Index to

John Gill's

New Testament Commentary

MATTHEW

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

The subject of this book, and indeed of all the writings of the New Testament, is the Gospel. The Greek word ευαγγελιον signifies a joyful message, good news, glad tidings of good things; such as Christ was anointed to preach, the Angels brought to the shepherds, and the Evangelists, Apostles, and Ministers of Christ published to the world. (<236101>Isaiah 61:1, <235207>Isaiah 52:7 <420210>Luke 2:10). And such is the account given by this inspired writer, of the incarnation, life, actions, ministry, miracles, sufferings, and death of Jesus Christ; whereby peace and reconciliation, pardon and righteousness, atonement and redemption, life and salvation, are obtained for lost, perishing sinners. The Jews, to whom the message of grace was first sent, and among whom the Gospel was first preached, having despised and rejected it; they and their posterity, in allusion to the word “Evangelion”, most wickedly and blasphemously call the whole New Testament, ˆwylg ˆwa or ˆwylg ˆw[“Aven Gilion” [f1], a “revelation”, or “volume of iniquity and vanity”; but “blessed are the people that know the joyful sound”, (see <199915>Psalm 89:15).

The writer of this Gospel, Matthew, who also was called Levi in (<420527>Luke 5:27) was by occupation a publican, or tax-gatherer, and was in his employ when Christ called him by his grace. He was one of the twelve Apostles sent forth by Christ to preach the Gospel of the kingdom, (<401003>Matthew 10:3) and was honoured to be the first of the writers of the New Testament, and to be the first publisher therein of the good news of the incarnate Saviour; and was a wonderful instance of the rich and sovereign grace of God. Though he was employed in collecting the Roman tax, yet he was of Jewish extract; as appears from his being called the son of Alphaeus, (<410214>Mark 2:14) and from his name Matthew Levi; for as the latter, so the former is an Hebrew name. The Jews say [f2] one of the disciples of Jesus was called yatm, Matthai or Matthew: his name signifies a “gift” or “given”; he was one of those the Father had given to Christ, and was kept by him, when the son of perdition was lost, (<431706>John 17:6,9,11,12).

It may not be improper to inquire in what language this Gospel was written. The ancient Christian writers were generally of opinion, that Matthew wrote it in Hebrew; Papias and [f3] Pantaenus were of this mind, as also Irenaeus [f4], Origen [f5] Eusebius [f6], Athanasius [f7], Epiphanius [f8], and Jerom [f9]; and it is asserted in the titles of the Arabic and Persic versions, and at the end of the Syriac version of this Gospel, that it was written in that language; and this opinion is espoused by Grotius and Hammond, though justly exploded by others; for what has been published by Munster, Mercer, Hutter, and Robertson, are translations, made by themselves or others, and of no antiquity: and since Hebrew and Syriac words are interpreted in this Gospel, (see <40123>Matthew 1:23, <402733>Matthew 27:33,46) which would not have been done, had it been written in either language; and since Matthew generally follows the Septuagint version in the passages cited by him out of the Old Testament; and since the Hebrew language was not generally known at that time to the common people, only to the learned; for the law and the prophets, when read in the synagogues in that language, required an interpreter; and since the Greek tongue was the language more commonly spoken, and the rest of the Evangelists wrote in Greek, and the Gospel was designed for the Gentiles as well as the Jews; it is most reasonable to conclude that this Gospel also was wrote in Greek; whereby that ancient prophecy was fulfilled, at least in part, “God shall enlarge” or “persuade Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem”, (<010927>Genesis 9:27) the Gospel being published in the language of Japheth, the Greek language, which the Jews, the posterity of Shem, now understood; agreeably to which the Palmudic writers interpret the prophecy; says [f10] Bar Kaphra, mentioning the above words,

> “They shall speak tpy lç wnwçlb in the language of Japheth, in the tents of Shem;”

or,

> “the words of the law shall be spoken in the language of Japheth, in the midst of the tents of Shem [f11].”

R. Jochanan [f12] explains them thus:

> “tpy lç wyrbr “the words of Japheth” shall be in the tents of Shem; and says R. Chiya ben Aba, the sense of it is, The beauty of Japheth shall be in the tents of Shem.”

Which the gloss interprets thus:

> “The beauty of Japheth is the language of Javan, or the Greek language, which language is more beautiful than that of any other of the sons of Japheth.”

The time when this Gospel was written is said [f13] by some to be in the eighth or ninth, by others, in the fifteenth year after the ascension of Christ, when the Evangelist had received the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, among which was the gift of tongues; and when the promise of Christ had been made good to him, (<43 14 26>John 14:26).

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 1

Ver. 1. *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ*, etc.] This is the genuine title of the book, which was put to it by the Evangelist himself; for the former seems to be done by another hand. This book is an account, not of the divine, but human generation of Christ; and not merely of his birth, which lies in a very little compass; nor of his genealogy, which is contained in this chapter; but also of his whole life and actions, of what was said, done, and suffered by him. It is an Hebrew way of speaking, much like that in (<0105>Genesis 5:1) and which the Septuagint render by the same phrase as here; and as that was the book of the generation of the first Adam; this is the book of the generation of the second Adam. The Jews call their blasphemous history of the life of Jesus, wçy twdlwt rps "The book of the generations of Jesus" [f14]. This account of Christ begins with the name of the Messiah, well known to the Jews,

the son of David; not only to the Scribes and Pharisees, the more learned part of the nation, but to the common people, even to persons of the meanest rank and figure among them. (see <4009>Matthew 9:27, <4021>Matthew 12:23, <4042>Matthew 22:42). Nothing is more common in the Jewish writings, than for dwd ˆb "the son of David" to stand alone for the Messiah; it would be endless to cite or refer to all the testimonies of this kind; only take the following [f15],

> "R. Jochanan says, in the generation in which dwd ˆb "the son of David" comes, the disciples of the wise men shall be lessened, and the rest, their eyes shall fail with grief and sorrow, and many calamities and severe decrees shall be renewed; when the first visitation is gone, a second will hasten to come. It is a tradition of the Rabbins (about) the week (of years) in which dwd ˆb "the son of David" comes, that in the first year this scripture will be fulfilled, (<3004>Amos 4:7). "I will rain upon one city", etc. in the second, arrows of famine will be sent forth; in the third there will be a great famine, and men, women and children, holy men and men of

> business will die, and the law will be forgotten by those who learn it; in the fourth there will be plenty and not plenty; in the fifth there will be great plenty, and they shall eat and drink and rejoice, and the law shall return to them that learn it; in the sixth there will be voices (or thunders;) in the seventh there will be wars; and in the going out of the seventh dwd ˆb the "son of David" comes. The tradition of R. Judah says, In the generation in which dwd ˆb "the son of David" comes, the house of the congregation (the school or synagogue) shall become a brothel house, Galilee shall be destroyed, and Gabalene shall become desolate; and the men of Gabul (or the border) shall go about from city to city, and shall find no mercy; and the wisdom of the scribes shall stink; and they that are afraid to sin shall be despised; and the face of that generation shall be as the face of a dog, and truth shall fail, as it is said, (<23 59 15>Isaiah 59:15) — The tradition of R. Nehorai says, In the generation in which dwd ˆb "the son of David" comes, young men shall make ashamed the faces of old men, and old men shall stand before young men, the daughter shall rise up against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; nor will a son reverence his father. The tradition of R. Nehemiah says, In the generation in which dwd ˆb "the son of David" comes, impudence will increase, and the honourable will deal wickedly, and the whole kingdom will return to the opinion of the Sadducees, and there will be no reproof. — It is a tradition of the Rabbins, that dwd ˆb "the son of David" will not come, until traitorous practices are increased, or the disciples are lessened or until the smallest piece of money fails from the purse, or until redemption is despaired of."

In which passage, besides the proof for which it is cited, may be observed, how exactly the description of the age of the Messiah, as given by the Jews themselves, agrees with the generation in which Jesus the true Messiah came; who as he was promised to David, and it was expected he should descend from him, so he did according to the flesh; God raised him up of his seed, (<45 01 03>Romans 1:3 <44 13 23>Acts 13:23) it follows,

The son of Abraham. Abraham was the first to whom a particular promise was made, that the Messiah should spring from, (<01 22 18>Genesis 22:18). The first promise in (<01 03 15>Genesis 3:15) only signified that he should be the seed of the woman; and it would have been sufficient for the fulfilment of it, if

he had been born of any woman, in whatsoever nation, tribe, or family; but by the promise made to Abraham he was to descend from him, as Jesus did; who took upon him the seed of Abraham, (<58216>Hebrews 2:16) or assumed an human nature which sprung from him, and is therefore truly the son of Abraham. The reason why Christ is first called the son of David, and then the son of Abraham, is partly because the former was a more known name of the Messiah; and partly that the transition to the genealogy of Christ might be more easy and natural, beginning with Abraham, whom the Jews call [f16] sjyh çar the "head of the genealogy", and the root and foundation of it, as Matthew here makes him to be; wherefore a Jew cannot be displeased with the Evangelist for beginning the genealogy of our Lord at, Abraham.

Ver. 2. *Abraham begat Isaac*, etc.] The descent of Christ from Abraham is in the line of Isaac; Abraham begat Ishmael before Isaac, and others after him, but they are not mentioned; because the Messiah was not to spring from any of them, but from Isaac, of whom it is said, "in Isaac shall thy seed be called", (<01212>Genesis 21:12) and who, as he was a progenitor, so an eminent type of Christ; being Abraham's only beloved son; and particularly in the binding, sacrifice and deliverance of him.

Isaac begat Jacob. The genealogy of Christ proceeds from Isaac, in the line of Jacob. Isaac begat Esau, as well as Jacob, and they two were twins, but one was loved, and the other hated; wherefore no mention is made of Esau, he had no concern in the Messiah, nor was he to spring from him, but from Jacob, or Israel, by whose name he is sometimes called, (<23403>Isaiah 49:3)

Jacob begat Judas and his brethren. The lineage of Christ is carried on from Jacob in the line of Judah; the reason of which is, because it was particularly prophesied that the Messiah, Shiloh, the prince and chief ruler, should be of him, (<01490>Genesis 49:10) (<13502>1 Chronicles 5:2). And it is evident beyond all contradiction, that our Lord sprung from his tribe, (<58714>Hebrews 7:14). The reason why the brethren of Judah, who were eleven in number, are mentioned, when the brethren of Isaac and Jacob are not, is, because though the Messiah did not spring from them, yet the promise of him was made to the twelve tribes, who all expected him, and to whom he was sent, and came. These made but one body of men, and therefore, though the Messiah came from the tribe of Judah, yet he is said to be of them all, (<45904>Romans 9:4,5).

Ver. 3. *And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar*, etc.] The genealogical account of Christ goes on from Judah in the line of Phares, with whom Zara is mentioned; not because they were twins, for so were Jacob and Esau, and yet the latter is taken no notice of; but it may be because of what happened at their birth, (see <0138>Genesis 38:28,29,30). But the line of the Messiah was in Phares, and very rightly is he put in the genealogy of Christ, the Jews themselves being witnesses; who expressly say, that "the Messiah comes from him." These two are said to be begotten of Thamar, daughter-in-law to Judah; who, though she was a Canaanitish woman, has the honour to be named in the genealogy of Christ, who came to save Gentiles as well as Jews: nor can the Jews reproach our Evangelist for putting her into the account; since they themselves frequently acknowledge that the Messiah was to spring from her: they say, [f17]

> "there are two women from whom come David the king, and Solomon, and the king Messiah; and these two are Thamar and Ruth."

Jonathan Ben Uzziel on (<0138>Genesis 38:6) says, that Thamar was the daughter of Shem the great.

And Phares begat Esrom; called Hezron, (<0804>Ruth 4:18) where the same phrase is used as here. He had another son called Hamul, (<1302>1 Chronicles 2:5) but the account proceeds from Phares, in the line of Esrom.

And Esrom begat Aram; called Ram in (<0804>Ruth 4:18) where the same way of speaking is used as here. Esrom also besides him begat Jerahmeel, Chelubai, or Caleb, and Segub, (<1309>1 Chronicles 2:9,21) but these are not in the line. Elihu, who conversed with Job, is said to be of the kindred of Ram, (<1832>Job 32:2) whether the same with Ram or Aram, may be inquired.

Ver. 4. *And Aram begat Aminadab*, etc.] Which, with what follows in this verse, exactly agrees with the genealogical account in (<0419>Ruth 4:19,20).

Ver. 5. *And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab*, etc.] That Salmon begat Boaz, is affirmed in (<0421>Ruth 4:21) but it is not there said, nor any where else in the Old Testament, as here, that he begat him of Rahab, that is, of Rahab the harlot. This the Evangelist had from tradition, or from the Jewish records. That the Messiah was to spring from Boaz is asserted by the Jewish writers [f18]; and they also own that Rahab was married to a prince in Israel, which some say [f19] was Joshua: they pretend that she was ten years of age when the Israelites came out of Egypt; that she played the harlot all

the forty years they were in the wilderness, and was married to Joshua upon the destruction of Jericho. To excuse this marriage with a Canaanitish woman, they tell us, she was not of the seven nations with whom marriage was forbid; and moreover, that she became a proselyte when the spies were received by her: they own that some very great persons of their nation sprung from her, as Jeremiah, Maaseiah, Hanameel, Shallum, Baruch, Ezekiel, Neriah, Seraiah, and Huldah the prophetess. The truth of the matter is, she became the wife of Salmon, or Salma, as he is called, (<130211>1 Chronicles 2:11). And in the Targum on (<080420>Ruth 4:20) is said to be of Bethlehem; he was the son of Nahshon or Naasson, a famous prince in Judah, and the head and captain of the tribe, (<040107>Numbers 1:7, 2:3) (<040712>Numbers 7:12,17, <041014>Numbers 10:14). And from Rahab sprung the Messiah, another instance of a Gentile in the genealogy of Christ; and a third follows.

And Booz begat Obed of Ruth; who was a Moabitess. It is a notion that generally obtains among the Jews [f20], that she was the daughter of Eglon, grandson of Balak, king of Moab; and it is often taken notice of by them [f21], that the king Messiah should descend from her; and also other persons of note, as David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, and Daniel; wherefore the mentioning of her in this genealogy, cannot be said by them to be impertinent.

And Obed begat Jesse. Jesse is thought to be, not the immediate son of Obed, but to be of the fourth generation from him; though no others are mentioned between them in Ruth, any more than here. A Jewish writer observes [f22], that

> “the wise men of the Gentiles say, that there were other generations between them; perhaps, says he, they have taken this from the wise men of Israel, and so it is thought.”

Now notwithstanding this, Jesse may be said to be begotten by Obed, as Hezekiah’s posterity, who were carried captive into Babylon, are said to be begotten by him, (<230907>Isaiah 39:7) though they were a remove of several generations from him. However, Jesse is rightly put among the progenitors of Christ, since the Messiah was to be a rod of his stem, and the branch of his roots, and is called the root of Jesse, (<231101>Isaiah 11:1,10) which words are interpreted of the Messiah, by many of the Jewish writers [f23]; and to this day the Jews pray for him in their synagogues under the name of yçy ^b, “the son of Jesse” [f24].

Ver. 6. *And Jesse begat David the king*, etc.] The descent of the Messiah runs in the line of David, the youngest of Jesse's sons, who was despised by his brethren, and overlooked and neglected by his father; but God chose him, and anointed him to be king, and set him on the throne of Israel; hence he is called "David the king"; as also because he was the first king that was of the tribe of Judah, and in the genealogy of Christ, and was an eminent type of the king Messiah, who is sometimes called by the same name, (<2634>Ezekiel 34:24, <2637>Ezekiel 37:24,25 <2805>Hosea 3:5) and who was to be his son, as Jesus is, and also right heir to his throne and kingdom.

And David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias; which was Bathsheba, though not named; either because she was well known, or because of the sin she had been guilty of, which would easily be revived by mentioning her name: our translators have rightly supplied, "that had been", and not as the Vulgate Latin, which supplies it, "that was the wife of Urias", for Solomon was begotten of her, not while she was the wife of Uriah, but when she was the wife of David.

Ver. 7. *And Solomon begat Roboam*, etc.] Called Rehoboam, (<111143>1 Kings 11:43) of Naamah an Ammonitess, (<111421>1 Kings 14:21,31).

And Roboam begat Abia, sometimes called Abijam, as in (<111431>1 Kings 14:31), sometimes Abijah, (<141216>2 Chronicles 12:16) and sometimes, as here, Abia, (<130310>1 Chronicles 3:10). Him Rehoboam begat of Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom, (<111502>1 Kings 15:2) called Michaiah, the daughter of Uriel, (<141302>2 Chronicles 13:2). Maachah and Michaiah being the same name; or else she went by two names, as her father did.

And Abia begat Asa, who was a good king; his mother's name is the same with the name of his father's mother; and perhaps it is not his proper mother, but his grandmother who is meant in (<111510>1 Kings 15:10). He is wrongly called Asaph in the Persic and Ethiopic versions, and in one copy.

Ver. 8. *And Asa begat Josaphat*, etc.] Called Jehoshaphat, (<111524>1 Kings 15:24) whom Asa begat of Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi, (<112242>1 Kings 22:42). He also was a very good prince.

And Josaphat begat Joram; called Jehoram, (<112250>1 Kings 22:50) to whom his father gave the kingdom, because he was the firstborn, (<142103>2 Chronicles 21:3).

And Joram begat Ozias; called Uzziah, (<14601>2 Chronicles 26:1) and Azariah, (<12501>2 Kings 15:1). He was not the immediate son of Joram; there were three kings between them, Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, which are here omitted; either because of the curse denounced on Ahab's family, into which Joram married, whose idolatry was punished to the third or fourth generation; or because these were princes of no good character; or because their names were not in the Jewish registers. Nor does this omission at all affect the design of the Evangelist, which is to show that Jesus, the true Messiah, is of the house of David; nor ought the Jews to complain of it, as they do [f25] since such omissions are to be met with in the Old Testament, particularly in (<150702>Ezra 7:2) where six generations are omitted at once; and which is taken notice of by one of their own genealogical writers, whose words are these [f26];

> "we see in the genealogy of Ezra that he hath skipped over seven generations (perhaps it should be W "six" and not Z "seven", since six are only omitted) from Ahitub to Ahitub."

Nor is it any objection that Joram is said to beget Ozias, which he may be said to do in the like sense, as has been before observed of Hezekiah, (<230907>Isaiah 39:7).

Ver. 9. *And Ozias begat Joatham*, etc.] Called Jotham, (<12507>2 Kings 15:7) him Ozias begat of Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok, (<12533>2 Kings 15:33).

And Joatham begat Achaz, or Ahaz, (<12538>2 Kings 15:38) to him the sign was given, and the famous prophecy of the Messiah, (<230714>Isaiah 7:14).

And Achaz begat Ezekias, or Hezekiah, (<12620>2 Kings 16:20) him Ahaz begat of Abi, the daughter of Zachariah, (<121802>2 Kings 18:2). He was a very religious king, and had that singular favour from God to have fifteen years added to his days, (<230805>Isaiah 38:5).

Ver. 10. *And Ezekias begat Manasses*, etc.] Or Manasseh, (<122121>2 Kings 20:21). Him Hezekiah begat of Hephzibah, (<122101>2 Kings 21:1). He was very remarkable both for his sins, and for his humiliation on account of them.

And Manasses begat Amon, of Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah, (<122119>2 Kings 21:19). He was a very wicked prince.

And Amon begat Josias, or Josiah of Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath, (<12201>2 Kings 22:1). He was a very pious king, and was prophesied of by name some hundreds of years before he was born, (<11302>1 Kings 13:2).

Ver. 11. *And Josias begat Jechonias*, etc.] This Jechonias is the same with Jehoiakim, the son of Josias, called so by Pharaohnecho, when he made him king, whose name before was Eliakim, (<12334>2 Kings 23:34) begat of Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah, (<12336>2 Kings 23:36).

and his brethren. These were Johanan, Zedekiah, and Shallum. Two of them were kings, one reigned before him, viz. Shallum, who is called Jehoahaz, (<12330>2 Kings 23:30) compared with (<24211>Jeremiah 22:11,12), the other, viz. Zedekiah, called before Mattaniah, reigned after his son Jehoiakim: these being both kings, is the reason why his brethren are mentioned; as well as to distinguish him from Jechonias in the next verse; who does not appear to have had any brethren: these were

about the time they were carried away to Babylon, which is not to be connected with the word "begat": for Josiah did not beget Jeconiah and his brethren at that time, for he had been dead some years before; nor with Jechonias, for he never was carried away into Babylon, but died in Judea, and slept with his fathers, (<12406>2 Kings 24:6) but with the phrase "his brethren": and may be rendered thus, supposing τους understood, "which were at", or "about the carrying away to Babylon", or the Babylonish captivity.

Ver. 12. *And after they were brought to Babylon*, etc.] Not Jechonias, but the father of Jechonias, and the Jews.

Jechonias begat Salathiel. Not Jechonias mentioned in the former verse, but his son, called Jehoiachin, (<12406>2 Kings 24:6,8) and Coniah, (<24224>Jeremiah 22:24,28) both which are rendered Jechonias by the Septuagint in (<14608>2 Chronicles 36:8 <24224>Jeremiah 22:24) and he is so called, (<13316>1 Chronicles 3:16). Abulpharagius [f27] calls him Junachir, and says he is the same who in Matthew is called Juchonia; and he asserts him to be the father of Daniel the Prophet. But here a considerable difficulty arises, how he can be said to beget Salathiel, called Shealtiel, (<37001>Haggai 1:1) when he was pronounced "childless", (<24230>Jeremiah 22:30). To remove which, it may be observed, that the sentence pronounced may be considered with this tacit condition or proviso, if he repented not. Now the Jews have a tradition [f28] that he did repent in prison, upon which the sentence was

revoked; but there is no need to suppose this, though it is not an unreasonable supposition; for the sentence does not imply that he should have no children, but rather that he should, as will appear upon reading the whole; “thus saith the Lord, write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting on the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah”. Besides, the Hebrew word yryr[, rendered “childless”, comes from hr[, which signifies “to make naked” or “bare” and so denotes not only such as have no children, or are bereft of them, but such as are by any providence stripped of the blessings of life, and are left bare, destitute, and unhappy, as Jechonias and his posterity were: however, the Jews have no reason to find fault with our Evangelist, since Salathiel is expressly called Jechonias’s son, (<130317>1 Chronicles 3:17) either he was his proper natural son, or, to use their way of speaking, twklm ^b “the son of the kingdom” [f29], that is, his heir and successor in the kingdom, as some have thought; since it looks as if he was the son of Neri, (<420327>Luke 3:27) though the chronicle of Jedidaeus of Alexandria [f30], or Philo the Jew, says, that Jechonias was called Neri, because Ner, or the lamp of David, shined in him, which had been almost extinguished.

And Salathiel begat Zorobabel. This account perfectly agrees with many passages in the Old Testament, where Zorobabel is called the son of Shealtiel or Salathiel, (<150302>Ezra 3:2,5:2 Neh 12:1) (<370101>Haggai 1:1,12,14 2:2,23) which is sufficient to justify the Evangelist in this assertion. There is indeed a difficulty which as much presses the Jews as the Christians, and that is, that Zorobabel is reckoned as the son of Pedaiah, (<130319>1 Chronicles 3:19) for the solution of which a noted Jewish commentator [f31] observes, that

> “in Haggai, Zachariah and Ezra, Zorobabel is called the son of Shealtiel, because he was his son’s son; for Pedaiah was the son of Shealtiel, and Zorobabel the son of Pedaiah; and do not you observe (adds he) that in many places children’s children are mentioned as children?”

No doubt there are many instances of this; but to me it seems that Pedaiah was not the son of Shealtiel, but his brother, (<130317>1 Chronicles 3:17,18). And I greatly suspect that Shealtiel had no children of his own, since none are mentioned; and that he adopted his brother Pedaiah’s son Zorobabel, and made him his heir and successor in the government of Judah. However,

it is certain, as a genealogical writer[f32] among the Jews observes, that he was of the son's sons of Jechonias, king of Judah, from whom our Evangelist makes him to descend.

Ver. 13. *And Zorobabel begat Abiud*, etc.] The children of Zorobabel are said in (1 Chronicles 3:19,20), to be Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister, but no mention is made of Abiud: he seems to be the same with Meshullam the eldest son, who might have two names; nor is this unlikely, since it was usual, especially about the time of the Babylonish captivity, for men to have more names than one, as may be observed in Daniel and others, (Daniel 1:7) where they went by one, and in Judea by another.

And Abiud begat Eliakim, etc. From hence to the 16th verse the genealogy is carried down to Joseph, the husband of Mary; which account must be taken from the genealogical tables of the Jews, to which recourse might be had, and with which it agrees; or otherwise the Jews would have cavilled at it; but I do not find any objections made by them to it. That there were genealogical books or tables kept by the Jews is certain, from the following instances[f33];

> "Simeon ben Azzai says, I found in Jerusalem, ˆysjwy tlgm, "a volume of genealogies", and there was written in it, etc."

Again[f34], says R. Levi,

> "they found a "volume of genealogies" in Jerusalem, and there was written in it that Hillell came from David; Ben Jarzaph from Asaph; Ben Tzitzith Hacceseth from Abner; Ben Cobesin from Ahab; Ben Calba Shebuah from Caleb; R. Jannai from Eli; R. Chayah Rabba from the children of Shephatiah, the son of Abital; R. Jose be Rabbi Chelphetha from the children of Jonadab, the son of Rechab; and R. Nehemiah from Nehemiah the Tirshathite."

Once more[f35], says R. Chana bar Chanma, when the holy blessed God causes his

> "Shechinah to dwell, he does not cause it to dwell but upon families, twsjwym, "which are genealogized" in Israel."

Now if Matthew's account had not been true, it might easily have been refuted by these records. The author of the old[f36] Nizzachon takes notice

of the close of this genealogy, but finds no fault with it; only that it is carried down to Joseph, and not to Mary; which may be accounted for by a rule of their own [f37], tjpçm hywrq hnya µa tjpçm "the mother's family is not called a family", whereas the father's is. It is very remarkable that the Jewish Targum [f38] traces the descent of the Messiah from the family of David in the line of Zorobabel, as Matthew does; and reckons the same number of generations, wanting one, from Zorobabel to the Messiah, as the Evangelist does, from Zorobabel to Jesus; according to Matthew, the genealogy stands thus, Zorobabel, Abiud, Eliakim, Azor, Sadoc, Achim, Eliud, Eleazar, Matthan, Jacob, Joseph, Jesus; and according to the Targum the order is this,

> "Zorobabel, Hananiah, Jesaiah, Rephaiah, Arnon, Obadiah, Shecaniah, Shemnigh, Neariah, Elioenai, Anani; this is the king Messiah, who is to be revealed."

The difference of names may be accounted for by their having two names, as before observed. This is a full proof, that, according to the Jews own account, and expectation, the Messiah must be come many years and ages ago.

Ver. 16. *And Jacob begat Joseph*, etc.] According to an old tradition mentioned by [f39] Epiphanins, this Jacob, the father of Joseph, was named Panther, and which name perhaps is originally Jewish; and it may be observed, that Joseph is sometimes called by the Jewish writers Pandera [f40], and Jesus arydnp ^b, the son of Pandira [f41]. It has created some difficulty with interpreters that Jacob should be here said to beget Joseph, when Joseph in Luke is said to be the son of Eli. Some have thought Joseph's father had two names, one was Jacob, and the other Eli; others take them to be two different persons, and suppose that Joseph was the natural son of the one, and the legal son of the other, either by marriage, or by adoption, or by the law of the brother's wife, (<05D505>Deuteronomy 25:5,6). But the truth of the matter is, that not Joseph, but Jesus, is by Luke called the son of Eli, as will be made to appear in its proper place. Joseph, who is here called the husband of Mary, because he not only espoused her, but, upon the advice and encouragement of the Angel, took her to be his wife, was, as is evident by this genealogy, of the house and lineage of David; though a mean and obscure person, and by trade a carpenter. Mary, which is the same name with Miriam in Hebrew, was a poor virgin that dwelt at

Nazareth, a city of Galilee; yet also of the family of David, and belonged to the city of Bethlehem;

of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ, or Messiah; being that illustrious person, who was spoken of by the Prophets of the Old Testament under that name, and whom the Jews expected. We may learn from hence, what a low condition the family of David was in, when the true Messiah came; according to ancient prophecy, it was like a stump of a tree, or like to a tree cut down to the root, (<23 11 01>Isaiah 11:1) and Christ who sprung from it was like a root out of a dry ground, (<25 53 02>Isaiah 53:2). From the whole of this genealogy it appears, that Jesus was of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David; whereby several ancient prophecies have their accomplishment, and therefore he ought to be acknowledged as the true Messiah: and also that he was of the blood royal, and had his descent from the kings of Judah, and was heir apparent to the throne and kingdom of his father David. The Talmudic Jews own that Jesus, or Jesu, as they call him, was put to death because he [f42], hyh twklml bwrq "was nigh to the kingdom", or nearly related to it. Yea, even in that malicious book [f43] they have written of his life, they represent him as akin to queen Helena, who they say, on that account, would have saved his life. And this was so clear a point, and their forefathers were so thoroughly convinced of this matter, that they would have took him by force and made him a king, (<43 06 15>John 6:15) but his kingdom was to be of another kind, a spiritual, and not a temporal one.

Ver. 17. *So all the generations from Abraham*, etc.] The Evangelist having traced the genealogy of Christ from Abraham, which he divides into "three" parts, because of the threefold state of the Jews, "first" under Patriarchs, Prophets, and Judges, "next" under Kings, and "then" under Princes and Priests, gives the sum of each part under its distinct head; "so all the generations", that is, the degrees of generation, or the persons generated from Abraham to David, both being included, "are fourteen generations"; as there were, and no more, and are as follow, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Phares, Esrom, Aram, Amminadab, Naasson, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, Jesse, David.

And from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations. Here David who closed the first division must be excluded this, and it must be observed, that the Evangelist does not say as before, that "all" the generations from David to the captivity were fourteen, for

there were seventeen, three kings being omitted by him at once; but, the generations he thought fit to mention, in order to reduce them to a like number as before, and which were sufficient for his purpose, were fourteen; and may be reckoned in this order, Solomon, Roboam, Abia, Asa, Josaphat, Joram, Ozias, Joatham, Achaz, Ezekias, Manasses, Amon, Josias, Jechonias, or Jehoiachin.

And from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations. This must be understood as before; for there might be more generations in this interval, but these were enough to answer the design of the Evangelist; and which he thought proper to mention, and may be numbered in this manner; Jechonias, or Jehoiachin, Salathiel, Zorobabel, Abiud, Ehakim, Azor, Sadoc, Achim, Eliud, Eleazar, Matthan, Jacob, Joseph, Christ. This way of reckoning by generations was used by other nations as well as the Jews [f44], particularly the Grecians; so [f45] Pausanias says,

> "From Tharypus to Pyrrhus the son of Achilles, πεντε ανδρων και δεκα εισι γενεαι, were fifteen generations of men."

And Herodotus [f46] speaking of those who had reigned in Babylon, says, among them were two women, one whose name was Semiramis, who reigned before the other γενεησι πεντε, five generations; many other instances of the like kind might be given.

Ver. 18. *Now the birth of Jesus Christ*, etc.] The Evangelist having finished the genealogy of Christ, proceeds to give an account of his birth, which includes both his conception and bringing forth; and which he says

was on this wise, ουτως so, "after this manner", and which was very wonderful and astonishing;

when as, gar, for his mother Mary was found with child, not of man, no, not of Joseph her husband; Christ had no real father as man, Joseph was only, as was supposed, his father; but

of the Holy Ghost, according to (Luke 1:35). "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee", etc. and this was done that the human nature of Christ might be clear of original pollution; that so being the immediate produce of the Holy Ghost and without sin, it might be fit for union with the Son of God, and for the office of Mediator he had undertook. When Mary is said to be

found with child, the meaning is, it appeared by evident signs, it was observed by Joseph particularly, who might know not only that she was with child, but with child of the Holy Ghost; by conversation with her, who might relate to him what passed between the Angel and her, (Luke 1:28, 36) though it looks as if as yet he did not know this, or at least was not fully satisfied about it; since he had a mind to have put her away, before he was assured of the truth of it, by the appearance of an angel to him. Now Mary's being with child, and its being known, were facts, at the time when she was

espoused to Joseph, and thereby the outward credit both of Mary and Jesus were secured; for had this appeared before the espousals, the Jews would have fixed a brand of infamy on them both; and both the espousals and her being found with child, were

before they came together; that is, before they cohabited together as man and wife, before he brought her home to his own house and bed. The espousals were before they thus came together. It was usual with the Jews first to espouse or betroth, and then to marry, or rather consummate the marriage, by bringing the woman home to her husband's house, between which there was some space of time. The account and manner of betrothing is given by Maimonides [f47] in the following words.

> "Before the giving of the law, if a man met a woman in the street, if he would, he might take her, and bring her into his house and marry her between him and herself, and she became his wife; but when the law was given, the Israelites were commanded, that if a man would take a woman he should obtain her before witnesses, and after that she should be his wife, according to (Deuteronomy 22:13) and these takings are an affirmative command of the law, and are called ^yswrya wa ^yçwdyq "espousals" or "betrothings" in every place; and a woman who is obtained in such a way is called tsrwam wa tçdwqm "espoused" or "betrothed"; and when a woman is obtained, and becomes tçdwqm "espoused", although she is not yet hl[bn "married, nor has entered into her husband's house", yet she is a man's wife."

And such a distinction between a married woman and a betrothed virgin, which was Mary's case, may be observed in (Deuteronomy 22:22,23) moreover, her being found or appearing to be with child, was "before they

came together"; which it is likely, as Dr. Lightfoot [f48] observes, was about three months from her conception, when she was returned from her cousin Elizabeth. It is probable that as soon as she was espoused to Joseph, or quickly after, she went and paid her visit to Elizabeth, with whom she stayed about three months, and then returned home, (<4056>Luke 1:56). Upon her return home, she appears to be with child, with which she had gone three months, a proper time for the discovery of such a matter, (<013824>Genesis 38:24) and which is assigned by the Jewish doctors for this purpose. In the Misna [f49] such a case as this is put,

> "If two men should espouse two women, and at the time of their entrance into the bride chamber, the one should be taken for the other — they separate them for three months, because they may prove with child;"

that is, as Bartenora observes upon it,

> "they separate them that they may not return to their husbands; and that if they should be with child, they may distinguish between a legitimate and an illegitimate offspring; and that the children which they may bring forth may not be ascribed to the wrong persons."

Now Mary being gone three months from the time of her espousals to Joseph, and he and she not being yet come together, it was a clear case, that the child she was gone three months with, was none of his; hence it follows,

Ver. 19. *Then Joseph her husband*, etc.] To whom she had been betrothed, and who was her husband, and she his wife according to the Jewish law, (<052223>Deuteronomy 22:23,24) though not yet come together,

being a just man, observant of the law of God, particularly that which respected adultery, being wholly good and chaste, like the Patriarch of the same name; a character just the reverse of that which the Jews give him, in their scandalous [f50] book of the life of Jesus; where, in the most malicious manner, they represent him as an unchaste and an unrighteous person:

and not willing to make her a public example, or to deliver her, i.e. to the civil magistrate, according to Munster's Hebrew edition. The Greek word signifies to punish by way of example to others, to deter them from sinning; and with the ancients it [f51] denoted the greatest and severest punishment. Here it means either bringing her before the civil magistrate, in order to her

being punished according to the law in (<052223>Deuteronomy 22:23,24) which requires the person to be brought out to the gate of the city and stoned with stones, which was making a public example indeed; or divorcing her in a very public manner, and thereby expose her to open shame and disgrace. To prevent which, he being tender and compassionate, though strictly just and good,

was minded to put her away privily: he deliberately consulted and determined within himself to dismiss her, or put her away by giving her a bill of divorce, in a very private manner; which was sometimes done by putting it into the woman's hand or bosom, (see <052401>Deuteronomy 24:1). In Munster's Hebrew Gospel it is rendered, "it was in his heart to forsake her privately."

Ver. 20. *But while he thought on these things*, etc.] While he was revolving them in his mind, considering what was most fit and proper to be done, whether to dismiss her publicly or privately; while he was consulting within himself the glory of God, the peace of his own conscience, and the credit of Mary,

behold the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream; probably the same Angel which appeared to Zacharias, and brought him tidings that his wife should have a son, and who also appeared to Mary, and acquainted her that she should conceive, and bring forth the Messiah, Whose name was Gabriel, (<420111>Luke 1:11,19,36). If we will believe the Jews, this Angel must be Gabriel, since he is the Angel who they say [f52] amlj l[anmmd "is appointed over dreams"; for he appeared to

Joseph in a dream, which is one of the ways and methods in which the Lord, or an Angel of his, has appeared to the saints formerly, and has answered them, (see <013111>Genesis 31:11 <110305>1 Kings 3:5 <092806>1 Samuel 28:6,15) and is reckoned by the Jews [f53] one of the degrees or kinds of prophecy: and so the Angel here not only encourages Joseph to take to him his wife,

saying Joseph, thou son of David; which is said partly to attest his being of the house and lineage of David, and partly to raise his expectations and confirm his faith, that his wife should bring forth the promised son of David; and chiefly to engage his attention to what he was about to say,

fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; do not be afraid either that thou shalt offend the Lord, or bring any reproach or scandal upon thyself as if thou didst connive at an adulteress; but as she is thine espoused wife, solemnly betrothed to thee, take her home to thyself, live with her as thy wife, and openly avow her as such. To which he is encouraged by the following reason or argument,

for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost; she has not been guilty of any criminal conversation with men; this conception of her's is of the Holy Ghost, and entirely owing to his coming upon her, and overshadowing her in a wonderful and miraculous manner. I say, the Angel not only encourages Joseph after this manner, but delivers something to him by way of prophecy, in the following verse.

Ver. 21. *And she shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Jesus.*] For though she was with child, it could not be known any otherwise than by prediction or divine revelation, that she should have a son, whose name should be called Jesus; a name of the same signification with Joshua and Hosea, and may be interpreted a "Saviour", (<44 13 23>Acts 13:23) for the word [wçy Jesus, comes from [çy which signifies "to save." And to this agrees the reason of the name given by the Angel,

for he shall save his people from their sins. The salvation here ascribed to him, and for which he is every way fit, being God as well as man, and which he is the sole author of, is to be understood, not of a temporal, but of a spiritual and everlasting salvation; such as was prophesied of, (<23 45 17>Isaiah 45:17) and which old Jacob had in his view, when he said, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord", (<01 49 18>Genesis 49:18) which by the Jewish [f54] Targumist is paraphrased thus:

> "Jacob said when he saw Gideon the son of Joash, and Samson the son of Manoah, that they would rise up to be saviours, not for the salvation of Gideon do I wait, nor for the salvation of Samson do I look, for their salvation is at[çd^qrwp "a temporary salvation"; but for thy salvation, O Lord, do I wait and look, for thy salvation is ^yml[^qrwp "an everlasting salvation", or (according to another copy) but for the salvation of Messiah the son of David, who shall save the children of Israel, and bring them out of captivity, for thy salvation my soul waiteth."

By “his people” whom he is said to save are meant, not all mankind, though they are his by creation and preservation, yet they are not, nor will they be all saved by him spiritually and eternally; nor also the people of the Jews, for though they were his nation, his kinsmen, and so his own people according to the flesh, yet they were not all saved by him; many of them died in their sins, and in the disbelief of him as the Messiah: but by them are meant all the elect of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, who were given to him by his Father, as a peculiar people, and who are made willing in the day of his power upon them, to be saved by him in his own way. And these he saves from “their sins”, from all their sins, original and actual; from secret and open sins; from sins of heart, lip and life; from sins of omission and commission; from all that is in sin, and omission upon it; from the guilt, punishment, and damning power of it, by his sufferings and death; and from the tyrannical government of it by his Spirit and grace; and will at last save them from the being of it, though not in this life, yet hereafter, in the other world, when they shall be without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Ver. 22. *Now all this was done*, etc.] These are not the words of the Angel, but of the Evangelist; observing that Mary’s being with child of the Holy Ghost, and her conception in such an extraordinary manner, whilst a pure virgin, before she and Joseph came together, who though espoused to him, was untouched by him, were all brought about in this way, and with such circumstances,

that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet; that is, the Prophet Isaiah, and so some copies read. The passage referred to is in (<23714>Isaiah 7:14) what is there spoken was by divine inspiration; it was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet; the Spirit of the Lord spake by him. Prophets and holy men formerly, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; so that what they said is to be looked upon as the word of God. Now between the prophecy of Isaiah referred to, and the fact here recorded by the Evangelist, is an entire agreement: the prophecy shows the will, counsel, and determination of God about this matter; the accomplishment of it, the faithfulness and veracity of God in his word; the prediction declares that the thing would be, and the thing itself was done, that what was spoken might be fulfilled; not merely by way of accommodation, or in a typical and mystical, but in a strict, proper and literal sense.

Ver. 23. *Behold, a virgin shall be with child*, etc.] These words are rightly applied to the virgin Mary and her son Jesus, for of no other can they be understood; not of Ahaz's wife and his son Hezekiah, who was already born, and must be eleven or twelve years of age when these words were spoken; nor of any other son of Ahaz by her or any other person since no other was Lord of Judea; nor of the wife of Isaiah, and any son of his, who never had any that was king of Judah. The prophecy is introduced here as in Isaiah with a "behold!" not only to raise and fix the attention, but to denote that it was something wonderful and extraordinary which was about to be related; and is therefore called twa a "sign", wonder, or miracle; which lay not, as some Jewish writers [f55] affirm, in this, that the person spoken of was unfit for conception at the time of the prophecy, since no such thing is intimated; or in this, that it should be a son and not a daughter [f56], which is foretold; for the wonder lies not in the truth of the prediction, but in the extraordinariness of the thing predicted; much less in this [f57], that the child should eat butter and honey as soon as born; since nothing is more natural and common with new born infants, than to take in any sort of liquids which are sweet and pleasant. But the sign or wonder lay in this, that a "virgin" should "conceive" or "be with child"; for the Evangelist is to be justified in rendering, hml[by παρψενος "a virgin"; by the Septuagint having so rendered it some hundreds of years before him, by the sense of the word, which comes from μl[and which signifies to "hide" or "cover"; virgins being such who are unknown to, and not uncovered by men, and in the Eastern countries were kept recluse from the company and conversation of men; and by the use of the word in all other places, (<01243>Genesis 24:43 <02208>Exodus 2:8 <19825>Psalm 68:25 <22003>Song of Solomon 1:3 6:8 <20019>Proverbs 30:19). The last of these texts the Jews triumph in, as making for them, and against us, but without any reason; since it does not appear that the "maid" and the "adulterous woman" are one and the same person; and if they were, the vitiated woman might be called a maid or virgin, according to her own account of herself, or in the esteem of others who knew her not, or as antecedent to her defilement; (see <05228>Deuteronomy 22:28). Besides, could this be understood of any young woman married or unmarried, that had known a man, it would be no wonder, no surprising thing that she should "conceive" or "be with child", and "bring forth a son". It is added,

and they shall call his name Emmanuel. The difference between Isaiah and Matthew is very inconsiderable, it being in the one "thou shalt call", that is,

thou virgin shalt call him by this name; and in the other “they shall call”, that is, Joseph, Mary, and others; for, besides that some copies read the text in Matthew χαλεσεις “thou shalt call”, the words both in the one and the other may be rendered impersonally, “and shall be called”; and the meaning is, not that he should be commonly known and called by such a name, any more than by any, or all of those mentioned in (<230906>Isaiah 9:6), but only that he should be so, which is a frequent use of the word; or he should be that, and so accounted by others, which answers to the signification of this name, which the Evangelist says,

being interpreted is God with us: for it is a compound word of la “God” and wnm[“with us”, and well agrees with Jesus, who is God in our nature, the word that was made flesh and dwelt among us. (<430114>John 1:14), and is the one and only Mediator between God and us, (<540205>1 Timothy 2:5) [f58]. So the Septuagint interpret the word in (<230808>Isaiah 8:8).

Ver. 24. *Then Joseph being raised from sleep*, etc.] That is, being awaked out of sleep, του υπνου “that sleep”, into which he either naturally fell, whilst he was meditating on the affair of Mary’s being with child; or rather into which he was cast by the Lord, on purpose that he might have a revelation of the will of God to him in a dream; and rising up from his bed or place where he was, immediately and without any delay,

did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him; firmly believing that it was a messenger of God that was sent to him, and that this matter was of the Lord. Wherefore he

took unto him his wife, that is, he publicly married her, whom he had before espoused, took her to his house, or continued her there, lived with her as his wife, and owned her to be such, and henceforwards had no more thoughts of putting her away.

Ver. 25. *“And knew her not”*, etc.] Or “but he knew her not”, και answering to the Hebrew w that is, had carnal knowledge of her, or copulation with her, though his wife. The words are an euphemism, or a modest way of expressing the conjugal act, and is a very ancient one, (see <010401>Genesis 4:1) and what has been used in nations and languages. And this conduct of his was necessary,

till she had brought forth her firstborn; that it might be manifest not only that she conceived, being a virgin, but also that she brought forth, being a

virgin: for both are signified in the prophecy before related, “a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son”; which is all one as if it had been said, a virgin shall conceive, and “a virgin” shall bring forth a son. The “firstborn” is that which first opens the womb of its mother, whether any follows after or not, (<02132>Exodus 13:12,13 <04032>Numbers 3:12). Christ is called Mary’s firstborn, because she had none before him, whether she had any after him or not; for her perpetual virginity seems to be no necessary article of faith: for when it is said,

Joseph knew her not till she had brought forth, the meaning is certain that he knew her not before. But whether he afterwards did or not, is not so manifest, nor is it a matter of any great importance; the word “until” may be so understood as referring to the time preceding, that the contrary cannot be affirmed of the time following, (<10623>2 Samuel 6:23 <40239>Matthew 23:39) and which may be the case here, and is indeed generally understood so; and it also may be considered as only expressive of the intermediate time, as in (<40526>Matthew 5:26 <44233>Acts 27:33) as Beza observes. Christ was “her firstborn” as he was man, and the firstborn of God, or his first and only begotten, as the Son of God. It is further observed, that she “called his name Jesus”, as was foretold to her, or ordered her by the Angel, (<40131>Luke 1:31) and to Joseph, (<40121>Matthew 1:21).

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 2

Ver. 1. *Now when Jesus was born*, etc.] Several things are here related respecting the birth of Christ, as the place where he was born,

in Bethlehem of Judea; so called to distinguish it from another Bethlehem in the tribe of Zabulon, (<06015>Joshua 19:15). Here Christ was to be born according to a prophecy hereafter mentioned, and accordingly the Jews expected he would be born here, (<40204>Matthew 2:4-6 <43041>John 7:41,42) and so Jesus was born here, (<42004>Luke 2:4-7) and this the Jews themselves acknowledge;

> "Such a year, says a noted [f59] chronologer of theirs, Jesus of Nazareth was born in Bethlehem Juda, which is a "parsa" and a half, i.e. six miles, from Jerusalem."

Benjamin [f60] Tudelensis says it is two parsas, i.e. eight miles, from it; and according to Justin Martyr [f61] it was thirty five furlongs distant from it. Yea even they own this, that Jesus was born there, in that vile and blasphemous book [f62] of theirs, written on purpose to defame him; nay, even the ancient Jews have owned that the Messiah is already born, and that he was born at Bethlehem; as appears from their Talmud [f63], where we meet with such a passage.

> "It happened to a certain Jew, that as he was ploughing, one of his oxen bellowed; a certain Arabian passed by and heard it, who said, O Jew, Jew, loose thy oxen, and loose thy ploughshare, for lo, the house of the sanctuary is destroyed: it bellowed a second time; he said unto him, O Jew, Jew, bind thy oxen, and bind thy ploughshare, for lo ajyçm aklm dyly "the king Messiah is born". He said to him, what is his name? Menachem (the comforter); he asked again, what is his father's name? Hezekiah; once more he says, from whence is he? He replies hdwhy µjltyb aklm tryb ^m "from the palace of the king of Bethlehem Judah"; he went and sold his oxen and his ploughshares, and became a

> seller of swaddling clothes for infants; and he went from city to city till he came to that city, (Bethlehem,) and all the women bought of him, but the mother of Menachem bought nothing."

Afterwards they tell you, he was snatched away by winds and tempests. This story is told in much the same manner in another [f64] of their writings. Bethlehem signifies "the house of bread", and in it was born, as an ancient writer [f65] observes, the bread which comes down from heaven: and it may also signify "the house of flesh", and to it the allusion may be in (1 Timothy 3:16) "God manifest in the flesh". The time of Christ's birth is here expressed,

in the days of Herod the king. This was Herod the great, the first of that name: the Jewish chronologer [f66] gives an account of him in the following manner.

> "Herod the first, called Herod the Ascalonite, was the son of Antipater, a friend of king Hyrcanus and his deputy; him the senate of Rome made king in the room of Hyrcanus his master. This Herod whilst he was a servant of king Hyrcanus (so in the [f67] Talmud Herod is said to be anwmçj tybd adb[a servant of the family of the Asmonaeans) king Hyrcanus saved from death, to which he was sentenced by the sanhedrim of Shammai; that they might not slay him for the murder of one Hezekiah, as is related by Josephus, l. 6. c. 44. and Herod took to him for wife Miriam, the daughter of Alexander the son of Aristobulus, who was the daughter's daughter of king Hyrcanus."

This writer tacitly owns afterwards [f68] that Jesus was born in the days of this king; for he says, that in the days of Hillell and Shammai (who lived in those times) there was one of their disciples, who was called R. Joshua ben Perachiah, and he was, adds he, yrxwnh wbr "the master of the Nazarene", or of Jesus of Nazareth. Herod reigned, as this same author observes, thirty seven years; and according to Dr. Lightfoot's calculation, Christ was born in the thirty fifth year of his reign, and in the thirty first of Augustus Caesar, and in the year of the world three thousand nine hundred and twenty eight, and the month Tisri, which answers to part of our September, about the feast of tabernacles; which indeed was typical of Christ's incarnation, and then it may reasonably be thought that "the word

was made flesh", and εσκηνωσεν "tabernacled among us", (<40114>John 1:14). Another circumstance relating to the birth of Christ is, that

when Jesus was born — behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem; these wise men in the Greek text are called μαγοι, "Magi", a word which is always used in a bad sense in the sacred writings; hence they are thought by some to be magicians, sorcerers, wizards, such as Simon Magus, (<40809>Acts 8:9) and Elymas, (<41308>Acts 13:8) and so the Jewish writers [f69] interpret the word çwgm a wizard, an enchanter, a blasphemer of God, and one that entices others to idolatry; and in the Hebrew Gospel of Munster these men are called μypçkm "wizards". Some have thought this to be their national name. Epiphanius [f70] supposes that these men were of the posterity of Abraham by Keturah, who inhabited a country in some part of Arabia, called Magodia: but could this be thought to be the name of their country, one might rather be induced to suppose that they were of the μαγοι, "Magi", a nation of the Medes mentioned by Herodotus [f71]; since both the name and country better agree with these persons; but the word seems to be rather a name of character and office, and to design the wise men, and priests of the Persians. An Eastern [f72] writer says the word is of Persic original, and is compounded of two words, "Mije Gush", which signifies "a man with short ears"; for such was the first founder of the sect, and from whom they were so called. But in the Arabic Persic Nomenclator [f73] it is rendered "a worshipper of fire", and such the Persian priests were; and to this agrees what Apuleius [f74] says, that "Magus", in the Persian language, is the same as "priest" with us: and Xenophon [f75] says, that the Magi were first appointed by Cyrus, to sing hymns to the gods, as soon as it was day, and to sacrifice to them. The account given of them by Porphyry [f76] is, that

> "among the Persians they that were wise concerning God, and worshipped him, were called μαγοι, "Magi", for so "Magus" signifies in their country dialect; and so august and venerable were this sort of men accounted with the Persians, that Darius, the son of Hystaspis, ordered this, among other things, to be inscribed on his monument, that he was the master of the Magi."

From whence we may learn in some measure who these men were, and why the word is by our translators rendered "wise men"; since the Magi, as Cicero [f77] says, were reckoned a sort of wise men, and doctors among the Persians: who further observes, that no man could be a king of the Persians

before he understood the discipline and knowledge of the Magi: and the wisdom of the Persian Magi, as Aelianus [f78] writes, among other things, lay in foretelling things to come. These came

from the east, not from Chaldea, as some have thought, led hereunto by the multitude of astrologers, magicians, and soothsayers, which were among that people; (see <270202>Daniel 2:2,10,27 4:7) for Chaldea was not east, but north of Judea, as appears from (<240114>Jeremiah 1:14,15; <240406>Jeremiah 4:6) (<240622>Jeremiah 6:22 <241022>Jeremiah 10:22 <242509>Jeremiah 25:9). Others have thought they came from Arabia, and particularly Sheba, induced hereunto by (<197210>Psalm 72:10,15). But though some part of Arabia lay east, yet Sheba was south of the land of Israel, as is evident from the queen of that place being called the “queen of the south”, (<401242>Matthew 12:42). The more generally received opinion seems to be most right, that they came from Persia, which as it lies east of Judea, so was famous for this sort of men, and besides the name, as has been seen, is of Persic original. The place whither they came was Jerusalem, the “metropolis” of Judea, where they might suppose the king of the Jews was born, or where, at least, they might persuade themselves they should hear of him; since here Herod the king lived, to whom it seems they applied themselves in the first place. The time of their coming was, “when Jesus was born”; not as soon as he was born, or on the “thirteenth” day after his birth, the sixth of January, as it stands in our Calendar; or within the forty days before Mary’s Purification; since this space of time does not seem to be sufficient for so long a journey, and which must require a considerable preparation for it; nor is it probable if they came so soon as this, that after such a stir at Jerusalem, after Herod’s diligent search and inquiry concerning this matter, and his wrath and anger at being disappointed and deluded by the wise men, that Joseph and Mary should so soon bring the child into the temple, where, it was declared to be the Messiah by Simeon and Anna. Besides, immediately after the departure of the wise men, Joseph with his wife and child were ordered into Egypt, which could not be done before Mary’s Purification. But rather this their coming was near upon two years after the birth of Christ; since it is afterwards observed, that “Herod sent and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men”, (<401616>Matthew 2:16). This was the opinion of Epiphanius [f79] formerly, and is embraced by Dr. Lightfoot [f80], to whom I refer the reader for further proof of this matter.

Ver. 2. *Saying, where is he that is born king of the Jews?* etc.] These words were spoken to the Jews, or rather to Herod the king, or his ministers and courtiers, or to each of them, as the wise men had the opportunity of speaking to them; who make no scruple of his being born, of this they were fully assured; nor did they in the least hesitate about his being king of the Jews, who was born; but only inquire where he was, in what city, town, village, house, or family. The reason of their asking this question is,

for we have seen his star in the east. By the star they saw, some understand an angel, which is not likely. The learned Lightfoot [f81] is of opinion that it was the light or glory of the Lord, which shone about the shepherds, when the angel brought them the news of Christ's birth, and which at so great a distance appeared as a star to these wise men; others, that it was a comet, such as has been thought to portend the birth or death of some illustrious person: but it seems to be properly a star, a new and an unusual one, such as had never been seen, nor observed before; and is called his star, the star of the king born, because it appeared on his account, and was the sign of his birth, who is "the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star", (<66216>Revelation 22:16). This they saw "in the east"; not in the eastern part of the heavens, but they saw it when they were in the east, that is, in their own country; and according to the best observations they were able to make, it was in that part of the heavens right over the land of Judea; from whence they concluded that the king of the Jews was born; but the question is how they should hereby know and be assured that such a person was born? To this it maybe replied, that there is a prophecy of Balaam's which is thus expressed, "there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel", (<041717>Numbers 24:17) which is owned by some Jewish writers [f82] to be a prophecy of the Messiah; though the star there mentioned is considered by them as one of the Messiah's titles; hence one who set up himself, and for a while was by some received as the Messiah, was called by them abkwk rb "the son of a star"; but when he was discovered to be an impostor, they called him abyzwk rb "the son of a lie": but I rather take it to be a sign of the Messiah's coming, and the meaning is, when a star shall Ærd "walk" or steer its course from Jacob, or above, or over the land of Israel, then a sceptre, or sceptre bearer, that is, a king, shall rise out of Israel. Now this prophecy of Balaam, who lived in the east, might be traditionally handed down to this time, and be well known by these men; and who, observing

such a star appear over the land of Judea, might conclude that now the sceptre bearer or king was born [f83]. Besides, Zerdusht or Zoroastres, the author of the sect of the Magi or wise men, and who appears to be a Jew by birth, and to be acquainted with the writings of the Old Testament, and with this prophecy, spoke of the birth of Christ to his followers; and told them when he should be born, a star would appear, and shine in the day, and ordered them to go where that directed, and offer gifts, and worship him. An Eastern writer, who affirms [f84] what I have now mentioned, relates [f85] the following speech as spoke by the wise men to Herod, when in conversation with him, about this matter:

> "A certain person, say they, of great note with us, in a book which he composed, warned us in it, mentioning these things; a child that shall descend from heaven, will be born in Palestine, whom the greatest part of the world shall serve, and the sign of his appearance shall be this; ye shall see a strange star, which shall direct you where he is; when ye shall see this, take gold, myrrh and frankincense, and go and offer them to him, and worship him, and then return, lest a great calamity befall you. Now the star has appeared unto us, and we are come to perform what was commanded us."

If this be true, we are not at a loss how they come by their knowledge, nor for a reason of their conduct. That the Jews have expected that a star should appear at the time of the Messiah's coming, is certain, from some passages in a book of theirs of great value and esteem among them, in which are the following things: in one place it is said [f86]

> "The king Messiah shall be revealed in the land of Galilee, and lo a star in the east shall swallow up seven stars in the north, and a flame of red fire shall be in the firmament six days;"

and in another place, [f87]

> "When the Messiah shall be revealed, there shall rise up in the east a certain Star, flaming with all sorts of colours — and all men shall see it:"

once more it is affirmed as a tradition [f88] that

> "The holy blessed God hath determined to build Jerusalem, and to make a certain (fixed) star appear sparkling with seven blazing tails

> shining from it in the midst of the firmament — and then shall the king Messiah be revealed in all the world."

Now this expectation of the appearing of such a star at the coming of the Messiah takes its rise from and is founded upon the above mentioned prophecy. It is said [f89] that Seth the son of Adam gave out a prophecy, that a star should appear at the birth of the Messiah; and that a star did appear at the birth of Christ is certain from the testimony of the Evangelist, and seems to have some confirmation from the writings of the Heathens themselves. Some have thought that the star which Virgil speaks of, and calls [f90] "Caesaris Astrum", "Caesar's star", is this very star, which he in complaisance to that monarch ascribes to him. Pliny [f91] makes mention

> "of a bright comet with a silver beard, which was so refulgent that it could scarce be looked upon, showing in itself the effigies of God in human form."

If the testimony of Chalcidius, a Platonic philosopher, taken notice of by many learned men, is genuine, and he not a Christian, [f92] it is much to the purpose, and is as follows:

> "There is also a more venerable and sacred history, which speaks of the rising of a certain unusual star; not foretelling diseases and deaths, but the descent of a venerable God, born for the sake of human conversation, and the affairs of mortals; which star truly, when the wise men of the Chaldeans saw in their journey by night, and being very expert in the consideration of celestial things, are said to inquire after the birth of the new Deity, and having found the infant majesty, to worship him, and pay their vows worthy of such a God."

The end proposed by them in taking such a journey is expressed,

and are come to worship him; that is, either to pay adoration to him as God, of which they might be convinced by the extraordinary appearance of the star, or be assured of by divine revelation or rather to give him civil homage and respect, as an illustrious person, as being king of the Jews.

Ver. 3. *When Herod the king had heard these things*, etc.] That is, the report made by the wise men of the appearance of an unusual star, and of the birth of the king of the Jews, which they affirmed with all certainty, without any hesitation,

he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Herod was troubled, his mind was disturbed and made uneasy, fearing he should be deposed, and lose his kingdom, to which he knew he had no just right and claim, being a foreigner; and “all Jerusalem”, i.e. all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who heard of this, were also troubled, and showed a concern at it with him; either feignedly, as knowing his jealousy, suspicion and cruelty; or in reality, because of tumults, commotions and wars, they might fear would arise upon this, having lost the true notion of the Messiah, as a spiritual king, saviour and redeemer. And hereby was fulfilled, in part, the famous prophecy in (<01490>Genesis 49:10) according to the sense of one [f93] of the Targumists on it, who paraphrases it after this manner;

> “Kings and governors shall not cease from the house of Judah, nor scribes, who teach the law, from his seed, until the time that the king Messiah, the least of his sons, comes, “and because of him”, aymm[^wsmyty, “the people shall melt.””

that is, they shall be distressed and troubled, their hearts shall melt like wax within them; which was their present case, though perhaps the paraphrast may design the Gentiles.

Ver. 4. *And when he had gathered all the chief priests*, etc.] Here we have an account of Herod’s conduct at this juncture; he calls a council, assembles the sanhedrim, gathers together the more learned persons in the city to consult with them upon this matter,

the chief priests, all of which he gathered together, and which seem to be many; and were not only the then present high priest and his substitutes, but all the principal persons of the priesthood, who were chosen from the rest, into the great sanhedrim, or council: and by

the scribes of the people are meant a sort of letter learned men, whose business it was to keep and write out copies of the law, and other things, for “the people”; they were the fathers of the traditions, and interpreters of the law to them; and therefore are called “the scribes of the people”: as well also, because they were chosen from among the people, from any other tribe, and not from the tribe of Levi, from whom the priests were; so that one seems to design the “clergy”, and the other the laity, in this assembly. The Septuagint render µyrjwç “the officers of the people”, by this same word the scribes, and scribes of the people, in (<04116>Numbers 11:16 <05205>Deuteronomy 20:5,8,9) (<06010>Joshua 1:10 3:2; <06033>Joshua 8:33;

(Joshua 23:2, Joshua 24:1). The learned Dr. Lightfoot [f94] conjectures, that the persons of note, who were present at this time, were Hillell the president of the council, Shammai the vice president, the sons of Betira, Judah and Joshua, Bava ben Buta, Jonathan ben Uzziel, the Chaldee paraphrast, and Simeon the son of Hillell.

He demanded of them, or asked them with authority, as the chief captain did, (Acts 21:33) "where Christ", ο χριστος, the Christ, the Messiah

should be born? that is, where was the place of his birth as fixed in their prophecies, where, accordingly, they believed and expected he would be born. Herod's pretence, no doubt, in putting this question was, that he might be able to satisfy the wise men of the East about this matter; though the true reason within himself was, that he might know where this new born king was, in order to destroy him.

Ver. 5. *And they said unto him*, etc.] They answer without any hesitation, it being a generally received notion, and a thing well known among them,

in Bethlehem of Judea; and give their reason for it; for

thus it is written by the prophet, that is, the prophet Micah, in whose prophecy, (Micah 5:2) it stands, and is as follows:

Ver. 6. *And thou Bethlehem in the land of Juda*, etc.] This prophecy, which the chief priests and scribes produced, as pointing at the place of Christ's birth, is owned by both ancient and later Jews [f95] to be a prophecy of the Messiah. The difference between Micah and Matthew is easily reconciled. Bethlehem is called by Micah, Bethlehem Ephratah, and by Matthew, Bethlehem in the land of Judah, and both were one and the same place. Bethlehem Ephratah was in the land of Juda, as appears from the prophecy of Micah itself, from (Ruth 1:2) and the Septuagint version of (Joshua 15:60) and is described in this manner by Matthew, partly to distinguish it from another Bethlehem in the land of Zebulun, (Joshua 19:15) and partly because its other name Ephratah was now disused, and so unknown to Herod, who was unacquainted with the books and prophecies of the Old Testament. Micah says this place was

little among the thousands of Judah. Matthew says, "not the least". But in this is no apparent contradiction, it might be "little" and yet "not the least"; besides, it might be "little" and "not little", or "not the least" in different respects, and at different times; it might be little, mean, and contemptible as

to worldly splendour, riches, number of inhabitants, pompous buildings, etc. and yet not be little or mean, when considered as the place of the birth of many great persons, such as Booz, Jesse, David, etc. and especially Christ. It might be little in Micah's time, and yet not in Matthew's; especially since it had received a considerable additional honour by Christ's being born there. Moreover, the words in Micah may be rendered, by way of interrogation, "art thou little, or the least?" To which the answer in Matthew is, "no, thou art not the least", etc. or else the word rbd may be understood, and the text be translated thus; "it is a small thing that thou art among the thousands of Judah, for out of thee", etc. a great honour shall be conferred on thee, the Messiah shall spring from thee. Again, what Micah calls "thousands", are in Matthew called "princes"; the reason of this is, because the tribes of Israel were divided into thousands, and every thousand had its prince; so that though here is a difference in words, yet none in sense. What Micah styles "a ruler in Israel", Matthew expresses by "a governor that shall rule or feed my people Israel"; but in this there is no contradiction. Add to all this, that it should be observed, that the Evangelist is not giving a version of his own, but of the chief priests and scribes; and therefore was it ever so faulty, they, and not he, must be chargeable with it; for he has acted the part of a faithful historian in giving it in the words in which they cited it [f96].

Ver. 7. *Then Herod, when he had privately called the wise men*, etc.] As soon as he had got the intelligence of the place of the Messiah's birth, he called, or ordered the wise men to be brought into his presence, and that in a very private manner; lest the Jews, who knew his hypocrisy and deceit, should perceive his views, and enter into his designs, and so give the wise men some instructions, which would be prejudicial to the scheme he was forming in his own mind to destroy the young king; and having called them to him, he

inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. He took a good deal of pains in examining them, he sifted them, and inquired of them with much accuracy, and exactness, the precise time of the star's appearing to them, how long ago it was when it was first observed by them; that hereby he might exactly know the age of Christ, and the better execute the bloody design he had formed, should the wise men disappoint him; and the better detect an impostor, should another afterwards arise, and set up himself for the king of the Jews.

Ver. 8. *And he sent them to Bethlehem*, etc.] Having got out of them all that he could, and was for his purpose, he informs them of the place where they might find the person they came to inquire after, according to the account of it which the chief priests and scribes had given him; and then sends them away to Bethlehem, where Christ, according to prophecy, was to be born, and now was born. It may seem strange that neither any of the Jews, nor Herod, or any of his ministers and courtiers, should go along with these men to Bethlehem; since it was but a little way off, not above five or six miles from Jerusalem; and since the birth of such a person was no trivial thing, but an affair of great concern and importance. The Jews might not care to go, lest Herod should suspect that they were going to revolt from him, and set up this new born king against him; and it might be a piece of policy in Herod and his courtiers not to accompany them, for they might imagine that the parents of the child would be jealous and afraid of them, and would therefore conceal it, when they would be in no fear of strangers: and no doubt but the wise providence of God overruled and directed this matter, that so the young child Jesus might be preserved from the bloody designs of this tyrant; who often takes the wise in their own craftiness, and carries the counsel of the froward headlong. When he dismissed them he gave them this charge and these orders,

go and search diligently for the young child; go to Bethlehem, the place of his birth I have told you of, and there inquire and search in every house and family, omit none till you have found him;

and when you have found him bring me word again; give me a particular account of him, who are his parents, and where he dwells,

that I may come and worship him also: for they had declared, that the reason of their coming was to worship him; this he said hypocritically, in order to hide and cover his bloody intentions.

Ver. 9. *When they had heard the king*, etc.] With great care and attention, what he had told them of the birth place of the young child; the strict charge he had given them to search diligently for him, and then return to him with an account of the whole affair; and his expressions of respect to the new born prince, which they took to be said in great sincerity,

they departed; took their leave of Herod and his court, and set forward on their journey from Jerusalem to Bethlehem:

and lo, to their great surprise and joy,

the star, which they saw in the east, then appeared; for, it seems, it had for some time disappeared: it looks as if it had been only seen at the time of Christ's birth, and when they were in their own country; for both here, and in (Matthew 2:2) they are only said to have seen it "in the east", that is, when they were in the east country; so that it seems from that time they had had no sight of it, not while they were on their journey, nor at Jerusalem; nor was it necessary they should. When they saw it in their own country, according to their best observation, it was over the land of Judea, and they were persuaded of it, that it was a certain sign that the king of the Jews was born: they therefore determine upon and prepare for a journey to Jerusalem, the metropolis of the nation, and where the king kept his court, to inquire for him; nor needed they the guidance of the star to direct them to a place so well known; but being in quest of him in an obscure place, and without any guide, this star appears to them; and, which is something very extraordinary,

went before them, till it came, and stood over, where the young child was. This star had a motion, kept pace with them, and was a guide unto them, till it and they came to the place where Christ was; and then it stood directly over the house, so that they had no need to inquire of any person for him. It is certain from hence, that this star was indeed a very unusual one; its being seen in the daytime, its motion and standing still, its situation, which must be very low, and its use to point out the very house where Christ was, show it to be so; but though it was an unusual appearance, it should not be thought incredible. [f97] Varro relates, that

> "from the time Aeneas went from Troy, he saw the star Venus in the daytime, day after day, till he came to the field of Laurentum, where he saw it no more, by which he knew that those lands were fatal."

The appearing of this star, and then its disappearing for a time, agree, in some measure, with the account the Jews give of the star which they expect will be seen at the coming of the Messiah; for they [f98] say,

> "after seven days that star shall be hid, and the Messiah shall be hid for twelve months — when he shall descend, the pillar of fire shall be seen as before, in sight, and afterwards the Messiah shall be revealed, and many people shall be gathered to him."

Ver. 10. *When they saw the star*, etc.] Which by its appearance, size, brightness, etc. they knew to be the same with that which they had seen, when in their own country;

they rejoiced with exceeding great joy; a "pleonasm" or a redundancy of expression frequently used by the Hebrews, (see <4006>John 4:6) and the Septuagint there; setting forth the rapture, the excess of joy they were in upon the sight of the star. Very probably before this, their hearts were sad, their countenances dejected, and they greatly discouraged, having taken so great a journey, and as yet to so little purpose. They had been at Jerusalem, where they expected to have found him that was born king of the Jews; they had been at court, and conversed with men of the greatest figure and intelligence, and could get no tidings of him; people of all ranks and degrees seemed to be troubled at the account they brought; no body cared to go along with them to Bethlehem: all these circumstances no doubt were discouraging to them; but as soon as they saw the star their spirits revived, joy filled their hearts, cheerfulness appeared in their countenances; and they pursued their journey with inexpressible delight, till they came to the place where the illustrious person was they were seeking after.

Ver. 11. *And when they were come into the house*, etc.] Which they entered without making any inquiry, being fully assured by the star's standing right over it, that this was the house, and here was the king of the Jews, whom they were come to worship; and having entered in "they saw" some copies read ευρον,

they found the young child, with Mary his mother; in her lap, or arms, or in the house with her, for by this time he might go alone. Joseph perhaps was not at home, but about his business; and which might be so ordered by the providence of God, that so these men might only see the mother of Christ, who had no real father as man; who had they seen Joseph, might have took him to be his proper father. Upon the sight of the young child,

they fell down on their knees or faces to the ground, agreeably to the custom of their country,

and worshipped him as a king; giving him the same civil honour and respect, as they were wont to do to their own kings and princes; which custom began with Cyrus: for so Xenophon [f99] says, that

> "when the people saw him, παντες προσεκυνησαν, they all worshipped him; either because some were ordered to begin this

custom; or else being amazed at the apparatus; or because he seemed to appear so great and beautiful; for before that time none of the Persians worshipped Cyrus."

And when they had opened their treasures, that is, their purses, bags or boxes, in which they put those things they brought with them necessary for their journey;

they presented, or offered to him *gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh*: such things as they had; it being usual, not only with the Persians, but other eastern nations, to make presents to kings and great persons, when they made any addresses to them; which generally, among other things, consisted of gold, spices, myrrh, and the like, (see <01431>Genesis 43:11 <11002>1 Kings 10:2 <19720>Psalm 72:10-15). Which last passage referred to, being a prophecy of the Messiah, has been thought by some now to have had its accomplishment, together with (<23606>Isaiah 60:6) where frankincense as well as gold is mentioned, "they shall bring gold and incense" or frankincense; upon which a noted Jewish writer [f100] observes, that gold and frankincense shall be brought privately as a present to the king Messiah. According to the Ethiopians, these wise men were three, whose names they give us; the name of him that offered the gold, was Annoson; he that offered the frankincense, was Allytar; and he that offered the myrrh, Kyssad [f101]. The Papists call them the three kings of Colen, and say they lie buried in that place.

Ver. 12. *Being warned of God in a dream*, etc.] It is likely they made a short stay at Bethlehem, might lodge there a night; at least laid themselves down a while to take some refreshment in sleep, after they had paid their respects to him that was born king of the Jews, and performed the whole business they came about; when in a dream they received a divine oracle, were admonished and counselled by God,

that they should not return to Herod: which would have been going back again, and out of their way; there being a nearer one from Bethlehem to their own country, than to go by Jerusalem, though Herod had charged them to return to him. Whether they had promised him they would, is not certain; it is probable they might; however, they thought it most advisable to hearken to the divine oracle; wherefore,

they departed into their own country another way. What became of these persons afterwards, and whether they were spiritually and savingly

enlightened into the knowledge of Christ; what a report they made of him when they came into their own country, and the success thereof, we have no account of, either in sacred or profane history.

Ver. 13. *And when they were departed*, etc.] That is immediately, or as soon as they were gone, or in a very little time after, probably the same night,

behold, the Angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream; it is very likely the same angel who appeared to him in such sort, (<40120>Matthew 1:20) "saying arise", awake out of sleep, and rise from thy bed directly,

and take the young child and his mother. The angel does not say take thy wife and son; for though Mary was properly his wife, yet Christ was not properly his son. The child is also mentioned before the mother, not only because of his divine nature and office, in respect to which he was her God and Saviour; but because it was the preservation of the child that was chiefly regarded, and for which the providence of God was particularly concerned; wherefore Joseph is ordered to take them in proper carriages, and

flee into Egypt, which was near to Judea, and so a fit place to flee to; for a long and tedious journey would not have been suitable to the mother and her young child. Moreover, Egypt was out of Herod's jurisdiction; here he could not come at them, or have any power over them; besides, hereby a prophecy after mentioned was to have its accomplishment. Hence it appears to be lawful to flee from danger, from tyrants and persecutors, when the providence of God opens a way for escape. The angel goes on with his charge,

and be thou there until I bring thee word: continue there, do not remove elsewhere, or return back, till I speak with thee, or order and command thee otherwise; and gives the reason for his appearing to him in such a manner, and giving such a charge;

for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him: no less a person than Herod the king, a bloody minded man, revengeful, desperate, and resolute in whatsoever he undertakes, "will seek", diligently search and inquire for, not his parents, Joseph and Mary, who might have been safe, but "the young child", who was born king of the Jews, and which gave him a great deal of uneasiness; and that not to worship him, as he told the wise men, but

to destroy him, to take away his life; to prevent which the angel was sent with this charge to Joseph: for though he was born to die for the sins of his people, his time was not yet come; he was to grow up to years of maturity, he was to be a preacher of the Gospel, to do many miracles and at last to lay down his life of himself, voluntarily, and not to be taken away from him without his knowledge and will.

Ver. 14. *When he arose, he took the young child and his mother*, etc.] That is, as soon as he awoke out of sleep, and rose from his bed, he did as he was commanded, he prepared for his journey; and very opportunely had the wise men presented their gifts; the gold they brought served to defray the expense of this journey, and which no doubt was so ordered by divine providence for this purpose. Joseph was very punctual and expeditious in obeying the command of God; he took the young child and his mother,

by night, the very selfsame night in which he had this notice; and which season was the most fitting to depart in for secrecy, and most commodious and agreeable to travel in, in those hot countries: hence it appears very manifest, that the coming of the wise men, and the departure of Joseph with Mary and Jesus into Egypt, could not be within a fortnight after the birth of Christ, nor any time before Mary's Purification; since such a journey must have been very improper and unsuitable, at any time within that period; but rather Jesus must be about two years of age, whether something under, or over, it matters not, when Joseph with him

departed into Egypt: what part of Egypt he went into is not certain. The Jews say that Jesus went to Alexandria in Egypt, and which is probable enough; since this was a place greatly resorted to at this time by Jews, and where provision was made for their sustenance; though they greatly mistake the person with whom he went; for they say [f102] that R. Joshua ben Perachiah, whom they pretend was his master, went to Alexandria in Egypt, and Jesus with him. However, this is an acknowledgment of the truth of this part of Christ's history, that he was in Egypt; as also when they blasphemously and maliciously say [f103], did not Ben Stada, by whom they mean Jesus, bring enchantments or magic, µyrxmm µypçk, "out of Egypt", in a cutting in the flesh? To which wicked accusation Arnobius seems to refer [f104], when he says,

> "perhaps we may meet with many other of these reproachful and childish sayings; as that he was a magician, that he performed all

these things by secret arts, and that he stole strange sciences, and the names of mighty angels, out of the temples of the Egyptians."

Ver. 15. *And was there until the death of Herod*, etc.] Which was in a very short time; for Eusebius [f105] says, that immediately, in a very little time after the slaughter of the children at Bethlehem, the divine vengeance inflicted diseases on him, which quickly brought him to his end; so that, according to the learned Dr. Lightfoot [f106], Jesus was not above three or four months in Egypt. Now all this was brought about,

that it might be fulfilled; not by way of accommodation of phrases to a like event; or by way of type, which has a fresh completion in the antitype; or as a proverbial sentence which might be adapted to any remarkable deliverance out of hardship, misery and destruction; but literally, properly, and in the obvious sense thereof;

which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, not Balaam, in (Numbers 23:22) or (Numbers 24:8) but in (Hosea 11:1) "when Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt": the meaning of which passage is, either in connection with the last clause of the foregoing chapter thus; "in a morning shall the king of Israel be cut off", r[nyk, "because Israel is a child", a rebellious and disobedient one, acting a very weak and wicked part; "yet I have loved him, or do love him", and "have called", or "will call", (the past tense for the future, frequent in the Hebrew language, especially in the prophetic writings,) "my son out of Egypt"; who will be obliged to retire there for some time; I will make him king, set him upon the throne, who shall execute justice, and reign for ever and ever; or thus, "because Israel is a child", helpless and imprudent, and "I love him", though he is so, "therefore l will call", or I have determined to call

my son out of Egypt: who through a tyrant's rage and malice will be obliged to abide there a while; yet I will bring him from thence into the land of Judea, where he shall live and "help" my "servant", παιδος [f107], "child Israel"; shall instruct him in his duty, teach him the doctrines of the Gospel, and at last, by his sufferings and death, procure for him the pardon of all his transgressions; of which there is a particular enumeration in (Matthew 2:3,4,5,6,7). This is the natural and unconstrained sense of these words, which justifies the Evangelist in his citation and application of them to Christ's going to Egypt, and his return from thence, as I have elsewhere [f108] shown.

Ver. 16. *Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked*, etc.] Herod, having waited a proper time for the return of the wise men, and they not coming, concluded he was tricked by them; though, no doubt, when they promised to return, and bring him word how things were, they seriously meant and designed a performance; but having met with a divine oracle, which ordered them another way, they thought it most advisable to obey God rather than man. Upon this,

Herod was exceeding wroth; partly at the usage he met with from the wise men, who according to his apprehension had put a trick upon him; and chiefly because his scheme was broke, which was by them to come at the knowledge and sight of the young child, and privately dispatch him: and now he might fear, which increased his wrath, that the child would escape his hands, and in time be set up for king, to the prejudice of him and his family; wherefore, to prevent this, if possible, he

sent forth his officers and soldiers, of his own will, without any show of law or justice, acting herein as an absolute and tyrannical prince,

and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under. A most cruel and barbarous action, and agrees with the character given of him, that he was in the beginning of his reign, and it seems too in the latter end of it, hmrmw µymd çya, "a bloody and deceitful man" [f109]: he slew, or ordered to be slain, "children", infants who had done him no injury, nor were capable of doing any, and whose parents also had not disobliged him; he slew the infants at Bethlehem, because this was the place of the Messiah's birth, the knowledge of which he had got from the chief priests and scribes; he slew all of them, that there might be no possibility of the young child's escaping: and lest it should by any means escape to a neighbouring town or village, he slew all the children

in all the coasts thereof, in all the territories of Bethlehem, in all the towns and villages around it, as many as were

from two years old and under: for of such an age he supposed the newborn king to be; he knew he must be near that age, but could not exceed it,

according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men; of the appearing of the star to them, and when they concluded this great and famous prince was born. This cruel murder of the infants seems to be

hinted at by Josephus [f110], where he says, that “many slaughters followed the prediction of a new king”; and is more manifestly referred to by Macrobins, a Heathen author, though the story is mixed and confounded with other things; who reports [f111], that

> “when Augustus heard, that among the children under two years of age, whom Herod king of the Jews ordered to be slain in Syria, that his son was also killed, said, it was better to be Herod’s hog than his son.”

Killing of infants as soon as born, or while in their cradles, is by the Jews ascribed to one Lilith, which, R. Elias [f112] says, is the name of a devil, which kills children; and indeed such an action is truly a diabolical one.

Ver. 17, 18. *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken*, etc.] By the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem was literally accomplished what had been predicted by

Jeremy the prophet, in (<2815>Jeremiah 31:15).

in Rama was there a voice heard, etc. That this prophecy belongs not to the Babylonish captivity, but the times of the Messiah, appears from the whole context; which manifestly speaks of the miraculous conception of Christ, of the blessings of his kingdom to be enjoyed by his people, and of the new covenant to be made with them, as I have shown in another place [f113]. Rama was not in Arabia, as Justin Martyr says [f114], but a town in the tribe of Benjamin, (<0625>Joshua 18:25) and very near to Bethlehem in the tribe of Juda: between these two places, and near to both of them, was the grave of Rachel, (<0519>Genesis 35:19) for which reason, and also because Rama belonged to Benjamin, a son of hers, and where, no doubt, many children were destroyed in this massacre, as well as at Bethlehem, Rachel is introduced in the prophecy representing the sorrowful mothers of those parts,

weeping for their children; whose distress and grief are signified by several words, “lamentation, weeping and great mourning”, to express the excessiveness thereof, for they

would not be comforted; they refused to hear anything that might be suggested to them for their relief, because their children

were not, i.e. were dead, were not in the land of the living, and no more to be enjoyed by them in this world. I cannot forbear transcribing a remark made by a noted Jew [f115] upon that passage in (<01350>Genesis 35:20). “And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave”; to show, says he, that Jacob saw that this thing was of the Lord, and that it would be an help to her children, as it is written, “a voice was heard in Rama”, etc. wherefore he set a pillar upon her; and to show that the affair of her grave, that this dyt[l htyh “belonged to the time to come”, he says, “that is the pillar of Rachel’s grave unto this day”: he means, hlwagh µwy, “the day of redemption”. And Rachel, in the passage of Jeremy, the Jews [f116] themselves own, means the congregation of Israel.

(See Gill on “<40217>Matthew 2:17”)

Ver. 19. *But when Herod was dead*, etc.] Who died, as before observed, a few months after this tragedy was acted; and, according to the [f117] Jewish writers, on the seventh day of the month Cisleu, and which answers to the twenty fifth of our November: and was afterwards observed as a day of rejoicing by the Jews. The account which Josephus [f118], and from him Eusebius [f119], gives of his miserable death, is as follows; a burning fever seized him, with an intolerable itching all over his body, and continual pains of the colic; his feet swelled with a dropsy; he had an inflammation in the lower part of his belly: a putrefaction in his privy parts, which bred worms; a frequency and difficulty of breathing, and convulsions in all his members; he had a voracious appetite, a stinking breath, and his intestines abounded with ulcers; when he found that all means made use of were ineffectual, and that he must die, he attempted to lay violent hands upon himself, but was prevented, and soon after expired in a very miserable manner. Now some time after his death,

behold an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. It may be the same angel who appeared in the same manner, and ordered him to go into Egypt, with the young child and his mother; and who now brings him news of the death of Herod, and bids him return to the land of Israel; which shows the watchful providence of God, and the useful ministry of angels, concerned in the preservation of the infant Jesus.

Ver. 20. *Saying, arise, and take the young child and his mother*, etc.] Joseph strictly observed and obeyed the divine command of the angel, who had ordered him to continue in Egypt, till he brought him word what he

should do, and where he should go: here he was with Mary and Jesus, when the angel bid him arise, and take them with him,

and go into the land of Israel. He does not bid him go to Bethlehem or Nazareth, or any particular place, but the land of Israel, where he might go even into any part of it, without fear; and gives this reason for it,

for they are dead which sought the young child's life; meaning either Herod only, the plural number being put for the singular; or including Antipater his son with him, who might be equally concerned in seeking the life of Christ; since he was next heir, and whom Herod [f120] ordered to be slain about five days before his death; or else designing with him many of the executioners of the infants at Bethlehem, and thereabout; who might have been, as well as he, miserable instances of divine vengeance, for their concern in that barbarous tragedy.

Ver. 21. *And he arose and took the young child and his mother*, etc.] He exactly conformed in every circumstance to the orders given him, with respect to the persons he took, the place he went to, and the expeditiousness of doing it; and is an example of ready and cheerful obedience to the commands of God, worthy of imitation. We may learn from hence, as well as from some other instances already met with, a reason among others, why, though Mary was a virgin, and even if she was to continue so, yet she must be espoused to Joseph as her husband; that she might have one to take care of her and her young child, and be a means, under God, of preserving, protecting, and providing for them.

Ver. 22. *But when he heard that Archelaus*, etc.] This Archelaus was a son of Herod the great by Malthace Samaritan, and was appointed by him for his successor a little before his death, and was upon it declared king by the populace, the soldiers, and those that were in power; all which is affirmed by Josephus [f121], and confirms the account given by the Evangelist; with whose account agrees what the Jewish chronologer says [f122], that

> "Archelaus, the second king of the family of Herod, reigned after his father's death: and a little after he says, Caesar Augustus caused Archelaus to reign swdrwh wyba tjt "in the room of Herod his father"";

which is the very phrase used by Matthew. Now this man was like his father, a very cruel wicked man; and, as the above chronologer says [f123], he

ordered his troops, and slew at the feast of the passover, in the temple of the Lord, “nine thousand persons”: though perhaps Josephus’s account is truest, who says [f124], that he sent in his whole army upon the people, who had raised a sedition, and slew, whilst they were sacrificing, about “three thousand”; and this happened at the beginning of his reign, and indeed before he had scarce mounted the throne. And now the news of this might have reached the ears of Joseph, and be the reason why he

was afraid to go thither, into Judea, where Archelaus reigned.

Notwithstanding being warned of God in a dream, who never failed to advise him when in difficulty and distress, he did not go back again to Egypt, but

turned aside into the parts of Galilee; where Herod Antipas, another of Herod’s sons, was tetrarch or governor; who was a milder person, and not so cruel and tyrannical as Archelaus: besides, Galilee was an obscure place, where, Joseph might reasonably think, he should live with Mary and Jesus unobserved, and free from danger.

Ver. 23. *And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth*, etc.] Which was a city of Galilee, and where Joseph and Mary had both dwelt before, (<4012>Luke 1:26 2:4) here they came and fixed their habitation,

that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet. This affair of going into Galilee, and settling at Nazareth, was brought about with this view, to accomplish what had been foretold by the prophets, or prophet, the plural number being used for the singular, as in (<4065>John 6:45 <4034>Acts 13:40). And indeed it is so rendered here in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; and designs the prophet Isaiah, and respects that prophecy of his in (<2301>Isaiah 11:1) “and there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and רxנ, “a branch shall grow out of his roots”; a prophecy owned by the Jews [f125] themselves to belong to the Messiah, and which was now fulfilled in Jesus; who as he was descended from Jesse’s family, so by dwelling at Nazareth, he would appear to be, and would be “called a Nazarene, or Netzer, the branch”; being an inhabitant of Natzareth, or Netzer, so called from the multitude of plants and trees that grew there.

A Nazarene, as David de Pomis says [f126],

> “is one that is born in the city Netzer, which is said to be in the land of Galilee, three days journey distant from Jerusalem.”

Now though Christ was not born, yet because he dwelt at Nazareth, and was educated there; hence the Jews frequently call him yrxwnh [wçy, “Jesus, the Nazarene[f127]”; and sometimes only yrxwnh, “the Nazarene”[f128]. They also design him by rxn ^b, “Ben Netzer”[f129], of whom they say a great many evil things: and that Christ is often called Jesus of Nazareth, or the Nazarene, and his followers Nazarenes, from the place of his habitation, is known to everyone. One of Christ’s disciples is called Netzer in the Talmud[f130], and made to plead for his life, because his name signified a branch, according to (<23101>Isaiah 11:1). Surenhusius observes[f131], that the form rmanç hm µwyql “to fulfil what is said”, used by the Talmudists, and which he takes to be the same with this here, is used by them, when they allege not the very words of Moses, or the prophets, but their sense, which is deduced as a certain axiom from them; and thinks it is applicable to the present case.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 3

Ver. 1. *In those days came John the Baptist*, etc.] The Evangelist having given an account of the genealogy and birth of Christ; of the coming of the wise men from the east to him; of his preservation from Herod's bloody design against him, when all the infants at Bethlehem were slain; of the flight of Joseph with Mary and Jesus into Egypt, and of their return from thence, and settlement in Nazareth, where Christ continued till near the time of his baptism, and entrance on his public ministry; proceeds to give a brief relation of John, the harbinger and forerunner of Christ, and the administrator of baptism to him: and he describes him by his name John, in Hebrew ˆnjwy, "Jochanan", which signifies "gracious", or "the grace of the Lord", or "the Lord has given grace"; which agrees with him, both as a good man, on whom the Lord had bestowed much grace, and as a preacher, whose business it was to publish the grace of God in Christ, (<42>16<16>Luke 16:16). This name was given him by an angel before his conception, and by his parents at his birth, contrary to the mind of their relations and neighbours, (<42>1<13>Luke 1:13-60,63). He is called by some of the Jewish writers [f132], John the "high priest"; his father Zacharias was a priest of the course of Abia, and he might succeed him therein, and be the head of that course, and for that reason be called a "high" or "chief priest"; as we find such were called, who were the principal among the priests, as were those who were chosen into the sanhedrim, or were the heads of these courses; and therefore we read of many chief priests, (<40>2<4>Matthew 2:4). From his being the first administrator of the ordinance of baptism, he is called John the Baptist; and this was a well known title and character of him. Josephus [f133] calls him "John", who is surnamed ο βαπτιστης, "the Baptist"; and Ben Gorion having spoken of him, says [f134], this is that John who hlybj hçf, "made", instituted, or practised "baptism"; and which, by the way, shows that this was not in use among the Jews before, but that John was the first practiser this way. He is described by his work and office as a preacher, he "came" or "was preaching" the doctrines of repentance and baptism; he published and declared that the kingdom of the Messiah

was at hand, that he would quickly be revealed; and exhorted the people to believe on him, which should come after him. The place where he preached is mentioned,

in the wilderness of Judea; not that he preached to trees and to the wild beasts of the desert; for the wilderness of Judea was an habitable place, and had in it many cities, towns, and villages, in which we must suppose John came preaching, at least to persons which came out from thence. There were in Joshua's time six cities in this wilderness, namely Betharabah, Middin, and Secacah, and Nibshan, and the city of Salt, and Engedi, (<0661>Joshua 15:61,62). Mention is made in the Talmud [F135] of this wilderness of Judea, as distinct from the land of Israel, when the doctors say, that

> "they do not bring up small cattle in the land of Israel, but they bring them up hdwhybç rbdmb, "in the wilderness which is in Judea"."

The Jews have an observation [F136] of many things coming from the wilderness;

> "the law, they say, came from the wilderness; the tabernacle from the wilderness; the sanhedrim from the wilderness; the priesthood from the wilderness; the office of the Levites from the wilderness; the kingdom from the wilderness; and all the good gifts which God gave to Israel were from the wilderness."

So John came preaching here, and Christ was tempted here. The time of his appearance and preaching was in those days: not when Christ was newly born; or when the wise men paid their adoration to him; or when Herod slew the infants; or when he was just dead, and Archelaus reigned in his room; or when Christ first went to Nazareth; though it was whilst he dwelt there as a private person; but when John was about thirty years of age, and Christ was near unto it, (<4223>Luke 3:23) an age in which ecclesiastical persons entered into service, (<0403>Numbers 4:3). It was indeed, as Luke says, (<4201>Luke 3:1) in the "fifteenth" year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar; Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea; and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee; and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea; and of the region of Trachonitis; and Lysanias, the tetrarch of Abilene; Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests.

Ver. 2. *And saying, repent ye*, etc.] The doctrine which John preached was the doctrine of repentance; which may be understood either of amendment of life and manners; for the state of the Jews was then very corrupt, all sorts of men were grown very wicked; and though there was a generation among them, who were righteous in their own eyes, and needed no repentance; yet John calls upon them all, without any distinction, to repent; and hereby tacitly strikes at the doctrine of justification by works, which they had embraced, to which the doctrine of repentance is directly opposite: or rather, this is meant, as the word here used signifies, of a change of mind, and principles. The Jews had imbibed many bad notions. The Pharisees held the traditions of the elders, and the doctrine of justification by the works of the law; and the Sadducees denied the resurrection of the dead; and it was a prevailing opinion among them all, and seems to be what is particularly struck at by John, that the Messiah would be a temporal king, and set up an earthly kingdom in this world. Wherefore he exhorts them to change their minds, to relinquish this notion; assuring them, that though he would be a king, and would have a kingdom, which was near at hand, yet it would be a heavenly, and not an earthly one. Hence the manner in which John enforces his doctrine, or the reason and argument he uses to prevail upon them to regard it, is by saying,

for the kingdom of heaven is at hand: by which is meant not the kingdom of glory to be expected in another world; or the kingdom of grace, that is internal grace, which only believers are partakers of in this; but the kingdom of the Messiah, which was “at hand”, just ready to appear, when he would be made manifest in Israel and enter upon his work and office: it is the Gospel dispensation which was about to take place, and is so called; because of the wise and orderly management of it under Christ, the king and head of his church by the ministration of the word, and administration of ordinances; whereby, as means, spiritual and internal grace would be communicated to many, in whose hearts it would reign and make them meet for the kingdom of glory; and because the whole economy of the Gospel, the doctrines and ordinances of it are from heaven. This phrase, “the kingdom of heaven” is often to be met with in Jewish writings; and sometimes it stands opposed to the “kingdom of the earth” [F137]; by it is often meant the worship, service, fear, and love of God, and faith in him: thus in one of their books [F138] having mentioned those words, “serve the Lord with fear”: it is asked, what means this phrase, “with fear?” It is answered, the same as it is written, “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of

wisdom"; and this is µymç twklm "the kingdom of heaven". And elsewhere they [F139] ask, "what is the kingdom of heaven?" To which is answered, "the Lord our God is one Lord". Yea, the Lord God himself is so called [F140], and sometimes the sanctuary; and sometimes they intend by it the times of the Messiah, as the Baptist here does; for so they paraphrase [F141] those words,

> "the time of the singing of birds, or of pruning, is come; the time for Israel to be redeemed is come; the time for the uncircumcision to be cut off is come; the time that the kingdom of the Cuthites (Samaritans or Heathens) shall be consumed is come; and the time hlgtç µymç twklm lç that "the kingdom of heaven shall be revealed" is come, as it is written, "and the Lord shall be king over all, the earth.""

Very pertinently does John make use of this argument to engage to repentance; since there cannot be a greater motive to it, whether it regard sorrow for sin, and confession of it, or a change of principles and practice, than the grace of God through Christ, which is exhibited in the Gospel dispensation: and very appropriately does he urge repentance previous to the kingdom of heaven; because without that there can be no true and cordial embracing or entering into the Gospel dispensation, or kingdom of heaven; that is, no real and hearty receiving the doctrines, and submitting to the ordinances of it. Nor ought the Jews above all people to object to John's method of preaching; since they make repentance absolutely necessary to the revelation of the Messiah and his kingdom, and redemption by him; for they say [F142] in so many words, that

> "if Israel do not repent, they will never be redeemed; but as soon as they repent, they will be redeemed; yea, if they repent but one day, immediately the son of David will come."

Ver. 3. *For this is he that was spoken of*, etc.] These are not the words of the Baptist himself, as in (<430123>John 1:23) but of the Evangelist, who cites and applies to John a passage in the Prophet Isaiah, (<230403>Isaiah 40:3) and that very pertinently, since that "chapter" is a prophecy of the Messiah. The consolations spoken of in (<230403>Isaiah 40:3), were to be in the days of the king Messiah, as a writer of note [F143] among the Jews observes. The Messiah is more expressly prophesied of in (<230409>Isaiah 40:9-11) as one that should appear to the joy of his people, and "come with a strong hand",

vigorously prosecute his designs, faithfully perform his work, and then receive his reward; he is spoken of under the “character” of a “shepherd”, who would tenderly discharge the several parts of his office as such, which character is frequently given to the Messiah in the Old Testament: now the person spoken of in (<230403>Isaiah 40:3) was to be his harbinger to go before him, proclaim and make ready for his coming; and what is said of him agrees entirely with John the Baptist, as the character given of him,

the voice of one crying, Βοωντος, lowing like an ox; which expresses the austerity of the man, the roughness of his voice, the severity of his language; that he called aloud and spoke out, openly, publicly, and freely; and that he delivered himself in preaching with a great deal of zeal and fervency. The place where he preached was “in the wilderness”, that is, of Judea, where he is said before, in (<400301>Matthew 3:1) to come preaching. The doctrine he preached was,

prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight, which is best explained by what is said before, in (<400302>Matthew 3:2)

repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The Lord whom ye have sought, the Messiah whom you have expected, is just coming, he will quickly appear; prepare to meet him by repentance, and receive him by faith, relinquish your former notions and principles, correct your errors, and amend your lives, remove all out of the way which may be offensive to him. The allusion is to a great personage being about to make his public appearance or entrance; when a harbinger goes before him, orders the way to be cleared, all impediments to be removed, and everything got ready for the reception of him.

Ver. 4. *The same John had his raiment*, etc.] The Evangelist goes on to describe this excellent person, the forerunner of our Lord, by his raiment;

the same John of whom Isaiah prophesied, and who came preaching the doctrine in the place and manner before expressed,

had his raiment of camel’s hair; not of camel’s hair softened and dressed, which the Talmudists [F144] call µylmg rmx “camel’s wool”; of which wool of camels and of hares, the Jews say [F145] the coats were made, with which God clothed Adam and Eve; and which being spun to a thread, and wove, and made a garment of, they call [F146] hlymj, and we “camlet”; for this would have been too fine and soft for John to wear, which is denied of him,

(<40108>Matthew 11:8) but either of a camel's skin with the hair on it, such was the "rough garment", or "garment of hair", the prophets used to wear, (<380104>Zechariah 13:4) or of camels hair not softened but undressed; and so was very coarse and rough, and which was suitable to the austerity of his life, and the roughness of his ministry. And it is to be observed he appeared in the same dress as Elijah or Elias did, (<120108>2 Kings 1:8) in whose spirit and power he came, and whose name he bore, (<420117>Luke 1:17 <401114>Matthew 11:14).

And a leathern girdle about his loins; and such an one also Elijah was girt with, (<120108>2 Kings 1:8) and which added to the roughness of his garment, though it shows he was prepared and in a readiness to do the work he was sent about.

And his meat was locusts and wild honey; by the "locusts" some have thought are meant a sort of fish called "crabs", which John found upon the banks of Jordan, and lived upon; others, that a sort of wild fruit, or the tops of trees and plants he found in the wilderness and fed on, are designed; but the truth is, these were a sort of creatures "called locusts", and which by the ceremonial law were lawful to be eaten, (see <031122>Leviticus 11:22). The Misnic doctors [F147] describe such as are fit to be eaten after this manner;

> "all that have four feet and four wings, and whose thighs and wings cover the greatest part of their body, and whose name is bgj "a locust.""

For it seems they must not only have these marks and signs, but must be so called, or by a word in any other language which answers to it, as the commentators [f148] on this passage observe; and very frequently do these writers speak [f149] of locusts that are clean, and may be eaten. Maimonides [f150] reckons up "eight" sorts of them, which might be eaten according to the law. Besides, these were eaten by people of other nations, particularly the Ethiopians [f151], Parthians [f152], and Lybians [f153].

And wild honey: this was honey of bees, which were not kept at home, but such as were in the woods and fields; of this sort was that which Jonathan found, and eat of, (<091425>1 Samuel 14:25,26,27) now the honey of bees might be eaten, according to the Jewish laws [f154], though bees themselves might not.

Ver. 5. *Then went out to him Jerusalem*, etc.] The uncommon appearance of this person, the oddness of his dress, the austerity of his life, together with the awfulness and importance of his doctrine, and the novelty of the ordinance of baptism he administered, and the Jews having had no prophet for some hundreds of years, and imagining he might be the Messiah, quickly drew large numbers of people to him. Some copies read "all Jerusalem": that is, the inhabitants of that city, a very large number of them; and "all Judea", a great number of people from all parts of that country. "All" is here put for "many". And

all the region round about Jordan; multitudes from thence, which seems to be the same country with that which is called "beyond Jordan", (<4004025>Matthew 4:25) and is distinguished from Judea as here. The Septuagint in (<140417>2 Chronicles 4:17) use the same phrase the Evangelist does here, and likewise in (<011310>Genesis 13:10,11).

Ver. 6. *And were baptized of him*, etc.] The place where they were baptized of him was, "in Jordan"; some copies read, "in the river Jordan", as in (<410105>Mark 1:5). As to the name of this river, and the etymology of it, the Jews say [f155] it was so called, ˆdm drwyç "because it descended" from Dan, i.e. Leshem Dan, or Pamias, which they say is a cave at the head of it. It was in John's time and long after a considerable river, a river to swim in; we [f156] read that "Resh Lakish andryb yjs hwh was swimming in Jordan." And elsewhere [f157], that one day "R. Jochanan was swimming in Jordan." Also it was a river for boats and ships to pass in, so that it was a navigable river; hence we read [f158] of ˆdryh tbyr["the boat of Jordan", and of ships in it, and of such and such things being forbidden to be carried over Jordan in a ship [f159]; particularly,

> "a man might not take the water of the sin offering, and the ashes of the sin offering, and carry them over Jordan in a ship."

Pliny [f160], Pausanias [f161], Solinus [f162], and others, speak of it as a very considerable and delightful river; (see <060315>Joshua 3:15,16,17). The Christians of Christ's time are called by the Jews, in a way of contempt, apostates, that received the doctrine of baptism, and were ˆdryb µylwbj "dipped in Jordan" [f163]. The manner in which they were baptized by him was by immersion or plunging them in the water: this may be concluded from the signification of the word βαπτιζω where used, which in the primary sense of it signifies to dip or plunge; from the place in which they

were baptized, “the river Jordan”; and from John’s constant manner of baptizing elsewhere, who chose places for this purpose, where and because there was there much water; (see <40128>John 1:28 <40323>John 3:23). The character of the persons baptized by him is this, they were such as were

confessing their sins. They were called to repentance by John’s ministry, and had the grace of it bestowed upon them; being thoroughly convinced of sin, and truly sorry for it, they were ready to acknowledge and confess it to God and men; and such an abiding sense they had of it upon their minds, that they continued doing it: they were not only confessing their sins before baptism, which engaged John to administer it to them; since we find afterwards he refused to admit others, because of their want of repentance and fruits meet for it; but also whilst they were going into the water, and when they came up out of it, so full were they of a sense of sin, and so ready to own it. Even in baptism itself there is a tacit confession and acknowledgment of sin, for it represents the sufferings and death of Christ which were for sin, into which persons are baptized, and profess to be dead to sin thereby; and also the resurrection of Christ for justification from sin, which obliges the baptized person to walk in newness of life, (see <45603>Romans 6:3,4,5) besides, in this ordinance believers are led to the blood of Christ, both for the cleansing and remission of their sins, which suppose filth and guilt, (<44216>Acts 22:16) and (<44238>Acts 2:38). Now this is the character given of the very first persons that were baptized by John, and ought surely to be attended to, by us; and as much care as possible should be taken, that none but such as have a true sense of sin, and are brought to an humble and hearty acknowledgment of it, be admitted to this ordinance.

Ver. 7. *But when he saw many of the Pharisees*, etc.] This being the first place in which mention is made of the Pharisees and Sadducees, it may not be amiss to give some account of them once for all, and to begin with the Pharisees, and first with their name. Some derive this word from פרץ pharatz to “divide”, to “make a breach”, from whence Phares had his name (<01829>Genesis 38:29) so Jerom [f164], who observes, that

> “the Pharisees, who separated themselves from the people as righteous persons, were called “divisi, the divided.””

And in [f165] another place,

> "because the Pharisees were "divided" from the Jews on account of some superfluous observations, they also took their name from their disagreement."

Origen [f166] seems to refer to this etymology of the word, when he says,

> "the Pharisees, according to their name, were διηρημενοι τινες και στασιωδεις, certain divided and seditious persons."

And true it is, that this sect often meddled with the affairs of the government, and were very ambitious of being concerned therein. Josephus [f167] observes of queen Alexandra, that she governed others, and the Pharisees governed her; hence, though they were in great esteem with the people, they were rather dreaded than loved by the government. Others derive this name from ç r p "Pharas" to "expand", or "stretch out"; either because they made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments; or because they exposed themselves to public notice, did all they could to be seen of men, prayed in the corners of the streets, had a trumpet blown before them when they gave alms, chose the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, greetings in the markets, and to be called of men "Rabbi": all which to be sure are their just characters. Others derive it from the same word, as signifying to "explain" or "expound"; because it was one part of their work, and in which they excelled, to expound the law; but this cannot be the reason of their general name, because there were women Pharisees as well as men, who cannot be thought to be employed in that work. The more generally received opinion is, that this name is taken from the above word, as signifying to "separate"; because they separated themselves from the men and manners of the world, to the study of the law, and to a greater degree of holiness, at least in pretence, than other persons. They were strict observers of the traditions of the elders; are said, to hold both fate and free will; they owned the resurrection of the dead, and that there were angels and spirits, in which they differed from the Sadducees. Or rather they have their name from s r p, which signifies "a reward"; they being stiff defenders of the doctrine of rewards and punishments in a future state, which the Sadducees denied. The Talmudic writers [f168] say, there were "seven" sorts of them, and if it would not be too tedious to the reader, I would give the names of them; and the rather, because some of them seem to tally with the complexion and conduct of the Pharisees mentioned in the scriptures. There were then,

1. ymkyç çwrp the "Shechemite Pharisee", who does as Shechem did; is circumcised, not on God's account, or for his glory, or because circumcision is a command of his, but for his own profit and advantage, and that he may get honour from men.

2. ypqyn çwrp "the dashing Pharisee"; who walks gently, the heel of one foot touching the great toe of the other; and scarce lifts up his feet from the earth, so that he dashes them against the stones, and would be thought hereby to be in deep meditation.

3. yazyq çwrp the "Pharisee letting blood"; who makes as if he shut his eyes, that he may not look upon women, and so runs and dashes his head against the wall, till the blood gushes out, as though a vein was opened.

4. aykwdm çwrp the "depressed Pharisee"; who went double, or bowed down, or as others render the phrase, "the mortar Pharisee"; either because he wore a garment like a mortar, with the mouth turned downwards; or a hat resembling such a vessel; so that he could not look upward, nor on either side, only downward, or right forward.

5. hnç[aw ytbwj hm çwrp the Pharisee, that said, what is my duty and I will do it? the gloss upon it is, teach me what is my duty, and I will do it: Lo! this is his excellency, if he is not expert in the prohibitions and niceties of the commands, and comes to learn; or thus, what is more to be done and I have not done it? so that he shows himself, or would appear as if he had performed all.

6. hary çwrp "the Pharisee of fear"; who does what he does from fear of punishment.

7. hbha çwrp "the Pharisee of love"; who does what he does from love; which the gloss explains thus: for the love of the reward of the commandment, and not for the love of the commandment of his Creator; though they say of all these there is none to be beloved, but the Pharisee of love.

When this sect first began, and who was the first author of it, is not easy to say; it is certain there were great numbers of them in the times of John the Baptist, and of Christ, and for some time after. The Jews say [f169], that when the temple was destroyed the second time, the Pharisees increased in Israel.

Next let us consider the Sadducees, who they were, and from whence they sprung. These have their name not from qydx "Saddik righteous" [f170], or qdx "Sedek righteousness", being self justitiaries; for though they were, yet this would not have distinguished them from the Pharisees, who were likewise such; but from qwdx Sadok or Saduk, a disciple of Antigonus, a man of Socho [f171]. The occasion of this new sect was this; Antigonus, among the instructions he gave to his scholars, had this saying;

> "be not as servants who serve their master for the sake of reward; but be ye as servants that serve their master not for the sake of reward, and let the fear of God be upon you."

Which, when Sadok and a fellow scholar, whose name was Baithos, or Baithus, heard, not rightly understanding him, concluded that there was no future state of rewards and punishments; which notion they broached and had their followers, who from the one were called Sadducees, and sometimes from the other Baithuseans: these men held the Scriptures only, rejecting the traditions of the elders; they denied fate, and ascribed all to free will; they affirmed that there is no resurrection of the dead; that the soul dies with the body; that there is no future state after this life, and that there are neither angels nor spirits. Now when "John saw" or observed "many" of both these sects "come to his baptism"; not merely to see it administered, led thither by the novelty of the thing; but to submit to it, to which they might be induced by that very great character of a very holy good man, which John had got among the people; and they were desirous of being thought so too, and therefore desired to be baptized by him; but he knowing the men and their manners,

said unto them; addressed them in a very severe style, quite contrary to their expectation, and the opinion the people had of them,

O generation of vipers! It seems their parents before them were vipers, and they their offspring were like them, in hypocrisy and malice. The viper appears very beautiful outwardly, but is full of poison; it looks harmless and innocent, as if it neither could nor would do any hurt, its teeth being hid, but is a most deadly and hurtful creature: so these men, though they made specious pretences to religion and holiness, yet were full of the deadly poison of hypocrisy, malice, and error. A very disagreeable salutation this must be to men, who were desirous of being reckoned very religious, and who boasted of, and trusted in, their being the seed of

Abraham; when they were the children of the devil, the seed of the old serpent, and the offspring of the worst of men, and in whom was verified the proverb, like father like son. John proceeds and asks, saying, “who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” who has suggested this to you? from whom have ye received this hint? who has pointed out the way to you to escape divine vengeance, or the ruin which will quickly come upon you? for by

wrath to come is not meant hell fire, everlasting destruction, from which baptism could not save them; but temporal calamity and destruction, the wrath which in a little time came upon that nation to the uttermost, for rejecting the Messiah, and the Gospel dispensation; from which they might have been saved, had they given credit to Jesus as the Messiah, though only with a bare assent; and had they entered into the kingdom of heaven, or Messiah, the Gospel dispensation, by receiving its doctrines, and submitting to its ordinances, though only externally.

Ver. 8. *Bring forth therefore fruits*, etc.] That is, if you are truly penitent, if you have a proper sense of sin, and true repentance for it, do such works as are suitable to it, and will show the genuineness of it; for

fruits meet for repentance are the same as “works meet for repentance”, (<44 26 20>Acts 26:20) and as a tree is known by its fruit, so repentance is known by good works; these are the fruits and effects of repentance, and which are proofs with men of the sincerity of it. Those which follow upon evangelical repentance are such as are mentioned in (<47 07 11>2 Corinthians 7:11). Now let it be observed, that John insisted upon repentance, and a good conversation, attesting the truth of it as necessary prerequisites to the ordinance of baptism; and so Peter first urged repentance; and then proposed baptism, (<44 02 38>Acts 2:38) from whence one should think it may be rationally and strongly concluded, that none but truly repenting sinners, and such who have given proofs that they are so, are to be admitted to this ordinance.

Ver. 9. *And think not to say within yourselves*, etc.] John knew the sentiments of their minds, and the prevailing opinion they had given into, against which he cautions them; as, that because they were Abraham’s seed, they were in a state of salvation, in the favour of God, and had a right to all privileges and ordinances: this they trusted in, and boasted of, and would often think of it within themselves, pleasing themselves with the thoughts of it, and speak of it to others;

we have Abraham for our father. The Baptist was aware how ready they would be to object this to him; and therefore prevents their plea from hence in favour of their admission to baptism, by assuring them, that this would have no weight with him, nor give them any right to the ordinance he administered: hence it appears that it is not a person's being born of believing parents that can entitle him to water baptism; or be a reason why it ought to be administered to him: if nothing more than this can be said in his favour, it is a plain case from hence, he ought to be debarred from it. The reason John gives why such a plea as this would be insufficient is,

for I say unto you; I assure you of it; you may depend on it as a certain truth,

that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. To "raise up children" is an Hebrew way of speaking, and the same with µç or [rz µyqhl to "raise up seed", or a "name" to another, (<01838>Genesis 38:8 <05207>Deuteronomy 25:7 <08040>Ruth 4:10) and signifies to beget children for another, who are to be called by his name. Some by "the stones" understand the Gentiles, comparable to stones, both for the hardness of their hearts, and their idolatry in worshipping stocks and stones; of and among whom God was able to raise, and has raised up, a spiritual seed to Abraham; who are of the same faith with him, who walk in his steps, and whose father he is: but then it must be supposed, according to this sense, that there were some Gentiles present, since John calls them "these" stones, pointing to some persons or things, that were before him; wherefore I rather think that this phrase is to be taken literally, and that John pointed to some certain stones that were near him, within sight, and which lay upon the banks of Jordan, where he was baptizing; for what is it that the omnipotent God cannot do? He could as easily of stones make men, as make Adam out of the dust of the earth, and then make these men, in a spiritual sense, children of Abraham; that is, believers in Christ, and partakers of his "grace; for if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise", (<48029>Galatians 3:29). So that God stood in no need of these persons, nor had they any reason to boast of their natural descent from Abraham; since this in spiritual matters, and in things relating to the Gospel dispensation, would stand them in no stead, or be of any advantage to them.

Ver. 10. *And now also the axe is laid*, etc.] These words may be rendered, "for now also", and contain in them a reason why they might expect future

wrath; why they should bring forth good fruit; and why they should not trust to nor plead their descent from Abraham, because “the axe is now laid”: by which is meant, not the Gospel which now began to be preached by John; though this was like an axe laid to the root of, and which cut down, their pride and vanity, their self-confidence and glorying in their righteousness, holiness, carnal wisdom, and fleshly privileges: but rather; the axe of God’s judgment and vengeance is here designed, which, because of the certainty and near approach of it, is said to be “now laid”; and that not to some of the branches only, to lop them off, to take away from the Jews some particular privileges, but “to the root” of all their privileges, civil and ecclesiastical; even the covenant which God had made with that people as a nation, who was now about to write “Lo Ammi” upon them; so that henceforward they would have nothing to expect from their being the seed of Abraham, Israelites, or circumcised persons. The time was just at hand, when the Lord would take his “staff Beauty and cut it asunder, that he might break the covenant he had made with all the people”, (<38 11 10>Zechariah 11:10) in a short time their civil polity and church state would be both at an end. The Romans, who were already among them and over them, would very quickly come upon them, and cut them off root and branch; and utterly destroy their temple, city, and nation: and this ruin and destruction was levelled not at a single tree, a single person, or family only, as Jesse’s, or any others, but at the root

of the trees: of all the trees of the whole body of the people; for the covenant which was made with them all being broke, and which was their hedge and fence, they were all exposed to the wild boar of the forest.

Therefore every tree, every individual person, though one of Abraham’s children, and made never such a fair show in the

flesh, which bringeth not forth good fruit; does not perform good works from a right principle, to a right end, such as are meet for repentance; particularly, does not believe in the Messiah now ready to be revealed, which is the main and principal work; and does not continue so doing, and thus believing,

is hewn down and cast into the fire. Temporal ruin and destruction shall come upon him; he shall not escape divine vengeance here, and shall be cast into everlasting burnings hereafter; which is quite contrary to a notion of theirs, that µhrbad ytwkzb “by the merits of Abraham”, the Israelites shall be delivered from the fire of hell [f172].

Ver. 11. *I indeed baptize you with water*, etc.] These words, at first view, look as if they were a continuation of John's discourse with the Pharisees and Sadducees, and as though he had baptized them; whereas by comparing them with what the other Evangelists relate, (see <4010 05>Mark 1:5,8 <4030 10>Luke 3:10,15,16) they are spoken to the people, who, confessing their sins, had been baptized by him; to whom he gives an account of the ordinance of water baptism, of which he was the administrator, in what manner, and on what account he performed it:

I indeed baptize you; or, as Mark says, "I have baptized you"; I have authority from God so to do; my commission reaches thus far, and no farther; I can administer, and have administered the outward ordinance to you; but the inward grace and increase of it, together with the ordinary and extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, I cannot confer. I can, and do baptize, upon a profession of repentance, and I can threaten impenitent sinners with divine vengeance; but I cannot bestow the grace of repentance on any, nor punish for impenitence, either here or hereafter; these things are out of my power, and belong to another person hereafter named: all that I do, and pretend to do, is to baptize

with water, or rather in water, as εν υδατι should be rendered. Our version seems to be calculated in favour of pouring, or sprinkling water upon, or application of it to the person baptized, in opposition to immersion in it; whereas the "preposition" is not instrumental, but local, and denotes the place, the river Jordan, and the element of water there, in which John was baptizing: and this he did

unto repentance, or "at", or upon "repentance": for so εις may be rendered, as it is in (<4012 41>Matthew 12:41) for the meaning is not that John baptized them, in order to bring them to repentance; since he required repentance and fruits meet for it, previous to baptism; but that he had baptized them upon the foot of their repentance; and so the learned Grotius observes, that the phrase may be very aptly explained thus: "I baptize you upon the `profession' of repentance which ye make." John gives a hint of the person whose forerunner he was, and of his superior excellency to him: he indeed first speaks of him as one behind him, not in nature or dignity, but in order of time as man;

but he that comes after me. John was born before Jesus, and began his ministry before he did; he was his harbinger; Jesus was now coming after him to Jordan from Galilee, to be baptized by him, and then enter on his

public ministry: but though he came after him in this sense, he was not beneath, but above him in character; which he freely declares, saying,

is mightier than I; not only as he is the mighty God, and so infinitely mightier than he; but in his office and ministry, which was exercised with greater power and authority, and attended with mighty works and miracles, and was followed with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. Not to mention the mighty work of redemption performed by him; the resurrection of his own body from the dead; and his exaltation in human nature, above all power, might, and dominion. The Baptist was so sensible of the inequality between them, and of his unworthiness to be mentioned with him, that he seems at a loss almost to express his distance from him; and therefore signifies it by his being unfit to perform one of the most servile offices to him,

whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; or as the other Evangelists relate it, "whose shoelatchet I am not worthy to unloose"; which amounts to the same sense, since shoes are unloosed in order to be taken from, or carried before, or after a person; which to do was the work of servants among the Jews. In the Talmud [f173] it is asked,

> "What is the manner of possessing of servants? or what is their service? He buckles his (master's) shoes; he "unlooses his shoes", and "carries them before him to the bath.""

Or, as is elsewhere [f174] said,

> "he unlooses his shoes, or carries after him his vessels (whatever he wants) to the bath; he unclothes him, he washes him, he anoints him, he rubs him, he clothes him, he buckles his shoes, and lifts him up."

This was such a servile work, that it was thought too mean for a scholar or a disciple to do; for it is [f175] said,

> "all services which a servant does for his master, a disciple does for his master, l[nm wl trthm wuj, "except unloosing his shoes"."
>
> The gloss on it says, "he that sees it, will say, he is a "Canaanitish servant":"

for only a Canaanitish, not an Hebrew servant [f176], might be employed in, or obliged to such work; for it was reckoned not only, mean and servile, but even base and reproachful. It is one of their [f177] canons;

> “if thy brother is become poor, and is sold unto thee, thou shalt not make him do the work of a servant; that is, yagn lç trwb[, any reproachful work; such as to buckle his shoes, or unloose them, or carry his instruments (or necessaries) after him to the bath.”

Now John thought himself unworthy; it was too great an honour for him to do that for Christ, which was thought too mean for a disciple to do for a wise man, and too scandalous for an Hebrew servant to do for his master, to whom he was sold; which shows the great humility of John, and the high opinion he had of Christ. It has been controverted whether Christ wore shoes or not; Jerom affirmed that he did not: but it seems from hence that he did; nor were the Jews used to walk barefoot, but on certain occasions. The Baptist points at the peculiar work of this great person, in which he greatly exceeds anything done by him;

he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; referring, either to the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, to be bestowed on the disciples on the day of Pentecost, of which the cloven tongues, like as of fire, which appeared unto them, and sat upon them, were the symbols; which was an instance of the great power and grace of Christ, and of his exaltation at the Father’s right hand. Or rather, this phrase is expressive of the awful judgments which should be inflicted by him on the Jewish nation; when he by his Spirit should “reprove” them for the sin of rejecting him; and when he should appear as a “refiner’s fire”, and as “fuller’s soap”; when “the day of the Lord” should “burn as an oven”; when he should “purge the blood of Jerusalem”, his own blood, and the blood of the Apostles and Prophets shed in it, “from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning”; the same with “the Holy Ghost and fire” here, or the fire of the Holy Ghost, or the holy Spirit of fire; and is the same with “the wrath to come”, and with what is threatened in the context: the unfruitful trees shall be cut down, and cast into the fire”, and the “chaff” shall be burnt with unquenchable fire”. And as this sense best agrees with the context, it may the rather be thought to be genuine; since John is speaking not to the disciples of Christ, who were not yet called, and who only on the day of Pentecost were baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, in the other sense of this phrase; but to the people of the Jews, some of whom had been

baptized by him; and others were asking him questions, others gazing upon him, and wondering what manner of person he was; and multitudes of them continued obdurate and impenitent under his ministry, whom he threatens severely in the context. Add to all this, that the phrase of dipping or baptizing in fire seems to be used in this sense by the Jewish writers. In the Talmud [f178] one puts the question, In what does he (God,) dip? You will say in water, as it is written, “who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand?” Another replies, lybj arwnb, “he dips in fire”; as it is written, “for behold the Lord will come with fire”. What is the meaning of arwnb atwlybj, “baptism in fire?” He answers, according to the mind of Rabbah, the root of “dipping in the fire”, is what is written; “all that abideth not the fire, ye shall make go” through the water. Dipping in the fire of the law, is a phrase used by the Jews [f179]. The phrases of “dipping, and washing in fire”, are also used by Greek [f180] authors.

Ver. 12. *Whose fan is in his hand*, etc.] The Jews had their hand fans, and which were like a man’s hand; their names were bwgm hrwm rb[m; which, as Maimonides says [f181], were three sorts of instruments used in the floor, in form of a man’s hand; with which they cleansed the wheat and barley from the straw; and their names differ according to their form: some have many teeth, and with them they cleanse the wheat at the end of the work; and there are others that have few teeth, no more than three, and with these they purge the wheat at first, from the thick straw. By the “fan”, here is meant, either the Gospel which Christ was just ready to publish; by which he would effectually call his chosen people among the Jews, and so distinguish and separate them from others, as well as purify and cleanse them, or rather the awful judgment of God, which Christ was ready to execute, and in a short time would execute on the unbelieving and impenitent Jews: hence it is said to be “in his hand”; being put there by his Father, who “hath committed all judgment to the Son”. That this is the meaning of the “Baptist”, seems evident, since “fanning” is always, when figuratively taken, used for judgments, (<23416>Isaiah 41:16 <24107>Jeremiah 15:7 <25102>Jeremiah 51:2). By “his floor”, is meant the land of Israel, where he was born, brought up, and lived; of which the Lord says, “O my threshing, and the corn of my floor!” (<23210>Isaiah 21:10). This, he says, “he will thoroughly purge” of all his refuse and chaff, that is, by fanning: so fanning and cleansing, or purging, are joined together, (<24011>Jeremiah 4:11) so rrb is used for purging by fanning, in the Misnic writings [f182]. By “his wheat”, are meant his elect among the Jews, the chosen of God and precious; so called

because of their excellency, purity, usefulness, solidity, and constancy: these he “will gather into his garner”; meaning either some place of protection, where he would direct his people to for safety from that wrath, ruin, and destruction; which should fall upon the Jewish nation; or else the kingdom of heaven, into which he would bring them, by taking them out of the world from the evil to come. By “the chaff”, are meant wicked and ungodly persons, such as are destitute of the grace of God, whether professors, or profane; being empty, barren, and unfruitful; and so good for nothing but the fire, which therefore “he will burn with unquenchable fire”, of divine wrath and vengeance: an allusion to a custom among the Jews, who, when they purified the increase of their unclean fields, gathered it together in an “area” or floor, in the midst of them, and then sifted it with sieves; one sort with two sieves, another with three, that they might thoroughly purge it, and burnt the chaff and stalks [f183]; (see <23524>Isaiah 5:24).

Ver. 13. *Then cometh Jesus*, etc.] That is, when John had been some time preaching the doctrine of repentance, and administering the ordinance of baptism; for which, time must be allowed, since he went into all the country about Jordan, and preached unto them, and baptized such large numbers: very probably it might be six months from his first entrance on his ministry; since there was this difference in their age, and so might be in their baptism and preaching. Now when John had given notice of the Messiah’s coming, and so had prepared his way; had declared the excellency of his person, the nature of his work, and office, and had raised in the people an expectation of him,

then cometh Jesus from Galilee; from Nazareth of Galilee, (<41009>Mark 1:9) where he had lived for many years, as the Jews [f184] themselves own; in great obscurity, in all obedience to God, in subjection to his parents, exercising a conscience void of offence towards God and man, and employing his time in devotion and business: from hence he came to Jordan to John, who was baptizing there; which shows the great humility of Christ, who comes to John, and does not send for him, though John was his servant, and he was his Lord and Master; and also his cheerful and voluntary subjection to the ordinance of baptism, since of himself, of his own accord, he took this long and fatiguing journey; for Nazareth, according to David de Pomis [f185], was three days journey from Jerusalem, though somewhat nearer Jordan; the end and design of his coming was

to be baptized of him. It may reasonably be inquired what should be Christ's view in desiring to be baptized; it could not be to take away original or actual sin, since he had neither; nor has baptism any such efficacy to do this, in those who have either or both: but, it was to show his approbation of John's baptism, and to bear a testimony of it, that it was from heaven; and also that he himself might receive a testimony both from heaven, and from John, that he was the Son of God and true Messiah, before he entered upon his public ministry, into which he was in some measure initiated and installed hereby; and moreover, to set an example to his followers, and thereby engage their attention and subjection to this ordinance; and, in a word, as he himself says, to fulfill all righteousness.

Ver. 14. *But John forbad him, saying*, etc.] It appears from hence, that John knew Christ before he baptized him, and before he saw the Spirit descending and abiding on him, (⁴⁰John 1:33) wherefore that was not a signal, whereby he should first know him but whereby his knowledge of him should be confirmed; which knowledge of him he had, not through his kindred to him, or by any conversation he had with him before, but by immediate, divine revelation: upon which account he "forbad him"; refused to administer the ordinance to him; earnestly entreated that he would not insist upon it; desired to be excused being concerned herein: and this he did, partly lest the people should think Christ was not so great a person as he had represented him to be; yea, that he was one of the penitent sinners John had admitted to his baptism; and chiefly because of the majesty and dignity of Christ's person, who he knew stood in no need of such an outward ordinance; and because of his own unworthiness to administer it to him, as is evident from what follows,

I have need to be baptized of thee; not with water baptism, which Christ never administered, but with the baptism of the Spirit, which was his peculiar office. Hence we learn, that though John was so holy a man, was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, had such large measures of grace, and lived such an exemplary life and conversation; yet was far from thinking, that he was perfect and righteous in himself, but stood in need of Christ, and of more grace from him. He seems surprised that Christ should come to him, and make such a motion to him; when it was his duty and privilege to come to him daily for fresh supplies of grace, and always to trust in him for life and salvation;

and comest thou to me? who am of the earth, earthly, when thou art the Lord from heaven; “to me”, a poor sinful creature, when thou art the Holy One of God; “to me”, who am thy servant, when thou art Lord of all; “to me”, who always stand in need of thy grace, when thou art God all sufficient.

Ver. 15. *And Jesus answering, said unto him*, etc.] This is an Hebrew way of speaking, often used in the Old Testament, and answers to rmaYw^[y; (see <18201>Job 3:1). He replied to John, who had made use of very forbidding words, after this manner,

suffer it to be so now; let me have my request; do not go on to object, but comply with my desire; let it be done now, immediately, directly, at this present time; do not put me off with any excuse; it is a proper season for it, even “now”, since the time is not yet come that I am to baptize with the Holy Ghost; and besides, thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. It became John to administer the ordinance of baptism to Christ, as he was his forerunner, and the only administrator of it, and that he might fulfill the ministry which he had received; and as it became Christ to fulfill all righteousness, moral and ceremonial, and baptism being a part of his Father’s will, which he came to do, it became him to fulfill this also. And since it became Christ, it cannot be unbecoming us to submit to this ordinance; and since he looked upon it as a part of righteousness to be fulfilled by him, it ought to be attended to by all those who would be accounted followers of him. Christ having strongly urged the conveniency and equity of the administration of baptism to him, which showed his eager desire after it, and the lowliness of his mind; and John being convinced, and overcome by the force of his reasoning, agrees to his baptism;

then he suffered him, i.e. to be baptized in water by him, as he had requested, and accordingly did administer it to him.

Ver. 16. *And Jesus, when he was baptized*, etc.] Christ, when he was baptized by John in the river Jordan, the place where he was baptizing,

went up straightway out of the water. One would be at a loss at first sight for a reason why the Evangelist should relate this circumstance; for after the ordinance was administered, why should he stay in the water? what should he do there? Everyone would naturally and reasonably conclude, without the mention of such a circumstance, that as soon as his baptism was over, he would immediately come up out of the water. However, we

learn this from it, that since it is said, that he came up out of the water, he must first have gone down into it; must have been in it, and was baptized in it; a circumstance strongly in favour of baptism by immersion: for that Christ should go down into the river, more or less deep, to the ankles, or up to the knees, in order that John should sprinkle water on his face, or pour it on his head, as is ridiculously represented in the prints, can hardly obtain any credit with persons of thought and sense. But the chief view of the Evangelist in relating this circumstance, is with respect to what follows; and to show, that as soon as Christ was baptized, and before he had well got out of the water,

lo the heavens were opened: and some indeed read the word “straightway”, in connection with this phrase, and not with the words “went up”: but there is no need of supposing such a trajection, for the whole may be rendered thus;

and Jesus, when he was baptized, was scarcely come up out of the water, but lo, immediately, directly, as soon as he was out, or rather before,

the heavens were opened to him; the airy heaven was materially and really opened, parted, rent, or cloven asunder, as in (<40110>Mark 1:10) which made way for the visible descent of the Holy Ghost in a bodily shape. A difficulty arises here, whether the words, “to him”, are to be referred to Christ, or to John; no doubt but the opening of the heavens was seen by them both: but to me it seems that John is particularly designed, since this vision was upon his account, and for his sake, and to him the following words belong; “and he”, that is,

John, saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: for this is what was promised to John, as a sign, which should confirm his faith in Jesus, as the true Messiah, and which he himself says he saw, and upon which he based the record and testimony he bore to Christ, as the Son of God; (see <40132>John 1:32,33,34) not but that the descent of the Holy Ghost in this manner might be seen by Christ, as well as John, according to (<40110>Mark 1:10). The Spirit of God, here said to descend and light on Christ, is the same, which in the first creation moved upon the face of the waters; and now comes down on Christ, just as he was coming up out of the waters of Jordan, where he had been baptized; and which the Jews [f186] so often call jwr jyçmh dlm lç, “the Spirit of the king Messiah, and the spirit of the Messiah”. The descent of him was in a “bodily shape”, as Luke says in (<42322>Luke 3:22) either in the shape of a dove, which is a very

fit emblem of the Spirit of God who descended, and the fruits thereof, such as simplicity, meekness, love, etc. and also of the dove-like innocence, humility, and affection of Christ, on whom he lighted; or it was in some other visible form, not expressed, which pretty much resembled the hovering and lighting of a dove upon anything: for it does not necessarily follow from any of the accounts the Evangelists give of this matter, that the holy Spirit assumed, or appeared in, the form of a dove; only that his visible descent and lighting on Christ was ωσει περιστερα, as a dove descends, hovers and lights; which does not necessarily design the form of the creature, but the manner of its motion. However, who can read this account without thinking of Noah's dove, which brought in its mouth the olive leaf, a token of peace and reconciliation, when the waters were abated from off the earth? Give me leave to transcribe a passage I have met with in the book of Zohar[f187];

> "a door shall be opened, and out of it shall come forth the dove which Noah sent out in the days of the flood, as it is written, "and he sent forth the dove", that famous dove; but the ancients speak not of it, for they knew not what it was, only from whence it came, and did its message; as it is written, "it returned not again unto him any more": no man knows whither it went, but it returned to its place, and was hid within this door; and it shall take a crown in its mouth, and put it upon the head of the king Messiah."

And a little after, the dove is said to abide upon his head, and he to receive glory from it. Whether this is the remains of some ancient tradition, these men studiously conceal, concerning the opening of the heavens, and the descent of the Spirit of God, as a dove, upon the Messiah; or whether it is hammered out of the evangelic history, let the reader judge.

Ver. 17. *And lo, a voice from heaven, saying*, etc.] At the same time the heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God descended as a dove, and lighted on Christ, and whilst it abode upon him, an extraordinary voice was heard; hence the note of attention and admiration, "lo", is prefixed unto it, as before, to the opening of the heavens; being what was unusual and surprising; and as denoting something to be expressed of great moment and importance. The Jews, in order to render this circumstance less considerable, and to have it believed, that these voices from heaven heard in the time of Jesus, and in relation to him were common things, have invented a great many stories concerning µymçm lwq tb, "the voice", or

"the daughter of the voice from heaven"; which they pretend came in the room of prophecy: their [f188] words are,

> "after the death of the latter prophets, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, the holy Spirit departed from Israel, and thenceforwards they used "Bath Kol", the "voice". One time they were sitting in the chamber of the house of Guria in Jericho, and there came to them µymçm lyq tb, "the voice from heaven", (saying;) there is one here, who is fit to have the Shekinah (or divine majesty) abide on him, as Moses our master; but because his generation was not worthy, therefore the wise men set their eyes on Hillell, the elder; and when he died, they said concerning him, this was a holy man, a meek man, a disciple of Ezra. Again, another time they were sitting in a chamber in Jabneh, and there came to them "the voice from heaven", (saying;) there is one here, who is fit to have the Shekinah dwell on him; but because his generation was not worthy, therefore the wise men set their eyes on Samuel the little."

I have cited this passage at large, partly because, according to them, it fixes the date and use of "the voice"; and partly, because it affords instances of it, wherefore more need not be mentioned; for, it would be endless to repeat the several things spoken by it; such as encouraging Herod to rebel, and seize his master's kingdom [f189]; forbidding Ben Uzziel to go on with his paraphrase on the Hagiographa, or holy books, when he had finished his Targum on the prophets [f190]; declaring the words of Hillell and Shammai to be the words of the living God [f191]; signifying the conception, birth, and death of [f192] persons, and the like; all which seem to be mere fiction and imagination, diabolical delusions, or satanical imitations of this voice, that was now heard, in order to lessen the credit of it. But, to proceed; this extraordinary voice from heaven, which was formed in articulate sounds for the sake of John; and, according to the other Evangelists, was directed to Christ, (<40311>Mark 1:11 <40322>Luke 3:22) expressed the following words, "this is my beloved Son". "This" person, who had been baptized in water, on whom the holy Spirit now rested, is no other than the Son of God in human nature; which he assumed, in order to be obedient to this, and the whole of his Father's will: he is his own proper "son", not by creation, as angels, and men; nor by adoption, as saints; nor by office, as magistrates; but in such a way of filiation as no other is: he is the natural, essential, and only begotten Son of God; his beloved Son, whom the Father loved from everlasting, as his own Son; the image of himself, of the same nature with

him, and possessed of the same perfections; whom he loved, and continued to love in time, though clothed with human nature, and the infirmities of it; appearing in the likeness of sinful flesh; being in his state of humiliation, he loved him through it, and all sorrows and sufferings that attended it. Christ always was, and ever will be considered, both in his person as the Son of God, and in his office as mediator, the object of his love and delight; wherefore he adds,

in whom I am well pleased. Jehovah the Father took infinite delight and pleasure in him as his own Son, who lay in his bosom before all worlds; and was well pleased with him in his office relation, and capacity: he was both well pleased in him as his Son, and delighted in him as his servant, (Isaiah 42:1) he was pleased with his assumption of human nature; with his whole obedience to the law; and with his bearing the penalty and curse of it, in the room and stead of his people: he was well pleased with and for his righteousness, sacrifice and atonement; whereby his law was fulfilled, and his justice satisfied. God is not only well pleased in, and with his Son, but with all his people, as considered in him; in him he loves them, takes delight in them, is pacified towards them, and graciously accepts of them. It would be almost unpardonable, not to take notice of the testimony here given to the doctrine of the Trinity; since a voice was heard from the "father" in heaven, bearing witness to "the Son" in human nature on earth, on whom "the Spirit" had descended and now abode. The ancients looked upon this as so clear and full a proof of this truth, that they were wont to say; Go to Jordan, and there learn the doctrine of the Trinity. Add to all this, that since this declaration was immediately upon the baptism of Christ, it shows that his Father highly approved of, and was well pleased with his submission to that ordinance; and which should be an encouraging motive to all believers to follow him in it.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 4

Ver. 1. *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit*, etc.] The Evangelist having finished his account of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ; of his ministry and baptism; and particularly of the baptism of Christ; when the Holy Ghost came down upon him in a visible and eminent manner; whereby he was anointed for his public work, according to (<23601>Isaiah 61:1) proceeds to give a narration of his temptations by Satan, which immediately followed his baptism; and of those conflicts he had with the enemy of mankind before he entered on his public ministry. The occasion, nature, and success of these temptations are here related. The occasion of them, or the opportunity given to the tempter, is spoken of in this and the following verse. In this may be observed the action of the Spirit in and upon Christ; he

was led of the Spirit: by "the Spirit" is meant the same spirit of God, which had descended and lighted on him in a bodily shape, with the gifts and graces of which he was anointed, in an extraordinary manner, for public service; of which he was "full", (<42401>Luke 4:1) not but that he was endowed with the Holy Ghost before which he received without measure from his Father; but now this more eminently and manifestly appeared and by this Spirit was he led; both the Syriac and the Persic versions read, "by the holy Spirit". Being "led" by him, denotes an internal impulse of the Spirit in him, stirring him up, and putting him upon going into the wilderness: and this impulse being very strong and vehement, another Evangelist thus expresses it; "the Spirit driveth him, εκβαλλει thrusts him forth into the wilderness", (<41012>Mark 1:12) though not against his will; to which was added an external impulse, or outward rapture, somewhat like that action of the Spirit on Philip. (<44039>Acts 8:39). When he is said to be led up, the meaning is, that he was led up from the low parts of the wilderness, where he was, to the higher and mountainous parts thereof, which were desolate and uninhabited. The place where he was led was "into the wilderness", i.e. of Judea, into the more remote parts of it; for he was before in this wilderness, where John was preaching and baptizing; but in that part of it

which was inhabited. There was another part which was uninhabited, but by “wild beasts” and here Christ was led, and with these he was, (<40113>Mark 1:13) all alone, retired from the company of men; could have no assistance from any, and wholly destitute of any supply: so that Satan had a fair opportunity of trying his whole strength upon him; having all advantages on his side he could wish for. The end of his being led there, was

to be tempted of the devil: by “the devil” is meant “Satan” the prince of devils, the enemy of mankind, the old serpent, who has his name here from accusing and calumniating; so the Syriac calls him axrq lka, the accuser, or publisher of accusations. He was the accuser of God to men, and is the accuser of men to God; his principal business is to tempt, and Christ was brought here to be tempted by him, that he might be tried before he entered on his public work; that he might be in all things like unto his brethren; that he might have a heart as man, as well as power, as God, to succour them that are tempted; and that Satan, whose works he came to destroy, might have a specimen of his power, and expect, in a short time, the ruin of his kingdom by him. The time when this was done was “then”; when Jesus had been baptized by John; when the Holy Ghost descended on him, and he was full of it; when he had such a testimony from his Father of his relation to him, affection for him, and delight in him; “then” was he led, “immediately”, as Mark says, (<40112>Mark 1:12). As soon as all this was done, directly upon this, he was had into the wilderness to be tempted by and to combat with Satan; and so it often is, that after sweet communion with God in his ordinances, after large discoveries of his love and interest in him follow sore temptations, trials, and exercises. There is a very great resemblance and conformity between Christ and his people in these things.

Ver. 2. *And when he had fasted forty days*. etc.] As Moses did, when he was about to deliver the law to the Israelites, (<023428>Exodus 34:28) and as Elijah did, when he bore his testimony for the Lord of hosts, (<111908>1 Kings 19:8) so did Christ, when he was about to publish the Gospel of his grace, and bear witness to the truth. “Forty nights” as well as days, are mentioned; partly to show that these were whole entire days, consisting of twenty four hours; and partly to distinguish this fast of Christ from the common fastings of the Jews, who used to eat in the night, though they fasted in the day: for according to their canons [f193], they might eat and drink as soon as it was dark, and that till cock crowing; and others say, till break of day. Maimonides [f194] says, they might eat and drink at night, in all

fasts, except the ninth of Ab. What is very surprising in this fasting of our Lord, which was made and recorded, not for our imitation, is, that during the whole time he should not be attended with hunger; for it is added,

he was afterwards an hungered; that is, as Luke says, "when" the "forty" days "were ended", (<4042>Luke 4:2) which seized upon him, and is related, both to express the reality of his human nature, which though miraculously supported for so long a time without food, and insensible of hunger, yet at length had appetite for food; and also that very advantageous opportunity Satan had to attack him in the manner he did, with his first temptation.

Ver. 3. *And when the tempter came to him*. etc.] By "the tempter", is meant the devil, (see <5305>1 Thessalonians 3:5) so called, because it is his principal work and business, in which he employs himself, to solicit men to sin; and tempt them either to deny, or call in question the being of God, arraign his perfections, murmur at his providences, and disbelieve his promises. When he is here said to come to Christ at the end of forty days and nights, we are not to suppose, that he now first began to tempt him; for the other Evangelists expressly say, that he was tempted of him forty days, (<4013>Mark 1:13 <4042>Luke 4:2) but he now appeared openly, and in a visible shape: all the forty days and nights before, he had been tempting him secretly and inwardly; suggesting things suitable to, and taking the advantage of the solitary and desolate condition he was in. But finding these suggestions and temptations unsuccessful, and observing him to be an hungered, he puts on a visible form, and with an articulate, audible voice, he said,

if thou be the Son of God; either doubting of his divine sonship, calling it in question, and putting him upon doing so too; wherefore it is no wonder that the children of God should be assaulted with the like temptation: or else arguing from it, "if", or "seeing thou art the Son of God"; for he must know that he was, by the voice which came from heaven, and declared it: and certain it is, that the devils both knew, and were obliged to confess that Jesus was the Son of God, (<4041>Luke 4:41) by which is meant, not a good, or righteous man, or one dear to God, and in an office; but a divine person, one possessed of almighty power; and therefore, as a proof and demonstration of it, be urges him to

command that these stones be made bread, pointing to some which lay hard by; ειπε, "say" but the word, and it will be done. He did not doubt but he was able to do it, by a word speaking; but he would have had him to

have done it at his motion, which would have been enough for his purpose; who wanted to have him obedient to him: and he might hope the rather to succeed in this temptation, because Christ was now an hungry; and because he had carried his point with our first parents, by tempting them to eat of the forbidden fruit.

Ver. 4. *But he answered and said, it is written*, etc.] The passage referred to, and cited, is in (Deuteronomy 8:3) the manner of citing it is what was common and usual with the Jews; and is often to be met with in the Talmudic writings; who, when they produce any passage of scripture, say bytkd, "as it is written". The meaning of this scripture is; not that as the body lives by bread, so the soul lives by the word of God, and doctrines of the Gospel; though this is a certain truth: or that man lives by obedience to the commands of God, as was promised to the Israelites in the wilderness, and in the land of Canaan; but that God, in satisfying man's hunger, and in supporting and preserving his life, is not tied to bread only, but can make use of other means, and order whatever he pleases to answer these ends; as, by raining manna from heaven, which is mentioned in the passage cited; and therefore there was no occasion to change the nature of things, to turn stones into bread; since that was not so absolutely necessary to the sustenance of life, as that it could not be maintained without it. Our Lord hereby expresses his strong faith and confidence in God, that he was able to support him, and would do it, though in a wilderness, and destitute of supply; whereby he overcame this temptation of Satan. Christ, in this, and some following citations, bears a testimony to, and establishes the authority of the sacred writings; and though he was full of the Holy Ghost, makes them the rule of his conduct; which ought to be observed against those, who, under a pretence of the Spirit, deny the scriptures to be the only rule of faith and practice and at the same time points out to us the safest and best method of opposing Satan's temptations; namely, by applying to, and making use of the word of God.

Ver. 5. *Then the devil taketh him up*, etc.] This was done, not in a visionary way, but really and truly: Satan, by divine permission, and with the consent of Christ, which shows his great humiliation and condescension, had power over his body, to move it from place to place; in some such like manner as the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, (Acts 8:39) he took him up, raised him above ground, and carried him through the air, "into, the holy city": this was Jerusalem; for Luke expressly says,

he brought him to Jerusalem, (<4009>Luke 4:9) called so, because of the presence, worship, and service of God, which had been in it, though then in a great measure gone; and according to the common notions of the Jews, who say [f195] Jerusalem was more holy than any other cities in the land, and that because of the Shekinah. The inscription on one side of their shekels was çdqh ry[µlçwry, "Jerusalem, the holy city" [f196]. Satan frequents all sorts of places; men are no where free from his temptations; Christ himself was not in the holy city, no nor in the holy temple; hither also he had him,

and setteth him upon a pinnacle, or "wing of the temple". In this place [f197] the Jews set James, the brother of Christ, and from it cast him down headlong: this was the ακρον "the summit", or "top" of it; and intends either the roof encompassed with battlements, to keep persons from falling off; or the top of the porch before the temple, which was 120 cubits high; or the top of the royal gallery, built by Herod, which was of such an height, that if a man looked down from it, he soon became dizzy [f198]. The view Satan had in setting him here appears in the next verse.

Ver. 6. *And saith unto him, if thou be the Son of God*, etc.] He addresses him after the same manner as before; if, or seeing,

thou art the Son of God, show thyself to be so; give proof of thy sonship before all the priests which are in and about the temple, and before all the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

cast thyself down that is, from the pinnacle of the temple: for since thou art the Son of God, no hurt will come to thee; thou wilt be in the utmost safety; and this will at once be a full demonstration to all the people, that thou art the Son of God: for hither Satan brought him, hoping to have got an advantage of him publicly; otherwise, had his view only been to have got him to cast himself down from any place of eminence, and so to have destroyed himself, he might have set him upon any other precipice; but he chose to have it done in the sight of the people, and in the holy city, and holy place. Let it be observed, that Satan did not offer to cast him down himself; for this was not in his power, nor within his permission, which reached only to tempt; and besides, would not have answered his end; for that would have been his own sin, and not Christ's: accordingly, we may observe, that when he seeks the lives of men, he does not attempt to destroy them himself, but always puts them upon doing it. To proceed,

Satan not only argues from his divine power, as the Son of God, that he would be safe in casting himself down; but observing the advantageous use Christ made of the scriptures, transforms himself into an angel of light, and cites scripture too, to encourage him to this action; assuring him of the protection of angels. The passage cited is (<19111>Psalm 91:11,12) which expresses God's tender care and concern for his people, in charging the angels with the guardianship and preservation of them, in all their ways, that they might be secured from sin and danger. It does not appear that Satan was wrong in the application of this passage to Christ; for since it respects all the righteous in general, why not Christ as man? the head, as well as the members? And certain it is, that angels had the charge of him, did watch over him, and were a guard about him; the angels of God ascended, and descended on him; they were employed in preserving him from Herod's malice in his infancy; they ministered to him here in the wilderness, and attended him in his agony in the garden: but what Satan failed in, and that wilfully, and wickedly, was, in omitting that part of it,

to keep thee in all thy ways; which he saw was contrary to his purpose, and would have spoiled his design at once; and also in urging this passage, which only regards godly persons, in the way of their duty, to countenance actions which are out of the way of a man's calling, or which he is not called unto; and which are contrary to religion, and a tempting God. Satan before tempted Christ to distrust the providence of God, and now he tempts him to presume upon it: in like manner he deals with men, when he argues from the doctrines of predestination and providence to the disuse of means, for their good, either for this life, or that which is to come; and if he tempted the Son of God to destroy himself, it is no wonder that the saints should be sometimes harassed with this temptation.

Ver. 7. *Jesus saith unto him, it is written again*, etc.] Christ takes no notice of the false and wrong citation of scripture made by the devil, nor of any misapplication of it; but mildly replies, by opposing another passage of scripture to him, (<05616>Deuteronomy 6:16)

ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, thereby tacitly showing, that he had produced scripture to a very wrong purpose, since that could never contradict itself; and also, that for a person to neglect the ordinary means of safety, and to expect, that as God can, so he will, preserve without the use of such means, is a tempting him. The Hebrew word wsnt "tempt", as Manasseh ben[f199] Israel observes, is always taken in an ill part, and is to be

understood of such who would try the power, goodness, or will of God. And which, as it is not fitting it should be done by any man, so not by himself; and perhaps he hereby intimates too, that he himself was God; and therefore as it was not right in him to tempt God the Father, by taking such a step as Satan solicited him to; nor would it be right in any other; so it was iniquitous in the devil to tempt him who was God over all, blessed for ever.

Ver. 8. *Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain*, etc.] That is, he took him off from the pinnacle of the temple, and carried him through the air, to one of the mountains which were round about Jerusalem; or to some very high mountain at a greater distance; but what mountain is not certain; nor can it be known; nor is it of any moment; it has been said [f200] to be Mount Lebanon: here he

sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and glory of them. By "all the kingdoms of the world" are meant, not only the Roman empire, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, though that was, to he sure, the greatest in the world at that time; but all the kingdoms in the whole world, which subsisted in any form, whether within, or independent of the Roman empire; or whether greater or lesser: and by "the glory of them", is meant, the riches, pomp, power, and grandeur of them. Now the view which Satan gave Christ of all this, was not by a representation of them in a picture, or in a map, or in any geographical tables, as [f201] some have thought; since to do this there was no need to take him up into a mountain, and that an exceeding high one; for this might have been done in a valley, as well as in a mountain: and yet it could not be a true and real sight of these things he gave him; for there is no mountain in the world, from whence can be beheld anyone kingdom, much less all the kingdoms of the world; and still less the riches, glory, pomp, and power of them: but this was a fictitious, delusive representation, which Satan was permitted to make; to cover which, and that it might be thought to be real, he took Christ into an high mountain; where he proposed an object externally to his sight, and internally to his imagination, which represented, in appearance, the whole world, and all its glory. Xiphilinus [f202] reports of Severus, that he dreamed, he was had by a certain person, to a place where he could look all around him, and from thence he beheld πασαν μεν την γην, πασαν δε την ψαλασσαν "all the earth, and also all the sea"; which was all in imagination. Satan thought to have imposed on Christ this way, but failed in his attempt. Luke says, this was done

in a moment of time, in the twinkling of an eye; as these two phrases are joined together, (<4652>1 Corinthians 15:52) or "in a point of time". The word στιγμη, used by (<4005>Luke 4:5) sometimes signifies a mathematical point, which Zeno says [f203] is the end of the line, and the least mark; to which the allusion may be here, and designs the smallest part of time that can be conceived of. Antoninus the emperor uses the word, as here, for a point of time; and says [f204], that the time of human life, and the whole present time, is but στιγμη a point. Would you know what a moment, or point of time is, according to the calculation of the Jewish doctors, take the account as follows; though in it they differ: a moment, say they [f205], is the fifty six thousandth, elsewhere [f206], the fifty eight thousandth, and in another place [f207], the fifty three thousandth and eight hundredth and forty eighth, or, according to another account [f208], eighty eighth part of an hour. If this could be thought to be a true and exact account of a moment, or point of time, it was a very short space of time indeed, in which the devil showed to Christ the kingdoms of this world, and their glory; but this is not more surprising than his vanity, pride, and impudence, in the following verse.

Ver. 9. *And saith unto him, all these things will I give thee* etc.] This is more fully and strongly expressed by the Evangelist Luke. (<4006>Luke 4:6,7).

And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it — all shall be thine. In which words he sets up himself to be the God of this world, and the sovereign disposer of it: he pretends it was delivered to him by the true God, who had left it to his arbitrary disposal; and that he could invest Christ with the power and government of it, and put him in possession of all its glory, and make good and support his title to it, and interest in it. Never was such monstrous arrogance expressed as this; when this poor, proud, wretched creature, has not the disposal, at his pleasure, of anyone single thing; no not the least in the whole universe. He could not touch, neither Job's person, nor any of his substance, without divine permission; nor enter into an herd of swine without Christ's leave; and yet had the front to make an offer of the whole world, as if he had a despotic power over it; and that upon this horrid and blasphemous condition,

if thou wilt fall down and worship me. This was the highest degree of effrontery and impudence. The devil is not content to be worshipped by men, but seeks for adoration from the Son of God: this opens at once his

proud, ambitious, and aspiring views, to be as God himself; for with nothing less can he be satisfied.

Ver. 10. *Then saith Jesus to him, get thee hence, Satan*. etc.] In (Luke 4:8) it is "get thee behind me": and so some copies read here, and is expressive of indignation and abhorrence; (see Matthew 16:23) rebuking his impudence, and detesting his impiety: he had borne his insults and temptations with great patience; he had answered him with mildness and gentleness; but now his behaviour to him was intolerable, which obliged him to show his resentment, exert his power and authority, and rid himself at once of so vile a creature; giving this reason for it;

for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. The place referred to is in (Deuteronomy 6:13)

thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him: to fear the Lord, and to worship him, is the same thing. Worship includes both an internal and external reverence of God: the word "only" is not in the original text, but is added by our Lord; and that very justly; partly to express the emphasis which is on the word "him"; and in perfect agreement with the context, which requires it; since it follows,

ye shall not go after other Gods. Moreover, not to take notice of the Septuagint version, in which the word "only" is also added, Josephus [f209], the Jewish historian, referring to this law, says, because God is one, και δει τουτον σεβεσψαι μονον, "therefore he only is to be worshipped". And Aben Ezra [f210], a Jewish writer, explaining the last clause in the verse,

and thou shalt swear by his name, uses the word "only"; and which indeed, of right, belongs to every clause in it. The meaning of our Lord in citing it is; that since the Lord God is the alone object of worship, it was horrid blasphemy in Satan to desire it might be given to him, and which could not be done without the greatest impiety.

Ver. 11. *Then the devil leaveth him*, etc.] In (Luke 4:13) it says,

when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season, or until a season. That is, having tempted him with all sorts of temptations, and tried him every way to no purpose; having gone through, and finished the whole scheme and course of temptations he had devised, without success; and having orders from Christ to depart, which he was obliged to obey, leaves him for a while, till another opportunity of tempting

him in some other way should offer; or till the time came, when he should be so far able to get the advantage of him, as to bruise his heel, or bring him to the dust of death; (see <490430>John 14:30 <422253>Luke 22:53) and when he was gone, better company came in his room;

behold, angels came and ministered to him. They came to him in a visible, human form, as they were used to do under the Old Testament dispensation, and that after the temptation was over; after Satan was foiled, and was gone; that it might appear that Christ alone had got the victory over him, without any help or assistance from them. When they were come, they "ministered to him"; that is, they brought him food of their own preparing and dressing, as they formerly did to Elijah, (<111905>1 Kings 19:5,6,7,8) to satisfy his hunger, and refresh his animal spirits; which had underwent a very great fatigue during this length of time, in which he fasted, and was tempted by Satan. Thus, as the angels are ministring spirits to the heirs of salvation, both in a temporal and in a spiritual sense, (<581414>Hebrews 1:14) so they were to Christ. Nothing is more frequent with the Jews than to call the angels trçh ykalm "ministring angels": it would be needless and endless to refer to particular places.

Ver. 12. *Now, when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison*, etc.] John was cast into prison by Herod; the reason of it may be seen in (<401403>Matthew 14:3,4). The prison into which he was cast, according to Josephus [f211], was the castle of Machaeras: here he continued some time before he was put to death; for from hence he sent two disciples to Jesus, to know if he was the Messiah, (<401102>Matthew 11:2). Now when Jesus heard of this his imprisonment,

he departed into Galilee; not so much on account of safety, or for fear of Herod, but to call his disciples, who lived in that country.

Ver. 13. *And leaving Nazareth*, etc.] Where he was educated, and had lived many years together; and where he preached first to the good liking of the people, who

wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth: though afterwards they were so much displeased with him, that they thrust him out of their city; and intended to have destroyed him, by casting him down headlong from the brow of an hill; and which seems to be the reason of his leaving this city; (see <420416>Luke 4:16-31)

he came and dwelt in Capernaum a city of Galilee. (<40431>Luke 4:31)

which is upon the sea-coast by the sea of Tiberias, or Genesareth

in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: it bordered on both these tribes; it signifies “the village of consolation” [f212]; and so it was, whilst the consolation of Israel dwelt there. The Jews speak very evilly of it: no doubt because it was the dwelling place of Christ; and because there might be some in it who believed in him: they represent the inhabitants of it as very great sinners, heretics, and dealers in magic art. Chanina, the brother’s son of R. Joshua, they say [f213], went to Capernaum, and the heretics did something to him; according to the gloss, they bewitched him: and elsewhere [f214] explaining the words in (<21726>Ecclesiastes 7:26)

Who so pleaseth God, etc.]; this, they say, is Chananiah, the brother’s son of R. Joshua; and “the sinner”; these are the “children”, or inhabitants of Capernaum. Thus they show their spite against the very place in which Christ dwelt.

Ver. 14, 15. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken*, etc.] Christ’s dwelling in Capernaum accomplished a prophecy of the prophet (<23901>Isaiah 9:1,2) and he went and dwelt there, that it might be fulfilled which he had spoken: the meaning of which prophecy is [f215], that as those parts of the land of Israel, there mentioned, had suffered much by Tiglathpileser, who had carried them captive, (<121529>2 Kings 15:29) and is “the vexation” referred to; so they should be honoured, and made very glorious, by the presence and conversation of the Messiah among them, and which now had its literal fulfilment: for Christ now came and dwelt in Capernaum, which lay between the lands and upon the borders both of Zabulon and Nephthalim; was situated by the sea of Tiberias, beyond Jordan, and in, “Galilee of the nations”; the upper Galilee, which had in it people of other nations besides Jews. The ancient Jews expected the Messiah to make his first appearance in Galilee; which expectation must be grounded on this prophecy; for so they say [f216] expressly,

> “the king Messiah shall be revealed lylgd a[rab, “in the land of Galilee.””

And in another place [f217] explaining (<23219>Isaiah 2:19) they paraphrase it thus,

> ""for fear of the Lord"; this is the indignation of the whole world: and for the "glory of his majesty"; this is the Messiah; when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth, when he shall arise and be revealed lylgd a[rab, "in the land of Galilee": because that this is the first place to be destroyed in the holy land; therefore he shall be revealed there the first of all places."

Here Jesus, the true Messiah, made his first appearance publicly; here he called his disciples, and began his ministry.

(See Gill on "<4044>Matthew 4:14")

Ver. 16. *The people which sat in darkness*, etc.] The inhabitants of Galilee, who sat or "walked", as in Isaiah; that is, continued in spiritual darkness, in ignorance, blindness, error, and infidelity, "saw great light"; Christ himself, who came a light into the world; he conversed with them, preached unto them, and opened the eyes of their understandings to behold his glory, and to know him, and salvation by him.

And to them which sat in the region and shadow of death: the same persons who sit in darkness, sit also in the region of death; for such are dead in trespasses and sins: where there is no spiritual light, there is no spiritual life, and such are in danger of the second death; but the happiness of these people was, that to them "light is sprung up", like the rising sun, and this without their asking or seeking for: Christ, the sun of righteousness, arose upon them, without any desert, desire, or expectation of theirs, with healing in his wings; and cured them of their darkness and deadness, turned them from darkness to light, and caused them to pass from death to life. "Light" is not only a character under which Christ frequently goes in the New Testament, (see <4001>John 1:4-8,9 <4003>John 3:19 <4008>John 8:12 <4312>John 12:46) but is one of the names by which the Messiah was known under the Old Testament; (see <2702>Daniel 2:22 <1903>Psalm 43:3) and which the Jews give unto him: says R, Aba [f218] Serungia, "and the light dwelleth with him"; this is the king Messiah. The note of R. Sol. Jarchi on these words, "send forth thy light", is, the king Messiah; who is compared to light, according to (<1917>Psalm 132:17) the days of the Messiah are by them said to [f219] be hrwa ymy "days of light"; and so these Galilaeans found them to be; as all do, to whom the Gospel of Christ comes with power and demonstration of the Spirit. And these days of light first begun in the land of Zabulon which, according to Philo the Jew [f220], was

> "συμβολον φωτος, "a symbol of light"; since (adds he) its name signifies the nature of night; but, the night removing, and departing, light necessarily arises."

As did, in a spiritual sense, here, when Christ the light arose.

Ver. 17. *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say*, etc.] Not from the time he dwelt in Capernaum; for he had preached in Nazareth before he came there, (<4016>Luke 4:16, 31) nor from the time of John's being cast into prison; for he had preached, and made disciples, who were baptized by his orders, before John's imprisonment, (<4022>John 3:22, 24-26) (<4001>John 4:1) but from the time that Satan left tempting him; as soon as that combat was over, immediately he went into Galilee, began to preach, and called his disciples. The words with which he began his ministry are the same with which John begun his; which shows the entire agreement between them, in that they not only preached the same doctrine, but in the same words; (See Gill on "<4002>Matthew 3:2")

Ver. 18. *And Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee*, etc.] Not for his recreation and diversion, or by accident: but on purpose to look out for, and call some, whom he had chosen to be his disciples. And as he was walking about, to and fro, he "saw two" persons; and as soon as he saw them, he knew them to be those he had determined to make his apostles: and these are described by their relation to each other, "brethren"; not merely because they were of the same nation, or of the same religion, or of the same employ and business of life, but because they were of the same blood; and by their names, "Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother". Simon is the same name with ˆw[mç, "Simeon"; and so he is called, (<4414>Acts 15:14) and which, in the Jerusalem dialect, is read ˆwmys, "Simon". His surname "Peter", which was afterwards given him by Christ, (<4016>Matthew 16:18 <4042>John 1:42) is Greek, and answers to "Cephas", signifying a "rock": though this name is to be met with in the Talmudic [f221] writings, where we read of R. Jose, srjyp rb, "bar Petros". This his surname is added here, to distinguish him from Simon, the Canaanite. The name of his brother Andrew is generally thought to be Greek; though some have derived it from rdn, "to vow", and is also to be observed in the writings of the Jews [f222]; where mention is made of R. Chanina, yyrdna rb bar Andrei. They are further described by the work they were at, or business they were employed in,

casting a net into the sea; either in order to catch fish in it, or to wash it, (<40512>Luke 5:2) and the reason of their so doing is added; “for they were fishers”. Of this mean employment were the very first persons Christ was pleased to call to the work of the ministry; men of no education, who made no figure in life, but were despicable and contemptible: this he did, to make it appear, that they were not qualified for such service of themselves; that all their gifts and qualifications were from him; to show his own power; to confound the wisdom of the wise; and to let men see, that none ought to glory in themselves, but in him. The Jews have a notion of the word of God and prophecy being received and embraced only by such sort of persons: says R. Isaac Arama [f223],

> “his word came to heal all, but some particular persons only receive it; and who of all men are of a dull under standing, µyh ydb[µygyyd, “fishermen, who do business in the sea”: this is what is written; “they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord”: these seem not indeed fit to receive anything that belongs to the understanding, because of their dulness; and yet these receive the truth of prophecy and vision, because they believe his word.”

I cannot but think, that some respect is had to these fishers, in (<263710>Ezekiel 47:10) “it shall come to pass that fishers shall stand upon it”: that is, upon, or by the river of waters, said in (<263708>Ezekiel 47:8) to “issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert”: which both R. Jarchi and Kimchi understand of the sea of Tiberias; the same with the sea of Galilee, by which Christ walked; and where he found these fishers at work, and called them. See also (<241616>Jeremiah 16:16)

Ver. 19. *And he saith unto them, follow me*, etc.] These two brethren had been the disciples of John, as Theophylact thinks, and which seems agreeable to (<430105>John 1:35-40) and though through John’s pointing out Christ unto them, they had some knowledge of him, and conversation with him, yet they abode with him but for that day, (<430137>John 1:37,38,39) and afterwards returned to their master; and upon his imprisonment, betook themselves to their former employment: from whence Christ now calls them to be his disciples, saying “follow me”, or “come after me”: that is, be a disciple of mine; (see <421427>Luke 14:27). And to encourage them to it, makes use of this argument; “and”, or “for”, I “will make you fishers of men”: you shall be fishers still, but in a higher sense; and in a far more

noble employment, and to much better purpose. The net they were to spread and cast was the Gospel, (see <4013 47>Matthew 13:47) for Christ made them not hrwt ygyyd, “fishers of the law”, to use the words of Maimonides [f224], but fishers of the Gospel. The sea into which they were to cast the net was first Judea, and then the whole world; the fish they were to catch were the souls of men, both among Jews and Gentiles; of whose conversion and faith they were to be the happy instruments: now none could make them fishers in this sense, or fit them for such service, and succeed them in it, but Christ; and who here promises it unto them.

Ver. 20. *And they straightway left their nets*, etc.] That is, as soon as he had called them, they left their worldly employment, and followed him; they gave up themselves to his service, and became his disciples; they not only left their “nets”, but their fishing boats, and fishing trade, and all that belonged to it, even all their substance; and also their relations, friends, and acquaintance, (see <4019 27>Matthew 19:27) which shows what a mighty power went along with the words and call of Christ; and what a ready, cheerful, and voluntary subjection this produces, wherever it takes place.

Ver. 21. *And going on from thence, he saw other two*, etc.] When he had gone but a little way further, (<4101 19>Mark 1:19) he spied two other persons he was looking for, and had designed to call to the office of apostleship; and these are also described as “brethren”, and by name,

James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother. The Jews make mention in their writings [f225], of one ydbz rb bq[y r, “R. James, the son of Zebedee”: which Capellus [f226] conjectures is the very same person here mentioned: but the James they speak of as a disciple of Jesus, they call hanym bq[y, “James the heretic” [f227]; who, they say, was of the village of Secaniah, and sometimes of the village of Sama. His brother’s name was John, who was the Evangelist, as well as Apostle: these were

in a ship with Zebedee their father. Men of this name, and sons of men of this name, were very common among the Jewish Rabbins; but neither this man, nor his sons, were masters or doctors in Israel; for such Christ chose not for his apostles. It seems to be the same name with Zebadiah, (<1327 07>1 Chronicles 27:7) these, with him, were “mending their nets”, which were broken, and needed repairing; and perhaps being poor, could not afford to buy new ones: this shows their industry and diligence, and may be a pattern

and example to persons, closely to attend the business of their calling, whilst the providence of God continues them in it.

And he called them: from their employment, to follow him, and become his disciples; and no doubt gave them the same promise and encouragement he had given the two former.

Ver. 22. *And they immediately left the ship*, etc.] More is expressed here than before, for they not only left their nets, but their ship too; which was of much more value; nay, even "their father" also, "with the hired servants", (<401020>Mark 1:20) and so complied with the call of Christ to his people, (<19450>Psalm 45:10) and thereby proved, that they were sincerely his followers, (<421426>Luke 14:26) and might expect the gracious promise of Christ to be made good unto them, (<401928>Matthew 19:28,29).

Ver. 23. *And Jesus went about all Galilee*, etc.] Having called four of his disciples, he took a tour throughout Galilee; a country mean and despicable, inhabited by persons poor, illiterate, vile, and wicked: such had the first fruits of Christ's ministry, and messages of his grace; which shows the freeness, sovereignty, and riches, of his abounding goodness. He went about "all" this country, both upper and nether Galilee, which was very populous: Josephus says [f228], there were two hundred and four cities and towns in it; he means, which were places of note, besides villages. He went about, not like Satan, seeking the destruction of men; but as one that went along with him says, "doing good", (<441038>Acts 10:38), both to the bodies and souls of men; for he was

teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. The places where he taught were "their synagogues": he did not creep into private houses, as the Pharisees then, and false apostles afterwards did; but he appeared openly, and declared his doctrine in places of public worship; where the Jews met together for divine service, to pray, read the Scriptures, and give a word of exhortation to the people; for though they had but one temple, which was at Jerusalem, they had many synagogues, or meeting places, all over the land: here Christ not only prayed and read, but "preached"; and the subject matter of his ministry was, "the Gospel of the kingdom": that is, the good news of the kingdom of the Messiah being come, and which now took place; wherefore he exhorted them to repent of, and relinquish their former principles; to receive the doctrines, and submit to the ordinances of the Gospel dispensation: he also preached to them the things concerning the kingdom of heaven; as that except a man be

born again, he cannot see it; and unless he has a better righteousness than his own, he cannot enter into it: he was also

healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people. It is in the Greek text, “every sickness and every disease”; that is, all sorts of maladies, disorders and distempers, which attend the bodies of men; and is another instance, besides (4005Matthew 3:5) in which the word “all”, or “every”, is to be taken in a limited and restrained sense, for “some”, or “some of all sorts”; which teaches us how to understand those phrases, when used in the doctrine of redemption by Christ.

Ver. 24. *And his fame went throughout all Syria*, etc.] For his ministry and miracles, especially the latter; wherefore

they brought to him, that is, out of Syria, the sick. Syria was in some respects reckoned as the land of Israel, though in others not.

> “The [f229] Rabbins teach, that in three respects Syria was like to the land of Israel, and in three to the countries with out the land: the dust defiled, as without the land; he that sold his servant to (one in) Syria, was as if he sold him to one without the land; and he that brought a bill of divorce from Syria, as if he brought it from without the land: and in three things it was like to the land of Israel; it was bound to tithes, and to the observance of the seventh year; and he that would go into it, might go into it with purity and he that purchased a field in Syria, was as if he had purchased one in the suburbs of Jerusalem.”

All sick people, that were taken with divers diseases and torments. This expresses in general, the grievous and tormenting diseases with which the persons were afflicted, who were brought to Christ for healing: some particular ones follow;

and those which were possessed with devils; in body as well as in mind; of which there were many instances, permitted by God on purpose, that Christ might have an opportunity of showing his power over those evil spirits.

And those which were lunatic; either melancholy persons, or mad and distracted men; that retired from the conversation of men, into fields or desert places: or such, whose disorders were influenced by the change of the moon; such as those who are troubled with the falling sickness; so the

Greeks [f230] call such persons σεληνιαζο- μενους the word here used by the Evangelist.

And those that had the palsy. These were each of them such disorders, as were incurable by the art of medicine; or for which rarely, and with great difficulty, any manner of relief could be obtained; and

he healed them; without any means, by a word speaking; which showed him more than a man, and truly and properly God.

Ver. 25. *And there followed him great multitudes of people*, etc.] Some on one account, and some on another; some out of good will, others out of ill will; some for the healing of their bodies, others for the good of their souls; some to see his miracles, others to hear his doctrine; and what with one and another, the concourse of people that followed him was greater than that which followed John. The Greek word for "multitude" is adopted into the Talmudic language, and is often used by the doctors; who have a tradition to this purpose, that awbr µyççm htwjp aswlkwa ˆya, "there is no multitude less than sixty myriads" [f231]; but we are not to imagine, that when here, and elsewhere, a multitude is said to follow, or attend on Christ, that he had such a number of people after him as this; only that the number was very large. The places from whence they came are particularly mentioned, as "from Galilee"; where he had called his disciples, had been preaching the Gospel, and healing all manner of diseases; and therefore it is not to be wondered at that he should have a large number of followers from hence. This country was divided into [f232] three parts:

> "There was upper Galilee, and nether Galilee, and the valley from Capharhananiah and upwards: all that part which did not bring forth sycamine trees was upper Galilee, and from Capharhananiah downwards: all that part which did bring forth sycamine trees was nether Galilee; and the coast of Tiberias was the valley."

Frequent mention is made in the Talmudic [f233] writings of upper Galilee, as distinct from the other.

And from Decapolis; a tract of land so called, from the "ten cities" that were in it; and which, according to Pliny [f234] were these following; Damascus, Opoton, Philadelphia, Raphana, Scythopolis, Gadara, Hippondion, Pella, Galasa, and Canatha; (see <4105>Mark 5:20 <4107>Mark 7:31)

“And from Jerusalem”; the metropolis of the whole land; for his fame had reached that great city, and there were some there, curious and desirous to see him, and hear him; though he was got into those distant and obscure parts.

And from Judea; from the other parts of it:

and from beyond Jordan; which was a distinct country of itself, known by the name of Peraea; so called, perhaps, from περαν, the word here translated, “from beyond”. It is to be observed, that here are three countries distinctly mentioned, Galilee, Judea, and “beyond Jordan”; which was the division of the land of Israel; of these three lands the Talmudists often speak.

> “It is a tradition of the Rabbins [f235], that in three countries they intercalate the year; Judea, and beyond Jordan, and Galilee.”

Again [f236],

> “There are three lands, that are obliged to the removing of fruits; Judea, and beyond Jordan, and Galilee.”

Once more [f237],

> “There are three countries for celebration of marriages, Judea, and “beyond Jordan”, and Galilee.”

The account which [f238] Maimonides gives of these three countries is this;

> “The land of Judea, all of it, the mountain, the plain, and the valley, are one country beyond Jordan, all of it, the plain of Lydda, and the mountain of the plain of Lydda, and from Betheron to the sea, are one country: Galilee, all of it, the upper and nether, and the coast of Tiberias, are one country.”

The country beyond Jordan was not so much esteemed as what was properly the land of Canaan, or Israel; for the Jews [f239] say,

> “the land of Israel is holier than all lands; because they bring out of it the sheaf, the first fruits, and the showbread, which they do not bring from other lands: the land of Canaan is holier than beyond Jordan; the land of Canaan is fit to be the habitation of the Shekinah; beyond Jordan is not.”

This, they say [f240], was not the land flowing with milk and honey.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 5

Ver. 1. *And seeing the multitudes*, etc.] The great concourse of people that followed him from the places before mentioned,

he went up into a mountain; either to pray alone, which was sometimes his custom to do, or to shun the multitude; or rather, because it was a commodious place for teaching the people:

and when he was set: not for rest, but in order to teach; for sitting was the posture of masters, or teachers, (see <401312>Matthew 13:2) (<402004>Luke 4:20 5:3 <430802>John 8:2). The form in which the master and his disciples sat is thus described by Maimonides [f241].

> "The master sits at the head, or in the chief place, and the disciples before him in a circuit, like a crown; so that they all see the master, and hear his words; and the master may not sit upon a seat, and the scholars upon the ground; but either all upon the earth, or upon seats: indeed from the beginning, or formerly, bçwy brh hyh "the master used to sit", and the disciples stand; but before the destruction of the second temple, all used to teach their disciples as they were sitting."

With respect to this latter custom, the Talmudists say [f242], that

> "from the days of Moses, to Rabban Gamaliel (the master of the Apostle Paul), they did not learn the law, unless standing; after Rabban Gamaliel died, sickness came into the world, and they learnt the law sitting: hence it is a tradition, that after Rabban Gamaliel died, the glory of the law ceased."

His disciples came unto him; not only the twelve, but the company, or multitude, of his disciples, (<420617>Luke 6:17) which he made in the several places, where he had been preaching; for the number of his disciples was larger than John's.

Ver. 2. *And he opened his mouth*, etc.] He spoke with a clear and strong voice, that all the people might hear him; and with great freedom, utterance, and cheerfulness, and things of the greatest moment and importance;

and taught them; not his disciples only, but the whole multitude, who heard him with astonishment; (see <4072>Matthew 7:28,29). Some things in the following discourse are directed to the disciples in particular, and others regard the multitude in general.

Ver. 3. *Blessed are the poor in spirit*, etc.] Not the poor in purse, or who are so with respect to things temporal: for though God has chosen and called many, who are in such a condition of life, yet not all; the kingdom of heaven cannot be said to belong to them all, or only; but such as are poor in a spiritual sense. All mankind are spiritually poor; they have nothing to eat that is fit and proper; nor any clothes to wear, but rags; nor are they able to purchase either; they have no money to buy with; they are in debt, owe ten thousand talents, and have nothing to pay; and in such a condition, that they are not able to help themselves. The greater part of mankind are insensible of this their condition; but think themselves rich, and increased with goods: there are some who are sensible of it, who see their poverty and want, freely acknowledge it, bewail it, and mourn over it; are humbled for it, and are broken under a sense of it; entertain low and mean thoughts of themselves; seek after the true riches, both of grace and glory; and frankly acknowledge, that all they have, or hope to have, is owing to the free grace of God. Now these are the persons intended in this place; who are not only “poor”, but are poor “in spirit”; in their own spirits, in their own sense, apprehension, and judgment: and may even be called “beggars”, as the word may be rendered; for being sensible of their poverty, they place themselves at the door of mercy, and knock there; their language is, “God be merciful”; their posture is standing, watching, and waiting, at wisdom’s gates, and at the posts of her door; they are importunate, will have no denial, yet receive the least favour with thankfulness. Now these are pronounced “blessed”, for this reason,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; not only the Gospel, and the ministration of it, which belongs to them. “The poor have the Gospel preached”: it not only reaches their ears, but their hearts; it enters into them, is applied unto them, they receive and embrace it with the utmost joy and gladness; but eternal glory, this is prepared for them, and given to

them; they are born heirs of it, have a right unto it, are making meet for it, and shall enjoy it.

Ver. 4. *Blessed are they that mourn*, etc.] For sin, for their own sins; the sin of their nature, indwelling sin, which is always working in them, and is a continual grief of mind to them; the unbelief of their hearts, notwithstanding the many instances, declarations, promises, and discoveries of grace made unto them; their daily infirmities, and many sins of life, because they are committed against a God of love, grace, and mercy, grieve the Spirit, and dishonour the Gospel of Christ: who mourn also for the sins of others, for the sins of the world, the profaneness and wickedness that abound in it; and more especially for the sins of professors, by reason of which, the name of God, and ways of Christ, are evil spoken of: who likewise mourn under afflictions, spiritual ones, temptations, desertions, and declensions; temporal ones, their own, which they receive, either more immediately from the hand of God, or from men; such as they endure for the sake of Christ, and the profession of his Gospel; and who sympathize with others in their afflictions. These, how sorrowful and distressed soever they may appear, are blessed

for they shall be comforted: here in this life, by the God of all comfort, by Christ the comforter; by the Spirit of God, whose work and office it is to comfort; by the Scriptures of truth, which are written for their consolation; by the promises of the Gospel, through which the heirs of promise have strong consolation; by the ordinances of it, which are breasts of consolation; and by the ministers of the word, who have a commission from the Lord to speak comfortably to them; and then are they comforted, when they have the discoveries of the love of God, manifestations of pardoning grace, through the blood of Christ, and enjoy the divine presence: and they shall be comforted hereafter; when freed from all the troubles of this life, they shall be blessed with uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, and with the happy society of angels and glorified saints. (Isaiah 61:1-3) seems to be referred to, both in this, and in the preceding verse.

Ver. 5. *Blessed are the meek*, etc.] Who are not easily provoked to anger; who patiently bear, and put up with injuries and affronts; carry themselves courteously, and affably to all; have the meanest thoughts of themselves, and the best of others; do not envy the gifts and graces of other men; are willing to be instructed and admonished, by the meanest of the saints;

quietly submit to the will of God, in adverse dispensations of providence; and ascribe all they have, and are, to the grace of God. Meekness, or humility, is very valuable and commendable. The Jews, though a proud, haughty, and wrathful people, cannot but speak in its praise:

> "Wisdom, fear, and meekness, say [f243] they, are of high esteem; but hwn[, "meekness", is greater than them all."

They had two very considerable doctors in the time of Christ, Hillell and Shammai; the one was of a meek, the other of an angry disposition: hence, say they [f244],

> "Let a man be always meek as Hillell, and let him not be angry as Shammai."

Here meekness is to be considered, not as a moral virtue, but as a Christian grace, a fruit of the Spirit of God; which was eminently in Christ, and is very ornamental to believers; and of great advantage and use to them, in hearing and receiving the word; in giving an account of the reason of the hope that is in them; in instructing and restoring such, who have backslidden, either in principle or practice; and in the whole of their lives and conversations; and serves greatly to recommend religion to others: such who are possessed of it, and exercise it, are well pleasing to God; when disconsolate, he comforts them; when hungry, he satisfies them; when they want direction, he gives it to them; when wronged, he will do them right; he gives them more grace here, and glory hereafter. The blessing instanced, in which they shall partake of, is,

they shall inherit the earth; not the land of Canaan, though that may be alluded to; nor this world, at least in its present situation; for this is not the saints' rest and inheritance: but rather, the "new earth", which will be after this is burnt up; in which only such persons as are here described shall dwell; and who shall inherit it, by virtue of their being heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof. Though some think heaven is here designed, and is so called, partly for the sake of variety of expression, from (<4003>Matthew 5:3) and partly in allusion to the land of Canaan, a type of it; and may be called an earth, or country, that is an heavenly one, in opposition to this earthly one; as the heavenly Jerusalem is opposed to the earthly one, and which will be a glorious inheritance. The passage, referred to is (<19711>Psalm 37:11).

Ver. 6. *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst*, etc.] Not after the riches, honours, and pleasures of this world, but

after righteousness; by which is meant, not justice and equity, as persons oppressed and injured; nor a moral, legal righteousness, which the generality of the Jewish nation were eagerly pursuing; but the justifying righteousness of Christ, which is imputed by God the Father, and received by faith. To "hunger and thirst" after this, supposes a want of righteousness, which is the case of all men; a sense of want of it, which is only perceived by persons spiritually enlightened; a discovery of the righteousness of Christ to them, which is made in the Gospel, and by the Spirit of God; a value for it, and a preference of it to all other righteousness; and an earnest desire after it, to be possessed of it, and found in it; and that nothing can be more grateful than that, because of its perfection, purity, suitableness, and use: happy souls are these,

for they shall be filled: with that righteousness, and with all other good things, in consequence of it; and particularly with joy and peace, which are the certain effects of it: or, "they shall be satisfied", that they have an interest in it; and so satisfied with it, that they shall never seek for any other righteousness, as a justifying one, in the sight of God; this being full, perfect, sufficient, and entirely complete.

Ver. 7. *Blessed are the merciful*, etc.] Who show mercy to the bodies of men, to those that are poor, indigent, and miserable, in their outward circumstances; by both sympathizing with them, and distributing unto them; not only making use of expressions of pity and concern; but communicating with readiness and cheerfulness, with affection and tenderness, and with a view to the glory of God: who also show mercy to the souls of men, by instructing such as are ignorant, giving them good counsel and advice: reproving them for sin, praying for them, forgiving injuries done by them, and by comforting those that are cast down. To show mercy is very delightful to, and desirable by God; it is what he requires, and is one of the weightier matters of the law; it is very ornamental to a child of God, and what makes him more like to his heavenly Father. The happiness of such persons is this, that

they shall obtain mercy; from man, whenever they are attended with any uncomfortable circumstances of life; wyl[^ymjrm µjrm lk, "whoever is merciful", men show mercy to him [f245]: and from God, through Christ;

which is free, sovereign, abundant, and eternal. Men are said to obtain this, when they are regenerated, and called by grace; and when they have a discovery, and an application, of the forgiveness of their sins: but here, it seems to design those supplies of grace and mercy, which merciful persons may expect to find and obtain, at the throne of grace, to help them in time of need; and who shall not only obtain mercy of God in this life, but in the world to come, in the great day of the Lord; for which the Apostle prayed for Onesiphorus, (2 Timothy 1:18).

Ver. 8. *Blessed are the pure in heart*, etc.] Not in the head; for men may have pure notions and impure hearts; not in the hand, or action, or in outward conversation only; so the Pharisees were outwardly righteous before men, but inwardly full of impurity; but “in heart”. The heart of man is naturally unclean; nor is it in the power of man to make it clean, or to be pure from his sin; nor is any man in this life, in such sense, so pure in heart, as to be entirely free from sin. This is only true of Christ, angels, and glorified saints: but such may be said to be so, who, though they have sin dwelling in them, are justified from all sin, by the righteousness of Christ, and are “clean through the word”, or sentence of justification pronounced upon them, on the account of that righteousness; whose iniquities are all of them forgiven, and whose hearts are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, which cleanses from all sin; and who have the grace of God wrought in their hearts, which, though as yet imperfect, it is entirely pure; there is not the least spot or stain of sin in it: and such souls as they are in love with, so they most earnestly desire after more purity of heart, lip, life, and conversation. And happy they are,

for they shall see God; in this life, enjoying communion with him, both in private and public, in the several duties of religion, in the house and ordinances of God; where they often behold his beauty, see his power and his glory, and taste, and know, that he is good and gracious: and in the other world, where they shall see God in Christ, with the eyes of their understanding; and God incarnate, with the eyes of their bodies, after the resurrection; which sight of Christ, and God in Christ, will be unspeakably glorious, desirable, delightful, and satisfying; it will be free from all darkness and error, and from all interruption; it will be an appropriating and transforming one, and will last for ever.

Ver. 9. *Blessed are the peace makers*, etc.] Not between God and man, for no man can make his own peace with God; nor can any mere creature,

angels, or men, make it for him; Christ, in this sense, is the only peace maker: but between men and men; and such are they, who are of peaceable dispositions themselves; live peaceably with all men, and with one another, as their relation obliges to, and their mutual comfort requires; and with the men of the world; and who are ready, willing, and very serviceable, in composing differences, and making peace between their fellow creatures and fellow Christians. The Jews speak very highly, and much, in the commendation of peace making; they reckon this among the things which shall be of use to a man, both in this, and the other world.

> "These are the things, (say they [f246],) the fruit of which a man enjoys in this world, and his lot or portion remains for him in the world to come; honouring father and mother, liberality, wrybjl µda ˆyb µwlç tabhw, "and making peace between a man and his neighhour.""

This, they say [f247], Aaron was much disposed to.

> "Moses used to say, let justice break through the mountain; but Aaron loved peace, and pursued it, and made peace between a man and his neighhour, as is said, (<3026>Malachi 2:6.)"

Hence that saying of Hillell [f248],

> "be thou one of the disciples of Aaron, who loved peace, and followed after it; he loved men, and brought them to the law."

Now of such persons it is said, that

they shall be called the children of God; that is, they are the children of God by adopting grace, which is made manifest in their regeneration; and that is evidenced by the fruits of it, of which this is one; they not only shall be, and more manifestly appear to be, the sons of God hereafter; but they are, and are known to be so now, by their peaceable disposition, which is wrought in them by the Spirit of God; whereby they become like to the God of peace, and to Christ, the great and only peacemaker, and so are truly sons of peace.

Ver. 10. *Blessed are they which are persecuted*, etc.] Not for any crimes they have done, for unrighteousness and iniquity, as murderers, thieves, and evildoers, but

for righteousness sake: on account of their righteous and godly conversation, which brings upon them the hatred and enmity of the men of the world: for saints, by living righteously, separate themselves from them, and profess themselves not to belong to them; their religious life sets a brand upon, and distinguishes other persons; yea, it reproves and condemns their wicked lives and practices; and this fills them with wrath against them, and puts them on persecuting them: or by "righteousness" may be meant, a righteous cause, the cause of Christ and his Gospel; for by making a profession of Christ, showing a concern for his interest, and by engaging in a vindication of his person and truths, saints expose themselves to the rage and persecution of men: and particularly, they are persecuted for preaching, maintaining, or embracing, the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ; because it is not of man, nor agreeable to the carnal reason of man; it is opposite to the way of justification, which men naturally receive; it excludes boasting, and is contrary to their carnal and selfish principles: persecution is either verbal with the tongue, by cruel mockings and reproachful language; or real, by deeds, such as confiscation of goods, banishment, imprisonment of body, and innumerable sorts of death: the latter seems here more especially designed, and both are expressed in the following verse; and yet the saints, though thus used, or rather abused, are happy;

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven: the same blessedness is predicated of these as of the poor in spirit, ver. 3.

Ver. 11. *Blessed are ye when men shall revile you*, etc.] These words are particularly directed to the disciples of Christ, and are designed to inform them, that they should not be exempted from reproach and persecution, and to animate and fortify them against it; and are prophetical of what they, and the first Christians particularly, were to endure for Christ's sake. Men should "revile" them, speak very reproachfully of them, brand them with infamy, and load them with disgrace; and

persecute you from place to place, by ill usage of all sorts;

and shall say all manner of evil against you: the worst things they could think of and invent, and all of them; such as that they were seditious persons, enemies to the commonwealth, and the public good, guilty of sacrilege, incest, and murder but what would serve to relieve them under these heavy charges is, that they were "falsely" laid; there was not a word of truth in them; wherefore their own hearts would not reproach them; but

all were the malicious lies of men, invented on purpose to bring them and Christianity into disgrace: and that they were brought against "them for Christ's sake", for his name's sake, for the sake of his Gospel and interest: the treatment they meet with is on his account, and the same that he himself met with; the like reproaches fell on him, which will be all wiped off from him and them another day; when they will appear to be the blessed persons, and their revilers and persecutors the unhappy ones. The Jews have some sayings not unlike these, and which may serve to illustrate them:

> "ajal aht alw ajwl aht, "be thou cursed", or bearing curses, but do not curse [f249]. The gloss upon it is, it is better to be one of them that are cursed, than to be of them that curse; for, at the end, the curse causeless returns to him that curseth."

Again [f250],

> "for ever let a man be of them that are persecuted, and not of them that persecute; of them that suffer injury, and not of them that do it."

Once more [f251],

> "they that suffer injury, and do it not; who hear reproach, and do not return it; who act from love, and rejoice in chastisements, of them the Scripture says, "let them that love him", etc. (Judges 5:31)."

Ver. 12. *Rejoice and be exceeding glad*, etc.] Because of the honour put upon them, the glory they bring to Christ and his cause, by cheerfully suffering for it; and because of the glory and happiness that shall follow upon their sufferings:

for great is your reward in heaven; not of debt, but of grace; for there is no proportion or comparison between what the saints suffer for Christ, and the glory that shall be revealed in them by him; not in earth, but in heaven. Saints must not expect their reward here, but hereafter, when God himself will be their reward; he will be all in all; Christ and all his glory, glory and all the riches of it will be the reward of the inheritance, and which must needs be a "great" one. And the more to animate them to suffer with joyfulness, and to support them under all their reproaches and persecutions, it is added;

for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you; as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah, and others; which shows, that what should befall them was no new and strange thing, but what had been the lot of the most eminent servants of God in former ages.

Ver. 13. *Ye are the salt of the earth*, etc.] This is to be understood of the disciples and apostles of Christ; who might be compared to "salt", because of the savoury doctrines they preached; as all such are, which are agreeable to the Scriptures, and are of the evangelic kind, which are full of Christ, serve to exalt him, and to magnify the grace of God; and are suitable to the experiences of the saints, and are according to godliness, and tend to promote it: also because of their savoury lives and conversations; whereby they recommended, and gave sanction to the doctrines they preached, were examples to the saints, and checks upon wicked men. These were the salt "of the earth"; that is, of the inhabitants of the earth, not of the land of Judea only, where they first lived and preached, but of the whole world, into which they were afterwards sent to preach the Gospel.

But if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? The "savour" here supposed that it may be lost, cannot mean the savour of grace, or true grace itself, which cannot be lost, being an incorruptible seed; but either gifts qualifying men for the ministry, which may cease; or the savoury doctrines of the Gospel, which may be departed from; or a seeming savoury conversation, which may be neglected; or that seeming savour, zeal, and affection, with which the Gospel is preached, which may be dropped: and particular respect seems to be had to Judas, whom Christ had chosen to the apostleship, and was a devil; and who he knew would lose his usefulness and place, and become an unprofitable wretch, and at last be rejected of God and men; and this case is proposed to them all, in order to engage them to take heed to themselves, their doctrine and ministry. Moreover, this is but a supposition;

if the salt, etc. and proves no matter of fact; and the Jews have a saying [f252], that all that season lose their savour "hm[j hgypm hnya jlmw, but salt does not lose its savour". Should it do so,

it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot. Salt is good for nothing, but to make things savoury, and preserve from putrefaction; and when it has lost its savour, it is of no use, neither to men nor beasts, as some things are when corrupted; nor is it of

any use to the land, or dunghill, for it makes barren, and not fruitful: so ministers of the word, when they have dropped the savoury doctrines of the Gospel, or have quitted their former seeming savoury and exemplary conversations; as their usefulness is gone, so, generally speaking, it is never retrieved; they are cast out of the churches of Christ, and are treated with contempt by everyone.

Ver. 14. *Ye are the light of the world*, etc.] What the luminaries, the sun and moon, are in the heavens, with respect to corporal light, that the apostles were in the world with regard to spiritual light; carrying and spreading the light of the Gospel not only in Judea, but all over the world, which was in great darkness of ignorance and error; and through a divine blessing attending their ministry, many were turned from the darkness of Judaism and Gentilism, of sin and infidelity, to the marvellous light of divine grace. The Jews were wont to say, that of the Israelites in general, and particularly of their sanhedrim, and of their learned doctors, what Christ more truly applies here to his apostles; they observe [f253], that

> "on the fourth day it was said, "let there be light": which was done with respect to the Israelites, because they are they µlw[l µyryam, "which give light to the world", as it is written, (<271203>Daniel 12:3)"

And in another place [f254], say they,

> "how beautiful are the great ones of the congregation, and the wise men, who sit in the sanhedrim! for they are they aml[l ˆyrhnm, "that enlighten the world", the people of the house of Israel."

So. R. Meir, R. Akiba his disciple, and R. Judah the prince, are each of them called [f255] µlw[h rwa, "the light of the world"; as R. Jochanan ben Zaccai is by his disciples, µlw[rn, "the lamp of the world" [f256]: and it was usual for the head of a school, or of an university to be styled [f257] aml[d arwhn, "the light of the world"; but this title much better agrees and suits with the persons Christ gives it to, who, no question, had a view to those exalted characters the Jews gave to their celebrated Rabbins. A city that

is set on an hill cannot be hid; alluding either to Nazareth, where he was educated, and had lately preached, which was built on an hill, from the

brow of which the inhabitants sought to have cast him headlong, (<40 4029>Luke 4:29) or to Capernaum, which, on account of its height, is said to be

exalted unto heaven, (<40 1123>Matthew 11:23) or to the city of Jerusalem, which was situated on a very considerable eminence. The land of Israel, the Jews say [f258], was higher than all other lands; and the temple at Jerusalem was higher than any other part of the land of Israel. And as a city cannot be hid which is built on a high place, so neither could, nor ought the doctrines which the apostles were commissioned to preach, be hid, or concealed from men: they were not to shun to declare the whole counsel of God, nor study to avoid the reproaches and persecutions of men; for they were to be "made a spectacle"; to be set as in a public theatre, to be seen by "the world, angels, and men".

Ver. 15. *Neither do men light a candle*, etc.] Which may be read impersonally, "a candle is not lighted": and by it may be meant the Gospel, and gifts qualifying men to preach it; which, like a candle, was lighted in the evening of the Jewish dispensation, though not confined to the land of Judea; but has shone throughout the world, being as a candle to be removed, and has been removed from place to place: wherever it is set, it gives light, more or less, and dispels darkness; it is useful both to work by and walk with; it does not always burn alike clearly, it needs looking after; it has its thieves, as candles sometimes have; and will give the greatest light towards the close of the world, as they usually do, when ready to go out. Now when a candle is lighted by men, they do not

put it under a bushel, or anything which may hide and cover it, and so hinder its light and usefulness. The Greek word μοδιος, rendered a "bushel", answers to the Hebrew has, "seah", which is the very word used in Munster's Hebrew Gospel; and this was a dry measure that held about a gallon and a half; and accordingly is rendered here by the Syriac atas. The design of the expression is, that Christ has lighted the candle of the everlasting Gospel, and given gifts to men for the ministration of it, not to be concealed and neglected, or to be used as the servant did his lord's money, wrap it up in a napkin, and hide it in the earth. Ministers are not, through slothfulness, to neglect the gift that is in them; nor, through fear, to hide their talents, or keep back any part of the Gospel, or cover anything out of sight, which may be profitable to souls: "but" men, when they light a candle, put it

on a candlestick, and it giveth light to all that are in the house; as on the candlestick in the temple, a type of the church; where Christ has set the light of the Gospel, where it is held forth particularly by the ministers of the word, to illuminate the whole house and family of God; by the light of which poor sinners, the lost pieces of silver, are looked up; straggling souls are brought home; hypocrites and formalists are detected; and saints are enlightened, directed, and comforted. Much such a proverbial saying is used by the Jews [f259]:

> "do not leave a vessel of balsam in a dunghill, but move it from its place, that its smell may spread, and men may receive profit from it."

Ver. 16. *Let your light so shine before men*, etc.] Here Christ applies the foregoing simile to his disciples, and more fully opens the meaning and design of it. His sense is this; that the light of the Gospel, which he had communicated to them, the spiritual knowledge of the mysteries of grace, which he had favoured them with, were to be openly declared, and made manifest before men. Light was not given merely for their own private use, but for the public good of mankind; and therefore, as they were placed as lights in the world, they were to hold forth, in the most open and conspicuous manner, the word of light and life:

that they may see your good works: meaning their zeal and fervency; their plainness and openness; their sincerity, faithfulness, and integrity; their courage and intrepidity; their diligence, industry, and indefatigableness in preaching the Gospel; their strict regard to truth, the honour of Christ, and the good of souls; as also their very great care and concern to recommend the doctrines of grace, by their example in their lives and conversations:

and glorify your Father which is in heaven; that is, that when the ministration of the Gospel has been blessed, for the illumination of the minds of men, to a thorough conviction of their state; and for their regeneration, conversion, sanctification, and comfort; they may give praise to God, and bless his name for qualifying and sending such Gospel ministers to show unto them the way of salvation; and that the word has been made useful to them for communicating spiritual light, life, joy, and comfort, µymçbç wnyba, "Our and your Father which is in heaven", is a name, appellation, or periphrasis of God, frequently used by Jewish writers [f260]; and is often expressed by Christ in these his sermons on the mount.

Ver. 17. *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets*, etc.] From verse 3 to the 10th inclusive, our Lord seems chiefly to respect the whole body of his true disciples and followers; from thence, to the 16th inclusive, he addresses the disciples, whom he had called to be ministers of the word; and in this "verse", to the end of his discourse, he applies himself to the whole multitude in general; many of whom might be ready to imagine, that by the light of the Gospel, he was giving his disciples instructions to spread in the world, he was going to set aside, as useless, the law of Moses, or the prophets, the interpreters of it, and commentators upon it. Christ knew the thoughts of their hearts, that they had taken up such prejudices in their minds against him; wherefore he says, "think not"; he was sensible what objections they were forming, and what an improvement they would make of them against his being the Messiah, and therefore prevents them, saying,

I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. By "the law" is meant the moral law, as appears from the whole discourse following: this he came not to "destroy", or loose men's obligations to, as a rule of walk and conversation, but "to fulfil" it; which he did doctrinally, by setting it forth fully, and giving the true sense and meaning of it; and practically, by yielding perfect obedience to all its commands, whereby he became "the end", the fulfilling end of it. By "the prophets" are meant the writings of the prophets, in which they illustrated and explained the law of Moses; urged the duties of it; encouraged men thereunto by promises; and directed the people to the Messiah, and to an expectation of the blessings of grace by him: all which explanations, promises, and prophecies, were so far from being made void by Christ, that they receive their full accomplishment in him. The Jews [f261] pretend that these words of Christ are contrary to the religion and faith of his followers, who assert, that the law of Moses is abolished; which is easily refuted, by observing the exact agreement between Christ and the Apostle Paul, (◁Romans 3:31 10:4▷) and whenever he, or any other of the apostles, speaks of the abrogation of the law, it is to be understood of the ceremonial law, which in course ceased by being fulfilled; or if of the moral law, not of the matter, but of the ministry of it. This passage of Christ is cited in the Talmud [f262], after this manner:

> "it is written in it, i.e. in the Gospel, "I Aven", neither to diminish from the law of Moses am I come, "but", or "nor" (for in the

Amsterdam edition they have inserted alw between two hooks), to add to the law of Moses am I come."

Which, with their last correction, though not a just citation, yet tolerably well expresses the sense; but a most blasphemous character is affixed to Christ, when they call him "Aven"; which signifies "iniquity" itself, and seems to be a wilful corruption of the word "Amen", which begins the next "verse".

Ver. 18. *For verily I say unto you*, etc.] Or "I Amen say unto you", which is one of the names of Christ; (see Revelation 3:14) or the word "Amen" is only used by Christ as an asseveration of what he was about to say; and which, for greater confirmation, is usually doubled in the Evangelist John, "Amen, Amen", or "verily, verily". The word is used by the Jews [f263] for an oath; they swore by it; and it is a rule with them, that whoever answers "Amen" after an oath, it is all one as if he had pronounced the oath itself. The thing so strongly affirmed in this solemn manner is,

till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. The ιωτα "or jot", in the Greek language, answers to "jod" in the Hebrew, the least of all the letters in the alphabet; hence a little city is called by this name, and this reason is given for it, [f264] twytwab hnjq dwyç, "because that jod is the least among letters". We read also of Rabbi Jod [f265], perhaps so called because ^jq hyh, he was little, as the author of Juchasin observes [f266]. This shows in what language the law was written; not in the Samaritan language, for the jod in that is a large letter, but in the Hebrew, in which it is very small; and particularly is written in a very diminutive character, in (Deuteronomy 32:18) "by one tittle" some think is meant one of those ducts, dashes, or corners of letters, which distinguish one letter from another, that are much alike; others have thought that one of the pricks or vowel points is intended; others, one of those little strokes in the tops of letters, which the Jews call [f267] "crowns" and "spikes", is here meant, in which they imagined great mysteries were contained; and there were some persons among them, who made it their business to search into the meaning of every letter, and of everyone of these little horns, or pricks, that were upon the top of them. So says R. Meir [f268],

> "in the time of the prophets there were such who very diligently searched every letter in the law, and explained every letter by itself; and do not wonder at this that they should expound every letter by itself, for they commented twaw twa lk lç wqw wq lk l[, upon everyone of the tops of each letter."

Such an expounder was Akiba ben Joseph [f269]. To which custom Christ is here supposed to have respect: however, certain it is that he speaks very much in the language, and agreeably to the mind of the Jewish doctors; and some things in their writings will serve to illustrate this passage,

> "If, (say they [f270],) all the nations of the world were gathered together, "to root one word out of the law", they could not do it; which you may learn from Solomon, who sought to root "one letter out of the law", the letter "jod", in (<051716>Deuteronomy 17:16,17) but the holy blessed God said, Solomon shall cease, and an hundred such as he (in the Talmud [f271] it is a thousand such as he) µlw[l hlyjb hnya Æmm dwyw, "but, jod shall not cease from thee (the law) for ever"."

And elsewhere the same expression is used [f272], and it is added,

> "ljbm ynya Æmm hxwqw, "but a tittle from thee shall not perish."

The design of Christ, in conformity to the language of the Jews, is to declare, that no part of the law, not one of the least commandments in it, as he explains himself in the next verse, should be unaccomplished; but all should be fulfilled before "heaven and earth pass" away, as they will, with a great noise and fervent heat, as to their present form and condition; or sooner shall they pass away, than the least part of the law shall: which expresses the perpetuity of the law, and the impossibility of its passing away, and the superior excellency of it to the heavens and the earth. It is a saying of one of the Jewish doctors [f273], that

> "the whole world is not equal even to one word out of the law,"

in which it is said, there is not one letter deficient or superfluous.

Ver. 19. *Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments*, etc.] Which are to be understood not of the beatitudes in the preceding verses, for these were not delivered by Christ under the form of commandments; nor of any of the peculiar commands of Christ under

the Gospel dispensation; but of the precepts of the law, of which some were comparatively lesser than others; and might be said to be broke, loosed, or dissolved, as the word here used signifies, when men acted contrary to them.

And shall teach men so; not only teach them by their example to break the commandments, but by express orders: for however gross and absurd this may seem to be, that there should be any such teachers, and they should have any hearers, yet such there were among the Jews; and our Lord here manifestly strikes at them: for notwithstanding the great and excellent things they say of the law, yet they tell us, that the doctors of the sanhedrim had power to root anything out of the law; to loose or make void any of its commands, for a time, excepting in the case of idolatry; and so might any true prophet, or wise man; which they pretend is sometimes necessary for the glory of God, and the good of men; and they are to be heard and obeyed, when they say, transgress anyone of all the commands which are in the law [f274]. Maimonides says [f275], that the sanhedrim had power, when it was convenient, for the time present, to make void an affirmative command, and to transgress a negative one, in order to return many to their religion; or to deliver many of the Israelites from stumbling at other things, they may do whatsoever the present time makes necessary: for so, adds he, the former wise men say, a man may profane one sabbath, in order to keep many sabbaths. And elsewhere [f276] he affirms,

> "if a prophet, whom we know to be a prophet, should order us twxm lkm tja l[rwb[l, "to transgress anyone of the commands", which are mentioned in the law, or many commands, whether light or heavy, for a time, we are ordered to hearken to him; and so we learn from the former wise men, by tradition, that in everything a prophet shall say to thee hrwt yrbd l[rwb[, "transgress the words of the law", as Elias on Mount Carmel, hear him, except in the case of idolatry."

And another of their writers says [f277],

> "it is lawful sometimes to make void the law, and to do that which appears to be forbidden."

Nay, they even [f278] say, that if a Gentile should bid an Israelite transgress anyone of the commands mentioned in the law, excepting idolatry, adultery, and murder, he may transgress with impunity, provided it is done

privately. You see what reason Christ had to express himself in the manner he does, and that with resentment, saying,

he shall be called, or be *the least in the kingdom of heaven*; meaning either the church of God, where he shall have neither a name, nor place; he shall not be in the least esteemed, but shall be cast out as a worthless man; or the ultimate state of happiness and glory, in the other world, where he shall not enter, as is said in the next verse; but, on the other hand,

whosoever shall do and teach; whose doctrine and conversation, principles and practices agree together; who both teach obedience to the law, and perform it themselves: where again he glances at the masters in Israel, and tacitly reproves them who said, but did not; taught the people what they themselves did not practise; and so were unworthy of the honour, which he that both teaches and does shall have: for

the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven; he shall be highly esteemed of in the church here, and be honoured hereafter in the world to come. The Jews have a saying somewhat like this;

> "he that lessens himself for the words of the law in this world, lwdg hç[n, "he shall become great" in the world to come [f279],"

or days of the Messiah.

Ver. 20. *For I say unto you*, etc.] These words are directed, not to the true disciples of Christ in general, or to his apostles in particular, but to the whole multitude of the people; who had in great esteem and admiration the Scribes and Pharisees, for their seeming righteousness and holiness; concerning which Christ says,

that except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. He mentions the Scribes, because they were the more learned part of the people, who were employed in writing out, and expounding the law; and the Pharisees, because they were the strictest sect among the Jews for outward religion and righteousness; and yet, it seems, their righteousness was very defective; it lay only in an external observance of the law; did not arise from a purified heart, or the principles of grace; nor was it performed sincerely, and with a view to the glory of God; but for their own applause, and in order to obtain eternal life: besides, they neglected the weightier matters of the law, and contented themselves with the lesser ones; and as

they were deficient in their practice, so they were very lax in their doctrines, as appears from the foregoing verse. Wherefore Christ informs his hearers, that they must have a better righteousness than these men had, if ever they expected to enter into the kingdom of heaven. There will be no admission into heaven without a righteousness: it was the loss of righteousness which removed Adam out of his earthly paradise; and it is not agreeable to the justice of God, to admit man into his heavenly paradise without one; yea, it is contrary to his nature, and would be destructive to the comfort of saints, to receive an unrighteous person into his kingdom and glory. A "pharisaical" righteousness will never bring a person thither; nor will any righteousness of man's, be it what it will, because the best is imperfect; it must be a righteousness exceeding that of the Scribes and Pharisees; and such is the righteousness of the saints: indeed their inherent righteousness, or the sanctification of the Spirit, is preferable to any righteousness of a natural man; it exceeds it in its author, nature, effects, and usefulness; yea, even works of righteousness done by believers are greatly preferable to any done by such men as are here mentioned: but, above all, the righteousness of Christ, which is imputed to them, and received by faith, is infinitely more excellent in its author, perfection, purity, and use; and which is their only right and title to eternal glory; and without which no man will be admitted into that glorious state.

Ver. 21. *Ye have heard*, etc.] That is, from the Scriptures being read to them, and the explanations of the ancients, which were called `at[mç`, "hearing", being read in the schools, and heard by the scholars [f280]; so that to "hear", was along with the recital of the text, to receive by tradition, the sense the elders had given of it: of this kind is the instance produced by Christ. Thus Onkelos, and Jonathan ben Uzziel, render the phrase, "him shall ye hear", in (Deuteronomy 18:15) by `ˆylbqt hynm`, "from him shall ye receive"; so those phrases [f281], `h[wmçh ypm wdml`, "they learn from hearing", or by report from others; and `h[wmçh ypm wrma` "they speak from hearing", or from what they have heard, are often used for receiving and reporting things as they have them by tradition. That "it was said", or "it hath been said"; this is also a Talmudic form of expression; often is this phrase to be met with in the Talmud, `rmatya`, "it has been said" [f282]; that is, by the ancient doctors, as here, "by them of old time", or "to the ancients", `µynwmdql` so in Munster's Hebrew Gospel; not to the Israelites in the time of Moses, but to the ancestors of the Jews, since the

times of Ezra; by the elders, who were contemporary with them; and who by their false glosses corrupted the law, when they recited any part of it to the people; or “by the ancients”, the ancient doctors and commentators, which preceded the times of Christ, whom the Jews often call wnynwmdq, “our ancients” [f283]. Now, upon that law, “thou shalt not kill”, they put this gloss, or added this by way of interpretation,

and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment; which they understood only of actual murder, either committed in their own persons, or by the means of others. Their rules for the judgment of such persons were these;

> “everyone that kills his neighbour with his hand; as if he strikes him with a sword, or with a stone that kills him; or strangles him till he die; or burns him in fire; seeing he kills him in any manner, in his own person, lo! such an one must be put to death ˆyd tybb, “by the house of judgment”, or the sanhedrim [f284].”

Not that which consisted of three persons only, but either that which consisted of twenty three, or the supreme one, which was made up of seventy one; which two last had only power of judging capital offences. Again,

> “if a man hires a murderer to kill his neighbour, or sends his servants, and they kill him, or binds him, and leaves him before a lion, or the like, and the beast kills him, everyone of these is a shedder of blood; and the sin of slaughter is in his hand; and he is guilty of death by the hand of heaven, i.e. God; but he is not to be put to death by the house of judgment, or the sanhedrim [f285].”

A little after, it is said, “their judgment” is delivered to heaven, i.e. to God; and this seems to be the sense of the word “judgment” here, namely, the judgment of God, or death by the hand of God; since it is manifestly distinguished from the council, or sanhedrim, in the next “verse”. The phrase,

in danger of judgment, is the same with [f286] ˆyd byyj, “guilty of judgment”, or deserves condemnation.

Ver. 22. *But I say unto you*, etc.] This is a Rabbinical way of speaking, used when a question is determined, and a false notion is refuted; it is a

magisterial form of expression, and well suits with Christ, the great teacher and master in Israel; who spake as one having authority, opposing himself, not to the law of “Moses, thou shalt not kill”; but to the false gloss the ancient doctors had put upon it, with which their later ones agreed. You say, that if one man kills another himself, he is to be put to death by the sanhedrim; and if he does it by proxy, he is to be left to the judgment of God, so wholly restraining the law to actual murder; but I affirm, that

whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of judgment. By “brother” is meant, not in a religious sense, one that is of the same faith, or in the same church state; nor, in a strict natural sense, one that is so in the bonds of consanguinity; but in a large sense, any man, of whatsoever country or nation: for we are to be angry with no man; that is, as is rightly added,

without a cause: for otherwise there is an anger which is not sinful, is in God, in Christ, in the holy angels; and is commendable in the people of God, when it arises from a true zeal for religion, the glory of God, and the interest of Christ; and is kindled against sin, their own, or others, all manner of vice, false doctrine, and false worship: but it is causeless anger which is here condemned by Christ, as a breach of the law, “thou shalt not kill”; and such persons are

in danger of judgment; not of any of the courts of judicature among the Jews, as the sanhedrim of three, or of twenty three, or of seventy one, which took no notice of anger, as a passion in the mind, only of facts committed; but of the judgment of God, as in the preceding “verse”, it being distinguished from the sanhedrim, or council, in the next clause.

And whosoever shall say to his brother Raca, shall be in danger of the council, or “sanhedrim”. The word Raca is expressive of indignation and contempt; it was used as a term of reproach. Some derive it from qqr to “spit upon”; as if the person that used it thought the man he spoke to deserved to be spit upon, and treated in the most contemptuous manner: but rather the word signifies “empty” and “vain”, and denotes a worthless, empty headed man; a man of no brains; a foolish, witless, fellow: so it is often used in Jewish writings. Take a few instances, as follow:

> “a certain person said to R. Jochanan [f287], Rabbi, expound, for it becomes thee to expound; for as thou hast said, so have I seen: he

> replied to him, aqyr Reka, if thou hadst not seen, thou wouldst not have believed."

Again[f288], it happened to R. Simeon ben Eliezer of Migdal Edar, who went from the house of Rabbi; and he met with a certain man very much deformed; he says unto him, hqyr Reka, how many are the deformed sons of "Abraham our father?" Many more instances might be given[f289]. Now I do not find that the use of this reproachful word was cognizable by the Jewish sanhedrim, or great council; nor is it our Lord's meaning that it was, only that it ought to have been taken notice of in a proper manner, as well as actual murder. He adds,

but whosoever shall say thou fool, shall be danger of hell fire. The word "fool" does not signify a man of weak parts, one that is very ignorant in things natural; this the word Raca imports; but a wicked reprobate man; in which sense Solomon often uses the word. The Persic version renders it here "wicked". There is a manifest gradation in the text from causeless anger in the breast, or reproachful words; and from thence to a censorious judging of a man's spiritual and eternal estate, which is what is here condemned. "Thou fool", is, thou wicked man, thou ungodly wretch, thou graceless creature, whose portion will be eternal damnation. Calling a man by such names was not allowed of by the Jews themselves, whose rules are:

> "he that calls his neighbour a servant, let him be excommunicated; a bastard, let him be beaten with forty stripes; [çr, "a wicked man", let him descend with him into his life or livelihood[f290]."

The gloss upon it is,

> "as if he should say, to this the sanhedrim is not obliged, but it is lawful to hate him, yea to lessen his sustenance, and exercise his trade,"

which was done to bring him to poverty and distress. So, it seems, the sanhedrim were not obliged to take notice of him. Again, they say,

> "it is forbidden a man to call his neighbour by a name of reproach [f291] everyone that calls his neighbour [çr, "a wicked man", shall be brought down to hell;"

which is pretty much what Christ here says,

shall be in danger of hell fire; or deserving of hell fire; or liable to, and in danger of punishment, even "unto hell fire". An expression much like this may be observed in Jarchi, on (<2Kings 24:23>Isaiah 24:23) where he speaks of some persons µnhgl µnhg ybyywjm, "who are guilty", deserving, or in danger of "hell unto hell". The word γεεννα, here used, and which is often used in the New Testament for "hell", is but the Hebrew µnh ayg, "Ge-Hinnom", the valley of Hinnom, where the children were caused to pass through the fire to Moloch. This place, the Jewish writers [f292] say,

> "Was a place well known, near to Jerusalem, a valley, whose fire was never quenched; and in which they burned the bones of anything that was unclean, and dead carcasses, and other pollutions."

Hence the word came to be used among them, as might be shown in innumerable instances, to express the place and state of the damned; and very fitly describes it.

Ver. 23. *Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar*, etc.] The Jews obliged such who had done any damage to their neighbours, by stealing from them, to make satisfaction before they brought their offering; concerning which they say [f293],

> "he that brings what he has stolen, before he brings his trespass offering, is right; he that brings his trespass offering, before he brings that which he has stolen, is not right."

Again [f294],

> "they do not bring the trespass offering before the sum of what is stolen is returned, either to the owners, or to the priests."

Some have thought Christ refers to this; only what they restrained to pecuniary damages, he extends to all sorts of offences. But not a trespass offering, but a freewill offering, seems to be designed by "the gift": which, when a man either intended to bring, or was going to bring, or had already brought, as a voluntary sacrifice to be offered unto God; and it came into his mind, that he had offended any man by showing any undue passion, or by any reproachful words, then he was to do what is advised in the following verse: "and there", whilst going, or when at the altar,

rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee: hath anything to charge thee with; any just ground of complaint against thee; if thou hast done him any injury, or given him any offence: particularly, if he had at any time said Raca to him, or called him “fool” for those words have reference to what goes before, and are a corollary, or conclusion from them, as appears from the causal particle “therefore”.

Ver. 24. *Leave there thy gift before the altar*, etc.] This might easily be done, and the business soon dispatched, at some seasons; particularly, at their public feasts, as the passover, pentecost, and feast of tabernacles, when all the Israelites were together:

and go thy way; make what haste thou canst,

first be reconciled to thy brother: use all means to reconcile him; acknowledge the offence; ask his pardon; assure him that thou wishest well to him, and not ill;

and then come and offer thy gift, by putting it on the altar, before which it was left. This shows, that acts of love and friendship are preferable to sacrifices; and that sacrifices offered up in wrath, and whilst unreconciled to others, are unacceptable to God, and of no avail: and so much the Jews themselves seem to acknowledge; when they say [f295]:

> “that transgressions, which are between a man and God, the day of atonement expiates; the transgressions which are between a man and his neighbour, the day of atonement does not expiate, wrybj ta hxryç d[, “until he hath reconciled his neighbour.””

Which is enlarged upon, and explained by Maimonides [f296], after this manner:

> “the day of atonement does not expiate any transgressions, but those that are between a man and God, as when one eats anything that is forbidden, and lies with anything that is forbidden, or the like; but transgressions which are between a man and his neighbour, as he that hurts his neighbour, or curses his neighbour, or steals from him, and the like, are never forgiven, until he has given his neighbour what he owed him, and has “reconciled” him; yea, though he has returned to him the money he owed him, he ought to “reconcile” him, and desire him to forgive him; yea, even though “he has only provoked him by words”, (which is the very case in

> the text before us,) wsyypl Æyrx, “he ought to reconcile him”, and to meet him until he forgives him: if his neighbour will not forgive, he must bring with him three of his friends, and meet him, and entreat him; and if he will not be reconciled by them, he must bring them a second, and a third time.”

So that he was to use all means to obtain a reconciliation.

Ver. 25. *Agree with thine adversary quickly*, etc.] These words are not to be understood in an allegorical sense, as if “the adversary” was the justice of God, demanding payment of debts; “the way”, this present life; “the judge”, God himself; “the officer”, the devil; “the prison”, the pit of hell; and “the uttermost farthing”, the least sin, which will never be remitted without satisfaction: but the design of them is to prevent lawsuits about debts, which may be in dispute; it being much better for debtor and creditor, especially the former, to compose such differences among themselves, than to litigate the matter in a court of judicature. By “the adversary” is meant not an enemy, one that bears hatred and ill will, but a brother that has ought against a man; a creditor, who demands and insists upon payment of what is owing to him; and for this purpose has taken methods towards bringing the debtor before a proper magistrate, in order to oblige him to payment: wherefore it is better for him to make up and agree the matter directly, as soon as possible,

whilst thou art in the way with him; that is, whilst the creditor and debtor are going together to some inferior magistrate, or lesser court, as the sanhedrim, which consisted of three persons only, before whom such causes might be tried: for hçwlçb twnwmm ynyd, pecuniary causes, or causes relating to money matters, were tried “by the bench of three” [f297]: and the selfsame advice is given in the Talmud [f298], as here, where it seems to be a common proverb; for it is said,

> “there are men that say, or men usually say, [mtçya Æbbd l[bl Æjrwa bga, “whilst thou art in the way with thine adversary, be obedient”.”

Lest at any time the adversary should deliver thee to the judge, a superior magistrate in a higher court; for if the creditor would, he could oblige the debtor to go with him to the supreme court of judicature, and try the cause there; for so say the Jewish [f299]; canons:

> “if the creditor says we will go to the great sanhedrim, they compel the debtor, and he goes up with them, as it is said, “the borrower is servant to the lender”,”

where it might go harder with the poor debtor; and therefore it was advisable to prevent it by an agreement, lest

the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

> “It was an affirmative command in the law, says Maimonides, to appoint “judges” and “officers” in every country and province, as it is said, (Deuteronomy 16:18). µyjpwç, “judges” they are the judges that are fixed in the sanhedrim, and such that engage in law suits come before them: µyrjwç, “officers”; these are the masters of the rod and scourge, i.e. who beat and scourge delinquents; and these stand before the judges — and all they do, is by the order of the judges.”

Now it is one of these that is meant by “the officer”; in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel, he is called rjwç; who, when he had authority from the judge, could cast into prison, and that for debt; of which we have no account in the law of Moses.

Ver. 26. *Verily, I say unto thee*, etc.] This may be depended upon, you may assure yourself of it, that

thou shalt by no means come out thence, from prison,

till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing, or “last farthing”; or as the Ethiopic version reads it, “till thou hast exactly paid all”; which seems to express the inexorableness of the creditor, and the impossibility of the debtor’s release.

Ver. 27. *Ye have heard that it was said*, etc.] These forms of speech, as well as what follows,

by them of old time, have been explained, in ver. 21. The law here mentioned,

thou shalt not commit adultery, is recorded in (Exodus 20:14) and the meaning of our Lord is, not that the then present Jews had heard that such a law had been delivered “to the ancients”, their fathers, at Mount Sinai; for that they could read in their Bibles: but they had received it by

tradition, that the sense of it, which had been given to their ancestors, by the ancient doctors of the church, was, that this law is to be taken strictly, as it lies, and only regards the sin of uncleanness in married persons; or, what was strictly adultery, and that actual; so that it had no respect to fornication, or unchaste thoughts, words, or actions, but that single act only.

Ver. 28. *But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman*, etc.] Many and severe are the prohibitions of the Jews, concerning looking upon a woman, which they aggravate as a very great sin: they say [f300], it is not lawful to look upon a beautiful woman, though unmarried; nor upon another man's wife, though deformed; nor upon a woman's coloured garments: they forbid [f301] looking on a woman's little finger, and say [f302], that he that tells money to a woman, out of his hand into her's, that he may look upon her, though he is possessed of the law and good works, even as Moses, he shall not escape the damnation of hell: they affirm [f303], that he that looks upon a woman's heel, his children shall not be virtuous; and that a man may not go after a woman in the way, no, not after his wife: should he meet her on a bridge, he must take her to the side of him; and whoever goes through a river after a woman, shall have no part in the world to [f304] come: nay, they forbid [f305] a man looking on the beauty of his own wife. Now these things were said by them, chiefly to cover themselves, and because they would be thought to be very chaste; when they were, as Christ calls them, an "adulterous generation" in a literal sense: they usually did what our Lord observes, "strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel". We read in the Talmud [f306], of hjwç dysj, a "foolish saint" and it is asked, who is he? and it is answered, one that sees a woman drowning in a river, and says it is not lawful for me hb ylwk tsyal, "to look" upon her, and deliver her. It was not any looking upon a woman, that is forbid by Christ as criminal; but so to look, as "to lust after her"; for such an one

hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. But these men, who forbad external looking upon a woman, generally speaking, had no notion of heart sins; and which was the prevailing opinion of the Pharisees, in Christ's time.

> "A good thought, they [f307] allow, is reckoned as if done; as it is said, (<3916>Malachi 3:16). Upon which it is asked, what is the meaning of that, and "that thought" upon "his name?" Says R. Ase, if a man thinks to do a good work, and is hindered, and does it not, the

> Scripture reckons it to him, as if he did it; but an evil thought, the holy blessed God does not account of it as if done, as is said, (<19B618>Psalm 66:18).”

Upon which words, a noted commentator [f308] of their’s has this remark:

> “Though I regard iniquity in my heart to do it, even in thought, yea, against God himself, as if I had expressed it with my lips, he does not hear it; that is, ˆw[yl bçj al, “he does not reckon it to me for sin”; because the holy blessed God does not account an evil thought for an action, to them that are in the faith of God, or of the true religion.”

For it seems, this is only true of the Israelites; it is just the reverse with the Gentiles, in whom God does not reckon of a good thought, as if it was done, but does of an evil one, as if it was in act [f309]. It must be owned, that this is not the sense of them all; for some of them have gone so far as to say [f310], that

> “the thoughts of sin are greater, or harder, than sin itself:”

by which they mean, that it is more difficult to subdue sinful lusts, than to refrain from the act of sin itself; and particularly, some of them say things which agree with, and come very near to what our Lord here says; as when they affirm [f311], that

> “everyone that looks upon a woman hnwwkb, with intention, it is all one as if he lay with her.”

And that Pawn arqn wyny[b Pawn, “he that committeth adultery with his eyes, is called an adulterer” [f312]. Yea, they also observe [f313], that a woman may commit adultery in her heart, as well as a man; but the Pharisees of Christ’s time were of another mind.

Ver. 29. *And if thy right eye offend thee*, etc.] Or “cause thee to offend”, to stumble, and fall into sin. Our Lord has no regard here to near and dear relations seeking to alienate us from God and Christ, and hinder us in the pursuit of divine things; whose solicitations are to be rejected with the utmost indignation, and they themselves to be parted with, and forsaken, rather than complied with; which is the sense some give of the words: for both in this, and the following verse, respect is had only to the law of adultery; and to such members of the body, which often are the means of

leading persons on to the breach of it; particularly the eye and hand. The eye is often the instrument of ensnaring the heart this way: hence the Jews have a [f314] saying,

> “whoever looks upon women, at the end comes into the hands of transgression.”

Mention is only made of the right eye; not but that the left may be an occasion of sinning, as well as the right; but that being most dear and valuable, is instanced in, and ordered to be parted with:

pluck it out, and cast it from thee: which is not to be understood literally; for no man is obliged to mutilate any part of his body, to prevent sin, or on account of the commission of it; this is no where required, and if done, would be sinful, as in the case of Origen: but figuratively; and the sense is, that persons should make a covenant with their eyes, as Job did; and turn them away from beholding such objects, which may tend to excite impure thoughts and desires; deny themselves the gratification of the sense of seeing, or feeding the eyes with such sights, as are graceful to the flesh; and with indignation and contempt, reject, and avoid all opportunities and occasions of sinning; which the eye may be the instrument of, and lead unto:

for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. This is still a continuation of the figure here used; and the meaning is, that it will turn to better account, to lose all the carnal pleasures of the eye, or all those pleasing sights, which are grateful to a carnal heart, than, by enjoying them, to expose the whole man, body and soul, to everlasting destruction, in the fire of hell.

Ver. 30. *And if thy right hand offend thee*, etc.] Or “cause thee to offend”; that is, is the means of ensnaring thine heart; and of drawing thee into either mental, or actual adultery; for, as before, all unchaste looks, so here, all unchaste touches, embraces, etc. are condemned. As adultery may be committed in the heart, and by the eye, so with the hand:

> “says R. Eliezer [f315] what is the meaning of that Scripture, “your hands are full of blood”, (Isaiah 1:15)? It is replied, dyb µypanmh wla, “these are they, that commit adultery with the hand”. It is a tradition of the house of R. Ishmael, that the sense of that command, “thou shalt not commit adultery”, is, there shall be

> none that commits adultery in thee, whether “with the hand”, or “with the foot”.”

Like orders are given as before,

cut it off, and cast it from thee; as a man would choose to do, or have it done for him, when such a part of the body is mortified, and endangers all the rest. The Jews enjoined cutting off of the hand, on several accounts; if in a morning, before a man had washed his hands, he put his hand to his eye, nose, mouth, ear, etc. ⓓqyt, it was to be “cut off” [f316]; particularly, the handling of the “membrum virile”, was punishable with cutting off of the hand.

> “Says R. [f317] Tarphon, if the hand is moved to the privy parts, wdy ⓓqt, “let his hand be cut off to his navel”.”

That is, that it may reach no further; for below that part of the body the hand might not be put [f318]; lest unclean thoughts, and desires, should be excited. In the above [f319] place it is added,

> “what if a thorn should be in his belly, must he not take it away? It is replied, no: it is further asked, must not his belly be ripped up then? It is answered, it is better that his belly be ripped up, tjç rabl dry law, “than that he should go down to the pit of corruption.””

A way of speaking, much like what our Lord here uses; and to the above orders and canons, he may be very well thought to allude: but he is not to be understood literally, as enjoining the cutting off of the right hand, as they did; but of men’s refraining from all such impure practices, either with themselves, or women, which are of a defiling nature; and endanger the salvation of them, body and soul; the same reason is given as before.

Ver. 31. *It hath been said*, etc.] It is not added here, as in the former instances, “by them of old time”; nor prefaced with these words, “ye have heard”; because the case of divorce was not any law of Moses, or of God by him; but only a permission, because of the hardness of the hearts of the Jews: and as to the controversy, about the causes of divorce, this was not debated by them of old time, but was a new thing, just started in the time of Christ; and was a controversy then agitating, between the schools of

Hillell and Shammai: the one allowing it upon any frivolous cause; the other, only on account of adultery.

Whosoever shall put away his wife, dissolve the marriage bond, dismiss her from his bed, and send her from his house, (see <5401>Deuteronomy 24:1,2) "let him give her a writing of divorcement", ttyrk rps, "a bill of divorcement", or "a book of cutting off". For though a wife was obtained by several ways, there was but one way of dismissing her, as the Jews observe [f320], and that was, by giving her a bill. The form of a writing of divorcement, as given by Maimonides [f321], is as follows:

> "On such a day of the week, in such a month, of such a year, either from the creation, or the epocha of contracts, according to the usual way of computation, which we observe in such a place; I such an one, the son of such an one, of such a place; or if I have any other name, or surname, or my parents, or my place, or the place of my parents; by my own will, without any force, I put away, dismiss, and divorce thee. Thee, I say, who art such an one, the daughter of such an one, of such a place; or if thou hast any other name, or surname, or thy parents, or thy place, or the place of thy parents; who wast my wife heretofore, but now I put thee away, dismiss and divorce thee; so that thou art in thine own hand, and hast power over thyself, to go, and marry any other man, whom thou pleasest; and let no man hinder thee in my name, from this day forward and for ever; and lo! thou art free to any man: and let this be unto thee, from me, a bill of divorce, an instrument of dismission, and a letter of forsaking, according to the law of Moses and Israel." "Such an one, the son of such an one, witness. Such an one, the son of such an one, witness."

Would you choose to have one of these bills, filled up in proper form, take it in manner [f322] following.

> "On the fourth day of the week, on the eleventh day of the month Cisleu, in the year five thousand four hundred and fifty four, from the creation of the world; according to the computation which we follow here, in the city of Amsterdam, which is called Amstelredam; situated by the sea side, called Taya, and by the river Amstel; I Abraham, the son of Benjamin, surnamed Wolphius, the priest; and at this time dwelling in the city of Amsterdam, which is called Amstelredam, which is situated by the sea side, called Taya, and by

> the river Amstel; or if I have any other name, or surname, or my parents, or my place, or the place of my parents; by my own free will, without any compulsion, I put away, dismiss, and divorce thee, my wife Rebecca, the daughter of Jonas the Levite; who at this time abides in the city of Amsterdam, called Amstelredam, situated by the sea side, called Taya, and by the river Amstel; or if thou hast any other name, or surname, or thy parents, or thy place, or the place of thy parents, who wast heretofore my wife; but now I put thee away, dismiss, and divorce thee; so that thou art in thine own hands, and hast power over thyself, to go and marry any other man, whom thou pleasest: and let no man hinder thee in my name, from this day forward, and for ever; and lo! thou art free to any man. Let this be to thee, from me, a bill of divorce, an instrument of dismission, and a letter of forsaking, according to the law of Moses and Israel." "Sealtiel, the son of Paltiel, witness. Calonymus, the son of Gabriel, witness."

This bill being written in twelve lines, neither more nor less, and being sealed by the husband, and signed by the witnesses, was delivered, either by him, or by a messenger, or deputy of his or hers, into her hand, lap, or bosom, in the presence of two persons; after which, she might, if she would, enrol it in the public records, and marry whom she pleased.

Ver. 32. *But I say unto you; that whosoever shall put away his wife*, etc.] Christ does not infringe, or revoke the original grant, or permission of divorce; only frees it from the false interpretations, and ill use, the Pharisees made of it; and restores the ancient sense of it, in which only it was to be understood: for a divorce was allowable in no case,

saving for the cause of fornication; which must not be taken strictly for what is called fornication, but as including adultery, incest, or any unlawful copulation; and is opposed to the sense and practices of the Pharisees, who were on the side of Hillell: who admitted of divorce, upon the most foolish and frivolous pretences whatever; when Shammai and his followers insisted on it, that a man ought only to put away his wife for uncleanness; in which they agreed with Christ. For so it is written [f323],

> "The house of Shammai say, a man may not put away his wife, unless he finds some uncleanness in her, according to (<5240>Deuteronomy 24:1) The house of Hillell say, if she should spoil his food, (that is, as Jarchi and Bartenora explain it, burns it either

at the fire, or with salt, i.e. over roasts or over salts it,) who appeal also to (<240124>Deuteronomy 24:1). R. Akiba says, if he finds another more beautiful than her, as it is said, (<240124>Deuteronomy 24:1) “and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes.””

The commentators [f324] on this passage say that the determination of the matter is, according to the school of Millell; so that, according to them, a woman might be put away for a very trivial thing: some difference is made by some of the Jewish doctors, between a first and second wife; the first wife, they say [f325], might not be put away, but for adultery; but the second might be put away, if her husband hated her; or she was of ill behaviour, and impudent, and not modest, as the daughters of Israel. Now our Lord says, without any exception, that a man ought not to put away his wife, whether first or second, for any other reason than uncleanness; and that whoever does, upon any other account,

causeth her to commit adultery; that is, as much as in him lies: should she commit it, he is the cause of it, by exposing her, through a rejection of her, to the sinful embraces of others; and, indeed, should she marry another man, whilst he is alive, which her divorce allows her to do, she must be guilty of adultery; since she is his proper wife, the bond of marriage not being dissolved by such a divorce: and

whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery; because the divorced woman he marries, and takes to his bed; is legally the wife of another man; and it may be added, from (<401909>Matthew 19:9) that her husband, who has put her away, upon any other account than fornication, should he marry another woman, would be guilty of the same crime.

Ver. 33. *Again, ye have heard that it hath been said*, etc.] Besides what has been observed, in ver. 21 and 27 you know it has also been said,

by, or to them of old time, what is written in (<031912>Leviticus 19:12). “And ye shall not swear by my name falsely”; which seems to be referred to, when it is said, “thou shalt not forswear thyself”: and is the law forbidding perjury, or false swearing; and was what the Jews were chiefly, if not only concerned about; little regarding the vanity, only the truth of an oath: for they took swearing vainly, to be the same as swearing falsely; wherefore so long as what they swore was truth, they were not careful whether it was of any importance or not: moreover, these men sinned, in that they swore by the creatures, which they thought they might do, and not sin; and when

they had so done, were not under obligation to perform; because they made no use of the name of God, to whom only vows and oaths were to be performed, “but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths”, (<scripRef passage="Numbers 30:2" />) which they understood of vows only made to the Lord, and not to others; and of oaths, when in his name, and not by others; which they did do, and yet thought themselves not obliged by them.

Ver. 34. *But I say unto you, swear not at all*, etc.] Which must not be understood in the strictest sense, as though it was not lawful to take an oath upon any occasion, in an affair of moment, in a solemn serious manner, and in the name of God; which may be safely done: but of rash swearing, about trivial matters, and by the creatures; as appears by what follows,

neither by heaven; which is directly contrary to the Jewish canons [f326], which say,

> “they that swear µymçb, “by heaven”, and by earth, are free.”

Upon the words in (<scripRef passage="Song of Solomon 2:7" />) “I adjure you”, etc. it is asked [f327],

> “by what does she adjure them? R. Eliezer says, by the heavens, and by the earth; by the hosts, the host above, and the host below.”

So Philo the Jew says [f328] that the most high and ancient cause need not to be immediately mentioned in swearing; but the “earth”, the sun, the stars, ουρανον, “heaven”, and the whole world. So R. Aben Ezra, and R. David Kimchi, explain (<scripRef passage="Amos 4:2" />). “The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness”; that is, say they, µymçb, “by heaven”: which may be thought to justify them, in this form of swearing; though they did not look upon it as a binding oath, and therefore if broken they were not criminal [f329].

> “He that swears µymçb by heaven, and by the earth, and by the sun, and the like; though his intention is nothing less than to him that created them, this is no oath.”

The reason why it is forbidden by Christ to swear by heaven, is,

for it is God’s throne; referring to (<scripRef passage="Isaiah 66:1" />) where he sits, the glory of his majesty shines forth, and is itself glorious and excellent, and not to be mentioned in a vain way; and especially, for the reason Christ elsewhere

gives, (<4022>Matthew 23:22) that “he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon”; so that they doubly sinned, first, by openly swearing by that which is God’s creature; and then, by tacitly bringing God into their rash and vain oaths.

Ver. 35. *Nor by the earth, for it is his footstool*, etc.] That the Jews were wont to swear by the earth, is clear from the above mentioned instances; and is condemned by Christ for this reason, because the earth is God’s “footstool”, referring, as before, to (<236601>Isaiah 66:1) on which he treads; and where he also manifests forth his glory, and is a considerable part of the work of his hands.

Neither by Jerusalem, which the Jews used to swear by: such forms of vows as these are to be met with in their writings [f330];

> “as the altar, as the temple, µlçwryk, “as Jerusalem”;”

that is, by Jerusalem, I vow I will do this, or the other thing.

> “R. Judah says, he that says Jerusalem (i.e. as Bartenora observes [f331], without the note of comparison, as) says nothing.”

In the Gemara [f332] it is,

> “he that says as Jerusalem, does not say anything, till he has made his vow concerning a thing, which is offered up in Jerusalem.”

Dr. Lightfoot [f333] has produced forms of vowing and swearing, which have not occurred to me.

> “Jerusalem; µlçwryl, “for”, or “unto Jerusalem”, which exactly answers to εις Ιεροσολυμα, here; and “by Jerusalem”;”

The reason given for prohibiting this kind of oath, is;

for it is the city of the great king: not of David, but of the King of kings, the Lord of hosts; who had his residence, and his worship, here; (see <19482>Psalm 48:2).

Ver. 36. *Neither shalt thou swear by thy head*, etc.] This also was a common form of swearing among the Jews: take a few instances.

> "If anyone is bound to his friend by an oath, and says to him, vow unto me Æçar yyjb, "by the life of thy head"; R. Meir says [f334], he may retract it; but the wise men say, he cannot."

Again [f335], a certain Rabbi said to Elijah,

> "I heard "Bath Kol" (or the voice from heaven) mourning like a dove, and saying, woe to my children; for, because of their sins, I have destroyed my house, and have burnt my temple, and have carried them captive among the nations: and he (Elijah) said unto him Æçar yyjw Æyyj, "by thy life, and by the life of thy head", not this time only it says so, but it says so three times every day."

Once more [f336], says R. Simeon ben Antipatras, to R. Joshua,

> "I have heard from the mouth of the wise men, that he that vows in the law, and transgresses, is to be beaten with forty stripes: he replies, blessed art thou of God, that thou hast so done, Æçar yyjw Æyyj, "by thy life, and by the life of thy head", he that is used to do so is to be beaten."

This form of swearing is condemned, for this reason,

because thou canst not make one hair white or black: which shows, that a man's head, nor, indeed, one hair of his head, is in his own power, and therefore he ought not to swear by it; as he ought not to swear by heaven, or earth, or Jerusalem, because these were in the possession of God. Some copies read, "canst not make one white hair black".

Ver. 37. *But let your communication be yea, yea*, etc.] That is, let your speech, in your common conversation, and daily business of life, when ye answer to anything in the affirmative, be "yea"; and when ye answer to anything in the negative, "nay": and for the stronger asseveration of the matter, when it is necessary, double these words; but let no oaths be joined unto them: this is enough; a righteous man's yea, is yea, and his no, is no; his word is sufficient. Hence it appears, that our Lord is here speaking of rash swearing, and such as was used in common conversation, and is justly condemned by him. The Jews have no reason to reject this advice of Christ, who often use and recommend the same modes of expression. They endeavour to raise the esteem of their doctors and wise men, by saying, that their words, both in doctrines and dealings with men, are "yea, yea"

[f337]. One of their [f338] commentators on the word “saying”, in, (<2001>Exodus 20:1) makes this observation;

> “hence we learn, that they used to answer, wal wal l[w ^h ^h l[“concerning yea, yea, and concerning nay, nay”.”

This way of speaking, they looked upon equivalent to an oath; yea, they affirm it was one.

> “Says R. Eliezer [f339], h[wbç ^h h[wbç wal, “nay is an oath; yea is an oath”, absolutely; “nay” is an oath, as it is written, (<0109>Genesis 9:11) and (<2309>Isaiah 54:9). But that “yea” is an oath, how does it appear? It is concluded from hence, that “nay” is an oath; saith Rabba, there are that say “nay, nay”, twice; and there are that say “yea, yea”, twice; as it is written, (<0109>Genesis 9:11) and from hence, that “nay” is twice, “yea” is also twice said.”

The gloss upon it is,

> “he that says either “nay, nay”, twice, or “yea, yea”, twice; lo! it is rjam h[wbçk “as an after oath”, which confirms his words.”

For whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil: that is, whatever exceeds this way of speaking and conversation, in the common affairs of life, is either from the devil, who is the evil one, by way of eminency; or from the evil heart of man, from the pride, malice, envy, etc. that are in it.

Ver. 38. *Ye have heard that it hath been said*, etc.] That is, to, or by them of old time, as is expressed in some of the foregoing instances,

an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, (<2124>Exodus 21:24). This is “lex talionis”, the “law of retaliation”; which, whether it is to be understood literally, or not, is a matter of question. The Baithuseans, or Sadducees, among the Jews, took it in a literal sense, and so does Josephus, who says [f340], he that shall blind, i.e. put out a man’s eyes, shall suffer the like. But the Jewish doctors generally understood it of paying a price equivalent to the damage done, except in case of life. R. Sol. Jarchi [f341] explains the law thus:

> “He that puts out his neighbour’s eye, must give him wny[ymd, “the price of his eye”, according to the price of a servant sold in the

market; and so the same of them all; for, not taking away of the member is strictly meant."

And, says Maimonides [f342],

"if a man cuts off his neighbour's hand, or foot, he is to be considered as if he was a servant sold in a market; what he was worth then, and what he is worth now; and he must pay the diminution which is made of his price; as it is said, "eye for eye". From tradition it is learned, that this for, spoken of, is to be understood of paying money; this is what is said in the law, "as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again". Not that he is to be hurt, as he has hurt his neighbour; but inasmuch as he deserves to want a member, or to be hurt as he has done; therefore he ought to pay the damage."

And Josephus himself [f343] says, that he must be deprived of that, which he has deprived another of, except he that has his eye put out is willing to receive money; and which, he observes, the law allows of. The controversy about the sense of this law may be seen in a few words, as managed between R. Sandish Hagson, and Ben Zeta [f344].

"Says R. Sandish, we cannot explain this verse according to its literal sense; for if a man should smite the eye of his neighbour, and the third part of the light of his eye should depart, how will he order it, to strike such a stroke, as that, without adding or lessening? perhaps he will put out the whole light of his eye. And it is yet more difficult with respect to burning, wound, and stripe; for should they be in a dangerous place the man might die but that is intolerable. Ben Zeta answers him, is it not written, in another place, "as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again?" To which Hagson replies, בּ, "in", is instead of עַל, "upon", or against; and lo! the sense is, so shall the punishment be upon him. Ben Zeta answers him again, as he does, so shall it be done to him. Hagson replies, behold Samson said, "as they have done to me, so will I do to them"; but Samson did not take their wives, and give them to others, he only rendered to them their reward: but Ben Zeta replies, if a poor man should smite, what must be his punishment? Hagson answers him, if a blind man should put out the eye of one that sees, what shall be done to him? as for

> the poor man, he may become rich, and pay, but the blind man can never pay."

Now our Lord here, does not find fault with the law of retaliation, as delivered by Moses, but with the false gloss of the Scribes and Pharisees; who, as they interpreted it of pecuniary mulcts, as a compensation for the loss of a member, which sometimes exceeded all just and due bounds; so they applied it to private revenge, and in favour of it: whereas this law did not allow of a retaliation to be made, by private persons, at their pleasure, but by the civil magistrate only.

Ver. 39. *But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil*, etc.] This is not to be understood of any sort of evil, not of the evil of sin, of bad actions, and false doctrines, which are to be opposed; nor of the evil one, Satan, who is to be resisted; but of an evil man, an injurious one, who has done us an injury. We must not render evil for evil, or repay him in the same way; (see <3006>James 5:6). Not but that a man may lawfully defend himself, and endeavour to secure himself from injuries; and may appear to the civil magistrate for redress of grievances; but he is not to make use of private revenge. As if a man should pluck out one of his eyes, he must not in revenge pluck out one of his; or should he strike out one of his teeth, he must not use him in the same manner; but patiently bear the affront, or seek for satisfaction in another way.

But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also: which is to be understood comparatively, rather than seek revenge, and is directly contrary to the Jewish canons, which require, in such a case, a pecuniary fine [f345].

> "He that strikes his neighbour (which Maimonides explains, he that strikes his neighbour with his hand shut, about the neck) he shall give him a "sela", or "shekel": R. Judah says, in the name of R. Jose the Galilean, one pound: if he smite him (i.e. as Maimonides says, if he smite him with his double fist upon the face; or, as Bartenora, with the palm of his hand, yy j l , "on the cheek", which is a greater reproach) he shall give him two hundred "zuzim"; and if he does it with the back of his hand, four hundred "zuzim"."

R. Isaac Sangari [f346] manifestly refers to this passage of Christ's, when he says to the king he is conversing with,

> "I perceive that thou up braidest us with poverty and want; but in them the great men of other nations glory: for they do not glory but in him, who said, "Whosoever smiteth thee thy right cheek, turn to him the left; and whosoever taketh away thy coat, give him thy cloak"."

Ver. 40. *And if any man will sue thee at the law*, etc.] Or "will contend with thee", or as the Syriac renders it, Æm[^wdnd, "will strive", or "litigate with thee"; not contest the matter, or try the cause in an open court of judicature, a sense our version inclines to; but will wrangle and quarrel in a private way, in order to

take away thy coat, by force and violence,

let him have thy cloak also; do not forbid, or hinder him from taking it; (see <4069>Luke 6:29). The "coat", is the same with tylj, "the upper garment": and what we render a "cloak", answers to qwlj, "the inward garment"; by which words Sangari expresses the passage in the place before cited: and the sense is, if a wrangling, quarrelsome man, insists upon having thy coat, or upper garment, let him take the next; and rather suffer thyself to be stripped naked than engage in a litigious broil with him. This also is contrary to the above canon of the Jews[f347], which says;

> "If a man should pull another by his ear, or pluck off his hair, or spit, and his spittle should come to him, wnmm wtylj ryb[h or "should take his coat from him", or uncover a woman's head in the street, he shall pay four hundred "zuzim", and all this is according to his dignity; says R. Akiba; even the poor in Israel, they consider them as if they were noblemen, who are fallen from their estates, for they are the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

Ver. 41. *And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile*, etc.] The word αγγαρευσει, rendered "compel", is generally said to be of Persic original; the "Angari", among the Persians, were the king's messengers, or those who rode post, and were maintained at the king's expenses; and had power to take horses, and other carriages, and even men, into their service, by force, when they had occasion for them: hence the word is used to force, or compel persons to do this or the other thing; the word ayrgna is often to be met with in the Jewish writings, and is in them expounded to be[f348], the taking of anything for the service of the king. David de Pomis renders it

by lw[, "a yoke"[f349]; meaning, any servile work, which such, who were pressed into the king's service, were obliged unto. And[f350] ayrgna hç[is used to compel persons to go along with others, to do any service; in which sense it is here used: and Christ advises, rather than to contend and quarrel with such a person, that obliges to go with him a mile, to

go with him twain: his meaning is, not to dispute such a matter, though it may be somewhat laborious and disagreeable, but comply, for the sake of peace. The Jews[f351], in their blasphemous book of the birth of Christ, own that he gave advice in such words as these, when they introduce Peter thus speaking of him.

> "He, that is, Jesus, hath warned and commanded you to do no more evil to a Jew; but if a Jew should say to a Nazarene, go with me one mile, he shall go with him two miles; and if a Jew shall smite him on the left cheek, he shall turn to him also the right."

Can a Jew find fault with this advice?

Ver. 42. *Give to him that asketh thee*, etc.] To every man, (<4060>Luke 6:30) whether Jew or Gentile; friend or foe; believer or unbeliever; a good, or a bad man; worthy or unworthy; deserving or not, that asketh alms, whether food or money; give it freely, readily, cheerfully, according to your abilities, and as the necessity of the object requires: for such rules are always supposed, and to be observed; and though all are to be relieved, yet the circumstances of persons, and their relation to men, are to be considered, and special regard is to be had to the household of faith.

And from him that would borrow of thee, turn not away; refuse him not, turn not away from him with a frown, or without speaking to him, or with a denial; look upon him with a pleasant countenance, cheerfully lend him what he wants, whether he be a Jew, from whom it was not lawful to take usury, or a stranger, from whom it, was lawful to take it, yet take it not; lend him freely, "hoping for nothing again", (<4065>Luke 6:35) which must not be understood of not hoping for the money lent, for then it would be giving, and not lending; but of not hoping for any reward for lending it: and indeed the money itself is not to be hoped for again, when the circumstances of the borrower are such, that he is not able to make a return.

Ver. 43. *Ye have heard that it hath been said*, etc.] By, or to them of old time. This law has been delivered to them,

thou shalt love thy neighbour, with this appendage to it, or false gloss upon it,

and hate thine enemy; for the first of these only is the law of Moses, (Leviticus 19:18), the other is the addition, or wrong interpretation of the Scribes and Pharisees: wherefore the Jew [f352] has no reason to charge Christ, or the Evangelist, with a false testimony, as he does, because the latter is no where written in the law, nor in the prophets: nor does Christ say it is; he only observes, that it had been traditionally handed down to them from the ancients, by the masters of the traditions of the elders, that the law of loving the neighbour was so to be understood as to allow, and even enjoin, hatred of enemies: in proof of which, take the following instances [f353].

> "When one man sins against another, he may not hate him in his heart, and be silent, as is said of the wicked; Absalom spoke not with Amnon: but it is commanded to make it known to him, and to say to him, why hast thou done to me so and so? As it is said, "rebuking, thou shalt rebuke thy neighbour"; and if he returns, and desires him to pardon him, he shall not be implacable and cruel; but if he reproves him many times, and he does not receive his reproof, nor turn from his sin, then wtwançl rtwm, "it is lawful to hate him"."

Again, they say [f354],

> "Every disciple of a wise man, çjnk rjwnw µqwn wnyaç, "who does not revenge, and keep as a serpent"; that is, as the gloss explains it, "enmity in his heart", as a serpent, is no disciple of a wise man."

And so Maimonides [f355], one of their better sort of writers, says;

> "A disciple of a wise man, or a scholar, whom a man despises and reproaches publicly, it is forbidden him to forgive him, because of his honour; and if he forgives him, he is to be punished, for this is a contempt of the law; but "he must revenge, and keep the thing as a serpent", until the other asks pardon of him, and then he may forgive him."

Thus they bred their scholars in hatred and malice against their enemies. This arises from a mistaken sense of the word “neighbour”, which they understood only of a friend; and concluded, that if a friend was to be loved, an enemy was to be hated; not the Gentiles only, but anyone, among themselves, which could come under that name.

Ver. 44. *But I say unto you, love your enemies*, etc.] That is, as the Apostle Paul may be thought to interpret the words of Christ, (Romans 12:20). “If thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst, give him drink”: unless our Lord should be supposed rather to regard the internal affection of the mind; since outward expressions of love, by words and works, are urged in the following exhortations: the actions of a man may be hated, and just indignation be expressed against them, and yet his person be loved, tenderness be used to him, and pity shown him: all men, even enemies, are to be loved with a natural love, as men; though they cannot be loved with a spiritual affection, as brethren in Christ: and in natural affection there are degrees, according to the relation and circumstances that persons stand in to one another.

Bless them that curse you: when wicked men curse you, as Shimei cursed David, do not “render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing”; give good words, use kind language, mild and soft expressions; such as may either win upon them, or put them to shame and silence: “bless, and curse not”; the latter belongs to them, the former to you; “let them curse, but bless thou”: curses better fit their mouths, and blessings thine. Blessing here, does not signify praising them, for that would be sinful, which is sometimes the sense of the word; nor wishing, or praying for a blessing on them, which is right and good; but this is mentioned afterwards, as distinct from blessing; wherefore, it is better to understand it of a sweet and engaging address unto, and behaviour and conduct towards such, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.

Do good to them that hate you; such as hate you in their hearts, and discover their hatred by their actions; do not make returns in the same way, but on the contrary, do them all the good you can; perform all the kind offices that lie in your power; let them partake of your bounty and liberality; if poor, feed, clothe, and supply them, as you are able, with the necessaries of life; and give them wholesome advice for the good of their souls: by “so doing”, you will “heap coals of fire on their heads”; of

enemies, make them friends; engage their affections to you, and you may be happy instruments in doing them good, both in soul and body:

and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you. What Christ here commands and advises to, he himself did; for as he hung upon the cross, he prayed for his crucifiers, who were then using him in the most despiteful, as well as cruel manner; saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do": and in this he has left us an example, that we should tread in his steps; and here in he was quickly followed by his holy martyr Stephen; who, whilst he was being stoned, prayed for his persecutors and murderers, saying, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge". This breathes out the true spirit of Christianity, and is peculiar to it. The whole of this is directly opposite to the tenets of the Jews, particularly the Scribes and Pharisees; who allowed of revenge, and keeping anger against any person that had done them an injury, as has been observed: and which were also the sentiments of the Karaites, or Scripturarians, another sect among them who kept to the letter of the Scriptures, and rejected the traditions of the elders, which the Pharisees held: but in this they agreed with them,

> "that it was right to do good to their friends, and to forgive them that asked pardon of them; but to such men who rendered evil, and did not return to do well, that they might receive forgiveness, µhm rwjnlw µwqnl rwsa wnya, "it is not forbidden to revenge, and to keep anger against them" [f356]."

It is indeed said [f357] of their former holy men, µydysj, "Hasideans", which some have thought to be the same with the "Essenes", and a sort of Christians; however, were a better sort of Jews; that these

> "heard their reproach, but did not return it; and not only so, but they pardoned him that reproached them, and forgave him."

And it is reported of these men, that they used to pray to God to pardon and forgive all that disturbed them. But the Pharisees, whom Christ had to do with, and against whom he inveighs, were men of another complexion.

Ver. 45. *That ye may be the children of your father*, etc.] Not that any became the children of God, by doing things in imitation of him: for as in nature no man becomes the son of another by imitating him, or by doing the things he does but either by birth, or by adoption; so in grace no man

becomes a child of God by the works he does, as a follower of God, but by adopting grace; and which is discovered in regeneration. Christ's meaning is, that they might appear, and be known to be the children of God, by doing those things in which they resemble their heavenly Father; and which are agreeable to his nature and conduct; as the tree is known by its fruit, and the cause by its effect: for where adoption and regenerating grace take place, the fruit of good works is brought forth to the glory of God. Some copies, instead of υιοι, "children", read ομοιοι "like": and accordingly, the Persic version renders it thus, "that ye may be like your Father, which is heaven". Our Lord seems to have respect to the Jews, often having in their mouths this expression, µymçb wnyba, "our Father which is in heaven"; and to their frequent boasting that they were the children of God; and therefore he would have them make this manifest by their being like him, or acting in imitation of him;

for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good. Christ instances in one of the greatest blessings in nature, the sun, so useful to the earth, and so beneficial to mankind for light and heat; which he calls "his sun": his own, and not another's; which he has made, and maintains, orders to run its race, and commands it to rise morning by morning, and that upon good and bad men; one, as well as another; all equally share in, and partake of its benign influences, and enjoy the comfortable effects and blessings of it:

and sendeth rain on the just and unjust; that is, on the fields of persons of such different characters, even both the early and the latter rain; which makes the earth fruitful, crowns it with goodness, and causes it to bring forth bread to the eater, and seed to the sower. This is one of the most considerable blessings of life; the gift of it is God's sole prerogative; it is peculiar to him; it is what none of the vanities of the Gentiles can give; and yet is bestowed by him on the most worthless and undeserving. This flows from that perfection of God, which the Cabbalists [f358] call

> ""chesed, mercy", or benignity, to which it is essential to give largely to all, both "to the just and unjust"."

The Jews have a saying [f359], that

> "greater is the day of rain, than the resurrection of the dead; for the resurrection of the dead is for the just; but rain is µy[çrl ^yb µyqdxl ^yb, "both for the just, and for the wicked":

a way of speaking much like this here. They also used to praise God for rain, on this consideration, because it was given to unworthy persons.

> "[f360] R. Jose Bar Jacob went to visit R. Joden of Magdala; whilst he was there, rain descended, and he heard his voice, saying, thousands of thousands, and millions of millions are bound to praise thy name, O our king, for every drop thou causest to descend upon us, µybyyjl hbwj lmwg taç, "because thou renderest good to the wicked"."

Now our Lord instances in things which could not be denied, and they themselves allowed; and makes use of their own words, to engage them to imitate God, whom they call their Father, by doing good to their enemies, and them that hated them, as well as to their friends and neighbours: yet sometimes they could scarcely allow, that the Gentiles had the same share in this divine favour with themselves; for they say [f361], that

> "God works by way of miracle, that rain should not be wanting in his land, although it is wanting in the countries of the Heathen; as he says, (<18B510>Job 5:10) "who giveth rain on the earth", which is the land of Israel; for on that rjm br, "a great rain" descends, and "sendeth waters", µyj[m, "few (which is added to the text) upon the fields"; which relates to what is without the land, whereupon it does not descend, but the substance of the land of Israel; therefore he saith, the Lord will open to thee his good treasure, and not to others."

Ver. 46. *For if ye love them which love you*, etc.] That is, if ye only love such that love you; for that such who love should be loved again, is both natural and just: our Lord's meaning is not, that ye ought not to love them that love you, but that these should not be the only objects of your love; for should this be the case,

what reward have ye? or "shall ye have?" Do you deserve any thanks for your love now? none at all, it is what you are obliged to by your friend's love to you. Do you expect any hereafter with God? if you do, you will be mistaken; you have your reward with men, who have loved you as much as you have done them, and therefore none can be due to you, either from God or men: besides,

do not even the publicans the same? men of the worst characters, and who were most hateful to the Jews, upon many accounts; partly because of their business, which was to collect the Roman tax, and carry it to the proper officers appointed to receive it, and of whom they sometimes farmed it. Now the Roman yoke was very grievous to the Jews, who boasted of their being a free people; nor did they willingly pay their tribute money; and some of them would refuse to do it, under a pretence of religion; wherefore those publicans, or tax gatherers, which were oftentimes men of their own nation, as appears from the instances of Levi and Zacchaeus, were very odious to them; because they looked upon them as joining with the Romans, in oppressing them, and abridging them in their liberty: and partly because of their character and conduct, being men of great improbity, rapine, and covetousness: hence, as in the New Testament, they are frequently joined with "sinners", as being notorious ones themselves; so in the Talmudic writings, with thieves [f362], and are reckoned as thieves, with murderers, and robbers [f363]; they were not allowed as witnesses [f364] in any of their courts of judicature; nor were they to be kept company [f365] with in private houses. Now our Lord instances in these men who were the most profligate part of the nation, and had in greatest contempt by the rest; and yet these, by the very dictates of nature, loved such as loved them: wherefore it must be shameful and scandalous in the Pharisees, and others, who pretended to great sanctity and religion, to do no more than these persons did.

Ver. 47. *And if you salute your brethren only*, etc.] This does not mean salutation by embraces or kisses, but by words, asking of each other's welfare, and wishing prosperity and happiness to one another.

> "The manner of salutation among the wise men was this [f366]; he that salutes says, a good day to my lord; and he replies, saying, a good, and long day to my lord: always he that replies doubles the salutation."

The persons they usually gave their salutations to were those of their own nation, their countrymen, relations, and friends; and who are here designed by "brethren"; meaning, not brethren in the strict sense, but any kindred, acquaintance, or any of their own nation. Some copies read it "friends", who, generally speaking, only partook of such favours.

> “A man, (says Maimonides [f367],) might not salute his master, nor return a salutation to him in the manner they gave a salutation µy[rl, to “friends”: and they return it to one another.”

They were not very free in saluting any persons, as strangers and Gentiles: such advice as this is indeed given µda lk µwlçb µydqm ywh [f368], “prevent every man with a salutation”, or be first in saluting every man; upon which passage their commentators [f369] say, even a Gentile in the streets. Accordingly, it is elsewhere [f370] observed, that

> “R. Abai used to say, let a man be always cunning with fear, for “a soft answer turns away wrath”; and multiply salutation with his brethren, and with his relations, and with every man, even with a stranger in the streets.”

But this proceeded not from any cordial hearty respect, but out of policy, and from fear; and in order to maintain peace; and for selfish ends, and with sinister views: otherwise their salutations were confined to their brethren and kinsfolk after the flesh. Now, this being the case, says Christ,

what do ye more than others? do not even publicans so? Or, as some copies read it, Gentiles or Heathens; and accordingly the Ethiopic version, and the Vulgate Latin so render it: the Arabic renders it “idolaters”. Now, what great matter was this to salute their brethren and their friends, when even the very Heathens, who had nothing but the light of nature to guide them, did the same?

Ver. 48. *Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father*, etc.] This perfection is to be restrained to the subject Christ is upon, love to men, and not to be referred to any, or every other thing; wherefore, in (<4066>Luke 6:36) it is, “be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful”; and regards not a perfection of degree in that, but objects and quality: that is to say, not that men may, or can, or ought to be as perfect in love, as to the degree of it, as God is; that is impossible: the “as” here, is not a note of equality, but of likeness: such, who profess God to be their Father, ought to imitate him, particularly in their love to men, which ought to be extended to the same objects, as the divine goodness is; that, as he shows regard in a providential way to all men, good and bad, just and unjust, and his tender mercies are over all his works; so ought they to love all men with a natural affection, and hate no man, no, not their enemies: for he that loves only his friends, and not his enemies, loves imperfectly; he does not take in the whole compass of

objects his love is to extend unto; and as God loves sincerely, and without dissimulation, so should they. To be “perfect”, is to be sincere and upright: in this sense is the word often used, and answers to the Hebrew word µymt, which signifies the same: (see <051813>Deuteronomy 18:13) which is the passage Christ seems to refer to here; and the sense is, be ye sincere and upright in your love to all men, as your heavenly Father is hearty and sincere in his affections to them.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 6

Ver. 1. *Take heed that ye do not your alms before men*, etc.] Some copies read, “take heed that ye do not your righteousness”, etc. which is a very good reading: but then, by “righteousness”, is not meant righteousness, as comprehending all other righteous acts, as particularly alms, prayer, and fasting, hereafter mentioned; but alms only; nothing being more common with the Jews than to call alms hqdx, “righteousness”: and whatever word Matthew made use of, there is no doubt to be made of it, but this was the word Christ used. Now alms was so called, because it is a righteous action, which ought to be performed; and to withhold from the poor what is meet, is to deal unrighteously: hence we read of the “mammon of unrighteousness”; by which is meant, not money unrighteously got, but that which is unrighteously kept from the poor: also it might be so called, because the Jews very much placed their justifying righteousness before God in the performance of it: let us first see how, according to them, it was to be done, and then what confidence they placed in it, and how much they made use of it. The account Maimonides [f371] gives is as follows, who observes: that

> “we are bound to take heed to the commandment of alms more than all the affirmative commands; because alms is a sign of a “righteous” man, the seed of Abraham our father; as it is said, in (<011819>Genesis 18:19). Nor is the throne of Israel established, nor can the law of truth stand, but by alms; as it is said, (<201619>Proverbs 16:19). Nor shall Israel be redeemed, but by alms, according to (<230127>Isaiah 1:27). There are (says he) eight degrees in giving alms, the one above another; the highest, than which there is none higher, is this; when one relieves an Israelite, and gives him a gift, or lends to him, or takes him into partnership, or finds him work, so that he strengthens his hands before he stands in need of asking; and of this it is said, and “thou shalt relieve him, a stranger and a sojourner, that he may live with thee”: which is as much as to say, relieve him before he falls, and is brought to necessity. The next to this is, when

> a man gives alms to the poor, and he knows not to whom he gives; nor does the poor man know of whom he receives; for, behold, this is doing it for the sake of it; as the chamber of secrets, which was in the sanctuary, into which righteous men privately put, and the poor children of good men were privately supported: and the next to this is, when a man puts into the alms chest: and a man does not put into the alms chest except he knows that the governor is faithful and wise, and knows how to manage as should be; such an one as R. Chananiah ben Tradion. The next to this is, when the giver knows to whom he gives, but the poor man does not know from whom he receives; as the great ones of the wise men, who used to go secretly, and cast their money at the doors of the poor; and this is right to do, and a good method it is when the governors of alms do not dispose aright. The next to this is, when the poor man knows of whom he takes, but does not know the giver; as the great men among the wise men, who used to bind up their money in linen cloths, and put them behind them, and the poor came and took them, that they might not be ashamed. The next to this is, when a man puts it into his hands before he asks. The next to this is, when he gives to him after he has asked. The next to this is, when he gives to him less than is proper, with a pleasant countenance. The next to this is, when he gives with grief."

Now this work, or duty, they magnify at a very great rate: not content to say [f372], that

> "he that does alms, does that which is more excellent than all offerings;"

they further affirm [f373], that

> "giving of alms and beneficence hlwk hrwth dgnk, "are equal to the whole law";"

or, it is all one as if a man performed the whole law. Moreover, they give [f374] out,

> "that whoever takes of his goods, and does alms with them, he shall be delivered from the "damnation of hell"."

Yea, they reckon that this gives a right and title to eternal life [f375].

> "He that says, let this "sela", or "shekel", be for alms, that his children may live, and that he may be worthy of the life of the world to come, lo! this is rwmg qydx, "a perfect righteous man"."

Or, as elsewhere [f376] expressed,

> "let this sela be for alms, that my son may live, and that he may be a son of the world to come; lo! this is a perfect righteous man."

Thus, you see, they looked upon it as their righteousness; and what made them heirs of heaven, and gave them a title to eternal glory. Now our Lord advises them to take heed, as what would be of bad consequence, and very detrimental to them, that they did not their alms before men,

to be seen of them; not but alms may be lawfully done before, or in the sight of men, and a good end may be answered by it; namely, to stir up others to acts of liberality; but then this must not be done with this view, to be seen of men, in order to gain their applause, and a good name among them,

otherwise, ye have no reward of your Father, which is in heaven. You expect a reward, and a very great one, for your alms; but if you do them only to raise your credit, and gain esteem among men, you have your reward already with men: nor must you expect any from God, since you seek not his glory, but your own. When a man's self, and not the glory of God, is the chief end of any action, that cannot be called a good work, nor will it have any reward; whereas a good work, which springs from a principle of grace, and is directed to the glory of God, will have a reward, not of debt, but of grace, from whence it arises.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore, when thou dost thine alms*, etc.] Christ proceeds to give some directions and cautions about giving of alms, that they might be done aright, and answer some valuable purposes for the glory of God, the good of others, and their own:

do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. The persons Christ has reference to were the Scribes and Pharisees, who did all they did to be seen of men; whom he calls "hypocrites"; as he often does, because they put on an appearance of religion and holiness, but inwardly, and otherwise, were very wicked men. It does not appear that any such practice was literally performed, as blowing a trumpet before them, when

they gave their alms; though the collectors of alms did, by some means, publicly notify to the people when they were about that service: for one of their rules is [f377],

> "the collectors of alms do not proclaim on a feast, as they proclaim on a common day; but they collected h[nyxb, "privately", and put it into their bosom, and distributed it to everyone by himself."

Wherefore this must be understood proverbially; and the sense is, that when they did their alms, they chose public places for it, such as the "synagogues", where was a large concourse of people met together for religious worship; or the open "streets" of the city, where people were continually walking to and fro, so that nothing could be done in this way, but what must be seen and observed: and moreover, they took care, either by themselves, or others, to proclaim their good actions, that they might "have glory of men"; not only of the poor, or the collectors for them, but of the spectators. R. Aben Ezra [f378] says, that

> "a man that gives alms to the poor, must not give it because of the glory of the collector, i.e. that he may have glory of him; nor that the children of men may praise him."

But his ancestors were of another mind: but what did they get by it?

verily I say unto you, they have their reward; and a poor one it is, the applause of men: however, it is what they seek after, and is all their empty performances deserve, and all they will have.

> "He that glories in anything done by himself, wrkç ta ljwn awh, "he takes", or receives "his reward" [f379]; for as for any reward from God, they will have none;"

in this sense, as the Ethiopic version reads it, "they have lost their reward": and, as a learned critic has thought, is the sense of the Greek word, "they forbid", or "hinder their reward". By seeking the glory of men, they lay impediments in the way of receiving honour from God.

Ver. 3. *But when thou dost alms*, etc.] Do it so privately, and with so much secrecy, that, if it was possible, thou mightest not know it thyself, much less make it known to others:

let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth; acquaint not thy nearest and dearest friend with it; let not one that sits at thy left hand know

what thou art doing with thy right hand; it is a proverbial and hyperbolical phrase, expressing the secrecy of the action. It is a Jewish canon [f380], that

> "he that gives a gift to his friend out of love, may make it known, hqdxb al lba, "but not if it be by way of alms"."

Ver. 4. *That thine alms may be in secret*, etc.] May be done in secret, and be kept a secret. The allusion seems to be to the secret chamber, where money was brought privately for the relief of the poor.

> "There were two chambers in the sanctuary, the one was µyaçj tkçl, "the chamber of secrets", and the other the chamber of vessels: the chamber of secrets was that into which pious persons put yaçjb, "in secret", and the poor children of good men were maintained out of it privately [f381]."

The Jews say many things in favour of doing alms privately.

> "Greater, (say they [f382],) is he that gives alms rtsb, in secret, than Moses our master."

They tell us [f383], that

> "R. Jannai seeing a certain man give Zuz (a piece of money) to a poor man publicly, said unto him, it would have been better, if thou hadst not have given him anything, than to have given him in this manner."

This was the practice of the ancient religious Jews, to give their alms privately; but the Scribes and Pharisees had brought that practice into disuse, and which our Lord labours to restore; adding, for encouragement,

and thy Father, which seeth in secret; beholds all secret actions, and knows the secret springs of actions,

himself shall reward thee openly; in the great day of account, before angels and men, when all secret things shall be brought to light, and every good man have praise of God. This duty, of giving alms to the poor, is mentioned by Christ before prayer to God; it may be for this reason, because it was usual to give alms before prayer.

> "The great, or famous men, among the wise men, used to give a Prutah (a small piece of money) to a poor man before every prayer,

and after that they prayed; as it is said, “I shall behold thy face in righteousness” [f384].”

Ver. 5. *And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites*, etc.] As the Scribes and Pharisees; whose posture in prayer, the places they chose to pray in, and the view they had therein, are particularly taken notice of:

for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. It was their usual custom to pray “standing”; nay, it is established by their canons.

> “There are eight things, (says Maimonides [f385],) that a man that prays ought to take heed to do; and the first he mentions is “standing”; for, says he, no man may pray dmy[m ala, “but standing”; if he is sitting in a ship, or in a cart, if he can stand, he must stand; if not, he may sit in his place and pray.”

Several hints of this custom there are in the Misna [f386].

> “On their fast days they used to bring out the ark into the streets — hlptb wdm[, “and they stood in prayer”, or praying; and caused an old man to go down before the ark, who was used to recite prayers, and he said them.”

Again [f387],

> “whoever hlptb dmw[, “stood praying”, and remembered that any uncleanness attended him, he might not break off, but he might shorten.”

Yea, standing itself is interpreted of praying; for it is said [f388],

> “and Abraham rose up early in the morning to the place, where he stood, hdym[b ala hlpt ^yaw, “and there is no prayer but standing”;”

though sometimes they prayed sitting, as David did, (<1078>2 Samuel 7:18) so it is said of R. Jose, and R. Eleazar, that ylxw wbty, “they sat and prayed”, and afterwards rose up and went on their way [f389]. So it was likewise customary to go to the synagogues, and there pray; and indeed they were places built and appointed for this purpose.

> “Wherever there were ten Israelites, a house ought to be provided, in which they may go to prayer at every time of prayer; and this place is called a synagogue [f390].”

Hence some have thought, that not such places are here designed, but any assembly, or concourse of people gathered together upon any occasion; but such an interpretation will find no place, when the following things are observed.

> “For ever let a man go, morning and evening, to the synagogue; for no prayer is heard at any time, but in the synagogue; and everyone that hath a synagogue in his city, and does not pray in it with the congregation, is called a bad neighbour [f391].”

Again [f392],

> “he that prays in the house of the Lord, is as if he offered up a pure offering.”

Now, partly on account of the publicness of the place, and partly because they thought their prayers were only heard there, therefore they chose to pray in the synagogues; and also in

the corners of the streets, where two streets met, and they might be the more easily seen. This was also a common thing to pray in the streets:

> “says R. Jochanan, I saw R. Jannai stand and pray in the streets of Tzippore [f393].”

And a little after, it is said of another, that he stood and prayed ayjrsab, “in the streets”; though such places were not reckoned holy, as the synagogues were.

> “The street of a city, (says Maimonides [f394],) although the people pray in it at fasts and stations, because that there is a great collection of people, and the synagogues cannot hold them, has no holiness in it, because it is accidental, and not appointed for prayer.”

Wherefore streets were only used in case of necessity, or by such of the Pharisees, who chose to be seen of men. A reason is given for this practice in another place [f395], where it is asked,

> “why do they go out to the streets, i.e. on their fast days? to show that we are reckoned as if we were carried captive before thee: says Joshua ben Levi, because they prayed in “secret”, and were not answered; therefore they went without, wmsrptyw, “that they might be made public”.

Now let it be observed, that neither the posture, nor places of prayer, are condemned by our Lord, but their view in all to

be seen of men; and a considerable emphasis lies upon the word “love”; they loved “standing” in prayer, rather than any other posture, because they could be better seen; and they loved to be in the synagogues and streets, rather than in their closets; they liked public better than private prayer, because it gained them applause among men.

Verily I say unto you, they have their reward; they gain their point; they have what they seek for; and this is all they will have.

Ver. 6. *But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet*, etc.] Or “chamber”, a secret place, fit for private retirement, meditation, and prayer.

And when thou hast shut thy door; see some such like phrases in (<2620>Isaiah 26:20) where they are used to express security, here secrecy. Our Lord does not mean to exclude and condemn public prayer, in joining with few, or more persons, in such service; for he himself directs to it, and approves of it, (<4018>Matthew 18:19,20) but his view is to instruct persons that they should not only pray in public, but in private also; and especially the latter, which is more suitable and fitting for their particular cases, and less liable to pride, hypocrisy, and vanity.

Pray to thy Father, which is in secret; who is invisible; not to be seen with the eyes of the body, but to be approached with a true heart, in faith and fear, through his Son Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man; and who is the image of the invisible God, and in whom he is pleased to manifest himself to his people, so as he does not unto the world:

and thy Father, which seeth in secret, observes and takes notice of the secret breathings, pantings, desires, and requests of thy heart and lips,

shall reward thee openly, both here and hereafter; by pouring into thy bosom all the good things thou hast been praying for, both for time and eternity. This is agreeable to what the Jews sometimes say,

"that a man ought not to cause his voice to be heard in prayer; but should pray çjlb, "silently", with a voice that is not heard; and this is the prayer which is daily accepted [f396]."

Ver. 7. *But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions*, etc.] Saying the same things over and over again,

as the Heathens do, as the worshippers of Baal, from morning till noon, (<11826>1 Kings 18:26). This our Lord observes, to dissuade from such practices, because the Gentiles, who were odious to the Jews, used them, and the Jews were guilty of the same; had they not, there would not have been any need of such advice:

for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking; as did the Jews, who, under pretence of "long prayers", devoured widows' houses; and with whom it is an axiom, that "everyone hn[n hlyptb hbrmh, that multiplies prayer is heard" [f397]; and whoever prolongs his prayer, his prayer does not return empty; and he that is long in prayer, his days are prolonged [f398]: and, according to their canons, every day a man ought to pray eighteen prayers. Moreover, their prayer books abound in tautologies, and in expressing the same things in different words, and by a multiplicity of them.

Ver. 8. *Be not ye therefore like unto them*, etc.]. Do not be imitators of them, and follow their ways, who have only the dim light of nature to guide them; it would be shameful in you to do as they do, when you have a divine revelation for your direction; and especially, because

your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him; and therefore have no need to make use of many words, or much speaking, or long prayers. The omniscience of God is a considerable argument, and a great encouragement to prayer; he knows our persons and our wants before hand; and as he is able to help us, we have reason to believe he will; especially since he stands in the relation of a Father to us.

Ver. 9. *After this manner therefore pray ye*, etc.] That is, in such a concise and short way, without much speaking and vain repetitions; making use of such like words and expressions as the following: not that Christ meant to pin down his disciples to these express words, and no other; for this prayer is not a strict form, but a pattern of prayer, and a directory to it, both as to brevity, order, and matter; for we do not find the disciples ever making use

of it in form; and when it is recited by another Evangelist, it is not in the selfsame words as here; which it would have been, had it been designed as an exact form. Besides, Christ does not bid them pray in these very words, but “after this manner”; somewhat like this: not but that it is very lawful to use the very express words of this prayer in any of the petitions here directed to; and which indeed were no other than what good people among the Jews did frequently make use of; and which were collected and singled out by Christ, as what he approved of, in distinction from, and opposition to, other impertinent expressions, and vain repetitions, which some used; as will appear by a particular consideration of them.

Our Father which art in heaven. This may be looked upon as the preface and introduction to the prayer, and regards the object of it, and his character, which is an epithet of God, often to be met with in Jewish writings, and particularly in their prayers; for thus they [f399] say,

> “µymçbç wnyba, “our Father which art in heaven”, show mercy “to us, because thy great name is called upon us.”

Again [f400], let the prayers and the requests of all Israel be received by aymçb yd ˆwhwba, “their Father, which is in heaven”. They seem to have a regard to this prayer, when they apply that passage in (<2035>Proverbs 3:35) “shame shall be the promotion of fools”, to the nations of the earth, who, they say [f401],

> “do not consider the glory of the law; and how, say they, “our Father which art in heaven”, hear our voice, have mercy on us, and receive our prayer?”

So in confessions, thanksgivings, and sacrifices of praise, they required, and looked upon it, as the main thing, for a man to direct his heart µymçbç wybal, “to his Father which is in heaven [f402].” By “father”, our Lord means the first person in the Trinity, who is the Father of all men by creation, and of the saints by adoption; who are to address him in prayer under the character of “our Father”, partly to command a reverential fear of him, and partly to secure boldness and liberty of speech before him; and also to express fiducial confidence in him, faith of interest in him, and relation to him; which arises from some experience of his paternal love, and requires the witnessings of the Spirit of adoption; and inasmuch as the direction is not to say “my Father”, but “our Father”; it shows that we

should pray for others as well as for ourselves, even for all the dear children of God. It is a rule [f403] with the Jews,

> "that a man ought always to join himself in prayer with the church;"

upon which the gloss says,

> "let him not pray the short prayer µybr ˆwçlb ala dyjy ˆwçlb, "in the singular, but in the plural number", that so his prayer may be heard."

The object of prayer is further described by the place of his residence, "in heaven"; not that he is included in any place, but that the heaven of heavens is the place where he most eminently displays his glory: and this may teach us to look upwards in prayer, and seek those things which are above; and also, that this earth, on which we dwell, is not our native country, but heaven is, where our Father dwells. Next follows the first petition,

hallowed, or sanctified be thy name; so the Jews [f404] in their prayers,

> "Æmç çdqty, "let thy name be hallowed", or "sanctified by us", O Lord our God, before the eyes of all living."

And very often [f405],

> "let his great name be magnified and sanctified in the world, which he hath created according to his will."

And again [f406],

> "let us sanctify thy name in the world, as they sanctify it in the highest heavens."

By the "name" of God is meant he himself, the perfections of his nature, and the several names by which he is known, and which we are to think and speak of with holy reverence. By sanctifying his name, is not meant a making him holy, but acknowledging, and declaring him to be holy, and a glorifying him, and all his perfections. He is sanctified by himself, by declaring himself to be holy; by glorifying his perfections in his works; by implanting grace and holiness in the hearts of his people; by restoring the purity of his worship; by diffusing the knowledge of himself in the world; and by taking vengeance on the wicked: and he is sanctified by others,

when they fear him, believe in him, call upon his name, use it reverently, submit to his will, acknowledge his mercies, regard his commands aud ordinances, and live a holy life and conversation; all which is earnestly desired by truly gracious souls.

Ver. 10. *Thy kingdom come*, etc.] The form of expression used by the ancient Jews, relating to this article, before the coming of Christ, doubtless was, as it now stands in their prayers [f407], abyÆjyçm twklm, "the kingdom of thy Messiah come". Christ alters the expression, leaves out the word "Messiah", and puts it thus, "thy kingdom come", to let them know that the Messiah was come; and that it was the kingdom of the Father, in the power of his grace, upon the souls of men, they must pray for and expect: however, he conformed to a rule of their's in this, as well as in the former petition [f408]; that

> "every blessing, or prayer, in which there is no µçh trbz, "mention made of the name", i.e. of God, is no prayer; and that every prayer, in which there is not twklm, "the kingdom", is no prayer."

In this petition the disciples were taught to pray for the success of the Gospel, both among Jews and Gentiles; for the conversion of God's elect, in which the kingdom of God would greatly appear, to the destruction of the kingdom of Satan, and the abolition of the kingdom of the beast, in the latter day; which will usher in the kingdom, of the mediator, he will receive from his Father, and this will terminate in the kingdom of glory: in a word, not the kingdom of nature and providence is meant, which always was; but the kingdom of heaven, which was at hand, nay had taken place, though as yet was not very visible, and which is spiritual in the hearts of God's people, Jews and Gentiles; and which will appear exceeding glorious in the latter day, and at last be swallowed up in the ultimate glory; all which must be very desirable by the sincere lovers of Jesus Christ.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. There is some appearance of this petition still remaining, in what the [f409] Jews call the short prayer:

> "what is the short prayer? R. Eliezer says, µymçb Ænwxr hç[, "do thy will in heaven"; and give quietness of spirit, or acquiescence of spirit in thy will, to them that fear thee below."

Christ says “thy will”; not the will of wicked men, nor the will of Satan, nor a man’s own will, but the will of God: by which is meant either his secret will, which is the rule of all his proceedings both in providence and grace; is unknown to us, till facts make it appear; is always fulfilled in heaven and in earth; and sometimes is fulfilled by those who have no regard to his revealed will; and is what ought to be submitted to patiently, and without murmuring: or rather his revealed will, which consists partly in the declarations of his grace and mercy; as that salvation is by Christ, whoever believes in him shall be saved, that all the redeemed be sanctified, persevere to the end, and be glorified; and partly in the commands enjoined his people, which will of his is good, perfect, and acceptable. The will of God may be said to be done by us, when our wills are resigned to his; when we patiently submit to every adverse dispensation of providence; when our hearts and actions are, in some measure, conformed to his law; when what is done, is done in faith, with a view to his glory, and without dependence upon it; of which such only are capable who have a spiritual understanding of the will of God, believe in Christ, receive grace and strength from him, and are assisted by his Spirit. These desire to do the will of God, as it is done in heaven; meaning not so much by the inanimate creatures, the sun, and moon, and stars, as glorified saints and holy angels, who do it voluntarily and cheerfully; speedily, and without delay; constantly, and without any interruption; and perfectly and completely.

Ver. 11. *Give us this day our daily bread*.] The Arabic version reads it, “our bread for tomorrow”; and Jerom says, that in the Hebrew Gospel, used by the Nazarenes, he found the word rjm, which signifies “tomorrow”: but this reading and sense seem to be contradicted by Christ, (<40634>Matthew 6:34) were it not that it may be observed, that this signifies the whole subsequent time of life, and so furnishes us with a very commodious sense of this petition; which is, that God would give us, “day by day”, as Luke expresses it, (<42113>Luke 11:3) that is, every day of our lives, to the end thereof, a proper supply of food: or the meaning of it is, that God would give us, for the present time, such food as we stand in need of; is suitable to us, to our nature and constitution, state and condition, and is sufficient and convenient for us: to which agrees the petition of the [f410] Jews:

> “The necessities of thy people are great, and their knowledge short; let it be thy good will and pleasure, O Lord, our God, that thou

> wouldst give to everyone wtsnrpydk, “what is sufficient for his sustenance”, and to every one’s body what it wants.”
>
> “Says R. Jose [f411], all the children of faith seek “every day” whyynwzm alaçl, “to ask their food” of the Lord, and to pray a prayer for it.”

By “bread” is meant all the necessaries of life, and for the support of it: it is called “our’s”; not that we have a right unto it, much less deserve it, but to distinguish it from that of beasts; and because it is what we need, and cannot do without; what is appointed for us by providence, is our’s by gift, and possessed by labour. It is said to be “daily” bread, and to be asked for “day by day”; which suggests the uncertainty of life; strikes at all anxious and immoderate cares for the morrow; is designed to restrain from covetousness, and to keep up the duty of prayer, and constant dependence on God; whom we must every day ask to “give” us our daily bread: for he is the sole author of all our mercies; which are all his free gifts; we deserve nothing at his hands: wherefore we ought to be thankful for what we have, without murmuring at his providences, or envying at what he bestows on others. All kind of food, everything that is eatable, is with the Jews called µjl, “bread” [f412].

Ver. 12. *And forgive us our debts*, etc.] Nothing is more frequent in the Jewish writings than to call sins ybwj, “debts”; and the phrase, of forgiving, is used both of God and men. Thus the prayer of Solomon is paraphrased [f413] by the Targumist:

> “and hear thou the petition of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall make before this place; and do thou receive it from the place of the house of thy Shekinah, from heaven; and do thou accept their prayer ^whybwjl qbçtw, “and forgive their debts”.”

So Joseph’s brethren signify to him, that it was their father’s orders to say unto him, “forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin”; which is rendered by the Chaldee paraphrasts [f414] ybwjl qwbç, “forgive the debts” of thy brethren, and their sins. Accordingly, by “debts” are meant sins here, as appears from (<4210[illegible]4) Luke 11:4) where it is read, “and forgive us our sin”. These are called “debts”; not because they are so in themselves, for then it would be right to do them; debts should be paid; they are not debts we owe to God, but are so called, because on account of

them we owe satisfaction to the law and justice of God: the proper debts we owe to God are love, obedience, and gratitude; and in default of these, we owe the debt of punishment. Now these debts are numerous, and we are incapable of paying, nor can any mere creature pay them for us; wherefore, we are directed to pray, that God would forgive them, or remit the obligation to punishment we lie under, on account of sin. This petition supposes a sense, acknowledgment, and confession of sin, and of inability to make satisfaction for it; and that God only can forgive it, who does, for Christ's sake, and on account of his blood, sacrifice, and satisfaction: what is here requested is a manifestation and application of pardon to the conscience of a sensible sinner; which, as it is daily needed, is daily to be asked for. The argument, or reason used, is,

as we forgive our debtors; which is to be understood not so much of pecuniary debtors, though they are to be forgiven, when poor and unable to pay; but of such who have offended, or done real injuries to others, either by word or deed: the injuries of enemies, the unkindness of friends, all sorts of offences, are to be forgiven by us; and not only so, but we are to pray to God to forgive them also. Now this is mentioned, not as if our forgiving others is the cause of God's forgiving us, or the model of it, or as setting him an example, or as if his and our forgiving were to be compared together, since these will admit of no comparison; but this is an argument founded upon God's own promise and grace, to forgive such who have compassion on their fellow creatures.

Ver. 13. *And lead us not into temptation*, etc.] Such a petition as this is often to be observed in the prayers of the Jews [f415],

> "ynaybt la, "do not lead me" neither into sin, nor into transgression and iniquity, ˆwysn ydyl alw, "nor into temptation", or "into the hands of temptation";"

that is, into the power of it, so as to be overcome by it, and sink under it; in which sense the phrase is to be understood here. We are not here taught to pray against temptations at all, or in any sense, for they are sometimes needful and useful; but that they may not have the power over us, and destroy us. There are various sorts of temptations. There are the temptations of God; who may be said to tempt, not by infusing anything that is sinful, or by soliciting to it; but by enjoining things hard and disagreeable to nature, as in the case of Abraham; by afflicting, either in

body or estate, of which Job is an instance; by permitting and letting loose the reins to Satan, and a man's own corruptions; by withdrawing his presence, and withholding the communications of his grace; and sometimes by suffering false prophets to arise among his people: his ends in them are on his own account, the display of his power; grace, wisdom, and faithfulness; on account of his Son, that his saints might be like him, and he might have an opportunity of exercising his power and pity: and on his people's account, that they might be humbled; their faith and patience tried; might see their weakness, and need of Christ, and be excited to prayer and watchfulness. There are also the temptations of Satan; which lie in soliciting to evil, suggesting hard and blasphemous thoughts of God, and filling with doubts and fears; which are cunningly formed by him, and are very afflictive. There are moreover the temptations of the world, which arise from poverty and riches, from the men of the world, the lusts of it, and from both its frowns and flatteries: add to all this, that there are temptations arising from a man's own heart. Now, in this petition, the children of God pray, that they may be kept from every occasion and object of sinning; from those sins they are most inclined to; that God would not leave them to Satan, and their own corrupt hearts; nor suffer them to sink under the weight of temptations of any sort; but that, in the issue, they might have a way to escape, and be victorious over all.

But deliver us from evil. This petition, with the Jews, is in this[f416] form:

> "[r [gpm ynlyxtw, "but deliver me from an evil accident", and diseases; and do not trouble me with evil dreams, and evil imaginations."

R. Juda, after his prayer, or at the close of it, as is this petition, used[f417] to say;

> "let it be thy good pleasure, 0 Lord our God, and the God of our fathers, wnlyxtç, "that thou wouldst deliver us" from impudent men, and impudence; from an "evil" man, and from an "evil" accident; from the "evil" imagination, i.e. the corruption of nature; from an "evil" companion; from an "evil" neighbour; and from Satan the destroyer; and from hard judgment; and from an hard adversary, whether he is the son of the covenant, or is not the son of the covenant."

And most, if not all of these things, may be very well thought to be comprised in the word “evil” here: particularly Satan may be meant, by “evil”, or “the evil one”, as the word may be rendered; who is eminently, originally, and immutably evil; his whole work and employment is nothing else but evil: and to be delivered from him, is to be rescued out of his hands, preserved from his snares, and delivered from his temptations. Evil men may also be intended: all men are naturally evil, and unalterably so, without the grace of God; and some are notoriously wicked; from whose company, sinful lusts, and pleasures, to which they are addicted, as well as from their rage and persecution, good men cannot but desire deliverance; as also from the evil of afflictions, and especially from the evil of sin; as that they may be kept from the commission of it; have the guilt of it removed; be preserved from its power and dominion; and, at last, be freed from the very being of it.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen. This conclusion is left out in the Arabic and Vulgate Latin versions, as it is in (Luke 11:4). It stands thus in the Jewish prayers [f418],

> “ayh Ælç twklmh yk, “for the kingdom is thine”, and thou shalt reign in glory for ever and ever.”

The usual response at the close of prayers, and reading the Shema, instead of “Amen”, was [f419] this:

> “Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom, for ever and ever.”

Which bears some resemblance to this concluding expression, which ascribes everlasting kingdom, power, and glory, to God: which may be considered either as a doxology, or an ascription of glory to God, which is his due; and ought be given him in all our prayers to him; or as so many reasons strengthening our faith in prayer; or as many arguments with God, with respect to the petitions made; since the kingdom of nature, providence, grace, and glory, is his: he is omnipotent, he has power to give us our daily bread; to forgive our sins; to preserve from, support under, and deliver out of temptation; to keep from all evil, and preserve from a total and final falling away: whose glory is concerned in all, to whom the glory of all is, and to whom it must, and shall be given; and all this for ever: and the whole is concluded with the word “Amen”; which is a note of asseveration, of the truth herein contained; is added by way of assent to

every petition made; is expressive of an hearty wish, and desire to have all fulfilled; and also of faith and confidence, that they will be answered. And this word being retained, and kept the same in all languages, signifies the unity of the spirit, and faith in prayer, in all the saints, in all ages. I leave this prayer with one observation, and that is, whereas it has been so long, and so often said, that this is the Lord's prayer, it can never be proved that he ever made use of it; and it is certain that he did not make it, as appears from what has been cited out of the Jewish records: the several petitions in it were in being and use before he directed to them; and not only the petitions, but even the very preface and conclusion, are manifestly of Jewish original: what our Lord did was, he took the most proper and pertinent petitions, that had been used by good men among that people; which, with some alterations much for the better, he put together in this order, and gave his approbation of; and that with this view, to point out to his disciples some of the best and most suitable petitions to be made; and to give them a pattern of brevity and conciseness in prayer; and teach them to pray after such a manner, or in some such like words and expressions. This I observe, not to lessen the usefulness of this excellent pattern of sound words; the whole, and every part of it, being exceedingly instructive, and worthy of imitation; but to rectify a vulgar mistake, and to abate the formal and superstitious observance of it.

Ver. 14. *For if ye forgive men their trespasses*, etc.] Christ here refers to the petition in (<4006>Matthew 6:12) which is enforced with this reason and argument, "as", or "for", so (<4204>Luke 11:4) "we forgive our debtors"; which he repeats and explains: and the reason why he singles out this particularly is, because he knew the Jews were a people very subject to revenge; and were very hardly brought to forgive any injuries done them: wherefore Christ presses it upon them closely to "forgive men their trespasses"; all sorts of injuries done them, or offences given them, whether by word or deed; and that fully, freely, from the heart; forgetting, as well as forgiving; not upbraiding them with former offences; and even without asking pardon, and though there might be no appearance of repentance. Now to this he encourages by saying,

your heavenly Father will also forgive you; will hear your prayers, and manifest his forgiving love to you: not that the forgiveness of others is the procuring cause of forgiveness with God, which is the blood of Christ; or of the manifestation and application of it, that is, the advocacy of Christ; nor the moving cause of it, that is, the free grace of God: but this enters

into the character, and is descriptive of the persons, to whom God is pleased to make a comfortable discovery, and give a delightful sense of his pardoning grace; such persons, so disposed and assisted by his grace, may expect it of him.

Ver. 15. *But if you forgive not men their trespasses*, etc.] On the other hand, where men are not of a forgiving temper to their fellow creatures and fellow Christians, how can they expect forgiveness at the hands of God? or what sense of pardoning grace can there be upon their minds? Had they any right apprehensions of the grace and goodness of God, in the forgiveness of their sins, this would influence their minds, and engage their hearts to forgive such who have offended them: wherefore, where this is wanting, it may be concluded of, and said to such persons,

neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. It is a plain case, that your Father has not given you a true sense of the pardon of your sins, nor can you be certain that he will; nor have you any reason to expect it, when you are so cruel and revengeful to others. There is a considerable emphasis lies upon the word “men”, to which “heavenly Father” is opposed, and the sense, according to it, is, that if men, who are upon an equal foot with each other, should not forgive one another, how should it be expected that our Father which is in heaven, who is so much above, and no ways obliged to us, should forgive us?

Ver. 16. *Moreover when ye fast*, etc.] This is to be understood, not so much of their public stated fasts, and which were by divine appointment, as of their private fasts; which, with the Jews, were very frequent and numerous, and particularly every Monday and Thursday; (see Luke 18:12) in which they affected great severity, and is here condemned by Christ:

be not as the hypocrites, the Scribes and Pharisees,

of a sad countenance; who put on very mournful airs, and dismal looks; made wry faces, and distorted countenances; banished all pleasantry and cheerfulness from them, so that they looked quite like other men than they really were;

for they disfigure their faces; not by covering them out of sight, by putting a veil over them, as some have thought; but they neglected to wash their faces, and make them clean, as at other times; and not only so, but put ashes upon their heads, and other methods they used: they discoloured

their faces, or “made” them “black”, as the Arabic version reads it; that they might look as if they became so through fasting: and such persons were in great esteem, and thought to be very religious. It is said [f420], in commendation of R. Joshua ben Chanamah, that all his days wynp wrjçwh, “his face was black”, through fastings; and this is said [f421] to be the reason of Ashur’s name, in (1 Chronicles 4:5) because “his face was black” with fasting: yea, they looked upon such a disfiguring of the face to be meritorious, and what would be rewarded hereafter.

> “Whoever (say they [f422]) wynp ryjçmh, “makes his face black”, on account of the law in this world, God will make his brightness to shine in the world to come.”

Now these practices they used,

that they might appear unto men to fast: so that either they did not really fast, when they pretended to it; only put on these outward appearances, that men might think they did; or, not content with real fasting, which they must be conscious of themselves, and God knew, they took such methods, that it might appear to men that they fasted, and that they might be taken notice of, and applauded by them: for their view in fasting was not to satisfy their own consciences, or please God, but that they might have glory of men. Hence, says Christ,

verily I say unto you, they have their reward; they obtain what they seek for, honour from men, and that is all they will have.

Ver. 17. *But thou, when thou fastest*, etc.] Christ allows of fasting, but what is of a quite different kind from that of the Jews; which lay not in an outward abstinence from food, and other conveniences of life, and refreshments of nature; but in an abstinence from sin, in acknowledgment and confession of it; and in the exercise of faith and hope in God, as a God pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin; wherefore cheerfulness, and a free use of the creatures, without an abuse of them, best became such persons.

Anoint thine head, and wash thy face; directly contrary to the Jewish canons, which forbid these things, with others, on fast days:

> “On the day of atonement, (say [f423] they,) a man is forbidden eating and drinking, hkysbwhxyjrbw “and washing and anointing”, and putting on of shoes, and the use of the bed.”

And the same were forbidden on other fasts: in anointings, the head was anointed first, and this rule and reason are given for it:

> “he that would anoint his whole body, hlyjt wçar Æs, “let him anoint his head first”, because it is king over all its members [f424].”

Anointing and washing were signs of cheerfulness and joy; (see <08B03>Ruth 3:3 <10120>2 Samuel 12:20).

Ver. 18. *That thou appear not unto men to fast*, etc.] Which is just the reverse of the hypocrites, the Scribes and Pharisees; and quite contrary to the customs of the Jews, who when they fasted, particularly on their noted fasts [f425],

> “brought out the ark into the street of the city, and put burnt ashes upon it, and upon the head of the prince, and upon the head of the president of the sanhedrim, and every man upon his own head.”

All which was done, to be seen of men to fast; but Christ directs to such sorts of fasting, and which is to be done in such a manner, as only to be seen by God:

but unto thy Father which is in secret; who is invisible, and who sees what is done in secret, and takes notice of the internal exercise of grace; which he approves of, and prefers to outward fastings; and

thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly: and to have honour from God, is infinitely more than to have the applause of men; for as God delights in, so he will reward his own grace with glory.

Ver. 19. *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth*, etc.] Meaning either treasures that are of an earthly nature and kind, the more valuable and excellent things of the earth, worldly wealth and riches; or the things and places, in which these are laid up, as bags, chests, or coffers, barns and other treasuries, private or public. Christ here dissuades from covetousness, and worldly mindedness; an anxious care and concern, to hoard up plenty of worldly things for themselves, for time to come, making no use of them at present for the good of others: and this he does, from the

nature of the things themselves; the places where they are laid up; the difficulty of keeping them; and their liableness to be corrupted or lost.

Where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal. Garments, formerly, were a considerable part of the treasures of great men, as well as gold and silver; (see <18276>Job 27:16). So according to the [f426] Targumist, Haman is bid to go aklmd yzng tybl, "to the king's treasury", and take from thence one of the purple garments, the best, and raiment of the best silk, etc. and these were liable to be eaten with the moth, (<59502>James 5:2). The word translated rust, does not here signify the rust of metals, as gold and silver; by which there is not so much damage done, so as to destroy them, and make them useless; but whatever corrupts and consumes things eatable, as blasting and mildew in corn, or any sort of vermin in granaries: for gold and silver, or money, with jewels and precious stones, which make a very great part of worldly treasure, seem to be more particularly designed, by what thieves break through into houses for, and carry away. So that here are three sorts of earthly treasures pointed at, which are liable to be corrupted, or taken away: garments, which may be destroyed, and rendered useless for wearing; provisions of things eatable, as all sorts of corn and grain, which may be so corrupted by smut and vermin, as not to be fit for use; and money and jewels, which may be stolen by thieves: so that no sort of worldly riches and treasure is safe, and to be depended on; and therefore it is a great folly and vanity to lay it up, and trust in it.

Ver. 20. *But lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven*, etc.] That is, either be concerned for, and seek after heavenly treasure, the riches of glory, the joys and glories of another world, which infinitely excel everything that is valuable on earth; and which can never be corrupted, or taken away: or rather, lay up your earthly treasures in heaven; that is, put them into the hands of God in heaven; and this is done, by liberally communicating to the poor; by which means men "provide themselves bags which wax not old, and a treasure in heaven that faileth not", (<42233>Luke 12:33). They shall never want any good thing here, and they "lay up in store for themselves, a good foundation against the time to come", (<540618>1 Timothy 6:18, 19). This is the way to have worldly treasure secured from moth, rust, and thieves; for to lay it up in heaven with God, to give it to him, to his poor, to make use of it for his glory, is to lay it up in a place,

where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. Treasures are safer here than in our own hands, and will turn to better account, and more to our own advantage, both in this life, and that which is to come: (see <401921>Matthew 19:21). In this way, though not for it, men come to have treasure in heaven, even the treasure of eternal life, glory, and happiness. Heaven is often represented by the Jewish writers as a treasury; and the treasures which are in it are said [f427] to be

> “µyyj yzng, “treasures of life”, and treasures of peace, and treasures of blessing; and the souls of the righteous, and the spirits and souls that shall be created, and the dew with which God will quicken the dead.”

Those words in (<053116>Deuteronomy 31:16). “And the Lord said unto Moses, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers”, are thus [f428] paraphrased.

> “And the Lord said unto Moses, lo! thou shalt sleep in the dust with thy fathers, and thy soul shall be treasured up aml[yyj yzngb, “in the treasury of eternal life”, with thy fathers.”

They tell us [f429] of a story of Monbaz the king, who was son to queen Helena; in which are many things agreeable to these words of Christ, and which may serve to illustrate them.

> “Monbaz the king stood and gave all his goods to the poor: his relations sent to him, and said, thy fathers added to that which was their’s, and to that which was their fathers; but thou hast given away that which was thine, and that which was thy father’s: he replied to them all thus: my fathers µymçb ytzng ynaw Wdab wzng, “laid up treasure on earth, but I have laid up treasure in heaven”, according to (<198511>Psalm 85:11). My fathers laid up treasures, which do not bring forth fruit; but I have laid up treasures, which bring forth fruit, according to (<230310>Isaiah 3:10). My fathers gathered in a place, where the hand, i.e. of man rules, (where thieves break through and steal,) but I have gathered in a place where the hand of man does not rule, according to (<199702>Psalm 97:2). My fathers gathered mammon, money, but I have gathered souls, according to (<201130>Proverbs 11:30). My fathers gathered for others, but I have gathered ymx[l, for myself, according to (<052413>Deuteronomy

24:13). My fathers gathered in this world, but I have gathered “for the world to come”.”

One of their commentators [f430] on the phrase, “my fathers laid up treasures below”, as it is in the Babylonish Talmud [f431], has this remark:

“for lo! all that they treasured up was for the necessaries of this world; which is h[lwt hmr rp[µwqm, “a place of dust and vermin”, which corrupt and destroy everything; “but I have laid up treasures above”, a place secure and firm, and which preserves everything that is put into it.”

Ver. 21. *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*.] This seems to be a proverbial expression, and contains in it another reason, dissuading from worldly mindedness; because of the danger the heart is in of being ensnared and ruined thereby: and the sense of it is, if your treasure is on earth, and lies in earthly things, your hearts will be set upon them, and be in them, in your bags, your coffers and storehouses; and so your souls will be in danger of being lost; which loss will be an irreparable one, though you should gain the whole world. But if your treasure is put into the hands of God, your hearts will be with him, and be settled on him; your desires will be after heavenly things; your affections will be set on things above; your conversation will be in heaven, whilst you are on earth; and that will be the place and seat of your happiness, to all eternity.

Ver. 22. *The light of the body is the eye*, etc.] Or, the “candle of the body is the eye”; for the eye is that in the body, as a candle is in the house; by the light of it, the several members of the body perform their office; and what is said of the eye of the body, is transferred to the eye of the mind:

if therefore thine eye be single: that is, if thy mind be liberal, generous, and bountiful: for Christ is still upon the same subject of liberality, and against covetousness; and here speaks entirely in the language of the Jews, who could easily understand him; in whose writings we read of three sorts of eyes; a good eye, a middling one, and an evil one; so in the offerings of the first fruits [f432],

“hpy ^y[, “a good eye” gave the fortieth, the house Shammai say, the thirtieth part; a middling one, the fiftieth; and an evil one, the sixtieth part.”

Upon which the commentators say [f433], a "good eye" means one that is liberal, and an "evil eye" the contrary: hence you often read [f434] of "trading, dedicating", and "giving with a good" or "an evil eye"; that is, either generously, liberally, or in a niggardly and grudging manner; which may help us to the sense of our Lord in these words; whose meaning is, that if a man is not covetous, but his mind is disposed to generosity and liberality; if this be the case, as if he should say,

thy whole body shall be full of light: all thy actions will be influenced by this noble principle; thy whole life will be illuminated, guided and governed by it; thy mind will be cheerful and pleasant, and thy estate and condition will be prosperous and successful.

Ver. 23. *But if thine eye be evil*, etc.] If thou art of a sordid disposition, of an avaricious temper, if the sin of covetousness prevails over thee,

thy whole body will be full of darkness: thy judgment will be so influenced by that sordid principle, that thou wilt not be able to discern what is agreeable to the law of God, or human reason; what is fitting to be done for thyself, for God, or for thy fellow creatures; all the powers and faculties of thy soul will be enslaved by it, and all be intent upon, and employed in the gratification of it: thy mind will be always sad and sorrowful, harassed and distressed; and thy estate, and condition, will be most miserable and uncomfortable:

if therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! as it is in the body, so it is with the mind; as when the eye, the light of the body, is put out by any means, all the members of the body are in entire darkness; so when the light of reason in the mind is so far extinguished by any prevailing iniquity, particularly the sin of covetousness, so that it is wholly influenced and governed by it, what irregular actions is it led into! What deeds of darkness does it perform! and what will be the consequence of it, but utter and eternal darkness, if grace prevent not!

Ver. 24. *No man can serve two masters*, etc.] Whose orders are directly contrary to one another: otherwise, if they were the same, or agreed, both might be served; but this is rarely the case, and seldom done. This is a proverbial expression, and is elsewhere used by Christ, (⁴²1613Luke 16:13). The Jews have sayings pretty much like it, and of the same sense as when they say [f435],

> "we have not found that twnjlwç ytçl hkwz µda lk, "any man is fit for two tables.""

And again [f436],

> "that it is not proper for one man to have two governments:"

their meaning is, that two things cannot be done together:

for, either he will hate the one, and love the other; he will have less affection and regard to the one, than to the other; as the service or orders of the one, are less agreeable to him than the others;

or else he will hold to the one; hearken to his commands, obey his orders, and abide in his service;

and despise the other; show disrespect to his person, neglect his orders, and desert his service:

ye cannot serve God and mammon. The word "mammon" is a Syriac word, and signifies money, wealth, riches, substance, and everything that comes under the name of worldly goods. Jerom says, that riches, in the Syriac language, are called "mammon"; and so the word is often used in the above senses, in the Chaldee paraphrases [f437], and in the Talmudic writings; where [f438] twnwmm ynyd, "pecuniary judgments", or causes relating to money affairs, in which were pecuniary mulcts, are opposed to twçpn ynyd, "judgment of souls", or causes relating to life and death. The account and interpretation Irenaeus [f439] gives of the word, is very wide and foreign; who says, that

> "Mammon, according to the Jewish way of speaking, which the Samaritans used, is one that is greedy, and would have more than he ought; but, according to the Hebrew language, it is called adjectively Mam, and signifies one that is gluttonous; that is, who cannot refrain himself from gluttony."

Whereas it is not an Hebrew word, nor an adjective, but a substantive, and signifies riches; which are opposed to God, being by some men loved, admired, trusted in, and worshipped, as if they were God; and which is incompatible with the service of the true God: for such persons, whose hearts go after their covetousness, and are set upon earthly riches, who give up themselves to them, are eagerly and anxiously pursuing after them,

and place their confidence in them; whatever pretensions they may make to the service of God, as did the Scribes and Pharisees, who are particularly struck at by this expression, both here and elsewhere, they cannot truly and heartily serve the Lord. “Mammon” is the god they serve; which word may well be thought to answer to Pluto, the god of riches, among the Heathens. The Jews, in Christ’s time, were notorious for the love of “mammon”; and they themselves own, that this was the cause of the destruction of the second temple: the character they give of those, who lived under the second temple, is this:

> “we know that they laboured in the law, and took care of the commandments, and of the tithes, and that their whole conversation was good; only that they ˆwmmh ta ˆybhwa, “loved the mammon”, and hated one another without a cause [f440].”

Ver. 25. *Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life*, etc.] Since ye cannot serve both God and “mammon”, obey one, and neglect the other. Christ does not forbid labour to maintain, support, and preserve, this animal life; nor does he forbid all thought and care about it, but all anxious, immoderate, perplexing, and distressing thoughts and cares; such as arise from diffidence and unbelief, and tend to despair; which are dishonourable to God, as the God of nature and providence, and uncomfortable to men:

what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. The several and the only things, which are necessary for the support and comfort of human life, are mentioned; as meat, drink, and clothing; Eating and drinking are necessary to preserve life; and raiment, to cover and defend the body, from the injuries of the heavens: and having these, men have everything necessary, and ought herewith to be content; nor should they be anxiously thoughtful about these: for

is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? And yet, God has given these without man’s thought: and since these are better, and much more excellent, than food and raiment, as all must and will acknowledge; and God has given these the greater gifts, it may be depended upon, that he will give the lesser; that he will give meat and drink; to uphold that valuable life, which he is the author of; and raiment to clothe that body, which he, with so much wisdom and power, has accurately and wonderfully made.

Ver. 26. *Behold the fowls of the air*, etc.] Not such as are brought up in houses, but which fly abroad in the air, wild; and are not supported by their own, or any human care, but by the care of God: (<scripRef>Luke 12:24</scripRef>) particularly mentions the “ravens”, referring probably to (<scripRef>Psalm 147:9</scripRef>), and because they are very voracious creatures: and there it is said, “consider the ravens”; look attentively upon them, and with observation,

for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns. This is not said, that men should not sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns: but to reprove their diffidence and unbelief: who, though they have the opportunity of sowing, reaping, and gathering in, year by year, yet distrust the providence of God; when the fowls of the air do none of these,

yet your heavenly Father feedeth them; (see <scripRef>Psalm 145:15,16 147:9</scripRef>). The Jews acknowledge this, that the least and meanest of creatures are fed by God.

> “Mar says[f441], the holy blessed God sits ˆzw, “and feeds”, i.e. all creatures, and takes care of them.”

Are ye not much better than they? Do not you differ from them? are ye not much more excellent than they? And if God feeds and provides for inferior creatures, such as are very mean and contemptible, how much more will he not provide for you? There is a passage in the Talmud, which has great affinity to this of Christ’s, and appears to have in it pretty much of the like kind of reasoning. In the Misna[f442] it is said, that R. Simeon ben Eleazer should say,

> “Did you ever see a beast, or a fowl, that had a trade? but they are fed without trouble.”

In the Gemara[f443] is added,

> “Did you ever see a lion bearing burdens, an hart gathering summer fruits, a fox a money changer, or a wolf selling pots? And yet r[x alb ˆysnrptm, “they are nourished without labour”, and wherefore are they created? To serve me, and I am created to serve my Maker: and lo! these things have in them an argument, “from the less to the greater”; for if these, which are created to serve me after this manner, are supported without trouble; I, who am created to serve my Maker, is it not fit that I should be supplied without

trouble? And what is the reason that I am sustained with trouble? My sins."

Ver. 27. *Which of you by taking thought*, etc.] As Christ argued before, from the unnecessariness of anxious thoughts and cares, about the provisions of life; so here, from the unprofitableness of them; it being impossible for a man, with all his care and thought, to

add one cubit unto his stature, or "to his age"; so the word is rendered, (<430921>John 9:21-23; <581111>Hebrews 11:11) to the days of his life, he is so solicitous about; for a cubit may as well be applied to a man's age, as an "hand's breadth" is to his days, (<19905>Psalm 39:5). Nor is it so reasonable to think, that Christ should be speaking of making such an addition to a man's height; though that, to be sure, is an impossible thing: since the far greater part of Christ's hearers must be come to their full growth, and could not hope to have any addition made to their height; though they might hope to add to their days; much less such a monstrous one as that of a cubit, and which is a strong reason against the other sense of the word, and for this: for our Lord is speaking of something very small, which men cannot do; as appears from what Luke says, (<421226>Luke 12:26) "If ye then be not able to do that which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?" Whereas, to add a cubit to a man's height, is a great deal:

"the stature of a middling man (says [f444] Bartenora) is three cubits."

And to add one more, makes a large addition to his stature; but to apply this to a man's age, is a small matter, and yet is what men cannot do: the sense of the words is this, that no man, by all the care and thought he can make use of, is ever able to add one cubit, or the least measure to his days; he cannot lengthen out his life one year, one month, one day, one hour; no, not one moment.

Ver. 28. *And why take ye thought for raiment*, etc.] Having exposed the folly of an anxious and immoderate care and thought, for food to support and prolong life, our Lord proceeds to show the vanity of an over concern for raiment:

consider the lilies of the field or "the flowers of the field", as the Arabic version reads it, the lilies being put for all sorts of flowers. The Persic version mentions both rose and lily; the one being beautifully clothed in red, the other in white. Christ does not direct his hearers to the lilies, or flowers which grow in the garden which receive some advantage from the

management and care of the gardener; but to those of the field, where the art and care of men were not so exercised: and besides, he was now preaching on the mount, in an open place; and as he could point to the fowls of the air, flying in their sight, so to the flowers, in the adjacent fields and valleys: which he would have them look upon, with their eyes, consider and contemplate in their minds,

how they grow; in what variety of garbs they appear, of what different beautiful colours, and fragrant odours, they were; and yet

they toil not, or do not labour as husbandmen do, in tilling their land, ploughing their fields, and sowing them with flax, out of which linen garments are made:

neither do they spin; the flax, when plucked and dressed, as women do, in order for clothing; nor do they weave it into cloth, or make it up into garments, as other artificers do.

Ver. 29. *And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory*, etc.] This is a certain truth, to be affirmed in the strongest manner, and to be believed, that not only men and kings too in general; but even particularly Solomon, the richest and most magnificent of all the kings of Israel, whose grandeur, and glory, exceeded all the princes of the earth; that even he, not in his common dress, but when "in his glory", and in "all" his glory, when arrayed with his royal and richest robes, with his crown on his head, and when seated on his throne,

was not arrayed like one of these lilies, or flowers of the field: for the glory and beauty of his garments were purely from art, but their's by nature; which can never be equalled by art. This phrase, "Solomon in all his glory", is the same which the Jewish doctors, in their writings, express by wt[çb hmlç, "Solomon in his hour" [f445]: that is as their commentators explain it [f446], wtwklm t[b, "in the time of his reign"; for they say he was first a king, and then a private person. Now, not whilst he was a private person, but when a king, in the height of his grandeur and magnificence, and when dressed out in the most splendid manner, he was exceeded in array by a single lily: or the sense is, in his royal apparel. For as the same doctors say,

> "what is a man's "glory?" It is his clothing that is his outward glory; and again, garments are the glory of a man [f447]."

Ver. 30. *Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field*. etc.] These words are a conclusion from the former, and contain an argument from the lesser to the greater; that if God, for this is solely his work, so clothes the lilies, the flowers of the field, and whatever grows up out of the earth, in such a beautiful and splendid manner, as even to outdo Solomon, in his richest apparel; there's no doubt to be made of it, or at least ought not, but that he will much more provide clothing for men. The argument is illustrated, by the short continuance of the grass of the field, which is so clothed; and the use it is put to, when cut down;

which today is in being, but abides not long, as it were but for a day: it flourishes in the morning, continues for the day in its glory and verdure, is cut down at evening, and withers and dies,

and tomorrow is cast into the oven, to heat it with, or as the Syriac version reads arwntb, "in the furnace". And so Munster's Hebrew edition of this Gospel. For furnaces used to be heated with straw and stubble, and such like things, as were gathered out of the fields; so, we read in the Misna [f448], that pots and furnaces were heated;

> "a pot which they heat "with straw and stubble", they put into it that which is to be boiled — a furnace which they heat "with straw and stubble", they put nothing into it, nor upon it (i.e. till they have removed the coals or ashes): a little furnace, which they heat abbgbw çqb, "with straw and stubble", is as the pots."

The last word, abbg, Bartenora says, signifies wood, or sticks, small as stubble, which they gather out of the field; that is, the stalks of some sort of herbs and plants, that grow in the field: now if God clothes these plants, which are so short lived, and at last used for such mean purposes;

shall he not much more clothe you men, his people, who are of a much longer life, and designed for greater ends and purposes; for the worship and service of God, for his honour and glory here, and for eternal life and happiness hereafter,

O ye of little faith? As such persons are, who distrust the providence of God, with respect to food and raiment, The phrase, hnma ynjq, "men of little faith", is often to be met with in the Rabbinical writings: so Noah is represented by them, as one of "little faith", who believed, and did not believe the flood; and therefore did not go into the ark, till the waters

drove him [f449]: and though he is said to be perfect, this was not by his works, but by the grace of God [f450]. So the Israelites at the Red Sea, who thought that when they came out on one side, the Egyptians would come out on the [f451] other. So the little children that mocked Elisha, are said to be so called, because they were men "of little [f452] faith". So everyone that exalts his voice in prayer, is reckoned such an one [f453]. But what comes nearest to the case before us, is the following [f454] passage;

> "Says R. Eliezer the Great, whoever has a morsel in his basket, and says, what shall I eat tomorrow? is no other than hnma ynmqm, "one of those of little faith"."

Ver. 31. *Therefore take no thought*, etc.] That is, for the morrow, as it is explained, (<401634>Luke 6:34) for it is lawful to take proper care and thought for present food, drink, and raiment; but not to be anxiously concerned for futurity;

saying, what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? These are a repetition of the several things instanced in, and are the very language and expressions of men of little faith; as in the above citation, rjml lkwa hm, "what shall I eat tomorrow?"

Ver. 32. *For after all these things do the Gentiles seek,* etc.] Or "the nations of the world", as in (<401230>Luke 12:30). The Syriac reads it so here: the phrase, µlw[h twmwa "the nations of the world", is used of the Gentiles, in distinction from the Israelites, thousands of times in the Jewish writings; it would be endless to give instances. These knew not God, nor acknowledged his providence; the greater part of them thought, that the soul perished with the body; few of them thought, that anything remained after death; and they that did, spoke very doubtfully of it: wherefore it is no wonder, that such persons should greedily seek after, and be anxiously concerned for all these things, food, raiment, and riches, and a great plenty of them; since this is all the happiness they expect; and imagine, that this is to be acquired by their care, thought, diligence, and industry; having no regard to a superior being, and his all wise providence: but for the Jews, and so Christians, who have a divine revelation, the knowledge of God, and his providence, and of a future state after this life, to act the same part the Heathens do, is exceedingly unbecoming, absurd, and wicked: and besides, such greedy desires, immoderate care, and anxious solicitude, are altogether unnecessary;

for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. Every word almost, carries in it an argument, to strengthen the faith of God's children, to encourage them to believe, that he will bestow upon them, whatever is needful, for meat, drink, and clothing: he is a "father", and will take care of his children; "their father"; they have interest in him, being related to him, and need not doubt of his paternal care, and affectionate regard to them: their "heavenly" Father, or their Father in heaven; who has all things at his command, who sits there, and does whatever he pleaseth on earth: "he knoweth that they have need"; he knows all things, all their straits, difficulties, wants and necessities; he knows they need every day, "all these things", food and raiment, and cannot do without them: and therefore they may depend upon it, that as it is in his power to relieve them, and their persons and cases are not unknown to him; he who stands in the relation of a father to them, will supply them with whatever is proper and convenient for them.

Ver. 33. *But seek first the kingdom of God*, etc.] Meaning either the Gospel, and the ministration of it; in which sense this phrase is often used, (see <4021343>Matthew 21:43 <4010114>Mark 1:14 <4020443>Luke 4:43,9:2-60,16:16) and which is diligently to be sought after, and into; to be constantly attended on, and to be preferred to our necessary food, to raiment, or riches, or any enjoyment of life: or else the kingdom of glory, which is prepared by God, and is his gift; for which he makes his people meet here, and will introduce them into it hereafter.

And his righteousness; the righteousness of God, which is revealed in the Gospel, and is what gives a right and title to the kingdom of heaven. This is not the righteousness of man, but of God; and is no other than the righteousness of Christ; so called, because he is God who has wrought it; it is what God approves of, accepts, and imputes, and which only can justify in his sight, and give an abundant entrance into his kingdom and glory. Heaven is to be sought for in the first place, as the perfection of the saints' happiness; and Christ's righteousness is to be sought for, and laid hold on by faith, as the way and means of enjoying that happiness; without which, there will be no entering into the kingdom of heaven.

And all these things shall be added unto you: of the free bounty, goodness, and liberality of God, without your thought and care, and much less merit; even "all these things", meat, drink, clothing, or whatsoever worldly sustenance else is necessary for you: which are not parts of the happiness

of saints, only appendages thereunto; which they have over and above what they are, or should be chiefly seeking after. The Hebrews [f455] say,

> "that no good sign will be shown to Israel, until they return and "seek" three things: "afterwards the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord"; µymç twklmwz, "this is the kingdom of heaven"; and "David their king", according to its literal sense; "and shall fear the Lord and his goodness"; this is the house of the sanctuary, as it is said, "this goodly mountain", and Lebanon."

Ver. 34. *Take therefore no thought for the morrow*, etc.] Reference is had to (Proverbs 27:1). "Boast not of thyself tomorrow": a man cannot promise or assure himself, that he shall have a morrow, and therefore it is great weakness and folly to be anxiously thoughtful about it. This is expressed in the Talmud [f456], nearer the sense of Christ's words, after this manner:

> "rjm trx rxt la, "do not distress thyself with tomorrow's affliction, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"; perhaps tomorrow may not be, and thou wilt be found distressing thyself, for the time which is nothing to thee."

And should it come, it is unnecessary to be thoughtful of it in a distressing manner before hand;

for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. The morrow is here introduced by a "prosopopeia", as if it was a person sufficiently thoughtful and careful for the necessaries of it: every day brings along with it fresh care and thought, being attended with fresh wants and troubles; and therefore, it is very unadvisable, to bring the cares and troubles of two days upon one; as he does, who is anxiously concerned today, for the things of tomorrow;

sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. This proverb is thus expressed in the Talmud [f457], htçb hrxl hyd, "sufficient for distress", or "vexation, is the present time"; which the gloss explains thus,

> "sufficient for the vexation it is, that men should grieve for it, at the time that it comes upon them."

It is very wrong to anticipate trouble, or meet it before hand; if it was for no other reason but this, that every day's trouble is enough, and should not

be needlessly added to, by an over concern what shall be done for tomorrow; or how shall the necessities of it be answered, or the trials of it be endured.

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 7

Ver. 1. *Judge not, that ye be not judged*.] This is not to be understood of any sort of judgment; not of judgment in the civil courts of judicature, by proper magistrates, which ought to be made and pass, according to the nature of the case; nor of judgment in the churches of Christ, where offenders are to be called to an account, examined, tried, and dealt with according to the rules of the Gospel; nor of every private judgment, which one man may make upon another, without any detriment to him; but of rash judgment, interpreting men's words and deeds to the worst sense, and censuring them in a very severe manner; even passing sentence on them, with respect to their eternal state and condition. Good is the advice given by the famous Hillell [f458], who lived a little before Christ's time;

> "Do not judge thy neighbour, (says he,) until thou comest into his place."

It would be well, if persons subject to a censorious spirit, would put themselves in the case and circumstances the persons are in they judge; and then consider, what judgment they would choose others should pass on them. The argument Christ uses to dissuade from this evil, which the Jews were very prone to, is, "that ye be not judged"; meaning, either by men, for such censorious persons rarely have the good will of their fellow creatures, but are commonly repaid in the same way; or else by God, which will be the most awful and tremendous: for such persons take upon them the place of God, usurp his prerogative, as if they knew the hearts and states of men; and therefore will have judgment without mercy at the hands of God.

Ver. 2. *For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged*, etc.] Both by God and men; to which agree those proverbial sentences used by the Jews;

> "He that judgeth his neighbour according to the balance of righteousness, or innocence, they judge him according to righteousness."

[F459]And a little after,

> “As ye have judged me according to the balance of righteousness, God will judge you according to the balance of righteousness.”

Hence that advice of Joshua ben Perachiah [f460], who, by the Jewish writers, is said to be the master of Christ;

> “Judge every man according to the balance of righteousness.”

Which their commentators explain thus [f461]; when you see a man as it were in “equilibrio”, inclining to neither part, it is not clear from what he does, that he is either good or evil, righteous or unrighteous; yet when you see him do a thing which may be interpreted either to a good or a bad sense, it ought always to be interpreted to the best.

And with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again. This was an usual proverb among the Jews; it is sometimes delivered out thus, hdm dgnk hdm, “measure against measure” [f462]; but oftener thus, and nearer the form of it here, wl ˆyddwm hb ddwm µdaç hdmb, “with what measure a man measures, they measure to him”: one might fill up almost a page, in referring to places, where it is used in this form: besides those in the [f463] margin, take the following, and the rather, because it gives instances of this retaliation [f464]:

> ““With what measure a man measures, they measure to him”; so the woman suspected of adultery, she adorned herself to commit sin, and God dishonoured her; she exposed herself to iniquity, God therefore stripped her naked; the same part of her body in which her sin begun, her punishment did. Samson walked after his eyes, and therefore the Philistines plucked out his eyes. Absalom was lifted up in his mind, with his hair, and therefore he was hanged by it; and because he lay with his father’s ten concubines, they therefore pierced him with ten lances; and because he stole away three hearts, the heart of his father, the heart of the sanhedrim, and the heart of Israel, therefore he was thrust with three darts: and so it is with respect to good things; Miriam waited for Moses one hour, therefore the Israelites waited for her seven days in the wilderness; Joseph, who was greater than his brethren, buried his father; and Moses, who was the greatest among the Israelites took care of the bones of Joseph, and God himself buried Moses.”

Ver. 3. *And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye*? etc.] By "mote" is meant, any little bit of straw, or small splinter of wood, that flies into the eye, and does it damage, hinders its sight, and gives it pain; and designs little sins, comparatively speaking, such as youthful follies, human frailties, and infirmities, inadvertencies and imprudencies; which may be said to be light faults, in comparison of others: and though not to be vindicated, nor continued in, yet not to be severely looked upon and chastised. To scrutinize diligently into, aggravate, dwell upon, and sharply reprove the lighter faults of others, is a conduct, which is here inveighed against, and condemned by Christ; and more especially, when it may be said with the greatest truth and justice to such,

but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye: by the "beam" is meant, greater sins, grosser abominations, and such as were more peculiar to the Pharisees; as pride, arrogance, a vain opinion of themselves, confidence in their own righteousness, hypocrisy, covetousness, and iniquity; things they did not advert to in themselves, when they loudly exclaimed against lesser evils in others. Such men must be of all persons inexcusable, who condemn that in others, which either they themselves do, or what is abundantly worse.

Ver. 4. *Or how wilt thou say to thy brother*? etc.] This is not so much an interrogation, as an expression of admiration, at the front and impudence of such censorious remarkers, and rigid observators; who not content to point at the faults of others, take upon them to reprove them in a very magisterial way: and it is as if Christ had said, with what face canst thou say to thy friend or neighbour,

let me pull out the mote out of thine eye? give me leave to rebuke thee sharply for thy sin, as it deserves,

and behold a beam is in thine own eye; thou art guilty of a far greater iniquity: astonishing impudence! Art thou so blind, as not to see and observe thy viler wickedness? Or which, if conscious of, how canst thou prevail upon thyself to take upon thee to reprove and censure others? Dost thou think thy brother cannot see thy beam? And may he not justly retort thine iniquities upon thee, which exceed his? and then what success canst thou promise thyself? Such persons are very unfit to be reprovers of others.

Ver. 5. *Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye*, etc.] Very rightly does our Lord call such a man an hypocrite, who is very free

in remarking and reproving other men's sins, and covering his own; and indeed, one end of his critical observations, rigid censures, and rash judgments is, that he might be thought to be holier than he is. Christ very manifestly points at the Scribes and Pharisees, who were men of such a complexion; and whom he often, without any breach of charity, calls hypocrites. The meaning of this proverbial expression is, that a man should first begin with himself, take notice of his own sins, reprove himself for them, and reform; and then it will be soon enough to observe other men's.

And then shalt thou see clearly, to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye: then will he, and not before, be a proper person to reprove others; all objections and impediments to such a work will then be removed. Our Lord here speaks in the language of the Jewish nation, with whom such like expressions were common, and of long standing [f465]

> "In the generation that judged the judges, one said to another, Æyny[ˆybm µsyq lwj, "cast out the mote out of thine eye"; to whom it was replied, Æyny[ˆybm hrwq lwj, "cast out the beam from thine eye": one said to another, "thy silver is become dross": the other replies, "thy wine is mixed with water"."

Again [f466],

> "R. Taphon said, I wonder whether there is any in this generation, that will receive reproof; if one should say to him, "cast out the mote out of thine eye", will he say to him, "cast out the beam out of thine eye?" Says R. Eleazer ben Azariah, I wonder whether there is any in this generation, that knows how to reprove."

From whence it is clear, that these phrases were used in the same sense they are by Christ; and which is still more evident by the gloss upon them: for upon the word "mote", it observes,

> "That it is as if it had been said, ˆwjq ˆw[, "a little sin", which is in thine hand (i.e. which thou hast committed): the other could say to him, cast thou away lwdg ˆw[, "the great sin", which is in thine hand; so that they could not reprove, because they were all sinners."

Agreeable to these, are some other proverbs used by the Jews, such as

> "a vice which is in thyself, do not speak of to thy neighbour,"

[f467] or upbraid him with it: and [f468] again

> “adorn thyself, and afterwards adorn others.”

Which is produced by a noted commentator [f469] of their’s, to illustrate the text in (<3001>Zephaniah 2:1) on which he also makes this remark;

> “inquire first into your own blemishes, and then inquire into the blemishes of others.”

The sense of each of them is, that a man should first reform himself, and then others; and that he that finds faults with others, ought to be without blame himself.

Ver. 6. *Give not that which is holy to the dogs*, etc.] Dogs were unclean creatures by the law; the price of one might not be brought into the house of the Lord, for a vow, (<052318>Deuteronomy 23:18) yea, these creatures were not admitted into several temples of the Heathens [f470]. Things profane and unclean, as flesh torn by beasts, were ordered to be given to them, (<022231>Exodus 22:31) but nothing that was holy was to be given them, as holy flesh, or the holy oblations, or anything that was consecrated to holy uses; to which is the allusion here. It is a common maxim [f471] with the Jews,

> “µybl k l ˆlykahl µyçdqh ta ˆydwp ˆyaç, “that they do not redeem holy things, to give to the dogs to eat”.”

Here the phrase is used in a metaphorical sense; and is generally understood of not delivering or communicating the holy word of God, and the truths of the Gospel, comparable to pearls, or the ordinances of it, to persons notoriously vile and sinful: to men, who being violent and furious persecutors, and impudent blasphemers, are compared to “dogs”; or to such, who are scandalously vile, impure in their lives and conversations, and are therefore compared to swine;

neither cast ye your pearls before swine. But since the subject Christ is upon is reproof, it seems rather to be the design of these expressions, that men should be cautious, and prudent, in rebuking and admonishing such persons for their sins, in whom there is no appearance or hope of success; yea, where there is danger of sustaining loss;

lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you: that is, despise the admonitions and reproofs given, and hurt the persons who

give them, either by words or deeds; (see <scripRef passage="Proverbs 9:7,8" />). The Jews have some sayings much like these, and will serve to illustrate them [f472];

> “µyryzjh ynpl µynynph wkylçt la, “do not cast pearls before swine”, nor deliver wisdom to him, who knows not the excellency of it; for wisdom is better than pearls, and he that does not seek after it, is worse than a swine.”

Ver. 7. *Ask and it shall be given you*, etc.] This is to be understood of asking of God in prayer, for such things as are wanting; whether of a temporal nature, as food and raiment, which Christ, in the former chapter, had warned against an immoderate and anxious concern for; or of a spiritual nature, as grace, and wisdom to behave in a proper manner, both towards God and men: and such, who ask according to the will of God, in the name of Christ, and under the direction, guidance, and influence of the Spirit, who ask in faith and fear, and with submission to the divine will, shall have what they ask for; not as what they deserve, but as a free gift.

Seek, and ye shall find. This is still meant of prayer, and of seeking God, his face and favour: which such shall find, who seek in a right way, by Christ, and with their whole hearts, diligently:

knock and it shall be opened unto you as beggars do, who use much importunity for relief and assistance. So men should stand and knock at the door of mercy, which will not always be shut against them. Faith in prayer is a key that opens this door, when a poor soul finds grace and mercy to help it in time of need. Our Lord’s design is to express the nature, fervour, and constancy of prayer, and to encourage to it.

Ver. 8. *For everyone that asketh receiveth*, etc.] For God is no respecter of persons; whoever makes application, be he a Jew, or a Gentile, rich or poor, bond or free, a man of great gifts, or mean parts, provided he asks aright, from right principles, and with right views, shall not lose his labour; but shall receive all such good things at the hand of God, as are suitable and convenient for him.

And he that seeketh findeth; he that seeks for God in Christ, the grace and mercy of God, the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; that seeks after the true riches, both of grace and glory, shall be sure to find them; (see <scripRef passage="Proverbs 21:21" />).

And to him that knocketh it shall be opened: that is, to him that is constant at the throne of grace, who continues knocking at the door of mercy, and will have no denial, it shall be opened to him; and he shall have entrance into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus.

Ver. 9. *Or what man is there of you*, etc.] "That is a father", as in (<42111>Luke 11:11) that is, is in the relation, and has the affections of a father; and indeed is a man, and has the nature and passions of a man; unless he is become a mere brute, and devoid of all humanity,

whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? No, by no means; no man can act such a merciless, cruel part as this to a child: for though he might impose upon him by the likeness of some sort of stones with bread; yet could not hope to satisfy his hunger, or stop his mouth this way; but must expect to hear from him again with bitter complaints.

Ver. 10. *Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent*?] Which is somewhat like a fish, especially an eel. Fish and bread are mentioned, because these were common food; (see <41064>Mark 6:41 8:6,7) (<43213>John 21:13) and particularly in Galilee, a fish country, where Christ now was, and from whence he had called his disciples, who were fishermen. In (<42112>Luke 11:12) it is added, "or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?" which is used, as the rest, to show the absurdity and inhumanity of such conduct; and that indeed nothing of this kind is to be found among men, unless it be among monsters in nature.

Ver. 11. *If ye then being evil,* etc.] As all mankind in general are, both by nature and practice: they are conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity; are evil from their youth, and transgressors from the womb; are corrupt, and do abominable things; and such these Jews were Christ speaks unto; and who, very likely, has respect chiefly to the evil of covetousness they were addicted to. The argument is taken from the lesser to the greater, and runs thus; that if ye, who are but men, men on earth, yea evil men, not over liberal and beneficent, nay covetous and niggardly,

know how to give good gifts unto your children; can find in your hearts, having it in the power of your hands, to give suitable provisions for the support and sustenance of your children;

how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven; who is omniscient and omnipotent; who knows the persons and wants of his children, and

what is proper for them, and is able to relieve them, being Lord of heaven and earth,

give good things to them that ask him? Not only temporal good things, as meat, drink, and clothing; but all spiritual good things; every supply of grace; all things pertaining to life and godliness. In (<421113>Luke 11:13) "the Holy Spirit" is mentioned, and so seems to design his gifts and graces, everything that is necessary for the spiritual and eternal good of his people: but for these things he must be inquired of, and sought after; and it is the least saints can do to ask for them; and they have encouragement enough to ask; for it is but ask and have.

Ver. 12. *Therefore all things whatsoever*, etc.] These words are the epilogue, or conclusion of our Lord's discourse; the sum of what he had delivered in the two preceding chapters, and in this hitherto, is contained in these words; for they not only respect the exhortation about judging and reproving; but every duty respecting our neighbour; it is a summary of the whole. It is a golden rule, here delivered, and ought to be observed by all mankind, Jews and Gentiles. So the Karaite Jews [f473] say,

> "all things that a man would not take to himself, wyjal µtwç[l ywar ^ya, "it is not fit to do them to his brethren"."

And Maimonides [f474] has expressed it much in the same words our Lord here does;

> "all things whatsoever ye would that others should do to you, (says he,) do you the same to your brethren, in the law, and in the commandments:"

only there seems to be a restriction in the word "brethren"; the Jews, perhaps, meaning no other than Israelites; whereas our Lord's rule reaches to all without exception, "all things whatsoever"

ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: let them be who they will, whether brethren, or kinsmen, according to the flesh, or what not; "for this is the law and the prophets": the sum of the law and the prophets; not the whole sum of them, or the sum of the whole law: but of that part of it which respects our neighbours. Remarkable is the advice given by Hillell [f475] to one who came to be made a proselyte by him;

> “whatsoever is hateful to thee, that do not thou to thy neighbour; hlwk hrwth lk ayh wz, “this is all the whole law”, and the rest is an explication of it, go and be perfect:”

yea, this rule is not only agreeable to the law of Moses, and the prophets, but even to the law and light of nature. Aristotle being asked, how we ought to carry ourselves to our friends, answered [f476], as we would wish they would carry it to us. Alexander Severus, a Heathen emperor, so greatly admired this rule of Christ’s, that he ordered it to be written on the walls of his closet.

Ver. 13. *Enter ye in at the strait gate*, etc.] By the “strait gate” is meant Christ himself; who elsewhere calls himself “the door”, (<430107>John 10:7-9) as he is into the church below, and into all the ordinances and privileges of it; as also to the Father, by whom we have access unto him, and are let into communion with him, and a participation of all the blessings of grace; yea, he is the gate of heaven, through which we have boldness to enter into the holiest of all by faith and hope now; as there will be hereafter an abundant entrance into the kingdom and glory of God, through his blood and righteousness. This is called “strait”; because faith in Christ, a profession of it, and a life and conversation agreeable to it, are attended with many afflictions, temptations, reproaches, and persecutions. “Entering” in at it is by faith, and making a profession of it: hence it follows, that faith is not the gate itself, but the grace, by which men enter in at the right door, and walk on in Christ, as they begin with him.

For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction; so that the one may be easily known from the other. There is no difficulty in finding out, or entering in at, or walking in the way of sin, which leads to eternal ruin. The gate of carnal lusts, and worldly pleasures, stands wide open,

and many there be which go in thereat; even all men in a state of nature; the way of the ungodly is “broad”, smooth, easy, and every way agreeable to the flesh; it takes in a large compass of vices, and has in it abundance of company; but its end is destruction. Our Lord seems to allude to the private and public roads, whose measures are fixed by the Jewish canons; which say [f477], that

> “a private way was four cubits broad, a way from city to city eight cubits, a public way sixteen cubits, and the way to the cities of refuge thirty two cubits.”

Ver. 14. *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way*, etc.] And so, difficult to enter in at; and when entered, the way is unpleasant to the flesh to walk in, being hedged up on each side with afflictions and tribulations; and moreover, is like the “narrow place”, or στενος τοπος, “the strait place”, as the Septuagint in (Numbers 22:26) render it; in which the angel that met Balaam stood; and in which there was no turning to the right hand or the left; and such is the way to eternal happiness. The great encouragement to walk on in it is, because it is that way

which leadeth unto life: unto eternal life: it certainly leads thither; it never fails of bringing persons to it; believers in Christ, all that walk in Christ the way, though they are said to be “scarcely” saved, by reason of their afflictions and trials, they meet with in their way to the kingdom; yet they are, and shall be certainly saved: they shall be safely brought to glory; which will be an abundant recompense for all the troubles and sorrows that have attended them in their journey.

And few there be that find it; the way, and so consequently the life it leads to. “The gate is strait”; small and little, and so unobserved: there is but one way to heaven, and the generality of men neglect it. “The way is narrow”, and so disagreeable; the company few, and not engaging. Men choose large gates, broad ways, and much company. The flesh loves to walk at liberty, unconfined, and uncontrolled, and with a multitude to do evil: hence, Zion’s ways are thin of passengers; a small number, comparatively speaking, walk thereto, and will be saved; a remnant, a little flock, a little city, and few men in it. It is asked in the Talmud [f478],

> “why is the world to come created with “jod?” (the least of the letters in the “Hebrew alphabet”) the answer is, because µyj [wm wbç µyqydx, “the righteous which are in it are few”.”

Some read the words, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate Latin, with a note of admiration, “how strait is the gate!” etc. and so some copies.

Ver. 15. *Beware of false prophets*, etc.] Or false teachers; for not such who pretended to foretell things to come, but such who set up themselves to be teachers of others, are here meant; (see 2 Peter 2:1). It may be

queried, whether our Lord has not respect to the Scribes and Pharisees, who sat in Moses's chair, and taught, for doctrines, the commandments of men? and of whose doctrines he elsewhere bids men beware: for whatever plausible pretences for holiness and righteousness might appear in them, they were repugnant to the word of God, and destructive to the souls of men; such as their doctrines of free will, justification by the works of the law, the traditions of the elders, etc. since it follows,

which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves; for these "loved to go in long clothing", (<41238>Mark 12:38) tyljb, in a garment which reached to the feet, and was made of the wool of sheep. The Babylonish garment Achan saw and stole, Rab says [f479], was atlymd aljxya, a garment called "melotes": which is the very Greek word the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews uses for sheep skins, persecuted saints wandered about in, (<581137>Hebrews 11:37) and the gloss upon the place, in the Talmud referred to, says, that this was yqn rmx lç tylj, "a talith", or "garment of pure wool"; and Jarchi [f480] says, that

> "it was the way of deceivers, and profane men, to cover themselves, µtyljb, "with their talith", or long garment, "as if they were righteous men", that persons might receive their lies."

All which agrees very well with the Pharisees, who would have been thought to have been holy and righteous, humble, modest, and self-denying men; when they were inwardly full of hypocrisy and iniquity, of rapine, oppression, and covetousness; and, under a pretence of religion, "devoured widows' houses". Though, it seems, by what follows, that Christ has respect, at least also, to such, who bore his name, and came in his name, though not sent by him, and called him Lord, and prophesied, and cast out devils, and did many wonderful works in his name; who, that they might get the good will and affections of the people, clothed themselves, not in garments made of sheep's wool, but in the very skins of sheep, with the wool on them, in imitation of the true prophets, and good men of old; pretending great humility, and self-denial, and so "wore a rough garment to deceive", (<380104>Zechariah 13:4) when they were inwardly greedy dogs, grievous wolves, of insatiable covetousness; and, when opportunity offered, spared not the flock to satisfy their rapacious and devouring appetites. The Jews speak of a "wolfish humility"; like that of the wolf in the fable, which put on a sheep skin.

> "There are some men, (says one of their [f481] writers,) who appear to be humble, and fear God in a deceitful and hypocritical way, but inwardly lay wait: this humility our wise men call tybaz hwn[, "wolfish humility"."

Such is this our Lord inveighs against, and bids his followers beware of.

Ver. 16. *Ye shall know them by their fruits*, etc.] By "fruits" are meant, not so much their external works in life and conversation; for a false prophet may so behave, as not to be discovered thereby. So the Pharisees were outwardly righteous before men; and false teachers among Christians may have the form of godliness, and keep it up, though they are strangers to, and even deny the power of it: but their doctrines are here meant, and the effects of them. When doctrines are contrary to the perfections of God, repugnant to the Scriptures of truth, tend to depreciate the person and offices, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, to lessen the glory of God's grace, to exalt the creature, and to fill men's minds with notions of the purity, self-sufficiency, and ability of human nature; when they are calculated to feed the pride and vanity of men, to get money, and gain applause, to serve their own interests, and gratify men's lusts and passions, they may be easily discerned who they are, and from whence they come. The Jews have a proverb pretty much like this [f482], [ydy hyp jqm ^yxwb, "a gourd is known by its branches". The gloss upon it is,

> "it is, as if it was said, from the time it buds forth, and goes out of the branch, it is known whether it is good or not;"

i.e. the goodness of the gourd is known by the fruit its branches bear. So a good preacher is known by the good doctrine he brings, and a bad one, by his unsound doctrine. Christ is not speaking of these false prophets, as men, or as private professors of religion, but as prophets, or teachers. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Grapes and figs were common fruit; there was great plenty of them in Judea; we often read of the "gathering" of them. It is a matter in dispute with the doctors [f483],

> "if a man intends µybn[jqwlw µyna t jqll, "to gather figs, and he gathers grapes", black ones, and he gathers white ones, white ones, and he gathers black ones, whether he is guilty of a sin offering or not."

One says he is, another says he is not. These words of Christ put me in mind of another passage, which seems to speak of grapes of thorns [f484];

> “he that marries his daughter to a scholar, it is like to grapes of the vine, with grapes of the vine, a thing beautiful and acceptable; but he that marries his daughter to a plebeian, it is like to grapes of the vine, hnsh ybn[b, “with grapes of the thorn”, a thing ugly, and unacceptable.”

Though ybn[, in the last sentence, must be taken for berries which grow on some thorn bushes, and not what are properly grapes; for grapes do not grow upon, and are not to be gathered from thorns, and bramble bushes. The meaning of our Lord is, that from the false doctrines of men comes no good fruit of faith, holiness, joy, peace, and comfort. Their doctrines are like “thorns”, which prick and pierce, give pain and uneasiness; and, like “thistles”, choke, and are unprofitable, afford no solid food and nourishment; yea, their words eat as do a canker, are contrary to vital religion and powerful godliness. This sense I prefer; because, on the one hand, it is possible for a false teacher to do works, which may be externally good; though indeed no good works, properly speaking, can be performed by an unregenerate man, because he has neither good principles to act from, nor good ends in view: and, on the other hand, a man who is destitute of the grace of God, and lives ill, may yet have right notions of the Gospel, though he has no experimental knowledge and relish of it; but where false doctrines are imbibed, and propagated, no good fruit can follow upon it.

Ver. 17. *Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit*, etc.] As is the tree, so is its fruit; if the tree is good, it will bring forth good fruit. The tree that brings forth good fruit, is good antecedent to the fruit it produces; it is first good, and then puts forth good fruit: it is not the fruit that makes the tree good, but makes it appear to be so; but it is the goodness of the tree that makes the fruit good. As a good man does, and will do good works, but his works do not make him a good man; he is so before he performs good works, or he would never be able to do them; these make him appear to be a good man: so a good preacher, that has an experimental knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel, will deliver out sound doctrine, who is first made so by the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God; and by searching the Scriptures, and examining his doctrines by them, he will be known and appear to be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of

faith and good doctrine; and such a good minister of the Gospel, out of the good treasure of Gospel truths put into his earthen vessel, will bring forth, from time to time, good and excellent truths, to the edification and profit of those that hear: “but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit”; if the tree is corrupt, the fruit will be corrupt; and as is the preacher, so will be his doctrines: if he is a corrupt preacher, or a man of a corrupt mind, destitute of the truth, his preaching will be such as will tend to corrupt both the principles and practices of men; for such evil men and seducers, out of the evil treasure of false doctrines, which they have received into their judgments, will bring forth, either more secretly or openly, evil tenets in their ministry, which prove of bad consequence to the souls of men.

Ver. 18. *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit*, etc.] A man that is unprincipled with the grace of God, has an experimental acquaintance with the Gospel of Christ, and is guided by the Spirit of God into all truth, as it is in Jesus, cannot knowingly deliver, maintain, and abide by any doctrine that is contrary to the glory of God’s grace, and the person of Christ, the work of the Spirit, the fundamental doctrines of the Bible; or what is repugnant to the experiences of God’s people, and prejudicial to their souls.

Neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. A corrupt preacher, one destitute of the truth of the Gospel, reprobate concerning the faith, who never had any experience of the doctrines of grace, and denies them in the theory of them, cannot, consistent with himself, and his own principles, deliver, or preach good doctrine; or that which tends to produce any good fruit, either in the experience or lives of men. It is true, a corrupt man, that is, an unregenerate man, may preach sound doctrine, it being what he believes, though he has no experience of it: but then this man is not a corrupt tree, that is, a corrupt preacher, though a corrupt man. As our Lord means by “a good tree”, not a good man, barely, or one that is made so by the grace of God; but a good minister, one that is furnished by the Spirit of God, and is well instructed in the kingdom of heaven: so by “a corrupt tree” he does not mean a corrupt man, a man that is in a state of nature, habitually and practically evil; but a corrupt preacher, a false prophet or teacher, that has sucked in corrupt principles, and has nothing else in him, and therefore can bring forth no other.

Ver. 19. *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit*, etc.] Every preacher and teacher that does not bring the Gospel of Christ with him, and plainly and faithfully preach it to the people, sooner or later,

is hewn down: however he may have appeared as a tall lofty cedar, and have carried it with a high hand against Christ and his Gospel, spoke "great swelling words of vanity", and behaved with much "loftiness" and "haughtiness"; yet the time comes on, when all this is bowed and made low, "and the Lord alone is exalted": such preachers are either cut off from the churches of Christ, or hewn down by death,

and cast into the fire; into the fire of hell; into the lake of fire and brimstone, "where the beast and false prophet shall be".

Ver. 20. *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them*.] This is the conclusion of the whole, and a repetition of what is before said, the more to fix the rule of judgment upon their minds, and engage them to try men by their doctrines, and their doctrines by the standard of the Scriptures, and not believe every spirit; for with some care and diligence such persons may be detected, and the malignant influence of their ministry be prevented. The sum of the whole is, that ordinarily, and generally speaking, as men are, so are the doctrines they preach, and by them they may be known, and judged to be what they are. Christ here, and in the preceding verses, is speaking not of men of bad lives and conversations, who take upon them to teach others; for there is not so much reason to caution good men against these; they are easily detected, and generally discarded; but of men that put on sheep's clothing, who pretended to much holiness of life and conversation, and strictness of religion; and under that disguise delivered out the most corrupt and unwholesome doctrines; which tended greatly to depreciate him and his grace, and to do damage to the souls of men.

Ver. 21. *Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord*, etc.] Not every one that calls Christ his Lord and Master, professes subjection to him, or that calls upon his name, or is called by his name; or makes use of it in his public ministrations. There are many who desire to be called, and accounted Christians, and who make mention of the name of Christ in their sermons, only to take away their reproach, to cover themselves, and gain credit with, and get into the affections and goodwill of the people; but have no hearty love to Christ, nor true faith in him: nor is it their concern to preach his Gospel, advance his glory, and promote his kingdom and interest; their chief view is to please men, aggrandize themselves, and set

up the power of human nature in opposition to the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ. Now not everyone of these, no, not any of them,

shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. This is to be understood not of the outward dispensation of the Gospel, or the Gospel church state, or the visible church of Christ on earth, in which sense this phrase is sometimes used; because such persons may, and often do, enter here; but of eternal glory, into which none shall enter,

but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. This, as it may regard private Christians, intends not merely outward obedience to the will of God, declared in his law, nor barely subjection to the ordinances of the Gospel; but more especially faith in Christ for life and salvation; which is the source of all true evangelical obedience, and without which nothing is acceptable to God. He that seeth the Son, looks unto him, ventures on him, commits himself to him, trusts in him, relies on him, and believes on him for righteousness, salvation, and eternal life, he it is that does the will of the Father, and he only; and such an one, as he is desirous of doing the will of God in all acts of cheerful obedience to it, without dependence thereon; so he shall certainly enter the kingdom of heaven, and have everlasting life; (see <4864>John 6:40) but as these words chiefly respect preachers, the sense of them is this, that only such who are faithful dispensers of the word shall enter into the joy of their Lord. Such do the will of Christ's Father, and so his own, which are the same, who fully and faithfully preach the Gospel of the grace of God; who declare the whole counsel of God, and keep back nothing that is profitable to the souls of men; who are neither ashamed of the testimony of Christ, nor afraid of the faces of men; but as they are put in trust with the Gospel, so they speak it boldly, with all sincerity, not as pleasing men, but God, and commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God: such as these shall have an abundant entrance into the kingdom and glory of God. The Vulgate Latin adds this clause, "he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven", and so does Munster's Hebrew edition of the Gospel according to Matthew.

Ver. 22. *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord*, etc.] That is, in the last day, the day of judgment, the great and famous day, fixed by God, unknown to angels and men, which will be terrible to some, and joyful to others; the day in which the faithful ministers of the Gospel shall be owned by Christ, and received into the kingdom of heaven: "many", not of the common people only, but of the preachers of the word, who have filled up

the highest station in the church below; not one, or two, or a few of them only, but many of them “will say to me”; to Christ, who will appear then as the judge of quick and dead, to which he is ordained by his Father,

Lord, Lord; not “my Lord, my Lord”, as the Syriac version reads it; for they will not be able to claim any interest in him, though they will be obliged to own his dominion, power, and authority over them. The word is repeated to show their importunity, sense of danger, the confusion they will be in, the wretched disappointment they will have; and therefore speak as persons amazed and confounded, having expected they would have been the first persons that should be admitted into heaven. Their pleas follow;

have we not prophesied in thy name? This may be understood either of foretelling things to come; which gift wicked men may have, who have never had any experience of the grace of God, as Balaam, and Caiaphas, and others; or rather of preaching the word, which is sometimes called prophesying, (<45 12 6>Romans 12:6 <46 13 9>1 Corinthians 13:9,14:1-5) and which may be done in the name of Christ, pretending mission and authority from him, and to be preachers of him, and yet be no better than “sounding brass”, or “a tinkling cymbal”; yea, nothing at all as to true grace, or spiritual experience.

And in thy name have cast out devils? Diabolical possessions were very frequent in the times of Christ; no doubt but they were suffered, that Jesus might have an opportunity of showing his power over Satan, by dispossessing him from the bodies, as well as the souls of men; and of giving proof of his deity, divine sonship and Messiahship: and this power of casting out devils was given to others, not only to the twelve apostles, among whom Judas was, who had the same power with the rest, and to the seventy disciples; but even to some who did not follow him, and his disciples, (<41 09 38>Mark 9:38) and some did this in the name of Jesus, who do not appear to have any true faith in him, and knowledge of him; as the vagabond Jews, exorcists, and the seven sons of Sceva, (<44 19 13>Acts 19:13,14). An awful consideration it is, that men should be able to cast out devils, and at last be cast to the devil.

And in thy name done many wonderful works? that is, many miracles; not one, or a few only, but many; such as speaking with tongues, removing mountains, treading on serpents and scorpions, and drinking any deadly thing without hurt, and healing all manner of diseases and sicknesses. Judas, for one, was capable of pleading all these things; he had the gift of

preaching, and a call from Christ to it, and yet a castaway; he had the power of casting out devils, and yet could not prevent the devil from entering into him; he could perform miracles, do wonders in Christ's name, and yet, at last, was the betrayer of him. These pleas and arguments will be of no use to him, nor of any avail to any at the great day. It may be observed, that these men lay the whole stress of their salvation upon what they have done in Christ's name; and not on Christ himself, in whom there is salvation, and in no other: they say not a syllable of what Christ has done and suffered, but only of what they have done. Indeed, the things they instance in, are the greatest done among men; the gifts they had were the most excellent, excepting the grace of God; the works they did were of an extraordinary nature; whence it follows, that there can be no salvation, nor is it to be expected from men's works: for if preaching the word, which is attended with so much study, care, and labour, will not be a prevailing argument to admit men into the kingdom of heaven; how can it be thought that ever reading, or hearing, or any other external performance of religion, should bring persons thither?

Ver. 23. *Then will I profess unto them*, etc.] Publicly before men and angels, at the day of judgment,

I never knew you; which must be understood consistent with the omniscience of Christ; for as the omniscient God he knew their persons and their works, and that they were workers of iniquity; he knew what they had been doing all their days under the guise of religion; he knew the principles of all their actions, and the views they had in all they did; nothing is hid from him. But, as words of knowledge often carry in them the ideas of affection, and approbation, (see <19106>Psalm 1:6 <55219>2 Timothy 2:19) the meaning of Christ here is, I never had any love, or affection for you; I never esteemed you; I never made any account of you, as mine, as belonging to me; I never approved of you, nor your conduct; I never had any converse, communication, nor society with you, nor you with me. The Persic version reads it, "I have not known you of old", from ancient times, or from everlasting; I never knew you in my Father's choice, and my own, nor in my Father's gift to me, nor in the everlasting covenant of grace; I never knew you as my sheep, for whom, in time, I died, and called by name; I never knew you believe in me, nor love me, or mine; I have seen you in my house, preaching in my name, and at my table administering mine ordinance; but I never knew you exalt my person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; you talk of the works you have done, I never

knew you do one good work in all your lives, with a single eye to my glory; wherefore, I will neither hear, nor see you; I have nothing to do with you. In this sense the phrase is used in the Talmud[f485]:

> "Bar Kaphra went to visit R. Juda; he says to him, Bar Kaphra, µlw[m Ærykm ynya, "I never knew thee"."

The gloss upon it is,

> "he intimates, that he would not see him."

So here, Christ declares, he knew them not; that is, he did not like them; he would not admit them into his presence and glory; but said,

depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. The former of these expressions contains the awful sentence pronounced by Christ, the judge; which is, banishment from his presence, than which nothing is more terrible: for as it is his presence that makes heaven, it is his absence that makes hell; and this supposes a place and state, whither they are banished; which is elsewhere called their "own place, the lake" which burns with fire and brimstone; "everlasting fire", prepared for the devil and his angels. Departure from Christ's presence is the punishment of loss, and being sent to everlasting burnings, is the punishment of sense; and the whole, as it is an instance of strict justice, so a display of Christ's almighty power. The latter expression contains the character of these persons, and in it a reason of their punishment; they were "workers of iniquity": it may be, neither adulterers, nor murderers, nor drunkards, nor extortioners, nor thieves, or any other openly profane sinners; but inasmuch as they did the work of the Lord deceitfully, preached themselves, and not Christ; sought their own things, and not his; what they did, they did with a wicked mind, and not with a view to his glory; they wrought iniquity, whilst they were doing the very things they pleaded on their own behalf, for their admission into the kingdom of heaven. Some copies read, "all the workers of iniquity", as in (<19608>Psalm 6:8) from whence the words are taken.

Ver. 24. *Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine*, etc.] The comparison in this, and the following verses, is the concluding part of our Lord's discourses upon the mount, which are meant by these sayings, or doctrines, he here speaks of; and as he had in some foregoing verses chiefly respect to preachers, so here, to hearers, his disciples and followers in general. The subject of this comparison, in (<42647>Luke 6:47) is, "whosoever

cometh unto me"; as all that are given to Christ by the Father will do, sooner or later: such whom he encourages to come to him, are they that labour and are heavy laden; and they that come aright, come as poor perishing sinners; they believe in him, give up themselves to him, to be saved by him with an everlasting salvation; all which is owing to efficacious grace. These hear his sayings, as doctrines, not merely externally, but internally, having ears to hear given unto them, so as to understand them, love them, believe them, feel the power, taste the sweetness, and have a delightful relish of them; and such an one hears them,

and doth them: he is not only an hearer, but a doer of the word of the Gospel; the doctrines of it he receives in the love of them, and exercises faith on them; upon Christ, his grace and righteousness held forth in them, which is the great work and business of a Christian, he is to do, and does do in this life: the ordinances of it he cheerfully obeys; and all the duties of religion he performs from love to Christ, without any view to obtain eternal life hereby, which he only expects from Christ, as his sayings and doctrines direct him. The comparison follows,

I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. Luke says, "he is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation a rock". Every believer is a builder; the house he builds, is his own soul, and the salvation of it; in order to which he digs deep, till he comes to a rock, to a good foundation; he searches diligently into the Scriptures of truth; he constantly attends the ministry of the word; he inquires of Gospel preachers, and other saints, the way of salvation; which having found, he lays the whole stress of his salvation on the rock of ages, which rock is Christ: he makes him the foundation of all his hopes of eternal life and happiness; which is the foundation God has laid in Zion; and which has been laid ministerially by the prophets of the Old, and the apostles of the New Testament; and by believers themselves, when they build their faith and hope upon it. This foundation, the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, is as a rock, firm and strong, will bear the whole weight that is laid upon it; it is sure and certain, it will never give way; it is immoveable and everlasting; the house built upon it stands safe and sure.

Ver. 25. *And the rains descended, and the floods came*, etc.] These several metaphors of "rain", "floods", "stream", and "winds", may design the temptations of Satan, the persecutions of the world, the corruptions of a man's own heart, and the errors and false doctrines of men; from all which

such a man is safe, who is built upon the rock Christ Jesus; (see Isaiah 32:2) not but that the rain of temptation may descend upon him, with great violence and force, but shall not beat him down; he shall be made able to bear the whole force of it; the gates of hell cannot prevail against him; the floods of persecution may be cast after him, but shall not carry him away; the stream of corruption may run strong against him, yet shall not overset him; and the wind of divers and strange doctrines may blow hard upon him, but not cast him down: some damage he may receive by these several things, but shall not be destroyed; he may be shaken by them, but not so as to be removed off of the foundation, on which he is laid; yea, he may fail from some degree of the steadfastness of his faith, but not so as to fail totally and finally; the reason is, because he is founded on the rock Christ Jesus, which is sure and immoveable: whence it appears that such a man acts the wise and prudent part, and may be truly called “a wise man”.

Ver. 26. *And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine*, etc.] Who only externally hears them, but has no understanding of them; do not believe them, nor like and approve of them, but hates and despises them; or if not, depends upon his external hearing of them, and contents himself with a speculative knowledge, without the practice of them,

and doth them not; does not yield the obedience of faith to the doctrines of the Gospel, nor submits to the ordinances of it, but neglects them, and all other duties of religion: or if he does obey, it is only outwardly, not from the heart; nor from a principle of love; nor in faith; nor in the name and strength of Christ; nor for the glory of God, but in order to obtain life for himself: such

shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; or, as Luke has it, “without a foundation upon the earth”; upon the surface of the earth, without digging into it for a foundation: and such may be said to build

without a foundation, who pretend to make their peace with God by their own works; who hope for pardon on the foot of the mercy of God, and their own repentance; seek for justification by their own, and not the righteousness of Christ; look for acceptance with God, for the sake of their own worthiness; and who expect salvation in any other way than by Christ: as in each of these articles, they leave out Christ, they may be said to build without a foundation indeed, and to build “upon” the surface of “the earth”; as they do, who build their hope of salvation upon anything that is

merely external; as, their riches and grandeur, their wisdom and learning, their natural descent, and religious education, their civility, courteousness, and what is called good nature, their liberality and alms deeds, their morality, common justice and honesty, their legal righteousness, whether moral or ritual, and a round of religious duties; and such may be said to "build upon the sand", on that which will bear no weight, but gives way, and sinks. The salvation of the soul is a weighty thing; and that which is like sand, as is everything of a man's own, can never support it: God has therefore laid the salvation of his people on his own Son; and he must be a "foolish man" that builds on anything short of him.

Ver. 27. *And the rain descended, and the floods came*, etc.] Such builders, and such a building, cannot stand against the violent rain of Satan's temptations, the floods of the world's persecutions, the stream and rapid torrent of their own heart's lusts, nor the blowing winds of heresy and false doctrine, and much less the storms of divine wrath and vengeance. They are in a most dangerous condition; they cannot support themselves; they must fall, and great will be their fall; their destruction is inevitable, their ruin is irrecoverable. The Jews make use of some similes, which are pretty much like these of Christ's.

> "R. Eliezer ben Azariah used to say [f486], he whose wisdom is greater than his works, to what is he like? to a tree, whose branches are many, and its roots few, "and the wind comes", and roots it up, and overturns it; as it is said, (<24706>Jeremiah 17:6) but he whose works are greater than his wisdom, to what is he like? to a tree, whose branches are few, and its roots many, "against which, if all the winds in the world were to come and blow", they could not move it out of its place: as it is said, (<24708>Jeremiah 17:8)."

Again [f487],

> "Elisha ben Abuijah used to say, a man who hath good works, and learns the law much, to what is he like? to a man that "builds with stones below", and afterwards with bricks; and though hbrh µym µyab, "many waters come", and stand at their side, they cannot remove them out of their place; but a man who hath no good works, and learns the law, to what is he like? to a man that "builds with bricks first", and afterwards with stones; and though few waters come, they immediately overturn them."

The same used to say,

> “a man who hath good works, and learns the law much, to what is he like? to mortar spread upon bricks; and though µymçg wyl[^ydrwy, “the rains descend upon it”, they cannot remove it out of its place: a man that hath no good works, and learns the law much, to what is he like? to mortar thrown upon bricks; and though but a small rain descends upon it, it is immediately dissolved, and “falls”.”

Ver. 28. *And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings*, etc.] Delivered in this, and the two foregoing chapters, concerning true happiness; the duty and usefulness of Gospel ministers; the true sense and meaning of several commandments in the law; concerning alms, prayer, and fasting; concerning the care of worldly things, rash judging, rigid censures, and reproofs; the straitness and narrowness of the way to eternal life, and the largeness and breadth of the way to destruction; concerning false prophets, and the right hearing of the word.

The people were astonished at his doctrine; it being something new, and unheard of, what they had not been used to; and coming in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, it carried its own evidence along with it, wrought conviction in their minds, and obliged them to acknowledge the truth of it.

Ver. 29. *For he taught them, as one having authority*, etc.] This does not so much respect the subject matter of his ministry, the gravity, weight, and solidity of his doctrine; which, to be sure, was greatly different from that of the Scribes, which chiefly lay in proposing and handling things trivial, and of no moment; such as the rituals of the law, the traditions of the elders, or washing of the hands and cups, etc. nor merely the manner of his delivery, which was with great affection, ardour, and fervency of spirit, with much liberty and utterance of speech, and with wonderful perspicuity and majesty; in which also he differed from the Scribes, who taught in a cold and lifeless manner, without any spirit and power; but this chiefly regards the method he used in preaching, which was by delivering truths of himself in his own name, and by his own authority; often using those words, “but I say unto you”: he spoke as a lawgiver, as one that had authority from heaven, and not from men;

and not as the Scribes, who used to say, when they delivered any thing to the people, “our Rabbins”, or “our wise men say” so and so: such as were on the side of Hillell made use of his name; and those who were on the side of Shammai made use of his name; scarce ever would they venture to say anything of themselves, but said, the ancient doctors say thus and thus: almost innumerable instances might be given, out of the Talmud, in which one Rabbi speaks in the name of another; but our Lord spoke boldly, of himself, in his own name, and did not go about to support his doctrine by the testimony of the elders; but spake, as having received power and authority, as man, from his Father, “and not as the Scribes”. Some copies add, and Pharisees; these generally going together; and so read the Vulgate Latin, the Syriac, the Persic versions, and the Hebrew edition of Matthew by Munster.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 8

Ver. 1. *When he was come down from the mountain*, etc.] Into which he went up, and preached the sermon recorded in the "three" preceding chapters:

great multitudes followed him: which is mentioned, partly to shew, that the people which came from several parts, still continued with him, being affected with his discourses and miracles; and partly on account of the following miracle, of healing the leper, which was not done in a corner, but before great multitudes, who were witnesses of it: though some think this miracle was wrought more privately.

Ver. 2. *And behold there came a leper*, etc.] As soon as he came down from the mountain, and whilst he was in the way; though Luke says, (<40 5 12>Luke 5:12) "when he was in a certain city"; in one of the cities of Galilee; one of their large towns, or unwalled cities, into which a leper might come: he might not come into walled [f488] towns, at least they might turn him out, though without punishment: for the canon runs thus [f489],

> "a leper that enters into Jerusalem is to be beaten; but if he enters into any of the other walled towns, though he has no right, as it is said, "he sitteth alone", he is not to be beaten."

Besides, this leper, as Luke says, was "full of leprosy", (<40 5 12>Luke 5:12) see the note there; and he might be pronounced clean by the priest, though not healed, and so might go into any city or synagogue: the law concerning such an one, in (<03 13 01>Leviticus 13:1-13:59) is a very surprising one; that if only there were some risings and appearances of the leprosy here and there, the man was unclean; but if "the leprosy covered all his flesh", then he was pronounced clean; and such was this man: he was a very lively emblem of a poor vile sinner, full of sin and iniquity, who is brought to see himself all over covered with sin, when he comes to Christ for pardon and cleansing; and is so considered by Christ the high priest, when he applies his justifying righteousness and sin purging blood to his conscience. A

leper, by the Jews [f490], is called [ç r, "a wicked" man; for they suppose leprosy comes upon him for evil speaking. This account is ushered in with a "behold", as a note of admiration and attention, expressing the wonderfulness of the miracle wrought, and the seasonableness of it to confirm the doctrines Christ had been preaching to the multitude. This man came of his own accord, having heard of the fame of Christ;

and worshipped him in a civil and respectful way, showing great reverence to him as a man; which he did by falling down on his knees, and on his face; prostrating himself before him, in a very humble and submissive manner, as the other evangelists relate: for that he worshipped him as God, is not so manifest; though it is certain he had an high opinion of him, and great faith in him; which he very modestly expresses,

saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean: he was fully assured of his power, that he could make him clean, entirely rid him of his leprosy, which the priest could not do; who could only, according to the law, pronounce him clean, so that he might be admitted to company, but could not heal him of his disease: this the poor man was persuaded Christ could do for him, and humbly submits it to his will; of which, as yet, he had no intimation from him. And thus it is with poor sensible sinners under first awakenings; they can believe in the ability of Christ to justify them by his righteousness, cleanse them by his blood; and save them by his grace to the uttermost: but they stick at, and hesitate about his willingness, by reason of their own vileness and unworthiness.

Ver. 3. *And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him*, etc.] This is a wonderful instance both of the grace, and goodness of Christ, in touching this loathsome creature; and of his unspotted purity and holiness, which could not be defiled by it; and of his mighty power in healing by a touch, and with a word of his mouth,

saying, I will, be thou clean: in which he expresses at once his willingness, "I will", of which the leper before was not certain; and his power by a word of command, "be thou clean"; and in which also is shown the readiness of Christ to do it: he did not stand parleying with the man, or making any further trial of his faith, or objecting to him his uncleanness; but at once stretches out his hand, touches his filthy flesh, and commands off the disorder. A great encouragement this, for poor sensible sinners to betake themselves to Christ, under a sense of their guilt and filth; who

readily receives such, in no wise casts them out, but gives immediate discoveries of his power and grace unto them:

And immediately his leprosy was cleansed, or he was cleansed from it; he was not only pronounced clean, but was made so; he was thoroughly healed of the disease of leprosy. The Jews, themselves acknowledge this fact; for so they tell us in their wicked and blasphemous book [f491], that Jesus should say,

> "bring me a leper, and I will heal him; and they brought him a leper, and he healed him also by Shemhamphorash,"

i.e. by the ineffable name Jehovah. Though they greatly misrepresent the matter; for this man was not brought by others, at the request of Christ, but came of his own accord; nor was he healed by the use of any name, as if it was done by a sort of magic, but by a touch of his hand, and the word of his mouth. Whether this was the same man with Simon the leper, (<4066>Matthew 26:6) as some have thought, is not certain.

Ver. 4. *And Jesus saith unto him, see thou tell no man*, etc.] Not that this fact could be concealed, if it was done publicly, before the multitude; nor was it Christ's design that it should be; only it was his counsel to this man, that whilst he was on the road to Jerusalem, and when he was come there, that he would speak of it to no man, before he came to the priest, or priests: lest out of ill will to Christ, they should refuse to pronounce him clean:

but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. The man was now in one of the cities of Galilee; from hence Christ orders him to make the best of his way, directly to Jerusalem; and present himself to one of the priests, by him to be examined, whether he was free of his leprosy; and then offer what was ordered by the law of Moses in such cases: for as yet the ceremonial law was not abolished: and therefore, as Christ was subject to it himself, so he enjoins others the observance of it. There was a two fold offering, according to the law of Moses, on account of the cleansing of the leper; (<0301>Leviticus 14:1-14:57) the one was on the first day of his cleansing, when he first showed himself to the priest, and consisted of two birds, alive and clean, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop; the other, and which was properly the offering on the eighth day, was, if the man was able, two he lambs and one ewe lamb, with a meat offering; but if poor, one lamb, with

a meat offering, and two turtle doves, or two young pigeons. The Jewish canons, concerning this matter, are as follow[f492]:

> “when a leper is healed of his leprosy, after they have cleansed him with cedarwood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and the two birds, and have shaved all his flesh, and bathed him; after all this he enters into Jerusalem, and numbers seven days; and on the seventh day he shaves a second time, as he shaved at first, and bathes — and on the morrow, or eighth day, he bathes a second time, and after that they offer his offerings — he bathes on the eighth day in the court of the women, in the chamber of the lepers, which is there — if it is delayed, and he shaves not on the seventh day, but he shaves on the eighth, or some days after, on the day that he shaves, he bathes, and his sun sets; and on the morrow he brings his offerings, after he hath bathed a second time, as we have declared: how do they do unto him? The leper stands without the court of Israel, over against the eastern gate, in the gate of Nicanor and his face to the west: and there stand all they that want atonement; and there they give the bitter waters to the suspected women: and the priest takes the leper’s trespass offering, while it is alive, and waves it with the log of oil, towards the east, according to the way of all wave offerings; and if he waves this by itself, and this by itself, it is right: after that he brings the leper’s trespass offering to the door, and he brings it in both his hands into the court, and layeth them upon it; they slay it immediately, and two priests receive its blood: the one receives it in a vessel, and sprinkles it upon the top of the altar; and the other, in his right hand, and pours it into his left hand, and sprinkles with his finger the right hand; and if he repeats it, and receives it in his left hand first, it is unlawful. The priest that receives some of the blood in a vessel, carries it, and sprinkles it upon the altar first; and after that comes the priest, who receives the blood in the palm of his hand, to the leper, the priest being within, and the leper without; and the leper puts in his head, and the priest puts of the blood that is in the palm of his hand, upon the tip of his right ear; after that he puts in his right hand, and he puts of it on the thumb of his hand; and after that he putteth in his right foot, and he puts of it upon the toe of his foot, and if he puts of it upon the left, it is not right; and after that he offers his sin offering, and his burnt offering: and after that he hath put the blood upon his thumb and toe, the priest takes

> of the log of oil, and pours it into the left hand of his fellow priest; and if he pours it into his own hand, it will do: and he dips the finger of his right hand into the oil, which is in his hand, and sprinkles it seven times towards the most holy place: at every sprinkling there is a dipping of the finger in the oil; and if he sprinkles, and does not intend it, over against the holy place, it is right; and after that, he comes to the leper, and puts of the oil upon the place of the blood of the trespass offering, on the tip of the ear, and on the thumb of his hand, and toe of his foot; and that which is left of the oil, that is in his hand, he puts it on the head of him that is to be cleansed; and if he puts it not, atonement is not made; and the rest of the log is divided among the priests; and what remains of the log is not eaten, but in the Court, by the males of the priests, as the rest of the holy things; and it is forbidden to eat of the log of oil, until he has sprinkled it seven times, and has put of it upon the thumb and toe; and if he eats, he is to be beaten, as he that eats holy things before sprinkling."

Now these were the things which, as the other evangelists say, this leper was ordered to offer for his cleansing, "for a testimony unto them"; meaning either to the priests; for the Syriac and Persic versions read the former clause, "show thyself to the priests", in (Luke 17:14) that they being satisfied of the healing and cleansing of this man, and accordingly pronouncing him clean, and accepting his offerings, this might be either a convincing testimony to them, that Jesus was the Son of God, and true Messiah, and that he did not deny or oppose the law given by Moses; or might be a standing testimony against them, should they continue in unbelief; or else to the Jews, who saw the miracle, and heard the orders Christ gave to the man after he had healed him; or to the lepers that they were cleansed; or this law of Moses was for a testimony or statute to be always observed by them in such cases.

Ver. 5. *And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum*, etc.] Was returned from his journey through Galilee, to the place where he before dwelt, and is called his own city, (Matthew 9:1)

there came unto him a centurion, a Roman officer, ham rç, "a commander of an hundred men", as the Hebrew Gospel by Munster reads it: though the number of men under a "centurion" was more, according to some accounts.

> "A band (it is said [f493]) made two centuries, each of which consisted of an hundred and twenty eight soldiers; for a doubled century made a band, whose governor was called an ordinary "centurion"."

Such an one was Cornelius, a centurion of a band, (<44:10:1>Acts 10:1). The other person that was healed was a Jew. The next instance of Christ's power and goodness is the servant of a Gentile; he came to do good both to Jews and Gentiles;

beseeching him, not in person, but by his messengers; (see <42:07:03>Luke 7:3) and the Jews [f494] say, wtwmk µda lç wjwlçç, "that a man's messenger is as himself".

Ver. 6. *And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home*, etc.] It would be a difficulty whether it was a son or a servant he was so concerned for; since παις, the word here used, more commonly signifies a "son" or "child"; but that Luke, supposing it to be the same case he relates, expressly calls him δουλος, "a servant", (<42:07:02>Luke 7:2). The concern of the "centurion" for him, shows him to have been a good servant, faithful and obedient to his master; since he was so much affected with his case, and took so much care of him; and Luke says, he "was dear unto him"; in great esteem, highly valued, and much beloved: and also, that the centurion was a good master; he does not put his sick servant from him, but takes care of him at home, and seeks out for relief for him, being greatly desirous of his life. And as his keeping him at home discovered a tender regard to him; so his not bringing him forth, or ordering him to be brought out to Christ, which was sometimes done in such cases, shows his great faith in Christ, that he was as able to cure him lying at home, as if brought before him; absent, as well as present. It is in the original text, "is cast"; or, as it is rendered, (<40:08:14>Matthew 8:14) "laid in the house", as if he was dead, speechless, and without motion; and Luke says, that he was "ready to die", being as one laid out for dead. The phrase answers to ljwm, a word often used by the Rabbins; sometimes of sick persons, as when they say [f495] of anyone, that he is hjmb ljwmw hlwj, "sick, and laid upon the bed"; and sometimes of a person really dead, and laid out: and often this phrase is to be met with, wynpl ljwm wtmç ym, "he that hath his dead cast", or "laid out before him" [f496]; concerning whom they dispute many things; as what he is free from, the reading of Shema, prayer, and the phylacteries; and where he

ought to eat and drink till such time his dead is buried out of his sight. But this man's servant was not dead, but lay as one dead;

sick of the palsy, his nerves all relaxed, and he stupid, senseless, motionless,

grievously tormented, or "punished", or rather "afflicted"; as the Ethiopic version, and Munster's Hebrew edition read it; for paralytic persons do not feel much pain and torment: but the meaning is, that he was in a miserable afflicted condition. The account of his disorder is given to move Christ's compassion, and recorded to show the greatness of the miracle.

Ver. 7. *And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him*.] This answer of Christ's, which is short and full, not only shows the readiness of Christ to do good, how soon and easily he complied with the centurion's request, it being a prayer of faith, and so effectual, and was heard as soon as delivered; but also contains an absolute promise that he would heal him. He does not say that he would come and see him, and what his case was, and do what he could for him, as ordinary physicians do; but he would come and heal him at once: and indeed it is a proposal of more than what was asked of him; his presence was not asked, and yet he offered it; though Luke says, that he besought him by the messengers to "come and heal his servant"; and so this is an answer to both parts of the request; the whole is granted. Christ cannot deny anything to faith, his presence or assistance.

Ver. 8. *The centurion answered, and said*, etc.] This, according to (⁴⁰⁷⁰⁶Luke 7:6) was said by his friends in his name, when he understood that Christ had agreed to come to his house, with the elders of the Jews, he first sent to him; and after he was actually set out with them, and was in the way to his house; who, conscious of his own unworthiness, deputes some persons to him, to address him in this manner,

Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof. This is not said as rejecting and despising the presence and company of Christ; but is expressive of his great modesty and humility, and of his consciousness of his own vileness, and unworthiness of having so great a person in his house: it was too great a favour for him to enjoy. And if such a man was unworthy, having been an idolater, and lived a profane course of life, that Christ should come into his house, and be, though but for a short time, under his roof; how much more unworthy are poor sinful creatures (and sensible sinners see themselves to be so unworthy), that Christ should

come into their hearts, and dwell there by faith, as he does, in all true believers, however vile and sinful they have been?

But speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. As the former expression declares his modesty and humility, and the mean apprehensions he had of himself; so this signifies his great faith in Christ, and the persuasion he had of his divine power: he does not say pray, and my servant shall be healed, as looking upon him barely as a man of God, a prophet, one that had great interest in God, and at the throne of grace; but speak, command, order it to be done, and it shall be done, which is ascribing omnipotence to him; such power as was put forth in creation, by the all commanding word of God; "he spake, and it was done, he commanded, and it stood fast", (<1819>Psalm 33:9) yea, he signifies that if he would but speak a word, the least word whatever; or, as Luke has it, "say in a word"; let but a word come out of thy mouth, and it will be done.

Ver. 9. *For I am a man under authority*, etc.] Of Caesar the Roman emperor, and of superior officers under him, as a tribune, etc.

having soldiers under me; an hundred of them at least, for military service, and some of them were used by him as his domestics:

and I say unto this man go, and he goeth, and to another come, and he cometh: for there is no disputing the commands of officers, by soldiers, in anything, in exercises, marches, battles, etc.

and to my servant, that was more properly his domestic servant, who waited upon him, and did those things for him which every soldier under him was not employed in,

do this, and he doth it; immediately, without any more ado; as indeed a servant ought. The Jews [f497] have a saying, that

> "a servant over whom his master twçr ^ya, "hath no power", is not called a servant."

Now, these words are not a reason excusing Christ's coming to his house, or showing how unworthy it was, and how unfit it would be for him to come thither, since he was a man that held soldiers under him, and his house was encumbered with them; for these were not with him, but quartered out elsewhere: but they are an argument, from the lesser to the greater, that seeing he was a man, and Christ was God, he was under the

authority of others. Christ was subject to none; and yet he had such power over his soldiers and servants, that if he bid one go, and another come, or ordered them to stand in such a place, and in such a posture, or do this and the other servile work, his orders were immediately obeyed: how much more easily then could Christ, who had all power in heaven and in earth, command off this distemper his servant was afflicted with? He suggests, that as his soldiers were under him, and at his command; so all bodily diseases were under Christ, and to be controlled by him, at his pleasure; and that, if he would but say to that servant of his, the palsy, remove, it would remove at once.

Ver. 10. *When Jesus heard it, he marvelled*, etc.] Which must be understood of him as man; for as God, nothing could present itself unto him at unawares, unthought of, and not known before; and so could not raise admiration in him, and which cannot properly fall on a divine person: or he behaved, both by words and gesture, as persons do when they are astonished at anything; and this he might do, to raise the attention and wonder of those that were with him:

and said to them that followed. This agrees perfectly with the account that Luke gives, that Christ was set out, with the messengers the centurion sent unto him, in order to come to his house, and heal his servant, and these that followed him were his disciples, and so some copies read, and others that were following him thither to see the miracle.

Verily, I say unto you; a strong asseveration, and which Christ used, when he was about to deliver anything of considerable importance, and required attention:

I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel: that is, among the people of Israel: so the Arabic version reads it, “in any of Israel”; and the Persic, “among the children of Israel”; and is to be understood, not of the patriarchs and prophets, and other eminent believers, which were in Israel formerly; but of the men of the then present generation, his mother and his apostles being excepted: though it may be questioned, whether the apostles themselves as yet, had expressed such a strong faith in him, as this man: or it may have a particular respect to them in Israel, who had applied to him for healing, and had been healed by him; that he had not met with and observed any such expression of faith, in his divine power from them, as this centurion had delivered. And it was the more remarkable, that it came from a Gentile, and from a soldier too: but as great as it was, he did not

exceed it; he did not ascribe more to Christ than was proper, and which, by the way, is a clear proof of our Lord's divinity: for had he not been truly God, he would have rebuked, and not have commended this man's faith in him: who ascribed that power to him, which is peculiar to God: he is so far from finding fault with him, for thinking or speaking so highly of him, that he praises him for it, and prefers his faith in him, to any instance of it he had met with among the Israelites; who yet had far greater advantages of knowing him, and believing in him. There is a phrase in the Talmud [f498] somewhat like this, only used of a person of a different character; where a certain Jew, observing another called by some of his neighbours Rabbi, thus expressed himself;

> "If this be a Rabbi, larçyb wtwmk wbry la, "let there not be many such as he in Israel"."

And it is said [f499] of Nadab and Abihu,

> "that two such were not found larçyb whyytwwk, "as they in Israel"."

Ver. 11. *And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west*, etc.] On occasion of the faith of the centurion, who was a Gentile, our Lord makes a short digression, concerning the call of the Gentiles; and suggests, that what was seen in that man now, would be fulfilled in great numbers of them in a little time: that many of them from the several parts of the world, from the rising of the sun to the setting of it, from the four points of the heaven, east, west, north, and south, as in (<4213>Luke 13:29) and from the four corners of the earth, should come and believe in him;

and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: signifying, that as the Gospel would be preached in a short time to all nations, many among them would believe in him, as Abraham, and the rest of the patriarchs did; and so would partake of the same blessings of grace with them; such as, adoption, justification, pardon of sin, and the like; for "they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham", (<4809>Galatians 3:9) now, under the Gospel dispensation, though Gentiles; and shall enjoy with him the same eternal glory and happiness he does, in the other world. Which shows, that the faith of Old and New Testament saints, Jews and Gentiles, is the same; their blessings the same, and so their eternal happiness; they have the same God and Father, the same Mediator and Redeemer, are actuated and influenced by the same Spirit, partake of the

same grace, and shall share the same glory. The allusion is to sitting, or rather lying along, which was the posture of the ancients at meals, and is here expressed, at a table, at a meal, or feast: and under the metaphor of a feast or plentiful table to set down to, are represented the blessings of the Gospel, and the joys of heaven; which are not restrained to any particular nation, or set of people; not to the Jews, to the exclusion of the Gentiles. Our Lord here, goes directly contrary to the notions and practices of the Jews, who thought it a crime to sit down at table, and eat with the Gentiles; (see <44 11 03>Acts 11:3) and yet Gentiles shall sit at table and eat with the principal men, the heads of their nation, in the kingdom of heaven, and they themselves at the same time shut out.

Ver. 12. *But the children of the kingdom*, etc.] The Jews, who were subjects of the kingdom, and commonwealth of Israel, from which the Gentiles were aliens; and who were also in the church of God, which is his kingdom on earth; and besides, had the promise of the Gospel dispensation, sometimes called the kingdom of heaven, and by them, often the world to come; and were by their own profession, and in their apprehension and expectation, children, and heirs of the kingdom of glory. These phrases, abh µlw[h ^b, "a son of the world to come", and ytad aml[ynb, "children of the world to come" [f500], are frequent in their writings: these, Christ says,

shall be cast out; out of the land of Israel, as they were in a few years after, and out of the church of God: these branches were broken off, and the Gentiles grafted in, in their room; and will be excluded from the kingdom of heaven, where they hoped to have a place,

and cast into outer darkness: into the Gentile world, and into judicial blindness, and darkness of mind, and into the blackness of darkness in hell,

where shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth. Phrases expressive of the miserable state and condition of persons out of the kingdom of heaven; who are weeping for what they have lost, and gnashing their teeth with the pain of what they endure. The Jews say [f501],

> "he that studies not in the law in this world, but is defiled with the pollutions of the world, he is taken hrbh wtwa wkylçyw, "and cast without": this is hell itself, to which such are condemned, who do not study the law."

The allusion in the text is, to the customs of the ancients at their feasts and entertainments; which were commonly made in the evening, when the hall or dining room, in which they sat down, was very much illuminated with lamps and torches; but without in the streets, were entire darkness: and where were heard nothing but the cries of the poor, for something to be given them, and of the persons that were turned out as unworthy guests; and the gnashing of their teeth, either with cold in winter nights, or with indignation at their being kept out. Christ may also be thought to speak in the language, and according to the notions of the Jews, who ascribe gnashing of teeth to the devils in hell; for they say [f502], that

> "for the flattery with which they flattered Korah, in the business of rioting, "the prince of hell wynç qrj, gnashed his teeth at them"."

The whole of this may be what they call µnhg zgwr, "the indignation", or "tumult of hell" [f503].

Ver. 13. *And Jesus said unto the centurion*, etc.] Christ having finished the digression, returns an answer to the centurion, agreeably to his desire, saying to him,

go thy way; not as displeased with him, but as granting his request: for it follows,

and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. As he had faith to believe, that Christ could cure his servant by a word speaking, it was done accordingly. Christ by his almighty "fiat" said, let him be healed, and he was healed: just as God in the creation said, "let there be light, and there was light". He does not say according to thy prayer, or according to thy righteousness, and goodness, but according to thy faith: and it is further to be observed, that this cure was wrought, not so much for the sake of the servant, as his master; and therefore Christ says, "be it done unto thee"; let him be healed for thy sake, and restored unto thee, to thy use, profit, and advantage.

And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour, at the very exact time, even in that moment. Some copies add, "and when the centurion returned to his house, in the selfsame hour he found his servant healed"; which the Ethiopic version has, and it agrees with (<40 7 10>Luke 7:10).

Ver. 14. *And when Jesus was come into Peter's house*, etc.] And which was also Andrew's, (<40 1 29>Mark 1:29) for these two brothers lived together,

and this was in Capernaum, as appears from the context. Though Andrew and Peter were originally of Bethsaida, a place not far from this, but had removed hither since their call by Christ, this being his city; though probably this house was Peter's wife's mother's, and only called their's, because they lodged there, whilst in this city: into this house Christ entered, with James and John, and others; when

he saw his (Peter's) wife's mother, laid, or "cast" on a bed, *See Gill "Matthew 8:6"*.

and sick of a fever: Luke says, (Luke 4:38) that she "was taken", or rather held, or "detained with a great fever"; the distemper was very raging and furious, it had got to a very great height. The other evangelists say, that the persons in the house told him of her, and besought him for her, that he would heal her, having a very great affection for her, and desire of her life, which seemed to be in great danger. Hence it may be observed against the Papists, that ministers of the Gospel may lawfully marry; Peter, an apostle, and from whom they pretend to derive their succession of bishops, was a married man, had a wife, and that after he was called to be an apostle. His wife's mother is expressly mentioned, being the person labouring under a violent fever, and whom Christ cured in the following manner.

Ver. 15. *And he touched her hand*, etc.] Sometimes he healed by a word, as the centurion's servant; and sometimes by a touch, as here; and sometimes by both, as the leper. Luke says, that he "stood over her", reached over her to take her by the hand, and lift her up, "and rebuked the fever". Just as he did the winds and sea, having all diseases, as well as the elements, at his beck and control;

and the fever left her immediately, as the other evangelists say.

And she arose and ministered unto them: the former of these actions is a proof of her being restored to health and strength, in so much that she could rise and walk about of herself; whereas generally, persons after fevers continue very weak a considerable time; which shows what a miracle was wrought upon her by Christ: and the latter of them expresses her gratitude, for the mercy she had received; she rises and serves him and his friends, preparing proper and suitable provisions for them.

Ver. 16. *When the even was come*, etc.] The other evangelists say, when "the sun was set", or "setting"; which circumstances are observed, not as

some think, because the cool of the evening, and when the sun was set, it was more seasonable and convenient, in those hot countries, to bring out their sick, than in the heat of the day: nor are they remarked, as others think, because it was an unseasonable time to bring them to Christ, when he had been fatigued all day long, and yet he healed them; such was his goodness and compassion: but the true reason of the mention of them is, because it had been their sabbath day, as appears from (<401021>Mark 1:21 <420431>Luke 4:31) and they could not, according to their canons, bring them sooner. Their sabbath began at sun setting; hence they say [f504], that on the eve of the sabbath, that is, immediately preceding it, when the sabbath is about to begin, it is lawful to work hmjh [qçtç d[, "until the sun sets"; and so it ended at sun setting the next day, which they judged of by the appearance of three stars [f505].

> "R. Phinehas, in the name of R. Aba Bar Papa, says, if but one star appears, it is certainly day; if two, it is a doubt whether it is night or not; if three, it is certainly night. On the eve of the sabbath, if he sees one star and does any work, he is free; if two, he brings a trespass offering for a doubt; if three, he brings a sin offering; at the going out of the sabbath, if he sees one star, and does any work, he brings a sin offering; if two, he brings a trespass offering for a doubt; if three, he is free."

So that till the sun was set, and three stars appeared as a proof of it, it was not lawful to do any sort of business; but as soon as it was out of doubt, that the sun was set, they might do anything: and this being the case,

they brought to him (Christ) many that were possessed with devils; whose bodies Satan had been suffered to enter into, and were acted, and governed, and thrown into strange disorders by him. Such possessions, through divine permission, were frequent; that Christ, who was come in the flesh, might have an opportunity of showing his power over Satan, and giving proof of his deity and Messiahship.

And he cast out the spirits with his word; only by speaking to them; who were obliged, at his command, and by his orders, to quit their tenements, though unwillingly enough.

And healed all that were sick; whoever they were, without any respect of persons, of whatsoever disease attended them: the most stubborn, inveterate, and otherwise incurable disorder, was not too hard for him,

which he cured without the help of medicine, and where that could be of no use, and either by speaking, or touching, or some such like means.

Ver. 17. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet*, etc.] In (<25304>Isaiah 53:4) “He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows”, here rendered,

himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses: very agreeable to the Hebrew text, awh, “he himself”, not another; açn, “took up”, upon himself voluntarily, freely, as a man lifts up a burden, and takes it on his shoulders; wnyl j, “our infirmities”, diseases, sicknesses, whether of body or soul, µlbs wnybakmw, “and bare”, or carried, as a man does a burden upon his back, “our sicknesses”, or diseases, which occasion pain and sorrow. And that these words are spoken of the Messiah, the Jews themselves own; for among the names they give to the Messiah, “a leper” is one; which they prove from this passage [f506].

> “The Rabbins say, “a leper” of the house of Rabbi is his name; as it is said, “surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted”. Says R. Nachman, if he is of the living, he is as I am, as it is said, (<24021>Jeremiah 30:21) Says Rab, if of the living, he is as our Rabbi, the holy.”

Upon which last clause the gloss is,

> “If the Messiah is of them that are alive, our Rabbi the holy is he, “because µyawl j t lbwsd he bears infirmities”.”

Elsewhere [f507] they say,

> “There is one temple that is called the temple of the sons of afflictions; and when the Messiah comes into that temple, and reads all the afflictions, all the griefs, and all the chastisements of Israel, which come upon them, then all of them shall come upon him: and if there was any that would lighten them off of Israel, and take them upon himself, there is no son of man that can bear the chastisements of Israel, because of the punishments of the law; as it is said, “surely he hath borne our griefs”, etc.”

And in another ancient book [f508] of their’s, God is represented saying to the Messiah,

> "^yrwçy lwbst, "wilt thou bear chastisements", in order to remove their iniquities? (the iniquities of the children of God,) as it is written, "surely he hath borne our griefs": he replied, "I will bear them with joy"."

Hence it is manifest, that according to the mind of the ancient Jews, this passage belongs to the Messiah, and is rightly applied to him by the evangelist. But the difficulty is, how it had its accomplishment in Christ's healing the bodily diseases of men; since Isaiah speaks not of his actions and miracles, but of his sufferings and death; and not of bearing the diseases of the body, as it should seem, but of the diseases of the mind, of sins, as the Apostle Peter interprets it, (1 Peter 2:24). To remove which, let it be observed, that though the prophet chiefly designs to point out Christ taking upon him, and bearing the sins of his people, in order to make satisfaction for them, and to save them from them; yet so likewise, as to include his bearing, by way of sympathy, and taking away by his power, the bodily diseases of men, which arise from sin; and which was not only an emblem of his bearing and taking away sin, but a proof of his power and ability to do it: for since he could do the one, it was plain he could do the other.

Ver. 18. *Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him*, etc.] Who got together, partly out of novelty to see his person, of whom they had heard so much; and partly to see the miracles he wrought: some came to have their bodily diseases healed; few, if any, to hear the Gospel preached by him, and for the good of their immortal souls: the most part came with some sinister, selfish, and carnal views, wherefore

he gave commandment to depart unto the other side. Different were the reasons, which at certain times moved Christ to depart from the multitude; as that he might have an opportunity of private prayer, or to preach, to others, or to show he sought not popular applause, and to avoid seditions: his reasons here seem to be with respect to himself, that being wearied as man, with the work of the day, he might have an opportunity of refreshing himself with sleep; with respect to his disciples, that he might have a trial of their faith, when in danger at sea; and with respect to the multitude, because of their carnality, and sole concern for their temporal, and worldly good. The persons he gave commandment to, must be either the multitude, or the disciples; not the former, because he studiously avoided their company, and his concern was to be rid of them; but the latter, and so the

Vulgate Latin and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read, "he commanded his disciples". The place he would have them go to was, the other side of the lake of Tiberias, or Genesareth; not over the river Euphrates, as says the author of the old Nizzachon [f509].

Ver. 19. *And a certain Scribe came*, etc.] "As they went in the way", (Luke 9:57) to go to the sea side, in order to take shipping, and pass to the other shore;

and said unto him, Master, or Rabbi, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. One would have thought, that this man desired in good earnest to be a disciple of Christ, were it not for Christ's answer to him, who knew his heart: from whence it appears, that he, seeing the miracles which Christ wrought, and observing the fame of him among the people, began to think that he would be generally received as the Messiah; and by joining himself to him, promised himself much ease, honour, and wealth. These seem to be the motives, which prevailed upon him to take so sudden and hasty a step; for he did not wait to be called to follow Christ, as the other disciples were, but offers himself to be one; that is, to be one of his intimates, one of his apostles; and besides, he rashly promises to do that, which he knew nothing of, and which in some cases is impossible to be done.

Ver. 20. *And Jesus saith unto him*, etc.] Knowing his heart, and the carnal and worldly views with which he acted;

the foxes have holes in the earth, where they hide themselves from danger, take their rest, and secure their whelps;

and the birds of the air have nests, where they sit, lay, and hatch their eggs, and bring up their young;

but the son of man has not where to lay his head, when he is weary, and wants rest and sleep, as he did at this time. So that though he was Lord of all, as being the mighty God; yet as "the son of man", a phrase, expressive both of the truth and meanness of his human nature, the most despicable of creatures in the earth and air, were richer than he. This he said, to convince the Scribe of his mistake; who expected much worldly grandeur and wealth, by becoming his disciple. When Christ styles himself "the son of man", it is no contradiction to his being God; nor any objection to trust and confidence in him, as the Jew [f510] suggests; for he is truly and properly God, as well as really man, having two natures, human and divine, united in his person; so that he is, as was prophesied of him, Emmanuel, God with us, in

our nature, God manifested in the flesh: and since he is so, it cannot be unlawful to trust in him; which it would be indeed, was he a mere man. The Jews ought not to object to this name and title of the “Messiah, the son of man”: since he is so called, as their own writers and commentators acknowledge, in [f511] (<19807>Psalm 80:17) and [f512] (<27713>Daniel 7:13,14). And whereas it is further urged against these words of Christ, that if he was God, why does he complain of want of place? Is not the whole world his, according to (<19401>Psalm 24:1)? It may be replied, that it is very true, that the whole world is his, nor could he be in want of anything, as God; but yet, as man, for our sakes he became “poor”, that we “might be rich”: nor should this be any difficulty with a Jew, when they themselves say, as some have thought, if he (the Messiah) should come, hyb anbytyd atkwd yl, “there’s no place in which he can sit down” [f513]. Unless it be understood of Nebuchadnezzar, as the gloss explains it; let the learned inspect the place, and judge: the coming of the Messiah is immediately spoken of.

Ver. 21. *And another of his disciples said unto him*, etc.] That is, one of his disciples; for this does not suppose, that the other, the Scribe before mentioned, was one. It is possible, he might be one of the twelve. The Persic version makes him one of the disciples, whom they call “Hawarion”, apostles; and, according to ancient tradition, it was [f514] Philip. And certain it is, that he was one, who was called to preach the Gospel; so that he was not a common ordinary disciple; nor could he be one of the seventy disciples, since it was after this, that they were called and sent forth; as appears from Luke’s account, (<42060>Luke 9:60,10:1). But who he particularly was, cannot be certainly known, nor is it of any great importance to know it: his address to Christ is made with great respect and reverence, and in a very modest and humble manner,

Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father: for it seems, according to Luke, that Christ had bid him “follow” him: he had given him a call to be his disciple, and to go and preach the Gospel, which he did not refuse; but desires leave “first” to attend his father’s funeral, who was now dead; as his requests, and Christ’s answer, both suppose: though some conjecture, that he was only very aged, or was dangerously ill; and therefore it could not be thought he would live long: hence he was desirous of doing this last good office, before he entered on his public work; but these are conjectures, without any foundation: it is plain, his father was dead, and what he requested was, to go home, which perhaps might not be a great way off, and perform the funeral rites, and then return. This may seem very

reasonable, since burying the dead was reckoned by the Jews, not only an act of kindness and respect to the deceased, but an act of piety and religion; and in which, men are followers of God, and imitate him, who himself buried the body of Moses [f515]. And though this man was called to preach the Gospel, yet he might think he would be easily excused for the present, on this account; since, according to the Jewish canons, such whose dead lay before them, who were as yet unburied, were excused reading the Shema, they were free from performing the duty of prayer, and were not obliged to wear their phylacteries [f516].

Ver. 22. *But Jesus said unto him, follow thou me*, etc.] Christ would not excuse him on this account, but insists on what he had before called him to; to attend upon him, and give himself up to the ministry of the word: which was done, partly to shew, that a greater regard ought to be had to him, than to the nearest relation and friend whatever; and partly, on account of the dignity of the Gospel ministry, which greatly exceeds any such services; as also to signify, of what little account were the traditions of the elders with him; wherefore he says,

let the dead bury the dead. Our Lord is not to be understood, as speaking against, or disrespectfully of burying the dead; his words suppose it ought to be done: only it was not proper, that this person should be concerned in it at this time, who was called to an higher employment; and therefore should leave this to be done by persons, whom it better became. And however strange and odd such a phrase may sound in the ears of some, of one dead man's burying another, it was easily understood by a Jew; with whom it is common to say, tmk bwçj ajwjh, "that a sinner is counted as [f517] dead, and that ungodly persons, even while they are alive", µytm ˆyywrq, are "called dead" [f518]. And in this sense is the word used, in the former part of this phrase; and Christ's meaning is, let such who are dead in trespasses and sins, and to all that is spiritually good, bury those who are dead in a natural or corporal sense. It is likely the deceased was an unregenerate man; however, it is plainly suggested, that many of the relations were; and there were enough of them to take care of this service: and therefore, there was no need why he should neglect the ministry of the Gospel to attend that; but, ought to leave it to persons who were fitter for it.

Ver. 23. *And when he was entered into a ship*, etc.] Which was got ready by his disciples, or hired by them for his use, according to the directions he had given,

his disciples followed him into the ship, and they only; for as for the men hereafter mentioned, they were the men that belonged to the ship, and had the management of it: the multitude were dismissed, and in order to be clear of them, Christ took this method; and being desirous also of trying the faith of his disciples, he ordered it so, that they should be alone with him.

Ver. 24. *And behold, there arose a great tempest*, etc.] "A great concussion", or "shaking" of the sea; the stormy wind moved the sea, and the waves thereof; and both wind and sea shook the ship, and the men that were in it. Luke calls this tempest a "storm wind", (<4823>Luke 8:23) and Mark says, it was "a great storm of wind", (<4837>Mark 4:37) and both use the word "loelaps", which signifies a particular kind of wind, which is suddenly whirled about upwards and downwards; or rather, a conflict of many winds: it seems to be a whirlwind, or hurricane. It is said, that this tempest "arose", not by chance, nor by the power of Satan, but by divine providence; for the trial of the faith of Christ's disciples, and that he might have an opportunity of giving proof of his deity on the sea, as he had lately done in several instances on the dry land. Luke says, that this storm of wind "came down"; referring to the motion and course of the winds, which are exhalations from the earth, raised up into the middle region of the air, from whence they are expelled by a superior force to the lower region, and from thence move in an oblique, slanting manner, downwards. The place where this tempest arose, or into which this storm of wind came down, is here said to be

in the sea. Luke calls it a "lake", and it was the lake of Genesareth. But both Matthew and Mark call it the sea, and is what is sometimes called the sea of Tiberias, and the sea of Galilee; (see <4601>John 6:1,21:1) agreeably to the language of the Jewish [f519] writers. To all this, the word "behold!" is prefixed; which is sometimes used, when anything extraordinary and preternatural is spoken of: and this storm seems to be more than an ordinary one; at least, it was very sudden and unexpected: when the disciples entered the ship, the air was serene, and the sea still and quiet; but as soon as they had set sail, at once, on a sudden, this storm came down, with great force into the sea, and lifted up its waves;

insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves; it was just sinking to the bottom, so that they were in the utmost extremity: and what added to their distress was,

but he, Christ,

was asleep. Mark mentions the place where he was asleep, "in the hinder part of the ship"; that is in the stern: where he, as Lord and Master, should be, though to the great concern of his disciples, there asleep; and that in a deep sound sleep, as the word which Luke makes use of signifies; and as appears by the loud repeated call of his disciples to awake him: and though this sleep doubtless arose from natural causes, he being greatly fatigued with the business of the day past; yet was so ordered by the providence of God, to come upon him in such a manner at this time, for the trial of the faith of his disciples. Christ's body needing sleep, and refreshment by it, shows that it was a real human body he assumed; subject to the same infirmities as our's; excepting sin; and is no contradiction to the truth of his divinity, as the Jew [f520] suggests. He slept as man, though, as God, he is Israel's keeper, who neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Ver. 25. *And his disciples came unto him*, etc.] From some other part of the ship, being in great consternation, and distress,

and awoke him; saying, Lord, save us, we perish. They awoke him by their loud cries, and repeated calls; for in Luke, the form of address is doubled, "Master, Master!" expressing their distress, importunity, and haste for deliverance saying, "save us, we perish", or "we are lost": which shows the apprehensions they had of their condition; not only that they were in danger of being lost, or were ready to be lost, but were lost: they saw no probability of escaping by any natural, rational methods: wherefore they apply to Christ, believing that he was able to save them, in this their extremity; as they had indeed a great deal of reason to conclude, from the miracles they had that day seen performed by him.

Ver. 26. *And he saith unto them, why are ye fearful*? etc.] Though they had some faith in him, yet there was a great deal of fear and unbelief, for which Christ blames them, saying,

O ye of little faith: (see Gill on "<4160>Matthew 6:30"). In Luke, the phrase is, "where is your faith?" what is become of it? You professed but just now to believe in me, is your faith gone already? In Mark it is, "how is it that ye have no faith?" That is, in exercise, their faith was very small, it could

hardly be discerned: some faith they had, as appears by their application to him, but it was very little. They had no faith in him, as sleeping, that he could deliver them; but had some little faith in him that he might, could he be awaked out of sleep; and for this Christ blames them; for he, as the eternal God, was as able to save them sleeping as waking.

Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm: being awaked by his disciples, he raises his head from his pillow, stands up, and with a majestic voice, in an authoritative manner, showing some kind of resentment at the wind and sea, as if they had exceeded their commission; and the one had blown, and the other raged too much and too long; he rebukes them in such language as this, "peace, be still"; σιωπα πεφιμωσο, as it is in Mark, be silent, hold your peace, stop your mouth, put a bridle on it, as the words used signify; and go on no longer to threaten with shipwreck and loss of lives; upon which the wind ceased, the sea became calm, and the ship moved quietly on.

Ver. 27. *But the men marvelled*, etc.] Mark says, "they feared exceedingly"; and Luke, "they being afraid, wondered": they were filled with astonishment and fear, or reverence: there was such a shine of majesty, such a lustre of divine power appeared in this affair. The other two evangelists seem to refer this to the disciples, which Matthew seems to ascribe to the men, the mariners that were in the ship; it is likely it had the same effect on both; and both were abundantly convinced of his deity and dignity, saying,

what manner of man, or person

is this? For the word "man", is not in the text; of what qualities, perfections and powers, is he possessed? Surely he must be more than a mere man; he can be no other than the mighty God,

that even the winds and the sea obey him: which can be said of no other, than the most high God: never was such a thing heard of, that the winds and sea should be rebuked by a mere creature, and should obey. That man must be infidel to "revelation", that can read this account, and deny the deity of Christ; to one or other of these he must be drove, either to deny the truth of the fact, and the circumstances of it, or believe that Jesus Christ is truly and properly God, as the disciples and mariners did.

Ver. 28. *And when he was come to the other side*, etc.] Of the lake, or sea of Tiberias, right over against Galilee,

into the country of Gergesenes, the same with the Girgashites, (Genesis 15:21 Deuteronomy 7:1 Joshua 3:10) whom Joshua drove out of the land of Canaan; and who, as a Jewish writer [f521] says, left their country to the Israelites, and went to a country, which is called to this day, ˆajsygrwg, "Gurgestan", of which these people were some remains: both in (Mark 5:1; Luke 8:26) it is called "the country of the Gadarenes"; and so the Syriac and Persic versions read it here; which is easily reconciled by observing, not that Gergesa and Gadara were one and the same city, called by different names; but that these two cities were near each other, in the same country, which was sometimes denominated from the one, and sometimes from the other. Origen [f522] has a remarkable passage, showing the different situations of Gadara and Gergesa; and that the latter cannot be Gerasa in Arabia; and also the signification of the name, for the sake of which, I shall transcribe it.

> "Gerasa (says he) is a city of Arabia, having neither sea nor lake near it; wherefore the evangelists, who well knew the countries about Judea, would never have said so manifest an untruth: and as to what we find in some few copies, "into the country of the Gadarenes", it must be said, that Gadara indeed was a city of Judea, about which were many famous baths; but there was no lake, or sea in it, adjacent with precipices; but Gergesa, from whence were the Gergasenes, is an ancient city about the lake; now called Tiberias; about which is a precipice adjacent to the lake, from whence is shown, that the swine were cast down by the devils. Gergesa is interpreted, παροικια εκβεβληκοτων, "the habitation of those that cast out"; being called so perhaps prophetically, for what the inhabitants of those places did to the Saviour, beseeching him to depart out of their coasts."

Dr. Lightfoot suggests, that this place might be so called, from atçgrg, which signifies "clay" or "dirt", and mentions Lutetia for an example. But to pass this, as soon as Christ was got out of the ship, and come to land in this country,

there met him two possessed with devils. Both Mark and Luke mention but one, which is no contradiction to Matthew; for they do not say that there was only one; and perhaps the reason why they only take notice of him is, because he was the fiercest, had a legion of devils in him, and was the principal one, that spake to Christ, and with whom he was chiefly

concerned. This is to be understood, not of any natural disease of body, but of real possession by Satan. These possessed men met him, not purposely, or with design, but accidentally to them, and unawares to Satan too; for though he knows much, he is not omniscient: had he been aware of Christ's coming that way, and what he was about to do, he would have took care to have had the possessed out of the way; but so it was ordered by providence, that just as Christ landed, these should be

coming out of the tombs. Their coemeteria, or burying places, were at some distance from towns or cities; wherefore Luke says, the possessed met him "out of the city", a good way off from it; for the Jews [f523] say, ry[l ˆykwms twrbqh ytb wyh alç, "that the sepulchres were not near a city"; (see <4007>Luke 7:12) and these tombs were built so large, that persons might go into them, and sit and dwell in them, as these "demoniacs" did, and therefore are said to come out of them. The rules for making them are [f524] these;

> "He that sells ground to his neighbour to make a burying place, or that receives of his neighbour, to make him a burying place, must make the inside of the cave four cubits by six, and open in it eight graves; three here and three there, and two over against them; and the graves must be four cubits long, and seven high, and six broad. R. Simeon says, he must make the inside of the cave six cubits by eight, and open within thirteen graves, four here, and four there, and three over against them; and one on the right hand of the door, and one on the left: and he must make rxj, "a court", at the mouth of the cave, six by six, according to the measure of the bier, and those that bury; and he must open in it two caves, one here and another there: R. Simeon says, four at the four sides. R. Simeon ben Gamaliel says, all is according to the nature of the rock."

Now in the court, at the mouth, or entrance of the cave, which was made for the bearers to put down the bier or coffin upon, before the interment, there was room for persons to enter and lodge, as these possessed with devils did: which places were chosen by the devils, either because of the solitude, gloominess, and filthiness of them; or as some think, to confirm that persuasion some men had, that the souls of men after death, are changed into devils; or rather, to establish a notion which prevailed among the Jews, that the souls of the deceased continue for a while to be about their bodies; which drew persons to necromancy, or consulting with the

dead. It is a notion that obtains among the Jews [f525], that the soul for twelve months after its separation from the body, is more or less with it, hovering about it; and hence, some have been induced to go and dwell among the tombs, and inquire of spirits: they tell us [f526],

> "it happened to a certain holy man, that he gave a penny to a poor man, on the "eve" of the new year; and his wife provoked him, and he went twrbqh tybb ˆlw, "and lodged among the tombs", and heard two spirits talking with one another."

Or the devil chose these places, to render the persons possessed the more uncomfortable and distressed; to make them wilder and fiercer, by living in such desolate places, and so do more mischief to others: which was the case of these, who were

exceeding fierce, wicked, malignant, mischievous, and troublesome, through the influence of the devils in them;

so that no man might pass that way, without being insulted or hurt by them.

Ver. 29. *And behold they cried out, saying*, etc.] This is an instance and proof, of the wonderful power of Christ over the devils; and has therefore the note of admiration, "behold!" prefixed to it, that the devils themselves who had took possession of these men, and made them so fierce and cruel, and outrageous, that there was no passing the way for them; yet upon the sight of Christ, and especially at hearing his orders to come out from them, not only say, but cry out, as being in great consternation, horror, and fear, and with the utmost subjection to him,

what have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? They had nothing indeed to do with him; they had no interest in his grace, blood, righteousness, and salvation; he was no Saviour for them: but he had to do with them, and that was what they dreaded; and therefore mean, that he would let them alone, in the quiet possession of these men, and not disturb and dislodge them; for they knew that he was Jesus, the Saviour of sinful men, though none of their's, the true Messiah; and that he was also "the Son of God", a divine person, possessed of almighty power, and so an overmatch for them; at whose presence they trembled, and whose all commanding voice they were obliged to obey, though sorely against their wills.

Art thou come hither to torment us before the time? This question implies the apprehension the devils had of Christ as a judge, and their sense of his authority, and power, to punish them; as also that they deserved it, and expected it, nor do they say anything against it; only imagine that the time of their full torment was not yet come; which is generally referred unto the day of judgment, to which they were reserved by the appointment of God; which they had some notion of, and as at a distance; and therefore complain of Christ's coming to them now, and expostulate with him about it: though it may be understood of the time they had proposed to themselves, to abide in the men they had possessed, and which they concluded they had a permission for; and nothing could give more torment, pain, and uneasiness, than to be turned out, and remanded to their prison, and restrained from doing more mischief to the bodies and souls of men. Or whether this may not have some respect to the time of the preaching of the Gospel, and setting up the kingdom of Christ among the Gentiles, the devils might have some hint of, as not yet to be, I leave to be considered, with this observation; that there seems to be a considerable "emphasis" on the word "hither", meaning the country of the Gergesenes, an Heathen country, at least where many Gentiles inhabited: and it is as if they had said, is it not enough, that thou turnest us out of the land of Judea, and hast dispossessed us out of the bodies of men dwelling there; but thou pursuest us hither also, and will not let us have any rest, even in this Heathenish land; though the time is not yet come, for the dissolution of our empire and government in the Gentile world?

Ver. 30. *And there was a good way off from them*, etc.] "Nigh unto the mountains", as Mark says, or "on the mountain", as Luke, bordering on the sea shore; so that though it was at some distance, yet within sight. The Vulgate Latin, and the Hebrew edition of Munster read, "not far off"; and the Persic version, "near them": which agree with the accounts of Mark and Luke, who say, that there were "there", or hard by, "an herd of many swine feeding". Since swine's flesh was forbidden the Jews to eat, (<3B1107>Leviticus 11:7) it may be asked, how came it to pass, that there should be any number of these creatures, or that such a herd of them should be kept in the land of Israel? To which may be replied, that though the Jews might not eat swine's flesh, they were not forbid to bring them up; which they might do, in order to sell to the Gentiles, who dwelt among them; and particularly to the Romans, under whose government they now were, and with whom swine's flesh was in great esteem: but still a difficulty remains;

for it was not only forbidden by the law of God to eat swine's flesh, but, by the Jewish canons, to bring them up, and make any advantage of them in any shape: their law was this, µwqm lkb µyryzj larçy ldgy al, "an Israelite might not bring up hogs in any place" [f527]: the reasons of this canon were many, partly because of the uncleanness of these creatures; hence one of their writers [f528] observing, that next to those words, they "are unclean unto you", are, "and the swine", says, that this is to teach us, that "it is forbidden to bring up hogs"; and partly, because of the damage which these creatures do to other men's fields: hence [f529]

> "the wise men say, cursed is he that brings up dogs and hogs, hbwrm ^qyzhç ynpm, "because they do much hurt"."

But the chief reason given by the Gemafists [f530] for this prohibition, was the fact following:

> "When the Hasmonean family, or Maccabees, were at war with one another, Hyrcanus was within (Jerusalem), and Aristobulus without, and every day they let down to them money in a box; and they sent up to them the daily sacrifices: there was one old man who understood the wisdom of the Greeks, and he said unto them, as long as they employ themselves in the service (of God), they will not be delivered into your hands: on the morrow they let down their money, and they sent them up a hog; and when it came to the middle of the wall, he fixed his hoofs in the wall, and the land of Israel shook, etc. at that time they said, cursed be the man µyryzj ldgyç, "that breeds hogs"; and cursed is the man that teaches his son the learning of the Grecians."

Before this time, it seems to have been lawful to bring them up, and trade with them: but now it was forbid, not only to breed them, but to receive any gain or profit by them; for this is another of their rules [f531].

> "It is forbidden to bring up a hog, in order to get any profit by his skin, or by his lard, or fat, to anoint with, or to light (lamps) with; yea, though it may fall to him by inheritance."

And nothing was more infamous and reproachful among them, than a keeper of these creatures: when therefore they had a mind to cast contempt upon a man, they would call him yryzj ldgm [f532], "a breeder of hogs", or

ayrzj [f533], "a hog herd". But after all, it was only an Israelite that was forbid this; a stranger might bring them up, for this is one of their canons [f534].

> "A man may sell fetches to give to a stranger that breeds hogs, but to an Israelite it is forbidden to breed them."

Yea, they say [f535],

> "If others breed them to anoint skins with their lard, or to sell them to an Israelite to anoint with them, it was lawful: all fat may be sold, which is not for eating."

And so some cities are supposed to have hogs in them, concerning which they observe [f536], that

> "a city that has hogs in it, is free from the "mezuzah";"

the schedules which were fastened to the posts of doors and gates: but now supposing this herd of swine belonged to Jews in these parts, it may easily be accounted for; for since they lived among Heathens, they might not have so great a regard to the directions of their Rabbins; and especially, since it was so much for their profit and advantage, they might make no scruple to break through these ordinances. Though this herd of swine may well enough be thought to belong to the Gentiles, that dwelt in this country; since Gadara was a Grecian city, and then inhabited more by Syrians, than by Jews, as Josephus relates [f537].

Ver. 31. *So the devils besought him, saying*, etc.] All the devils, the whole legion of them, who perceiving that they must be obliged to go out of these men, and after they had earnestly entreated they might not be sent out of the country where they had long been, and had made themselves masters of the tempers, dispositions, and circumstances of the inhabitants, and so capable of doing the more mischief, begged hard,

if thou cast us out of these men, or "from hence", as the Vulgate Latin, the Ethiopic, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read, or "out of our place", as the Persic; since we must depart, and cannot be allowed to enter into other men,

suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. This request shows the weakness of the infernal spirits, they are not able to do anything without leave, and the superior power of Christ over them, and their

acknowledgment of it; as well as the wretched malignity of their nature, who must be doing mischief, if not to the bodies and souls of men, yet to their property and goods; and if they cannot vent their malice on rational creatures, are desirous of doing it on irrational ones. Many reasons have been thought of, why the devils should desire to go into the herd of swine; as because of the filthiness of these creatures, these impure spirits delighting in what is impure; or out of pure hatred to the inhabitants of this country, who, because they could no longer hurt their persons, would destroy their goods; or that by so doing, they might set the people against Christ, and so prevent his usefulness among them; which last seems to be the truest reason, and which end was answered.

Ver. 32. *And he said unto them, go*, etc.]. He gave them leave, as God did to Satan, in the case of Job; for without divine permission, these evil spirits cannot do anything to the bodies, souls, or estates of men: they could not enter into the swine without leave, and much less do things of greater moment and consequence; and therefore are not to be feared, or dreaded by men, especially by the people of God. It may be asked, why did Christ suffer the devils to enter the herd of swine, and destroy them, which was a considerable loss to the proprietors? To which may be answered, that if the owners were Jews, and these creatures were brought up by them for food, it was a just punishment of their breach of the law of God; or if to be sold to others, for gain and filthy lucre's sake, it was a proper rebuke, both of the avarice and the contempt of the laws of their own country, which were made to be a hedge or fence for the law of God: or if they were Gentiles, this was suffered to show the malice of the evil spirits, under whose influence they were, and who would, if they had but leave, serve them as they did the swine; and to display the power of Christ over the devils, and his sovereign right to, and disposal of the goods and properties of men; and to evince the truth of the dispossession, and the greatness of the mercy the dispossessed shared in; and to spread the fame of the miracle the more.

And when they were come out of the men that had been possessed by them,

they went into the herd of swine; which shows the real existence of these spirits, the truth of possessions and dispossessions; and that by these devils cannot be meant the sins and corruptions of men's hearts, such as pride, covetousness, uncleanness, envy, malice, cruelty, etc. for these could never be said to enter into a herd of swine, or be the authors of their destruction:

and behold, the whole herd of swine, and which was a very large one, consisting of about two thousand,

ran violently down a steep place; a precipice of one of the rocks, by the sea side,

into the sea of "Tiberias", or lake of Genesareth, which were the same, and over which Christ had just now passed;

and perished in the waters of the sea, or lake, and not any other waters near Gadara, and afar off from hence.

Ver. 33. *And they that kept them fled*, etc.] The hog herds, men of very low life, and whose employment was very infamous and reproachful, as has been observed. These, amazed at what they had seen, distressed with the loss of the swine, and so of their employment, and frightened also lest they should incur the blame and displeasure of their masters, ran away in great haste, fear, and astonishment;

and went their way into the city; either of Gergesa, or Gadara. Mark and Luke say, they "went and told it in the city, and in the country": in their fright and distress, some ran one way, and some another; some went into the city, others into the country, and so spread the affair far and near, and the fame of Christ, which was designed by this miracle;

and told everything they saw and heard; how the devils entered into the swine, and they ran headlong into the sea, and were drowned: this they told first, as being done last, and with which they were most affected, and what chiefly concerned their employers; and after they had told every circumstance of the affair, next they gave a narrative of

what was befallen to the possessed of the devils, and which was the occasion of the loss of their swine; how subject the devils, that were in them, were to Christ; how easily he dispossessed them by a word of command; how they entreated they might have leave to go into the herd of swine, which was granted; and how perfectly whole, and in health, both in body and mind, the men were.

Ver. 34. *And behold, the whole city*, etc.] The inhabitants of it, not every individual person, but the greater number of them, or, at least, a very great number of them. Luke says, "the whole multitude of the country of the

Gadarenes round about”: for as the news was carried both into the city and country, great numbers flocked from all parts,

and came out to meet Jesus: not out of any love and respect to him, and in order to invite him, and conduct him into their city, and there receive him kindly, and treat him with due honour and reverence; but either out of curiosity to see such an extraordinary person, which, doubtless, was the case of many; or, else being terrified at the report concerning him, and distressed with their present loss, which was the case of others, went out to prevent his coming any further, lest they should suffer something worse: accordingly,

when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts; which was done not as though they thought themselves unworthy the presence of so great a person, as did the “centurion”, in the former part of this “chapter”, or, as Peter, when he said, “depart from me, I am a sinful man”; but as fearing, lest some greater punishment should be inflicted on them for their sins, of which they were conscious; and therefore make no complaint of any injustice being done them by the loss of their swine; though these they preferred to the presence of Christ, and even to any cures wrought, or which might have been wrought, either upon the bodies, or souls of men.

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 9

Ver. 1. *And he entered into a ship*, etc.] Or “the ship”, the selfsame ship he came over in, with his disciples. The Gergesenes, or Gadarenes, or both, having desired him to depart their coasts, showing an unwillingness to receive him, and an uneasiness at his company, he immediately turned his back upon them, as an ungrateful people, being no better than their swine; and who, by their conduct, judged themselves unworthy of his presence, ministry, and miracles: he returned to the sea side, took shipping, and

passed over the sea of Tiberias again,

and came into his own city; not Bethlehem, where he was born, nor Nazareth, as Jerom thought, where he was educated, but Capernaum, as is clear from (<40>Mark 2:1) where he much dwelt, frequently conversed, and his disciples: here he paid tribute as an inhabitant, or citizen of the place, which he was entitled to by only dwelling in it twelve months, according to the Jewish canons; where it is asked [f538],

> “how long shall a man be in a city ere he is as the men of the city? It is answered, “twelve months”; but if he purchases a dwelling house, he is as the men of the city immediately;”

that is, he is a citizen, and obliged to all charges and offices, as they are: though they seem to make a distinction between an inhabitant and a citizen [f539].

> “A man is not reckoned ry[h ynbk, “as the children of the city”, or as one of the citizens, in less than twelve months, but he may be called, or accounted, ry[h ybçwym, “as one of the inhabitants” of the city, if he stays there thirty days.”

One or other of these Christ had done, which denominated this city to be his, and he to be either an inhabitant, or a citizen of it.

Ver. 2. *And behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy*, etc.] That is, some of the inhabitants of Capernaum, four men of that city particularly; for Mark says, (<40 02 03>Mark 2:3) he "was borne of four": these brought him to Jesus,

lying on a bed, or couch, he being so enfeebled by the disease upon him, his nerves so weak, and the members of his body in such a tremor, that he was not able to walk himself, nor even to be carried by others in any other way than this.

And Jesus seeing their faith; the faith of the bearers of him, his friends, who brought out a man to be healed, who was otherwise incurable; and though they could not, for the multitude, bring him directly to Christ, they were not discouraged, but took the pains to carry him to the top of the house, and there let him down through the roof, or tiling; as both Mark and Luke say; and then set him down before him, believing he was able to cure him: moreover, Christ took notice not only of their faith, but of the sick man's too, who suffered himself to be brought out in this condition, and was contented to go through so much fatigue and trouble, to get at him; when he

said unto the sick of the palsy, son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. He calls him son, either meaning by it no more than "man"; (see <42 05 20>Luke 5:20) or using it as a kind, tender, and endearing appellation; or as considering him in the grace of adoption, as one that God had put among the children, had given to him as such, and whom he should bring to glory. He bids him "be of good cheer", whose animal spirits were fainting through the disease that was upon him, and the fatigue he had underwent in being brought to him; and his soul more distressed and dejected, under a sense of his sins and transgressions; which Jesus knowing, very pertinently says, "thy sins be forgiven thee"; than which, nothing could be more cheering and reviving to him: or Christ says this to show, that sin was the cause of the disease and affliction that were upon him, for ˆw[alb ˆyrwsy ˆya, "there are no chastisements without sin", as the Jews say [f540]; and that the cause being removed, the effects would cease; of both which he might be assured, and therefore had good reason to cheer up, and be of good heart. This was a wonderful instance of the grace of Christ, to bestow a blessing unasked, and that of the greatest moment and importance.

Ver. 3. *And behold, certain of the Scribes said within themselves*, etc.] And of the Pharisees also, as Luke says; for there were at this time Pharisees and doctors of the law, who were come out of every town of Galilee and Judea, and out of Jerusalem, sitting and hearing him teach, and observing what he said, and did; who upon hearing him pronounce the sentence of pardon, upon this "paralytic" man, reasoned and concluded in their own minds, though they did not care to speak it out, that

this man blasphemeth: the reason was, because they thought he ascribed that to himself, which was peculiar to God: and so he did, and yet did not blaspheme; because he himself was God, of which he quickly gave convincing proofs.

Ver. 4. *And Jesus knowing their thoughts*, etc.] Which was a clear evidence, and full demonstration of his deity; for none knows the thoughts of the heart but God; and since he knew the thoughts of men's hearts, it could be no blasphemy in him to take that to himself which belonged to God, even to forgive sins. And this, one would think, would have been sufficient to have approved himself to them as the true Messiah; since this is one of the ways of knowing the Messiah, according to the Jews, and which they made use of to discover a false one.

> "Bar Coziba, (they say [f541],) reigned two years and a half: he said to the Rabbins, I am the Messiah; they replied to him, it is written of the Messiah, that he is "of quick understanding, and judges", (referring to (<23>11<03>Isaiah 11:3)) let us see whether this man is of quick understanding, and can make judgment, i.e. whether a man is wicked, or not, without any external proof; and when they saw he was not of quick understanding, and could not judge in this manner, they slew him."

But now Christ needed not any testimony of men; he knew what was in the hearts of men, of which this instance is a glaring proof: hence he said,

wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? it was no evil in them to think that God only could forgive sin; but the evil was, that they thought Christ was a mere man, and ought not to have took so much upon him; and that, for so doing, he was a wicked man, and a blasphemer.

Ver. 5. *For whether is easier to say*, etc.]. Christ proceeds to clear himself of the charge of blasphemy, and to prove his power to forgive sins, by

putting a case to them, of which he makes themselves Judges, and is this: which is easiest to be said,

thy sins are forgiven thee? or to say, arise and walk? Neither of them were easy to a mere creature, but both of them easy to God; and he that could say the one with power and efficacy going along with his word, could say the other as effectually: and whereas it was a plain case, and out of all question, that he could bid this “paralytic” man, though in this weak condition, arise from his bed, stand upon his feet, and go home of himself; and since he had already healed many that were sick of the palsy, and particularly the “centurion’s” servant, by a word speaking, he must have equal power to forgive sin. For to heal the diseases of the body in such a wonderful manner, was a very sensible proof of his power to heal the maladies of the soul; and though these are greater than those of the body, yet since both require divine power, he that is able to do the one, is able to do the other. And that it might appear he did not say this in a boasting manner, he adds,

Ver. 6. *But that ye may know that the son of man*, etc.] That they might have a visible proof, an ocular demonstration, that though he was the son of man, truly and really man, yet not a mere man; but also as truly and properly God, God and man in one person, and so

hath power on earth to forgive sins: not only ability as God, but even authority to do it as mediator, even whilst he was on earth, in a state of humiliation, in fashion as a man, in the form of a servant, conversing with sinful mortals.

Then saith he to the sick of the palsy; turning himself from the Scribes, unto him, and without putting up any prayer to God, but by a mere word of command, says to him,

arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house: he ordered him to “arise” from his bed, on which he was carried by four men, and “take up his bed”, and carry it himself; which would be not only an evidence that the disease had left him, but that he was in full strength, and perfect health; and to “go” to his own “house”, not only that the multitude might see that he could walk home himself, whom they had seen brought by others; but that those in the house, who had been eyewitnesses of his great disorder and weakness, might be also of his cure.

Ver. 7. *And he arose, and departed to his house.*] Immediately, at the command of Christ, believing he was able to heal him by a word speaking; and, upon his attempt to arise, found himself perfectly healed of his disease, and endued with such strength, that he could, not only with the greatest ease, arise from his bed, stand upon his feet, and walk alone, without any help; but, as the other evangelists declare, took up his bed, on which he lay, carried it home on his shoulders, in the sight of all the people, praising, and giving glory to God for this wonderful cure, which he had received.

Ver. 8. *But when the multitude saw it*, etc.] The miracle that was wrought; when they saw the man take up his bed, and carry it home, which was done by Christ, as a proof of his having power to forgive sin,

they marvelled, and glorified God: they were struck with amazement and astonishment at the sight, it being what was strange and unusual; the like to which they had never seen before, nor heard of: and concluding it to be more than human; they ascribed it to God; they praised, and adored the divine goodness,

which had given such power unto men; of working miracles, healing diseases, and delivering miserable mortals from such maladies, as were otherwise incurable; still looking upon Christ as a mere man, by whom God did these things; not knowing yet the mystery of the incarnation, God manifest in the flesh.

Ver. 9. *And as Jesus passed forth from thence*, etc.] That is, from Capernaum to the sea side; where, as Mark says, the multitude resorted, and he taught them;

he saw a man named Matthew; the writer of this Gospel. The other evangelists call him Levi, who was the son of Alphaeus: he went by two names; Mark and Luke call him by the name, which perhaps was the more honourable, or the least known, on purpose to conceal the former life of the apostle, which might expose him to the contempt of some; but he himself chooses to mention the name by which he was most known, as an apostle, and that the grace of God might appear the more illustrious in his calling and conversion. The Jews say [f542], that one of Christ's disciples was called ytm, Matthew, which, as Levi, is an Hebrew name; for though he was a publican, yet a Jew; for it was common with the Jews either to be

employed by the Roman officers in collecting the toll or tribute, or to farm it of them.

Sitting at the receipt of custom, or "at the custom house", or "toll booth"; which both the Syriac version, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel, call skm, or askwm tyb, the "publican's house". In the [f543] Talmud mention is made of it, in the following parable, upon citing (<23608>Isaiah 61:8)

> "it is like, (say the doctors,) to a king of flesh and blood, who passing by skmh tyb, "the toll booth", or "publican's house", says to his servants, give "toll to the publicans": they reply to him, is not all the toll thine? he says to them, all that pass by the ways will learn of me, and will not avoid the toll; so says the holy blessed God, etc."

The publicans had houses, or booths built for them, at the foot of bridges, at the mouth of rivers, and by the sea shore, where they took toll of passengers that went to and fro: hence we read [f544] of bridges being made to take toll at, and of publicans being at the water side [f545], and of skwm yrçyq [f546], "the tickets", or "seals of the publicans"; which, when a man had paid toll on one side of a river, were given him by the publican, to show to him that sat on the other side, that it might appear he had paid: in which were written two great letters, bigger than those in common use [f547]. Thus Matthew was sitting in a toll booth, near the seashore, to receive the toll of passengers that came, or went in ships or boats.

And he saith unto him, follow me; notwithstanding the infamous employment he was in, as accounted by the Jews: this was no bar in the way of his call to be a disciple of Christ; and shows, that there was no merit and motive in him, which was the reason of this high honour bestowed upon him; but was entirely owing to the free, sovereign, and distinguishing grace of Christ, and which was powerful and efficacious: for without telling him what work he must do, or how he must live, and without his consulting with flesh and blood, at once, immediately

he arose, and followed him: such a power went along with the call, that he directly left his employment, how profitable soever it might be to him, and became a disciple of Christ.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house*, etc.] That is, as the Arabic version reads it, in the house of Matthew, not in the toll

house, but in his own house; for he immediately quitted the toll booth, and his office there, and followed Christ, and had him to his own house, where he made a great feast for him, as Luke says, to testify the sense he had of the wondrous grace which was bestowed on him; and also, that other publicans and sinners might have an opportunity of hearing Christ, and conversing with him, whom he invited to this feast; his bowels yearning towards them, and sincerely desiring their conversion, which is the nature of true grace: for, when a soul is made a partaker of the grace of God, it is earnestly desirous that this might be the case of others, especially its sinful relations, friends, or companions; and it takes every opportunity of using, or bringing them under the means; so did Matthew: hence it is said,

behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples; not of their own accord, but by the invitation of Matthew, and with the good will, and full consent of Christ, who was far from being displeased with their company and freedom; but gladly embraced every opportunity of doing good to the souls of the worst of men; for such as these he came to call and save.

Ver. 11. *And when the Pharisees saw it*, etc.] The feast Matthew made, the guests that were invited, and particularly that Christ sat down to meat with such vile and wicked company; they and the Scribes, as Mark and Luke add, who generally were together, of the same complexion, equally enemies to Christ, and watchful observers of his conduct, and pretending to a more strict and religious way of life, were offended at all this;

and said to his disciples, which they chose to do, rather than to Christ himself; partly, because they were afraid to engage in a dispute with him, who had just given them a full proof of his omniscience, that he knew the very thoughts and reasonings of their minds, and had so confounded them already, both by his arguments and miracles; and partly, because they might think themselves a match for the disciples, and might hope to stumble and ensnare them, and prevail upon them to quit their profession, and leave following him, whom they would suggest could not be a good man, that was guilty of so evil an action; which, with them, was very unlawful and abhorrent, as that for which they accuse and reprove him,

why eateth your master with publicans and sinners? The “publicans”, or gatherers of the Roman tax, toll, or tribute of any sort, whether Jews or Gentiles, were persons of a very infamous character; and, as here, so often, in Jewish writings, are ranked with “sinners”, and those of the worst sort:

so false swearing was allowed to be made ^yskwmlw ^ymrjlw µygrwhl, "to murderers, and to robbers, and to publicans" [f548]; and so "publicans and thieves" are joined together by Maimonides [f549], and a publican is said by him to be as a thief. And indeed this was not only the sense of the Jews, but also of other people, according to those words of Zeno the poet, παντες τελωναι παντες εισιν αρπαγες [f550], "all publicans are all of them robbers": though this was not originally their character; for formerly the best of the Roman gentry were employed in this office, till by malpractices it became scandalous, when the meaner sort of people, yea, even vassals, were put into it [f551]. Now, with such sort of men as these the Pharisees held it unlawful to have any sort of conversation; they expelled such their society, would not dwell with them in the same house, nor eat or drink with them; concerning which, their rules and methods are these;

> "a companion, or friend, who becomes the king's collector, or a "publican", or the like, they drive him from society with them: if he abstains from his evil works, then he is as any other man [f552]."

Again,

> "when the king's collectors enter into a house to dwell, all that are in the house are defiled [f553]."

Moreover, it is [f554] said, that

> "the former saints ate their common food with purity, i.e. with their hands washed, and took care of all defilements every day; and these were called Pharisees; and this sect was exceedingly holy, and was the way of piety; for such a man was separated, and he abstained from the rest of the people, and he did not touch them, µhm[htçw lkay alw, "nor did he eat and drink with them"."

It was a general rule with them, that a clean person ought not to eat with an unclean, as they judged the common people to be; nay, that a Pharisee, who was unclean himself, might not eat with another person that was so, and which they boast of, as a great degree of holiness.

> "Come and see, (say they [f555],) to what a pitch purity has arrived in Israel; for they not only teach, that a pure person may not eat with one that is defiled, but that one that has a "gonorrhoea" may not eat with another that has one, lest he should be used to transgress this

way; and a Pharisee that has a “gonorrhoea” may not eat with a common person that has one, lest he should be used to do so.”

Hence they looked upon Christ and his disciples as such, and would insinuate that they were evil men, who had no regard to purity of life and conversation.

Ver. 12. *But when Jesus heard that*, etc.] The charge the Pharisees brought against him, and the insinuations they had made of him to his disciples; which he either overheard himself, or his disciples related to him,

he said unto them; the Pharisees, with an audible voice, not only to confute and convince them, but chiefly to establish his disciples, they were endeavouring to draw away from him:

they that be whole need not a physician; by which he would signify that he was a “physician”: and so he is in a spiritual sense, and that a very skilful one: he knows the nature of all the diseases of the soul, without being told them by the patient; what are the true causes of them; what is proper to apply; when is the best time, and what the best manner: he is an universal one, with regard both to diseases and to persons, that apply to him; he heals all sorts of persons, and all sorts of diseases; such as are blind from their birth, are as deaf as the deaf adder, the halt, and the lame, such as have broken hearts, yea the plague in their hearts, and have stony ones, and all the relapses of his people; which he does by his stripes and wounds, by the application of his blood, by his word and Gospel, through sinners looking to him, and touching him: he is an infallible one, none ever went from him without a cure; none ever perished under his hands; the disease he heals never returns more to prevail, so as to bring on death and destruction; and he does all freely, without money, and without price. So Philo the Jew calls the Logos, or word, ιατρον κακων, “an healer of diseases” [f556], and God our legislator, των της θυχης παψω ν αριστος ιατρος, “the best physician of the diseases of the soul” [f557]. Now Christ argues from this his character, in vindication of himself; as that he was with these persons, not as a companion of their’s, but as a physician to them; and as it is not unlawful, but highly proper and commendable, that a physician should be with the sick; so it was very lawful, fit, and proper, yea praiseworthy in him, to be among these publicans and sinners, for their spiritual good. He suggests indeed, that “they that be whole”, in perfect health and strength, as the Pharisees thought themselves to be, even free from all the maladies and diseases of sin, were strong, robust, and able to

do anything, and everything of themselves; these truly stood in no “need of” him, as a physician, in their own apprehension; they saw no need of him; in principle they had no need of him, and in practice did not make use of him; and therefore it was to no purpose to attend them, but converse with others, who had need of him:

but they that are sick; who are not only diseased and disordered in all the powers and faculties of their souls, as all Adam’s posterity are, whether sensible of it or not; but who know themselves to be so, these see their need of Christ as a physician, apply to him as such, and to them he is exceeding precious, a physician of value; and such were these “publicans” and sinners. These words seem to be a proverbial expression, and there is something like it in the [f558] Talmud, aysa ybl lyza abyak hyl byakd, “he that is afflicted with any pain goes”, or “let him go to the physician’s house”; that is, he that is attended with any sickness, or disease, does, or he ought to, consult a physician.

Ver. 13. *But go ye and learn what that meaneth*, etc.] dmlw ax, “go and learn”, is a phrase used by the Jews [f559], when they are about to explain a passage of Scripture, and fetch an argument from the connection of the text. So the phrase τι εστιν, “what that is”, or “what that meaneth”, is Talmudic, as, yhm, “what is it?” bytkd yam, “what is that which is written?” arq yam, “what is the Scripture?” that is, what is the meaning of it? Our Lord speaks in their own dialect, and tacitly reproves their ignorance of the Scriptures; and instead of finding fault with him, and his conduct, he intimates, it would better become them to endeavour to find out the meaning of that passage in (<280606>Hosea 6:6) “I will have mercy, and not sacrifice”; which, if rightly understood, was sufficient to silence all their cavils and objections: and which words are to be taken, not in an absolute and unlimited sense; for sacrifices even of slain beasts, which were offered up in the faith of Christ’s sacrifice, and were attended with other acts of religion and piety, were acceptable to God, being his own institutions and appointments; but in a comparative sense, as the following clause in the prophet shows; “and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings”; and so the sense is given in the “Chaldee paraphrase”, after this manner: “for in those that exercise mercy is my good will and pleasure”, or “delight”, jbdmm, “more than in sacrifice”: and the meaning is, that God takes more delight and pleasure, either in showing mercy himself to poor miserable sinners; or in acts of mercy, compassion, and beneficence done

by men, to fallen creatures in distress, whether for the good of their bodies, or more especially for the welfare of their souls, than he does even in sacrifices, and in any of the rituals of the ceremonial law, though of his own appointing: and therefore must be supposed to have a less regard to sacrifices, which were offered, neither in a right manner, nor from a right principle, nor to a right end; and still less to human traditions, and customs, which were put upon a level, and even preferred to his institutions; such as these the Pharisees were so zealous of. The force of our Lord's reasoning is, that since his conversation, with publicans and sinners, was an act of mercy and compassion to their souls, and designed for their spiritual good; it must be much more pleasing to God, than had he attended to the traditions of the elders, they charge him with the breach of: besides, what he was now doing was the end of his coming into this world, and which was answered hereby;

for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. The phrase, "to repentance", is not in the Vulgate Latin, nor in Munster's Hebrew Gospel, nor in the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Persic versions; but is in the Arabic, and in the ancient Greek copies, and is very justly retained. The "repentance" here designed, is not a legal, but an evangelical one: which is attended with faith in Christ, with views, at least hopes of pardon through his blood, and springs from a discovery and sense of his love: it lies in a true sense of sin, and the exceeding sinfulness of it, by the light of the Spirit of God; in a godly sorrow for it, and hearty loathing of it; in real shame and blushing for it, ingenuous confession of it, and departing from it; all which is brought on, influenced, heightened, and increased, by displays of the love of God through Christ. The persons called to this are not the "righteous"; meaning either such who are really so, because these are already called to it, though, whilst in a state of imperfection, daily need the exercise of this grace; or rather such who are so in their own opinion, and in the sight of men only, not in the sight of God, which was the case of the Scribes and Pharisees, and very few of these were called and brought to repentance; but "sinners", even the worst, and chief of sinners, who, as they stand in need of this grace, and when thoroughly convinced, see they do; so Christ came into this world as prophet and minister of the word to "call" them to it: which call of his does not suppose that they had a power to repent of themselves; for this man has not, he is naturally blind, and do not see his sin; his heart is hard and obdurate, and till his eyes are opened, and his stony heart taken away by a superior power to his own, he will

never repent; though he may have space, yet if he has not grace given him, he will remain impenitent. No means will bring him to it of themselves, neither the most severe judgments, nor the greatest kindnesses, nor the most powerful ministry; repentance is entirely a free grace gift: nor does the call of Christ imply the contrary; which may be considered either as external, as a preacher of the word, and as such was not always attended to, and effectual, but often slighted and rejected: or as internal, being by the power of his grace effectual; for he who called to repentance, as a minister of the word, as a prince and a saviour, was able to give it, and which none but a divine person is able to do. The Jews have a saying [f560] of

> "shepherds, collectors of taxes and "publicans", hçq ^tbwçt, "that their repentance is difficult"."

Now, since this was the end of his coming into the world, his conduct in conversing with publicans and sinners was in all respects highly to be justified.

Ver. 14. *Then came to him the disciples of John*, etc.] Of John the Baptist, to whom they had addicted themselves, and by whom they abode: though their master was in prison, and the Messiah was known to be come, yet still they were attached to John, and particularly imitated him in the austerities of his life. These, either hearing of the great entertainment made at Matthew's house for Christ, and his disciples, at which they were offended; or else being moved, and set on by the Pharisees, with whom they were agreed in the business of fasting, came to Christ where he was, and put this question to him,

saying, why do we, and the Pharisees, fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? Not that they wanted to know the reason why they and the Pharisees fasted; that they could account for themselves, but why Christ's disciples did not: and this is said not so much by way of inquiry, as reproof; and their sense is; that Christ's disciples ought to fast, as well as they and the Pharisees, and not eat, and drink, and feast in the manner they did. The fastings here referred to are not the public fasts enjoined by the law of Moses, or in any writings of the Old Testament; but private fasts, which were enjoined by John to his disciples, and by the Pharisees to their's; or which were, according to the traditions of the elders, or of their own appointing, and which were very "often" indeed: for besides their fasting twice a week, on Monday and Thursday, (Luke 18:12) they had a

multitude of fasts upon divers occasions, particularly for rain [f561]. If the 17th of Marchesvan, or October, came, and there was no rain, private persons kept three days of fasting, viz. Monday, Thursday, and Monday again: and if the month of Cisleu, or November, came, and there was no rain, then the sanhedrim appointed three fast days, which were on the same days as before, for the congregation; and if still there was no rain came, they added three more; and if yet there were none, they enjoined seven more, in all thirteen, which R. Acha and R. Barachiah kept themselves [f562]. Fasts were kept also on account of many other evils, as pestilence, famine, war, sieges, inundations, or any other calamity; sometimes for trifling things, as for dreams [f563], that they might have good ones, or know how to interpret them, or avoid any ill omen by them; and it is almost incredible what frequent fastings some of the Rabbins exercised themselves with, on very insignificant occasions. They [f564] say,

> "R. Jose ˆymwx yynmt µx, "fasted fourscore fasts" to see R. Chiyah Rubba; at last he saw, and his hands trembled, and his eyes grew dim: — R. Simeon Ben Lakish ˆymwx ˆwam t l t µx, "fasted three hundred fastings" to see R. Chiyah Rubba, and did not see him."

Elsewhere it is said, that R. Ase fasted "thirty days" to see the same person, and saw him not [f565]. Again [f566],

> "R. Jonathan fasted every eve of the new year, R. Abin fasted every eve of the feast of tabernacles, R. Zeura fasted "three hundred fasts", and there are that say "nine hundred fasts"."

This may serve to illustrate and prove the frequency of the Jewish fastings. Luke represents this question as put by the Pharisees, which is here put by the disciples of John: it was doubtless put by both agreeing in this matter; and which shows that John's disciples were instigated to it by the Pharisees, who sought to sow discord between them, and to bring Christ and his disciples into contempt with them.

Ver. 15. *And Jesus said unto them*, etc.] To the disciples of John, the Pharisees being present, who both have here a full answer; though it seems to be especially directed to the former:

can the children of the bride chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom, is with them? By the "bridegroom" Christ means himself, who stands in

such a relation to his church, and to all, believers; whom he secretly betrothed to himself from all eternity, in the covenant of grace; and openly espouses in the effectual calling; and will still do it in a more public manner at the last day John, the master of those men, who put the question to Christ, had acknowledged him under this character, (<4029>John 3:29) and therefore they ought to own it as belonging to him; so that the argument upon it came with the greater force to them. By "the children of the bride chamber" are meant the disciples, who were the friends of the bridegroom, as John also says he was; and therefore rejoiced at hearing his voice, as these did, and ought to do; their present situation, having the presence of Christ the bridegroom with them, required mirth and not mourning, John, their master, being witness. The allusion is to a nuptial solemnity, which is a time of joy and feasting, and not of sorrow and fasting; when both bride and bridegroom have their friends attending them, who used to be called hpwjh ynb, "the children of the bride chamber". The bride had her maidens waiting on her; and it is said [f567],

> "she did not go into the bridechamber but with them; and these are called, atpwj ynb, "the children of the bride chamber"."

So the young men that were the friends of the bridegroom, which attended him, were called by the same name; and, according to the Jewish canons, were free from many things they were otherwise obliged to: thus it is said [f568]:

> "the bridegroom, his friends, and all hpwjh ynb, "the children of the bride chamber", are free from the booth all the seven days;"

that is, from dwelling in booths at the feast of tabernacles, which was too strait a place for such festival solemnities. And again,

> "the bridegroom, his friends, and all hpwjh ynb, "the children of the bride chamber", are free from prayer and the phylacteries;"

that is, from observing the stated times of attending to these things, and much more then were they excused from fasting and mourning; so that the Pharisees had an answer sufficient to silence them, agreeably to their own traditions. Give me leave to transcribe one passage more, for the illustration of this text [f569].

> "When R. Lazar ben Arach opened, in the business of Mercava, (the visions in the beginning of Ezekiel,) Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai alighted from his ass; for he said it is not fit I should hear the glory of my Creator, and ride upon an ass: they went, and sat under a certain tree, and fire came down from heaven and surrounded them; and the ministering angels leaped before them, hpwj ynbk, "as the children of the bride chamber" rejoice before the bridegroom."

The time of Christ's being with his disciples, between his entrance on his public ministry, and his death, is the time here referred to, during which the disciples had very little care and trouble: this was their rejoicing time, and there was a great deal of reason for it; they had no occasion to fast and mourn; and indeed the Jews themselves say [f570], that

> "all fasts shall cease in the days of the Messiah; and there shall be no more but good days, and days of joy and rejoicing, as it is said, (Zechariah 8:19)."

But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; in a forcible manner, and put to death, as he was;

and then shall they fast and mourn, and be in great distress, as John's disciples now were, on account of their master being in prison.

Ver. 16. *No man putteth a piece of new cloth*, etc.] These words are, by (Luke 5:36) called a "parable", as are those in the following verse; and both are commonly interpreted of the unreasonableness and danger of putting young disciples upon severe exercises of religion, as fasting, etc.: and it is true, that young converts are to be tenderly dealt with, as they are by Father, Son, and Spirit, as the disciples were by Christ, and the first Christians were by the apostles: and some things in these parables may seem to agree; as that these austerities should be represented as "new", and as burdensome and troublesome, and the disciples as weak, and easily staggered: but then there are others that will not bear; as that the disciples should be compared to "old garments, and old bottles"; when they were "young" converts, and men "renewed" by the Spirit and grace of God, and had on the beautiful robe of Christ's righteousness; and that such severe exercises, under the notion of religion, should be signified by "new wine", which generally designs something pleasant and agreeable: nor were the disciples unable to bear such severities, who very probably had been

trained up in them, and been used to them before their conversion; and could now as well have bore them as John's disciples, or the Pharisees, had they been proper and necessary; but the true reason why they were not required of them, was not their weakness, or danger of falling off, and perishing, of which there were none; but because it was unsuitable to their present situation, the bridegroom being with them. But our Lord, in this parable of putting "a piece of new", or "undressed cloth", such as has never passed through the fuller's hands, and so unfit to mend with,

unto an old garment, refers not only to the fastings of the Pharisees, but to their other traditions of the elders, which they held; as such that respected their eating, drinking, and conversing with other persons mentioned in the context, and which observances they joined with their moral performances; on account of which, they looked upon themselves as very righteous persons, and all others as sinners: and to expose their folly, Christ delivers this parable. Wherefore, by "the old garment", I apprehend, is meant their moral and legal righteousness, or their obedience to the moral and ceremonial laws, which was very imperfect, as well as impure, and might be rightly called "filthy rags"; or be compared to an old worn out garment, filthy and loathsome, torn, and full of holes, which cannot keep a person warm, nor screen him from the weather, and so old that it cannot be mended. And by the "piece of new cloth", or "garment", put unto it, or sewed upon it, are intended the traditions of the elders, these men were so fond of, concerning eating, and drinking, and fasting, and hundreds of other things, very idle and trifling, and which were new and upstart notions. Now, by putting, or sewing the new cloth to their old garment, is designed, their joining their observance of these traditions to their other duties of religion, to make up a justifying righteousness before God; but in vain, and to no purpose. Their old garment of their own works, in obedience to the laws of God, moral and ceremonial, was full bad enough of itself; but became abundantly worse, by joining this new piece of men's own devising to it;

for that which is put in to fill it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse: their new obedience to the traditions of men, making void the law of God, instead of mending, marred their righteousness, and left them in a worse condition than it found them: and besides, as it is in Luke, "the piece that was taken out of the new, agreeth not with the old"; there being no more likeness between the observance of the commandments of men, and obedience to the laws of God, than there is between a piece of

new undressed cloth, that has never been washed and worn, and an old worn out garment. Much such a foolish part do those men under the Gospel dispensation act, who join the righteousness of Christ, or a part of it, with their own, in order to make up a justifying righteousness before God; for Christ's righteousness is the only justifying righteousness; it is whole and perfect, and needs nothing to be added to it, nor can it be parted, any more than his seamless coat was; nor a piece taken out of it: nor is there any justification by works, either in whole or in part; the old garment of man's righteousness must be thrown away, in point of justification; it cannot be mended in such a manner; and if any attempts are made in this way, the rent becomes worse: such persons, instead of being justified, are in a worse condition; for they not only set up, and exalt their own righteousness, which is criminal, but disparage the righteousness of Christ as imperfect, by joining it to their's; and whilst they fancy themselves in a good state, are in a most miserable one; harlots and publicans being nearer the kingdom of heaven than these, and enter into it before them; self-righteous persons are more hardly, and with greater difficulty convinced, than such sinners. Moreover, nothing is more disagreeable than such a patch work; Christ's righteousness and a man's own bear no likeness to one another; and such a patched garment must ill become the character and dignity of a saint, a child of God, an heir of heaven.

Ver. 17. *Neither do men put new wine into old bottles*, etc.] As in the former parable, our Lord exposes the folly of the Scribes and Pharisees, in their zealous attachment to the traditions of the elders; so in this, he gives a reason why he did not call these persons by his Gospel, who were settled upon the old principle of self-righteousness, but sinners, whom he renews by his Spirit and grace: for by "old bottles" are meant, the Scribes and Pharisees. The allusion is to bottles, made of the skins of beasts, which in time decayed, waxed old, and became unfit for use: such were the wine bottles, old and rent, the Gibeonites brought with them, and showed to Joshua, (Joshua 9:4,13) and to which the Psalmist compares himself, (Psalm 119:83) and which the Misnic doctors call twtmj, and their commentators [f571] say, were rw[lç tdwn, "bottles made of skin", or "leather", and so might be rent. Of the use of new and old bottles, take the following hint out of the "Talmud" [f572].

> "The bottles of the Gentiles, if scraped and µyçdj, "new", they are free for use; if µynçy, "old", they are forbidden."

Now the Scribes and Pharisees may be signified by these old bottles, being natural men, no other than as they were born; having never been regenerated, and renewed in the spirit of their minds; in whom the old man was predominant, were mere formal professors of religion, and self-righteous persons: and by "new wine" is meant, either the love and favour of God compared to wine, that is neat and clean, because free from hypocrisy in him, or motives in the creature; to generous wine, for its cheering and reviving effects; and to new wine, not but that it is very ancient, even from everlasting, but, because newly manifested, in the effectual calling and conversion: or the Gospel is signified by wine, for its purity, good flavour, and pleasant taste; for its generous effects, in reviving drooping spirits, refreshing weary persons, and comforting distressed minds; and by new wine, not that it is a new doctrine, an upstart notion, for it is an ancient Gospel, but because newly and more clearly revealed by Christ and his apostles: or the blessings of grace which spring from the love of God, and are manifested in the Gospel, such as pardon of sin, reconciliation and atonement, justifying and sanctifying grace, spiritual joy and peace, and the like. Now as the new wine is not put into old bottles,

else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: so the love of God, the Gospel of the grace of God, and the blessings of it, are not received and retained, nor can they be, by natural men, by self-righteous persons: they do not suit and agree with their old carnal hearts and principles; they slight and reject them, and let them run out, which proves their greater condemnation.

But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved. By "new bottles" are meant sinners, whom Christ calls by his grace, and the Spirit regenerates and renews, who are made new creatures in Christ; who have new hearts, and new spirits, and new principles of light, life, love, faith, and holiness, implanted in them; who have new eyes to see with, new ears to hear with, new feet to walk with, to and in Christ, new hands to work and handle with, and who live a new life and conversation. Now to such as these, the love of God is manifested and shed abroad in their hearts; by these, the Gospel of Christ is truly received and valued, and these enjoy the spiritual blessings of it; and so both the doctrine of the Gospel, and the

grace of God, are preserved entire, and these persons saved in the day of Christ.

Ver. 18. *While he spake these things unto them*, etc.] To the Scribes and Pharisees, and to John's disciples, concerning, and in vindication of his, and his disciples, eating and drinking with publicans and sinners, and their not fasting as others did; and while he spake these parables, to expose the folly of self-righteous persons, and justify his own conduct, in calling sinners to repentance,

behold, there came a certain ruler and worshipped him. This man, as both Mark and Luke say, was named Jairus; and was a ruler, not of the sanhedrim, or lesser consistory, but of the synagogue that was at Capernaum; and whom the Jews call, `tsnkh çar`, "the head of the synagogue". Mark says, he was "one of the rulers": not that there were more rulers than one, in one synagogue [f573]: but as in great cities, so it is likely in Capernaum there were more synagogues than one, of which he was one of the rulers: so we read of `twysnk yçar` [f574], "heads", or "rulers of synagogues". As this is one mistake, so it is another to say, that Dr. Lightfoot speaks of this ruler, as the same with the "minister" of the congregation; when both here, and in the place referred to, he manifestly distinguishes them; as do the Jews: for, by this ruler, as their commentators [f575] say,

> "the necessary affairs of the synagogue were determined, as who should dismiss with a prophet, who should divide the "shema", and who should go before the ark."

Whereas the business of `tjnkh ^zj`, "the minister of the synagogue", was to bring in and out the ark, or chest, in which was the book of the law; and particularly, when the high priest read, or pronounced the blessings, "he" took the book, and gave it to "the ruler of the synagogue"; and the ruler of the synagogue gave it to the "sagan", and the "sagan" to the high priest [f576]. The doctor makes indeed `rwbxh jylç`, "the messenger of the congregation", to be the same with "the minister of the synagogue", and which is his mistake; for these were two different officers [f577]: the former was the lecturer, or preacher; and the latter, a sort of a sexton to keep the synagogue clean, open and shut the doors, and do other things before mentioned. This Jairus was a man of great power and significance; who in

such a very humble manner prostrated himself at the feet of Jesus, and expressed such strong faith in him:

saying, my daughter is even now dead, but come and lay thine hand upon her, and she shall live. Luke says, she was "his only daughter": and Mark calls her his "little daughter": though both he and Luke say, she was about "twelve" years of age, and that with strict propriety, according to the Jewish canons, which [f578] say; that

> "a daughter, from the day of her birth until she is twelve years complete, is called hnjq, "a little one" and when she is twelve years of age, and one day and upwards, she is called hr[n, "a young woman"."

Her case seems to be differently represented; Mark says, she was "at the point of death", or "in the last extremity"; and Luke, that she "lay dying": but Matthew here says, that she was "even now dead", which may be easily reconciled: for not to observe, that αρτι signifies "near", and the phrase may be rendered, "she is near dead", or just expiring, the case was this; when Jairus left his house, his daughter was in the agony of death, just ready to give up the ghost; so, that he concluded, by the time he was with Jesus, she had made her exit; as it appears she had, by a messenger, who brought the account of her death, before they could get to the house. The ruler's address to Christ on this occasion, is a very considerable, though not so great an instance of faith as some others; that he, who was a ruler of a synagogue, should apply to Christ, which sort of men were generally most averse to him; that he should fall down and worship him, if not as God, since as yet he might be ignorant of his deity, yet behaved with the profoundest respect to him, as a great man, and a prophet; that he should come to him when his child was past all hope of recovery; yea, when he had reason to believe she was actually dead, as she was; that even then, he should believe in hope against hope; he affirms, that he really believed, that if Christ would but come to his house, and lay his hand upon her, an action often used in grave and serious matters, as in blessing persons, in prayer, and in healing diseases, she would certainly be restored to life again.

Ver. 19. *And Jesus arose and followed him*, etc.] Immediately, without delay, or any more ado: he did not upbraid him with the treatment he and his followers met with, from men of his profession; who cast out of their synagogues such, who confessed him to be the Messiah: nor does he take

notice of any weakness in his faith; as that he thought it necessary he should go with him to his house, when he could as well have restored his daughter to life, absent, as present; and that he should prescribe a form of doing it, by laying his hands upon her. These things he overlooked, and at once got up from Matthew's table, and went along with him,

and so did his disciples, to be witnesses of the miracle; and according to the other evangelists, a large multitude of people besides; even a throng of them, led by curiosity to see this wondrous performance.

Ver. 20. *And behold a woman which was diseased*. etc.] This affair happened in the streets of Capernaum, as Christ was going from the house of Matthew the publican, to the house of Jairus the ruler of the synagogue, which were both in this city. This poor woman's case was a very distressed one; she had been attended

with an issue of blood twelve years; it was an uncommon flux of a long standing, was inveterate, and become incurable; though she had not been negligent of herself, but had made use of means, applied herself to regular physicians, had took many a disagreeable medicine, and had spent all her substance in this way; but instead of being better, was worse, and was now given up by them, as past all cure. This woman might be truly called hlwdg hbz, [f579] "the greater profluvious woman", in the language of the doctors; for if one that had a flux but three days was called so, much more one that had had it twelve years. She having heard of Jesus, and his miraculous cures, had faith given her to believe, that she also should receive one from him; wherefore she

came behind him, through modesty, being ashamed to come before him, and tell him her case, especially before so many people; and fearing lest if her case was known, she should be thrust away, if not by Christ, yet by the company; she being according to the law an unclean person, and unfit for society:

and touched the hem of his garment; which was the txyx, or "fringes", the Jews were obliged to wear upon the borders of their garments, and on it a ribband of blue; (see <04153>Numbers 15:38; <05212>Deuteronomy 22:12) in both which places Onkelos uses the word ^ydpswrk, the same with κρασπεδον, used here, and in (<40656>Mark 6:56) and rendered "hem". The Jews placed much sanctity in the wear and use of these fringes; and the Pharisees, who pretended to more holiness than others, enlarged them

beyond their common size; but it was not on account of any peculiar holiness in this part of Christ's garment, that induced this poor woman to touch it; but this being behind him, and more easy to be come at, she therefore laid hold on it; for it was his garment, any part of it she concluded, if she could but touch, she should have a cure. However, we learn from hence, that Christ complied with the rites of the ceremonial law in apparel, as well as in other things.

Ver. 21. *For she said within herself*, etc.] That is, she thought within herself, she reasoned the matter in her mind, she concluded upon it, and firmly believed it; being strongly impressed and influenced by the Spirit of God, and encouraged by instances of cures she had heard were performed by persons only touching him; see (<4069>Luke 6:19)

if I may but touch his garment. The Arabic version reads it, "the hem of his garment", as before; but is not supported by any copy, nor by any other version: her faith was, that if she might be allowed, or if she could by any means come at him, to touch any part of his garment, she should have a cure:

I shall be whole, or "I shall be saved"; that is, from her disease, from which she could have no deliverance, by the advice and prescriptions of all her former physicians, and by all the means she had made use of.

Ver. 22. *But Jesus turned him about*, etc.] Knowing what was done behind him, that virtue was gone out of him, that the woman had touched him, and was healed; which is a clear proof of his omniscience, and so of his deity: not that he was angry with her for touching him, though she was an impure woman; for though men and garments were defiled by the touch of a profluvious [f580] person; yet such was the power and holiness of Christ, that as he could not be defiled by any such means, so hereby, at once, this woman's impurity was also removed: but Christ turned about to observe and point out the woman, and her cure, to the company; not for the sake of his own honour, but for the glory of God, the commendation of the woman's faith, and chiefly for the strengthening the faith of Jairus, with whom he was going to raise his daughter from the dead:

and when he saw her. The other evangelists, Mark and Luke, record, that Jesus inquired who touched him, and what answer Peter and the disciples made to him; and how he looked around, and very likely fastened his eyes upon the woman; when she perceiving that she could not go off

undiscovered, came trembling to him, fell down before him, and told him the whole matter; and then

he said, daughter be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole. He addressed her in a kind and tender manner, calling her “daughter”; an affable, courteous way of speaking, used by the Jewish doctors [f581], when speaking to women: which showed his affection, and bespoke his relation; and bidding her take heart and be of good cheer, since he meant not to blame her for what she had done, but to commend her faith in him, whereby she had received a cure: meaning, not that there was such virtue in her faith as to effect such a cure; but that he, the object of her faith, had performed it for her:

and the woman was made whole from that hour; her disease immediately left her, and from that time forward, was no more troubled with it: the cure was so effectual, and so perfect, that the disorder never returned more.

Ver. 23. *And when Jesus came into the ruler’s house*, etc.] Both Mark and Luke relate, how that before this, whilst they were in the way, and just as Christ had done speaking to the poor woman, that news was brought to the ruler, that his daughter was actually dead, and therefore need not give Jesus any further trouble; when Christ encouraged him not to be cast down at the tidings, but believe, and she should be restored again; and that he suffered none to follow him, but Peter, James, and John: and

saw the minstrels, or “pipers”; how many there were, is not known: it is certain there were more than one; and it was a rule with the [f582] Jews that

> “the poorest man in Israel (when his wife died) had not less µylyl j ynçm, “than two pipes”, and one mourning woman.”

And since this was a daughter of a ruler of the synagogue that was dead, there might be several of them. These instruments were made use of, not to remove the melancholy of surviving friends, or allay the grief of the afflicted family; but, on the contrary, to excite it: for the Jewish writers say [f583], these pipes were hollow instruments, with which they made a known sound, lbahw hykbh rrw[l, “to stir up lamentation and mourning”: and for the same purpose, they had their mourning women, who answered to the pipe; and by their dishevelled hair, and doleful tones, moved upon the affections, and drew tears from others; and very likely are the persons, that Mark says, “wept and wailed greatly”. Sometimes trumpets were made

use of on these mournful occasions [f584]; but whether these were used only for persons more advanced in years, and pipes for younger ones, as by the Heathens [f585], at least, at some times, is not certain.

And the people making a noise; the people of the house, the relations of the deceased, the neighbours, who came in on this occasion; and others, in a sort of tumult and uproar, hurrying and running about; some speaking in the praise of the dead, others lamenting her death, and others preparing things proper for the funeral; all which shew, that she was really dead: among these also, might be the mourners that made a noise for the dead;

> "for since mourning was for the honour of the dead, therefore they obliged the heirs to hire mourning men, and mourning women, to mourn for the same [f586]."

Ver. 24. *And he said unto them, give place*, etc.] Depart, be gone; for he put them out of the room, and suffered none to be with him, when he raised her from the dead, but Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the child, who were witnesses enough of this miracle.

For the maid is not dead, but sleepeth: not but that she was really dead; and Christ signifies as much, when he says, she "sleepeth"; a phrase that is often used in [f587] Talmudic writings, for one that is dead: but Christ's meaning is, that she was not so dead as the company thought; as always to remain in the state of the dead, and not to be restored to life again: whereas our Lord signifies, it would be seen in a very little time, that she should be raised again, just as a person is awaked out of sleep; so that there was no occasion to make such funeral preparations as they did. The Jews say [f588] of some of their dead, that they are asleep, and not dead: it is said, (<23269>Isaiah 26:19) "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust".

> "These, say they, are they that sleep and die not; and such are they that sleep in Hebron, for they ˆykymd ala ˆytmwal, "do not die, but sleep", — the four couples in Hebron (Adam and Eve, etc.) they "sleep, but are not dead"."

And they laughed him to scorn; they mocked at his words, and had him in the utmost contempt, as a very weak silly man; taking him either to be a madman, or a fool; knowing that she was really dead, of which they had all the evidence they could have; and having no faith at all in him, and in his power to raise her from the dead.

Ver. 25. *But when the people were put forth*, etc.] Either out of the house or room, by Christ, or, at least, by his orders: which was done, partly because he was desirous it might be kept a secret, as much as possible, and to shew, that he did not affect popular applause; and partly, because they were unworthy to be admitted spectators of such a wondrous action, who had treated him with so much scorn and contempt:

he went in; not alone, but with his three disciples, Peter, James, and John, who were taken in to be witnesses of this resurrection, and the parents of the child; who were so very solicitous for its life, under whose power she was, and to whom she was to be restored:

and took her by the hand; just as one would do to awake another out of sleep; and, perhaps, in compliance with her father's request, to lay his hand upon her: and though the touch of a dead body, according to the law, (Numbers 19:16) was defiling; yet this did not defile him, any more than his touching the leper, or the profluvious woman's touching his clothes; for these actions produced supernatural effects, which came not under the cognizance of the law. His taking her by the hand, was not all that he did, but he called, as to a person asleep, and said unto her these words, "Talitha cumi", as recorded by Mark, and are also in Munster's Hebrew Gospel of Matthew; and which, in the Syriac language, signify, "maiden, arise"; and immediately, directly, as soon as ever he had thus said,

the maid arose, as out of sleep; she revived, her soul came to her again, and she got off of the bed, and walked about house, and food was ordered to be given to her. All which most fully demonstrated that she was really restored to life, which was as clear a case, as that before she was really dead.

Ver. 26. *And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land*.] For though he strictly charged the parents, as the other evangelists say, that they should tell no man what was done, he not affecting the applause of men; yet it was not possible the thing should be entirely concealed; since there was such a number of people, not only relations, but neighbours, who full well knew, and were assured she had been dead: when these saw her alive, walk about, eat and drink, and converse with them, they must be persuaded of the miracle, and relate it wherever they came; so that the fame of it could not but be spread all over the country in which Capernaum was.

Ver. 27. *And when Jesus departed thence*, etc.] From the house of Jairus, to another in the same city;

two blind men followed him: very closely, by the direction of others, having heard of the miracle just now performed by him; and from thence concluded he was able to restore them to their sight;

crying and saying, with great faith and fervour, with much importunity, and frequently repeating the following words,

thou son of David, have mercy on us. Whence it appears, that they firmly believed, and were fully persuaded, that he was the true Messiah; for "the son of David" was a known character of the Messiah among the Jews: nothing was more common than to call him by this title, without any other additional epithet, *see Gill "Matthew 1:1"*, and since it had been prophesied of the Messiah, that he should "open the eyes of the blind", (Isaiah 35:5,42:7) they might be greatly encouraged to hope and believe they should obtain mercy from him in this respect.

Ver. 28. *And when he was come into the house*, etc.] In which he dwelt, whilst at Capernaum: for he took no notice of them by the way; but though they followed him close, and cried vehemently, he did not stop to speak to them, or give them a cure: according to their request, but went on his way; which he did, partly to avoid the populace, and that he might not be seen by men, in what he did, and partly to try their faith, and the constancy of it.

The blind men came to him; being directed by others, into what house he went, and where he was, and very probably with the leave of Christ:

and Jesus saith unto them, believe ye that I am able to do this? That is, to have mercy on them, as they requested, by curing them of their blindness; which, though not expressed, is implied, and is the thing designed: this question is put, not as being ignorant of, or as doubting their faith in him, which they had expressed, in calling him the son of David; and had shown the firmness and constancy of it, by following him, though he took no notice of them; but partly, for the further trial of their faith, and to bring them to a more open profession of it, as to this particular, his power to cure them of their blindness; and partly, for the sake of those, that were in the house:

they said unto him, yea, Lord. They firmly believed he had power to do it, they had not the least doubt and hesitation in their minds about it; for

though their bodily eyes were at present dark, the eyes of their understandings were enlightened, to see and know Jesus to be the true Messiah, David's Son, and Lord.

Ver. 29. *Then touched he their eyes*, etc.] Not but that he could have restored sight to them, without touching their eyes, by a word speaking, or by the secret communication of his power; but he might do this as a sign of his favour and kindness to them, and of his will to cure them; as also in compliance with their weakness, who might expect some manual operation upon them;

saying, according to your faith be it unto you: not that faith in his person and power, was the cause or condition of this cure, or the rule and measure according to which Christ proceeded; but the sense is, that as they had believed he was able to heal them, accordingly a cure should be effected; which, upon his so saying, they immediately found performed in them.

Ver. 30. *And their eyes were opened*, etc.] Some copies read, "immediately"; and so do the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions: and this was certainly the true and real matter of fact, that as soon as Christ had touched their eyes, and said the above words, their sight was perfectly restored to them; and they had a clear, full, and true sight of objects, as men have, whose vision faculty is in its full strength and rigour, and their eyes open:

and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, see that no man know it. This was a very strict charge, and according to the signification of the word here used, it was given with great austerity of countenance, and severity of expression, in a very rough and threatening manner; which Christ might be the rather induced to, because he had given such like orders already, and they had not been observed: the reasons for concealing the miracle are not very obvious; it seems likely, that with the same view he took no notice of these blind men in the street, but went into an house, and cured them; which seems to be, to shun all appearance of vain glory, or seeking popular applause, that he gave these orders; or it may be, he did not choose to be made more known by this miracle, or at this time, or by these men; he might foresee that it would be attended with ill consequences; either the more to irritate the resentments of some persons against him; or to put others on doing things which were disagreeable to him; as setting him up for a temporal prince among them, being David's son.

Ver. 31. *But they, when they were departed*, etc.] That is, out of the house where they received their cure, and out of the city; for it appears, by what follows, they went into other parts, where it is probable they might originally belong; they

spread abroad his fame in all that country. This they did, not in contempt of Christ and his orders; but rather out of gratitude to their benefactor, and through an honest zeal to spread his honour and glory: though they are not to be commended for disregarding the command of Christ; for, not our affection, but Christ's will, is to be the rule of our actions.

Ver. 32. *As they went out*, etc.] The Syriac version reads it, "when Jesus went out"; to which agrees the Arabic, against all the copies: for not he, but the men who had been blind, and now had their sight restored, went out from the house where Jesus was; which circumstance is mentioned, and by it the following account is introduced, partly to show how busy Christ was, how he was continually employed in doing good, and that as soon as one work of mercy was over, another offered; and partly, to observe how closely and exactly the prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled; in which, as it was foretold, that "the eyes of the blind" should "be opened"; so likewise, that "the tongue of the dumb" should "sing", (Isaiah 35:5,6).

Behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. The word signifies one that is deaf, as well as dumb; as does the Hebrew word çrj, often used by the Jewish writers for a deaf and dumb man; one, they say [f589], that can neither hear nor speak, and is unfit for sacrifice, and excused many things: and indeed these two, deafness and dumbness, always go together in persons, who are deaf from their birth; for as they cannot hear, they cannot learn to speak: but this man seems to be dumb, not by nature, but through the possession of Satan, who had taken away, or restrained the use of his speech, out of pure malice and ill will, that he might not have the benefit of conversation with men, nor be able to say anything to the glory of God. This man did not come of himself to Christ, perhaps being unwilling, through the power and influence the devil had over him; but his friends, who were concerned for his welfare, and who were thoroughly persuaded of the power of Christ to heal him, by the miracles they had seen, or heard performed by him, brought him to him; and, no doubt, expressed their desire that he would cast out the devil, and cure him, which he did.

Ver. 33. *And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake*, etc.] The cause of his dumbness being removed, the effect ceased, and the man spake as he did before, and as other men do; and this was done, according to the Persic version, “as soon as Christ saw him”; the devil not being able to bear his presence, much less withstand his power: but as soon as Christ had set his eyes upon the man possessed by him, and had given him orders to be gone, he immediately went out, and the man was restored to his speech again;

and the multitude marvelled, saying, it was never so seen in Israel. The vast crowds of people, who were alarmed with the former miracles of Christ, and came along with the friends of the dumb man, when they heard him speak so suddenly and plainly, and with so much freedom, nothing being said or done to him, were surprised; and declared very frankly, that though many wonderful things had been done in Israel, in times past, by Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and others, yet never were such things seen, or heard, or known of, as were done by Christ: referring not to this miracle only, but to all the rest he had just wrought; as curing the woman of her bloody issue, raising Jairus’s daughter from the dead, restoring sight to the two blind men, and now casting out a dumb devil.

Ver. 34. *But the Pharisees said*, etc.] Who were the sworn enemies of Christ, and were filled with envy at him, and malice against him: these men could not bear, that so much honour and glory should be given to Christ; and therefore said,

he casteth out the devils through the prince of the devils: they could not deny matter of fact, that he had cast out a devil; nor could they say he had done an ill thing in so doing; they could not but own that it was a preternatural action, more than human; nor could they contradict what the multitude said, that no such thing had been ever seen, or known, in Israel: but that Christ might not have the glory of the action, and to fix a mark of infamy upon him, foolishly impute it to a diabolical influence, as if one devil would eject another; and to Christ’s familiarity with, and the assistance he had from, not a common devil, but the prince of them. In Beza’s most ancient manuscript, and in some others, this whole verse is wanting; and were it not, for the general consent of copies, one should be tempted to think these words were not said at this time, because Christ returns no answer to them; and what is observed by (Luke 11:15) as following this miracle, is the selfsame as was spoken by Christ in

(⁴⁰1224Matthew 12:24,25) and where this passage is more thoroughly considered.

Ver. 35. *And Jesus went about all the cities and villages*, etc.] He did not confine himself, and his acts of kindness and compassion, to his own city, Capernaum, but he took a circuit throughout all Galilee; and not only visited their larger and more principal cities and towns, but their villages also; doing good to the bodies and souls of men in every place, and of whatever state and condition.

Teaching in their synagogues; which were places of public worship, where prayer was made, the law and the prophets were read, and a word of exhortation given to the people; and which, it seems, were in villages, as well as in cities and towns: and indeed it is a rule with the Jews [f590], that

> "in what place soever there are ten Israelites, they ought to build a house, to which they may go to prayer, at all times of prayer; and such a place is called tsnkh tyb, "a synagogue"."

And hence we often read of [f591] µyrpk lç tsnkh tyb, "the synagogue of villages", as distinct from the synagogues of cities and walled towns; which confutes a notion of the learned Dr. Lightfoot [f592], who thought there were no synagogues in villages. Now, wherever Christ found any of these, he entered into them, and taught the people publicly,

preaching the Gospel of the kingdom; the good news and glad tidings of peace and pardon, reconciliation and salvation, by himself the Messiah; all things relating to the Gospel dispensation; the doctrines of grace, which concern both the kingdom of grace and glory; particularly the doctrine of regeneration, and the necessity of having a better righteousness than that of the Scribes and Pharisees; the one as a meetness, the other as a title to eternal happiness:

and healing every sickness, and every disease among the people. As he preached wholesome doctrine for the good of their souls; for their spiritual health, and the cure of their spiritual maladies; so he healed all sorts of diseases the bodies of men were incident to, that were brought unto him; and by his miracles confirmed, as well as recommended, the doctrines he preached.

Ver. 36. *But when he saw the multitudes*, etc.] As he took his circuit through the several cities, towns, and villages, he made his observations

upon the large numbers that flocked to his ministry, and seemed to be desirous of spiritual instructions, in what an unhappy and melancholy situation they were; and

he was moved with compassion on them: his bowels yearned for them, he was touched with a feeling of their infirmities, as the merciful high priest, the good shepherd, and faithful prophet; being heartily concerned for the souls of men, their comfort here, and everlasting happiness hereafter:

because they fainted; being fatigued and tired, not in their bodies, through journeying from place to place, to hear the word, but in their minds; being burdened and wearied with the various traditions and doctrines of the Scribes and Pharisees:

and were scattered abroad; thrown and tossed about, and divided through the different sects of religion among them; no due care was taken of them, to gather and keep them together, and feed them with wholesome doctrine; but were as abjects, outcasts, that no man regarded, and in great danger of the loss and ruin of their immortal souls: being

as sheep without a shepherd; that was good for anything, or did the office and duty of a shepherd to them: the Scribes and Pharisees were shepherds indeed, such as they were, but very bad ones; like the shepherds of Israel of old, who fed themselves, and not the flock; who strengthened not the diseased, nor healed the sick, nor bound up that which was broken; nor brought again that which was driven away, nor sought that which was lost: but on the contrary, caused them to go astray from mountain to hill; whereby they forgot their resting place, in the Messiah promised them, and who was now come.

Ver. 37. *Then saith he unto his disciples*, etc.] His heart being drawn out, and filled with pity to these poor people, upon observing the miserable and sad condition they were in; he turns himself to his disciples, whom he was about to call, and send forth in a more public manner to preach the Gospel, of which we read in the following chapter; and in order to quicken them to this service, and engage their hearts in it, says unto them,

the harvest truly is plenteous; meaning the large number of God’s elect, which were in these cities, towns, and villages, and in other places: not that these were maturely prepared by anything in themselves, or done by them, for the grace of God; and much less ripe for the kingdom of glory, and therefore called an harvest: but as there are the appointed weeks of the

harvest, or a set time for the harvest to be gathered in, so there is a certain fixed time, settled in the counsel, and by the purpose of God, for the effectual calling and conversion of his elect; and this time being come, with respect to these in Galilee, and other parts, Christ calls them an “harvest”; and because of their number, a large, or “plenteous” one.

But the labourers are few: Gospel ministers; whose calling is a laborious one; whose business is to labour in the word and doctrine; to be constant in prayer; to give up themselves to meditation and reading; to study to show themselves workmen; to preach the word in season, and out of season; and diligently discharge the several duties of their office, to the glory of Christ, and the good of souls: but such painful and laborious ministers, who are willing to spend, and be spent for Christ and immortal souls, have been but few in all ages; generally speaking, there are more loiterers than labourers.

Ver. 38. *Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest*, etc.] By “the Lord of the harvest” is either meant God the Father, whose are all the elect, who has a hearty concern for them, and will have them all gathered in, not one of them shall be left; or the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who has the care and charge of the whole election of grace; and who as he must, he will bring them all in; and who has power of sending forth labourers, as the following chapter shows; and so this is a proof of prayer being made to Christ;

that he will send forth labourers into his harvest. This is the petition the disciples of Christ were put upon making to the Lord of the harvest, on consideration of the present condition multitudes of souls were in: they could not make, qualify, and send out ministers themselves; this is not man’s work, but God’s: he only is able to furnish with ministerial gifts, to work upon, and powerfully incline the hearts of men to this service, to call and send them forth into it, and to assist and succeed them in it. The persons desired to be sent are “labourers”; faithful, diligent, and industrious preachers of the Gospel; such as lay out themselves, their time, talents, and strength, in their master’s service; and do not indulge themselves in sloth and idleness: the place they are desired to be sent into is, “into the harvest”; into the field of the world, where God’s elect lie, and there labour in preaching the Gospel; hoping for a divine blessing, and an almighty power to attend their ministrations, for the conversion of sinners, and edification of saints. The request the disciples are directed to make, concerning these persons for this work, is, that the Lord of the harvest would “send”, or “thrust” them “forth”; implying power and efficacy, and

authority, on the part of the sender; and backwardness on the part of those that are sent, through modesty: a sense of the greatness of the work, and of their own unworthiness and unfitness for it. Very opportunely did our Lord move his disciples to put up this petition, and was done, no question, with a view to, and to prepare for, his mission of the twelve to preach the Gospel, of which there is an account in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 10

Ver. 1. *And when he had called to him his twelve disciples*, etc.] These persons had been for some time called by the grace of God, and were already the disciples of Christ, and such as were more familiar and intimate with him, than others, that went by that name. They had sat down at his feet, and had received of his words; they had heard his doctrines, and had seen his miracles, and had been by him training up for public work; but as yet had not been called and sent forth to enter on such service: but now all things being ready, they being properly instructed, and the time for the conversion of a large number of souls being up, he called them together privately; and gave them a commission to preach the Gospel, ordained them ministers of the word, and installed them into the office of apostleship. The number "twelve", is either in allusion to the twelve spies that were sent by Moses into the land of Canaan, or to the twelve stones in Aaron's breast plate; or to the twelve fountains the Israelites found in the wilderness; or to the twelve oxen on which the molten sea stood in Solomon's temple; or to the twelve gates in Ezekiel's temple; or rather, to the twelve patriarchs, and the tribes which sprung from them; that as they were the fathers of the Jewish nation, which was typical of God's chosen people; so these were to be the instruments of spreading the Gospel, not only Judea, but in all the world, and of planting Christian churches there. And that they might appear to come forth with authority, and that their doctrine might be confirmed,

he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out; or "over all devils", as (Luke 9:1). It was usual with the Jews to call a demon or devil `hamwj jwr`, "an unclean spirit"; especially such as frequented burying places: so in one place[f593], an unclean spirit is interpreted by the gloss, `µydç jwr`, "the spirit of the demons", or devils; and in another[f594] place, `twrbqh tyb dç`, "the demon of the graves"; where necromancers sought to be, that these spirits might be their familiars, and assist them in their enchantments: accordingly the devils are here called, "unclean spirits"; being in themselves, in their own nature, unclean, and being the cause and

means of defiling others, and delighting in impure persons, places, and things. There were many of these spirits, who, because of the great impiety of the Jews, the prevalence of magic arts among them, and by divine permission, had at this time taken possession of great numbers of persons; whereby Christ had an opportunity of giving proof of his deity, of his being the Messiah, the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head, by his ejecting them; and of confirming the mission of his disciples, and establishing the doctrine preached by them, by giving them power and authority over them, to cast them out also: and whereas various diseases frequently followed and attended such possessions; he likewise gave them power

to heal all manner of sicknesses, and all manner of diseases, as he himself had done. The expressions are very full and strong, and include all sorts of maladies incident to human bodies, either of men or women; all distempers natural or preternatural, curable or incurable, by human methods: so that at the same time they were sent to preach the Gospel, for the cure of the souls of men, they were empowered to heal the diseases of their bodies; and which, one should think, could not fail of recommending them to men, and of ingratiating them into their affections.

Ver. 2. *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these*, etc.] This is the first time these disciples are called "apostles", they were learners before; now being instructed, they are sent forth to preach publicly, and therefore are called apostles, or messengers, persons that were sent: so the elders of the priesthood are called ˆyd tyb yjwlç, "the apostles", or messengers "of the sanhedrim" [f595], to whom the high priest were delivered, before the day of atonement. So six months in the year, µyjwlç, "apostles", or messengers, were sent by the [f596] sanhedrim, throughout all the land of Israel, and to the captive Jews in other parts, to give notice of the new moon; in allusion to which, the disciples might be so called. It was proper to give the names of them, for the truth of the history, and confirmation of it; for the sake of the persons themselves, and the honour done them; and for the exclusion and detection of false apostles.

The first, Simon, who is called Peter; his pure Hebrew name was ˆw[mç, Simeon, as he is called, (<441514>Acts 15:14) but in the then Jerusalem dialect, and in Rabbinical language, this name is frequently read and pronounced ˆwmys, "Simon", as here: we often read of R. Simon, and of R. Juda bar

Simon, in both Talmuds [f597]. This apostle is also called Peter, to distinguish him from Simon the Canaanite, and which signifies a stone, or rock, in allusion to the object of his faith, and the steadiness of it. He is said to be the "first"; not that he was the head of the rest of the apostles, or had any primacy, dominion, and authority over them; but because he was first called, and was the first that was to open the door of faith to the Gentiles: but chiefly he is said to be so for order's sake; for, some one in the account must be named first, and he as proper as any:

and Andrew his brother; who was called at the same time with him, and therefore are put together. This name is also to be met with in the Talmudic writings; *see Gill "<4018>Matthew 4:18"*.

James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; these two were called next and together, and therefore are placed in this order: the former is so called, to distinguish him from another James, the son of Alphaeus, after mentioned; and the latter is the beloved disciple; these were surnamed "Boanerges", that is, "sons of thunder".

Ver. 3. *Philip and Bartholomew*, etc.] The first of these was called next; his name is a Greek one, which his parents, though Jews, might take from the Greeks that dwelt among them, (see <4812>John 12:20,21) mention is made of one R. Phelipi, and Phulipa, in the Jewish writings [f598]. The latter of these, Bartholomew, is conjectured, by Dr. Lightfoot, to be the same with Nathanael, he being called next in order after Philip; and that his name was Nathanael, ymlt rb, "Bar Talmai", or "the son of Talmai", or "Ptolomy": a name once common to the kings of Egypt: so Talmai, king of Geshur, is by the Septuagint, in (<101303>2 Samuel 3:3) (<101337>2 Samuel 13:37) called Tholmi, and in (<130302>1 Chronicles 3:2) Tholmai: hence it appears, that Bartholomew is no other than Bartholmi, or the son of Tholmi. We read of one R. Jonathan, swmlwjba ^b, "ben Abtolemus", in the Talmud [f599], whether the same name with this, may be considered.

Thomas, and Matthew the publican: by the other evangelists Matthew is mentioned first; but he being the writer of this Gospel, puts Thomas first, which is an instance of his modesty; and also calls himself the "publican", which the other do not: this he mentions, to magnify the grace of God in his vocation. The Jews [f600] speak of yatm, "Matthai", or "Matthew", as a disciple of Jesus. Thomas was sometimes called Didymus; the one was his Hebrew, the other his Greek name, and both signify a "twin", as it is very

likely he was: mention is made of R. Thoma, or Thomas bar Papias, in a Jewish writer [f601]. Next follow,

James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus: the former of these is so called, to distinguish him from James, the son of Zebedee. This is the James, who was the brother of our Lord, (<480119>Galatians 1:19) and is called "James the less", (<411540>Mark 15:40). Alphaeus his father, is the same with Cleopas, (<422418>Luke 24:18) or Cleophas, (<431925>John 19:25). The Hebrew name, ypl j, which often occurs among the Jews [f602], may be pronounced either Chlophi, or Alphi, or with the Greek termination Cleopas, or Alphaeus. The latter of this pair of apostles is the same person with Jude, the writer of the epistle, which bears that name, and was the brother of James, with whom he is coupled: he was called Lebbaeus, either from the town of Lebba, a sea coast town of Galilee, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks; or from the Hebrew word ybl, "my heart", as others, either for his prudence, or through the affections of his parents to him; as the Latins call one they love, "meum corculum", "my little heart"; or from aybl, "a lion", that being the motto of the tribe of Judah. His surname Thaddaeus, is thought by some to be a deflexion of Jude; or Judas, and as coming from the same root, hdy, which signifies "to praise", or "give thanks"; or from the Syriac word, dt, "a breast", and may be so called for the same reason as he was Lebbaeus. Frequent mention is made of this name, aydt, "Thaddai", or "Thaddaeus", among the Talmudic [f603] doctors. The Jews themselves speak [f604] of one hdwt, "Thodah", as a disciple of Jesus, by whom no doubt they mean this same disciple. Eusebius [f605] mentions one Thaddaeus, as one of the seventy disciples, who was sent to Agbarus, king of Edessa, who was healed and converted by him. This Agbarus is reported to have wrote a letter to Jesus Christ, desiring him to come and cure him of his disease; to which Christ is said to return an answer, promising to send one of his disciples, who should do it; and that accordingly, after Christ's death, Thomas sent this Thaddaeus to him.

Ver. 4. *Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot*, etc.] This is the last couple, for they are all mentioned by pairs, because they were sent forth "by two and two", as the Evangelist Mark says, (<410607>Mark 6:7). The former of these is called Simon the Canaanite, to distinguish him from Simon Peter, before mentioned; not that he was a Canaanite, that is, an inhabitant

of the land of Canaan, a man of Canaan, as a certain woman is called a woman of Canaan, (<401522>Matthew 15:22) for all the disciples of Christ were Jews; though in Munster's Hebrew Gospel he is called ynkh ^w[mç, "Simeon the Canaanite", or of Canaan, as if he belonged to that country; nor is he so called from Cana of Galilee, as Jerorm and others have thought; but he was one of the µyanq, "Kanaim", or "Zealots"; and therefore Luke styles him, "Simon called Zelotes", (<420615>Luke 6:15 <440113>Acts 1:13). The Kanaites, or Zelotes, were a set of men, who, in imitation of Phinehas, who slew Zimri and Cozbi in the very act of uncleanness, when they found any persons in the act of adultery, idolatry, blasphemy, or theft, would immediately kill them without any more ado: this they did, from a pretended zeal for the honour and glory of God: nor were they accountable to any court of judicature for it; yea, such an action was highly applauded, as a very laudable one [f606]: under this specious name of Zealots, innumerable murders, and most horrible wickedness were committed, both before, and during the siege of Jerusalem, as Josephus [f607] relates. Now Simon was one of this sect before his conversion, and still retained the name afterwards. Judas, the last of the twelve, is called Iscariot; concerning which name, the notation of it, and the reason of his being so called, many are the conjectures of learned men: some think that he belonged to the tribe of Issachar, and that he is called from thence, rkçç çya, "a man of Issachar", as a certain man is, in (<070701>Judges 10:1) others, that he takes his name from the place he belonged to, and that he was called twyrq çya, "a man of Kerioth". A place of this name is mentioned, (<061525>Joshua 15:25) and some manuscripts and copies in some places read Judas απο Καρυωτου, of "Caryot". Caryota is said [f608] to be a plain of the city of Jericho, about eighteen miles from Jerusalem, which abounded in palm trees, called yjyyrwq, "Caryotae", of which mention is made in the [f609] Talmud, and other writers [f610]. Others think he is so called, from the Syriac word, ajwyrks, "secariota", which signifies a "purse", or bag, because he carried the bag. Some copies read it, σκαριωτες, "scariotes": others are of opinion, that he is so called, from the manner of death he died, which was strangling: for arksa, "ascara", a word often used in the [f611] Talmudic writings, signifies "strangling"; and is accounted by the Jews the hardest of deaths, and an evil one; and which seems to bid fair for the true reason of his name: however, it is mentioned here, as elsewhere, to distinguish him from Jude, or Judas, the true and faithful apostle of Christ; for this was he,

who also betrayed him; that is, Christ, as the Persic version reads it; and which is mentioned, not only for further distinction's sake, but to his great reproach. We learn from hence, that in the purest society on earth there has been an impure person; nor can it therefore be expected it should be otherwise in the best of churches, in the present state of imperfection; yea, that a man may have the highest gifts and attainments, as Judas had, ministerial gifts, and power of performing miracles, and yet be a vile person.

Ver. 5. *These twelve Jesus sent forth*, etc.] And no other but them, under the character of apostles. These had been with him a considerable time, to whom he had been gradually communicating spiritual knowledge; and by the benefit of private conference with him, and the observation they had made upon his doctrine and conduct, were greatly qualified for public usefulness: wherefore he gives them a commission, furnishes them with power and authority; and sends them forth from him by pairs, that they might be assisting to one another, and bear a joint testimony to the Gospel they preached; but before he sent them forth from his presence, he gave them some directions where they should go, and to whom they should minister, and where not:

and he commanded them, as their Lord and Master; he gave them strict orders, which he expected them to comply with, and closely enjoined them, as they must answer it to him again,

saying, go not into the way of the Gentiles; meaning, not the customs' and manners of the Heathens, they were to avoid; but that they were not to steer their course, or take their journey towards them: they were not, as yet, to go among them, and preach the Gospel to them; the calling of the Gentiles was not a matter, as yet, so clearly revealed and known, nor was the time of their calling come: besides it was the will of God, that the Gospel should be first preached to the Jews, to take off all excuse from them, and that their obstinacy and perverseness in rejecting Jesus as the Messiah, might manifestly appear; and since Christ himself was the minister of the circumcision, he would have his apostles, for the present, whilst he was on earth, act agreeably to the character he bore, that there might be an entire harmony in their conduct.

And into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: the word "any" is supplied, and that very rightly; for, not the city of Samaria, the metropolis of that country, as the Arabic version reads it, is only meant, but any, and

every city of the Samaritans: not that it was strictly unlawful and criminal to go thither; for he himself went into one of their cities, and so did his apostles, (⁴⁰04John 4:4,5,8) (⁴⁰09Luke 9:52) and after his death preached the Gospel there; but he judged it not proper and expedient at this time, and as yet, to do it; that is, not before their preaching it to the Jews; for there was a very great hatred subsisting between the Jews, and the Samaritans, insomuch that they had no conversation with each other in things civil or religious. The Samaritans, though they boasted of their descent from Jacob, were a mongrel sort of people, partly Jews, and partly Gentiles, a mixture of both; and therefore are distinguished from both and though they had, and held the law, and five books of Moses, yet corrupted them in many places, to serve their purpose, and countenance their religion, particularly their worshipping at Mount Gerizim; on which account they were looked upon by the Jews as apostates, idolaters, and even as Heathens [f612], and are therefore here joined with them; and to shun giving offence to the Jews, seems to be the reason of this prohibition; *see Gill "⁴⁰04John 4:20"*.

Ver. 6. *But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*.] To whom he himself was sent, (⁴⁰15Matthew 15:24). By "the house of Israel" is meant the whole Jewish nation; for though this phrase, when distinguished from the house of Judah, designs only the ten tribes; yet here it intends all the Jews, then living in the land of Judea, among whom there were some of all the tribes: and by "the lost sheep" of this house, are meant either all the people of the Jews in general, who were wandering, and were lost in error and sin, and to whom the external ministry of the Gospel came; or rather the elect of God among them, for whose sake particularly the apostles were sent unto them. These are called "sheep", because they were chosen of God, and given to Christ to be redeemed, looked up, sought out, and saved by him; and "lost" ones, not only because lost in Adam, and by their own transgressions, so that neither they themselves, nor any mere creature, could save them from eternal ruin and destruction; but also, because they were made to go astray, and were lost through the negligence and errors of their pastors, the Scribes and Pharisees: and this character is the rather given of them, partly to reflect upon the characters of the shepherds of Israel: and partly to magnify the grace of God, in having regard to such ruined and miserable creatures; and also to excite the compassion and diligence of the apostles, to preach the Gospel to them: respect seems to be had to (²⁴06Jeremiah 1:16).

Ver. 7. *And as ye go*, etc.] Through the cities of Judea, and the streets thereof, from one city to another, from place to place; for these were itinerant preachers, who were not to abide long in any place, but to move about, that the Gospel might be spread all over the land, and the lost sheep in every corner be sought out and found.

Preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. This was to be the subject matter of their ministry, which they were to proclaim aloud in every place; and which is expressed in the same words with which John the Baptist, and Christ himself, began their ministry, (Matthew 3:2 4:17) which shows the entire harmony, and strict agreement, there were between them: for the meaning of the phrase; *see Gill "Matthew 3:2"*. The Cambridge copy reads, "repent, for the kingdom", etc.

Ver. 8. *Heal the sick*, etc.] For so he had given them power to do, and this both for the confirmation of their doctrine, and the recommendation of them to men; for nothing could more evidently prove their mission to be divine, and their doctrine from heaven, or be more acceptable to men, than to "heal" their "sick" friends and relations, who were given up by physicians, and incurable by the art of man; and to do this without the use of medicines, either by a word speaking, or by laying on of their hands, or by anointing with oil, joined with prayer; and particularly to

cleanse the lepers, of which there were many in Israel, who otherwise could not get rid of that disorder, and by the law were deprived of many privileges, and advantages, which others enjoyed: and especially to

raise the dead, which had never been done before the times of Christ, since the days of Elijah and Elisha; and which must be allowed by all men to be more than human, and to require the arm of almighty power: and lastly, to

cast out devils, the sworn enemies of mankind, and who had taken possession of the bodies, as well as souls of multitudes in the Jewish nation; all which they are ordered to do, without taking any thing of the people, for so doing:

freely ye have received, freely give; which refers both to the working of miracles, and preaching of the Gospel. As they had these miraculous gifts freely imparted to them by Christ, they had them not of themselves, nor did they procure them at any charge, or expense of their's, or purchase them with their money, as Simon Magus impiously proposed to the apostles; so they were freely to make use of these wonderful powers, they were

possessed of, for the relief of the distressed, without insisting upon, or receiving any thing for the same; a practice which was formerly disapproved and condemned in Gehazi, the servant of Elisha: and with respect to the Gospel, as the knowledge of it was freely communicated to them by Christ, and gifts qualifying them for the preaching of it, were of his mere grace and goodness bestowed upon them, so they were to dispense it without making a gain of godliness, or discovering in the least an avaricious disposition. Our Lord seems to have respect to a rule frequently inculcated by the Jews concerning teaching their oral law [f613]; which is this;

> "in the place where they teach the written law for a reward, it is lawful to teach it for a reward; but it is forbidden to teach the oral law for a reward, as it is said, "behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me", etc. (Deuteronomy 4:5). As I have μνjb, "freely" learned, and ye have also μνjb, "freely" learnt of me; so when ye learn posterity, ynmm μtdmlç wmk μνjb wdml, "teach them freely, as ye have learnt of me"."

Now what the Jews say of their traditions, Christ applies to the Gospel: in dispensing of which he would not have his disciples come behind them; but as they had freely received the Gospel from his lips; so they would as freely, as well as faithfully, make it known to others; and which no ways contradicts the maintenance of the Gospel ministers by the people; only forbids amassing wealth and riches by it, or preaching for sordid gain, or filthy lucre's sake: for otherwise it is Christ's own ordinance, that the preachers of the Gospel should live by it; and which is confirmed in the following verses.

Ver. 9. *Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass*, etc.] That is, not any sort of "money", as both Mark and Luke express it: for money was then coined, as now, of these three sorts of metals, and which include all kind of money; so that they were not to provide, get, prepare, or take along with them for their journey, as not gold, nor silver, or any parcel of this sort of money, which might be of considerable importance, and lasting consequence to them; so neither brass money, as, halfpence, and farthings, the least, and most inconsiderable: they were forbidden to carry any of either sort

in your purses: or, as it may be rendered, “in”, or “within your girdles”; in which travellers, among the Jews, used to carry their money; and who, in their travelling dress, might not go into the temple, and are thus described [f614];

> “a man may not go into the mountain of the house with his staff, or with his shoes on, nor wtdnwpb, “with his girdle”.”

The adnwp “phunda”, Maimonides says [f615], is an inner garment, wore to keep off sweat from other garments, to which were sewed hollow things like purses, in which a man put what he pleased; though other [f616] interpreters say it is tw[mwb ˆyntwnç lwlj rwza, “a hollow girdle, in which they put their money”: and so the Romans [f617] had used to do; and so do the Turks [f618] to this day; to which practice the allusion is here.

Ver. 10. *Nor scrip for your journey*, etc.] This the Jews call lymrt, “tarmil”: and which their commentators [f619] say, is a large leathern bag, in which shepherds and travellers put their food, and other things, and carried with them, hanging it about their necks; so that the disciples were neither to carry money with them, nor any provisions for their journey:

neither two coats; one to travel in, and another to put on, when they came to their quarters: they were not allowed change of raiment; either because superfluous, or too magnificent to appear in, or too troublesome to carry:

nor shoes, only sandals, as Mark says; for there was a difference between shoes and sandals, as appears from the case of the plucking off the shoe, when a man refused his brother’s wife [f620]: if the “shoe” was plucked off it was regarded; but if the “sandal”, it was not minded: this was the old tradition, though custom went against it. Sandals were made of harder leather than shoes [f621], and sometimes of wood covered with leather, and stuck with nails, to make them more durable [f622]; though sometimes of bulrushes, and bark of palm trees, and of cork [f623], which were light to walk with.

> “Says R. Bar bar Chanah [f624], I saw R. Eleazar of Nineveh go out on a fast day of the congregation, µ[ç ldnsb, “with a sandal of cork”.”

Of what sort these were, the disciples were allowed to travel with, is not certain:

nor yet with staves: that is, with more than one staff, which was sufficient to assist them, and lean upon in journeying: for, according to Mark, one was allowed; as though they might take a travelling staff, yet not staves for defence, or to fight with; (see Matthew 26:55). Now these several things were forbidden them, partly because they would be burdensome to them in travelling; and partly because they were not to be out any long time, but were quickly to return again; and chiefly to teach them to live and depend upon divine providence. Now, since they were to take neither money, nor provisions with them, and were also to preach the Gospel freely, they might reasonably ask how they should be provided for, and supported: when our Lord suggests, that they should not be anxiously concerned about that, he would take care that they had a suitable supply; and would so influence and dispose the minds of such, to whom they should minister, as that they should have all necessary provisions made for them, without any care or expense of their's:

for the workman is worthy of his meat; which seems to be a proverbial expression, and by which Christ intimates, that they were workmen, or labourers in his vineyard, and they, discharging their duty aright, were entitled to food and raiment, and all the necessaries of life: this to have, was their due; and it was but a piece of justice to give it to them, and on which they might depend. So that this whole context is so far from militating against a minister's maintenance by the people, that it most strongly establishes it; for if the apostles were not to take any money or provisions with them, to support themselves with, it clearly follows, that it was the will of Christ, that they should live by the Gospel, upon those to whom they preached, as the following words show: and though they were not to make gain of the Gospel, or preach it for filthy lucre's sake; yet they might expect a comfortable subsistence, at the charge of the people, to whom they ministered, and which was their duty to provide for them.

Ver. 11. *And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter*, etc.] As Christ had instructed them in what manner they were to travel, so he directs them where to go, and who to ask for, and take up their abode with, in the several towns and villages to which they should come; that as soon as they had entered any town or village, they should, in the first place,

inquire, who in it is worthy; not of them, as the Arabic version reads, nor of the Gospel they preached, or of the grace of God, of which no man is worthy: and besides, who could answer to such a question when asked?

Who in any town, or city, could tell who in it were worthy of Christ, of his Gospel, and ministers, to which they were all equally strangers before they came among them? Nor does it mean a man famous for piety and religion, or one that feared God, and was a worshipper of him, but an hospitable man; one that was very liberal; who was willing and ready to entertain strangers; for such a man they would want, having neither money nor food: and so the same word, in the Hebrew language, signifies "to be worthy", and "to give alms", because an eleemosynary man, or a man given to alms, was reckoned by the Jews a very worthy man: they thought giving of alms to be a matter of merit. Christ here speaks in the language of the masters of Israel; take an instance or two:

> "saith R. Jona, blessed is the man that giveth to the poor; it is not written so, but "blessed is he that considereth the poor": he looks upon him, how he may wm[twkzl, "give alms to him"."

And a little after,

> ""God hath set one against the other", that when evil comes to thy friend, thou mayest see how wb twkzl, "to do thine alms to him", and nourish him, so that thou mayest receive the gift of its reward."

Again, so a man says to his neighbour, yb ykz, "give alms unto me": and afterwards, in the same place, it is said, at tya ayhhb ykz, "give alms unto that woman" [f625]. Now, it was such a worthy generous man, that was beneficent to the poor, and kind to strangers, that the apostles were to inquire out, wherever they came; and having found such a person, they were to continue with him:

and there abide till ye go out; of that city or town, to another city or town: for to be often changing houses would bring upon them an ill character, as if they were difficult to be pleased, not content with the provision made for them; and would look as if they sought to serve their own bellies, and gratify their appetites, more than to do good to the souls of men; and besides, moving from the house of a bountiful man, might bring some reproach upon his character, as if he had not used them well, and therefore left him. In short, Christ's meaning is, that he would not have his disciples be difficult, and dainty, or fickle, and inconstant, but be content with such things they should have provided for them; and not seek for other, and better quarters, nor fear being troublesome where they were.

Ver. 12. *And when ye come into an house*, etc.] Or the "house"; that is, the house of an hospitable man, when, upon inquiry, found out:

salute it; meaning the inhabitants of it; or, as the Persic version reads, those of the household, especially the master of the family. Some copies add, saying, peace be to this house, as in (⁴²10:5) and so read the Vulgate Latin, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel; and is a very just, and proper explanation of saluting: for the usual form of salutation among the Jews was in such words; of which (see Gill on "⁴⁰5:47") by which is meant all kind of happiness, and prosperity, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

Ver. 13. *And if the house be worthy*, etc.] If the family, and particularly the master of it, appeared to be civil, courteous, friendly, and hospitable, upon such a salutation, and ready to receive and embrace them, and provide for them,

let your peace come upon it, or *it shall come upon it*; the imperative for the future, which is not unusual; and so read the Syriac and Vulgate Latin. The sense is, the peace the apostles wished for, in their form of salutation, should come, and abide on the family; for not the Gospel of peace, and the preaching of it, are here meant, but the salutation itself, or the things desired in it, which should be granted, and the house be blessed for their sake, and as a reward of their generosity, and hospitality:

but if it be not worthy: does not prove to be what it was said to be, and they expected; namely, to be generous, liberal, and beneficent; but, on the contrary, uncivil and churlish, should neglect their salutation, discover an unwillingness to receive them, and turn their backs upon them:

let your peace return to you, or "it shall return to you"; the happiness wished for shall not come upon them, and the prayers and good wishes of the apostles shall be void, and of none effect, with respect to that family, but should be made good to themselves; and they should be directed to another house, where they should find persons more generous and free to entertain them.

Ver. 14. *And whosoever shall not receive you*, etc.] Into their houses, and refuse to entertain them and provide for them in a friendly manner;

nor hear your words, slight their salutations, make no account of, but despise their good wishes for their welfare; and also treat with contempt

the doctrines of the Gospel preached by them; and either would not attend on their ministry, or if they did, give no credit to what they should say, but deride and reject them.

When ye depart out of that house, or city; to another house, or to another city, being obliged to remove, through their contemptuous rejection of them:

shake off the dust of your feet. So Paul and Barnabas did at Antioch in Pisidia, when the Jews contradicted and blasphemed the Gospel preached by them, raised a persecution against them, and expelled them out of their coasts, (<44:13:51>Acts 13:51) which ceremony was ordered by Christ to be observed even to the cities of Judea, that should despise and reject the ministry of his apostles; and that either to show that they did not come to them with worldly views, with any design to amass riches and wealth to themselves, for they would not so much as carry away with them the dust on their feet, but it was purely with a view to their welfare, both spiritual and temporal; or to testify that they had been among them, and that that very dust they shook off their feet would rise up in judgment against them, and declare that the Gospel had been preached among them, and they had rejected it, which will be an aggravation of their condemnation; or rather to observe to them, that such was their wickedness, that even the dust of their country was infected thereby, and therefore they shook it off, as though it defiled them, as the dust of an Heathen country was thought by the Jews to do; so that by this action they signified that they would have nothing more to do with them, or say to them, and that they looked upon them as impure and unholy, as any Heathen city or country. There seems to be an allusion to some maxims and customs of the Jews, with respect to the dust of Heathen countries.

> "On account of six doubts, they say [f626], they burn the first offering, for a doubt of a field in which a grave might be, and for a doubt µym[h Wdam abh rp[, "of the dust which comes from the land of the Gentiles", etc."

On which Bartenora has this note;

> "all dust which comes from the land of the Gentiles, is reckoned by us as the rottenness of a dead carcass; and of these two, "the land of the Gentiles", and a field in which is a grave, it is decreed that they "defile" by touching, and by carrying."

Again[f627],

> “the dust of a field in which is a grave, and the dust without the land (of Israel) which comes along with an herb, are unclean.”

Upon which Maimonides makes this remark,

> “that the dust of a field that has a grave in it, and the dust which is without the land of Israel, defile by touching and carrying; or if, when it hangs at the end of an herb, when they root it out of the dust of such a field, it is unclean.”

Hence they would not suffer herbs to be brought out of an Heathen country into the land of Israel, lest dust should be brought along with them.

> “A Misnic doctor teaches[f628], that they do not bring herbs from without the land (of Israel into it), but our Rabbins permit it; what difference is there between them? Says R. Jeremiah, they take care of their dust; that is the difference between them.”

On that clause, “they take care of their dust”, the gloss is,

> “lest there should be brought with it µym[h Wda çwgm, “any of the dust of the land of the Gentiles”, which defiles in the tent, and pollutes the purity of the land of Israel.”

Ver. 15. *Verily, I say unto you*, etc.] This was not all the punishment that should be inflicted on such despisers of the Gospel of Christ, and the ministers of it; as not to enjoy that peace and prosperity wished for by the apostles, and to be declared to be on an equal foot with Heathen cities and countries: but they were to suffer everlasting punishment in the world to come; which is here asserted by Christ in the strongest manner, saying:

it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha, in the day of judgment, than for that city. The inhabitants of the land of Sodom and Gomorrha are the rather mentioned, because, as they were very notorious and abominable sinners, so their temporal punishment was well known, exemplary and awful, though not that, but their future damnation is here regarded, of which the Jews made no doubt; for they say[f629],

> “the men of Sodom have no part in the world to come; as it is said, (<011313>Genesis 13:13) “the men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners,

> before the Lord exceedingly": they were "wicked" in this world, and "sinners" in the world to come;"

meaning, that by this passage is designed their double punishment in this, and the other world. But though their punishment was very tremendous, and they will suffer also "the vengeance of eternal fire", as Jude says; yet, their punishment will be milder, and more tolerable, than that of the inhabitants of such a city, that rejects the Gospel of the grace of God: as there are degrees in sinning, for all sins are not alike, as the Stoics say; so there will be degrees in suffering; the sins of those that are favoured with the Gospel, are greater than those who only have had the light of nature, and so their torments will be greater. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha, though they sinned against the light of nature, despised the advice and admonitions of Lot, and ill treated the angels, yet will be more mildly punished than the wicked Jews, who rejected Christ, and his Gospel, and despised his apostles, and ministers; because they sinned not against so much light, and such means of grace, and knowledge, as these did; (see <2046>Lamentations 4:6) which is thus paraphrased by the Targumist, and may be aptly applied to the Jews in Christ's time:

> "the sin of the congregation of my people is greater than the sin of Sodom, which was overturned in a moment; and there dwelt no prophets in it to prophesy, and turn it to repentance."

The time referred to, signified by "the day of judgment", respects not the destruction of Jerusalem, which was a very severe judgment on that people, but the general judgment, at the end of the world, which is appointed and fixed by God, though unknown to angels and men. The phrase is Jewish, and often to be met with in their writings, who use it in the same sense; particularly in the book of Zohar[f630], mention is made of anydd amwy, "the day of judgment", when there will be no pollution in the sanctuary.

Ver. 16. *Behold, I send you forth, as sheep among wolves*, etc.] This, and the following verses, chiefly respect the troubles, afflictions, persecutions, and sufferings which should befall the apostles after the death and resurrection of Christ; when their commission was enlarged, and they afresh sent out by Christ to preach his Gospel; of which he gives a faithful account before hand, that they might be prepared for them, and not be surprised when they came upon them. He compares them to "sheep",

because they were meek and humble in their spirits, harmless, and inoffensive, in their lives and conversations; were weak, and unable to protect themselves, and were sent out by him unarmed and defenceless; and their oppressors and persecutors to “wolves”, because fierce and furious, voracious and ravenous, cruel and hurtful, as these creatures are, especially to sheep; wherefore Christ gives them this wholesome advice,

be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. Much such an expression as this God is represented as saying of Israel [f631]:

> “Says R. Judah, in the name of R. Simon, the holy blessed God said, concerning Israel, with me they are µynwyk µymymt, “harmless as doves”; but among the nations of the world, they are µyçjnk µymwr[, “subtle as serpents”.”

The serpent is a very sharp sighted, cunning creature, and uses various arts and stratagems for its own preservation, and especially of its head; and is so far to be imitated by the followers of Christ, as to make use of all proper methods to preserve themselves from the insults and rage of men, and not expose themselves to unnecessary dangers: and, as much as in them lies, they should be careful to give no just occasion of offence, or irritate, and provoke them to use them ill, and to avoid all snares and traps that are laid for them; and, at the same time, maintain the innocence and harmlessness of the dove, being free from all wicked cunning and craftiness, without rancour, malice, and wrath; not meditating and seeking revenge, but meek and humble in their deportment, leading inoffensive lives, and proceeding in the course of their calling, though liable to many insults, and much oppression.

Ver. 17. *But beware of men*, etc.] Of these men, comparable to wolves, before spoken of: the phrase is somewhat uncommon and emphatical, and designs not merely wicked men in common, the men of the world, and enemies of the Gospel; but chiefly such of them as were men of note and authority, ecclesiastical and civil governors of the people, the Scribes, Pharisees, elders, and chief priests, and other rulers; and the advice to the apostles is, to take care how they came into their company, and put themselves into their hands; who would seek all opportunities and occasions against them, and use their power and interest to do them hurt:

for they will deliver you up to the councils, or sanhedrim, of which there were three sorts; the greater, which consisted of seventy one persons, and

was only held in Jerusalem; the lesser one, which was made up of twenty three members, and was kept in every place where there were an hundred and twenty Israelites; and the third, where there was not that number, and was a triumvirate, or a bench of three judges only [f632].

And they will scourge you in their synagogues; where the triumvirate, or bench of three Judges kept their court; under whose cognizance were pecuniary judgments, and such as related to thefts, damages, restitutions, ravishing, and enticing of virgins, and defamation; also to plucking off of the shoe, and refusing a brother's wife, to the plant of the fourth year, second tithes whose price is unknown, holy things, and the estimations of goods; to these belonged also laying on of hands, the beheading of the heifer, and, among the rest, hçlçb twkm, "scourging was by the bench of three" [f633]. The manner of performing it was this [f634]:

> "they bind both his hands to a pillar, here and there; and the minister of the synagogue takes hold of his clothes, and if they are rent, they are rent; and if they are ripped in the seam, they are ripped till his breast is uncovered; for he is not to beat him on his clothes, as it is said, "he shall beat him", but not his clothes: and a stone is placed behind him, on which the minister that scourges stands, and a white leather whip in his hand, doubled two and two with four, and two lashes of an ass's hide, going up and down: the breadth of the whip was an hand's breadth, and the length of it, so as to reach to the navel, and the handle of the whip, by which he took hold, was the length of an hand; and he lifts up the whip with both his hands, and strikes with one hand, with all his might; and gives him the third part of his stripes before, upon his breast, between his paps, and two thirds behind him; one third upon this shoulder, and the other upon the other shoulder. He that scourges neither stands, nor sits, but bows; as it is said, "the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face"; for the eyes of the judge shall be upon him, that he do not look upon anything else, and smite him from thence; for no two strokes are as one; the greatest of the judges reads all the time he is scourging, viz. these passages; "if thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law", etc. and "the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful", etc. and he intends to finish the verses with the stripes; but if he does not finish, he returns to the beginning of the Scripture, and reads, and returns, and reads until the whole scourging is over: and the

second of the judges numbers the stripes; and the third says to the minister strike: every time he strikes, it is at his orders he strikes."

Now, as this punishment was inflicted by the chazan, or minister of the synagogue, who was a sort of sexton, so it was done in the synagogue itself: and according to our Lord's predictions here, and in (<40234>Matthew 23:34) as the former of these, delivering up to councils, had its accomplishment in part, in the apostles, (<40401>Acts 4:1-5:42) so the latter, scourging in their synagogues, was fulfilled both by Paul, (<40229>Acts 22:19,26:11) and upon him, (<471124>2 Corinthians 11:24). Epiphanius tells [f635] us of one Joseph, a Jew, who was caught by the Jews reading the Gospels in his own house; upon which they dragged him away, and had him to the synagogue, and there "scourged" him. Now as these things did not befall the apostles till after the death of Christ, it is clear that the context refers not to their first, but to an after mission.

Ver. 18. *And ye shall be brought before governors*, etc.] Meaning Roman governors; so Paul was had before Gallio, Felix, and Festas; for judgments relating to life and death were to be taken away, and were taken away from the Jewish sanhedrim; and as they themselves say [f636], forty years before the destruction of the second temple, which was much about the time of Christ's death: so that what power they had, was only with regard to lesser matters, and to inflict lesser punishments, as beating and scourging: if they sought to take away life, they were obliged to bring the cause before the governors of the Roman provinces, who are here intended:

and kings for my sake; as Herod, Agrippa, Nero, Domitian, and others, before whom one or other of the apostles were brought; not as thieves, or murderers, or traitors, and seditious persons, or for having done any wrong or injury to any man's person or property; but purely for the sake of Christ, for the profession of their faith in him, and for preaching his Gospel; of all which they had no reason to be ashamed, nor were they:

for a testimony against, or "to"

them, and the Gentiles; that is, that thereby they might have an opportunity of bearing a testimony to the truths of the Gospel, which would be either to the conviction and conversion of many Gentiles, as well as Jews; or would be a testimony which would stand against them another day, both against the Jews, who charged, and accused them, and brought them before the Heathen kings and governors, to punish them with death; and against those

Gentile magistrates, and others, who should join with them in rejecting the Gospel, and putting them to death for preaching it: so that they should have no pretext or excuse; since the Gospel had been faithfully and clearly preached to them, and they had despised it, and evil treated the ministers of it. This confirms what is before observed, that this passage refers to an after mission.

Ver. 19. *But when they deliver you up*, etc.] The apostles hearing that they should be delivered up to councils, and brought before governors and kings, might be under some concern how they should behave, and what they should be able to say in vindication of themselves and truth, before such great persons; they not being used to converse with men in such high stations: they were illiterate men, and of no elocution; men of mean birth, low life, most of them poor fishermen; and might fear, on these accounts, that the Gospel would suffer for want of able persons to defend it before the great ones of the earth. Now, in order to remove these their fears and objections, and to strengthen and comfort their minds, our Lord bids them, when this would be their ease, that the Jews would deliver them to the Roman magistrates, to

take no thought how, or what ye shall speak; not to be anxiously concerned, neither as to the matter, or manner of what they should say in their defence: they should have no occasion, as orators do, to take pains, and rack their thoughts, to prepare a studied, elaborate oration, dressed with all the flowers of rhetoric, filled with the most moving and powerful arguments, and clothed with diction of the strictest propriety and elegance; for they should want neither words, nor things; they should have arguments put into their mouths, and helped to proper language to express them in:

for it shall be given you in the same hour, what ye shall speak; immediate assistance should be afforded them either by his father, or himself; or rather, the blessed Spirit, who would suggest unto them, at once, things, the most proper to be said, and help them to deliver them in the most proper manner: and these are the most convincing arguments, and that the best elocution, which the Spirit of God helps men to; these vastly exceed all the art of men, and strength of nature. This was greatly verified in Peter and John, two poor fishermen, when before the council, and in Stephen the protomartyr.

Ver. 20. *For it is not ye that speak*, etc.] Not but that they were to speak the words, and did; but then both the things they spoke, and the very

words in which they spoke them, were not of themselves, but were suggested and dictated by the Spirit of God; for as “the preparation of the heart” in them, so “the answer of the tongue” by them, were both “from the Lord”: the Spirit, he was the efficient cause, they were only instruments; for not they of themselves spoke; or not so much they,

but the Spirit of your father, which speaketh in you, or “by you”: what they should say was not to be dictated by their own spirit or natural understanding, nor by an angel, but by the Spirit of God; called the “Spirit of” their “father”, because he proceeds from him, is of the same nature with him, and is the reason of his being given to them: and this character of him might serve to strengthen their faith in the expectation of him, and in the assistance promised, and to be had by him; since he was the spirit of him, who stood in the relation of a father to them, and bore a paternal affection for them.

Ver. 21. *And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death*, etc.] Christ having fortified the minds of his disciples by the foregoing promises of divine influence and assistance, proceeds to open more largely and particularly the sorrows, troubles, and afflictions they must expect would attend the faithful ministration of his Gospel; as, that the true followers of Christ should not only be persecuted and betrayed, and delivered up into the hands of the civil magistrate, by persons that were strangers to them; but even by their nearest relations, brethren, whom the nearness of blood, should oblige to the tenderest regards to each other, to the securing of property and preserving of life: these should deliver up those that were so nearly related to them in the bonds of consanguinity, into the hands persecuting men in power, in order to be put to death; than which scarce anything can be more barbarous and unnatural, though the next instances exceed it:

and the father the child, and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. The father laying aside his natural affection for his child, whom he has begotten, and brought up, and has took so much care of, and delight in, and perhaps his only one, his son aud heir; and yet, professing a faith different from his, such is his blind zeal and bigotry, that, breaking through all the ties of parental relation and affection, he delivers him up into the hands of wicked magistrates, to put him to death: and, on the other hand, children, forgetting the bonds they are in, and the obligations they lie under to their aged parents, rise up

against them, and either with their own hands murder them, or appear as witnesses against them, and give their hearty consent to the taking away of their lives; even of them who have been the means and instruments of bringing them into the world, and of bringing them up in it. This shows the sad corruption of human nature, its enmity to the Gospel of Christ, and the inveterate malice and hatred of Satan against Christ, and his interest. Something like this is said by the Jews themselves, as what shall be in the times of the Messiah; for a little before his coming, or in the age in which the son of David comes, they say,

> "the son shall deal basely by his father, the daughter shall rise up against her mother — a man's enemies shall be of his own household; the face of that generation shall be as the face of a dog; and the son shall not reverence his father[f637]."

Ver. 22. *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake*, etc.]. This is more particularly directed to the apostles themselves, as what is said before regards the followers of Christ in general; for this was to be the lot of the apostles, that they should not only be ill treated in common with others, by their near friends and relations, whose love would be turned into hatred to them, but should be the butt and mark of the malice and wrath of all men; that is, of most men, or of the far greater part of the Jews, even of all wicked men who disbelieved and rejected the Messiah: for that the words are not to be understood in the utmost latitude, without any restriction, is certain; since there would be some who would be converted; and believe in Christ through their ministry, and consequently would love, esteem, and honour them as their spiritual fathers and guides, and as the disciples and apostles of Christ. This hatred they should be exposed to, would not be on account of any ill will to their persons; or because of any evil or immorality committed by them; but purely, and alone, for the name of Christ, in whom they believed, by which they were called, of which they made a profession, and zealously preached: which consideration, as it must needs secure peace and tranquillity in their breasts; so for their further encouragement, it is added,

but he that endureth to the end, shall be saved: which words suggest, that the tribulations and persecutions of the disciples of Christ, through the hatred of wicked men against them, shall not last always; there will be an end to them; respecting either the end of time and life, or the destruction of Jerusalem, when these their enemies would be cut off, or removed, and be

capable of giving them no further trouble; and that such persons are happy, who patiently endure the hatred of men, and all manner of persecution, for Christ's sake; who are not moved by the afflictions they suffer, but stand fast in the faith, hold fast the profession of it, go on in their Christian course, and hold out to the end; for such shall be saved, not only with a temporal salvation, as the Christians were at the destruction of Jerusalem, but with an eternal one.

Ver. 23. *But when they persecute you in this city*, etc.] Or any city into which they went, and preached the Gospel; and would not suffer them to go on in their work, they were not to desist, but to go elsewhere, where they might hope for a better reception, and a longer continuance, and so of doing more good:

flee ye into another; not so much for their own safety, though this, according to the circumstances of things, is lawful, but for the further spreading of the Gospel. The exhortation is not to take methods to avoid persecution, or to make an escape from it, but to perseverance under it: the sense is, they were not to be discouraged, and to leave off, because of persecution in one place, but to persist in the ministration of the Gospel, by carrying it to other cities; and it seems to be a spur to them to make haste, and fulfil their office of preaching the Gospel, in the land of Judea: nor need they fear going on too fast, lest they should have no places to preach in;

for verily I say unto you, this is a certain and indisputable truth not to be called in question, being strongly affirmed by truth itself,

ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, or "finished" them; that is, their tour through them, and their ministry, or the preaching of the Gospel in them,

till the son of man be come; which is not to be understood of his second coming to judgment, but either of his resurrection from the dead, when he was declared to be the Son of God, and when his glorification began; or of the pouring forth of the Spirit at the day of Pentecost, when his kingdom began more visibly to take place, and he was made, or manifested to be the Lord and Christ; or of his coming to take vengeance on his enemies, that would not have him to rule over them, and the persecutors of his ministers, at the destruction of Jerusalem.

Ver. 24. *The disciple is not above his master*, etc.] So far from it, that he is inferior to him; as in knowledge, so in reputation and character; and cannot expect the same honour to be given him, and the same respect shown to him, as to his master; and therefore if his master is not used with that decency, and in that becoming manner he ought to be, he must not think it any hardship if he is treated in the same way. Our Lord hereby intends to fortify the minds of his disciples against all the reproach and persecution they were to meet with from the world, by observing to them the treatment he himself met with; wherefore, if he who was their master, a teacher that came from God, and taught as never man did, and was worthy of the utmost deference that could be paid, was maligned and evilly treated by men, it became them who were his disciples, to look for, and patiently bear such indignities; since they could expect no better usage than he himself had: the same doctrine is suggested in the next clause,

nor the servant above his Lord; and both seem to be proverbial expressions. The Jews have a saying [f638] much like unto them, wbrm hkz db[h ^ya, "no servant is worthier than his master"; and Christ might make use of such common, well known expressions, that he might be the more easily understood, and in the most familiar manner convey what he intended, into the minds of his disciples; as, that since he was their Lord, and they were his servants, if his superior character and dignity did not secure him from the obloquy and insults of men, it could not be thought by them, who were inferior to him, that they should escape them.

Ver. 25. *It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master*, etc.] A disciple should think himself very well off, be entirely satisfied, yea, abundantly thankful, if he meets with no worse treatment than his master; if he has the same honour done him his master has, this is more than could be expected by him; and if he has the same ill usage with his master, he need not wonder at it, but should solace himself with this consideration, that it is no other, nor worse than his master had before him: and the same is equally true in the other case,

and the servant as his Lord: these expressions, as before, were proverbs, or common sayings among the Jews, which our Lord chose to make use of, and adapt to his present purpose; wbrk twyhl, "vel" ahyç db[l wyd, "it is enough for the servant, that he be as his master", is a saying often to be met with in their writings [f639]; which our Lord applies, and reasons upon, in the following manner:

if they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of the household? By "the master of the household"; he means himself, who is master of the family both in heaven and in earth; who is son over his own house, the high priest over the house of God, the lord and governor of all the household of faith; who takes care of, provides for, and protects all that are of God's household: and yet, though in such an high office, and of such great usefulness, he did not escape the severest lashes of the tongues of the wicked Jews; who called him by the most opprobrious names they could think of, and among the rest Beelzebub; (see <401224>Matthew 12:24) (<421115>Luke 11:15). This was the god of the Ekronites, (<120102>2 Kings 1:2). The word signifies "a masterfly" or the "lord of a fly": and so the Septuagint there call him βααλ μυιαν, "Baal the fly", the god of the Ekronites. And this idol was so called, either because it was in the form of a fly: or else from the abundance of flies about it, by reason of the sacrifices, which it was not able to drive away; and therefore the Jews contemptuously gave it this name. They observe [f640], that in the temple, notwithstanding the multitude of sacrifices offered up there, there never was seen a fly in the slaughter house: or else this deity was so called from its being invoked to drive away flies, and the same with Myiodes, the god of flies, mentioned by Pliny [f641], or Myagros, which the same author [f642] speaks of; so Jupiter was called απομυιος, a driver away of flies; as was also Hercules [f643]; and were worshipped by some nations on this account. In most copies, and so in the Arabic version, it is read Beelzebul; that is, as it is commonly rendered, the "lord of dung", or a dunghill god; and it is generally thought the Jews called the god of the Ekronites so, by way of contempt; as it was usual with them to call an idol's temple lwbz, "zebul", "dung", and worshipping of idols lbzm, "dunging" [f644]: but I must own, that I should rather think, that as Beelsamin, the god of the Phoenicians, is the same with Beelzebul, the god of the Ekronites, so it signifies the same thing: now ^ymç l[b, "Beelsamin", is "the lord of the heavens", and so is Beelzebul; for lwbz, "Zebul", signifies "heaven"; so the word is used in (<350311>Habakkuk 3:11) "the sun and the moon stood still", hlbz, "in their habitation"; by which, as a Jewish [f645] writer observes, µymçh wb ^wxrh, "is meant the heavens"; for they are the habitation of the sun and moon: see also (<236315>Isaiah 63:15) and so among the seven names of the heavens, reckoned up by them, this is accounted one [f646]. Now as the Jews looked upon all the deities of the Gentiles as demons, or devils; and since Beelzebub was the chief of them, they thought they could not fix upon a

more reproachful name, to give to Christ, than this: and our Lord suggests, that since the great master of the family was called in such an abusive manner, it should be no cause of stumbling and offence, if those of a lower class in the family should be so stigmatized; if Christians are called by ever such hard names, even devils, they should not be disturbed at it; since their lord and master was called the prince of them.

Ver. 26. *Fear them not, therefore*, etc.] That is, be not afraid of men, and of their reproaches and revilings; which our Lord intimates would do them no more hurt, than they did him, and which in a little while would be all wiped away: time would bring all things to light, when the wickedness of these men would be discovered, their evil designs seen through; which were now covered with the specious pretences of sanctity, and zeal for religion, and the glory of God; and the innocence and integrity of him and his disciples would be made manifest. There is no need to refer this to the great day of account, when every secret thing shall be brought to light; but it chiefly regards the times when the Gospel should be more publicly known, and embraced, and should prevail against all the opposition made unto it; and then all these reproachful names and characters would be seen plainly to arise from spite and malice: to which may be applied those proverbial sayings in common use,

for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed, and hid, that shall not be known. Men may cover their malice and wickedness, for a while, under the best of names, but ere long it will all be revealed to their great shame and reproach: the innocence of the followers of Christ may, for some time, lie out of sight, and they may be traduced as the worst of men; but in process of time things take another turn, and their characters appear in quite another light: and so it is with the Gospel preached and professed by them, which, though sometimes it is little known, lies hid, and is covered with disgrace; yet in the Lord’s own time its light breaks forth, power attends it, and it is made manifest to the consciences of men.

Ver. 27. *What I tell you in darkness*, etc.] Hence Christ proceeds to encourage his disciples to an open, plain, and faithful ministration of the Gospel, not fearing the faces and frowns of men. For with respect to the Gospel, his meaning is, that what was hid and covered should not remain so, but should be revealed, and made known, and they were the persons who were to do it; and it was with that view that he had communicated it to them: and whereas he had told them it “in darkness”; not in a dark and

obscure manner; for though he spoke in parables to others, yet to them he made known the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven: and if at any time he delivered parables, or dark sayings, to them, he would afterwards, or when alone, explain them to them; but his meaning chiefly is, that what he communicated to them in private houses, when they were by themselves, and no one saw, or heard them, and so were in darkness with respect to others,

that speak ye in light; openly and publicly in the synagogues and temple, in the high places of the city, streets, or fields, wherever there is a concourse of people; hide and conceal nothing, but speak out all clearly, distinctly, fully, without the least reserve, or throwing any obscurity on it, which may cover the true sense of it from the view of the people.

And what ye hear in the ear, or is whispered to you by me, as your master. Christ alludes to the custom of the Jewish doctors, who had each an interpreter, into whose ear he used to whisper his doctrine, and then the interpreter delivered it to the people: so it is said [f647],

> "Rab came to the place of R. Shilla, and he had no speaker to stand by him; wherefore Rab stood by him, and explained."

The gloss upon it is,

> "an interpreter stands before a doctor whilst he is preaching, and the doctor wl çjwl, "whispers to him" in the Hebrew tongue, and he interprets it to the multitude in a tongue they understand."

Again [f648],

> "they said to Judah bar Nachmani, the interpreter of Resh Lekish, stand for a speaker for him."

The gloss upon it is,

> "to cause his exposition to be heard by the congregation, Æl çwjlyç, "which he shall whisper to thee"."

Now it was absolutely requisite, that the speaker, or interpreter, should faithfully relate what the doctor said; sometimes, it seems, he did not: it is said [f649] in commendation of the meekness of R. Aba,

> “that he delivered one sense, and his speaker said another, and he was not angry.”

The gloss says,

> “his speaker was, he that interpreted to the multitude what he wl çjwl, “whispered to him” in the time of preaching.”

Sometimes one doctor is said to whisper in the ear of another, when he instructed him, or informed him of anything. R. Jochanan [f650] whispered R. Joshua hyndwab, “in his ear”. The Jews have a notion that the law was given this way; so they interpret “the eloquent orator” in (<2800>Isaiah 3:3) [f651] this is he to whom it is fit to deliver the words of the law, çjlb hntynç, “which was given by whispering”: and so, it seems, the Gospel was in like manner delivered by Christ to his disciples. It was reckoned a very great honour, and a token of magisterial dignity, to have one to whisper in the ear to, and speak for them. So to one that related his dream, that he saw an ass standing at his pillow, and braying, answer is made, thou shalt be a king, that is, the head of a school; and “a speaker” or “an interpreter shall stand by thee” [f652]. Our Lord very justly takes upon him the character of a doctor, master, and dictator, and solemnly charges his disciples, clearly, loudly, and faithfully to declare what he suggested to them.

That preach ye, says he,

upon the housetops; for the roofs of their houses were not ridged, but plain, and flat, upon which they could stand or walk; and battlements were made about them to prevent their falling off, according to the law in (<052208>Deuteronomy 22:8). Here many religious actions were performed: here Peter went up to pray, (<441009>Acts 10:9) and here persons sometimes sat and read: hence that passage in the Misna [f653] if any one ggh çarb arwq, “was reading on the top of a roof”, and the book is rolled out of his hand, etc. and sometimes they made their proclamations from hence of their festivals and solemn days, and particularly of their sabbath; which was done by the sound of a trumpet, that the people might cease from work in the fields, and shut up their shops in the city, and light up their lamps. This proclamation, by the sound of a trumpet, was made six times by the chazan, or minister of the congregation, from an housetop; and, it is said, that there was, ry[h hbwgb djwym gg, “a peculiar roof in the highest part of the city”, and from the middle of it he blew the trumpet [f654]. In

allusion to this, our Lord orders his disciples to blow the trumpet of the everlasting Gospel; and loudly proclaim to all the truths and mysteries of grace, which he had made known to them.

Ver. 28. *And fear not them which kill the body*, etc.] This is a "periphrasis" of bloody persecutors, who, not content to revile, scourge, and imprison, put the faithful ministers of Christ to death, in the most cruel and torturing manner; and yet are not so to be feared and dreaded by them, as to discourage and divert them from the performance of their important work and office; for, as Luke says, (^[obscured]Luke 12:4) "after" that they "have no more than they can do". This is all they are capable of doing, even by divine permission, when they are suffered to run the greatest lengths in violence against the saints; this is the utmost of their efforts, which Satan, and their own wicked hearts, can put them upon, or is in the power of their hands to perform: and the taking away of the lives of good men is of no disadvantage to them; but sends them the sooner out of this troublesome world to their father's house, to partake of those joys that will never end; so that they have nothing to fear from their most implacable enemies; but should boldly and bravely go on in their master's service, openly, freely, faithfully, and fully discharging the work they were called unto: for, the loss of a corporal life is no loss to them, their souls live after death, in eternal happiness; and in a little time God will raise up their bodies, and reunite them to their souls, and be for ever happy together. A noble argument this, which our Lord makes use of, to engage his disciples to a public and diligent ministration of the Gospel, in spite of all opposers; who, when they have vented all their malice, can only take away a poor, frail, mortal life; and which, if they did not, in a little time would cease in course:

but are not able to kill the soul; which is immortal, and cannot be touched by the sword, by fire and faggot, or any instruments of violence: it is immortal, it survives the body, and lives in a separate state, enjoying happiness and bliss, whilst the body is in a state of death:

but rather fear him, which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. This is a description of God, and of his power, who is able to do that which men are not: all that they can do, by divine permission, is to kill the body; but he is able to "destroy", that is, to torment and punish both body and soul "in hell", in everlasting burnings; for neither soul nor body will be annihilated; though this he is able to do. As the former clause expresses the immortality of the soul, this supposes the resurrection of the body; for how

otherwise should it be destroyed, or punished with the soul in hell? Now this awful being which is able to hurl, and will hurl all wicked and slothful, unfaithful and unprofitable, cowardly and temporising servants and ministers, soul and body, into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, is to be feared and dreaded; yea, indeed, he only is to be feared, and to be obeyed: cruel and persecuting men are not to be feared at all; God alone should be our fear and dread; though the argument seems to be formed from the lesser to the greater; yet this, is the sense of the word “rather”, that God is to be feared, not chiefly and principally only, but solely; and in some versions that word is left out, as in the Arabic, and Ethiopic, and in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel.

Ver. 29. *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?* etc.] A farthing, with the Jews, was a very small coin; according to them it contained four grains of silver [f655]; was the ninety sixth part of a “sela”, or shilling [f656]; and sometimes they make it to be of the same value with an Italian farthing: for they say [f657], it is of the value of eight “prutahs”: and a “prutah” is the eighth part of an Italian farthing: it is used proverbially to signify a very little thing in the Misna [f658];

> “if of a command, which is light `rsyak` “as a farthing”, which Bartenora explains a “very little thing”, the law says, “that it may be well with thee”, much more of the weighty commands in the law.”

Hence, in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel, it is rendered by `^wjq [bj`, “a little piece of money”; and this was the common price of two sparrows. Our Lord appeals to his disciples, for the truth of it, as a thing well known: according to the question in Luke, five sparrows were sold for two farthings, which makes them somewhat cheaper still. This shows they were of little account.

And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father: some copies add, “which is in heaven”; meaning, that one of them should not be shot, or be killed, without the knowledge, will, and pleasure of God. The design of Christ is to assert the doctrine of providence, as reaching to all creatures and things, even the most minute and worthless: he instances not in men, nor in the beasts of the field, but in the fowls of the air, and in those of the inferior sort, and more useless, in sparrows, yea in little sparrows; as the word may be rendered; whose price was so low, that two are obliged to be put together to fetch the least sum of money current: and

yet the providence of God is concerned with each of these; so that not one of them is taken in a snare, or killed with a stone, or shot flying, or sitting, but by the will of God: from whence it may be strongly concluded, that nothing comes by chance; that there is no such thing as contingency with respect to God, though there is to men, with respect to second causes; that all things are firmly ordained by the purpose of God, and are wisely ordered by his providence: and our Lord's further view is, from this consideration, to animate his disciples to a free, open, and constant preaching of his Gospel, not regarding their lives for his sake; for since their heavenly Father, in his providence, takes care of the meanest, even of the most irrational creatures, so that the life of one of them is not taken away without his will, much more will he take care of them; nor could their valuable lives be lost without his will and pleasure. Much such a way of arguing is used by the Jews, who [f659] say, açn rb ˆkç lk adby al aymç yd[lbm rwpx, "a bird without God does not perish, much less a man"; or, as it is elsewhere [f660] expressed,

> "a bird "without God" is not hunted, or taken, how much less does the soul of a man go out of him?"

And again [f661],

> "a bird "without God" does not fly away, much less the soul of a man."

Two birds, or sparrows, as the word may be rendered, in (<03404>Leviticus 14:4) were used in cleansing the leper; one was killed, and the other let loose into the open field: and though it might be a contingent thing with men which was killed, and which preserved, yet not with God; and some think the allusion is here to that case.

Ver. 30. *But the very hairs of your head are all numbered*.] A proverbial expression, showing the perfect knowledge God has, and the exquisite care he takes, in providence, of all his creatures, particularly men, and especially his dear children and faithful ministers; as not a sparrow, so not a single hair of a man's head falls to the ground without the knowledge, and will of God: a way of speaking sometimes used to signify, that not the least hurt or damage should befall a person; (see <09145>1 Samuel 14:45; <10411>2 Samuel 14:11; <44734>Acts 27:34) and the phraseology of the text was in use, and very well known by the Jews; for so they represent God speaking [f662];

"do not I number all the hairs of every creature?"

As our Lord applies this particularly to his disciples, his sense is, that they had no reason to be afraid of men, or fear anything that should befall them, for their bearing a faithful testimony to him; for, their valuable lives were under the special and peculiar care of divine providence; not only the days, months, and years of their lives were with God, and put down in his book of purposes and decrees, which could neither be shortened nor lengthened; and not only the more principal, and even all the members of their bodies were written in his book of providence, and a singular care taken of them; but even their very excrescences, the more minute parts, and which were of no great account with them, the "hairs" of their head", even "all" of them, were not only known, but numbered", taken account of; yea, the thing was done already, it was not to be done; a very strong way of setting forth the doctrine of divine providence: a doctrine which the Jews were not unacquainted with, who say [f663];

"that the events of man, and accidents which come upon him, µymç ydyb lkh, "are all by", or "in the hands of God";"

and [f664] that

"nothing is by chance, but all things are tnwkb, "with design";"

or, as they elsewhere say [f665],

"a man does not hurt his finger below, but they proclaim concerning it above;"

that is, as the gloss explains it, wyl[wrzg, "it is decreed" concerning it: which comes very near to the phrase here used.

Ver. 31. *Fear ye not therefore*, etc.] Neither be afraid of men, nor distrust the providence of God; for if that reaches to the meanest of creatures, sparrows, and to that which is of the least account with men, the single hair of a man's head; much more must it regard the lives of men, and still more such useful lives as those of the disciples were, who were called to, and employed in preaching the everlasting Gospel; a work which so much concerned the glory of God, the interest of Christ, and the good of immortal souls:

ye are of more value than many sparrows. Two of them were worth no more than a farthing; there must be a great multitude of them to be mentioned with any man: and indeed there is no comparison between the whole species of them and the life of a single man, and much less between them and the apostles of the Lamb. Any man is more valuable, as a man, than many sparrows, and much more a Christian man, and still more an apostle: the argument then is, that if God takes care of sparrows and is concerned for their lives, much more will he take care of his faithful ministers, and not suffer their lives to be taken away, till they have done the will and work of their Lord.

Ver. 32. *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men*, etc.] The confession of Christ here, more especially designed, does not so much intend, though it may include, that which is less public, and is necessary to be made by every believer in Christ: for it is not enough to believe in him, with the heart, but confession of him must also be made with the mouth; and which lies in ascribing their whole salvation to him, giving him the glory of it; declaring their faith in him to others, and what he has done for their souls; and subjecting themselves to his ordinances, and joining in fellowship with his church and people: which confession, as it ought to be both by words and deeds, and to be hearty and sincere, so likewise visible, open, and before men. This, I say, may be included in the sense of these words; but what they chiefly relate to, is a confession of Christ by his ministers, in the public preaching of the Gospel; who ought openly, and boldly, to acknowledge, and declare, that Christ is truly and properly God, the eternal Son of God, the only mediator between God and men, the Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners; through whose blood alone is the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of grace; by whose righteousness only men can be justified before God; and by whose sacrifice and satisfaction sin is only expiated; that he died for, and in the room and stead of his people, rose again for their justification, ascended to heaven in their name, is set down at the right hand of God, and ever lives to make intercession for them, and will come again, and judge both quick and dead: such a free and open confession of Christ ought to be made by all his ministers before men, and in spite of all the rage and opposition of earth and hell; and such shall not fail of being taken notice of, and requited by Christ; for he himself says,

him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven: as he has a perfect knowledge of them, and bears an affectionate love to them; so he

will openly own, and acknowledge them as his ministers, and speak in the praise and commendation of their works and labours; though they have been performed through the gifts, grace, and strength, which he has communicated to them: he will introduce them into his Father's presence, and recommend them to him, to be honoured, blessed, and glorified by him.

Ver. 33. *But whosoever shall deny me before men*, etc.] Deny that he is a disciple of Christ, and that Christ is his Lord and master, act contrary to him, deliver things repugnant to his mind and will; which for a disciple to do to his master was a very heinous crime with the Jews:

> "if (say they [f666]) Rabbi Jochanan, rwpky, "deny" Rabbi Eleazar, his disciple, he will not "deny" Rabbi Jannai, his "master"."

Some regard may be had here to Peter's after denial of Christ; and this proviso be supposed, "except he repent", as he did. Moreover, to deny Christ, is to drop, or oppose any of those truths which regard his person, office, and grace; or to hide and conceal them from men, through fear, shame, or cowardice of mind: and even not to confess him, through fear of men, is interpreted, by Christ, a denial of him; and such who deny him in any form and shape, either by words or deeds,

him, says he,

will I also deny before my Father which is heaven; he will deny them to be disciples, or that they belong to him; he will deny that he ever knew them, loved or approved of them; he will declare in the presence of his Father, his disapprobation of them, his indignation against them, that they are workers of iniquity; yea, he will do more, he will banish them from his presence, and send them into everlasting burnings.

Ver. 34. *Think not ye that I am come to send peace on earth*, etc.] The Jews had a notion of great outward peace and prosperity in the days of the Messiah; which was grounded on several prophecies of the Old Testament, not rightly understood by them; and the disciples of Christ had imbibed the same notion: wherefore our Lord thought fit to let them know the contrary; and that they must not expect outward ease and quiet, and worldly tranquillity would attend their ministry; for though he came to be a peace maker between God and sinners, by the blood of his cross; and was both the author and donor of spiritual peace to his people; and the Gospel

he brought with him, and sent them to preach, was the Gospel of peace; which, accompanied with his power, would produce peace in the consciences of men, and be the means of cultivating and maintaining peace among the saints; yet “peace on earth” in a temporal sense, whether in the world in general, or in Judea in particular, must not be expected as the consequence of his coming; so far from it, that he subjoins,

I came, not to send peace, but a sword. By the “sword” may be meant the Gospel, which is the means of dividing and separating the people of Christ from the men of the world, and from their principles and practices, and one relation from another; as also of divisions, discords, and persecutions arising from it: not that it was the intention and design of Christ, in coming into the world, to foment and encourage such things; but this, through the malice and wickedness of men, was eventually the effect and consequence of his coming; (see <4212 5>Luke 12:51) where, instead of a “sword”, it is “division”; because the sword divides asunder, as does the sword of the Spirit, the word of God.

Ver. 35. *For I am come to set a man at variance against*, etc.] Or “to divide a man from his father”. Here our Lord opens and explains what he means by the sword, intestine divisions, domestic broils, family differences, as well as such as appear in towns, cities, and kingdoms, which are exemplified by other instances following;

and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: the case is this, a father believing in Christ, embracing his Gospel, and submitting to his institutions, is contradicted, opposed, and persecuted by his own son, and a mother by her own daughter; in both which relations, natural affection knit them together; and the mother-in-law by her daughter-in-law, who before lived together in the most peaceable, kind, and tender manner: which must be imputed, not to Christ, and the doctrines of Christ, and the natural tendency of them, embraced by the father, the mother, and mother-in-law; but to the natural enmity of the son, the daughter, and the daughter-in-law, to everything divine, spiritual, and evangelical, or “vice versa”.

Ver. 36. *And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household*.] His children, and his servants, such that he has either begotten and brought up, or are daily fed at his table, and maintained by him. This, with the former instances, are borrowed from (<3306 >Micah 7:6) and the times of the Gospel are set forth in the same dismal and black characters, as those in which the

prophet lived; and much such a description do the Jews themselves give, of the times of their expected Messiah; which agreeing in words, as well as things, I cannot forbear transcribing.

> “The government shall be turned to heresy (Sadducism), and there will be no reproof; the synagogue shall become a brothel house, Galilee shall be destroyed, and Gablan shall be laid waste, and the men of the border shall wander from city to city, and shall obtain no mercy; the wisdom of the Scribes shall stink, and they that fear to sin shall be despised, and truth shall fail; young men shall turn pale, or put to shame, the faces of old men, and old men shall stand before young men; the “son” shall deal basely “with his father, the daughter shall rise up against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and the enemies of a man shall be they of his own house”: the face of that generation shall be as the face of a dog, and the son shall not reverence his father [f667].”

All which characters, how exactly they agree with the generation in which Christ lived, is easy to observe.

Ver. 37. *He that loveth father or mother more than me*, etc.] The design of these words, is not at all to lessen the due affection of children to their parents; or to detract from the respect and esteem, in which they ought to be had by them: it is the duty of children, to love, honour, and, obey them; who have been the means of bringing them into the world, and of bringing them up in it; nor do any of the doctrines of Christ break in upon the ties and obligations of nature, or in the least set aside any of the duties of natural religion: but the intent of this passage is, to show, that as Christ is infinitely above all creatures, he is to be loved above the nearest and dearest relations and friends; being God over all blessed for ever, and also the Saviour and Redeemer; which itself, makes him more amiable and lovely than a common parent. That man therefore, that prefers father and mother to Christ, and their instructions, and orders, to the truths and ordinances of Christ: who, to please them, breaks the commands of Christ, rejects his Gospel, and either denies him, or does not confess him, our Lord says,

is not worthy of me; or, as in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel, he is not ytwal ywar, “fit for me”: it is not fit and proper, that such a person should name the name of Christ, or be called by his name, and should be reckoned one

of his disciples; he is not fit to be a member of the church of Christ on earth, nor for the kingdom of heaven, but deserves to be rejected by him, and everlastingly banished his presence: for otherwise no man, let him behave ever so well, is worthy of relation to Christ, and interest in him; or of his grace, righteousness, presence, kingdom and glory. The same is the sense of the following clause,

and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me: whoever, to gratify a child, drops the profession of Christ, renounces his Gospel, and neglects his commands, it is not proper and convenient that he should bear the name of Christ, be accounted one of his, or be treated as such, but all the reverse.

Ver. 38. *And he that taketh not his cross*, etc.] By the "cross", which was a Roman punishment, whereby malefactors were put to death, are meant all sorts of afflictions, reproaches, persecutions, and death itself; and particularly the ill will, hatred, and persecution, of near relations and friends, which must be expected by such, who bear a faithful testimony for Christ. Every minister of Christ, or professor of his name, has "his" own cross, his own particular afflictions, appointed by God, and laid on him by Christ, and which he should cheerfully take up, and patiently bear, for his sake. The allusion is to the custom of persons sentenced to be crucified, to carry their own cross, as Christ did his, and Simon the Cyrenian for him; and which our Lord here may have a respect unto, as well knowing what death he was to die, and that some of his disciples also would die the same death: wherefore Christ says,

and followeth after me; led on by his example, to preach or profess the Gospel, submit to the ordinances of it, and cheerfully suffer for the sake of it, when called to it. If a man, who would be thought to be a disciple of Christ, is not willing to do all this, but, in order to avoid it, complies with his friends, conforms to the world, and turns his back on Christ; of such an one he may well say, he

is not worthy of me; it is not convenient that he should stand among his disciples and followers.

Ver. 39. *He that findeth his life shall lose it*, etc.] That man that seeks to preserve his life, and the temporal enjoyments of it, by a sinful compliance with his friends and the world, and by a denial of Christ, or non-confession of him; if he is not, by the providence of God, deprived of the good things

of life, and dies a shameful death, both which are sometimes the case of such persons; yet he is sure to lose the happy and eternal life of his soul and body, in the world to come: so that the present finding of life, or the possession of it, on such sinful terms, will in the issue prove an infinite and irreparable loss unto him. On the other hand, Christ observes,

he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it. That man that is willing to forego the present advantages of life, to suffer reproach and persecution, and lay down his life cheerfully for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, for the profession of his name, rather than drop, deny, conceal, or neglect any truth and ordinance of his, shall find his soul possessed of eternal life, as soon as separated from his body; and shall find his corporal life again, in the resurrection morn, to great advantage; and shall live with Christ in soul and body, in the utmost happiness, to all eternity.

Ver. 40. *He that receiveth you, receiveth me*, etc.] This is said to comfort the disciples, lest they should conclude from this account of the sorrows, afflictions, and persecutions they were to meet with, that there would be none that would receive them and their message; Christ therefore suggests, that there would be some that would embrace the Gospel preached by them, and receive them kindly into their houses, and entertain them in a very hospitable manner: and, for the encouragement of such persons, who would risk their own goods and lives by so doing, he lets them know, that receiving of his disciples, was interpreted by him, a receiving of himself; and what they did to them, would be taken as kindly, as if done to him personally; and, in like manner, would it be understood and accepted by his Father:

and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me. To which agrees, what the Jews say [f668] of the angel, in (<2222>Exodus 23:22) "If thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I shall speak": who observe, that it is not written, "that he shall speak", but "that I shall speak"; intimating, that µylbqm µta yl wlak wnmyh µta ˆylbqm µa, "if ye receive him, it is all one as if you received me": and the whole of this accords with a common saying among [f669] them, wtwmk µda lç wjwlçç, "that a man's messenger is as himself". The Jew [f670], therefore, has no reason to reproach Christ and his followers as he does, as if it was the sense of these words of Christ, and which the Christians give of them, that Christ and his twelve apostles were but one person.

Ver. 41. *He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet*, etc.] By "a prophet" is meant, not one that foretells things to come, but a preacher of the Gospel; for as prophesying sometimes signifies preaching, so a prophet designs a minister of the word: and to "receive" him, is not only to embrace his doctrine, but to entertain him in a kind, and generous manner; and he that does this, "in the name of a prophet", not as coming in the name of another prophet, but upon this account, and for this consideration, because he himself is a prophet; so the phrase, µçl, "in the name", or on the account of anything, is often used in the Misnic writings [f671]: he that regards such a person, and shows him respect, by an hospitable entertainment of him; not because he may be related to him after the flesh; or because he may be a man of good behaviour, of a singular disposition and temper, of much learning and eloquence, of great natural parts and abilities; but because he is a faithful minister of the Gospel; he

shall receive a prophet's reward: either a reward from the prophet himself, who shall interpret the Scriptures to him, preach the Gospel to him, lead him more fully into the truths of it, and guide him to the true, and more clear and distinct sense of the sacred writings; which is an ample reward for his kind entertainment of him: or else, that reward which God has appointed, prepared, and promised, to them who receive his prophets; and which indeed is no other, than what the prophets themselves shall receive, even the reward of the inheritance, the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, a reward of grace, and not of debt; since both, in their way, serve the Lord Christ.

And he that receiveth a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man. He that is kind and liberal to any good man, whether he is a minister of the Gospel or not, who appears to have the work of grace upon his soul, and is justified by the righteousness of Christ, and expects eternal life on that account; if he shows respect to him, purely because he has the image of Christ stamped on him, and the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and not on any natural, worldly, or civil accounts,

he shall receive a righteous man's reward; either from the good man himself, who will not fail to pray for his benefactor, to wish him well, and give him all the assistance he can in his Christian course; to exhort, comfort, instruct him as much, and as far as his Christian experience will furnish him with; or else the same reward of grace the righteous man

himself shall have, namely, eternal life, as God's gift, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ver. 42. *And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones*, etc.] Our Lord gradually descends from prophets to righteous men, and from righteous men, to those of the lowest form and class among them; who have the least measure of grace, and share of spiritual light, and knowledge; who are outwardly the poorest, meanest, and most contemptible in the eyes of the world; and are little, even the least of saints, in their own esteem and account: whosoever takes notice but of "one" of these, receives him into his house, and gives him

a cup of cold water only, is regarded, a phrase used to express the least favour, or benefit whatever.

> "So says [f672] Maimonides, one that calls to his friend to dine with him, and he refuses, and swears, or vows, that he shall not enter into his house, nor will he give him to drink, ^nwx tpj "a drop of cold water", etc."

Moreover, this is said to prevent any objection, on account of the mean and low condition persons may be in, to their relieving necessitous objects; for everyone is capable of doing this, and if they can do no more, it is accepted. Now whosoever takes notice of, and shows favour to the meanest of Christ's people, though it be but bestowing so small a benefit as a cup of cold water; yet, if it is done

in the name of a disciple, or because that poor person is a disciple of Christ,

verily, says Christ,

I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward: it will be observed another day by Christ, who takes what is done to the least of his brethren, as done to himself. The Jews say many things in praise of hospitality, to µkj dyml t, "a disciple of a wise man"; and observe [f673], that he that hospitably entertains such an one in his house, and causes him to eat and drink, and partake of the goods of his house, there is reason to believe, he shall be much more blessed than the house of Obed Edom was for the ark's sake, which neither ate nor drank with him; and which may be compared with this passage.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 11

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass*, etc.] In the course of things, and as before determined and resolved on, that

when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples; when he had given them a commission to preach the Gospel, had finished all his instructions he thought fit to give them, and orders he enjoined them, relating to that work; as where they should go, what they should say, how they should behave, and what treatment they should meet with; and had given them all proper advice and encouragement,

he departed thence, from the place where he then was: he did not desist either from the ministry of the word, or from working of miracles, but went out into other parts of the country,

to teach and to preach in their cities: meaning either in the cities of the Jews, or in the cities of his disciples; and these, either the cities they belonged to, from whence they came, namely, the cities of Galilee; for the disciples were Galilaeans, and in which parts Christ now was; or else the cities where he sent them to preach first, and then came himself, and confirmed their doctrine by his own ministry and miracles.

Ver. 2. *Now when John had heard in the prison*, etc.] The person here spoken of is John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who was now in the prison of Machaerus; being put there by Herod, for his reproving him for taking Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; and whilst he was there, an account was brought him by his own disciples, (see <4078>Luke 7:18) of

the works of Christ, the miracles he wrought; as the healing of the centurion's servant, the raising from the dead the widow's son of Nain, and the like; upon hearing of which,

he sent two of his disciples, who might be the most prejudiced against Christ, because of the increase of his followers, and the decrease of their master's; and because he did not live such an austere life as John did; and

who, notwithstanding all that they had heard, and their master had told them of Jesus, were not easily persuaded that he was the true Messiah. Moreover, two of them were sent, both because it was more honourable to Christ, and that they might be proper witnesses of what they saw and heard; and since it was not so much for himself, as for the sake of his disciples, that these messengers were sent.

Ver. 3. *And said unto him*, etc.] By the disciples he sent; this was the message they came with, and this the question they were to ask, and did,

art thou he that should come? A "periphrasis" of the Messiah, well known to the Jews; for he had been spoken of frequently in the prophecies of the Old Testament, as the Shiloh, the Redeemer, the Prophet, and King that should come; particularly, by this circumlocution, reference seems to be had to (Habakkuk 2:3). "It shall surely come", aby ab yk, which may be rendered, "for he that cometh", or "is to come, shall come". So that the question in plain terms is, whether he was the Messiah? John could not be ignorant of this, who had seen the Spirit of God descending on him at his baptism, heard a voice from heaven, declaring him the Son of God; and had so often pointed him out to others, and had borne frequent testimonies that he was the Lamb of God, and bridegroom of his church: wherefore this question was put, not upon his own account, but his disciples, that they might have from the mouth of Christ a full and satisfactory answer, which would remove all their doubts and scruples, and attach them to Christ, now he was about to die, and leave them, than which nothing was more desirable to him. Though some have thought, that John's faith was somewhat slackened; and through his long imprisonment, he began to doubt whether he was the Messiah or not: and others have been of opinion, as particularly Dr. Lightfoot, that the reason of this message was, neither the ignorance and unbelief of John, or his disciples; but that John, with the rest of the Jews, having a notion of a temporal kingdom, and hearing of the mighty works of Christ, wonders that he himself was not delivered out of prison by him, grows impatient upon it, and asks, if he was the Messiah? And if he was, why did he suffer his forerunner and chief minister to lie in prison?

or do we look for another, to release me, and set up this kingdom?

Ver. 4. *Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc.] Not by an express declaration, that he was the Messiah that was to come, and they were not to look for any other; but he bids them

go, and show John again, those things which ye do hear and see. Christ would have them go back to John in prison, and relate to him the doctrines which they had heard preached by him to the poor; and the miracles which they had seen with their own eyes, then wrought by him; as well as many others, which were attested to them by credible witnesses; for there were at that time about Christ, that had infirmities, plagues, and evil spirits, and that were blind, and he instantly cured them in their presence; (see <40072>Luke 7:21).

Ver. 5. *The blind receive their sight*, etc.] Our Lord here, has reference to several prophecies concerning the Messiah, in (<23506>Isaiah 35:6) (<23601>Isaiah 61:1) and which having their accomplishment in him, John and his disciples might easily and strongly conclude, that he was he that was to come, and that they should not look for another. The several things here mentioned, were not all done at this time, but were what these disciples had sufficient and authentic evidence of; sight was restored to the blind before them then; and no doubt they were informed of the two blind men, that had their eyes opened, (<40930>Matthew 9:30)

and the lame walk; as did the man sick of the palsy, who was brought to him on a bed, carried by four men, but went away himself, with his bed upon his shoulders, (<40902>Matthew 9:2,6,7)

the lepers are cleansed: as the poor man was, that was full of leprosy, and who was cured by Christ, by touching him, (<40803>Matthew 8:3)

and the deaf hear; as did the man, into whose ears Christ put his fingers and said, Ephphatha, be opened, (<40733>Mark 7:33-7:35)

and the dead are raised: as were Jairus's daughter, (<40918>Matthew 9:18,25) and the widow's son of Nain, (<40715>Luke 7:15)

and the poor have the Gospel preached them; by "the poor" are meant, either the preachers of the Gospel; for so the words may be rendered, "the poor preach the Gospel": and such were the apostles of Christ; they were poor with respect to the things of this world; they were chiefly fishermen; and, with respect to human literature, they were unlearned men, had no stock or furniture of acquired learning, and were mean, abject, and

contemptible, in the sight and opinion of men; and yet Christ called, qualified, and sent them forth to preach the Gospel. Or else, the hearers of it are designed; who were also the poor of this world, made a very low figure in life, and had but a small share of knowledge and understanding, and so were despised, and reckoned as cursed by the Scribes and Pharisees: or they were such, who were poor in spirit, or spiritually poor; who saw their spiritual poverty, bewailed and acknowledged it, and sought after the true riches of grace, and glory in Christ. Now these, as they had the Gospel preached to them more fully and clearly, with more power and authority, and so as it never was before or since, so they "received" it, as Tremellius from the Syriac reads the text, readily and willingly, joyfully and gladly, with faith and love; and were, as it may be also rendered, "evangelized" by it, or thrown into a gospel mould and frame: which may be said to be done, when a man has a spirit of liberty, in opposition to a spirit of bondage; when he lives by faith on Christ alone; when his comforts do not spring from his works, but from Christ; when the love and grace of God influence his repentance and obedience; when a man has a spirit of meekness and of love to the saints, is of a forbearing and forgiving spirit: when he is desirous of performing all duties both to God and man, and yet depends upon none of them, but upon Christ alone, for salvation.

Ver. 6. *And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me*.] The Jews were offended at Christ's parentage and birth, at the poverty of his parents, and at the manner of his birth, by a virgin; and at the place of his birth, which they thought to be Galilee; at his education, because he had not learnt letters, and was brought up to a mechanical employment; at his mean appearance in his public ministry, in his own person, and in his attendants: his company and audience being the poorer sort, the more ignorant, and who had been loose and scandalous persons, publicans and sinners; at the doctrines he preached, particularly, which respected his own deity and eternity, the distinguished grace of God, and living by faith upon his flesh and blood. The disciples of John also were offended in him, because he and his disciples did not fast, and lead such an austere life as they and their master did; because of the meanness and obscurity of Christ's kingdom; the imprisonment of John, and the many reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions, which did, and were likely to attend a profession of Christ: this our Lord knew, and had a peculiar respect to them in these words; but happy are those persons, who, notwithstanding all these difficulties and discouragements, are so far from stumbling at Christ,

and falling from him, that they heartily receive him and believe in him, make a profession of him, and hold it fast; greatly love, highly value, and esteem him, and are willing to part with all, and bear all for his sake: these are blessed, notwithstanding all their sufferings for him even now; they have spiritual peace, joy, and comfort in their souls, and shall be happy in the full enjoyment of him to all eternity.

Ver. 7. *And as they departed*, etc.] That is, the messengers of John, (⁴⁰Luke 7:24) when they returned to their master, to give an account to him of what they had heard and seen,

Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John; he took this opportunity before the whole company, who had heard what passed in conversation between him and the disciples of John, to say some things concerning his character and ministry: and which he did, partly to rectify and remove any wrong opinion they might have conceived of him, from this message of his, as if he had retracted his former sentiments concerning Christ, at least was wavering and doubtful about him; and partly, to put them in mind of their former zeal and attachment to John's ministry, when they went out in large bodies to attend upon it; and to revive a good opinion of him; and signifies, that they would do well to ask themselves, what views they had in attending on him, and how they came to grow indifferent to so great a man: and Christ, by giving an account of his character and office, confirms his own Messiahship; and this commendation of John, he chose to enter into, after the departure of his messengers, lest what he said of him should be interpreted as mere flattery:

what went ye out in the wilderness to see? This refers to (⁴⁰Matthew 3:5) where we read, that great numbers from Jerusalem, Judea, and the country round about Jordan, went out into the wilderness of Judea, where John came preaching, to hear him, and be baptized by him; and our Lord asks, what was it that led such multitudes of them into the wilderness? What did they expect to see there?

A reed shaken with the wind? This may either refer to John's gesture in preaching, who might wave to and fro as a reed does, when shaken by the wind; and Christ's question is, did ye go out only to see and observe the preacher's gesture, to see him move his body to and fro? Was it not to hear his doctrine, and receive benefit for your souls? And did you not? Wherefore, you ought still to retain a valuable respect for him. Or this may regard their opinion of him; and the sense of the interrogation is, when you

first went out to him, did you take him to be an unstable, inconstant man? Like a reed shaken with every wind! If you did, you were mistaken; he was firm and stable in his sentiments and ministry, his preaching was not yea and nay, his doctrine was all of a piece; he stood to it, that he was not the Messiah, but his forerunner; the testimony he bore was always alike, consistent with himself, and he is the same man now he ever was. The Jews use this comparison of a man to a reed, in a sense just the reverse, and make it to signify constancy, and not inconstancy, as well as tenderness, in opposition to roughness, severity, and stubbornness.

> "Let a man (say they [f674]) be always hnqb Ær, "tender as a reed", and let him not be hard and stubborn as a cedar: when the four winds of the world go out, the reed goes and comes with them; and when the winds are still, the reed stands in its place."

So they observe [f675], that it is said, that "the Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed shaken in the water", (1 Kings 14:15) which they interpret by way of blessing.

> "As a reed (say they) stands in a place of water, its body waves about, and its roots are many; and though all the winds in the world come and blow upon it, they cannot move it out of its place, but it goes and comes with them; and when the winds are still, the reed stands in its place."

Ver. 8. *But what went ye out for to see?* etc.] Since it cannot be thought it was to see the reeds in the wilderness blow to and fro by the wind, or a man like one of them, either in gesture or doctrine; was it to see

a man clothed in soft raiment? In raiment made of soft materials, as fine wool, cotton, silk, etc. such as Mecaenos wore, and who was therefore called Malacinus [f676]: one finely dressed, and richly apparelled, draws the eyes of persons to him; but such an one is not to be expected in a wilderness: and if the Jews went to see such a person, they were greatly disappointed; for John's raiment was of camel's hair, undressed, and he had a leathern girdle about his loins; and as for his diet, it was locusts and wild honey: no,

behold they that wear soft clothing, or, as Luke says, are "gorgeously apparelled"; to which he adds,

and live delicately, are in kings' houses, or "courts"; not in a desert, where John came preaching, nor in a prison, where he now was: he was no light, inconstant, flattering person, as generally courtiers are; had he, he would not have been in a prison; it was for his uprightness and faithfulness, in reproving Herod the king, that he was in such a place and condition. Thus from his very garb and diet, his character is vindicated from the charge of levity and change.

Ver. 9. *But what went ye out for to see?* etc.] Since it was not any thing so mean as a shaking reed, or so grand as a man in gay clothing, pray what was it you went out to see?

A prophet? This was the truth of the matter, they expected to see a prophet, and they believed he was one; this was the common voice of the people; all held John to be a prophet. This made Herod afraid to put him to death, and the Pharisees to speak against his baptism: now, though this was giving him a great character, to believe and own him to be a prophet, yet it did not come up to his full character.

Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet; when they saw him, they saw not only a prophet, but one that was greater, and more excellent than any of the prophets that went before him: they prophesied of the Messiah at a distance, and in words not so clear, and easy to be understood; they spoke of him as to come, but he pointed him out with his finger, and declared that he was come; he saw him himself, and showed him to others; he saw the Spirit of God descending on him, and he himself baptized him; his office, as the harbinger of Christ, and the administrator of the ordinance of baptism to him, gave him a preference to all the prophets; and was such an one, as never any man was vested with but himself.

Ver. 10. *For this is he of whom it is written*, etc.] (Malachi 3:1)

Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. That these words belong abh µlw[l, to the world to come, or the times of the Messiah, that is, the Gospel dispensation, the Jews [f677] themselves own; but as to the particular person meant by the "messenger", or "angel", because they are not willing to acknowledge the right person, are at the utmost loss. Jarchi makes him to be the angel of death, who is to destroy the wicked; Aben Ezra conjectures it may be Messiah the son of Joseph, who they fancy will come before Messiah the son of David. Kimchi thinks an angel from heaven is designed; and Abarbinel Malachi himself:

but the more ancient sense of the synagogue was, that the same person is meant, as in (<4009>Mark 9:5) under the name of Elijah the prophet; and some have thought, that Elijah the Tishbite himself, is intended; though others think, that some great prophet of equal degree with him, and who is called by his name, is what the prophecy has regard unto [f678]; which last is the true sense of the passage: nor should it be once called in question, when our Lord himself has applied it to John the Baptist; to whom the things said in it perfectly agree. He was an "angel", not by nature, but by office; a "messenger" sent by God, "before the face" of the Messiah; six months before him: such a space of time he was born before him; and such a space of time he entered on his public ministry before him; and "prepared" his "way before" him, by preaching the doctrine of repentance, administering the ordinance of baptism, pointing at the Messiah, and exhorting persons to believe on him. All which proves him to be, what Christ says he was, "more than a prophet".

Ver. 11. *Verily I say unto you*, etc.] What Christ had before said, he proved from a testimony of Scripture; what he was about to say depending on his word, he asseverates in the most solemn manner:

among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist. The phrase, "them that are born of women", is a "periphrasis", of men born into the world by ordinary generation; (see <1814>Job 14:1) and the sense is, that of all the prophets that have been in the world, since the beginning of it, Moses himself not excepted, there has not been raised up by God a greater prophet than John, the first administrator of baptism; were but considered, the uncommonness of his birth, his being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, his exemplary life, the excellency of his doctrine; and especially, his work and office, as the harbinger of Christ, and the preparer of his ways.

Notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he; which is to be understood, not of Christ, who was younger in age, and a junior preacher, and less in the esteem of the Pharisees, being greater than he, in nature and office, nor of the saints in heaven, where he that was least, the meanest, and most abject, when on earth, is more happy than John, who was then in prison; nor of all the believers under the Gospel dispensation; but of the apostles of Christ, and the least among them, who were then the kingdom of heaven, or the visible Gospel church state. These had a better opportunity of conversing with Christ, and of seeing and

hearing the things they did, than John had; they had the power of performing miracles, which John had not; were immediately sent forth by Christ, to preach the Gospel, and had a clearer insight into the truths of it, than John; especially, after the Holy Ghost was in such an extraordinary manner poured forth upon them, on the day of Pentecost; particularly after the death and resurrection of Christ, they were able to preach him, not only as come in the flesh, but as having suffered and died, and obtained eternal redemption: they could speak of his blood being shed, of his righteousness being wrought out, and of his sacrifice and satisfaction as made, which John could not; and besides, were more successful in the conversion of sinners, both Jews and Gentiles, than ever he was. The comparison does not lie so much between their persons, as their several different degrees of light and doctrine.

Ver. 12. *And from the days of John the Baptist until now*, etc.] From the time that he began to preach, to the then present time,

the kingdom of heaven, the Gospel, and the ministry of it, first by John, then by Christ and his apostles,

suffereth violence; or "comes with force", and power upon the souls of men: it was attended with the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; as appeared by its being the means of quickening persons that were dead in trespasses and sins; enlightening the blind; causing the deaf to hear; melting and softening hearts of stone; making, of enemies, friends to God and Christ; turning men from the power of Satan unto God; setting at liberty such as were slaves and vassals to their own corruptions; and, in a word, in being the power of God unto salvation, to many souls: and which was further seen, in the manner it did all this; suddenly, secretly, powerfully, and effectually, and yet not against the wills of men; and by such instruments as the apostles were, poor, sinful, mortal men; despised by the world, and attended with opposition and persecution: or "suffers violence"; which may be understood, either of the vast numbers, that pressed and crowded to hear the Gospel preached: great numbers followed John, when he first began to preach, and baptize: still a greater number followed Christ, some to hear his doctrine, others to see his miracles, others to behold his person, others out of selfish ends; and some behaved rudely and indecently: or of the ardour and fervency of spirit, which appeared in some, to the ministry of John and Christ, and in their desires and expectations of the kingdom of the Messiah: or of the Gospel's suffering violence by the

persecutions of its enemies opposing and contradicting it, reproaching it, intimidating the professors of it, and seeking to take away the life of Christ, the great subject of it:

and the violent take it by force; meaning either publicans, and harlots, and Gentile sinners; who might be thought to be a sort of intruders: or rather the same persons, as being powerfully wrought upon under the ministry of the Gospel; who were under violent apprehensions of wrath and vengeance, of their lost and undone state and condition by nature; were violently in love with Christ, and eagerly desirous of salvation by him, and communion with him; and had their affections set upon the things of another world: these having the Gospel preached to them, which is a declaration of God's love to sinners, a proclamation of peace and pardon, and a publication of righteousness and life by Christ, they greedily catched at it, and embraced it.

Ver. 13. *For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John*.] These words are to be considered in connection with (<40111> Matthew 11:11) and are a further proof of John's being greater than any of the prophets; because all the inspired writers and prophets, who were before him, prophesied of the Messiah as to come; and either spoke of him in obscure terms, or represented him under dark shadows and figures: whereas John spake of him as already come, and in plain terms, and directed to his very person; and since his time, there have been no prophecies concerning the Messiah and his kingdom; vision and prophecy are now sealed up; all which are acknowledged by the Jews themselves, who [f679] say, jyçmh twmyl ala wabntn al zlwk µyaybnh lk, "all the prophets did not prophesy but to, or of the days of the Messiah". This was the subject, and these the limits of their prophecies; for they own [f680], that

> "from the day that the temple was destroyed, yaybnh ˆm hawbn hlyjb, "prophecy was taken away from the prophets"."

Since that time, they confess they have had no prophet [f681], and that they are not able to observe their signs.

Ver. 14. *And if ye will receive it*, etc.] The words carry in them some suspicion of unbelief and hardness of heart, as though they would not receive it: however, whether they would or not, it was a certain truth, that

this same person, "John the Baptist",

is Elias, which was for to come; who was appointed by God to come, and was prophesied of (³⁹04⁰⁵Malachi 4:5) that he should come; and even according to the doctrine of the Scribes and Rabbins, he was expected to come before the Messiah; only they in general thought that Elijah the Tishbite, in person, was meant; though some, as before observed [f682], were of opinion, that some great prophet equal to Elijah, and endued with the same spirit, is intended; and which is true of John the Baptist, who came "in the Spirit" and "power" of Elias, (⁴⁰01¹⁷Luke 1:17). And, as it was usual with the Jews [f683], to call Phinehas by the name of Elias, and Elias Phinehas, because of his zeal for the Lord of hosts; for the same reason may John be called by the same name, there being a great resemblance between Elias and him; in their temper and disposition; in their manner of clothing, and austere way of living; in their very great piety and holiness; in their courage and integrity, in reproving vice; and in their zeal and usefulness in the cause of God, and true religion: in respect to which, Christ must be here understood, when he affirms John to be Elias; not Elias in person, but he that was intended by Elias, that was said should come: hence here is no contradiction to the words of the Baptist, in (⁴⁰01²¹John 1:21) when he says, that he was not Elias; for the Jews, who put the question to him, whether he was Elias, or not? meant whether he was Elias in person, Elias the Tishbite, or not; and so John understood them, and very honestly and sincerely replies, he was not: but he does not deny that he was intended by this Elias, that was prophesied should come; yea, he says such things as might induce them to believe he was that person; hence, Christ, and he, say nothing contrary to, and irreconcilable, as the Jew [f684] suggests, with each other.

Ver. 15. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*.] A way of speaking used by Christ, when anything serious, and of great importance, was delivered; and which required attention, and was not easily understood: and such were the several things he had mentioned in this context; as that John was more than a prophet, more excellent than all the prophets; that the law and prophets were now at an end, and that John was Elias; which things, if rightly understood, would serve greatly to settle their judgment, with respect to himself as the Messiah: but his words imply, that everyone had not spiritual ears and understandings, to hear and take in things of such an high nature, and excellent use; none but those to whom they were given; and such ought to attend to them, and, seriously weigh and consider the

importance of them. The phrase is to be met with in Jewish writings, where it is thus expressed [f685];

> ""He that hears let him hear, and he that understandeth let him understand";"

(see <4013>Matthew 13:43).

Ver. 16. *But whereunto shall I liken this generation*? The men of that age, the stubborn and perverse Jews; who were pleased with nothing, with no man's ministry, neither with John's, nor with Christ's, but found fault with whatever they heard, or saw done:

it is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling to their fellows: that is, the case of such persons may be fitly represented by children in a public market, calling to their companions, to pipe or mourn with them, and who are so morose and sullen as to do neither: for the men of that generation, are not the good natured children, that called to their fellows, and were willing to join in innocent diversions and exercises; but rather John the Baptist, Christ and his disciples, who may be compared to "children", for their harmlessness and simplicity; and are represented as "sitting in markets", places of concourse, where much people met together; which may intend the synagogues and temple, and other public places, which they made use of to publish their doctrines in, to preach to, and exhort the people; and as "calling to their fellows", to their contemporaries, to those of their own nation, by the external ministry of the word.

Ver. 17. *And saying, we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced*, etc.] The allusion is to Jewish children, who having seen their parents and friends at their festivals and weddings, some play upon the pipe, and others dance to them, mimicked the same in their diversions; and also having observed, at funerals, the mourning women, making their doleful ditties, and others answering to them, acted the part of these persons, expecting their fellows would make their responses, but did not: hence the complaint,

we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. The different characters of John and Christ, are here set forth, by "piping" and "mourning". The character and ministry of Christ and his disciples, by "piping"; by which is meant, the clear, comfortable, and joyful ministry of the Gospel; which is delightful music to a sensible sinner; and may be compared to it, for distinction of sounds, harmony, and agreement, being charming and delightful; its notes are all grace, mercy, love, liberty, peace,

pardon, righteousness, and free salvation; and it is very powerful and engaging, it quickens and animates, attracts, allures and charms. The character and ministry of John, is signified by “mourning”: his life was a very austere one; he and his disciples fasted oft; he appeared in a very coarse habit; his speech was rough, his voice thundering: his doctrine was the doctrine of repentance, and he used very severe threatenings, in case of impenitence: on the other hand, by the “fellows” to whom they piped, or ministered, in their different ministrations, are meant, the Scribes and Pharisees; who were neither affected to, nor with, either of them: as for John, he was too austere for them; they did not like his garb, nor his diet; nor did his doctrine, or baptism please them; nor were they wrought upon, or brought to repentance by his ministry; they did not lament, weep, or shed one tear, but sat unmoved, like stocks and stones, under those awful striking discourses, on mournful subjects, delivered by him: nor were they pleased with the free conduct, and pleasant conversation of Christ; nor did they dance, or rejoice, at the good news and glad tidings of grace, and salvation, which were brought by him: of such froward, peevish spirits they were, that neither John, nor Christ, could please them: they were a true picture and emblem of many persons, who like neither law nor Gospel, but are morose, sullen, and quarrelsome, let them hear what they will; as Solomon says,

“If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest”, (Proverbs 29:9). Upon which the Talmudists [f686] comment, and illustrate it in this manner, and produce a proverbial saying, much like this in the text.

> “Says God, I was angry with Ahaz, and I delivered him into the hands of the kings of Damascus; he sacrificed and burnt incense to their gods, (2 Chronicles 28:22,23). I played with Amaziah, and I gave the king of Edom into his hands; he brought their gods and worshipped them, (2 Chronicles 25:14). Says R. Papa, this is what men say, or it is a common proverb, [dy a l d rml hyl ykyyj [dy a l d rml hyl yykb, “they weep to a man who takes no notice of it, they laugh to a man who does not observe it”; woe to that man, who knows not the difference between good and evil.”

Ver. 18. *For John came neither eating nor drinking*, etc.] This and the following verse are an explanation of the foregoing “parable”; and this shows, that John and his disciples are the persons that mourned, of which

his austere life was a proof: for when he “came”, being sent of God, and appeared as a public preacher, he was “neither eating nor drinking”; not that he did not eat or drink at all, otherwise he could not have lived, and discharged his office: but he ate sparingly, very little; and what he did eat and drink, was not the common food and drink of men; he neither ate bread nor drank wine, but lived upon locusts and wild honey; he excused all invitations to people’s houses, and shunned all feasts and entertainments; he abstained from all free and sociable conversation with men, in eating and drinking: and though the Scribes and Pharisees pretended to much abstinence and frequent fastings, yet they did not care to follow his very severe way of living, and lament, in answer to his mournful ditty; but in a calumniating way,

they say he hath a devil; is a demoniac, a madman, one that is unsociable and melancholy; under a delusion of Satan, and influenced by him to abstain from proper food and company of men, under a pretence of religion.

Ver. 19. *The son of man came eating and drinking*, etc.] Meaning himself, who ate and drank as men usually do, lived in the common way of life, was free and sociable, went to feasts, entertainments, and weddings, when he was invited; and was affable, courteous, and friendly in his deportment, to all men;

and they say, behold a man gluttonous, a voracious man, an epicurean, one that indulges his appetite to a very great degree, and in a scandalous manner;

a winebibber, a common tippler, one that drinks to excess; whom the Rabbins call [f687], `^rgrg`, who is one, they say, that drinks up his cup at one draught; one that is given to wine, and is greedy of it:

a friend of publicans and sinners; such as are openly and notoriously wicked; and loves their company, for the sake of tippling with them; and encourages them in their revelling and drunkenness; a very black charge this!

But wisdom is justified of her children; either the wisdom of God, in making use of ministers of a different disposition and deportment, whereby some are gained, and others left inexcusable: or the Gospel, in which there is such a display of divine wisdom, which is vindicated from the charge of

licentiousness, by the agreeable lives and conversations of the children of God: or rather Christ himself, who is the wisdom of God; and in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; who, however he may be traduced by ignorant and malicious men, yet will be acquitted from all such charges, as here insinuated, by all the true sons of wisdom; or by such, who are made wise unto salvation. We may learn from hence, that no sort of preachers and preaching will please some men; that the best of Gospel ministers may be reproached as libertines, or madmen; and that they will be sooner, or later, justified and cleared from all such aspersions.

Ver. 20. *Then began he to upbraid the cities*, etc.] When he had sent forth his disciples to preach, and had been in these several cities hereafter mentioned himself, and had taught and preached in them, and confirmed his doctrine by many wonderful works; when he had observed how ill they had used both John and himself, representing the one as having a devil, and the other as a licentious person; when they could not be pleased with the ministry of the one, nor of the other, he very seasonably and righteously began to reproach them with their ungenerous treatment of him, their ingratitude to him, their unbelief in him, the hardness and impenitence of their hearts; which could not be moved to repent of their evil ways, and believe in him, and acknowledge him as the Messiah, by all the instructions he gave them, and miracles he wrought among them: for the cities he has a view to, were such,

wherein most of his mighty works were done; the most for number, and the greatest in their kind; as particularly at Capernaum; where he cured the centurion's servant, recovered Peter's wife's mother from a fever, healed the man sick of a palsy, raised Jairus's daughter from the dead, made whole the woman that had a bloody issue, opened the eyes of two blind men, and cast out a devil from a dumb man, possessed with one: all these, and more, he did in this one city, and therefore he might justly upbraid them,

because they repented not: not because they did not commend him, and speak well of his works, for he sought not his own glory, but their good: all he did was, in order to bring men to repentance of their sins, and faith in himself, that they might be saved.

Ver. 21. *Woe unto thee, Chorazin!* etc.] Though many of Christ's mighty works were done in this place, yet mention is made of it no where else, but here; whether it was a single city, or a country, is not easy to determine:

the word ˆyçrwj, “Chorasin”, signifying “woody places”, Dr. Lightfoot [f688] conjectures it might include Cana, in which Christ wrought his first miracle, and a small adjacent country, situated in a wood, and be so called from thence; and Origen [f689] reads it, χορα ζιν, “the region of Zin”:

woe unto thee, Bethsaida! This was the city of Andrew and Peter, *see Gill “*⁴³⁰⁴⁴*John 1:44”*; so that as bad as it was, some persons were called out of it by the grace of God, and to the high office of apostleship; and which makes that grace in such the more distinguishing:

for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. These words are to be understood in a popular sense, as Grotius observes, and express what was probable, according to an human judgment of things; and the meaning is, that if the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon had had the advantages of Christ’s ministry, and of seeing his miracles, as the inhabitants of Chorazin and Bethsaida had, it looks very likely, or one would be ready to conclude, especially from many coming out of these parts, to attend on Christ’s ministry, (⁴¹³⁰⁸Mark 3:8) and from the conversion of some of them in after times, (⁴⁴²¹⁰Acts 21:3,4) they would have repented of their sins; at least, in an external way, signified by sackcloth and ashes, which were outward signs of repentance; (see ²³⁸⁰⁵Isaiah 58:5 ²⁴⁰²⁶Jeremiah 6:26). And which, if it had been only performed in such a manner by the inhabitants of Chorazin and Bethsaida, would have saved them from temporal judgments, which their sins now called for. The words are an hyperbolical exaggeration of the wickedness of those cities, like to (²⁶³⁰⁵Ezekiel 3:5-7) showing, that they were worse than the Tyrians and Sidonians; an Heathenish and idolatrous people, who lived very profligate and dissolute lives, in all intemperance, luxury, and impiety; and therefore would be punished in a severer way: neither this passage, nor what follows, can be any proof of God’s giving sufficient grace to all men alike, which in some is effectual to conversion, and in others not, but of the contrary; since the men of Tyre and Sidon had not the same means, or the same grace, as the inhabitants of the other cities, if the mighty works done among them are to be called so; or that man has a power to repent of himself, in a spiritual and evangelical way; or that outward means, as doctrines and miracles, are sufficient to produce such a repentance, without efficacious and unfrustrable grace; since only an outward repentance is here supposed, such as that of Ahab, and of the Ninevites.

Ver. 22. *But I say unto you*, etc.] What may be depended upon as true, and which shall certainly come to pass, however the inhabitants of these cities might flatter themselves; or in whatsoever light they might look upon their neighbours, the Tyrians and Sidonians; and fancy themselves to be the favourites of heaven, and these as the most execrable of creatures;

it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day off judgment, than for you. Their punishment in another world will be more mild and moderate; they will not have such severe stings of conscience, nor have reason to make such bitter reflections on themselves, as those will who have had the advantages of a Gospel revelation: all sins are not alike, nor will the punishment of them be the same; there will be degrees of torments in hell, and which the justice of God requires. These words suppose, that the men of Tyre and Sidon will be punished for their many abominable sins, committed against the law and light of nature; but that the inhabitants of Chorazin and Bethsaida, having rejected the Messiah, and the doctrines of the Gospel, against all the evidence of miracles, and convictions of their own minds, and probably sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost; as their sins are aggravated, their condemnation will be the greater, and their punishment the more intolerable.

Ver. 23. *And thou Capernaum*, etc.] This city is singled out from all the rest, and spoken to particularly, because of its peculiar advantages:

which art exalted unto heaven; which has respect to the very great privileges this place enjoyed, it being the city where Christ chose to dwell, and for a time fixed his abode in; where he first began to preach, and where such a train of miracles were done; a particular enumeration, of which has been before given: as also it may refer to the situation of the place, which was very high and lofty, so that it seemed to reach unto heaven; for the account that R. Benjamin Tudelensis [f690] gives of it is, that

> "Capernaum, which is, by interpretation, "the village of comfort", at first sight looks to be ylmrk l[µwqm, "a place higher than Mount Carmel"."

And Nonnus on (<4065>John 6:59) calls it, βαψυκρηπιδι χαφαρναουμ which the interpreter renders, the land of "Capernaum founded on high". But notwithstanding all this,

shalt be brought down to hell; meaning, it should be attended with very humbling providences, be reduced to a very low condition, (see <23 14 15>Isaiah 14:15) be destroyed and laid waste, as a city, as it was in the times of Vespasian; and the inhabitants of it not only punished with temporal, but everlasting destruction;

for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. The sense of these words is the same with that of (<40 11 22>Matthew 11:22) only this may be observed, that whereas Capernaum was superior in privileges and advantages than the other cities, and yet acted the vile and ungrateful part it did; so that its impenitence and unbelief were the more aggravated; hence a still viler set of men are pitched upon, even the men of Sodom, to make the comparison of them with: for as wicked as the men of that place were, who were so infamous for their unnatural lusts; yet if they had enjoyed such a ministry as Christ's, and had had such miracles wrought among them, for the attestation of the doctrines taught them, in all human probability they would have repented of their flagitious crimes; at least in an external way, in such a manner as to have escaped that dreadful judgment, which laid their city, and several adjacent ones, in ashes; and so would have continued a city until this day. The phrase remained is Jewish, and is used of Sodom by the Rabbins, who say [f691], that

> "Abraham was "ninety nine" years of age when he was circumcised, and then was the overthrow of Sodom; which was "fifty one" years, after the generation of the division (of the people and languages), and near "fifty two" years; but "Zoar remained" one year, µwds bwçy rja, "after Sodom remained"."

According to the Jews, it stood but fifty two years at most [f692]: and they have a notion, that Sodom and Gomorrha will be built again in the future state [f693], or world to come, the times of the Messiah.

Ver. 24. *But I say unto you*, etc.] Capernaum, and the inhabitants thereof, as before, to Chorazin and Bethsaida.

It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for thee: though the punishment of the men of Sodom will be very great, their iniquities being horribly dreadful and enormous, yet more easy to be borne than the vengeance, which, in the last and general judgment, will fall upon such, who have had the means of grace, and have despised

them; especially such as had the personal presence, ministry, and miracles of Christ among them, as the Capernaites had. Such a way of expressing and setting forth the severer punishment of others, by that of Sodom, is not unusual in the Old Testament; (see <250406>Lamentations 4:6) nor in Jewish writers, who say [f694], that

> "the Israelites were fit for, or deserved, µwds çnw[m rwmj rtwy çnw[l, "a far more heavy punishment than the punishment of Sodom": because they abounded with prophets, rising early, and sending them, but they did not hearken; whereas Sodom had no hands stayed on her, or prophets to warn them."

Ver. 25. *At that time Jesus answered, and said*, etc.] The time referred to is, when the disciples returned to him, and gave him an account of the success of their ministry, (<420717>Luke 10:17,21) who say nothing of the conversion of sinners, but of the spirits being subject to them; and may also refer to the several things spoken of in the context: it was at that time when Christ spoke to the multitude about John, and the excellency of his ministry, which yet was ineffectual to great numbers, who for a while attended on it; and when he took notice to the people, how he himself, as well as John, was rejected and vilified by the Pharisees, and received by publicans and sinners; and when he upbraided Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, for their impenitence and unbelief: taking occasion from hence, he "answered and said"; an Hebrew way of speaking, used when nothing goes before, to which what is said can be an answer; (see <180302>Job 3:2).

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth. This is an address to God, by way of thanksgiving; glorifying and praising him, confessing and acknowledging his wisdom, power, grace, and goodness, discovered in the things he after mentions: so far was he from being discouraged and dejected at the poor success of the Seventy: at his ill treatment by the Pharisees; and at the general impenitence and unbelief of the cities, where he preached and wrought his miracles; that he is abundantly thankful, and admires the distinguishing grace of God in the calling of a few in those places. This address is made to God as a "Father", as his Father, his own Father; for he was the only begotten of him, and dearly beloved by him: this epithet he makes use of, to show the near relation he stood in to him, and the freedom he could use with him: he also addresses him as "the Lord of heaven and earth"; he being the maker, upholder, and governor of both,

and which he fills with his presence; the one is his throne, and the other is his footstool. This he mentions to show the sovereignty of his Father, in the conversion of men; and that it was not for want of power in him, that there were no more wrought upon under the ministry of John, himself, and his disciples. The things he expresses his thankfulness for, follow;

because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent. The "things" he means are the doctrines of the Gospel; such as respect himself, his person, as God, and the Son of God; his office, as Messiah, Redeemer, and Saviour; and the blessings of grace, righteousness, and salvation by him. The persons from whom these things were hid, are "the wise and prudent"; in things worldly, natural, and civil; men of great parts and learning, of a large compass of knowledge, having a considerable share of sagacity, penetration, and wisdom; or, at least, who were wise and prudent in their own conceits, as were the Scribes and Pharisees, and the schools of Hillell and Shammai, the two famous doctors of that day: and indeed the people of the Jews in common were so; who thus applaud themselves at the eating of the passover every year, and say, hrwth ta µy[dwy wnlk µynwbn wnlk µymkj wnlk, "we are all wise, we are all prudent, we all understand the law" [f695]; the same is elsewhere [f696] said of all Israel; in their opinion they were so, yet the things of the Gospel are hidden from them. God may be said to "hide" these things, when either he does not afford the outward revelation of the Gospel; or, if he does, it is given forth in parables, or he does not give along with it the light of his Spirit and grace, but leaves men to their own darkness and blindness; so that they cannot see, perceive, and understand the beauty, glory, excellency, and suitableness of the doctrines of it. Now, when Christ confesses this, or gives thanks to God for it, it is a declaration that God has done so, and denotes his acquiescence in it; and is not properly a thanksgiving for that; but rather, that forasmuch as he has thought fit, in his infinite wisdom, to take such a method, he has been pleased to make a revelation of these things to others;

and hast revealed them unto babes; foolish ones, comparatively speaking, who have not those natural parts, learning, and knowledge others have, that wisdom and prudence in worldly and civil things; and are so in their own account, and in the esteem of the world; and who are as babes, helpless, defenceless, and impotent of themselves, to do or say anything that is spiritually good, and are sensible of the same: now to such souls

God reveals the covenant of his grace, Christ, and all the blessings of grace in him, the mysteries of the Gospel, and the unseen glories of another world. The veil of darkness and ignorance is removed from them; spiritual sight is given them; these things are set before them; they see a glory and suitableness in them; their desires are raised after them; their affections are set on them; their hearts are impressed with them; and they are helped to view their interest in them. The Jews themselves have a notion, that in the days of the Messiah, children and babes shall have knowledge of divine things.

> "Says Simeon ben Jochai [f697], it is not the pleasure of God that wisdom should be so revealed to the world; but when it is near the days of the Messiah, even aml[d yybr, "little children", or the "babes that are in the world", shall find out the hidden things of wisdom, and know thereby the ends, and the computations of times; and at that time it shall be revealed to all:"

and there is more truth in what they own elsewhere [f698], than they themselves are aware of, when they say, that

> "from the day that the temple was destroyed, prophecy has been taken away from the prophets, and given twqwnyt lw µyjwçl, "to fools and babes"."

Ver. 26. *Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight*.] Or, "so is the good will", or "pleasure before thee": thus, Æynplm ^wxr yhy, "let it be the good will before thee", or "in thy sight, O Lord", is a phrase often to be met with in the Jews' forms of prayer [f699]. Here the word designs the sovereign counsel and purpose of God, to which, and to which only, our Lord refers the different dispensations of God towards the sons of men: this is a reason which ought to satisfy everyone, and is better than ten thousand others that can be thought of, or devised by men. This difference among men, with respect to the Gospel revelation, cannot be owing to natural sagacity, prudence, and penetration; for these things are with those from whom it is hid; nor to any worthiness in those to whom it is revealed; for they are the poor, the base, the foolish things of this world, and even things that are not; nor to any foresight of their making a better use and improvement of such a revelation, but to the good will and pleasure of God only.

Ver. 27. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father*, etc.] This is to be understood of Christ, as mediator; for, as God, nothing was delivered to him; he had all things, all perfections, power, and glory his Father has; and is to be considered in the utmost extent: all persons are delivered to him, angels and men; good angels are delivered to him, to be confirmed in him, as their head, and to be made use of by him; spirits, evil spirits, which were subject to his disciples, are under him, and at his command and disposal; and their subjection to his disciples is owing to his power over them, which he communicated to them; all the elect of God are delivered to him, to be kept and saved by him; all the babes and little ones, to whom it was the Father's will to reveal the mysteries of grace, were his care and charge; all power in heaven, and in earth, are given unto him; and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid with him, which are distributed to any of the sons of men; all the blessings of grace, and the promises of the everlasting covenant, and all the glory and happiness of his people, are put into his hands:

and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; the transcendent glories and perfections of his nature, as the Son of God; nor the whole of his work and office, as mediator: or all that is committed to his charge, as such: all that he was to do, and suffer, for his people; all that he had done for them, and should communicate to, and bestow upon them.

Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son; his essence and glory, his mind and will, his purposes and decrees, his counsels and covenant; the grace and love of his heart to his chosen people; what he has prepared and laid up for them, and will make them partakers of to all eternity;

and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him; both himself, and his Father, and the grace and glory of each, which he does by his Spirit; who is a Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; and which entirely depends on his own sovereign will and pleasure.

Ver. 28. *Come unto me*, etc.] Christ having signified, that the knowledge of God, and the mysteries of grace, are only to be come at through him; and that he has all things relating to the peace, comfort, happiness, and salvation of men in his hands, kindly invites and encourages souls to come unto him for the same: by which is meant, not a local coming, or a coming to hear him preach; for so his hearers, to whom he more immediately directed his speech, were come already; and many of them did, as multitudes may, and do, in this sense, come to Christ, who never knew

him, nor receive any spiritual benefit by him: nor is it a bare coming under the ordinances of Christ, submission to baptism, or an attendance at the Lord's supper, the latter of which was not yet instituted; and both may be performed by men, who are not yet come to Christ: but it is to be understood of believing in Christ, the going of the soul to him, in the exercise of grace on him, of desire after him, love to him, faith and hope in him: believing in Christ, and coming to him, are terms synonymous, (<4865>John 6:35). Those who come to Christ aright, come as sinners, to a full, suitable, able, and willing Saviour; venture their souls upon him, and trust in him for righteousness, life, and salvation, which they are encouraged to do, by this kind invitation; which shows his willingness to save, and his readiness to give relief to distressed minds. The persons invited, are not "all" the individuals of mankind, but with a restriction,

all ye that labour, and are heavy laden; meaning, not these who are labouring in the service of sin and Satan, are laden with iniquity, and insensible of it: these are not weary of sin, nor burdened with it; not do they want or desire any rest for their souls; but such who groan, being burdened with the guilt of sin upon their consciences, and are pressed down with the unsupportable yoke of the law, and the load of human traditions; and have been labouring till they are weary, in order to obtain peace of conscience, and rest for their souls, by the observance of these things, but in vain. These are encouraged to come to him, lay down their burdens at his feet, look to, and lay hold by faith on his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; when they should enjoy that true spiritual consolation, which could never be attained to by the works of the law.

And I will give you rest; spiritual rest here, peace of conscience, ease of mind, tranquillity of soul, through an application of pardoning grace, a view of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, and full atonement of sin by his sacrifice; and eternal rest hereafter, in Abraham's bosom, in the arms of Jesus, in perfect and uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit. The Jews say[f700], that hrwt tjwnm, "the law is rest"; and so explain (<0149>Genesis 49:15 <1902>Psalm 23:2 <2713>Daniel 12:13) of it: but a truly sensible sinner enjoys no rest, but in Christ; it is like Noah's dove, which could find no rest for the soles of its feet, until it returned to the ark; and they themselves expect perfect rest in the days of the Messiah, and call his world hjwnm, rest[f701].

Ver. 29. *Take my yoke upon you*, etc.] The phrase is Rabbinical. The Jewish doctors often speak [f702] of µymç twklm lw[, "the yoke of the kingdom of heaven", and of persons taking it upon them; and which they exhort to, and express in much such language as here [f703]; açydq atwklm lw[wkyyl[wlybq, "take upon you the yoke of the holy kingdom", every day. They distinguish this from the yoke of the law, and say [f00]

> "a man must first take upon him the yoke of the kingdom of heaven, and after that take upon him the "yoke" of the commandment."

Their sense I take to be this, that a man must first make a profession of his faith in the God of Israel, and then live conformably to his law: agreeably to this, Christ exhorts such persons who come to him for rest and happiness, to profess their faith in him, to embrace the doctrines of the Gospel, to submit to his ordinances, and to walk according to those laws, commands, and orders, which he, as king of saints, has made, and requires obedience to: so those who come to him for life, and believe in him, as the Saviour of their souls, though they are not to trust in, and depend upon any duties performed by them; yet they are not to sit still, or lay aside the performance of good works, or live a licentious course of life, but are always to be doing the will and work of their Lord. And this he calls "his yoke", in distinction from the yoke of the law of Moses, and of the traditions of the elders.

And learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly in heart: respect seems to be had to (Zechariah 9:9) where such characters as these are given of the Messiah. The meekness, humility, and lowliness of Christ appear in his assumption of human nature; in his subjection to his Father; in the whole of his deportment and conversation among men; in his submission to the ordinance of baptism; in the whole course of his obedience to God, and in his sufferings and death: and he is to be imitated herein, by all his followers, who may learn many excellent things from his example, as well as from his doctrine; and particularly, that whereas, though he was so great a person, yet condescended to perform every duty with readiness and cheerfulness, his disciples should not think it below them to conform to every ordinance of his, to every branch of his will; for he has set them an example, that they should tread in his steps, and walk even as he has walked. There never was such an instance of humility, and lowliness of

mind, as Christ; nor is there any example so worthy of our imitation as his. The Jews have a saying [f705],

> "for ever let a man lylhk ^twwn[, "be meek as Hillell", and let him not be wrathful as "Shammai":"

which two men were presidents of their universities about the times of Christ. But our Lord says, "learn of me", not of "Hillell", or any of your doctors,

and ye shall find rest unto your souls; referring to (<2406>Jeremiah 6:16) and which shows the rest he speaks of in the preceding verse, to be not a corporal, but a spiritual one; and which is to be enjoyed "in", though not "for" the observance of Christ's commands; whose "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all" whose "paths are peace".

Ver. 30. *For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*] Christ calls a profession of faith in him, and subjection to his ordinances, a yoke, in allusion to the law of Moses, and in distinction from it; and a "burden", with respect to the very heavy ones the Scribes and Pharisees laid upon the shoulders of the people, obliging them to a strict observance of them; though of a different nature from either of them; "for his commandments are not grievous", hard and heavy to be borne, as their's were, but "easy and light": not that they are so to unregenerate men, or are easily performed by the strength of nature, and power of men's free will: but they are good and amiable, and lovely in their own nature, and are cheerfully complied with, and abundance of spiritual pleasure and delight is enjoyed in them by believers, when they have the presence of God, the assistance of his Spirit, and the discoveries of his love. Moreover, the commands of Christ, and the ordinances of the Gospel, are so in comparison of the law of Moses; which required perfect obedience, but gave no strength to perform, and threatened with condemnation and death, in case of the least failure; and of the numerous, and some very severe rites and usages of the ceremonial law; and of the bulky and heavy traditions of the elders, and ordinances of men.

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 12

Ver. 1. *At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn*, etc.] That is, the corn fields, as the other evangelists express it. It being on a sabbath day, it is very probable, that Christ and his disciples were going to some public place of worship, the way to which lay through some fields of corn, which were now ripe: for Luke says, it was on the "second sabbath after the first", or rather "the first sabbath after the second"; that is, the first sabbath after the second day of the passover, when the sheaf of the first fruit was offered, and harvest was begun.

And his disciples were an hungered; it being in the morning before they had broke their fast; and this circumstance is mentioned to show the reason of the following action, and to excuse it: at which the Pharisees were so much offended, and of which they accused them, as having done what was very criminal:

and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat; Luke adds, "rubbing them in their hands"; and so here in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, it is rendered, "they began to rub": as they passed along, they plucked off the ears of corn, either barley or wheat, and rubbed them in their hands, to get the grain clear of the husk, or beard, and eat them; contenting themselves with such mean and unprepared food, when the Jews on that day fed on the best of dainties [f706].

Ver. 2. *But when the Pharisees saw it*, etc.] Who went along with him, or followed him, being employed to make observation on his words and actions,

they said unto him; Luke says, "unto them", the disciples: it seems, they took notice of this action both to Christ and his disciples, and first spoke of it to the one, and then to the other, or to both together:

behold thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day! they mention it with astonishment, and indignation. What they refer to, is not their walking on the sabbath day: this they might do, according to

their canons, provided they did not exceed two thousand cubits, which were a sabbath day's journey [f707] nor was it their passing through the corn fields; though, according to them [f708],

> "it was not lawful for a man to visit his gardens, wytwdçw, "or his fields", on the sabbath day, to see what they want, or how the fruits grow; for such walking is to do his own pleasure."

But this they knew was not the case of Christ, and his disciples, who were not proprietors of these fields: nor was it merely their plucking the ears of corn, and rubbing and eating them, which were not their own, but another man's; for this, according to the law, in (Deuteronomy 23:25) was lawful to be done: but what offended the Pharisees was, that it was done on a sabbath day, it being, as they interpret it, a servile work, and all one as reaping; though, in the law just mentioned, it is manifestly distinguished from it. Their rule is [f709]

> "he that reaps (on the sabbath day) ever so little, is guilty (of stoning), awh rxwq hdlwt çlwtw, and "plucking of ears of corn is a derivative of reaping";"

and is all one as its primitive, and punishable with the same kind of death, if done presumptuously: so Philo the Jew observes [f710], that the rest of the sabbath not only reached to men, bond and free, and to beasts, but even to trees, and plants; and that ου ερνος ου κλαδον, αλλ ουδε πεταλον εφειται τεμειν, "it was not lawful to cut a plant, or branch, or so much as a leaf", on a sabbath day: and it may be what might make this offence of the disciples the more heinous was, that they plucked these ears, and ate them, and so broke their fast before morning prayer; for a man might not eat any thing on a sabbath day until morning prayers were ended in the synagogue, nor indeed on any other day; for they used not to eat bread till after they had offered the daily sacrifice, which was about the third hour of the day, or nine o'clock in the morning; nor did they eat till the fourth hour, or ten o'clock [f711].

Ver. 3. *But he said unto them, have ye not read*, etc.] If they had not read the Scriptures, they were very unfit persons either to be teachers, or censurers of others, and must have been very slothful and negligent; and if they had, they could not but have observed the case of David, which Christ produces in vindication of his disciples:

what David did when he was an hungred; which was the case of the disciples, and is therefore mentioned; it being also the circumstance which could, and did excuse what was done by David and his men: and the Jews themselves own, that in case of hunger the showbread might be eaten, by those that were not priests; not only that which was removed from the table, but that which was upon it; yea, even when there was none to put in its room [f712]; and that David was in the utmost distress, and therefore desired it, and it was granted him on that account. They represent him as thus saying to the priest [f713],

> "when he found there was none but showbread, give it me, that we may not die with hunger; tbç hjwd twçpn qpsç, "for danger of life drives away the sabbath";"

which perfectly agrees with our Lord's argument, and justifies the apostles conduct: and this was not a single fact of David's, but of others also;

and they that were with him; for though in (<0921 01>1 Samuel 21:1) he is said to be "alone, and no man with him"; yet this must be understood either comparatively, having but very few with him, and which were as none, considering his dignity; or thus, though none came with him to Ahimelech, pretending to the priest he had a secret affair of the king's to transact; and therefore had left his servants in a certain place, and desires bread for himself and them; concerning whom the priest and he discourses, as may be seen in the place referred to: so that though no man was with him at the priest's house, yet there were some with him, and who partook with him in eating of the showbread.

Ver. 4. *How he entered into the house of God*, etc.] Not the temple, which was not then built; but the tabernacle, which was then at Nob, the city of the priests, and which probably adjoined to Abimelech's house:

and did eat the shewbread; for that this is meant by the hallowed bread, in (<0921 06>1 Samuel 21:6) is certain; though R. Joseph Kimchi [f714] thinks it was the bread of the thank offering; to which R. Levi ben Getsom [f715] seems to incline: but the general sense of the Jewish doctors [f716] is, that it was the showbread; and which is very clear from that text, and is rightly affirmed by Christ;

which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests: (see <0240 5>Leviticus 24:5,9) and so the Jews say that

this bread μyrzl rwsa, "is forbidden to strangers" [f717]; that is, to any but the priests, which, after the burning of the frankincense, was divided equally among them: that course of priests that came into the service had six cakes, and that which went out six; though the high priest had a right to half himself, but he did not use to take it, it being judged not to his honour to do so [f718]. No hint is here given, nor in the history, in (<0921>1 Samuel 21:1) that it was on the sabbath day that David came to Ahimelech, and ate the showbread; but this is observed, and disputed, by the Jewish writers. Some indeed are in a doubt about it; but others [f719] readily give into it, that it was on the sabbath day, which he chose to flee in, for the greater safety and preservation of his life: and indeed it seems reasonable it should be on that day; since on that day only the showbread was removed from the table, and other loaves put in the room. One of their writers [f720] says,

> "that showbread was not to be eaten, but on the day, and night of the sabbath day; and on the going out of the sabbath day; and on the going out of the sabbath David came there."

Now our Lord's argument stands thus, that if David, a holy, good man, and, the men that were with him, who were men of religion and conscience, when in great distress, through hunger, ate of the showbread, which was unlawful for any to eat of but priests, the high priest himself assenting to it; then it could not be criminal in his disciples, when an hungred, to pluck, rub, and eat a few ears of corn, which were lawful for any man to eat, even though it was on the sabbath day: and for the further vindication of them, he adds,

Ver. 5. *Or have ye not read in the law*, etc.] (<0428>Numbers 28:9) by which law the priests were obliged, every sabbath day, to offer up two lambs for a burnt offering; to which were annexed many servile works, as killing the sacrifice, flaying it, cutting it in pieces, and laying it on the altar, cutting of wood, and putting that in order, and kindling the fire: from all which, it might be observed,

how that on the sabbath days, the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless. There were many things, which, according to the Jewish canons, the priests might do on the sabbath day; particularly they might slay the sacrifice: it was a rule with them, tbç ta hjwjç htjd, "that slaying drives away the sabbath" [f721]. They might also knead, make, and bake the showbread on the sabbath day: their general rule was,

as R. Akiba says, that what was possible to be done on the evening of the sabbath, did not drive away the sabbath; but what was not possible to be done on the sabbath eve, did drive away the sabbath [f722]: so they might kill the passover, sprinkle its blood, wipe its inwards, and burn the fat on the sabbath day [f723], with many other things. What exculpated these men was, that what they did was done in the temple, and for the service of it, upon which an emphasis is put; and agrees with their canons, which say, that there is no prohibition in the sanctuary; awh r th çdqmb twbç rwsya, "that which is forbidden to be done on the sabbath, is lawful to be done in the sanctuary" [f724]: and whereas, it might be objected to the disciples of Christ, that they were not priests; and what they did was not in the temple, but in the fields; to this it is replied, in the following words:

Ver. 6. *But I say unto you*, etc.] Who Christ knew would be ready to object, as above, and therefore prevents them, by saying,

that in this place is one greater than the temple; meaning himself, who was the Lord and Proprietor of the temple, and in his human nature the antitype of it; (see <430219>John 2:19) and was infinitely more sacred than that. Some copies read μειζον, "something greater"; referring either to the human nature of Christ, in which the Godhead dwells bodily, and so infinitely greater than the temple; or to the health of his disciples, which was in danger, through hunger: or to the ministry of the apostles, which, by satisfying nature, they were more capable of performing; either of which was of more moment than the sacrifices and service of the temple. Christ's argument is, that if the temple, and the service of it, excused the priests from blame, in doing things in it on the sabbath day, which otherwise might not be done; then much more might his presence, who was greater than the temple, excuse his disciples from blame in this action of rubbing and eating the ears of corn; which was done to satisfy hunger, and to render them the more capable of performing their ministerial function; and which was of more importance than the service of the priests.

Ver. 7. *But if ye had known what this meaneth*, etc.,] The passage of Scripture in (Hos 6:6)

I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; of the sense of which, *see Gill "<401213>Matthew 9:13"*

ye would not have condemned the guiltless. Our Lord taxes the Pharisees both with ignorance of the Scriptures, in which they pretended to be very

knowing, and took upon them to be the interpreters of; and with inhumanity, for condemning innocent persons, the apostles, for rubbing a few ears of corn, for the refreshment of nature; which they would never have done, had they understood the word, and will of God; who prefers acts of humanity, compassion, and mercy, to the observance of rites and ceremonies; or had they the common affections of human nature, and those bowels of compassion which one man ought to show to another.

Ver. 8. *For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day*.] By "the Son of man" is meant, not any man, as some have thought; for no mere man is lord of any law, moral or ritual, natural or positive; or has a power of disposing of it, and dispensing with it at pleasure; but Christ himself; which is the constant sense of this phrase in the New Testament, and is a character of the Messiah in the old, (<270713>Daniel 7:13) who, as he was the institutor of the sabbath among the Jews, that being a ritual, and of mere positive institution, could dispense with it, and even abrogate it at his pleasure. The Jews so far agree to this, that he that commanded the law of the sabbath, could dispense with it; they say[f725], that

> "the day on which Jericho was taken was the sabbath day; and that though they slew and burnt on the sabbath day, tbç llj l hwx tbçh l[hwxç ym, "he that commanded the observation of the sabbath, commanded the profanation of it"."

And since Christ is greater than the temple, and has all the perfections of the divine nature in him, is equal to the Father in power and glory; and even as mediator, has all power in heaven and earth given him; so as he is Lord of all other things, he is of the sabbath, and has a power of dispensing with it, and even of abolishing it; (see <510216>Colossians 2:16,17) and since the Lord of the sabbath had a power of dispensing with it, and made use of it in the cases of David and his men, and of the priests in the temple formerly; the Pharisees ought not to think it strange, that the Son of man, who is equally Lord of the sabbath, dispensed with it in his disciples now.

Ver. 9. *And when he was departed thence*, etc.] From the corn fields, where the disciples had plucked the ears of corn, and this conversation passed between Christ and the Pharisees about the violation of the sabbath, he went into their synagogue; not on the same sabbath day, as one might be led to conclude from the account of this evangelist, but on another sabbath, as Luke expresses it, (<420606>Luke 6:6). He might indeed directly go into one

of their synagogues the same day, where he and his disciples seem to have been going, and stay in the city the week following; and then, as it is said in (<4001>Mark 3:1) he entered again into the synagogue; not being afraid of the Pharisees, who sought an advantage against him; nor deterred by them from doing good to men; and willing to take another opportunity of exposing their ignorance and malice.

Ver. 10. *And behold, there was a man which had his hand withered*, etc.] Or dry; the juices were dried up, the nerves and sinews contracted, so that it was of no manner of use to him: Luke says, it was his right hand, which was so much the worse; and means not only his hand, but the whole arm. Such a case is mentioned in the Talmud [f726], "it happened to one, "w[wrz hçbyç, that his arm was dry, or withered. Jerom says [f727], in the Gospel which the Nazarenes and Hebionites used, this man is said to be a plasterer, and so might possibly come by his misfortune through his business; and being a man that got his bread by his hand labour, the case was the more affecting. This account is introduced with a "behold!" it being remarkable that such a case should offer so opportunely, of showing his divine power in healing such a disorder; and of his authority, as the Son of man, over the sabbath; and of putting to silence his enemies, the Pharisees: and who, upon seeing such an object, put the following question to him;

and they asked him, saying, is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? and which was put, not for information sake, as willing to be instructed in this point; for their determinations were, that healing was not lawful on such a day; nor were any means to be made use of for that purpose: if a man received a cure accidentally, it was very well; but no methods were to be taken with intention: as for instance [f728];

> "if a man had an ailment in his throat, he might not gargle it with oil, but he might swallow a large quantity of oil, aprtn aprtn µaw "and "if he was healed, he was healed" (i.e. it was very well, it was no breach of the sabbath); they may not chew mastic, nor rub the teeth with spice, on the sabbath day, hawprl ˆywktmç ˆmzb, "when it is intended "for healing"; but if it is intended for the savour of his mouth, it is free."

There are several things they allowed might be done on the sabbath; but then they did not reckon them to come under the notion of healing.

> "Three [f729] things R. Ishmael bar Jose said he had heard from R. Matthia ben Charash; they might let blood for the stranguary on the sabbath day; one that was bit by a mad dog, they might give him hog's liver to eat; and he that had an ailment in his mouth, they might put spice to it on the sabbath day: but the wise men say of these, that there is not in them hawpr µwçm, anything of medicine."

Indeed, in case of extreme danger of life they did admit of the use of medicine, by the prescription of a physician [f730].

> "Danger of life drives away the sabbath; wherefore, if there is any danger in a sick person, it is lawful to kindle a fire for him, etc. and they may kill, and bake, and boil: and though there may be no apparent danger, only a doubt of danger; as when one physician says there is a necessity, and another physician says there is none, they may profane the sabbath for him."

Hence it is very clear with what view the Pharisees asked Christ this question; and that it was, as the evangelist says, that they might accuse him: either of cruelty and weakness, should he answer in the negative, that either he was not able to heal the poor man before him, or wanted compassion; or should he answer in the affirmative, as they expected, and act upon it, then they might have wherewith to charge him before the sanhedrim as a violator of the sabbath, and of their canons concerning it.

Ver. 11. *And he said unto them*, etc.] Well knowing their intentions, and also their usages and customs, which he was able to produce and object to them; in which, through covetousness, they showed more regard to their beasts, than they did humanity to their fellow creatures:

what man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? Christ appeals to them in a case which was usually done among them, and which, without delay, no man would scruple to do; though their present rule of direction, in such a case, is this [f731]:

> "if a beast fall into a ditch, or a pool of water, if food can be given it, where it is, they feed it till the going out of the sabbath; but if not, bolsters and pillows may be brought, and put under it, and if it can come out: it may come out:"

and which is elsewhere [f732] a little differently expressed;

> "if a beast fall into a ditch, or pool of water, it is forbidden a man to bring it out with his hand; but if he can give it food where it is, it may be fed till the going out of the sabbath:"

which seems to have been made since the times of Christ, and in opposition to this observation of his.

Ver. 12. *How much then is a man better than a sheep?* etc.] As a rational creature must be better, and more excellent, than an irrational one, more care is to be taken of, and more mercy shown unto, the one, than the other: even the health of a man is preferable to the life of a beast; and if it is lawful to give food to a beast, and make use of means for its relief, and for the lifting it up out of a ditch, when fallen into it on the sabbath day, "wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days", to men; to do acts of beneficence and humanity to them, among which must be reckoned healing of diseases and infirmities: and particularly, if it is lawful to take a sheep out of a ditch on the sabbath day, it must be right to restore to a man the use of his hand on such a day; and especially to one that gets his bread by his hand labour, as it is very likely this man did. This was such a strong way of arguing, that the Jews could not well object to it; and it appears, that they were confounded and put to silence; for, as Mark observes, "they held their peace": and indeed they allow of everything to be done where life is in danger, though not otherwise: they say [f733],

> "they may take care of the preservation of life on the sabbath; and if he is prepared for it, lo! this is praiseworthy, and there is no need to take a licence from the sanhedrim: as when a man sees a child fallen into the sea, he may spread a net, and bring him out; and if he is prepared for it, lo! this is praiseworthy, and there is no need to take a licence from the sanhedrim, though he was fishing: if he sees a child fallen into a ditch, he may rake into the mud and bring him out; and if he is prepared for it, lo! this is praiseworthy, and there is no need to take a licence from the sanhedrim, though he had set a ladder ready."

It is said of Hillell [f734], that

> "he sat by a window to hear the words of the living God, from the mouth of Shemaia and Abtalion; and they say that that day was the evening of the sabbath, and the winter solstice, and the snow

descended from heaven; and when the pillar of the morning ascended, (when it was daylight,) Shemaia said to Abtalion, brother Abtalion, all other days the house is light, but today it is dark, perhaps it is a cloudy day: they lift up their eyes, and saw the form of a man at the window; they went up, and found upon him snow the height of three cubits; they broke through and delivered him; and they washed him, and anointed him, and set him over against his dwelling, and said, very worthy is this man tbç ta wyl[llhl, "to profane the sabbath for him"."

And if it was lawful to dig a man out of the snow, and do these several things for him on the sabbath day, why not cure a man of a withered hand, and especially when done by a word speaking, and without any labour?

Ver. 13. *Then saith he to the man*, etc.] That is, after he had looked round about upon them, to observe their countenances; and what answer they would make to his arguments; and with anger for their inhumanity and cruelty; being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, i.e. their unmercifulness to their fellow creatures, and the stupidity and blindness of their minds, being ignorant of the Scriptures, and of the sabbath, the nature, use, and Lord of it; which things are observed by the Evangelist Mark; then, in a commanding authoritative way, almighty power going along with his word, he says to the man who stood forth before him, and the Pharisees,

stretch forth thine hand, which was before contracted and shrivelled up;

and he stretched it forth with all the ease imaginable, and was, not only able to do this, but to make use of it any way;

for it was restored whole like as the other; his left hand, which had never been damaged. This was an instance of Christ's power; a proof of the lawfulness of healing on the sabbath day; and a rebuke to the Pharisees for their cruelty and uncharitableness. This man was an emblem of the inability of men to do anything that is spiritually good, and of the power and efficacy of divine grace to enable persons to stretch out their hands, and do things which they of themselves are not equal to.

Ver. 14. *Then the Pharisees went out*, etc.] Of the synagogue, being, as Luke says, filled with madness, at the unanswerableness of his arguments; and because of the violation of the sabbath, as they thought; and most of

all, because of the miracle wrought by him; and which was so glaringly a proof of his being Lord of the sabbath, and could not fail of creating him esteem among the people: and held a council against him, how they might destroy him. Mark says, the council was held by them with the Herodians; of whom, (see Gill on "Matthew 22:16") who, though they differed from them both in religion and politics, yet might be thought very proper persons to advise with about this matter; and especially, as they might have a greater interest at court, than they had. Nor did they scruple to enter into such a consultation, though on the sabbath day, and about the taking away of the life of an innocent person; which shows what scared consciences, and hard hearts they had, and how full of hypocrisy they were.

Ver. 15. *But when Jesus knew it*, etc.] Their consultation against him, as he did, not by any discovery made to him by men, but as the omniscient God; he withdrew himself from thence; from the synagogue and city, where he was, to the sea of Galilee, and his disciples with him, as Mark observes; not through fear, but because his time was not yet come, that he must suffer and die for his people; he had some other work to do first, and therefore rightly and wisely provides for his safety. And great multitudes followed him; from Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; and were joined by another multitude of people, who came from about Tyre and Sidon, as Mark relates: so that his departure was not so very private; nor was he forsaken by the common people, though the Pharisees were so offended with him. And he healed them all; that stood in need of healing, as many as had plagues and unclean spirits; practising agreeably to his doctrine, that it was lawful to do good on the sabbath day, and to heal the bodies as well as the souls of men.

Ver. 16. *And charged them that they should not make him known*.] This charge was given, either to the multitude that followed him, and were healed by him, that when they returned to the respective places from whence they came, they would not make it known to his enemies where he was, and what he had done to them; being neither desirous of popular applause and glory, nor willing to provoke them more, nor to fall into their hands as yet; or else, as Mark seems to intimate, to the unclean spirits, that they would not declare who he was, the Son of God, they confessed him to be: and very likely it was given to both, and that they should neither tell where he was, nor who he was; and this charge was a very severe one; for the word signifies a charge with threatenings, should they not observe his orders.

Ver. 17. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying*.] (<230401>Isaiah 42:1-4) not that Christ gave the above charge with this view, that this passage in Isaiah might have its accomplishment: but this is an observation of the evangelist, that what was now done by Christ, by his private departure from the Pharisees, being unwilling to irritate them more; by his preaching to the Idumeans, Tyrians, and Sidonians; by healing their diseases, and shunning all ostentation and popular applause; and prohibiting to tell who and where he was, was a fulfilling of this prophecy; in which the Holy Spirit foreknowing the disposition and actions of Christ, predicted them: which, when considered, must be looked upon as a very large proof of the truth of his being the Messiah. For that this prophecy belongs to the Messiah, is owned by the Jews themselves [f735].

Ver. 18. *Behold, my servant whom I have chosen*, etc.] These are the words of God the Father, speaking to the church, concerning Christ, as mediator; who, as such, is God's servant, employed by him, and obedient to him, in the work of man's salvation; and is a righteous, faithful, prudent, and diligent one; whom he, from all eternity, had chosen to this service, and in the fulness of time sent him to do it, and supported and upheld him in it; for it is whom I uphold, in the Hebrew text. My beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased; who always was the object of his love, not only as his own and only begotten Son, but as in his office capacity, as mediator; in regard to which he was his elect, as it is in Isaiah; and, as such, he was always delighted in his person, well pleased with his office, and the discharge of it, and which he declared more than once by a voice from heaven, as at his baptism, and at his transfiguration on the mount: I will put my Spirit upon him; as he did without measure, whereby he was abundantly qualified for his whole work, and particularly for preaching the Gospel, being richly anointed with gifts and graces, above his fellows; of which the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him, as a dove at his baptism, which immediately preceded his public ministry, was a symbol. And he shall show judgment unto the Gentiles; meaning, not the general judgment, at the last day, which is committed to him; nor the laws of Justice and equity; but the Gospel, which is the produce of the God of judgment; best informs the judgment of men about the business of salvation; gives an account of the righteous procedure of God in justifying sinners, by the righteousness of his Son; and teaches men to live soberly, righteously, and godly: this Christ brought forth, and showed, at this time, to the Heathens, the Idumeans,

Tyrians, and Sidonians; who flocked unto him; whereby this part of the prophecy had its fulfilment: in the Hebrew it is, “he shall bring forth”; that is, out of his heart and mouth, and is the same as “show” here.

Ver. 19. *He shall not strive*, etc.] Or contend in a wrangling way, as the disputers of this world do about words to no profit, and for the sake of victory only, and popular applause, but shall choose rather to withdraw, than to carry on a controversy to a great length, to little purpose; or, as men litigate a point in a court of judicature, where one is plaintiff, and the other defendant. In the Hebrew text it is, “he shall not cry”; he shall not act the part of a plaintiff; he shall not complain, or bring in any charge, or accusation against any, but choose rather to suffer wrong, than to contend: thus hq[x signifies such a cry, as is a complaint of injustice, (<23B507>Isaiah 5:7) and q[wx a plaintiff, one that brings an action against another [f736]: but Christ did not so, he would not accuse to the Father, nor complain against his most implacable enemies, but left that to Moses, in whom they trusted; “nor cry”, or, as in the Hebrew text, lift up; that is, his voice, in a clamorous way, using reviling and opprobrious language, or menaces and threatenings; but, on the contrary, he silently put up all abuses, and patiently bore every affront, and behaved peaceably, quietly, committing himself and cause to a righteous God.

Neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets; or, as in the Hebrew text, “nor cause his voice to be heard in the street”: the sense is the same, and the meaning is, that he sought not worldly honour, popular applause, and to be seen of men; he did nothing in an ostentatious way, said nothing in his own commendation, was never heard to praise himself, and chose that others should be silent concerning him: for this does not so much regard the lowness of his voice, as if that was not so sonorous as to be heard without doors, when he preached within, as his modest mein and suitable deportment; nor the places where he usually ministered, which was sometimes in the street, as well as in an house, or on a mountain, or by the sea side, or in the temple, and the synagogues. The Ethiopic version here is very wrong, “no man shall hear his voice in the synagogues”; for his voice was often heard there.

Ver. 20. *A bruised reed shall he not break*, etc.] Various are the thoughts of interpreters, about what is meant by this, and by

the smoking flax shall he not quench. Some think the Scribes and Pharisees are designed, whose power Christ could easily crush, and their wrath and fury restrain, but would not, till the time of his vengeance was come. Others that the publicans and sinners are intended, of whose conversion and salvation there were more hope than of the Scribes and Pharisees; and which Christ greatly sought after, and therefore cherished and encouraged them in his ministry and conversation. Some are of opinion, that such who have fallen into sin, and are under great decays of grace, are meant, whom Christ has compassion on, succours, and restores: but rather young converts, such as are under first awakenings, are here pointed at; who, like to a “bruised reed”, or “broken” one, one that is in some measure broke, near being broken to pieces, are wounded in their spirits, have their hearts broken and contrite, under a sense of their sinfulness, vileness, weakness, and unworthiness; whom Christ is so far from breaking and destroying, that he binds up their broken hearts, heals their wounds, and restores comforts to them: and who are like to “smoking flax”, or, as the Syriac reads it, Pjpjmd agrç, “a smoking lamp”; to which the Arabic and Persic versions agree; meaning the wick of the lamp, which being just lighted, seems ready to go out, having scarce any light, only a little fire in it, which makes it smoke: so these have but little light of knowledge, faith, and comfort, and a great deal of darkness and infirmity; only there is some warmth in their affections, which go upwards “like pillars of smoke, perfumed with frankincense”; and such Christ is so far from neglecting, and putting out, that he blows up the sparks of grace into a flame, and never utterly leaves the work,

till he sends forth judgment into victory; that is, till he sends forth the Gospel into their hearts, accompanied with his mighty power, in the light and comfort of it; which informs their judgments, enlightens their understandings, bows their wills, raises their affections, sanctifies their souls, works effectually in them, under the influence of his Spirit and grace, to the carrying on of the work of grace in them to the end; and making them victorious over all their enemies, and more than conquerors, through him that has loved them. The Targum of Jonathan paraphrases the words thus;

> “the meek, who are as a bruised reed, he will not break; and the poor, who are as an obscure lamp, he will not quench.”

Ver. 21. *And in his name shall the Gentiles trust*.] The former part of the text is omitted, “he shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth”; but is inserted in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel; and which some understand of the bruised reed, and smoking flax, and others of Christ; the latter sense is to be preferred. The passage, here cited, is somewhat different in Isaiah: for there it is, “and the isles shall wait for his law”; but the difference, at least, in sense, is not so great as it may appear at first sight: for, µyya, as Grotius observes, does not always signify “islands”, but nations, and countries, that are upon the continent, (<01005>Genesis 10:5) and so might be rightly rendered here, the Gentiles, or “nations”; and by “the name” of Christ is meant his Gospel: (see <44915>Acts 9:15) which Isaiah calls his “law”: that is, his doctrine, the doctrine of righteousness, life, and salvation by him, which is the ground and foundation of hope, and trust in him; and they that wait for it, may be truly said to hope, or trust in it. This began to have its accomplishment in the Idumeans, Tyrians, and Sidonians, now attending on the ministry of Christ; and has had a greater accomplishment since: the Gospel having been preached in the Gentile world, both upon the main land, and in the isles afar off; whereby multitudes have been brought to hope, and believe in Christ, as their Saviour and Redeemer.

Ver. 22. *Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil*, etc.] About this time, or some little time after, when he was returned from the sea of Galilee, and was come into a certain house; (see <41019>Mark 3:19 <40146>Matthew 12:46,13:1) some persons brought him a demoniac, in compassion to the possessed man, and being persuaded of the power of Christ to heal him by the late cures he had performed. A like instance we have in (<40932>Matthew 9:32,33,34; <42114>Luke 11:14,15), which had a like effect upon the people, and cavilled at by the Pharisees in much the same way; and which cavils were answered in much the same words; and yet the case is not the same; for that man was only dumb, but this both

blind and dumb; not by birth, or through the defect of nature, or by any natural distemper that had attended him, but through the malice of Satan, by divine permission; his blindness, and dumbness, were the effects of his being possessed with a devil, who had deprived him of his sight, and speech. The word rendered “dumb”, signifies both deaf and dumb, and answers to the Hebrew word çrj, which sometimes [f737] is used of a deaf man only, who can speak, but not hear; and often of one that can neither

speak, nor hear; which is the case of such as are born deaf: it seems as if this man could hear, though he could not speak; since no mention is made of his want of hearing, or of Christ's restoring it to him; for it follows,

and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb, both spake and saw. This he did, not by making use of medicines, but by a word speaking, dispossessing Satan; so that the cause of blindness and dumbness being removed, the effects ceased, and the man was restored to his sight, and speech, as before. He had his sight to behold his Saviour, and a tongue to praise his name: so when men are turned from Satan unto God, and are delivered from his thraldom and bondage, they are brought into marvellous light, and put into a capacity of showing forth the praises of God.

Ver. 23. *And all the people were amazed*, etc.] At the cure; it was such an instance of divine power, and so glaring a proof, that the person who wrought it was more than a man, and must be the Messiah. This is to be understood of the greater part of the people, not of every individual, and of the common people only; for it had a different effect upon the Pharisees, as hereafter appears; but in these it not only produced admiration, but conviction, faith, and confession:

and said, is not this the son of David? or the Messiah; for dwd ˆb, "the son of David", is a character of the Messiah, well known among the Jews; *See Gill "<401001>Matthew 1:1"* because he was promised to David, was to be raised up of his seed, and to spring from his loins. This question they put, not as doubting of it, but as inclining, at least, to believe it, if not as expressing their certainty of it: and is, as if they had said, who can this person be but the true Messiah, that has wrought such a miracle as this? for from his miracles they rightly concluded who he was; though the Jews since, in order to deprive Jesus of this true characteristic of the Messiah, deny that miracles are to be performed by him [f738].

Ver. 24. *But when the Pharisees heard it*, etc.] Very probably not the same that went out, and held a council against Christ to destroy him, (<401214>Matthew 12:14) but others that were come from Judea and Jerusalem, and were with him in the house, and saw the miracle: these, when they heard what the people said, and how ready they were to believe, and own Jesus to be the Messiah, in order to prevent it, being filled with envy and malice,

they said, this fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. They could not deny the miracle, or that it was one; but to deprive him of the glory of it, and even reproach him for it, and to bring him into contempt with the people, they not only speak of him in a scornful manner, ουτος, "this" sorry man, "this" vile fellow; but ascribe the miracle he wrought to familiarity with the devil, to diabolical influence and skill in magic art: they pretended he was in confederacy with Satan, and was carrying on his interest: and therefore, that he might gain credit and reputation, the prince of devils suffered the inferior ones to remove at his word: and of these their ancestors, the Jews have learnt to fix this vile imputation, and blasphemous piece of slander upon Christ; who, they say [f739], brought enchantments, or witchcrafts, out of Egypt, in the cuttings of his flesh, whereby he performed the things he did. Concerning Beelzebub, *See Gill "<40>10025>Matthew 10:25"* here called "the prince of devils"; it being a prevailing notion among the Jews, that there is one devil who is the head of all the rest, and who is by them sometimes called Asmodeus: they say [f740], when Solomon sinned against the Lord, he sent to him ydyçd aklm yadmça, "Asmodeus the king of the devils", and drove him from his throne, and so elsewhere [f741]: and sometimes Samael, who is styled [f742] Samael the prince, µydçd aklm, "the king of devils"; and the angel Samael, the wicked, µynjçh lk çar, "the head of all the Satans", or devils [f743]: and we often read [f744] of µnhygh rç, "the prince of hell"; by whom the same is meant, as here, by Beelzebub; for if anyone devil is more wicked, odious, and execrable than the rest, the chief of them may be thought to be so; for which reason he is here mentioned.

Ver. 25. *And Jesus knew their thoughts*, etc.] He not only heard their blasphemous words, but was privy to their secret thoughts; he knew their vile malicious intentions and designs, with what view they expressed themselves in this manner, on purpose to reproach him, and set the people against him, contrary to the inward light of their minds, and dictates of their consciences; who must, and did know the contrary of what they said: and regarding the inward frame of their minds, as well as their words, and which is a proof of his omniscience, and so of his deity, and consequently of his Messiahship,

said unto them the following parables, as Mark calls them, (<41>0323>Mark 3:23) or proverbial expressions:

every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; a government, in which there is a disagreement between the chiefs of it, and the body of the people, or where one part is opposed to the other, or in which a civil and intestine war is begun and prosecuted, cannot continue in any comfortable situation, and flourishing state, but must come to nothing: this is a maxim that has been so often fatally verified, that no one will doubt the truth of it; and the same holds true of lesser communities, of cities, and families:

and every city, or house, divided against itself, shall not stand. If citizens fall out with their magistrates, or one with another, and turn out, and disfranchise each other; and if the heads of families, and the respective branches thereof, quarrel with, and divide from one another, a dissolution of the whole must ensue; and the same may be said of the kingdom and government of Satan. These, it is very likely, were common sayings among the Jews, and they might be very easily understood by them; and are very appropriately produced by Christ to illustrate the present case, and confute the vile and blasphemous suggestions of the Pharisees: a proverbial expression, much like to these, is to be read in the writings of the Jews, brjyl wpws tqwljm wb çyç tyb lk, "every house, in which there is a division, at the end shall come to desolation" [f745].

Ver. 26. *And if Satan cast out Satan*, etc.] That is, if Satan, the same with Beelzebub, casts out the rest of the Satans, or other devils, of which he is the prince and head,

he is divided against himself; he acts contrary to his own interest, which is to keep possession of the bodies and souls of men; and consequently it must, in course, be subversive of his power and dominion:

how shall then his kingdom stand? he will never be able to maintain his authority, and keep up the show of a government, as he does: for these words suggest, that there is a form of government among the devils, who are united in one body, under one head; and whose unity and concord are their greatest strength, as in all other governments. Our Lord's argument, and which is his first, for others follow, is, that since Satan, who is so cunning and crafty, can never be thought to act such an opposite part to himself, subversive of his kingdom and government; and which would give so much credit to Christ, and serve so much to strengthen his interest, as to

assist him in the casting out of devils; the weakness, and maliciousness of such a suggestion, must be clear and evident to all.

Ver. 27. *And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils*, etc.] As the Pharisees asserted, and would have the people believe; for this is not allowed, only for argument sake supposed:

by whom do your children cast them out? meaning not the apostles and disciples of Christ, the children of the Jews, to whom Christ gave power of casting out devils, and who had exercised it in his name; and therefore argues, if they in his name cast out devils, why could he not do it himself, without the help of Satan? wherefore these would be judges against them: but, no doubt, the Pharisees had no better opinion of the disciples, and of their ejection of devils, than of Christ; wherefore, it is not likely, that our Lord should argue with them from hence: but rather, he means, some among themselves, who pretended to have a power of exorcising and ejecting of devils, either in the name of Jesus, as some of them did, (<40>Mark 9:38; <44>Acts 19:13,14) or in the name of their kings, righteous men, prophets and patriarchs, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob [f746]; and which practice, perhaps, they took up and made pretensions to, in imitation of Christ and his apostles; so as Christ healed men possessed of devils, they also affected to do the same. A story is reported [f747],

> "concerning Ben Talmion, that a miracle was wrought by R. Eleazar bar Jose, who healed a king's daughter at Rome, in whose body the devil entered, whose name was Ben Talmion; and they brought him (the Jew) to the king's treasury, to take what he would, but he would take nothing from thence, but letters, in which were written the decrees they had decreed against Israel; and when he found them, he tore them to pieces, and there he saw the vessels of the house of the sanctuary, in the treasury."

Now since the Jews pretended to do these things, Christ asks them, by whom they cast out devils? Whether by the Spirit of God, or by Beelzebub? They would doubtless say by the former, and not the latter, which would show their great partiality; for admitting that the like actions were done by them, as by him, why not by the same power? Why should their ejection of devils be ascribed to God, and his to Beelzebub?

Therefore they shall be your judges; who will rise up against you, and condemn you one day, for this unequal judgment you now pass; and which

was just the reverse of the true state of the case: for he cast out devils by the Spirit of God, which they imputed to the assistance of Beelzebub; their children cast out devils, or pretended to do so, and it was by the help of Satan; and yet they ascribed it to a divine power, even though they made use of the name of Satan, under that of Beelzebub, or Asmodeus, their exorcising, of which take the following form [f748].

> "By the authority of the glorious and fearful name, I adjure thee Asmodeus, "king of the devils", and all thy company, etc. that ye hurt not, nor put in fear, nor trouble such an one, the son of such an one, but that ye help him, and sustain him (or deliver him) out of every distress and anguish, and from every evil thing, and from all diseases, that enter into the two hundred and forty eight members, etc."

Ver. 28. *But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God*, etc.] As it was certain he did, from the nature, use, and design of such miracles; and it could not be reasonably thought, that Satan would assist in what was so very opposite to his kingdom and interest, and was so serviceable to the cause and glory of Christ. All the three persons had an hand in the miracles of the Messiah; they were done by Christ, in his Father's name, and by the power of the Spirit of God; from which the following inference may be justly deduced,

then the kingdom of God is come unto you: meaning, either the Messiah himself; or rather, his kingdom, the Gospel dispensation, which both Christ and John had declared to be at hand; of which the performing of miracles, particularly the casting out of devils, whereby the kingdom of Satan was so much weakened, was a clear proof.

Ver. 29. *Or else, how can anyone enter into a strong man's house*, etc.] This is another argument of Christ's proving that his casting out of devils could not be by Satan, but by the Spirit of God; for if he did not act by any superior power to Satan's, and such by which he was able to master, overcome, and bind him, he could never

spoil his goods, as he did; or dispossess devils out of the bodies or souls of men: just as if a man should enter into another man's house, who is strong and robust, with a design to spoil his goods, who would never make use of the man himself to do it, and can never be thought to effect it, unless he has a power superior to his, and uses it;

except he first bind the strong man, and then he will spoil his house: by the "strong man", is meant the devil, (see Isaiah 49:24,25) who is powerful and mighty, as appears from his nature, being an angel, though a fallen one, excelling in strength human creatures; from his names, such as the roaring lion, the great red dragon, leviathan, etc. from the extent of his dominion, here called "his house"; which reaches to the whole posse of devils, and world of men; whence he is called the prince of the power of the air, and the prince of this world, and the god of it; and from his works and actions, in and over the bodies and estates of men, by divine permission; which might be exemplified in the case of Job, and the demoniacs in the time of Christ; and in and over the souls of men, not only over wicked men, but men under a show of religion, as antichrist and his followers; yea, saints themselves, and even over Adam in a state of innocence; but Christ is stronger than he, and attacked him, and dispossessed him of the bodies of men; and restraining him from doing them any hurt, enters into the souls of men, dethrone him, and leads him captive, who led others; and keeps him from doing them any damage; as he will in the latter day "bind" him and shut him up in prison a thousand years; and also "spoils his goods", or "vessels", and "his house"; the palace of Satan, by taking bodies and souls out of his possession; by awakening the conscience, enlightening the mind, working upon the affections, subduing the will, and implanting principles of grace and holiness in the heart; and so making it a fit habitation for God, which spoils it for the devil: in all which, Satan can never be thought to have any hand; and therefore the suggestion that Christ casts out devils by his assistance, even out of the bodies of men, has no show of reason in it.

Ver. 30. *He that is not with me, is against me*, etc.] These words chiefly refer to Satan, and are a further proof, that Christ did not cast out devils by him; since they two are as much opposites, as can possibly be; Satan is not on the side of Christ, but an adversary to him; there is an original, and implacable enmity, between the serpent and the seed of the woman; there is an open war between them, and therefore one cannot be thought to lend assistance to the other. They were concerned in different things, had different views and interests, and so took different methods;

and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth: Christ is the good shepherd, that gathers his sheep to himself, and into his fold, by the external ministry of the word, and internal efficacy of his grace; Satan is the wolf, that catches and scatters the sheep, and seeks to kill and destroy them: and

since there is such an open war proclaimed and carried on between Christ and the devil, none ought to be neutral; whoever is not on the side of Christ, is reckoned as an enemy; and whoever is not concerned by prayer or preaching, or other means to gather souls to his word and ordinances, and to his church, and to himself, is deemed by him a scatterer of them.

Ver. 31. *Wherefore I say unto you*, etc.] This shows, that what follows is occasioned by what the Pharisees had said, concerning the miracles of Christ; imputing them to diabolical influence and assistance, when they were done by the Spirit of God, of which they themselves were conscious;

all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: not unto all men, for there are some, who, as they are never truly convinced of sin, and brought to repentance for it, so they never have the remission of it; but to such to whom God of his free grace has promised, and for whom he has provided this blessing, in the covenant of his grace; for whom the blood of Christ was shed, for the remission of their sins; and who, by the Spirit of God, are made sensible of them, and have repentance unto life given them, and faith in Christ, by which they receive the forgiveness of them: the sense is, that all kind of sin, whether committed more immediately against God, or man, the first or second table of the law, or against any of the divine precepts; be they sins small or great, secret or open, sins of heart, lip, or life, or attended with whatsoever aggravating circumstances; and all kind of blasphemy, or evil speaking of men, or of angels, or of the name of God, but what is hereafter excepted, there is forgiveness of in the grace of God, through the blood of Christ, even for all sorts of men and sinners whatever. The Jews have a saying [f749], that God pardons all sins,

> “hmzh ˆm wWj, “except lasciviousness”.”

But this is not excepted by Christ, only what follows,

but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven unto men: by which is meant, not every ignorant denial of, and opposition to his deity and personality; nor all resistance of him in the external ministry of the word; nor every sin that is knowingly and wilfully committed; but it is a despiteful usage of the Spirit of grace, an opposing, contradicting, and denying the operations wrought, or doctrines revealed by him, against a man’s own light and conscience, out of wilful and obstinate malice, on purpose to lessen the glory of God, and gratify his own lusts: such was the sin of the Scribes and Pharisees; who, though they knew the miracles of

Christ were wrought by the Spirit of God, yet maliciously and obstinately imputed them to the devil, with a view to obscure the glory of Christ, and indulge their own wicked passions and resentments against him; which sin was unpardonable at that present time, as well as under that dispensation then to come, when the Spirit of God was poured down in a more plenteous manner.

Ver. 32. *And whosoever speaketh a word against the son of man*, etc.] By whom is meant, not any man, as Grotius thought, but the Lord Jesus Christ, so often called "the son of man", on account of his human nature, in which he appeared in great meanness and obscurity. Now many might, through ignorance of him, thinking him to be a mere man, and taking up with common fame, speak evil of him, deny him to be the Messiah, reproach him for the meanness of his parentage and education, and for the freedom of his conversation with publicans and sinners; and do many things contrary to his name, as Saul, whilst a Pharisee did, and thought he ought to do; and yet be afterwards convinced of their mistakes, and be brought to a sense and acknowledgment of them, and obtain pardoning grace and mercy, as Saul did, though a blasphemer; and who is an instance of what is here promised,

it shall be forgiven him through the grace of God, the blood and mediation of Christ, under the application of the blessed Spirit.

But whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, in the sense before declared,

it shall not be forgiven him: not because the Holy Ghost is greater than Christ; or for want of efficacy in the blood of Christ; or because God cannot pardon it; but because such persons wilfully, maliciously, and obstinately oppose the Spirit of God, without whom there can be no application of pardon made; and remain in hardness of heart, are given up to a reprobate mind, and die in impenitence and unbelief, and so there is no forgiveness for them,

neither in this world, nor in the world to come; that is; they shall never be forgiven, (see <40329>Mark 3:29). The distinction here used, does not refer to a common one among the Jews, of the Jewish state and the times of the Messiah; but to the present state of life, and that which will be after, or upon death: and it does not suppose there may be forgiveness of other sins, though not of this, in the other world; but strikes at a notion the Jews had,

that there are some sins, which repentance and the day of atonement expiate in this life; but there are others, which repentance and the day of atonement do not expiate; and these a man's death expiates, or makes atonement for [f750]. The form of confession used by sick persons is the following [f751];

> "I confess before thee, O Lord our God, and the God of our fathers, that my cure is in thy hands, and my death is in thy hands; if it be thy good pleasure, heal me with a perfect healing: but if I die, hjyls yt tym aht, "let my death be for the pardon", forgiveness, and atonement of all the sins, iniquities, and transgressions, which I have sinned, acted perversely in, and transgressed before thee; and give me my portion in paradise, and justify me "in the world to come", which is hidden for the righteous."

But the sin against the Holy Ghost is such, as is not forgiven, neither before, nor at, nor after death, nor by it: all sins that are forgiven, are forgiven in this world, and that perfectly and at once; and all that are forgiven in this world, there will be a manifestation and declaration of the pardon of them in another; but such sins as are not forgiven here, there will be no declaration of the pardon of them hereafter. In short, the sense is, that the sin against the Holy Ghost never has forgiveness; it is not pardoned now, and consequently there will be no declaration of the pardon of it hereafter. The Jews use the phrase in the same sense [f752]; a certain sick man said to his son,

> "give me water, and such certain food; but if not, I will not "forgive thee, neither in this world, nor in the world to come"."

That is, I will never forgive thee.

Ver. 33. *Either make the tree good, and his fruit good*, etc.] That is, either assert them both good, or

else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: say they are both evil, for the contrary cannot be affirmed with any consistency and propriety: the matter is easy to be determined,

for the tree is known by his fruit; fruit will discover what a tree is, and accordingly judgment may be made. No man will say a tree is good, and its fruit corrupt; or say, that a tree is corrupt, and its fruit good: these are

glaring contradictions, and can never be reconciled. The case Christ here puts, is a very easy and familiar one, and is obvious to common sense: the application of it may be made, either to the foregoing instance of Christ's casting out devils, which the Jews ascribed to the help of Satan; and then the sense is, either say I am a good man, and do good works, or that I am an evil man, and do evil works: to say that I do good works, as the casting out of devils must be allowed to be, and yet am an evil man, and do this under satanical influence, is as great an inconsistency, as to say that a corrupt tree brings forth good fruit; either therefore condemn these miracles as evil actions, done by confederacy with Satan; or if you will allow them to be good ones, as you do, ascribe them to the Spirit of God; for these things may as easily be determined, as the cause by its effect, or as a tree is known by its fruit: or else this may be applied unto the Pharisees, who, though wicked men, pretended to do good works; and though they set up for men of religion and holiness, yet did evil things, as their words and actions testified; particularly the blasphemy just now uttered by them, charging the miracles of Christ as done by the assistance of the devil, which discovered the malignity and rottenness of their hearts: and the meaning of Christ is, that they would either both say, and do, that which is right and good; or relinquish their pretensions to the character of good and religious men: nothing can be concluded from hence in favour of free will, or a power in the creature to make himself good; for the word "make", here signifies to "say, affirm, assert", and the like; (see John 5:18 8:53 10:33). Though it may be fairly inferred from hence, that a man must first be a good man, ever he can perform good works, truly and properly so called; and that these are fruits and evidences of the inward real goodness of a man; which must be understood not of a few single actions, but of the common, constant series and course of life.

Ver. 34. *O generation of vipers*, etc.] Though they boasted of their being the seed of Abraham, yet their immediate ancestors were no other than vipers, deceitful, hurtful, poisonous creatures; and they were exactly like them: for though they made a fair show in the flesh, and outwardly appeared righteous, yet were inwardly full of the poison of wickedness, envy and malice; and which their pestilential breath, their blasphemy against the Spirit, fully discovered; and gave just cause and reason for so severe a reproof, and such resentment, as here made by Christ.

How can ye, being evil, speak good things? This is not to be expected, nor is it commonly and constantly done; an evil man may sometimes speak

good things, or which seem to be so; but these are not his common talk; as he is, so, for the most part, is his language; his speech betrays him: and since these men were by nature evil, were destitute of the Spirit and grace of God, had no good thing in them, how should any good thing come out of them? And since they were so full of wickedness, spite and malice, it is no wonder that they belched out such blasphemous expressions concerning the miracles of Christ;

for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh: a phrase much like this is used by the Septuagint, in (Ecclesiastes 2:15). "I spoke abundance", or "much in my heart"; διοτο ο αφρων εκ περισσευματος λαλει, "for the fool out of his abundance speaketh": as there is abundance of folly in him, there is much delivered out by him; and where there is abundance of wickedness in the heart, if the grace of God is wanting to restrain it, much of it will come out by the lips; as is a man's heart, ordinarily is his language.

Ver. 35. *A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart*, etc.] "A good man", is a regenerated man, one that is renewed by the Spirit of God, a believer in Christ, a sincere lover of him, and one that follows him, wheresoever he goes, and who has the grace of God implanted in him: for "the good treasure the heart", is not what he is naturally possessed of, but what is put into him: and is no other than the superabundant grace of God, or that grace for grace, which he has received out of Christ's fulness, and the rich experience of it he is blessed with: and may well be called a "treasure"; for as a treasure is a collection of riches, so this consists of various graces, each of which is more precious than gold, silver, and precious stones; a "good" one, both from the quality and quantity of it; and "of the heart", though this is left out in many copies, from the seat and subject of it; and out of this the gracious man

bringeth forth good things; tells his experience, speaks of what God has done for his soul; says many things to the glory of the grace of God; of the person, offices, blood, righteousness, and fulness of Christ; and of the operations and influences of the blessed Spirit; and which are pleasant, profitable, useful, and edifying to the saints:

and an evil man, out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. The "evil man", is a man as he was born; who is wholly flesh, carnal, and in a state of nature; destitute of the Spirit, and having no principle of grace in him: "the evil treasure", is the corruption of his nature, the desperate

wickedness of his heart; and those swarms of lusts, and all manner of sin that dwell there; from whence are continually proceeding evil and corrupt communications, which not only defile himself, but others; and among the rest, not only vain words and unprofitable talk, but blasphemies against God, Christ, and the blessed Spirit; all which men will be accountable for another day.

Ver. 36. *But I say unto you*, etc.] This form of speaking is used, the more strongly to asseverate the truth of what is after said; and the rather, because men are apt to indulge a liberty with their tongues; fancying no great crime is committed, when only words are spoken, and no facts done;

that every idle word that a man shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. By an "idle word" is meant, what the Jews call, hlq hjyç, "light conversation", and ljb rbd, "vain discourse", as the Hebrew Gospel of Munster reads it here; frothy language, unprofitable talk, which, though it does not directly hurt God or man, yet is of no use to speaker or hearer; and yet even this, in the last general and awful judgment, if not forgiven, and repented of, must be accounted for; and much more such horrid blasphemies the Pharisees had vented against Christ, and the Spirit of Christ. The Jews [f753] have a saying pretty much like this,

> "That even hlq hjyç l[, "for any light conversation", which passes between a man and his wife, he shall "be brought to judgment"."

Ver. 37. *For by thy words thou shalt be justified*, etc.] Theophylact seems to take these words to be a passage of Scripture cited by Christ, in proof of what he had said, but does not point to any; nor is any such Scripture to be found. They are rather proverbial expressions, in common use among the Jews; or refer to the usual methods of proceeding in courts of judicature, upon the acknowledgments and confessions of persons.

> "Says Resh Lakish [f754], such an one and such an one, they justify; and such an one and such an one, they condemn. R. Eliezer replies, ynwlp hkdzg^hyrbdm, "by their words such an one and such an one are justified"."

The gloss upon it is,

> "upon hearing the difference there is between them, and between their words, they are justified."

Our Lord's meaning is, that not only works and actions, but words of all sorts, will come into account in the day of judgment, and will be evidences for, or against a man, to acquit or condemn him:

and by thy words thou shalt be condemned: according to these, the sentence of justification, or of condemnation, will be pronounced; as these will appear to be evidences for, or against a man's being in a state of grace and righteousness: thus for instance, a man that has spoken for Christ, and has freely confessed that all his hope of justification before God, and acceptance with him, is solely upon the account of the righteousness of Christ imputed; such a man will be declared a justified man according to the tenor of his own words: on the other hand, a man that has spoken hard speeches against Christ, and his righteousness; declaring he has no dependence on it, expects no justification by it; he will be convinced of these ungodly sayings, and out of his own mouth will be condemned. Some have thought, that Christ here strikes at a notion which obtained among the Jews, that little or no account would be taken of a man's words in the day of judgment; provided his life and actions were good, and regular; but whatever were the sentiments of the Pharisees, or of any of Christ's present hearers, it is certain, that it is the opinion of Jewish writers, that words, as well as actions, will be accounted for hereafter: they say [f755],

> "When a man dies, he lifts up his eyes and sees two come to him, and write before him all that he has done in this world, hymwp ^m qypad hm lkw, "and all that has proceeded out of his mouth", alk l[anyd byhyw, "and he gives an account for all"; and a little after, ^ylm ^wnya lk, "all the words" of a man in this world, are prepared before him, and not one of them lost; and in the hour he goes to his grave, they are all set before him."

Ver. 38. *Then certain of the Scribes and Pharisees answered*, etc.] Not the same that charged him with casting out devils, by the prince of devils; but others, that were present, as appears from (^{Luke 11:16}Luke 11:16) and who do not take upon them to make a proper reply to what he had said, or return an answer to that, but address him on another account; being willing to divert the discourse, and try what they could do with him in another, and more gentle and crafty way; saying, master, not fellow, magician,

Samaritan, thou that hast a devil, and casts out devils by Beelzebub, and art a devil, and Beelzebub himself; but doctor, teacher, allowing him, at least, in a flattering way, that he was an instructor of mankind, though they would not own him to be a prophet, unless he would give such signs, as would make it appear he was one; hence they say,

we would see a sign from thee: that is, a sign from heaven, as they desired at another time, (<40 16 01>Matthew 16:1) and, as Luke says, they did now, (<42 11 16>Luke 11:16) they had seen a sign from him on earth, in the cure of the man that had a withered hand; and another, in dispossessing the devil out of the man, that was blind and dumb; but these they looked upon rather as signs from hell, and done by confederacy with the devil; and therefore desire, or rather, in an imperious way, demand one from heaven, where they thought Satan had not such power, as on earth; and where there could not be such collusion and deception, as they wickedly imagined were in this last action: they seem to require some such things to be done, as were on Mount Sinai, at the giving of the law, when there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud, and the voice of a trumpet, and some visible appearances of the divine majesty; and intimate, that if something of this kind was done, if there was any visible and miraculous appearance in the heavens, produced by him, they should believe him to be the prophet that was spoken of, and the true Messiah; but if not, should give no credit to him: however, this is to be learned from hence, that the Jews, in Christ's time, expected signs and wonders to be wrought by the Messiah, in proof of his being so, though now they reject them as needless [f756].

Ver. 39. *But he answered and said unto them*, etc.] Not to the Pharisees, who were unworthy of an answer from him; having, in such an imperious manner, and with a sole view to tempt him, and after such miracles were wrought by him, required of him a sign from heaven; but to the multitude, the throng of people gathered thick together on this occasion, (see <40 12 45>Matthew 12:45; <42 11 29>Luke 11:29) he turns himself from the Scribes and Pharisees, to the common people, and says to them concerning the former,

an evil and adulterous generation; not only in a spiritual sense, being degenerated from the faith, religion, and piety of their ancestors; but literally, which appeared not only in their polygamy, and frequent divorces on trivial occasions, but by criminal conversation with other women; (see <43 08 09>John 8:9) and this, with the Jews themselves, is a character of the generation in which the Messiah comes: for they say [f757],

> "that just when the Messiah comes, or in the age the son of David comes, "impudence shall be increased", corn and wine shall be dear, the government shall be heretics, twnzl hyhy d[ww tyb, "and the synagogue shall become a brothel house"."

Their meaning is, that the chief magistrates should be Sadducees, and those that pretended to religion and holiness would be adulterers, which was now the case. Their writings [f758] frequently speak of the increase and abounding of adulteries, under the second temple, and about this time; which obliged Jochanan ben Zaccai and the sanhedrim, to leave off the use of the bitter waters.

Seeketh after a sign; this is perfectly Talmudic language, the language of the Jews [f759].

> "The disciples of R. Jose ben Kismai, asked him, when the Son of David came? He replied, I am afraid, lest twa ynmm wçqbt, "ye should seek of me a sign"; they say unto him, we will not "seek of thee a sign"."

This the Jews sought of Christ, time after time; not content with one, sought another, though such wonderful ones were wrought, which most fully demonstrated him to be the Messiah; and therefore he would not indulge this temper in them; but declared, that

there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. Not that no miracles should afterwards be wrought amongst them; for, after this, many wondrous works were done by Christ; but no such signs should be given they desired, not one from heaven; but one particularly should be given them, out of the earth, and should be, not for their conviction, but condemnation; and would seem very much like that which was done to the prophet Jonas, or Jonah; for so is his name in the Hebrew language, the other being the Greek termination of it.

Ver. 40. *For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly*, etc.] Or "in the belly of a great fish", as is said, (Jon 1:17) for that it was a whale, is not there said, nor is it certain it was; nor from the smallness of its swallow, is it thought probable it should; nor does the word here used, necessarily imply one, but some large fish; nor are there whales in the Phoenician Sea: it might be a kind of a sea dog, called Carcharias, and sometimes Lamia, or Lamina, from its vast swallow; in which whole

men; even in coats of mail, have been found. However, be it what it will, Jonas was three days and three nights in the belly of it; which agrees with the account in the above mentioned place, and is the sign Christ speaks of in the foregoing verse; and a very great sign and miracle it was, that being swallowed down by such a fish, he should remain in the belly of it three days and three nights, as one dead; for, without a miracle, he could not have lived an hour; and on the third day, as one raised from the dead, be cast out of it upon the dry land; which was a very eminent type of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, as appears by what follows. The Jews reckon up several wonders or miracles in this case of Jonah's; as that a fish was prepared to swallow him up, and he not drowned in the sea; and that this was prepared for him from the creation of the world; that he should be three days and three nights in the fish's belly, and be alive; and that he should retain his senses and his understanding, so as to be able to pray: they represent him also as if he was in the state of the dead [f760], and that the fish itself was dead, and was quickened again. According to Josephus, after he had been carried 250 miles in the Hellespont of the Euxine Sea, he was cast ashore [f761].

So shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. That Christ means himself by the "son of man", there is no reason to doubt; and his being laid in a tomb, dug out of a rock, is sufficient to answer this phrase, "the heart of the earth", in distinction from the surface of it; but some difficulty arises about the time of his continuing there, and the prediction here made agreeable to the type: for it was on the sixth day of the week, we commonly call "Friday", towards the close, on the day of the preparation for the sabbath, and when the sabbath drew on, that the body of Christ was laid in the sepulchre; where it lay all the next day, which was the sabbath of the Jews, and what we commonly call "Saturday"; and early on the first of the week, usually called "Sunday", or the Lord's day, he rose from the dead; so that he was but one whole day, and part of two, in the grave. To solve this difficulty, and set the matter in a clear light, let it be observed, that the three days and three nights, mean three natural days, consisting of day and night, or twenty four hours, and are what the Greeks call νυχθημερα, "night days"; but the Jews have no other way of expressing them, but as here; and with them it is a well known rule, and used on all occasions, as in the computation of their feasts and times of mourning, in the observance of the passover, circumcision, and divers purifications, that wlwkk μwyh txqm, "a part of a day is as the

whole" [f762]: and so, whatever was done before sun setting, or after, if but an hour, or ever so small a time, before or after it, it was reckoned as the whole preceding, or following day; and whether this was in the night part, or day part of the night day, or natural day, it mattered not, it was accounted as the whole night day: by this rule, the case here is easily adjusted; Christ was laid in the grave towards the close of the sixth day, a little before sun setting, and this being a part of the night day preceding, is reckoned as the whole; he continued there the whole night day following, being the seventh day; and rose again early on the first day, which being after sun setting, though it might be even before sun rising, yet being a part of the night day following, is to be esteemed as the whole; and thus the son of man was to be, and was three days and three nights in the grave; and which was very easy to be understood by the Jews; and it is a question whether Jonas was longer in the belly of the fish.

Ver. 41. *The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment*, etc.] Alluding either to the custom and practice of witnesses, who rise up from their seats, and stand, when they give in their testimonies in a court of judicature; or else, referring to the time of the general resurrection from the dead, at the last day, when these men shall rise from the dead, and stand in judgment

with this generation; shall rise when they do, and stand before the judgment seat together, and be against them,

and shall condemn them; not as judges of them, but by their example and practices, which will be brought above board, and observed as an aggravation of the guilt and condemnation of the Jews: so the lives and conversations of the saints condemn the wicked now, and will do hereafter: in this sense the word is used in the Talmud [f763]; where having related how Hillell, though a poor man, and R. Eleazar, though a rich man, studied in the law, and Joseph, though youthful, gay, and beautiful, withstood the importunities of his mistress, it is observed, that Hillell byyjm, "condemned" the poor; and R. Eleazar ben Harsum condemned the rich; and Joseph condemned the wicked: in like manner, the Ninevites will condemn the Jews,

because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; a mere man, a single prophet, a stranger to these men, who only preached, and wrought no miracle among them, and his stay with them was very short; whereas the men of this generation had the Son of God "sent" to them, had the ministry

of his apostles, and of John the Baptist, and a variety of miracles wrought among them; and all this for a series and course of years, and yet remained impenitent: the chief aggravation of their impenitence, and what made it the more astonishing was, that so great a person was in the midst of them;

and behold, a greater than Jonas is here; meaning himself, who was greater in person, office, doctrine, miracles, life, obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead. The Ninevites, though a Heathenish people, having but forty days allowed them to repent in, upon Jonas's preaching, repented immediately; whereas the Jews, though God's: professing people, and having forty years, from Christ's resurrection, allowed them to repent in, yet did not at all; and though the repentance of the Ninevites was but an external one, in dust and ashes, yet it was what secured them from temporal ruin; as the Jews would have been saved from the destruction that came upon their temple, city, and nation, had they repented but as they did.

Ver. 42. *The queen of the south*, etc.] Called the queen of Sheba, (1 Kings 10:1). Sheba was one of the sons of Joktan, a grandchild of Arphaxad, who settled in the southern parts of Arabia: hence this queen is called the queen of the south. Sheba is by the Targumist [f764] called Zemargad: and this queen the queen of Zemargad: she goes by different names. According to some, her name was Maqueda [f765], and, as others say, Balkis [f766]: a Jewish chronologer [f767] tells us, that the queen of Sheba, who is called Nicolaa, of the kingdom of Jaman, or the south, came to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, and gave him much riches: and Josephus [f768] calls her Nicaulis, queen of Egypt and Ethiopia; of whom it is here said, that she

shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: the meaning is, as before; that she shall rise from the dead, and stand as a witness against that generation at the day of judgment, and, by her example and practices, which will then be produced, condemn them, or aggravate their condemnation:

for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth; an hyperbolical expression, meaning a great way off from a far country, a very distant part of the world from Jerusalem, hmlç tmkj [wmçl, "to hear the wisdom of Solomon"; the very phrase used by the above Jewish [f769] writer.

And behold, a greater than Solomon is here; one that was infinitely greater than Solomon was, in everything; so particularly in that, in which he

excelled others, and on the account of which the queen of the south came unto him, namely, wisdom: for he is the wisdom of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The Jews themselves [f770] own, that the king, meaning the Messiah, that shall be raised up of the seed of David, hmlçm rty hyhy hmkj l[b, "shall be a greater master of wisdom", or "wiser than Solomon". Now what an aggravation of the condemnation of the Jews will this be another day, that a Gentile woman, living in a foreign and distant land, should, upon the fame of the wisdom of Solomon, leave her own kingdom and country, and come to Jerusalem, to hear his wise discourses about things natural, civil, and moral; and yet the Jews, who had a greater than Solomon in the midst of them, and had no need to take much pains to come to the sight and hearing of him, yet rejected him as the Messiah, blasphemed his miracles, and despised his ministry; though it was concerned about things of a spiritual and evangelic nature, and the eternal welfare of immortal souls.

Ver. 43. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man*, etc.] By "the unclean" spirit, is meant Satan, the old serpent, the devil; who by the Jews, is wont to be called as here, abasm jwr, "the unclean spirit" [f771]; and that, because he is by sin become so, though he was not so originally; is the cause of uncleanness in men, and delights in unclean persons, places, and things: his "going out of a man", is not to be understood of his being dispossessed of the bodies of men; nor of the ejection of him, and his going by force, through the power of divine grace, out of the souls of men; but either of his leaving the Jews for a while, in some sort, whilst Christ and the Gospel continued among them; and of his going out of the Scribes and Pharisees; not really, but putting on another form, appearing as an angel of light, and under the guise of holiness and righteousness: and so he may be said to go out of men, when any outward reformation is made in them; and they take up a profession of religion, though destitute of the grace of God:

he walketh through dry places; referring to a prevailing notion, that unclean spirits walk in, and haunt, desert and desolate places; and may have regard to the Gentiles, among whom Satan might go, seeking rest and satisfaction among them, in their idolatries and other wickedness, till he was there also disturbed by the Gospel sent among them: or by these "dry places" may be meant the saints, whom he takes his walks among, in order, by tempting, to distress them, being secure of pharisaical persons: and these may be so called, not for what they are in themselves; not because the

sun of righteousness shines upon them: or because thirsty and desirous of divine and spiritual things; much less as if they had no moisture, since they have a well of living water in them, and are watered by the Lord; or were unfruitful, as dry places usually are; but for what they were to the unclean spirit, there being nothing in their grace, and the exercise of it, and in their spiritual performances, grateful to him; nothing to quench his thirst, and satisfy his sinful appetite; nor were there in them the mire and dirt of iniquity to roll in, as in unregenerate persons: wherefore he is represented as

seeking rest, and findeth none: his view in walking in these places, or among such persons, is rest; not the rest of the saints, he seeks their disturbance, but his own rest; which is to do all the mischief he can, by stirring up corruption, tempting to sin, and discouraging the exercise of grace; but is not able to do so much mischief as he would, and so cannot find the rest he seeks for, nor satisfy his envious, spiteful, and malicious temper: and this being the case, it follows,

Ver. 44. *Then he said, I will return into my house*, etc.] Into the land of Judea, particularly into the Scribes and Pharisees, outward professors of religion; who, notwithstanding their outward reformation, and great pretensions to holiness, are Satan's house still: he has a property in them, a claim upon them; and though he says,

from whence I came out, yet he never really and properly quitted it, only seemingly, and in appearance; and therefore his returning is only throwing off the guise, and reassuming his former character, as a vicious and unclean spirit.

And when he is come, he findeth it empty: not empty of sin: this puts me in mind of a passage in the Misna[f772], where it is said, that on a fast day,

> "when they stand in prayer, they cause to descend, or go before the ark, an old man, who is used (to prayer,) whose children, µqyr wtybw, "and his house, are empty", so that his heart is perfect in prayer,"

or entirely at leisure for it. The commentators[f773] on that phrase, "his house is empty", note, that he was empty of sin, and free from it, and one concerning whom an evil report had not gone forth from his youth: but such was not this house; it was empty of God, of the true knowledge of

him, of the fear of him, and love to him; of Christ, of faith in him, affection for him, and hope on him; of the Spirit of God, and of his graces, and of spiritual, internal religion, and powerful godliness.

Swept; not with the Spirit of grace convincing of sin, righteousness, and judgment; but with the besom of an outward reformation:

and garnished; not with internal grace, which makes saints all glorious within; but with secret lusts and corruptions, which rendered it an agreeable habitation for this unclean spirit; and at most, with some show of morality, a little negative holiness, or abstinence from outward acts of sin, an observance of some external rites and ceremonies, and a few hypocritical performances of fasting and prayer; which Satan can very well bear with, so long as the heart is empty of spiritual grace, and till an opportunity offers of throwing off all appearance of good.

Ver. 45. *Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits*, etc.] This is said in allusion to, and in imitation of the seven spirits before the throne; or may denote a large number of devils, seven being a number of perfection; or else the various corruptions of a man's heart, the swarms of internal lusts which are there stirred up by Satan;

more wicked than himself, as these are more pernicious to man, than the devil himself:

and they enter in and dwell there; that is, though they were there before, now they exert and show themselves, and such men appear to be under the power and government of them; when leaving their seeming religion and holiness, they return like the dog to the vomit, and the swine to the wallowing in the mire.

And the last state of that man is worse than the first: he becomes more wicked than ever he was, before he made pretensions to religion; as such apostates generally are more extravagant in sinning, and are seldom or ever recovered by repentance, and their last end is eternal damnation; (see 2 Peter 2:20,21,22)

even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation. This parable fitly suited them, the Scribes and Pharisees, and the men of that generation, from whom in some measure the unclean spirit might be said to depart through the doctrine, and miracles of Christ, to go into the Gentile world; but being followed there with the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles,

returns to the Jews, and fills them with more malice, blasphemy, and blindness, than ever, which issued in their utter ruin and destruction; of which this parable may be justly thought to be prophetical.

Ver. 46. *While he yet talked to the people*, etc.] Upon these subjects, which so nearly concerned the Scribes and Pharisees, and which could not fail of drawing upon him their resentment and ill will.

Behold his mother and his brethren: by "his mother" is meant Mary; but who are "his brethren", is not so easy to say: some are of opinion, that Joseph had children by Mary, who are here meant; but it is more generally believed, that these were either the sons of Joseph by a former wife, whose name is said to be Escha; or rather, Mary's sister's sons, the wife of Cleophas, the cousin-germans of Christ, it being usual with the Jews to call such kindred brethren; and so they might be James, Joses, Simon, and Judas: these

stood without: for Christ was within doors, not in a synagogue, as Piscator thought, but in an house; (see <40 13 1>Matthew 13:1) and his mother and brethren stood without doors, either because they could not get in for the throng of the people; or because they would not, it not being proper to make all within acquainted with what they had to say to him:

desiring to speak with him; not with a pure view to interrupt him in his work, or to divert him from it, lest he should overspend himself; nor from a principle of ambition and vain glory, to show that they were related to him, and that he was at their beck and command; but rather, to observe unto him the danger he exposed himself to, by the freedom he took with the Pharisees in his discourses, and probably to acquaint him with some conspiracies formed against him.

Ver. 47. *Then one said unto him*, etc.] Either one of his auditors, or, as the Ethiopic version has it, one "of his disciples": the other evangelists intimate, that more than one acquainted him with it; which is easily reconciled: for, upon his mother and brethren calling to him, as Mark says they did; first one and then another, and more, might apprise him of it, and especially as he did not immediately go out unto them.

Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee: whether this message was carried at the request of the mother and brethren of Christ, and delivered in a simple manner, and with an honest intention; or whether it was officiously done, and with a design to interrupt

him, and to try him, whether he would prefer his natural relations, and their society and conversation, to the spiritual work in which he was engaged, in doing good to the souls of men, is not certain; the latter seems probable, from the following words, and conduct of Christ. Some copies read, “desiring to see thee”.

Ver. 48. *But he answered and said unto him that told him*, etc.] Of his mother and brethren being without doors, desiring, and waiting to speak to him,

Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? These questions are put, not as if he himself was ignorant who were his mother or his brethren; or as suggesting as if he had none; or as denying that these were in such a relation to him; or as casting any slight upon them; or as intending to teach men disrespect to parents and kindred, according to the flesh; but as displeased with the man, or men, for interrupting him in his work; and to let them know, that the business of his heavenly Father was preferred by him to any his natural relations could have with him; and that he might have an opportunity of pointing out who were his relations in a spiritual sense.

Ver. 49. *And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples*, etc.] By whom are meant, not only the twelve, but all others present, who truly believed in him, both men and women; and who might sit near him and together, and whom, by this motion of his hand, he pointed out as his spiritual relations, to the multitude that sat round him:

and said, behold my mother, and my brethren; in whose hearts he was formed, and who were the children of God by adopting grace, and so his brethren; and were as dear to him as his mother and brethren. It is reasonable to suppose, that when he said, “behold my mother”, and, as in the following verse, “sister”; he might stretch forth his hand particularly, toward the pious and religious women that believed in him, and ministered to him of their substance, who might be now present; such as Mary Magdalene, Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and others; since these are mentioned by Luke in the same chapter in which this passage stands in his Gospel; and when he said “behold my brethren”, he might point directly to the twelve, and the rest of the men that believed in him, and followed him.

Ver. 50. *For whosoever shall do the will of my Father*, etc.] This is not to be understood of a perfect obedience to the will of God, revealed in his righteous law; for since this cannot be performed by any mere man, no one could be in such a spiritual relation to Christ: but of the obedience of faith to the will of God, revealed in the Gospel; which is to believe in Christ, and have everlasting life; (see <43>John 6:40). This is the will of Christ's Father,

which is in heaven, and which is good news from heaven, to sinners on earth; and which Christ came down from heaven to do, and to declare to the children of men: such as "hear the word of God and do it", as Luke says, (<42>Luke 8:21) that is, hear the Gospel, understand and believe it, and become obedient to the faith of it; these are in this near manner related to Christ, evidentially and openly, as well as those who were now present:

the same is my brother, and sister, and mother; as dear to me, as such are to those, to whom they stood thus related in the flesh: and these natural relations serve to convey some ideas of that relation, union, nearness, and communion, there are between Christ and his people; all these relative characters may be observed in the book of Solomon's Song, to which our Lord may be reasonably thought to have respect; (see <22>Song of Solomon 3:11 4:9,10,12 5:1,2 8:1).

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 13

Ver. 1. *The same day Jesus went out of the house*, etc.] Where he had been preaching, and working miracles: where this house was, is not certain; it seems to have been in one of the cities of Galilee, probably Capernaum, since that was by the sea coast: the reason of his going out of the house was, either to converse with his mother and brethren, as they desired; or to withdraw himself from company, and take some refreshment by the sea side; or because it would not hold the people, and therefore he quitted it for a more convenient place. The time he went out of it, was the same day he had cast the devil out of the man blind and dumb, and had delivered himself so freely concerning the Scribes and Pharisees, who had blasphemously ascribed that miracle to the assistance of Satan; and the same day his mother and brethren came to see him, and speak to him.

And sat by the sea side; either as weary, and for his refreshment, or in order to preach to the people; for, Mark says, "he began again to teach by the sea side", (<4001>Mark 4:1). This was the sea of Galilee, sometimes called the sea of Tiberias.

Ver. 2. *And great multitudes were gathered unto him*, etc.] Some on one account, and some on another; some to see his person, others his miracles; some healing for their bodies, and others for their souls; some for the loaves, and others to hear him preach; and of these there were several sorts, as the following parable shows.

So that he went into a ship: both for his own advantage, that he might not be crowded, and pressed by the people, and have more room, and a freer air to speak in, and for their's, that they might both see and hear him better.

And sat, and the whole multitude stood on the shore; as was the then custom of the Jewish doctors and hearers, the one to sit, and the other to stand. *See Gill #<4001>Matthew 5:1*. Christ sat upon the deck of the ship; or perhaps this ship was no other than an open boat, which was put to sea,

some little distance from the shore; upon which the people stood in great numbers, with much convenience and attention.

Ver. 3. *And he spake many things unto them in parables*, etc.] For the parables of the sower, and the different sorts of ground the seed fell in, of the wheat and tares, of the grain of mustard seed, of the leaven in three measures of meal, of the treasure hid in a field, of the pearl of great price, of the net cast into the sea, and of the householder, were all delivered at this time. This way of speaking by parables was much in use among the eastern nations, and particularly the Jews. R. Meir was very famous among them for this way of teaching: they say [f774],

> "that when R. Meir died, µylçmyl çwmwljb, "they that were skilled in, and used parables, ceased"."

The commentators [f775] on this passage say,

> "that he preached a third part tradition, and a third part mystical discourse, yltmatlytw, "and a third part parables":"

which method of discoursing was judged both pleasant and profitable, and what served to raise the attention of the hearer, and to fix what was delivered the more firmly in their minds: what was our Lord's reason for using them, may be seen in (<40 13 13>Matthew 13:13). He begins with the parable of the sower. The design of which is to set forth the nature of the word of God, the work and business of the ministers of it, the different success of the preaching of it, and the fruitfulness of it; and to show when it is truly received, and the various degrees of fruit it produces; that the efficacy of it depends on the grace of God, which makes the heart good, and fit to receive it; and how few they be which hear the word to any spiritual advantage and benefit; and how far persons may go in hearing, and yet fall short of the grace of God; and therefore no dependence is to be had on the external hearing of the word.

Behold, a sower went forth to sow; Luke adds, "his seed"; as does also Munster's Hebrew Gospel here; and Mark introduces the parable thus, "hearken, behold!" it being a matter of great importance and concern, which is expressed by this parable, it deserves the most diligent attention. By "the sower" is meant "the son of man", as may be learnt from the explanation of another parable, (<40 13 37>Matthew 13:37) which is Jesus Christ himself, who is often so called on account of his human nature; and may

the rather be thought to be intended here, since the seed he sowed is called "his seed"; meaning the Gospel, of which he is the author, publisher, sum and substance; and since he is, by way of eminency, called ο σπειρων, "the sower"; which must be understood of him as a prophet, or preacher of the word, who was eminently sent of God, and richly qualified for such an office, and was most diligent in it, and yet his success was but small. Indeed, every minister of the Gospel may be called a sower, who bears precious seed, sows spiritual things, and though in tears, he shall not return empty, but shall reap in joy, and bring his sheaves with him. This sower "went forth" from his own house to his field; which, as applied to Christ, may intend his incarnation, his coming into this world by the assumption of human nature, his appearance in the public ministry, in the land of Judea, and his going forth still in his ministers, and by his Spirit, in the preaching of the Gospel; and, as applied to the preachers of the word, may be explained of their commission, of their being sent, and of their going forth into the field of the world, preaching the Gospel every where. The end of the sower's going forth is to "sow his seed": by "his seed" is meant the word, the word of God; (see <4004>Mark 4:14; <4081>Luke 8:11) so called, because of the choiceness and excellency of it in itself, that grain which is reserved for seed being usually the best of the kind; and because of its smallness, it being mean and contemptible in the eyes of those, who know not the nature of it; and because of the generative virtue it has, though not without a divine influence. Nor does it bring forth fruit, unless it is sown in the heart, as seed in the earth; where its operation is secret, its growth and increase gradual, and its fruitfulness different. By "sowing", is meant preaching; which, as sowing, requires knowledge and skill, and an open and liberal hand; keeping back nothing that is profitable, a declaring the same doctrine in one place as another; and designs a constant ministration of it, notwithstanding all discouragements, and a patient waiting for success.

Ver. 4. *And when he sowed*, etc.] Or, "as he sowed", as the other evangelists; that is, "whilst he was sowing",

some seeds fell; either out of his hand, or out of the cart drawn by oxen; hence the [f776] Talmudists distinguish between dy tlwpm, "the falling of the hand", or what falls out of the hand; and µyrwwç tlwpm, "the falling of the oxen", or what falls from them; where the gloss is,

> “in some places they sow the grain with the hand; and in other places they put the seed on a cart full of holes, and oxen draw the cart on the ploughed land, and it falls upon it.”

By the wayside; by the common road, or private paths, which led through corn fields, in which Christ and his disciples walked, (<4012>Matthew 12:1) and which being beaten and trodden hard, the seed must lie open on it, and so be liable to be trampled upon by men, or devoured by the fowls of the air; and designs such hearers as are careless, negligent, and inattentive, who hear without understanding, judgment, and affection; (see <4013>Matthew 13:19)

and the fowls came and devoured them; the other evangelists say, “the fowls of the air”; and so the Vulgate Latin, and Munster’s Hebrew Gospel, and some copies; and mean the devils; so called, because their habitation is in the air; hence they are said to be “the power of the air”: and because of their ravenous and devouring nature, their swiftness to do mischief, and their flocking in multitudes, where the word is preached, to hinder its usefulness, as fowls do, where seed is sowing. Satan, and his principalities, and powers, rove about in the air, come down on earth, and seek whom they may devour, and often mix themselves in religious assemblies, to do what mischief they can; (see <1801>Job 1:6,7).

Ver. 5. *Some fell upon stony places*, etc.] Such a place as the Jews call `tyslwj`, a barren, stony place, a place from whence, they say, they take stones, and `[ls tyb`, and which `h[yrzl ywar wnya`, “is not fit for sowing” [f777]; and such were those places and spots of ground, that some of these seeds fell upon; and design such hearers, in whom the natural hardness of their hearts continues, and who remain unbroken by the word, and are without any true sense of sin, and repentance for it.

Where they had not much earth, to cover them and take root in: this is expressive of such persons who have slight convictions of sin, and awakenings of the natural conscience; some little, light, and speculative notions of the word, in the understanding and judgment; some flashes of natural affection for it, and outward expressions of delight and pleasure in it; some show of grace, and a form of godliness, but no real heart work.

And forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth; to strike their roots downwards: and through the reflection of the heat, upon the rocks and stones, they quickly broke through the thin surface of the

earth over them, and appeared above ground before the usual time of the springing up of seed: which may not only denote the immediate reception of the word by these hearers, and their quick assent to it; but their sudden and hasty profession of it, without taking due time to consider the nature and importance thereof; and the seeming cheerfulness in which they did both receive and profess it; though it was only outward and hypocritical, and more on account of the manner of preaching it, than the word itself, and through a selfish principle in them; and did not arise from any real experience of the power of it on their souls, or true spiritual pleasure in it: nor could it be otherwise, since their stony hearts were not taken away, nor hearts of flesh given them; wherefore the word had no place in them, and made no real impression on them; they remained dead in trespasses and sins; the word was not the savour of life unto life unto them, or the Spirit that giveth life; they did not become living and lively stones; they continued as insensible as ever of their state and condition by nature, of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, of the danger they were in, and of their need of Christ, and salvation by him; they were as hard, and obdurate, and as inflexible, as ever, without any real contrition for sin, or meltings of soul through the influence of the love and grace of God; and as backward as ever to submit to the righteousness of Christ, being stout hearted, and far from it; and being no more cordially willing to be subject to the sceptre of his kingdom, or to serve him in righteousness and holiness, than they ever were; for the word falling upon them, made no change in them; their hearts were as hard as ever, notwithstanding the seeming and hasty reception of it; though they did not refuse to hearken to the word externally, did not put away the shoulder, or stop their ears, yet their hearts were still like an adamant stone: nothing but the mighty power of God, and his efficacious grace, can break the rocky heart in pieces; or give an heart of flesh, a sensible, soft, and flexible one, with which a man truly repents of sin, believes in Christ, and becomes subject to him.

Ver. 6. *And when the sun was up*, etc.] Some time, and its heat was increasing, and it began to shine out hot, and beat with some vehemency and strength; which may denote some sore temptation, or severe affliction, or fiery trial of persecution and tribulation; (see <40132121>Matthew 13:21) for this is not to be understood of the glorious light of the Gospel, which, though very comfortable and refreshing, as well as illuminating to good men, is very distressing and tormenting to carnal minds; they cannot bear its truths and doctrines; this is the fire which comes out of the mouth of God's

faithful witnesses, and torments them that dwell on the earth, and devours their enemies, (<66 11 5>Revelation 11:5-11:10). And it, moreover, like the sun, has different effects on different objects; as the sun hardens clay, and melts wax, so the Gospel is to the hardening of some, and softening of others; to the one it is the savour of life unto life, and to the other the savour of death unto death; but this cannot be intended, because the word by these hearers is first received with joy. Nor is Christ the sun of righteousness meant, who arises with healing in his wings, and gives grace and glory to his people; but the sun of persecution and affliction, in which sense the metaphor is used, in (<22 01 06>Song of Solomon 1:6) the heat of which the church patiently bore, though she was made black with it: but these hearers think it strange that such a fiery trial should befall them; wherefore, as they take up their profession in haste, they as quickly drop it; (see <66 07 16>Revelation 7:16).

They were scorched, and because they had not root, they withered away: they were offended with what they met with, for the sake of Christ, and the profession of his word; and therefore, not being rooted in him, nor in the love of God, nor having the root of the matter, true grace, in themselves, or, as Luke says, “lacked moisture”, of divine grace, of the dews and waterings of it, fell away finally and totally. This is no instance of the apostasy of real saints, or any proof of true believers falling away finally and totally; since these were not rooted, and grounded in the everlasting and unchangeable love of God, were not interested in it, or were partakers of the effects of it; had they been so, they could never have been separated from it; tribulation, distress, and persecution could never have done it; none of these would ever have moved them; had they had the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, they would have gloried in tribulation: nor were they united to Christ, rooted and built up in him; had they, they would have continued to have derived life and nourishment from him; in him the life of believers is hid, and because he lives they live also; as long as there is life in the root, the branches will not die; he is the root that bears the branches, the root of the righteous that yields fruit, and is never moved: nor had these the truth of grace, which is an incorruptible seed, a well of living water springing up to everlasting life; had they, they could never have withered away; to such God gives more grace, he himself is as the dew unto them, and he waters them every moment.

Ver. 7. *And some fell among thorns*, etc.] On a spot of ground which was full of the roots of thorns, and briars, which was not cleared of them as it should be. We often read [f778] of hxwqtnç hdç, “a field cleared of

thorns"; but such was not this piece of ground, it was overrun with them, not on the surface of the earth, but within it: for it follows,

and the thorns sprung up: naturally, being neither sown nor planted; either before the seed, or, at least, as soon; and however grew faster, and higher,

and choked them; so that they came to nothing; hence the advice, "sow not among thorns", (<24004>Jeremiah 4:3) and a lost kindness, or what is bestowed in vain, is expressed in this proverbial manner[f779], yrzyja aydçw Æytwbyj hlwqç, "thy beneficence is taken away, and cast among thorns": these point out such hearers who seemed to be contrite, to have the low ground of their hearts broken up, their consciences tender, and to have a true sense of sin, as well as to be outwardly reformed; and yet inwardly were full of the thorns of sinful lusts, particularly of the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, the lusts of other things, and the pleasures of this life, which rendered the word useless and unfruitful; (see <40122>Matthew 13:22) all which are comparable to thorns; it is hardly possible to be in the midst of, and meddle with these, without being scratched by them; they pierce, afflict, and wound, even where they have not their greatest power and influence; and where they do prevail, and get the ascendant, as they are fruitless themselves, they make others so too; they choke the word, and make that, and all ordinances, and opportunities, useless, and unserviceable. Thorns are a part of the earth's curse for the sin of man; and such persons in whom thorny cares and lusts prevail, as they are like unto the earth which beareth thorns, so, as that, they are rejected, and nigh to cursing, whose end is to be burned in everlasting flames of divine wrath and fury, (<58608>Hebrews 6:8).

Ver. 8. *But others fell into good ground*, etc.] Not beaten and trodden by the feet of men, nor stony, nor thorny, but well broke up, manured, and tilled; which designs good, honest hearted hearers who become so by the Spirit and grace of God; who with a spiritual understanding, experience, savour, and relish, what they hear; (see <40123>Matthew 13:23)

and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold: some seeds produced an hundred, others sixty, and others thirty. The first of these especially was a large increase, but what was sometimes had, and which Isaac received in Gerar, in the land of the Philistines, (<01262>Genesis 26:12) and is what Pliny says[f780] of Byzacium, a country of the Lybiphoenicians, that it yielded an hundred fold to its husbandmen; and of

such fruitfulness was the land of Israel, of which the Jewish doctors say some things incredible: they tell us a story[f781] of

> "one that sowed a measure of vetches, or pease, ^yas twam çlç hç[w, "and it produced three hundred measures"; they say unto him, the Lord hath begun to bless thee, etc."

Here, in the parable, these various increases intend the different degrees of fruitfulness in gracious souls; for though the fruits of grace, in believers, are of the same quality, yet not of the same quantity. Some believers are grown to a greater maturity than others; some are but little children, some are young men, some are fathers.

Ver. 9. *Who hath ears to hear, let him hear*.] Not externally only, but internally; he that has ears given him to hear, so as to understand, let him make use of them, and seriously consider of, and diligently attend to the use and importance of this parable. It is a way of speaking used by Christ, when anything of moment was delivered, and not so easy to be understood, on purpose to quicken the attention of his auditors, and stir up in them a desire of understanding what was said; which effect this had upon his disciples; (see <4004>Mark 4:10; <4008>Luke 8:9).

Ver. 10. *And the disciples came, and said unto him*, etc.] Not the twelve only, but others that were about him, as Mark says, who also were his disciples, and believed in him: these, when he was alone, came nearer to him, who, whilst he was preaching to the people, were at some little distance from him, either in the ship, or on the shore, though within the hearing of him, and addressed him after this manner;

why speakest thou unto them in parables? not that this way of speaking was new and surprising to them; but because it was not easily understood, especially not by the common people, without an explanation, which, as yet, Christ had not given: and indeed the parable was not understood by the disciples themselves; who put this question, not only for the sake of the multitude, but for their own also, hoping to be favoured with the meaning of it.

Ver. 11. *He answered, and said unto them*, etc.] Christ was always ready to give an answer to his inquiring disciples, concerning his ministry, and his conduct in it; which shows great respect to them, and condescension in him:

because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven: by the "kingdom of heaven", is meant the Gospel, which treats of the kingdom of heaven, and of things pertaining to it; of the saints' meetness for it, which is the regenerating and sanctifying grace of the Spirit; and of their right to it, which lies in the justifying righteousness of Christ. The "mysteries" of it intend the sublime doctrines thereof; such as relate to the Trinity of persons in the Godhead, to the incarnation of Christ, and the union of the two natures, human and divine, in him, eternal predestination, redemption by Christ, satisfaction by his sacrifice, justification by his righteousness, and pardon through his blood, the resurrection from the dead, etc. things, though clearly revealed, yet may have difficulties attending them, and which are not very easily solved: now to know and understand the great truths of the Gospel, spiritually, savingly, and experimentally, is not from nature, or to be acquired by men's industry, but is the gift of God's grace, flowing from his sovereign will and pleasure; a favour which the disciples of Christ, as a chosen people, receive from the Lord, and which is denied others:

but to them it is not given; to the wise and prudent, to the Scribes and Pharisees, to the multitude, to the bulk and generality of the people, to the rest that were blinded. Mark calls them "them that are without"; who are not in the number of God's elect; nor within the covenant of grace, nor among the disciples of Christ; referring to a common way of speaking among the Jews, who used to call the Gentiles, all without their land, "they that are without"; and indeed all within themselves that despised the rules and judgment of the wise men [f782]: but Christ here calls the wise men themselves such. Now our Lord, who was privy to the secret and sovereign dispensation of God, who, of his own will and pleasure, had determined to give a spiritual and saving knowledge of divine things to some, and deny it to others, made this the rule of his conduct in his ministry; that is to say, he preached in parables to some without an explication, whilst he spoke plainly to others; and, if in parables, yet gave them an interpretation, and an understanding of them.

Ver. 12. *For whosoever hath, to him shall be given*, etc.] Whoever has the true grace of God implanted in him, has a saving knowledge of Christ, and a spiritual acquaintance with the doctrines of the Gospel, shall have more grace given him; he shall grow in the knowledge of Christ, and the Spirit of truth shall lead him into all truth:

and he shall have more abundance: of grace, light, knowledge, and experience: all grace shall be made to abound towards him; he shall be filled with all the fulness of God, and shall arrive to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; and his light shall shine more and more unto the perfect day.

But whosoever hath not: the truth of grace, nor a spiritual knowledge of Christ, nor any experience of the doctrines of the Gospel,

from him shall be taken away, even that he hath, or "that which he seemed to have", as Luke expresses it; for everything besides true grace is a mere show, and has no solidity in it; as natural parts, human learning, and a form of knowledge and of truth in the law, the national church state of the Jews, with all the outward privileges appertaining thereunto, all which may be here meant; and even speculative notions of the Gospel, the external gifts of the Spirit, the means of grace, the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and the ministry of it, which in process of time were wholly taken from these people.

Ver. 13. *Therefore speak I to them in parables*, etc.] Because it was the will and pleasure of his Father to give the knowledge of divine mysteries to some, and not to others; and because even the outward good things they had, being wrongly used or abused by them, would be taken away from them:

and because they seeing, see not: they saw Christ with their bodily eyes, but not with an eye of faith; they saw the miracles he did, but did not discern, at least did not acknowledge the evidence of them, proving him to be the true Messiah.

And hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand: they heard externally, but not internally; they heard the sound of Christ's voice, but did not understand his words, even when he spake in the plainest and most intelligible manner; nor were they concerned to know the meaning of them: wherefore he spoke to them in this abstruse and parabolical way, that they might be what they really were, seers and not seers, hearers and not hearers, at least not understanding ones; and that what he said might remain sealed and hidden to them, as the things contained in the sealed book were to the Jews of old; the reason of which was, as a writer of their's [f783] says, and which agrees with our Lord's reason and conduct here, hdyjw lçmb wyhç, "because they were in parable and riddle".

Ver. 14. *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias*, etc.] In (²³⁰⁶Isaiah 6:9,10)

which saith, which runs, or may be read thus,

by hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive. The words are a prophecy concerning the people of the Jews, which began to be accomplished in the times of Isaiah; and were again fulfilled in the times of some after prophets; and had been in part fulfilled under the more plain and easy ministry of Christ; and was to have a further accomplishment under this parabolical way of preaching; as it also was to have, and had, a yet further completion under the ministry of the apostles; (see ⁴⁰²⁶Acts 28:26,27; ⁴⁵¹¹Romans 11:8) and the judicial blindness here predicted was to go on among them, until the land of Judea was utterly destroyed by the Romans, and the cities and houses thereof left without any inhabitants; all which accordingly came to pass: for that this prophecy refers to the times of the Messiah, and to the people of the Jews, is clear from this one observation made by Christ himself, that Esaias foretold those things when he saw the glory of the Messiah, and spake of him, (⁴³⁴⁰John 12:40,41) and because it was to have, and had, its accomplishment over and over again in that people, therefore the word αναπληρουται, which may be rendered "is fulfilled again", is made use of. The sense of the prophecy is, with respect to the times of the Messiah, that the Jews, whilst hearing the sermons preached by him, whether with, or without parables, should hear his voice, and the sound of it, but not understand his words internally, spiritually, and experimentally; and whilst they saw, with the eyes of their bodies, the miracles he wrought, they should see the facts done, which could not be denied and gainsayed by them, but should not take in the clear evidence, full proof, and certain demonstration given thereby, of his Messiahship. In the prophecy of Isaiah, the words run in the imperative, "hear ye, see ye", etc. but are here rendered in the future, "shall hear, shall see", etc. which rendering of the words is supported and established by the version of the Septuagint, by the Chaldee paraphrase, and by many Jewish commentators [f784]; who allow, that the words in Isaiah may be so understood, which is sufficient to vindicate the citation of them, by the evangelist, in this form of them.

Ver. 15. *For this people's heart is waxed gross*, etc.,] Or fat, become stupid and sottish, and without understanding; and so incapable of taking in the true sense and meaning of what they saw with their eyes, and heard

with their ears; for they had their outward senses of hearing and seeing, and yet their intellectual powers were stupefied.

And their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; which is expressive of the blindness and hardness, which were partly brought upon themselves by their own wilfulness and obstinacy, against such clear evidence as arose from the doctrine and miracles of Christ; and partly from the righteous judgment of God, giving them up, for their perverseness, to judicial blindness and obduracy; (<43124>John 12:40) and are in the prophet ascribed to the ministry of the word; that being despised, was in righteous judgment, the savour of death unto death, unto them; and they under it, as clay, under the influence of the sun, grew harder and harder by it, stopping their ears, and shutting their eyes against it:

lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart: which may be understood either of God's intention, and view, in giving them up to judicial blindness, and hardness of heart, under such miracles, and such a ministry, as a punishment for their wilful contempt of them; that so they might never have any true sight, hearing, and understanding of these things, and be turned from the evil of their ways, have repentance unto life, and remission of sins; which seems to be the sense of the other evangelists, (<41412>Mark 4:12 <42810>Luke 8:10 <43124>John 12:40) or, as if these people purposely stupefied themselves, stopped their ears, and pulled away the shoulder, and wilfully shut their eyes; fearing they should receive some conviction, light, and knowledge,

and be converted by the power and grace of God:

and I should heal them; or, as in Mark, "and their sins should be forgiven them"; for healing of diseases, and forgiveness of sins, are, in Scripture language, one and the same thing; and this sense of the phrase here, is justified by the Chaldee paraphrase, which renders it, ˆwhl qbtçyw, "and they be forgiven", or "it be forgiven them", and by a Jewish commentator on the place; who interprets healing, of the healing of the soul, and adds hjylsh ayhw, "and this is pardon" [f785].

Ver. 16. *But blessed are your eyes, for they see*, etc.] Which is to be understood both of corporal and intellectual sight: it was their happiness to see Christ in the flesh, and converse with him in person, be eyewitnesses of his majesty, and see with their own eyes the miracles performed by him, the

proofs and attestations of those doctrines they were to publish to all the world; and it was still their greater happiness, that they saw his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth: many saw him in the flesh, as they did, with their bodily eyes, but saw no beauty, nor comeliness in him, nothing amiable and desirable in him; but these saw his personal and transcendent glories, as the Son of God, his fulness as mediator, his suitableness as a Saviour and Redeemer, and all the characters of the Messiah in him; and so believed, and were sure that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God: they saw Christ, not in the promise, as Abraham, and other patriarchs did; nor through types and shadows, as the saints of the Old Testament did; to them it was given to know and understand the mysteries of grace, respecting the person, offices, obedience, sufferings, and death of Christ.

And your ears, for they hear. This also must be understood of corporal and intellectual hearing, another branch of their present happiness. They heard the words of truth from the lips of that great prophet Moses said should rise up among them, like unto him, whom they should hear: they heard, with their own ears, a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the beloved Son of God, in whom he was well pleased. They heard the Gospel preached by him, not only so as to be affected with it, and give their assent to it, but also to understand it spiritually, and experimentally, and to bring forth the fruit of it; and so were that sort of hearers, signified by the good ground in the parable Christ had just delivered. The forms of speech, in which the happiness of the disciples is here expressed, seem to be in common use with the Jews, when they would extol the peculiar attainments of a man, especially in matters of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. Thus, it being told R. Jochanan ben Zaccai of some persons that had expounded the work of Mercavah, that is, the beginning of Ezekiel's prophecy, and the mysterious passages in it, and what befell them, expressed himself thus concerning them [f786];

> "blessed are you, and blessed are your children, `war Ækç ymy[ yrça`, "and blessed are the eyes that so see"."

And elsewhere [f787] mention being made of a book of secrets delivered to Solomon, and which he had understanding of, it is said,

> "[mçç ^zwaw harç ^y[yrça, "blessed is the eye that sees, and the ear that hears", and the heart that understands, and causes to understand, the wisdom of it."

Ver. 17. *For verily I say unto you*, etc.] This is added for the further confirmation of what is before said, concerning the happiness of the disciples, in seeing and hearing what they did:

that many prophets, and righteous men; Luke says, (<42 10 24>Luke 10:24) "kings"

have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. To see Christ in the flesh, and have a clearer insight into the knowledge of the mysteries of grace, were things very desirable to men of the highest class in church and state, and of the best characters, such as Abraham, (<43 08 56>John 8:56). Jacob, (<01 49 18>Genesis 49:18). David, (<19 14 07>Psalm 14:7). Solomon, and the church in his time, (<22 01 01>Song of Solomon 8:1). Isaiah, and the saints with him, (<23 25 09>Isaiah 25:9) with many others. These indeed had a sight of Christ, but a very distant one; they saw him afar off in the promises and prophecies of him; and not very clearly, but through dark types and cloudy sacrifices; whereas the disciples saw him in person, heard him preach, took in the evidence of his miracles, and felt the power of his doctrines, and spiritually and savingly understood them. A way of speaking, somewhat like this, stands in the Talmud [f788];

> "Many have watched to expound in Mercavah (the beginning of Ezekiel's prophecy), µhymym htwa war alw, "and have not seen it all their days"."

Ver. 18. *Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower*. That is, the interpretation of the parable; for they had heard the parable before, and had desired an explanation of it; which, though not mentioned by Matthew, is, by the other evangelists, (<41 04 10>Mark 4:10), (<42 08 09>Luke 8:9) and since it was given to them to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, therefore Christ calls upon them to attend unto, and hear, so as to understand the spiritual meaning of this parable. Mark relates, that he moreover said to his disciples at this time, "know ye not this parable?" Do ye not understand the meaning of it, so easy to be taken in? them as it were reproving for their dulness of hearing, notwithstanding the grace given them, and the advantages they enjoyed: "how then will ye know all parables?" all that he

had delivered, or was about to deliver at this time, or should hereafter; which were of more difficult interpretation, and not so easy to be understood as this.

Ver. 19. *When anyone heareth the word of the kingdom*, etc.] Hence it appears, that by the "seed" in the parable is meant the Gospel, called the "word of the kingdom": because it treats of the king Messiah, of his person, office, and grace; and of his kingdom, and the administration of it by him, under the present dispensation; of the kingdom of grace saints enjoy now, and of the kingdom of heaven they shall enter into hereafter, through the grace and righteousness of Christ. Now such a hearer of this word is here described, who hears it accidentally, and only externally; hears the sound of it with his ears,

and understandeth it not with his heart. He is one that is careless and inattentive, negligent and forgetful; has some slight notions of things as he hears, but these pass away as they come; his affections are not at all touched, nor his judgment informed by them, but remains as stupid, and as unconcerned as ever; his heart is not opened to attend to, and receive the word, but continues hard and obdurate; and is like the common and beaten road, that is trodden down by everyone, and is not susceptible of the seed, that falls upon it.

Then cometh the wicked one, Satan, the devil, (<4104>Mark 4:15, <4108>Luke 8:12) who is, by way of eminency, so called, being the first creature that became wicked, and the worst that is so; who is entirely and immutably wicked; whose whole work and employment lies in wickedness; and who, was the original cause of the wickedness that is among men, and which he is continually instigating and promoting: so the Jews frequently call [f789] Samael, by whom they mean the devil, Samael, [çdh, "the wicked". This evil spirit, as soon as ever he observes one hearing the word, especially that has not been used to attend, comes immediately, and, as he is hearing,

catcheth away that which is sown in his heart: not the grace of God, which being once implanted in the heart, can never be taken away by Satan; but the word which was sown, not in his understanding, in a spiritual sense, nor even in his affections, so as to love it, delight, and take pleasure in it; much less in his heart, so as to become the engrafted word able to save, or so as to believe in it, and in Christ revealed by it; but in his memory, and that but very slightly neither; for the heart sometimes means the memory;

(see <4005>Luke 2:51). Besides, the word only fell “upon”, not “into” his heart, as into the good ground, as the metaphor in the parable shows; and it made no impression, nor was it inwardly received, but as soon as ever dropped, was “catched” away by the enemy; not by frightening him out of it, by persecution, as the stony ground hearer; nor by filling the mind with worldly cares, as the thorny ground hearer; but by various suggestions and temptations, darting in thoughts, presenting objects, and so diverted his mind from the word, and fixed his attention elsewhere; which is done at once, at an unawares, secretly, and without any notice of the person himself; so that the word is entirely lost to him, and he does not so much as remember the least thing he has been hearing:

this is he which receiveth the seed by the way side; such an hearer is comparable to such ground, on whom the word has no more effect, than seed sown upon a common beaten path.

Ver. 20. *But he that receiveth the seed into stony places*, etc.] Such a hearer, who is like to the stony ground on which the seed fell, is one that is not an accidental hearer of the word, as the former, but a settled constant hearer of it; and not one that is careless and negligent, but diligent and attentive, and has some understanding of what he hears;

the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: he is one that not only constantly attends upon it, but he receives it; he gives an assent to it, he believes in it historically, makes a profession of his faith in it, and holds it for a while, being under some convictions of the truth of it: and having some speculative notions of it, and light in his understanding and judgment in it, he has some flashes of natural affection for it, and delivers some outward expressions of pleasure and delight in it, like Herod, and the hearers of John the Baptist; but has no heart work, and so is like to the rock in stony ground; the natural hardness of his heart continues, it remains unbroken by the word, without any true sense of sin, and repentance for it, and destitute of spiritual life, and of true faith, love, and joy: hence, as his profession is taken up in haste, immediately, upon a flash of affection, and a little head knowledge, it does not last long, nor prove honourable.

Ver. 21. *Yet hath he not root in himself*, etc.] Nor in Christ; the word is not rooted in him, nor has he the root of the matter, or the truth of grace in him:

but dureth for a while; a hearer of the word, a professor of religion, showing some outward respect to the word, and to the preachers of it:

for when tribulation or persecution ariseth, because of the word; which is often the case, and must be expected by those who embrace the Gospel, profess the name of Christ, and are willing to live godly in him. Tribulation may intend some lesser and lighter troubles for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel; such as the revilings and reproaches of men, loss of character, and trade, etc. and persecution may design something more public and vehement; such as confiscation of goods, imprisonment, and danger of life, the most exquisite tortures, and death in the most cruel form and shape; things very disagreeable to flesh and blood, and which cannot be endured, and submitted to, by persons without a principle of grace, by one that has no root in himself. Luke calls this a time "of temptation", or trial, as it is either way, both by private troubles, and more public persecutions: these try men's principles and professions, and whether the truth of grace is in them or not; and where it is not in any person,

by and by he is offended; at the cross; he shrinks back from it, does not care to take it up, and follow Christ; but drops his religion, and the profession of it; apostatises, falls away, and comes to nothing.

Ver. 22. *He also that receiveth seed among the thorns*, etc.] The hearer that is like to the thorny ground, on which the seed fell,

is he that heareth the word; not a profane sinner, nor a reviler of religion, or a persecutor of the saints; but one that not only shows a love to the word, but who seems to have his heart broken under it, and by it, his conscience tender, and his life outwardly reformed; one, who besides his being a settled, diligent, understanding, and affectionate hearer of the word, and a believing receiver and professor of it, seems to have a thorough work of grace upon him, to have the fallow ground of his heart ploughed up, and to be truly contrite; the thorns being under ground, and not yet to be seen, but afterwards appear:

and the care of this world; not the care of another world, nor a care about spiritual things in this world, nor even a proper, laudable care of the things of this present life, but an anxious and immoderate care of them; which, as thorns, is very perplexing and distressing to the persons themselves, and is what is vain and fruitless.

And the deceitfulness of riches: in opposition to some riches, the riches of grace and glory, which have no deceit in them; and not riches themselves, bare worldly riches but the deceitfulness of them, is here taken notice of; for riches often delude, and lead persons out of the right way, out of God's way; cause them to err from the faith; they do not give the satisfaction they promise, and often do not continue, as is expected: and are as thorns, pungent to the owners of them, who pierce themselves through with many sorrows in acquiring and keeping them; and are frequently injurious to others, their fellow creatures; and in the issue are useless and unprofitable, especially with respect to the concerns of another world. Mark adds, "and the lusts of other things"; besides riches; and Luke adds, and "pleasures of this life"; meaning divers other worldly lusts and pleasures, such as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life: which also, like thorns, are distracting and afflicting, sooner or later; are vain, and unprofitable, and lead to destruction: and these are called "the pleasures of this life", in opposition to, and distinction from the pleasures of that which is to come, which are real and lasting: the phrase is Jewish [f790];

> "says R. Judah, the prince, whoever takes upon him, hzh µlw[h ygwn[t, "the pleasures of this world", to him are denied the pleasures of the world to come: and whoever does not take upon him "the pleasures of this world", to him are given the pleasures of the world to come."

Now these, all, and each of them,

choke the word: by overspreading all the powers and faculties of the soul, as thorns do a field; by overtopping the seed of the word, and by hiding it from the influences of the sun of righteousness, and rain of grace; and by attracting everything in the heart to themselves; and by bearing and pressing down all thought, concern, and care for the use, fruitfulness, and increase of the word.

And he becometh unfruitful: as in such circumstances he must needs be; or if there be any show of fruit in outward respect to the word, in an historical faith of it, in an external profession, and outward reformation, "yet brings not fruit to perfection", as Luke says; these in process of time shrivel up, wither away, and come to nothing.

Ver. 23. *But he that received seed into the good ground*, etc.] The hearer compared to good ground into which the seed fell, is he that heareth the

word and understandeth it; has a new and spiritual understanding given him, feels the power of it on his heart, enlightening and quickening him; has an application of it made to him by the Spirit of God, and can discern the worth and excellency of it, and distinguish it from all others; and, as Mark says, “receives it”; as the word of God in faith, and with the love of it, and with all readiness and meekness; and, as Luke observes, “keeps it”; holds it fast against all opposition with great struggling; will not part with it at any rate, nor depart from it in the least, nor entertain any doubt about it; but abides by it, stands fast in it, and is valiant for it: and this he does in and with “an honest and good heart”; which no man naturally has; nor can any man make his heart so: this is the work of God, and is owing to his efficacious grace. This is an heart of flesh, a new and right heart, and spirit; an heart to fear God, to love him, and to trust in him; in which Christ dwells by faith; in which the Spirit of God has his temple; and in which every grace is implanted: and such an one, as he hears with a strict, and an honest intention, and in the exercise of grace; so he holds fast the word he hears, understands and receives, with all faithfulness and honesty:

which also beareth fruit and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty, and some thirty: the fruit bore, and brought forth by such an hearer, is the true fruit of grace and righteousness, and is all from Christ, under the influences of the Spirit, through the word and ordinances, as means, and issues in the glory of God; and though not brought forth in the same quantity in all, yet is of the same quality; and is brought forth, as Luke says, “with patience”: constantly, and continually, in all seasons, in old age, and even unto death; and is at last brought “to perfection”, holds, and remains unto the end.

Ver. 24. *Another parable put he forth unto them, saying*, etc.] Somewhat like the former, but with a different view: for whereas the design of the former was to show the different sorts of hearers that attend upon the ministry of the word, three parts in four being bad; this is to show the difference of members in churches, some being comparable to good seed, and others to tares.

The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: by “the kingdom of heaven”, is not meant the ultimate glory of the saints in heaven, or the state of happiness in the other world; for there will be no tares there; nor the Gospel, and the ministration of it, but the Gospel dispensation, and times, and kingdom of the Messiah; or rather the

Gospel visible church state, on earth, called a “kingdom”, of which Christ is king, and in which the saints are subject to him; where proper laws are made for the orderly government of it, and proper officers appointed to explain, and put those laws in execution; and which consists of various persons, united under one head, and independent of any other government: and it is styled the kingdom of heaven, in distinction from the kingdoms of this world; the subjects of it are, or should be, heaven born souls; the word, laws, and ordinances of it are from heaven; and there is some resemblance between a Gospel church state and heaven, and it is very near unto it, and is even the suburbs of it: or else the king Messiah himself is intended, who is compared to a man, a sower; and so it is explained, (Matthew 13:37) “he that soweth the good seed is the son of man”: which is a name and title of the Messiah, by which he is called both in the Old and New Testament; who, though the seed of the woman, yet was the son of man, as of Abraham, and David; and which denotes the truth, and yet the infirmity of his human nature: he is the sower that went about preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, in the Jewish world, or throughout Judea and Galilee, in his own person: and who also, by the ministry of his apostles, sowed the seed of the word in the several parts of the world, which was made effectual for the beginning of a good work of grace on the souls of many; for by “his field” is meant “the world”, as appears from (Matthew 13:38) and means either the whole world, in which both good and bad men live and dwell; and is the field Christ is the proprietor of, both by creation, as God, and by gift, as mediator: or the church, the visible Gospel church state throughout the world; which is as a field well tilled and manured; and is Christ’s by gift, purchase, and grace: and by the good seed sown in it, are meant “the children of the kingdom”; as is said, (Matthew 13:38) such as have a good work begun in them, and bring forth good fruit in their lives and conversations.

Ver. 25. *But while men slept*, etc.] Good men, ministers, and churches; whose case this sometimes is to be asleep in a spiritual sense: and which sleepiness lies in a non-exercise of grace; in a sluggishness to and in duty; in a contentment in external exercises of religion; in lukewarmness about the cause of Christ; in an unconcernedness about sins of omission and commission; and in a willingness to continue in such a state; and which arises from a body of sin and death; from worldly cares; weariness in spiritual duties; a cessation from spiritual exercises; an absenting from spiritual company; oftentimes from outward ease, peace, and plenty,

sometimes from a long expectation of the bridegroom's coming, and the delay of it; and from its being a night season, a time of darkness and security: such a case with the church, and good men, is very dangerous, as it exposes to every sin and snare; renders them liable to lose the presence of Christ, their liveliness and comfort; and tends to poverty and leanness of soul: such are in danger of being surprised with the midnight cry; and the churches are likely to be filled with hypocrites and heretics:

his enemy came; by whom is meant the devil, (<4013 39>Matthew 13:39) who is an enemy to Christ personally, and showed himself to be so in his infancy, by stirring up Herod to seek his life: and, when grown up, by instigating the Jews to contrive his death; which they attempted by various methods, and which, at last, he compassed by Judas, and the Scribes and Pharisees; and also to Christ mystical, to the church, and all true believers; whose adversary he is, going about, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour: the same came into the field, the world, and church in it;

and sowed tares among the wheat; by "the wheat", is meant the same with the "good seed", the children of God, true believers in Christ; who are comparable to wheat, for the choiceness of it, that being the choicest grain, so they are the chosen of God, and precious, and the excellent in the earth: and because it dies before it rises and springs up; so the saints do, and will do, both in a spiritual and corporal sense; and because of the purity and whiteness of it, so they are pure and white, being sanctioned by the Spirit, washed in the blood of Christ, and justified by his righteousness; and because of its substance, fulness, weight, and permanence, so they are filled from Christ's fulness, and with the fulness of God, and fruits of righteousness, and remain, and cannot be driven as the chaff is, but continue to live, because Christ their head lives; and because of its gradual increase, so they increase in spiritual light, grace, and experience; and because of the chaff that adheres to it, so sin and corruption cleave to the saints in this life; and lastly, because it needs both the flail and the fan, so believers need chastisements, afflictions, and corrections: by "the tares" sown among them, are meant "the children of the wicked one"; Satan, the enemy and adversary, as in (<4013 38>Matthew 13:38) who are to be understood, not of profane sinners; though these are the children of the devil; but of professors of religion, men either of bad principles, or of bad lives and conversations; whom Satan, by some means or another, gets into churches, and they become members thereof: at first they look like wheat, like true believers, have a show of religion, a form of godliness, an appearance of

grace, but are destitute of it; and prove tares, unfruitful, unprofitable, and of no account, yea hurtful, and whose end is to be burned.

And went his way; somewhere else, to do more mischief; and having done all he could at present here, undiscovered, not taken notice of by ministers and churches; they being all asleep, and having lost, in a great measure, the spirit of discerning. The word ζιζανια, we render "tares", and the Ethiopic version "thistles", probably means the same the Jewish doctors call ˆynwz, Zunin [f791]; and which, they say, is a sort of wheat, and not of a different kind from it; that when it is sown it looks like wheat, and is sown for it, but is changed in the earth, both as to its nature and form, and brings forth this kind. In the generation in which the flood was, they say [f792], they sowed wheat, and the earth brought forth ˆynwz, ζιζανια, what we render "tares", and bids fair to be what is here meant; and fitly expresses false professors, nominal Christians, men of degenerate principles and practices: for not what we call tares, or vetches, can be meant, which may be removed from the wheat without danger, but rather this degenerate wheat; or that wheat which is blasted, and which may be observed sometimes to grow upon the same root, and therefore cannot be taken away, without rooting up the wheat also.

Ver. 26. *But when the blade was sprung up*, etc.] That is, the blade of the wheat; which designs the taking up, a profession of religion on principles of grace, called a profession of faith; and when right, it springs up from, and proceeds upon a work begun in the heart: and such a profession ought to be made by all that are partakers of the grace of God; and ought to be made both verbally, by a confession of the mouth, and a declaration of the work of God upon the heart, and by deeds, by submitting to the ordinances of the Gospel; and should be sincere, and from the heart, and be visible to men, and be held fast unto the end without wavering.

And brought forth fruit; which intends not the conversion of sinners, nor the performance of duties, nor the perfection of grace, but the first appearances of grace under a profession, such as sorrow for sin, after a godly sort, fear and reverence of God, great humility, much self-denial, ardent love to Christ, pantings and breathings after him, and communion with him, strong affection for the people of God, some exercise of faith on Christ, zeal for his cause and interest, and a concern to honour and glorify God.

Then appeared the tares also. They were not discernible for some time when they were first sown; they looked like good seed when they first appeared among the people of God; they seemed to have the truth of grace, as others had; their blade of profession, when it sprung up, looked like that of true wheat; but were now discernible both by their unfruitfulness in their lives and conversations, and by their bad principles, which they now endeavoured to spread, to the hurt of the churches where they were: they always appeared to be what they were to God the searcher of hearts; but now, through the zeal of true converts, to which these opposed themselves, and the fruitfulness of their lives, from which they were so very different, they became manifest to ministers and churches.

Ver. 27. *So the servants of the householder came*, etc.] Christ is the "householder"; the house of which he is master is the church, called the household of God, the household of faith, the family in heaven, and in earth; in which house he bears and sustains many relations, as those of a son, a priest, a master, or governor. By "the servants" that came to him, are meant, not civil magistrates, who have nothing to do in the affairs of churches; nor the angels, though these are ministering servants to Christ, and will be employed by him, in the close of time, to gather up the tares, bind them in bundles, and cast them into the fire; but the ministers of the Gospel, the servants of Christ, and of the most high God, who are made use of in planting, and sowing, and weeding his field, the church: these observing the tares, and fearing the danger the wheat was in by them, as well as troubled and surprised at the appearance and growth of them, came to him, and spread the case before him in prayer; and

said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? Their manner of address, calling him Sir, or Lord, is expressive of their reverence of him, and obedience to him; and which is said, not in word only, but in the sincerity of their hearts, and under the influence of the Spirit of God. They ascribe the field, the church, the good seed, converts that sprung up in it, and the sowing, or making of them such, all to Christ, and not any of this kind, or any part of it to themselves; though they were employed by him in tilling this field, in sowing spiritual things to the saints, and were useful to them in their profession of religion. Moreover, they intimate, that nothing but good could come from Christ; no bad seed, no tares could be of his sowing: and declare their ignorance of the rise of them; which ignorance was owing to their being asleep, when the enemy sowed them.

Ver. 28. *He said unto them, an enemy has done this*, etc.] This is the answer of the householder to the question of his servants. In the Greek text it is, “an enemy man”; and is so rendered in the several versions; meaning, not that the enemy was a man; for he was the devil, as in (40 13:39 Matthew 13:39) but it is an Hebraism; such as in (17 07:06 Esther 7:6), bywaw rx çya, “the man adversary and enemy” is this wicked Haman; and signifies a certain enemy, and one indeed that is an implacable enemy to man.

The servants said unto him, wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? which words express the concern of the ministers of Christ for the true members of the church, comparable to wheat, lest they should receive any damage by the ill examples, and pernicious principles of evil men among them; also their detestation and abhorrence of men of wicked lives and erroneous principles; they cannot bear them which are evil; likewise, they show great regard to the glory of God, and interest of religion, and their readiness to execute any orders Christ should give them; but not willing to proceed of themselves, ask counsel and advice of him.

Ver. 29. *But he said, nay*, etc.] The answer is in the negative; and which, if spoken to angels, is to be understood, that they should not inflict punishments, or pour out, their vials, as yet, on formal professors, lest the righteous should share in them; and if to magistrates, the sense of it is, that they should not persecute with the sword, or put men to death for heretical opinions; but if to ministers of the word, which sense I choose, the meaning is, that not everyone suspected to be a tare, or a nominal professor, is to be removed from the communion of the church, because there is often danger in so doing:

lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them: not that men of openly scandalous lives are to be tolerated in churches; they are to be withdrawn from, and put away; nor men of known, avowed, heretical principles; such, after the first and second admonition, are to be rejected: yet there may be such in churches, not altogether agreeable in principle and practice, whose character and situation may be such, that there is no removing them without offending some truly gracious, useful persons, in whose affections they stand, who may be tempted, by such a step, to leave their communion; and so cannot be done without a considerable prejudice to the church. The scope of the parable, and the design of our Lord in it, are chiefly to be attended to; which are to show, that a pure and perfect church cannot be expected in the present state of

things; and that saints should not be immoderately uneasy, but patiently bear such exercises, until Christ's time is come to relieve them, when the tares and chaff shall be separated from the wheat; when sinners shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous, and there shall be no more a pricking briar, nor a grieving thorn in the house of Israel.

Ver. 30. *Let both grow together until the harvest*, etc.] By "the harvest", is meant "the end of the world", (<40 13 39>Matthew 13:39) either of the Jewish world, the dissolution of their church and state, which was near; or of a man's life, which is the end of the world to him; or rather of this present world, the system of the universe, of the material world, as to its present form and use, and of the inhabitants of it, and of time in it. Now the end of the world is compared to harvest, because the time of it is fixed and settled; though it is not known when it will be, yet it is as certain as the time of harvest; and because as that is in the summer season, in hot weather, so this will be a time of wrath, when the day of the Lord will burn like an oven; and as the harvest time is a time of hurry and labour, so will it be in the end of the world, especially with the angels, who will be gathering the elect from the four winds, and all men, to appear before the judgment seat of Christ; and as at harvest the corn is cut down, the fields cleared, and all brought home, so it will be at the end of the world; the sickle will be thrust in, and the earth reaped, the tares bound in bundles, and cast into the fire, and the wheat gathered into the garner; and as the harvest, as it falls out to be good or bad, is matter of joy or sorrow, so will the end of the world be joy to saints, who will then enter into the joy of their Lord, and be for ever with him, and sorrow to the wicked, who will then go into everlasting punishment. Until this time, wheat and tares are to "grow" together. The "wheat", or true believers, "grow" in the exercise of grace, as of faith, hope, love, humility, etc. and in spiritual knowledge of the will of God, of the doctrines of grace, and of Christ; which growth is owing to the dews of divine grace, to the sun of righteousness shining upon them, to the gracious influences of the blessed Spirit, and to the word and ordinances as means. The "tares", or nominal professors, may "grow" in riches, in credit, and reputation among men, and in speculative knowledge; and oftentimes so it is, that they grow worse and worse, both in doctrinal and practical wickedness: when they are ordered to "grow together", the meaning is, not that their growth is equal, or of the same kind, nor in the same way, nor in the same things; but this only notes the time and duration of their growth: nor is this suffered and permitted, because of any love God has unto them,

or any delight in, or approbation of them; but either because they are not fully ripe for ruin; or for the exercise of the saints, and for their temporal and spiritual good; for it is entirely a tender regard to the wheat, and not to the tares, that they are ordered to grow together.

And in the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, the angels, (⁴⁰13:39 Matthew 13:39)

gather ye together first the tares; that is, formal professors, hypocrites, and heretics; whom he will have removed out of his kingdom, his church, his field, in the world: and this order shows, that the angels will have a perfect and exact knowledge of these persons; and that their work will be to separate them from the righteous; when the churches will be pure, and without spot, or wrinkle: and this will be done first; that is, these wicked men will be first removed out of the church, before their more severe punishment takes place:

and bind them in bundles to burn them: which denotes the power of angels over these persons, the certainty and inevitableness of their ruin, their association together, and their destruction in company with one another; which will be an aggravation of their misery, which is expressed by "burning" with fire; not material, but metaphorical; the wrath of God, which will be a consuming fire, and be everlasting and unquenchable.

But gather the wheat into my barn; meaning the kingdom of heaven, which is as a garner or repository, in which none but wheat is put, and where it is safe, and lies together: so none but righteous, pure, and undefiled persons, are admitted into heaven; and being there, they are safe, and out of the reach of all enemies; and what adds to their happiness is, that they are together, enjoying all satiety and fulness; and are in Christ's barn, or garner, which he has made, and prepared for their reception. The gathering of them into it designs the introduction of the saints into heaven by angels, as their souls at death, and both souls and bodies, at the last day, when their happiness will be perfect and complete.

Ver. 31. *Another parable put he forth unto them, saying*, etc.] As the former parable sets forth the condition of the Gospel church state until the end of the world; this expresses the small beginnings of it, and the large increase and growth of it, and its great usefulness to the saints.

The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: by "the kingdom of heaven" is meant, as

before, the Gospel dispensation, or the Gospel church state, and the ministry of the word, and the administration of ordinances in it: by the grain of mustard seed, either the Gospel, or the people of God, or the grace of God in them; and by the man that took and sowed it, the Lord Jesus Christ; and by his field, in which he sowed it, the world, or his church throughout the world.

Ver. 32. *Which indeed is the least of all seeds*, etc.] So mustard with the Jews [f793], is called µy[rz ^ym, "a kind of seeds"; and being very small, hence ldrjk, "as a grain of mustard", is often used, proverbially [f794], for the least thing, as it is by Christ, (<401720>Matthew 17:20, <421706>Luke 17:6). Not but there are seeds lesser than this; but the meaning is, that this is one of the least of all seeds; or was the least of seeds, which were commonly known in Judea; or the very least which grew to the size this sometimes did, and as here related. Now this is designed to express the small beginnings of the Gospel dispensation, of the ministry of the word, of the grace of God in the hearts of his people, and of the small number of them at first. The Gospel, and the ministry of it were like a grain of mustard seed, little, mean, and contemptible; the author of it, Christ, was so to the Jews, in his birth, parentage, education, and outward appearance; the subject of it a crucified Christ, and salvation by him; and the doctrines out of the reach, and contrary to carnal reason; the preachers of it, were persons of very mean and low life, few in number, weak, illiterate, and despicable, and the whole world against them; the circumstances which attended the Gospel were very discouraging; it was charged with novelty, represented as contrary to common sense, and the reason of mankind, and as opening a door to licentiousness; and was followed with violent opposition and persecution, wherever it went. The grace of God, which under the ministry of the word is implanted in the hearts of the Lord's people, is at first very small, like a grain of mustard seed; it is a day of small things; faith in Christ is very weak and low, spiritual strength small, comfort little, experience of the love of God not large, light and knowledge in the doctrines of grace but very obscure and glimmering: the church of God, which sprung up under the ministry of the word, and through the work of grace, upon the hearts of particular persons, was like the small grain of mustard seed; the persons of which it consisted were but few in number in Christ's time, and at his ascension into heaven, and when the Gospel was first preached among the Gentiles; and those persons which laid the foundation, and were at the beginning of the Gospel church state,

made a very contemptible figure, by reason of their outward poverty, and mean circumstances in the world; and on account of the severe persecutions which every where attended them; and also through the errors and heresies introduced by evil men, that crept in among them.

But when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree. Luke says, "a great tree", (ver. 19Luke 13:19) for to such a size did the mustard tree grow in the land of Judea, of which take the following instances[f795].

> "At Shichin there was a mustard stalk, which had three branches, and one of them was cut down, and they covered a potter's booth with it; and found in it ldrj lç ˆybq tçlç, "three kabs of mustard seed" (elsewhere[f796] it is said, nine kabs). Says R. Simeon ben Chelphetha, I have one stalk of mustard seed in my field, and I go up to it, hnath çarb hlw[k, "as one goes up to the top of a fig tree"."

And though the mustard tree grew to this height and size, it was reckoned among herbs, as here by Christ; for they say[f797],

> "they do not put mustard in a field of fruits, but in a field of herbs."

All which serve to illustrate and confirm the account here given by Christ, and alluded to; and which expresses the very large growth and increase of the Gospel, and the ministry of it; of the grace of God in the heart, and of the church of Christ, and his interest in the world: of the Gospel, and the ministry of it, as to its large spread in the world; which at first was confined to the Jews, but was afterwards published to the Gentiles, and carried through the whole world; and, in ages since, has made a considerable progress, particularly at the Reformation; and will make a much greater one, towards the end of time: and of the grace of God in the heart, which gradually increases to a full assurance of understanding of hope, and of faith, and to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: and of the church of Christ, and his interest in the world; both as to the large numbers it did consist of in the times of the apostles, and since, and will more especially hereafter; for the church will fill the earth, and the kingdoms of the world will become the church, and all nations of the earth will flock unto it; the people of the Jews in general will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in: as also with respect to the figure it will make through the great personages, the kings and princes of the earth, that

will be in it; the great power and authority the saints will then have; the peace and prosperity that will be enjoyed by them; the spirituality, holiness, righteousness, love, and unity, there will be among them; as also the presence of God and of the Lamb, they will be favoured with; all which glory and happiness will be brought about by a plentiful effusion of the Spirit, and by the glorious appearance of Christ.

So that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof: by "the birds of the air", some think angels are meant, compared to "birds" for their harmlessness and innocence; for their readiness and swiftness to do the will of God; and for their warbling notes and tuneful songs of praise; and who may be called birds "of the air", or heaven, because of their habitation: now these delight to be in the church, to be under the shadow of the Gospel ministry, and to look into the mysteries of it. Though rather, the saints and people of God are intended, who, in Scripture, are sometimes compared to particular birds; as to the eagle, the dove, and sparrow; and to birds in general, because timorous, weak, and defenceless, are exposed to danger, and wonderfully delivered, and are very subject to wander and go astray; and because of their chirpings, and singing songs of praise to their God and Redeemer; and to birds of the air or heaven, because they are heaven born souls, are partakers of the heavenly calling, and are pressing for, and soaring aloft towards the high calling of God in Christ: now the Gospel ministry, and the Gospel church state, are very useful to these; they "come" thereunto willingly, and cheerfully, deliberately, and with dependence on the grace and strength of Christ; humbly, under a sense of their own unworthiness, and yet with joy and thankfulness; heartily, and with their faces thitherwards, and they also "lodge" therein. This is what they desire, and their hearts are set upon; here they determine to be, and it is their happiness to be here; the shadow of Gospel ordinances is very delightful, very refreshing, and very fruitful to them, and under which saints dwell with great safety; and what a coming of these birds will there be hither, and a tabernacling of them herein, at the latter day! which are greatly designed in this part of the parable.

Ver. 33. *Another parable spake he unto them*, etc.] To the disciples and the multitude, and which was of the same kind, to the same purpose, and relating to the same subject as the former; the spread of the Gospel, and the increase of it in the world.

The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven. The word “leaven” is every where else used in a bad sense; and either designs immorality, as malice and wickedness, or false doctrine, such as that of the Pharisees and Sadducees: but here it seems to be taken in a good sense, and the Gospel to be compared unto it; nor for its disagreeable qualities, but on account of its small quantity; it is a little leaven that leavens the whole lump, and may express, as the grain of mustard seed does, the small beginnings of the Gospel, and its meanness in the eyes of men; and on account of its piercing, penetrating, and spreading nature: so the Gospel reaches the conscience, pierces the heart, enlightens the understanding, informs the judgment, raises and sets the affections on right objects, subdues the will, and brings down all towering thoughts, to the obedience of Christ, in particular persons; and has penetrated and made its way, under divine influence, through towns, cities, kingdoms, and nations: also on account of its heating, swelling, and assimilating nature; so the Gospel, where it takes place, warms the affections, causes the heart to burn within, inspires with zeal for God, and Christ, and the Gospel; it swells and fills churches with such as shall be saved, and assimilates the several persons it operates in, makes them like one another, one bread, one body, having like precious faith, knowledge, and experience, though in a different degree.

Which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal. By the “three measures of meal”, are meant the elect of God; who, because of their nature and quality, are compared to meal, or fine flour; and that because of that of which it is made, wheat, to a corn of which Christ is compared, ([48]John 12:24) and by whose grace the saints are what they are, justified, regenerated, and sanctified; and on account of the manner it becomes so, as by grinding the wheat, sifting it when ground, and separating it from the bran; all which may express the first convictions in the conscience of awakened sinners, the grace of God in conversion, and the separation of them from the rest of the world, in the effectual calling; as also by reason of its choiceness, purity, and goodness, the saints being chosen of God and precious, and being pure and spotless, through the grace and righteousness of Christ, and being highly valued, and had in great esteem by him; and because of their quantity, are compared to three measures of meal. The measure here designed, is the Hebrew seah, which held a gallon and an half, and three of these made an ephah; and which is often rendered by the [f798] Targumists, ˆyas tlt, “three seahs”, or “measures”, the very phrase here used; and the reason why three are particularly mentioned is, because

such a quantity used to be fermented and kneaded by women at one time; (see <01806>Genesis 18:6) and for the further illustration of this, take the following passage out of the Talmud [f799].

> “The wise men say, that three women may be employed in one lump of dough; one may knead it, another may make it into loaves, and another may bake it — and it is a tradition, ˆybq tçlç ˆyjyjb “that in wheat they use three kabs”, or “measures”, and in barley four “kabs”.”

These measures, as here used parabolically, may design the small number of God’s elect; and, as some have thought, may have respect to the three then known parts of the world, where they were, or should be: by the woman that took and hid the leaven in these measures, is meant, either the church, sometimes compared to a woman in Scripture, (<661201>Revelation 12:1) or the ministers of the Gospel, wisdom’s maidens; or rather, Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God; (see <200901>Proverbs 9:1-3) and the reason why a woman is mentioned is, because it was, with the Jews, the work of women to ferment the flour, knead the dough, and make the bread: and this action of taking and covering the leaven in the meal, may denote the power of Christ, in opening the heart, and putting in the Gospel, which unless he takes in hand, and uses, is ineffectual; as also the passiveness of men, under the first workings of the Spirit of Christ upon their souls, by the Gospel; and likewise, the secret and invisible power of divine grace, operating by the ministry of the word, upon the heart.

Until the whole was leavened: to be “leavened” by the Gospel, is to be evangelized by it, to be brought into the life and liberty of it, to a Gospel way of living by faith on Christ; to derive all peace, joy, and comfort from him, and not from any works of righteousness; and to have a man’s obedience influenced by the love of God, so as to do it cheerfully, and without dependence on it. Now the Gospel, where it has entrance and takes place, powerfully and effectually, continues to operate more or less, as the leaven in the meal, until the whole man, soul and body, all the faculties of the soul, and members of the body, are influenced by it; and will continue with power and efficacy in the world, and church, until all the elect of God are wrought upon by it, and are brought in. There is a late ingenious interpretation [f800] of this parable, which, since the word “leaven” is elsewhere always used in a bad sense, deserves consideration; according to which, this parable expresses not the spread of truth, but of error; by

"the woman" is thought to be meant, the Apocalyptic woman, the woman spoken of in the Revelations, the whore of Rome, the mother of harlots; and the "leaven" which she took, the leaven of false doctrine and discipline; by her "hiding" it, the private, secret, artful methods, false doctrines, and bad discipline were introduced, and the gradual progress thereof; and by the "three measures of meal", the bishops and doctors of the church, among whom this leaven was spread, and who were fermented with it; particularly those three bishops of Rome at first, Sosymus, John the faster, and Boniface the third; which by degrees spread itself, until the whole Christian world was affected with it; and for a long time lay hid and undiscovered, till the Lord raised up Wyclif, John Huss, Jerom of Prague, Luther, and other reformers. The reader may choose which interpretation he likes best.

Ver. 34. *All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude*, etc.] In the hearing of his disciples, whilst in the ship, the multitude being on the shore,

in parables; in the four foregoing ones;

and without a parable spake he not unto them: not that he never had preached but in a parabolical way unto them, or that he never did afterwards use any other way of speaking; for it is certain, that both before and after, he delivered himself plainly, and without figures: but the meaning is, that in that sermon, and at that time, he thought fit to make use of no other method, as appears from the many other parables he afterwards delivered; and though he explained the meaning of some of them to his disciples, at their request, yet he dismissed the multitude without any explication of them.

Ver. 35. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet*, etc.] Not Isaiah, as some copies in the times of Jerom read, but Asaph, who is called Asaph the seer, (2 Chronicles 29:30) which is all one as a prophet; vision is one sort of prophecy [f801]; and there was such a thing as prophesying with harps, psalteries and cymbals, as well as in other ways, and with which Asaph and his sons are said to prophesy, (1 Chronicles 25:1-3) so that he is very rightly called a prophet by the evangelist, who is cited, as

saying, (Psalm 78:2)

I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world: which Psalm, though a history of

the dealings of God with the people of Israel, and of the many deliverances wrought for them, yet as the [f802] Jewish writers observe, contain many things in it, expressed in a parabolical and enigmatical way; such as God's furnishing a table in the wilderness, kindling a fire against Jacob, opening the doors of heaven, giving the corn of heaven, and angels' food, and delivering his strength into captivity; and besides, the very historical facts recorded of the people of Israel, were types of things future under the Gospel dispensation: now as Asaph, by divine inspiration, delivered these parables and dark sayings, so Christ expressed the Gospel, and the mysteries of it, in a parabolical way, which were hid in God, and under the shadows of the law; and so were kept secret from the beginning of the world, and from the multitude, though now made known to the apostles, and by them to others, according to the will of God.

Ver. 36. *Then Jesus sent the multitude away*, etc.] That his disciples might have the opportunity of conversing with him alone, about the sense of the parables he had delivered; and that he might instruct them by some others hereafter mentioned.

And went into the house: left the ship in which he had been preaching to the multitude, came on shore, and returned to the house he came out of, (<401301>Matthew 13:1)

and his disciples came to him; and being alone, make an humble request to him,

saying, declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field: by which they mean, not a rehearsal of it, but an explication of the sense and meaning of it: they ask nothing about the parables of the mustard seed and leaven, either because they better understood them; or because there were some things very remarkable and striking in this, which made them very desirous to be particularly informed of the several parts of it, and their meaning.

Ver. 37. *He answered and said unto them*, etc.] Being very ready to answer their request, and willing to communicate spiritual knowledge to them; thereby showing great condescension, and humility in himself, and great affection to them:

he that soweth the good seed, is the son of man; he that is signified by the man that sowed good seed in his field, is "the son of man"; by whom he means himself, the seed of the woman; and the son of David; who being anointed with the Holy Ghost without measure, went about Judea and

Galilee, preaching the everlasting Gospel, to the conversion of sinners, thereby making them good seed; though this may be understood of him, as including his apostles and ministers, whom he makes use of as instruments for the good of souls, by preaching the Gospel.

Ver. 38. *The field is the world*, etc.] That which is represented by "the field", in which the good seed is sown, is not only the land of Judea, where Christ preached in person, but the whole world, into which the apostles were afterwards sent; or the church of Christ, in the several parts of the world:

the good seed are the children of the kingdom: they which are designed by the good seed, are such, for whom the kingdom of heaven is prepared, to whom it is bequeathed, and who are appointed to it; who are possessed of the kingdom of grace here, and are heirs of the kingdom of glory; and have both a meetness for it, and a right unto it, being the children of God by adoption, and that appearing by regeneration:

but the tares are the children of the wicked one: the persons intended by "the tares", are such professors of religion, as both by their principles and practices, manifestly show that they are of their father the devil; they resemble and imitate him, and do his works; and plainly declare, that they were never born of God, and are in no better state, though under a profession, than openly profane and immoral persons; and are more hurtful and scandalous to the interest of Christ, than such are.

Ver. 39. *The enemy that sowed them is the devil*, etc.] He that is designed by the enemy, who sowed the tares in the field among the wheat, is no other than the devil; the enemy of Christ, of mankind in general, of God's elect in particular, and the accuser of the brethren; and his getting of hypocrites and heretics into churches, is no small proof of his implacable enmity to Christ and his interest; and shows what an adversary he is to the peace, comfort, and fruitfulness of the churches of Christ.

The harvest is the end of the world; that which is meant by "the harvest", until which time wheat and tares, good and bad men, under a profession of religion, are to be together, is "the end of the world"; meaning either the day of wrath and vengeance upon the Jewish nation; when those that truly believed in Christ were separated from the rest, and that hypocritical generation of men were utterly destroyed; or else the day of judgment, the great and last day, when the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein,

shall be burnt up; when the righteous will enter into life, and the wicked go into everlasting punishment:

and the reapers are the angels; the persons signified by “the reapers”, who shall put in the sickle, cut down the tares, bind them in bundles, and cast them into the fire, and who shall gather the wheat into the barn; that is, who shall be the executors of God’s wrath, upon wicked professors of religion, and who shall be the means of introducing the saints into the heavenly kingdom, are “the angels”; the holy and elect angels, who are the ministers of Christ, and ministering servants to them, who are the heirs of salvation; and are opposite to all secret and open enemies of Christ and his people; and will be employed in the end of time, against the wicked, and for the righteous.

Ver. 40. *As therefore the tares are gathered*, etc.] As it is represented in the parable, that in the time of harvest, the tares shall be gathered out from the wheat first; and being bound in bundles, shall be

burnt in the fire, prepared for that purpose,

so shall it be in the end of this world; hypocritical and heretical men, and all formal professors, shall be gathered out from among the saints, and the several churches, among whom they have been; and shall be together cast into everlasting burnings, prepared for the devil and his angels, whose children they are.

Ver. 41. *The Son of man shall send forth his angels*, etc.] Meaning himself, whose ministers the angels are; who wait upon him, and are at his beck and command; even the thousand thousands that minister unto him; these will be sent forth by his orders, into the several parts of the world, where he has any churches, or an interest;

and they shall gather out of his kingdom: the Gospel church, over which Christ is king, where he rules and governs in the hearts of his people; and who are cheerfully and willingly obedient to his laws, under the influence of his Spirit and grace: but all who are in the visible Gospel church state, are not such; some are wicked and rebellious, and though they are suffered to continue, yet not always; for if not removed by censures and excommunications, they will be at last by angels; who will separate them from the saints:

even all things that offend; who are scandals to Christ, his church, and Gospel, by their wicked principles, or infamous practices; and who give offence, not only to God, and his righteous law, but lay stumbling blocks in the way of the children of God, and are the authors of divisions and offences among them:

and them that do iniquity; that do nothing else but iniquity; and who, though they profess to be religious persons, are secretly, or openly, workers of iniquity; and are even doing iniquity, in and whilst they are professing religion.

Ver. 42. *And shall cast them into a furnace of fire*, etc.] Not a material, but a metaphorical one; denoting the wrath of God, which shall fall upon wicked men, and abide upon them to all eternity: which is sometimes called hell fire, sometimes a lake which burns with fire and brimstone; and here a furnace of fire, expressing the vehemency and intenseness of divine wrath, which will be intolerable; in allusion either to Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace, or as some think, to the custom of burning persons alive in some countries; or rather, to the burning of chaff and stubble, and the stalks of any unprofitable things that grew in the field [f803], for the heating of furnaces, and is the very language of the Jews, who used to compare hell to a furnace; so (Genesis 15:17) is paraphrased by them [f804].

> "And behold the sun set, and there was darkness; and lo! Abraham saw until the seats were set, and the thrones cast down; and lo! "hell", which is prepared for the wicked in the world to come, arwntk, "as a furnace", which sparks and flames of fire surrounded; hwgbd, "in the midst of which", the wicked fell, because they rebelled against the law, in their lifetime."

Which is expressed in much the same language, and conveys the same ideas as here; and no wonder is it that it follows,

there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth; declaring the remorse of conscience, the tortures of mind, the sense of inexpressible pain, and punishment, the wicked shall feel; also their furious rage and black despair.

Ver. 43. *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun*, etc.] The time referred to is, when the tares shall be separated from the wheat: when they that offend and do iniquity, shall be gathered out of Christ's kingdom; when the wicked shall be cast into hell: then the "righteous", not who are

so merely in their own apprehensions, and in the judgment of others; nor by their obedience, legal or evangelical; but who are made so, by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them: these, though they have been in this world loaded with reproaches, and attended with many afflictions and persecutions; and have been despised for their poverty and meanness, and want of outward glory, honour, riches, and prosperity; shall now "shine forth" in the robe of Christ's righteousness, in perfect holiness of nature, in all felicity and prosperity of soul; and in the shining dazzling robes of glory, incorruption, and immortality, on their bodies; even

as the sun, having no spot in them, or upon them, and without any clouds of darkness: they will be as Christ himself, the sun of righteousness, with whom, and in whose glory they shall appear, both in soul and body,

in the kingdom of their father; meaning either the same with the kingdom of Christ, the Father's and his, being one and the same; or as distinct from Christ's, (see <40134>Matthew 13:41) the church, and the government of it in this world, in all ages of time, and especially in the latter day, and during the thousand years, Christ and his saints shall reign together, may be peculiarly called the kingdom of Christ; when it will be delivered to the Father, and God shall be all in all: so that the ultimate glory may, though not to the exclusion of the Son, be styled the kingdom of the Father; of God, who is the Father of Christ and of his people; and which is observed, to assure the saints of their interest in it, right unto it, and certain enjoyment of it. Some copies read, "the kingdom of heaven". Much the same images, here made use of, to set forth the glory of the saints, both in soul and body, in the world to come, are expressed by the Jews.

> "The faces of the "righteous", they say, [f805] in time to come, shall be hmjl twmwd, "like to the sun", and moon, to the stars and planets, and lightnings, and lilies, and to the lamp of the sanctuary."

And elsewhere [f806] they observe, that

> "God in time to come, will beautify the body of "the righteous", as the beauty of the first man, when he entered into paradise, according to (<235811>Isaiah 58:11) and that the soul, whilst in its dignity, shall be sustained with the superior light, and be clothed with it; and when it shall enter into the body hereafter, it shall enter with that light; and then shall the body shine, [yqrh rhzk, "as the brightness of the firmament": as is said in (<271203>Daniel 12:3)"

And a little after [f807] it is said, that when

> “the soul goes out, the body is left, which shall be there built again, açmçd arhnk, “as the light of the sun”, and as the brightness of the firmament.”

Who hath ears to hear, let him hear; and seriously consider of the several things said in this parable, concerning the wheat and tares, the righteous and the wicked, as being matters of the greatest moment and importance.

Ver. 44. *Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure*, etc.] By which is meant, not eternal life, the incorruptible inheritance, riches of glory, treasure in heaven; nor Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and all the riches of grace and glory; but the Gospel, which is a treasure consisting of rich truths, comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones; of the most valuable blessings, and of exceeding great, and precious promises; and reveals the riches of God, of Christ, and of the other world; and is a treasure unsearchable, solid, satisfying, and lasting: this is said to be

hid in a field. The Gospel was in some measure hid, under the former dispensation, from the Old Testament saints; and for a long time was hid from the Gentile world; and is entirely hid from them that are lost, who are blinded by the god of this world; and even from the elect of God themselves, before conversion: this is sometimes said to be hid in God, in his thoughts, counsels, and purposes, and in the covenant of his grace; and sometimes in Christ; who is the storehouse of truth, as well as of grace; and may be thought to be hid under the Mosaic economy, in the types and shadows of the ceremonial law: but here “the field” means the Scriptures, in which the Gospel lies hid; and therefore these are to be searched into for it, as men seek and search for silver and hid treasures, by digging into mines, and in the bowels of the earth:

the which when a man hath found; either with or without the use of means, purposely attended to, in order to find it; such as reading, hearing, prayer, and meditation: for sometimes the Gospel, and the spiritual saving knowledge of it, are found, and attained to, by persons accidentally, with respect to themselves, though providentially, with respect to God; when they had no desire after it, or searched for it, and thought nothing about it; though by others it is come at, in a diligent use of the above means:

he hideth; which is to be understood not in an ill sense, as the man hid his talent in a napkin, and in the earth; but in a good sense, and designs his care of it; his laying it up in his heart, that he might not lose it, and that it might not be taken away from him: and

for joy thereof; for the Gospel, when rightly understood, brings good tidings of great joy, to sensible sinners;

goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth the field: which is not to be interpreted literally and properly; though a man that knows the worth and value of the Bible, rather than be without one, would part with all his worldly substance for one; but figuratively, and denotes the willingness of such souls, who are led into the glory, fulness, and excellency of the word of God, the scriptures of truth, and of the immense treasure of the Gospel therein, to part with all that has been, or is dear unto them; with their sins, and self-righteousness; with their good names and characters; their worldly substance, and life itself, for the sake of the Gospel, and their profession of it: and may also design the use of all means, to gain a larger degree of light and knowledge in the Gospel. It seems by this parable, according to the Jewish laws, that not the finder of a treasure in a field, but the owner of the field, had the propriety in it; when it should seem rather, that it ought to be divided. Such that have ability and leisure, may consult a controversy in Philostratus [f808], between two persons, the buyer and seller of a field; in which, after the purchase, a treasure was found, when the seller claimed it as his; urging, that had he known of it, he would never have sold him the field: the buyer, on the other hand, insisted on its being his property; alleging that all was his which was contained in the land bought by him.

Ver. 45-46. *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man*, etc.] This parable may be understood of Christ's seeking, finding, and purchasing his elect: for, certain it is, that he has sought after them; which implies, that they were lost and going astray; expresses his great love to them, value for them, and desire after them; in doing which, he took much pains, and used much diligence: and certain it also is, that he finds them in redemption, and in effectual calling; and that they are to him a pearl of great price; as very precious to God, so highly esteemed of by Christ, as his portion, his inheritance, and his jewels. He has also parted with all he had for the sake of these persons; he became poor, emptied himself of everything, even gave himself a ransom for them, and so made a purchase of them, with the price of his own blood: though to this sense it may be

objected, that it does not seem so agreeable, that Christ should be compared to a merchant man, which better suits with those that deal with him, than as he is concerned with them; nor does he seek after any other than his elect: whereas this merchant man is said to be

seeking goodly pearls; any pearls that were so: nor is Christ's finding his elect a chance business; nor have they any intrinsic excellency in them, to denominate them pearls, but by his grace. The more common interpretation of it is, that it designs a sensible sinner, seeking after the true way of salvation, and finding Christ, and parting with all for him: such a man is a spiritual merchant, who trades in foreign parts, and in things of worth and value; and such an one seeks after a variety of things, which at first sight seem "goodly", in order to obtain salvation by; as civility, morality, a legal righteousness, fasting, watchings, prayer, a profession of religion, and a submission to external ordinances; but at length finds Christ,

the pearl of great price: who is of an unspeakable brightness and glory, of intrinsic worth and value; who is enriching to those that possess him, and precious to them that believe; and of such a price, that no valuable consideration can be given for him: wherefore such a soul is willing to part with all for him; with sinful self, and righteous self; and with the honours, riches, and profits of this world; and buy him, his grace and righteousness, without money, and without price. Though I rather think, that in connection and agreement with the other parables, this is to be understood of such, who are seeking after knowledge in every branch of it, natural, moral, and spiritual; and so may be compared to a "merchant man, seeking goodly pearls"; and who find the Gospel, and prefer it to everything else.

Who when he had found one pearl of great price: for such who seek after wisdom and knowledge in the use of proper means, are like merchant men, that trade abroad, and for things of value; and these, under divine direction, find in the Scriptures, and through the ministry of the word, and by prayer and study, the truths of the everlasting Gospel, respecting Christ, his person, office, grace and righteousness; which are equal to, yea transcend a pearl of the highest price; for their original, coming from a far country, from heaven; for their brightness, clearness, and perspicuity; for their ornament and glory; for their firmness and solidity; for their virtue and value, to them that know the worth of them; and such will buy, but not sell them; reckon all things but loss and dung, in comparison of them; and will contend for them, and stand fast in them.

(See Gill on "Matthew 13:45")

Ver. 47. *Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net*, etc.] By which also is meant, the Gospel, and the ministry of it. This may be compared to a net, for its meanness in the esteem of men; being despicable, and of no account in the eyes of the world: and yet like a net, a piece of curious artifice and workmanship, being the produce of the grace of God; in which his manifold wisdom is displayed, and is what angels desire to look into: it is designed, and purposely contrived, for the gathering in of sinners to Christ, and to his churches, though by accident, it has other uses; such as troubling of the world, as the net does the waters of the sea, and drawing out the corruptions of the men of it, as that does weeds, stones, etc. and which, like a net, can do nothing of itself, unless cast; and not then neither, unless succeeded with a divine blessing:

that was cast into the sea; by "the sea" is meant the world, so called, for the storms and tempests of afflictions, and persecutions the saints meet with, and for the continual troubles that are in it; for the restlessness and instability of all things therein; for the dangers of it; and for its being the proper place and element of fishes, as the world is to the men of it. The casting of it into the sea, designs the opening of the Gospel, and the unfolding the mysteries of it, and the preaching it in all the world; and supposes persons qualified for it; such were the patriarchs and prophets under the Old Testament; and particularly Christ, John the Baptist, and the Apostles of Christ, and succeeding ministers under the New Testament; and requires art, skill, and wisdom, might and strength, industry, diligence, and patience; and which is done at a venture, whether there are fish or not; and sometimes succeeds, and sometimes not:

and gathered of every kind; the Persic version adds, "of animals"; but much more agreeably Munster's Hebrew Gospel, and the Vulgate Latin, add, "of fishes"; and so some copies read. The preaching of the Gospel, is the means of gathering souls to Christ, and into his churches; and those that are gathered into a visible Gospel church state, are of every kind, of all nations in the world; Jews and Gentiles: of all ranks and degrees of men, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free; of all sorts of sinners, and of men good and bad; some who have the truth of grace in them, and others that are only hypocrites: profess in words, and deny in works; have nothing more than a form of godliness, and name to live, and are dead.

Ver. 48. *Which when, it was full*, etc.] As the Gospel, and the Gospel church state may be said to be, when all the ends of the preaching of the word are answered; when all are called by the one, and into the other, that were designed to be called; when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and all Israel shall be saved.

They drew to the shore; which will be done, when the end of the world comes; then will an end be put to the Gospel ministry, the net will be drawn to shore; the preaching of the Gospel will cease, and no more use be made of it:

and sat down; the ministers of the word having done their work, enter into the joy of their Lord, and rest from their labours:

and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away; as fishermen used to do; though this last office seems, by the application of the parable, to be what will be performed by angels; who, as many as they find to have a good work of grace wrought and finished in their souls, they will gather into Christ's barn, into the everlasting habitations, the mansions in Christ's Father's house, he is gone to prepare: but as for the bad, who shall appear to be destitute of the grace of God, and righteousness of Christ, notwithstanding their profession of religion, they shall be rejected, as good for nothing, and shall be cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

Ver. 49. *So shall it be at the end of the world*, etc.] As the fisherman, when he has drawn his net to shore, picks out the good fish, and puts them into proper vessels, and casts the dead, putrid, and useless fish away; so, at the close of time, in the last day,

the angels shall come forth out of heaven, from the presence of God and Christ, and by his orders, as the judge of all the earth,

and sever the wicked from the just; with whom they have had not only civil conversation, but have been joined in a Gospel church state; but now these ungodly shall not stand in judgment with them; nor these sinners, these hypocrites, in the congregation of the righteous: the one will be set at Christ's right hand, the other at his left; the one will go into life eternal, and the other into everlasting punishment; and their separation from one another will be for ever.

Ver. 50. *And shall cast them into the furnace of fire*, etc.] (See Gill on "Matthew 13:42")

Ver. 51. *Jesus saith unto them*, etc.] This is left out in the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel, and in some Greek exemplars; though it is necessary to the connection and sense of the words:

have ye understood all these things? All the parables Christ had delivered, besides those he had given a particular explanation of; as of the mustard seed, and leaven, of the treasure hid in the field, the pearl of great price, and the net cast into the sea: Christ's putting this question to the disciples, shows that the things delivered, had some difficulty in them; that they were of moment and importance to be understood; and how concerned he was, that they should understand them; and how ready he was to communicate the knowledge of them, which he knew would be useful to them in their after ministrations:

they say unto him, yea, Lord. This answer, which was truly and faithfully made, is a proof of their close and strict attention to the words of Christ; the quickness of their understandings, at that time, being in a very special manner opened and illuminated by Christ; and which he knew, when he put the question to them; but was willing to have it owned and expressed by themselves, that he might have the opportunity of saying what follows.

Ver. 52. *Then said he unto them*, etc.] Since the disciples had such a clear understanding of the above parables, and were by them, and by other things, so well furnished to preach the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven to others, Christ stirs them up by the following parable, to a diligent exercise of their gifts, and to a large, free, and cheerful communication of their knowledge to others.

Therefore every Scribe; meaning not legal ones, Scribes in the law of Moses, a sort of letter men, often mentioned by the evangelists, and the same with the lawyers, who were conversant with the letter of the law, and only understood that; as for the kingdom of heaven, they were so far from being instructed unto it, that they shut it up, and would neither go in themselves, nor suffer others; but evangelical Scribes are here meant, (see Matthew 23:34) the preachers of the everlasting Gospel, now everyone of these,

which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, as each of them be more or less; that is, understands the nature of the Gospel church state, the discipline, laws, and rules of Christ's house, the doctrines of the Gospel, the way and things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven; as Christ and his righteousness, and the regenerating and sanctifying grace of the Spirit: such an one,

is like unto a man that is an householder; that has an household or family under his care, as the ministers of the Gospel have, and which is the church of God; called the household of God, the household of faith, a spiritual house, and a family; consisting of fathers, young men, and children; of which indeed Christ is properly the householder and master, but Gospel ministers are deputies and stewards under him, and under him preside over the household, and have the government of it, provide food for it, and protect and defend it; all which require large gifts and abilities, great love and affection, both to Christ and his people; much wisdom, prudence, and knowledge; and great faithfulness and integrity, courage and firmness of mind.

Which bringeth forth out of his treasure, things new and old: by "his treasure" is meant, either Christ, who is the great treasury and storehouse of grace and truth; from whence his ministers receive all their gifts, grace, light, and knowledge; or the word of God, the Scriptures of truth, by which the men of God are thoroughly furnished for every good work; or the treasure of the Gospel, which is put into their earthen vessels, into their own hearts, and that stock of Gospel knowledge and experience they are blessed with; a large competency of which is necessary to these householders since they are to give out, not niggardly, but largely, and plentifully, and in great variety. The Syriac version reads it, htmys ^m, "out of his treasures", and so may include them all. "Things new and old": not the new Gospel and the old law, for the law is not old, nor the Gospel new; the Gospel is much older than the law, being hid of God, and ordained before the world was, to our glory; and was even promulgated, long before the law was on Mount Sinai: nor things out of the Old and New Testament, for the New Testament was not yet in being; though it is right, and is the business of Gospel preachers, to bring forth such truths and doctrines, as are contained in both: rather truths that are old in themselves, but newly discovered to them, may be intended, and every new acquisition of knowledge and experience, added to the former stock and fund: the phrase seems to denote the plenty and variety of Gospel

provisions, which the ministers of it are to bring forth, suited to the various cases of such who are under their care. The allusion is either to a good provider for his family, who lays up stores for them of all sorts, and upon proper occasions brings them forth for their relief; or to the people under the law, bringing their offerings out of the fruits, both of the old and new year; concerning which, take the following rule [f809].

> "All offerings, both of the congregation and of a private person, came from the land (of Israel), and without the land, ^çyh ^mw çdjh ^m, "from the new and from the old" (i.e. from the new and old stock, the increase of the new and old year), except the sheaf of the first fruits, and the two wave loaves; for they come only from the new, and from the land of Israel."

The place where fruits of any kind were laid up, was called a treasure; hence it is said [f810], the palm tree has its fallen fruits, which they do not bring rxwal, "into the treasure"; and it produces dates, which they put into the treasure: perhaps some reference is had to (<22713>Song of Solomon 7:13) where mention is made of fruits new and old, and which the Jewish writers [f811] interpret of the words of the Scribes, and of the words of the law; the fruits "new", are the words and sayings of the Scribes, their doctrines and decisions; and the "old", are the words of the law; and one that was well versed in both these; was with them a well instructed Scribe. Unless the allusion should rather be thought to be to old and new wine, (see <40537>Luke 5:37-39), it being usual to call a wine cellar a "treasure" [f812], in which all sorts of wine were kept; and a well instructed Scribe is full of matter, and, like Elihu, his belly is as wine that has no vent and is ready to burst like new bottles, (<18219>Job 32:19) and, like Jeremy, he is weary of forbearing, and cannot stay, (<24009>Jeremiah 20:9) and, like David, his heart indites a good matter, and his tongue is as the pen of a ready writer, (<19501>Psalm 45:1).

Ver. 53. *And it came to pass that, when Jesus had finished these parables*, etc.] Which he spoke both to the multitude from the ship, and to his disciples in the house,

he departed thence; from the house in which he was, and the city of Capernaum, where he had some time been.

Ver. 54. *And when he was come into his own country*, etc.] Not where he was born, Bethlehem, for it is never observed, that he went thither; but

where he was educated, and where his parents and near relations, according to the flesh, lived; who had been some little time ago seeking for him, and desirous of speaking with him, even Nazareth:

he taught them in their synagogue, it being the sabbath day; (see <40601>Mark 6:1,2). The Vulgate Latin, and all the Eastern versions, the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read, "in their synagogues"; but as Nazareth was so mean and obscure a place, it is not likely that there should be in it more synagogues than one; and of no more do we read in (<42046>Luke 4:16,20,28) where an account is given of Christ's preaching in this place before this time.

Insomuch that they were astonished; at the doctrines he taught, which were new and unheard of to them; and were delivered in such a graceful manner, and with so much power and authority; and also at the miracles he wrought, in confirmation of what he delivered; and said,

whence hath this man this wisdom and these mighty works? They knew his education, how that he had not been put to school, had never learned letters of men, or received any instructions from their learned doctors; and therefore could not imagine, how he came by such sublime and divine knowledge, and by what power he performed such wonderful things; looking upon him to be a mere man, and a very mean, and contemptible one: not knowing that he was the wisdom of God, and the power of God; which had they been acquainted with, there would have been no room, nor reason, for such questions.

Ver. 55. *Is not this the carpenter's son?* etc.] Meaning Joseph, who was by trade a carpenter, and whose son Jesus was supposed to be; and who very probably was now dead, which may be the reason he is not mentioned by name. The Greek word here used, signifies any mechanic, or artificer. The Syriac expresses it by a word, which signifies both a carpenter and a blacksmith; and Munster's Hebrew Gospel renders it, ajpn^b, "the blacksmith's son". But the generally received notion of the ancient Christians is, that he was a carpenter, and that Jesus was brought up to the same business, which lay in making ploughs and yokes[f813]. This also appears, from the answer the Christian schoolmaster at Antioch gave to Libanius the sophister; who being big with expectation of Julian the apostate's getting the victory, asked the schoolmaster, what he thought the carpenter's son was doing? To which, after a short pause, he replied; O

sophister! the Creator of all things, whom thou callest the carpenter's son, is making a coffin for Julian; who accordingly died in a few days after [f814]. The Jews make mention of one Abba Joseph, ynbh, "the builder", or carpenter [f815]; but whether the same, is not certain. What they here say, was no doubt by way of derision and contempt; and yet the same phrase is used by them of a person of great note and fame, for his wisdom and knowledge: thus speaking of a difficult point, they [f816] say,

> "rgn rb alw rgn tyl, "no carpenter", or smith, or a carpenter's son, can solve this: says R. Shesheth, I am neither a carpenter, nor a carpenter's son, and I can solve it."

The gloss upon it is,

> "a wise man, the son of a wise man."

Is not his mother called Mary? Plain Mary, without any other title, or civil respect; a poor spinstress, that got her bread by her hand labour: the Jews say [f817], she was a plaiter of women's hair, and treat her with the utmost scorn.

And his brethren; not strictly so, but either the sons of Joseph by a former wife; or Mary's, or Joseph's brothers or sisters sons, and so cousins to Christ; it being usual with the Jews to call such, and even more distant relations, brethren:

James; the son of Alphaeus, or Cleophas, one of Christ's disciples, (<40>10<03>Matthew 10:3) called the Lord's brother, (Gal 1:19) and the same that wrote the epistle that bears his name:

and Joses; or Joseph, as the Vulgate Latin, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read; and which two names are one and the same: hence, in Talmudic writings, we often read of R. Jose, who is the same with R. Joseph [f818]: this Joses is, by Dr. Lightfoot, conjectured to be the same with Joseph, called Barsabas, who was put in nomination for apostleship, after the death of Judas, (<44>01<23>Acts 1:23)

And Simon; or Symeon, the son of Cleophas, who is said [f819] to succeed James, as bishop of Jerusalem, and to be Christ's cousin, being son of Cleophas, the brother of Joseph, the supposed father of Christ:

and Judas; the same that is called Lebbaeus, and Thaddaeus, (<40>10<03>Matthew 10:3) and the brother of James, (<42>06<16>Luke 6:16) and the same that wrote

the epistle that goes by his name. The Jews ought not to have made these remarks, since many of their great doctors were of mean parentage; as R. Zachariah was a butcher's son [f820], and R. Jochanan a blacksmith's son [f821]; hence that advice of R. Juda ben Bethira [f822],

> "take heed that ye do not reproach the sons of the common people, for from them comes forth the law."

Ver. 56. *And his sisters*, etc.] Whose names, according to Epiphanius [f823], were Mary and Salome; whom he supposes were the daughters of Joseph, by a former wife; but rather of Alphaeus or Cleophas.

Are they not all with us? Lived in the same town with them, were well known by them, and familiar with them.

Whence then hath this man all these things? His wisdom and his mighty works; for since he had not them from any of their schools, and nurseries of learning, from their learned doctors and wise men; and could not have received them from his parents, and near relations, they could not devise from whence he should have them.

Ver. 57. *And they were offended in him*, etc.] It was a stumbling to them, how he came by his wisdom and power; since he had not these things from men of learning, and could not have them from his relatives: and therefore, rather than believe he had them of himself, or from God, they chose to indulge at least a suspicion, that he had them from the devil, and so were offended in him: or this offence was taken at the meanness of his birth, parentage, and education, though without reason; for if without the advantage of an education without human literature, and the instructions of men, he was able to expound the Scriptures, preach such doctrine, and deliver such words of wisdom, and confirm all this by miracles, and mighty works, they ought to have considered him as a divine person, and all this, as a demonstration of it, and of his having a divine mission at least, and of his being raised up by God for extraordinary purposes.

But Jesus said unto them; being unmoved at their offence in him, and contempt of him, which was no other than what he expected:

a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house; which seems to be a proverbial speech in common use, though I have not met with it in Jewish writings; showing, that a prophet, or any teacher, or preacher, generally speaking, is more esteemed among

strangers, who have no personal pique, nor prejudices against him, and who judge of him, not by what he has been, but by his present abilities, doctrine, and conduct, than among his countrymen; who are apt to think meanly of him, because familiarly acquainted with him, and knew, if not his vices, yet his infirmities, and envy him any superior degree of honour to them, he has attained unto. I say, generally speaking, for this is not always the case on either side; sometimes a prophet is affronted and abused in strange places, as Christ himself was: and sometimes is received with esteem and applause among his countrymen, relations, and acquaintance; but this is rare and uncommon; the proverb respects what is usually and ordinarily done, and the truth of it is easy to be observed.

Ver. 58. *And he did not many mighty works there*, etc.] Some he did, though not many; partly that they might be left inexcusable, and partly that it might not be said, he did not wish well, to his own country: what he did, were not of the first class, and greatest note; he only "laid his hands", as Mark says, (Mark 6:5) "upon a few sick folk, and healed them"; and yet these were such as raised their wonder and astonishment, but did not command their faith, and were rather stumbling blocks unto them; such were their prejudices, their unbelief, and the hardness of their hearts: and the reason indeed why he did no more was,

because of their unbelief. These words in Mark are joined with this expression, "he marvelled"; showing, that their continued unbelief in him, notwithstanding his ministry and miracles among them, was matter of surprise to him; but here they are given as a reason why he did no more mighty works among them: and which Mark says he could not do, not for want of power, or as if their unbelief was too mighty for him to overcome; but he would not, because he judged them unworthy, and that it was not fit and convenient to perform any more, since they were offended with what was done; and that their condemnation might not be increased.

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 14

Ver. 1. *At that time Herod the tetrarch*, etc.] Not Herod the Great, in whose reign Christ was born, and who slew the infants of Bethlehem, but his son; this was, as the Jewish chronologer [f824] rightly observes,

> "Herod Antipater, whom they call yqrtyj, "the tetrarch"; the son of Herod the First, and brother of Archelaus, and the third king of the family of Herod."

And though he is here called a "tetrarch", he is in (<40614>Mark 6:14) called a king: the reason of his being styled a "tetrarch" was this; his father Herod divided his large kingdom into four parts, and bequeathed them to his sons, which was confirmed by the Roman senate: Archelaus reigned in Judea in his stead; upon whose decease, that part was put under the care of a Roman governor; who, when John the Baptist began to preach, was Pontius Pilate; this same Herod here spoken of, being "tetrarch" of Galilee, which was the part assigned him; and his brother Philip "tetrarch" of Ituraea, and of the region of Trachonitis; and Lysanias, "tetrarch" of Abilene, (<420301>Luke 3:1) the word "tetrarch": signifying one that has the "fourth" part of government: and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel, he is called "one of the four princes"; and in the Arabic version, "a prince of the fourth part"; and in the Persic, a "governor of the fourth part of the kingdom". The "time" referred to, was after the death of John the Baptist; and when Christ had been for a good while, and in many places, preaching and working miracles; the particular instant which respect is had unto, is the sending forth of the twelve disciples to preach and work miracles; and which might serve the more to spread the fame of Christ, and which reached the court of Herod; who, it is said here,

heard of the fame of Jesus: what a wonderful preacher he was, and what mighty things were done by him.

Ver. 2. *And said unto his servants*, etc.] Those of his household, his courtiers, with whom he more familiarly conversed; to these he expressed

his fears, that it might be true what was suggested by the people, and he was ready to believe it himself;

this is John the Baptist: some copies add, “whom I have beheaded”, as in (<4106>Mark 6:16) the guilt of which action rose in his mind, lay heavy on him, and filled him with horror and a thousand fears:

he is risen from the dead; which if he was a Sadducee, as he is thought to be, by comparing (<4016>Matthew 16:6) with (<4015>Mark 8:15) was directly contrary to his former sentiments, and was extorted from him by his guilty conscience; who now fears, what before he did not believe; and what he fears, he affirms; concluding that John was raised from the dead, to give proof of his innocence, and to revenge his death on him:

and therefore mighty works do show themselves in him, or “are wrought by him”; for though he wrought no miracles in his lifetime, yet, according to a vulgar notion, that after death men are endued with a greater power, Herod thought this to be the case; or that he was possessed of greater power, on purpose to punish him for the murder of him; and that these miracles which were wrought by him, were convincing proofs of the truth of his resurrection, and of what he was able to do to him, and what he might righteously expect from him.

Ver. 3. *For Herod had laid hold on John*, etc.] By his servants, whom he sent to apprehend him:

and bound him; laid him in chains, as if he was a malefactor;

and put him in prison, in the castle of Machaerus [f825],

for Herodias’s sake; who was angry with him, had a bitter quarrel against him, and by whose instigation all this was done; who was

his brother Philip’s wife. This Herodias was the daughter of Aristobulus, son to Herod the Great [f826], and brother to Philip, and to this Herod; so that she was niece to them both; and first married the one, and then the other, whilst the former was living. Philip and this Herod were both sons of Herod the Great, but not by the same woman; Philip was born of Cleopatra of Jerusalem, and Herod Antipas of Malthace, a Samaritan [f827]; so that Philip was his brother by his father’s side, but not by his mother’s; the Evangelist Mark adds, “for he had married her”: the case was this, Herod being sent for to Rome, called at his brother Philip’s by the way, where he

fell into an amorous intrigue with his wife, and agreed, upon his return, to take her with him and marry her; as he accordingly did, and divorced his own wife, who was daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petraea; which occasioned a war between Herod and his wife's father, in which the former was beaten [f828],

Ver. 4. *For John said unto him*, etc.] John having heard of this incestuous marriage, went to Herod, and reproved him to his face for it; and, as Luke says, "for all the evils he had done", (<4>Luke 3:19) for he was a very wicked man, and guilty of many flagitious crimes: John, in so doing, showed his zeal for holiness, his hatred of sin, his courage and faithfulness in reproving thus freely so great a man; and made it manifest, that he came in the spirit of Elijah: what he said to him was,

it is not lawful for thee to have her, being forbidden, (<3>Leviticus 18:16) for though by another law it was right to marry a brother's wife, after his decease, when he left no issue, yet this was not the case here; Philip was now living, and, had he been dead, such a marriage would have been unlawful, because there was issue; she had a daughter, who afterwards is said to dance before Herod; and besides, he himself had another wife, whom he put away; so that his sin was a very aggravated and complicated one: lying with a brother's wife, was one of those sins which, according to the Jewish [f829] canons, deserved cutting off, or death by the hand of God. Josephus [f830] gives another reason of the imprisonment and death of John, that Herod feared that the people of the Jews, through his means, would be moved to sedition, and revolt from his government; which might be what Herodias suggested to him, or what he gave out himself, to cover the true cause of his proceedings: but the true reason is, what is here given, and is to be confirmed by the testimony of Jewish writers. One of their chronologers [f831] delivers the account in these express words:

> "Herod Antipater was a very wicked and pernicious man, many of the wise men of Israel he slew with the sword; and he took to wife, his brother Philip's wife, whilst he was living; and because John the high priest (for so through mistake they call him) hz l[wjykwh "reproved him for this"; ((see <4>Luke 3:19)) he slew him with the sword, with many of the wise men of Israel."

And, says their historian [f832],

> “also he, Herod, slew John, because he said unto him, it is forbidden thee to take the wife of Philip, and he slew him; this is that John that practised baptism.”

Ver. 5. *And when he would have put him to death*, etc.] As soon as he apprehended him, and put him into prison; being provoked by his reproving him, and being stirred up by Herodias, who was greatly incensed and enraged, and would have killed him herself, but could not, being hindered by Herod: who, though he had a good will and strong inclination to take away his life, yet what with fearing the terror of his own conscience, and the reverence and respect he had for John, as a good man; and especially for the reason here given, he did not do it, for

he feared the multitude: not God, but the multitude; and these, not only the large number of people that attended on John’s ministry, and were baptized by him, and became his disciples, but the generality of the people, the whole body of the Jewish nation. So God is pleased oftentimes to restrain the wickedness of princes, by the fear of their subjects:

because they counted him as a prophet; a holy good man, and who was sent of God; they respected him as such, believing him to be a true and real prophet, and treated him with honour and reverence, suitable to his character; wherefore Herod was afraid, should he take away his life, that the people would mutiny, rise up against him, and revolt from him. In what esteem John was with the people of the Jews in general, may be learned from the character Josephus gives of him, as a good man; who stirred up the Jews to the practice of virtue, especially piety and justice; which made the common people fond of him and his doctrine; and who were of opinion, that the defeat of Herod’s army, which followed the death of John, was a just judgment of God upon him for it [f833].

Ver. 6. *But when Herod’s birthday was kept*, etc.] The birthdays of princes, both of their coming into the world, and accession to the throne of government, were kept by the Gentiles; as by the Egyptians, (<0140 40>Genesis 40:20) and by the [f834] Persians, and Romans [f835], and other nations, but not by the Jews; who reckon these among the feasts of idolaters.

> “These (say they [f836]) are the feasts of idolaters; the “Calends”, and the “Saturnalia”, the time kept in memory of subduing a kingdom (or when a king takes possession of it, the day of his accession), µyklm lç ayswng µwyw, “and the birthday of kings” (when they

> are made and crowned, the day of coronation), and the day of birth, and the day of death."

And it is a question, whether this day, that was kept, was the day of Herod's natural birth, or of his civil government, being his accession, or coronation day: and it might also be a question, whether it was the then present Herod's birthday, or whether it was not his father Herod's, was it not that Mark says, (<4062>Mark 6:21) it was his birthday; since it is the latter the poet [f837] refers to, as kept by Jews, when he says, "At cum Herodis venere dies"; and the old Scholiast upon him observes, that

> "Herod reigned over the Jews in Syria, in the times of Augustus; therefore the Herodians kept Herod's birthday, as also the sabbath, on which day they set up candles in the windows lighted, and encircled with violets."

This they did, believing him to be the Messiah: and it is further to be observed, that the word here used, is said [f838] to be proper to the dead, and not to the living; and that he that uses it of the living, speaks very inaccurately: but however, it was a festival, and a time of great mirth and jollity; and a proper opportunity offered to Herodias, to execute her malicious designs against John the Baptist; for at this time,

the daughter of Herodias danced before them: in the original text it is, "in the midst", in the middle of the hall; or in the midst of the company, the lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee, for whom Herod made a supper, (<4062>Mark 6:21) and the Syriac renders it akyms µdq, "before the guests". Music and dancing were usual at such entertainments, they were the common appendages of a feast [f839]: the daughter of Herodias, who danced before the company for their diversion, whether alone, or with others, was very probably Salome [f840], whom she had by her former husband; and therefore is called, not the daughter of Herod, but of Herodias:

and pleased Herod; and as Mark adds, "and them that sat with him"; so that the pleasure he had did not arise merely from the respect and honour shown to him and his birthday, by her appearing with so much cheerfulness on this occasion before him; who had taken her father's wife from him, and defiled her mother; but from the airs, gestures, and motions of the lady in dancing; which were so extremely fine and regular, that she gave wonderful satisfaction and delight to Herod, and the whole company.

Ver. 7. *Whereupon he promised with an oath*, etc.] On account of her fine dancing, and being extremely pleased with it himself; and the more, that it gave such pleasure to the whole court: he first promised her,

to give her whatsoever she would ask; and then repeating it, he confirmed it with an oath; adding, as Mark says, that he would give it her, even "to the half of his kingdom": a way of speaking used by princes, when they give full power to persons to ask what they will of them; and to express their great munificence and liberality; signifying, let it be ever so great, or cost what it will, though as much as half a kingdom comes to, it shall be granted; (see <17D3>Esther 5:3,6). A very foolish promise, and a rash oath these, which were made upon such a consideration, as only a fine dance. If she, as Theophylact observes, had asked for his head, would he have given it her? And if he swore by his head, which was a common form of swearing with the Jews [f841], she very appropriately, though unjustly, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, answers to him; as you have swore by your head, give me John Baptist's head.

Ver. 8. *And she being before instructed of her mother*, etc.] What request to make; for as Mark says, "she went forth" to her mother immediately, as soon as she had received the king's promise, and took advice of her, what she should ask; who bid her ask for the head of John the Baptist; and accordingly she went in, "straightway with haste unto the king", as the same evangelist observes, to take him at his word, and whilst he was in the mood; being urged and hastened on by her mother, who was eager to satisfy her revenge on John; and said,

give me here John Baptist's head in a charger: she desires his head, and this to be brought to her in a large dish, that her mother might be sure of his death; and have an opportunity of insulting that mouth and tongue, that had spoke against her incestuous marriage: and she desires to have it given "here", in that very place, at that very time, where, and while the company was together, who were witnesses of the king's promise and oath; and this she did, lest when the festival was over, and he was out of his cups, he should repent of his folly and rashness. The mother and daughter seem to be much alike, both for lasciviousness, revenge, and cruelty: and if what the historian says [f842] be true, that this same person Salome, the daughter of Herodias, as she walked over a river which was frozen in the winter season, the ice broke, and she fell in, and the pieces of ice cut off her head; the "lex talionis", the law of retaliation, was righteously executed on her.

Ver. 9. *And the king was sorry*, etc.] As he might be upon many accounts; partly on account of John, whom, notwithstanding his freedom in reproving him, he had a respect; and partly on his own account, his conscience dictating to him that it was an evil action, and would leave a brand of perpetual infamy upon him; as also on account of the people, who were so much affected to John, lest they should make an insurrection, and rebel against him; and likewise, because it was reckoned an ill omen with the Romans, to take away life on that day they received their own; and therefore carefully abstained, on such days, from executions.

Nevertheless for his oath's sake; that he might not be guilty of perjury, chose rather to commit murder; though it would have been no iniquity in him, to have acted contrary to such a rash promise, and wicked oath; which would have been better to have been broke, than kept;

and them which sat with him at meat; lest he should be thought by them fickle and inconstant, and not a man of his word, and who had no regard to an oath: or it may be, they, either to curry favour with Herodias, or out of ill will they might bear to John; or in great respect to the damsel, who had so well pleased them with her dancing; instead of dissuading him from it, pressed him much to perform his promise: and therefore,

he commanded it to be given her; in the form and manner she requested it. Some have thought, that the whole of this affair was a concerted scheme; and that Herod himself was in it, though he pretended to be sorry and uneasy, having fixed on this season as a convenient time for it; and chose to have it done in this way, and in so public a manner, to lessen the odium of it; or otherwise, it is not easy to account for his extravagant promise, and his punctual performance of it.

Ver. 10. *And he sent*, etc.] "An executioner", as in (Mark 6:27) where the Latin word "speculator", or as it is sometimes written "spiculator", is used; and is the name of an officer concerned in executions, and particularly in beheading of persons; and so is used by Latin writers.

> "In a civil war (says [f843] Seneca), a servant hid his master that was proscribed; and when he had fitted his rings for himself, and put on his clothes, he met "speculatoribus", the "speculators"; he told them he desired nothing, but that they would perform their orders, and immediately stretched out his neck."

And the same writer elsewhere [f844] speaks of a soldier that was condemned by Piso, on suspicion of murdering his fellow soldier;

> "Who was had without the camp, and as soon as he stretched out his neck, he, who was thought to be killed, suddenly appeared; upon which the centurion that had the management of the execution, ordered "speculatorem", the "speculator", to put up his sword, and returned the condemned person to Piso."

The word is also used by the Jewish doctors, and in the same sense: take the following instance among many [f845].

> "R. Ishmael said to R. Simeon ben Gamaliel (when they were both apprehended, in order to be executed), brother, there was a man ready to receive his blow, and they entreated rwjlqpsal, "the speculator": one said, I am a priest, the son of an high priest, slay me first, that I may not see the death of my companion; and the other said to him, I am a prince, the son of a prince, slay me first, that I may not see the death of my companion: he replied unto them, cast lots; and they cast lots, and the lot fell on R. Simeon ben Gamaliel; immediately he took a sword, "and cut off his head"."

And as this word is often used by them [f846] for an executioner, so alwqps, "specula" is often made mention of by them [f847], as a sort of punishment by death: and such an officer was sent by Herod, to inflict this punishment upon John; who accordingly executed it,

and beheaded John in the prison; that is, of Machoeras, where he lay, without giving him a hearing, or allowing him to speak for himself, or with his friends: and which was done in this private manner, partly for dispatch, and partly on account of the people; who it might have been feared, had the execution been public and known, would have rose and rescued him.

Ver. 11. *And his head was brought in a charger*, etc.] By the executioner that cut it off, to Herod, whilst he and his guests were at table; by which it should seem, that the prison was very near; and it is not improbable, that it was the castle of Macheerus that Herod made this entertainment in:

and given to the damsel; the daughter of Herodias, who, by her mother's instigation, had asked it, and who received it out of the hands of Herod himself; or however, it was delivered to her by his orders:

and she brought it to her mother; who had put her upon it, than which, nothing could be a more agreeable dish to her; and who, as Jerome says [f848], because she could not bear truth, that tongue which spoke truth; she plucked out, and pierced it through and through with a needle, as Fulvia did Cicero's: but this triumph over the faithful reprover of her, and Herod's vices, did not last long; for quickly after this, they were stripped of their honours and riches, and deprived of the kingdom, and banished to Lyons in France, where they died [f849]. A Jewish chronologer says [f850], Herod was driven out of the land by Tiberius, and fled to Spain, and died there.

Ver. 12. *And his disciples came*, etc.] To the prison where his body was left, and to which they had liberty of recourse before; (see <401102>Matthew 11:2) and very probably, upon hearing what was done, might apply to Herod, as Joseph of Arimathea did to Pilate, for the body of Jesus; who might, as he did, give them leave to take it: and

took up the body and buried it. Theophylact says, his body was buried in Baste Caesarea, and that his head was first reposited in Emesesa. This was the last office of love to their master, and was done in respect and gratitude to him, and to show that they still abode by his doctrine; and was what decency and the belief of the resurrection of the dead, as well as the will of God, require should be done:

and went and told Jesus; that their master was dead, what kind of death he suffered, and by what means it was brought about; and how that they had interred him; and what Herod also had said of Jesus, that he was John risen from the dead. Their coming to Christ, and informing him of all this, show, that they were taught by their master to respect him as the Messiah, and believe in him, and adhere to him; and it is very likely that they continued with him.

Ver. 13. *When Jesus heard of it*, etc.] Of the death of John, and of the cruel usage he had met with; and particularly, that his fame had reached the court of Herod, and that he was talked of there, and said by Herod himself to be John the Baptist, that was risen from the dead;

he departed thence by ship, into a desert place apart; to avoid Herod, though not through fear of death; but because his time was not yet come: which may teach us, that it is lawful to shun dangers, when there is an opportunity; which may be done, without betraying truth, or sacrificing a good conscience. The other evangelists, Mark and Luke, assign another

reason of this departure of Christ's, that it was upon the return of his disciples to him from their embassy; when having given him an account of what they had done, and taught, he judged it proper they should retire, and get some refreshment and rest; and both may very well be thought to be the reasons of this recess. At the same time that John's disciples brought him the news of their master's death, Christ's disciples return to him, with the account of the success of their ministry; who might not only be weary, and want refreshment, but be discouraged in their minds, at this instance of cruelty; wherefore Christ thought it necessary to retire, partly for his own safety, and partly for their ease; and that he might have an opportunity of fortifying their minds against all trials and persecutions they were to meet with: the place from whence he departed, was either Capernaum, his own country and city, or Nazareth, where we have lately heard of him; or some other place in Galilee, where he was, when John's disciples came to him: the place whither he went, was "a desert place"; and, as Luke says, "belonging to the city called Bethsaida", the city of Andrew and Peter, which lay on the other side of the sea of Galilee, or Tiberias; over which he went by ship, (⁴⁰⁶⁰¹John 6:1).

And when the people had heard thereof; of his departure, and whither he went,

they followed him on foot out of their cities; such as Nazareth, Capernaum, Tiberias, and others; and passing the bridge at Jordan, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, they outwent the ship, and got thither before them, as Mark relates. This showed their great affection and zeal for Christ, and their diligence in attending on him.

Ver. 14. *And Jesus went forth*, etc.] Either from the mountain where he sat with his disciples, (⁴⁰⁶⁰³John 6:3) or out of the desert, where he had retired for secrecy; or out of the ship, which seems best, the company having got thither before his landing:

and saw a great multitude; for, there were about five thousand men, beside women and children, (⁴⁰¹⁴²Matthew 14:21)

and was moved with compassion toward them: partly on account of their bodily infirmities, which were very many and great; and partly on account of the bad situation they were in, through want of spiritual pastors to feed them with the bread of life; for Mark gives this as the reason, moving his compassion, "because they were as sheep, not having a shepherd": all

which shows the truth of Christ's human nature; proves him to be a merciful high priest, and one truly concerned for both the bodies and souls of men:

and he healed their sick; which they brought along with them, and that without the use of any medicine, by a word speaking: so that as the former phrase gives proof of his humanity, this attests his divinity: but this was not all he did, he not only healed their bodies, but he taught them the doctrines of the Gospel; and spake to them concerning the kingdom of God, for the good of their souls, as the other evangelists relate.

Ver. 15. *And when it was evening*, etc.] Mark says, "when the day was now far spent"; and Luke, "when the day began to wear away"; it was upon the decline of the day. The Jews, as Grotius rightly observes, had two evenings; the one began when the sun declined at noon, and the other at sun setting: now it was the former of these, and not the latter, that was now come; for after this, you read of another evening that was come, (<40 14 23>Matthew 14:23) between which two evenings Christ made the multitude to sit down, and he fed them in a miraculous manner; and the disciples reason for the dismission of the multitude, that might go into the neighbouring villages, and buy provisions, shows that it could not be the last, but the first of these evenings, that is here meant.

His disciples came to him; the twelve, whom he had left in that part of the desert he retired to; or on the mount, where he had sat down with them for their rest and refreshment:

saying, this is a desert place; where no food was to be had; where were no houses of entertainment:

and the time is now past; not the time of the day, but of dining: the usual dinner time was past, which, with the Jews, was the fifth hour of the day, and answers to eleven o'clock with us, or at furthest six; which, with us, is twelve at noon; concerning which, the Jewish doctors thus dispute [f851].

> "The first hour, is the time of eating for the Lydians, or Cannibals; the second for thieves, the third for heirs, the fourth for workmen, and the fifth for every man: but does not R. Papa say, that the fourth is the time of dining for every man? But if so, if the fourth is the time for every man, the fifth is for workmen, and the sixth for the disciples of the wise men."

Which is elsewhere [f852] delivered with some little variation, thus;

> “the first hour is the time of eating for Lydians; the second, for thieves; the third, for heirs; the fourth, for workmen; the fifth, for scholars; and the sixth, for every man: but does not R. Papa say, etc.”

But supposing the usual time of dining to be, at the furthest, at the sixth hour, at twelve o’clock, this time must be elapsed, since the first evening was commenced; so that the reasoning of the disciples is very just,

send the multitude away. Christ was preaching to them, the disciples move that he would break off his discourse, and dismiss them; in the synagogue the manner of dismissing the people was, by reading the hrjph, or “dismission”, which was some passage out of the prophetic writings.

That they may go into the villages and buy themselves victuals; the little towns which lay nearest the desert, where they might be supplied with suitable provisions.

Ver. 16. *But Jesus said unto them*, etc.] the disciples,

they need not depart; meaning so long as he was with them, who had power enough to provide a sufficient meal for them, as well as by a word speaking, to heal their diseases; however, to try their faith, and make way for the working of the following miracle, he says to them,

give ye them to eat; such provisions as you have along with you.

Ver. 17. *And they say unto him*, etc.] In order to excuse themselves, and to show the impossibility of feeding such a large number of people;

we have here but five loaves; and these barley ones, coarse bread;

and two fishes; small ones, which were dried and salted, and fit for present eating; which they either brought along with them for their own refreshment, or rather, were brought thither by a boy to sell, as is usual where a great concourse of people are got together: these words seem to be spoken by Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother; who added, “but what are they among so many?” (see <430609>John 6:8,9) not thinking of the power of Christ, who was able to multiply, and make this provision a sufficiency for the whole company.

Ver. 18. *He said, bring them hither to me*.] The loaves and the fishes, signifying that they were sufficient; or that he would make them so: this he said, to try their faith in him, their obedience to him, and their liberality to others: and indeed, the best way to have an increase of temporal supplies, is to bring what we have, and put it into Christ's hands; whereby not only good is done to others, but that with an overplus is returned to the giver.

Ver. 19. *And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass*, etc.] The other evangelists say, that he ordered the disciples to cause the people to sit down; both no doubt were done: the multitude were commanded to sit down by Christ, which, without his orders, they would never have done; and the disciples were enjoined to place them in form, by companies, in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties, that their number might be the better taken, and the food more orderly distributed by the apostles:

and took the five loaves and the two fishes: into his hands, lifting them up, that they might be seen by the whole company; and they be fully convinced of the miracle going to be wrought by him:

and looking up to heaven; to his Father in heaven, who is the Father of mercies; and from whom every mercy and blessing of life comes; and giving thanks to him for the same, as was usually done by him,

he blessed the five loaves and the two fishes;

and brake the loaves, and divided the fishes;

and gave the loaves, and fishes also,

to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitude; who were the ministers and servants of Christ, employed by him in this manner, for the more orderly and quick dispatch of this business: and which was an emblem of their spiritual work and office: who received all their food from Christ, which they distributed to the churches, and fed them with.

Ver. 20. *And they did all eat*, etc.] Christ and his twelve disciples, and the five thousand men, with the women and children, of the five loaves and two fishes; everyone had their portion,

and were filled; they were satisfied, they had a full meal, they had enough, and to spare; (see <14810>2 Chronicles 31:10) which the Targumist paraphrases thus.

> "And Azariah said unto him, who was appointed chief over the house of Zadok, and said, from the time that they began to separate the offering, to bring it into the sanctuary of the Lord, ^y[bçw ^ylka, "we have eat and are filled", and have "left much"; for "the word of the Lord" hath blessed his people, and what is left, lo! it is this plenty of good."

The Jews used not to reckon it a meal, unless a man was filled, and account it an ill sign, if nothing was left: but here was fulness, and more left than was first had; which was gathered up, either for the use of the poor, or reserved for after service; teaching us liberality to the needy, and frugality, not to waste that which is left.

And they took up of the fragments that remained, twelve baskets full; according to the number of the disciples, every man had his basket full. It may be inquired, where they could have so many baskets in the wilderness? It is not likely, that everyone of the apostles had a basket with him; it is indeed not improbable, but that they might be furnished with them from some in the company, who might bring provisions with them, either for their own use, or to sell; (see <430609>John 6:9) but perhaps the reason why they were so easily supplied with such a number of baskets in a desert place, might be a custom which the Jews [f853] had of carrying baskets with hay and straw, in commemoration of what they did in Egypt; when they were obliged to carry bricks in baskets, and to go about and pick up straw in baskets to make bricks; hence the [f854] Epigrammatist calls a "Jew", "cistifer", a "basket bearer", or "carrier"; and Juvenal [f855] laughs at these people, as if all their household goods lay in a basket, and a little hay, or straw: it is said of R. Siraeon, that when he went to the school, anx lyqç, "he carried a basket" on his shoulders [f856]; the gloss suggests, it was to sit upon; but a basket is not very proper for a seat; very likely it was for the above reason: such a custom will account for it, how such a number of baskets could be come at in the wilderness.

Ver. 21. *And they that had eaten were about five thousand men*, etc.] The word "about", is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, in Munster's Hebrew Gospel, and in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, which expressly say there were so many. A large number indeed, to be fed with five loaves and two fishes!

besides women and children; who were not taken into the account, though they all ate, and were filled, it not being usual with the Jews to number their women; and who might be near as large a number as the men: for generally there is a very great concourse of the female sex, and of children, where anything extraordinary, or out of the way, is to be seen or heard; and of this sort was a large number of Christ's audience, who only came out of curiosity, or for one sinister end or another.

Ver. 22. *And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples*, etc.] As soon as ever he had wrought the above miracle, and perceived that the people were so convinced by it, of his being the Messiah, that they were determined, whether he would or not, to set him up for a temporal king, to deliver them from the Roman yoke; which they doubted not he was able to do, who could feed so large a number, with such a small quantity of provision; (see <4614>John 6:14,15) and knowing also, that his disciples had imbibed the same notion of a temporal kingdom, were very fond of it, and big with expectation thereof; and would have readily encouraged the populace, and joined with them in such an action: wherefore, in all haste, he hurried them away, obliged them to depart, lest any step should be taken, which might be of dangerous consequence to them, and the people: it looks as if the disciples were bent upon the same thing, and that it was with much difficulty and reluctance they were brought off of it. Christ was forced to use his power and authority; and order them directly

to get into a ship; very likely, the same they came over in;

and to go before him unto the other side of the lake of Tiberias or sea of Galilee, over against Bethsaida, to Capernaum, or the land of Gennesaret;

while he sent the multitudes away: who would not so easily have been prevailed upon to have departed, if Christ had not first shipped off his disciples; for had he withdrawn himself, and left his disciples with them, they would have been in hopes of his return, and would have continued in a body with them, in expectation of it; and therefore, the better to disperse them, and prevent their designs, he sends away his disciples before him.

Ver. 23. *And when he had sent the multitudes away*, etc.] Had ordered them at least to go away; for, it seems, according to (<4622>John 6:22) that they did not in general disperse: there was a large body of them that continued upon the spot all night, expecting his return; in which being disappointed, they took shipping, and came to Capernaum.

He went up into a mountain apart to pray; perhaps the same he went up to before, and from whence he came down, (<43603>John 6:3). This he chose as a proper place for prayer, where he could be retired, and alone, have his thoughts free, and, as man, pour out his soul to his Father, on his own account, and on the behalf of others; and particularly, he might be concerned about this notion of a temporal kingdom, that his disciples and others were so fond of; and pray that his disciples might be convinced of their mistake, and that the people might be hindered from prosecuting their designs. His going up into a mountain and praying there, were quite contrary to the canons of the Jews; which forbid praying in places ever so little raised.

"Let not a man stand (say they[f857]) hwbg µwqmb, "in an high place", and pray, but in a low place and pray; as it is said, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord", (<19001>Psalm 130:1). It is a tradition, that a man may not stand, neither upon a throne, nor upon a footstool, nor in any high place and pray, because there are no high places before God."

This rule is delivered by Maimonides[f858], in this form:

> "A man may not stand in a place that is three hands high, or more, and pray, neither upon a bed, nor upon a seat, nor upon a throne."

But Christ did not look upon himself obliged, by these traditions of the elders; but chose such places, whether high or low, which were most private and retired.

And when evening was come; when it was now dark, (<43617>John 6:17) when the second evening was come and ended; (see <40145>Matthew 14:15) and it was properly night,

he was there alone; in the mountain, where he continued the greatest part of the night, even until the fourth watch.

Ver. 24. *But the ship was now in the midst of the sea*, etc.] That is, the ship in which the disciples were put into, to go on the other side, had by this time got into the midst of the sea: the Syriac and Persic versions say, it was "many furlongs from land"; and the Arabic expressly says, "about twenty five furlongs": which account seems to be taken from (<43619>John 6:19) but this was not all, it was not only at such a distance from land, but was

tossed with waves: up and down, and in danger of being overset, and the passengers lost:

for the wind was against them; which beat the waves with such violence against them, that they were in the utmost danger of their lives, and not able to get forward; and what was worst of all, and most discouraging to the disciples, Christ was not with them. The ship in which the disciples were, was an emblem of the church of Christ, and of its state and condition in this world: this world is like a sea, for its largeness, and the abundance of nations and people in it, compared to many waters, (Revelation 17:15) and for the tumultuousness of its inhabitants; the wicked being like a troubled sea, which cannot rest, continually casting up the mire and dirt of sin, to the dishonour of God, and the grief of his people; and for its fickleness and inconstancy, changes and war being continually in it: now the church of Christ is like a ship in this troublesome sea; where the true disciples and followers of Christ are selected together; and are preserved from the pollutions of the world, and from the danger to which the men of it are exposed, being in their sins, and liable to the wrath and curse of God, and eternal damnation; which, they that are in Christ, and members of his body, are secure from; the port or haven to which they are bound, is heaven and eternal happiness; their's and Christ's Father's house, where are many mansions provided for them; and where they long to be, and hope, and believe, ere long they shall arrive unto; and hope is as an anchor of their soul, sure and steadfast: but in the mean while, whilst they are sailing through the sea of this world, they are often, as the church of old, tossed with tempests, and not comforted, (Isaiah 55:11) with the tempests of Satan's temptations, the storms of the world's persecutions, and with the winds of error and false doctrine; and then is it most uncomfortable to them, when Christ is not with them, which was the case of the disciples here.

Ver. 25. *And in the fourth watch of the night*, etc.] This is said, according to the division of the night into four watches, by the Jews; who [f859] say, that

> "there are four watches in the night, and four watches in the day."

It is true indeed, that it is disputed among them, whether there were four watches, or only three in the night: some say there were four, others say there were but three [f860]; not but that these made a division of the night into four parts, the three first of which, they thought were properly the watches of the night, and the fourth was the morning. The first watch began at six

o'clock in the evening, and lasted till nine; the second began at nine, and ended at twelve, which was midnight; the third began at twelve, and closed at three; the fourth began at three, and ended at six in the morning. But since some [f861] Jewish writers are so positive for the division of the night into three watches only, and a watch is with them called [f862] the third part of the night; and it is dubious with some, whether the Jewish division is here referred to; and since it is so clear a point, that the Romans [f863] divided their night into four watches, and their writers speak not only of the first, second, and third watches, but also of the fourth watch [f864]; it is thought by some, that the evangelist speaks after the Roman manner: but however, certain it is, that within this period, probably at the beginning of it, after three o'clock in the morning, Christ came to his disciples, when they had been almost all the night at sea, tossed with waves, and in great danger.

Jesus went unto them; from the mountain where he had been praying, the greatest part of the night, to the sea side, and so upon the waters to them; for it follows,

walking upon the sea; as on dry land: though it was so stormy and boisterous, that the disciples, though in a ship, were in the utmost danger, yet he upon the waves, was in none at all; by which action he showed himself to be the Lord of the sea, and to be truly and properly God; whose character is, that he "treadeth upon the waves of the sea", (Job 9:8).

Ver. 26. *And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea*, etc.] It being now morning, and perhaps might have moon light; and besides, there is always more light upon the water than land; they were able to discern something like a man, walking upon the surface of the sea, but had not light enough to distinguish what, or who it was; and, moreover, had no thought of Christ, or expectation of seeing him; and the appearance of a man walking upon the waters being so unusual, and astonishing,

they were troubled, saying it is a spirit: a nocturnal apparition, a demon in human form. The Jews, especially the sect of the Pharisees, had a notion, from whom the disciples might have their's, of spirits, apparitions, and demons, being to be seen in the night; hence that rule [f865],

> "it is forbidden a man to salute his friend in the night, for we are careful, lest awh dç, "it should be a demon"."

They say a great many things of one tylyl, “Lilith”, that has its name from hlyl, “the night”, a she demon, that used to appear in the night, with an human face, and carry off young children, and kill them. Some such frightful notions had possessed the minds of the disciples:

and they cried out for fear, as persons in the utmost consternation, in the greatest danger, and in want of help: the fear of spirits arises from the uncommonness of their appearance; from their superiority to men in power and strength; from the enmity there is between men and evil spirits; and from a general notion of their doing hurt and mischief: hence, demons are, by the Jews, called ^yqyzm, “hurtful”, or “hurting”, all their study being to do hurt to men; and the same word is here used in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel: add to all this, that the fear of the disciples might be increased, through a vulgar notion among seafaring men, that such sights are ominous, and portend evil to sailors; and they might the more easily be induced to give credit to this, and fear, since they were already in such imminent danger.

Ver. 27. *But straightway Jesus spake unto them*, etc.] Directly, the very moment, as soon as ever they cried out, and he perceived the consternation they were in, as one truly affected towards them, and concerned for their welfare; he called out aloud unto them, not coming with any intention to fright them, but to save them;

saying, be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid: take heart, be of good courage, do not be affrighted at my appearance, from whom you have nothing to fear; nor be afraid of the storm and tempest in which you are, I will deliver you; for it is I, your Master, Saviour, and Redeemer, and not any hurtful spirit; who am able to save you, and am come for that purpose. Christ may be sometimes near his people, and they not know him; as the Lord was in the place where Jacob was, and he knew it not, (OLBIGGenesis 28:16) and as Christ was standing by Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre, and she took him to be the gardener: and for want of a distinct knowledge of Christ in his person, offices, and grace, persons have wrong apprehensions of him, and are filled with dread and fears, concluding they have no interest in him; that he is a Saviour, but not of them; that their sins are so many, and of such a die, and attended with such aggravating circumstances, that though he is able to save them, he never can be willing to receive such vile sinners as they are: but when Christ makes himself known unto them, as the able and willing Saviour, and their Saviour and

Redeemer, then, instead of dreading him as a judge, their fears vanish, their faith increases, and they are ready to do anything he shall order them; as Peter says in the next verse, who was willing to come to Christ on the water, when he knew who he was, if he was but pleased to bid him come.

Ver. 28. *And Peter answered him and said*, etc.] Who knew his voice, and was ready to believe it might be Christ; and having more courage, and being more forward than the rest of the disciples, ventured to speak to him; saying,

Lord, if it be thou; for he was not fully assured that it was he: he might consider that nocturnal apparitions are deceitful, and that Satan can transform himself into an angel of light, and could put on the appearance, and mimic the voice of Christ; wherefore, to try whether it was a spectre, or really Christ, he says,

bid me come unto thee on the water; thereby expressing great love and affection to Christ, being willing to come to him, though through danger, through storms and tempests; and also his strong faith in him, supposing it to be he; who, he knew, was as able to support his body on the water, as his own; and yet much modesty, submission, and dependence; not willing to take a step without his order.

Ver. 29. *And he said, come*, etc.] This he said, partly to assure them who he was; for had he denied him, he and the rest might have concluded, it was none of Jesus; and partly to commend his love, and confirm his faith, by giving a further instance of his power, in enabling him to walk upon the water, as he did:

and when Peter was come down out of the ship; as he immediately did, having orders from Christ; and being by this second speech fully convinced it was he

he walked on the water; a little way, being supported and enabled by the power of Christ; for this was an extraordinary and miraculous action: for if it was so in Christ, it was much more so in Peter: Christ walked upon the water by his own power, as God; Peter walked upon the water, being held up by the power of Christ. The Jews [f866] indeed, call swimming µymh ynp l[hjyçh, "walking upon the face of the waters": hence we read of a swimmer's vessel, which is explained to be what men make to learn in it, how µymh ynp l[jwçl, "to go or walk upon the face of the waters" [f867];

but then this is not going upon them upright, but prone, or lying along upon the surface of the waters, which was not Peter's case; he did not, as at another time, cast himself into the sea, and swim to Christ; (see <42107>John 21:7) but as soon as he came down from the ship, standing upright, he walked upon the waters,

to go to Jesus; not merely for walking sake, but for the sake of Christ, he dearly loved; that he might be with him, and be still more confirmed of the truth of its being he, and not a spirit.

Ver. 30. *But when he saw the wind boisterous*, etc.] Or "strong", blowing hard against him, and raising up the waves, which beat with great violence upon him,

he was afraid; though Christ was so nigh him, and he had had such an instance of his power in bearing him up, causing him to walk upon the waters thus far; which shows, that his faith was imperfect:

and beginning to sink; through fear, and the violence of the wind and waves, just ready to be immersed, and go down to the bottom of the sea,

he cried; being in a great fright and much danger, and with great importunity and eagerness,

saying, Lord, save me: I am just going, I shall certainly perish else; still having so much faith in Christ, that he was able to save him in the last extremity.

Ver. 31. *And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand*, etc.] The Syriac reads it, h t [ç r bw, "and in that very moment"; for his case requires immediate assistance, and Christ readily gave it; he reached out his hand at once, being just by him,

and caught him; as he was sinking to the bottom, and lifted him up, and set him on his feet upon the water, and enabled him to walk with him to the ship; but not without reproving him for the weakness of his faith,

and said unto him, O thou of little faith: he does not say, O thou unbeliever! or, O thou who hast no faith! for some faith he had, though but small; of this phrase, *See Gill "<40630>Matthew 6:30"*.

Wherefore didst thou doubt? waver, fluctuate, or wast divided between faith and fear. He was worthy of reproof, since he had had the order of

Christ to come to him upon the water; and an experience of his power in supporting him thus far; and was now so near unto him, that he had no room to doubt, whether it was he or not, nor of his power to preserve him.

Ver. 32. *And when they were come into the ship*, etc.] Christ and Peter. The Arabic and Persic versions, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read, "when he ascended", or "was come into the ship"; but there is no doubt but Peter went with him into it, though the following effect is only to be ascribed to Christ's coming into the ship, and not to Peter's:

the wind ceased: from blowing with that fury and violence it did before, and there was a perfect calm; which gave equal proof of the divine power of Christ, as his walking upon the sea: he walked upon the sea whilst the wind was blowing hard, and the waves were tumultuous; he comes into the ship, and all is calm; both winds and sea obey him, who is Lord of both.

Ver. 33. *Then they that were in the ship*, etc.] Not only the rest of the disciples, who remained in it, whilst Peter came forth out of it, to walk upon the sea, to go to Christ: but the mariners also, the owners of the vessel, and their servants that managed it,

came and worshipped him: not merely in a civil, but in a religious way; being convinced, by what they saw, that he must be truly and properly God, and worthy of adoration;

saying, of a truth, thou art the Son of God: not by creation, as angels and men, nor by office, as magistrates, but by nature; being of the same essence, perfections, and power, with God, his Father: and which these actions of his now done, as well as many others, are full attestations of; as his walking upon the sea, causing Peter to do so too, saving him when sinking, and stilling the wind and waves upon his entrance into the vessel; all which being observed by the disciples and mariners, drew out this confession upon full conviction from them, that he was a divine person, and the proper object of worship.

Ver. 34. *And when they were gone over*, etc.] That is, "the sea", as Munster's Hebrew Gospel adds, the sea of Tiberias, or Galilee;

they came into the land of Gennesaret; the same with Cinnereth, or Chinnereth, or Cinnerot, (<04611>Numbers 34:11 <05317>Deuteronomy 3:17 <06112>Joshua 11:2 12:3 13:27) (<11150>1 Kings 15:20) in all which places, the Chaldee paraphrase renders it by rswnyg, "Ginusar", the same word that is

used in Munster's Hebrew Gospel here: it was a country in Galilee, in the tribe of Naphtali [f868], bordering upon a lake, called the lake of Gennesaret; taking its name from the country, or the country from the lake: it was exceeding fruitful, full of gardens and orchards; hence we often read in the Talmud [f869], of rswng twryp, "the fruits of Genusar", or Gennesaret, which are said to be exceeding sweet: and it is said to [f870] be a country in the land of Israel, in which were many gardens; and by others [f871], a place in the land of Galilee (as it was) whose fruits were large and good; and was, as Josephus says [f872], thirty furlongs long and twenty broad. And thus the saints, after a long and troublesome passage over the sea of this world, arrive, at last, safe at their desired haven, and enter upon a most delightful country, a paradise, a garden of pleasure; where all delicious fruits and desirable things are enjoyed, even pleasures for evermore; where they shall be led to fountains of living waters, into fulness of joy; where all troubles will cease, and tears will be wiped away; and when they will have leisure and capacity to reflect upon all they have met with in their dangerous, and difficult voyage; and will admire the wonderful grace of God, which has been with them; and his divine power, which has appeared for them, and supported them, and brought them safe to eternal glory; and they ascribe greatness to Christ, as the Son of God, and for ever worship him as the eternal Jehovah, who has done such great things for them, as none but God can do.

Ver. 35. *And when the men of the place had knowledge of him*, etc.] Not merely by report, but by face, having seen, and heard him before; (see Luke 5:1).

They sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased; which not only expresses their faith in him, that he was able to heal all their sick and diseased, were they ever so many; but also their affectionate regard to their fellow creatures and countrymen; and their care and diligence in sending messengers about to their respective cities, towns, and villages, and which must be attended with expense: for they neither spared cost nor pains, to do good to their country; in all which, they set an example worthy of imitation.

Ver. 36. *And besought him that they might touch the hem of his garment*, etc.] As the woman with the bloody issue did; (Matthew 9:20). This they desired, partly to show the strength of their faith in him, that they doubted not of a cure, could they be admitted so near his person; and

partly, to signify the sense of their unworthiness, to be in another way taken notice of by him, either by speaking to them, or putting his hands on them:

and as many as touched, were made perfectly whole. Christ condescended to this their request, and perfectly cured all such of their diseases, of whatever kind they were, who, in the exercise of faith, touched the hem of his garment, the fringe he wore, in compliance with the ceremonial law, (<04153838>Numbers 15:38,39 <05221212>Deuteronomy 22:12).

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 15

Ver. 1. *Then came to Jesus Scribes and Pharisees*, etc.] After he had wrought so many miracles, particularly that of feeding five thousand men; besides women and children, with five loaves and two fishes: the fame of which had reached Jerusalem, and occasioned much talk there about him: the Scribes and Pharisees, who were his inveterate enemies, hearing thereof, came to him, where he was, in Galilee: to know the truth of these things, to converse with him, and to watch, and observe, what he said and did;

which were of Jerusalem, saying. There were Scribes and Pharisees throughout the land, but those of Jerusalem were the chief; they were men of the greatest learning and abilities, and were more expert in their religion and customs: these were either sent by the sanhedrim at Jerusalem, or came of themselves; taking upon them a greater power, and authority of examining, correcting, directing, and advising.

Ver. 2. *Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?* etc.] Having observed, for some little time, the conduct of Christ and his disciples, they thought proper to take no notice of him as yet, but of them; and of them, not as transgressing any command of God, but of men; not being able to charge them with any breach of the law of God: and could they have done this with any show of truth, yet they might choose rather to accuse them of breaking the rules of the elders; by whom they mean, not the elders of the present sanhedrim, but Hillell and Shammai; the two heads of their famous schools, and other ancient doctors; from whom were delivered by one to another, certain rules and laws of their own devising, which had no foundation in the word of God; and of these the Scribes and Pharisees were more tenacious, than of the Scriptures; and indeed they preferred them before them: most extravagant are their praises and commendations of these unwritten traditions; thus they say [f873],

> “Know then, that “the words of the Scribes” are more lovely than the words of the law: for, says R. Tarphon, if a man does not read,

> he only transgresses an affirmative; but if he transgresses the words of the school of Hillell, he is guilty of death, because he hath broke down a hedge, and a serpent shall bite him. It is a tradition of R. Ishmael, the words of the law have in them both prohibition and permission; some of them are light, and some heavy, but "the words of the Scribes" are all of them heavy — µynqz yrbd µyrwmh, "weightier are the words of the elders", than the words of the prophets."

And elsewhere [f874], this advice is given;

> "My son, attend to "the words of the Scribes", more than to the words of the law; for in the words of the law, are affirmatives and negatives; but the words of the Scribes µyrpws yrbd l[rbw[h lk, "everyone that transgresses the words of the Scribes", is guilty of death."

This is what they charge the disciples with here, and could they have had their wills, would have put them to death for it: the particular tradition, they accuse them with the breach of, follows,

for they wash not their hands when they eat bread; common bread, an ordinary meal; for, for eating of holy things, more than bare washing was required, even an immersion of them in water; but the hands were to be washed before eating common food, whether they were known to be defiled or not: "bread" is particularly mentioned, as including all sorts of food, and as distinct from fruit; for, for eating of common fruit, there was no need of washing of hands; he that washed his hands for eating fruit, was reckoned an ostentatious man [f875], who were the first authors of this tradition, it is not certain; it is said [f876], that

> "Hillell and Shammai decreed µydy twrhj l[, "concerning the purification of the hands"; R. Jose ben R. Bon, in the name of R. Levi, says, so was the tradition before, but they forgot it; and these two stood up, and agreed with the minds of the former ones."

> "However, it is a certain point, that the washing of the hands, and the dipping of them, are µyrpws yrbdm, "from the words of the Scribes" [f877]."

The breach of this rule was reckoned equal to the most flagitious crimes [f878]: R. Jose says,

> "whoever eats bread without washing of hands, is as if he lay with a whore: and, says R. Eleazer, whoever despiseth washing of hands, shall be rooted out of the world."

And elsewhere it is said by them [f879], that

> "he that blesseth (food) with defiled hands, is guilty of death."

And again [f880],

> "whoever does not wash his hands as is fitting, although he is punished above, he shall be punished below."

And to fright people into an observance of this tradition, they talk of Shibta, a sort of an evil spirit, that hurts such as eat without washing their hands: they say, he sits upon their hands, and upon their bread, and leaves something behind, which is very dangerous [f881]; and it is recorded [f882], to the praise of R. Akiba, that he chose rather to die, than to transgress this tradition; for being in prison, and in want of water, what little he had, he washed his hands with it, instead of drinking it. Eleazar ben Chanac was excommunicated for despising the tradition concerning washing of hands; and when he died, the sanhedrim sent and put a great stone upon his coffin, to show, that he that died in his excommunication, the sanhedrim stoned his coffin [f883]: but of this, *See Gill "<4078>Mark 7:3"*.

Ver. 3. *But he answered and said unto them*, etc.] Taking no notice of the tradition about eating bread without washing the hands, whether it was right or wrong; it being at most but an human tradition, of no moment and importance, whether it was broke or kept; he makes a very just recrimination, by putting another question to them,

why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? suggesting, that, if his disciples were guilty, they were not so guilty as they themselves were; that his disciples, at most, were but guilty of the breach of an human precept, whereas they were guilty of the breach of a divine command; and that it was strange, that men who were so scrupulous of breaking, and bore so hard on such as did transgress the traditions of the elders, could allow themselves to transgress the commandments of God; yea, to do this by, and while they were observing their own traditions: and

which observation carries a full acquittance of the disciples from blame; for, if by keeping the traditions of the elders, they broke the commands of God, it was a very good reason why they should not observe them.

Ver. 4. *For God commanded, saying*, etc.] That he might not be thought to suggest this without any foundation, he gives them an instance, wherein a command of God was transgressed, by the observance of their tradition: the command he refers to, stands in (<2012>Exodus 20:12) and is this;

Honour thy father and mother. This was a plain command of God, written with his own hand, and delivered by Moses to them; it was of a moral nature, and of eternal obligation: and to be understood, not merely of that high esteem parents are to be had in by their children, and of the respectful language and gesture to be used towards them, and of the cheerful obedience to be yielded to them; but also of honouring them with their substance, feeding, clothing, and supplying them with the necessaries of life, when they stand in need thereof; which is but their reasonable service, for all the care, expense, and trouble they have been at, in bringing them up in the world: nor did the Jews deny this to be the duty of children to their parents, and own it to be the sense of the commandment: they say [f884], that this is the weightiest commandment among the weighty ones, even this, the honouring of father and mother; and ask,

> "What is this honour? To which is replied, he must give him food, drink, and clothing; buckle his shoes, and lead him in, and bring him out."

They indeed laid down this as a rule, and it seems a very equitable one [f885]; that,

> "when a man's father has any money, or substance, he must be supported out of that; but if he has none, he must support him out of his own."

But then, as will be seen hereafter, they made void this command of God, and their own explications of it, by some other tradition. Moreover, Christ observes, that it is said, (<2017>Exodus 21:17)

And he that curseth father or mother, let him die the death; temporal and eternal: and which is a positive command of God, made as a fence for the former; and is to be understood, not only of giving abusive language to parents, but of slighting, as the Hebrew word signifies, and neglecting

them, taking no notice of them, when needy and in distress, to supply their wants. Now these commands of God, Christ shows the Jews transgressed by their tradition, as appears from the following verses.

Ver. 5-6. *But ye say, whosoever shall say to his father or mother*, etc.] That is, it was a tradition of their's, that if a man should say to his father and mother, when poor and in distress, and made application to him for sustenance,

it is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his father, or his mother, he shall be free: or, as Mark expresses it, "it is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, he shall be free, and ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or mother". For the understanding of this tradition, let it be observed, that the word "Corban" signifies a gift, or offering, which was devoted to sacred use; and was unalienable, and could not be converted to any other use; and that this word was used among the Jews, from hence, as the form of an oath, or vow; and therefore, when anyone said "Corban", it was all one, as if he swore by "Corban"; or as if he had said, let it be as "Corban", as unalienable as "Corban": by which oath, or vow, the use of that which was spoken of, whether it respected a man's self, or others, was restrained and prohibited: the rule was [f886] this rwsa awh ^brqk rmwak ^brq, "if a man said Corban, it was as if he said as Corban, and it was forbidden": and if he used the words "Conem", "Conach", and "Conas", which they call [f887] the surnames of Corban, and were no other than corruptions of it, it was all one as if he had said "Corban" itself. There are many instances of this kind of vows, and the form of them in their oral law [f888], or book of traditions;

> "If anyone should say, hnhn ynaç µnwq, "Conem (or "Corban") whatsoever I might be profited by the" sons of Noah, it is free of an Israelite, and forbidden of a Gentile; if he should say, "whatsoever I might be profited" by the seed of Abraham, it is forbidden of an Israelite, and is free of a Gentile — if anyone should say, µyl r [l hnhn ynaç µnwq, "Conem (or "Corban") whatsoever I might be profited by the uncircumcised", it is free of the uncircumcised of Israel, and forbidden of the circumcised of the Gentiles; if he says "Conem (or "Corban") whatsoever I might be profited by the circumcised", it is forbidden of the circumcised of Israel, and free of the circumcised, of the Gentiles."

Again[f889],

> “if anyone says to his friend, Æl hnhn ynaç µnwq, “Conem (or “Corban”) whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me”, etc.”

which is exactly the same form as here, unless it should be rather rendered, “whatsoever I might be profited by thee”: once more[f890],

> “if a married woman should say to her husband, Æybalw abal tynhn ynaç µnwq “Conem (or Corban) whatsoever I might be profited by my father, or thy father, etc.”.”

Let these instances suffice: the plain and evident sense of the tradition before us, is this; that when, upon application being made to a man by his parents, for support and sustenance, he makes a vow in such form as this, “Corban, whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me”; that is, whatsoever profit or advantage thou mightest have, or expect to have from me, let it be as “Corban”, as a gift devoted to God, that can never be revoked and converted to another use; or, in other words, I vow and protest thou shalt never have any profit from me, not a penny, nor a pennyworth of mine. Now, when a man had made such an impious vow as this, according to this tradition, it was to stand firm and good, and he was not to honour his father or mother, or do anything for them, by way of relief: so that our Lord might justly observe upon it as he does;

thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect, by your tradition: for if such a vow was valid, and a man was obliged to abide by it, according to the tradition of the elders, and not honour his father and mother, as the law of God requires; it is a plain case, that the command of God was made void by this tradition: nay they expressly say[f891] that hwxm yrbd l[twlj µyrdn, “vows fall upon things of a (divine) commandment”, as well as upon things in a man’s power, and that he is bound by them; so that without sin he cannot do what the law commands; insomuch, that if a man vows a vow, and that it may be ratified, a command must be made void, his vow must stand, and the command be abrogated. So truly and justly does Christ charge them with making the command of God of none effect, by their tradition. It is indeed disputed by the doctors, and at last allowed, that such a vow might be dissolved by a wise man, for the honour of parents[f892].

> "R. Eliezer says, they open to a man, (i.e. the door of repentance, and dissolve his vow,) for the honour of his father and his mother, but the wise men forbid "it". Says R. Tzadok, if they open to him for the honour of his father and mother, they will open to him for the honour of God, and if so, there will be no vows: however, the wise men agreed with R. Eliezer in the affair between a man and his parents, that they should open to him for the honour of them."

And this could be done only by a wise man; and very probably this last decree was made on account of this just reproof of Christ's, being ashamed any longer to countenance so vile a practice; and even, according to this determination, the vow stood firm till dissolved by of their doctors: so that notwithstanding, Christ's argument is good, and the instance full to prove that for which he brought it: for the above reason it may be, it is, that this tradition Christ refers to is not now extant; but that there was such an one in Christ's time, is certain; he would never have asserted it else; and had it not been true, the Pharisees would have been able to have retired him, and forward enough to have done it: and that such vows were sometimes made, and which were not to be rescinded, is clear from the following fact [f893].

> "It happened to one in Bethhoron, hanh wnmyh rdwm wyba hyhç, "whose father was excluded, by a vow, from receiving any profit from him": and he married his son, and said to his friend, a court and a dinner are given to thee by gift; but they are not to be made use of by thee, but with this condition, that my father may come and eat with us at dinner;"

which was a device to have his father at dinner, and yet secure his vow. Upon the whole, the sense of this passage is, not that a man excused himself to his parents, according to this tradition, by saying, that his substance, either in whole, or in part, was "Corban", or devoted to the service of God, and therefore they could expect no profit, or relief, from him; but that he vowed that what he had should be as "Corban", and they should be never the better for it: so that a man so vowing might give nothing to the service of God, but keep his whole substance to himself; which he might make use of for his own benefit, and for the benefit of others, but not for his father and mother; who, after such a vow made, were to receive no benefit by it, unless rescinded by a wise man; and which seems to be an explanation of it, made after the times of Christ.

See note on <40155>Matthew 15:5

Ver. 7. *Ye hypocrites*, etc.] After our Lord had given so full a proof of their making void the commandments of God by their traditions, he might very justly, as he does, call them hypocrites; who pretended to so much religion and holiness, and yet scrupled not, upon occasion, to set aside a divine command; who affected so much sanctity, as to be displeased with the disciples, for not complying with an order of their elders, when they themselves made no account of a divine precept; and plainly showed they had more regard to men than God, and to the precepts of men, than to the commands of God, and to approve themselves to men more than to God; and that they sought the praise and applause of men, and not the honour which comes from God; and that their religion lay in mere rituals and externals, and those of men's devising, and not in the spiritual worship and service of God. Nor can it be thought that Christ, in calling them hypocrites, bears too hard upon them; when one of their own doctors, who lived not very distant from this age, says [f894] of the men of Jerusalem, that

> "if the hypocrites of the world were divided into ten parts, nine of them would belong to Jerusalem, and one to the rest of the world."

Well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, in (<23293>Isaiah 29:13) which prophecy, though it was directed to, and suited with many in that generation in which the prophet lived, yet had a further view to the Jews in after times: their own writers [f895] acknowledge, that the whole prophecy is spoken of that nation; for by Ariel they understand the altar at Jerusalem, the city in which David dwelt,

Ver. 8. *This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth*, etc.] The preface to these words, or the form in which they are introduced by the prophet; "wherefore the Lord said", is left out in this citation, being unnecessary here, though of the greatest importance there; partly to show, that what was about to be said, was not the prophet's own words, but the words of the Lord, of which the Jews in Christ's time made no doubt; and partly to give a reason why that judicial blindness, threatened in the context, should be inflicted on them, which is no part of Christ's design here; but which is only to show, that the description here given exactly agrees with them, and so proves, and confirms the character he gives of them as hypocrites. They approached the ordinances of God, and drew nigh to him, and attended him in outward worship; they prayed unto him

publicly, and constantly, in the streets, in the synagogues, and temple, and with much seeming devotion and sanctity:

and honoureth me with their lips: they owned him to be their creator and preserver; they made their boast of him, and of their knowledge of him, as the one only living, and true God, and as the God of Israel; they brought their sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, even the fruit of their lips, unto him, for their many peculiar mercies, privileges, and favours, as a nation, church, and people, and with much seeming sincerity and affection.

But their heart is far from me; they had no true love to God, nor faith in him, nor fear of him; they were not at all concerned for his presence with them, or for communion with him, or for his honour and glory; their hearts were in the world, and after their covetousness; they made religion a tool to their secular purposes, supposing gain to be godliness; sought the applause of men, and contented themselves with bodily exercise; having no regard to internal religion, powerful godliness, or where their hearts were, so be it, their bodies were presented to God in public worship; and what they did it was to be seen and approved of men, not caring what the searcher of hearts knew concerning them, or what he required of them.

Ver. 9. *But in vain do they worship me*, etc.] In the Hebrew text it is, "their fear towards me": which is rightly expressed here by "worship"; for the fear of God often intends the whole worship of God, both external and internal: here it only signifies external worship, which these men only attended to. They prayed in the synagogues, read, and, in their way, expounded the books of Moses, and the prophets, to the people, diligently observed the rituals of the ceremonial law, brought their offerings and sacrifices to the temple, and neglected nothing appertaining to the outward service of it; and yet it was all "in vain", and to no purpose; since the heart was wanting, no grace there, they acted from wrong principles, and with wrong views; their worship was merely outward, formal, and customary; and besides, they added doctrines and traditions of their own inventing and devising. The phrase, "in vain", is not in the text in Isaiah: some have thought that it was not originally in Matthew, but inserted by some other hand, to make the sense more complete. Grotius thinks there was a various reading, which is followed by the Septuagint, and the evangelist; and that instead of yhtw, "and is", it was whtw, the same with whtl, "in vain": but there is no need to suppose either of these: Christ, who made this citation, either added it himself for the clearer illustration of the passage, and as

being entirely agreeable to the sense of it, and which it required, for the true understanding of it; or he might have in his view another passage of the same prophet, speaking of the same people, and upon the same subject, (<2911>Isaiah 1:11,13) and from thence take the phrase, and, for explanation sake, join it to the passage here. It follows,

teaching for doctrines the commandments of men; that is, teaching the people to observe the traditions of the elders, the decrees and determinations of the doctors, as if they were doctrines delivered by God himself; or, instead of the doctrines contained in the Bible, which lay neglected by them, they obtruded on them the orders, and injunctions of men. In the text in Isaiah, are only these words, "taught by the precept of men": and which relate to their fear and worship of God; and which is here interpreted of their teachers teaching them it, and that explained of the commandments of men; as if, instead of hdmlm, "taught", it had been read, µydmlm, "teaching". The Jews have no reason to quarrel with this construction and sense, since their Targum paraphrases it thus; "and their fear before me is, ˆyplm ˆyrbg tdyqptk, according to the commandment of men that teach": and a noted commentator[f896] of their's has this remark on the text, "their fear towards me is" not with a perfect heart, but "by the commandment µtwa µydmlmh µyçnah, of the men that teach them".

Ver. 10. *And he called the multitude*, etc.] Having silenced the Scribes and Pharisees, and judging it not worth his while to say any more to men so obstinate and perverse; who were not open to conviction, nor would attend to any argument or reason, though ever so clear and strong, against their darling notions; he leaves them, as both disliking them, and despairing of them, and calls to the common people; who, through their great veneration for these men, upon their coming withdrew, and stood at a distance; nor indeed would they admit them very near unto them, lest they should be polluted by them: Christ, I say, calls to these to come nearer to him, hoping better of them, and knowing that they were more tractable, and teachable; and that there were some among them, that were to be brought off of their former principles and prejudices, to embrace him, and the truths delivered by him:

and said unto them, hear and understand; this he said, partly, by way of reflection upon the learned Scribes and Pharisees, who, with all their

learning, could not hear him so as to understand him; and partly to excite the attention of the multitude to what he had to say; as also to show, that barely to hear with the outward hearing of the ear, will be of no service, unless what is heard is understood; and that the way to understand, is to hear.

Ver. 11. *Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth the man*, etc.] No sorts of meats, or drinks, or whatever is proper food for men, or manner of eating and drinking them, when moderately used, defile a man, or render him loathsome and odious in the sight God. This is directly opposite to the notions of the Jews, who say [f897], that

> "forbidden meats are unclean themselves, çpnhw Pwgh ˆyamjmw, "and defile both body and soul"."

The first food of man was herbs; after the flood he had an allowance of the flesh of beasts, without distinction; under the Levitical dispensation, a difference of meats was enjoined to be observed; the laws respecting that distinction are now abolished, and not binding on us under the Gospel dispensation. Some scruples, about some of these things, did arise among the first Christians; but in process of time these difficulties were got over: nor is there any religion in abstinence from any sort of food; men, indeed, on a "physical" account, ought to be careful what they eat and drink, but not on a religious one; moderation in all ought to be used; and whatever is ate or drank, should be received with thankfulness, and done to the glory of God, and then no defilement can arise from hence:

but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. It is sin, and that only, which takes its rise from the heart, lies in thought, and is either expressed by the mouth, or performed by some outward action, which defiles the man, and renders him loathsome, abominable, and odious in the sight of God. The heart is the source of all evil; the pollution of it is very early, and very general, reaching to all the powers and faculties of the soul; which shows the ignorance of some, and folly of others, that talk of, and trust to the goodness of their hearts; and also the necessity of new hearts and right spirits being formed and created; and that the sinful thoughts of the heart, and the lusts thereof, are defiling to men; and that they are sinful in God's account, and abominable in his sight; that they are loathsome to sensible sinners, and are to be repented of, and forsaken by them; and need the pardoning grace of God or otherwise will be brought into judgment.

Sinful words, which, through the abundance of wickedness in the heart, come out of the mouth, have the same influence and effect: words are of a defiling nature; with these men pollute both themselves and others: the tongue, though a little member, defiles the whole body; and evil and corrupt communication proceeding out of the mouth, corrupts the best of manners, and renders men loathsome to God, and liable to his awful judgment. And this is the nature of all sinful actions; they are what God can take no pleasure in; they are disagreeable, to a sensible mind; they leave a stain, which can never be removed by any thing the creature can do; nothing short of the blood of Christ can cleanse from it; and inasmuch as they are frequently committed, there is need of continual application to it. These are now the things men should be concerned about, as of a defiling nature; and not about meats and drinks, and the manner of using them, whether with hands washed, or unwashed.

Ver. 12. *Then came his disciples, and said unto him*, etc.] That is, after he had dismissed the people, and was come into a private house; (see <4077>Mark 7:17) his disciples came to him, being alone, full of concern, for what he had said to the Pharisees, and before all the people; and not so well understanding it themselves.

Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?, that they set aside the commandments of God, by observing the traditions of the elders; or that they were hypocrites; and that the prophecy of Isaiah, which describes such persons, belonging to them; or that not what goes into, but what comes out of a man, defiles him: whichever it was they have respect unto, or it may be to the whole, they seem to wish Christ had not said it; because the Pharisees were, as they thought, grieved and troubled at it, as being contrary to true religion and piety; and lest they should be so stumbled, as no more to attend, and so all hopes of bringing them over to the faith of Christ be lost; and chiefly, because they perceived they were made exceeding angry, and were highly provoked; so that they might fear that both Christ, and they themselves, would feel the effects of their wrath and rage; and perhaps it was with some such view, that he would take some prudential step that he might not fall into their hands, that they acquaint him with it.

Ver. 13. *But he answered, and said*, etc.] As being unconcerned at their rage, and having nothing to fear from them; and being well satisfied, that

what he had said was right, and would produce proper effects, he gave his disciples this for answer:

every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up; which may be understood either of things, or of persons: it may have regard to doctrines and ordinances; and the meaning be, that whatever doctrine is not delivered by God, or whatever ordinance is not instituted by him; whatever is not of heaven, but of man, of man's devising, and of human imposition, as the traditions of the elders, must be opposed and rejected; and sooner or later will be utterly rooted up, and destroyed; as will all the false notions, corrupt worship, and errors, and heresies of men, in God's own time: or it may respect persons. There are some plants, which are planted by Christ's Father, which is in heaven; these are the elect of God, who are trees of righteousness; the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. These are planted by the river of God's love, in the person of Christ, in the likeness of his death and resurrection; they are transplanted out of a state of nature, are ingrafted into Christ, have the graces of the Spirit implanted in their souls, and are themselves planted in the courts of the Lord, in a Gospel church state; and being watered with the dews of grace, appear to be choice plants, plants of renown, pleasant ones, very fruitful, and which shall never perish, or be rooted, and plucked up, but there are others, like these Pharisees, hypocrites, formal professors, and heretics, who pretend to much religion and holiness, make a show of the leaves of profession, but have not the fruit of grace; these get into churches, and are outwardly and ministerially planted there; but being never rooted in Christ, nor partake of his grace, in time they wither, and die away; or persecution arising because of the Word, or truth being dispensed in so clear and glaring a light, that they cannot bear it; they are offended with it, and so are detected, discovered, and rooted up and it is necessary that truth should be freely spoken, as it was here by Christ, that such plants might be rooted out; for these words are said by Christ in justification of his conduct. So the Jews speak of God, as a planter, and of rooting up what he does not like.

> "The holy, blessed God (say they [f898]), "plants" trees in this world; if they prosper, it is well; if they do not prosper, ˆwl rq[a, "he roots them up", and plants them even many times."

And elsewhere it is said [f899],

> "let the master of the vineyard come, and consume its thorns: the gloss on it is, the holy, blessed God; for the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, is the house of Israel, and he will consume, and take away the thorns of the vineyard."

Ver. 14. *Let them alone*, etc.] Have nothing to say, or do with them; do not mind their anger and resentment, their reproaches and reflections, nor trouble yourselves at the offence they have taken; if they will go, let them go; they are a worthless generation of men, who are not to be regarded, hearkened to, nor to be pleased; it matters not what they say of me, and of my doctrine:

they be blind leaders of the blind; the people that hearken to them, and are followers of them, are "blind", as to any true sense of themselves, their state, and condition by nature; as to any spiritual, saving knowledge of God; as to any acquaintance with the Messiah, and the method of salvation by him; as to the Spirit of God, and the work of grace, regeneration, and sanctification upon the soul; as to the Scriptures of truth, and doctrines of the Gospel; and the "leaders" of them were as "blind" as they: by whom are meant the Scribes and Pharisees, the learned doctors and rabbins of the Jewish nation; who thought themselves very wise and knowing, yet they were blind also; and none more than they. It was an old tradition [f900] among the Jews,

> "that there should be "blind teachers" at the time when God should have his tabernacle among them."

This was predicted, in (Isaiah 42:19) and all such leaders and teachers are blind, who, notwithstanding their natural abilities, and acquired parts, are in a state of unregeneracy; and have nothing more than what they have from nature, or have attained to at school; and as apparently all such are, who lead men from Christ, to mere morality, and to a dependence upon their own righteousness for justification, which was the darling principle of the blind leaders in the text.

And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch; of ignorance and error, immorality and profaneness, distress, if not despair, temporal ruin and destruction; which was notoriously verified in the Jewish people, and their guides: and of eternal damnation, the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; what else can be expected?

Ver. 15. *Then answered Peter*, etc.] Mark says, “his disciples asked him concerning the parable”; which might be by the mouth of Peter; who, probably, being the eldest man, and very forward to speak, was generally their spokesman: and who, at this time, might be requested, by the rest, to ask the meaning of the parable, which had given offence to the Pharisees, and was not clearly understood by them; which he accordingly did:

and said unto him, declare unto us this parable; that not what goes into the mouth, but what comes out of it, defiles the man; which, though expressed in very plain words, and easy to be understood, yet did not appear clear to their understandings; and seemed to be contrary, not only to the traditions of the elders, but to the laws of God, respecting the difference of clean and unclean meats; and therefore call it a “parable”, and desire an explanation of it.

Ver. 16. *And Jesus said*, etc.] As wondering at, and as being displeased with, and as reproving them for their dulness and ignorance:

are ye also yet without understanding? you, my disciples, as well as the Scribes and Pharisees; you, who have been with me so long, who have heard so many discourses from me, who for so long a time have been instructed by me, both in private, and in public; and yet do not understand what is so plain and easy, that has nothing of difficulty in it, but what might easily be accounted for.

Ver. 17. *Do not ye understand*, etc.] You must understand, you cannot be so ignorant,

that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? that is, that whatsoever food a man takes in at his mouth, he swallows down, and it is received into his stomach; which, having performed its office, the grosser parts go down into the belly, and passing through the bowels, are evacuated into the vault, or privy, “purging all meats”, as Mark says; for that only receives the filth and excrementitious matter; so that what is left in the body is pure, wholesome, and nourishing: nor can any part of what goes into a man defile him, because it only enters into the body, and passes through it; and, as Mark says, “entereth not into the heart”, which is the seat of moral impurity; so that no moral pollution can be contracted by eating any sort of food, even though it should not be clean itself, nor be eaten with clean hands.

Ver. 18. *But those things which proceed out of the mouth*, etc.] Meaning not material things, as spittle, vomit, etc. but, as it follows, which

come forth from the heart: are first conceived and formed there, and then come forth from thence, and are expressed by the mouth; as all idle words, foolish talking, filthy jesting, unsavoury communication, and every word that is rotten and corrupt, or which is done in the life and conversation;

and they defile the man: the heart is the corrupt fountain from whence all moral defilement flows; and sinful words and actions are the impure streams, which spring from thence, and increase the moral pollution of human nature.

Ver. 19. *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts*, etc.] Of God, of Christ, of the Spirit, of fellow creatures, and of all sorts of wickedness. The thoughts of sin are evil, are to be hated, forsaken, and for which men are accountable to God. All wicked imaginations, carnal reasonings, lustful desires, and malicious contrivances, are here included; which take their rise from, and are devised, and forged, in the corrupt heart of man.

Murders; inveterate hatred of men's persons, malice prepense, schemes to take away life, all angry and wrathful words, and actual effusion of man's blood.

Adulteries; uncleanness committed between married persons, both in thought, and deed:

fornications; unlawful copulations of persons in a single state:

thefts; taking away from others by force or fraud, what is their right and property:

false witness: swearing falsely, or exhibiting a false testimony to the hurt of his neighbour, either his name, person, or estate:

blasphemies; evil speakings of God or men. To which Mark adds "covetousness"; a greedy and insatiable desire after the things of the world, or the neighbour's goods: "wickedness"; doing hurt and mischief to fellow creatures: "deceit"; in words and actions, in trade and conversation: "lasciviousness"; all manner of uncleanness, and unnatural lusts: "an evil eye"; of envy and covetousness: the vitiosity, or corruption of nature, is, by the Jews [f901], called ˆy[[r, "the evil eye": "pride"; in heart and life, in dress and gesture; and "foolishness"; expressed in talk and conduct.

Ver. 20. *These are the things which defile a man*, etc.] These are filthy in themselves, and must pollute all in whom they are; they bring a defilement on the whole man, both body and soul, fasten guilt upon him, and expose him to everlasting punishment:

but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man: should a man neglect to wash his bands before eating a common meal, this need give him no uneasiness; he contracts no filth to his soul hereby, nor any guilt to his conscience; nor does he break any law of God; nor is he liable to any penalty for such an omission. This is a trifling matter, and merits no regard; but the things before mentioned are in their nature evil: they are contrary to the law of God; they are abominable in his sight; they render men loathsome and odious to the divine being; and expose them to shame and ruin; and it is only the blood of Christ can cleanse them from the pollution and guilt of them, and secure them from that punishment they deserve.

Ver. 21. *Then Jesus went thence*, etc.] From the land of Gennesaret, after he had silenced the Pharisees, as to the charge brought by them against his disciples; and when he had reproved them for their hypocrisy and wickedness, in making void the commands of God by their traditions; and had explained some difficult and parabolical sayings he had made use of to his disciples, he then left that country, and departed very privately: either to shun the multitude, for the sake of retirement; or to avoid any snares the Scribes and Pharisees might be laying for him, who must be greatly galled with his free discourse, and strong arguments:

and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon; two principal cities of Phoenicia: not that he went into these places themselves, but into some places that bordered upon them; for as he ordered his disciples not to go in the way of the Gentiles, so neither did he himself.

Ver. 22. *And behold a woman of Canaan*, etc.] That is, of Phoenicia, which was called Canaan; so Shaul, the son of a Canaanitish woman, is, by the Septuagint in (<02065>Exodus 6:15) called the son of a Phoenician; and the kings of Canaan are, by the same interpreters in (<06501>Joshua 5:1) called kings of Phoenicia: hence this woman is by Mark said to be a Greek, that is, a Gentile, as the Jews used to call all of another nation, and a Syrophenician, being a native of Phoenicia, called Syrophenician; because it bordered upon Syria, and had been formerly a part of it, by conquest: so Cadmus, who is reported to have first brought letters from Phoenicia to Greece, is called [f902] a Syrophenician merchant.

Came out of the same coasts; being an inhabitant, it is very likely, either of Tyre or Sidon: this shows that Christ did not go into these places, but only to the borders of them, since she is said to come out of them to him; who, having heard of him, and the miraculous cures wrought by him, and being informed that he was near, at such a place, as the Persic version says, "suddenly came forth out of a corner"; and the Ethiopic reads it, "out of the mountains thereof"; and made to the house where he was privately retired, and would have hid himself, as Mark suggests,

and cried unto him; with a loud voice, with much vehemency, being in great distress,

saying, have mercy on me; meaning, by curing her daughter, with whose case she was so much affected, that she made it, as it were, her own:

O Lord, thou son of David. The first of these characters expresses her faith in his power, dominion, and government, that all persons and things, and so all diseases were at his command, and control; and that being Lord of all, he could remove them at his pleasure: the other shows her knowledge and belief of him, as the Messiah, that being a name by which he was usually known by the Jews; *See Gill "<40101>Matthew 1:1"* and which she, though a Gentile, might come at the knowledge of, either through being a proselyte to the Jewish religion, or through a general report which might reach, especially the neighbouring nations, that the Jews expected a wonderful deliverer to arise among them, under this character of the son of David; and from what she had heard of him, she concluded he must be the person.

My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil, which had took possession of her, and most grievously afflicted her: and her request to him was, that he would cast him out of her: believing he had power so to do, without seeing or touching her, only by a word speaking: her faith was like that of the centurion's.

Ver. 23. *But he answered her not a word*, etc.] Not that he did not hear her, or that he despised either her person or petition, or that he was not moved with it; but to continue her importunity, and try her faith, and make it manifest: for like reasons the Lord does not always, and immediately, answer the requests of his people. This giving her no answer, either that he would, or would not help her, carried in it a tacit repulse of her, and a denial of assistance to her; and it seems as if she did for a while desist from

her application to him, and betook herself to his disciples to plead with him for her:

and his disciples came; to the house where he was; who, it seems by this, had been elsewhere;

and besought him, saying, send her away; not in any shape, with any sort of answer, without curing her daughter, or without a promise of a cure; no, they desired she might be dismissed, with a grant of her request, to her entire satisfaction, as appears from Christ's answer: the reason they give is,

for she crieth after us; not only because she was troublesome to them, was importunate with them, and would take no denial from them: she followed them wherever they went; there was no getting rid of her: but also, because her case was so moving, was delivered in such an affecting manner, and her cries were piercing, that they could not bear them; and therefore entreat him, that he would relieve, and dismiss her.

Ver. 24. *But he answered, and said*, etc.] To his disciples, who knew how limited their commission was, that they were not to go into the way of the Gentiles, not to preach to them, nor perform miracles among them; and therefore could not reasonably expect that either the woman, or they, on her behalf, should succeed in this matter.

I am not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; as a priest, or as a Saviour and Redeemer, he was sent to make satisfaction and atonement for the sins of all God's elect, and to obtain eternal redemption and salvation for all of them, whether Jews or Gentiles; but as a prophet, in the discharge of his own personal ministry, he was sent by his Father only to the Jews; he was the "minister of the circumcision", (Romans 15:8) that is, a minister to the circumcised Jews; he was sent only to preach the Gospel to them, and work miracles among them, in proof of his Messiahship; and upon their rejection of him, then his apostles were to be sent among the Gentiles; but he himself was sent only to the Jews, here styled "the lost sheep of the house of Israel": by "the house of Israel", is meant the whole body of the Jewish nation, so called from Israel, the name of Jacob their father, from whom they sprung; and by the "lost sheep" of that house, are more especially designed the elect of God among them: for though all the individuals of that house were "lost" persons, considered in Adam, and in themselves, as the rest of mankind, and Christ, in the external ministry of the word, was sent to preach to them all; yet the elect of God

are only “sheep”: they are the sheep of Christ, of his pasture, and of his hand, whom he has the particular care and charge of; and who, in their natural state, are lost and straying, and could never find their way, or recover themselves from their lost state in Adam, and by their own transgressions; but he came to seek, and to save them, and to these his ministry was powerful and efficacious.

Ver. 25. *Then came she and worshipped him*, etc.] She followed the disciples into the house; and perceiving another repulse by Christ’s answer to them, she pushes on, through all discouragements; her faith grows stronger, and her importunity greater: she had called Christ Lord, and the son of David before, but now she worships him as God:

Saying, Lord help me; a short petition, but what fully and fitly expressed her case: the object she prays unto is the Lord, by which she owns his sovereignty, dominion, and power: the request she makes is for “help”, signifying that her case required it; that it was such, that she could not help herself, nor any creature help her, only he, which she firmly believed; and though it was her daughter, and not she herself, that was so miserably afflicted; yet such was her sympathy, love, and affection to her, that she makes the case her own, and calls helping her daughter, helping herself; for her daughter being relieved, she would be made easy.

Ver. 26. *But he answered, and said*, etc.] To the woman, as the Persic version reads it, and the sense requires:

it is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs; which he said, to try her faith the more, and make it the more illustrious; and that not so much from his own sense of things, as in the language of the Jewish people, and which she might not be a stranger to. By “the children”, are meant the Jews, to whom the adoption belonged; who, as a nation and people, were the children of God in a large sense; being distinguished by many blessings and favours, which others had not, and being under the more peculiar care and notice of God; not that all of them were the children of God by special grace: by “the bread”; which belonged to them, is meant the external ministry of the word, and the miracles of Christ wrought among them: and particularly such outward favours which related to the good of the bodies of men, by healing their diseases, and dispossessing them of devils: and by “the dogs” are designed the Gentiles, so called by the Jews in a way of contempt, because of their ignorance, idolatry, and impurity. Christ here speaks not his own mind, as if he

reproached the Gentiles, and held them in scorn and contempt, but uses the common dialect of the people; and which, this woman, living upon the borders of the Israelitish nation, was acquainted with; so that it was not so shocking and surprising, or quite so discouraging, as it would otherwise have been. The Jewish doctors say [f903], that the idolatrous Gentiles are not called men, that they are comparable to the beasts or the field [f904], to oxen, rams, goats [f905], and asses [f906]: the foetus in the bowels of a Canaanitish servant, they say [f907],

> "ymd hmhb y[mb dlwk, "is like the foetus in the bowels of a beast"."

Take the following passage, as an illustration of this, and as a further proof of the Jews calling the Gentiles dogs [f908].

> "A king provides a dinner for the children of his house; whilst they do his will they eat their meat with the king, and he gives to the dogs the part of bones to gnaw; but when the children of the house do not do the king's pleasure, he gives the dogs the dinner, and the bones to them: even so: while the Israelites do the will of their Lord, they eat at the king's table, and the feast is provided for them, and they of their own will give the bones to the Gentiles; but when they do not do the will of their Lord, lo! the feast is yblkl, "for the dogs", and the bones are their's."

And a little after,

> ""thou preparest a table before me"; this is the feast of the king; "in the presence of mine enemies"; yblk ^wnya, "these are the dogs" that sit before the table, looking for their part of the bones."

In which may be clearly discerned the distinction between children and dogs, and the application of the one to the Jews, and the other to the Gentiles, and the different food that belongs to each: and hence it is easy to see from whom Christ borrowed this expression, and with what view he made use of it.

Ver. 27. *And she saith, truth, Lord*, etc.] She owns all that he had said to be true, that he was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: that she was indeed but a dog, a poor sinful creature, and unworthy of any

favour; and that it was not right and fitting that all the children's bread should be taken from them and given to dogs:

yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. The Syriac and Persic versions add "and live": thus she wisely lays hold upon and improves in a very beautiful manner, in her own favour, what seemed to be so much against her. It is observed [f909] of the Syrophoenicians in general, that they have all, in their common talk, something ηδυ και κεχαρισμενον "pleasant and graceful", as there is indeed in this smart reply of her's, who was one of that people. She suggests that though the Gentiles were but dogs, and she one of them; yet their common Lord and Master had a propriety in them, and they in him; and were to be maintained and fed, and ought to live, though not in such fulness of favours and blessings, as the Jews, the children of God: nor did she desire their affluence, only that a crumb of mercy might be given her, that her poor daughter might be healed; which was but a small favour, in comparison of the numerous ones he heaped upon the children, the Jews: nor would this be any more detrimental to them, than it is to the children, for the dogs, under the table, to eat of the crumbs that fall.

Ver. 28. *Then Jesus answered, and said unto her*, etc.] As one surprised at the strength of her faith, and the clearness and justness of her pious reasoning; and not concealing himself, and the designs of grace, any longer from her, breaks out in great admiration of her, saying,

O woman, great is thy faith! He seems surprised, that she, a woman, and a poor Gentile, should express such strong faith in him; calling him Lord, owning him to be the Messiah, worshipping him as God, believing him able to do what could not be done by human art; and though she met with such repulses, and even called a dog, yet still continued importunate with him, believing she should succeed:

be it unto thee even as thou wilt; let thy daughter be healed, as thou desirest, and in the way, and at the very time thou wouldst have it:

and her daughter was made whole from that very hour: power went forth from Christ, and dispossessed the devil; so that when she came home, as Mark observes, she found her daughter lying on the bed, quiet, and easy, and perfectly well. The conduct of our Lord towards this woman, and her behaviour under it, do, in a very lively manner, represent the methods which God sometimes takes with his people, when they apply to him in

their distress; and the nature and actings of their faith upon him: as she, when she first applied to Christ for mercy and help, had not sword of answer given her; so sometimes they cry, and the Lord turns a deaf ear, or seems not to hear, and, in their apprehension of things, has covered himself with a cloud, that their prayer should not pass through; however, an immediate answer is not returned; yea, when others interpose on their behalf, and entreat for them, yet no favourable answer is returned, as was not by Christ to his disciples, when they besought him on this woman's account: and yet, notwithstanding all this, as she, they are not discouraged, but ply the throne of grace with fresh suits, acknowledge that the worst of names and characters belong to them: that they are unworthy of the least of mercies, and should be content with the crumbs of divine favour, but cannot go away without a blessing; they lay hold on every word of God, and hastily catch at it, and improve everything in their own favour, that faith can come at, and so, in the issue, succeed in their requests: effectual, fervent, and importunate prayer, the prayer of faith availeth much with God.

Ver. 29. *And Jesus departed from thence*, etc.] From the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, where he would have been private and retired; but being discovered, and knowing that the fame of this last miracle would make him more public in those parts, he removed, and passed through the midst of the coast of Decapolis, as Mark says, "and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee": the same with the sea of Tiberias. (◁4001▷John 6:1 21:1), that is, he came to those parts of Galilee, which lay near the sea side,

and went into a mountain: which was very usual with him, either for solitude, or for prayer, and sometimes, for better conveniency, to preach to the people:

and sat down there: to take some rest, being weary with his journey, and as waiting for the multitude to come to him, both for instruction and healing.

Ver. 30. *And great multitudes came unto him*, etc.] From the adjacent places; having heard of his being where he was; and who had either attended on him before, or, however, the fame of him, and his miracles, had reached their ears: these flocked to him, having with them, in their hands, or arms, or upon their backs, or shoulders, leading some, and carrying others, in some form or another,

those that were lame; either in their legs, or arms:

blind; in one eye, or both, and that either from their birth, or since:

dumb: the word signifies both deaf and dumb: these often meet in the same person: and if a man is born deaf, he is always dumb:

maimed: having lost a limb, an arm, or a leg, or so enfeebled by some disease or another, as the palsy, that their limbs were useless to them. The Persic version reads it “leprous”:

and many others; who were afflicted with various other diseases, too many to be mentioned particularly:

and cast them down at Jesus’ feet; to ease themselves of their burdens, and with a view to move his compassion, believing he was able to cure them: nor do they say a word to him, or desire him to relieve these miserable objects; thinking it was enough to present them to him, and not doubting at all, but he would show favour to them:

and he healed them; immediately, either by a word speaking, or by touching them, or by putting his hands on them, or without any such outward sign, through a divine power proceeding from him, which, at once, removed all their disorders and complaints.

Ver. 31. *Insomuch that the multitude wondered*, etc.] The multitude of the spectators, who, though they came in expectation of seeing miracles wrought, yet these were so much beyond what they could have imagined, that they were amazed and surprised to see cures so instantly performed, in such a miraculous manner: these were such glaring proofs and evidences of the wonderful power of God, that they were astonished

when they saw the dumb to speak; that is, such who before were dumb, now spoke; and the same is to be observed in the other following instances: some copies have also, “the deaf to hear”, and so the Arabic version: “the maimed to be whole”. This is left out in some copies; nor is it in the Arabic, Ethiopic, and Vulgate Latin versions, nor in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel; but the Syriac has it, and most Greek copies, and seems necessary; since these are particularly mentioned among the persons brought to be cured; and a wonderful cure this was, that persons who had not only lost the use of their limbs, but such who had lost the limbs themselves, should have them restored perfect; for doubtless, the power of our Lord was able to do this, and which was amazing to behold:

the lame to walk, and the blind to see; as was prophesied of the times of the Messiah, and as things to be effected by him, (Isaiah 35:5,6)

and they glorified the God of Israel. The Ethiopic version adds, “which had given such power to the son of man”, or “unto men”, which seems to be taken out of (Matthew 9:8). This must be understood both of the multitude that saw these miraculous operations, and the persons on whom they were wrought; who were both affected with them, and gave God the praise and glory of them, by whose power alone such things could be done, who is the one only and true God: and therefore, to distinguish him from the fictitious deities of the Gentiles, he is here styled the God of Israel, of the people of Israel, so called from Jacob their ancestor, whose name was Israel; by whom God was known, and worshipped, and was their Covenant God, and Father.

Ver. 32. *Then Jesus called his disciples unto him*, etc.] Who were at some little distance from him, to impart his mind unto them, whom he had made, and used, as his familiar friends; and to try their faith, and raise their attention, and prepare them for the following miracle; as well as to teach them by his example, and accustom them to show bowels of mercy and compassion to persons in any kind of want and distress:

and said, I have compassion on the multitude; which must be understood of him as man, whose bowels yearned towards them, having been so long without any food for their bodies, or very little; as he had compassion on the sick, and diseased, and healed them, so on the sound and whole, and was willing to feed them. Christ, our high priest, is a merciful one, and is touched with the feeling of the infirmities of men, of every sort, both of soul and body:

because they continue now with me three days; which time had been spent in healing their bodily disorders, and in preaching to them for the good of their souls; which shows the diligence and indefatigableness of Christ, as well as the attachment of the people to him; who were so struck with his miracles and ministry, that though they had been so long from their habitations and families, knew not how to leave him; nor did they talk, or show any signs of departing from him, and returning to their houses, and business of life;

and have nothing to eat; not that they had been so long without eating anything, though very likely it was but little, and what they brought with

them, and was now expended; nor could they provide themselves in a desert place, and many of them were a great way off from home:

and I will not send them away fasting; he might have done it, nor did the multitude ask any food of him; but he could not bear the thoughts of dismissing them in such a condition; having had but very little sustenance all this while, and so might be said to be in a manner fasting during this time, at least now:

lest they faint by the way; to their own houses, not having strength and spirit enough to travel, and get home: for "divers of them", as Mark says, "came from far".

Ver. 33. *And his disciples said unto him*, etc.] The former miracle of feeding five thousand men, besides women and children, with five loaves and two fishes, being quite out of their thoughts, they reply,

whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? The question is big with objections, and is put with some vehemency and astonishment: the people to be led were a multitude, a great multitude, a very great multitude, and these too had had but little, or no food, for a great while; and therefore would require the more to fill and satisfy them; and besides, it was a wilderness where they were, and where no provisions were to be had; and if they could have been got for money, they had not stock enough to purchase such a large number of loaves, as were necessary to feed so great a company with.

Ver. 34. *And Jesus saith unto them*, etc.] In a very mild and gentle manner, taking no notice of their stupidity, nor upbraiding them with their forgetfulness of the late miracle, and willing to exercise their patience, and try their faith, asks,

how many loaves have ye? meaning in the common stock, and which they brought along with them, for their own supply:

and they said seven, and a few little fishes; which they mention as so small a provision, that it was as nothing for such multitudes; their loaves of bread were but seven, and their fishes, which were ready dressed, dried, or boiled, etc. were few in number, and small, as to quantity and size.

Ver. 35. *And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground*.] Not regarding the smallness of the provisions, nor any further consulting with

his disciples; but knowing his own power to increase this food, and determining to feed the multitude before he dismissed them, in an authoritative way ordered them to sit down upon the ground in rows, that they might be the better seen, and served.

Ver. 36. *And he took the seven loaves and the fishes*, etc.] Into his hands, and lifted them up, that it might be seen, and observed, that there were no other food than these, that so the miracle might appear in its true light:

and gave thanks; to God for the provision, though it was so small, in the name of the whole company, according to the usage of the Jewish nation; who, if there were ten thousand [f910], one for the rest used to say,

> "let us bless the Lord our God, the God of Israel, the God of hosts, that sitteth between the cherubim:"

teaching us to do so likewise, and to be thankful for, and content with our portion, be it more or less:

and brake them; which also was the custom of the master of the family to do:

and gave to his disciples: as a fresh trial of their faith, to reprove their unbelief, to put them in mind of the former miracle, and that they might be witnesses of this, and, in order to distribute to the people, which they accordingly did:

and the disciples to the multitude; in doing which they obeyed their master's orders, though before they could not persuade themselves, that such a multitude of people could be filled with so small a quantity.

Ver. 37. *And they did all eat, and were filled*, etc.] Every one had a share of the provision, and that to full satisfaction; no one was overlooked and neglected, and everyone had as much as he could eat:

and they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets full. The disciples, after they had distributed to everyone his portion, went round, and collected the remaining fragments, and filled seven baskets therewith, according to the number of the loaves which were broken; and so had a full return for the loaves and fishes they spared on this occasion.

Ver. 38. *And they that did eat, were four thousand men*, etc.] This number of men, as well as of the baskets of fragments, clearly shows this to be a

distinct miracle from the former of this kind, recorded in (<4014>Matthew 14:15-21). There the number of men were five thousand, here four thousand; there the quantity of food was five loaves and two fishes, here seven loaves and a few fishes; there the number of the baskets of fragments was twelve, here seven; though the quantity might be as large; since the word here used for a basket is not the same as there, and designs one of a larger size:

besides women and children; who were not taken into the account, though they ate as well as the men, and whose number might be very large.

Ver. 39. *And he sent away the multitude*, etc.] Dismissing them, either with a prayer for them, or with a suitable word of exhortation, to be thankful for the mercies, both spiritual and temporal, they had received, and behave agreeably in their lives and conversations:

and took ship; being near the sea side, the sea of Galilee,

and came into the coasts of Magdala: not far from Tiberias; for often mention is made of Magdala in the Talmud [f911], along with Tiberias, and Chammath, another place in the same neighbourhood; and was famous for some Rabbins, as R. Joden and R. Isaac [f912], who are said to be hldgm, "of Magdala". Thus the Syriac version reads it Magedo, and the Vulgate Latin Magedan; and Beza says, in one Greek exemplar it is read Magadan; and some have thought it to be the same with Megiddo, where Josiah was slain by Pharaohnecho, and which Herodotus calls Magdolos [f913]. The Evangelist Mark says, that he came into the parts of Dalmanutha, which was a place within the coasts of Magdala. This was not the place, but another of the same name near Jerusalem, from whence Mary Magdalene may be thought to have her name. The Ethiopic version renders it, "they went into a ship, and departed into the mountains of Magdala"; that is, Christ, and his disciples.

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 16

Ver. 1. *The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came*, etc] Not from Jerusalem, as in (<40 15 1>Matthew 15:1) but from the neighbouring places: these were Galilean Sadducees and Pharisees, of whom mention is made in the Misna [f914];

> “says ylylg yqwdx, “a Galilean Sadducee”, (i.e. one that was of the land of Galilee, as Bartenora on the place observes,) I complain of you Pharisees, because ye write the name of a ruler with the name of Moses, in a divorce; say the Pharisees, we complain of you Galilean Sadducees, that you write the name of a ruler with the name of God, in the same leaf:”

but though these two sects could not agree in this, and in many other things, yet they could unite against Christ, to whom they bore an implacable hatred.

And tempting, desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven: they came with no sincere view to be taught by him, or learn anything from him; but if they could, to ensnare him, and get an opportunity of exposing him to the people; and therefore pretending dissatisfaction with the miracles he wrought on the earth, they ask of him to produce a sign from heaven, of his coming from thence, of his being the Son of God, and the true Messiah. They wanted some such sign, as the standing still of the sun and moon, in the times of Joshua; and as raining manna, in the times of Moses; or some such appearances of thunder and lightning, as at the giving of the law. The appearance of the rainbow, in a very extraordinary manner, is looked upon by the Jews as a sign of the Messiah’s coming [f915].

> “Says a certain Jew, when my father departed out of the world, he said thus to me; do not look for the Messiah until thou seest the bow in the world, adorned with light colours, and the world enlightened by it; then look for the Messiah, as it is written, (<01 09 16>Genesis 9:16).”

Some very unusual and uncommon sight in the heavens, was what these men asked of Christ in proof of his mission from God.

Ver. 2. *He answered and said unto them*, etc.] Knowing full well their views, and having wrought sufficient miracles to confirm his Messiahship, he thought fit to give them no other answer than this:

when it is evening, ye say, it will be fair weather, for the sky is red; when the sun is setting, it is a common thing for you to say, looking up to the heavens, and observing the face and colour of them, that it is like to be fair weather; no rain, that night, nor perhaps the next day, for the sky is red like fire, through the rays of the sun; which show the clouds to be very thin, and so will soon waste away, and consequently fine weather must follow.

Ver. 3. *And in the morning, it will be foul weather today*, etc.] When you rise in the morning, and take a survey of the heavens, it is a very usual thing with you to say, it is like to be windy or rainy weather today,

for the sky is red and lowring; which shows, that the clouds are so thick that the sun cannot pierce through them, and its face is not seen; so that it may be reasonably concluded they will issue in rain, or wind, or both.

O ye hypocrites. The Vulgate Latin, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel, leave out this appellation; but all other versions, as well as copies, have it: and it is an usual epithet, bestowed very justly by Christ, on these men; who pretended to be the guides of the people, took upon them to teach and instruct them in divine things, and set up themselves as men of great holiness, piety and knowledge; and yet, instead of searching the Scriptures, and comparing the characters of the times of the Messiah therein fixed, with the present ones, spent their time in making such low and useless observations, and which fall within the compass of everyone's knowledge and reach.

Ye can discern the face of the sky; very distinctly, and make some very probable guesses, if not certain conclusions, what will follow, good weather or bad:

but can ye not discern the signs of the times? or, as the Syriac reads it, "the time", the present time: if they had not been blind, they might easily have discerned, that the signs of the time of the Messiah's coming were upon them, and that Jesus was the Messiah; as the departure of the sceptre from Judah, the ending of Daniel's weeks, the various miracles wrought by

Christ, the wickedness of the age in which they lived, the ministry of John the Baptist, and of Christ, the great flockings of the people, both to one and to the other, with divers other things which were easy to be observed by them: but they pretend this to be a very great secret.

> "The secret of the day of death, they say [f916], and the secret of the day when the king Messiah comes, who by his wisdom can find out?"

Ver. 4. *A wicked and adulterous generation*, etc.] He says the same things here, as he did to the Pharisees on a like occasion, in (<40>1239Matthew 12:39).

And he left them; as persons hardened, perverse, and incurable, and as unworthy to be conversed with:

and departed: to the ship which brought him thither, and went in it to the other side of the sea of Galilee; (see <40>813Mark 8:13).

Ver. 5. *When his disciples were come to the other side*, etc.] Of the sea, as Munster's Hebrew Gospel adds, to Bethsaida, (<40>822Mark 8:22) as they were either in the ship, or going from the shore to the said place, they recollected themselves,

that they had forgotten to take bread: having but one loaf, as Mark says, in the ship; the seven baskets of fragments being either expended, or given away to the poor, of their own accord, or by Christ's orders. It seems, it was usual with the disciples to buy food at places most proper, and carry with them; since Christ often went into deserts and mountainous places, where provisions could not be had. This their forgetfulness to act according to their wonted method, might arise either from their being intent upon Christ's conversation with the Pharisees, and Sadducees, or from the suddenness of Christ's departure.

Ver. 6. *Then Jesus said unto them*, etc.] Either taking occasion from the disciples observing that they had forgot to take bread with them, or on account of what passed between him and the Pharisees and Sadducees, he gave the following advice to his disciples;

take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. Mark, instead "of the leaven of the Sadducees", says, "the leaven of Herod"; either because Christ might caution against all three; or because the Sadducees were generally Herodians, taking Herod to be the Messiah;

or were on his party, or for his government, which the Pharisees disliked; and the Herodians were generally Sadducees. By “the leaven” of these is meant their doctrine, as appears from (<4016 12>Matthew 16:12). The doctrines the Pharisees taught were the commandments and inventions of men, the traditions of the elders, free will, and justification by the works of the law: the doctrine of the Sadducees was, that there was no resurrection of the dead, nor angels, nor spirits: now because they sought secretly and artfully to infuse their notions into the minds of men; and which, when imbibed, spread their infection, and made men sour, morose, rigid, and ill natured, and swelled and puffed them up with pride and vanity, Christ compares them to leaven; and advises his disciples to look about them, to watch, and be on their guard, lest they should be infected with them.

Ver. 7. *And they reasoned among themselves*, etc.] Either what should be the meaning of this caution of Christ’s, and upon what account he should say this to them; or they were anxiously concerned what they should do for provision:

saying, because we have taken no bread; for the phrase, “it is”, is a supplement, and is not in the original text, which confines the sense to the first way of interpretation; the words may be read without it, and confirms the other sense, and which receives strength from what follows.

Ver. 8. *Which when Jesus perceived*, etc.] Without hearing any of their debates, but by his omniscience; for he knew the doubts and unbelief, and anxious solicitude of their minds, as well as their private reasonings one with another:

he said unto them, O ye of little faith; a phrase used upon a like occasion, when he would dissuade his disciples from an anxious distressing care about a livelihood, (<4006 30>Matthew 6:30 See Gill “<4006 30>Matthew 6:30”):

why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? blaming one another for your negligence and forgetfulness in this matter; distressing your minds, as if you should be famished and starved, because ye have not brought a quantity of bread, as you used to do with you.

Ver. 9. *Do ye not understand*, etc.] Meaning either the sense of the advice he had now given; or rather his almighty power displayed in the two miracles of feeding five thousand at one time, and four thousand at another, with a very small quantity of provision; for to this the word “understand” refers, as well as the following:

neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Have you forgot what was so lately done, namely, the feeding five thousand men, besides women and children, with five loaves and two fishes, when ye took up, after all were filled and satisfied, no less than twelve baskets of fragments? And can you, after this, distrust my power in the care of you? Have I fed so many with so small a quantity of food? and am I not able to feed twelve of you, though you have but one loaf? Why all these anxious thoughts and carnal reasonings?

Ver. 10. *Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand*, etc.] Have you forgot the other miracle done but a very little while ago, when I fed four thousand men, beside women and children, with seven loaves and a few small fishes;

and how many baskets ye took up? no less than seven large baskets; and am I not able to provide for you? distress not yourselves about this matter; give not way to unbelief, which must argue great stupidity and insensibility.

Ver. 11. *How is it that ye do not understand*, etc.] That you should be so senseless and void of thought, after such instances, as to imagine, that I concerned myself about what bread you brought with you; one would think you could not but know,

that I spake it not to you concerning bread, taken in a literal sense; but must be thought to speak figuratively and mystically, and to have an higher sense and meaning, when I said to you,

that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees; how could you think that I had any regard to the leaven taken in a literal sense, the Pharisees and Sadducees approve or disapprove of?

Ver. 12. *Then understood they*, etc.] Without any further explication of his sense and meaning,

how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread: which sense they first took him in; imagining, because the Pharisees were very particular and precise what sort of leaven they made use of [f917], that Christ forbad them buying bread that was made with leaven according to their directions: and since their rules in everything prevailed much in all places, they were concerned what bread they must, or could buy; but now they perceived that he did not speak of this, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. It was very common with the Jews [f918] to call the

corruption and vitiosity of nature by the name of hsy[bç rwaç, “leaven in the lump”: hence our Lord calls their doctrine so, because it proceeded from thence, and was agreeable thereunto; and uses the phrase on purpose to expose it, and bring it into neglect and contempt.

Ver. 13. *When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi*, etc.] The towns that were in the neighbourhood of this city; which city went by several names before, as Leshem, (<061947>Joshua 19:47) which being taken by the Danites, they called it Dan; hence we read of ˆwyrsyqdˆd, “Dan, which is Caesarea” [f919]. It was also called Paneas, from the name of the fountain of Jordan, by which it was situated; and which Pliny says [f920] gave the surname to Caesarea; and hence it is called by Ptolomy [f921] Caesarea Paniae; and by the name of Paneas it went, when Philip the [f922] tetrarch rebuilt it, and called it Caesarea, in honour of Tiberius Caesar; and from his own name, Philippi, to distinguish it from another Caesarea, of which mention is made in the Acts of the Apostles, built by his father Herod, and so called in honour of Augustus Caesar; which before bore the name of Strato’s tower. The Misnic doctors speak of two Caesareas [f923], the one they call the eastern, the other the western Caesarea. Now, as Mark says, whilst Christ and his disciples were in the way to these parts; and, as Luke, when he had been praying alone with them,

he asked his disciples, saying, whom do men say that I the Son of man am? He calls himself “the son of man”, because he was truly and really man; and because of his low estate, and the infirmities of human nature, with which he was encompassed: he may have some respect to the first intimation of him, as the seed of woman, and the rather make use of this phrase, because the Messiah was sometimes designed by it in the Old Testament, (<198017>Psalm 80:17 <270713>Daniel 7:13) or Christ speaks here of himself, according to his outward appearance, and the prevailing opinion of men concerning him; that he looked to be only a mere man, born as other men were; was properly a son of man, and no more: and therefore the question is, not what sort of man he was, whether a holy, good man, or not, or whether the Messiah, or not; but the question is, what men in general, whether high or low, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, under the notion they had of him as a mere man, said of him; or since they took him to be but a man, what man they thought he was; and to this the answer is very appropriate. This question Christ put to his disciples, they being more conversant with the people than he, and heard the different opinions men

had of him, and who were more free to speak their minds of him to them, than to himself; not that he was ignorant of what passed among men, and the different sentiments they had of him, but he was willing to hear the account from his disciples; and his view in putting this question to them, was to make way for another, in order to bring them to an ingenuous confession of their faith in him.

Ver. 14. *And they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist*, etc.] It was the opinion of some of the Jews, that he was John the Baptist risen from the dead. This notion was spread, and prevailed in Herod's court, and he himself, at last, gave into it.

Some Elias; the Tishbite, because an extraordinary person was prophesied of by Malachi, under the name of Elias; and who was to come in his power and spirit before the great day of the Lord; and it being a prevailing notion with the Jews, that Elias was to come before the Messiah; *See Gill "Matthew 11:14"* they concluded that he was now come:

and others Jeremias; this is omitted both by Mark and Luke; the reason why he is mentioned, is not because of what is said of him, in (Jeremiah 1:5,10,18) but because the Jews thought he was that prophet spoken of, in (Deuteronomy 18:15) that should be raised up from among them, like unto Moses: and this is the sense of some of their writers [f924]: and in their very ancient writings a parallel is run between Moses and Jeremy [f925].

> "R. Judah, the son of R. Simon, opened (Deuteronomy 18:18, 34:10) thus: "as thee", this is Jeremiah, who was, as he, in reproofs; you will find all that is written of the one, is written of the other; one prophesied forty years, and the other prophesied forty years; the one prophesied concerning Judah and Israel, and the other prophesied concerning Judah and Israel; against the one those of his own tribe stood up, and against the other those of his own tribe stood up; the one was cast into a river, and the other into a dungeon; the one was delivered by means of an handmaid, and the other by the means of a servant; the one came with words of reproof, and the other came with words of reproof."

Now they fancied, either that the soul of Jeremy was transmigrated into another body, or that he was risen from the dead.

Or one of the prophets; one of the ancient ones, as Hosea, or Isaiah, or some other: they could not fix upon the particular person who they thought

was risen from the dead, and did these wondrous works among them. From the whole it appears, that these persons, whose different sentiments of Christ are here delivered, were not his sworn enemies, as the Scribes and Pharisees, who could never speak respectfully of him; saying, that he was a gluttonous man, a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, a very wicked man, and far from being one, or like one of the prophets: they sometimes represent him as beside himself, and mad, yea, as being a Samaritan, and having a devil, as familiar with the devil, and doing his miracles by his assistance; but these were the common people, the multitude that followed Christ from place to place, and had a great opinion of him on account of his ministry, and miracles: wherefore, though they could not agree in their notions concerning him, yet each of them fix upon some person of note and worth, whom they took him for; they all looked upon him as a great and good man, and as a prophet, as John the Baptist was accounted by all the people, and as one of the chief of the prophets, as Elias and Jeremiah; and they that could not fix on any particular person, yet put him into the class of the prophets: but still they came short of the true knowledge of him; they did not know him to be a divine person, which his works and miracles proved him to be: nor to be that prophet Moses had spoken of, who was alone to be hearkened unto, though his ministry was a demonstration of it: nor that he was the Messiah, so much spoken of in prophecy, and so long expected by the Jewish nation, though he had all the characters of the Messiah meeting in him. The chief reason why they could not entertain such a thought of him, seems to be the mean figure he made in the world, being of a low extract, in strait circumstances of life, regarded only by the poorer sort; and there appearing nothing in him promising, that he should deliver them from the Roman yoke, and set up a temporal kingdom, which should be prosperous and flourishing, which was the notion of the Messiah that then generally obtained: and since they could not, by any means, allow of this character as belonging to Jesus, though otherwise they had an high opinion of him; hence they could not agree about him, but formed different sentiments of him; which is usually the case in everything, where the truth is not hit upon and received.

Ver. 15. *He saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am?*] Without taking any further notice, or making any reflections on the different sentiments of men concerning him, he put this question to his disciples, and which is what he had chiefly in view, that he might have their sense of him; and which he puts in a different form, and leaves out the phrase, the son of

man, because they knew he was more than a man: nor was his mean appearance an offence to them; they had believed in him, became his disciples, and were followers of him: but it was not enough to believe in him, they must confess him; both are necessary: therefore he does not say, whom believe ye, but whom say ye that I am? You who have been with me so long from the beginning; you who have heard so many discourses from me, and have seen so many miracles wrought by me; and who are to be the teachers of others, to preach my Gospel, and publish my salvation to Jews and Gentiles, what have you to say of me? Whom do you say I am? as for those men, it is no great matter who they say I am; but of great moment and consequence are your sense and confession of me. Such who have long sat under a Gospel ministry, or who have been long in the church and school of Christ, it is expected of them, that they should know more of Christ than others; and should be come to a point about his person and office, and be ready to make a confession of their faith, and give a reason of their hope in him; and especially such who are, or are to be preachers of Christ to others: these ought to be well acquainted with him, who, and what he is; they should have no doubt, nor hesitation in their minds, about him, but be fully satisfied concerning him; and be free, and open, and ready to declare what they know and believe of him.

Ver. 16. *And Simon Peter answered and said*, etc.] Either of his own accord, and for himself, being a warm, zealous, and forward man; one that dearly loved Christ, truly believed in him, and was ready to make a confession of him; or, as the mouth of the rest, in their name, and with their consent; or, at least, as full well knowing the sentiments of their minds. Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God: a short, but a very full confession of faith, containing the following articles: as that there is a God, that there is but one God; that he is the living God, has life in himself, is the fountain of life to others, and by this is distinguishable from the idols of the Gentiles: that Jesus is the Christ, the Christ of God, the true Messiah, that was promised by God, prophesied of by all the prophets, from the beginning of the world, and expected by the people of God: a character that includes all his offices, of prophet, priest, and king, to which he is anointed by God; and that this Messiah was not a mere man, but a divine person, the Son of God; not by creation, as angels and men are, nor by adoption, as saints, nor by office, as magistrates, but by nature, being his own Son, his proper Son, the only begotten of the Father, of the same nature with him, being one with him, and equal to him. This confession, as

it is uniform, and all of a piece, and consistent with itself, and is what all the disciples of Christ agreed in, so it greatly exceeds the most that can be made of the different sentiments of the people put together. They took him, one and all, to be but a mere man; their most exalted thoughts of him rose no higher: but in this he is acknowledged to be the Son of God, a phrase expressive of his divine nature, and distinct personality: they thought him to be a dead man brought to life; but here he is called the Son of the living God, as having the same life in him the Father has: they indeed judged him to be a prophet, but not that prophet that was to come, superior to all prophets; but here he is owned to be the Christ, which not only takes in his prophetic office in a higher sense than they understood it, but all his other offices, and declares him to be the promised Messiah; which they who thought, and spoke the most honourably of him, could not allow of.

Ver. 17. *And Jesus answered and said unto him*, etc.] Not waiting for any other declaration from them; but taking this to be the sense of them all, he said,

blessed art thou Simon Bar Jona, or son of Jona, or Jonas, as in (<430142>John 1:42, 21:15). His father's name was Jonah, whence he was so called: so we read [f926] of R. Bo bar Jonah, and of a Rabbi of this very name [f927], anwy rb ^w[mç r, Rabbi Simeon bar Jona; for Simon and Simeon are one, and the same name. Some read it Bar Joanna, the same with John; but the common reading is best; Bar Jona signifies "the son of a dove", and Bar Joanna signifies "the son of one that is gracious". Our Lord, by this appellation, puts Peter in mind of his birth and parentage, but does not pronounce him blessed on that account: no true blessedness comes by natural descent; men are by nature children of wrath, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity: though he was Bar Jona, the son of a dove, and his father might be a good man, and answer to his name, and be of a dove like spirit; yet such a spirit was not conveyed from him to Peter by natural generation: and though he might be, according to the other reading, Bar Joanna, or the son of a gracious man, yet grace was not communicated to him thereby; for he was not "born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God", (<430113>John 1:13). He was a blessed man, not by his first, but by his second birth; and the reason why our Lord makes mention of his father, is to observe to him, that he was the son of a mean man, and had had, but a mean education, and therefore his blessedness in general was not of nature, but of grace, and this branch of it in particular; the knowledge he

had of the Messiah, was not owing to his earthly father, or to the advantage of an education, but to the revelation he had from Christ's Father which is in heaven, as is hereafter affirmed. He is pronounced "blessed", as having a true knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal; and all such as he are so, appear to be the favourites of God, to have an interest in Christ and in all the blessings of his grace; are justified by his righteousness, pardoned through his blood, are accepted in him, have communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, and shall live eternally with them hereafter.

For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee: nothing is more frequent to be met with in Jewish writings, than the phrase of "flesh and blood", as designing men in distinction from God: so the first man is said [f928] to be

> "the workmanship of the blessed God, and not the workmanship µdw rçbd, "of flesh and blood"."

Again [f929], µdw rçb, "flesh and blood", who knows not the times and seasons, etc. but the holy, blessed God, who knows the times and seasons, etc. Instances of this way of speaking are almost without number: accordingly, the sense here is, that this excellent confession of faith, which Peter had delivered, was not revealed unto him, nor taught him by any mere man; he had not it from his immediate parents, nor from any of his relations, or countrymen; nor did he attain to the knowledge of what is expressed in it, by the dint of nature, by the strength of carnal reason, or the force of his own capacity and abilities:

but my Father which is in heaven; from whom both the external and internal revelation of such truths come; though not to the exclusion of the Son, by whose revelation the Gospel is taught, and received; nor of the Holy Ghost, who is a Spirit of wisdom and revelation, but in opposition to, and distinction from any mere creature whatever. Neither the Gospel, nor any part of it, is an human device or discovery; it is not after man, nor according to the carnal reason of man; it is above the most exalted and refined reason of men; it has in it what eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of: its truths are the deep things of God, which the Spirit of God searches and reveals: and which men, left to the light of nature, and force of reason, must have been for ever ignorant of, and could never have discovered. The Gospel is a

revelation, it consists of revealed truths; and which are to be received and believed upon the testimony and credit of the revealer, without entering into carnal reasonings, and disputes about them; and it is the highest reason, and the most noble use of reason, to embrace it at once, as coming from God; for this revelation is from heaven, and from Christ's Father; particularly the deity, sonship, and Messiahship of Christ, are doctrines of pure revelation: that there is a God, is discoverable by the light of nature; and that he is the living God, and gives being, and life, and breath, and all things, to his creatures; but that he has a Son of the same nature with him, and equal to him, who is the Messiah, and the Saviour of lost sinners, this could never have been found out by flesh and blood: no man knows the Son, but the Father, and he to whom he reveals him; he bears witness of him, and declares him to be his Son, in whom he is well pleased; and happy are those who are blessed with the outward revelation of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, but more especially such to whom the Father reveals Christ in them the hope of glory!

Ver. 18. *And I say also unto thee*, etc.] Either besides what he had already said concerning his happiness; or, as the father had revealed something great and valuable, so likewise would he; or inasmuch as he had freely said and declared who, and what he was, in like manner he also would say what Peter was, thou art Peter: intimating, that he was rightly called Peter, or Cephas, by him, when he first became a follower of him, (<40418>Matthew 4:18 <43142>John 1:42), which words signify the same thing, a rock, or stone; because of his firmness and solidity, and because he was laid upon the sure foundation, and built on the rock Christ, and was a very fit stone to be laid in the spiritual building. The aptness of this name to him is easy to be seen in his full assurance of faith, as to the person of Christ, and his free, open, and undaunted confession of him.

And upon this rock will I build my church: by the church, is meant, not an edifice of wood, stones, etc. but an assembly, and congregation of men; and that not of any sort; not a disorderly, tumultuous assembly, in which sense this word is sometimes taken; nor does it design the faithful of a family, which is sometimes the import of it; nor a particular congregated church, but the elect of God, the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven; and especially such of them as were to be gathered in, and built on Christ, from among the Jews and Gentiles. The materials of this building are such, as are by nature no better, or more fit for it, than others: these stones originally lie in the same quarry

with others; they are singled out, and separated from the rest, according to the sovereign will of God, by powerful and efficacious grace; and are broken and hewn by the Spirit of God, generally speaking, under the ministry of the word, and are, by him, made living stones; and being holy and spiritual persons, are built up a spiritual house: and these are the only persons which make up the true and invisible church of Christ in the issue, and are only fit to be members of the visible church; and all such ought to be in a Gospel church state, and partake of the privileges of it: these materials are of different sorts, and have a different place, and have a different usefulness in this building; some are only as common stones, and timber; others are as pillars, beams, and rafters; and all are useful and serviceable; and being put, and knit together, grow up as an holy temple to the Lord: and are called, by Christ, "my" church, because given him by the Father; and he has purchased them with his own blood; are built by him, and on him; inhabited by him, and of whom he is the head, king, and governor; though not to the exclusion of the Father, whose house they also are; nor of the Spirit, who dwells in them, as in his temple. This church Christ promises to "build". Though his ministers are builders, they are but under builders; they are qualified, employed, directed, encouraged, and succeeded by him; he is the wise, able, and chief master builder. This act of building seems to have a special regard to the conversion of God's elect, both among Jews and Gentiles, particularly the latter; and to the daily conversions of them in all ages; and to the building up of saints in faith and holiness; each of which will more manifestly appear in the latter day; and are both generally effected through the word, and ordinances, as means, the Spirit of Christ blessing them. By the rock on which Christ builds his church, is meant, not the person of Peter; for Christ does not say, upon thee Peter, but upon this rock, referring to something distinct from him: for though his name signifies a rock, or stone, and there may be some allusion to it; and he is so called because of his trust and confidence in the Lord, on whom he was built; but not because he was the foundation on which any others, and especially the whole church, were built: it is true, he may be called the foundation, as the rest of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are, (<4020>Ephesians 2:20, <6214>Revelation 21:14) without any distinction from them, and preference to them; they and he agreeing in laying doctrinally and ministerially Christ Jesus as the foundation of faith and hope, but not in such sense as he is; neither he, nor they, are the foundation on which the church is built, which is Christ, and him only. Moreover, what is said to Peter in these, and the following words, is not said to him personally and

separately from the rest of the apostles, but is designed for them, as well as him, as appears by comparing them with (<4018>Matthew 18:18). As he spoke in the name of them all, to Christ; so Christ spake to him, including them all. Peter had no preeminence over the rest of the apostles, which he neither assumed, nor was it granted; nor would it ever have been connived at by Christ, who often showed his resentment at such a spirit and conduct, whenever there was any appearance of it in any of them; (see <4018>Matthew 18:1-3, 20:25-28) and though Peter, with James, and John, had some particular favours bestowed on him by Christ; as to be at the raising of Jairus's daughter, and at the transfiguration of Christ on the mount, and with him in the garden; and he appeared to him alone after his resurrection, and before he was seen by the rest of the disciples; yet in some things he was inferior to them, being left to deny his Lord and master, they did not; and upon another account is called Satan by Christ, which they never were; not to mention other infirmities of his, which show he is not the rock: and, after all, what is this to the pope of Rome, who is no successor of Peter's? Peter, as an apostle, had no successor in his office; nor was he bishop of Rome; nor has the pope of Rome either his office, or his doctrine: but here, by the rock, is meant, either the confession of faith made by Peter; not the act, nor form, but the matter of it, it containing the prime articles of Christianity, and which are as immoveable as a rock; or rather Christ himself, who points, as it were, with his finger to himself, and whom Peter had made such a glorious confession of; and who was prefigured by the rock the Israelites drank water out of in the wilderness; and is comparable to any rock for height, shelter, strength, firmness, and duration; and is the one and only foundation of his church and people, and on whom their security, salvation, and happiness entirely depend. Christ is a rock that is higher than they, where they find safety in times of distress, and the shadow of which is refreshing to them; and therefore betake themselves to him for shelter, and where they are secure from the wrath of God, and rage of men: he is the rock of ages, in whom is everlasting strength; and is the sure, firm, and everlasting foundation on which the church, and all true believers, are laid: he is the foundation of their faith, and hope, and everlasting happiness, and will ever continue; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The Jews speak of the gates of hell: sometimes of the gate of hell, in the singular number [f930]; and sometimes of the gates of hell, in the plural number. They say [f931], that

> "µnhygl çy µyjtp hçlç, "hell has three gates", one in the wilderness, one in the sea, and one in Jerusalem."

They talk [f932] of

> "an angel that is appointed µnhygd y[rt l[, "over the gates of hell", whose name is Samriel; who has three keys in his hands, and opens three doors."

And elsewhere [f933] they say, that

> "he that is appointed over hell his name is Dumah, and many myriads of destroying angels are with him, and he stands µnhygd ajtp l[, "at the gate of hell"; and all those that keep the holy covenant in this world, he has no power to bring them in."

Our Lord may allude to these notions of the Jews, and his sense be, that all the infernal principalities and powers, with all their united cunning and strength, will never be able to extirpate his Gospel, to destroy his interest, to demolish his church in general, or ruin anyone particular soul that is built upon him. Again, the gates of "Hades", or hell, sometimes seem to design no other than the gates of death, and the grave, and persons going into the state of death; (see <181817>Job 38:17 <232810>Isaiah 38:10) where the Septuagint use the same phrase as here; and then the sense is, that neither death, nor the grave, shall finally, and totally prevail over the people of God, and members of Christ; but they shall be raised out of such a state, and live gloriously with him for ever. By it here is not meant Peter himself; though it is true of him, that Satan, and his posse of devils that beset him, did not prevail against him, so as to destroy his grace, hurt his estate, and hinder his salvation: nor could death, in all its frightful appearances, deter him from holding, and preaching, and maintaining the doctrine of Christ; and though death, and the grave, have now power over him, yet they shall not always detain him: but rather, it designs the doctrine Peter made a confession of; which, though it may be opposed by hell and earth, by Satan, and his emissaries, by the open force of persecutors, and the secret fraud of heretics, it may be brought into contempt by the scandalous lives of professors; and though the true professors of it may die off, yet truth itself always lives, and defies the power of death, and the grave: or else the church in general is meant, and every true believer. These words do not ascertain the continuance of anyone particular congregated church, but

secures the church universal, which will continue as long as the sun and moon endure, and the perseverance of everyone of God's elect; and assure that death, and the grave, shall not always have the dominion over the saints, but that they shall be rescued from them. Once more, this "it" may refer to Christ the rock, who, though he was brought to the dust of death, by the means of Satan, and the powers of darkness, yet to the ruin of him that had the power of death; and though death, and the grave, had power over him for a while, yet could not hold him; he rose victorious over them, and ever lives, having the keys of hell and death, to open the gates thereof, and let his people out when he thinks fit.

Ver. 19. *And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven*, etc.] By the kingdom of heaven is meant the Gospel, which comes from heaven, declares the king Messiah to be come, speaks of things concerning his kingdom, is the means of setting it up, and enlarging it, displays the riches of his grace, and gives an account of the kingdom of heaven, and of persons' right unto it, and meetness for it. "The keys" of it are abilities to open and explain the Gospel truths, and a mission and commission from Christ to make use of them; and being said to be given to Peter particularly, denotes his after qualifications, commission, work, and usefulness in opening the door of faith, or preaching the Gospel first to the Jews, (<4401>Acts 2:1-47) and then to the Gentiles, (<4401>Acts 10:1-48 15:7,14) and who was the first that made use of the keys of evangelical knowledge with respect to both, after he, with the rest of the apostles, had received an enlarged commission to preach the Gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Otherwise these keys belonged to them all alike; for to the same persons the keys, and the use of them, appertained, on whom the power of binding and loosing was bestowed; and this latter all the disciples had, as is manifest from (<4018>Matthew 18:18) wherefore this does not serve to establish the primacy and power of Peter over the rest of the apostles; nor do keys design any lordly domination or authority; nor did Christ allow of any such among his apostles; nor is it his will that the ministers of his word should lord it over his heritage: he only is king of saints, and head of his church; he has the key of David, with which he opens, and no man shuts, and shuts, and no man opens; and this he keeps in his own hand, and gives it to none. Peter is not the door-keeper of heaven to let in, nor keep out, whom he pleases; nor has his pretended successor the keys of hell and death; these also are only in Christ's hands: though it has been said of the pope of Rome, that if he sends millions of men to hell, none should say to

him, what dost thou? but the keys here mentioned are the keys of the kingdom of heaven; or of the Gospel, which was shut up in the Jewish nation, through the ignorance, malice, and calumnies of the Scribes and Pharisees, who would neither embrace it, or enter into the kingdom of God themselves, nor suffer others that were going to enter into it; and through their taking away the key of knowledge, or the right interpretation of the word of God; and through a judicial blindness, which that nation in general was given up to: and this was shut up to the Gentiles through the natural darkness that was spread over them, and through want of a divine revelation, and persons sent of God to instruct them: but now Christ was about, and in a little time he would (for these words, with what follow, are in the future tense) give his apostles both a commission and gifts, qualifying them to open the sealed book of the Gospel, and unlock the mysteries of it, both to Jews and Gentiles, especially the latter. Keys are the ensigns of treasurers, and of stewards, and such the ministers of the Gospel are; they have the rich treasure of the word under their care, put into their earthen vessels to open and lay before others; and they are stewards of the mysteries and manifold grace of God, and of these things they have the keys. So that these words have nothing to do with church power and government in Peter, nor in the pope, nor in any other man, or set of men whatever; nor to be understood of church censures, excommunications, admissions, or exclusions of members: nor indeed are keys of any such similar use; they serve for locking and unlocking doors, and so for keeping out those that are without, and retaining those that are within, but not for the expulsion of any: but here they are used in a figurative sense, for the opening and explaining the truths of the Gospel, for which Peter had excellent gifts and abilities.

And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. This also is not to be understood of binding, or loosing men's sins, by laying on, or taking off censures, and excommunications; but only of doctrines, or declarations of what is lawful and unlawful, free, or prohibited to be received, or practised; in which sense the words, `rtwmw rwsa`, "bound and loosed", are used in the Talmudic writings, times without number, for that which is forbidden and declared to be unlawful, and for that which is free of use, and pronounced to be so: in multitudes of places we read of one Rabbi `rswa`, "binding", and of another `rytm`, "loosing"; thousands, and ten thousands of instances of this kind might be produced; a whole

volume of extracts on this head might be compiled. Dr. Lightfoot has transcribed a great many, sufficient to satisfy any man, and give him the true sense of these phrases; and after him to mention any other is needless; yet give me leave to produce one, as it is short, and full, and explains these phrases, and points at the persons that had this power, explaining (<21212>Ecclesiastes 12:11) and that clause in it, “masters of the assemblies”.

> “these (say they [f934]) are the disciples of the wise men, who sit in different collections, and study in the law; these pronounce things or persons defiled, and these pronounce things or persons clean, ^yrytm ^llhw ^yrswa wllh, “these bind, and these loose”; these reject, or pronounce persons or things profane, and these declare them right.”

And a little after,

> “get thyself an heart to hear the words of them that pronounce unclean, and the words of them that pronounce clean; the words of them ^yrswa, that “bind”, and the words of them ^yrytm, that “loose”; the words of them that reject, and the words of them that declare it right”

But Christ gave a greater power of binding and loosing, to his disciples, than these men had, and which they used to better purpose. The sense of the words is this, that Peter, and so the rest of the apostles, should be empowered with authority from him, and so directed by his Holy Spirit, that whatever they bound, that is, declared to be forbidden, and unlawful, should be so: and that whatever they loosed, that is, declared to be lawful, and free of use, should be so; and accordingly they bound some things which before were loosed, and loosed some things which before were bound; for instance, they bound, that is, prohibited, or declared unlawful, the use of circumcision, which before, and until the death of Christ, was enjoined the natural seed of Abraham; but that, and all ceremonies, being abolished by the death of Christ, they declared it to be nothing, and of no avail, yea, hurtful and pernicious; that whoever was circumcised, Christ profited him nothing, and that he was a debtor to do the whole law: they affirmed, that the believing Gentiles were not to be troubled with it; that it was a yoke not fit to be put upon their necks, which they, and their fathers, were not able to bear, (<480501>Galatians 5:1,3,6 <441510>Acts 15:10,19). They bound, or forbid the observance of days, months, times, and years; the

keeping holy days, new moons, and sabbaths, which had been used in the Jewish church for ages past; such as the first day of the new year, and of every month, the day of atonement, the feasts of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles, the jubilee year, the sabbatical year, and seventh day sabbath, (<480409>Galatians 4:9,10 <510216>Colossians 2:16,17). They loosed, or declared lawful and free, both civil and religious conversation between Jews and Gentiles; whereas, before, the Jews had no dealings with the Gentiles, nor would not enter into their houses, nor keep company with them, would have no conversation with them; neither eat, nor drink with them; but now it was determined and declared, that no man should be called common, or unclean; and that in Christ Jesus, and in his church, there is no distinction of Jew and Gentile, (<441028>Acts 10:28 11:2,3,18 <480328>Galatians 3:28). They also loosed, or pronounced lawful, the eating of any sort of food, without distinction, even that which was before counted common and unclean, being persuaded by the Lord Jesus Christ, by the words he said, (<401511>Matthew 15:11). They asserted, that there is nothing unclean of itself; and that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; or that true religion does not lie in the observance of those things; that every creature of God is good, and fit for food, and nothing to be refused, or abstained from, on a religious account, provided it be received with thanksgiving, (<451414>Romans 14:14,17 <540404>1 Timothy 4:4). And these things now being by them bound or loosed, pronounced unlawful or lawful, are confirmed as such by the authority of God, and are so to be considered by us.

Ver. 20. *Then charged he his disciples*, etc.] When Peter had so freely and fully confessed him to be the Messiah, and which was the sense of all the disciples; and when Christ had expressed his approbation of his confession, and had promised such great and excellent things upon it, he gave a strict charge unto his disciples,

that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. The word Jesus is not in some copies; and is left out in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; nor does it seem absolutely necessary; it was enough to charge them to tell no man that he was the Messiah: his reasons for it might be, lest his enemies, the Scribes and Pharisees, should be the more provoked and incensed against him, and seek his death before his time; and lest the jealousy of the Romans should be stirred up, who might fear he would set up himself against Caesar, as king of the Jews, which might lead them to take measures obstructive of his further designs; and lest some persons,

hearing of this, should rise and proclaim him king of the Jews, who were big with the notion of the Messiah being a temporal prince: and moreover, because the disciples were to attest the truth of this after his resurrection; and he chose, for the present, that the people should collect this from his own ministry and miracles, which were sufficient to lead them into the knowledge of it, without any declarations of their's: and though they were possessed of true faith in him, as such, for themselves, as yet they had not the gifts and abilities to defend those doctrines respecting his person, and his offices, they had after the Spirit was poured down upon them.

Ver. 21. *From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples*, etc.] From the time that Peter made the confession concerning Jesus, as that he was the Messiah, and Son of God, and which things were clear to all the apostles, he began to teach them more expressly, and to point out to them more clearly, and plainly, his sufferings and death, than he had done before: and this he chose to do now, partly because that their faith in him was well grounded and established, so that they were the better able to bear these things he told them, which before might have been more staggering and discouraging to them; and partly, that being forewarned of them, they would not be so shocking when they came to pass: as also to destroy all their expectations of a temporal kingdom, which they might now be big with, he having so fully and freely owned himself to be the Messiah: and this also furnishes out some reasons why Jesus would not have his disciples, for the present, declare him to be the Messiah, that his death might not, by any means, be prevented, which was so necessary; since, should the princes of the world know him, they would not crucify him: and besides, seeing he was to suffer, and die, and rise again for the salvation of his people, it was proper that all this should be over before he was so publicly declared to be the Messiah, the Saviour, and Redeemer.

How that he must go to Jerusalem: the metropolis of the nation, where the great sanhedrim sat, who only could take cognizance of him, under the imputation of a false prophet, and condemn him to death, and which therefore would be in the most public manner; and though it would add to his reproach, would leave no room to be doubted of. The word "must", not only belongs to his going to Jerusalem, but to his sufferings, death, and resurrection; all which must be because of the immutable decree of God, the council, and covenant of grace, and peace, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and the redemption and salvation of God's elect; these required them, and made them absolutely necessary:

and suffer many things of the elders, chief priests, and Scribes: who would lie in wait for him, send persons to apprehend him, insult, reproach, and despitefully use him; load him with false charges, accusations, and calumnies, and deliver him to the Gentiles, to be mocked, scourged, and crucified: and this is aggravated as what would be done to him, not by the common people, or the dregs of them, but by the principal men of the city, by the sanhedrim, which consisted of the "elders" of the people, their senators; for this is not a name of age, but of office and dignity; and of the "chief priests", the principal of them, those of the greatest note among them, who were chosen members of the grand council; and of "the Scribes", a set of men in high esteem for their learning and wisdom:

and be killed; signifying, that he should not die a natural death, but that his life should be taken from him in a cruel and violent manner, without any regard to law or justice; indeed, that he should be properly murdered; but for the comfort of his disciples, and that they might not be overmuch pressed and cast down, at the hearing of these things, he adds,

and be raised again the third day according to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and the type of Jonas.

Ver. 22. *Then Peter took him*, etc.] The Arabic version reads it, "called to him": the Ethiopic, "answered him"; and the Syriac, "led him"; he took him aside, by himself; and as the Persic version, "privately said to him", or he took him by the hand in a familiar way, to expostulate with him, and dissuade him from thinking and talking of any such things;

and began to rebuke him: reprove and chide him, forgetting himself and his distance; though he did it not out of passion and ill will, but out of tenderness and respect; looking upon what Christ had said, unworthy of him, and as what was scarce probable or possible should ever befall him, who was the Son of the living God, and overlooking his resurrection from the dead, and being ignorant at present of the end of Christ's coming into the world, and redemption and salvation by his sufferings and death:

saying, far be it from thee, Lord, or "Lord, be propitious to thyself", or "spare thyself": the phrase answers to dl sj, often used by the Targumists [f935] and stands in the Syriac version here. The Septuagint use it in a like sense, in (<01423>Genesis 43:23 <10237>2 Samuel 23:17) (<13119>1 Chronicles 11:19). Some think the word "God" is to be understood, and the words to be considered, either as a wish, "God be propitious to thee": or "spare

thee", that no such thing may ever befall thee; or as an affirmation, "God is propitious to thee", he is not angry and displeased with thee, as ever to suffer any such thing to be done to thee: but it may very well be rendered, by "God forbid"; or as we do, "far be it from thee", as a note of aversion, and abhorrence of the thing spoken of:

this shall not be done unto thee: expressing his full assurance of it, and his resolution to do all that in him lay to hinder it: he could not see how such an innocent person could be so used by the chief men of the nation; and that the Messiah, from whom so much happiness was expected, could be treated in such a manner, and especially that the Son of the living God should be killed.

Ver. 23. *But he turned*, etc.] Either to Peter, changing his countenance, and looking sternly upon him, or rather to the disciples; for Mark says, "when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter": Peter had took him aside, and was arguing the case privately with him; but what he said was so offensive to him, that he chose to reprove him publicly before the disciples; and therefore turned himself from him to them, in a way of resentment,

and said unto Peter; in their hearing, and before them all,

get thee behind me, Satan. The Persic version renders it, O infidel! as he was at present, with respect to the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ: some take the word Satan, to be a general name for an adversary, or enemy, as it is used in (<101922>2 Samuel 19:22 <111114>1 Kings 11:14) and think that Christ calls Peter by this name, because he was against him, and opposed him in this point; which sense abates the harshness of this expression. But it seems rather to mean the devil, who took the advantage of Peter's weakness and ignorance; and put him upon dissuading Christ from suffering, for the salvation of his people: though it should be known, that the word Satan, is used by the, Jews [f936], to signify the vitiosity and corruption of nature; of which they say, awh ^jç, this is Satan; so the messenger, or angel Satan, (<471207>2 Corinthians 12:7) may be thought to be the same; (See Gill on "<471207>2 Corinthians 12:7") And then our Lord's sense is, be gone from me, I cannot bear the sight of thee; thou art under the influence of the corruption of thy heart, and nature; thou talkest like a carnal, and not like a spiritual man; and therefore Christ denominates him from his carnality, Satan, one of the names of the vitiosity of nature, whom

a little before he had pronounced blessed; being then under the influence of another spirit, as appeared from the noble confession of his faith in Christ: this change shows the weakness of human nature, the strength of corruption, the inconstancy and fickleness of frames, and the imperfection of grace in the best of saints.

Thou art an offence unto me; or a stumbling block to me, a cause of stumbling and failing; not that he really was, but he endeavoured to be, and was as much as in him lay; and had he given heed unto him, would have been so. It may be observed, that nothing was more offensive to Christ, than to endeavour to divert him from the work his farther called him to; he had agreed to do; what he came into this world for, and his heart was so much set upon; namely, to suffer and die in the room of his people, in order to obtain salvation for them: never were such words uttered by him, and such resentment shown to any, but to the devil himself, when he tempted him to worship him.

For thou savourest not the things that be of God; meaning his sufferings and death, which were the appointment of God, the counsel of his will, the provision of his covenant; what he foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and what he had an hand in, and in which the glory of his grace, power, and justice, was concerned, and were the end of the mission of his Son into this world; which things were out of sight and mind, and were not regarded by the apostle at this time;

but those that be of men: he thought of nothing but worldly grandeur in the kingdom of the Messiah, as a temporal prince and Saviour; and of the continuance of Christ's natural life, for his own carnal and worldly advantage; which showed him to be, at this time, greatly under the influence of corrupt nature. So, though the blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and death of Christ, are savoury things, things to be savoured, minded, and regarded by believers, and accounted precious; and they do mind them, so the word signifies, (ROMRomans 8:5) when being blessed with a spiritual and experimental knowledge, and application of them to themselves, they exercise faith, hope, and love upon Christ, with respect unto them; when they remember them aright in the ordinance of the supper, the love from whence they spring, and the benefits that come hereby; and when they discern the Lord's body in it, a crucified Jesus, and the blessings of grace which come by him, and ascribe their whole salvation to his sufferings and death, and taste the sweetness there is in these things, eating his flesh and

drinking his blood by faith; yet being left to themselves, they do not savour, mind, and regard these things, but carnal things, and human schemes; as when they are dilatory to profess a crucified Christ, and submit to those ordinances of his, which set forth his sufferings and death; or are negligent in their attendance on them, their place being often empty at supper time; or if they do attend, their hearts go after other things.

Ver. 24. *Then said Jesus unto his disciples*, etc.] Knowing that they had all imbibed the same notion of a temporal kingdom, and were in expectation of worldly riches, honour, and pleasure; he took this opportunity of preaching the doctrine of the cross to them, and of letting them know, that they must prepare for persecutions, sufferings, and death; which they must expect to endure, as well as he, if they would be his disciples:

if any man will come after me: that is, be a disciple and follower of him, it being usual for the master to go before, and the disciple to follow after him: now let it be who it will, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, young or old, male or female, that have any inclination and desire, or have took up a resolution in the strength of grace, to be a disciple of Christ,

let him deny himself: let him deny sinful self, ungodliness, and worldly lusts; and part with them, and his former sinful companions, which were as a part of himself: let him deny righteous self, and renounce all his own works of righteousness, in the business of justification and salvation; let him deny himself the pleasures and profits of this world, when in competition with Christ; let him drop and banish all his notions and expectations of an earthly kingdom, and worldly grandeur, and think of nothing but reproach, persecution, and death, for the sake of his Lord and Master: and

take up his cross; cheerfully receive, and patiently bear, every affliction and evil, however shameful and painful it may be, which is appointed for him, and he is called unto; which is his peculiar cross, as every Christian has his own; to which he should quietly submit, and carry, with an entire resignation to the will of God, in imitation of his Lord:

and follow me; in the exercise of grace, as humility, zeal, patience, and self-denial; and in the discharge of every duty, moral, or evangelical; and through sufferings and death, to his kingdom and glory. The allusion is, to Christ's bearing his own cross, and Simeon's carrying it after him, which afterwards came to pass.

Ver. 25. *For whosoever will save his life*, etc.] Whoever is desirous of preserving himself from troubles, reproaches, persecutions, and death; and takes such a method to do it, as by forsaking Christ, denying his Gospel, and dropping his profession of it; and by so doing, curries favour with men, in order to procure to himself worldly emoluments, honour, peace, pleasure, and life,

shall lose it; he will expose himself to the wrath of God, to everlasting punishment, the destruction of soul and body in hell, which is the second death, and will be his portion:

and whosoever will lose his life for my sake: that is, is willing to forego all the pleasures and comforts of life, and be subject to poverty and distress, and to lay down life itself, for the sake of Christ and the Gospel, rather than deny him, and part with truth,

shall find it; in the other world, to great advantage; he shall enjoy an immortal and eternal life, free from all uneasiness and affliction, and full of endless joys and pleasures.

Ver. 26. *For what is a man profited*, etc.] Such persons, though they are only seeking their own profit, will find themselves most sadly mistaken; for of what advantage will it be to such a man,

if he shall gain the whole world; all that is precious and valuable in it; all the power, pleasures, and riches of it; if with Alexander, he had the government of the whole world, and with Solomon, all the delights of it; and was possessed with the wealth of Croesus, and Crassus,

and lose his own soul? If that should be consigned to everlasting torment and misery, be banished the divine presence, and continually feel the gnawings of the worm of conscience that never dies, and the fierceness of the fire of God's wrath, that shall never be quenched, he will have a miserable bargain of it.

Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Or, "for the redemption" of it, as the Ethiopic version renders it: (see Psalm 49:8). If he had the whole world to give, and would give it, it would not be a sufficient ransom for it; the redemption of an immortal soul requires a greater price than gold and silver, or any corruptible thing; nothing short of the blood and life of Christ, is a proper exchange, or ransom price for it. But in the other world there will be no redemption; the loss of a soul is

irrecoverable: a soul once lost and damned, can never be retrieved. This passage is thought to be proverbial; what comes nearest to it, is the following [f937].

> "If a scholar dies, we never find an exchange for him; there are four things which are the ministry or service of the world, ˆypyl j çy wdba µa, if they are lost, they may be changed; and they are these, gold, silver, iron, and brass, (<1880>Job 28:1,2) but if a scholar dies, w t rwmt wnl aybm ym, who will bring us his exchange? or an exchange for him: we lost R. Simon, "who will bring us his exchange?"."

Ver. 27. *For the son of man shall come in the glory of his Father*, etc.] This is a reason, proving the truth of what is before asserted, that men's lives may be lost by saving them, and be found by losing them, whatever paradoxes they may seem to be; and that the loss of a soul is irrecoverable, and no compensation can be made for it; and points out the time, when all this will appear: for nothing is more certain, and to be depended upon, than that Christ, who, though he was then a mean and contemptible man, and attended with the sinless infirmities of human nature, wherefore he calls himself, "the son of man", should come; either a second time to judgment at the last day, in the same glory as his Father, as his Son, equal with him, and clothed, with power and authority from him, and as mediator, to execute judgment: with his angels; the Holy Ones, so the Syriac and Persic versions read, and so some copies; who will add to the glory of his appearance; and will be employed in gathering all nations before him, and in executing his will: or, in his power, to take vengeance on the Jewish nation; on those that crucified him, or did not believe in him, or deserted and apostatised from him. And then he shall reward every man according to his works, or work; either that particular action of putting him to death, or their unbelief in him, or desertion of him; or any, or all of their evil works, they had been guilty of: for though good works are not the cause of salvation, nor for which men will be rewarded; though they may be brought into judgment, as proofs and evidences of true faith, in the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, by which good men will be acquitted and discharged; yet evil works will be the cause of condemnation, and the rule of judgment; and the reason of adjudging to temporal punishment here, and eternal destruction hereafter.

Ver. 28. *Verily I say unto you*. etc.] This is a strong asseveration, Christ puts his “Amen” to it; declaring it to be a certain truth, which may firmly be believed:

there be some standing here; meaning either his disciples, or some of the audience; for it is clear from (<40>Mark 8:34) that the people were called unto him with his disciples, when he said these words:

which shall not taste of death: that is, shall not die; a phrase frequently used by the Jewish doctors: they say [f938],

> “All the children of the world, atwmd am[j ˆym[j, “taste the taste of death”.”

That is, die:

till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom; which is not to be understood of his personal coming in his kingdom in the last day, when he will judge quick and dead; for it cannot be thought, that any then present should live to that time, but all tasted of death long before, as they have done; for the story of John’s being alive, and to live till then, is fabulous, and grounded on a mistake which John himself has rectified at the close of his Gospel: nor of the glorious transfiguration of Christ, the account of which immediately follows; when he was seen by Peter, James, and John, persons now present; for that, at most, was but an emblem and a pledge of his future glory: rather, of the appearance of his kingdom, in greater glory and power, upon his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension to heaven; when the Spirit was poured down in an extraordinary manner, and the Gospel was preached all over the world; was confirmed by signs and wonders, and made effectual to the conversion and salvation of many souls; which many then present lived to see, and were concerned in: though it seems chiefly to have regard to his coming, to show his regal power and authority in the destruction of the Jews; when those his enemies that would not he should reign over them, were ordered to be brought and slain before him; and this the Apostle John, for one, lived to be a witness of.

CHAPTER 17

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 17

Ver. 1. *And after six days*, etc.] That is, so long after Christ's conversation with his disciples at Caesarea Philippi, Peter's confession of him, and the reproof he gave him, upon his intimating that he should suffer and die, and Christ's resentment of it; after he had discoursed about his disciples taking up their cross, and following him; and of men's losing and finding their lives; and after the promise, or prophecy, that he had given out, that some then present should not die, until he came into his kingdom. Mark says the same as here, (<40>Mark 9:2) but (<42>Luke 9:28) says, it was about an eight days after, which may be reconciled in this manner; Matthew and Mark leave out the day in which Christ delivered the above sayings, and that in which he was transfigured, and so reckon but six days; and Luke takes them both into the account, and makes it eight days, so that they all agree; and it appears, in short, to be that day seven night.

Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother: Peter is taken, though he had so lately offended his master; Christ did not bear the offence in mind, but freely forgave him, and still loved him: James was not the brother of our Lord, who was of that name, but the Son of Zebedee; as appears from John being his brother, who was the beloved disciple; these three were all favourite disciples, and were at other times admitted to be with him, when others were not, (<40>Matthew 26:37, <41>Mark 5:37). Such a number was taken, as being proper and sufficient to bear witness of the truth of the following account of Christ's transfiguration;

and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart. Luke says, to pray; as he was wont to do, in such places. This mountain is generally said to be Tabor; but for what reason does not appear. Christ was going to Caesarea Philippi, when he had that discourse with his disciples, which this account is connected with; and though it was a week after, yet we have no intimation of his removing from these parts, with his disciples; only of his leading them up into a mountain: and quickly after this, we hear of him at Capernaum, which was ten miles from Mount Tabor. Dr. Lightfoot [f939] thinks, that this was the mountain, which Caesarea was at the foot of;

where formerly, the first idolatry was set up, one of Jeroboam's calves; and now the eternal Son of God is shown, in the confession of Peter, and in the illustrious demonstration of the Messiah. Since the goodly mountain Lebanon, and which was a very high one, was in those parts which Moses had a sight of before he died; why may it not be that, which he now descended upon, to be one of the witnesses from heaven, of Christ's transfiguration?

Ver. 2. *And was transfigured before them*, etc.] Peter, James, and John, before whom he was metamorphosed, or changed into another form; for not the substance of his body was changed, nor even the shape of it altered, only it received a more glorious form; that whereas before he appeared in the form of a servant, and looked mean and despicable, now he appeared in the form and majesty of God; or there was a divine glory; which from his deity showed itself in a visible manner through his flesh:

and his face did shine as the sun it had still the same appearance of an human face, but had such a dazzling glory upon it, as equalled the sun shining in its full strength:

and his raiment was white as the light: he did not put off his clothes, nor were the nature and substance, and fashion of them changed; but such rays of glory darted through his flesh, and through his clothes, as made them as bright and shining, as the light of the sun at noon day. Mark says, they became "exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them". The Vulgate Latin reads, "as snow", here; and so do the Ethiopic version, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel. Snow has a peculiar whiteness in it, and is therefore made use of, to express the glittering brightness of Christ's raiment; and the fuller is mentioned, who by the Jews [f940] is called sbwk, and means one that whitens wool, or raiment, and such an one is here designed: not that any fuller makes garments of another colour white; for though this may be done, it is not the work of fullers, but dyers: but fullers, whatever colour garments are of, if sullied and spotted, can restore them to their native colour; and if white, can bring them to their former whiteness: now Christ's garments were as white, yea, whiter, than any such men could possibly make garments, that were white at first: what colour Christ's garments were of before, is not certain; now they appeared white, to the greatest degree of whiteness. Dr. Hammond [f941] has a conjecture, that in the phrase "on earth", reference is had to the earth fullers make use of in cleaning, and which is called "fullers' earth"; and that the words are to

be rendered, “as no fuller, by or with earth can white them”; but if this will not bear, the sense is, that there is no fuller, nor ever was, or ever will be upon earth, that can make raiment so white as Christ’s was.

Ver. 3. *And behold there appeared unto them*, etc.] The disciples:

Moses and Elias; Moses the giver of the law, and Elias one of the chief of the prophets: one of them had been dead near a thousand and five hundred years, and the other had been caught up to heaven, about nine hundred years before this. The Jews sometimes speak of these two as together. They say [f942],

> “that the Shekinah never descends below, but whylaw hçm, “Moses and Elias” ascend above.”

Yea, they expect that these two will come together in future time; for so they represent [f943] a God saying to Moses;

> “Moses, as thou hast given thy life for them (the Israelites) in this world, so in time to come (the days of the Messiah) when I shall bring Elias the prophet, tjakˆyab µkynç, “you two shall come together”.”

Now they came. Luke says, they appeared “in glory”: in glorious bodies, in a glory upon their bodies; like, though inferior, to the glorious body of Christ, now transfigured: that they appeared in their own real bodies, no doubt need be made; about the body of Elijah, or Elias, there is no difficulty; since he was carried soul and body to heaven, he died not, but was changed; and has ever since remained in a glorious body, in which he doubtless now appeared: and why this should not be the case of Moses, or why he should appear in another body, and not his own, I see not; for though he died, yet he was buried by the Lord, and no man ever knew the place of his sepulchre; and there was a dispute about his body, between Michael and the devil, all which are uncommon circumstances: so that it might be, that his body was, quickly after his death, raised and restored to him; or at this time, as a pledge of the resurrection of the dead, as Christ’s transfiguration was of his glory. The Jews have a notion that Moses is not dead, but is ascended, and stands and ministers to God, in the highest heavens [f944]: the appearance of these two with Christ, was to show, that Christ is the end of the law and prophets; that there is an entire agreement between him and them, and that they have their full accomplishment in him;

and also shows, that he was neither Elias, nor any of the prophets, as some took him to be; since he was distinct from them, and the chief and more glorious than any of them. If it should be asked; how came the disciples to know these two to be Moses and Elias, since they never saw them before, nor could have any statues or pictures of them, these being not allowed among the Jews; nor do the accounts of them in Scripture seem to be sufficient to direct them to such a thought; especially, since by their glorification, they must be greatly altered: it may be replied, they knew them, either by immediate divine revelation, or by the discourse that passed between them and Christ; for it follows,

talking with him. The Jews often speak of the appearance of Elias to their doctors, and of his conversing with them, and teaching them. Whether this is done with design to lessen the glory of this appearance, I will not say; however, they cannot reasonably object to the probability of this account, since they make it to be so frequent among themselves; though they look upon it as an high favour, and that such are holy good men, that are indulged with it, take an instance or two: thus they say [f945] of a certain person,

> "Lo! the pious man, whom Elias used hydhb y[tçm, "to converse with"."

And elsewhere it is said [f946],

> "R. Phineas and R. Mari, the sons of R. Chasda, were godly men, µhm[rbdm whyla, "and Elias was talking with them", and they were priests."

What Moses and Elias were talking with our Lord about, is expressed by Luke, (see Gill on "Luke 9:31").

Ver. 4. *Then answered Peter and said unto Jesus*, etc.] Which was, as Luke informs us, after he, and James, and John, awoke out of sleep; for it being night when Christ was transfigured, and they weary, were overpressed, and fell asleep on the mount, as they afterwards did in the garden with him: but when they were awaked, either by the talk of the men with Christ, or by the rays of brightness and glory, which darted from them, and especially from Christ, to their great surprise; they saw the glory that was upon him, and observed the two men that were with him, who appeared also in glorious forms; whom either by revelation, or the sequel

of their discourse, they knew to be Moses and Elias: and just as these were taking their leave of Christ, Peter, charmed with such objects, and with such delightful company, and pleasant conversation, he had the happiness of hearing part of, addresses himself to Christ and says,

Lord, it is good for us to be here; in this mountain, with thyself and such company; better than to be below among the throng and multitude, where nothing but misery and distress are to be seen, and noise and tumult heard; or it is better to be here, than to go to Jerusalem, and there suffer and die; the horror of which, is thought by some, still to abide on Peter's mind.

If thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles: tents, or booths, such as were made, at the feast of tabernacles, of boughs and branches of trees, to keep off heat, cold, and rains:

one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias; Luke adds, "not knowing what he said"; and Mark, "for he wist not what to say": the one representing him, as with the rapture and surprise, not himself; and the other, under the awe and dread of such majesty, as at the utmost loss what to say, agreeably to such a situation of things: not but that he knew what words he did deliver, and with what view; but he spake as a mistaken man, being ignorant of the design of this appearance; which was, not that this glory should continue, only that he should be an emblem and pledge of what was future; and besides, he was wrong in putting these two men upon an equal foot with Christ, each of them being to have a separate tabernacle as he; and he appeared to be quite out of the way, in proposing earthly tabernacles for glorified persons to dwell in, who had an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens: moreover, as to the mystical sense, Moses and Elias, the law and the prophets, were not to be considered as in distinct apartments, and separate from Christ, but as agreeing with him, and fulfilled and swallowed up in him; who only, according to the voice that followed, was to be heard and attended to, and not they, as distinct from him.

Ver. 5. *While he yet spake*, etc.] That is, while Peter was proposing the above to Christ, before an answer could be given by him, and which was unworthy of one, another scene of things presents, and a full answer is returned him by a voice from the Father; directing him and his fellow disciples, to attend to Jesus only, and not to Moses and Elias;

and behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; that is, Jesus, Moses, and Elias; the two last of which were seen no more; and which cloud covered them, as the cloud of glory covered the Israelites in the wilderness: and which, as it ceased at the death of Moses, the first prophet; one like unto it appeared at the declaration of Christ, as the greater prophet, spoken of, and typified by Moses. The disciples at its first appearance were not under it, and overshadowed by it; for Luke adds, “and they feared as they entered into the cloud”; there was such a solemnity and glory in it, as struck their minds with awe and fear, as they gradually came into it, and under it. This cloud, which is said to be a “bright” one, was a symbol of the divine presence, and a token of the love, grace, and favour of God; and expressive of the brightness and clearness of the Gospel dispensation, in distinction from the obscurity of the legal one, signified by the thick, dark, and black cloud, God descended in on Mount Sinai, when he gave the law;

and behold, a voice out of the cloud. The word “behold”, is prefixed both to the cloud and to the voice out of it, which were both wonderful and surprising; and which voice came from heaven, and from the excellent glory, from God the Father in heaven: as says Peter, who was now present, (<61017>2 Peter 1:17,18). Which said,

this is my beloved Son; not a servant, as Moses, Elias, and the rest of the prophets were: though as Mediator, and as considered in his office capacity, he was a servant; but in this clause, he is considered in his personal character and relation to the Father, as a divine person, who was the Son of God: not by creation, as angels and men are the sons of God; nor by adoption, as saints are; or on account of his miraculous incarnation, and resurrection from the dead; whereby indeed, he was manifested and declared to be the Son of God, which he was before; but on account of his natural relation to God, as his Father; he being the eternal, essential, and only begotten Son of God, in a way of filiation no creature is, and which, is ineffable by us. And as such he is dearly beloved of God his Father, being his image and the brightness of his glory; of the same nature and perfections with him, and equal to him. So he ever was, and will be, and that even in the meanest form and lowest condition, in which he has appeared: he was his beloved Son, when he was made flesh and dwelt among men, while submitting to ordinances, as to baptism, and obeying his Father’s will, when covered with reproach, and full of sorrows; when he hung upon the cross, and laid down his life for his people; which he showed, by concealing nothing from him; by putting all things into his

hands, and by appointing him the head of the church, the Saviour of the body, and the judge of quick and dead.

In whom I am well pleased: Mark and Luke have not this clause, but Peter, who was present, and heard the words spoken, mentions it, (<61017>2 Peter 1:17) which confirms Matthew's relation. This regards, not so much the well pleasedness of God with the person of Christ, which is expressed in the former clause; but signifies that he was in him, as Mediator, well pleased with all his people; he was well pleased with his righteousness he was working out, whereby the law was magnified, and made honourable; and with the sacrifice he was about to offer up, which would be of a sweet smelling savour to him, his justice being entirely satisfied with it; and with all he did and suffered in human nature; which were things that always pleased the Father, being according to his will, his counsel and covenant: and so he graciously accepted of, and was infinitely well pleased with all his elect, as considered in him, and represented by him, on account of his righteousness, sacrifice, and satisfaction:

hear ye him; as the former clause chiefly respects that part of his mediatorial office, the priestly, this regards his prophetic office principally, and also his kingly office; so that in this divine testimony, first his sonship is bore witness to, and then his several offices; which his sonship is the foundation of, and qualifies him to bear and execute. This clause has the very words which Moses delivered, when he spoke of the Messiah, the great prophet like unto himself, that should be raised up among the Jews; saying, "unto him ye shall hearken", (<051815>Deuteronomy 18:15). So that these words, "hear ye him", most clearly point to Christ, as being this prophet, who is to be heard, and he only; not Moses, but he, the prophet Moses prophesied of; nor Elias, or any of the other prophets, but one greater than them all: hear and believe his prophecies, concerning his sufferings, death, and resurrection, lately delivered by him; listen to, and embrace his doctrines, as coming from God, and as having a divine impress upon them, and being confirmed by miraculous works; submit to his ordinances, and obey his commands, as king of saints; hear him always, and in all things.

Ver. 6. *And when the disciples heard it*, etc.] The voice out of the cloud, and which they apprehended came from God, and was uttered with so much majesty:

they fell on their face: not so much out of reverence, or for the sake of adoration, but as persons struck with astonishment and fear, and were as half dead; and so fell with their faces fiat to the ground, not being able to stand before God, to behold his majesty, and hear his voice:

and were sore afraid: they were filled with fear, when, awaking out of their sleep, they saw the surprising glory of Christ, and of the two men that were with him, insomuch that they knew not what to think, or say; and so they were when they entered into the cloud, and still more upon hearing the voice of God himself, even though it was a voice of love, grace, and mercy; (see De 5:24-26). But yet they were not struck with so much amazement and surprise, as not to know what was said; for they distinctly heard the words, rightly understood, and faithfully related them; from whom the evangelists had them, and which Peter perfectly remembered, and recorded many years after.

Ver. 7. *And Jesus came and touched them*, etc.] The disciples were at some little distance from Christ, but he observing the fear and surprise they were in, came to their relief and assistance; which he did not disdain to give, notwithstanding the glory he was covered with; but acts the part of a mediator between God and them, and lays hold on them to raise them up, whom the majesty of God's voice had cast down: the Persic version renders it, "he came and brought them to themselves"; who were just fainting and swooning away, at the awfulness of the voice:

and said, arise, and be not afraid: it is not the voice of an angry God, but of God well pleased with me, and in me with you; it is the voice of my God, and your God, of my Father, and your Father; arise, stand on your feet, take heart, and be of good courage, no hurt will come to you.

Ver. 8. *And when they had lift up their eyes*, etc.] And "looked round about", as Mark says, to see whether the same objects still continued, as Moses and Elias; and the bright cloud:

they saw no man; neither Moses nor Elias, who were both gone: signifying, that though the law and the prophets were till this time, they were now finished and completed, and the Mosaic economy was to be no more; as these men appeared no more after, nor will they till the second coming of Christ. And Mark has it, "they saw no man any more"; that is, these men any more, neither then, nor afterwards, "save Jesus only". Mark adds, "with themselves"; in the same form as before his transfiguration. Christ is

the only Mediator, Saviour, and Redeemer; the only Prophet, Priest, and King; and who only is to be, and can be beheld as such; and who does, and will abide with his people; and helps, comforts, and saves them, when none else can. Luke observes, that “when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone”; which was so ordered, that it might be a clear case, that this voice was only concerning Christ, and not either Moses or Elias.

Ver. 9. *And as they came down from the mountain*, etc.] Where all these things had been transacted,

Jesus charged them, saying, tell the vision to no man: by the “vision” is meant, as it is explained in Mark, “what things they had seen”; as Moses and Elias, and the bright cloud that overshadowed them, and Christ transfigured before them, in a surprising, glorious manner. These Christ strictly ordered Peter, James, and John, to speak of to no man whatever; no, not their fellow disciples; who either would be apt to disbelieve them, on account of the greatness of them, as Thomas did the resurrection of Christ afterwards; or lest they should be troubled and displeased, that they were not admitted to the same sight; and especially not to the multitude, or to any other person,

until the son of man be risen again from the dead; meaning himself and his resurrection, when such proof would be given of his mission, authority, and glory, which would make this account more easy to be believed: besides, he had told the Jews, that no sign, that is, from heaven, as this voice was, should be given, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas; referring to his resurrection, which would be a sure testimony of the truth of his Messiahship. This order of Christ was strictly observed by the disciples; for Luke, says, “they kept it close”; to themselves, in their own breasts; it lay concealed between these three; “and told no man in those days, any of those things which they had seen”: and Mark says, “they kept that saying within themselves”; only as he adds, they were “questioning one with another, what the rising from the dead should mean”: for they were not yet reconciled to the Messiah’s dying, which was contrary to their expectation of a temporal kingdom; and therefore could not tell what to make of his rising again, whether this had not some secret, mystical meaning; for of his resurrection from the dead, in a literal sense, they had no notion; though it was foretold in the writings of the Old Testament, and had been so lately affirmed by Christ himself.

Ver. 10. *And his disciples asked him, saying*, etc.] That is, these three, Peter, James, and John, before they came to the rest; whilst they were going down the mountain, or from it, to the place where the others were; for the rest knew nothing of the appearance of Elias, and so cannot be thought to join in a question concerning him.

Why then say the Scribes, that Elias must first come? That is, come before the Messiah comes; for certain it is, that this was the sense of the Scribes, as it was of the ancient Jews, and is still the opinion of the modern ones. They say [f947],

> "that in the second year of Ahaziah, Elias was hid; nor will he appear, till the Messiah comes; then he will appear, and will be hid a second time; and then will not appear, till Gog and Magog come."

And they expressly affirm [f948], that

> "before the coming of the son of David, rçbl whyla aby, "Elias will come to bring the good news" of it."

And this, they say [f949], will be one day before the coming of the Messiah. And Maimonides [f950] observes,

> "that there are of their wise men that say, whyla aby jyçmh tayb µdwqç, "that before the coming of the Messiah, Elias shall come"."

So Trypho the Jew, the same with R. Tarphon, so often mentioned in Talmudic writings, disputing with Justin Martyr, tells him [f951], that the Messiah,

> "shall not know himself, nor have any power, µεχρι αν ελψων Ηλιας, "till Elias comes", and anoints him, and makes him known to all."

And hence the Targumist [f952] often speaks of Messiah and Elias as together, and of things done by them; and in their prayers, petitions are put for them, as to come together [f953]: this is founded upon a mistaken sense of (<3005>Malachi 4:5) and which is the general sense of their commentators [f954]. Now the Scribes made use of this popular sense, to disprove Jesus being the Messiah: they argued, that if he was the Messiah, Elias would be come; but whereas he was not come, therefore he could not be the Messiah. The

disciples having just now seen Elias, are put in mind of this tenet of the Scribes, and of their use of it; and inquire of Christ, not so much about the truth of it, and the reason of their imbibing it, as why they were suffered to make use of it, to his disadvantage; and especially why they, the disciples, should be forbid publishing what they had seen; whereas, were they allowed to divulge this vision, and bear their testimony to this truth, that Elias had appeared, and they had seen him, it might be a means of stopping the mouths of these Scribes; and of convicting men of the truth of the Messiahship of Jesus, upon their own principles, and of confirming them that believed it: or else the sense is, whereas they had seen Elias, and he was gone again, without making any public appearance in the nation, their question is, how came the Scribes to say, that he should come first? and if there was any truth in this, how came it to pass, that he did not come sooner, even before Christ came in the flesh; and inasmuch as he did now appear, why he did not appear more publicly, as the person that was to come, at least, before the setting up of the kingdom and glory of the Messiah; which they might hope were at hand, and that Elias was come to usher it in: but that he did not appear publicly, and they were not allowed to speak of it, they wanted to know Christ's sense of these things; and took this opportunity as they came from the mountain, to converse with him about it.

Ver. 11. *And Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc.] By way of concession,

Elias truly shall first come: this is indeed a tenet of the Scribes, and it is also certain, that there is a prophecy in (Malachi 4:5) of the coming of Elias; of one that goes under that name, not of Elias the Tishbite, in person, but of one that was to come in his power and spirit,

and restore all things. The Syriac and Persic versions render it, "shall perfect, or complete all things", that are prophesied of him; and shall put a period to the law and the prophets, and close the Mosaic economy, and direct persons to Christ; in whom are the perfection of the law, and the fulfilling of the prophets. The Arabic version reads it, "he shall teach you all things"; the whole of the Gospel being to be reduced to these two heads, repentance towards God, and faith in Christ; both which were taught by the true Elias: but the truest sense of the phrase is to be learned out of (Malachi 4:6). "He shall restore, byçh, he shall turn all things, the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their

fathers”; and as this is explained in (<4017>Luke 1:17) “he shall turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and make ready a people prepared for the Lord”: which is other, and better sort of work, than what the Jews assign to their Elias, whom they expect, and whom they make to be a restorer of all things, in their way: they often speak of his purifying [f955] of things, or pronouncing things pure, that were defiled; and among others, that he will purify bastards, and µbyçy, “restore them” to the congregation of the Lord [f956]. Though Maimonides [f957] denies, that when he comes he will pronounce defiled that which is pure, or pronounce pure, that which is defiled. They pretend [f958], that he is now employed, and very busy, in writing everything that is done in every age; so that when he comes, he will be able to give an account of everything: and nothing is more common with them, than to say concerning any matter, that there is any doubt or difficulty about it [f959], whyla abyç d[jnwm ahy, “let it be left till Elias comes”.

Ver. 12. *But I say unto you*, etc.] A way of speaking used by Christ, when he opposes and contradicts any of the tenets of the Scribes and Pharisees; (see <4005>Matthew 5:22,28,32,34,39,44) “that Elias is come already”; the person that was signified by, and prophesied of, under the name of Elias: for Christ refers not to the late appearance of Elias on the mount, but to the coming of a certain person some time ago; who came in the power and spirit of Elias, and was the forerunner and harbinger of him, the Messiah; as was said of him he should, “and they knew him not”; that is, the Scribes and Pharisees, who believed that Elias would come before the Messiah; and yet when he who was designed by him was come, they knew him not, they did not know him to be the Elias; they knew him under the name of John the Baptist, and seemed pleased with his ministry for a while, but afterwards rejected his doctrine and baptism, which is referred to in the next clause:

but have done unto him whatsoever they listed; they did not believe what he said, nor repent upon his preaching to them; they rejected the counsel of God he declared, not being baptized of him; they treated him with indignity and contempt, charging him with having a devil, and were well pleased when Herod put him to death; some of whom were doubtless among those that sat at meat with him; for whose sake, as well as for his oath’s sake, he ordered the execrable murder to be committed:

likewise also shall the son of man suffer of them. Christ takes this opportunity to confirm what he had said in the preceding chapter, concerning his sufferings and death; and his meaning is, that as sure as John the Baptist had suffered indignities, and death itself, so sure should the son of man suffer like things; if not from the same individual persons, yet from that generation of men.

Ver. 13. *Then the disciples understood*, etc.] By his saying that Elias was come, and by the account he gave of his ill usage, it was clear to them,

that he spake unto them of John the Baptist; and that he was the Elias that was to come, and was come: so that this observation, that according to prophecy Elias was to come before the Messiah, was no objection to Jesus being the Messiah; but on the contrary, since he that was intended by Elias was come, and had done his work and office, it was a confirmation of the truth of his Messiahship.

Ver. 14. *And when they were come to the multitude*, etc.] Which was on the next day, as in (Luke 9:37) when Christ and his three disciples, Peter, James, and John, came down from the mount to the other nine, with whom the multitude of the people were; during their stay on the mountain,

there came to him a certain man; who was, as Mark says, “one of the multitude”; and as Luke, “a man of the company”: who had applied to the nine disciples on the behalf of his son, but without success, and was waiting till Christ came from the mount; who when he saw him, made up to him, and

kneeling down to him in the manner of a supplicant, doing him homage and worship; hereby showing his great esteem of him, and veneration for him,

and saying the following words:

Ver. 15. *Lord, have mercy on my son*, etc.] He addressed him with great marks of honour and respect, not only by gesture, but by words; he craves mercy, pity, and compassion; for the case he had to present, was a miserable one; and his earnestness and importunity he hoped might be excused, since it was for a child of his own. Luke adds “for he is mine only child”; and therefore his affection for him must be thought to be very strong, and he greatly concerned for its grievous affliction, and earnestly desirous of its health and life.

For he is lunatic: not a mad man, but troubled with the epileptic disease; upon which, as on madness or lunacy, the changes and full of the moon have an influence: hence the next clause,

and sore vexed, is rendered in the Arabic version, “and sore vexed at the beginning of full moons”; at which times, he had very grievous and frequent fits of his disorder:

for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water: which shows it to be the “epilepsy”, or “falling sickness”, he was afflicted with; which, whenever it seized him, whether by the fireside, or by the side of a river or brook, or any place of water, or in any other dangerous situation, he fell into it, not being able to help himself, or avoid any danger to which he was exposed. A larger account of this child’s disorder, and of the circumstances of his cure, are related by (<4017>Mark 9:17,18) where this case will be more fully considered. (See Gill on “<4017>Mark 9:17”). (See Gill on “<4018>Mark 9:18”).

Ver. 16. *And I brought him to thy disciples*, etc.] To the nine, whilst Christ was with the other three upon the mountain: no doubt but his design was to bring him to Christ first; but he being absent, he applied to his disciples, and, desired them to make use of their power to heal him; and which they attempted, but without success:

and they could not cure him. This he said, partly to show the malignity and stubbornness of the disease, and partly to accuse the disciples of weakness; when he himself was as much in fault as they, as the following words show. Here the Jew [f960] insults, and charges with contradiction, that in one place it should be said, that Jesus gave his disciples power to cast out unclean spirits, and here all the disciples could not cast a spirit out of one little child: but without any reason; let it be observed, that “all” the disciples were not present, the three principal ones were with Christ; besides, this was not owing to want of power in them, which Christ had conferred on them, and which they often made use of with success: but partly to their own unbelief, and partly to the unbelief of the father of this child, and others with him, as appears from what follows: and it is clear from Mark, that when he came to Christ, he had but little faith; he says to him, “if thou canst do anything, help us”; and after Christ had talked with him about his faith, he could only say, “Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief”.

Ver. 17. *Then Jesus answered and said*, etc.] Not to the disciples, but to the father of the child; (see <4019>Mark 9:19) and those that were with him, and the Scribes that were present, disputing with the disciples, upbraiding them with their weakness, and triumphing over them: “O faithless and perverse generation”; a way of speaking, which is never used of the disciples, and indeed could not be properly said of them; for though they often appeared to be men of little faith, yet not faithless; nor were they so rebellious, stubborn, and perverse, as here represented, though there was a great deal of perverseness in them: but the characters better suit the body of the Jewish nation, who, on account of the incredulity of this man, and those that were present, being of the same temper with them, are exclaimed against in words, which were long ago spoken of their ancestors, (<5205>Deuteronomy 32:5) and from whence they seem to be taken.

How long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Upbraiding them with the length of time he had been with them, in which so many wonderful works had been done among them, and yet they remained unbelieving and incorrigible; and intimating, that his patience and longsuffering would not always continue; and that in a short time, he should be gone from them, and they should no longer enjoy the benefit of his ministry and miracles, but wrath should come upon them to the uttermost: but however, whilst he was with them, notwithstanding all their unbelief and obstinacy, he should go on to do good; and therefore says,

bring him hither to me, meaning the lunatic child. These words also are directed, not unto the disciples, but to the father of the child; for so it is said in (<4041>Luke 9:41) “bring thy son hither”; and so the Syriac renders it here whyta, “bring thou him”; though, as expressed in the plural number, may very well be thought to intend him, and his friends.

Ver. 18. *And Jesus rebuked the devil*, etc.] The words may indeed be rendered, “and Jesus rebuked him, and the devil departed out of him”; so the Vulgate Latin, and the Oriental versions; but the sense our version gives is certainly right; for it was not the father of the child Christ rebuked for his unbelief; this he had done already; nor the lunatic himself, as some have thought, either for his unbelief, or because he was possessed by the devil, for some sins of his own; which is not likely, since he was so from a child, and perhaps not now in his right mind, and capable of any rebuke: besides, the Evangelists Mark, and Luke expressly say, that he “rebuked the foul”, or “unclean spirit”: for though it was a natural disease which

attended this child, yet he was afflicted with it in a preternatural way, by the means of Satan; who, by divine permission; had a power of inflicting bodily diseases: and that this disease was effected by him, is clear from the manner of curing, by the dispossession of him; for when

he departed out of him; at the command of Christ, whose power he could not withstand, but was obliged, whether he would or not, to obey;

the child was cured from that very hour; directly, immediately, and continued well, and in good health. Hence the word rendered lunatic, in (<40 17 15>Matthew 17:15) is in several Oriental versions, translated in the sense of "demoniac", or one possessed with a devil. The Arabic version renders it, "he is with a demon": the Persic thus, "on whom a demon hath power"; and the Ethiopic after this manner, "an evil demon takes hold on him". And it is usual with the Jews, to ascribe diseases to evil spirits; and perhaps this uncommon dispensation in the times of Christ, may give rise to such a notion; particularly, they ascribe this very same disease of the "epileptic", or "falling sickness", to the same cause, which they call [f961] "Kordicus", or "Cardiacus", the "Cardiac" passion, which one of their commentators [f962] explains thus.

> "It is a disease which proceeds from the repletion of the vessels of the brain, whereby the understanding is confounded; wherefore it is one of the sorts lpwnh ylwj, "of the falling sickness"."

Says another [f963] of them,

> "It is hdyç µç, "the name of a demon", that rules over such, that drink much wine out of the vat."

To which others agree, saying [f964], that one attended with this disorder, is one,

> "whose understanding is confounded, dç tmjm, "by means of a demon", who rules over such, that drink new wine; and lo! the spirit's name is "Kardiacus"."

From whence it is clear, that with them, the disease and the demon go by the same name; and that the former is from the latter.

Ver. 19. *Then came the disciples to Jesus apart*, etc.] Or "secretly", as the Vulgate Latin, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read; that is, privately, and

when alone; and as Mark says, “when he was come into the house”; and was by himself, then came the nine disciples to him, to converse with him about this matter,

and said unto him, why could not we cast him out? That is, the devil, and so cure the lunatic; the Syriac and Persic versions render it, “why could not we heal him?” The lunatic; which only could be done by casting out the demon: they were concerned, fearing they had lost the power which Christ had bestowed on them, and wanted to know what they had done, which had deprived them of it; and what should be the cause of their late unsuccessful attempt, when they had so frequently triumphed over the unclean spirits, that were subject to them. Though they might have learned from the answer Christ gave to the father of the lunatic, and the general character of the Jewish nations in that answer, the true reason of their own inability; but this they took no notice of, imagining it belonged entirely to others, and not to them.

Ver. 20. *And Jesus said unto them, because of your unbelief*, etc.] The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, “because of your little faith”, or “the smallness of your faith”; and so does one Greek manuscript; and which is what is doubtless meant by their unbelief; for they were not altogether destitute of faith, but their faith was very low, and their unbelief very great. Christ says, not because of the unbelief of the parent of the child, and those that were with him, though that also was a reason; but because of their unbelief, being willing to convince them of their unbelief, as he had done the father of the child, who had confessed it, and desired it might be removed from him: but lest they should think they had lost their power of doing miracles, Christ adds;

for verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed; which was a very small seed, the least of all seeds, and is used very often proverbially by the Jews, to signify anything of a small quantity or weight [f965], and is sometimes used of faith, as here; so speaking of the congregation of Edom, meaning the Christians, they [f966] say,

> “they have not ldrj lç ˆy[rg wmk hnwma, “faith as a grain of mustard seed”.”

And it is used in like sense in other eastern nations; and by Mahomet in his Alcoran [f967], who says,

> "We will appoint just balances in the day of resurrection, neither shall any soul be injured at all, although the merit or guilt of an action be of the weight of "a grain of mustard seed"."

So that it has no reference to the quality of mustard seed, being hot and acrimonious; which has led some interpreters wrong, to compare faith unto it, for its liveliness and fervency: when our Lord only means, that if his apostles had ever so small a degree of faith in exercise, which might be compared for its smallness to this least of seeds, such an effect as he after mentions would follow; and which therefore is to be understood, not of an historical faith, by which men assent to all that is in the Bible as true; nor of a special, spiritual faith, by which souls believe in Christ, as their Saviour and Redeemer; for of neither of these can the following things in common be said; but of a faith of miracles, peculiar to certain persons in those early times, for certain reasons; which such as had but ever so small a degree of, as the apostles here spoken to might say, as Christ observes to them,

ye shall say to this mountain; pointing perhaps to that he was just come down from, which might be in sight of the house where he was,

remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove: meaning, not that it would be ordinarily or ever done in a literal sense by the apostles, that they should remove mountains; but that they should be able to do things equally difficult, and as seemingly impossible, if they had but faith, when the glory of God, and the good of men, required it. So that it does not follow, because the apostles did not do it in a literal sense, therefore they could not, as the Jew insultingly says [f968]; since it was meant that they should, and besides, have done, things equally as great as this, and which is the sense of the words. So the apostle expresses the faith of miracles, by "removing mountains", (<460202>1 Corinthians 13:2) i.e. by doing things which are difficult, seem impossible to be done: wherefore Christ adds,

and nothing shall be impossible to you; you shall not only be able to perform such a wonderful action as this, were it necessary, but any, and everything else, that will make for the glory of God, the enlargement of my kingdom and interest, the confirmation of truth, and the good of mankind.

Ver. 21. *Howbeit, this kind goeth not out*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin renders it, "is not cast out"; and so do the Arabic version, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel; and which confirm the more commonly received sense of these words, that they are to be understood of that kind of devils, one of which

was cast out of the lunatic, and was of the worst sort, of a fierce and obstinate kind; and having had long possession, was not easily ejected: and that there is a difference in devils, some are worse and more wicked than others, is clear from (<4012 45>Matthew 12:45) and not of that kind of miracles, or kind of faith to the working of such miracles. Moreover, the above versions, as they fitly express the word εκπορευται, here used; (see <4109 17>Mark 9:17) compared with (<4015 17>Matthew 15:17). So they pertinently set forth the dispossession of devils, who do not go out voluntarily, but by force; and this sort could not be ejected,

but by fasting and prayer: that is, in the exercise of a miraculous faith, expressed in solemn prayer to God, joined with fasting. It seems that Christ not only suggests, that faith was greatly wanting in his disciples; for which reason they could not cast out the devil, and heal the lunatic; but they had been wanting in prayer to God, to assist them in the exercise of their miraculous gifts; and that whilst Christ, and the other three disciples were on the mount, they had been feasting and indulging themselves with the people, and so were in a very undue disposition of mind, for such extraordinary service, for which our Lord tacitly rebukes them. This agrees with the notions of the Jews, who think that, by fasting, a divine soul [f969] hçqwbm ta gyçt, "may obtain that which is sought for"; and that among other things, for which a private person may afflict himself with fasting, this is one, h[r jwr ynpm, "because of an evil spirit" [f970]; which they think may be got rid of this way.

Ver. 22. *And while they abode in Galilee*, etc.] Munster's Hebrew Gospel reads it wklhçkw, "and while they were walking in Galilee", for they passed through it, when they departed from hence; see (<4109 30>Mark 9:30) and as they were going to Capernaum, and so onward, to the coasts of Judea, in order to be at Jerusalem at the feast of the passover; where, and when, Christ was to suffer: and observing that the time of his death drew nigh, he inculcates it again to his disciples a third time, that they might be prepared for it, and not be discouraged and terrified by it;

Jesus said unto them, the son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: some copies read, "sinful men"; and so the angels report the words, in (<4224 07>Luke 24:7) by whom may be meant the Gentiles, who, by the Jews, were reckoned very wicked men, and called sinners of the Gentiles. Now Christ intimates, that the son of man, meaning himself, should be betrayed by the Jews, into the hands of the Gentiles; than which, with the Jews,

nothing was reckoned a fouler action, or a viler crime; their canons run thus [f971]:

> “It is forbidden to betray an Israelite into the hands of the Gentiles, whether in his body or in his substance; and though he may be a wicked man, and a ringleader in sin, and though he may have oppressed and afflicted him; and everyone that betrays an Israelite into the hands of the Gentiles, whether in his body, or in his substance, has no part in the world to come.”

They forgot this rule, when they delivered Christ to Pontius Pilate. They go on to observe, that

> “it is lawful to kill a betrayer in any place, even at this time, in which they do not judge capital crimes; and it is lawful to kill him before he betrays; but when he says, lo! I am about to betray such an one in his body, or in his substance, though his substance is small, he exposes himself to death; and they admonish him and say to him, do not betray: if he is obstinate, and says I will betray him, it is commanded to kill him; and he that is first to kill him, is a worthy man,”

Ver. 23. *And they shall kill him*, etc.] Put him to death, with the death of the cross; for the angels in rehearsing these words, affirm, that Christ told his disciples at this time, and in this place, whilst they were in Galilee, that he should be crucified, (⁴²⁴⁰⁷Luke 24:7).

And the third day he shall be raised again: this he said for their comfort; and it is observable, that when Christ speaks of his rising again, he makes mention of the exact time, the third day, on which he should rise, according to the types and prophecies of the Old Testament:

and they were exceeding sorry: that he should be betrayed into the hands of the Gentiles, fearing that another nation would come, and take away, and possess the worldly kingdom and grandeur they were dreaming of; and that he should die at all; and much more that he should die such a cruel and ignominious death, as that of the cross. They seem to have overlooked, and to have taken no notice of his rising again from the dead; which might have administered comfort to them, and have relieved them under their melancholy apprehensions of things; but this they understood not, nor indeed truly any part of what he had said; so Mark and Luke intimate: but then it may be said, how came they to be so very sorrowful, if they did not

know what was said? To which may be replied, that this might be the reason of their sorrow, because they did not understand what he said, and they were afraid to ask; they could not tell how to reconcile the betraying of him into the hands of men, and his sufferings and death, with their notions, that the Messiah should abide for ever, and should set up a temporal kingdom, in great splendour and magnificence; and what he meant by rising again from the dead, they could not devise; they could not tell whether all this was to be understood in a literal, or mystical sense.

Ver. 24. *And when they were come to Capernaum*, etc.] Called Christ's own city, (<40901>Matthew 9:1) where he dwelt some time (<40413>Matthew 4:13) and Peter had an house, (<40814>Matthew 8:14) "they that received tribute money", or the "didrachms"; in Talmudic language, it would be µylqçh ^ybwg [f972], "they that collect the shekels": for not the publicans, or Roman tax gatherers are meant; nor is this to be understood of any such tribute: there was a tribute that was paid to Caesar, by the Jews; (see <402217>Matthew 22:17) but that is expressed by another word, and was paid in other money, in Roman money, which bore Caesar's image and superscription; and was exacted of them, whether they would or not: but this designs the collection of the half shekel, paid yearly for the service of the temple: the original of this custom, was an order of the Lord to Moses, upon numbering the people; that everyone that was twenty years of age and upwards, should give half a shekel as atonement money, or as a ransom for his soul; which was to be disposed of for the service of the tabernacle, (<023012>Exodus 30:12-16). This does not appear to have been designed for a perpetual law, or to be paid yearly; nor even whenever the number of the people was taken, but only for that present time: in the time of Joash king of Judah, a collection was set on foot for the repair of the temple; and the collection of Moses in the wilderness, was urged as an argument, and by way of example; nor is any mention made of the half shekel, nor was any sum of money fixed they should pay; but, according to the account, it was entirely free and voluntary. In the time of Nehemiah, there was a yearly charge of the "third" part of a "shekel", for the service of the temple; but this was not done by virtue of a divine order, or any law of Moses, with which it did not agree; but by an ordinance the Jews then made for themselves, as their necessity required. Aben Ezra [f973] indeed says, that this was an addition to the half shekel. Now in process of time, from these instances and examples, it became a fixed thing, that every year an half shekel should be paid by every Israelite, excepting women, children, and servants, towards defraying

the necessary charges of the temple service, and this obtained in Christ's time. There is a whole tract in the Jewish Misna, called Shekalim; in which an account is given of the persons who are obliged to pay this money, the time and manner of collecting it, and for what uses it is put: and so it continued till the times of Titus Vespasian, who, as Josephus says [f974], laid a tax of two drachms, the same with the half shekel, upon the Jews; and ordered it to be brought yearly into the capitol at Rome, as it used to have been paid into the temple at Jerusalem. We need not wonder that we hear of receivers of the half shekel at Capernaum; since once a year, on the "fifteenth" of the month Adar, tables were placed, and collectors sat in every city in Judea, as they did on the "twenty fifth" of the same month, in the sanctuary [f975]. The value of the half shekel, was about "fifteen pence" of our money. The Syriac version renders the word here used, "two zuzim of head money": now a "zuz" with the Jews, answered to a Roman penny, four of which made a "shekel" [f976]; so that two of them were the value of an half "shekel"; it is further to be observed, that shekels in Judea, were double the value of those in Galilee, where Christ now was: five "shekels" in Judea, went for ten in Galilee, and so ten for twenty [f977]. The receivers of this money

came to Peter; not caring to go to Christ himself; but observing Peter a forward and active man among his disciples, they applied to him; or rather, because he had an house in this place, at which Christ might be:

and said, doth not your master pay tribute? or the "didrachms", the half "shekel" money. Had this been the Roman tribute, the reason of such a question might have been either to have ensnared him, and to have known whether he was of the same mind with Judas, of Galilee, that refused to pay tribute to Caesar; or because they could not tell whether he was reckoned as an inhabitant, or citizen of that city; for, according to the Jewish canons [f978], a man must be twelve months in a place, before he is liable to tribute and taxes; or because they might suspect him to be exempted, as a doctor, or teacher for the Jewish doctors, wise men, and scholars, were freed from all tribute and taxes [f979] even from the "head money", the Syriac version here mentions; and which was a civil tax paid to kings [f980]; to which sense that version seems to incline: the rule concerning wise men or scholars, is this [f981].

> "They do not collect of them for the building a wall, or setting up gates, or for the hire of watchmen, and such like things; nor for the

> king’s treasury; nor do they oblige them to give tribute, whether it is fixed upon citizens, or whether it is fixed on every man.”

But this was not the Roman tax, nor tribute, on any civil account, but the half shekel for religious service: and it may seem strange that such a question should be asked; and especially since it is a rule with them [f982], that

> “all are bound to give the half shekel, priests, Levites, and Israelites; and the strangers, or proselytes, and servants, that are made free; but not women, nor servants, nor children; though if they gave, they received it of them.”

But a following canon [f983] explains it, and accounts for it: on the fifteenth

> “(i.e. of the month Adar,) the collectors sit in every province or city, (that is, in the countries,) lk tjnb ˆy[bw, “and mildly ask everyone”: he that gives to them, they receive it of him; and he that does not give, ˆtyl wtwa ˆypwk ˆya, “they do not oblige him to give”: on the five and twentieth they sit in the sanctuary to collect, and from hence and onward, they urge him that will not give, until he gives; and everyone that will not give, they take pawns of him.”

So that it seems, there was a different usage of persons, at different times and places: our Lord being in Galilee at Capernaum, was treated in this manner.

Ver. 25. *He saith, yes*, etc.] Without any hesitation, knowing it had been his master’s practice; and therefore as he had done it, did not doubt but he would again:

and when he was come into the house; that is, Peter, as both the Syriac and Persic versions express; when he was come into his own house, or at least into that where Christ was, in order to talk with him about this affair, the collectors had been speaking of to him, who seems to have been alone when they met with him; however, Christ was not with him:

Jesus prevented him; saying what he intended to say, on that head; for he being the omniscient God, though not present, knew what question had been put to Peter, and what answer he had returned; and therefore, before Peter could lay the case before him, he puts this question to him;

saying, what thinkest thou, Simon? How does it appear to thee, to thy reason and understanding? in what light dost thou consider this matter? what is thy judgment of it?

of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers, or others? What is the usual practice of earthly kings, whether of Judea, or of other countries? do their own children, sons, and heirs, such as are of their own family, pay? or is it only their subjects that are not of their family?

Ver. 26. *Peter saith unto him*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin reads, "and he said": and so the Ethiopic, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel; but without doubt Peter is meant, and rightly expressed; whose answer to Christ's question is,

of strangers: meaning not foreigners, or such who formerly belonged to other nations, but were now taken captive, and brought into subjection; but their own native subjects, so called, in distinction from their domestics, their children, and those of their own family:

Jesus saith unto him, then are the children free; from paying custom, tribute, and taxes, and leaves Peter to make the application; and which he suggested might be made, either thus: supposing it was a civil tax, that since he was the son of David, king of Israel, was of his house and family, and heir apparent to his throne and kingdom; according to this rule, he must be exempt from such tribute: or, thus; taking it to have respect to the half shekel, paid on a religious account, for the service of the temple worship; that since he was the Son of the King of kings, for the support of whose worship and service that money was collected; and was also the Lord and proprietor of the temple, and greater than that, he might well be excused the payment of it.

Ver. 27. *Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them*, etc.] Though Christ could have maintained his right of exemption from payment, by such strong and clear reasons and arguments; yet he chose to forego it, lest any should be offended with him, and look upon him as a transgressor of the law; one that had no regard to the temple, and slighted the worship and service of it, and so be prejudiced against him, and his doctrines: which, by the way, may teach us to be careful to give no offence, to Jew or Gentile, or the church of God; though it may be to our own disadvantage, when the

honour and interest of religion lie at stake. This is following the example of Christ, who therefore said to Peter,

go thou to the sea; of Tiberias, which was near this city,

and cast an hook; a fisher's hook into it:

and take up the fish that first cometh up, and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: a "stater", as in the original text, the same with the arytsa of the Talmudists; and which word the Syriac version here retains, and was, they [f984] tell us, of the same value with a "sela", or "shekel" of the province. The Arabic and Persic versions render it, by "four drachms", which also were the same with a "shekel": and so was just enough to pay the two half shekels, for Christ and Peter, and was worth, of our money, near "half a crown"; and not "nearly a crown", as in a late paraphrase is said, through mistake. This was a wonderful instance of the omniscience of Christ, who knew there was in such a fish, such a piece of money, as exactly answered the present exigence, and that that would come first to Peter's hook; and of his omnipotence, if not in forming this piece of money immediately in the fish's mouth, as is thought by some, yet in causing this fish to come to Peter's hook first, and as soon as cast in; and of his power and dominion over all creatures, even over the fishes of the sea; and so proved himself to be what he suggested, the Son of the King of kings; and to be a greater person than the kings of the earth, to whom tribute was paid: and yet, at the same time, it declares his great poverty as man, that he had not a shekel to pay on such an occasion, without working a miracle; and his great condescension to do it, rather than give offence by non-payment:

and take, and give unto them for me and thee; for the half shekel was expected of Peter, as well as of Christ, and he had not wherewith to pay it; and this Christ knew, and therefore provides for both. But why did not Christ pay for the other disciples, as well as for himself and Peter? It may be replied, that this money would pay for no more than two: but this is not a full answer; Christ could have ordered more money in the same way he did this: it may then be further said, that only he and Peter were looked upon as inhabitants of this place; and so the rest were not called upon here, but in their respective cities, where they might pay also, and, besides, were not now present.

CHAPTER 18

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 18

Ver. 1. *At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus*, etc.] When the receivers of the half shekel had spoke to Peter about his master's paying it, and Christ and he had conversed about it, by whose orders he had taken up a fish out of the sea, and from it a piece of money, which he had paid for them both; just at this time came the other eleven disciples to the house where Christ and Peter were: saying,

who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Mark says, that the disciples disputed this point in the way; and that when they came to Jesus, he put the question to them, what they had been disputing about: and Luke takes no notice of any question put by one or another; but observes, that Christ perceiving the thoughts of their hearts, in order to rebuke, and convince them, took the method hereafter mentioned. All which is reconcilable, and of a piece: the sum is this; that as they were in the way to Capernaum they fell upon this question, which, being known to Christ, the omniscient God; when they came to Capernaum, and to the house where he was, and knowing that the same thought was in them, he asked them what they had been talking of by the way; upon which they were silent; but calling them nearer to him, and they finding that the matter was known, took courage to put the question to him, and desired to have his sense of it. The Vulgate Latin reads, "who dost thou think"; and the Arabic version, "who in thy opinion", etc. The occasion of this could not be the respect shown to Peter, in paying the half shekel for him; for this conversation was begun in the way, and before this was done, or, at least, before they knew it: rather it might be occasioned by his promise of giving the keys of the kingdom of heaven to him; or by his taking him, and James, and John, so lately to the mountain with him, where he was transfigured before them; though it seems best to ascribe it to the mention Christ had made of his resurrection from the dead: for as Dr. Lightfoot, Hammond, and others, have observed, something of this kind generally followed any account Christ gave of his death and resurrection, as (<41>Mark 9:31,34 <41>Matthew 20:19,20 <42>Luke 22:24) and this thought of an earthly kingdom still continued,

when they saw him risen, (<40>Acts 1:6) for they had been taught, that the resurrection, and the kingdom of the Messiah, would be at the same time [f985]. And, by the kingdom of heaven, they meant, not the kingdom of glory in another world, but the kingdom of the Messiah in this; and which they looked upon to be a temporal one, though they call it the kingdom of heaven; not only because Christ often used this phrase, but because the times of the Messiah, and his reign, were frequently so called by the Jews; *See Gill "<40>Matthew 3:2"*. Now, what they wanted to be satisfied in was, who should be advanced to the post highest in that kingdom next to the Messiah; and, as they doubted not but it would fall on one of them, to have the most honourable post, and the place of the greatest trust, they were desirous of knowing who it should be.

Ver. 2. *And Jesus called a little child unto him*, etc.] One, very likely, that was in the house, and might belong to the master of it, and which was big enough to come to him at his call. Some have thought that this was Ignatius the martyr, but without any foundation. His own words, in his epistle to the church at Smyrna [f986], can give no countenance to it; where he says, "for I also know, that after his resurrection he was in the flesh, and I believe that he is." The Latin version indeed renders it thus; "for I also saw him in the flesh after the resurrection, and believe that he exists." But it does not follow from hence that he must be this child, but rather the contrary; since it cannot be thought, that a child so young as this, in half a year after, had it seen Christ, when risen from the dead, could have took so much notice of him, as this version represents Ignatius to do; but it matters not who it was; Christ designed, by this emblem, to give them his sense of the question, and convey some proper instruction to the minds of his disciples:

and set him in the midst of them; that everyone might see him; and upon the very sight of him, had he said no more to them, they might easily have perceived what was his opinion; that he that was but a child, the most humble, and least in his own eyes, would be the greatest: but besides setting the child in such a situation, he pointed to him, saying what follows.

Ver. 3. *And said, verily I say unto you*, etc.] You may take it for a certain truth, and what may be depended upon, that

except ye be converted or turned; from that gross notion of a temporal kingdom, and of enjoying great grandeur, and outward felicity in this world; and from all your vain views of honour, wealth, and riches,

and become as little children: the Arabic renders it, “as this child”; that is, unless ye learn to entertain an humble, and modest opinion of yourselves, are not envious at one another, and drop all contentions about primacy and pre-eminence, and all your ambitious views of one being greater than another, in a vainly expected temporal kingdom; things which are not to be found in little children, though not free from sin in other respects,

ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven: ye shall be so far from being one greater than another in it, that you shall not enter into it at all; meaning his visible, spiritual kingdom, which should take place, and appear after his resurrection, upon his ascension to heaven, and pouring forth of the Spirit: and it is to be observed, that the apostles carried these carnal views, contentions, and sentiments, till that time, and then were turned from them, and dropped them; for, upon the extraordinary effusion of the Holy Spirit, they were cleared of these worldly principles, and understood the spiritual nature of Christ’s kingdom; which they then entered into, and took their place in, and filled it up with great success, without envying one another; having received the same commission from their Lord, and Master: so that these words are a sort of prophecy of what should be, as well as designed as a rebuke to them for their present ambition and contentions.

Ver. 4. *Whosoever therefore shall humble himself*, etc.] Whoever shall entertain mean thoughts of himself, and prefer others to himself, shall behave in a modest humble manner, not affecting dominion over others, or treating his brethren and Christians in a haughty and supercilious manner, with scorn and contempt; but condescend to those of the lowest state, and place himself in the lowest form, conversing with his friends freely and familiarly, without distinction,

as this little child; or any other of the like age; for there is no reason to suppose, that there was anything peculiar in this child, which was not in another, it being common to children to behave towards one another, as on a level; not to envy one another, or to set up one above another, or be vainly elated with the distinctions of birth and fortune.

The same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven; in the Gospel church state; which was verified in the Apostle Paul, though not one of the twelve: nor are these words limited to them; at least, this passage may be illustrated in his case: he thought himself to be the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints, and unworthy to be called an apostle; yet had the largest measures of grace, the greatest gifts and abilities; and was honoured with

the greatest usefulness and success in the preaching of the Gospel to the conversion of sinners, and planting of churches; labouring more abundantly than they all.

Ver. 5. *And whoso shall receive one such little child*, etc.] Which is to be understood, not literally but metaphorically; meaning not such an one in age, but one, as the Syriac renders it, and ayl j Æya, "that is as this child": like unto it for modesty and humility; one, that is as that, free from pride, ambition, and envy. Christ's sense is, that whoever receives his disciples, that are meek and lowly, into their houses, or into their hearts and affections; that receives their ministry and message, embraces the Gospel preached by them with readiness and cheerfulness, with faith and love,

in my name; on his account, because they are his disciples, believe in him, preach his Gospel, and, as being sent by, and representing him,

receiveth me: it is so taken by Christ, as if he was personally present, and personally received, and had all the favours shown to his, done to himself in person; yea, such receive Christ in the ministry of the word, he being the sum and substance of it. This is said to encourage modesty and humility; and intimates, that proud and haughty persons will not be received as the disciples and followers of the meek and lowly Jesus; and to encourage persons to receive such that are modest and humble, since the respect shown to them, is all one as if shown to him.

Ver. 6. *But whoso shall offend one of these little ones*, etc.] Not in age, but are little and mean in their own eyes, and contemptible in the esteem of the world; though otherwise men of great grace, gifts, and usefulness; who may be said to be offended, when they are not received; their persons despised, their ministry rejected, and they reproached and persecuted; and everything done to them to discourage, and cause them to stumble and fall, to drop their profession of Christ, to quit his service, and desert his cause: and that such persons are designed, appears by the following descriptive character of them,

which believe in me; which cannot be said of infants, or little ones in age, and who also are not capable of offence; but must be understood of adult persons, of such who by faith look unto, lay hold on, and receive the Lord Jesus Christ, as their Saviour and Redeemer, and who make a profession of their faith in him; and chiefly of such who preach the doctrine of faith, who

having believed, therefore speak; and who are generally the butt of the contempt, reproach, and persecution of men.

It were better for him, that a mill stone be hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. The word translated “depth”, is sometimes used for the Sea itself, (<25110>Isaiah 51:10) and signifies the middle, or deeper path, and answers to the Hebrew phrase, “the heart of the sea”; abr amyd swglyp, used by the Targum, in (<19603>Psalm 46:3) and by Jonathan ben Uzziel, in (<02508>Exodus 15:8). Jerom thinks, that this was a sort of punishment in use among the Jews, that is here referred to; but this does not appear. The four capital punishments inflicted by them were stoning, burning, slaying with the sword, and strangling [f987]: they had indeed other sorts of punishment, which they borrowed from other nations; and so they might this, either from the Romans, or Greeks, or their neighbours the Syrians. The mill stone, in the original, is called μυλος ονικος, which may be rendered “the ass mill stone”, being either the nether mill stone, as some think, which was called “the ass”, because, like an ass, it bears the chief of the weight and burden; or else respects such mill stones as were turned about by an ass, in distinction from those that were turned by the hand; for that it was usual with the Jews to make use of asses in grinding, as well as other nations, is certain: hence we read [f988] of ayjyr armj “the ass of mills”, that were employed in grinding in the mills, and of one that turned his mill with wild asses [f989]: but it is further to be observed, that mention is made [f990] of dy lç µyjr lç rwmj, “the ass of an handmill”: which the commentators say [f991], was a beam on which an handmill was fixed, and was called “the ass.” Now, I should rather think that this is meant than the other. It does not seem likely that a nether mill stone, or one that required an ass to turn it, should be tied to a man’s neck, in order to drown him, when cast into the sea; for our Lord must be thought to refer to a practice somewhere in use: but rather, that such a beam, or log, of an handmill, so called, were wont to be put about the necks of malefactors, in drowning them. Our Lord’s sense is, that it was much better for a man to endure the severest temporal punishment, rather than by offending, and evil treating any of his disciples, expose himself to everlasting destruction. The phrase of having a mill stone about the neck, I find, is sometimes used to denote anything very troublesome and burdensome [f992].

> “The tradition is, a man that marries a wife, and after that learns the law, R. Jochanan says, wrawxb µyjyr, “though a mill stone is about his neck”, yet he must study in the law: that is, though his worldly circumstances are narrow, and his wife and family are as burdensome as if he had a mill stone about his neck, he must continue his studies.”

Ver. 7. *Woe unto the world because of offences*! etc.] By which are meant, not sins, as sometimes, but rather temptations to sin; and so the Ethiopic version renders this word by “temptation” in every clause, as the Arabic does in the next; and may design all the contempt and reproach cast upon the doctrines, ordinances, and people of Christ, and all those afflictions, distresses, and persecutions exercised on them, on purpose to cause them to stumble and fall; to tempt them to deny the truth, drop their profession of religion, and relinquish the service of Christ; things which are displeasing to God, discouraging to his people, and often attended with bad consequences to formal professors; and bring down the judgments of God upon the men of the world; who sooner or later will vindicate his own cause, avenge his own elect, and render tribulation to them that trouble them.

For it must needs be that offences come; considering the implacable malice of Satan, his unwearied and indefatigable pains, the malignity of the men of the world, their aversion and enmity to the Gospel of Christ, and all good men; it cannot be thought, God suffering such things for the trial of such as are truly gracious, and for the discovery of hypocrites, and for the manifestation of his grace, power, and faithfulness in the preservation of his dear children, that it should be otherwise, but that such offences should be:

but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh; for though God, for wise ends and reasons, as above, voluntarily permits such things to be in the world; and though they do not succeed, as to cause the true followers of Christ so to stumble and fall, as to perish, yet this does not excuse their sin and wickedness, in doing all that in them lay to effect it. For though God will, and does overrule all their base designs against his ministers, church, and people, for his glory, and their good, this is no thanks to them; and as it does not in the least extenuate their crime, it will not abate the severity of their punishment.

Ver. 8, 9. *Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot*, etc.] The same words are repeated here on occasion of offences, as are spoken by Christ, (<4052>Matthew 5:29,30) on account of unchaste looks, desires and lusts: giving offence to Christ's disciples, or endeavouring, by any means whatever, to cause them to stumble and fall, is equally gratifying the flesh, and no more to be indulged, than the other, on pain of eternal damnation. *See Gill "<4052>Matthew 5:29" See Gill "<4052>Matthew 5:30"*

Ver. 10. *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones*, etc.] That is, one of those little ones that believed in Christ; for he is not speaking of infants in age, but of those who might be compared to such, for their humility and modesty; who were little in their own eyes, and mean and despicable in the eyes of the world, as well as appeared but little in the eyes of their fellow disciples and brethren; for our Lord returns and addresses himself to his disciples, who had been contending among themselves who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven; and so were striving to lessen one another, each looking upon himself as the greater, and every other as little. Wherefore Christ cautions them against such a spirit, and bids them beware of despising their fellow disciples, as little, and below them; especially since so much notice and care were taken of them, both in heaven, and in earth:

for I say unto you, that in heaven: the phrase, "in heaven", is omitted in the Syriac and Persic versions, perhaps because it might be looked upon as unnecessary, since it afterwards appears; but is very proper, or pertinent, whether it be considered as descriptive of the angels, who have their habitation there, in distinction from the evil angels, who are cast down from thence; or as pointing out the place where the angels behold the face of God, and who are styled "their angels"; the angels of the little ones, that believe in Christ, who are ministering spirits unto them, the guardians of them, who encamp about them, and do many good offices for them. Some have thought from hence, that every good man has his peculiar angel that waits upon him, and cares for him; but this does not necessarily follow from, these words, only that they all have an interest in angels, and in their good services. This seems indeed to have been a notion that prevailed among the Jews, not only that there were angels which presided over particular nations, but who also had the care of particular persons; so they speak of an angel that was particularly appointed for Abraham [f993]. Nor will they allow, that one angel does two messages, nor two angels one [f994]

message: but that everyone has his particular place, person, and work; of whom it is further said, that they

do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven: which is not so much to be understood of their intellectual knowledge, and apprehension of the divine being, of their beholding the glory of his nature, and essence, and of their contemplating and applauding his perfections; as of their ministering before him, waiting, as servants, upon him, watching to receive his orders, and ready to obey his commands. And our Lord's argument is, that if such excellent creatures as the angels in heaven, who are continually favoured with being in the presence of Christ's heavenly father, honoured with so high a station, as always to stand before him, as ministers of his; if these are the guardians of these little ones, if they are committed to their care, and they have the oversight of them, then they ought not to be despised: and besides, since the angels that have the care of them are so near the throne, it should deter everyone from having their charge in contempt, or doing any injury to them; since they arc capable of lodging accusations and complaints against them; and, when leave is given, have power of executing the sorest judgments upon men. This description of angels agrees with what the Jews say of them, especially of the chief of them. Michael, they say [f995], is the first and principal of the chief princes, Ælmh ynp yawr "that behold the face of the king"; that is, the King of kings, the Lord of hosts. Suriel, which, with them, is another name of an angel, is called [f996], µynph rç, "the prince of faces", who is always in the presence of God; and, as the gloss says, is "an angel that is counted worthy to come before the king."

Ver. 11. *For the Son of man is come to seek that which was lost*.] This is another, and stronger reason, why these little ones should not be despised; because Christ, who is here meant by the Son of man, came into this world to save these persons; who were lost in Adam, and had destroyed themselves by their transgressions, and carries great force in it: for if God had so great a regard to these little ones, as to send his Son to obtain eternal salvation for them, when they were in a miserable and perishing condition; and Christ had so much love for them, as to come into this world, and endure the sorrows, sufferings, and death itself for them, who were not only little, but lost; and that to obtain righteousness and life for them, and save them with an everlasting salvation; then they must, and ought to be, far above the contempt of all mortals; and the utmost care

should be taken not to despise, grieve, offend, and injure them in any form or shape whatever; (see <45145>Romans 14:15 <46811>1 Corinthians 8:11). Beza observes, that this whole verse is left out in some Greek copies, but it stands in others, and in all the Oriental versions, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel; nor can it be omitted; the following parable, which is an exemplification of it, requires it.

Ver. 12. *How think ye*, etc.] Or, as the Arabic, "what do you think?" what is your opinion of this matter? what is your sense of it? how does it appear to you? It is a Talmudic way of speaking, the same with ˆyrwbs µta hm "what do you think?" what is your judgment? So the Rabbins, after they have discussed a point among themselves, ask [f997], ˆl arybs yam, "what is our opinion?" or what do we think upon the whole? Christ here appeals to his disciples, makes them judges themselves in this matter, and illustrates it by a familiar instance of a man's seeking and finding his lost sheep, and rejoicing at it.

If a man have an hundred sheep; who is the proprietor of them; not the hireling, who has them under his care, and whose the sheep are not; but the owner of them, to whom they belong, and who must be thought to be most concerned for anyone of them that should go astray: a hundred sheep seem to be the number of a flock; at least flocks of sheep used to be divided into hundreds. In a Maronite's will, a field is thus bequeathed [f998];

> "the north part of it to such an one, and with it ˆax ham, "a hundred sheep", and a hundred vessels; and the south part of it to such an one, and with it ˆax ham, "a hundred sheep", and a hundred vessels; and he died, and the wise men confirmed his words, or his will."

Such a supposition, or putting such a case as this, is very proper and pertinent.

And one of them be gone astray; which sheep are very prone to; (see <19976>Psalm 119:176 <23506>Isaiah 53:6);

doth he not leave the ninety and nine, which are not gone astray, in the place where they are; it is usual so to do:

and goeth into the mountains; alluding to the mountains of Israel, where were pastures for sheep, (<26343>Ezekiel 34:13,14) and whither sheep are apt

to wander, and go from mountain to mountain, (Jeremiah 50:6), and therefore these were proper places to go after them, and seek for them in: but the Vulgate Latin version joins the words “in” or “on the mountains”, to the preceding clause, and reads,

doth he not leave the ninety and nine in the mountains; and so read all the Oriental versions, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Persic; and in the same manner Theophylact;

and seeketh that which is gone astray? This is usual with men: no man that has a flock of sheep, and though but one strays from it, but takes this method. This parable now may be considered, either as an illustration of the Son of man’s coming into this world, to seek, and to save his lost sheep, mentioned in the preceding verse; even the lost sheep of the house of Israel, the little ones that believed in him, who were despised by the Jews. And then by the “ninety and nine”, we are not to understand the angels; who never went astray, never sinned, but kept their first estate, whom Christ left in the highest heavens, on the holy mountains of eternity, when he became incarnate, and came down on earth to redeem mankind: for these never go by the name of sheep; nor are they of the same nature and kind with the one that strays, and is sought out; nor is their number, with respect to men, as ninety nine to one; at least it cannot be ascertained; nor were they left by Christ, when he came on earth; for a multitude descended at his birth, and sung glory to God. Nor are the saints in heaven intended, whose state is safe; since it cannot be said of them, as in the following verse, that they went not astray; for they went astray like lost sheep, as others, and were looked up, sought out, and saved by Christ as others; but rather, by them, are meant the body of the Jewish nation, the far greater part of them, the Scribes and Pharisees, who rejected the Messiah, and despised those that believed in him: these were in sheep’s clothing, of the flock of the house of Israel, of the Jewish fold; and with respect to the remnant among them, according to the election of grace, were as ninety nine to one: these were left by Christ, and taken no notice of by him, in comparison of the little ones, the lost sheep of the house of Israel he came to save: these he left on the mountains, on the barren pastures of Mount Sinai, feeding on their own works and services; or rather, he went into the mountains, or came leaping and skipping over them, (Song of Solomon 2:8), encountering with, and surmounting all difficulties that lay in the way of the salvation of his people; such as appearing in the likeness of sinful flesh, bearing, and carrying the griefs and sorrows of his people, obeying

the law, satisfying justice, bearing their sins, and undergoing an accursed death, in order to obtain the salvation of his chosen ones, designed by the one sheep “that was gone astray”; who strayed from God, from his law, the rule of their walk, out of his way, into the ways of sin, which are of their own choosing and approving: or, the intention of this parable is, to set forth the great regard God has to persons ever so mean, that believe in Christ, whom he would not have stumbled and offended, and takes special care of them, that they shall not perish; even as the proprietor of a flock of sheep is more concerned for one straying one, than for the other ninety nine that remain.

Ver. 13. *And if so be that he find it*, etc.] Which is a casual and uncertain thing with the shepherd, but not so with Christ, who certainly finds all those he goes after, and seeks: for,

verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep; at the finding of it, whose loss greatly affected him,

than of the ninety and nine which went not astray; who seemed not to go astray, were outwardly righteous before men, and, in their own opinion, being the same with the ninety and nine just persons who needed no repentance in their own apprehension, (Luke 15:7). This same parable is related in (Luke 15:3,4,5,6), and it being there more largely expressed, and along with other parables of the same kind, I shall refer the more particular consideration of it to that place; only observe, that it seems to me that this parable was twice delivered by our Lord, and that on two different occasions; once, as here, in his discourse on offences, and upon mention of his coming into this world to save lost sinners; at another time, as there, upon the Pharisees murmuring at his receiving sinners, and eating with them.

Ver. 14. *Even so it is not the will of your father which is in heaven*, etc.] This is the accommodation, or application of the parable of the lost sheep to the present purpose, and is the top of the climax or gradation here made use of. First, Christ observes, in order to deter any from despising and offending any of his disciples, even the meanest, that they have angels to be their guardians, who are continually in the presence of God; and next, that he himself in human nature came to be the author of salvation to these persons; and then rises up to the sovereign will of his Father, and their’s, the source and security of their everlasting happiness; which will is, not

that one of these little ones, that believe in Christ,

should perish. It is his will of command that no stumbling block should be laid in their way to cause them to stumble and fall, to the grieving of their souls, the wounding of their consciences, and the perishing, or loss of their peace and comfort; and it is his unalterable will of purpose, or his unchangeable decree, that not one of them, even the meanest, shall perish eternally: in pursuance of which will, he has chosen them in his Son, he has put them into his hands, and secured them in his covenant; and having redeemed them by Christ, and called them by grace, he keeps them by his power, through faith unto salvation. Nor shall anyone of them finally and totally fall away and perish, through the power of their own corruptions, the temptations of Satan, the reproaches and persecutions of men, the frowns or flatteries of the world, or through the errors and heresies of false teachers, or any other way. It is to be observed, that when our Lord, in (<40>1810>Matthew 18:10), is speaking of the happiness of the angels, and the honour done to the little ones by having such guardians; then the more to aggrandize this matter, he represents those as in the presence of his "Father which is in heaven"; but here, when he would express the wonderful love and grace of God, in the resolutions of his heart, and purposes of his will, to save them, then it is "your Father which is in heaven"; and this, the rather to engage them to the belief of it, since they stood in such a near relation to him, as children to a father: and therefore must be infinitely more concerned for their welfare, than a proprietor of sheep can be, for one that is lost. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions indeed read, "my father", but without any authority; for the phraseology, "the will before your Father", as in the original text, *See Gill "<40>1126>Matthew 11:26"*

Ver. 15. *Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee*, etc.] This is said to show, that as on the one hand, if any of those that believe in Christ, should commit a trespass against his fellow Christian, his sin is not to be connived at, for fear of offending him; for what Christ has before said, is not to be taken in such sense, as to prevent private reproof, or public censures, when there is occasion for them; so on the other hand, he is not to be despised and ill used, and treated in the same injurious manner; but gentle reproofs are to be made use of, for his good. This is spoken not to the apostles as such, but as believers in Christ; and concerns everyone that stands in the relation of a brother, or church member to each other, and only such; for they that are without, do not fall under their notice, nor are they obliged to take, nor can they take altogether, the same methods with

them. This rule respects sins committed by one brother against another, either in word or deed; or such as are of a private nature, and which one only, or at least but few, are acquainted with: in such cases the advice is,

go and tell him his fault between thee, and him alone; do not wait for his coming to thee, as being the aggressor, to acknowledge his fault, testify his repentance, express his sorrow for his sin, and ask pardon: but go to him, and freely and faithfully lay his sin before him; but do not aggravate it, and reproach him with it, and bear hard on him for it, but gently rebuke and reprove him: let this be done in the most private manner; let none be present, nor any know of it, even the most intimate friend and acquaintance:

if he shall hear thee; patiently, take your reproof kindly, acknowledge his offence, declare his hearty sorrow for it, and desire it might be overlooked, and reconciliation made:

thou hast gained thy brother; recovered him from the error of his ways, restored him to his duty, and secured his friendship, and interest in his favour; nor should any mention be made of this ever after, either to him, or any other, or to the church.

Ver. 16. *But if he will not hear thee*, etc.]. But will either deny the fact, or extenuate and excuse it, or defend it, or at least is obstinate and incorrigible, shows no signs of repentance, but is angry, gives hard words, and ill language:

then take with thee one or two more; members of the church, and perhaps of weight, reputation, and character, who either know some thing of the matter, and so can confirm, by their testimony, what has been alleged, in order to bring the person to conviction and acknowledgment; or if they do not, and which seems rather to be the sense, they may, by hearing what is said on both sides, judge where the truth lies, and join with the offended person in the admonition, that it may fall with the greater weight, and become more effectual:

that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established, referring to (Deuteronomy 19:15). So that should the matter be brought before the whole church, these witnesses would be able to testify the truth of the case, and report the steps that had been taken, and what effect they had had; so that things being thus prepared, the case would appear plain and easy, and without difficulty. The whole of this is very agreeable to the

rules and customs of the Jews, and is founded on the law, in (<3>Leviticus 19:17), upon which they form rules very much like to these. They represent God himself taking such a method as this, with the sons of men [f999]:

> “When the holy blessed God reproves a man, he reproves him in love, privately: if he receives it, it is well; if not, he reproves him among his friends: if he receives it, it is well; if not he reproves him openly before the eyes of all; if he receives it is well; if not, he leaves him, and reproves him no more.”

And this is an instruction to men, how they should reprove their friends. They say [f1000], “he that sees anything in his friend that is not becoming, he ought to reprove him.” And which is elsewhere more [f1001] largely expressed:

> “he that seeth his friend walking in a way that is not good, he is bound to reprove him, even a disciple his master; and this he shall do for his good, and in order to bring him to the life of the world to come, or eternal life; and “if he takes it of him, it is well”: but if not, he must reprove again, “a second and a third time”; and so he must reprove him many times, if, or until he hears him.”

And this they require to be done, in the most private manner:

> “reproof out of love (they [f1002] say) is secret from the children of men; whoever reproves his friend in love, seeks to secrete his words from the sons of men, that he may not expose him thereby to shame and reproach.”

That is, as the gloss [f1003] on it observes,

> “he seeks to reprove him in secret, so that he may not be put to shame before many.”

If this way does not succeed, they allow of a public reproof, for so it is said [f1004];

> “thou mayest not reprove him with hard words, till his countenance changes; for whoever causes the face of his friend to turn pale publicly, has no portion in the world to come; but thou mayest reprove in the words of heaven, or God; and if he does not return privately, thou mayest make him ashamed publicly, and expose his

sin before him; and reproach and curse him, until he returns to do well; so did all the prophets to Israel."

They plead also for a second reproof, from the text in (<031917>Leviticus 19:17) [f1005].

From whence does it appear, that he that sees anything in his friend unbecoming, ought to reprove him? As it is said, "thou shalt in any wise rebuke", etc. if he reproves him, lbq alw, "and he does not receive it", (he does not take it kindly, or, as here, he does not hear him,) from whence is it manifest, that he must return and reprove him (or repeat the reproof)? from what is said, reproving thou shall reprove."

The whole of this is very fully expressed in a few words, by one [f1006] of their best writers, and in great agreement with these rules of Christ:

"He that sees his friend sinning, or going in a way not good, he is commanded to cause him to return to that which is good; and to let him know, that he sins against himself by his evil works; as it is said, "thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour": he that reproveth his friend, whether for things between him and himself, or whether for things between him and God, "ought to reprove him", wmx[^yb l wnyb, "between him and himself"; and should speak to him mildly, and in tender language; and let him know that he does not speak to, him, but for his good, and to bring him to everlasting life; "and if he receives it of him, it is well, and if not, he must reprove him", tyçylçw hyynç µ[p "a second and a third time"; and so a man must continually reprove, until the sinner strikes him and says", I will not hear.""

Buxtorf has produced a passage out of one of their writers [f1007], in the very language in which Christ here delivers himself:

"The wise man says, if thy friend does thee an injury, reprove him between him and thee alone: if he hears thee, thou hast already gained; if he does not hear thee, speak to him before one or two, who may hear the matter, and if he will not hear reckon him a "worthless friend"."

One would almost be ready to think, that this writer should mean Christ by the wise man, were it not for the implacable enmity they bear unto him.

The above author has cited also the following passage out of the same [f1008] writer, pertinent to the present purpose:

> “A friend that declares to thee thy faults, “between him and thee”, whenever he meets thee, is better to thee than a friend, that whenever he meets thee, gives thee a golden penny.”

Ver. 17. *And if he shall neglect to hear them*, etc.] The one or two, in conjunction with the offended person that shall hear the ease, and admonish and reprove; if he takes no notice of what they say to him, but remains stiff and impenitent, tell it unto the church: which some understand, of the µybr, or “multitude”, before whom it was lawful to reprove, after such private methods had been taken: others, the political magistrates, or sanhedrim; who took cognizance of cases between one person and other, either by themselves, or messengers; and gave admonitions and reproofs, as to parents, when they did not provide for their families [f1009], and to wives that were perverse, and provoked their husbands [f1010], etc. others, of the presbyters and governors of the Christian church; others, of the church itself, and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “the house of Christians”; to which it is objected, that as yet a Christian church was not formed: but what were the twelve apostles of the Lamb? They were the great congregation and church, in the midst of which Christ sung praise to his Father: and since the whole of this advice, and these excellent rules are given to them, and they are spoken of in the next verse, as having the power of binding and loosing, they may well be thought to be meant here; and that the design of Christ is, to instruct them how to behave, in case of offence to one another; that the reproof should be first private, and if it did not succeed, to be made before one or two more; and if that did not do, the whole body was to be acquainted with it; and which rules hold good, and are to be observed by all Christian men and churches, in all ages: though no doubt but allusion is made to the Jewish customs, in rebuking before the multitude, or carrying of a private case, after all other means used were ineffectual, to the sanhedrim.

But if he neglect to hear the church: the advice they should give unto him, the reproof they should think proper for him, or the censure they should pass upon him,

let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican. This is not a form of excommunication to be used among Christians, nor was there ever any

such form among the Jews; nor could Heathens or publicans, especially such publicans as were Gentiles, be excommunicated, when they never were of the Jewish church.

> "A religious person indeed, that becomes a collector of taxes, they first said, is to be driven from the society; but they afterwards said, all the time that he is a tax gatherer, they drive him from the society; but when he goes out of his office, lo! he is as a religious person [f1011]."

But one that never was of a religious society, could not be driven out of it. And besides, this is given, not as a rule to the church, but as advice to the offended person, how to behave towards the offender: after he has come under the cognizance, reproof, and censure of the church, he is to look upon him as the Jews did one that disregarded both private reproof by a man's self, and that which was in the presence of one or two more, twjp rbj, "a worthless friend", or neighbour; as a Gentile, with whom the Jews had neither religious nor civil conversation; and a "publican", or as Munster's Hebrew Gospel reads it, hrb[l[b "a notorious sinner", as a publican was accounted: hence such are often joined together, and with whom the Jews might not eat, nor keep any friendly and familiar acquaintance: and so such that have been privately admonished and publicly rebuked, without success, their company is to be shunned, and intimate friendship with them to be avoided.

Ver. 18. *Verily I say unto you*, etc.] To them all, what he had said before to Peter; *See Gill "<4069>Matthew 16:19"*: what is said here, refers to things and not persons, as there also.

Ver. 19. *Again, I say unto you*, etc.] As the words in the former verse seem to regard the whole body of the disciples, whose decisions in cases brought before them, declaring them just or unjust, are determinate and unalterable; these seem to respect the one or two, that should join the offended person in the reproof of the offender, and are spoken for their encouragement; who might think proper either to premise, or follow their engaging in such a work with prayer:

that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask; both in the case before mentioned, and in any other thing: whether it be for themselves or others; to assist them in the ministry of the word, and give success to it, for the conversion of sinners; and in the

performance of any miracle, for the confirmation of the Gospel; in the administration of ordinances, for the comfort of saints; and in laying on of censures, for the reclaiming of backsliders; or be it what it will that may be done, consistent with the glory of God, the purposes of his mind, and the declarations of his will, and the good of men, provided they agree in their requests; though they are here on earth, and at such a distance from heaven, from whence their help and assistance come:

it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven; with whom nothing is impossible; and who, as he regards the effectual fervent prayer of any righteous man, so more, of two agreed together in anyone thing; and still more, of a church and community of saints in their united requests: a great encouragement this to social prayer, though ever so few are engaged in it.

Ver. 20. *For where two or three are gathered together*, etc.] This seems to be said in opposition to a Jewish notion, that a number less than ten, is not a congregation [f1012]; whereas, though the number is ever so few that are met together to pray to God; or to hear his word, attend on his ordinances, or do the business of his house, or transact any affair that is for the glory of God, and the good of souls, in my name, says Christ; that is, by his authority, depending on his assistance, calling upon his name, and making use of it, and seeking the glory of it:

there am I in the midst of them; presiding over them, ruling in their hearts, directing their counsels, assisting them in all they are concerned, confirming what they do, and giving a blessing and success to all they are engaged in. The Jews, though they say there is no congregation less than ten, yet own that the divine presence may be with a lesser number, even as small an one as here mentioned [f1013].

> "Ten that sit and study in the law, the Shechaniah dwells among them, as it is said, (<19821>Psalm 82:1). From whence does this appear, if but five? from (<30906>Amos 9:6), from whence, if but three? from (<19821>Psalm 82:1), from whence, if but two? from (<30316>Malachi 3:16), from whence, if but one? from (<02024>Exodus 20:24)."

And again [f1014],

> "two that sit together, and the words of the law are between them, the Shechaniah dwells among them, according to (<30316>Malachi 3:16), from whence does it appear, that if but one sits and studies in

> the law, the holy blessed God hath fixed a reward for him? from (Lamentations 3:28)."

Ver. 21. *Then came Peter unto him*, etc.] Having heard and observed the rules Christ gave concerning offences and brotherly reproofs, he drew near to Christ, and put this question to him:

and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? He instances in a brother, because it was such an one Christ had been speaking of; he makes no doubt of its being his duty to forgive him upon his repentance, and acknowledgment, but wanted to be reformed, how often this was to be done, and asks, whether

until seven times? Which was, as he might think, a large number; and especially, since it was double the number of times, that the Jewish doctors set for forgiveness: for thus they say [f1015],

> "A man that commits a sin, the "first" time they pardon him; the "second" time they pardon him; the "third" time they pardon him: the "fourth" time they do not pardon, according to (Amos 2:6, Job 33:29)."

Again,

> "he that says I have sinned, and I repent, they forgive him "unto three times", and no more [f1016]."

Ver. 22. *Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee*, etc.] Which is as if he had said, observe what I am about to say, I do not agree to what thou sayest to fix the number, "until seven times only", but

until seventy times seven; a certain number for an uncertain, (see Genesis 4:24). Christ's meaning is, that a man should be all the days, and every day of his life, forgiving those that sin against him, as often as they repent and acknowledge their fault; and that no time is to be set for the exercise of the grace of forgiveness; but as often as there are objects and occasions, though ever so many and frequent, it should be used; and which he illustrates by the following parable.

Ver. 23. *Therefore is the kingdom of heaven*, etc.] The Gospel church state, or the church of Christ under the Gospel dispensation, and the methods of God's dealings in it;

likened unto a certain king: or “a man”, “a king”, pointing either to Christ, the king Messiah, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, the King of saints and churches; who, as God, has a natural kingdom of providence, and as man and Mediator, a kingdom of grace; and will have a more visibly glorious one, both in this world and in the other; or rather, the Father of Christ, as appears from the application of the parable, in (<40:18:35>Matthew 18:35), who is the living God, and everlasting King: whose is the kingdom of nature, grace, and glory:

which would take account of his servants; not all mankind, though these are all in a sense his servants, and accountable to him; nor only ministers of the Gospel, who are so in an eminent and peculiar sense, and must give an account to God of their time and talents, and souls committed to them; but all that bear the Christian name, that are professors of religion, that are either really or nominally the subjects and servants of God. These, it is sometimes the will and pleasure of God, to “take account of”: not of their persons, or number, but of their conduct and behaviour; which, as it will be more fully done at death, or at judgment, so sometimes is taken in this life: God sometimes calls, and brings, professors of religion to an account, and reckons with them by afflictive dispensations of providence; when he puts them upon reflecting how they have spent their time, made use of their talents and gifts, and have behaved in their families, and in the world, and church; or by dealing roundly with men’s consciences, awakening and convincing them of their sins, of omission and commission, which seems to be intended here.

Ver. 24. *And when he had begun to reckon*, etc.] To open the book of conscience, and to bring to account by some awakening providence, and strong conviction: one was brought unto him; whether he would or no, through the force of an awakened conscience, under guilt and terror;

which owed him ten thousand talents; which must be understood, either of gold, or silver: a talent of silver contained 3,000 shekels, as appears from (<02:38:25,26>Exodus 38:25,26), and was in value of our money 375l. but a talent of gold was equal to 4,500l. of our [f1017] money. According to Dr. Prideaux [f1018], a talent of silver was 450l. and a talent of gold, the proportion of gold to silver being reckoned as sixteen to one, was 7,200l. and according to Bishop Cumberland, a talent of silver was 353l. 11s. 10d. ob. and a talent of gold of the same weight, was 5,075l. 15s. 7d. ob. The whole, according to Dr. Hammond, was a thousand eight hundred seventy five thousand

pounds, reckoning them silver talents; but if talents of gold are meant, what an immense sum must ten thousand of them be! According to some, seventy two millions sterling. The design of the phrase, is to set forth the exceeding greatness of the debt. Munster's Hebrew Gospel reads it, "ten thousand manehs", or pounds; and so the Persic version: now the value of a maneh of gold, was 75l. and of silver, 7l 10s. [f1019] take the sum in the least quantity and value, it was exceeding large. The Arabic version renders it a "sum of talents", without mentioning the number, and may mean an innumerable one. Mention is made of such a number of talents of silver, in (<17D309>Esther 3:9), which Aben Ezra says is defective, and signifies ten thousand thousand talents. The "second" Targum on the place says, that the sum of six hundred thousand zuzim, drachms, or pence (i.e. Roman ones) is ten thousand talents of silver. These "ten thousand talents" intend sins, which are called debts, in Scripture; not that they are properly so, or owing to God, for then it would be right to pay them, but because they bind over to punishment. All men owe a debt of thankfulness to God, for their beings, the preservation of them, and all the mercies of life; and a debt of obedience to the whole law, in failure of which, they are obliged to punishment: hence every sin becomes a debt, and these are numerous; indwelling sin, and the lusts thereof, are innumerable; as are actual sins and transgressions, they are more than the hairs of a man's head, and are fitly expressed, both for the weight and quantity of them, by "ten thousand talents". In this light they appear to the conscience of an awakened sinner, who sees that he has been doing nothing but sin, all the days of his life; and that he has been continually breaking the law, one precept or another of it, in thought, word, or deed: which violations of the law, even in word and deed, are risen up to so great a sum, that he is not able to give it to any nearness, and with any exactness; he cannot understand all his errors, nor express the full number of them, or declare all their aggravated circumstances; besides the swarms of corruption of internal lusts and sins, which he observes dwelling in his heart, and are as innumerable as the motes and atoms in a sunbeam. The sins of God's people, which have been all made to meet upon Christ, have been laid upon him by his Father's imputation of them to him, with his own consent, are represented in this manner; (see <19D012>Psalm 40:12). And indeed, if the debts of one of them amount to ten thousand talents, what must the sum of all be, put together! and how great must be the strength and power of Christ, to bear the weight of these sins, and not be broken or discouraged, and fail, as he did not! and what a rich virtue and efficacy must there be in his blood, to pay off all

these debts, and make satisfaction for them, which could never have been done, if he had not done it! for, it is impossible that a person in such circumstances as here described, should ever be able to recover himself, or pay his debts, as follows.

Ver. 25. *But forasmuch as he had not to pay*, etc.] Every sinner is insolvent; sinful man has run out the whole stock of nature, and is become a bankrupt, and has nothing to offer by way of composition; nor has he any righteousness to answer for him, nor any works of righteousness which deserve that name: and if he had, these are nothing in point of payment: for a debt of sin cannot be discharged by a debt of obedience; since God has a prior right to the latter; and in paying it, a man does but what is his duty. Sin being committed against an infinite God, contracts the nature of an infinite debt, which cannot be paid off by a finite creature. Christ only was able to pay this debt, and he has done it for his people; and without an interest in his blood, righteousness, and satisfaction, every debtor is liable to be cast, and will be cast into the prison of hell, there to lie till the uttermost farthing of the ten thousand talents is paid, which will be to all eternity. We see what a sad condition sin has brought men into; it has stripped them of their estates and possessions; it has reduced them to want and beggary; it exposes them to a prison; to the just resentments of their creditor; to the wrath of God, and the curses of the law; and what little reason there is to think, yea, how impossible it is, that a man should be able to merit anything at the hands of God, to whom he is so greatly indebted: he must first pay his debts, which is a thing impracticable, before he can pretend to do anything deserving the notice of God; and even was he set free, and clear of all his debts, and entered upon a new life of obedience, and this strictly attended to, without contracting any debts for the future, yet all this would be but what is due to God, and could merit nothing of him; (see <42710>Luke 17:10 <45135>Romans 11:35). We see also from hence, how much the saints are obliged to Christ Jesus, and how thankful they should be to him, who became a surety for such insolvent creatures; has paid all their debts for them, and procured for them every blessing of grace they stand in need of: but think, O sinner, what thou wilt be able to say and do, when God comes to reckon with thee, and thou hast nothing to pay, nor any to pay for thee, or be thy surety; a prison must be thy portion ever.

His Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had; according to the Jewish laws, in such a case: of a man's being sold, or selling himself when poor, (see <032547>Leviticus 25:47), for the law in

(Exodus 22:3), referred to by some as an instance of this, respects the selling of a man for theft, and not for debt. Of the selling of a man's wife for the payment of his debts, I do not remember to have read any law concerning it, or instances of it; but of children being taken for bondmen by the creditor, for their father's debts, mention is made, (2 Kings 4:1). These children, by the Jewish writers [f1020], are said to be the children of Obadiah, who contracted the debt to feed the prophets in a cave, when they were persecuted by Jezebel; and the creditor, according to them, was Jehoram, the son of Ahab, who lent him money on usury for this purpose, in his father's time; and now Obadiah being dead, he takes his children for the debt, and makes them bondmen; see also (Nehemiah 5:5). There seems to be an allusion to this practice, in (Isaiah 50:1), and it was not only the custom of the Jews to come upon children for the debts of parents, but of other nations: with the Athenians, if a father could not pay his debts, the son was obliged to pay, and in the mean while to be kept in bonds till he did [f1021]: and as Grotius, in (2 Kings 4:1) proves from Plutarch and Dionysius Halicarnassensis, children were sold by the creditors of their parents, as in Asia, at Athens, and at Rome. Now this expresses the state of bondage, sin, as a debt, brings men into; they become slaves to their own lusts, vassals of Satan, and in bondage to the law; and also the ruin and destruction it exposes them to; as, the curse and condemnation of the law, the wrath of God, eternal death, even the destruction of body and soul in hell:

and payment to be made by punishment, which will always be making, and never finished. This order of the king was not intended to be executed, as the sequel shows; but declares the will of God, that the sad and woeful condition of man should be set before him by the ministers of the word; signifying what his state is, how deserving of vengeance, and what must be his portion, if grace prevent not: the view of which is to vindicate the rights of law and justice, to express the sinner's deserts, and move him to apply to the Lord for grace and mercy, which effect it had.

Ver. 26. *The servant therefore fell down*, etc.] At his feet, upon his knees, or on his face, to the ground; not being able to stand before him, or look him in the face, and much less to answer the demands of his law and justice; but owned the debt, and his present inability to pay,

and worshipped him: the Vulgate Latin reads it, "prayed", or entreated him,

saying, Lord have patience with me; give me but time, spare me a little longer, send me not to prison, and I will pay thee all: a very weak and foolish promise, but what is usual for men in such circumstances to make. Thus men, under guilt, and dreadful apprehensions of wrath and ruin, frequently promise, that if their lives are but spared, what they will do for God, and in a religious way; and very foolishly and ignorantly imagine, that by their humiliation and tears, their prayers and other services by their good lives and conversations, for the future, they shall be able to make compensation to God for all the iniquities they have been guilty of: which shows them to be exceeding ignorant of the nature of sin, which is committed against an infinite being, and therefore reconciliation for it cannot be made by finite creature; as also of the nature of their duties and services, which, when performed, in ever so good a manner, can never make satisfaction for past offences, these being duties they are obliged to perform; and would have been equally obliged thereunto if they had never offended; and likewise betrays great vanity, pride, boasting, and conceit of themselves, and abilities, as that they shall be able, in a little time to pay all, when they have nothing at all to pay with: and was patience to be exercised towards them ever so long, they would still be in the same condition, and in no better capacity to make payment; but, on the contrary, would still run a larger score, and be more and more in debt. Indeed, the patience and longsuffering of God to his people is salvation; not that by giving them time, and bearing with them, they discharge their debts, and work out their salvation; but waiting upon them to be gracious to them, he brings them to repentance, to a sense of themselves and sins, and to an acknowledgment of them, and leads them, by faith, to his Son for righteousness, forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life; but as for others, his patience towards them, and forbearance of them, issue in their everlasting destruction, which, by their iniquities, they are fitted for.

Ver. 27. *Then the Lord of that servant was moved with compassion*, etc.] Or had compassion on him, showed pity to him, and extended mercy towards him; not that he was moved hereunto by any actions of his, as his prostrating himself before him, and his worshipping him, nor by his cries and entreaties, nor by his promises, which were not at all to be depended on, but by his own goodness, and will; for not to anything that this man said, or did, nor to any deserts of his, but to the pure mercy, and free grace of God, is to be ascribed what is after related:

and loosed him; from obligation to punishment, and from a spirit of bondage, through the guilt of sin, and work of the law upon his conscience:

and forgave him the debt; the whole debt of ten thousand talents: for when God forgives sin, he forgives all sin, original and actual, secret and open, sins of omission and commission, of heart, lip, and life, of thought, word, and deed, past, present, and to come; and that freely, according to his abundant mercy, and the riches of his grace; without any regard to any merits, motives and conditions in the creature; though not without respect to the satisfaction of Christ, which no ways detracts from the grace and mercy of God, since this is owing to his gracious provision and acceptation. It was grace in God that provided, sent, and parted with his Son to be the propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and accepted the satisfaction when made, in the room, and stead of sinners: it was grace in Christ to become a surety for them, to assume their nature, to shed his precious blood, and give himself an offering, and a sacrifice for them; and it is distinguishing grace that this satisfaction should be provided, made, and accepted, not for angels, but for men; and though it is at the expense of Christ's blood and life that this satisfaction is made, and remission of sins obtained, yet the whole is entirely free to those who are partakers of it; they have it without money; and without price. So, that though the satisfaction of Christ is not expressly mentioned in this parable, and forgiveness of sin, which lies in a non-remembrance, and non-imputation of it, in a covering, and blotting it out, and in remitting the obligation to punishment for it, is ascribed to the compassion and mercy of God, yet it is implied; since these two involve each other: the special mercy of God, in the forgiveness of sins, streams only through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; and the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ largely display the grace and mercy of God.

Ver. 28. *But the same servant went out*, etc.] From his Lord's palace and presence, immediately, directly, after he had got his pardon and liberty:

and found one of his fellow servants; a fellow creature and Christian; not only one of the same nature and species; but of the same profession of religion, and in the service of the same kind and generous master:

which owed an hundred pence; which, if understood of Roman pence, each penny being seven pence halfpenny of our money, amounted to no more than three pounds and half-a-crown; a small sum, in comparison of the ten thousand talents which had been just now forgiven him: for so sins

committed against men, against fellow creatures, or fellow Christians; are but small, when compared with those which are committed against God. All which circumstances, as that it was immediately after he had been forgiven himself; that it was a fellow servant he found: and the sum he owed him so inconsiderable, greatly aggravate his inhuman carriage, next related:

and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, pay me that thou owest; he laid hold on him in a violent manner, and used him with great inhumanity: he took him by the collar, and shook him, and griped him so hard about the neck, that he almost throttled, and strangled, or choked him, as the word signifies, and is so rendered in most versions. It answers to the Hebrew word qnh, which is used by the Jews[f1022] in the same sense:

> "qynjh, he that throttles anyone (who is indebted to him) in the streets, and his friend comes up and says, let him go, and I will pay thee, he is free, etc."

This man insisted on payment of the whole debt; which expresses the rigour and severity used by some professors of religion to their fellow Christians; who, having offended them, in ever so small a matter, will not put up with the affront, nor forgive the injury, without having the most ample satisfaction, and avenging themselves upon them to the uttermost.

Ver. 29. *And his fellow servant fell down at his feet*, etc.] In the most humble and submissive manner, just as he himself had done a little before at the feet of his Lord:

and besought him, saying, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all; using the very same words, in which he had expressed himself to his Lord, and had succeeded.

Ver. 30. *And he would not*, etc.] Have patience with him, give him time for payment, and forbear severity at present, as he requested:

but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt; had him before a proper officer, and proved his debt, and got him sent to jail, there to lie till the whole debt was paid; which, as it discovered ill nature, severe usage, so, great ignorance and stupidity; for a prison will pay no debt: which sets forth the rigorous proceedings of some church members against their brethren, that have displeased them; who immediately bring the matter before the church, and will not be easy unless some censure is laid upon

them, or they are cast out, until full satisfaction is given them, whereby oftentimes an useful member of a church is lost.

Ver. 31. *So when his fellow servants saw what was done*, etc.] What hard usage, and ill treatment, their fellow servant met with; the Syriac reads, "their fellow servants", being the fellow servants both of the creditor and the debtor:

they were very sorry; they were greatly grieved and troubled at the cruelty of the one, and the unhappiness of the other; being more tenderhearted, and of a more forgiving spirit than he:

and came and told unto their Lord all that was done; to their fellow servant, by one that had so lately received such favours from him: this may be expressive of the concern of some members of churches at such conduct: who, though they may not have strength and number sufficient to oppose such measures, yet being secretly grieved at such cruel methods, go to the throne of grace, and spread the case before the Lord, tell him all that is done by way of complaint; which, is no impeachment of his omniscience, only shows their trouble for such malpractices, and the sense they have, by whom only such grievances can be redressed.

Ver. 32. *Then his Lord, after that he had called him*, etc.] Or ordered him to be called, and brought before him,

said unto him, O thou wicked servant! Munster's Hebrew Gospel reads, "thou servant of Belial"; thou cruel and hard hearted man to thy fellow servant, and ungrateful creature to me, on whom my goodness to thee has not made any impression, nor taken any effect:

I forgave thee all that debt: all that vast debt of ten thousand talents, and that freely:

because thou desiredst me: not to forgive the debt, but to have patience, and give time, and therefore unasked forgave the whole sum, every farthing of it; which was such an instance of pure goodness, as was enough to have wrought upon an heart of stone, and engaged the most tender concern and pity for a fellow creature, as well as filled with thankfulness to the kind benefactor. The favour so lately bestowed on him is justly observed as an aggravation of his wickedness.

Ver. 33. *Shouldest not thou also have had compassion*. etc.] It is but reasonable, what ought to be, and may be expected, that such who have received mercy, should show mercy; and as the Lord had compassion on this man, and had forgiven him such an immense sum, and saved him, his wife and children, from being sold for bondslaves, the least he could have done after this, would have been to have followed such an example, and have had mercy, as his Lord says to him,

on thy fellow servant; between whom, and him, there was not so great a distance, as between him, and his Lord; and the sum so small that was owing to him, as not to be mentioned with his:

even as, I had pity on thee; such an instance of pity and compassion did not only set him an example, worthy of his imitation, but laid him under an obligation to have acted such a part.

Ver. 34. *And his Lord was wroth*, etc.] Very angry, greatly incensed, and justly provoked at such inhuman treatment:

and delivered him to the tormentors, or jail keepers. The Ethiopic version renders it, “to them that judge”, or the judges; Munster’s Hebrew Gospel, “to the punishers”, or such that inflicted punishment according to the decree of the judge: from both, the sense may be, that he was delivered over to proper judges of his case, to be treated as the nature of it required, to be cast into prison, and there endure all the severities of law and justice:

till he should pay all that was due unto him; which being so vast a sum, and he but a servant, could never be done: but inasmuch as this man was fully and freely pardoned before, how comes it to pass, that full payment of debt is yet insisted on? It is certain, that sin, once pardoned by God, he never punishes for it; for pardon with him is of all sin; he forgives all trespasses, though ever so many, and remits the whole debt, be it ever so large; which act of his grace will never be revoked: it is one of his gifts which are without repentance; it proceeds upon, and comes through a plenary satisfaction for sin made by his own Son, and therefore it would be unjust to punish for it: by this act, sin is covered out of sight; it is blotted out, and entirely done away, and that for ever. Hence some think this man had only the offer of a pardon, and not that itself; but it is not an offer of pardon, that Christ, by his blood, has procured, and is exalted to give, but that itself; and this man had his debt, his whole debt forgiven him: others think, that this was a church forgiveness, who looked upon him, judged

him, and received him as one forgiven; but for his cruel usage of a fellow member, delivered him to the tormentors, passed censures on him, and excommunicated him, till he should give full satisfaction, which is more likely: others, this forgiveness was only in his own apprehensions: he presumed, and hoped he was forgiven, when he was not; but then his crime could not have been so aggravated as is: rather, this forgiveness is to be understood of averting calamities and judgments, likely to fall for his iniquities, which is sometimes the sense of this phrase: (see 1 Kings 8:34,36,39) and so his being delivered to the tormentors may mean, his being distressed with an accusing guilty conscience, an harassing, vexing devil, many misfortunes of life, and temporal calamities. Though after all, this is not strictly to be applied to any particular case or person, but the scope of the parable is to be attended to; which is to enforce mutual forgiveness among men, from having received full and free pardon at the hands of God; and that without the former, there is little reason to expect the latter, as appears from what follows.

Ver. 35. *So likewise shall my heavenly Father*, etc.] This is the accommodation and application of the parable, and opens the design and intent of it; showing that God, who is Christ's Father, that is in heaven, will act in like manner towards all such persons, who are cruel and hard hearted to their brethren, and are of merciless and unforgiving spirits; for so it is said,

he will do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses. The phrase, "their trespasses", is omitted by the Vulgate Latin, the Arabic, and the Ethiopic versions, but is in all the Greek copies; and designs not pecuniary debts, though these are to be forgiven, and not rigorously exacted in some cases, and circumstances; but all injuries by word or deed, all offences, though ever so justly taken, or unjustly given; these should be forgiven fully, freely, and from the heart, forgetting, as well as forgiving, not upbraiding with them, or with former offences, and aggravating them; and should also pray to God that he would forgive also. It is certainly the will of God, that we should forgive one another all trespasses and offences. The examples of God and Christ should lead and engage unto it; the pardon of sin received by ourselves from the hands of God strongly enforces it; the peace and comfort of communion in public ordinances require it; the reverse is contrary to the spirit and character of Christians, is very displeasing to our heavenly Father, greatly unlike to Christ, and grieving to the Spirit of God.

CHAPTER 19

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 19

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings*, etc.] Concerning humility, avoiding offences, the methods to be taken in reproving offenders, and the forgiveness that is to be exercised towards them:

he departed from Galilee; where he had chiefly preached and wrought his miracles, no more to return thither till after his resurrection:

and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan; that is, to that country which was called "beyond Jordan", and bordered on Judea; coming still nearer and nearer to Jerusalem, where he had told his disciples, a little while ago, he must come, and suffer, and die. Rather, it should be rendered, "on this side Jordan", as also in (<4001028>John 1:28) for the coasts of Judea were on this side; so ˆdryh rb[, is rendered in (<5004949>Deuteronomy 4:49)

Ver. 2. *And great multitudes followed him*, etc.] The Persic version adds, "of the sick and diseased"; but all that followed him were not such, though some were: these came not only from Galilee, but from the adjacent parts, from the country beyond Jordan, and the coasts of Judea, where he had been formerly; and who resort to him again, as Mark observes; and whom, according to his usual manner, he taught and instructed in the knowledge of divine things, and confirmed his doctrines by miracles:

and he healed them there; in the above mentioned places, even as many of them as were sick and diseased.

Ver. 3. *The Pharisees also came unto him*, etc.] Either from the places round about, or from Jerusalem: these came unto him, not for the sake of learning, or to be instructed by him; but as spies upon him, to observe what he said and did, and watch every opportunity to expose him to the contempt and hatred of the people;

tempting him with a question about divorces, in order to ensnare him:

and saying to him, is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? be it ever so trivial, as said the school of Hillell: for there was a difference between the school of Shammai and the school of Hillell about this matter; the former insisted that a man might not put away his wife but in case of uncleanness; but the latter allowed putting away for very trifling things; as if she spoiled her husband's food by over roasting, or over salting it; and, as one of the doctors say, if he found another woman that was more beautiful than her; *see Gill "<40532>Matthew 5:32"*. This question being now agitated in the schools, they artfully put to Christ; not for information, but with a view to reproach him in some way or other; and that he might incur the resentment of one party or another, as he should answer. They might argue thus with themselves, and hope to succeed in this manner; should he be on the side of the school of Shammai, which was the weakest side, and less popular, as they had reason to believe he would, he would then expose himself to the resentment of the school of Hillell, and all on that side the question; should he take the part of Hillell, he would make the school of Shammai his enemies; should he forbid putting away of wives, which Moses allowed, they would then traduce him as contrary to Moses, and his law, which could not fail of setting the people against him; and should he consent to it, they would charge him with contradicting himself, or with inconstancy in his doctrine, since he had before asserted the unlawfulness of it, but in case of adultery; and should he abide by this, they might hope to irritate the men against him, who would think their liberty granted by Moses was entrenched on; as, on the other hand, should he, according to the question, admit of putting away for every cause, the women would be provoked at him, who would be left to the uncertain humour and caprice of their husbands; so that either way they hoped to get an advantage of him.

Ver. 4. *And he answered and said unto them*, etc.] Not by replying directly to the question, but by referring them to the original creation of man, and to the first institution of marriage, previous to the law of Moses;

have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female? This may be read in (<01027>Genesis 1:27) and from thence this sense of things collected; that God, who in the beginning of time, or of the creation, as Mark expresses it, made all things, the heavens, and the earth, and all that is therein, and particularly "man", as the Vulgate Latin, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel supply it here, made the first parents of mankind, male and female; not male and females, but one male, and one

female; first, one male, and then, of him one female, who, upon her creation, was brought and married to him; so that in this original constitution, no provision was made for divorce, or polygamy. Adam could not marry more wives than one, nor could he put away Eve for every cause, and marry another: now either the Pharisees had read this account, or they had not; if they had not, they were guilty of great negligence and sloth; if they had, they either understood it or not; if they did not understand it, it was greatly to their reproach, who pretended to great knowledge of the Scriptures, and to be able to explain them to others; and if they did understand it, there was no need for this question, which therefore must be put with an evil design.

Ver. 5. *And said*, etc.] (Genesis 2:24) where they seem to be the words of Adam, though here they are ascribed to God, who made Adam and Eve; and as if they were spoken by him, when he brought them together; and which is easily reconciled by observing, that these words were spoken by Adam, under the direction of a divine revelation; showing, that there would be fathers, and mothers, and children; and that the latter, when grown up, would enter into a marriage state, and leave their parents, and cleave to their proper yoke fellows, which relations then were not in being: this therefore being the effect of a pure revelation from God, may be truly affirmed to be said by him. Some think they are the words of Moses the historian; and if they were, as they were delivered by divine inspiration, they may be rightly called the word of God. A note by Jarchi on this text exactly agrees herewith, which is ˆk trmwa çdqh jwr, "the holy Spirit says thus: for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife"; and not wives: and the phrase denotes that close union between a man and his wife, which is not to be dissolved for every cause, it being stricter than that which is between parents and children; for the wife must be cleaved unto, and father and mother forsaken: not that upon this new relation between man and wife, the former relation between parents and children ceases; nor does this phrase denote an entire separation from them, so as to have the affection alienated from them, or to be disengaged from all duty and obedience to them, and care and regard for them, for the future; but a relinquishing the "house of his father and the bed of his mother", as all the three Targums on the place explain it: that is, he shall quit the house of his father, and not bed and board there, and live with him as before; but having taken a wife to himself, shall live and cohabit with her:

and they twain shall be one flesh; the word “twain” is: not in the Hebrew text in Genesis, but in the Septuagint version compiled by Jews, in the Samaritan Pentateuch, and version, and in the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel, who renders, it as here, dj arçybl ˆwhywwrt ˆwhyw, “and they two shall be one flesh”. This is the true sense, for neither more nor less can possibly be meant; and denotes that near conjunction, and strict union, between a man and his wife, the wife being a part of himself, and both as one flesh, and one body, and therefore not to be parted on every slight occasion; and has a particular respect to the act of carnal copulation, which only ought to be between one man and one woman, lawfully married to each other; (see Gill on “<4666>1 Corinthians 6:16”).

Ver. 6. *Wherefore they are no more twain*, etc.] They were two before marriage, but now no more so; not but that they remain two distinct persons,

but one flesh; or, as the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, “one body”: hence the wife is to beloved by the husband as his own body, as himself, as his own flesh, (<4528>Ephesians 5:28,29).

what therefore God hath joined together; or, by the first institution of marriage, has declared to be so closely united together, as to be, as it were, one flesh, and one body, as husband and wife are;

let no man put asunder; break the bond of union, dissolve the relation, and separate them from each other, for every trivial thing, upon any slight occasion, or for anything; but what is hereafter mentioned. The sense is, that the bond of marriage being made by God himself, is so sacred and inviolable, as that it ought not to be dissolved by any man; not by the husband himself, or any other for him; nor by any state or government, by any prince or potentate, by any legislator whatever; no, not by Moses himself, who is, at least, included, if not chiefly designed here, though not named, to avoid offence: and God and man being opposed in this passage, shows, that marriage is an institution and appointment of God, and therefore not to be changed and altered by man at his pleasure; this not merely a civil, but a sacred affair, in which God is concerned.

Ver. 7. *They say unto him*, etc.] That is the Pharisees, who object the law of Moses to him, hoping hereby to ensnare him, and expose him to the resentment of the people, should he reject that, as they supposed he would;

why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and put her away? referring to (Deuteronomy 24:1) which they thought to be a contradiction, and what they knew not how to reconcile to the doctrine Christ had delivered, concerning the original institution of marriage, and the close union there is between a man and his wife, by virtue of it, and which is not to be dissolved by men. Concerning a writing of divorcement and the form, and manner of it, *see Gill "Matthew 5:31"*

Ver. 8. *He saith unto them*, etc.] In answer to their objection;

Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: in which may be observed, that, though it was by direction that Moses, in his system of laws, allowed of divorces; yet not God, but he is said to do it, because it was a branch of the political and judicial laws, by which the people of the Jews were governed under Moses, and whilst the Mosaic economy continued, and did not concern other people, and other times; and therefore it is said "you" and "your" wives, you Jews, and you only, and not the Gentiles. And so the Jews say [f1023], that the Gentiles have no divorces: for thus they represent God, saying;

> "in Israel I have granted divorces, I have not granted divorces among the nations of the world. R. Chananiah, in the name of R. Phineas, observed, that in every other section it is written, the Lord of hosts, but here it is written, the God of Israel; to teach thee, that the holy, blessed God does not join his name to divorces, but in Israel only. R. Chayah Rabbah says, ˆyçwryg ˆhl ˆya µywg, "the Gentiles have no divorces.""

Besides, this was a direct positive command to the Jews, as the Pharisees suggest in their objection; it was only a sufferance, a permission in some cases, and not in everyone; and that because of the hardness of their hearts; they being such a stubborn and inflexible people, that when they were once displeased there was no reconciling them; and so malicious and revengeful, that if this had not been granted, would have used their wives, that displeased them, in a most cruel, and barbarous manner, if not have murdered them: so that this grant was made, not to indulge their lusts, but to prevent greater evils; and not so much as a privilege and liberty to the men, as in favour of the women; who, when they could not live peaceably and comfortably with a man, might be dismissed and marry another:

but from the beginning it was not so; from the beginning of time, or of the creation, or of the world, or at the first institution of marriage, and in the first ages of the world, there was no such permission, nor any such practice. This was not the declared will of God at first, nor was it ever done by any good men before the times of Moses; we never read that Adam, or Seth, or Noah, or Abraham, put away their wives, upon any consideration; though in the latter there might have been some appearance of reason for so doing, on account of sterility, but this he did not; nor Isaac, nor Jacob, nor any of the "patriarchs".

Ver. 9. *And I say unto you*, etc.] To his disciples, when they were with him alone in the house, and asked him more particularly about the subject, concerning which he had been discoursing with the Pharisees, as Mark observes, (<4100>Mark 10:10,11) when he said to them much the same things, he had delivered before in (<4052>Matthew 5:32)

whosoever shall put away in his wife; separate her from his person, house and bed, and dismiss her as his wife, no more to be considered in that relation to him,

except it be for fornication; or whoredom, for defiling his bed: for this is not to be understood of fornication committed before, but of uncleanness after marriage, which destroys their being one flesh:

and shall marry another woman, committeth adultery; Marks adds, "against her"; which may be understood either of the woman he marries, which not being lawfully done, she lives in adultery with the husband of another woman; or of his former wife, and who is still his wife, and to whose injury he has married another; and he not only commits adultery himself, but, as in (<4052>Matthew 5:32) "causeth her to commit adultery also", by being the occasion of marrying another man, when she is still his lawful wife:

and whoso marrieth her which is put away, for any other cause than adultery,

doth commit adultery also; since he cohabits with the wife of another man; *see Gill "<4052>Matthew 5:32"*

Ver. 10. *His disciples say unto him*, etc.] Being surprised at this account of things, it being quite contrary to what they had been taught, and very different from the general practice and usage of their nation:

if the case of a man be so with his wife; if they are so closely joined together in marriage; if they are, as it were, one flesh, or one body, that a man's wife is himself: that the bond between them is so inviolable, that it is not to be dissolved, but in case of adultery; that if a separation be made by a bill of divorce, in any other case, and either party marry again, they are guilty of adultery; if a man cannot part with his wife lawfully, provided she be chaste, and is faithful to his bed, let her be what she will otherwise, though ever so disagreeable in her person, and troublesome in her behaviour; though she may be passionate, and a brawler; though she may be drunken, luxurious, and extravagant, and mind not the affairs of her family, yet if she is not an adulteress, must not be put away:

it is not good to marry; it would be more expedient and advisable for a man to live always a single life, than to run the risk of marrying a woman, that may prove very disagreeable and uncomfortable; to whom he must be bound all the days of his or her life, and, in such a case, not to be able to relieve and extricate himself. This they said under the prejudice of a national law and custom, which greatly prevailed, and under the influence of a carnal heart.

Ver. 11. *But he said unto them*, etc.] With respect to the inference or conclusion, the disciples formed from what he had asserted:

all men cannot receive this saying; of their's, that it is not good to marry, but it is more proper and expedient to live a single life! every man, as the Syriac version renders it, is not hl qps, "sufficient", or "fit", for this thing; everyone has not the gift of continency, and indeed very few; and therefore it is expedient for such to marry; for what the disciples said, though it might be true in part, yet not in the whole; and though the saying might be proper and pertinent enough to some persons, yet not to all, and indeed to none,

save they to whom it is given; to receive such a saying, to live unmarried with content, having the gift of chastity; for this is not of nature, but of grace: it is the gift of God.

Ver. 12. *For there are some eunuchs*, etc.] Our Lord here distinguishes the various sorts of persons, that can and do live in a single state with content: some by nature, and others by violence offered to them, are rendered incapable of entering into a marriage state; and others, through the gift of God, and under the influence of his grace, abstain from marriage cheerfully

and contentedly, in order to be more useful in the interest of religion; but the number of either of these is but few, in comparison of such who choose a conjugal state, and with whom it is right to enter into it, notwithstanding all the difficulties that may attend it. Some men are eunuchs, and of these there are different sorts; there are some,

which were so born from their mother's womb; meaning, not such who, through a natural temper and inclination of mind, could easily abstain from marriage, and chose to live single; but such who had such defects in nature that they were impotent, unfit for, and unable to perform the duties of a marriage state; who, as some are born without hands or feet, these were born without proper and perfect organs of generation; and such an one was, by the Jews, frequently called, hmh syrs, "an eunuch of the sun [f1024]": that is, as their doctors [f1025] explain it, one that from his mother's womb never saw the sun but as an eunuch; that is, one that is born so; and that such an one is here intended, ought not to be doubted. The signs of such an eunuch, are given by the Jewish [f1026] writers, which may be consulted by those, that have ability and leisure. This sort is sometimes [f1027] called µymç ydyb syrs "an eunuch by the hands of heaven", or God, in distinction from those who are so by the hands, or means of men, and are next mentioned:

and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: as among the Romans formerly, and which Domitian the emperor forbid by a law [f1028]; and more especially in the eastern countries, and to this day among the Turks, that they may the more safely be entrusted with the custody of their women; and this sort the Jews call µda syrs, "an eunuch of men", or µda ydyb, "by the hands of men". The distinction between an "eunuch of the sun", and an "eunuch of men", is so frequent with the Jews [f1029], and so well known to them, that a question need not be made of our Lord's referring to it:

and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs; not in a literal sense, in which the words are not to be taken, as they were by Origen; who though otherwise too much pursued the allegorical way of interpreting Scripture, here took it literally, and castrated himself [f1030]; as did also a sort of heretics, called Valesians [f1031], from one Valens an Arabian; and which practice is recommended by Philo the Jew [f1032], and by Heathen philosophers [f1033], for the sake of chastity. But here it means such, who having the gift of continency without mutilating their bodies, or indulging

any unnatural lusts, can live chastely without the use of women, and choose celibacy:

for the kingdom of heaven's sake; not in order, by their chaste and single life, to merit and obtain the kingdom of glory; but that they might be more at leisure, being free from the incumbrances of a marriage state, to attend the worship and service of God, the ordinances of the Gospel church state, to minister in, and preach the Gospel of Christ, and be a means of spreading it in the world, and of enlarging his kingdom and interest.

He that is able to receive it, let him receive it: whoever is able to receive cordially, and embrace heartily, the above saying concerning the expediency and goodness of a single life, and having the gift of continency, can live according to it; let him take it, and hold it fast, and act up to it; he may have less of worldly trouble, and be more useful for God in the Gospel of Christ, and to the interest of religion; but this should be a voluntary thing: no man should be forced into it; and he that goes into it, ought to consider well whether he is able to contain, or not.

Ver. 13. *Then were there brought unto him little children*, etc.] It does not appear that they were new born babes; the words used by either of the evangelists do not always signify such, but are sometimes used of such as are capable of going alone; yea, of receiving instructions, of understanding the Scriptures, and even of one of twelve years of age, (<401802>Matthew 18:2 <410539>Mark 5:39,42 <550315>2 Timothy 3:15) nor is it probable that infants just born, or within a month, should be had abroad. Moreover, these were such as Christ called unto him, (<421816>Luke 18:16) and were capable of coming to him of themselves, as his words following suppose; nor does their being brought to him, or his taking them in his arms, contradict this; since the same things are said of such as could walk of themselves, (<401222>Matthew 12:22, 17:16) (<410936>Mark 9:36). Nor is it known whose children they were, whether their parents were believers or unbelievers, nor by whom they were brought: but the end for which they were brought is expressed,

that he should put his hands on them, and pray; not that he should baptize them, nor did he; which may be concluded from the entire silence of all the evangelists; and from an express declaration that Christ baptized none; and from the mention of other ends for which they were brought, as that Christ should "touch" them, (<411013>Mark 10:13 <421815>Luke 18:15) as he sometimes used to do persons, when he healed them of diseases; and probably some of those infants, if not all of them, were diseased, and brought to be cured;

otherwise, it is not easy to conceive what they should be touched by him for: or as here, that he might put his hands on them, and pray over them, and bless them, as was usual with the Jews to do; (see <01814>Genesis 48:14-16) and it was common with them to bring their children to venerable persons, men of note for religion and piety, to have their blessing and prayers [f1034]:

and the disciples rebuked them; not the children, as the Persic version reads, but those that brought them, Mark observes; either because they came in a rude and disorderly manner, and were very noisy and clamorous; or they might think it would be too troublesome to Christ, to go through such a ceremony with so many of them; or that it was too mean for him, and below him to take notice of them; or for fear he should take fresh occasion, on the sight of these children, to rebuke them again for their pride and ambition. However, from this rebuke and prohibition of the disciples, it looks plainly as if it had never been the practice of the Jews, nor of John the Baptist, nor of Christ and his disciples, to baptize infants; for had this been then in use, they would scarcely have forbid and rebuked those that brought them, since they might have thought they brought them to be baptized; but knowing of no such usage that ever obtained in that nation, neither among those that did, or did not believe in Christ, they forbad them.

Ver. 14. *But Jesus said, suffer little children* etc.] This he said to show his humility, that he was not above taking notice of any; and to teach his disciples to regard the weakest believers, and such as were but children in knowledge; and to inform them what all ought to be, who expect the kingdom of heaven; for it follows;

and forbid them not to come unto me, now, or at any other time;

for of such is the kingdom of heaven; that is, as the Syriac renders it, "who are as these" or as the Persic version, rather paraphrasing than translating, renders it, "who have been humble as these little children": and it is as if our Lord should say, do not drive away these children from my person and presence; they are lively emblems of the proper subjects of a Gospel church state, and of such that shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: by these I may instruct and point out to you, what converted persons should be, who have a place in my church below, and expect to enter into my kingdom and glory above; that they are, or ought to be, like such children, harmless and inoffensive; free from rancour and malice, meek, modest, and humble;

without pride, self-conceit, and ambitious views, and desires of grandeur and superiority. Christ's entire silence about the baptism of infants at this time, when he had such an opportunity of speaking of it to his disciples, had it been his will, has no favourable aspect on such a practice. It is not denied that little children, whether born of believers or unbelievers, which matters not, may be chosen of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, and have the passive work of the Spirit on their souls, and so enter into heaven; but this is not the sense of this text. It was indeed a controversy among the Jews, whether the little children of the wicked of Israel, abh µlw[l ^yab, "go into the world to come": some affirmed, and others denied; but all agreed, that the little children of the wicked of the nations of the world, do not. They dispute about the time of entrance of a child into the world to come; some say, as soon as it is born, according to (<19223>Psalm 22:31) others, as soon as it can speak, or count, according to (<19220>Psalm 22:30) others as soon as it is sown, as the gloss says, as soon as the seed is received in its mother's womb, though it becomes an abortion; according to the same words, "a seed shall serve thee": others, as soon as he is circumcised, according to (<19815>Psalm 88:15) others, as soon as he can say "Amen", according[f1035] to (<23602>Isaiah 26:2) All weak, frivolous, and impertinent.

Ver. 15. *And he laid his hands on them*, etc.] "And blessed them", as Mark says; he put his hands upon them, according to the custom of the country, and wished all kind of prosperity to them:

and departed thence, out of the house where he had been, and his disciples with him: the Ethiopic version renders it, "and they went from thence", from those parts, towards Jerusalem.

Ver. 16. *And behold, one came*, etc.] The Persic version reads, "a rich man"; and so he was, as appears from what follows: Luke calls him, "a certain ruler"; not of a synagogue, an ecclesiastical ruler, but a civil magistrate: perhaps he might be one of the sanhedrim, which consisted of "twenty one" persons; or of that which consisted only of "three", as in some small towns and villages Mark represents him as "running"; for Christ was departed out of the house, and was gone into the way, the high road, and was on his journey to some other place, when this man ran after him with great eagerness; and, as the same evangelist adds, "kneeled to him"; thereby paying him civil respect, and honour; believing him to be a worthy good man, and deserving of esteem and veneration:

and said unto him, good master: some say, that this was a title which the Jewish doctors were fond of, and gave to each other, but I have not observed it; he seems by this to intimate, that he thought him not only to be a good man, but a good teacher; that he was one that came from God, and taught good doctrine, which induced him to run after him, and put the following question to him:

what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? Or, as in the other evangelists, "inherit eternal life"; a phrase much in use with the Jewish Rabbins [f1036]:

> "Judah confessed, and was not ashamed, and what is his end? abh µlw[h yyj lj n, "he inherits the life of the world to come" (i.e. eternal life); Reuben confessed, and was not ashamed, and what is his end? "he inherits the life of the world to come"."

This man was no Sadducee, he believed a future state; was a serious man, thoughtful about another world, and concerned how he should enjoy everlasting life; but was entirely upon a legal bottom, and under a covenant of works; and speaks in the language and strain of the nation of Israel, who were seeking for righteousness and life by the works of the law: he expected eternal life by doing some good thing, or things; and hoped, as the sequel shows, that he had done every good thing necessary to the obtaining it.

Ver. 17. *And he said unto him*, etc.] By way of reply, first taking notice of, and questioning him about, the epithet he gave him:

why callest thou me good? not that he denied that he was so; for he was good, both as God and man, in his divine and human natures; in all his offices, and the execution of them; he was goodness itself, and did good, and nothing else but good. But the reason of the question is, because this young man considered him only as a mere man, and gave him this character as such; and which, in comparison of God, the fountain of all goodness, agrees with no mere man: wherefore our Lord's view is, by his own language; and from his own words, to instruct him in the knowledge of his proper deity. Some copies read, "why dost thou ask me concerning good". And so the Vulgate Latin, and the Ethiopic versions, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read; but the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, read as we do, and this the answer of Christ requires.

There is none good but one, that is God; who is originally, essentially, independently, infinitely, and immutably good, and the author and source of all goodness; which cannot be said of any mere creature. This is to be understood of God considered essentially, and not personally; or it is to be understood, not of the person of the Father, to the exclusion of the Son, or Spirit: who are one God with the Father, and equally good in nature as he. Nor does this contradict and deny that there are good angels, who have continued in that goodness in which they were created; or that there are good men, made so by the grace of God; but that none are absolutely and perfectly good, but God. What Christ here says of God, the [f1037] Jews say of the law of Moses, whose praise they can never enough extol; hrwt ala bwj ˆya "there is nothing good but the law". The law is good indeed; but the author of it must be allowed to be infinitely more so. Christ next directly answers to the question,

but if thou wilt enter into life: eternal life, which is in the question, and which being sometimes expressed by a house, a city, and kingdom, by mansions, and everlasting habitations, enjoyment of it is fitly signified by entering into it; which, if our Lord suggests, he had a desire of having a right to by doing any good thing himself, he must

keep the commandments; that is, perfectly: he must do not only one good thing, but all the good things the law requires; he must not be deficient in any single action, in anyone work of the law, either as to matter, or manner of performance; everything must be done, and that just as the Lord in his law has commanded it. Our Lord answers according to the tenor of the covenant of works, under which this man was; and according to the law of God, which requires perfect obedience to it, as a righteousness, and a title to life; and in case of the least failure, curses and condemns to everlasting death; (see <05D625>Deuteronomy 6:25 <480312>Galatians 3:12,10). This Christ said, in order to show, that it is impossible to enter into, or obtain eternal life by the works of the law, since no man can perfectly keep it; and to unhinge this man from off the legal foundation on which he was, that he might drop all his dependencies on doing good things, and come to him for righteousness and life.

Ver. 18. *He saith unto him, which*? etc.] Whether those commandments of a moral, or of a ceremonial kind; whether the commands of the written, or of the oral law; of God, or of the elders, or both; or whether he did not

mean some new commandments of his own, which he delivered as a teacher sent from God:

Jesus said; according to the other evangelists, “thou knowest the commandments”; not the true nature, spirituality, and use of them, but the letter and number of them; being trained up from a child by his parents, in the reading them, committing them to memory, and the outward observance of them, particularly those of the second table:

thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness. Christ takes no notice of the ceremonial law, nor of the traditions of the elders, only moral precepts; and these only such as refer to the second, and not the first table of the law, which respect duty to the neighbour, and not to God: and this he does, because these commandments were more known, and were in common use; and he chose to instance in these, partly to show, that if men are under obligation to regard these, much more such as concern God more immediately; and partly, to observe, that if men are deficient in their duty to one another, they are much more so in their worship of God; and consequently, eternal life is never to be got and enjoyed by the performance of these things.

Ver. 19. *Honour thy father and thy mother*: etc.] This, as it is the first commandment with promise, so the first of the second table, and yet is here mentioned last; which inversion of order is of no consequence: so the “seventh” command is put before the “sixth”, and the “fifth” omitted, in (Romans 13:9) and with the Jews it is a common [f1038] saying, hrwtb rjwamw µdqwm ^ya, “there is neither first nor last in the law”: that is, it is of no consequence which commandment is recited first, or which last. Moreover, it looks as if it was usual to recite these commands in this order, since they are placed exactly in the same method, by a very noted Jewish [f1039] writer.

And thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; which is not a particular distinct command from the rest, or an explication of the tenth and last, not mentioned; but a recapitulation, or compendium, and abridgment of the whole, and is said to be a complement and fulfilling of the law; (see Romans 13:9 Galatians 5:14).

Ver. 20. *The young man saith unto him*, etc.] For though he was so very rich and in such an exalted station in life, as to be a ruler, it seems he was

but a young man; and to be so early serious and religious, amidst so much riches and grandeur, though it was but externally, was both remarkable and commendable: upon hearing the answer of Christ, with which he was highly pleased and greatly elated, he very pertly replies,

all these things have I kept from my youth up: as soon as he was capable of learning, his parents taught him these precepts; and ever since he had the use of his reason, and understood the letter, and outward meaning of them, he had been careful to observe them; nor could he charge himself with any open and flagrant transgression of them; not understanding the internal sense, extensive compass, and spirituality of them; and therefore asks,

what lack I yet? In what am I deficient hitherto? in what have I come short of doing these things? what remains at last to be performed? what other precepts are to be obeyed? if there are any other commands, I am ready to observe them, which may be thought necessary to obtain eternal life.

Ver. 21. *Jesus said unto him, if thou wilt be perfect*, etc.] Wanting nothing, completely righteous, according to the tenor of the covenant of works, having no evil, concupiscence, or worldly lusts: our Lord signifies it was not enough to be possessed of negative holiness, and do no hurt to his neighbour, to his person, property, and estate, but he must love him, and do him good; and therefore, though so far as he had complied with the law, it was right and commendable; wherefore it is said by Mark, "that Jesus beholding him loved him"; had an affectionate regard to him as man, and approved of his intentions, seriousness, and actions, so far as agreeable; yet tells him,

one thing thou lackest: not but that he lacked many more, but he was only willing to observe one thing to him, as a trial of his love to his neighbour, which is the fulfilling of the law:

go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: not that either the law of God, or Gospel of Christ, require this to be done of all men, and at all times; for though it is a duty binding upon all, and always, to relieve the poor and the needy, yet a man is not obliged to give all that he has to them; (see <470811>2 Corinthians 8:11) nor does either legal or Christian perfection lie in doing this: a man may give all his goods to the poor and yet be destitute of the grace of God, (<461303>1 Corinthians 13:3) much less can such an action merit the heavenly treasure of eternal life. Nevertheless of some persons, and in some cases, it

has been required, that they part with all their worldly substance, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; as the apostles were called to leave all and follow Christ, as this man was also; for it is added,

and come and follow me: between these two, Mark puts, “take up the cross”; all which to do, was much more than to sell what he had, and give to the poor; and indeed, in this branch lies Gospel perfection, or to be really and truly a Christian: for to “come” to Christ, is to believe in him, lay hold on him, receive and embrace him as a Saviour and Redeemer; and to “follow” him, is to be obedient to his will, to be observant of his commands, to submit to his ordinances, and to imitate him in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; neither of which can be done, without “taking up the cross”; bearing reproach and persecution with patience; undergoing hardships and difficulties, of one sort or another, which attend faith in Christ, a profession of his name, and following him the Lamb, whithersoever he goes. The consequence of this now, not by way of merit, but by way of grace, is the enjoyment of the rich treasures of eternal glory: but this man was so far from complying with the latter, with coming to Christ, taking up the cross, and following him, that he could by no means agree to the former, parting with his worldly substance; and which is mentioned, as a test of his love to God and his neighbour, and to discover his sinful love of the world, and the things of it; and consequently, that he was far from being in a state of perfection. Moreover, it should be observed, that Christ is here speaking, not the pure language of the law, or according to the principles of the Gospel, when he seems to place perfection in alms deeds, and as if they were meritorious of eternal life; but according to the doctrine of the Pharisees, and which was of this man; and so upon the plan of his own notions, moves him to seek for perfection, and convicts him of the want of it, in a way he knew would be disagreeable to him; and yet he would not be able to disprove the method, on the foot of his own tenets: for this is their doctrine [f1040];

> “It is a tradition, he that says this “sela”, or shekel, is for alms, that my son may live, or I may be a son of the world to come, lo! rwmg qydx hz, “this man is a perfect righteous man”.”

The gloss adds,

> “In this thing; and he does not say that he does not do it for the sake of it, but he fulfils the command of his Creator, who has

> commanded him to do alms; and he also intends profit to himself, that thereby he may be worthy of the world to come, or that his children may live."

And so in answer to a question much like this, the young man put to Christ [f1041]:

> "How shall we come at the life of the world to come?"

It is replied,

> "take thy riches, and give to the fatherless and the poor, and I will give thee a better portion in the law."

Ver. 22. *But when the young man heard that saying*. etc.] That he must sell his estates, and all his worldly substance, and the money made of them, give away to the poor; and become a follower of Christ, deny himself, and submit to hardships very disagreeable to the flesh:

he went away sorrowful; not with a godly sorrow for his sin and imperfections, but with the sorrow of the world, which worketh death: he was ashamed and confounded, that he could not perform what he had just now so briskly promised, at least tacitly, that whatever else was proper he would do; as also grieved, that he had not arrived to perfection, which he had hoped he had, but now began to despair of, and of obtaining eternal life; and most of all troubled, that he must part with his worldly substance, his heart was so much set upon, or not enjoy it:

for he had great possessions; which were very dear to him; and he chose rather to turn his back on Christ, and drop his pursuits of the happiness of the other world, than part with the present enjoyments of this.

Ver. 23. *Then said Jesus unto his disciples*. etc.] When the young man was gone; taking this opportunity to make some proper observations for the use and instruction of his disciples, after, as Mark observes, he had "looked round about"; with concern, and in order to affect their minds with this incident, and to raise their attention to what he was about to say:

verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven: either into the Gospel dispensation, and receive the truths, and submit to the ordinances of it, or into the kingdom of glory hereafter; not but that there have been, are, and will be, some that are rich, called by grace, brought into a Gospel church state, and are heirs of the kingdom of

heaven; though these are but comparatively few: nor is it riches themselves that make the entrance so difficult, and clog the way, either into grace or glory, but putting trust and confidence in them; and therefore in Mark, they "that have riches", are by Christ explained of such, that "trust in riches"; and which rich men in common are very apt to do, as this young man did, against which the apostle cautions, (<5467>1 Timothy 6:17)

Ver. 24. *And again I say unto you*, etc.] After the apostles had discovered their astonishment at the above expression, about the difficulty of a rich man entering into the kingdom of heaven; when they expected that, in a short time, all the rich and great men of the nation would espouse the interest of the Messiah, and acknowledge him as a temporal king, and add to the grandeur of his state and kingdom; and after he had in a mild and gentle manner, calling them "children", explained himself of such, that trusted in uncertain riches, served mammon, made these their gods, and placed their hope and happiness in them; in order to strengthen and confirm what he had before asserted, and to assure, in the strongest manner, the very great difficulty, and seeming impossibility, of rich men becoming followers of Christ here, or companions with him hereafter, he expresses himself in this proverbial way:

it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God: thus, when the Jews would express anything that was rare and unusual, difficult and impossible, they used a like saying with this. So speaking of showing persons the interpretation of their dreams [f1042];

> "Says Rabba, you know they do not show to a man a golden palm tree i.e. the interpretation of a dream about one, which, as the gloss says, is a thing he is not used to see, and of which he never thought, ajjmd apwqb lyy[d alyp alw, "nor an elephant going through the eye of a needle"."

Again, to one that had delivered something as was thought very absurd, it is said [f1043];

> "perhaps thou art one of Pombeditha (a school of the Jews in Babylon) ajjmd apwqb alyp ^ylyy[md, "who make an elephant pass through the eye of a needle"."

That is, who teach such things as are equally as monstrous and absurd, and difficult of belief. So the authors of an edition of the book of Zohar, to set forth the difficulty of the work they engaged in, express themselves in this manner [f1044]:

> "In the name of our God, we have seen fit, ajjmd apwqb alyp synkhl, "to bring an elephant through the eye of a needle"."

And not only among the Jews, but in other eastern nations, this proverbial way of speaking was used, to signify difficulties or impossibilities. Mahomet has it in his Alcoran [f1045];

> "Verily, says he, they who shall charge our signs with falsehood, and shall proudly reject them, the gates of heaven shall not be opened to them, neither shall they enter into paradise, "until a camel pass through the eye of a needle"."

All which show, that there is no need to suppose, that by a camel is meant, not the creature so called, but a cable rope, as some have thought; since these common proverbs manifestly make it appear, that a creature is intended, and which aggravates the difficulty: the reason why instead of an elephant, as used in most of the above sayings, Christ makes mention of a camel, may be, because that might be more known in Judea, than the other; and because the hump on its back would serve to make the thing still more impracticable.

Ver. 25. *When his disciples heard it*. etc.] That is, the difficulty of a rich man's entering into the kingdom of heaven, aggravated by the above proverbial expression,

they were exceedingly amazed. They were surprised at his first words; but when he confirmed them by the proverb of a camel's passing through the eye of a needle, they were, as Mark says, "astonished out of measure": they did not imagine there was any difficulty of rich men coming into the kingdom of the Messiah, which they took to be a worldly one, and would be filled with rich men; for so they understood Christ; though he meant by the kingdom of heaven a spiritual kingdom, a Gospel church state here, or the heavenly glory, or both; but when he expressed, by the proverb, the impracticableness of such men becoming the subjects thereof, their amazement increased;

saying, as in Mark, "among themselves", privately to one another,

who then can be saved? meaning, not with a spiritual and everlasting salvation, but a temporal one: for upon Christ's so saying, they might reason with themselves, that if rich men did not come into the kingdom of the Messiah, they would oppose him and his kingdom, with all their force and strength; and then what would become of such poor men as themselves, who would not be able to stand against them? nor could they hope to be safe long, or enjoy any continued happiness in the expected kingdom, should this be the case.

Ver. 26. *But Jesus beheld them*, etc.] Looking wishfully and earnestly at them; signifying thereby, that he knew their reasonings among themselves, though they did not speak out so as to be heard by him; and that there was no reason why they should be in so much concern, as their countenances showed, or possess themselves with such fears:

and said unto them, with men this is impossible. Mark adds, "but not with God; for with God all things are possible"; to be done by him, if he will, which are consistent with the glory and perfections of his nature: for as he could, by his almighty power, if he would, reduce a camel to so small a size, as to be able to go through the eye of a needle, which, with men, is an impossible thing; so by the mighty power of his grace he can work upon a rich man's heart, in such a manner, as to take off his affections from his worldly substance, and cause him to drop his trust and confidence in it: he can so influence and dispose his mind, as to distribute his riches cheerfully among the poor, and largely, and liberally supply their wants, and even part with all, when necessity requires it: he can change his heart, and cause the desires of his soul to be after true riches of grace and glory; and bring him to see his own spiritual poverty, his need of Christ, and salvation by him; and to deny himself, take up the cross, and follow him, by submitting to his most despised ordinances, and by suffering the loss of all things for his sake; and he can carry him through a thousand snares safe to his kingdom and glory, which is Christ's sense; though the thing is impossible upon the foot of human nature, and strength, which can never effect anything of this kind: and as to what the apostles suggested concerning the safety of persons in the Messiah's kingdom, if no rich man could enter there, but should be in opposition to it; our Lord's answer implies, that though, humanly speaking, it was not possible and practicable that they, a company of poor, mean, and despicable men, should be able to stand against the united force of the great and mighty men of the earth; yet God was able to support, and uphold them, succeed, and keep them, and make them both

useful and comfortable, amidst all the opposition and persecution they should meet with, until he had finished his whole will and work by them.

Ver. 27. *Then answered Peter and said unto him*, etc.] Peter observing what Christ said to the young man, bidding him sell all that he had, and give to the poor, and he should have treasure in heaven, and come and follow him, lays hold on it, and addresses him in the following manner,

behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee. Though their worldly substance was not so large as the young man's, they had not such estates to sell, nor that to give to the poor, he had; yet all that they had they left for Christ's sake, their parents, wives, children, houses, and worldly employments, by which they supported themselves and families; and became the disciples and followers of Christ, embraced his doctrines, submitted to his commands, imitated him in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, denying themselves, and suffering many hardships on his account: wherefore it is asked,

what shall we have therefore? what reward for all this? what part in the Messiah's kingdom? or what treasure in heaven?

Ver. 28. *And Jesus said unto them*, etc.] To all the disciples whom Peter represented;

verily I say unto you: the thing being something very considerable, and of great moment, Christ uses the asseveration he sometimes does in such cases:

that ye which have followed me. Christ does not deny that they had forsaken all for his sake, nor does he despise it, because it was but little they left, though he does not repeat it; but only takes notice of their following him, which, including their faith in him, their profession of him, and subjection to him, was a much greater action, and of more importance that the other, and therefore is only mentioned, and which our Lord confirms:

in the regeneration. This clause is so placed, that it may be read in connection with the preceding words, and be understood of the disciples following Christ in the regeneration; meaning, not the grace of regeneration, in which they could not be said, with propriety, to follow Christ; and one of them was never a partaker of it: but the new state of things, in the church of God, which was foretold, and is called the time of

reformation, or setting all things right, which began upon the sealing up the law, and the prophets, and the ministry of John the Baptist, and of Christ; who both, when they began to preach, declared, that this time, which they call the kingdom of heaven, was at hand, just ushering in. Now the twelve apostles followed Christ herein: they believed, and professed him to be the Messiah; they received, what the Jews called, his new doctrine, and preached it to others; they submitted to the new ordinance of baptism, and followed Christ, and attended him wherever he went, working miracles, preaching the Gospel, and reforming the minds and manners of men. Now this new dispensation is called the regeneration, and which more manifestly took place after our Lord's resurrection, and ascension, and the pouring down of the Spirit; wherefore the phrase may be connected with the following words,

when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory in the regeneration; not in the resurrection of the dead, or at the last judgment, but in this new state of things, which now began to appear with another face: for the apostles having a new commission to preach the Gospel to all the world; and being endued with power from on high for such service, in a short time went every where preaching the word, with great success. Gentiles were converted, as well as Jews, and both brought into a Gospel church state; the ceremonies of the old law being abolished, were disused; and the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper, every where practised; old things passed away, and all things became new: agreeably to this the Syriac version renders the phrase, atdj aml[b, "in the new world"; and so the Persic. The Arabic reads it, "in the generation", or "age to come"; which the Jews so often call the world, or age to come, the kingdom of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation.

When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, or glorious throne; as he did when he ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God; and was then exalted as a prince, and made, or declared to be Lord and Christ; and was crowned in human nature, with honour, and glory, and angels, principalities, and powers, made subject to him:

ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones: for though Judas fell from his apostleship, yet Matthias was chosen in his room, and took his place, and made up the number twelve; a metaphorical phrase, setting forth the honour, dignity, and authority of their office and ministry, by which they should be

judging the twelve tribes of Israel; doctrinally and practically; by charging them with the sin of crucifying Christ, condemning them for their unbelief, and rejection of him, denouncing the wrath of God, and the heaviest judgments that should fall upon them, as a nation, for their sin; and by turning from them to the Gentiles, under which judgment they continue to this day. So the doctors among the Jews are represented as sitting and judging others: of "the potters", in (1Ch 4:23) they say [f1046],

> "these are the disciples of the law, or the lawyers, for whose sake the world is created, anyd l[^ybtyd "who sit in judgment", and establish the world; and build, and perfect the ruins of the house of Israel."

Ver. 29. *And everyone that hath forsaken houses*, etc.] Not only the then disciples of Christ, but any other believer in him, whether at that time, or in any age, that should be called to quit their habitations, or leave their dearest relations, friends, and substance: as

brethren or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children, lands, for my name's sake; or, as in Luke, "for the kingdom of God's sake"; that is, for the sake of the Gospel, and a profession of it. Not that believing in Christ, and professing his name, do necessarily require a parting with all worldly substance, and natural relations, but when these things stand in competition with Christ, he is to be loved and preferred before them; and believers are always to be ready to part with them for his sake, when persecution arises, because of the word. All these things are to be relinquished, rather than Christ, and his Gospel; and such who shall be enabled, through divine grace, to do so,

shall receive an hundred fold: Mark adds, "now in this time"; and Luke likewise, "in this present time", in this world; which may be understood either in spiritual things, the love of God, the presence of Christ, the comforts of the Holy Ghost, the communion of saints, and the joys and pleasures felt in the enjoyment of these things, being an hundred times more and better to them, than all they have left or lost for Christ's sake; or in temporal things, so in Mark it seems to be explained, that such shall now receive an hundred fold,

even houses and brethren, and sisters and mothers, and children and lands; not that they should receive, for the leaving of one house, an hundred houses; or for forsaking one brother, an hundred brethren, etc.

which last indeed might be true, as to a spiritual relation; but that the small pittance of this world's goods, and the few friends they should have "with persecutions" along with them, and amidst them, should be so sweetened to them, with the love and presence of God, that these should be more and better to them than an hundred houses, fields, and friends, without them:

and shall inherit everlasting life. The other evangelists add, "in the world to come", which is infinitely best of all; for this is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, which fades not away, reserved in the heavens, when all other inheritances are corruptible, defiled, fading and perishing; houses fall, relations die, friends fail, and lands and estates do not continue for ever: they then have the best of it, who being called, in providence, to quit all terrene enjoyments for Christ's sake, are favoured with his presence here, and shall enjoy eternal glory and happiness with him in another world.

Ver. 30. *But many that are first shall be last*, etc.] This may refer unto, or be occasioned by, either the young ruler; signifying that he, and others like him, who were superior in riches and honour, were first in this world, of the first rank and figure, should be the last in the world to come:

and the last shall be first; the apostles, who were last in this world, being poor, mean, and abject, should be the first in the other: or to the Scribes and Pharisees, who were in the chief place, and highest esteem, in the Jewish church, and yet least in the kingdom of heaven; when, on the other hand, the publicans and sinners, who were in the lowest class, and in least esteem, went first into it: or to the case of persecution, when some, who seem most forward to endure it at a distance, when it comes nearer, are most backward to it; whilst others, who were most fearful of it, and ready to shrink at the thoughts of it, most cheerfully bear it: or to the apostles themselves, one of which, who was now first, Judas, should be last; and the apostle Paul, who was last of all, as one born out of due time, should be first: or to Jews and Gentiles, intimating, that the Jews, who were first in outward privileges, would be rejected of God for their unbelief, and contempt of the Messiah; and the Gentiles, who were last called, should be first, or chief, in embracing the Messiah, professing his Gospel, and supporting his interest. This sentence is confirmed, and illustrated, by a parable, in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 20

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 19

Ver. 1. *For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man*, etc.] That is, the Gospel dispensation, or times of the Messiah, may fitly be represented by a man

that is an householder, or master of a family, as Christ is; *See Gill "<4010>Matthew 10:25"* He is master of the whole family of God, in heaven, and in earth, of all the children of God, and household of faith; his house they are, he is Father and master, son and firstborn, priest and prophet there.

Which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard: by "the vineyard" may be meant the church, which, like a vineyard, is separated by electing, redeeming, and calling grace, and by the order and ordinances of the Gospel, from the rest of the world; is set with various vines, with trees of righteousness, with pleasant plants, both fruitful and profitable; and which are dear and valuable to Christ; and about which much care is used to preserve, keep, and improve them. This may be called "his", Christ's, being what he has chosen for himself, his Father has given him, and he is heir of; which he has purchased with his blood, and which he plants, waters, takes care of, and enjoys. The "labourers" design either the ministers of the Gospel, who labour in the word and doctrine, who are, or at least ought to be, labourers in Christ's vineyard, and not loiterers; whose work in study, meditation, and prayer, in the ministration of the word and ordinances, and in performing other services they are called unto, is very laborious; and made more so, through the wickedness of some, and weakness of others: the employment of these labourers in the vineyard is various; the business of some is to plant; they are chiefly made use of in conversion: the work of others is to water; these are instruments in edification, and means of the growth of grace: others have a good hand at pruning, giving reproofs and corrections, in a suitable manner, with success, to the checking of sin, and bringing forth more fruit: others are useful in propping and supporting the vines, comforting and strengthening weak believers; and others in protecting and defending the outworks of the

church, the doctrines and ordinances of it: or else private Christians in general may be intended, who all are, or should be labourers, both in the exercise of grace; for there is the work of faith, and the labour of love, to God, Christ, and his people, in which they should be continually employed; and in the discharge of duty, with regard to themselves; and in the care of their own vineyard, with respect to their families, which are their charge, and also to the church of Christ, of which they are members. These labourers are said to be "hired" by the householder, or owner of the vineyard, Christ, not strictly and properly speaking; nor does it mean that he had no prior right to their obedience, or that there is any merit in their labour, or that that is the condition of their salvation; but it signifies the influence of his grace, in making them willing to serve him cheerfully, and labour in his vineyard freely; to encourage them in which, he makes them many gracious, and exceeding great and precious promises, and particularly that of eternal life: for which purpose, it is said, that he "went out", either from his Father as mediator, being sent by him; or from heaven into this world, by the assumption of human nature; or by his Spirit, and the influence of his grace, in the calls of his people, to their several services, in his church; and that "early in the morning": some of them being very early called to labour there; meaning either in the morning of the world, as Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, and others; or in the morning of the Jewish church state, as Abraham, Moses, Joshua, and the like; or in the morning of the Gospel dispensation, as the apostles of Christ, which seems most likely; or in the morning of youth, as Timothy and others. Several things, in this first part of the parable, might be illustrated from the Jewish writings. They have a parable indeed, which, in the several parts of it, greatly resembles this, and begins thus [f1047]:

> "to what is R. Bon like? to a king that hath a vineyard, µyl[wp wyl[rkçw, "and hires labourers into it", etc."

Out of which some other things will be remarked, in the following parts of this parable: of a son's being sent, and going out to hire labourers into the vineyard, take the following instance [f1048]:

> "it happened to R. Jochanan ben Matthia, that said to his son, rkçw ax, "go out, and hire labourers" for us: "he went out", and agreed with them for their food."

The time of hiring labourers, here mentioned, exactly agrees with the Jewish accounts [f1049].

> “Says R. Juda ben Bethira, when the face of all the east is light unto Hebron, all the people go out, every man to his work; and when it is so light, it is good “to hire labourers we say”.”

Upon which the gloss says,

> “every man goes out to his work, not for labourers, but the “householder”, who rtwy µykçm, “rises earlier to find labourers to hire”.”

Perhaps it may not be worth while to observe, how large a spot of ground, set with vines, was, by them, called a vineyard: it is frequently said by them [f1050],

> “that a vineyard planted by less than four cubits, is no vineyard; but R. Simeon, and the wise men, say it is a vineyard.”

Ver. 2. *And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day,* etc.] These labourers were of that sort that were called µwy rykç, “hired for a day”; concerning whom is the following rule [f1051]:

> “he that is hired for a day, may demand it all the night; and he that is hired for a night may demand it all the day: he that is hired for hours, may demand it all the night, and all the day; he that is hired for a week, he that is hired for a month, he that is hired for a year, he that is hired for seven, if he goes out in the day, may demand all the day; and if he goes out in the night, he may demand it all the night, and all the day.”

And the wages of a day were usually rnyd “a penny”; which, if understood of a Roman penny, was seven pence halfpenny of our money. One of their canons runs thus [f1052]:

> “he that hires a labourer in the winter, to work with him in the summer, µwy lkb, “for a penny every day”, and he gives him his hire; and, lo! his hire is alike to that in the winter, a “sela” every day, this is forbidden; because it looks as if he chose that time to lessen his wages; but if he says to him, work with me from this day,

to such a time, “for a penny every day”, though his hire is the same, a “sela” every day, this is lawful.”

By the penny a day agreed for with the labourers, may be meant external privileges; or the free promise made, whether to ministers, or private believers, of a sufficient supply of grace daily, that as their day is, their strength shall be; together with that of eternal life and happiness at last.

He sent them into his vineyard; to labour there: for none have any business there, but such who are called and sent by the owner of it; and where sons are sent, and work, as well as servants; (see <4021 28>Matthew 21:28,29).

Ver. 3. *And he went out about the third hour*, etc.] About nine o’clock in the morning,

and saw others standing idle in the market place: the place where labourers used to be hired: and may design the world, because a place full of people, and of great wickedness, for the whole world lies in it; a place of trade and traffic in worldly things, and likewise of worldly and carnal pleasure, and also of idleness. Now God’s elect before calling, are in this place: they are natives of it, have their conversation according to it: here Christ came in person, and here he sends his ministers, his Gospel, to find them out, and by his Spirit and grace he calls them from hence; so that afterwards they are no more of it, though they are in it: but before conversion they belong to it, and their posture then is standing idle; being sluggish, and slothful in business, unwilling to work, and afraid of a little danger and trouble, sauntering away their time in carnal pleasures, and so clothed with rags, and in a starving, famishing condition: but Christ’s eye is upon them; he observes, and takes notice of them in this disagreeable position and situation, and speaks of them in the following manner.

Ver. 4. *And said unto them, go ye also into the vineyard*, etc.] Expressive of a call of divine grace out of the world, into the church; and which arises from mere grace, and good will, without any merit in, or motive from man, as the case here shows: for the householder went out to these men, not they to him; he puts the question to them, and calls them, and bids them go into his vineyard; they do not ask him to hire them, nor desire to be in his service. Moreover, the persons called were a parcel of idle, mean, vulgar people, as market folks commonly are; the weak, base, and foolish things of the world. The encouragement given them follows,

and whatsoever is right I will give you which is to be understood, not of strict justice; for in this sense nothing could be given to sinful mortals, for their services; but of grace, for what is had on this score, whether in this, or in the other world, is in a way of giving and receiving, which are the phrases used here, and in the context. It properly signifies what is meet and convenient, and will be satisfying; and since it is not expressed what he would give them, and they should receive, it calls for faith and dependence on divine goodness: for it does not yet appear, what the faithful labourers in Christ's vineyard will want, and shall receive in this life, nor what will be their happiness in the world to come: the glories and joys of heaven are unseen things; and eternal life is a hidden one at present, and must be trusted for:

and they went their way: into the vineyard, the church, to labour there; which shows, that the call was powerful and efficacious; they were powerfully wrought upon by it; were at once inclined, and made willing to, and did go cheerfully, without standing to dispute about their work or wages.

Ver. 5. *Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour*, etc.] About twelve o'clock, or at noon, and three o'clock in the afternoon. These three last mentioned seasons of the day, were the hours of prayer; (see <44025>Acts 2:15, 3:1, 10:9) and did likewise: seeing others in the same place, and posture, he called them, and sent them into his vineyard, to labour there, giving them the same promise he did to others.

Ver. 6. *And about the eleventh hour he went out*, etc.] About five o'clock in the afternoon. The Persic version reads it, "the twelfth hour", which was six o'clock in the afternoon, the last hour of the day. The Jews divided their day into twelve hours, (<43109>John 11:9) and these twelve hours into four parts; (<16903>Nehemiah 9:3) each part containing three hours, to which division there is a manifest respect in this parable. These different seasons of the husbandman's going out to hire labourers, may have regard either to the several periods of time, and ages of the world, as before the law, under the law, the times of the Messiah, and the last days; or the various dispensations of the Gospel, first by Christ, and John the Baptist to the Jews, then by the apostles to the same in their first mission, afterwards when their commission was renewed, first to the Jews in Judea, and then to the same among the nations of the world, and last of all to the Gentiles; or to the several stages of human life, and may regard Christ's call of persons

in childhood, youth, manhood, and old age; which last may be signified by the eleventh hour, as also the Gentiles, and the remainder of God's elect in the last day:

and found others standing idle; in the same place and position as before: for the state and condition of God's elect, by nature, as it is the same with others, it is the same with them all. The word "idle" is omitted here by the Vulgate Latin, the Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel; but is retained in the Syriac and Persic versions; and stands in the Greek copies:

and saith unto them, why stand ye here all the day idle? for being about the eleventh hour, the day was far spent, it was almost gone, a small portion of it remained, but one hour, as appears from (<4002012>Matthew 20:12).

Ver. 7. *They say unto him, because no man hath hired us*, etc.] This may be fitly applied to the Gentiles, who hundreds of years were neglected by God; he overlooked the times of their ignorance, took no notice of them in their state of stupidity, blindness, and irreligion; but suffered them to walk in their own ways, sent no prophets to instruct them, nor messages, nor messengers to them; till at length the Jews, having rejected and crucified the Messiah, and persecuted his apostles, and contradicted, and blasphemed the Gospel, they were ordered to go to the Gentiles, and preach it to them:

he saith unto them, go ye also into the vineyard: the Gospel was made the power of God unto salvation to them; they were called by grace, became of the same body the church, were fellow heirs with the believing Jews, partakers of the same promises and privileges, in a Gospel church state, and were equally labourers in the Lord's vineyard:

and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive; with the rest of the labourers in it. This clause is left out in the Vulgate Latin, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel; nor is it in Beza's most ancient Greek copy, though in all the rest; nor is it in the Persic version, which has added, "and they went", as they were bidden, into the vineyard, the call being effectual; but is retained in the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 8. *So when even was come*, etc.] At six o'clock, or when the sun was set, which was the time of paying labourers their wages: thus in the parable of the Jews, before referred to, which bears some resemblance to this, it is said,

> “b r [t [l, [f1053] that “at evening time” the labourers came to take their wages.”

Sooner than this, one that was hired for a day, could not demand it; nor was the master of the vineyard, who hired him, obliged to pay him till the sun was set [f1054], which was the time of his going forth from his labour [f1055]. This even may be understood, either of the evening of the Jewish state, upon the calling of the Gentiles; or of the end of the world, the close of the Gospel dispensation; when the work of it will be over, when all the elect of God, Jews and Gentiles, shall be called and gathered in, and all brought to repentance towards God, and faith in Christ.

The lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward: by the lord of the vineyard may be meant God the Father, who has chosen and separated the vineyard of the church for himself; and has made it the care and charge of his Son Jesus Christ; who, as mediator, may be designed by “his steward”; who has not only all the stores of grace in his hand, to distribute to his people, in this life, as their cases require; but has also eternal life and happiness in his possession for them; not only the promise of it, but that itself; and has a power of giving it to as many as the Father hath given him; and which he, the righteous judge, and faithful steward, will give at the day of judgment, to all that love his appearing.

Call the labourers, and give them their hire; the proper time being come: for the Jews say [f1056]

> “it is an affirmative precept to give the wages of an hired person in its time; as it is said, (<052415>Deuteronomy 24:15) at “his day thou shalt give him his hire”; and if it is prolonged after its time, it is transgressing a negative precept, as it is said, (in the same place,) “neither shall the sun go down upon it.””

So Jews and Gentiles were called to partake of the same Gospel privileges; and so will all the faithful labourers in the Lord’s vineyard be called together, and have the reward of eternal life bestowed upon them, and be bid to enter into the joy of their Lord, and inherit the kingdom prepared for them, as they before were ordered to go into the vineyard, and work. And though eternal life may be called hire or reward, because as hire is given to labourers, so is eternal life; and as that is given at the even and close of the day, and when the labourer has done his work, so everlasting glory will be given to the saints at the end of life, and when they have done the will and

work of God: yet it will not be bestowed by way of merit, or, as if there was a just proportion between the work, labour, and services of the saints, and the glory that shall be revealed in them. Their purest services, even their sufferings for Christ, are not worthy to be compared with that; nor are there any that are done by them, but what are due to God, what he has a right unto, and are their duty to perform; so that when they are done by them in the best and most perfect manner, they are but unprofitable servants: nor can they, by anything they do, be profitable to God, or give anything to him, which can be obligatory upon him, to do anything for them, or be a valuable consideration for anything they should receive from him; and therefore they cannot merit anything at his hand, and much less eternal life: besides, their services are impure and imperfect, and whenever anything is well done by them, it is done not by their own strength and might, but by the assistance and grace of God; and therefore they can have no demand upon him for what they do: eternal life, though a reward, is not a reward of debt, but of grace; it is the free gift of God through Christ; God has graciously promised it in the covenant of his grace, before the world began; he has given it into the hands of his Son for his people, with whom it is sure; and he gives it freely to all the sheep the Father has given him.

Beginning from the last unto the first; beginning with the last that was called and sent into the vineyard, and so proceeding on to the next to them; giving them their wages as he went along, till he came to the first, who were early in the morning hired into this service; intimating, that some such method will be taken in the introducing of the saints into the kingdom of the Messiah here, and into his everlasting kingdom hereafter; whereby that saying of our Lord's which occasioned this parable, will be also fulfilled, "the first shall be last, and last first".

Ver. 9. *And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour*, etc.] Who were the last that were hired; and signify either such, as are called in their last days, in old age; or Gentile sinners; or the last of God's elect, that will be called by grace, in the end of the world:

they received every man a penny: the same they first agreed for, that were hired early into the vineyard; and all, and every man alike, not one more and another less. So the same church privileges and immunities are common to all believers, Jews or Gentiles, sooner or later called; and equal title give to the same eternal life and happiness, which will be enjoyed alike,

by one saint as another: they are all loved with the same everlasting love by God; they are chosen alike by him in his Son, at the same time, in the same way and manner, and to the same grace and glory; they are interested in the same covenant, in all the promises and blessings of it; they are bought with the same price of a Redeemer's blood, are justified by the same righteousness, and are called in one hope of their calling; they are equally the sons of God, and their glory and happiness are always expressed by the same thing, as a kingdom, a crown, and inheritance, etc. They are all equally heirs of the same kingdom and glory, and are born again to the same incorruptible inheritance, of which they will all be partakers; they will all be called to inherit the same kingdom, they will sit on the same throne of glory, and wear the same crown of righteousness, and enjoy the same uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit. Now, indeed, they have not the same measures of grace; some have more, others less; but in heaven, it will be alike, complete and perfect in all; and even now, they have the same grace for nature and kind, only it is not in all in the same exercise; now the saints are distinguished by the several stations and places in which they are; though they are members of the same body, they have not the same office, and have gifts differing from one another; but in the other state, all such offices and gifts will cease, and all will be upon an equal foot; be where Christ is, and behold his glory, and will stand in no need of each other's instruction and help. Now the capacities of man are different, according to the different temperament of their bodies, their different education, opportunities, advantages, and stations in life, but in the other world, where this difference will be no more, every vessel of mercy being prepared for glory, will be equally capable of receiving it: and though there will be degrees of punishment in hell, proportionate to the sins of men, which the justice of God requires, yet it follows not, that there will be degrees in glory; since that is not proportioned to the works of men, but springs from the grace of God, and yet in a way of justice too, through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ: and since the saints have an equal interest in these things, it seems that upon the foot of justice, they should equally enjoy all that happiness which these entitle them to.

Ver. 10. *But when the first came*, etc.] Who were early hired into the vineyard; and design either the first saints that were in the world; or the Jews that first believed in Christ, either really or nominally; or such, who were called by grace in their early days:

they supposed, or "hoped", as the Syriac version renders it,

that they should have received more; than a penny, a greater reward: not that they could expect it on the foot of their agreement, or on account of their work; but because they observed, that they that came last into the vineyard, had as much as they agreed for; and therefore hoped, from the goodness of their Lord to them, that they should receive more:

and they likewise received every man a penny; the selfsame privileges of the Gospel, and a title to the selfsame reward of free grace, the selfsame glory and happiness.

Ver. 11. *And when they had received it*, etc.] The external privileges of the Gospel dispensation, an inheritance among them that are sanctified, and a right unto it, on the foot of free grace,

they murmured against the good man of the house; who had been so kind and liberal, to those who came last into the vineyard, and had done no injury to them, but gave them a full reward. So the Jews that first believed in Christ, were at first uneasy at the Gospel being preached to the Gentiles, at the calling of them, and their partaking of the same privileges in a Gospel church state with them, without submitting to the ceremonies of the law, as they had done; just as the Pharisees, in Christ's time, murmured against him; for receiving sinners, and eating with them: though in the latter day, the envy of Ephraim shall depart, and in the ultimate glory there will be no murmuring at each other's happiness.

Ver. 12. *Saying, these last have wrought but one hour*, etc.] Thinking it hard, that they should have the same reward for the service of one hour, others had for the service of many. This is grudged by the Jews [f1057];

> ""Bath Kol", a voice from heaven, went out and said, "Ketiah bar Shallum", is prepared for the life of the world to come; Rabbi wept, and said, there is that obtains his world (or the world to come for himself) tjah[çb, "in one hour"; and there is that obtains it in many years."

The same observation is also made by the same person, on account of R. Eleazar ben Durdia [f1058]. So in the parable of the Jews above mentioned, which is the broken remains of a common proverb among them like [f1059] this; it is observed, that there being one labourer among those that were hired, who did his work better than all the rest, and who was taken notice of by the king; that when

> “at even the labourers came to take their wages, this labourer also came to take his; and the king gave him his wages equal with them, (or, as in another place, a perfect one,) the labourers began to press him with difficulty, (or as elsewhere [f1060] ^ym[rtm, “they murmured”,) and said, Oh! our Lord, the king, “we have laboured all the day”; but this man has not laboured but two or three hours in the day, and he takes his wages, even as ours, or a perfect reward.”

And so it follows here,

and thou hast made them equal to us, who have borne the burden and heat of the day; of all the Jewish rites and ceremonies, which were burdensome and intolerable. The ceremonial law was a burden to the Jewish people; the multitude of sacrifices enjoined them, and the frequent repetition of them, together with the great number of other ordinances and institutions, produced a weariness in them; especially in the carnal part of them, who saw not the things typified by them, the use and end of them, and so did not enjoy spiritual pleasure in them, (Malachi 1:13). It was a yoke, and a yoke of bondage to them, which brought on them a spirit of bondage, through the fear of death, which was the penalty annexed to it; and it was an insupportable one, which neither they, nor their forefathers, were able to bear, because it made them debtors to keep the whole law: and this was made still more burdensome, by the traditions of the elders, which were added to it, and which the Scribes and Pharisees obliged to the observance of; to which they themselves still added, and bound heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and laid them on men’s shoulders. The law was a fiery law, and the dispensation of it was a hot and scorching one; it was uncomfortable working under the flashes of a mount, that burned with fire: the law worked wrath, and possessed the minds of men with a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation. This may also be applied to such Christians, who are called to more severe service or sufferings for Christ, than others are; who are almost pressed down without measure, and endure fiery trials, are scorched, and made black, with the sun of persecution beating upon them; as the saints under the ten persecutions of the Roman emperors, and as the confessors and martyrs in the times of papal power and cruelty; and who, it might be thought, will have a greater degree of glory and happiness hereafter; and so some have been of opinion, that these are they that shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years, (Revelation 20:4-6) But it rather seems, that others will be made equal with them, who have not endured what they have done; for all the dead in

Christ, all that have part in the first resurrection, when Christ comes, as all the saints will then rise, will share in that glory; even the innumerable company, chosen, redeemed, and called, out of every nation, tongue, and people, and will be admitted to the same honour and happiness, (Revelation 7:9,13,15-17) And this character will also agree with many other servants of Christ, who are called to harder and more laborious service than others are, and labour more abundantly in the Lord's vineyard than others do, and are longer employed in it; as for instance, the Apostle Paul; and yet the same crown of righteousness that is laid up for him, and given to him, will be given to all that love the appearance of Christ, though they have not laboured for his name's sake, as he has done.

Ver. 13. *But he answered one of them*, etc.] Who was the forwardest and loudest in his complaints, and represented the rest;

and said, friend, I do thee no wrong; by giving all alike, the same privileges and blessings to the last, as to the first, since nothing was withheld from him. And indeed the Lord does no wrong to any, by the distinction which he makes among his creatures: he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works: he does no injury to the evil angels, by choosing the good angels, and confirming them in the estate in which they were created; when the others are reserved in chains of darkness, to the judgment of the great day; or by choosing fallen men, in Christ, and making provisions of grace for them, and not devils: and so there is no unrighteousness in him, nor does he do any wrong to any, when, like the potter, out of the same clay, he makes one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour; any more than when, in a providential way, he gives riches and wealth to some, and withholds them from others; or sends his Gospel, the means of grace to one, and not to another: and still less can he be thought to do wrong to the sons of men, by giving to them alike the same grace and privileges here, and the same happiness and glory hereafter; since neither have any right to what they have, or shall enjoy, and no one has the less for what is given to the other.

Didst thou not agree with me for a penny? That is, to labour in the vineyard all the day for a penny; yea, this agreement was made personally with him, not with a servant, or messenger of his; though if it had, it ought, according to the Jewish canons, to have been abode by, which run thus [f1061]:

> “A man says to his messenger, or servant, go and hire workmen for me for three pence; he goes and hires them for four pence: if the messenger says to them, your wages be upon me, he gives them four pence, and takes three pence of the master of the house; he looses one out of his own purse: if he says to them, your hire be upon the master of the house, the master of the house gives them according to the custom of the province: if there are one in the province that hired for three pence, and others that are hired for four pence, he gives them but three pence, “and the murmuring” is against the messenger; in what things? When the work is not known, but when the work is known, and it is worth four pence, the master of the house gives them four pence; but if his messenger does not say to them four pence, they do not labour and do what deserves four pence. The householder says to him, hire me for four pence, and the messenger goes and hires for three pence, though the work deserves four pence, they have but three pence; because that ˆmx[l[wlbq, “they took it upon themselves”, (i.e. they agreed for so much,) and their murmuring is against the messenger.”

Thus the argument in the parable proceeds upon the agreement, which ought to be abode by.

Ver. 14. *Take that thine is*, etc.] By agreement, and go thy way; out of my sight, give me no more trouble on this head; which looks like a dismissal from his service, and after privileges; and was true of many among the Jews, who were only nominal professors, and from whom the Gospel and ordinances of it were taken:

I will give unto this last man that was called, and sent into the vineyard,

even as unto thee; the same outward privileges, besides special grace, and eternal glory, which it looks as if the other had not.

Ver. 15. *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own*? etc.] External gifts and outward privileges, such as enjoying the word and ordinances, are God’s own; and he may, as he does, bestow them on whom he will, and when and where he pleases; as he gave them to the Jews, and continued them many hundred years, when the Gentiles were utterly with them destitute of them; and as he has bestowed them in a more abundant manner for a long time on the Gentiles, whilst the Jews despise and reject

them. Special grace is his own, which he gives to whom he pleases; it is by his own grace, and not the merits of men, that any are chosen, adopted, justified, pardoned, regenerated, and called; that they have faith, hope, love, repentance, or perform new obedience from a new heart, and new principles. Heaven and glory is his own, of his own preparing and giving; and both grace and glory are disposed of, and that very rightly and lawfully, according to his sovereign good will and pleasure: he chooses, adopts, justifies, pardons, regenerates, calls, and sanctifies whom he pleases; and brings what sons to glory he thinks fit, and bestows it equally upon them: and in so doing, does no wrong, or any injustice to any of his creatures; not to the fallen angels, by choosing some of their species, and confirming them in their original constitution; and by leaving them, the fallen angels, in their apostasy; nor by making provision for fallen man, and not them, nor by punishing them with everlasting destruction; nor do they ever complain of any wrong being done them: nor to non-elect men; for none of Adam's race have any right to grace or glory, and therefore no wrong is done to any of them, by withholding them from them, whereby nothing is taken from them, and given to others; and by punishing them for sin; nor to any elect men, by making others partners with them; since they are all alike by nature, unworthy of grace and glory, and deserving of wrath: what is enjoyed by any of them, is of mere grace, and not through merit; and one has not a whit the less, for what the other is possessed of; so that there is no room for envy, murmuring, and complaint:

is thine eye evil because I am good? An "evil eye", is opposed to a good eye, frequently in Jewish writings, as a "good eye" signifies beneficence and liberality; hence it is said [f1062]

> "He that gives a gift, let him give it hpy ^y[b "with a good eye"; bountifully and generously; and he that devoteth anything, let him devote it with a "good eye","

cheerfully and freely: so an "evil eye" intends envy and covetousness, as it does here: and the sense is, art thou envious at the good of others, and covetous and greedy to monopolize all to thyself, because I am liberal, kind, and beneficent? Men are apt to complain of God, and charge his procedures in providence and grace, with inequality and injustice; whereas he does, as he may, all things according to his sovereign will, and never contrary to justice, truth, and goodness; though he is not to be brought to man's bar, and men should submit to his sovereignty.

Ver. 16. *So the last shall be first, and the first last*, etc.] As he had asserted in (<4019 30>Matthew 19:30) and which is clearly illustrated by this parable, as it may be applied to Jews or Gentiles, or to nominal and real Christians:

for many be called; externally, under the ministration of the Gospel, as the Jews in general were, by Christ and his apostles; but

few chosen; in Christ from all eternity, both to grace and glory; and in consequence, and as an evidence of it, but few among the Jews; as also in the Gentile world, comparatively speaking: and even but a few of those that are outwardly called, are inwardly and effectually called by the powerful grace of God, out of darkness into marvellous light, into the grace and liberty of the Gospel, into communion with Christ, and to the obtaining his kingdom and glory, according to the eternal purpose of God. It is a saying of R. Simeon ben Jochai [f1063]

> "I have seen the children of the world to come (elsewhere [f1064] it is, of the chamber), ^yj[wm ^hw, "and they are few"."

Though he vainly thought, that if those few were but two, they were himself and his son.

Ver. 17. *And Jesus going up to Jerusalem*, etc.] Which was situated [f1065] in the highest part of the land of Israel: the land of Israel, is said to be higher than any other land whatever; and the temple at Jerusalem, higher than any part of the land of Israel; wherefore Christ's going to Jerusalem, is expressed by going up to it. Whither he came either from the coasts of Judea, from beyond Jordan, (<4019 01>Matthew 19:1) where he had been some time healing diseases, disputing with the Pharisees, discoursing with the young ruler, and instructing his disciples; or from a country near to the wilderness, from a city called Ephraim, (<4311 54>John 11:54) where he continued some time with his disciples, after the sanhedrim had took counsel to put him to death; for this was his last journey to Jerusalem.

Took the twelve disciples apart in the way: into some private place, which lay near the road; for it seems that there were others that followed him, besides the twelve; when he was not willing they should hear what he had to say to them, concerning the issue of this, journey; lest either they should be discouraged and desert him, or it should be made public, and methods be used to prevent it: and said unto them; the disciples, whom he thought

fit once more to remind of his sufferings and death, and to prepare them for the same; and though they would not so thoroughly understand all that he should say, yet when it was come to pass, they would remember it, and which would be of service to confirm their faith in him, as the true Messiah. *See Gill "(41032)Mark 10:32"*.

Ver. 18. *Behold, we go up to Jerusalem*, etc.] This is the last time of our going thither; observe, and take notice of what I am about to say; some extraordinary things will come to pass, and, as Luke relates that he said,

all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man, shall be accomplished; everything that is recorded in (19201)Psalm 22:1-31), and in (23501)Isaiah 53:1-12), or in any other prophecies of the Old Testament, relating to the ill treatment the Messiah should meet with, to his sufferings and death, and all the circumstances attending them, shall be exactly fulfilled in every point: and that they might not be at a loss about what he meant, he gives an account of various particular things, which should befall him;

and the Son of man shall be betrayed: he does not say by whom, though he knew from the beginning who should betray him, that it would be one of his disciples, and that it would be Judas; but the proper time was not yet come to make this discovery: the persons into whose hands he was to be betrayed, are mentioned;

unto the chief priests, and unto the Scribes; who were his most inveterate and implacable enemies; and who were the persons that had already taken counsel to put him to death, and were seeking all advantages and opportunities to execute their design:

and they shall condemn him to death; which is to be understood not of their declaring it as their opinion, that he was guilty of death, and ought to die by a law of their's, which declaration they made before Pilate; nor of their procuring the sentence of death to be pronounced by him, upon him; but of their adjudging him to death among themselves, in the palace of the high priest; which was done by them, as the sanhedrim and great council of the nation; though either they could not, or did not, choose to execute it themselves, and therefore delivered him up to the Romans; for this act of condemning him to death, was to be, and was, before the delivery of him up to the Gentiles, as is clear from what follows.

Ver. 19. *And shall deliver him to the Gentiles*, etc.] To Pilate, an Heathen governor, and to the Roman officers and soldiers under him; (see <43835>John 18:35).

To mock him, as they did, by putting on him a scarlet robe, platting a crown of thorns, and placing it on his head, and a reed in his hand; and then bowed the knee to him, and cried, hail, king of the Jews!

and to scourge him: as he was by Pilate, at least by his orders: Mark adds, "and spit upon him"; as not only did the Jews in the palace of the high priest, but also the Gentiles, the Roman soldiers, after they had mocked him in the manner before described:

and to crucify him: which, as it was a cruel and shameful death, such as slaves and the worst of malefactors were put to, so it was a Roman one; for which reason, the Jews choose to deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. The Persic version here adds, "and put him into the grave": which though it followed his crucifixion, was not done by the Gentiles, but by Joseph of Arimathea, a Jew, and a disciple of Jesus; and that not in a contemptuous, but honourable manner

and the third day he shall rise again: this he said for the comfort of his disciples; but now, though these things were so clearly and distinctly expressed by Christ, and which show his omniscience, and give proof both of his deity and Messiahship, yet Luke observes of the disciples, "that they understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken": the words were plain, the grammatical sense of them was easy, but they could not imagine that they were to be taken literally; which was such a glaring contradiction to their received and rooted principles of the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, and the grandeur of it, that they fancied these expressions carried a mystical, secret meaning in them, which they were not masters of: and certain it is, that what our Lord now said, was so far from destroying, or weakening these prejudices of theirs, that it rather confirmed them in them; particularly, what he said about rising again, which seemed to have put them afresh in mind, and to excite their hopes of this external felicity, as appears from the following case.

Ver. 20. *Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children*, etc.] Whose name was Salome, as may be concluded from (<42756>Matthew 27:56) compared with (<41540>Mark 15:40). She is not called the wife of Zebedee,

who might be now dead, but the mother of his children, his two sons, as the Arabic version renders it: James and John, and who were the disciples of Christ: it is not certain, that Zebedee was ever a follower of him; and therefore the woman is described by her relation to her children, and not her husband; and the rather, because it was in their name, and on their account, that she came to Jesus. She is said to be the sister of Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of our Lord; and if so, might hope to succeed in her request, on the foot of relation; as also, since she herself had been a constant follower of, and attendant on him; and especially, inasmuch as her sons were his favourite disciples;

with her sons; her two sons, James and John, whom Mark mentions by name:

worshipping him,

and desiring a certain thing of him; that is, she came in a very submissive manner to him, either bowed unto him, or kneeled down before him, or threw herself at his feet, and signified that she had a single favour, and a very considerable one, to ask of him. Mark represents the case thus, that her two sons, James and John, came to Christ, and that they themselves spoke to him, and addressed him in this manner: “Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us, whatsoever we shall desire”: which was a very odd request, both as to the matter and manner of it; that they should ask; and insist upon everything to be done for them, they desired; and suggest, that they expected that he would promise them this, before they declared the particular favour they had to ask of him. The matter may be reconciled thus. These two disciples, having observed what Christ had said concerning the twelve disciples sitting on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, and what he had just related, concerning his rising again the third day, which they might understand of some display of his glory; and concluding from all this, that the setting up of his temporal monarchy was at hand, inform their mother of it, and move to her, to use her interest with Christ, in their favour: and which they did, partly to shun the envy and ill will of the rest of the disciples; and partly, to conceal their own pride and vanity; as also, they might think a request from her, on their behalf, would be more easily granted: accordingly, she agreeing to the motion, they all three came, as Matthew relates, and the mother is the mouth, and speaks for her sons; so that they may be said to make such a request by her, she

representing them; or they joined in the petition with her; or as soon as she had made it, they seconded it, and made it their own.

Ver. 21. *And he said unto her, what wilt thou*? etc.] Mark says, "he said unto them"; her two sons, James and John, "what would you that I should do for you?" Both is true; what is this singular favour? what business of moment and importance is it, you would have me do for you, you are so eager and pressing for, and so solicitous of? This he said, not as being ignorant of the matter; he knew the corruption of their hearts, the vanity of their minds, their carnal, worldly, and ambitious views; but to lead them on to say all they had to say upon this head; in which may be observed the goodness, humanity, and patience of Christ, in not upbraiding them with their pride and insolence, in bearing with their rashness and folly, and in giving them room to believe, that he should answer their request in every thing that was right and reasonable to be done,

She saith unto him, grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on the right hand, and the other the left in thy kingdom: or, as in Mark, "in thy glory" that is, in thy glorious kingdom; meaning a temporal one, which would outdo all the kingdoms of the world, in external glory, pomp, and splendour, as they imagined: to sit one on the right hand and the other on the left hand of Christ, when he should be seated, literally, on the throne of his father David, signifies to be nearest to his person; to be next to him in power and authority; to have the highest posts of honour, and places of trust and profit; to be his prime ministers; and, in a word, to have the greatest share next to him of worldly honour, riches, and power. To sit at the right hand, was, with the Jews, reckoned a great mark of honour and affection; (see <1029>1 Kings 2:19) and so with other nations: with the Egyptians especially, it was accounted a great honour to be placed on the right hand, but the greatest to be in the middle: which was equally observed among the Romans, and the same with the Africans and Numidians; though Xenophon relates, that Cyrus, with a singular prudence, that he might receive his guests the more honourably, used to place them at the left hand, accounting that part, as nearest the heart, to be the more worthy. [f1066] These two, the best and most honourable places, this woman was for engrossing for her two sons, who joined with her in the request; for Mark says, that "they said unto him, grant unto us that we may sit, etc." and Christ's answer here, which follows, implies as much.

Ver. 22. *But Jesus answered, and said*, etc.] To her two sons,

ye know not what ye ask. They were ignorant of the nature of Christ's kingdom, which is spiritual, and not of this world: or they would never have asked such a question, or sued for that which will never be enjoyed by any and supposing that Christ's kingdom had been such as they imagined, yet in asking for honours and riches, they might not know what they asked for; they might promise themselves much pleasure and happiness in the enjoyment of them, and yet, if indulged with them, might be disappointed, and find unexpected troubles and uneasiness. It would have been much more proper and seasonable, on hearing of Christ's being mocked, scourged, spit upon, and crucified, if they had put such a question to themselves, Christ here directs to,

are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with? meaning his reproaches, sorrows, sufferings, and death; which because of the disagreeableness of them, he compares to a bitter cup of vengeance, wrath, fury, and indignation; and because they were appointed to him, and allotted for him, they were his portion, therefore he expresses them by a "cup"; and because they were so many and great, of such an overwhelming nature, that he seemed to be plunged into them, and covered with them, therefore he likens them to a "baptism" and which the ordinance of water baptism, performed by immersion, is a lively representation of. Now Christ suggests to these disciples, that instead of indulging their ambitious desires of worldly grandeur, that they would do well to consider what a bitter cup he had to drink of, and what a sea of sorrows and sufferings he was about to be plunged into, and drenched in; and whether they could think of enduring anything of the like kind, for his sake, which was most likely to be in a short time, what they would be called unto, and not to honours, ease, and pleasure; and what they must be sure, more or less, to undergo, before they entered the everlasting kingdom of glory:

they say unto him, we are able; not considering the nature of these sufferings, and their own weakness; but partly through ignorance of themselves, and a vain confidence which possessed them; and chiefly through a vehement desire of the places in his kingdom, they asked for, and which they thought drinking his cup, and being baptized with his baptism, were the condition, and the means of enjoying; and so rashly affirm their ability, and which includes their willingness to comply herewith.

Ver. 23. *And he saith unto them, ye shall drink indeed of my cup*, etc.] Not of the selfsame, but of what was like unto it; meaning, that they should endure much persecution for his name's sake, as all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must expect in one shape or another. Thus James, who was one of these persons, was slain with the sword by Herod; John, the other, was imprisoned, and beaten by the order of the Jewish sanhedrim, was banished into the isle of Patmos by Domitian; and, some say, was cast into a cauldron of boiling oil, though saved in it: so that these words seem to be a prophecy of what they should suffer for Christ, instead of enjoying places of worldly honour and profit under him, they were seeking for.

And be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: this clause is here, and in the former verse, omitted by the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, and in some Greek copies, and is thought to be transcribed hither out of Mark's Gospel; but the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions have it, and so has Munster's Hebrew Gospel, and it appears in many Greek copies. James, being bathed in his own blood, when killed with the sword, and John being cast into a vessel of scalding oil, these are fitly expressed by a baptism.

But to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine, to give; in the sense in which they asked it, since he was no temporal prince; nor was his kingdom of this world; nor had he any such external favours, or worldly honours: and as to the true and spiritual sense of such a phrase, it was not a point to be fixed now by him, as man, and according to his own will; as who should reign with him in the kingdom of heaven, who should sit down on the same throne with him, and enjoy all the glories and happiness of the world to come; and though, as mediator, all this glory was given to him, and he had it in his hands to give to others, yet to none

but those *for whom*, says he, *it is prepared of my Father*: for this is the true reading and sense of the last clause; signifying, that eternal life, or the heavenly glory, is a kingdom prepared by his Father, from the foundation of the world, and not for anybody, and every person, but for some only, according to his Father's sovereign will and pleasure; and that this is an affair that was fixed by him, in his eternal counsels and purposes, and in the covenant of his grace, and not to be adjusted now; nor was the designation of it to be, nor will the distribution of it be according to the merits of men, but the free grace of God; and though he, as mediator, was appointed to

bestow both grace and glory on men, yet only on those the Father had given to him, for whom grace was laid up in him, and glory prepared.

Ver. 24. *And when they ten heard it*, etc.] The other ten apostles, who either were within hearing the request made, and Christ's answer, or had by some means information of it:

they were moved with indignation against the two brethren; the two sons of Zebedee, James and John: they were not so much displeased with the mother of them, who asked the favour for them, as with her sons, knowing that they have put her upon making this motion to Christ; nor were they so much moved with indignation at the action, detesting all notions of superiority and preeminence; for they were all tinctured with the same carnal principle, and each was desirous of the chief place for himself; but they were angry, and out of all temper, that these two brethren should move for that, which they thought they had as good a right unto, as any of them: wherefore, as Mark says, "they began to be much displeased with" them, and to show their resentment, not only by their looks and gestures, but by words; and very probably they would have rose to very high words, and a downright quarrel, had not Christ interposed; as, from the following verse, it appears he did.

Ver. 25. *But Jesus called them unto him*, etc.] All his twelve disciples, perceiving that the same ambitious views prevailed in them all: to discourage which, and to prevent their quarrelling one with another, he called them to him, and made use of the following reasonings:

and said, ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; appealing to them in a case that was well known by them, what the princes of the Gentiles did; or, as Mark expresses it, "they which are accounted", or "seem to rule over the Gentiles": who know not God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who neither serve and obey him, or have any dependence on him, but assume a power of governing others, take upon them to rule the nations of the world, and are acknowledged as such by them: these claim a superiority over others, and exercise lordly power over them; and they that are their great ones, their lords, and nobles under them; these also assert a preeminence, and exercise authority on those that are below them; which they have received from those that are above them: this is the usual way and method of the governments of the kingdoms of this world: wherefore, for the apostles to affect and desire a superiority to each

other, in the kingdom of Christ, was to imitate the Gentiles, and to act according to worldly forms of government; which is very unsuitable to the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, whose kingdom is spiritual, and not of this world.

Ver. 26. *But it shall not be so among you*, etc.] This is not to be extended to Christian nations, as if there were to be no order of magistracy subsisting in them; but that all must be on a level, and no distinction of princes and subjects, of governors and governed; nor to Christian churches, as if there was no ecclesiastical authority to be used, or any church government and power to be exercised; none to rule, whom others are to obey and submit themselves to; but is to be restrained to the apostles as such, among whom there was an entire equality; being all apostles of Christ, being equally qualified and sent, and put into the selfsame office by him: the same holds good of all pastors of churches, who have no superintendency and pre-eminence over one another, or can, or ought to exercise any lordly power and authority, one, or more, over the rest; being equally invested with the same office power, one as another: for otherwise Christ's kingdom would appear like the nations of the world, and to be of a worldly nature; whereas it is spiritual, and does not lie in worldly pomp and grandeur, and in external superiority and pre-eminence of one another; but in the spiritual administration of the word and ordinances; which every pastor of a church has an equal right to exercise, and obedience to them lies in a submission to these things:

but whosoever will be great among you, let him be, or, as in Mark, *shall be your minister*: whoever would be reckoned a great man in the kingdom of Christ, or under the Gospel dispensation, must be a minister to others if he is desirous of being truly great in the esteem of God, and of men, he must do great service for Christ, and to the souls of men; and seek to bring great glory to God, by faithfully ministering the word and ordinances, and by denying himself worldly honour and glory, and by serving others, through much reproach, difficulty, and opposition.

Ver. 27. *And whosoever will be chief among you*, etc.] Or first, or have the pre-eminence, the first place in the kingdom of the Messiah,

let him be your servant; or, as in Mark, *shall be servant of all*: not only a minister, but a servant; not a servant of some only, but of all. This was verified in the Apostle Paul, who became a servant to all men, though he was free, that he might gain some to Christ; and by so doing was the chief,

though he reckoned himself the least of the apostles, yea, less than the least of all saints. The Jews have a saying somewhat like this, that [f1067]

> "everyone that makes himself db[k, as a servant, for the words of the law in this world, shall be made free in the world to come."

Ver. 28. *Even as the son of man*, etc.] Meaning himself, the seed of the woman, the son of Abraham, and of David, according to the flesh; and whom he proposes as an example of humility, and as an argument to draw them off from their ambitious views of worldly grandeur, and from all thoughts of the Messiah's setting up a temporal kingdom; since he

came not to be ministered unto by others; to be attended on in pomp and state, to have a numerous retinue about him, waiting upon him, and ministering to him; as is the case of the princes, and great men of the world; though he is Lord of all, and King of kings;

but to minister; in the form of a servant unto others, going about from place to place to do good, both to the bodies and souls of men: he "came" forth from his Father, down from heaven, into this world, by his assumption of human nature, to "minister" in the prophetic office, by preaching the Gospel, and working miracles, in confirmation of it; and in the priestly office, one branch of which is expressed in the next clause,

and to give his life a ransom for many: what he came to give was his life, which was his own, and than which nothing is more dear and precious: besides, his life was an uncommon one, being not only so useful to men, and entirely free from sin in itself, but was the life of the man Jesus, who is in union with the Son of God: this he came to "give", and did give into the hands of men, to the justice of God, and death itself; which giving, supposes it to be his own, and at his own disposal; was not forfeited by any act of his, nor was it forced from him, but freely laid down by him; and that as a "ransom", or redemption price for his people, to deliver them from the evil of sin, the bondage of Satan, the curses of a righteous law, from eternal death, and future wrath, and, in short, from all their enemies: which ransom price was paid "for" them in their room and stead, by Christ, as their substitute; who put himself in their legal place, and laid himself under obligation to pay their debts, and clear their scores, and redeem them from all their iniquities, and the evil consequences of them: and this he did "for many"; for as many as were ordained to eternal life; for as many as the Father gave unto him; for many out of every kindred, tongue, and people,

and nation; but not for every individual of human nature; for many are not all.

Ver. 29. *And as they departed from Jericho*, etc.] Which, was distant about ten parsas, or miles, from Jerusalem [f1068], through which Christ just passed, and had met with Zacchaeus, and called him, and delivered the parable concerning a nobleman's going into a far country. The Syriac and Persic versions render the words, "when Jesus departed from Jericho"; and the Arabic, "when he went out of Jericho"; not alone, but "with his disciples", as Mark says; and not with them only, for a great multitude followed him out of the city; either to hear him, or be healed by him, or to see him, or behold his miracles, or to accompany him to Jerusalem; whither he was going to keep the feast of the passover, and where they might be in some expectation he would set up his kingdom. The Ethiopic version reads it, "as they went out from Jerusalem", contrary to all copies and versions.

Ver. 30. *And behold, two blind men*, etc.] Mark and Luke make mention but of one; which is no contradiction to Matthew; for they neither of them say that there was but one. A greater difficulty occurs in Luke's account; for whereas Matthew and Mark both agree, that it was when Jesus came out of Jericho, that this cure was wrought, Luke says it was "when he came nigh unto it"; which some reconcile by observing, that that phrase may be rendered, "while he was near Jericho"; and so only signifies his distance from it, and not motion to it; but this will not solve the difficulty, because we after read of his entrance into it, and passing through it. Some therefore have thought, that Christ met with, and cured one blind man before he entered the city, and another when he came out of it and that Matthew has put the history of both together: but to me it seems, that there were three blind men cured; one before he went into Jericho, which Luke only relates, and two as he came out of Jericho, which Matthew here speaks of; and one of which, according to Mark, was by name Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus; for so Bartimaeus signifies. Tima, or Timaeus, was a name in use among the Jews: we often read of R. Judah amyt ^b, Ben Tima [f1069], the son of Tima, or Timaeus. Origen [f1070] thinks, he had his name from the Greek word τιμη, which signifies "honour"; and so ymyj, "Time", with the Jews, is used for honour and profit [f1071]. This man's father might have been a very honourable and useful man, though the son was fallen into poverty and distress, through blindness; for which reason he may be mentioned, as being a person well known to the Jews.

Sitting by the wayside; Mark says, “begging”, where such were wont to sit, in order to ask alms of persons, as they passed by;

when they heard that Jesus passed by; who, upon perceiving that there was an unusual concourse of people, might ask the reason of it, when it was told them that Jesus of Nazareth was coming that way: or, without asking, they might hear the people speak of him; and inasmuch as they had heard many things concerning him, and the miracles he wrought, applied to him for help, and

cried out, saying, have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David: in which may be observed the titles of honour they give him, which declare their faith in him; calling him Lord, expressing their sense of his deity, dominion, and power; and “Son of David”, thereby owning and professing him to be the Messiah, that being a common name of him, well known among the Jews; (see Gill on “Matthew 1:1”), the petition they make is, that he would “have mercy on them”, who, through blindness, were in a poor, helpless, and miserable condition; and this was made with great vehemency: they “cried” out aloud, that he might hear them, and take pity on them; being eagerly desirous of having their sight, and firmly believing that he was able to restore it to them.

Ver. 31. *And the multitude rebuked them*, etc.] Who were either the friends or enemies of Christ: if his friends, they might rebuke them, that they might not be so troublesome to him, and judging it unworthy of him to have anything to do with such mean persons, and supposing that their business was only to ask alms of him; or if they were his enemies, or not so well affected to him, they might chide them for giving him such high characters, as Lord, and Son of David; and therefore being displeased with such encomiums, reproved them,

because they should hold their peace; be silent, and say no more of that kind, lest others should take up the same notion of him, and it should prevail among the people.

But they cried the more, saying, have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. They lifted up their voice higher, and cried the more loudly, that their voice might be above the noise of the people, and be heard by Christ; and renewed their request with more eagerness and importunity, repeating the characters they before gave him, being not in the least intimidated by the rebukes of the people: their faith in Jesus, as the Messiah, being more

increased, and their desires of his pity and compassion being more enlarged, they grew bolder, and more resolute, as faith often does by opposition, and trials.

Ver. 32. *And Jesus stood still*, etc.] Made a full stop, when he was near, or right against where these blind men sat; which shows the strength of faith, the force of prayer, and the great regard Christ has to both:

and called them: himself, being near unto them, and within the reach of his voice; or he commanded them to be brought to him, as Mark says: he ordered others to call them, or let them know, that it was his will they should come to him; upon which they threw away their garments, their long upper garments, which were some hindrance to a quick motion, at least Bartimaeus did; that they might be the sooner with him: and when they were come to him, he said,

what will ye that I shall do unto you? is it alms you want? or would you have your sight restored? This question he put, not as being ignorant of their desires, but to show both his power and willingness to do anything for them they should ask; and that their faith in him might be made manifest, and the people have their expectations raised, and they prepared to attend the miracle now to be wrought.

Ver. 33. *They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened*.] That is, that their sight might be restored to them; for being deprived of that, it was all one as if their eyes were so closed, that they could not open them; and so the recovery of it is expressed by an opening of them. The opening of the eyes of the blind was prophesied of, as what should be done in the days of the Messiah, and by him, as an evidence of his being that person, (Isaiah 35:5) which prophecy these blind men might be acquainted with, and be an encouragement to their faith to expect a cure from him. They do not ask for alms, but for the recovery of their sight; which being granted, they would be able to get their bread in another way; for they were not like some idle persons that choose rather to be under such a calamity, or any other, that they might not be obliged to work with their hands for a livelihood. Their request shows, that they made no doubt of it, but firmly believed that Christ was able to do this for them, though the thing was impossible to be done by man; who therefore must conclude that he was not a mere man, but the Son of the living God.

Ver. 34. *So Jesus had compassion on them*, etc.] His bowels moved towards them as a man; he pitied their miserable and distressed condition, and discovered the tenderness of his heart towards them by some outward sign, by his looks, or by some gesture or another: and touched their eyes; with his bare hand, without the use of any instrument or medicine. The Ethiopic version adds; "and said unto them, according to your faith shall it be unto you"; which seems to be taken out of (<4009>Matthew 9:29). The Evangelist Mark relates, that "Jesus said unto him (Bartimaeus) go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole": not that the virtue of healing came from the act of faith, but from the object of it; his faith was not the cause of, nor the reason why, but the way and means in and by which he received the cure:

and immediately their eyes received sight; or, as the Syriac and Persic versions render the words, "that moment their eyes were opened": the cure was wrought at once, directly; a clear proof of the omnipotence of Christ, and of his true and proper deity: the words, "their eyes", are not in some copies: and are omitted by the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, which read thus, "they immediately saw". The Persic version adds, and they saw the world; the men and things of it, which they either had never seen before, or, at least, for a considerable time; which must be a very surprising and agreeable sight to them.

And they followed him; in a corporal sense they joined the multitude, and went after him to Jerusalem; partly to express their gratitude for such a wonderful favour bestowed upon them; and partly that they might be witnesses of the power of his deity, and the truth of his Messiahship, as they went along, and at Jerusalem: and in a spiritual sense; they became his disciples, they embraced his doctrines, believed in him as the Messiah, submitted to his ordinances, imitated him in the exercise of grace, and in the performance of duty: for, at the same time he restored their bodily sight, he gave them a spiritual one to look to him, and follow him, the light of the world, that they might enjoy the light of life in another world.

CHAPTER 21

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 21

Ver. 1. *And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem*, etc.] The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, "when he drew nigh, or was near"; but not alone, his disciples were with him, and a multitude of people also; as is evident from the following account. They might well be said to be near to Jerusalem, since it is added,

and were come to Bethphage; which the Jews say [f1072] was within the walls of the city of Jerusalem, and was in all respects as the city itself, and was the outermost part of it [f1073]; and that all within the outward circumference of the city of Jerusalem was called Bethphage [f1074]: it seems to me to be part of it within the city, and part of it without, in the suburbs of it, which reached to Bethany, and that to the Mount of Olives. Various are the derivations and etymologies of this place: some say it signifies "the house", or "place of a fountain", from a fountain that was in it; as if it was a compound of "Beth", an house, and πηγη, "pege", a fountain: others, "the house of the mouth of a valley"; as if it was made up of those three words, ayg yp tyb, because the outward boundary of it was at the foot of the Mount of Olives, at the entrance of the valley of Jehoshaphat: others say, that the ancient reading was "Bethphage, the house of slaughter"; and Jerom says [f1075], it was a village of the priests, and he renders it, "the house of jaw bones": here indeed they might bake the showbread, and eat the holy things, as in Jerusalem [f1076]; but the true reading and signification of it is, ygap tyb, "the house of figs"; so called from the fig trees which grew in the outward limits of it, near Bethany, and the Mount of Olives; hence we read of [f1077] ynyh tyb ygp, "the figs of Bethany"; which place is mentioned along with, Bethphage, both by Mark and Luke, where Christ, and those with him, were now come: the latter says, they were come nigh to these places, for they were come

to the Mount of Olives; near to which were the furthermost limits of Bethany, and Bethphage, from Jerusalem. This mount was so called from the abundance of olive trees which grew upon it, and was on the east side

of Jerusalem [f1078]; and it was distant from it a sabbath day's journey, (<4012>Acts 1:12) which was two, thousand cubits, or eight furlongs, and which made one mile:

then sent Jesus two disciples; who they were is not certain, perhaps Peter and John, who were afterwards sent by him to prepare the passover, (<4208>Luke 22:8).

Ver. 2. *Saying unto them, go into the village over against you*, etc.] Munster's Hebrew Gospel reads, "before you"; not Jerusalem, as some have thought, for that would never be called a village; though the Ethiopic version reads it, "the city"; but rather Bethany, which was near to Bethphage, and is mentioned with it; though the Jews say [f1079], the name of the village was Nob, and was near to Jerusalem, and own, that Christ had an ass from hence, on which he rode to Jerusalem, and applied to himself the prophecy in (<3809>Zechariah 9:9). And it is very likely this was the village; for Nob was very near to Jerusalem; it was over against it, within sight of it, and from thence might be taken a view of the whole city, according to the Jews; who say [f1080], that Sennacherib stood in Nob, a city of the priests, over against the walls of Jerusalem, and saw the whole city, and it was little in his eyes; and he said; is not this the city of Jerusalem, etc.

and straightway, or, as in Mark, "as soon as ye be entered into it"; and in Luke, "at your entering", at the town's end, at one of the first houses in it, at the door thereof,

ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her. The other evangelists only make mention of the colt, or young ass; but, no doubt, both were spoken of by Christ, and both were found by the disciples, the ass, and the colt by her, and both were brought away by them; and on both of them, very probably, Christ rode; first on one, and then on the other, as the prophecy hereby fulfilled seems to require, and as the sequel of the account shows. The ancient allegorical sense of the ass and colt is not to be despised: that the ass may signify the Jews, who had been used to bear the burdensome rites and ceremonies of the law; and the colt, the wild and untamed Gentiles, and the coming of Christ, first to the one, and then to the other:

loose them, and bring them unto me, both ass and colt. So the Arabic version reads it, "loose both, and bring them, both to me".

Ver. 3. *And if any man say ought unto you*, etc.] As, what business have you with the ass and colt? why do you loose them? as certain persons, the owners of them did, as Mark and Luke relate;

ye shall say, the Lord hath need of them: he that is our Lord, and your Lord, and the Lord of these creatures, and of all things else, wants them for his present service;

and straightway he will send them: which is either a continuation of what the disciples should say to any that should ask them the reason of their loosing the ass and colt, in order to make them easy: that the Lord who had need of them, as soon as he had done with them, would send them back to their proper owners, safe and well: or they are spoken for the encouragement of the disciples to go, and not be disheartened, though they should be thus examined; for immediately upon saying, that the Lord stood in need of them, and had an use for them at that time, the owner thereof, without any more words, would immediately send them along with them; which latter rather seems to be the sense of the clause; and which is confirmed by Mark: a very clear proof is this of the omniscience of Christ. He knew, that there were an ass, and a colt, in such a village, fastened to such a door, just at the entrance into the town: he knew the owners of it would examine the disciples about loosing and taking them away, and prepares them to give an answer; and he knew that the minds of these owners would be immediately wrought upon, and inclined to let them go directly and quietly.

Ver. 4. *All this was done*, etc.] The disciples were sent to the neighbouring village for the ass and colt, and they brought them, and Christ rode upon them; not because of the distance of the place from Jerusalem, for he was just at it; or because he was weary, or it would be very fatiguing to him to walk thither on foot; for he had been used to travelling, and had gone through most parts of Galilee and Judea; but

that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: the Ethiopic version adds, Isaiah; for the former part of the following citation stands in (<2621>Isaiah 62:11) as the latter does in (<3009>Zechariah 9:9). It was usual with the Jews to cite Scripture in this manner, by taking a part from one writer, and another from anther, and joining them together: saying, the following words.

Ver. 5. *Tell ye the daughter of Zion*, etc.] These words seem to be taken out of (<236211>Isaiah 62:11) where it is said, “say ye to the daughter of Zion, behold thy salvation cometh”, or “thy Saviour cometh”; meaning, without doubt, the Messiah: by the daughter of Zion is meant, not the city of Jerusalem, but the inhabitants thereof, the Jewish synagogue; or as the Targum renders it, ˆwyxd atçynk, “the congregation of Zion”, the people of the Jews; particularly the elect of God among them, those that embraced the true Messiah, and believed in him:

behold, thy king cometh unto thee: this, and what follow, are cited from (<380909>Zechariah 9:9) and to be understood of the king Messiah, who, in a little time after this prophecy was given out, was to come to Zion, and redeem Jacob from all his iniquities, and was now come. One of the Jewish commentators says [f1081], that interpreters are divided about the sense of this prophecy; but observes, that there are some that say this is the Messiah: and another [f1082] of them affirms, that it is impossible to explain it of any other than the king Messiah; and that it can be understood of no other, I have elsewhere [f1083] shown. “Meek”; in the prophecy of Zechariah it is, yn[, “poor”, as the Messiah Jesus was, in a temporal sense; but the word, both by the Septuagint, and our evangelist, is rendered

meek; as it is by the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, who all explain it by ˆtwn[, “lowly, humble, or meek”: and a character it is, that well agrees with Jesus, who, in the whole of his deportment, both in life and in death, was a pattern of meekness and lowliness of mind: and

sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass. This is applied to the Messiah by the Jews, both ancient [f1084] and modern [f1085], who consider this as an instance and evidence of his humility: they suppose, this ass to be a very uncommon one, having an hundred spots on it; and say, that it was the foal of that which was created on the eve of the sabbath [f1086]; and is the same that Abraham and Moses rode upon: and they own, as before observed, that Jesus of Nazareth rode on one to Jerusalem, as is here related. Their ancient governors, patriarchs, princes, and judges, used to ride on asses, before the introduction and multiplication of horses in Solomon’s time, forbidden by the law of God: wherefore, though this might seem mean and despicable at this present time, yet was suitable enough to Christ’s character as a king, and as the son of David, and king of Israel; strictly observing the law given to the kings of Israel, and riding in such manner as they formerly did.

Ver. 6. *And the disciples went*, etc.] The two disciples, as the Arabic version reads, to the village over against them; and, as Mark says, “found the colt tied to the door without, in a place where two ways met”: the house was just at the entrance of the village, at the door of which, on the outside in the street, was the colt fastened, where were two ways of going into, and coming out of the town; so that it was a public place; the colt was easily seen, nor could it well be taken away without being observed, as it was by the owners of it: and

did as Jesus commanded them; they loosed the colt; and whereas whilst they were loosing it, the owners of it asked them, what they meant by so doing? they returned for answer what Christ had directed them to say; upon which they were satisfied, and let them go with it; (see <411104>Mark 11:4-6). This is a very considerable instance of the faith of the disciples in Christ, and their ready and cheerful obedience to him; who might have objected the appearance of theft, the scandal that might be brought upon them, and the trouble they might be exposed to hereby; but they make no hesitation, but go and do as he had ordered them; and in which, they are worthy of the imitation of all the followers of Jesus.

Ver. 7. *And brought the ass and the colt*, etc.] To Jesus, as Mark and Luke add, and who only make mention of the colt: both were undoubtedly brought; the colt being unloosed and taken away, the ass, its dam, followed after:

and put on them their clothes; their loose upper garments, to be instead of saddles and trappings, and that Christ might sit thereon with ease and decency: the other evangelists say, that they cast their garments on the colt; and the Syriac version here reads, “they put their garments on the colt, and Jesus rode upon it”: but as both were brought, it is clear from hence, that their clothes were put upon both; not knowing which Christ would choose to ride on. And it should seem, that it was not unusual to put garments on asses to ride on; for the Targumist on (<070510>Judges 5:10) represents the princes of Israel as riding upon asses, strewed or saddled with all kind ^yrwyx, of “painted garments”. The Persic version, without the least colour of authority from the original text, renders it, “and Jesus put his own garment on the colt, and sat thereon”; which is ridiculous, as well as contrary to truth:

and they sat him thereon, or “on them”: meaning either on the ass and colt, that is, on one of them, or both successively, or on the clothes they put upon them.

Ver. 8. *And a very great multitude*, etc.] Which consisted partly of the great multitude which followed Christ from Jericho, and partly of the much people that were come up to the feast of the passover from divers parts, and met him from Jerusalem; (see <430212>John 12:12,13). These, many of them, for it cannot be thought to be done by them all,

spread their garments in the way; either in the middle of the road, instead of carpets, to ride upon; the Persic version adds, “that he might pass over them”: this they did, in honour to him as a king. So when Jehu declared to the princes of Israel, that he was anointed king of Israel, they hastened, and took every man his garment, and put it under him, (<120913>2 Kings 9:13) that is, to tread upon; though the Jewish writers [f1087] say, it was done that he might be higher than them all, suitable to the dignity of a king: and it is reported [f1088] of Cato Uticensis, the emperor, that his soldiers strewed their garments for him to walk upon: or these garments were spread by the way side. Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, that little tents might be raised by them along the road, upon which they spread their garments to make a show, in imitation of the feast of tabernacles, to which there is a very great resemblance in many things which occur in this account; when they used to spread linen cloth, garments, and fruits, over their booths, for decoration and ornament; as appears from their traditions about these things:

> “ˆyds hyl[sryp, “if a man spreads a linen cloth over it”, (his booth,) because of the sun, or under it, because of the falling of leaves, etc. or spreads it over a canopy, it is not right; but he may spread it over the bedposts [f1089].”

That is, for ornament, as the commentators observe [f1090]. Again,

> “dgb hyl[çrp, if a man spreads a garment over it, (his booth,) or if he spreads it under it, because of what falls it is not right; but if he spreads it so as that it is, htwanl, “for ornament”, it is right; and so if he covers it according to the tradition of it, and encompasses it with various kinds of fruits, and precious things, and vessels which hang upon it, whether on its walls, or on its covering, so they be for ornament, it is right [f1091].”

In like manner, the multitude might hang their garments, to make the show the greater, either on such booths, or on the houses and trees, that were upon the road, as they went along.

Others cut down branches from the trees; from the olive trees, as the Persic version expresses it, which grew in great plenty hereabout; and also from the palm trees, the branches of which, with the boughs of other trees, were what the Jews used to carry in their hands on the feast of tabernacles; (see <03240>Leviticus 23:40) and the Evangelist John expressly says, that the people which met Christ from Jerusalem at this time, did take branches of palm trees in their hands, (<43213>John 12:13). And though this was not the time of the feast of tabernacles, but of the passover, yet it was common with the Jews to signify their joy upon any occasion, by such ways and methods they used at that least: so upon the cleansing of the tower of Jerusalem, by Simon Maccabeus, the Jews entered into it with thanksgiving, and branches of palm trees:

> "And entered into it the three and twentieth day of the second month in the hundred seventy and first year, with thanksgiving, and branches of palm trees, and with harps, and cymbals, and with viols, and hymns, and songs: because there was destroyed a great enemy out of Israel." (1 Maccabees 13:51)

Likewise upon purifying the temple, which had been polluted by Antiochus, they kept eight days with gladness as in the feast of tabernacles, and bare branches and fair boughs, and palms also, as in the Apocrypha: 6 And they kept the eight days with gladness, as in the feast of the tabernacles, remembering that not long afore they had held the feast of the tabernacles, when as they wandered in the mountains and dens like beasts. 7 Therefore they bare branches, and fair boughs, and palms also, and sang psalms unto him that had given them good success in cleansing his place. (2 Maccabees 10)

But here it is said,

and they strawed them in the way: not in the middle of the road, which would have been an hindrance to riding; but by the way side, upon, the booths, or houses in the road, in honour of him; just as the Jews [f1092] say,

> "the streets were strewed with myrtles, and the courts with purple, when Mordecai went out of the king's gate."

Ver. 9. *And the multitudes that went before*, etc.] That is, that went before Christ; accordingly the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel, read, "that went before him": these seem to be the much people that met him from Jerusalem,

and that followed him; which were perhaps those that came from Jericho, and other parts;

cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: by calling Jesus the Son of David, they owned and proclaimed him to be the Messiah; this being the usual title by which the Messiah was known among the Jews; see the note on (<4001>Matthew 1:1) and by crying and saying Hosanna to him, which was done with loud acclamations, and the united shouts of both companies, before and behind; they ascribe all praise, honour, glory, and blessing to him, and wish him all prosperity, happiness, and safety. The word is an Hebrew word, and is compounded of `an`, and `h[yçwh`, which signifies, "save I beseech"; and which words stand in (<19825>Psalm 118:25) to which the multitude had reference, as appears from what follows; and are formed into one word, `an[çwh`, "Hosana", or "Hosanna", in which form it frequently appears in the Jewish writings; and because of the often use of it at the feast of tabernacles, that feast was called "Hosanna", and the seventh day of it was called `hbr an[çwh`, "the great Hosanna" [f1093]. Moreover, the "Lulabs", or the bundles made of branches of palm trees, and boughs of willow and myrtle, which they carried in their hands at the feast of tabernacles, often go by this name: it is said [f1094],

> "the Egyptian myrtle is right or fit `an[çwhl`, "for the Hosanna"."

That is, to be put into the "Lulab", or bundle of boughs and branches, which was carried about, and shaken at the above feast. Again [f1095],

> "it is a tradition of R. Meir, that it was the practice of the honourable men of Jerusalem, to bind their "Lulabs" with golden threads says Rabbah, these are they `an[çwh yldgm`, "that bind the Hosanna": the gloss on it is, "that bind the Lulabs", of the house of the head of the captivity; for in binding the Hosanna of the house of the head of the captivity, they leave in it an hand's breadth and says the same Rabbah, a man may not hold an Hosanna in a linen cloth."

Once more [f1096],

> "says R. Zera, a man may not prepare ançwh, "an Hosanna" for a child, on a good day."

Sometimes the Hosanna seems to be distinguished from the "Lulab", and then by the "Lulab" is meant, only the branches of palm tree; and by the Hosanna, the boughs of willow and myrtle; as when [f1097],

> "Rabbah says, a man may not fix the "Lulab", ançwhb, "in the Hosanna"."

And a little after says the same,

> "a man may not bind the "Lulab" with the "Hosanna"."

Now these bundles might be so called, because they were lifted up and shaken, when the above words out of (Psalm 118:25) were recited: for thus it is said [f1098],

> "when do they shake, that is, their "Lulabs", or "Hosannas?" At those words, "O give thanks unto the Lord", (Psalm 118:1) the beginning and end; and at those words, "Save now I beseech thee", (Psalm 118:25). The house of Hillell, and the house of Shammai say also at those words, "O Lord I beseech thee, send now prosperity": says R. Akiba, I have observed Rabban Gamaliel and Rabbi Joshua, that all the people shook their Lulabs, but they did not shake, only at those words, Save now I beseech thee, O Lord."

Hence some have thought, that these are meant by the Hosanna in this text; and that the sense is, that the multitude cried, saying, These branches of palm trees we carry in our hands, and strow by the way side, are in honour to the Son of David, the true Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth: but then this sense will not agree with the following clause, "Hosanna in the highest": it may therefore be further observed, that certain prayers and songs of praise, were called "Hosannas": hence we read [f1099] of tbç lç twn[çwh, "the Hosannas of the sabbath"; which consisted of various sentences in praise of the sabbath, and thanksgiving to God for it, and are concluded with this word "Hosanna"; and of various petitions that God would save them, as he had done others; and at the end of each petition, is this word. As also of [f1100] hbr an[çwh lç twn[çwh, "the Hosannas of the great Hosanna"; which are certain words of prayer and praise, used on the seventh day of the feast of tabernacles: and whereas at that feast the "Hallell", or hymn,

was sung, which concluded with the 118th Psalm where the words, “Save now I beseech thee, O Lord”, stand, from whence this word is formed; the true sense and meaning of it here appears to be this; that the multitude that attended Christ to Jerusalem, as they went along, sung songs of praise to him, as the true Messiah; particularly, applying the above passage to him, and earnestly wished him all success and prosperity; and importunately prayed for salvation by him; adding,

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: which words are taken also out of (<19B826>Psalm 118:26) and is an ascription of blessing and praise to Jesus, the Messiah; who being sent by God, came from him with his authority, as his apostle, and as representing him; and contains another petition for him, that he might be crowned with the blessings of divine goodness, for his people; and be blessed and praised by them, for all the spiritual blessings they are blessed with in him. And very properly and pertinently were those words used and applied to Christ, since the Psalm from whence they are taken belongs to him: the whole of it is, by some Jewish interpreters [f1101], said to be spoken concerning him; and particularly, he is designed in (<19B822>Psalm 118:22) by the stone the builders refused, as is clear from (<401242>Matthew 21:42) of this chapter, and from (<440411>Acts 4:11) and (<600207>1 Peter 2:7) and which is allowed by some Jewish writers, ancient and modern [f1102]; and (<19B827>Psalm 118:27) the words following these, are by them interpreted of the days of the Messiah, the times of Gog and Magog, and the future age [f1103]. And others of them said, as Mark observes, (<411110>Mark 11:10). “Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord”; (See Gill on “<411110>Mark 11:10”). Moreover, as it may be thought others of the people said, as Luke relates, (<421938>Luke 19:38).

Blessed be the king that cometh in the name of the Lord; (See Gill on “<421938>Luke 19:38”). To which is added,

Hosanna in the highest; that is, let songs of praise be sung to God, who is in the highest heavens, for all his grace and goodness vouchsafed to the sons of men, through Christ his beloved Son; or let not only all salvation, happiness, and prosperity attend the Messiah, David’s son, here on earth, but all glory and felicity in the highest heavens, above which he will be exalted.

Ver. 10. *And when he was come into Jerusalem*. etc.] The metropolis of the nation, the seat of the ancient kings of Judah, and of his father David,

entering into it in this very public manner; as he never did before; riding in the manner the ancient judges and kings of Israel did, attended with a numerous retinue, shouting as they went along, and singing their "Hosannas" to him:

all the city was moved; as Bethlehem was, when Naomi with Ruth returned thither; and of which the same phrase is used, as here, (Ruth 1:19).

all the city was moved about them; which the Chaldee paraphrase renders,

"all the inhabitants of the city were gathered in troops about them."

And so here the sense is, that the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem were in general alarmed at the uncommon apparatus, and shouting, and ran in great numbers to inquire what was the matter:

saying, who is this? They knew him not; for though he had preached unto them, and wrought miracles among them, yet they had never seen him in any such pomp and state; and could not devise who he should be, that entered their city in such a manner, amidst the shouts and acclamations of so great a multitude: it seemed greatly to affect them, and fill them with concern, astonishment, and fear.

Ver. 11. *And the multitude said*, etc.] Or the people, as the Vulgate Latin, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read; the common people, that went before, and followed after him: these knew Christ better than the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Scribes and Pharisees, and rulers of the people.

This is Jesus the prophet: that prophet Moses spoke of, in (Deuteronomy 18:15) and the nation of the Jews in general expected:

of Nazareth of Galilee; who, though he was not born there, yet being educated, and having lived much in that place, is said to be of it; and which was the common opinion of the people.

Ver. 12. *And Jesus went into the temple of God*, etc.] At Jerusalem, which was built by his order, and dedicated to his worship, and where the Shechaniah, or the divine presence was. Christ went not to the tower of David, the strong hold of Zion, the palace of his father David; for he entered not as a temporal king; but he went to the house of his heavenly Father, as the lord and proprietor of it, to preach in it, and purge it; whereby the glory of the latter house became greater than that of the former; and so several prophecies had their accomplishment, particularly

(<3017>Haggai 2:7,9 <3001>Malachi 3:1) though this was not the first time by many, of Christ's being in the temple; yet this his entrance was the most public and magnificent of any: after, he had alighted from the colt, and sent back that and the ass to their proper owners, as is very probable, he went by the eastern gate, called the king's gate, (<1309>1 Chronicles 9:18) into the temple;

and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple: not in the holy of holies, nor in the holy place, nor in the court of the priests, nor in the court of the Israelites, but in the court of the Gentiles, and in the mountain of the house, in which were shops, where various things were sold, relating to sacrifices. What these persons bought and sold, whom Christ cast out, is not said, but may be collected from (<4014>John 2:14) where besides "doves", of which hereafter, mention is made, of "sheep" and "oxen"; which were brought to be sold, on account of the passover, for it was then near their time of passover as now; for besides the lambs and kids, which were here also sold and bought for the passover supper, sheep and oxen were here also killed and sold for the Chagiga, or feast [f1104], which was the day following: here likewise the drink offerings were bought and sold, of which take the following account.

> "There were fifteen presidents çdqmb, "in the sanctuary": Jochanan ben Phinehas was over the tickets, and Ahijah over the drink offerings, etc. — He that inquired for drink offerings, went to Jochanan, who was appointed over the tickets: he gave him the money, and took a ticket; he then went to Ahijah, that was appointed over the drink offerings, and gave him the ticket, and received from him the drink offerings; and in the evening they came together, and Ahijah produced the tickets, and took for them the money [f1105]."

This was one way of buying and selling in the temple;

and overthrew the tables of the money changers; of which sort were they, who sat in the temple at certain times, to receive the half shekel, and change the money of such, who wanted one, by which they gained something, to themselves. It was a custom in our Lord's time, for every Israelite, once a year, to pay half a shekel towards the temple charge and service, which was founded upon the orders given by God to Moses in the wilderness; that upon his numbering the people, to take of everyone that was twenty years of age and upwards, rich or poor, half a shekel,

(<2013>Exodus 30:13-15) though this does not seem to be designed as a perpetual rule. However, it now obtained, and was annually paid:

> "On the first day of Adar (which answers to our February) they proclaimed concerning the shekels [f1106]."

That is, they gave public notice, in all the cities in Israel, that the time of paying the half shekel was near at hand, that they might get their money ready, for everyone was obliged to pay it: the Jews [f1107] say,

> "it is an affirmative command of the law, that every man in Israel should pay the half shekel every year; even though a poor man that is maintained by alms, he is obliged to it, and must beg it of others, or sell his coat upon his back and pay it, as it is said, (<2015>Exodus 30:15). The rich shall not give more, etc. — All are bound to give it, priests, Levites, and Israelites, and strangers, and servants, that are made free; but not women, nor servants, nor children."

Notice being thus given [f1108],

> "on the fifteenth day (of the same month), twnjlwç, "tables" were placed in the province, or city (which Bartenora [f1109] interprets of Jerusalem; but Maimonides [f1110] says, the word used is the name of all the cities in the land of Israel, excepting Jerusalem), and on the twenty fifth they sit, çdqmb, "in the sanctuary"."

The same is related by Maimonides [f1111], after this manner:

> "On the first of Adar they proclaim concerning the shekels, that every man may prepare his half shekel, and be ready to give it on the fifteenth; µynjlwçh, "the exchangers" sit in every province or city, and mildly ask it; everyone that gives them it, they take it of them; and he that does not give, they do not compel him to give: on the twenty fifth, they sit in the sanctuary to collect it; and henceforward they urge him that does not give, until he gives; and everyone that does not give, they oblige him to give pledge, and they, take his pledge, whether he will or not, and even his coat."

This gives us a plain account of these money changers; of their tables, and of their sitting at them in the temple, and on what account. Now these exchangers had a profit in every shekel they changed [f1112].

> "When a man went to an exchanger, and changed a shekel for two half shekels, he gave him an addition to the shekel; and the addition is called ^wbl q, "Kolbon"; wherefore, when two men gave a shekel for them both, they were both obliged to pay the "Kolbon"."

Would you know what this "Kolbon", whence these exchangers are called, κολλυβισται, "Collybistae", in this text, or the gain which these men had, take this question and answer in their own words [f1113].

> "How much is the "Kolbon?" A silver "meah", according to. R. Meir; but the wise men say, half an one."

Or as it is elsewhere expressed [f1114],

> "what is the value of the "Kolbon?" At that time they gave two pence for the half shekel, the "Kolbon" was half a "meah", which is the twelfth part of a penny; and since, "Kolbon" less than that is not given."

Now a "meah" was the half of a sixth part of the half shekel, and the twenty fourth part of a shekel, and weighed sixteen barley corns: half a "meah" was the forty eighth part of a shekel, and weighed eight barley [f1115] corns; a "meah" was, of our money, the value of somewhat more than a penny, and half an one more than a halfpenny. This was their gain, which in so large a number that paid, must amount to a great deal of money. There seems to be nothing lie against these men being the very persons, whose tables Christ overturned, unless it should be objected, that this was not the time of their sitting; for it was now within a few days of the passover, which was in the month Nisan; whereas it was in the month Adar, that the half shekel was paid: but it should be observed, according to the above account, that they did not begin to sit in the temple to receive this money, until the twenty fifth of Adar; and it was now but the tenth of Nisan, when Christ entered the temple and found them there: so that there was but fifteen days: between the one and the other; and considering the large numbers that were obliged to pay, and the backwardness and poverty of many, they may reasonably be thought to be still sitting on that account: and what Maimonides before relates deserves notice, and will strengthen this supposition; that on the twenty fifth: of Adar, they sat in the temple to collect this money; and that henceforward they urged and compelled persons to pay it. Moreover, these men had other business, in a way of exchange, than this to do; and especially at such a time as the passover,

when persons came from different parts to attend it; and who, might want to have their foreign money changed for current coin; or bills of return, to be changed for money: add to all this the following account, which will show the large and perpetual business of these men [f1116].

> "In the sanctuary there were before them, dymt, "continually", or "daily", thirteen chests (and there were as many tables [f1117]); every chest was in the form of a trumpet: the first was for the shekels of the present year, the second for the shekels of the year past; the third for everyone that had a "Korban", or vow upon him to offer two turtledoves, or two young pigeons; the one a burnt offering, the other a sin offering: their price was, cast into this chest: the fourth for everyone that had the burnt offering of a fowl only on him, the price of that was cast into this chest. The fifth was for him, who freely gave money to buy wood, to be laid in order on the altar; the sixth, for him that freely gave money for the incense; the seventh, for him that freely gave gold for the mercy seat; the eighth, for the remainder of the sin offering; as when he separated the money for his sin offering, and took the sin offering, and there remained of the money, the rest he cast into this chest; the ninth, for the remainder of the trespass offering; the tenth, for the remainder of the doves for men and women in fluxes, and women after childbirth; the eleventh, for the remainder of the offerings of the Nazarite; the twelfth, for the remainder of the trespass offering of the leper: the thirteenth, for him that freely gave money for the burnt offering of a beast."

And the seats of them that sold doves, which were the offerings of the poor sort after child bearing, and on account of running issues: which cases were very frequent, and sometimes raised the price of doves very high, of which what follows is an instance [f1118].

> "It happened at a certain time, that doves were sold in Jerusalem for a golden penny each; said Rabban ben Simeon Gamaliel, by this habitation (or temple which he swore by) I will not lodge (or lie down) this night, until they are sold for a silver penny each: he went into the council house and taught, that if a woman had five certain births, or five certain issues, she should bring one offering, and eat of the sacrifices, nor should there remain any debt upon her; and doves were sold that day for two fourths."

That is, for a silver penny; now a golden penny was the value of twenty five silver pence [f1119]; so that the price, by this means, was sunk very much: but not only doves were sold in the markets in Jerusalem, but in the temple itself [f1120].

> "There was a president over the doves, which was he with whom they agreed, who sold doves for the offerings, so and so by the shekel; and everyone that was obliged to bring a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons, brought the price of them, çdqml, "to the sanctuary"; and the president gave the doves to the masters of the offerings, and made up the account with the treasurers."

Now at a feast time as this was, there was a greater demand for doves than usual; for women who had lain in, and such as had fluxes, whether men or women, who lived in distant parts, reserved their offerings till they came up to the feast [f1121]; and which in consequence must occasion a greater call for these creatures, and furnishes out a reason, why there should be so many sitting at this time in the temple to sell doves. Some have thought, that those persons are here meant, which are often mentioned by the Jewish doctors [f1122], as an infamous sort of men, who are not admitted as witnesses in any case; and are reckoned among thieves, robbers, usurers, and players at dice; who µynwy yjyrpm, "teach doves to fly", either to decoy other doves from their dove houses, or to out fly others for money, or to fight one against another; and these sat in the temple to sell this sort of doves, which was still more heinous; but the other sense is more agreeable.

Ver. 13. *And said unto them, it is written*, etc.] In (Isaiah 56:7).

My house shall be called the house of prayer. These are the, words of God, calling the temple his house, which was built according to the plan he gave; and was the place of his worship, and where he dwelt, and vouchsafed his presence to his people; and signifying, that in time to come, it should be an house of prayer; not for the Jews only, but for the Gentiles also: "for all people", as it is expressed by the prophet, and cited by Mark; and particularly this part of it, in which were the money changers and sellers of doves; for that was the court of the Gentiles, where they were admitted to pray, and perform other parts of worship. These words are rightly applied by Christ to the temple; nor can the Jews themselves deny it; for their own Targum paraphrases it thus, yçdqm tyb, "the house of my sanctuary shall be called an house of prayer"; or shall be one; for the

meaning is not that it should go by such a name, but should be for such use, and not for buying and selling, and merchandise, to which use the Jews now put it: hence it follows,

but ye have made it a den of thieves. These are the words of Christ, affirming what is complained of in (<2407>Jeremiah 7:11) and applying it to the present case, on account of the wicked merchandise, unlawful gain, avarice and extortion, of the priests and other officers of the temple, who had a considerable share in these things; and to whom the temple was, and by them used, as a den is to and by thieves and robbers, where they shelter themselves; for these persons robbed both God and man, and the temple was a sanctuary to them: here they screened themselves, and, under the appearance of religion and devotion, devoured widows' houses, plundered persons of their substance, and were full of extortion and excess.

Ver. 14. *And the blind and the lame came to him*, etc.] The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, "they brought unto him the blind and the lame". The blind could not come to him unless they were led, nor the lame, unless they were carried: the sense therefore is, they came, being brought to him:

in the temple; that part of it, the court of the Gentiles, and mountain of the house, out of which he had cast the buyers and sellers, etc. and in the room of them, were brought in these objects of his pity:

and he healed them; to the blind he restored sight, and caused the lame to walk; which miracles he wrought in confirmation of the doctrine he preached: for all the other evangelists relate, that he taught in the temple.

Ver. 15. *And when the chief priests and Scribes*, etc.] The inveterate enemies of Christ; who upon hearing the shouts of the people at Christ's entrance into the city, and passage through it to the temple; and understanding that it was Jesus of Nazareth that was come thither, they came also to awe the people, and pick up what they could against him: who, when they

saw the wonderful things that he did; as the overturning the tables of the money changers, and the seats of those that sold doves, without any opposition, when these traders were so many, and in great power, and he a single person, and unarmed; and that the blind received their sight, and the lame were cured,

and the children crying in the temple; who came from the various parts of the city, with their parents, to see the sight; who, when the multitude had done, they began the same ditty:

and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; proclaiming Jesus to be the Messiah, and ascribing praise and glory to him, and wishing him all happiness and prosperity: the form they had taken up from the people, and might be encouraged by their parents; and which they pronounced without fear of the high priests, and Scribes, being disposed, directed, and overruled hereunto by the providence of God. It was indeed no unusual thing for children to sing the "Hosanna" at the feast of tabernacles; for, according to the Jewish canons [f1123],

> "a child that knew how to shake, was obliged to carry the "Lulab","

or bundle of myrtle, and willow boughs, and palm tree branches, at the shaking of which "Hosanna" was said: but that they should cry "Hosanna" to Jesus, as David's son was very extraordinary, and what the high priests, and Scribes, took notice of with great resentment:

they were sore displeased; at the children, that so said, at their parents that suffered them, and especially at Christ, who did not forbid them. The Persic version renders it, "it displeased the priests"; the Arabic reads, "they murmured"; and the Ethiopic has it, "it was not pleasant to them".

Ver. 16. *And said unto him, hearest thou what these say?* etc.] Suggesting, that if he did, he ought to reprove them, or else he would be a very vain, as well as a weak man, to take such things to himself, which did not belong to him, and that from such poor, little, silly creatures, so void of knowledge and understanding:

and Jesus said unto them, yea: signifying he did hear, and well approved of what they said, and was ready to vindicate it; and did, by putting the following question to them,

have ye never read; that passage of Scripture in (<19802>Psalm 8:2)

out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? in the original text it is, "thou hast ordained", or "founded strength"; and which is rendered by the Septuagint, as it is by Matthew here; and glory and strength are mentioned together, as being to be given to God, (<19601>Psalm 29:1) and so "strength" and "praise" by the Targumist in (<23003>Isaiah 13:3)

by which is meant strong glory, or glory and praise expressed with a strong voice, or in a very vehement manner, as it was by these babes and sucklings; and this owing to God's disposing them hereunto, putting it into their mouths, and strengthening them to declare it in a very strong and powerful manner; so that his strength was made perfect in their weakness, and his praise the more glorious. In the Psalm it is added, "because of thine enemies, that thou might still the enemy, and the avenger": by whom are meant the high priests, the Scribes and Pharisees, the mortal enemies of Christ, who were full of enmity against him, and wanted to revenge themselves on him for spoiling their market at this time; but were stilled by the "Hosannas" of the children, and Christ's defence of them. The Jews themselves seem to be conscious, that these words relate to the Messiah; for they say [f1124], that

> "babes and sucklings, apqwt ˆybhy, shall give strength to the king Messiah"

manifestly referring to this passage.

Ver. 17. *And he left them*, etc.] The high priests and Scribes, confounded and put to silence, and as unworthy of his company and conversation;

and went out of the city; of Jerusalem, partly to prevent being apprehended by his enemies before his time, and partly to remove all suspicion of seizing the city and government, and setting himself up as a temporal prince;

to Bethany; which was about fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, or almost two miles, (<43 11 18>John 11:18). Hither he went to converse with his dear friends, Lazarus, and Martha, and Mary, who were all of this place, and where he could lodge and rest quietly. The name of the town is variously interpreted: according to some ancient writers [f1125], it signifies "the house of obedience"; so Christ went from the disobedient and faithless city, to a place of obedience, where he had some faithful and obedient disciples: others read it, and so Munster's Hebrew Gospel, hyn[tyb, "the house of affliction"; a suitable place for Christ to go to, who was about to suffer for the sins of his people. The Syriac version renders it ayn[tyb, and which is interpreted "an house", or "place of business", as this town of Bethany was. We read [f1126] of wnyh tyb lç twywnj, "the shops of Bethany", which were destroyed three years before Jerusalem, because they made their affairs to stand upon the words of the law; that is, as the gloss explains it,

they found that what was forbidden by the wise men, was free by the law: a great trade might be drove here for olives, dates, and figs, which grew hereabout in great plenty: mention is made in the Talmud of [f1127] ynyh tyb ygp, "the figs of Bethany": hence, as Christ departed from this place, the next morning he saw a fig tree. But the true etymology and signification of the name is ynyha tyb "the house", or "place of dates", the fruit of the palm tree: hence they that came from Jerusalem to meet Christ, might have their palm tree branches. One part of Mount Olivet abounded with olives, from whence it had its name; another part bore palm trees, and that was called "Bethany", from whence this town over against it had its name; and another part had great plenty of fig trees growing on it, and this called "Bethphage"; and that part of Jerusalem which was nearest to it went by the same name. We read [f1128] also of ynyh tyb lç ψrm, "the washing place of Bethany"; which seems to me to be not a place for the washing and purification of unclean men and women, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, but for washing of sheep; for the story is, that

> "a fox tore a sheep in pieces at the washing place of Bethany, and the affair came before the wise men;"

that is, at Jerusalem, to know whether that sheep might be eaten or no, since that which was torn was forbidden. And some have interpreted "Bethany, an house", or "place of sheep": but so much for this town, and what account is given of it.

And he lodged there; either in the house of Lazarus, and his two sisters, or in that of Simon the leper; for it was eventide when he went out of Jerusalem, as Mark observes. The Ethiopic version adds, "and rested there"; and so Origen [f1129] reads it; and, according to Harpocratian [f1130], the word used by the evangelist signifies to lie down, and sleep, and take one's rest. Christ lodged here all night.

Ver. 18. *Now in the morning*, etc.] Greek "in the first", or morning light, in the dawn, or break of day, the first spring of light; so the Latins [f1131] use "prima luce" for early in the morning, as soon as ever day breaks: so early did Christ rise, and return from Bethany to Jerusalem;

and as he returned to the city. The Persic version renders it, "they returned"; which, though not a good version, gives a true sense; for, as Christ went with the twelve to Bethany, as Mark affirms, so these returned

with him, as is clear from what follows. Thus Christ, day after day, went to and from Jerusalem: in the evening he went to Bethany, or to some part of the Mount of Olives, and there abode all night, and returned in the daytime to Jerusalem, and taught in the temple; for it does not appear that he was one night in Jerusalem, before the night of the passover.

He hungered, rising so early before his friends were up, he had eaten nothing that morning, and so before he had got far from Bethany, found himself hungry; which proves the truth of his human nature, which was in all respects like to ours, excepting sin.

Ver. 19. *And when he saw a fig tree*, etc.] In the Greek text it is "one fig tree", one remarkable fig tree: he must see a great many, as he went along; for a large tract of the Mount Of Olives was full of fig trees, and therefore called "Bethphage": and notice has been taken already of the figs of Bethany: but he saw none that had such large and spreading leaves as this; for it was the time when the fig tree was just budding, and putting forth its leaves: wherefore he took notice of it; and though it was "afar off", as Mark says, yet being hungry, he made up to it, expecting, from its promising appearance, to find fruit on it. This fig tree was "in the way"; by the road side, and probably had no owner; was common to anybody, and so no injury was done to any person by losing it: he came to it,

and found nothing thereon but leaves only: Mark says, "he came, if haply he might find anything thereon"; which must be understood of him as man; for as he hungered as man, so he judged and expected as man, from the appearance of this fig tree, that he might find fruit upon it; and which is no contradiction to his deity, and his having the Spirit of God, as the Jew [f1132] objects; and especially since, as Bishop Kidder [f1133] observes, such an expectation is attributed to God himself, in (<23 5 2>Isaiah 5:2,4) and it may be added, and with regard to that people, of which this fig tree was an emblem, and designed by Christ to be considered as such in what he did to it. The same evangelist further observes, "and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for the time of figs was not yet". The word "yet" is not in the original text; which last clause is a reason, either why he found no fruit, or nothing but leaves upon it, because it was not a time, or season of figs: it was not a good fig year, so Dr. Hammond interprets it; and yet though it was not, since this tree was so very flourishing, fruit might have been expected on it: and also, it furnishes out a reason why Christ took so much pains to go to it, seeing there were very few figs to be had elsewhere,

and this bid very fair to supply him with some in this time of scarcity: or else, as a reason why, besides its promising appearance, he expected fruit upon it, because the time of figs, that is, of the gathering of the figs, was not come: in which sense the phrase is used in (<4021>Matthew 21:34); and is Bishop Kidder's interpretation of the passage: and since therefore the time was not come for the ingathering of the figs, none had been taken off of it, the more might be expected on it. This sense would be very probable, did it appear that figs were usually ripe about this time; but the contrary seems manifest, both from Scripture, which represents the fig tree putting forth its leaves, as a sign the summer is nigh, (<4024>Matthew 24:32) and from the Talmudists, who say [f1134], that the beginning of leaves, or putting forth of the leaves of trees, is in the month Nisan, the month in which the passover was kept, and so the then present time of the year; and who, from this time, reckon three times fifty days, or five full months before the figs are ripe [f1135]: so that these words are rather a reason why Christ did not expect to find figs on other trees, which he saw in great abundance as he passed along, because the time of common, ordinary figs being ripe, was not come; and why he particularly expected to find some on this tree, because it being full of leaves, appeared to be of a different kind from other fig trees: and was either of that sort which they call jwç twnb, "Benoth Shuach", as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures which were a kind of white figs that were not ripe till the third year [f1136]. This tree put forth its fruit the first year, which hung on it the second, and were brought to perfection on the third: so that when it was three years old, it had fruit of the first, second, and third year on it: this being such a tree, by its being full of leaves, when others had none, or were just putting out, fruit, of one year, or more might have been expected on it, when it had none at all, and therefore was cursed: or it might be one of that sort which brought forth fruit twice a year; for of such sort of fig trees we read in the Jewish writings [f1137]: and therefore though it was not the time of the common figs being ripe, yet this being one of the seasons, in which this tree bore ripe fruit, and being so very flourishing, might reasonably be expected from it: but there being none,

he said unto it, let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever; or, as it is expressed in Mark, "no man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever": for if none grew on it henceforward, no man could hereafter eat of it. Both expressions design the same thing, the perpetual barrenness of the fig tree:

and presently the fig tree withered away: immediately, upon Christ's saying these words, its sap was dried up, it lost its verdure; its leaves were shrivelled and shrunk up, and dropped off, and the whole was blasted. This tree was an emblem of the Jews: Christ being hungry, and very desirous of the salvation of men, came first to them, from whom, on account of their large profession of religion, and great pretensions to holiness, and the many advantages they enjoyed, humanly speaking, much fruit of righteousness might have been expected; but, alas! he found nothing but mere words, empty boasts, an outward show of religion, an external profession, and a bare performance of trifling ceremonies, and oral traditions; wherefore Christ rejected them, and in a little time after, the kingdom of God, the Gospel, was taken away from them, and their temple, city, and nation, entirely destroyed.

Ver. 20. *And when the disciples saw it*, etc.] The next day in the morning, as Mark says: they had, heard what Christ had said to it the day before, as the same evangelist observes; but did not take notice of the immediate withering of the tree; but the next morning, as they returned from Bethany, they saw it dried up from the roots:

they marvelled; not that Christ should curse it, but that it should wither away so soon, and upon his saying what he did; which was a considerable instance of his power and Godhead, all creatures, animate and inanimate, being at his command and disposal:

saying, how soon is the fig tree withered away? This was said by Peter, in the name of the rest, who recollecting what Jesus had said to it the day before, and observing how the event had answered his words so soon, addressed Christ after this manner: "master, behold the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away"; expressing his wonder at it, and ascribing, it to the power of Christ; of which this was an amazing proof and evidence.

Ver. 21. *Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc.] His disciples wondering at his power, in causing the fig tree to wither so suddenly:

verily I say unto you, if ye have faith; that is, in God, in his power, which reaches to all things: the object of faith is expressed in Mark, and by way of exhortation, "have faith in God", that he will enable you to perform whatsoever ye shall desire; which must be understood, not of spiritual faith in the promises of God, and person of Christ, but of, the faith of miracles,

or faith in the power of God to perform things that are above the strength of nature:

and doubt not; either of the power, or will of God to do for you, and by you, the thing desired; for this kind of faith would not admit of the least degree of doubting: there must be no hesitation in the mind, no reasoning upon the thing, how it can be performed; the mind must not be divided between the power and will of God, and the difficulties and discouragements which attend the case, but must believe in hope against hope, with a full persuasion of accomplishment: for want of this faith, without doubting, the disciples could not cure the child that was lunatic.

Ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree; cause one to be dried up, and wither away by a word, as Christ had done to this, which, comparatively speaking, was but a lesser sort of miracle;

but also, if ye shall say to this mountain; the Mount of Olives, where Christ and his disciples now were, and were passing over, or, at least, were very near it; or any other mountain wherever they might be, to which they should, upon any occasion, think fit to say,

be thou removed, and cast into the sea; which was many miles off from Mount Olivet, and must he a very surprising performance for a mountain to be rooted up, so large as that was, and be carried several miles from its former situation, and be thrown into the sea; and yet, as difficult and amazing as this may seem,

it shall be done: that is, provided the person doubts not; or, as it is said in Mark, “shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things, which he saith, shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith”: for this must not be confined to the particular instances of drying up a fig tree, or removing a mountain, but the doing of any sort of miracle, how great soever. Nor is it our Lord’s meaning that they should do these particular things; nor is it certain that they ever did: but his sense is, that, had they faith, they should be able not only to do such lesser miracles, as, comparatively speaking, the withering of the fig tree was, but they should be able to perform things much more difficult and surprising, whenever the good of the souls of men, the propagation of the Gospel, and the glory of God required them.

Ver. 22. *And all things whatsoever*, etc.] Not only miracles, but any other thing which may be for the honour of God, the interest of religion, the

spreading of the Gospel, the enlargement of the kingdom, of Christ, their own spiritual good, and the welfare of immortal souls,

ye shall ask in prayer, believing. Munster's Hebrew Gospel reads it, "in prayer, and in faith"; and the Arabic version renders it, "in prayer with faith"; both to the same purpose, and aptly express the sense of the words, which design the prayer of faith; or that prayer which is put up in the strength of faith; and is of great avail with God: for whatever is asked in faith, agreeable to the will of God, which is contained in his covenant, word, and promises, and makes for his glory, and the good of his people, shall be given, be it what it will; though to carnal sense and reason it may seem impracticable and impossible:

ye shall receive; of God, through Christ, freely and fully, and shall have and enjoy them, either they themselves, if asked for themselves, or others, for whom they are asked.

Ver. 23. *And when he was come into the temple*, etc.] The day following the cursing the fig tree: for the withering of it, and the notice the disciples took of it, and our Lord's discourse with them about it, were not in one and the same day, as is clear from the account the Evangelist Mark gives; but on the morning that Christ had conversed with his apostles by the way from Bethany to Jerusalem, concerning the strength of faith in prayer, and the success of it; when they were come into the city, and to the temple, whither he directly went, and entered upon his work of preaching to the people,

the chief priests and elders of the people came unto him. The "chief priests" were not the high priest, and his "sagan", or deputy, but the principal of the priesthood, who were chosen from the rest of their brethren, to sit in the sanhedrim; and "the elders of the people" were the laity that were chosen from among the people, to be members of the same grand council: in this sense the Jewish writers interpret the word "elders", in (<5202>Deuteronomy 21:2) "thy elders, and thy judges"; that is,

> "thy elders, who are thy judges: it is a tradition, R. Eliezer ben Jacob says, lwdgh ˆyd tyb hz:Æynqz, "thine eiders; this is the great sanhedrim" [f1138]."

The other Evangelists Mark and Luke add to these, Scribes, who also were a part of this great assembly; so that the principal members of it, if not the

whole sanhedrim, came in a body together, if possible, by their presence and authority, to daunt Christ, discourage his ministry, bring it into contempt with the people, and stop his proceedings and success. And this they did

as he was teaching; the people, that is, preaching the Gospel to them, as Luke explains it: he was instructing them in the things relating to himself, and his kingdom, dispensing the mysteries of his grace, the doctrines of regeneration, justification, and salvation. Mark says, it was “as he was walking in the temple”: and at the same time teaching the people, who flocked about him in like manner, as the Peripatetic philosophers taught their scholars walking: whence they had their name.

And said, by what authority dost thou these things? that is, drive out the buyers and sellers out of the temple, which greatly provoked them, their own gain and interest being concerned therein; and perform these miracles of restoring sight to the blind, and causing the lame to walk; which he had very lately wrought in the temple; and particularly preach these doctrines, the work in which he was then engaged:

and who gave thee this authority? They do not object to his doctrines, or dispute whether they were true or false; nor examine his miracles, whether they were of God, or of the devil: in these points they might fear he would be able to put them to silence and confusion, of which some of them had had an experience before; but they proceed in another way, in which they might hope for success, and attack him about his commission and authority under which he acted, whether he pretended to derive his authority from God, or from men: by this they designed to ensnare him and hoped they should gain their point, let him answer in what form he would. Should he say that God gave him the authority to do these things, they would charge him with enthusiasm and blasphemy, urging, that it was wickedness and presumption any man to pretend to be sent immediately from God; since the order of the priesthood, and of teaching was fixed, and none were to take upon them the office of a priest, or of a teacher of the people, but by their appointment; or none were called and sent, but through them, or by their means: and if he should say, that he had his authority from men, they would confront him, and absolutely deny that he had any from them, who only had the power of giving men an authority of preaching in the temple; wherefore he must be an usurper of this office, and a turbulent, seditious person, that sought to destroy all order, civil and ecclesiastical.

Ver. 24. *And Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc.] Not by replying directly to their question, but by putting another question to them, whereby he escaped the snare he saw they laid for him:

I also will ask you one thing, word, or question,

which if ye tell me; honestly, and plainly answer to it,

I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: which was putting the thing upon such a foot, and in such a form, as they could not well object to; for Christ promises, that if they would return a plain answer to the question he had to put to them, and which was no unreasonable, nor impertinent one, he would thoroughly satisfy them in this point; and expressly declare his commission and authority, what it was, and from whence he had it. The question is as follows:

Ver. 25. *The baptism of John, whence was it?* etc.] By the baptism of John, is meant the ordinance of water baptism, which was first administered by him; from whence he took the name of John the Baptist: and the doctrine which he preached concerning it, and previous to it, and even the whole of his ministry; which is denominated from a principal part of it, and which greatly distinguished his ministry from all others: and the question put by Christ concerning it is, whence it was? by what authority did John administer the ordinance of water baptism, which had never been administered before by any? who sent him to preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, a doctrine the world had never heard of before? who gave him a commission to discharge the several parts of his ministry, which he performed in such a wonderful and powerful manner? did he receive his authority

from heaven, or of men? that is, from God or man? as the opposition requires; and as it was usual for the Jews to call God by the name of "heaven": in this sense it is used by them, when they say [f1139], that such have no part in the world to come, who affirm, that the law is not µymçh ˆm, "from heaven", that is, from God; which is exactly the phrase here: and when they observe [f1140], that care should be taken that a man does not pronounce µymç µç, "the name of heaven", that is, God, in vain: and when they tell [f1141] us of a certain man that built large buildings by the way side, and put food and drink there, so that everyone that came went in and eat, and drank, µymçl Ærbw, "and blessed heaven"; that is blessed, or

gave thanks to God; and when they speak of [f1142] µymçl htym, "death by heaven"; that is, death which is immediately inflicted by God. So when Christ here asks, whether John's baptism was from heaven, or of men, his meaning is, whether it was of divine institution, and that John acted by divine authority, and commission; or whether it was an human device of his own, or of other men, and that he took the office of preaching and baptizing upon himself of his own head, or by some human appointment: to this he requires a direct answer, as is said in Mark, "answer me"; whether it was from the one, or from the other;

and they reasoned with themselves; either "within themselves", as the Arabic version renders it, "in their own minds", as the Syriac; or they took some little time and privately conferred together, what answer they should return; when they argued the point among themselves,

saying, if we shall say from heaven; if we shall return for answer, that the baptism and ministry of John were of divine appointment, and that he acted by a divine authority,

he will say unto us, why did ye not believe him? why did not ye believe the doctrine that he preached? and receive the testimony that he gave concerning the Messiah? and why were ye not baptized by him? why did ye reject the counsel of God against yourselves? They saw plainly, that if they owned the divine authority of John's baptism and ministry, they must allow Jesus to be the true Messiah, John bore witness to; and consequently, that it was by a divine authority he did what he did; and then there was an end of the question, and is the very thing that Christ had in view.

Ver. 26. *But if we shall say of men*, etc.] They reasoned with themselves, that should they give their answer in this form, and say, that the ministry and baptism of John, were merely human, and what he took up of himself, or which he performed by an authority derived from men,

we fear the people; that were then upon the spot, in the temple; who, as many of them were now the followers of Christ, more of them had been the admirers of John, and probably had been baptized by him: wherefore the sanhedrim were afraid of them, lest if they should affirm, that the authority by which John acted was human, they would immediately rise up against them; and, as Luke says, "stone" them: so high a veneration had they for him, and so dear was his memory still unto them.

For all held John as a prophet. These are the words of the high priests and elders, and not of the evangelist, expressing the reason of their fears from the people, who, in general, were thoroughly persuaded, as Luke expresses it, and firmly believed that John was a prophet, that was raised up, and sent immediately by God; and did not derive his authority and commission to preach and baptize from any man, or set of men, whatever.

Ver. 27. *And they answered Jesus and said, we cannot tell*, etc.] They saw the dilemma they were brought into; they chose rather therefore to speak against their own consciences, and tell a wilful lie, and incur the reproach of ignorance: who, at other times, took upon them to judge of a prophet, whether he was a true or a false one, and by what authority he acted, whether of God, or man: but now being reduced to this wretched condition, contrary to their office and character, declare they did not know, and could not tell from whence John had his commission, and who gave him his authority:

and he said unto them, neither tell I you by what authority I do these things: since, according to the proposal of Christ, and the agreement he entered into with them, they did not give him a direct answer to his question, he looked upon himself under no obligation to inform them, what was his authority, and from whence he had it; though by the question he put to them he tacitly suggests, that he had his authority not from man, but from God; and by this his answer signifies, that since John preached and baptized without their authority and approbation, so might he; nor was he dependent on them, or accountable to them.

Ver. 28. *But what think you*? etc.] (See Gill on "Matthew 18:12")

a certain man had two sons. This is a parable; the design of which is to show the hypocrisy and deceit of the Scribes and Pharisees, in pretending to works of righteousness, and not doing them; and to reprove them for their disbelief and rejection of John's ministry; and to make it appear, that the worst of sinners in the Jewish nation were preferable to them; and that many of them were, and would be, happy, when they would be miserable. By the "certain man", in the parable, God is designed; who, though he is not a man, nor to be represented by any human form; yet, as man is the image of God, he is therefore, in an improper and figurative sense, compared to man, and set forth by him; which may be allowed in a metaphorical and parabolical way: and though the Son of God only assumed human nature, and really became man; yet God, the Father, seems

rather to be here intended, who is sometimes compared to a husbandman and a vinedresser; (see ⁴³John 15:1,2) and as appears from the relation of the "two sons" unto him; by whom are meant not Jews and Gentiles; for the latter can never be intended by the first son; for these were not sons in such sense as the Jews were, nor were upon an equal foot of sonship with them, as the parable supposes; much less were they called first, and bid to work in the vineyard: but, on the contrary John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles, were first, and only sent to the Jews; and God, as yet, was not come even in the external ministry of the word to the Gentiles; nor were they brought to repentance and obedience: but by them are meant two sorts of people, among the Jews, the Scribes and Pharisees, and publicans and sinners; as the application of the parable, by our Lord himself, most clearly shows: these were both the sons of God; not only by creation, as all men are, all having, in this sense, but one common father, whose offspring they be; but also by national adoption; for to all, who were Israelites, according to the flesh, whether good men, or bad men, alike belonged the general privilege of adoption, (⁴⁵Romans 9:4). This publicans and sinners had an equal right to, as well as the Scribes and Pharisees, though they were not all the sons of God by special grace, or spiritual adoption:

and he came to the first; the publicans and sinners among the Jews, by the ministry of John the Baptist, Christ, and his disciples, who first and chiefly preached to such sort of persons;

and said, son, go work today in my vineyard: by the "vineyard", is meant the kingdom of God, or of heaven, the Gospel church state, the then present dispensation of things, which was set up, and which men were called to embrace and enter into; the doors of which the Pharisees, who pretended to have the key of knowledge, did all they could to shut up, and hinder persons going in, as they refused to do themselves: this is called it a "vineyard"; (See Gill on "⁴⁰Matthew 20:1"). To work in it signifies to hear the word preached, to believe in the Messiah, embrace his doctrines, and submit to his ordinances, particularly the ordinance of baptism, which was the then principal ordinance of that dispensation. The time of working in it is "today"; directly, immediately, and whilst it is day; for the hour cometh when no man can work, and when all these means and ordinances will be at an end, and attending on them will be over: the argument used to engage hereunto, is taken from the relation the person stood in as a "son", highly favoured by God, with the blessing of national adoption, besides that of natural sonship common to all mankind.

Ver. 29. *He answered and said, I will not*, etc.] Which answer fitly expresses the language and practice of openly profane and unregenerate sinners, who will not come to Christ, that they may have life; nor will they serve the Lord, but are bent upon indulging their lusts; nor will they be subject to the law of God; nor will they hear and receive the Gospel of Christ, or submit to his ordinances, and are averse to every good work: where is man's free will? this is the true picture of it; man has no will naturally to that which is good.

But afterward he repented, and went: a change of mind was wrought in him, and this produced a change of life and conversation: so, many of the publicans and sinners repented of their sins of disobedience, and rebellion against God, under the ministry of John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; not of themselves, men do not naturally see their sin, or need of repentance; their hearts are hard and obdurate; nor have they any spiritual sense and feeling: nothing will bring them to repentance, not the most powerful ministry, the severest judgments, or the kindest mercies, without the grace of God: but it was of God, and owing to his powerful and efficacious grace, that they repented: it was his will they should come to repentance: he called them to it, and gave it to them, as a free grace gift of his: and they repented not in a mere legal way, with a legal repentance, which lies in a mere conviction of the outward acts of sin; in an external sorrow for it, in horror and terror of mind about it, and in shedding tears for it, accompanied with a cessation from the grosser acts of sin, and an outward reformation of life and manners: but they repented in an evangelical manner, as such do, who are really converted, and spiritually instructed; who are true believers in Christ, have views, and, at least, hopes of pardoning grace and mercy; and have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Spirit: the repentance of such lies in a spiritual sight and sense of sin, of the evil nature of indwelling sin, and the exceeding sinfulness of it, as well as of the outward actions of life; in a hearty, godly sorrow for it, because committed against a God of purity, grace, and goodness; in a loathing it, and themselves for it; in a holy shame, and blushing, on account of it; and is attended with an ingenuous confession of it, and forsaking it: the consequence of which is, that such go readily and cheerfully into the Lord's vineyard; hear the word with all diligence, receive it with gladness; walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord; and are taught, by the grace that has appeared to them, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world.

Ver. 30. *And he came to the second*, etc.] The Scribes and Pharisees, by the ministry of John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles also:

and said likewise; the same things as to the other son, the publicans and sinners; calling them into the Gospel dispensation, to hear the word, embrace truth, attend on ordinances, and labour in promoting the kingdom, and interest of the Messiah, whilst they had the light of the Gospel with them. Urging also the relation they stood in to God, as a part of the Jewish body; to whom, among other external privileges, the adoption belonged:

and he answered and said, I go, sir, and went not: the word "go" is not in the generality of the Greek copies; the phrase is only "I sir", though it is rightly enough supplied as to the sense. Beza says, it was in his most ancient copy; and so it is in the Arabic and Persic versions, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel; though it is not in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions. So, the Scribes and Pharisees seemed pleased with the ministry of John for a while, and at first were forward to submit to his baptism, and were very inquisitive about the Messiah: yet, when he was declared in John's ministry, and by his own doctrine, and miracles, they refused to give in to the belief of him; they would neither enter into the Gospel kingdom, embrace the doctrines, and obey the commands of it themselves, nor suffer others to enter in; but, as much as in them lay, by their reproaches, menaces, and excommunications, deterred them from it. They, were like some other persons, who promise fair, and talk much of doing good works, but do none; teach the people to do them, but do not perform them themselves, though they would seem to do them; make great pretensions to them, boast of them, and trust in them; and therefore, of all men, ought to be careful to maintain them, and yet do the least.

Ver. 31. *Whether of them twain did the will of his father*? etc.] This is the question put by Christ, upon the preceding parable to the chief priests, elders, and Scribes;

they say unto him, the first: an answer which natural reason, and common sense, directed them to; and therefore they give it out at once, directly, without staying upon it, and demurring about it; though they seemed not to be aware of the application of it to themselves, which follows:

Jesus saith unto them, verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots; that is, such who had been so; (See Gill on "Matthew 9:10").

go into the kingdom of God before you. They are signified by the first son, who repenting went, and did the will of his father: these repented under John's ministry, were called, and brought to repentance by the preaching of Christ, and his apostles: these justified God, their Father, by being baptized with John's baptism: these embraced the Messiah, believed in him, and were the first in his kingdom, and set an example to the chief among the Jews to follow: and it is easy to observe, that a poor profane sinner may, by the grace of God, be brought to repentance, that before was obstinate, rebellious, and disobedient, and be made willing to go and work in the Lord's vineyard here, and be at last glorified; when a self righteous person, notwithstanding all his fair promises and resolutions to do good, his professions of, and pretensions to religion, neither repents of his sins, nor believes in Christ; has no share in the kingdom of grace here, nor will he enter into the kingdom of glory.

Ver. 32. *For John came unto you in a way of righteousness*, etc.] He had a commission from God; he was no impostor; the doctrine he taught was true, and which he faithfully delivered; his life and conversation were unblamable; there was nothing in his credentials, ministry, and conduct, that could justly be found fault with:

and ye believed him not; to be the forerunner of the Messiah, or the Elias that was to come; nor attended to the doctrine of repentance preached by him, nor were subject to the ordinance of baptism he administered; nor gave any assent, or credit, to the Messiah he so manifestly pointed out:

but the publicans and harlots believed him; what he said concerning the wrath to come, and the miserable state and danger they were in; and they repented of their sins, and confessed them, and were baptized of him in Jordan; believing the testimony he gave of Jesus of Nazareth being the Messiah, and Son of God:

and ye, when ye had seen it; the repentance and faith of these persons, and what a wonderful reformation was wrought in them,

repented not afterwards; of their disobedience, impenitence, and unbelief, after they had seen the effects of John's ministry on these very profligate sinners, and after, the death of John; who, by his constancy, zeal, and faithfulness, had shown himself to be a true, and upright minister of the word; and afterwards under the ministry of Christ, and his apostles, by,

whom the same doctrines were preached, and the same ordinances administered,

that ye might believe him; the testimony he has left behind him concerning the Messiah.

Ver. 33. *Hear another parable*, etc.] Which, though Luke says was spoken to the people, who, were gathered round about him, yet was directed to, and against the chief priests; who continued with him till it was delivered, and the application of it made; when they perceived it was spoken of them. The design of it is, to set forth the many favours and privileges bestowed on the Jewish nation; their unfruitfulness, and the ingratitude of the principal men among them; and their barbarous usage of the servants of the Lord, and particularly of the Son of God himself: the consequence of which would be, the removal of the Gospel from them, and the miserable destruction of them. So that this parable is partly a narrative, of some things past, and partly a prophecy of some things to come:

there was a certain householder: by whom the great God of heaven and earth is meant; who may be so called, either with respect to the whole world, which is an house of his building, and the inhabitants of it are his family, who live, are nourished, and supplied by him; or to the church, the house of the living God, the family in heaven and in earth, called the household of God, and of faith; or to the people of Israel, often called the house of Israel, the family, above all the families of the earth, God took notice of, highly favoured, and dwelt among.

Which planted a vineyard: of the form of a vineyard, the manner of planting it, and the size of it, the Jews say many things in their Misna [f1143].

> "He that plants a row of five vines, the school of Shammai say, "it is a vineyard"; but the school of Hillell say, it is not a vineyard, unless there are two rows — he that plants two vines over against two, and one at the tail or end, µrk hzyrh, "lo! this is a vineyard"; (it was a little vineyard;) but if two over against two, and one between the two, or two over against two, and one in the midst, it is no vineyard, unless there are two over against two, and one at the tail or end."

Again [f1144],

> “a vineyard that is planted with less than four cubits (between every row), R. Simeon says, is no vineyard; but the wise men say it is a vineyard.”

And the decision is according to them. Now by this vineyard is meant, the house of Israel and the men of Judah, the nation of the Jews, as in (Isa 5:7) from whence our Lord seems to have taken many of the ideas expressed in this parable; who were a people separated from the rest of the world, and set with valuable plants, from whom fruit might reasonably be expected: the planting of them designs the removing them out of Egypt, the driving out the natives before them, and settling them in the land of Canaan, where they were planted with choice vines, such as Joshua, Caleb, etc. and where they soon became a flourishing people, though for their iniquities, often exposed to beasts of prey, the neighbouring nations, that were suffered at times to break in upon them. The Jews often speak [f1145] of the house of Israel, as the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, and even call their schools and universities vineyards: hence we read [f1146] of hnbyb µrk, the vineyard in Jabneh, where the scholars were placed in rows, as in a vineyard.

And hedged it round about; as it was usual to set a hedge, or make a wall round a vineyard, which according to the Jewish writers, was to be ten hands high, and four broad; for they ask [f1147],

> “rdg hz ya, “what is a hedge?” That which is ten hands, high.”

And elsewhere [f1149],

> “An hedge that encompasses a vineyard, which is less than ten hands high, or which is ten hands high, but not four hands broad, it has no circuit (or void place between that and the vines) — an hedge which is ten hands high, and so a ditch which is ten hands deep, and four broad, lo! this is lawful to plant a vineyard on one side of it, and herbs on the other; even a fence of reeds, if there is between the reeds the space of three hands, lo! this divides between the vineyard and the herbs, as an hedge.”

By this “hedge” is designed, either the law, not the oral law, or the traditions of the elders, which the Jews [f1149] call hrwtl gys, “an hedge for the law”, which was none of God’s setting, but their own; but either the ceremonial law, which distinguished them from other people, was a middle

wall of partition between them, and the nations of the world, and kept them from coming among them, and joining together; or the moral law, which taught them their duty to God and man, and was the means of keeping them within due bounds; or else the protection of them by the power of God, which was an hedge about them, is here intended; and which was very remarkable at the time of their three feasts of passover, pentecost, and tabernacles; when all their males went up to Jerusalem, and the whole country was, left an easy prey to the nations about them; but God preserved them, and, according to his promise, suffered not their neighbours to have any inclination or desire after their land.

And digged a winepress in it; which is not ˜wr j , "the ditch", that went through a, vineyard; for this cannot be said of a winepress, and is Dr. Lightfoot's mistake [f1150]; but tg, "the winefat", in which they squeezed the grapes and made the wine, and this used to be in the vineyard: the rule about it is this,

> "µrkbç tgh, the winepress that is ten hands deep and four broad, R. Eliezer says, they may set in it; but the wise men do forbid it [f1151]."

By this may be meant, the altar where the drink offerings of wine were poured forth; and so the Targumist [f1152] renders it by yjbdm, "my altar I have given them, to atone for their sins": though one of their commentators [f1153], by it, understands the prophets, who taught Israel the law, that their works might be good before God and men; they urged and pressed them to the performance of them, as grapes are squeezed in the winepress:

and built a tower; the same the Jews call hrmwç, "the watch house"; which was an high place, in which the watchman stood to keep [f1154] the vineyard, and which was built in the vineyard; of this they say,

> "µrkbç hrmwç, the "watch house which is in the vineyard", that is ten hands high and four broad, they set in it [f1155]."

By this is meant, either the city or Jerusalem, which stood in the midst, and on the highest part of the land of Israel; or the temple, which stood on the highest part of Jerusalem, where the priests and Levites kept their watch

every night; and so the Targumist [f1156] interprets it, by ycdqm, "my sanctuary I built among them": that is, the temple:

and let it out to husbandmen; of which there were different sorts, as there were different methods of hiring and letting out fields and vineyards among the Jews: one sort was called rkwch, and such was he, who hired of his neighbour a field to sow in it, or a vineyard to eat of the fruit of it, for a certain sum of money yearly; (see <220811>Song of Solomon 8:11) another sort was called rkwjh, and this was one that hired a field, or a vineyard, and agreed to give the proprietor of it yearly, so many measures of the fruit thereof, whether it yielded more or less; and there was a third sort, called syra, or lbqm, and such was he, who agreed to give the owner half, or a third, or a fourth part of the increase of the field, or vineyard [f1157]. Now it is not of the former, but of the latter sort of letting out and farming, that this is to be understood; not of letting it out for money, but for fruit, as appears from (<402134>Matthew 21:34) and by the husbandmen are meant, the rulers of the Jews, civil and ecclesiastical, especially the latter; the priests, Levites, and Scribes, who were intrusted with the care of the Jewish people, to guide and instruct them, and cultivate the knowledge of divine things among them, that they might bring forth fruits of righteousness; and to offer their gifts and sacrifices, and the like, which are meant by letting out the vineyard to them: and went into afar country; which must be interpreted consistent with the omnipresence of God, who is every where, and cannot be said properly to move from place to place; but fills heaven and earth with his presence, and cannot be contained in either: but this phrase seems to design his taking up his residence in the thick darkness, in the tabernacle and temple, when the civil and ecclesiastical state of the Jews was settled, and God did not appear to them in that visible manner he had done before; but having fixed their order of government, worship, and duty, left them to themselves and their rulers; for many years; in which he expressed much longsuffering and patience towards them.

Ver. 34. *And when the time of the fruit drew near*, etc.] Of gathering the fruit, when it was ripe, and might be eaten, or profit made of it, according to the law in (<031923>Leviticus 19:23,24,25). The fruit of all manner of trees, for the first three years, was uncircumcised; it was not to be eaten, nor any profit made of it, and on the fourth year it was to be holy to praise the Lord with; being either given to the priests, or eaten by the owners before the Lord at Jerusalem; and on the fifth year it might be eaten, and made use

of for profit, and henceforward every year; which law regarded the fruit of the vine, as any other fruit: hence it is said [f1158], that

> "the grapes of the vineyard of the fourth year, the sanhedrim ordered that they should be brought up to Jerusalem, a day's journey on every side, so that they might crown or adorn the streets with fruits."

To this time of fruit, and the custom of bringing it up to Jerusalem, the allusion seems to be here. Thus, God after a long time, after he had waited a great while for fruit from the Jewish nation, from whom much might have been expected, by reason of the advantages they enjoyed; he sent his servants to the husbandmen: by his servants are meant, the prophets of the Old Testament; who were sent by God from time to time, to the kings, priests, and people of the Jews; to instruct them in their duty, to exhort them to the performance of it, to reprove them for their sins, to stir them up to repentance, and to bring forth fruits meet for it, signified in the next clause:

that they might receive the fruits of it; of the vineyard from the husbandmen, for the use of the owner; for fruits of justice and judgment, of righteousness and holiness, might be justly expected and demanded of such persons, to be brought forth by them, to the honour and glory of God.

Ver. 35. *And the husbandmen took his servants*, etc.] They seized and laid hold of them in a rude and violent manner: so far were they from treating these servants with respect, as they ought to have done; considering whose they were, from whom they came, and upon what account; and also so far from delivering to them the fruit due to their master, or excusing their inability to make a suitable return, as might be expected, they use them very roughly:

and beat one; either with the fist, as Jeremiah was struck by Pashur, the son of Immer, the priest, one of these husbandmen, (<2001>Jeremiah 20:1,2) and as Micaiah was smitten on the cheek by Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, the false prophet, (<1423>2 Chronicles 18:23) or with a scourge, and may refer to the punishment of beating with forty stripes, save one, by which the skin was flayed off; as the word here signifies; for some of these servants had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, (<1136>Hebrews 11:36). And killed another; that is, with the sword. There were four kinds of death in the power of the sanhedrim, of which this is one, and what follows is

another; and were these, stoning, burning, killing (i.e. beheading with the sword), and strangling: the manner of executing this punishment here expressed, was this:

> "They cut off the person's head Pyysb, "with a sword", in the manner the government orders it. R. Judah says, this is indecent (i.e. to cut off his head standing, they do not do so), but they put his head upon a block, and cut it off with an axe; they reply to him, there is no death more abominable than this [f1159]."

So the prophets, in the time of Elijah, were killed with the sword, (<11 19 14>1 Kings 19:14) see also (<27 11 33>Daniel 11:33).

And stoned another; as they did Zechariah, (<14 24 21>2 Chronicles 24:21) and doubtless many others; since Jerusalem had the character of killing the prophets, and stoning them that were sent unto her, (<40 23 37>Matthew 23:37) these seemed such that were stoned, but not killed; but as Mark says, were wounded in the head with the stones thrown at them, and shamefully handled, and sadly abused.

Ver. 36. *Again he sent other servants*, etc.] Meaning, perhaps, such as suffered in the times of the Maccabees:

more than the first; their number was greater, though their office was the same, at least not higher:

and they did unto them likewise; they beat them with rods, they killed them with the sword, and stoned them, (<58 11 36>Hebrews 11:36,37).

Ver. 37. *But last of all*, etc.] In the last times, in the last days, in the end of the world, the Jewish world, at the close of their ecclesiastic and civil state; after all the prophets had been sent, and finished their course, came the greatest prophet of all, to seal up the vision and prophecy:

he sent unto them son; not a servant as before, but a son; his own son, his only begotten son, the son of his love, his dearly beloved one; him he sent to these husbandmen the Jews. The Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, was sent only to the house of Israel: he was the minister of the circumcision; he was the great prophet raised up among them, and was sent to bless them, by turning them from their iniquities; he came to them, to his own, to them of his own nation, but they received him not:

saying, they will reverence my son. The Son of God is to be reverenced equally as his Father, since he is in nature and glory equal to him; and it is the will of his Father he should be so reverenced, as he is by the angels in heaven, and by the saints, both in heaven and in earth; but did these husbandmen reverence him? no; they despised and rejected him; they reproached and traduced him, as the vilest of men, and used him in the most cruel and barbarous manner. And did not his Father know this? yes; this is certain from his omniscience, which reaches to all future events, the most minute and contingent; and from the predictions of the usage of these persons of him, delivered long before it came to pass. Luke says, "it may be they will reverence him": so that it was not a positive affirmation, that they would do it, and which also is to be understood after the manner of men: that humanly speaking, it might be expected that they would give him reverence, in consideration of the dignity of his person, his character, and relation to God, which was his due and their duty; but he had a very different treatment from them.

Ver. 38. *But when the husbandmen saw the son*, etc.] Whom many of them knew, though some did not: some were entirely ignorant of him; some knew him, but durst not confess him, yet were not injurious to him; others acted against light and conscience, with spite and malice, as did these men. They expected the Messiah about this time; they knew, by prophecy, it could not be long ere he appeared: when they saw Jesus of Nazareth, they knew by various circumstances, by all the characters of the Messiah meeting in him, and by his miracles, that he must be the same.

They said among themselves; privately, not openly to the people,

this is the heir; as indeed he is of all things, as the Son of God, and as the mediator of the new covenant: he is heir of all that his Father has, as he is his natural, essential, and only begotten Son; and as mediator, he is heir of all things, natural, spiritual, and eternal, for the use and benefit of his church and people, who are also his portion and inheritance: but here it seems to denote, his being heir to the throne of Israel, the government of the Jewish nation, as he was the son of David; and the Jews confess[f1160], that because it was said that Jesus of Nazareth was twklml bwrq, "near to the kingdom", therefore they put him to death:

come let us kill him, and seize on his inheritance: concluding, that could they be rid of him, their nation would be in peace, their temple would

stand, and temple worship and service continue, and they remain in their office and authority undisturbed; the contrary of which they feared, should he be suffered to live; though what they feared from his life, befell them upon, and in consequence of his death, quite beyond all their counsels and expectations.

Ver. 39. *And they caught him*, etc.] Seized and laid hold of him, in a rude and violent manner, as they had some of the servants before. This regards their apprehending of Christ in the garden, by a band of soldiers and officers, sent by the chief priests and Pharisees, who with swords and staves took him, bound him, and led him away:

and cast him out of the vineyard; which is not to be understood of their casting him out of the synagogue, which is never said of them; nor does it so much relate to the leading of him without the gates of Jerusalem, where they crucified him, though this is a sense not to be despised and rejected; but rather, to the delivery of him to those, that were without the vineyard of the Jewish church and nation, to the Gentiles; to be mocked, scourged, and put to death by them:

and slew him: for though the sentence of death was pronounced on him by Pilate, an Heathen governor, and was executed by the Roman soldiers; yet it was through the instigation and at the pressing importunity of these husbandmen, the Jewish rulers; and who were afterwards frequently charged by the apostles with the murder of him.

Ver. 40. *When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh*, etc.] In a way of providence, to call these husbandmen to an account; not only for the fruit they were to bring to him; but for their barbarity to his servants, the prophets, time after time; and especially, for the inhuman usage and murder of his own son;

what will he do unto those husbandmen? This question is put to the chief priests, elders, and Scribes: and they themselves, who are designed hereby, are made judges in this case, just as the inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah are, in (Isaiah 5:4) which passage of Scripture our Lord had greatly in view when he spake this parable.

Ver. 41. *They say unto him*, etc.] Either the common people that were about him; or rather the chief priests, scribes, and elders, to whom he put the question; little thinking then, that they were the persons intended in this parable:

he will miserably destroy those wicked men: in saying which, they own that persons guilty of such crimes, as beating, killing, and stoning, servants sent to them by the proprietor of the vineyard, to receive his due and proper fruit, and at last murdering his son and heir, were very wicked persons, and deserved the severest punishments to be inflicted upon them, and that without mercy; nor could it be thought, but this must and would be unavoidably their case, when the Lord of the vineyard should come: thus tacitly did they condemn themselves as wicked men, and as deserving the worst of deaths, who in a few days after this, were concerned in the death of the Son of God:

and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen; allowing it to be a very just thing, not only to put these men to the most miserable and tormenting death that could be devised, but to take the vineyard out of the hands of their posterity, and let it out to other persons; as it was a righteous thing with God, to remove the church state, Gospel and ordinances from the Jews, and deliver them to the Gentiles:

which shall render him the fruits in their seasons; that is, his due, and that in proper time. The other evangelists relate these words, as spoken by Christ: for the reconciliation of which let it be observed, that they were first spoken by the Jews, as is here signified; and after that were spoken by Christ, confirming what they said, and applying it to them; upon which they said, “God forbid”; that we should ever be guilty of such crimes, incur such punishment, and this should be our case: but in proof of it, that so it would be, our Lord alleges the following words.

Ver. 42. *Jesus saith unto them, did ye never read the Scriptures*, etc.] The passage which stands in (<19B822>Psalm 118:22,23).

The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. Very appropriately is this Scripture cited, and applied to the present case; which expresses the rejection of the Messiah by the Jewish builders, priests, and scribes: the whole Psalm may be understood of the Messiah. R. David Kimchi owns [f1161], that there is a division among their Rabbins about it: some say that the Psalm is spoken of David, and others, that it is spoken of the days of the Messiah; and these are certainly in the right; and as for this particular passage, it is applied by some of them to the Messiah: so on mentioning (<280305>Hosea 3:5) they [f1162] say,

> “David was king in this world, and David shall be king in the time to come: wherefore it is said, the stone which the builders refused, etc.”

And one of their noted commentators [f1163] on those words, “though thou be little among the thousands of Judah”, has this note:

> “It is fit thou shouldest be little among the families of Judah, because of the impurity of Ruth the Moabitess, which is in thee: out of thee shall come forth unto me, Messiah, the son of David; for so he saith, “the stone which the builders refused”, etc.”

Christ is often in Scripture compared to a stone, and is called the stone of Israel; is said to be a stone of stumbling to some, and a precious tried stone to others: is represented as a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, and on which are seven eyes: and is fitly compared to one, for his usefulness in the spiritual building the church, where he is as both the foundation and corner stone, and for his strength and duration. Christ is the sure, firm, and everlasting foundation, which God has laid in Zion, and the only one of any avail; nor can any other be laid to any purpose; and if he is neglected, and laid aside, in the ministration of the word, the building which men endeavour to rear, or exhort unto, will come to nothing. Whoever build on him are safe, and on nothing else: Christ is the foundation, on which the church, and every believer, are built, and therefore will abide; for the gates of hell cannot prevail against them: the covenant of grace is immoveable, being established in him; its mercies are sure, and its promises yea and amen: the salvation of immortal souls is certain, resting upon him; the faith and hope of the saints fail not, being directed to, and settled on him: the house not made with hands, which is in heaven, is an eternal one; and the city, which has foundations, is a continuing one, because of the concern that Christ has in it; and though he is of such eminent use and importance in the building, yet, as such, the “builders rejected” him: by the builders are meant, the Jewish rulers, both political and ecclesiastical, especially the latter, who pretended to instruct, and build up the people in knowledge and understanding; but in a very bad way did they do it, and upon a very sandy foundation, upon their fleshly privileges, their moral righteousness, and the observance of the ceremonial law, and the traditions of the elders. The Jews used to call their doctors and their scholars “builders” [f1164]: says R. Jochanan,

> “the disciples of the wise men are called ^yanb, “builders”, because they study in the building of the world all their days, which is the law.”

These rejected the Messiah, refused to receive, and acknowledge him as such: they disallowed and disapproved of him, as base and vile, and the most contemptible of mortals, and set him at nought, and had him in the utmost scorn and derision. And so he is rejected by some who bear the characters of builders among Christians: as when his proper deity, and eternal sonship are denied, and he is treated as a mere creature; when his satisfaction and atoning sacrifice are either wholly rejected, or little regarded, lessened, and depreciated, and repentance and good works are put in the room of them; when his imputed righteousness is opposed, and laid aside, and the righteousness of men preferred unto it, and cried up as the matter of justification in the sight of God; when his efficacious grace is represented as unnecessary to regeneration, conversion, and sanctification, and to the performance of good works; and when he is left out of public ministrations, as the way of life and salvation, as the fountain of all grace, and foundation of all happiness, and human power, free will, and moral righteousness are put in his room. But notwithstanding the former and present rejection, and ill treatment of him, he is

become the head of the corner: he is the corner stone in the building which knits and cements it together, angels and men, Jews and Gentiles; Old and New Testament saints; saints above, and saints below, and in all ages and places, all meet, and are united together in this corner stone; which also strengthens and supports the building, and holds it together, and is the ornament and beauty of it: he is the chief corner stone; he is higher than the kings of the earth; he is superior to angels, and the chiefest among ten thousands of his saints; he is exalted above all creatures, angels, and men, who, by the Jewish builders, was despised and rejected, and scarce allowed to be worthy the name of a man:

this is the Lord’s doing; this stone is laid in the building by him: the rejection of him is according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge; and the exaltation of him, above every name, is owing to him, and he is by, and at his own right hand: and

is marvellous in our eyes; in the eyes of all the saints; there being in all this such, a wonderful display of the wisdom, grace, mercy, power, and faithfulness of God.

Ver. 43. *Therefore I say unto you*, etc.] This is the application of the parable; and the words are directed to the chief priests, elders, scribes, and people of the Jews; and are delivered as what would be in consequence of the builders, rejecting the Messiah, the foundation and corner stone of the building.

The kingdom of God shall be taken from you: by which is meant, not their political estate, their civil government, which was of God, and in a short time was to depart from them, according to ancient prophecy, and which is come to pass, as the event shows; nor their legal national church state and ordinances only, or the priesthood, and the appendages of it; all which, in a little while, were shaken and removed; but the Gospel, which had been preached among them by John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; so called because it treats of the kingdom of God, and things pertaining to it, and shows men both their right and meetness for it; the one as in the righteousness of Christ, and the other in the regenerating and sanctifying grace of the Spirit, which Gospel may be taken away from a people, as from the Jews, because of their contempt of it, and opposition to it, or lukewarmness and indifference about it, or unfruitfulness under it; and when God has no more souls to gather in by it in such a place, and which is a very unhappy case, whenever it is the case of any people: for when the Gospel is taken away, the riches of a people are gone; the glory of a nation is departed; the light of it is put out; the spiritual bread of a people is no more; the means of conversion and spiritual knowledge cease: all which have a melancholy aspect on posterity. Moreover, the Gospel church state, which was set up in Judea, may be here meant; which, though it continued and flourished a while, in process of time was to be removed: and which may be done elsewhere, as it has been in Judea, by God's suffering persecution to arise, as he did against the church of Jerusalem, whereby the ministers of the Gospel are driven into corners, or scattered abroad; or by ordering his ministers to preach no more unto such a people, as the apostles were ordered to turn from the Jews to the Gentiles; or by taking away ministers and members of churches by death, and not raising up others in their room; or by withholding a blessing from the word; or by permitting the growth of errors and heresies, which, in course of time, must issue in the dissolution of the church state in such a place, and which necessarily follows upon the removing of the Gospel:

and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. Though God may take away the Gospel from a people, as he did from the Jews; yet he does

not, nor will he, as yet, take it out of the world: he gives it to another "nation"; to the Gentiles, to all the nations of the world, whither he sent his apostles to preach and where it must be preached before the end of the world comes, in order to gather his elect out of them: for not one particular nation is meant, unless the nation of God's elect, among all nations, can be thought to be designed. It may be observed, that the Gospel, wherever it comes, it comes as a gift; it is "given": to have it only in the external ministration of it, is a favour; and more especially to understand it spiritually; this is an unmerited gift; as is also ability to preach it: and it is likewise a national mercy wherever it comes; for though it comes in power only to a few in a nation, yet it is more or less a blessing to the whole: nor is it easy to say what temporal advantages a nation enjoys through the ministration of the Gospel in it: and where it is given, and comes in power, it brings forth fruit, as it did in all the world of the Gentiles; even the fruits of grace, and righteousness, and every good work; all which come from Christ, under the influence of his Spirit, and by the word and ordinances, as means, and highly become the Gospel, and the professors of it; and for want of which it is removed sometimes from one nation to another: for this cause it was taken from the Jews, and given to the Gentiles. One of the Jewish commentators [f1165] on these words, in (<24>Jeremiah 13:17) "my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride", has this note;

> "because of your grandeur, which shall cease; because of the excellency of "the kingdom of heaven", µylyspl ˆtntç, "which shall be given to the profane";"

i.e. the nations of the world.

Ver. 44. *And whosoever shall fall on this stone*, etc.] This is not to be understood of believing in Christ, or of a soul's casting itself on Christ, the foundation stone; relying on him, and building all its hopes of happiness and salvation on him; which is attended with contrition and brokenness of heart, or repentance unto life, which needed not to be repented of nor of a believer's offending Christ by evil works, whereby his conscience is wounded, his soul is grieved, and his faith shaken; and though he is hereby in great danger, he shall not be utterly destroyed, but being recovered by repentance, shall be preserved unto salvation; but of such to whom Christ is a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence: for as he is the foundation and corner stone to some, and is set for the rising of them, and to whom he is precious; so he is a stone set for the fall of others, and at which they

stumble and fall, and fall upon it: and such are they who are offended at Christ's state of humiliation on earth; at the manner of his birth, the meanness of his parentage, and education; the despicable figure he made in his person, disciples, and audience; and at his sufferings and death: and these "shall be broken": as a man that stumbles at a stone, and falls upon it, breaks his head or his bones, at least bruises himself, does not hurt the stone, but the stone hurts him; so all such as are offended at Christ, injure their own souls, being filled with prejudices against him, and contempt and disbelief of him, which if grace prevents not will issue in their everlasting destruction: but whilst there is life, the means of grace continue, the kingdom of God is not taken away; there is hope that such may be recovered from their impenitence and unbelief: "but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder". Just as if a millstone, or any stone of such like weight and bulk, was to fall upon an earthen vessel; or, as the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, by which the Messiah and his kingdom, are designed, brake in pieces the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, so that it became like the chaff of the summer threshing floor. As the former part of this verse expresses the sin of unbelievers, and the danger they are exposed unto by it, this sets forth their punishment; and has respect both to the vengeance of Christ, on the Jewish nation, at their destruction, which would fall heavy from him in his state of exaltation, for their evil treatment of him in his state of humiliation; and to his severe wrath, which will be executed at the day of judgment on all unbelievers, impenitent Christless sinners, who have both offended him, and been offended at him; when their destruction will be inevitable, their salvation irretrievable, and their souls irrecoverably lost, and ruined. Some have thought, that there is an allusion in these words to the manner of stoning among the Jews, which was this [f1166]:

> "the place of stoning was two men's heights; one of the witnesses struck him on his loins, to throw him down from thence, to the ground: if he died, it was well; if not, they took a stone, which lay there, and was as much as two men could carry, and cast it, with all their might, upon his breast: if he died, it was well; if not, he was stoned by all Israel."

Maimonides observes [f1167], that

"stoning, or throwing down from the high place, was that he might fall upon the stone, or that the stone might fall upon him; and which of them either it was, the pain was the same."

Ver. 45. *And when the chief priests and Pharisees*, etc.] Which latter, though not before mentioned, were many of them of the grand sanhedrim, as well as the chief priests, scribes, and elders: "had heard his parables"; that of the two sons being sent into the vineyard, and that of the letting out the vineyard to husbandmen,

they perceived that he spake of them: they plainly saw that they were designed by the son, that promised to go into the vineyard, but did not; only talked of works, but did not do them: and that they were the husbandmen that acted the ungrateful part to the householder, and the cruel one to his servants, and would to his son, their own consciences told them they were the men. They knew that the whole was levelled against them, and designed for them, and exactly hit their case.

Ver. 46. *But when they sought to lay hands on him*, etc.] Not that they attempted by any outward action to apprehend him, and carry him off, or by any immediate act of violence to take away his life; but they secretly wished, and earnestly desired to do it: they were so irritated and provoked, that they could scarcely keep their hands off of him, and could have been glad of an opportunity of satiating their revenge upon him: and whereby they would but have fulfilled what he in this parable had prophetically said of them: and yet so hardened were they, though they understood his meaning, they were not deterred thereby, but on another account:

they feared the multitude; which were now about Christ, lest there should be a tumult, and they should take the part of Christ against them, to which they seemed inclined; when their lives, had they attempted anything of this nature, would have been in a great deal of danger:

because they took him for a prophet; by the doctrines which he taught, by the boldness and freedom of speech he used, and by the miracles he wrought: wherefore, though they might not all of them believe that he was the Messiah, or that prophet Moses spoke of; yet, since it was exceeding manifest, that he was a teacher sent of God, and endowed with very wonderful gifts; and from whom many of them had received singular benefits, if not for their souls, yet for their bodies; being healed by him of their lameness, or blindness, or other diseases; therefore would not suffer

him to be abused, and ill treated by them: so that, as Mark says, “they left him, and went their way”; to consult together what was proper to be done, and wait for a better opportunity to seize him.

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 22

Ver. 1. *And Jesus answered and spake unto them again*, etc.] Not to the multitude only, but to the chief priests, elders, Scribes, and Pharisees: for though Mark seems to intimate, that upon the delivery of the last parable of the vineyard, they left him, and went their way; yet since he does not relate the following parable, they might not leave him until they had heard that, which is spoken with much the same design as the former, and might increase their resentment the more: or if the chief priests and elders did go away, the Pharisees remained behind, as is clear from (<4022215>Matthew 22:15) to whom he spake

by parables, similitudes, and comparisons, taken from earthly things, and against whom he directed the following one;

and said, as hereafter related.

Ver. 2. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king*, etc.] The Gospel dispensation which had now taken place, the methods of divine grace in it, and the behaviour of men under it, may be fitly illustrated by the following simile, or parable; the design of which is to express the great love of God the Father, who is represented by this

certain king, in espousing any of the children of men to his own son: as, that he a king, who is the King of kings, and Lord of Lords, should concern himself in this manner; and especially, that he should espouse such mean and unworthy creatures to his own, his only, and beloved son, his equal, and his heir: also, the view of it is to set forth the plenteous provisions of grace made under the Gospel dispensation in the word and ordinances; the great neglect and contempt of these by the Jews, who were externally called unto them; the wrath of God upon them for their abuse of them, and ill usage of his servants; the calling of the vilest among them, or of the Gentiles, and how far persons may go in a profession of religion without the wedding garment, and at last be lost:

which made a marriage for his son: which may be understood either of contracting and bringing him into a marriage relation, or of making a marriage feast on that account: in the former sense, the persons concerned are the Father, the bridegroom, and the bride: the parties contracted are the Son of God and sinful creatures. The bridegroom is no other than the only begotten of God the Father, his only Son and heir, the Maker and Governor of the universe, who has all the, perfections of the Deity, and fulness of the Godhead in him; and, as mediator, has all accomplishments and, excellencies; he has all the riches of grace and glory; all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; all loveliness, beauty, and amiableness in his person, and everything to recommend him as the chiefest among ten thousand: on the other hand, the bride is the church, which consists of a set of persons chosen by God, in Christ, before the foundation of the world; who were considered as sinless creatures, and viewed as such when first betrothed to Christ in the everlasting covenant: but for the further demonstration of his love to them, were suffered to fall in Adam, with the rest of mankind, and to be scattered abroad; when they lost the image of God, came short of his glory, passed under a sentence of condemnation, became liable to the curse of the law, and eternal death; were defiled and polluted in their nature, and in their estate became bankrupts and beggars; and yet this hindered not the consummation of the marriage between Christ and them. The person that contracted this relation between them, is the Father of Christ, who chose them for him to be his spouse and bride; brought and presented them to him, as he did Eve to Adam before the fall; and gave them to him, and made them one body and flesh with him, in the everlasting covenant; and draws them, and brings them to him by his powerful grace, in the effectual calling; there was a secret betrothing of all these persons to him in eternity, at his own request, and the full consent of his Father, who had the disposal of them; there is an open espousal of them, as particular persons, at conversion; and there will be a more public and general consummate marriage of them, at the last day, when they are all called by grace, and brought home: moreover, this may be understood of the marriage feast which the Father makes on this extraordinary account. So the Syriac version renders the word by atytçm, “a feast”; and in this sense is it used by the Septuagint in (Genesis 29:22) by which is meant, not the latter day glory, or marriage feast of the Lamb, to which only saints will be invited, and partake of; nor the ultimate glory, when all the elect shall go with Christ into the marriage chamber, and spend an eternity in endless and unspeakable felicity with him; nor the

spiritual blessings of grace enjoyed by believers now; but the external ministry of the word and ordinances, which are a feast of fat things, a rich entertainment, the particulars of which are after given; which many are invited to, who never partake thereof, and others do, and yet destitute of the grace of God; for both good and bad were guests at this feast. The allusion is to the custom of the Jews, and of other nations, in making feasts and grand entertainments at such times. The Jews used to make feasts both at espousals, and at marriage: hence we [f1168] read of ˆyswrya tdw[s, "a feast of espousals", and of ˆyawçyn tdw[s, "a marriage feast": the reference here is to the latter; and which used to be made at the charge of the father: for so runs one of their canons [f1169]:

> "a father marries his son, htçm wl hç[w, "and makes a feast for him", and the expense is the father's etc."

Ver. 3. *And sent forth his servants*, etc.] The ministers of the Gospel, who are the servants of the most high God, of his choosing and ordaining, of his calling and sending, and of his qualifying and employing, and who voluntarily and cheerfully serve him; and may intend John the Baptist, and the twelve apostles of Christ, who were sent

to call them that were bidden to the wedding; µyawrqh, "those that were called", as in (<091613>1 Samuel 9:13,22) by whom are meant the Jews, who were the "bidden", or "called ones"; called of God, and therefore styled "Israel my called" (<234812>Isaiah 48:12) and by the Targum interpreted ynmzm, "my bidden". They were called by the name of God, and called the people of God, and the children of God, and were the children of the kingdom; and were called to many valuable and external privileges; and had previous notice of the Gospel dispensation by the prophecies concerning Christ, and the blessings of his grace under the former dispensation; and by the ordinances and sacrifices of it, which in a very significant manner set him forth to that people; and now were called to embrace him, to receive his doctrines, and submit to his ordinances, by the ministry of John the Baptist, and the disciples of Christ. It seems, it was sometimes customary to give two invitations to a feast, or to send a second time to the persons bidden to the feast [f1170]; to which the allusion is here;

and they would not come: which shows the insolence and ingratitude of men, their natural aversion to the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; the depravity of the will of man, with respect to things spiritual and

evangelical; the insufficiency of outward means, to work with effect, upon the minds of men; and the necessity there is of efficacious and unfrustrable grace to bring men to believe in Christ, cordially to receive his truths, and be subject to his commands. There is a two fold call by the ministry the word; the one is internal, and that is, when the word comes not in word only, but in power; is the power of God unto salvation, and the savour of life unto life; for by the Gospel are the elect of God called to the obtaining of the glory of Christ; (<53214>2 Thessalonians 2:14). This call is of grace; it springs from the free grace and favour of God, and it is effected by the mighty power of his grace; and it is to special blessings of grace; it is a fruit of God's everlasting love, and an evidence of it; and is according to the eternal purpose of God, which is never frustrated: it is a call to the enjoyment of spiritual blessings, as peace, pardon, righteousness, and everlasting happiness; by it men are called to light and liberty, to the grace of Christ, and communion with him; to all the privileges of God's house here, and eternal glory hereafter; to which he that calls them, gives them a right and meetness, and infallibly brings them to it: and therefore it is styled an heavenly calling, and the high calling of God in Christ; for this call is ever effectual, and the ends of it are always answered; it is unchangeable, irreversible, and never repented of. But besides this, there is a bare external call to the sons of men, through the preaching of the word; which is not to make their peace with God, a thing impossible to be done by them, and which is contrary to the Gospel, and reflects dishonour on Christ, the peacemaker; nor to get an interest in him, which, wherever possessed, is given, and not gotten; nor to regenerate themselves; this is the work of the Spirit of God, and in which men are as passive, as the infant in its natural generation, conception, and birth; nor to the exercise of evangelical grace, as faith, love, etc. which are not in them, and no man can exercise that which he has not, nor should he be called to it; nor to any spiritual vital act, since men are dead in trespasses and sins, and cannot put forth any: but this call in the word, is to the natural duties of religion, as to hear, read, and pray; to attend on the word, to wait at Wisdom's gates, and watch at the posts of her door, and so lie in the way of being effectually called by the grace of God; but this call may be where election does not go before, and where sanctification does not follow, and where there may be no salvation, (<401016>Matthew 20:16) and is often slighted, neglected, and of no effect, which is the case here.

Ver. 4. *Again he sent forth other servants*, etc.] The seventy disciples, and other ministers of the Gospel, as Barnabas and Saul, and others that were joined to, and were helpers of the apostles, who were sent, and preached to the Jews, any time before the destruction of Jerusalem:

saying, tell them which are bidden; for these preachers of the word were first sent to the Jews, and preached unto them, until they by their carriage and conduct, showed themselves to be unworthy of the blessing. These men had notice of the Gospel feast by the prophets, and were invited to it, by the forerunner of Christ, by him, and his disciples, and again by them, and others; which strongly expresses the goodness, grace, and condescension of God to these people, and aggravates their stupidity, ingratitude, and wickedness:

behold, I have prepared my dinner. The ministry of the word and ordinances under the Gospel dispensation, is signified by a "dinner"; of God's preparing and providing; which is a full meal at noon, and in it is plenty of food, and of that which is wholesome to the souls of men, sweet and savoury to a spiritual taste, and very nourishing and satisfying; and this dinner is a feast, a rich banquet, a grand entertainment; in which are a variety of provisions, suited to all sorts of persons, and plenty of the richest dainties, attended with the largest expressions of joy; and this feast is a marriage one, and that not for an ordinary person, but for the king's son, the son of the King of kings; it is large, grand, and noble, rich and costly, and yet all free to the guests; it is kept in the king's palace, the banqueting house, the church, is common to all, and of long continuance, it will last unto the end of the world. What privileges the patriarchs and prophets, and the people of the Jews enjoyed, in the morning of the world, before the coming of Christ, who made the bright and full day of the Gospel, were but as a "breakfast", a short meal; the means of grace were not so rich and plentiful, and their knowledge of spiritual things not so large; they had but, as it were, a taste of what is plentifully bestowed under the Gospel dispensation, and therefore that is called a "dinner"; grace and truth in all their fulness, coming by Jesus, by whom God has delivered at once his whole mind and will; whereas, before, it was delivered piecemeal, at sundry times and divers manners; and this is distinguishable from the "supper" of the Lamb, in the evening of the world, in the latter day, when the Jews will be converted, and will not act the part they are represented to do in the parable; and the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in, and the Gospel will have a general spread all over the world. The dinner is the same with

the feast of fat things, which God is said to make for all people, Gentiles as well as Jews, in his holy mountain the church, (²³²⁵⁶Isaiah 25:6) and the table which wisdom has furnished, (²⁰⁹⁰²Proverbs 9:2) with all sorts of suitable food, proper to persons of every age: here's milk for babes, even the sincere milk of the word, that their souls may grow thereby, who are newborn babes, and have tasted of the grace of God; namely, the plainer and more easy truths of the Gospel, to be taken in, understood, fed upon, and digested; and meat for strong men, the more sublime doctrines of it, which such as are strong in faith, receive, relish, and live upon, and are greatly refreshed and edified with: here's the wine of God's everlasting love set forth, in the election, redemption, justification, pardon, adoption, regeneration, and salvation of his people; and fruits served up both new and old, for their comfort, delight, and pleasure; in the ordinances of the Gospel, are the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, and fatted calf, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed: here is everything for delight and nourishment, for faith to feed and live upon; and therefore may well be called a dinner, and what is worthy of him, who is the maker of it, and exceedingly well suited to the persons who are to partake of it.

My oxen and my fatlings are killed; in allusion to feasts and large entertainments, when oxen and fatted calves, and the best of the flock were killed and dressed; or to the sacrifices of oxen and other creatures, under the law, as typical of the sacrifice of Christ; and may here represent Christ as crucified and slain, held forth in the ministry of the word and ordinances; who as such, is suitable food for believers, is spiritual, solid, and substantial, and greatly to be desired; is nourishing and strengthening, comforting and quickening, delightful and satisfying:

and all things are ready; for upon the crucifixion and death of Christ, and after the renewed commission of Christ to his disciples, to preach the Gospel, beginning at Jerusalem, it might be justly represented in the ministry of the word, that all things were now ready. Redemption was obtained by Christ; an everlasting righteousness was wrought out and brought in; pardon of sin was procured; peace and reconciliation were made; the sacrifice of Christ was offered up, and full satisfaction given to law and justice; the covenant of grace, with all the blessings and promises of it, were ratified and confirmed; and all were ready in Christ's hands to distribute, to as many as came to him; in whom are life and salvation, and everything necessary for peace and comfort here, and eternal happiness

hereafter. This shows the completeness and perfection of the Gospel dispensation, this being that better thing, which God has provided for his people in the last times, that former saints might not be perfect without them, *See Gill "Hebrews 11:40"*. The law made nothing perfect; there was nothing got ready by that; the works, sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies of it, could not justify men's persons, nor sanctify their hearts, nor purge the consciences of the worshippers, nor take away sin, nor pacify God, or give satisfaction to his justice, or procure peace, pardon and salvation; but now all these things are declared to be ready in the Gospel: but this is not owing to man, it is all of God; it is of his providing and preparing; and he is a rock, and his work is perfect; and nothing can be brought by the Creature to be added to it, nor does it need it; there is everything exhibited in the Gospel that a poor sinner stands in need of, or can desire, even that can make him comfortable here, and happy hereafter.

Come unto the marriage; the marriage feast; come into the Gospel dispensation, attend the word and ordinances: the invitation is pressing, the arguments are strong and moving, but the persons invited were averse, self-willed, stubborn, obstinate, and inflexible.

Ver. 5. *But they made light of it*, etc.] The invitation. They neglected the ministry of the Gospel; they did not care for it, nor showed any regard to it: and this is the ease, when either it is not attended on, though there is an opportunity, yet having no heart to embrace it, and no value for it, neglect attendance on it; and which often arises from loving of the world too much: or when it is attended on, but in a very negligent and careless manner; when men pull away the shoulder, or stop their ears; when they do not mind what they hear, let it slip and forget it; when they are unconcerned for it, and their thoughts are employed about other things: or when the Gospel and the ordinances of it are looked upon as things of no importance; not knowing the real worth and value of them; seeing no wisdom in them, having never tasted the sweetness, or felt the power of them, or seen the need of the things revealed by them: as also when there is an aversion to the Gospel, a loathing of it, as a novel, upstart doctrine, received but by a few, and these the meanest and most illiterate; as contrary to reason, and tending to licentiousness; and especially, when it is contradicted and blasphemed, as it was by the Jews, and its ministers despised: some men make light of it, because of the loss of time from worldly employments; because of the charge attending it; because it teaches them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; and because they

prefer their bodies to their souls, and things temporal, to things eternal. The aggravations of their sin, in slighting and neglecting the Gospel and Gospel ordinances, are, that this is a grand entertainment, a very expensive provision, as well as a very plentiful one; that it was a wedding dinner, a feast of love, they were invited to; that it was prepared by so great a person as a king, and who is the King of kings, and the only potentate; who provided this dinner of his own sovereign good will and pleasure, in the everlasting council and covenant of grace and peace: for the things of which it consists, there was a scheme so early contrived to bring them about; and that this was made on the account of the marriage of his Son, the Messiah, who had been so often spoken of by the prophets of the Old Testament, these men professed a value for; one so long expected by their forefathers, and is the messenger of the covenant, whose coming they themselves desired and sought for; and that they should be invited to it again and again, and one set of servants sent after another, and the most striking and moving arguments made use of; and yet they slighted and made light of all this, and were careless and unconcerned; to which may be added, that the things they were invited to, were such as concerned their immortal souls, and the spiritual and eternal welfare of them; in short, it was no other than the great salvation, wrought out by the great God, and our Saviour, for great sinners, at the expense of his blood and life, which they neglected; *See Gill "Hebrews 2:3"*.

And went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: they all turned their backs on the Gospel, and the ministration of it, and pursued their own worldly inclinations, ways, and methods of life: those that were brought up in a rural way, lived a country life, and were concerned in meaner employments, went everyone to their "village", as the Vulgate Latin, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read it, and to their farms, there to manage their cattle, and till their ground; and others, that lived in larger towns and cities, and were concerned in greater business of life, betook themselves to trade at home, or traffic abroad; placing their happiness in the affluence of this life, which they preferred to the word and ordinances of Christ. Such a division of worldly employment is made by the Jews [f1171];

> "the way of that host is like to a king, who makes a grand entertainment, and says to the children of his palace, all the rest of the days ye shall be everyone in his house; this shall do his business, hytrjsb lyza adw, "and this shall go about his merchandise",

hylqjb lyza adw, “and this shall go to his field”, except on my day.”

Ver. 6. *And the remnant took his servants*, etc.] They that went to their several worldly callings and occupations of life, troubled themselves no further about the Messiah, his doctrines and ordinances; but others of them were more spiteful and injurious: they not only slighted the message, and took no notice of the invitation, but also abused the messengers; some of the servants they laid hold upon, and put them in the common prison, and detained them there a while; as they did the apostles quickly after our Lord’s ascension, particularly Peter and John:

and entreated them spitefully; gave them very hard words, and reproachful language; menacing and threatening them what they would do to them, if they did not forbear preaching in the name of Jesus; though they were not intimidated hereby, but rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame on such an account; and even their malice and wickedness proceeded so far, as to take away the lives of some of them:

and slew them: thus they stoned Stephen to death, the first martyr for Christ; and killed James, the brother of John, with the sword; which last, though he was put to death by Herod, yet with the consent and approval of the Jews.

Ver. 7. *But when the king heard thereof*, etc.] Of this maltreatment, and barbarous usage of his servants, their cries coming up into his ears, and their blood calling for vengeance at his hands; and he full well knowing what they did unto them, and upon what account, being the omniscient God; and observing their malignity and wickedness,

he was wroth: who, though slow to anger, bears much, and suffers long; yet was now highly incensed and provoked, and stirred up all his wrath, determining to take vengeance on such a vile generation of men. Christ, when he was here on earth, was sometimes provoked by the Jews, through their unbelief, their obstinacy, and the hardness of their hearts and was angry with them, being grieved for them, (<4105>Mark 3:5), but then was not the proper time to execute his wrath; he then appeared as the Lamb of God, to take away the sin of the world; he came to save men, and not to destroy their lives, nor to condemn the world: when his martyr Stephen was suffering, he was seen by him standing at the right hand of God, being risen from his seat, as one incensed at the usage his servant met with from

the wicked Jews; but the time of his vengeance was not yet come, more patience and forbearance were to be exercised towards them: but now his kingdom came with power, and he appears as the Lion of the tribe of Judah; and pours out his wrath to the uttermost upon them, destroys their city and temple, and puts an end to their civil and ecclesiastical state, and cuts them off from being a nation; and now it was, that he ordered these his enemies, who would not have him to rule over them, brought before him, and slain in his presence; and in all this, he showed his kingly power and authority; and by removing the sceptre from them, and all show of dominion and government, made it fully appear that he, the Messiah, was come. Well had it been for them, had they taken the advice of the Psalmist, "Kiss the Son", the Son of God, believe in him as such, embrace him as the Messiah, yield subjection and obedience to his word and ordinances, "lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little", (Psalm 2:12). But now his wrath was kindled very much, and was poured out like fire, and there was no standing before it; the day of the Lord burned like an oven, and destroyed the Jews root and branch: the manner and means, in and by which this utter ruin was brought about, are as follow:

and he sent forth his armies; not the angels, who are the armies and hosts of heaven; nor desolating judgments only, as pestilence and famine, though the latter was severely felt by the Jews, but chiefly the Roman armies are here meant; called "his", because they came by the Lord's appointment and permission; and were used by him, for the destruction of these people:

and destroyed those murderers; of Christ and his apostles, as their fathers had been of the prophets before them:

and burnt up their city; the city of Jerusalem, the metropolis of the Jews, and where the principal of these murderers dwelt; and which was burnt and destroyed by the Roman army, under Titus Vespasian. And a worse punishment than this, even the vengeance of eternal fire, may all the neglecters of the Gospel, and persecutors of the ministers of it expect, from him, whose vengeance is, and who will repay it; for if judgment began at the house of God, the people of the Jews who were so called, what will be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of Christ? How sore a punishment shall they be thought worthy of, who trample under foot the Son of God, count his blood a common thing, and do despite to the Spirit of grace? If the law, when transgressed; demanded a just recompense of

reward, or inflicted deserved punishment, how shall the neglecters of the great salvation revealed in the Gospel escape?

Ver. 8. *Then saith he to his servants,* etc.] That were preserved from their rage and malice, and outlived their implacable enemies, and saw their utter ruin and destruction:

the wedding is ready; meaning not the marriage contract, which was secretly performed in eternity; or the calling of God's elect among the Jews, and their open espousal to Christ, which for the present was now over; but the marriage feast, or the Gospel dispensation, which was ushered in, and the ministry of it, to which nothing was wanting; all the promises, prophecies, types, and shadows, of the former dispensation, were now accomplished; the Lamb of God was slain, and all things to be done by him, were now finished; the ministers of the Gospel, the apostles, were called, their commission enlarged, and they qualified with a greater measure of the Spirit, and were sent to preach both to Jews and Gentiles:

but they which were bidden were not worthy; that is, the Jews, who had notice of this dispensation by the prophets, were told by John the Baptist, that it was at hand; were once, and again externally called unto it by the ministry of the apostles; but they were not only unworthy in themselves, as all men are, of such a blessing and privilege, but they behaved towards it in a very unworthy manner; they were so far from attending on it in a diligent and peaceable way, as becomes all such persons that are blessed with the external ministry of it; who when they do so, may be said to behave worthily, and, in some sense, to be worthy of such a privilege being continued with them; (see <401013>Matthew 10:13) compared with (<421006>Luke 10:6) that they contradicted and blasphemed it, and by their own outrageous carriage, showed plainly that they were unworthy of it; and were so judged by Christ and his apostles, who ordered them to turn from them, and go to the Gentiles, and which may be intended in the following words.

Ver. 9. *Go ye therefore into the highways*, etc.] Either of the city, which were open and public, and where much people were passing to and fro; or of the fields, the high roads, where many passengers were travelling; and may design the Gentile world, and Gentile sinners, who, in respect of the Jews, were far off; were walking in their own ways, and in the high road to destruction; and may denote their being the vilest of sinners, and as having

nothing to recommend them to the divine favour, and to such privileges as this entertainment expresses:

and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage; to the marriage feast, not the marriage supper, but the dinner, (Matthew 22:4), their orders were to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature, Jew or Gentile, high or low, rich or poor, outwardly righteous, or openly profane, greater or lesser sinners, and exhort them to attend the Gospel ministry, and ordinances.

Ver. 10. *So these servants went out into the highways*, etc.] Turned from the Jews, and went among the Gentiles, preaching the Gospel to them; particularly the Apostle Paul, with Barnabas, and others:

and gathered together all, as many as they found, both good and bad: the Persic version reads it, "known or unknown". The Gospel ministry is the means of gathering souls to Christ, and to attend his ordinances, and into his churches; and of these that are gathered by it into churches, and to an attendance on outward ordinances, some are good and some bad, as the fishes gathered in the net of the Gospel are said to be, in (Matthew 13:47,48) which may either express the character of the Gentiles before conversion, some of them being outwardly good in their civil and moral character; closely adhering to the law and light of nature, doing the things of it, and others notoriously wicked; or rather, how they proved when gathered in, some being real believers, godly persons, whose conversations were as became the Gospel of Christ; others hypocrites, empty professors, having a form of godliness, and nothing of the power of it; destitute of grace in their hearts, and of holiness in their lives; and the whole sets forth the diligence of the servants, in executing their master's orders, with so much readiness and exactness:

and the wedding was furnished with guests; that is, the wedding chamber, or the place where the wedding was kept, and the marriage dinner was prepared, and eat; so the Syriac renders it, atytçm tyb, "the house of the feast", or where the feast was kept; and so the Ethiopic version: the Persic version reads it, "the house of the nuptial feast": which designs the house and church of God, into which large numbers of the Gentiles were brought, by the ministry of the apostles; so that it was filled with persons that made a profession of Christ and his Gospel.

Ver. 11. *And when the king came in to see the guests*, etc.] Professors of religion, members of churches, whom God takes particular notice of; he is an omniscient being, and his eyes are upon all men and their actions, and especially on such as are called by his name: he takes notice how they behave in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, and distinguishes hypocrites from real believers; the latter of which he has a special affection for, makes rich and large provisions for them, and protects and defends them; he knows them that are his, and gives them marks of respect; and he spies out such as are not, and will in his own time discover them, to their utter confusion and ruin. There are certain times and seasons, when God may be said to come in to see his guests; as sometimes in a way of gracious visits to his dear children, when he bids them welcome to the entertainment of his house, and invites them to eat and drink abundantly: and sometimes in a way of providence, against formal professors and hypocrites; and at the last judgment, when he will separate the sheep from the goats, and discern between the righteous and the wicked:

he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment; by which is meant, not good works, or a holy life and conversation, nor any particular grace of the Spirit, as faith, or charity, or humility, or repentance, or any other, nor the whole work of sanctification, nor the Holy Ghost, but the righteousness of Christ: for though good works are the outward conversation garments of believers, and these greatly become them and adorn the doctrine of Christ, yet they are imperfect, and have their spots, and need washing in the blood of Christ, and cannot in themselves recommend them to God; and though the Holy Spirit and his graces, his work of holiness upon the heart, make the saints all glorious within, yet not these, but the garment of Christ's righteousness, is their clothing of wrought gold, and raiment of needlework, in which they are brought into the king's presence: this, like a garment, is without them, and put upon them; and which covers and protects them, and beautifies and adorns them; and which may be called a wedding garment, because it is that, in which the elect of God were betrothed to Christ; in which they are made ready and prepared for him, as a bride adorned for her husband: and in which they will be introduced into his presence, and be by him presented, first to himself, and then to his Father, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. This man had not on this garment, this robe of righteousness; it was not imputed to him; he had no knowledge of it; or if he had any, it was only a speculative one; he had no true faith in it; he had never put on Christ, as

the Lord his righteousness; he had got into a church state without it, though there is no entrance into the kingdom of heaven but by it.

Ver. 12. *And he saith unto him, friend*, etc.] Either in an ironical way, or because he professed to be a friend of God and Christ:

how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? Which way didst thou come in hither? since he did not come in by faith, in the righteousness of Christ; intimating, that he climbed up some other way, and was a thief and robber; or with what face, or how couldest thou have the assurance to come in hither in such a dress, having nothing but the filthy rags of thine own righteousness? How couldest thou expect to meet with acceptance with me, or to be suitable company for my people, not being arrayed with the garments of salvation, and robe of righteousness, as they are?

And he was speechless: or muzzled: his mouth was stopped, he had nothing to say for himself: not but that there will be pleas made use of by hypocrites, and formal professors, another day; who will plead either their preaching and prophesying in Christ's name; or their attendance on outward ordinances; or the works they have done, ordinary or extraordinary; but then these will all be superseded and silenced, their own consciences will condemn them, their mouths will be stopped, and they will have nothing to say in vindication of themselves; their righteousness will not answer for them in a time to come. The Jews have a tradition [f1172], that

> "Esau the wicked, will veil himself with his garment, and sit among the righteous in paradise, in the world to come; and the holy blessed God will draw him, and bring him out from thence, which is the sense of those words, (Obidiah 1:4). "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord.""

Ver. 13. *Then said the king to his servants*, etc.] By whom are meant, either the ministers of the Gospel, and pastors of churches, who by the order of Christ, and in the name of the churches, cast out all such as appear, by their bad principles and evil practices, to be without the grace of God, and righteousness of Christ; or rather, the angels, who will bind up the tares in bundles, and burn them, and gather out of Christ's kingdom all that offend and do iniquity; and sever the wicked from the just, and use them in the manner here directed to:

bind him hand and foot; as malefactors used to be, to denote greatness of his crime, his unparalleled insolence, and the unavoidableness of his punishment; such methods being taken, that there could be no escaping it:

and take him away; from hence, to prison; a dreadful thing, to go out of a church of Christ to hell. This clause is not in the Vulgate Latin, nor in the Syriac and Arabic versions, nor in Munster's Hebrew Gospel, but is in all the ancient Greek copies;

and cast him into utter darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; See Gill "Matthew 8:12"

Ver. 14. *For many are called, but few chosen*.] See Gill "Matthew 20:16"

Ver. 15. *Then went the Pharisees*, etc.] After they had heard the parables of the two sons being bid to go into the vineyard, of the vineyard let out to husbandmen, and of the marriage feast; for it is clear from hence, that these stayed and heard the last of these parables, in all which they saw themselves designed; and though they were irritated and provoked to the last degree, they were obliged to hide their resentments, nor durst they use any violence for fear of the people; wherefore they retired to some convenient place, to the council chamber, or to the palace of the high priest, or where the chief priests were gone, who seem to have departed some time before them:

and took counsel; among themselves, and of others, their superiors; not how they should behave more agreeably for the future, and escape due punishment and wrath to the uttermost, which the King of kings would justly inflict on them, very plainly signified in the above parables; but

how they might entangle him in his talk, or "take hold of his words", as in Luke; or "catch him in his words", as in Mark: they consulted to draw him into a conversation, on a dangerous and ensnaring subject; when they hoped a word might drop unwarily from him, which they might catch at, lay hold on, and improve to his disadvantage; either with the common people, or the government, and especially the latter; as is to be learned from Luke, who expressly says their end was,

that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor; the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, should he say any thing against Caesar, which they endeavoured to ensnare him into; by which

means, they doubted not of setting the populace against him, and of screening themselves from their resentments; and of gaining their main point, the delivery of him up into the hands of the civil government, who, for treason and sedition, would put him to death.

Ver. 16. *And they sent out unto him their disciples*, etc.] Who were trained up in the same way of thinking with themselves, had imbibed the same tenets, and were strenuous defenders of them; and no doubt they selected the most crafty and artful among them; and who were the best versed in their principles and sophistic method of arguing: these they the rather sent, imagining they would not be known, as they themselves were: and from their age and air of simplicity, might be taken for innocent persons, who in great sincerity, came to be instructed by him,

with the Herodians: learned men are very much divided in their sentiments about these men; some think they were Gentiles under the government of Herod; but it is not likely that the Pharisees would join themselves with such, whose company they carefully shunned; others, that they were Gentile proselytes, as Herod was; but that on either of these accounts, they should be called by his name, there seems to be no reason: others say, they were Greeks, whom Herod brought out of a desert into his own country, and formed a sect, which from him were called Herodians: this way went Drusius, in which he was followed by several learned men, until the mistake was detected; who took it from a passage in the Hebrew Lexicon, called "Baal Aruch", mistaking the word µynwy, for "Greeks", which signifies "doves": the Jewish writer referring to a passage in the Misna [f1173], which speaks of twaysdrj ynwy, "Herodian doves"; that is, tame ones, such as were brought up in houses: for that these are meant, is clear from the Misnic and Talmudic writers, and their commentators [f1174]; and were so called, because that Herod was the first that tamed wild doves, and brought up tame ones in his own palace; and so Josephus [f1175] says, that he had many towers stored with tame doves, which was a new thing in Judea. Others, that they were Sadducees, which carries some appearance of truth in it; since what is styled the leaven of the Sadducees, in (<401606>Matthew 16:6) is called the leaven of Herod, in (<411615>Mark 8:15) And very probable it is, that Herod was a Sadducee, and that his courtiers, at least many of them, were of the same sect; but yet it is certain, that the Sadducees are spoken of, as distinct from these Herodians, in (<402223>Matthew 22:23) of this chapter. Others, that they were a set of men, that formed a new scheme of

religion, consisting partly of Judaism, and partly of Gentilism, approved and espoused by Herod, and therefore called by his name; and others, that they were such as held, that Herod was the Messiah; but it is certain, that Herod did not think so himself, nor the people of the Jews in common; and whatever flatterers he might have in his life time, it can hardly be thought, that this notion should survive his death, who was odious to the Jewish nation: others think, that they were such, who were not for paying tribute to Caesar, but to Herod, and were encouraged and defended by him and his courtiers, as much as they could; since he and his family looked upon themselves to be injured by the Romans, and secretly grudged that tribute should be paid unto them: others, on the contrary, say, that these were such, who pleaded that tribute ought to be paid to Caesar, by whose means Herod enjoyed his government, and was supported in it; and were just the reverse of the Pharisees, with whom they are here joined, in their attempts on Christ. The Syriac version renders the word by sdwrh tybd, "those of the house", or "family of Herod", his courtiers and domestics: in Munster s Hebrew Gospel, they are called swdwrh ydb[, "the servants of Herod"; and certain it is, that Herod was at Jerusalem at this time, (<420207>Luke 23:7) We read [f1176] of Menahem, who was one while an associate of Hillell, who with eighty more clad in gold, went Ælmh tdwb[l, "into the service of the king", that is, Herod, and hence might be called Herodians. Wherefore these seem rather to be the persons designed, whom the Pharisees chose to send with their disciples, though they were of Herod's party, and were on the other side of the question from them; being for giving tribute to Caesar, by whom their master held his government; that should Christ be ensnared by them, as they hoped he would, into any seditious or treasonable expressions against Caesar, these might either accuse him to Herod, or immediately seize him, and have him before the Roman governor. Luke observes, that these men, the disciples of the Pharisees and the Herodians, were sent forth as "spies, which should feign themselves just men"; men of religion and holiness, and who were upright and sincere in their question, and who had strong inclinations to become his disciples: the Jews themselves own, that they sent such persons to Jesus, whom they mention by name, in such a disguised manner to deceive him: their words are these [f1177];

> "They (the Sanhedrim) sent unto him Ananiah and Ahaziah, honourable men of the lesser sanhedrim, and when they came

before him they bowed down to him — and he thought that they believed in him, and he received them very courteously."

Saying, master: as if they were his disciples, or at least were very willing to be so: however, they allow him to be a doctor or teacher, and a very considerable one:

we know that thou art true; a true and faithful minister, that teachest truth, and speakest uprightly; one of great integrity, and to be depended upon:

and teachest the way of God in truth; rightly opens the word of God, gives the true and genuine sense the law of God, faithfully instructs men in the worship of God; and with great sincerity, directs men to the way of coming to God, and enjoying eternal happiness with him; having no sinister ends, or worldly interest in view:

neither carest thou for any man; be he ever so great and honourable, in ever so high a station, be he Caesar himself; signifying, that he was a man of such openness and integrity, that he always freely spoke the real sentiments of his mind, whether men were pleased or displeased; being in no fear of man, nor in the least to be intimidated by frowns and menaces, or any danger from men: for thou regardest not the person of men; as he had not the persons of the high priests and elders, the grand sanhedrim of the nation, who had lately been examining him in the temple: and seeing therefore he made no difference among men, whether learned or unlearned, rich or poor, high or low; whether they were in exalted stations and high offices, or not he feared no man's face, and accepted no man's person, but gave his sense of things, without fear or flattery; they hoped he would give a direct answer to the following question, though Caesar himself was concerned in it.

Ver. 17. *Tell us therefore what thinkest thou*, etc.:] Since, as they suggested he was a person of great understanding and sincerity, they earnestly desire that he would be pleased, according to his usual frankness and openness, to give them his opinion; in which they intimate, they should sit down satisfied and contented:

whether is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? Meaning, according to the law of God: this was a question among the Jews: the Herodians were for it, the Pharisees were against it, at least secretly; and, indeed, this latter was the general sense of the nation, who looked upon themselves to be, or however ought to be, a free people, being the children

of God, and the seed of Abraham; and who urged, that according to their law, none but one of their own brethren, who was of their own nation and religion, was to be set as king over them; whereas Caesar, the Roman emperor, was a stranger, one of another nation, and an idolater; and some openly refused it, and made mutinies and insurrections on account of it, as Theudas, and Judas of Galilee: now by putting this question to Christ, in the presence of different parties, they hoped to get an advantage of him either way; for had he been silent, they would have reproached him, as not being the honest, faithful, frank, and open man, they pretended to take him to be; and if he had answered either in the affirmative or negative, they were prepared to make use of it to his injury; had he said that it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar, this being contrary to the general notions of the people, they would have improved it to draw them from him, and to set them against him; and had he affirmed it was not lawful to do it, they would then have accused him to the Roman governor, and delivered him up into his hands, to judge and condemn him, according to the Roman laws; which latter was what they were wishing for.

Ver. 18. *But Jesus perceived their wickedness*, etc.] Luke says, “their craftiness”; and Mark says, “knowing their hypocrisy”; for there was, a mixture of malice, hypocrisy, and artfulness, in the scheme they had formed; but Christ being the omniscient God, saw the wickedness of their hearts, knew their hypocritical designs, and was well acquainted with all their artifice: he judged not according to the outward appearance of their affection for him, and opinion of him, of religion, righteousness, and holiness in themselves, and of a sincere desire to have their conscience satisfied about this matter; the snare they laid was visible to him, the mask they put on could not screen them from him, nor impose upon him:

and said, why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? as he might well call them, who feigned themselves just persons, pretended a great deal of respect for him, call him master, compliment him with the characters of a faithful, sincere, and disinterested preacher; yet by putting the above question, designed no other than to ensnare him, and bring him into disgrace or trouble.

Ver. 19. *Shew me the tribute money*, etc.] Not any money, or any sort of coin that was current among them; but that in which the tribute was usually paid, which was Roman money: and they brought unto him a penny; not as, being what was the usual sum that was paid for tribute at one time, but as a

sample of what sort of money it was paid in, in Roman pence; one of which was seven pence halfpenny of our money.

Ver. 20. *And he saith unto them*, etc.] Having the penny in one hand, and pointing to it with the other,

whose is this image and superscription? or inscription? for the penny that was, brought him had an image upon it, the form of a man's head struck on it, and round about it an inscription, or writing, showing who it was the image of, and whose money it was, and when it was coined: this is enough to show, that this penny was not a Jewish, but a Roman one; for the Jews, though they put inscriptions, yet no images on their coin; and much less would they put Caesar's thereon, as was on this: it is asked [f1178],

> "What is the coin of Jerusalem? The answer is, David and Solomon on one side, and Jerusalem the holy city off the other side, i.e. as the gloss observes, David and Solomon were "written" on one side, and on the other side were written Jerusalem the holy city."

It follows,

> "and what was the coin of Abraham our father? an old man and an old woman, (Abraham and Sarah,) on one side, and a young man and a young woman, (Isaac and Rebekah,) on the other side."

The gloss on it is,

> "not that there was on it the form of an old man and an old woman on one side, and of a young man and a young woman on the other, for it is forbidden to make the form of a man; but so it was written on one side, an old man and an old woman, and on the other side, a young man and a young woman."

Ver. 21. *They say unto him, Caesar's*, etc.] Either Augustus Caesar's; for there was a coin of that emperor's, as Dr. Hammond reports, from Occo, which had his image or picture on it, and in it these words written, Augustus Caesar, such a year, "after the taking of Judaea"; which if this was the coin, was a standing testimony of the subjection of the Jews to the Romans; and this being current with them, was an acknowledgment of it by them, and carried in it an argument of their obligation to pay tribute to them; or it might be Tiberius Caesar's, the then reigning emperor, in the nineteenth year of whose reign, Christ was crucified; and seeing he had

reigned so long, it is reasonable to suppose, his money was very common, and most in use: we read in the Talmud [f1179], of hnarsyq arnyd, "a Caesarean penny", or "Caesar's penny", the same sort with this: now this penny having Caesar's image and inscription on it, our Lord tacitly suggests, that they ought to pay tribute to him; since his money was allowed of as current among them, which was in effect owning him to be their king; and which perfectly agrees with a rule of their own, which runs thus [f1180]:

> "A king whose "coin" is "current" in any country, the inhabitants of that country agree about him, and it is their joint opinion, µydb[wl µhw µhynwda awhç "that he is their Lord, and they are his servants"."

This being the case now with the Jews, Christ's advice is,

render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God, the things that are God's: give Caesar the tribute and custom, and fear, and honour, and obedience, which are due to him; which may be done without interfering with the honour of God, and prejudicing his interest and glory, when care is taken, that all the worship and obedience due to God are given to him: subjection to civil magistrates is not inconsistent with the reverence and fear of God; all are to have their dues rendered unto them, without entrenching upon one another. And the Jews themselves allow, that a king ought to have his dues, whether he be a king of Israel, or of the Gentiles:

> "a publican, or tax gatherer, (they say [f1181],) that is appointed by the king, whether a king of Israel, or of the Gentiles, and takes what is fixed by the order of the government; it is forbidden to refuse payment of the tax to him, for anyd twklmd anyd, "the right of a king is right"."

Just and equitable, and he ought to have his right.

Ver. 22. *When they had heard these words*, etc.] This answer returned unto them, this advice which was given them, which they could not gainsay or deny to be good,

they marvelled: were amazed and astonished, at his prudence and wisdom, in answering them, in such an unexpected and cautious manner:

they left him: being silenced, confounded, and disappointed:

and went their way: not being able to get any advantage against him, neither to bring him into contempt with the people, and alienate their affections from him; nor to charge him with sedition or treason to the Roman governor; and so had but a very indifferent account of their success, to report to them that sent them.

Ver. 23. *The same day came to him the Sadducees*, &] Quickly after the Pharisees and Herodians had left him; and which shows, that the Herodians and Sadducees were not the same; but that the Sadducees were a distinct sect, both from the Pharisees and the Herodians. These understanding that the former had not succeeded, came with a knotty question, with which they had often puzzled the Pharisees, and hoped they should nonplus Christ with it, showing the absurdity of the doctrine of the resurrection, an article which they denied; as it follows,

which say, that there is no resurrection of the dead: they denied that there were angels and spirits, and the immortality of the soul; they affirmed, that the soul died with the body, and that there was no future state: the rise of this sect, and of these notions of their's, was this, as the Jews relate [f1182].

> "Antigonus, a man of Socho, used to say, be not as servants, that serve their master on account of receiving a reward, but be as servants that serve their master, not on account of receiving a reward; and let the fear of heaven (God) be upon you, so that your reward may be double in the world to come: this man had two disciples, who altered his words, and taught the disciples, and the disciples their disciples, and they stood and narrowly examined them, and said, what did our fathers see, to say this thing? Is it possible, that a labourer should work all day, and not take his reward at evening? But if our fathers had known that there is another world, and that there is µytmh tyyht, "a resurrection of the dead", they would not have said thus: they stood and separated from the law, and of them there were two parties, the Sadducees and Baithusites; the Sadducees on account of Sadoc, and the Baithusites on account of Baithus."

The Syriac version reads, "and they said" and the Ethiopic version also, "saying, there is no resurrection of the dead"; taking the sense to be, that they at this time declared their sense of this doctrine, and according to a

settled notion of their's, affirmed before Christ, that there was no such thing; that never any was raised from the dead, nor never will; and they were desirous of entering into a controversy with him about it:

and asked him; put the following question to him, in order to expose the weakness and absurdity of such a doctrine.

Ver. 24. *Saying, master*, etc.] Rabbi, or doctor, as he was usually called;

Moses said, in (<052505>Deuteronomy 25:5)

if a man die having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother; which, though not expressed in the self same words, yet is the sense of the passage referred to, and was a practice in use before the times of Moses, as appears from the case of Er and Onan; the design of which was, to preserve families, and keep their inheritances distinct and entire. This law only took place, when a man died without children; for if he left any children, there was no need for his brother to marry his wife; yea, as a Jewish writer observes [f1183], she was forbidden, it was not lawful for him to marry her, and was the case if he had children of either sex, or even grandchildren: for as another of their commentators notes [f1184], his having no child, regards a son or a daughter, or a son's son, or a daughter's son, or a daughter's daughter; and it was the eldest of the brethren, or he that was next in years to the deceased, that was obliged by this law [f1185], though not if he had a wife of his own; and accordingly in the following case proposed, each of the brethren married the eldest brother's wife in their turn, according to the course of seniority; and by this law, the first child that was born after such marriage, was reckoned the seed of the deceased, and was heir to his inheritance. The Jews in their Misna, or oral law, have a whole tract on this subject, called Yebamot, which contains various rules and directions, for the right observance of this law.

Ver. 25. *Now there were with us seven brethren*, etc.] That is, there was in the city, town or neighbourhood, where these Sadducees dwelt, probably at Jerusalem, a family, in which were seven sons, all brethren by the father's side; for brethren by the mother's side were not counted brethren, nor obliged by this law [f1186]; whether this was a reigned case which is here and in the following verses put, or whether it was real fact, which is possible, it matters not: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: the eldest of these seven brethren married a wife, and after some time died, having no

children, son or daughter, by his wife; and therefore, according to the above law, leaves her to his next brother to marry her, and raise up seed unto him; which, according to the Jewish canons [f1187], could not be done before ninety days, or three months after the decease of his brother; for so long they were to wait and see, whether she was with child by his brother or not; for if she was, it was not necessary, yea, it was unlawful for him to marry her.

Ver. 26. *Likewise the second also*, etc.] The eldest of the surviving brethren, having married his brother's wife, after sometime died also without children, and left her to his next brother to marry her; and the third brother accordingly did marry her, and in process of time died likewise, leaving no issue behind him; and thus they went on in course, unto the seventh: the fourth, fifth, and sixth, married her in turn, and so did the seventh; and all died in the same circumstances, having no children by her.

Ver. 27. *And last of all the woman died also.*] A widow and childless, having never married another person but these seven brethren; and the case with them being alike, no one having any child by her, upon which any peculiar claim to her could be formed, the following question is put.

Ver. 28. *Therefore in the resurrection*, etc.] As asserted by the Pharisees and by Christ, supposing that there will be such a thing, though not granting it; for these men denied it, wherefore the Ethiopic version reads it hypothetically, "if therefore the dead will be raised"; upon such a supposition,

whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her, or were married to her. By putting this question, they thought to have got some advantage against Christ, and in favour of their notion; they hoped, either that he would give into their way of thinking, and relinquish the doctrine of the resurrection upon this, and join with them against the Pharisees, and so there would be no need of an answer to the question; or they judged, that if he returned an answer, it would be either that he did not know whose wife she should be, and then they would traduce him among the common people, as weak and ignorant; or should he say, that she would be the wife of one of them only, naming which of them, or of them all, or of none of them, they fancied that such absurd consequences would follow on each of these, as would expose the doctrine of the resurrection to ridicule and contempt; but they missed their aim, and were sadly disappointed by Christ's answer and reasonings which follow.

Ver. 29. *Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc.] The Sadducees: as idle and impertinent as the case they put may seem to be and really was, our Lord thought fit to return an answer to them, thereby to expose their ignorance, and put them to silence and confusion: ye do err; not only in that they denied the immortality of the soul and the resurrection, but that supposing that there would be a resurrection, things in that state would be just they were in this; as particularly for instance, that there would be the same natural relation of husband and wife, which their question supposes. Mark reads these words by way of interrogation,

do ye not therefore err, because? etc.] And by Luke they are wholly omitted, as also what follows,

not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. These two things were the spring and source of their errors: they had not a true knowledge, and right understanding of the Scriptures; which if they had had, it must have appeared to them, from many places in the Old Testament, that the soul remains after death, and that the body will be raised from the dead: they owned the authority of the Scriptures, and allowed of all the writings of the Old Testament; for it seems to be a mistake of some learned men, who think that they only received the five books of Moses, and that therefore Christ takes his proof of his doctrine from thence; but though they had the greater esteem for the law, and would admit of nothing that was not clearly proved from that; yet they did not reject the other writings, as what might serve to confirm and illustrate what was taught in the law; but then, though they approved of the Scriptures and read them, yet they did not understand them, and so fell into those gross errors and sad mistakes; nor did they attend to the power of God, which, as it was able to make men out of the dust of the earth, was able to raise them again, when crumbled into dust; but this was looked upon by them, as a thing impossible, and so incredible; (see <4408>Acts 26:8).

Ver. 30. *For in the resurrection*, etc.] At the time of the resurrection, and in that state; when the bodies and souls of men shall be reunited,

they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither the men marry wives, nor are the women given in marriage to men, which is done by their parents here, generally speaking, they having the right of disposing of children in marriage: but, as Luke says, “they which shall be accounted worthy”; not through their own works of righteousness, but through the grace of God and righteousness of Christ, “to obtain the world”, the world

to come, a future state of happiness, “and the resurrection of the dead”, that which will be unto everlasting life and glory, “neither marry nor are given in marriage”; shall not enter into any such natural and carnal relation: and this agrees with the notion of the other Jews, who say [f1188]; that

> “In “the world to come”, there is neither eating nor drinking, hybrw hyrp alw, “nor fructification, nor increase” (of children), no receiving and giving, (no commerce), nor envy, nor hatred, nor contention.”

But are as the angels of God in heaven; or, as in Luke, “are equal unto the angels”; and which he explains their immortality: “neither can they die any more”; no more than the angels can: for this must not be extended to everything; not in everything will the saints be like, or equal to the angels; they will not be incorporeal, as the angels are, but then, even their bodies will be spiritual, and in some respects, like spirits; they will not stand in any need of sustenance, by eating and drinking, any more than the angels; nor will there be any such things as marriage, and procreation of children among them, any more than among angels; for they “are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection”: they will then appear to be the children of God by adopting grace, through their enjoying the adoption, even the redemption of their bodies; and possessing, in soul and body, the heavenly inheritance they are heirs of: indeed, the souls of the saints before the resurrection, during their separate state, are in some sense like the angels, to which may be applied those words of Maimonides [f1189].

> “In the world to come, there is no body, but the souls of the righteous only, without a body, trçh ykalmk “as the ministering angels”; and seeing there is no body, there is no eating nor drinking in it, nor any of all the things which the bodies of the children of men stand in need of in this world; nor does anything befall which happens to bodies in this world, as sitting or standing, or sleep or “death”, or grief, or laughter, or the like.”

And according to the sense of the Jews, they will be like to the angels after the resurrection: so God is by them introduced speaking [f1190];

> “At the appointed time known by me, to quicken the dead, I will return to thee that body which is holy and renewed, as at the first, to be µyçwdq µykalmk, “as the holy angels”.”

This was an usual way of speaking with them, to compare saints in a state of immortality, to angels [f1191]. Christ, by making mention of angels, strikes at another notion of the Sadducees, that there were no angels, (<442308>Acts 23:8).

Ver. 31. *But as touching the resurrection of the dead*, etc.] In proof of that doctrine, and which will greatly serve to confirm and establish it, and that it may appear that the dead are, or will be raised, and to put it out of all doubt,

have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, as Mark adds, "in the book of Moses"; which was written by him, the book of (<020306>Exodus 3:6) and though the words were spoke to Moses, yet were designed for the use, instruction, and comfort of the Israelites; not only at that time, but in succeeding ages, they being the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; whose God the Lord there declares himself to be. Moreover, whereas these words were spoken by God to Moses, there is some little difficulty occasioned, by Luke's representing them to be the words of Moses; for he says, "Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham", etc. which may be removed by observing, that the sense is, that when Moses showed to the children of Israel, what he heard and saw at the bush on Mount Sinai, he called the Lord by these names, in which he spoke of himself to him; he recited to them what the Lord said to him; and indeed he was bid to say to them these words; (see <020314>Exodus 3:14-16)

saying, as follows,

Ver. 32. *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, etc.] The Sadducees expressly denied, that the resurrection could be proved out of the law.

> "Says R. Eliezer, with R. Jose [f1192], I have found the books of the Sadducees to be corrupt; for they say that the resurrection of the dead is not to be proved out of the law: I said unto them, you have corrupted your law, and ye have not caused anything to come up into your hands, for ye say the resurrection of the dead is not to be proved out of the law; lo! he saith, (<041531>Numbers 15:31) "That soul shall be utterly cut off, his iniquity shall be upon him; he shall be utterly cut off" in this world; "his iniquity shall be upon him", is not this said with respect to the world to come?."

Hence, in opposition to this notion of the Sadducees, the other Jews say [f1193], that

> “Though a man confesses and believes that the dead will be raised, yet that it is not intimated in the law, he is an heretic; since it is a fundamental point, that the resurrection of the dead is of the law.”

Hence they set themselves, with all their might and main, to prove this doctrine from thence, of which take the following instances [f1194].

> “Says R. Simai, from whence is the resurrection of the dead to be proved out of the law? From (<020604>Exodus 6:4) as it is said, “I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan: to you” it is not said, but “to them”; from hence then, the resurrection of the dead may be proved out of the law.”

The gloss upon it is,

> “the sense is, that the holy blessed God, promised to our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that he would give to them the land of Israel; and because he gave it to them, has he not given it to their children? But we learn from hence, that they shall be raised, and that God will hereafter give them the land of Israel.”

And which the learned Mr. Mede takes to be the sense of the words of this text, cited by our Lord;, and this the force of his reasoning, by which he proves the resurrection of the dead. Again,

> “the Sadducees asked Rabban Gamaliel, from whence does it appear that the holy blessed God will quicken the dead? He said unto them, out of the law, and out of the prophets, and out of the Hagiographa; but they did not receive of him (or regard him): out of the law, as it is written, “Thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, and rise up”, (<053116>Deuteronomy 31:16) And there are that say from this Scripture, (<050404>Deuteronomy 4:4). “But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God, are alive every one of you this day”: as this day all of you stand, so in the world to come, all of you shall stand.”

Thus our Lord having to do with the same sort of persons, fetches his proof of the doctrine of the resurrection out of the law, and from a passage which respects the covenant relation God stands in to his people, particularly Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and which respects not their souls

only, but their bodies also, even their whole persons, body and soul; for God is the God of the whole: and therefore as their souls now live with God, their bodies also will be raised from the dead, that they, with their souls, may enjoy everlasting glory and happiness; which is the grand promise, and great blessing of the covenant of grace.

God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; as all the saints are; for though their bodies are dead, their souls are alive, and their bodies will be raised in consequence of their covenant interest in God, to enjoy an immortal life with him: so the Jews are wont to say, that the righteous, even in their death, are called living [f1195]:

> "from whence is it proved, (say they,) that the righteous, even in their death, µyyj ˆyywrq, "are called living?""

from (<0534>Deuteronomy 34:4) as it is written, "and he said unto him, this is the land which I have sworn to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying." Menasseh ben Israel, a learned Jew, of the last century, has produced [f1196] this same passage of Scripture, Christ here does in proof of the immortality of the soul, and argues from it in much the same manner: having mentioned the words, he adds,

> "for God is not the God of the dead, for the dead are not; but of the living, for the living exist; therefore also the patriarchs, in respect of the soul, may rightly be inferred from hence to live."

Ver. 33. *And when the multitude heard this*, etc.] This wise and full answer of Christ to the posing question of the Sadducees, with which perhaps they had puzzled many, and never had met with their match before:

they were astonished at his doctrine; concerning the pure, perfect, and angelic state of the righteous in the world to come;, and how strongly and nervously he proved the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the dead, which were both denied by the Sadducees; and who were so confounded with his answer, proof, and reasonings, that Luke says, "after that they durst not ask him any question at all": and the Scribes were so pleased therewith, that certain of them applauded him, saying, "master, thou hast well said".

Ver. 34. *But when the Pharisees had heard*, etc.] Either with their own ears, they being some of them present: or rather from the relation of others,

from the Scribes, who expressed their approbation of Christ's answer to the Sadducees; for the Pharisees, with the Herodians, in a body, had left him, and were gone to their respective places of abode; or to them that sent them, being baffled and confounded by him: but now hearing

that he had put the Sadducees to silence, or stopped their mouths, having nothing to reply, which itself, was not disagreeable; for they were as opposite as could be to them in the doctrine of the resurrection, and in other things, and were their sworn and avowed enemies: and yet it sadly gravelled them, that Christ should be too hard for, and get the victory over all sects among them. Wherefore, considering that should he go on with success in this manner, his credit with the people would increase yet more and more; and therefore, though they had been so shamefully defeated in two late attempts, yet

they were gathered together in great hurry upon this occasion. The Ethiopic version reads it, "they were gathered to him", that is, to Christ; and so reads the copy that Beza gave to the university of Cambridge: but the other reading, as it is general, so more suitable to the place: they gathered together at some certain house, where they consulted what to do, what methods to take, to put a stop to his growing interest with the people, and how they might bring him into disgrace with them; and they seemed to have fixed on this method, that one among them, who was the ablest doctor, and best skilled in the law, should put a question to him relating to the law, which was then agitated among them, the solution of which was very difficult; and they the rather chose to take this course by setting a single person upon him, that should he succeed, the victory would be the greater, and the whole sect would share in the honour of it; and should he be silenced, the public disgrace and confusion would only fall on himself, and not the whole body, as in the former instances. This being agreed to, they went unto him.

Ver. 35. *Then one of them, which was a lawyer*, etc.] Or that was "learned", or "skilful in the law", as the Syriac and Persic versions, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read. The Ethiopic version calls him, "a Scribe of the city", of the city of Jerusalem; but I do not meet with any such particular officer, or any such office peculiar to a single man any where: mention is made of "the Scribes of the people" in (Matthew 2:4) and this man was one of them, one that interpreted the law to the people, either in the schools, or in the synagogues, or both; and Mark expressly calls him

a “Scribe”: and so the Arabic version renders the word here; and from hence it may be concluded that the lawyers and Scribes were the same sort of persons. This man was by sect a Pharisee, and by his office a Scribe; or interpreter of the law, and suitable to his office and character,

asked him a question, tempting him, and saying: he put a difficult and knotty question to him, and thereby making a trial of his knowledge and understanding of the law; and laying a snare for him, to entrap him if he could, and expose him to the people, as a very ignorant man: and delivered it in the following form.

Ver. 36. *Master, which is the great commandment in the law?*] He calls him “master, Rabbi, or doctor”, as the Sadducees had in (<40 22 24>Matthew 22:24) either because he was usually so called by his disciples, and by the generality of the people; or merely in complaisance to engage his attention to him, and his question: and might hereby suggest, that should he return a proper and satisfactory answer to it he should be his master. The question is not which of the laws was the greatest, the oral, or the written law: the Jews give the preference to the law delivered by word of mouth; they prefer the traditions of the elders before the written law of Moses; (See Gill on “<40 15 2>Matthew 15:2”); but the question was about the written law of Moses; and not merely about the decalogue, or whether the commands of the first table were greater than those of the second, as was generally thought; or whether the affirmative precepts were not more to be regarded than negative ones, which was their commonly received opinion; but about the whole body of the law, moral and ceremonial, delivered by Moses: and not whether the ceremonial law was to be preferred to the moral, which they usually did; but what particular command there was in the whole law, which was greater than the rest: for as there were some commands that were light, and others that were weighty, a distinction often used by them [f1197], and to which Christ alludes in (<40 23 23>Matthew 23:23). It was moved that it might be said which was the greatest and weightiest of them all. Some thought the commandment of the sabbath was the greatest: hence they say [f1198], that he that keeps the sabbath is as if he kept the whole law: yea, they make the observance of the three meals, or feasts, which, according to the traditions of the elders, they were obliged to eat on the sabbath, to be at least one of the greatest of them.

> “These three meals (says one of their writers [f1199]) are a great matter, for it is one hrwtbç twlwdgh twxmhm, “of the great commandments in the law”.”

Which is the very phraseology used in this question. Others give the preference to circumcision, on which they bestow the greatest encomiums, and, among the rest [f1200], say, it drives away the sabbath, or that is obliged to give place unto it. Others [f1201] say of the “phylacteries”, that the holiness of them is the greatest of all, and the command to be arrayed with them all the day, is more excellent than all others; and even of the fringe upon the borders of their garments, others observe [f1202], that a man that is guilty of that command, is guilty of all others, and that single precept is equal to all the rest. In this multiplicity of opinions, Christ’s is desired on this subject, though with no good intention.

Ver. 37. *Jesus said unto him*, etc.] Directly, without taking time to think of it; and though he knew with what design it was put to him, yet, as an answer to it might be useful and instructive to the people, as well as silence and confound his adversaries, he thought fit to give one; and is as follows, being what is expressed in (Deuteronomy 6:5).

thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; that is, with all the powers and faculties of the soul, the will, the understanding, and the affections; in the most sincere, upright, and perfect manner, without any dissimulation and hypocrisy, and above all objects whatever, for this the law requires; and which man, in his state of innocence, was capable of, though now fallen, he is utterly unable to perform; so far from it, that without the grace of God, he has no true love at all to God, in his heart, soul and mind, but all the reverse; his carnal mind is enmity against God, and everything that is divine and good, or that belongs unto him: and though this is now the case of man, yet his obligation to love the Lord in this manner is still the same; and when the Spirit of God does produce the grace and fruit of love in his soul, he does love the Lord sincerely; because of the perfections of his nature, and the works of his hands, and because of the blessings of grace bestowed, and especially for Christ, the unspeakable gift of his love; and most affectionately does he love him, when he is most sensible of his everlasting and unchangeable love to him, and when that is shed abroad by the Spirit; “for we love him, because he first loved us”, (1 John 4:19) instead of, “with all thy mind”, as here, in (Deuteronomy 6:5) it is read, “with all

thy might”; and which clause is here added by the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, as it is in (<41230>Mark 12:30). The Hebrew phrase seems to denote the vehemency of affections, with which God is to be beloved. Though the Jewish writers [f1203] paraphrase and interpret it, “with all thy substance”, or “money”; and in the Misna [f1204], the following interpretation is given of the whole;

> ““with all thy heart”, with thy imaginations, with the good imagination, and with the evil imagination; and “with all thy soul”, even if he should take away thy soul; and “with all thy strength”, with all thy “mammon”, or riches; or otherwise, “with all thy might”, with every measure he measures unto thee, do thou measure unto him;”

that is, as one of the commentators says [f1205], whether it be good or evil; or, as another [f1206], in every case that happens give thanks to God, and praise him. And certain it is, that as God is to be loved in the strongest manner we are capable of, and with all we have, and are; so always, at all times, under all dispensations of his providence, and upon all accounts, and for all he does towards, in, upon, and for us.

Ver. 38. *This is the first and great commandment*.] Whether the object of it is considered, who is the first and chief good; or the manner in which it is to be observed, which requires and engrosses the whole heart, soul, and mind, and all the strength and power of man; or its being the principle from whence all the duties, and actions of men should flow, and the end to which all are to be referred; and is not only a compendium of the duties of the first table of the decalogue, but of all others that can be thought to, and do, belong to God. This is the first command in order of nature, time, dignity, and causality; God being the first cause of all things, infinitely above all creatures, and love to him being the source, spring and cause of love to the neighbour; and it is the greatest in its object, nature, manner, and end. That this command, and these words our Lord cites, are so full and comprehensive, the Jews themselves cannot deny. A noted writer of their’s [f1207] says,

> “the root of “all the commandments” is, when a man loves God with all his soul, and cleaves unto him.”

And, says [f1208] another, “in this verse only, “thou shalt love the Lord thy God”, etc. twrbdh trç[µylwlk, “the ten words, or decalogue, are comprehended”.”

Ver. 39. *And the second is like unto it*, etc.] For there is but a second, not a third: this is suggested in opposition to the numerous commandments in the law, according to the opinion of the Jews, who reckon them in all to be “six hundred and thirteen”: of which there are “three hundred and sixty five” negative ones, according to the number of the days of the year; and “two hundred and forty eight” affirmative ones, according to the members of a man’s body [f1209]. Christ reduces all to two, love to God, and love to the neighbour; and the latter is the second in order of nature, time, dignity, and causality; the object of it being a creature; and the act itself being the effect of the former, yet like unto it: for though the object is different, yet this commandment regards love as the former, and requires that it be as that, true, hearty, sincere, and perfect; that it be with singleness of heart, always, and to all men; and that it spring from love to God, and be performed to his glory: and which is expressed in the words written in (<031918>Leviticus 19:18) “thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”; as heartily and sincerely, and as a man would desire to be loved by his neighbour; and do all the good offices to him he would choose to have done to himself by him. This law supposes, that men should love themselves, or otherwise they cannot love their neighbour; not in a sinful way, by indulging themselves in carnal lusts and pleasures; some are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; but in a natural way, so as to be careful of their bodies, families, and estates; and in a spiritual way, so as to be concerned for their souls, and the everlasting happiness of them: and in like manner should men love their neighbours, in things temporal do them all the good they can, and do no injury to their persons or property; and in things spiritual pray for them, instruct them, and advise as they would their own souls, or their nearest and dearest relations. And this is to be extended to every man; though the Jews restrain it to their friend and companion, and one of their own religion.

> ““Thy neighbour”; that is, (say they [f1210],) thy friend in the law; and “this is the great comprehensive rule in the law”, to show that it is not fit there should be any division, or separation, between a man and his companion, but one should judge every man in the balance of equity: wherefore, near unto it is, “I am the Lord”: for as I the Lord am one, so it is fit for you that ye should be one nation

> without division; but a wicked man, and one that does not receive reproof, it is commanded to hate him; as it is said, “do not I hate them that hate me?””

But our Lord intends by it to include, that love, benevolence, and good will, which are due to every man; and suggests, that this comprehends not only all that contained in the second table of the decalogue, but all duties that are reducible thereunto, and are obligatory on men one towards another whatever; all which should spring from love, and be done heartily and sincerely, with a view to the neighbour’s good, and God’s glory: and with this Maimonides agrees, saying [f1211], that

> “all the commands, or duties, respecting a man, and his neighbour, µydysj twlymgb twsnkn, “are comprehended in beneficence.””

Ver. 40. *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*.] Not that all that is contained in the five books of Moses, and in the books of the prophets, and other writings of the Old Testament, is comprehended in, and is reducible to these two precepts; for there are many things delivered by way of promise, written by way of history, etc. which cannot, by any means, be brought into these two general heads: but that everything respecting duty that is suggested in the law, or is more largely explained and pressed in any of the writings of the prophets, is summarily comprehended in these two sayings: hence love is the fulfilling of the law; (see <450813>Romans 13:8,9, <480514>Galatians 5:14). The substance of the law is love; and the writings of the prophets, as to the preceptive part of them, are an explanation of the law, and an enlargement upon it: hence the Jews have a saying [f1212], that “all the prophets stood on Mount Sinai”, and received their prophecies there, because the sum of them, as to the duty part, was then delivered. Beza thinks, that here is an allusion to the “phylacteries”, or frontlets, which hung upon their foreheads and hands, as a memorial of the law. And certain it is, that the first of these commands, and which is said to be the greatest, was written in these phylacteries. Some take the phrase, “on these hang all the law and the prophets”, to be a mere Latinism, but it is really an Hebraism, and often to be met with in the Jewish writings: so Maimonides says [f1213],

> “the knowledge of this matter is an affirmative precept, as it is said, “I am the Lord thy God”; and he that imagines there is another God besides this, transgresses a negative, as it is said, “thou shalt have

no other Gods before me"; and he denies the fundamental point, for this is the great foundation, wb ywlt lkhç, "on which all hang":"

and so the word is used in many other places [f1214]. The sense is plainly this, that all that are in the law and prophets are consistent with, and dependent on these things; and are, as the Persic version renders the word, "comprehended" in them, and cannot be separated from them.

Ver. 41. *While the Pharisees were gathered together*, etc.] Or rather, "when" they were gathered together, and while they continued so, before they left him: for this is to be understood not of their gathering together, to consult privately about him; this is expressed before in (<401234>Matthew 22:34) but of their gathering together about Christ, to hear what answer he would return to the question their learned doctor would put to him: and he having given an answer to that, which the Scribe was obliged to allow was a good one; and he having no more to say, Christ directs his discourse not to him individually, but to all the Pharisees before he parted with them, and puts a question to them, in his turn; and which would lead on to another they could not answer, and they must therefore leave him once more with great shame and confusion.

Jesus asked them: as the lawyer put a question to him suitable to his office and character, Christ puts another to the Pharisees suitable to his office and character, as a Gospel preacher; suggesting by it, that salvation was not by the law, and the works of it, which they set up for doctors and interpreters of, and advocates for, but by the Messiah, who was promised to their fathers, and they expected.

Ver. 42. *Saying, what think ye of Christ*, etc.] Or the Messiah; he does not ask them whether there was, or would be such a person in the world. He knew, that he was so plainly spoken of in the writings of the Old Testament, which they had in their hands, that they could not be ignorant, that such a person was prophesied of: he knew that they believed that he would come, and that they were in continual expectation of his coming; wherefore he asks them what they thought of him, what were their sentiments and opinions concerning him; as about his person, whether they thought him to be divine, or human, a mere man, or God, as well as man; what they thought of his work and office he came to perform, whether it was a spiritual, or temporal salvation, they expected he should be the author of; and so of his kingdom, whether it would be of this world or not;

and particularly, what thoughts they had of his sonship, and who was his father;

whose son is he? and which the Pharisees understanding only as respecting his lineage and descent as man, as, of what family he was? who were his ancestors and progenitors?

they say unto him, the son of David. This they said directly, without any hesitation, it being a generally received notion of their's, and was very right, that the Messiah should be of the seed and family of David: and hence he is frequently, in their writings, called by no other name, than the son of David; (see Gill on "<40101>Matthew 1:1"). If this question was put to some persons, it would appear, that they have no thoughts of Christ at all. The atheist has none; as God is not in all his thoughts, nor in any of them, for all his thoughts are, that there is no God; so neither is Christ the Son of God. The deist thinks thing of him, for he does not believe the revelation concerning him. The epicure, or voluptuous man, he thinks only of his carnal lusts and pleasures: and the worldling, or covetous man, thinks nothing but of his worldly substance, and of the much good things he has laid up for many years: to say nothing of the Heathens, who have never heard of him; others, and such as bear the Christian name, have very wrong thoughts of Christ, mean, and undervaluing. The Arrian thinks he is a created God, of a like, but not or the same nature with the Father. The Socinian thinks he is a God by office, and did not exist until he was born of the Virgin Mary; and has no notion of his sacrifice, and satisfaction for the sins of men. The Arminian thinks meanly of his righteousness, and denies the imputation of it to them that believe. And indeed, all such think wrongly of Christ, who divide their salvation between their works and him, and make them their Christ, or their frames their Christ, or their graces, and particularly their believing in him; that is, that ascribe that to them, which properly belongs to him. And as for those who do not bear the name Christians, it is no wonder that they entertain wrong and low thoughts of Christ. The Jews thought him to be a mere man, and the carpenter's son. The Pharisees thought that he was an Antinomian, a libertine, a loose, and licentious person, that had no regard to the law, and good works: hence those words of his, "think not that I am come to destroy the law", (<40517>Matthew 5:17). Yea, they thought him to be a Samaritan, and to have a devil, and to cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. The Mahometans, though they allow him to be a prophet, yet think that he is inferior to Mahomet their prophet. There are others that think well of

Christ, admire the loveliness of his person, and the fulness of his grace, but are afraid Christ does not think well of them: they think well of the suitableness there is in Christ, of his righteousness to justify, of his blood to cleanse and pardon, and of the fulness of his grace to supply all wants, but think these are not for them: they often revolve in their minds his ability to save, and firmly believe it, but question his willingness to save them: they often think of Christ, what he is to others, but cannot think of him for themselves; only believers in Christ have a good thought of him, to their own joy and comfort: faith is a good thought of Christ; to them that believe, he is precious; and such, through believing in him, are filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; such think often, and well, of the dignity of Christ's person, of the excellency and usefulness of his offices, of the virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and of the sufficiency of his grace for them: they think well of what he did for them in eternity, as their surety, in the council and covenant of peace; and of what he has done for them in time, by suffering and dying for them in their room and stead; and of what he is now doing for them in heaven, as their advocate and intercessor.

Ver. 43. *He saith unto them*, etc.] Not denying it to be a truth they affirmed; but rather granting and allowing it: he argues upon it, though he tacitly refuses their sense and meaning of the phrase, thus,

how then doth David in spirit call him Lord? that is, if he is a mere man, if he is only the son of David, according to the flesh, if he has no other, or higher descent than from him, how comes it to pass, that David, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, by which he wrote his book of Psalms, (see <102301>2 Samuel 23:1,2) where the passage, after cited, stands, to call him Lord; which supposes him to be more than barely his son, and to be a greater person than himself, one superior in nature and dignity to him? for the phrase "in spirit", is not to be connected with the word Lord; as if the design of it was to show, that the Messiah was Lord, or God, in spirit, or with respect to his divine nature, but, with the word "call", expressing the influence of the Spirit of God, under which David wrote; otherwise the Pharisees would have had a direction how to have answered the question, which much puzzled them:

saying, as in (<191001>Psalm 110:1).

Ver. 44. *The Lord said unto my Lord*, etc.] By the Lord that said, is meant "Jehovah" the Father, who said the following words at the time of Christ's

ascension, and entrance into heaven, after he had finished the great work of man's salvation; prophetically delivered by the Psalmist, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, being what was before purposed and promised: by "my Lord", the person spoken to, the Messiah is designed, who was David's "Adon", or Lord, by right both of creation and redemption: as God, he made him: and as the Messiah and Saviour, redeemed him; and on both accounts had a right to rule over him. The words said unto him are,

sit thou on my right hand; which is a figurative phrase, and expressive of the exaltation, dignity, power, and authority of the Messiah; and of an honour done to him, which was never granted to the angels, nor to any mere man:

till I make thine enemies thy footstool; till all the enemies of him, and his people, are subdued under him; carnal professors, as the Pharisees, and profane sinners, who neither of them would have him to rule over them; the world, the devil, antichrist, and all the powers of darkness, and the last enemy, death itself. That these words were spoken of the Messiah, and therefore pertinently cited, and properly applied to him, by Jesus, is evident from the silence of the Pharisees; for had it not been the generally received sense of the Jewish church, they would, at once, have objected it to him; which might, in some measure, have relieved them under that distress, into which they were brought by this passage proposed unto them: but by their silence they acknowledged, that the Psalm was wrote by David; that it was wrote by him under the inspiration of the Spirit of God; and that the Messiah was the subject of it. And the same is owned by some of their doctors, ancient, and modern.

> "Says R. Joden, in the name of R. Chijah, in time to come the holy blessed God will cause the king Messiah to sit at his right hand; as it is said, "the Lord said unto my Lord", etc. [f1215]."

And the same says, R. Berachiah, in the name of R. Levi, elsewhere [f1216]. And, says, another of their writers [f1217],

> "we do not find any man, or prophet, whose birth was prophesied of before the birth of his father and mother, but Messiah our righteousness; and of him it is intimated, "from the womb of the morning", etc. i.e. before the womb of her that bore thee was created, thy birth was prophesied of: and this these words respect,

> "before the sun, his name is Yinnon", (Psalm 72:17) i, e. before the creation of the sun, the name of our Messiah was strong and firm, and he shall sit at the right hand of God; and this is what is said, "sit at my right hand"."

In some writings of the Jews, esteemed by them, very ancient [f1218], the "Adon" or Lord, to whom these words are spoken, is interpreted of Messiah ben Joseph, whom they make to sit at the right hand of Abraham; which, though a false interpretation of the words, carries in it some marks and traces of the ancient sense of them: yea, even some of the more modern Jews [f1219] have owned, that they belong to the Messiah, and apply them to him. Though others, observing what confusion their forefathers were thrown into by Jesus, and what improvement his followers have made of this sense of the words since, have quitted it, and introduced strange and foreign ones. Some [f1220] of them would have Abraham the patriarch to be the subject of this Psalm; and that it was composed either by Melchizedek or by Eliezer, the servant of Abraham; or by David, on account of the victory Abraham obtained over the four kings, in rescuing his kinsman Lot: but Melchizedek could not be the author of it, because he was a far greater person than Abraham; he blessed him, and took tithes of him, and therefore would not call him Lord. Eliezer might indeed, as being his servant; but then he could not assign to him a seat at the right hand of God, or say of him, that he had an everlasting priesthood, after the order of Melchizedek: and though the Psalm was composed by David, yet not on the above account, for the same reasons. Nor is David the subject of it, as others [f1221] have affirmed; for it cannot be thought that David would say this of himself, or call himself his Lord, which this sense of the words makes him to do: and whereas others of them say, that it was wrote by one of the singers concerning him; it may be replied, that the title declares the contrary: besides, David is not ascended into heaven, nor is he set down at the right hand of God, nor had he any thing to do with the priesthood, much less was he a priest after the order of Melchizedek, and that for ever: but all is true of the Messiah Jesus, of whose kingdom and priesthood, sufferings, and exaltation, conquest of his enemies, and success of his Gospel, this whole Psalm is a very plain and manifest prophecy

Ver. 45. *If David then call him Lord*, etc.] That is, the Messiah, which is taken for granted, nor could the Pharisees deny it,

how is he his son? The question is to be answered upon true and just notions of the Messiah, but unanswerable upon the principles of the Pharisees; who expected the Messiah only as a mere man, that should be of the seed of David, and so his son; and should sit upon his throne, and be a prosperous and victorious prince, and deliver them out of the hands of their temporal enemies: they were able to make answer to the question, separately considered, as that he should be of the lineage and house of David; should lineally descend from him, be of his family, one of his offspring and posterity, and so be properly and naturally his son; but how he could be so, consistent with his being David's Lord, puzzled them. Had they understood and owned the proper divinity of the Messiah, they might have answered, that as he was God, he was David's Lord, his maker, and his king; and, as man, was David's son, and so both his root and offspring; and this our Lord meant to bring them to a confession of, or put them to confusion and silence, which was the consequence.

Ver. 46. *And no man was able to answer him a word*, etc.] They saw the dilemma they were reduced to, either to acknowledge the deity of the Messiah, or confess their ignorance; and neither of them they cared to do, and therefore judged it to be the wisest part to be silent.

Neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions: neither Pharisees nor Sadducees, for the same is observed by (Luke 20:40) of the Sadducees particularly, and was true of all sorts, and every sect, of men among them: and thus our Lord was freed from a cavilling, captious, and troublesome generation of men, from this time forward, to the time of his sufferings, which was not very long after; for this was the third day before the passover, as appears from (Matthew 26:1,2).

CHAPTER 23

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 23

Ver. 1. *Then spake Jesus to the multitude*, etc.] To the common people that were about him in the temple; the high priests and elders, Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees, having left him, being all nonplussed and silenced by him: and now, lest on the one hand, the people seeing the ignorance and errors of these men detected by Christ, should be tempted to conclude there was nothing in religion, and to neglect the word and worship of God, on account of the concern these men had in it; and on the other hand, because of their great authority and influence, being in Moses's chair, lest the people should be led into bad principles and practices by them, he directs them in what they should observe them, and in what not: that they were not altogether to be rejected, nor in everything to be attended to; and warns them against their ostentation, pride, hypocrisy, covetousness, and cruelty; and, at the same time, removes an objection against himself, proving that he was no enemy to Moses, and the law, rightly explained and practised:

and to his disciples; not only the twelve, but to all that believed in him, and were followers of him.

Ver. 2. *Saying, the Scribes and Pharisees*, etc.] The Persic version adds, the priests: but Christ does not here speak of the sanhedrim, or grand council of the nation, and of their legislative power; but of those that were the teachers of the people, and the interpreters of the law; and of those, who, though they corrupted the word with their glosses and traditions, yet retained some truth, and at least came nearer truth, than the Sadducees; who therefore are omitted, and only Scribes and Pharisees mentioned, who gave the literal and traditional sense of the Scriptures; of whom he says, they

sit in Moses's seat: not that they were his successors in his office as a legislator and mediator; though the Persic version reads it, "sit in the place and chair of Moses"; but they read his law, and explained it to the people: this post and place, as yet, they kept in the office they were, and were to

continue; and the people were to regard them so far as they spoke consistent with the law, until it had its full accomplishment in Christ. The allusion is not to the chairs in which the sanhedrim sat in trying and determining causes, but to those in which the doctors sat when they expounded the law; for though they stood up when they read the law, or the prophets, they sat down when they preached out of them: this custom of the synagogue was observed by our Lord; (see <4204616>Luke 4:16,20).

Ver. 3. *All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe*, etc.] This must be restrained to things that were agreeable to the chair of Moses, in which they sat, to the law of Moses, which they read and explained, to other parts of Scripture and truth in general; for otherwise many of their glosses and traditions were repugnant to the law, and ought not to be observed, as appears from (<4005101>Matthew 5:1-48, 15:6). The word “observe”, in this clause, is omitted by the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel; and Beza says, it is wanting in one ancient copy, but is in others; and is retained in the Syriac and Persic versions

that observe and do; hearken to what they say, give diligent heed unto it, take notice of it, and act according to it:

but do not ye after their works; let their doctrine be the rule of your lives, so far as it agrees with the law of Moses; but let not their actions be drawn into an example by you; conform to their instructions, but do not imitate their practices:

for they say, and do not; they talk of good works, but do none; they bid others do them, but do not practise them themselves; they very strictly and severely enjoin them on others, but are very careless themselves to observe them; and of this the Jews are so conscious, that they suggest the same doctrine [f1222].

> “The daughter of Ahar (a wicked man) came before Rabbi; she said to him, Rabbi, supply me with the necessaries of life: he replied to her, daughter, who art thou? she answered him, the daughter of Ahar: he said to her, is there any of his seed in the world? for lo! it is written, (<1801819>Job 18:19). “He shall neither have son, nor nephew, among his people, nor any remaining, in his dwellings”: she replied to him, wyç[m rwkzt law wt rwtl rwkz, “remember his law, or doctrine, but do not remember his works.” — Says R. Jochanan, what is that which is written, (<3900207>Malachi 2:7). “For the priest’s

lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts." If the doctor is like to an angel, or messenger of the Lord of hosts, they should seek the law at his mouth; and if not, they should not seek the law at his mouth. Says Resh Lekish, R. Meir found and explained that Scripture, (<scripRef type="bible">Proverbs 22:17</scripRef>). "Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart to my knowledge": to their knowledge it is not said, but to my knowledge. R. Chanina says, hence, (<scripRef type="bible">Psalm 45:10</scripRef>). "Hearken, O daughter! and consider, incline thine ear, forget thine own people, and thy father's house": on which the gloss is, forget their works, and do not learn them: he that knows how to take care not to learn their works, may learn the law from their mouths."

— And a little after,

"the disciples of the wise men are like to a nut; as a nut, though it is defiled with mire and filth, yet that which is within it is not to be rejected; so a scholar, or a disciple of a wise man, though he act wickedly, his law, or doctrine, is not to be despised."

Good doctrine is not the worse for being taught by bad men; nor are good works to be slighted and neglected, because they are not done by all that teach them; but it must be owned that examples are very useful and forcible, and practice greatly recommends doctrine; and it is to be wished, that they both always went together.

Ver. 4. *For they bind heavy burdens*, etc.] Meaning not the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses, circumcision, and other rituals, which obliged to the keeping of the whole law, which was a yoke men were not able to bear; but the traditions of the elders, which the Scribes and Pharisees were very tenacious of, and very severely enjoined the observance of, and are called their "heavy" things [f1223].

"It is a tradition of R. Ishmael, there are in the words of the law, that, which is bound or forbidden, and that which is loose or free; and there are in them light things, and there are in them heavy things; but the words of the Scribes, ^h ^yrwmj ^lwk, "all of them are heavy"."

And a little after,

> "the words of the elders, µyrwmj, "are heavier" than the words of the prophets."

Hence frequent mention is made of

> "the light things of the school of Shammai, yrmwjmw, "and of the heavy things of the school of Hillell" [f1224]"

two famous doctors, heads of two universities, in being in Christ's time: these are also called, ^yçwrp twkm, "the blows, or wounds of the Pharisees" [f1225]; not as Bartenora explains them, the wounds they gave themselves, to show their humility; or which they received, by beating their heads against the wall, walking with their eyes shut, that they might not look upon women, under a pretence of great chastity; but, as Maimonides says, these are their additions and heavy things, which they add to the law. Now the binding of these heavy things, means the imposing them on men, obliging them to observe them very strictly, under great penalties, should they omit them. The allusion is, to those frequent sayings in use among them, such a thing is "bound", and such a thing is loosed; such a "Rabbi binds", and such an one looses; that is, forbids, or allows of such and such things; (see Gill on "<4016>Matthew 16:19").

and grievous to be borne. This clause is left out in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; but is in all the Greek copies, and serves to illustrate and aggravate the burdensome rites and institutions of these people: and

lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers: the sense is, not that they were so rigid and hardhearted, that they would not move a finger to remove these burdens from the shoulders of men, or ease them in the least degree, or dispense with their performance of them in the least measure, upon any consideration, though this also was true in many respects; but that they were so slothful and indolent themselves, that though they strictly enjoined the observance of their numerous and unwritten traditions on the people, yet in many cases, where they could without public notice, they neglected them themselves, or at least, made them lighter and easier to them, as in their fastings, etc. In the Misna [f1226], mention is made of "a crafty wicked man", along with a woman Pharisee, and the blows of the Pharisees before spoken of; and in the Gemara [f1227], is explained by R. Hona, of one,

"that makes things "light" for himself, and makes them "heavy" for others."

Such crafty wicked men were Scribes and Pharisees; though R. Meir pretended that he made things "light" to others and "heavy" to himself [f1228].

Ver. 5. *But all their works they do for to be seen of men*, etc.] All their prayers, alms deeds, and fastings, were all done in a public manner, that men might behold them, and they might have applause and glory from them: they sought neither the glory of God, nor the good of their fellow creatures, nor any spiritual advantage and pleasure to themselves, in their performances; they neither attended to moral duties, nor ceremonious rites, nor the traditions of their fathers, any further than they could be seen by men in them, and keep up their credit and esteem among them. Hence,

they make broad their phylacteries: these were four sections of the law, wrote on parchments, folded up in the skin of a clean beast, and tied to the head and hand. The four sections were these following, viz. the "first", was (Exodus 13:2-11) the "second", was (Exodus 13:11-17) the "third", was (Deuteronomy 6:4-10) the "fourth", was (Deuteronomy 11:13-22). Those that were for the head, were written and rolled up separately, and put in four distinct places, in one skin, which was fastened with strings to the crown of the head, towards the face, about the place where the hair ends, and where an infant's brain is tender; and they took care to place them in the middle, that so they might be between the eyes. Those that were for the hand, were written in four columns, on one parchment, which being rolled up, was fastened to the inside of the left arm, where it is fleshy, between the shoulder and the elbow, that so it might be over against the heart [f1229]. These, they imagined, were commanded them by God, in (Exodus 13:16, Deuteronomy 6:8) whereas the sense of these passages only is, that the goodness of God in delivering them out of Egypt, and the words of the law, should be continually before them, in their minds and memories, as if they had tokens on their hands, and frontlets between their eyes; but they understood them literally, and observed them in the above manner. These the Jews call "Tephillin", because they use them in time of prayer, and look upon them as useful, to put them in mind of that duty: they are here called "phylacteries", because they thought they kept them in the fear of God, preserved in them the memory of the law, and them from sin; yea, from evil spirits, and diseases of the body. They imagined there was a great deal of holiness in, and valued themselves much

upon the use of them [f1230]; and the Pharisees, because they would be thought to be more holy and religious, and more observant of the law than others, wore these things broader than the rest of the people;

and enlarge the borders of their garments. These were the fringes which they put upon the borders of their garments, and on them a ribbon of blue, to put them in mind of the commandments, to obey them, (<04158>Numbers 15:38, <05222>Deuteronomy 22:12). The observance of this law is of so much consequence with the Jews, that they make all the commandments to depend on it [f1231]; and say, that it is equal to them all, and that he that is guilty of the breach of it, is worthy of death [f1232]: they ascribe the like virtue to these fringes, as to their phylacteries, and think themselves much the better for the wearing them; and the Pharisees, because they would appear with a greater air of sanctity and devotion than others, made their's larger. We [f1233] read of one Ben Tzitzith Hacceseth, a man of this complexion, who was so called, because his Tzitzith, or fringes, were drawn upon, a pillow; and there are some that say, that the pillow was bore between the great men of Rome: it was drawn after him, not upon the ground, but upon a cloth or tapestry, and the train supported by noblemen, as is pretended. This was one of those, that enlarged the Tzitzith, or fringes, beyond the ordinary size; hence Mark calls it, "long clothing."

Ver. 6. *And love the uppermost rooms at feasts*, etc.] Or the first and chief places to sit, or lie down on, at ordinary meals, and especially at large entertainments, where the great ones sat, as in (<09122>1 Samuel 9:22) where Jarchi on the place observes, that by the manner of their sitting, it was known who was the greatest; and this the Scribes and Pharisees affected. With the Romans, the most honourable place was at the upper end of the table: some think it was more honourable to sit in the middle, but the master of the feast sat at the lower end; and to senior men, and who were venerable with age, or excelled in prudence and authority, the first sitting down, and the more honourable place, were given; and when the table was taken away, they used to rise first [f1234]: the middle place was the more honourable with the Numidians [f1235], and so it seems to be with the Romans [f1236], and also with the Jews; and this the Scribes and Pharisees loved, desired, sought for, and were pleased if they had not it. It is said [f1237] of Simeon ben Shetach, a noted Pharisee, about, or rather before the time of Christ, that having fled upon a certain account from king Jannai, he sent for him, and when he came,

> “he sat himself between the king and the queen: the king said to him, why dost thou mock me? he replied to him, I do not mock thee, thou hast riches and I have learning, as it is written, “Wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence”, (Ecclesiastes 7:12). He said to him, but why dost thou “sit between the king and queen?” He replied, in the book of Ben Sira, it is written, “Exalt her and she shall promote thee, and cause thee to sit among princes.” He ordered to give him a cup, that he might ask a blessing; he took the cup and said, blessed be the food that Jannai and his friends eat.”

Thus on account of their wisdom and learning, they thought they had a right to take the upper hand of kings themselves:

and the chief seats in the synagogues; for these were different; the seats of the senior men were turned towards the people, and the backs of them were towards the ark or chest, in which the holy books were put; and these seem to be what the Scribes and Pharisees coveted, that they might be in the full view of the people. And so says Maimonides [f1238], “How do the people sit in the synagogues?”

> “The elders sit, i.e. first, and their faces are towards the people, and their backs are to the temple, or holy place; and all the people sit in rows, and the faces of one row are to the backs of the row that is before them; so that the faces of all the people are to the holy place, and to the elders, and to the ark.”

Ver. 7. *And greetings in the markets*, etc.] They used to stroll about the markets, being public places, where there was a great concourse of people, on purpose to be taken notice of before multitudes, with singular marks of respect; as stretching out the hand, uncovering the head, and bowing the knee:

and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi; because of their great authority, and largeness of their knowledge: the repetition of the word Rabbi, is not made in the Vulgate Latin, nor in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, nor in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel, but is in all the Greek copies, and very justly; since it was usual in the salutations of them, to double the word. It is reported [f1239] of R. Eleazar ben Simeon, of Migdal Gedur, that having reproached a deformed man he met in the road; when he came to the city where the man lived,

> “the citizens came out to meet him, and said to him, peace be upon thee, yrwm yrwm ybr ybr, “Rabbi, Rabbi, Master, Master”; he (Eleazar) said to them, who do you call “Rabbi, Rabbi?” They replied to him, he who followed thee: he said unto them, if this be a Rabbi, let there not be many such in Israel.”

The Jews pretend, that king Jehoshaphat used to salute the doctors with these titles; though they forget that they were not in use in his time, as will be hereafter observed: they say [f1240],

> “whenever he saw a disciple of the wise men, he rose from his throne, and embraced and kissed him, and called him, yrm yrm ybr ybr yba yba, “Father, Father, Rabbi, Rabbi, Master, Master”.”

Where you have the three different words used by our Lord in this and the following verses, by which these men loved to be called, and he inveighed against; nay, they not only suggest, that kings gave them these honourable titles, and they expected them from them, but even they liked to be called kings themselves. It is said [f1241] of R. Hona arid R. Chasda, that as they were sitting together, one passed by them,

> “and said to them, “peace be to you kings”, yklm wkyl[aml ç, “peace be to you kings”: they said to him, from whence does it appear to thee, that the Rabbins are called kings? He replied to them, from what is written, “by me kings reign”, etc. They said to him, from whence hast thou it, that we are to double or repeat peace, or salutation to kings? He answered them, that R. Judah said, that Rab said from hence, (1 Chronicles 12:18). “Then the spirit came upon Amasai”, etc.”

This title began but to be in use in the time of our Lord, or a very little while before: none of the prophets had it, nor Ezra the Scribe, nor the men of the great synagogue, nor Simeon the Just, the last of them; nor Antigonus, a man of Socho, a disciple of his: and it is observed by the Jews themselves [f1242], that

> “the five couple are never called by the name of Rabban, nor by the name of Rabbi, only by their own name.”

By whom are meant, Joseph ben Joezer, and Joseph ben Jochanan; Joshua ben Perachia, said to be the master of Jesus of Nazareth, and Nittai the Arbelite; Judah ben Tabai, and Simeon ben Shetach; Shemaiah and Abtalion; Hillell and Shammai. The sons, or disciples of the two last, first took these titles. Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillell, thought by some to be the same Simeon that had Christ in his arms, is [f1243] said to be the first that was called by this name; and it is also observed by them [f1244], that Rabban was a name of greater honour than Rabbi, or Rab, and that Rabbi was more honourable than Rab; and to be called by a man's own name, was more honourable than any of them. The Karaite Jews make much the same complaint, and give much the same account of the pride and vanity of the Rabbinical doctors, as Christ here does; for so one of them says [f1245];

> "The Karaites do not use to act according to the custom of the wise men among the Rabbans, to make to themselves gods of silver, and guides of gold, with this view, br arqhl, "to be called Rab"; and also to gather wealth and food to fulness, etc."

Ver. 8. *But be not ye called Rabbi*, etc.] Do not be ambitious of any such title, fond of it, or affect it, or be elated with it, should it be given you; nor look upon yourselves as men of power and authority over others; as having the dominion over men's faith, a power to make laws for others, impose them in a magisterial way, and bind and loose men's consciences at pleasure, as these men do:

for one is your master, even Christ; meaning himself, the true Messiah, the head of the church, King of saints, and Lord of all; who had all power in heaven and in earth, to make laws, appoint ordinances, and oblige men to receive his doctrines, and obey his commands: the word "Christ", is left out in the Vulgate Latin, the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; but is in the Arabic version, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel, and in all the ancient Greek copies Beza consulted, excepting two: no other indeed can be meant; he is the great Rabbi, and doctor, that is to be hearkened to, and the master we are all to obey:

and all ye are brethren; not merely as the descendants of Adam, but as being in a spiritual relation, the children of God, and disciples of Christ, and so have no superiority one over another: this may regard the disciples, both as believers and Christians, partakers of the same grace, and standing in the same relation to God, Christ, and one another, and having an equal

right to the same privileges: and as apostles and ministers, one as such, no, not Peter, having no pre-eminence over the other, having the same commission, doctrine, and authority, one as the other.

Ver. 9. *And call no man your father upon the earth*, etc.] Not but that children may, and should call their natural parents, fathers; and such who have been instrumental in the conversion of souls, may be rightly called by them their spiritual fathers; as servants and scholars also, may call those that are over them, and instruct them, their masters: our Lord does not mean, by any of these expressions, to set aside all names and titles, of natural and civil distinction among men, but only to reject all such names and titles, as are used to signify an authoritative power over men's consciences, in matters of faith and obedience; in which, God and Christ are only to be attended to. Christ's sense is, that he would have his disciples not fond of any titles of honour at all; and much less assume an authority over men, as if they were to depend on them, as the founders of the Christian religion, the authors of its doctrines and ordinances; and to take that honour to themselves, which did not belong to them; nor even choose to be called by such names, as would lead people to entertain too high an opinion of them, and take off of their dependence on God the Father, and himself, as these titles the Scribes and Pharisees loved to be called by, did: and who were called not only by the name of Rabbi, but Abba, "Father", also: hence we read of Abba Saul, or "Father" Saul [f1246]; Abba Jose ben Jochanan, a man of Jerusalem [f1247], Abba Chanan [f1248], Abba Chelphetha, a man of the village of Hananiah [f1249]; Abba Gorion [f1250], and others; and this name was ybr wmk dwbk ^wçl, "a name of honour, even as Rabbi" [f1251], and of great authority: the wise men are said to be lkh twba, "the fathers of all" [f1252], to whom all gave heed, and upon whom all depended, as so many oracles. There is a whole treatise in their Misna, called Pirke Abot, which contains some of the oracles, and peculiar sayings of these "fathers", the Misnic doctors, and which are preferred to the writings of Moses, and the prophets. In this sense, and upon this score, our Lord inveighs against them, and cautions his disciples against giving or taking all such titles, in such sense. "For one is your Father, which is in heaven"; who is so, both by creation and adoption, and is possessed of all paternal authority; and is to be honoured and obeyed by all; from whom all wisdom and knowledge is derived, and who has the care and government of all in heaven and in earth.

Ver. 10. *Neither be ye called masters*, etc.] Or guides and leaders; not but that, the ministers of the word are in a sense such; it is their business to lead and direct souls to Christ, to guide their feet in the way of peace, and to go before them, as examples to them, in word, in conversation, faith, and purity; but then they are to guide them according to the word of God, and not their own dictates; and teach them to observe the rules, and obey the ordinances of Christ, and not what are of their own inventing and prescribing; and to enforce the authority of their great Lord and Master, and not their own; and direct men to a dependence on Christ, as head of the church, who is the one Lord, as his faith is one, and his baptism one also: "for one is your master, even Christ"; which is said before, in (Matthew 23:8) but being a matter of so much importance to the honour of Christ, and men being so apt to set up for masters themselves, in opposition to him, or in conjunction with him, or above him, it was necessary to repeat it; for in an authoritative sense he is the one, and only master of the assemblies.

Ver. 11. *But he that is greatest among you*, etc.] Either who really is so, having more grace, and greater gifts bestowed upon him, than others; which doubtless was the case of some of the disciples, or who desired to be the greatest, was ambitious of, and affected a superiority over others, and to be in the highest post and place, as it is certain some of them did. This was what they were often contending about among themselves, who should be greatest: and Christ here seems to have regard to that vain spirit, which appeared among them; and his view is, to check and restrain it: "shall be your servant"; or "let him be your servant". Service is the way to honour; he that would be most esteemed ought to do the most work; and the man that has the most grace, and the greatest gifts, ought to employ them for the use and benefit of others; (see Gill on "Matthew 20:27").

Ver. 12. *And whosoever shall exalt himself*, etc.] Above his fellow Christians, or fellow ministers, by entertaining too high an opinion of himself, by boasting of his gifts, as preferable to others, and as if he had not received them; by assuming, or eagerly coveting titles of honour among men, or by affecting honour that do not belong to him, or, abusing what he has: "shall be abased"; or humbled by God, or men, or both; such shall lose the honour they have, and come greatly short of what they are ambitious of; they shall fall into disgrace with men, and are abominable in the sight of God: "and he that shall humble himself"; by entertaining low thoughts, and a mean opinion of himself, behaving modestly among men; not being elated

with his gifts, but acknowledging that they are owing to the grace and goodness of God; and using them in an humble manner, for, the advantage of others; not coveting honour from men, nor lifted up with what is conferred on him: “shall be exalted”; by God, or men, or both; if not in this world, yet in the world to come: and indeed, generally speaking, such modest, humble, persons, are most esteemed among men; and God gives more grace unto them, and will at last give them glory. This is a saying, often used by our Lord on different accounts, both with respect to his disciples, for their instruction, and with regard to the scribes and Pharisees, for their mortification; (see <4241><4411>Luke 14:11, 18:14). It seems to be a proverbial expression, and much in use among the Jews: it is said in so many words in the Talmud [f1253], as here;

> “whosoever shall humble himself, the holy blessed God shall exalt him; and whosoever shall exalt himself, the holy blessed God shall humble him.”

Ver. 13. *But woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*, etc.] It seems from hence, that the Scribes and Pharisees had not left him, at least not all of them, notwithstanding the confusion they were thrown into; but were still about him, observing what he said to the people, and watching an opportunity to take every advantage against him; whom he addresses in a very awful manner, calling them “hypocrites”, as he truly might; for they were such, both to God and men: he had detected them already before the people, in several instances of hypocrisy; and gives sufficient reasons, in the following part of this chapter, to support the character, he gives of them, and his charge against them; denouncing a woe upon them in this world, and that which is to come, no less than eight times; expressing his abhorrence of their wickedness, his commiseration of their case, and their certain destruction: “for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men”: not eternal life and happiness, the entrance into which can neither be opened nor shut by men: those whom God determines to bring thither, shall have an entrance abundantly ministered to them, in spite of the opposition of men and devils; though these men did all that in them lay, to hinder persons enjoying everlasting glory. But the Gospel dispensation is here meant, which opened by the ministry of John the Baptist, Christ and his disciples, and which the Scribes and Pharisees did all they could to shut; by discouraging the preaching of the Gospel, and the administration of ordinances, in which this dispensation lay; and prejudicing the minds of men against it, that they might not embrace the doctrines of it, nor submit

to its ordinances: they, by their office, ought to have opened and explained the Scriptures, the prophecies of the Old Testament relating to the Messiah, and led the people into a knowledge of the mysteries of his kingdom, and encouraged them to enter into this new state of things; which, according to the true intent of Scripture, was to take place, and now did: but instead of this, they shut up the Scriptures, took away the key of knowledge, and laid it aside; and darkened the Scriptures by their false glosses, and obliged the people to observe the traditions of the elders, and which they call hrwtl gys, "an hedge for the law" [f1254]; to which Beza thinks, the allusion is here, and by which men were shut up, and kept from the true knowledge both of law and Gospel:

for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in: they neither believed in the Messiah themselves, nor embraced the doctrines relating to his person and office: have any of the Pharisees believed on him? No; they received him not, they rejected him, and also the counsel of God, against themselves, not being baptized with the baptism of John, the forerunner of Christ; nor would they suffer others, that were inclined to profess their faith in him, and be baptized, to do it; but discouraged them all they could, by their reproachful treatment of the person, miracles, and ministry of Christ, and by their threatenings and menaces, and by their excommunications of such as made a confession of him.

Ver. 14. *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*, etc.] The same character is given as before, and the same woe denounced, and a fresh reason given of it:

for ye devour widows' houses; that is, the goods in the houses of such as were left with fatherless children, and but little to support them; who being left alone, and none to advise them, and being weak, and prone to superstition; these greedy dogs, as Isaiah calls them, who could never have enough, easily imposed upon them, wormed them out of all their substance, stripped them bare of the necessaries of life, prevailed on them to sell their houses and goods, and bestow them on them; or got their little estates into their hands, pretending to take care, and dispose of them for them, to their advantage:

and for a pretence make long prayers: as if they were very holy, good men; or pretended that the substance of these widows, which they got into

their hands, was for their long prayers for them; or they made long prayers for them in return for their substance. Maimonides [f1255] says, that

> “the ancient saints, or good men, used to stay an hour before prayer, and an hour after prayer, h[ç hlptb µkyramw and “prolonged”, or “held an hour in prayer”:”

and this being three times a day, nine hours every day, as is observed in the Talmud [f1256], were spent in this manner; and on this account they got the character of very devout and religious men, and hereby covered all their avarice, rapine, and oppression of the poor: but God will not be mocked;

therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation; both on account of their plundering and distressing the poor, the widows, and the fatherless; and also because of their hypocrisy in doing this under the cover of religion and holiness. Hence it appears, that there are degrees of punishment in hell, and that hypocrites, and all such who oppress the poor, under the mask of godliness, supposing gain to be that, will be partakers of the greatest degree of it. In Munster’s Hebrew Gospel it is called Æwra jpçm, “a long judgment”, or “damnation”, in allusion to their long prayers: and is the very reverse of what they expect on account of them: they say [f1257]

> “three things prolong a man’s days and years, wtlptb Æyramh, “he that is long in his prayer””

is the first mentioned; and he that is long at his prayer, it is an excellency, they say; but instead of a long and happy life, he shall have a long damnation. This verse is left out in some copies, and in others it stands before the former; in which order it is read in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 15. *Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*, etc.] The same character, and woe, are still continued, and a new reason added, confirming the justness of them, in order to awaken and convince them, or, however, to caution the people against them:

for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; that is, to the Jewish religion, and their particular sect. There were two sorts of proselytes among them; one was called bçwt rg, “a proselyte of the gate”, one that might dwell in any of their towns, and cities, and who is thus described [f1258];

> “Who is a proselyte of the gate? whosoever takes upon him, before three neighbours, that he will not commit idolatry. R. Meir and the wise men say, whosoever takes upon him the seven precepts which the sons of Noah took upon them: others say, these do not come into the general rule of a proselyte of the gate: who is then a proselyte of the gate? this is a proselyte, that eats what dies of itself, but takes upon him to fulfil all the commandments said in the law, except that which forbids the eating of things that die of themselves.”

But the usual account of such an one is, who agrees to the seven precepts commanded the children of Noah [f1259], which were these [f1260]; the first forbad idolatry, the second blasphemy, the third murder, the fourth uncleanness, the fifth theft, the sixth required judgment, or punishment on malefactors, the seventh forbad eating the member of any creature alive. The other proselyte was called qdx rg, “a proselyte of righteousness”; and he was one that submitted to circumcision [f1261], and the rest of the ceremonies of the law; and was in all respects as an Israelite himself; and of this sort is the text to be understood. The Ethiopic version reads the words, “baptize one proselyte, and when he is baptized”; referring to a custom among the Jews, who baptized; or dipped their proselytes in water, as well as circumcised them; about which there are great disputes in their writings; some alleging, that the dipping of them was necessary to the making them proselytes; others affirming, that it was not:

> “a proselyte that is circumcised, and not dipped, dipped, and not circumcised, the whole follows after, or depends on circumcision, says R. Eliezer.”

R. Joshua says, even dipping delays it; (i.e. the want of it, hinders a man from being a proselyte;) but R. Joshua ben Levi says, it should go according to the tradition of Bar Kaphra; for the tradition of Bar Kaphra is,

> “that he that is circumcised, and not dipped, lo! he is right; for there is no proselyte but what is dipped, because of the pollutions that happen to him [f1262].”

And elsewhere [f1263] this is debated in the following manner:

> “a proselyte that is circumcised, and not dipped, R. Eliezer says, lo! this is a proselyte; for so we find concerning our fathers, that they

were circumcised, but not dipped. One that is dipped, and not circumcised, R. Joshua says, lo! this is a proselyte; for so we find concerning our mothers, that they were dipped, but not circumcised. The wise men say, one that is dipped, and not circumcised, or circumcised, and not dipped, is no proselyte, until he is both circumcised and dipped."

So the dispute ended, and it became a settled point, that one should never be reckoned a proselyte, unless he was both circumcised and dipped. And after this it became customary to receive proselytes by circumcision, dipping, and sacrifice; and the manner was this [f1264]:

"a stranger that comes to be made a proselyte at this time, they say unto him, what dost thou see, that thou comest to be made a proselyte? dost thou not know that the Israelites at this time are miserable, banished, drove about, and plundered, and chastisements come upon them? If he says, I know this, but it does not satisfy me, they receive him immediately, and make known some of the light commands, and some of the heavy commands to him; and they acquaint him with the business gleanings, the forgotten sheaf, the corner of the field left standing, and the poor's tithe: they also inform him of the penalties of the commands, and say unto him, know thou, that before thou camest into this way, thou didst eat fat, and was not punished with cutting off; thou didst profane the sabbath, and was not punished with stoning? but now if thou eatest fat, thou wilt be punished with cutting off; and if thou profanest the sabbath, thou wilt be punished with stoning: and as they inform him of the penalties of the precepts, so they acquaint him with the giving of the rewards of them; saying to him, know thou that the world to come is not made but for the righteous; and the Israelites at this time cannot receive neither much good, nor much punishment? but they do not multiply words, nor critically inquire of him; if he receives these things, they immediately circumcise him; and if there remain in him obstructions, hindering circumcision, they circumcise him a second time; and when he is healed they immediately dip him; and two disciples of the wise men stand over him, and acquaint him with some of the light commands, and some of the heavy commands; then he dips, and comes up, and is as an Israelite in all respects: if a woman, the women set her in water up to her neck, and two disciples of the wise men stand by her

without, and inform her of some of the light commands, and some of the heavy commands."

And, as Maimonides [f1265] adds, who gives a larger account of this matter,

"she sits in the water, and after that dips herself before them; and they turn away their faces, and go out, so that they do not see her, when she comes out of the water."

From all which it appears, that this affair was moved after our Lord's time; was not a settled point till a good while after; and is a custom that has obtained since the Jews were drove out of their own land; though they pretend to say it was an ancient practice of their fathers, of which they can give no sufficient proof; wherefore there could be no regard had to it in this text, and consequently the Ethiopic version of it is not a right one; nor can the dipping of proselytes by the Jews be what Christian baptism takes its rise from, or in any respect be modelled according to it, between which, in many things, there is a wide difference. Now the Jews were very diligent and industrious, which is meant by compassing of sea and land: they used all kinds of methods, ways and means, to gain such a point, and sometimes very wicked ones.

"Rabbenu Tam [f1266] allowed a daughter of Israel to change her religion, and a stranger to lie with her, that she might confirm it, when he became a proselyte."

And this they were so exceeding fond of, not out of any regard to the glory of God, or the good of the souls of men; nor did they really love the proselytes: and it is often said by them [f1267], that

"proselytes are hard or uneasy to Israel, as the itch or scab."

The gloss says, because they were not expert in the commandments, and were the cause of punishment, and the Israelites were apt to imitate their works; but they coveted to make them, because hereby either they strengthened their own party, or filled their purses with their substance, or got applause and credit among the common people; for the making a proselyte was reckoned a very great action, and is ascribed to the patriarchs Abraham and Jacob, and made equal to creation [f1268].

"Says R. Eliezer, in the name of R. Jose ben Zimra, if all that come into the world were gathered together to create even one fly, they

> would not be able to put breath into it: but you will object what he saith, “the souls they made in Haran”, (<01205>Genesis 12:5), but these are the proselytes whom Abraham proselyted; but why does he say “made”, and not proselyted? to teach thee, that whoever brings near a stranger, and proselytes him, “is as if he created him”. You will say Abraham made proselytes, but not Sarah: the text is, “the souls which they made in Haran”: which he made is not written, but which they made: Abraham proselyted the men, and Sarah proselyted the women.”

And a little after,

> “Jacob made proselytes, as it is written, (<01302>Genesis 35:2) “Jacob said unto his household”,”

And in imitation of these they might be fond of making proselytes, but no further than their own interest was some way or other concerned:

and when he is made, ye make him two fold more the child of hell than yourselves; for to their former errors in heathenism, some of which they might still retain, they added new ones, they received from them, equally as bad, and were but more and more deserving of hell, and even more than their masters; and besides, were trained up by them in the most bitter prejudices against Christ, and his Gospel; and many of them proved more violent persecutors of the followers of Christ, than the original Jews themselves: (see <44405>Acts 15:5 14:2,19) Our Lord here seems to oppose a common notion and saying of their’s [f1269], that when “one was made a proselyte, he became entirely like a new born babe;” but so far from being like one in innocence and harmlessness, that he became a child of hell, filled with wrath and malice, and fitted for destruction; and so opposes another notion of their’s, that hellfire has no power over their disciples, nor even over the transgressors of Israel [f1270]: but they will find it, by experience, that neither their descent from Abraham, nor their learning, nor their religion, will save them from the devouring flames, which their sins have made them so deserving of, and so are µnhyg ynb, “children of hell” [f1271]; a Talmudic phrase; the meaning of which they understood well enough, and which was applicable to them, and more so to their proselytes; and that as owing to them, which was an aggravation of their own guilt and condemnation.

Ver. 16. *Woe unto you, you blind guides*, etc.] Meaning the same persons, the Scribes and Pharisees, as before, though not named, who pretended to

be “guides of the blind”, ([4129]Romans 2:19) but were them selves blind, and so very unfit to be guides of others; they were as they were born, ignorant of divine things, of God in Christ, of the true Messiah, of the true meaning of the Scriptures, of the spirituality of the law, and of the Gospel of Christ; and the way of salvation by him; and their minds were blinded by the God of this world, and with a greedy, and insatiable covetousness after the things of it, of which Christ here gives an instance:

which say, whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; meaning either that it was no sin to use such an oath, or it was not binding upon a man: he might choose whether he would abide by what he swore by the temple he would do; and thus they ignorantly, and wickedly encouraged vain swearing and perjury. It was usual with them to swear by the temple: take an instance or two.

> “Says R. Jochanan [f1272], alkyh, “by the temple”, it is in our hands; but what shall I do?”

The gloss upon it is;

> “it is an oath by the temple of God, that it is in our power to reveal the illegitimacy of the families of the land of Israel.”

> “Says R. Zechariah ben Hakatzab [f1273], hzh ^w[mh, “by this habitation” (meaning the temple), her hand was not removed from my hand from the time the Gentiles entered into Jerusalem, to the time they went out.”

Jarchi and Bartenora’s note on it is, this is an oath. Again,

> “says R. Simeon ben Gamaliel [f1274], hzh ^w[mh, “by this habitation”; I will not rest this night until they (doves) are sold for pence apiece.”

The gloss on it is, “he swore by the sanctuary.”

But whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is guilty; or is bound, or is a debtor, to make good his oath; he cannot be excused, but must be obliged to fulfil it; or if he does not, he is guilty of perjury. This is to be understood not of the gold that covered any part of the temple; nor of the golden vessels in it; but of the gold, or money, or gifts which were offered for the service of the temple: and the sense is, that whosoever

swore by “Korban”, and that this, or that should be as “Korban”, he should not go back from it; he was obliged to give it. This showed the covetous disposition of these men, who made nothing of oaths that were swore by the temple; but those that were made by the “Korban”, or the gifts of it, were binding, because their interest was in it; it was for their gain.

Ver. 17. *Ye fools, and blind*, etc.] That argue after so ridiculous a manner, that make use of such thin sophistry, that everybody may see through it; who must be stupid and sottish to the last degree, and their minds foolishly blinded with avarice; as to please and satisfy themselves: with so poor a distinction; that would by no means serve them, but make against them:

for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? The temple, to be sure: for that was the seat of the divine majesty; built for him to dwell in, and in which he took up his residence; and was dedicated to his service, and in it was divine worship performed unto him. The temple was sanctified by the presence of God in it; and the gold sanctified by the temple, being devoted to the service of it: whatever holiness it had, it had it from the temple, and therefore the temple must be greater than that; and consequently it must be most extravagantly ridiculous and foolish in them, to make oaths by the gold of the temple, and gifts dedicated to its service, and on that score sanctified by it, more binding and sacred than such as were by the temple itself.

Ver. 18. *And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing*, etc.] These are again the words or savings of the scribes and Pharisees, and express their sentiments and practice: it was usual with them to swear by the altar; and this was reckoned either no sin at all, or such an oath was not accounted binding on a man; he might break, or keep it as he thought fit: of this kind of swearing, we have the following instances. One said to another [f1275],

> “swear to me that thou wilt not discover me, and he swore to him; by what did he swear? says R. Jose bar Chanina, ymynph jbzmb, “by the innermost altar”.”

Again, it is said of Zedekiah [f1276],

> “that he (Nebuchadnezzar) made him to swear; by what did he make him to swear? says R. Jose, by the covenant he made him to swear; Rabbi says jbzmb, “by the altar” he made him to swear.”

And elsewhere [f1277] it is said of him,

> ""and he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who made him swear by God", (<1463>2 Chronicles 36:13). By what did he make him swear? says R. Jose bar Chanina, "by the horns of the innermost altar" he made him swear."

But whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty: of perjury, if he does not make good his oath; he is bound to perform it, it is obligatory; whatever he swore should be a gift for the altar, he was indispensably obliged to bring it; for whatever he swore by "Korban", or the gift, could never be put to any other use.

Ver. 19. *Ye fools, and blind*, etc.] This is very justly repeated, since this is no less an instance of their folly, blindness, and stupidity. In three copies of Beza's the word "fools" is not; nor is it in the Vulgate Latin, nor in Munster's Hebrew Gospel; but the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions have it:

for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? The gift, or offering, before it was devoted to sacred use, and brought, and laid upon the altar, was common, had no ceremonial sanctity in it, and might be put to any use; but when it was brought, and laid upon the altar, it became holy; for, according to the law, whatever touched the altar, and indeed all, or any of the vessels of the sanctuary, was holy, (<0237>Exodus 29:37 30:29). Christ speaks the sense of the law, and their own traditions, and in their own language, and argues from the same to the confutation of them: çdqm jbzmj, "the altar", they say [f1278], "sanctifies" that which is fit for it; that is, that which is proper to be offered up upon it:

> "as the altar sanctifies that which is fit for it, so the ascent unto it sanctifies; and as the altar, and the ascent, sanctify what is fit for them, so the vessels sanctify; the vessels for liquids sanctify the liquids, and the dry measures sanctify the dry; the vessels for liquids do not sanctify the dry, nor the dry measures sanctify the liquids; the holy vessels, which are bored, (or broken,) when they do the service they used to do, when whole, sanctify, if not, they do not sanctify; nor does anything sanctify but in the sanctuary."

Now, since this is a clear case, that the altar sanctifies the gift, and not the gift the altar, our Lord's question is, which is the greater? A man that has

the least share of common sense will easily see, that the altar must be the greater: wherefore these scribes and Pharisees must be wretchedly stupid to give out, that an oath made by the altar was not binding, when one that was made by the gift, or *Korban*, was binding; seeing the gift, or offering, received its sanctity from the altar: hence, of the two, an oath made by the altar should be more sacred and obligatory than one made by the gift.

Ver. 20. *Whosoever therefore shall swear by the altar,* etc.] Not that Christ allowed of swearing by the altar, or by the temple, or by heaven, or by any creature, animate or inanimate; for such swearing is elsewhere disapproved of by him, and forbid, but if a man did swear by the altar, he ought to know, and consider that he not only

sweareth by it, but by all the gifts, and offerings that are brought, and laid upon it,

and by all things thereon; whatever gifts and sacrifices are offered upon it; which, by being put there, become holy, as the altar itself: so that he that swears by the altar, swears also by the gifts of the altar; and consequently, according to their own traditions, such oaths must be binding.

Ver. 21. *And whoso shall swear by the temple*, etc.] As we have before seen they used to do, and as appears from what the poet says [f1279]: Ecce negas, jurasque mihi per templa tonantis Non credo: jura, verpe, per Anchialum.

In which he intimates, that if the Jew swore by the temple, he would not believe him; as well he might not, since such an oath was accounted nothing; but bids him swear by Anchialus, that is, by hwlayj, "Chi Eloah", or ˆwyl[yj, "Chi Alon", or "Elion, the living God", or µlw[h yh, "Chi Haolam, he that lives for ever" [f1280]; and suggests, that he should then believe him. Now our Lord, though he did not allow of such swearing, yet justly argues, that he that sweareth by the temple, not only "sweareth by it", which could not be a witness of what was swore; but he must be interpreted to swear by the inhabitant of it, and by him that dwelleth in it; that is, God, for whom it was built, to whom it was dedicated; where he was worshipped, and where he vouchsafed to reside; taking up his dwelling between the cherubim upon the mercy seat, in the most holy place; from whence he communed with men, and gave tokens of his presence; and who only could be the proper witness of the truth, or falsehood, of what was

swore; and therefore an oath, by the temple, ought to be looked upon as if made by God himself, and so to be sacred and binding.

Ver. 22. *And he that shall swear by heaven*, etc.] As the Jews were wont to do in common, but did not look upon such an oath as obligatory on them; (See Gill on "<40534>Matthew 5:34"), though such an one

sweareth by the throne of God; for heaven is God's throne, where he sits, and, in an eminent manner, displays the glory of his majesty:

and by him that sitteth thereon, by God himself. Thus swearing by anything that has any relation to God, is implicitly swearing by him; and therefore ought to be considered as binding, as if he was expressed in it; since an appeal cannot be made to things inanimate, nor indeed to any creature, but to God, the searcher of hearts.

Ver. 23. *Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*, etc.] Christ returns to the former epithets he had very rightly given to these men, and very pertinently repeats them here; and which are confirmed by the instances of their conduct and practice here alleged, which abundantly show their hypocrisy and deceit; since they were very strict in observing some outward things, which gave them credit with the people, and especially the priests and Levites, some little trifling ceremonies and traditions of their elders, whilst they neglected internal religion, and those things which were of the greatest moment and importance:

for ye take tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin; which ought not commanded by the law, they were obliged to by the traditions of the elders. Mint is an herb well known, and has its name in the Greek from its sweet smell; on account of which the Jews used to spread it on the floors of their synagogues [f1281]. This was one of the herbs that was subject to the law of the seventh year [f1282], and is mentioned with those which were to be tithed [f1283]. The Ethiopic version, instead of mint reads "hyssop"; and which also was an herb that was obliged to be tithed [f1284]. "Anise" is a seed also well known, and which the Jews call tbç, and of which they often observe, that it is subject to tithing, both seed, herb, flowers, or stalks [f1285]: instead of this Munster's Hebrew Gospel has µgyp, "rue"; and which, in the Misna [f1286], is mentioned along with mint, as it is by (<42142>Luke 11:42) and said to be one of the things the Pharisees gave tithe of; though in their oral law it is reckoned among the things that are free from tithe [f1287]: and therefore this must be a sort of work of supererogation to give tithe of that, which they

were not obliged to. “Cummin” is a sort of anise; its seed is much like fennel seed, and which pigeons are very fond of: mention is made of it in (<2825>Isaiah 28:25,27) and is reckoned with figs, dates, carobes, or Egyptian figs, and rice, which were obliged to be tithed [f1288], and was what was also bound to the offering of the first fruits to the priest [f1289]. Christ mentions these particular herbs and seeds, as a specimen of what they paid tithes of. In Luke, it is added, “and all manner of herbs”: for, according to the traditions of the elders, they were in general subject to tithes: and it is a common saying or maxim of the Jews, that the tithing of corn is from the law, but ˆnbrd qry rç[m, “the tithing of herbs is from the Rabbins” [f1290]: it is a constitution of their’s, and not of Moses:

and have omitted the weightier matters of the law. The distinction of the commandments of the law into lighter and heavier, or weightier, to which Christ here refers, is frequent with the Jews. When one comes to be made a proselyte, they acquaint him with some of twlq twxm, “the light commands”, and some of twrwmj twxm, “the heavy”, or “weighty commands” [f1291]. So again, they paraphrase the words in (<2318>Isaiah 33:18) “where is the scribe?” he that numbers all the letters in the law. “Where is the receiver?” who weighs the “light” things, hrwtbç ˆyrwmjw, and “heavy”, or “weighty things in the law” [f1292]. Again [f1293],

> “in the words of the law there are some things “light”, and some things “heavy”, or “weighty”:”

but those weighty things they omitted, and regarded those that were light; yea, that had no foundation in the law at all: and no wonder, since, in the place last cited, they say [f1294], that

> “the words of the Scribes are all of them “weighty” and that the sayings of the elders are more “weighty” than the words of the prophets.”

The things our Lord refers to, and instances in, are as follow;

judgment, mercy, and faith. “Judgment” may mean the administration of justice in courts of judicature; the putting in execution good judgments, righteous laws and statutes; protecting and relieving the injured and oppressed, and doing that which is right and equitable between man and man: but, on the contrary, these men devoured widows’ houses, and oppressed the poor and fatherless. “Mercy” includes all acts of compassion

to the distressed, relieving the necessitous, distributing to their wants, and showing all kindness and beneficence to the poor and needy; which the scribes and Pharisees very little practised, being a set of cruel, hard hearted, and covetous persons. “Faith” may not only design faithfulness in a man’s keeping his word and promise, and fidelity to a trust reposed in him; but also faith in God, as the God of providence, and as the God of grace and mercy; believing in his word and promises, and worshipping him, which the law requires; and the rather this seems to be intended, because Luke, instead of “faith”, puts “the love of God”, which faith includes, and works by, and is the end of the commandment, arising from faith unfeigned: so that Christ instances in the weightier matters of both tables of the law, which these men neglected, and the latter, as well as the former; not believing the revelation of the Gospel, nor the Messiah, who was promised, and prophesied of by God, in the writings of the Old Testament:

these ought ye to have done: more especially, and in the first place, as being of the greatest use and importance:

and not to leave the other undone; meaning either the lighter matters, and lesser commands of the law; or even their tithes of herbs: if they thought themselves obliged to them, Christ would not dispute the matter with them; if they thought fit to observe them, they might, so long as they did not interfere with, and take them off from things of greater moment. But alas! these men preferred the rituals of the ceremonial law, and the traditions of the elders, above the duties of the moral law; and reckoned that the latter were nothing, if the former were wanting; for they [f1295] Say, that

> “the words of the Scribes, are more lovely than the words of the law.”

And also [f1296], that

> “he that profanes the holy things, and despises the solemn feasts, and makes void the covenant of Abraham our father (circumcision), and behaves impudently towards the law (ceremonial), although the law and good works are in his hands, he has no part in the world to come.”

The Persic version renders the words thus; “these ought ye to do, and not them”; as if it was our Lord’s sense, that they ought to observe the weightier matters of the moral law, and not regard their tithing of herbs, and other traditions of, their fathers.

Ver. 24. *Ye blind guides*, etc.] As in (<40C216>Matthew 23:16)

who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel: the Syriac and Persic versions read the words in the plural number, gnats and camels. The Jews had a law, which forbid them the eating of any creeping thing, (<03B114>Leviticus 11:41) and of this they were strictly observant, and would not be guilty of the breach of it for ever so much.

> "One that eats a flea, or a gnat; they say [f1297] is rmwm, "an apostate";"

one that has changed his religion, and is no more to be reckoned as one of them. Hence they very carefully strained their liquors, lest they should transgress the above command, and incur the character of an apostate; and at least, the penalty of being beaten with forty stripes, save one; for,

> "whoever eats a whole fly, or a whole gnat, whether alive or dead, was to be beaten on account of a creeping flying thing [f1298]."

Among the accusations Haman is said to bring against them to Ahasuerus, and the instances he gives of their laws being different from the king's, this one [f1299]; that

> "if a fly falls into the cup of one of them, whtwçw wqrwz, "he strains it, and drinks it"; but if my lord the king should touch the cup of one of them, he would throw it to the ground, and would not drink of it."

Maimonides says [f1300],

> "He that strains wine, or vinegar, or strong liquor, and eats "Jabchushin" (a sort of small flies found in wine cellars [f1301], on account of which they strained their wine), or gnats, or worms, which he hath strained off, is to be beaten on account of the creeping things of the water, or on account of the creeping flying things, and the creeping things of the water."

Moreover, it is said [f1302],

> "a man might not pour his strong liquors through a strainer, by the light (of a candle or lamp), lest he should separate and leave in the top of the strainer (some creeping thing), and it should fail again

into the cup, and he should transgress the law, in (<3114>Leviticus 11:41)."

To this practice Christ alluded here; and so very strict and careful were they in this matter, that to strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel, became at length a proverb, to signify much solicitude about little things, and none about greater. These men would not, on any consideration, be guilty of such a crime, as not to pay the tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, and such like herbs and seeds; and yet made no conscience of doing justice, and showing mercy to men, or of exercising faith in God, or love to him. Just as many hypocrites, like them, make a great stir, and would appear very conscientious and scrupulous, about some little trifling things, and yet stick not, at other times, to commit the grossest enormities, and most scandalous sins in life.

Ver. 25. *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*, etc.] Our Lord cannot be thought to bear too hard upon these men, nor does he continue this character of them, and denunciations of woe against them, without a reason:

for ye make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. The allusion is to their traditions about washing their cups and pots, and brazen vessels; (see <4004>Mark 7:4) which they strictly observed. In their oral law is a whole tract, called "Mikvaot", which gives rules about the places where they washed, the things to be washed, and the manner of washing them; about which they were very nice, pretending to much outward cleanness, but had no regard to inward purity. Christ's sense is, that they took much pains, and were very careful, that the cup they drank out of, and the platter, or dish they ate out of, should be very clean; when at the same time, the food and drink that were within them, were got by oppression and rapine; by devouring widows' houses, by making undue claims upon, and extorting unjust sums from the fatherless, the poor, and the needy; and were abused by them, to luxury and intemperance. In like manner the Jews themselves say of hypocrites [f1303];

"They make show of a pure and clean soul, but under it lies hid a leprosy: they are like to "vessels full of uncleanness"; they are outwardly washed with the water of fraud and craftiness; but whatsoever is within, in the midst or them, is unclean."

The Vulgate Latin version of the text, instead of “excess”, reads “uncleanness”, and so does Munster’s Hebrew Gospel: many copies read “unrighteousness”. Excess is thought to be a sin the Pharisees were not guilty of, though they were of extortion, injustice, and uncleanness.

Ver. 26. *Thou blind Pharisee*, etc.] Well might Christ call such an one a blind Pharisee, who was so scrupulously careful to cleanse his cup and platter; and yet made no conscience of filling them with what was gotten in an unjust way, and so defiled himself and them:

cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also: get food and drink in an honest way, remove all extortion and oppression out of thine hands, and luxury and intemperance from thy table; and so shall the outward cleanness of thy cup and dish, be no reproach unto thee, or testimony against thee, of thine hypocrisy. So the great concern of all men should be, inward purity; that their hearts be purified by faith in the blood of Christ, and sprinkled from an evil conscience by the same; that principles of grace and holiness be formed in them by the Spirit of God; and then their outward lives and conversations being influenced thereby, will be honourable and agreeable to their professions. Otherwise, an external reformation, or an outward show of holiness, and bare pretensions to it, without internal grace, will never be of any avail in the sight of God.

Ver. 27. *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*, etc.] It is much these men could bear to hear themselves so often called by this name; and it shows great courage in our Lord, so freely to reprove them, and expose their wickedness, who were men of so much credit and influence with the people:

for ye are like unto whited sepulchres; or “covered with lime”, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, render it. For the Jews used to mark their graves with white lime, that they might be known: that so priests, Nazarites, and travellers, might avoid them, and not be polluted with them. This appears from various passages in their writings:

> “The vineyard of the fourth year, they marked with clods of earth, and an uncircumcised one with dust, dysb twrbq lçw, “and graves with chalk”, mixed (with water) and poured (on them [f1304].)”

Of this marking of the graves, the reason of it, the time and manner of doing it, Maimonides [f1305] gives us this account:

> “Whoever finds a grave, or a dead carcass, or anything for the dead that defiles, by the tent he is obliged to put a mark upon it, that it may not be a stumbling to others; and on the intermediate days of a feast, they go out from the sanhedrim, to mark the graves. — With what do they mark? hjmm dysb, “with chalk infused” in water, and poured upon the unclean place: they do not put the mark upon the top of the unclean place, (or exactly in it,) but so that it may stand out here and there, at the sides of it, that what is pure may not be corrupted; and they do not put the mark far from the place of the uncleanness, that they may not waste the land of Israel; and they do not set marks on those that are manifest, for they are known to all; but upon those that are doubtful, as a field in which a grave is lost, and places that are open, and want a covering.”

Now because when the rains fell, these marks were washed away, hence on the first of Adar (February) when they used to repair the highways, they also marked the graves with white lime, that they might be seen and known, and avoided; and so on their intermediate feast days [f1306]: the reason why they made use of chalk, or lime, and with these marked their graves, was because it looked white like bones [f1307]; so that upon first sight, it might be thought and known what it was for, and that a grave was there: hence this phrase, “whited sepulchres”:

which indeed appear beautiful outward; especially at a distance, and when new marked:

but within are full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness; worms and rottenness, which arise from the putrefied carcasses, and are very nauseous and defiling.

Ver. 28. *Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous*, etc.] By making broad their phylacteries, enlarging the borders of their garments, praying long prayers, compassing sea and land to make one proselyte, paying tithes of all manner of herbs, and cleansing the outside of the cup and platter, and doing all their works, prayers, fastings, and alms deeds, to be seen of men. This is the accommodation of the above simile; by reason of these things they looked like whited sepulchres, outwardly beautiful: so these appeared outwardly righteous, they looked like righteous persons, and were not;

they were what Hagar, as the Jews say, charged her mistress with being; for so they interpret these words, “her mistress was despised in her eyes”, (Genesis 16:4) [f1308].

> “She said, this Sarah is not secretly, what she is openly; she appears tqdx ayh wlyak, “as if she was righteous” and she is not righteous.”

The same they say of [f1309] Leah. This was a misrepresentation; but the representation Christ gives of these men, is right; they were of that sort of the Pharisees, which they call ˆy[wbxh, “the dyed”, or “coloured” ones: it is said of Jannai the king, that he should say to those of his family [f1310];

> “Do not be afraid of them that are Pharisees, (that are truly so,) nor of them that are not Pharisees; but of them that are, ˆy[wbxh, “dyed”, for they are like to Pharisees; for their works are as the works of Zimri, (adulterers, as these were,) and they expect the reward as Phinehas.”

The gloss upon it is,

> “the Pharisees hated him, because he had slain many of their wise men, and was turned Sadducee; and when he was dying, his wife was afraid of them, lest they should take away the kingdom from her sons, and she desired him to seek their favour for her; but he said unto her, do not be afraid of the Pharisees, for they are “righteous”, and will not render evil to thee, nor to thy sons; for they have not sinned against them; nor of them that are not Pharisees, for they are their friends; but of “the dyed ones”: as if he had said, their appearance is not according to their nature, but they are dyed without, µrbk µkwt ˆyaw, “and their inside is not as their outside”: for their works are as the work of Zimri, for they are ungodly; and they expect the reward as Phinehas, saying to men, to honour them as Phinehas.”

But this outward show and appearance of righteousness, was only “unto men”, not unto God: they did not appear so to him, who is the searcher of hearts, and knows what is in man, and knew all the secret wickedness that was in them; for though they imposed upon, and deceived men, they could not deceive God; nor was their iniquity hid from Christ, who adds, “but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity”: and which was evident from

their ambition and vain glory, in desiring the uppermost rooms at feasts, the chief places in the synagogue, greetings in the markets, and titles of honour and grandeur; from their avarice and cruel oppression of the widows, and fatherless, under a pretence of long prayers; from their neglecting the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith, and practising extortion and excess: that saying of their's [f1311], may be applied to themselves;

> "every disciple of a wise man, wrbk wkwt ˆyaç, "whose inside is not as his outside", is no disciple of a wise man."

And it is expressly ascribed by some of their writers to one sort of the Pharisees, of whom they say [f1312],

> "they are desirous to appear to men to be holy, but their inside is not as their outside;"

which is much the same Christ here says of them. What our Lord charges these men with, is owned by their own doctors; they say [f1313], that

> "the iniquity of those that were under the first temple, was open and manifest, but the iniquity of those that were under the second temple, was not open."

But as the gloss says,

> "the children of the second temple, rtsb wyh µy[çr, "were secretly wicked"."

Ver. 29. *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*, etc.] This is the seventh and last time, in which these words are delivered in this exact form by our Lord, in this chapter; and expresses the certainty, both of their sin and punishment: and the instance annexed to it, no less discovers the hypocrisy of these persons, and supports the character given of them; as also furnishes out a sufficient reason, why a woe is denounced upon them;

because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous; meaning by the "prophets" and "righteous" men, the same persons, the prophets, who were righteous men; or else the prophets, and also other righteous men besides them. Rightly is the word "build", used of tombs and sepulchres; the Jews have a canon, which runs thus [f1314];

> "they do not dig graves nor sepulchres, on a feast day."

The commentators [f1315] on it say, that the graves are the holes which they dig in the earth, and the sepulchres are the buildings over the graves. In the Gemara it is asked [f1316],

> "what are the graves? and what are the sepulchres? says R. Judah, the graves are made by digging and the sepulchres or tombs ynbb, "by building";"

and these edifices which they built over the graves of some of their prophets, and righteous men, were very grand and beautiful. The Cippi Hebmici furnish us with many instances of this kind: in Hebron, in the land of Canaan, which is Kirjath Arba, is the cave of Machpelah; in which were buried the fathers of the world, Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah; and over it is a wonderful, hanw, "and beautiful" building and it is the building of David the king; and opposite the city, in the mountain, is a beautiful building, and there was buried Jesse, the father of David the king: in the way from Hebron to Jerusalem, is Chalchul, where Gad, David's seer, was buried; and Tekoah, where Isaiah the prophet was buried, and over him a "beautiful" structure: at the Mount of Olives is a beautiful fabric, which they say is the sepulchre of Huldah, the prophetess; at the bottom of the mount is a very great cave, attributed to Haggai the prophet, and in the middle of it are many caves; near it, is the sepulchre of Zechariah the prophet, in a cave shut up, and over it is han hpyk, "a beautiful arch", or vault of one stone: between Rama and Jerusalem are caves ascribed to Simeon the just, and the seventy (elders of the) sanhedrim: at Rama, Samuel was buried, also his father Elkanah, and Hannah his mother, and in a cave shut up, and over the cave buildings: at Cheres, which is Timnath Cheres, in Mount Ephraim, are buried Joshua the son of Nun, and Nun his father, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and over them are trees. At Avarta is the school of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, and Eleazar is buried upon the mountain; and below the village, between the olive trees, Ithamar, and over him a large monument: at the barns is a temple of the Gentiles, with a vault and a cave, where they say are buried seventy elders. At Belata, a village about a sabbath day's journey from Shechem, Joseph the righteous was buried: at Mount Carmel, is the cave of Elijah the prophet, and there was buried Elisha, the son of Shaphat the prophet: at Jordan was buried Iddo the prophet, and over it is a great elm tree, and it is in the form of a lion; and there was buried Shebuel, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, over whom is a great oak

tree: at Geba, in Mount Lebanon, is buried Zephaniah the prophet, in the middle of a cave shut up. On a mountain, a sabbath day's journey from Zidon, Zebulun was buried, in a beautiful vault; at Cephar Noah, was buried Noah the just; and at Kadesh Nephtalim, Barak the son of Abinoam, and Deborah his wife, and Jael; and at Timnath, Shamgar the son of Auath, over whom are two marble pillars. At Cephar Cana, is buried Jonah, the son of Amittai, on the top of a mountain, in a temple of the Gentiles, in a "beautiful" vault: at Jakuk, was buried in the way, Habakkuk the prophet; and at the north of the village of Raam, was buried Obadiah the prophet: at Susan the palace, was buried Mordecai the Jew, and over him a beautiful stone statue; and on it written, this is the sepulchre of Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a man of Jemini; and near the river Hiddekel, Ezekiel the prophet was buried. In this account, many things may be observed, which confirm and illustrate the words of the text. And certain it is, that it was accounted very honourable and laudable in persons, to beautify the sepulchres of the patriarchs and prophets. Among the excellent characters given of Benaah, R. Jochanan's master, it is said [f1317],

> "that he was a very wise man, and a judge, and understood mysteries and parables; t r [m ^yyxw, "and painted the cave" of Adam the first, and the cave of Abraham."

Though perhaps this is to be understood of him in a figurative sense, but yet must allude to a literal one: the sepulchres of the prophets, were especially very sacred:

> "all sepulchres (they say [f1318]) might be removed, but the sepulchres of a king, and the "sepulchres of a prophet"; they say unto him, were not the sepulchres of the sons of David removed? and the sepulchres of the sons of Huldah were in Jerusalem, and a man might not touch them, to remove them for ever. R. Akiba replied to them because of decency it was forgiven (or allowed) there, and from thence the uncleanness being channelled, went out to the brook Kidron."

Now our Lord must not be understood as blaming them for barely building the tombs of the prophets, and garnishing the sepulchres of the righteous, which they might have done without blame. But because they did all this, that they might be thought to be very innocent and holy men, and far from being guilty of the crimes their forefathers were; when they were of the very selfsame blood thirsty, persecuting spirit; and did, and would do the

same things to the prophets and apostles of the New Testament, their fathers had done to the prophets of the Old. They have a saying [f1319], that

> "they do not erect monuments "for the righteous"; for their words are their memorial."

But this can only mean, that there is no need of monuments for them; since their sayings are sufficient to keep up the memory of them. Hence Dr. Lightfoot thinks, that our Lord reproves them out of their own mouths, for despising the words of the prophets; imagining they performed piety enough, by bestowing cost in adorning their sepulchres; when they themselves own, their sayings are the best remembrances of them, and therefore ought to be regarded more than their tombs.

Ver. 30. *And say, if we had been in the days of our fathers*, etc.] Their ancestors and predecessors: signifying, that if they had lived in the times they did, or had been in the same post and office with them, they should have opposed, at least not consented to their measures:

we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets; would not have joined them in persecuting the prophets, and in shedding their blood, and putting them to death; but would have received them as the prophets of the Lord, have hearkened to their advice and message, and have honoured and obeyed them as such; and this they thought they sufficiently declared, by building and adorning their tombs.

Ver. 31. *Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves*, etc.] Or "against yourselves", as the Syriac reads; for what they said was a plain acknowledgment, and a full confession, what their fathers had done, and whose offspring they were; and from whom better things were not to be expected; since they were their fathers' own children, and of the same temper and disposition with them:

that ye are the children of them that killed the prophets. They plainly owned, that their fathers killed the prophets, and that they descended from them; though they meant not so much to reproach, their ancestors, as to give themselves a greater character; yet it did not with those, that knew them; not with our Lord: for as their own words testified against them, that they were a seed of evildoers; their practices showed them to be of the same spirit and principles with their progenitors.

Ver. 32. *Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers*.] Of their sins; for there were bounds and limits set how far they should proceed, and no further; as yet they had not got to the end of their iniquity: their fathers had gone great lengths in sin, but their iniquity was not yet full, as is said of the Amorites, (<01516>Genesis 15:16) these their sons were to fill it up. They had shed the blood of many of the prophets; and indeed there were none of them but they had persecuted and abused, in one shape or another: some they entreated shamefully, others they beat: some they stoned, and others they put to death with the sword, or otherwise; and now their children were about to fill the measure brimful, by crucifying the Son of God, which they were at this time meditating and contriving; and by persecuting and slaying his apostles, and so would bring upon them the vengeance of God. The Jews well enough understood these words, which were spoken to them in an ironical way, and expressing what they were about, and what they would hereafter do, and what would be the issue and consequence of it: they have a saying [f1320], that

> "the holy blessed God does not take vengeance on a man, wtas almttç d[, "until his measure is filled up"; according to (<18022>Job 20:22)."

Which the Chaldee paraphrase renders,

> "when his measure is filled up, then shall he take vengeance on him;"

and that this is Christ's sense, appears from what follows.

Ver. 33. *Ye servants, ye generation of vipers*, etc.] The latter of these names, John the Baptist calls the Sadducees and Pharisees by, in (<40307>Matthew 3:7) and Christ, in (<40134>Matthew 12:34) both express their craft and subtlety, their inward poison, and venomous nature; their fair outside, and specious pretences; their hypocrisy, malice, and wickedness; in which they were like to the old serpent, their father the devil, and to their ancestors, that murdered the prophets; nor could any good thing be expected, from such a viperous generation:

how can ye escape the damnation of hell? signifying, that it was impossible that they should; nor could they surely expect it themselves, who must be conscious to themselves of their wickedness, malice, and deceit. The Persic version reads it, "where can ye escape?" etc. and so Beza says it was read,

in one ancient copy of his; and the sense is, whither can ye flee? to whom, or what can you have recourse to, to screen you from the wrath to come? Rocks and mountains, caves and dens, will be of no service. The phrase, µnhyg lç hnyd, "the judgment, or damnation of hell", is a phrase often used in the Talmud [f1321], and Midrashes [f1322] of the Jews; and intends future torment, and the everlasting vengeance and wrath of God, the unquenchable fire prepared for the devil and his angels, and which impenitent unbelieving sinners cannot escape.

Ver. 34. *Wherefore, behold I send unto you prophets*, etc.] To try them, whether they would show the respect to prophets, they pretended to have for them; by building and beautifying their sepulchres; by exclaiming against their forefathers for shedding their blood; and by declaring, that had they lived in their days, they would not have joined with them in it; and to make it appear, that these were all empty words, and specious pretences; and that they had the same malicious and bloody principles in them; and would be guilty of the same practices, and so fill up the measure of their fathers' sins; and bring upon them the punishment of everlasting burnings hereafter, as well as ruin and destruction on their nation, city, and temple now. Christ here speaks, as, one having power and authority, to qualify and send forth men, under the several characters here mentioned, and of what he should do after his resurrection: for notwithstanding the people of the Jews would crucify him, and use him as they did, in a barbarous manner; yet after all this, he would send his ministers to them, to gather his elect out from among them, to render the rest inexcusable, and to show his longsuffering and patience. The persons designed by "prophets", "wise men", and "Scribes", are his apostles: called "prophets"; because they were divinely inspired to write, and preach in his name; had the gift of foretelling future events, and of explaining with the greatest clearness and exactness, the prophecies of the Old Testament; showing their respect unto, and accomplishment in Christ: "wise men"; because they were made wise unto salvation, and capable of instructing others: they were filled with all spiritual and evangelical wisdom, and preached the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom: and Scribes; because they were well instructed in the kingdom of heaven, and had the true knowledge of the law, and could rightly interpret it, as well as make known the Gospel of the grace of God. Christ chooses to use these names and titles, because the Jews pretended to have great veneration for the ancient prophets, and these he should send, would not be a whit inferior to them, but in many things

exceed them; and they had great esteem for their wise men and Scribes, who would be vastly exceeded by these ministers of his, and yet would be used very badly by them:

and some of them ye shall kill; as Stephen, the first "martyr", who was stoned to death by them; and James, the brother of John, whom Herod, to their good liking, killed with the sword; and the other James they threw headlong from off the pinnacle of the temple, and killed him with a fuller's club [f1323].

And crucify; so Simeon, the son of Cleophas, was crucified at the instigation of the Jews, as Eusebius relates [f1324].

And some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues; as John, Peter, and Paul:

and persecute them from city to city; as they did Paul and Barnabas, as the Acts of the Apostles testify.

Ver. 35. *That upon you may come all the righteous blood*, etc.] Or "the blood of all the righteous men", as the Syriac: Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read; for there is no righteousness in blood, nor any conveyed by it: all men are of one blood, and that is tainted, they that are righteous, are not so naturally, nor by any righteousness of their own, but by the righteousness of Christ: and such were the persons here meant, whose blood being shed in the cause of righteousness, God would revenge; and the punishment for such a crime, and the vengeance of God for it, were to come upon the nation of the Jews by this means, through their crucifying of Christ, and killing, and persecuting his apostles; whereby they would make it manifest, that they approved of, and consented to, what others had done to all the righteous men, whose blood had been

shed upon the earth; whether in Judea, or elsewhere; and continued in the same wicked practices, or committed worse, and so justly incurred the wrath of God to the uttermost; which would quickly come upon them, when the measure of their fathers' sin were filled up by them, from the beginning of time, to the present age: even

from the blood of righteous Abel: who was the first person in the world that was killed, and that for righteousness sake too, because his works were righteous, his person being so; not by his works, but through the righteousness and sacrifice of the Messiah, which were to be brought in; in

the faith of which he offered up his sacrifice, whereby he obtained a testimony from God, that he was righteous, having respect to his person in Christ, and so to his offering. This epithet of "righteous" seems to be what was commonly given him by the Jews: hence, with a peculiar emphasis, he is called, qydxh lbh, "Abel the righteous" [f1325]; as he is also said to be µygrhnl çar, "the head of them that killed" [f1326]; he being the first man that was slain; for which reason he is mentioned here by Christ; and also, because his blood cried for vengeance, and still continued to do, upon all such persons that should commit the like crime. It is an observation frequently made by the Jews, on those words in (<010410>Genesis 4:10) "the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me", that

> "it is not said in the Hebrew text, the blood of thy brother, but the bloods of thy brother; his blood, and the blood of his seed [f1327]; and that from hence may be learned, that the blood of his children, and of his children's children, and of all his offspring, to the end of all generations, that should proceed from him, all stood and cried before the Lord [f1328]."

The Jerusalem Targum paraphrases the words in this remarkable manner;

> "the price of the bloods of "the multitude of the righteous", that shall spring from Abel thy brother."

And Onkelos thus,

> "the voice of the blood of the seed that shall rise from thy brother, etc."

unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Learned men are very much divided about this person, who he was. Some think our Lord speaks prophetically of Zechariah, the son of Baruch; who, as Josephus says [f1329], was slain in the middle of the temple, just before the siege of Jerusalem; and who was, as he also relates, a rich man, of an illustrious family, a hater of wickedness, and a friend to liberty: and because, as Abel was the first man that was slain, and this man being killed in the temple, at the close of the Jewish state; and because the words may be rendered, "whom ye shall have slain", therefore he is thought to be intended: but there are several things that do not agree with him, besides its being a narration of a fact, as past, according to the usual rendering of the word: for this Zacharias was the

son of Baruch, and not Barachias, which are two different names; he was killed in the middle of the temple, not between the temple and the altar; nor does he appear to be a man of such great character, as to be distinguished in this manner; and besides, his death was what the Jews did not consent to in general, and therefore could not be charged with it; he was acquitted by the sanhedrim of the charge of treachery laid against him, and was assassinated by two zealots. Others have thought that Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, is meant, who is supposed to be murdered by the Jews very lately; and it being a recent action, is mentioned by our Lord: the reason of it is a tradition, which several ancient writers [f1330] speak of, and is pretended to be this; that there was a place, in the temple appropriated to virgins, and that Mary, the mother of our Lord, after his birth, came and took her place here, as a virgin, when the Jews, knowing her to have a child, objected to it; but Zechariah, who was acquainted with the mystery of the incarnation, ordered her to keep her place, upon which the Jews slew him upon the spot: but this tradition is not to be depended on; nor does it appear that there ever was any such particular place in the temple assigned to virgins; nor that the father of this Zacharias was Barachias; or that the son was slain by the Jews, and in this place. Others have been of opinion, that Zechariah the prophet is designed; and indeed, he is said to be the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, (<38 1:1>Zechariah 1:1) and the Jewish Targumist speaks of a Zechariah, the son of Iddo, as slain by the Jews in the temple. His words are these [f1331];

> “as ye slew Zechariah, the son of Iddo, the high priest, and faithful prophet, in the house of the sanctuary of the Lord, on the day of atonement; because he reproved you, that ye might not do that evil which is before the Lord.”

And him the Jews make to be the same with Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah, in (<23 8:2>Isaiah 8:2) and read Berechiah [f1332]: but the Targumist seems to confound Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, with him; for the prophet Zechariah was not an high priest, Joshua was high priest in his time; nor does it appear from any writings, that he was killed by the Jews; nor is it probable that they would be guilty of such a crime, just upon their return from captivity; and besides, he could not be slain in such a place, because the temple, and altar, were not yet built: it remains, that it must be Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, who was slain in the court of the house of the Lord, (<14 24:20-22>2 Chronicles 24:20-22) who, as Abel was the first, he is the last of the righteous men whose death is related in the Scriptures,

and for whose blood vengeance was required, as for Abel's. He was slain in the court of the house of the Lord; and so the Ethiopic version here renders it, in the midst of the holy house. It is often said by the Jewish writer [f1333], that

> "R. Joden (sometimes it is R. Jonathan) asked R. Acha, whether they slew Zechariah, in the court of the Israelites, or in the court of the women? he answered him, neither in the court of the Israelites, nor in the court of the women, but in the court of the priests."

And elsewhere they say [f1334], that they

> "slew a priest and a prophet in the sanctuary; this is Zechariah the son of Jehoiada."

Now it should be observed, that the temple, or sanctuary, is sometimes put for the whole sacred building, with all its courts and appurtenances; and sometimes, as in this text, for that part of it that was covered, between which, and the altar of burnt offerings, in the court of the priests, which must he here meant, and not the altar of incense, in the most holy place, was a space of twenty two cubits [f1335], frequently called, in Jewish writings, the space between the porch and the altar; that is, the porch which led into the temple, and the brazen altar in the court of the priests, which was open to the air, and is the very spot here intended. Now this was a very sacred place, and is mentioned as an aggravation of the sin of the Jews, that they should enter where none but priests might; nor these neither that had any defect in them; and defile it also by shedding innocent blood.

> "The court of the Israelites is holier than the court of the women; because those that wanted atonement might not enter there; and a defiled person that entered there, was obliged to be cut off: the court of the priests was holier than that, because the Israelites might not enter there, but in the time of their necessities, for laying on of hands for atonement, for killing and waving: the place between the porch and the altar was holier than that; for such that had any blemishes, or were bareheaded, or had their garments rent, might not enter [f1336]."

Hence they say [f1337], that

> "the Israelites committed seven transgressions on that day: they slew a priest, and a prophet, and a judge; and they shed innocent

blood, and they blasphemed God, and defiled the court, and it was a sabbath day, and the day of atonement."

The chief objections to its being this Zechariah are, that the names do agree; the one being the son of Jehoiada, the other the son of Barachias; and the killing of him was eight hundred years before this time; when it might have been thought our Lord would have instanced in a later action: and this he speaks of, he ascribes to the men of that generation: to which may be replied, that as to the difference of names, the father of this Zechariah might have two names, which is no unusual thing; besides, these two names signify much the same thing; Jehoiada signifies praise the Lord, and Barachias bless the Lord; just as Eliakim and Jehoiakim, are names of the same person, and signify the same thing, (2 Chronicles 36:4). Moreover, Jerom tells us, that in the Hebrew copy of this Gospel used by the Nazarenes, he found the name Jehoiada instead of Barachias: and as to the action being done so long ago, what has been suggested already may be an answer to it, that it was the last on record in the writings of the Old Testament; and that his blood, as Abel's, is said to require vengeance: and Christ might the rather pitch upon this action, because it was committed on a very great and worthy man, and in the holy place, and by the body of the people, at the command of their king, and with their full approbation, and consent: and therefore, though this was not done by the individual persons in being in Christ's time, yet by the same people; and so they are said to slay him, and his blood is required of them: and their horrible destruction was a punishment for that load of national guilt, which had been for many hundreds of years contracting, and heaping upon them.

Ver. 36. *Verily I say unto you*, etc.] An usual form of introducing something of moment to raise attention to it, and to ascertain the truth of it:

all these things shall come upon this generation; all the things which Christ had foretold should come to pass in the present age; as that the apostles and ministers of the word he should send to them, some of them they would kill and crucify, and others they would scourge in their synagogues, or persecute from place to place; and all the horrible murders and bloodshed in any age, committed by that people, would be placed to the account of the men of that generation; and the guilt of them imputed to them, and the punishment due unto them be inflicted on them. And which came to pass, and had its full accomplishment about forty years after this,

in the utter destruction of Jerusalem, and the whole nation; so that many now living were personally involved in that temporal ruin, as well as escaped not the damnation of hell, (<42233>Matthew 23:33).

Ver. 37. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem*, etc.] The metropolis of Judea, the seat of the kings of Judah, yea, the city of the great king; the place of divine worship, once the holy and faithful city, the joy of the whole earth; wherefore it was strange that the following things should be said of it. The word is repeated to show our Lord's affection and concern for that city, as well as to upbraid it with its name, dignity, and privileges; and designs not the building of the city, but the inhabitants of it; and these not all, but the rulers and governors of it, civil and ecclesiastical; especially the great sanhedrim, which were held in it, to whom best belong the descriptive characters of killing the prophets, and stoning them that were sent by God unto them; since it belonged to them to take cognizance of such who called themselves prophets, and to examine, and judge them, and, if false, to condemn them [f1338]; hence that saying of Christ, (<42233>Luke 13:33) which goes before the same words, as here, "it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem": and who are manifestly distinguished from their "children": it being usual to call such as were the heads of the people, either in a civil or ecclesiastic sense, "fathers", and their subjects and disciples, "children": besides, our Lord's discourse throughout the whole context is directed to the Scribes and Pharisees, the ecclesiastic guides of the people, and to whom the civil governors paid a special regard.

Thou that killest the prophets; that is, with the sword, with which the prophets in Elijah's time were slain by the children of Israel, (<111910>1 Kings 19:10) and which was one of the capital punishments inflicted by the Jewish sanhedrim [f1339]; and also that which follows was another of them.

And stonest them which were sent unto thee; as particularly Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, before mentioned. The Jews themselves are obliged to own, that this character belongs to them: say [f1340] they,

> "when the word of God shall come, who is his messenger, we will honour him. Says R. Saul, did not the prophets come, µwng r hw, "and we killed them", and shed their blood, and how shall we receive his word? or how shall we believe?"

And a celebrated writer of their's, on those words [f1341], "but now murderers", has this note;

"they have killed Uriah, they have killed Zechariah."

How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Christ here speaks as a man, and the minister of the circumcision, and expresses an human affection for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and an human wish, and will for their temporal good; which he very aptly signifies by the hen, which is a very affectionate creature to its young, and which it endeavours to screen from danger, by covering with its wings. So the "Shekinah" with the Jews is called, açydq arpx, "the holy bird" [f1342]; and that phrase, jmykçh ypnk tjt twsjl, "to betake one's self, or to come to trust under the wings of the Shekinah", is often used [f1343] for to become a proselyte to the true religion, and worship of God, as Jethro, and Ruth the Moabitess did. An expression much like to this here is used by an apocryphal writer of 2 Esdras:

> "I gathered you together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings: but now, what shall I do unto you? I will cast you out from my face." (2 Esdras 1:30)

It seems to be a simile much in use with that people. Our Lord is to be understood not of his divine will, as God, to gather the people of the Jews internally, by his Spirit and grace, to himself; for all those whom Christ would gather, in this sense, were gathered, notwithstanding all the opposition made by the rulers of the people; but of his human affection and will, as a man, and a minister, to gather them to him externally, by, and under the ministry of his word, to hear him preach; so as that they might be brought to a conviction of, and an assent unto him as the Messiah; which, though it might fall short of faith in him, would have been sufficient to have preserved them from temporal ruin, threatened to their city and temple, in the following verse. Instances of the human affection, and will of Christ, may be observed in (<41021>Mark 10:21 <42194>Luke 19:41 22:42) which will of his, though not contrary to the divine will, but subordinate to it, yet not always the same with it, nor always fulfilled: whereas his divine will, or his will as God, is, always fulfilled: "who hath resisted his will?" this cannot be hindered, and made void; he does whatsoever he pleases: and further, that this will of Christ to gather the Jews to himself, is to be understood of his human, and not divine will, is manifest from hence, that this will was in him, and expressed by him at certain several times, by intervals; and therefore he says, "how often would I have gathered", etc. whereas the

divine will is one continued, invariable, and unchangeable will, is always the same, and never begins or ceases to be, and to which such an expression is inapplicable; and therefore these words do not contradict the absolute and sovereign will of God, in the distinguishing acts of it, respecting the choice of some persons, and the leaving of others. And it is to be observed, that the persons whom Christ would have gathered, are not represented as being unwilling to be gathered; but their rulers were not willing that they should, and be made proselytes to him, and come under his wings. It is not said, "how often would I have gathered you, and you would not!" nor, "I would have gathered Jerusalem, and she would not"; nor, "I would have gathered thy children, and they would not"; but, "how often would I have gathered thy children, and ye would not!" Which observation alone is sufficient to destroy the argument founded on this passage in favour of free will. Had Christ expressed his desire to have gathered the heads of the people to him, the members of the Jewish sanhedrim, the civil and ecclesiastical rulers of the Jews: or had he signified how much he wished, and earnestly sought after, and attempted to gather Jerusalem, the children, the inhabitants of it in common, and neither of them would not; it would have carried some appearance of the doctrine of free will, and have seemed to have countenanced it, and have imputed the non-gathering of them to their own will: though had it been said, "they would not", instead of, "ye would not", it would only have furnished out a most sad instance of the perverseness of the will of man, which often opposes his temporal, as well as his spiritual good; and would rather show it to be a slave to that which is evil, than free to that which is good; and would be a proof of this, not in a single person only, but in a body of men. The opposition and resistance to the will of Christ were not made by the people, but by their governors. The common people seemed inclined to attend his ministry, as appears from the vast crowds, which, at different times and places, followed him; but the chief priests, and rulers, did all they could to hinder the collection of them to him, and their belief in him as the Messiah; by traducing his character, miracles, and doctrines, and by menacing the people with curses, and excommunications, making a law, that whoever confessed him should be turned out of the synagogue. So that the plain meaning of the text is the same with that of (40 23 13 Matthew 23:13) and consequently is no proof of men's resisting the operations of the Spirit and grace of God; but only shows what obstructions and discouragements were thrown in the way of attendance on the external ministry of the word. In order to set aside, and overthrow the doctrine of grace, in election, and

particular redemption, and effectual calling, it should be proved that Christ, as God, would have gathered, not Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of it only, but all mankind, even such as are not eventually saved, and that in a spiritual, saving way and manner, to himself; of which there is not the least intimation in this text: and in order to establish the resistibility of the grace of God, by the perverse will of man, so as to become of no effect; it should be shown that Christ would have savingly converted persons, and they would not be converted; and that he bestowed the same grace upon them, he does bestow on others, who are converted: whereas the sum of this passage lies in these few words, that Christ, as man, out of a compassionate regard for the people of the Jews, to whom, he was sent as the minister of the circumcision, would have gathered them together under his ministry, and have instructed them in the knowledge of himself, as the Messiah; which if they had only notionally received, would have secured them, as chickens under the hen, from impending judgments, which afterwards fell upon them; but their governors, and not they, would not; that is, would not suffer them to receive him, and embrace him as the Messiah. So that from the whole it appears, that this passage of Scripture, so much talked of by the Arminians, and so often cited by them, has nothing to do with the controversy about the doctrines of election and reprobation, particular redemption, efficacious grace in conversion, and the power of man's free will. This observation alone is sufficient to destroy the argument founded on this passage, in favour of free will.

Ver. 38. *Behold your house is left unto you desolate*.] Signifying that the city in which they dwelt, where they had their ceiled houses, and stately palaces, would, in a little time, within the space of forty years, be destroyed, and become a desert; and the temple, formerly the house of God, but now only their's, and in which they trusted, would be abandoned by God, he would grant his presence no more in it; and the Messiah, the proprietor of it, and who was now in it, would then take his leave of it, and never more return to it; and that also should share the same fate as the city, and at the same time. Our Lord seems to have in view those passages in (2407Jeremiah 12:7 22:5) and which the Jewish [f1344] writers understood of the temple. The author of the apocryphal the second book of Esdras has much such an expression as this: "Thus saith the Almighty Lord, Your house is desolate, I will cast you out as the wind doth stubble." (2 Esdras 1:33)

Ver. 39. *For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth*, etc.] Meaning in a very little time after the passover, from the time of his crucifixion and death; otherwise they saw him many times after this, as in the palace of the high priest, in Pilate's judgment hall, and on the cross; but not after his resurrection. This shows the reason of their house being desolate, and in what sense it should be so, and immediately became so; namely, by being then directly, and ever after, destitute of his presence: and though they might afterwards seek for, and expect the Messiah in it, yet they would never be able to see him, nor throughout their long captivity: till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; that is, until the time comes, that the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and all Israel shall be saved, the Jews shall be converted, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; when they shall readily and cheerfully say these words to Christ, who will then appear in his glory; which they were now displeased at in the multitude that followed him, and the children in the temple. Though some think this is said by way of threatening, since the rest that is spoken to them by Christ is of that sort, and regards the men of that generation; and is given as a reason of their house being left desolate: and the sense is, that they should never see him with joy and pleasure; since, though they would be obliged to confess that he was Lord and Christ, they would never say the above words to him in faith, and holy reverence of him. The Cambridge exemplar of Beza's, and the Persic versions, read, "in the name of God."

CHAPTER 24

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 24

Ver. 1. *And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple*, etc.] He not only went out of it for that time, but took his final leave of it, never to return more to it; having foretold its desolation, which he, in part, by so doing, immediately fulfilled: this the disciples observing, and being intent on the outward splendour, and worldly grandeur of it, were concerned that so beautiful a structure should be deserted; and almost thought it incredible, that so strong, and firm a building could be destroyed.

And his disciples came unto him: as he went, and as soon as he was come out of the temple, and whilst in view of it:

for to show him the buildings of the temple; the walls of it, and courts adjoining to it, how beautiful and firm they were: whether this was done by them to raise in him admiration or commiseration, in hopes he might change the sentence he had passed upon it, is not easy to say; or whether this did not express their incredulity about the desolation of it; which Christ's answer, in the next verse, seems to imply. Mark says, it was "one of the disciples" that observed these to him, who might be accompanied with the rest, and in their name address him; and who, probably, might be Peter, since he was generally their mouth; and that he should speak to him in this manner: "master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here!" Luke says, "how it was adorned with goodly stones, and gifts." The Jews give very great encomiums of the second temple, as repaired by Herod; and it was undoubtedly a very fine structure. They say [f1345], that he built the house of the sanctuary, "an exceeding beautiful building"; and that he repaired the temple, in beauty "greatly exceeding" that of Solomon's [f1346]. They moreover observe [f1347], that

> "he who has not seen the building of Herod, has never seen, hanˆyynb, "a beautiful building." With what is it built? says Rabbah, with stones of green and white marble. And there are others say, that it was built with stones of spotted green and white marble."

These, very likely, were the very stones the disciples pointed to, and admired; and were of a prodigious size, as well as worth. Some of the stones were, as Josephus [f1348] says,

> “forty five cubits long, five high, and six broad.”

Others of them, as he elsewhere affirm [f1349],

> “were twenty five cubits long, eight high, and twelve broad.”

And he also tells us, in the same place, that there were,

> “in the porches, four rows of pillars: the thickness of each pillar was as much as three men, with their arms stretched out, and joined together, could grasp; the length twenty seven feet, and the number of them an hundred and sixty two, and beautiful to a miracle.”

At the size of those stones, and the beauty of the work, it is said [f1350], Titus was astonished, when he destroyed the temple; at which time his soldiers plundered it, and took away “the gifts”, with which it is also said to be adorned. These were rich and valuable things which were dedicated to it, and either laid up in it, or hung upon the walls and pillars of it, as it was usual in other temples [f1351]. These may, intend the golden table given by Pompey, and the spoils which Herod dedicated; and particularly the golden vine, which was a gift of his [f1352]; besides multitudes of other valuable things, which were greatly enriching and ornamental to it. Now the disciples suggest, by observing these, what a pity it was such a grand edifice should be destroyed; or how unaccountable it was; that a place of so much strength, could easily be demolished.

Ver. 2. *And Jesus said unto them, see ye not all these things*? etc.] “These great buildings”, as in Mark; all these goodly stones, so beautiful and large, and so firmly put together:

verily, I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down; or broken, as Munster’s Hebrew Gospel reads it: which prediction had a full and remarkable accomplishment; and which is not only attested by Josephus [f1353], who relates, that both the city and temple were dug up, and laid level with the ground; but also by other Jewish writers; who tell us [f1354] that

> “on the ninth of Ab, a day prepared for punishments, Turnus Rufus the wicked, lkyhh ta çrj, “ploughed up the temple”, and all

> round about it, to fulfil what is said, “Zion shall be ploughed as a field”.”

Yes, and to fulfil what Christ here says too, that not one stone should be left upon another, which a plough would not admit of.

Ver. 3. *And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives*, etc.] Which was on the east of the city of Jerusalem [f1355], “over against the temple”, as Mark says, and where he could sit and take a full view of it; for the wall on the east side was lower than any other, and that for this reason; that when the high priest burnt the red heifer on this mount, as he did, and sprinkled the blood, he might have a view of the gate of the temple. It is said [f1356],

> “all the walls which were there, were very high, except the eastern wall; for the high priest, when he burned the heifer, stood on the top of the mount of Olives, and directed himself, and looked to the gate of the temple, at the time he sprinkled the blood.”

This place, very probably, our Lord chose to sit in, that he might give his disciples an occasion to discourse more largely with him on this subject; and that he might take the opportunity of acquainting them with what would be the signs and forerunners of this desolation, and so it proved:

the disciples came to him privately; these four at least, Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, as Mark relates; and that either separately from the rest of the disciples, or from the multitude: it might not be thought so proper, to ask the following questions before them, and they might suppose that Christ would not be so ready to give an answer to them plainly, before the common people; when they might hope to be indulged with one by him, in private:

saying, tell us, when shall these things be? That this house will be left desolate, these buildings will be destroyed, and not one stone left upon another? This first question relates purely to the destruction of the temple, and to this Christ first answers, from (<4004>Matthew 24:4-23).

And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? Which two are put together, as what they supposed would be at the same time, and immediately follow the destruction of the temple. That he was come in the flesh, and was the true Messiah, they firmly believed: he was with them, and they expected he would continue with them, for they had no notion of his leaving them, and coming again. When he at any time

spake of his dying and rising from the dead, they seemed not to understand it: wherefore this coming of his, the sign of which, they inquire, is not to be understood of his coming a second time to judge the world, at the last day; but of his coming in his kingdom and glory, which they had observed him some little time before to speak of; declaring that some present should not die, till they saw it: wherefore they wanted to be informed, by what sign they might know, when he would set up his temporal kingdom; for since the temple was to be destroyed, they might hope a new one would be built, much more magnificent than this, and which is a Jewish notion; and thai a new state of things would commence; the present world, or age, would be at a period; and the world to come, they had so often heard of from the Jewish doctors, would take place; and therefore they ask also, of the sign of the end of the world, or present state of things in the Jewish economy: to this Christ answers, in the latter part of this chapter, though not to the sense in which they put the questions; yet in the true sense of the coming of the son of man, and the end of the world; and in such a manner, as might be very instructive to them, and is to us.

Ver. 4. *And Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc.] Not to indulge their curiosity, but to instruct them in things useful to be known, and which might be cautions to them and others, against deceivers; confirm them in the faith of himself, when they should see his predictions accomplished; and be directions to them, of what might shortly be expected.

Take heed that no man deceive you: by pretending to come from God with a new revelation, setting himself up for the Messiah, after my departure; suggesting himself to be the person designed by God to be the deliverer of Israel, and to be sent by him, to set up a temporal kingdom, in great worldly splendour and glory; promising great names, and high places of honour and trust in it; things which Christ knew his disciples were fond of, and were in danger of being ensnared by; and therefore gives them this suitable and seasonable advice, and caution.

Ver. 5. *For many shall come in my name*, etc.] by his orders, or with delegated powers and authority from him; but should assume the name of the Messiah, which was peculiarly his, to themselves; and take upon them his office, and challenge the honour and dignity which belonged unto him:

saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many. This is the first sign, preceding the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem; as there was a general expectation among the Jews of a Messiah; that is, of one that

should arise and deliver them from the Roman yoke, which was the common idea tacked to that word; in this period of time, many set up themselves to be deliverers and redeemers of the people of Israel: who had each of them their followers in great numbers, whom they imposed upon, and brought to destruction. Of this sort was Theudas, not he that Gamaliel speaks of, (<4405>Acts 5:36) for he was before this time; but one that was in the time of Claudius Caesar, when Cuspius Fadus was governor of Judea; who persuaded a great number to follow him to the river Jordan, which he promised to divide, by a word of command, and give them a passage over; and thereby, as the historian observes [f1357], πολλους ηπατησην, "he deceived many"; which is the very thing that is here predicted: but he and his company were routed Fadus, and his head cut off. There was another called the Egyptian, mentioned in (<4405>Acts 21:38) who made an uproar, and led four thousand cut-throats into the wilderness; and this same man persuaded thirty thousand men to follow him to Mount Olivet, promising a free passage into the city; but he being vanquished by Felix, then governor of Judea; fled, and many of his followers were killed and taken [f1358]: and besides, there were many more magicians and impostors, that pretended to signs and wonders, and promised the people deliverance from their evils, by whom they were imposed upon to their ruin. There were others also besides these, that set up for deliverers, who called themselves by the name of the Messiah. Among these, we may reckon Simon Magus, who gave out that he was some great one; yea, expressly, that he was the word of God, and the Son of God [f1359], which were known names of the Messiah; and Dositheus the Samaritan, asserted himself to be Christ [f1360]; and also Menander affirmed, that no man could be saved, unless he was baptized in his name [f1361]; these are instances before the destruction of Jerusalem, and confirm the prophecy here delivered.

Ver. 6. *And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars*, etc.] This is the second sign of the destruction of Jerusalem: it is observable that this, and some of the following signs, are given by the Jews, as signs of the Messiah's coming; whereas they were forerunners of their ruin, for the rejection of him who was already come. They suppose the Messiah will come in the seventh year, or the year of rest and release:

> "On the seventh year (they say [f1362]) will be twmj lm, "wars": and in the going out, or at the close of the seventh year, the son of David will come."

Which wars, the gloss says, will be between the nations of the world, and Israel. Here wars may mean the commotions, insurrections, and seditions, against the Romans, and their governors; and the intestine slaughters committed among them, some time before the siege of Jerusalem, and the destruction of it. Under Cureanus the Roman governor, a sedition was raised on the day of the passover, in which twenty thousand perished; after that, in another tumult, ten thousand were destroyed by cut-throats: in Ascalon two thousand more, in Ptolemais two thousand, at Alexandria fifty thousand, at Damascus ten thousand, and elsewhere in great numbers [f1363]. The Jews were also put into great consternation, upon hearing the design of the Roman emperor, to put up his image in their temple:

see that ye be not troubled; so as to leave the land of Judea as yet, and quit the preaching of the Gospel there, as if the final destruction was just at hand;

for all these things must come to pass; these wars and the reports of them and the panic on account of them; these commotions and slaughters, and terrible devastations by the sword must be; being determined by God, predicted by Christ, and brought upon the Jews by their own wickedness; and suffered in righteous judgment, for their sin:

but the end is not yet; meaning not the end of the world, but the end of Jerusalem, and the temple, the end of the Jewish state; which were to continue, and did continue after these disturbances in it.

Ver. 7. *For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom*, etc.] This seems to be a distinct and third sign, foreboding the general calamity of the Jews; that there should be not only seditions and intestine wars, in the midst of their country, but there should be wars in other nations, one with another; and with the Jews, and the Jews with them: and this also is made a sign of the Messiah's coming by them, for so they say [f1364];

> "when thou seest, wlab wla twrgtm twyklm, "kingdoms stirred up one against another", look for the feet of the Messiah: know thou that so it shall be; for so it was in the days of Abraham: by the means of kingdoms stirred up one against another, redemption came to Abraham."

Poor blinded creatures! when these very things were the forerunners of their destruction. And so it was, the Jewish nation rose up against others, the Samaritans, Syrians, and Romans: there were great commotions in the Roman empire, between Otho and Vitellius, and Vitellius and Vespasian; and at length the Romans rose up against the Jews, under the latter, and entirely destroyed them; compare the writings in 2 Esdras:

> "And one shall undertake to fight against another, one city against another, one place against another, one people against another, and one realm against another." (2 Esdras 13:31)

> "the beginning of sorrows and great mournings; the beginning of famine and great death; the beginning of wars, and the powers shall stand in fear; the beginning of evils! what shall I do when these evils shall come?" (2 Esdras 16:18)

> "Therefore when there shall be seen earthquakes and uproars of the people in the world:" (2 Esdras 9:3)

And there shall be famines: a fourth sign of the desolation of the city and temple, and which the Jews also say, shall go before the coming of the Messiah:

> "in the second year (of the week of years) in which the son of David comes, they say [f1365], there will be "arrows of famine" sent forth; and in the third year, lwdg b[r, "a great famine": and men, women, and children, and holy men, and men of business, shall die."

But these have been already; they followed the Messiah, and preceded their destruction: one of these famines was in Claudius Caesar's time, was foretold by Agabus, and is mentioned in (<44128>Acts 11:28) and most dreadful ones there were, whilst Jerusalem was besieged, and before its utter ruin, related by Josephus.

And pestilences: a pestilence is described by the Jews after this manner [f1366]:

> "a city that produces a thousand and five hundred footmen, as Cephar Aco, and nine dead men are carried out of it in three days, one after another, lo! rbd hz, "this is a pestilence"; but if in one day, or in four days, it is no pestilence; and a city that produces five

> hundred footmen, as Cephar Amiko, and three dead men are carried out of it in three days, one after another, lo! this is a pestilence."

These commonly attend famines, and are therefore mentioned together; and when the one was, the other may be supposed sooner or later to be:

and earthquakes in divers places of the world; as, at Crete [f1367], and in divers cities in Asia [f1368], in the times of Nero: particularly the three cities of Phrygia, Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse; which were near to each other, and are all said to perish this way, in his reign [f1369];

> "and Rome itself felt a tremor, in the reign of Galba [f1370]."

Ver. 8. *All these are the beginning of sorrows*, etc.] They were only a prelude unto them, and forerunners of them; they were only some foretastes of what would be, and were far from being the worst that should be endured. These were but light, in comparison of what befell the Jews, in their dreadful destruction. The word here used, signifies the sorrows and pains of a woman in travail. The Jews expect great sorrows and distresses in the times of the Messiah, and use a word to express them by, which answers to this, and call them, jyçmh ylbj, "the sorrows of the Messiah"; ylbj, they say [f1371], signifies the sorrows of a woman in travail; and the Syriac version uses the same word here. These they represent to be very great, and express much concern to be delivered from them. They [f1372] ask,

> "what shall a man do, to be delivered from "the sorrows of the Messiah?" He must employ himself in the law, and in liberality."

And again [f1373],

> "he that observes the three meals on the sabbath day, shall be delivered from three punishments; from "the sorrows of the Messiah", from the judgment of hell, and from Gog and Magog."

But alas there was no other way of escaping them, but by faith in the true Messiah, Jesus; and it was for their disbelief and rejection of him, that these came upon them.

Ver. 9. *Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted*, etc.] Our Lord proceeds to acquaint his disciples, what should befall them in this interval;

and quite contrary to their expectations, who were looking for a temporal kingdom, and worldly grandeur, assures them of afflictions, persecutions, and death; that about these times, when these various signs should appear, and this beginning of sorrows take place; whilst these will be fulfilling in Judea, and other parts of the world; the Jews continuing in their obstinacy and unbelief, would deliver them up to the civil magistrates, to be scourged and imprisoned by them; either to their own sanhedrim, as were Peter and John; or to the Roman governors, Gallio, Festus, and Felix, as was the Apostle Paul.

And shall kill you; as the two James', Peter, Paul, and even all the apostles, excepting John, who suffered martyrdom, and that before the destruction of Jerusalem:

and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake; as the apostles and first Christians were, both by Jews and Gentiles; the latter being stirred up against them by the former, wherever they came, and for no other reason, but because they professed and preached in the name of Christ, as the Acts of the Apostles show: and their hatred proceeded so far, as to charge all their calamities upon them; as war, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, etc. as the apologies of the first Christians declare.

Ver. 10. *And then shall many be offended*, etc.] That is, many who had been hearers of the apostles, and professors of the Christian religion; who were highly pleased with it, and were strenuous advocates for it, whilst things were tolerably quiet and easy; but when they saw the apostles, some of them beaten, and imprisoned; others put to death, and others forced to fly from place to place; and persecutions and affliction, because of Christ and his Gospel, likely to befall themselves, would be discouraged hereby, and stumble at the cross; and fall off from the faith of the Gospel, and the profession of it:

and shall betray one another; meaning, that the apostates, who would fall off from the Christian religion, would prove treacherous to true believers, and give in their names to the persecutors, or inform them where they were, that they might take them, or deliver them into their hands themselves: these are the false brethren, the Apostle Paul was in perils among:

and shall hate one another; not that the true Christians should hate these false brethren, any more than betray them; for they are taught to love all

men, even their enemies; but these apostates should hate them, in whose communion they before were, and to whom they belonged; and even to a very great degree of hatred, as it often is seen, that such who turn their backs on Christ, and his Gospel, prove the most bitter enemies, and most violent persecutors of its preachers and followers.

Ver. 11. *And many false prophets shall rise*, etc.] Out of, from among the churches of Christ; at least under the name of Christians; for false teachers are here meant, men of heretical principles, pretending to a spirit of prophecy, and to new revelations, and a better understanding of the Scriptures; such as Simon Magus, Ebion, and Cerinthus, who denied the proper deity, and real humanity of Christ; Carpocrates, and the Gnostics his followers, the Nicolaitans, Hymcneus, Philetus, and others:

and shall deceive many: as they all of them had their followers, and large numbers of them, whose faith was subverted by them; and who followed their pernicious ways, being imposed upon and seduced by their fair words, specious pretences, and licentious practices.

Ver. 12. *And because iniquity shall abound*, etc.] Meaning, either the malice and wickedness of outrageous persecutors, which should greatly increase; or the treachery and hatred of the apostates; or the errors and heresies of false teachers; or the wickedness that prevailed in the lives and conversations of some, that were called Christians: for each of these seem to be hinted at in the context, and may be all included, as making up the abounding iniquity here spoken of; the consequence of which would be,

the love of many shall wax cold. This would be the case of many, but not of all; for in the midst of this abounding iniquity, there were some, the ardour of whose love to Christ, to his Gospel, and to the saints, did not abate: but then there were many, whose zeal for Christ, through the violence of persecution, was greatly damped; and through the treachery of false brethren, were shy of the saints themselves, not knowing who to trust; and through the principles of the false teachers, the power of godliness, and the vital heat of religion, were almost lost; and through a love of the world, and of carnal ease and pleasure, love to the saints was grown very chill, and greatly left; as the instances of Demas, and those that forsook the Apostle Paul, at his first answer before Nero, show. This might be true of such, who were real believers in Christ; who might fall under great decays, through the prevalence of iniquity; since it does not say their love shall be lost, but wax cold.

Ver. 13. *But he that shall endure to the end*, etc.] In the profession of faith in Christ, notwithstanding the violent persecutions of wicked men; and in the pure and incorrupt doctrines of the Gospel, whilst many are deceived by the false teachers that shall arise; and in holiness of life and conversation, amidst all the impurities of the age; and shall patiently bear all afflictions, to the end of his life, or to the end of sorrows, of which the above mentioned were the beginning:

the same shall be saved; with a temporal salvation, when Jerusalem, and the unbelieving inhabitants of it shall be destroyed: for those that believed in Christ, many of them, through persecution, were obliged to remove from thence; and others, by a voice from heaven, were bid to go out of it, as they did; and removed to Pella, a village a little beyond Jordan[f1374], and so were preserved from the general calamity; and also with an everlasting salvation, which is the case of all that persevere to the end, as all true believers in Christ will.

Ver. 14. *And this Gospel of the kingdom*, etc.] Which Christ himself preached, and which he called and sent his apostles to preach, in all the cities of Judah; by which means men were brought into the kingdom of the Messiah, or Gospel dispensation; and which treated both of the kingdom of grace and glory, and pointed out the saints' meetness for the kingdom of heaven, and their right unto it, and gives the best account of the glories of it:

shall be preached in all the world; not only in Judea, where it was now confined, and that by the express orders of Christ himself; but in all the nations of the world, for which the apostles had their commission enlarged, after our Lord's resurrection; when they were bid to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; and when the Jews put away the Gospel from them, they accordingly turned to the Gentiles; and before the destruction of Jerusalem, it was preached to all the nations under the heavens; and churches were planted in most places, through the ministry of it:

for a witness unto all nations; meaning either for a witness against all such in them, as should reject it; or as a testimony of Christ and salvation, unto all such as should believe in him:

and then shall the end come; not the end of the world, as the Ethiopic version reads it, and others understand it; but the end of the Jewish state,

the end of the city and temple: so that the universal preaching of the Gospel all over the world, was the last criterion and sign, of the destruction of Jerusalem; and the account of that itself next follows, with the dismal circumstances which attended it.

Ver. 15. *When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation*, etc.] From signs, Christ proceeds to the immediate cause of the destruction of Jerusalem; which was, "the abomination of desolation", or the desolating abomination; or that abominable thing, which threatened and brought desolation upon the city, temple, and nation: by which is meant, not any statue placed in the temple by the Romans, or their order; not the golden eagle which Herod set upon the temple gate, for that was before Christ said these words; nor the image of Tiberius Caesar, which Pilate is said to bring into the temple; for this, if true, must be about this time; whereas Christ cannot be thought to refer to anything so near at hand; much less the statue of Adrian, set in the most holy place, which was an hundred and thirty years and upwards, after the destruction of the city and temple; nor the statue of Titus, who destroyed both, which does not appear: ever to be set up, or attempted; nor of Caligula, which, though ordered, was prevented being placed there: but the Roman army is designed; (see <42120>Luke 21:20) which was the µmçm µyxwqç Pnk, "the wing", or "army of abominations making desolate", (<270927>Daniel 9:27). Armies are called wings, (<230808>Isaiah 8:8) and the Roman armies were desolating ones to the Jews, and to whom they were an abomination; not only because they consisted of Heathen men, and uncircumcised persons, but chiefly because of the images of their gods, which were upon their ensigns: for images and idols were always an abomination to them; so the "filthiness" which Hezekiah ordered to be carried out of the holy place, (<142905>2 Chronicles 29:5) is by the Targum called, aqwjyr, "an abomination"; and this, by the Jewish writers [f1375], is said to be an idol, which Ahaz had placed upon the altar; and such was the abomination of desolation, which Antiochus caused to be set upon the altar:

> "Now the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and fifth year, they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side;" (1 Maccabees 1:54)

And so the Talmudic writers, by the abomination that makes desolate, in (<271211>Daniel 12:11 9:27) to which Christ here refers, understand an image,

which they say [f1376] one Apostomus, a Grecian general, who burnt their law, set up in the temple. Now our Lord observes, that when they should see the Roman armies encompassing Jerusalem, with their ensigns flying, and these abominations on them, they might conclude its desolation was near at hand; and he does not so much mean his apostles, who would be most of them dead, or in other countries, when this would come to pass; but any of his disciples and followers, or any persons whatever, by whom should be seen this desolating abomination,

spoken of by Daniel the prophet: not in (<27113>Daniel 11:31) which is spoken of the abomination in the times of Antiochus; but either in (<27121>Daniel 12:11) or rather in (<27027>Daniel 9:27) since this desolating abomination is that, which should follow the cutting off of the Messiah, and the ceasing of the daily sacrifice. It is to be observed, that Daniel is here called a prophet, contrary to what the Jewish writers say [f1377], who deny him to be one; though one of [f1378] no inconsiderable note among them affirms, that he attained to the end, yyawbnh lwbgh, "of the prophetic border", or the ultimate degree of prophecy: when therefore this that Daniel, under a spirit of prophecy, spoke of should be seen,

standing in the holy place; near the walls, and round about the holy city Jerusalem, so called from the sanctuary and worship of God in it; and which, in process of time, stood in the midst of it, and in the holy temple, and destroyed both; then

whoso readeth, let him understand: that is, whoever then reads the prophecy of Daniel; will easily understand the meaning of it, and will see and know for certain, that now it is accomplished; and will consider how to escape the desolating judgment, unless he is given up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart; which was the case of the greater part of the nation.

Ver. 16. *Then let them which be in Judea*, etc.] When this signal is given, let it be taken notice of and observed; let them that are in the city of Jerusalem, depart out of it; or who are in any other parts of Judea, in any of the towns, or cities thereof; let them not betake themselves to Jerusalem, imagining they may be safe there, in so strong and fortified a place, but let them flee elsewhere; (see <42121>Luke 21:21) and accordingly it is observed, that many did flee about this time; and it is remarked by several interpreters, and which Josephus [f1379] takes notice of with surprise, that Cestius Gallus having advanced with his army to Jerusalem, and besieged

it, on a sudden, without any cause, raised the siege, and withdrew his army, when the city might have been easily taken; by which means a signal was made; and an opportunity given to the Christians, to make their escape: which they accordingly did, and went over Jordan, as Eusebius says [f1380], to a place called Pella; so that when Titus came a few mouths after, there was not a Christian in the city, but they had fled as they are here bidden to

flee into the mountains; or any places of shelter and refuge: these are mentioned particularly, because they are usually such; and design either the mountains in Judea, or in the adjacent countries. The Syriac and Persic versions read in the singular number, “into the mountain”; and it is reported that many of them did fly, particularly to Mount Libanus [f1381].

Ver. 17. *Let him which is on the housetop*, etc.] Who should be there either for his devotion or recreation; for the houses of the Jews were built with flat roofs and battlements about them, which they made use of both for diversion and pleasure, and for private meditation and prayer, for social conversation, and sometimes for public preaching; (see <400027>Matthew 10:27, <441009>Acts 10:9)

not come down to take anything out of his house: that is, let him not come down in the inner way, but by the stairs, or ladder, on the outside of the house, which was usual. They had two ways of going out of, and into their houses; the one they call [f1382], µyjtp Ærd, “the way of the doors”; the other, ^ygg Ærd, “the way of the roof”: upon which the gloss is,

> “to go up on the outside, µlwp Ærd, “by way” or “means” of a ladder, fixed at the entrance of the door of the upper room, and from thence he goes down into the house by a ladder;”

and in the same way they could come out; (see <410204>Mark 2:4) and let him not go into his house to take any of his goods, or money, or food along with him necessary for his sustenance in his flight; lest, whilst he is busy in taking care of these, he loses his life, or, at least, the opportunity of making his escape; so sudden is this desolation represented to be.

Ver. 18. *Neither let him which is in the field*, etc.] Ploughing, or sowing, or employed in any other parts of husbandry, or rural business,

return back to take clothes; for it was usual to work in the fields without their clothes, as at ploughing and sowing. Hence those words of Virgil [f1383].

“Nudus ara, sere nudus, hyems ignava colono.”

Upon which Servius observes, that in good weather, when the sun warms the earth, men might plough and sow without their clothes: and it is reported by the historian [f1384] of Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, that the messengers who were sent to him, from Minutius the consul, whom he had delivered from a siege, found him ploughing naked beyond the Tiber: not that he was entirely naked, but was stripped of his upper garments: and it is usual for people that work in the fields to strip themselves to their shirts, and lay their clothes at the corner of the field, or at the land’s end; and which we must suppose to be the case here: for our Lord’s meaning is not, that the man working in the field, should not return home to fetch his clothes, which were not left there; they were brought with him into the field, but put off; and laid aside in some part of it while at work; but that as soon as he had the news of Jerusalem being besieged, he should immediately make the best of his way, and flee to the mountains, as Lot was bid to do at the burning of Sodom; and he might not return to the corner of the field, or land’s end, where his clothes lay, as Lot was not to look behind; though if his clothes lay in the way of his flight, he might take them up, but might not go back for them, so sudden and swift should be the desolation. The Vulgate Latin reads, in the singular number, “his coat”; and so do the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and Munster’s Hebrew Gospel; and so it was read in four copies of Beza’s, in three of Stephens’s, and in others; and may design the upper coat or garment, which was put off whilst at work.

Ver. 19. *And woe unto them that are with child*, etc.] Not that it should be criminal for them to be with child, or a judgment on them; for it was always esteemed a blessing to be fruitful, and bear children: but this expresses the miserable circumstances such would be in, who, by reason of their heavy burdens, would not be able to make so speedy a flight, as the case would require; or would be obliged to stay at home, and endure all the miseries of the siege: so that these words, as the following are not expressive of sin, or punishment, but of pity and concern for their misery and distress:

and to them that give suck in those days; whose tender affection to their infants will not suffer them to leave them behind them; and yet such their weakness, that they will not be able to carry them with them; at least, they must be great hindrances to their speedy flight. So that the case of these is

much worse than that of men on the house top, or in the field, who could much more easily leave their goods and clothes, than these their children, as well as had more agility and strength of body to flee. So twqynymw twrbw[, "women with child, and that give suck"; are mentioned together in the Jewish writings, as such as were excused from certain fasts, though obliged to others [f1385].

Ver. 20. *But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter*, etc.] When days are short, and unfit for long journeys, and roads are bad, and sometimes not passable, through large snows, or floods of water; and when to dwell in desert places, and lodge in mountains, must be very uncomfortable: wherefore Christ directs to pray to God, who has the disposal of all events, and of the timing of them, that he would so order things in the course of his providence, that their flight might not be in such a season of the year, when travelling would be very difficult and troublesome. Dr. Lightfoot observes, from a Jewish writer [f1386], that it is remarked as a favour of God in the destruction of the first temple, that it happened in the summer, and not in winter; whose words are these:

> "God vouchsafed a great favour to Israel, for they ought to have gone out of the land on the tenth day of the month Tebeth; as he saith (2642 Ezekiel 24:2) "son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this same day": what then did the Lord, holy and blessed? If they shall now go out in the winter, (saith he,) they will all die; therefore he prolonged the time to them, and carried them away in summer."

And since therefore they received such a favour from him at the destruction of the first temple, there was encouragement to pray to him, that they might be indulged with the like favour when Jerusalem should be besieged again:

neither on the sabbath day: the word "day" is not in the Greek text; and some [f1387] have been of opinion, that the "sabbatical year", or the seventh year, is meant, when no fruits would be found in the fields, and a great scarcity of provisions among people; who would not have a sufficiency, and much less any to spare to strangers fleeing from their native places; but rather the sabbath day, or "day of the sabbath", as the Persic version reads it, is designed; and Beza says, four of his copies read it in the genitive case: and so four of Stephens's. And the reason why our Lord put them on

praying, that their flight might not be on the sabbath day, was, because he knew not only that the Jews, who believed not in him, would not suffer them to travel on a sabbath day more than two thousand cubits; which, according to their traditions [f1388], was a sabbath day's journey; and which would not be sufficient for their flight to put them out of danger; but also, that those that did believe in him, particularly the Jerusalem Jews, would be all of them fond of the law of Moses, and scrupulous of violating any part of it, and especially that of the sabbath; (see <442120>Acts 21:20). And though the Jews did allow, that the sabbath might be violated where life was in danger, and that it was lawful to defend themselves against an enemy on the sabbath day; yet this did not universally obtain; and it was made a question of, after the time of Christ, whether it was lawful to flee from danger on the sabbath day; of which take the following account [f1389].

> "Our Rabbins teach, that he that is pursued by Gentiles, or by thieves, may profane the sabbath for the sake of saving his life: and so we find of David, when Saul sought to slay him, he fled from him, and escaped. Our Rabbins say, that it happened that evil writings (or edicts) came from the government to the great men of Tzippore; and they went, and said to R. Eleazar ben Prata, evil edicts are come to us from the government, what dost thou say? jrbn, "shall we flee?" and he was afraid to say to them "flee"; but he said to them with a nod, why do you ask me? go and ask Jacob, and Moses, and David; as it is written, of Jacob, (<281212>Hosea 12:12) "and Jacob fled"; and so of Moses, (<020215>Exodus 2:15) "and Moses fled"; and so of David, (<091918>1 Samuel 19:18) "and David fled, and escaped": and he (God) says, (<232620>Isaiah 26:20) "come my people, enter into thy chambers"."

From whence, it is plain, it was a question with the doctors in Tzippore, which was a town in Galilee, where there was an university, whether it was lawful to flee on the sabbath day or not; and though the Rabbi they applied to was of opinion it was lawful, yet he was fearful of speaking out his sense plainly, and therefore delivered it by signs and hints. Now our Lord's meaning, in putting them on this petition, was, not to prevent the violation of the seventh day sabbath, or on account of the sacredness of it, which he knew would be abolished, and was abolished before this time; but he says this with respect to the opinion of the Jews, and "Judaizing" Christians, who, taking that day to be sacred, and fleeing on it unlawful, would find a difficulty with themselves, and others, to make their escape; otherwise it

was as lawful to flee and travel on that day, as in the winter season; though both, for different reasons, incommodious.

Ver. 21. *For then shall be great tribulation*, etc.] This is urged as a reason for their speedy flight; since the calamity that would come upon those who should remain in the city, what through the sword, famine, pestilence, murders, robberies, etc. would

be such as was not since the beginning of the world, to this time, no, nor ever shall be. The burning of Sodom and Gomorrha, the bondage of the children of Israel in Egypt, their captivity in Babylon, and all their distresses and afflictions in the times of the Maccabees, are nothing to be compared with the calamities which befell the Jews in the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. Great desolations have been made in the besieging and at the taking of many famous cities, as Troy, Babylon, Carthage, etc. but none of them are to be mentioned with the deplorable case of this city. Whoever reads Josephus's account will be fully convinced of this; and readily join with him, who was an eyewitness of it, when he says [f1390], that

> "never did any city suffer such things, nor was there ever any generation that more abounded in malice or wickedness."

And indeed, all this came upon them for their impenitence and infidelity, and for their rejection and murdering of the Son of God; for as never any before, or since, committed the sin they did, or ever will, so there never did, or will, the same calamity befall a nation, as did them.

Ver. 22. *And except those days should be shortened*, etc.] That is, those days of tribulation which commenced at the siege of Jerusalem; and therefore cannot refer to the times before it, and the shortening of them by it, which were very dreadful and deplorable through the murders and robberies of the cut-throats and zealots; but to those after the siege began, which were very distressing to those that were within; and which, if they had not been shortened, or if the siege had been lengthened out further,

there should no flesh be saved; not one Jew in the city of Jerusalem would have been saved; they must everyone have perished by famine, or pestilence, or sword, or by the intestine wars and murders among themselves: nor indeed, if the siege had continued, would it have fared better with the inhabitants of the other parts of the country, among whom also many of the same calamities prevailed and spread themselves; so that,

in all likelihood, if these days had been continued a little longer, there had not been a Jew left in all the land.

But for the elect's sake; those who were chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to believe in him, and to be saved by him with an everlasting salvation; both those that were in the city, or, at least, who were to spring from some that were there, as their immediate offspring, or in future ages, and therefore they, and their posterity, must not be cut off; and also those chosen ones, and real believers, who were at Pella, and in the mountains, and other places, for the sake of these, and that they might be delivered from these pressing calamities,

those days shall be shortened: for otherwise, if God had not preserved a seed, a remnant, according to the election of grace, that should be saved, they had been as Sodom and as Gomorrha, not one would have escaped. The shortening of those days is not to be understood literally, as if the natural days, in which this tribulation was, were to be shorter than usual. The Jews indeed often speak of the shortening of days in this sense, as miraculously done by God: so they say [f1391], that

> "five miracles were wrought for our father Jacob, when he went from Beersheba to go to Haran. The first miracle was, that amwyd yw[ç hyl wrxqta, "the hours of the day were shortened for him", and the sun set before its time, because his word desired to speak with him."

They also say [f1392],

> "that the day in which Ahaz died, was shortened ten hours, that they might not mourn for him; and which afterwards rose up, and in the day that Hezekiah was healed, ten hours were added to it."

But the meaning here is, that the siege of Jerusalem, and the calamities attending it, should be sooner ended: not than God had determined, but than the sin of the Jews deserved, and the justice of God might have required in strict severity, and might be reasonably expected, considering the aggravated circumstances of their iniquities. A like manner of speech is used by the Karaite Jews [f1393], who say,

> "if we walk in our law, why is our captivity prolonged, and there is not found balm for our wounds? and why are not µhymy wj[mtn,

"the days" of the golden and silver kingdom "lessened", for the righteousness of the righteous, which were in their days?"

Ver. 23. *Then if any man shall say unto you*, etc.] Either at the time when the siege shall be begun, and the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place; or during the days of tribulation, whilst the siege lasted; or after those days were shortened, and the city destroyed, and the Roman army was gone with their captives: when some, that were scattered up and down in the country, would insinuate to their countrymen, that the Messiah was in such a place: saying,

lo! here is Christ, or there, believe it not; for both during the time of the siege, there were such that sprung up, and pretended to be Messiahs, and deliverers of them from the Roman power, and had their several abettors; one saying he was in such place, and another that he was in such a place; and so spirited up the people not to fly, nor to deliver up the city; and also, after the city was taken and destroyed, one and another set up for the Messiah. Very quickly after, one Jonathan, a very wicked man, led many into the desert of Cyrene, promising to show them signs and wonders, and was overthrown by Catullius, the Roman governor [f1394]; and after that, in the times of Adrian, the famous Barcochab set up for the Messiah, and was encouraged by R. Akiba, and a multitude of Jews [f1395].

Ver. 24. *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets*, etc.] Such as the above mentioned: these false Christs had their false prophets, who endeavoured to persuade the people to believe them to be the Messiah, as Barcochab had Akiba, who applied many prophecies to him. This man was called Barcochab, which signifies the son of a star, in allusion to (<0247>Numbers 24:17) he was crowned by the Jews, and proclaimed the Messiah by Akiba; upon which a Roman army was sent against him, and a place called Bitter was besieged, and taken, and he, and a prodigious number of Jews were destroyed. This deceiver was afterwards, by them, called Barcoziba, the son of a lie:

and shall show great signs and wonders; make an appearance of doing them, though they really did them not: so that Jonathan, before mentioned, pretended to show signs and sights; and Barcochab made as if flame came out of his mouth; and many of the Jewish doctors in these times, and following, gave themselves up to sorcery, and the magic art; and are, many

of them, often said[f1396] to be µysnb µydmwlm, “expert in wonders”, or miracles:

if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. By whom we are to understand, not the choicest believers, or the persevering Christians: not but that such who are truly converted, are choice believers in Christ, and persevering Christians are undoubtedly the elect of God; but then the reason why they are elect, and why they are so called, is not because they are converted, are choice believers, and persevering Christians; but, on the contrary, the reason why they are converted, become true believers, and persevere to the end, is, because they are elected; conversion, faith, and perseverance being not the causes or conditions, but the fruits and effects of election: besides to talk of the final seduction of a persevering Christian, is a contradiction in terms. Such an interpretation of the phrase must be absurd and impertinent; for who knows not that a persevering Christian cannot be finally and totally deceived? But by the elect are meant, a select number of particular persons of Adam’s posterity, whom God, of his sovereign goodwill and pleasure, without respect to their faith, holiness, and good works, has chosen, in Christ, before the foundation of the world, both to grace and glory: and to deceive these finally and totally, is impossible, as is here suggested; not impossible, considering their own weakness, and the craftiness of deceivers, who, if left to themselves, and the power of such deception, and the working of Satan with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, might easily be seduced; but considering the purposes and promises of God concerning them, the provisions of his grace for them, the security of them in the hands of Christ, and their preservation by the mighty power of God, their final and total deception is not only difficult, but impossible. They may be, and are deceived before conversion; this is one part of their character whilst unregenerate, “foolish, disobedient, deceived”, (Titus 3:3) yea, they may be, and oftentimes are, deceived after conversion; but then this is in part only, and not totally; in some lesser, and not in the greater matters of faith; not so as to let go their hold of Christ their head, and quit the doctrine of salvation by him, or fall into damnable heresies: they may be seduced from the simplicity of the Gospel, but not finally; for they shall be recovered out of the snare of the devil, and not to be left to perish in such deceivings. This clause, as it expresses the power of deceivers, and the efficacy of Satan, so the influence and certainty of electing grace and the sure and firm perseverance of the saints, to the end, notwithstanding the

cunning and craft of men and devils; for if these, with all their signs and wonders, could not deceive them, it may be pronounced impossible that they ever should be finally and totally deceived.

Ver. 25. *Behold, I have told you before*.] Meaning not before in this discourse, though he had in (<4024>Matthew 24:5,11) signified also, that false Christs, and false prophets should arise, but before these things came to pass; so that they had sufficient notice and warning of them, and would be inexcusable if they were not upon their guard against them; and which, when they came to pass, would furnish out a considerable argument in proof of him, as the true Messiah, against all these false ones, showing him to be omniscient; and so would serve to establish their faith in him, and be a means of securing them from such deceivers.

Ver. 26. *Wherefore if they shall say unto you*, etc.] Any of the false prophets, or the deluded followers of false Christs:

behold, he is in the desert, go not forth: that is, should they affirm, that the Messiah is in such a wilderness, in the wilderness of Judea, or in any other desert place, do not go out of the places where you are to see, or hear, and know the truth of things; lest you should, in any respect, be stumbled, ensnared, and brought into danger. It was usual for these impostors to lead their followers into deserts, pretending to work wonders in such solitary places: so, during the siege, Simon, the son of Giora, collected together many thousands in the mountainous and desert parts of Judea [f1397]; and the above mentioned Jonathan, after the destruction of the city, led great multitudes into the desert:

behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not; or should others say behold, or for certain, the Messiah is in some one of the secret and fortified places of the temple; where, during some time of the siege, were John and Eleazar, the heads of the zealots [f1398]; do not believe them. Some reference may be had to the chamber of secrets, which was in the temple [f1399];

> “for in the sanctuary there were two chambers; one was called µyaçj tkçl, “the chamber of secrets”, and the other the chamber of vessels.”

Or else some respect may be had to the notions of the Jews, concerning the Messiah, which they imbibed about these times, and ever since retained, that he was born the day Jerusalem was destroyed, but is hid, for their sins,

in some secret place, and will in time be revealed [f1400]. Some say, that he is hid in the sea; others, in the walks of the garden of Eden; and others, that he sits among the lepers at the gates of Rome [f1401]. The Syriac version here reads in the singular number, "in the bedchamber"; in some private apartment, where he remains till a proper time of showing himself offers, for fear of the Romans: but these are all idle notions, and none of them to be believed. The true Messiah is come, and has showed himself to Israel; and even the giving out these things discovers a consciousness, and a conviction that the Messiah is come.

Ver. 27. *For as the lightning cometh out of the east*, etc.] The eastern part of the horizon,

and shineth even unto the west; to the western part of it, with great clearness; in a moment; in the twinkling of an eye, filling the whole intermediate space;

so shall also the coming of the son of man be; which must be understood not of his last coming to judgment, though that will be sudden, visible, and universal; he will at once come to, and be seen by all, in the clouds of heaven, and not in deserts and secret chambers: nor of his spiritual coming in the more sudden, and clear, and powerful preaching of the Gospel all over the Gentile world; for this was to be done before the destruction of Jerusalem: but of his coming in his wrath and vengeance to destroy that people, their nation, city, and temple: so that after this to look for the Messiah in a desert, or secret chamber, must argue great stupidity and blindness; when his coming was as sudden, visible, powerful, and general, to the destruction of that nation, as the lightning that comes from the east, and, in a moment, shines to the west.

Ver. 28. *For wheresoever the carcass is*, etc.] Not Christ, as he is held forth in the Gospel, crucified and slain, through whose death is the savour of life, and by whom salvation is, and to whom sensible sinners flock, encouraged by the ministry of the word; and much less Christ considered as risen, exalted, and coming in great glory to judgment, to whom the word "carcass" will by no means agree, and but very poorly under the former consideration: but the people of the Jews are designed by it, in their fallen, deplorable, miserable, and lifeless state, who were like to the body of a man, or any other creature, struck dead with lightning from heaven; being destroyed by the breath of the mouth, and brightness of the coming of the son of man, like lightning, just as antichrist will be at the last day:

there will the eagles be gathered together: not particular believers here, or all the saints at the day of judgment; though these may be, as they are, compared to eagles for many things; as their swiftness in flying to Christ, their sagacity and the sharpness of their spiritual sight, soaring on high, and renewing their spiritual strength and youth: but here the Roman armies are intended, whose ensigns were eagles; and the eagle still is, to this day, the ensign of the Roman empire: formerly other creatures, with the eagle, were used for ensigns; but C. Marius, in his second consulship, banished them, and appropriated the eagle only to the legions: nor was it a single eagle that was carried before the army, but every legion had an eagle went before it, made of gold or silver, and carried upon the top of a spear [f1402]: and the sense of this passage is this, that wherever the Jews were, whether at Jerusalem, where the body and carcass of them was, in a most forlorn and desperate condition; or in any other parts of the country, the Roman eagles, or legions, would find them out, and make an utter destruction of them. The Persic version, contrary to others, and to all copies, renders it "vultures". Though this creature is of the same nature with the eagle, with respect to feeding on carcasses: hence the proverb,

"cujus vulturis hoe erit cadaver?"

"what vulture shall have this carcass?" It has a very sharp sight, and quick smell, and will, by both, discern carcasses at almost incredible distance: it will diligently watch a man that is near death; and will follow armies going to battle, as historians relate [f1403]: and it is the eagle which is of the vulture kind, as Aristotle [f1404] observes, that takes up dead bodies, and carries them to its nest. And Pliny [f1405] says, it is that sort of eagles only which does so; and some have affirmed that eagles will by no means touch dead carcasses: but this is contrary not only to this passage of Scripture, but to others; particularly to (Job 39:30) "her young ones also suck up blood, and where the slain are, there is she": an expression much the same with this in the text, and to which it seems to refer; see also (Proverbs 30:17). Though Chrysostom [f1406] says, both the passage in Job, and this in Matthew, are to be understood of vultures; he doubtless means the eagles that are of the vulture kind, the Gypaeetos, or vulture eagle. There is one kind of eagles, naturalists say [f1407], will not feed on flesh, which is called the bird of Jupiter; but, in common, the eagle is represented as a very rapacious creature, seizing, and feeding upon the flesh of hares, fawns, geese, etc. and the rather this creature is designed here; since, of all birds, this is the only one that is not hurt with lightning [f1408], and so can

immediately seize carcasses killed thereby; to which there seems to be an allusion here, by comparing it with the preceding verse: however, the Persic version, though it is literally a proper one, yet from the several things observed, it is not to be overlooked and slighted.

Ver. 29. *Immediately after the tribulation of those days*, etc.] That is, immediately after the distress the Jews would be in through the siege of Jerusalem, and the calamities attending it; just upon the destruction of that city, and the temple in it, with the whole nation of the Jews, shall the following things come to pass; and therefore cannot be referred to the last judgment, or what should befall the church, or world, a little before that time, or should be accomplished in the whole intermediate time, between the destruction of Jerusalem, and the last judgment: for all that is said to account for such a sense, as that it was usual with the prophets to speak of judgments afar off as near; and that the apostles often speak of the coming of Christ, the last judgment, and the end of the world, as just at hand; and that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, will not answer to the word "immediately", or show that that should be understood of two thousand years after: besides, all the following things were to be fulfilled before that present generation, in which Christ lived, passed away, (Matthew 24:34) and therefore must be understood of things that should directly, and immediately take place upon, or at the destruction of the city and temple.

Shall the sun be darkened: not in a literal but in a figurative sense; and is to be understood not of the religion of the Jewish church; nor of the knowledge of the law among them, and the decrease of it; nor of the Gospel being obscured by heretics and false teachers; nor of the temple of Jerusalem, senses which are given into by one or another; but of the Shekinah, or the divine presence in the temple. The glory of God, who is a sun and a shield, filled the tabernacle, when it was reared up; and so it did the temple, when it was built and dedicated; in the most holy place, Jehovah took up his residence; here was the symbol of his presence, the mercy seat, and the two cherubim over it: and though God had for some time departed from this people, and a voice was heard in the temple before its destruction, saying, "let us go hence"; yet the token of the divine presence remained till the utter destruction of it; and then this sun was wholly darkened, and there was not so much as the outward symbol of it:

and the moon shall not give her light; which also is to be explained in a figurative and metaphorical sense; and refers not to the Roman empire, which quickly began to diminish; nor to the city of Jerusalem; nor to the civil polity of the nation; but to the ceremonial law, the moon, the church is said to have under her feet, (<66201>Revelation 12:1) so called because the observance of new moons was one part of it, and the Jewish festivals were regulated by the moon; and especially, because like the moon, it was variable and changeable. Now, though this, in right, was abolished at the death of Christ, and ceased to give any true light, when he, the substance, was come; yet was kept up by the Jews, as long as their temple was standing; but when that was destroyed, the daily sacrifice, in fact, ceased, and so it has ever since; the Jews esteeming it unlawful to offer sacrifice in a strange land, or upon any other altar than that of Jerusalem; and are to this day without a sacrifice, and without an ephod:

and the stars shall fall from heaven; which phrase, as it elsewhere intends the doctors of the church, and preachers falling off from purity of doctrine and conversation; so here it designs the Jewish Rabbins and doctors, who departed from the word of God, and set up their traditions above it, fell into vain and senseless interpretations of it, and into debates about things contained in their Talmud; the foundation of which began to be laid immediately upon their dispersion into other countries:

and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; meaning all the ordinances of the legal dispensation; which shaking, and even removing of them, were foretold by (<37006>Haggai 2:6) and explained by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, (<58126>Hebrews 12:26,27) whereby room and way were made for Gospel ordinances to take place, and be established; which shall not be shaken, so as to be removed, but remain till the second coming of Christ. The Jews themselves are sensible, and make heavy complaints of the great declensions and alterations among them, since the destruction of the temple; for after having taken notice of the death of several of their doctors, who died a little before, or after that; and that upon their death ceased the honour of the law, the splendour of wisdom, and the glory of the priesthood, they add [f1409];

> “from the time that the temple was destroyed, the wise men, and sons of nobles, were put to shame, and they covered their heads; liberal men were reduced to poverty; and men of violence and calumny prevailed; and there were none that expounded, or

> inquired, or asked. R. Elezer the great, said, from the time the sanctuary were destroyed, the wise men began to be like Scribes, and the Scribes like to the Chazans, (or sextons that looked after the synagogues,) and the Chazans like to the common people, and the common people grew worse and worse, and there were none that inquired and asked;"

that is, of the wise men there were no scholars, or very few that studied in the law.

Ver. 30. *And then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven*, etc.] Not the sound of the great trumpet, mentioned in the following verse; nor the clouds of heaven in this; nor the sign of the cross appearing in the air, as it is said to do in the times of Constantine: not the former; for though to blow a trumpet is sometimes to give a sign, and is an alarm; and the feast which the Jews call the day of blowing the trumpets, (<042901>Numbers 29:1) is, by the Septuagint, rendered ημερα σημασιας, "the day of signification"; yet this sign is not said to be sounded, but to appear, or to be seen, which does not agree with the sounding of a trumpet: much less can this design the last trumpet at the day of judgment, since of that the text does not speak; and, for the same reason, the clouds cannot be meant in which Christ will come to judgment, nor are clouds in themselves any sign of it: nor the latter, of which there is no hint in the word of God, nor any reason to expect it, nor any foundation for it; nor is any miraculous star intended, such as appeared at Christ's first coming, but the son of man himself: just as circumcision is called the sign of circumcision, (<450411>Romans 4:11) and Christ is sometimes called a sign, (<420234>Luke 2:34) as is his resurrection from the dead, (<401239>Matthew 12:39) and here the glory and majesty in which he shall come: and it may be observed, that the other evangelists make no mention of the sign, only speak of the son of man, (<411326>Mark 13:26, <422127>Luke 21:27) and he shall appear, not in person, but in the power of his wrath and vengeance, on the Jewish nation which will be a full sign and proof of his being come: for the sense is, that when the above calamities shall be upon the civil state of that people, and there will be such changes in their ecclesiastical state it will be as clear a point, that Christ is come in the flesh, and that he is also come in his vengeance on that nation, for their rejection and crucifixion him, as if they had seen him appear in person in the heavens. They had been always seeking a sign, and were continually asking one of him; and now they will have a sign with a witness; as they had accordingly.

And then shall the tribes of the earth, or land, *mourn*; that is, the land of Judea; for other lands, and countries, were not usually divided into tribes, as that was; neither were they affected with the calamities and desolations of it, and the vengeance of the son of man upon it; at least not so as to mourn on that account, but rather were glad and rejoiced:

and they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. The Arabic version reads it, "ye shall see", as is expressed by Christ, in (40 26:64 Matthew 26:64). Where the high priest, chief priests, Scribes, and elders, and the whole sanhedrim of the Jews are spoken to: and as the same persons, namely, the Jews, are meant here as there; so the same coming of the son of man is intended; not his coming at the last day to judgment; though that will be in the clouds of heaven, and with great power and glory; but his coming to bring on, and give the finishing stroke to the destruction of that people, which was a dark and cloudy dispensation to them: and when they felt the power of his arm, might, if not blind and stupid to the last degree, see the glory of his person, that he was more than a mere man, and no other than the Son of God, whom they had despised, rejected, and crucified; and who came to set up his kingdom and glory in a more visible and peculiar manner, among the Gentiles.

Ver. 31. *And he shall send his angels*, etc.] Not the angels, i.e. ministering spirits, so called, not from their nature, but their office, as being sent forth by God and Christ; but men angels, or messengers, the ministers and preachers of the Gospel, whom Christ would call, qualify, and send forth into all the world of the Gentiles, to preach his Gospel, and plant churches there still more, when that at Jerusalem was broken up and dissolved. These are called "angels", because of their mission, and commission from Christ, to preach the Gospel; and because of their knowledge and understanding in spiritual things; and because of their zeal, diligence, and watchfulness.

With a great sound of a trumpet, meaning the Gospel; (see 23 27:13 Isaiah 27:13) so called in allusion either to the silver trumpets which Moses was ordered to make of one piece, and use them for the calling of the assembly, the journeying of the camps, blowing an alarm for war, and on their solemn and festival days, (4 10 Numbers 10:1-10). The Gospel being rich and precious, all of a piece, useful for gathering souls to Christ, and to his churches; to direct saints in their journey to Canaan's land; to encourage

them to fight the Lord's battles; and is a joyful sound, being a sound of love, grace, and mercy, peace, pardon, righteousness, life and salvation, by Christ: or else so called, in allusion to the trumpet blown in the year of "jubilee"; which proclaimed rest to the land, liberty to prisoners, a release of debts, and restoration of inheritances; as the Gospel publishes rest in Christ, liberty to the captives of sin, Satan, and the law, a payment of debts by Christ, and a release from them upon that, and a right and title to the heavenly inheritance. The Vulgate Latin reads it, "with a trumpet, and a great voice"; and so does Munster's Hebrew Gospel; and so it was read in four of Beza's copies:

and they shall gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other; that is, by the ministration of the Gospel; the Spirit of God accompanying it with his power, and grace, the ministers of the word should gather out of the world unto Christ, and to his churches, such persons as God had, before the foundation of the world, chosen in Christ, unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; wherever they are under the whole heavens, from one end to another; or in any part of the earth, though at the greatest distance; for in (<41 13 27>Mark 13:27) it is said, "from the uttermost part of the earth, to the uttermost part of the heaven". The Jews [f1410] say, that

> "in the after redemption (i.e. by the Messiah) all Israel shall be gathered together by the sound of a trumpet, from the four parts of the world."

Ver. 32. *Now learn a parable of the fig tree*, etc.] Take a similitude, or comparison from the fig tree, which was a tree well known in Judea; and the putting forth of its branches, leaves, and fruit, fell under the observation of everyone:

when its branch is yet tender; through the influence of the sun, and the motion of the sap, which was bound up, and congealed in the winter season:

and putteth forth leaves; from the tender branches, which swell, and open, and put forth buds, leaves, and fruit:

ye know the summer is nigh; spring being already come: the fig tree putting forth her green figs, is a sign that the winter is past, the spring is come, and summer is at hand; (see <22 02 11>Song of Solomon 2:11,13).

Ver. 33. *So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things*, etc.] That are mentioned above, relating to the signs of the destruction of the temple and city, and the destruction itself, with all those several things that should directly take place upon it; this is an accommodation of the above parable, similitude, or comparison:

know that it is near, even at the doors; meaning, either that "he is near", as the Ethiopic version reads it, the son of man is near, even at the doors; or as the Vulgate Latin renders it, "in the gates", or "doors", and so does Munster's Hebrew Gospel; and signifies, that he was already come; for to be in the doors, or within the gates, is more than to be at the doors, or at the gates: and thus the fig tree putting forth its leaves, is a sign that summer is not only nigh, but is already come, even that part of it we call spring; for the Scripture divides the whole year only into two parts, summer and winter; so these calamities and desolations on the Jews, were a sign that the son of man was come, was in the gates, displaying his power and his glory: or the redemption and deliverance of the people of God was at hand, from the persecutions of the Jews; for till the destruction of Jerusalem, the persecutions of the Christians were chiefly from the Jews, or occasioned by them; but now, they being destroyed, the summer of deliverance was at hand: or else the kingdom of God, or a more enlarged state of the Gospel dispensation was near; the winter of the legal dispensation was over, the spring of the Gospel dispensation was come, through the preaching of John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles; and now the summer of it was at hand, through the general spread of it, all over the Gentile world. So the second coming of Christ, will be a summer of joy and comfort to the saints: Christ will appear most lovely and amiable to them, he will be glorified by them, and admired in them; great grace will be brought unto them, and great glory will be put upon them; they will then enjoy full redemption and salvation: the winter of sorrows, afflictions, and persecutions, and of coldness, darkness, and desertion, will be over; the sun shall no more go down, nor the moon withdraw itself, but the Lord will be the everlasting light of his people.

Ver. 34. *Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass*, etc.] Not the generation of men in general; as if the sense was, that mankind should not cease, until the accomplishment of these things; nor the generation, or people of the Jews, who should continue to be a people, until all were fulfilled; nor the generation of Christians; as if the meaning was, that there should be always a set of Christians, or believers in Christ in the world,

until all these events came to pass; but it respects that present age, or generation of men then living in it; and the sense is, that all the men of that age should not die, but some should live

till all these things were fulfilled; (see <4016 28>Matthew 16:28) as many did, and as there is reason to believe they might, and must, since all these things had their accomplishment, in and about forty years after this: and certain it is, that John, one of the disciples of Christ, outlived the time by many years; and, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, many of the Jewish doctors now living, when Christ spoke these words, lived until the city was destroyed; as Rabban Simeon, who perished with it, R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, who outlived it, R. Zadoch, R. Ishmael, and others: this is a full and clear proof, that not anything that is said before, relates to the second coming of Christ, the day of judgment, and end of the world; but that all belong to the coming of the son of man, in the destruction of Jerusalem, and to the end of the Jewish state.

Ver. 35. *Heaven and earth shall pass away*, etc.] This is either an assertion, which will be true at the end of time; not as to the substance of the heavens and earth, which will always remain, but as to the qualities of them, which will be altered: they will be renewed and refined, but not destroyed; the bad qualities, or evil circumstances, which attend them through the sin of man, will be removed and pass away, but they themselves will continue in being: or is a comparative expression, and the sense is, that the heavens and the earth, and the ordinances thereof, than which nothing can be more firm and strong, being fixed and supported by God himself, shall sooner pass away, than anything asserted and predicted by Christ shall:

but my words shall not pass away; be vain and empty, and unaccomplished; which is true of anything, and everything spoken by Christ; and especially here regards all that he had said concerning the calamities that should befall the Jews, before, at, or upon the destruction of their nation, city, and temple; and the design of the expression, is to show the certainty, unalterableness, and sure accomplishment of these things; (see <2436 31>Jeremiah 31:36).

Ver. 36. *But of that day and hour knoweth no man*, etc.] Which is to be understood, not of the second coming of Christ, the end of the world, and the last judgment; but of the coming of the son of man, to take vengeance on the Jews, and of their destruction; for the words manifestly regard the

date of the several things going before, which only can be applied to that catastrophe, and dreadful desolation: now, though the destruction itself was spoken of by Moses and the prophets, was foretold by Christ, and the believing Jews had some discerning of its near approach; (see Hebrews 10:25) yet the exact and precise time was not known: it might have been: calculated to a year by Daniel's weeks, but not to the day and hour; and therefore our Lord does not say of the year, but of the day and hour no man knows; though the one week, or seven years, being separated from the rest, throws that account into some perplexity; and which perhaps is on purpose done, to conceal the precise time of Jerusalem's destruction: nor need it be wondered at, notwithstanding all the hints given, that the fatal day should not be exactly known beforehand; when those who have lived since, and were eyewitnesses of it, are not agreed on what day of the month it was; for, as Dr. Lightfoot [f1411] observes, Josephus [f1412] says,

> "that the temple perished the "tenth" day of "Lous", a day fatal to the temple, as having been on that day consumed in flames, by the king of Babylon."

And yet Rabbi Jochanan ben Zaccai, who was also at the destruction of it, as well as Josephus, with all the Jewish writers, say it was on the "ninth of Ab"; for of this day they [f1413] say, five things happened upon it:

> "On the "ninth of Ab" it was decreed concerning our fathers, that they should not enter into the land (of Canaan), the first and second temple were destroyed, Bither was taken, and the city ploughed up."

Though the words of R. Jochanan, cited by the doctor, refer to the first, and not to the second temple, and should have been rendered thus:

> "If I had been in the generation (which fixed the fast for the destruction of the first temple), I would not have fixed it but on the tenth (of Ab); for, adds he, the greatest part of the temple was burnt on that day; but the Rabbins rather regarded the beginning of the punishment [f1414]."

And so the fasting of Rabbi, and R. Joshua ben Levi, on the "ninth" and "tenth" days, were on account of the first temple; for they were under the same difficulty about the one, as the other:

no, not the angels of heaven; who dwell there, always behold the face of God, stand in his presence ready to do his will, and are made acquainted with many of his designs, and are employed in the executing of them, and yet know not the time of God's vengeance on the Jews; to this agrees the sense that is given of the day of vengeance in (<2604>Isaiah 63:4) it is asked [f1415]:

> "what is the meaning of these words, "the day of vengeance is in my heart?" Says R. Jochanan, to my heart I have revealed it, to the members I have not revealed it: says R. Simeon ben Lakish, to my heart I have revealed it, ytylg al trçh ykalml, "to the ministering angels I have not revealed it"."

The Ethiopic version adds here, "nor the son", and so the Cambridge copy of Beza's; which seems to be transcribed from (<4132>Mark 13:32) where that phrase stands; and must be understood of Christ as the son of man, and not as the Son of God; for as such, he lay in the bosom of the Father, and knew all his purposes and designs; for these were purposed in him: he knew from the beginning who would betray him, and who would believe in him; he knew what would befall the rejecters of him, and when that would come to pass; as he must know also the day of the last judgment, since it is appointed by God, and he is ordained to execute it: but the sense is, that as he, as man and mediator, came not to destroy, but to save; so it was not any part of his work, as such, to know, nor had he it in commission to make known the time of Jerusalem's ruin:

but my Father only; to the exclusion of all creatures, angels and men; but not to the exclusion of Christ as God, who, as such, is omniscient; nor of the Holy Spirit, who is acquainted with the deep things of God, the secrets of his heart, and this among others.

Ver. 37. *But as the days of Noe were*, etc.] So Noah is usually called Noe by the Septuagint: the sense is, as were the practices of the men of that generation, in which Noah lived, so will be the practices of the men of that age, in which the son of man comes; or as the flood, which happened in the days of Noah, was sudden and unexpected; it came upon men thoughtless about it, though they had warning of it; and was universal, swept them all away, excepting a few that were saved in the ark:

so shall also the coming of the son of man be; to take vengeance on the Jews, on a sudden, at an unawares, when they would be unthoughtful

about it; though they were forewarned of it by Christ and his apostles, and their destruction be as universal; all would be involved in it, excepting a few, that were directed a little before, to go out of the city of Jerusalem to Pella; where they were saved, as Noah and his family were in the ark.

Ver. 38. *For as in the days that were before the flood*, etc.] Not all the days before the flood, from the creation of the world; but those immediately preceding it, a century or two before it:

they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage: not that these civil actions of life were criminal in themselves, had care been taken that they were not abused. It is lawful to eat and drink, provided it be in moderation, and not to excess; and to marry, and give in marriage, when the laws, rules, and ends thereof, are observed: and therefore this must be understood, either of their wholly giving themselves up to the pleasures of life, and lusts of the flesh, without any concern about the affairs of religion, the worship and glory of God, the welfare of their souls and their approaching danger, of which Noah had given them warning; or of their luxury and intemperance, in eating and drinking, and of their libidinous and unlawful marriages; for the word here used for eating, signifies eating after the manner of brute beasts: they indulged themselves in a brutish way, in gluttony and drunkenness; and it is certain from the account given of them, in (Genesis 6:2,4) that they entered into unlawful marriages, and unclean copulations: wherefore these things may be spoken of them, as what were really sinful and wicked, and denote a course of sinning, a constant practice of these sins of intemperance and lust, and which is still more fully expressed in the next clause:

until the day that Noe entered into the ark. The Arabic version renders it, “the ship”; the vessel which God directed him to make, for the saving of himself and family. Now the men of that generation persisted in their wicked course of living, after, and notwithstanding, the warning God had given them by Noah, of the flood that would come upon them; and all the while the ark was building, even to the very day that Noah and his family, by the order of God, went into the ark.

Ver. 39. *And knew not until the flood came*, etc.] That is, they did not advert or give heed to what Noah said to them about it: they slighted and despised his warnings; they did not believe, that what he said of the flood was true; they had notice of it, but they would not know it, and therefore

God gave them up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart; and so they remained, until it came upon them at once:

and took them all away; the whole world of the ungodly, every man, woman, and child, except eight persons only; Noah and his wife, and his three sons and their wives; for the deluge was universal, and reached to all the inhabitants of the world, who all perished in it, excepting the above persons.

So shall also the coming of the son of man be: such shall be, as it was, the case of the Jews, before the destruction of Jerusalem: they gave themselves up to all manner of wickedness and uncleanness; they disregarded the warnings of Christ and his apostles; they were careless and secure of danger; they would not believe their ruin was at hand, when it was just upon them; they buoyed themselves up to the very last, that a deliverer would arise, and save them; they cried peace, peace, when sudden destruction was nigh; even of them all, their nation, city, and temple, a few only excepted, as in the days of Noah: and though they were so much like the men of that generation, yet they themselves say of them, that

> "the generation of the flood have no part in the world to come, nor shall they stand in judgment, according to (<000106>Genesis 6:3)[f1416]."

Ver. 40. *Then shall two be in the field*, etc.] About their proper business, of husbandry, ploughing, or sowing, or any other rural employment:

the one shall be taken; not by the preaching of the Gospel, into the kingdom of God, or Gospel dispensation; though such a distinction God makes, by the ministry of the word, accompanied by his Spirit and power; nor by angels, to meet Christ in the air, and to be introduced into his kingdom and glory; but by the eagles, the Roman army, and either killed or carried captive by them:

and the other left; not in a state of nature and unregeneracy, as many are, to whom the Gospel is preached; nor with devils at the last day, to be thrust down by them into the infernal regions; but by the Romans, being by some remarkable providence, or another, delivered out of their hands; which was the case of some few, and these of the meaner sort; and therefore persons of a rural life and occupation are instanced in.

Ver. 41. *Two women shall be grinding at the mill*, etc.] Though the word women is not in the Greek text, yet it is rightly supplied by our translators,

as it is in the Persic version; for the word rendered grinding, is in the feminine gender, and was the work of women, as appears both from the Scripture, (<2102>Exodus 11:5, <2301>Isaiah 47:1,2) and from several passages in the Jewish writings, concerning which their canons run thus [f1417];

> “These are the works which a woman is to do for her husband, tnjwj, “she must grind”, and bake, and wash, and boil, and make his bed, etc.”

And elsewhere it is asked [f1418],

> “how does she grind? she sits at the mill, and watches the flour, but she does not grind, or go after a beast, that so the mill may not stop; but if their custom is to grind at a hand mill, she may grind. The sanhedrim order this to poor people; for if she brings one handmaid, or money, or goods, sufficient to purchase, she is not obliged to grind, etc.”

Frequent mention is made, of women grinding together at the same mill: a case is put concerning two women grinding at an hand mill [f1419], and various rules are given about it; as, that [f1420]

> “a woman may lend her neighbour that is suspected of eating the fruits of the seventh year after time, a meal sieve, a fan, a mill, or a furnace, but she may not winnow, nor “grind with her”.”

Which it supposes she might do, if she was not suspected: again [f1421],

> “the wife of a plebeian, tnjwj, “may grind” with the wife of a learned man, in the time that she is unclean, but not when she is clean.”

Nor was this the custom of the Jews only, for women to grind, but also of other countries, as of the Abyssines [f1422], and of both Greeks and Barbarians [f1423]:

the one shall be taken, and the other left; as before, one shall be taken by the Romans, and either put to death, or carried captive; and the other shall escape their hands, through the singular providence of God. The Ethiopic version, and Munster’s Hebrew Gospel add, “two shall be in one bed, one shall be taken, and the other left”; but these words are not in the copies of Matthew in common, but are taken out of (<4234>Luke 17:34) though they are in the Cambridge copy of Beza’s, and in one of Stephens’s.

Ver. 42. *Watch therefore*, etc.] Since the time of this desolation is so uncertain, and since it will come upon the Jews unawares, and some wilt escape, whilst others perish; for the words are plainly an inference from what precedes, and clearly relate to things going before, and are not a transition to a new subject:

for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come; to avenge himself of the unbelieving Jews, and fulfil what he in person, and by his apostles, had predicted and warned them of: though I will not deny, but that what follows may be much better accommodated and applied to the second coming of Christ, and the last judgment, and the behaviour of men with regard to both, than anything said before; and it may be our Lord's intention, to lead his disciples gradually, and as it were imperceptibly, to the last scene of things on earth, to make way for the parables and description of the future judgment, in the next chapter; still keeping in view, and having reference to, the subject he had been so long upon.

Ver. 43. *But know this*, etc.] Or you do know this: this may be illustrated by supposing a case well known to men, and in which common prudence would direct a man how to behave:

that if the good man of the house, or householder, or master of the family,

had known in what watch the thief would come; whether at the first, second, third, or fourth watch; for the night was divided into four watches; had he any previous notice given by any of the associates of the thief, or by those that had overheard, or by any means had got intelligence of his design and measures, and the time of his pursuing them,

he would have watched; in every watch either in person, or by employing others, or both:

and would not have suffered his house to be broken up: or "dug through"; (see Job 24:16) concerning which, there is a law in (Exodus 22:2) and is explained by the Jewish canonists thus:

"He that comes in by digging, whether by day or by night, there is no blood for him (i.e. to be shed for him, if he is killed); but if the master of the house, or any other man kill him, they are free; and every man has power to kill him, whether on a weekday, or on a sabbath day; and with whatsoever death he can put him to, as it is said, there is no blood for him, (Exodus 22:2). And one that comes in, t r t j mb, "by digging", or a

thief that is found in the midst of a man's roof, or in his court, or within his hedge, whether in the day or in the night, (may be killed;) and wherefore is it called digging? because it is the way of most thieves to come in by digging in the night [f1424]."

Wherefore no doubt since the master of the house had such a law on his side, he would never suffer, if possible, his house to be entered by digging, when he had, especially, any previous notice of it. Now the application of this case, or parabolical way of speaking, is to the coming of Christ, and the watchfulness of every good man who has notice of it, that he may not be surprised with it, but be in a readiness to receive him. The coming of the son of man, is here represented by the coming of the thief in the night: but when he is compared to a thief, this is not to be understood in a bad sense, in which Satan is called one, who comes to kill and to destroy the souls of men; and likewise heretics and false teachers, and everyone that climbs up, and gets into the church of God in a wrong way; but this only respects the manner of Christ's coming, which is like that of a thief, secretly, suddenly, and at unawares. The "good man of the house", or householder, is every Christian, or believer in Christ, who has a house to look after, his own soul, the spiritual affairs and everlasting salvation of it, things of moment and concern unto him: and as the Christians, before the destruction of Jerusalem, had notices of Christ's coming in that way, by our Lord's predictions, by the hints the apostles gave, to refresh their memories with them, and by the signs of the times and voices that were heard; so the saints have of Christ's coming to judgment: wherefore as it became the one, so it does the other, to watch, to be upon their guard, to be in a readiness, to have their loins girt about, and their lights burning, and they like men that wait for their Lord; that so when he comes, their houses may not be broken up, may not be surprised, and the several powers and faculties of their souls may not be thrown into disorder and confusion; wherefore it follows,

Ver. 44. *Therefore be ye also ready*, etc.] Or prepared for the coming of the son of man; which as it is said to be like a thief in the night, expresses the suddenness of it, may excite to watchfulness and readiness; which readiness is to be understood, not of a readiness to do the will and work of God, though this is absolutely necessary; as to watch and pray, to hear the word preached, to confess Christ, and give a reason of the hope that is in us, to communicate to the support of the cause and interest of Christ, and to suffer for his sake; but of a preparedness to meet the Lord in the way of

his judgments, when desolating judgments are coming on the earth, such as these in Jerusalem; by faith and trust in the power, providence, and care of God; by humiliation before him, and resignation to his will: and if this can be applied to a readiness for a future state after death; for the second coming of Christ, and last judgment; this lies not in a dependence on the absolute mercy of God; nor in an external humiliation for sin; nor in an abstinence from grosser sins, or in mere negative holiness; nor in any outward, legal, civil, and moral righteousness; nor in a submission to Gospel ordinances; nor in a mere profession of religion; but in being in Christ, having on his righteousness, and being washed in his blood; and also in regeneration and sanctification, in having true knowledge of Christ, and faith in him; for all which it becomes men to be concerned, as also all believers to be actually, as well as habitually ready; being in the lively exercise of grace, and cheerful discharge of duty, though without trusting to either. And such a readiness in either branch of it, is not of themselves, but lies in the grace of God, which gives a meetness for glory; and in the righteousness of Christ, the fine linen, clean and white, which being granted by him, his people are made ready for him: and as for their faith, and the exercise of it, and their constant performance of duty, these are not from the strength of nature and the power of freewill, but from the Spirit of God and his grace; who makes ready a people prepared for the Lord, and all according to the ancient settlements of grace, in which provision is made for the vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory: though there should be a studious concern in men for such readiness, for nothing is more certain than death, and nothing more uncertain than when it will be; and after death, no readiness can be had, but he that is then righteous, shall be righteous still, and he that is filthy, shall be filthy still, and a deathbed is by no means to be trusted to; and though a person may not be snatched away suddenly, but may have space given him to repent, yet if grace is not given him, to repent and believe in Christ, he never will; the grave is ready for men, and in a little time all will be brought to this house, appointed for all living, where there is no wisdom, knowledge, and device; and therefore whatever we are directed to do, should be now done, with all that might, and strength, and grace, that is given us; to which may be added, that after death comes judgment; the day is fixed, the judge is appointed, and all must stand before his judgment seat; and nothing is more sure than that Christ will come a second time, to judge both quick and dead; and happy will those be that are ready; they will be received by Christ into everlasting habitations, and be for ever with him: and miserable will those be, who will

not be ready, who will not have the oil of grace in their hearts with their lamps, nor the wedding garment on them; they will be shut out, and bid to depart into everlasting burnings: how fit and proper is such an advice and exhortation as this, “be ye also ready”. A readiness the Jews report Bath Kol, or the voice from heaven, gave out concerning the Israelites.

> “Bath Kol (say [f1425] they) went out, and said to them, abh µlw[h yyj l ˆynmwzm µklwk, “ye are all of you ready for the life of the world to come”.”

And elsewhere it is said of Bath Kol, that it went forth and affirmed of some particular Rabbins, that they were ready for eternal life; as of Ketiah bar Shalom, R. Eleazar ben Durdia, and R. Chanina [f1426]:

for in such an hour as ye think not, the son of man cometh: this is true of his coming in power to destroy Jerusalem, and of his second coming to judgment. The Jews say much the same of the coming of the Messiah, whom they expect:

> “there are three things, they say [f1427], which come, t[dh jsyhb, “without knowledge”, or unthought of, at an unawares; and they are these, the Messiah, anything that is found, and a scorpion.”

Ver. 45. *Who then is a faithful and wise servant*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin adds, “do you think?” and is a question put to the disciples, which they might apply to themselves: in (~~2222~~Luke 12:42), it is spoken in answer to a question of Peter’s, in relation to the above exhortation, whether it was spoken to them, or to all; and by this answer, it looks as if it was more especially designed for them, though it may be applied to other. The “servant” is there called a “steward”, for such a servant is meant; and a name that is very proper for the apostles and ministers of the word, who are stewards of the mysteries of Christ, and of the manifold grace of God; and whose characters are, that they are “faithful”: for this is required in stewards, that they be faithful to the trust reposed in them; as ministers are, when they preach the pure Gospel of Christ, and the whole of it; conceal no part, nor keep anything of it; seek not to please men, but God; neither seek their own things, their ease, honour, and profit, but the glory of God, the honour of Christ, and the good of souls; and abide by the truths, cause, and interest of a Redeemer, at all hazards. And they are “wise”, who know and are well instructed in divine things; who make Christ the main subject of their ministry; who improve their talents and time for their master’s use,

and the advantage of those that are under their care; who seek for, and deliver acceptable words and matter; and manage their whole trust, so as to be able to give in a good account of their stewardship another day. The post that such a person is put in, and the work he is to do, follow:

whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household; or "family", the church of God, which is the household of God, and of faith, in which are believers of various growths and sizes; some fathers, some young men, some children; and over these, the ministers are, by their Lord, made and placed as rulers; not as lords and tyrants over God's heritage, to govern them in an arbitrary way, but as over them in the Lord, to rule them according to the word of God, and the laws of his house; by preaching the Gospel, administering ordinances, and keeping up his worship and the discipline of the church; and whose principal business it is,

to give them meat in due season; even "their portion" of it, as in (Luke 12:42): for the word of God is to be cut and rightly divided, and everyone in the family, according to his age, appetite, and digestion, is to have his proper part and portion given him: it must be meat, proper food, such as is solid, substantial, and nourishing; even the wholesome words of Christ Jesus, that must be given them, and not husks and empty trash; and all in due season, in its proper time, as their cases and circumstances require, and call for; as whether weary, or uncomfortable, or in the dark, or under temptations and afflictions: for a word fitly and seasonably spoken, how useful is it!

Ver. 46. *Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh*, etc.] Whether in a way of judgment, as against Jerusalem; or at death, when he comes to remove him out of time, into eternity; or at the day of judgment, when he, the righteous judge, will give the crown of righteousness to him:

shall find so doing; acting the faithful and wise part, ruling the household of God well; giving to all wholesome food, a proper portion of it, and that in the right time.

Ver. 47. *Verily I say unto you*, etc.] Nothing is a greater truth, more certain, or to be depended on, than this; all such wise, faithful, diligent, and industrious servants may expect it:

that he, shall make him ruler over all his goods; will honour him with greater gifts, bestow a larger degree of Gospel light and knowledge on

him, make him more useful in the church below, and at last cause him to inherit all things in the other world, all glory, happiness, and bliss.

Ver. 48. *But and if that evil servant*, etc.] Or should there be an evil servant, an unwise and faithless one, who though he may have gifts and talents, yet destitute of the grace of God; and though he may be in the highest post and office in the church of God for sometimes wicked and graceless men are in such places; yet if he

shall say in his heart; secretly to himself, and with pleasure to his mind, and strengthen himself in a full persuasion of this,

my Lord delayeth his coming; and begins to think that either he will not come at all, to call him to an account for the use of his time, gifts, and talents; or if he does, it will be long first ere he will come, and visit the people of the Jews, by desolating calamities; or by death, to summon him to his bar; or at judgment, to give in his account of his stewardship.

Ver. 49. *And shall begin to smite his fellow servants*, etc.] By abusing the power lodged in him, usurping a dominion over their faith, and imposing on their consciences things which Christ has never commanded; vexing and burdening them with trifling rites and ceremonies, and other unnecessary things; wounding, grieving, offending weak minds by his conduct and example; or persecuting the saints, such of them as cannot come into everything in his way of believing and practising:

and to eat and drink with the drunken; giving himself up to luxury and intemperance; feeding himself instead of the family; serving his own belly, and not his Lord and Master Christ; living an ungodly and licentious life, altogether unbecoming the Gospel of Christ: such servants and stewards have been, and are in the church of God; but sad will be their case, when their Lord comes, as follows. Respect seems to be had either to the ecclesiastical rulers among the Jews, who went under the name of the servants of the Lord, but persecuted the apostles, and those that believed in Christ; or the "Judaizing" Christians, and false teachers, that were for imposing the ceremonies of the law upon believers; or Simon Magus, and his followers, a set of licentious, men; or all of them; who lived in this period of time, between the death of Christ, and the destruction of the temple.

Ver. 50. *The lord of that servant*, etc.] Not by redemption and grace, but by creation and profession;

shall come in a day when he looked not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of: suddenly and unexpectedly: such was his coming in wrath and vengeance on the Jewish nation; and such is his coming oftentimes by death; and such will be his coming at the day of judgment.

Ver. 51. *And shall cut him asunder*, etc.] The Persic version renders it, "he shall separate him from himself": he shall separate soul and body by death; he shall take away all his gifts and talents from him; and remove him from his place and office, and from the church of God, and communion of the saints, and out of this world. Some think the allusion is to the cutting up of the sacrifices, and dividing them into pieces; and the sense is, that this wicked servant should have no share in the sacrifice of Christ; but should fall himself a victim to divine justice, and be used as sacrifices were; or, in other words, be severely punished for his sins; though the allusion seems rather to be to the manner of punishing treacherous and unfaithful persons, by dismembering them, cutting them in pieces, or in two: and so the Arabic version renders it, "he shall cut him in the middle": this was certainly a way of putting persons to death; though some say it was not known to the Jews; but the following instances show the contrary. Mention is made of some that were sawn asunder, (Hebrews 11:37) and the Jews say [f1428], that Isaiah was sawn asunder by Manasseh; and such a kind of death is spoken of in the Targum [f1429]; where it is said, that

> "the priests went before Mordecai, and proclaimed, saying, whoever does not salute, or wish prosperity to Mordecai, and to the Jews, dyb[ty ^ymdh "he shall be cut into pieces", and his house be made a dunghill."

And elsewhere [f1430] it is said of a wicked man, that they put him upon a carpenter's block, and wb µyrsnm, "sawed him asunder"; and he cried out, woe, woe, woe, that I have provoked my Creator. This was also a punishment used among the Heathens, as Gataker [f1431], and others out of Heathen writers, have shown. It must not here be understood literally, that this wicked servant should be put to such a corporeal death; but that he should be punished in the severest manner, and should be the object of the fierce wrath and sore displeasure of God;

and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. Luke says, "with the unbelievers" (Luke 12:46): very likely both phrases were used by Christ; intimating, that such as make a profession of him, and have only a

form of godliness, without the power of it, and are wicked and hypocritical men, will share the same fate with those that believe not; and the portion of these is the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; (see Revelation 21:8) or all such persons are intended, who put on the mask of religion, and do not answer to the character they bear: and are unfaithful to the trust reposed in them, and therefore will made examples of righteous judgment, and have their part in the lowest hell:

there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth: (See Gill on “Matthew 13:42”)

CHAPTER 25

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 25

Ver. 1. *Then shall the kingdom of heaven*, etc.] The Gospel church state; (See Gill on "Matthew 13:24") either as it would be a little before the coming of the son of man to take vengeance on the Jews; or as it will be a little before his second coming to judgment: for the parable is manifestly connected with, and refers to the preceding chapter, which chiefly treats of Jerusalem's destruction: but though the Jews were in great security before their utter ruin, yet it does not appear that the Christian church was then in such a lukewarm, drowsy, and sleepy condition, as this parable represents; and since, in the latter part of the preceding chapter, there are some hints of Christ's second and last coming; when the servant found doing his Lord's will, will be greatly honoured, and the wicked, cruel, and licentious servant will be severely punished; and since, at the close of this and the following parable, there is a very lively description given of the last judgment; as also, because it appears elsewhere, that such will be the formal, lukewarm, cold, indifferent, secure, and sleepy state of the church, before the second coming of Christ: it seems right and best to understand this parable, and the following, as having respect to that: and that the design of it is to show, what will be the case of professors at that time; the difference between nominal and real Christians; how far persons may go in a profession of religion, and yet, at last, be shut out of heaven: as also the suddenness of Christ's coming; the necessity of being ready for it; and how watchful the saints should be, that they be not surprised with it. Now some time before this, the Gospel church state, or the body of professing Christians, will

be likened unto ten virgins; to "virgins" for quality; being betrothed ones to Christ, at least in profession; and because of the singleness of their love, and chaste adherence to him, however, as they will declare, and which, in some of them, will be fact; and for their beauty, comeliness, and gay attire, being, as they will profess, clothed with the righteousness of Christ; with that fine linen, clean and white, with cloth of gold, and raiment of needlework, and so perfectly comely through his comeliness: and for their

purity and uncorruptness of doctrine, worship, and conversation, at least in appearance, and which will be true of many of them; and all, from their profession, will bear the same character: these for their quantity and number, are compared to “ten” virgins; which may, perhaps, denote the small number of professors at this time; (see <0183>Genesis 18:32) that there will be but few, that will then name the name of Christ, and fewer still who will not have defiled their garments, and be virgins indeed. The number “ten” was greatly taken notice of, and used among the Jews: a congregation, with them, consisted of ten persons, and less than that number did not make one [f1432]: and wherever there were ten persons in a place, they were obliged to build a synagogue [f1433]. Ten elders of the city were witnesses of Boaz’s taking Ruth to be his wife, (<0804>Ruth 4:2,9,10). Now it may be in reference to the former of these, that this number ten is here expressed, since the parable relates to the congregated churches of Christ, or to Christ’s visible church on earth: moreover, they say, that

> “with less than ten they did not divide the “shema”, (i.e. “hear O Israel”, and say any part of the blessings that went before it;) nor did (the messenger of the congregation) go before the ark (to pray); nor did (the priests) lift up their hands (to bless the people); nor did they read in the law (in the congregation); nor did they dismiss (the people) with (a passage out of one of) the prophets; nor did they make a standing, and a sitting (when they carried the dead to the grave, which used to be done seven times, to weep over the dead); nor did they say the blessing of the mourners, nor the comforts of the mourners (when they returned from the grave, and stood in a row to comfort the mourner; and there was no row less than ten); µynt j tkrbw, “nor the blessing of the bridegrooms”,”

which consisted of seven blessings, and this was not said but in the presence of ten persons [f1434]: to which there may be an allusion here: for the whole alludes to the solemnities of a marriage among the Jews, when the bridegroom fetched home his bride from her father’s house, attended with his friends, the children of the bridechamber, and which was usually done in the night: and, at the same time, the bride was waiting for him, accompanied with virgins, or bridemaids; (see <1954>Psalm 45:14) who, when they perceived the bridegroom coming, went out with lamps, or torches, to meet him, and conduct him to her; hence it follows,

which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions, add, “and the bride”, contrary to the “Greek” copies, excepting the Cambridge copy of Beza’s. Nor do the Arabic and Ethiopic versions so read; nor Munster’s Hebrew Gospel; nor does it agree with the above custom. By “the bridegroom” is meant Christ, who stands in this relation to his church and people; he saw them in the glass of the purposes and decrees of God, and loved them, and asked them of his father to be given him as his spouse and bride; and who did give them to him, when he secretly betrothed them to himself, in the everlasting covenant, as he does their particular persons at conversion, and will consummate the marriage of them all at the last day; and, in the mean while, acts the part of a bridegroom to them; he loves them as a bridegroom loves his bride, with a love prior to theirs, free and unmerited; with a love of complacency and delight, which is single and chaste, strong and affectionate; constant and perpetual, wonderful, matchless, and inconceivable: he sympathizes with them, nourishes, and cherishes them as his own flesh; providing spiritual food, and rich clothing for them; and indulging them with intimate communion with himself, and interests them in all he has; and when he comes again a second time, he will appear under this character. His first appearance was mean, in the form of a servant, in the likeness of sinful flesh, in garments rolled in blood; but when he comes a second time, he will appear as a bridegroom in his nuptial robes; all his elect will be prepared for him, beautified and adorned as a bride for her husband; when he will come and take them home to himself, and will avow them to be his before his Father, and his holy angels: and which will be a time of great glory, and great joy. Now these virgins are said to take their lamps, and go forth to meet him: by their lamps are meant, either the word of God, the Scriptures of truth, particularly the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; which, like a lamp, were lighted in the evening of the Jewish dispensation, and will shine the brightest towards the end of the world: these are like lamps both to walk by, and work by, and were a light to all these virgins; some were savingly enlightened into them, and by them; and others only notionally, but were taken up, owned, and professed, as the rule of faith and practice, by them all; and that in order to meet and find the bridegroom, for they testify of him: or rather an external profession of religion is designed by the lamps, which is distinct from the oil of grace, and the vessel of the heart, in which that is; and is that into which the oil is put and burns, so as to become visible: and must be daily recruited, and trimmed with fresh supplies of grace from Christ, without which it cannot

be kept up, nor will be of any use and service; and is what may go out, or be dropped and lost, as some of these lamps. Now this was what was taken up by them all; they all made a profession of Christ, and his Gospel: some of them took it up aright, upon an experience of the grace of God, and principles of grace wrought in their souls; others, without any experience, and without considering the nature, importance, and consequences of a profession: and so they all went forth to meet the bridegroom: some in the exercise of faith on him, and in his coming; in love to him, and his appearance; desiring, and longing to see him; expecting, and waiting for him: others only in a way of a visible profession of religion, and an outward attendance on ordinances. The custom here alluded to of meeting the bridegroom, and attending the bride home to his house in the night, with lighted torches, or lamps, and such a number of them as here mentioned, was not only the custom of the Jews, but of other eastern nations [f1435]. Jarchi says [f1436], it was the custom of the Ishmaelites; his words are these:

> “it was a custom in the land of Ishmael, to bring the bride from her father’s house to her husband’s house, hlylb, “in the night”, before she entered the nuptial chamber; and to carry before her ^ysdnwq rç[k, “about ten staves”; and upon the top of the staff was the form of a brazen dish, and in the midst of it, pieces of garments, oil, and pitch, which they set fire to, and lighted before her.”

Something like this is the custom of the East Indians now, which is thus related [f1437]:

> “on the day of their marriage, the husband and wife being both in the same “palki”, or “palanquin”, (which is the ordinary way of carriage in the country, and is carried by four men upon their shoulders,) go out between seven and eight o’clock “at night”, accompanied with all their kindred and friends; the trumpets and drums go before them; and they are “lighted” by a multitude of “massals”, which are a kind of flambeaux; immediately behind the “palanquin” of the newly married couple, walk many “women”, whose business is to sing verses, wherein they wish them all kind of prosperity. — The newly married couple go abroad in this equipage, for the space of some hours; after which they return to their own house, where the “women” and domestics wait for them: the whole house is enlightened with little lamps, and many of these

> "massals", already mentioned, are kept ready for their arrival, besides those that accompany them, and go before their "palanquin". This sort of lights are nothing else, but many pieces of old linen squeezed hard against one another, in a round figure, and forcibly thrust down into a mould of copper; those who hold them in one hand, have, in the other, a bottle of the same metal, with the mould copper, which is full of oil; and they take care to pour out of it, from time to time, upon the linen, which otherwise gives no light."

Ver. 2. *And five of them were wise*, etc.] The order of these words is inverted in some versions, as in the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel, which read, "and five of them were foolish, and five of them were wise"; but this is of no great consequence. There is a parable of R. Jochanan ben Zaccai [f1438], who lived before, and after the destruction of the second temple, which bears some likeness to this part of the parable, and others in it, and is this;

> "a certain king invited his servants, but did not fix any time for them; those of them that were µyhqp, "wise", adorned themselves, and sat at the gate of the king's house, and said, is there any want at the king's house? but those of them that were µyçpj, "fools", went and did their work, and said, is there any feast without trouble? on a sudden, the king inquired after his servants: the wise went in before him, as they were, adorned; but the fools went in before him, as they were, filthy: the king rejoiced at meeting the wise, and was angry at meeting the foolish; and ordered, that those who had adorned themselves for the feast should sit and eat, and those that had not adorned themselves for the feast should stand."

The wise virgins are such, who are wise, not in their own conceits, which is the case of natural men, and empty professors; nor in the things of nature, or in the things of the world, of which the saints are oftentimes less knowing than others; nor in notional and speculative knowledge, much less in things that are evil: but they are such who are wise unto salvation; who not only know the scheme of it, but are sensible of their need of it; apply to Christ for it; venture their souls on him, and commit them to him: they trust in his righteousness for justification; in his blood for pardon; in his sacrifice for atonement; in his fulness for daily supplies; in his grace and strength to perform every duty; and expect eternal life in, and from him: they know

him, prize him, and value him as their Saviour; rejoice in him, and give him all the glory; and they are such who are also wise in the business of a profession, as well as in the affair of salvation; they are such who take up a profession of religion aright, upon principles of grace, and after mature thought and deliberation; and when they have so done, hold it fast without wavering, walk becoming it in their lives and conversations; and yet do not depend on it, or trust to it:

and five were foolish; not in their own apprehension, in which they might be wise enough; nor in the judgment of others; nor in natural knowledge; or with respect to the things of the world; nor in speculative notions of the Gospel; nor merely so called, because unconverted; every unconverted man being a foolish man: but they were so in the business of salvation; as all are who build their hopes of it on birth privileges; on a carnal descent from good men; on a religious education; on their own righteousness; or on the absolute mercy of God; and not on Christ, the one only, and sure foundation: they are such who know not themselves; the impurity of their hearts, and nature; their impotency to that which is spiritually good; and the imperfection and insufficiency of their own righteousness: they know not Christ, and his salvation, neither the worth, nor want of him, or that; and are altogether strangers to the power of godliness, and spiritual experience: and are also as foolish in the affair of a profession, which they take up without a work of the Spirit of God upon their souls, and without considering the cost and charge of it; and either in a little time wholly drop it, or, if they hold it, they foolishly depend upon it, or lead lives unsuitable to it. The number of wise and foolish virgins being equal, does not imply that there will be just the same number of nominal, as of real believers in the churches, in the latter day, a little before the coming of Christ; only that there will be a large number of such among them.

Ver. 3. *They that were foolish took their lamps*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel, read, "the five foolish", whose folly is here exposed; and which lay not merely, or only in taking up the lamps of a profession in a wrong way, and upon a wrong bottom, but chiefly in what follows;

and took no oil with them: by oil is meant, not temporal blessings, nor spiritual ones, nor the Gospel, nor the gifts of the Spirit, all which are sometimes signified by oil; but either the Spirit of God himself, who is the oil of gladness, and the anointing which teacheth all things; or the

regenerating and sanctifying grace of the Spirit, even all the graces which are implanted by him in conversion: this is so called, in allusion to the anointing oil under the law, in its excellent nature, its costly matter, its curious make, and particular application; and in the use of it to anoint both things, the tabernacle and its vessels, and persons, prophets, priests, and kings; (see ⁂Exodus 30:23), etc. The grace of the Spirit being of an holy and sanctifying nature, exceeding valuable and precious, and a curious piece of workmanship, and what is only applied unto, and bestowed on the elect of God; and with which all the vessels of mercy, small and great, are anointed, and are made prophets, priests, and kings, and is what is, as that was, lasting and abiding: or else with respect to the precious oil, or ointment poured on Aaron's head, which was emblematical of the grace of the Spirit, which was poured forth, without measure, on Christ, and from him descends to all his members: or to the lamp oil for the candlestick in the tabernacle, which was oil olive, pure, beaten, and was for light, to cause the lamp to burn always; and fitly represented grace, which comes from Christ, the true olive tree; is pure, and of a purifying nature; and comes through a bruised, crucified Christ; and being put into the heart, causes the light of good works, and a becoming conversation, to shine forth: or else to oil in common, which is of a cheering and refreshing nature; is beautifying and adorning, supplying and healing, feeding and fattening, searching and penetrating, and will not mix with any thing else; upon all which accounts grace may be compared to it. Now these foolish virgins, though they took up a lamp of a profession, yet were unconcerned for the oil of grace, to fill, maintain, and trim this lamp: they were ignorant of the nature and use of true grace; they saw no need of it, and therefore did not ask for it, or about it; they neglected it, made light of it, and denied it as useless; and being destitute of it, took up their profession without it; and in this lay their folly.

Ver. 4. *But the wise took oil*, etc.] They were concerned for the true grace of God, being enlightened by the Spirit of God; they saw their need of the grace of God, and being directed by him where it was to be had, went to Christ for it; and having received it from him, through the power of the Holy Ghost, exercised it on him; and herein lay their wisdom: for a stock of this in the heart, daily renewed by Christ, will supply the lamp of a profession well. This they had

in their vessels, their oil vessels; by which are meant their hearts; so called in allusion either to the vessels in which the oil was put, when pressed out

of the olives, (²⁴⁰¹⁰Jeremiah 40:10) or to the oil vessels of the candlestick, (⁰⁴⁰⁰⁹Numbers 4:9). These are vessels of God's making, though through sin are become impure, and empty of all spiritual good: they are indeed large and capacious; here's room for Father, Son, and Spirit, and for abundance of grace; they are capable of comprehending much of the love of God, and besides natural, a great deal of spiritual knowledge: here, in these vessels, sanctified by the Spirit of God, the wise virgins had the oil of grace, which is an internal thing: it is nothing in the head, in the tongue, or in the hand, but something in the heart: it does not lie in notion, in talking, nor in doing; a man may know much, say a great deal, and do many external works, and yet be destitute of the grace of God; nothing external is that: it is not a mere outward reformation of life, an external humiliation for sin, an abstinence from the grosser sins of life, or a conformity to the ordinances of the Gospel, or a profession of religion: it is a principle of light, life, love, and holiness wrought in a man's heart; it has its seat in the mind, understanding, and judgment, in the will, conscience, and the affections. This oil of grace was not naturally in them; nor was it obtained by the power of their freewill; but was freely given unto them, and powerfully wrought in them: the case is this; all grace was put into Christ's hands for them; the Spirit of God was sent down to apply it to them, and work it in them; Which is generally done by means, which they made use of by his direction and assistance, and so may be said to take it:

with their lamps, of an external profession; they did not take up a profession before they had grace, or without it; but when they received the one, they took up the other; and which was acting the wise part.

Ver. 5. *While the bridegroom tarried*, etc.] The space of time here referred to, is either from the ascension of Christ, to his coming to take vengeance on the Jews; or from thence to his second coming; or rather from the time of some general expectation by the saints, of the near approach of Christ, till such time he does come: for as there was a general expectation of the coming of Christ before he came in the flesh, so there will be a general expectation of Christ being near at hand some time before his second coming; and because such an expectation will not be answered, or Christ will not come so soon as was hoped for, and expected, a general drowsiness, and security, and unconcernedness, especially about the coming of Christ, will fall upon the churches. Thus, in the last century, there was among the people of God, in these kingdoms, a general expectation of Christ's speedy coming; but being in this disappointed,

professors of all sorts are fallen asleep, and do not at all, or very little, at least very few, concern themselves about it: in a word, this interval of time seems to regard that period which is pointed out by the Laodicean church state, which will usher in the coming of Christ, and the last judgment. Now Christ, the bridegroom, may be said to tarry, not with respect to the time fixed by the Father and himself; for as this is settled, though unknown to man, it will not be passed by him; he does not, nor will he tarry beyond the appointed time: but either with respect to the time fixed by men; or with respect to the declaration of Christ, and his apostles, that he would come "quickly", and the length of time since; or rather with respect to the expectations of the saints, and their impatience. The reason why he tarries is, because his time is not come, and there are many things to be done first; there is to be a glorious spread of the Gospel all over the world; all the elect must be gathered in, both among Jews and Gentiles; and the man of sin must be destroyed; and the ungodly must fill up the measure of their iniquities; and Christ tarries to try the graces of his people, who should exercise faith in his coming, by looking, watching, and waiting for it, desirous of it, and hastening unto it; being ready for him, prepared to receive him, and to go with him to the nuptial-chamber; but instead of this

they all slumbered and slept: which is not to be understood as if that one only slumbered, and the other slept; that is, that the wise virgins slumbered, and the foolish virgins slept; for the wise virgins, or true believers, are elsewhere said to sleep, and formal professors to slumber; but both these are spoken of them all: and by this slumber, and sleep, is not meant a natural death; though that is sometimes called a sleep, and to which true believers are subject, as well as others; yet all at the coming of Christ will not be asleep in this sense: and were this intended, their resurrection would be designed by their "arising", in the seventh verse; and so the resurrection of the saints, and of others, would be together, which is not true, for the dead in Christ will rise first; and would be also before the coming of Christ, whereas the resurrection of the saints is not till at his coming; and it would look, by the account in some following verses, as if grace might be had, or, at least, be thought to be had, after the resurrection: nor is this to be understood of the dead sleep of sin: a death in sin may be signified by sleeping, and be so called, and conviction be an awakening out of it; but the foolish virgins were always asleep in this sense, and were never truly and thoroughly awaked; and wise virgins never do, nor can, fall into this sleep; for being quickened by Christ, they never die again: nor of a judicial

slumber and sleep, which the saints are never given up to; but a dead, lifeless, and sleepy frame of spirit in the wise virgins: which lies in grace not being in exercise; in a slothfulness to perform religious duties; in taking up a satisfaction with the outward parts of religion; in an indifference about the interest of Christ; in an unconcernedness at the omission of duty, or commission of sin; and in an entire ease of mind with regard to such a frame and state: the causes of it are a body of sin; an anxious care of the world; a being weary of spiritual exercises, and a leaving them off; abstaining from an awakening ministry, and spiritual conversation; and keeping company with sleepy and slothful professors, or the men of the world: and often it arises from ease, peace, and liberty; and sometimes from long watchfulness, and waiting for the bridegroom's coming; in which, being disappointed, such a frame of spirit ensues: and also in the foolish virgins it intends great carnal security in themselves; a rest and confidence in their external profession; and a laying aside all thoughts of Christ, and his coming to judgment: for a difference there is between the sleep and slumbering of the one and of the other; the wise virgins are children of the day, and not of the night; though they sleep, their hearts wake, and they sleep with grace in their hearts; neither of which can be said of the foolish virgins, or formal professors: as to the phraseology here used, the Jews would distinguish upon it, for they make a difference between slumbering and sleeping:

> "they do not dismiss (the company) after the passover with the sweet-meats: if some of them sleep, they may eat, but if all of them, they may not eat. R. Jose says, wmnmntn, "if they slumber" they may eat; wmdrn, "if they sleep they may not eat" [f1439]: which Maimonides thus [f1440] explains, "if they slumber"; that is, if they begin to sleep, but are not yet overwhelmed with sleep, but bear when others speak to them, and answer immediately to them that call them: "if they sleep": if they are oppressed with a deep sleep."

Though the phrase bykçw µyyn, which I should choose to render, "he slumbered and slept", is often said [f1441] of the same person, without any distinction, as here.

Ver. 6. *And at midnight there was a cry made*; etc.] Which is no other than the following notice of the bridegroom's coming, expressed in these words:

behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him: which supposes that then all things will be ready for his coming: all things respecting this world; all the strange and surprising events that were to come to pass, before the coming of Christ, will now be accomplished; an end put to all the monarchies of the earth; and all the preparations in nature, for the burning of the world finished: all things respecting the ungodly of the world: they will have filled up the measure of their iniquities, and finished their persecutions of the saints: and all things respecting the elect of God, they will be all born, and born again; they will have gone through all their sufferings for Christ, and have all their graces tried and perfected; for when the bridegroom comes, he will come to espouse them openly to himself, for which they must be prepared and adorned, and to take them to himself, that they may be for ever with him. It also supposes, that his coming will be very nigh at hand; it was so represented long ago; it is greatly desired by the saints to be quickly; and it will be in a very short time after this notice: and it signifies that there will be some notice given of it, a little before he comes; and that partly for the glory of his majesty; and that his own people, the wise virgins, may be ready; and that the foolish ones may be left without excuse: and this being prefaced with a “behold”, shows the certainty of his coming, than which nothing is more certain, and to be depended on; as appears from Enoch’s prophecy, and others of the Old Testament; from Christ’s own promise; from the testimony of angels: from the words of the apostles; and from the ordinance of the Lord’s supper: and also the importance of it; for things of the greatest moment will follow on it; such as the resurrection of the dead, the judgment of the whole world, the complete happiness of the saints, and the destruction of the wicked: and likewise, that it will be wonderful and astonishing; Christ will come in amazing glory, in his own, in his Father’s, and in the glory of the holy angels, and of his power and authority, as the judge of quick and dead. And in this notice advice is given to the virgins,

go ye out to meet him; (see Song of Solomon 3:11), and may intend either a going forth internally, as the wise virgins did in the exercise of grace, of faith in the coming of Christ, of love of his appearance, and earnest desire after it; or a going forth externally, as all the virgins did in a way of visible profession, taking up and trimming their lamps; or literally and corporeally, as the saints will, that will be found alive at Christ’s coming. Now this notice is called “a cry”; and refers not to the voice of Christ in raising the dead, for this will be before the coming of Christ,

whereas that will be when he is come; and for the same reason, not to the voice of the archangel, if he can be thought to be distinct from Christ. Some think it regards a secret general impulse, that will be upon the spirits of the people of God, with respect to the bridegroom's coming, but this does not seem to answer to a cry; rather it should intend some remarkable providence, as the earthquake in (<66113>Revelation 11:13) when a tenth part of the city shall fall, seven thousand men of note be slain, and the rest affrighted; or the sounding of the seventh angel, (<66115>Revelation 11:15), or, what is most likely, the voice of a great multitude, as of many waters, and of mighty thunderings, declaring, that the marriage of the Lamb was come, and the bride ready, (<66906>Revelation 19:6,7), and will be a very loud one: it will awaken all the virgins, and will be the cry, not of one, but of many; and will be very sudden and surprising, though joyful to the saints: this cry will be made, not by the virgins, for they will be asleep; nor by Christ himself, for he will not be come; nor by the angels, for they will come with him, and not before; rather by the ministers of the Gospel, who are the angels so often spoken of in the book of the Revelations, who sound the trumpets at different times, and on different occasions; who also will sound this trumpet, and give this last and general notice of Christ's coming; who will be all at once apprized of it, and give an universal alarm of it together in all the churches: thus, as the notice of Christ's first coming was made by the prophets, the notice of his second coming will be made by the ministers of the Gospel: and this will be at "midnight": which expresses the state of the church a little before the coming of Christ: it will be a night season with it, a time of darkness both with respect to Gospel light, and the presence of God with his people; a time of coldness and lukewarmness, as to zeal for God, love to his people, and concern for the interest of Christ; a time of drowsiness and sleep, of insensibility and security, of indolence and inactivity: so as the coming of Christ will be later than was first expected; it will be sudden, and at unawares, and like a thief in the night; but whether it will be literally in the night season, as his first coming, is not certain. The Jews expect [f1442], that at the end of the world Moses and Messiah will come in the night, the one from the wilderness, and the other from Rome: and they make frequent mention of God's going into the garden of Eden, or paradise, at midnight, and there rejoicing with good men. It is said [f1443], that R. Eliezer and R. Jose

> "were sitting one night, and studying in the law, and about midnight, a man cried (or the cock crowed), bless ye the blessing;

says R. Eliezer, now is, the time that the holy, blessed God goes into the garden of Eden, to rejoice with the righteous."

Ver. 7. *Then all these virgins arose*, etc.] Not out of their graves; for the righteous and wicked will not rise together; the dead in Christ will rise first, and this first resurrection will not be till Christ is come; nor will grace be to be had, or be thought to be had after the resurrection; nor will there be any trimming of lamps then, in order to meet the bridegroom, for he will be come: nor out of the graves of sin; for the wise virgins were not in such a state, and the foolish virgins were never brought out of it: but the meaning is, that they arose out of their sleepy and slumbering frame. True believers may fall into a very low condition, with respect to the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; but they shall arise again, for they are held and upheld by the right hand of God: it is sometimes midnight with them, and they are fallen fast asleep, but they shall be awaked, and arise; which arising here, as it respects them, signifies, that they were thoroughly awaked, that they quitted their former place and posture, were upon their feet, and ready to meet the bridegroom. The foolish virgins also arose; which may intend some awakenings of conscience, and reformation of life, and a more diligent attendance on duties and ordinances; all which they did to make them meet for Christ, and to obtain salvation; but after all it appears, they were destitute of the oil of grace:

and trimmed their lamps: both wise and foolish: the former by removing what hindered the clear burning of them; by casting off the works of darkness, and causing the light of good works to shine before men, in the discharge of them, from a principle of grace; and chiefly by applying to Christ for fresh supplies of the oil of grace, to fill their lamps, revive their light and heat, and keep them burning: and the latter, only by a few outward decorations, and external performances; to make their outward profession of religion look as bright as possibly they could.

Ver. 8. *And the foolish said unto the wise, give us of your oil*, etc.] A graceless person may be able to see the grace of God in others, be convinced of it, and acknowledge it, as these foolish virgins did: they saw that the wise virgins had oil, that is, grace; this they knew by the bright burning of their lamps, by their readiness in trimming them, and that in a different way from them; by their sedate composure of mind, and confidence of soul, notwithstanding the midnight cry; and by their ardent and affectionate desire to meet the bridegroom. A graceless person may

also see a need of grace: these foolish virgins had no such sense, when they first took up their profession; they went on a long time in a course of religion, without any thoughts of it; and the sense they had now was not of the need of it, in the vessels of their hearts, but in their lamps only; nor was it from the Spirit of God, but through the surprise and terror of the midnight cry. Such persons may also be desirous of the grace of God; not because of the intrinsic nature and worth of it, nor for the service and glory of God, but from a mere principle of self-love; and when they can go on no longer with the lamp of profession; and then they desire to have it any where, rather than from Christ, as did these foolish virgins; and who betrayed their folly by applying to saints for it. Had they asked their advice in this their distress, it would have been wisely done; or had they desired their prayers for them; or that they would impart some spiritual instructions to them; but to ask their grace of them was exceeding foolish; when grace only comes from God, who is the God of all grace, through Christ as mediator, in whom the fulness of it dwells, and by the Spirit, who is a Spirit of grace and of supplication; but is never to be had from men, no, not from the best men on earth, nor from the angels in heaven. The reason of this their request follows,

for our lamps are gone out; which may be said to be when professors neglect the duties of religion, drop, or deny the doctrines of the Gospel formerly professed by them, become bad in their principles, and scandalous in their lives, or withdraw themselves from the churches of Christ; though neither of these seem to be the case here: wherefore this going out of their lamps seems to intend the insufficiency of an external profession of religion to meet the bridegroom, and support a person with confidence and intrepidity in his presence: these foolish virgins now saw, when too late, that their lamps availed them nothing; they were gone out, and become useless and unprofitable, because they had not the oil of grace with them; or what they had was only counterfeit grace, or only an appearance of it; a mere form of godliness, without its power; or only gifts which are perishable, and now failed, ceased, and were vanishing away; wherefore this is no instance of the loss of true grace, nor at all militates against the perseverance of the saints.

Ver. 9. *But the wise answered, saying, not so*, etc.] A flat denial; and which sprung not from want or compassion; for the saints are taught not only to compassionate one another, and to pity fallen professors, but even to regard their very enemies in distress: nor from a narrow, niggardly spirit,

since such are directed and exhorted to communicate freely, both in things temporal and spiritual, they are capable of, to them that are in need, and even to lay down their lives for the brethren; nor from an uncivil, morose, and churlish disposition; or from a careless and indolent one, as being unconcerned what became of these persons; but from an indignation at the honour put upon them, and the slight put upon God and Christ, and the Spirit of grace: saints know that all grace comes from Father, Son, and Spirit; and frankly own, that what they have is from thence; and they give God all the glory of it, and cannot bear any such application to them for it, as this; but show the same spirit, as Paul and Barnabas did, when the Lystrians were going to sacrifice to them. Moreover, this denial arose from a consciousness of insufficiency to help them in this respect: it is the saints' mercy that they cannot lose the grace they have, nor can any take it away from them, and it is not in their power to give it away; nor can any be sanctified, or justified, or saved, by another man's grace: the reason alleged by them is,

lest there be not enough for us and you; saints have a large abundance of grace communicated to them; some have more, others less; at least it so appears, as to exercise; but they that have the most, have none to spare, and see their need of more; and ask for more, being sensible that present grace in them, is not sufficient for time to come, but grace in Christ only; wherefore their answer, and the reason of it, were like themselves, wise; and this destroys the notion of supererogation;

but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. This advice is thought by some, to be ironical and sarcastic; but it seems rather to be serious, and in good earnest; directing them to go to proper persons for grace; not to men, even ministers of the Gospel, nor to angels; but to God the Father, the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, who sits on a throne of grace, and gives it liberally to them that come to him for it through Christ, and ask it of him; and to Christ the mediator, who is full of grace and truth, and counsels persons to buy of him gold tried in the fire, grace more precious than the purest gold; and to the Spirit of grace, who gives it to all severally as he will: who are said to "sell", and "men" to buy; not in a proper sense, by giving any valuable consideration for the grace of God, which is impossible to be done; but in an improper sense, without money and without price; or in other words, by giving and receiving freely.

Ver. 10. *And while they went to buy*, etc.] The foolish virgins so far took the advice of the wise, as to go forth to buy oil for themselves: they not only had some thoughts about it, and resolutions to do it, but they really did go out to buy; which may design their attendance on the word and ordinances, where they stopped: they did not go to Christ for grace, for if they had gone directly to him, they had met him; but they went another way, and missed him; they took buying in a proper sense, and thought to have obtained grace by their own works: wherefore, though they went to buy, they did not, nor could they, their attempts were vain and fruitless; and while they were employing themselves in this way, to no purpose,

the bridegroom came; in person, to raise the saints that were dead, to change the living ones, to espouse them all openly, and take them all to himself, and to judge the world; for this must be understood of his second and personal coming:

and they that were ready; not by a mere profession of religion, or submission to Gospel ordinances, or by an external righteousness, or negative holiness, and abstinence from the grosser sins of life, or an outward humiliation for them, or by a dependence on the absolute mercy of God; but through being clothed with the wedding garment, washed in the blood of Christ, being regenerated and sanctified, and having the oil of grace in their hearts, a spiritual knowledge of Christ, faith in him, and interest in him: such are ready for every good work, and to give a reason of their faith and hope, to confess Christ, and suffer for his sake; and are ready for death and eternity, and to meet the bridegroom, and for the marriage of the Lamb, to enter into the new Jerusalem. The Jews say[f1444], that

> "the Jerusalem of the world to come, is not as the Jerusalem of this world: the Jerusalem of this world, everyone may go into it that will; but the Jerusalem of the world to come, none may go into it, but hl ^ynmwzmh, "those that are prepared for it"."

And these

went in with him to the marriage: the Syriac reads it, "into the wedding house", and the Persic, "the nuptial parlour"; the marriage chamber, where the bridegroom and bride celebrated their marriage; kept their marriage feast; and where were received the bridemaids, and friends of the bridegroom, called in Talmudic language, hyyl[ynb, "the children of the

bridechamber" [f1445]. Such as were these that went in: and the marriage may here denote, either heaven, Christ's Father's house, and the mansions of glory in it, which the saints shall enter into along with Christ; or the act of celebrating the marriage between Christ and the Lamb, and the whole body of the elect; when these virgins will not be bare spectators and witnesses, but parties concerned; and which will only be a publication before his Father and the holy angels, of what has been already done: for these were secretly betrothed to him from everlasting, and were particularly espoused to him, one by one, in conversion; but it now will be declared of them all together, that they are his spouse and bride: or the marriage feast, or supper, is here intended; and which designs not the provision of the Gospel in Christ's house, or church on earth, in general, nor the ordinance of the Lord's supper in particular, nor the feast in the latter day, but the heavenly glory; and happy are those, who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and who will be ready when he comes; these shall partake of it: they will go in with Christ, and be for ever with him, and never return more.

And the door was shut: which expresses both the happy and comfortable case of the wise virgins, and the sad and miserable state of the foolish ones. The door being shut, the wise virgins will at once be freed from the disagreeable company of profane sinners, and formal professors; their state and condition will be everlastingly settled, their communion with Christ will be free and uninterrupted, and that, for ever; no enemy of their souls can follow them, to give them any disturbance; and they shall never return to a state of sin, sorrow, and imperfection: and it also represents, the woeful and miserable condition of the foolish virgins, in whatsoever sense the word "door" is taken. The church is a door, (Song of Solomon 8:9), and an open one, to receive in proper persons, and will be so more especially in the latter day; but this will be shut, when all the elect of God are called and gathered in; there will be no longer a church state on earth, or ordinances. Christ himself is called a door, (John 10:7), he is the door into the church and into the blessings of grace, and into heaven itself; and which stands open in the ministry of the word, to receive sinners, but will now be shut; Christ will be no more preached, and held forth in the word, as God's salvation: and there is the door of faith, (Acts 14:27), which is the Gospel, so called, because faith is hereby let into the soul, and souls are by it let into the doctrine of faith; and this is sometimes an open door, when ministers have a fair opportunity of preaching it, and have freedom and liberty in it; when attention is given to it, and many souls are

gathered in by it; and this will be shut when Christ comes; there will be no more preaching; and there is also the door of hope, (^{Hos 2:15}Hosea 2:15), which now stands open, whilst the Gospel church state lasts: whilst Christ is preached, the word and ordinances administered, and whilst there is life, and Christ not yet come, there is hope of salvation, pardon, and eternal life; but when Christ comes, either by death, or at judgment, and finds persons in a graceless state, there is then no hope: add to all this, that the door of Christ's heart is now open, to receive all coming sinners; but then will be shut, against all their cries, entreaties, and importunities: it will be shut by himself, who opens and no man shuts, shuts and no man opens; and that against all wicked and profane sinners, all hypocrites and formal professors; even all without his righteousness, and the grace of the Spirit of God.

Ver. 11. *Afterwards came also the other virgins*, etc.] The "other five virgins", as the Persic version reads. The "other"; that were only virgins in name, not in reality; they were different from the wise, they were foolish ones; they were other than those that were ready, they were unprepared ones; and in another situation than those that entered in; they were without, they were now separated from the company of the wise virgins, with whom they had been so long; and what was worst of all, they were to be so for ever. These "also came"; from buying oil: they went about, and came just as they went without any; they came to the door of the bridechamber, being desirous to be let in, and hoping to partake of the marriage feast, and join in the solemnity: but alas! they came too late, they came "afterwards"; after the bridegroom was come, after they that were ready had entered in, and after the door was shut;

saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. They do not call him their Lord, for they had no interest in him, nor could they claim any; though the Syriac version reads it, "our Lord, our Lord": they give him the title, and the bare title, without having yielded that obedience, which was due unto him. They double the word, to show their importunity, earnestness, sense of danger, and confusion: this title or character is the rather used, because Christ will then appear more clearly to be Lord and God, and every tongue shall confess him to be such: their request to him is, that he would "open" the door unto them, and let them in: they were sensible that the door was shut, and that none but Christ could open it; they did not at once conclude that their case was desperate, but were willing to hope the door might be opened, through their entreaties, and what they had to say for themselves;

for though no pleas or arguments are here mentioned, yet, as elsewhere, such as these will be made by the foolish virgins; namely, prophesying in the name of Christ, casting out devils in his name, doing many wonderful works in his name, hearing his word preached, and eating and drinking in his presence; but all in vain, and to no purpose.

Ver. 12. *But he answered and said*, etc.] The Lord and bridegroom from within, thought fit to give them an answer, but an unexpected and awful one to them:

verily I say unto you, I know you not; which must be understood in consistence with the omniscience of Christ: he knew their persons, conduct, and state; he knew they were foolish virgins, graceless professors, who had made no account of him and his righteousness; but had trusted to, and depended upon, their external profession of religion: they were none of the people whom he foreknew, or knew as his own, and loved with an everlasting love; he never knew them as his father's choice in him, or as this father's gift to him; he never knew them in the everlasting covenant, or as his sheep, for whom he died; he never knew them to believe in him, or love him; nor ever exalt his person, blood and sacrifice, at his table, nor do any good work with a single eye to his glory; he never approved of them, liked their persons, or their conduct; or ever owned them as the true companions, either of his bride, or of himself: which answer implies, that as the door was shut, so it should remain; there was no admittance for them, nor any to be hoped for; and it is all one as if he had said, begone, and depart hence. The Persic version adds such a clause, "begone from my door".

Ver. 13. *Watch therefore*, etc.] In ordinances, in prayer, public and private, in hearing the word, at the Lord's supper, and in every religious exercise; over the heart, the thoughts and affections of it; over words, actions, life, and conversation; and against all sin and unbelief, Satan's temptations, the world, and its charms and snares, false teachers, and their doctrines, and for the bridegroom's coming. This is the use and application of the whole parable, and shows the general design of it; the reason to enforce watchfulness follows:

for ye know neither the day nor the hour; of death, or of judgment, or of the coming of the son of man, of one or the other; for it is added,

wherein the son of man cometh: that he will come is certain, and that quickly; the time is fixed, but when it will be is unknown; and therefore it becomes us to be our watch and guard. This last clause is not in the Vulgate Latin, nor in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and was wanting in three of Beza's copies, but is in most Greek copies, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel, and seems to be necessary.

Ver. 14. *For [the kingdom of heaven] is as a man travelling*, etc.] Our Lord adds another parable to illustrate the Gospel dispensation, or its visible church state; or the state of things respecting the church of Christ, before, and at his second coming, and during the interval between his ascension and that: for by the man here, is meant Christ, who in the everlasting covenant agreed to become man, was prophesied of as such, frequently appeared in human form, under the Old Testament dispensation; and in the fulness of time, really became man; though he was not a mere man, but was God as well as man; having all the perfections and fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in him: this man is said to travel

into a far country; by which heaven is designed, and is so called, not only because of its great distance from the earth, and which is very great indeed; but because the better country and land afar off, is out of sight; and what views we have of it, are very distant ones; and is afar off, in respect of our state of pilgrimage in this world, in which, whilst Christ was here, he was a pilgrim and a stranger too; who might be said to be as a "man travelling", whilst he was in it, and when going out of it, and ascending to heaven: he came from thence, and stayed here a while, walking up and down, and doing good; and when he had finished what he came about, he ascended on high, went to his God and Father, entered into heaven, where he is received until the times of the restitution of all things:

who called his own servants; before he took his journey, to commit some things to their trust and management; and to give them some instructions how to behave during his absence: for, according to the Jewish [f1446] canons,

> "a master that had a mind to go out of the land (of Israel) could not take his servant with him, unless he pleased; and this is a rule at all times, even at this time, that the land is in the hand of the Gentiles."

And here no mention is made of any going with him, only how they were to be employed whilst he was gone: by "his own servants" are meant, not all mankind; for though they are all in some sense his servants, or ought to

be, yet they are not so called in Scripture, much less with such an emphasis, his own servants; and besides, more than what are in the kingdom of heaven, or Gospel church state, cannot be intended; since the parable reaches to, and concerns no other: nor all the elect of God only, or all are not the elect of God that are designed; for though these are the servants of Christ, and his own peculiarly, yet all intrusted with talents, are not such; one of these was wicked, slothful, graceless, and at last was eternally lost, and perished; which is not true of anyone of the elect: but ministers of the word are here meant, who are eminently the servants of Christ, his own, whom he has called, qualified, commissioned, and sent forth; for the ministers of the word, whether faithful or slothful, good or bad, are in a very lively manner described in this parable, which is a distinct one from the former; for whereas that gives an account of the different members of the visible church, this describes the several ministers of it: nor can it be any objection to this sense of it, that these servants are all of them said to be his own servants, and called, commissioned, and gifted by him; since Judas, as well as the rest, was called, ordained, qualified, and sent forth by Christ, as an apostle.

And delivered unto them his goods; the Gospel, that rich treasure of divine truths, the dispensation of it, and gifts to preach it; all which are Christ's goods and his gifts, and not man's; and which was in a very eminent manner done, when Christ ascended on high, and received gifts for, and gave them unto men. Just before it, as he was ready to go, he gathered his disciples together; he renewed and enlarged their commission to preach the Gospel; and quickly after it, gave them greater and larger gifts of the Spirit than before; and has been ever since giving ministerial gifts to men, to some more, others less, and which are signified by the talents following.

Ver. 15. *And unto one he gave five talents*, etc.] A "talent" with the Jews, if of silver, was, according to Brerewood [f1447], of the value of 375 l. of our money; according to Bishop Cumberland, 353 l. 11 s. 10 1/2 d.; and if of gold, was equal to 4500l. and, according to the latter, 5075 l. 15 s. 7 1/2 d.: so that five of these talents, if of silver, were 1875 l. and if of gold, 22,500 l. according to Brerewood; a very large sum for one servant to be intrusted with. The Persic version reads "pounds", as in (<42>19<13>Luke 19:13). By these talents, special grace is not meant; for the parable speaks not of what was wrought in these servants, but of what was committed to their trust, and of what might lie useless by them, and be taken away from them; whereas special grace is internal, something, implanted in man, and is an

incorruptible seed, that can never be lost, or will be taken away; and it is certain, that one of these servants had not special and saving grace, but was wicked, slothful, and unprofitable, and was cast into utter darkness: but outward gifts are designed by the talents; and these not merely the gifts of natural knowledge and riches, the gifts of nature and of providence; nor the external ministry of the word, Gospel ordinances, and opportunities of enjoying them; but ministerial gifts, such as fit and qualify men to be preachers of the Gospel, as appears from their name, "talents": they being the greatest gifts for usefulness and service in the church, as talents were the greatest of weights and coins among the Jews; from the nature of them, being what may be improved or lost, and for which men are accountable; from the persons to whom they were delivered, the servants of Christ; from the time of their delivery, when Christ went into a far country, to heaven, when he ascended on high, and received gifts for men, and gave them to them; and from the unequal distribution of them, being given to some more, and others less; all which perfectly agree with ministerial gifts: for it follows,

to another two, and to another one; and these were given *to every man, according to his several ability*, or "according to his own power"; his proper power that belonged to him, as the Lord of these servants: for the sense is, not that he gave these talents, or gifts, according to the different capacities, abilities, stations, and employments of these men; but according to that power and authority which he, as Mediator, had, to dispense these gifts to each as he would; to some more, others less, as he knew would best serve his interest and kingdom:

and straightway took his journey; after he had signified, that all power in heaven and earth was given to him, by virtue of which he ordered them to go into all the world, and preach his Gospel, and administer his ordinances; for which he had, and would abundantly qualify them; with a promise of his presence with them to the end of the world; he took his leave of them, blessed them, and was parted from them, and went up into heaven.

Ver. 16. *Then he that had received the five talents*, etc.] The largest measure of gifts; an account is first given of him, how he behaved, and conducted in his Lord's absence, and what use he made of the gifts bestowed upon him: this must be understood, not of a single man, but of that sort of the servants of Christ, who have the greatest ministerial gifts: he

went; it denotes immediate application to business, and signifies that such servants went according to their commission, preached the Gospel to every creature, and administered the ordinances to proper subjects; they went directly, as soon as they had their talents; they did not stay to consult with flesh and blood, whether it would be for their interest and credit or not; they did not stick at any difficulties and discouragements, nor were deterred by the cross, reproaches, and persecutions; but went forth with courage and boldness, not in their own name and strength, but in the name and strength of Christ, who sent them, and promised them his presence and assistance, on which they depended:

and traded with the same: with the five talents, or their ministerial gifts. The ministers of the Gospel are traders, not in their own name, nor on their own stock, and for themselves, but for Christ, and for the good of immortal souls: they closely attend unto, and work at, their business and employment; by constant reading, and diligent search into the word of God; by studious meditation on it; by frequent prayer; and continual preaching the Gospel, and administering ordinances; and their success follows:

and made them other five talents; that is, increased in spiritual knowledge; gifts were improved and enlarged; a greater stock of divine things were laid in; and many souls gained to Christ: such are they whom Christ has ordained to go forth, and bear and bring forth fruit in their ministry, and whose fruit remain.

Ver. 17. *And likewise he that received two*, etc.] Talents, or a lesser measure of ministerial gifts:

he also gained other two; he worked and laboured, and traded, in proportion to the gifts he had received; and his improvements and success, under a divine blessing, were answerable.

Ver. 18. *But he that received one*, etc.] Talent, or the least degree of gifts, for the ministry of the word:

went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, "silver", and the Ethiopic, "gold"; but whether these talents were silver or gold, is not certain. Where he buried it; that is, he neglected the gift that was in him, he made no use of it, either to his own advantage, or to the good of others, and the interest of his Lord; he either never went into the ministry, or if he did, he left it as Demas did, having

too great affection for the world, and the things of it: he minded earth and earthly things, and employed himself in them, and not in his master's work and service. The phrase seems to point out the earthly mindedness of the man, his worldly disposition, and his eager pursuit after the things of life; which were the reason why he disregarded his talent, and made no use of his ministerial gifts: he could not deny worldly self, nor leave all to follow Christ; but rather than drop the world, he chose to bury his talent in it: it was his Lord's money and not his own, and he was accountable to him for it, and should have used it in another manner.

Ver. 19. *After a long time, the Lord of these servants cometh*, etc.] Either in a providential way, by a fit of illness, or in a time of persecution, and awakens the conscience, and calls them to give an account of their stewardship; or by death, when their trading or working time is over, and they become accountable for their whole conduct, throughout their ministrations; or rather, at the last judgment, when all must appear before the judge of quick and dead, ministers as well as others, and give an account of their gifts, and the use of them, to their Lord, from whom they have received them, and whose servants they profess to be. Which coming of his is after a long time; for seventeen hundred years are now past, and he is not yet come; which is a long time in man's account, though not in God's account, with whom a thousand years are as one day; and in the apprehension of the saints, who love long for, and hasten to, the coming of Christ, are desirous of it, and impatient for it. But though it may seem long, he will certainly come: he stays long, to give time to his laborious ministers to exercise all those gifts he has bestowed upon them, and to leave slothful ones without excuse. It is not to be inferred from his delay, that he will not come: he is not unmindful of his promise, or slack concerning it; though he tarries long, he will not tarry beyond the appointed time; at the end he will come, though it is long first:

and reckoneth with them; what talents they received from him, what they had done with them, and what they had gained by them. The things that ministers of the word are intrusted with, are things of value; the Gospel is a pearl of great price, or rich treasure, that is put into their earthen vessels; it is the unsearchable riches of Christ; gifts to preach it are spiritual, and preferable to gifts of nature, and providence; and the souls of men committed to their care, are of great worth and esteem with Christ; nor are any of these their own, but Christ's, and therefore must give an account of them: this shows both the awfulness and usefulness of the Gospel ministry.

Ver. 20. *And so he that had received five talents*, etc.] Or the greatest gifts: as this man is the first to whom his Lord gave any talents, and the first that went and traded with them; he is also the first that is reckoned with; who

came and brought other five talents: he came freely and cheerfully, with a holy confidence and intrepidity of mind, and gave in his account very readily, both of what he had received, and of what he had gained;

saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents, behold I have gained besides them five talents more. True ministers of the Gospel frankly own, that what gifts they have are delivered to them by Christ; and such are willing that he should have all returned to him, principal and increase: it is not to be imagined that this will be said in so many express words by them, nor will there be any need thereof; for Christ will not be ignorant of what they have been doing, and of what use they have been of; but the sense is, that as all will be manifest to Christ the searcher of hearts, with whom they have to do, so the account will stand fair and open; and it will be seen and known by all, that such and such faithful ministers of Christ have behaved in this agreeable manner, and have been thus and thus serviceable in his interest.

Ver. 21. *His Lord said unto him, well done*, etc.] Gospel ministers do not say so to themselves; they know they can do nothing well of themselves, and when they have done all they can, they own they are but unprofitable servants; they acknowledge all they do is owing to the grace of God, and strength of Christ, and that no praise is due to them; nor do they expect or seek for such eulogies from men: but this is said, to show how acceptable a diligent laborious ministry is to Christ, and to encourage industry in the preachers of the word, whose works will follow them, though not go before them:

thou good and faithful servant: such may be said to be good, who have the grace of God implanted in them, some good thing in them towards the Lord God; a good work begun in their hearts, without which men can never be good ministers of Christ; and who have good abilities, not only natural and acquired parts, but ministerial gifts; which are the good things committed to them, and that dwell in them, which they are to keep by the Holy Ghost; and who make a good use of them, and freely communicate and impart their spiritual gifts, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God; and who being employed in a good work, as that of the ministry is,

do it well, and abide in it: and such may be said to be “faithful”, who preach the pure Gospel of Christ, and the whole of it; who neither mix it with the inventions of men, nor keep back any part of it from the saints; who seek not to please men, but their Lord and Master; and not their own honour and applause, but his glory; and who abide by him and his cause, notwithstanding all reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions. In such language as this, the Jews used to praise their servants,

> “ˆmanw bwj çya ywh “O man! good and faithful”, and from whose labour one had [f1448] profit.”

Thou hast been faithful over a few things: not as considered in themselves; for the truths of the Gospel which ministers are intrusted with, and in which they are faithful, are neither few, nor inconsiderable; they are the manifold grace of God, and the unsearchable riches of Christ: nor are their gifts mean and despicable; nor are their labours worthless, and of no account; but in comparison of the unseen and eternal things of glory, which are prepared and laid up for them; so that there is no proportion between their works, and the glory that shall be revealed in them:

I will make thee ruler over many things; either on earth, where they shall reign with Christ a thousand years; and when the kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatness of it, will be given to the saints of the Most High; and when they who have turned many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars in that kingdom: or else in heaven, where as kings, they shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them, sit down with Christ in his throne, and wear the never fading crown of glory, life, and righteousness;

enter thou into the joy of our Lord; not their own, or what was of their own procuring, but their Lord’s; which Jehovah the Father has prepared for his people, and gives unto them; which the son possesses for them, and will bestow on them; and which the Holy Spirit makes them meet for; and which will chiefly lie in the enjoyment of Christ their Lord: this happiness of theirs is expressed by “joy”, which will be full and perfect, and without any interruption or mixture; will be unspeakable and glorious, and continue for ever; for when the saints shall enter into it, as into an house or mansion, they shall take possession of it, and abide in it for ever. It was usual with the Jews to express the, happiness of the world to come by “joy”; not only that which is from the Lord, but that with which he himself rejoices with his people: for they say [f1449],

> "there is no joy before, or in the presence of the holy blessed God, since the world was created, hjmç htwak, "like that joy", with which he will rejoice with the righteous, in the world to come."

Ver. 22. *He also that had received two talents*, etc.] A lesser degree of ministerial gifts; and who as he received next to the other, and was the next, who in proportion to what he had received, had traded and gained, he is mentioned in the next: place, as giving in his account; who

came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents, behold I have gained two other talents besides them: his account, abating the sum and gains, is given in, in the same form as the other.

Ver. 23. *His Lord said unto him*, etc.] The same words as he did to the other servant,

well done good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord: where the same commendation is made, and the same characters are given, as before; for a man that has lesser gifts, and is of less usefulness, may be as good and as faithful in his service, and as praise worthy, as a man of greater gifts, and more extensive usefulness; and the same happiness is bestowed on one, as the other, which in neither is of merit; but of grace; and whatever difference may be made between the saints, or between one minister and another in the Millennium state, yet in the ultimate glory, their joy, bliss, and happiness, will be alike. It is not to be established from this parable, that man has a power to improve the stock of sufficient grace given him, and by his improvement procure eternal happiness to himself; since such a stock of grace is not designed by the talents; nor is that either gotten or improved, by the industry of man; nor does the parable suggest, that men by their improvement of the talents committed to them, do, or can, procure eternal happiness: "good and faithful" servants are indeed commended by Christ, and he graciously promises great things to them, which are not proportioned to their deserts; for whereas they have been "faithful over a few things", he promises to make them "rulers over many things"; and bids them "enter into the joy of their Lord"; into the joy, which of his grace and goodness, he has provided for them, and not which they have merited and procured for themselves: nor is it to be inferred from hence, that true grace once given, or implanted, may be taken away or lost; for the parable speaks not of what is wrought in

men, but of goods and talents bestowed on them, and committed to their trust; which may be lost or taken away, or be wrapped up in a napkin, and lie useless by them; when true grace is the incorruptible seed which never dies, but always remains; that good part which shall never be taken away nor lost, but is inseparably connected with eternal glory.

Ver. 24. *Then he which had received the one talent came*, etc.] For he that has the least gifts, is accountable for them; and therefore ought to make use of them to the good of his fellow creatures, and the interest of his Lord and Master; though these often lie neglected, and frivolous, and even wicked pretences are formed to excuse such neglect, as here:

and said, Lord, I knew that thou art an hard man; he calls him "Lord", though he had not served him, and pretends he knew him; but if he had, he would have had a true affection for him, faith in him, and would have observed his commands; and he would also have appeared altogether lovely to him, and of an amiable character, and not in such a light as he represents him; which makes it a clear case, that he was ignorant of him, or he would never have said, that he was an hard, severe, or austere man; one very difficult of being pleased, cruel and uncompassionate to his servants, unjustly withholding from them what was due unto them, and rigorously exacting service that could not be performed by them: all which is the reverse of Christ's true character; who accepts of the meanest services of his people: and takes what is done, though ever so little, as even a cup of cold water, given to the least of his disciples, as done to himself; is merciful and compassionate, both to the bodies and souls of men; and is not unrighteous to forget any labour of love, shown to him or his; and makes his strength perfect in the weakness of his servants, and his grace always to be sufficient for them: but this wicked servant goes on to traduce him, and adds,

reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: which seem to be proverbial expressions; (see <4037>John 4:37), describing either a covetous man, that is desirous of that which does not belong to him; or an hard master that requires work to be done, and gives neither tools nor matter to work with; like the Egyptian task masters, who demanded the full tale of bricks, but gave no straw: whereas Christ is neither niggardly, nor exacting; he requires nothing that is not his, and gives his grace, and bestows his gifts liberally, and upbraids not; nor does he call any to service, of whatsoever sort, but he gives them grace,

strength, and abilities, proportionate to it; and as he has promised, he makes it good, that as their day is, so shall their strength be.

Ver. 25. *And I was afraid*, etc.] The Persic version adds, "to negotiate with thy money": he was afraid, lest by trading he should not gain what his Lord expected; and most of all, lest he should lose the talent itself; and dreaded his Lord's austerity, should that be the case, fearing that he would have no mercy on him. This was his pretence; but the true causes were sloth and earthly mindedness:

and went and hid thy talent in the earth; that it might not be lost, though it lay useless, and turned to no account. The Arabic version renders it, "and buried thy goods in the earth": he owned the money to be his Lord's, and thought he did very well, and enough, that he preserved it, though he had not improved it; and this he hoped would be a sufficient excuse, and on which he laid the greatest stress:

lo! there thou hast that is thine: he again acknowledges, that the gifts he had were not his own, but his master's; and whereas he had kept them entire, as he had received them, and there was the full sum he was intrusted with, he hoped no more would be required: but it is not sufficient to retain what is given, it must be made use of and improved; for every spiritual gift is given to profit with: and besides, there seems to be a degree of rudeness in these words; he does not bring the talent with him, and return it, but only signifies that he had hid it in the earth, in such a place, and "there" it was, where his Lord might take it, and have it again, if he pleased.

Ver. 26. *His Lord answered and said unto him*, etc.] Resenting, as he well might, not only his indolence and sloth, his neglect of his duty, and his worldly disposition, but the abusive character he had given of him, in order to cover his own wickedness:

thou wicked and slothful servant; a very just character of him: he was a "wicked" servant; all men in a state of nature are wicked; they lie in wickedness, and are under the power of the wicked one; and there are many wicked men among professors of religion, and many wicked ministers, who, though not openly profane, yet either trusting to their works, or doing the work of the Lord deceitfully, or wholly neglecting it, justly merit this character. This man's wickedness lay in his slothfulness, in not doing the good he might, and had gifts and abilities for; and in entertaining wrong thoughts of, and in bringing false charges against his

Lord: and he might be truly said to be “slothful”; since he took no pains to improve in spiritual knowledge; and instead of digging for that, as for silver and hid treasure, dug in the earth, and hid his talent there: he neglected the gift that was in him; did not stir it up, or study to show himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed; did not give himself up to reading, meditation, and prayer; but trusted to, and depended on what other men had done; stole away his neighbour’s words, reaped that for which he had not laboured, and entered into the labours of others; and being afraid of difficulties, indulged himself in ease and pleasure, served his own belly, and not the Lord Jesus; he gratified his worldly lusts, and had no regard to his master’s interest.

Thou knowest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: not granting that he was such an one, and that his servant knew him to be such, and had given a true character of him; but supposing he was such a person he had wickedly represented him to be; he turns the argument upon him, that therefore he must needs know, that he expected to have had his money improved, and to have received it with an increase; and that upon such a consideration he ought to have been the more diligent and industrious, in using and improving his talent, and not to have indulged sloth, and idleness; and thus he convicts, judges, and condemns him, as a wicked, slothful servant, by his own words.

Ver. 27. *Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers*, etc.] “Trapezites”, or “tablets”, the same whom the Jews [f1450] call µynjlwç, and is the same word which is here used in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel; who were so called from the table that stood before them, on which they told, and paid their money, and the exchange and use: hence all the Oriental versions here read, “thou shouldest have put my money to, or on the table”; put it into the hand of these bankers, where it would have been not only safe, as in the earth, where it was hid, but also would have made some increase, and would have been returned with profit;

and then at my coming I should have received my own with usury: this is said not so much to encourage usury, though it may be lawful; and it seems to have been a practice in those times to put money out to use upon a reasonable interest; but to reprove the sloth and inactivity of this servant, upon his own reasonings, and the character he had given of his master.

Ver. 28. *Take therefore the talent from him*, etc.] This shows it was not special grace, which is intended by the talent; for the gift and calling of special grace are without repentance, and are that good part which shall not be taken away: but gifts may fail, cease, and vanish; they may be taken away from men, and men from them; a right arm may be clean dried up, and a right eye be utterly darkened:

and give it unto him which hath ten talents; for to diligent and laborious ministers of the word, more spiritual light and knowledge is given: but this is not to be understood, as though other men's gifts are, properly speaking, taken away from them, and bestowed on them; but that their gifts appear the more illustrious through the slothfulness of others.

Ver. 29. *For unto everyone that hath shall be given*, etc.] This seems to be a frequent saying of Christ's, or a common maxim of his, which he made use of on different occasions; (See Gill on "<4013 12>Matthew 13:12"), and accords with some usual sayings, and proverbial expressions of the Jews; who say [f1451], that "the blessed God does not give wisdom, but to him that has wisdom"; and of a man, in other respects, they use this is a common proverb [f1452],

> "if he adds or increases, they add unto him, and if he lessens, they lessen to him:"

and so here; he that has gifts; and talents, shall have an addition to them.

And he shall have abundance of spiritual gifts and knowledge;

but from him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he hath. The Vulgate Latin reads, "that which he seemed to have", and so reads Munster's Hebrew Gospel, and so it is read in some Greek copies; though it seems to be taken out of (<4018 8>Luke 8:18).

Ver. 30. *And cast ye the unprofitable servant*, etc.] All the servants of Christ are unprofitable with respect to God; for no man can be profitable to him, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself, or others; or in a way of merit, since when they have done the most and best, they have done but their duty: but this man was unprofitable with respect to himself, having not improved the gift and talent bestowed on him; and with respect to men, being of no use for the conversion of sinners, or the comfort of saints, or the edifying of the body of Christ; and brought no honour to his master, and was of no service for the spreading of his Gospel, and the enlargement

of his kingdom and interest; and therefore, as one good for nothing, the ministering angels are bid to take him, and cast him

into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth: he shall be turned out of doors into outer darkness, to be a companion of other unhappy creatures; who are also without, bewailing their miserable condition, and reflecting on their past conduct; whilst faithful, diligent, and laborious servants will be within, partaking of a rich entertainment, prepared by their Lord, accompanied with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: (See Gill on "Matthew 8:12").

Ver. 31. *When the son of man shall come in his glory*, etc.] What is before signified in the two preceding parables, is here clearly and distinctly represented without a parable: and it should be observed, that as the foregoing parables only regard the Gospel church state, and the ministers and members of it, good and bad, or all sorts of Christian professors; so this account of the last judgment only concerns them; for though all men that ever have been, are, or shall be in every nation under heaven, from Adam to the last man that will be born, will be judged; yet the part or it here described, though it gives a general and lively idea of the whole, only regards the judgment and final state of such who have made a profession of the Christian religion. The judge himself is first described, who is said to be "the son of man"; a name by which Christ is frequently called, and by which he styles himself in his state of humiliation; expressing both the truth of his human nature, and the meanness of it in that state: but as despicable as he appeared then in human nature, in the form of a servant, a man of sorrows, despised by men, and subject to sufferings and death; yet when he comes again, it will be in another guise manner: he will appear "in his glory"; in the glory of the only begotten of the Father, in the glory of his proper deity, in the glory of all the perfections of the divine nature; which glory was, in a great measure, and from most persons, hid in the days of his flesh, though he was in the form of God, and equal with him. He will also come in his mediatorial glory, which he had with the Father before the world was, and with all the honour, power, and authority of the judge of the whole earth, to execute judgment upon men; and in the glory of his human nature, of which his transfiguration on the mount was a pledge and emblem.

And all the holy angels with him; which splendid retinue will add to the glory of his appearance; and who will accompany him not merely, or only

as his attendants, to make the solemnity more grand, pompous, and magnificent; but as ministering spirits, who will be employed by him in gathering all before him, separating the wicked the good, and conducting each to their several apartments of bliss or woe: and when he thus appears,

then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; or glorious throne, upon the clouds of heaven, where he will sit as judge, and be visible to all.

Ver. 32. *And before him shall be gathered all nations*. etc.] That is, all that have professed the Christian religion in all the nations of the world, whether Jews or Gentiles, high or low, rich or poor, wise and foolish, such as have had greater or lesser talents; though it is also true of every individual of mankind of every nation, tribe and family, of every sex, age, and state, that ever has been, is, or will be. Yet Christian professors seem only here intended, as the following distinction of them, their final state, and the reasons of it show. This collection of them before Christ, the righteous judge, will be made by the holy angels, who will come with him for this purpose; and being mighty, as they are, will be able to accomplish great a work; and especially as being under the direction, influence, and authority of so divine, glorious, and illustrious a person, as the son of man will then to all appear to be.

And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: they shall be gathered before him, as they were together in their visible church state, as being all under a profession of religion; some wise, some foolish virgins; some sheep, and others goats; some industrious, diligent, faithful, and laborious servants; others wicked, slothful, and unprofitable ones; many of whom pass undistinguished and undiscovered now: but then the judge, who is of quick understanding, will easily discern the one from the other; such as have the oil of grace in the vessels of their hearts, together with their lamps, from such as have only the outward visible lamp of a profession, but destitute of the grace of God; and good and faithful servants, who have made a right use of their gifts, from such who have been negligent, careless, and remiss; and though these have been folded together, sheep and goats, in the sheepfold of the church, where they have all bore the character of the sheep of Christ; yet now when the chief shepherd appears, who knows his own sheep, and calls them by name, he will as easily separate the one from the other, and more so, than any shepherd, among men, can part a flock consisting of sheep and goats. Hypocrites in Zion shall now be no more, nor sinners stand any

longer in the congregation of the righteous, nor both together as one body, and on one side in judgment.

Ver. 33. *And he shall set the sheep on his right hand*, etc.] That is, the elect of God, and true believers, such as have the grace of God truly implanted in them; the sheep the Father gave unto Christ, and made his care and charge, whom he, as the good shepherd, laid down his life for; and who know his voice in effectual calling, and follow him in the way of his ordinances and appointments; and are comparable to sheep for their meekness and innocence, their simplicity and usefulness, and their harmless and inoffensive lives, and conversations: these Christ will set on his right hand, as a token of his affection for them, and a mark of respect and honour shown them, and as a pledge of that exaltation and glory he will be about to raise them to.

But the goats on the left; that is, the foolish virgins, wicked, and slothful servants, graceless professors, who, because of the impurity of their hearts, the filthiness of their lives, and their offensiveness to Christ, are compared to goats: these he will place at his left hand, in token of his disaffection for them, as a brand of disgrace upon them, and as an intimation of that dishonour, and miserable condition they will quickly be in. These different situations plainly pre-signify how things will go with each, that one will be acquitted, and made happy, the other will be condemned, and become miserable. Agreeable to which the Jews say [f1453], that there is a right hand and a left hand with the Lord: they that are on the right hand, are such as have done well, and are twkzl, "for absolution"; and they that are on the left hand are criminals, and are hbwjl, "for condemnation". Some think the allusion is to the two Scribes in the sanhedrim, who stood before the judges, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, and wrote the sentences; the one of those that were acquitted, and the other of those that were condemned [f1454].

Ver. 34. *Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand*, etc.] Before Christ is called "the son of man", now "the king"; who is not only king of saints, but king of the whole world; the king of kings, and lord of lords, the judge of all the earth; he appearing in glory and majesty, sitting on a throne of glory, being attended with his glorious angels, and all nations gathered before him, waiting for the final sentence to be pronounced upon them by him; and who accordingly begins with those on his right hand, his sheep, the chosen, redeemed, and called of God, saying to them,

come. The Arabic version adds, “to me”: by such a phrase he sometimes had invited, and encouraged poor sensible sinners: to come and partake of his grace: and here by it he calls the righteous, and bespeaks them in the most tender and endearing manner, and yet with the majesty of a king, and the authority of a judge, to come near unto him, with intrepidity and confidence, and take possession of a glorious kingdom; bestowing on them this high and illustrious character,

ye blessed of my Father: so called, partly because they were his Father’s, not only by creation, but by his choice of them to grace and glory, and therefore most happy and blessed; and partly, because, as such a choice shows, they were dear unto him, highly in his favour, and loved by him with an everlasting love; as also, because they were blessed by him as the Father of Christ, and theirs, with all the spiritual blessings of the everlasting covenant in him; with the pardon of their sins, the justification of their persons, the sanctification of their nature, with adoption, and a right unto, and meetness for the eternal inheritance: hence it follows,

inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. The happiness of the saints, in the other world, is here expressed by a “kingdom”, because of the glory, riches, grandeur, and magnificence of it; as it is sometimes by a crown, for the same reason, suitable to their character and dignity, who are made kings and priests by Christ: and is likewise represented as an “inheritance”, as it is elsewhere, being not acquired by industry, or obtained by merit; but is the gift of their heavenly Father, and in right of adoption, as the children of God, being made such by his free grace and favour, and denotes the stability and perpetuity of it: and this is said to be prepared, not only appointed and designed in the council purposes, and decrees of God, but got ready; it is a kingdom erected, an inheritance reserved, and a crown of righteousness laid up in heaven; a glory really provided and secured in an everlasting covenant, and that for you: for some, and not others; for the sheep on the right hand, and not the goats on the left; for the peculiar favourites of God, the objects of his love and choice, the redeemed of the Lamb, and that are born of the Spirit; and that for them,

from the foundation of the world. The place itself, where this happiness is to be enjoyed, was actually made on the first day of the creation, when the heavens were formed, and the foundations of the earth were laid, and the glory itself long before. The Ethiopic version here reads, “before the

world"; and the Persic, "before the foundation of the world was laid"; and Grotius himself owns, that the phrase is the same as "before the foundation of the world"; and Dr. Hammond's paraphrase is, "before all eternity": for as early were these persons, the beloved, the chosen, and blessed of the Father: so that this glory must be of free grace, and not merit, or owing to any works of righteousness done by men; since it was not only designed and appointed, but prepared and laid up for persons before they had a being, and had done neither good nor evil. The Jews [f1455] speak of the law being an inheritance for all Israel, from the six days of the creation; but a much more glorious one is here spoken of: nearer to this is what they say [f1456] that Bathsheba was appointed to be David's wife from the day that the world was created; and add, but the mystery of the thing is, alyld atwklm, "the kingdom that is above", which is called by her name. So in 2 Esdras, "the kingdom is already prepared for you":

> "Go, and ye shall receive: pray for few days unto you, that they may be shortened: the kingdom is already prepared for you: watch." (2 Esdras 2:13)

Ver. 35. *For I was an hungered and ye gave me meat.* etc.] This, and the following, are not mentioned as causes of the kingdom being prepared for them, or of their being entitled to it, or of their being put into the possession of it; but as descriptive of their characters, and as testimonies and evidences of the grace of God in them; by which it appeared, that they were the blessed of his Father, having his special grace vouchsafed unto them; and that they were the children of God, to whom the inheritance of the kingdom belonged, and for whom it was prepared: for what was done by them in time, could never be the cause of what was done for them in eternity, or before, or from the foundation of the world; nor is there any proportion between a kingdom, and such services as here mentioned: and besides, this kingdom is by inheritance, and not, merit; is prepared by God, and not procured by men, and was got ready for them before they had a being; and therefore could not be caused by any actions of theirs: what is here, and in the following instances, said to be done to Christ, is not to be understood of him personally, but mystically, of the members of his body, as he himself explains it, (<40 25 40>Matthew 25:40), and the sense is, that when some of the servants of Christ, ministers, or private Christians, were in distress for want of the necessaries of life, these gracious souls supplied them with food; which to do, especially in a time of persecution, showed

not only love to Christ, but great faith in him, and that they were not ashamed of him, and their profession of him, nor of his poor ministers and members; for this was done by them, not as the effect of mere humanity to the poor in general, but as an instance of affection to Christ's poor; and was done for his sake, and because they belonged to him, were preachers of his Gospel, and professors of his name; and therefore was considered as if done to himself personally:

I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; not gall and vinegar, as the Jews did, but a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, prophet, and righteous person, and because belonging to Christ: this is taken notice of with acceptance by him; and such shall not lose the reward of grace. The Targumist [f1457] has a passage which may be compared with this:

> "Solomon said, by a spirit of prophecy from before the Lord; the Lord of the world shall say to all the righteous in the presence of everyone, go taste, with joy, thy bread which is returned unto thee, for thy bread which thou hast given to the poor and needy, who were hungry; and drink with a good heart the wine which is laid up for thee in paradise, instead of thy wine, which thou hast mingled for the poor and needy, who were thirsty; for, lo! now are thy works accepted before the Lord."

I was a stranger, and ye took me in, or "gathered me": an Hebraism; (see <101127>2 Samuel 11:27), and the Septuagint there. Such servants of Christ as were obliged to quit their habitations through the violence of persecution, and were scattered abroad, or went about preaching the Gospel; such were by these righteous ones taken into their houses, and provided for with food and lodging, and every convenience of life; as they were by Gaius, and others.

Ver. 36. *Naked, and ye clothed me*, etc.] For in such a condition sometimes are the dear children of God, and members of Christ; (see <460411>1 Corinthians 4:11), when others, who, Dorcas like, have made coats and garments for them, and clothed them with them; and which will be shown another day, or taken notice of as the fruits, and so evidences of the grace of God in them.

I was sick, and ye visited me, or "looked after me", or "over me": or, as the Persic version renders it, ye had the care of me; and which is the true sense and import of the word: for it not only intends visits paid to sick

persons in a Christian manner, relieving them with their substance, giving good advice, or speaking comfortable words to them; but attending them, and waiting on them, and doing such things for them which, in their weak state, they are not capable of doing for themselves. Visiting of the sick was reckoned, by the Jews, a very worthy action: they speak great things of it, and as what will be highly rewarded hereafter.

> "Six things, (they say [f1458],) a man eats the fruit of them in this world, and there is a stable portion for him in the world to come:"

and the two first of them are, ^yjrwa tsnkh "the taking in of travellers", or "strangers", which is mentioned in the preceding verse, and µylwj rwqyb, "visiting the sick". One of their Rabbins [f1459] says,

> "he that does not visit the sick, is as if he shed blood: says another, he that visits the sick is the cause of his living; and he that does not visit the sick, is the cause of his death: and, says a third, whoever visits the sick shall be preserved from the damnation of hell."

I was in prison, and ye came unto me: which has been often the lot of the saints, as it was frequently of the Apostle Paul, who had this respect shown him by many of the people of God, as by the house of Onesiphorus, and by Epaphroditus, who brought him a present from the Philippians, when in bonds; and which will be remembered another day.

Ver. 37. *Then shall the righteous answer him*, etc.] From whence it appears, that only such shall be at the right hand of Christ, who are righteous persons, who have the righteousness of Christ imputed to them; and, in consequence of which, are created anew unto righteousness and true holiness; and, under the influence of divine grace, live soberly, righteously, and godly: and those, upon hearing such works ascribed unto them, will, with wonder and astonishment, reply,

saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? which answer arises partly from not attending to, or thoroughly understanding the words of Christ, which they seem to take in such sense, as if he meant these things were personally done to him; whereas the far greater part of them had never seen him in the flesh, and much less in such circumstances as required such things to be done to him; and partly from surprise and astonishment, that he should take notice of such mean actions, and so highly extol them, and graciously reward them;

as also from a forgetfulness of them, their left hand not knowing what their right hand had done: which shows, that they had put no confidence in their works, or depended upon them for their justification before God, and acceptance, with him; these were out of sight, and mind; their only trust being in the person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ.

Ver. 38. *When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in*? etc.] As they had never seen him hungry and thirsty, in his own person, though he was both in the days of his flesh, and were ministered to, both by angels, and by good women out of their substance; so they had never seen him a stranger, and took him into their houses; yet they had, seen him hungry and thirsty, and as a stranger in his members, and had done these good offices to him in them, and to them for his sake:

or naked, and clothed thee? for so Christ in person never was, until stripped of his raiment by the soldiers, and officers; but they had seen many of his poor saints without clothing, and had covered their nakedness.

Ver. 39. *Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee*?] For though he bore the sicknesses of his people, yet we never read of his being sick himself, nor was he ever cast into prison; but this has been the case of many of his servants, as John the Baptist, Peter, and Paul, and multitudes of others, who have been tenderly and affectionately used by their fellow Christians.

Ver. 40. *And the king shall answer, and say unto them*, etc.] Christ, though a king, and now appearing in great glory and majesty, yet such will be his goodness and condescension, as to return an answer to the queries of his people; blushing and astonished at his notice of their poor services, which they know to be so imperfect, and are always ready to own themselves unprofitable servants; and this he will do in the following manner:

verily I say unto you; a way of speaking often used by him, when here on earth, when he, in the strongest manner, would asseverate anything as truth, and remove all doubt and hesitation about it.

Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me: which is to be understood, not in so limited a sense, as to regard only the apostles, and the least of them, for these were not the only brethren of Christ; nor in so large a sense, as to include all in human nature; but the saints only, the children of God, and household of faith: for

though acts of charity and humanity are to be done to all men, yet especially to these; and indeed, these only can be considered as the brethren of Christ, who are born of God, and do the will of Christ; for such he accounts his mother, brethren, and sisters; and who are not only of the same human nature, but in the same covenant with him, and the sons of God, not by nature, as he is the Son of God, but by adoption, and so are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: now he that does any of the above acts of kindness to these "brethren" of Christ, and because they stand in such a relation to him, even the "least" of them: though he is not an apostle, or a martyr, or a preacher of the Gospel, or has any considerable gifts and abilities for usefulness, but is a weak believer in spiritual things, as well as poor in temporal things; and though it is but to "one" of these opportunity and circumstances not allowing it to be done to more; yet as such is the humility and condescension of this great king, as to account such mean persons his brethren; such also is his grace and goodness, as to reckon every instance of kindness and respect shown to them, as done to himself in person; and will take notice of it, accept and reward it, as if it had been so done.

Ver. 41. *Then shall he also say unto them on his left hand*, etc.] The goats, the foolish virgins, and slothful and wicked servants,

depart from me: a like expression is used by him to preachers of the word, and professors of religion, that are mere nominal ones. (⁴⁰7²³Matthew 7:23) and such are intended here, who professed to be on Christ's side, had been in his visible church, and hoped to have been with him for ever; but having nothing but the lamp of a profession, and some external works to trust to, they are bid to be gone from him; they are banished his presence, which is what is commonly called the punishment of loss; the loss of the presence of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, angels, and saints; and is thought to be greater than the punishment of sense, hereafter expressed. The character given of them, which is the reverse of the former, is,

ye cursed; for having sinned against God, and his righteous law, they are cursed by it, which curses everyone that is under its works, as these were, and do not perfectly fulfil whatsoever it requires; and so were justly rejected of God, and hated by him: and therefore are condemned and sent,

into everlasting fire: by which is meant, the wrath of God; and the phrase expresses the intolerable fierceness of it, and its perpetual continuance; the sense of which, without intermission, will ever be felt in the conscience;

and is the punishment of sense, the wicked will for ever endure: it may also intend the pit and prison of hell, where these torments will be for ever inflicted; and so hell is called by the Jews [f1460], the hell µl[twdyqy, "eternal fire", or "everlasting burning": and is here said to be

prepared for the devil and his angels; for Satan, or Beelzebub, the prince of devils, and all his principalities and powers under him: it is not said to be prepared for these persons, though it was, and who were foreordained to this condemnation, but for the devil and his angels; showing, that the same punishment will be inflicted on hypocrites and carnal professors, as on the devils themselves; and it is indeed of such, that the devouring fire, and everlasting burnings are spoken, in (~~23314~~Isaiah 33:14), to which this passage seems to have some respect; for no where else is mention made of this everlasting fire: it is not said neither when it was prepared. It is a notion of the Jews [f1461], that the angels were created on the second day; and it should seem by them, that they fell the same day; hence it is a prevailing opinion among them [f1462], that hell was made on the second day of the creation; though at, other times, they reckon hell among the seven things which were created before the world was [f1463], and which may be reconciled together: for as heaven, the place of the saints' happiness, was prepared from the foundation of the world, or on the first day of its creation, though the happiness itself was provided long before; so hell, the place of the torments of the devils and wicked, though it was not made or prepared until the second day of the creation, when, according to this opinion, the angels were made and fell; yet the punishment they were to endure there, was appointed before the world was; and so hell is said to ^yml[^mardsm, "be ordained from eternity", because of their sins [f1464].

Ver. 42. *For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat*, etc.] Hence it appears, that these were such as dwelt among Christians, and professed the Christian name, and yet disregarded the poor members of Christ in distress, when it was in the power of their hands to help them; but when they were hungry and ready to starve for want of food, did not communicate to them for Christ's sake; which showed I that they had no true faith in him, and love to him, and therefore are justly condemned by him; whereas such who never knew Christ, nor any of his people, or any obligation they were under to regard any for Christ's sake, these will never be condemned for the non-performance of these things:

I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; as not the least morsel of bread to eat, so not so much as a cup of cold water to drink; which with what follows, are manifest tokens and evidences, that they did not belong to Christ, were not true believers in him, nor had they any real love to him: the grace of God was not in them, and therefore had neither right unto, nor meetness for, the kingdom of heaven; but were righteously banished from the presence of the Lord, and sent to dwell among everlasting burnings; for righteous it was, that such as they who would not show any love to him here, should not dwell with him for ever hereafter.

Ver. 43. *I was a stranger, and ye took me not in*, etc.] Did not take the poor members of Christ into their houses, and take care of them in their families, when they were obliged to flee from their places of abode, or wandered about preaching the Gospel; and who must have perished in the streets, if others, that bore the Christian name; had not been more compassionate than they:

naked, and ye clothed me not: sick and in prison, and ye visited me not: their conduct, behaviour, and character, are just the reverse of the righteous, and therefore it is no wonder that their sentence is different.

Ver. 44. *Then shall they also answer him*, etc.] As well as the righteous, being likewise astonished at what he had said, but on a different account;

saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to thee? Hence it is clear again, that these men were nominal Christians, who had made a profession of Christ: they own him as Lord; and suggest that they had seen him, and known him, though never in such circumstances; for if they had, such was their love to him, and great respect and veneration for him, as they pretend, they would, to be sure, have ministered unto him; and if ever they had seen him in such a case, which they could not call to mind, they could not believe, but they must have supplied him with all things necessary and convenient.

Ver. 45. *Then shall he answer them*, etc.] With a stern countenance, in great resentment, as one highly offended, and with the authority of a judge:

saying, verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me: since they had given no food not to the least of his brethren and friends that stood at his right hand, no not to anyone of them; not so much as the least bit of bread to them when hungry, nor a

drop of water to them when thirsty; had not taken them into their houses, nor provided the meanest lodging for them, when they were exposed in the streets to the inclemency of the weather, and insults of men; nor gave them the least rag to cover them, when they were almost naked, and ready to perish; nor did they minister to their wants, either physical, or food, or give attendance, when on sick beds, and in prison houses; therefore he reckoned this neglect of them, and want of compassion to them, all one as if he himself in person had been so treated: and if then judgment will righteously proceed against men for sins of omission, much more for sins of commission; and if such will be dealt with in this manner, who have taken no notice, and shown no respect to the members of Christ; what will the end be of those, who are injurious to them, their persons, and properties, and persecute and kill them?

Ver. 46. *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment*, etc.] Their excuses will not be regarded, their pleas will be of no avail, their pretensions to interest in Christ, and love to him, will be set aside; the sentence will remain irrevocable, and there will be no appeal from it, for there is no higher tribunal to bring the cause before; judgment having passed, the execution of it immediately follows: these goats, or formal professors, shall be obliged, whether they will or not, to depart from the presence of Christ; the angels will be ordered to take and cast them into everlasting burnings; they will be driven by them into hell, the place appointed for them; where they shall endure `yjxn çnw[` "everlasting punishment", as the Jews [f1465] also express it; and that both in soul and body, as the just desert of sin; which being committed against an infinite God, cannot be satisfied for by a finite creature; who therefore must ever bear the punishment of it, because its pollution and guilt will always remain:

but the righteous into life eternal; such as are justified by the righteousness of Christ, and who, though they have done works of righteousness under the influence, and by the assistance of the grace of God, yet have not depended upon them, but upon Christ, for life and salvation: these shall go into heaven, the place appointed for them, to enjoy that eternal life in soul and body, which is the free gift of God, through Christ; and will be a life free from all the sorrows of the present one; a life of perfect holiness and knowledge, and inconceivable pleasure; a life of vision of God, and communion with him, and which will continue for ever; and which ascertains the eternity of the punishment of the wicked: for as the

happiness of the righteous will be eternal, the punishment of the wicked will be so too; for no reason can be given why the word which is the same in both clauses, should be taken in the one for a limited time, and in the other for an eternal duration. The Jews have a saying [f1466] which agrees with this last clause, “the world to come is not made but for the righteous”.

CHAPTER 26

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 26

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings*, etc.] Meaning either all that are recorded by this evangelist, all the sermons and discourses of Christ, delivered both to the people of the Jews, and to his disciples; his conversation with the former, and his divine instructions and prudent advice to the latter, together with all his excellent parables, which are largely related in this book; or else what is said in the two preceding chapters, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world, the state of the church, and conduct of his servants to the end of time, expressed in the parables of the virgins and talents, and concerning the last judgment and final state of all men:

he said unto his disciples; who now were alone with him: having finished his prophetic, and being about to enter on his priestly office, he gives his disciples some intimations of its near approach.

Ver. 2. *Ye know that after two days is [the feast of] the passover*, etc.] Which was kept in commemoration of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt; and was typical of Christ the passover, who was now to be sacrificed for his people. This was said on Tuesday, and on the Thursday following, the passover began. Christ speaks of this as a thing well known to the disciples, as it must be, since it always began on a certain day, the fourteenth of the month Nisan; which month answered to part of our March, and part of our April; and though there was very frequently an intercalation of a whole month in a year, made by the sanhedrim, to keep their festivals regularly in the proper season of the year; yet previous public notice was always given of this, either by fixing a paper upon the door of the sanhedrim [f1467], signifying such an intercalation made, which served for the inhabitants of Jerusalem; or by sending messengers with letters into all distant places [f1468], acquainting them with it. So that the times of these festivals were always well known; even to the common people:

and the son of man is betrayed to be crucified; it must not be thought that this was equally known by the disciples, as the former; for though they

might know, or at least remember, that Christ had told them that he should suffer many things of the priests, Scribes, and elders, who would deliver him to the Gentiles, to be crucified; yet might not understand that this passover was to be the time, when this should be done: by “the son of man”, Christ means himself, who was truly and really man, the seed of the woman, the son of Abraham and of David; a character by which the Messiah is described in the Old Testament, (<198017>Psalm 80:17) (<270713>Daniel 7:13), and hence frequently used by Christ of himself; which, as it expresses the truth of his human nature, so the weaknesses and infirmities he bore in it; and is very properly used here, when he is speaking of his being to be betrayed and crucified. What he says of himself is, that he is “betrayed”; that is, is to be betrayed, or will be betrayed, meaning at the passover, which was to be in two days time. Christ speaks of his being betrayed, as if it was already done; not only because it was so near being done, there being but two days before it would be done; but because it was a sure and certain thing, being determined in the purpose of God, and foretold in prophecy that it should be; and besides, Judas had now resolved upon it within himself, and was forming a scheme how to bring it about. And this respects not only the act of Judas in betraying him into the hands of the chief priests, but also the delivery, as the word here used signifies, of him by them, to the Roman governors; for they, as Stephen says, were also his betrayers and murderers; yea, it may include the delivery of him by Pilate, to the Jews and Roman soldiers; and the rather, because it follows, “to be crucified”; which was a Roman, and not a Jewish punishment. This was typified by the lifting up the brazen serpent on a pole, and foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament, (<192216>Psalm 22:16 <381210>Zechariah 12:10), and predicted by Christ himself, sometimes more covertly, (<431232>John 12:32,33), and sometimes in express words, (<401919>Matthew 20:19), and was a very painful and shameful death, and which showed him to be made a curse for his people. It appears from hence; that the crucifixion and death of Christ, were not casual and contingent events, but were determined by the counsel of God, with all circumstances attending: the betraying and delivery of him were by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; and not only his death, but the manner of it by crucifixion, was pointed out in prophecy, and was a certain thing; and the very time of his death was fixed; which shows the early concern of God for the salvation of his people, and his wonderful grace and mercy to them: and it is clear from hence, that Christ had perfect knowledge of all this: he knew not only that he should be betrayed, but he knew from the beginning who would betray

him; he not only knew that he should die, but he knew what kind of death he should die, even the death of the cross; and he knew the exact time when he should die, that it would be at the following passover, which was just at hand; and he had suggested this to his disciples, and therefore he speaks of it as a thing known unto them; at least what they might have known, and concluded from what he had said to them, (<4001818>Matthew 20:18,19), and the whole is a considerable proof of his being God omniscient. And he thought fit to put his disciples in mind of it, because the time drew nigh; that their memories being refreshed with it, they might be prepared for it, and not be surprised, shocked, and offended at it, when it came to pass; which shows the tender concern our Lord had for them.

Ver. 3. *Then assembled together the chief priests*, etc.] About the same time, two days before the passover, that Jesus said these things to his disciples, as is plain from (<411401>Mark 14:1). By "the chief priests" are meant, either such who had been high priests, or such as were the heads of the twenty four courses of the priests; or rather, the principal men of the priesthood, who were chosen out of the rest, to be members of the great sanhedrim:

and the Scribes; the doctors, of the law, who wrote out copies of the law for the people, and interpreted it to them in a literal way: this clause is left out in the Vulgate Latin, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel, and in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, and in the Alexandrian copy, and some others, but is retained in, the Syriac version; and no doubt, but these men had a place in this grand council:

and the elders of the people; these were the civil magistrates; so that this assembly consisted both of ecclesiastics and laymen, as the sanhedrim did, of priests, Levites, and Israelites [f1469]: these came

unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas; his name was Joseph, but his surname Caiaphas; a word not of the same original with Cephas, as Camero thought; for these two words begin with different letters, nor are the rest the same. Now, though a king of Israel might not sit in the sanhedrim, yet an high priest might, provided he was sufficiently qualified with wisdom [f1470]. The president of this grand council at this time, should be Rabban Gamaliel, Paul's master; unless it was Caiaphas, at whose house they were: how they came to meet at the high priest's palace, deserves inquiry; since their proper and usual place of meeting, was a chamber in the temple, called Gazith [f1471], or the paved chamber: now let it

be observed, that according to the accounts the Jews themselves give, the sanhedrim removed from this chamber, forty years before the destruction of the temple [f1472]; and which, as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, was about a year and a half before the death of Christ; and as others say [f1473], four years; at least three years and a half before that time: but then, though the sanhedrim removed from the paved chamber, they met at Chanoth, "the sheds", which was a place within the bounds of the temple, in the mountain of the house; and the question still returns, how came it to pass they did not meet there? To me the reason seems to be, that they chose not to meet there, but at the high priest's palace, because of privacy, that it might not be known they were together, and about any affair of moment; and particularly this: the high priest's house was always in Jerusalem, and he never removed from thence; nor did he go from the temple thither only in the night, or an hour or two in the day; for he had an apartment in the temple, which was called the chamber of the high priest, where he was the whole day [f1474].

Ver. 4. *And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety*, etc.] The Jews had often attempted his life, but he escaped out of their hands; they had sent officers to apprehend him, but to no purpose; they therefore meet and consult together, to form some scheme, and make use of some stratagem, that they might lay hold on him, and keep him; they were for doing this in the most private manner they could:

and kill him; not with their own hands, nor privately; but their scheme was to apprehend him privately, by some secret artifice, and then deliver him to the Roman governor; to put him to death according to law, publicly, for crimes they had to charge him with; hereby (<19202>Psalm 2:2), had its accomplishment, at least in part.

Ver. 5. *And they said, not on the feast day*, etc.] Upon mature deliberation, it was an agreed point with them, at least it was carried by a majority, that nothing of this kind should be attempted to be done on the feast day, on any of the days of the feast of passover, which was now at hand; though this was contrary to their common rules and usages: for, a person that sinned presumptuously, and such an one they accounted Jesus to be, they say [f1475],

> "they do not put him to death by the order of the sanhedrim of his own city, nor by the sanhedrim of Jabneh; but they bring him up to the great sanhedrim at Jerusalem, and keep him "until the feast",

and put him to death, `lgrb`, "on a feast day"; as it is said, (<05D713>Deuteronomy 17:13), "and all the people shall hear and fear", etc."

But what influenced them at this time to take another course, is the reason following;

lest there be an uproar among the people: they had no fear of God before their eyes, or in their hearts, only the fear of the people; many of whom believed in Christ, and others that did not, yet had a great veneration for him, having seen his miracles, and received favours from him; themselves, or their friends and relations, being cured by him of various diseases: besides, at the feast, people from all parts came up to Jerusalem; and they knew that large numbers from Galilee, where he had the greatest interest, would be present; and they feared, should they attempt anything of this nature at this time, the people would rise, and rescue him out of their hands. But God had determined otherwise, and his counsel shall stand; it was his pleasure, that he should be put to death at this feast, that the truth might answer the type of the passover lamb; and that all Israel, whose males now met together, might be witnesses of it: and so it was, that though these men had concluded otherwise in their council; yet an opportunity offering by Judas, to get him into their hands, they embrace it; and risk the danger of the people's uprising, who they found compliant enough to their wishes.

Ver. 6. *Now when Jesus was in Bethany*, etc.] Which was about fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, (<431118>John 11:18), or about two miles from it. The time of Christ's death being at hand, he keeps nigh to Jerusalem, where he was to suffer and die, in the room and stead of sinners:

in the house of Simon the leper; so called, to distinguish him from others of the name. This epithet was either a family one, some person of note in it having been a leper; or else he is so named, because he himself had been one, but was now cured; though the reason interpreters give for this, that otherwise he would not have been suffered to live in a town, is not a good one; for lepers, according to the Jewish [f1476] canons, were only forbid Jerusalem, and towns and cities that were walled round, and not others, such as the village of Bethany. There were many lepers healed by Christ, which, among other things, was an evidence of his being the Messiah, and a proof of his deity, and this Simon was one of them; whether the same

mention is made of in (40801Matthew 8:1), is not certain, nor very probable; since that man lived in Galilee, at, or near Capernaum; this at Bethany, near Jerusalem: however, he was one of those lepers that had a sense of his mercy, and was grateful for it, as appears by his entertaining Christ at his house; and may teach us thankfulness to Christ, who has healed all our diseases; and particularly, the spreading leprosy of sin, with which all the powers and faculties of our souls were infected; and which was not in our own power, or any creature's, to cure, but his blood cleanses from it: and it may be observed, that Christ goes in and dwells with such whom he heals, and with such he is always welcome.

Ver. 7. *There came unto him a woman*, etc.] By some thought to be the same that is spoken of in (40737Luke 7:37), and by most, to be Mary, the sister of Lazarus, (43203John 12:3), which may be true; for it is possible that one and the same woman, might perform a like action at different times; for to neither of the above, at the same time, will the following agree: not to the former, for though that was done in the house of one Simon, yet not Simon the leper, but Simon the Pharisee; who though he had a particular respect for Christ, which few of that sect had, yet appeared to be then of a Pharisaical spirit; that was done in Galilee, this near Jerusalem in Bethany; the woman there anointed the feet of Christ, but this woman poured the ointment on his head; nor did any such conversation as here follow upon it, between Christ and his disciples; but what discourse was had on that occasion, was between Simon and Christ. Not to the latter, for that does not appear to be done in Simon's house, but rather in the house of Lazarus; no mention is made of the alabaster box, nor was the ointment poured on his head, but on his feet; besides, that was done six days before the passover, whereas this was but two; moreover, Judas only objected to that, but the disciples in general had indignation at this; and though the objections to it, and Christ's defence of it, are much in the same language, in one place as in the other, yet it was no unusual thing with Christ, to make use of the same words on a like incident, or when the same objections were made. The fact here recorded, is the same as in (41403Mark 14:3), where it stands in the same order as here, and seems to have been done at the supper, of which mention is made, (43302John 13:2), when Satan entered into Judas, and put it into his heart to betray his master, the account of which follows this here:

having an alabaster box of very precious ointment; Mark calls it, "ointment of spikenard", (41403Mark 14:3), which was very odorous, and of

a very fragrant smell; (see <2201212>Song of Solomon 1:12). Some there render it, “pure nard”; unadulterated, unmixed, sincere and genuine; others, “liquid nard”, which was drinkable, and easy to be poured out; and some “Pistic” nard, so called, either from “Pista”, the name of a place in India, from whence it was brought, as some think; or as Dr. Lightfoot, from aqtsyp, “Pistaca”, which is the maste of a tree [f1477], and of which, among other things, Pliny says [f1478], the ointment of nard was made. The Persic version in both places read it, “ointment of Gallia”; and the just now mentioned writer [f1479], speaks of “nardum Gallicum”, “Gallic nard”, which is what may be meant by that interpreter; but be it what ointment it will; it was ointment, very precious: very costly, and of a very great price; for the disciples observe, it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence: and for the better preserving of such ointments incorrupt, they used to be put into vessels made of “alabaster” [f1480]; though some think not the matter, but the form of these vessels is referred to; and observe, that vessels of gold, silver, and glass, for this use, being made in the form of “alabasters”, were called by that name; and that this might be made of the latter, since Mark says, that she brake the box; not into pieces, for then she could not be said to pour it out; but either the top, or side of it: though some critics observe, that the word signifies no more, than that she shook it, that the thicker parts of the ointment might liquify, and be the more easily poured out. The Arabic version has omitted that clause, and the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic, read it, “she opened it”; that is, as the Persic adds, “the top of the vessel”: she took off the covering of the box, or took out the stopple,

and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat: which was usually done at festivals, or at any considerable entertainments, as at weddings, etc.

> “Says Rab, they “pour ointment on the heads of the doctors”; (the gloss is, the women put ointment on the heads of the scholars;) says R. Papa to Abai, does the doctor speak of the ointment of the bridechamber? He replies, thou orphan, did not thy mother cause for thee, that “they poured out ointment on the heads of the doctors”, at thy wedding? for lo! one of the Rabbins got a wife for his son, in the house of R. Bar Ula; and they say, that R. Bar Ula got a wife for his son in the house of one of the Rabbins, ˆnbrd açyra ajçym gydrdw, “and poured ointment on the head of the doctors” [f1481]:”

to this custom are the allusions in (<19215>Psalm 23:5 <21908>Ecclesiastes 9:8). The pouring of this ointment on the head of Christ was emblematical of his being anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows; of his having the holy Spirit, and his gifts and graces without measure; which, like the ointment poured on Aaron's head, that ran down to his beard, and the skirts of his garments, descends to all the members of his mystical body: and was a symbol of the Gospel, which is like ointment poured forth; and of the sweet savour of the knowledge of Christ, which was to be diffused, throughout all the world, by the preaching of it; and was done by this woman in the faith of him, as the true Messiah, the Lord's anointed, as the prophet, priest, and king of his church.

Ver. 8. *But when his disciples saw it*, etc.] What the woman did, what a costly box of ointment it was, and with what profusion she used it,

they had indignation: Mark says, "within themselves", (<41404>Mark 14:4); either among themselves, or their indignation was secret in their breasts; their resentment was private, though it might be betrayed by their looks, and afterwards showed itself in words. This indignation was either at the woman, for the Evangelist Mark observes, that "they murmured against her", (<41405>Mark 14:5), that she should act such an imprudent part, and be guilty of such extravagance; or at Christ himself, for suffering such an action to be done unto him; for so the Syriac version reads the above clause in Mark, and "they murmured wb, against him"; so De Dieu observes it should be rendered; though Tremellius, Boderianus, and others, translate it, "against her": or else their indignation was neither at Christ, whom they dearly loved; nor at the woman, they being taught to love their enemies, and much more the friends of Christ; but at the action, which they looked upon as an ill judged thing, that sprung from misguided zeal, and which they thought could never be acceptable to their master, who was not used to encourage such profuseness and extravagance.

Saying, to what purpose is this waste, or "loss?" They call that waste, or loss, which was spent on Christ himself; whereas, whatever is laid out for the honour of Christ, or the good of his interest, ought not to be reckoned loss, for it will be returned with great increase and advantage; but they could not see what end was to be answered by this expense. It is easy to observe the variableness and inconstancy of the disciples: one time, because the inhabitants of a certain village did not receive Christ, they were for calling for fire from heaven to destroy them; and here is a poor woman

that exceeds, as they thought, in her respects to him, and they are filled with indignation.

Ver. 9. *For this ointment might have been sold for much*, etc.] Mark says, "for more than three hundred pence", (<41405>Mark 14:5): now if this is to be understood of Roman pence, each penny being seven pence half penny of our money, three hundred pence come to nine pounds, seven shillings, and six pence; but if it is to be understood of the penny of the sanctuary, which was one shilling and three pence, they come to just as much more: it might well be called very precious and costly ointment; and this was the reason of the disciples indignation, that so much cost and expense should be thrown away, as they thought, in such a manner, which might have been applied, in their opinion, to a better purpose. For had it been sold for its worth, so much might have been had for it,

and given to the poor; which was a very plausible objection to the action; and which they seem to have taken from Judas, who had made the same, on a like occasion, about four days before this, and he might instigate the disciples now: which shows what mischief an hypocrite may do in a church, and what influence he may have over good men to draw them into his measures, under the specious pretences of carefulness, frugality, and doing good to the poor. It seems our Lord inured his disciples to this good work of relieving the poor: they kept one common purse, and one of them, who was Judas, was appointed the bearer of it; whatever they collected, or was made a present to them, they put into this purse; out of which they were provided with the necessaries of life; and the rest expended on the poor.

Ver. 10. *When Jesus understood it*, etc.] The indignation of his disciples at this action of the woman's; which he might know, as man, partly by their looks, and partly by their words; though without these, as God, he knew the secret indignation, and private resentment of their minds:

he said unto them, why trouble ye the woman? by blaming her, and censuring the action she had done; as it must, no doubt, greatly trouble her to meet with such treatment from the disciples of Christ: had any of the Pharisees blamed her conduct, it would have given her no pain or uneasiness; but that Christ's own disciples should show indignation at an action done by her from a sincere love to Christ, and to do honour to him, must cut her to the heart: and so it is when either ministers of the Gospel, or private believers, are blamed for their honest zeal in the cause of Christ,

by any that profess to love him; this grieves them more than all the enemies of religion say or do unto them:

for she hath wrought a good work upon me; upon his body, by pouring the ointment on it: the Persic version reads it, "according to my mind": it was done, in the faith of him, as the Messiah; it sprung from real and sincere love to him, and was designed for his honour and glory; and so had the essentials of a good work in it. This is the first part of our Lord's defence of the woman: he goes on in the next verse.

Ver. 11. *For ye have the poor always with you*, etc.] This is said in answer to the objection of the disciples, that the ointment might have been sold, and the money given to the poor. Christ seems to have respect to (<5511>Deuteronomy 15:11), and which, agreeably to the sense of the Jews, refers to the times of the Messiah: for they say [f1482],

> "there is no difference between this world (this present time) and the times of the Messiah, but the subduing of kingdoms only; as it is said, (<5511>Deuteronomy 15:11), "for the poor shall never cease out of the land": the gloss on it is, from hence it may be concluded, that therefore, twyn[çyµlw[l, "for ever there will be poverty, and riches"."

Our Lord's words also show, that there will be always poor persons in the world; that there will be always such with his people, and in his churches; for God has chosen, and he calls such by his grace; so that men may always have opportunities of showing kindness and respect to such objects: in Mark it is added, "and whensoever ye will ye may do them good", (<4107>Mark 14:7); by relieving their wants, and distributing to their necessities:

but me ye have not always; referring not to his divine and spiritual presence, which he has promised to his people, churches, and ministers, to the end of the world, but to his corporeal presence; for he was to be but a little while with them, and then go to the Father; be taken up to heaven, where he now is, and will be until the restitution of all things; so that the time was very short in which any outward respect could be shown to him in person, as man.

Ver. 12. *For in that she hath poured this ointment*, etc.] Which was so very precious, and cost so much,

upon my body: for being poured on his head, it ran down all over his body.

She did it for my burial; not for the interment of his body, but for the embalming of it, previous to it: the Jews used to embalm their dead, to show their constant respect to the deceased, and their belief of the resurrection; at least not only used to wash them, but anoint them with oil; for so runs one of their canons [f1483]:

> "they do all things necessary to the dead, (i.e. on the sabbath day,) ˆyks, "they anoint him": that is, as Bartenora adds, "with oil"; and they wash him;"

but the body of Christ, when dead, was not to be so used: the women intended it, and prepared materials for it, but the sabbath coming on, they rested according to the commandment; though, according to this canon, they might have anointed him, but they waited till the sabbath was over; and early on the first day, in the morning, they came to the sepulchre, in order to do it, but it was too late, Christ was risen; (see <422356>Luke 23:56 24:1 <411601>Mark 16:1). Now either this woman had some revelation made to her, that the death of Christ was near at hand, and she feared, or knew, she should not be able to anoint him when dead; and therefore, as Mark has it, "she hath done what she could; she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying", (<411408>Mark 14:8): or if she had no knowledge of all this, nor any such intention, yet the Holy Ghost directed her to this action, with this view, as it were, for the performing of these funeral rites before he was dead; and so the Syriac version renders it, "she hath done it, ynrbqmld Æya, as it were, to bury me".

Ver. 13. *Verily I say unto you*, etc.] The following words are prefaced in this manner, to excite attention, and command belief:

wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world. The Syriac version reads it, ytrbs, "my Gospel"; and so the Persic version; and has respect chiefly to the doctrine of his death, burial, and resurrection, which this action of the woman had relation to; for though the incarnation of Christ, and all the actions of his life, and whatsoever he did for the good, and in the room and stead of his people, are good news and glad tidings to the sons of men, and so the Gospel; yet his dying for sin, and making atonement for it, thereby satisfying justice, fulfilling the law, destroying death, and him that had the power of it, and his lying in the grave, and

leaving the sins of his people behind him, and rising again for their justification, which were the ends of his coming into the world, make up the most glorious and principal part of the Gospel: and these words of Christ show that “this” Gospel should be preached; for which purpose he gave a commission and gifts to his disciples, and has done so, more or less, to men, ever since, for the conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints, and the glory of his name; and that this Gospel shall be preached all over the world, as it was by the apostles, agreeably to the commission; and will be again, towards the close of time, when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord and then

there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her; of her faith, love, and gratitude; for the memory of the just is blessed, and the righteous are had in everlasting remembrance. Christ suggests, that, though the disciples blamed this action, it should be spoken of by others to her praise and commendation, in all succeeding ages, throughout the world: “a good name”, the wise man says, “is better than precious ointment”, (<2000>Ecclesiastes 7:1). This woman got a good name, and obtained a good report by her precious ointment; and if this woman’s action was to be told for a memorial of her, much more what Christ has done and suffered should be told as a memorial of him.

Ver. 14. *Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot*, etc.] Who was provoked and exasperated, to the last degree, by this action of the woman, and Christ’s defence of it, and because the ointment was not sold, and the money put into his hand; and being instigated by Satan, who had now entered into him, formed a scheme in his mind to betray his master, and was resolved to put it in execution, whereby he might, in some measure, satisfy both his avarice and revenge; and, as an aggravation of this his wickedness, he is described, as “one of the twelve”: of his twelve disciples; so the Persic and Ethiopic versions: this is a way of speaking used by the Jews[f1484]; they call the twelve lesser prophets, rç[µynç or rç[yrt “the twelve”, without any other word added thereunto. He was not an open enemy, nor one of Christ’s common hearers, nor one of the seventy disciples, but one of his twelve apostles, whom he made his intimates and associates; whom he selected from all others, and called, qualified, and sent forth to preach his Gospel, and perform miracles: it was one of these that meditated the delivery of him into the hands of his enemies, and never left pursuing his scheme till he had effected it, even Judas Iscariot by name; so

called, to distinguish him from another disciple, whose name was also Judas. This man

went to the chief priests; of his own accord, unasked, from Bethany, to Jerusalem, to Caiaphas's palace, where the chief priests, the implacable enemies of Christ, with the Scribes, and elders of the people, were met together, to consult his death: Mark adds, "to betray him unto them", (<41410>Mark 14:10), which was manifestly his intent in going to them; and Luke, that he "communed" with them "how he might betray him unto them", (<42204>Luke 22:4); in the safest, and most private manner; and both observe that they were glad; for nothing could have fallen out more to their wishes, who were met together on this design. The Jews, in their blasphemous account of Jesus [f1485], say as much: they own, that Judas, or Juda, as they call him, offered to betray him into the hands of the wise men, saying to them, almost in the words expressed in the following verse,

> "if you will hearken unto me, wtwa rwsma, "I will deliver him into your hands tomorrow";"

and which agrees very well with the time also: for it was two days before the passover that Jesus was in Bethany, where he supped with his disciples, and washed their feet, and had the box of ointment poured on his head; and on the night of the day after all this was done, Judas set out from thence to Jerusalem; (see <43330>John 13:30), so that it must be the next day before he could meet the high priests, and on the morrow, at night, he delivered him into their hands; on the proposal of which, they say, that Simeon ben Shetach, whom they make to be present at this time, and all the wise men and elders, hlwdg hjmç wjmç "rejoiced exceedingly".

Ver. 15. *And said [unto them]*, etc.] Though the words, "to them", are not in the original text, they are rightly supplied; as they are by the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel; and mean the chief priests to whom Judas went, and to whom he made the following proposal;

what will ye give me, and I will deliver him to you? They did not ask him to do it, he first made the motion; a barbarous and shocking one! to deliver his Lord and Master, with whom he had familiarly conversed, and from whom he had received so many favours, into the hands of those that hated him; nor was he concerned what they would do to him, or what would become of him, when in their hands: all his view, and what he was intent

upon, was, what they would give him for doing it. They did not tempt him, by first offering him so much money, if he would betray him; but he himself first moves it to them, and tempts them with it to offer him an handsome reward: and it is to be observed, that he does not mention the name of Jesus, either because they might be talking of him, when he came into their company; or else as suiting his language to theirs, who, when they spake of him, usually said, “he”, or “that man”, or “this fellow”. And in the same rude way Judas now treats his master:

and they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver; that is, thirty shekels of silver; for it is a rule with the Jews, that when mention is made in Scripture of pieces of silver, without expressing the species, shekels are meant: so Onkelos, and Jonathan ben Uzziel, in their Targums on (<012016>Genesis 20:16 45:22), render pieces of silver, by shekels of silver; so pieces of gold signify shekels of gold: thus the 1700 pieces of gold in (<070826>Judges 8:26), are, in the Septuagint, Arabic, and Vulgate Latin versions, called so many shekels of gold; and our version supplies the word “shekels” also, as it does in (<141915>2 Chronicles 9:15,16), and yet some learned men have asserted [f1486], that there were no shekels of gold among the Jews, though express mention is made of them in (<132125>1 Chronicles 21:25). The value of a shekel of gold, according to Brerewood [f1487], was, of our money, “fifteen shillings”; and some make it to come to a great deal more; to “one pound sixteen shillings and sixpence” sterling: had these thirty pieces been pieces, or shekels of gold, they would have amounted to a considerable sum of money; but they were pieces of silver, and not talents, or pounds, but shekels. The silver shekel had on one side stamped upon it the pot of manna, or, as others think, “a censer”, or incense cup, with these words around it, in Samaritan letters, “shekel Israel”, “the shekel of Israel”; and, on the other, “Aaron’s rod” budding, with this inscription about it, “Jerusalem Hakedushah”, “Jerusalem the holy” [f1488]. As for the weight and value of it, R. Gedaliah says [f1489], we know by tradition that the holy shekel weighs 320 grains of barley of pure silver; and the same writer observes [f1490], that the “selah”, or holy shekel, is four “denarii”, or pence; that is, Roman pence, each being of the value of seven pence halfpenny of our money: and to this agrees what Josephus [f1491] says, that a “shekel” is a coin of the Hebrews, which contains four Attic drachms, or drams; and an Attic dram is of the same value with a Roman penny: so that one of these shekels was worth about “half a crown”; and it usually weighed half an ounce, as not only some Jewish writers affirm, who

profess to have seen them, and weighed them themselves, as Jarchi [f1492], Gerundensis [f1493], Abarbinel [f1494], and Gedaliah ben Jechaiah [f1495]; but other writers also, as Masius [f1496] Arias Montanus [f1497], Waserus [f1498] and Bishop Cumberland. Now thirty

shekels of silver were the price of a servant, (<022132>Exodus 21:32). So [f1499] Maimonides observes, that the

> "atonement of "servants", whether great or small, whether male or female, the fixed sum in the law is "thirty shekels of good silver", whether "the servant" is worth an hundred pound, or whether he is not worth but a farthing,"

and which was in value of our money about "three pounds fifteen shillings". This was the "goodly price", which Christ, who appeared in the form of a servant, was prized at, according to the prophecy in (<381112>Zechariah 11:12,13), and which the high priests thought a very sufficient one; and the wretch Judas, as covetous as he was, was contented with.

Ver. 16. *And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him*.] Luke adds, "in the absence of the multitude", (<422206>Luke 22:6); in the most private manner, when he was alone, and in some solitary place, that no tumult might arise, and that there might be no danger of a rescue: for so he, and the chief priests, had consulted, and settled it, as what would be most prudent and advisable; and therefore, from that time forward, being prompted on by Satan, and the lucre of the money he was to receive, he narrowly watched, and diligently observed, the best and most fitting season to perform his enterprise, and quickly offered.

Ver. 17. *Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread*, etc.] There were seven of these days, and this was the first of them, in which the Jews might not eat leavened bread, from the fourteenth, to the twenty first of the month Nisan; in commemoration of their being thrust out of Egypt, in so much haste, that they had not time to leaven the dough, which was in their kneading troughs: wherefore, according to their canons [f1500], on the night of the fourteenth day; that is, as Bartenora explains it, the night, the day following of which is the fourteenth, they search for leaven in all private places and corners, to bring; it out, and burn it, or break it into small pieces, and scatter it in the wind, or throw it into the sea. Mark adds, "when they killed the passover", (<411412>Mark 14:12); and Luke says, "when

the passover must be killed", (⁴²²⁰⁷Luke 22:7); which was to be done on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, after the middle of the day; and this was an indispensable duty, which all were obliged to: for so they say [f1501],

> "every man, and every woman, are bound to observe this precept; and whoever makes void this commandment presumptuously, if he is not defiled, or afar off, lo! he is guilty of cutting off."

The time of killing the passover was after the middle of the day; and it is said [f1502] that

> "if they killed it before the middle of the day it was not right; and they did not kill it till after the evening sacrifice, and after they had offered the evening incense; and after they had trimmed the lamps, they began to slay the passovers, or paschal lambs, unto the end of the day; and if they slayed after the middle of the day, before the evening sacrifice, it was right."

The reason of this was, because the lamb was to be slain between the two evenings; the first of which began at noon, as soon as ever the day declined: and this was not done privately, but in the temple; for thus it is [f1503] affirmed,

> "they do not kill the passover but in the court, as the rest of the holy things."

The time and manner of killing the lamb, and by whom, of the sprinkling of the blood, and of their flaying it, and taking out the fat, and burning it on the altar, may be seen in the Misna [f1504].

The disciples came to Jesus; that is, Peter and John, as may be learnt from (⁴²²⁰⁸Luke 22:8), for these only seem to have had any notion of Judas's betraying Christ, from what had been said at the supper in Bethany, two days before; the rest thought he was gone to prepare for the feast, and therefore were under no concern about it; but these two judged otherwise, and therefore came to Christ to know his mind concerning it; for it was high time that a preparation should be made; for this was Thursday morning, and the lamb was to be killed in the afternoon, and ate at even.

Saying unto him, where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? This question in Luke follows upon an order which Christ gave to these disciples; "saying, go and prepare us the passover, that we may

eat", (<22208>Luke 22:8): for masters used to give their servants orders to get ready the passover for them; and which were expressed in much such language as this [f1505]:

> "he that says to his servant, jsp tayl[jwjçw ax, "go and slay the passover for me": if he kills a kid, he may eat of it."

It is reported [f1506] of

> "Rabban Gamaliel, that he said to his servant Tabi, hlxw ax, "go and roast" the passover for us upon an iron grate."

The disciples having received such an order from their master, inquire not in what town or city they must prepare the passover, for that was always ate in Jerusalem; (see <51605>Deuteronomy 16:5-7 <42241>Luke 2:41,42), where they were obliged, by the Jewish canon [f1507], to lodge that night; though they might eat the unleavened bread, and keep the other days of the feast any where, and in every place [f1508]; but they inquire in what house he would have it got ready; for they might make use of any house, and the furniture of it, where they could find room, and conveniency, without any charge; for they did not let out their houses, or any of their rooms, or beds, in Jerusalem; but, at festivals, the owners of them gave the use of them freely to all that came [f1509]: and it is [f1510] observed among the wonders and miracles done at Jerusalem, that though there were such multitudes at their feasts, yet

> "a man could never say to his friend, I have not found a fire to roast the passover lambs in Jerusalem, nor I have not found a bed to sleep on in Jerusalem, nor the place is too strait for me to lodge in, in Jerusalem."

Ver. 18. *And he said, go into the city to such a man*, etc.] That is, to such a man in the city of Jerusalem, for, as yet, they were in Bethany, or at the Mount of Olives however, without the city; he does not mention the man's name, but describes him, as Mark and Luke say, and tells them, "there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house, where he entereth in", (<41413>Mark 14:13) (<42210>Luke 22:10); who seems to be not the master of the house, but a servant, that was sent on such an errand. This is a very considerable instance of our Lord's prescience of future contingencies; he knew beforehand, that exactly at the time that the disciples would enter Jerusalem, such a man, belonging to such a house,

would be returning with a pitcher of water in his hand; and they should meet him; and follow him, where he went, which would be a direction to them what house to prepare the passover in;

and say unto him; not to the man bearing the pitcher of water; but, as the other Evangelists say, to the good man of the house, the owner of it, who probably might be one of Christ's disciples secretly; for many of the chief rulers in Jerusalem believed on Christ, though they did not openly confess him, for fear of the Pharisees, as Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea; and this man might be one of them, or some other man of note and wealth; since they were to find, as they did, a large upper room furnished and prepared. For, it seems, that without mentioning his name, the man would know him by their language, he dictates to them in the following clause, who they meant;

the master saith; the Syriac and Persic versions read, our master; thine and ours, the great master in Israel, the teacher sent from God:

my time is at hand; not of eating the passover, as if it was distinct from that of the Jews, and peculiar to himself, for he ate it at the usual time, and when the Jews ate theirs; and which time was fixed and known by everybody, and could be no reason to move the master of the house to receive him: but he means the time of his death, that he had but a little while to live; and that this instance of respect would be the last he would have an opportunity of showing him whilst living, and the last time Christ would have an opportunity of seeing him; and he might say this to prepare him to meet the news of his death with less surprise:

I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples; not with him and his family, but with his disciples, who were a family, and a society of themselves, and a sufficient number to eat the passover together; for there might be two companies eating their distinct passovers in one house, and even in one room: concerning which is the following rule,

> "djа tybb µylkwа wyhç twrwbj ytç, "two societies that eat in one house"; the one turn their faces this way and eat, and the other turn their faces that way and eat, and an heating vessel (in which they heat the water to mix with the wine) in the middle; and when the servant stands to mix, he shuts his mouth, and turns his face till he comes to his company, and eats; and the bride turns her face and eats [f1511]."

Ver. 19. *And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them*, etc.] They went into the city of Jerusalem; they met the man carrying a pitcher of water home; they followed him into the house he entered; they addressed the master of the house, in the manner Christ directed, who showed them a large upper room, prepared with all proper furniture for such an occasion, as Christ had foretold:

and they made ready the passover; they went and bought a lamb; they carried it to the temple to be slain in the court, where it was presented as a passover lamb for such a number of persons; they had it flayed, cut up, the fat taken out, and burnt on the altar, and its blood sprinkled on the foot of it: they then brought it to the house where they were to eat it; here they roasted it, and provided bread, and wine, and bitter herbs, and a sauce called "Charoseth", into which the herbs were dipped: and, in short, everything that was necessary.

Ver. 20. *Now when the even was come*, etc.] The second evening, when the sun was set, and it was dark, and properly night; for

> "on the evenings of the passovers near the Minchah, a man might not eat Æçjtçd[, "until it was dark" [f1512]."

This was according to the rule, (<2120>Exodus 12:8),

he sat down with the twelve, his twelve disciples; so the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel; and which also adds, "at table"; even all the twelve apostles, who were properly his family, and a sufficient number for a passover lamb [f1513]: for

> "they do not kill the passover for a single man, according to the words of R. Judah, though R. Jose permits it: yea, though the society consists of an hundred, if they cannot eat the quantity of an olive, they do not kill for them: nor do they make a society of women, servants, and little ones?"

Judas was now returned again, and took his place among the disciples, as if he was as innocent, and as friendly, as any of them: this he might choose to do, partly to avoid all suspicion of his designs; and partly that he might get intelligence where Christ would go after supper, that he might have the opportunity he was waiting for, to betray him into the hands of his enemies. "He sat, or lay down with them", as the word signifies; for the posture of the Jews, at the passover table especially, was not properly

sitting, but reclining, or lying along on coaches, not on their backs, nor on their right side, but on their left; (see Gill on "John 13:23"). The first passover was eaten by them standing, with their loins girt, their shoes on, and staves in their hands, because they were just ready to depart out of Egypt: but in after passovers these circumstances were omitted; and particularly sitting, or lying along, was reckoned so necessary to be observed, that it is said [f1514], that

> "the poorest man in Israel might not eat, bsyç d[, "until he lies along", or leans;"

that is, as some of their commentators [f1515] note, either upon the couch, or on the table, after the manner of free men, and in remembrance of their liberty: and another of them [f1516] says,

> "we are bound to eat, hbshb, "lying along", as kings and great men eat, because it is a token of liberty."

Hence they elsewhere say [f1517],

> "it is the way of servants to eat standing; but here (in the passover) to eat, ˆybwsm, "sitting", or "lying along", because they (the Israelites) went out of bondage to liberty. Says R. Simon, in the name of R. Joshua ben Levi, that which a man is obliged to in the passover, though it be but the quantity of an olive, he must eat it, bswm, "lying along"."

The account Maimonides gives of this usage, is in these words [f1518]:

> "even the poorest man in Israel may not eat until he "lies along": a woman need not lie; but if she is a woman of worth and note, she ought to lie: a son by a father, and a servant before his master ought to lie: "but a disciple before his master does not lie, except his master gives him leave" (as Christ did his); and lying on the right hand is not lying; and so he that lies upon his neck, or upon his face, this is not lying; and when ought they to lie? at the time of eating, the quantity of an olive, of unleavened bread, and at drinking of the four cups; but at the rest of eating and drinking, if he lies, lo! it is praiseworthy: but if not, there is no necessity."

This custom was so constantly and uniformly observed at the passover, that it is taken particular notice of in the declaration, or showing forth of

the passover by the master of the family, when he says [f1519], "how different is this night from all other nights", etc. and among the many things he mentions, this is one;

> "in all other nights we eat either sitting, or lying along; that is, which way we please, but this night all of us ^ybwsm, "lie along"."

Ver. 21. *And as they did eat*, etc.] The passover lamb, the unleavened bread, and bitter herbs: he said it was usual, whilst they were thus engaged, to discourse much about the reason and design of this institution. What they talked of may be learnt from what follows [f1520]:

> "it is an affirmative precept of the law, to declare the signs and wonders which were done to our fathers in Egypt, on the night of the fifteenth of Nisan, according to (<021303>Exodus 13:3), "remember this day", etc. and from whence on the night of the fifteenth? from (<021308>Exodus 13:8), "and thou shalt show thy son", etc. at the time that the unleavened bread, and bitter herbs lie before thee. And though he has no son, or though they are wise, and grown up, they are bound to declare the going out of Egypt; and everyone that enlarges, or dwells long on the things that happened and came to pass, lo! he is praiseworthy. It is a command to make known to children, even though they do not ask; as it is said, "and thou shalt show thy son": according to the son's knowledge, his father teaches him; how if he is a little one, or foolish? he says to him, my son, all of us were servants, as this handmaid, or this servant, in Egypt; and on this night the holy, blessed God redeemed us, and brought us into liberty: and if the son is grown up and a wise man, he makes known to him what happened to us in Egypt, and the wonders which were done for us by the hands of Moses, our master; all according to the capacity of the son. And it is necessary to make a repetition on this night, that the children may see, and ask, and say, how different is this night from all other nights? until he replies to them, and says to them, so and so it happened, and thus and thus it was. — If he has no son, his wife asks him; and if he has no wife, they ask one another, how different is this night? and though they are all wise men, everyone asks himself alone, how different is this night? and it is necessary to begin with reproaches, and end with praise, how? he begins and declares, how at first our fathers were in the days of Terah, and before him, deniers (of the

divine being), and wandering after vanity, and following idolatrous worship; and he ends with the law of truth, how that God brought us near to himself, and separated us from the nations, and caused us to draw nigh to his unity; and so begins and makes known, that we were servants to Pharaoh in Egypt, and all the evils he recompensed us with; and ends with the signs and wonders which were wrought for us, and with our liberties: and he that expounds from — "a Syrian was my father, ready to perish": till he has finished the whole section: and every one that adds and enlarges in expounding this section, lo! he is praiseworthy. And everyone that does not say these three words on the night of the fifteenth, cannot be excused from blame; and they are these, the passover, the unleavened bread, and the bitter herbs: "the passover", because God passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt, as it is said, (Exodus 12:27), "the bitter herbs", because the Egyptians made bitter the lives of our fathers in Egypt: "the unleavened bread", because they were redeemed: and these things all of them are called the declaration, or showing forth."

Christ now took up some part of the time, at least, whilst they were eating, in discoursing with his disciples about the traitor:

he said, verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me; meaning to the chief priests and Scribes, who should condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles, to be mocked, scourged, and crucified, as he had told them some time before, (Matthew 20:18,19), though he did not tell them as now, that it should be done by one of them; he had indeed signified as much as this two days before, at the supper in Bethany, but none seemed to understand whom he meant, but Peter and John, and the thing wore off their minds; and therefore he mentions it again to them, with great seriousness, and in the most solemn manner, declaring it as a certain and undoubted truth.

Ver. 22. *And they were exceeding sorrowful*, etc.] Partly that Christ should be betrayed at all, into the hands of his enemies, by whom they knew he would be ill used; and partly, that so vile an action should be done, by one from among themselves; and greatly, because they knew not, nor could not conceive, who of them could be guilty of such an horrid sin:

and began everyone of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? excepting Judas, who afterwards spoke for himself. This they said, though conscious

to themselves the thing had never entered into their hearts; nor had they taken any step towards it, but with their whole souls abhorred it; yet, as knowing the treachery and deceitfulness, of their hearts, which they could not trust to; and fearing lest should they be left thereunto, they might commit such a dreadful iniquity; and as desirous of being cleared by Christ from any such imputation, and even from all suspicion of anything of this kind.

Ver. 23. *And he answered and said*, etc.] In order to make them easy, and point out the betrayer to them,

he that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. This seems to refer to the dipping of the unleavened bread, or bitter herbs, both, into the sauce called "Charoseth", which the Jews [f1521] say,

> "was made of figs, nuts, almonds, and other fruits; to which they added apples; all which they bruised in a mortar, and mixed with vinegar; and put spices into it, calamus and cinnamon, in the form of small long threads, in remembrance of the straw; and it was necessary it should be: thick, in memory of the clay."

The account Maimonides [f1522] gives of it is,

> "the "Charoseth" is a precept from the words of the Scribes, in remembrance of the clay in which they served in Egypt; and how did they make it? They took dates, or berries, or raisins, and the like, and stamped them, and put vinegar into them, and seasoned them with spices, as clay in straw, and brought it upon the table, in the night of the passover."

And in this he says, the master of the family dipped both the herbs, and the unleavened bread [f1523], and that both separately and conjunctly; for he says [f1524], that

> "he rolled up the unleavened bread and bitter herbs together, lbjmw and dipped them in the Charoseth."

And this was twice done in eating the passover; for so it is observed [f1525] among the many things, which distinguished this night from others: "in all other nights we dip but once, but in this night twice". By this action, Christ gave his disciples a signal, whereby they might know the betrayer: for this is not the general description of one, that sat at the table, and ate of his

bread with him, and so fulfilled the prediction, in (<19409>Psalm 41:9), though this is too true; but then, this was saying no more than he had before done, when he said, “one of you shall betray me”; though the phrase is so [f1526] used; for instance,

> “if a man goes and sits at table with them, ˆhm[lbwjw, and “dips with them”, though he does not eat the quantity of an olive, they bless for him.”

But this refers to a particular action then performed by Judas, just at the time Christ spoke these words; and who might sit near him, and dip into the same dish he did; for since there were thirteen of them, there might be more dishes than one; and two or three might have a dish to themselves, and Judas dip in the same dish with Christ.

Ver. 24. *The son of man goeth*, etc.] Meaning himself, not to the Mount of Olives, or Gethsemane, or the garden, whither he went a little after this, but out of the world, to his Father: the phrase is expressive of his death, as in (<061214>Joshua 23:14 <19913>Psalm 39:13), and denotes the voluntariness of it, and which is no ways inconsistent with the divine determinations about it: nor the violence that was offered to him by his enemies.

As it is written; in the book of God’s eternal purposes and decrees; for Luke says, “as it was determined” (<422222>Luke 22:22): or as it was recorded in the books of the Old Testament; in (<19201>Psalm 22:1-31), (<235301>Isaiah 53:1-12) and (<270901>Daniel 9:1-27) for Christ died for the sins of his people, in perfect agreement with these Scriptures, which were written of him:

but woe unto that man by whom the son of man is betrayed; for God’s decrees concerning this matter, and the predictions in the Bible founded on them, did not in the least excuse, or extenuate the blackness of his crime; who did what he did, of his own free will, and wicked heart, voluntarily, and to satisfy his own lusts:

it had been good for that man if he had not been born. This is a Rabbinical phrase, frequently, used in one form or another; sometimes thus; as it is said [f1527] of such that speak false and lying words, and regard not the glory of their Creator, aml[l ˆwtyy ald ˆwl bj, it would have been better for them they had never come into the world; and so of any other, notorious sinner, it is at other times said [f1528], yrba ald hyl bj, or [f1529], arbn alç wl jwn, “it would have been better for him if he had not been

created"; signifying, that it is better to have no being at all, than to be punished with everlasting destruction; and which was the dreadful case of Judas, who fell by his transgression, and went to his own place.

Ver. 25. *Then Judas, which betrayed him*, etc.] Or that was about to betray him, as the Ethiopic version reads it: he had taken a step towards it, was seeking an opportunity to do it, and at length effected it: the Persic version reads, Judas Iscariot; who after all the rest had put the question,

answered and said, Master, is it I? Who though he knew what he had been doing, and what he further resolved to do, and was conscious to himself he was the man; nay, though he had been pointed out as the person, and the most dreadful woe denounced on him, that should be the betrayer, in his hearing; yet all this did not at all affect his marble heart; but in the most audacious manner, and without any concern of mind, or show of guilt, asks if he was the person; suggesting, that surely he could, not mean him. It is observed by some, that the word Rabbi, used by Judas, is a more honourable name than that of Lord, used by the disciples; thereby reigning to give Christ more honour, and exceed in his respect to him, than the rest of the disciples; in order, if he could, to cover his wicked designs:

he said unto him, thou hast said: that is, it is as thou hast said; thou hast said right, thou art the man; a way of speaking used, when what is asked is assented to as truth: thus it being

> "said to a certain person, is Rabbi dead? He replied to them, ^wtyrma ^wta, "ye have said"; and they rent their clothes [f1530]."

Taking it for granted, by that answer, that so it was.

Ver. 26. *And as they were eating*, etc.] The paschal lamb, and just concluding the whole solemnity, which was done by eating some of the [f1531] lamb: for

> "last of all he (that kept the passover) eats of the flesh of the passover, though it be but the quantity of an olive, and he does not taste anything after it; and at the same time he eats the quantity of an olive of unleavened bread, and does not taste anything after it; so that his meal endeth, and the savour of the flesh of the passover, or of the unleavened bread, is in his mouth; for the eating of them is the precept."

So that the paschal supper was now concluded, when Christ entered upon the institution of his own supper:

Jesus took bread; which lay by him, either on the table, or in a dish. Though this supper is distinct from the "passover", and different from any ordinary meal, yet there are allusions to both in it, and to the customs of the Jews used in either; as in this first circumstance, of "taking" the bread: for he that asked a blessing upon bread, used to take it into his hands; and it is a rule [f1532], that

> "a man does not bless, wdyb µjlh swptyç d[, "until he takes the bread into his hand", that all may see that he blesses over it."

Thus Christ took the bread and held it up, that his disciples might observe it:

and blessed [it]; or asked a blessing over it, and upon it, or rather blessed and gave thanks to his Father or it, and for what was signified by it; and prayed that his disciples, whilst eating it, might be led to him, the bread of life, and feed upon him in a spiritual sense; whose body was going to be broken for them, as the bread was to be, in order to obtain eternal redemption for them: so it was common with the Jews, to ask a blessing on their bread: the form in which they did it was this [f1533]:

> "Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, the king of the world, that produceth bread out of the earth."

What form our Lord used, is not certain; no doubt it was one of his composing, and every way suitable to the design of this ordinance. It was customary also when there were many at table, that lay down there, however, as Christ and his disciples now did, for one to ask a blessing for them all; for so runs the rule [f1534],

> "if they sit to eat, everyone blesses for himself, but if they lie along, µlkl Ærbm dja, "one blesses for them all"."

Moreover, they always blessed, before they brake:

> "Says Rabba [f1535], he blesses, and after that he breaks:"

this rule Christ likewise carefully observes, for it follows,

and brake it. The rules concerning breaking of bread, are these [f1536];

> “The master of the house recites and finishes the blessing, and after that he breaks: — no man that breaks, is allowed to break, till they have brought the salt, and what is to be eaten with the bread, before everyone — and he does not break neither a small piece, lest he should seem to be sparing; nor a large piece, bigger than an egg, lest he should be thought to be famished; — and on the sabbath day he breaks a large piece, and he does not break, but in the place where it is well baked: it is a principal command to break a whole loaf.”

Christ broke the bread, as the symbol of his body, which was to be broken by blows, and scourges, thorns, nails, and spear, and to be separated from his soul, and die as a sacrifice for the sins of his people: and having so done, he

gave it to the disciples; which being a distinct act from breaking the bread, shows that the latter does not design the distribution of the bread, but an act preceding it, and a very significant one: and which ought not to be laid aside: according to the Jewish [f1537] usages,

> “He that broke the bread, put a piece before everyone, and the other takes it in his hand; and he that breaks, does not give it into the hand of the eater, unless he is a mourner; and he that breaks, stretches out his hand first and eats, and they that sit, or lie at the table, are not allowed to taste, until he that blesses, has tasted; and he that breaks, is not allowed to taste, until the Amen is finished out of the mouth of the majority of those that sit at table.”

And said, take, eat, this is my body; in Luke it is added, “which is given for you”, (<42219>Luke 22:19); that is, unto death, as a sacrifice for sin; and by the Apostle Paul, (<461124>1 Corinthians 11:24), “which is broken for you”; as that bread then was, and so expressive of his wounds, bruises, sufferings, and death, for them. Now when he says, “this is my body”, he cannot mean, that that bread was his real body; or that it was changed and converted into the very substance of his body; but that it was an emblem and representation of his body, which was just ready to be offered up, once for all: in like manner, as the Jews in the eating of their passover used to say [f1538] of the unleavened bread,

> “aynd amjl ah, this is “the bread of affliction”, which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt.”

Not that they thought that was the selfsame bread, but that it resembled it, and was a representation of the affliction and distress their fathers were in at that time: to which some think our Lord here alludes: though rather, the reference is to the passover lamb, which is frequently, in Jewish writings, called "the body" of the lamb: thus mention being made of the bringing of the herbs, the unleavened bread, and the sauce "Charoseth", with other things to the master of the house, it is added [f1539]:

> "and in the sanctuary (whilst that stood) they bring unto him, jsp lç wpwg, "the body of the lamb"."

Again, elsewhere [f1540] it is said,

> "they bring a table furnished, and on it the bitter herbs and other greens, and the unleavened bread, and the sauce, jsph çbk lç wpwgw "and the body of the paschal lamb"."

And a little further [f1541],

> "he recites the blessing, blessed art thou O Lord, etc. for the eating of the passover, and he eats, jsp lç wpwgm, "of the body of the passover"."

And now it is, as if Christ had said, you have had "the body" of the lamb set before you, and have eaten of it, in commemoration of the deliverance out of Egypt, and as a type of me the true passover, quickly to be sacrificed; and this rite of eating the body of the paschal lamb is now to cease; and I do here by this bread, in an emblematical way, set before you "my body", which is to be given to obtain spiritual deliverance, and eternal redemption for you; in remembrance of which, you, and all my followers in successive generations, are to take and eat of it, till I come. The words, "take, eat", show that Christ did not put the bread into the mouths of the disciples, but they took it in their hands, and ate it; expressive of taking and receiving Christ by the hand of faith, and feeding on him in a spiritual manner.

Ver. 27. *And he took the cup and gave thanks*, etc.] For the Jews blessed, or gave thanks for their wine, as well as for their food, and generally did it in this form [f1542]:

> "Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, the king of the world, who hast created the "fruit of the vine"."

Hence the phrase, “the fruit of the vine”, in (<40>26<29>Matthew 26:29), not that we are to suppose, that Christ used or confined himself to this form of words: and it is to be observed, that they not only gave thanks for their wine before food, and whilst they were eating [f1543], but also after meat; and as this relates to the blessing of the cup after eating, or as the Apostle Paul says, “when he had supped”, (<46>11<25>1 Corinthians 11:25). I shall only transcribe what the Jews say [f1544] concerning that:

> “When wine is brought to them after food, if there is but that cup there, the house of Shammai say, ˆyyh l[Ærbm, “he blesses”, or gives thanks “for the wine”, and after that gives thanks for the food: the house of Hillell say, he gives thanks for the food, and after that gives thanks for the wine.”

And as this was usual at ordinary meals, to bless or give thanks for the wine, so at the passover; and which our Lord continued in his supper, and is to be practised by us. It should be further known, that the wine at the passover, and so what Christ used at his supper, was red.

> “Says R. Jeremiah [f1545] it is commanded to perform this duty, µwda ˆyyb “with red wine”.”

And elsewhere it is said [f1546],

> “that it is necessary, that there should be in it (the wine) taste and look.”

The gloss on it is, µwda ahyç, “that it should be red”: and which, as it most fitly represented the blood sprinkled on the door posts of the Israelites, when the Lord passed over their houses; so the blood of Christ, shed for the remission of the sins of his people. It is scarcely worth observing the measure of one of the cups, that was used at such a time: they say [f1547], that the four cups which were drank at this feast, held an, Italian quart of wine, so that one cup contained half a pint. More particularly, they ask how much is the measure of a cup? the answer is, two fingers square, and a finger and a half and the third part of a finger deep; or as it is elsewhere [f1548], the fifth part of a finger:

and gave it to them, saying, drink ye all of it; for this is not to be restrained from one sort of communicants, and only partook of by another; but all are to drink of the cup, as well as eat of the bread: whether here is

not an allusion to the custom of the Jews at the passover, when they obliged all to drink four cups of wine, men, women, and children, and even the poorest man in Israel, who was maintained out of the alms dish [f1549], may be considered.

Ver. 28. *For this is my blood of the New Testament*, etc.] That is, the red wine in the cup, was an emblem and representation of his precious blood, whereby was exhibited a new dispensation, or administration of the covenant of grace; and by which it was ratified and confirmed; and whereby all the blessings of it, such as peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life, come to the people of God: the allusion is to the first covenant, and the book of it being sprinkled with the blood of bulls, and therefore called the blood of the covenant, (<2408>Exodus 24:8). But the second covenant, or the new administration of the covenant of grace, for which reason it is called the New Testament, is exhibited and established in the blood of Christ the testator. It was usual, even among the Heathens, to make and confirm their covenants by drinking human blood, and that sometimes mixed with wine [f1550].

Which is shed for many, for the remission of sins; that is, was very shortly to be shed, and since has been, for all the elect of God; for the many that were ordained to eternal life, and the many that were given to Christ, the many that are justified by him, and the many sons he will bring to glory: whereby the full forgiveness of all their sins was procured, in a way consistent with, and honourable to the justice of God; full satisfaction being made to the law of God, for all their transgressions.

Ver. 29. *But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth*, etc.] From whence it seems natural to conclude, that Christ had drank of the cup in the supper, as well as at the passover; and it is reasonable to believe, that he also ate of the bread; since it appears from what has been observed before, (see Gill on "<4026>Matthew 26:26"), that none might eat, till he that blessed and brake the bread had tasted of it [f1551]: the reason why wine is here called

the fruit of the vine, and not wine, (see Gill on "<4027>Matthew 26:27"). The design of this expression is to show, that his stay would be very short: the cup he had just drank of, was the last he should drink with them: he should drink no more wine at the passover; he had kept the last, and which now of right was to cease; nor in the Lord's supper, for though that was to continue to his second coming, he should be no more present at it corporeally, only spiritually; nor in common conversation, which is not

contradicted by (<44104>Acts 10:41). Since, though the apostles drank with him in his presence, it does not necessarily follow, that he drank with them; and if he did, it was not in a mortal state, nor in the ordinary manner and use of it, but to confirm his resurrection from the dead, nor can it be proved that he drank of the fruit of the vine: the design of the phrase, as before observed, is to signify his speedy departure from his disciples. The allusion is to an usage at the passover, when after the fourth cup, they tasted of nothing else all that night, except water; and so Christ declares, that he would drink no more, not only that night, but never after.

Until the day I drink it new with you, in my Father's kingdom: Mark says, "in the kingdom of God", (<41425>Mark 14:25); and Luke, "until the kingdom of God come", (<42218>Luke 22:18); and both the Syriac and Persic versions read it here, "in the kingdom of God"; by which is meant, something distinct from the kingdom of the Son, or of the Messiah, which was already come; and appeared more manifestly after the resurrection of Christ, upon his ascension to heaven, and the effusion of the holy Spirit, and the success of the Gospel, both among Jews and Gentiles; and which will be more glorious in the latter day: and when all the elect of God are gathered in, and have been presented to Christ by himself, he will then deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and God shall be all in all; and then the kingdom of the Father will take place here mentioned, and which is no other than the ultimate glory; so called, because it is of the Father's preparing and giving, and in which he will reign and dwell, and the saints with him, to all eternity; which must not be understood to the exclusion of Christ, for it is called his kingdom also, (<42230>Luke 22:30), in this state, Christ will drink new wine, not literally, but spiritually understood; and which designs the joys and glories of heaven, the best wine which is reserved to the last: which is sometimes signified by a feast, of which wine is a principal part; by sitting down as at a table, in the kingdom of heaven, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, (<40811>Matthew 8:11), and expressed by "wine", because of its refreshing and exhilarating nature, in God's presence is "fulness of joy"; and by "new wine", because these joys are the most excellent, because they are always new, and never change; they are "pleasures for evermore": to "drink" hereof, denotes the full enjoyment of them, which Christ, as man and mediator, and his people with him, shall be possessed of; and is different from the superficial "taste of the powers of the world to come", (<580605>Hebrews 6:5), which hypocrites have, and those real prelibations of glory which saints have in this life; there being a difference between

drinking and tasting, (<40>2734Matthew 27:34), and this will be social; Christ and his true disciples shall be together; and drink this new wine together; or enjoy the same glory and felicity in the highest measure and degree, they are capable of; and which society therein will yield a mutual pleasure to each other, as the words here suggest. The Jews often express the joys of the world to come, by such like figurative phrases: they make mention of, ytad aml[d ˆyy, "the wine of the world to come" [f1552]; and of ynjwr rkç, "a spiritual drink", in the last days, which is called the world to come [f1553]: and so they explain [f1554] after this manner, (<23>6404Isaiah 64:4). "Neither hath the eye seen, O God", etc., ˆyy hz, "this is the wine", which is kept in the grapes from the six days of the creation; of which they often speak in their writings [f1555]

Ver. 30. *And when they had sung an hymn*, etc.] The "Hallell", which the Jews were obliged to sing on the night of the passover; for the passover, they say [f1556], was llh ˆw[j, "bound to an hymn". This "Hallell", or song of praise, consisted of six Psalms, the 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, and 118th [f1557]: now this they did not sing all at once, but in parts. Just before the drinking of the second cup and eating of the lamb, they sung the first part of it, which contained the 113th and 114th Psalms; and on mixing the fourth and last cup, they completed the "Hallell", by singing the rest of the Psalms, beginning with the 115th Psalm, and ending with the 118th; and said over it, what they call the "blessing of the song", which was (<19>1510Psalm 145:10), etc., and they might, if they would, mix a fifth cup, but that they were not obliged to, and say over it the "great Hallell", or "hymn", which was the 136th Psalm [f1558]. Now the last part of the "Hallell", Christ deferred to the close of his supper; there being many things in it pertinent to him, and proper on this occasion, particularly (<19>1501Psalm 115:1 116:12-15 118:22-27), and the Jews themselves say [f1559], that jyçm lç wlbj, "the sorrows of the Messiah" are contained in this part: that this is the hymn which Christ and his disciples sung, may be rather thought, than that it was one of his own composing; since not only he, but all the disciples sung it, and therefore must be what they were acquainted with; and since Christ in most things conformed to the rites and usages of the Jewish nation; and he did not rise up from table and go away, until this concluding circumstance was over; though it was allowed to finish the "Hallell", or hymn, in any place they pleased, even though it was not the place where the feast was kept [f1560] however, as soon as it was over,

they went out to the Mount of Olives; he and his disciples, excepting Judas: first he himself alone, and then the disciples followed him, according to (<422239>Luke 22:39), and the Persic version here reads it, “he went out”. This seems to be contrary to a Jewish canon; for the passover was hnyl ^w[j, “bound to lodging a night” [f1561]; that is, as the gloss explains it,

> “the first night (i.e. of the passover) a man must lodge in Jerusalem; thenceforward it was lawful to dwell without the wall, within the border.”

And a little after, the same phrase, being bound to lodge, is explained, one night in the midst of the city: but Christ had more important business to attend unto, than to comply with this rule, which was not obligatory by the word of God, though the Jews pretend to found it on (<051607>Deuteronomy 16:7) [f1562]. The place where he went with his disciples, was the Mount of Olives, which was on the east side of Jerusalem; and was the place where the high priest stood, and burnt the red heifer, and sprinkled its blood [f1563]: now from the temple, or from the mountain of the house, there was a causeway, or bridge on arches, made to the Mount of Olives, in which the high priest and the heifer, hyd[sm lkw, “and all his assistants”, (the priests that helped him in this service,) went to this mount [f1564]: in this same way it is very probable, went Christ the great high priest, who was typified by the red heifer, and his companions the disciples, to the same place, where he had his bloody sweat, and where his sorrows and sufferings began.

Ver. 31. *Then saith Jesus unto them*, etc.] Either before they went out of the house, where they had been eating the passover, and the supper; or as they were going along to the Mount of Olives; which latter rather seems to be the case:

all ye shall be offended because of me this night. The words are spoken to the eleven disciples; for Judas was now gone to the high priests, to inform them where Jesus was going that night, and to receive of them a band of men and officers to apprehend him; which is what would be the occasion of all the rest of the disciples being offended: for when they should see their master betrayed by one of themselves, and the officers seize him and bind him, and lead him away as a malefactor, our Lord here suggests, that they would be filled with such fear and dread, that everyone of them would forsake him and run away, and provide for their own safety; yea, would be

so stumbled at this unexpected event, that they would begin to stagger and hesitate in their minds, whether he was the Messiah, or not, as the two disciples going to Emmaus, seem to intimate; they would be so shocked with this sad disappointment, and so offended, or stumble, as to be ready to fall from him: and their faith in him must have failed, had he not prayed for them, as he did for Peter; for they thought of nothing else but a temporal kingdom, which they expected would now quickly be set up, and they be advanced to great honour and dignity; but things taking a different turn, it must greatly shock and affect them; and it was to be the case not of one or two only, but of all of them: and that because of him, whom they dearly loved, and with whom they had been eating the passover, and his own supper, and had had such a comfortable opportunity together; and because of his low estate, his being seized and bound, and led away by his enemies; as the Jews were before offended at him, because of the meanness of his parentage and education: and this was to be that very night; and it was now very late, it may reasonably be supposed to be midnight: for since the last evening, or sun setting, they had ate the passover, the ceremonies of which took up much time, and after that the Lord's supper; then the Hallell, or hymn was sung, when Christ discoursed much with his disciples, and delivered those consolatory and instructive sermons, about the vine and other things, occasioned by the fruit of the vine, they had been just drinking of, recorded in the 15th and 16th chapters of John; and put up that prayer to his Father for them, which stands in the 17th chapter; and indeed within an hour or two after, (see <4114>Mark 14:37), this prediction of Christ's had its accomplishment, and which he confirms by a prophetic testimony:

for it is written, in (<3807>Zechariah 13:7),

I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.
This text is miserably perverted by the Jewish writers; though they all agree, that by "the shepherd", is meant some great person, as a king; so the Targum renders it, "kill the king, and the princes shall be scattered": one [f1565] of them says, that a wicked king of Moab is designed; another [f1566], a king of the Ishmaelites, or of the Turks; and a third [f1567], that any, and every king of the Gentiles is meant; a fourth says [f1568], it is a prophecy of the great wars that shall be in all the earth, in the days of Messiah ben Joseph; and a fifth [f1569], after having taken notice of other senses, mentions this as the last: that

> "the words "my shepherd, and the man my fellow", in the former part of the verse, are to be understood of Messiah, the son of Joseph; and because he shall be slain in the wars of the nations, therefore the Lord will whet his glittering sword against the nations, to take vengeance on them; and on this account says, "awake, O sword! for my shepherd, and for the man my fellow": as if the Lord called the sword and vengeance to awake against his enemies, because of Messiah ben Joseph, whom they shall slay; and who shall be the shepherd of the flock of God, and by reason of his righteousness and perfection, shall be the man his fellow; and when the nations shall slay that shepherd, the sword of the Lord shall come and smite the shepherd; that is, every shepherd of the Gentiles, and their kings; for because of the slaying of the shepherd of Israel, every shepherd of their enemies shall be slain, and their sheep shall be scattered; for through the death of the shepherds, the people that shall be under them, will have no standing."

Now though this is a most wretched perversion of the passage, to make the word "shepherd" in the former part of it, to signify one person, and in the other part of it another; yet shows the conviction of their minds, that the Messiah is not be excluded from the prophecy, and of whom, without doubt, it is spoken, and rightly applied by him, who is concerned in it, the Lord Jesus Christ; who feeds his flock like a shepherd, is the great shepherd of the sheep, the chief shepherd, the good shepherd, that laid down his life for the sheep; which is intended by the smiting of him: in the text in (<3807>Zechariah 13:7) it is read, "smite the shepherd"; being an order of Jehovah the Father's, to Justice, to awake its sword, and sheath it in his son, his equal by nature, his shepherd by office; and here, as his own act, and what he would do himself, "I will smite the shepherd"; for his ordering Justice to smite, is rightly interpreted doing it himself. The Jews cannot object to this, when their own interpreters in general explain it thus, tyrky µçh, "God shall cut off the shepherd" [f1570]. The sufferings of Christ, which are meant by the smiting him, were according, not only to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, the will of his good pleasure, but according to his will of command; which justice executed, and Christ was obedient to, and in which Jehovah had a very great hand himself: he bruised him, he put him to grief, he made his soul an offering for sin; he spared him not, but delivered him up into the hands of men, justice, and death, for us all: the latter clause, "and the sheep of the flock shall be

scattered", respects the disciples, and their forsaking Christ, and fleeing from him, when be was apprehended; for then, as was foretold in this prophecy, and predicted by Christ, they all forsook him and fled, and were scattered every man to his own, and left him alone. In Zechariah it is only said, "the sheep shall be scattered", (<38137>Zechariah 13:7): here, the sheep of the flock; though the Evangelist Mark reads it, as in the prophet, (<41427>Mark 14:27), and so the Arabic here, and the sense is the same; for the sheep are the sheep of the flock, Christ's little flock, the flock of slaughter, committed to his care; unless it may be thought proper to distinguish between the sheep and the flock; and by "the flock" understand, all the elect of God, and by "the sheep", the principal of the flock; "the rams of his sheep", or "flock", as the Syriac version renders it; the apostles of Christ, who are chiefly, if not solely intended; though others of Christ's followers might be stumbled, offended, and staggered, as well as they; as Cleophas was, one of the two that went to Emmaus.

Ver. 32. *But after I am risen again*, etc.] This he says for their comfort, that though he, their shepherd, should be apprehended, condemned, and crucified, should be smitten with death, and be laid in the grave, yet he should rise again; and though they should be scattered abroad, yet should be gathered together again by him, their good shepherd; who would after his resurrection, appear to them, be at the head of them, and go before them, as a shepherd goes before his sheep: for it follows,

I will go before you into Galilee; the native place of most, if not all of them. This the women that came to the sepulchre after Christ's resurrection, were bid, both by the angel, and Christ himself, to remind the disciples of, and ordered them to go into Galilee, where they might expect to see him: accordingly they did go thither, and saw and worshipped him; (see <40807>Matthew 28:7,10,16,17).

Ver. 33. *Peter answered and said unto him*, etc.] Who was always a forward man, free to speak his mind, and was often the mouth of the rest; observing what Christ had affirmed concerning all of them, that that very night, in a very short space of time, they would be offended because of him; and knowing the strong love he had for Christ, and being persuaded it could never be his case, thus addresses him;

though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended: his sense is, that though all the men in the world, friends, and foes, though even all the rest of the disciples, who were his most intimate

friends, most closely attached to him, and who dearly loved him, and sincerely believed in him, should be so stumbled at what should befall him, as to flee from him, and be tempted to relinquish his cause, and interest; yet nothing should ever cause him, in the least, to stumble and fall, to desert him, or hesitate about him, or cause him to take the least umbrage and offence at what might come upon him; and this he was positive of would be the case, not only that night, but ever after. No doubt he said this in the sincerity of his heart, and out of his great fervour of affection for Christ; but what he failed in, was trusting to his own strength, being self-confident; and in entertaining greater opinion of himself, and his steady attachment to Christ, than of the rest of the disciples; and in contradicting what Christ had so strongly affirmed of them all, without any exception, and so of himself, and had confirmed by so glaring a prophecy concerning this matter.

Ver. 34. *Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee*, etc.] Christ, the more strongly to asseverate what he was about to say, uses the word verily, or prefixes his "Amen" to it, as being a certain truth, and what Peter might assure himself of would certainly come to pass:

that this night before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice; which is, as if he should say, thou wilt not only be offended because of me, and flee from me, and be scattered with the rest, as will be the case of all of you; but thou wilt deny that thou knowest me, that thou belongest to me, or hast any concern with me; and this thou wilt do not only once, but again and again, even three times, one after another, and that this very night, before the cock has done crowing. In Mark it is said, "that this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice", (<4114 0>Mark 14:30); which may be reconciled with the words of Matthew, and the other evangelists, by observing, that the word "twice" is not in Beza's ancient copy, which he gave to the university of Cambridge, nor is it in the Ethiopic version; which if allowed to be the true reading, the difficulty is removed at once; but whereas it is in other copies, no stress must be laid on this, nor is there any need of it: for whereas the cock crows twice in the night, once at midnight, and again near break of day; and which latter crowing being louder, and more welcome, and most taken notice of, is, by way of eminence, called the cock crowing; and is what Matthew here has respect to, and so designs the same as Mark does; and the sense of both is, that before the cock crow a second time, which is most properly the cock crowing, Peter should three times deny his master,

as he did; (see <4135>Mark 13:35), where cock crowing is distinguished from midnight, the first time the cock crows, and means the second time of crowing; and where Mark is to be understood in the same sense as Matthew, and both entirely agree. So cock crowing and midnight are distinguished by the Jews, who say [f1571],

> “that on all other days they remove the ashes from the altar, rbgh tayrqb, “at cock crowing”, or near unto it, whether before or after; but on the day of atonement, twxhm, “at midnight”:”

and who also speak of the cocks crowing a first and second, and even a third time [f1572].

> “Says R. Shila, he that begins his journey before cock crowing, his blood be upon his head. R. Josiah says, he may not proceed bwçyç d[, “until he repeats”; that is, until he crows twice: and there are, who say, until he trebles it, or crows a third time: of what do they speak? of a middling one, i.e. which neither crows too soon, nor too late.”

Ver. 35. *Peter saith unto him*, etc.] Mark says, “he spake the more vehemently”, (<4143>Mark 14:31); his spirits were raised to a greater pitch of resentment, and he expressed himself in stronger terms, and in more peremptory and self-confident language;

though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee: he seems to have understood Christ, that he should suffer death, and that he would be in great danger himself, and therefore rather than lose his life would deny his master; wherefore he most confidently affirms, that should this be the case, should he be called to suffer death for his sake, or along with him, he would most cheerfully embrace it, rather than be guilty of so dreadful a crime, which he could not look upon but with the utmost detestation and abhorrence, as to deny his dear Lord and Saviour:

likewise also said all the disciples; that they would never be offended because of him, and would die with him rather than deny him. This they said, being also self-confident and ignorant of their own weakness, and drawn into these expressions through Peter’s example; and that partly to show their equal abhorrence of so horrible an iniquity, as denying Jesus; and partly to remove all suspicion from them, lest they should be thought to have less love and zeal for Christ than Peter had.

Ver. 36. *Then cometh Jesus with them*, etc.] The eleven disciples,

unto a place called Gethsemane; the Syriac version calls it Ghedsiman; the Persic, Ghesmani, so the Arabic; the Vulgate Latin, and the Ethiopic, Gethsemani: in Munster's Hebrew Gospel, and in the Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, it is called a "village"; and in the Ethiopic version, "a village of wine"; and in the Syriac and Persic versions, a place. Here, according to an Ethiopic writer, the Virgin Mary was buried by the apostles [f1573]. Its etymology is very differently given: some read, and explain it, as if it was µynmç yg, "a valley of fatness", or "of olives", as it is called in Munster's Hebrew Gospel; (see <230801>Isaiah 28:1); others as if it was ynmysd yg, "a valley of signs", or a very famous valley; so Mount Sinai is called [f1574], yanmys rh, "Harsemanai", the mountain of signs: but, to take notice of no more; the true reading and signification of it is, ynmç tg, "an olive press", or a press for olives: so we read [f1575] of a chamber in the temple which is called "the chamber", aynmç tyb, "Beth Semania", or "Bethsemani", where they put their wine and oil for temple service. It is very probable that at, or near this place, was a very public olive press, where they used to squeeze the olives, for the oil of them, which they gathered in great plenty from off the Mount of Olives; at the foot of which this place was; and a very significant place it was for our Lord to go to at this time, when he was about to tread the wine press of his Father's wrath, alone, and of the people there were none with him: for it follows,

and saith unto the disciples, sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder: perceiving a time of distress was coming upon him, he betakes himself to prayer, an example worthy of our imitation; in the performance of which duty he chose to be retired and solitary, and therefore left eight of his disciples at a certain place, whilst he went to another at some distance, convenient for his purpose; who perhaps might be the weakest of the disciples, and not able to bear the agonies and distress of their Lord and Master.

Ver. 37. *And he took with him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee*, etc.] James and John, who perhaps were the strongest, and best able to bear the shocking sight, and were his favourite disciples; who were admitted to be with him at other times, when the rest were not; as at the raising of Jairus's daughter, (<410537>Mark 5:37), and moreover, these were at his transfiguration on the mount, (<401701>Matthew 17:1), which was a representation and presage

of his glory; and so were very proper persons to be witnesses of his sorrows and agonies, which were the way to it; and three of them were taken by him for this purpose, being a sufficient number to bear testimony, since by the mouth of two or three witnesses everything is established:

and began to be sorrowful; his soul was troubled on the same account six days before, (^{BIBLE}John 12:27), but was now sorrowful. He was a man of sorrows all his days, and acquainted with griefs, being reproached and persecuted by men: but now a new scene of sorrows opened; before he was afflicted by men, but now he is bruised, and put to grief by his Father: his sorrows now began, for they did not end here, but on the cross; not that this was but a bare beginning of his sorrows, or that these were but light in comparison of future ones; for they were very heavy, and indeed seem to be the heaviest of all, as appears from his own account of them; his vehement cry to his Father; his bloody sweat and agony; and the assistance he stood in need of from an angel; and the comfort and strength he received from him in his human nature: all which, put together, the like is not to be observed in any part of his sufferings:

and to be very heavy; with the weight of the sins of his people, and the sense of divine wrath, with which he was so pressed and overwhelmed, that his spirits were almost quite gone; he was just ready to swoon away, sink and die; his heart failed him, and became like wax melted in the midst of his bowels, before the wrath of God, which was as a consuming fire: all which shows the truth, though weakness of his human nature, and the greatness of his sufferings in it. The human nature was still in union with the divine person of the Son of God, and was sustained by him, but left to its natural weakness, without sin, that it might suffer to the utmost, and as much as possible for the sins of God's elect.

Ver. 38. *Then saith he unto them*, etc.] The three disciples, Peter, James, and John, who, by his looks and gestures, might know somewhat of the inward distress of his mind; yet he choose to express it to them in words, saying,

my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. That Christ had an human soul, as well as an human body, is clear from hence; and which was possessed of the same passions as ours are, but without sin, such as joy, love, grief, sorrow, etc. and at this time its sorrows were exceeding great: his soul was beset all around with the sins of his people; these took hold on him, and encompassed him, which must, in the most sensible manner, affect

his pure and spotless mind; the sorrows of death and hell surrounded him on every side, insomuch that the least degree of comfort was not let in to him; nor was there any way open for it, so that his soul was overwhelmed with sorrow; his heart was ready to break; he was brought even, as it were, to the dust of death; nor would his sorrows leave him, he was persuaded, until soul and body were separated from each other; see a like phrase in (<07/16/16>Judges 16:16),

tarry ye here. The Ethiopic adds, “till I shall return”, for he was going a little further from them, to vent his grief, and pour out his soul unto God. Munster’s Hebrew Gospel reads it, “expect me”, or “wait for me here”, signifying, that he should return to them shortly;

and watch with me. It was night, and they might be heavy and inclined to sleep: he knew it would be an hour of temptation both to him and them, and therefore advises them to watch against it; and to observe how it would go with him, and what should befall him, that they might be witnesses of it, and be able to testify what agonies he endured, what grace he exercised, and how submissive he was to his Father’s will.

Ver. 39. *And he went a little further*, etc.] Luke says, (<42/22/41>Luke 22:41), “about a stone’s cast”, about fifty or sixty feet from the place where they were,

and fell on his face, and prayed; partly to show his great reverence of God, the sword of whose justice was awaked against him, the terrors of whose law were set in array before him, and whose wrath was pouring down upon him; and partly to signify how much his soul was depressed, how low he was brought, and in what distress and anguish of spirit he was, that he was not able to lift up his head, and look up. This was a prayer gesture used when a person was in the utmost perplexity. The account the Jews give of it, is this [f1576],

> “µhynp l[ˆylpwnçk, “when they fall upon their faces”, they do not stretch out their hands and their feet, but incline on their sides.”

This was not to be done by any person, or at any time; the rules are these [f1577]:

> “no man is accounted fit wynp l[lwpyl, “to fall upon his face”, but he that knows in himself that he is righteous, as Joshua; but he inclines his face a little, and does not bow it down to the floor; and

it is lawful for a man to pray in one place, and to “fall upon his face” in another: it is a custom that reaches throughout all Israel, that there is no falling upon the face on a sabbath day, nor on feast days, nor on the beginning of the year, nor on the beginning of the month, nor on the feast of dedication, nor on the days of “purim”, nor at the time of the meat offering of the eves of the sabbath days, and good days, nor at the evening prayer for every day; and there are private persons that fall upon their faces at the evening prayer, and on the day of atonement only: they fall upon their faces because it is a time of supplication, request, and fasting.”

Saying, O my father; or, as in Mark, “Abba, Father”, (<41436>Mark 14:36); “Abba” being the Syriac word he used, and signifies, “my father”; and the other word is added for explanation’s sake, and to denote the vehemency of his mind, and fervour of spirit in prayer. Christ prayed in the same manner he taught his disciples to pray, saying, “our Father”; and as all his children pray under the influence of the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry “Abba, Father”. God is the Father of Christ, not as man, for as such he was without father, being the seed of the woman, and made of a woman, without man; nor by creation, as he is the Father of spirits, of angels, and the souls of men, of Adam, and all mankind; nor by adoption, as he is the Father of all the chosen, redeemed, and regenerated ones; but by nature, he being the only begotten of the Father, in a manner inconceivable and inexpressible by us. Christ now addresses him in prayer in his human nature, as standing in this relation to him as the Son of God, both to express his reverence of him, and what freedom and boldness he might use with him; what confidence he might put in him; and what expectation he might have of being heard and regarded by him; and what submission and resignation of will was due from himself unto him.

If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; meaning not only the hour, as it is called in Mark, the present season and time of distress, and horror; but all his future sufferings and death, which were at hand; together with the bearing the sins of his people, the enduring the curse of the law, and the wrath of God, all which were ingredients in, and made up this dreadful bitter cup, this cup of fury, cursing, and trembling; called a cup, either in allusion to the nauseous potions given by physicians to their patients; or rather to the cup of poison given to malefactors the sooner to dispatch them; or to that of wine mingled with myrrh and frankincense to intoxicate them, that they might not feel their pain, *see Gill “<41523>Mark 15:23”*, or to

the cup appointed by the master of the family to everyone in the house; these sorrows, sufferings, and death of Christ being what were allotted and appointed by his heavenly Father: and when he prays that this cup might pass from him, his meaning is, that he might be freed from the present horrors of his mind, be excused the sufferings of death, and be delivered from the curse of the law, and wrath of God; which request was made without sin, though it betrayed the weakness of the human nature under its insupportable load, and its reluctance to sufferings and death, which is natural; and yet does not represent him herein as inferior to martyrs, who have desired death, and triumphed in the midst of exquisite torments: for their case and his were widely different; they had the presence of God with them, Christ was under the hidings of his Father's face; they had the love of God shed abroad in them, he had the wrath of God poured out upon him; and his prayer bespeaks him to be in a condition which neither they, nor any mortal creature were ever in. Moreover, the human nature of Christ was now, as it were, swallowed up in sorrow, and intent upon nothing but sufferings and death; had nothing in view but the wrath of God, and the curse of the law; so that everything else was, for the present, out of sight; as the purposes of God, his counsel and covenant, his own engagements and office, and the salvation of his people; hence it is no wonder to hear such a request made; and yet it is with this condition, "if it be possible". In Mark it is said, "all things are possible unto thee", (<4114636>Mark 14:36); intimating, that the taking away, or causing the cup to pass from him, was: all things are possible to God, which are consistent with the perfections of his nature, and the counsel of his will: and all such things, though possible in themselves, yet are not under such and such circumstances so; the removal of the cup from Christ was possible in itself, but not as things were circumstanced, and as matters then stood; and therefore it is hypothetically put, "if it be possible", as it was not; and that by reason of the decrees and purposes of God, which had fixed it, and are immutable; and on account of the covenant of grace, of which this was a considerable branch and article, and in which Christ had agreed unto it, and is unalterable; and also on the score of the prophecies of the Old Testament, in which it had been often spoken of; and therefore without it, how should the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be? they would not have been the Scriptures of truth. Besides, Christ had foretold it himself once and again, and therefore consistent with the truth of his own predictions, it could not be dispensed with: add to all this, that the salvation of his people required his drinking it; that could not be brought

about no other way in agreement with the veracity, faithfulness, justice, and holiness of God. This condition qualities and restrains the above petition; nor is it to be considered but in connection with what follows:

nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt; which shows that the request was far from being sinful, or contrary to piety to God, or love to men, or to true fortitude of mind; the pure natural will of Christ, or the will of Christ's human nature, being left to act in a mere natural way, shows a reluctancy to sorrows, sufferings, and death; this same will acting on rational principles, and in a rational way, puts it upon the possibility the thing, and the agreement of the divine will to it. That there are two wills in Christ, human and divine, is certain; his human will, though in some instances, as in this, may have been different from the divine will, yet not contrary to it; and his divine will is always the same with his Father's. This, as mediator, he engaged to do, and came down from heaven for that purpose, took delight in doing it, and has completely finished it.

Ver. 40. *And he cometh unto the disciples*, etc.] The three he took with him, Peter, James, and John, after he had finished his prayer;

and findeth them asleep: many things might contribute to, and bring this drowsiness upon them; as the great fatigue they had had in preparing the passover in the day, the plentiful meal they had eaten at night, though without excess, and the lateness of the night, it being now probably midnight; but the chief reason of their sleepiness was their sorrow, as is expressed in (<4226>Luke 22:45), what Christ had said to them of his soul troubles, and what they saw in him, had filled their hearts with sorrow, which brought on them an amazement and stupidity of mind; and this issued in sleep. We have other instances of persons in excessive grief and trouble falling asleep, as Elijah in (<111904>1 Kings 19:4,5), and Jonah in (Jon 1:5), so that this did not arise from a secure, lazy, indolent frame of spirit; or from any disregard to Christ, and neglect of him, and unconcernedness for him; but from their great sorrow of heart; for, the trouble and distress that he was in, added to the causes above mentioned. Though some have thought, that Satan might be, concerned in it, who induced this sleepiness, or increased it, that he might the more easily surprise them with his temptations, he was preparing for them, which I will not deny. Now, though this sleep was natural bodily sleep, which the disciples fell into, yet was an emblem of, and carried in it a resemblance to, the spiritual sleep and drowsiness of the people of God; for as this was after a delightful

entertainment and conversation with Christ at the passover and Lord's supper, so it sometimes is, that the children of God fall into a sleepy frame of soul, after much communion with Christ, as the church did in (Song of Solomon 5:1, 2), and as this sleep befell them, when Christ was withdrawn a little space from them; so it was with the church, when her beloved was absent from her, (Song of Solomon 3:1 5:2), and with the wise virgins when the bridegroom tarried, (Matthew 25:6), and as this was not an entire thorough sleep; they knew all the while what Christ was doing, and could relate, as they have done, the circumstances of it; so the children of God, when asleep, they are not like unregenerate persons, in a dead sleep of sin, that hear, and see, and feel, and know nothing; but though they are asleep, their hearts are awake, as was the church's, (Song of Solomon 5:2), yet as the disciples were so much asleep, that the bare words of Christ did not arouse them from it for a while; so such is the sleep of the saints sometimes, that they are not to be aroused by the bare ministry of the word, though the most powerful arguments, and the most moving and melting language are made use of, as were with the church, (Song of Solomon 5:2-4),

and saith unto Peter, what! could ye not watch with me one hour? This was said particularly to Peter, because he had so lately, in such a confident manner, declared, that he would not be offended with Christ, but abide with him, stand by him, and even die with him, was there an occasion for it; and yet, in so short a space of time, was fallen asleep, as were the rest who said the same things also: and it is as if Christ should say, how will you be able to stand by me throughout this night, when ye cannot watch with me so much as one hour, though I so earnestly desired you to tarry here, and watch with me, and you saw in what distress I was in? how will you be able to withstand the temptations that will beset you quickly, and perform your promises of love, fidelity, constancy, and close attachment to me, in the greatest dangers, when you cannot keep yourselves awake one hour for my sake?

Ver. 41. *Watch and pray*, etc.] These two are very justly put together. There is, and ought to be, a watching before prayer, and "unto" it; a watching all opportunities, the most suitable and convenient to perform it; and there is a watching in it, both over our hearts, thoughts, words, and gestures, and after it, for a return of it, and answer to it: the reason of this exhortation follows,

that ye enter not into temptation; not that they might not be tempted at all; for none of the saints have been, or are without temptations; and they are needful for them; and it is the will of God they should be attended with them; and he has made gracious provisions for their help and relief under them; but that they might not enter into them, throw themselves in the way of temptation, be surprised by them at an unawares, fall into them headlong, be immersed in them, fall by them, and be overcome with them, so as to forsake Christ, or to deny him:

the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak: meaning either that the evil spirit Satan was very desirous of having them in his hands; very forward and ready to make the onset upon them; was cheerful, alert, and confident of victory; and was strong, robust, and powerful; and they were but flesh and blood, very weak and infirm, and unequal to the enemy; which is a sense not to be despised, seeing it carries in it a very strong reason why they ought to watch and pray, lest they fall into the temptations of such a powerful adversary; (see Ephesians 6:12 1 Peter 5:8), or else by "spirit" may be meant the soul, as renewed and regenerated by the spirit of God; particularly the principle of grace in it, which is born of the Spirit, and is called by the same name, and which lusts against the flesh, or corrupt nature: this was willing to watch and pray, and guard against falling into temptations; was willing to abide by Christ, and express its love to him every way; but "the flesh", or "body", so the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, is "weak" and infirm, prone to sleep, indulges ease, and unfit to bear trouble, but ready to sink under it, and is for fleeing from it: and so the words contain our Lord's excuse of his disciples in their present circumstances. Munster's Hebrew Gospel reads the words thus, and "indeed the spirit is tdqwç, watchful, but the flesh is weak". The Ethiopic version after this manner, "the spirit desires, and the body is fatigued". The Persic version, contrary both to the letter and sense of the words, renders them, "my spirit is firm, but my body is infirm".

Ver. 42. *He went away again the second time*, etc.] To the same place as before, or at some little distance; after he had reproved his disciples for their sleeping, and had exhorted them to watchfulness and prayer, suggesting the danger they were liable to, and the condition they were in:

and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done. The sense of this prayer to his God and Father is, that if his sufferings and death could not be dispensed with; if it

was not consistent with the decrees of God, and the covenant of grace, that he should be excused from them; or if the glory of God, and the salvation of his people required it, that he must drink up that bitter cup, he was content to do it; desiring in all things to submit unto, and to fulfil his Father's will, though it was so irksome and disagreeable to nature.

Ver. 43. *And he came and found them asleep again*, etc.] For they were aroused and awaked, in some measure, by what he had said to them; but no sooner was he gone but they fell asleep again, and thus he found them a second time; or, "he came again and found them asleep"; so read the Vulgate Latin, the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel:

for their eyes were heavy; with sleep through fatigue, sorrow, etc. Mark adds, "neither wist they what to answer him", (<41140>Mark 14:40); they were so very sleepy, they knew not how to speak; or they were so confounded, that he should take them asleep a second time, after they had had such a reproof, and exhortation from him, that they knew not what answer to make him; who probably rebuked them again, or gave them a fresh exhortation.

Ver. 44. *And he left them, and went away again*, etc.] At some little distance from them; they being so overpowered with sleep, that he could have no conversation with them:

and prayed the third time; as the Apostle Paul did, when under temptation, he prayed thrice that it might depart from him, (<471208>2 Corinthians 12:8),

saying the same words: the Arabic version renders it, "in the words which he before expressed"; and Munster's Hebrew Gospel reads, "he said the same prayer"; not in the selfsame words, or in the express form he had before delivered it; for it is certain, that his second prayer is not expressed in the same form of words as the first: but the sense is, that he prayed to the same purpose; the matter and substance of his prayer was the same, namely, that he might be exempted from suffering; but if that could not be admitted of, he was desirous to be resigned to the will of his heavenly Father, and was determined to submit unto it.

Ver. 45. *Then cometh he to his disciples*, etc.] The three that were nearest to him, "the third time", as Mark says, (<41441>Mark 14:41), and as it was;

and saith unto them, sleep on now, and take your rest. The Evangelist Mark adds, “it is enough”, (<41 14 41>Mark 14:41); which has induced some interpreters to think, that these words were spoken seriously by Christ: though the sense cannot be that they had watched sufficiently, and now might sleep, and take their rest, for they had not watched at all; but rather, that he had now no need of them, or their watching with him; the conflict was over for the present; or, as the Syriac version renders it, “the end is come”; and so the Arabic; and to the same purpose the Persic, “the matter is come to an end”, or to an extremity; the sense being the same with what is expressed in the following clause, “the hour is at hand”; and shows, that the words are to be understood in an ironical sense, sleep on and take your rest, if you can: I have been exhorting you to watchfulness, but to no purpose, you will be alarmed from another quarter; a band of soldiers is just at hand to seize and carry me away, and now sleep if you can: that this is the sense appears from the reason given, and from the exhortation in the following verse, and the reason annexed to that:

behold the hour is at hand, and the son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners: by the son of man Christ means himself, and under this diminutive title expresses his Messiahship, this being a character of the Messiah in the Old Testament; and the truth of his human nature, and the weakness and infirmities of it: by the “betraying”, or delivery of him, is intended either the betraying of him by Judas into the hands of the high priest, Scribes, and Pharisees; or the delivery of him, by them, into the hands of Pilate, and by him to the Roman soldiers; all which were by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. The high priest, elders, Scribes, and Pharisees, notwithstanding all their pretensions to religion, righteousness, and holiness, were very wicked persons; though the Gentiles, the band of Roman soldiers, Judas brought with him to take Christ, are here rather meant, it being usual to call the Gentiles sinners. This betraying and delivery of Christ into the hands of these, was determined by God; the time, the very hour was fixed, and was now approaching; the last sand in the glass was dropping; for as soon as Christ had said these words, Judas, with his band of soldiers, appeared.

Ver. 46. *Rise, let us be going*, etc.] Not to run away from the enemy, but to meet him: this was said, partly to arouse his sleepy disciples; and partly to show his love to his Father, and his submission to his will; as also to express the fortitude of his mind as man; he was now rid of his fears, and free from those agonies and dreadful apprehensions of things, he was but a

little while ago possessed of; and likewise, to signify his willingness to be apprehended, and to suffer, and die, in the room of his people:

he is at hand that doth betray me. This shows his omniscience: he not only knew, as he did from the beginning, who should betray him; but he knew when be would do it; and he knew where the betrayer now was, that he was just now coming upon him, in order to deliver him the hands of sinful men. And this he spake with trepidity of soul, with greatness of mind, being no more concerned at it, than when he gave him the sop, and bid him do what he did quickly: he does not mention his name; nor did he ever, when he spoke of him as the betrayer; either because the disciples, as yet, did not fully and certainly know who should betray him, and he would not now surprise them with it; or because they did, and therefore it was needless to mention his name; or rather, because he was unworthy to be mentioned by name: a “behold” is prefixed to this, partly to awaken the attention of his disciples; and partly to express what an horrid, insolent, and unparalleled action that was, Judas was now about to be guilty of.

Ver. 47. *And while he yet spake*, etc.] While he was thus speaking to his disciples, before the last words, he is at hand that doth betray me, were well out of his mouth; such an exact knowledge had Christ of every motion of Judas, of what he was about, and where he was:

lo! Judas, one of the twelve, came. The Persic version adds, “in sight”; of Christ, and the disciples; they saw him, and knew him, though some little distance: he came to Gethsemane, and into the garden, where they were, with a design to betray his master. He is described by his name Judas; as in (<4014>Matthew 26:14), for there was another Judas among the apostles; the Syriac and Persic read, Judas the betrayer, to distinguish him from the other: and also by his office, “one of the twelve”; i.e. apostles, whom Christ called from the rest of his disciples and followers, and bestowed extraordinary gifts upon, and sent forth to preach the Gospel, cast out devils, and heal all manner of diseases; and “lo!”, one of these betrays him! an apostle, and yet a devil! one of the twelve, one of his select company, and bosom friends, and yet a traitor!

and with him a great multitude, with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders the people. Judas was at the head of them, went before them to show them where Christ was, and to deliver him into their hands: he had not been asleep, he had been with the chief priests, and acquainted them with the opportunity he had of making good his agreement with him:

he had got the band of soldiers, and other persons together, in order to make sure work of it. Thus we see how diligent wicked men are in the accomplishment of their evil designs, whilst good men are asleep and indifferent to godly and spiritual exercises. Judas is here described by his company; he who but a few hours ago was at table with his Lord, and the rest of the apostles, is now at the head of band of Roman soldiers, and other miscreants, and blood thirsty wretches, intent upon the death of his master. They may well be called a "multitude", because made up of various sorts of persons, and these, many of them; of Roman soldiers, of the officers and servants of the chief priests; yea of the chief priests themselves, captains of the temple, and elders of the people, who were so eager upon this enterprise, that they could not forbear going in company with them, to see what would be the issue of it. And "a great one"; for the "band" of soldiers, if it was complete, consisted of a thousand men itself; and besides this, there were many others, and all to take a single person, and who had no more about him than eleven disciples; though the [f1578] Jews pretend he had two thousand men with him: and who came also "with swords and staves, or clubs"; the Roman soldiers with their swords, and the servants of the chief priests with their clubs: the reason of this posse, and of their being thus armed, might be either for fear of the people, who, should they be alarmed, and have any notice of their design, might rise and make an uproar, and attempt to rescue him; or that by having a Roman band with them, and the chief priests and their officers, it might appear, that what they did they did by authority; and that they seized him as a malefactor, as one guilty either of sedition, or heresy, or both. And this account is confirmed by the Jews themselves, who say [f1579], that the citizens, of Jerusalem were µynywzm, "armed", and equiped, and so took Jesus: and this multitude also came "from the chief priests and elders of the people". Mark joins the Scribes with them, (<411443>Mark 14:43): these composed the sanhedrim, or great council of the nation, who had been consulting the death of Christ; had agreed to give Judas thirty pieces of silver to betray him into their hands; had obtained a band of soldiers of the Roman governor to apprehend him, and sent their officers and servants to assist herein; these all acted under their direction, influence, and authority. The Vulgate Latin, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read, "sent", from them.

Ver. 48. *Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign*, etc.] By which it might be known who he was; for it being night, though they had lanterns and torches, as John says, (<431803>John 18:3), yet Judas himself might not be

able to discern, him, so as to point him out, until he came very near him: moreover, Christ and his apostles might be clothed alike, so that a mistake might be easily made, and one of them be took for him: and so the Jews say[f1580], that the two thousand men, they pretend were with him, were clothed with the same apparel; which story may take its rise from hence: add to this, that James, the son of Alphaeus, called the brother of our Lord, is reported to be very like unto him. Besides, it is very likely that the Roman soldiers, who were to be the principal persons in apprehending, binding, and carrying him away, might never have seen him, and so could not know him without some sign was given them; and which Judas gave them before he came out with them: and is as follows:

saying, whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he, hold him fast. Judas might the rather pitch upon this to be the sign, partly because it might be what had been usual with the disciples, when they had been at any time absent from Christ, and which he admitted of; and partly because he might think this would best cover his treacherous designs, who, with all his wickedness, had not effrontery enough to come sword in hand and seize him in a violent manner, and besides, might not judge such a method advisable, had he impudence enough to prosecute it, lest this should put Jesus upon taking some measures to make his escape. The reason of his advice, "hold him fast", was, because he knew that once and again, when attempts were made to seize him, he easily disengaged himself, passed through the midst, and went his way; (see <scripRef type="bible">Luke 4:30</scripRef> <scripRef type="bible">John 8:59</scripRef>) (<scripRef type="bible">John 10:39</scripRef>); and therefore gave them this caution, and strict charge, lest, should he slip from them, he should lose his money he had agreed with the chief priests for; or to let them know, that when he was in their hands, he had made good his agreement, and should expect his money: and that it lay upon them then to take care of him, and bring him before the sanhedrim. The account the Jews themselves give of the directions of Judas, is not very much unlike this; who represent him advising in this manner, only as on the day before:

> "gird yourselves ready about this time tomorrow, and the man whom shall worship and bow to, the same is he; behave yourselves like men of war, fight against his company, and lay hold on him[f1581]."

Ver. 49. *And forthwith he came to Jesus*, etc.] As soon as ever he appeared, before the rest could come up; for, he went before them, as Luke

says, and that not only as, their guide to direct them to the person they wanted, but he separated himself from them, that it might not be thought that he came with them, or belonged to them:

and said, hail, master; and kissed him. Just as Joab asked Amasa of his health, and took him by the beard to kiss him, and smote him under the fifth rib, (<100>2 Samuel 20:9). The salutation he gave him was wishing him all health, prosperity, and happiness. The Syriac version renders it, “peace, Rabbi”; and the Persic, “peace be upon thee, Rabbi”; which was the very form of salutation the disciples of the wise men gave to their Rabbins.

> “Says [f1582] Aba bar Hona, in the name of R. Jochanan, in what form is the salutation of a disciple to his master? ybr Æyl[µwlç, “peace be upon thee, Rabbi”.”

In (<411445>Mark 14:45), the word “Rabbi” is repeated, this being usual in the salutation of the Jewish doctors; and the rather used by Judas under a pretence of doing him the greater honour, and of showing the highest respect, and strongest affection for him. So this deceitful wretch still addresses him as his master, though he was now serving his most implacable enemies; and wishes him all peace and joy, when he was going to deliver him into the hands of those that sought his life; and to cover all, kissed him, as a token of his friendship and the sincerity of it. It is rightly observed by Dr. Lightfoot, that it was usual for masters to kiss their disciples, particularly their heads; but then not for disciples to kiss their masters: of the former there are many instances in the Jewish writings, but not of the latter: yet, I can hardly think that this was done out of open contempt and derision; but under a pretence of respect and love; and even as being concerned for his present case, and as condoling him under the circumstances he was now likely to be in, through an armed hand, which was just upon him; and which he, by this artifice, would have suggested he had no concern with.

Ver. 50. *And Jesus said unto him, friend*, etc.] Not in an ironical and sarcastic way, but because he pretended to be his friend, by saluting and kissing him, in the manner he had done; or rather, because Christ had always used him as his friend, his familiar friend, who had been of his councils, and had ate at his table; and therefore this carried in it something very cutting, had Judas had any conscience, or sense of gratitude:

wherefore art thou come? The Ethiopic version reads, “my friend, art thou not come?” that is, art thou come as my friend? is thy coming as a friend, or as an enemy? if as a friend, what means this company with swords and staves? if as an enemy, why this salutation and kiss? or what is thine end in coming at this time of night? what is thy business here? thou hast left my company, and my disciples, what dost thou do here? The Syriac version reads it, “to that”; and the Arabic, “to this art thou come?” to kiss me, and by a kiss to deliver me into the hands of my enemies? to which agrees what is said in Luke, “Judas, betrayest thou the son of man with a kiss?” (<4222>Luke 22:48). This he said, to let him know he knew him, and therefore he calls him by name; and that he knew his design in kissing him, and that what he was doing was against light and knowledge; he, at the same time, knowing that he was the son of man, the true Messiah.

Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him; that is, the multitude, the Roman band, the captains and officers of the Jews, when Judas had given the sign; though not till Christ had given them a specimen of his power, in striking them to the ground; to let them know, that Judas could never have put him into their hands, nor could they have laid hold on him, had he not thought fit to surrender himself to them. The seizing and apprehending him is related by Luke and John as after the following circumstance; though the Ethiopic version here reads, “they lift up their hands, and did not lay hold on the Lord Jesus”.

Ver. 51. *And behold one of them which were with Jesus*, etc.] Either one of the three that Jesus took with him whilst he was in his agony, leaving the other eight at some distance; or of the eleven, who might now be all with him: however, it is certain, Peter is the person meant; for though he is not named here, nor by Mark, nor Luke, he is by John, (<4318>John 18:10); whose Gospel being wrote last, and many years after the rest, there was no danger like to accrue, by telling who it was that did the following action: he being now thoroughly awaked with the rest, by what Christ had said to him; and more so by the surprise of the multitude of armed men about him; and remembering his solemn protestations of abiding by his master; and seeing him just now ready to be seized, and carried away; without knowing his master’s mind, or waiting his answer to the question the other disciples put,

stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest’s, and smote off his ear. It seems he had a sword by his side,

upon what account is not certain; this he drew, and struck at a servant of the high priest's, who might show great malignity against Christ, and was foremost, and most busy in apprehending him. The blow was levelled at his head, and with an intention, no doubt, to have, cleaved him down, but sloping on one side took off his ear. The servant's name was Malchus, as John says; and it was his right ear that was cut off, as both he and Luke relate, (<43810>John 18:10) (<42250>Luke 22:50).

Ver. 52. *Then said Jesus unto him*, etc.] That is, unto Peter,

put up again thy sword into its place, or sheath. This Christ said not only to rebuke Peter for his rashness, but to soften the minds of the multitude, who must be enraged at such an action; and which was still more effectually done by his healing the man's ear: and indeed, had it not been for these words, and this action of Christ's; and more especially had it not been owing to the powerful influence Christ had over the spirits of these men, in all probability Peter, and the rest of the apostles, had been all destroyed at once.

For all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword. This is not to be understood of magistrates who bear not the sword in vain, are ministers of God for good, and revengers of evil works; but of private persons that use the sword, and that not in self-defence, but for private revenge; or engage in a quarrel, to which they are not called; and such generally perish, as Peter must have done, had it not been for the interposition of almighty power. Though this seems to be spoken not so much of Peter, and of the danger he exposed himself to, by taking and using the sword, and so to deter him from it, but rather of these his enemies: and as an argument to make and keep Peter easy and quiet, and exercise patience, since, in a little time, God would avenge himself of them; and that the Jews, who now made use of the sword of the Roman soldiers, would perish by the sword of the Romans, as in a few years after the whole nation did.

Ver. 53. *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father*, etc.] Meaning, if he thought proper, or that there was any necessity for it, or that he was desirous of being rescued out of such hands he was falling into. This must be understood of him as man: for, as God, the angels were his creatures and ministering servants, whom he had the command of himself, and so had no need, as such, to pray to his Father to detach a number of them to his assistance, and which, as man, he could only want.

And he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels. A Roman legion consisted of about six thousand soldiers, or upwards; some add six hundred sixty six; and others make the number far greater. Twelve are mentioned, either with respect to the twelve apostles; or in allusion, as others think, to the Roman militia; a proper and full army with them consisting of such a number of legions: and that there is an innumerable company of angels, thousand thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, is certain; and the Persic version here reads; “twelve myriads” of legions; and that these are at the command of God, and he can dispatch them at once, on any emergent occasion, is very evident; and what is it that such a company of angels is not capable of, when a single angel slew in one night an hundred, fourscore, and five thousand men, (<12195>2 Kings 19:35), wherefore had Christ had any inclination to have been rescued from the present danger, he stood in no need of Peter’s sword.

Ver. 54. *But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled*, etc.] That is, should Christ make such a request to his Father, and he should grant it, and an host of angels should be sent to rescue him, and he should be rescued by them; how then should the Scriptures, which speak of Christ’s being taken, and led as a lamb to the slaughter, and of his various sufferings, and the circumstances of them, have their accomplishment? “declaring”, as the Arabic version supplies, or as the Ethiopic version, “which say”,

that thus it must be; that the Messiah must be apprehended, and suffer, and die. The several parts of the sufferings of the Messiah are foretold in the writings of the Old Testament; the spirit of Christ, in the prophets, testified before hand of them; as that he should be reproached and despised of men, (<19206>Psalm 22:6-8 <23503>Isaiah 53:3), be spit upon, smote, and buffeted, (<23005>Isaiah 1:5,6 <33501>Micah 5:1), be put to death, (<19215>Psalm 22:15 <23532>Isaiah 53:12), and that the death of the cross, (<19215>Psalm 22:15,16 <38120>Zechariah 12:10), and be buried, (<23509>Isaiah 53:9), and also the several circumstances of his sufferings, which led on to them, or attended them; as the selling him for thirty pieces of silver, (<38112>Zechariah 11:12,13), the betraying him by one of his familiar friends, (<19409>Psalm 41:9), the seizing and apprehending him, and which is particularly referred to here, (<23507>Isaiah 53:7,8), his disciples forsaking him, (<38307>Zechariah 13:7), and even his God and Father, (<19201>Psalm 22:1), his suffering between two thieves, (<23532>Isaiah 53:12), the parting of his garments, and casting lots on his vesture, (<19218>Psalm 22:18), the giving him gall and vinegar when on the cross, (<19621>Psalm 69:21), and not breaking any of his bones, (<19420>Psalm 34:20), yea, the Scriptures not

only declared, that these things should be; but the necessity of them also, that they must be; because of the purposes and decrees of God, which are eternal, immutable, and unfrustrable; for as God had determined on his salvation of his people by Christ, and that through his sufferings and death, these were determined by him also, even the time, nature, manner, and circumstances of them; and which the Scriptures declare, and therefore must be likewise; and because of the covenant of grace, which is sure, unalterable, and unchangeable; in which Christ agreed to assume human nature, to obey, suffer, and die in it, and so do his Father's will, which was to bear the penalty of the law, and undergo the sufferings of death, and which therefore must be, or Christ's faithfulness fail. Moreover, on account of the law and justice of God, which required his bearing the curse, as well as fulfilling the precept of the law: and especially on account of the salvation of his people, which could not be effected without them, they must be. Christ, in these words, discovers a very great concern for the fulfilling of Scripture; and that because it is the word of God, which must not be broken; and because throughout it he is spoken of, in the volume of it, it is written of him, to do the will of God; even in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms: and besides, he was the minister of the circumcision, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers; and even agreeably to them, and upon the foundation of them, he had himself predicted his own sufferings: and as those were to be the rule of the faith and practice of his people in all ages, he was concerned for their accomplishment in every point; and which may teach us to value the Scriptures, and to be confident of the fulfilment of them in things yet future.

Ver. 55. *In that same hour said Jesus to the multitude*, etc.] That is, to the heads and chief of them, the chief priests, captains of the temple, and elders, as Luke says, (⁴⁰²²Luke 22:52), for though it was in the dead of the night, and the company such, as they would not have chose to have been seen in at another time; yet so intent were they upon this affair, that they could not satisfy themselves without being in it, and seeing the issue of it; and this the Jews themselves confirm in their account; for they say[f1583], that the elders of Jerusalem took Jesus, and brought him to the city. Now in that same hour, immediately, that very moment, that Christ had made an end of rebuking Peter for his rash action, and reasoning with him upon it, he turned and addressed himself to these men, saying;

are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves, for to take me? as an highwayman, or notorious robber, that had done great mischief to the country; and being armed, and having associates, was not easy to be taken: the Syriac renders it, as a cut-throat: and the Persic, as a robber, and a cut-throat; a desperate villain, that would by no means yield, unless overpowered by numbers, by force of arms, by the dint of the sword, by knocks and blows: but how different from this, was the character of Jesus! who never did any injury to any man's person or property, but saved both; was meek, lowly, and humble in his deportment, throughout the whole of his life; never strove with men, or cried, and caused his voice, in any riotous manner, to be heard in the streets; and even when reviled, reviled not again, but took every insult patiently; and was now unarmed, and ready to submit at once; nay, before they could well come up to him, he asked them who they sought; and on mentioning his name, declared he was the person; and signified he was ready to surrender himself, only desired his disciples might have leave to go away: he adds,

I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. The business he was employed was not thieving and stealing, but teaching; and that wholesome doctrine, which he, as man, had received from his Father, and as the great prophet in Israel taught; and with such power and authority, as the Scribes and Pharisees did not: the place where he taught, was the temple; not a corner, or a private place, but a place of public worship, and of public resort: the time when he taught there, was the daytime, and day by day; for some days past, it had been his custom in the daytime to teach in the temple, and at night to go out, and abide in the Mount of Olives; and his continuance day by day in the temple, or his constant teaching there, is signified by sitting daily there, and teaching; unless it should be thought rather to have regard to the posture in which he taught; (see Matthew 5:1). And yet, though this had been his common practice for some days past, and at other times before, yet no man laid hands on him then; which was not wanting to a good will in them, who were very desirous of it, and sought every opportunity to do it, but were prevented; either through fear of the people, or through Christ's making his escape from them; and particularly, by the singular providence and power of God, which restrained them, because his time was not yet come. However, Christ suggests by this, that they had no need to take such extraordinary methods to apprehend him, as to make use of one of his disciples to betray him; to come in the middle of the night to take him, and

that in such great numbers, and with swords and staves, when he was every day with them in the temple.

Ver. 56. *But all this was done, that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled*, etc.] Some have thought these to be the words of the evangelist, making this remark upon what was said and done; but by what both Mark and Luke record, (<41449>Mark 14:49 <42253>Luke 22:53), they appear to be the words of Christ himself; who observes this, partly to make himself, as man, easy under the treatment he met with; and partly, to fortify the minds of his disciples against offence at it; and also to throw conviction, or confusion, into the minds of his enemies. The Scriptures of the prophets he refers to, as having, or about to have, by this conduct, their accomplishment, were such, as regarded the betraying him by Judas, the taking him in this secret, private, insidious, yet violent manner; in all which he showed great meekness, calmness, and submission, as (<19409>Psalm 41:9 <25420>Lamentations 4:20 <23507>Isaiah 53:7,8). As also what respected the scattering, and hasty flight of his disciples from him, (<381307>Zechariah 13:7), which in the next clause is shown to be accomplished.

Then all the disciples forsook him and fled; not only went away from him, and left him alone, as he foretold they would, (<431632>John 16:32), but they ran away from him in a precipitant manner, like timorous sheep, the shepherd being about to be smitten; and they fearing, lest Peter's rash action should be imputed to them all, and they suffer for it; or lest they should be laid hold on next, and bound, as their master was, or about to be. Every thing in this account is an aggravation of their pusillanimity, and ingratitude; as that they were the "disciples" of Christ that forsook him, whom he had called, and sent forth as his apostles to preach his Gospel; and to whom he had given extraordinary gifts and powers; who had forsaken all and followed him, and had been with him from the beginning; had heard all his excellent discourses, and had seen all his miracles, and yet these at last forsake him, and even "all" of them: John the beloved disciple, that leaned on his bosom, and Peter, that professed so much love to him, zeal for him, and faith in him; the three that had just seen him in his agony and bloody sweat, and everyone of them left him; not one stood by him, and this too, after they had had a fresh instance of his power, in striking the men to the ground, that came to take him; and when he was sueing for them with their enemies, to let them go peaceably and safely: so that they had no need to have fled in such haste; and to leave him "then", in the midst of his enemies, in his great distress and trouble, was very unkind and ungrateful:

and to this account of the evangelist, pretty much agrees what the Jews themselves say of it; for they report [f1584], that

> "when his disciples saw that he was taken, and that they could not fight against them, µhylgrb wxwry, "they ran away on foot", and lift up their voice and wept greatly."

Though they also pretend, that the citizens of Jerusalem killed many of them, and that the rest "fled" to the mountain, which is false.

Ver. 57. *And they that had laid hold on Jesus*, etc.] Who were the band, and the captain, and the officers of the Jews, as (<43>18:12), or as the Jews themselves say [f1585], the elders of Jerusalem; who not only laid fast hold on him, but bound him; and that both for greater security of him, some of them perhaps knowing how he had made his escape from them formerly; or at least taking the hint from Judas, to hold him fast, and lead him away safely; and by way of reproach and contempt, thereby showing that he was a malefactor, and had done some crime worthy of bonds; and having him thus in fast and safe custody, they

led him away to Caiaphas, the high priest; who was high priest that year; for the priesthood was frequently changed in those times, and men were put into it by the Roman governor, through favour or bribery. The year before this, Simeon, or Simon ben Camhith, was high priest; and the year before that, Eleazar, the son of Ananus; and before him, Ishmael ben Phabi, who were all three, successively, made high priests by the Roman governor: as was also this Caiaphas, this year; and who by Josephus [f1586], and in the Talmud [f1587] likewise, is called Joseph. From whence he had his name Caiaphas, is not certain: Jerom [f1588] says, it signifies "a searcher", or "a sagacious person"; but may be better interpreted, he adds, "one that vomits at the mouth"; deriving the word, as I suppose, from awq, "to vomit", and yp, "the mouth"; (see Gill on "<40>26:3"). It was to the house, or palace of this man, the high priest, that Jesus was led;

where the Scribes and elders were assembled: a council was held about a week before this, in which Caiaphas assisted, and then gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient, that one man should die for the people, (<43>11:47,49,50), whether that was held at his house, or elsewhere, is not certain, very probably it might; however, it is clear from (<40>26:2,3), that two days ago, the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, were assembled together in his palace, to consult about putting Jesus to death;

and here they were again met together on the same account, waiting to have him brought before them.

Ver. 58. *But Peter followed him afar off*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, alone; and which seems to be the true case; for though there was another disciple who also followed Jesus, and is thought to be John, yet it looks as if they followed him separately, and not together; for the other disciple went into the palace with Jesus, but Peter not till afterwards, being espied by his fellow disciple standing without. These two it seems, having a little recovered themselves from the fright they had been put into, stopped and turned back, and followed after Jesus, to see what would be the issue of things. Peter's following Christ, showed love to him; he was lothe to leave him, his bowels moved towards him, and he wanted to know how it would fare with him, and what would become of him; and yet keeping at a distance, following him afar off, betrayed fear, lest he should be observed, and taken up, and come into danger: however, he proceeded on his way in a slow pace, till he came

unto the high priest's palace, and went in and sat with the servants, to see the end; of the matter, or business, as the Ethiopic and Persic versions add; to see how it would go with him, whether he would exert his divine power, and deliver himself out of their, hands, which he knew he was able to do, when he would again join him; or what punishment they would inflict upon him, whether they would scourge him, and then let him go; or whether they would sentence him to death; that so he might know how to provide for his own safety: all which was indulging curiosity, and the carnal reasonings of his mind; and it showed want of integrity at that time, and some degree of hypocrisy, in placing himself among the servants of the high priest, as if he was none of the followers of Jesus, but was of the same complexion and cast with them: he had got into bad company, and was in the way of temptation; and though he had no design in following Jesus, and in going into the high priest's palace, and seating himself among the servants to deny his Lord, yet all this led on to it; for which reason these several circumstances are taken notice of, the account of which denial of his, is afterwards related.

Ver. 59. *Now the chief priests and elders, and all the counsel*, etc.] Or sanhedrim, which consisted, as the Jewish writers say [f1589], of priests, Levites, and Israelites, of both ecclesiastics and laics; the ecclesiastics were the priests and Levites, and the laics the Israelites, or elders of the people;

for if priests and Levites could not be found, a sanhedrim might consist of those only; and so those words in (<scripRef passage="Deuteronomy 21:2" />Deuteronomy 21:2), “thy elders”, are thus interpreted [f1590], lwdgh ˆyd tyb hz, this is the great sanhedrim; and though a king of Israel might not sit in the sanhedrim, yet an high priest might, if he was a man of wisdom [f1591], and it seems as if Caiaphas was now at the head of this council, by its being assembled at his palace; which though it was not the usual place where they met, yet might be chose at this time for greater secrecy. Now these thus assembled together,

sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; they first take him up, and then seek out for witnesses against him; being determined, right or wrong, to put him to death, if possible; and false witnesses too, even those whose business it was, to examine and detect false witnesses, and to inflict the same punishment upon them, which they by their false testimony intended to have brought on another, (<scripRef passage="Deuteronomy 19:18,19" />Deuteronomy 19:18,19). And besides, it was in the night, when it was forbid by their canons to begin the trial of capital causes, or to receive and admit of witnesses [f1592]. Indeed the Syriac and Persic versions read, only witnesses, or witness, and leave out the word “false”; perhaps imagining, that men could never be so wicked, to seek out for false witnesses: but this need not be wondered at, when these men were bent upon the death of Christ at any rate; and were aware that nothing true could be objected to him, that would legally take away his life; and besides, their manner of procedure in judgment against a false prophet, a deceiver, and one that enticed to idolatry, and such an one they would have Jesus to be, was quite different from what they took with other persons: their canon runs thus [f1593]:

> “the judgment of a deceiver, is not as the rest of capital judgments; his witnesses are hid; and he has no need, or ought not to have any premonition, or warning, as the rest of those that are put to death; and if he goes out of the sanhedrim acquitted, and one says I can prove the charge against him, they turn him back; but if he goes out condemned, and one says I can prove him innocent the do not return him.”

So in the Misna [f1594] it is said,

> “of all that are condemned to death in the law, none have their witnesses hidden but this (the deceiver, or one that entices to idolatry) — and they hide his witnesses behind a wall, or hedge; and he (whom he endeavoured to seduce) says to him, say what

> thou hast said to me privately; and if he repeats it to him, he must say, how shall we leave our God that is in heaven, and go and serve stocks and stones! if he repents, it is well; but if he should say, so we are bound to do, and so it becomes us, they that stand behind the wall, or hedge, shall carry him to the sanhedrim and stone him."

In the Gemara it is thus expressed [f1595],

> "they light up a lamp in the innermost house, and set the witnesses in the outermost house, so that they can see him and hear his voice, and he cannot see them."

And then follows what is said before, to which is added, "so they did to Ben Stada"; by whom they mean Jesus of Nazareth. Moreover, this need not seem strange, that they took such a course with Christ, when in the case of Stephen, they suborned and set up false witnesses against him. The sanhedrim cannot be thought to do this in person, but they sent out their officers to seek for such men, as could or would produce anything against him, and no doubt promised them an handsome reward.

Ver. 60. *But found none*, etc.] That were fit for their purpose;

yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none; whose testimonies were sufficient to put him to death, which was what they were resolved upon, or whose witness were not alike and agreed; for according to their law, a man must not die by the mouth of one witness only, but by the mouth of two or three witnesses agreed in a point; and though they might be willing enough to dispense with the law in this case, yet might have some regard to their own character and reputation; and especially as they meant to deliver him to the Roman governor, in order to be condemned by him; they knew they must have a charge, and this supported with a proper evidence, or they could not hope to succeed; for which reason, they could not put up, as they otherwise willingly would, with any sort of witnesses:

at the last came two false witnesses; who were agreed in a point, and whose testimonies were alike; at least, had a greater appearance of truth and agreement than the rest; though Mark says, "neither so did their witnesses agree together", (<411459>Mark 14:59), as to prove the point, for which it was given.

Ver. 61. *And said, this fellow said*, etc.] Or saith, as De Dieu observes, the Syriac version of this place should be rendered; that is, he has not only said in times past, referring to (<43 2:19>John 2:19), but continues to say it, and glory in it:

I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days; in which they did injury, both to his words and sense: he did not say, "I am able to destroy the temple", but only said, "destroy this temple"; signifying neither his power, nor his will and inclination to it; but put it upon the Jews, and left it to them to do it: nor did he say one word about the temple of God, or as it is in (<41 4:58>Mark 14:58), "this temple that is made with hands"; the temple at Jerusalem, which was made by the hands of men, and devoted to the worship of God; but only "this temple", referring to his body, or human nature; in which he, the Son of God, dwelt, as in a temple; nor did he say that he was able to "build" it in three days, but that he would "raise it up" in three days; intending the resurrection of his body by his own power, after it had been dead three days; and so they perverted his sense, as well as misquoted his words; applying that to the material temple at Jerusalem, what he spoke of the temple of his body, and of its resurrection from the dead, on the third day; designing hereby to fix a charge, both of sacrilege and sorcery upon him: of sacrilege, in having a design upon the temple of God to destroy it; and of sorcery, or familiarity with the devil, and having assistance from him, or knowledge of the magic art, that he could pretend in three days to rebuild a temple, which had been forty and six years in building; and was what could never be done, but by help of Beelzebub, the prince of devils, by whom it was insinuated he did all his miracles.

Ver. 62. *And the high priest arose and said unto him*, etc.] He rose up from his seat in great wrath and anger; partly being vexed, that they could get no other and better testimony; and partly because of Christ's contemptuous silence, giving no answer to the witnesses, as judging they deserved none; and which highly provoked the high priest, and therefore in passion said,

answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? Is it true or false, right or wrong? The Vulgate Latin renders it, "dost thou answer nothing to those things which these witness against thee?" To which agree the Arabic version, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel.

Ver. 63. *But Jesus held his peace*, etc.] Knowing it would signify nothing, whatever he should say, they being set upon his death, the time of which was now come; and therefore he quietly submits, and says nothing in his own defence to prevent it. To be silent in a court of judicature, Apollonius Tyanaeus [f1596] says, is the fourth virtue; this Christ had, and all others:

and the high priest answered and said unto him; though Christ had said nothing, a way of speaking very frequent among the Jews, and in the sacred writings:

I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God; the Christ; the anointed, that David speaks of in the second Psalm, and who is there said to be the Son of God, (Psalm 2:2,7), to which the high priest seems to have respect; since there is no other passage, in which both these characters meet; and which was understood by the ancient Jews of the Messiah, as is owned by modern ones [f1597]. Jesus was given out to be the Messiah, and his disciples believed him to be the Son of God, and he had affirmed himself to be so; wherefore the high priest, exerting his priestly power and authority, puts him upon his oath; or at least with an oath made by the living God, charges him to tell the truth, and which when ever any heard the voice of swearing, he was obliged to do, (Leviticus 5:1).

Ver. 64. *Jesus saith unto him, thou hast said*, etc.] That is, thou hast said right; or as Mark expresses it, "I am", (Mark 14:62), the Christ, the anointed of God, who was so from everlasting, and in time; being before the world was, installed into, and invested with the office of mediator; and in the fulness of time, anointed with the holy Spirit without measure: he might truly say he was the Messiah, since all the characters of him in the books of the prophets, met in him; and all the miracles he was to work in proof of his Messiahship were wrought by him: as also that be was the Son of God, not by creation, as angels and men; nor by adoption, as saints; nor as man, or in the human nature, in which he was the son of man, and not the Son of God; nor was he begotten as man, whereas he is called the only begotten Son, and the begotten of the Father; and was he the Son of God as man not the first, but the third person must be his Father; besides, he was the Son of God before his incarnation: nor as mediator neither; be was the Son of God, antecedent to his office as mediator; his sonship is distinct from it, is an illustration of it, and what puts virtue into it; but he is so as God, as a divine person, by natural and eternal filiation; being begotten of

the Father in the divine essence, and of the same nature; and having the same perfections with him, and in all things equal to him; and is the sense in which he always affirmed God to be his Father, and himself to be his Son. For this phrase, "thou hast said", as answering to an affirmation, "I am", (see Gill on "[40]Matthew 26:25"). Now, though Christ had so fully answered to the adjuration, and so strongly affirmed himself to be the Messiah, the Son of God, yet he knew they would not believe; and therefore refers them to an after proof thereof, which whether they would or not, would oblige them to acknowledge the whole:

nevertheless, I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the son of man, sitting at the right hand of power: the Vulgate Latin, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel, read "the power of God", as in ([42]Luke 22:69), though it is not absolutely necessary; for "power" designs God himself, who is all powerful; as appears by the creation of all things out of nothing, the upholding of all things in their being, the redemption of men, the conversion of sinners, and the preservation of his saints. In the Jewish writings[f1598], God is frequently called, hrwbgh, "the power": such a thing, say they, we have heard, hrwbgh ypm, "from the mouth of power", or might; that is, from God himself: and so he is by the Grecians called δυναμις, "power"[f1599]: by "the son of man", is meant Christ in the human nature; who then appeared at their bar as a mere man, in a very despicable form and condition, but hereafter they should see him in a more glorious one, and at "the right hand of God": a phrase expressive of his exaltation, above all creatures whatever: respect is had to the prophecy of him in ([19]Psalm 110:1). "Sitting" there, denotes his having done his work; and his continuance in his exalted state, until all enemies are subdued under him: and when he says they should "see" him, his meaning is not, that they should see him at the right hand of God with their bodily eyes, as Stephen did; but that they should, or at least might, see and know by the effects, that he was set down at the right hand of God; as by the pouring forth of the holy Spirit upon his disciples, on the day of pentecost; by the wonderful spread of his Gospel, and the success of it, notwithstanding all the opposition made by them, and others; and particularly, by the vengeance he should take on their nation, city, and temple; and which may be more especially designed in the next clause;

and coming in, the clouds of heaven. So Christ's coming to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, as it is often called the coming of the son

of man, is described in this manner, (<4227>Matthew 24:27,30). Though this may also be understood of Christ's second coming to judgment, at the last day; when as he went up to heaven in a cloud, he will return, and come also in the clouds of heaven; (see <4409>Acts 1:9,11) (<6607>Revelation 1:7), when he will be seen by the eyes of all, good and bad; and when this sanhedrim, before whom he now was, will see him also, and confess that he is Lord and Christ, and the Son of God. Though the former clause seems to have regard to what would quickly come to pass, and what they should soon observe, and be convinced of; for απ αρτι, rendered "hereafter", may be translated "henceforwards"; or as it is in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, "from this time"; meaning, that in a very little while, they should begin to see the effects of his being set down at the right hand of God, and which would be full proofs of it, and should see him come in the clouds of heaven, at the last day: reference seems to be had to (<2713>Daniel 7:13), where one like unto the son of man is said to come in the clouds of heaven, and which is understood of the Messiah by many, both of the ancient and modern Jews [f1600]: with whom one of his names is "Anani" [f1601], which signifies "clouds".

Ver. 65. *Then the high priest rent his clothes*, etc.] Both his outer and inner garments. This he did, to show his zeal for the honour and glory of God, his grief and concern at the profanation of his holy name by a false oath, and his abhorrence of, and indignation at the blasphemy he supposed Christ to be guilty of, in asserting himself to be the Son of God. Some have thought, that Caiaphas in this action, transgressed the law, in (<3210>Leviticus 21:10), where it is said, that "the high priest — shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes": and it is one of the Jews' negative precepts [f1602], that

> "an high priest is prohibited, µlw[l, "ever" to rend his garments:"

and that therefore being transported with passion at the greatness of the supposed crime, could not forbear expressing his detestation of it in this manner, though it was forbidden him: but it does not appear to have been unlawful: as for the law in Leviticus, it only regards the rending of garments at funerals, or in mourning for the dead, as the context shows; and so Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases the text, "nor rent his clothes": yqyna t[çb "in the time of mourning"; and so the Jewish [f1603] interpreters, in general, expound it; and besides, this prohibition, according to them, only regards the manner of rending: their rule is this [f1604];

> "an high priest rends below, and a common person above:" the sense of which, according to their commentators, is [f1605],
>
> "that if anyone dies for whom an high priest is obliged to rend his garments, he must rend below, at the extreme part of his garment, near his feet; and as for what is written, nor rend his clothes; the meaning is, he shall not rend as other men do, above, over against the breast, near the shoulder, as the rest of the people."

Moreover, a priest might not go into the sanctuary, nor perform any part of service with his clothes rent; the canon runs thus [f1606],

> "the judgment, or the law of them that rend their garment, and of those that uncover the head, is one and the same, as it is said, (<031006>Leviticus 10:6), lo! if he is in service, and rends his garments, he is guilty of death by the hands of heaven, though his service is right, and not profaned."

And indeed no man, whether a priest or an Israelite, might go into the temple with his clothes rent; and a priest might not rend his sacerdotal garments, on any account; yet such were not these that Caiaphas now had on; but in case of hearing blasphemy, everyone, be he what he would, was obliged to rend his garments [f1607]:

> "Whosoever hears the cursing of the name (of God) is obliged to rend, even at the cursing of the surnames he is obliged to rend; and he that hears it from an Israelite, both he that hears, and he that hears from the mouth of him that hears, he is obliged to rend; but he that hears from the mouth of a Gentile, is not obliged to rend; and Eliakim and Shebna would not have rent, but because Rabshakeh was an apostate."

So when witnesses expressed the blasphemy of such they testified against, the judges were obliged to rise up and rend their garments; concerning which, take the following rule [f1608]:

> "a blasphemer is not guilty, unless he expresses the name (of God); says R. Joshua ben Korcha, all the day the witnesses are examined by the surnames; but when the cause is finished, they do not put to death because of the surnames, but they bring every man out, and ask the chief among them, and say to him, say expressly what thou hast heard, and he says it: then the judges stand upon their feet,

> ^y[rwqw, “and rend their garments”, and do not sow them up again; and then the second and the third say, I have heard the same as he.”

From all which it appears, that Caiaphas did what was the custom of the nation to do in such a case. The observation, that some learned men have made, that the high priest’s rending his garments, was, though without his intention, an emblem and presage, of the rending of the priesthood from him, and his brethren, and the entire change of it; as the abolition of the whole ceremonial law, was signified by the rending of the vail of the temple in twain; and as the removing of the kingdom from Saul, was represented by Samuel’s rending his mantle; and the revolt of the ten tribes to Jeroboam, by Abijah’s rending his garment into twelve pieces, and giving ten to him; would have had a much better foundation to be built on, were these clothes that Caiaphas rent, his priestly ones: but such they were not; for both the high priest, and the other priests, only wore their sacerdotal garments in the temple; nor was it lawful for them to go out in them elsewhere; for so the Jews say [f1609];

> “it is forbidden to go out into the province; city, or country, in the garments of the priesthood; but in the sanctuary, whether in the time of service, or not in the time of service, it was lawful.”

In the temple, there were chests on purpose for the garments of the priests [f1610]; from whence they took them, and where they laid them up when they had performed their service: of these there were ninety six in number; for as there were twenty four courses, there were four chests for every course; in which the garments were put by themselves, the breeches by themselves, the girdles by themselves, the bonnets by themselves, and the coats by themselves; sealed up with an inscription on them, showing what was in them: and when the men that belonged to such a course, came to perform their service in turn, they opened these chests, and clothed themselves: and when they went out of their service, they put them up in them again, and sealed them; and as for

> “the high priest, he left his golden garments, wlç hkçlb, “in his chamber”, (an apartment in the temple, peculiar to him, and for this use,) in the night, and at whatsoever time he went out of the sanctuary [f1611]”

Nor might he go abroad with them, unless lwdg Ærwxl, "in great necessity" [f1612]; as Simeon the Just went out in priestly garments to meet Alexander the Great, to appease him, being warned of God so to do: hence the Apostle Paul knew not Ananias the high priest, (<4423 5>Acts 23:5), which he must have done, had he had on his priestly garments: for when the priests were not in the temple, and out of service, they wore no distinguishing habits, but were dressed as laics, and as the common people were [f1613]. The reason of Caiaphas's rending his clothes, is expressed in, the next clause,

saying, he hath spoken blasphemy: not only because Jesus asserted that he was the Messiah, but also the Son of God; hereby making himself equal with God, which is the sense in which the Jews always understood this phrase; and he appearing to them to be but a mere man, they charged it as blasphemy against God, to assume such a character and relation to himself:

what further need have we of witnesses? of seeking after others, as they had done: or of further examining and taking the depositions of those, who were before them: he was for putting a stop to the process, and bringing the cause at once to an issue: and therefore addresses the court in the following manner;

behold now, ye have heard his blasphemy: out of his own mouth, as (<4227 1>Luke 22:71), expresses it; and with their own ears, and at that very time; so that they had no need of recourse to things past, or examine witnesses about what they had heard from him formerly: and therefore he proposes, that they would attend to, and take notice of his present words; and which, as he suggests, were shocking and astonishing: for the word, "behold!" may not only be a note of attention, but of astonishment.

Ver. 66. *What think ye*? etc.] Of the words just now spoken by him; do not they in your opinion amount to a charge of blasphemy and what punishment do you think ought to be inflicted on him? is he guilty of death, or not? This question he put, as being president of the court:

they answered and said, he is guilty of death; they were unanimous in their vote, for Mark says, "they all condemned him to be guilty of death"; only Joseph of Arimathea must be excepted, who consented not to their counsel and deed, (<4225 1>Luke 23:51), and so must Nicodemus, if he was present; who seeing what they were determined to do, withdrew themselves before the question came to be put, and so it passed "nemine contradicente"; and

indeed, if he had been guilty of blasphemy, as they charged him, the sentence would have been right. Now this was in the night, in which they begun, carried on, and finished this judicial procedure, quite contrary to one of their own canons [f1614] which runs thus:

> "pecuniary causes they try in the day, and finish in the night; capital causes (such was this) they try in the day, and finish in the day; pecuniary causes they finish the same day, whether for absolution, or condemnation; capital causes they finish the same day for absolution, and the day following for condemnation; wherefore they do not try causes neither on the sabbath eve, nor on the eve of a feast day."

But in this case, they begun the trial in the night, examined the witnesses, finished it, and passed the sentence of condemnation, and that in the eve of a grand festival, their Chagigah.

Ver. 67. *Then did they spit in his face*, etc.] Not the judges, the members of the sanhedrim, but the servants of the high priest, and the officers that had Jesus in hold, and were the guard upon him; (see <422263>Luke 22:63), who seeing him condemned as guilty of death, thought they might insult him at pleasure, and use him in the most indecent and barbarous manner; and therefore, in a way of contempt, spit in his face; than which nothing was more reproachful and disgraceful: the Jews [f1615] say, that he that spits before, or in the presence of his master, is guilty of death, so nauseous and filthy was it accounted; and how much more must it be so, to spit in the face of anyone? hereby a prophecy was fulfilled, (<235006>Isaiah 50:6), "I hid not my face from shame and spitting": and hereby, together with his sweat and blood, his visage was more marred than any man's, and his form than the sons of men:

and buffeted him; cuffed, or boxed him with their double fists:

and others smote him, with the palms of their hands; gave him many a slap on the face with their open hands, or struck him on the face with rods, as the word will bear to be rendered: they rapped him with the wands they had in their hands, and struck him on the head with the rods or staves they had with them; whereby was accomplished the prophecy, in (<330501>Micah 5:1), "they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek". This was very injurious treatment, the Jews themselves being witnesses; who have in their canons enjoined [f1616], that

> “if a man strikes his neighbour with his double fist, he must give him a shekel; R. Judah says, on account of R. Jose the Galilean, a pound: if he gives him a slap of the face, he must pay him two hundred zuzims, or pence; and if with the back of his hand (which was accounted [f1617] the more ignominious) four hundred zuzims: if he plucked him by his ear, or plucked off his hair, or spit, so as that the spittle came upon him, or took away his cloak — he must pay four hundred zuzims, and all according to his honour or dignity.”

All these indignities were done to Christ; (see <23506>Isaiah 50:6).

Ver. 68. *Saying, prophesy unto us, thou Christ*, etc.] Not that they owned him to be the Messiah; but because he asserted himself to be the Messiah, and his followers believed in him as such, they call him so; and in an ironical and sarcastic way, call upon him to divine, and tell them who the persons were, that used him in this manner; suggesting, that if he was the Christ, or Messiah, he would know all things, and what were done to him:

who is he that smote thee? for they had covered his face, or blindfolded him, as the other Evangelists say, (<41465>Mark 14:65 <42264>Luke 22:64), and then bid him tell them who smote him last. Christ did not think fit to give them an answer to this question, but he will let them know hereafter, who the particular person, or persons were, that smote him; and when it will appear to all the churches, and to all the world, that he is the Lord God omniscient. Some learned men have observed [f1618], that there was a play formerly used, called by the ancients, κολλαβισμος, at which, one person having his face covered, the rest smote him; or one put his hands over his eyes, and another smote, and asked him who it was that smote? and such an exercise is yet in being among us, which is commonly called Blindman’s Buff; and such pastime as this the Jews had with Christ; in this ludicrous way did they use him, and made him their sport and diversion, as the Philistines did Samson; but it will cost them dear another day.

Ver. 69. *Now Peter sat without in the palace*, etc.] Peter’s denial of his Lord, the account of which follows, is related among the sufferings of Christ; and indeed, the ill usage he met with from his enemies, their spitting in his face, buffeting him with their fists, smiting him on the cheeks with their hands, and rods, did not give him so much pain and grief, as to be denied by his own disciple: we are before told, (<40258>Matthew 26:58), that Peter followed Christ afar off, and went into the high priest’s palace, and sat with the servants there, to see what would be the end and issue of these

things: and here now he was in the apartment, where the council sat, and were examining and trying Jesus; though, as Mark says, “beneath in the palace”, (<41 14 66>Mark 14:66); in the lower part of the room, in the great hall, in the midst of which the servants had made a fire: the Arabic version reads it, “in the area of the court”: here Peter had placed himself, and here he sat making his observations:

and a damsel came unto him; one of the maids of the high priest, as Mark says, (<41 14 66>Mark 14:66); and according to the Evangelist John, was she that kept the door, and had let him in, (<43 18 16>John 18:16,17),

saying, thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. The Arabic and Persic versions read, Jesus the Nazarene, or of Nazareth, as below. So she called him, not so much to distinguish him from any other of that name, as by way of reproach; suggesting, that he could not be the Messiah, or that prophet; since Christ comes not out of Galilee, nor does any prophet arise from thence: and when she charges him with being “with” him, her meaning is not, that he was with him in the garden, when he was taken; where it cannot be thought she was to see him; nor with him in the temple, or in any part of Jerusalem, where she possibly might have seen him; but that he was a disciple of his, one that believed in him, embraced him as the Messiah, had imbibed his principles and doctrines, and was of his party; and was only come thither as a spy, to see what would be done to him.

Ver. 70. *But he denied before them all*, etc.] Which was a very great aggravation of his sin; for, as it is to a man’s commendation to profess a good profession of Christ before many witnesses, so it is to his disgrace, and is resented by Christ, to deny him before men: he did not deny that Christ was God, or the Son of God, or that he was come in the flesh, or that Jesus was the Christ, or that he was the only Saviour of sinners; but that he was with him, or one of his disciples;

saying, I know not what thou sayest: which was a very great falsehood; he knew the sense and import of her words; he denied that which was most true; he had been with him from the beginning, had heard all his discourses, and seen his miracles; he had been with him at particular times, and in particular places, when and where some others of the disciples were not admitted, as at the raising of Jairus’s daughter, at the transfiguration in the mount, and in the garden, very lately; and yet, O base ingratitude! now denies that he had been with him; or that he knew what was meant by such an expression. He denied that he was a disciple of Christ, which was his

greatest character, and highest glory; and this denial did not arise from any diffidence of his being one, or from a sense of his unworthiness to be one, but from the fear of man, which brought this snare upon him: and the more his weakness is discovered in it, that he should be intimidated by a servant maid into such a denial, who but a few hours before had confidently affirmed, that though he should die with Christ, he would not deny him; and who had so courageously drawn his sword in his master's cause, in the face of a band of soldiers, and a multitude of armed men with swords and staves. This was his first denial; a second follows.

Ver. 71. *And when he was gone out into the porch*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "the gate": and so does Munster's Hebrew Gospel; but more rightly it is rendered, "the porch": he did not attempt to go out at the door, and run away, though he could gladly have done it; but he feared to do this, lest, as this would discover him, they should pursue him, and overtake him, and bring him before the sanhedrim: he chose rather to keep his ground, but was very uneasy; and therefore moved into the porch, where he sat very pensive, considering what was proper for him to do; when

another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, this [fellow] was also with Jesus of Nazareth: she speaks of Christ in the same contemptuous manner, as her fellow servant had done; for this appellation of Christ was commonly, if not always used by way of contempt; and she means the same thing by his being with him, the other did, and is rather more spiteful, and bent on mischief; for, the other addressed him alone, and what she said, said to himself; but this directs her speech to the servants and officers that were near at hand, and uses him in a very scurrilous manner: this sorry fellow, that is sauntering and lurking about here, is certainly one of this man's disciples.

Ver. 72. *And again he denied with an oath*, etc.] He denied a second time, that he had ever been with Jesus, or was a disciple of his; and to put it out of all doubt, and an end to all dispute about it, and further charge of this kind, as he hoped, he annexed an oath to it: he swore by the God of truth; made a solemn appeal to the omniscient God, the searcher of hearts, that he was so far from being ever with Jesus of Nazareth, or a disciple of his, that, says he,

I do not know the man: meaning not only that he had no personal knowledge of him, or acquaintance with him; but that he had never seen

the man in his life, nor did he know what manner of man he was. This, as it was a downright falsehood, it was what he had no need to have said; for there were multitudes that knew Christ in this sense, who never joined with him, or became his disciples. This was so much overdoing it, that it was much it had not given them a suspicion of him. Those that would excuse Peter's sin, by supposing that he meant, that he knew Christ to be God, and did not know him as a mere man, have no foundation for such a supposition; and indeed, such an ambiguous expression, and mental reservation, is no other than dealing fallaciously. Peter knew Christ in every sense; he knew him spiritually, whom to know is life eternal: and he valued the knowledge of him above all things else: he knew him to be God, and the Son of God; he knew him as mediator, and the Saviour of lost sinners; he knew him as man, and had had personal intimacy and conversation with him of a long time, and yet now denies he knew him; and that with an oath, adding perjury to lying; and so it is, that one sin leads on to another. This instance of Peter's shows the wickedness and deceitfulness of man's heart; and what the best of men are, or would be, when left to themselves, and of God: they become like other men, even like the men of the world, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.

Ver. 73. *And after a while*, etc.] Mark says, "a little after", (<41470>Mark 14:70), and Luke observes, that it was "about the space of one hour after", (<42259>Luke 22:59): so that here was time to reflect upon what he had been saying, and to guard against another temptation, should he be attacked; but, alas! as yet he was unmindful of his Lord's words, and persists in the denial of him, and that with greater aggravation, than at his first surprise: and indeed his temptation was now more violent: for there

came unto him they that stood by; the officers and servants of the high priest, his attendants that waited upon him, and who stood by the fire, where Peter was warming himself: before he was attacked by single maidservants, now by a body of men, and one of them the kinsman of the man whose ear he had cut off, and who challenged him, as having seen him in the garden: and another confidently affirmed, and swore to it, that he was with Jesus, and was a Galilean; and all of them agreed in this,

and said to Peter, surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech betrayeth thee: not his spiritual speech, for he had not been speaking in the language of a disciple of Christ, like one that had been with Jesus; nor his swearing neither, for this rather showed him to be one of them; but his

country language, the brogue of his speech, the Galilean dialect which he spoke: for in Mark it is said, “thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereunto”, (<4114>Mark 14:70): for though the same language was spoken in Galilee as at Jerusalem, yet it was not so accurate and polite in Galilee, nor so well pronounced; words of different signification were confounded together. Hence the Talmudists say [f1619], that

> “the men of Judah, who were careful of their language, their law was confirmed in their hands; the men of Galilee, who were not careful of their language, their law was not confirmed in their hands — the men of Galilee, who do not attend to language, what is reported of them? a Galilean went and said to them, ˆaml rma ˆaml rma, they said to him foolish Galilean, rmj, “Chamor” is to ride upon, or “Chamar” is to drink, or “Hamar” is for clothing, or “Immar” is for hiding for slaughter.”

By which instances it appears, that a Galilean pronounced “Chamor”, an ass, and “Chamar”, wine, and “Hamar”, wool, and “Immar”, a lamb, all one, and the same way, without any distinction; so that it was difficult to know which of these he meant. Many other instances of the like kind are given in the same place, which show the Galilean to be a more gross, barbarous, and impolite language, than what was spoken at Jerusalem; and Peter using this dialect, was known to be a Galilean: just as the Ephraimites were known by their pronouncing Shibboleth, Sibboleth.

Ver. 74. *Then began he to curse, and to swear*, etc.] He swore before, and now he began “to curse”; not Christ, as Saul compelled some to blaspheme him, who professed him, and as the Jews formerly cursed Christ, and his followers, in their synagogues: for Peter’s crime was bad enough, it need not be made worse than it was: he could never call Jesus accursed; in so doing he would have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost; but he cursed himself; “he began to imprecate himself”, as the Arabic version renders it; he made dreadful imprecations and wishes; wished that all the miseries and calamities he could think of might fall upon him, if he was one of the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, or knew anything of him: saying,

I know not the man; if I do, God do so to me, or more also: let vengeance light upon me; may I be the most miserable creature in the world, if I know anything of him;

and immediately the cock crew: as he was swearing and cursing in this manner; as soon as ever the words were out of his mouth, and he had in this sad and solemn manner three times denied that he knew Christ, or was ever with him, or a disciple of his. It is forbid, by a Jewish canon, to keep cocks at Jerusalem; it runs thus [f1620]:

> "they do not bring up cocks in Jerusalem, because of the holy things, neither do the priests in all the land of Israel, because of the purifications."

Whether this canon was then in being, or how it was dispensed with, or whether there was any particular providence in the cock being here now, and so nigh the high priest's palace, is not certain; but one there was: nor can the Jews deny that there were cocks at Jerusalem; for they themselves speak of a cock, µylçwryb lqsnç [f1621], "that was stoned at Jerusalem".

Ver. 75. *And Peter remembered the words of Jesus*, etc.] Forgetfulness of God, of his works, of his words, and of his law, of his revealed mind and will, is often the cause of sin; and a remembrance of things is necessary to the recovery of a fallen or backsliding professor; as, of what he is fallen from, of the love and kindness of God formerly shown to him, of his evil ways and works he is fallen into, and of the words and truths of Christ he has been very indifferent unto and lukewarm about:

which said unto him, before the cock crow, or is done crowing,

thou shalt deny me thrice; which he was put in mind of on hearing the cock crow. So by one means, or another, sometimes by some remarkable providence, and sometimes by the ministry of the word, God is pleased to alarm and awaken sleepy professors, backsliding believers, and remind them of their condition and duty, and restore them by repentance, as he did Peter:

and he went out; of the high priest's palace, either through fear, lest he should be seen weeping, and be suspected; or rather through shame, not being able to continue where his Lord was, when he had so shamefully denied him; as also to leave the company he had got into, being sensible he was wrong in mingling himself with such, and thereby exposed himself to these temptations; as well as to vent his grief in tears privately:

and wept bitterly; being thoroughly sensible what an evil and bitter thing the sin was, he had been guilty of: his repentance sprung from Christ's

looking upon him, and from his looking to Jesus, and was truly evangelical: it was a sorrow after a godly sort, and was increased by the discoveries of Christ's love unto him; and was attended with faith in him, and views of pardon through him: the Persic version adds, "and his sin is forgiven"; which, though not in the text, yet is a truth; for Peter's repentance was not like Cain's, nor Esau's, nor Judas's; it was not the repentance of one in despair, but was a repentance unto life and salvation, which needed not to be repented of.

CHAPTER 27

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 27

Ver. 1. *When the morning was come*, etc.] Or, as soon as it was day, as Luke says, (<42266>Luke 22:66). The sanhedrim had been up all night, which, after eating the passover, they had spent in apprehending, trying, and examining Jesus, and the witnesses against him; and had come to an unanimous vote, that he was guilty of death; upon which they either put Jesus out of the room for a while, or went into another themselves, to consult what further steps should be taken: or if they went home to their own houses, they very quickly got together again, and met in the temple, where they seem to be, (<40275>Matthew 27:5), unless the story of Judas is, by anticipation, inserted here; and in their council chamber, where they led Jesus, and examined him again concerning his being the Son of God; (see <42266>Luke 22:66), all which shows how intent they were upon this business, and with what eagerness and diligence they pursued it; their feet ran to evil, and they made haste to shed blood. This was the time of their morning prayers, of their saying their phylacteries, and reciting the "shema", "hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord", according to their canon, which is this [f1622]:

> "from what time do they read the "shema" in the morning? from such time that a man can distinguish between blue and white: says R. Eliezer, between blue and green; and he finishes it before the sun shines out. R. Joshua says, before three hours had elapsed:"

but religion, rites, ceremonies, and canons, must all give way to the accomplishment of what their hearts were so much set upon:

all the chief priests and elders of the people. The Syriac and Persic versions leave out the word "all", but it is retained in the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel, and that very rightly. The Scribes and elders met at Caiaphas's house before, (<40257>Matthew 26:57), but it being in the night, they might not be all together; Annas particularly seems to have been absent, (<43824>John 18:24),

but now they all assemble together, as in a case of necessity they were obliged to do: their rule was this [f1623];

> "the sanhedrim, consisting of seventy and one (as this was), are obliged to sit all of them as one, (or all, and everyone of them,) in their place in the temple; but at what time there is a necessity of their being gathered together, ˆlwk ˆyxbqtm, "they are all of them assembled"; but, at other times, he who has any business may go, and do his pleasure, and return: yet so it is, that there may not be less than twenty three sitting continually all the time of their sitting; (their usual time of sitting was from the morning daily sacrifice, to the evening daily sacrifice [f1624];) one that is under a necessity of going out; this looks upon his companions that remain, and if twenty three remain, he may go out; but if not, he may not, until the other returns."

This being now a case of necessity, and great importance, they are all summoned and gathered together, unless we except Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus; who yet might be there, though they did not consent to their counsel and deed, as is certain of the former, (<422351>Luke 23:51), these

took counsel against Jesus; God's holy child Jesus, his anointed, the Messiah; and which was taking counsel against the Lord himself; and so the prophecy in (<190202>Psalm 2:2), had its accomplishment: what they consulted about was

to put him to death; it was not what punishment to inflict upon him, whether scourging or death; that was before determined; they had already condemned him to death: but now they enter into close consultation what death to put him to, and in what manner; whether privately, he being now in their hands; or whether by the means of zealots, or by the Roman magistrate; or whether it should be by stoning, which must have been the case, if they put him to death according to their law; and by their authority; or whether by crucifixion, which they chose as the most ignominious and painful; and therefore determined to deliver him up to the Roman governor, and use their interest with him to put him to death, according to the Roman law.

Ver. 2. *And when they had bound him*, etc.] The captain, and officers, bound him when they first took him, and brought him to Annas, and Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas, (<431812>John 18:12,24). Perhaps he might be

unloosed whilst he was examining before the high priest, under a show of freedom to speak for himself; or they might bind him faster now, partly greater security, as he passed through the streets, and partly for his greater reproach; as also, that he might be at once taken to be a malefactor by the Roman judge;

they led him away: the chief priests and elders of the people led him, at least by their servants, and they themselves attending in person, that they might awe the people from attempting a rescue of him, as they passed along; and that they might influence the Roman governor speedily to put him to death; and lest he should be prevailed upon to release him, through his own commiseration, the innocence of Jesus, and the entreaty of his friends.

And delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor; and so fulfilled what Christ had predicted, (<4019>Matthew 20:19). This they did, either because the power of judging in cases of life and death was taken away from them; or if it was not, they chose that the infamy of his death should be removed from them, and be laid upon a Gentile magistrate; and chiefly because they were desirous he should die the death of the cross. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions leave out the first name Pontius, and only call him Pilate: the Ethiopic version calls him Pilate Pontinaeus; and Theophylact suggests, that he was so called because he was of Pontus. Philo the Jew [f1625] makes mention of him:

> “Pilate, says he, was επιτροπος της Ιουδαιας, “procurator of Judea”; who not so much in honour of Tiberius, as to grieve the people, put the golden shields within the holy city in the palace of Herod.”

And so Tacitus [f1626] calls him the procurator of Tiberius, and Josephus also [f1627]. It is said [f1628] of him, that falling into many calamities, he slew himself with his own hand, in the times of Caligula, and whilst Publicola and Nerva were consuls; which was a righteous judgment of God upon him for condemning Christ, contrary to his own conscience.

Ver. 3. *Then Judas, which had betrayed him*, etc.] Before, he is described as he that shall, or should, or doth betray him; but now having perpetrated the horrid sin, as he that had done it.

When he saw that he was condemned; that is, that Jesus was condemned, as the Syriac and Persic versions read, either by the Jewish sanhedrim, or

by Pilate, or both; for this narrative concerning Judas may be prophetically inserted here, though the thing itself did not come to pass till afterwards; and the sense be, that when he, either being present during the whole procedure against Christ; or returning in the morning after he had received his money, and had been with his friends; finding that his master was condemned to death by the sanhedrim, who were pushing hard to take away his life; that they had delivered him bound to the Roman governor; and that he, after an examination of him, had committed him to the soldiers to mock, and scourge, and crucify him; and seeing him leading to the place of execution,

repented himself: not for the sin, as committed against God and Christ; but as it brought a load of present guilt and horror upon his mind, and exposed him to everlasting punishment: it was not such a repentance by which he became wiser and better; but an excruciating, tormenting pain in his mind, by which he became worse; therefore a different word is here used than what commonly is for true repentance: it was not a godly sorrow for sin, or a sorrow for sin, as committed against God, which works repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but a worldly sorrow, which issues in death, as it did in him. It did not spring from the love of God, as evangelical repentance does, nor proceed in the fear of God, and his goodness; but was no other than a foretaste of that worm that dieth not, and of that fire which cannot be quenched: it was destitute of faith in Christ; he never did believe in him as the rest of the disciples did; (see <4664>John 6:64,70,71), and that mourning which does not arise from looking to Jesus, or is not attended with faith in him, is never genuine. Judas's repentance was without hope of forgiveness, and was nothing else but horror and black despair, like that of Cain's, like the trembling of devils, and the anguish of damned souls. It looks as if Judas was not aware that it would issue in the death of Christ: he was pushed on by Satan, and his avarice, to hope, that he should get this money, and yet his master escape; which he imagined he might do, either through such a defence of himself, as was not to be gainsaid; or that he would find out ways and means of getting out of the hands of the Jews, as he had formerly done, and with which Judas was acquainted: but now, there being no hope of either, guilt and horror seize his mind, and gnaw his conscience; and he wishes he had never done the accursed action, which had entailed so much distress and misery upon him:

and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders: which was the sum he; had covenanted for, and they had agreed to give him, on condition of delivering Jesus into their hands, which he had done: and it appears from hence, that the money had been accordingly paid him, and he had received it. But he being filled with remorse of conscience for what he had done, feels no quietness in his mind; nor could he save of what he had desired, but is obliged to return it; not from an honest principle, as in the case of true repentance, but on account of a racking and torturing conscience.

Ver. 4. *Saying, I have sinned*, etc.] Here was a confession, and yet no true repentance; for he confessed, but not to the right persons; not to God, nor Christ, but to the chief priests and elders; nor over the head of the antitypical scape goat, not seeking to Christ for pardon and cleansing, nor did he confess and forsake sin, but went on adding sin to sin, and so found no mercy. The same confession was made by a like hardened wretch, Pharaoh, (Exodus 9:27). He proceeds and points out the evil he had committed:

in that I have betrayed innocent blood, or "righteous blood"; so the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read, and some copies; that is, have betrayed an innocent and righteous person, and been the occasion of his blood being about to be shed, and of his dying wrongfully. So God, in his all-wise providence, ordered it, that a testimony should be bore to the innocence of Christ, from the mouth of this vile wretch that betrayed him; to cut off the argument from the Jews, that one of his own disciples knew him to be a wicked man, and as such delivered him into their hands: for though Judas might not believe in him as the Messiah, and the Son of God, at least had no true faith in him, as such; yet he knew, and believed in his own conscience, that he was a good man, and a righteous and innocent one: and what he here says is a testimony of Christ's innocence, and what his conscience obliged him to; and shows the terrors that now encompassed him about; and might have been a warning to the Jews to have stopped all further proceedings against him; but instead of that,

they said, what is that to us? see thou to that: signifying, that if he had sinned, he must answer for it himself; it was no concern of theirs; nor should they form their sentiments of Christ according to his: they knew that he was a blasphemer, and deserving of death; and whatever opinion he

had of him, it had no weight with them, who should proceed against him as an evildoer, let him think or say what he would to the contrary; and suggest, that he knew otherwise than what he said: so the Syriac and Persic versions render it, “thou knowest”, and the Arabic, “thou knowest better”.

Ver. 5. *And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple*, etc.] Upon the ground, in that part of the temple where they were sitting; in their council chamber, tyzgh tkçl, “the paved chamber”, where the sanhedrim used to meet [f1629]: for it seems they would not take the money of him; and he was determined not to carry it back with him, and therefore threw it down before them, left it,

and departed; from the sanhedrim: and went; out of the temple; not to God, nor to the throne of his grace, nor to his master, to ask pardon of him, but to some secret solitary place, to cherish his grief and black despair,

and hanged himself. The kind and manner of his death, as recorded by Luke in (<4401 8>Acts 1:18) is, that “falling headlong, he burst asunder the midst, and all his bowels gushed out”; which account may be reconciled with this, by supposing the rope, with which he hanged himself, to break, when falling; it may be, from a very high place, upon a stone, or stump of a tree; when his belly burst, and his guts came out: or it may be rendered, as it is in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, “he was strangled”; and that either by the devil, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks; who, having been in him for the space of two or three days, caught him up into the air, and threw him down headlong; and dashing him on the ground, he burst in the midst, and his bowels gushed out, and the devil made his exit that way: or by a disease called the squinancy, or quinsy, a suffocation brought upon him by excessive grief, deep melancholy, and utter despair; when being choked by it, he fell flat upon his face, and the rim of his belly burst, and his entrails came out. This disease the Jews call arksa, “Iscara”; and if it was what he was subject to from his infancy, his parents might call him Iscariot from hence; and might be designed in providence to be what should bring him to his wretched end: and what is said of this suffocating disorder, seems to agree very well with the death of Judas. They say [f1630], that

> “it is a disease that begins in the bowels, and ends in the throat:”

they call death by it, h[r htym, “an evil death” [f1631]; and say [f1632], that

> “there are nine hundred and three kinds of deaths in the world, but that arksa ˆlkbç hçq, “the hardest of them all is Iscara”; which the Gloss calls “strangulament”, and says, is in the midst of the body:”

they also reckon it, hnwçm htym, “a violent death” [f1633]; and say [f1634], that the spies which brought a bad report of the good land, died of it. Moreover, they affirm [f1635], that

> “whoever tastes anything before he separates (i.e. lights up the lamp on the eve of the sabbath, to distinguish the night from the day), shall die by “Iscara”, or suffocation.”

Upon which the Gloss says, this is

> “measure for measure: he that satisfies his throat, or appetite, shall be choked: as it is said [f1636] he that is condemned to be strangled, either he shall be drowned in a river, or he shall die of a quinsy, this is “Iscara”.”

Ver. 6. *And the chief priests took the silver pieces*, etc.] Off of the ground, after Judas was gone, no other daring to meddle with them; for in any other it would have been deemed sacrilege; and they being the proper persons to take care and dispose of money brought into the temple: and if not, their covetous disposition would have moved them to take up the money:

and said, one to another, it is not lawful to put them into the treasury, or “Corban”; as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave the word untranslated: and which is the place where the offerings for the repair and service of the temple were put, and is the same into which Christ beheld the people casting their money, (<4124>Mark 12:41). Josephus [f1637] observes, that

> “there was, with the Jews, an holy treasure, which is called “Corbonas”;”

and this is the ˆbrqh tkçl, “the chamber of the Korban”, of which the Jews make mention [f1638]: the reason the high priests give why it was not lawful to put this money into the treasury, or into any of the chests in the “Corban” chamber, was,

because it is the price of blood. Thus they strained at a gnat, and swallowed a camel. It is highly probable, that they took this selfsame money out of the treasury to buy this blood with, and yet scruple to put it in, having bought it: and besides, they made no hesitation about seeking for, and shedding this innocent blood, and yet boggle at putting this money into the "Corban", because it was the price of it; proceeding upon the same reason as the law in (<05 23 18>Deuteronomy 23:18) does, pretending much religion, and great veneration for holy pieces and things, when they made no conscience of committing the most flagitious crimes.

Ver. 7. *And they took counsel*, etc.] With one another, considered of the matter, and deliberated about it a while; and at last came to a resolution,

and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in: a field of no great value, or it could not have been bought so near Jerusalem for so small a sum as thirty pieces of silver. Grotius's conjecture seems to be a good one, that it was a field the potter had dug up for his use, and had made the most of it; so that it was good for nothing, but for the purpose for which these men bought it, "to bury strangers in": either such as were not of their own nation, as the Roman soldiers, many of which were among them, and who they did not suffer to be buried among them; or proselytes, or such as came from distant parts, at their three festivals, many of whom may be supposed to die at such times: now by this act of humanity in providing for the interment of strangers, they designed, and hoped to have covered their wickedness in bargaining with Judas to betray innocent blood, for this sure of money; but it was so ordered by divine providence, that this became a public and lasting memorial of their sin and infamy: for it follows,

Ver. 8. *Wherefore that field was called*, etc.] Not by the priests and elders, but by the common people, who knew by what money it was purchased,

the field of blood; or "Aceldama", which so signifies, as in (<44 01 19>Acts 1:19), not called the field of the priests, the purchasers; nor the field of the strangers, for whom it was bought; but the field of blood, being purchased with that money, for which innocent blood was betrayed; and this name it bore

unto this day; in which Matthew wrote his Gospel, about eight years after, as is thought. Jerom [f1639] says, that in his time this field was shown on the south side of Mount Sion.

Ver. 9. *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet*, etc.] Through the purchasing of the potter's field with the thirty pieces of silver, the price that Christ was valued at, a prophecy in the writings of the Old Testament had its accomplishment: but about this there is some difficulty. The evangelist here says it was spoken by Jeremy the prophet; whereas in his prophecy there is no mention of any such thing. There is indeed an account of his buying his uncle Hanameel's son's field, in (<2Jer 32:7>Jeremiah 32:7-12), but not a word of a potter, or a potter's field, or of the price of it, thirty pieces of silver; and that as a price at which he, or any other person was valued; but the passage which is manifestly referred to, stands in (<3Zec 11:12>Zechariah 11:12,13), where are these words, "and I said unto them, if ye think good, give [me] my price, and if not, forbear; so they weighed for my price thirty [pieces] of silver: and the Lord said unto me, cast it unto the potter, a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty [pieces] of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord": the removing of this difficulty, it might be observed, that the Syriac and Persic versions make no mention of any prophet's name, only read, "which was spoken by the prophet"; and so may as well be ascribed to Zechariah, as to Jeremy, and better: but it must be owned, that Jeremy is in all the Greek copies, in the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel. Various things are said for the reconciling of this matter: some have thought that Zechariah had two names, and that besides Zechariah, he was called Jeremy; but of this there is no proof. Jerom [f1640] affirms, that in an Hebrew volume, being an apocryphal work of Jeremy, which was shown him by one of the Nazarene sect, he read these words verbatim: so that though they do not stand in the writings of Jeremy, which are canonical Scripture, yet in an apocryphal book of his, and which may as well be referred to, as the book of Maccabees, the traditions of the Jews, the prophecies of Enoch, and the writings of the Heathen poets. Moreover, Mr. Mede [f1641] has laboured, by various arguments, to prove, that the four last chapters of Zechariah were written by Jeremy, in which this passage stands; and if so, the reason is clear, for the citation in his name. But what seems best to solve this difficulty, is, that the order of the books of the Old Testament is not the same now, as it was formerly: the sacred writings were divided, by the Jews, into three parts: the first was called the law, which contains the five books of Moses; the second, the prophets, which contains the former and the latter prophets; the former prophets began at Joshua, and the latter at Jeremy; the third was called Cetubim, or the Hagiographa, the holy

writings, which began with the book of Psalms: now, as this whole third and last part is called the Psalms, (<42444>Luke 24:44), because it began with that book; so all that part which contained the latter prophets, for the same reason, beginning at Jeremy, might be called by his name; hence a passage, standing in the prophecy of Zechariah, who was one of the latter prophets, might be justly cited, under the name of Jeremy. That such was the order of the books of the Old Testament, is evident from the following passage [f1642]

> "it is a tradition of our Rabbins, that the order of the prophets is, Joshua and Judges, Samuel and the Kings, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the twelve."

Moreover, it is usual with them to say [f1643], that the spirit of Jeremiah was in Zechariah; and it is very plain, that the latter prophets have many things from the former; and so might Zechariah have this originally from Jeremy, which now stands in his prophecy: all this would be satisfactory to a Jew: and it is to be observed, that the Jew [f1644], who objects to everything he could in the evangelist, with any appearance on his side, and even objects to the application of this prophecy; yet finds no fault with him for putting Jeremy for Zechariah. That the prophecy in Zechariah belongs to the Messiah, and was fulfilled in Jesus, manifestly appears from the context, for as well as the text itself. The person spoken of is in (<38104>Zechariah 11:4), called to "feed the flock of slaughter", which being in a very poor condition, (<38105>Zechariah 11:5,6), the state of the Jews, at the time of Christ's coming, is hereby very aptly represented: he agrees to do it, (<38107>Zechariah 11:7), and accordingly furnishes himself for it; but he is despised, abhorred, and rejected by the shepherds, the principal men in church and state; because he severely inveighed against their doctrines and practices, (<38108>Zechariah 11:8), upon which he rejects them, and dissolves both their civil and church state; which can suit with no other times than the times of Jesus, (<38109>Zechariah 11:9-11,14), and lest it should be thought that he used them with too much severity, he gives one single instance of their ingratitude to him, which shows how little they esteemed him; and that is, their valuing him at no greater a price than "thirty pieces of silver", (<38112>Zechariah 11:12,13), which were afterwards "cast unto the potter". The Jews [f1645] themselves own, that this prophecy belongs to the Messiah, though they interpret it of him in another manner.

> "Says R. Chanun, the Israelites will have no need of the doctrine of the king Messiah in the time to come; as it is said, (<23110>Isaiah

> 11:10), “to him shall the Gentiles seek”, and not the Israelites: if so, for what does the king Messiah come? and what does he come to do? to gather the captives of Israel, and to give them the thirty precepts, as it is said, (<38 11 12>Zechariah 11:12), “and I said unto them, if ye think good”, etc. Rab says, these are the thirty mighty men; and Jochanan says, these are the thirty commands.”

Should it be objected, that supposing the Messiah is intended, the money is said to be given into his hands, and not into the hands of him that was to betray him; “if ye think good, give [me] my price”, (<38 11 12>Zechariah 11:12): it may be replied, that the words yrkç wbh, should not be rendered, “give me my price”, but “give my price”; i.e. give what you think fit to value me at, into the hands of the betrayer; and accordingly they did: “so they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver”, (<38 11 12>Zechariah 11:12); which is the very sum the chief priests agreed with Judas for, and which he received; (see <40 26 15>Matthew 26:15), and if it should be objected to the citation of the evangelist, that it is considerably different from the word of the prophet, it being in the latter, “I took the thirty pieces of silver”; whereas in the former, the words are quoted thus,

saying, and they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value: it may be observed, that the word which Matthew uses may be rendered, “I took”, as it is in the Syriac version; and that the thirty pieces of silver were the goodly price, at which the Messiah was valued by the children of Israel, is manifest enough; and is an instance of egregious ingratitude, that this should be the price of the “innocent one”, as the Arabic Version renders the phrase, “of him that was valued”; of the “honoured one”, as the Ethiopic; of the “most precious one”, as the Syriac; he who in his person, and the perfections of his nature, is equal to his father, and his fellow; who has all the riches of grace and glory in him, as mediator; who is superior to angels, and fairer than the sons of men in human nature: is the chiefest among ten thousands, and more precious than rubies; and all the things that can be desired are not to be compared with him, and yet sold for a sum of money, the price of a slave, (<02 21 32>Exodus 21:32), and that by the children of Israel, to whom the Messiah was promised; who expected him, and desired his coming; and who sprung from among them, and was sent unto them, and yet they received him not, but undervalued him in this exceeding mean way. Wicked men have no value for Christ; they sell him and themselves for nought; but

gracious souls cannot value him enough, nor sufficiently express their esteem of him.

Ver. 10. *And gave them for the potter's field*, etc.] In the prophet it is, "and I cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord", (<38B113>Zechariah 11:13); whereas here it is, "they gave them"; but the word Matthew uses may be rendered, "I gave", as it is by the Syriac; and as the last words require it should, "as the Lord commanded me"; otherwise there will be no coherence between them: and whereas the thirty pieces of silver are, in the prophet, said to be cast, or given "to the potter", and here, "for the potter's field", there is no contradiction: the plain sense is, that they were given to the potter, as a valuable consideration for his field: and whereas it is added, "in the house of the Lord", which the evangelist does not cite the reason is, because this money was first cast down in the temple by Judas, and after being taken up by the priests, they covenanted with the potter for his field, and paid him for it with this money in the sanctuary. The evangelist, instead of this last clause, puts,

as the Lord commanded me; which have made some think, that there should: be a different reading; and that instead of tyb, "the house", it should be read tdk, "according to the commandment": but there is no need to suppose this: the evangelist is justified in the use of this phrase, by what is said in the prophet in the beginning of (<38B113>Zechariah 11:13), "and the Lord said unto me": and this is only a transposition and explanation, according to a rule the Jews have, whçrdw arqmh srs, "invert, or transpose the Scripture, and explain it" [f1646]. Should it be said that the Messiah, and not the betrayer, nor the priests, is said to cast this money to the potter, or give it for the potter's field; it may be replied, that Jesus may be said to do that which Judas, and the chief priests did; because, by his almighty power and providence, he overruled those things for good, which in themselves were evil. Judas thought to have converted the money to his own use, and the priests would have been glad to have taken it again to themselves; but Christ obliged Judas to carry back the money to the priests, and cast it into the temple, and worked upon the minds of the priests, not to put it into the treasury, but to buy the potter's field with it, whereby the prophecy, in its literal sense, was fully accomplished.

Ver. 11. *And Jesus stood before the governor*, etc.] Pilate who sat; for so was the custom for the judge to sit, and those that were judged, to stand, especially whilst witness was bore against them [f1647].

> "Says R. Bo, in the name of Rab Hona, the witnesses ought to stand whilst they bear witness. Says R. Jeremiah, in the name of R. Abhu, also ^ydmw[twyhl ^kyrx ^ynwdynh, "those that are judged ought to stand", whilst they receive their witness."

And again [f1648],

> "how do they judge? the judges sit, ^ydmw[^ynwdynhw, and "they that are judged stand"."

Think what a sight was here, the eternal Son of God in human nature, the Lord of life and glory, the Prince of the kings of the earth, standing before an Heathen governor! he before whom Pilate must stand, and even all men, small and great, another day; all must appear, and stand before the judgment seat of Christ; he himself stands at the bar of men! the reason of this was, because he stood in the legal place, and stead of his people: he became their substitute from everlasting, was made under the law in time, and was subject to its precept, and its penalty: and though he had no crimes of his own to answer for, he had the sins of his people on him; on account of which he stood before the governor, to receive the sentence of condemnation on himself; that so sin being condemned in his flesh, the whole righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them: he stood here, that they might stand before God, and at the throne of his grace with boldness and intrepidity; a new, and living way to it being opened for them, through his blood and sacrifice; and that they might stand before him, the judge of all the earth, with confidence, and not be ashamed at his coming.

And the governor asked him, saying, art thou the king of the Jews? for the Jews had suggested to Pilate, that Jesus had given out that he was Christ a king; and he being Caesar's procurator, it became him strictly to inquire into this matter, lest there should be any encroachment made on his master's dignity, authority, and dominions, and he himself should suffer blame; wherefore, he does not ask Jesus, whether he said he was the king of the Jews, or others said so of him, but whether he was their king: he knew he was not in fact; but his question was, whether he was so in right; or if he thought he was, what claim he made, and what he did to support it:

and Jesus said unto him; thou sayest; which is all one as if he had said, "I am"; (see <40265>Matthew 26:25,64), compared with (<41462>Mark 14:62), and that this was the sense of his answer is clear from (<43836>John 18:36,37), though, at the same time, he let him know that his kingdom was not of this

world; that he was not a temporal king, nor did he lay any claim to any earthly dominions; and therefore neither he, nor his master Caesar, had anything to fear from him: he was only a king in a spiritual sense, over the Israel of God; such as received him, as the Messiah, and believed in his name.

Ver. 12. *And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders*, etc.] As that he was a perverter of the people, a stirrer of sedition, discord, and rebellion among them; that he taught them not to give tribute to Caesar, and set up himself for a king; all which he had done not in one place only, but throughout all the land of Judea, from Galilee to Jerusalem; (see Luke 23:2,5),

he answered nothing; the things laid to his charge being notoriously false, and known to be so by all the people; and the evidence with which they were supported being so slender, the judge could never receive it; he therefore judged it unnecessary, and not worth a while to return an answer to them: besides, he knew they were bent upon his death, and that, should he set aside these charges, as he easily could, they would invent new ones, and so increase their sin, and their condemnation: but the chief reason of all, of his silence, was, he had the sins of his people to answer for, and the time of his dying for them was now come, and for which he was ready; and therefore would say nothing to remove these false charges, and retard his death.

Ver. 13. *Then saith Pilate unto him*, etc.] Observing he made no reply to the accusations of the chief priests and elders, and in order to draw something out of him,

hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? art thou deaf? or dost thou not take in what is alleged against thee? dost thou not consider the nature of these charges? how many, and of what kind the depositions are now made by persons of such rank and figure? art thou under no concern to make answer to them?

Ver. 14. *And he answered him to never a word*, etc.] He made no reply to anyone thing which Pilate suggested to him, though it seems to have been in a kind and friendly way, and with a view to his good:

insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly; that a man, who at other times had such fluency of speech, and readiness of expression, who both for matter and words, and also weight and authority, spake as never man

did: and who had so often silenced the Scribes and Pharisees, men of the greatest learning among the Jews, of which Pilate, doubtless, had knowledge, should say nothing in his own defence; and especially when the charges brought against him were of a capital nature, and touched his life, and yet were so easy to be refuted, and proved to be false ones: and what might increase his wonder, was, that he should take no notice of them, nor return an answer to them, considering by whom they were brought; not by the common people, but by the sanhedrim of the nation, and that before him the Roman governor, who had power to crucify or release him: and above all, he marvelled at the patience of Jesus, that he could hear such notorious falsities, and which so affected his character, and his life, and say nothing to them; and at the fortitude of his mind, at his being so regardless of his life, and fearless of death.

Ver. 15. *Now at [that] feast*, etc.] The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "at every feast": which looks as if the authors of these versions thought the sense was, that the following custom was used at each feast in the year, at the feasts of pentecost, and tabernacles, and passover; whereas it was only at the feast of the passover; and which is meant by the feast here, as is clear from (^{Joh}John 18:39). It was but once a year that this was done; at every returning passover; and so the Persic version renders it, "every year on the day of the feast"; that is, of the passover, and which was frequently called by way of emphasis, gj, "the feast":

the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. It was not a law, but a custom; it was not enjoined by the law of Moses; for they that sinned against that; died without mercy: nor is it agreeable to strict justice, that there should be such a release of criminals; nor was it a Jewish custom, as an emblem of their deliverance out of Egyptian bondage. I have not met with the least trace of any such custom of theirs at the time of the pass over in any of their writings; but it seems to be a Roman one: and from all the accounts of the evangelist, it appears to be peculiar to the Roman governor, who, either by the order of Caesar, or of himself, introduced such a custom to get the favour of the people; for it was to them the release was made, and the person, whom they pleased; and this being repeated annually for some time, was expected by them, and at last became necessary.

Ver. 16. *And they had then a notable prisoner*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin reads, "he had"; that is, Pilate, who had committed him to prison, and

under whose power he was: for the Jews had lost all authority of this kind, at least in capital cases. This prisoner is called a “notable” one; that is, a famous, or rather an infamous one: he was a thief, and a robber, and had been guilty of sedition; had made, or joined with others in an insurrection, and had committed murder in it; and so, on more accounts than one, was deserving of death: nor could it be otherwise expected by himself, or others, but that he should die: his name was

called Barabbas; that is, as the Syriac version reads it, `aba rb`, which signifies “the son of a father”: a father’s child that was spoiled and ruined, and a child of his father the devil. This was a name common among the Jews. Frequent mention is made of R. Abba [f1649], and Bar Abba is the son of Abba: hence we read of Abba Bar Abba [f1650], and of R. Samuel Bar Abba [f1651] and of R. Simeon Bar Abba [f1652], and of R. Chijah Bar Abba [f1653]. In Munster’s Hebrew Gospel it is read `hbr rb`, “Bar Rabbah, the son of a master”; and so Jerom says, that in the Gospel according to the Hebrews it is interpreted, “the son of their master”; but the former is the right name, and the true sense of the word. The Ethiopic version adds, “the prince”, or “chief of robbers, and all knew him”; and the Arabic, instead of a “prisoner”, reads, a “thief”, as he was.

Ver. 17. *Therefore when they were gathered together*, etc.] Meaning not the chief priests and elders; for these were together before, but the common people; and so the Persic version renders the words, when the people increased into a multitude: for it was to them the release of a prisoner was to be made, and so the proposal of one; and it was at their option, who should be the person; for it was “whom they would”, as in (<40 27 15>Matthew 27:15), and where the Ethiopic version adds, “and should choose”.

Pilate said unto them, whom will ye that I should release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus, which is called Christ? He puts it to them, whom they would choose to have released, Barabbas, the thief and robber, the seditious person and murderer, or Jesus, whom some called the Christ, the Messiah, the king of the Jews. Pilate on purpose proposed such an infamous person along with him, not doubting but they would have preferred him, whatever were their prejudices against him, before such a scandalous person as Barabbas; and whatever good will they might secretly have to put Jesus to death, and release Barabbas, yet he thought they could not, for shame, speak out their sense, and desire him, and not Jesus. His

view was not to reproach Christ, by joining him with so wicked a man, but in order to save him.

Ver. 18. *For he knew that for envy they had delivered him*.] He saw in their countenances, and by their charges against him, and by the whole of their conduct, that it was not out of any regard to Caesar, or to the peace and tranquillity of the civil government, or to strict justice; but from envy, at his popularity, at his fame and credit, the honour, glory, and applause he had among the people, on account of his doctrine, and miracles, that they had delivered him up into his hands; and therefore Pilate might the rather hope to succeed in this scheme of his to release him, by proposing him with so notorious a person to the populace, when the one, as he might reasonably judge, was abhorred by them, and the other had got great credit and esteem among a large number of them. The Persic version here adds the people's answer; "they answered, release Barabbas, but deliver Jesus to us".

Ver. 19. *When he was set down on the judgment seat*, etc.] That is, when Pilate the governor, as the Syriac and Persic versions read, was set down upon the bench, and while he was sitting there, and trying of Jesus:

his wife sent unto him: her name, according to the Ethiopians, was Abrokla [f1654]; who might be a Jewess, as the wife of Felix was, (Acts 24:24), and a favourer of Jesus, or, at least, a religious person; and if, only a mere Heathen, yet had some notion of justice being to be done; and however, pressed by her dream, sent a messenger to her husband, as he was trying this cause:

saying, have thou nothing to do with that just man; meaning Jesus, whom she either knew to be so, or concluded from her dream that he was one: and her sense is, that her husband would have no hand in his condemnation and death, but rather do all he could to release and save him. She might know that he had gone some lengths already against him; that he had the night before granted a band of soldiers to the chief priests to apprehend him; and knew he rose early that morning, at the request of the same, to try him; and he was now before him, and she might be apprehensive that he was forward to condemn him to death, and therefore sends this cautionary message; alleging this for a reason,

for I have suffered many things this day, in a dream, because of him. The Arabic and Persic versions read, "this night". Pilate might rise that morning

before she was awake, and had an opportunity of telling her dream; or she might dream it after he was gone; in which she was sadly distressed about Jesus, and might have some hints given her of the miserable consequences of his death, not only to the Jewish nation, but to her husband and family; which gave her great uneasiness and disquietude. Some have thought, that this dream was from the devil, willing to hinder the death of Christ, and so man's redemption and salvation by it; but had he had any such intention, the most effectual method would have been to have persuaded the chief priests and elders off of it, and in attempting it; whereas, on the contrary, they were instigated by him to it: and whatever natural causes there might be of this dream, as the chief priests coming over night to desire a band of soldiers to take Jesus, and the discourse they might have with Pilate about him; which things might run in her mind in her sleep; yet, doubtless, this was of God, and with a design that a testimony should be bore to the innocency of Christ every way; as by Judas that betrayed him, by Pilate his judge, and by his wife.

Ver. 20. *But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude*, etc.] Among whom the choice lay who should be released. This they did not by haranguing them, or making a public oration to them; but by sending their servants, or proper persons among them, telling them that Jesus had been examined before the sanhedrim that morning, and was found to be a blasphemer; and that the whole court had unanimously condemned him to death, and therefore it became them to act according to their decree: and besides, should this man be set free, they might suggest to them, since he has given out that he is the king Messiah, the Romans hearing of it, will be jealous of such a person, and come and take away both our place and nation, or deprive us of the privileges we have remaining: with such sort of arguments as these, it may be supposed they worked upon the common people. The Persic version reads, "commanded", instead of "persuaded",

that they should ask Barabbas to be released to them,

and destroy Jesus; for nothing short of that would satisfy them: they thirsted after his blood, and were bent upon his death: to release Barabbas, if Jesus was not destroyed, would not answer their end: they desired Barabbas's liberty for no other reason, but for the sake of the destruction of Jesus.

Ver. 21. *The governor answered and said unto them*, etc.] A second time, after some time had been allowed and taken up to consider of the matter,

and which the chief priests and elders improved among the people against Jesus.

Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? for as these two were proposed, one of them must be released; and it lay in the breast of the people to choose which they would:

they said, Barabbas; so that Christ was not only numbered among, and reckoned with transgressors, but he was accounted worse than the worst of them; a seditious person, a robber, and a murderer was preferred before him: (see <4403 14>Acts 3:14).

Ver. 22. *Pilate saith unto them*, etc.] As one astonished at their choice: he could not have thought they would have asked the life of so vile a wretch, that had been guilty of such capital crimes, crimes to be abhorred by all men:

what shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? Surely you would not have me put him to death, and that for no other reason but this, because he is called either by himself or others, Christ, or the Messiah, or the king of the Jews!

they all say unto him, let him be crucified; which was a Roman punishment, inflicted on the meanest and worst of men; as wicked servants, thieves, robbers, and cut-throats [f1655]; and so was not only a torturing and painful death, but a very shameful and ignominious one; yea, an accursed one: in this they all agreed, being instigated to it by the chief priests and elders.

Ver. 23. *And the governor said, why, what evil hath he done*? etc.] What reason can be given, why he should be crucified? what sin has he committed, that deserves such a death? From whence it is clear, that of all the things they had accused him, they had not, in Pilate's account, given proof of one single action, that was criminal, nor had he done any: he came into the world without sin, he did none in it; he knew no sin, nor could any be found in him, by Satan, nor his accusers, nor his judge:

but they cried out the more, saying, let him be crucified: the more they saw Pilate inclined to favour him, and pleaded for him, and attested his innocence; the more clamorous, outrageous, and urgent they were to have him crucified.

Ver. 24. *When Pilate saw he could prevail nothing*, etc.] That it was to no purpose to talk to them, and in favour of Jesus; he saw they were determined upon his crucifixion, and that nothing else would satisfy them:

but that rather a tumult was made; there was an uproar among the people, and he might fear the consequences of it, should he not grant their request; otherwise, as Philo the [f1656] Jew says of him, he was, την φυσιν ακαμπης και μετα του ανψαδους αμειλικτος, "naturally inflexible, rigid, and self-willed": but he knew the temper of these people, and had had experience of their resoluteness, when they were determined on any thing; as in the case of his introducing the golden shields into the holy city, of which the same author speaks: and was then obliged, though sore against his will, as now, to yield unto them:

He took water, and washed his hands before the multitude; either in conformity to a custom among the Jews, whereby they testified their innocence as to the commission of murder; (see <052106>Deuteronomy 21:6,7 <192606>Psalm 26:6), or to a Gentile one, used when murder was committed, for the lustration or expiation of it [f1657]:

saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; though this did not clear him from all guilt in this matter: he ought to have acted the part of an upright judge, and not have yielded to the unrighteous requests of the people; he ought not to have scourged an innocent man, and much less have condemned and delivered him to be crucified, as he did; though in this he bore a testimony to the innocence of Christ, and which is somewhat remarkable in him; who was, as Philo says [f1658], notoriously guilty of receiving bribes, of injuries, rapine, and frequent murders of persons uncondemned:

see ye [to it]; you must be answerable for this action, and all the consequences of it. The Syriac version renders it, "you have known"; and the Persic version, "you know": and the Arabic version, "you know better"; (see Gill on "<402704>Matthew 27:4").

Ver. 25. *Then answered all the people*, etc.] They were as unanimous in their imprecations upon themselves, as in desiring the crucifixion of Christ:

and said, his blood be on us, and on our children; not for the cleansing of them from sin, which virtue that blood has, but if there were any stain, blot, or pollution, through the shedding of it, they wished it might be on them and theirs: not for the forgiveness of sins, which that blood was shed for;

but on the contrary, if there was any sin and guilt in it, they desired it might be imputed to them: nor for their justification before God, and security from wrath to come, both which are by his blood; but all the reverse of this, that if there were any punishment, and condemnation, and death, due for the shedding of it, they imprecated it all upon themselves, and their posterity: so this phrase is used in (<06029>Joshua 2:19 <10016>2 Samuel 1:16), and in other places, and in the Talmud [f1659]: and it is a notion of the Jews, that the guilt of innocent blood, and the blood of that innocent man's children, lie not only upon the persons immediately concerned, but upon their children to the end of the world: and so the judges used to address the witnesses upon a trial, after this manner [f1660];

> "know ye, that capital causes, are not as pecuniary ones: in pecuniary causes, a man gives his money, and it atones for him; but in capital causes, wb ^yywlt w[rz µdw wmd, "his blood, and the blood of his seed, hang upon him", to the end of the whole world: for lo! of Cain it is said, "the voice of the blood of thy brother cryeth", etc. his blood, and the blood of his seed."

And this imprecation of theirs, has been notoriously verified in them; for though this blood was shed for many of them, and Christ prayed for the forgiveness of them, and they had the Gospel, and the doctrine of remission of sins first preached among them, which was made the power of God unto salvation to some of them, even of those who were concerned in the crucifixion of Christ; yet, on the generality of them, his blood was in the sense they wished it; and for the shedding of it, wrath came upon them to the uttermost, in the entire destruction of their nation, city, and temple, and very remarkable it is, that great numbers of them were put to death by crucifixion; and very likely some of those very persons, that were so clamorous for the crucifying of Christ; and if not, at least their children; five hundred of the Jews and more, were sometimes crucified in a day, whilst Titus was besieging the city; till at length there wanted "room for crosses", και σταυροι τοις σωμασι "and crosses for bodies", as Josephus [f1661] says, who was an eyewitness of it: and to this day, this dreadful wish of the blood of Christ upon them, is to be seen in their miserable, abject, and captive state; and will be, until such time that they look to him whom they have pierced, and mourn.

Ver. 26. *Then released he Barabbas unto them*, etc.] The seditious person, robber, and murderer, for which crimes he was in prison. This man was an

emblem of the persons for whom Christ suffered, both in his character and in his release: in his character; for they are such as have rebelled against God, robbed him of his glory, and destroyed themselves; many of them are notorious sinners, the chief of sinners, and all of them by nature, children of wrath, as others; and as the descendants of Adam, under the sentence of condemnation and death; and yet in Christ, they are children of Abba, Father; being of God predestinated by him, to the adoption of children: and in his release; for when Christ was apprehended, they were let go; when he was bound they were loosed; when he was condemned, they were released, and acquitted; and when the sword of justice was awaked against him, the hand of grace and mercy was turned upon them.

And when he had scourged Jesus; which was done some time before his examination, trial, and condemnation were over, though mentioned here, as appears from (<430119>John 19:1), and was done by Pilate, in order to move the pity and compassion of the Jews; hoping they would have been satisfied with it, and not have resisted upon his death: and he indeed moved it to them, that he might chastise him and let him go, (<422322>Luke 23:22), but nothing would do but crucifixion. Whether the previous scourging sufficed, or whether he was not scourged again upon his condemnation, is not certain: if he was scourged twice, John may be thought to relate the one, and Matthew the other; for certain it is, that it was usual with the Romans to scourge either with rods or whips, just before crucifixion [f1662]: our Lord was scourged with whips, as the word here used shows. Persons of birth and blood, and freemen of Rome, were beaten with rods; but such as were servants, which form Christ had taken, were scourged with whips; to which, sometimes were fastened, the hip bones of beasts [f1663]; so that this kind of whipping, was very severe and cruel. The Jews themselves own this scourging of Jesus, only they ascribe it to the elders of Jerusalem, and relate it thus [f1664]:

> “the elders of Jerusalem took Jesus, and brought him to the city, and bound him to a marble pillar in the city, µyjwçb whwkyw, “and smote him with whips”, or “whipped him”; and said unto him, where are all thy miracles which thou hast done?”

Hereby the prophecy in (<230106>Isaiah 1:6), and our Lord’s prediction in (<402019>Matthew 20:19), had their accomplishment. This scourging of Christ, was an emblem of the scourges and strokes of divine justice, which he endured in his soul, as the surety of his people; being smitten of God by the

sword of justice, as he stood in their place and stead, and stricken for their transgressions; and may furnish out several instructions: as that it is no wonder, if any of the followers of Christ have, do, or shall, meet with such like treatment from men; and that it becomes them to bear patiently the scourges of their heavenly Father, since these are in love; and that they need not fear being trodden down, or carried away by the overflowing scourge of God's wrath, since Christ has endured this in their room. This being done,

he delivered him to be crucified; either into the hands of the Jews, to their will and at their request; or into the hands of his soldiers, to execute the sentence he passed upon him; which was done in a judicial way, and according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

Ver. 27. *Then the soldiers of the governor*, etc.] Those that were about him, his attendants and guards,

took Jesus into the common hall; the "praetorium", or judgment hall, as it is sometimes called; the governor's palace, into which the Jews would not enter, lest they should defile themselves: Pilate therefore came out to them, and went into the pavement called Gabbatha, and sat upon a judgment seat there; (see John 18:28,29) (John 19:13), where he passed sentence on Christ; which being done, the soldiers took him into the hall of judgment; which being both magnificent and large, was fit for the scene they intended to act there. Munster's Hebrew Gospel reads it, they took him "in the house of judgment"; and the Ethiopic version renders it, "out of the court of judicature"; both wrong.

And gathered unto him whole band [of soldiers]; the same that Judas had with him to take him, consisting of five hundred, and some say more: these their fellow soldiers, to whom Jesus was committed, got together to him, or "against him", as the Syriac and Persic versions render it, make themselves sport and diversion with him. Think in what hands and company our dear Lord now was: now was he encompassed with dogs, and enclosed with the assembly of the wicked indeed; (see Psalm 22:16). The Persic version renders it, "multitudes of knaves being gathered together to him".

Ver. 28. *And they stripped him*, etc.] Of his clothes; at least of his upper garment: for one man to spit upon another, as these soldiers afterwards did on Christ, or to strip him of his garment, according to the Jewish canons,

were punishable with a fine of four hundred pence [f1665], which amounted to twelve pounds and ten shillings of our money; but the soldiers were in no danger of being prosecuted, for stripping Christ. This is one part of the low estate Christ submitted to: his clothes on his back seem to be all he had in this world, and of these he is stripped:

and put on him a scarlet robe, or "a red coat", as the Persic version renders it; very likely an old coat of one of their officers. The Evangelists Mark and John say it was "purple", (<41517>Mark 15:17 <43902>John 19:2), and so the Arabic version renders it here: whether there were two garments put upon him, the one a purple vest, and the other a scarlet robe over it; or whether scarlet was used instead of purple, is not certain; which was a colour wore by kings, and a sign of imperial dignity [f1666]; and therefore put upon Christ by way of mockery, upbraiding him with the character he bore, as king of the Jews. This was an emblem of his being clothed, as it were with our sins, which are as scarlet, and of his bloody sufferings in the human nature.

Ver. 29. *And when they had platted a crown of thorns*, etc.] What sort of thorn this crown was made of, whether of the bramble, or of the white thorn, is not very material [f1667]: the word used in the Syriac version, is rendered by interpreters, "white thorns", and which were common in Judea: these, be they what they will, they made into the form of a crown, and

they put it upon his head; both to reproach him as a king, and to torture him as a man: however, it had its significance, and was an emblem of men, comparable to thorns; either of wicked men, and of his being encompassed with them at this time; or of good men, chosen out from among them, redeemed by him, and accounted as a royal diadem with him [f1668]: or it might represent the sins of his people, which, like thorns, pierced him, and like a crown of them surrounded him every side; or else the many troubles he was exercised with, and through which he did, as his members do, enter the kingdom: and especially, his being made a curse for us, thorns and briers being the curse which was inflicted on the earth, for the sin of man: in this Christ was the antitype of the ram, caught by his horns among the thickets, which "Abraham" sacrificed in the room of his son. This may teach us many useful lessons: we may see what a curse sin brought upon man, and upon the earth for man's sake; and even upon the Messiah, in the stead of men: we may observe the difference between us and Christ: we are

a crown of glory, and a royal diadem in his hand; we are crowned with loving kindness and tender mercies, and have a crown of righteousness, life, and glory, laid up for us, and he was crowned with thorns; as also the difference between Christ in his state of humiliation wearing such a crown, and his state of exaltation, in which he is crowned with glory and honour. The Jews acknowledge this circumstance of the sufferings of Jesus, though they ascribe it to the elders of Jerusalem; who, they say [f1669],

"took thorns and made a crown of them, and put it upon his head."

Which are the very words of the evangelist:

and a reed in his right hand, or "cane"; and Munster's Hebrew Gospel uses the word, hnq, "a cane", such as men walk with; and this may be confirmed from the barbarous use they afterwards made of it, by smiting him on the head with it: a "reed" indeed may fitly express the weakness of his kingdom in the eye of the world: but any cane or common staff, or stick, put into his hands in the room of a sceptre, would also signify the meanness of his kingdom, which was not of this world, and came not with observation: they meant to reproach him with it, but they will find one time or another, that he, has another sceptre, even a sceptre of righteousness, a staff of strength, a rod of iron, with which he will rule and break in pieces, all the wicked of the earth. However, we may learn from hence, Christ does not disdain to hold a reed in his hand: nor will he break the bruised reed, or discourage, or crush the weakest believer.

And they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, king of the Jews: being thus clad in a scarlet, or purple robe, or both; and having a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed instead of a sceptre in his hand, they carry on the mockery still further, and bend the knee to him, as to a prince just come to his throne, and salute as such; and in a mock way, wish him long life and prosperity: thus deriding him in his kingly office, as all such do, who call him Lord, Lord, but disregard his commands.

Ver. 30. *And they spit upon him*, etc.] The Syriac and Persic versions add, "upon his face", which he did not hide from spitting; (see <230506>Isaiah 1:6), and so what with sweat, by being hurried from place to place, and with blood trickling down from his temples, scratched with thorns, and with the spittle of these filthy soldiers, his visage was more marred than any man's, and his form than the sons of men, (<235214>Isaiah 52:14).

And took the reed, or “cane”, which was put into his right hand,

and smote him on the head; whereby they drove the sharp points of the thorns into it, which must give him inexpressible pain and torture.

Ver. 31. *And after that they had mocked him*, etc.] Gone through the whole farce, and glutted themselves with derision of him, and with sport and diversion with him,

they took the robe off from him; it belonging to one of their company,

and put his own raiment on him; partly that he might be known to be the selfsame person that was condemned and committed to them, which they now brought forth to crucify; and partly, that the four soldiers that were appointed to be the executioners, might have the perquisite of his clothes, which belonged unto them:

and led him away to crucify him; for a condemned person was always executed the same day: their canon is [f1670],

> “after that his judgment, or sentence is finished, they do not tarry with him, but slay him, wmwyb, “that very day”.”

And their custom was this;

> “he whose sentence for death is finished, they bring him out from the house of judgment; and one stands at the door of it, and linen clothes in his hand, and a horse at some distance from him; and a crier goes out before him, “saying”, such an one is going to be executed with such a death, because he has committed such a sin, in such a place, at such a time, such and such being witnesses; whoever knows him to be innocent, let him come, and speak in his favour: if one says, I have something to say in his favour: this waves with the linen clothes, and the other rides upon the horse, and runs and brings back him that is judged, to the sanhedrim; and if he is found innocent, they dismiss him: but if not, he returns, and goes to execution [f1671].”

The Jews pretend [f1672], that a crier went out before Jesus of Nazareth, forty days before his execution, and made such a proclamation, but found none that had any thing to say in his favour, and therefore hanged him on the evening of the passover. But this is false; Christ had no such length of time, or his friends any liberty granted them to speak for him. They led him out

of the common hall, through Jerusalem, and through one of the gates of it, without the city, in order to crucify him, to which he was condemned, when that prophecy was fulfilled in (<235307>Isaiah 53:7). “He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth”: as he made no opposition or struggle, but quietly went along with them, where they led him; so he took every thing patiently from them, uttered not one complaint, or any murmuring and repining word, or any thing by way of reviling; but became meekly subject to them, and submitted himself to him that judgeth righteously.

Ver. 32. *And as they came out*, etc.] Of the city; for no execution was made, neither in the court of judicature, nor in the city, but at some distance; as it was at stoning, so at crucifixion [f1673]:

> “when judgment was finished, they brought him out to be stoned; the place of stoning was without the sanhedrim, as it is said, (<032414>Leviticus 24:14), “bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp”.”

Upon which the gloss and Gemara say [f1674], without the three camps; which were these, the court which was the camp of the Shekinah; or the divine presence; and the mountain of the house, the camp of the Levites; and the city, the camp of Israel; so that he that was executed, was had without the city. Maimonides [f1675] says,

> “the place in which the sanhedrim executed, was without it, and at a distance from it, as it is said, (<032414>Leviticus 24:14), and it appears to me, that it was about six miles distant; for so far it was between the sanhedrim of Moses our master, which was before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the camp of Israel.”

So Jesus went without the camp, and suffered without the gate, as the antitype of the red heifer; (see <041903>Numbers 19:3), compared with (<581311>Hebrews 13:11-13), and the notes there.

They found a man of Cyrene: a place in Libya, and one of the five cities called Pentapolis: which were these, Berenice, Arsinoe, Ptolemais, Apollonia, and Cyrene [f1676]; Kir in (Amos 1:5 9:7) is rendered by the Targum, ynryq, “Cyrene”, as it is also by the Vulgate Latin. There were many Jews dwelt here, as appears from (<442010>Acts 2:10), as this man was a Jew, as his name shows; and besides, there was a synagogue of the

Cyrenian Jews at Jerusalem, (44069Acts 6:9), so that though he was a native of Cyrene, he might now dwell there, and some of these were converted to the faith of Christ; for of those that were scattered abroad at the death of Stephen, some were men of Cyrene, (44119Acts 11:19,20). And it is very likely, that this man was a favourer of Christ, which might be one reason why they laid hold on him, and obliged him to bear the cross of Christ; since he was the father of Alexander and Rufus, who were men of note among the first Christians:

Simon by name; of which name was one of the apostles, and a common name among the Jews, and signifies hearkening and obedient: and none are fit to bear, or will bear the cross of Christ, but such who hearken to his voice, and are obedient to him, being made willing in the day of his power:

him they compelled to bear his cross; which they did, not out of good will to Christ, but fearing lest through his faintness and weakness, he should, die before he got to the place of execution, and they be disappointed of their end, the crucifixion of him; or because they were in haste to have him executed, and he was not able to go so fast as they desired; for when they, first came out, the cross was laid upon Christ, and he bore it, as John relates; but he being weak and ready to faint under it, and not able to go the pace they would have him, and meeting with this man, they press him to bear it after him: which he might be unwilling to do, partly because it was scandalous and ignominious; and partly, because if a favourer of Jesus, he did not choose to be any ways accessary to his death: but he was obliged to it; and it may be observed from hence, that taking up the cross and following Christ, is disagreeable to flesh and blood: though the spirit may be willing, the flesh recoils; none care for it, or choose to bear it, unless constrained to it.

Ver. 33. *And when they were come to a place called Golgotha*, etc.] The true pronunciation is “Golgoltha”, and so it is read in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel. It is a Syriac word, in which language letters are often left out: in the Syriac version of this place, the first “l” is left out, and the latter retained, and it is read “Gogoltha”: and so, in the Persic, “Gagulta”; and in the Arabic, “Gagalut”. The Ethiopic version reads it, “Golgotha”; and so, Dr. Lightfoot observes, it is read by the Samaritan interpreter of the first chapter of Numbers:

that is to say, a place of a skull: some say Adam’s skull was found here, and from thence the place had its name; this is an ancient tradition, but

without foundation [f1677]: it seems to be so called, because it was the place where malefactors were executed, and afterwards buried; whose bones and skulls in process of time might be dug up, and some of them might lie scattered about in this place: for, one that was executed as a malefactor [f1678],

> “they did not bury him in the sepulchres of his ancestors; but there were two places of burial appointed by the sanhedrim; one for those that were stoned, and for those that were burnt; and another for those that were killed with the sword, and for those that were strangled; and when their flesh was consumed, they gathered the bones, and buried them in their place;”

i.e. in the sepulchres of their ancestors. This place was as infamous as our Tyburn, and to be crucified at “Golgotha”, was as ignominious as to be hanged at Tyburn; which shows what shame and disgrace our Lord was brought, and what he condescended to bear on our account.

Ver. 34. *They gave him vinegar to drink*, etc.] It was a custom with the Jews [f1679] when

> “a man went out to be executed, to give him to drink a grain of frankincense in a cup of wine, that his understanding might be disturbed, as it is said, (<202806>Proverbs 31:6). “Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts”; and the tradition is, that the honourable women in Jerusalem gave this freely; but if they did not, it was provided at the charge of the congregation.”

The design of it was to cheer their spirits, and intoxicate their heads, that they might not be sensible of their pain and misery. But such a cup was not allowed Christ at the public expense, nor were the honourable women so compassionate to him; or if it was sent him, the soldiers did not give it him, but another potion in the room of it; indeed Mark says, they gave him “wine mingled with myrrh”, (<411523>Mark 15:23); which was either a cordial provided by his friends, and given him, and is different from what the soldiers gave him here; or the sense is, that they gave him the cup, that was so called, but not the thing; but instead of it,

vinegar mingled with gall. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, instead of “vinegar”, read “wine”; and so does Munster’s Hebrew Gospel, and so it is read in Beza’s most ancient copy, and in another exemplar, and

in one of Stephens's; and which may be easily reconciled with the common reading, and that with Mark; for the wine they gave him was flat and sour, and no other or better than vinegar; and real vinegar may be so called, as this seems to be; and the rather, because vinegar was a part of the Roman soldiers' allowance, and so they had it ready at hand; (see Gill on "John 19:29"). As also, because it was thought that vinegar was useful to prolong the life of a man ready to die; and therefore they might choose to give it to Christ, that he might live the longer in misery: so the Jews [f1680] write, that

> "if a man swallows a wasp or hornet alive, he cannot live; but they must give him to drink a quarter, zgmç alj d, "of vinegar of Shamgaz", (which the gloss says is strong vinegar,) and it is possible he may live a little while, until he hath given orders to his house."

The Arabic version, instead of "gall", reads "myrrh"; nor are we to suppose that this drink was mixed with the gall of a beast itself, but with something that was as bitter as "gall"; as wormwood, or myrrh, or any other bitter, to make it distasteful. This potion of vinegar with gall, was an aggravating circumstance in our Lord's sufferings, being given to him when he had a violent thirst upon him; and was an emblem of the bitter cup of God's wrath, he had already tasted of in the garden, and was about to drink up: the Jews had a notion of vinegar's being expressive of the chastisements of the Messiah; the words in (Ruth 2:14), they say [f1681],

> "speak of the king Messiah; "come thou hither", draw nigh to the kingdom; "and eat of the bread", this is the bread of the kingdom, "and dip thy morsel in the vinegar", ^yrwsyyh wla, "these are the chastisements", as it is said in (Isaiah 53:5), "he was wounded for our transgressions"."

By this offer was fulfilled the prophecy in (Psalm 69:21), and which he did not altogether refuse; for it follows,

and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink: not because it was the vinegar of Gentiles, which was forbidden by the Jewish canons [f1681], lest it should have been offered to idols; but because he would make use of no means either to prolong his life, or discompose his mind; and that it might appear he knew what he did, and that he was not afraid nor unwilling to die; though he thought fit to taste of it in a superficial way, to show he did

not despise nor resent their offer; and that he was really athirst, and ready to drink a more disagreeable potion than that.

Ver. 35. *And they crucified him*, etc.] That is, the soldiers: they laid the cross upon the ground, and stretched Christ upon it; they extended his two arms as far as they could, to the transverse part of it, and nailed his hands unto it: his two feet they fixed by each other on a basis, in the body of the cross, through which they also drove nails; and then raising it up, fixed it in the earth, and left him hanging on it till he expired. This death was not only painful and cruel, but exceedingly shameful and ignominious: it was what was inflicted on the meanest of persons, as servants, whose form Christ had taken; and upon the worst of men, as murderers, cut-throats, thieves, and the vilest of men [f1682] among whom Christ was now numbered:

and parted his garments, casting lots: for they stripped him of his clothes before they fixed him to the cross, and crucified him naked, as was the custom of the Romans [f1683]; as it was of the Jews to stone and hang persons naked: their canons run thus [f1684];

> "when he is four cubits off of the place of stoning, they strip off his garments; a man they cover before, a woman both behind and before; the words of Judah: but the wise men say, a man is stoned naked, and a woman is not stoned naked: a man, they hang him with his face to the people; a woman, with her face to the tree. R. Eliezer, and the wise men say, a man is hanged, but a woman is not hanged."

On which the Gemara [f1685] says,

> "what is the sense of the Rabbins? the Scripture says, "thou shalt hang him"; him, and not her: and, says R. Eliezer, him, wtwsk alb, "without his clothes"."

So our Lord was crucified; his clothes were a perquisite of the soldiers; there were four of them, as we learn from (<43 19 23>John 19:23), and they parted them into four parts, and then cast lots whose each part should be; or rather, they divided his garments into four parts, and each took his part; but his vesture, or coat, being seamless, and woven from top to bottom, they did not choose to tear it into pieces, but cast lots for it, who should have it:

that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, by David, in (<19218>Psalm 22:18),

they parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. All this, Beza says, is not in any of the ancient copies; nor is it in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, but stands in the Vulgate Latin, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel; (see Gill on "<43024>John 19:24").

Ver. 36. *And sitting down, they watched him there*.] That is, the soldiers, after they had crucified Jesus, and parted his garments, sat down on the ground at the foot of the cross, and there watched him, lest his disciples should take him down; though there was no need to fear that, since they were few, and weak, and wanted courage, and were in the utmost dread and consternation themselves; or lest the people, who were very changeable with respect to Christ, one day saying Hosanna to the son of David, and another day crucify him, crucify him, should once more change their sentiments of him, and through pity to him rise and take him down; or rather, lest Jesus himself should, by his miraculous power, unloose himself, come down, and make his escape. It was usual with the Romans to set a soldier, or soldiers, to watch those that were crucified, not only before they expired, but after they were dead, lest they should be took down and buried; as appears from Petronius, Plutarch, and others [f1686]. This seems to be the watch Pilate refers to, (<40276>Matthew 27:65), and over which there was a centurion, (<40254>Matthew 27:54).

Ver. 37. *And set up over his head his accusation written*, etc.] The Evangelist John calls it a "title", (<43019>John 19:19,20), and Luke, a "superscription", (<42338>Luke 23:38), and Mark, the "superscription of his accusation", (<41526>Mark 15:26): it was what contained the sum and substance of what he was accused, and for which he was condemned, and suffered. The Syriac and Persic versions here render it, "the cause of his death". It was written by Pilate in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, that all might read it; and by his orders it was put upon the cross, and over the head of Jesus by the soldiers. This title, or inscription, setting forth the person's crime, used to be carried before him, or put upon him, as he was led to execution [f1687]: but here it was set upon the cross, and perhaps nailed unto it; to which the apostle seems to allude in (<51214>Colossians 2:14), the substance of it was,

this is Jesus the king of the Jews. This was what the chief priests accused him of to Pilate, and about which he questioned him, and for which they

desired he might be crucified; urging, that should he let him go, he could not be Caesar's friend. Hence Pilate wrote his accusation in this form, not so much in derision of Jesus; for by conversation with him he understood what sort of a king he was, as to the reproach of the Jews for crucifying him who was their king; being the person that was prophesied of in their books, as king of Zion, and whom they expected as such, though now they denied and rejected him.

Ver. 38. *Then were there two thieves crucified with him*, etc.] Which seems contrary to one of their canons, which runs thus; djа µwyb µynç ˆynd ˆya, "they do not judge two in one day" [f1688], unless they were both in the same crime, and died the same death: but here were three persons, Jesus, and these two malefactors, condemned and executed in one, and the same day: these two thieves were led out with Jesus, to be put to death with him, according to (<422332>Luke 23:32), and were crucified with him upon the same spot of ground; their death was the same, but not their crime:

one the right hand, and another on the left; and Jesus in the midst, as John relates, (<431918>John 19:18), and hereby was fulfilled, as Mark observes, (<411528>Mark 15:28), a prophecy in (<235312>Isaiah 53:12). If this was so ordered by Pilate, it might be done in order to cover the sin, and take off the reproach of putting an innocent person to death, suggesting hereby he was one of them; though this seems rather to be done by the Jews, the soldiers agreeing to it, for the greater reproach of Jesus; intimating, that he was the worst of these malefactors, and a ringleader of such sort of persons: and whereas they had observed, he took it ill at their hands that they should come to apprehend him with swords and staves, as if he was a thief and a robber; to vex and distress him the more, they crucify him between two such persons: but the grand reason why it was so ordered, was, that though Christ was no transgressor, he was accounted one, and stood in the room and stead of sinners, and was numbered with them, and as such was treated by divine justice, and accordingly died for them.

Ver. 39. *And they that passed by*, etc.] In the road to or from Jerusalem; for, it seems, the crosses were placed by the wayside; or they who passed by the cross, the populace that came from Jerusalem, on purpose to see the sight,

reviled him, or "blasphemed him": they spoke all manner of evil of him, they could think of, to which he answered not a word; and which may

teach us patience under the revilings of men: this was foretold of him, (<19B951>Psalm 89:51), “they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed”, or “Messiah”; and which Jarchi explains by ypws, “the ends of the king Messiah”; his last times, towards the close of his days; and cites that passage in the Misna [f1689],

> “in the heels, or, as Buxtorf renders it, in the end of the days of the Messiah impudence shall be multiplied,”

as it now was exceedingly:

wagging their heads; in derision of him, and as exulting in his misery; (see <232237>Isaiah 37:22 <250215>Lamentations 2:15). This also was prophesied of him in (<19B207>Psalm 22:7).

Ver. 40. *And saying, thou that destroyest the temple*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, and Munster’s Hebrew Gospel, read, “the temple of God”; and add “ah!” here, as in (<411529>Mark 15:29), and so Beza says it is read in a certain copy. They refer to the charge of the false witnesses against him, who misrepresenting his words in (<430219>John 2:19), declared that he gave out that he was able to destroy the temple of Jerusalem, and rebuild it in three days time; wherefore it is added,

and buildest it in three days, save thyself. They reproach him with it, and suggest, that these were vain and empty boasts of his; for if he was able to do any thing of that kind, he need not hang upon the tree, but could easily save himself:

if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. The Jews themselves say [f1690] that the following words were said to Jesus on the cross,

> “if thou be the Son of God, why dost thou not deliver thyself out of our hands?”

As Satan before them, they put an “if” upon the sonship of Christ: and seeing his followers believed in him as the Son of God, and he had owned himself to be so before the sanhedrim, they require a sign of it by his power, and to do that which they believed no mere man in his situation could do; which shows, that they had no other notion of the Son of God, but that he was a divine person: but his sonship was not to be declared by his coming down from the cross, which he could have easily effected, but by a much greater instance of power, even by his resurrection from the

dead; and no other but that sign was to be given to that wicked and perverse generation.

Ver. 41. *Likewise also the chief priests*, etc.] Who as they attended at his apprehension, and in their own council condemned him to death unanimously, and were very busy at his arraignment, examination, and trial before Pilate, and persuaded the people to be urgent for his crucifixion; they follow him to the cross to exult over him, and insult him, and to see that the execution was strictly performed: and forgetting their character, office, and education; and laying aside all humanity, decent, and good manners; instead of rebuking and restraining the populace from using him in an ill and unkind manner, they themselves stood

mocking him, with the Scribes and elders; who composed the whole sanhedrim of the nation. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, and several copies, read, “and the Pharisees”: of which, no doubt, there were great numbers present, who had been indefatigable and implacable enemies of Christ every where, and to whom it must be a pleasing sight to see him hanging on the cross: these scoffed at him, gibed, and reproached him; and

said, as follows;

Ver. 42. *He saved others, himself he cannot save*, etc.] This was not so much a concession of theirs, that he had done many saving works, as healing the sick, cleansing lepers, causing the blind to see, and the lame to walk, and raising the dead; but rather a suggestion, that these were only pretensions and illusions; that either they were not really done, or done by the help of the devil; since now he himself was in the utmost extremity, he could not save himself: but of this they might have been convinced by his striking many of them to the ground, that came to apprehend him in the garden, and of which these men were eyewitnesses; and he, as man, could easily have obtained of his Father more than twelve legions of angels that would have rescued him out of their hands: but so it must not be; he came not to save himself, but others, and to save them spiritually and eternally by dying himself.

If he be the king of Israel; that is, the Messiah, who was promised and expected as a king, as Zion’s king, or king of Israel; (see ⁴⁰⁰⁴⁹John 1:49), hence in (⁴¹⁰⁰⁵²Mark 15:32) it is Christ the king of Israel.

Let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. The Persic version reads, “that the people may see, and believe in him”; and the

Syriac and Arabic versions, “that we may see, and believe in him”, as in (<41532>Mark 15:32). But, alas! they had seen greater things already than this, and yet had not believed. He could easily have caused the nails to have given way, and unloosed himself, and come down, who had done such mighty works among them; and if he had, there is no reason to conclude they would have believed him to be the Son of God, and the true Messiah; for though after this, he did a much greater work, raised himself from the dead, of which they had the fullest evidence, yet they remained unbelieving.

Ver. 43. *He trusted in God*, etc.] That is, he pretended to claim an interest in him, to be high in his favour and esteem, and to have great faith and confidence in him:

let him deliver him now; directly, from the cross, and the death of it:

if he will have him; or if he is well pleased with him as his own Son, or delights in him as such, and will show him any favour and good will; (see <19218>Psalm 22:8), where are these very words, and which are predicted should be said by these men to Christ; and are a wonderful confirmation of the truth of that Psalm and prophecy belonging to him:

for he said, I am the Son of God; not only in his ministry, but he had said so in their grand council, before them all.

Ver. 44. *The thieves also*, etc.] One or other of them, not both; an Hebrew way of speaking, as Drusius [f1691] observed: so it is said of Jonah, (Jon 1:5), that he was “gone down into the sides of the ship”; not into both sides, but into one or other of them: so here the thieves, one or other of them, not naming which, railed at Jesus, for it was but one of them; (see <42339>Luke 23:39), unless it can be thought, as it is by some, that they both at first reviled him; but one being quickly convinced of his evil, ceased, and rebuked his fellow sufferer, confessed his, sin, bore a testimony to the innocence of Christ, and desired to be remembered by him in his kingdom. This was an aggravation of the sufferings of Christ, that he should be vilified by those,

which were crucified with him; who ought to have been, considering the condemnation they were in, and the future state they were just entering into, lamenting and confessing the sins they had been guilty of, instead of adding sin to sin, and so aggravating their condemnation. These, at least one of them,

cast the same into his teeth; as the populace, the chief priests, Scribes, elders, and Pharisees had done; twitted him with his pretensions of being the Son of God, the Messiah, and king of Israel; and urged, that if he was, why did not he save himself, and them also?

Ver. 45. *Now from the sixth hour*, etc.] Which was twelve o'clock at noon,

there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour; till three o'clock in the afternoon, the time the Jews call "between the two evenings"; and which they say [f1692] is "from the sixth hour, and onwards". Luke says, the sun was darkened, (<4236>Luke 23:45). This darkness was a preternatural eclipse of the sun; for it was at the time when the moon was in the full, as appears from its being at the time of the passover; which was on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, the Jews beginning their months from the new moon: and moreover, it was over all the land, or earth, as the word may be rendered; and the Ethiopic version renders it, "the whole world was dark"; at least it reached to the whole Roman empire, or the greatest part of it; though some think only the land of Judea, or Palestine, is intended: but it is evident, that it is taken notice of, and recorded by Heathen historians and chronologers, as by Phlegon, and others, referred to by Eusebius [f1693]. The Roman archives are appealed unto for the truth of it by Tertullian [f1694]; and it is asserted by Suidas, that Dionysius the Areopagite, then an Heathen, saw it in Egypt; and said,

> "either the, divine being suffers, or suffers with him that suffers, or the frame of the world is dissolving."

Add to this the continuance of it, that it lasted three hours; whereas a natural eclipse of the sun is but of a short duration; (see <3009>Amos 8:9). The Jews [f1695] have a notion, that in the times of the Messiah

> "the sun shall be darkened, amwy twglpb, "in the middle of the day", (as this was,) as that day was darkened when the sanctuary was destroyed."

Yea, they speak [f1696] of a darkness that shall continue a long time: their words are these:

> "the king Messiah shall be made known in all the world, and all the kings shall be stirred up to join together to make war with him; and many of the profligate Jews shall be turned to them, and shall go with them, to make war against the king Messiah; so aml[lk

> Æçjty, "all the world shall be darkened" fifteen days, and many of the people of Israel shall die in that darkness."

This darkness that was over the earth at the time of Christ's sufferings, was, no doubt, an addition to them; the sun, as it were, hiding its face, and refusing to afford its comforting light and heat to him; and yet might be in detestation of the heinousness of the sin the Jews were committing, and as expressive of the divine anger and resentment; for God's purposes and decrees, and the end he had in view, did not excuse, nor extenuate their wickedness; as it shows also their wretched stupidity, not to be awakened and convinced by the amazing darkness, with other things attending it, which made no impression on them; though it did on the Roman centurion, who concluded Christ must be the Son of God. It was an emblem of the judicial blindness and darkness of the Jewish nation; and signified, that now was the hour and power of darkness, or the time for the prince of darkness, with his principalities and powers, to exert himself; and was a representation of that darkness that was now on the soul of Christ, expressed in the following verse; as well as of the eclipse of him, the sun of righteousness, of the glory of his person, both by his incarnation, and by his sufferings.

Ver. 46. *And about the ninth hour*, etc.] Or three o'clock in the afternoon, which was about the time of the slaying and offering of the daily sacrifice, which was an eminent type of Christ. The Jews say [f1697], that

> "every day the daily sacrifice was slain at eight and a half, and was offered up at nine and a half:"

about which time also the passover was killed, which was another type of Christ; and as they say [f1698], "was offered first, and then the daily sacrifice." Though the account they elsewhere [f1699] give of these things, is this;

> "the daily sacrifice was slain at eight and a half, and was offered up at nine and a half; (that is, on all the common days of the year;) on the evenings of the passover, it was slain at seven and a half, and offered at eight and a half, whether on a common day, or on a sabbath day: the passover eve, that happened to be on the sabbath eve, it was slain at six and a half, and offered at seven and a half, and the passover after it."

At this time,

Jesus cried with a loud voice: as in great distress, having been silent during the three hours darkness, and patiently bearing all his soul sufferings, under a sense of divine wrath, and the hidings of his Father's countenance, and his conflicts with the powers of darkness; but now, in the anguish of his soul, he breaks out,

saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani: which words are partly Hebrew, and partly Chaldee; the three first are Hebrew, and the last Chaldee, substituted in the room of "Azabthani"; as it was, and still is, in the Chaldee paraphrase of the text in (¹⁹²⁰Psalm 22:1), from whence they are taken;

that is to say, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? He calls him his God, not as he was God, but as he was man; who, as such, was chosen by him to the grace of union to the Son of God; was made and formed by him; was anointed by him with the oil of gladness; was supported and upheld by him in the day of salvation; was raised by him from the dead, and highly exalted by him at his own right hand; and Christ, as man, prayed to him as his God, believed in him, loved him, and obeyed him as such: and though now he hid his face from him, yet he expressed strong faith and confidence of his interest in him. When he is said to be "forsaken" of God; the meaning is not, that the hypostatical union was dissolved, which was not even by death itself; the fulness of the Godhead still dwelt bodily in him: nor was he separated from the love of God; he had the same interest in his Father's heart and favour, both as his Son, and as mediator, as ever: nor was the principle and habit of joy and comfort lost in his soul, as man, but he was now without a sense of the gracious presence of God, and was filled, as the surety of his people, with a sense of divine wrath, which their iniquities he now bore, deserved, and which was necessary for him to endure, in order to make full satisfaction for them; for one part of the punishment of sin is loss of the divine presence. Wherefore he made not this expostulation out of ignorance: he knew the reason of it, and that it was not out of personal disrespect to him, or for any sin of his own; or because he was not a righteous, but a wicked man, as the Jew[f1700] blasphemously objects to him from hence; but because he stood in the legal place, and stead of sinners: nor was it out of impatience, that he so expressed himself; for he was entirely resigned to the will of God, and content to drink the whole of the bitter cup: nor out of despair; for he at the same time strongly claims and asserts his interest in God, and repeats it; but to show, that he bore all the griefs of his people, and this among the rest, divine desertion; and to set forth the bitterness of his sorrows, that not

only the sun in the firmament hid its face from him, and he was forsaken by his friends and disciples, but even left by his God; and also to express the strength of his faith at such a time. The whole of it evinces the truth of Christ's human nature, that he was in all things made like unto his brethren; that he had an human soul, and endured sorrows and sufferings in it, of which this of desertion was not the least: the heinousness of sin may be learnt from hence, which not only drove the angels out of heaven, and Adam out of the garden, and separates, with respect to communion, between God and his children; but even caused him to hide his face from his own Son, whilst he was bearing, and suffering for, the sins of his people. The condescending grace of Christ is here to be seen, that he, who was the word, that was with God from everlasting, and his only begotten Son that lay in his bosom, that he should descend from heaven by the assumption of human nature, and be for a while forsaken by God, to bring us near unto him: nor should it be wondered at, that this is sometimes the case of the saints, who should, in imitation of Christ, trust in the Lord at such seasons, and stay themselves on their God, and which may be some support unto them, they may be assured of the sympathy of Christ, who having been in this same condition, cannot but have a fellow feeling with them. The Jews themselves own [f1701], that these words were said by Jesus when he was in their hands. They indeed apply the passage to Esther; and say [f1702], that

> "she stood in the innermost court of the king's house; and when she came to the house of the images, the Shekinah departed from her, and she said, "Eli, Eli, lama Azabthani?" my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Though others apply the "Psalm" to David, and others to the people of Israel in captivity [f1703]: but certain it is, that it belongs to the Messiah; and many things in it were fulfilled with respect to Jesus, most clearly show him to be the Messiah, and the person pointed at: the first words of it were spoken by him, as the Jews themselves allow, and the very expressions which his enemies used concerning him while suffering, together with their gestures, are there recorded; and the parting his garments, and casting lots on his vesture, done by the Roman soldiers, are there prophesied of; and indeed there are so many things in it which agree with him, and cannot with any other, that leave it without all doubt that he is the subject of it [f1704].

Ver. 47. *Some of them that stood there*, etc.] Near the cross, looking on, and mocking at him,

when they heard that; the words, “Eli, Eli”, spoken by Christ,

said, this man calleth for Elias. These could not be the Roman soldiers that said so, who had no notion of Elias; rather the Hellenistic Jews, who not so well understanding the Hebrew language, hearing the above words, and having some notion of the prophet Elias, fancied he was calling for him; though it seems most likely to be the Jews, who either through the nearness of the sound of the words, and mistake of them, and not near enough to hear and distinguish them, really thought he called for that prophet; or rather wilfully mistook him, with an intent to banter and ridicule him.

Ver. 48. *And straightway one of them ran and took a sponge*, etc.] Which was not far from the cross, where a vessel full of vinegar was set, (<43 19 29>John 19:29),

and filled it with vinegar; dipping it into it, it sucked it up. Some of these sponges had leathern handles to them. [f1705]

And put it on a reed; a stalk of hyssop; (see Gill on “<43 19 29>John 19:29”),

and gave him to drink; not to revive his spirits, or hasten his death, as some have thought, but in contempt of him, and to mock him, he having signified that he was athirst.

Ver. 49. *The rest said, let be*, etc.] The others, to whom he belonged, that fetched the sponge, said to him, let him alone, keep at a distance from him, give him nothing to drink:

let us see whether Elias will come to save him; whom the Jews looked upon to be the forerunner of the Messiah, and therefore suggest, that should he come to save him, they would believe he was the Messiah; and they had a mighty notion of Elias appearing to persons frequently [f1706], and talking, and conversing with them; (see Gill on “<40 17 03>Matthew 17:3”), though they did not believe he would come, and appear to Christ; for they were persons of great note for piety and learning, to whom he appeared, as they pretend, whereas they had no such opinion of him. The Ethiopic version here adds, and one took a spear and pierced his side with it, and blood and water flowed out: but this circumstance is only recorded by the

Evangelist John, (⁴John 19:34), though Beza says the same is read here in two ancient copies.

Ver. 50. *Jesus, when he had cried again*, etc.] "A second time", as the Persic version; for he had cried once before, and expressed the words he did, as in (⁴Matthew 27:46), what he now delivered were, "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit", (⁴Luke 23:46), and "it is finished", (⁴John 19:30), which he said

with a loud voice; which showed the vehemency of his affection, his strong confidence in God, and his being fearless of death; as also he thus spoke, that he might be heard, and his words attended to, since they contained things of the greatest importance and consequence: moreover, being able to express himself in such a manner, this declared him to be more than a mere man; for after such agonies in the garden, and so much fatigue in being hurried from place to place, and such loss of blood by being buffeted, scourged, crowned with thorns, and nailed to the accursed tree, where, being stretched, he had hung for some hours; to speak with so loud a voice was more than human, and was a conviction to the centurion, that he was a divine person: for when he saw that he so cried out, and "gave up the ghost", he said, "truly this man was the Son of God", (⁴Mark 15:39), and likewise it shows, that he died freely and voluntarily, and not through force and necessity: it was not all that men had done, or could do to him, that could have forced his life from him: he died willingly, and when nature was in its full strength; and which is signified in the next phrase,

yielded up the ghost, or "dismissed the Spirit", as the Syriac version truly renders it; he sent it away. It was not taken from him, he laid down his life of himself, as the Lord of it, and gave himself freely to be an offering and sacrifice in the room of his people; which is a proof of his great love, and amazing grace unto them.

Ver. 51. *And behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain*, etc.] Just at the time that Christ spake with so loud a voice, and expired, and which was at the time of the offering up of the evening incense; and so must be seen by the priest that was then offering, and those that assisted him, for the incense altar was near the vail; and which must be a very astonishing sight unto them: the vail was of a very great thickness; it was made of fine twined linen, (²Exodus 26:31), and it is a rule with the Jews [f1707], that

> "where ever mention is made in the law of fine linen, or fine twined linen, it means a thread six times doubled:"

and whereas this was made of blue, and purple, and scarlet, Jarchi's note on the place is, that

> "every kind was doubled with each thread of six threads."

His sense is more clearly expressed in his note on (<2601>Exodus 26:1),

> "lo! here are four sorts to every thread; one of linen, and three of wool, and every thread is six times doubled; behold four sorts when they are twisted together, make twenty four doubles to a thread."

Yea, some of them make it to be forty eight doubles [f1708]. What a thick piece of tapestry must this be! and this makes the rending of it the more amazing; for no doubt but that the vail of the second temple was made after the manner of the first; and this was rent

from top to bottom; and which was no less than forty cubits in length, which was the height of the holy of holies in the second temple; and which made the rent the more astonishing. The account the Jews give of the vail, is this [f1709]:

> "R. Simeon ben Gamaliel said, on account of R. Simeon, the son of the Sagan, the thickness of the vail is an hand's breadth, and it is woven of seventy two threads, and every thread has twenty four threads in it: it is forty cubits long, and twenty broad, and is made of eighty two myriads; (which is either the number of the threads in it, or the sum of the golden pence it cost. Some copies read, is made by eighty two virgins [f1710];) two are made every year; and three hundred priests wash it."

The Syriac version renders it, "the face of the gate of the temple"; by which may be meant, perhaps, the vail of the gate of Ulam, or of the porch [f1711]. The Jews have a tradition [f1712] that

> "forty years before the destruction of the temple, the gates of it opened of themselves. R. Jochanan ben Zaccai reproved them, saying, O temple! temple! wherefore dost thou fright thyself? I know thy end is to be destroyed; for so prophesied of thee Zechariah, the son of, Iddo, "open thy gates, O Lebanon", etc. (<3801>Zechariah 11:1)."

But whether this may be referred to in the above version, or has any reference to the evangelic history, I will not say. Other writers, as Josephus [f1713], and Egesippus [f1714], speak of the eastern gate of the city, which was of brass, and as much as twenty men could shut, opening of its own accord, before the destruction of the temple; which perhaps the Jewish tradition rather regards. This rending of the vail was done, as some think, in token of mourning for, and testifying abhorrence at the crucifixion of Christ; the temple rending its garments, the vail, at the death of its Lord, proprietor, and type, as the high priest did his at supposed blasphemy; or to show that the Lord, who had taken up his residence in the most holy place between the cherubim, over the mercy seat, in thick darkness, was now about to remove, and leave the house desolate; or it signified the rending of Christ's flesh, the breaking of his body for us, which was typified by the vail; (see <scripRef passage="Hebrews 10:20" />Hebrews 10:20), and may also denote both the fulfilment and abrogation of the ceremonial law, which had its end in the death of Christ; and likewise the more clear discoveries of the mysteries of grace under the Gospel, in which they are laid to open view, and are beheld with open face: to which may be added, that this pointed out, that the way to the holiest of all, to heaven, of which this was a figure, was now made manifest; and was plain and accessible, as it was, first to Christ, who entered by his own blood, as the forerunner; and also to his people, who likewise have boldness to enter by the same.

And the earth did quake: whether this earthquake reached only to the spot of ground where Christ was crucified, and on which the city and temple of Jerusalem stood; or whether it extended to other parts of the earth; since, in the reign of Tiberius Caesar, as Pliny [f1715] relates, there was an earthquake, in which twelve cities in Asia fell, is not certain. However, it was an indication of the divine anger and resentment, and in detestation of the sin of crucifying Christ; (see <scripRef passage="Psalm 18:7" />Psalm 18:7), and was an emblem of the shaking and removing of the Jewish church state and ordinances, (<scripRef passage="Hebrews 12:26,27" />Hebrews 12:26,27).

And the rocks rent; which were near Mount Calvary, and about Jerusalem; and, as we are told, the clefts are to be seen to this day, and which appear to be supernatural. This was also a token of divine wrath and fury, (Na 1:5,6), and a rebuke of the stupidity and hardness of the Jews, who were unmoved when rocks were rent asunder, being harder than they; and an emblem of the future conversion of many through the powerful ministry of the word, and in consequence of Christ's death; when hearts, as hard as

rocks, were broke in pieces, stony hearts taken away, and hearts of flesh given; of which the three thousand being pricked to the heart under Peter's sermon, were an instance.

Ver. 52. *And the graves were opened*, etc.] Which were near the city of Jerusalem: this was a proof of Christ's power over death and the grave, by dying; when he through death, destroyed him that had the power of it, and abolished death itself; and became the plague of death and the destruction of the grave, taking into his hands the keys of hell and death:

and many bodies of saints which slept, arose: not that they arose at the time of Christ's death: the graves were opened then, when the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent; but the bodies of the saints did not arise, till after Christ was risen, as appears from the following verse; but because the other event now happened, they are both recorded here: these were saints, and such as slept in Jesus; and of whom he is the first fruits that now rose; and not all, but many of them, as pledges of the future resurrection, and for the confirmation of Christ's, and the accomplishment of a prophecy in (<23 26 19>Isaiah 26:19). And they rose in the same bodies in which they before lived, otherwise they could not be called their bodies, or known by those to whom they appeared: but who they were is not to be known; some have thought them to be the ancient patriarchs, as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. In the Septuagint on (<18 42 17>Job 42:17), Job is said to be one of them, and a tradition is there recorded, which runs thus:

> "it is written, that he rose with whom the Lord rose."

But it should seem rather, that they were some later saints, such as Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, John the Baptist himself, good old Simeon, Joseph the husband of Mary, and others, well known to persons now alive. Some think they were such, as had been martyrs in the cause of religion; and so the Persic version renders the words, "and the bodies of many saints who suffered martyrdom, rose out of the graves".

Ver. 53. *And came out of the graves after his resurrection*, etc.] The resurrection of Christ; for he rose as the first fruits, as the first begotten of the dead, and the firstborn from the dead; for he was the first that was raised to an immortal life; for though others were raised before him, by himself, and in the times of the prophets, yet to a mortal life; but these saints came forth to the resurrection of life, and therefore it was necessary that Christ the first fruits, should rise first. The Arabic version indeed

reads, “after their own resurrection”; and the Ethiopic version, “after they were raised”; both wrong, and scarcely sense:

and went into the holy city; the city of Jerusalem, which though now a very wicked city, was so called, because of the temple, and the worship of God, and his residence in it: the burying places of the Jews were without the city [f1716], and therefore these risen saints, are said to go into it:

and appeared unto many; of their friends and acquaintance, who had personally known them, and conversed with them in their lifetime. These saints, I apprehend, continued on earth until our Lord’s ascension, and then joining the retinue of angels, went triumphantly with him to heaven, as trophies of his victory over sin, Satan, death, and the grave.

Ver. 54. *Now, when the centurion*, etc.] That was over the band of soldiers, that mocked Christ in Pilate’s hall, and who was particularly over the guard of soldiers, set about the cross of Christ:

and they that were with him, watching Jesus: the soldiers that were with him, who were set to watch the cross of Christ, lest he should come down, or any should take him down from thence; (see Gill on “Matthew 27:36”).

Saw the earthquake, and those things that were done; as besides that, the darkening of the sun, the rending of the rocks, and particularly heard with what a loud voice Christ spoke, and then at once expired:

they feared greatly; not with a true godly fear, but with a fear of punishment; lest divine vengeance should light on them, for their concern in this matter:

saying, truly this was the Son of God; which they concluded, not from any mediatorial performances, which they were utter strangers to, but from effects of divine power; and which to them showed him to be a divine person, what he said he was, and the Jews charged him with blasphemy, on account of, and condemned him for, as these soldiers might have seen and heard.

Ver. 55. *And many women were there*, etc.] At the cross of Christ, at some little distance from it; but where was Peter, who had declared he would never be offended, though all men were; and would die with Christ, rather than deny him? and where were the rest of the disciples, who said the same

things? None were present excepting John, as can be learnt from the evangelists; but many women, those of the weaker sex, were there, which was a rebuke of the former vanity and confidence of the disciples, and of their present pusillanimity and cowardice:

beholding afar off; Christ upon the cross, in all his agonies, the chief priests and people mocking him, the darkness upon the earth, the quaking of it, and the rending of the rocks: they were witnesses of all this, being at some little distance, by reason of the crowd of people and soldiers about the cross; and they beheld with an eye of faith, their bleeding, dying Lord, as crucified for them, and as bearing and taking away their sins: a sight which at once stirred up their affection and love to Christ, their concern for him, and sorrow for sin; and yet joy and peace, in believing in him:

which followed Jesus from Galilee: where they had seen his miracles, heard his doctrines, and had been savingly converted by him; and therefore followed him wherever he went, though an hundred miles or more, and through many difficulties and discouragements: they attended him in his triumphant entry into Jesus, and now at his cross; nor did they leave him when dead, and in his grave:

ministering unto him: not now, for he stood in no need of their assistance, nor could they give him any; but this respects what they had done heretofore, in their journey with him from Galilee to Jerusalem; when they ministered to him of their worldly substance, as a token of their affection for him; and which expresses the low estate and mean condition he was in, and is an instruction to his followers, how to behave towards the faithful preachers of his Gospel; (see Luke 8:3).

Ver. 56. *Among which was Mary Magdalene*, etc.] Out of whom Christ had cast out seven devils; and who having received much from him, loved much, which she showed by her zealous and constant attachment to him. She was called Magdalene, either because she was an inhabitant of Magdala, (Matthew 15:39), so we read [f1717] of R. Isaac, hldgm, of "Magdala", or "Magdalene"; and the rather, because that Magdala was famous, or rather infamous, for whoredom; for which reason the Jews [f1718] say, it was destroyed: or else she was so called, because she was tldg, a "tonstrix", or plaiter of women's hair, as the word signifies [f1719]; and so we often read of Mary, ayyçn r[yç aldgm, "the plaiter of women's hair" [f1720]; by whom the Jews seem to design Mary, the mother of Jesus, whom

they confound with this Mary Magdalene. Jerom says [f1721], her name signifies “towered”, or “fortified”, because of her care and diligence, and the ardour of her faith; and “Migdal”, in Hebrew, does signify a tower:

and Mary the mother of James and Joses: the same with the wife of Cleophas, and sister to Mary, the mother of Jesus: instead of Joses, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read Joseph: yswy “Jose”, in Hebrew, is the same with “Joseph”, the last letter being cut off; the Arabic version reads Mary, the mother of James, and the mother of Joses, (<43925>John 19:25).

And the mother of Zebedee’s children: that is, of James and John; her name was Salome, (<41540>Mark 15:40).

Ver. 57. *When the even was come*, etc.] The second evening, when it was just at sunset; at which time the Jewish sabbath began, and when the bodies of those that were crucified, must be taken down; and if not dead, their bones must be broken, and they dispatched, in order to be interred in the common burying place of malefactors:

there came a rich man Arimathea: not from thence now, for he lived at Jerusalem; but this was the place of his nativity, or former abode, and from whence he originally came; and is the same with Ramathaim Zophim, and Ramah, and was the birthplace of Samuel the prophet, (<090101>1 Samuel 1:1,19), and is by the Septuagint called Armathaim, in (<090101>1 Samuel 1:1,3,19 8:4 15:34 16:13 28:3). His character, as a rich man, is particularly mentioned, not merely to show that such men may be, and sometimes are, instances of the grace of God; much less in a way of boasting, that such a man was attached to Jesus; but rather to point out the reason, how he came to have such easy access to Pilate, and to succeed in his business with him; as well as to observe the accomplishment of a prophecy, in (<235309>Isaiah 53:9),

named Joseph; the same name with one of the patriarchs, the sons of Jacob; between whom there was a resemblance, not only as good men, but in their observance of funeral rites and obsequies; the one in those of his father, the other in those of his dear Lord and Master. Some think [f1722] he is the same with Joseph ben Gorion, the brother of Nicodemus ben Gorion, often spoken of as a priest, and one of the richest of them in Jerusalem:

who also himself was Jesus' disciple; though he was only a secret one, as Nicodemus was: he had not as yet, or till now publicly professed him, for fear of the Jews, who had made a law, that whoever did, should be cast out of the synagogue; (see <43198>John 19:38).

Ver. 58. *He went to Pilate*, etc.] To his house where he lived, and went in, as Mark says, (<41543>Mark 15:43), boldly; not being ashamed of Christ crucified, or afraid to own him, and show his respect to him as dead, though he knew he should incur the displeasure, reproach, and persecution of the Jews:

and begged the body of Jesus; which could not be taken down and interred, without the leave of the Roman governor; and which was generally granted to the friends of the deceased, when asked; otherwise they were buried in places [f1723] appointed for such persons; (see Gill on "<40733>Matthew 27:33"). And this would have been the case of Christ, had not Joseph craved his body; and which he did, to prevent its being abused by the Jews, and interred in such an ignominious manner:

then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered; to Joseph, after he had understood by the centurion that Jesus was dead, which he at first could not tell how to believe, and marvelled at it, (<41544>Mark 15:44,45). Joseph might the more easily obtain his request, as he was a person of character and riches; and because Pilate himself had a good opinion of Jesus, and of his innocence, as well as his wife was much in his favour: so that Joseph had no difficulty to obtain the body of Christ; but as soon as he asked, he had the favour granted, and orders were given to the centurion and his soldiers, to deliver it to him.

Ver. 59. *And when Joseph had taken the body*, etc.] Down from the cross, with the assistance of others, or from the hands of those who had orders to deliver it to him:

he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth: that is, he wound up the body in it round and round, as was the custom of the Jews; (see <40506>Acts 5:6) (<43144>John 11:44). Nor was it usual to bury in any thing but linen: so it is said [f1724],

> "let the wrappings, or grave clothes, be µynbl ^tçp lç, "of white linen"; and let not the price of them be dear, for it is forbidden to bury in wrappings of silk, or broidered garments, even

> to a prince of Israel: for this is pride and destruction, and the work of the Gentiles."

This clean linen cloth, in which the dead body of Christ was wrapped, may be an emblem of his purity and innocence, who did no sin; nor did he die for any of his own, but for the sins of others; and also of his pure and spotless righteousness, which is compared to fine linen, clean and white, and which he now had wrought out, and brought in; (see <66908>Revelation 19:8).

Ver. 60. *And laid it in his own new tomb*, etc.] Christ was laid not in his own, but in another's tomb; for as in his lifetime he had not where to lay his head; so when he was dead, he had no sepulchre of his own to put his body in: and moreover, this shows that as he was born for others, and suffered and died not for himself, but them; so he was buried for them, as well as rose again for their justification: and it was a "new" tomb in which he was laid, in which none had been laid before; and was so ordered by providence, for the confirmation of the truth of his resurrection; for had another body been laid there, it might have been said that it was that, and not his that was raised. The Jews distinguish between a new grave, and an old grave [f1725]:

> "a new grave may be measured, and sold, and divided; an old one may not be measured, nor sold, nor divided: there is a new grave, which is as an old one; and an old one, which is as a new one; an old grave, in which are ten dead bodies, which is not in the power of the owners, lo! this is as a new grave."

Which he had hewn out in the rock; it was usual with the Jews to make their sepulchres in rocks:

> "in the midst (of the court of the sepulchre, they say [f1726]) two caves are opened, one on one side, and the other on the other; R. Simeon says, four on the four sides; Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel says, all are [lshypl, "according to the rock";"

i.e. according to the nature of the rock, out of which the sepulchre is hewn; (see <23216>Isaiah 22:16).

And he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre; for the sepulchres were made with doors to go in and out at: hence we often read [f1727] of rbqh jtph, "the door of the sepulchre"; and this was not only the

custom of the Jews, but of other nations also [f1728]: the stone rolled to the door, was what the Jews call, ללג, from its being rolled to, and from the door of the sepulchre; and which, they say [f1729], was a large and broad stone, with which the mouth of the sepulchre was stopped above: and it was at the shutting up of the sepulchre with this stone, that mourning began [f1730]; and after it was shut with this sepulchral stone, it was not lawful to open it [f1731]: now this was done by Joseph, to preserve the body from any injury, either from beasts, or from the Jews:

and when he had so done, *he departed* to his own house; for the sabbath drew on, and there was no more time to do any thing more in this affair. The Syriac version reads these last clauses in the plural number; "they rolled a great stone, and they put it", etc. and they went away; intimating, that Joseph did not do this himself; the stone was too great; but by others, or with their assistance. It may be observed, that all this was done on a feast day; on one of the days of the feast of the passover, when no servile work was to be done; and yet this was agreeably to the Jewish canons, which say [f1732],

> "they do all things needful for the dead on a feast day; they shave his head, and wash his clothes, and make him a coffin; and if they have no boards, they bring timber and saw boards of it, silently within doors; and if the person is a man of note, they do it even in the street; but they do not cut wood out of the forest, to saw planks of it for the coffin; nor do they hew stones, to build a tomb with them."

In this case, there was no need for the latter, because the sepulchre in which the body of Christ was laid, had been hewn out of a rock before; but the body was wrapped in a clean linen cloth, and wound up in it with myrrh and aloes to preserve it, and was interred; and so the women on this day, prepared spices and ointments, to anoint it with; though they rested on the sabbath day according to the commandment; but then as soon as that was over, though it was a feast day, they came to the sepulchre with their spices and ointments, ([4256]Luke 23:56 24:1).

Ver. 61. *And there was Mary Magdalene and the other Mary*, etc.] The wife of Cleophas, and the mother of James and of Joses:

sitting over against the sepulchre; observing where the body of Christ was put, and how it was laid; for they intended to prepare spices and ointments

to anoint it with; and were mourning for the death of Christ: for sitting was a mourning posture, which now they were allowed, the body being taken down from the cross, and interred by leave of the governor; for, for one that died as a malefactor, they might not use the outward signs of mourning: the canon is this [f1733]; for such

> "they do not mourn, but they grieve; and there is no grieving but in the heart:"

hence these women before stood, (<43>19:25John 19:25), but now they sat.

Ver. 62. *Now the next day that followed the day of preparation*, etc.] Which was the sabbath day; for the day of preparation was the day before the sabbath, (<41>15:42Mark 15:42), in which they prepared every thing necessary for the sabbath, and therefore was so called: and as this introduces the account of the chief priests and Pharisees, making application to Pilate, to secure the sepulchre; and which by his leave they did, by sealing the stone, and setting a guard about the sepulchre; it shows what consciences these men had, who accused the disciples of Christ of a violation of the sabbath, for plucking a few ears of corn on that day; and sought to kill Jesus, because he healed a man on it, and bid him take up his bed and walk; and yet they themselves could leave their devotions, and first meet together and agree upon an address to Pilate, and then go in a body to his palace; and having obtained their request, march to Joseph's garden, and make the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch, which were servile works, and, according to their laws and traditions, not to be done on the sabbath day; and yet they scrupled them not, notwithstanding their characters and profession, which follow:

the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate; these were the inveterate and implacable enemies of Christ; they took counsel how to put him to death; they employed Judas to betray him, and sent a band of soldiers with him to take him; they suborned false witnesses against him; they moved the people to prefer Barabbas to him; they got him condemned to death, and followed him to the cross, where they mocked him; and still, like the troubled sea, they were restless and uneasy; for though he was dead, they feared his resurrection; and though they could not prevent the thing, they consult to hinder the credit of it.

Ver. 63. *Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said*, etc.] Meaning Jesus; for no better name could they give him alive or dead, and they chose

to continue it; and the rather to use it before Pilate, who had a good opinion of his innocence; and to let him see, that they still retained the same sentiments of him: tysm, “a deceiver”, is with the Jews [f1734],

> “a private person, that deceives a private person; saying to him there is a God in such a place, so it eats, and so it drinks; so it does well, and so it does ill.”

But which can never agree with Jesus, who was not a private person, but a public preacher; and who taught men, not privately, but openly, in the temple and in the synagogues; nor did he teach idolatry, or any thing contrary to the God of Israel, or to the unity of the divine being; or which savoured of, and encouraged the polytheism of the Gentiles. The Ethiopic version renders these words thus; “Sir, remember”, etc. as if Christ had said this to Pilate in their hearing, and therefore put him in mind of it.

While he was yet alive; so that they owned that he was dead; and therefore could not object this to the truth of his resurrection, that he was taken down from the cross alive, and did not die:

after three days I will rise again: now, though he said to his to his disciples privately, (<40162>Matthew 16:21 17:23), yet not clearly and expressly to the Scribes and Pharisees; wherefore they must either have it from Judas, and lied in saying they remembered it: or they gathered it either from what he said concerning the sign of the prophet Jonas, (<40124>Matthew 12:40), or rather from his words in (<43219>John 2:19), and if so, they acted a most wicked part, in admitting a charge against him, as having a design upon their temple, to destroy it, and then rebuild it in three days; when they knew those words were spoken by him concerning his death, and resurrection from the dead: they remembered this, when the disciples did not: bad men have sometimes good memories, and good men bad ones; so that memory is no sign of grace.

Ver. 64. *Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure*, etc.] By this also they own, that he was buried; and they knew in what, and whose sepulchre he was laid, and where it was; and request of Pilate, that as he had given leave to Joseph to take the body and inter it, that he would also give orders that the sepulchre might be watched, that no body might come near it, and remove the body, and that

until the third day: not from the time they made this request, but from the time of Christ's death; for no longer did they desire the sepulchre to be guarded; for if he did not rise, and no pretensions could be made to it in that time, they then very likely intended to expose his dead body, and triumph over him as an impostor; and after that time, they cared not what became of it, and were in no concern about watching the sepulchre; but till then they judged it necessary and desired it,

lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away: but of this there was no danger; they were too fearful and timorous to do such an action, had they been ever so much inclined to it; they all forsook him and fled immediately upon his apprehension; nor durst any of them appear at the time of his crucifixion, but John; and were now shut up for fear of the Jews; and besides, they had forgot what Christ said to them about his resurrection, though these men remembered it, and even disbelieved it when it was told them: the phrase "by night", is not in two copies of Beza's, nor in the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, nor in Munster's Hebrew Gospel; but is in other copies, and in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions:

and say unto the people, he is risen from the dead; to the common people, that were illiterate, credulous, and easily imposed on: as for themselves, who were the learned, the wise and knowing, they were in no danger of being carried away with such a deception; but the populace, for whom they pretend a great concern, were:

so the last error shall be worse than the first; either their own error and mistake, should the sepulchre be neglected, and an opportunity given for such a report; this would be of more fatal consequence than their first mistake, in suffering him and his followers to go on so long: or rather, the error of the people, in believing that Jesus was the Messiah; which would be greatly strengthened and received by greater numbers, should it be given out, and there was any proof of it, that he was risen from the dead: nor were they mistaken in this, for the number of the disciples and followers of Christ greatly increased after his resurrection; to an hundred and twenty, which was their number upon Christ's resurrection, three thousand were added at one time; being converted under one sermon, and that the first preached after Christ was risen.

Ver. 65. *Pilate said unto them, ye have a watch*, etc.] Meaning either the watch of the temple, said to be placed in the tower of Antonia, for the

service of it: hence mention is made of the captain of the temple, (<4401>Acts 4:1), but it is not likely they would remove the temple guards, to watch a sepulchre night and day: or rather, therefore, the soldiers that had had the care of the crucifixion of Christ, and watched him on the cross, are designed: the words may be read imperatively, “have yea watch”, or “take a watch”, as the Ethiopic version renders it, and which seems best; for if they had a watch already, what occasion had they to have applied to Pilate for one? but having none, he gives them leave to take one, or such a number of soldiers as were sufficient:

go your way; as fast as you can, take the watch as soon as you please, make no stay, but satisfy yourselves in this point:

make [it] as sure as you can; or, as you know how to do it, and what will be proper and necessary.

Ver. 66. *So they went*, etc.] From Pilate’s palace, to the garden of Joseph, and to the sepulchre there; which whether more than a sabbath day’s journey, or two thousand cubits, may be inquired; and if so, then they broke one of their own traditions, which allowed a person to go no further on a sabbath day; (see Gill on “<4401>Acts 1:12”).

And made the sepulchre sure; in the following manner,

sealing the stone; that was rolled to the door of it, it may be with some public seal, with Pilate’s, or with the sanhedrim’s; as the stone at the mouth of the lions’ den, in which Daniel was put, was sealed with the king’s signet, and with the signet of his lords, (<2706>Daniel 6:17), that there might be no change of the sentence upon him, and by which it appeared, that his deliverance was by no human assistance: so the stone at Christ’s sepulchre was sealed, that it could not be removed without breaking it; which would show, whether any fraudulent methods were taken to remove the body:

and setting a watch; a guard of soldiers, to observe and prevent any person coming near it; or “with the watch”: they made sure the sepulchre with the watch; or sealed the stone, the watch being present; all which was overruled by the providence of God, for the greater confirmation of the truth of Christ’s resurrection: by the methods taken, it clearly appears, there could be no fraud in the case; the body was laid in a tomb, where no corpse had ever been before; in a tomb hewed out of a rock, to which there was no access, but at the door; where a great stone was rolled; and this had a seal upon it, and a guard of soldiers about it; and hereby there were more

witnesses of Christ’s resurrection, than otherwise would have been; as the soldiers, though they were afterwards bribed to tell another story; and even the chief priests and Pharisees were convicted that he was risen, or they would never have taken such a method with the soldiers, as they did.

CHAPTER 28

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 28

Ver. 1. *In the end of the sabbath*, etc.] This clause is by some joined to the last verse of the preceding chapter, but stands better here, as appears from (<41601>Mark 16:1), and intends not what the Jews call the sabbath eve, for that began the sabbath; but what they call `tbç yaxwm`, "the goings out of the sabbath"; and as Mark says, (<41601>Mark 16:1), "when the sabbath was past": that is, when the sun was set, and any stars appeared. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel render it, "the evening of the sabbath"; and the Persic version, "the night of the sabbath"; but must mean, not the evening and night, which preceded the sabbath, and was a part of it, but what followed it, and belonged to the first day.

As it began to dawn; not the day, but the night; a way of speaking used by the Jews, who call the night, `rwa`, "light": thus they say [f1735], `rç[ h[bral rwa`, "on the light, or night of the fourteenth" (of the month Nisan) "they search for leavened bread", etc. And so the word is used, in (<42354>Luke 23:54), of the eve of the sabbath, or the beginning of it, as here of the going out of it;

towards the first day of the week, or "sabbaths"; so the Jews used to call the days of the week, the first day of the sabbath, the second day of the sabbath, etc. take an instance or two [f1736]

> "The stationary men fast four days in the week, from the second day to the fifth day; and they do not fast on the sabbath eve (so they sometimes call the sixth day), because of the glory of the sabbath; nor `tbçb djab`, "on the first day of the sabbath", or week, that they may not go from rest and delight, to labour and fasting, and die."

On which the Gemara has these words [f1737];

"the stationary men go into the synagogue, and sit four fastings; tbçb ynçb, "on the second of the sabbath", or "week": on the third, and on the fourth, and on the fifth."

Came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and mother of James and Joses, with whom also was Salome, the mother of Zebedee's children, (<41601>Mark 16:1). There seems to be some difference between the evangelists about the time of the women's coming to the sepulchre. Matthew says, it was "at the end of the sabbath, when it began to dawn; towards the first day of the week". John says, that "Mary Magdalene" came "when it was yet dark", (<43001>John 20:1), and yet Mark says, that they came "at the rising of the sun", (<41602>Mark 16:2). Though they all agree it was early in the morning: all they say is no doubt true, and may be reconciled thus. As soon as the sabbath was ended, the women set out on their journey, and as they went, bought spices and ointment to anoint the body with: they passed through the gates of the city before they were shut, and might stay some time in the suburbs; when Mary Magdalene, eager to be at the sepulchre, set out first, whilst it was dark, and came back and reported to Peter what she had seen, and returned again by such time the other women came, which was at sunrising. From all the accounts it is clear, that he rose, as is expressly said, (<41609>Mark 16:9), on the first day of the week, and which was the third from his death: on the sixth day, which was Friday, he was crucified, and buried that evening; he lay in the grave all sabbath day, or Saturday; and rose early on the first day of the week, before the women got to the sepulchre; who came thither, as it is here said,

to see the sepulchre: not merely to see it, for they had seen it before, and where, and how the body of Christ was laid in it; but to see whether they could enter into it, and anoint the body with the spices and ointments, which they had prepared and brought with them for that purpose.

Ver. 2. *And behold there was a great earthquake*, etc.] Or "there had been one"; which, how far it reached, and whether further than the spot of ground in which the sepulchre was, is not certain: it was an emblem of the shaking of the earth by the preaching of the Gospel, the sound of which was now to go after Christ's resurrection to the ends of the world; and a prelude of the general resurrection, when the earth shall be shaken, and the graves opened, and the dead come forth; and was a symbol and token of the presence and majesty of Christ, at whose rising, as at his death, the

earth shook and trembled. Think whether the watch could now be asleep, as they afterwards gave out, (<40:28:13>Matthew 28:13). The Persic version renders it very wrongly; “and there was great consternation and fear”; which was the consequence of the earthquake, and the descent of the angel, and was so great that it was not possible for the keepers to sleep, if ever so much inclined:

for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven; perhaps Gabriel, who brought the news of the conception of Christ to the virgin, and of his incarnation to the shepherds, and might be the same angel that strengthened him in the garden: nor is this any contradiction to the other evangelists, which speak of two angels, (<42:24:4>Luke 24:4) (<43:20:12>John 20:12), for Matthew does not say there were no more than one, though he makes mention but of one.

And came and rolled back the stone from the door; of the sepulchre, which by Joseph, or his orders, was put there, and was sealed by the Jews. This might be done, that way might be made for the risen body of Christ to pass out of the sepulchre; for to suppose, as some do, that he penetrated through this stone with his risen body, is not to be credited: it is true, he could have caused the stone to have given way, or removed it himself, and put it in the place again; as he caused the doors of the house in which the disciples were, to open and shut so quick, that they could not discern it when he appeared in the midst of them, (<43:20:19>John 20:19); (see <44:12:10>Acts 12:10), but he might choose to do it by the ministry of an angel, which is no ways derogatory to his power and majesty, but rather agreeable. Moreover, this might be done, that the women might have access to the sepulchre, and enter into it, which was the thing they were concerned about by the way, who should roll away the stone for them. Besides, this the angel did, as a token that Christ was risen, and to let the guard know as much, who, if they thought fit, might come and see what was done; but chiefly the stone was rolled away by the angel, as an emblem of the acquittance and discharge of Christ, as the surety of his people. He had taken upon him their sins; he had bore them in his body on the tree; he had suffered and died for them, and was laid as a prisoner in the grave; and now full satisfaction being made, an angel is sent from heaven to roll away the stone; thereby signifying, that the debt was fully paid, and he was now legally discharged. It is added,

and sat upon it; thereby showing who it was that rolled it away; that it was done by him, not by the earthquake, nor by any human power: he sat there defying the guard of soldiers to come nigh; and waiting for the coming of the women, to tell them the good news, that their Lord was risen; and as the keeper of the sepulchre, that no corpse might be brought and laid in the room of Christ, and it be said that he was not risen. This posture of the angel does not contradict what other evangelists say of this, and the other angel, that they stood by the women, and also were sitting in the sepulchre, (<41165>Mark 16:5 <42404>Luke 24:4 <43012>John 20:12), for each was true: when the women first came, the angel sat upon the stone; after that, with the other, stood by them; when having invited them to the grave, placed themselves, sitting the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Christ had lain.

Ver. 3. *His countenance was like lightning*, etc.] There was such a lustre and brightness in his face, that it glittered like lightning: such a description is in (<27106>Daniel 10:6),

and his raiment white as snow: the word "white" is left out in the Vulgate Latin, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel: the angel appeared clad in white, as a token of the purity and innocence of his nature; and because of the victory and triumph of Christ over death and the grave; and that he might be known and taken by the women for a good angel, it being a commonly received notion of the Jews, that ministering angels were clothed in white [f1738].

> "Said R. Ame to R. Levi, show me the Persians; he said to him, they are like to the mighty men of the house of David: show me the Chaberin, (another nation near the Persians,) they are like to destroying angels: show me the Ishmaelites, they are like to devils of the house of Hacsa: show me the disciples of the wise men in Babylon, they are like to the ministering angels."

Upon which the gloss says,

> ""to the devils", because they are clothed in black, and are like to devils; to "the ministering angels", µynbl yçwbl, "they are clothed in white", and veiled like the ministering angels; as it is written in (<26902>Ezekiel 9:2), "and the man was clothed with linen": and it is said [f1739] of R. Judah, that he was veiled, and sat in fine linen fringed, and was like to an angel of the Lord of hosts: and

elsewhere [f1740] it is said, who are the ministering angels? the Rabbins: and why are they called ministering angels? because they are fringed, as the ministering angels, in beautiful garments."

Ver. 4. *And for fear of him the keepers did shake*, etc.] Though they were soldiers, Roman soldiers and veterans, who had been used to terrible sights in the field of battle; were men of courage, and fearless of danger; and yet were seized with a panic, and every limb of them shook and trembled at the sight of the angel, for fear he was come as an executioner of divine vengeance upon them; who had been concerned in the crucifixion of Christ, had watched him as he hung upon the cross, and now his body in the sepulchre: and even supposing no consciousness of guilt in them, or dread of punishment from him; yet such was the glory and majesty in which he appeared, of which they had never seen the like before, that it had this effect upon them:

and became as dead men: they turned pale, as dead men, and had scarce any life, or spirit, left in them.

Ver. 5. *And the angel answered and said unto the women*, etc.] Who being come up, were also affrighted at the sight of the angel. The Arabic version leaves out the first part, "and the angel answered": which is a Jewish way of speaking, when nothing goes before, to which it is a reply; and renders the other part thus, "and said to the two women": but from the other evangelists it appears, that there were more women than two; (see <41601>Mark 16:1 <42410>Luke 24:10),

fear not ye; some put an emphasis upon the word "ye", as if used in opposition to the keepers, who had reason to be afraid, but not these good women. It was very common with gracious persons to be filled with fear at the sight of an angel, as Zacharias, and the shepherds; but without reason; they are their friends, their fellow servants, and ministering spirits to them. The Persic version adds, "but come near before, for ye are his familiars": the reason alleged, by the angel, why they had no reason to fear, is,

for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified: the knowledge which angels have of saints is very considerable, and which arises from their frequent embassies to them, care and guardianship of them, the good offices they perform, and their several ministrations to them; and the knowledge which the angel had of these good women, might not be from immediate revelation, but from the observations he had made of them: they

had followed Jesus from Galilee, they had attended him all the while he was on the cross, and were now come to his grave to anoint him; and from their words and gestures, the angel might know that they were the disciples of Christ, and now sought him; and therefore had no reason to fear, as those who were his adversaries: and indeed, such as seek a crucified Christ, and life and salvation by him, have no reason to be afraid of any thing; not of sin, and its damning power, since Christ saves, his blood cleanses, and his righteousness justifies from all sin; nor of the law, its menaces, curses, and condemnation, for Christ has redeemed them from it; nor of Satan, and his principalities and powers, who are spoiled by Christ, and out of whose hands he has ransomed his people; nor of the world, since Christ has overcome it, and delivered his people from it; nor of death, whose sting is taken away, and that abolished as a penal evil; nor of hell, and wrath to come, from which he has saved them; and much less of good angels, who are kindly disposed to them: and such are they that seek a crucified Christ, whom Christ has first sought, and looked up, and found in redemption and the effectual calling; who are made sensible of their lost and dangerous state by nature, to whom Christ has been manifested; and who see both their need of him, and his worth and value: these seek to him in the first place, and with all their hearts, for cleansing, pardon, righteousness, rest, food, salvation, and eternal life: they seek for him where he is, and is revealed, in the Scriptures, in the Gospel, in the ordinances, and at the Father's right hand.

Ver. 6. *He is not here*, etc.] In the grave, where he was laid, and these women saw him laid: he was dead, but is now alive; he was laid in the grave, but God would not leave him there, nor suffer him to see corruption:

for he is risen, as he said; not stolen away, as the chief priests hired the soldiers to say he was; nor removed to another place, as Mary Magdalene first thought, when she found him gone; but he was risen from the dead, by the power of his Father, and by his own power, as he had before said he should. In one of Beza's exemplars it is added, "to you"; for the words that Christ said in Galilee, that he should be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and rise again, the third day, were said in the presence and hearing of these women, and to them, as well as to the disciples; (see <4246>Luke 24:6-8). This clause is left out in the Persic version: it follows,

come see the place where the Lord lay; the Lord both of angels and men: the Syriac and Persic versions read, “our Lord”. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions leave out the word “Lord”, and only read “he”. Christ, as the Son of God, lay in the bosom of his Father, and in the arms of his love, from all eternity; as mediator, he lay in the womb of God’s purposes and decrees, being his elect, in whom his soul delighted; as man, he lay in the womb of the virgin; and, as an example to his people, he lay, when baptized, in the waters of Jordan; and as the language of the ordinance of the Lord’s supper is, “come see my hands, and my feet”; that of baptism is, “come see the place where the Lord lay”: but here it regards the grave, in which the body of Christ had been laid; and the women are invited by the angel to go along with him, into the sepulchre, to see the place where he had lain; to assure them the more of the truth of his resurrection, that they might, with their own eyes, see that he was gone, who before had beheld where, and how he was laid; as also to affect them with the condescending grace of Christ, in making his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; as well as to strengthen their faith in their discharge from sin and condemnation by Christ, who was risen for their justification; as also to let them see that the grave was perfumed and sanctified by him; and he was risen as the first fruits and pledge of them that slept.

Ver. 7. *And go quickly and tell his disciples*, etc.] Who were mourning and weeping for the death of Christ; despairing of his resurrection, of which, at least, they had but little hope, nor indeed much thought, though Christ had so often told them of it; and therefore a quick dispatch was necessary to remove their sorrow, revive their faith, and relieve their souls, to which the errand these women were sent upon, and the news they were to bring, had a tendency; namely,

that he is risen from the dead: than which nothing could be more joyful news unto them, as it is to all believers; for on this depend the justification and salvation of God’s elect; their security from condemnation, and their resurrection from the dead. This news was first brought to the apostles by women, who were greatly honoured hereby; that as the woman was first in the transgression, and the cause of death, so the first news of the resurrection of Christ to life, and of life and immortality being by him, who was first showed the path of life, were brought by women; and to a woman it was that Christ first appeared after his resurrection, (<4169>Mark 16:9). The Vulgate Latin only reads, “that he is risen”, as in the former verse.

And behold he goeth before you into Galilee. These are still the words of the angel to the women, telling them what they should say to the apostles, that he should go before them into Galilee; and which might serve to confirm the resurrection to them, and to give the greater credit to the report of the women, since this very thing Christ had promised them before; (see <4026>Matthew 26:32), though it was also true, that he should go before these women into Galilee, and who also should see him there: for the next words,

there shall ye see him; though they may chiefly design the apostles, who should have a sight of Christ in Galilee, yet may include these women also:

lo! I have told you; I "Gabriel", who am an angel of the Lord, sent by him to inform you of these things; and you may depend upon the truth of them, that Jesus is risen, and that he is about, in a very little time, to go before his disciples into Galilee, where they shall see him with their bodily eyes, and have a free and familiar conversation with him. The reasons why this place was pitched upon for Christ and his apostles to meet in, were, because here he first preached, and chiefly conversed, and had the largest number of disciples there, to whom he meant to show himself, as he did, (<4606>1 Corinthians 15:6), as well as to his apostles: moreover, the apostles were of Galilee, and so were these women; and to go into their own country, and there meet with Jesus, must be very agreeable; and besides, there they would be safer and freer from the molestations and persecutions of the Jews; and might follow their former calling, as they did, until the time they were to be further employed in preaching the Gospel.

Ver. 8. *And they departed quickly from the sepulchre*, etc.] Or "they went out from it", as it may be rendered, and as it is in (<4108>Mark 16:8), which shows, that they went into the sepulchre upon the invitation of the angel, and saw the place where the Lord lay; and here it was the angel gave them their instructions, and errand to the disciples; which as soon as they received, they quitted the sepulchre in all haste, partly in obedience to the angel's orders, and partly through surprise and fear; for Mark says, "they fled from the sepulchre", (<4108>Mark 16:8), as persons terrified and affrighted: and it is added here,

with fear and great joy: a mixture of both these; with fear and dread, because of the vision they had seen, and with joy at the news of Christ's resurrection; and yet in this their faith might not be so confirmed, as to have no doubt about it: they might fear the body was taken away, and

removed to some other place, and that this they had seen might be a deception and a delusion. However, between both joy and fear, they set out,

and did run to bring his disciples word; as Mary Magdalene ran to Peter, (<43 20 2>John 20:2), nor is running unusual for women, or unbecoming them on certain occasions; (see <01 24 20>Genesis 24:20,28 29:12). Their fright, as well as their joy, and their regard to the angel's order, might cause them to run, and make the quicker dispatch.

Ver. 9. *And as they went to tell his disciples*, etc.] This clause is wanting in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, and in Beza's most ancient copy; but it stands in the Ethiopic version, and in Munster's Hebrew Gospel,

behold, Jesus met them: that they might be confirmed in what the angel had told them, and their fear might be removed, and their joy increased; and also be capable of reporting to the disciples not only what they had heard from the angel, but what they had seen themselves; they being now eyewitnesses, as well as earwitnesses of his resurrection: so souls in the way of their duty, as these women were, oftentimes meet with Jesus, and he with them, as they may expect, and indeed not otherwise:

saying, all hail; all health of soul and body, all happiness and prosperity, both temporal, spiritual, and eternal, attend you. The Syriac and Persic versions, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel render it, "peace be to you"; which, it is highly probable, was the phrase used by Christ, since it was the common form of salutation among the Jews, and what Christ made use of at other times; (see <43 20 19>John 20:19,26),

and they came; near unto him, being encouraged by the above salutation, and knowing who he was by his voice, habit, and gesture:

and held him by the feet; they threw themselves prostrate at his feet, in token of reverence and humility; and they laid hold on his feet, that they might know, and be assured that he was really risen, and that it was not a spirit, or a mere phantom and appearance; and they held him in affection to him, and as desirous of his continuance with them:

and worshipped him: with divine adoration, expressing their love to him; their faith and hope in him, owning him to be their Lord and God; he being,

by his resurrection from the dead, declared to be the Son of God, with power; and so the proper object of religious worship.

Ver. 10. *Then said Jesus unto them, be not afraid*, etc.] Of me, or what you have seen; or lest there should be any deception in the case. In other respects the saints are subject to fears; as lest they should have no share in the love of God, nor interest in Christ, or the work of God is not begun in their hearts; and by reason of sin, lest that should get the ascendant over them, and they perish by it, and so fall short of eternal glory; when it is the will of Christ to have these fears removed, by shedding abroad his love in their hearts, by affording his gracious presence, views of interest in him, and promises of his grace, by sending his Spirit, word, and ministers to comfort them, by discovering and applying pardoning grace to them, and showing his power to keep them.

Go tell my brethren; meaning not his kinsmen according to the flesh, but his disciples, who were in this relation to him, as all the elect of God are; not only through his incarnation, he being their "Goel", their near kinsman, and Redeemer, and of the same nature, flesh, and blood with them, and like unto them in all things, excepting sin; but on account of their divine adoption, to which they were predestinated, and which they received through his redemption, and under the witnessings of the Spirit: he that is his God being theirs; and he that is his Father being theirs also: and which was made manifest in their regeneration, by their faith in him; and obedience to him, and his Father; (see <4012949>Matthew 12:49,50). A very considerable relation this is, that the disciples stood in to Christ, who is the eternal Son of God, and heir of all things; and wonderful grace and condescension it was in Christ to own the relation, when they had so lately forsaken him; and now he was raised from the dead, and had glory given him:

that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me: he does not say they should not see him before: for they saw him, all but Thomas, that very evening, and all of them eight days after; and both times were before they went into Galilee: but this he said, to put them in mind of what he had promised them, (<4012632>Matthew 26:32), and to confirm the words of the angel; and which might serve for a confirmation of the truth of these things, both to the women, and to the disciples, when they observed the exact agreement between the words of Christ, and of the angel. Moreover, it may be remarked, that wherever Christ has appointed to meet his people,

they may expect, and be sure to see him at one time or another; as in his house and ordinances, where they are sometimes indulged with a sight of him by faith, which is an appropriating, assimilating, soul rejoicing, and satisfying one; when with pleasure they behold the glory of his divine person, and of his offices, the transcendent excellencies and perfections of his nature, his love and his loveliness, the beauty and amiableness of him, the fulness of grace, life, and righteousness in him, and so the suitableness of him as their Saviour and Redeemer; and when they are favoured with communion with him, and the joys of his salvation.

Ver. 11. *Now when they were going*, etc.] Or were gone from the sepulchre: that is, the women, Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, and their companions, when they were going, or gone, and before they could come to the disciples, to inform them of what they had seen and heard, and deliver the message both of the angel, and of Christ, unto them:

behold, some of the watch came unto the city: that is, "of Jerusalem". The word "behold" is left out in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; but ought to be retained as expressive of what is wonderful, and worthy of observation and attention; that the very persons who were placed to prevent every thing, that might be the foundation of a report, that Christ was risen, should be the first persons that should relate it to the chief priests and elders, that employed them: not all the watch, for some still stayed behind, till they had orders to come away; but some of them, the principal of them, or who were deputed by the rest, came. The Persic version, rather commenting than translating, has these words:

> "moreover, the rulers and governors, who watched the sepulchre, coming to themselves, returned to the city with a pale and frightened countenance."

And showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done; how that there had been a very great earthquake, and a very surprising appearance; one like a young man descended from the clouds, whose countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow, which filled them with astonishment and dread; that he rolled away the stone from the sepulchre, and then sat upon it; and that some women coming to the sepulchre, were shown by him where the body had been laid, but was now gone; and how, that after they had recovered themselves from the fright, they had themselves examined the sepulchre, and the body was certainly gone; and sure they were that the women did not carry it away, nor any other: all

which they thought proper to relate to the chief priests; partly on their own account, to clear themselves from the charge of bribery and corruption, and sloth and negligence; and partly that the chief priests might consider what was proper to be done at such a juncture.

Ver. 12. *And when they were assembled with the elders*, etc.] Upon this the grand sanhedrim was convened together, which consisted of the chief priests, Scribes, and elders;

and had taken counsel among themselves what steps to take to stifle this matter, that it might not spread and be believed by the people; they agreed upon this, as the best expedient, to bribe the soldiers to give a false account of it, as they did:

they gave large money unto the soldiers, or "sufficient money"; they gave large sums of money, as were enough to satisfy the soldiers; they gave them whatever they would have; for though these men were very covetous, yet upon this occasion gave liberally; and that perhaps which were for the sacrifices, or for the repair of the temple, or for the supply of the poor.

Ver. 13. *Saying, say ye his disciples came by night*, etc.] They charged them to tell every one that should ask them about this affair; and even publish it every where, that the disciples of Christ came in the dead of the night,

and stole him away while we slept: which was a very unlikely thing, and a foolish scheme this, for such a body of men to form. There is no show of probability in it, that the disciples, who were intimidated by the taking and putting Christ to death, and were now shut up in a house, for fear of the Jews, that these should venture out in the night, to take away the body of Christ, which was decently and honourably interred in a garden of one of his disciples: and when they knew it was guarded by a company of Roman soldiers; and who besides had no notion of his resurrection from the dead, nor never thought of it till he was risen, and therefore would never attempt any thing of this kind, in order to give out such a report. Moreover, had they took it away by stealth, it is not reasonable to think that they would afterwards have reported such a lie every where, that he was risen from the dead, when they were sure to obtain nothing by it, but reproach, afflictions, persecutions, and death: add to this, that this was never objected to them by their worst enemies, when they most strongly asserted his resurrection: nor was it a feasible account, or well put together, with respect to the

watch. It can hardly be thought that they should be all of them asleep at once; and if they were, it is much they were not awaked by the coming up of the disciples, and the rolling away of the stone, and the bustle there must be in taking up the body, and carrying it away; and besides, if they were asleep, and continued so, what is their evidence good for? for how could they know that his disciples came and took him away? if they awaked, though too late, and saw them at a distance, why did not they pursue them, who might easily have been overtaken with such a burden? at least, why did not they search their houses for the body? and take up both the women and the disciples, and prosecute them for it? and yet nothing of this was done. Besides, how came the linen clothes to be left behind? why did they take the napkin from his head, and give themselves all that trouble to unwrap the body, and carry it away naked? It is clear the chief priests themselves were convinced in their own minds, that he was truly risen, or they would have punished the soldiers severely for their sleep and negligence, and would never have given them money to spread such a story.

Ver. 14. *And if this come to the governor's ears*, etc.] Not the governor of the watch, but Pontius Pilate the governor of Judea: if this should be told him, and should be heard by him; or this matter should come before him, and be under his examination, and there should be any danger of punishment; for to sleep on the watch was severely punished by the Romans:

we will, persuade him; that this is the true state of the case, and intercede with him, and make use of all our interest, not to punish for it: or will persuade him, that though this is a false account, yet it will be much better that it should go in this way, for his own peace, and the peace of the nation, and the security of the Roman government; since, should it spread among the people, that this person was really raised from the dead, they would, one and all, believe he was the true Messiah, and would set him up as a king, and seize upon the government in favour of him:

and will secure you; indemnify you, bear you harmless, keep you from punishment; so that you need not be under any care, or concern on this account.

Ver. 15. *So they took the money, and did as they were taught*, etc.] Though they had been just now in the greatest fright and consternation imaginable, at the sight of the angel, and knew what was done; yet being

men of no religion or conscience, were tempted with the money, and took it, and reported every where what had been put into their mouths by the chief priests and elders.

And this saying is commonly reported among the Jews unto this day; to the time that Matthew wrote this Gospel; which according to the subscriptions to a most ancient copy of Beza's, and the Syriac and Arabic versions of De Dieu, was in the "eighth" year after our Lord's ascension; though others make it to be the "ninth"; and others the "fifteenth". The sense is, not that this narrative the evangelist gives, that the sanhedrim bribed the soldiers to give out such a lying story, was known to the Jews, and commonly reported by them; though some take this to be the sense; but that it was reported and believed among the Jews in common, to that time, that the disciples of Christ did really come in the night, and steal away the body of Christ, while the watch slept: to such judicial blindness, and hardness of heart, were they given up, as to believe a lie, and which had no appearance of truth in it. They have since contrived a more monstrous and ridiculous story than this. They say [f1741], that Judas, seeing where the body was laid, and the disciples sitting upon the tomb, and mourning over it, in the middle of the night, took his opportunity to take away the body, and buried it in his own garden, under a current of water; having first turned the water another way, and then put it in the same course as before; and which he afterwards discovered to the Jews; and the body was taken up and exposed, and insulted in the most ignominious manner: but alas! Judas had hanged himself some days before; and had he been living, would not have been capable of doing what they ascribe unto him.

Ver. 16. *Then the eleven disciples*, etc.] For Judas was not only gone from them, but was dead; so that there were now but eleven of them: went

away into Galilee: not directly, as soon as the women had delivered their message; for Christ appeared to them the same day at Jerusalem; and so he did at the same place that week; (see <430119>John 20:19, 26), but some time, after this they went together into Galilee, according to Christ's direction both before and after his resurrection, (<401632>Matthew 26:32 28:10),

into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them; either before his death, or since he was risen; and very likely at one of the above interviews he had with them. This is generally thought to be Mount Tabor; but of this there is no proof, nor certainty: it might be the mountain near Capernaum, on

which he taught, (<40:5:1>Matthew 5:1), or that, if not the same with the other, near the sea of Galilee, where Christ fed four thousand with seven loaves, and a few fishes, (<40:15:29>Matthew 15:29). A mountain was appointed for this meeting, both for solitariness and for sight; for here it was he was seen by above five hundred brethren at once, (<46:15:6>1 Corinthians 15:6).

Ver. 17. *And when, they saw him, they worshipped him*, etc.] With divine adoration, as the eternal Son of God; for so he was now declared to be by his resurrection from the dead, (<45:1:4>Romans 1:4),

but some doubted; or "some of them", as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; that is, some of the eleven disciples: not that they doubted now that Christ was risen from the dead; since he had appeared several times to them before this, and had given them all the proofs of the truth of his resurrection they could desire; but they, who worshipped him now in Galilee, had doubted before in Jerusalem; not only Thomas, but all of them: they looked upon the words of the women as idle tales; nor did the rest believe the two disciples, with whom Christ travelled to Emmaus: wherefore he upbraids them for their unbelief, (<42:24:11>Luke 24:11 <41:16:11>Mark 16:11,13,14), or else the sense is, that some of them, though they believed Christ was risen from the dead, of which they had had the strongest assurance; yet they doubted whether what they then saw on the mountain was he, or whether it was not a spirit, or a mere phantom; and therefore, as in the next verse, he "came" nearer to them, when they knew him: or else this may be understood of some of the seventy disciples, or of the five hundred brethren, who saw him at this time, and at first had some doubts of his resurrection, but were afterwards fully satisfied.

Ver. 18. *And Jesus came and spake unto them*, etc.] To the eleven disciples and apostles; for though there might be so large a number as before observed, yet the following words were only spoken to the apostles:

saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; which is to be understood of him, not as God, who has the same original and underived power and authority over all creatures, and things in heaven and earth, as the Father has; but as mediator, to whom all things are delivered by the Father; and not of a power of doing this, or the other thing, or of omnipotence, being the Almighty; nor of doing miracles, and forgiving sins, which he had, and exercised before his death and resurrection, but of governing: he was king before, but his kingdom was not with observation; but now he was declared, and made manifest, to be both Lord and Christ;

he had “all” power and authority for the settling the affairs of his church and kingdom, to appoint offices and officers in it, and, to bestow gifts upon men, to qualify them for the same, and to institute ordinances to be observed till his second coming: and this power of his reached to things in heaven; he having the angels in heaven subject to him, as ministering spirits to be sent forth by him at his pleasure; and all the gifts of the Spirit to dispose of as he thought good; and to things on earth, not only to the saints, whose King he is, and who are made willing to serve him; but to all flesh, to kings and princes, who rule and reign by him; and even to all the wicked of the world, who in some shape or another are made to subserve the ends of his mediatorial kingdom and government: and this is not usurped power, but what is given him, and what he has a right to exercise; having finished sin, abolished death, overcome the world, and destroyed the devil; and must reign till all enemies are subject to him: and this he says, and it was necessary to say it at this time, partly on account of his late sufferings and death, which were attended with weakness and reproach; and partly on account of the following commission he gives to his disciples, that it might be seen and believed, he had power and authority sufficient to give them such an one; as also to animate and encourage them under all the weakness, contempt, and persecution that should attend them in their ministry. The Syriac and Persic versions add, “as the Father hath sent me, even so I send you”, as in (<43D21>John 20:21), from whence these words seem to be taken.

Ver. 19. *Go ye therefore*, etc.] Into all the world; some into one place, and some into another; since his power and authority, and so now the commission he gave them, reached every where: before it was confined to Judea, but now it is extended to all the nations of the world; (see <40106>Matthew 10:6,7 <41615>Mark 16:15),

and teach all nations; Jews and Gentiles, first the one, and then the other, the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; whatever they had learned from Christ, or were ordered by him, or “disciple all nations”: make them disciples by teaching them; or, as the Persic version, by way of explanation, adds, “bring them to my religion and faith”: not that they were able to do this of themselves, but they were to teach men externally, or outwardly minister the word, whilst the Spirit of God internally applied it, and taught, and made men true disciples of Christ: and they are such, who have learned to know themselves, their sin, and lost estate by nature; to deny themselves, both sinful and righteous self; who have learnt to know

Christ, and the way of righteousness, peace, pardon, life, and salvation by him; and who are taught and enabled to part with all for Christ, and to bear all for his sake, and to believe in him, and give up themselves to him, and follow him whithersoever he goes:

baptizing them; not all nations, for the antecedent to the relative "them", cannot be "all nations"; since παντα τα εψνη, the words for "all nations", are of the neuter gender, whereas αυτους, "them", is of the masculine: nor can it be thought that it should be the mind of Christ, that all the individuals of all nations should be baptized, as Heathens, Turks, and Jews; but μαψευτας, "disciples", supposed and contained in the word μαψετευσατε, "teach", or "make disciples"; such as are taught, and made disciples by teaching, or under the ministry of the word by the Spirit of God: Christ's orders are to "baptize": wlbj, "dip" them, as Munster's Hebrew Gospel renders it; that is, in water, which, though not expressed, is implied; for with no other baptism could the apostles baptize: not with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; for this was Christ's peculiar prerogative; but with water, which they in obedience to this commission practised, (<4408>Acts 8:36,38 10:47), and which was to be done

in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; by the authority of these three divine persons, who all appeared, and testified their approbation of the administration of this ordinance, at the baptism of Christ: and as they are to be invocated in it, so the persons baptized not only profess faith in each divine person, but are devoted to their service, and worship, and are laid under obligation to obedience to them, Hence a confirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity, there are three persons, but one name, but one God, into which believers are baptized; and a proof of the true deity both of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and that Christ, as the Son of God, is God; since baptism is administered equally in the name of all three, as a religious ordinance, a part of divine instituted worship, which would never be in the name of a creature. This is the first, and indeed the only, place in which the Trinity of persons is expressed in this order, and in the selfsame words. Galatinus[f1742] pretends, that the ancient Jews used the same way of speaking. It would be well if proof could be made of it: he asserts it to be in Zohar on (<5004>Deuteronomy 6:4), and in the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel on (<2306>Isaiah 6:3). In the former he says, it is expressed thus, "hear, O Israel; the Lord", he is called "the Father; our God", he is called the Son; "is one Lord", this is "the Holy Ghost", who proceeds from both; and again, by the same R. Simeon, it is said, "holy",

this is ba, “the Father”; “holy”, this is ^b, “the Son”; “holy”, this is çdqh jwr, “the Holy Ghost”: and in the latter after this manner, “Holy Father, Holy Son, and Holy Holy Ghost”; but no such words are now to be found in either of these places. He affirms, that he himself saw a copy of Jonathan’s Targum that had these words. The Jews often speak of the Tetragrammaton, or name of four letters, the name Jehovah, which they say is not lawful to be pronounced; and also of the name of twelve letters, which the above writer [f1743] makes to be “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost”; and of forty two letters, which from a book called Gale Razia, he says is,

> “Father God, Son God, Holy Ghost God, three in one, and one in three;”

which in the Hebrew language make up so many letters; but this wants better authority.

Ver 20. *Teaching them to observe all things*, etc.] All ordinances, not only baptism, but the Lord’s supper; all positive institutions, and moral duties; all obligations, both to God and men; all relative duties that respect the world, or one another, those that are without, and those that are within; and these are to be taught them, and therefore to be insisted on in the ministry of the word; and not merely in order that they may know them, and have the theory of them, but that the may put them into practice:

whatsoever I have commanded you; every thing that Christ has commanded, be it what it will, and nothing else; for Christ’s ministers are not to teach for doctrines the commandments of men; or enjoin that on the churches, which is of their own, or other men’s devising, and was never ordered by Christ; and for their encouragement he adds,

and lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world: meaning, not merely to the end of their lives, which would be the end of the world to them; nor to the end of the Jewish world, or state, which was not a great way off, though this is sometimes the sense of this phrase; but to the end of the world to come, the Gospel church state, which now took place; or to the end of the present world, the universe: not that the apostles should live to the end of it; but that whereas Christ would have a church and people to the end of the world, and the Gospel and the ordinances of it should be administered so long, and there should be Gospel ministers till that time; Christ’s sense is, that he would grant his presence to them, his immediate disciples, and to all that should succeed them in future generations, to the

end of time: and which is to be understood not of his corporeal presence, which they should not have till then, but of his spiritual presence; and that he would be with them, in a spiritual sense, to assist them in their work, to comfort them under all discouragements, to supply them with his grace, and to protect them from all enemies, and preserve from all evils; which is a great encouragement both to administer the word and ordinances, and attend on them.

FOOTNOTES

ft1 -- T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 116. 1. Vet. Nizzachou. p. 15, 39, 87, 94, 137, 186. Ed. Wagenseil.

ft2 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 43. 1.

ft3 -- Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 50:3. c. 39. p. 113. Vid. ib. 50:5. c. 8. p. 172. c 10. p. 175. & 50:6. c. 25. p. 226.

ft4 -- Adv. Haeres. 50:3. c 1.

ft5 -- In Matthew Tom. 50:p. 203. Ed. Huet.

ft6 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:3. cap. 24. p. 95.

ft7 -- Synops. sacr. Script. p. 134. Vol. 2.

ft8 -- Contra Haeres. 50:1. Haer. 29. & 30.

ft9 -- Catalog. Script. Eccles fol. 90. Tom. 1. ad Hedib. fol. 46. Tom. 3.

ft10 -- T. Hieros. Megilla, fol. 71. 2.

ft11 -- Bereshit. Rabba, sect. 36. fol. 32. 1.

ft12 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 9. 2.

ft13 -- Vid. Fabricii Biblioth. Graec. 50:4. c. 5. sect. 2. p. 197. & Vales. not. in Euseb. Eccl. Hist. p. 52.

ft14 -- Apud Wagenseil. Tela Ignea.

ft15 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 97. 1. Shir Hashirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.

ft16 -- Juchasin, fol. 8. 1. Tzeror Hammor. fol. 29. 3. & 154. 4.

ft17 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 30. fol. 131. 4. Caphtor, fol. 122. 1.

ft18 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 105. 4. Gloss in T. Bab. Maccot. fol. 23. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 49. 2. Zoher in Genesis fol. 63. 3.

ft19 -- T. Bab. Megilia, fol. 14. 2. Juchasin, fol. 10. 1. Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 7. 2. Abarb. Kimchi & Laniado in Joshua 6. 25. & Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Torah, pr. neg. 112.

ft20 -- Targ. in Ruth. 1:4. T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 105. 2. Horayot, fol. 10. 2. Nazir. fol 23. 2. Sota, fol. 47. 1. Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 109. 2. Shalshelet Hakabala fol. 8. 1.

ft21 -- Targ. in <0815>Ruth 3:15. T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 93. 7. Midrash Ruth, fol. 34. 4. Zohar in Gen, fol. 72. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 20. 4. & 123. 4. & 132. 4.

ft22 -- Juchasin, fol. 10. 2.

ft23 -- Targum, Aben Ezra & Kimchi in loc. & Zohar in Exodus fol. 71. 1.

ft24 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 278. 1. & 285. 2. Ed. Basil, T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 29. 1.

ft25 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunab, par. 2. p. 390.

ft26 -- Juchasin, fol. 10. 2.

ft27 -- Hist. Dynast. p. 45. Vid. Hieron. Comment. in Daniel 1:fol. 264. B.

ft28 -- Kimchi in <1317>1 Chronicles 3:17. & in <2420>Jeremiah 22:30.

ft29 -- Ib. in <1315>1 Chronicles 3:15.

ft30 -- Apud Vorst. Observ. in Ganz. Chronolog. p. 310.

ft31 -- Kimchi in <1319>1 Chronicles 3:19. & in Hagg. 1:1.

ft32 -- Juchasin, fol. 13. i.

ft33 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 49. 2.

ft34 -- T. Hieros. Taanith, fol. 68. 1. B. Rabba, sect. 98. fol. 85. 3.

ft35 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 70. 9.

ft36 -- P. 186.

ft37 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 54. 2. Bava Bathra, fol. 109. 2. & 110. 2. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 6. 1. Jucbasin, fol. 55. 2.

ft38 -- In <1324>1 Chronicles 3:24. Vid. Beckii Not. in ib. p. 56, 57.

ft39 -- Contra Haeres. 50:3. Haeres. 78.

ft40 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 3.

ft41 -- T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 4. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 14. 2. & Midrash Kohelet, fol. 81. 1.

ft42 -- T. Bab. Sanhed. fol. 43. 1.

ft43 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 10.

ft44 -- Vid. Pirke Abot. c. 5. sect. 2.

ft45 -- Attica sive 50:1. c. 10. p. 19.

ft46 -- Clio. 50:1. c. 184. p. 74.

ft47 -- Hilchot. Ishot. c. 1. sect. 1, 2, 3.

ft48 -- In loc.

ft49 -- Yebamot, c. 3. sect. 10.

ft50 -- Teldos Jesu, p. 3.

ft51 -- A. Gellii Noct. Attic. 50:6. c. 14.

ft52 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 103. 3.

ft53 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 103. 3. & Maimon. Yesode Hattorah. c. 7. 50:13.

ft54 -- Targum Jon. Ben Uzziel in loc.

ft55 -- Jarchi. in ²³Isaiah 7:14.

ft56 -- Gaon. in Aben Ezra, in ib.

ft57 -- Kimchi & Aben Ezra in ib. R. Isaac Chizuk. Emun. p. 1. c. 21.

ft58 -- See more of this in a book of mine, called “The Prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, literally fulfilled in Jesus”, ch. 5. p. 92, 93, etc.

ft59 -- R. David Ganz. Zemach David, pars 2. fol. 14. 2.

ft60 -- Itinerarium, p. 48.

ft61 -- Apolog. 2. p. 75.

ft62 -- Toldos, p. 7.

ft63 -- Hieros. Beracot. fol. 5. 1.

ft64 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 1.

ft65 -- Hieron. Epitaph. Paulae. fol. 59. E. Tom. 1.

ft66 -- R. David Ganz. Zemach David, pars 1. fol. 24. 1.

ft67 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 3. 2. Juchasin. fol. 17. 1. & 18. 1. & Seder Olam Zuta, p. 111.

ft68 -- Ib. col. 2.

ft69 -- T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 75. 1. Gloss. in ib. & Sota, fol. 22. 1. & Sanhedrim, fol. 39. 1.

ft70 -- Contr. Haeres. 50:3. Haeres. 30.

ft71 -- Clio sive 50:1. c. 101.

ft72 -- Alfiranzabadius in Pocock. Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 146.

ft73 -- In Ibid.

ft74 -- Apolog. p. 204.

ft75 -- Cyropaedia, 50:8. sect. 6.

ft76 -- De Abstinentia, 50:4. sect. 16.

ft77 -- De Divinatione, 50:i.

ft78 -- Hist. Var. 50:2. c. 17.

ft79 -- Contr. Haeres. 50:1. Haeres. 30. and 50:2. Haeres. 51.

ft80 -- Harmony, Vol. I. p. 205, 432, etc.

ft81 -- Harmony, p. 205, 437, 438, Vol. I. Hor. Hebrews p. 109. Vol. II.

ft82 -- Targum Onk. Jon. & Aben Ezra in loc. Zohar. in Exodus fol. 4. 1. Abarbinel Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 4. 3. Tzeror Hamor, fol. 126. 3.

ft83 -- See my book of the “Prophecies of the Messiah”, c. 7. p. 119, etc.

ft84 -- Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. p. 54.

ft85 -- lb. p. 70.

ft86 -- Zohar. in Genesis fol. 74. 3.

ft87 -- Zohar. in Exodus fol. 3. 3, 4.

ft88 -- lb. in Numbers fol 85. 4. and 86. 1.

ft89 -- Vid. Wolf. Bibl. Hebrews p. 1156.

ft90 -- Eclog. 9. 5:47.

ft91 -- Nat. Hist. 50:2. c. 25.

ft92 -- Vid. Fabricii Bibliothec. Latin. p. 142-146.

ft93 -- Jonathan ben Uzziel in loc.

ft94 -- Vol. II. p. 111.

ft95 -- Targum Jon. Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi & Abendana in loc. Abarbinel Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 62. 2. R. Isaac Chizuk Emuna, p. 279.

ft96 -- See my book of the “Prophecies of the Messiah”, etc. ch. 6. p. 104-116.

ft97 -- Apud Servium in Virgil Aeneid. 50:1. p. 471. Ed. Basil. 1586.

ft98 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 3, 4. & 71. 1.

ft99 -- Cyropaedia, 50:8. sect. 23.

ft100 -- R. David Kimchi.

ft101 -- Ludolph. Lex. Ethiop. p. 539, 542, 543.

ft102 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 107. 2. Cabala R. Abraham. Juchasin, fol. 16. 2.

ft103 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat. fol. 13. 1. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 104. 2.

ft104 -- Adv. Gentes, 50:1. p. 36.

ft105 -- Hist. Eccl. 50:1. c. 8. p. 25, 26.

ft106 -- Harmony of the New Testament, p. 6.

ft107 -- <40154>Luke 1:54.

ft108 -- Prophecies of the Messiah, etc. p. 123, etc.

ft109 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 1.

ft110 -- Antiq. 50:17. c. 3.

ft111 -- Saturnal. 50:2. c. 4.

ft112 -- Methurgemau in voce tylyl. Vid. Buxtorf. Lexicon Rab. in cadem voce & Synagog. Jud. c. 4. p. 80.

ft113 -- Prophecies of the Messiah, etc. p. 126, etc.

ft114 -- Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 304.

ft115 -- R. Abraham Seba Tzeror Hammor, fol. 47. 1.

ft116 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 13. 1. & in Leviticus fol. 8. 4.

ft117 -- Megillah Taanith apud Van Till. de anno, etc. Christ. Nat. p. 122.

ft118 -- De Bello Judaic. 50:1. c. 33. sect. 5. 7. & Antiq. 50:17. c. 9.

ft119 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:1. c. 8. p. 25, 26.

ft120 -- Joseph. de Bello Judaico, 50:1. c. 33. sect. 8, 9.

ft121 -- Ib. c. 28. sect. 7. etc. 33. sect. 1. & 50:2. c. 1. sect. 1.

ft122 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol 25. 1.

ft123 -- Ib.

ft124 -- De Bello Jud. 50:2. c. 1. sect. 5.

ft125 -- Targum, Jarchi, Aben Ezra & Kimchi in loc.

ft126 -- Lexic Hebrews fol. 141. 2.

ft127 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 17. 1. Ganz. par. 2. fol. 14. 2. Abarbinel in Daniel fol. 44. 1.

ft128 -- Ganz. par. 1. fol. 24. 2.

ft129 -- T. Bab. Cetuboth, fol. 51. 2. & Gloss. in ib. Bereshith Rabba, fol. 67. 2. Abarbinel in Dau. fol. 44. 1.

ft130 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 43. 1.

ft131 -- Biblos Katallages, p, 2, 3, 4, 197, etc.

ft132 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2. Chronicon Regum, fol. 54. 4.

ft133 -- Antiq. 50:18. c. 7.

ft134 -- L. 5. c. 45.

ft135 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol, 79. 9. 2.

ft136 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 13. 3.

ft137 -- Bereshit Rabba, fol. 7. 4.

ft138 -- Zohar in Exodus fol 39. 2.

ft139 -- Debarim Rabba, fol. 237. 2.

ft140 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 112. 3.

ft141 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.

ft142 -- T. Hieros. Taanith, fol. 63. 4. & 64. 1. & Bab. Sanhed. fol. 97. 2.

ft143 -- R. David Kimchi in <2401>Isaiah 40:1.

ft144 -- Misn. Negaim. c. 11. sect. 2. & Kilaim, c. 9. sect. 1. Talmud, Bab. Menachot, fol. 39. 2.

ft145 -- Bereshit Rabba, fol. 18. 2.

ft146 -- T. Hieros. Nedarim, fol. 40. 3.

ft147 -- Misn. Cholin. c. 3. sect. 7.

ft148 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ft149 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 6. sect. 3. Terumot. c. 10. sect. 9. & Ediot. c. 7. sect. 2. & 8. 4.

ft150 -- Maacolot Asurot, c. 1. sect. 21.

ft151 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. 50:6. c. 30. Alex. ab Alex. 50:3. c. 11. Ludolph. Hist. Ethiop. 50:1. c. 13.

ft152 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. 50:11. c. 29.

ft153 -- Hieron. adv. Jovinian. fol. 26. Tom. 2.

ft154 -- Moses Kotzensis Mitzvot Tora precept. neg. 132.

ft155 -- T. Bab. Becorot. fol. 55. 1. Kimchi in <6994>Joshua 19:47.

ft156 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 9. 2.

ft157 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 84. 1.

ft158 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat. fol. 7. 1. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 64. 2.

ft159 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 116. 2. Chagiga, fol. 23. 1. Sabbat. fol. 60. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Parah Adumah, c. 10. sect. 2. & Bartenora in Misn. Parah, c. 9. sect. 6.

ft160 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 15.

ft161 -- L. 5. p. 29.

ft162 -- Polyhist. c. 48.

ft163 -- Cosri, p. 3. sect. 65. p. 241. Ed. Buxtorf.

ft164 -- Trad. Hebrews in Genesis fol. 72. D. Tom. 3.

ft165 -- Adv. Luciferian. fol. 49. K. Tom. 2. so Tertullian. praescript. Haeret. c. 45.

ft166 -- Comment. in Joan. p. 115. Ed. Huet.

ft167 -- De Bello Jud. 50:1. c. 5. sect. 2.

ft168 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 14. 2. & Sota fol. 20. 3. Bab. Sota, fol. 22. 2. eight sorts are reckoned in Abot R. Nathan, c. 37. fol. 8. 4.

ft169 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 60. 2.

ft170 -- So Epiphanius contr. Haeres. 50:1. Haeres. 14. Hieron. Comment. in Matthew c. 22. 50:3. fol. 30. M. Tom. 9.

ft171 -- Abot R. Nathan c. 5. fol. 3. 1. Sepher Cosri orat. 3. fol. 187. 2. & R. Juda Muscatus in ib. Maimon. in Pirk. Abot. c. 1. sect. 3. Juchasin. fol. 15. 2. Ganz. Tzemach David. par. 1. fol. 20. 2. & Bartenora in Misn. Judaim, c. 4. sect. 6.

ft172 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 34. 4.

ft173 -- T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 59. 4. Maimon. & T. Bartenora in Misu. Kiddushin, c. 1. sect. 3.

ft174 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 22. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Mechirah, c. 2. sect. 2.

ft175 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 96. 1. Maimon. Talmud Torn, c. 5. sect. 8.

ft176 -- Maimon. Hilch. Abadim, c. 1. sect. 7.

ft177 -- Moses Kotzensis Mitzvot Torah, precept. neg. 176.

ft178 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 39. 1.

ft179 -- Tzeror Hammor. fol. 104. 4. & 142. 3. & 170. 1.

ft180 -- Moschi Idyll. 1. Philostrat, Vit. Apollon, 50:3. c. 5.

ft181 -- In Misn. Celim. c. 13. sect. 7. Vid. Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. & in Misn. Tibbul. Yom. c. 4. sect. 6.

ft182 -- Misn. Sabbat. c. 7. sect. 2. & Gittin, c. 5. sect. 9.

ft183 -- Misn. Oholot. c. 18. sect. 2.

ft184 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 6.

ft185 -- Tzemach David, fol. 141. 2.

ft186 -- Bereshit Rabba, fol. 2. 4. & 6. 3. Vajikra Rabba, fol. 156. 4. Zohar in Genesis fol. 107. 3. & 128. 3. Baal Hatturim in <01012>Genesis 1:2. Caphtor Uperah, fol. 113. 2.

ft187 -- In Numbers fol. 68. 3, 4.

ft188 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 11. 1. Sota, fol. 48. 2. Yoma. fol. 9. 2.

ft189 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 3. 2.

ft190 -- Megilla, fol. 3. 1.

ft191 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 3. 2.

ft192 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 22. 1. T. Hieros. Sabbat. fol. 8. 3.

ft193 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 12. 1, 2. Misn. Taanith, c. 1. sect. 5.

ft194 -- Hilch. Taanith, c. 5. sect. 5.

ft195 -- Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 183. 4. & Maimon. Hilch. Beth. Habechirah, c. 7. sect. 14. & 6. 16.

ft196 -- Waserus de Antiq. Numm. Hebrews 50:2. c. 5.

ft197 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:2. c. 23.

ft198 -- Joseph. Antiq. Jud. 50:15. c. 14.

ft199 -- Conciliat. in De Quaest. 3. p. 223.

ft200 -- Vid. Fabricii Bibliograph. Antiq. c. 5. p. 137.

ft201 -- Vid. Fabricium, ibid. & Grotium in loc.

ft202 -- Apud Fabricium, ib.

ft203 -- Vid. Laertium in Vit. Zenou.

ft204 -- De seipso, 50:2. c. 17. & 50:6. c. 36.

ft205 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2. 4.

ft206 -- T. Bab Beracot. fol. 7. 1.

ft207 -- Avoda Zara, fol. 4. 1.

ft208 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 7. 1.

ft209 -- Antiq. Jud. 50:3. c. 5. sect. 5.

ft210 -- In <663>Deuteronomy 6:13.

ft211 -- Antiq. 50:18. c. 7.

ft212 -- Vid. Benjamin Tudelens. Itinerar. p. 37. & L'Empereur, not. in ib. & Hieron. in Mar. 1:21. & Origen. Comment. in Matthew p. 317. vol. 1. Ed. Huet.

ft213 -- Midrash Koheleth. fol. 63. 1.

ft214 -- Ib. fol. 77. 1.

ft215 -- See my treatise upon the "Prophecies of the Messiah", etc. p. 147, etc.

ft216 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 74. 3.

ft217 -- Ib. in Exodus fol. 3. 3. & 88. 3.

ft218 -- Bereshith Rabba, fol. 1. 3. & Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2.

ft219 -- Baal Hatturim in Genesis fol. 2. 2.

ft220 -- De Somniis, p. 1113.

ft221 -- T. Hieros. Moed Katon, fol 82. 4. Avoda Zara, fol 42. 3.

ft222 -- T. Hieros. Megilla, fol. 75. 2. & Geracot, fol. 2. 3.

ft223 -- Apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. 50:3. c. 5. p. 119. & Crocium de Messia Thes. 213. p. 62, 63.

ft224 -- Hilcot. Talmud. Torah, c. 1. sect. 12. so Dr. Lightfoot cites the phrase, but in Ed. Amsterd. it is hrwt ynyd, “the judgments of the law”.

ft225 -- T. Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 9. 4. & Maaser Sheni, fol. 55. 2. Trumot. fol. 45. 2. Sheviith. fol. 35. 1. Bereshith Rab. fol. 31. 4. & 36. 2.

ft226 -- Spicilegium in loc.

ft227 -- T. Bab. Megilla, 23. 1. Avoda Zara, fol 17. 1. & 27. 2. & 28. 1. Cholin. fol. 84. 1. T. Hieros. Sabbat. fol. 14. 4. & Abvoda Zara, fol. 40. 4. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 62. 4. & 77. 1. Juchasin, fol. 41. 1.

ft228 -- In vita ejus.

ft229 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 8. 1. 2. vid. Maimon. Hileb. Tumath Meth. c. 11. sect. 6.

ft230 -- Vid. Fabricii Bibl. Graec. vol. 2. 50:3. c. 26. p. 656-658.

ft231 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 58. 1.

ft232 -- Misn, Sheviith. c. 9. sect. 2.

ft233 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 80. 1. Cetubot, fol. 67. 2. & Succa, fol. 27. 2. & 28. 1. Zohar in Genesis fol. 129. 3.

ft234 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 18.

ft235 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 11. 2.

ft236 -- Misn. Sheviith. c. 9. sect. 2.

ft237 -- Misn. Cetubot, c. 13. sect. 10.

ft238 -- Hilch. Shemittah, c. 7. sect. 9.

ft239 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 188. 3. Maimon. Beth Habechira, c. 7. sect. 12.

ft240 -- Misn. Biccurim, c. 1. sect. 10.

ft241 -- Hilch. Talmud Torah, c. 4. sect. 2.

ft242 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 21. 1. Vid. Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 15. & Jarchi, Maimon, & Bartenora in ib.

ft243 -- Piske Tosaphot Yebamot, art. 196.

ft244 -- T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 30. 2.

ft245 -- Maimon. Hilch. Mattanot Anayim. c. 10. sect. 2.

ft246 -- Misn. Peah. c. 1. sect. 1. T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 127. 1. & Kiddushin. fol. 40. 1.

ft247 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 6. 2. Vid. Abot. R. Nathan, c. 12. fol. 4. 2.

ft248 -- Pirke Abot. c. 1. sect. 12.

ft249 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 49. 1.

ft250 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 93. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Deyot. c. 5. sect. 13.

ft251 -- T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 88. 2. Yoma, fol. 23. 1. & Gittin, fol. 36. 2.

ft252 -- T. Bab. Betzah, fol. 14. 1.

ft253 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 3.

ft254 -- Targum in Cant. 4:1.

ft255 -- Juchasin, fol. 63. 2.

ft256 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 25. fol. 6. 3.

ft257 -- Juchasin. fol. 121. 1.

ft258 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 69. 1. Sanhedrim, fol. 87. 1. Zebachim, fol. 54. 2.

ft259 -- Vid. Joh. Isaac. Praefat. ad Eliae Levit. Methurgeman.

ft260 -- Vid. Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 15. & Yoma, c. 8. sect. 9.

ft261 -- R. Isaac Chizuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 10. p. 401.

ft262 -- T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 116. 2.

ft263 -- T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 60. 4. Misn. Bava Kama, c. 9. sect. 7, 8. T. Bab. Shebuot, fol. 36. 1. Debarim Rabba, fol. 242. 2. Maimon Hilch. Shebuot, c. 2. sect. 1.

ft264 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

ft265 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 22. 2.

ft266 -- Fol. 93. 2.

ft267 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 29. 2.

ft268 -- In Semitis fidei, fol. 104. 4. & 105. 1. apud Capell. in loc.

ft269 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 29. 2.

ft270 -- Vajikra Rabba, fol. 160. 3. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol 20. 2.

ft271 -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrim, fol. 20. 3.

ft272 -- Shemot Rabba, fol. 96. 1.

ft273 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 4.

ft274 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 79. 1. & 89. 2. & 90. 2.

ft275 -- Hilch. Memarim, c. 2. sect. 4.

ft276 -- Hilch. Yesode Hattorah, c. 9. sect. 3.

ft277 -- Bartenora in, Misn. Beracot, c. 9. sect. 5.

ft278 -- T. Hicros. Sheviith, fol. 35. 1.

ft279 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 2.

ft280 -- Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Rabbin, fol. 2453.

ft281 -- Maimon. Hilch. Issure Mizbeach, c. 1. sect. 2, 4, 5, 7, 10. & passim, & T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 88. 1.

ft282 -- Vid. Edzardi Not. in Avoda Zara, c. 2. p. 284.

ft283 -- Vid. R. Aben Ezra in <0202117>Exodus 21:17. & in <2302313>Isaiah 52:13. & 66:24.

ft284 -- Maimon. Hilch. Rotseach, c. 2. sect. 1.

ft285 -- Maimon. Hilch. Rotseach, c. 2. sect. 2.

ft286 -- In Targ. in <1401910>2 Chronicles 19:10.

ft287 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 100. 1. T. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 1.

ft288 -- Massechet Derach Eretz, c. 4. fol. 18. 1.

ft289 -- Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 32. 2. Zohar in Exodus fol. 50. 2.

ft290 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 28. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 71. 1.

ft291 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 50. 3.

ft292 -- Sepher Cosri, fol. 57. 2. Vid. Kimchi in Psal. 27:13.

ft293 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 9. sect. 12.

ft294 -- Maimon. Hilch. Gezela, c. 8. sect. 13.

ft295 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 8. sect. 9.

ft296 -- Hilchot Teshuba, c. 2. sect. 9. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 87. 1.

ft297 -- Misn. Sanhedrim, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft298 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 95. 2.

ft299 -- Maimof. Hilch. Sanhedrim, c. 6. sect. 7.

ft300 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 1, 2.

ft301 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 24. 1. Sabbat. fol. 64. 2.

ft302 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 61. 1. Eruvin, fol. 18. 2.

ft303 -- T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 20. 1. T. Hieros. Challa, fol. 58. 3. Derech Eretz. c. 1. fol. 17. 3.

ft304 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 61. 1. Eruvin, fol. 18. 2.

ft305 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 34. 4.

ft306 -- T. Bab Sota, fol. 21. 2.

ft307 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 40. 1.

ft308 -- R. David Kimchi, in Psal. 66:18.

ft309 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 16. 2.

ft310 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 29. 1.

ft311 -- T. Hieros. Challa, fol. 58. 3. Massechet Calah, fol. 16. 4. Vid. Maimon. Issure Bia, c. 21. sect. 2. & Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora precept. neg. 126.

ft312 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 265. 1.

ft313 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 196. 1.

ft314 -- T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 20. 1.

ft315 -- T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 13. 2. Vid. Maimon. Issure Bia, c. 21. sect. 18.

ft316 -- T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 108. 2. Massechet Callah, fol. 17. 1.

ft317 -- T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 13. 2.

ft318 -- Maimon. lssure Bia, c. 21. sect. 23.

ft319 -- T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 13. 2.

ft320 -- Baal Hatturim in (540)Deuteronomy 24:1. Maimon. Hilchot Ishot, c. 1. sect. 2, 3.

ft321 -- Hilchot Gerushin, c. 4. sect. 12.

ft322 -- In Surenhusii Misna, Vol. III. p. 324. Vid. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora pr. affirm. 50.

ft323 -- Misn. Gittin, c. 9. sect. 10. Vid. T. Hieros. Gittin, fol. 49. 4. & Sota, fol. 16. 2. & Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 195. 2.

ft324 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Gittin, c. 9. sect. 10.

ft325 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 90. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Gerushin, c. 10. sect. 21, 22.

ft326 -- Misn. Shebuot, c. 4. sect. 13.

ft327 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 10. 4.

ft328 -- De Special. leg. p 770.

ft329 -- Maimon. Hilch. Shebuot, c. 12. sect. 3.

ft330 -- Misn. Nedarim, c. 1. sect. 3.

ft331 -- In. ib.

ft332 -- T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 11. 1.

ft333 -- In loc. ex Tosapht. in Nedarim, c. 1.

ft334 -- Misn. Sanhedrim, c. 3. sect 2.

ft335 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3. 1.

ft336 -- Derech. Eretz, c. 6. fol. 18. 2.

ft337 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 20. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Dayot. c. 5. sect. 13.

ft338 -- R. Sol. Jarchi, in <1201>Exodus 20:1.

ft339 -- T. Bab. Shebuot, fol. 36. 1. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Shebuot, c. 2. sect. 1.

ft340 -- Antiq. Jud. 50:4. c. 8. sect. 35.

ft341 -- In <1224>Exodus 21:24.

ft342 -- Hilchot Chebel. c. 1. sect. 2, 3.

ft343 -- In loc. supra citat.

ft344 -- In Aben Ezra in <1224>Exodus 21:24.

ft345 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 8. sect. 6. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ft346 -- Sepher Cosri, Orat. 1. Sign. 113. fol. 56. 1.

ft347 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 8. sect. 6.

ft348 -- Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 6. sect. 3.

ft349 -- Tzemach David, fol. 8. 4.

ft350 -- Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Rabb. p. 131, 132.

ft351 -- Toldos Jesu, p 22.

ft352 -- R. Isaac Chizuk Emunah, par. 2. c. 11. p. 402.

ft353 -- Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora precept. neg. 5. Vid. Maimon. Hilchot Rotseach, c. 13. sect. 14.

ft354 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 22. 2. & 23. 1.

ft355 -- Maimon. Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 7. sect. 13.

ft356 -- R. Eliahu in Adderet, c. 3. apud Trigland. de Sect. Karaeorum, c. 10. p. 166, 167.

ft357 -- Maimon. Hilch. Talmud Tora. c. 7. sect. 13.

ft358 -- Sepher Shaar Hassamaim, Tract. 7. c. 12. p. 155.

ft359 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 7. 1.

ft360 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 14. 1. & Taanith, fol. 64. 2.

ft361 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 152. 4.

ft362 -- Maimon. Hilch. Gezela, c. 5. sect. 9. 11.

ft363 -- Misn. Nedarim, c. 3. sect. 4.

ft364 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 25. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Eduth, c. 10. sect. 4. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora pr. neg. 214.

ft365 -- Maimon. Hilch. Mishcab, c. 10. sect. 8.

ft366 -- Sepher Chasidim, fol. 5. col. 2. apud Buxtorf. Florileg. Hebrews p. 300, 301.

ft367 -- Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 5. sect. 5.

ft368 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 15.

ft369 -- Jarchi & Bartenora in ib.

ft370 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1.

ft371 -- Hilch. Mattanot Anayim, c. 10. sect. 1. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

ft372 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 49. 2.

ft373 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 2, 3.

ft374 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 7. 1, 2.

ft375 -- T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 4. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 10. 2.

ft376 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 8. 1, 2.

ft377 -- T. Hieros. Demai, fol. 23. 2.

ft378 -- In (2203)Exodus 20:3.

ft379 -- R. Jona apud Capell. Spicileg. in loc.

ft380 -- Piske Tosephot in Sabbat. c. 1. art. 134.

ft381 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 6. Mainnon. Hilch. Eracin, c. 2. sect. 12.

ft382 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 9. 2.

ft383 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 5. 1.

ft384 -- Maimon. Hilch. Mattanot Anayin, c. 10. sect. 15.

ft385 -- Hilch. Tephilla. c. 5. sect. 1, 2.

ft386 -- Misn. Taanith, c. 2. sect. 1, 2.

ft387 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 3. sect. 5.

ft388 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 47. 1. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 26. 2.

ft389 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 4. 4.

ft390 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 11. 1.

ft391 -- lb. c. 8. sect. 1. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 8. 1. & Piske Tosephot Beracot, c. 1. art. 7.

ft392 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 8. 4.

ft393 -- Ib. fol. 8. 3. & 9. 1.

ft394 -- Hilch. Tephilla, c. 11. sect. 21. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Megilla, c. 3. sect. 1.

ft395 -- T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 65. 1.

ft396 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 114. 4.

ft397 -- T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 67. 3.

ft398 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 104. 4.

ft399 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 4. 2. Ed. Basil.

ft400 -- Ib. fol. 33. 2.

ft401 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Leviticus fol. 34. 1.

ft402 -- T. Bab. Shebuot, fol. 15. 1.

ft403 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 30. 1.

ft404 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 78. 1. Ed. Amstelod. Zohar in Exodus fol. 43. 4.

ft405 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 17. 2, Ed. Basil. & passim.

ft406 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 22. 1. & passim.

ft407 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 128. 2. Ed. Basil.

ft408 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 40. 2.

ft409 -- Ib. fol. 29. 2.

ft410 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 29. 2.

ft411 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 26. 2.

ft412 -- Jarchi in Job, 6:7.

ft413 -- Targum in <14062>2 Chronicles 6:21.

ft414 -- Targum Onkelos & Jon. ben Uzziel in <01507>Genesis 50:17. Vid. Targum in <13048>1 Chronicles 4:18. & in Cant. 1:1. & in <01043>Genesis 4:13. & passim.

ft415 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 3. 1. Ed. Basil. fol. 4. 2. Ed. Amstelod. Shaare Zion, fol. 73. 1. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 2.

ft416 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 2.

ft417 -- Ib. fol. 16. 2.

ft418 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 280. 1. Ed. Basil.

ft419 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 4. sect. 1. & 6. 2. T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 56. 1. & Taanith, fol. 16. 2. Seder Tephillot, fol. 70. 2. Ed. Basil.

ft420 -- Juchasin, fol. 59. 1.

ft421 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 12. 1.

ft422 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 100. 1.

ft423 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 8. sect. 1. & Taanith, c. 1. sect. 4, 5, 6. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 77. 2. Taanith, fol. 12. 2. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 32.

ft424 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 61. 1.

ft425 -- Misn. Taanith, c. 2. sect. 1.

ft426 -- Targum Sheni. in Esth. 6:10.

ft427 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 12. 2.

ft428 -- Targum Jon. ben Uzziel, in <05316>Deuteronomy 31:16.

ft429 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 2.

ft430 -- Caphtor, fol. 97. 1.

ft431 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 11. 1.

ft432 -- Misn. Trumot, c. 4. sect. 3.

ft433 -- Maimon. Bartenora & Ez. Chayim in ib.

ft434 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 37. 2. & 71. 1. & 72. 1.

ft435 -- Praefat. Celi Jaker, fol. 3. 1.

ft436 -- Piske Tosephot Cetubot, art. 359.

ft437 -- Vid. Targum Onkelos & Jon. in <01313>Genesis 13:13. & in Jud. 5:19. & in <20309>Proverbs 3:9. & in <23513>Isaiah 45:13. & passim.

ft438 -- Misn. Sanhed. c. 1. sect. 1. & c. 4. sect. 1.

ft439 -- Adv. Haeres. 50:3. c. 8. p. 249.

ft440 -- T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 38. 3.

ft441 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 107. 2. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2.

ft442 -- Kiddushin, c. 4. sect. 14.

ft443 -- T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 66. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 82. 1, 2.

ft444 -- In Misn. Erubim, c. 4. sect. 5. & Negaim, c. 13. sect. 11.

ft445 -- Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 7. sect. 1. T. Bab. ib. fol. 49. 1. & 83. 1. & 86. 2.

ft446 -- Jarchi & Bartenora in ib.

ft447 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 95. 1. & 99. 4. & 110. 4.

ft448 -- Sabbat, c. 3. sect. 1, 2.

ft449 -- Jarchi in <01007>Genesis 7:7.

ft450 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 10. 2.

ft451 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 118. 2. Erachin, fol. 15. 1.

ft452 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 46. 2. Zohar in Exodus fol. 90. 2.

ft453 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 24. 2. Zohar in Numbers fol. 93. 2.

ft454 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 48. 2.

ft455 -- Jarchi & Kimchi, in <3005>Hosea 3:5.

ft456 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 100. 2.

ft457 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 9. 2.

ft458 -- Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 4.

ft459 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 127. 2.

ft460 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 6.

ft461 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ft462 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 7. 4.

ft463 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 12. 2. Sota, fol. 8. 2. Sanhedrim, fol. 100. 1. Zohar in Genesis fol. 87. 4. & in Leviticus fol. 36. 1. & 39. 3. & in Numbers fol. 67. 3. Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 194. 1. Misn. Beracot, c. 9. sect. 5.

ft464 -- Misn. Sota, c. 1. sect. 7, 8, 9. Vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 99. 1, 2.

ft465 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 15. 2.

ft466 -- T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 16. 2.

ft467 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 59. 2.

ft468 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 19. 1.

ft469 -- R. David Kimchi in <3001>Zephaniah 2:1. Vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 142. 4.

ft470 -- Vid. Alex. ab. Alex. Gaeial. Dier. 50:2. c. 14.

ft471 -- T. Bab. Temura, fol. 17. 1. & 31. 1. & 33. 2. Becorot, fol. 15. 1. Hieros. Pesachim, fol. 27. 4. & Maaser Sheni, fol. 53. 3.

ft472 -- Mischar Happeninim apud Buxtorf. Florileg. Hebrews p. 306.

ft473 -- R. Eliahu Addaret, c. 3. apud Trigland de sect. Karaeorum, c. 10. p. 166. Vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 146. 4.

ft474 -- Hilch. Ebel. c. 14. sect. 1.

ft475 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 31. 1. Maimon. in Misn. Peah, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft476 -- Diog. Laert. in Vit. Aristotel. 50:5.

ft477 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 100. 1, 2. Vid. Maimon. & R. Sampson in Misn. Peah, c. 2. sect. 1. & Maimon in Sabbat. c. 1. sect. 1.

ft478 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 29. 2.

ft479 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 41. 1.

ft480 -- In Zechariah 13:4.

ft481 -- Abarbinel Nachalath Abot, fol. 192. 1.

ft482 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 48. 1.

ft483 -- T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 19. 1, 2. & 20. 1.

ft484 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 49. 1.

ft485 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1.

ft486 -- Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 17. & Abot R. Nathan, c. 22. fol. 6. 1, 2.

ft487 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 24. fol. 6. 2.

ft488 -- Misn. Celim. c. 1. sect. 7.

ft489 -- Maimon. Biath Hamikdash, c. 3. sect. 8. & in Misn. Celim. c. 1. sect. 8.

ft490 -- Maimon. in Misn. Negaim, c. 12. sect. 5. & Bartenora in ib. sect. 6.

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ft492 -- Maimon. Hilchot Mechosre Capporah, c. 14. per totum.

ft493 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:6. c. 13.

ft494 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2.

ft495 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 146. 2. 147. 50:Cetubot, fol. 103. 2.

ft496 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 3. sect. 1. T. Bab. Moed. Katon, fol. 23. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 4. sect. 7.

ft497 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 72. 2.

ft498 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 2. Derech Eretz. fol. 18. 1

ft499 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 24. 1. & 25. 4.

ft500 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 4. 2. Taanith, fol. 22. 1. Megilla, fol. 28. 2. Yoma, fol. 88. 1. & Sanhedrim, fol. 88. 2. Raziel, fol. 37. 1. & 38. 1. Caphtor, fol. 15. 1. & 18. 2. & 60. 1. & 84. 2. Raya Mehimna, in Zohar in Leviticus fol. 34. 2.

ft501 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 104. 3.

ft502 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 52. 1.

ft503 -- Targum in Job, iii 17.

ft504 -- T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 33. 1.

ft505 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2. 2. Maimon. Sabbat, c. 5. sect. 4.

ft506 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 98. 2.

ft507 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 85. 2.

ft508 -- Pesikta in Abkath Rochel, 50:1. par. 2. p. 309. Ed. Huls.

ft509 -- Pesikta in Abkath Rochel, 50:1. par. 2. p. 205. Ed. Huls.

ft510 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 12. p. 403.

ft511 -- Targum & Aben Ezra in loc, Abarbinel Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 81. 2.

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ft513 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 96. 2.

ft514 -- Clement. Alex. Strom. 50:3. p. 436.

ft515 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 30. 2. & Sota, fol. 14. 1.

ft516 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 3. sect. 1.

ft517 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 2.

ft518 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 18. 2. Jarchi in Genesis 11. 32. Baal Hatturim, in <606>Deuteronomy 17:6. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 58. 3. Midrash Kohelet. fol. 78. 2. Caphtor, fol. 79. 1, 2. & 84. 1.

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ft524 -- Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 6. sect. 8.

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ft526 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 18. 2.

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ft530 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 2. Menachot, fol. 64. 2. Sota, fol. 49. 2.

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ft532 -- T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 47. 3.

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ft534 -- Piske Tosaphot in Sabbat, art. 317.

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ft538 -- Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 1. sect. 5.

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ft545 -- Jarchi in Jud. 5:10.

ft546 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 8. sect. 2. T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 11. 2. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 78. 2. & Bechorot, fol. 30. 2. & Avoda Zara, fol. 39. 1.

ft547 -- Jarchi, Maimonides, & Bartenora in Misn. Sabbat, c. 8. sect. 2. & Gloss. in T. Bab. Bechorot, fol. 30. 2.

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ft555 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 13. 1.

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ft562 -- T. Hieros. Taanlot, fol. 65. 2. & 66. 4.

ft563 -- T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 10. 1. Maimon Taaniot, c. 1. sect. 12-14.

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ft572 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 33. 1.

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ft599 -- T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 19. 1.

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ft746 -- Justin Martyr, adv. Tryphon. p. 311.

ft747 -- In Gloss. in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 57. 1. Meilah, fol. 17. 2.

ft748 -- Raziel, fol. 41. 2.

ft749 -- Tanchuma apud Buxtorf. Hebrews Florileg. p. 126.

ft750 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86. 1.

ft751 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 333. 2. Ed. Basil. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 1.

ft752 -- Sepher Chasidim: num. 234.

ft753 -- R. Jonah apud L. Capell. in loc.

ft754 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 30. 1.

ft755 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 53. 2.

ft756 -- Maimon. Hilch. Melachim. c. 11. sect. 3.

ft757 -- Misn. Sota c. 9. sect. 15. T. Bab. Sanhed. fol. 97. 1.

ft758 -- Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 9. & Maimon. Hilch. Sota, c. 3. sect. 19.

ft759 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 98. 1. so ^mys çqbm, “seeketh a sign”, Shemot Rabba, Parash. 9. fol. 97. 2.

ft760 -- R. David Kimchi & Jarchi, in <3017>Jonah 1:17. & 2:1. Zohar in Exodus fol. 20. 3. & 78. 3.

ft761 -- Antiq. 1. 9. c. 18.

ft762 -- T. Hieros. Pesach. fol. 31. 2. T. Bab. Moed. Katon, fol. 16. 2. 17. 2. 19. 2. & 20. 2. Bechorot, fol. 20. 2. & 21. 1, Nidda, fol. 33. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 7. sect. 1, 2, 3. Aben Ezra in <0120>Leviticus 12:3.

ft763 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 35. 2.

ft764 -- In <1301>1 Chronicles 1:9. & <1401>2 Chronicles 9:1.

ft765 -- Ludolph. Hist. Aethiop. 1. 2. c. 3. & not. in Claud. Confess. sect. 1.

ft766 -- Pocock. Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 59.

ft767 -- Juchasin, fol. 136. 1.

ft768 -- Antiqu. 1. 8. c. 2.

ft769 -- Juchasin, fol. 136. 1.

ft770 -- Maimon. Hilchot. Teshuba, c. 9. sect. 2.

ft771 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 77. 2.

ft772 -- Taanith, c. 2. sect. 2.

ft773 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ft774 -- Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 15.

ft775 -- Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. e Talmud. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 38. 2.

ft776 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 105. 2.

ft777 -- T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 32. 1. & Gloss. in ib. & Bava Bathra, fol. 156. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

ft778 -- Misn. Sheviith, c. 4. sect. 2. T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 34. 3. & 35. 1. T. Bab. Bechorot, fol. 34. 2.

ft779 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 63. 2. Bava Kama, fol. 83. 1. Cetubot, fol. 53. 2. & Betza, fol. 29. 2.

ft780 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 5. c. 4.

ft781 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 20. 2.

ft782 -- Vid. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 24. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

ft783 -- Abarbinel in Isaiah 29. 11.

ft784 -- In R. David Kimchi in <2969>Isaiah 6:9.

ft785 -- R. David Kimchi in loc.

ft786 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 14. 2.

ft787 -- Sepher Raziel, fol. 34. 1.

ft788 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 24. 2.

ft789 -- Sepher Bahir apud Zohar in Genesis fol. 27. 2. Debarim Rabba, fol. 145. 3.

ft790 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 28. Vid. Kimchi & Ben Melech in Psal. xvi 5. & Eben Ezra in Psal. 19:10.

ft791 -- Misn. Kilaim, c. 1. sect. 1. & Trumot, c. 2. sect, 6. & Maimon. in ib. T. Hieros. Kilaim, fol. 26. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Kilaim, c. 3. sect. 3.

ft792 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 28. fol. 23. 4.

ft793 -- Misn. Kilaim, c. 3. sect. 2.

ft794 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 31. 1. Megilla, fol. 23. 2. Nidda, fol. 66. 1.

ft795 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 20. 2.

ft796 -- T. Bab, Cetubot, fol. 111. 2.

ft797 -- Misn. Kilaim, c. 2. sect. 8.

ft798 -- Targum Onketos & Jarchi, in <02166>Exodus 16:36. & Targum Jon. in <08127>Ruth 2:17.

ft799 -- T. Hieros. Pesachim, fol. 30. 2.

ft800 -- Vid. Teelman. Specimen Explic. Parabolarum, p. 64, 65, 66, 67, 68.

ft801 -- R. David Kimchi, Shorash. rad. hzj.

ft802 -- Aben Ezra & Kirachi in loc.

ft803 -- Misn. Sabbat. c. 3. sect. 1. & Maimon, & Bartenora in ib.

ft804 -- Hieros. Targum in <01517>Genesis 15:17.

ft805 -- Vajikra Rabba, fol. 170. 1. Siphre apud. Ceseph. Misna in Maimon. Hilch. Teshuba, c. 9.

ft806 -- Midrash haunealam apud Zohar in Genesis fol. 69. 1.

ft807 -- lb. fol. 70. 1. Vid. Midrash Tillim. in Psal. 11:apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. 1. 12. c. 6. p. 712.

ft808 -- De Vita Apollonii, lib. 2. c. 15.

ft809 -- Misn. Parah, c. 2. sect. 1.

ft810 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 3. fol. 180. 3.

ft811 -- Targum in Cant. 7:13. T. Bab. Erubim, fol. 21. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

ft812 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 178. 2.

ft813 -- Justin Martyr. Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 316.

ft814 -- Tripartit. Hist. 1. 6. c. 44.

ft815 -- Shemoth Rabba, sect. 13. fol. 99. 2.

ft816 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 50. 2.

ft817 -- T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 104. 2. Chagiga, fol. 4. 2. Sanhedrim, fol. 67. 1.

ft818 -- Vid. Juchasin, fol. 61. & 62.

ft819 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 1. 3. c. 11.

ft820 -- Misn. Sota, c. 5. sect. 1.

ft821 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 96. 1.

ft822 -- Ib.

ft823 -- Contr. Haeres. Tom. 2. 1. 3. Haeres. 78. &. lib. Ancorat.

ft824 -- David Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2. and so in Juchasin, fol. 142. 2.

ft825 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 1. 18. c. 7.

ft826 -- Ib. c. 6.

ft827 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 1. 18. c. 6. de Bello Jud. 50:1. c. 28. sect. 7.

ft828 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 1. 18. c. 6.

ft829 -- Misn. Ceritot, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft830 -- Antiqu. lsss. 18. c. 6.

ft831 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

ft832 -- Joseph. Gorionides, 1. 5. c. 45.

ft833 -- Antiqu. 1. 18. c. 6.

ft834 -- Herodot. 50:1. c. 133. & 9. c. 109.

ft835 -- Plin. Ep. 1. 10. ep. 61.

ft836 -- Misn. Avoda Zara, c. 1. sect. 3.

ft837 -- Persius, Satyr. 5. prope finem.

ft838 -- Ammonius, περι ομοιων etc. in lit.

ft839 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:2. c. 25.

ft840 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:18. c. 6.

ft841 -- Misn. Sanhedrim, c. 3. sect 2. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3. 1. Derech Eretz, c. 6. fol. 18. 2.

ft842 -- Nicephorus, Hist. 50:1. c. 20.

ft843 -- De beneficiis, 1. 3. c. 25.

ft844 -- De ira, 50:1. c. 16. Vid. Julium Firmicum, 50:8. c. 26. & Florum, 50:4. c. 7. & Suetonium in vit. Caligul. c. 52. Octav. August. c. 74. & Claud. c. 35. Tertullian. de Corona, c. 1.

ft845 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 38. fol. 9. 1.

ft846 -- Vid Targum Jon. in <0136>Genesis 37:36. & 39:1. & Targ. Sheni in Esth. 5:2. Jarchi in <0241>Exodus 4:11. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 108. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

ft847 -- Bereshit Rab. sect. 79. fol. 69. 3. Vajikra Rab. sect. 24. fol. 165. 2. & Bemidbar Rab. sect. 7. fol. 187. 4.

ft848 -- Adv. Ruffin. Tom. 2. fol. 82. K.

ft849 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:18. c. 8.

ft850 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

ft851 -- T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 11. 1.

ft852 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 12. 2.

ft853 -- Nicholas de Lyra, in Psal. lxxxi. 6.

ft854 -- Nubere: nupsisti Gellia Cistifero. Martial. Epigram. 1. 5. ep. 17.

ft855 -- Judaeis: quorum Cophinus foenumque supellex. Juvenal. Satyr. 3. cum dedit ille locum, Cophino, foenoque relicto. ib. Satyr. 6.

ft856 -- T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 49. 2.

ft857 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 10. 2. Piske Tosaph. in ib. art. 52, T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 4. 4. Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora precept. Affirm. 19. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 70. 3.

ft858 -- Hilch. Tephillah. c. 5. sect. 7.

ft859 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2. 4. Echa Rabbati, fol. 54. 4.

ft860 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3. 1, 2.

ft861 -- Jaschi & Kimchi in <0709>Judges 7:19. & in Psal. cxix. 147.

ft862 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Betacot, fol. 2. 1.

ft863 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 1. 4. c. 20.

ft864 -- Liv. Hist. 1. 36, c. 24.

ft865 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 3. 1. Sanhedrim, fol. 44. 1.

ft866 -- R. David Kimchi, Sepher Shorash. rad. h j ç.

ft867 -- R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel moed, fol. 78. 1.

ft868 -- Targum Jon. in <05323>Deuteronomy 33:23.

ft869 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 44. 1. Erubim, fol. 30. 1. & Pesachim, fol. 8. 2. Vid. Jarchi in <23801>Isaiah 28:1. & Kimchi in Joshua 11:& in <11520>1 Kings 15:20.

ft870 -- Maimon. in Misn. Maaserot, c. 3. sect. 7.

ft871 -- Bartenora, in ib.

ft872 -- De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 35.

ft873 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 3. 2.

ft874 -- T. Bab. Erubim, fol. 21. 2. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 4. 2.

ft875 -- Misn. Chagiga, c. 2. sect. 5, 6. Maimon. Praefat. ad Tract. Yadaim, & Hilch. Beracot, c. 6. sect. 3.

ft876 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 3. 4.

ft877 -- Maimon Hilch. Mikvaot, c. 11. sect. 1.

ft878 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 4. 2.

ft879 -- Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 107. 3.

ft880 -- lb. in Genesis fol. 60. 2.

ft881 -- Gloss. in. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 77. 2. Taanith, fol. 20. 2. & Cholin, fol. 107. 2.

ft882 -- T. B. Erubim, fol. 2l. 2.

ft883 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 19. l.

ft884 -- T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 61. 2.

ft885 -- Piske Toseph. ad T. Bab. Kiddushin, art. 61.

ft886 -- T. Hieros. Nedarim, fol. 37. 1. Misn. Nedarim, c. 1. sect. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Nedarim, c. 1. sect. 7.

ft887 -- Misn. Nedarim, c. 1. sect. 1, 2. Maimon. Hilch. Nedarim, c. 1. sect. 16.

ft888 -- Misn. Nedarim, c. 3. sect. 11.

ft889 -- lb. c. 8. sect. 7. Vid. c. 11. sect 3, 4.

ft890 -- lb. c. 11. sect. 11.

ft891 -- Maimon. Hilch. Nedarim, c. 3. sect. 1. 6, 7. 9.

ft892 -- Misn. Nedarim, c. 9. sect. 1.

ft893 -- Ib. c. 5. sect. 6.

ft894 -- R. Nathan in Rabba, sect. 1.

ft895 -- Abarbinel, Jarchi, Kimchi, & Aben Ezra.

ft896 -- R. Sol. Jarchi in <2290>Isaiah 29:13.

ft897 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 142. 1.

ft898 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 105. 3.

ft899 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 83. 2.

ft900 -- Midrash Tillim in Psal. cxlvi apud Grotium in loc.

ft901 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 141. 3.

ft902 -- Lucian. Dialog. Deor. Coneil. sect. 2,

ft903 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 114. 2. Zohar in Exodus fol. 35. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 4.

ft904 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 31. 1. & 34. 1. 2.

ft905 -- Jarchi in Genesis 15. 10.

ft906 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 68. 1.

ft907 -- Ib. fol. 69. 1.

ft908 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 63. 1, 2. Vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 147. 4.

ft909 -- Eunapius in Vita Libanii.

ft910 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 7. sect. 3.

ft911 -- T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 38. 4. Maaserot, fol. 50. 3. Erubin, fol. 21. 4.

ft912 -- T. Hieros. Taanith, fol. 64. 3. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 81. 2. & Nidda, fol. 33. 1. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 4. 4.

ft913 -- I. 2. c. 159.

ft914 -- Yadaim, c. 4. sect. 8.

ft915 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 53. 2.

ft916 -- Targum in Eccl. 7:24.

ft917 -- Misn. Pesach, c. 2. sect. 2, 3. T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 3. 3.

ft918 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 7. 4. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 29. 4. Caphtor, fol. 38. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 73. 2.

ft919 -- Targum Hieros. in <0114>Genesis 14:17.

ft920 -- Hist. 50:5. c. 15, 18.

ft921 -- Geograph. 50:5. c. 15.

ft922 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:18. c. & de Bello Jud. 50:3. c. 13.

ft923 -- Misn. Oholot, c. 18. sect. 9.

ft924 -- Baal Hatturim in <0518>Deuteronomy 18:15. R. Abraham Seba; Tzeror Hammor, fol. 127. 4. & 143. 4.

ft925 -- Pesikta Rabbati apud R. Abarbinel, Praefat. ad Jeremiah fol. 96. 2.

ft926 -- Juchasin, fol. 85. 1.

ft927 -- Ib. fol. 105. 1.

ft928 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 43. 3.

ft929 -- R. Simeon in Jarchi in <0102>Genesis 2:2.

ft930 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 39. 1. Succa, fol. 32. 2. Bava Bathra, fol. 84. 1.

ft931 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 19. 1. Menasseh ben Israel, Nishmat Chayim, fol, 33. 1, 2.

ft932 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 47. 4.

ft933 -- Ib. fol. 7. 1.

ft934 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 3. 2.

ft935 -- Targum Hieros. in <0149>Genesis 49:22. & Targum Onkelos in <0920>1 Samuel 20:9.

ft936 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 2, 3. & passim.

ft937 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 72. 3, 4. T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 3.

ft938 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 27. 4. & 37. 1. & in Exodus fol. 19. 2. & in Numbers fol. 50. 4. & 51. 2. 4. Vid. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 7. 3, 4. Midrash Kohelet, fol, 83. 2.

ft939 -- Hor. Hebrews in Mar. 9:2.

ft940 -- Maimon. in Misn. Bava Kama, c. 10. sect. 10,

ft941 -- In <4003>Mark 9:3.

ft942 -- T. Bab. Succab, fol. 5. 1.

ft943 -- Debarim Rabba, sect. 3. fol. 239. 2.

ft944 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 13. 2. Maimon. praefat. ad Seder Zeraim in Talmud. fol. 86. 4.

ft945 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 7. 2.

ft946 -- Juchasin, fol. 101. 1. Vid. fol. 79. 1. & 118. 2. & 13. 132. 1. & T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 106. 1.

ft947 -- Seder Olam Rabba, p. 45, 46.

ft948 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 43. 2.

ft949 -- R. Abraham ben David in Misn. Ediot, c. 8. sect. 7.

ft950 -- Hilch. Melacim, c. 12. sect. 2.

ft951 -- Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 226.

ft952 -- In <2040>Exodus 40:10. <5504>Deuteronomy 30:4. & <2502>Lamentations 4:22.

ft953 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 56. 2. & 128. 2.

ft954 -- Aben Ezra, Kimchi, & Abarbinel in loc.

ft955 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 25. 1. & Becorot, fol. 33. 2. & 34. 1.

ft956 -- Kimchi in <3806>Zechariah 9:6.

ft957 -- Hilchot Melacim, c. 12. sect. 2. Vid. Misn. Ediot, c. 8. sect. 7. & Maimon & Bartenora in ib.

ft958 -- Seder Olam Rabba, p 46.

ft959 -- Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 1. sect. 8. T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 3. 1. & 37. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 94. 1.

ft960 -- Vet. Nizzachon, p. 219, 220.

ft961 -- Misn. Gittin, c. 7. sect. 1.

ft962 -- Maimon. in ib.

ft963 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 67. 2.

ft964 -- Bartenora & Yom Tob. in Misn. Gittin, c. 8. sect. 1.

ft965 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3l. 1. Megilla, fol. 28. 2. Nidda, fol. 66. 1. Maimon. lssure Biah, c. 11. sect. 4. Maacolot Asurot, c. 2. sect. 21. etc. 14. sect. 8. Tumaot Okelim, c. 4. sect. 2. & 7. 6.

ft966 -- Vet. Nizzachon, p. 148.

ft967 -- C. 21. p. 268. & c. 31. p. 336. Ed. Sale.

ft968 -- Vet. Nizzachon, p. 237.

ft969 -- Jacchiades in <27003>Daniel 10:3.

ft970 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 22. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Taaniot, c. 1. sect. 6.

ft971 -- Maimon. Hilch. Chobel Umazzik, c. 8. sect. 9, 10.

ft972 -- Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 2. sect. 4.

ft973 -- In <161032>Nehemiah 10:32.

ft974 -- De Bello Jud. 50:7. c. 20.

ft975 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 1. sect. 3. Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. sect. 9.

ft976 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 11. 2. Vid. Targum & Kimchi in <090903>1 Samuel 9:3. Maimon. in Misn. Shekalim, c. 2. 4. & Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. sect. 3.

ft977 -- Misn. Trumot, c. 10. sect. 8. & Cetubot, c. 5. sect. 9. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 59. 1.

ft978 -- T. Hieros. Bava Bathra, fol. 12. 4. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 1.

ft979 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 5.

ft980 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 100. 2. & Nedarim, fol. 62. 2. & Bava Metzia, fol. 73. 2.

ft981 -- Maimon Talmud Tora, c. 6. 10.

ft982 -- Ib. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. sect. 7.

ft983 -- Ib. sect. 9.

ft984 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 64. 1. & 105. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 102. 2.

ft985 -- Vid. Poceck. not. miscell. ad. Port. Mosis, p. 103, 104, 105, 106.

ft986 -- p. 3. Ed. Voss.

ft987 -- Misn. Sanhedrim. c. 7. sect. 1.

ft988 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 1. 10. 2. Maimon. Hileh. Yom Tob, c. 8. sect. 15.

ft989 -- T Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 16. 2.

ft990 -- Mish. Zabim. c. 4. sect. 2.

ft991 -- R. Maimon. R. Sampson. & R. Obadiah Bartenora, in. ib.

ft992 -- T. Bab. Kiddusbin, fol. 29. 2.

ft993 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 96. 1.

ft994 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 50. fol. 44. 4.

ft995 -- Jacchiades in <27103>Daniel 10:13.

ft996 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 51. 1.

ft997 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 88. 2.

ft998 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 156. 2.

ft999 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar, in Leviticus fol. 35. 4.

ft1000 -- T. Bab. Betacot, fol. 31. 1, 2.

ft1001 -- Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora pr. Affirm. 11.

ft1002 -- Zohar. in Leviticus fol. 19. 3.

ft1003 -- Imre Binah in ib.

ft1004 -- Milzvot Tora, pr. neg. 6.

ft1005 -- T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 16. 2.

ft1006 -- Maimon. Hilch. Deyot. c. 6. sect. 7.

ft1007 -- Mischar happeninim apud Buxtorf. Florileg. Hebrews p. 297.

ft1008 -- Ibid.

ft1009 -- Maimon Hilehot Ishot, c. 12. sect. 14.

ft1010 -- Ib. c. 14. sect. 9. & Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 81.

ft1011 -- T. Hieros. Demai, fol. 23. 1.

ft1012 -- Misn. Sanhedrim, c. 1. sect. 6. T. Bab. Megilia, fol. 23. 2. Gloss. in ib.

ft1013 -- Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 6.

ft1014 -- Ib. sect. 2.

ft1015 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 36. 2. Mainion. Hilch. Teshuba. c. 3. sect. 5.

ft1016 -- Abot. R. Nathan, c. 40. fol. 9. 3.

ft1017 -- Brerewood de Nummis Hebrews c. 4.

ft1018 -- Connection, Vol. 1. Preface, p. 20.

ft1019 -- Brerewood de Numuis. Hebrews c. 4.

ft1020 -- Targum Jon. in loc. Tanchuma in Abarbinel in loc. Jarchi, Kimchi & Laniado in ib.

ft1021 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:6. c. 10.

ft1022 -- Apud Castell. Lexic. Polyglott. col. 1314.

ft1023 -- T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 58. 3.

ft1024 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 75. 1. 79. 2. & 80. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 2. sect. 14.

ft1025 -- Maimon & Bartenora in Misn. Yebamot, c. 8. sect. 4.

ft1026 -- Bartenora, ibid. & Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, ut supra.

ft1027 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 80. 2.

ft1028 -- Philostrat. vit. Apollon. 50:6. c. 17.

ft1029 -- Misn. Yebamot, c. 8. sect. 4. Zabim, c. 2. sect. 1. T. Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 9. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 2. sect. 26. & 4. 18. Mechosre Caphara, c. 3. sect. 6. Mishcabumoshab, c. 50:sect. 5.

ft1030 -- Euseb. Ecel. Hist. 50:6. c. 8.

ft1031 -- Augustin de Haeres. c. 37. & Danaeus in ib.

ft1032 -- Lib. quod deterius, p. 186.

ft1033 -- Sexti Pythag. Sent. p. 8.

ft1034 -- Massechet Sopherim, c. 18. sect. 5. see the note on <042242>Luke 2:42.

ft1035 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 110. 2.

ft1036 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 7. 2.

ft1037 -- T. Hieroa. Roshhashanah, fol. 59. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 151. 2.

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ft1039 -- R. Sangari, Sepher Cosri, par. 3. sect. 11, fol. 146. 2.

ft1040 -- T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 8. 1, 2. & Roshhashanah, fol. 4. 1.

ft1041 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 60. 4.

ft1042 -- T. Bab. Beracot fol. 55. 2.

ft1043 -- T. Bab Bava Metzia, fol. 38. 2.

ft1044 -- Prefat. ad Zohar, Ed. Sultzbach.

ft1045 -- Chap. 7. p. 120. Ed. Sale.

ft1046 -- Targuru in <1042>1 Chronicles 4:23.

ft1047 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 21. 3. Vid. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 72. 4. & Talmud Hicros. Beracot, fol 5. 3.

ft1048 -- Misua Bava Metzia, c. 7. sect. 1.

ft1049 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 28. 2.

ft1050 -- T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 33. 2. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 37. 2. & 33. 1.

ft1051 -- Misna Bava Metzia, c. 9. sect. 11. Maimen Hilch. Shericut, c. 11. sect. 2.

ft1052 -- Maimon. Hilch. Milvah Ulavah, c. 7. sect. 12. Vid. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 86. 2. & 87. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

ft1053 -- Shirashirim Rabba, fol. 21. 3. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 72. 4. T. Hicros. Beracot, fol. 5. 3.

ft1054 -- Bartenora in Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 9. sect. 11.

ft1055 -- Jarchi in <0319>Leviticus 19:13.

ft1056 -- Maimen, Helch. Secirut, c. 11. sect. 1.

ft1057 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 10. 2.

ft1058 -- Ib. fol. 17. 1.

ft1059 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol 21. 4. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 72. 4.

ft1060 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 3.

ft1061 -- Maimon. Hilch, Shecirut, c. 9. sect. 3.

ft1062 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 65. 1. & 71. 1. & 72. 1.

ft1063 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 13. 4.

ft1064 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 45. 2. & Sanhedrim, fol. 97. 2.

ft1065 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 87. 1.

ft1066 -- Alex. ab. Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:2. c. 19.

ft1067 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 35. 2.

ft1068 -- Bartenora in Misn. Taraid, c. 3. sect. 8.

ft1069 -- T. Hieros. Nazir, fol. 52. 1. Erubin, fol. 19. 4. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 84. 1. Bava Metzig, fol. 94. 1. Massech. Semachot, c. 9. Juchasin, fol. 159. 2.

ft1070 -- Comment. in Matthew vol. 1. p. 428. Ed. Huet.

ft1071 -- Targum in Esth. 3:8. & 5:13. T. Hicros. Peah, fol. 15. 4.

ft1072 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 14. 2. & Pesach. fol. 91. 1.

ft1073 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 63. 2. & 91. 1.

ft1074 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Sota, fol. 45. 1. & Bava Metzia fol. 90. 1.

ft1075 -- In loc. & ad Eustoch, fol. 59. 3. Tom. 1.

ft1076 -- Misn. Menachot, c. 11. sect. 2. T. Bab. Menachot fol. 63. 1. & 78. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Pesul. Hamukdash, c. 12. sect. 16. Gloss. in Pesach. fol. 63. 2.

ft1077 -- T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 53. 1. & Erubin, fol. 28. 2.

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ft1096 -- Ib. fol. 45. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Lulab, c. 8. sect. 10.

ft1097 -- Maimon. Hilch, Lulab, fol. 37. 2.

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ft1166 -- Misu. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect. 4. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 45. 1, 2. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 15. sect 1. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora pr. Affirm. 99.

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ft1182 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 5. fol. 3. 1.

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ft1184 -- Jarchi in ib. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Yebum, c. 1. sect. 3.

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ft1198 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 37. 1.

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ft1203 -- Targum Onk. & Jarchi in <0605>Deuteronomy 6:5.

ft1204 -- Beracot, c. 9. sect. 5. Vid. Targum Jon. in Dent. 6:5.

ft1205 -- Bartenora in Misn. ib.

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ft1212 -- Jarchi in <4816>Isaiah 48:16. & in <3001>Malachi 1:1.

ft1213 -- Hilch. Yesode Hatorah, c. 1. sect. 6.

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ft1219 -- R. Saadiah Gaon in <2713>Daniel 7:13. Nachman. disp. cure Paulo. p. 36, 55.

ft1220 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 60. 3. Jarchi in Psal. cx. 1. Vet. Nizzachon, p. 179, 180.

ft1221 -- Kimchi & Aben Ezra in Psal. cx. 1. R. Isaac Chizuk Emuna, par. 1. c. 40. p. 321.

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ft1226 -- Ubi supra. (Misn. Sota, c. 3. sect. 4.)

ft1227 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 21. 2.

ft1228 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 3. 1.

ft1229 -- Targ. Jon. Jarchi, & Baal Hatturim in <2316>Exodus 13:16. & <5508>Deuteronomy 6:8. Maimon. Hilch. Tephillin, c. 1. sect. 1. & c. 2. sect. 2. & c. 3. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. & c. 4. sect. 1, 2.

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ft1231 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tzitzith, c. 3. sect. 12.

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ft1304 -- Misn. Maaser Sheni, c. 5. sect. 1.

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ft1328 -- Abot. R. Nathan, c. 31.

ft1329 -- De Bello Jud. 50:5. c. 1.

ft1330 -- Origen. in Matth. T. 3. Homil. 26. fol. 44. Greg. Nyssen. in diem nat. Christ. Vol. 2. p. 777. Basil. de human. gen. Christ. & Theophylact. in loc.

ft1331 -- Targum in Lamentations 2:20.

ft1332 -- T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 24. 2.

ft1333 -- T. Hieros. Tannioth, fol. 69. 1. Praefat. ad Echa Rabbati, fol. 36. 4. & Echa Rabbati, fol. 52. 4. & 58. 3. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 68. 3.

ft1334 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 55. 1.

ft1335 -- Misn. Middot, c. 3. sect. 6.

ft1336 -- Maimon. Beth. Habbechira, c. 7. sect. 18, 19, 20. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 188. 4.

ft1337 -- T. Hieros. Taanioth, fol. 69. 1. Echa Rabbati, fol. 53. 1. & 58. 3. Midrash Kobelet, fol. 68. 4.

ft1338 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 5.

ft1339 -- lb. c. 7. sect. 1.

ft1340 -- R. Isaac Arama in Genesis 47:apud Galatin. Arcan. Cath. ver. 50:3. c. 5.

ft1341 -- Jarchi in <2012>Isaiah 1:21.

ft1342 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 106. 3. & Imre binah in ib.

ft1343 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 77. 4. &. 115. 2. Vid. Targum in <0802>Ruth 2:12. Zohar in Exodus fol. 28. 3. & 29. 2.

ft1344 -- Targum & Kimchi in <2407>Jeremiah 12:7.

ft1345 -- Juchasin, fol. 139. 1.

ft1346 -- Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 24. 2.

ft1347 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1. & Succa, fol. 51. 2.

ft1348 -- De Bello Jud. 50:5. c. 5.

ft1349 -- Antiq. Jud. 50:15. c. 14.

ft1350 -- Egesippus, 50:5. c. 43.

ft1351 -- Vid. Ryckium de Capitol. Romans c. 21, etc.

ft1352 -- Joseph. Antiq. 50:15.

ft1353 -- De Bello Jud. 50:7. c. 7.

ft1354 -- Maimon. Hilch. Taaniot, c. 5. sect. 3. T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 23. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

ft1355 -- Bartenora in Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 3.

ft1356 -- Misn. lb. c. 2. sect. 4.

ft1357 -- Joseph. Antiq. 50:20. c. 2.

ft1358 -- Joseph. Antiq. 50:20. c. 6.

ft1359 -- Jerom in loc. Iren. adv. Haeres. 50:1. c. 20.

ft1360 -- Origen contr. Cels. 50:1. p. 44.

ft1361 -- Tertull. de prescript. Haeret. c. 46.

ft1362 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1. & Megilia, fol. 17. 2. Zohar in Exodus fol. 3. 3, 4.

ft1363 -- Vid. Joseph. Antiq. 50:20. c. 6. & de Bello Jud. 50:2, etc.

ft1364 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 42. fol. 37. 1.

ft1365 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1. Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 15.

ft1366 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. & 19. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Taaniot, c. 2. sect. 5.

ft1367 -- Philostrat. in vit. Apollon. 50:4. c. 11.

ft1368 -- Sueton. in vit. Nero, c. 48.

ft1369 -- Orosius, 50:7. c. 7.

ft1370 -- Sueton. in vit. Galba, c. 13.

ft1371 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 2.

ft1372 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

ft1373 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 2.

ft1374 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 5.

ft1375 -- R. David Kimchi, & R. Sol. ben Melech, in <1491>2 Chronicles 29:5.

ft1376 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 28. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

ft1377 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1. & Megilla, fol. 3. 1. & Tzeror Ham, mor, fol. 46. 4. Zohar in Numbers fol. 61. 1.

ft1378 -- Jacchiades in <2017>Daniel 1:17.

ft1379 -- De Bello Jud. 50:2. c. 19. sect. 7.

ft1380 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 5. p. 75.

ft1381 -- Joseph. ib.

ft1382 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 117. 1.

ft1383 -- Georgic. 50:1.

ft1384 -- Aurel Victor. de illustr. viris, c. 20.

ft1385 -- T. Hieros. Taanioth, fol. 64. 3. Maimon. Hilch. Taanioth, c. 5. sect. 10.

ft1386 -- Taachuma, fol. 57. 2.

ft1387 -- Vid. Reland. Antiq. Hebrews par. 4. c. 10. sect. 1. & Hammond in loc.

ft1388 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 27. sect. 1.

ft1389 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 231. 4.

ft1390 -- De Bello Jud. 50:6. c. 11.

ft1391 -- Targum Jonathan ben Uzziel, & Targum Hieros. in Gem 28:10.

ft1392 -- R. Sol. Jarchi in <2308>Isaiah 38:8.

ft1393 -- Chilluk M. S. apud Trigland. de sect. Karaeorum, c. 9. p. 147.

ft1394 -- Joseph. Antiq. 50:7. c. 12.

ft1395 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 28. 2.

ft1396 -- T. Bab. Meila, fol. 17. 2. Juchasin, fol. 20. 1, 2. & 42. 2. & 56. 2. & 77. 1. & 96. 2.

ft1397 -- Joseph de Bello. Jud. 50:5. c. 7.

ft1398 -- Ib. c. 6. 50:4.

ft1399 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 6.

ft1400 -- Aben Ezra in Cant. 7:5. Targum in Mic. 4:8.

ft1401 -- Vid. Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. c. 50.

ft1402 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. 50:10. c. 4. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:4. c. 2.

ft1403 -- Aelian. de Animal. Natura, 50:2. c. 46.

ft1404 -- De Hist. Animal. 50:9. c. 32.

ft1405 -- Hist. Nat 50:10. c. 3.

ft1406 -- In Matthew Homil. 49.

ft1407 -- Aelian. de Animal. 50:9. c. 10.

ft1408 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. 50:2. c. 55.

ft1409 -- Misn. Sotah, c. 9. sect. 15.

ft1410 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 47. 1.

ft1411 -- In <4132>Mark 13:32.

ft1412 -- De Bello Jud. 50:6. c. 26.

ft1413 -- Misu. Taanith, c. 4. sect. 7. T. Hieros. Taanioth, fol. 68. 3. & Maimon. Hilch. Taanioth, c. 5. sect. 2.

ft1414 -- T. Bab, Taanith, fol. 29. 1.

ft1415 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 1.

ft1416 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 3.

ft1417 -- Misn. Cetubot, c. 5. sect. 5. Vid. T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 47. 9. & 48. 1.

ft1418 -- Maimon. Hilch. Ishot. c. 21. sect. 5, 6.

ft1419 -- T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 60. 2.

ft1420 -- Misn. Sheviith, c. 5. 9. & Gittin, c. 5. sect. 9.

ft1421 -- T. Hieros. Teruinot, fol. 46. 3. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 61. 2. & Cholin, fol. 6. 2. Misn. Taharot, c. 7. sect. 4.

ft1422 -- Ludolph. Hist. Ethiop. 50:4. c. 4.

ft1423 -- Plutarch apud Beza. in loc.

ft1424 -- Mairmon. Hilch. Genibah, c. 9. sect. 7, 8.

ft1425 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 9. 1.

ft1426 -- T. Bab Avoda Zara, fol. 10. 2. & 17. 1. & 18. 1. & Callah, fol. 17. 2. & Cetubot, fol. 103. 2.

ft1427 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1.

ft1428 -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 28. 3. & T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 49. 2.

ft1429 -- Targum in Esth. 8:15.

ft1430 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 65. fol. 58. 4.

ft1431 -- Adversaria, p. 455.

ft1432 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 6. T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 11. 3.

ft1433 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephillah, c. 11. sect. 1.

ft1434 -- Misn. Megilia, c. 4. sect. 3. Maimon, Hilch. Tephilla, c. 8. sect. 4, 5.

ft1435 -- Bartenora in Misn. Megilla, c. 4. sect. 3. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 8. 2.

ft1436 -- In Misn. Celim, c. 2. sect. 8.

ft1437 -- The Agreement of Customs between the East Indiana and Jews, art. 17. p. 68, 69.

ft1438 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 153. 1. Vid. R. David Kimchi in <26513>Isaiah 65:13.

ft1439 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 10. sect. 8. & Maimon. Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. sect. 14.

ft1440 -- In Misn. ib.

ft1441 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 47. 2. & 65. 1. & 67. 2.

ft1442 -- Targum Hieros. in Exod 12:42.

ft1443 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 76. 4. & in Leviticus fol. 21. 1. & 23. 2.

ft1444 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 2.

ft1445 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 45. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 2.

ft1446 -- Maimon. Hilch. Abadim, c. 8. sect. 9.

ft1447 -- De Nummis Jud. c. 4.

ft1448 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2.

ft1449 -- Midrash Haneelam in Zohar in Genesis fol. 69. 4.

ft1450 -- Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. sect. 9. & c. 2. sect. 1.

ft1451 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 55. 1. Zohar in Exodus fol. 89. 4.

ft1452 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 30. fol. 170. 2.

ft1453 -- Jarchi in <01026>Genesis 1:26. Kimchi in <12219>1 Kings 22:19. Lex. Cabalist. p. 132. Zohar in Numbers fol. 93. 4.

ft1454 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 3. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 9. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora pr. affirm. 97.

ft1455 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2.

ft1456 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 44. 3.

ft1457 -- Zohar in Eccl. 9:7.

ft1458 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol, 127.

ft1459 -- T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 40. 1. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 14. sect. 4, 5, 6.

ft1460 -- Targum in <23314>Isaiah 33:14.

ft1461 -- Targum Jon. in <01026>Genesis 1:26. Pirke Eliezer, c. 4.

ft1462 -- Targum in Cant. 8:6. T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 54. 1. Zohar in Genesis fol. 13. 3. & 30. 2. & in Exodus fol. 61. 4. & in Deuteronomy fol. 120. 1. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 4. fol. 4. 1. & sect. 21. fol. 19. 1. Shemot Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 101. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 2. & 121. & 1. 2. & 130. 3.

ft1463 -- T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 54. 1. & Nedar. fol. 39. 2. Zokar in Leviticus fol. 14. 4. Targum Jon. in Gen 3:24.

ft1464 -- Targum in 2 Kings Isaiah 30:33.

ft1465 -- Caphtor, fol. 113. 1. Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 71. 1.

ft1466 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol, 47. 1.

ft1467 -- Targum in Cant. 7:4.

ft1468 -- Maimon Hilch. Kiddush Hachodesh, c. 4. sect. 17.

ft1469 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 1.

ft1470 -- lb. sect. 4.

ft1471 -- Misn. Middot c. 5. sect. 3.

ft1472 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 15. 1. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2. Sanhedrin, fol. 41. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 14. sect. 13. Juchasin, fol. 21. 1.

ft1473 -- Edzard. not. in Avoda Zara, c. 1. p. 236.

ft1474 -- Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 5. sect. 7.

ft1475 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. sect. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Memarim, c. 3. sect 8.

ft1476 -- Misn. Celim, c. 1. sect. 7. Maimon. Beth Hamikdash, c. 3. sect. 8.

ft1477 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 69. 1. Gloss. in ib.

ft1478 -- Hist. Nat. 50:13. c. 1.

ft1479 -- Ib. c. 2. & 50:12. c. 12.

ft1480 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. 50:13. 2. & 36. 8.

ft1481 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 17. 2.

ft1482 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 63. 1.

ft1483 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 23. sect. 5.

ft1484 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 2. & 15. 1.

ft1485 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 16.

ft1486 -- Waseras de numis Hebrews 50:2. c. 3.

ft1487 -- De numis Jud. c. 3.

ft1488 -- Waser ib. & Ar. Montan. Ephron. sive de Siclo in Jud. Antiq. p. 126. Brerewood de ponder. & pret. vet. num. c. 1.

ft1489 -- Shaishelet Hakabala, fol.

ft1490 -- Ib.

ft1491 -- Antiq. 50:3. c. 8. sect. 2.

ft1492 -- Perush in Exodus 21:32.

ft1493 -- Ad fin. Expos. in Pentateuch.

ft1494 -- Comment. in 1 Reg. 7. fol. 221. 2.

ft1495 -- Shalshelet Hahohala, fol. 72. 2.

ft1496 -- In Joshua, 7. 21. p. 135.

ft1497 -- De Siclo, ut supra. (in Jud. Antiq. p. 126)

ft1498 -- De numis Hebrews 50:2. c. 3.

ft1499 -- Hilch. Niske Mammon. c. 11. sect. 1.

ft1500 -- Misn. Pesach. c. 1. sect, 1. Maimon. Chametz Umetzah, c. 2. sect. 3, 4. & 3. 11.

ft1501 -- Maimon. Hilch. Korban Pesaeh. c. 1. sect. 1. 2.

ft1502 -- Ib. sect. 4. Moses Kotsensis Mitavot Tora pr. affirm. 39.

ft1503 -- Maimon. lb. sect. 3.

ft1504 -- Pesachim, c. 5. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10.

ft1505 -- Ib. c. 8. 2.

ft1506 -- Ib. c. 7. sect. 2.

ft1507 -- T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 95. 2. & Gloss in ib.

ft1508 -- Maimon. Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 6. sect. 1.

ft1509 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 12. 1. Megilia, fol. 26. 1. & Gloss. in ib. Maimon Hilch. Beth Habbechira, c. 7. sect. 14. & Ceseph Misna in ib.

ft1510 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 35. Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 5.

ft1511 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 7. sect. 13.

ft1512 -- Ib. c. 10. sect. 1.

ft1513 -- Ib. c. 8. sect. 7.

ft1514 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 10. sect. 1.

ft1515 -- Jarchi & Bartenora in ib.

ft1516 -- Maimonides in ib.

ft1517 -- T. Hieros. Pesach. fol. 37. 2.

ft1518 -- Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 7. sect. 8.

ft1519 -- Maimon ib. c. 8. 2. Haggadah Shel Pesach. p. 5.

ft1520 -- Maimon. ib. c. 7. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Vid. c. 8. 2, 3, 4, 5. & Haggadah Shel. Pesach. p. 5, 6, 7, 8.

ft1521 -- Bartenora in Misn. Pesach. c. 10. sect. 3. Vid. Maimon. & Yom Tob, in ib. & Piske Tos. Pesach. art. 322.

ft1522 -- Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 7. sect. 11.

ft1523 -- Ib. c. 8. sect. 2. 8.

ft1524 -- Ib. sect. 6. & T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 115. 1.

ft1525 -- Misn. Pesach. c. 10. sect. 4, Maimon. Chametz Umetzah, c 8. sect. 2. Haggadah Shel Pesach, p. 5.

ft1526 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 91. fol. 78. 4.

ft1527 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 41. 1. Vid. Misn. Chagiga, c. 2. sect. 1. T. Bab Chagiga, fol. 16. 1.

ft1528 -- Zohar in Genesis fol, 46. 4. & in Exodus fol. 1. 4. & 36. 3. & 62. 3. & 66. 3. & 105. 4. & 106. 1.

ft1529 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 3. 2. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1. & Erubin, fol. 13. 2. Midrash Kobelet, fol. 79. 1.

ft1530 -- T. Hieros Kilaim, fol. 32. 2.

ft1531 -- Maimon. Hilch. Charnetz Umetzah, c. 8. sect. 9. Vid. Bartenora in Misn. Pesach. c. 10. sect. 8.

ft1532 -- Levush hattecheleth Numbers 167. sect. 3. & Shlchan Aruch in Buxtorf. Exercit. de Coena Dominic. Thes. 45.

ft1533 -- Haggadah Shel. Pesach. fol. 249. 2. Ed. Basil. Misn. Beracot, c. 6. sect. 1.

ft1534 -- Ib. sect. 6. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 42. 2. & 43. 1.

ft1535 -- T. Bab. Berncot, fol. 39. 2.

ft1536 -- Maimon. Hilch. Beracot, c. 7. sect. 2, 3, 4. T. Bab. Berncot, fol. 47. 1.

ft1537 -- Ib. sect. 5.

ft1538 -- Haggadah Shel Pesach, p. 4. Ed. Rittangel. fol. 242. 2. Ed. Basil.

ft1539 -- Misn. Pesach, c. 10. sect 3.

ft1540 -- Maimon. Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. sect. 1.

ft1541 -- Ib. sect. 7.

ft1542 -- Haggadah Shel Pesach. fol. 241. 1.

ft1543 -- Vid. Misn. Beracot, c. 6. sect. 1. 6.

ft1544 -- Ib. c. 8. sect. 8.

ft1545 -- T. Hieros. Pesach. fol. 37. 3. & Sabbat, fol. 11. 1.

ft1546 -- T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 108. 2. & R. Samuel ben Meir in ib.

ft1547 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 11. 1.

ft1548 -- T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 109. 1.

ft1549 -- Misn. Pesach. c. 10. sect. 1. T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 108. 1. Mitzvot Torah, pr. affirm. 41.

ft1550 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:5. c. 3.

ft1551 -- Maimon. Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. sect. 10. Piske Toseph. Pesach. art. 328.

ft1552 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 17. 2.

ft1553 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 3. 4. En Israel, fol. 30. 1.

ft1554 -- T. Bab. Berncot, fol. 34. 2, & Sanhed. fol. 99. 1.

ft1555 -- Targum in Cant. 8:2. Zohar in Genesis fol. 81. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 30. 3.

ft1556 -- Misn. Pesach. c. 9. 3. T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 95. 1, 2.

ft1557 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 101, etc. Ed. Amstelod.

ft1558 -- Maimon. Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. sect. 5. 10.

ft1559 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 118. 1.

ft1560 -- Maimon. ut supra. (Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. sect. 5. 10.)

ft1561 -- T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 95. 2.

ft1562 -- Talmud ib. & Jarchi in Dent. 16:7.

ft1563 -- Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 4. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 16. 1.

ft1564 -- Misn. Parah, c. 3. sect. 6. & Middot, c 1. sect. 3. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ft1565 -- R. Sol. Jarchi, in Zechariah 13:7.

ft1566 -- Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 1. c. 37. p. 310.

ft1567 -- R. David Kirachi, in Zechariah 13:7.

ft1568 -- R. Aben Ezra in ib.

ft1569 -- Abarbitnel, Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 74. 4.

ft1570 -- R. Aben. Ezra, R. David Kimchi, & Miclol Yophi in loc.

ft1571 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 8.

ft1572 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 21. 1.

ft1573 -- Ludolph. Lex. Ethiop. p. 554.

ft1574 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 89. 1.

ft1575 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 16. 1.

ft1576 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2.

ft1577 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 5. sect. 14, 15.

ft1578 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 16.

ft1579 -- Ib.

ft1580 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 16.

ft1581 -- Ib.

ft1582 -- T. Hieros. Shebuot. fol. 34. 1.

ft1583 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 17.

ft1584 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 16, 17.

ft1585 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 16, 17.

ft1586 -- Antiq. 50:18. c. 14.

ft1587 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 47. 1.

ft1588 -- De Hebrews nominibus, fol, 104. col. 4. Tom. 3.

ft1589 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 1, 2. Abarbinel in Tora, fol. 366. 2.

ft1590 -- T. Hieros. Sota, fol. 23. 3.

ft1591 -- Maimon. ib. sect. 4.

ft1592 -- Maimon. ib. c. 3. sect. 3, 4.

ft1593 -- lb. c. 11. sect. 5.

ft1594 -- Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 10.

ft1595 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 67. 1.

ft1596 -- Philostrat. Vita Apollouii, 50:8. c. 1.

ft1597 -- Jarchi & Aben Ezra in Psal. 2:1. & Kimchi in ver. 12.

ft1598 -- T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 24. 1. & Horayot, fol. 8. 1. Debarim Rabba, fol. 245. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Memarim, c. 5. sect. 15. & Melacim, c. 8. sect. 10. & alibi passim.

ft1599 -- Sententiae Secundi, p. 21. Ed. Gale.

ft1600 -- Zohar in Gert. fol. 85. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 13. fol. 209. 4. R. Jeshuah in Aben Ezra, in <2073>Daniel 7:13. & Jarchi & Saadiah Gaon in loc.

ft1601 -- Targum in <1324>1 Chronicles 3:24. & Beckius in ib. Midrash Tillim apud Galatin. de arcan. Cathol. ver. 50:10. c. 1.

ft1602 -- Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 302.

ft1603 -- Jarchi, Aben Ezra, etc. in loc.

ft1604 -- Misn. Horayot, c. 3. sect. 5.

ft1605 -- Bartenora & Maimon. in ib.

ft1606 -- Maimon. Hilch. Biath Hamikdash, c. 1. sect. 14, 17.

ft1607 -- Maimon. Hilch. Obede Cochabim, c. 2. sect. 10. Vid. T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 25. 1.

ft1608 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 5.

ft1609 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 69. 1. & Tamid, fol. 27. 2.

ft1610 -- Misn. Tamid, c. 5. sect. 3.

ft1611 -- Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 8, 9, 10.

ft1612 -- Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pt. affirm. 173.

ft1613 -- Maimon. ib. c. 10. sect. 4. Joseph. de Bello Jud. 50:6. c. 15.

ft1614 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 1. Maimom. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1, 2. T. Hieros. Yom Tob, fol. 63. 1.

ft1615 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 99. 1.

ft1616 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 8. sect. 6.

ft1617 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ft1618 -- Braunii Select. Sacr. 50:5. Exerc. 2. sect. 38. p. 622, 623. & Capelt. in loc. e Polluce, 50:9. c. 7.

ft1619 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 53. 1, 2. Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. in rad. ו ו ג.

ft1620 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 7. sect. 7. T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 2. Abot R. Nathan, c. 35. Maimon. Hilch. Beth Habechirah, c. 7. sect. 14. Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 9. 2.

ft1621 -- T. Hieros Erubin, fol. 26. 1. Caphtor, fol. 42. 1.

ft1622 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 1. sect. 2.

ft1623 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 3. sect. 2.

ft1624 -- lb. c. 3. sect. 1. Bernidbar Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 177. 3.

ft1625 -- De Legat. ad Caium, p. 1033, 1034.

ft1626 -- Hist. 50:15.

ft1627 -- De Bello Jud. 50:2. e. 9. sect. 2.

ft1628 -- M. Aurel-Cassiodor. Chronicon in Caligula, Joseph. Antiq. 50:18. c. 11. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:2. c. 7.

ft1629 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 88. 2.

ft1630 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol 33. 1.

ft1631 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 62. 9.

ft1632 -- Beracot, fol. 3. 1.

ft1633 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 19. 2.

ft1634 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 35. 1.

ft1635 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 105. 1.

ft1636 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 30. 2.

ft1637 -- De Bello Jud. 50:2. c. 9. sect. 3.

ft1638 -- Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect, 1.

ft1639 -- De locis Hebraicis.

ft1640 -- In loc.

ft1641 -- Mede’s Works, p. 963, 1022, 1023.

ft1642 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 2. Vid. Praefat. R. David Kimchici in Jer.

ft1643 -- Sepher Hagilgulim apud Surenhus. Biblos Katallages, p. 41.

ft1644 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 25. p. 412.

ft1645 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 98. fol. 85. 3, 4.

ft1646 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 119. 2. & Vajikra Rabba, sect. 27. fol. 167. 4.

ft1647 -- T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 43. 2, 3.

ft1648 -- Ib. Sanhedrin, fol. 21. 2.

ft1649 -- Juchasin, fol. 70. 1, etc.

ft1650 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 18. 2. & Hieros Pesachim, fol. 32. 1. & Juchasin, fol. 104. 1.

ft1651 -- T. Hieros. Pesachim, fol. 32. 1.

ft1652 -- T. Hieros. Succa, fol. 53. 3. Juchasin, fol. 105. 1.

ft1653 -- T. Hieros. Succa, fol, 55. 3. Juchasin, fol. 91. 2.

ft1654 -- Ludolph. Lex. Ethiop. p. 541.

ft1655 -- Lipsius de Cruce, 50:1. c. 12, 13.

ft1656 -- De Legat. ad Caium, p. 1034.

ft1657 -- Vid. Ovid. Fast. 50:2. Anticlidis Redit. 50:74. Triclinius in Ajac. Sophocl. 3. 1.

ft1658 -- Ubi supra. (De Legat. ad Caium, p. 1034.)

ft1659 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 110. 1. Yoma, fol. 2l. 1. & Avoda Zara, fol. 12. 2.

ft1660 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 12. sect. 3.

ft1661 -- De Bello Jud. 50:6. c. 12.

ft1662 -- Lipsius de Cruce 50:2. c. 2.

ft1663 -- Ib. c. 3.

ft1664 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 17.

ft1665 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 8. sect. 6.

ft1666 -- Alexander ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:1. c. 28.

ft1667 -- Vid. Bartholin. de Spinea Corona, sect. 1. 2.

ft1668 -- Vid. Paschal. de Coronis, 50:10. c. 12. p. 701, 702.

ft1669 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 17.

ft1670 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 12. sect. 4. Misn. Sanhed. c. 6. sect. 1.

ft1671 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 13. sect. 1.

ft1672 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

ft1673 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect. 1.

ft1674 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 42. 2.

ft1675 -- Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 12. sect. 3.

ft1676 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 5.

ft1677 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect. 4. 5.

ft1678 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sauhedrin, c. 13. sect. 2, 3.

ft1679 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 12. 2.

ft1680 -- Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2.

ft1681 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 29. 2.

ft1682 -- Lipsius de Cruce, 50:1. c. 12. & 13.

ft1683 -- Lipsius de Cruce, 50:2. c. 7.

ft1684 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect. 3, 4.

ft1685 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 46. 1.

ft1686 -- Vid. Lipsium de Cruce, 50:2. c. 16. & Lydium. de re militari, 50:5. c. 4. p. 191. Kirchman. de funeribus Romans append. c. 9. p. 726.

ft1687 -- Lipsius de Cruce, 50:2. c. 11.

ft1688 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 35. 1. & 46. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 190. 1.

ft1689 -- Sota, c. 9. sect. 15.

ft1690 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 17.

ft1691 -- Quaest. Hebrews 50:1. qu. 5.

ft1692 -- T. Hieros Pesachim, fol. 31. 3.

ft1693 -- In Chronicis.

ft1694 -- Apolog. c. 21.

ft1695 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 4. 1.

ft1696 -- Ib. fol. 3, 4.

ft1697 -- T. Hieros. Pesachim, fol. 31. 3, 4.

ft1698 -- Ib.

ft1699 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 5. sect. 1.

ft1700 -- Vet. Nizzachon, p. 162.

ft1701 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 17.

ft1702 -- Bab. Megilia, fol. 15. 2. & Gloss. in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 29. 1.

ft1703 -- Vid. Jarchi & Kimchi in Psal. 22:1.

ft1704 -- See my Book of the Prophecies of the Old Test. etc. p. 158.

ft1705 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 21. sect. 3.

ft1706 -- Vid. Juchasin, fol. 79. 1. & 86. 1. & 101. 1. & 118. 2. & 132. 1.

ft1707 -- Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 14. Kimchi in Sepher Shorash rad. rzç.

ft1708 -- T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 51.

ft1709 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 8. sect. 5. Shernot Rabba, sect. 50. fol. 144. 2. Bernidbar Rabba, sect. 4. fol. 183. 2.

ft1710 -- Vid. Bartenora & Yom. Tob. in ib.

ft1711 -- Vid. Bartenora in ib.

ft1712 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 39. 2. Jarchi & Kimchi in <BIBLE>Zechariah 11:1:Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

ft1713 -- L. 8. c. 12.

ft1714 -- L. 5. c. 44.

ft1715 -- L. 2. c. 84.

ft1716 -- Vid. Gloss. in T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 80. 2. & Maimon. Hilch. Shemitta veyobel, c. 13. sect. 3.

ft1717 -- Juchasin, fol. 96. 2.

ft1718 -- T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 69. 1. Echa Rabbati, fol. 52. 4.

ft1719 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Kiddushin, c. 2. sect. 3.

ft1720 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 104. 2. Chagiga, fol. 4. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 67. 1.

ft1721 -- Ad Principiam, Tom. 50:fol. 41.

ft1722 -- Alting. Shilo, p. 309.

ft1723 -- See Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect. 5, 6. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 14. sect. 9.

ft1724 -- Juchasin, fol. 54. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 4. sect. 2.

ft1725 -- Massech. Semachto, c. 14. fol. 16. 2.

ft1726 -- Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 6. sect. 8.

ft1727 -- Misn. ib. & Bartenora in Misn. Ohalot, c. 15. sect. 8.

ft1728 -- Vid. Kirchman de Funer. Roman. 50:3. c. 15. p. 438.

ft1729 -- Bartenora & Yom. Tob. in Misn. Ohalot, c. 2. sect. 4.

ft1730 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 47. 2. Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 1. sect. 2. & c. 2. sect. 8.

ft1731 -- Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Rab. p. 437.

ft1732 -- Maimon. Hilchot Yom. Tob. c. 7. sect. 15.

ft1733 -- Misn. Sarhedrin, c. 6. sect. 4.

ft1734 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 10.

ft1735 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 1. sect. 1. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ft1736 -- Misn. Taanilh, c. 4. sect. 3.

ft1737 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 4. 2. & 11. 1. & 67. 2.

ft1738 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 72. 1.

ft1739 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 25. 2.

ft1740 -- T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 20. 2.

ft1741 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 18, 19, 21.

ft1742 -- L. 2. c. 1.

ft1743 -- Ib. c. 11, 12. Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Hebrews in voce hwh

MARK

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF MARK

This is the title of the book, the subject of which is the Gospel; a joyful account of the ministry, miracles, actions, and sufferings of Christ: the writer of it was not one of the twelve apostles, but an evangelist; the same with John Mark, or John, whose surname was Mark: John was his Hebrew name, and Mark his Gentile name, (<44122>Acts 12:12,25), and was Barnabas's sister's son, (<51040>Colossians 4:10), his mother's name was Mary, (<44122>Acts 12:12). The Apostle Peter calls him his son, (<60513>1 Peter 5:13), if he is the same; and he is thought to have wrote his Gospel from him [f1], and by his order, and which was afterwards examined and approved by him [f2] it is said to have been wrote originally in Latin, or in the Roman tongue: so say the Arabic and Persic versions at the beginning of it, and the Syriac version says the same at the end: but of this there is no evidence, any more, nor so much, as of Matthew's writing his Gospel in Hebrew. The old Latin copy of this, is a version from the Greek; it is most likely that it was originally written in Greek, as the rest of the New Testament.

Ver. 1. *The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ*, etc..] Not that the Gospel first began to be preached at this time, for it was preached by Isaiah, and other prophets before; and long before that, was preached unto Abraham; yea, it was preached as early as the times of our first parents, in Eden's garden; and is indeed that mystery, which was hid in God before the creation of the world; and was ordained before that was, to the glory of the saints: but the sense is, that this narrative Mark was about to write, began with the ministry of John the Baptist, and of Christ; which was a Gospel one, and was the beginning of the Gospel dispensation, in distinction from the legal one: the law and the prophets were until John, and they ceased and ended in him; when the abh lw, “the world to come”, the kingdom of God, or Gospel state, took place. The design of this evangelist, is not to give an account of the genealogy of Christ, of his conception and birth, of what befell him in his infancy, or of any actions and sayings of his from thence, to his appearance in Israel; but to give an account of his ministry and miracles, sufferings and death: which is introduced with the preaching

and baptism of John his forerunner, and which he chiefly intends by “the beginning of the Gospel”: he first points out Christ, who is the author and substance, as well as the great preacher of the Gospel; the sum of which is, that he is Jesus, the Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners; the Christ, the Messiah, that was to come; the Mediator between God and man, the prophet that has declared the whole mind and will of God; the great high priest, who has offered himself a sacrifice for his people, made peace, procured pardon, brought in everlasting righteousness, and obtained eternal redemption, and now lives to make intercession for them; and King of saints, who reigns over them, protects and defends them, and is no other than

the Son of God; equal with his Father; of the same nature with him, possessed of the same perfections, and enjoying the same glory; and which is a grand article of the Gospel, and without which he could not be an able Saviour, nor the true Messiah. Mark begins his account of the Gospel, and which he calls the beginning of it, with the same article of the divine sonship of Christ, as the Apostle Paul began his ministry with, (Acts 9:20). Matthew began his Gospel with the humanity, Mark with the divinity of Christ: the one calls him the son of David, the other the Son of God, both true: Christ is the son of David according to his human nature, the Son of God according to his divine nature; so a testimony is bore to the truth of both his natures, which are united in one person.

Ver. 2. *As it is written in the prophets*, etc..] Malachi and Isaiah; for passages out of both follow; though the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions read, “as it is written in the prophet Isaias”; and so it is in some Greek copies: but the former seems to be the better reading, since two prophets are cited, and Isaiah is the last; to which agree the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, and the greater number of Greek copies. The following citations are made to show, that according to the writings of the Old Testament, John the Baptist was to be the harbinger of Christ, to come before him, and prepare his way; and also the propriety of the method the evangelist takes, in beginning his Gospel with the account of John's ministry and baptism: the first testimony stands in (Malachi 3:1), and the words are the words of the Father to the son, concerning John, pointing out his character and his work:

behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. John the Baptist is here called a messenger, and the message

he was sent and came with, was of the greatest moment and importance, and required the closest attention to it; wherefore this passage is introduced with a “behold!” signifying that something momentous, and what should be strictly regarded, was about to be delivered: and indeed, the work of this messenger was no other, than to declare that the long expected Messiah was born; that he would quickly make his public appearance in Israel; that the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of the Messiah, was at hand; and that it became the Jews to repent of their sins, and believe in Christ: he is called the messenger of God, “my messenger”; because he was sent, and sanctified by him; he was called unto, and qualified for his work by him; (see <430106>John 1:6,7), his father Zechariah says, he should be called the prophet of the Highest, (<420176>Luke 1:76). The reason of his being called the messenger of God, may be observed in the text itself, “behold, I send”: the words in Malachi are by us rendered, “behold, I will send”, (<390301>Malachi 3:1): because this was at the time of the prophet's writing a thing future, but in the times of the evangelist a thing done: and indeed, it is a more literal version of the Hebrew text, to render it “I send”, or “am sending”; and it is so expressed, to denote the certainty of it, and because in a little time it would be done: the words “before thy face”, are not in the original text of Malachi, nor in the Septuagint version, but are inserted by the evangelist; who might do it with authority, since Christ had done it before him, (<401110>Matthew 11:10), and which, as Surenhusius [f3] observes, is for the greater elucidation of the matter. The prophet does not say before whom he should be sent, though it is implied in the next clause, but here it is expressed: besides, this messenger had now appeared before the face of Christ, had prepared his way in the wilderness, and had baptized him in Jordan; all which is designed in the following words, “which shall prepare thy way before thee”, by his doctrine and baptism: in the text in Malachi it is, “before me”, (<390301>Malachi 3:1); which has made it a difficulty with the interpreters, whether the words in the prophet, are the words of Christ concerning himself, or of his Father concerning him. But sending this messenger before Christ, may be called by the Father sending him before himself, and to prepare the way before him; because Christ is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and is the angel of his presence, or face; besides, Jehovah the Father was greatly concerned, and the glory of his perfections, in the work the Messiah was to do, whose way John came to prepare. That the prophecy in Malachi here cited, is a prophecy of the Messiah, is owned by several Jewish writers [f4]; who expressly say, that those words which follow,

"the Lord whom ye seek", are to be understood of the king Messiah: and though they are divided among themselves, who should be meant by this messenger, (see Gill on "<40110>Matthew 11:10"), yet some of them are of opinion, that Elias is intended, even Abarbinel himself: for though in his commentary he interprets the words of the prophet Malachi himself, yet elsewhere [f5] he allows Elias may be intended: indeed he, and so most that go this way, mean Elijah the prophet, the Tishbite; who they suppose will come in person, before the Messiah appears: yet not he, but one in his Spirit and power is designed; and is no: other than John the Baptist, in whom the passage has had its full accomplishment.

Ver. 3. *The voice of one crying in the wilderness*, etc..] This is the other testimony in proof of the same, and may be read in (<23403>Isaiah 40:3). (See Gill on "<40303>Matthew 3:3").

Ver. 4. *John did baptize in the wilderness*, etc..] Of Judea, (<40301>Matthew 3:1), where he first appeared as a preacher; and is the same wilderness Isaiah has respect to in the above prophecy, (<23403>Isaiah 40:3). The words are best rendered in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; "John was in the wilderness, baptizing and preaching the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins": according to which, the account of the Baptist begins with his name, John; describes the place where he was where he made his first appearance, and continued in, the wilderness; which was not a wild uninhabited place and without people, but had many cities, towns, and villages in it; and also declares his work and ministry there, which was preaching and baptizing: for though baptizing is here put before preaching, yet certain it is, that he first came preaching in these parts; and there baptized such, to whom his preaching was made useful. Baptism is here called, the

baptism of repentance: because John required repentance antecedent to it, and administered it upon profession of repentance, and as an open testification of it; and this

for, or *unto the remission of sins*: not for the obtaining the remission of sins, as if either repentance, or baptism, were the causes of pardon of sin; but the sense is, that John preached that men should repent of their sins, and believe in Christ, who was to come; and upon their repentance and faith, be baptized; in which ordinance, they might be led to a fresh view of the free and full forgiveness of their sins, through Christ; whose blood was to be shed for many, to obtain it: (see <44238>Acts 2:38).

Ver. 5. *And there went out unto him all the land of Judea*, etc..] The people of the land, a great number of them:

and they of Jerusalem; the inhabitants of Jerusalem, hearing of this new preacher, the new doctrine that he taught, and the new ordinance that he administered:

and were all baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins; that is, as many of them as were brought to a sight and sense of their sins, and made a confession of them, these he baptized, or immersed, in the river Jordan; for certain it is, that there were many of the Pharisees and Sadducees who came, whom he rejected; (see Gill on "Matthew 3:5-7"),

Ver. 6. *And John was clothed with camel's hair*, etc..] This is a description of John by his clothes; (see Gill on "Matthew 3:4"), to which may be added, that it was usual for penitents, and men of austere lives, and of the first class for holiness and religion, to live in deserts, to fare hard, and wear coarse apparel. Mention is made of one man, who is called, atywd tn[f6], because he had on a garment of goat's hair, which cut his flesh, that so it might atone for him, for he was a penitent:

and with a girdle or skin about his loins; a leathern one, as in (Matthew 3:4), not a golden one, such as the high priest wore, though the[f7] Jews call John an high priest: he was indeed of the priestly race: his father was a priest, but he did not wear a priestly girdle, nor any of the priest's garments;

and he ate locusts and wild honey. The Ethiopic version renders it, "honey of earth bees": in Ethiopia was a sort of bees, little bigger than flies, and without a sting, which had their hives in the earth, where they produced honey of a white colour, very pleasant and wholesome; and this is thought, by the Ethiopians, to be the honey which John ate[f8]; but then there must have been the same in Judea, which does not appear. Moreover, in the land of Judea, there was yrmt l bd, "the honey of palm trees"; and it is said[f9], that it is the best honey; and therefore the Scripture calls, honey of the palm trees, honey; and the palm trees which grow in the plains and valleys, abound most with it; wherefore there was much of this about Jericho, the city of palm trees: there was also ynyat l bd, "honey of figs"; which in some places was in great plenty:

> "R. Jacob ben Dosthai says [f10], it is three miles from Lud to Ono (see <150233>Ezra 2:33)) one time I walked before break of day, and I went up to my ankles in honey of figs."

Dr. Lightfoot thinks, this was the honey the evangelist speaks of, and John ate of. I have observed on (<400304>Matthew 3:4) that with the Jews, the honey of bees was lawful to eat [f11] though the bees themselves were not. So Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases, (<031120>Leviticus 11:20), they being reckoned among reptiles that fly: and it may be further observed, that according to them, the honey of wasps and hornets was lawful to be eaten, as well as the honey of bees [f12] and this may be truly called, as here, wild honey; for which they give these reasons [f13], because it is not of the substance of their bodies, but they

> "Let the species of bees be an abomination to you, but the honey of bees may be eaten;"

gather it from herbs; and because in the same manner as bees, they take it into their bodies, but do not produce it from them; though some of the doctors dissent, and think it not lawful [f14].

Ver. 7. *And preached, saying, there cometh one mightier than I after me*, etc..] From whence it appears, that John was a preacher of Jesus Christ; of the dignity of his person, the excellency of his office, and the nature and importance of his work:

the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose; expressing the great veneration he had for him, and the great sense he had of his own unworthiness, to be concerned in the lowest and meanest service of life for him; and that he was far from being worthy of the high honour done him, to be his messenger and forerunner; (see Gill on "<400311>Matthew 3:11").

Ver. 8. *I indeed have baptized you with water*, etc..] This was spoken to the baptized persons, partly to take off their dependence upon him and his baptism; and partly to direct their views to Christ, from whom the gifts and graces of the Spirit are alone to be had:

but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost; (see Gill on "<400311>Matthew 3:11"). One copy adds, "and with fire", as there: a Jewish writer says, the holy blessed God baptizeth with fire, and the wise shall understand [f15].

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass in those days*, etc..] Whilst John was preaching and baptizing in the wilderness, and had large crowds of people flocking to him, to see his person, hear his doctrine, and to be baptized by him; some for one thing, and some another;

Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee; the place where he had been brought up, and lived, and dwelt in from his infancy, to this time:

and was baptized of John in Jordan; which was the reason of his coming from Nazareth to him; (see <4013>Matthew 3:13), where this is observed; and in some verses following, an account is given of what passed between Christ and John, on this occasion.

Ver. 10. *And straightway coming up out of the water*, etc..] Not John, as many think; though it was true of him, that he came up out of the water, as the administrator of the ordinance of baptism to Christ, but Christ himself; who having descended into the water, the river of Jordan, and being baptized by immersion in it by John, came up out of it; not from the river side, and up the declivity to it, but out of the river itself: when

he saw the heavens opened; or "cloven", or "rent"; this may be understood, either of John, who was the spectator of all this, which was done for the manifestation of the Messiah to him, and the confirmation of his faith in him, and that he might bear record of him; and so the Persic version reads, "John saw", etc.. (see <4030>John 1:30,33), or of Jesus Christ himself, who came up out of the water; and when he did, saw the heavens part,

and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him. The position of these words here, is a little different from that in (<4016>Matthew 3:16), there it is, "the Spirit of God descending like a dove"; which seems rather to point out the manner of his descent, than the form in which he descended: here it is put, "the Spirit like a dove descending on him"; which seems rather to incline to such a sense, that the Spirit appeared in the form of a dove, as well as descended like one; and both may be designed, and indeed the latter follows upon the former: if it was the form of a dove the Spirit of God descended in, it was a very suitable one: the dove is a very proper emblem of the Spirit of God: "the voice of the turtle", in (<2212>Song of Solomon 2:12), is by the Targum interpreted, the voice of the holy Spirit: he may be likened to a dove, for its simplicity and sincerity; he guides into all truth as it is in Jesus, and teaches to speak the word in all plainness, openness, and sincerity, and preserves the saints in the simplicity of the Gospel; and for its

mildness and meekness; one of the fruits of the Spirit of God is meekness, (Gal 5:23). And this it produces in converted persons, making them meek; humble, and gentle: and also for its harmlessness and innocence; and which appears, or at least should, in those who mind the things of the Spirit: hence that advice of Christ, "be harmless as doves", (<4010 16>Matthew 10:16). Likewise for its purity and cleanness; the Spirit of God is a Spirit of holiness, he is the author of sanctification; such as are washed, sanctified, and justified, are so in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God, (<4611 1>1 Corinthians 6:11). The dove is a mournful and bemoaning creature; and the Spirit of God makes intercession for the saints, with groanings which cannot be uttered, (<4508 26>Romans 8:26). To which may be added, that Noah's dove bringing the olive leaf in its mouth, as a sign, of peace and reconciliation, fitly resembled the holy Spirit, one of whose fruits is peace, (<4805 22>Galatians 5:22), and which he produces, by leading to the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, whereby peace is made, and reconciliation obtained: and his descending upon Christ here, points him out as the peacemaker, through whom was come peace on earth, good will towards men, and glory to God. Christ, on whom he lighted, is comparable to a dove; he is said to have doves' eyes, (<2205 12>Song of Solomon 5:12), and he has all the fruits and graces of the dove like Spirit of God, which rested on him; like the dove, he is humble, meek, and lowly; in which characters, he is to be followed and imitated by his people: and as that creature is a very loving one to its mate, so is Christ to his church; whom he has so loved, as to give himself for her: and as that is a lovely beautiful creature, so is Christ; he is altogether lovely; and especially his eyes of love, as they are set and fixed upon his church and people. With this descent of the Spirit as a dove on Christ, compare (<2311 02>Isaiah 11:2 61:1); (see Gill on "<4003 16>Matthew 3:16").

Ver. 11. *And there came a voice from heaven*, etc..] What the Jews call "Bath Kol", saying,

thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: it is in Matthew, "this is my beloved Son", (<4003 17>Matthew 3:17); as if the words were spoken to others, to John, the administrator of baptism to him, and to those that were spectators; directing them to Christ, on whom the Spirit now descended, and testifying to them how great a person he was, how nearly related to God; how much he was the object of his love, and what a pleasure and delight he took in him; but here they are delivered as an immediate address to Christ himself, "thou art my beloved Son". Christ, as

he was the only begotten Son of God from eternity, so his filiation was owned and declared to him as early, (<19207>Psalm 2:7). This therefore was not the first time, nor was it only for his sake that this was said unto him, but also for the sake of those that stood by: but it may be observed, that he is not only called his Son, but his “beloved Son”; which might be necessary to be said to him in his state of humiliation, whilst he was yielding obedience to the will of God, and fulfilling all righteousness; and when he was about to be, as he quickly after this was, tempted by Satan in the wilderness, by whom his sonship was called in question. Now these words being directed to Christ, show that the former are spoken of him, and are applicable to him, as well as to John; (see Gill on “<40317>Matthew 3:17”).

Ver. 12. *And immediately*, etc..] As soon as he was baptized, and this testimony had been given of his divine sonship, the very selfsame day,

the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness: into a more remote and desolate part of it; for it was in the wilderness John was baptizing and preaching, when Christ came to him, and had the ordinance of baptism administered by him; and it was the same Spirit that descended on him at his baptism, which remained with him; by whose impulse he was moved, though not against his will, to go into, this desert and forlorn place. For this was not the evil spirit Satan, by whom he was tempted; for Matthew expressly says, that he was “led up of the Spirit — to be tempted by the devil”, (<40401>Matthew 4:1): where the devil that tempted him, is manifestly distinguished from the Spirit by whom he was led, and the same Spirit is meant here, as there. Moreover, in one of Beza's copies, and in his most ancient one, and in one of Stephens's, it is read, “the Holy Spirit driveth him”; (see Gill on “<40401>Matthew 4:1”).

Ver. 13. *And he was there in the wilderness forty days*, etc..] The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions add, “and forty nights”: for so long was he there,

tempted of Satan: the several temptations of Satan, and how they were overcome by Christ, are particularly related by the Evangelist Matthew, (<40403>Matthew 4:3-11), which are here omitted; and what is not mentioned there, is here recorded:

and was with the wild beasts: which shows, that he was now in an uncultivated and uninhabited part of the desert by men, and where only the most fierce and most savage of creatures dwelt; and yet was as secure and

unhurt by them, being the Lord of them, as Adam in Eden's garden, or Daniel in the lions' den. This circumstance is only related by the Evangelist Mark, and is what adds to the uncomfortable situation Christ was in, when tempted by Satan; and his being not hurt by them, may declare, partly his innocence, as man, being as pure and holy as the first man was in his state of integrity, when all creatures were brought before him, to give them names; and partly the power of God, who shut up the mouths of these creatures, that they did him no hurt; and also may signify, the awe they stood in of him, who, as God, is Lord of all. These creatures were more gentle to Christ, and used him better than the wicked Jews, among whom he dwelt, who are compared to lions, dogs, and "bulls" of Bashan, (<19P22:12,13,16,20,21>Psalm 22:12,13,16,20,21).

And the angels ministered unto him; after the temptations were over, and Satan had left him, preparing for him, and bringing to him proper food, after so long a fast; and waiting upon him, and serving him as their great Lord and master; (see Gill on "<40M4:11>Matthew 4:11").

Ver. 14. *Now after that John was put in prison*, etc..] In the castle of Macherus, by Herod, for reproving him for taking his brother Philip's wife:

Jesus came into Galilee: again, from whence he came to be baptized of John:

preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God: the good news and glad tidings of the kingdom of the Messiah, or Gospel dispensation; which lies not in worldly pomp and splendour, in outward observances, in legal rites and ceremonies, but in righteousness, peace, and joy; in peace and pardon by the blood of Christ, in justification by his righteousness, and in free and full salvation by him.

Ver. 15. *And saying, the time is fulfilled*, etc..] Either that which was fixed for the end of the law and prophets, the legal and Mosaic dispensation, and the Jewish church state; or the fulness of time for the Messiah's appearance in the world; which was agreed upon between the Father and the Son, was predicted in various prophecies, and the people of the Jews were in a general expectation of:

and the kingdom of God is at hand: the same with the kingdom of heaven, in (<40M3:2>Matthew 3:2 4:17), see the notes.

repent ye, and believe the Gospel. He called them to repent, not only of their former sins and vicious course of life, but of their bad principles and tenets, concerning a temporal kingdom of the Messiah; concerning merit and free will, justification by the works of the law, and salvation by their obedience to the ceremonies of it, and the traditions of the elders: these he exhorts them to change their sentiments about, and to relinquish them, and give into the Gospel scheme; which proclaims liberty from the law, peace, pardon, and righteousness by Christ, and salvation and eternal life by the free grace of God.

Ver. 16. *Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee*, etc..] The same with the sea of Tiberias, (<4001>John 6:1),

he saw Simon: whose surname was Peter, the son of Jonas:

and Andrew his brother; the brother of Simon,

casting a net into the sea; of Galilee, in order to catch fish:

for they were fishers: by occupation, this was their trade and business, by which they got their livelihood; (see Gill on "<4018>Matthew 4:18").

Ver. 17. *And Jesus said unto them, come ye after me*, etc..] Leave your worldly employments, and become my disciples,

and I will make you to become fishers of men: which will be a much more excellent and honourable employment, as men, and the souls of men, are more excellent, and of more worth than fishes; (see Gill on "<4019>Matthew 4:19").

Ver. 18. *And straightway they forsook their nets*, etc..] Which perhaps were their all; (see <4027>Matthew 19:27).

And followed him; both in a corporeal and spiritual sense; (see Gill on "<4020>Matthew 4:20").

Ver. 19. *And when he had gone a little further thence*, etc..] From the place where Simon and Andrew were casting their nets, though still by the sea side;

he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother. The former was be whom afterwards Herod killed with the sword, and the latter the beloved disciple; these were also fishermen:

who also were in the ship mending their nets: as the other two disciples were on board the ship, casting their nets into the sea to catch fish; these were also in a ship, repairing their nets, in order to use them the same way, and for the same purpose; (see Gill on "<4021>Matthew 4:21").

Ver. 20. *And straightway he called them*, etc..] As soon as he saw them; for he was looking out for them, having appointed them long before to the service he now called them to;

and they left their father Zebedee with the hired servants, and went after him. It might seem unnatural, had they left their father alone in the ship, to have taken the care and management of it, and therefore it is added, "with the hired servants"; who were hired for that purpose, to assist in mending the nets, and casting them, and managing the ship, and conducting it from place to place, and therefore were not to be charged with want of humanity; and such was the power that went along with Christ's call, that notwithstanding natural affection to their parents, and the gain they might get by these servants and their trade, they cheerfully quitted all, and followed Christ; (see Gill on "<4022>Matthew 4:22").

Ver. 21. *And they went into Capernaum*, etc..] Jesus and his four disciples he had just called, Simon and Andrew, James and John; though the Arabic and Persic versions read, "he went"; that is, Christ; and so Beza says it was read in a certain copy:

and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught; that is, immediately, as soon as he entered the, city, it being then sabbath day; or, as soon as the sabbath day came, he went to the synagogue at Capernaum, and his disciples with him; where the people used to meet weekly to hear the law read, and to be instructed in divine things; which opportunity Christ laid hold on to preach the Gospel to them, and teach them things concerning the kingdom of God.

Ver. 22. *And they were astonished at his doctrine*, etc..] The nature and importance of it, it being what they had not been used to hear; only at best the doctrine of the law, and sometimes only the traditions of the elders, or an allegorical and traditional sense of the Scriptures, and things very trifling and unedifying: and also they were amazed at the manner of his preaching, which was with so much gracefulness, gravity, and majesty, and was attended with so much evidence and power:

for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes; or "their Scribes", as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read. He did not go about to establish what he said by the authority of the Rabbins, as the Scribes did; saying, Hillell says so, or Shammai says thus, or such a doctor says thus and thus; but he spoke as from himself, as one sent of God, that had an authority from him, and was independent of man; and this was what they had not observed in others, and wonder at it; (See Gill on "4028Matthew 7:28-29")

Ver. 23. *And there was in their synagogue*, etc..] In the synagogue of the Capernaites, at the same time that Jesus was teaching there,

a man with an unclean spirit: not with an unclean heart, for there were doubtless many such there, but that had a devil; for in (4048Luke 4:33), it is said, "he had a spirit of an unclean devil": so called, because he is impure in himself, and the cause of uncleanness in men, in which he delights: and such spirits sometimes are where religious persons meet, but with no good design; either to disturb the preacher, or to divert the hearer, that the word may be unfruitful and unprofitable:

and he cried out: either the man, or rather the unclean spirit in him, who had possessed his body, and made use of the organs of it: he cried out through dread of the majesty of Christ, whose presence he could not bear; and through grief and envy at the success of his ministration, and the influence it had upon the minds of men; and through fear of being dispossessed of the man, in whom he was.

Ver. 24. *Saying, let us alone*, etc..] Meaning with himself, the rest of the unclean spirits, that had possessed the bodies of men in Galilee, and in all Judea; knowing that Christ had power to dislodge them, and fearing he would, entreats him he would let them alone, quietly to dwell in their beloved habitations:

what have we to do with thee? They had nothing to do with Christ, as a Saviour; they had no interest in him, nor in his redemption, but he had something to do with them, to show his power over them, and to deliver men out of their hands:

thou Jesus of Nazareth: calling him so, from the place where he was educated, and had lived the greatest part of his life, though he knew he was born at Bethlehem; but this he said, according to the common notion of the people, and it being the usual appellation of him:

art thou come to destroy us? not to annihilate them, but either to turn them out of the bodies of men, which to them was a sort of a destruction of them, and was really a destroying that power, which they had for some time exercised over men; or to shut them up in the prison of hell, and inflict that full punishment on them, which is in reserve for them:

I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God: he whom God had called his Holy One, (<19610>Psalm 16:10), and who is so, both in his divine nature, as the Son of God, the Holy One of Israel; and as the Son of man, being the holy thing born of the virgin, and is without the least stain of original sin, or blemish of actual transgression; and also as the mediator, whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, the true Messiah; and all this the devil knew from his wonderful incarnation, by the voice from heaven at his baptism, from the conquest over him in the wilderness, and by the miracles he had already wrought: in the high priest's mitre was written, hwhyl dwq, which may be rendered, “the Holy One of the Lord”: the high priest was an eminent type of him.

Ver. 25. *And Jesus rebuked him*, etc..] Checking his insolence, despising his flattery, and refusing to receive a testimony from him; and which he wanted not, lest it should be thought he had a familiarity and confederacy with him:

saying, hold thy peace; stop thy mouth, I need no such witness as thine, nor thy praises; I am not to be soothed by thy flattery, nor is my mouth to be stopped, or power restrained, by such methods: wherefore he adds,

and come out of him: I will not let thee alone, thy encomiums of me shall not prevail upon me to leave thee in the quiet possession of the man; I will give a testimony of who I am, by the dispossessing of thee out of this man. In imitation of this authoritative power of Christ, the Jewish exorcists, in their pretensions to cast out devils, use a like form: so they tell us [f16], that R. Simeon ben Jochai, cast a devil out of Caesar's daughter, saying, “Ben Talmion” (which was the name of the devil) a, “come out, Ben Talmion come out”; and he came out of her; (see Gill on “<40227>Matthew 12:27”).

Ver. 26. *And when the unclean spirit had torn him*, etc..] Not that he had torn any limb from him, or had made any wound in any part of his body; for Luke says, (<42435>Luke 4:35), that he “hurt him not”, but he shook him; and as Luke there says, “threw him in the midst”, of the people, or synagogue; and so the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read here, “he

cast him", or "threw him to the ground": he threw him into convulsions, and laid him prostrate on the floor:

and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him; though sorely, against his will, as his loud cry showed, and being obliged to it by a superior power.

Ver. 27. *And they were all amazed*, etc..] The people that were in the synagogue, who were met together for divine worship, were astonished, not only at his doctrine, as before, but at this miracle and power of his in casting out devils:

insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, what thing is this? They spake among themselves, as Luke says, (<4046>Luke 4:36); they inquired of one another; they conferred together, talked over the point, and disputed among themselves, concerning both the doctrine and power of Christ, what, and how wonderful they were:

what new doctrine is this? This they said, not as fixing a brand of novelty upon it, as the Athenians did on Paul's doctrine, (<4417>Acts 17:19), but as admiring it; being what was rare and unusual, and which they had never heard of from their Rabbins and Scribes, and which was confirmed by miracles;

for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him: they not only observed the authority with which he delivered his doctrine, but the authority with which he cast out devils, by a word speaking; he not only commanded them to come out, but they immediately came out; their exorcists took authority upon them to command, but could not oblige the devils to obey; but these men took notice, that such was the authority of Christ in commanding, that the unclean spirits were obliged to obey, and did.

Ver. 28. *And immediately his fame spread abroad*, etc..] Not only in the city of Capernaum, where these things were done, and where his fame was first spread, but also

throughout all the region round about Galilee: and not only throughout Galilee, but throughout all the country that was bordering upon it, and adjacent to it; (see <4023>Matthew 4:23,25). The Persic version reads, "through all the provinces".

Ver. 29. *And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue*, etc..] Christ having wrought this miracle, and finished his sermon, and the whole synagogue service being over, when it was usual for every one to repair to their own houses, or their friends, for refreshment; he, and they that were with him, departed from it, and directly, being not far from it,

they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew; who being brethren, dwelt together in a house at Capernaum, where it seems they were now inhabitants, though their native place was Bethsaida, (<4044>John 1:44),

with James and John; whom they took along with them, being fellow disciples of Christ.

Ver. 30. *But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever*, etc..] "A great fever", Luke says, (<4038>Luke 4:38); a very violent one, which threatened with death, and must be very dangerous to an old person; (see Gill on "<4014>Matthew 8:14"),

And anon they tell him or her; for it seems, that not as soon as he came into the house, but some time after, when he had sat awhile, and rested himself after his fatigue in preaching; they acquainted him with her case, and beseeched him to look upon her, and restore her: this was done, either by Simon and Andrew, or by some others of their friends that were in the house; who having either seen, or heard of his dispossessing the unclean spirit, might rightly conclude he had power to remove a fever.

Ver. 31. *And he came and took her by the hand*, etc..] He went into the room where she lay, and took hold of her hand; not to feel her pulse, and thereby judge of the nature and strength of her disorder, as physicians do; nor merely in a friendly manner, as is customary, but in order to restore her:

and lift her up; to sit upright in the bed, who before was laid along upon it, so weak as not to be able to turn herself, much less to sit erect by any assistance whatever:

and immediately the fever left her: and there was not the least symptom of it, nor none of the effects which it usually leaves; such was the virtue that went forth from Christ by touching her, and such his great power:

and she ministered unto them; she immediately arose from the bed, and put on her clothes, being at once in perfect health and strength; and, in

gratitude to her Saviour and physician, she assisted in preparing food for him and his disciples, and served at table to them.

Ver. 32. *And at even, when the sun did set*, etc..] At which time the Jews' sabbath was ended; (see Gill on "<40816>Matthew 8:16"), for this was a sabbath day, (<41021>Mark 1:21), when according to them, it was not lawful to heal; nor did they offer to bring their sick to him on that day; but the last of the two evening days being come, and the sun set, the sabbath was over; and therefore being under no restraint on account of that,

they brought unto him all that were diseased; with any sort of disease whatever, even all that were in their city;

and them that were possessed with devils. The Persic version renders it "epileptics", such as were troubled with the falling sickness, as many of those were, whose bodies the devils possessed.

Ver. 33. *And all the city was gathered together at the door.*] That is, the inhabitants of the city of Capernaum, a very great number of them at least, who having either heard of, or seen the dispossession of the unclean spirit in the synagogue in the daytime; and being willing to see what miraculous cures might be wrought by Christ upon the diseased and possessed that were brought to him, got together in great crowds about the door of the house of Simon and Andrew where Jesus now was.

Ver. 34. *And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases*, etc..] Not that there were some, who had some sorts of diseases, whom he did not heal; but he healed all that came, or were brought to him, which were many, of every sort of disease, which were divers, with which they were afflicted:

and cast many devils; even as many as were brought to him, or were possessed with any:

and he suffered not the devils to speak; either for him, or against him; which shows his great power over them:

because they knew him, or "that they knew him": he would not suffer them to say a word about him, because he knew that they knew that he was the Christ, the Son of God, or he would not permit them to say who he was; because he had others to bear witness of him, and better testimonies than

theirs, and lest his enemies should reproach him with an agreement and familiarity with them.

Ver. 35. *And in the morning, rising up a great white before day*, etc..] On the morrow after the sabbath, on the first day in the morning, notwithstanding the fatigue of the former day, through preaching and working miracles; yet he rose up very early while it was very much within the night, as the light and day were coming on, and before the day broke; though it might be broad day before he departed out of the house, as Luke suggests, (<4042>Luke 4:42),

he went out; out of the house of Simon and Andrew, and out of the city of Capernaum, leaving his disciples and friends behind him:

and departed into a solitary place, and there he prayed; as man, to his God and Father; it may be for his disciples he had lately chosen; for himself, as man, that he might be strengthened as such for service; and for success in his ministry, and that his Gospel might run and be glorified; he chose a desert, and solitary place, for the sake of retirement, from the crowd of people that attended at Peter's door; where he could not be alone, and in private, and as most suitable for the exercise of prayer. His early and private devotion may be an example to us.

Ver. 36. *And Simon, and they that were with him*, etc..] Peter, and his brother Andrew, together with James and John,

followed after him; some time after he was gone; for he privately withdrew from them, so that they might not be aware when he went, nor apprized of his departure, for some considerable time; which when they were, they set out, in diligent search, and eager pursuit after him, until they found him.

Ver. 37. *And when they had found him*, etc..] In the desert and solitary place, where he had been praying:

they said unto him; in order to engage him to go with them, and as the reason why they sought him with so much eagerness and diligence,

all men seek for thee; not all the men in the world, nor, it may be, all the inhabitants of Capernaum, but a large number of them, who were inquiring after him, some for one thing, some for another; some to see him, what manner of man he was, and some to hear him, what sort of doctrine he preached, and others to see his miracles, or to have themselves, or their

sick healed; and the disciples were loath that such an opportunity of doing good should be missed, and therefore sought for him, till they found him.

Ver. 38. *And he said unto them, let us go into the next towns*, etc..] Instead of returning with his disciples to Capernaum, as they expected he would, and especially since there was such a concourse of people got together, he proposes to go to "the next towns"; or "village cities"; towns that were neither villages, nor cities, but between both, as the word signifies: hence the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions render it, "villages and cities": and it designs such towns in which there were synagogues. The Jews distinguish between walled towns, villages, and large cities [f17]. They ask,

> "what is a large city? every one in which there are ten leisure men; if less than so, lo! it is a village."

And

> "every place in which there were ten Israelites, they were obliged to provide a house into which they might go to prayer, at every prayer time, and that place is called a synagogue [f18]."

These were the places Christ judged it advisable to go to; he had preached already at Capernaum, the day before, and had confirmed his doctrine by miracles, which was sufficient for the present, and therefore thought fit to go elsewhere, and orders his disciples to go likewise; for the Syriac version renders it, "go ye to the next cities"; and in the same way read the Arabic and Persic versions:

that I may preach there also; as well as at Capernaum, that so the Gospel may be spread, and have its usefulness in other parts as well as there: the Arabic version renders it, "that we may preach"; both I and you; but without any foundation; nor does the reason following suit such a version,

for therefore came I forth: meaning, not from Simon's house, nor from Capernaum, though there may be a truth in that; for Christ might come from thence, with that view, to preach the Gospel elsewhere; but from God his Father, from whom he came forth, and by whom he was sent to preach the Gospel to other cities also, both in Galilee and Judaea; even to all the inhabitants of that country, to all the lost sheep of the house of Israel; so that this was but answering the end of his coming, and acting according to the commission given him.

Ver. 39. *And he preached in their synagogues*, etc..] Which were in the next towns, in the village cities, and

throughout all Galilee: taking every town and city in his circuit, he continued preaching the Gospel of the kingdom in one place and another, until he had gone over the whole country:

and cast out devils; as out of the souls, so out of the bodies of men, whereby he confirmed the doctrine he preached.

Ver. 40. *And there came a leper to him*, etc..] After he was come down from a certain mountain, in Galilee, where he had been preaching to the people, (<4081>Matthew 8:1), and when be was in a certain city, (<4052>Luke 5:12), either Capernaum, or some other city of Galilee. This man was full of leprosy, as Luke says, and very probably deemed incurable; of the nature and symptoms of the leprosy, (see Gill on "<4052>Luke 5:12"),

beseeching him; to cure him of his leprosy:

and kneeling down to him; in token of submission, respect, and reverence, and to worship him:

and saying unto him, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean; (see Gill on "<4082>Matthew 8:2"). Mark omits the word "Lord".

Ver. 41. *And Jesus, moved with compassion*, etc..] At the sad and deplorable case the poor man was in, being a merciful high priest, and not with a desire of popular applause, and vain glory:

put forth his hand and touched him; though the leprosy was spread all over him, and there was no place clean, and touching him was forbidden by the law:

and saith unto him, I will be thou clean; (see Gill on "<4083>Matthew 8:3").

Ver. 42. *And as soon as he had spoken*, etc..] The above words,

immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed; from it, and which seems to be done not by touching him, but by the words spoken, which were accompanied with such power, as to effect the cure in an instant; (see Gill on "<4083>Matthew 8:3").

Ver. 43. *And he straitly charged him*; etc..] Either with the sin which had been the cause of this leprosy, and to take care that he sinned that sin no

more, lest a worse evil should befall him; for sin was usually the cause of leprosy, as the cases of Miriam, Gehazi, and Uzziah show. It is said to come upon men for seven things. The seven abominations mentioned in (<200616>Proverbs 6:16-19), are said, by the Jewish writers [f19], to be the reasons of persons being stricken with leprosy: “a proud look”; as appears from the instance of the daughters of Zion, (<230316>Isaiah 3:16-24), the crowns of whose heads were smitten with a scab, and who were attended with a stink, boldness, and burning. “A lying tongue”; as in the case of Miriam, who, with Aaron, spoke against Moses; upon which the cloud departed from the tabernacle, and Miriam became leprous, white as snow, (<041201>Numbers 12:1,10). “And hands that shed innocent blood”; which is proved from Joab, on whose head the blood of Abner and Amasa returned; and on account of which a leper was not to fail from his house; (see <110231>1 Kings 2:31,32), compared with (<100329>2 Samuel 3:29). “An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations”; which was fulfilled in Uzziah, who sought to bring the high priesthood into contempt, and therefore was smitten with leprosy, which arose in his forehead, while he had the censer in his hands, and was contending with the priests; and he continued a leper to his death, (<142618>2 Chronicles 26:18-21). “Feet that be swift in running to mischief”; which was true of Gehazi, who ran after Naaman the Syrian, and took a gift of him which he should not; for which, the leprosy, Naaman was cured of, seized him, and cleaved unto him, (<120520>2 Kings 5:20-27). “A false witness that speaketh lies”; of this no instance is given. “And him that soweth discord among brethren”; as Pharaoh between Abraham and Sarah; wherefore the Lord plagued Pharaoh, etc.. (<011217>Genesis 12:17), which the Jews understand of the plague of leprosy. These seven things are, in another place [f20], said to be an evil tongue, shedding of blood, a vain oath, uncleanness, a proud spirit, theft, and envy. Elsewhere it is said [f21], that for eleven things leprosy cometh; for cursing God, for uncleanness, for murder, for saying of a neighbour a thing that there is nothing in it, for pride, for entering into a border which is not a man's own, for a lying tongue, for theft, for a false oath, for profaning the name of God, for idolatry: and R. Isaac says, for an evil eye; and the Rabbins also say, it comes upon him who despises the words of the law: the first is proved from Goliath, (<091726>1 Samuel 17:26,46); the second from the daughters of Jerusalem, (<230316>Isaiah 3:16-24); the third from Cain, (<010415>Genesis 4:15) and from Joab, (<100329>2 Samuel 3:29); the fourth from Moses, (<020405>Exodus 4:5,6); the fifth from Naaman, (<120501>2 Kings 5:1); the sixth from Uzziah, (<142616>2 Chronicles 26:16-19); the seventh from Miriam, (<041210>Numbers 12:10); the

eighth and ninth from (Zechariah 5:4), compared with (Leviticus 14:45); the tenth from Gehazi, (2 Kings 5:20,27); the eleventh from the children of Israel when they made the calf, (Exodus 32:25), compared with (Numbers 5:2). But whether this man's sin was either of these, or what it was, is not certain: however, he was, by this cure, laid under an obligation, for the future, to avoid it, and all other sins: or rather the charge was to tell no man of his cure, before he came to the priest: nor to him, or any other, how he came by it, and by whom he was healed;

and forthwith sent him away; to the priest, in all haste; and it looks as if the man was unwilling to have gone from him, but chose rather to have continued with his kind benefactor: for the word signifies, he cast him out; he drove him from him; he obliged him to go without delay.

Ver. 44. *And saith unto him, see thou say nothing to any man*, etc..] By the way, till he came to the priest;

but go thy way, show thyself to the priest: the Syriac and Persic versions read, “to the priests”; and the Vulgate Latin renders it, “to the chief priest”; but any priest might judge of the cleansing of a leper;

and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded for a testimony unto them; (see Gill on “Matthew 8:4”).

Ver. 45. *But he went out*, etc..] Either out of the synagogue; for in (Mark 1:39), it is said, that Christ preached in their synagogues, etc.. and in (Mark 1:40), “there came a leper to him”; and Luke very, plainly suggests, that he was in the city, (Luke 5:12), and he might be in the synagogue: and this was allowed a leper, according to the Jewish canons, provided some rules were observed; which were these [f22]:

> “if a leper enters into a synagogue, they make for him a partition ten hands high, and four cubits broad; he enters in first, and goes out last:”

or, it may be, he went out of the house where he was, into the city, and parts adjacent; for it seems as if the cure was done privately: and yet a leper was not allowed to enter into a house [f23];

> “if he did, all the vessels which were there, i.e. all the goods in the house were defiled, even to the very beams. R. Simeon says, as far

as four cubits. R. Judah says, if he stayed so long as the lighting of a lamp."

And began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter; contrary to the charge Christ gave him; though this might be done by him, not out of disobedience to Christ, but out of a transport of joy for the mercy received; and perhaps with a good intention to spread the fame and glory of his Saviour:

insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city; of Capernaum, or whatever city it was, where this cure was wrought, without a crowd of people about him, and danger from them, at least from his enemies, who envied his applause and glory.

But was without in desert places; devoid of inhabitants, where he spent his time in prayer:

and they came to him from every quarter; whenever the people could learn where he was: so agreeable was his doctrine to some; and so useful his miraculous work of healing to others.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 2

Ver. 1. *And again he entered into Capernaum after some days*, etc..] After he had been preaching in the synagogues throughout Galilee, and after he had spent some days in prayer, and private retirement in desert places: and it was noised that he was in, the house; a report was spread throughout the city that he was in the house of Simon and Andrew, where he was before, and where he used to be when in Capernaum.

Ver. 2. *And straightway many were gathered together*, etc..] From all parts of the city,

insomuch that there was no room to receive them; in the house: by which it should seem to be a large one, though not large enough to hold such a numerous company as were got together:

no, not so much as about the door; or the places before the door, the porch, the court, or courtyard. The crowd was so great, that neither the house, nor the out places before, could hold them, nor could they come even near the door;

and he preached the word unto them. The Ethiopic version renders it, “he spake his own word to them that came to him”; he preached the Gospel, the word of grace and truth, of life and salvation, to as many as could come near him, and were within the hearing of him. To me it seems, that our Lord went up into an upper room, and out of the window preached to the people, that were, in great numbers, without doors; and the following narrative seems to confirm this conjecture.

Ver. 3. *And they came unto him*, etc..] A considerable body of people, townsmen, friends, and relations of the person after mentioned:

bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four; carried by four men upon their shoulders, as if he was a dead carcass; so weak and enfeebled was he by his disease, that he could not walk, or be otherwise brought; or rather upon a bed, which four men, at the four comers of it,

carried in their hands; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “four men carried him on a bed”; and certain it is, by what follows, that he was brought upon a bed. This man's case appears to be a very bad one, and what seems to be incurable by the art of medicine: it was not a slight touch of the palsy, but a general one, which had deprived him of motion and sensation. The palsy is a disease, whereby the body, or some of its parts, lose their motion, and sometimes their sensation or feeling: the causes of it are an impeded influx of the nervous spirits into the villi, or the muscles, or of the arterious blood into their vessels; which may happen from some fault either in the brain, the nerves, muscles, or their vessels. The palsy is said to be “perfect”, or complete, when there is a privation of motion and sensation at the same time; “imperfect”, when one of the two is destroyed, the other remaining. The palsy again is either “universal, lateral”, or “partial”. The “universal” palsy, called also “paraplegia”, or “paraplexia”, is a general immobility of all the muscles that receive nerves from the cerebrum, or cerebellum, except those of the head — its cause is usually supposed to reside in the ventricles of the brain, or in the root of the spinal marrow. — The “lateral” palsy, called also “hemiplegia”, is the same disease with the “paraplegia”, only that it affects but one side of the body. Its cause is the same, only restrained to one side of the brain, or spinal marrow. The “partial” palsy is where some particular part, or member, alone is affected; as, for instance, where the motion of the arm, or leg, is destroyed [f24]. Now this man's disease seems to be the perfect and general palsy, which affects the whole body, or the “paraplegia”, which reaches every part but the head; whereby all sense, as well as motion, are destroyed, and sometimes only one of them: but in this case it seems as if both of them were lost: that he was motionless, is clear from his being carried by four persons; and it looks as if he had lost his feeling, since he is not said to be grievously tormented, as the centurion's servant is said to be, (<4006>Matthew 8:6), whose disease seems to have been of the partial or imperfect kind; or however, though it deprived him of motion, yet not of sensation; his might be a kind of scorbutic palsy. This man is an emblem of a sinner in a state of nature, who is insensible of his condition, of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, of his danger and misery to which he is exposed, of his lost and undone state, of the necessity of the new birth, and of the need of salvation by Jesus Christ; and who, as he is destitute of spiritual life, can have no spiritual motion to come to Christ for life and salvation, or any spiritual strength and activity to move in, or perform any thing that is spiritually good: and as the friends of this man took him, and

brought him to Christ, and laid him down before him, hoping he might receive a cure from him, though from what appears, it was unasked by him, as he did; so it becomes the friends and relations of unregenerate persons, who have received the grace of God themselves, and are in a sound and safe estate, to be concerned for them; to bring them under the means of grace, where they may be brought to a sense of their sins, and to a comfortable view of the free and full forgiveness of them, as this man: and this should be done, even though there may be difficulties in the accomplishment of it, as there were in this case, as is manifest from what follows.

Ver. 4. *And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press*, etc..] To the room where Jesus was, nor into the house, nor even to the door, the crowd about it was so great,

they uncovered the roof where he was. The Arabic version reads it, "they went up to the roof"; and the Persic thus, "they carried him up upon the roof". The place where Christ was, seems to be an upper room; for in such an one the Jewish doctors used to meet, and discourse together about religious matters; (see <4013>Acts 1:13 20:8). Though some think this was a mean house in which Christ was, and had no upper room, but the ground floor was open to the roof, through which the man, sick of the palsy, was let down on his bed to Christ; and the rather, because the people crowded about the door to get in, and there was no room to receive them, no not about it: but even from this circumstance it seems most reasonable, that there was an upper room in which Christ was, and at a window in which he might preach to the people, with much more convenience, than at, or about the door, where they were pressing: for, certain it is, that he did preach the word to them, (<4002>Mark 2:2), and many instances may be given of the above mentioned doctors, whose usages, when indifferent, and not sinful, might be complied with by Christ, as these were, of their meeting and conversing together in upper rooms. Instead of many, take the few following [f25]:

> "It happened to Rabban Gamaliel, and the elders, who were sitting hyyl b, "in an upper room in Jericho", that they brought them dates, and they did eat, etc.,"

Again [f26],

> "these are some of the traditions which they taught, tyylb, "in the upper chamber" of Hananiah ben Hezekiah, ben Garon."

So it is likewise said[f27], that

> "R. Tarphon, or Tryphon, and the elders, were sitting "in the chamber" of the house of Nithzah, in Lydda, and this question was asked before them, is doctrine greatest, or practice greatest?"

Once more[f28],

> "the elders of the house of Shammai, and the elders of the house of Hillell, went up, tyyll, "to the upper chamber" of Jochanan ben Bethira, and said, that the Tzitzith, or fringes, had no measure, etc.."

Now, over this upper room, was a flat roof, with battlements about it; for so the Jews were obliged to build their houses, (Deuteronomy 22:8), to which they had a way of going to and from, both within and without side their houses; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:17"). Hence we so often read[f29] of twggrd, "the way of the roofs", in distinction from ytrd "the way of the doors"; by which they entered into their houses, and by which means, things might be carried from a court to a roof, and from a roof to a court; about which the doctors dispute, saying, that on a sabbath day[f30],

> "it is forbidden to ascend and descend from the roofs to the court, and from the court to the roofs; and the vessels, whose abode is in the court, it is lawful to move them in the court, and which are in the roofs, it is lawful to move them in the roofs. — Says Rabbi, when we were learning the law with R. Simeon at Tekoah, we brought up oil, and a confection of old wine, water, and balsam, from roof to roof, and from roof to court, and from court to court, and from the court to a close, and from one close to another, till we came to the fountains, in which they washed. Says R. Judah, it happened in a time of danger, and we brought the book of the law from court to roof, and from roof to court, and from court to a close, to read in it."

Now, in these roofs, there was a door, which they call, twggt, "the door of the roofs"[f31]; now when they had brought up the sick man to the roof of the house, by a ladder fastened on the outside, which was common[f32]; they

took up this door, and let him down in his bed into the room where Jesus was: and because they wrenched the roof door open with violence, therefore it is said,

and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay: opening the door, and perhaps taking up the frame of it, and removing some tiles about it, to make the way wider, they let down with ropes, the bed, and the man on it, together. The Persic version thus renders it, “and the paralytic man being put upon a bed, at the four corners of the bed so many ropes being fastened, they let him down through a window to Jesus, into the place where he was sitting”; which is rather a paraphrase, or exposition of the words, than a translation.

Ver. 5. *When Jesus saw their faith*, etc..] The faith of the sick man, and his friends, who seemed confident, that could they get at Christ, a cure would be wrought: the faith of the one appears in suffering himself to be brought in such a manner, under so much weakness; and with so much trouble; and of the other in bringing him, and breaking through so many difficulties to get him to Christ.

He said unto the sick of the palsy, son, thy sins be forgiven thee; pointing and striking at the root of his disorder, his sins. Christ calls him son, though, in this afflicted condition a person may be a child of God, and yet greatly afflicted by him; afflictions are not arguments against, but rather for sonship: “for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?” He scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, and by chastising them, dealeth with them as with sons; and such as are without chastisement are bastards, and not sons, (Hebrews 12:6-8), yea he calls him a son, though a sinful creature, and who had not, as yet, until these words were spoken by Christ, any discovery and application of pardoning grace unto him: he was a son of God by divine predestination, being predestinated to the adoption of children: he was a son by virtue of the covenant of grace, he was interested in, as appears by his enjoying pardon of sin, a blessing of it; which runs thus, “I will be their Father, and they shall be my sons and daughters”, (2 Corinthians 6:18). He was one of the children which were given to Christ as in such a relation: and for the sake of whom Christ was now a partaker of flesh and blood, and in a little time was to die for them, in order to gather them together, who were scattered abroad. The blessing Christ conferred on this poor man is of the greatest consequence and importance, forgiveness of sin: it is what springs from the grace and mercy of God; it is

provided in a promise in the covenant of grace; Christ was sent to shed his blood to procure it, in a way consistent with the holiness and justice of God; and this being done, it is published in the Gospel, and is a most considerable article in it, and than which, nothing can be more desirable to a sensible sinner: and blessed are they that are partakers of it, their sins will never be imputed to them; they will never be remembered more; they are blotted out of God's book of debts; they are covered out of his sight, and are removed as far as the east is from the west, even all their sins, original and actual, secret or open, of omission, or commission; (see Gill on "<4009>Matthew 9:2").

Ver. 6. *But there were certain of the Scribes sitting there*, etc..] In the upper room where Jesus was, to watch and observe what he said:, and did:

and reasoning in their hearts; upon the above words of Christ, in the following manner.

Ver. 7. *Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies*? etc..] They took Christ to be a mere man, and reasoned with themselves, that he must be a blasphemer, in assuming that to himself, which was peculiar to God: they seem astonished at his words, and wonder at his arrogance, and to be filled with indignation and resentment at him; saying,

who can forgive sins but God only? this was a generally received maxim with them, and a very just one. The Chaldee paraphrase of (<1804>Job 14:4), runs thus;

> "who can give a pure man out of a man that is defiled with sins, but God, who alone is he, hyl qwby yd, "that can pardon him?""

They even deny that Metatron, so they call the angel in (<2320>Exodus 23:20), of whom they say, that his name is as the name of his master, has a power of forgiving sins; for which reason the Israelites rejected him as a messenger[f33]. They were right in saying, that none but God could forgive sin, against whom it is committed; but wrong in charging Christ with blasphemy on this account; because he is truly God, as well as man, as his omniscience and omnipotence hereafter manifested, did abundantly show. That no mere creature can forgive sin, is certain: good men may, and ought to forgive one another, and even their very enemies; but then they can only forgive sin as an injury done to themselves, not as committed against God. The ministers of the Gospel may be said to remit sins ministerially, or

declaratively, by preaching the doctrine of pardon, declaring, that such as believe in Christ shall receive the remission of sins; but for any man to assume such a power to himself, as to grant pardons and indulgences, to absolve from sins, is anti-christian, as the pope of Rome does; in which he takes that to himself, which is peculiar to God; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God, (51042 Thessalonians 2:4). Nor can any man procure the forgiveness of his sins by any thing he has, or can do; not by his riches, which will not profit in a day of wrath, they being not a sufficient ransom price for a man's self, or any of his brethren and friends; nor by his repentance, for though this, and remission of sins, go together in grace and experience, yet repentance is not the cause of remission of sins, but rather the effect of remission applied; nor by his faith, for faith does not procure, but receives this blessing: and much less by good works, for then the forgiveness of sins would not be according to the riches of grace; and a man would be saved by his works, since a principal part of salvation lies in the pardon of sin; and besides the blood of Christ would be shed in vain. That God only can forgive sin, is evident, because it is against him, and him only, that men sin: sin is a transgression of his law, a contrariety to his nature, and a contradiction of his will, an affront to his justice and holiness, a contempt of him, who is the lawgiver, that is able to save and to destroy; it is of the nature of a debt, which he only can loose from. Moreover, if there were any besides himself that could forgive sin, he would have one equal with him, and like unto him; whereas, “who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity?” (3018Micah 7:18). This is a prerogative peculiar to him, which he challenges to himself: “I even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions”, (2325Isaiah 43:25), but then this is common to all the three divine persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit. The Father, he has prepared this grace in his own heart; for the moving cause of it, is his sovereign grace and mercy; he has promised and secured it in the covenant of his grace; he set forth, and sent forth his Son to obtain it, by the shedding of his blood, that so his justice might he satisfied; and it is for Christ's sake he forgives all trespasses. The Son of God is concerned in it: as man, his blood was, shed for it; and that being the blood, not of a mere man, but of him that is God, as well as man, it was effectual to that purpose; it is in his name that it is preached, and he is exalted as a Saviour to give it; and as the advocate of his people he calls for it, and requires it; and as he is truly and properly God, he has equal power to bestow it, and apply it as his Father. The holy Spirit, as he makes men sensible of their need of it, he shows it to them, and their interest in it;

he sprinkles the blood of Christ upon their consciences, and declares them pardoned through it; he bears witness of the truth of it to them, and seals it up unto them; so that it is wholly of God.

Ver. 8. *And immediately, when Jesus perceived in his Spirit*, etc..] "His own Spirit", as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; not his human soul, nor the holy Spirit of God, though both may be said to be his Spirit; but his divine nature, in and by which he knew all things, even the most sacred thoughts of men's hearts: and as soon as ever the above thoughts were conceived in the minds of the Scribes and Pharisees, they were perceived by him, and told to them,

that they so reasoned within themselves; he said unto them, why reason ye these things in your hearts? thereby reproving them, not for reasoning and concluding in their own minds, that none but God can forgive sins; but for imputing blasphemy to him, for pronouncing this man's sins pardoned; he being God, as well as man, of which his knowing the thoughts and reasonings of their minds might have been a convincing proof.

Ver. 9. *Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy*, etc..] This question was put to them by Christ, in order to prove his deity, and clear himself from the charge of blasphemy; for he that could cure the sick of the palsy, by a word speaking, had power to forgive him his sins: and therefore proposes it to them, which was easiest to say,

thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? Both of them were easy to say, but not with power and effect: they were both instances of divine power, and proofs of deity; and only he that could do the one, could do the other, and the one was as easy to be performed, by a divine person, as the other: and though it may be hard to say which is the greatest instance of power, or the strongest proof of deity, to pardon a sinner, or to cure a paralytic by a word speaking; perhaps forgiveness of sin may be the greatest evidence of divine power and goodness; however, it is certain, it is a greater blessing to be pardoned, than to be cured of a palsy; yet curing of a palsy, in the manner in which Christ did it, was a more sensible proof of his deity to the Scribes and Pharisees, than pronouncing a man's sins forgiven; because this was visible, and could not be denied; whereas the other, though pronounced, they might question whether it had its effect: but by the one, which they would see done before their eyes, there would be left no room for them to doubt of the reality of the other; (see Gill on "Matthew 9:5").

Ver. 10. *But that ye may know that the son of man*, etc..] Meaning himself, who was really man, and the true Messiah, in which sense this phrase had been used in the writings of the Old Testament; (see <19807>Psalm 80:17 <27713>Daniel 7:13), and though by reason of his outward form; and mean appearance, he might be thought by them to be but a mere man, and had no right, nor authority, to say what he had; in order to convince them; he affirms, that he

hath power on earth to forgive sins. As there is an emphasis lies on the phrase, "the son of man", suggesting, that his being so was no contradiction to his deity, nor any hindrance to the exertion of his power; so there is another on those words, "upon earth"; intimating, that though he was upon earth, in a very low estate, in a state of humiliation, yet he had the same power to forgive sin as in heaven; his humbling himself in human nature did not strip him of his perfections, power, and prerogative as God: and if he had power on earth to forgive sin, there can be no room to doubt of it now he is in heaven; since as mediator, he is "exalted to be a prince, and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins", (<44531>Acts 5:31), And that it might appear he had such a power on earth,

he saith to the sick of the palsy; turning to, and addressing him in the following words, with great majesty, authority, and power; (see Gill on "<40906>Matthew 9:6").

Ver. 11. *I say unto thee, arise, and take up thy bed*, etc..] He bid him, in an authoritative way to arise from his bed, in which he was brought, and on which he lay before him, and take it up upon his shoulders, directly, and in the face of all the people, carry it away:

and go thy way into thine house; to show himself whole to his family and friends, and go about his business; (see Gill on "<40906>Matthew 9:6"),

Ver. 12. *And immediately he arose*, etc..] Power going along with the words of Christ, he found himself perfectly well; and at once sprung up from off his bed,

and took up his bed, upon his shoulders, with all the ease imaginable:

and went forth before them all: the Scribes and Pharisees, and the whole multitude of the people, who were eyewitnesses of this wonderful cure: or "against them all"; for being strong and robust, he made his way through the crowd, with his bed on his back;

insomuch that they were all amazed; at the power of Christ, and the strength of the man:

and glorified God, saying, we never saw it on this fashion; or any thing like this in our days. They easily perceived it was a preternatural action, and what could never be done by any mere man; they therefore attribute it to God, and give him the glory of it; they celebrated the perfections of God, particularly his power, and his goodness, which were very visible in this instance; they praised him and his works, and gave thanks to him for this wonderful cure, which was wrought; and that he had given such power to Christ, who they looked upon to be but a man; though they might have concluded from hence that he was God, to perform such mighty works: and these that glorified God, and expressed their thankfulness for this instance of his kindness to men, were not the Scribes and Pharisees, who had charged Christ with blasphemy; for the miracles of Christ rarely, if ever, had such an effect upon them, as to acknowledge that they were from God, and that Christ performed them by a divine power, but rather by a diabolical influence. We never read of their praising God, and glorifying him for any thing that was done by Christ; but generally went away, after a miracle, hardened, and full of spite and malice, going and consulting together how to take away his life. But these were the "multitude", as Matthew says, who attended on the ministry of Christ, and followed him from place to place, and had a high opinion of him, as a great and good man; though they did not believe in him as the Messiah, and did not know him to be the Son of God; (see Gill on "Matthew 9:8"),

Ver. 13. *And he went forth again by the sea side*, etc..] The sea of Galilee, where he had met with, and called Peter and Andrew, James and John; and not far from which were the solitary place, and the desert places, where he was before he entered into Capernaum:

and all the multitude resorted unto him; who had been with him at Peter's house, and about the door, and those who could not get near him:

and he taught them; the word of God, the Gospel, and the doctrines of it.

Ver. 14. *And as he passed by*, etc..] As he went from Simon's house, and from the city of Capernaum, to go to the sea side:

he saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus; the same with Matthew, (Matthew 9:9), and son to the same Alphaeus as James was, (Matthew 10:3), Beza's most ancient copy reads "James", instead of "Levi", very wrongly;

but he was the brother of James, and also of Simon and Jude; so that there were four brothers of them apostles: and if Joses, called Barsabas, was the same Joses that was brother to these, as seems probable, a fifth was put up for an apostle, though the lot fell on Matthias. James, and Joses, and Simon, and Jude, are mentioned together, (40Matthew 13:55), because they lived together, and were men of religion and seriousness, and known by their neighbours; but Matthew, or Levi, is not mentioned: it is thought, by some, probable, that he was a loose, extravagant young man, and so might depart from his father's family, and enter into this scandalous employment of a publican; and herein went contrary to his father's will, Cleophas, or Alphaeus, who was the husband of the sister of Mary, the mother of our Lord:

sitting at the receipt of custom; the toll booth, or custom house, where he sat to take toll of passengers that came, or went in ships or boats, The Syriac version renders it, “sitting among the toll gatherers”; and the Persic, “among publicans”; not only signifying the business in which he was, but the company he was among; which makes the grace of Christ the more illustrious and distinguishing, in looking upon him, and calling him:

and said unto him, follow me; and he arose, and followed him. Christ, the great shepherd of the sheep, who came to seek, in order to save that which was lost, was now locking up his lost sheep; and Matthew, or Levi, being one of them, he finds him, and calls him by his grace. Christ is always first with his people; he first seeks them, and then they seek him; he first finds them, and then they find him; yea, he is found of them that sought him not. Levi took no notice of him, inquired not about him, and had no thought of leaving his employ; and going after him, but Christ knew him: his eye was upon him as he passed by him, and his time was a time of love, and so a time of life; he looked upon him, and said unto him, live; quickening power went along with his words, and he arose, and left all, and followed him: Christ, as the good shepherd, went before; and Levi, through the grace that was now given him, as one of his sheep, heard and knew his voice, and, without the least hesitation or reluctance, quitted his business, and became a follower of him. How powerful is efficacious grace! what is it, it can not do! it turns the heart of a sinner at once, inclines it to Christ, and causes it to leave all for his sake; it at once fills the soul with love to Christ, faith in him, and obedience to him; it works powerfully, and yet freely; it always obtains, and effects what it designs, yet puts no force upon the will: Levi,

under the drawings of divine grace, followed Christ most willingly and cheerfully; (see Gill on "<4009>Matthew 9:9").

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his house*, etc..] In the house of Levi; not in the custom house, or toll booth, for that he left; but in his house in the city of Capernaum, where he had him, and made an entertainment for him, in token of gratitude, for the high favour bestowed on him:

many publicans and sinners sat also together, with Jesus, and his disciples; being invited by Levi, and not objected to by Christ; (see Gill on "<4010>Matthew 9:10").

for there were many, and they followed him; either Christ whom they had observed to have called Matthew, and had heard preach by the sea side; or else Matthew; and so the Persic version renders it, "for many followed Matthew". The Ethiopic version reads the words, "and they were many", that is, publicans and sinners, "and the Scribes and Pharisees followed him"; mentioned in the next verse, from whence it seems to be taken; though true it is, that not only a large number of publicans and sinners followed Christ, but also many of the Scribes and Pharisees; yet with a different view from the former, not to get any advantage to themselves, but, if they could, an advantage against Christ.

Ver. 16. *And when the Scribes and Pharisees saw him eat*, etc..] They were offended at his eating and drinking, though it was in moderation; because he did not fast as they, and their disciples did; and especially, that he eat

with publicans and sinners; men of very infamous characters, and bad lives, with whom the Pharisees disdained to keep company:

they said unto his disciples, how is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, "your master", (see Gill on "<4011>Matthew 9:11"); so some Greek copies here.

Ver. 17. *When Jesus heard it, he saith to them*, etc..] Christ either overheard what they said to his disciples, or he heard it from the relation of the disciples; and when he did, he turned to the Scribes and Pharisees, and spoke to them the following words:

they that are whole, have no need of the physician, but they that are sick; which seems to be a proverbial expression, signifying that he was a physician; that these publicans and sinners were sick persons, and needed his company and assistance; but that they, the Scribes and Pharisees, were whole, and in good health, in their own esteem, and so wanted no relief; and therefore ought not to take it amiss, that he attended the one, and not the other. These words give a general view of mankind, in their different sentiments of themselves and of Christ; and of the usefulness of Christ to one sort, and not another. There are some that cry up the power of man's freewill, and plead for the strength and purity of human, nature, and extol its excellencies and abilities; and it is no wonder that these see no need of Christ, either for themselves or others: hence preachers of this complexion leave Christ out of their ministry for the most part; and generally speaking, lessen the glory and dignity of his person, depreciate his offices, reject his righteousness, and deny his satisfaction and atonement: and such reckon themselves the favourites of heaven, and are ready to say, whom shall God delight to honour, but us, who are so pure and holy? they therefore trust in their own righteousness, and despise others, and submit not to the righteousness of Christ; they make their own works their saviours, and so neglect the great salvation by Christ. There are others that are sick, and are quite sick of themselves; they see the impurity of their nature, how unsound and unhealthful they are; that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there is no soundness in them, nothing but wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores: their loins are filled with the loathsome disease of sin; they are sensible of their inability to cure themselves, and that no mere creature can help them; and that all besides Christ, are physicians of no value: and therefore they apply to him, whose blood is a balm for every wound, and a medicine for every sickness and disease, and which cleanses from all sin: and whereas such, and such only, see their need of Christ as a physician, these only does he attend under this character; (see Gill on "Matthew 9:12"). Adding this as a reason,

I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. These words explain, what is more obscurely and figuratively expressed in the former; it appears from hence, that by "the whole" are meant, "righteous" persons; not such who are made righteous, by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, but such who were outwardly righteous before men, who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, depended on their own righteousness, and fancied themselves, with respect to the righteousness of

the law, blameless; and so, in their own apprehensions, stood in no need of Christ and his righteousness: yea, even needed not repentance, according to their own thoughts of things, and therefore were not called to it, but were left to their own stupidity and blindness; these were the Scribes and Pharisees; and by the “sick”, are meant “sinners”; such who are made sensible of sin, and so of their need of Christ as a Saviour; and who have evangelical repentance given them, and are called to the exercise and profession of it: and Christ's calling sinners to repentance, and bestowing that grace, together with the remission of sins, which goes along with it, is doing his work and office as a “physician”. This evangelist makes no mention of the passage in (<2806>Hosea 6:6), with which these words are introduced in Matthew. The last words, to “repentance”, are omitted by the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and are wanting in some ancient copies; but are retained in the Arabic version, and in most copies, as in (<4013>Matthew 9:13).

Ver. 18. *And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast*, etc..] Or “were fasting”; perhaps that very day, and so were the more displeased at this entertainment, Matthew had made for Christ and his disciples, and at their being at it; or fasting was usual with them: they fasted often, both John's disciples, and the disciples of the Pharisees, or the Pharisees themselves; so the Vulgate Latin reads: of their frequent fasting, (see Gill on “<4014>Matthew 9:14”),

and they came: both the disciples of John, (<4014>Matthew 9:14), and the Scribes and Pharisees, (<4250>Luke 5:30,33),

and say unto him, why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? (see Gill on “<4014>Matthew 9:14”).

Ver. 19. *And Jesus said unto them*, etc..] Both to John's disciples and the Pharisees,

can the children of the bride chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? Suggesting that he was the bridegroom, as John their master had called him, (<4029>John 3:29), and that his disciples were the children of the bride chamber; and that it was very unsuitable for them, and very unreasonable to desire them to fast at such a time, and under such a character: wherefore the answer returned by Christ himself to the question is,

as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast: all which the Syriac version expresses by ܠܐ, "no": *see Gill "<4095>Matthew 9:15"*.

Ver. 20. *But the days will come*, etc..] As they were in some sense now come to the disciples of John, their master being taken up by Herod, and confined in prison, and so it was a mourning time with them:

when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days: referring to the time of the sufferings and death of Christ, which would be, and was a sorrowful season to his disciples.

Ver. 21. *No man also seweth a piece of new cloth*, The traditions of the elders are meant, particularly concerning eating and drinking, and fasting, things before spoken of; and which occasioned this parable, and which were new things in comparison of the commands of God: some of them were of very short standing, devised in, that age; and most, if not all of them, were since the times of Ezra.

On an old garment; the moral and ceremonial righteousness of the Jews, in obedience to the law of God; signifying, that the former were not to be joined with these, to make up a justifying righteousness before God; which were not sufficient for such a purpose, either singly, or both together:

else the new piece that filled it up, taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse; for by attendance to the traditions of the elders, the Jews were taken off from, and neglected the commandments of God; nay, oftentimes the commands of God were made void by these traditions, so that the old garment of their own righteousness, which was very ragged and imperfect of itself, instead of being purer and more perfect, became much the worse, even for the purpose for which it was intended; (see Gill on "<4096>Matthew 9:16").

Ver. 22. *And no man putteth new wine into old bottles*, etc..] By "old bottles" are meant, the Scribes and Pharisees, the whole, which needed not a physician, and the righteous, Christ came not to call; and by new wine, either the love of God, which is not shed abroad in the hearts of such persons; or the blessings of the new covenant, which are not bestowed upon them; or the Gospel, which brings an account of both, which is not received by carnal men:

else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: the Gospel will only fill them with rage and fury,

and they will despise it, and let it go; which will be an aggravation of their sin and misery, and so will prove the savour of death unto death unto them:

but new wine must be put into new bottles; into the hearts of sinners, who are called to repentance, and are renewed in the Spirit of their minds; are newborn babes, that desire the sincere milk of the word, and wine of the Gospel; in these the love of God is exceeding abundant, and it comes in with full flows into their souls; all grace is made to abound towards them, and the word of Christ richly dwells in them; in whom these things remain and abide, and they themselves are saved with an everlasting salvation; (see Gill on "<4009>Matthew 9:17").

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass*, etc..] The Vulgate Latin adds, "again"; and so Beza says it was read in one of his copies:

that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day, and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn, and to rub them, and get the grain out of them, and eat them; (see Gill on "<4001>Matthew 12:1").

Ver. 24. *And the Pharisees said unto him*, etc..] To Christ, the same they said to his disciples, (<4002>Luke 6:2).

Behold, why do they on the sabbath day, that which is not lawful? see how they pluck the ears of corn and rub them, and eat things, which by the law, especially by the traditions of the elders, were not lawful to be done on the sabbath day; (see Gill on "<4002>Matthew 12:2").

Ver. 25. *And he said unto them*, etc..] By way of answer to their question, and which was a full one, and enough to silence them:

have ye never read what David did; referring to the history in (<0921>1 Samuel 21:1-15).

when he had need: of bread, was in great necessity, and in the utmost distress:

and was an hungered, he, and they that were with him? which was a justifiable reason for what he and his company did; as it was for the action of the disciples; being in a like case, and therefore very appropriate to the purpose; (see Gill on "<4003>Matthew 12:3").

Ver. 26. *How he went into the house of God*, etc..] The tabernacle; for the temple was not yet built: thither David went to get bread for himself and

his men, being hungry: so in a spiritual sense, where should such go, who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, but into the house of God? Here is bread enough, and to spare; here is a table furnished with excellent provisions; here the Gospel is dispensed, which is milk for babes, and meat for strong men; here Christ, the bread of life, is set forth, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed; here the ordinances are administered, which are breasts of consolation to the children of God; here is a feast of fat things, all things are ready, and souls are welcome, and therefore it must be right to attend here. And this was on the sabbath day that David went into the house of God: when the showbread loaves were removed, and divided, among the priests, and new ones were placed in their room: and so under the Gospel dispensation, on the Lord's day, the day set apart for public worship, it becomes the saints to go up to the house of the Lord, and feed upon the provisions of it: they are a royal priesthood, they are priests, as well as kings to God; and their business is in the house of the Lord, to offer up spiritual sacrifices to him; and as the goodness and fulness of his house appertains to them, they do well to attend and partake thereof.

In the days or Abiathar the high priest: and yet from the history it is clear, that it was in the days of Ahimelech the high priest, the father of Abiathar; wherefore the Jew charges [f34] Mark with an error, and Matthew and Luke too: whereas the two last make no mention of the name of any high priest; and it might be observed, that in the Persic version of Mark it is rendered, “under Abimelech the high priest”; and in an ancient copy of Beza's, the whole clause is omitted; though it must be owned, that so it is read in other Greek copies, and in the ancient versions, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and others: wherefore let it be further observed, that the fact referred to was done in the days of Abiathar, though it was before he was an high priest; and the particle επι may be so rendered, about, or “before Abiathar was high priest”, as it is in (<40111>Matthew 1:11). Besides, Abiathar was the son of an high priest, and succeeded his father in the office: and might be at this time his deputy, who acted for him, or he by has advice; and according to a rule the Jews [f35] themselves give,

> “the son of an high priest, who is deputed by his father in his stead, rwma lwdg hk yrh, “lo! he is called an high priest”.”

So that Abiathar might at this time be called the high priest; and is the rather mentioned, because he was the more eminent and famous man; and

whom the Jews call [f36] Urim and Thummim, because there was much inquiry made by them; in his and his father's days, and very little after: to which may be added, that the names of the father and the son are sometimes changed; Ahimelech is called Abiathar, and this Abiathar is called Ahimelech, the son of Abiathar, (<10817>2 Samuel 8:17), and Abimelech the son of Abiathar, (<13816>1 Chronicles 18:16). And it seems as if both father and son had two names, and were sometimes called by the one, and sometimes by the other: for as the father is sometimes called Abiathar, the son is called Ahimelech, or Abimelech, as in the places mentioned; and which refer to the times when David was king of Israel, and long after the death of Saul, and consequently long after Ahimelech, and the rest of the priests at Nob, were killed by the order of Saul: wherefore Ahimelech, or Abimelech, in the said places, must be the son of Abiathar; and who afterwards was thrust out of the priesthood by Solomon, for joining with Adonijah in his usurpation, (<11025>1 Kings 1:25 2:26). And from whence it appears, that his father was called Abiathar also, and which some take to be their family name; and if so, then there is no difficulty, and the evangelist rightly says, that this affair was in the days of Abiathar: but be it that he intends the son, what has been before observed is a sufficient solution of this difficulty; for the evangelist does not say that Abiathar was high priest, when David came and eat the showbread; he only says, “it was in the days of Abiathar the high priest”: for certain it is, that this happened in his days; and as certain, that he was an high priest; and Mark might with great propriety call him so, though he was not strictly one, till after this business was over: besides, he was not only the son of an high priest, and it may be his deputy, and some have thought officiated at this time, his father being sick or infirm through old age; but inasmuch as his father was directly killed by the order of Saul, he narrowly escaping, immediately succeeded him in the office of the high priesthood; and therefore his being an high priest so very near the time of this action, without any impropriety and impertinence, and especially without incurring the charge of falsehood, the evangelist might express himself as he does.

And did eat the showbread, which is not lawful to eat, but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? Who not only ate the showbread, which was set before the Lord, and was sacred, and which none but the priests might eat of, after it was removed from the table; but he did this on the sabbath day; and he not only eat of it himself, but the soldiers that were with him: and all this with the knowledge and leave of

the high priest: for the Jews [f37] have no reason to charge this evangelist and the others with an error, that others besides David ate of the showbread, urging that he came alone to Ahimelech; since it is evident from (<09210 2>1 Samuel 21:2,4,5), that David had servants in company with him when he fled, though they did not attend him when he went to the high priest; and that he asked bread, and it was given him, not only for himself, but for the young men that he had appointed to be at such a place: and therefore, if this was allowed to David and his men, when hungry, it ought not to be charged as an evil upon the disciples, for plucking and rubbing a few ears of corn to satisfy their hunger, though on a sabbath day; and especially when he, who was Lord of the sabbath, was present, and admitted of it; (see Gill on "<40120 4>Matthew 12:4").

Ver. 27. *And he said unto them*, etc..] Continuing his answer to them, and adding, in confirmation of what he had said, and for the further vindication of his disciples,

the sabbath was made for man; for his good, and not for his hurt; both for the good of his soul, that he might have an opportunity of attending divine worship, both in public and private; and for the good of his body, that he might have rest from his labour; and this was the end of the original institution and appointment of it; and therefore works of necessity are not forbidden on this day; such as are for the necessary comfort, support, and preservation of life; or otherwise it would be apparent, that the sabbath was not appointed for the good, but for the hurt of men. By "man", is not meant all mankind; for the sabbath was never appointed for all mankind, nor binding upon all; only the Jews, who are emphatically called "man", or "men"; (see <26340 >Ezekiel 34:30,31), upon which the Jewish writers remark [f38], that

> "they are called, da, "man"; but the idolatrous Gentiles, and nations of the World, are not called "men";"

but dogs, beasts, etc.. Our Lord may here be thought to speak in their language, as he does in Mt. 15:26, (see Gill on "<40152 6>Matthew 15:26"). And that the observation of the seventh day, was only designed for the children of Israel, seems manifest from (<02311 6>Exodus 31:16,17), "wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant; it is a sign between me and the children of Israel"; and not between him and the rest of the world: and in

(Exodus 31:14), “ye shall keep the sabbath, for it is holy unto you”: on which the Jews [f39] make this remark, ymm ral alwkl, “to you, and not to the rest of the nations”: nor did they ever think that the Gentiles were obliged to observe their sabbath, only such who became proselytes to their religion; even those who were proselytes of righteousness: for a proselyte of the gate, was not bound to observe it; for so says [f40] Maimonides,

> “those who take upon them the seven commandments of Noah only, lo! they are as a proselyte of the gate, and they are free to do work on the sabbath day for themselves, openly, as an Israelite on a common day.”

Yea, they not only say, they were not obliged to keep the sabbath, but that it was not lawful for them to observe it; and that it was even punishable with death them to regard it; for so they say [f41],

> “a Gentile that keeps the sabbath before he is circumcised, is guilty of death, because it is not commanded him.”

They judged them unworthy of having this precept enjoined them, as being not men, but beasts, and worse than they, and had not the privilege the ass has: hence one of their commentators [f42] says,

> “concerning the rest of an ass, thou (O Israelite!) art commanded; but concerning the rest of a Gentile, thou art not commanded.”

And not man for the sabbath; who was in being long before that was appointed and enjoined.

Ver. 28. *Therefore the son of man is Lord also of the sabbath*.] Meaning himself, who had a power not only to dispense with it, but to abrogate it as he did, with the rest of the rituals of the ceremonial law; (see Gill on “Matthew 12:8”). So that it did not become them to find fault with what his disciples did, with his leave and approbation.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 3

Ver. 1. *And he entered again into the synagogue*, etc..] Perhaps in Capernaum, where he had before cast out the unclean spirit; but not on the same day, nor on that day he had had the debate with the Pharisees, about his disciples plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath day; but on another sabbath, perhaps the next; (see <4006>Luke 6:6).

And there was a man there which had a withered hand; who came there either for a cure, knowing Christ to be in the synagogue, or for the sake of worship; (see Gill on "<4012>Matthew 12:10").

Ver. 2. *And they watched him*, etc..] The ruler of the synagogue, and the principal men in it; particularly the Scribes and Pharisees, who followed him wherever he went; they observed him diligently, and kept their eyes upon him; this lame man being in the synagogue, to see

whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; which, knowing his readiness to do good, they might expect he would:

that they might accuse him; as they had accused his disciples before, of the violation of the sabbath: according to the Evangelist Matthew, they put a question to him, whether it was lawful to heal on the sabbath day? with this view, that they might, one way or another, have something to accuse him of, either to the people, or to the sanhedrim; (see Gill on "<4012>Matthew 12:10").

Ver. 3. *And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand*, etc..] After he had reasoned with them from the lesser to the greater, upon their own principles and practices, in relieving and taking out a sheep fallen into a ditch, on a sabbath day, (<4012>Matthew 12:10,11), and knowing "their thoughts", as Luke says, (<4006>Luke 6:8), their reasonings and designs; and as the Persic version here, from thence "understanding their conspiracy", turns himself to the lame man, and bids him

stand forth: or, as in Luke, “rise up and stand forth in the midst”, (Luke 6:8). He bid him rise up from his seat, and stand forth in the midst of the synagogue: this he said, partly to raise the attention of the people to the following miracle; and partly to move commiseration upon the sight of the object; and to aggravate the hard heartedness of the Pharisees; as also, that it might be manifest to all, that the man's hand was really withered; and that there was no fraud in the following cure.

Ver. 4. *And he saith unto them*, etc..] Either to the whole multitude, to all the assembly in the synagogue; and so the Persic version renders it, “again he said to the multitude”; or rather, to the Scribes and Pharisees, who were watching him, and had put a question to him, which he answers by another:

is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil, to save life, or to kill? The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, or “to destroy”, as in (Luke 6:9), To do evil, kill, or destroy, are not lawful at any time; and to do good, and to save life, must be right at all times: our Lord has a particular view to the Scribes and Pharisees, and the question is put home to their own consciences; whose hearts and thoughts, designs and views, were all open to Christ; and who were now watching to do evil to him, and even to destroy and take away his life: for the violation of the sabbath was death by the law, and this was what they sought to accuse him of: now he puts the question to them, and makes them judges which must appear most right and just in the sight of God and men, for him to heal this poor man of his withered hand, though on the sabbath day; which would be doing a good and beneficent action to him, whereby his life would be saved, and preserved with comfort and usefulness, and he would be in a capacity of getting his livelihood; or for them to cherish an evil intention against him, to seek to bring mischief on him; and not only destroy his character and usefulness as much as in them lay, but even take away his very life also: he leaves it with them to consider of which was most agreeable to the law of God, the nature of a sabbath, and the good of mankind;

but they held their peace; or “were silent”, not being able to return an answer, but what must have been in his favour, and to their own confusion, and therefore chose to say nothing.

Ver. 5. *And when he had looked round about on them*, etc..] In the several parts of the synagogue; for there were many of them on every side of him; which he might do, to observe their countenances, which might justly fall,

upon such a close question put to them, and what answer they would return to him: and his look upon them was

with anger, with a stern countenance, which showed indignation at them, though without sin, or any desire of revenge, for the evil they were meditating against him; for at the same time he had pity and compassion for them,

being grieved for the hardness of their hearts: or "the blindness of their hearts", as the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it; being troubled in his human soul, both at their inhumanity and cruelty to a miserable object, whose cure, in their opinion, would have been a breach of the sabbath; and to himself, having a malicious design against him, should he perform it; and at their stupidity and ignorance of the law of God, the nature and design of the sabbath, and of their duty to God, and their fellow creatures: wherefore as one not to be intimidated by their evil designs against him, or prevented thereby from doing good,

he saith unto the man, stretch forth thine hand; that is, the lame one; and such power went along with his words, as at once effected a cure:

and he stretched it out, and his hand was restored whole as the other. This last clause, "whole as the other", is not in the Vulgate Latin, nor in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; and may be added from (⁴⁰12¹³Matthew 12:13); see the note there; since it is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in Beza's most ancient copy, and in others.

Ver. 6. *And the Pharisees went forth*, etc..] Out of the synagogue, being dreadfully galled with the reasonings of Christ, at the silence and confusion they were put to, and with the miracle he wrought, to the exposing of them, and establishing his own credit:

and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him: (see Gill on "⁴⁰12¹⁶Matthew 22:16").

How they might destroy him: persisting still in their evil intentions, though Christ had so fully and clearly exposed the wickedness of them: and it is to be observed, that those men who thought it was not lawful to heal a lame man on the sabbath day, yet make no scruple of meeting and consulting together on that day, and even with profane men, what measures and methods were best to take, to destroy the life of an innocent person.

Ver. 7. *But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea*, etc..] Knowing their evil designs against him, he departed out of the synagogue, and city of Capernaum; and taking his disciples with him, he went to the shore of the sea of Galilee; not out of fear, but because his time was not yet come, and he had more work to do:

and a great multitude from Galilee: from the several parts of it, in which country he now was:

and from Judea: that part of the land of Israel, which was particularly so called, and belonged to the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 8. *And from Jerusalem*, etc..] The metropolis of the country of Judea;

and from Idumea, or Edom, as the Syriac version reads it; a country that lay on the south of Judea, formerly inhabited by the sons of Edom, but now by Jews; or at least the inhabitants of it were proselytes to the Jewish religion. Mention is made of the plains of Idumea, along with Gazera, Azotus, and Jamnia, as in 1 Maccabees:

> "Howbeit all the hindmost of them were slain with the sword: for they pursued them unto Gazera, and unto the plains of Idumea, and Azotus, and Jamnia, so that there were slain of them upon a three thousand men." (1 Maccabees 4:15)

Pliny [f43] speaks of Idumea and Judea together, as a part of Syria; and Ptolemy says [f44], this country lies on the west of the river Jordan; and it is here added,

and from beyond Jordan; the country of Peraea, on the east of Jordan:

and they about Tyre and Sidon; either the inhabitants of these places, as the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions favour, reading "a great company from Tyre and Sidon"; or those that lived near the borders, and upon the confines of these cities of Phoenicia:

a great multitude; when all met together, from these several parts; who

when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him: for his fame went through all the countries, for the miracles he wrought; which drew this vast concourse of people after him; and who, inquiring where he was, came to him at the sea of Galilee.

Ver. 9. *And he spake unto his disciples*, etc..] In an authoritative way; he ordered and commanded them,

that a small ship should wait on him: that a boat should be got ready, be near at hand, and attend him, who was on shore; that he might go into it, should there be any occasion for it; and from thence preach to the people:

because of the multitude; which came from the above parts, and all together made a very numerous body of people:

lest they should throng him; crowd, press, afflict, and distress, and make him uneasy, that he could not be able to stand conveniently, and preach to them: so that should this be the case, as it was very likely it would, having a small vessel near the shore, he could go into it, and free himself from such an inconvenience.

Ver. 10. *For he had healed many*, etc..] Of various diseases, and the fame of this brought more still to him:

insomuch that they pressed upon him; or pushed upon him, with great eagerness and violence. The Arabic version renders it, “they rushed upon him, so that they fell”: they pushed on, and pressed so hard to get to him, that they fell upon one another, and on him: the Persic version renders it, “they cast themselves on him, for the sake of touching him”; which must be very troublesome indeed. Though some think the phrase signifies no more, than that they fell down before him at his feet, in a submissive and petitionary way, entreating they might have the favour

for to touch him; either any part of his body, or his garments, even the hem of them: and so the Ethiopic version translates the words; “they prayed him that they might touch him”; (see <4066>Mark 6:56).

As many as had plagues; of leprosy, and other diseases, which were inflicted on them by God, as scourges and chastisements for their sins, as the word signifies, and which answers to ygn, “Negaim”; concerning which, there is a whole treatise in the Misna; and which bears that name, and particularly regards the plagues of leprosy. Some versions join this with the beginning of the next verse. The Syriac version reads thus, “who had plagues of unclean spirits”; as if these plagues were their being possessed by unclean spirits. The Persic version thus, “having plagues from unclean spirits”; as if these plagues were inflicted upon them by them, and which

was sometimes the case. The Arabic version after this manner, “who had diseases and unclean spirits”; both the one and the other.

Ver. 11. *And unclean spirits, when they saw him*, etc..] That is, as the Syriac and Arabic versions read, “they who had unclean spirits”: or, as the Ethiopic, “they that were possessed with unclean spirits”; as soon as ever they beheld Christ, though they had never seen him before, and he was an entire stranger to them, yet

fell down before him: the unclean spirits being said to do that, which they that were possessed with them did; and which, notwithstanding their possession of them, they could not prevent, but were obliged to admit of it, as a token of their subjection to Christ:

and even the devils themselves in the men,

cried, saying, thou art the Son of God; a divine person, equal with God; and such his power over them, and his healing all manner of diseases, by a word, or touch, showed him to be.

Ver. 12. *And he straitly charged them*, etc..] Or vehemently rebuked them, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; or threatened them much and vehemently, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic. The Persic version renders it, “threatened many”; both the devils that confessed him, and the many that were healed of their diseases: he gave them a strict and severe charge,

that they should not make him known; or “his work”, as the Arabic, his miracles: he sought not vain glory and popular applause, nor did he need the testimony of men or devils; and especially did not choose the latter, lest his enemies should traduce him, as having familiarity with them, as they did.

Ver. 13. *And he goeth up into a mountain*, etc..] Near Capernaum, being solitary, and a place of recess and retirement, “to pray”, as Luke says, (Luke 6:12), who adds, “and continued all night in prayer to God”, notwithstanding the great fatigue of the day past. His prayer, as is very probable, was chiefly concerning the great and important work, which was upon his mind, and he was about to do; the making and constituting twelve of his disciples, as his apostles, to preach in his name, and work miracles:

and calleth unto him whom he would; that is, “when it was day”, as the above evangelist observes; when he called his disciples, such as had been

for some time followers of him, as many of them as he thought fit: for it seems by the same evangelist, that others were called to him besides the twelve; and out of them he chose them: the phrase “whom he would”, is in the Arabic version rendered, “whom he loved”; and it is a common observation of expositors, that the choice and call of the apostles to office, were not according to their will, works and merits, but according to the sovereign will and grace of Christ, who chose them, and not they him: but to me there seems no foundation for such a remark here, though it is a truth; because this regards not the call of the twelve only, and much less of them to office, but a call of many of the followers of Christ to come to him on the mountain:

and they came unto him; as many as he called out of the multitude; and from among these he made the following choice.

Ver. 14. *And he ordained twelve*, etc..] Or made, constituted, and appointed twelve men, out of those he called to him. The Arabic version adds, “and called them apostles”; which seems to be taken out of (<4063>Luke 6:13).

That they should be with him; constantly, in private and in public; be taken into his family, and reckoned such; be his familiars, and privy to all his affairs; hear all his discourses, and see his miracles; that so they might be trained up and fitted for the great work he designed them for:

and that he might send them forth to preach; the Gospel in Judea first, and then in all the world: for he did not at this time send them to preach, only chose; called, and appointed them; and after they had been with him some time, and were better qualified for such service, he sent them forth, as in (<4001>Matthew 10:1,5), for this constitution of them was before that mission, and was in order to it.

Ver. 15. *And to have power to heal sicknesses*, etc..] All manner of corporeal diseases that attend men and women:

and to cast out devils; from such who were possessed with them: that is, he chose and appointed them to be his apostles, with a view of conferring such powers upon them hereafter; for as yet, they were not vested with them, nor sent out to exercise them; no, not till near twelve months after.

Ver. 16. *And Simon he surnamed Peter*.] Or Cephas, which signifies a rock, or stone, because of his courage and constancy, his strength and

fortitude, steadiness and firmness of mind: this name was imposed upon him, not at the time of his mission as an apostle; nor when he made that noble confession of his faith in Christ, as the Son of the living God, at which time this name was taken notice of; but when Christ first called him to be his disciple and apostle; (see <4042>John 1:42).

Ver. 17. *And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James*, etc..] These are mentioned next, as being first called after Peter and Andrew:

and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, the sons of thunder: either because of their loud and sonorous voice; or their warm zeal for Christ, and fervency in their ministry: or for their courage in opposing the enemies of Christ, and the power that went along with their words; which either put to confusion and silence, or issued in conviction and conversion. The Syriac version reads, “Benai Regesh”, and the Persic, “Beni Reg'sch”. The Jews, as our learned countryman Mr. Broughton has observed [f45], sometimes pronounce “Scheva” by on, as Noabyim”, for “Nebyim”; so here, “Boanerges” for Benereges”, or “Benerges”. There is a city which was in the tribe of Dan, mentioned in (<0695>Joshua 19:45), which is called “Bene-berak, the sons of lightning”; and is spoken of in the Jewish [f46] writings, as a place where several of the Rabbins met, and conversed together: the reason of this name may be inquired after.

Ver. 18. *And Andrew*, etc..] The brother of Peter;

and Philip, who was of Bethsaida;

and Bartholomew, whom Dr. Lightfoot thinks is the same with Nathaniel: the name may be the same with wymlt rb, “Bar Talmion”, with the Jews [f47]; (See Gill on “<4003>Matthew 10:3”). (See Gill on “<4044>John 1:41”).

and Matthew, the publican, who was called Levi;

and Thomas, who was called Didymus, from his being a twin;

and James, the son of Alphaeus, to distinguish him from the other James, the son of Zebedee, and who is sometimes called “the less”;

and Thaddaeus, whose name was also Lebbaeus, and likewise Jude, the author of the Epistle that bears that name;

and Simon the Canaanite, or Zelotes; of these men, and their several names, (See Gill on "Matthew 10:2-4").

Ver. 19. *And Judas Iscariot*, etc..] So called to distinguish him from the other Judas; and is mentioned last for the following reason:

which also betrayed him; and which action of his will ever render his name infamous among men. This man, with the rest, our Lord chose to be an apostle of his, though he knew he would betray him; in order to fulfil the purposes of God, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and bring on the work of man's redemption he came into the world to perform.

And they went into an house at Capernaum; the house of Simon and Andrew, where Jesus used to be when there: they went home with him from the mountain; and from that time became his domestics, and were looked upon by him as his family, and were admitted to the greatest nearness and intimacy with him.

Ver. 20. *And the multitude coming together again*, etc..] Either the multitude that were about the door of this house; insomuch that there was no room about, nor any coming near it, (Mark 2:2), or the multitude that came from different parts, and had thronged about him at the sea side, before he went up into the mountain: these understanding that he was come down from thence, and was returned to Capernaum, and was at Simon's house, flocked thither, in great numbers, to see his person, hear his doctrines, and observe his miracles;

so that they could not so much as eat bread; the press was so great, and their importunities so urgent, either to hear him preach, or have their sick healed, that Christ, and his disciples, had neither room nor opportunity to eat some food for the refreshment of nature; though it was very necessary, and high time they had, especially Christ, who had been up all night, which he had spent in prayer; and had been very busy that morning in calling and appointing his apostles, and instructing them what they should do.

Ver. 21. *When his friends heard of it*, etc..] Not his spiritual friends, his disciples and followers, that believed in him; but his kinsmen, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render the words, who were so according to the flesh; when they heard where he was, and what a crowd was about him, so that he could not so much as take the necessaries of life for his refreshment and support,

they went out to lay hold on him: either out of their houses at Capernaum, or they went forth from Nazareth, where they dwelt, to Capernaum, to take him from this house, where he was thronged and pressed, along with them; where he might have some refreshment without being incommoded, and take some rest, which seemed very necessary: so that this was done in kindness to him, and does not design any violent action upon him, in order to take him home with them, and to confine him as a madman; though the following words seem to incline to such a sense;

for they said, he is beside himself: some render it, "he is gone out": that is, out of doors, to preach again to the people, which they might fear would be greatly detrimental to his health, since, he had had no sleep the night before; had been much fatigued all that morning, and for the throng of the people could take no food; so that for this reason they came to take him with them, to their own habitations, to prevent the ill consequences of such constant exercise without refreshment. Moreover, though this may not be the sense of the word, yet it is not to be understood of downright madness and distraction, but of some perturbation of mind, which they imagined, or heard, he was under; and answers to a phrase frequently used by the Jews, that such an one, wtd hrjn, "his knowledge is snatched away", or his mind is disturbed; which was sometimes occasioned by disorder of body: so it is said [f48],

> "a deaf woman, or one that is foolish, or blind, htd hrjnw, or "whose mind is disturbed"; and if there are any wise women, they prepare themselves, and eat of the oblation."

On that phrase, "whose mind is disturbed", the note of Maimonides is,

> "it means a sick person, whose understanding is disturbed through the force of the disease:"

and was sometimes the case of a person when near death [f49]: and it was usual to give a person that was condemned to die, and going to be executed, a grain of frankincense in a cup of wine, wtd Prjt ydk, "that so his knowledge may be snatched away", or his mind disturbed [f50], and: be intoxicated; that so he might not be sensible of his pain, or feel his misery; in all which cases, there was nothing of proper madness: and so the kinsmen and friends of Christ, having heard of the situation that he was in, said one to another, he is in a transport and excess of mind; his zeal carries him beyond due bounds; he has certainly forgotten himself; his

understanding is disturbed; he is unmindful of himself; takes no care of his health; he will certainly greatly impair it, if he goes on at this rate, praying all night, and preaching all day, without taking any rest or food: wherefore they came out, in order to dissuade him from such excessive labours, and engage him to go with them, where he might have rest and refreshment, and be composed, and retire.

Ver. 22. *And the Scribes which came down from Jerusalem*, etc..] Or, "but the Scribes", etc.. who had an aversion to Christ, and a different opinion of him: these were they, who having heard much of the doctrine and miracles of Christ, came down from Jerusalem, which lay in the upper, and higher part of the land of Israel, into Galilee, a low country, to make their observations upon him; and take every advantage they could against him, being men, in their way, letter learned, and artful, and cunning: these

said, he hath Beelzebub: or, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it, "Beelzebub is in him": sometimes they call him Beelzebub; sometimes say that he cast out devils by him; and here, that he had him, or was in him; Beelzebub possessed him, and assisted him, and there was a confederacy and familiarity between them:

and by the prince of devils casteth he out devils; for so they reckoned Beelzebub to be; (see Gill on "Matthew 10:25"), (see Gill on "Matthew 12:24").

Ver. 23. *And he called them unto him*, etc..] The Jerusalem Scribes, to come nearer to him, and attend to what he had to say in defence of his character and miracles:

and said unto them in parables: similitudes, and proverbial expressions, as the following seem to be,

how can Satan cast out Satan? or one devil cast out another? how unreasonable is it to suppose it? can it ever be thought that such, whose interest it is to unite, would ever oppose and dispossess one another? if therefore, as if he should say, I am Beelzebub, or have him, and he is in me, and I am in confederacy with him; was this the case, can any think I should ever cast him out of others, as I do?

Ver. 24. *And if a kingdom be divided against itself*, etc..] Any of the kingdoms of this world, and the kingdom of "Satan":

that kingdom cannot stand: not long; its internal broils and divisions will, soon bring it to desolation; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:25").

Ver. 25. *And if a house be divided against itself*, etc..] Any family, small or great,

that house cannot stand; its contentions and discords will soon bring it down from a comfortable and flourishing situation, to a very distressed one; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:25").

Ver. 26. *And if Satan rise up against himself*, etc..] As he must do in such a case as this, if devils are cast out by Beelzebub, the prince of devils:

and be divided; one devil against another, as the above calumny supposes;

he cannot stand, but hath an end: his kingdom cannot stand long, but must soon come to an end; his power and authority will soon be destroyed, both over his own species, and among men; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:26").

Ver. 27. *No man can enter into a strong man's house*, etc..] This is properly a parable; the other seem to be proverbs, or sayings, that were commonly used to show the ill consequences of discords, factions, and divisions, as is explained in the note on (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:29").

Ver. 28. *Verily I say unto you*, etc..] The Scribes and Pharisees, who had not only blasphemed him, but the Spirit of God also:

all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme; God; or the Son of God, angels, and men, and that through the blood of Christ, and when brought to a sense of the evil of them; for though pardon is procured before, it is not applied till then; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:31").

Ver. 29. *But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost*, etc..] Against his person, and the works performed by him, by ascribing them to diabolical power and influence, as the Scribes did,

hath never forgiveness: there is no pardon provided in the covenant of grace, nor obtained by the blood of Christ for such persons, or ever applied to them by the Spirit;

but is in danger of eternal damnation. The Vulgate Latin reads it, and so it is read in an ancient copy of Beza's, guilty of an eternal sin; a sin which can

never be blotted out, and will never be forgiven, but will be punished with everlasting destruction; (see Gill on "Matthew 12:32").

Ver. 30. *Because they, said, he hath an, unclean spirit*.] They charged Christ with having a devil, and his miracles with being wrought by the help of the devil; when, at the same time, they knew in their own consciences they were works which were wrought by the finger and Spirit of God, and so were guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost; the unpardonable sin, for which there is no remission: and this is mentioned as a reason why our Lord said what he did concerning that sin; because they had been guilty of it, and so were liable to everlasting punishment on account of it.

Ver. 31. *There came then his brethren and his mother*, etc..] At the same time he was speaking to the Scribes, who seem to be different persons from his friends and kinsmen, (Mark 3:21),

and standing without; for Christ was within, in the house, talking with the Scribes and Pharisees, and preaching to the people; and the crowd being so great, that they could not get into the house; they

sent unto him, calling him: they not only sent one in to let him know who they were, and that they were without doors, desirous to speak with him; but also, with a voice as loud as they could, called to him themselves; (see Gill on "Matthew 12:46").

Ver. 32. *And the multitude sat about him*, etc..] In a circle, all around him, to hear him preach; so that there was no such thing as the messenger coming near him; but the message being whispered from one to another, it came to those who sat nearest him:

and they said unto him, behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee: in five of Beza's ancient copies, and in his most ancient one, are added, and thy sisters: agreeably, Christ hereafter makes mention of sister, as well as mother and brother; (see Gill on "Matthew 12:47"), and so it is read in the Alexandrian copy.

Ver. 33. *And he answered them*, etc..] The multitude that sat about him, and informed him of his mother and brethren being without, and desirous of speaking with him:

saying, who is my mother, or my brethren? which is said not through ignorance or contempt, but either, as displeased with the interruption given

him; or with a view to take an opportunity from hence of expressing his superior value to his spiritual relations; which looks with no favourable aspect on the superstitious notions, and veneration of the virgin Mary among the papists; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:48").

Ver. 34. *And he looked round about on them which sat about him*, etc..] To find out his disciples among them, and point them out particularly, by stretching forth his hand towards them: and said,

behold my mother and my brethren: not in a natural, but in a spiritual sense; his mother, because, in regeneration, he was formed in them; his brethren, because, by adoption, his God was their God, his Father their Father; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:49").

Ver. 35. *For whosoever shall do the will of God*, etc..] By believing in Christ, receiving him as a Saviour and Redeemer, and submitting to him in all his ordinances, as King of saints:

the same is my brother, and my sister, and my mother: such are openly, and manifestly related to Christ in a spiritual sense; and are as dear to him, and more so, than such persons are who stand in such a relation to others, or did to him according to the flesh. And this shows not only the near relation, and strong affection which Christ has for his people, but that he is not ashamed of them; and it may be concluded, that he will resent, in the keenest manner, every injury that is done them; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:50").

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 4

Ver. 1. *And he began again to teach by the sea side*, etc..] He went out of the house where he was at Capernaum, the same day he had the above discourse with the Scribes and Pharisees, and on which his mother and: brethren came to speak with him; and from thence he went where he had been before, and taught the people; namely, to the sea side, the shore of the sea of Galilee, or Tiberias:

and there was gathered unto him a great multitude; which followed him from the house, and from other parts of the city, and perhaps from the adjacent places:

so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; in the ship at sea, at some little distance from the shore; the sea of Tiberias being rather a lake, and within land, had no tide, and so was still and quiet:

and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land; stood on the land, all along the sea shore; (see Gill on "Matthew 13:1-2").

Ver. 2. *And he taught them many things by parables*, etc..] As he sat in the ship, and they stood on shore;

and said unto them in his doctrine; as he was teaching them, and delivering unto them the doctrine he had received from his Father: though the Jews say [f51], that

> "the Israelites will have no need ymymlwdwmltl, "of the doctrine of the king Messiah, in the time to come"; because it is said, "unto him shall the Gentiles seek", and not the Israelites."

But it appears from hence, and many other places, that the Israelites both stood in need of his doctrine, and sought after it; and very excellent it was; the doctrine of God, and of the grace of God; and was spoken with authority, and in such a manner as never man spake, and which he delivered to his apostles; and which, if ministers bring not with them, should not be bid God speed.

Ver. 3. *Hearken, behold, there went out a sower to sow*.] By whom is meant Jesus Christ, who came forth from God as a teacher, and went out into the land of Judea to preach the Gospel, which is sowing spiritual things among men; and this may be also applicable to any faithful minister of the word.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass, as he sowed*, etc..] Whilst he was preaching the, Gospel, casting about the precious seed of the word, he was laden with:

some fell by the way side; the common beaten path: the word was dispensed among some men comparable to it, on whom it lighted, but made no impression; there it lay, though not long, and was not inwardly received, and took no root, and consequently was of no effect:

and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up; the devils, who have their abode in the air, especially the prince of the posse of them; and the Syriac version reads it in the singular number, “and the fowl came”; that ravenous bird of prey, Satan, who goes about seeking what he may devour; and for this purpose attends where the word is preached, to hinder its usefulness as much as in him lies.

Ver. 5. *And some fell on stony ground*, etc..] The word was preached to some persons who had hearts of stone, and which remained so:

where it had not much earth; and so could be received only in a notional and superficial way, but could take no place, so as to produce any good effect:

and immediately it sprung up; a sudden and hasty profession of the word was made, without a powerful experience of it:

because it had no depth of earth; if it had, it would have been longer in coming up; more work would have been done by it, which would have required more time, before a profession of it had been made.

Ver. 6. *But when the sun was up, it was scorched*, etc..] When persecution arose because of the word, and that became very hot and vehement, it tried and pierced through this thin speculative knowledge of the word, which could not stand before it, and bear the heat of it:

and because it had no root, it withered away; the word had only a place in the head, and not in the heart; wherefore the profession of it was soon dropped, and came to nothing.

Ver. 7. *And some fell among thorns*, etc..] The word was ministered to some who were eat up with the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and other lusts:

and the thorns grew up, and choked it; the word did not take place so as to beat down, overcome, and root out these things, nor even to weaken, and keep under, and prevent the influence of them; but these got the ascendant of the word, and prevailed over it, and made it altogether useless and unsuccessful: for whilst it was administered, the minds of these persons were after their riches and worldly things, and gave no heed to the word; and last were prevailed upon, not to attend upon it, but drop the profession of it:

and it yielded no fruit; it was not the means of grace; faith did not come by it, nor any other grace; nor did it produce good works in the life and conversation.

Ver. 8. *And other fell on good ground*, etc..] The word was preached to some whose hearts were disposed by the Spirit and grace of God to receive it; and their understandings were enlightened by it; and they had a savoury and comfortable experience of the truths of it, it coming with power to them; it was a good word to them, and through the grace of God they became good by it; a good work of grace was wrought upon their souls, and they were filled with all goodness and righteousness:

and did yield fruit that sprang up, and increased; they not only appeared, and made an outward profession of the word, and brought forth a little show of fruit, which comes to nothing, as in others; but they were filled with the fruits of righteousness, and increased with the increase of God, and grew in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and continued to bring forth fruit to the end of their lives:

and brought forth some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred; that is, so many fold: in some the word of God produced larger and greater effects; the grace of God was more in exercise in some, than in others, and some were more fruitful and useful; yet in all of them there was true grace, and a measure of it; some degree of lively exercise, and some usefulness.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto them*, etc..] To the multitude of hearers that were on the sea shore attending to the word preached, and among whom, doubtless, there were all those sorts of hearers mentioned in this parable:

he that hath ears to hear, let him hear: observe, and take notice of what has been said, as being of the greatest moment and importance: for a larger explanation and illustration of this parable, see the notes on (<4013>Matthew 13:3-9).

Ver. 10. *And when he was alone*, etc..] After the multitude was dismissed, and he either remained in the ship, or left it, and retired to some private place, it may be to Simon's house in Capernaum. The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, “when they were alone”; meaning as follows,

they that were about him with the twelve; that is, such disciples of his, who, besides the twelve, constantly attended him; perhaps those who now were, or hereafter were the seventy disciples. The Vulgate Latin reads, “the twelve that were with him”. In Beza's most ancient copy it is read, “his disciples”; and to this agrees the Persic version; and so the other evangelists, Matthew and Luke, relate, that his disciples came and

asked of him the parable; the meaning of it, and why he chose this way of speaking to the people, (<4013>Matthew 13:10 <4809>Luke 8:9), though that word may include others besides the twelve.

Ver. 11. *And he said unto them*, etc..] His disciples;

unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; or the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, the secrets of the Gospel dispensation, the mysterious doctrines of grace; (see Gill on “<4013>Matthew 13:11”),

but unto them that are without; “to strangers”, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, who were not the disciples of Christ, nor admitted to any intimacy with him; who came only to amuse themselves with the sight of his person and miracles:

all [these] things are done in parables; are wrapped up in dark sayings, and figurative expressions, the sound of which they heard, and might be pleased with the pretty similes made use of, but understood not the spiritual meaning of them.

Ver. 12. *That seeing they may see*, etc..] Which the end and reason of his speaking to them in parables. The passage referred to is in (²³⁰⁶Isaiah 6:9,10). (See Gill on "⁴⁰¹³Matthew 13:14-15").

Ver. 13. *And he saith unto them, know ye not this parable*? etc..] So easy to be understood, taken from things common, and which fall under every one's observation:

and how then will you know all parables? if not this single one, and which is so plain, how will ye be able to understand the numerous parables hereafter to be related, and which will be much more difficult?

Ver. 14. *The sower soweth the word*.] Though our Lord thought fit to give the above gentle rebuke to his disciples for their dulness; yet he condescends to favour them with an interpretation of the above parable, which here begins: by this it appears, that the seed in the parable, before delivered, and which fell on different sorts of ground, is the word of God, which was preached to hearers of different dispositions: the word is the word of life and truth; the word of peace and reconciliation; the word of faith and righteousness; the word of salvation; the word which publishes and declares all these to be in and by Jesus Christ.

Ver. 15. *And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown*, etc..] Such hearers are represented by the way side, in which the seed fell; who, coming where the Gospel is preached, stop awhile and hear it, and so are only casual and accidental hearers of it:

but when they have heard; and indeed whilst they are hearing, and before they are well got out of the place of hearing,

Satan cometh immediately and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. The devil, signified by the fowl, or fowls of the air, immediately takes notice of such hearers, and is very busy with them; filling their minds with other things suitable to their dispositions, and setting before them other objects, whereby their minds are, at once, taken off from what they have been hearing; so that all that they have observed, and laid up in their memories, is lost at once, and never thought of any more.

Ver. 16. *And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground*, etc..] Such sort of hearers of the word are signified by the stony ground, on which the seed were sown, who are constant hearers of the word, and have some understanding of it, and some sort of affection for it, and yet their

hearts are not truly broken by it; they are not brought to a thorough sight and sense of sin, and of their need of Christ, and salvation by him; their stony hearts are not taken away, and hearts of flesh given them:

who when they have heard the word immediately receive it with gladness; seem highly pleased, and greatly delighted with it, as being a well connected scheme things; and which declares things, as heaven and eternal happiness, which they, from a principle of self love, are desirous of enjoying.

Ver. 17. *And have no root in themselves*, etc..] The word has no root in their hearts, only in their natural affections: nor is the root of grace in them; there is no heart work, only speculative notions, and flashy affections:

and so endure but for a time: they continue hearers and professors of the Gospel but for a small season; like the Jews, who rejoiced in the ministry of John the Baptist for a while, and then left him:

afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. As soon as any small degree of trouble comes upon them, and especially when there is a hot persecution of the professors of religion, because of the Gospel they have embraced; such hearers are stumbled at these things, and cannot bear the loss of any thing, or endure any thing severe for the sake of the word they have professed a pleasure in; and therefore, rather than suffer, they relinquish at once their profession of it.

Ver. 18. *And these are they that are sown among thorns*, etc..] Such hearers of the word are designed by the thorny ground, upon which other seed fell, as it was sown, who are of worldly dispositions; who are immoderately careful and anxious about the things of this life, and are bent upon acquiring earthly riches, and gratifying their carnal and sensual appetites:

such as hear the word; who notwithstanding are prevailed upon through custom, or the dictates of their consciences, to attend upon the ministry of the word.

Ver. 19. *And the cares of this world*, etc..] The perplexing and distressing cares of it to get as much of it as they can, for themselves and families, fill their minds, and possess their souls even when and while they are hearing the word: and the deceitfulness of riches; or riches which are deceitful,

especially when trusted in, and being obtained, they do not give the satisfaction they promise: and the lusts of other things entering in: carnal desires after other objects, which are pleasing to the sensual mind, entering into their hearts, and gaining, the ascendant there: choke the word, and it, becometh unfruitful; these being more attended to than the word is, that is quite lost, and becomes useless, and unprofitable.

Ver. 20. *And these are they which are sown on good ground*, etc..] Such hearers who are intended by the good ground on which other seed fell, are those who are made good men by the grace of God; for there is none good naturally, nor that doeth good, no not one; these are

such who hear the word, and receive it; as the word of God, in whose hearts it works effectually; who receive it not into their heads only, but into their hearts; and having received it, hold it fast, and abide by it in the worst of times:

and bring forth fruit, some thirty fold, some sixty, and some an hundred; all bring forth good fruit of the same quality, though not of the same quantity: for a larger exposition of this explanation of the parable, see the notes on (<4013-23>Matthew 13:19-23).

Ver. 21. *And he said unto them*, etc..] At the same time, after he had explained the parable of the sower; for though the following parabolical and proverbial expressions were delivered by Christ at other, and different times, and some of them twice, as related by other evangelists; yet they might be all of them expressed or repeated at this time, by our Lord, showing why he explained the above parable to his disciples; and that though he delivered the mysteries of the Gospel in parables to them that were without, yet it was not his design that these things should be always kept a secret, and that from all men: for as the Gospel might be compared to seed, so likewise to a candle, the design and use of which is to give light to men: wherefore he asks,

is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed, and not to be set on a candlestick? when a candle is brought into a room, in the night, where company are together, to converse, or read, or work; is it proper that it should be covered with a bushel, or any other hollow vessel? or when brought into a bedchamber, is it right to put it under the bed? is it not most fitting and convenient, that it should be set in a candlestick, and then it will be of use to all in the room? so the Gospel, which is the candle of the

Lord, he had lighted up in the evening of the Jewish world, in the land of Judea; it was not his will that it should be always, and altogether, and from all men, covered with parables, and dark sayings, without any explanation of them; but that the light of it should be communicated, especially to them his; disciples, who were to be the lights of the world, and which were to shine openly before men, for their good, and the glory of his heavenly Father; (see <40514>Matthew 5:14-16).

Ver. 22. *For there is nothing hid*, etc..] In these parables, and figurative expressions used by Christ,

which shall not be manifested, sooner or later, to his disciples:

neither was any thing kept secret; any doctrine of the Gospel, or mystery of the kingdom:

but that it should come abroad; it was designed to be published in all Judea, and afterwards, throughout the whole world, for the benefit of God's chosen ones, to their conversion, comfort, and edification: wherefore it becomes the ministers of the Gospel to keep back nothing that may be profitable to the churches, nor shun to declare the whole counsel of God; but faithfully dispense the mysteries of grace, and commend the truth to every man's conscience, without any fear of men, or dreading the effects and consequences of things: since nothing is declared in the word, or made known, but with a design to be published to others, to answer some divine end and purpose; (see Gill on "<40026>Matthew 10:26").

Ver. 23. *If any man have ears to hear, let him hear*.] What is now delivered, being very momentous and important; (see <40115>Matthew 11:15).

Ver. 24. *And he said unto them*, etc..] At the same time, though he had said what follows at another time, still continuing his discourse with his disciples:

take heed what you hear: diligently attend to it, seek to understand it, and lay it up in your minds and memories, that it may be of use to you in time to come, and you may be useful in communicating it to others:

with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you; a common proverb among the Jews, used on various occasions, and to different purposes; (see Gill on "<40702>Matthew 7:2"). Here it seems to intimate, that if the disciples carefully hearkened to what they heard from Christ, and

studiously laboured to understand it, and faithfully dispensed it to others, in return, a larger measure, and greater degree of spiritual knowledge, would be bestowed upon them: for it follows, and

unto you that hear, shall more be given; that is, that hear so as to understand, keep, and make a good use of what they hear, more shall be communicated to them; they shall have an increase of knowledge in the doctrines of grace, and mysteries of the Gospel.

Ver. 25. *For he that hath, to him shall be given*, etc..] He that has Gospel light and knowledge, and makes a proper use of it, he shall have more; his path shall be as the path of the just, which shines more and more to the perfect day; the means of grace and knowledge shall be blessed, to him, he attending constantly thereon, that he shall arrive to such a knowledge of the Son of God as to be a perfect man in comparison of others, who are in a lower class; and shall come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, shall grow up to maturity, and be a man in understanding: and he that has the truth of grace, though its beginning is but small, yet that making and keeping him humble, as it always does, he shall have more grace, or that he has shall open and enlarge in its actings and exercises; his faith shall grow exceedingly, he shall abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost; and his love to God, and Christ, and to the saints, shall be greater and greater; and he shall increase in humility, patience, self-denial, etc.. and so he that has gifts for public usefulness, and does not neglect them, but stirs them up for the profit of others, he shall have an increase of them; he shall shine as a star in Christ's right hand, and appear brighter and brighter in the firmament of the church:

and he that hath not, from him shall be taken, even that which he hath; or seemed to have, or thought he had, (Luke 8:18), a saying often used by Christ, both with respect to the ignorant Jews, and professing Christians, and even, as here, to the disciples themselves, respect perhaps being had to Judas. He that has only a speculative notion of the Gospel, and is without any experience and practice of it, in course of time his candle is put out; his light becomes darkness; he drops and denies the truths he held, and relinquishes the profession of them: and he that has only counterfeit grace, a feigned faith, a false hope, and a dissembled love, in due time these will be discovered, and the name of them, and the character he bore, on account of them, will be taken from him: for true grace is never taken away, nor lost; it is a solid, permanent thing, and is inseparable to

everlasting glory and happiness: but bare notions of the Gospel, and a mere show of grace, are unstable and transient things; as also are the greatest gifts without the grace of God. Judas had doubtless all the appearance of a true Christian; he had the Gospel committed to him, and the knowledge of it, and gifts qualifying him to preach it, and a commission from Christ for it, yea, even a power of working miracles to confirm what he preached; and yet not having true grace, all was taken away from him, and were of no use unto him in the business of salvation: and so sometimes it is, that even in this life the idle and worthless shepherd has his right arm clean dried up, and his right eye utterly darkened; his ministerial light and abilities are taken away from him; these being either not used at all by him, or used to bad purposes; (see <4012>Matthew 12:12 25:29).

Ver. 26. *And he said*, etc..] He went on saying the following parable, which was delivered at the same time that the parable of the sower was, though omitted by Matthew; and is here placed between that, and the other concerning the grain of mustard seed; which shows the time when it was spoken. The design of it is to set forth the nature of the word, and the ministration of it; the conduct of the ministers of the Gospel, when they have dispensed it; the imperceptibleness of its springing and growth; the fruitfulness of it, when it has taken root, without the help of man; the gradual increase of grace under the instrumentality of the word; and the gathering of gracious souls, when grace is brought to maturity:

so is the kingdom of God; such is the nature of the Gospel dispensation; and such are the things that are done in it, as may fitly be represented by the following;

as if a man should cast seed into the ground: by “the man”, is not meant Christ, for he sleeps not; and besides, he knows how the seed springs and grows; but any Gospel minister, who is sent forth by Christ, bearing precious seed: and by seed is intended, not gracious persons, the children of the kingdom, as in the parable of the tares; nor the grace of God in them, though that is an incorruptible and an abiding seed; but the word of God, or Gospel of Christ, so called for its smallness, the diminutive character it bears, and contempt it is had in by some; and for its choiceness and excellency in itself, and in the account of others; and for its generative virtue under a divine influence: for the Gospel is like the manna, which was a small round thing, as a coriander seed; and as that was contemptible in the eyes of the Israelites, so the preaching of the Gospel is, to them that

perish, foolishness; and yet it is choice and precious seed in itself, and to those who know the value of it, by whom it is preferred to thousands of gold and silver; and, as worthless and unpromising as it may seem to be, it has a divine virtue put into it; and, under the influence of powerful and efficacious grace, it is the means of regenerating souls, and produces fruit in them, which will remain unto everlasting life: though, as the seed is of no use this way, unless it is sown in the earth, and covered there; so is the Gospel of no use for regeneration, unless it is by the power of God let into the heart, and received there, where, through that power, it works effectually. By "casting" it into the earth, the preaching of the word is designed; which, like casting seed into the earth, is done with the same sort of seed only, and not with different sorts, with plenty of it, and at the proper time, whatever discouragements there may be, and with great skill and judgment, committing it to God to raise it up again: for the faithful dispensers of the word do not spread divers and strange doctrines; their ministry is all of apiece; they always sow the same like precious seed, without any mixture of the tares of error and heresy; and they do not deal it out in a narrow and niggardly way; they do not restrain and conceal any part of truth, but plentifully distribute it, and declare the whole counsel of God; and though there may be many discouragements attend them, many temptations arise to put off from sowing the word; the weather bad, storms and tempests arise, reproaches and persecutions come thick and fast, still they go on; using all that heavenly skill, prudence, and discretion God has given them, preaching the word in season, and out of season; and when they have done, they leave their work with the Lord, knowing that Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God only that gives the increase: and by the "ground", into which it is cast, As meant the hearers of the word, who are of different sorts; some like the way side, others like the stony ground, and others like the thorny earth, and some like good ground, as here; whose hearts are broke up by the Spirit of God, the stoniness of them taken away, and they made susceptive of the good word.

Ver. 27. *And should sleep*, etc..] That is, the man that casts in the seed, who represents the ministers of the Gospel: and, as applied to them, is not to be understood of natural sleep, and indulging themselves in that; much less of spiritual sloth and indolence, as if they cared not what became of the seed sown, whether it sprung up, and came to any thing, or not; for neither of these belong to the characters of the true ministers of the word: for though bodily sleep in them, as in other men, is necessary for the support

of nature, and to put them in a capacity of discharging their work; yet perhaps none have less of it than studious and laborious preachers of the Gospel; and much less do they indulge a spiritual sleep and slothfulness; though this may sometimes attend them, as well as others: but then, whilst they sleep, in this sense, tares are sown, and they spring up, and not the good seed of the word, as in this parable; besides, as they labour in the word and doctrine, by studying and preaching it, so they follow their ministrations with incessant prayers that they be succeeded to the conversion of sinners, and comfort of saints; nor can they be easy, unless they have some seals of their ministry: but rather, this may be understood of the sleep of death; for so it often is, that the seed sown by them does not appear in the fruits of it to the churches of Christ, among whom they have ministered, until after they are fallen asleep in Jesus: though it seems best to understand it of their holy security, confidence, and satisfaction in their own minds, that it will turn to profit and advantage, both to the good of souls, and glory of God, not despairing of success; but having left their work with their Lord, they sit down easy and satisfied, believing that the word shall prosper to the thing whereunto it is sent:

and rise night and day; which shows their diligence and laboriousness, and their constant attendance to other parts of their work, rising up early, and sitting up late, to prepare for, and discharge their ministerial work; and their continued expectation of the springing-up of the seed sown, which accordingly does in proper time:

and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how; it is a mystery in nature, how the seed under the clods, where it dies before it is quickened, should spring and grow up, and bring forth fruit; and so it is in grace, how the word of God first operates on a sinner's heart, and becomes the ingrafted word there; the time when, and much less the manner how, grace, by this means, is implanted in the heart, are not known to a soul itself, and still less to the ministers of the word, who sometimes never know any thing of it; and when they do, not till some time after: this work is done secretly, and powerfully, under the influence of divine grace, without their knowledge, though by them as instruments; so that though the sowing and planting are theirs, all the increase is God's: this may encourage attendance on the ministry of the word, and teach us to ascribe the work of conversion entirely to the power and grace of God.

Ver. 28. *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself*, etc..] Without any further help, or cultivation from the husbandman; though under the influence of the sun, dews, and showers of rain from heaven: this is said, not to denote that man of himself, upon hearing the word, can bring forth the fruit of grace in himself; he cannot regenerate himself, nor quicken, nor convert himself; he cannot believe in Christ, nor love the Lord of himself; nor repent of his sin, nor begin, or carry on the good work; he can neither sanctify his heart, nor mortify the deeds of the body; or even bring forth the fruits of good works, when converted. For all these things are owing to the Spirit, power, and grace of God: men are regenerated according to the abundant mercy of God, of water and of the Spirit, by the word of truth, through the sovereign will and pleasure of God; and they are quickened, who before were dead in trespasses and sins, and were as dry bones, by the Spirit of God breathing upon them: conversion in the first production, is the Lord's work; “turn thou me, and I shall be turned”: faith in Christ is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; and so is repentance unto life; love is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and in short, the whole work of grace is not by might, nor by power of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts; who begins and carries on, and performs it until the day of Christ: the work of sanctification, is therefore called the sanctification of the Spirit; and it is through him the deeds of the body are mortified: and indeed, without Christ, believers themselves can do nothing at all; even cannot perform good works, or do any action that is truly and spiritually good. But the design is to show, that as the earth without human power, without the husbandman, under the influence of the heavens, brings forth fruit; so without human power, without the Gospel minister, the word having taken root under divine influence, through the sun of righteousness, the dews of divine grace, and operations of the blessed Spirit, it rises up and brings forth fruit:

first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear; which, as it very aptly describes the progress of the seed from first to last; so it very beautifully represents the gradual increase of the work of grace, under the instrumentality of the word, accompanied with the Spirit and power of God. Grace at first appearance is very small, like the small green spire, when it first shoots out of the earth: light into a man's self, his heart, his state and condition, in the knowledge of Christ, and the doctrines of the Gospel, is but very small; he is one of little faith, and weak in the exercise of it: faith is but at first a small glimmering view of Christ, a venture upon

him, a peradventure there may be life and salvation for such an one in him; it comes at length to a reliance and leaning upon him; and it is some time before the soul can walk alone by faith on him: its experience of the love of God is but small, but in process of time there is a growth and an increase; light increases, which shines more and more unto the perfect day; faith grows stronger and stronger; experience of the love of God is enlarged; and the believer wades in these waters of the sanctuary; not only as at first up to the ankles, but to the knees and loins; when at length they are a broad river to swim in, and which cannot be passed over.

Ver. 29. *But when the fruit is brought forth*, etc..] Unto perfection, and is fully ripe; signifying that when grace is brought to maturity, and faith is performed with power, and the good work begun is perfected; then, as the husbandman,

immediately he putteth the sickle; and cuts it down, and gathers it in;

because the harvest is come; at death or at the end of the world, which the harvest represents: when all the elect of God are called by grace, and grace in them is brought to its perfection, and they have brought forth all the fruit they were ordained to bear, they will then be all gathered in; either by Christ himself who comes into his garden, and gathers his lilies by death; or by the angels, the reapers, at the close of time, who will gather the elect from the four winds; or the ministers of the Gospel, who shall come again with joy, bringing their sheaves with them; being able to observe with pleasure a greater increase, and more fruit of their labours, than they knew of, or expected.

Ver. 30. *And he said*, etc..] Still continuing his discourse on this subject, and in order to convey to the minds of his disciples clearer ideas of the Gospel dispensation, the success of the Gospel, and the usefulness of their ministration of it, for their encouragement, how unpromising soever things might then be:

whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God, or with what comparison shall we compare it? It was usual with the Jewish doctors, when about to illustrate anything in a parabolical way to begin with such like questions; as, hmwd rbdh hml, "to what is this thing like"[f52]? when the answer is to such or such thing, as here.

Ver. 31. *It is like a grain of mustard seed*, etc..] That is, the kingdom of God spoken of in the preceding verse, is like unto a grain of mustard seed; by which is meant, either the Gospel, or the Gospel church state, or the grace of God in the hearts of his people, and it may include them all: the Gospel is so called, because it treats of the two latter; but more especially, because it brings life and immortality to light, or points to the kingdom of heaven, directs the way unto it, and shows what qualifies persons for it, and gives them a claim unto it: and the Gospel church state may be so called, because here Christ dwells, and rules as king; the members of it are his subjects, and the ordinances of it are his laws, to which they are obedient: and the grace of God in the hearts of his people may be so called, because it is a governing principle in them; it reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, and by it Christ reigns in and over them: now the kingdom of God in each of these senses, may be compared to a grain of mustard seed, for the smallness of it, as follows;

which when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth. The Gospel was first preached by very few persons, and these of no figure and account, especially at their first setting out. John the Baptist came preaching the kingdom of God, clothed with a garment of camel's hair, and with a leathern girdle about his loins; our Lord himself made no pompous appearance, there was no form nor comeliness in him; he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs, and of a mean descent and occupation; his disciples were fishermen, and illiterate persons; those to whom it was preached, and by whom it was received at first were but few, and these were the poor and the unlearned, and publicans and sinners. The Gospel church state at first, consisted of very few persons, of Christ and his twelve apostles; and at his death, the number of the disciples at Jerusalem, men and women, were but an hundred and twenty; the several Gospel churches formed in the Gentile world, rose from small beginnings; from the conversion of a very few persons, and these the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things. The grace of God in the hearts of his people at first, is very little; it can scarcely be discerned by themselves, and is ready to be despised by others; their light and knowledge, their faith and experience being so exceeding small.

Ver. 32. *But when it is sown, it groweth up*, etc..] So the Gospel, when it was preached, it spread notwithstanding all the opposition made against it by, the Jews and Gentiles: there was no stopping it; though the Jewish sanhedrim charged the apostles to speak no more in the name of Jesus,

they regarded them not; though Herod stretched forth his hands against the church, and killed one apostle, and put another in prison, yet "the word of God grew and multiplied", (<4412 01>Acts 12:1-3,24), and Gospel churches when set up, whether in Judea, or among the Gentiles, presently had additions made unto them, and "grew up", as holy temples in the Lord: and wherever the grace of God is really implanted, there is a growing in it, and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus:

and becometh greater than all herbs: the Gospel exceeds the traditions of the Jews, and the philosophy of the Gentiles, and any human scheme whatever, in its nature, usefulness, and the largeness of its spread: and the Gospel church state will ere long fill the world, and all nations shall flow unto it; when the Jews shall be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall come, it will be a greater kingdom, than any of the kingdoms of the earth ever were: and the grace of God in the heart, is vastly above nature, and does that which nature can never perform; and which spreads and enlarges, and at last issues in eternal glory:

and shooteth out great branches, so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it: by whom are meant, saints; such to whom the Gospel is come in power, and who have the grace of God wrought in their hearts, who are partakers of the heavenly calling: these come where the Gospel is preached, and where gracious souls are met together, even in the several Gospel churches; where they not only come and go, but where they lodge, abide, and continue, under the shadow of the Gospel, and Gospel ordinances, and that with great delight and pleasure; singing songs of praise to God, for his electing and redeeming love, and for calling grace, and for all spiritual blessings, and Gospel privileges: for a larger explanation and illustration of this parable, (see Gill on "<4013 31>Matthew 13:31-32").

Ver. 33. *And with many such parables*, etc..] As those of the tares, of the leaven in three measures of meal, of the treasure hid in the field, the pearl of great price, the net cast into the sea, and of the Scribe instructed unto the kingdom of God; which though not related at length here, are by the Evangelist Matthew, in (<4013 24>Matthew 13:24-30,33,44-50,52) together with others elsewhere:

spake he the word unto them; preached the Gospel to the multitude,

as they were able to hear it: meaning either that he condescended to their weakness, accommodated himself to their capacities, and made use of the plainest similes; and took his comparison from things in nature, the most known and obvious, that what he intended might more easily be understood; or rather, he spoke the word to them in parables, as they were able to hear, without understanding them; and in such a manner, on purpose that they might not understand; for had he more clearly expressed the things relating to himself, as the Messiah, and to the Gospel dispensation, so as that they could have took in his meaning, such were their pride, their wickedness, and the rancour of their minds, that they would have at once rose up, and attempted to have destroyed him.

Ver. 34. *But without a parable spake he not unto them*, etc..] For the above reason, as well as for the accomplishment of Scripture; (see Gill on "Matthew 13:34-35").

And when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples: after they returned with him from the sea side, to the house in Capernaum, where he usually was when there; (see Matthew 13:36). The multitude being dismissed, he unfolded and explained all these parables to his disciples, and led them into a large knowledge of himself, and the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; whereby they were furnished for the work he had called them to, and designed them for.

Ver. 35. *And the same day, when the even was come*, etc..] After he had finished his parables among the multitude, and had explained them to his disciples:

he saith unto them; his disciples,

let us pass over unto the other side: that is, of the sea of Galilee, or lake of Gennesaret, to the country of the Gadarenes, and Gergesenes; with a view for retirement and rest, after the fatigue of the day; and for the trial of the faith of his disciples, by a storm which he knew would arise, whilst they were on the sea; and for the sake of a miracle he was to work on the other side, after related.

Ver. 36. *And when they had sent away the multitude*, etc..] Who had been attending him all day on the sea shore; though they seem to have been dismissed by Christ, when he went into the house, and privately interpreted the parables to his disciples: (see Matthew 13:36), wherefore it is possible, that upon Christ's going to the sea shore again, in order to take

boat for the other side, they might gather together the disciples acquainted them that he was not about to preach any more to them, but was going to the other side of the lake; upon which they departed: and

they took him even as he was in the ship; which may be understood of his being taken and carried in the ship, in which he had been preaching all the day, without being moved into another; though this does not so well agree with his quitting that, and going home to his house in Capernaum; where, being alone with the disciples, he opened the parables to them. Some think it refers to the situation and posture in which he laid himself, as soon as he entered the ship; placing himself at the stern, and laying his head upon a pillow there, and so they carried him: others, that they took him into the ship, as he was alone without the multitude, who were sent away, only the disciples with him, which seems best:

and there were also with him other little ships; or boats, that were in company with that, in which Christ was; and had in them either seafaring men upon business, taking fish, or carrying passengers over; or might have in them persons, who were going along with Christ to the other side: these seem to be ordered in providence to be in company, that they might be witnesses of the after miracle.

Ver. 37. *And there arose a great storm of wind*, etc..] Called Laelaps, a wind that is suddenly whirled about upwards and downwards, and is said to be a storm, or tempest of wind with rain; it was a sort of a hurricane:

and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was full; of water, and ready to sink. Beza says in one copy it read, βυψιζεσψαι, and so in one of Stephens's. It was immersed, covered all over with water, and was going down at once to the bottom; so that they were in imminent danger, in the utmost extremity; (see Gill on "Matthew 8:24").

Ver. 38. *And he was in the hinder part of the ship*, etc..] That is, Christ was in the stern of the ship: the Persic version renders it, "he was in the bottom of the ship, in a corner", but very wrongly; here he was

asleep on a pillow, which some say was a wooden one, framed at the stern: however, he was fast asleep on it, being greatly fatigued with the work of the day; (see Gill on "Matthew 8:24").

And they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? The disciples came to him and jogged him, and awoke him out of

sleep; saying, Master, arise, and save us, or we are lost: hast thou no concern for us? how canst thou lie sleeping here, when we are in such danger? are our lives of no account with thee? is it a matter of no moment with thee, whether we are saved or lost? They seem to say this, not so much praying and interrogating, as complaining and reproving.

Ver. 39. *And he arose and rebuked the wind*, etc..] He arose from off his pillow, and stood up; and in a majestic and authoritative way reproved the wind, as if it was a servant that had exceeded his commission; at which he shows some resentment:

and said unto the sea, peace, be still; as if that which was very tumultuous and boisterous, and threatened with shipwreck and the loss of lives, had raged too much and too long:

and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm; which was very unusual and extraordinary; for after the wind has ceased, and the storm is over, the waters of the sea being agitated thereby, keep raging, and in a violent motion, for a considerable time; whereas here, as soon as ever the word was spoken, immediately, at once, the wind ceased, and the sea was calmed: a clear proof this, that he must be the most high God, who gathers the winds in his fists, and stills the noise of the seas and their waves.

Ver. 40. *And he said unto them*, etc..] His disciples,

why are ye so fearful? since he was with them in person, whose power to keep and preserve them, they had no room to question, when they reflected on the miracles they had so lately seen performed by him:

how is it that ye have no faith? That is, in exercise: faith they had, but it was very small, and scarcely to be called faith: they did indeed apply to him to save them, which showed some faith in him, but then they feared it was too late, and that they were past all hope, and were just perishing; (see Gill on "Matthew 8:26").

Ver. 41. *And they feared exceedingly*, etc..] That is, the men in the ship, the mariners to whom the ship belonged, and who had the management of it:

and said to one another, as persons in the greatest amazement,

what manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him? Surely this person must not be a mere man; he must be more than a man;

he must be truly God, that has such power over the wind and sea. This best suits with the mariners, since the disciples must have known before, who and what he was; though they might be more established and confirmed in the truth of Christ's deity, by this wonderful instance of his power.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 5

Ver. 1. *And they came over unto the other side of the sea*, etc..] Of Galilee, or Tiberias;

into the country of the Gadarenes: in the Evangelist Matthew it is called, "the country of the Gergesenes", as it is here in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions. The Vulgate Latin reads, "of the Gerasenes", and so some copies, from Gerasa, a place in the same country; but the Syriac and Persic versions read, "Gadarenes", as do most copies; so called from Gadara, a city either adjacent to, or within the country of the Gergesenes; which was called by both names, from these different places. It was not far from Tiberias, the place from whence this sea has its name, over which Christ and his disciples passed, (John 6:1). Chammath was a mile from [f53] Tiberias, and this Chammath was so near to the country of Gadara, that it is often called, rdgd tm, "Chammath of Gadara" [f54]; unless it should be rather rendered, "the hot baths of Gadara": for so it is [f55] said, that at Gadara are the hot baths of Syria; which may be the same with the hot baths of Tiberias, so often mentioned in the Jewish writings [f56]; hence the town of Chammath had its name, which was so near to Tiberias, that it is sometimes reckoned the same with it [f57]: Pliny [f58] places this Gadara in Decapolis, and Ptolemy [f59] in Coelo Syria; and Meleager, the collector of epigrams, who is called a Syrian, is said [f60] to be a Gadarene, a native of this Gadara. Mention is made of the whirlpool of Gadara [f61], which remained ever since the flood. It appears to be an Heathen country, both from its situation, and the manners of the people.

Ver. 2. *And when he was come out of the ship*, etc..] As soon as he was landed,

immediately there met him out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit. The Jews have a notion, that a man by dwelling among the tombs, becomes possessed with an unclean spirit: hence they say of one that seeks to the dead, or a necromancer [f62], this is he that starves himself, and goes "and lodges in the tombs"; hamwj wr wyl hrt ydk, "that so an unclean spirit

may dwell upon him": which notion may arise from unclean spirits hurrying persons possessed by them, unto such places; partly for the terror, both of themselves and others; and partly to possess the minds of men with a persuasion, that they have power over the dead, and which is very great in such places. This case is the same with that, which is mentioned in (<4008>Matthew 8:28) as appears partly from its following the storm, from which the disciples had a remarkable deliverance; and partly from the country, in which this affair happened; for the country of the Gergesenes, and of the Gadarenes, is the same, as has been observed; only it is called by different names, from two principal places in it: as also from various circumstances in this relation; as the character of the possessed being exceeding fierce, dwelling among the tombs, and coming out from thence; the expostulation of the devil with Christ, and adjuration not to torment him; his entreaty to go into the herd of swine, and the leave he had; the destruction of the swine in the sea; the fear and flight of the swine herds; the report they made to their masters and others; and the request of the people in general to Christ, that he would depart out of their coasts. And though Matthew makes mention of two that were possessed, and Mark but of one, there is no contradiction in the one to the other; for Mark does not say there were no more than one; had he, it would have been a glaring contradiction to the other evangelist; but as he has put it, there is none, and it creates no difficulty: wherefore the Jew [f63] has no reason to object this as he does, as if the evangelists clashed with one another; and Mark may only take notice of this one, because he was the fiercest of the two, and had the most devils in him, having a legion of them; and because the conversation chiefly passed between Christ and him; and because the power of Christ was more manifestly seen in the dispossession of the devils out of him.

Ver. 3. *Who had his dwelling among the tombs*, etc..] Which is one of the characters of a madman among the Jews; who say it is [f64]

> "the sign of a madman, that he goeth out in the night, twrbqh tybb lhw, "and lodges among the tombs", and rends his garments, and loses what is given to him."

The same they say, in the same place, of an hypochondriac, and melancholy man; and of Kordiacus, which they give out [f65] is a demon that possesses, and has power over some sort of persons:

and no man could bind him, no, not with chains; so as to hold him for any length of time: not only cords were insufficient to hold, but even chains of iron; so strong was he through the possession; for this could not be by his own natural strength.

Ver. 4. *Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains*, etc..] Trial had been made several times, to no purpose; his arms had been bound with chains, and his feet with fetters, which was very proper to prevent doing hurt to himself, and injury to others:

and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces; as if they had been twine threads; such was his strength, through the force of madness, and the possession of Satan, and his diabolical influence:

neither could any man tame him; by any methods whatever; even such who undertook the cure of madness, or to exorcise those that were possessed: this man was so furious and outrageous, that he was not to be managed any way, either by art or force.

Ver. 5. *And always night and day, he was in the mountains*, etc..] And this being in an Heathen country, would have rendered him an unclean person, if he had not been possessed with an unclean spirit; for so runs one of the Jewish canons [f66]:

> “he that walks in an Heathen land, on mountains and rocks, is unclean.”

And in the tombs: which very likely were on the mountains, and cut out of them, it being usual to cut their sepulchres out of rocks:

crying, and cutting himself with stones; with sharp pieces of stone, which he picked up among the broken tombstones, or from off the mountains, where he was night and day; and besides taking up stones with his hands, and cutting himself with them, he might cut his feet with the sharp stones of the mountains, in which he ran about; these mountains were those, that encompassed the sea of Tiberias; for of it is htwa yyqm yrh, “that the mountains surround it” [f67]: for the place where this man was, was near the sea of Tiberias, over which Christ was just now come; and soon as he arrived on shore, he met him, and found him in this condition. This man was a lively emblem of a man in a state of nature and unregeneracy: he had “an unclean spirit”, as every natural man has; his soul or spirit is defiled

with sin, particularly his mind and conscience: this pollution is natural to him; he brings it into the world with him; it is very universal, it has spread itself over all the powers and faculties of his soul, and is what he cannot cleanse himself from: “who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?” (<20:9>Proverbs 20:9). Nothing that he can do, or can be done for him by a mere creature, can free him from it: nothing but the blood of Christ, and that cleanses from all sin: this man, through the possession of Satan, was a madman, and exceeding fierce and furious: there is a spirit of madness in all unregenerate men; they are exceeding mad against God, and Christ, and the saints, as Saul was before conversion, (<26:9-11>Acts 26:9-11). For who but madmen would stretch out their hands against God, strengthen themselves against the Almighty, run upon him, even on his neck, and upon the thick bosses of his bucklers? (<15:25,26>Job 15:25,26). Who but such would oppose themselves to the Son of God, or do despight to the Spirit of grace, who are equal in power and glory with God the Father? or kick against the pricks, by persecuting the members of Christ? Who but men out of their senses, would seek to ruin and destroy themselves, both soul and body? This man was altogether under the power and influence of Satan, and had a legion of devils within him. Satan is in every unconverted man, in every child of disobedience; and works effectually in him, and leads him captive at his will: and he has besides a swarm of fleshly lusts in him, which have the government over him. This man had his dwelling among the tombs, where the dead lay: so unregenerate men dwell among dead sinners, they have their conversation among the men of the world, who are dead in trespasses and sins, and according to the course of it: and as this man could not be bound with chains and fetters, but these were broke asunder by him; so wicked men are not to be bound, restrained, and governed, by the laws, commands, and ordinances of God; they despise them, break through them, and cannot be subject to them, their language is, “let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us”, (<2:3>Psalm 2:3). And as no man could tame this man, so it is not in the power of men, by the force of moral persuasion, by all the arguments, expostulations, exhortations, promises, or threatenings, they can make use of, to influence the carnal minds of men, or make any real change in them: or bring them into a subjection to the law of God, or Gospel of Christ, and remove from them the spirit of madness, and opposition to all that is good: and to say no more; as this man was mischievous to himself, and cut himself with stones, so carnal men are the worst enemies to themselves; they cut and wound themselves with their sins, though, like the madman, they are not sensible

of it; and if grace prevent not, will destroy themselves, both soul and body, with their transgressions.

Ver. 6. *But when he saw Jesus afar off*, etc..] For it seems the tombs among which this man dwelt, were at some distance from the sea shore: wherefore when it is said, (<410502>Mark 5:2), that this man met Jesus, as soon as he came out of the ship: the meaning that he then came forth to meet him, as he might do upon sight of persons landing afar off; though he might not know then, who Jesus was: but coming nearer, and perceiving who he was, such was the power of Christ over the devils in him, that though sore against their wills, they obliged him to move on speedily towards him; so that

he ran and worshipped him: he made all imaginable haste to him; and when he came up to him, fell down at his feet before him, acknowledging his superiority and power, whom no chains nor fetters could bind, nor any man tame; nor durst any man pass that way, for fear of him: and yet, upon sight of Christ, without a word spoken to him, he runs and prostrates himself before him. This is an instance of the superiority of Christ over the devils, who knowing who he is, are filled with horror at him, fall down before him, and in their way do homage to him; though it is impossible they should be spiritual worshippers of him: unless this is rather to be understood of the man himself, who, at the sight of Christ, might have his senses for the present restored, and a knowledge of Christ given: to whom he ran speedily, and threw himself at his feet, hoping for relief from him: however, it may be an emblem of a poor awakened sinner, having a distant sight of Christ, who, upon it, makes haste unto him, and prostrates itself before him, believing he is able, if willing, to save him from the power of Satan, the evil of sin, and from eternal ruin and damnation.

Ver. 7. *And cried with a loud voice*, etc..] The man possessed with the devil; or the devil in him, making use of his voice, expressing great fear, dread, and horror, at the appearance of Christ in these parts:

and said, what have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? The devils in the man, own the being of a God, and his supreme government over all, under the title of the Most High. The word here used, answers to the Hebrew word, wyl , “Elion”, a name of God known to the ancient Canaanites: hence Melchizedek, a Canaanitish king, is called the priest of the most high God, (<011418>Genesis 14:18). And among the

Phoenicians, he is called Elion, which a Phoenician writer [f68] says, signifies "the Most High"; and hence in Plautus [f69], he goes by the name of Alon, which is the same word a little differently pronounced; and by the same name he might be known among other neighbouring nations of the Jews, and by the Gadarenes; and the devil now being in a Gadarene, makes use of, this name. Devils believe there is one God, and tremble at him; and they confess that Jesus of Nazareth, who was born of the virgin, according to the human nature, is the Son of God, according to his divine nature: and whereas they had no interest in him, as a Saviour, they desired they might have nothing to do with him as God; and since they had no share in the blessings of his grace, they beg they might not feel the power of his hand. Truly they choose not to have any thing to do with God himself; they have cast off allegiance to him, and rebelled against him; and have left their estate, and departed from him; and still less do they care to have any thing to do with his Son: and indeed it seems as if it was the decree and counsel of God, made known unto them, that the Son of God should assume human nature, and in it be the head over principalities and powers, as well as men, which gave umbrage to them: upon which they apostatized from God, being unwilling to be under subjection to the man Christ Jesus; though whether they will or not, they are obliged unto it: for though they desire to have nothing to do with Christ, yet Christ has something to do with them; he had when he was here on earth, and when he hung upon the cross, and will have when he comes again to judge both quick and dead: they might be glad, one would think, to have to do with him as a Redeemer; but this they are not, their sin being the same with that against the Holy Ghost: they are malicious, obstinate, and inflexible, they cannot repent; and there is no pardon, nor was there any provided for them; they were passed by in the counsel and purposes of God's grace, and were not taken notice of in the covenant of grace: Christ took not on him their nature, but the nature of men; yea he came to destroy them, and their works; so that indeed they had nothing to do with him as a Saviour, though he had something to do with them as a judge, and which they dreaded: however, they own, and acknowledge him to be the Son of the most high God; they know and confess as much of him, and more too, than some that call themselves Christians, and hope to be saved by Christ; and yet at the same time own, they had nothing to do with him. Men may know much of Christ notionally; may know, and confess him to be God, to be the Son of God, in the highest and true sense of the phrase; to be the Messiah, to have been incarnate, to have suffered, died, and risen again: to be ascended to

heaven, from whence he will come again; and yet have no more to do with him, or have no more interest in him, than the devils themselves; and will, at the last day, be bid to depart from him.

I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not: not that he required an oath of Christ, that he would swear to him by the living God, that he would not distress him; but he most earnestly and importunately entreated and beseeched him, in the name of God; (see <4088>Luke 8:28), that he would not dispossess him from the man, and send him out of that country, to his own place, to his chains and prison; but suffer him either to lodge in the man, or walk about seeking, as a roaring lion, his prey: for it is torment to a devil to be cast out of a man, or to have his power curtailed, or to be confined in the bottomless pit, from doing hurt to men: (see Gill on "<4029>Matthew 8:29").

Ver. 8. *For he said unto him*, etc..] Or he had said unto him, as soon as he came up to him, and fell before him; even before he had confessed, and adjured him; and which indeed drew out the confession from him, that he was superior to him, and therefore became his supplicant:

come out of the man, thou unclean spirit; which was said with so much authority and power, that there was no withstanding it: the devil knew he was not a match for him; that he must, at his command, quit his possession, and therefore fell to confession and entreaty. Christ will not dwell where Satan does; when therefore he is about to take up his residence in the hearts of any, he outs with Satan; he binds the strong man armed, and dispossesses him; he causes the spirit of uncleanness to depart; he sanctifies the heart by his grace and Spirit, and so makes it a proper habitation for him to dwell in by faith; and this is done by mighty power: a man cannot deliver himself out of the hands of Satan, or cause him to quit his hold of him, or the unclean spirit to depart; nor can he sanctify and cleanse himself, and make himself meet for the master's use: this is all owing to efficacious grace.

Ver. 9. *And he asked him, what is thy name*? etc..] Which question Christ put, not for his own sake; for he was not ignorant of his name, nor of the number of the unclean spirits which were in the man; but partly, that it might be known what a miserable condition this poor man was in, being infested, and vexed with such a large company of devils; and partly, that his own pity and power in delivering him, might be more manifest;

and he answered, saying, my name is Legion: the Syriac version renders it, “our name is Legion”; the reason of which name is given,

for we are many: as a Roman legion did consist of many, though its number was not always alike: in the time of Romulus, a legion consisted of three thousand foot, and three hundred horse; afterwards, when the city was, increased, of six thousand foot, and six hundred horse; sometimes it was six thousand and two hundred foot, and three hundred horse; sometimes four thousand foot, and three hundred horse; sometimes five thousand foot, and three hundred horse [f70]. Some make a legion to consist of six thousand six hundred sixty six; and others make it much larger, even twelve thousand five hundred: however, the number in a legion was many; hence the word is retained among the Jews, and is used for a large number, either of persons or things; as, ytyz lm da wygl, “a legion of olives” [f71]: that is, a large number of them; though sometimes it is used of a single person, who has others under him, as the general of an army: thus it is said [f72] that one man should say to another,

> “from whence art thou? he replies, from such a “legion” am I; — the man went to the legion — the legion heard, and was afraid — the man said, woe unto me! now will the legion slay me — the legion heard, etc..”

And again [f73],

> “a certain legion asked R. Abba, is it not written, etc..”

Once more [f74],

> “Lo! such a legion shall go with thee, to keep thee, etc..”

Upon which the gloss is, abh r, “the general of an army”; so called, because he had a legion, or a large number of soldiers under his command: and just so this unclean spirit is called by this name, because he had a great many more with him, and under him, in that man; sometimes it is only used of a single person himself, as of a king's servant sent into a foreign country, to collect his [f75] tax: a legion was reckoned by the Jews unclean and defiled, whatsoever place they entered into [f76]; how much more unclean must this man be, that had a legion of unclean spirits in him! From hence it appears, that the devils are very numerous; for if there was a legion of them in one man, how many must there be in all the children of disobedience, to maintain their ground, and support their interest among them? As there is

an innumerable company of holy angels to encamp about the saints, and do them all the service they can, and axe appointed to; so there is undoubtedly an innumerable company of devils, who do all the hurt they can, or are permitted to do, unto the sons of men: hence they are expressed by words, which signify number as well as power; as principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places, the power or posse of the air, the angels of Satan, the angels that sinned and left their habitations, etc.. As also that they are in a body, and in the form of an army; with a general at the head of them, the prince of devils, and king of the bottomless pit: there are whole squadrons and regiments of them, yea, even legions; which are formed in battle array, and make war against Christ, the seed of the woman; as they did when he was in the garden, and hung upon the cross, which was the hour and power of darkness; and against his members; as they did in Rome pagan against the Christian church, and in Rome papal, against the same, (ⁿ⁶⁶²⁰Revelation 12:7,8,17), and what a mercy it is for the saints, that besides twelve legions of good angels and more, which are ready to assist and protect them, they have God on their side, and therefore it signifies not who is against them; and they have Christ with them, who has spoiled principalities and powers; and greater is the Holy Spirit that is in them, than he that is in the world.

Ver. 10. *And he besought him much*, etc..] The devil that was at the head of this legion, who had the rest under his command, he, in their name, and on their behalf, entreated Jesus with great earnestness. This shows the authority Christ has over the devils, and their subjection to him; they are not only obliged to quit their former possession, when he gives orders, but they cannot go any where else, or where they would, without his leave: though the man they were in could not be bound and held with chains and fetters of iron, through the great strength they put forth in him; yet these themselves are bound and held in chains, and cannot move without Christ's permission, or as he is pleased to lengthen out the chain unto them: and though they are no humble supplicants to him for grace and mercy, yet they are, that they may continue where they are; or be suffered to be somewhere else, to do mischief to the souls and bodies of men: and though they are such proud spirits, they be, they are very willing to humble themselves and in the most submissive and pressing manner ask a favour, even of him whom they hate, when they have an end to answer by doing injury to others; and in this, as well as in many other things, they are imitated by

them who are truly called the children of the devil, and do the lusts of him their father.

That he would not send them away out of the country; that if he did think fit to dispossess them from that man, that however he would permit them to stay in that country, and not drive them wholly from thence; and which they might be the more desirous of, because it was an Heathen country, inhabited by the blind Gentiles, that knew not God, or apostate Jews, or both; among whom their power and authority were very great; and where they had long been, and had had a large experience of the tempers and dispositions of men, and knew how to bait their temptations with success.

Ver. 11. *Now there was there, nigh unto the mountains*, etc..] Where this man often was, (Mark 5:5) according to Beza, the mountains of Galaad, which ran through that country, or the mountains that surrounded Tiberias. Some copies, as the Alexandrian copy and others, read “at”, or “about the mountain”, in the singular number. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, “about the mountain”. The Syriac and Ethiopic, “at the mountain”; so in (Luke 8:32),

a great herd of swine feeding; on one side of the mountain, or mountains; it may be called a great one, for there were about two thousand hogs in it.

Ver. 12. *And all the devils besought him*, etc..] The whole legion of them, not only their chief, in the name of the rest, but all of them earnestly entreated him; they were all humble supplicants, not from love, but fear, and with a view to do mischief: though the word “all” is omitted in some copies, as it is in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions; neither has the Ethiopic the word devils, but both are retained in the Arabic version:

saying, send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. The Persic version renders it, “seeing thou drivest us from the man, give leave that we may enter into the swine”: which is rather a paraphrase than a version, and expresses the sense very well. They chose to be any where, rather than depart the country; and especially than to be sent into the deep, the abyss, or bottomless pit; and they chose to be sent into the swine, as being impure creatures like themselves; and no doubt with a view to destroy them, that they might satisfy themselves as much as they could with doing mischief; though not to that degree they would, nor to those persons they were desirous of; and so bring as much odium and reproach upon Christ as they could, who gave them leave. The devils are unwearied in doing mischief,

they cannot rest unless they are about it; and they choose to be concerned in doing it in a lesser way, if they are not allowed to do it as largely as they would; if they are not suffered to touch the lives of men, or ruin their souls, it, is some satisfaction to them to be suffered to hurt their bodies; and if that is no longer permitted, rather than be doing nothing, they are desirous of doing injury to irrational creatures, the property of men; all which shows the malice and wickedness of these evil spirits: (see Gill on "<4031>Matthew 8:31").

Ver. 13. *And forthwith Jesus gave them leave*, etc..] For the reason of this (see Gill on "<4032>Matthew 8:32").

and the unclean spirits went out; of the man, in whom they had for some time dwelt:

and entered into the herd of swine; according to the leave given them by Christ: this shows not only the existence of spirits, but their going from one to another shows that they are circumscribed by space; that they are here, and not there, or there, and not here: there is an "ubi", a somewhere, where they are; and whilst there, are not elsewhere:

and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, "the herd ran to the rock", or "promontory", and "fell into the sea". The Ethiopic, the "herd grew mad, and was carried headlong into the sea": the sense is, that the devils having entered into them, it had a like effect on them, as on the man possessed; they ran mad, and were hurried on by the devils, to the rocks on the sea shore; where, falling down the precipice, they were all lost; and a considerable loss it was to their owners; for

they were about two thousand; a very large herd, but there were devils enought in that one man, to possess all these, and run them into the sea:

and were choked in the sea; not suffocated by the devils, but drowned in the waters of the sea, or lake, as Luke calls it; the lake of Gennesareth, or sea of Tiberias and Galilee; which, as often observed, were the same. Though some think it was not this lake or sea, but some other place of water near Gadara. Strabo says [f77], that in the country of Gadara, there was a very bad laky water, of which if cattle tasted, they cast their hair, hoofs, and horns; which perhaps may be the same with what the Talmudists call [f78], rdgd hwlb, "the whirlpool of Gadara"; said to be from the time of the

deluge, and so called from its swallowing up every thing that came into it; but the sea of Tiberias seems rather to be the place, where this herd perished. The Jew [f79] objects to the destroying this herd of swine as an unjust action, being a great injury to the owners; and seeks to blacken the character of Christ, as being concerned in it: but, as Bishop Kidder [f80] well observes, it does not appear that Jesus destroyed it; it was the devils that did it: he suffered them indeed to go into it, nor did he restrain the natural power which they had; nor did he think fit to do it, nor was he obliged to it: but had he destroyed it himself, since he is Lord of all, the proprietor of all creatures, who has all under him, and at his disposal, can give and take away as he pleases, no charge of evil and injustice can be brought against him: and this should be satisfactory to a Christian, who believes him to be God over all blessed for ever; though it will not be to a Jew: let it therefore be further observed, that the owners of these swine were either Jews or Gentiles; if they were Jews, and they brought up these swine in order to eat them themselves, to destroy them was a just punishment, for their violation of the law of God, (<5148>Deuteronomy 14:8). And if they brought them up to sell to others, this was contrary to their own canons; (see Gill on "<4030>Matthew 8:30"), to the rules and customs of their own country, which were made as a fence to keep off from breaking the above law; and such a practice could only proceed from an avaricious disposition, of which this was a proper rebuke: or if they were Gentiles that were the owners of them, these were idolatrous persons, worshippers of devils; and it was but a righteous thing, to suffer the devils, whom they worshipped, to do this mischief to their property, to whom they devoted themselves soul and body; and a Jew cannot well find fault with this, who believes that idolaters cannot be punished too severely: add to this, what the above learned prelate observes; this practice of the Gentiles in breeding hogs, was a temptation to the Jews to follow the same business, and even to taste of the forbidden flesh; so that to use his words, it was in truth an act of grace and favour to the Jews, to remove from them so dangerous a snare, and so bad an example: and it may be added, by suffering the devils to go into the swine, several valuable ends were answered, infinitely preferable to the herd of swine; such as evincing the truth of the dispossession; showing the greatness of the mercy to the dispossessed; the power of Christ over the devils; and making for the spread of the fame of this miracle the more; as well as giving further proof of the malignity and mischievous disposition and actions of these evil spirits; by which the inhabitants of the adjacent places might learn, how hurtful they were to them, and what a blessing it

was to be rid of them: and therefore ought to have been thankful to Christ for this dispossession, notwithstanding the loss of their swine; but such an effect it had not upon them, but the reverse, as the words following show.

Ver. 14. *And they that fed the swine*, etc..] Not the owners, but the keepers of them, the swine herds, "fled"; being astonished at the power of Christ, affrighted at the noise of the devils, and terrified at the sight and loss of the swine:

and told it in the city and country; or "in the fields": they went into the city of Gadara, and told the story of the dispossession of the devils out of the man, that had been for some time troublesome in those parts; and of their entrance into the swine, and the destruction of them: and they went into the fields, or country adjacent; they went to the "villages" thereabout, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render the word; or to those houses that were in the fields, scattered about, here, and there one, and where perhaps the owners of the herd lived: and they not only hasted away to the owners of the swine, to acquaint them with what had happened, in order to remove all blame from themselves, and any suspicion of negligence in them; to make it appear that it was not their fault, or owing to any carelessness of theirs the swine perished; as that they suffered them to go too near the sea side, and did not keep a good lookout, and were not, as they should have been, between them and the sea, to have prevented such an accident: this they not only did, but the affair, in all its circumstances, being such an amazing one; as the dispossession of the devils out of the man; the health, the calmness, and happy condition the dispossessed was in; the entrance of the devils into the swine; their madness, and precipitant running into the sea, and suffocation there; that they told it to every body they met with, whether in the fields belonging to Gadara, or in the city itself; which drew out a large concourse of people to see what was done to the man that had been possessed, and to the swine, and also to see the person who had done all this; and which made the miracle the more notorious; city and country rung of it: so that, as Matthew says, "the whole city came out to meet Jesus", (Matthew 8:34); and Luke observes, that "the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart", etc.. (Luke 8:37). So we sometimes read, in the Jewish writings, of the men, or inhabitants of the field, as opposed to the men, or inhabitants of the city, who differed both in their clothes and diet.

> "The garments, azwm ynbd, "of the children", or "inhabitants of the city", who live deliciously, and do no work, are broad, like women's; but the garments, atylq ynbd, "of the children of the field"; such as do business in the field, are short[f81]:"

and so of their food, it is observed[f82], that the bread, yalqd, "of the men of the field", which the gloss explains by rk ynb, "the children", or "inhabitants of a village", is what they put much flour into; but the bread, azwmd, "of a city", which the gloss interprets of rk ynb, "the children", or "inhabitants of a walled town", or "city", is what they do not put much flour into.

And they went out to see what it was that was done: that is, the inhabitants of the city of Gadara, and those that dwelt in the villages, and in lone houses in the fields, went forth to the places where the possessed man used to be, and where Jesus and he now were, and where the swine used to feed, to see with their own eyes, and satisfy themselves of the truth of the narration the swineherds gave them.

Ver. 15. *And they come to Jesus*, etc..] Who had wrought this miracle, and of which, and whom, the keepers of the swine had given them some account:

and see him that was possessed of the devil, and had a legion. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the last clause, "and had a legion", and so Beza's ancient copy; the Persic version renders it, "the legion being gone out of him": they saw, along with Jesus, the man who had been possessed with a legion of devils, whom they knew very well to be the same man;

sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind, and they were afraid; not of the man, as they were before, when he was possessed, not daring to come that way because of him; but of Christ, and his amazing power; who was able to dispossess a legion of devils, and restore a man to his perfect senses, to such composure and decency, who was before in such a dreadful condition, and so exceeding furious and outrageous: they saw the man was still and quiet, harmless and inoffensive; they had nothing to fear from him; but they knew not what to make of Christ: they might take him for an exorcist, or a magician, and fear that he would exercise his art to the ruin and destruction of them: they did not fear and reverence him as a divine person, but they

dreaded him, as one possessed of a power of doing hurt: they were conscious to themselves of their sins, and that they deserved the just judgments of God upon them; and they were afraid that Christ was sent to execute them upon them: and it is observable, that they say not one word to him, by way of complaint, for the loss of their swine; but thought themselves well off, could they but get rid of him. There was a strange change and alteration in the man; he, who before was running about among the tombs, and upon the mountains, and scarce ever sat still, but was always in motion, as persons distracted commonly are, was now sitting at the feet of Jesus, his kind benefactor, (4035Luke 8:35), and he who before was naked, and whenever any clothes were put upon him, tore them off again, and to pieces, as madmen usually do, was now "clothed"; perhaps with some the swine herds had left behind them, in their fright, or the disciples had with them: and he who before was quite out of his senses, knew not what he said, or did, was now "in his right mind"; of a sound mind, of a good understanding, sober, modest, and knowing. This man, as whilst under the possession of Satan, was an emblem of a man in a natural estate; so, being now dispossessed, he very aptly represented a converted man; who, being brought out of a state of nature, out of an horrible pit, a pit wherein is no water, is "sitting" at the feet of Jesus; where he places himself, imploring his grace and mercy, entreating him to receive and save him, resolving, if he perishes, he will perish there; and where he is, as a scholar, at the feet of his master, hearing his words, and receiving instruction from him; and which also is expressive of his submission to his Gospel and ordinances, and of pleasure and continuance under them; as well as of that calmness and serenity of mind, which attends a sense of justification, pardon, reconciliation, and adoption, and hope of glory: and whereas, before he was naked, and without a righteousness, or, which was no better than filthy rags; he is now "clothed" with the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, with fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints, with change of raiment, and clothing of wrought gold; the righteousness of Christ being not only imputed to him by the Father, but revealed in the Gospel, brought near by the Spirit, and put upon him, and received by faith; as well as having put on the new man, and being clothed with humility, and other graces of the Spirit, and with the garments of a holy conversation; and so will at last be clothed with the shining robes of immortality and glory. Such an one, who before was not himself, is now "in his right mind"; is come to himself like the prodigal; is become sensible of the evil of sin, and is brought to true

repentance for it; and of his lost state and condition, of his need of Christ, and salvation by him; has his spiritual senses exercised upon Christ; beholds the loveliness and suitableness of him as a Saviour, hears his voice, handles him, the word of life, tastes the sweetness there is in him, and in his Gospel, and savours the things of his Spirit; and whose senses also are exercised to discern between good and evil, and truth and error; who likewise has a new heart, and a right Spirit created in him; and has the same mind in him, as was in Jesus Christ, for humility and lowliness; and whose mind is stayed upon him, and trusts in him.

Ver. 16. *And they that saw it*, etc..] Not the keepers of the swine, for they were fled and gone; but others that were eyewitnesses of the whole affair, who lived in houses hard by, or were working in the fields; or the disciples of Christ:

told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil; gave a particular account, how, upon first sight of Christ, he ran to meet him, and fell down and worshipped him; how Christ ordered the unclean spirit to come out of him; and how he was dispossessed of a legion of devils by a word speaking:

and also concerning the swine; how, at the request of the devils, and by the leave of Christ, they entered into them; upon which they ran mad; and betaking themselves to the rocks by the sea side, fell down the precipice, and were suffocated in the sea.

Ver. 17. *And they began to pray him*, etc..] That is, the inhabitants of the city of Gadara, and of the villages round about, very earnestly importuned him

to depart out of their coasts; fearing, lest for their sins, some sorer judgment should fall upon them, than the loss of their swine; since they perceived he was a person of great power and authority; which shows great ignorance and worldly mindedness: they knew not how great a person they had among them; that he was the Son of God, and Saviour of the world: they might have known from the miracles wrought, that he was a very wonderful and extraordinary person; but then they considered him as one endued with great power, rather, to do them hurt than good; as one sent to scourge them for their sins, than to save them from them: such very contrary notions have carnal men of Christ; they are afraid of being sufferers, or losers by him: they do not care to part with their swinish lusts

for him; these they prefer to a Saviour, and love the world, and the things of it, more than he, and therefore are not worthy of him; (see Gill on "Matthew 8:34").

Ver. 18. *And When he was come into the ship*, etc..] For at the request of these men, who were unworthy of his presence, and of any favour from him, either by his doctrine, or miracles, he turned back to the sea side again; and as he was about to take ship,

he that had been possessed with the devil, prayed him that he might be with him: for when Jesus turned his back upon the Gadarenes, and returned to the sea shore, this poor man, who had received so great a benefit by him, rose up and followed him; and when he perceived that he was entering on ship board, in order to go over into another country, earnestly entreated he might go over with him in the ship, and continue with him: which he did, partly to testify his great love to him, and the grateful sense he had of the mercy he had received from him; and partly, that be might enjoy his presence, and have his protection: for he might fear, that when he was gone, and should he remain in that country, the devils would repossess him with greater rage and fury. So gracious souls who know Christ, and have received out of his fulness, and grace for grace, earnestly desire to be with him, to enjoy communion with him, receive instruction from him, and be always under his care, influence, and protection. For to be with Christ, is to have his gracious presence; to have nearness to him, and fellowship with him; to have familiarity and acquaintance with him, yet more and more; to be guided with his counsel, and upheld with the right hand of his righteousness: than which, nothing can be more desirable to those that spiritually and savingly know him: for such desires arise from the knowledge they have of his personal glories and excellencies, as the Son of God; and as mediator? he has all power to protect them, all strength to support them, all grace to supply them, all wisdom to direct them, all provisions to feed them, and all blessings of grace and glory to bestow upon them; and from the gracious experience they have had of his favour and lovingkindness, which is better than life; and from the sense they have of their need of him; for without him they can do nothing; they cannot perform any duty aright, nor withstand any temptation, or bear up under any affliction: they are sensible of the blessed effects of his presence; they know it brings light to their souls in darkness; that it quickens them when dead and lifeless in their frames and duties, and enlivens their spirits when dull and heavy; that it comforts and rejoices their hearts, and puts more joy

and gladness into them, than any outward blessing whatever; that it removes their fears, and emboldens, them against their enemies, and is their safety and defence; that it makes ordinances pleasant and delightful, and gives contentment in the meanest state; there is nothing enjoyed by them in this life which gives them the pleasure and satisfaction that does: and hence it is that they often desire even to depart out of this world, that they may be with Christ, which is far better; and indeed, if the presence of Christ is so sweet and desirable now, what will the, everlasting, and uninterrupted enjoyment of his presence be in the world to come? for in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore.

Ver. 19. *Howbeit Jesus suffered him not*, etc..] He being as able to preserve him from those evil spirits, when absent, as present; and besides, to take him along with him, would look like ostentation and boasting, which Christ was averse unto; and more especially, as is clear from what follows, he chose he should stay behind, because he had work for him to do in those parts, which would be for the glory of God, the spread of the knowledge of himself, and his Gospel, among his friends, relations, and countrymen: wherefore it follows,

but saith unto him, go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee: he bids him go to his "own house", as it is in Luke, (Luke 8:39) to the place of his former abode; to the town, or city, where he before dwelt, and where his father and mother, brethren and sisters, wife and children might live; and there relate to them what great things the Lord, or God, as the Ethiopic version reads, had done for him; by casting out a legion of devils from him, and had restored him to his perfect senses and health, and had had compassion on him, both as of his soul and body, and had wrought a great salvation for him. So such as are called by grace, and are turned from darkness to light; and from the power of Satan unto God, ought to go, to their Christian friends, and to the church of God, and declare in Zion the great things which God has done for their souls; in enlightening, quickening, converting, and comforting them, to the glory of his rich mercy, and abundant grace. They are "great things" indeed which the Lord has done for his people: he has done great things for them in eternity; he has loved then with an everlasting love; he has chosen them in his Son to holiness and happiness; he has made a covenant with him, for them, full of spiritual blessings and promises; he has provided him, as a Saviour, for them, and has appointed, and called him to that work; all which is more or

less made known to them in the effectual calling, when they receive the Spirit of God, that they may know the things which are freely given to them of God. The Lord Jesus Christ has done great things for them, as before time, by engaging for them as their surety; so, in time, by taking upon him their nature, by bearing their sins, and suffering in their room and stead, thereby working out a great salvation, which, in conversion, is brought near, and applied unto them. And the Lord, the Spirit, does great things for them, when he calls them by his grace, and afterwards; in opening their eyes who were born blind, and who otherwise must have lift them up in hell; and in bringing them into the marvellous light of, the Gospel; in quickening them, when dead in trespasses and sins, who otherwise must have died the second death; in causing them, to hear the voice of Christ in the joyful sound of the word, who otherwise must have heard the curses of a righteous law; in taking away their stony hearts, and giving them hearts, of flesh; in rescuing them out of Satan's hands; in leading them to Christ for righteousness, life, and salvation; in discovering pardoning grace and mercy to them, through the blood of Christ; in delivering out of many and great temptations; in applying great and precious promises, suitably and seasonably; and in restoring them when backslidden, and speaking comfortably to them; in witnessing to their spirits, their adoption; and in sealing them up to the day of redemption; and all this flows from divine “compassion”, and not from any motive and merit in the creature. It was sovereign pity and compassion; the Lord “has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and has compassion on whom he will have compassion”, (Romans 9:15). It was discriminating mercy: this man was not only dispossessed of Satan, but possessed of special grace, which caused him to desire to be with Christ, when his countrymen desired him to depart from them; it was shown him, when he had no pity on himself, when he cut and wounded himself; and it was bestowed upon him, when he could, not help himself, when he had a legion of devils within him: and now these great things, which spring from great love and mercy, should be told to others, especially to them that fear the Lord, to the churches of Christ: this is the will of God, and has been the practice of the saints in former ages; it rejoices the hearts of God's: people to hear of these things, and enhances the glory of the grace of God: and what may serve to encourage souls, to such a work is, that it is to their “friends” they are to declare these things; who are well disposed to: them, rejoice at their conversion, sympathize with them in their troubles, know what the things they speak of mean, and gladly receive them into their affections and fellowship.

Ver. 20. *And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis*, etc..] He submitted to the will of Christ, though he could gladly have gone with him; he hearkened to his instructions, took his advice, and obeyed his commands, as every one that has received favours from him ought to do and he went not only to his own, or his father's house, and acquainted his nearest friends and relations with what had befallen him, but he published the account, as Luke says, (⁴⁰⁸⁹Luke 8:39), throughout the whole city, very likely of Gadara, where he might be a native; and which, as Pliny [f83] relates, was in Decapolis, and agrees with the accounts of both the evangelists: here he published, as Christ had ordered him,

how great things Jesus had done for him: only instead of saying the Lord had done them, for him, he attributed them to Jesus, who: is Lord and God; and by that miracle, as by many others, gave full proof of his deity, as well, as Messiahship. This is an instance of the obedience of faith, and is a considerable branch of it; for, as with the heart, men believe in Christ unto righteousness, so, with the mouth, confession must be made to the glory of that salvation which Christ has wrought out: many are backward to this part of the service of faith, through fears, through unbelief, and Satan's temptations; but this man, though to have continued with Christ was greatly desirable by him, yet he submits to his will and pleasure, and is obedient to his orders; and that at once, immediately dropping his suit: unto him, no longer insisting on his being with him; for he was sensible of the great obligations he was laid under to him, and saw it to be his duty to observe whatever he commanded him: and this was indeed but a reasonable, piece of service, and what if he had not been ordered to do, one would think he could not have done otherwise; at least, had he not, he would not have acted the grateful and generous part: and indeed, if such for whom the Lord has done great things as these, should hold their peace, the stones would even cry out.

And all men did marvel; at the power of Jesus, at the miracle wrought by him, and the benefit the man had received, who they all knew had been in so deplorable a condition. It is not only marvellous to the persons themselves, for whom great things are done by the Lord; but it is amazing to others, to angels and men, when it is considered who they are, on whose account they are wrought; great sinners, very unworthy of such high favours, yea, deserving of the wrath of God, and of eternal damnation; and likewise, who it is that has done these things for them, the Lord of heaven and earth; he against whom they have sinned, and is able both to save, and

to destroy; he who is the great God, is their Saviour; to which may be added, the consequence of these things, they issue in everlasting glory and happiness.

Ver. 21. *And when Jesus was passed over again*, etc..] Over the sea of Tiberias, that part of it which was necessary to go over from the country of Gadara, to Capernaum,

by ship, or "boat",

unto the other side. This may seem to some unnecessary to be added; and it may be asked, what way but by ship, or boat, could he have gone over to the other side of the sea of Galilee? To which it may be replied, there was a bridge at Chammath of Gadara [f84], over an arm of this sea, over which Christ and his disciples might have passed, and have gone by land to Capernaum; so that this phrase is very necessarily and significantly used:

much people gathered unto him; who had before attended on his ministry in these parts, and had seen his miracles; as the casting out of an unclean spirit from a man, healing the centurion's servant, curing the man sick of the palsy, and Simon's wife's mother of a fever, and a man that had a withered hand:

and he was nigh unto the sea; he seems to have been at Capernaum, which was nigh unto the sea, and in the house of Matthew or Levi, whom he had called at the sea side from the receipt of custom; (see <40909>Matthew 9:9,10,18).

Ver. 22. *And behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue*, etc..] Having heard of his return, and where he was; (see Gill on "<40918>Matthew 9:18").

Jairus by name; in Hebrew ryay, "Jair": and Jerom says [f85], it signifies "enlightening", or "enlightened": deriving it from rwa, "to be light": and it is no doubt a Jewish name, since he was a ruler of the synagogue; and besides, it is often mentioned in the Old Testament, and particularly in (<17015>Esther 2:5), where, in the Septuagint, it is read, Ιαιρος, Jairus. Matthew makes no mention of his name; but both Mark and Luke do, (<41022>Mark 5:22 <42841>Luke 8:41).

And when he saw him, he fell at his feet: as soon as he came into his presence; though he was a person of such authority; yet having heard much

of the doctrine and miracles of Christ, and believing him to be a great prophet, and man of God; though he might not know that he was the Messiah, and truly God, threw himself at his feet; and, as Matthew says, "worshipped him", (<4018>Matthew 9:18); showed great reverence and respect unto him, gave him homage, at least in a civil way, though he might not adore him as God.

Ver. 23. *And besought him greatly*, etc..] Used much importunity with him, and was very urgent in his requests:

saying, my little daughter lieth at the point of death, or "is in the last extremity"; just breathing out her last; for she was not actually dead when he left her, though she was before he returned, and was at this time, as he might expect, expiring, or really gone; (see Gill on "<4018>Matthew 9:18").

[I pray thee] come and lay thine hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live; expressing faith in the power of Christ to restore his daughter, though in the utmost extremity; yet seemed to think his presence, and the imposition of his hands were necessary to it.

Ver. 24. *And Jesus went with him*, etc..] Immediately without objecting to the weakness of his faith:

and much people followed him; to see the miracle performed, which they were exceedingly fond of:

and thronged him; so that it was with some difficulty and trouble that he passed along the streets to: the ruler's house.

Ver. 25. *And a certain woman which had an issue of blood twelve years*.] (See Gill on "<4020>Matthew 9:20"). This woman was in the crowd that thronged Jesus, as he passed through the streets of Capernaum. Eusebius relates [f86], that it was reported, that this woman was of Caesarea Philippi, where her house was to be seen; where were extant some wonderful monuments of the benefits conferred upon her by Christ; as that at the door of her house was an effigy of a woman in brass, set upon an high stone on her bended knees, and arms stretched out like a supplicant; and opposite to her, another effigy of a man, of the same metal, standing, and decently clothed in a tunic, and his hand stretched out to the woman; at whose feet, upon the pillar, a strange form of a plant arose, reaching up to the border of the brazen tunic, which is a remedy against all diseases; and he says it remained to his times, and was then to be seen: and Theophylact [f87] says, in

the times of Julian the apostate it was broke to pieces. But this woman rather seems to be an inhabitant of Capernaum, in the streets of which the after cure was wrought; and therefore what credit is to be given to the above accounts I leave to be judged of. It may be more useful to observe, that this profluvious woman is an emblem of a sinner in a state of nature: as her disease was in itself an uncleanness, and rendered her unclean by the law, whereby she was unfit for the company and society of others; so the disease of sin, with which all are infected, is a pollution itself, and of a defiling nature; all the members of the body, and all the powers and faculties of the soul are polluted with it, and the whole man is filthy in the sight of God, and is pronounced unclean by the law of God; and such persons are very unfit for the society of saints on earth, and much less to be with those in heaven, nor even to be with moralized persons; for evil communications corrupt good manners: openly profane and impure sinners are infectious, and to be avoided. Likewise, as this woman's disease was of long standing, she had it twelve years, and it was become inveterate and stubborn, and not easy to be removed; so such is the disease of sin, and indeed it is much worse; it is what is brought into the world with men, and is as old as themselves; is natural to them, and cannot be removed by any ordinary and natural methods, but requires supernatural power and grace; and it is in such a like case and condition, that the Spirit of God finds his people, when he quickens, sanctifies, and cleanses them: “and when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live”, (Ezekiel 16:6).

Ver. 26. *And had suffered many things of many physicians*, etc..] She took many a nauseous medicine, and had gone through courses of physic with different physicians; for there were many among the Jews that pretended to the cure of fluxes; and various are the prescriptions the Jewish doctors give for such a disorder, as may be seen in their Talmud [f88]; and many of which Dr. Lightfoot [f89] has transcribed: and among the rest, they direct to the use of gum of Alexandria, alum, saffron, Persian onions, cummin, and “faenum graecum”, put into wine and drank.

And had spent all that she had; had wasted her substance, and brought herself to poverty, by pursuing the directions given her; so that she was not in circumstances now to employ a physician;

and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse: the several medicines she had taken had done her no good, had not, in the least, restrained and

checked the disorder, but it was rather increased thereby. This is often the case of persons who are, in some measure, sensible of the disease of sin, but are ignorant of the proper methods to be taken for the cure of it. They apply to their own works of righteousness, moral and civil, to the duties of religion, private and public, to a legal repentance, external humiliation and tears, and an outward reformation of life, hoping hereby, in process of time, to be rid of their disorder, and be in good health; whereas these are physicians of no value, and of no real service in their case: they are so far from being the better, that they are rather worse and worse, there being so much impurity, imperfection, and sin, in all these things, and which is increased by a dependence on them; that their iniquities grow upon them, and the score of their transgressions is become greater, and their distemper the more inveterate, and less easy to be cured; yea, not only they spend their money for that which does not bring them a cure, and exhaust all the stock of nature's power to no purpose, but they also suffer much hereby. For such a course of action, such conduct and methods as these bring them into a spirit of bondage; for when they fail in their duties, do not come up to the rules prescribed them, what terror of mind possesses them! what horror and wrath does the law work in their consciences! what a fearful looking for is there of fiery indignation, to consume them! It cannot be expressed what some have suffered by following such prescriptions.

Ver. 27. *When she had heard of Jesus*, etc..] Of the many miracles he had wrought, and cures he had performed, in cases as difficult and desperate as hers, or more so; and that he was now passing along the streets,

came in the press behind; though she was so weak, and much enfeebled, as she must needs be, by such, and so long a disorder; yet she ventures into the crowd, which were pushing and pressing after Christ; and got up to him, behind him, being ashamed to tell her case, and desire a cure:

and touched his garment; the hem or border of it, with her hand, very softly, and in a private manner, so as not to be observed by any. Christ is the sinner's last shift; he tries every one first before he comes to him; he spends all his money, strength, and time, with others, to no purpose; and finding them all to be useless and unserviceable, he applies to him, who is the only physician that can give relief in this case: like this woman, having heard of his ability to save to the uttermost those that come to him; and being encouraged by the many cures of the worst of sinners, of such who were in the most desperate condition, presses in the throng, through a

great many temptations, difficulties, and discouragements thrown in the way by Satan, and its own evil heart of unbelief, and which arise from a sense of vileness and unworthiness; and in a modest and bashful manner, fearing it should be thought presumption in him, and yet persuaded it is the only way for a cure, and that it is to be had in this way, lays hold on the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the garment s of his salvation; or, in other words, thus reasons with himself: though I am such a vile, sinful, unrighteous, and impotent creature, yet surely in the Lord there is righteousness and strength, if I can but by faith lay hold thereon; though it be but in a weak way, only by a touch, and in a trembling manner; I shall be justified from all things, I could not be justified by all the works of righteousness I have been doing, and that evidentially and comfortably; and therefore I will venture and draw nigh unto him, and though he slay me I will trust in him; I will throw off my own filthy rags of righteousness; I will make mention of, and lay hold on his righteousness, and that only; he shall be my salvation. And such an one finds, as this woman afterwards did, a perfect cure, cleansing from all sin, a free and full forgiveness of it, and complete justification from it.

Ver. 28. *For she said*, etc..] Within herself, such were her thoughts, and so great her faith:

if I may touch but his clothes I shall be whole; (see Gill on "Matthew 9:21").

Ver. 29. *And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up*, etc..] It was usual with the Jews to call the womb, in which the child is formed, rwqm, "a fountain" [f90]; and because, from hence, issued the blood in a menstruous and profluvious person, they called it, as here, hymd rwqm, "the fountain of her blood" [f91]; and sometimes use the same phrase of the drying up of it, as in this place: they say [f92], when a woman is searched and found to be pure, she is forbidden her house, hnyym bgnty d, "until her fountain be dried up"; so that as no blood issued from it, there was none in it, and which was now this woman's case, as she found;

and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague: she not only found by that quick alteration there was in her animal spirits, which were now free and vigorous; but she perceived, in that part of her body, from whence the issue sprung, that she was perfectly well, and that the disorder was entirely gone, which had been for so many years a sore affliction to

her, and a severe correction and chastisement of her, as the word used implies. It properly signifies a “scourge”, as every affliction is, a scourge for sin; and very likely this woman's disease was on the same account: sometimes afflictions are God's scourges in a way of wrath, and sometimes in a fatherly way, in love: “for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth”, (Hebrews 12:6), and who, as he wounds, he heals, and which is sensibly perceived by his people. The word “plague” carries in it something more dreadful, and fitly enough expresses the nature of sin, which is a pestilential disease; the corruption of nature, indwelling sin is called the “plague of the heart”, (1 Kings 8:38). It is a loathsome disease, and without the grace of God, a mortal one; the body of sin, is a body of death; and all sin is of the same nature and kind; the end of it is destruction and death: the healing of it is the forgiveness of sin, which is through the blood of Christ, and the application of it to the soul; which, when made, is sensibly felt, for it immediately produces spiritual joy, peace, and comfort: this makes the bones, which were broken, to rejoice; this bids every son and daughter of the Lord God Almighty to be of good cheer; it causes the inhabitants of Zion to hold their peace, and no more say they are sick, because their sins are forgiven them. And a man may as easily perceive when his spiritual maladies are healed in this way, as when he is cured of any bodily disorder.

Ver. 30. *And Jesus immediately knowing in himself*, etc..] As soon as ever the woman had touched his garments, and had a cure, Christ, who knew all things in his Spirit, or divine nature, that dwelt in him, knew what was done, that the woman had touched him, and was healed thereby; though, as not without his knowledge, so neither without his will, and entirely by his power:

that virtue was gone out of him; to the healing of some person, though not at all to the diminution of that virtue, which remained as powerful and effective in him as ever. This shows that there was an internal essential virtue in Christ to cure diseases: it was not what he derived from another, or exercised under another's influence; but what was his own, and which he put forth as the Lord God omnipotent. The apostles of Christ cured diseases, but not by their own power and holiness, by any innate virtue in them; but in the name of Christ, and by power derived and received from him: but Christ, being God, had infinite virtue within himself, which went forth from him when he pleased, to the curing of whatsoever disease he thought fit; and which was no ways lessened by the frequent exertions of it;

no more than the light and heat of the sun by the continual emanations of them; only there is this difference between the emission of light and heat from the sun, and the sending forth virtue from Christ, that the one is by the necessity of nature, without knowledge, or will, but the other voluntarily, and when, and as he pleases, The same holds good with respect to healing spiritual diseases: Christ has a power within him to forgive all trespasses; and virtue may be said to go out of him to this purpose, when it is his will to make application of pardoning mercy to his people; which requires an exertion of power, as well as a display of grace.

Turned him about in the press, and said, who touched my clothes? that is, turned himself towards the woman behind him, though the press was so large about him, and asked who touched his clothes; not for his own sake, who knew very well who had done it; but that the cure might be known to others: not for the sake of ostentation and popular applause, but for the manifestation of his glory, and for the glory of God, and for the strengthening the faith of Jairus, who was with him, and with whom he was going to raise his daughter to life; and also that he might have an opportunity of showing forth, and commending this poor woman's faith, and of confirming the cure wrought, and of dismissing her with the utmost pleasure and joy.

Ver. 31. *And his disciples said unto him*, etc..] Peter, and they that were with him; after the crowd that were about him denied that any of them had touched him; (see <4185>Luke 8:45),

thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou who touched me? They seem astonished at his question, and answer with some degree of warmth, and almost ready to charge it as weak: and impertinent; since, as there was such a crowd about him, pressing him on every side, he could not but be touched by many; and therefore to ask who touched him, when this was the case, they thought was a very strange and unnecessary question.

Ver. 32. *And he looked round about*, etc..] The press and throng of people, on every side of him; though he knew very well where she stood, who had done the thing, and had received the cure:

to see her that had done this thing; how she looked, and whether her countenance, and the confusion she was thrown into by the question, would not betray her; though he himself wanted no such signs, by which to

discover her. Christ, as God, being omniscient, knew who she was, and where she was; and, as man, did not want to see her to gratify his curiosity: nor was his view to chide her for what she had done, but to express his well pleasedness in her faith and actions, and to observe it to others, and the cure she had; not in an ostentatious way, to gain glory to himself, but to commend her faith, and encourage others in the exercise of it on him; and especially Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, who was with him, and in great distress, on account of his daughter, whom Christ was going to raise from the dead.

Ver. 33. *But the woman fearing and trembling*, etc..] Lest she should be reproved, and suffer the penalties of the law, for appearing in public during the time of her uncleanness, (<3Leviticus 15:25), or that Christ was displeased with her, for her taking an improper method to obtain her cure; or lest he should recall it, or was angry with her for concealing it, and attempting to go away undiscovered, and without so much as thanking him for it. After conversion, after souls have laid hold on Christ for righteousness and life; after they have had the pardon of their sins, and are cured of their diseases, they are not without their fears and tremblings, though there is no just reason for them: they fear where no fear is; that is, where there is no true cause of fear; which was this woman's ease: they are sometimes afraid they have no interest in Christ, and in his love; that they are hypocrites; that the truth of grace is not in them; that they shall never hold out to the end; that they shall perish, and come short of eternal glory, notwithstanding they know, as this woman did, what has been done in them, and done for them.

Knowing what was done in her, and by her; being conscious to herself that she was the person that had touched him, and that upon it the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she was thoroughly healed of her disease:

Came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. Christ did not point her out, though he knew her; or call her by her name, though he could have done it, and have ordered her to come to him, and account for her conduct: he had said enough to work upon her, and engage her to come; who came of herself, and with the greatest reverence to his person, and sense of her own unworthiness, threw herself at his feet, and gave him a relation of the whole matter, with the utmost truth and, exactness; what had been her case, what was her faith, and what she had done, and what a cure she had received; and which she acknowledged with the greatest

thankfulness. In some copies it is added, “before all”; before Christ and his disciples, and the throng of people that were along with him: she that came behind Christ, and privately took hold of the hem of his garment, her faith secretly going out unto him; now appears openly before him, not being able to hide herself any longer. Nor is she ashamed to tell what she had done, and had been done in her: truth is to be spoken, even all the truth; no one has reason to be ashamed of that, and especially of the truth of grace, truth in the inward parts; this is what God requires, and gives, and delights in. The secret experiences of grace in our souls we should not be ashamed to relate to others; this makes for the glory of divine grace, and the good of others. In some copies it is read, “and told him all her cause before all”: her whole affair, how it had been with her, and now was, and what was the cause of her taking such a method she did.

Ver. 34. *And he said unto her, daughter*, etc..] Instead of reproving her, or showing any anger, or resentment at her, as she feared, he speaks to her in a very soft, kind, and tender manner, and called her “daughter”, which was not only an expression of affection and civility, this being an affable, courteous way of speaking used by the Jews; but might signify her spiritual relation through him, being a child of God by adopting grace. She was a daughter of Abraham by natural descent, as was the woman bound by Satan eighteen years, (<42 13 16>Luke 13:16) and so she was likewise in a spiritual sense, being one that walked in the steps of his faith, believing in hope against hope; and she was also a daughter of the Lord God Almighty, as her faith showed her to be, (<48 03 26>Galatians 3:26), and to this our Lord may chiefly refer; she was one of those that were predestinated to the adoption of children, and were given to Christ as such; and who are evidentially the children of God by faith in him: and to have a testimony of adoption from the Spirit of God, and from the mouth of Christ himself, as this woman had; how great a blessing is it!

thy faith hath made thee whole: through faith in Christ she received the cure from him; for it was not her act of faith that either merited, or procured it, but his power, and he himself the object of her faith that effected it: though he is pleased to take no further notice of the virtue that went out from him; but commends her faith, for her further and future encouragement in the exercise of it, and for the encouragement of others to believe in him. In the Greek text it is, “thy faith hath saved thee”; both from her bodily disease, and from her sins: not that there is such an intrinsic virtue in faith as to deliver from either; for certain it is, that it was not

virtue that went out of her faith, but virtue which went out from Christ, that cured her of her issue; though faith was the means of drawing it out; or it was that, through which, virtue from Christ exerted itself, and produced such an effect: and it is as certain, that not faith, but Christ, is the author and cause of spiritual salvation: faith looks to Christ for salvation, and receives every blessing of it from him, as righteousness, peace, pardon, adoption, and eternal life; so that believers are saved by grace, through faith; through the exercise of that grace they have the joy, and comfort Of salvation now; and through it they are kept, by the power of God, unto the full possession of it hereafter.

Go in peace; to thine house; all health and happiness attend thee; let no uneasy thought, about what has passed, dwell on thy mind; be joyful and thankful for the mercy received, and never fear, or dread, a return of the disorder. Peace is the effect of faith in Christ, of pardon through his blood, and salvation in him; true, spiritual, solid peace is enjoyed in a way of believing; it is the fruit of a view of interest in justification by faith in Christ's righteousness; and nothing more effectually produces and secures it than a sense of, all spiritual diseases being healed, or an application of pardoning grace and mercy, through the blood of Christ; which itself speaks better things than that of Abel, even pardon, and so peace: such who are blessed in this manner, and walk under a view and sense of these things, go in peace all their days, and at last enter into peace, even into the joy of their Lord.

And be whole of thy plague: she was so already; but this was a confirmation of it, and what might assure her, that she should remain so, and no more be afflicted with that chastisement. Sin pardoned, though sought for, shall not be found; nor condemnation come upon the pardoned sinner; he is whole and sound, and shall be no more sick, and much less die the second death.

Ver. 35. *While he yet spake*, etc..] The above things to the poor woman, in commendation of her faith, and for her future encouragement, peace, and comfort in soul and body:

there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain that said. The Vulgate Latin renders it, “from the ruler of the synagogue”, and which is indeed the literal version of the phrase; but they could not come from him in person, for he was with Jesus: hence some versions, as the Arabic and Ethiopic, read, “there came to the ruler of the synagogue”; but the sense is

easy, by supplying the word house, as we do, and as the Syriac and Persic versions also do. Luke speaks but of “one” that came, (⁴Luke 8:49) whereas this evangelist suggests there were more, which is no contradiction; for Luke does not say there was but one; there might be more that came with the news, though but one related it as the mouth of the rest; or they might come one after another with it.

Which said, thy daughter is dead, why troublest thou the master any further? these brought him the account that his daughter was actually dead, which he himself feared before; and therefore they thought it was in vain to give Christ any further trouble to drag along through a crowd of people pressing him; whom they looked upon as a very worthy person, an eminent doctor and prophet, a master in Israel, and one that had done great cures on living persons in distress; yet imagined it was wholly out of his power to raise one from the dead, of which, as yet, they had had no instance, unless the raising of the widow of Nain's son was before this, as indeed it seems to be; but perhaps persons, who were some of the relations, or domestics of the ruler, had heard nothing of it; for if they had, they might have hoped he would have exerted his power in raising the ruler's daughter, as well as the widow's son.

Ver. 36. *As soon as Jesus had heard the word that was spoken*, etc..] By those that came from the ruler's house; as that his daughter was dead, and it was to no purpose to give him any further trouble, since all hope of recovery was now gone:

he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue; who was overwhelmed with trouble, and quite dispirited, and ready to swoon and die away;

be not afraid, only believe: do not be discouraged at these tidings, or distrust my power to help thee, only believe that I am able to raise her, even from the dead; and fear not, but it will be done. If a man can but believe, he has no reason to fear; for what is it that almighty power cannot do? it can raise the dead; there is nothing can stand in its way, or stop its course; and faith in it surmounts difficulties which are insuperable to carnal sense and reason: this was the support and foundation of Abraham's faith; hence he was strong in the exercise of it, and believed in hope against hope, because he was fully persuaded that God was able to perform what he had promised, (⁴Romans 4:18,20,21). And whereas the ruler had expressed some faith in Christ, that his daughter, though at the point of death, would be, healed by him and live, provided he would but come and

lay his hands on her; and Christ had assented to go along with him, and had given him an intimation that he would restore her; he had nothing to do but to believe in him, that even though she was dead, he was able to raise her from the dead, as well as to recover her at the point of death, and that he would do it, but, oh! this thing, “only believe”, how hard a matter is it, though there is so much encouragement to it both in the power and will of Christ! Faith is not of a man's self at first; it is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; and the lively and comfortable exercise of it is owing to the influence of efficacious grace: but if Christ, who is the author and finisher of faith, says “believe”, or “only believe”; such power goes along with his words, as doubtless did at this time, as causes souls to exercise faith in him; and the more faith, the less fear; and such walk most comfortably in themselves, and most to the glory of Christ, who walk by faith on him. This word “only” does not exclude the exercise of other graces, but rather implies it, for where this grace is in exercise, generally speaking, others are; nor the performance of good works, which are the fruits and effects of true faith, and without which faith is dead; but it stands opposed to fears and doubting, and to all carnal reasonings, as well as to all trust and confidence in other objects besides Christ.

Ver. 37. *And he suffered no man to follow him*, etc..] To the house of the ruler, but dismissed the multitude, being not desirous of the honour and applause of men: probably what he said to the ruler, was privately, and with a low voice, so that the multitude did not hear him; and understanding by the messengers that the child was dead, were the more easily prevailed upon to depart, since they might conclude there was nothing now to be done;

save Peter, and James, and John, the brother of James: three favourite disciples, who were a sufficient number of witnesses; and who were taken alone along with Christ on some other occasions, as at his transfiguration, and when in the garden.

Ver. 38. *And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue*, etc..] Along with him, and the three disciples above mentioned; and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, “and they came”, the above persons:

and seeing the tumult; the throng and crowd of people, of relations, friends, neighbours, and acquaintance, on this occasion, all in a hurry, and in one motion or another, expressing their concern by words and gestures.

And them that wept and wailed bitterly; the mourning women, the same with the “preficae” of the Romans, who sung mournful songs, and made hideous noises, being hired for this purpose; as also those who played doleful tunes on musical instruments; (see Gill on “[4023]Matthew 9:23”).

Ver. 39. *And when he was come in*, etc..] Into the house, within doors, into one of the apartments, and where the company of mourners, and the pipers, and mourning women were, singing and saying their doleful ditties:

he saith unto them, why make ye this ado and weep? why all this tumult and noise? this grief and mourning, whether real or artificial?

the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth: not but that she was truly dead, but not so as to remain under the power of death: she was like a person in a sleep, who would in a little time be awaked out of it: and which was as easily performed by Christ, as if she had been only in a natural sleep; (see Gill on “[4024]Matthew 9:24”).

Ver. 40. *And they laughed him to scorn*, etc..] The servants of the house that had laid her out; and the neighbours and relations that were come in on this occasion, and had satisfied themselves that she was dead; and the players on the pipe and flute, with the mourning women, who got their livelihood this way; (see Gill on “[4024]Matthew 9:24”);

but when he had put them all out: of the house, or that part of it where he was; that is, ordered them to depart, with the leave and consent of the master of the house:

he taketh the father, and the mother, of the damsel, and them that were with him: either with Jairus, who had accompanied him to Christ, and returned with him; the Ethiopic version reads it, “with them”, who were with the father and the mother of the damsel, their near relations, and intimate friends; or rather with Christ, namely, the three disciples, Peter, James, and John;

and entereth in where the damsel was lying; into an inner room, where the child was laid out on a bed.

Ver. 41. *And he took the damsel by the hand*, etc..] (See Gill on “[4025]Matthew 9:25”).

And said unto her; in the Syriac language, which was then commonly spoken by the Jews, and well understood: hence the Syriac version expresses the following words without an interpretation,

Talitha Cumi. The Ethiopic version reads it, “Tabitha Cumi”; and so do some Greek copies, and Latin versions, taking it to be the same word as in (<4036>Acts 9:36) whereas that signifies “Dorcas, a roe”; but this word is of another signification, as here explained,

which is, being interpreted, damsel (I say unto thee) arise. The phrase, “I say unto thee”, is no part of the interpretation of the above Syriac words; but is added, by the evangelist, as being what was expressed by Christ at the same time, signifying his authority and power over death; only “damsel arise”, is the interpretation of them, ylj, “Tali”, signifies a “boy”, and atylj, “Talitha”, a “girl”; and so they are often used in the Targums[f93], and in the Talmud: the one is used for a boy of seventeen years of age[f94], and the other for a girl of sixteen or seventeen years of age[f95]; so that this child might well be called by this name, since she was but twelve years of age; and ymwq, “Cumi”, is the imperative wq, “to arise”.

Ver. 42. *And straightway the damsel arose, and walked*, etc..] As soon as ever the above words were pronounced by Christ, such divine power went along with them, that the child returned to life; and raised herself up from the bed, got off of it, and walked about the room in perfect health and strength:

for she was of the age of twelve years; and so, when alive and well, was able to walk; though one of this age was called a little one, as this is by another evangelist; (see Gill on “<4018>Matthew 9:18”),

and they were astonished with a great astonishment; they were exceedingly amazed at such a signal instance of the power of our Lord, even both the parents of the child, and the disciples of Christ.

Ver. 43. *And he charged them straitly that no man should know it*, etc..] From them, immediately, and whilst he was upon the spot; for that the thing could be long concealed, it was not reasonable to suppose: this charge he gave, to show his dislike of ostentation and popular applause, and to avoid the envy of the Scribes and Pharisees, and prevent the people from making any attempts to proclaim him king; his time not being yet come to die, he having some other work to do; and a more full

manifestation of him being reserved for another time, and to be done in another way.

And commanded that something should be given her to eat; which would be an evidence not only that she was really alive, but that she was restored to perfect health: she was both raised from the dead, and entirely freed from the distemper she laboured under before her death; death had cured her of that, as it does of all distempers: she did not rise with it, but was free from it; and was now like one that had been asleep for a while, and was hungry upon it; as children of such an age generally are upon rising from sleep.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 6

Ver. 1. *And he went out from thence*, etc..] From Capernaum;

and came into his own country; or "city", as the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, the city of Nazareth; so called because it was the place where Christ was conceived, and where he was educated; for which he had a regard, and was willing it should partake of the benefit of his doctrine and miracles:

and his disciples follow him; as they did wherever he went; and which is a true characteristic of a disciple of Jesus.

Ver. 2. *And when the sabbath day was come*, etc..] For it seems that it was on a weekday, or on one of the common days of the week, that he entered into the city, where he remained without making himself known, till the sabbath day came: and then

he began to teach in the synagogue; that is, at Nazareth; where he expounded the law and the prophets, and preached the Gospel:

and many hearing [him] were astonished. The Vulgate Latin adds, "at his doctrine"; and so it is read in Beza's most ancient copy:

saying, from whence hath this man these things? This skill of explaining Scripture, this doctrine which he teaches, and these miracles he is said to work? This question they the rather put, because they had known him from the beginning: he had lived long among them, and they knew he had not learnt of men, and therefore wondered how he came by such things as these:

and what wisdom is this which is given to him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? which were but the other day employed in servile work, and mechanical operations.

Ver. 3. *Is not this the carpenter*? etc..] Some copies read, "the carpenter's son", as in (Matthew 13:55) and so the Arabic and Ethiopic versions;

but all the ancient copies, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions, read "the carpenter": such may Christ be reasonably thought to be, since his father was; and which business he might follow, partly through the meanness and poverty of his parents; and partly that he might set an example of industry and diligence; and chiefly to bear that part of the first Adam's curse, which was to eat his bread with the sweat of his brow: nor ought this to have been objected to him by the Jews, with whom it was usual for their greatest doctors and Rabbins to be of some trade or secular employment; so R. Jochanan was a shoemaker [f96] R. Isaac was a blacksmith [f97], R. Juda was a tailor [f98], Abba Saul and R. Jochanan, were undertakers for funerals [f99]; R. Simeon was a seller of cotton [f100], R. Nehemiah was a ditcher [f101], R. Jose bar Chelphetha was a skinner [f102]; and others of them were of other trades, and some exceeding mean: the famous R. Hillell was a hewer of wood, and Carna, a judge in Israel, was a drawer of water [f103]; and so Maimonides says,

> "the great wise men of Israel were some of them hewers of wood and drawers of water [f104]."

They say,

> "a man is obliged to learn his son an honest and easy trade [f105]:"

there are some businesses they except against [f106], but this of a carpenter is not one; yea, they say,

> "if a man does not teach his son a trade, it is all one as if he taught him thievery [f107]."

Nor did they think it at all inconsistent with learning; for they have a saying [f108], that

> "beautiful is the learning of the law, along with a trade."

The Jews ought not to have flouted Christ with this trade of a carpenter, since, according to them, it was necessary that a carpenter, in some cases, should be a regular priest; as in repairing of the temple, especially the holy of holies. So says Maimonides [f109];

> "there was a trap door, or an open place in the floor of the chamber, open to the holy of holies, that workmen might enter thereby into the holy of holies, when there was a necessity of repairing any thing; and since we make mention of workmen, it may

be observed here, when there is need of building in the midst of the temple, great care should be taken, rk hk mwah hyhy, "that the workman, or carpenter, be a right priest"."

Yea, they expressly say, that the Messiah is one of the four carpenters in (Zechariah 1:20). "And the Lord showed me four carpenters"; they ask [f110],

> ""who are the four carpenters?" Says R. Chana bar Bizna, says R. Simeon the saint, Messiah the son of David, Messiah the son of Joseph, and Elijah, and a priest of righteousness."

This is with some variation elsewhere expressed thus [f111],

> ""and the Lord showed me four carpenters"; and these are they, Elijah, and the king Messiah, and Melchizedek and the anointed for war."

And one of their commentators [f112] on the same text says,

> "our Rabbins of blessed memory, explain this verse of the days of the Messiah;"

and then cites the above passage out of the Talmud; and another [f113] refers unto it; (see Gill on "Matthew 13:55"). The inhabitants of Nazareth go on, in order to reproach Jesus, calling him

the son of Mary; a poor woman of their town, and perhaps now a widow, since no mention is made of Joseph:

the brother of James and Joses, and of Juda and Simon? who were all of them the sons of Alphaeus or Cleophas, who was himself brother, or his wife sister, to Joseph or Mary; so that Christ was the near kinsman of these his sons: and it was usual with the Jews to call such an one a brother, and even indeed a more distant relation. The Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, instead of Joses, read Joseph:

and are not sisters here with us? And they were offended at him: either at the manner he came by his wisdom, with which he delivered such doctrine he did; and by his power, through which he wrought his mighty works, or miracles; they suspecting he came by them in an unlawful way, through familiarity with the devil, which they sometimes charged him with having: or at the meanness of his trade and employment; they could by no means

think of him as the Messiah, who made so contemptible a figure, and was brought up in such a low way of life; and the rather, since one of their kings in common, was not be a mechanic, or at least of any mean occupation: of their canons runs thus [f114];

> "they do not appoint to be a king, or an high priest, one that has been a butcher, or a barber, or a bath keeper, or a tanner; not because they were unfit, but because their business was mean, and the people would always despise them."

Other trades are elsewhere [f115] mentioned, from among whom a king, or an high priest, were never taken; as founders, combers, borers of handmills, druggists, weavers, notaries, fullers, a letter of blood, or a surgeon, etc.. particularly such as related to women's business. Now, as it was not usual to choose any one to be a king that wrought at a trade, they could not bear that the king Messiah should be of one; and because Jesus was, they were offended at him, and rejected him as the Messiah. Or they were offended at the meanness of his extraction and descent, his father, and mother, and brethren, and sisters, being all persons in low circumstances of life; whereas they expected the Messiah would be born and brought up as a temporal prince, in great grandeur and splendour; (see Gill on "Matthew 13:55-57").

Ver. 4. *But Jesus said unto them*, etc..] The following proverb;

a prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house; the same as in (Matthew 13:57). Only the phrase, "among his own kin", is here added: very probably some of those that made these reflections, were some distant relations of Joseph, or Mary; for as Jesus was now in his own country and city, and in his own native place, so among his kindred and relations; who envied his gifts and attainments, and objected to him his rise from that branch of their family, which was the most mean and abject.

Ver. 5. *And he could there do no mighty work*, etc..] Or miracle; not that Christ had no power in himself to work miracles, though their unbelief and contempt of him were very great; but it was not fit and proper that he should do any there, since such were their prejudices against him: it is an usual way of speaking with the Hebrews, when either it is not "fit" and proper that a thing should be done, or they "will" not do it, to say it cannot be done; (see Genesis 19:22 37:4); and even it is said of God himself,

"So that the Lord could no longer bear, because of your evil doings", (<2442>Jeremiah 44:22). Not but that he could if he would, but he would not; nor was it fit and proper that he should; the same is the sense here: besides, in (<4058>Matthew 13:58) it is said, "he did not many mighty works there"; and so the Arabic version here, "and he did not many mighty works there"; he did not think it proper to do any of any great consequence, nor did he. Wherefore the Jew [f116] has no reason to object this to the divinity of Christ, as if there was a want of power in him. Christ is omnipotent, and he has given proof of his almighty power, by the miracles which he has wrought; and though he wrought no mighty work "there", yet he wrought many elsewhere, which sufficiently attest the truth of his proper deity: the emphasis lies upon the word there; though he did not work any considerable miracle in that place, he did in others; which shows, that it was not a defect of power in him, that was the reason of it, but something else; and Matthew gives the reason of it, and says, it was "because of their unbelief": not that their unbelief was an over match for his power; he could have removed that, if he had thought fit, but he did not do it; he, who is the author and finisher of faith, could have took away their unbelief, as the man that brought his dumb child to Christ, concluded he could; and therefore said to him, "Lord, help my unbelief", (<4124>Mark 9:24). Christ sometimes required of the persons he was about to heal, faith in him, that he could heal them; and so did his apostles, (<4028>Matthew 9:28 <4409>Acts 14:9). Not that faith contributed any thing to the cure, but it was the way and means in which Christ was pleased to communicate his healing virtue: besides, when persons applied to him for healing, and expressed their faith in him, it gave him an opportunity of working a miracle for that purpose; but now these people did not so much as ask such a favour of him, and so gave him no occasion of doing any mighty work; for which reason it may be said, he could not, no opportunity offering: and moreover, seeing they disbelieved him, and rejected him as the Messiah, they were unworthy of having any wrought among them; and it was but just and right, to do none: nay, it was rather an instance of kindness not to do any among them; since had he, and they had remained impenitent and unbelieving, as he knew they would, these would have been aggravations of their condemnation.

Save that he laid his hands upon a sick folk, and healed them. There were some few sick people that had faith in him, and came to him, beseeching him to heal them; and accordingly he did lay his hands on them, and cured them, which was a way he sometimes used: and these cures he wrought, to

show his power, what he could do, and what benefits they might have enjoyed by him, and to leave them inexcusable.

Ver. 6. *And he marvelled because of their unbelief*, etc..] Which was the reason, as Matthew says, (⁴⁰1358Matthew 13:58), why he did not many mighty works there, because they continued their prejudices against him, and their unbelief in him, notwithstanding what he did do, which was matter of admiration to him; wherefore he took his leave of them, as an ungrateful and unworthy people; and it is never after observed, that he returned there any more. It was a surprise to Christ, as man, that his country men should not believe in him, but reject him as the Messiah, on account of the above things: since they knew his parentage and education, and mean employ among them, even almost to that time; and yet such were his ministry and miracles, and such were his wisdom and power he was possessed of, that they could not account for; they might at least have concluded, seeing it was clear to them he had not them from men, that he had a mission and commission from God, and was qualified by him for such service and work; though they might have carried their reasonings further, and it was marvellous they should not, and have believed him to be more than a man, to have been a divine person, and the true Messiah; the proofs of Christ's deity and Messiahship are so plain and incontestable, that it is amazing that there should be any, who have read them or heard of them, that should be deists, or continue unbelievers. Such unbelief must be owing to a wretched stupidity, and judicial blindness of mind.

And he went round about the villages teaching: he took a circuit throughout all the little towns and villages round about Nazareth, instructing the ignorant country people, in the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Ver. 7. *And he called unto him the twelve*, etc..] "His twelve disciples", as some copies read; whom he had before called by his grace, and had appointed and ordained them his apostles, but had not yet publicly sent forth; in order to which, he now called them to him, and gave them their commission, qualifications, and instructions:

and began to send them forth by two and two: he first sent forth one couple, and then another; the reason of his sending them by pairs, was partly for the sake of company, and that they might be useful and assisting to one another; and partly to show their agreement in doctrine; and that they might be proper and sufficient witnesses of it, whereby it might be

established; and the rather, being thus sent by pairs into different parts, their message would be the sooner dispatched, than if they had all went together:

and gave them power over unclean spirits; that is, to cast them out; as it is expressed in Mt. 10:1, (see Gill on "Matthew 10:1"); and which is here added in the Syriac and Persic versions. Many things are omitted by this evangelist, which are mentioned by Matthew: he does not give us the names of the twelve apostles; the reason of that indeed may be, because they are related by him in (Mark 3:16-19), and he did not choose to repeat them here: nor does he take any notice of the places where the apostles were to go, and where not; nor of the persons to whom, or not; as not into the way of the Gentiles, nor into any of the cities of the Samaritans, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: nor does he say any thing of the subject matter of their ministry or what they had in charge to publish; as that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, or the Gospel dispensation: nor does he observe the several things they were to do in confirmation of their doctrine and mission; as healing the sick, cleansing lepers, raising the dead, and casting out devils: he only relates the directions given them with respect to their journey, in the following verses; the reason of all which seems to be, because he refers not to the same time as Matthew does, to their appointment and ordination; but to the time they were sent out, and proceeded on their journey.

Ver. 8. *And commanded them that they should take nothing for [their] journey*, etc..] To accommodate them in it, except those things after directed to:

save a staff only; a single one, for staves in the plural number are forbidden, (see Gill on "Matthew 10:10");

no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse. Travellers used to put their bread, or any other sort of food into their scrips, and their money in their girdles; but the disciples were not allowed to carry either, because provision was to be made for them wherever they came at free cost, it being what their labour was worthy of; (see Gill on "Matthew 10:9-10).

Ver. 9. *But be shod with sandals*, etc..] Which were different from shoes, and more fit to travel with, and therefore allowed when shoes were forbidden; (see Gill on "Matthew 10:10"), though some think there was no difference between shoes and sandals, and that Christ, in (Matthew

10:10), does not forbid the taking of shoes, but two pair of shoes; as not two coats, nor two staves, but one of a sort only. And

not put on two coats; that is, at a time; an inner and an outward one, or one at one time, and another at another: they were forbid change of raiment; the reasons for it (see Gill on "Matthew 10:10"). From all which it appears, that as a minister of the Gospel ought not to be a worldly minded man, that minds earth and earthly things, and seeks to amass wealth and riches to himself, and preaches for filthy lucre's sake; nor to be a sensual and voluptuous man, serving his own belly, and not the Lord Jesus Christ, feeding himself, and not the flock; so neither should he be filled with worldly cares, overwhelmed in worldly business, and entangled with the affairs of this life: he ought to have his mind free from all solicitude and anxious concern, about a subsistence for himself and his, that so he may with greater and more close application attend to his ministry, to preparations for it, and the performance of it; and give up himself entirely to the word and prayer, and not have his mind distracted with other things: upon which account it is highly necessary, that the people to whom he ministers should take care, that a sufficient provision be made for him; that he may live without any anxious care and thought about such things, and his mind be more intent about the work he is called unto: and which is what our Lord chiefly designs by all this, who has ordained that they that preach the Gospel, should be comfortably provided for, and live of it; and which, as it makes for the peace of their minds that minister, it issues in the advantage of those who are ministered to.

Ver. 10. *And he said unto them*, etc..] He continued giving orders and directions to them, saying,

in what place soever you enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place: that is, in whatsoever city or town they should come to, the first house they went into, they should continue in, during their stay in that city or town, and not shift from house to house; (see Gill on "Matthew 10:11").

Ver. 11. *And, whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you*, etc..] Who would neither take them into their houses, nor hear what they had to say to them:

when ye depart thence; from the house or the city, or town, in which it is,

shake off the dust under your feet, for a testimony against them; that they had been with them, and attempted to preach the Gospel to them, but they despised and rejected it; wherefore they departed from them as an unworthy people, against whom the dust of their feet would rise as a testimony, in the day of judgment; (see Gill on "[40]10:14 Matthew 10:14").

Verily, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. This clause is omitted in some copies, and so it is in the Vulgate Latin version, and may perhaps be transcribed from Mt. 10:15, (see Gill on "[40]10:15 Matthew 10:15"); though it is in most copies, and is read in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions. It is certain that there will be a day of judgment; it is fixed, God has appointed it, though it is not known by men or angels: this will be universal; all must appear in it before God, the judge of all, Jews and Gentiles; such who have lived in the earlier ages of time, as well as those that will live nearer that day; such who have only had the dim light of nature to guide them, and also who have been favoured with the Gospel revelation: the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha, though they have had the judgments of God upon them in this world, they will not escape the righteous judgment of God hereafter; things are not over with them, there is still a reckoning to be made, an account to pass with them; their full punishment is not yet executed, even though they have been suffering the vengeance of eternal fire; their bodies must be raised, and they must receive for the things which they have done in them, and which they have so dreadfully and unnaturally abused; and yet, as vile sinners as they have been, and as sore a punishment as they are worthy of, their punishment will be milder and more tolerable, than that of the inhabitants of such places, where the Gospel has been preached, and they have despised and rejected it. May the inhabitants of our land, especially of some parts of it, as of London, and others, consider this!

Ver. 12. *And they went out*, etc..] From that part of the country where they then were, some one way, and some another, two by two, with these instructions, and according to these directions; in order to preach the word, and work miracles, in the several parts where they were sent:

and preached that men should repent; both of the evil practices which they were guilty of, and of the bad principles they had imbibed, and change both their sentiments and their conduct: this, they exhorted them to, as John the Baptist, and Christ, had done before, who set out in their ministry the same

way; and these, as they did also, preached the Gospel, and the things appertaining to the kingdom of God, and Gospel dispensation, and called upon men to believe them. For faith and repentance went together in Christ's ministry, (<41015>Mark 1:15), and so they did in the ministry of John, the Baptist, (<441904>Acts 19:4), and in the ministry of the apostles, (<442021>Acts 20:21). When they preached that men should repent, it does not from hence follow, that they have a power to repent of themselves: for such is the condition of men by nature, that they neither see their need of repentance, and their hearts are so hard and obdurate, that they cannot work themselves up to it, or work it in them, and exercise it; this requires the powerful and efficacious grace of God to produce it, and it is a gift of his grace; and if he gives the means, and not the grace of repentance itself, it will never appear: but the apostles preaching that men should repent, shows that they were in such a state as to need it; and how necessary it was for them to have it, seeing without it they must all perish: and such a ministration is proper, to awaken the minds of men to a sense of the need of it, and to direct them to Christ the Saviour, who is exalted to give it, as well as the remission of sins.

Ver. 13. *And they cast out many devils*, etc..] Which they had power given them to do; and this they did, in confirmation of their mission and doctrine, and for the benefit of miserable creatures, who were possessed by them; and to show their power over the devils, and as a prelude of what they were to be the instruments of, in casting Satan out of the souls of men, both Jews and Gentiles; and especially, in the ejection of him out of the Gentile world:

and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them. This they were doubtless directed to by Christ, as an outward sign of healing; but not as a medicine; otherwise there would have been no miracle in the cure: though it is certain, the Jews used anointing with oil medicinally in many cases, as the means of healing; but they did not always succeed, as the apostles did: on the day of atonement [f117],

> “it was not lawful to “anoint” part of the body, as the whole body; but if a man was sick, or had ulcers on his head, he might anoint according to his usual way, and no notice was taken of it.”

Again [f118],

> “a man may not anoint with wine, or vinegar, but he may anoint with oil: he that has a pain in his head, or has ulcers upon him, m , “he may anoint with oil”, but he may not anoint with wine and vinegar: wine of the second tithe, which they mix, is forbidden to anoint with; oil of the second tithe, which they mix, is lawful to anoint with.”

And it is elsewhere said[f119], that

> “R. Meir allowed of the mixing of oil and wine, hlwl wl, “to anoint the sick” on a sabbath; but when he was sick, and we sought to do so to him, he would not suffer us.”

But that oil was used by the apostles as a medicine for the healing of diseases, cannot well be thought; since oil, though it may be useful in some cases, it is not an universal medicine, which is proper to all; nor were the apostles instructed by Christ in the art of physic, but were possessed by him with extraordinary gifts, to cure the disorders of the body, for the confirmation of the Gospel, which they preached; and it is easy to observe, that healing the sick by anointing with oil, is joined with the extraordinary power of casting out devils; and it was the same power by which they performed the one, as the other; (see <4901>Luke 9:1,2,6). Hence it appears, that this passage gives no countenance to the use of such a practice in our days; since these were apostles only, who used it, who were extraordinary persons, and whose office in the church was an extraordinary one, and is now ceased; and healing in this way, was by an extraordinary power bestowed upon them, which has ceased; and therefore the rite, or ceremony of anointing with oil, for such a purpose, should be of course discontinued; however, it cannot be supported by this instance, whatever countenance it may seem to have from (<5901>James 5:14), for it must be owned, there is some difference in the passages: the persons that anointed here were apostles, there the elders of the church; the persons anointed there, were good people, the members of the church, but here any sort of persons, and chiefly, if not altogether unbelievers; the healing of them is ascribed to the prayer of faith in James, but here to the extraordinary power of the apostles, by anointing with oil; though it may be, the healing was equally miraculous in the one, as the other: but be this as it will, nothing can be concluded from hence, in favour of the sacrament of extreme unction, used by the Papists; who administer that to persons, just at the point of death, and that for the remission of their sins, and the saving

of their souls; whereas oil was used by the apostles to sick persons, and for the recovery of their bodily health. But since these were extraordinary cures which they performed this way, why did they make use of oil at all, seeing the virtue of healing did not come from that, and they could as well have healed sicknesses without it, as with it? To which it may be replied, that they did not always make use of it; sometimes only words were expressed, sometimes only hands were laid on the sick, and sometimes the sick persons were healed by handkerchiefs and aprons taken from them; which show, that the "healing" virtue was not in the means, nor was it tied to any: moreover, this was only used as an outward sign of healing, and might have some spiritual significancy in it; it might show, that they were sent forth by Christ the anointed one, who is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows; it might be symbolical of the grace of the Spirit, which is often compared to oil, which they themselves were possessed of in a large measure, and which is communicated through the ministration of the Gospel; and it might be significative of the Gospel itself, which brings light and joy, health and comfort along with it, to the souls of men, which they were the happy messengers of.

Ver. 14. *And king Herod heard [of him]*, etc..] "Of Jesus", as the Syriac version supplies it; or "the miracles of Jesus", as the Persic version. This Herod here called a king, as he might be by his courtiers, and the common people, is the same with the Tetrarch in (<4014>Matthew 14:1 Luke 9: 7), for he was only Tetrarch of Galilee. This was Herod Antipater, the son of Herod the Great; the fame of Jesus reached his ears, he being governor of those parts, which were mostly visited by Christ:

for his name was spread abroad; by means of his ministry and miracles, and through those of his disciples, whom he had sent two by two into all parts of the country:

and he said that John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him; for Herod had some time before put John to death; and hearing of these wonderful things that were done by Christ, his conscience smote him for the murder of John; and such a thought struck into his mind, that he was risen from the dead, and did these miracles: and the more he thought of it, the more strongly he was persuaded of it; and told it to his courtiers with a great deal of assurance, that it was certainly he; (see Gill on "<4014>Matthew 14:2").

Ver. 15. *Others said that it is Elias*, etc..] This was the opinion, either of many of the Jews, who expected that Elias the Tishbite would come in person, before the coming of the Messiah; and thought by the appearance and wonderful works of Jesus, that he was now come: or of Herod's courtiers, who said this to divert him from his notion of John the Baptist, which they might perceive was very distressing to him; though the former seems rather to be the sense:

others said, that it is a prophet: or "the prophet", that was to come, whom Moses had spoken of, and the Jews expected; this was the opinion of others of them: or

as one of the prophets. The word η, "or", is left out in some copies; and so it is in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; and then the sense is, this new prophet lately raised up, is as one of the old prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others; or one of them had risen up.

Ver. 16. *But when Herod heard thereof*, etc..] Either of Christ, or rather of the different opinions about him,

he said, it is John, whom I have beheaded: the thought stuck close to him, and continued with him; he could not get rid of it, nor persuade himself to the contrary; nor could any of his servants get him off of it, but he affirmed it with the greatest assurance imaginable. These different sentiments of the people concerning Jesus, greatly perplexed the mind of Herod, as appears from (<4907>Luke 9:7-9), for it was first given out by others, and not by Herod, that John the Baptist was

risen from the dead; which he hearing of, gave him great uneasiness: he thoroughly considered the matter; he called to mind how he had used him, imprisoned him, and put him to death. At first he could not receive it, that since he was beheaded by him, he should be restored to life; but hearing of the miracles that were done by him, his conscience accused him, his fancy worked, and at length he firmly believed it, that he must be risen: and this sentiment, which he himself gave into at last, distressed him above all the rest, because of his concern in his death, fearing he was come to life to take vengeance on him: it might not sit very easy upon his mind, to bear that Elias had appeared the forerunner of the Messiah, the king of the Jews; who himself might be quickly expected, and who, he might fear, would seize upon, and take away that part of the kingdom which he was possessed of: and even to be told, that one of the prophets was risen from

the dead, might be shocking to him; imagining that something of considerable moment was to be done, some revolution to be made; that the people would be stirred up by him, to attempt a change of government: but the first of these made the greatest impression on him, and what he could not get off, but fully gave into, as a thing unquestionable. He owns he beheaded John; he was conscious to himself of the sin, and confesses it; he does not lay it to the charge of Herodias and her daughter, though they requested it; the guilt of it lay upon his conscience, and he dreaded this appearance of John, as he fancied. And if he was a Sadducee before, as he has been thought to be, he now changed his mind, and believed a resurrection from the dead. So men may be convinced of sin, and entertain other and better notions of religion, and yet not be converted persons.

Ver. 17. *For Herod himself had sent forth*, etc..] Some of his guard, a detachment of soldiers,

and laid hold upon John; who seized upon him, and took him up:

and bound him in prison; in the castle of Machaerus:

for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife, for he had married her; whilst his brother was living, and who had had children by her; (see Gill on "Matthew 14:3").

Ver. 18. *For John had said unto Herod*, etc..] He had been personally with him, and had plainly and freely told him of his sin, and faithfully reproved him for it; alleging what he had done was contrary to the law of God:

it is not lawful, for thee to have thy brother's wife: (see Gill on "Matthew 14:4").

Ver. 19. *Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him*, etc..] Was angry with him, conceived wrath, and laid up hatred against him, and was an adversary to him; which is the sense of the Oriental versions. She bore him an inward grudge, and lay in wait to take the first opportunity of dispatching him:

and would have killed him, but she could not; being hindered by Herod, who as yet would not suffer it; partly through fear of the people, and partly through the respect he had for John.

Ver. 20. *For Herod feared John*, etc..] Had him in great respect; he had a great veneration for him; which was the reason that Herodias could not as

yet accomplish her design against him, and vent her rage upon him. Though some understand this not of his reverence, but of his dread of him: he knew as follows, that he was a man exemplary for justice and holiness, which gained him great esteem among the people; wherefore, though Herod, as well as Herodias, could very willingly have put him to death, yet, as Matthew says, "he feared the multitude", (<4405>Matthew 14:5): who, in general, had an high opinion of John as a prophet, and a holy good man: he feared therefore to take away his life, lest they should rise and rebel against him; nor would he suffer Herodias to do it, for the same reason.

Knowing that he was a just man, and an holy; by what he had heard of him, by his own conversation with him, and the observation he had made upon his tenets and conduct. He was a "just", or "righteous" man, in a civil, legal, and evangelical sense: he did that which was just, between man and man; he did to others, as he would be done by himself; he was outwardly righteous before men, he lived soberly and righteously; nor was he chargeable with any notorious breach of the law; his conversation was strictly moral: and he was just or righteous before God, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; in whom he believed, and to whom he looked as the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world: but it was in the former sense, that he was known by Herod to be a just man; who only could pass such a judgment upon him, by his outward conduct and manner of life: and so as he had true principles of internal holiness wrought in him by the Spirit of God, with which he was filled from his mother's womb; he was externally holy in his walk and conversation, which was visible to others, and was taken notice of by this wicked prince: the former of these characters may regard his justice, uprightness, and integrity among men; the latter, his piety and devotion unto God: and the whole agrees with the account the Jewish historian [f120] gives of him, that he was

> "an excellent good man, who stirred up the Jews to the study of virtue, and especially piety and justice."

These were epithets, which used to be given to men, famous for religion and piety; so we read of Simeon, qyd, "the just" [f121], and of R. Simeon, ady, "the Holy One" [f122]:

and observed him: or "kept him" in custody, in prison, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic render it; and did not put him to death, but preserved him from the designs of Herodias against him. Or he observed

and took notice of what he had heard him say in his ministry; he laid it up, and kept it in his mind, and memory; the remembrance of which kept him in awe, and he durst not, and could not for the present, give heed to the solicitations of Herodias, or suffer her to take away his life: and he also observed his exemplary life and conversation, which was so just and upright, that his conscience would not admit him to give him up to her will and pleasure.

And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly: when he heard John explain the law and the prophets, open the writings of the Old Testament, preach the doctrine of repentance towards God, and faith in the Messiah to come; set forth the evil, danger, and punishment of sin, and exhorted to a holy life and conversation; taught the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sin by Christ, and spoke of the glories and happiness of a future state, and of the nature of the Gospel dispensation, just now ushering in; Herod, like one of the stony ground hearers, received the word with joy, was pleased with it, and in some things outwardly reformed: but the word did not take root in his heart, and therefore what external effects it produced, came to nothing; nor was he able to withstand the lusts and corruptions of his heart. The sense seems to be, that while he was hearing John, his natural affections were moved, and he had a kind of pleasure in the things he delivered; just as the Jews for a season rejoiced in his light, (⁴⁸⁵⁵John 5:35), his natural conscience dictating to him, that the things which were spoken, were right, and just, and good; and they were delivered in such a solemn and striking manner, as commanded attention and awe; and were things of such a nature and importance, that from a principle of self-love, he could not but wish himself an interest in: and so far they had such an influence upon him, as to engage him to do many things in an external way, which had the appearance of good, at least of moral good: so that it is manifest from hence, that persons may have a natural affection for the ministry of the word, and seem delighted with it for a while; yea, may do a great many good actions, which seem to be such; and yet the word come in word only, and not in power: there may be all this, and yet true grace may not be wrought, and the word not be the engrafted word, which is able to save. In one of Beza's copies, and so in one of Stephens's, and in the Coptic version, instead of “he did many things”, it is read, “he hesitated much”: he was perplexed and distressed, he did not know what to do with himself; his conscience was uneasy, some things were pleasing to him, and others greatly afflicted him; his mind was

distracted, he could not tell what to think, say, or do: however, it had such an effect upon him, that he had some respect for John; a veneration of him; at least, some fear and dread of him, which kept him from taking away his life, or suffering any others to do it.

Ver. 21. *And when a convenient day was come*, etc..] For Herodias; who had long sought and watched for an opportunity of avenging herself on John, and such a time Herod's birthday proved; though some think, that this phrase is the same with bwj wy, "a good day"; often used by the Jews for a festival, any one of their feast days; there is a tract in their Misna which bears this name; and that such a day was this. But not one of the festivals of the Jews was this, as either their passover, or pentecost, or feast of tabernacles, which Herod had no regard to; but his own birthday, which he kept as a festival, in eating, and drinking, and dancing; and so was a very opportune and seasonable time for Herodias to take the advantage of Herod when in a good humour, amidst his company, and in his cups, to solicit that, which she had often done without success: and so it was now,

that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee: this birthday, was either the day of his natural, or civil birth; the day when he was born into the world, or of his accession to the throne; (see Gill on "<4006>Matthew 14:6"), when he made a grand entertainment in the evening for his nobles, and the officers of the army, the captains of thousands, and the principal men, those of the first rank and quality in Galilee, of which he was Tetrarch.

Ver. 22. *And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in*, etc..] To the hall, where Herod and his guests were, after supper was over; or rather, whilst at it: she is called the daughter of Herodias, and not of Herod; she having had her not by him, but by his brother Philip: her name is thought to be Salome; (see Gill on "<4006>Matthew 14:6"),

and danced and pleased Herod, and them that were with him; at supper, his lords, captains, and principal men in his dominions; (see Gill on "<4006>Matthew 14:6").

The king said unto the damsel, ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee; which shows how exceedingly pleased he was; and the more, in that she gave such general pleasure to his whole company.

Ver. 23. *And he sware unto her*, etc..] He added an oath to what he had before said, the more to confirm it, and to encourage her in her request, and which he repeated in stronger language:

whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom; (see Gill on "<4047>Matthew 14:7").

Ver. 24. *And she went forth and said unto her mother*, etc..] The king having made such a promise to her, and annexed his oath to it, she thought proper before she asked any thing of him, to withdraw from the hall and company, and consider with herself, and consult with her mother, who was not at the entertainment; it being not usual in those eastern countries, for women to sit at table, at any grand festival: to whom she reported the offer the king had made, and desired she would be pleased to direct her, what request to make saying,

what shall I ask? To which her mother made answer, without taking any further time to think of it, being prepared for it, and determined in her mind, whenever she had an opportunity of asking a favour of the king, what it should be:

and she said, the head of John the Baptist. So sweet is revenge, that to have her will on that great and good man, was more to her, than to have half the king's dominions.

Ver. 25. *And she came in straightway with haste unto the, king*, etc..] Having had her mother's advice, and being hastened by her, she immediately returned to the hall, where the king and his guests were, with much Concern, eagerness, and diligence:

and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger, the head of John the Baptist: her petition proceeding upon a promise with an oath, is presented by way of demand; insisting upon it, that in a very little time, "this hour", as the Syriac version renders it, within an hour's time, or less; and "here", as Matthew has it, (<4048>Matthew 14:8), in that very place, and whilst the company was there; that orders should be given to cut off the head of John the Baptist, and that that should be brought, in a large dish, unto her; and this was what she had to ask, and insisted upon the immediate and punctual performance of it; (see Gill on "<4048>Matthew 14:8").

Ver. 26. *And the king was exceeding sorry*, etc..] (See Gill on "Matthew 14:9")

yet for his oath's sake, [and] for their sakes which sat with him; as Matthew adds, "at meat", (Matthew 14:9); for it seems as if supper was not over, when all this was transacting.

He would not reject her; deny her her request, or send her away without granting it which could not be without grieving her, and treating her with contempt, and defrauding her of the promise; all which ideas are expressed by some versions.

Ver. 27. *And immediately the king sent an executioner*, etc..] (See Gill on "Matthew 14:10")

and commanded his head to be brought; ordered him to cut off his head in prison, and bring it away forthwith in a charger to him:

and he went and beheaded him in the prison; according to his orders.

Ver. 28. *And brought his head in a charger*, etc..] In a large dish, to Herod, who

gave it to the damsel; the daughter of Herodias, as she had requested:

and the damsel gave it to her mother; who had instigated her to it; (see Gill on "Matthew 14:11").

Ver. 29. *And when his disciples heard of it*, etc..] That is, when the disciples of John heard of this barbarous execution of their master,

they came; to the prison in the castle of Machaerus,

and took up his corpse; the trunk of his body; for his head was carried away, to glut the revenge of Herodias;

and laid it in a tomb; (see Gill on "Matthew 14:12").

Ver. 30. *And the apostles gathered themselves together*, etc..] The twelve apostles of Christ, whom he had sent out, two by two, into different parts, having gone through them, and finished the embassy, they were sent about, met together in one place, and came in a body together,

unto Jesus; their Lord and master, who had sent them, and to whom they were accountable, as all the ministers of the Gospel are:

and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught; they gave him an exact and full account of what miracles were wrought by them, what diseases they had cured, and what a number of devils they had cast out; and also what doctrines they had preached, and what success in all they had had: so every Gospel minister must give an account of his ministrations to Christ.

Ver. 31. *And he said unto them*, etc..] After he had heard their account, was satisfied with it, and approved of what they had said and done:

come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: where they might be free from noise and hurry, and take some rest and refreshment, after their wearisome journey, hard labours, and great fatigue in preaching and working miracles; which shows the great compassion, tenderness, and care of Christ, for his disciples:

for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat; the people were continually going to and fro; as soon as one company was gone, who came with their sick and diseased to be healed, or upon one account or another, another came: so that there was no opportunity of private meditation and prayer, nor of spiritual converse together: nor even so much as to eat a meal's meat for the refreshment of nature.

Ver. 32. *And they departed into a desert place*, etc..] Which belonged to the city of Bethsaida, (Luke 9:10),

by ship, privately; over some part of the sea of Tiberias, this place lying on a more remote side of it.

Ver. 33. *And the people saw them departing*, etc..] The multitude that came to and fro, saw Christ and his disciples taking ship, and launching off; for though they were as private as could be, and intended to have gone in a very private manner, yet the people observed them:

and many knew him: Jesus; some copies read, “them”; and so do the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; they knew both Christ and his disciples, though they were in the ship, and at some distance:

and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and out went them, and came together unto him; they went on foot, as they might from Capernaum, Nazareth, and the parts adjacent, over the bridge at Chammath of Gadara,

to this place, that belonged to Bethsaida; whither they perceived they steered, and made such haste, that they got thither before them; and the people that flocked from several cities met together, and came to Jesus, to hear his doctrine, and see his miracles,

Ver. 34. *And Jesus, when he came out*, etc..] Of the ship, and was got ashore,

saw much people; who came partly from the places where he came from, and partly from the cities and towns adjacent:

and was moved with compassion towards them; (see Gill on "Matthew 14:14"), the reason follows,

because they were as sheep, not having a shepherd. Christ observed, that they were hungering and thirsting after the word of righteousness, and had no faithful, spiritual pastors to feed them with knowledge and understanding; for the Scribes and Pharisees were blind guides, and shepherds that could not understand; so that the people were ready to perish for lack of knowledge, not having any spiritual comfort and refreshment under their ministry: hence they followed Christ, wherever he went, with great zeal and fervency, earnestly desiring the bread of life: this moved his compassion, so that though his view in coming to this place was retirement, and that his disciples might have some rest and refreshment, and might solace themselves in private conversation with him, and each other; yet postponing private advantage to public good, instead of reproving them for giving him this fresh trouble, kindly and tenderly received them:

and he began to teach them many things; relating to the kingdom of God, the Gospel dispensation, the doctrines and ordinances of it; things relating to their spiritual and eternal welfare, the comfort, and salvation of their immortal souls: and he dwelt long upon these subjects, because he found they were very ignorant, and needed instruction, and were very desirous of it; as well as healed all such of bodily diseases that stood in need thereof; of which Matthew only takes notice, (Matthew 14:14); as Mark only of doctrine; but Luke mentions both doctrine and miracles of healing, (Luke 9:11).

Ver. 35. *And when the day was now far spent*, etc..] Or "much time was gone", in teaching the people, and healing the sick:

his disciples came unto him; nearer to him, as he was preaching, or healing the sick;

and said, this is a desert place, and now the time is far passed; (see Gill on "⁴⁰14¹⁵Matthew 14:15").

Ver. 36. *Send them away*, etc..] Leave off preaching, dismiss the assembly; (see ⁴⁰14¹⁵Matthew 14:15);

that they may go into the country round about; or "into the fields"; that is, to the odd houses; which were here and there in the fields; (see Gill on "⁴¹6¹⁴Mark 5:14");

and into the villages; the little country towns that were near at hand:

and buy themselves bread, for they have nothing to eat; they brought no provisions with them, and there were none to be had in that desert place; and it was high time they had some refreshment; for the usual time of dining was past, the first evening was come, the day was on the decline, and was far spent.

Ver. 37. *He answered and said unto them, give ye them to eat*, etc..] This he said to try their faith, and make way for the following miracle:

and they say unto him, shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? This might be just the sum of money they now had in the bag, as Grotius, and others conjecture; and the sense be, shall we lay out the two hundred pence, which is all we have in hand, to buy bread for this multitude? is it proper we should? is it thy will that so it should be? and if we should do so, as Philip suggests, (⁴³6⁰⁷John 6:7), it would not be enough to give every one a little: wherefore they say this, as amazed that he should propose such a thing unto them: or the reason of mentioning such a sum, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, might be, because that this was a noted and celebrated sum among the Jews, and frequently mentioned by them. A virgin's dowry, upon marriage, was "two hundred pence" [f123]; and so was a widow's; and one that was divorced [f124], if she insisted on it, and could make good her claim: this was the fine of an adult man, that lay with one under age; and of a male under age, that lay with a female adult [f125]; and of one man that gave another a slap of the face [f126]. This sum answered to six pounds and five shillings of our money.

Ver. 38. *And he saith unto them, how many loaves have ye*? etc..] This he said, not as ignorant, but as willing to try their faith yet more, and that the after miracle might be more manifest and illustrious:

go and see; meaning, either that they should examine their own store, if they had any; or rather go and see what was to be had upon the spot, among the company, for money;

and when they knew, they say five loaves and two fishes: when they had made inquiry what provisions there were, and the most that could be got at any rate, they tell him, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, particularly, that there was a boy among the multitude that had five barley loaves, and two small fishes; and, at the same time, suggests, that they were nothing for so great a company.

Ver. 39. *And he commanded them to make all sit down*, etc..] Christ ordered his disciples, without any more ado, to cause the whole multitude, men, women, and children, to sit, or lie down, as they used to do at table when about to take a meal: and as they had no table before them, nor beds, or couches to sit, or lie down upon, he directed them to place them

by companies upon the green grass; that there might be some order among them, as at a meal; and that their number might be the more easily known; and that all of them might more plainly see the miracle that was to be wrought: and the provision be more orderly distributed to them.

Ver. 40. *And they sat down in ranks*, etc..] Or "beds": in such form as little beds are placed in a garden, or as rows of vines in a vineyard, in which form the scholars of the wise men sat in their schools: it is said [f127],

"R. Eliezer ben Azariah expounded before the wise men in the vineyard (i.e. the university) of Jabneh: though was there a vineyard there? but these are the disciples of the wise men, who are made, or placed, twrw twrw, "rows, rows", or "in ranks", as a vineyard."

By hundreds, and by fifties; that is, an hundred in "each" bed, or row, and fifty in "each" bed, or row, as the word ανα, signifies: each distinct bed, or row, had either a hundred, or fifty in it.

Ver. 41. *And when he had taken the five loaves and two fishes*, etc..] Out of the hands of those that brought them into his own:

he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves: (see Gill on "<40149>Matthew 14:19"),

and gave them to his disciples to set before them; the multitude, in order to eat of them:

and the two fishes divided he among them all; that every one might have a part. The Syriac and Persic versions read, they divided; that is, the apostles.

Ver. 42. *And they did all eat, and were filled*.] (See Gill on "<40140>Matthew 14:20").

Ver. 43. *And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments*, etc..] Of the broken pieces of bread, after all had eaten, and were satisfied:

and of the fishes; what remained of them:, for though there was but one loaf for a thousand persons and more, and two small fishes to be divided among five thousand and more: yet, through the wonderful power of Christ increasing both, as they were distributing and eating, there was enough of both for them all, and such a quantity of each left as filled twelve baskets.

Ver. 44. *And they that did eat of the loaves*, etc..] And also of the fishes; for they all ate of both;

were about five thousand men; the word ωσει, "about", is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Persic and Ethiopic versions, reading five thousand men certain. The Evangelist Matthew adds, "beside children and women", (<40121>Matthew 14:21).

Ver. 45. *And straightway he constrained his disciples*, etc..] The reasons of this is (see Gill on "<40122>Matthew 14:22"),

to get into the ship; in which they came to this place, and which was waiting for them:

and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida; or rather "to go to the other side over against Bethsaida"; for they were now in a desert belonging to that city, wherefore they were ordered to go, and did go to the other side of the sea of Tiberias, or Galilee, even to Capernaum, as appears from (<43617>John 6:17,24,25);

while he sent away the people; (see Gill on "<40122>Matthew 14:22").

Ver. 46. *And when he had sent them away*, etc..] Either his disciples, or rather the multitude:

he departed into a mountain to pray: after his disciples were gone, and he had dismissed the people, he went from the desert where he had been, up into a mountain; being a retired place, to spend some time in private prayer to God; (see Gill on "<4014>Matthew 14:23").

Ver. 47. *And when even was come*, etc..] The second evening, and it was properly night:

the ship was in the midst of the sea; of Galilee, about twenty five or thirty furlongs from the shore; (see <4006>John 6:19);

and he alone on the land; upon the mountain. This is observed, partly to show what distress the disciples were in, in the midst of the sea, having a hard gale of wind, and their master not with them; and partly to show that there was no way, humanly speaking, of Christ's getting to the ship, in order to go over; and is an illustration of the following miracle, of walking so many furlongs, as he must, upon the water, in a stormy, blustering night, to get to it.

Ver. 48. *And he saw them toiling in rowing*, etc..] He saw them either with his bodily eyes from the mountain on which he was; or he perceived in his Spirit, he knew, by virtue of his omniscience as God, what distress his disciples were in; being tossed about with the waves of the sea, and were labouring with all their might and main against the wind: and were vexed and tortured, as the word signifies; they were in the utmost pain and uneasiness of mind, as well as fatigue of body, assisting the men in rowing; for the ship they were in was no other than a vessel managed by oars; and hard work it was to keep it from being overset:

for the wind was contrary unto them; it blew from the other side they were making to, full in their face, hard against them; so that it was with great toil and difficulty, that they got any thing forward:

and about the fourth watch of the night; or three o'clock in the morning: so that it is very likely, that as the evening when they took to the vessel was sun setting, or about six o'clock, they had been nine hours at sea, and had got but twenty five or thirty furlongs from shore; (see Gill on "<4014>Matthew 14:25");

he cometh unto them walking upon the sea: being in this distress, Christ came down from the mountain to the sea side; and then, by his divine power, as the mighty God, that treadeth on the waves of the sea, he walked upon the surface of the waters of it; “as on dry land”, as the Persic version adds:

and would have passed by them; that is, he made as though he would; (see <4248>Luke 24:28). By the course he steered, by the swiftness of his motion, and his seeming negligence of them, it looked as though he intended to have gone by them, and said nothing to them, though this was far from his real design.

Ver. 49. *But when they saw him walking on the sea*, etc..] (See Gill on “<4046>Matthew 14:26”);

they supposed it had been a spirit; a phantom, a spectre, an apparition, a nocturnal demon:

and cried out; as men affrighted at the sight, and fearing they should be hurt by it, or that it portended some evil to them; (see Gill on “<4046>Matthew 14:26”).

Ver. 50. *For they all saw him, and were troubled*, etc..] Had it been only seen by one, it might have been thought a fancy, and the effect of mere imagination; but as every one saw it, it was out of all doubt that so it was, and which gave them the greater concern:

and immediately he talked with them; as soon as they saw him, “that very moment”, as the Syriac renders it; that so by hearing his voice their fears might be allayed:

and saith unto them, be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid; (see Gill on “<4047>Matthew 14:27”).

Ver. 51. *And he went up unto them in the ship*, etc..] That is, after Peter had desired he might be bid to come to him upon the water, and having got leave, made an essay; but the wind being boisterous, and beginning to sink, he cried out for help; when Christ stretched out his hand, and saved him; and then he, together with Peter, went up into the ship to the rest of the disciples, as is related by Matthew, (<4048>Matthew 14:28-32), though omitted by this evangelist:

and the wind ceased; from blowing; it was laid at once, as soon as ever Christ entered the ship:

and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. The Ethiopic version adds, “at him”; they were astonished, when they found it was Christ, and not a spirit; and they were more amazed at his walking upon the sea; and they marvelled still more abundantly, when they observed that the wind ceased upon his coming into the ship; their amazement was beyond expression, and therefore many words are made use of to signify it by.

Ver. 52. *For they considered not the miracle of the loaves*, etc..] Which they had seen but the day before; they did not attend to it, nor learn from it, as they might, the wonderful glory of Christ, and the greatness of his power; which was as much an act of omnipotence, as either his walking upon the water, or causing the wind to cease, or more so.

For their heart was hardened; or “blinded”; not by sin, or against Christ, much less in a judicial way: but there was a great deal of dulness and stupidity, and want of attention in them. The glory of Christ, which he manifested, and showed forth in his miracles, was not so clearly and fully discerned, attended to, and acknowledged by them, at it might reasonably be thought it would; for notwithstanding these miracles, which they daily saw, they stood in need of divine illuminations, that the darkness of their minds being removed, they might behold the glory of Christ, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father.

Ver. 53. *And when they had passed over*, etc..] The lake of Gennesaret, or sea of “Galilee”,

they came into the land of Gennesaret; (see Gill on “<4014>Matthew 14:34”); to Capernaum, as appears from (<4006>John 6:17,24) for Capernaum was in the land of Gennesaret; to which agrees what Josephus says, that the land of Gennesaret was watered with a very excellent spring, which the inhabitants of that place called Capernaum [f128]:

and drew to the shore: this is omitted in the Syriac and Persic versions: and the Arabic reads, “and they cast anchors”.

Ver. 54. *And when they were come out of the ship*, etc..] Christ and his disciples, and were ashore,

straightway they knew him; that is, the men of that place, as in Mt. 14:35, (see Gill on "[40]Matthew 14:35"); and so the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read here, "the inhabitants of that country", the country of Gennesaret; they knew him, having seen and heard him before.

Ver. 55. *And ran through that whole region round about*, etc..] That is, the inhabitants of that part of the country where Christ landed, ran many of them themselves, and others sent messengers into all parts of it, on every side:

and began to carry about in beds those that were sick; or lame, or so disordered that they could not walk, or bear any other way of being carried: these they brought to him,

where they heard he was: in whatsoever part of the country they could learn he was in; for he went about from place to place doing good.

Ver. 56. *And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country*, etc..] Whether in smaller towns, or larger cities, or the fields, where were houses, here and there one:

they laid the sick in the streets; or "markets", in any public places:

and besought him that they but might touch the border of his garment; if they might not be admitted to touch his person, or he did not choose to lay his hands on them:

and as many as touched him; or "it", the border of his garment, as they desired:

were made whole; of whatsoever sickness, or disease, they were afflicted with; (see Gill on "[40]Matthew 14:36").

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 7

Ver. 1. *Then came together unto him the Pharisees*, etc..] Having heard of his miracles, and that he was come into the land of Gennesaret; they consulted with one another, and came together to Jesus, to watch and observe what was said and done by him, and take what advantage they could against him. These were not of that country, but were of Jerusalem, as were their companions the Scribes:

and certain of the Scribes, which were of Jerusalem; for the fame of Christ had reached the metropolis of the nation; and these men being the more artful and cunning of the whole sect, either came of themselves, or were sent by the sanhedrim, to make their observations upon his doctrine and conduct; (see Gill on "Matthew 15:1").

Ver. 2. *And when they saw some of his disciples*, etc..] An opportunity soon offered of giving them an handle against him: for observing some of his disciples to sit down to meat, they took notice that they

eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashen) hands, and *they found fault*; with them, and charged them with the breach of the traditions of the elders, and took an occasion from hence of quarrelling with Christ. The Jews use the same phrase the evangelist here does, and interpret it in just the same manner: so, speaking of things eaten, twbawm ydyb, "with defiled hands"; that is, says the commentator[f129], it is all one as if it was said, ydy tlyjn alb, "without washing of hands"; which was esteemed a very great crime, and especially if done in a contemptuous way: for they say[f130],

> "he that despiseth washing of hands, shall be rooted out of the world; for in it is the secret of the decalogue:"

and particularly to eat with unwashed hands, was unpardonable in a disciple of a wise man; for they looked upon this to be the characteristic of one of the vulgar people, a common and illiterate man: for they ask[f131],

> "who is one of the people of the earth, or a plebeian? he that does not eat his common food with purity."

By this also they distinguished a Jew from a Gentile; if he washed his hands, and blessed, he was known to be an Israelite, but if not, a Gentile [f132]; (see Gill on "Matthew 15:2").

Ver. 3. *For the Pharisees, and all the Jews*, etc..] The far greater part of them; all, excepting the Sadducees; and especially the Pharisees, were very tenacious of this tradition of washing hands before eating: hence Pharisees are described as such, hrhjb hylw ylkwa, "that eat their common food with cleanness" [f133], i.e. of hands: these,

except they wash their hands oft, eat not; or except they wash very cautiously, with great care, diligence, and exactness, as the Syriac version suggests; and about which there are various rules given, to be observed with great strictness [f134]. Some render the words, "they wash their hands to the elbow"; and this is a rule with the Jews, which is closely to be abode by, that the washing of hands is to be, qr d, "to the joint", which joins the hand and arm together [f135]: particularly it is observed [f136], that

> "washing of the hands for the eating of the offering, is unto the elbow, and for common food, to the joints of the fingers: he that eats with an ancient man, and does not wash his hands to the elbow, he may not eat with him."

Well may it be added,

holding the tradition of the elders; nor do the Jews pretend the authority of the Scriptures as obliging them to such rules; for, they say, the command concerning washing of hands is, yrw yrbdm, "from the words of the Scribes" [f137]; and is ymk twm, "a command of the wise men" [f138]. The tradition is this:

> "they wash hands for common food, but for the tithe, and for the first offering, and for that which is holy, they dip them, and for the sin offering; for if the hands are defiled; the body is defiled [f139]."

And this tradition of the elders, the Scribes, and Pharisees, strictly observed.

Ver. 4. *And when they come from the market*, etc..] In Beza's most ancient copy, and in one of Stephens's, it is read as we supply, “when they come”: wherefore this respects not things bought in the market, a sense favoured by all the Oriental versions, for many of them could not be washed; but the persons of the Scribes and Pharisees, who when they came from market, or from any court of judicature, immersed themselves all over in water, according to the true sense of the word βαπτιζω, here used: for,

> “if the Pharisees touched but the garments of the common people, they were defiled, all one as if they had touched a profluvious person, hlybj kyrw, “and needed immersion”;”

and were obliged to it [f140]: hence, when they walked the streets, they walked on the sides of the way, that they might not be defiled by touching the common people [f141]:

wherefore, except they wash, they eat not, or immerse themselves in water, as well as used, ydy tlybj, “immersion of the hands”, or washing of the hands by immersion; and which, if only intended, is sufficient to support the primary sense of the word, “baptizo”:

and, many other things there be which they have received to hold; by tradition from their elders;

as the washing of cups and pots, brazen, vessels, and of tables: and here the word βαπτισμος, “baptism”, is rightly used in its proper and primary signification; for all these things were, according to the traditions of the elders, washed by immersion:

> “in a laver, (they say [f142]) which holds forty seahs of water, which are not drawn, every defiled man dips himself, except a profluvious man; and in it yamjh ylkh lk ta ylybjm, “they dip all unclean vessels”;”

> “as cups, pots, and brazen vessels”: very particularly brazen vessels are mentioned, because earthen ones that were unclean, were to be broken [f143]; which were all washed before eaten in, even on a sabbath day, and that by dipping [f144]:

> ““dishes”, in which they eat at evening, (i.e. of the sabbath,) they wash them, to eat in in the morning; in the morning they wash them, to eat in at noon; at noon they wash them, to eat in at the

> "minchah"; and from the "minchah", and forward, they do not wash again: but "cups", and "jugs", and "pots" they wash, and it goes through all the day; for there is no fixed time for drinking."

All such vessels, whether had of a Gentile, or an Israelite, or even a wise man, were to be immersed before used [f145].

> "He that buys a vessel for the use of a feast, of Gentiles, whether molten vessels, or glass vessels — lybjm, "they dip them", in the waters of the laver; and after that they may eat and drink in them: and such as they use for cold things, as "cups", and "pots", and "jugs", they wash them, lybjmw, "and dip them", and they are free for use: and such as they use for hot things, as "cauldrons" and "kettles", ("brazen vessels",) they heat them with hot water, and scour them, lybjmw, "and immerse them", and they are fit to be used: and things which they use at the fire, as spits and gridirons, they heat them in the fire till the crust (the covering of rust, or dirt) falls off, lybjmw, "and dip them", and they may be lawfully made use of. This is the immersion with which they immerse vessels for a feast, bought of Gentiles; and after that they are free for eating and drinking; for the business of uncleanness and purification is only from the words of the Scribes — and none are obliged to this immersion, but molten vessels for a feast, bought of Gentiles; but if he borrows of Gentiles, or a Gentile leaves in pawn molten vessels, (made of cast brass, or iron,) he washes, or boils, or heats in the fire, but need not immerse them; and so if he buys vessels of wood, or vessels of stone, he washes, or boils them, but need not dip them; and so earthen vessels need not be immersed; but those that are covered with lead, are as molten vessels, hlybj ykyrw, "and need immersion"."

And not only such that were bought of Gentiles, but even that were made by Jews, and scholars too, were to be immersed in water.

> "Vessels, (they say [f146],) that are finished in purity, even though a disciple of a wise man makes them, care is to be taken about them, lo! these ought to be immersed:"

and also "tables", at which they eat; and because their posture at them were lying, reclining, or leaning: hence the word κλινων, is used for them

here: these were capable of defilement in a ceremonial sense, according to the traditions of the Jews: one of their rules is this [f147];

> “every vessel of wood, which is made for the use of vessels, and of men, as, lwh, a “table”, a bed, etc.. receive defilement.”

And there were several sorts of tables, which, by their laws, were unclean, or might be defiled by the touch of unclean persons, or things: so they say [f148],

> “a table, and sideboard, which are made less, or covered with marble, if there is a space left, in which cups may be set, they may be defiled. R. Judah says, if a space is left, in which may be put pieces, i.e. of bread or flesh: a table of which the first of its feet is taken away is clean; if the second is taken away it is clean; if the third is taken away it may be defiled.”

Again [f149], every vessel of wood, that is divided into two parts, is, clean, excepting a double table, etc.., i.e. a table which consisted of various parts, and were folded together when it was removed: and these were washed by covering them in water; and very nice they were in washing them, that the water might reach every part, and that they might be covered all over; that there might be nothing which might separate between them and the water, and hinder its coming to them: as for instance, pitch being upon a table, whether within or without, divided between that and the water; and when this was the case, it was not rightly washed [f150]: but to washing tables by immersion, there is no objection; wherefore, to perplex this matter, and give further trouble, it is insisted on that the word should be rendered “beds”; and it must be owned that it is so rendered in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, (in the Arabic version the clause is omitted,) and in many modern translations: and we are contented it should be so rendered. And these beds design either the couches they lay, or leaned upon at meals; or the beds they slept in at nights: these were capable of being polluted, in a ceremonial sense; for of such pollution, and such washing, are we to understand these traditions: for those things regard not the bare washing of them when naturally unclean, when they ought to be washed; and it is the custom of all people to wash them when this is the case. A bed, and bedstead, are capable of such pollution as soon as they are shaved with a fish skin, or are completed without polishing [f151]; that is, as soon as they are finished; and there are several ways by which they are defiled. A bed is

defiled, tm amj, “by one that is defiled with the dead” [f152]; that is, who has touched a dead body, and he sits upon the bed, or touches it, he defiles it. Again, a bed that is made to lie upon, is defiled, rdm, “by treading” [f153]; that is, it is defiled if a man, or a woman, that has a “gonorrhoea”, or a menstruous woman, or one in childbirth, or a leper, should sit, stand; lie, hang, or lean upon it; yea, if any thing should touch it, which has been touched by any of these. Also, a bed which is not made for to lie upon, but to lay a dead body on, is defiled in the same way; and so are even the pillow and bolster [f154]. Now these were to be washed when they had received any defilement, and that by immersion. Their canons run thus:

> “hjm, “a bed”, that is wholly defiled, if hlybjh, “he dips” it, part by part, it is pure [f155];”

again [f156],

> “hjmh ta wb lybjh, “if he dips the bed in it”, (the pool of water,) although its feet are plunged into the thick clay (at the bottom of the pool), it is clean.”

If it should be insisted upon, that it ought to be shown and proved, that the very bolsters and pillows on which they lay and leaned, were washed in this way, we are able to do it:

> “ytkhw rkh, “a pillow”, or “a bolster” of skin, when a man lifts up the ends, or mouths of them, out of the water, the water which is within them will be drawn; what shall he do? lybjm, “he must dip them”, and lift them up by their fringes [f157].”

In short, it is a rule with the Jews, that

> “wheresoever, in the law, washing of the flesh, or of clothes, is mentioned, it means nothing else than the dipping of the whole body in water — for if any man wash himself all over, except the top of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness [f158].”

So that the evangelist uses the words βαπτιζω and βαπτισμος, most properly, without departing from their primary and literal sense; nor could he have used words more appropriate and fit. Various rules, concerning these things, may be seen in the treatises “Celim” and “Mikvaot”. Hence it appears, with what little show of reason, and to what a vain purpose this

passage is so often appealed to, to lessen the sense of the word βαπτιζω, "baptizo"; as if it did not signify to dip, but a sort of washing, short of dipping; though what that washing is, is not easy to say, since vessels and clothes are in common washed by putting them into water, and covering them with it: this passage therefore is of no service to those who plead for sprinkling, or pouring water in baptism, in opposition to immersion; nor of any disservice, but of real use to those who practise immersion, and must confirm them in it. Nor need they have recourse to a various reading, which one of the manuscripts in the Bodleian Library furnishes with, which is, unless they are sprinkled; which reading must be wrong, not only because, contrary to all other copies, but also to the usages of the Jews in the washing of themselves.

Ver. 5. *Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked him*, etc..] Not the disciples, but Christ himself; for their chief view was to find fault, and quarrel with him:

why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with unwashen hands? or "with common", that is, defiled "hands", as in (<40702>Mark 7:2). So the words are read in Beza's most ancient copy, and in one of Stephens's copies, and in the Vulgate Latin version. The word "common" is used for that which is unclean or unholy, (<441014>Acts 10:14,28 <451414>Romans 14:14 <581029>Hebrews 10:29), and so signifies unwashen hands, as we read, and render it: besides, "common hands" may have some respect to the hands of the common people, the vulgar and illiterate, who showed no regard to this tradition, but ate their common food without washing their hands. Instead of "the tradition of the elders", the Ethiopic version reads, "the constitution of the Scribes and Pharisees"; and which are sometimes by the Jews called, yrw yrbd, "the words", or "sayings of the Scribes" [f159], and are preferred by them to the written law; and the same are commonly called twkylh, "ways", in which a man is to walk, and according to which he is to steer his course of life; and to which reference is here had in the word, "walk", used by the Pharisees; who suggest, that these decisions, constitutions, and traditions of the elders, were the rule, according to which men ought to order their manner of life and conversation; blaming the disciples, that they did not conform to them, and particularly in the case of eating bread, which they did without washing their hands, which was strictly enjoined among these canons; and they wanted to know the sense of Christ upon it. Though they might have

known from the Scriptures, particularly from (Ezekiel 20:18,19) that it was their duty, as well as the disciples of Christ, to walk, not in the, statutes of their fathers, nor observe their judgments, the laws and ordinances instituted by them; but to walk in the statutes of the Lord, and to keep his judgments, and do them: not the traditions of men, but the word of God, should be the rule of walk and conversation; and as many as walk according to this rule, peace will be upon them; but those that walk according to the commandments of men, justly deserve the character given of such by the prophet Isaiah, whose words our Lord produces in the following verses.

Ver. 6. *He answered and said unto them*, etc..] Matthew postpones the following citation and application of the prophecy of Isaiah, to the account of the command of God being broken by the tradition of Corban; which Mark makes the answer of Christ to begin with:

well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites; which in Matthew is read, "ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you", (Matthew 15:7); to the same sense as here: for the prophecy of Isaiah not only described the hypocrites of his time, but had respect chiefly to the Jews in succeeding ages, in the times of Christ, and both before and after; when they would, as they did, greatly degenerate, and lost the power and spirituality of religion, and had only the form of it; left the word of God for the traditions of men, and were given up to great stupidity, and to judicial blindness: hence the Apostle Paul refers to a passage in the same chapter, (Isaiah 29:10), and applies it to the Jews in his time, (Romans 11:8); (see Gill on "Matthew 15:7"), saying,

as it is written in (Isaiah 29:13),

this people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. In the Prophet Isaiah more is said than is here cited; and so in Matthew more is produced, and the whole is there expressed thus: "this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me", (Matthew 15:8): they presented their bodies before the Lord in the synagogues, or in the temple, and prayed to him with an air of devotion and fervency, and offered up their praises to him, for their external privileges and blessings; but, alas! this was all lip labour; there was no lifting up their hearts, with their hands, unto God; these were not united to fear his name, but were distracted in his worship, and carried away from him to other objects; (see Gill on "Matthew 15:8").

Ver. 7. *Howbeit, in vain do they worship me*, etc..] This is the continuation of the citation out of Isaiah, as is also what follows:

teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. As all these traditions mentioned were such; as washing their hands before they ate bread, and their whole bodies, when they came from the market, or from any court of judicature, or concourse of men, where they had been touched by the common people, and the washing of cups, pots, brazen vessels, and tables, or beds; these they taught the people, and enjoined them the observance of them: instead of instructing them in the doctrines of the Bible, respecting the Messiah, and salvation by him, the right fear, and true worship of God, his ordinances and statutes; wherefore their worship of him, though attended with a great show of sanctity and religion, was a vain thing, a mere empty thing, devoid of life, power, and spirituality, unacceptable to God, and of no real use, profit, and advantage to themselves: it neither issued in the glory of God, nor brought any true pleasure, or solid peace to themselves; and they would find, by sad experience, that their hope of being in the favour of God, and of enjoying eternal happiness on account of it, would prove a vain hope; (see Gill on "Matthew 15:9").

Ver. 8. *For laying aside the commandment of God*, etc..] Meaning not any particular commandment, but all the commandments of God, the whole written law; to which they preferred the oral law, or the traditions of the elders, and the decisions of their doctors. So the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, "the commandments of God".

Ye hold the tradition of men: very significantly are the elders, whom the, Jews revered, and whose traditions and constitutions they extolled above the Scriptures, called "men", in distinction from "God", whose commands they neglected; which exposes and aggravates their sin, that they should leave the one, which had the stamp of divine authority on them, and hold the other, which were only the devices of men's brains;

as the washing of pots and cups. The Arabic version adds, "and vessels", from (Mark 7:4), and the Ethiopic version, between "chalices" and "cups", places "monies"; as if they also contracted uncleanness in some cases, and needed washing: and indeed, there is a tradition to this purpose [f160],

> "ln rnyd, "a penny which is rejected" (that is, as the commentators say [f161], which a kingdom or province has made void,

> or which wants weight), if any one prepares it to hang about the neck of a child, it is “unclean”; and so a “sela” (which was the value of four pence) and it is prepared to weigh with it, is “unclean”.”

And many other such like things you do; so many, that it is almost endless to reckon up. The treatise “Celim”, or “of vessels”, in the Misna, is full of rules, concerning the cleanness and uncleanness, of almost all things in use with men; and so of what do, and what do not stand in need of washing. And these things they did, not according to the commandment of God, nor did they pretend to it; but according to the words of the Scribes, and traditions of the elders, which reached to all sorts of vessels: their rule is this [f162];

> “vessels made of wood, and of skin, and of bone, and of glass, if they are plain, they are clean; but if they are hollow, (or made to hold things,) they are liable to pollution.”

Which Maimonides [f163] explains thus;

> “vessels of wood, and of skin, and of bone, if hollow, receive defilement from the words of the law; but if they are plain, as tables, a seat, a skin on which they eat, they do not receive defilement, but, yrw yrbdm, “from the words of the Scribes”.”

And this washing of vessels, not only concerned such as were for private use, but the vessels of the sanctuary: so it is said [f164];

> “after a feast, at the close of a good day, or festival, “they dip all the vessels in the sanctuary”; because the “common people” have “touched” them at the feast, in the time of keeping it: wherefore they say, touch not the table (the showbread table), when they show it to them that come up to the feast, that it may not be defiled by touching it; and if after the feast, it is found (polluted), it must be dipped and all the vessels are obliged to immersion, excepting the golden altar, and the altar of brass.”

So that our Lord might well say, “and many such like things ye do”.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto them*, etc..] He continued his discourse, saying,

full well, or “fairly”,

ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition: these words may be considered, as spoken ironically, thus; as pious and excellently good men, you in a very fair and handsome manner, reject and make void the commandments and laws of God; and it is very fit it should be so, in order to preserve your own traditions, that nothing may be wanting to keep up the honour of them, and a due regard to them. The Arabic version reads the words by way of interrogation, "is it fit that you should omit the commandments of God, and keep your own statutes?" and so the Ethiopic, "do ye rightly make void the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own commandment?" Which makes them come nearer to the passage in Matthew; (see Gill on "Matthew 15:3").

Ver. 10. *For Moses said*, etc..] That is, God by Moses; for the following precept was spoken by God, and written by him on one of the tables of stone, and delivered into the hands of Moses, to be given to the children of Israel:

honour thy father and thy mother, (Exodus 20:12), the sanction of which law is,

and whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death, (Exodus 21:17). As the former of these commands is to be understood, not only of honouring parents in thought, word, and deed, but also of providing for them, when in want and distress, through poverty and old age; so the latter is to be interpreted, not merely of wishing or imprecating the most dreadful things upon parents, which some may not be guilty of, and yet transgress this command; but likewise of every slight put upon them, and neglect of them, when in necessitous circumstances: and both these laws were broken by the Jews, through their tradition hereafter mentioned; (see Gill on "Matthew 15:4").

Ver. 11. *But ye say*, etc..] Your elders, doctors, and wise men, in opposition to God and Moses:

if a man shall say to his father or his mother, it is Corban, that is to say, a gift; in the same manner is this word interpreted by Josephus, who speaking of some that call themselves Corban unto God, says [f165] in the Greek tongue, δωρον δε τουτο σεμαινει, "this signifies a gift": now, according to the traditions of the elders, whoever made use of that word to his father or his mother, signifying thereby, that what they might have

expected relief from at his hands, he had devoted it; or it was as if it was devoted to sacred uses; adding,

by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, [he shall be free]; and not under any obligation to regard and relieve his parents, let their case and circumstances be what they would. This is the form of a vow, which a man having made on purpose, to free himself from the charge of the maintenance of his parents, when reduced, repeats unto them; or which he makes upon their application to him: various forms of this kind of vows, are produced in the note *"Matthew 15:5"*, which see: this was not the form of an oath, or swearing by Corban, or the sacred treasury in the temple, mentioned in (Matthew 27:6), of which I do not remember any instance; nor was it a dedication of his substance to holy and religious uses; to the service of God and the temple; but it was a vow he made, that what he had, should be as Corban, as a gift devoted to sacred uses: that as that could not be appropriated to any other use, so his substance, after such a vow, could not be applied to the relief of his parents; though he was not obliged by it to give it for the use of the temple, but might keep it himself, or bestow it upon others. L. Capellus has wrote a very learned dissertation upon this vow, at the end of his Spicilegium on the New Testament; very and our learned countryman, Dr. Pocock, has said many excellent things upon it, in his miscellaneous notes on his Porta Mosis; both which ought to be read and consulted, by those who have learning and leisure.

Ver. 12. *And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father, or his mother*.] According to the Jewish canons [f166], if a man vowed a thing which is contrary to a command, he was obliged to keep his vow, and break the command: thus, if a man vowed that his father or his mother should never receive any benefit from what he had, but that his substance was as "Corban", or as any thing devoted to divine service, he was obliged to keep his vow; nor was he allowed after this to do any thing for his father, or mother, however poor or helpless they might be; unless he applied to a wise man to revoke his vow, or to give him liberty to do it; for he could not do it of himself, as wicked as it was; and though he might heartily repent of it, and was ever so willing to make it null and void: and though a dissolution it by a wise man was allowed of, yet hereby they set up their own power and authority against God, and his law; they did not rescind the vow, because it was contrary to the command of God: for notwithstanding its being contrary to the command of God, it was to be observed, though to the breaking of that, unless loosed by a wise man, at the man's request;

whereby they established their magisterial power and authority, without any regard to the honour and glory of God; and therefore what follows, is justly observed by our Lord; (see Gill on "Matthew 15:5").

Ver. 13. *Making the word of God of none effect, through your tradition*, etc..] Beza says, in his most ancient copy it is read, "your foolish tradition"; and such it was indeed, that a vow made rashly, and in a passion, or if ever so deliberately entered into, should be more binding upon a man than the law of God; that rather than break this, he should transgress a divine command; and that though he might see his folly, and repent of his sin in making such a wicked vow, he could not go back from it, without the permission of a wise man: should his poor distressed parents come to him for assistance, he was obliged to answer them, that he had bound himself by a vow, that they should receive no advantage from his substance; and should they remonstrate to him the command of God, to honour them and take care of them, and observe that that command is enforced by promises and threatenings; he had this to reply, and was instructed to do it, that it was the sense of the wise men and doctors, and agreeably to the traditions of the elders, to which he ought rather to attend, than to the words of the law, that he should keep and fulfil his vow, whatever command was neglected or broken by it.

Which ye have delivered: they received it from their ancestors, and delivered it to their disciples; and it is in this way, that all their traditions were delivered: they say [f167], that

"Moses received the law (the oral law) at Sinai, hrmw, "and delivered" it to Joshua; and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets; and the prophets to the men of the great synagogue; the last of which was Simeon the just; and Antigonus, a man of Socho, received it from him; and Jose ben Joezer, a man of Tzeredah, and Jose ben Jochanan, a man of Jerusalem, received it from Antigonus; and Joshua ben Perachiah (said to be the master of Jesus Christ), and Nitthai the Arbelite, received it from them; and Judah ben Tabai, and Simeon ben Shetach, received it from them; and Shemaiah and Abtalion received it from them; and from them Hillell and Shammai."

Who were now the heads of the two grand schools of the Jews; these received, and delivered out these traditions to the Scribes and Pharisees, and they to their disciples:

and many such like things do ye; meaning, that there were many other traditions besides this now mentioned; whereby, instead of preserving the written law, which, they pretended, these were an hedge unto [f168], they, in a great many instances, made it void.

Ver. 14. *And when he, had called all the people unto him*, etc..] The Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, instead of "all", read again, and so do some copies: having said what was sufficient to stop the mouths of the Scribes and Pharisees, about their unwarrantable traditions; he turns himself to the common people, who stood at some distance, because of these venerable doctors, and called to them to come nearer to him:

he said unto them, hearken to me every one of you, and understand; signifying, he had something of moment to say to them, which they would do well to attend unto, and what they should be desirous of understanding aright, it being what concerned every one of them; (see Gill on "<40150>Matthew 15:10").

Ver. 15. *There is nothing from without a man*, etc..] As any sort of food and drink, whether it be received, with, or without washing of the hands:

that entering into him can defile him; in a moral sense, or render him loathsome and unacceptable in the sight of God:

but the things which come out of him; the Arabic: version reads, "out of the mouth of man", as in (<40151>Matthew 15:11), for the things are, all sinful words which proceed from the imaginations and lusts of the heart; as all idle, unchaste, blasphemous, and wrathful words and expressions: and may include evil thoughts, words, and actions; which actions first in thought, take their rise from the corrupt heart of man; and in word, come out of the mouth; and in action, are performed by some one or other of the members of the body: these are

they that defile the man: his mind and conscience, the faculties of his soul, and the members of his body; and render him abominable in the sight of God, and expose him to his wrath and displeasure; (see Gill on "<40151>Matthew 15:11"). The sense of the whole is, that not what a man eats and drinks, and in whatsoever way he does either, though he may eat and drink with unwashen hands, or out of cups, pots, and platters, not properly washed, according to the traditions of the elders, renders him a polluted sinful man, in the sight of God; or such as one, whose company and conversation are to be, avoided by good men; but that it is sin in the heart,

and what proceeds from it; as all evil thoughts, wicked words, and impure actions; which denominate a man filthy and unclean, and expose him to the abhorrence of God, and of his people: the words may be rendered, “there is nothing from without a man, can make him common”; that is, as a plebeian, a vulgar common man, a sinful wicked man, as the common people were, or at least were so esteemed by the Pharisees; nothing that he took into his body, by eating or drinking, could put him into the class of such persons: “but the things which come out of him”; out of his heart, by his lips: “those are they that make a man common”; or a vulgar wicked man. The Ethiopic version renders it, “it is not what enters from without into the mouth of man, which can defile him; but only what goes out of the heart man, this defiles the man”: the Persic version adds, “and is the sin of death”; or sin unto death, a deadly, mortal sin.

Ver. 16. *If any man have ears to hear, let him hear*.] (See Gill on “40 11 15Matthew 11:15”).

Ver. 17. *And when he was entered into the house*, etc..] Very probably at Capernaum, and it may be the house of Simon and Andrew, where he used to be when there:

from the people; being separated from them, having dismissed and left them, when he and his disciples were by themselves alone:

his disciples asked him concerning the parable; that saying of his to the people, which was somewhat dark and intricate to them; that nothing without a man going into him defiled him, but what comes out of him: this was asked by Peter, in the name of the rest; (see Gill on “40 15 15Matthew 15:15”).

Ver. 18. *And he saith unto them*, etc..] With some warmth of spirit and resentment, at their stupidity:

are ye so without understanding also? As well as others, and to such a degree; and “yet”, as Matthew expresses it, (40 15 16Matthew 15:16), so wretchedly stupid, and so long, and as much, as others:

do ye not perceive? common sense will tell you,

that whatsoever thing from, without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; (see Gill on “40 15 16Matthew 15:16”).

Ver. 19. *Because it entereth not into his heart*, etc..] Which is the seat and fountain of all moral pollution; and if that is not defiled, no other part can be; and that that is not defiled by eating and drinking, unless in case of intemperance, is clear; because food and drink do not go into it:

but into the belly; it is taken in at the mouth, goes down the throat, and is received into the stomach, and from thence it passes through the bowels:

and goeth into the draught; `akh tyb`, "the private house", as the Jews call it, without going into the heart at all:

purging all meats; that which it leaves behind, is pure and nourishing; and whatever is gross and impure, is carried with it into the draught, so that nothing remains in the man that is defiling.

Ver. 20. *And he said*, etc..] Continued to say in his discourse; though this is left but in the Syriac version;

that which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man; meaning, not his excrements, which were unclean by the law, (<05 23 13>Deuteronomy 23:13) but what comes out of his heart, by his mouth; or is expressed in action, as appears by what follows; (see Gill on "<40 15 18>Matthew 15:18").

Ver. 21. *For from within, out of the heart of man*, etc..] The inside of man is very bad, his inward part is not only wicked, but wickedness itself, yea, very wickedness, (<19 05 09>Psalm 5:9), in him dwells no good thing naturally, his heart is wicked, and desperately so; it is full of evil; and out of the abundance of it, proceed the evil things hereafter mentioned; all its powers and faculties are vitiated, there is no place clean; the understanding and judgment are dreadfully corrupted; the mind and conscience are defiled; the affections are inordinate; not only the thought, but every imagination of the thought of the heart is evil, and that continually: what good thing therefore, can come out of such a Nazareth as this? Nothing, but what follows: for from hence

proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders; which several things are related in Mt. 15:19 see the note on *"<40 15 19>Matthew 15:19"*; only the order here is a little different; "murders", which are here mentioned last, are there put after "evil thoughts".

Ver. 22. *Thefts*, etc..] These also are mentioned in Matthew, but Mark omits “false witnesses”, and adds the following; which, excepting “blasphemy”, are not taken notice of by the other evangelists;

covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; (see Gill on “<4015>Matthew 15:19”).

Ver. 23. *All these evil things come from within*, etc..] All evil thoughts, words, and actions, take their rise from the inward parts of man; from his heart; which is sadly corrupted, and is the fountain from whence all these impure streams flow. And if these come from within, then not from without; they are not by imitation or are the mere effects of example in others: example may indeed, and often does, draw out the evil that is within; but it does not produce it there; if it was not there before, it could not draw it out from thence: and if all these evils come from within, then the inward part of man must be sinful and polluted, previous to the commission of these evil things; and from whence springs then that inward pollution? It is the fruit of original sin, of Adam's transgression; the consequence of which is, a corrupt nature, which is derived to all his posterity: for his nature being corrupted by sinning, and he having all human nature in him, the individuals of it could not be propagated by ordinary generation, without the pollution of sin cleaving to them; “who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one”, (<1814>Job 14:4). Nor has there ever been any instance to the contrary, but the man Christ Jesus; whose human nature was holy, it not descending from Adam by ordinary generation; otherwise, all men, as David was, are “shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin”, (<1905>Psalm 51:5), and this is the source and spring of all sinful action, internal and external.

And defile the man; both soul and body; all the powers and faculties of the soul, and all the members of the body; or “make a man common”: these show him to be one of the common people, a very sinful man; as such were reckoned, and therefore are called emphatically, “sinners”: and are joined with “publicans”, who were esteemed the worst of sinners: from all which it appears, that sin in thought, word, and deed, is the defiling thing, and is what ought to be carefully avoided; and not meats, and the manner of eating them, provided moderation is used.

Ver 24. *And from thence he arose*, etc..] From the land of Gennesaret, or from Capernaum, which was in it:

and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon; two cities of Phoenicia: not into them, but into the borders of them; into those parts of Galilee, which bordered on Phoenicia; (see Gill on "<40152>Matthew 15:21").

And entered into an house; in some one of the towns, or cities, in those parts; which house might be, for the entertainment and lodging of strangers:

and would have no man know it; took all proper precaution as man, that nobody should know who, and where he was; that the, Gentiles, on whose borders he was, might not flock to him, which would create envy and disgust in the Jews:

but he could not be hid; he had wrought so many miracles in Galilee, and his fame was so much spread, and he had been seen, and was known by so many persons, that, humanly speaking, it was next to impossible, that he should be long unknown in such a place.

Ver. 25. *For a certain woman*, etc..] One way and means by which he came to be more openly discovered who he was, was this; a woman in those parts,

whose young daughter had an unclean spirit; a devil, with which she was possessed; hearing of some miracles he had wrought in healing the sick, and casting out devils;

heard of him, and came; and understanding that he was in such a place made all haste to him;

and fell at his feet; and with great respect and reverence to so venerable a person, threw herself at his feet, and earnestly entreated mercy for her child; believing he had power to cast the devil out of her, though at a distance from her.

Ver. 26. *The woman was a Greek*, etc..] Or Gentile, an Heathen woman, which made her faith the more remarkable. So the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions call her; which she might be, and was, though she was a woman of Canaan, as she is said to be in (<40152>Matthew 15:22), for though the land of Israel in general, was called the land of Canaan, yet there was a particular part, which was at first inhabited by Canaan himself, which bore this name; and is the same with Phoenicia, of which this woman was an inhabitant, and therefore she is afterwards called a Syrophoenician; (see

Gill on "<40 15 22>Matthew 15:22"). And this place was now inhabited by Gentiles; hence the Jews often distinguish between an Hebrew and a Canaanitish servant; of which take an [f169] instance or two;

> "an Hebrew servant is obtained by money, and by writing, a Canaanitish servant is obtained by money, and by writing, and by possession."

Again [f170],

> "he that does injury to an Hebrew servant, is bound to all these (i.e. to make compensation for loss, pain, healing, cessation from business, and reproach), excepting cessation from business — but he that hurts a Canaanitish servant, that belongs to others, is bound to them all."

And by a Canaanitish servant, they understand any one that is not an Israelite; for an Hebrew and a Canaanite, are manifestly opposed to one another. This woman being of Phoenicia, as appears by what follows, which was sometimes called Canaan, might be said to be a woman of Canaan, and also a Gentile.

A Syrophoenician by nation; or extract. The Syriac and Persic versions say she was "of Phoenicia of Syria"; and the latter, by way of explanation, "of Emisa". The Arabic version adds, "her extraction was of Ghaur"; and the Ethiopic version says, she was "the wife of a Syrophoenician man"; (see Gill on "<40 15 22>Matthew 15:22").

And she besought him, that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter; which she was persuaded, by what she had heard of him, he was able to do, by a word speaking, though her daughter was not present.

Ver. 27. *But Jesus said unto her*, etc..] Not directly and immediately, upon her first request; for he answered not a word to that; but after his, disciples had desired she might be sent away, her cries being so troublesome to them; and after she had renewed her request to him; (see <40 15 23>Matthew 15:23-25).

Let the children first be filled: according to this method, our Lord directed his apostles, and they proceeded: as he himself was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, he ordered his disciples to go to them, and preach the Gospel to them, and work miracles among them; and not go in the way of

the Gentiles, nor into any of the cities of the Samaritans; but when they had gone through the cities of Judea, he ordered them, after his resurrection, to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem: and this order they observed in other places, where there were Jews; they first preached to them, and then to the Gentiles; knowing that it was necessary, that the word of God should be first spoken to them; and it was the power of God to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile: and the expression here used, though it gives the preference to the Jew, does not exclude the Gentile; nay, it supposes, that after the Jews had had the doctrines of Christ, confirmed by his miracles, sufficiently ministered unto them, for the gathering in the chosen ones among them, and to leave the rest inexcusable; and so long as until they should despise it, and put it away from them, judging themselves unworthy of it; that then the Gentiles should have plenty of Gospel provisions set before them, and should eat of them, and be filled; and should have a large number of miracles wrought among them, and a fulness of the blessings of grace bestowed on them. The Jews are meant, who were the children of God by national adoption; who were first to be filled with the doctrines and miracles of Christ, before the Gentiles were to have them among them; as they were, even to a loathing and contempt of them:

for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs: as by “the children” are meant the Israelites, who were not only the children of Abraham by natural descent, but the children of God, to whom pertained the adoption, by virtue of the national covenant made with them; so by “the dogs”, are meant the Gentiles, who were reckoned as such by the Jews; and by the “bread”, which it was not fit and proper should be taken from the one for the present, and cast to the other, is designed the ministry of the Gospel; which is as bread, solid, substantial, wholesome, and nourishing; and the miraculous cures wrought on the bodies of men, which accompanied it: now it was not meet and convenient as yet, that these things should be taken away from the Jewish nation, until they had answered the ends for which they were designed, and the Jews should express their loathing and abhorrence of them: which when they did, they were taken away from them, and were ministered to the nations of the world, they contemptuously called dogs; (see Gill on “Matthew 15:26”).

Ver. 28. *And she answered and said unto him, yes, Lord*, etc..] Agreeing to, and acquiescing in, what he said; which she seemed to have understood, though delivered in a proverbial way; and very appropriately replies,

yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs; which they leave, or let fall: signifying that she did not envy the blessings of the Jews, or desire any thing might be done injurious to them; only that this favour might be granted her, which she owned she was unworthy of, that her daughter might be healed. She tacitly owns, that the character of dogs belonged to the Gentiles, and to her and hers among the rest; that they were vile and base in themselves, inferior to the Jews, as to privileges, like dogs under the table; that the provisions with which the table of the Gospel ministry was furnished, was not for them; at least, that they were quite undeserving of them: but however, whereas dogs were allowed to eat crumbs, which now and then fell from the table, or out of the children's hands and laps; so such unworthy Gentiles as she, might be allowed a small benefit or favour by the bye, when it did not take from, and was no disadvantage to the Jews; (see Gill on "Matthew 15:27").

Ver. 29. *And he said unto her, for this saying*, etc..] Or word of faith; in which she expressed such great faith in him: the Persic version reads it, "go thy way; for with the blessing of this word, the devil is gone out of thy daughter": as if this saying referred to the word Christ, and the divine power that went along with it, to the ejection of the devil; when it refers to the saying of the woman, and not to the words of Christ, which follow,

go thy way; in peace, thy request is granted; it is as thou wouldst have it:

the devil is gone out of thy daughter. Christ, who as God is every where, and whose divine power reaches to all places, persons, and things had, in a secret and powerful manner, cast the devil out of this woman's daughter; without going to her, or speaking to him, his power had wrought the miracle effectually.

Ver. 30. *And when she was come to her house*, etc..] For with those words of Christ; she was abundantly satisfied, and went away with as great a faith, and as strong a persuasion of the dispossession, as that she came with, that Christ was able to effect it: and accordingly

she found the devil gone out; of her daughter; that she was entirely dispossessed of him, and no more vexed and tormented with him, but in perfect ease, and at rest:

and her daughter laid upon the bed; without any violent motions, convulsions, and tossings to and fro, as before; but composed and still, taking some rest, having been for some time greatly fatigued with the possession. The Ethiopic version reads, “she found her daughter clothed, and sat upon the bed”: for persons in these possessions, would often put off their clothes, and tear them in pieces; and were seldom composed, and rarely sat long in a place or posture; but now it was otherwise with her.

Ver. 31. *And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon*, etc..] The Vulgate Latin version reads, “and coming out again from the borders of Tyre, he came through Sidon”; and so two of Beza's copies; the Arabic version, which Deuteronomy Dieu made use of reads “to Sidon”; as he must needs come to it, if he came through it; though the version in the Polyglot Bible of Walton's reads, ym, “from Sidon”: but the greater number of copies, and the Syriac and Persic versions read as we do, and which is rightest; since it does not appear, that Christ went out of the land of Israel, into any Heathen cities: and besides, Sidon was further from Galilee than Tyre, and so did not lie in his way to it; and therefore it is not likely he should pass through that city, in order to go to it. The Ethiopic version reads, “and coming out again from Tyre, he went through Sidon”: both these places were in Phoenicia, and it is probable that the woman before mentioned might belong to one or other of them. According to this version, she may be thought to be of Tyre, and that it was there, where the above discourse passed between Christ and her; though some Dutch pictures, Dr. Lightfoot [f171] takes notice of, represent her as praying for her daughter, at the gate of Sidon; and Borchard the monk, as he relates from him, says, that before the gate of Sidon eastward, there is a chapel built in the place, where the. Canaanitish woman prayed to our Saviour for her daughter. But Christ, for the reason before given, could be in neither of these places, being out of the land of Israel; besides, the text is express, that it was to the borders of this country he came, and from thence he went; and to, or from, or through any of these places.

He came unto the sea of Galilee; or Tiberias, the same with the lake of Gennesaret: he came to those parts of Galilee, which lay by it, where he had been, before he went the borders of Tyre and Sidon:

through the midst the coasts of Decapolis; of this place, (see Gill on “Matthew 4:25”). It was a country which consisted of ten cities, from whence it had its name: now not through the middle of these cities, or of

this country, as the Ethiopic version reads; but through the midst of the borders of it Christ passed, which lay in his way from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, to the sea of Galilee. The Syriac and Persic versions render the words, “unto the borders of Decapolis, or the ten cities”; and the Arabic version, “unto the middle of the coasts of the ten cities”; (see Gill on “Matthew 15:29”).

Ver. 32. *And they bring unto him one that was deaf*, etc..] There were two sorts of persons that were called deaf among the Jews; one that could neither hear nor speak; such were they who were born deaf; and so having never heard any thing, it was impossible they should ever speak: the other sort were they that could speak, but not hear; who lost their hearing by some disaster or another, but retained their speech [f172]: of this sort seems to be this man, who though he had some difficulty in speaking, yet could speak a little,

and had an impediment in his speech; or could “scarcely speak”, as the word signifies; though it is sometimes used by the Septuagint, for one that was entirely dumb, as in (Isaiah 35:6) and so it is here rendered “dumb”, by the Vulgate Latin, and other versions; yet it seems to design one that stammered, and could not speak plainly, and without great difficulty: he was tongue tied, as it should seem from (Mark 7:35). This man, the inhabitants of the parts where Christ now was, his relations or friends, bring to him, having heard of his fame, and perhaps they had seen miracles performed by him:

and they beseech him to put his hand upon him; firmly believing, that upon his so doing, the man's hearing would come to him, and he would speak without difficulty: very likely they had seen cures performed by Christ in this way, or at least heard, that by laying his hands on persons disordered, they had been restored to the right use of their senses, or limbs; wherefore they most earnestly entreated, he would be pleased to do the same favour to this poor man. The case of this man much resembles that of a sinner in a state of nature, who is deaf to the voice, both of law and Gospel: he does not hearken to the commanding voice of the law, or attend to its precepts, nor can he be subject to it; nor does he hear its menaces and curses, nor is he at all affected and disturbed with these things; and, like the deaf adder, he stops his ear to the charming voice of the Gospel; he despises it, and has it in the utmost abhorrence: he is deaf to all the instructions, directions, cautions, and exhortations, of the ministers of the word; and even of his

best friends, relations, and acquaintance nor can he speak the language of Canaan; it is a strange language to him; he can neither talk it himself, nor understand it in others; for as he has no experience of the grace of God in him, he must be dumb, and cannot speak of what he has no knowledge: and indeed, it may be observed of such who are under the first workings of the spirit of God upon the soul, that they are often as it were tongue tied, and through fear or bashfulness, or the temptations of Satan, care not to speak; or with great difficulty are brought to speak of what God has done for them; and at first, it is but in a lisping, stammering way, they do speak of these things and as the friends and relations of this man, having a great opinion of Christ, and a persuasion of his ability to relieve and cure him, bring him unto him, that he might put his hands upon him; so do such who know Christ themselves, and have felt the power of his grace upon their own souls, bring their deaf and dumb, their relations in a state of nature, under the means of grace; being very desirous that Christ would make bare, and put forth his mighty arm of grace, and lay hold upon them, and work a good work in them, and give them ears to hear his voice, and a tongue to speak his praise.

Ver. 33. *And he took him aside from the multitude*, etc..] To shun all appearance of ostentation and vain glory:

and put his fingers into his ears; the finger of his right hand into his left ear, and the finger of his left hand into his right ear:

and he spit and touched his tongue; that is, either he spit upon his tongue, for so the Vulgate Latin renders it, “spitting he touched his tongue”; and the Persic version thus, “he cast his spittle on his tongue”; or rather, he spit on his finger, and touched his tongue with it. These actions were not done as means of healing, or as having any natural virtue, or tendency in them, to effect a cure; but to show the power of Christ, that by the mere touch of his finger, and by the spittle of his mouth, as well as by laying on of hands, as was desired, and by a word speaking, he could at once remove this, or any such disorder. The taking this man aside from the multitude, is an emblem of the Lord's separating his people from the rest of the world, when he calls them by his grace; for as they are distinguished from others, in the choice of them in Christ, and in redemption by him; so in the effectual calling, they are bid to come out from among them, and by the power of divine grace, they are brought out from among them, and give up themselves to Christ, and to his churches: and Christ's putting his fingers

into the ears of this man, represents the exertion of his power, and his removing by the finger of his Spirit, the obstructions of spiritual hearing; or rather, the planting of the spiritual ear, or forming a principle ot spiritual nearing in the soul: and his touching his tongue with the spittle of his mouth, may lead us to observe the application of his word, through the efficacy of his grace, as a means of loosing his tongue and opening his lips to show forth his praise.

Ver. 34. *And looking up to heaven*, etc..] To his Father there, by whom he was sent, and from whom, as man, he received his authority and power; though this was not for assistance in the working of this miracle, which he had power to do of himself; nor do we find that he put up any request to his Father: but he seems to have made use of this motion, not for his own sake, but for the sake of the man: to teach him, that every good gift, blessing, mercy, and favour, and so this he was about to partake of, was from above:

he sighed; not as unequal to the work of healing the man, or as despairing of doing it; but as commiserating the case of the poor man, and reflecting with concern upon his sin, that had been the occasion of it. These actions of looking up to heaven and sighing, as they may be understood in a spiritual sense, or with relation to the spiritual healing of a sinner, may show that such a blessing comes from above: it is received from heaven; it is God that gives the hearing ear, as well as the seeing eye; and that in a spiritual, as well as in a natural sense: and therefore this directs to apply to God for it, whether for a man's self, or for others; and when enjoyed, to look up again to heaven, and return thanks for it: and also that such a favour flows from divine mercy and compassion, Christ pitying the case of persons in such a condition; and he being an high priest that can have compassion on those that are in distress, and having ability to help them, makes use of it, and expresses both his pity and his power, as in the following manner.

And saith unto him; in the Syriac language, which he then spoke, ܬ ܬ ܐ,

Ethphatha, or “Ephphatha”;

that is, being interpreted,

be opened, both ears and mouth. And this way of speaking is used by the Jews, of a deaf man being restored to hearing, as of a blind man's being restored to sight; of which, take the following instance [f173];

> “a minor that receives (i.e. a divorce), and afterwards becomes adult, or a deaf man, qtnw, “and is opened” (i.e. his ears are opened, or his hearing is restored), or a blind man, ttnw, “and is opened” (has his sight again), or a fool, and he is restored to his reason, or a Gentile, and he becomes a proselyte, is unfit or unlawful (to carry a divorce from a man to his wife), but q, “one that is open”, and afterwards becomes deaf, and then again “opened”; wt, or “open”, and afterwards become blind, and again “opened”; or a fool, and is restored to his senses, and again becomes a fool, he is right or fit”

(for the above purpose). It is common with them to call one that hears well, in distinction from a deaf man, “one that is open” [f174]. This is an instance of the power of Christ in curing disorders, merely by a word speaking, without the use of means; for what he did before, were not as means of healing, but significative of his power; which now went along with his word, and which was expressed with great majesty and authority: and such a power attends the word of his grace, to the opening of the heart, to give heed to the things which are spoken; and to the opening of the ear to discipline, and sealing instruction to it; land to the opening of the mouth and lips, in praise and thankfulness.

Ver. 35. *And straightway his ears were opened*, etc..] It is in the Greek text, “his hearings”; the instruments of his hearing, and so rightly rendered, “his ears”: the Persic version reads, “both his ears”; but the word “both” is unnecessary, since the word, “ears”, takes in both. Such a power went along with the words of Christ, when he said, “be opened”; that immediately, as soon as ever the words were pronounced, the man's hearing came to him, and he heard as quick as ever he did before he lost it, or, as any other man:

and the string of his tongue; which caused it to cleave to his jaws, or the roof of his mouth, and hindered him from speaking plainly,

was loosed, and he spake plain; tyaqy, “easily”, as the Syriac version renders it; without any difficulty to himself, and so as to be readily

understood by others. Thus those whose ears are opened, and whose tongues are loosed in a spiritual manner by Christ, speak plainly of what they have heard and seen, and felt; they can give a plain and clear account of the work of God upon their souls; how they have been convinced of the impurity of their nature, the corruptions of their hearts, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, in heart, lip, and life; how they have seen Christ to be an all sufficient and suitable Saviour, and have been directed, and encouraged, to go to him, for healing, pardon, righteousness, and everlasting salvation; they can tell what promises have been applied to them, and what comforts they have enjoyed; how busy Satan has been with them; and what temptations of his they have been delivered out of, and by what means: in a word, they can speak plainly of the love of God to them; of the glories and excellencies of Christ; of their faith and hope in him, and love to him; and of the operations of the Spirit of God upon their hearts; and of the glories of the world to come, they are in the expectation of, so far as they are taught of God.

Ver. 36. *And he charged them*, etc..] The man that had his hearing and speech restored to him, and those that brought him, and as many as were witnesses of the miracle:

that they should tell no man; of the cure that was wrought, being not desirous of the applause of men; and knowing it would bring upon him the envy of the Scribes and Pharisees; and be a means of putting the common people upon setting him up as a temporal king, such as they expected the Messiah would be:

but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published [it]; or "spake of him", as the Ethiopic version reads it; for they looked upon his charge merely to proceed from modesty, and that made them the more forward to speak of his greatness and in his praise, to publish his mighty works, and spread the fame of his miracles far and near. So, such who have received the grace of God, are become acquainted with Christ, and have a real experience of divine things, cannot but speak of them; they are like new wine which hath no vent; and are ready to burst like new bottles; to forbear speaking is a pain, and weariness to them; nay, they think, should they hold their peace, the stones in the walls would cry out. Wherefore, partly for the glory of God, the magnifying of the riches of his grace, and the honour of Christ, and the blessed Spirit; and partly to show their own sense of things, the gratitude of their minds, and the

thankfulness of their hearts, as well as for the use, comfort, edification, and instruction of others, they must speak, and cannot be silent, whatever restraints are laid upon them.

Ver. 37. *And were beyond measure astonished*, etc..] The man that was cured, the men that brought him, and the whole multitude were exceedingly, beyond all expression, amazed at what was done, in this case, and many others; for there were other miracles also wrought at this time; (see <401530>Matthew 15:30,31). The grace of God, in opening the ears and heart of a sinner, and causing the tongue of the dumb to sing his praise, is very astonishing, to men and angels; to the persons themselves that partake of it; and to all the saints that hear of it; it is amazing that such grace should be bestowed at all; and it is more, that it should be communicated to such unworthy persons it is; as also that it should produce such effects it does; that it should make such a surprising change, and be attended with such blessed consequences:

saying, he hath done all things well; not by Beelzebub, the prince of devils, as said the Scribes and Pharisees; nor in any ostentatious manner, for the sake of the honour and applause of men, as they plainly saw; but for the good of mankind, and for the glory of God: and as all the miraculous works, which Christ did, were well done by him, so all other works of his: all that he did in eternity before the world was, he did well; what he did in the council and covenant of grace, in espousing the persons and cause of his people, and in all his federal transactions and suretyship engagements for them: he drew nigh to God on their account; he cheerfully agreed to what his Father proposed; he entered into a covenant with him, and took the care and charge of all his people, and of all promises and blessings of grace for them: and whatsoever he has done in time is well done; as his assumption of human nature; taking a nature, and not a person, this of a virgin, and an holy nature, though subject to sinless infirmities, and this in due and proper time; also his subjection to the law, moral, civil, and ceremonial, as it became him to fulfil all righteousness; and his preaching the Gospel, which he did with authority, and which he spake as never man did, and which he confirmed by his miracles; but especially the great work of redemption he came about, was well done by him: this he has thoroughly done; he has redeemed his people from the law, its curse, and condemnation; he has ransomed them out of the hands of Satan; he has saved them from all their sins; he has procured the remission of them, made reconciliation for them, and brought in an everlasting righteousness: he has

done this work to the satisfaction of all parties; to the glory of all the divine perfections, of justice, as well as of grace and mercy; to the contentment and pleasure of all the divine persons; his Father, himself, and the blessed Spirit: and to the joy of angels and men: and all that he has done, or is now doing in heaven, as an advocate and intercessor, is done well; and we may be assured, that all that he will do hereafter, as the judge of quick and dead, will be done in like manner.

He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb, or those that could not speak, at least without a great deal of difficulty,

to speak; an instance of both which there was in this single man's case.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 8

Ver. 1. *In those days*, etc..] The Ethiopic version reads, on that day; as if it was on the same day that the deaf man was healed; and so it might be; and on the third day from Christ's coming into those parts; and so is very properly expressed, “in those days”; (see <41031>Mark 7:31), compared with the following verse:

the multitude being very great: for the number of men that ate, when the following miracle was wrought, were about four thousand; (see <41009>Mark 8:9). The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions add, “again”; referring to the former miracle of the five thousand, who were fed with five loaves, and two fishes, (<41044>Mark 6:44).

And having nothing to eat; what they might have brought with them being expended, and they in a desert, where nothing was to be had, nor bought for money:

Jesus called his disciples to him, and saith unto them; (see Gill on “<40152>Matthew 15:32”).

Ver. 2. *I have compassion on the multitude*, etc..] Christ is a compassionate Saviour both of the bodies and souls of men: he had compassion on the souls of this multitude, and therefore had been teaching them sound doctrine and he had compassion on the bodies of many of them, and had healed them of their diseases; and his bowels yearned towards them all;

because, says he,

they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat; for if they brought any food with them, it was all spent, and they were in a wilderness, where nothing was to be got; where they had no house to go into, nor bed to lie upon, and no provisions to be bought; and in this case they had been two nights and three days; which showed great affection and zeal in these people, and a close attachment to Christ, in exposing

themselves to all these difficulties and hardships, which they seemed to bear with much patience and unconcernedness. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions prefix the word “behold” to this clause, as expressing admiration at their stay with him so long in such a place.

Ver. 3. *And if I send them away fasting to their own houses*, etc..] Greek, “to their own house”, or home; but all the Oriental versions render it as we do, in the plural, “their own houses”, or habitations; and it seems from hence that they were now tasting, and at least had had no food all that day, whatever they might have the day before, which it not certain.

They will faint by the way; for want of food their strength will be exhausted, their animal spirits will fail, their nerves will be loosened, they will not be able to perform their journey, or get to the end of it:

for divers of them came from far; perhaps some had followed him from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, from whence he came last; and others from Decapolis, through the midst of the borders of which he passed hither; and others from different parts, who had heard of his coming; (see Gill on “Matthew 15:32”).

Ver. 4. *And his disciples answered him*, etc..] The Syriac version renders it, “say unto him”; and the Persic and Ethiopic, “said unto him”; forgetting the late miracle of feeding five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, when they had now a less number, and more provisions:

from whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness? from what place, and by what ways and means can it be thought, that such a quantity of bread can be got at any rate in a desert, as to satisfy so large a number of hungry men? (see Gill on “Matthew 15:33”).

Ver. 5. *And he asked them, how many loaves have ye*? etc..] (See Gill on “Matthew 15:34”);

and they said, seven. Matthew adds, “and a few little fishes”, which are here afterwards mentioned.

Ver. 6. *And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground*, etc..] (See Gill on “Matthew 15:35”);

and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake them; (see Gill on “Matthew 15:36”);

and gave to his disciples to set before [them], the multitude,

and they did set [them] before the people; in which they were obedient to their Lord's commands, though they were so forgetful, unbelieving, and stupid.

Ver. 7. *And they had a few small fishes*, etc..] Which they also acquainted Christ with, and brought out unto him:

and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before [them]. It looks, by this account, as if the fishes were blessed, and brake, and distributed separately, alter the blessing, breaking, and distribution of the bread; and so the Syriac version renders it, “upon whom also he blessed”; and the Persic thus, “and he also blessed the fishes”; but, according to Matthew they were both blessed, and brake, and distributed together, as it is highly reasonable to suppose they were both ate together; (see Gill on “Matthew 15:36”).

Ver. 8. *So they did eat, and were filled*, etc..] Christ and his disciples, and the whole multitude: they not only had some, but they had all enough, a full meal. It was surprising that it could be divided so, is that every one should have a bit; but that they should all be satisfied to the full, is amazing:

and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets; as many as there were loaves; (see Gill on “Matthew 15:37”).

Ver. 9. *And they that had eaten were about four thousand*, etc..] That is, men, besides women and children, as Matthew observes; (see Gill on “Matthew 15:38”).

and he sent them away; some that came dumb, with their speech, and deaf, with their hearing; others that were maimed, with perfect healing of their wounds, and with their limbs sound and whole; others that came lame, he dismissed leaping; and others that were blind, with their sight restored to them, and all of them full.

Ver. 10. *And straightway he entered into a ship, with his disciples*, etc..] As soon as ever he had, dismissed the multitude, he took shipping with his disciples; for he was at the sea of Galilee, either at a place near it, or upon the shore of it; (see Mark 7:31);

and came into the parts of Dalmanutha; which Matthew calls, “the coasts of Magdala”; (see Gill on “Matthew 15:39”). The Arabic version reads it, “Magdal”; and in two of Beza's copies it is read, “Madegada”; but the

Syriac version reads, “Dalmanutha”; and the Persic, “Dalmanuth”; and the Ethiopic, “Dalmathy”: it was a city in the coasts of Magdala, and is thought by Dr. Lightfoot to be the same with Tzalmon, or Salmon, a place often mentioned [f175] in the Jewish writings.

Ver. 11. *And the Pharisees came forth*, etc..] Out of their houses; who dwelt in the coasts of Magdala, and parts of Dalmanutha, and came to Jesus, hearing of his being arrived in their neighbourhood:

and began to question with him; or to dispute with him, it being their manner to carry on disputations by questions and answers. The Persic version has the question they put, and about which they disputed, “if thou art the Christ”; in proof of which they required a sign:

seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him; (see Gill on “<4016>Matthew 16:1”).

Ver. 12. *And he sighed deeply in his Spirit*, etc..] In his human soul; and which shows that he had one, and was subject to grief and sorrow, and all passions and infirmities, excepting sin. This deep sigh was on account of the hardness of their hearts, the malignity of their minds, and insincerity of their intentions; who had no view to come at truth by this inquiry, but to ensnare him:

and saith, why doth this generation seek after a sign? when so many have been shown among them, and they will not believe:

verily I say unto you, there shall no sign be given to this generation: such as they desired; namely, one from heaven. The Evangelist Matthew adds, “but the sign of the Prophet Jonas”; (see Gill on “<4016>Matthew 16:4”), (see Gill on “<4012>Matthew 12:40”).

Ver. 13. *And he left them*, etc..] As a perverse and hardened generation of men, and as such with whom it was not worth while to discourse:

and entering into the ship again; which brought him over, and waited for him:

departed to the other side; of the sea of Galilee, towards Bethsaida, (<4082>Mark 8:22).

Ver. 14. *Now the disciples had, forgotten to take bread*, etc..] At Dalmanutha, or Magdala, or whatever place in those parts they were at, before they took shipping, as was their usual method.

Neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf; for thirteen passengers of them. The Persic version reads the whole thus: “and they forgot to take bread with them, not indeed one loaf, and there was no bread with them in the ship”; (see Gill on “<4065>Matthew 16:5”).

Ver. 15. *And he charged them*, etc..] When they were in the ship, and had just recollected themselves, that they had took no care to bring any provisions with them:

saying, take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees; and of the leaven of Herod: in Matthew, instead of “the leaven of Herod”, it is read, “the leaven of the Sadducees”: which are either the same, Herod and his courtiers being Sadducees, or favourers of them; or the Sadducees being sticklers for Herod, and his government, which the Pharisees had no good opinion of; or else distinct from one another; and so Christ cautions against the doctrines of the Pharisees, which regarded the traditions of the elders, and of the Sadducees, concerning the resurrection, and of the Herodians, who thought Herod to be the Messiah; and against the unreasonable request and demand of them all to have a sign from heaven, in proof of his own Messiahship; (see Gill on “<4066>Matthew 16:6”).

Ver. 16. *And they reasoned among themselves*, etc..] Upon Christ's giving this caution, and recollecting with themselves, that they had forgot to buy any provisions, and take with them:

saying, it is because we have no bread; that he says these words; tacitly chiding and reproving us, for our want of thought and care; (see Gill on “<4067>Matthew 16:7”).

Ver. 17. *And when Jesus knew it*, etc..] As he did immediately, by his omniscience; for as he knew the thoughts and reasonings of the Scribes and Pharisees, (<4004>Matthew 9:4), so he did those of his own disciples:

he saith unto them, why reason ye because ye have no bread? or imagine that I have given you this caution on that account; or are distressed because this is your case, as if you should be reduced to great difficulties, by reason of your forgetfulness and negligence:

perceive ye not yet, neither understand? the meaning of the parabolical expressions, which he had used them to; or his power in providing food for them, and supporting a great number of persons with very little food, of which they had some very late instances:

have ye your heart yet hardened? as after the first miracle; (see <4652>Mark 6:52), for it might have been expected, that by a second miracle of the loaves, their understandings would have been more enlightened, and their faith increased, and that they would have relinquished their gross notions, their anxieties, doubts, and unbelief.

Ver. 18. *Having eyes, see ye not*? etc..] Meaning perhaps both the eyes of their bodies, and of their understandings: they had bodily eyes, and with them saw the miracles he wrought, and yet took little notice of them; and the eyes of their understandings were enlightened by Christ, and yet saw things but very darkly:

and having ears, hear ye not? They had their natural hearing, and yet made but little use of it; and did not so diligently attend to the sound of Christ's words: and though they had spiritual ears given them to hear, yet were very dull of, understanding, and taking in things:

and do ye not remember? the interpretation of parables formerly given, and the miracles of the loaves lately wrought.

Ver. 19. *When I brake the five loaves among five thousand*, etc..] This, with what follows, chiefly regards the last question:

how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? do not you remember? have you forgot what was so lately done? surely you cannot:

they say unto him, twelve. Their memories were hereby refreshed, and they call to mind the exact number of the baskets of fragments that were taken up, which were above double the number of the loaves, the multitude were fed with.

Ver. 20. *And when the seven among four thousand*, etc..] That is, when seven loaves were broken among four thousand men,

how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? this surely you must remember, it being so recent an action, but just done, as it were:

and they said, seven; for this, as yet, could not have slipped their memories; though they had, been reasoning among themselves because of their straitness of provisions, as if these things had never been done.

Ver. 21. *And he said unto them*, etc..] Since this was the case, and they so well remembered the miracles he had wrought, and the circumstances of them:

how is it that ye do not understand? my words concerning the leaven of the Pharisees, of the Sadducees, and of Herod, as to imagine I spoke of bread, taken in a literal sense; or that I concerned myself about the scantiness of your provisions, when you, might have learnt from my late miracles, how able I am to support you, if you had not so much as one loaf with you: wherefore it argues great want both of understanding and faith, and shows great stupidity, ignorance, and unbelief, to give such a sense of my words, and to be anxiously concerned on the score of your provisions.

Ver. 22. *And he cometh to Bethsaida*, etc..] The city of Andrew, Peter, and Philip, (⁴⁰0144 John 1:44); a fishing town, which was situated by the sea of Galilee. Beza's ancient copy, and the Gothic version, wrongly read "Bethany". The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "they came"; Christ, and his twelve apostles, who landed at this place:

and they bring a blind man unto him; for Christ had been here before, and was known by the inhabitants of the place; who, as soon as they heard of his arrival, and knowing what miracles were done by him, brought a poor blind man, of their town, to him, to be cured by him:

and besought him to touch him; having heard of, or seen cures performed by him this way. This man is an emblem of such who are spiritually blind: he had no natural sight at all; he could see nothing; he had not the least glimmering of any thing, until he was touched by Christ: so men, in a state of nature, are quite dark, even darkness itself, until they are made light by the Lord: they have no sight, nor sense of themselves, of their sinful, lost, and dangerous estate and condition they are in; they know not because they are blind, that they are wretched, and poor, and miserable, and naked: they have no sight of Christ, neither of the glory of his person, nor of the fulness of his grace, nor of the nature, necessity, and suitableness of his salvation: they are quite blind as to any saving knowledge of God in Christ, the way of life and peace by him, and the work of the Spirit of God upon the soul; or with regard to any spiritual experience of the power of Gospel

truths, or views of the glories of another world: and as this man seemed to be unconcerned himself about the cure of his blindness, only his friends were affected with his case, and brought him to Christ, and solicited a cure, so it is with unregenerate men, they are insensible of their case, and so thoughtless of it, and unaffected with it, and do not, of themselves, seek for a deliverance out of it; nor do they make use of means for that purpose; but it becomes their friends, relations, and acquaintance, that are spiritual, who know their case, and their need of Christ, and his grace, to bring them to him under the means, and pray unto him, that he would put forth the mighty power of his grace upon them, and give them spiritual sight to see in what a lost condition they are, and their need of him.

Ver. 23. *And he took the blind man by the hand*, etc..] Not for the sake of touching him, in order to heal him, as they desired, but to be his guide:

and led him out of the town; to shun all appearance of vain glory and popular applause, being willing to do the miracle in a private manner; and because of the obstinacy and unbelief of the inhabitants of this place, who were not worthy to be witnesses of such a cure; (see <40112121>Matthew 11:21);

and when he had spit on his eyes; not as a cause of healing him; for whatever use spittle may be of to such that have weak eyes, it can have no causal influence upon, or be of any service, in a natural way, to a blind man to restore his sight unto him:

and put his hands upon him; as he sometimes did, when he healed persons of any disorder:

he asked him, if he saw ought; any object whatever, whether he could perceive he had any sight at all. Christ's taking the blind man by the hand, and leading him out or the town, and spitting on his eyes, and putting his hands upon him, and then asking him if he saw ought, are emblematical of what he does in spiritual conversion, when he turns men from darkness to light: he takes them by the hand, which expresses his condescension, grace, and mercy, and becomes their guide and leader; and a better, and safer guide they cannot have; he brings them by a way they know not, and leads them in paths they had not known before; makes darkness light before them, and crooked things straight, and does not forsake them: he takes them apart, and separates them from the rest of the world; he calls them out from thence to go with him, teaching them, that, when enlightened by him, they should have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,

and the workers of them; for what communion has light with darkness? his putting spittle upon his eyes, may signify the means of grace, the eye salve of the word, which, when attended with a divine power, enlightens the eyes; and which power may be represented here by Christ's putting his hands upon the man; for the Gospel, without the power of Christ, Is insufficient to produce such an effect; but when it is accompanied with that, it always succeeds.

Ver. 24. *And he looked up*, etc..] This is omitted in the Arabic and Persic versions. The sense is, that he opened his eyelids, and lifted up his eyes, to try if he could see, and he could, and did see again; his sight was returned again, though very imperfectly as yet:

and said, I see men, as trees, walking: he saw some objects at a little distance from him, which, by their motion, he supposed to be men; otherwise his sight was so imperfect, that he could not have distinguished them from trees: he was capable of discerning the bulk of their bodies, and that they walked, or moved forward; but he could not distinguish the particular parts of their bodies; they seemed to be like trunks of trees, in an erect posture, and which he should have took for such, had it not been for their walking. As this man immediately, upon Christ's putting spittle on his eyes, and laying his hands on him, had sight given him, though it was very obscure and glimmering; so, as soon as ever the Gospel comes with power, it dispels the darkness of the mind, and introduces light; though at first it is but very small; it is let in gradually: the sinner is first convinced of the evil of his actions, and then of the sinfulness of his nature; he first sees the ability and suitableness of Christ as a Saviour, and after that his willingness, and his interest in him as such; and all this is commonly before he is so well acquainted with the dignity and infiniteness of his person, as the Son of God: and it is some time before he has his spiritual senses exercised to discern between good and evil, between truth and error; or arrives to a clear and distinct knowledge of Gospel truths, and a stability in them. Hence it is, that such are greatly harassed with Satan's temptations; are disquieted in their souls; are filled with doubts and fears, and are in danger of being imposed upon by false teachers.

Ver. 25. *After that he had put his hands again upon his eyes*, etc..] By the former account it does not appear on what part of him he put his hands; but this determines it; and from hence it seems plain, that he first spit on his

eyes, and then closed them, and put his hands on them; which last action of his he repeated, though not the former:

and made him look up. This is omitted in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions. The Vulgate Latin reads it, “he began to see”; and so Beza's ancient copy: but this he did before, upon the first imposition of hands on him. The Arabic version renders it, “he saw well”: this is expressed afterwards. The words are an order, or command of Christ to the man to lift up his eyes, and try again how he could see, and whether any better than before, which he did:

and he was restored; his sight was restored to him as before, and he was perfectly cured of his blindness;

and saw every man clearly; or “all things”, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read: he saw every object distinctly, and afar off, as the word used also signifies; he could distinguish men from trees, and trees from men. This man, as before observed, was a very lively emblem of one that is spiritually enlightened by the grace of God: Christ first separated this man from the rest of the multitude; and such are first distinguished from others in election, and redemption, and calling, who are illuminated by the Spirit of God: means were made use of by Christ for healing this man; though the bare actions, without a divine power, would have been insufficient, as the spittle of his mouth, and the imposition of his hands: and, generally speaking, in the illumination of a sinner the word of Christ's mouth is a means; though this, without the efficacy of his grace, is not of itself sufficient. This man, upon his first reception of sight, had a very dim, obscure, and imperfect view of things; could not well distinguish one thing from another, though he saw. As at first conversion, the enlightened soul has but a very glimmering view of things, particularly of Christ, the glory and fulness of his person, the efficacy of his blood, the excellency of his righteousness, of his ability, willingness, and suitableness as a Saviour; and especially of those doctrines of the Gospel, that are more sublime and distinguishing. But as this man afterwards had a more clear, and distinct view of objects; so it is with true believers in Christ; their shining light increases, and shines more and more unto the perfect day. For Gospel light at present is not perfect in any such who have the clearest views of things, have some darkness and imperfection in them; though they may be said to see all things clearly in comparison of what they sometimes did, and others do: particularly saints, under the Gospel dispensation see

more clearly than those under the legal dispensation did; the object was at a greater distance from them; they saw the promises afar off; and the medium of their sight or through which they saw were obscure types shadows and sacrifices and dark prophecies. Moses, and his law, had a veil over them; but New Testament saints with open face without a veil behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord Jesus and of Gospel truths: indeed, they that know most see things most clearly and speak of them most distinctly know but in part and prophesy but in part in comparison of the beatific vision; when saints shall see face to face and know, as they are known; they now see but through a glass darkly. How clearly will all things be seen in the new Jerusalem state when there will be no need of the light of the sun or moon of ordinances; but Christ, the Lamb will be the everlasting light thereof in which the nations of them that are saved shall walk!

Ver. 26. *And he sent him away to his house*, etc..] Which seems to have been in one of the neighbouring villages or was one of the houses scattered about in the fields for the conveniency of rural business.

Saying, neither go into the town: or "that town", as the Syriac, the town or city of Bethsaida:

nor tell it to any in the town; to any of the inhabitants of the town that he should meet with any where or at any time: the reason of this was not merely or only because Christ would have the miracle concealed; but chiefly because the inhabitants of this place were notorious for their impenitence and unbelief. Christ had done many wonderful works among them and yet they repented not; nor did they believe in him; but despised him, his doctrine and his miracles; and therefore for their neglect and contempt of such means he was determined to withdraw them from them. So Christ sometimes deals with nations cities and towns that disbelieve reject and despise his Gospel; he takes it away from them he orders his ministering servants to preach no more to them; no more to tell them of the good news of life and salvation by him: thus he dealt with the Jews who contradicted and blasphemed and judged themselves or by their conduct made themselves appear to be unworthy of the words of eternal life; he took away the kingdom of God or the Gospel from them and sent it among the Gentiles: and thus he threatened the church of Ephesus for leaving its first love to remove the candlestick out of its place in case of non-repentance; and a grievous judgment it is upon a place and people when God commands the clouds to rain no rain upon them, (Isaiah 5:6); or, in

other words when he enjoins his ministers no more to tell, or publish his Gospel to them; he determining to withdraw from them and have no more to do with them; so Christ and his disciples departed from this place, declared in the following verse.

Ver. 27. *And Jesus went out, and his disciples*, etc..] From Bethsaida and even from Galilee

into the towns Caesarea Philippi; in the jurisdiction of Philip, tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis; for this Caesarea was rebuilt by him and called so in honour of Tiberius Caesar; and the towns and villages adjacent to it are here intended: (see Gill on "<4016>Matthew 16:13");

and by the way he asked his disciples; as they were going from Galilee to those parts:

saying unto them; whom do men say that I am? not that he needed any information of this; for he knew not only what was said by men but What was in them; but he put this question, in order to bring out their sense of, and faith in him, and to impart something to them which was necessary they should be acquainted with; (see Gill on "<4016>Matthew 16:13"), where it is read, "whom do men say that I, the son of man am?"

Ver. 28. *And they answered*, etc..] That some said he was

John the Baptist; which was the opinion of Herod, and others:

but some say Elias; that is the "Tishbite", whom the Jews in general expected in person before the coming of the Messiah and imagined that Jesus was he:

and others one of the prophets; as Jeremiah or Isaiah or some other. The Vulgate Latin reads, "as one of the prophets"; and so Beza's ancient copy as in (<4016>Mark 6:15). All spake highly and honourably of him: the people in common did not look upon him as a mean person; they perceived by his doctrine and more especially by his miracles that he was an extraordinary one: the several persons which they differently took him to be and make mention of were such as were of great repute; as John the Baptist, who had lately, been among them and whom all held to be a prophet, and indeed was more than a prophet; and Elias who was so very zealous for the Lord of hosts and wrought many miracles in his day; and whose coming the Jews were in expectation of to usher in the Messiah; and none thought him less

than one of the prophets; and all agreed he was an uncommon man; even one raised from the dead as he must be, if he was John the Baptist or Elias or one of the old prophets; but they knew him not at least did not confess him to be the Messiah; he not appearing as a temporal prince, they were taught to believe he would be; (see Gill on "<4014>Matthew 16:14").

Ver. 29. *And he saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am*? etc..] It was for the sake of this question he put the former; (see Gill on "<4015>Matthew 16:15");

and Peter answereth and saith unto him, thou art the Christ; the Messiah that was long ago promised and so often prophesied of in the books of Moses and the prophets; and whom the Jews have so much and long expected. This confession of Peter's in which all the apostles agreed with him speaks out what Jesus really was, and exceeds the most exalted sentiments which the people had of him: he was not the harbinger of the Messiah but the Messiah himself; not Elias in whose Spirit his forerunner was to come and did come; nor any one of the prophets; but he who was spoken of by all the holy prophets; which have been since the beginning of the world. Not one of the various opinions of the people being just, and answering the true character of Jesus, he demands the sense of his disciples which is here given by Peter in their name, and which was right; and on account of which he declared Peter blessed and ascribed his knowledge of him not to flesh and blood but to the revelation of his Father. The Syriac and Persic versions add, "the Son of the living God"; and so Beza found it in one ancient copy; but it may be it is only taken from <4016>Matthew 16:16; (see Gill on "<4016>Matthew 16:16").

Ver. 30. *And he charged them*, etc..] His disciples, after he had declared his approbation of Peter's confession of faith, and signified he would build his church on that rock, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it: and promised Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and that whatsoever was bound, or loosed by him on earth, should be bound and loosed in heaven; which are omitted by Mark, but related by Matthew, (<4017>Matthew 16:17-19): after this he gave a strict and severe charge,

that they should tell no man of him; that he was the Messiah, and the Son of God; (see Gill on "<4020>Matthew 16:20").

Ver. 31. *And he began to teach them*, etc..] For as yet he had said nothing to them about his sufferings and death, at least in express terms; but now

they being firmly established in the faith of him, as the Messiah, he thought it proper to inform them,

that the son of man must suffer many things; meaning himself, as that he should be betrayed, apprehended, and bound, should be smitten, spit upon, buffeted, and scourged; and which things must be done, and he suffer them, because it was so determined by God, and foretold in the Scriptures:

and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests and Scribes; which composed the grand sanhedrim of the nation, and are the builders that were prophesied of by whom he should be rejected, (<19B822>Psalm 118:22),

and be killed; in a violent manner; his life be taken away by force, without law, or justice:

and after three days rise again: not after three days were ended, and on the fourth day, but after the third day was come; that is, "on the third day", as the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read; and even the Pharisees themselves thus understood Christ, (<402763>Matthew 27:63,64), so the phrase, "after eight days", is used for the eighth day, being come, or that same day a week later; (see <420928>Luke 9:28) compared with (<401701>Matthew 17:1 <432026>John 20:26).

Ver. 32. *And he spake that saying openly*, etc..] Concerning his sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead. He not only spoke it before them all, but in plain words, without a figure; so that it might be, and was clearly understood by them; and he spake it as the word will also bear, not only very freely, but likewise boldly, with an undaunted courage, with intrepidity of mind; being not in the least discouraged, nor showing any concern or fear about what was to befall him:

and Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. Peter might more especially be concerned at this free and open account Christ gave of his sufferings and death, because he had just now acquainted him, that he should have the keys of the kingdom of heaven; by which he might understand some high post in the temporal kingdom of the Messiah he expected; and immediately to hear of his sufferings and death, damped his spirits, and destroyed his hopes, and threw him into such difficulties he was not able to remove; and therefore he takes Christ aside, and very warmly expostulates with him about what he had said, and chides him for it, and entreats him that he would not think, or talk of such like things: the words of Peter are recorded by Matthew, (see Gill on "<401622>Matthew 16:22").

Ver. 33. *But when he had turned about*, etc..] Upon Peter, and showed quick resentment at what he said:

and looked on his disciples; he cast his eye toward, them at the same time, and expressed to them the same displeasure in his countenance, they being of the same mind:

he rebuked Peter, saying, get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God; things which were according to the will of God, as the sufferings of Christ were: they were according to the determinate counsel of his will; what he had determined in his purposes and council should be; and what he had declared in the Scriptures of truth, the revelation of his will, would be; and in which, according to them, he should have a great concern himself, (<2506>Isaiah 53:6,10), and whereby all his divine perfections would be glorified, and therefore may well be said to be the things of God; and which ought to be savoured, minded, and attended to, as things of the greatest moment and importance: and which, though the apostle had often read of in the books of the Old Testament; yet either had not a clear understanding of them, as being the will of God; or however, they were greatly out of his view at this time, his mind being possessed with notions of a temporal kingdom, and of worldly honour and grandeur: wherefore it follows,

but the things that be of men; as were the notions of Christ's being a temporal prince, that would set up a worldly kingdom, and deliver the Jews from the Roman yoke, and make his subjects happy, with an affluence of all worldly things; and particularly his favourites, as the disciples were: these were schemes of men's devising, and were suited to the corrupt nature, and carnal inclinations of men; and these things at present too much possessed Peter's mind: wherefore the Lord rebuked him in a very severe, though just manner; being touched in his most tender part, and dissuaded from that which his heart was set upon, and he came into the world for; whose keen resentment is seen by using a phrase he never did but to the devil himself, (<4004>Matthew 4:10); (see Gill on "<4023>Matthew 16:23").

Ver. 34. *And when he had called the people unto him*, etc..] Who, it seems, followed him out of Galilee, from Bethsaida, and these parts; for it was in the way from thence to Caesarea Philippi, that Christ had this conversation with his disciples; who walked together alone, the multitude following at some distance; and the private conversation being ended, Christ called, or beckoned to the people, to come nearer to him:

with his disciples also; for what he was about to say, concerned them both:

whosoever will come after me; in a spiritual sense, as this multitude did in a natural one, and which is the same as to be a disciple of his:

let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me; signifying, that his followers must deny themselves of worldly advantages, and suffer many things, as well as he, which he had been but just before acquainting his disciples with; (see Gill on "<40>1624Matthew 16:24").

Ver. 35. *For whosoever will save his life*, etc..] Life is a valuable thing, and all that a man has he will give for it; self preservation is a principle in nature; and it becomes every man to take all lawful methods to save his life, when it is threatened, or is in danger: but whoever is willing to save it, when it is called for to be laid down for Christ's sake; and rather than lay it down, will deny Christ, and give up a profession of him, and his Gospel,

shall lose it: he shall not enjoy it with honour and comfort now, and much less with peace, pleasure, and happiness hereafter, but shall be under the power of the second death:

but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's; that is, shall willingly part with it when he is called to it, rather than deny Christ and his Gospel,

the same shall save it: though he will lose it now, he will find it again in the resurrection of life; for he will rise to eternal life; when such, who have apostatized from Christ, will rise to shame, and everlasting contempt: this man will have greatly the advantage over such; they will die the second death, or be destroyed soul and body in hell; and he will live for ever with Christ, in endless pleasure and glory; (see Gill on "<40>1625Matthew 16:25").

Ver. 36. *For what shall it profit a man*, etc..] In the long run, in the issue of things, who by denying Christ, and his Gospel, may not only save his life for the present, but procure for himself great riches and wealth:

if he shall gain the whole world; were that possible to be done, and which the ambitious, worldly man is desirous of; yet supposing he: had his desire, of what avail would this be in the upshot of things, should the following be his case, as it will,

and lose his own soul? which is immortal and everlasting, when the world, and the glory of it pass away, and so is of more worth than the whole

world. The world can only be enjoyed for a season, and that with a great deal of fatigue and trouble; but the soul continues for ever; and if it is lost and damned, its torment always abides, and the smoke of it ascends for ever, its worm never dies, and its fire is never quenched; (see Gill on "⁴⁰16²⁶Matthew 16:26").

Ver. 37. *Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul*?] To deliver it out of its miserable state and condition; all the riches of the world, and the whole world itself, are not an equivalent to it, or a sufficient ransom for it; riches will not profit in the day of wrath, or deliver a soul from damnation, and ruin: wherefore, if he had the whole world, he could not redeem his soul with it; and he has nothing else to give for it, and therefore it is past all recovery: (see Gill on "⁴⁰16²⁶Matthew 16:26").

Ver. 38. *Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me*, etc..] As suffering, crucified, and put to death; things he had been speaking of before: whoever through scandal of the cross, and fear of men, will be ashamed of Christ, and dare not profess faith in him, but shall conceal and keep it to themselves:

and of my words; the doctrines of the Gospel, of remission of sins by his blood, of justification by his righteousness, and of salvation alone by him, with every other truth relating to him, or connected with these;

in this adulterous and sinful generation; which was so both in a moral and spiritual sense; for both corporeal and spiritual adultery prevailed among them, And particularly the Scribes and Pharisees adulterated the word of God by their false glosses, in which they acted a very sinful part; and such was their authority, that few durst contradict them, or profess doctrines which were the reverse of them. Wherefore our Lord assures his disciples and followers, that should they be deterred by these men from a free and open profession of him, and his Gospel, by which it would appear that they were ashamed of both,

of him also shall the son of man be ashamed; will not own such an one for his; he will take no notice of him; he will not confess his name; but, as one that he is ashamed of, he will turn away from him; not so much as look at him, or say one favourable word to him, or for him; but bid him be gone from him, as a worker of iniquity: this he will do,

when he cometh in the glory of his Father; the same that the Father has; being his Son, of the same nature with him, and equal to him; and as

mediator, endued with power and authority from him, to judge the world; and when he will be accompanied

with the holy angels; who will descend from heaven with him, and be employed on earth by him; (see Gill on "<4016>Matthew 16:27").

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 9

Ver. 1. *And he said unto them*, etc..] Both to his disciples, and the multitude,

verily I say unto you, there be some of them that stand here; that were then living, and upon the spot,

which shall not taste of death, or die,

till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. When Jesus was declared both Lord and Christ, by the wonderful effusion of the Holy Spirit; the Gospel spread in the world both among Jews and Gentiles, in spite of all opposition, under the power and influence of the grace of God, to the conversion of thousands of souls; and that branch of Christ's regal power exerted in the destruction of the Jewish nation; (see Gill on "<4016B>Matthew 16:28"). This verse properly belongs to the foregoing chapter, to which it is placed in the Vulgate Latin version; and so it concludes one in Matthew, and ought not to begin a new chapter.

Ver. 2. *And after six days*, etc..] Six days after this discourse with his disciples, in their way to Caesarea Philippi, and after they were come into those parts:

Jesus taketh with him Peter, James, and John; favourite disciples, and a sufficient number, to be witnesses of his transfiguration:

and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves; where he and they were alone. This was not Mount Tabor, as is generally said, but either the mountain which Caesarea was at the foot of, or it may be Mount Lebanon; (see Gill on "<4017D>Matthew 17:1");

and he was transfigured before them; the above three disciples; (see Gill on "<4017D>Matthew 17:2").

Ver. 3. *And his raiment became shining*, etc..] With the rays of glory and brightness which darted from his body through his clothes, and made them as bright as the light of the sun at noon day: and

exceeding white as snow; than which nothing is whiter;

so as no fuller on earth can white them. The Syriac version renders it, “as men cannot white on earth”; and the Persic thus, “so as men could not behold him”. Just as the Israelites could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, because of the glory of his countenance, when he came down from the mount; (see Gill on “Matthew 17:2”).

Ver. 4. *And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses*, etc..] Or Moses and Elias, as all the Oriental versions read, as in Mt. 17:3, (see Gill on “Matthew 17:3”):

and they were talking with Jesus; concerning his decease, and what he was to do and suffer at Jerusalem, and of which he himself had lately talked with his disciples; so that this might have been a confirmation of these things to them; (see Gill on “Matthew 17:3”).

Ver. 5. *And Peter answered and said to Jesus*, etc..] He addressed himself to him, as being more familiar with him; as also because he was the principal person: wherefore he says,

master, it is good for us to be here: the company and conversation were exceeding agreeable to him and his fellow disciples; and the glory that Christ appeared in surpassed every thing they had seen before:

and let us make three tabernacles; or, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “and we will make”, etc.. expressing not a petition, but a resolution; to which the Persic version premises, “if thou wilt give us commandment”; submitting it to the will of Christ:

one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias; (see Gill on “Matthew 17:4”).

Ver. 6. *For he wist not what to say*, etc..] He did not know what he should say, or what was proper to be said by him, at such a time, in such circumstances, and before such persons;

for they were sore afraid. The Persic version reads, “he was”: and so the Latin translation of the Syriac, though that itself is, “they were”; for all

three were filled with consternation at what they saw and heard; so that they were scarcely themselves, and knew not well what they said or did.

Ver. 7. *And there was a cloud that overshadowed them*, etc..] Jesus, Moses, and Elias, and also the disciples; who, according to Luke, entered into it, and so were covered by it.

And a voice came out the cloud, saying, this is my beloved Son, hear him. This was the voice of God the Father, bearing a testimony to the sonship of Christ; and was directed, not to Moses and Elias, but to the disciples, enjoining them to hear and obey him, who was the end of the law and prophets; was the great prophet Moses had spoken of, and was to be hearkened to, and whom all the prophets had testified of, and in whom they all centred; (see Gill on "Matthew 17:5").

Ver. 8. *And suddenly, when they had looked round about*, etc..] Upon hearing the voice, to see if they could observe any other object, by whom it was pronounced, and whether the same they had seen continued:

they saw no man any more; neither Moses, nor Elias, not at that time, nor ever after;

save Jesus only with themselves: the voice only regarded him, and being directed to them; (see Gill on "Matthew 17:8").

Ver. 9. *And as they came down from the mountain*, etc..] Christ and his three disciples, Peter, James, and John, whom he led up thither:

he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen; on the mount, as the transfiguration of himself, the persons of Moses and Elias, and the bright cloud from whence the voice came, which bore testimony of Christ's sonship: he ordered to keep the whole of this a secret from every man, even from their fellow disciples,

till the Son of man were risen from the dead; (see Gill on "Matthew 17:9").

Ver. 10. *And they kept that saying with themselves*, etc..] "They retained it in their own mind", as the Persic version renders it; "they kept [it] close", as Luke says, (Luke 9:36), among themselves, and acquainted no man with it: and which refers either to the whole of Christ's charge, relating to the vision on the mount; or else only to what he said about his resurrection from the dead; and which they took notice of particularly, and laid hold

upon, as the word will bear to be rendered; and so the Ethiopic version does render it, “and they observed his saying”; what he last said concerning the son of man's rising from the dead;

questioning with one other what the rising from the dead should mean: they inquired, disputed, and reasoned with one another, what should be the meaning of such an expression: not that they were ignorant of the general resurrection of the dead; for this was the hope of Israel, and the general sense of the Jewish nation: but they did not know what he meant by his particular rising from the dead: whether he meant it in a literal sense, which supposed his death; and that though he had lately told them of, they knew not how to reconcile to the notions they had of a long and flourishing temporal kingdom of the Messiah; or whether he meant a and interest, in such manner as they expected.

Ver. 11. *And they asked him, saying*, etc..] Being put in mind of it, by seeing Elias on the mount, or else by what Christ had said concerning his resurrection, or both:

why say the Scribes, the Vulgate Latin adds, “and Pharisees”,

that Elias must first come? before the Messiah comes, or before the setting up his kingdom in greater glory; (see Gill on “<40170>Matthew 17:10”).

Ver. 12. *And he answered, and told them*, etc..] Allowing that their observation was right, and that this was the sense of the Scribes, and that there was something of truth in it, when rightly understood:

Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things: (see Gill on “<40171>Matthew 17:11”);

and how it is written of the son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought. The sense of Christ is, that John the Baptist, whom he means by Elias, comes first, and restores all things: and among the rest of the things he sets right, this is one, and not of the least; namely, that he gives the true sense of such passages of the sacred writings, which related to the contemptuous usage, rejection, and sufferings of the Messiah; as that in these he was the Lamb of God typified in the sacrifices of the law, who by his sufferings and death takes away the sin, of the world; and therefore he exhorted and directed those to whom he ministered, to look unto him, and believe in him; (see <43029>John 1:29 <44104>Acts 19:4).

Ver. 13. *But I say unto you, that Elias is indeed come*, etc..] Meaning John the Baptist, who in prophecy is designed by him.

And they have done unto him whatsoever they listed; (see Gill on "<4072>Matthew 17:12"); which words should be read in a parenthesis, as they are in the Vulgate Latin version; for what follows, as

it is written of him, respects not what the Scribes and Pharisees, and the people of the Jews did to John at their pleasure; despising his ministry and message, rejecting the counsel of God delivered by him, and remaining impenitent and unbelieving, notwithstanding his powerful and awakening ministry, with many other things, which are no where written of him; but the words regard his coming, and the prophecies concerning him, and particularly, that under the name of Elijah, in (<3905>Malachi 4:5) and which had had their accomplishment.

Ver. 14. *And when he came to his disciples*, etc..] The other nine, who were left at the bottom of the mountain, and were waiting for him:

he saw a great multitude about them: there was a multitude that followed him from Bethsaida hither; and which, very likely, was greatly increased upon Christ's arrival in those parts, and the people hearing of it;

and the Scribes questioning with them; disputing and contending with them about their master, his doctrines and miracles, and their mission and authority from him; insulting them, on account of their inability to dispossess a dumb spirit, hereafter related.

Ver. 15. *And straightway all the people, when they beheld him*, etc..] As soon as ever they saw him, to many of whom, especially those that followed him out of Galilee, he was personally known.

Were greatly amazed; either that he should come at that juncture, to assist and relieve his disciples, when the Scribes were triumphing over them, as some think; or rather, as others, on account of that remaining lustre and glory which was on his countenance, through his transfiguration, and not yet wholly gone off; like that which was on the face of Moses, when he came down from Mount Sinai:

and running to him, saluted him; wishing him all peace and prosperity, expressing their great joy at his coming to them; which was very desirable

by them, and exceedingly pleasing to them, and especially at this time, as both their words and gesture showed.

Ver. 16. *And he asked the Scribes*, etc..] The Vulgate Latin renders it, “he asked them”; and the Ethiopic version, he said unto them; meaning either that he asked the disciples when he came to them, or else the people that ran to salute him; but the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, “the Scribes”; seeing them about his disciples, in close debate with them, and running hard upon them, he asks them,

what question ye with them? what is it ye seek and require of them? what is your dispute with them? what is your debate about? The Vulgate Latin version reads, “what question ye among you?” among themselves, and one another; and so Beza's most ancient copy.

Ver. 17. *And one of the multitude answered and said*, etc..] The Scribes made no reply, being afraid to engage with him, whom they had often found too hard for them; and the disciples, if they were spoken to, were silent, through shame, because they had not succeeded in the cure of the person brought to them, which gave their enemies an handle against them: wherefore the parent of the afflicted child made answer, saying; the occasion of this debate between the Scribes, and thy disciples, is as follows:

Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; signifying, that he had heard much of him, as a very great man, and he believed him to be a master in Israel, who was famous both for doctrine and miracles, and therefore he brought his son to him, to be cured by him; but Christ not being in the way, he proposed him to his disciples, who attempted it without success. The case of his son was, he had a “dumb spirit”. The Evangelist Matthew says he was “lunatic”, (<4017 15>Matthew 17:15); and by his account of him it appears, that he had the “epilepsy”, or falling sickness; and which, when upon him, took away the use of his speech. And so the Jews ascribe dumbness to the violence of a disease: thus they ask [f176];

“what is “Cordiacus” (καρδιακος)? one that has a disorder which affects the heart, and causes a deliquium (a fainting and swooning away), but a man, lah, “who is become dumb”, through the force of a disease;”

which was the case of this child: though this disease did not arise from natural causes, but from a diabolical possession; for he had a spirit, a foul spirit, a devil, as he is called: some further account is given of this unhappy case, in the next verse.

Ver. 18. *And wheresoever he taketh him*, etc..] The spirit, or devil, whether it be near fire, or water, whatsoever danger, or dangerous place:

he teareth him; or throws him into it, or dashes him against it; or inwardly racks, tortures, and convulses him:

and he foameth; at the mouth, like one that is mad:

and gnasheth with his teeth; through the excessive pain he is in:

and pineth away; his flesh is withered, dried up, and consumed away. This was the sad deplorable case this child was in, who was his father's only child, and therefore his health and life were very desirable: now he further observes to Christ, saying,

and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out, and they could not. Christ being absent, he entreated the disciples, who had power against unclean spirits, to cast them out; that they would make use of it, and dispossess this dumb and evil spirit; and who did make trial to cast him out, but were not able to effect it; (see Gill on "Matthew 17:16").

Ver. 19. *He answereth him*, etc..] The father of the child, and who is included in the reproof afterwards given, for his unbelief, and taking part with the Scribes against his disciples; though the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, read, "them"; meaning not his disciples, but the Scribes and Pharisees, with the father of the child: and saith,

O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me; (see Gill on "Matthew 17:17").

Ver. 20. *And they brought him unto him*, etc..] The father of the child, and those that were with him, brought the child to Jesus, into his presence, before him:

and when he saw him, that is, either when Jesus saw the child, or the child saw Jesus; or the evil spirit in him, and by him which were all at once:

straightway the spirit tare him; threw him into a violent fit, shook him, and convulsed him in a dreadful manner; knowing his time was short, and being

filled with indignation and rage, that he should be obliged, as he knew he must, to leave the child very speedily; and was therefore resolved to do all the mischief, and put him to all the pain he could:

and he fell on the ground; at the feet of Jesus, not being able to stand, through the violent motions and convulsions he threw him into:

and wallowed, foaming; rolled about from side to side, foaming at the mouth, and in the most exquisite rack and torture.

Ver. 21. *And he asked his father*, etc..] As he lay rolling about in this miserable condition, that the length and stubbornness of his disorder might be known, and so the cure the more remarkable, and appear the more expressive of his divine power and goodness:

how long is it ago since this came unto him? since this evil spirit entered into him, and these disorders have attended him?

and he said of a child; or "from his infancy"; so that it was not for any actual sin that he had committed, that this sore affliction came upon him; and yet he could not be without sin, since it was not agreeable to the justice, mercy, and goodness of God, to afflict, or suffer to be afflicted, one that is innocent; and therefore must be tainted with original sin, which is the source and spring of all afflictions, calamities and judgments.

Ver. 22. *And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire*, etc..] When he has been near it; so that one part or other of his body has been scorched, or burnt, and his life in danger:

and into the waters to destroy him: when he has been near any brook, or river, it has thrown him into it, in order to drown him, as into the fire to burn him. The Ethiopic version before fire and water reads, "into the deep"; meaning either the sea or some deep pit, or off a precipice. All this is said to aggravate the case, and show the miserable condition the child was in, from the frequency of the fits, and the danger he was exposed to:

but if thou canst do any thing. This man's faith was very weak, and perhaps weaker than when he first came from home with his child. He had brought him to the disciples of Christ, and they could not cure him; the evil spirit was as strong, or stronger in him than ever; he now lay in a violent fit, and in a most miserable condition; so that he was almost ready to despair of healing: some small hopes he had that Christ might be able to relieve in this

case; but he puts an if upon his power, and earnestly entreats him, if he had any, he would put it forth:

have compassion on us, and help us; his child that lay in such a deplorable condition, rolling on the ground at his feet; and himself, who was greatly afflicted for him: he tries, in very moving language, both the power and pity of Christ; and begs that if he had either, he would exert them on this occasion.

Ver. 23. *Jesus said unto him, if thou canst believe*, etc..] As the man put an "if" on the power of Christ, Christ puts an "if" on the faith of the man; and tacitly suggests, that power was not wanting in himself, but faith in him; and should that cure not be performed, it would not be owing to any inability in him, but to his own incredulity. The Arabic version renders it, "what is this thy: saying, if thou canst do any thing?" What dost thou mean by it? Thou oughtest not to doubt of my power; there is no reason for it, after so many miracles wrought; upbraiding the man with his unbelief; and the Ethiopic version renders it thus, "because thou sayest, if thou canst": wherefore to show that power was not wanting in him, provided he had but faith, it follows,

all things are possible to him that believeth; that is, "to be done" to him, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions supply: for all things are not possible to be done by the believer himself, but all things are possible to be done for him, by God, or Christ, or the Spirit of God: thus our Lord, as he elsewhere does, ascribes that to faith, which is done by a divine power.

Ver. 24. *And straightway the father of the child cried out*, etc..] As soon as ever he found it was put upon his faith, and that the issue of things would be according to that, he expressed himself with much vehemency, being in great distress; partly with indignation at his unbelief, and partly through fear of missing a cure, by reason of it:

and said with tears; repenting of his unbelief, and grieved at the present weakness of his faith; which he very ingenuously confesses, saying,

Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief; not forward, but out of the way: he found in himself some small degree of faith in the power of Christ, but it was mixed with much unbelief, through the greatness of the child's disorder; and therefore desires it might be removed from him, and he might be helped against it: he saw it was not in his own power to believe; nor had he strength of himself to oppose his unbelief; but that both faith must be

given him, and power against unbelief. The Syriac version renders it, “help”, ytwnmyh twryl, “the defect of my faith”: till up that which is lacking in it, it is very deficient, Lord, increase it; and the Arabic and Ethiopic translate thus, “help the weakness of my faith”. He found his faith very weak, he desires it might be strengthened, that he might be strong in faith, and give glory to God; and in this way belief is helped, or men helped against it: every believer, more or less, at one time or another, finds himself in this man's case; and also that it is necessary to make use of the same petition; for faith is but imperfect in this life, and often very weak and defective in its exercise.

Ver. 25. *When Jesus saw that the people came running together*, etc..] hytwl, “to him”, as the Syriac version adds, and so the Persic; upon hearing the vehement cry of the father of the child, and the earnest solicitations he made, expecting that something would be done:

he rebuked the foul spirit; that brought this disorder on the child, had continued it so long, and with so much violence. Matthew calls this foul spirit, “the devil”, (see Gill on “<4017>Matthew 17:18”):

saying unto him, thou dumb and deaf spirit; so calling him, not because the spirit was dumb and deaf, but because he had been the cause of dumbness and deafness in the child: he had at times taken away both his speech and hearing:

I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into him. Christ, in an authoritative way, ordered the unclean spirit to leave his possession, and never attempt to regain it more. This he said, partly with regard to the devil, who would be desirous of repossession; and partly with respect to the disease, which had its intervals, and returned at certain times; and also with respect to the father of the child, to confirm his faith in the cure, and that he might be in no pain about the return of the disorder.

Ver. 26. *And [the spirit] cried, and rent him sore*, etc..] We rightly supply, “the spirit”, as do the Syriac and Persic versions, “the demon”; for it was he, and not the child, that cried, and made an hideous noise, at his ejection; being filled with wrath and rage, that he must be obliged to quit the possession he had so long held; and therefore, in spite and malice, before it left him, shook and tore him, and threw him into dreadful convulsions:

and came out of him; though sore against his will, being obliged to it, by the superior power of Christ:

and he was as one dead: that is, the child, when the devil had left him, lay as still as if he had no breath, nor life in him:

insomuch that many said, he is dead; really dead: that there was no life in him, nor any hopes of his coming to himself again.

Ver. 27. *But Jesus took him by the hand*, etc..] "Took hold of the hand of the child", as the Persic version renders it;

and lifted him up; from the ground, on which he was cast by the spirit;

and he arose: this is omitted in the Syriac and Arabic versions, though in one edition of the latter, according to Deuteronomy Dieu, it is rendered, "and he stood"; to which is added, "and went into his own house". The Persic version, instead of this clause, reads, "and the child was healed"; and all the expressions show, that he was perfectly well.

Ver. 28. *And when he was come into the house*, etc..] Perhaps into the man's house whose child he had healed, or into some other in these parts, for the sake both of retirement and refreshment:

his disciples asked him privately, why could not we cast him out? The nine disciples, who were particularly concerned in this matter, fearing they had lost the power of casting out devils, conferred upon them, inquired of Jesus, when he was alone, why they could not cast the demon out of the child, when they had ejected unclean spirits out of many others; (see Gill on "<4079>Matthew 17:19").

Ver. 29. *And he said unto them*, etc..] Matthew, besides the following reason, assigns another, as given by our Lord, why they could not cast out the foul spirit, which was their unbelief; of which they were guilty in some sort, as well as the Jews, and the father of the child; but Mark omits it, and only relates this as the reason;

this kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting; which they had not observed; (see Gill on "<4072>Matthew 17:21").

Ver. 30. *And they departed thence*, etc..] From the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, from that part of the country where the mountain was, on which Christ was transfigured, and at the foot of which the above miracle was

wrought. This is to be understood of Christ and his twelve disciples, though the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read in the singular number, “he went out”; not alone, but with his disciples, as the following account shows:

and passed through Galilee; in order to go to the coasts of Judea, and so to Jerusalem, where he was shortly to suffer: and therefore that his journey might not be retarded, and he be hindered by the conversation of the people in Galilee, and their importunity to stay with them, and teach, and work miracles among them, he passed through the country, in as private a manner as could be:

and he would not that any man should know it; partly for the reason just mentioned, and partly that he might have the opportunity of conversing alone with his disciples, and of reminding, and informing them, of some important things, which it was necessary they should be acquainted with, and observe.

Ver. 31. *For he taught his disciples, and said unto them*, etc..] What he had some little time before suggested to them; (see <4083>Mark 8:31).

The son of man is delivered into the hands of men: in one of Beza's copies it is read, “sinful men”, as in (<4207>Luke 24:7) and so the Persic version reads here, and adds rebellious. This is represented as if it was already done, because it was determined and agreed upon, that it should be; and because, in a very little time, the son of man would be delivered into the hands of wicked men, according to the will of God, with his own consent, by the means of Judas, the Jews, and Pilate:

and they shall kill him; put him to death, in a violent manner, contrary to all law and justice:

and after that he is killed; this is omitted in the Arabic version, and in the Persic version in the room of it it is read, “and shall put him into a sepulchre”; that being what followed next upon his death:

and he shall rise the third day. This Christ always takes care to mention, for the comfort of his disciples, when he tells them of his death.

Ver. 32. *But they understood not that saying*, etc..] Meaning either the whole of what he had said, concerning his delivery, death, and resurrection: and which then must be interpreted with some limitation; for they must

understand the sense of his words, which were clear and express; especially concerning his death, which affected their minds with trouble and grief; for Matthew says, “they were exceeding sorry upon it”, (see Gill on “Matthew 17:23”); but they could not understand how it could be, and upon what account, and for what end, so holy and good, and innocent a man as he was, could be put to death; nor how this could consist with his character, as the Son of God, the Messiah, and king of Israel; and with the notions they had of the Messiah's abiding for ever, and setting up a temporal kingdom on earth: or this may regard only his resurrection from the dead; which whether it was to be taken in a literal or mystical sense, they could not tell:

and were afraid to ask him; lest they should be upbraided with their ignorance and stupidity, as they had been lately rebuked by him for their unbelief, and the neglect of their duty; and as Peter had been severely reprimanded for expostulating with him about the selfsame things, delivered by him to them, not before.

Ver. 33. *And he came to Capernaum*, etc..] Where he met with the collectors of the tribute money, and paid it to them, as related by Matthew, (Matthew 17:24), though Mark takes no notice of it. The Vulgate Latin and the Syriac versions, read in the plural number, “they came”; Christ and his twelve apostles; and which is the sense of the words, read in the singular number; for Christ came not alone, but with his disciples:

and being in the house; of Simon and Andrew, very likely where he used to be when at Capernaum:

he asked them, what was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? Whilst in their journey from Caesarea Philippi, to Galilee; or as they travelled through the parts of Galilee to Capernaum. This question Christ put, not as ignorant of what had passed among them, but in order to have the case laid before him; that he might reprove them for their pride and ambition, and have an opportunity of teaching them humility, and of informing them of the nature of his kingdom, and subjects; concerning which, they had entertained very wrong notions. The phrase “among yourselves”, is omitted in the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, but stands in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic.

Ver. 34. *But they held their peace*, etc..] Fearing a reprimand, for their vanity and affectation of worldly grandeur:

for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who [should be] the greatest; that is, who should be advanced to the highest post, and have the greatest place of authority, honour, and dignity, in the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, they expected would be in a little time set up; for notwithstanding what Christ had said to them, concerning his being given up to the power of men, and concerning his death and resurrection, they still retained their former principle, to which they knew not how to reconcile his dying; and therefore chose rather to leave his meaning in suspense, and remain ignorant about it, than quit so darling a notion: and doubtless this dispute was occasioned by what Christ had said to them; who afterwards, getting by themselves, talked about it, which led on to a warm contest, about precedence in his kingdom.

Ver. 35. *And he sat down*, etc..] As their master, as one having authority; and in order to examine into this matter, and pass judgment upon it:

and called the twelve; all the disciples, who though they might not be all engaged in this dispute, nor equally criminal, yet were all, possessed of the same notion; and therefore Christ calls them all unto him, what he had to say, being pertinent unto them all:

and saith unto them, if any man desire to be first; to have the pre-eminence, and be in the chief place in the kingdom of the Messiah,

the same shall be last of all, and servant of all: his pride and vanity shall be checked; his ambitious views shall be frustrated; instead of being first, he shall be last; and instead of having superior reverence and respect, he shall be debased, and treated with neglect and contempt; and instead of being the master over others, shall be the servant of all. Some copies read, “let him be”; and so the Persic version, “let him be last, and minister to every one”; and the Ethiopic thus, “let him subject himself to all, and be servant to all”; for the only way to preferment in Christ's kingdom, or in the Gospel dispensation, is humility and meekness, and performing the lowest services to all, with diligence and cheerfulness.

Ver. 36. *And he took a child*, etc..] Which was in the house, and which he called unto him, and set by him, as the other evangelists observe:

and set him in the midst of them; his disciples, that all might see and learn from this instance;

and when he had taken him in his arms; and embraced him, to show his great regard to humility, and humble persons:

he said unto them; the following words.

Ver. 37. *Whosoever shall receive one of such children*, etc..] That is, any believer, who is like to such a child for humility, meekness, and lowliness of mind; and so the Syriac version renders it, aylj anh ya, "one like to this child": and so the Arabic and Persic versions; for it cannot be thought that Christ's meaning is, that whoever takes up any little child, embraces, and takes notice of it, as he did, does what is after related; but that whoever shows respect, and performs the least office of love and kindness to the meanest believer, comparable to a little child, for the above excellent qualities, and he does this, says Christ,

in my name; on account that he belongs to Christ, is one of his, bears his image, partakes of his grace, is loved by him, and shall be glorified with, him: such is Christ's great regard to his humble followers, that he takes it all one as if done to himself:

he receiveth me; this humble believer, being a member of his, and like unto him, and respected by him;

and whosoever shall receive me; Christ, in any of his members:

receiveth not me; that is, not him only; for he does receive him, otherwise there would be a contradiction in the words; but his meaning is, that he does not hereby receive him, by receiving one of his, nor him so much, as his Father:

but him that sent me; for as showing respect to one of Christ's members, is showing respect to him; so showing respect to Christ, is showing respect to his Father, from whence he came, by whom he was sent, in whose name he acted, and whose work and service he was concerned in.

Ver. 38. *And John answered him, saying*, etc..] Taking notice of what Christ just now said, and observing how well pleasing it was to him, to receive in a meek and humble manner, the least believer in his name; and reflecting upon an action, in which he and some of his fellow disciples were concerned, and which he perceived was not so agreeable to this rule of Christ, thought proper to relate it to him; that he might have his sense of it,

and give him an opportunity of enlarging on a subject, so suitable to the temper and disposition of this beloved disciple.

Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name: very likely he called him Rabbi, as the Syriac version renders it, or Rabboni, as in (<43 20 16>John 20:16), a title commonly given to Christ, both by his disciples and others: the case related, very probably happened, when the disciples being sent forth by Christ to preach the Gospel and cast out devils, took a tour through Judea and Galilee, where they saw this man. John was not alone; there were others with him, at least another, who was an eyewitness with him; for the apostles were sent out, by two and two: who this man was, is not said, his name is not mentioned, perhaps was unknown to the apostles; though Beza says, in one ancient exemplar it is read, “we knew one”. This person not only attempted to cast out devils, but really did; and that more than one; but in which of Christ's names he did it, is not expressed; if in the name of the Messiah, Dr. Lightfoot's conjecture may be right, that he was one of John's disciples; who had been baptized in the name of the Messiah, that was just expected to come; to whom, as to others of his disciples, was given a power of casting out devils, to make the way of the Messiah more plain; wherefore the reason why he did not cast out devils in the name of Jesus, but in the name of the Messiah, and did not follow him, nor his disciples, was not out of contempt, but ignorance, not knowing that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah: or if he cast out devils in the name of Jesus, which seems most likely, he might be, as others think, a disciple of John's, who really did believe in Jesus, though he did not associate with, his disciples, but continued with the disciples of John: wherefore it is said,

and he followeth not us; was neither one of the twelve apostles; nor one of the seventy disciples; nor even one of the lower class of the professed disciples of Jesus. This clause is omitted in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions:

and we forbad him; going on in this way, casting out any more devils:

because he followeth, not us; was not one of their company, nor any of Christ's disciples; who had received no authority and commission from Christ, to do what he did: wherefore they feared, that by such an irregular way of proceeding, the dignity of Christ would be lessened, and some dishonour and reproach reflected on him: and besides the honour of Christ, they might consult their own; and their case be too much like that of

Joshua, when Eldad and Medad prophesied in the camp. This clause is left out in the Vulgate Latin, but stands in all the eastern versions.

Ver. 39. *But Jesus said, forbid him not*, etc..] Neither him, nor any other they should hereafter meet with, who might be casting out devils in his name, giving this as a reason for it;

for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name; or "miracles", as the Syriac version, as to cast out devils, or heal any sickness and disease,

that can lightly speak evil of me: such a man can never reproach and blaspheme that name, which he makes use of in doing, and by which he does wonderful works; no man can call Jesus accursed, who casts out devils in his name; (see <612C>1 Corinthians 12:3), if he has spoken evil of him before, he cannot do it "again", as the Persic version renders it, with any face; or he cannot do it "quickly, immediately", as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions interpret it: there must be some time before such an one apostatizes, if he ever does; he cannot very easily and readily go into a way of blaspheming that name, by which he does his mighty works: his conscience will not admit of it; and besides, it would be contrary to his interest; it must sink his credit, and he lose the esteem and applause of men, he had gained by his miracles; for to dishonour that name, would be to reproach himself.

Ver. 40. *For he that is not against us, is on our part*.] Many copies read, "he that is not against you, is for you"; as this man; he was not against either Christ, or his disciples; he was doing the same work, promoting the same interest, and destroying the kingdom of Satan: and therefore, though he did not follow them, and had not his commission immediately from Christ; yet, inasmuch as he was opposing the same common enemy, and did nothing against them, he ought to be reckoned as one for them, and on their side. It is a proverbial expression, signifying that all that are not against a man, and take not the part of his enemy, are to be accounted his friends.

Ver. 41. *For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink*, etc..] Not only one that does a miracle in the name of Christ, but he that shows the least respect, or does the least kindness to any one of his; (see Gill on "<4042>Matthew 10:42"); is to be reckoned a friend, and is so accounted by Christ; and will be sooner or later taken notice of by him, especially, if what he does, be it ever so little, is done on his account:

in my name, because ye belong to Christ; or as the Syriac version renders it, “on account that ye are Christ's”; are his disciples, are called by his name, are partakers of his grace, bear his image and likeness, are loved by him, interested in him, given to him, redeemed by him called by his grace, and shall be with him:

verily l say unto you, he shall not lose his reward; (see Gill on “Matthew 10:42”).

Ver. 42. *And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me*, etc..] Whosoever shall do the, least injury to the meanest person that believes in Christ, who are mean both in their own eyes, and the eyes of others; for Christ is not speaking of little children in age, who are neither capable of believing in Christ, nor are they ready to take offence; but of such as belong to him; his disciples and followers, of whom he is speaking in the preceding verse:

it is better for him that a mill stone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea; and drowned there: the allusion is to the drowning of malefactors, by tying a stone, or any heavy thing about their necks, and casting them into the sea. Casaubon, and others, have shown out of Heathen writers, that this has been a practice of some nations, particularly the Grecians: Jerom says, Christ speaks according to the custom of the country; this being a punishment of the greatest crimes among the Jews; but I have no where met with it in their writings: Christ's sense is, that such who give offence to any of his ministers or people, how mean soever they may appear, shall undergo the severest punishment; (see Gill on “Matthew 18:6”).

Ver. 43. *And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off*, etc..] I have observed on (Matthew 5:30) that by the Jewish canons, cutting off of the hand was ordered in some cases there mentioned; which, though literally enjoined, must not be understood, as though the Jewish sanhedrim had a power of inflicting such a punishment, on persons found guilty of the things instanced in; or that it was required they should do this to themselves; but such rules were delivered in such language, to show the heinousness of the crimes committed, to express an abhorrence of them [f177], and to deter persons from them; and to show, as the gloss [f178] on one place observes, that it is better that the hand be cut off; or it should be more eligible to the person himself, to have it cut off, than to be guilty of such evil: and in like manner, Christ there and here, directs to what is most proper and fit to be

done; even to part with what is ever so near and dear, rather than be drawn into evil by it: and his sense in this place is, that the dearest friends and acquaintance, or be they what they will, though ever so near and dear, like a right hand, the instrument of action, that obstruct the spiritual welfare of men, are to be renounced and parted with, and treated as real enemies, and of the most pernicious consequence; (see Gill on "<4059>Matthew 5:29-30").

It is better for thee to enter into life maimed: not that there will be any such thing, as upon the resurrection, going into heaven without a limb; for the words are to be understood, not literally, but figuratively; and the sense is, it is better to part with every thing here, that is detrimental to a man's doing, or enjoying, what is spiritually good, and enter into eternal life,

than having two hands, to go into hell; than by enjoying such persons and things, agreeable to the flesh, to the ruin of the soul, and be cast into hell;

into the fire that never shall be quenched. This is a periphrasis of hell, and is an allusion to the valley of Hinnom, from whence hell has its name, here and elsewhere; where a constant fire was kept, for the burning of polluted things: one of the Jewish writers says [f179], that it

> "was a place in the land near to Jerusalem, and was a place contemptible: where they cast things defiled, and carcasses; and there was there, dymt a, "a continual fire", to burn polluted things and bones; and therefore the condemnation of the wicked, in a parabolical way, is called "Gehinnom"."

And says another of them [f180],

> "Gehinnom is a place known, near to Jerusalem, and a valley, tybkn ah ya, "whose fire is never quenched"; and in which they burn bones of defilement, and carcasses, and other polluted things."

This whole clause is left out in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; and the phrase, "that never shall be quenched", is not in the Arabic version.

Ver. 44. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*.] The passage referred to, is in (<2324>Isaiah 66:24), and as there, the words are spoken of such, as transgressed against the Lord; so here, of such as offended any of Christ's little ones, or were offended by an hand, a foot, or eye, and retained them: by their worm is meant, their conscience; for as a worm that is continually gnawing upon the entrails of a man, gives him

exquisite pain; so the consciences of sinners, will be continually flying in their faces, bringing their sins to remembrance, accusing them of them, upbraiding them with them, aggravating them, tormenting them for them, filling them with dreadful anguish and misery, with twinging remorses, and severe reflections, and which will never have an end. This will be always the case; conscience will be ever distressing, racking, and torturing them; it will never cease, nor cease doing this office, and so the Chaldee paraphrase of (<26624>Isaiah 66:24) renders this phrase, wtwmy al wh tmn, "their souls shall not die"; but shall ever continue in the dreadful torments and unspeakable horrors of a corroding conscience; and by "the fire" may be meant the fire of divine wrath let into their souls, which will never be extinguished; and so Jarchi interprets the phrase in (<26624>Isaiah 66:24), "their fire", nhygb, "in hell". It is a tradition of the Jews [f181], that the light, fire, which God created on the second day, "there is no quenching it for ever"; as it is said, "for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched", (<26624>Isaiah 66:24), the passage which is here referred to; the reason they give is, because it is the fire of hell; the sense of which is sometimes given by the Jewish doctors thus [f182]; "their worm shall not die" from the body, "and the fire shall not be quenched" from the soul.

Ver. 45. *And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off*, etc..] Such who are that to men, as the foot is to the body, the support of them through whom they have their maintenance and subsistence; and yet these, if they are a means of causing them to stumble and tail, or of leading out of the ways of Christ, and off from him, their company is to be shunned and abstained from;

it is better for thee to enter halt into life. The Vulgate Latin version reads, "eternal life", which is undoubtedly intended by "life"; and so reads the Cambridge copy of Beza's; and the meaning is, that it is better to go alone without such company into heaven,

than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; (see Gill on "<41944>Mark 9:44").

Ver. 46. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*.] The Persic version renders it, "because from thence there can be no deliverance": which is rather an interpretation of these figurative expressions, and is a good one; since they design the eternity of hell torments, as well as point at the anguish and misery of them.

Ver. 47. *And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out*, etc..] Than which, nothing is dearer to man, it being very tender, and exceeding useful: this metaphor the Lord sometimes makes use of, to show how dear his people are unto him, and what a tender concern he has for them, (<5520>Deuteronomy 32:10 <1708>Psalm 17:8 <3808>Zechariah 2:8). And here it may design such, as are most beloved by men, and are their most intimate acquaintance, and bosom friends; and yet these are to be parted with, when they prove snares and stumbling blocks, or give offence, by endeavouring to draw into sin, and from Christ:

it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye; that kingdom, which God has prepared for his people, from the foundation of the world, and of his rich grace, gives unto them, and in which they will enjoy him to all eternity;

than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire. In the two instances before it is added, “that never shall be quenched”.

Ver. 48. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*.] This is repeated again, not only to assure the truth of the thing, but to raise the attention of the mind unto it, and fix an awful impression upon it: the Persic version renders it, “from whence thou shall never find redemption”: there is no redemption from hell, as Origen and others have thought.

Ver. 49. *For every one shall be salted with fire*, etc..] That is every one of those that transgress the law of God, offend any that, believe in Christ, retain their sins, and sinful companions; every one of them that are cast into hell, where the worm of conscience is always gnawing, and the fire of divine wrath is always burning, with that fire every one of them shall be salted: that fire shall be to them, what salt is to flesh; as that keeps flesh from putrefaction and corruption, so the fire of hell, as it will burn, torture, and distress rebellious sinners, it will preserve them in their beings; they shall not be consumed by it, but continued in it: so that these words are a reason of the former, showing and proving, that the soul in torment shall never die, or lose any of its powers and faculties; and particularly, not its gnawing, torturing conscience; and that the fire of hell is inextinguishable; for though sinners will be inexpressibly tormented in it, they will not be consumed by it; but the smoke of their torments shall ascend for ever and ever; and that they will be so far from being annihilated by the fire of hell, that they shall be preserved in their beings in it, as flesh is preserved by salt:

and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt; referring to (Leviticus 2:13). “With all thine offerings thou shall offer salt”; not only the meat offerings, but the burnt offerings, and all others, were to be offered with salt [f183]; of which, the Jews say the following things [f184]:

> “It is an affirmative precept to salt all the sacrifices, before they go up to the altar, as it is said, (Leviticus 2:13). With all thine offerings thou shall offer salt; and there is nothing brought to the altar without salt, except the wine of drink offerings, and blood, and wood; and this thing is a tradition, and there is no Scripture to support it; and the commandment is to salt the flesh very well, as one salts flesh for roasting, who turns the part, and salts it; though if he salts the whole, with even one grain of salt, it is right; he that offers without any salt at all, is to be beaten; as it is said, “thou shall not suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking”: and though he is to be beaten, the offering is right, and acceptable, except the meat offering. — The salt, with which they salt all the sacrifices, is from the congregation, as the wood; and a private person does not bring salt, or wood, for his offering, from his own house: and in three places [f185] they put on salt, in the chamber of salt, and upon the ascent of the altar, and upon the top of the altar: in the chamber of salt they salt the skins of the holy things; and upon the ascent of the altar they salt the parts (of the sacrifice); and upon the top of the altar they salt the handful, and the frankincense and the meat offerings, that are burnt, and the burnt offerings of fowls.”

Something of this kind also obtained among the Heathens, who thought their sacrifices were not rightly offered, nor acceptable to God, unless salt was used with them [f186]. Now our Lord in this has either respect to the same persons, as before; and signifies hereby, that the wicked in hell shall be victims to divine justice, and sacrifices to his wrath and vengeance; and that as the sacrifices under the law were salted with salt, these shall be salted with the fire of hell, and shall never be utterly destroyed; but shall ever remain the objects of God's sore displeasure; and fiery indignation: or he may have respect to a different sort of persons, even to the saints and people of God, who are an holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice to him; and in the prophecy referred to in the context, (Isaiah 66:20), they are said to be brought for “an offering to the Lord — as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord”: and so as the

sacrifices of the Jews were salted with salt, and became acceptable to God; such who are seasoned with the grace of God, are preserved from the corruptions of the world, are acceptable in the sight of God, and are kept safe to his kingdom and glory.

Ver. 50. *Salt is good*, etc..] To make meat savoury, and keep flesh from corrupting; and so is the grace of God, to season men's hearts, make their discourse savoury, and preserve them from the corruption of sin: and so men made partakers of the grace of God; they are good and useful to others, both by their words and actions, and especially ministers of the Gospel, who are "the salt of the earth", (see Gill on "<40513>Matthew 5:13"); and here Christ may chiefly intend his apostles:

but if the salt hath lost its saltness, wherewith will ye season it? there is no recovering it, it becomes good for nothing; (see Gill on "<40513>Matthew 5:13");

have salt in yourselves; the doctrine of grace, and word of Christ, prudence in talk and conversation, and holiness of heart and life, so as to behave wisely towards them that are without;

and have peace one with another; which the God of peace calls unto, the Gospel of peace requires, and the grace of God teaches. Salt is an emblem of firm union, concord, and agreement: hence the covenant of peace is called a covenant of salt, (<041919>Numbers 18:19), compared with (<042512>Numbers 25:12). This exhortation, very appropriately follows upon the making mention of salt in different senses; especially, this exhortation was the more necessary to the disciples at this time, since they had been very lately warmly disputing the point among themselves, who should be greatest in the kingdom of the Messiah; and which had occasioned this discourse of Christ's.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 10

Ver. 1. *And he arose from thence*, etc..] From Galilee, and particularly from Capernaum:

and cometh into the coasts of Judea; into those places, which bordered on that part of the land of Israel, called Judea, as distinct from Galilee:

by, or rather “to”

the further side of Jordan; which he crossed at the bridge of Chammath: the particular place he came to was Bethabara; (see <4010>John 10:40 1:28): where John formerly preached, and baptized:

and the people resorted unto him again; great multitudes followed him out of Galilee, and more doubtless flocked to him from the adjacent parts, when they heard of his coming again to them.

And, as he was wont, he taught them again: it had been his custom before, and so it was wherever he went, to preach the word of God, and teach men what was profitable to them, and useful for the good of their immortal souls; and so he did now, and here: and not only so, but healed many of them of their bodily disorders, as Matthew relates, (<4019>Matthew 19:2).

Ver. 2. *And the: Pharisees came unto him*, etc..] As they every where did; not to be instructed by him, but to ensnare him;

and asked him, is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? that is, as Matthew adds, “for every cause”, (see Gill on “<4019>Matthew 19:3”): for, a divorce might be lawfully made for a cause, or reason, namely, adultery, but not for any, or every cause; which is the sense of this question of the Pharisees; and, which they put, not for information, but

tempting him; trying to entangle him by opposing the authority of Moses, should he deny the lawfulness of divorces, or by objecting his former doctrine, (<4032>Matthew 5:32), and so expose him as an inconsistent

preacher, should he allow them to be lawful for every reason. This clause is placed in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions before the question.

Ver. 3. *And he answered and said unto them*, etc..] Very prudently and wisely,

what did Moses command you? according to Matthew, he put another question to them; (see <40190>Matthew 19:4); no doubt but both were put, and this after they had urged the authority and law of Moses: and therefore be very pertinently asks them, what Moses had said about divorces, what law he had left; and puts them upon producing and repeating it, that the sense of it might be examined, and it be considered, upon what account it was given.

Ver. 4. *And they said*, etc..] By way of reply,

Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away, Moses did not command them to divorce their wives, only suffered them to do so: and gave orders that if they could not bear that they should live with them, but would divorce them, that they should give them a bill, which should certify, they were so divorced, and then send them out of their houses, free to marry other men; this law, or permission, is in (<052401>Deuteronomy 24:1), of the form of a bill of divorcement, (see Gill on "<40531>Matthew 5:31").

Ver. 5. *And Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc..] With respect to this command, or sufferance of Moses, which they urged:

for the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept; it was, not because it was right in its own nature, or according to the original will of God; but, because the Jews were such cruel, and hard hearted men, that if this had not been permitted, some of them, that had wives not so agreeable to them, would have used them in a very inhuman manner, if not murdered them; and therefore to prevent further, and greater mischief, Moses indulged them with such a precept; (see Gill on "<40198>Matthew 19:8").

Ver. 6. *But from the beginning of the creation*, etc..] Of the world, or of man: lw l wtyyrb tl tm, "from the beginning of the creation of the world", is a way of speaking often used by the Jews [f187]: the phrase "of the creation" is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions; and so it was in Beza's most ancient copy, and it is only read, "from the beginning", as in <40194>Matthew 19:4,8.

God made them male and female; the first that were created, Adam and Eve, the first parents of mankind, the first couple that came together were one male and one female; so that there could be no polygamy or divorce: Adam could not have more wives than one: nor could he put away Eve, and marry another; no provision was made for any such usages and practices; (see Gill on "<40194>Matthew 19:4"). In the Complutensian edition, it is added, "and said", the following words.

Ver. 7. *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother*, etc..] The Persic version adds, "and brethren and sisters", though without any foundation in the original text, in (<01224>Genesis 2:24), from whence this passage is cited; or in any copy of the evangelist:

and cleave to his wife; (see Gill on "<40195>Matthew 19:5").

Ver. 8. *And the twain shall be one flesh*, etc..] This is the remaining part of the citation out of (<01224>Genesis 2:24); (see Gill on "<40195>Matthew 19:5");

so then they are no more twain; but one flesh; as Adam and Eve were both by creation and marriage: and so two persons, a man and woman, being lawfully married together, become one flesh, or "one body", as the Arabic and Persic versions render the phrase; and therefore the wife is to be loved by the husband as his own body, and from whom there should be no separation, until death, but in case of adultery; (see Gill on "<40196>Matthew 19:6").

Ver. 9. *What therefore God hath joined together*, etc..] (See Gill on "<40196>Matthew 19:6").

Ver. 10. *And in the house*, etc..] To which Christ retired, after he had put the Pharisees to silence, and dismissed the multitude:

his disciples asked him again of the same matter; concerning the affair of divorces, be bad been discoursing with the Pharisees about; some things being said, they had not been used to, and which they did not thoroughly understand; and therefore chose privately to converse with him on this subject, for their further information.

Ver. 11. *And he saith unto them*, etc..] The same things as in <40532>Matthew 5:32, 19:9:

whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another; when there is no uncleanness in the case; when his former wile has not injured him by violating the marriage bed:

committeth adultery against her; to the injury of his lawful wife; or “upon her”, or “with her”, with the person he marries. The Syriac and Persic versions leave out the phrase, “against her”.

Ver. 12. *And if a woman shall put away her husband*, etc..] Not that there was the same law, or the same sufferance by the law of Moses, for a woman to put away her husband, as for the husband to put away the wife; nor was it practised among the Jews, unless it came to be in use about this time, in their declining state, having taken it from the Gentiles; of whom they say [f188], that

> “they divorce one another: says R. Jochanan, wtrgm wta, “his wife divorces him”, and gives him the dowry.”

So Salome, the sister of Herod the Great, sent a bill of divorce to her husband Costobarus; and in this she was followed by Herodias, the daughter of Aristobulus, as Josephus [f189] relates; and which his own wife also did. And by such examples the practice might prevail among the Jews: and we have a story told [f190] us of a holy man, and a holy yeoman, who were married, and had no children, hz ta hz wrgw, “and they divorced one another”; and the one went and married a wicked woman, and she made him wicked; and the other went and married a wicked man, and she made him righteous but I do not find that this practice was approved, or established by any rule, or canon. They allow [f191] indeed a woman to write her husband's divorce of her, with proper witnesses; and they also oblige one, that was espoused in her minority, and refuses her husband, when adult, to write a bill of refusal; the form of that, and the rules about it, take as follow [f192]:

> “they do not allow one to marry a minor; he that marries a minor that is fatherless, and she is not pleased with her husband, lo! she may refuse, and go away, and she has no need of a divorce from him, because the espousals of a minor are not perfect espousals, as we have explained: and so a minor, whom her father marries, and she becomes a widow, or is divorced whilst she is a minor, lo! she is as one fatherless, in, her father's life time; and if she marries whilst she is a minor, she may refuse — how does she refuse? she

says before two witnesses, I do not like such an one my husband; or I do not like the espousals with which my father, or my brother, espoused me; and such like words. — The two, before whom the minor refuses, write for her; on such a day, such an one, the daughter of such an one, refused, before us, such an one her husband; and they seal, and give it to her: and this is the body, or substance of a bill of refusal — in such a week, on such a day of the month, in such a year, such an one, the daughter of such an one, refused before us, and said, that my mother, or my brother, forced me, and married me, or espoused me, and I, a minor, to such an one, the son of such an one; and now I reveal my mind before you, that I do not like him, and I will not abide with him: and we have searched such an one; and this is manifest to us, that she is yet a minor, and we have written, and sealed, and have given this to her, for her justification, and a clear proof;" "Such an one, the son of such an one, witness. Such an one, the son of such an one, witness."

And such a writing was called, `waym jg`, "a bill of refusal", and sometimes `ynwaym yrj`, "letters of refusal" [f193], but a bill of divorcement given by a married woman to her husband, I have not met with. Justin Martyr speaks [f194] of a Christian woman that, ρεπουδιον δουσα, "gave a bill of divorce" to her husband: such things, therefore, have been done, and might be done in Christ's time, to which he refers; and concerning which he says, that if a woman do so,

and be married to another, she committeth adultery; with the man she marries, and against, and to the injury of her former husband, unjustly left by her.

Ver. 13. *And they brought young children to him*, etc..] The parents, or friends, or nurses of the children in those parts, having heard of the fame of Jesus; and having entertained an high opinion of him, as a great prophet, and a holy, good man, brought their children in their arms, or hands,

that he should touch them; as he did when he healed diseased persons, as these might be, though not expressed:

and [his] disciples rebuked those that brought [them]; (see Gill on "Matthew 19:13").

Ver. 14. *But when Jesus saw it*, etc..] Observed that his disciples reproved those that brought their children to, him,

he was much displeased; with his disciples, who took too much upon them; for they ought first, to have known their master's will; whether it was his pleasure to grant the favour desired for these children, and not to have forbid them of themselves:

and said unto them; the disciples, as the Persic version reads:

suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God; or "of them who" are, ylh ya, "as these", as the Syriac version, renders the words; or, as the Arabic, who "are like to these"; and the Persic, who are "like to these little children"; in innocence and humility; (see Gill on "<4019>Matthew 19:14").

Ver. 15. *Verily I say, unto you*, etc..] A form of speech used when our Lord was about to asseverate a thing, and assert something of moment and importance, and which he would have attended to.

Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God; the Gospel, and the mysteries of it:

as a little child; laying aside all pride and prejudice, attending thereunto with humility and meekness:

he shall not enter therein; he shall attain to no true spiritual knowledge of the Gospel; nor should he be admitted into a Gospel church state, and to the ordinances of it.

Ver. 16. *And he took them up in his arms*, etc..] "Upon his arms", the Syriac version says; "he put them into his bosom", according to the Ethiopic; and the Persic renders it, "he took them into his bosom": all which expresses great tenderness towards them, and affection for them:

put his hands upon them, and blessed them. The Ethiopic version transposes these clauses, and puts blessing first, contrary to the natural order of the words, and things; for he first put his hands on the children, according to the custom of the Jews, and then prayed over them, and wished all happiness and prosperity to them; (see Gill on "<4019>Matthew 19:15").

Ver. 17. *And when he was gone forth into the way*, etc..] For when he had blessed the children he departed from the coasts of Judea, on the further side of Jordan, and steered his course towards Jerusalem, (<41032>Mark 10:32), and as he was on the road thitherwards,

there came one running; a young man, a ruler among the Jews, and very rich, a person of great dignity, and large substance; he hearing that Christ was going from those parts, ran in great haste to him, to have some conversation with him, before he was entirely gone;

and kneeled to him; as a token of great respect and civility: some versions, as the Persic and Ethiopic, render it, "and worshipped him"; which must be understood not in a religious, but in a civil way: the words might be literally rendered, "and kneeled him"; and Dr. Lightfoot suspects, that more is meant than bending his knees to Christ; that he also might take hold of the knees of Christ, and kiss them, as was usual with the Jewish Rabbins, and which he illustrates by several instances:

and asked him, good master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? This man, though a young man, and also a rich man, was thoughtful of the world to come, and the life of it: he believed there was an eternal life after this state of things, and so was no Sadducee; but he had wrong notions about the way and manner of attaining it: he thought it was to be had by the works of the law, which shows him to be a Pharisee; whereas eternal life is the gift of God, through the Messiah, the person he now applied to, and who had the words of eternal life; and to a more proper person he could not have put the question, he being himself the way, the truth, and the life, or the true way to eternal life: and had he attended to his own words, which suggest, that eternal life is an inheritance, he might have learned, that it is not to be acquired by the industry and works of men; but, that it is the bequest of our heavenly Father to his children, and comes by will, by promise, and as a free gift; so that it is not of the law; nor are they that are of the law heirs of it, (<45044>Romans 4:14 <48318>Galatians 3:18); (see Gill on "<40916>Matthew 19:16").

Ver. 18. *And Jesus said unto him*, etc..] The same as in Mt. 19:17, (see Gill on "<40917>Matthew 19:17").

Why callest thou me good? This is said, not as denying that he was good, or as being angry with him for calling him so, but in order to lead this

young man to a true knowledge of him, and his goodness, and even of his proper deity:

there is none good, but one, [that is], God; some render it, "but one God", as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; and so the words are a proof of the unity of the divine being, and agree with (Deuteronomy 6:4), but are not to be understood to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, who, with the Father, are the one God: nor do these words at all militate against the deity of Christ, or prove that he is not God, as the Jew objects [f195]; seeing this is not to be understood of the person of the Father, in opposition to the Son and Spirit, who are equally good: nor does Christ, in these words, deny himself to be God, but rather tacitly suggests it; since he is good in the same sense in which God is good: in Matthew it is added, "but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments", (Matthew 19:17): this Christ said not as his sense, that the way to eternal life lies in keeping the commandments of the law; but he speaks in the language of the Pharisees, and of this man; and his view is, to bring him to a sense of the impossibility of obtaining eternal life by these things, as the sequel shows: wherefore the above Jew [f196] has no reason to confront the followers of Jesus with this passage, as if it was a concession of his, that it is impossible any should be saved without keeping the commands of the law of Moses.

Ver. 19. *Thou knowest the commandments*, etc..] Which God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai; these the Jews taught their children; so that this young man might reasonably be thought to know what, and how many they were, though he was ignorant of the extent and spirituality of them;

do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not steal, do not bear false witness, defraud not, honour thy father and mother. In which may be observed, that the strict order in which the commandments stood is not kept; the seventh commandment, "thou shalt not commit adultery", is set before the sixth, "thou shalt not kill"; though the Arabic version places them in their order; and the fifth command, "honour thy father and thy mother", is placed last of all: but a Jew has no reason to object to this, when it is a rule with them, that hrwtb rwamw dqwm ya [f197], there is no first nor last in the law; that is, order is not strictly attended to; but sometimes, that which is first is mentioned last, and the last first. There is one precept, "defraud not", wrong no man of his property, either by force or fraud, which none of the other evangelists have. Dr. Hammond, and others, think, that it is an

explanation of the tenth command, “thou shalt not covet”; signifying, that a man should be so satisfied with his own condition, as not to desire another's goods, or, by any means, seek to lessen them to enlarge his own. A certain Jew [f198] objects against our Lord Jesus, that he did not mention the other precepts in (<022003>Exodus 20:3-11 <050506>Deuteronomy 5:6-15), by which he seems to mean the precepts of the first table, which respect the unity of God, and his worship, which are of greater moment; to which may be replied, that our Lord does suggest the unity of the Divine Being, and his essential, infinite, and independent goodness, which are the ground and foundation of his fear and worship in the preceding verse; and besides, as Bishop Kidder observes [f199], nothing is more common than to put some precepts for the whole; (see <330608>Micah 6:8); yea, that Jesus may be justified from the Old Testament in this method, as from (<191501>Psalm 15:1), where a question, very like this of the young man, is put; and yet in answer to it we find nothing mentioned but obedience to the second table: to which reply of the learned prelate, may be added, that Christ instances in the commandments of the second table, as being more known, and better understood by this young man; “thou knowest the commandments”; that is, the following ones he mentions: and besides the argument runs strong from the lesser to the greater, which is implied, that if the commands of the second table, which respect the neighbour, are necessary to be observed, then much more those which concern God himself; and if men fail short in keeping the lesser commands, it can hardly be thought they should be perfect in the observance of greater ones; and so consequently, and which is our Lord's drift, eternal life is never to be obtained by the works of the law.

Ver. 20. *And he answered and, said unto him*, etc..] With a great deal of pertness,

master, all these have I observed from my youth; (see Gill on “<401920>Matthew 19:20”). In a certain copy, Beza says, it is added, as there, “what lack I yet?” and so in one of Stephens's copies.

Ver. 21. *Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him*, etc..] Not as God, with that special love, with which he loves his people, who were given him by the Father, are redeemed by his blood, whom he calls by his grace, justifies by his righteousness, forgives their iniquities, and, at last, glorifies: but as man, he had an human affection for him; so far as there was any appearance of moral good in him, it was agreeable to him, who loves

righteousness, and hates iniquity; and though the young man betrayed much vanity, pride, and conceit, he did not use him roughly, but kindly, and tenderly; he beheld him, he looked wistly upon him, when he said the above words; which look intimated, that he could not believe he had perfectly, and completely kept all the commandments; however, he did not choose to reproach him with a lie, and charge him with pride and arrogance, but gave him good words, and spoke friendly to him; and, as far as he could, commended him for his diligence in observing the commands: in this sense the word is observed to be used by the Septuagint interpreters, as when it is said of Ahab, (<14B402>2 Chronicles 18:2), that he "persuaded him" (Jehoshaphat), they render it, ηγαπα, "he loved him to go up to Ramoth Gilead": he gave him good words, he spake friendly to him, and by fair speeches prevailed upon him: and so when it said of the Israelites, (<197836>Psalm 78:36); "they did flatter him", (God,) they render it, ηγαπησαν, "they loved him with their mouth"; spoke very well to him, and of him, praised him, and his works, and in this way expressed affection to him, though it was only with their mouths. Moreover, Christ might not only speak kindly to this young man, but he might make use of some external gesture: which showed an human affection to him, and respect for him. Dr, Lightfoot conjectures it might be by kissing his head, which might be conveniently done, as he was now on his knees; and since this was frequently used by the Jewish doctors, as an expression of respect, of which he gives various instances; and more might be added, especially out of the book of Zohar, where we often read of one Rabbi kissing the head or another, or of his pupil. But the sense of this phrase, which pleases me best of all, is what may be collected from the use of it among the "seventy" interpreters, who often render the Hebrew ר, which signifies to "have compassion", or "show pity", by the word here used: so (<201813>Proverbs 28:13), "whoso confesseth and forsaketh, shall have mercy", they interpret αγαπηψησεται, "shall be loved" and (<280223>Hosea 2:23), "I will have mercy on her that had not obtained mercy", they render αγαπησω, "I will love her that was not beloved"; once more, (<380106>Zechariah 10:6). "I will bring them again to place them, for I have mercy upon them", they translate οτι ηγαπησα αυτους, "because I have loved them"; see also (<236010>Isaiah 60:10) and then, according to this use of the word, the sense is, that Jesus looked upon him when he expressed himself in such a pert manner, and had a compassionate concern for him; he pitied him for his ignorance of the law, in its spirituality and large extent; for his pride and vanity, his conceit

of, and glorying in himself: wherefore, in order to mortify him, and abate these swelling thoughts of himself;

he said unto him, one thing thou lackest; before which last clause the Ethiopic version puts this, “if thou wilt be perfect”, out of (<40>1921 Matthew 19:21), see the note there: and the Coptic version, and two of Stephens's copies read it before the following,

go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me. This young man's reigning sin seems to have been an overweening affection for the things of this world; his riches were his idol, on which his heart was set, and in which he trusted: wherefore he was so far from keeping all the commandments, that he had not kept the first; “thou shalt have no other gods before me”: there was more than one thing wanting in him, but Christ takes notice of this as the first; and there was no need to mention any other; this touched him sensibly, and fully tried, and sufficiently exposed the vanity of his boasted perfection. That clause, “take up the cross”, is omitted in the Vulgate Latin version, as it is not mentioned by Matthew. The Ethiopic version reads it, “the cross of thy death”, and places it before, “come and follow me”; as do also the Syriac and Persic versions; but the Arabic reads it last of all; (see Gill on “<40>1921 Matthew 19:21”).

Ver. 22. *And, he was sad at that saying*, etc..] That he lacked one thing, and especially that he should be bid to sell all that he had, and give it away; and what might add to his sadness is, that he must take up the cross of reproach, affliction, persecution, and death; his countenance fell upon this,

and went away grieved: finding that he must part with two things his heart was set upon, his idol of self-righteousness, and his mammon of unrighteousness; the bladder of his pride was pricked, and his vanity and self-conceit were exposed; and he was called upon to part with his substance; all which were sadly mortifying, and exceedingly disagreeable to him:

for he had great possessions; (see Gill on “<40>1922 Matthew 19:22”).

Ver. 23. *And Jesus looked round about*, etc..] To see what effect the discourse he had with the young man, and the consequence of it, had upon his disciples; as also to raise their attention to what he was about, to say:

and saith unto his disciples, how hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! the Gospel dispensation, by embracing the doctrines, and submitting to the ordinances of it; (see Gill on "Matthew 19:23").

Ver. 24. *And the disciples were astonished at his words*, etc..] For they expected, in a little while, that the kingdom of the Messiah would be set up in great worldly pomp and grandeur; and that all the rich men of the nation would come into it, become his subjects, and join to support the glory and splendour of it:

but Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, children: it was common with the Jews to call the disciples, or scholars of the wise men, "children"; hence that saying of theirs[f200], ynb ywrq ydyml th, "the disciples are called children", which they prove from (2 Kings 2:3) (Isaiah 8:18).

How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! This he said partly to confirm what he had before said, at which his disciples were astonished; and partly to explain it, as that he was to be understood of such that trusted in their riches, set their hearts upon them, and placed their hope and happiness in them: and the great difficulty, or rather impossibility of such, at least continuing so, entering into the kingdom of God, is still more strongly expressed in the following words.

Ver. 25. *It is easier for a camel*, etc..] (See Gill on "Matthew 19:24").

Ver. 26. *And they were astonished out of measure*, etc..] They were still more amazed, their surprise increased exceedingly upon our Lord's using the above comparison; which, in their apprehension, showed, that it was utterly impossible for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God; and they expressed their astonishment,

saying, among themselves, who then can be saved? in the Messiah's kingdom, if rich men are not? (see Gill on "Matthew 19:25"). The Persic version renders it, "how can this man be saved?" as if the words had a particular respect to the young man, that had great possessions, and was gone away sorrowful.

Ver. 27. *And Jesus, looking upon them*, etc..] And by their countenances saw the surprise and anxiety of mind they were in, as well as by his omniscience, knew their private reasonings among themselves:

saith, with men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible; even to reduce a camel to so small a size, as to go through the eye of a needle; and to work upon a rich man's heart, so as to take him off of his trust and confidence in his worldly riches, and bring him to a compliance with his will, and into his kingdom; and also to protect, and save his poor and mean followers, notwithstanding all the difficulties, dangers, and oppositions they meet with; (see Gill on "<40>1926>Matthew 19:26").

Ver. 28. *Then Peter began to say unto him*, etc..] only observing that Christ promised treasure in heaven to the young man, provided he sold all that he had, and gave it to the poor; but being, in some measure, freed from that surprise and astonishment, which had seized him, and his fellow disciples, at the representation of the difficulty of a rich man's entering into the kingdom of God, by the last words; and taking heart from thence, began to take notice of the following case, as an instance and illustration of what Christ had said; for that same power, which had caused them to quit all their worldly substance for Christ, though it was but small, could also work a like effect upon the heart of a man ever so rich:

lo! we have left all, and have followed thee: in Matthew it is added, "what shall we have therefore?" (see Gill on "<40>1927>Matthew 19:27").

Ver. 29. *And Jesus answered and said, verily I say unto you*, etc..] This evangelist omits what Matthew relates; that whereas Peter, and his fellow disciples had followed Christ in the present time, hereafter when he appeared in his glory, they should sit upon twelve thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel; (see <40>1928>Matthew 19:28), and where it is added to the same sense as here;

there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sister, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the Gospel's; for the sake of preaching, or professing Christ, and his Gospel. The word "wife" is left out in the Vulgate Latin version, perhaps because it is not repeated in the following verse; but all copies, and other versions have it; (see Gill on "<40>1929>Matthew 19:29").

Ver. 30. *But he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time*, etc..] Not that he should have an hundred houses, brethren, etc.. but that he should enjoy that even in this present life, which was an hundred times better than any of the things mentioned; namely,

houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands; (see Gill on "Matthew 19:29") it is added here,

with persecutions. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read in the singular, "with persecution"; signifying that this must be expected amidst the greatest happiness, and highest enjoyments of this life; though often even that which the saints enjoy, whilst they are, in the severest manner, persecuted for Christ, is an hundred times better than, yea, infinitely above, all that they part with, or lose for his sake; and so is an ample compensation for all: and yet this is not all they shall have; for it follows,

and in the world to come eternal life: so that they will be doubly recompensed; once in this life, and again in the other world: in the Targum on (Song of Solomon 8:7) is a passage somewhat like this, where the Lord of the world is represented saying;

> "if a man will give all the substance of his house to obtain wisdom in the captivity, I will return unto him, ytad amll lwk, "double in the world to come"."

Ver. 31. *But many that are first shall be last*, etc..] (See Gill on "Matthew 19:30").

Ver. 32. *And they were in the way*, etc..] Upon the road, having left the coasts of Judea on the further side of Jordan:

going up to Jerusalem; to the passover there, which was to be in a short time, and where Christ was to suffer and die; for this was the last journey he took, and the last passover he was to eat there:

and Jesus went before them; as their forerunner, their guide and leader, with unconcernedness and intrepidity; though he knew what would befall him, and what designs were forming against him: and this he did to inspire his disciples with courage, and to leave them an example that they should tread in his steps:

and they were amazed; at his readiness to go up to Jerusalem, and the cheerful Spirit he discovered, when he had so many, and such powerful enemies at that place, in going to which he exposed himself to the greatest dangers.

And as they followed; for they did not choose to leave him, but were determined to continue with him at all events, though

they were afraid; what would be the consequence of it to themselves, as well as to him; for they being his followers, could not expect any other than ill usage from his enemies.

And he took again the twelve; the disciples, as he had done before, (<41031>Mark 8:31),

and began to tell them what things should happen unto him; being what were determined by God, agreed unto by himself, and foretold in the Scriptures; for these were not casual and contingent events.

Ver. 33. *[Saying], behold we go up to Jerusalem*, etc..] They were now upon the road thither.

And the son of man; meaning himself,

shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the Scribes; by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God, and by the means of a treacherous disciple of his, Judas. The Vulgate Latin version adds, “and to the elders”; but this is not in any of the copies, nor in other versions:

and they shall condemn him to death; as they did in the palace of the high priest, “nemine contradicente”; (see <41464>Mark 14:64),

and shall deliver him to the Gentiles; the Romans, to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor; either because they had not then power to put him to death themselves, or because they were desirous he should die the death of the cross, a Roman punishment.

Ver. 34. *And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him*, etc..] The Gentiles, as the Roman soldiers did; the one at the connivance, and the other by the order of their governor:

and shall spit upon him; on his face, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it, and as they did; (see <41519>Mark 15:19). This clause is placed by the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, between the two former; though, according to the order in which these things were executed, he was first scourged, then mocked, and then spit upon: all which express both the cruel and indecent usage he was to meet with:

and shall kill him, and the third day he shall rise again. The Persic version between these two clauses read, “and shall put him in a grave”; which is

not in any copy of this text, nor in any other version; nor indeed was this done by the Gentiles, but by Joseph of Arimathea.

Ver. 35. *And James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, came unto him*, etc..] Along with their mother, who was their mouth, and spoke for them, and they by her:

saying, master, we would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire: that is, we earnestly desire, that whereas we have a favour to ask of thee, that thou wouldst not deny us it, be it what it will; (see Gill on "Matthew 20:20").

Ver. 36. *And he said unto them*, etc..] And also to their mother, and to them by her, what

would ye that I should do for you? Christ insists upon their telling him the particular thing they wanted to have done for them, before he would give them any promise, though he knew very well what it was they were desirous of.

Ver. 37. *They said unto him*, etc..] By their mother, or seconding her motion:

grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory; or glorious kingdom, which they expected would be quickly set up; and which they might conclude from his having lately promised to all the twelve, that when he should sit on his throne, they should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel; and from his having just now mentioned his rising from the dead, which they might understand of some revival, or breaking forth of this glorious state; (see Gill on "Matthew 20:21").

Ver. 38. *But Jesus said unto them*, etc..] Not by granting them what they desired, but by observing their ignorance to them;

ye know not what ye ask: for sometimes good men are ignorant petitioners at the throne of grace; they are under the influence of their own spirits, and not the Spirit of God; they are prompted to ask things from a selfish principle, and not with a view to the glory of God, and their own spiritual welfare, and that of others: and indeed, the best of saints know not what they should pray for as they ought; and always stand in need of the help, assistance, and intercession of the Spirit of God; who is a Spirit of grace

and supplication, and searches the deep things of God, and knows his mind and will, and what is suitable and convenient for his people; and whenever they pray without him, there is much darkness and ignorance in them, and in their petitions. In particular, these disciples knew not what they were asking for; they had no true notion of Christ's kingdom and glory, they were asking the chief places in; they were dreaming of worldly glory and grandeur, in which they imagined the kingdom of the Messiah would quickly appear: whereas his kingdom, in the present state of things, is not of this world, but of a spiritual nature; namely, the Gospel dispensation, which lies in the ministration of his word and ordinances, and in the distribution of his gifts and grace; and his kingdom and glory in the world to come, are things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard: they talked of things which would never be, either in Christ's kingdom, in earth or in heaven; fancying there would be posts of honour and profit, which some would be advanced to in it, signified by sitting at his right hand and left; whereas in the Gospel church state, the apostles, governors, and officers of the church were alike, and had no superiority over one another, but were all brethren, having one master, Christ; and the members of the churches are of the same body, and members one of another; and in the ultimate glory, there will be no degrees, but all the saints will share the same happiness:

can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? Which Christ speaks of in the present time, partly because his sorrows and sufferings were already begun: he had already been drinking of the cup of sorrows, being a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs, all his days; and he was wading in the waters of affliction, though as yet they were not come into his soul, and he as it were immersed in them; he was not yet baptized with the bloody baptism he came into this world for, and he was desirous of, (^{Luke 12:50}), and partly because of the certainty of these things, the cup was not to pass from him, and the baptism of his sufferings was to be surely accomplished; (see Gill on "^{Matthew 20:22}").

Ver. 39. *And they said unto him we can*, etc..] That is, drink of Christ's cup and be baptized with his baptism which is another instance of their ignorance; for as they knew not the glorious state of things and the nature of it they desired places in so they were unacquainted with themselves; they were ignorant of their own weakness as well as of the greatness of the sufferings Christ should endure or even they should be called unto: had

they had a just notion of either, they would not have expressed themselves in this manner without any mention of the grace of God or any dependence on the strength of Christ; (see Gill on "Matthew 20:22").

And Jesus said unto them, ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized; meaning, not that they should undergo the same sufferings he did and much less for the same end and purpose: he trod the winepress alone and bore the whole punishment due to the sins of his people himself; and of them there were none with him to take a part: but that they should endure sufferings in some sort like to his for his sake as they both afterwards did; (see Gill on "Matthew 20:23").

Ver. 40. *But to sit on my right hand and on my left, is mine to give*, etc..] There being no such places in his kingdom in the sense they petitioned; and as for the glories of the heavenly state or eternal life, the gift of these was not to be settled now it being done already: and though he had a power to give yet only to them who were given him of his Father and who were ordained to such happiness as it follows:

but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared; that is, of his Father as is expressed in (Matthew 20:23) which is not to be understood as excluding these two persons but as including all others with them for whom the kingdom was prepared before the foundation of the world: the Ethiopic version therefore wrongly renders the words "but to sit on my right hand and on my left, I do not give to you, it is prepared for other": the Jew [f201] very badly concludes from hence against the deity of Christ and his unity with the Father he not having power to do this; whereas Christ does not say he had no power to give this honour, but only describes the persons to whom he should give it; and these being persons for whom it, is prepared by his Father instead of destroying, proves their unity.

Ver. 41. *And when the ten heard it*, etc..] The request made by the sons of Zebedee or their mother for them:

they began to be much displeased with James and John; Matthew says "they were moved with indignation against them", (Matthew 20:24); they were filled with, wrath and were very angry with them; which they showed in their countenances and by their behaviour towards them as well as by words: the Syriac and Arabic versions, render it, "they began to

murmur against them"; they highly resented it and were ready to break out into an open quarrel upon it; (see Gill on "⁴⁰²⁴Matthew 20:24").

Ver. 42. *But Jesus called them to him*, etc..] Who were at some little distance from him, though so nigh, that he could discern the heat and passion they were in, and knowing that they had the same ambitious views with the two brethren:

and saith unto them, to check their pride and vanity and reprove them for their ambitious desires of superiority and pre-eminence over, one another; by showing them that this was a part which the Heathens that knew not God acted and therefore was very unbecoming them:

you know that they which are accounted, or "seem to" or rather "do",

rule over the Gentiles; or are reckoned worthy of government who are, ybw, men of honour, reputation, and esteem; who are either by birth or merit thought to be deserving of high places: these

exercise lordship over them; rule over them in a lordly tyrannical and arbitrary way:

and their great ones; their nobles and lords under them

exercise authority over them; the Gentiles; by a delegated power from those who have the supreme rule; (see Gill on "⁴⁰²⁵Matthew 20:25").

Ver. 43. *But so shall it not be among you*, etc..] Or "so let it not be", as in many copies; or as the Persic version renders it, "it ought not to be so among you"; such a lordly spirit does not become you; this is heathenish:

but whosoever will be great among you shall be, as in Matthew "let him", (⁴⁰²⁶Matthew 20:26), be

your minister. This was just the reverse of what the two disciples were seeking for; they were indeed for being ministers but then they were for being prime ministers of state; and would have had all the rest subject to them and attendants on them to be sent out and employed as they should think fit: whereas the only way to preferment and greatness in Christ's kingdom, or rather Gospel church state, is to labour, in the work, of the ministry more abundantly than others; to take great pains and endure great hardships in order to bring great glory to God, and do great good to the souls of men; (see Gill on "⁴⁰²⁶Matthew 20:26").

Ver. 44. *And whosoever of you will be the chiefest*, etc..] Is desirous of the highest place and the greatest honour

shall be servant of all: for the ministers of the Gospel are not only the servants of Christ Jesus, but also of the churches for his sake; and in serving them, they serve Christ: not that they are to be the servants of men and to take their instructions from them and act according to rules prescribed by them; or seek to please men for then they would not be the servants of Christ: but they become servants to all that they may win souls to Christ, and increase his churches, and enlarge his interest; and such as are most useful this way are the chiefest in the Gospel church state; they are honoured by Christ and esteemed by his people; (see Gill on "Matthew 20:27").

Ver. 45. *For even the son of man*, etc..] That is, Christ himself; a name by which he frequently goes both in the Old and New Testament to the arguments before produced, Christ adds his own example, to teach his disciples humility and lowliness of mind and to check their ambitious views and desires:

came not to be ministered unto: not but that he was ministered unto even by the angels of God; who ministered to him in the wilderness, after he had been tempted by Satan; and he was also ministered unto by some women out of their substance; but these show the low estate he was in to stand in need of such ministrations: here the sense is that he did not appear as an earthly prince, with a fine equipage, a large retinue and attendance,

but to minister; to be a servant, as he is in his mediatorial office and capacity: he was sent, and came as the servant of the Lord; and he ministered, in his prophetic office, the Gospel unto men; and went about in the form of a servant, doing good, ministering medicine both to the souls end bodies of men: but the great work he came about, was the work of man's redemption; which he willingly and cheerfully undertook, diligently and faithfully prosecuted, and has completely finished; to which respect is had in the next clause:

and to give his life a ransom for many; even for all the elect of God, to redeem them from sin, Satan, and the law; and secure them from the wrath of God, and eternal death; and this he has done, by laying down his life as the ransom price for them; (see Gill on "Matthew 20:28").

Ver. 46. *And they came to Jericho*, etc..] Christ and his disciples, from the coasts of Judea, beyond Jordan, in their way to Jerusalem; where Christ met with Zaccheus and converted him, and after some short stay at his house, departed thence;

and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples, and a great number of people: which followed him out of that city, to go with him to Jerusalem, being but ten miles off:

blind Bartimeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging; who was one of the two blind men Matthew makes mention of it, (see Gill on "Matthew 20:30").

Ver. 47. *And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth*, etc..] "That passed by", as reads the Persic version; which he might learn, by inquiring the meaning of such a multitude of people, and the noise; or he might hear his name frequently mentioned, and it said, that, he, was coming, or passing by:

he began to cry out; aloud, and with great vehemency, and often repeating it:

and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me: he did not call him Jesus of Nazareth, as the common people did, but Jesus, the son of David, a title of the Messiah; nor did he ask for money, but for mercy; (see Gill on "Matthew 20:30").

Ver. 48. *And many charged him that he should hold his peace*, etc..] And be silent, and not call him the son of David, at least; nor ask any thing of him:

but he cried the more a great deal: he lifted up his voice more loudly, and repeated the same words quicker and oftener, and with greater vehemency and importunity:

thou son of David, have mercy on me; (see Gill on "Matthew 20:31").

Ver. 49. *And Jesus stood still*, etc..] Hearing his voice, and knowing what charges and reproofs were given him to be silent:

and commanded him to be called and led and brought unto him: this order was given; either to his disciples, or to some of the multitude, probably the latter:

and they call the blind man, saying unto him, be of good comfort, rise, he calleth thee; or “because he calleth thee”, as the Arabic version renders it; suggesting, that some hopes might be conceived from thence, that something would be done in his favour. The Persic version renders it, “our master calleth thee”, so that that interpreter thought, that the disciples were the persons that were ordered to call, and did call the blind man: the word “rise”, is left out in the Persic and; Ethiopic versions. It may be observed from hence, that such whom Christ effectually calls by his grace, of which this instance is emblematical, have reason to be of good comfort; or that the effectual calling is a ground of comfort: called ones may take comfort from it, and be assured that they are loved by God; since it is a fruit, effect, and evidence, of God's everlasting love to them; and that they are the chosen of God, for, whom he did predestinate, he calls; and that they are Christ's, and are redeemed by him, seeing he has called them by name: and they may expect all good things from him; seeing they are called according to grace, given them in him before the world began; and are called to the participation of the blessings of grace; and it is affirmed that all things work together for their good: wherefore they may live in the faith of eternal glory and happiness; since they that are called, are justified, and shall be glorified.

Ver. 50. *And he casting away his garment*, etc..] His upper garment, and which no doubt was little worth; though this he did, that he might make the quicker dispatch to Christ:

rose; from off the bank, or ground, whereon he sat, in an instant: and “sprung up”, as the Vulgate Latin, and Beza's ancient copy read, with great nimbleness, and in haste:

and came to Jesus; being led by the persons that were sent to call him. It may be observed from hence, that such who are effectually called by the grace of Christ, of which this man was an emblem, hate the garment spotted with the flesh; and: put off the old man, as to the former conversation, being called by an holy God, with an holy calling, to holiness in heart and life; and that by the Gospel, which teaches to deny sin, and live a holy conversation: and these also cast away the garment of their own righteousness, it being as fig leaves, a spider's web, filthy rags, and a beggarly robe, as this man's was; and come nakedly to Christ, for righteousness, and renounce their own in point of justification, that being an hinderance to their coming to him for his. The Gospel reveals a better

righteousness to them than their own, more suitable to them, who are called from the dunghill, to sit among princes, and to inherit the throne of glory; and then such rise in the strength of grace, and come forth to Christ, for righteousness, peace, pardon, life, and salvation.

Ver. 51. *And Jesus answered and said unto him*, etc..] Being come to him, and standing before him:

what wilt thou that I should do unto thee? What means this vehement cry? what is it thou designest by mercy? is it money thou askest for, to relieve thy wants? or is it that thy sight may be restored?

The blind man said unto him, Lord; "Rabboni", or, as the Syriac version reads it; "Rabbi"; thou, great master in Israel, and Lord, of the whole world, my request to thee, and which thou, art, able to effect; is,

that I might receive my sight; (see Gill on "Matthew 20:33").

Ver. 52. *And Jesus said unto him, go thy way*, etc..] The Syriac version reads, it, az, "see"; receive thy sight, be it unto thee as thou dost desire; and which is the sense of, "go thy way": to to thine own house, or place of abode; and about thy business; thy request is granted:

thy faith hath made thee whole; or "saved thee"; and which respected not only the power of Christ in restoring his sight, but his faith in Jesus as the Messiah, the son of David: so that by Christ, the object of his faith, he was saved, both in soul and body; and had his spiritual sight, before he had his bodily sight, and both from Christ:

and immediately he received his sight; or saw again as well as ever he did, or as other men:

and followed Jesus in the way: that is, to Jerusalem. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read "him", instead of "Jesus"; but the Syriac and Persic versions read neither. This man was an emblem of the people of God, before, at, and after conversion: before conversion; for, as he was blind, so are they; they are without any spiritual sight and discerning of God, as in Christ, as the God of all grace, as their Covenant God and Father; and of themselves, being without any true sight of sin, or sense of their state and condition; and of Christ, and of the way of peace, life, and salvation by him, seeing no beauty in him, nor any need they stand in of him; and of the Spirit, of his person, grace, and operations, of the

things of the Spirit, which they know not, because they are spiritually discerned: at conversion; when they receive their sight from Christ, as he did, are made light in the Lord, and become the children of the day; when the eyes of their understandings are enlightened, to see their sad and ruinous state, the pollution of their hearts, the sinfulness of their thoughts, as well as of their actions; the imperfection and insufficiency of their righteousness, to justify them before God; the loveliness of Christ, the fulness of his grace, and righteousness; the suitableness, ability, and willingness of him, as a Saviour; and that salvation by him, is all of free grace; and that eternal glory and happiness, is secured by him, for them. All which light they have, not from themselves, nor from any mere creature, but from Christ; and which they receive as a benefit and favour; they have it as a gift, and in a way of receiving; and that at once, suddenly, and immediately: and after conversion; for, as this man, when he had received his sight from Christ, followed him in the way; so the people of God, being enlightened by Christ, follow him as their leader and commander, as the captain of their salvation, as the shepherd of the flock, as their guide and forerunner, as their pattern and exemplar, and as the light of the world: him they follow and imitate, in the duties of morality, in the way of public instituted worship, and in Gospel ordinances; as baptism, and the Lord's supper; and to follow him in the way of duty, is safe, honourable, pleasant, comfortable, and profitable; it issues in good here, and if happiness hereafter.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 11

Ver. 1. *And when they came nigh to Jerusalem*, etc..] The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, “when he came nigh”; that is, Jesus; though not without his disciples, nor the multitude:

unto Bethphage and Bethany; two places so called, near Jerusalem: Bethphage began where Bethany ended, and reached to the city itself. The Vulgate Latin only makes mention of Bethany; (see Gill on “Matthew 21:1”).

At the Mount of Olives; near which, the above places were:

he sendeth forth two of his disciples; perhaps Peter and John.

Ver. 2. *And saith unto them, go your way into the village*, etc..] Either of Bethany or of Nob. The Ethiopic version renders it “the city”, and so reads a copy of Stephens's: some have thought the city of Jerusalem is intended, but without any reason; (see Gill on “Matthew 21:9”);

over against you. The Syriac and Persic versions read, “over against us”: the sense is the same; for Christ and his disciples were together: this suits with either of the above mentioned places:

and as soon as ye be entered into it; are come to the town's end, and to one of the first houses in it,

ye shall find a colt tied: Matthew says, “an ass tied, and a colt with her”, (Matthew 21:2); both no doubt true:

whereon never man sat; which had never been backed and broke, and which makes it the more wonderful, that Christ should choose to ride upon it, and that that should quietly carry him:

loose him, and bring him; that is, away to me.

Ver. 3. *And if any man say unto you*, etc..] As very likely they would, and it would be strange if they should not say something to them, especially the owners of it:

why do ye this? Why do ye untie the ass, and attempt to carry it away, when it is none of your own, and it belongs to another man?

Say ye that the Lord hath need of him; our Lord and yours, the Lord of heaven and earth, and all things in it; it looks as if this title, "the Lord", was what Jesus was well known by; (see ◁4112▷John 11:28); unless it can be thought, that the owners of the colt were such, that believed in Christ, as is not improbable; and so would at once understand by the language who it was for, and let it go:

and straightway he will send him, hither; as soon as ever he hears that the Lord, by whom he would presently understand Jesus, wanted him for his present purpose; he will send him with all readiness and cheerfulness, without the least hesitation, or making any dispute about it.

Ver. 4. *And they went their way*, etc..] The two disciples went to the village, where Christ sent them, without objecting any difficulties that might present, in the execution of these orders:

and found the colt tied by the door without; in the street, fastened to the door of the owner's house, at the town's end:

in a place where two ways met; to go into and out of the village; at the corner house, where two ways met; so that the place was very public, and such an affair could not be transacted, without being seen:

and they loose him; as soon as ever they came to the place, they immediately began to untie the colt, and were going away with him.

Ver. 5. *And certain of them that stood there*, etc..] The Ethiopic version reads, who walked there; who were either standing hard by, or walking about the place, being inhabitants of it; and either the owners of the colt, or their servants, or both:

said unto them, what do ye loosing the colt? What do ye mean by it? do you intend to take the colt away? what business have you with it? what right have you to do so? and what is your end in it?

Ver. 6. *And they said unto them*, etc..] The very express words,

even as Jesus had commanded: not that these were the words they said, but “the Lord hath need of him”: upon which they said no more, were satisfied and contented, that they should untie the colt, and take it with them:

and they let them go; and the colt with them, very freely; (see Gill on “[4206]Matthew 21:6”).

Ver. 7. *And they brought the colt to Jesus*, etc..] Where he was,

and cast their garments on him; their clothes to be instead of a saddle, for Christ to sit upon:

and he sat upon him; or “Jesus rode on him”, as the Syriac version renders it. The Ethiopic version reads, “they made him to mount him”; that is, the disciples assisted him in getting upon it, and having mounted it, he sat on it without any trouble, though it had never been backed before, and rode on his way to Jerusalem; (see Gill on “[4207]Matthew 21:7”).

Ver. 8. *And many spread their garments in the way*, etc..] Instead of carpets to ride on, and in honour to him as a king:

and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way; in token of joy, as at the feast of tabernacles; (see Gill on “[4208]Matthew 21:8”).

Ver. 9. *And they that went before, and they that followed*, etc..] They that came from Jerusalem to meet him, and they that followed him from Jericho and other parts; which two bodies, the one went before him, and the other followed after him: and

cried, saying, Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; (see Gill on “[4209]Matthew 21:9”).

Ver. 10. *Blessed be the kingdom of our father David*, etc..] It was more usual with the Jews to call Abraham their father; but, because the Messiah was David's son, therefore, with respect to him, they here call him their father: and their meaning is, let the kingdom promised to our father David, and to his seed for ever,

that cometh in the name of the Lord; which is now coming, and appears in the auspicious reign and government of his son, the Messiah, who is clothed with majesty and authority; be prosperous and successful and be

established, and endure for ever; to the glory and happiness of him as king, and of all the subjects of it. Unless the words should be rendered, as by their situation they may be, thus, “blessed be the kingdom that cometh in the name of the Lord, of our father David”; and the sense be, let the kingdom of the Messiah, which is now come, and is set up in his name, who, as God, is David s Lord, greatly flourish, and long continue; may its king be blessed, and all its subjects happy. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, leave out the clause, “in the name of the Lord”; it is also left out in Beza's ancient copy, and in another; but the Ethiopic version retains it, reading it “in the name of God”. It is added,

Hosanna in the highest: (see Gill on “<4021 09>Matthew 21:9”).

Ver. 11. *And Jesus entered into Jerusalem*, etc..] this public manner, riding upon an ass, with the multitude attending hin, some going before, and others after, crying, “Hosanna” to him:

and into the temple; which he rode up directly to; the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the copulative “and”; his great concern being there; and having dismounted, and dismissed the colt, and sent it by proper persons to the owner of it, he went into the temple, into the court of the Gentiles; where he found and overturned the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and healed the lame and the blind:

and when he had looked round about upon all things; that is, in the temple, as the Lord and proprietor of it; and made a thorough visitation of it, and search into it, and corrected what was amiss in it:

and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve; having spent great part of the day in reforming abuses in the temple, in healing diseases, and disputing with the chief priests and Scribes: the evening being come, he did not think fit, for some reasons, to stay in the city; but went out to Bethany, which was near two miles off, and lodged there; (see Gill on “<4021 17>Matthew 21:17”).

Ver. 12. *And on the morrow*, etc..] The next day early in the morning,

when they were come from Bethany; Christ, and his twelve disciples. The Syriac and Persic versions read, “when he came out of Bethany”; though not alone, but with the twelve disciples, who went with him there, and returned with him, as appears from (<4111 14>Mark 11:14), as he and they came

out of that place early in the morning, having ate nothing, before they came from thence,

he was hungry; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:18").

Ver. 13. *And seeing a fig tree afar off*, etc..] By the wayside, at some distance from him:

having leaves; very large and spreading, which made a great show, as if there might be fruit on it:

he came; unto it; either he went out of his way to it, or having seen it before him a good way off, at length came up to it

if haply he might find any thing thereon; that is, any fruit; for he saw at a distance, there were leaves upon it; and which was the more remarkable, since it was the time of the fig tree just putting forth its tender branches, leaves, and fruit:

and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; no fruit at all upon it, contrary to his expectation as man, and the promising appearance the tree made:

for the time of figs was not [yet]; or, "for it was not the time of figs"; for the word "yet", is not in the text: and the words seem rather to be a reason, why Christ should not have expected fruit on it, than that he should: but the sense is, either because the time of gathering figs was not come; and since therefore they were not gathered, he might the rather hope to find some on it; or because it was not a kind season for figs, a good fig year; and this tree appearing in such a flourishing condition, might raise his expectation of finding fruit, yet he found none but leaves only; because it was so bad a season for figs, that even the most promising trees had none upon them: or this, tree being of an uncommon sort, though Christ expected to find no fruit on other trees, because the time of common: figs was not come, yet he might hope to, find some on this. Some critics neglecting the accents, render the words, "where he was, it was the season of figs"; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:19").

Ver. 14. *And Jesus answered and said unto it*, etc..] The fig tree; a Jewish way of speaking, often used when nothing before is said; the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, leave out the word "answered", as they do

also the word “Jesus”; and which is likewise omitted by the Vulgate Latin, though the other is retained:

no man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever; which is all one, as if he had said, as the other evangelist does, let no fruit grow on thee; for where no fruit is, none can be had, or eaten of. This tree may not only be an emblem of the Jewish people, who made a great show of religion, and enjoyed a great many privileges; and from whom, speaking after the manner of men, the fruits of good works, righteousness, and holiness, might have been hoped and looked for; when instead thereof, there was nothing but talk about them, and an observance of some insignificant rites and traditions of the “elders”; on which account, utter ruin and destruction ensued; but also of any outward professor of religion, who enjoying the means of grace, and making great pretensions to devotion and piety, it might be expected that he should do good works, well pleasing to God, and bring forth fruit to the glory of his name: whereas he only talks of good works, but does none; at least, no fruits of grace and righteousness are to be found on him; and at the last day, he will be cast as dry wood, as a withered branch, into everlasting burnings, being fit fuel for them.

And his disciples heard [it]; “this saying”, as the Persic version adds, and took notice of it, being in company with him.

Ver. 15. *And they came to Jerusalem*, etc..] The Ethiopic version reads, “he came”; that is, Christ; but not alone, for his disciples were with him: Beza says, that, one exemplar he had met with, adds “again”, and so one of Stephens's copies; for they had been there the day before:

and Jesus went into the temple: the Syriac and Persic versions add, “of God”; into the court of the Gentiles, as he did the preceding day:

and began to cast out them that bought and sold in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves; which was done, as Matthew relates, the same day that he made his public entry into Jerusalem: wherefore it is highly probable, that upon Christ's leaving the city, they returned “again”, and were the next morning sitting and doing business in the temple as before; and were drove out again by Christ, who, upon his return, found them there. They “that bought and sold in the temple”, were those that bought and sold lambs for the passover, which was now at hand; and the sheep and oxen for the “Chagiga”, or feast the day following; as well as doves hereafter

mentioned, for new mothers, and such as had fluxes: and that part of the temple where this business was carried on, was in a large space within the area of the temple, where shops were built for that purpose: and by “the money changers”, whose “tables” are said to be “overthrown”, are meant, such as sat at tables to receive the half shekel, who changed those that brought whole shekels, or foreign money: and who had so much for changing, which was called “Kolbon”; from whence they had the name of “Collybistae”, in the text: and “doves”, as before observed, were the offering of the poorer sort of women after birth, at the time of their purification, and of profluvious persons; of which many came from all parts, at the time of the passover: upon which account, there was a great demand for these creatures; and many sat upon seats to sell them, which Christ overturned; (see Gill on “<4012>Matthew 21:12”).

Ver. 16. *And would not suffer that any man*, etc..] He was more strict and severe than the day before; and gave orders, that they should be so far from being allowed to sit and trade in that sacred place, that no man

should carry any vessel through the temple; should make a, thoroughfare of it, by carrying through to any other place, any vessel that was for common use, or any sort of burden whatever: and this they could not well find fault with, nor complain of, since it was agreeable to one of their own canons; for they say[f202],

> “a man may not go into the mountain of the house, with his staff (in his hands); nor with shoes (on his feet); nor with his girdle, and his money in it; nor with a bag thrown over his shoulders; nor with dust upon his feet; nor might he make it, ayrdnq, “a thoroughfare”, and much less spit in it.”

Ver. 17. *And he taught, saying unto them, is it not written*, etc..] In (<2360>Isaiah 56:7).

My house shall be called of all nations, the house of prayer? For not only the Jews went up to the temple to pray, (see <4210>Luke 18:10), but the Gentiles also, who became of the Jewish religion, and had a court built for that purpose; and so the whole temple, from hence, was called an house of prayer: and the meaning is, not only that it should be called so by the Gentiles, but that it should be so to them, and made use of by them as such. Jarchi's note on the clause in (<2360>Isaiah 56:7) is, “not for Israel only, but also for the proselytes.”

But ye have made it a den of thieves; for no other, in our Lord's esteem, were the buyers and sellers of sheep, oxen, and doves, and the money changers, and the priests that encouraged them, and had a profit out of them: now these had their seats, shops, and tables, within the mountain of the house; and even in that part of it, which was assigned to the Gentiles, the nations of the world, who became proselytes, and came up to Jerusalem to worship there at certain times; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:13").

Ver. 18. *And the Scribes and chief priests heard it*, etc..] The reproof he gave to the money changers, and buyers, and sellers in the temple; and his strict prohibition that none should carry any vessels through it; and the argument he used from the prophecy of Isaiah, and the sharp rebuke he gave for the profanation of the holy place:

and sought how they might destroy him: they took counsel together to take away his life, for they hated reformation:

for they feared him; lest he should go on to make great changes and alterations among them, which would affect their credit and character, and their gains also, and draw the people after him:

because all the people were astonished at his doctrine; both as to the matter of it, which were such words as never man spake; and, as to the manner of it, being with such majesty, power, and authority, as the Scribes and Pharisees taught not with; and also at the miracles, by which it was confirmed, as well as at the reformation and discipline he was introducing; which was done with such an air of sovereignty and power, as was amazing.

Ver. 19. *And when even was come, he went out of the city*.] Of Jerusalem, as he did the evening before, and for the same reasons: probably he went to Bethany, where he had lodged the last night, with Lazarus, Martha, and Mary; or to the Mount of Olives, where he sometimes spent the night in prayer: the Syriac version renders it, "they went out"; for Christ took his disciples with him, as is evident from the following verse.

Ver. 20. *And in the morning, as they passed by*, etc..] The fig tree; when they returned the next morning from Bethany, or the Mount of Olives, or the place, wherever it was, they had been that night:

they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots; they did not see it immediately wither as it did, nor could they see it, as they went from Jerusalem to this place, because it was then in the evening; but in the morning, as they came along, they observed it; not only that the tender branches and boughs of it, but the trunk and body of the tree, and even the roots of it, were all dried up; so that it was entirely dead, and there was no room ever to expect it would revive, and bear any more fruit.

Ver. 21. *And Peter, calling to remembrance*, etc..] Not so much the tree, and its spreading leaves, and the greatness of it, and the flourishing condition it was in, the other day, as the imprecation of Christ upon it:

saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away; which he observed, as matter of astonishment, and as an instance of Christ's surprising power and authority; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:20").

Ver. 22. *And Jesus answering, saith unto them*, etc..] To all the disciples; for what Peter said, he said in the name of them all; and according to Matthew, the disciples said, "how soon is the fig tree withered away?" To which this is an answer; though the Arabic version renders it, "to him"; as if the words were directed particularly to Peter:

have faith in God; or "the faith of God", so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; that is, exercise, and make use of that faith which has God for its author, which is the work of God, and of his operation, a free grace gift of his; and which has God for its object; and is supported by his power, and encouraged by his goodness, truth, and faithfulness: and so the Arabic version renders it, "believe in God"; not only that such things may be done, as the drying up a fig tree, but those that are much greater.

Ver. 23. *For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain*, etc..] The Mount of Olives, at, or near which they now were,

be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; that is, of Galilee, which was nearest, and yet many miles off:

and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; not only as to removing a mountain, and casting it into the sea, but any thing equally difficult;

he shall have whatsoever he saith: whatever he commands shall be done; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:21").

Ver. 24. *Therefore I say unto you*, etc..] For encouragement in prayer more particularly, without which nothing should be attempted, and especially which is above the power of nature, and is of a miraculous kind:

whatsoever things ye desire when ye pray; that is, according to the revealed will of God, is for the confirmation of his Gospel, and for the glory of his name:

believe that ye receive [them], and ye shall have [them]; the petitions that are desired, and the things asked in them: that is, be as much assured of having them, as if you had already received them, and you shall have them; for the sense can never be, that they should believe they received them before they had them; this would be a contradiction in terms; and Beza's ancient copy, and one of Stephens's copies read it, "believe that ye shall receive", as in (Matthew 21:22), and so the Vulgate Latin version; with which agree the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, which render it, "believe that ye shall enjoy", or "obtain"; and the Syriac version, "believe that ye are about to receive"; and great faith it is so to believe; and this is the prayer of faith; (see 1 John 5:14,15).

Ver. 25. *And when ye stand praying*, etc..] Are about to engage in that work, or are engaged in it, performing it in such a posture; for standing was an usual posture in praying; (see Gill on "Matthew 6:5");

forgive, if ye have ought against any, that your Father also in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. The sense is, that if, while a man is praying, it comes into his mind that such an one has committed a trespass against him, has done him an injury, of which he has just reason to complain; but instead of complaining of it before God, and calling upon him to avenge his cause, he should immediately in his heart, and from his heart, forgive him, even though he is not present to acknowledge his sin, and ask his pardon; and such an one may expect forgiveness of God, and a manifestation of it to his soul; which is one the things he is constantly praying for, as his daily case makes it necessary: not that it is to be understood as though his for, giving the person that has offended him, is the cause, or condition, of his receiving remission of sin at the hand of God; for then it would not be through the blood of Christ, and according to the riches of his grace; but this points at a

temper and disposition of mind well pleasing to God, and describes persons who may expect this favour from him; (see Gill on "Matthew 6:14").

Ver. 26. *But if ye do not forgive*, etc..] Freely and fully, such as have trespassed against you, remit the debts they owe, and pass by the offences and injuries done you, and put up with every affront and indignity:

neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses; that is, such persons do not appear to have any true, or right notions of forgiveness; nor is there any evidence that their hearts are duly affected, or truly impressed with a sense of it; nor can they, upon their own principles and conduct, expect it: not but that to whomsoever God stands in the relation of a Father, and they are his children by adopting grace; these he pities and pardons, Christ's sake; the same covenant which contains the blessing of adoption, provides for pardoning mercy, and a non-remembrance of sin; the same persons that are predestinated to the adoption of children by Christ, and whom he has redeemed, that they might receive it, have the forgiveness of their sins, according to the riches of God's grace; for redemption and forgiveness of sins go together; and as many as are the children of God by faith in Christ, by the same faith receive the remission of sins; and without a view of pardon through the blood of Christ, a child of God cannot draw nigh to its heavenly Father, with that boldness, and cheerfulness, and filial fear it should; but there is forgiveness with him, that he may be feared; to whomsoever God stands in the relation of a Covenant God and Father, to them he manifests himself as a God pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin: unless the word "father" here not to be taken for such a special relation of grace, but only as expressive of him as the God of nature and providence, who has made; and takes care of all his creatures; in which sense he is the Father of all: as it is said, "have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?" (Malachi 2:10); and so "our heavenly Father", or "our Father" which is in heaven, may be so called only from the place where he dwells; and not from the grace he bestows on men, making them partakers of his heavenly gifts and calling, and blessing them in heavenly places, or things in Christ Jesus: in the former view of him it will not necessarily follow, that he does forgive sin, whereas under the latter consideration of him it will; for forgiveness is one of the heavenly gifts and things which he blesses his children with; (see Gill on "Matthew 6:15").

Ver. 27. *And they come again to Jerusalem*, etc..] The Persic and Ethiopic versions read, “he came”, which must be understood with his disciples; for they never parted from him till he was apprehended in the garden. Luke says, (⁴²⁰⁰¹Luke 20:1), that it was “on one of those days”; and the Persic version here reads, “on another day”: it was the day after the cursing of the fig tree, and two days after his public entrance into Jerusalem:

and as he was walking in the temple; not alone, but his disciples with him, and a multitude of people, whom he was teaching and preaching the Gospel to, as he walked to and fro; and whilst he was there employed,

there come to him the chief priests, and the Scribes, and the elders: the Jewish sanhedrim; for of these that great council of the nation consisted; (see Gill on “⁴²¹²³Matthew 21:23”).

Ver. 28. *And say unto him, by what authority dost thou do these things*? etc..] Enter into the temple, as if he was Lord of it; and correct in such a magisterial way every thing he thought an abuse in it; do the miracles he did, as healing the lame, and blind; and take upon him to instruct the people, a work he was now engaged in:

and who gave thee this authority to do these things? (see Gill on “⁴²¹²³Matthew 21:23”).

Ver. 29. *And Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc..] Being not in the least intimidated by such a body of men:

I will also ask of you one question; or “one word”, or “one thing”; λογος, here answers to the Hebrew word rbd, which signifies both “word” and “thing”:

and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things; (see Gill on “⁴²¹²⁴Matthew 21:24”).

Ver. 30. *The baptism of John*, etc..] The doctrine of which he was the first preacher, and the ordinance of which he was the first administrator:

was it from heaven, or of men? was it of divine or of human institution?

answer me; directly and plainly, without any shuffling, or evasion: it is a fair question, and may be answered; and the answer to it our Lord suggests would naturally lead to a proper one to their question; (see Gill on “⁴²¹²⁵Matthew 21:25”).

Ver. 31. *And they reasoned with themselves saying*, etc..] Privately; perhaps, they withdrew at a little distance for a short time, and consulted among themselves what answer to return; and the amount of their reasonings were this;

if we shall say from heaven, he will say, why then did ye not believe him? that is, should they say that John had a divine commission for what he said and did, they were aware that Christ would reply, why did not ye give credit to him? and had you done so, seeing he testified of me, you would have had no occasion to have put the above question; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:25").

Ver. 32. *But if we shall say, of men*, etc..] That John's baptism was an human invention, and he had no authority from God to preach and administer it,

they feared the people; lest being enraged thereby they should, at once, rise up, and destroy them:

for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed; a real prophet, one truly sent from God, and had his commission and credentials from him: this was the general sentiment of the people; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:26").

Ver. 33. *And they answered and said unto Jesus*, etc..] Being reduced by this dilemma to the greatest streight and difficulty;

we cannot tell: they could, if they would, but they did not care to tell; they knew if they did, they should expose themselves one way or other:

and Jesus answering, saith unto them, neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:27").

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 12

Ver. 1. *And he began to speak unto them by parables*, etc..] As of the two sons the father bid go to work in the vineyard; and of the planting of a vineyard, and letting it out to husbandmen, as here; though the latter is only related by this evangelist, yet both are by Matthew. This was not the first time of his speaking by parables to the people, though it might be the first time he spake in this way to the chief priests and elders, and who are particularly designed in them.

A certain man planted a vineyard. The Persic version adds, “with many trees”: that is, with vines, though sometimes other trees, as fig trees, were planted in vineyards; (see Luke 13:6). This man is, by the Evangelist Matthew, called an “householder”: by whom is meant God the Father, as distinguished from his Son, he is afterward said to send: and by the “vineyard”, planted by him, is meant the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, the men of Israel, (Isaiah 5:1,7);

and set an hedge about it, or “wall”, as the Persic version renders it; meaning either the law, not the Jews oral law, or the traditions of the elders, which were not of God's setting, but the ceremonial and moral law; or the wall of protection by divine power, which was set around the Jewish nation especially when they went up to their solemn feasts.

And digged a place for the winefat. The Syriac and Arabic versions add, “in it”; and the Persic version, “in the vineyard”; for this was made in the vineyard, where they, trod and squeezed the grapes when gathered; and may design the altar in the house of the Lord, where the libations, or drink offerings, were poured out;

and built a tower. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions add, “in it”; for this also was built in the vineyard, and may intend either the city of Jerusalem; or the temple in it, the watch house where the priests watched, and did their service, day and night.

And let it out to husbandmen; or “workmen”, as the Arabic version renders it, who wrought in it, and took care of the vines. The Ethiopic version renders it, “and set over it a worker and keeper of the vineyard”; by whom are meant the priests and Levites, to whom were committed the care of the people, with respect to religious things:

and went into a far country; left the people of the Jews to these husbandmen, or rulers, whether civil or ecclesiastical, but chiefly the latter, to be instructed and directed by them, according to the laws and rules given them by the Lord; (see Gill on “Matthew 21:33”).

Ver. 2. *And at the season he sent unto the husbandman a servant*, etc..] The Evangelist Matthew says, “when the time of the fruit drew near”, (Matthew 21:34); and so the Persic version here reads. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, “in its own time”, or “season”, which was the fourth year from the planting of it; and then it was holy to the Lord; and might not be eaten until the fifth year, (Leviticus 19:23-25). According to the Jewish canons [f203], a vineyard of the fourth year was marked with clods of earth, to show it was not to be eaten of; and the fruit of it was brought up to Jerusalem, from every place that was but a day's journey from thence, there to be eaten, or redeemed. Nor by the “servant” are intended the prophets of the Old Testament, who were sent to the Jews to call upon them to bring forth fruits of righteousness; for not a single person, but a set of men, are here designed; and the Evangelist Matthew expresses it in the plural number, “servants”:

that he might receive from the husbandmen the fruit of the vineyard: by the hands of his servants; for in Matthew it is, “that they might receive”, etc.. such as righteousness and judgment, truth and holiness, so as to give an account of them, which might have been expected from a people under such advantages, (Isaiah 5:7); (see Gill on “Matthew 21:34”).

Ver. 3. *And they caught him*, etc..] This clause is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions, though it seems proper to be retained; and denotes the rudeness and violence with which the prophets of the Lord were used by the Jewish nation:

and beat him: either with their fists, or with rods, and scourges, till the skin was flayed off:

and sent him away empty; without any fruit to carry with him, or give an account of, to the owner of the vineyard.

Ver. 4. *And again he sent unto them another servant*, etc..] Another set of good men, to instruct, advise, and counsel them, and exhort them to their duty; such as were Isaiah, Zechariah, and others:

and at him they cast stones, and wounded [him] in the head; for of these were stoned, as well as sawn asunder, and slain with the sword; though it seems, that this servant, or this set of men, were not stoned to death, because he was afterwards said to be sent away: nor could the stoning be what was done by the order of the sanhedrim, which was done by letting an heavy stone fail upon the heart [f204]; but this was done by all the people, by the outrageous zealots, in the manner Stephen was stoned. Dr. Lightfoot thinks, the usual sense of the Greek word may be retained; which signifies "to reduce", or "gather into a certain sum": and so as this servant was sent to reckon with these husbandmen, and take an account from them of the fruit of the vineyard, one cast a stone at him, saying, there is fruit for you; and a second cast another stone, saying the same thing; and so they went on one after another, till at last they said, in a deriding way, now the sum is made up with you:

and sent [him] away shamefully handled; with great ignominy and reproach.

Ver. 5. *And again he sent another*, etc..] That is, another servant, or set of men, it may be in the times of the Maccabees, who were used in a very inhuman manner; (see <58B137>Hebrews 11:37,38);

and him they killed; either with the sword, or by inflicting some capital punishment, as stoning, strangling, etc..

and many others; that is, either the owner of the vineyard sent many other servants, or the husbandmen ill used many others that were sent to them:

beating some; with their hands, or with scourges;

and killing some; in one or other of the above ways.

Ver. 6. *Having yet therefore one son, his well beloved*, etc..] The Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the one, and only Son of God his Father, his only begotten Son, for he has no other Son in the same way of filiation; and who is his dear Son, the Son of his love, who was loved by him before the foundation of the world; and whom he declared to be his beloved Son, both at his baptism, and at his transfiguration upon the mount, by a voice

from heaven: this Son he having with him, in his bosom, as one brought up with him, and rejoicing before him,

he sent him also last unto them; after all the prophets had been with them, when the last days were come, the end of the Jewish state, civil and ecclesiastical; (see <58>Hebrews 1:1);

saying, they will reverence my son. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, "perhaps they will reverence my son", as in (<42>Luke 20:13); (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 21:37").

Ver. 7. *But those husbandmen said among themselves*, etc..] This, in the Persic version, is introduced thus, "when the vine dressers saw the son of the lord of the vineyard": agreeably to (<40>Matthew 21:38). The Ethiopic version renders it, "and the servants said"; not the servants that had been sent, but the workmen in the vineyard:

this is the heir; that is, "of the vineyard", as the Persic version expresses it they knew him by the prophecies of the Old Testament which had described him, and by the miracles which were wrought by him; and they could not deny but that the vineyard of the house of Judah belonged to him, and he was right heir to the throne of Israel; though they refused to embrace him, confess him, and declare for him: but, on the other hand, said,

come let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours; that is, "the vineyard", and the Persic version again read. The priests, Scribes, and elders of the people consulted together to take away his life, with this view: that they might continue in the quiet possession of their nation, temple, and worship, in the office they bore, and in the privileges they partook of; and that the Romans might not come, and take away their place and nation, (<43>John 11:47,48); (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 21:38").

Ver. 8. *And they took him, and killed him, and cast him, out of the vineyard*.] They sent their officers and servants, and apprehended him in the garden; they delivered him to the Gentiles, who were without the vineyard, and by whom, at their instigation, he was put to death, even to the death of the cross. The Ethiopic version reads it in the same order as in Matthew; "they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed hin"; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 21:39").

Ver. 9. *What shall therefore the Lord of the vineyard do*? etc..] The Arabic and Ethiopic versions add, to them; that is, to the husbandmen, as is expressed in (<4021240>Matthew 21:40), (see Gill on "<4021240>Matthew 21:40"):

he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others. As the former clause contains a question put by Christ upon his having finished the parable, this is an answer to it, given by the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, in whose presence, and for whose sake it was delivered; (see Gill on "<4021241>Matthew 21:41").

Ver. 10. *And have ye not read this Scripture*? etc..] In (<19B822>Psalm 118:22,23) these are the words of Christ directed to the above persons, who were, many of them, teachers of the people, and therefore ought to have read the scriptures, and have taken notice of, and considered more especially such as respected the Messiah, as this passage did, and was very appropriate to the case in the parable Christ had respect unto:

the stone which the builders rejected, is become the head of the corner: by "the stone" is meant the same with the son and heir in the parable, even himself, the true Messiah; and by "the builders", the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, the same with the husbandmen, whose rejection of the stone, or of the Messiah, is signified by their seizing him, casting him out of the vineyard, and killing him; and yet notwithstanding all this, according to this Scripture, he was to be, and now is become, the head of the corner, exalted above angels and men, at the right hand of God; (see Gill on "<4021242>Matthew 21:42").

Ver. 11. *This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes*.] That is, the exaltation of the Messiah, after he had been so ill treated, and at last put to death by the Jews. These words are a continuation of the passage cited out of (<19B822>Psalm 118:22,23).

Ver. 12. *They sought to lay held on him*, etc..] That is, the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, after they had heard the parables he spake to them, were greatly irritated, and provoked, and had a good will to have seized him, and carried him away, and have had him before their court, and condemn him:

but feared the people; lest they should rise up in his defence, and fall on them; for many of them liked; and were attached to his ministry; and others had received favours of one kind or another from him through his miracles:

for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and that they were the husbandmen designed, who had not brought the fruit of the vineyard to their lord, but had ill treated his servants, and would his son.

And they left him; in the temple, not daring to do any thing to him:

and went their way; to their council chamber, perhaps to consult what measures to take, and how to destroy him.

Ver. 13. *And they send unto him*, etc..] That is, the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, who had been with Jesus in the temple, and were silenced by his reasonings, and provoked by his parables; and therefore left him, and went together to consult what methods they should take to get him into their hands, and be revenged on him; the result of which was, they send to him

certain of the Pharisees. The Syriac and Persic versions read "Scribes", who were the more skillful and learned part of that body of men, and scrupled paying tribute to Caesar, he being an Heathen prince, and they the Lord's free people:

and of the Herodians; who were, as the Syriac and Persic versions read, "of the household of Herod"; his servants and courtiers, and consequently in the interest of Caesar, under whom Herod held his government, and must be for paying tribute to him: these two parties of such different sentiments, they sent to him,

to catch him in his words; or "in word", or discourse; either with their word, the question they should put to him, or with his word, the answer he should return: and so the Ethiopic version supplies it, reading it, "with his own word"; they thought they should unavoidably catch him, one way or other; just as a prey is hunted, and taken in a net or snare, as the word used signifies: for if he declared against giving tribute to Caesar, the Herodians would have whereof to accuse him, and the Pharisees would be witnesses against him; and if he should be for it, the latter would expose him among the people, as an enemy to their civil liberties, and one that was for subjecting them to the Roman yoke, and consequently could not be the Messiah and deliverer they expected; (see Gill on "Matthew 22:16").

Ver. 14. *And when they were come*, etc..] Unto Jesus in the temple:

they said unto him, master; they saluted him in like manner, as they did their doctors and Rabbins, calling him "Rabbi", though they were not his

disciples; but one part of them were the disciples of the Pharisees, and the other had Herod for their master;

we know that thou art true; an honest, sincere, and upright man,

and carest for no man, for thou regardest not the person of men; no, not Caesar himself;

but teachest the way of God in truth; instructest men in the word, will, and worship of God, with all integrity and faithfulness; answer therefore this question,

is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not? The Syriac and Persic versions read, "head money"; and so it is read in Beza's most ancient copy; a tax that was levied on the heads of families; or on every particular head in a family; (see Gill on "<41216>Matthew 22:16-17").

Ver. 15. *Shall we give, or not give*? etc..] They not only ask whether it was lawful, but whether also it was advisable to do it, that they might not only accuse him of his principles, but charge him with persuading, or dissuading in this case. These words are left out in the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions:

but he knowing their hypocrisy; expressed in their flattering titles and characters of him, and which lay hid in their secret designs against him; which being thoroughly known to him,

said unto them, why tempt ye me: bring me a penny, that I may see it; what it is, that is required for tribute; (see Gill on "<41218>Matthew 22:18-19").

Ver. 16. *And they brought it*, etc..] The penny, which was a Roman one, and worth seven pence halfpenny of our money:

and he saith unto them, whose is this image, and superscription; for it had the head of an emperor upon it, very likely the image of the then reigning emperor Tiberius, and a superscription on it, expressing his name, and perhaps a motto along with it:

and they said unto him, Caesar's; one of the Roman emperors, Augustus, or Tiberius; most probably the latter; (see Gill on "<41220>Matthew 22:20-21").

Ver. 17. *And Jesus answering said unto them*, etc..] Very wisely and pertinently,

render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's: or “to the king, which are the king's”, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it:

and to God the things that are God's; (see Gill on “Matthew 22:21”);

and they marvelled at him; at his wisdom and prudence in returning such an answer, which cut off all occasion against him.

Ver. 18. *Then came unto him the Sadducees*, etc..] The same day, immediately after he had silenced the Pharisees and Herodians: these were a set of men distinct from the former, in some of their sentiments, especially in their religions ones, and particularly in the following:

which say there is no resurrection: of the dead, in a literal sense, either general or particular; (see Gill on “Matthew 22:23”);

and they asked him, saying; as in the next verse.

Ver. 19. *Master, Moses wrote unto us*, etc..] Has left in writing for us the following precept to observe; for they acknowledged the writings of Moses, and indeed all the Scriptures of the Old Testament; adhering to the literal sense of them, and rejecting the traditional interpretation of them by the Rabbins:

if a man's brother die, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother; which is the sense of the law in (Deuteronomy 25:5); (see Gill on “Matthew 22:24”).

Ver. 20. *Now there were seven brethren*, etc..] In a certain family, at a certain place; perhaps at Jerusalem, who were brethren by the father's side; for such only were reckoned so, and such only did this law oblige:

and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed: no child: hence it is clear that the ancient Jews used the word seed, of a single person, as these Sadducees did; though modern ones deny such an use of it in our present controversies with them about the sense of (Genesis 3:15 22:18); (see Gill on “Matthew 22:25”).

Ver. 21. *The second took her*, etc..] To wife, married her, as the next eldest brother, by the above law was obliged to: and so the Jewish [f205] canon upon it runs thus;

> “the command is, lwdgb, “for the eldest” to marry his brother's wife: if he will not, they go to all the brethren; if they will not, they

return to the eldest, and say, the command is upon thee, either pluck off the shoe, or marry."

Maimonides [f206] relates it in this manner;

"if a man dies, and leaves many brethren, the command is upon the eldest to marry, or pull off the shoe; as it is said, (Deuteronomy 25:6), "and it shall be the firstborn which she beareth". From tradition, it is learned that it does not speak but of the firstborn among the brethren; and it is all one as if it was said, the eldest of the brethren shall succeed in the name of his brother that is dead; and this is what is said, "which she beareth": the sense is, which the mother has borne, and not which the brother's wife beareth; if the eldest will not marry her, they go round to all the brethren; and if they will not, they return to the eldest, and say, upon thee is the command, either pluck off the shoe, or marry; and they do not compel him to marry, but they compel him to pluck off the shoe;"

i.e. in case he will not marry.

And died, neither left he any, seed, and the third likewise; married her, and died without issue, as the second did. The Persic version adds, "and the fourth, and fifth"; for so they all did to the seventh.

Ver. 22. *And the seventh had her, and left no seed*, etc..] All, the seven brethren married her, one after another, and neither of them had any children by her:

and last of all the woman died also; after all the seven brethren, to whom she had been married.

Ver. 23. *In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise*, etc..] This last clause, "when they shall rise", is omitted in two copies of Beza's, and in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, because, perhaps, it might be thought superfluous; but this is agreeably to the way of speaking and writing with the Jews: so in the Targum on (Zechariah 3:7): `nya aytym twyab`, "in the quickening of the dead I will quicken thee"; or, in the resurrection of the dead I will raise thee. The question put on supposition of a resurrection, and that these seven brethren, and the wife they all had should rise, then is,

whose wife shall she be of them? of the seven brethren;

for the seven had her to wife. She was, according to law, the lawful wife of all seven; what particular and special claim could one have to her above the rest? (see Gill on "Matthew 22:28").

Ver. 24. *And Jesus answering said unto them*, etc..] Which they thought he was not able to do, but would have been silenced at once by them, as many of their antagonists had been:

do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God? what is expressed in Matthew affirmatively, is here put by way of interrogation, which, with the Jews, was a more vehement way of affirming; (see Gill on "Matthew 22:29").

Ver. 25. *For when they shall rise from the dead*, etc..] These seven brethren, and the woman; and so any, and every other:

they neither marry, nor are given marriage: there will be no such natural relation subsisting, nor any need of any:

but are as the angels which are in heaven; (see Gill on "Matthew 22:30").

Ver. 26. *And as touching the dead, that they rise*, etc..] For the proof of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead,

have ye not read in the book of Moses; that is, in the law of Moses; for though it was divided into five parts, it was but one book; just as the Psalms are called the Book of Psalms, (Acts 1:20), and the Prophets, the Book of the Prophets, (Acts 7:42). The book of Exodus is particularly intended; for the passage referred to is in (Exodus 3:6),

how in the bush God spake unto him, or "out of the bush", as the Syriac and Persic versions read;

saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? (see Gill on "Matthew 22:31-32").

Ver. 27. *He is not the God of the dead*, etc..] This is our Lord's reasoning upon the passage; showing from hence, that since God is the God of these persons, they must be now alive in their souls, for God is not the God of the dead; and that their bodies must rise again, or he will not be the God of their whole persons;

but the God, of the living: the word “God”, in this clause, is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, but retained in the Persic and Ethiopic versions; (see Gill on “Matthew 22:32”);

ye therefore do greatly err; signifying, that it was not a slight mistake, an error of small importance, but a very great one; inasmuch as it was contrary to the Scriptures, and derogated from the power of God, and destroyed that covenant interest, which God has in his people, and particularly in the principal men of their nation, who were the fathers and founders of them.

Ver. 28. *And one of the Scribes came*, etc..] Matthew calls him a lawyer, (Matthew 22:35), an interpreter of the law, as a Scribe was:

and having heard them reasoning together; being present at the dispute between Christ and the Sadducees, which he diligently attended to:

and perceiving that he had answered them well: in a most beautiful manner. The Jews have adopted the very Greek word here used, and make use of it in the same sense as `wlaq hyl rma`[f207], “he answered him well”: or, as the gloss upon it, “praise worthily”; in a manner deserving praise; and is the same with `trmaq ry`[f208], “thou hast said well”, or beautifully; and so the answer here was with great solidity, and judgment, and strength of argument, to their utter confusion and silence; whereby he understood he had considerable knowledge in the law, and yet was willing to try if he could not puzzle him with a question relating to it:

asked him, which is the first commandment of all? of all the commandments in the law, moral and ceremonial.

Ver. 29. *Jesus answered him, the first of all the commandments is*, etc..] Christ replied at once, without taking any time to consider of it, that the chief and principal of all the commands of the law, and what is of the greatest importance is,

hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. The Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions read, “one God”; but the Syriac, and Ethiopic render it, “one Lord”; and that rightly, agreeably to the Greek text, and to (Deuteronomy 6:4), from whence this is taken. This passage of Scripture, to the end of the ninth verse, is the first of the sections which were put into their phylacteries; (see Gill on “Matthew 23:5”); and was repeated twice every day, morning and evening; which is by the Jews called

from the first word m tayrq, “the reading of the Shema”: concerning the exact time of the reciting of this, morning and evening, and of the posture in which they do it, reclining in the evening, and standing in the morning, and of the prayers before and after it, various rules are given in their Misna [f209], or oral law; it is a precept of great esteem and veneration with them, and attended to with much solemnity. The account Maimonides [f210] gives of it is this:

> “twice every day they read Keriath Shema; (i.e. “hear, O Israel”, etc..) in the evening and in morning, as it is said, (<0607>Deuteronomy 6:7). “When thou liest down, and when thou risest up”; in the hour it is the custom of men to lie down, and this is night; and in the hour it is the custom of men to stand, and this is day: and what does he read? three sections; and they are these, “hear”, etc.. (<0604>Deuteronomy 6:4), and it shall come to pass, “if ye shall hearken”, etc.. (<0513>Deuteronomy 11:13), “and Moses said”, etc.. (<0213>Exodus 13:3), and they read the section, “hear, O Israel”, first, because there is in it the unity of God, and the love of him and his doctrine; for it is, lwdgh rqh, “the great root”, or “foundation”, on which all hangs or depends.”

And it is observable, that the last letter of the word “hear”, and the last of the word “one”, are both written in very large characters in the Hebrew Bible, to denote the greatness of the command, and to cause attention to it. The Jews seek for mysteries in these letters, and think the unusual size of them, points at some very great things: they observe, that the first of these letters is numerically “seventy”, and directs to the seventy names of the law, and the seventy ways in which it may be interpreted, and the seventy nations of the world, from whom the Israelites are distinguished, by their belief of the one God [f211]; and that the latter stands for the number “four”, and shows that the Lord is the one God, in heaven and in earth, in all the world, and in the four parts of it; and that both these letters put together, make a word, which signifies “a witness”; showing that this passage is a glorious testimony of the unity of God, and that the Israelites are witnesses of it, by believing and professing it; and that should they depart from the faith of it, God would be a witness against them: and now, though there is no solid foundation for such interpretations, yet this shows what an opinion they had of the greatness of this command; to which, may be added, they ask [f212],

> “why does, “hear, O Israel”, etc.. go before that passage in (^{Deu 11:13}Deuteronomy 11:13). “And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments”, etc.. but because a man must take upon him, first the yoke of the kingdom of heaven, and after that he must take upon him the yoke of the commandments.”

The sense is, that he must first make a confession of his faith in God, which is contained in (^{Deu 6:4}Deuteronomy 6:4) and then he must obey his commands; so that they plainly considered this, as the first and greatest of all. These words are frequent in the mouths of the modern Jews, in proof of the unity of God, and against a plurality in the Deity; but the ancient ones, not only consider them as a good and sufficient proof, that there is but one God, but as expressive of a Trinity in the Godhead: with a view to this text they observe [f213], that

> “Jehovah, “our God, Jehovah”; these are, ygrd tlt, “three degrees” (or persons) with respect to this sublime mystery, “in the beginning, God”, or “Elohim, created”, etc..”

And again [f214],

> “there is an unity which is called Jehovah the first, our God, Jehovah; behold! they are all one, and therefore called one: lo! these three names are as one; and although we call them one, and they are one; but by the revelation of the Holy Ghost it is made known, and they are by the sight of the eye to be known, that “these three are one”, ((see ^{1Jo 5:7}1 John 5:7),) and this is the mystery of the voice that is heard; the voice is one; and there are three things, fire, and wind, and water, and they are all one, in the mystery of the voice, and they are not but one: so here, Jehovah, our God, Jehovah, these, ynwwg atlt, “three modes, forms”, or “things”, are one.”

Once more they [f215] say,

> “there are two, and one is joined to them, and they are three; and when they are three, they are one: these are the two names of hear, O Israel, which are Jehovah, Jehovah, and Elohenu, or our God, is joined unto them; and it is the seal of the ring of truth.”

To which I shall subjoin one passage more, where R. Eliezer is asking his father R. Simeon ben Jochai, why Jehovah is sometimes called Elohim, he replies [f216], among other things;

> "come see, there are ygr dg, "three degrees", (or persons,) and every degree is by itself; although they are all one, and bound together in one, and one is not separated from another."

To believe this, is the first and chief commandment in the law, and is the principal article of the Christian faith; namely, to believe that there is one God, and that there are three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, in the Godhead.

Ver. 30. *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God*, etc..] Which is to be understood of the one God, Father, Son, and Spirit; for all the three divine persons are to be equally loved, being possessed of the same perfections and excellencies, and having done the same works, and having bestowed like benefits and favours upon men: and though there is now no principle of love to God in men; but, on the contrary, men are enemies to God in their minds, which appears by their wicked works; yet this commandment is still in force, and the obligation to it is the same; the fall of man, the corruption of nature, and the impotency, and even aversion in man to observe this command, do not make it null and void: and in regeneration, when God puts his laws into the heart, and writes them in the mind; love is produced in such persons, to God the Father, who has begotten them again, according to his abundant mercy; and to Christ, who has saved them from their sins; and to the blessed Spirit, who has quickened and comforted them: and this love is in some measure exercised as it should be, and as here directed to,

with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; that is, with all the powers and faculties of the soul; or with the affections, as under the influence and guidance of the more noble faculties of the soul, the mind, the understanding, judgment, and will: it is added here, which is not in Matthew,

and with all thy strength; which answers to the phrase in (Deuteronomy 6:5), "with all thy might"; that is, with the greatest vehemency of affection, in the strongest expressions of it, and with all the strength of grace a man has. This passage follows the former in (Deuteronomy 6:5) and is what is only cited in (Matthew 22:37).

Ver. 31. *And the second is like*, etc..] “Unto it”, as in (40 22 39 Matthew 22:39) and so it is read here in two ancient copies of Beza's, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions;

[namely] this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. This commandment stands in (03 19 18 Leviticus 19:18) and respects not an Israelite only, or one of the same religion with a man's self, or his intimate friend and acquaintance, or one that lives in the same neighbourhood; but any man whatever, to whom affection should be shown, and good should be done to him, and for him, as a man would have done to and for himself; as much as lies in his power, both in things temporal and spiritual; see the note on (40 22 39 Matthew 22:39).

There is none other commandment greater than these; in the whole law, moral or ceremonial; not the sabbath, nor circumcision, nor the phylacteries, nor the fringes on the borders of the garments, nor any other.

Ver. 32. *And the Scribe said unto him*, etc..] This reply of the Scribe, is not related by Matthew:

well, Master, thou hast said the truth: what thou hast said is truth, and thou hast expressed it in a most beautiful manner: the Scribe was charmed with his answer, and could not forbear speaking in commendation of it, and even before the multitude, and those of his own sect: this was a rare and uncommon instance; it was not usual with the Scribes and Pharisees, whatever convictions they were laid under, either by the miracles or discourses of Christ, to own any thing, or make any concessions in his favour, or speak in his praise: but this man not only commends him, but gives reasons for it, and confirms the doctrine he taught in his own words;

for there is one God, and there is none other but he. The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word “God”; but it is in the Greek copies, and rightly retained in other versions: for the sense is, that there is one God, and but one; and which is perfectly agreeable to the Christian doctrine, of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead; for though the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, yet there are not three Gods, but one God. Nor are we to imagine, that this man said or thought any thing to the contrary, or had it in his mind to oppose the doctrine of the Trinity; which, though more clearly revealed in the New Testament, was not unknown to the ancient Jews, and might be learned from the writings of the Old Testament: but this he said, in opposition to the many

idols, and fictitious deities of the Gentiles; and if he spake in the Hebrew language, as it is probable he did, there must be a beautiful “paranomasia” in his words; “for there is”, דא, “Achad, one God; and there is none”, רא, “Achar, other but he”: and it is observed by a Jewish writer [f217], that the reason why the last letter of, דא, “one”, is greater than the rest, as before observed, in (<41229>Mark 12:29) is, that there might be no mistake of ד, for ר, which are much alike; and if mistook, the word would signify “another”, and not “one”: but this is done, lest a man should mistake, and worship “another”, and not the “one” God.

Ver. 33. *And to love him with all the heart*, etc..] That is, the one God, with a sincere hearty love and affection;

and with all the understanding; of his being, perfections, and works, which will serve to draw the affections to him: this clause answers to that, “with all thy mind”, in (<41230>Mark 12:30);

and with all the soul; with all the powers and faculties of it;

and with all the strength; a man has, or is given him; with all the vehemency and fervency of soul he is master of:

and to love his neighbour as himself; which are the two great commandments of the law:

is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices; that is, more excellent in their nature, more acceptable to God, and more useful among men, than all the rituals of the ceremonial law, than any sacrifice whatever: for the two words here used, “burnt offerings and sacrifices”, include all offerings; as those which were wholly consumed upon the altar, and those of which part was given to the priests; and all sin offerings, meat offerings, and peace offerings, and whatever else. This man had now at least a different sense of things, from the rest of his brethren; who placed religion chiefly in the observance of the rituals of the law, and the traditions of the elders; and neglected the duties of the moral law, respecting God and their neighbour: things which are to be preferred and attended to, before any ceremonial institutions, and especially the inventions of men. This entirely agrees with the sense of the passage in (<280606>Hosea 6:6). “For I desired mercy and, not sacrifice”; that is, willed and required, that men should show mercy to one another; or that every one should love his neighbour as himself, and attend to this, rather than to the offering of any ceremonial

sacrifice: this being more delightful and well-pleasing to God, than that: “and the knowledge of God”; of his unity, perfections, and glory: “more than burnt offerings”; which were entirely devoted to him: and it also agrees with the ancient sentiments of the people of God; so Samuel says to Saul, “Hath the Lord [as great] delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? behold, to obey [is] better than sacrifices, [and] to hearken, than the fat of rams”, (0915221 Samuel 15:22). And yet it may be observed, that there is some likeness between these things, burnt offerings and sacrifices, and the love of God and love to our neighbour; though the latter are greatly preferable to the former; true love to God being no other than the offering up of the soul, as a whole burnt offering to God, in the flames of love to him; and love to the neighbour, or doing good and communicating to him, is a sacrifice well-pleasing to God.

Ver. 34. *And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly*, etc..] Wisely and prudently, as a man of sense and understanding; by taking in the several parts of our Lord's answer very distinctly, and reasoning upon them, and confirming them:

he said unto him, thou art not far from the kingdom of God: not meaning from heaven, and eternal happiness; for right and distinct notions of the above commandments, and even the performance of the in by a sinful and imperfect creature, can neither give a man a title to, or bring him near, or introduce him into the heavenly glory, which is a pure gift of God's grace; but our Lord's sense is, that he was not far off from the Gospel dispensation, and was in a fair way of entering into it; his sentiments were very near to such, who became followers of Christ, and embraced the doctrines, and submitted to the ordinances of the Gospel state: since he preferred those things, which related to the knowledge of the being and perfections of God, to the love and worship of God, and to the good of his neighbour; before the ceremonies of the law; which were quickly to be abolished, and make way for the setting up of the kingdom of God, or of the Messiah, in a more glorious and visible manner. Indeed there are some persons, who seem not far off from the kingdom of God, in the other sense of the phrase, as it may respect eternal glory and happiness, who will never enter into it: there are some that seem very devout and religions; hear the word, attend on all ordinances, join themselves with a church, submit to baptism, and sit down at the Lord's table, and live a moral life and conversation, and yet are destitute of the grace of God: yea, there are some who have clear notions of the Gospel, and make a bright profession of it,

and yet have no experience of the power of it upon their hearts, and have not the oil of grace there: and even hold this profession to the end, and yet come short of the kingdom and glory of our Lord Jesus: such are almost Christians, but not altogether; virgins, but foolish ones; have lamps, but no oil; come as far as the door, but that is shut upon them.

And no man after that durst ask him any question; in any captious matter in order to ensnare him; finding they could get no advantage, or occasion against him that way; he having silenced the Herodians, Sadducees, Scribes, and Pharisees.

Ver. 35. *And Jesus answered and said*, etc..] To the Pharisees that were gathered together about him; (see Gill on "Matthew 22:41").

While he taught in the temple; Whilst he was in the temple, and as he was teaching the people there; among other things in his doctrine, he put this question,

how say the Scribes, that Christ is the son of David? Not that Christ meant to deny or invalidate the truth of this; for the Messiah was certainly to be the son of David, and was; but he wanted to know, inasmuch as they commonly said, and instructed the people to believe, and it was in general believed by them, that he was David's son, how they could reconcile this to his being the Lord of David: or how they could give out, that he was only and merely the Son of David, when he was David's Lord. Matthew relates the matter thus; that Christ first put these questions to them, what they thought of the Messiah, and whose son he was; and that they immediately replied, he was the son of David: wherefore this question seems to be put upon that, with another along with it,

how then doth David in spirit call him Lord? (see Gill on "Matthew 22:42-43").

Ver. 36. *For David himself said by the Holy Ghost*, etc..] In (Psalm 110:1), being inspired by the Spirit of God:

the Lord said to my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. This is a proof, that David did call Christ his Lord; and that he called him so in spirit; since these words were delivered by him under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: that the psalm was wrote by David, the title shows; and that he spake it as he was influenced by the Holy Ghost, our Lord declares: the passage relates to what God the Father said

to Christ, when being risen from the dead, he ascended on high, and entered into the most holy place; he bid him sit down at his right hand, as having done the work of man's salvation, he was sent about, to full satisfaction; and as a mark of affection to him, and honour conferred upon him in the human nature; where he should continue, till all his enemies, Jews, Pagans, Papists, and Mahometans, as well as Satan, and all his principalities and powers, were so subdued under him, as to be as a footstool to his throne: and when David prophetically speaks of this, he calls the Messiah his Lord; saying, the "Lord said to my Lord"; on which account the prophecy is cited; who was so, as he is God, and his Creator and Redeemer. That this prophecy is a prophecy of the Messiah, and is applicable to no other but he; and is therefore pertinently cited, and applied to him here, (see Gill on "Matthew 22:44").

Ver. 37. *David therefore himself calleth him Lord*, etc..] David, whose son you say the Messiah is, speaks of him as one superior to himself; as Lord, and as his Lord:

whence is he then his son? from what passage of Scripture does it appear, that he is his son? and how can these two different characters of him, be made to agree in him? Our Lord meant by this, to observe to them, that the Messiah was God, as well as man; that he was not merely the son of David, as was commonly received, or a mere man, but that he had a superior nature, in which he was David's Lord, and even Lord of all. This is a Talmudic way of speaking, frequently used when a proof from Scripture, or reason, is demanded to support any opinion or article of faith; as, arb yah yynm, "from whence is this opinion" [f218]? what proof is there of it? And again it is said [f219], ytmh tyytl yynm, "from whence" is the proof of the resurrection of the dead out of the law? It is said, (Exodus 6:4), "and I have also established", etc.. Sometimes it is expressed thus [f220], nydy anm, "from whence do we know that it is so?" And sometimes the word is doubled [f221]; says, R. Simeon ben Lekish, there is an intimation out of the law, concerning that which is torn, yynm yynm, "from whence? from whence?" (Exodus 22:31): "Neither shall ye eat any flesh that is torn", etc.. But the Scribes produced neither Scripture nor reason to support their assertion, though it was true; because they could not reconcile it with the passage cited by Christ.

And the common people; or the “whole multitude”, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; or a “great multitude”, as the Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions; or “all the people”, as the Ethiopic; all but the Scribes and Pharisees, the populace in general,

heard him gladly; with great pleasure and satisfaction, observing that his doctrine was superior to that of any of the sects among them; particularly his reasoning about the Messiah, was listened to with great attention, and who, no doubt, could gladly have heard how these things could be reconciled; but we read not that any answer was returned to our Lord's queries, either by himself or any other.

Ver. 38. *And he said unto them in his doctrine*, etc..] As he was preaching, not to the Scribes and Pharisees but to the multitude, and to his disciples particularly; and to them in the audience of the people, as appears from (<4201>Matthew 23:1 <4206>Luke 20:45).

Beware of the Scribes; for though he had just spoken favourably of one of them, this was but a single man, and a singular instance; the body of that set of men, were very bad in their principles and practices, and therefore to be avoided, and that for the reasons following:

which love to go in long clothing; the Persic version renders it, “who affect to walk in coats and garments conspicuous, and in long robes”; such as were very particular, and different from others, and out of the common way of apparel; and so were observable and taken notice of by others: very likely it may have reference to the common length of their fringes on the borders of their outward garment, which they enlarged beyond others; (see Gill on “<4205>Matthew 23:5”);

and [love] salutations the market places; or “streets”, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, in any public places, where there was a resort of men, and they were taken notice with respect, in a public manner. The Syriac Persic supply the word “love”, as we do from (<4206>Matthew 23:6,7).

Ver. 39. *And the chief seats in the synagogues*, etc..] Where the rulers of the synagogue, and the elders of the people sat; (see Gill on “<4206>Matthew 23:6”).

And the uppermost rooms at feasts; or the first and chief places where they sat, or rather lay along at public entertainment; (see Gill on “<4206>Matthew 23:6”).

Ver. 40. *Which devour widows' houses*, etc..] (See Gill on "Matthew 23:14").

Ver. 41. *And Jesus sat over against the treasury*, etc..] the Arabic version reads, "at the door of the treasury"; the place where the chests stood, into which money was put for various uses: there were thirteen chests in the temple [f222]; six of them were, hbdnl, for voluntary oblations, or freewill offerings; for what remained of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering, and of the turtles; for those that had fluxes, and for new mothers; and of the sacrifices of the Nazarite, and of the trespass offering for the leper; and the last was for a freewill offering in general; and into one of these chests, or all them, was the money cast, afterwards spoken of. The Ethiopic version renders it, "over against the alms chest"; but this contribution in the temple, was not for the maintenance of the poor, but for the supply of sacrifices, and other things, as mentioned. Jesus having done preaching, and the Scribes and Pharisees having left him, and the multitude being dismissed, he sat down, being weary, and rested himself in this place:

and beheld; with pleasure.

how the people, of all sorts, rich and poor,

cast money into the treasury; into one or other of the above chests: the word rendered "money", signifies "brass", which the Jews call, twm; for they had shekels of brass, as well as silver; and brazen pence, as well as silver pence [f223]; and also "prutas", or mites of brass [f224]; and such, the poor woman cast in:

and many that were rich cast in much: they gave very liberally and largely, as they were possessed with much worldly substance; for though religion was at a low ebb with them, yet they took care to support the external and ritual part of it.

Ver. 42. *And there came a certain poor widow*, etc..] Among the many that came to offer their gifts freely, there came one that was particularly taken notice of by Christ; and she was a "widow", had no husband to provide for her, and was a "poor" one; had no substance left her by her husband to support her with; very likely she was an inhabitant of Jerusalem:

and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing; a "quadrant", which was the fourth part of the Roman assis, or farthing; which seems to be

much the same with the τεταρτημοριον of the Greeks, which is said [f225] to be,

> “the fourth part of an obolus (the least Athenian coin), that is, two brass pieces.”

These mites seem to be the same with the “prutas”, the Jews often speak of; who say [f226], that a “pruta” is the eighth part of an Italian farthing; though some make it to be the sixth: hence the Syriac version here renders it, “two menin, that is, eighths”; and the Jerusalem Talmud expressly says [f227], that, jnydrq twjwr yn, “two prutas make a quadrant”, the very word here used: and that the Jews took the freewill offerings of the poor as well as the rich, though ever so little, is clear from this canon of theirs [f228];

> “a poor man that gives a “pruta”, or mite, into the alms dish, or a “pruta” into the poor's chest, they take it of him; but if he does not give, they do not oblige him to give.”

Nor were they obliged to cast into the treasury; but if they did, they received it, be it less or more: and indeed, the rich might throw in as little as they pleased: as for instance; into the chest for gold, they might throw in as little as the weight of a barley corn of gold; and into the chest for frankincense, as little as the weight of a barley corn of frankincense [f229]. The Persic version here, different from all others, instead of “two mites”, renders it, “two bottoms of thread”, or “yarn”.

Ver. 43. *And he called unto him, his disciples*, etc..] Who were at some little distance from him, he having finished his discourses:

and saith unto them, verily I say unto you: a way of speaking he often used, when he was about to deliver something of importance, and not so easy of belief, and which required attention, and what he solemnly affirmed:

that this poor widow, pointing to her,

hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: not that she had cast in more, or so much as any one of them as to value and substance, much less more than them all put together; but that she had cast in more in proportion to what she had, than they had in proportion to their substance; and that hers, though very small in itself, and might be contemptible to others, yet it was more in the account of God and Christ,

and more highly valued and esteemed of by them, than all that the rich men put in: since what she gave, she gave in faith, and from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God; when theirs was given only in hypocrisy, to make an outward show, and to be seen of men.

Ver. 44. *For all they did cast in of their abundance*, etc..] Or "superabundance", as the Arabic version renders it; or "superfluity", as the Ethiopic: they abounded in the things of the world, of which they gave only a part; and though they might give much, yet they could easily spare it, and had enough remaining:

but she, of her want; or "penury", as in (<421204>Luke 21:4); (see <470802>2 Corinthians 8:2);

did cast in all that she had, even all her living; her whole substance, all that she had in the world; what was to have bought her food, for that day; she left herself nothing, but gave away all, and trusted to providence for immediate supply.

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 13

Ver. 1. *And as he went out of the temple*, etc..] The Ethiopic version reads, “as they went out”; Christ and his disciples: for when Christ went out of the temple, the disciples went out with him; or at least very quickly followed him, and came to him, as appears from what follows; though the true reading is, “as he went out”: and the Syriac and Persic versions are more express, and read, “as Jesus went out”: for having done all he intended to do there, he left it, never more to return to it:

one of his disciples: it may be Peter, who was generally pretty forward, and commonly the mouth of the rest, as this disciple was, whoever he was: the Persic version reads, “the disciples”; and Matthew and Luke represent them in general, as observing to Christ, the beauty and grandeur of the temple, as this disciple did: who

saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings [are here]. The temple, as repaired by Herod, was a very beautiful building, according to the account the Jews give of it, and its stones were of a very great magnitude; (see Gill on “Matthew 24:1”).

Ver. 2. *And Jesus answering said unto him*, etc..] The Persic version reads, “unto them”; and so Beza's most ancient copy but as that question is put by one, the reply is made to him:

seest thou these great buildings? how beautiful and strong they are. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, add the word all; and the sense is, dost thou take a survey of all these buildings, and of the whole of this stately edifice? and dost thou not admire the strength and grandeur of them? and dost thou not think they will be of long duration, and that the demolition of them is scarcely possible?

There shall not be left one stone upon another. The Syriac and Arabic versions add, “here”: as in (Matthew 24:9), and so it is read in four of Beza's copies, and in others:

that shall not be thrown down; (see Gill on “Matthew 24:2”).

Ver. 3. *And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives*, etc..] On the east of Jerusalem:

over against the temple: where he could have a full view of it; the eastern wall of the temple being lower than the rest; (see Gill on “Matthew 24:3”).

Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, asked him privately; apart from the rest of the disciples, they being, especially the first three, his favourites, and very familiar with him.

Ver. 4. *Tell us when shall these things be*? etc..] When the temple will be destroyed, and these fine buildings shall be demolished, and not one of these large stones shall be left upon another:

and what shall be the sign when all these things [shall be] fulfilled? And what is the sign of his coming, and of the end of the world, as Matthew relates; (see Gill on “Matthew 24:3”).

Ver. 5. *And Jesus answering them*, etc..] His four disciples, Peter, John, James, and Andrew: “began to say”; or “said”, a way of speaking frequent with this evangelist:

take heed lest any man deceive you; (see Gill on “Matthew 24:4”).

Ver. 6. *For many shall come in my name*, etc..] Taking upon them the name of the Messiah: saying,

I am [Christ]; the word “Christ”, is rightly supplied from (Matthew 24:5); otherwise in the original it is only, “I am”; which the Persic version doubles, reading it, “I am indeed, I am”: he that was promised and expected, the true Messiah; he that was to come:

and shall deceive many; (see Gill on “Matthew 24:5”).

Ver. 7. *And when ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars*, etc..] Among the Jews themselves, and with the Romans:

be not troubled; keep your place, abide by your work, go on preaching the Gospel, without distressing yourselves about the event of things:

for [such things] must needs be: being decreed by God, foretold by Christ, and made necessary by the sins of the people:

but the end shall not be yet; of the temple, of Jerusalem, and of the Jewish state and nation; (see Gill on "4246Matthew 24:6").

Ver. 8. *For nation shall rise against nation*, etc..] The nations of the world one against another, and the Romans against the Jews, and the Jews against them:

and kingdom against kingdom; which is a synonymous phrase with the former, and what the Jews call, twnw twlm, "different words", expressing the same thing, often used in their commentaries:

and there shall be earthquakes in divers places; of the world:

and there shall be famines: especially in Judea, as in the times of Claudius Caesar, and at the siege of Jerusalem:

and troubles; public ones of various sorts, as tumults, seditions, murders, etc.. This word is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions.

These are the beginnings of sorrows; as of a woman with child, as the word signifies; whose pains before, though they are the beginnings and pledges of what shall come after, are not to be compared with those that immediately precede, and attend the birth of the child: and so all those troubles, which should be some time before the destruction of Jerusalem, would be but small, but light afflictions, the beginning of sorrows, in comparison of what should immediately go before, and attend that desolation; (see Gill on "4247Matthew 24:7"), (see Gill on "4248Matthew 24:8").

Ver. 9. *But take heed to yourselves*, etc..] This does not so much regard their doctrine and conversation, they were to take heed to; in which sense this phrase is sometimes used; but the security of their persons and lives; and the advice is, to take care of them selves, as much as in them lay, how they came into the hands of the persecuting Jews, and exposed themselves to danger, when at any time it could be avoided:

for they shall deliver you up to councils; their greater and lesser sanhedrim; the one consisting of seventy one persons, the other of twenty three, and the least of three only; and before the greater of these, Peter and John were brought, quickly, after the ascension of Christ:

and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten; with forty stripes, save one, as the Apostle Paul was, five, times:

and ye shall be brought before rulers; governors of Roman provinces, as the same apostle was, before Gallio, Festus, and Felix:

and kings for my sake; for the sake of professing Christ, and preaching his Gospel; as some of the apostles were, before Herod, Agrippa, Nero, Domitian, and others:

for a testimony against them: both against the rulers and kings before whom they should be brought, and bear a testimony for Christ, and against the Jews, who should bring them thither; (see Gill on "<40 10 17>Matthew 10:17"), (see Gill on "<40 10 18>Matthew 10:18").

Ver. 10. *And the Gospel must first be published among all nations*.] The Syriac version reads, "my Gospel"; the Gospel which Christ was the author, subject, and preacher of; this "must be published". There was a necessity of the promulgation of it by the will of God, the command and commission of Christ; and for the gathering in of the Jews, that were the elect of God, "among all nations" of the world, especially in the Roman empire; and that "first", or before the destruction of Jerusalem; (see Gill on "<40 24 14>Matthew 24:14").

Ver. 11. *But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up*, etc..] Lead to councils and courts of judicature, and deliver up to kings and rulers, to the civil magistrate, to be punished by the secular arm:

take no thought before hand; be not previously anxious, and carefully solicitous, in a distressing way:

what ye shall speak: to kings and rulers, by way of apology for yourselves, and your own innocence, and in defence of the Gospel:

neither do ye premeditate; or "meditate", as the generality of copies read: Beza says in one copy it is read, "premeditate": and so in one of Stephens's, as we render it: this clause is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions:

but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour; whatever shall be immediately suggested to your thoughts, be put into your minds, and laid upon your hearts:

that speak ye; freely and boldly without the fear of men:

for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost: not but that they did speak, but they were not the principal authors, either of the matter they spoke, or of the words and language in which they spoke; they were only the instruments of the Holy Ghost; they spoke as they were moved by him: hence their wisdom and eloquence in their self-defence, were amazing, and their arguments strong and unanswerable; (see Gill on "<4010>Matthew 10:19-20")

Ver. 12. *Now the brother shall betray the brother to death*, etc..] Signifying, that such should be the rage of men, particularly the Jews, against Christ and his Gospel, that those that were in the nearest relation, were of the same flesh and blood, children of the same parents, should betray and deliver up each other into the hands of the civil magistrate, in order to be put to death:

and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death; things unnatural and shocking; (see Gill on "<4010>Matthew 10:21").

Ver. 13. *And ye shall be hated of all men*, etc..] Not only of your friends and relations of your countrymen the Jews; but of all men, the generality of men, in, all nations of the world, wherever they came:

for my name's sake; for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, they professed and preached:

but he that shall endure; reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions, patiently; or persevere in the faith of Christ, in the profession of his name, and in preaching his Gospel:

to the end; of such troubles, and of life:

the same shall be saved; if not with a temporal, yet with an everlasting salvation; (see Gill on "<4010>Matthew 10:22"), (see Gill on "<4024>Matthew 24:13").

Ver. 14. *But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation*, etc..] The Roman army encompassing Jerusalem, which was an abomination to the Jews, and an "impure sign" of their destruction, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; and a desolating one to their nation, city, and temple:

spoken of by Daniel the prophet, in (<27027>Daniel 9:27). This clause is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, and was not found by Beza, in two of his copies, and is thought to be transcribed from Matthew:

standing where it ought not; round about the city, in the midst of it, and even in the temple: in one of Beza's exemplars it is added, “in the holy place”, as in Matthew; and so it is read in the Ethiopic version:

let him that readeth understand; either the passage in Daniel, or the citation of it by the evangelist, when he shall see this come to pass: this seems to be rather the words of the evangelist, than of Christ; since this was not written (and so not to be read), but spoken by Christ; and since his usual phrase was, “he that hath ears, let him hear”: though indeed the same exhortation is in Matthew, and may be understood of Christ, as it may refer to the written prophecy in Daniel, and indeed to the Gospel, which might be read before this event came to pass: (see Gill on “<40245>Matthew 24:15”).

Then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains; they that are in Jerusalem, or in any of the cities and towns of Judea, let them make their escape, as soon as possible, to the mountainous parts of the country; where they may be more safe from, the devastations of the Roman army; (see Gill on “<40246>Matthew 24:16”).

Ver. 15. *And let him that is on the house top*, etc..] On the battlements of the house, either for diversion or devotion:

not go down into the house; in the inner way by the stairs, or ladder within doors:

neither enter therein; being come down from the top of the house, by stairs, or a ladder without, which was usual:

to take any thing out of his house; to take care of his goods, or take any thing along with him, that might be useful in his flight, and journey, and stay abroad; (see Gill on “<40247>Matthew 24:17”).

Ver. 16. *And let him that is in the field*, etc..] At work, in any sort of business there,

not turn back again: either to his own house, or rather to that part of the field where he laid down his clothes:

for to take up his garment; but let him flee without it, or otherwise he would be in great danger; (see Gill on "<4248>Matthew 24:18").

Ver. 17. *But woe to them that are with child*, etc..] Who because of their burdens, would be very unfit for, and very incapable of fleeing with any haste; and therefore very liable to fall into the hands of the enemy, and become their prey:

and to them that give suck in those days; who could not bear to leave their children behind, and yet would not be able to carry them with them; at least not without great trouble, and which would much retard their flight, and endanger their being taken by the enemy; (see Gill on "<4249>Matthew 24:19").

Ver. 18. *And pray ye that your flight be not in winter*.] When days are short, roads bad, the weather inclement; and when to lodge in mountains, is very incommodious, and uncomfortable. The Persic version adds, "neither on the sabbath day"; (see Gill on "<4250>Matthew 24:20").

Ver. 19. *For in those days shall be affliction*, etc..] What with the close siege of the Romans; the fury of the zealots, and seditious; the rage of different parties among the Jews themselves; the ravage of the sword, both within and without, together with dreadful plagues and famines:

such as was not from the beginning of the creation, which God created, unto this time, neither shall be; of which there never was the like in any age, and cannot be paralleled in any history, since the beginning of time, or the world was made, or any thing in it, down to that period; nor ever will the like befall any one particular nation under the heavens, to the end of the world; (see Gill on "<4251>Matthew 24:21").

Ver. 20. *And except that the Lord had shortened those days*, etc..] Had determined that those days of affliction should be but few, and not last long; that the siege should not be longer continued, and the devastations within and without be prolonged:

no flesh should be saved; there would not have been a Jew left; that nation and race of men must have been utterly destroyed from off the face of the earth:

but for elect's sake, whom he hath chosen; in Christ, unto eternal salvation; who were either then upon the spot, called or uncalled, or that were to spring from in succeeding times:

he hath shortened the days; he hath determined they shall be but few, that a remnant might be saved, and among them his elect; or from whom should descend, such as he had chosen, who should be saved with an everlasting salvation: though the people in general have been given up to blindness and unbelief, yet they are preserved as a distinct people in the world; and in the latter day will be called and converted, and all Israel shall be saved and therefore it was the will of God to shorten those days of affliction, that they might not be entirely cut off, but that a number might be left, as a stock for future ages; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:22").

Ver. 21. *And then if any man shall say to you*, etc..] During those days of tribulation and affliction, or when shortened and at an end:

lo! [here is] Christ, or lo! [he is] there; the Messiah has appeared in such or in such a place, to deliver you from your national distresses and calamities, and from the Roman yoke and bondage:

believe him not; give no credit to such a report, for the reason following; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:23").

Ver. 22. *For false Christs and false prophets shall rise*, etc..] As there did, both before and after the destruction of Jerusalem:

and shall show signs and wonders; as they pretended to do, and did, at least to the appearance of people:

to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect; who were chosen in Christ, unto eternal life; in consequence of which they truly believed in him, and were constant followers of him; but this was not possible: though such was the force of their deception, that there was apparent danger of it, were it not for the power and grace of God; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:24").

Ver. 23. *But take ye heed*, etc..] The Persic version adds, "of them"; of the false Christs, and false prophets: for though the purposes of God, concerning the salvation of his elect, are infrustrable; his promises are yea and amen; his grace is efficacious and irresistible, and his power uncontrollable; and the salvation of his chosen ones certain; yet it becomes

them to be on their guard against every deception, and temptation, and to make use of all means for their perseverance:

behold, I have foretold you all things; relating to the destruction of the temple, city, and nation of the Jews; the signs that would go before it, as the disciples had desired; the miseries and calamities that would attend it, and the danger they would be exposed to through false Christs, and false prophets; and therefore would be inexcusable, if they did not observe the caution he now gave them: and moreover, when all these should be accomplished, they would remember that he had told them of them beforehand; which would be a proof of his omniscience, and so an establishment of them in the truth of him, as the Messiah; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:25").

Ver. 24. *But in those days, after that tribulation*, etc..] That is, after the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, and the miseries and calamities attending it, in the times immediately following it; (see Matthew 24:29);

the sun shall be darkened: so the Shekinah, or glory of the divine majesty was withdrawn, and all the symbols of the divine presence were gone, when the temple was destroyed:

and the moon shall not give her light; the ceremonial law, which though abolished by the death of Christ, was observed by the Jews as long as the temple stood; but now ceased, particularly that principal branch of it, the daily sacrifice; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:29").

Ver. 25. *And the stars of heaven shall fall*, etc..] The Jewish Rabbins and doctors, who fell off from the written word, and compiled their "Misna", or oral law, their book of traditions, and set it up above the Bible, the foundation of which was laid immediately upon their dispersion.

And the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken; the ordinances of the legal dispensation, which were shaken before, but now so shaken as to be removed; compare (Haggai 2:6) with (Hebrews 12:26,27); (see Gill on "Matthew 24:29").

Ver. 26. *And then shall they see the son of man*, etc..] Not in person, but in the power of his wrath and vengeance; of which the Jews then had a convincing evidence, and full proof; and even of his being come in the

flesh, as if they had seen him in person: this shows, that the sign of the son of man, in (<4240>Matthew 24:30) is the same with the son of man:

coming in the clouds with great power and glory; not to judgment, but having taken vengeance on the Jewish nation, to set up his kingdom and glory in the Gentile world; (see Gill on "<4240>Matthew 24:30").

Ver. 27. *And then he shall send his angels*, etc..] The ministers of the Gospel to preach it, and plant more churches among the Gentiles, since that at Jerusalem was entirely broken up:

and shall gather together his elect; that is, he the son of man, or Christ, shall gather them by the ministry of his servants; or "they shall gather them", as the Ethiopic version reads; and as Beza says it is read in a certain copy: these ministers shall be the means of gathering such whom God has chosen from all eternity, to obtain salvation by Christ, out of the world, and unto Christ, and into a Gospel church state: even

from the uttermost part of the earth, to the uttermost part of the heaven; be they where they will, on earth, and under the whole heavens; (see Gill on "<4241>Matthew 24:31").

Ver. 28. *Now learn a parable of the fig tree*, etc..] Our Lord was now upon the Mount of Olives, in one part of which fig trees grew in great plenty, and one, or more, might be near, and in view; and it was the time of year, the passover being at hand, for its putting forth:

when her branch is yet tender; and soft and opening, through the sap now in motion:

and putteth forth leaves; from the branches:

ye know, that summer is near; from such an appearance on the fig tree; (see Gill on "<4242>Matthew 24:32").

Ver. 29. *So ye, in like manner*, etc..] This is an accommodation of the parable to the present case:

when ye shall see these things come to pass; the signs preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, and especially the abomination of desolation, or the Roman army surrounding it:

know that it, or he *is nigh, even at at the doors*; either that the destruction of Jerusalem is near; or that the son of man is just ready to come to take

vengeance on it; or as Luke says, (Luke 21:31), the kingdom of God is nigh at hand; or a more glorious display of the kingly power of Christ, in the destruction of his enemies, and a greater spread of his Gospel in the Gentile world; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:33").

Ver. 30. *Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass*, etc..] Not the generation of men, in general, or Jews in particular, nor of Christians; but that present generation of men, they should not all go off the stage of life,

till all these things be done; which were now predicted by Christ, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the signs of it, and what, should immediately follow upon it; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:34").

Ver. 31. *Heaven and earth shall pass away*, etc..] Which may be understood either affirmatively, as what will be at the second coming of Christ; or comparatively, rather than any thing said by Christ should; and so shows the certainty and irreversibleness of his predictions, as it follows:

but my words shall not pass away; which is true of all the words of Christ he ever spake, and here particularly relates to those he had just delivered, concerning the calamities that should come upon the Jewish nation; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:35").

Ver. 32. *But of that day, and of that hour*, etc..] Of Jerusalem's destruction; for of nothing else had Christ been speaking; and, it is plain, the words are anaphorical, and relate to what goes before:

knoweth no man; nay, they that lived to see it, and have spoken of it, are not agreed about the particular day, when it was; much less did they know it beforehand, or could speak of it, and make it known to others:

no, not the angels which are in heaven; who are acquainted with many of the divine secrets, and have been employed in the imparting them to others, and in the executing divine purposes:

neither the Son; Christ, as the son of man; though he did know it as the Son of God, who knows all things, and so this; but as the son of man, and from his human nature he had no knowledge of any thing future: what knowledge he had of future things in his humanity, he had from his deity; nor, as man, had he any commission to make known, nor did he make known the day of God's vengeance on the Jews:

but the Father; who has the times and seasons in his own power, for the executing of any particular judgment on a nation, or the general one; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:36").

Ver. 33. *Take ye heed, watch and pray*, etc..] This seems to be the principal reason why the day and hour of Jerusalem's destruction, though known by the Father, were not made known to any man, neither to the angels, nor by them; nor to the son of man in the days of his flesh, nor by him when on earth; that his people might be upon their guard, against false Christs, and prophets, and their deception; and watch unto prayer, and in it, lest they fell into temptation, and that day should come upon them unawares:

for ye know not when the time is; the exact and precise time: for though the people of God had notice of it, and were sensible it was at hand, and did make their escape out of Jerusalem; yet they knew not the exact time, but that it might be sooner or later; and the unbelieving Jews were blinded, and in the dark about it to the very last; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:42").

Ver. 34. *[For the son of man is] as a man taking a far journey*, etc..] Or this case of the son of man's coming to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, is like a man that takes a journey into a far country. This puts me in mind of a question asked [f230] by the Jews:

> "what hqwr rd, "a far journey" from Modiim, and without."

from Modiim, according to the Gemara [f231], and commentators [f232] on this passage, was a place fifteen miles from Jerusalem; so that, according to them, fifteen miles were reckoned a far journey [f233].

Who left his house; and his goods in it, to the care and management of others during his absence:

and gave authority to his servants; to govern his house, and exercise power one over another, according to their different stations;

and to every man his work; which he was to do, while he was gone, and to give him an account of when he returned:

and commanded the porter to watch; his house, and take care that it was not broke open by thieves, and plundered of the substance that was in it. So Christ, when he ascended on high, went to heaven, the land afar off; left his house, his church, particularly in Judea, and at Jerusalem, to the care of

his apostles, and gave authority to govern it, according to the laws, rules, and directions prescribed by him; and assigned every man his particular work, for which he gave him proper gifts and abilities; and ordered the porter to be on his watch, not Peter only, but all the apostles and ministers, whose business it is to watch over themselves, and the souls of men committed to their care.

Ver. 35. *Watch ye therefore*, etc..] Against false Christs, and false prophets; over yourselves, and the whole church; for the words are particularly addressed to the disciples of Christ:

for ye know not when the master of the house cometh; when Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven, and in earth, is named, who is a Son in his own house, is an high priest over the house of God, and Lord of his church and people, whom he has bought with his blood, and provides for with his grace, and by his Spirit, when he will come to break up housekeeping with the Jews, and bring his wrath upon them to the uttermost: whether

at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning. This is agreeably to the division of the night among the Jews, who speak of the first watch, the middle of the night, the cock crowing, and morning, as distinct from each other. The three first of these we have in one passage [f234]:

> "every day they remove the ashes from the altar, rbgh tayrqb, "at cock crowing", or near it, either before, or after it; and on the day of atonement, twhm, "at midnight"; and on the feast days, "at the first watch","

the same with the evening here: and elsewhere the morning and cock crowing are distinguished [f235];

> "for a last of the congregation, how long may a man eat and drink? until the pillar of the morning ascends, (or until it is morning,) the words of R. Eliezer ben Jacob; R. Simeon says, until cock crowing."

And so the phrase, from cock crowing till morning, is used by them [f236]. The Romans also divided the night in like manner, into evening, the dead of the night, or midnight, cock crowing, and the morning [f237]. The allusion seems to be to the time of the president of the temple's coming into it, who

had the management of the affairs of it, and of appointing to each priest his work: it is said [f238],

> “whoever would remove the ashes from the altar, rose up early, and washed himself before the president came; but in what hour does the president come? not at all times alike: sometimes he comes, rbgh tayrqm, “at cock crowing”, or near it, before it, or after it; and the president comes and knocks for them, and they open to him; and he says unto them, whosoever has washed himself, let him come and cast lots: they cast lots, and he is worthy whom he counts worthy.”

Such who understand these words of Christ's coming by death, or at judgment, apply these seasons to the several ages of men, as childhood, youth, manhood, and old age.

Ver. 36. *Lest coming suddenly*, etc..] Unthought of, and unexpected, at an unawares:

he find you sleeping; inactive in the exercise of grace, and negligent in the performance of duty; unprepared for his coming, and unfit for service.

Ver. 37. *And what I say unto you*, etc..] The four disciples, Peter, James, John, and Andrew; who came privately to him, and put to him the questions, which occasioned this long discourse; (see <411303>Mark 13:3,4).

I say unto all. The Syriac and Persic versions read, “you all”; meaning all the rest of his apostles, and all his disciples and followers in Jerusalem, and in all Judea; who were all concerned in these things, and whom it became to

watch, and be upon their guard, and cast off all sloth and negligence; since they knew not soon the son of man would come, and all these evil things would be brought upon the Jewish nation, city, and temple: and the same exhortation is suitable to saints in all ages, times, and places, on account of the various snares, temptations, and evils, that they are liable to, the suddenness of death, and the uncertainty of the second coming of Christ.

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 14

Ver. 1. *After two days was [the feast of] the passover*, etc..] That is, two days after Christ had delivered the foregoing discourse concerning the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, was the feast of the passover; which was kept in commemoration of God's passing over the houses of the Israelites, when he destroyed the firstborn of Egypt, and made way for the deliverance of the children of Israel from thence: and which was kept by eating the passover lamb; and which, properly speaking, is the feast of the passover:

and of unleavened bread; which was the same feast with the other, called so from the unleavened bread which was then eaten; though with this difference, the passover lamb was only eaten on the first night, but unleavened bread was eaten for seven days together. The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions render it, “the passover of unleavened bread”, leaving out the copulative “and”.

And the chief priests and Scribes sought how they might take him by craft; that is, Jesus,

and put him to death: for which purpose they assembled together in Caiaphas the high priest's palace, and there took counsel together how to accomplish it; (see <4012>Matthew 26:2-4).

Ver. 2. *But they said not on the feast day*, etc..] The feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread, which was nigh at hand, and would be two days hence, when there would be a great concourse of people from all parts to keep it: and therefore they did not choose to seize him, and put him to death at that time,

lest there should be an uproar of the people; or among them, lest they should rise in his favour, and rescue him out of their hands; (see Gill on “<4015>Matthew 26:5”).

Ver. 3. *And being in Bethany*, etc..] A place about two miles from Jerusalem, whither he retired after he had took his leave of the temple, and had predicted its destruction; a place he often went to, and from, the last week of his life; having some dear friends, and familiar acquaintance there, as Lazarus, and his two sisters, Martha and Mary, and the person next mentioned:

in the house of Simon the leper; so called because he had been one, and to distinguish him from Simon the Pharisee, and Simon Peter the apostle, and others; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:6");

as he sat at meat there came a woman; generally thought to be Mary Magdalene, or Mary the sister of Lazarus:

having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard; or "pure nard", unmixed and genuine; or liquid nard, which was drinkable, and so easy to be poured out; or Pistic nard, called so, either from "Pista", the name of a place from whence it was brought, or from "Pistaca", which, with the Rabbins, signifies "maste"; of which, among other things, this ointment was made. Moreover, ointment of nard was made both of the leaves of nard, and called foliate nard, and of the spikes of it, and called, as here, spikenard. Now ointment made of nard was, as Pliny says [f239], the principal among ointments. The Syriac is, by him, said to be the best; this here is said to be

very precious, costly, and valuable:

and she brake the box. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, "she opened it"; and the Persic version, "she opened the head", or "top of the bottle", or "vial":

and poured it on his head; on the head of Christ, as the same version presses it; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:7").

Ver. 4. *And there were some that had indignation within themselves*, etc..] The Syriac version reads, "some of the disciples": agreeably to (Matthew 26:8), particularly Judas, and others might be incensed by his means:

and said, why was this waste of the ointment made? (see Gill on "Matthew 26:8").

Ver. 5. *For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence*, etc..] Which, was to the value of our money nine pounds, seven shillings, and sixpence:

and given to the poor; which was thought to be a better way of expending it, than by pouring it on the head of Christ:

and they murmured against her: that she should lavish so much money away in such an imprudent manner; they reproved her for it, expressed much resentment at it, and were very angry with, her upon the account of it; (see Gill on "<4008>Matthew 26:8"), (see Gill on "<4009>Matthew 26:9").

Ver. 6. *And Jesus said, let her alone*, etc..] Jesus knowing the secret indignation of some of his disciples, and their private murmurings at the woman, and their continual teasings of her, because of the expense of the ointment, said to them, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read; or "to the disciples", as the Persic, let the woman alone, cease to chide and reprove her for what she has done;

why trouble ye her? why do you grieve her, by charging her with imprudence and extravagance, as if she had been guilty of a very great crime? she is so far from it, that

she hath wrought a good work on me; she has done me an honour; expressed faith in me, and shown love to me, and ought to be commended, and not reproved; (see Gill on "<4010>Matthew 26:10").

Ver. 7. *For ye have the poor with you always*, etc..] (See Gill on "<4011>Matthew 26:11");

and whensoever ye will ye may do them good; by feeding them when hungry, clothing them when naked, and supplying them with the necessaries of life:

but me ye have not always; meaning, with respect to his bodily presence, which, in a short time, would be removed from them, and they would have no opportunity of showing him any such outward respect personally; (see Gill on "<4011>Matthew 26:11").

Ver. 8. *She hath done what she could*, etc..] What she had in her heart, and in the power of her hands to do; she hath done according to her ability, and her good will; and if she had not done it now, she could not have done it at all.

She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying; or, “as if it was to bury me”, as the Syriac version renders it. Christ signifies by this, that he should shortly die, and that this woman came before hand to anoint him, and, as it were, to perform the funeral rites before he was dead; it being revealed to her by the Spirit, that Jesus would quickly die, and she should not be able to perform this good work when dead, and therefore came to do it before; or, at least, she was directed by the Spirit of God, because she would be prevented doing it afterwards; (see Gill on “<4062>Matthew 26:12”).

Ver. 9. *Verily I say unto you*, etc..] And you may assure yourselves of the truth of it:

wheresoever this Gospel, of the death and resurrection of Christ,

shall be preached throughout the whole world, as it shall be,

[this] also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her; in remembrance of her, and her work, and in commendation of her faith, love, and duty; (see Gill on “<4063>Matthew 26:13”).

Ver. 10. *And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve*, etc..] Apostles of Christ; who was the principal person that had indignation at the woman, and murmured against her, for the profusion of the ointment:

went unto the chief priests; as soon as this affair was over, and Christ had defended the woman's conduct to his shame and silence: he immediately went out of the house, where they were, and set out from Bethany to Jerusalem; and understanding the chief priests were in consultation together at Caiaphas's house, how to apprehend Jesus, and put him to death, went directly to them, unsent for, and unthought of by them:

to betray him unto them; which Satan had put into his heart, and what his avarice and revenge for the late action of the woman, and Christ's defence of it, prompted him to; (see Gill on “<4064>Matthew 26:14”).

Ver. 11. *And when they heard it, they were glad*, etc..] That such an opportunity offered, and from such a quarter, by one of his own disciples; so that it might be done more secretly and effectually, and with less blame to themselves:

and promised to give him money; any sum he should ask; and what was agreed upon were thirty pieces, or shekels of silver; and so the Ethiopic

version here, instead of money, reads, “thirty pieces of silver”; (see Gill on “Matthew 26:15”).

And he sought how he might conveniently betray him; after this promise, and upon this agreement: henceforward he sought the most fitting opportunity, and the best season of betraying his master into the hands of these men, when he was alone, and the multitude absent, and there was no danger of a tumult, or a rescue; (see Gill on “Matthew 26:16”).

Ver. 12. *And the first day of unleavened bread*, etc..] Being come, which was the fourteenth of Nisan:

when they killed the passover; that is, “the Jews”, as the Syriac and Persic versions supply; for any Israelite, that not a priest, might slay it: their canon runs thus [f240],

> “an Israelite kills (the passover), and a priest receives (the blood), and gives it to his neighbour, and his neighbour to his neighbour, and he receives (the basin) full, and returns it empty; the priest that is near to the altar sprinkles it, at one sprinkling, over against the bottom of it.”

Upon which the commentators [f241] observe, that the slaying of the passover by strangers; that is, such as are not priests, lawful. And so Philo the Jew, speaking of the passover, says [f242];

> “at which time the common people do not bring their sacrifices to the altar, and the priests slay; but by the command of the law, συμπαν το εψνος, “the whole nation”, does the work of a priest; every one particularly bringing the sacrifices for himself, and then slaying them with his own hands.”

But then it was always killed in the court of the temple, and after the middle of the day; (see Gill on “Matthew 26:17”);

his disciples said unto him, where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayst eat the passover: for it was now Thursday morning, and the passover was to be slain after the middle of the day, between the two evenings, and eaten in Jerusalem at night; and they were now at Bethany, near two miles from the city; and it was usual for servants to get ready the passover for their masters; (see Gill on “Matthew 26:17”).

Ver. 13. *And he sendeth forth two of his disciples*, etc..] Peter and John, as appears from (Luke 22:8);

and saith unto them, go ye into the city; the city of Jerusalem; for there only the passover might be eaten, (Deuteronomy 26:2);

and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water; a servant of the master of the house that was sent for water, to mix with the wine, at the passover:

follow him; into the house to which he goes.

Ver. 14. *And wheresoever he shall go in*, etc..] Into whatsoever house he shall enter, go in after him:

and say ye to the good man of the house; the owner, and master of it, who might be Nicodemus, or Joseph of Arimathea, or some man of note and wealth in Jerusalem, that might have some knowledge of Christ, and faith in him, though he did not openly profess him; since by only saying what follows, he would at once, as he did, direct them to a suitable and convenient room;

the master saith. The Syriac and Persic versions read, our master saith: he that is yours, and ours, our master Jesus; though that is not expressed, yet it was understood by the master of the family; which confirms the above conjecture, that he was a secret disciple of Christ.

Where is the guest chamber; the chamber provided for guests that might be expected at the passover:

where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? where it might be done conveniently, and in a proper and comfortable manner; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:18").

Ver. 15. *And he will show you a large upper room*, etc..] A room in the highest part of the house, large enough for such a company, for thirteen persons, which was the number of Christ and his disciples:

furnished and prepared; with a table, and a sufficient number of couches to sit, or lie upon, and with all proper vessels necessary on such an occasion:

there make ready for us; the passover.

Ver. 16. *And his disciples went forth*, etc..] The two disciples, as the Arabic version has it, Peter and John, set out from Bethany to Jerusalem directly:

and came into the city; the city of Jerusalem:

and found as he had said unto them; a man bearing a pitcher of water, whom they followed to the house he went into, and addressed the master of the house, as Jesus had bid them; when he showed them an upper room, very commodious and fit for the purpose, as Christ had said; and which is a considerable proof of the prescience of Christ:

and they made ready the passover; they bought a lamb; they had it killed in the temple, according to rule; and they brought it to the house, where they were to sup, and got it roasted; and provided unleavened bread, and wine, and bitter herbs, and every thing that was proper for the feast; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:19").

Ver. 17. *And in the evening he cometh with the twelve*.] In the afternoon, as it is very reasonable to suppose, Christ set out from Bethany with the rest of the twelve, with the other nine, and came to Jerusalem; where they were joined by Judas, who had covenanted with the chief priests to betray him, and by Peter and John, who had been sent before to prepare the passover; and when it was night, when the second evening had took place, he went with all twelve of them to the house, where the provision to eat the passover together was made for them; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:20").

Ver. 18. *And as they sat and did eat*, etc..] Or "as they lay along"; for such was their posture at the eating of the passover; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:20"):

Jesus said, verily I say unto you, one of you which eateth with me shall betray me; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:21").

Ver. 19. *And they began to be sorrowful*, etc..] And were so, all but Judas, at this saying of Christ's:

and to say unto him, one by one; even till it came to Judas himself,

is it I? that shall betray thee;

and another said, is it I? This clause is wanting in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and in two of Beza's copies; and indeed seems to be redundant, since the disciples are said before to express themselves in this manner, one by one; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:22").

Ver. 20. *And he answered and said unto them*, etc..] In order to relieve their minds, and point out the particular person:

it is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish; just at that very instant; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:23").

Ver. 21. *The son of man indeed goeth*, etc..] Out of this world by death,

as it is written; both in the book of God's decrees, and in the Scriptures of the Old Testament;

but woe to that man by whom the son of man is betrayed! whose sin will not be excused, nor lessened by fulfilling the decrees of God, and by accomplishing the prophecies of the Bible:

good were it for that man if he had never been born; so aggravating will be his crime, so dreadful his punishment; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:24").

Ver. 22. *And as they did eat*, etc..] The paschal lamb, and the unleavened bread, just at the conclusion of that feast:

Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; beginning and instituting a new feast, to be kept in aftertimes, in commemoration of his sufferings and death, now near at hand;

and gave to them, the disciples,

and said, take, eat: the word eat is not in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and is wanting in some copies:

this is body; a figure and representation of it; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:26").

Ver. 23. *And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks*, etc..] Over it, and for it, by blessing it, and appropriating it to the present use and service:

he gave it to them; his disciples,

and they all drank of it; Judas, as well as the rest, as he bid them do; (see Gill on "[4026]Matthew 26:27").

Ver. 24. *And he said unto them*, etc..] Not after they had drank of it, but before, and as he gave it to them:

this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many; in Matthew it is added, "for the remission of sins"; (see Gill on "[4028]Matthew 26:28").

Ver. 25. *Verily I say unto you*, etc..] This seems, to have been said after the eating of the passover, according to ([4221]Luke 22:18), but was, in reality, not till after the Lord's supper was ended, and the last cup was drank, which was wont to be drank at the passover:

I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine; that is, wine,

until that day that I drink it new; in a figurative and mystical sense; by which are meant the joys of heaven:

in the kingdom of God; Father, Son, and Spirit, upon the general resurrection of the dead, when the kingdom of the Mediator will be delivered up, and there will be no distinction of government; but God, Father, Son, and Spirit, will be all in all, and shall reign in the saints, and they with them, to all eternity; (see Gill on "[4029]Matthew 26:29").

Ver. 26. *And when they had sung an hymn*, etc..] The Hallell, used at the passover:

they went out into the Mount of Olives; Christ, and eleven of his disciples; for Judas now separated from them, and went to the chief priests to acquaint them how things were, where Jesus was going, and where they might apprehend him; (see Gill on "[4030]Matthew 26:30").

Ver. 27. *And Jesus saith unto them*, etc..] As they were going to the Mount of Olives. The Persic version reads, in this place; meaning the Mount of Olives, having got thither:

all ye shall be offended because of me this night; (see Gill on "[4031]Matthew 26:31");

for it is written in ([3807]Zechariah 13:7),

I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: Christ is meant by the shepherd, and the apostles by the sheep. The Syriac version reads, "his sheep".

Ver. 28. *But after that I am risen*, etc..] From the dead, which, for their comfort, he assures them of; though they would be offended and discouraged at the seizing, and condemning, and crucifixion of him:

I will go before you into Galilee; the place of their nativity, and where he had often conversed with them; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:32").

Ver. 29. *But Peter said unto him*, etc..] Being greatly moved at what Christ had said, that all of them would be offended with him that night, and run away from him, and be scattered from him, and one another:

although all shall be offended, yet will not I; though all the rest of the disciples, the other ten, should do as Judas had done, should fall off from Christ, and either betray him, or deny him, or, at least, turn their backs on him, yet he would do neither; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:33").

Ver. 30. *And Jesus saith unto him, verily I say unto thee*, etc..] As confident as thou art of standing by me, and abiding with me;

that this day, which was then begun; for the Jews reckoned their days from evening, as in (Genesis 1:5);

even in this night; this night to be observed, this night of the passover, before it is past:

before the cock crow twice; for there was a first and second cock crowing, the one at midnight, and the other near break of day, and which last is properly the cock crowing: the word "twice" is left out in the Ethiopic version:

thou shalt deny me thrice; as he did; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:34").

Ver. 31. *But he spake the more vehemently*, etc..] With a louder voice; with more spirit and eagerness; in a more peremptory and self-confident way.

If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. The Syriac version adds, "O my Lord", my dear Lord, I will never deny thee upon any consideration whatever; and the Persic version, O Lord:

likewise also said they all; as he said, so said "all the disciples", as the Syriac version reads it; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:35").

Ver. 32. *And they came to a place which is named Gethsemane*, etc..] At the foot of the Mount of Olives, where the olives, which grew in great plenty on the mount, were pressed: and where our Lord began to be bruised, for our sins:

and be saith to his disciples: to eight of them:

sit ye here while I shall pray; at some distance from hence; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:36").

Ver. 33. *And he taketh with him Peter, and James, and John*, etc..] Who were witnesses of his transfiguration on the mount, and now of his sorrows in the garden:

and began to be sore amazed; to be in great consternation and astonishment, at the sight of all the sins of his people coming upon him; at the black storm of wrath, that was gathering thick over him; at the sword of justice which was brandished against him; and at the curses of the righteous law, which, like so many thunderbolts of vengeance, were directed at him: no wonder it should be added,

and to be very heavy: both with sin and sorrow; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:37").

Ver. 34. *And saith unto them*, etc..] The above three disciples;

my soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: he was surrounded with sorrow, and it pressed him so hard, and close, on every side, that he was just ready to die with it:

tarry ye here, and watch: in Matthew it is added, "with me": (see Gill on "Matthew 26:38").

Ver. 35. *And he went forward a little*, etc..] About a stone's cast, (Luke 22:41),

and fell on the ground, and prayed; he fell on his face to the ground, which was a praying posture. One of the Jewish canons concerning it, is this [f243]:

"worshipping, how is it done? after a man has lifted up his head; he bows it five times, he sits upon the ground, and "falls upon his face", hra, "to the

ground", and supplicates with whatsoever supplication he pleases: worshipping, or bowing, is the stretching out of hands and feet, until a man is found cast upon his face to the ground." (See Gill on "<4026>Matthew 26:39"). The supplication Christ made in this posture was,

that, it were possible, the hour might pass from him; the time fixed and agreed upon for his sufferings and death; that is, that it might pass without his enduring them, if there was any possibility of excusing him, and of his people's being saved without them; (see Gill on "<4026>Matthew 26:39").

Ver. 36. *And he said, Abba, Father*, etc..] In the original text, the former of these is a Syriac word, and the latter a Greek one, explanative of the former, as in (<4806>Romans 8:15) and (Galatians 4: 6) or the repetition is made, to express the vehemency of his affection, and his strong confidence in God, as his Father, amidst his distress, as the Syriac version renders it, yba aba, "Abba, my Father": or "my Father, my Father"; and so the Ethiopic version:

all things are possible unto thee; so Philo the Jew[f244], taking notice of Isaac's question about the burnt offering, and Abraham's answer to it, represents the latter as adding, in confirmation of it,

> "all things are possible to God, and which are both difficult and impossible to be done by men;"

suggesting, that God could easily provide a lamb for a sacrifice; and Christ here intimates, that every thing consistent with his perfections, counsels, and covenant, were possible to be done by him; and how far what he prays for, was agreeable to these, he submits to him, and to his sovereign will:

take away this cup from me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt: (see Gill on "<4026>Matthew 26:39").

Ver. 37. *And he cometh and findeth them sleeping*, etc..] His three disciples, Peter, James, and John:

and saith unto Peter; particularly, he having so lately asserted, with so much confidence, his love to Christ, and close attachment to him:

Simon, sleepest thou? Christ calls him by the name he first went by, and not by that which he had given him, Cephas, or Peter; he not now having that firmness and constancy, though he boasted of it, which answers to that name:

couldst thou not watch one hour? The Arabic and Persic versions add, with me; and so does the Complutensian edition; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:40").

Ver. 38. *Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation*, etc..] Of denying Christ, and falling off from him, which would quickly offer to them, when they should see him apprehended, bound, and led away.

The spirit truly is ready. The Persic version renders it, "my mind"; as if the Spirit or soul of Christ was meant; whereas it is either to be understood of the evil spirit, Satan, who was disposed to attack them, and especially Peter, whom he desired to have, and sift as wheat; or else the spirit of the disciples, their renewed spirit, which was ready and disposed watching and praying, and willing to abide by Christ:

but the flesh is weak; they were but flesh and blood, and so not a match of themselves for so powerful an adversary as Satan, and therefore had need to watch and pray; or "their body", as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it, was weak, and subject to drowsiness and sleep; and especially they were weak and feeble, and very unequal of themselves for spiritual exercises, as they had flesh, or a corrupt nature in them; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:41").

Ver. 39. *And again he went away*, etc..] To the same place, or at much such a distance from them, as before:

and prayed and spake the same words; or word, that is, the same matter; for λογος, here, answers to rbd, which signifies a thing, or matter, as well as word: Christ prayed to the same effect, for matter and substance the same as before, though not in the same express words, as is clear from (Matthew 26:39,42).

Ver. 40. *And when he returned, he found them asleep again*, etc..] Notwithstanding the expostulation he had used with them, the exhortation he had given them, and the danger he had suggested to them:

for their eyes were heavy: with sleep and sorrow:

neither wist they what to answer him; partly through confusion and shame, not knowing how to excuse themselves; and partly, through their being stupefied with sleep and grief.

Ver. 41. *And he cometh the third time*, etc..] After he had prayed a third time, to the same purport as before:

and saith unto them, sleep on now, and take your rest; which words are spoken ironically:

it is enough; or "the end is come"; as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, of watching and praying:

the hour is come, behold the son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners; both Jews and Gentiles, by one of his own disciples; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:45").

Ver. 42. *Rise up let us go*, etc..] To meet the enemy and the danger; for there is no escaping;

lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand; Judas, that he had hinted at supper should betray him, was now about doing it; and was just now coming upon him, in order to deliver him into the hands of the Jews, and the Roman band of soldiers; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:46").

Ver. 43. *And immediately, while he yet spake*, etc..] The above words:

cometh Judas one of the twelve: apostles of Christ, and which was an aggravation of his wickedness; the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic, versions add, "Iscariot"; and so it is read in one of Beza's copies. The Ethiopic version reads, "one of the ten", very wrongly:

and with him a great multitude; a band of men and officers, with many of the chief priests and captains of the temple, and elders of the people, that mixed themselves with the crowd, to see how things would issue:

with swords and staves; which they intended to make use of, should any resistance be made in apprehending him, or any attempt to rescue him:

from the chief priests, and the Scribes, and the elders; from the Jewish sanhedrim, which consisted of these; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:47").

Ver. 44. *And he that betrayed him had given them a token*, etc..] A common sign, in which they agreed; and so this same Greek word is used by the Jews [f245]:

> “said R. Phinehas in the name of R. Reuben, did you ever see one man go out of the north, and another from the south, and meet each other, except they made, anmy, “a common sign”, between them.”

Such an one the traitor gave his company;

saying, whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is he; Jesus of Nazareth; who was to be delivered to them:

take him, and lead him away safely; with care and caution, lest he should get out of their hands, and make his escape, as he had sometimes done: the word “safely”, is omitted in the Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions. The Vulgate Latin renders it “cautiously”, and so does the Syriac version, which joins it to the words, “take him”; (see Gill on “<4048>Matthew 26:48”).

Ver. 45. *And as soon as he was come*, etc..] To the place where Jesus was:

he goeth straightway to him; alone; as if he had nothing to do with the company behind, and as if he was his friend, and concerned for his safety:

and saith, Master, Master; expressing great affection for him, and respect to him, by repeating this word. The Ethiopic version has it but once, and so two exemplars of Beza's; and the Vulgate Latin reads, “hail, Master”, as in (<4049>Matthew 26:49).

and kissed him; (see Gill on “<4049>Matthew 26:49”).

Ver. 46. *And they laid hands on him, and took him*.] After Christ had said to Judas, “friend, wherefore art thou come?” as in Matthew; and also, “Judas, betrayest thou the son of man with a kiss?” as in (<4248>Luke 22:48); (see Gill on “<4050>Matthew 26:50”).

Ver. 47. *And one of them that stood by*, etc..] One of the disciples that stood by Jesus, as Judas was betraying him, and the soldiers were laying hold on him, Peter by name:

drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear; his right ear; the servant's name was Malchus; (see Gill on “<4051>Matthew 26:51”).

Ver. 48. *And Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc..] To the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, that came with the band and officers, as appears from (<4252>Luke 22:52). The Persic version reads, “to the multitude”:

are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and with staves, to take me? (see Gill on "Matthew 26:55").

Ver. 49. *I was daily with you in the temple*, etc..] That is, for several days past; ever since he made his public entry into Jerusalem:

teaching; the people, in a public manner:

and ye took me not; did not attempt to lay hands on him, seize him, and carry him away; which he signifies might have been easily done; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:55").

But the Scriptures must be fulfilled: which spoke of the betraying him by Judas; and of their taking him in this private and secret manner; and of the flight of the disciples from him next mentioned; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:56").

Ver. 50. *And they all forsook him and fled*.] That is, his disciples, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read; and who seem to have transcribed it from Matthew, and lest it should be thought, that the multitude whom Christ addressed, were intended.

Ver. 51. *And there followed him a certain young man*, etc..] Some think this was John, the beloved disciple, and the youngest of the disciples; others, that it was James, the brother of our Lord; but he does not seem to be any of the disciples of Christ, since he is manifestly distinguished from them, who all forsook him and fled: some have thought, that he was a young man of the house, where Christ and his disciples ate their passover; who had followed him to the garden, and still followed him, to see what would be the issue of things: but it seems most likely, that he was one that lived in an house in Gethsemane, or in or near the garden; who being awaked out of sleep with the noise of a band of soldiers, and others with them, leaped out of bed, and ran out in his shirt, and followed after them, to know what was the matter:

having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; which was either his shirt in which he lay, or one of the sheets, which he took and wrapped himself in, not staying to put on his clothes: though the word "Sindon", is used both by the Targumists [f246] and Talmudists [f247] for a linen garment; and sometimes even for the outer garment, to which the fringes were fastened [f248]; and he might take up this in haste, and slip it on, without putting on any inner garment: the word "body", is not in the text, and the phrase επι

γυμνου, may be rendered, “upon his nakedness”; and answers to twr, in (<09:23>Genesis 9:23) and (<03:11>Leviticus 20:11,17,19-21), and the meaning be, he had only a piece of linen wrapped about his middle, to cover his nakedness; and in this garb ran out, to see what was doing:

and the young men laid hold on him. The Roman soldiers, who were commonly so called: so David's soldiers are called “young men”, that were with him, (<09:04>1 Samuel 21:4,5); these attempted to lay hold on this young man, taking him to be a disciple of Christ, or one at least affected to him, and did take hold of his linen cloth. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, leave out the words, “the young men”. The design of Mark in relating this incident, is to show the rage and fury of these men; who were for sparing none that appeared to be or were thought to be the followers of Christ; so that the preservation of the disciples was entirely owing to the wonderful power of Christ.

Ver. 52. *And he left the linen cloth*, etc..] “In their hands”, so the Persic version renders it; just as Joseph left his garment in the hands of his mistress, (<01:39>Genesis 39:12);

and fled from them naked; to the house from whence he came. The Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the words “from them”.

Ver. 53. *And they led Jesus away to the high priest*, etc..] Caiaphas, as is added in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions. This was done, after they had took Jesus and bound, him, and after they had had him to Annas, who sent him bound to Caiaphas; (see <43:18>John 18:12,13,24);

and with him, the high priest Caiaphas,

were assembled all the chief priests, and the elders, and the Scribes; even the whole sanhedrim, who met at Caiaphas's house, and were waiting there for Jesus; whom Judas with his band of soldiers and others, were gone to secure, and brng before them; (see Gill on “<40:26>Matthew 26:57”).

Ver. 54. *And Peter followed him afar off*, etc..] And did another disciple, perhaps John; (<43:15>John 18:15), who having somewhat recovered themselves from their fright, turned back, and followed Jesus, and the company that led him away; keeping at some distance, that they might not be observed, and exposed to danger; and proceeded till they came to Jerusalem, and to the place where the sanhedrim were convened; and the

other disciple went in along with Jesus; and Peter afterwards, by his means, got in:

even into the palace of the high priest; being let in by her that kept the door, at the motion of the other disciple

and he sat with the servants; as if he was one of them, and had no concern with Jesus:

and warmed himself at the fire; or "light", as the Greek word signifies, and answers to the Hebrew word רוא, by which both: light and fire are expressed; of which, take an instance or two, in the room of many [f249]:

> "a murderer that strikes, his neighbour with a stone, or with iron, and plunges him into water, or into רואה, "fire", so that he cannot get out, and dies, is guilty."

Again [f250], a

> "book which רואה, "fire", takes hold upon on one side, he puts, water on the other; and if it is quenched, it is quenched; if the "fire" takes hold on both sides, he opens it, and reads in it; and if it is quenched, it is quenched: a cloak which "fire" takes hold upon on one side, he puts water on the other side; and if it is quenched, it is quenched; if the "fire" takes hold on it on both sides, he takes, it and wraps himself in it, and if it is quenched, it is quenched."

So we read [f251] of נהג ל רוא, "the fire of hell"; and Ur of the Chaldees has its name from the fire, that was worshipped there, as a symbol of the sun: and fire was the רוא, or "light", created on the first day, (Genesis 1:3); (see Gill on "Matthew 26:58").

Ver. 55. *And the chief priests, and all the council*, etc..] Especially the former, who were of all most busy and active in this matter:

sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; on which they were determined, right or wrong; in this they went contrary to one of their own canons, which runs thus [f252]:

> "in pecuniary causes, they begin either for absolution, or condemnation; but in capital causes, they begin for absolution, and do not begin for condemnation."

That is, they begun with such evidences as tended to acquit a man, and not with such as served to condemn him; whereas this court was only seeking for such evidence to begin with, that they might condemn Jesus to death:

and found none; that would answer their purpose; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:59").

Ver. 56. *For many bare false witness against him*, etc..] The word "false", is not expressed in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions: which only signify, that they bore witness against him, accused him of, and laid many things to his charge:

but their witness agreed not together; which showed it to be false, and so not to be admitted; for witnesses were to be as one in their testimony, or not to be received: the, rules concerning them with the Jews, are these [f253];

> "the tradition is, for ever let not their testimony be joined together, unless they both see, dak, "as one": says R. Joshua ben Korcha, even one after another; and their testimony is not ratified in the council, until they both witness "as one"."

Though this is not much the sense of the passage here; it was not the falsehood of their testimony, which this council was unconcerned about, or the contradiction that was in it, which does not appear; but their testimonies were not, ισαι, "equal", or answerable to the wishes of the council; they were not sufficient to prove a capital crime upon him, in order to, put him to death, which was what they wanted: they only respected some light and trivial matters, and did not amount to a charge of blasphemy, or sedition.

Ver. 57. *And there arose certain*, etc..] Two false witnesses, as in (Matthew 26:60), who stood up in court; for witnesses were obliged to stand, whilst they gave in their testimony:

> "says R. Bo, in the name of R. Hona, witnesses ought dwml, "to stand", whilst they bear witness; as it is said, (Deuteronomy 19:17). "Both the men shall stand" [f254], etc.."

And bare false witness against him, saying; as follows.

Ver. 58. *We heard him say*, etc..] In a discourse of his, recorded in (John 2:19):

I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands; which was a very false testimony; for Christ did not say be would destroy any temple at all, only put the Jews on doing it; much less did he point at, or design the temple of Jerusalem, but his own body; nor did he use the distinction of a temple, made with and without hands; nor did he affirm that he would build another; only said, he would raise up in three days, that which they should destroy. By this testimony these witnesses would suggest, that Christ had a design upon their temple to demolish it, and that he must be a sorcerer, or a magician, to pretend to build a temple without hands in three days time; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:61").

Ver. 59. *But, neither so did their witness agree together*.] Their witness did agree together, for they both witnessed the same thing; but not so as to found upon it the charge of a capital crime against him; their witness was not so, ισῃ, "equal", was not answerable to their desires, nor sufficient to convict him of a capital crime, for which they could condemn him to death, as before observed on (Mark 14:56).

Ver. 60. *And the high priest stood up in the midst*, etc..] Of the sanhedrim, of which he was now president: he sat at the head of them, and Ab Beth Din, or the father of the council, at his right hand; and the rest of the council sat before him, in a semicircular form, as the half of a round corn floor, so that the president, and the father of the council, could see them [f255]; for they were all before him, he being situated in the middle, right against them; so that when he stood up, he might be said to stand in the midst of them:

and asked Jesus, saying, answerest thou nothing? For he had made no reply to the several witnesses, that came against him:

what is it which these witness against thee? Is it true, or false? (see Gill on "Matthew 26:62").

Ver. 61. *But he held his peace, and answered nothing*, etc..] Knowing it would be to no purpose, and signifying hereby, that the things alleged against him were unworthy of an answer:

again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? The Vulgate Latin adds, "God": in Matthew it is "God" only, (Matthew 26:63). This is one of the names and epithets of God, with the Jews; nothing is more common in their writings, than this

abbreviature, hbqh, which is, awh wrb wdqh, “the holy blessed he”; who is blessed in himself, and the fountain of all blessedness to his creatures, and who is blessed and praised by angels and saints; (see Gill on “<40>Matthew 26:63”).

Ver. 62. *And Jesus said, I am*, etc..] That is, the Son of God; in proof of which he adds,

and ye shall see the son of man sitting on the right hand of power; that is, of God, who is all power, the Lord God Almighty:

and coming in the clouds of heaven; either at the destruction of Jerusalem, or at the last day, referring to the prophecy in (<270713>Daniel 7:13); (see Gill on “<40>Matthew 26:64”).

Ver. 63. *Then the high priest rent his clothes*, etc..] As was usual upon hearing blasphemy; which he now supposed the case, or at least would have it so thought:

and saith, what need we any further witnesses? or trouble ourselves to see for any more, or to hear and take the depositions of any others; (see Gill on “<40>Matthew 26:65”).

Ver. 64. *Ye have heard the blasphemy*, etc..] The “manifest” blasphemy, as the Arabic version renders it; and “out of his own mouth”, as the Syriac version adds, agreeably to (<42>Luke 22:71),

what think ye? what sentence is to, be passed upon him?

And they all condemned him to be guilty of death; excepting Joseph of Arimathea, (<42>Luke 23:51); (see Gill on “<40>Matthew 26:66”).

Ver. 65. *And some began to spit on him*, etc..] The men that held him, (<42>Luke 22:6), fulfilling the prophecy in (<23>Isaiah 50:6);

and to cover his face; with a veil, or linen cloth, to blindfold: him, as a person unworthy to behold the light: or rather, in order to make sport with him:

and to buffet him; with their double fists;

and to say unto him, prophesy. The Arabic version adds, “unto us, O Christ, who it is that hath buffeted thee now?” that gave thee the last blow?

and to the same purpose the Ethiopic. The Persic version adds, “and deliver thyself”;

and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands. The Syriac version renders it, “on his cheeks”: they gave him slaps on the face. These were the officers of the high priest, that used him in this indecent manner. This clause is omitted in the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 66. *And as Peter was beneath in the palace*, etc..] Not at the lower and further end of the room, but in the lower part of it; that part in which Jesus and the sanhedrim were, being upon an advanced ground, with steps ascending to it:

there cometh one of the maids of the high priest; the same that kept the door, and let him in. The Ethiopic version renders it, “a daughter of the high priest”.

Ver. 67. *And when she saw Peter warming himself*, etc..] At the life which was in the midst of the hall:

she looked upon him; very earnestly, knowing him to be the same, she had let in at the motion of one, that was known in the high priest's family; and suspecting him, by being a stranger, and by his looks:

and said, and thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth; that is, one of his disciples; (see Gill on “Matthew 26:69”).

Ver. 68. *But he denied*, etc..] That he was with Jesus, or a disciple of his:

saying, I know not; Jesus of Nazareth: neither understand I what thou sayest; about him, and of being with him: the last phrase, “neither understand I”, is omitted in the Syriac and Persic versions:

and he went out into the porch; adjoining to the palace, to consider what to do, being surprised and confounded at such a challenge:

and the cock crew; the first time, being about midnight; and yet he took no notice of it, nor remembered what Christ had but a few hours before said to him: or if he did, he might hope he should not meet with another attack, or he should have more courage and strength than to deny a second time.

Ver. 69. *And a maid saw him again*, etc..] Either the same maid, so the Syriac and Persic versions read, “that maid”: that selfsame maid, as before,

or another, as in (Matthew 26:71), and so the Arabic version reads it here; but the Ethiopic as before “a daughter”; that is, of the high priest:

and began to say to them that stood by; the fire, along with Peter, warming themselves:

this is one of them; this man is one of the disciples and followers of Jesus of Nazareth; he is of that sect, he certainly belongs to them, and is come here only as a spy.

Ver. 70. *And he denied it again*, etc..] That he was one of the disciples of Jesus:

and a little after; about an hour after, (Luke 22:59);

they that stood by, said again to Peter, surely thou art one of them; one confidently affirmed that he was with Jesus, and another challenged him with seeing him in the garden with him, (Luke 22:59) (John 18:26), and in general they were of opinion, that he must be one of that sect, giving this as a reason,

for thou art a Galilean: as they supposed Jesus to be; and knowing that in Galilee he had chiefly preached, and wrought his miracles, and had there a large number of followers:

and thy speech agreeth [thereto]; he used words and phrases peculiar to the Galileans, and pronounced as they did: (see Gill on “Matthew 26:73”). This clause is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, and is wanting in Beza's most ancient copy; but is in the other copies, and in all the eastern versions.

Ver. 71. *But he began to curse and to swear*, etc..] To wish the most dreadful things upon himself, and to swear by the living God;

[saying], I know not this man of whom ye speak: (see Gill on “Matthew 26:74”).

Ver. 72. *And the second time the cock crew*, etc..] Immediately, as soon as he had so said and swore, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, and as it is read in one of Beza's copies; which was about three of the clock in the morning, and is what is properly called the cock crowing:

and Peter called to mind; upon hearing the cock crow a second time,

the word that Jesus said unto him, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice: as he now had done twice, to the maid or maids, and a third time to the servants that stood by the fire along with him:

and when he thought thereon; on the words of Christ, and on his sin in denying him, and on the aggravated circumstances of it. The Arabic version renders it, "he turned himself to weep"; he turned away from the company, he threw himself out of it, and got out of doors as fast as he could, and broke out into a violent fit of weeping. The Syriac, Persic, and Vulgate Latin versions, render it, "he began to weep"; this phrase is omitted in the Ethiopic version: some choose to render it, "he looked upon him", that is, on Christ: as Christ looked upon him; which produced true evangelical repentance in him, so Peter looked upon his dear Lord with concern, whom he so had shamefully denied; he looked upon him and mourned, he looked upon him with an eye of faith, and sorrowed for his sin after a godly sort: but the true sense of the word is, "he covered himself"; he cast his garment over his head, he veiled himself as mourners did, who covered their heads, and their faces, and even their lips. So Maimonides [f256];

> "from whence, says he, is uncovering the head, forbidden a mourner? For, lo! it is said to (<26>Ezekiel 24:17), "cover not thy lips" at all, for the rest of mourners are obliged to the covering of the head; the linen cloth, or veil, with which he covers his head, he covers with a part of it, a little over his mouth; as it is said, (<03>Leviticus 13:45), "He shall put a covering upon his upper lip": and Onkelos paraphrases it, Pjty albak, "as a mourner he shall cover himself"."

And so it is said of Haman [f257],

> "that he went to his house, and mourned for his daughter, albak hyyr l Pjtmw, "and put a covering on his head as a mourner": for his daughter, and for his reproach."

And this, it seems, was the custom of the Ishmaelites: hence that saying [f258],

> "all veiling (in mourning) which is not as the veiling of the Ishmaelites (who cover all the face), is no veiling?"

And thus Peter, through shame, and as a token of sorrow and mourning for his sin, threw his garment over him:

and he wept; as Matthew says, “bitterly”: being fully convinced of his sin, and heartily sorry lot it; (see Gill on “[4075]Matthew 26:75”).

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 15

Ver. 1. *And straightway in the morning*, etc..] As soon as it was break of day, or daylight appeared:

the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and Scribes; who were the principal men in the sanhedrim:

and the whole council; which, on this extraordinary occasion, was convened; the result of which was, to bind Jesus, and deliver him up to the Roman governor, to be put to death by him, as a seditious person, and an enemy to Caesar, and accordingly they did so:

and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate. The Syriac and Persic versions add, "the governor"; (see Gill on "Matthew 27:1-2").

Ver. 2. *And Pilate asked him, art thou the king of the Jews*? etc..] Which either he had heard before that it was said by him, and his followers; or was what the Jews now suggested to him as his crime, which they desired sentence of death might pass upon him:

and he answering, said unto him, thou sayest it; which is all one as if he had said, I am; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:25"); for so he was in a sense, in which he explained himself to Pilate's satisfaction, (John 18:36,37); (see Gill on "Matthew 27:11").

Ver. 3. *And the chief priests accused him of many things*, etc..] As that he was a magician, and a blasphemer, and gave out that he was the Son of God; and that he made himself a king, and even forbad the people to give tribute to Caesar, and moved discord, sedition, and rebellion throughout the land;

but he answered nothing. This clause is wanting in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; but is in the Greek text of the Complutensian edition, and in the Ethiopic version, and agrees with (Matthew 27:12)

Ver. 4. *And Pilate asked him again*, etc..] In the presence of the chief priests, who laid so many things to his charge; for the former question was put, when Jesus and he were alone in the judgment hall, whither the Jews would not enter for fear of being defiled; (see <43 18 28>John 18:28,33);

saying, answerest thou nothing behold how many things they witness against thee? The charges were many, and very heinous, and which Pilate thought called for self-defence; (see Gill on "<40 27 13>Matthew 27:13").

Ver. 5. *But Jesus yet answered nothing*, etc..] He still continued silent, and made no defence for himself, which the governor was willing to give him an opportunity to make, and, as his friend, urged him to it:

so that Pilate marvelled; what should be the meaning of his silence, when he was so capable of defending himself, and was so innocent, as Pilate himself was ready to believe; and yet the things he was charged with were of, the highest nature, and by persons of the greatest figure in the nation; so that his silence exposed him to a great deal of danger, which Pilate thought might easily be avoided by answering for himself; (see Gill on "<40 27 14>Matthew 27:14").

Ver. 6. *Now at that feast*, etc..] The feast of the passover, which was at that instant; (see <43 18 39>John 18:39). The Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, "at every feast"; as if the following custom was used at every feast in the year, at the feasts of pentecost and tabernacles, as well as at the passover; whereas it was only at the latter:

he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired; of this custom (see Gill on "<40 27 15>Matthew 27:15").

Ver. 7. *And there was one named Barabbas*, etc..] A prisoner of that name at Jerusalem;

which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him: he had been at the head of a seditious mob, and he and his accomplices were taken and put in prison:

who had committed murder in the insurrection; which may be connected either with Barabbas, and read in the singular number, as it is in the Vulgate Latin version, "he had committed"; or with the seditious persons he lay bound with, and be read in the plural number, "they had committed murder", as it is in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; and so in the

ancient copies; and the Ethiopic renders it, “he was bound with seditious persons and murderers”; though, no doubt, he was guilty of murder as well as they; and so Peter calls him a murderer, (<4414>Acts 3:14). About this time murders were very frequently committed: the Jews say [f259] that

> “from the time that murderers increased, the slaying of the red heifer ceased; (the reason the commentators [f260] give, is, because they were known who were accustomed to commit murder;) and that was from the time that Eleazar ben Dinai came, and Techinah ben Perishah he was called; and they called him again the son of a murderer;”

(see Gill on “<4027>Matthew 27:16”).

Ver. 8. *And the multitude crying aloud*, etc..] The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, and when the “multitude”, or “people went up”, to the place called the pavement, where the judgment seat was; and so it is read in Beza's most ancient copy; but the former reading is to be preferred:

began to desire [him to do] as he had ever done to them: that is, release a prisoner to them, as he had done at every passover, since he had been a governor over them.

Ver. 9. *But Pilate answered them; saying*, etc..] Being satisfied of the innocence of Jesus, and being willing to dismiss him:

will ye that I release unto you the king of the Jews? he who is called so; and which he either said by way of derision both of Christ, and them; or else in order to prevail upon them to ask his release, it being scandalous and reproachful to put their king to death.

Ver. 10. *For he knew that the chief priests*, etc..] The Persic version reads in the singular, “the chief of the priests”, or the high priest, Caiaphas,

had delivered him for envy; at his popularity through his doctrine and miracles, and not from any principle of equity and justice, or from any regard to Caesar; (see Gill on “<4027>Matthew 27:18”).

Ver. 11. *But the chief priests moved the people*, etc..] Greatly solicited and persuaded them, both in person, and by their officers they employed, and dispersed among them, to make use of arguments with them to prevail upon them:

that he should rather release Barabbas unto them; than Jesus of Nazareth; choosing rather to have a murderer granted unto them, than the holy and just one. The Persic version, as before, reads, “the chief of the priests”; but they were all concerned, and were the most active men in bringing about the death of Christ; though Caiaphas was behind none of them in envy, rage, and malice; (see Gill on “Matthew 27:20”).

Ver. 12. *And Pilate answered and said again unto them*, etc..] Being astonished that they should ask the release of such an infamous person; and being very desirous of saving Jesus:

what will ye then that I shall do unto him, whom ye call the king of the Jews? at least many of you; would you have me put him to death? surely this can never be desired; or would you have me inflict some slight punishment on him, as scourging him, and so dismiss him? (see Gill on “Matthew 27:22”).

Ver. 13. *And they cried out again, crucify him*.] For they had cried so once before, though Matthew and Mark relate it not, yet Luke does, (Luke 23:21).

Ver. 14. *Then Pilate said unto them*, etc..] The third time, (Luke 23:22);

why, what evil hath he done? worthy of death. They had charged him with many things, but proved nothing against him. Pilate could find no fault in him, and judged him an innocent person, and therefore was loth to condemn him:

and they cried out the more exceedingly; with louder voices, and greater vehemency, the more they found he was inclined to save him:

crucify him; nothing short of death would satisfy them, and no other death but that of the cross; (see Gill on “Matthew 27:22”), (see Gill on “Matthew 27:23”).

Ver. 15. *And so Pilate, willing to content the people*, etc..] To satisfy and make them easy, who were become very noisy and tumultuous, and fearing the consequences of their resentment, should he not comply, of which he had formerly had experience; therefore to humour them, and keep in their favour, after he had washed his hands, to testify his innocence in the matter,

he released Barabbas unto them; the seditious person, robber, and murderer, as they desired:

and delivered Jesus when he had scourged him; or having scourged him; for this he had done before, hoping the Jews would have been satisfied with that, and not have insisted on any further punishment. The Arabic version very wrongly renders the words, “and delivered unto them Jesus, that he might be scourged”: as if this was afterwards to be done by the Jews, or Roman soldiers; whereas he had scourged him before, and now delivered him

to be crucified, as they desired; in which he acted contrary to law and justice, to the violation of his own conscience, and merely to gratify the humour of the people; (see Gill on “Matthew 27:26”).

Ver. 16. *And the soldiers led him away into the hall*, etc..] From the place called the pavement, where was the judge's bench, from which he passed sentence on Christ, to a large room,

called the praetorium, or judgment hall; being the hall, or room, where the praetor, or Roman magistrate, kept his court of judicature; and is the same place the Jews would not go into, lest they should be defiled, and become unmeet to eat the Chagigah that day; and into which Pilate had Jesus more than once alone, (John 18:28,33 19:9), but now he had a large company with him:

and they call together the whole band; very likely the soldiers, into whose custody Jesus was put, and who led him away, were the four soldiers that attended his crucifixion, and parted his garments; but for greater diversion they got together the whole band to which they belonged; (see Gill on “Matthew 27:27”).

Ver. 17. *And they clothed him with purple*, etc..] Matthew calls it a “scarlet” robe; and the Persic version here renders it a “red garment”: it was of a colour resembling purple; it was pretty near it, and therefore so called; which is what kings were used to wear; and so in derision of him, as a king, clothed him with this mock purple robe; and which was very likely one of the soldiers' old coats:

and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head; for a crown, and also a reed in his hand, instead of a sceptre, as Matthew relates; (see Gill on “Matthew 26:28”), (see Gill on “Matthew 26:29”).

Ver. 18. *And began to salute him, hail, king of the Jews*!] In a mock way, wishing him long life and prosperity, as if he was a king just come to his throne, and this was his coronation day.

Ver. 19. *And they smote him on the head with a reed*, etc..] Or cane, a walking stick which they had put into his hands for a sceptre: this they took out again, and struck him on the head with it, which drove the sharp pointed thorns into his temples:

and did spit upon him; "upon his face", as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read:

and bowing their knees, as to a sovereign prince,

worshipped him; saying the above words, hail, king of the Jews? (see Gill on "Matthew 27:29"), (see Gill on "Matthew 27:30").

Ver. 20. *And when they had mocked him*, etc..] To their satisfaction, and had had enough of this sort of diversion:

they took off the purple from him; and so, in their way, unkinged him;

and put his own clothes on him: both that he might be known to be the same person; and that the four soldiers, who had the charge of him, might have the perquisites of his clothes at his execution:

and led him out to crucify him: they led him out of the "praetorium", or judgment hall, and through the city, without the gates of it, to the usual place of crucifixion; he bearing his own cross, when first led out.

Ver. 21. *And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian*, etc..] (See Gill on "Matthew 27:32");

who passed by; as they were leading Jesus to be crucified:

coming out of the country; from some country village hard by, according to the Syriac, and Vulgate Latin versions; or out of the field, as the Persic and Ethiopic: he might have been in the field, about some rural business; or, as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, to fetch wood from thence, which was lawful to be done on a feast day, with some provisos, according to the Jewish canon, which runs thus [f261];

> "they may bring wood out of the field, (i.e. on a feast day, as this was,) of that which is gathered together, and out of a place that is

> fenced about, and even of that which is scattered abroad: what is a fenced place? whatever is near to a city, the words of R. Judah. R. Jose says, whatever they go into by a door, and even within the border of the sabbath."

And according to the commentators [f262], it must be wood that is gathered together, and that lies not in an open field, but in a fenced place, and this near the city; at least with in two thousand cubits, a sabbath day's journey.

The father of Alexander and Rufus; who were men well known when Mark wrote his Gospel, and very likely men of eminence among Christians: mention is made of Alexander in (<44>Acts 19:33) and of Rufus, in (<45>Romans 16:13), which some have thought the same as here; but whether they are or not, is not certain: however, they obliged "Simon"

to bear his cross: the cross of Christ, after him; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 27:32").

Ver. 22. *And they bring him unto the place, Golgotha*, etc..] A famous, or rather an infamous one, well known, and much noted for the many executions there:

which is, being interpreted, the place of a skull; because the skulls of men that had been executed and buried there, being dug up again, lay scattered about; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 27:33").

Ver. 23. *And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh*, etc..] Wine mingled with frankincense was what was usually given by the Jews to persons going to die [f263]:

> "he that goes to be executed they mix for him, yy l wkb hnwbl l jrwq, "a grain of frankincense in a cup of wine", that his mind may be disturbed, or not sensible; as it is said, (<20>Proverbs 31:6), "give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to the bitter in soul": and the tradition is, that the honourable women in Jerusalem gave this freely, and brought it them; and if they did not, it was provided by the congregation,"

at the public expense; the design of it was to intoxicate, that they might not feel their pain and misery: but neither the rich women in general, nor were the public so disposed towards Christ, as to provide such a potion for him: it is most likely therefore that this was prepared by his friends, as Mary

Magdalene, Martha, and others, in order to cheer and refresh his spirits; and was different from what the soldiers gave him, which was vinegar mixed with gall, though the Persic version so reads here:

but he received it not; nor would he so much as taste of it, as he did of the other, to show that he needed no such outward means to support his spirits, nor desired any allay of his sorrows, and was not afraid to meet death in all its terrors; and besides, he had said he would drink no more of the fruit of the vine till he drank it new in his Father's kingdom, (<40262>Matthew 26:29); (see Gill on "<40273>Matthew 27:34").

Ver. 24. *And when they had crucified him*, etc..] Had fastened him to the cross, and reared it up, and he was hanging upon it:

they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. This last clause, "what every man should take", is left out in the Arabic version. His garments they divided into four parts; and each soldier, as there were four of them, took a part; and upon his vesture, or seamless coat, because they would not rend it, they cast lots who should have it, and so fulfilled a prophecy in (<19218>Psalm 22:18); (see Gill on "<40275>Matthew 27:35").

Ver. 25. *And it was the third hour, and they crucified him*.] The time of the daily sacrifice of the morning, at which the priests ought to have been; and the time when the sanhedrim usually began to sit [f264]; for

> "the grand sanhedrim sat from the daily sacrifice of the morning, to the daily sacrifice of the evening:"

but this being an extraordinary case, and they in a hurry to put Jesus to death, had been sitting up all night; and early in the morning had procured the sentence of death on him, which they were going to execute by the time they used to sit: this was about nine o'clock in the morning, and takes in the time between that and twelve at noon. The Ethiopic version reads, "and it was the sixth hour", to make it agree with (<43914>John 19:14); and for the reconciling of these two places, (see Gill on "<43914>John 19:14").

Ver. 26. *And the superscription of his accusation*, etc..] Or "the cause of his death", as the Syriac and Persic versions read; the crime for which he suffered:

was written; over his head, upon the cross, to which it was fastened; the sum of which was,

the king of the Jews; (see Gill on "Matthew 27:37").

Ver. 27. *And with him they crucified two thieves*, etc..] For his greater reproach;

the one on his right hand, and the other on his left; as if he had been one of them, and a principal among them; (see Gill on "Matthew 27:38").

Ver. 28. *And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith*, etc..] In (Isaiah 53:12);

and he was numbered with the transgressors: he was no transgressor of the law of God himself, but was perfectly conformable to it in his holy nature, harmless conversation, and complete obedience: he knew no sin, nor committed any in thought, word, or deed, nor could any be found in him by men or devils; and yet he was traduced as a sinner, and charged with many foul things, none of which could be proved upon him: but inasmuch as he stood in the room, and stead of sinners, and had all the sins of his people imputed to him, and laid upon him, with his own consent, he was treated by the justice of God as if he had been a transgressor, and was reckoned as such; of which his being placed between two thieves, was a symbol and representation: hence he was stricken, and wounded, and died, for the sins of those in whose place he stood. The fifty third chapter of Isaiah, where this passage stands, is a manifest prophecy of the Messiah, as several of the Jewish writers themselves, both ancient and modern, acknowledge; though some would apply it to some other persons [f265].

Ver. 29. *And they that passed by*, etc..] In the road, and went by the cross. The Arabic version adds, "before him", Christ, as he hung on the cross:

railed on him, wagging their heads; gave him opprobrious language, and used indecent gestures;

and saying, ah! thou that destroyest the temple; the Vulgate Latin version adds, "of God":

and buildest it in three days; thou poor vain miserable creature, that boasted of thy power, where art thou now? and what dost thou think of thyself?

Ver. 30. *Save thyself, and come down from the cross*.] Suggesting that if he was what he had pretended to be, and could do what he gave out he could, he might easily free himself from the cross, and make his escape; (see Gill on "<4039>Matthew 27:39-40")

Ver. 31. *Likewise also the chief priests mocking*, etc..] Or "laughed at one another", as the Syriac version renders it, having gained their point, and satiated their revenge on him:

said among themselves with the Scribes; who were likewise his implacable enemies;

he saved others, himself he cannot save; (see Gill on "<4041>Matthew 27:41"), (see Gill on "<4042>Matthew 27:42").

Ver. 32. *Let Christ the king of Israel*, etc..] Who sets up for the Messiah, and whose followers call him the king of Israel, whom the nation expected: and if he is so, let him

descend now from the cross, that we may see; see him come down, and be eyewitnesses of his power:

and believe; that he is the Messiah that was prophesied of, and has been waiting for:

and they that were crucified with him reviled him; that is, the thieves, at least one of them; (see Gill on "<4044>Matthew 27:44").

Ver. 33. *And when the sixth hour was come*, etc..] Or twelve o'clock at noon, having hung upon the cross from about the third hour, or nine in the morning:

there was darkness over the, whole land until the ninth hour; or three o'clock in the afternoon. The Ethiopic version renders the whole thus, "and when it was noon, the sun was darkened, and the whole world was darkened until the ninth hour"; (see Gill on "<4045>Matthew 27:45").

Ver. 34. *And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice*, etc..] (See Gill on "<4046>Matthew 27:46");

saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? in Matthew it is, "Eli, Eli", Both "Eli" and "Eloi", are Hebrew words, and signify the same; and are both used in (<1901>Psalm 22:1,2), from whence the whole is taken:

which is, being interpreted, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (see Gill on "Matthew 27:46").

Ver. 35. *And some of them that stood by*, etc..] The cross:

when they heard [it]; the loud voice of Jesus, and the words he uttered:

said, behold he calleth Elias; whom they ignorantly, or wilfully took for Eloi; (see Gill on "Matthew 27:47").

Ver. 36. *And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar*, etc..] Christ at the same time saying, I thirst; (see John 19:28);

and put it on a reed; an hyssop stalk, (John 19:29);

and gave him to drink; and so fulfilled a prophecy in (Psalm 69:21);

saying, or "they said", as the Syriac version reads it; not he that fetched the sponge, but the others that were with him, and which agrees with (Matthew 27:27,49);

let alone; as forbidding him to go near him, and offer him any thing to drink:

let us see whether Elias will come and take him down; from the cross; (see Gill on "Matthew 27:49").

Ver. 37. *And Jesus cried with a loud voice*, etc..] A second time, and said the words which are in (Luke 23:46) and in (John 19:30)

and gave up the ghost. The Syriac version renders it, "and finished": his life, his days, his race, his ministry, and the work which was given him to do; (see Gill on "Matthew 27:50").

Ver. 38. *And the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom*.] At which time also there was an earthquake, and the rocks were rent, and graves were opened, as Matthew relates, (see Gill on "Matthew 27:51-52").

Ver. 39. *And when the centurion, which stood over against him*, etc..] To watch him, that nobody released him, and that he did not come down from the cross himself;

saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost; that he cried with so loud and strong a voice, and the next moment expired:

he said, truly this man was the Son of God; and so said the rest of the soldiers that were with them, as appears from (<4054>Matthew 27:54).

Ver. 40. *There were also women looking on afar off*, etc..] At some distance from the cross, observing what was said and done;

among whom was Mary Magdalene; who had received great favours from Christ:

and Mary the mother of James the less; or "little", so called to distinguish him from James the son of Zebedee, and because he might be little of stature: nor was it unusual with the Jews to distinguish persons after this manner: so we read [f266] of R. Jesa, aryz, "the little", and of Samuel, wjqh, "the little" [f267], which some have thought to be the Apostle Paul, so called from the littleness of his stature:

and of Joses; or "Joseph", as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read;

and Salome; the mother of Zebedee's children, James and John; (see Gill on "<4056>Matthew 27:56"). This was a common name among the Jews; Herod had a sister and a daughter of this name; and the daughter of Herodias, who demanded the head of John, the Baptist, was of this name; and it is the same with Shalom: we read [f268] of one Imme Shalom, or mother Shalom, wife of R. Eliezer, and sister to Rabban Gamaliel. Salome, with the Ethiopians [f269], is said to be Mary's midwife, and to accompany Christ, with Mary, and Joseph, when they fled into Egypt.

Ver. 41. *Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him*, etc..] Wherever he went in Galilee, and from thence to Jerusalem:

and ministered unto him; of their worldly substance, (<4203>Luke 8:3):

and many other women which came up with him into Jerusalem; from the same parts; (see <4055>Matthew 27:55).

Ver. 42. *And now when the even was come*, etc..] "Of the preparation", as the Syriac version reads; or "the night of the sixth day":, as the Persic version renders it, "Friday" night:

because it was the preparation; of the passover, and of the sabbath, when they prepared their food, and got it ready for the ensuing sabbath, on which it was not lawful to dress any;

that is, the day before the sabbath; that is, Friday; on which day, it is clear, Christ suffered, died, and was buried.

Ver. 43. *Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor*, etc..] A man of a good aspect, well dressed, and that behaved well and honourably in his office, as a counsellor: he seems to have been a priest, and one of the bench of priests that sat in the high priest's chamber, which is called, yjwwlb tkl, "the chamber of the counsellors" [f270]; with whom he advised there, in matters of moment:

which also waited for the kingdom of God; for the coming and kingdom of the Messiah, for the Gospel dispensation, the world to come, the Jews were so much in expectation of.

Came and went in boldly unto Pilate; not now ashamed of Christ, or afraid openly to appear in his cause, and declare himself a lover of him, a believer in him, and a disciple of his, though he formerly was:

and craved the body of Jesus; desired leave to take it down from the cross, and bury it; (see Gill on "Matthew 27:58").

Ver. 44. *And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead*, etc..] For death, by crucifixion, was a slow lingering death; persons that were in their full strength hung a great while before they expired; and the two thieves, which were crucified with Christ, were not dead when he was:

and calling unto him the centurion; who was set to watch him:

he asked him, whether he had been any while dead; he inquired of him, whether he was dead, and how long he had been dead.

Ver. 45. *And when he knew it of the centurion*, etc..] Who might inform him of his giving up the ghost after he had cried with a loud voice, which so much affected him; and how he was found to be really dead when they came to break the legs of the malefactors; and how that one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, from whence flowed blood and water; so that there was no room to doubt of his being really dead; with which Pilate being satisfied,

he gave the body to Joseph; ordered it to be given to him; gave him leave to take it down from the cross, and inter it.

Ver. 46. *And he bought fine linen*, etc..] That is, Joseph, as is expressed in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions; which, when he had done, as is highly probable, in the city of Jerusalem, he went to Mount Calvary,

and took him down; took the body of Christ down from the cross; though, no doubt, with the assistance of others, or by others, and not he himself, at least not alone:

and wrapped him in the linen; wound him up in it, as was the manner of the Jews; (see Gill on "<4059>Matthew 27:59");

and laid him in a sepulchre, which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre; (see Gill on "<4060>Matthew 27:60").

Ver. 47. *And Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Joses*, etc..] Or Joseph, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read:

beheld where he was laid: very likely they saw Joseph, and his men, take him down from the cross, and they followed him, and observed where he laid him; or, as the Ethiopic version reads, "where they buried him"; placing themselves, as Matthew suggests, right "over against the sepulchre", (<4061>Matthew 27:61); so that they were witnesses of his death, and of his burial, as they afterwards were of his resurrection from the dead.

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 16

Ver. 1. *And when the sabbath was past*, etc..] "In the end of it", as Matthew says, (<4001>Matthew 28:1); not "when it was the sabbath", as the Arabic version reads; for it was not lawful to buy spices, and anoint with on the sabbath day; (see Gill on "<4001>Matthew 28:1").

Mary Magdalene, and Mary, [the mother of James,] and Salome; who was the wife of Zebedee, and the mother of the other James and John:

had bought sweet spices; or "brought", as the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions read; for though the women might have bought some on the preparation day, the day before the sabbath, the same evening that Christ was buried, (<4256>Luke 23:56), yet, they might buy more for the same purpose, after the sabbath was over: for this there was a particular market at Jerusalem [f271]; for we are a told, that

> "there were there three markets, one by another; in the first of which were sold, all kinds of precious things, silks, and embroidered work; in the second, various kinds of fruits and herbs; and in the third, all kinds of spices."

That they might come and anoint him; with those sweet spices, as was the manner of the Jews: hence we read [f272] of, ytm l ymbh, "the spices of the dead"; which were used to expel an ungrateful savour: this they did, out of affection to Christ, but seemed to have no faith in his resurrection, though he had told them of it, which they had forgot. The Vulgate Latin reads, "that they might anoint Jesus"; the Ethiopic version, "anoint his body": but the Arabic thus, "anoint the sepulchre"; his body being anointed before, and wound up by Joseph and Nicodemus; and therefore they came to strew the sepulchre with spices and ointments, and give it a sweet perfume. Though it seems most likely, that they came to anoint his body; for this was one of the things which was customary in Israel to do to dead men, as Maimonides [f273] observes, ymb ynmb wtwa yk, "they anoint him with various sorts of spices".

Ver. 2. *And very early in the morning, the first day of the week*, etc..] (See Gill on "<4801>Matthew 28:1").

They came to the sepulchre at the rising of the sun; of the sun of righteousness, as Mr. Mede observes; or rather, of the natural sun: for though it was dark when they set out, and when it dawned towards the first day, yet by that time that they all got to the sepulchre, the sun was rising; the Jews say [f274], that

> "from the ascending of the morning, or break of day, until the sun rises, is an hour and a half."

And so much time may very well be allowed the women, from their setting out, to their coming to the sepulchre. Moreover, they say [f275], that

> "from the hind of the morning, to the time the east is enlightened, a man may walk four miles, and from the time that the east is enlightened, hmh tUt d, "until the sun rises", four miles."

But women must not be thought to walk so fast: let it be observed, that Christ, who is called the hind of the morning, (<19201>Psalm 22:1) (title, "Aijeleth Shahar"), and the morning star, (<66216>Revelation 22:16), rose at this time.

Ver. 3. *And they said among themselves*, etc..] Either before they set out, or as they were going along:

who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? Which they saw was placed there by Joseph, or his orders: this was the only difficulty they had, that they were aware of; for they seem to know nothing of the sealing of the stone, and of the watch that was set to guard the sepulchre: things which were done on the sabbath day, on which they rested: for had they, in all likelihood they would never have attempted to have gone to it; the guard of soldiers would have been a sufficient discouragement: but all their concern was, how, and by whom, the stone should be rolled away, that lay at the door of the sepulchre; and perhaps their concern might be, not only on account of the largeness of the stone, as being too much for them to remove, but because such a stone defiled by touching it, according to the Jewish traditions [f276].

Ver. 4. *And when they looked*, etc..] Towards the sepulchre, as they came near it:

they saw that the stone was rolled away; they perceived it lay at some distance from the door of the sepulchre, which doubtless was very grateful, and matter of rejoicing to them:

for it was very great; these words are to be read, in connection with the preceding verse; for they are not a reason, why when they looked towards the sepulchre, they saw the stone rolled, because it was a very large one, and so easily to be seen at a distance; but a reason why they were so thoughtful and concerned, who should roll it away for them, it being so big, that they could not think that they were able to do it themselves.

Ver. 5. *And entering into the sepulchre*, etc..] For the sepulchres of the Jews were made so large, that persons might go into them: the rule for making them is this [f277];

> "he that sells ground to his neighbour to make a burying place, or that receives of his neighbour to make a burying place, must make the inside of the cave four cubits by six, and open in it eight graves; three here, and three there, and two over against them: and the graves must be four cubits long, and seven high, and six broad. R. Simeon says, he must take the inside of the cave six cubits by eight, and open within thirteen graves: four here, and four there, and three over against them; and one on the right hand of the door, and one on the left; and he must make, r, "a court", at the mouth of the cave, six by six, according to the bier, and those that bury; and he must open in the midst of it two caves, one here and another there. R. Simeon says, four at the four sides; R. Simeon ben Gamaliel says, all is according to the nature of the rock."

Now it was in the court that the women entered, where the bier was to be put down by the bearers; and where they could look into the sepulchre, and the several caves and graves in it, and what were in them. So Maimonides says [f278],

> "they dig caves in the earth, and make a grave on, the side of the cave, and bury in; it."

And there being a door into one of these caves, persons might enter in, and see where the graves were, and the bodies lay.

They saw a young man; an angel; as angels used to appear in the form of men: nor is this any contradiction to John's account, who says there were

two angels, one at the head, and another at the feet, (<43012>John 20:12); since Mark does not say there was no more than one; besides, John relates what Mary Magdalene saw, when alone, and Mark what all the women saw:

sitting on the right side; from whence we learn, on what side of the door of the sepulchre Christ was laid, according to the above description of one:

clothed long white garment: (see Gill on "<40283>Matthew 28:3"); which was as white as snow:

and they were affrighted; at the sight of him; not expecting such a vision, but to have seen, the body of their Lord.

Ver. 6. *And he saith unto them, be not affrighted*, etc..] (See Gill on "<40285>Matthew 28:5-6"), where the same things, and almost in the same words, are said as here.

Ver. 7. *But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter*, etc..] Peter is particularly mentioned, not as distinct from the apostles, or as if he was not one of them, having sinned in the manner he had done; much less because he was the chief of them; but to comfort him in his great sorrow, on account of his fall; and to encourage him to meet Christ with the rest of his disciples, who might be both afraid and ashamed, because he had so basely denied him: this is a kind intimation, in favour of Peter; none of the other evangelists observe it; but this Gospel being published, as is thought by some, under the direction and examination of Peter himself, he was careful to relate every thing, that either aggravated his own crime, or illustrated the grace of God, and love of Christ towards him. The Persic version puts Peter first, rendering it, "say to Cephas and the rest of the disciples"; all copies, and other versions, put him last:

that he goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see him; (see Gill on "<40287>Matthew 28:7");

as he said unto you, as in (<41428>Mark 14:28).

Ver. 8. *And they went out quickly*, etc..] Out of the sepulchre, into which they had been, to see where Christ lay, as invited by the angel, (<41606>Mark 16:6). The word "quickly", is not read in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions: "which when they heard"; that is, when they heard the angel's and instructions, immediately they went out:

and fled from the sepulchre; as surprised and affrighted:

for they trembled and were amazed; at what they saw and heard, and yet this dread and fear were mixed with joy at the news of Christ's resurrection, as Matthew relates, (<4028>Matthew 28:8).

Neither said they any thing to any man; they met with by the way, till they came to the disciples; to whom they told all, otherwise they would not have acted according to the angel's orders

for they were afraid; not only affrighted with what they had seen and heard, but the were afraid to tell any but the disciples of these things, for fear of the Jews; lest they should be thought to have stolen the body of Christ, and so be taken up on that account, and punished.

Ver. 9. *Now when [Jesus] was risen early the first [day] of the week*, etc..] Though the word “Jesus” is not in the text, it is rightly supplied; for of the rising of no other, can the words be understood; and so the Persic version supplies “Messiah”, or “Christ”; that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week, agrees with the accounts of all the evangelists, and is here expressly affirmed; the phrase, “the first day of the week”, is so indeed placed, as that it may be thought to connected with the following words; as it is by some; fancying there would otherwise be a disagreement with (<4001>Matthew 28:1), whereas there is none; though it is true also, that he did appear on that day to Mary Magdalene, it being the same day he rose from the dead. But the true reading and pointing are as here placed; and the phrase belongs to, and points out the day of Christ's rising from the dead; and which ambiguity is removed in the Syriac version, which renders it, “now early on the first day of the week he rose”; and so the Persic version, “the Messiah”, or “Christ, therefore on the morning of the, first day, rose from the dead”: and that he rose early on that day, is clear from the women, who set out at the end of the sabbath, when that was past and over; and got to the sepulchre by the time the day dawned; and one of them, while it was dark, and all of them by break of day, at least by sunrising, and he was then risen:

he appeared first to Mary Magdalene; in the habit of a gardener, for whom she took him at first; and this was at the sepulchre, where she staid after the disciples were gone. That she was the very first person that Christ showed himself to, after his resurrection, may be concluded from hence, and from the account the Evangelist John has given, (<4314>John 20:14), nor is there any reason to think, that before this, he appeared to his mother, of which the evangelists are entirely silent. This was a very great favour, and

an high honour that was bestowed upon her; and who had received large favours from him before:

out of whom he had cast seven devils, (see <4802>Luke 8:2). And if she had been a very wicked person, as she is commonly thought to be, and very likely she had been, since Satan had such a power over her, as to lodge seven devils in her, it is an instance of abounding grace, that Christ should heap up favours on such an one; and she should be the first that he should appear to and converse with after his resurrection.

Ver. 10. *And she went and told them that had been with him*, etc..] Not "with her", as the Persic version reads, but "with him"; that is, with Christ: she went, as she was bid by Christ, and told his disciples, what she had heard and seen; even those who had been with him from the beginning, and had heard his doctrines, and seen his miracles, and had had communion with him, and truly believed in him, and were his constant followers, and real disciples; not only Peter, James, and John, who were with him, particularly at the raising of Jairus's daughter, and at his transfiguration on the mount, and when in his sorrows, in the garden; but the rest of the eleven, and not only them, but others that were with them; (see <4209>Luke 24:9).

As they mourned and wept, being inconsolable for the death of their Lord, and the loss of his presence; and also for their carriage towards him, that one among them should betray him, another deny him, and all forsake him: thus were they like doves of the valley, mourning for their absent Lord, and for their own iniquities; and in this condition were they, when Mary brought them the joyful news of Christ's resurrection from the dead.

Ver. 11. *And they, when they had heard that he was alive*, etc..] That is, the apostles, and those that were with them; when they heard the report of Mary Magdalene, that Christ was raised from the dead, and was certainly alive; or of all the women, for the Syriac version reads, "when they heard them saying that he was alive", not only Mary Magdalene, but Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women; for these all related this to the apostles, and the rest; (see <4209>Luke 24:9,10).

And had been seen of her; of Mary Magdalene, or "of them"; as the Syriac version reads, and as it is read in one of Beza's copies:

they believed not; the words of Mary, and the other women, for they seemed as idle tales to them, (<4211>Luke 24:11), imagining they were

deceived with the sight of a spectre, or apparition; and fearing the news were too good and great to be true; forgetting the words of their Lord, that he should rise again the third day, and which had been so often repeated to them; and all this through stupidity of mind, occasioned by the trouble and consternation they were in.

Ver. 12. *After that*, etc..] A little time, or some few hours after, on the selfsame day; (see <42413>Luke 24:13);

he appeared in another form: it seems to have been the form, or habit of a gardener that he appeared in to Mary; since she thought him to be one, and to be the gardener that belonged to the garden, in which the sepulchre was: but now it was in another form, or habit, that he appeared; very likely in the habit of a Scribe, or doctor; since he took upon him to expound the Scriptures to the persons he appeared to; as also took bread, and blessed it, when at supper with them, (<42427>Luke 24:27,30). According to the Jewish canons [f279]

> "if two persons eat together, and one of them is a Scribe, and the other an unlearned man, rbm rw, "the Scribe blesses", and the unlearned man is excused."

This is not to be understood of any change in the shape of his body, or the features of his face; for as soon as their eyes were opened, which had been before held, they knew him perfectly well: whereas, if there had been such an alteration made in him, that he could not have been known for the same, there would have been no need of holding their eyes, that they should not know him, (<42416>Luke 24:16,31). This appearance was

unto two of them; one of them was Cleophas, or Alphaeus, which is the same, (<42418>Luke 24:18); the other is by some [f280] thought to be Simon Peter, from what is said in (<42434>Luke 24:34) though others [f281] think it was Nathanael, and others [f282] Luke the evangelist, who conceals his own name, when he mentions the other; and some [f283] that his name was Ammaon, which perhaps may be through mistake of the place, Emmaus, where they were going, for the name of one of them, and the appearance to them was,

as they walked, and went into the country: to a country village called Emmaus, about sixty furlongs, or seven miles and a half from Jerusalem; (see <42413>Luke 24:13).

Ver. 13. *And they went and told it unto the residue*, etc..] Upon their return to Jerusalem, which was on the same night, they went to the eleven apostles, and the other disciples that were with them, and related the whole affair to them; how that Jesus had joined them by the way, and discoursed much with them about himself, and expounded the Scriptures on the road; and when they came to the end of their journey, sat down at meat with them, when he was very plainly discerned, and known by them, and then disappeared; (see <42433>Luke 24:33,35);

neither believed they them. "These two", as the Arabic version reads; though they were men, and fellow disciples; and this was a repeated testimony, and a second set of witnesses of Christ's resurrection to them; all which aggravates their unbelief: upon sight of them they said, "the Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon", (<42434>Luke 24:34); the reason of which Dr. Lightfoot thinks was this, that Peter hearing that Christ was risen, and went before them into Galilee, was eager to see him, and therefore took this journey along with Cleophas, which the rest of the disciples knew; and he returning so soon, they concluded he had seen him: but when he, and Cleophas, told the whole affair, they were as unbelieving as ever.

Ver. 14. *Afterward he appeared unto the eleven*, etc..] Apostles; for this was now the number of them, Judas being gone from them, and dead; and they were so called, though Thomas was not now with them, because their whole company consisted of this number: this appearance of Christ to them was on the same first day of the week, at evening, (<43019>John 20:19), though it must be very late at night; for it was after the two above disciples were returned from Emmaus, where Christ and they had supped together; (see <42429>Luke 24:29,30,33,36);

as they sat at meat; or "sat together"; being assembled together, and the doors shut fast for fear of the Jews, (<43019>John 20:19), and so the Arabic renders it, "while they were gathered together"; and the Persic version, "who being gathered together were sitting": nor does the word necessarily signify sitting at meat; nor is it very likely that they should be eating so late at night; though it is probable they had been eating, as seems from (<42441>Luke 24:41-43);

and upbraided them with their unbelief, and hardness of heart: not but that their hearts were very contrite for their sinful carriage to Christ; and very much humbled they were under the present dispensation: their hearts

were much affected, and they were filled with sorrow and trouble for the loss of Christ; but in this point their unbelief increased by their fears, and so much prevailed, that all that were said by one, and another, made no impression on them: and a great aggravation of their incredulity, and a reason of Christ's upbraiding them in this manner were,

because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen; as Mary Magdalene, and the other women, and Cleophas, and the other disciple that was with him, who were eyewitnesses that he was risen from the dead; and such as might have been depended on.

Ver. 15. *And he said unto them*, etc..] Not at the same time, and place, as before; not on the first day of the week, on which he rose from the dead, but forty days after, just upon his ascension to heaven; (see <41169>Mark 16:19); nor at Jerusalem, but in Galilee, where be appointed to meet his disciples, and did, when he gave them the following commission; (see <402816>Matthew 28:16,18,19).

go ye into all the world: not only into Judea, and through all the cities of it, where they had been before confined; nor only into the Roman empire, which is sometimes so called, because great part of the world was under that government; but into every known and habitable part of the whole universe, to all the nations of the world under heaven: and it is to be observed, that this command is not enjoined on every apostle separately, as if each of them was to go into all the world, and travel over every part; but that one was to go one way, and another another way; every one had his line, or that part of the world marked out for him, whither he was to steer his course, and where he was to fulfil and finish his ministry: and besides, this commission not only included the Apostles, but reaches to all the ministers of the Gospel in succeeding ages, to the end of the world; and since this, one part of the world, which was not known, is now discovered; and the order includes that, as well as the then known parts of the world, and the Gospel accordingly has been sent into it.

And preach the Gospel to every creature; not to inanimate and irrational creatures, as stocks and stones, the beasts of the field, etc.. nor to all rational creatures, as angels, good or bad; the former need not the preaching of the Gospel, and the latter are denied the blessing; but men, the offspring of fallen Adam, the objects of God's good will: these are styled “the creatures”, because the chief of God's creation on earth; and are often in the Jewish writings so called; take an instance or two:

> "R. Chuninn ben Dousa [f284] used to say, all in whom, twyrbh, "the creatures" (i.e. men) have delight, God has delight; and in whomsoever "the creatures" (or men) have no, delight, God has no delight."

One of the seven qualifications of a member of the sanhedrim is, twyrbh tbha, "love of the creatures" [f285], or love of men: so it is said [f286], that

> "the holy blessed God, sits in the height of the world, and gives a portion of food, hyrb lkl, "to every creature","

that is, to every man: and particularly the Gentiles, as distinguished from the Jews, are often intended by this phrase: thus

> "says [f287] R. Judah, perhaps, twyrbh, "the creatures", (i.e. the Gentiles,) knew the love with which the holy blessed God Ioved Israel, and roared like lions to pursue after them."

It is elsewhere [f288] said,

> "all the prayers, twyrb l, "of the creatures" (the Heathens) are only concerning the earth; Lord, let the earth bring forth! Lord, let the earth be fruitful! All the prayers of the Israelites, are only for the house of the Lord; Lord, let the house of the sanctuary be built, etc.."

And in this sense is the phrase used, in (Romans 8:22,23 Colossians 1:23) (2 Peter 3:4). Now to these, Christ would have the Gospel preached, as well as to the Jews; even to all, without any distinction of people, Jews and Gentiles, Barbarians, Scythians, bond and free, male and female, rich and poor, greater or lesser sinners, even to all mankind; than which, nothing was more provoking to the Jews; who would, if they could, have revoked and made null this commission of Christ; (see 1 Thessalonians 2:16). It was the Gospel he would have preached to them, the word of peace and reconciliation, by his atoning sacrifice; the doctrine of free and full pardon by his blood; and of justification by his righteousness; and of complete salvation by him: even every doctrine relating to his person, as God and man; to every office of his, as prophet, priest, and king; to his incarnation, sufferings, and death, his resurrection, ascension, session at the right hand of God, and intercession for his people, and second coming to judgment; with every doctrine relating to the grace

of God, of the Father in election, and the covenant of peace, of the Son in redemption, and of the Spirit in regeneration and sanctification: all which he would have published and declared in the most free, plain, and open manner, with all boldness, faithfulness, and constancy. A compendium and summary of which, is given in the next words.

Ver. 16. *He that believeth*, etc..] Not notionally only, or that gives a bare assent to the truth of the Gospel; but spiritually, who sees Christ, his need of him, and the worth and excellency, suitableness and fulness of him; who comes to him as a poor perishing sinner, and ventures on him, and commits himself to him, and lives upon him; believing alone in him, and expecting life and salvation alone by him:

and is baptized; faith must precede baptism, as these words of Christ, and Scripture examples show; and such as have it, ought to make a profession of it, and be baptized; and in which way it is that faith discovers itself, and works by love to Christ; namely, in observing his commands, and this among the rest:

shall be saved, such receive the remission of their sins a justifying righteousness, the privilege of adoption, a right and meetness for heaven now, and shall be saved in Christ, with an everlasting salvation; not that either faith or baptism, are the procuring causes of salvation: not faith, for Christ is the author of salvation; and faith is the grace that looks to him for it, receives the assurance of it now, and that will be the end of it hereafter: faith and eternal life are so connected together, that he that has the one, shall have the other; and it is descriptive of the person that shall enjoy it: and baptism, though it is said to save by the resurrection of Christ, as it is a means of leading faith to Christ's resurrection for justification, yet has no casual influence upon salvation; it is not essential to it; the thief on the cross, went to heaven without it, and Simon Magus to hell with it; but it is the duty of every one that believes, and he that truly believes, ought to be baptized, and prove the truth of his faith, by his obedience to Christ, and such shall be saved:

but he that believeth not shall be damned; such are here chiefly designed, who, are favoured with the Gospel revelation; but either deny it, reject and despise it, or neglect it, and are disobedient to it; whose guilt is the greater, and whose punishment and damnation will be the more intolerable; even more so, than that of Sodom and Gomorrha, Tyre and Sidon, or any of the Gentiles that perish without the law, and the knowledge of the Gospel; and

also such are meant, who are finally unbelievers, who live and die in a state of impenitence and unbelief; otherwise, one that believes not today, may believe tomorrow, and be saved.

Ver. 17. *And these signs shall follow them that believe*, etc..] Not all of them, but some; and not always, only for a time; and which were necessary for the confirmation of the Gospel, and the establishment of Christianity in the world; and not only believing hearers, but believing ministers of the word, are chiefly designed; and this is said, for the encouragement both of those that preach the Gospel, and of them that hear, believe and obey. The Persic version, contrary to all others, reads, “ye shall show signs and wonders to them that believe not”; (see <461422>1 Corinthians 14:22).

In my name shall they cast out devils; so the Apostle Paul dispossessed the damsel, that had a spirit of divination; commanding the spirit, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her, and it did; and evil spirits also went out of others, through his means, by the power of Christ, (<441618>Acts 16:18 19:12); and this power continued for a considerable time among the saints: the phrase “in my name”, is in the Arabic version, joined to the word “believe”, in the preceding clause; and is omitted in the Persic version, but is rightly retained by all others in this place; for by the power and authority of Christ, and not their own, and by calling upon, and making use of his name, such miraculous operations were wrought by the apostles:

they shall speak with new tongues: or languages, not such as were new made, and had never been heard and known before; but foreign languages, such as they had never learned, or were able to speak, or understood before; and this not only did the apostles on the day of pentecost, but even common believers at other times, (<440204>Acts 2:4,6,11) (<441045>Acts 10:45,46 <461210>1 Corinthians 12:10,28,30 14:13,18,26,27).

Ver. 18. *They shall take up serpents*, etc..] The Arabic version adds, “in their own hands”; and in an ancient manuscript of Beza's it is read, “in the hands”; so the Apostle Paul had a viper, which fastened and hung on his hand, which he shook off, without receiving any harm from it, (<442803>Acts 28:3-6).

And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; not that they were hereby warranted to drink poison, to show what power they had; but should they accidentally drink it, or rather should they be forced to it by their enemies in order to destroy them, they should find no hurt by it: and

Papias [f289] reports of Barsabas, surnamed Justus, who was put up with Matthias for the apostleship, (<440123>Acts 1:23), that he drank a poisonous draught, and by the grace of the Lord, received no hurt: and the Jews themselves report [f290], that

> “a son of R. Joshua ben Levi, swallowed something hurtful; and one came and whispered to him in the name of Jesus, the son of Pandira (so they call our Lord), and he did well.”

It follows,

and they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover; as the Apostle Paul did on the father of Publius, who was thereby healed of a fever, and a bloody flux, and also others, (<442808>Acts 28:8,9); nay, some were healed by the shadow of Peter, (<440515>Acts 5:15,16), and others, by handkerchiefs and aprons taken from the body of Paul, (<441912>Acts 19:12). The Persic version adds, without any authority, “whatsoever ye ask in my name, shall be given unto you”.

Ver. 19. *So then, after the Lord*, etc..] The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions add, “Jesus”; and the Ethiopic version reads, “our Lord, the Lord Jesus”; and both Syriac and Persic read, “our Lord”; which is common in these versions, where the word “Lord” is used:

had spoken unto them; the disciples, the above words, which commissioned them where to go, what to do, and what to say; and what should follow them, for the confirmation of their mission and doctrine:

he was received up into heaven; in a cloud, angels attending him, and devils led captive by him, and with a welcome into his Father's presence:

and sat on the right hand of God; the Ethiopic version adds, “his own Father”, and which is an evidence of his having done his work, and that to full satisfaction; and is an honour never conferred on angels, or any mere creature; and is a peculiar dignity conferred on the human nature of Christ, in union with his divine person; and here he will remain, till his second coming.

Ver. 20. *And they went forth*, etc..] After this the apostles went forth, from Galilee to Jerusalem; and on the day of pentecost, they appeared publicly, and preached the Gospel in divers languages; and after the death of

Stephen, and the persecution raised upon that, they went forth from Jerusalem; (see Isaiah 2:3).

And preached every where; not only in Judea, and in the neighbouring countries, but all over the world, in process of time:

the Lord working with them; making their ministry useful, for the conviction and conversion of large multitudes, and for the forming and settling abundance of Gospel churches, and for the comfort and edification of the saints; all which was done, by the power and grace of Christ, without whom they could do nothing; (see 1 Corinthians 3:9).

And confirming the word with signs following; the Arabic version adds "them"; or "which they did", as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; not by their own power, but, as the latter of these versions adds, "by the help of our Lord"; (see Hebrews 2:4); to all which, the evangelist puts his

Amen; so let it be, or so it shall be, and so it was.

FOOTNOTES

ft1 -- Papias apud Euseb. Hist. 50:3. c. 39. Tertull. adv. Marcion. 50:4. c. 5.

ft2 -- Hieron. Catalog. Script. Ecclesiastes p. 91. sect. 18.

ft3 -- Biblos Katallages, p. 229.

ft4 -- Kimchi & Ben Melech in <3001>Malachi 3:1. Abarbinel, Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 76. 4.

ft5 -- Abarbinel, Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 76. 4.

ft6 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 56. 2. Vid. Buxtorf. not. in Sepher Cosri, p. 156, 157.

ft7 -- Gauz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

ft8 -- Ludolph. Lex. Ethiop. p. 447.

ft9 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Biccurim, c. 1. sect. 10.

ft10 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 111. 2.

ft11 -- Vid. Piske Tosephot Becorot, art. 13.

ft12 -- Misn. Macshirin, c. 6. sect. 4. T. Bab. Becorot, fol. 7. 2.

ft13 -- Maimon. Hilch. Maacalot Asurot, c. 3. sect. 3. Ib. & Bartenora in Misn. Macshirin, ibid.

ft14 -- In Piske Tosephot Becorot, art. 13. Maggid Misna in Maimon. Hilch. Maacolot ib.

ft15 -- R. Menachem in Leviticus 8:apud Ainsworth on <0172>Genesis 17:12.

ft16 -- T. Bab. Meilab, fol. 17. 2.

ft17 -- Misn. Megilla, c. 1. sect. 1, 2, 3. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 2. 2. & 3. Maimon. Megilla, c. 1. sect. 4, 5, 8. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, affirm. pr. 154.

ft18 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 11. sect. 1.

ft19 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 16. fol. 158. 1, 2.

ft20 -- T. Bab. Eracin, fol. 16. 1. Vid. Abarbinel. in <1257>2 Kings 5:27.

ft21 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 188. 2, 3.

ft22 -- Misn. Negaim, c. 13. sect. 12.

ft23 -- lb. sect. 11.

ft24 -- Chambers's Cyclopaedia, in the word “palsy”.

ft25 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 37. 1.

ft26 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 12. 1. & Misn. Sabbat, c. 1. sect. 4,

ft27 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 40. 2. Vid. T. Hieros. Pesachim, fol. 30. 2. & T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 74. 1.

ft28 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 41. 2. Vid. Targum in Cant. 3:4.

ft29 -- T. Pesach. fol. 92. 1. Moed. Katon, fol. 25. 1. Cetubot, fol. 10. 2. Gittin, fol. 81. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 88. 1, in 117. 1.

ft30 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 91. 1. & Hieros. ib. fol. 25. 3.

ft31 -- T. Hieros. Erubin, fol. 26. 2.

ft32 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 117. 1.

ft33 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 38. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

ft34 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 9. c. 28. p. 419.

ft35 -- Siphra, fol. 17. 2. apud Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, par. 2. p. 73.

ft36 -- Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 16. 2.

ft37 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 28. p. 420. Jacob Aben Amrara apud Kidder, Demonstr. of the Messiah, par. 3. p. 48.

ft38 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 114. 2. Zohar in Exodus fol. 35. 4.

ft39 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 26. 4.

ft40 -- Hilchot Sabbat, c. 20. sect. 14.

ft41 -- Debarim Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 234. 4.

ft42 -- Bartenora in Misn. Sabbat, c. 24. sect. 1.

ft43 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 12.

ft44 -- Geograph. 50:5. c. 16.

ft45 -- Broughton's Requ. of Consent, in his Works, p. 620.

ft46 -- Haggada Shel Pesach. p. 6. Ed. Rittangel. & in Seder Tephillot, Ed. Basil, fol. 243. 1. Juchasin, fol. 36. 1.

ft47 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 6. fol. 151. 1.

ft48 -- Misn. Nidda, c. 9. sect. 1.

ft49 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 63. 1.

ft50 -- Ib. fol. 43. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 10, fol. 198. 4.

ft51 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect 98. fol. 85. 3.

ft52 -- T. Hieros. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 2. T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 82. 1. & Sabbat, fol. 108. 1. & passim.

ft53 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 2. 2.

ft54 -- T. Hieros. Erubin, fol. 23. 3. & Trumot, fol. 41. 3. & Sabbat, fol. 5. 4.

ft55 -- Eunapius in Vita Iamblici, p. 26.

ft56 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 108. 1. T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 6. 1.

ft57 -- T. Bab. Megilia, fol. 6. 1.

ft58 -- L. 5. c. 18.

ft59 -- L. 5. c. 15.

ft60 -- Fabricii Bibliotheca Grace. T. 2. p. 683.

ft61 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 108. 1.

ft62 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 65. 2. Nidda, fol. 17. 1. & Chagiga, fol. 3. 2.

ft63 -- Jacob Aben Amram, porta veritatia, No. 1028. apud Kidder's Demonstr. of the Messiah, par. 3. p. 51.

ft64 -- T. Hieros. Gittin, fol. 48. 3. & Trumot, fol. 40. 2.

ft65 -- Jarchi & Bartenora in Misn. Gittin, c. 7. sect. 1.

ft66 -- Misn Oholot, c. 19. sect. 6.

ft67 -- T. Hieros. Erubin, fol. 25. 2.

ft68 -- Sanchoniatho in Philo Bybl. apud Euseb. prepar. Evangel. 50:1. c. 10. p. 36.

ft69 -- In Poenulo.

ft70 -- Alexander ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:1. c. 5. Liv. Hist. 50:8. c. 8.

ft71 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 20. fol. 17. 4.

ft72 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 96. 4. & Ivare Binah in ib.

ft73 -- Ib. in Exodus fol. 50. 2.

ft74 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 51. 4.

ft75 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 30. fol. 170. 4. & Mattanot Cehuna in ib.

ft76 -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 123. 1.

ft77 -- Geograph. 1. 6.

ft78 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 108. 1.

ft79 -- Jacob Aben Amram, port. ver. No. 1028. apud Kidder, Demonstr. of the Messiah, par. 3. p. 51.

ft80 -- Kidder ib. p. 52.

ft81 -- Bab. Sabbat, fol. 12. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

ft82 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 37. 2.

ft83 -- Nat. Hist. 5. c. 19.

ft84 -- T. Hieros. Erubin, fol. 22. 4.

ft85 -- Deuteronomy Hebr. Nominibus in Luc.

ft86 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:7. c. 18.

ft87 -- In <4009>Matthew 9:20.

ft88 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 110. 1, 2.

ft89 -- Hor. Hebrews in loc.

ft90 -- Maimon. Issure Bia, c. 4. sect. 20, 22. & 5. 3. & 6. 1. Misn. Nidda, c. 2. sect. 5.

ft91 -- T. Hieros. Nidda, fol. 50. 2. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 111.

ft92 -- T. Hieros. Nidda, fol. 48. 4.

ft93 -- Targum Hieres in <5222>Deuteronomy 22:21. & Targum Sheni in <7009>Esther 2:9.

ft94 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 142. 2. Gloss. in ib.

ft95 -- Ib. fol. 91. 2.

ft96 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 11. T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 104. 2. Cetubot, fol. 34. 1. & 58. 2. Bava Kama, fol. 71. 1.

ft97 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 24. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 96. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 170. 1.

ft98 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 164. 2.

ft99 -- T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 24. 2.

ft100 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2. Megilla, fol. 17. 1. & 18. 2.

ft101 -- Caphtor, fol. 75. 2.

ft102 -- Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 30. 1.

ft103 -- Maimon. in Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 5.

ft104 -- Ib. Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 1. sect. 9.

ft105 -- Misn. Kiddush. c. 4. sect. 14. T. Bab. Kiddush. fol. 82. 1. & Beracot, fol. 63. 1.

ft106 -- T. Kiddush. ib.

ft107 -- Ib. fol. 30. 2.

ft108 -- Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 9.

ft109 -- In Misn. Middot, c. 4. sect. 5.

ft110 -- T. Bab. Succa.

ft111 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.

ft112 -- R. David Kimchi in <<< Zechariah 1:20.

ft113 -- R. Sol. Jarchi in ib.

ft114 -- Maimon. Hilch. Melachim, c. 1, sect. 6.

ft115 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 82. 1.

ft116 -- MS. Lusit. N. 83. apud Kidder, Demonstr. of the Messiah, par. 2. p. 59.

ft117 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 77. 2. Maimon. Hikh. Shebitat Ashur, c. 3. sect. 9.

ft118 -- T. Hieros. Maaser Sheni, fol. 53. 2.

ft119 -- Ib. Betacot, fol. 3. 1. & Sabbat, fol. 14. 3.

ft120 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:18. c. 7.

ft121 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 9.

ft122 -- T. Bab. Succah, fol. 52. 2.

ft123 -- Misn. Cetubot, c. 1. sect. 2. & 4. 7. & 5. 1.

ft124 -- Ib. c. 2. sect. 1. & 11. 4.

ft125 -- Ib. c. 1. sect. 3.

ft126 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 6. sect. 8.

ft127 -- T. Hieros. Beraeot, fol. 7. 4. Vid. Gloss. in T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 42. 2.

ft128 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 50:3. c. 35.

ft129 -- Bartenora in Misn. Cholin, c. 2. sect. 5.

ft130 -- Zoharin Numb fol. 100. 3.

ft131 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 61. 1.

ft132 -- Bevaidbar Rabba, fol. 228. 4.

ft133 -- Gloss in T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 18. 2. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Chagiga, c. 2. sect. 7.

ft134 -- Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Bcracot, c. 6.

ft135 -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 106. 1, 2. Maimon. Hilch. Beracot, c. 6. 4. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Eracin, c. 5. sect. 1. Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 115. 2.

ft136 -- T. Hieros. Betacot, fol. 12. 1.

ft137 -- Maimon. Hilch. Mikvaot, c. 11. sect. 1.

ft138 -- Ib. Beracot, c. 6. sect. 2.

ft139 -- Misn. Chagiga, c. 2. sect. 5.

ft140 -- Maimon. in Misn. Chagiga, c. 2. sect. 7.

ft141 -- Ib. Hilch. Abot Tumaot, c. 13. sect. 8.

ft142 -- Ib. Hilch. Mikvaot, c. 9. sect. 5.

ft143 -- Maimon. Hilch. Mikvaot, c. 1. sect. 3.

ft144 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 1. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 23. 7.

ft145 -- Maimon. Hilch. Maacolot Asurot, c. 17. sect. 3, 5, 6.

ft146 -- Maimon. Hilch. Abot Hatumaot, c. 12. sect. 6.

ft147 -- Ib. Hilch. Celim, c. 4. sect. 1.

ft148 -- Misn. Celim, c. 22. sect. 1, 2.

ft149 -- Ib. c. 16. sect. 1.

ft150 -- Misn. Mikvaot, c. 9. sect. 5. Maimon. Hilchot Mikvaot, c. 8. sect. 2.

ft151 -- Misn. Celim, c. 16. sect. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Celim, c. 5. sect. 1.

ft152 -- Maimon ib. c. 27. sect. 8.

ft153 -- Misn. Celim, c. 18. sect. 5, 6. & c. 24. sect. 8. Maimon. ib. c. 27. sect. 7.

ft154 -- Misn. Celim, c. 23. sect. 4.

ft155 -- Maimon. Hilch. Celim. c. 26. sect. 14.

ft156 -- Misn. Mikvaot, c. 7. sect. 7.

ft157 -- Ib. sect. 6. & Celim, c. 16. 4.

ft158 -- Maimon. Hilch. Mikvaot, c. 3. 2.

ft159 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 3. 2.

ft160 -- Misn. Celim, c. 12. sect. 7.

ft161 -- Jarchi & Battenora in ib.

ft162 -- Misn. Celim, c. 2. sect. 1.

ft163 -- Hilch. Celim, c. 1. sect. 10.

ft164 -- Maimon. Hilch. Mishcab Umoshab, c. 11. sect. 11.

ft165 -- Autiqu. Jud. 50:4. c. 4. sect. 4.

ft166 -- Maimon. Hilch. Nedarim, c. 3. sect. 1.

ft167 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

ft168 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft169 -- Misn. Kiddushin, c. 1. scct. 2, 3.

ft170 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 8. sect. 3.

ft171 -- Chorograph. Decad. in Mark, ch. 6:sect. 1.

ft172 -- Mish. Trumot, c. 1. sect. 2. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ft173 -- Gittin, c. 2. sect. 6.

ft174 -- Vid. Misn. Yebamot, c. 14. scct. 10. & T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 114. 2.

ft175 -- Misn. Celaim, c. 4. sect. 9. & Yebarnot, c. 16. sect. 6. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 82. 2.

ft176 -- Jarchi in Misn. Gittin, c. 7. sect. 1.

ft177 -- Maimonides in Misn. Nidda, c. 2. sect. 1.

ft178 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 108. 2.

ft179 -- Kimchi in Psal. 27:13.

ft180 -- R. Isaac Saugari, Sepher Cosri, fol. 57. 2.

ft181 -- T. Bab. Pesachim. fol. 54. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

ft182 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 62. 3.

ft183 -- Piske Toseph. Ceritot, c. 1. art. 3.

ft184 -- Maimon. Hilch. Issure Mizbeach, c. 5. sect. 11, 12, 13. Vid. ib. in Misn. Menachot, c. 3. sect. 2.

ft185 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 21. 2. & Baal Hatturim in Lev 2:13.

ft186 -- Servius in Virgil. Aeneid. 50:2. p. 568, 569. & in 50:12. p. 1751. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:4. c. 17.

ft187 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 3. fol. 2. 3. & sect. 4. fol. 4. 1.

ft188 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 18. fol. 15. 3.

ft189 -- Antiqu. 50:15. c. 11. & 18. 7.

ft190 -- Bercshit Rabba, sect. 17. fol. 14. 4.

ft191 -- Misn. Edict. c, 2. sect. 3.

ft192 -- Maimon. Hilch. Gerushim, c. 11. sect. 1, 8, 9, 11.

ft193 -- Misn. Bava Metzta, c. 1. sect. 8.

ft194 -- Apolog. 1. p 42. Yid. Euscb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 17.

ft195 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 19. p. 408.

ft196 -- Ib.

ft197 -- T. Bab. Yesachim, fol. 6. 2.

ft198 -- R. Jacob Aben Amram, Porta Verit. num. 1026. Apud Kidder's Demonstr. of the Messiah, par. 3. p. 50.

ft199 -- Demonstrat. ib. p. 50, 51.

ft200 -- Maimon. Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 1. sect. 2. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 12. Vid. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 42. fol. 36. 4. & Vajikra Rabba, sect. 11. fol. 154. 4.

ft201 -- R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 20. p. 409.

ft202 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 9. sect. 5. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 62. 2. & Yebamot, fol. 6. 2. & Midrash Kohelet, fol. 70. 3. & Maimon. Hilch. Beth Habbechira, c. 7. sect. 1, 2, 3.

ft203 -- Misn. Maaser Sheni, c. 5. sect. 1, 2.

ft204 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect. 4.

ft205 -- Misn. Yebamot, c. 4. sect. 5. & T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 39. 1.

ft206 -- Hilch. Yebum Uchalitza, c. 2, sect. 6, 7. Vid. Jarchium in Deuteronomy 25:6.

ft207 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 108. 1.

ft208 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 2. 3. & 15. 1.

ft209 -- Berncot, c. 1. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4.

ft210 -- Hilch. Keriat Shema, c. 1. sect. 1, 2.

ft211 -- Baal Hatturim, in Deuteronomy 6:4.

ft212 -- Misn. Berncot, c. 2. sect. 2.

ft213 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 1. 3.

ft214 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 18. 3, 4.

ft215 -- Ib. in Numbers fol. 67. 3.

ft216 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 27. 2.

ft217 -- Baal Hatturim, ib.

ft218 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 54. 2.

ft219 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 90. 2.

ft220 -- T. Bab. Nazir, fol. 5. 1.

ft221 -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 42. 1.

ft222 -- Misn. Shekalhim, c. 6. sect. 5. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. & Moses Kotsensis, Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 44. & Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 2. sect. 2, 3.

ft223 -- Misn. Maaser Sheni, c. 2. sect. 8, 9. & Ediot, c. 1. sect. 9, 10.

ft224 -- Vid. Hottinger de Nummis Hebrews p. 118.

ft225 -- Harpocratian. Lexic. p. 281.

ft226 -- Misn. Kiddushin, c. 1. sect. 1. T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 58. 4. T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 12. 1. Bava Metzin, fol. 44. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Shekalim, c. 1. sect. 3.

ft227 -- Kiddushi, fol. 58. 4.

ft228 -- Maimon. Hilch. Mattanot Anayim, c. 9. sect. 19.

ft229 -- Maimon. & Battenora in. Misn. Shekalim, c. 6. sect. 6.

ft230 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 9. sect. 2.

ft231 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 93. 2.

ft232 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. ib.

ft233 -- Maimon. Hilch. Korban Pesach. c. 5. sect. 9.

ft234 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 8. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 20. 9. & Zebachim, c. 50:96. 2.

ft235 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 2. 2. & Taanith, fol. 12. 1.

ft236 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 20. 2.

ft237 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:4. c. 20.

ft238 -- Misn. Tumid. c. 1. sect. 2.

ft239 -- Nat. Hist. 50:12. c. 12.

ft240 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 5. sect. 6.

ft241 -- Jarchi, Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ft242 -- Deuteronomy Vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 686.

ft243 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 5. sect. 13.

ft244 -- Deuteronomy Abrahamo, p. 374.

ft245 -- Midras Samuel, sect. 9. apud Buxtorf. Lex. Rab. p. 1519.

ft246 -- Targum in Psal civ. 2. & Lam 2:20.

ft247 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 41. 1.

ft248 -- Ib. fol 40. 1.

ft249 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c 9. sect 1.

ft250 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 15. 4. & T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 120. 1. Vid. Misn. Avoda Zara, c. 5. sect. 12.

ft251 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 27. 1.

ft252 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 1.

ft253 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 30. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Eduth, c. 4. sect. 1.

ft254 -- T. Herios. Sanhedrin, fol. 21. 3. & Yoma, fol. 43. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 21. sect. 3.

ft255 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 3. Maimon. Hiltch. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 3.

ft256 -- Hilch. Ebel, c. 5. sect. 19.

ft257 -- Targum in <1062>Esther 6:12. Vid. Targum in Mic. 3:7.

ft258 -- T. Bab. Moed. Katon, fol. 24. 1.

ft259 -- Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 9. Maimon. Hilch. Rotzeach. c. 9. sect. 12.

ft260 -- Jarchi & Bartienora in ib.

ft261 -- Misn. Betza, c. 4. sect. 2.

ft262 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Yom Tob, c. 2. sect. 14.

ft263 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 10. fol. 193. 4. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 13. sect. 2, 3. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 98.

ft264 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 3, sect. 1.

ft265 -- See my Book of the Prophecies of the Old Testament, etc. p. 160, 161, etc.

ft266 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 63. 2. & passim.

ft267 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2. & 29. 1.

ft268 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 116. 1.

ft269 -- Ludolph. Lex. Ethiop. p. 525, & Castell. Lex. Polyglot, col. 3767.

ft270 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 3. 2. & Hieros. Yoma, fol. 38. 3.

ft271 -- Jechus Haabot, p. 24. Ed. Hottinger.

ft272 -- Misn. Betacot, c. 8. sect. 6. & Barrenors in ib. T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 12. 2.

ft273 -- Hiichot Ebel, c. 4. sect. 1.

ft274 -- Piske Tosaphot in Pesach. art. 44.

ft275 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2. 3. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 50. fol. 45. 2.

ft276 -- Misn. Oholot, c. 2. sect 4.

ft277 -- Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 6. sect. 8.

ft278 -- Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 4. sect. 4.

ft279 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 45. 2.

ft280 -- Lightfoot, Hor. in. 5:13. & in Luk. 24:13.

ft281 -- Epiphan contra Haeres. 50:1. Haeres. 23.

ft282 -- Vid. Theophylact. in Luc. 24:13.

ft283 -- Ambros in Luc. 12. 49. & 24.

ft284 -- Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 10.

ft285 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sandedfin, c. 2. sect. 7.

ft286 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 118. 1. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86. 1.

ft287 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 2, 3.

ft288 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 13. fol. 11. 3. Vid. T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 12. 2.

ft289 -- Apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 50:3. c. 39.

ft290 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 14. 4. & Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 4. & Midrash Kobelet, fol. 81. 1.

LUKE

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF LUKE

The writer of this Gospel, Luke, has been, by some, thought, as Origen [f1] relates, to be the same with Lucius, mentioned in (<451621>Romans 16:21), but he seems rather to be, and without doubt is, Luke the beloved physician, who was a companion of the Apostle Paul in great part of his travels in the Gentile world: he came with him to Jerusalem, and from thence accompanied him to Rome, and continued with him when in prison, and was with him to the last; (see <441610>Acts 16:10,11), etc. (<510414>Colossians 4:14 <550411>2 Timothy 4:11 <570124>Philemon 1:24). Jerom [f2], and others, say, he was a physician of Antioch in Syria; where it may be the Apostle Paul met with him, and might be the happy instrument of his conversion; so that he seems to be, by nation, a Syrian, as Jerom [f3] calls him. Grotius thinks his name is Roman, and that it is the contraction of Lucilius. It is not an Hebrew name, but might be in common use in Syria; for though the Jews reckon swqwl, "Lukus", among foreign names, yet say [f4] a it was a very illustrious one, and well known to them, as it may well be thought to be if Syriac, the language being spoke by them: and many Jews lived in Syria, and particularly in Antioch. Some say that this Gospel was written by the advice, and assistance, and under the direction of the Apostle Paul, as the Gospel according to Mark was by that of Peter; though the following preface does not seem so well to accord with this. Eusebius says [f5] that it was the sense of the ancients, that whenever the Apostle Paul makes mention of his Gospel, he intends this according to Luke. The time of the writing of it is not certain; some say it was written in the fifteenth year after the ascension of our Lord; others in the twenty second; and others in the twenty seventh. It is commonly thought to have been written after the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, according to the order in which it stands; but this is rejected by some learned men, who rather think that Luke wrote first of all: and indeed, there are some things in his preface which look as if there had not, as yet, been any authentic account published, at least which was come to the knowledge of this evangelist. The place where he wrote it

is also uncertain. Jerom says [f6], he wrote it in the parts of Achaia, perhaps at Corinth: according to the titles prefixed to the Syriac and Persic versions, he wrote it in Alexandria: the former of these runs thus;

> “the Gospel of Luke, the Evangelist, which he spake and published in Greek in Alexandria the great.”

And the latter thus;

> “the Gospel of Luke, which he wrote in the Greek tongue in Alexandria of Egypt.”

However, it is agreed on all hands, that it is genuine, and of divine inspiration. Eusebius [f7] relates, that it was affirmed by some, that this Gospel, together with those of Matthew and Mark, were brought to the Apostle John, who approved of them, and bore witness to the truth in them.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 1

Ver. 1. *Forasmuch as many have taken in hand*, etc.] From hence, to the end of (⁴⁰¹⁰⁴Luke 1:4) is a preface of the evangelist to his Gospel, setting forth the reasons of his writing it; and which he wrote and sent to the excellent Theophilus, for the further confirmation of him in the faith of Christ. It seems that many had took in hand, or attempted

to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us; that is, they undertook to write and publish a very particular and exact narrative of the birth, life, actions, doctrines, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ; things which Luke, and other Christians, had the fullest and strongest evidence, and were confidently assured of, and most firmly believed, even with a full assurance of faith. By these many, he cannot mean the authentic historians of evangelical facts, as Matthew and Mark; for they two cannot, with any propriety, be called many; and besides, it is not so very clear and certain a point, that they had, as yet, wrote their Gospels; nor would this evangelist suggest any deficiency, weakness, and inaccuracy in them, as he seems to do: nor does he intend such spurious writers as the authors of the Gospels according to the Nazarenes, Hebrews, and Egyptians; of Nicodemus, Thomas, Matthias, and of the twelve apostles; and still less, the Gospels of Cerinthus, Basilides, and other heretics; since these would not have passed without a censure from him, for the falsehood, fabulous, and trifling stuff in them, as well as for the wicked and heretical opinions propagated by them; and besides, these pieces were not extant when this Gospel was written: but he seems to design some honest and well meaning Christians, who undertook to write, and did write an account of the above things, which were firmly believed by all; and which they took from the apostles, and first ministers of the Gospel, from their sermons and discourses, and from conversation with them; and which they committed to writing, partly to help their own memories, and partly for the benefit of others; in which, no doubt, they acted an upright part, though attended with weakness: wherefore, the evangelist does not censure them as false, wicked, and

heretical, nor approve of them as divine and perfect for though they honestly meant, and designed well, yet there might be many things collected by them, which were impertinent, and not proper to be transmitted to posterity; and what might be wrote with great inaccuracy and deficiency, and in a style the Holy Ghost thought improper things of this kind should be delivered in: and therefore the evangelist, moved and inspired by the Spirit of God, set about the following work, and under the same influence completed it. The phrase, αναταξασψαι διηγησιν, "to set forth in order a declaration", is as Dr. Lightfoot observes, out of the Talmud [f8], agreeably to the Jewish way of speaking.

> "R. Chasdai said to one of the Rabbins, who was atdga rdsm, "setting in order a declaration" before him. etc. or relating in order a story before him."

Ver. 2. *Even as they delivered them unto us*, etc.] By whom the evangelist means, as appears from the after description of them, the twelve apostles, and seventy disciples; who handed down to others the accounts of the birth, life, and death of Christ; and according to which the above Christians proposed to write:

which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word; either of the Gospel, or rather of Christ himself, the eternal Word of God; for from the beginning of Christ's preaching the Gospel, or as soon as he entered upon his public ministry, he called his apostles, as Simon, Andrew, James, John, etc. and afterwards seventy disciples; who were eyewitnesses of him, of the truth of his incarnation, and of his ministry and miracles; saw, and conversed with him after his resurrection from the dead and beheld his ascension to heaven; and were ministers that were called, qualified, and sent out by him and waited on him, and served him. This shows, as is by some rightly observed, that Luke was not one of the seventy disciples, as some [f9] have thought, and as the title of this Gospel, to the Arabic version of it, expresses; for then he would have been an eyewitness himself: nor did he take his account from the Apostle Paul; for he was not a minister of the word from the beginning, but was as one born out of due time.

Ver. 3. *It seemed good to me also*, etc.] Being moved to it by the Holy Ghost; for he did not undertake this work of himself, merely by the motion

of his own will, but was influenced, and directed to it by the Spirit of God, as well as by him assisted in it:

having had perfect understanding of all things; relating to the subject of this Gospel, concerning the conception, birth, ministry, baptism, and death of John the Baptist; concerning the conception, birth, private and public life of Christ, together with his sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension. The Syriac and Persic versions refer the word "all" to persons, to the eyewitnesses and ministers of the word; rendering the clause thus, "who have been studiously near to them all": and both senses may be taken in, and the meaning be, that Luke had diligently sought after, and had attained unto a perfect knowledge of all the affairs of Christ; having studiously got into the company of, and intimately conversed with all, or as many as he could, who had seen Christ in the flesh; and were, from the very first of his ministry, attendants on him, that he might have the most certain and exquisite account of things, that could be come at:

from the very first; and to the last; from the conception of John, the forerunner of the Messiah, which is higher than any other evangelist goes, to the ascension of Christ; though some choose to render the word here used, "from above", as it may be, and sometimes is; and may signify, that the evangelist had his perfect knowledge of things by a revelation from above, by divine inspiration; and this moved him to write, and which he mentions, that Theophilus, to whom he writes, and every other reader, may depend, with certainty, on what is said in it. This clause is omitted in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, but is in all copies, and by all means to be retained: this being the case, these reasons prevailed upon him, as he says,

to write unto thee, in order, most excellent Theophilus; which regards not so much the order of time, which he does not always strictly observe, as the particulars of things, related in order, and with great exactness: who this Theophilus was, to whom he writes his Gospel, cannot be said; by his title, which is such as was given to governors of provinces, as to Felix and Festus, (Acts 23:26 Acts 26:25), he seems to be, or to have been, a civil magistrate in some high office; for though not many rich, and mighty, yet some have been, and are, called by grace. Theophylact [f10] says, he was of the order of the senators, and perhaps a nobleman, or prince: however, this name was not a general name, for every "lover of God", as the word signifies, as Salvian [f11] thought; but the name of a particular man, who

believed in Christ, and was an acquaintance of Luke's; though Epiphanius [f12] makes a doubt of it which it should be.

Ver. 4. *That thou mightest know the certainty*, etc.] The end the evangelist had in writing this Gospel, and sending it to Theophilus, was, that he might be more strongly assured of and more firmly established in the truths of the Gospel. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions render it, "that thou mightest know the truth"; that is, the certain truth of things: the truth he did in some measure know before, but Luke's view was, that he might have a more certain knowledge of it; both truth, and the certainty of it may be intended: so the Hebrew word, hnwma, signifies both truth and firmness; and the word here used signifies such a certain evidence of things, as may be safely depended on; even

of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed; or catechised, signifying, that he had been hitherto taught, as a catechumen, the rudiments, and first principles of the Christian religion, by word of mouth; and he had taken them in upon the evidence they came with, and the authority of those that instructed him in them; and now he sent him in writing this account, to increase his knowledge, strengthen his faith, and to give him such a sure proof of things, as might preserve him safe in the belief of them, from all doubting and defection. Having finished his preface, he proceeds to the narrative itself, which begins as follows.

Ver. 5. *There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea*, etc.] This was Herod, the son of Antipater, sometimes called Herod the Great, and is rightly here said to be the king of Judea; for, by deputation from the Roman emperor, he had the government of all Judea, which upon his death was divided among his sons. The phrase, "in the days of", is an eastern way, of speaking; (see <0140>Genesis 14:1 <0801>Ruth 1:1 <0917>1 Samuel 17:12); and intends the time of his reign; in which there was

a certain priest named Zacharias: a name famous among the Jews, for an high priest, who was slain by them the court of the temple, (<1424>2 Chronicles 24:20,21), and for one of the later prophets, (<3801>Zechariah 1:1), who were of this name. This man, the father of John the Baptist, was not an high priest, as this character of him, and the work afterwards ascribed to him, show; though he has been thought to be so by some; and John himself is so called by the Jews [f13]: he was

of the course of Abia. The Ethiopic version reads, “in the days of Abia”: and it has been the opinion of some, that Zacharias and Abia were two priests, who performed their ministry in succession, one after another; one ministered one time, and another at another time; but such betray their ignorance both of Scripture, and of Jewish affairs. In David's time, there was a division of the sons of Aaron into “twenty four” orders, or courses; and this of Abia was one, and the “eighth” of them; (see <1Ch 24:1,4,10>1 Chronicles 24:1,4,10). The account the Jews [f14] give of this matter, and in which they are not agreed, is this;

> “says Rab Chama bar Guria, says Rab, Moses ordered for the Israelites eight courses, four from Eleazar, and four from Ithamar; Samuel came and made them “sixteen”; David came and made them twenty four. — It is a tradition, that Moses ordered for the Israelites sixteen courses, eight from Eleazar, and eight from Ithamar; and when the children of Eleazar increased above the children of Ithamar, they divided them, and appointed them twenty four.”

The account, as given by Maimonides [f15], is as follows:

> “Moses, our master, divided the priests into eight courses, four from Eleazar, and four from Ithamar, and so they were until Samuel the prophet; and in the days of Samuel, he and David, the king, divided them into twenty four courses; and over every course one head was appointed, and they went up to Jerusalem to the service of the course every week; and from sabbath to sabbath they changed; one course went out, and another came in, till they finished, and returned again.”

Now of these there were but four courses returned from the Babylonish captivity, as appears from (<Ezr 2:36-39>Ezra 2:36-39) and with this the Jewish accounts agree [f16].

> “The Rabbins teach, that four courses came up from the captivity, Jedaiah, Harim, Pashur, and Immer; the prophets that were among them stood up, and divided them, and appointed four and twenty lots, and put them into a box: Jedaiah came and took his lot, and the lot of his companions, six; Harim came and took his lot, and the lot of his companions, six; and so Pashur and Immer: and so the prophets that were among them taught, that if Jehoiarib, the first

> course, came up from captivity, he should not drive away Jedaiah out of his place; but Jedaiah should be the principal, and Jehoiarib an appendix to him."

Now, though the course of Abia did not return from captivity, yet its order and name were retained as the rest of the courses, being divided between these four by whom they were supplied; and therefore Zacharias is not said to be of the posterity of Abia, but of his course. To these courses there were added as many stations; and what they were, and their use, may be learnt from what follows [f17].

> "The former prophets offered four and twenty courses; and to every course there was a station at Jerusalem; consisting of priests, Levites, and Israelites: and when the time came for the course to go up, the priests and Levites went up to Jerusalem, but the Israelites, which were in that course, gathered themselves to their cities, and read in the history of the creation; and the men of the station fasted four days in the week, from the second day, to the fifth."

The sense of which, according to their commentators [f18], is, that these stations were substituted in the room of, and represented all Israel; and their business was to give themselves up to divine worship, prayer, and sacrifices; and such of them as were near Jerusalem, when the time of their course came, assisted at the sacrifices; and such as were afar off, betook themselves to the synagogues in their cities, and there fasted, prayed, and read. And so another of their authors [f19] says,

> "there were twenty and four courses of the priests, and so twenty and four courses of the Levites; and every week the course of the priests and Levites goes to Jerusalem; and the twenty and four stationary men, half of them go thither, and half are left in their houses, and pray over the offerings:"

for they had their stationary cities, where these men dwelt [f20]. Jericho was one: they say [f21],

> "Jericho was able to produce a complete station itself; but because of dividing the glory to Jerusalem, it furnished out but half an one:"

hence you need not wonder to hear of a priest and Levite on the road to Jericho from Jerusalem, as in (^[illegible]Luke 10:31,32) for they say, in the same place, that twenty four thousand, a station consisted of at Jerusalem, and

there was half a station at Jericho: as for the heads of the courses of the houses of their fathers,

> “there were in a course five, six, seven, eight, nine of them; a course which had five (heads) in it, three offered three days, and two offered four days; a course in which were six, five offered five days, and one offered two days: a course in which were seven, every one offered on his day; a course in which were eight, six offered six days, and two offered one day; a course in which were nine, live offered five days, and four offered two days: and there were some that fixed themselves for ever; and a course that was (or began) on a sabbath day, was always on a sabbath; and that which was at the going out of the sabbath, was always at the going out of the sabbath: and there were some of them that offered at every course: and there were some that cast lots at every course [f22].”

But to say no more of these courses and stations, I conclude with what Maimonides [f23] says of them:

> “it is not possible, that a man's offering should be offered up, and he not stand by it; but the offerings of the congregation are the offerings of all Israel; and it is not possible that all Israel should stand, in the court at the time of sacrifice: wherefore the former prophets ordered, that they should chose out of Israel men that were fit, and feared to sin, that they may be the messengers of all Israel to stand by the offerings, and these are called the men of the station; and they divided them into twenty and four stations, according to the number of the courses of the priests and Levites; and at every station one of them was appointed over them all, and he called the head of the station; and every week the men of the station of that week gather together; and such of them as are in Jerusalem, or near to it, go into the temple, with the course of the priests and Levites of that week; and they who are in that station, that are at a distance, when their station comes, they gather together to the synagogue, which is in their place.”

Then he goes on to give an account, as before, how often they fast in that week, how many prayers they say, and what they read.

And his wife was of the daughters of Aaron. It is a saying of R. Jochanan [f24];

> “he that would be rich, let him join himself to the seed of Aaron; so it is, that the law and the priesthood make rich. — R. Idi bar Abin married a priestess, and from him proceeded that were made doctors, R. Shesheth, the son of R. Idi, and R. Joshua, the son of R. Idi.”

This is not so much said in commendation of Zacharias, that he took a wife of the same tribe, and of the priestly line: for it was lawful for the tribe of Levi to take a wife of any other, because it did not make any alteration in the inheritances of tribes; and it a rule with the Jews [f25], that priests, Levites, and Israelites, might marry with one another; as Mary, who was of the tribe of Judah, was akin to Elizabeth: but to point the original of John, and show of what extraction he was, his father and mother being both of the family of Aaron.

And her name was Elizabeth; the same name with [bçyla. “Elisheba”, the wife of Aaron, (<020623>Exodus 6:23), and whom the Septuagint interpreters there call, as here, Elisabeth: and this being the name of Aaron's wife, it is very probable it might be a common name among the daughters of Aaron, in succeeding generations.

Ver. 6. *And they were both righteous before God*, etc.] Not as the Pharisees, only righteous before men, but in the sight of God, who sees the heart, and whose judgment is according to truth; and therefore were not justified by the deeds of the law; for by them no man can be justified in the sight of God; but were made righteous through the righteousness of Christ, by which the saints were made righteous before the coming of Christ, as those after it: see (<441511>Acts 15:11, <661308>Revelation 13:8). God beheld them in his Son, as clothed with that righteousness he engaged to bring in, and as cleansed from all sin in that blood of his which was to be shed: and they appeared to him, and in the eye of his justice, and according to his law, righteous persons: though this character may also regard the internal holiness of their hearts, and the truth and sincerity of grace in them: which God, who trieth the hearts and reins of the children of men, knew, took notice of, and bore testimony to: as likewise their holy, upright walk and conversation before men, and which was observed by God, and acceptable to him, though imperfect, as arising from a principle of grace, being performed in the faith and fear of him, and with a view to his glory, and for the sake, and through the righteousness of his Son.

Walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord: this was not the matter of their righteousness before God, but the evidence of it before men: “by the commandments” are meant, all those that are of a moral nature, which regarded their duty to God and man, and which are comprehended in love to both; and by “the ordinances of the Lord”, are intended the injunctions and institutions of the ceremonial law, which is called the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, which, though now abolished, were then in force: and it was right and commendable in them to observe them, who, by their “walking” in them, showed they loved them, both one and the other; esteemed them, concerning all things to be right; and had respect to them all, and observed them, and took pleasure in walking in them, which, by the grace of God, they continued to do; for walking not only shows that these commands and ordinances were a way marked out for them, but in which they took pleasure, and made progress: and were

blameless; not that they were without sin, as none are; and it appears from this chapter that Zacharias was not, (see <4000>Luke 1:20) but they were so in the sight of God; as they were justified by the righteousness of Christ, so they were without fault before the throne, and unreproveable before God; and as to their moral and religious character and conduct before men, they did not indulge themselves in any known sin, but lived in all good conscience among men: nor were they remiss and negligent in the discharge of duty: they were not guilty of any notorious breach of the law of God, or of any remarkable negligence in the business of religious observances: and though they might observe enough in them to charge themselves with, and to humble themselves before God and men; yet so strict were they, in their lives and conversations, that those who were the most intimately acquainted with them, had nothing very material to blame them for.

Ver. 7. *And they had no child*, etc.] Son or daughter: and which was accounted a great infelicity: but this was not owing to the judgment of God upon them for any sins they had been guilty of, as the above character of them shows: and it had been the case of some righteous pairs before them for a great while, as Abraham and Sarah, Manoah, and his wile, Elkanah and Hannah:

because that Elizabeth was barren; so that it was peculiarly her case, and not Zacharias's: and though God had promised the people of Israel that

there should be no male nor female barren among them, (<5D0714>Deuteronomy 7:14) yet there were instances and exceptions to this general rule, as before mentioned, when it was the pleasure of God to make himself known, and magnify his power in the extraordinary conception and birth of any person; and therefore, though barrenness was reckoned a reproach to a person, there was, in this case, a particular hand of God, to answer a special purpose: the signs of sterility are, according to the Jews [f26], when a woman had not breasts as other women have, her voice gross, so that it could not be discerned, whether it was a man's or a woman's, etc.

and they both were now well stricken in years; which made the conception and birth of John the more extraordinary, and even miraculous, and so the belief of it the more difficult; (see <011717>Genesis 17:17) It may be literally rendered, “they had proceeded”, or had far advanced “in their days”: it is an “Hebraism”, and answers to, µymyb µyab in (<011811>Genesis 18:11 <060301>Joshua 13:1 23:1,2 <110101>1 Kings 1:1) where the Septuagint render it by the same phrase as here. The Mahometan writers Beidavi and Jallallo'din say [f27] that Zacharias was “ninety nine” years of age, and his wife “eighty nine”.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office*, etc.] To which he was called and ordained, even to offer gifts and sacrifices for men; whilst he was in the way of his duty, when oftentimes God appears to, and in favour of his people; whilst he was performing it,

before God; in the temple, where was the symbol of the divine presence, before the altar of the Lord; and as having the fear of God before his eyes; considering himself as in the sight of God, and doing his work faithfully and sincerely:

in the order of his course; taking his turn in the order of the course of Abia, to which he belonged; (See Gill on “<420105>Luke 1:5”).

Ver. 9. *According to the custom of the priest's office*, etc.] In which, every man took his part in the execution of it by lot; and which was not an original settled law of God; but a custom, which, in process of time, through the number of the priests, took place, and prevailed: the occasion of it was this;

> “at first, whoever would, might sweep the altar, or cleanse it — — it happened that two alike ran, and came up to the ascent of the

> altar, and one thrust down the other, and he fell, and his leg was broke; and when the sanhedrim saw that they came into danger, they ordered that they should not cleanse the altar, but by lot [f28].”

And so likewise all other sorts of service were settled by lot:

his lot was to burn incense, when he went into the temple of the Lord; where was the altar of incense, and which was burnt upon it morning and evening; (see Exodus 30:1,7,8), and was typical of the continual intercession of Jesus Christ; and this part of service was assigned him by lot. The priests used to cast lots, what part they should take in the service of the temple, in the order of the course, to which they belonged [f29].

> “There were four lots there, and this was the first lot (i.e. to cleanse the altar); the second lot was, who should slay (the sacrifice,) who should sprinkle (the blood), who should remove the ashes from the innermost altar, who should cleanse the candlestick, who should bring the members (or parts of the sacrifice) to the ascent of the altar — — the third lot was, ye new ones, to the incense come, wsyphw, and “cast lots”; and the fourth, ye new ones, with the old ones, who shall bring up the parts from the ascent of the altar to the altar.”

And this was not only the case on the day of atonement, to which these rules belong; but every day in the daily service and sacrifice, when the same rules were observed, as appears from the rubric of the daily sacrifice: [f30]

> “the president said unto them (the priests), come and cast lots who shall slay, who shall sprinkle, who shall remove the ashes from the innermost altar, who shall remove the ashes from the candlestick, who shall bring up the parts to the ascent of the altar, etc.”

Again, [f31],

> “he says to them, O ye new ones, to the incense come, and cast lots; and they cast lots, and he is worthy, whom he accounts worthy — and he that is accounted worthy of the incense, takes a vessel, and the vessel is like to a large golden bushel, that holds three kabs, and a bowl in the middle of it, full and heaped up with incense, with a cover, and a sort of a linen cloth put over it.”

And it is afterwards said [f32],

“he that is worthy of the incense, takes the bowl out of the vessel, and gives it to his friend, or he that is near to him; and if it is scattered from it, in the midst of it, he puts it into his fist; and they teach him, “saying”, take care that thou dost not begin before thy face, that thou art not burnt: when he begins, he spreads it and goes out; and he that burns incense, may not do it, until the president says, burn incense.”

The account Maimonides gives[f33] of this matter, is as follows;

“all the services that they do every day, they do, syypb, by lot; and how do they do it? All the priests of the houses of the fathers, of the day, go into the paved chamber, after the pillar of the morning has ascended, and clothe themselves with the priestly garments; and the president who is over the lots is with them, and they stand in a circle; and the president takes a mitre from off the head of one of them, and goes round with it, and the man from whom he begins to number, and they cast lots, as has been explained — — how do they cast lots? they stand in a circle, and agree upon a number, eighty, a hundred, or a thousand, or whatsoever number they may agree upon; and the president says to them, put out your fingers, and they put out their fingers, one, or two; and if one puts out three, they number him three; and they do not put out the thumb in the sanctuary, because of deceivers; for the thumb is short, and easy to be put out, and to bend; and he that puts out the thumb, they do not number for him: and the president begins to number from the man that is known, whose mitre he took off first, and he numbers by their fingers, and returns in the round, until he has perfected the number they agreed upon; and the man that completes the number with his finger, he is he that goes out by the first lot to service: and why does he number the number they agree upon, by their fingers that they put out, and does not number them by the men themselves? Because it is forbidden to number Israel, but by means of another thing; as it is said, (1 Samuel 15:4) “And numbered them in Telaim”. There were four lots they cast every day in the morning; the first lot; was, who should cleanse the altar: they cast lots, and he was worthy that was accounted worthy to cleanse it; and he sets the row in order, and brings up the two pieces of wood to the altar, and he brings in the censer full of fire, from the outer altar, to the golden altar, to burn incense upon it: and the second

lot, thirteen were worthy of it, according to the order of their standing; how? the president says to them, put out your fingers, and he numbers in the way that has been explained; and he that goes out by the first lot, is he that slays the daily sacrifice of the morning; and the second that stands by his side, is he that receives the blood of the daily sacrifice, and sprinkles it; and the third that is next to the second, receives the ashes from the innermost altar, which is the altar of incense; and the fourth, that is by his side, cleanses the candlestick, and trims the lamps; and the fifth brings up the head of the daily sacrifice, and its leg to the ascent of the altar: and the sixth brings up the two shoulders; and the seventh brings up the extreme part of the backbone, and the other leg; and the eighth brings up the breast and the gullet; and the ninth brings up the two sides; and the tenth brings up the inwards; and the eleventh brings up the fine flour, and the drink offerings; and the twelfth brings up the things that were fried; and the thirteenth brings up the wine of the drink offerings: the third lot, the president says to them, "even" to all the men of the house of the father of that day, whoever has never burnt incense, let him come and "cast lots"; and they gather together to the president, and cast lots; and he that goes out by the lot first, he is he that is worthy to burn incense; the fourth lot, they all gather together, and cast lots to know who shall bring up the parts from the ascent of the altar, to the altar; they cast lots, and he is worthy who is accounted worthy: the daily evening sacrifice, they do not cast another lot for it; but every priest that is worthy of any service of the services of the morning, is worthy of the evening, except that of the incense; for they cast another lot for that in the evening; and every one may come, who has never burnt incense of the men of that house of the fathers, and cast lots for it; but if they have all of them burnt incense already, they all of them cast lots, in the morning, at the third lot; and he that is worthy of it in the morning, burns incense in the evening."

Hence it appears, that the burning of incense, as other parts of the priest's service, was by lot; and that they were new priests, or such who had never burnt incense, that cast lots for it: for it is a tradition [f34], that no man ever burnt incense twice; the reason assigned for it is, because it makes a man rich; and therefore that every one might partake of the blessing in their turns, new ones were called unto it: whether Zacharias had ever burnt

incense before, and whether he now did it in the morning or evening, is not certain.

Ver. 10. *And the whole multitude of the people were praying without*, etc.] In the court of the Israelites, whilst Zacharias was in the holy place; though not in the holy of holies, where only the high priest entered: it looks, as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, as if this was on a sabbath day, since there was such a multitude of people together; for on the weekday, there were only the priests and Levites of the course, and the stationary men, which represented the Israelites, and some of the more devout sort of the people; but here was the whole multitude of the people; or as the Ethiopic version renders it, "all the people were in a full congregation praying": prayer, was wont to be made at the time of incense; hence it is compared to it, (<19E102>Psalm 141:2). And hence it is, that Christ is said to offer up the prayers of all saints, with his much incense, (<660803>Revelation 8:3,4)

in the time of incense: whether it was morning or evening, the people were obliged to be at a distance, whilst that was burning; the Jewish canons confirm this [f35]:

> "in the time they burn the incense in the temple every day, µ[h lk ^yçrwp, "they separate all the people", from the temple, and from between the porch and the altar; there is not a man there, till he comes out that burns the incense."

Ver. 11. *And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord*, etc.] Gabriel, as seem's manifest from (<420119>Luke 1:19,26,36) the same angel that had appeared to Daniel, about the time of the evening oblation, near five hundred years before, and gave him an account of the time of the Messiah's coming, (<270921>Daniel 9:21). The Jews sometimes speak of divine and wonderful appearances to their priests, at such times, and in such places:

> "it is a tradition that R. Ishmael ben Elishah should say, one time I went in, trjq ryjqhl, "to burn incense": and I saw Actariel (one of the names of God with them) the Lord, the Lord of hosts, who was sitting on a throne, high and lifted up. [f36]"

And so they say of Simeon the just, that there was always an appearance when he went into the holy of holies; it is related thus [f37]:

> "Simeon the just, ministered unto Israel in the high priesthood, forty years; and in the last year, he said to them, I shall die this year: they said to him, from whence dost thou know it? He replied to them, every year that I have entered into the holy of holies, there was, dja ^qz, "one old man" clothed in white, and veiled in white, that went in with me, and came out with me; and this year he went in with me, but did not come out with me."

And according to Josephus [f38], the high priest Hyrcanus received an oracle, or answer from God, as he was offering incense; so that the Jews ought not to discredit such an appearance to Zacharias:

standing on the right side of the altar of incense; of which, (see <02301>Exodus 30:1-10, 35:25-28) the situation of it, according to the Jews, was this [f39]:

> "the table (of showbread) was in the north, two cubits and a half distant from the wall; and the candlestick was in the south, two cubits and a half distant from the wall; and the altar (of incense) was in the middle, and stood between them."

And to

> "this agrees the account of Maimonides [f40], who says, the candlestick was on the south, on the left hand, as you go in; and the table of shewbread on the right hand, and both of them on the side of the holy of holies without; and the altar of incense was between them both without."

So that it was on the north side that the angel stood.

Ver. 12. *And when Zacharias saw him*, etc.] The angel; he was troubled, and fear fell upon him; for such appearances of angels were not now so common as formerly: and when they were more usual, generally had such effects on the minds, even of good men; (see <07062>Judges 6:22, <27817>Daniel 8:17).

Ver. 13. *But the angel said unto him, fear not, Zacharias*, etc.] He calls him by his name; for holy men are known to angels in person, and by name; to whom they are ministering spirits, and for whose good they are concerned; and bid him not be afraid, as the angel also said to the women at Christ's sepulchre, (<40285>Matthew 28:5) for he saw by his countenance and gestures, that he was greatly surprised and terrified at the sight of him:

for thy prayer is heard; which he had many years ago put up for a son; for it cannot be thought that he had been now praying for one, being in such an advanced age, and having for years past given up all hopes of one, and was even unbelieving, when he was told by the angel he should have one: prayer is sometimes immediately heard, and answered; and sometimes an answer is deferred a long time, to try the faith and patience of the saints, and to discover the more the wisdom, power, and goodness of God: or this may have regard to his present prayer, one branch of which might concern the coming of the Messiah, which was now expecting, and therefore is told, that his prayer was heard; since the angel that appeared to him, brought him the news of the conception and birth of his forerunner:

and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son; who had been always barren, and was called so, (<40107>Luke 1:7,36)

And thou shalt call his name John; in Hebrew, “Jochanan”, and signifies “gracious”: a fit name for one that was filled with the gifts and graces of the Spirit; and was the harbinger of the Messiah, who is full of grace and truth; and the ushered in the Messiah's kingdom, which is a dispensation of grace.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt have joy and gladness*, etc.] Not only because of his having a son; but because this his son would be the prophet of the Highest; would go before the Lord, and prepare his ways; give knowledge of salvation to many, and light to them that were in darkness, and guide their feet in the way of peace: all which, and more, he afterwards expresses in his song, whereby this part of the angel's prediction had its accomplishment:

and many shall rejoice at his birth; as the neighbours and cousins of his parents did; (see <40105>Luke 1:58) and not only they, but all others, who, afterwards had knowledge of him as prophet, and as the forerunner of the Messiah.

Ver. 15. *For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord*, etc.] Of Jehovah, the Father; with whom, what is highly esteemed among men, is oftentimes an abomination; and of the Lord Jesus Christ, before whom he was to go, and who pronounced him a prophet, and more than a prophet, and even greater than any born of women, (<40109>Matthew 11:9,11) and of the Lord, the Spirit, with whom he was filled from his mother's womb: he was great, not in birth and blood, in worldly riches and grandeur, but in gifts and

grace, in his work, office, and usefulness, and in the esteem of God, and even of men too:

and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; which were forbidden the Nazarites, (<040603>Numbers 6:3) where the Jews, by "wine", understand "new wine"; and by "strong drink", old wine: so all the "three Targums", of Onkelos, Jonathan ben Uzziel, and the Jerusalem, paraphrase the words there, "from wine new and old, he shall separate himself"; and they allow strong drink to a Nazarite, that has no wine in it: their canon [f41] runs thus,

> "three things are forbidden a Nazarite, defilement, and shaving, and whatever proceeds from the vine, whether fruit, or the refuse of fruit; but strong drink made of dates, or dried figs, and such like, is free for a Nazarite; and the strong drink which is forbidden him in the law, is strong drink made of mixture of wine."

But the Hebrew word, rkç, and which is here retained by the evangelist, signifies [f42] any sort of liquor, which is inebriating, whether it is made of fruits, or honey, or what not. The Jews had no such strong drink as ours, which we call beer or ale; but they speak of the strong drink of the Medes, which they say was an inebriating liquor, made of barley [f43]:

and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb; or "whilst in his mother's womb", as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it: like Jeremiah, he was sanctified, set apart, and ordained to be the prophet of the Highest, before he came out of his mother's womb; and was then under such an influence of the Spirit of God, as to leap in it for joy, at the salutation of the mother of Christ to his, (<420141>Luke 1:41,44) and very early appeared to have the extraordinary gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, qualifying him for his work.

Ver. 16. *And many of the children of Israel*, etc.] To whom only, or at least chiefly, he was sent, and came preaching, and administering the ordinance of baptism; and great multitudes of them flocked unto him, attended on his ministry, believed in his doctrine, and submitted to his baptism, but not all; for some slighted his preaching, and rejected his baptism: however, some there were, and many too, that were converted under his ministry, confessed their sins, and were baptized by him; which verified this prediction:

shall he turn to the Lord their God; not Jehovah, the Father; for though he was the Lord God of the Jews in general, and of those that were turned by John's ministry in a special manner; yet John cannot be said “to go before him”, as he is in the next verse; but the Messiah is here meant, who is the Lord Jehovah, and is often so called in the Old Testament; particularly in a prophecy afterwards respected, (<2403>Isaiah 40:3) a name peculiar to God alone: and who also is called God, as he is frequently with additional epithets; as the mighty God, God over all, the great God, the true God, and eternal life; and our, your, and their God, the God of his covenant people, whether Jews or Gentiles; (see <2509>Isaiah 25:9 35:4). Conversion, which is meant by turning to God, is not man's work, but God's; and is effected by his mighty power, which is only equal to it; but John was to be, and was, an instrument of the conversion of many among the Jews, by preaching the doctrine of repentance towards God, and faith in the Messiah, that was just ready to come: he was the means in the hand of God, of turning many from sin, of bringing them to a true sense of it, and to an hearty and ingenuous confession and acknowledgment of it; and from trusting to, and depending upon, their birth privileges, legal duties, and self-righteousness; and from their gross notions of a temporal Messiah; and of leading them to believe in Christ as a spiritual Saviour, as the Lamb of God, that should take away the sin of the world.

Ver. 17. *And he shall go before him*, etc.] The Lord his God, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose forerunner he was; the messenger of him, that according to the prophecies in (<2403>Isaiah 40:3, <3001>Malachi 3:1) was to go before him, and prepare his ways; as he did by his wonderful conception and birth, which made way for the more easy belief of the conception and birth of the Messiah, by a virgin; and by his preaching the doctrine of repentance, and administering the ordinance of baptism; which, were done to awaken the people's expectation of the Messiah, and that he might be made manifest in Israel, and by pointing him out to them in his preaching:

in the spirit and power of Elias: or Elijah, the Syriac and Persic versions add, “the prophet”; John the Baptist, and Elijah, were men much of the same spirit and disposition, and of like power, life, and zeal in religion; and therefore the one goes by the name of the other: they both much conversed in the wilderness; agreed in the austerity of their lives; their habit and dress were much alike; they were both restorers of religion, when very low, and much decayed; were famous for their faithfulness in reproving the vices of

kings, and for their warm zeal for true religion, and for the persecution they endured for the sake of it:

to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children in (<3006>Malachi 4:6) which is the prophecy referred to, it is added,

and the heart of the children to their fathers; which some understand, of his turning the degenerate offspring of the Jews, to the sentiments of their forefathers, and causing them to agree with them in their notions of the Messiah: others, of the turning of the Jews to Christ, and his apostles; and others, of his being a means, through his ministry and baptism, of reconciling Jews and Gentiles together, which is the great business of the Gospel dispensation, ushered in by John; and who preached that all men should believe in Christ, and baptized publicans and Roman soldiers, as well as Jews; and which sense pretty much agrees with the interpretation the Jews put upon the prophecy, as referring to Elijah the Tishbite, whom they expect in person, before the coming of the Messiah: say [f44] they,

> "Elijah comes to defile and to cleanse (i.e. to pronounce what things are clean or unclean), and to remove afar off, and to bring near (i.e. to determine what families are legitimate or illegitimate). R. Simeon says, "to compose differences"; and the wise men say, neither to remove, nor to bring near, but µwlç twç[l, "to make peace" in the world; as it is said, "behold, I send unto you Elijah the prophet", etc. "and he shall turn the heart of the fathers", etc."

But the true meaning is, that John the Baptist, who is meant by Elias, should be an instrument of turning fathers with their children, and children with their fathers, to the Lord; that he should be a means of converting both fathers and children, one as well as another; and to gather persons of every age and station; for the particle l[which we render "to", is the same as µ[, "with", as Kimchi on the text observes: "and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just". By the "disobedient" are meant, either Jews or Gentiles; some understand it of the Gentiles, who were children of disobedience, before the light of the Gospel came among them: but rather the former are meant, who were a disobedient, rebellious, and gainsaying people; who were gone off from the wisdom, knowledge, and religion, of the just, or righteous ones, their forefathers; who prophesied of Christ, rejoiced to see his day, longed for him, and believed in him: now John was to be an instrument of turning some of the unbelieving Jews, to the true

knowledge of salvation by Christ; which their righteous progenitors waited for, had a right knowledge of, and an interest in: and of leading them either into the Gospel of Christ, that wisdom of God is a mystery; the manifold wisdom of God, in which he has abounded in all wisdom and prudence: and which the righteous men among the Jews, searched diligently into, attained some knowledge of, and which even the holy angels desire to look into; so the patriarchs were called just, or righteous; as righteous Abel, just Noah, etc. and so the Jewish fathers: hence in the Targum on (Jeremiah 12:5,6 31:16,21) mention is made of thy fathers, ayqydx "the just", who were of old: or to Christ himself, who is the wisdom of God, and in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, to know him, and believe in him; who in the same Targum on (Jeremiah 23:5) is called ayqydxd jyçm, "the Messiah of the just".

To make ready a people prepared for the Lord. The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, "a perfect people"; and the Persic version, "all the people": not all the people of the Jews, but God's elect among them who from all eternity were "prepared", as a people in a covenant relation, as the portion of Christ, and as his spouse and bride, and as such, given to him; they were in electing grace, vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; and heaven, as a kingdom, was prepared for them from the foundation of the world: they were provided with all spiritual blessings, which were prepared for them, and bestowed on them in heavenly places, in Christ, before the foundation of the world; even all their grace, and all their glory; yea, even their good works are such, which God has foreordained, or foreprepared that they should walk in. Now, the work of John the Baptist, was "to make ready" this people, by pointing out to them, in a ministerial way, wherein their readiness lay, to meet the Lord, and be for ever with him in heaven; not in a civil, moral, or legal righteousness; or in outward humiliation for, and abstinence from sin; nor in a submission to Gospel ordinances, and in a mere profession of religion, and in an observance of a round of duties; but in justification by the righteousness of Christ, and in regeneration and sanctification, by his Spirit and grace; the one giving a right to, the other a meetness for the heavenly inheritance: and John; and so any other Gospel minister, may be said to make ready a people, in this sense; when they are the instruments of the regeneration and conversion of sinners, and of leading them to the righteousness of Christ, for their justification before God, and acceptance with him.

Ver. 18. *And Zacharias said unto the angel, whereby shall I know this*? etc.] Notwithstanding such an appearance of an angel to him, which in those times was not so usual, and this in the holy place; and the things themselves which were told him, and these as the return of prayer; yet he distrusted, and wanted a sign, whereby he might know the truth of them, as the Jews were generally desirous of, and as the father of them was; who expressed himself in much such language, on a certain occasion, as this his son did; (see <01508>Genesis 15:8).

For I am an old man; at least sixty years of age; for with the Jews, sixty years were reckoned, hnqzl, "for old age" [f45]; and a man of these years, was accounted an old man: and the Jewish Rabbins observe [f46], that the word for old age in (<18302>Job 30:2) is by "gematry, sixty"; that is, the letters of the word, numerically make so much. The Mahometan writers, as before observed on (<42007>Luke 1:7) make him to be ninety nine years of age: he was not discharged from service; the Levites were at fifty, but not the priests; blemishes, as the Jewish writers say [f47], made them unfit for service, but years did not: and even the law concerning the Levites, they say [f48], only respected the time they carried the sanctuary from place to place, and not future generations; and that they are disqualified neither by blemishes, nor by years, only by voice, for singing of the song; but then they might be among the porters; so that they were not on that account laid aside from all service:

and my wife well stricken in years. The Mahometan writers, as before, say, she was "eighty nine"; a like objection Abraham made, though he afterwards got over it, and was strong in faith, giving glory to God, believing in his power and faithfulness; (see <01717>Genesis 17:17).

Ver. 19. *And the angel answering, said unto him, I am Gabriel*, etc.] The name of an angel well known to Zacharias from Daniel's prophecies, (<27816>Daniel 8:16; 9:21) and is the first time we read of the name of an angel: the Jews say [f49], the names of angels came out of Babylon, by the means of the Israelites; and it was there that Daniel became acquainted with this name of Gabriel, and also of Michael. Frequent mention is made of Gabriel in the Jewish writings [f50]: were there a particular angel appointed over conception, as the Jews say [f51] there is, one would be ready to think it should be Gabriel, since he was sent to declare the conception and birth both of John the Baptist, and of our Lord Jesus Christ: the name of that angel the Jews indeed say [f52] is Lilah; but yet the Cabalistic doctors [f53]

affirm, that that angel is under Gabriel. In what language this angel spoke to Zacharias, and afterwards to Mary, may be a needless inquiry; but since the Syriac language was generally spoken, and understood by the Jews at this time, it is highly reasonable that he spoke to them in that. The Jews have a notion, that none of the ministering angels understand the Syriac language, excepting Gabriel; and he, they say, understood seventy languages [f54]. Now the angel, by making mention of his name, puts Zacharias in mind of the prophecy of Daniel concerning the coming of the Messiah, which he had from him; and whereas his name signified, "a man of God", or "the power", or "strength of God", or "God is my strength", he suggests unto him, that he ought not to have distrusted his Words, since with God all things are possible: he adds,

that stand in the presence of God; beholding his face, hearkening to his voice, and ministering to him, and so had this affair immediately from him: and therefore he had no reason to doubt of the accomplishment of it. Gabriel, according to the Jews, is one of the four angels that surround the throne of God: their names are Michael, Uriel, Raphael, and Gabriel [f55].

> "Michael they place at his right hand, and Uriel at his left hand, and Gabriel, wynplm, before him, (in his presence, as he here says of himself,) over against the kingdom of Judah, and Moses and Aaron, who were in the east (of the camp of Israel); and why is his name called Gabriel? of Judah it is written, (1Ch 5:2 1 Chronicles 5:2) "for Judah", rbg, "prevailed above his brethren"; and of Moses it is written, (Le 1:1 Leviticus 1:1) "and God called unto Moses"; and it is written, (Isa 9:6 Isaiah 9:6) "and shall call his name Wonderful, Counselor, rwbg la the mighty God, lo! Gabriel"."

And am sent to speak unto thee, and to show unto thee these glad tidings: wherefore, on account of his name, his office, and his mission, especially the subject of it being welcome news, good tidings, what he said ought to have obtained credit with him. Gabriel was one of the ministering spirits sent to minister to them that were heirs of salvation; his messages were messages of mercy, grace and love; he was not a minister of the wrath and vengeance of God, but of his favour. Agreeably to this the Jews say of him, that his name Gabriel is, by "gematry", or numerically, the same with µjr "merciful" [f56]: he is called, in the Talmud [f57], tynwqsp jwr "the decisive spirit", and is said to have three names, Piskon, Itmon, and Sigron. He is

called Piskon, because he decides, or determines judgment against them that are above; and Itmon, because he stops up the sins of the Israelites; and Sigron, because when he shuts (the gates of judgment) there is none can open again. Hence also they say, that he is the angel that is appointed over water which quenches fire. The Targumist on (<18252>Job 25:2) paraphrases the words thus:

> “Michael on the right hand, who is over fire; and Gabriel on the left hand, who is over water; and the holy creatures mingle fire and water, and by his dominion and fear, make peace in his heaven of heavens.”

Ver. 20. *And behold, thou shalt be dumb,* etc.] Or “silent; and not able to speak”, if he would. Silence is sometimes voluntary; but this was what he could not help;

until the day that these thing shall be performed; which he had said concerning the conception and birth of a son, and the imposition of a name on him; for this dumbness remained upon Zachariah, not only until his wife had conceived, and the child was born, but until the eighth day after, when he was circumcised, and his name was given him the angel directed to: “because thou believest not my words”: he was struck both deaf and dumb, as appears from his friends making signs to him, (<42062>Luke 1:62) which they had no need to have done, could he have heard: he was struck with deafness, because he hearkened not to the angel's words; and with dumbness, because from the unbelief of his heart he objected to them. We learn from hence, what an evil unbelief is, and how much resented by God, and how much it becomes us to take heed, that it prevails not in us: and especially since it easily besets us: “which shall be fulfilled in their season”; first the conception, then the birth; after that the calling him by his name, and in process of time, the doing of his work and office; so that the unbelief Zacharias did not make the faith of God of none effect; for though sometimes the people of God are very unbelieving, yet he abides faithful to his word and promises. Mahomet, in his Alkoran [f58], very wrongly makes the angel to say these words to Zacharias;

> “thy sign shall be, that thou shalt speak unto no man for three days, otherwise than by gesture.”

And elsewhere [f59] it is said three nights.

Ver. 21. *And the people waited for Zacharias*, etc.] That were without, in the court of the Israelites, praying there, while he was offering incense: these were waiting for his coming out, in order to be blessed by him, according to (-0023-Numbers 6:23-26) and be dismissed: and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple; beyond the usual time of burning incense; which might be occasioned either by a longer discourse of the angel with him than what is here related; or being struck with amazement at the sight and hearing of the angel, he might continue long musing on this unexpected appearance and relation; or he might spend some time not only in meditation upon it, but in mental prayer, confession, and thanksgiving. The high priest, when he went in to burn incense on the day of atonement,

> "made a short prayer in the outward house, (in the temple,) and he did not continue long in his prayer, ty[bhl alç, "that he might not affright" the Israelites" [f60],

thinking that he was dead; for many high priests that were unfit for, or made alteration in the service, died in the holy of holies [f61].

> "It is reported [f62] of one high priest, that he continued long in his prayer, and his brethren, the priests, thought to have gone in after him; and they began to go in, and he came out; they say unto him, why didst thou continue long in thy prayer? he replied to them, is it hard in your eyes that I should pray for you, and for the house of the sanctuary, that it might not be destroyed? they answered him, be not used to do so; for we have learned, that a man should not continue long in prayer, that he may not affright Israel."

This high priest, they elsewhere say [f63], was Simeon the just.

Ver. 22. *And when he came out, he could not speak unto them*, etc.] Or deliver the benediction they were waiting for:

and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: which he made them to understand, by the gestures he used: for he beckoned unto them; nodding his head, or by some motions of his hands the Ethiopic version adds, "with his hand": or of his lips; for the signs of a dumb man are distinguished into hzymr, and hxypq [f64]; the one is a sign which is expressed by the head and hands; and the other is a sign expressed by the lips: hence that rule, [f65]

> "a dumb man beckons, and is beckoned to; and Ben Bethira says, he moves his lips, and lips are moved to him:"

and remained speechless; to the time the angel fixed.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass, that as soon as the days of his ministration*, etc.] In the order of the course, which might be three, four, five, or six days, according to the number of the heads of the house of their fathers in the course; (See Gill on "<4001>Luke 1:5")

were accomplished: for though he was deaf and dumb, he was not hereby disqualified for service. Deafness and dumbness excused persons from various duties [f66] but did not disqualify priests: a Levite, if he had lost his voice, was disqualified, but not a priest; [f67] the reason was this, because it was one part of the work of the Levites to sing, and therefore could not perform it without a voice; but such was the work of the priests, that though deaf and dumb, they could discharge it; as cleansing the altar, trimming the lamps, carrying the parts to the altar, laying them upon it, and burning them, or offering any sacrifice, burning incense, etc. which was the business of Zacharias; which when he had fulfilled, he departed to his own house; which was not at Jerusalem, but in the hill country, in a city of Judah there; (see <4001>Luke 1:39,40).

Ver. 24. *And after those days*, etc.] The days of his ministration in the temple, quickly after his return home; the Ethiopic version reads, "after two days":

his wife Elisabeth conceived; according to the angels prediction, and notwithstanding her barrenness, and the unbelief of her husband;

and hid herself five months. The Arabic and Persic versions render it, "hid her size"; but there could be no occasion to take any methods to hide this, since, if she said nothing of it herself, and there could be no suspicion of it in one of her years, it could not be much discerned in her by such a time; but she hid herself, or lived retired, that she might be fully satisfied that she was with child, before she said any thing about it; and that she might not discover any pride or vanity on account of it; and to avoid all discourse with others about it, which might be rumoured abroad; and chiefly to shun all ceremonial uncleanness, which one, that bred a Nazarite, was obliged to; (see <0701314>Judges 13:14) and most of all, that she might be retired, and spend her time in meditation upon the goodness of God, and in returning

thanks to him for the favour she had received; saying; as in the following verse.

Ver. 25. *Thus hath the Lord dealt with me*, etc.] In a very gracious and bountiful manner; in giving her strength to conceive a son in her old age, and such an one that was to be great, and so useful in his day; of which her husband had doubtless informed her by writing, though he could not speak:

in the days wherein he looked on me; with a favourable eye, with a look of love and mercy:

he took away my reproach from among men; as barrenness was accounted, especially among the Israelites, the seed of Abraham; to whom was promised a numerous issue, as the stars in the sky, and as the sand on the sea shore, and particularly the Messiah; (see <01303>Genesis 30:23, <23401>Isaiah 4:1).

Ver. 26. *And in the sixth month*, etc.] After Elisabeth's conception; for so long was John the Baptist conceived before Christ, and so long he was born before him; and it seems as if there was the same distance between the public ministry of the one, and the other: John was before Christ, as man, being his forerunner; but Christ was preferred unto him as mediator, and existed before him, as the eternal Son of God:

the angel Gabriel was sent from God; the same angel, that near five hundred years before gave Daniel an exact account of the time of the Messiah's coming, and six months ago acquainted Zacharias with the conception, birth, character, and office of his forerunner:

unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth; the whole country of Galilee was mean and contemptible with the Jews: they observe, though through mistake, that no prophet arose out of it, (<40752>John 7:52) and Nazareth particularly was exceeding despicable in their eye: hence those words of Nathanael, “can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” (<40146>John 1:46) and yet hither an angel was sent by God; and here dwelt the mother of our Lord. (See Gill on “<40123>Matthew 1:23”)

Ver. 27. *To a virgin*, etc.] A pure virgin, that never knew man; (See Gill on “<42034>Luke 1:34”) and yet

espoused to a man whose name was Joseph; but they were not come together, nor had he taken her for his wife, and home to his house, nor had they cohabited:

of the house of David; which, according to the grammatical construction of the words, may be connected either with the virgin, or with Joseph, to whom she was espoused; and is true of both; for they both were of the house and lineage of David: and this shows what a low condition David's family was in, that the persons that were the nearest allied to it were a carpenter, and a poor virgin; and both residing in so despicable a place as Nazareth in Galilee:

and the virgin's name was Mary; a name frequent among the Jews, and the same with Miriam; of which name was the sister of Moses and Aaron.

Ver. 28. *And the angel came in unto her*, etc.] Into her house, and into the room where she was:

and said, hail; all health, happiness, and prosperity attend thee; (Matthew 28:9)

thou art highly favoured; or graciously accepted, or hast obtained grace; not referring to electing, redeeming; justifying, pardoning, adopting, and sanctifying grace, which she had in common with other saints; but to that special and particular favour, in being chosen and singled out from all other women, to be the mother of the Messiah:

the Lord is with thee; so the angel to Gideon, (Judges 6:12) or "be with thee", an usual form of salutation among the Jews; (Ruth 2:4)

thou art blessed among women; and will be pronounced so by other women, as she was by Elisabeth, (Luke 1:42) and by another woman, (Luke 11:27).

Ver. 29. *And when she saw him*, etc.] The Persic version renders it, "when Mary saw the angel"; which expresses the true sense of the words, The Vulgate Latin reads, "when she heard"; i.e. the salutation:

she was troubled at his saying; at his speaking to her; she was surprised at the sight of him, and more at what he said to her;

and cast in her mind, or thought and reasoned within herself,

what manner of salutation this should be; for it was not usual with the Jews for a man to use any salutation to a woman; with them it was not lawful to be done in any shape or form; not by a messenger, nor even by her own husband [f68]; so that Mary might well be thrown into a concern what should be the meaning of this; and especially, that she should be addressed in such language, and saluted as a peculiar favourite of God, and blessed among women.

Ver. 30. *And the angel said unto her*, etc.] Observing the consternation and confusion she was in;

fear not, Mary; he calls her by her name, signifying that she was well known to him, as the saints are to the ministering angels, who are often sent unto them, encamp about them, and do them many good offices; and bids her not be afraid, he had no ill design upon her, nor brought any ill news to her:

for thou has found favour, or "found grace with God"; and what that particular grace and favour was, is expressed in the following verses.

Ver. 31. *And behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb,* etc.] Though a pure virgin, which never knew a man; and therefore, "a behold", is prefixed to it, as being what was extraordinary and wonderful; as it is also, in the prophesy of it, in (<230714>Isaiah 7:14) to which the angel manifestly refers, and is, by Matthew cited, as accomplished hereby; (See Gill on "<400122>Matthew 1:22-23")

and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus; which signifies a "Saviour"; and a Saviour Christ is of God's appointing, providing and sending; and a very suitable one, being a spiritual Saviour, and a complete one, both able and willing to save to the uttermost all that believe in him; nor is there any other, nor salvation in any other: he is the Saviour of his people, whom the Father has given him, even of all the elect, whether of Jews or Gentiles; and of them from all their sins, and from all their enemies; and whom he saves with a spiritual and eternal salvation.

Ver. 32. *He shall be great*, etc.] In his person, as God-man; this child born, and Son given, being the angel of the great counsel, the mighty God, and everlasting Father; (<230906>Isaiah 9:6) which is here referred to; and in his offices, in his prophetic office, being that great and famous prophet Moses spoke of, mighty in word and deed, in his doctrine and miracles; in his priestly office, being a great high priest, both in the oblation of himself, and

in his prevalent intercession; and in his kingly office, being the King of kings, and Lord of Lords; and in the whole of his office, as Mediator, being a great Saviour, the author of a great salvation for great sinners; in which is greatly displayed the glory of all the divine perfections: great also in his works, the miracles that he wrought, as proofs of his Deity and Messiahship, the work of redemption, the resurrection of himself from the dead, and of all men at the last day; and in the glory he is now possessed of in human nature, at the Father's right hand, where he is highly exalted above all principality and power:

and shall be called the Son of the Highest; that is, of God, of whose names is ˆwyl[, "the Most High"; (see <0114>Genesis 14:18-20) not by creation, as angels and men, nor by adoption, as saints, nor by office, as magistrates, are called "the children of the Most High", (<1906>Psalm 82:6) but by nature, being the eternal Son of God; of the same nature with him, and equal to him: for he was not now to begin to be the Son of God, he was so before, even from all eternity; but the sense is, that he should now be known, owned, and acknowledged to be the Son of God, being as such manifested in human nature, and should be proved to be so by the works he wrought, and declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead:

and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. Christ, as God, is the Son of God, as man, the son of David; a name often given to the Messiah, and by which he was well known among the Jews; and as Christ descended from him as man, in a literal sense, he had a right to the throne of his father David; and the Jews themselves say, that he was twklml bwrq, "nearly allied to the kingdom" [f69]: but here it intends not his throne, in a literal, but in a figurative sense; for as David was a type of the Messiah in his kingly office, hence the Messiah is called "David their king", (<2805>Hosea 3:5) so his throne was typical of the Messiah's throne and kingdom; which is not of this world, but is in his church, and is set up in the hearts of his people, where he reigns by his Spirit and grace; and this is a throne and kingdom "given" by the Lord God. The kingdom of nature and providence he has by right of nature, as the Son of the Highest; the kingdom of grace, or the mediatorial kingdom, the kingdom of priests, or royal priesthood, is a delegated one; his Father has set him as king over his holy hill of Zion; and he is accountable for his government to him, and will one day deliver it up complete and perfect.

Ver. 33. *And he shall reign over the house of Jacob*, etc.] Not over the Jews, the posterity of Jacob, in a literal sense; but over the whole Israel of God, consisting of Jews and Gentiles. For as his father David reigned over the Idumeans, Syrians, and others, as well as over the house of Judah and Israel, so this his son shall reign over both Jews and Gentiles: his kingdom shall be from one end of the earth to the other, even over all the elect of God; who in successive generations call themselves by the name of Jacob, and surname themselves by the name of Israel, of whatsoever nation they be; and this reign of his shall be "for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end"; referring to (<2907>Isaiah 9:7) see also (<2744>Daniel 2:44) (<2714>Daniel 7:14) he shall reign in the hearts of his people here unto the end of the world; and with his saints a thousand years in the new heavens and new earth; and with them to all eternity, in the ultimate glory.

Ver. 34. *Then said Mary to the angel, how shall this be*, etc.] This she said not as doubting the truth of what was said; for she required no sign, as Zacharias did; nor is she charged with, and blamed for unbelief, as he was; yea, it is expressly said, (<4045>Luke 1:45) that she believed: nor was this a curious question, as whether she should have this son by a man in a married state, or in her present virgin state; for she clearly understood the angel to mean the latter; and therefore her words express her admiration at it, and also her desire to be informed of the manner how it should be: as to the matter of fact, she did not dispute it, but wanted to be resolved by what means it would be brought about: she knew, by prophecy, that the Messiah was to be born of a virgin, and she perceived, by the angel's declaration, that she was that virgin, but could not imagine in what way this amazing thing should be effected; and therefore proposes this question for the following reason,

seeing I know not a man? "A husband", as the Arabic version renders it; not Joseph, nor any other man; for though she was espoused to Joseph, yet he had not taken her to wife; nor were they, as yet; come together; and before they did, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost, (<4018>Matthew 1:18) she was a pure virgin, untouched by man. The words are an "euphemism", or a modest way of expressing carnal copulation; (see <0401>Genesis 4:1).

Ver. 35. *And the angel answered and said unto her*, etc.] The angel gave her an account of the manner in which what he had said should be effected, as well as observed some things for the strengthening of her faith.

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee. The words, “upon thee”, are left out in the Syriac and Persic versions; but are retained in others, and in all copies: the formation of Christ's human nature, though common to all the three persons, yet is particularly, and most properly ascribed to the Spirit; not to the first person, the Father, lest it should be thought that he is only the Father of him, as man; nor to the second person, the Son, since it is to him that the human nature is personally united; but to the third person, the Spirit, who is the sanctifier; and who separated, and sanctified it, the first moment of its conception, and preserved it from the taint of original sin. His coming upon the virgin must be understood in consistence with his omnipresence, and immensity; and cannot design any local motion, but an effectual operation in forming the human nature of her flesh and substance; and not in the ordinary manner in which he is concerned in the formation of all men, (<18330>Job 33:4) but in an extraordinary way, not to be conceived of, and explained. The phrase most plainly answers to `l[ ab`, in frequent use with the Jews [f70], as expressive of coition.

And the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. By “the power of the Highest” is not meant the Lord Jesus Christ, who is sometimes called the power of God; but rather the Holy Ghost, as before, who is styled the finger of God, and power from on high, (<42120>Luke 11:20, 24:49) unless it should be thought that the perfection of divine power common to all the three persons is intended: and so points out the means by which the wondrous thing should be performed, even by the power of God; and which should not only be employed in forming the human nature of Christ, but in protecting the virgin from any suspicion and charge of sin, and defending her innocence and virtue, by moving upon Joseph to take her to wife. In the word, “overshadow”, some think there is an allusion to the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters, in (<010102>Genesis 1:2) when, `tpjrm`, he brooded upon them, as the word may be rendered; and which is the sense of it, according to the Jewish writers [f71] as a hen, or any other bird broods on its eggs to exclude its young: and others have thought the allusion may be to `µyntj tpwh`, [f72], “the nuptial covering”: which was a veil, or canopy, like a tent, supported on four staves, under which the bridegroom and bride were betrothed; or, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, it is a modest phrase alluding to the conjugal embraces, signified by a man's spreading the skirt of his garment over the woman, which Ruth desired of Boaz, (<080309>Ruth 3:9) though the Jewish writers say [f73], that phrase is `^yawçyn ^wçl` expressive of the act of marriage, or taking to wife. The

phrase of being hawbn jwrb ˆyl l jm “overshadowed”, or “covered with the spirit of prophecy”, as the virgin also was, is used by the Targumist, on (1Ch 2:55) 1 Chronicles 2:55)

therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. The human nature of Christ is here called a “thing”; for it was not a person; it never subsisted of itself, but was taken at once into union with the person of the Son of God, otherwise there would be two persons in Christ, whereas he is God, and man, in one person; and it is said to be “holy”, being free from that original pollution and sin, in which all that descend from Adam, by ordinary generation, are conceived, and brought forth; and is, moreover, said to be born of a virgin, “of thee”, or “out of thee”. Christ's flesh was formed out of the Virgin's; he took flesh of her; his body did not descend from heaven, or pass through her, as water through a pipe, as some heretics of old said: nor did his human nature, either as to soul or body, pre-exist his incarnation; but in the fulness of time he was made of a woman, and took a true body of her, and a reasonable soul, into union with his divine person; and “therefore should be called the Son of God”: not that he was now to become the “the Son of God”; he was so before his incarnation, and even from all eternity; but he was now to be manifested as such in human nature: nor does the angel predict, that he should, for this reason, be called the Son of God; for he never was, on this account, so called, either by himself, or others: nor is the particle, “therefore”, causal, but consequential: the angel is not giving a reason why Christ should be the Son of God, but why he should be owned, and acknowledged, as such by his people: who would infer, and conclude from his wonderful conception and birth, that he is the “Emmanuel”, God with us, the child that was to be born, and the Son given, whose name should be Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, etc. (Isa 7:14, 9:6) Isaiah 7:14, 9:6). Moreover, the word, “also”, is not to be overlooked; and the sense is, that seeing that human nature, which should be born of the virgin, would be united to the Son of God, it likewise should bear the same name, being in personal union with him, who was so from all eternity.

Ver. 36. *And behold thy cousin Elisabeth*, etc.] For though Elisabeth was of the daughters of Aaron, or of the tribe of Levi by her father's side, yet might be of the tribe of Judah by her mother's side, and so akin to Mary. The Persic version calls her “aunt by the mother's side”: intermarriages between the two tribes of Levi and Judah were frequent; nor were they at all contrary to the intention of that law, that forbid the tribes to intermarry,

which was to preserve the inheritance in each tribe, since the tribe of Levi had none at all. Though she might be called her cousin in a more general sense; it being usual with the Jews to call all of their own nation their kinsmen and kinswomen, according to the flesh: but the former sense seems more agreeable; and so Mary is directed to her own family, and to her own relations, and known friends, for a sign, by which her faith might be confirmed, in what the angel had said unto her; for if she found the one to be true, she might conclude the other was also; which is as follows:

she hath also conceived a son in her old age: though Mary asked no sign, yet one is given her, whereby she might know the truth of what was spoken: for if it should appear that Elisabeth had received strength to conceive, as was declared by the angel; and that a son, too, which he could not have known without a divine revelation; and that in her old age, which, was extraordinary and supernatural, she might assure herself, that the message brought to her was from God; and that she likewise, though a virgin, might conceive, and bear a son: the angel adds, as a further testimony of the truth of things;

and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. Elisabeth, was generally known to be barren, and was, by way of reproach, usually called so, but was now six months gone with child; so that it was a plain case, and out of question; the signs of her pregnancy were very apparent.

Ver. 37. *For with God nothing shall be impossible*.] That is consistent with his nature and perfections, with his counsels, purposes, and promises: every thing that he has said, purposed, or promised, he is able to do, and will; every word that he has spoken, every thing predicted by his prophets, or declared by his angels, and particularly this of a virgin's conceiving and bearing a Son: so that the angel not only answers her question, how this should be, but confirms her faith in it; partly by the instance of her cousin Elisabeth, and partly by observing the infinite omnipotence of God.

Ver. 38. *And Mary said, behold the handmaid of the Lord,* etc.] In which words she expresses her obedience of faith; she owns herself to be the handmaid of the Lord, and desires to obey him, and be submissive to him as such; and tacitly acknowledges her meanness, and great unworthiness:

be it unto me according to thy word; she assented to what the angel said should be unto her; she earnestly desired it might be, and firmly believed it would be; she set her “Amen” to the angel's message:

and the angel departed from her; to the heavenly regions from whence he came; to his great Lord and master, that sent him; having dispatched the business he came about, and which he was accountable to him for.

Ver. 39. *And Mary arose in those days*, etc.] The Ethiopic version renders it, “in that day”; directly, immediately, as soon as the angel was gone from her; partly to know the truth of things, and to make use of the sign which had been given her, for the further confirmation of her faith, which was very right and proper for her to do; and partly to converse with Elisabeth about the great things which God had done for each of them, and to praise his name together: “and went into the hill country with haste”; the same which is called the country of the hills, and the hills, and the mountains, in (<060410>Joshua 10:40 11:2,16 16:1 18:13 <142610>2 Chronicles 26:10) where the Septuagint use the same word as here: the land of Judea was divided into three parts, רהה, “the mountain”, or hill country, the champaign country, and the valley [f74]: from Betboron to Emmaus is רה, “the hill country”; from Emmaus to Lud, or Lydda, is the champaign country; and from Lydda to the sea, the valley [f75]. This place is frequently called, in the Jewish writings [f76], the king's mountain, or the royal mountain, and is said to be very full of cities: ten thousand cities, they say [f77], were in the king's mountain, and a thousand of them belonged to R. Eleazer ben Harsum: yea, they say [f78], that king Jannai had sixty myriads of cities in the mountain of the king. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it, “went to the mountain”, to this mountain, and which is called the mountain, or, as we read it, the hill country of Judah, (<062111>Joshua 21:11) on which Hebron was situated; and seems to be the city next mentioned: into a city of Judah; for that was given to the children of Aaron and so may reasonably be thought to be the city where Zacharias dwelt, and not Jerusalem, which was in the tribe of Benjamin. Hebron was a city peculiar to the priests; whereas Jerusalem was not; and it was in the hill country of Judea; it was remarkable for the goodness of its stones. It is said [f79]

> “you have no stones in all the land of Israel harder than at Hebron; hence they buried the dead there.”

Ver. 40. *And entered into the house of Zacharias*, etc.] Which was in the above city, and might be well known to her: and saluted Elisabeth; not Zacharias; either because he was not at home; or because he was deaf and dumb, and could neither hear her salutation, nor return it; or because it was not usual for women to salute men, nor men to salute women; (see Gill on

“(40129)Luke 1:29”), yet one woman might salute another; and especially Mary saluted Elisabeth, because she came to pay the visit to her, and it was with her she was principally concerned.

Ver. 41. *And it came to pass that when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary*, etc.] Which might be before she saw her, and at some little distance from her:

the babe leaped in her womb: which motion was not natural, but supernatural; being made at hearing the voice of Mary, who had now conceived the Messiah, whose forerunner this babe, John the Baptist, was to be; and who, by this motion, gave the first notice of his conception, which his mother Elisabeth took from hence; as he afterwards pointed him out by his finger, and by his baptism made him manifest to Israel:

and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost not with the ordinary graces of the Spirit, for these she had been filled with before, but with extraordinary gifts, with a spirit of prophecy; by which she knew that the Messiah was conceived, and that Mary was the mother of her Lord; that many things had been told her; that she had believed them; and there would be a performance of them; and perhaps it was at this time that John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost also; see (40115)Luke 1:15).

Ver. 42. *And she spake out with a loud voice*, etc.] So as that all in the house might hear; she spake with great vehemency of soul, and strength of affection, being under a very powerful impression of the Spirit of God: and said,

blessed art thou among women; the same words that the angel had said to her before, (40128)Luke 1:28)

and blessed is the fruit of thy womb: this is a reason why she is called blessed, because her child was blessed; being in union with a divine person, who is God over all, blessed for ever; and who has all spiritual blessings in him, and is that seed, in which all nations of the earth were to be blessed; and so is both blessed in himself, and the source of all blessedness to others. The Jews say [f80], that the six measures of barley, Boaz gave to Ruth, (80315)Ruth 3:15) signified, that six righteous men should spring from her, and among, them the Messiah; who should be blessed with six blessings, and they are these; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and of might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; (see 23102)Isaiah 11:2).

Ver. 43. *And whence is this to me*, etc.]. How comes it to pass, that such notice is taken of me, such an honour is done me; that besides being favoured with a child, who shall be great,

that the mother of my Lord should come to me? Elisabeth was far from envying the superior honour conferred on her kinswoman, who was both meaner and younger than she; that she esteems it a wonderful favour, that she should be indulged with a visit from her, who had already conceived the Messiah: and in due time would be the mother of him, as man; who, in his divine nature, is Lord of all angels, and men, and every creature; and in an especial manner was her Lord, and the Lord of all the saints; by his Father's gift from eternity, by his own purchase in time, and by the power of his grace on each of their souls. Thus the virgin is said to be the mother of our Lord, and so may be called the mother of God; because she was parent of that child, which was in union with him, who is truly Lord and God: Just in such sense as the Lord of life and glory is said to be crucified, and God is said to purchase the church with his own blood, (<4Cor 2:8>1 Corinthians 2:8, <4Act 20:28>Acts 20:28)

Ver. 44. *For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears*, etc.] This she mentions, as the signal by which she knew that she was the mother of her Lord; namely, from that unusual and extraordinary motion of the child, she felt within her:

the babe leaped in my womb for joy; that the mother of her Lord, and his, was come thither: the Jews ought not to object to this, who affirm, that the embryos, or infants in their mother's womb, sung the song at the Red Sea, and praised God. [f81]

Ver. 45. *And blessed is she that believed*. etc.] Meaning Mary, a woman, a very young woman, and who had had things very incredible to nature and reason told her; and yet she believed, without objecting thereto, or requiring a sign; tacitly referring to the unbelief of Zacharias, who was a man, a man in years, a priest by office; and yet had been very incredulous, in a thing that was much more possible; because there had been instances of it before, in Sarah, Hannah, and Manoah's wife; than what was related to the virgin, of which there had been none; and which to reason, and with men, was impossible: and happy indeed is every one, that has true faith in any degree; for faith is the faith of God's elect, and is both a fruit and evidence of electing grace, which is the source of all blessings; it is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit, and can never be lost: many are the

blessings such as believe are in the possession of, and openly entitled to; as the justification of their persons, the remission of their sins, their adoption into the household of God, liberty at the throne of grace, and a right to the eternal inheritance; they enjoy much solid peace, joy, and comfort in their own souls; bring much glory to God, and shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation:

for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord: these words may be considered, either as the subject matter of her faith, and be rendered in connection with the former, thus, “blessed is she that believed, that there shall be a performance, etc.”, being fully persuaded, that what the angel had told her, concerning the conception and birth of a son, concerning his name, and the greatness of his person, and the nature, extent, and duration of his kingdom, should be certainly and punctually fulfilled; or as a reason of her happiness, because there should be a sure accomplishment of them. Whatever God has spoken to any of his people, whether it be with respect to things temporal, spiritual, or eternal, shall be performed; as may be strongly concluded from the veracity of God, who cannot lie; and from his power, who is able to do all things; and from his faithfulness, which he will never suffer to fail; and from instances, and matters of fact; from the experience of the saints in all ages, who know, and are conscious to themselves, that not one of the good things the Lord God has spoken to them, has ever failed, but that all have come to pass; (see <06234>Joshua 23:14).

Ver. 46. *And Mary said, my soul doth magnify the Lord*.] Either Jehovah, the Father, or the Son; who, as he was David's Lord, according to his divine nature, though his son after the flesh, was, in the same sense, Mary's Lord, as well as her son: and by “magnifying” him is meant, not making him great, for he cannot be made greater than he is; but ascribing greatness to him, even all the perfections of the Deity, and praising him on account of them; and also declaring and speaking well of his many and mighty works of power, goodness, grace, and mercy, and giving him the glory of them: this Mary did, not in lip and word only, but with her whole heart and, soul, and with all the powers and faculties of it; being filled with the Holy Ghost, and under a more than ordinary influence of his, as her cousin Elisabeth was: and it is to be observed, that she all along speaks in the prophetic style, of things, as if they were done, which were doing, or would shortly be done.

Ver. 47. *And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour*.] Which also, may be understood, either of God the Father, who was her Saviour, both as the God of nature and providence; so the Persic version renders it, “in God that gives me life”; and who had supported, maintained, and preserved her life; and as the God of grace, who has contrived the scheme of salvation, fixed upon, and appointed Christ to be the Saviour; and who saves by him, and therefore is sometimes said to be our Saviour. (Titus 3:4,6) or of Christ, the Son of God, who being truly and properly God, was fit to be a Saviour; and is a very suitable, able, and willing one; and which is the great encouragement to sensible sinners, to look up to him, and be saved; and lays a solid foundation for rejoicing in him, since what he did as man, had hereby an infinite virtue and efficacy put into it, as was put into his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness; whereby the purposes designed were answered by them; and since he must be able to keep their immortal souls, which they commit unto him, and must have an interest with his Father, as their advocate, and a fulness, to supply all their wants: the consideration of Christ, by Mary, as God her Saviour, as having an interest in him, as a Saviour, and this her Saviour, God, gave her greater joy, than being the mother of him as man; and this her joy was not carnal, nor merely external, but inward and spiritual: it was a joy in her own spirit, and was excited there by the holy Spirit of God.

Ver. 48. *For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden,* etc.] Meaning, either her outward temporal estate, which was very low and mean: David's family was now very much reduced, it had its seat not at Jerusalem, but at Nazareth, in Galilee: Mary, of that house, was a poor virgin, and Joseph, of the same, to whom she was betrothed, was a poor carpenter; and yet God passed by the rich and noble families of Jewish people, and pitched upon this poor virgin to be the mother of the Messiah: or her estate, in a spiritual sense, which, as that of every son and daughter of Adam, was very low by the fall; for sin has run all mankind into debt, and they have nothing to pay: it has stripped them of original righteousness, and clothed them with rags; it has filled them with diseases, from the crown of the head to the sole of the feet; it has exposed them to a prison, into which being cast, they must lie, till they have paid the uttermost farthing; and has left them hopeless and helpless, poor and miserable, and blind and naked: but God has remembered his elect, in this their low estate, and has provided a Saviour for them, and sent him to

deliver them out of it; because his mercy endures forever; and this Mary was sensible, and there rejoiced in God her Saviour:

for behold, from henceforth all generations; not Jews only, but Gentiles also,

shall call me blessed; both on account of her son she had now conceived, and was bearing; because she was the mother of our Lord, who had reason so to conclude, from the nature of the thing, and from the words of the angel, and of Elisabeth, (Luke 1:28,42) and much more than Leah had, who said something like this, at the birth of her second son, (Genesis 30:13) and also on account of her interest in Christ, as God her Saviour: in whom she was blessed, with all spiritual blessings; so that she was truly blessed, and might well be called so.

Ver. 49. *For he that is mighty hath done to me great things*, etc.] With respect to the incarnation of Christ, a new, a great, and unheard of thing; in causing her, though a virgin, to conceive; and also to bear such a Son, who should be called Jesus, a Saviour, Immanuel, God with us; and who was no other than the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace: wherefore she describes God the author of it, by a proper periphrasis of him, “he that is mighty”; since this was a work of almighty power, and very justly adds,

and holy is his name: seeing this was brought about without any impurity, through the overshadowing influence of the Holy Ghost; whereby the human nature was preserved from the infection of sin, was sanctified, and fit to be united to the Son of God, and to be a sacrifice for the sins of his people. This may also have regard to the great things God had done for her in a spiritual sense; in the choice of her to eternal life, in the redemption of her by the Messiah, and in her regeneration and sanctification; wherein God had displayed his sovereign grace and goodness, and his almighty power, in a way consistent with his justice and holiness.

Ver. 50. *And his mercy is on them that fear him*, etc.] Not with slavish fear of hell and damnation, but with reverence and godly fear; with a filial fear, with a reverential love of God, and affection for him; with that fear which springs from the goodness of God, which has that for its object, and is encouraged by it: and though this fear is not the cause and reason of the mercy of God, yet is descriptive of the persons towards whom it is exercised in various ways, and to whom it is openly shown; they hereby

appearing to be the vessels of mercy, afore prepared to glory; and in whose redemption, mercy and truth have met together, and who, according to the abundant mercy of God the Father, have been begotten again; whose unrighteousnesses he has been merciful to, and whose sins he will remember no more: and it may have a particular regard to the incarnation of Christ, which in this chapter is said to be in remembrance of mercy; to be the mercy promised, and to come through the tender mercy of our God, (<4001:54,72,78>Luke 1:54,72,78). And which was a mercy Mary considered, not as peculiar to herself, but as extended to all that fear the Lord; not in that age only, but from

generation to generation; to the end of the world, to God's elect in all times and places, who should all be partakers of it, and sharers in it.

Ver. 51. *He hath showed strength with his arm*, etc.] Of almighty power, in the business of the incarnation, and in working out salvation for his people; which is done by his own arm, he being mighty to save, and travelling in the greatness of his strength; (see <2301:63,1,5>Isaiah 63:1,5).

He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts; whom he always resists, and both in providence and grace, takes such methods, as tend to humble and confound them: here particularly, it may regard the proud and haughty Jews; who imagined nothing less, than that the Messiah would be born of one of the rich and noble families in Judea; that he would appear as a temporal prince, and set up a temporal kingdom in great state and splendour, and make them a free and flourishing people: when instead of this, he was to be born of a poor virgin, of whom they disdainfully say, is not his mother called Mary? who was of Nazareth in Galilee, of which it is said, shall Christ come out of Galilee? or any good thing out of Nazareth? A virgin betrothed to a carpenter, and her son of that business also, with which both were flouted; and because of this meanness, the Messiah was rejected by them; and thus were they scattered and confounded in their imaginations.

Ver. 52. *He hath put down the mighty from their seats*, etc.] As mighty kings and emperors from their thrones, as he often does, in the course of his providence; setting up one, and putting down another: or the mighty angels, from their seats of bliss and happiness in heaven; who rebelling against God, opposing the incarnation of Christ, taking it ill, that the human nature should be advanced above theirs, were cast down to hell; and are reserved in chains of darkness, to the judgment of the great day: or this

may have respect to the putting down the monarchies and kingdoms of this world, by the kingdom of the Messiah to be set up; which, though at first was mean and despicable, like a stone cut out of a mountain, will increase, spread, and break in pieces, and destroy all other kingdoms:

and exalted them of low degree; as David to the throne of Israel, from the sheepfold, and following the ewes great with young; and now his house and family, which were sunk very low, by raising of his seed, of a poor virgin in his family, unto Israel, a Saviour Jesus; in whose days the poor had the Gospel preached, and received it: these were chosen and called: the great things of the Gospel were revealed to babes, and hid from the wise and prudent; and beggars were raised from the dunghill, to sit among princes, and to inherit the throne of glory: a method, which God in his infinite wisdom and grace has been pleased to take, more or less, in all ages of time; for not many mighty and noble are called by grace; but usually the foolish, the weak, and the base things of the world.

Ver. 53. *He hath filled the hungry with good things*, etc.] Such as earnestly desired and longed after the coming of the Messiah, as good old Simeon, and Anna the prophetess; and those that looked for redemption in Israel, to whom she spake: and all such persons as heartily desire salvation by Christ, and breathe after the forgiveness of their sins through his blood, and thirst after his righteousness, and long for communion with him, and a greater knowledge of him, and more conformity to him, and pant after his word and ordinances; these are filled, sooner or later, with a sense of their interest in Christ, and his salvation; with a view of the full and free forgiveness of their sins, and with his righteousness they hunger after; and with every good thing they stand in need of, with joy and peace, with food and gladness, even to satisfaction; so that they can say with Jacob, they have enough, yea, all things; seeing Christ is theirs, and all things with him:

and the rich he hath sent empty away: not the rich in this world's goods, though such who trust in their wealth, and boast of their riches, or do not make a proper use of them, God, in his providence, sometimes strips them of all, and turns them into the world naked and empty; much less the rich in grace, who are often the poor of the world; and who, though they seem to have nothing, yet possess all things, and are full: but such who are rich in their opinion, and in their own works; and trust in their righteousness, and despise others; these, as they come full of themselves to the throne of grace, as the Pharisee, are sent empty away; without any token of the love

and favour of God, or any blessing from him: and as they come to ordinances in their own strength, and trust in the performance of them, they go away empty, as they came; these are dry breasts unto them, whilst they are full breasts of consolation to the poor in spirit, and to all meek and humble souls: and what is still worst of all, notwithstanding all their good works they boast of, and trust in, they will be sent away at the last judgment from the presence of Christ, as not known by him, and as workers of iniquity.

Ver. 54. *He hath holpen his servant Israel*, etc.] Meaning, not the natural posterity of Jacob, or Israel in general, but the elect of God among them; for all were not Israel, who were of Israel; and not them only, but also the chosen ones among the Gentiles; who, with the former, make up the whole Israel of God, in a spiritual and mystical sense: these are the Israel, God has chosen, redeemed, and calls by his grace, and are here styled his "servant", as Israel is frequently called, (2408Isaiah 41:8, 44:21). The word signifies a "child", as well as a "servant": and may design, either the weak and helpless condition God's elect are in by nature, which calls for, and requires divine help and assistance; or the relation they stand in to him, being his adopted children, and which is the reason of his helping them: and which signifies to take them by the hand, and lift them up, and support and uphold them; and supposes them to have been fallen down, and unable to raise themselves up; but God having laid help for them on one that is mighty, sent him to take upon him their nature; and by obeying, suffering, and dying for them, to help them out of their state of sin and misery; and to uphold them with the right hand of his righteousness, and bring them safe to glory; and all this,

in remembrance of his mercy; which he had in his heart towards them, and had promised in his covenant to them: the mercy of God, is the spring and source of redemption; mercy provided a Redeemer, and a ransom; and it is owing to it, that the Redeemer came; and he, in his love and pity, performed the work: and therefore salvation is to be ascribed, not to works of righteousness done by men, but to the abundant mercy of God our Saviour.

Ver. 55. *As he spake to our fathers*, etc.] To David, of whose family Mary was; and to Jacob, or Israel, of whose stock she was; and to Isaac, in whom the seed was to be, called; and particularly,

to Abraham and to his seed for ever: not his natural, but his spiritual seed; both among Jews and Gentiles, to the end of the world; to these God promised this mercy of a Saviour and Redeemer, and to these he performs it, and will to all generations.

Ver. 56. *And Mary abode with her about three months*, etc.] That is, she continued with Elisabeth, as the Syriac and Persic versions express, about the space of three months; in which time, she had full satisfaction of the truth of the sign the angel had given her; namely, of Elisabeth's conception and pregnancy, for by this time she was ready to give birth; and she must now be fully assured, that she was with child herself: this space of three months is a term of time fixed by the Jewish doctors, to know whether a woman is with child or not, as in case of divorce or death: the rule runs thus [f82];

> "every woman that is divorced, or becomes a widow, lo! she may not marry, nor be betrothed, until she waits, µwy µy[çt, ninety days (i.e. three months), exclusive of the day in which she is divorced, or her husband dies, and of the day in which she is betrothed; that so it may be known whether she is with child or not, in order to distinguish between the seed of the former, and the seed of the second husband."

And so in the case of marrying the wife of a brother, that died without issue [f83], and of newly married couples mistaking their spouses [f84]:

and returned to her own house; at Nazareth, in Galilee; and now it was, that Joseph, to whom she was betrothed, perceived she was with child; and suspecting evil, had a mind to put her away privately; but was informed by an angel of God, in a dream, of the whole matter; and was advised and encouraged to take her to wife, which he accordingly did; (see <4001 8>Matthew 1:18-20).

Ver. 57. *Now Elisabeth's full time came*, etc.] The nine months, which is the full time of a woman's going with child, were now complete; for in the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy, or when she had been gone six months with child, the angel acquainted Mary with it, and she had stayed about three months with her; but now had left her, to shun the company which would be at the delivery of her; though some think, she stayed till that time was over, which is not so probable; and so her reckoning being out, and the time come,

that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son, according to the angel's prediction both to Zacharias and Mary, (<40113>Luke 1:13,36).

Ver. 58. *And her neighbours, and her cousins*, etc.] That lived in Hebron, and the parts adjacent, whether of the house of Aaron, or of the tribe of Judah; to both which she was related, and who dwelt near her, the priests in the city of Hebron, and the children of Judah in the places about it:

heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her; or "had magnified his mercy with her"; (see <01919>Genesis 19:19) in removing her barrenness, and so taking away her reproach from among men; in giving her strength to conceive, and bring forth a son, that was to be so great, as the prophet of the Highest; and more than a prophet, and greater than any born of women:

and they rejoiced with her: as the angel had foretold they should, (<40114>Luke 1:14) The Persic version reads, "with him, Zacharias"; having rendered the other clause thus, though wrongly, "hearing that God had poured out his mercy on the house of Zacharias"; (see <451215>Romans 12:15).

Ver. 59. *And it came to pass that on the eighth day*, etc.] The precise time fixed in the normal restitution of the ordinance of circumcision, (<01712>Genesis 17:12) though this was not always attended to, but circumcision was sometimes deferred to another time; yet keeping the exact time was judged most commendable and praiseworthy; (See Gill on "<500305>Philippians 3:5")

they came to circumcise the child; that is, the neighbours and cousins of Elisabeth, who were at the time of her delivery; eight days after they came again to be at the circumcision of the child: who was the operator is not known; nor was there any particular person appointed for this service; but any one might do it, whether ecclesiastic or laic, men or women, father or mother, or any other friend; for the rule is [f85],

> "all are fit to circumcise; even an uncircumcised person, and a woman, and a minor, may circumcise in a place where there is no man; but a Gentile may not circumcise at all."

The circumcision of John seems to be performed in Zacharias's house, and by one of those that came; for Zacharias, being dumb, could not say the blessing which the circumciser was obliged to say: nor indeed could he say

that, which, as the father of the child, belonged to him; concerning which, take the following account [f86]:

> “the circumciser blesses before he circumcises, “saying”, blessed is he that hath sanctified us by his precepts, and hath commanded us concerning circumcision: if he circumcises the son of his friend, or if he circumcises his own son, he blesses him with “this blessing”; and hath commanded us to circumcise a son: and the father of the son blesses with another blessing; blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who hath sanctified us by his precepts, and hath commanded us to enter him into the covenant of Abraham our father. — — If his father is not there, they do not say this other blessing. — — And if there are any standing there, they say, as he hath brought him into the covenant, so bring him to the law, and to matrimony, and to good works; and after that the father of the child, or the circumciser, or one of those that stand by, bless, “saying”, blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who sanctified the beloved (Isaac) from the womb, etc.”

How many of Elisabeth's neighbours and relations were present at this ceremony, is not related; but the Jews require ten persons as witnesses of it; for they say [f87], that

> “testimonies worthy of belief, in Israel, are ten, the witnesses of the covenant of circumcision are ten, the witnesses of a dead person ten, etc.”

and at this time also it was usual to give the child a name, which was not by divine appointment, but was a custom that prevailed among them; which took its rise from Abraham, having his name changed at the time when circumcision was enjoined him, (<0117>Genesis 17:5,10) and from the naming and circumcision of Isaac, mentioned together, (<0121>Genesis 21:3,4)

and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father: as the neighbours of Naomi gave a name to the son of Boaz and Ruth, calling him Obed, (<0817>Ruth 4:17). This they took upon them to do, because that Zacharias was deaf and dumb; but why they should call him by his name, cannot well be accounted for, it not being usual to call the father, and the son, by the same name; unless they were desirous of continuing the same name in the family, which had been famous in Israel for a prophet, and a

priest: to call children by Gentile names was not lawful. In the Targum on (<3106>Amos 6:1) it is said,

> “woe to them that name their children after the names of the Gentiles.”

Ver. 60. *And his mother answered and said*, etc.] That is, Elisabeth:

not so, but he shall be called John; knowing that this was the name wherewith the angel said he should be called; either by divine revelation, she being filled with the Holy Ghost, (<4041>Luke 1:41) or by information of her husband, who, doubtless, in writing, gave her an account of all that the angel had said unto him.

Ver. 61. *And they said unto her*, etc.] Her neighbours and relations, there is none of thy kindred that is called by this name; from whence it appears, that it was usual to give names to children after their ancestors, relations, and friends. The Persic version renders it, “in thine Israel there is not any one of this name”: but this could not be true; for the name of Jochanan, or John, was a name very common among the Israelites, though not in Elisabeth's family, or her husband's.

Ver. 62. *And they made signs to his father*, etc.] Who was deaf, as well as dumb; otherwise there would have been no occasion to have signs made to him: and so the word used, in (<4020>Luke 1:20) signifies both deaf and dumb. These signs were made by hands or head; for such used to be made to a dumb man. According to the canon [f88], a dumb man nods, and zm r nw “and is nodded”, or “beckoned to”: and which beckoning one of the commentators [f89] says, is a sign which is expressed either by the hands or head. Such a method as these took with Zacharias, about the name of his son, is directed to in case of a father's deafness, in relation to knowing who is his firstborn; [f90]

> “father that is dumb, they search or examine him in the way they search for divorces; if he makes signs, or writes, that this is his firstborn, lo! this takes the double portion.”

How he would have him called; by what name, Zacharias or John; and they were right in applying to him, to whom it most properly belonged, to give a name to his child.

Ver. 63. *And he asked for a writing table*, etc.] That is, he made signs for one, for as yet he could not speak. The Persic version renders it “ink”, and the Ethiopic, a book, and the Vulgate Latin, a notebook. The word signifies “a little table”, such as they used to write not only “upon”, but “in”; and was sometimes of brass [f91], sometimes of wood, and sometimes of wax [f92], on which they wrote with a style or pen;

and wrote, saying, his name is John: not that he must be, or shall be, so called; but this is his name, and no other; being what the angel had given him before his conception, and Zacharias now confirms:

and they marvelled all; they were astonished, not so much at the new name brought into the family, as at the agreement between Elisabeth and Zacharias in this point, when the latter was both deaf and dumb; they knowing nothing, as yet, of the angel's message to him.

Ver. 64. *And his mouth was opened immediately*, etc.] As soon as ever the child was named, and so all things accomplished which the angel had foretold;

and his tongue loosed; the impediments of speech were removed, and the use of his tongue and lips was restored unto him:

and he spake and praised God; for the safe delivery of his wife; for the birth of his son, the forerunner of Christ; for the conception of the Messiah; for God's gracious regards to his church and people, in these instances; and for the restoration of speech and hearing to himself, of which he had been some time deprived for his unbelief.

Ver. 65. *And fear came on all that dwelt round about them*, etc.] That is, the fear of God, an awful reverence of the divine majesty; they perceived the hand of God was in these things, and that these were effects of divine power; and which made very serious impressions upon their minds, and they thought, and spoke of them with great solemnity; (see <4043><4043>Acts 2:43 5:11).

and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea: the several things relating to the appearance of the angel to Zacharias in the temple; his message to him; the striking him deaf and dumb; the conception of Elisabeth, who had been barren; the birth of her son; the unusual name given him; and the more unusual manner in which it was given; and the opening of Zacharias's mouth, and the loosening of his

tongue upon this, were reported, and commonly talked of by all people to that part of Judea, where the parents of John dwelt.

Ver. 66. *And all they that heard them*, etc.] The above things, laid them up in their hearts; treasured them up in their memories, and often thought of them in their minds, what should be the meaning, and what would be the issue of them:

saying, what manner of child shall this be? what will he be, or come to? and what is it that he shall do? surely he must be designed in providence to be put into some high station, and some eminent work and service; since so many, and such great things, have gone before, and attended his birth:

and the hand of the Lord was with him; which may intend the special care, and peculiar providence of God in preserving his life, giving him health, causing him to grow strong and robust, and in stature of body, and in endowments of mind; and also the communications of grace unto him, and the gracious presence of God with him, so soon as he was capable of enjoying them; as likewise a spirit of prophecy, which is sometimes signified by the hand of the Lord; and the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which, in process of time, appeared in him, qualifying him for his high office and work: the hand of the Lord, with the Jews, is the Holy Ghost: thus they interpret (<130819>1 Chronicles 28:19) "all in writing", this is the "Masora"; "from the hand of the Lord", çdwqh jwr wz, "this is the Holy Ghost". [f93]

Ver. 67. *And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost*, etc.] With a spirit of prophecy, as his wife Elisabeth had been before, (<420141>Luke 1:41)

and prophesied saying; the following things, relating to the Messiah, his incarnation and redemption by him; to the accomplishing of the covenant, oath, promise and mercy of God to his people; and to his son, the forerunner of Christ; and to his work and office, in the various parts and branches of it, which he should perform. Whence it appears, that the following song is of divine inspiration; and that Zacharias spake it as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, as the prophets of old did.

Ver. 68. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel*, etc.] This was a form of blessing of long standing, (<197218>Psalm 72:18) and very likely was in use, more or less, ever since Israel was distinguished from other nations,

became a body politic, and were settled in the land of Canaan, in the enjoyment of peculiar privileges, both civil and religious; see other forms before it in (<010926>Genesis 9:26 24:27 <021810>Exodus 18:10) and now, this was very near being antiquated, and out of date; for upon the birth of Christ, the Son of God manifest in the flesh, the New Testament form of blessing runs, as in (<470103>2 Corinthians 1:3 Ep 1:3 <600103>1 Peter 1:3) The reason of its being now made use of might be, because the Messiah, the principal subject of this song, was peculiarly promised unto Israel, was raised up for them, and sent unto them. To bless God, is not to invoke a blessing on him; for there is none greater than he to ask one of; nor does he stand in need of any, being the Creator, who is blessed for ever in himself, and is the fountain of blessedness to his creatures: and therefore, also, cannot signify to confer a blessing on him, but to praise and glorify him, on account of the perfections of his nature, and the works of his hands; and to give thanks unto him for all mercies, spiritual and temporal; and especially for Jesus Christ, his mission, incarnation, and salvation by him, which are the things the God of Israel is blessed for in this song:

for he hath visited, and redeemed his people; as he did Israel of old, (<022316>Exodus 3:16,17) when the Lord looked upon them, and delivered them out of the bondage of Egypt, and which was a type and resemblance of redemption by Christ; and to which reference here seems to be had. The "people" here said to be visited, and redeemed, design all the elect of God, not only among the Jews, but Gentiles also; all those whom God has chosen to be his people, and has in his covenant taken and declared to be such; whom he has given to Christ, as his people and portion; for whose sins he was stricken, and made reconciliation, and whom he saves from their sins. The act of "visiting" them, as previous to redemption, may include God's look of love upon them from everlasting; his choice of them in Christ unto salvation; the appointment and provision of a Saviour for them; the covenant of grace made with them in Christ, the foundation and security of their salvation; and particularly the mission of Christ in human nature, in consequence of the council, covenant, and promise of God: or it designs his incarnation, for he was now actually conceived in the womb of the virgin: so that God had visited, and looked upon his people, and remembered his love and mercy, his covenant and promise to them: and the "redemption" of them, which was now said to be made, or done, because Christ was now sent to do it, and because it was as sure, as if it was done, intends the spiritual and eternal redemption of them by the price of his

blood, from the slavery of sin, the bondage of the law, and curse of it, and the captivity of Satan, and a deliverance out of the hands of every enemy; a redemption which reaches both to soul and body, and secures from all condemnation and wrath to come; and includes every blessing in it, as justification, forgiveness of sins, adoption, sanctification, and eternal life; and is a plenteous, full, complete, and everlasting one.

Ver. 69. *And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us*, etc.] Meaning the Messiah, whom God had now raised up:

in the house of his servant David; in David's family, he being now conceived by a virgin of his house; and who, in a little time, would be born in Bethlehem, the city of David. He is called “an horn of salvation”, because he is a powerful Saviour. “Horn” denotes power; it being that to a beast, as the arm is to a man, by which it defends itself, and pushes down its enemies; and “salvation” is the work Christ came to effect, and for which he was raised up, and sent: and a Saviour he is, and a mighty one, as appears from his doing and suffering what he has; as bearing all the sins of his people, and making reconciliation for them; obeying all the precepts of the law, and undergoing the penalty of it; being made a curse, and becoming obedient to death, even the death of the cross: as also, from his delivering them from sin, Satan, and the law, which no other could have done; and from his grappling with, conquering, spoiling, and destroying all his, and our enemies. Moreover, the word “horn” signifies regal power, honour, and dignity; (see <270724>Daniel 7:24) and so may not only denote the work of Christ as a Saviour, but his office also as a King, who in the discharge of that is likewise a Saviour; for he not only rules, and governs, but protects, defends, and preserves his, people, by his power; (see <090210>1 Samuel 2:10 <190217>Psalm 132:17).

Ver. 70. *As he spake, by the mouth of his holy prophets*, etc.] Which shows not only the veracity and faithfulness of God in his promises, but the early intimations that were given by him concerning the Messiah: for it follows,

which have been since world began; or from the beginning of the world; ever since the first hint of the Messiah, as the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head, was given, he was more or less spoken of. Adam, the first prophet, seems to have respect to him, when he calls his wife Eve, which signifies life; and because she should be the mother of all living. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of him, of his second

coming, which supposes his first; and Lamech may be thought to have some regard to him, when he named his son Noah, and said what he did concerning him: Christ was spoken of to Abraham, as his seed, in whom all nations of the earth should be blessed; and God spake of him by the patriarch Jacob, under the name of Shiloh, as who should spring from the tribe of Judah, before the sceptre and lawgiver were departed from it. Moses foretold that there should arise a prophet from the midst of his brethren like unto him, to whom the Israelites were to hearken. David, the prophet, often speaks of him, particularly of his death, his resurrection from the dead, his ascension to heaven, and session at God's right hand; and the evangelical prophet Isaiah predicts his birth of a virgin, and testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Micah points out the very place of his birth; and Zechariah describes the manner of his entrance into Jerusalem, as riding on an ass: to say nothing of what Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and others, have prophesied of him, It is a common saying of the Jews [f94], that

> “all the prophets, all of them prophesied not, jyçmh twmyl ala
> “but of the days of the Messiah.””

The men, by whom God spoke of the Messiah, of the mission of him, and of raising up this horn of salvation, for his people, were “prophets”; men endued with a spirit of prophecy; “holy”, men, who were sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and spake, as they were moved by him; and these all spake as if it were with one “mouth”; they all agree in their accounts concerning Christ, though they lived in different periods of time, from the beginning of the world.

Ver. 71. *That we should be saved from our enemies*, etc.] This, and the two following verses, either contain and express the sum and substance of what God spake by the prophets; or point out the end or ends of his raising up an horn of salvation, or a Saviour for his people; namely, that they should be saved by him from their enemies: from sin, which wars against the soul, and threatens the destruction of it; from Satan, the avowed and implacable adversary of mankind; from the world, the seed of the serpent, which has always bore an enmity to the seed of the woman; from the law, the killing letter; and from death, the last enemy that is to be destroyed;

and from the hand of all that hate us: which is only an illustration of the former sentence, or a repetition of it in other words; and designs the same as before.

Ver. 72. *To perform the mercy promised to our fathers*, etc.] By “mercy” is meant salvation by Christ, which springs from the mercy of God; the promise of which was an instance of mercy to the Jewish fathers under the Old Testament, and also the performance of it; for they were saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus, even as we: his blood was shed for the remission of sins that were past, and for the redemption of transgressions under the first Testament:

and to remember his holy covenant; which was made between him, and his Son from all eternity; and was, at various times, dispensed and manifested to the patriarchs, and eminent saints, as Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc. This is called an “holy” one; not only because it was made by, and between holy persons, and provided for the holiness of the people of God, both here, and hereafter; but because in the article of redemption and salvation by Christ, which is here more particularly regarded, care was taken to secure the glory of God's holiness and justice, as well as to display his grace and mercy. Now raising up, and sending Jesus a Saviour, showed, that God was mindful of this covenant, and therefore sent redemption to his people.

Ver. 73. *The oath which he swore to our father Abraham*.] When he swore by himself, because he could swear by no greater, that in blessing he would bless him; that his seed should possess the gates of his enemies, and in it all the nations of the earth should be blessed: all which have been fulfilled in Jesus the Messiah; (see <01221 6>Genesis 22:16-18, <58613>Hebrews 6:13,14).

Ver. 74. *That he would grant unto us*, etc.] What is said in this and the following verse, is the substance of the promised mercy, covenant, and oath:

that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, as before, in (<42017>Luke 1:71)

might serve him without fear. One principal end of deliverance from spiritual enemies by Christ, is the service of God; and nothing lays a greater obligation on men to serve the Lord, and glorify him, than redemption by Christ; nor is there any thing that makes men more zealous of good works: spiritual and evangelical service, in distinction from the legal service, and worship of God, is here meant; since it is said to be “without fear”, which

the threatenings and curses of the law filled men with; but being delivered from it, they become free from that spirit of bondage unto fear, it genders to; as being delivered also from sin and Satan, they are without fear of hell and damnation; and from the world, they are without fear of men; and from death, they are without fear of that, through which many under the legal dispensation, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. It is a saying of the Jews[f95], that:

> "greater is he that serves from love, than he that serves from fear."

But such sort of service is not of a man's self, or performed by his own power and strength, but is a "grant" from God, and owing to the influence of his Spirit and grace.

Ver. 75. *In holiness and righteousness*, etc.], Not in mere outward rites and legal ceremonies but as the saints serve, from principles of righteousness and true holiness; in which the new man is created, and of which the kingdom of God, or spiritual and internal religion consists; so in acts of piety and devotion towards God, and justice among men, which is the substance of the perfect and acceptable will of God:

before him; it is one thing to serve the Lord with an outward appearance of holiness and righteousness before men, and another thing to be righteous before God, and to walk in all his commandments and ordinances, as in his sight: all the days of our life; which denotes the constancy and continuance of this service; it is not for a day or two, or only on festivals and sabbath days, such as were under the Jewish dispensation, but every day we live. In the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and in two copies of Beza's, and two of Stephens's, and in the Alexandrian copy, it is only read, "all our days"; but the Arabic version reads, as the generality of copies, and as we render it.

Ver. 76. *And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest*, etc.] Here Zacharias turns himself to his son John, though an infant, and incapable of knowing what was said to him; and for the sake of those that were present, describes his office and work; and says, that he should be "called", that is, that he should "be", and be accounted a "prophet": for he was not only a preacher of Christ and his Gospel, but he also foretold the coming of the Messiah; and the vengeance that should fall on the Jewish nation, for their unfruitfulness, impenitence, and unbelief: and the Prophet "of the Highest"; that is, of God; as the Persic version renders it, of the

most high God; and by whom is meant, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose prophet, harbinger, and forerunner John was; and so is a proof of Christ being the supreme, or most high God:

for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways; as the angel had suggested in (<4017>Luke 1:17) and as was prophesied of him in (<2310>Isaiah 11:3, <3001>Malachi 3:1). (See Gill on "<4003>Matthew 3:3").

Ver. 77. *To give knowledge of salvation*, etc.] This is still said of John, and belongs to his work and office; though the Syriac and Arabic versions read, "that he may give"; as if it was spoken of the Lord, before whose face John was to go, and whose ways he was to prepare: by "salvation" is meant, not a temporal salvation, or a deliverance from the Roman yoke, the Jews were expecting, for John gave no intimation of any such salvation; but of a spiritual and eternal salvation, and of Christ himself, the author of it; who is often called Salvation, because he was appointed to this business, was fitted for it, and has effected it; and there is salvation in him, and in no other, the "knowledge" of this is not merely, notional and speculative, but experimental, approbative, fiducial, appropriating, sure, and certain; and is more excellent, than any other kind of knowledge whatever: and this is a "gift"; it is not what is attained unto, and acquired by application, diligence, and industry, as other sort of knowledge; but is a gift of God, though in the use of means, and through the ministry of the word: and so John is said to give it ministerially, he being an instrument in the hand of God, whereby souls came to the knowledge of salvation by Christ, and believed in him: it was communicated by God through his ministry,

unto his people: meaning not the people of John the Baptist, the Jews, though it was true of God's elect among them; but the people of Christ, and that not all mankind, who are his by creation; but a special people, whom the Father has given him, and he has purchased by his blood; whom he conquers by his grace, and makes a willing people, in the day of his power: to these, and only these, is the knowledge of salvation by Christ given; for none else are appointed to it, and for no other is it wrought out. It follows,

by the remission of their sins; the sense of which is, either that salvation is by the forgiveness of sin, and lies in it, that being a principal part of it; (see <4007>Ephesians 1:7). Sins are debts; forgiving them is a remitting these debts, a loosing them, or the obligation to payment, which is done freely and fully, for Christ's sake, and through his blood; and herein lies the

blessedness and salvation of men; see (Romans 4:6,7). Or else that the knowledge of salvation was conveyed through the ministry of John, not by preaching the works of the law, but the doctrine of remission of sins, by Christ; (Mark 1:4, John 1:29) and which is the sum and substance of the Gospel, as it was ordered to be preached by Christ, and was preached by his apostles. The Alexandrian copy reads, “our sins”.

Ver. 78. *Through the tender mercy of our God*, etc.] or “bowels of mercy”, to which the forgiveness of sin is owing; the source and spring of pardon, is the free grace and abundant mercy of God; it takes its rise from thence, though it is channelled in the blood and sacrifice of Christ; and which no way derogates from, but rather heightens the riches of God's grace and mercy: for it was mercy that moved God to enter into a covenant with his Son, in which forgiveness of sin is promised; and it was mercy to set forth his Son, in his eternal purposes and decrees; and to send him forth in the fulness of time, to shed his blood for the remission of sins; it was the mercy of God to us, that provided a lamb for a burnt offering, and then accepted of the sacrifice and satisfaction of his Son, in our room and stead, and forgave all our sins, for his sake; and whatever the pardon of our sins cost God and Christ, it is all free grace and mercy to us: it is owing not to the absolute mercy of God, or to the mercy of God as an absolute God, but to the mercy of “our” God; our God in Christ, our covenant God and Father, whose bowels yearned towards us, and whose pity is that of a tender parent: whereby

the day spring from on high hath visited us: the word ανατολη, here used, and is translated “the day spring”, is the same which the Septuagint use, in (Jeremiah 23:5, Zechariah 3:8, 6:12) where the Messiah is spoken of, under the name of the “branch”: and undoubtedly the Messiah Jesus, is intended here, who is the man, that branch, that has grown up out of his place; not from below, but from above; and who is the phosphorus, or bringer of light, that bright and morning star, that sun of righteousness, who has light in himself, and communicates light to others; even light natural, spiritual, and eternal; and with his rays and beams of light, life, and love, refreshes, exhilarates, and warms, the hearts of his people: and by the “visit” he has made in our “horizon”, is meant his assumption of human nature; which, like a friendly visit, proceeded from pure love to the children of God; and was a drawing near unto them, for it was a taking on him their nature, in which he represented their persons; and was done through much difficulty and great condescension, since he was in the form of God, and

thought it no robbery to be equal with him; and his stay on earth in this nature, was but for a little while; so that on all accounts, it may be truly called a “visit”: and which, as the remission of sin is wholly owing to the tender mercy of our God, who put him upon it, called him to it, sent him forth made of a woman, and in the likeness of sinful flesh, to obtain eternal redemption, in which mercy and truth met together: the end and design of this visit, are signified in the next verse; for the following words belong to the day spring from on high, and not to John the Prophet of the Highest.

Ver. 79. *To give light to them that sit in darkness*, etc.] God's elect among the Jews, who were not only in a state of unregeneracy, which is a state of darkness, ignorance, and unbelief; but in the darkness of the legal dispensation, and at this time under more than ordinary darkness and ignorance; having lost the knowledge of the righteousness of God, and of the spirituality of his law, the true sense of the Scriptures, and right notions of the Messiah; being led by blind guides, the Scribes and Pharisees;

and, were as it were also,

in the shadow of death; in a state seemingly irrecoverable, when Christ, the great light arose, and shone upon them; and communicated spiritual light, life, and heat unto them; (see Isaiah 9:2) compared with (Matthew 4:13-16) though Christ is also a light, to lighten his chosen ones among the Gentiles, (Luke 2:32) but the Jews seem chiefly to be intended here:

to guide our feet into the way of peace; which we knew not: not that he came to teach us how to make our peace with God, but to make peace for us, by the blood of his cross; and so by his Spirit and word, lead us into the true way of enjoying spiritual peace here, and eternal peace hereafter.

Ver. 80. *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit*, etc.] That is, John, the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth, grew in stature of body, and increased in wisdom and knowledge, and fortitude in his soul:

and was in the deserts; or “desert”, as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read; not in the wilderness of Judea, where he came preaching, but either of Ziph or Maon, which were near to Hebron; (see 1 Samuel 23:14,24,25, Joshua 15:54,55) he was not brought up in the schools of the prophets, nor in the academies of the Jews, or at the feet of any of their Rabbins and doctors; that it might appear he was not taught and sent of men, but of God: nor did he dwell in any of the cities, or larger towns, but in deserts; partly that he might be fitted for that gravity and austerity of life,

he was to appear in; and that it might be clear he had no knowledge of, nor correspondence with Jesus, whose forerunner he was, and of whom he was to bear testimony, till such time he did it; and in this solitude he remained,

till the day of his showing unto Israel; either till the time came that he was to appear before, and be examined by the sanhedrim, that judged of persons fitness and qualifications for the priesthood, in order to be admitted to it; which should have been when he was thirty years of age, but that he was designed for other service; or rather therefore till he appeared in his prophetic office, and showed himself to the people of Israel; to whom he came preaching the doctrine of repentance and remission of sins, administering the ordinance of baptism, giving notice of the near approach of the Messiah, and pointing him out unto the people.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 2

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in those days*, etc.] When John the Baptist was born, and Christ was conceived, and his mother pregnant with him, and the time of his birth drew on. The Ethiopic version reads, “in that day”; as if it was the same day in which John was circumcised, and Zacharias delivered the above song of praise: that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus; second emperor of Rome; the name Caesar was common to all the emperors, as Pharaoh to the Egyptians, and afterwards Ptolemy. His name Augustus, was not his original surname, but Thurinus; and was given him, after he became Caesar, to express his grandeur, majesty, and reverence; and that by the advice of Munatius Plancus, when others would have had him called Romulus, as if he was the founder of the city of Rome [f96]: by him a decree was made and published,

that all the world should be taxed; or “registered”, or “enrolled”; for this was not levying a tax, or imposing tribute upon them, but a taking an account of the names of persons, and of their estates; and which might be, in order to lay a tax upon them, as afterwards was: for the payment of a tax, there was no need of the appearance of women and children; and so the Arabic version renders it, “that the names the whole habitable world might be described, or written down”: such an enrolment had been determined on by Augustus, when at Tarracon in Spain, twenty seven years before; but he was diverted from it by some disturbances in the empire, so that it was deferred to this time, in which there was a remarkable interposition of divine providence; for had this enrolment been made then, in all likelihood it had not been done now, and Joseph and Mary would not have had occasion to have come to Bethlehem: but so it must be; and thus were things ordered by an infinite, and all wise providence to effect it: nor did this enrolment reach to all the parts of the known world, but only to the Roman empire; which, because it was so very large as it was, and in the boasting language of the Romans was so called, as, Ptolemy Evergetes [f97] calls his kingdom, κοσμος, “the world”. Though some think only the land of Judea is meant, which is called the earth, in (<42216>Luke 21:26) and “all the

world", in (<442128>Acts 11:28) but the other sense seems more agreeable; and so the Syriac version renders it, "that all the people of his empire might be enrolled": and the Persic version, "that they should enrol all the subjects of his kingdom"; and is justified by the use of the phrase for the Roman empire, in several passages of Scripture, (<450108>Romans 1:8 10:18 <661610>Revelation 3:10 13:3). Now at the time of this enrolment, and under this august emperor, and when the whole world was in a profound peace, was the Messiah born, the King of kings, and the only potentate; the Shiloh, the peaceable and prosperous, the Prince of Peace, and Lord of life and glory; and that, in order to redeem men from that worse subjection and bondage they were in to sin, Satan, the law, and death, than they were to the Roman emperor. The Jews say [f98], the son of David shall not come, until the kingdom (of Edom, or Rome, as some copies read, in others it is erased) shall be extended over all Israel, nine months, according to (<330503>Micah 5:3). The gloss on it is, that is, "all the world", in which the Israelites are scattered.

Ver. 2. *And this taxing was first made*, etc.] Or "this was the first enrolment, or taxing" in the Jewish nation; for there was another afterwards, when Judas the Galilean arose, and drew many after him, (<440538>Acts 5:38).

When Cyrenius was governor of Syria; or "of Cyrenius" "governor of Syria"; that is, it was the first that he was, concerned in; who not now, but afterwards was governor of Syria; and because he had been so before Luke wrote this history, and this being a title of honour, and what might distinguish him from others of that name, it is given him; for as Tertullian says [f99], Sentius Saturninus was now governor of Syria, when Cyrenius was sent into Judea, to make this register, or taxing; and which is manifestly distinguished from that, which was made during his being governor of Syria, when Archelaus was banished from Judea, ten or eleven years after Herod's death; which Josephus [f100] gives an account of, and Luke refers to, in (<440537>Acts 5:37). Moreover, the words will bear to be rendered thus, "and this tax, or enrolment, was made before Cyrenius was governor of Syria"; πρωτη, being used for προτερα, as in (<430115>John 1:15,30). This Cyrenius is the same whom the Romans call Quirinius, and Quirinus; a governor of Syria had great power in Judea, to which it was annexed, when Cyrenius was governor there. It is reported of R. Gamaliel, that he went to take a licence, ayrwsb ˆwmghm, "from a governor of Syria" [f101]; i.e. to intercalate

the year: and Syria was in many things like to the land of Judea, particularly as to tithes, and the keeping of the seventh year [f102].

Ver. 3. *And all went to be taxed*, etc.] Throughout Judea, Galilee, and Syria; men, women, and children;

every one into his own city; where he was born, and had any estate, and to which he belonged.

Ver. 4. *And Joseph also went up from Galilee*, etc.] Where he now lived, and worked at the trade of a carpenter; having for some reasons, and by one providence or another, removed hither from his native place:

out of the city of Nazareth; which was in Galilee, where he and Mary lived; and where he had espoused her, and she had conceived of the Holy Ghost:

into Judea; which lay higher than Galilee, and therefore he is said to go up to it:

unto the city of David; not what was built by him, but where he was born and lived; (see <091712>1 Samuel 17:12).

which is called Bethlehem: the place where, according to (<330502>Micah 5:2) the Messiah was to be born, and was born; and which signifies "the house of bread": a very fit place for Christ, the bread which came down from heaven, and gives life to the world, to appear first in. This place was, as a Jewish chronologer says [f103], a "parsa" and half, or six miles from Jerusalem; though another of their writers, an historian and traveller [f104], says, it was two "parsas", or eight miles; but Justin Martyr [f105] says, it was but thirty five furlongs distant from it, which is not five miles; hither Joseph came from Galilee,

because he was of the house and lineage of David; he was of his family, and lineally descended from him, though he was so poor and mean; and this is the reason of his coming to Bethlehem, David's city.

Ver. 5. *To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife*, etc.] Whom also he had married, though he had not known her in a carnal way; she came along with him to be taxed and enrolled also, because she was of the same family of David, and belonged to the same city:

being great with child; very near her time, and yet, though in such circumstances, was obliged by this edict, to come to Bethlehem; and the

providence in it was, that she might give birth there, and so the prophecy in (Micah 5:2) have its accomplishment: this was an instance, and an example, of obedience to civil magistrates.

Ver. 6. *And so it was, that while they were there*, etc.] At Bethlehem, waiting to be called and enrolled in their turn;

the days were accomplished that she should be delivered; her reckoning was up, the nine months of her going with child were ended, and her full time to bring forth was come.

Ver. 7. *And she brought forth her firstborn son*, etc.] At Bethlehem, as was predicted; and the Jews themselves own, that the Messiah is already born, and born at Bethlehem. They have a tradition, that an Arabian should say to a Jew [f106]

> "Lo! the king Messiah is born; he said to him, what is his name? Menachem: he asked him, what is his father's name? he replied to him, Hezekiah; he said unto him, from whence is he? he answered, from the palace of the king of Bethlehem."

Which is elsewhere [f107] reported, with some little variation; the Arabian said to the Jew,

> "the Redeemer of the Jews is born; he said unto him, what is his name? he replied, Menachem is his name: and what is his father's name? he answered, Hezekiah: he said unto him, and where do they dwell? he replied, in Birath Arba, in Bethlehem."

And the Jewish chronologer affirms [f108], that

> "Jesus the Nazarene, was born at Bethlehem Judah, a "parsa" and a half from Jerusalem."

And even the author of the blasphemous book of the life of Christ owns [f109], that

> "Bethlehem Judah was the place of his nativity."

Jesus is called Mary's firstborn, because she had none before him; though she might not have any after him; for the first that opened the matrix, was called the firstborn, though none followed after, and was holy to the Lord, (Exodus 13:2). Christ, as to his human nature; was Mary's firstborn; and as to his divine nature, God's firstborn:

and wrapped him in swaddling clothes; which shows, that he was in all things made like unto us, sin only excepted. This is one of the first things done to a new born infant, after that it is washed, and its navel cut; (see <26604>Ezekiel 16:4) and which Mary did herself, having neither midwife nor nurse with her; from whence it has been concluded, that the birth of Jesus was easy, and that she brought him forth without pain, and not in that sorrow women usually do;

and laid him in a manger. The Persic version serves for a comment; “she put him into the middle of the manger, in the place in which they gave food to beasts; because in the place whither they came, they had no cradle”: this shows the meanness of our Lord's birth, and into what a low estate he came; and that now, as afterwards, though Lord of all, yet had not where to lay his head in a proper place; and expresses his amazing grace, in that he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor: and the reason of his being here laid was,

because there was no room for them in the inn. It seems that Joseph had no house of his own to go into, nor any relation and friend to receive him: and it may be, both his own father and Mary's father were dead, and therefore were obliged to put up at an inn; and in this there was no room for them, because of the multitude that were come thither to be enrolled: and this shows their poverty and meanness, and the little account that was made of them; for had they been rich, and made any considerable figure, they would have been regarded, and room made for them; especially since Mary was in the circumstances she was; and it was brutish in them to turn them into a stable, when such was her case.

Ver. 8. *And there were in the same country shepherds*, etc.] For Bethlehem was a place of pasture: near to Ephrata, the same with Bethlehem, were the fields of the wood, (<19606>Psalm 132:6) and the tower of Edar or the tower of the flock, (<01521>Genesis 35:21, <33408>Micah 4:8) and here David kept his father's sheep, (<09175>1 Samuel 17:15) so that we need not wonder to hear of shepherds here,

abiding in the field, watching over their flock by night: from whence it appears, that Christ was born in the night; and the [f110] Jews say, that the future redemption shall be in the night; and Jerom says [f111], it is a tradition of the Jews, that Christ will come in the middle of the night, as was the passover in Egypt: it is not likely that he was born, as is commonly received, at the latter end of December, in the depth of winter; since at this

time, shepherds were out in the fields, where they lodged all night, watching their flocks: they were diligent men, that looked well to their flocks, and watched them by night, as well as by day, to preserve them from beasts of prey; they were, as it is in the Greek text, “keeping the watches of the night over their flock.” The night was divided into four watches, the even, midnight, cock crowing, and morning; and these kept them, as the Arabic version adds, alternately, some kept the flock one watch, and some another, while the rest slept in the tent, or tower, that was built in the fields for that purpose. There were two sorts of cattle with the Jews; there was one sort which they called twyrbdm, “the cattle of the wilderness”, that lay in the fields; and another sort which they called twtyyb, “the cattle of the house”, that were brought up at home: concerning both which, they have this rule [f112];

> “they do not water nor slay the cattle of the wilderness, but they water and slay the cattle of the house: these are the cattle of the house, that lie in the city; the cattle of the wilderness, are they that lie in the pastures.”

On which, one of their commentators [f113] observes,

> “these lie in the pastures, which are in the villages, all the days of cold and heat, and do not go into the cities, until the rains descend.”

The first rain is in the month Marchesvan, which answers to the latter part of our October, and the former part of November; and of this sort, seem to be the flocks those shepherds were keeping by night, the time not being yet come, of their being brought into the city: from whence it appears, that Christ must be born before the middle of October, since the first rain was not yet come; concerning this, the Gemara [f114] is more large;

> “the Rabbins teach, that these are they of the wilderness, or fields, and these are they of the house; they of the field are they that go out on the passover, and feed in the pastures, and come in at the first rain; and these are they of the house, all that go out and feed without the border, and come and lie within the border (fixed for a sabbath day's journey): Rabbi says, those, and those are of the house; but these are they that are of the field, all they that go out and feed in the pastures, and do not come in to remain, neither in the days of the sun, nor in the days of the rains.”

To the shepherds, the first notice of Christ's birth was given; not to the princes and chief priests, and learned men at Jerusalem, but to weak, mean, and illiterate men; whom God is pleased to choose and call, and reveal his secrets to; when he hides them from the wise and prudent, to their confusion, and the glory of his grace: and this was a presage of what the kingdom of Christ would be, and by, and to whom, the Gospel would be preached.

Ver. 9. *And lo, the angel of the Lord*, etc.] It may be Gabriel, who had brought the tidings of the conception of the Messiah to the virgin, and now the birth of him to the shepherds:

came upon them; on a sudden, unexpectedly, at once, and stood by them, as some versions read; or rather, stood over them, over their heads, just above them; so that he was easily and perfectly seen by them;

and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; or a very glorious and extraordinary light shone with surprising lustre and brightness all around them; by which light, they could discern the illustrious form of the angel that was over them:

and they were sore afraid; at the sight of such a personage, and at such unusual light and glory about them: they were not used to such appearances, and were awed with the majesty of God, of which these were symbols, and were conscious to themselves of their own sinfulness and frailty.

Ver. 10. *And the angel said unto them; fear not*, etc.] For he was not a messenger of bad, but of good tidings:

for behold, I bring you good tidings; tidings, that were both wonderful and amazing, and therefore a “behold” is prefixed to them, as well as to excite to attention; and which were good news, and glad tidings, for such the birth of Christ of a virgin is: in which the good will and amazing love of Cod to man are displayed, and the promises, and prophecies relating to him fulfilled; and the work of man's salvation, his peace, pardon, righteousness, etc. about to be accomplished, and so matter

of great joy: not carnal, but spiritual; not feigned, but real; not temporary, but lasting; even such as cannot be taken away, nor intermeddled with; and not small, but great, even joy unspeakable, and full of glory:

which shall be to all people; not to every individual of mankind; not to Herod and his courtiers, who were troubled at it; nor to the greater part of the Jewish nation, who when he came to them, received him not, but rejected him as the Messiah; particularly not to the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, who when they saw him, said, this is the heir, let's kill him, and seize on the inheritance; but to all that were waiting for him, and were looking for redemption in Israel; to all sensible sinners who rejoice at his birth, and in his salvation; (see <2903>Isaiah 9:3,6) to all the chosen people of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, whom God has taken to be his covenant people, and has given to his Son, as such, to redeem and save; to these the incarnation of Christ, with all the benefits resulting from it, is the cause of great joy, when they are made a willing people in the day of Christ's power.

Ver. 11. *For unto you is born this day*, etc.] Day is here put for a natural day, consisting both of night and day; for it was night when Christ was born, and the angels brought the tidings of it to the shepherds. The particular day, and it may be, month and year, in which Christ was born, cannot be certainly known; but this we may be sure of, it was in the fulness of time, and at the exact, season fixed upon between God and Christ in the council and covenant of peace; and that he was born, not unto, or for the good of angels; for the good angels stand in no need of his incarnation, sufferings, and death, having never fell; and as for the evil angels, a Saviour was never designed and provided for them; nor did Christ take on him their nature, nor suffer in their stead: wherefore the angel does not say, “unto us”, but “unto you”, unto you men; for he means not merely, and only the shepherds, or the Jews only, but the Gentiles also; all the children, all the spiritual seed of Abraham, all elect men; for their sakes, and on their account, and for their good, he assumed human nature; see (<2906>Isaiah 9:6 <5814>Hebrews 2:14,16)

in the city of David; that is, Bethlehem, as in (<4204>Luke 2:4) where the Messiah was to be born, as being, according to the flesh, of the seed of David, his son and offspring; as he is, according to his divine nature, his Lord and root. The characters of this new born child follow, and which prove the tidings of his birth to be good, and matter of joy:

a Saviour; whom God had provided and appointed from all eternity; and had been long promised and much expected as such in time, even from the beginning of the world; and is a great one, being God as well as man, and so able to work out a great salvation for great sinners, which he has done;

and he is as willing to save as he is able, and is a complete Saviour, and an only, and an everlasting one: hence his name is called Jesus, because he saves from sin, from Satan, from the law, from the world, from death, and hell, and wrath to come, and from every enemy.

Which is Christ the Lord; the Messiah spoken of by the prophets; the anointed of the Lord, with the Holy Ghost without measure, to be a prophet, priest, and king in his church; and who is the true Jehovah, the Lord our righteousness, the Lord of all creatures, the Lord of angels, good and bad, the Lord of all men, as Creator, the Prince of the kings of the earth, the Lord of lords, and King of kings; and who is particularly the Lord of saints by his Father's gift, his own purchase, the espousal of them to himself, and by the power of his grace upon them: and the birth of such a person must needs be joyful, and is to be accounted good news, and glad tidings.

Ver. 12. *And this shall be a sign unto you*, etc.] When they should come to Bethlehem, and to the inn where Joseph and Mary were:

ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger; for though there might be many other children, in the inn, yet none else in swaddling clothes, at least lying in a manger: this sign would distinguish the new born Saviour from all others; had not the angel given them this direction, they would never have thought to have looked for, and found: him in such a place: and moreover, it might have been a stumbling to them, and an objection with them against his being Christ, the Lord, had they not been told beforehand where he was; but by this means this objection was prevented, and this stumbling block was removed out of the way, and they were prepared to see him, embrace, and believe in him, in this mean condition.

Ver. 13. *And suddenly there was with the angel*, etc.] That brought the tidings of Christ's birth to the shepherds: a multitude of the heavenly host: who being caused to fly swiftly, were at once with him, by his side, and about him; and which was a further confirmation of the truth of his message to them: these were angels who were called an host, or army, the militia of heaven, the ministers of God, that wait upon him, and do his pleasure; and are sent forth to minister to his people, and encamp about them, preserve, and defend them; (see Genesis 32:1,2) These are styled an heavenly host, because they dwell in heaven; and to distinguish them from hosts and armies on earth; and said to be

a multitude, for the angels are innumerable; there are thousands, ten thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand of them: it may be rendered “the multitude”, and may intend the whole company of angels, who were all of them together to sing the praises of God, and glorify him at the birth of the incarnate Saviour, as well as to adore him; since it is said, “when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him”, (<58106>Hebrews 1:6), and these were

praising God; on account of the birth of Christ, and the redemption that was to be obtained by him, for elect men; which shows their friendly disposition to them, and how much they rejoice at their spiritual and eternal welfare; (see <42510>Luke 15:10); And thus, as at the laying of the foundation of the earth, these “morning stars sang together, and all these sons of God shouted for joy”, (<183807>Job 38:7) they did the same when the foundation of man's salvation was laid in the incarnation of the Son of God;

and saying, as follows.

Ver. 14. *Glory to God in the highest*, etc.] Which with the following words, are not to be considered as a wish, that so it might be, but as an affirmation, that so it was; for the glory of God is great in the salvation, peace, and reconciliation of his people by Jesus Christ, even the glory of all his perfections; of his wisdom and prudence in forming such a scheme; of his love, grace, and, mercy, the glory of which is his main view, and is hereby answered; and of his holiness, which is hereby honoured; and of his justice, which is fully satisfied; and of his power in the accomplishment of it; and of his truth and faithfulness in fulfilling his covenant and oath, and all the promises and prophecies relating to it. Great glory from hence arises to God; who is in the highest heavens, and is given him by angels and saints that dwell there, and that in the highest strains; and by saints on earth too in, their measure, and as they are able: the ground and foundation of which is what follows:

and on earth peace: by which is meant, not external peace, though, at this time there was peace on earth all the world over; nor internal peace, as distinguished from that eternal peace which the saints enjoy in heaven; nor even peace made by Christ; for this, as yet, was not done on earth, but was to be made by the blood of his cross: rather Christ himself is here intended, who is called “the man, the peace” (<330505>Micah 5:5) and “our peace”, (<490214>Ephesians 2:14) and was now on earth, being just born, in order to make peace with God, and reconciliation for the sins of the people: and he

is so called, because he is the author of peace between Jew and Gentile, which were at enmity with each other; by abrogating the ceremonial law, the cause of that enmity; by sending the Gospel to them, and converting some of each; and by granting the like privileges to them both; (see <4014>Ephesians 2:14-20) and because he is the author of peace between God and elect sinners, who, through the fall, are at enmity against, God, and enemies in their minds by wicked works unto him; nor can they make their peace with God; they know not the way of it; nor are they disposed to it; nor can they approach to God to treat with him about terms of peace; nor can they do those things that will make their peace with God, as satisfying his justice, and fulfilling his law: Christ only is their peace maker; he only is fit for it, being God and man in one person, and so a daysman that can lay his hands on both, and has a concern in each, in things pertaining to God, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people: he only is able to do it, and he has done it by the blood of his cross; and a very excellent peace it is he has made: it is made upon the most honourable terms, to the satisfaction of justice, and the magnifying of the law of God; and is therefore a lasting one, and attended with many blessings, such as freedom of access to God, and a right to all the privileges of his house; and the news of it are glad tidings of good things: and those angels that first brought the tidings of it, may be truly called, as some of the angels are by the Jews [f115], µwlç ykalm "angels of peace". Moreover, Christ may be said to be "peace", because he is the donor of all true solid peace and real prosperity, both external, which his people have in the world, and with each other; and internal, which they have in their own breasts, through believing in him, and attending on his ordinances; and eternal, which they shall have for ever with him in the world to come. And now Christ being the peace on earth, is owing to

good will towards men; that is, to the free favour, good will, and pleasure of God towards chosen men in Christ Jesus: that Christ was on earth as the peacemaker, or giver, was owing to God's good will; not to angels, for good angels needed him not as such; and the angels that sinned were not spared, nor was a Saviour provided for them; but to men, and not to all men; for though all men share in the providential goodness of God, yet not in his special good will, free grace, and favour: but to elect men, to whom a child was born, and a Son given, even the Prince of Peace: it was from God's good will to these persons, whom he loved with an everlasting love in Christ, laid up goodness for them in him, blessed them with all spiritual

blessings in him, and made a covenant with him for them; that he provided and appointed his son to be the Saviour and peace maker; that he sent him into this world to be the propitiation for sin; and that he spared him not, but delivered him up into the hands of men, justice, and death, in order to make peace for them. The Vulgate Latin version, and some copies, as the Alexandrian, and Beza's most ancient one, read, “peace on earth to men of good will”; and which must be understood, not of men that have a good will of themselves, for there are no such men: no man has a will to that which is good, till God works in him both to will, and to do of his, good pleasure; wherefore peace, reconciliation, and salvation, are not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy: but of such who are the objects of God's good will, and pleasure, whom he loves, because he will love, and has mercy and compassion on them, and is gracious to them, because he will be so; and therefore chooses, redeems, and regenerates them of his own will, and because it seems good in his sight. The Syriac and Persic versions read, “good hope to men”; as there is a foundation laid in Christ the peace, of a good hope of reconciliation, righteousness, pardon, life, and salvation for sinful men. The Arabic version renders it, “cheerfulness in men”; as there is a great deal of reason for it, on account of the birth of the Saviour and peace maker, the salvation that comes by him to men, and the glory brought thereby to God.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, as the angels*, etc.] The Persic version reads in the singular number, “the angel: were gone away from them into heaven”, from whence they came, and which was the place of their abode and residence; and therefore they are called the angels of heaven, where they always behold the face of God, hearken to the voice of his commandment, and go and come at his orders; and these having finished their embassy, delivered their message to the shepherds, and done all the work they came about,

departed from them: and, as the Ethiopic version adds, “and ascended up into heaven”; and as soon as they were gone, immediately,

the shepherds said one to another, let us now go even to Bethlehem the place where the angel said the Saviour was born,

and see this thing which hath come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us: from whence it appears, that it was not from diffidence of the matter, as questioning the truth of what the angel said, that they moved one another to go to Bethlehem; for they firmly believed the thing was

come to pass, which the angel had told them of, and that what he said was from the Lord; nor did they act any criminal part, or indulge a vain curiosity, in going to Bethlehem to see what was done; for it seems to be the will of God that they should go, and for which they had a direction from the angel, and a sign given them by which they might know the new born Saviour from any other infant, (^ꝏLuke 2:12) and which would also be a further confirmation of their faith, and by which they would be qualified not only as ear, but as eyewitnesses of the truth of this fact, to report it with greater certainty.

Ver. 16. *And they came with haste*, etc.] In the night, leaving their flocks, to see their incarnate Lord, as Zacchaeus hastened down from the tree to receive the Saviour. The wonderfulness of the vision, the importance of the thing related, the eagerness of their spirits to see the thing that was told them, put them on making quick dispatch, and hastening to the city with all speed:

and found Mary and Joseph; as they had been directed by the angel, in the city of Bethlehem, in an inn there, and in a stable in the inn:

and the babe lying in a manger: where Mary had put it as soon as born, and had wrapped it in swaddling clothes; because there was no room in the inn, and as the angel had told them they should find it, (^ꝏLuke 2:12)

Ver. 17. *And when they had seen it*, etc.] Or “him”, as the Arabic version reads, the child Jesus, or “them”, Joseph, Mary, and the child; or this whole affair, as had been related to them:

they made known abroad; not only in the inn, and among all the people there but throughout the city of Bethlehem,

the saying which was told them concerning this child: both what the angel had told them concerning his birth, and what he was, and where he lay; and what Mary had told them concerning the notice she had from an angel of the conception of him, and the manner of it, and of what he should be; and likewise what Joseph had told them, how an angel had appeared to him, and had acquainted him, after the conception of him, that it was of the Holy Ghost; and was bid to call his name Jesus: as Mary also was, because he was to be the Saviour of his people from their sins: for, no doubt, but they had a conversation with Joseph and Mary about him; and as they could not fail of relating to them, what they had seen and heard that night in the fields, it is reasonable to suppose, that Joseph and Mary would give

them some account of the above things; which all make up the saying, or report, they spread abroad: the Persic version reads, “what they had heard of the angel”; but there is no reason to confine it to that.

Ver. 18. *And all they that heard it*, etc.] What the shepherds related of what they had heard from the angel, and from Joseph and Mary, and what they had seen themselves;

wondered at those things that were told them by the shepherds: for though they expected the Messiah, and that he would be born at Bethlehem, yet they did not imagine that he would be born of such mean parents, and appear in such mean circumstances, and in so contemptible a place; and that shepherds, and not the princes of Israel, should have the first notice of it; and yet the account which these shepherd, who were plain hearted men, and could never be thought to invent such a story, and spread it, and impose on men, without any interest in it, was very surprising; so that they knew not what to say to it, neither to deny, nor believe it; accordingly, the Persic version renders the whole thus, “and whoever heard, wondering, stuck at it”; hesitated about it, and yet astonished at the particulars of it; just as Christ's hearers were in (Luke 4:22) who wondered at his ministry, and the manner of it, and yet objected the meanness of his parentage and education.

Ver. 19. *But Mary kept all these things*, etc.] Which the shepherds had related to her:

and pondered [them] in her heart; or compared them in her mind, with what had been said to herself by the angel, and also by her husband, as well as what was said by Elisabeth at the time she made her a visit; but she said nothing of them to others, lest she should be thought an enthusiast, or a vain boaster; and therefore left things, till time should make a discovery of them in a proper way, and in the best season.

Ver. 20. *And the shepherds returned*, etc.] From Bethlehem, to the fields, and to their flock there;

glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard; from Joseph and Mary:

and seen; as the babe lying in the manger:

as it was told unto them; by the angel: they glorified God on account of the birth of the Messiah; and praised him, wondering at his grace, and the high honour put upon them, that they should be acquainted with it; and that there was such an exact agreement between the things they had seen, and the angel's account of them.

Ver. 21. *And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child*, etc.] According to the original institution of circumcision, (<01712>Genesis 17:12) and which was strictly observed by religious persons, as by the parents of our Lord here, and by those of John the Baptist, (<42159>Luke 1:59) Hence the Apostle Paul reckons this among his privileges, that he could have boasted of as well as other Jews, (see Gill on "<50305>Philippians 3:5"). But it may be asked, why was Christ circumcised, since he had no impurity of nature, which circumcision supposed; nor needed any circumcision of the heart, which that was a symbol of? To which it may be replied, though he needed it not himself, it was the duty of his parents to do it, since all the male seed of Abraham were obliged it, and that law, or ordinance, was now in force; and besides, it was necessary that he might appear in the likeness of sinful flesh, who was to bear, and atone for the sins of his people; as also, that it might be manifest that he assumed true and real flesh, and was a partaker of the same flesh and blood with us; and that he was a son of Abraham, and of his seed, as it promised he should; and that he was made under the law, and came to fulfil it, and was obliged to it, as every one that is circumcised is; as well as to show a regard to all divine, positive institutions that are in being, and to set an example, that we should tread in his steps; and likewise to cut off all excuse from the Jews, that they might not have this to say, that he was an uncircumcised person, and so not a son of Abraham, nor the Messiah.

His name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb, (<42131>Luke 1:31) It appears from hence, and from the instance of John the Baptist, that at circumcision it was usual to give names to children; (see Gill on "<42157>Luke 1:57"). The Jews observe [f116] that

> "six persons were called by their names before they were born: and these are Isaac, Ishmael, Moses, Solomon, Josiah, and the King Messiah:"

the latter they prove from (<19727>Psalm 72:17) which they render, "before the sun his name was Yinnon", or the son: that is, the Son of God.

Ver. 22. *And when the days of purification*, etc.] Of the Virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord; though most copies read, “of their purification”; and so read the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, including both Mary and Jesus: and now, though Mary was not polluted by the conception, bearing, and bringing forth of Jesus, that holy thing born of her; yet inasmuch as she was in the account of the law clean; and though Jesus had no impurity in his nature, yet seeing he was made sin for his people, both came under this law of purification, which was for the sake of the son or daughter, as well as for the mother; though our reading, and which is according to the Complutensian edition, best agrees with the Hebrew phrase, h r j j ymy, the days of her purifying or purification, in (<3BLE03>Leviticus 12:4,6)

according to the law of Moses, in (<3BLE03>Leviticus 12:1-8).

were accomplished; which for a son were forty days: the seven first days after she gave birth she was unclean; and then she continued three and thirty days in the blood of her purifying, which made forty; (see <3BLE03>Leviticus 12:2,4) but though the time of her purifying was upon the fortieth day, yet it was not till the day following that she came to the temple with her offering: for so runs the Jewish canon [f117];

> “a new mother does not bring her offering on the fortieth day for a male, nor on the eightieth day for a female, but after her sun is set: and she brings her offering on the morrow, which is the forty first for a male, and the eighty first for a female: and this is the day of which it is said, (<3BLE03>Leviticus 12:6) and “when the days of her purifying are fulfilled for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring”, etc.”

And this was the time when they, Joseph and Mary, brought him, the child Jesus, to Jerusalem, and to the temple there, to present him to the Lord, to the priest his representative; and which was done in the eastern gate, called the gate of Nicanor: [f118] for here,

> “they made women, suspected of adultery, to drink, and purified new mothers, and cleansed the lepers.”

And here Mary appeared with her firstborn son, the true Messiah; and this was the first time of his coming into his temple, as was foretold, (<3BLE03>Malachi 3:1)

Ver. 23. *As it is written in the law of the Lord*, etc.] In (<2Ex 13:2> <4Nu 3:13>)

every male that openeth the womb, shall be called holy to the Lord; that is, devoted and consecrated to him, and so to be redeemed. The reason of this law was this, when God smote all the firstborn of Egypt, he saved the firstborn of Israel; and therefore claimed a right to them, and obliged their parents, excepting the Levites, to redeem them at the price of five shekels, which were about twelve shillings and six pence of our money, and which was given to the Levites: (see <2Ex 13:12-15> <4Nu 3:12,13,46,47>) (<4Nu 18:15,16>) And this law our Lord came under as Mary s firstborn, and as one holy to the Lord; and such a sum of money was now paid for his redemption, who was the great Redeemer of his people: he being made under the law, and in all things subject to it, that he might redeem them from the bondage, curse, and condemnation of it. Now as the tribe of Levi was excepted from this law, it is a clear case, that Mary, though allied to Elisabeth, was not of the tribe of Levi, otherwise her firstborn would not have been subject to it [f119].

> "An Israelite that comes from a priestess, or from a she Levite, is free, (i.e. from the redemption of the firstborn;) for the thing does not depend on the father, but on the mother, as it is said, that openeth the womb in Israel."

Ver. 24. *And to offer a sacrifice*, etc.] That is, when the time of purification came, the parents of our Lord brought him from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, to present him in the temple to the Lord as his, and to redeem him; and not only so, but to offer the sacrifice required of child-bed women:

according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, (<3Le 12:8>)

a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons: if the person was able, she was to bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering; and a young pigeon, or a turtle dove, for a sin offering; but in case of poverty, then the above sufficed, and one of them was for a burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering; which shows not only that the virgin offered for herself a sin offering, being ceremonially unclean, but also her mean estate and poverty, in that she offered the offering of the poorer sort; (see <3Le 12:6,8>).

Ver. 25. *And behold there was a man in Jerusalem*, etc.] Not in Nazareth, or Bethlehem, but in Jerusalem, the metropolis of the nation: one that lived there, was an inhabitant of that city, and a person of fame and note. So Joseph ben Jochanan is called [f120] µlçwry çya a man of Jerusalem, an inhabitant of that place:

whose name was Simeon; not Simeon, qydxh "the just", the last of the men of the great synagogue, of whom the Jews often make mention [f121]; though this Simeon bears the same character, yet could not be he; because he was not only an high priest, which, if this man had been, would doubtless have been mentioned; but also lived some years before this time. Many have thought, that this was Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillell, who was president of the sanhedrim forty years; and in which office this his son succeeded him; and which Simeon was the father of Gamaliel, the master of the Apostle Paul, of whom the Jewish chronologer thus writes [f122]:

> "Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillell the old, received from his father, and was appointed president after his father; but the time of the beginning of his presidentship I do not find in any authors:"

and a little after,

> "Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillell, is the first that is called by the name of Rabban."

There are some things which seem to agree with, and favour this thought; for certain it is, that Christ was born in his time, whilst he was living: so the above writer says [f123], after he had observed, that

> "Jesus of Nazareth was born at Bethlehem Judah, a parsa and a half from Jerusalem, in the year 3761 of the creation, and in the 42nd year of Caesar Augustus; that, according to this computation, his birth was in the days of Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillell."

And it is worthy of notice also, what another genealogical writer of theirs says [f124], that

> "Rabban Simeon, the son of old Hillell, the prince, or president of Israel, as his father was, as it is in Sabbat, c. 1. is not "mentioned in the Misna.""

Which looks as if he was not a favourer of the traditions of the elders, nor in great esteem with the Jews, that they ascribe none of them to him; yea, it

may be observed, that he is entirely left out in the account of the succession of the fathers of tradition, in the tract called Pirke Abot; which is somewhat extraordinary, when he was the son of one, and the father of another of so much note among them. One would be tempted to think, that such a neglect of him, should spring from ill will to him, on account of his professing Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah. But there are other things which do not so well accord, as that this Simeon lived some years after the birth of Christ; whereas our Simeon seems to be in the decline of life, and just ready to depart: as also, that he was prince of Israel, or president of the sanhedrim, after this; which it is not likely he should, after such a confession of Jesus being the Messiah: likewise, seeing that his son Gamaliel was brought up a Pharisee: to which last Dr. Lightfoot replies, that holy fathers have some times wicked children; and that it was thirty years from Simeon's acknowledging Christ, to Gamaliel's education of Paul, or little less; and so much time might wear out the notice of his father's action, if he had taken any notice of it, especially his father dying shortly after he had made so glorious a confession; but his last observation is an objection to him. Upon the whole, it must be left uncertain and undetermined who he was:

and the same man was just and devout; he was a holy good man in his life and conversation; he was one that feared God, and avoided evil; he was righteous before men, and devout towards God, and exercised a conscience void, of offence to both:

waiting for the consolation of Israel; that is, the Messiah; for this was one of his names with the Jews, who sometimes style him, µjnm, "the comforter": for so they report [f125] that

> "there are some that say his name is Menachen the comforter; as it is said, "because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me". (<2501116>Lamentations 1:16)"

And again [f126], It is observed, that

> "the name of the Messiah is Menachem, the comforter; and Menachem, by "gematry", or numerically, is the same with Tzemach, the branch, (<3800308>Zechariah 3:8)."

And so they often call him by the name of the "consolation": hmjgb hara, which Dr. Lightfoot renders, "so let me see the consolation", but

should be rendered, “may I never see the consolation”, was a common form of swearing among them; and used much by R. Simeon ben Shetach, who lived before the times of Christ, of which there are several instances [f127]:

> “says R. Juda ben Tabai, hmjnb hara “may I never see the consolation”, if I have not slain a false witness. Says R. Simeon ben Shetach, to him, “may I never see the consolation”, if thou hast not shed innocent blood.”

The gloss [f128] on it is,

> “it is a light word, (the form) of an oath, in short language; as if it was said, may I never see the consolations of Zion, if he has not done this.”

Again [f129],

> “says R. Simeon Ben Shetach, hmjnb hara “may I never see the consolation”, if I did not see one run after his companion, into a desolate place, etc.”

Now they might easily collect this name of the Messiah, from several passages of Scripture, which speak of God's comforting his people, at the time of redemption by the Messiah; and particularly, from its being part of his work and office, to comfort them that mourn, for which he was anointed by the Spirit of the Lord, (<2601>Isaiah 61:1-3). And when he is called here, “the consolation of Israel”, it is not to be understood of the whole Jewish nation; for he was so far from being a comfort to them, as such, that through their corruption and wickedness, he came not to send peace, but a sword; and to set at variance the nearest relations and friends among themselves; and through their unbelief and rejection of him, wrath came upon them to the uttermost: but of the true and spiritual Israel of God, whom he has chosen, redeemed, and calls, whether of Jews or Gentiles; his own special and peculiar people, the heirs of promise; and who are often mourners in Zion, and being frequently disconsolate on account of sin, the temptations of Satan, and the hidings of God's face, stand in need of consolation from him: and in him there is what is always matter and ground of consolation; as in his person, he being the mighty God, and so able to save to the uttermost; in his blood, which speaks peace and pardon, and cleanses from all sin; in his righteousness, which is pure

and perfect, and justifies from all iniquity, in his sacrifice, which expiates all the transgressions of his people; in his fulness, which is sufficient to supply all their wants; and in his power, by which he is able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before God. And he does often comfort them by his Spirit, by his word, and ordinances, by the promises of his Gospel, by the discoveries of pardoning grace, through his blood, and by his gracious presence: nor are his consolations small, but large and abundant, strong, solid, and everlasting. Now for the Messiah under this character, Simeon was waiting, hoping in a little time to see him; since he knew, both by the prophecies of the Old Testament, particularly by Daniel's weeks, and, by divine revelation, that the time was just at hand for his coming;

and the Holy Ghost was upon him; not in a common and ordinary way, as he is upon all that are called by grace, as a Spirit of regeneration and sanctification: and as he was upon many others, who at this time were waiting and looking for the Messiah, as well as he; but in an extraordinary way, as a spirit of prophecy: for though prophecy had ceased among the Jews, from the times of Malachi, yet upon the conception and birth of Christ, it now returned; as to Zacharias, Elisabeth, and the virgin Mary, and here to Simeon, as is clear from what follows.

Ver. 26. *And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost*, etc.] Not in a dream, as the wise men were warned, nor by an angel, as Joseph, nor by a voice from heaven, which the Jews call “Bath Kol”, but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, enlightening his understanding, and impressing on his mind:

that he should not see death; an Hebraism, see it in (Psalm 89:48) the same with the phrase, “to taste death”, elsewhere used; and the sense is, as the Ethiopic version renders it, “that he should not die”; or as the Persic version, “that his death should not be”; as yet: he should live some time longer; nor should that messenger be sent to remove him, though a man in years, out of time into eternity,

before he had seen the Lord's Christ: with his bodily eyes: for he had seen him with an eye of faith already, and in the promise, as Abraham had; and in the types and sacrifices of the law, as the rest of believers under the Old Testament. The Messiah is called the Lord's Christ, referring to (Psalm 2:2) because he was anointed by Jehovah, the Father, and with Jehovah, the Spirit; with the Holy Ghost, the oil of gladness, to be prophet, priest,

and king, in the Lord's house. So the Messiah is by the Targumist called, the Messiah of Jehovah, or Jehovah's Messiah; that is as here, the Lord's Christ: thus in the Targum on (Isaiah 4:2) it is said.

> “in that time, yyd ajyçm, “Jehovah's Messiah”, shall be for joy and for glory.”

And on (Isaiah 28:5) the paraphrase is,

> “at that time, yyd ajyçm, “the Messiah of the Lord” of hosts shall be for a crown of joy, and for a diadem of praise to the rest of his people.”

Compare these paraphrases with what is said of Christ, in (Luke 2:32). “The glory of thy people Israel”; Simeon's language exactly agrees with the Targumist. The Persic version adds, “and with this hope he passed his time, or age, and became very old and decrepit.”

Ver. 27. *And he came by the Spirit into the temple*, etc.] By the same Spirit of God, that revealed the above to him. The Ethiopic version renders it, “the Spirit brought him into the temple”: but Simeon was not brought thither, as this version seems to suggest, in such manner as Ezekiel was brought by the Spirit to Jerusalem. *Ezekiel 8:3* or as Christ was brought by Satan to the holy city and set upon the pinnacle of the temple; but the Spirit of God, who knows and searches all things, even the deep things of God, and could testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, knew the exact time when Jesus would be brought into the temple; and suggested to Simeon, and moved upon him, and influenced and directed him, to go thither at that very time. The Persic version renders the whole verse thus, “when he heard that they brought Christ into the temple, that they might fulfil the law, Simeon went in”; which version spoils the glory of the text, making Simeon's coming into the temple, to be upon a report heard, and not the motion of the Holy Ghost.

And when the parents brought in the child Jesus; when Joseph and Mary brought Christ into the temple. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “his parents”, Mary was his real parent, Joseph is called so, as he is his father in (Luke 2:48) because he was supposed, and generally thought to be so, (Luke 3:23).

To do for him after the custom of the law; as was used to be done in such a case, according to the appointment of the law: or as the Syriac version

renders it, “as is commanded in the law”; namely, to present him to the Lord, and to pay the redemption money for him.

Ver. 28. *Then took he him up in his arms*, etc.] That same Spirit that had revealed unto him that he should not die till he saw the Messiah with his bodily eyes; and who by a secret impulse had moved him to go to the temple just at this time made known unto him that that child which Joseph and Mary then brought into the temple to present to the Lord, was the Messiah; wherefore, in a rapture of joy, he took him out of their arms into his own, embracing him with all affection and respect imaginable: though, some think he was a priest, and it being his office to present the firstborn to the Lord, he took him in his arms, and did it; but the former account seems more agreeable:

and blessed God; praised him, and gave glory to him, for his great goodness, in sending the promised Messiah, and long wished for Saviour; for his grace and favour, in indulging him with a sight of him; and for his truth and faithfulness in making good his promise to him:

and said; as follows.

Ver. 29. *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant*, etc.] He acknowledges him as his Lord, and to have a despotic power over him with respect to life and death; and himself as his servant, which he was, both by creation and grace: and though it expresses humiliation, and a sense of distance and unworthiness, yet to be a servant of the most high God, is a very high and honourable character: what he requests of the Lord is that he might

depart in peace; signifying his hearty desire to die, and with what cheerfulness he should meet death, having obtained all that he could wish for and desire, in seeing and embracing the Saviour: he expresses his death, by a departure out of the world, as in (<43130>John 13:1) (<50121>Philippians 1:21) agreeably to the way of speaking of it among the Jews. (See Gill on “<50121>Philippians 1:21”) and by a word, which signifies a loosing of bonds; death being a dissolving the bond of union, between soul and body, and a deliverance, as from prison and bondage; the body being, as it were, a prison to the soul in the present state of things: and he also intimates, that whereas, though he had the strongest assurances of the Messiah's coming, and of his coming before his death, by the revelation of the Holy Ghost, and so most firmly believed it, without fluctuation, and hesitation of mind; yet as hope deferred makes the heart sick, he was anxious and restless in

his desire, till it was accomplished; but now being come, he could take his leave of the world, and his entrance into eternity, with the greatest calmness and tranquillity of mind, having nothing to disturb him, nor more to desire: he adds,

according to thy word; for he seems to have understood by the revelation made to him, that as he should not die before he saw the Messiah, so, when he had seen him, that he should immediately, or in a very short time after, be removed by death; and which he greatly desired, and in which, he sinned not, because his request was according to the word of God: whereas often, desires of death are not only without the word of God, and due resignation to his will, and any regard to his glory, but to be rid of some trouble, or gratify some lust, as pride, revenge, etc.

Ver. 30. *For mine eyes have seen thy salvation*, etc.] The Messiah, who is often so called; (see <014918>Genesis 49:18 <230606>Isaiah 49:6 52:10). He goes by the name of “salvation”, because the salvation of God's elect is put into his hands, and he has undertook it; and because he is the author of it, he has fulfilled his engagements, and has accomplished what he promised to do; and because salvation is in him, it is to be had in him; and in him the true Israel of God are saved, with an everlasting salvation: and he is called “God's salvation” because he is a Saviour of his choosing, calling, and constituting; whom he promised under the Old Testament dispensation and in the fulness of time sent; and who now appeared in human nature, and whom good old Simeon now saw, with his bodily eyes; a sight which many kings and prophets had desired, but were not favoured with; and also with the eyes of his understanding, with the spiritual eye of faith, as his Saviour and Redeemer; for without this, the former would not have been sufficient to have given such peace and tranquillity of mind, in a departure out of this world: for many saw him in the days of his flesh, who never saw his glory, as the Son of God, and Saviour of sinners; but such a sight those have, who have their understandings enlightened, and Christ, as God's salvation, set before them: they see him in the glory of his person, the fulness of his grace, the suitableness and excellency of his righteousness, the efficacy of his blood, and the perfection of his sacrifice; and as an able, willing, complete, and only Saviour: and such a sight of him, puts them out of conceit with themselves, and their own works of righteousness, as saviours; makes the creature, and all it has and does, look mean and empty; fills the soul with love to Christ, and a high esteem of him, and with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; it transforms a soul, and makes it like to

Christ; gives it inexpressible pleasure and satisfaction; and makes it desirous, as it did this good man, to depart and be with Christ, which is far better than to live in this (in some sense) state of absence from him.

Ver. 31. *Which thou hast prepared*, etc.] In his eternal purposes and decrees, having chosen and foreordained Christ, and appointed him to be his salvation, to the ends of the earth; in his counsel and covenant of grace wherein it was agreed, determined, and concluded on, that he should be the Saviour of his people; and in the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, and in all the types, shadows, and sacrifices, of that dispensation; in which he was exhibited, and held forth as the Saviour to the saints and believers of those times; and now had sent him in human nature, to work out that salvation he had chosen and called him to, and he had undertook:

before the face of all people; meaning not the congregation of Israel, that looked for redemption in Jerusalem, and who were now together with Simeon and Anna, when the child Jesus was presented in the temple; nor the body of the Jewish nation only, to whom he was made manifest, had they not wilfully shut their eyes, by John's ministry and baptism; and more so, by the miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did by Christ, in the midst of them; but both Jews and Gentiles: for, as he was provided and sent as a Saviour, and a great one, he was to be lifted up on the cross, as the serpent was lifted up by Moses, in the wilderness, to draw all his elect to him, of every nation; and to be set up as an ensign to the people, in the public ministry of the word; to be the object of faith and hope, to look unto, for life and salvation.

Ver. 32. *A light to lighten the Gentiles*, etc.] Or for the revelation of the Gentiles; to reveal the love, grace, and mercy of God, an everlasting righteousness, and the way of life and salvation to them. Reference seems to be had to (<230406>Isaiah 42:6 49:6). “Light”, is one of the names of the Messiah in the Old Testament, as in (<190403>Psalm 43:3) (<270222>Daniel 2:22), which passages are by the Jews [f130] themselves interpreted of Christ; and is a name often used of him in the New Testament: it is true of him as God, he is light itself, and in him is no darkness at all; and as the Creator of mankind, he is that light which lightens every man with the light of nature and reason; and as the Messiah, he is come a light into the world: the light of the Gospel, in the clear shine of it, is from him; the light of grace in his people, who were in darkness itself, he is the author and donor of; as he is

also of the light of glory and happiness, in the world to come: and particularly, the Gentiles enjoy this benefit of light by him; who were, and as this supposes they were, in darkness, as they had been some hundreds of years before the Messiah's coming: they were in the dark about the being and perfections of God, about the unity of God, and the Trinity of persons in the Godhead, and about God in Christ; about his worship, the rule and nature of it; and the manner of atonement, and reconciliation for sin; the person, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; the Spirit of God, and his operations on the souls of men; the Scriptures of truth, and both law and Gospel; the resurrection of the dead, and a future state: now, though Christ in his personal ministry, was sent only to the Jews, yet after his resurrection, he gave his disciples a commission to go into all the world, to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, in order to turn them from darkness to light; and hereby multitudes were called out of darkness into marvellous light: and this Simeon had knowledge of, and a few more besides him; otherwise, the generality of the Jewish nation were of opinion, that when the Messiah came, the nations of the world would receive no benefit by him, no light, nor comfort, nor peace, or prosperity: but all the reverse would befall them, as darkness, calamity, and misery: and so they express themselves in a certain place; [f131] the Israelites look, or wait for

> “redemption; for the day of the Lord shall be “light to them”; but; the nations, why do they wait for him? for he shall be “to them darkness, and not light”.”

But the contrary, Simeon, under divine inspiration, declares, and, blessed be God, it has proved true: he adds,

and the glory of thy people Israel; which is true of Israel in a literal sense, inasmuch as the Messiah was born of the Jews, and among them; and was first sent and came to them, and lived and dwelled with them; taught in their streets, and wrought his miracles in the midst of them; though this was an aggravation of their ingratitude and unbelief, in rejecting him: the Gospel was first preached to them, even after the commission was enlarged to carry it among the Gentiles; and many of them were converted, and the first Gospel church was planted among them; and an additional glory was made to them, by the calling of the Gentiles, and joining them to them, through the ministry of the apostles, who were all Jews; who went forth from Zion, and carried the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, to the several parts of the world: and this also is more especially true, of the mystical, or

spiritual Israel of God, whose glory Christ is; being made of God unto them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; they having such an head, husband, Saviour, and Redeemer, as he; and they being clothed with his righteousness, and washed in his blood, sanctified by his grace, and made meet for eternal glory; to which they have a right and claim, through the grace of God, and merits of Christ; and therefore glory not in themselves, but in Christ, who is their all in all.

Ver. 33. *And Joseph and his mother*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin reads, "and his father and mother". The Ethiopic version retains both his name and his relation, and reads, "and Joseph his father, and his mother"; but all the ancient copies read only "Joseph", without the addition, his father; and so the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions: they

marvelled at those things which were spoken of him; the child Jesus: not that those things which Simeon said, were new and strange to them; for they not only knew that the same things were predicted of the Messiah, but they had heard and known, and believed the same concerning this child; but they wondered, that a stranger to them and the child, coming into the temple at this instant, should have such a revelation made to him, and be able to say the things he did. Moreover, there is no need to confine this passage to what were said by Simeon, but it may reach to, and include every thing; that as yet had been spoken concerning Jesus; either before, or since his birth; as by the angel to them both, to the one before his conception, to the other after; and by Zacharias and Elisabeth, and by the angel to the shepherds, who had reported the same to Joseph and Mary, and now by Simeon; and they were astonished, at the exact agreement there was between them.

Ver. 34. *And Simeon blessed them*, etc.] Pronounced them blessed persons, on account of their relation to Christ as man; and more especially, because of their interest in him, as the, Saviour and Redeemer of them; and wished them all happiness and prosperity inward and outward, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; and so the Arabic version renders it, confining it to Joseph and Mary; "and Simeon blessed them both"; though this blessing of his may take in also the young child Jesus; whom he might pronounce blessed, as Elizabeth before had done, (⁴²01⁴²Luke 1:42) since he was the promised seed, in whom all nations of the earth should be blessed; and to whom, and to whose undertakings, interest, and kingdom, he might wish all prosperous success. The Persic version reads, "old Simeon: and said

unto Mary his mother": he directed his discourse to her, because she was the only real parent of this child he had in his arms, and had said so much of, and was about to say more; and because part of what follows, personally concerned her:

behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel. The word "child", is not in the original text; where it is only, "this is set, etc." Simeon seeming to be, as it were, at a loss, what name to call this great and illustrious person by, and therefore it is left to be supplied. The Persic version supplies it thus, behold, "this Holy One is set, etc." The sense is, that this child, who is the stone of Israel, is set, or put, or lies, both as a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, for many of the Jews to stumble at, and fail and perish; and as a precious corner and foundation stone, for the erection and elevation of others of them, to the highest honour and dignity, that shall believe on him: for these words are not to be understood of the same, but of different persons among the Jews; though it may be true, that some, who first stumbled at him, might be raised up again, and brought to believe in him; and that many, who for his sake, and the Gospel, fell under great disgrace and reproach, and into great afflictions and persecutions, were raised up to the enjoyment of great comfort and honour: but they are not the same persons that Christ is set for the fall of, that he is set for the rising of; nor the same he is set for the rising of, he is set for the fall of; the one designs the elect of God among the Jews, who became true believers in Christ; and the other, the reprobate, who died in impenitence and unbelief: the words, so far as they concern Christ, "being set for the fall of many of the Jews"; have a manifest reference to (Isaiah 8:14,15) where the Messiah is spoken of as a stone, and as a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence; at which, many of the Jews should stumble, and fail, and be broken. And so the text is applied in the Talmud [f132], where it is said, that

> "the son of David will not come, until both houses of the fathers, fail out of Israel; and they are these, the head of the captivity in Babylon, and the prince in the land of Israel; as it is said, (Isaiah 8:14) "he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and rock of offence", to both the houses of Israel."

Accordingly the Jews did stumble at his birth, parentage, and education; at the meanness of his person, and the obscurity of his kingdom; at the company he kept, and the audience that attended him; at his doctrine and

miracles, and at his sufferings and death: they fell, through their unbelief and rejection of him, as the Messiah; and not only from their outward privileges, civil, and religious; the Gospel was taken away from them, the national covenant between God and them was broken, and they ceased to be his people, their temple and city were destroyed, and wrath came upon their nation to the uttermost; but they also fell into everlasting perdition, dying in their sins, through their disbelief of Jesus as the Messiah: this indeed was not the case of all of them; there was a seed, a remnant, according to the election of grace but it was the case of many, and of the far greater part but then this same stone that was laid in Zion, was also

set for the rising again of many of them; meaning not for their resurrection in a literal sense, though this is a truth: for as all God's elect, whether Jews or Gentiles, rose in him representatively, when he rose from the dead; so many of them rose personally after his resurrection, and all of them, at the last day, will rise again, in consequence of their union to him: and indeed, all the wicked will be raised again, by virtue of his power; but not this, but their resurrection in a spiritual sense, is here meant; and it supposes the persons raised to have been in a low estate, as all God's elect by nature are: they are in a hopeless and helpless condition in themselves: they are in a state of thraldom and bondage, to sin, Satan, and the law; they are filled with diseases, nauseous, mortal, and incurable; they are clothed in rags, and are beggars on the dunghill; they are deep in debt, and have nothing to pay; and are dead in trespasses and sins. Christ is now provided and appointed, for the raising them up out of their low estate, and he does do it; he is the resurrection and the life unto them; he raises from the death of sin, to a life of grace and holiness from him, to a life of faith on him, and communion with him here, and to eternal life hereafter: he pays all their debts clothes them with his righteousness, heals all their diseases, redeems them from the slavery of sin, the captivity of Satan, and the bondage and curse of the law; brings them into a hopeful and comfortable condition; raises them to the possession of a large estate, an eternal inheritance; and gives them both a right unto it, and ineptness for it; sets them among princes, makes them kings, places them on a throne of glory, yea, on his own throne, and sets a crown of righteousness, life, and glory, on their heads; and will cause them to reign with him, first on earth, for a thousand years, and then in heaven to all eternity: and this was to be the case of many in Israel, though not of all; for all did not obey the Gospel, some did, three thousand under one sermon; and more will in the latter day, when all

Israel shall be saved. This privilege of rising again, in this sense, by Christ, though it is here spoken of with respect to many of the Jews, yet not to the exclusion of the Gentiles; for this honour have all the saints, be they of what nation they will. Now when Christ is said to be “set” for these different things, the meaning is, that he was foreappointed, preordained, and set forth in God's counsel, purposes, and decrees, as a stone at which some should stumble, through their own wickedness and unbelief, and fall and perish, and be eternally lost; and as a foundation stone for others, to build their faith and hope upon, which should be given them, and so rise up to everlasting life; and that he was set forth in the prophecies of the Old Testament, as in that here referred to, for the same ends; and that he was now exhibited in human nature with the same views, and should be held forth in the everlasting Gospel, for the like purposes; and which eventually is the savour of life unto life to some, and the savour of death unto death to others: to all this, a behold is prefixed, as expressing what is wonderful and surprising, and not to be accounted for, but to be resolved into the secret and sovereign will of God: it is added, that he is also set

for a sign which shall be spoken against: referring to (Isaiah 8:18). Christ is the sign of God's everlasting love to his people, the great proof, evidence, and demonstration of it; and in this respect, is spoken against by many: and he is set up in the Gospel, as an ensign of the people to look at, and gather to, for comfort, peace, righteousness, salvation, and eternal life; but is by many contradicted, opposed, and treated with contempt and abhorrence; so that he appears rather to be set as a mark and butt to shoot at: he was spoken against by the Scribes and Pharisees, and the greater part of the people of the Jews, and contradicted, as the Messiah, because of his mean appearance among them; his proper deity was denied, his divine sonship was gainsayed; he was contemned in all his offices, kingly, priestly, and prophetic; his works of mercy, both to the bodies and souls of men, his miracles, and the whole series of his life and actions, were traduced as sinful and criminal: this was the contradiction of sinners against himself, which he endured, (Hebrews 12:3) and for which he was set and appointed; and still the contradiction continues, and will, as long as the Gospel is preached.

Ver. 35. *Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also*, etc.] Meaning either the sword, “or spear of scandal”, as the Arabic version renders it; so the calumny, and reproach of the tongues of men, is compared to a sharp sword, (Psalm 57:4) and such the virgin might

meet with on account of her conception in art unmarried state, which might greatly wound her soul; or else the sorrows she met with on account of her son: as he was a man of sorrows, so was she a woman of sorrows, from his cradle to his cross; and his sorrows, like so many darts, or javelins, rebounded from him to her, and pierced her soul through; as when Herod sought his life, (<40 2 13>Matthew 2:13,14) when she had lost him for a whole day, (<42 2 48>Luke 2:48) and when he was frequently exposed to danger among the spiteful and malicious Jews; but never more than when she stood at his cross, and saw him, in his agonies, extended on the tree, bleeding, gasping, and dying, (<43 19 25>John 19:25). Some think this refers to martyrdom, which she was to suffer by the sword, of which the Scripture is silent, Epiphanius, an ancient writer, seems to hint at it [f133].

That the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed; that is, all this offence was to be taken at Christ, and he to be spoken against; and all these afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions, he and his were to endure for this end; that the secret thoughts of men might be discovered, and they be known to be what they were, whether hypocrites, or good men, foes or friends of Christ: so on the one hand, what were the Scribes and Pharisees, who talked of a Messiah, and pretended to righteousness and holiness, and yet when the Messiah came, rejected him, and so all such who followed Christ with worldly views, and expected a temporal kingdom, but left him when they found it otherwise, and Judas, one of his disciples; and, on the other hand, who were sincere and hearty? as the rest of his disciples, Joseph of Arimathea, and others, who abode by him, notwithstanding the cross; and the same use have all persecutions, errors, and heresies, the opposition and contradiction of men in every shape now, and the same end is answered; wicked men, and hypocrites, are known to be what they are; and good men are made manifest; and what each think of Christ and his Gospel, is discovered hereby; (see <46 11 19>1 Corinthians 11:19).

Ver. 36. *And there was one Anna*, etc.] The name is the same with Hannah: so Hannah, the mother of Samuel, is by the Septuagint called Anna, in (<09 01 02>1 Samuel 1:2,5,9,15,19,22,25) and it signifies “grace”; or “gracious”: and as was her name, so was she, a gracious woman; One that had the grace of God herself, and was a publisher of the glad tidings of grace and redemption by Christ, to others; and she was

a prophetess: for though prophecy had ceased among the Jews for some hundreds of years, it now revived upon the coming of the Messiah; and

though instances of women prophets were rare, yet some there were, both before, and after the coming of Christ; as Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, Deborah, the wife of Lapidoth, and Huldah, the wife of Shallum; and this Anna, at the time of Christ's birth, and afterwards four daughters of Philip the Evangelist, who were virgins. This woman was

the daughter of Phanuel; it is the same name with Penuel; and which, by the Septuagint, in (<130404>1 Chronicles 4:4 8:25) is called Phanuel, as here. This man might be a person of some note, or he may be mentioned for the sake of his name, which signifies the face of God, and is the name Jacob gave to a certain place where he had seen God face to face, (<013230>Genesis 32:30,31). And now Phanuel's daughter both saw and gave the light of the knowledge of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, and now beheld his face in the flesh, who is God over all, blessed for ever.

Of the tribe of Aser; the same with Asher; for so Asher is called, as here, by the Septuagint, in (<013013>Genesis 30:13 49:20) and elsewhere: and though this tribe was carried captive with the rest of the ten tribes; yet there were some of the ten tribes that returned along with Judah and Benjamin, and were dispersed among them. This tribe had its seat in Galilee; so that though the Jews denied that any prophet came from thence, yet it seems a prophetess did.

She was of a great age: the phrase is the same with that in (<420107>Luke 1:7) there rendered, “stricken in years”; (See Gill on “<420107>Luke 1:7”). Her age will appear to be great, if it be observed, that she was seven years a married woman, and fourscore and four years a widow, which make ninety one; and if she was married at twelve years and a half, at which time the Jews [f134] reckoned females marriageable, she must be an hundred and three years old; and perhaps her age might be eight or ten years more:

and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity: this is mentioned to observe her chastity, that she was in her virginity, or a chaste virgin, when she became a wife; such an one as the high priest was obliged to have, (<032113>Leviticus 21:13) and that the tokens of her virginity were brought, which the Jewish laws obliged to, (<052215>Deuteronomy 22:15,17,20) and that she lived honestly, and honourably, with her husband, during the term of her marriage state.

Ver. 37. *And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years*, etc.] Which is not the date of her whole age, as some have thought, but of her

widowhood state, as distinct from her marriage state, and the time of her virginity. And this sense all the versions favour.

Which departed not from the temple that is, she was constant in her devotion there, at the time of divine service, whether by night or day; not that she was in it, for she had been out of it now; otherwise it could not with propriety be said of her, that

she coming in that instant, as in the next verse; but that she always was there when there was any worship performed, in which women might be concerned, and which is pointed out in the next clause:

but served God with fastings and prayers, night and day: she attended to the usual fasts of twice a week, and to such as were enjoined the whole congregation, and to the several set times of prayer, and to every act of devotion, private or public, by night or day. In (Exodus 38:8) we read of women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: both the Targums of Onkelos and Ben Uzziel render it, “who came to pray”; and the Septuagint version, “that fasted”: Anna did both.

Ver. 38. *And she coming in that instant*, etc.] That the parents of Christ brought him into the temple; just as Simeon was embracing him in his arms, and blessing God for him, and saying the things concerning him he had done; and who also came at that juncture, as he did, under the impulse, and by the direction of the Spirit of God;

gave thanks likewise unto the Lord: praised him, as he had done, that he had sent the promised, and long looked for Messiah and Saviour; and that she had lived to see his blessed face, and this happy day; and that she should be directed to come in at this instant, and be favoured with this singular mercy of seeing the new born Saviour, and his honoured parents:

and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem; this she either did at this time; they in Jerusalem that looked, and diligently waited for, and earnestly desired the Messiah, and spiritual redemption and salvation by him, being now assembled together in the temple; or afterwards, as she had opportunity of conversing with them, when she acquainted them with what she had heard and seen. By “the redemption” they were looking for, is meant, the Redeemer; as by salvation, the Saviour, in (Luke 2:30). Some versions, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic read, “the redemption of Jerusalem”; not literally, but spiritually, understood, even the redemption of the church of Christ, which is often so

called: and others, as the Persic version, “the redemption of Israel”; that is, of spiritual Israel: some read “in Israel”; so one copy of Stephens's.

Ver. 39. *And when they had performed all things*, etc.] Relating to the purification of Mary, and the presentation and redemption of her firstborn, and the sacrifices and ceremonies belonging thereunto:

according to the law of the Lord; which that directed to, and enjoined:

they returned into Galilee: not that they came from thence to Jerusalem, but from Bethlehem, where Mary gave birth, and her time for purification was now just expired: nor did they go now directly to Galilee; or, if they did, they soon came back again to Bethlehem, since here the wise men found them two years after; when by a divine warning, they went into Egypt, where they remained till Herod's death, and after came into the land of Israel, into the parts of Galilee, and dwelt at Nazareth; for which reason it is here called their own city;

to their own city Nazareth: Bethlehem was their native city, the place of their birth, at least of their family; and Nazareth was the city of their habitation.

Ver. 40. *And the child grew*, etc.] In body, in strength, and in stature; which shows that it was a true body Christ assumed, and like ours, which did not come to its maturity at once, but by degrees:

and waxed strong in spirit, or in his soul; for as he had a true body, he had also a reasonable soul; the faculties of which were far from being weak, they were exceeding strong, and appeared stronger and stronger every day; his understanding was clear, his judgment solid, and his memory strong and retentive, his will, and the desires of it, were to that which is good, and his affections cleaved unto it. The Persic and Ethiopic versions read, “was strengthened in”, or “by the Holy Spirit”; with the grace and gifts of it; but the former sense is best.

Filled with wisdom; and knowledge as man; for this is to be understood, not of his essential wisdom as God, nor of those treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which were hid in him as mediator, to be dispensed to his church; but of his created and natural wisdom, as man; in which he increased gradually, as his body grew, and the faculties of his soul opened under the influences of his deity, and the power of his Spirit;

and the grace of God was upon him; which designs not the fulness of grace that was in him, as mediator, for the supply of his people: but either that internal grace which was bestowed on his human nature, even the various graces of the Spirit of God, and which flowed from the grace of union of the two natures in him; or rather the love and favour of God, which in various instances was in a very singular manner manifested to him.

Ver. 41. *Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year*, etc.] Joseph was obliged to go three times a year, as were all the males in Israel, at the feasts of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles, (Deuteronomy 16:16). The first of these is expressed here, at the feast of the passover; but the women were not obliged to go up: for so it is said by the Jews [f135], twçr µyçn lç ˆjsp, "the passover of women is voluntary", or in their own power; they might go up to the feast, or not, as they pleased. It is indeed said of Hillell, who was now alive, that he obliged the women to the first, but not to a second passover: to which the Karaites object; the account they give is as follows [f136];

> "truly the women were obliged, by the school of Hillell, to the offering of the passover; but if they were hindered from the first passover, the second was in their power; that is, the thing depended upon their will and pleasure, whether they would offer or not, which may be justly wondered at; for why should they be obliged to the, first, and not the second? for behold, as to the obligation of the passover, there is no difference between the first passover, and the second, The sum of the matter is, our wise men, on whom be peace, have determined and say, that there is no obligation but to males, who are arrived to maturity."

So that this was a voluntary thing in Mary; which discovers her piety and religion, and her great regard to the ordinances and appointments of God.

Ver. 42. *And when he was twelve years old*, etc.] Not that he was now, hwxm rb, "a son of the commandment", [f137] to use the Jewish phrase; or now came under the yoke of the law; or was obliged to the duties of adult church membership, as is asserted by some; nor particularly to go to Jerusalem to make his appearance at the feast of the passover, or any other feast: for according to the maxims of the Jews, persons were not obliged to the duties of the law, or subject to the penalties of it in case of non-performance, until they were, a female, at the age of twelve years, and one

day, and a male, at the age of thirteen years, and one day; but then they used to train up their children, and inure them to religious exercises before: as for instance, though they were not obliged to fast on the day of atonement, until they were at the age before mentioned; yet, they used them to it two or three year's before, as they were able to endure it: a son of nine, or ten years old, they train him up by hours; they make him fast so many hours; and one of eleven, or “twelve years old”, they make him fast a whole day: but then this was not law, but custom; and which they observed, that they might be used to the commandments [f138], and be expert in them, and ready to perform them when required. It is said, [f139] that

> “there was a good custom in Jerusalem to make their little sons and daughters fast on a fast day; the son of a year, till the very day he is “twelve years old”, when he fasts the whole day; and after that they carry him, and bring him before every ancient man, that he may bless him, and confirm him, and pray over him, that he may be worthy in the law, and in good works; and: every one that is greater than he in the city, he stands up from his place, and goes before him, and bows to him, to pray for him: and this is to learn him, that they are beautiful, and their works beautiful and acceptable to God; and they did not use to leave their little children behind them, but brought them to the synagogues, twxmb µzrzl ydk, “that they might be ready in the commandments”.”

That they might be inured to them, and expert in them, when they were under obligation to them; for they were not properly under the law, until they were arrived to the age above mentioned; nor were they reckoned adult church members till then, nor then neither, unless worthy persons: for so it is said [f140],

> “he that is worthy, at thirteen years of age, is called ykl ^b, “a son of the congregation of Israel”;”

that is, a member of the church. When therefore Joseph and Mary took Jesus along with them, at this age,

when they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast of the passover, it shows their religious regard to him; and may be an instruction to parents, to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, after their example.

Ver. 43. *And when they had fulfilled the days*, etc.] The seven days of the fear of unleavened bread, for so many days that feast was observed; and though it was not absolutely necessary, and obligatory upon them to stay all that time at Jerusalem, yet Mary and Joseph seem so to have done, as did the more religious and devout persons:

as they returned; at the time when they were going from Jerusalem home again:

the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; being desirous of hearing the discourses of the doctors about the sense of the Scriptures, the meaning of the laws, and the traditions of the elders, and of conversing with them:

and Joseph, and his mother, knew not of it; of his intention to tarry longer, nor of his design in so doing: he did not ask leave of them, since his stay was about an affair of his heavenly Father's; and therefore this action of Christ is not to be drawn into an example, or precedent for children, to act without consulting, or asking leave of their parents. They had no notion at all of his staying behind them, nor any suspicion of it; nor did they miss him for a considerable time; which might be owing to the large numbers that went in company together, so that they could not tell but that he was in the crowd, though they did not see him; or to the men and women travelling in separate companies, as is thought; so that Joseph might think he was with Mary, and Mary might conclude he was with Joseph, till they came to the end of their first day's journey, when they came together, and then missed him.

Ver. 44. *But they supposing him to have been in the company*, etc.] That travelled together into the same parts, having been, as they, at Jerusalem to keep the feast:

went a day's journey; either before they missed him; or if they missed him sooner, yet they went on inquiring for him in the company, until they were come a day's journey before they thought, or, at least, determined on going back to Jerusalem. The bounds of a day's journey from Jerusalem are said to be [f141] Elath on the south, and Akrabba on the north; elsewhere [f142] it is, Elathon the north, and Akrabbaon the south, Lud, or Lydda, on the west, and Jordan on the east; wherefore, as Galilee lay north of Jerusalem, the bound of this day's journey must be, according to the Misna, Akrabba, and, according to the Talmud, Elath. Nazareth was three days journey from Jerusalem [f143]: according to the Jewish writers [f144], a day's journey was ten

“parsas”, or large miles, Which were forty lesser miles; and which, they say, is a middling man's walk, on a middling day, as in the months of Tisri, or Nisan, when days and nights were alike: and it was in the latter of those months, on the twenty second day of it, that Joseph and Mary set out on their journey; (see Exodus 12:18) but it cannot be thought that women and children should be able to travel so many miles a day, and therefore this day's journey, very likely, was shorter:

and they sought him among their kinsfolks and acquaintance; when they came to the end of their day's journey, where they took up their lodging for that night: and as the company was large, they doubtless lay at different houses; wherefore they inquired in every house, where their relations and acquaintance lay, after their child Jesus, where they might most reasonably expect he would be: and so, in a spiritual sense, when souls have lost sight of Christ, of whom should they inquire concerning him? and where should they expect to hear of him, but among their spiritual kindred and friends, and who also are related to Christ? (see Song of Solomon 5:9).

Ver. 45. *And when they found him not*, etc.] In the company that came from Jerusalem with them, nor among any of their relations and friends, with whom they supposed he was:

they turned back again to Jerusalem, that is, the next morning, for it can hardly be thought they would set out that night, after they had travelled all day, without taking some repose:

seeking him; at Jerusalem, in the streets and broad places of it; a figure of the church and ordinances, where souls look for, and inquire after their beloved, when they have lost him, (Song of Solomon 3:1-3).

Ver. 46. *And it came to pass, that after three days*, etc.] From their first setting out from Jerusalem, when Jesus tarried behind; or on the third day, which may be reckoned thus; the first day was spent in journeying, and the second in coming back the same journey, and the third day they sought all Jerusalem for him, when

they found him in the temple; his Father's house, the house of God, a figure of a Gospel church, where the word and ordinances are duly administered, and where Christ is to be found. What part of the temple Christ was in, is not easy to say; it was not in the holy of holies, for none but the high priest went into that, and that only on the day of atonement; nor in the court of the priests, for he was not among them, but the doctors; nor in the court of

the Israelites, where the common people worshipped: it may be best judged of, by observing where their several consistories, or courts of judicature were [f145]; the grand sanhedrim sat in the sanctuary, in the room Gazith; the lesser sanhedrim, which consisted of twenty three persons, and the bench of three; the one sat in the gate of the court (of the Israelites); and the other in the gate of the mountain of the house (or court of the Gentiles); it seems most likely, that he was in the room Gazith, where the grand sanhedrim sat; for here was the largest number of doctors; and it was the more amazing to his parents, to find him here; unless it should be rather thought, that he was in the synagogue in the temple, for such an one there [f146] was there; where, after service was over, he might be admitted to a conversation with the learned doctors that belonged to it: it follows,

sitting in the midst of the doctors: the principal doctors in being at this time, were Hillell and Shammai, the one the president, and the other vice president of the council; and Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillell, who succeeded him in his office; and R. Judah, and R. Joshua, the sons of Bethira; Jonathan ben Uzziel, the author of the Chaldee paraphrase; and R. Jochanan ben Zaccai. The sanhedrim sat in a semicircular form, like the half of a round corn floor; so that they could see one another, and the prince, and the father of the court, could see them all; and before them sat three rows of the disciples of the wise men, or scholars; and in each row there were three and twenty men: the first row was next to the sanhedrim, and the second row below that, and the third row below that; and in every row they sat according to their superiority in wisdom [f147]: on a seat, in one of these rows, I think, Christ sat among the scholars; and this may be called sitting among the doctors, because these seats were just before them, and were in a semicircular form; at least he might be here at first; when upon the questions he put, and the answers he made, he was taken particular notice of by the doctors, who might call him up, and place him between them; for this, in some cases, was done to scholars. Thus, it is said [f148],

> “if one of the disciples, or scholars, say, I have something to say in favour of him, (one that is on his trial,) they bring him up, and “cause him to sit in the midst of them”; and he does not go down from thence all the whole day.”

Both hearing them: their debates and decisions about points in the law of Moses:

and asking them questions; upon those points. Had this been a “Midrash”, or school, there would be no difficulty of producing instances of putting questions to the doctors there; but there was no such place in the temple, or synagogue, where teachers were interrogated by their hearers; for which reason I think the passages, produced by Dr. Lightfoot, are not so pertinent, since they refer to such a place: it is very likely, since there were such a number of scholars admitted to sit before the sanhedrim to hear their controversies, and determinations, and were allowed, in some cases, to speak; so they might be suffered to put questions, in order to gain knowledge.

Ver. 47. *And all that heard him were astonished*, etc.] All in the sanhedrim, both the doctors, and their disciples, were amazed,

at his understanding; in the knowledge of the law, and of the Scriptures:

and his answers; which he returned to the questions the doctor's put to him, which were made with so much wisdom and judgment, that it was surprising in one of his years.

Ver. 48. *And when they saw him they were amazed*, etc.] That is, when Joseph and Mary saw him amidst the doctors, they were astonished that he was admitted among them, and had in such esteem by them:

and his mother said unto him; she being his own, and only parent, and not Joseph; and therefore he said nothing, but left it to her; who upon sight of him, at least as soon as she had a proper opportunity after he had left the doctors, began to chide, or rather to expostulate with him after this manner:

son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? which was said with great tenderness of affection, and in much mildness; and may be a pattern to parents, who should not provoke their children to anger, but deal gently and tenderly with them:

behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing; with great grief, anxiety, and solicitude, fearing lest some evil had befallen him. Mary calls Joseph his father, though she knew he was not, in a proper sense; but because he was supposed to be so, and was his father by the law of marriage; and especially, she might call him so because of his paternal care of him in his education, and bringing him up: for it is a maxim with the Jews[f149], that

"not he that begets, but he that brings up, is the father."

Ver. 49. *And he said unto them, how is it that ye sought me*? etc.] That is, with so much uneasiness and distress of mind, not trusting in the power and providence of God, to take care of him; and in other places, besides the temple, where they had been inquiring for him:

wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? or "in my Father's house", as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; where, as soon as you missed me, you might, at once, have concluded I was, and not have put yourselves to so much trouble and pains in seeking for me. Christ seems to tax them with ignorance, or, at least, forgetfulness of his having a Father in heaven, whose business he came to do on earth; and which they should have thought in their own minds he was now about, and so have made themselves easy. The business that Christ came about was to preach the Gospel, and which he afterwards performed with great clearness and fulness, with much power, majesty, and authority, with great constancy and diligence, with much concern for the souls of men, arid with great awfulness; and in which he took great delight, though he went through many dangers and risks of life; as also to work miracles in proof of his deity and Messiahship, and for the good of the bodies of men, and in which he was very assiduous, going about every where doing good this way: but the main, and principal part of his business was, to work out salvation for his people, by fulfilling the law, making reconciliation and atonement for their sins, and obtaining eternal redemption: this was a business which neither angels nor men could do; was very toilsome and laborious, and yet he delighted in it; nor did he desist from it until it was accomplished: and this is called his Father's business, because he contrived and assigned it to him; he called him to it, and sent him to perform; he enjoined it to him as man and mediator, and the glory of his perfections was concerned in it, and secured by it: and it was a business that Christ must be about, be concerned in, and perform, because he engaged to do it from all eternity; and because it was the will of his Father, which must be done, and was necessary in order to show himself dutiful and obedient; and because it was foretold in prophecy again and again and promised that it should be done; and because it could not be done by another. Now our Lord's conversing with the doctors, and which was a branch of his prophetic office, and was, no doubt, with a view to the good of the souls of men, and nothing less than miraculous, was a show, a prelude of, and a sort of an entrance upon the business he came about.

Ver. 50. *And they understood not the saying,* etc.] What he meant by his Father's house, or his Father's business, and the necessity of his being there, and about that:

which he spake unto them; at that time, and as above related.

Ver. 51. *And he went down with them*, etc.] From the temple, and from Jerusalem, which were on high ground:

and came to Nazareth; where he, and his parents, had lived ever since their return from Egypt:

and was subject unto them; for though he thought fit to let them know, or, at least, put them in mind, that he had a Father in heaven, whose business he came about, and must do, and therefore did not judge it necessary to ask their leave to stay at Jerusalem on that account; yet, as man, and willing to set an example of filial subjection to parents, he went along with them, and showed all dutiful respect unto them, yielding a ready and cheerful obedience to their commands, living with them, and working under them, and for them: and so he continued till he was about thirty years of age:

but his mother kept all these sayings, or things; for this relates not only to the words of Christ, but to the whole history of his staying behind them at Jerusalem, of his sitting among the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions, to the astonishment of all. These things she treasured up, and preserved,

in her heart; that is, in her memory; so the word is used in Jewish writings. It is reported of R. Meir[f150], that

> "he went to intercalate the year in Asia, and there was no Megilla (the book of Esther) there, and he wrote it, wbl m, "out of his heart", (i.e. out of his memory,) and read it."

Ver. 52. *And Jesus increased in wisdom*, etc.] As man; for neither his divine wisdom, nor the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him, as mediator, could admit of any increase; but as he grew in body, the faculties of his soul opened, and received gradually large measures of wisdom and knowledge, in things natural and spiritual, through the in dwelling of his divine nature in him, and the Holy Spirit that was, without measure, on him:

and stature: the word signifies age also; and so the Vulgate Latin has rendered it: but that is not the meaning of it here, since it would have been entirely unnecessary to have observed, that he increased in age, which must be unavoidable: but the sense is, that as he increased in the wisdom and knowledge of his human soul, so he likewise increased in the stature of his body: and in favour with God and man: he appeared by the grace that was in him, and the gifts bestowed on him, to be high in the love and favour of God; and had a large share in the esteem and affections of all good men, who had the honour and happiness of knowing him, and of being acquainted with him.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 3

Ver. 1. *Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar*, etc.] Emperor of Rome, and the third of the Caesars; Julius was the first, and Augustus the second, in whose time Christ was born, and this Tiberius the third; he was the son of Livia, the wife of Augustus, but not by him; but was adopted by him, into the empire: his name was Claudius Tiberius Nero, and for his intemperance was called, Caldius Biberius Mero; the whole of his reign was upwards of twenty two years, for he died in the twenty third year of his reign [f151]; and in the fifteenth of it, John began to preach, Christ was baptized, and began to preach also; so that this year may be truly called, "the acceptable year of the Lord".

Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea; under the Emperor Tiberius, in whose reign the Jewish chronologer [f152] places him, and the historian [f153] also, and make mention of him as sent by him to Jerusalem: he was not the first governor of Judea for the Romans; there were before him Coponius, Marcus Ambivius, Annins Rufus, and Valerius Gratus:

and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee; this was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the great, and brother of Archelaus; the above chronologer [f154] calls him also a tetrarch, and places him under Tiberius Caesar: he is sometimes called a king, and so he is by the Ethiopic version here called "king of Galilee"; and in the Arabic version, "prince over the fourth part of Galilee"; besides Galilee, he had also Peraea, or the country beyond Jordan, as Josephus [f155] says, and which seems here to be included in Galilee; (see Gill on "<4401>Matthew 14:1").

And his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea, and of the region of Trachonitis: Pliny [f156] makes mention of the nation of the Itureans, as belonging to Coele Syria; perhaps Iturea is the same with Batanea, or Auranitis, or both; since these with Trachon, the same with Trachonitis here, are allotted to Philip by Josephus [f157]: it seems to take its name from Jetur, one of the sons of Ishmael, (<0125>Genesis 25:15) Trachonitis is mentioned by Pliny [f158], as near to Decapolis, and as a region and tetrarchy, as here: Ptolemy [f159]

speaks of the Trachonite Arabians, on the east of Batanea, or Bashan: the region of Trachona, or Trachonitis, with the Targumists [f160], answers to the country of Argob. This Philip, who as before by Josephus, so by Egesippus [f161], is said, in agreement with Luke, to be tetrarch of Trachonitis, was brother to Herod Antipas, by the father's, but not by the mother's side. Philip was born of Cleopatra, of Jerusalem, and Herod of Malthace, a Samaritan [f162]: he died in the twentieth year of Tiberius [f163], five years after this:

and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene: mention is made of Abila by Pliny [f164], as in Coele Syria, from whence this tetrarchy might have its name; and by Ptolemy [f165], it is called Abila of Lysanius, from this, or some other governor of it, of that name; and the phrase, “from Abilene to Jerusalem”, is to be met with in the Talmud [f166], which doubtless designs this same place: who this Lysanias was, is not certain; he was not the son of Herod the great, as Eusebius suggests [f167], nor that Lysanias, the son of Ptolemy Minnaeus, whom Josephus [f168] speaks of, though very probably he might be a descendant of his: however, when Tiberius Caesar reigned at Rome, and Pontius Pilate governed in Judea, and Herod Antipas in Galilee, and Philip his brother in Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias in Abilene, John the Baptist began to preach and baptize; to fix the area of whose ministry and baptism, all this is said.

Ver. 2. *Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests*, etc.] Some difficulty here arises, how these two could be both high priests; when according to the law of God, and the usages of the Jewish nation, there was to be, and was but one high priest at a time: many things are observed by writers, to solve this difficulty: some go this way; that though according to the divine institution, and the practice of former times, there was but one high priest at a time; yet now, through the corruption of the present age, there were two high priests; or at least, which officiated alternately in the same year: but of such a corruption, no instance can be given, even in those corrupt times; and as Maimonides says [f169], there can be but “one high priest” µlw[h lkb, “in all the world”; and besides, is contrary to their canons, which were then in being, and still remain; one [f170] of which runs thus, tjak µylwdg µynhk ynç ˆynmm ˆya “they do not appoint two high priests at once”. Others suppose, that these two annually performed the office of high priests by turns; that Caiaphas was high priest one year, and

Annas another: it is true indeed, that through the corruption of those times, this office became venal, hence it is said in the Talmud [f171],

> “because they gave money for the priesthood, they changed it every twelve months.” And which is more largely expressed by one of their commentators [f172], “because the high priests, who were under the second temple, after Simeon the just, gave money to minister in the high priest's office, and because they were wicked, they did not fill up their years, therefore they changed every year.”

But though it is certain, that there were frequent, and sometimes annual changes in the priesthood, hence it is said of Caiaphas, (<431149>John 11:49, 18:13) that he was “high priest the same year”, yet it does not appear that he and Annas took it yearly by turns: for Caiaphas continued in that office some years, even till after the death of Christ: and besides, had this been the case, as one of them could be but high priest for the year being, both in one year as here, could not with propriety be said to be high priests. Others take another method, and suppose Caiaphas to be properly the high priest, as he certainly was; and Annas so called, because he had been one formerly, the same with Ananus, the son of Seth; who was put into the priesthood by Quirinius, in the room of Joazar, and was deposed by Valerius Gratus, and Ishmael ben Phabi was put into his room: but though there may be instances of persons being called high priests, who had been in that office, after they were removed from it, yet no reason can be given, why Annas should be peculiarly called so, when there were in all probability several alive, who had been in that office as well as he; as Joazar his predecessor, and Ishmael ben Phabi, who succeeded Joazar, and after him Eleazar, the son of Annas, and then Simeon ben Camhith; nor why he should be put in the annals of the high priests, in a year in which he was not one. It seems most likely therefore, that he was the “Sagan” of the priests, of which office mention is frequently made, in the Jewish writings [f173]; yea, we often read of Chanina, or Chananiah, or Ananias, perhaps the same with this Annas, who is called, µynhk ^gs, “the Sagan of the priests” [f174]. This officer was not a deputy high priest, or one that was substituted to officiate occasionally, in the room of the high priest, when any thing hindered him, or rendered him unfit for his office; as on the day of atonement, if the high priest contracted any pollution, they substituted another to minister [f175]; which was not the “Sagan”, but another priest; and even such an one was called an high priest, as appears from the following story [f176].

> “It happened to Simeon ben Camhith (a predecessor of Caiaphas), that he went out to speak with the king, on the evening of the day of atonement, and the spittle was scattered from his mouth, upon his garments, and he was unclear; and his brother Judah went in, and ministered in his stead in the high priesthood; and their mother saw her “two sons”, djа µwyb µylwdg µynhk ynç “high priests in one day”.”

But the “Sagan” was not an officer pro tempore, or so much under the high priest, and one in his stead, as a ruler and governor over other priests. Maimonides says of him thus [f177];

> “they appoint one priest, who is to the high priest as a second to the king, and he is called “Sagan”; and he is called a ruler: and he stands at the right hand of the high priest continually; and this is an honour to him, and all the priests are under the hand of the Sagan.”

The account given of him in the Talmud [f178] is this;

> “in five things the “Sagan” ministers; the “Sagan” says to him, my lord, high priest, lift up thy right hand (i.e. when he took the lots out of the vessel for the goats, on the day of atonement [f179]; which should be slain); the “Sagan” is on his right hand, and the father of the sanhedrim on his left (i.e. when he went to the east of the court and the north of the altar [f180], where were the two goats, and the vessel in which were the lots); the “Sagan” waved with the veils, or linen clothes; the “Sagan” held him by his right hand, and caused him to ascend (by the steps to the altar); and no man was appointed an high priest, before he was a “Sagan.””

Now these might be as Serojab and Zephaniah, the one chief priest, and the other second priest, (~~2Kgs 25:24~~Jeremiah 52:24) where the Targum and Jarchi interpret the text, the “Sagan” of the priests. And this being an office of such dignity and authority, supposing Annas in it, though he was not “the” high priest, yet being the head of the other priests, he might be called one, and be joined with Caiaphas, and set before him; not only because he had been an high priest, but because he was his father-in-law:

the word of God came to John the son of Zachariah: a priest of the order of “Abia”; and of Elisabeth, a daughter of Aaron, and cousin of Mary, the mother of Jesus; as it had come formerly to the prophets, and particularly

to Jeremiah, who was sanctified from the womb, as the Baptist was: he was blessed with a prophetic spirit, and with the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, and with a wonderful revelation of the Messiah, and of the Gospel dispensation; and was abundantly qualified for the work he was called to, and sent to perform: and this befell him

in the wilderness; that is, of Judea; where he had been brought up and lived, and from whence and where he came, preaching: he had lived a solitary life, and had not learnt his doctrine from men, but had his mission, ministry, and baptism, from heaven.

Ver. 3. *And he came into all the country about Jordan*, etc.] He came out of the wilderness of Judea, where he first began his ministry, to some parts of the country that bordered on Jordan, and was near unto it, on either side the river; sometimes he was at Bethabara, and sometimes at Aenon, near Salim; for he did not take a tour round about all, the country that encompassed Jordan, but being at it, or in places adjacent to it, all the country round about came to him; (see <4003>Matthew 3:5).

Preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins: this was the work and office of John, as signified by Elias, in (<3905>Malachi 4:5,6) the Jews say[f181],

> "the Israelites will not repent, till Elias comes; as it is said, (<3905>Malachi 4:5,6) in the land of Israel repentance delights."

John came into this land, preaching this doctrine; (See Gill on "<4004>Mark 1:4").

Ver. 4. *As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet*, etc.] (<2403>Isaiah 40:3)

saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord make his paths straight; (See Gill on "<4003>Matthew 3:3").

Ver. 5. *Every valley shall be filled*, etc.] Luke cites more out of the same prophecy, as relating to the times of John the Baptist, and the Messiah, than the other Evangelists Matthew and Mark do: in the prophet it is, "every valley shall be exalted"; which is done, by filling it up; the metaphor is persisted in, of preparing and clearing the way, for the coming of the Messiah, done by the ministry of John; under which, such souls as were lowly and humble, and depressed with the sense of sin, should be raised

and directed to believe in Christ, and be filled with divine consolation from him. These words are owned by the Jews [f182] to belong to the world to come; that is, the times of the Messiah; though they understand them, of making way for the return of the Israelites from captivity, by the Messiah: just as they suppose such things were done by the miraculous cloud, for the children of Israel, as they passed through the wilderness; of which they say [f183],

> "that it went before them, smote the serpents and scorpions, and fiery serpents, and the rock; and if there was any low place, it raised it up; or high place, it made it low, and caused them to be plain; as it is said, (Isaiah 40:3) "And every valley shall be exalted", etc."

But what they say of this cloud literally, as preparing the way for the Israelites, is in a spiritual sense true, of the ministry of John; whereby many of the children of Israel, had the way prepared for them, for the reception of the Messiah; when as every humble soul had its expectation raised, and its faith encouraged, and its heart filled with spiritual joy; so such as were proud and haughty, were humbled:

and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; all such as are elated with their own abilities, and boast of their righteousness, trust in themselves, and look with disdain and contempt on others, their loftiness shall be bowed down, and their haughtiness made low; and the Messiah alone, in his person, grace, and righteousness, be exalted:

and the crooked shall be made straight: such as are of a crooked spirit, and walk in crooked ways, with the workers of iniquity, shall have new spirits given them, and be directed to right ways, and be led in the paths of righteousness and truth:

and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and men of rough tempers, comparable to lions and bears, shall become quiet and peaceable, smooth and easy; and moreover, whatever difficulties were in the minds of men concerning the Messiah, the end of his coming, and the nature of his kingdom; and whatever impediments were in the way of embracing him when come, should now be removed at least from many persons: R. David Kimchi, a very noted Jewish commentator [f184], acknowledges that the whole of this passage is to be understood, lçm Ærd, "by way of parable", in a mystical and figurative sense.

Ver. 6. *And all flesh shall see the salvation of God*.] "By the salvation of God" is meant, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of God's appointing and sending; and who is the author of that salvation which God resolved on, contrived, and approved of; and is his ordinance for salvation, unto the ends of the earth, for all his elect; (<420230>Luke 2:30) whom a great number among the Jews should, and did see, with their bodily eyes; and whom not only God's elect among them, but also all of them among the Gentiles, should behold with an eye of faith, for themselves, as their Saviour and Redeemer. It is matter of question, what passage is here referred to; whether (<234005>Isaiah 40:5) or (<230310>Isaiah 3:10) the latter comes nearest to the words, and the former stands closely connected with the expressions before cited; though it is usual with the New Testament writers, to join together passages, which stand in different places of the same prophet, and even which are in different books; (<450933>Romans 9:33) compared with (<230814>Isaiah 8:14, 28:16) and (<402105>Matthew 21:5) compared with (<236211>Isaiah 62:11, <380909>Zechariah 9:9) and that agreeably to the method used by Jewish writers [f185].

Ver. 7. *Then said he to the multitude*, etc.] That is, John, as the Ethiopic version reads; and the multitude to whom he spake the following words, were many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, as appears from (<400307>Matthew 3:7)

That came forth to be baptized of him; who came out of their houses, towns, and cities, round about, to the place where John was; and hearing and seeing what he was about, desired to be admitted to his baptism: not that they "were baptised of him"; as the Arabic version renders it; but they came with a view of being baptized, were it thought fit and proper they should: but John refused them, saying to them,

O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? (See Gill on "<400307>Matthew 3:7").

Ver. 8. *Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance*, etc.] Or "meet" for it, such as will show it to be true and genuine: "and begin not to say within yourselves": in one of Beza's copies, and in another of Stephens's, it was read, "think not", as in (<400309>Matthew 3:9). the sense is the same. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, leave out the phrase, "within yourselves": what they are forbid to say follows,

we have Abraham to our father, for I say unto you, God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham; which need not be thought strange, when the creation of Adam out of the earth, and the production of such a numerous offspring, as the Israelites were, from Abraham and Sarah, when past all hope of children, and are signified by the rock and pit in (<23501>Isaiah 51:1,2) are considered; (See Gill on "<40309>Matthew 3:9").

Ver. 9. *And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees*, etc.] Not only to Jesse's family, which as a root in a dry ground, and to Jerusalem, the metropolis of the nation; but to the root of the vain boasting of every Jew; their descent from Abraham, the covenant made with him, their ecclesiastical state and civil polity, all which would quickly be at an end: the Romans were now among them, the axe in God's hand; by means of whom, utter ruin and destruction would be brought upon their nation, city, and temple:

every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire; (See Gill on "<40310>Matthew 3:10").

Ver. 10. *And the people asked him*, etc.] Not the same as in (<42307>Luke 3:7) the Sadducees and Pharisees, for they seemed not to be at all affected with, and wrought upon, by the ministry of John; but rather were displeased with him, and turned their backs on him, and rejected him and his baptism; but the common people, that stood by; who hearing John speak of wrath to come, and of repentance, and fruits worthy of it, were filled with concern about these things, and inquire,

saying, what shall we do? either to escape the wrath and vengeance coming on the nation, and also eternal ruin and destruction; and Beza says, that in two of his copies, and one of them his most ancient one it is added, "to be saved", and so in two of Stephens's; which confirms the above sense, and makes their inquiry to be the same with the jailor's, (<44160>Acts 16:30) or else their meaning is, what are the things we are to do, or the fruits we are to bring forth, the duties we are to perform, in order to testify the truth and genuineness of our repentance? which latter seems most agreeable.

Ver. 11. *He answereth and saith unto them*, etc.] By telling them what they should do; and he does not put them upon ceremonial observances, nor severe exercises of religion, nor even the duties of the first table of the law, and others of the second, though necessary to be done; but upon acts

of beneficence and kindness, to fellow creatures in distress; and are what may be called love of our neighbour, and which involves the love of God, and so the whole law; for the one cannot be rightly exercised without the other:

he that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; not both of them, but one of them: a man is not obliged to go naked himself, in order to clothe another; and so the Persic and Ethiopic versions read, "let him give one to him that has not"; that has not a garment to wear. This is not to be understood strictly and literally, that a man is obliged to give one of his coats, if he has more than one, to a person in want of clothing; it will be sufficient to answer the intent of this exhortation, if he supplies his want another way, by furnishing him with money to buy one: the meaning is, that persons according to their abilities, and of what they can spare, should communicate to those that are in distress: much less is it to be concluded from hence, that it is not lawful for a man to have more coats than one:

and he that hath meat, or meats, *let him do likewise*; that is, he that has a sufficiency of food, and more than enough for himself and family, let him give it freely and cheerfully to the poor and needy, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased: and when such acts of kindness are done in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God, they are the fruits of grace, and such as are meet for repentance, and show it to be genuine. John instances in these two articles, food and raiment, as containing the necessaries of human life, and including every thing, by which one may be serviceable to another.

Ver. 12. *Then came also publicans to be baptized*, etc.] Being convinced under John's ministry of the evils of their past life, and desirous of being admitted to baptism, to which they understood repentance, and fruits meet for the same, were pre-requisite: these came nearer to John,

and said unto him, master, what shall we do? we have been very wicked persons, what shall we do to escape divine vengeance? or what are the particular duties we are to perform? or the fruits meet for repentance, we are to bring forth; that so we may be admitted to the ordinance of baptism, which requires, as previous to it, a true and hearty repentance? of these men,

(See Gill on "Matthew 5:46") (See Gill on "Matthew 9:9-11")

Ver. 13. *And he said unto them*, etc.] Not by advising them to quit their employments, as if it was a thing unlawful to impose pay, and collect taxes, but by directing them to perform their office aright:

exact no more than that which is appointed you; by the government: there were two sorts of publicans; there were some that exacted more than what they were ordered, and settled the tax at their own pleasure, and collected what they would themselves; and these were very odious to the people, and were reckoned with the worst of sinners, as thieves and robbers; but there were others, who behaved according to the orders of the government, and these were submitted to, as appears from the Jewish canons:

> "says [f186] Samuel, the judgment a kingdom, is judgment (i.e. the orders of a government ought to be regarded); R. Chanina bar Cahana says, that Samuel says it of a publican, hbxyq wl ˆyaç "who has nothing appointed for him": the house of R. Jannai say, of a publican that stands of himself."

The gloss is,

> ""the judgment of a kingdom is judgment"; this is he that receives from a king, a tax (to gather) in a thing, bwxq, "that is fixed", so and so for the year, and he is no robber: "who has nothing appointed for him", but takes according to his whole will and pleasure."

Maimonides expresses this in plainer language [f187]

> "in what things is it said that a publican is as thieves? when a Gentile publican, or a Gentile that stands of himself, or a publican that stands for the king, and hath nothing fixed for him, but he takes what he pleases, and leaves what he pleases: but a publican with whom the king agrees, and orders that he should take a third or a fourth, or, bwxq rbd "any thing that is appointed"; and he constitutes an Israelitish publican to collect that part for the king, and it is known that the man is faithful, and does not add any thing to what the king has decreed; he is not in the class of robbers, for the judgment of a king is judgment. — And so a king that lays a tax upon citizens, or upon every man and man, "a thing fixed"; or decrees, that whoever transgresses this thing, they shall take all his goods into the king's house; or that whatever shall be found in the

> field in the time of the barn (i.e. when it should be there) should pay tribute for it, whether he is the owner of the field or not: and so with respect to any thing else of this kind, it is not a robbery; and an Israelite that collects them for the king, is not in the number of robbers; for lo! he is right, and he does not add nor alter, nor take any thing to himself."

Now such publicans as these, were received and submitted to, but others were rejected; so Moses Kotsensis says [f188], that

> "publicans that take, ˆhl bwxqh rbdm rtwy "more than what is appointed for them", are rejected."

From all which we may learn what publicans these were that came to John's baptism, and put the above question to him; that they were Jewish publicans, and not Gentiles; and therefore John says nothing to them, but what concerned their employment, which he doubtless would have done, if they had been ignorant Gentiles: and also we see the reason of his expressing himself in this manner, since publicans were very apt to go beyond their orders, and require more than was fixed for them to collect; and likewise that John, in this advice, spoke the sense of the Jews themselves; who did not refuse to pay tribute, excepting some few, provided no more was exacted, than the government appointed; and as temptations to such evils were very great, and it lay in the power of these men to impose on the people, and extort from them, to abstain from such practices was an argument of the fear of God, of the truth of grace, and of the sincerity of repentance.

Ver. 14. *And the soldiers likewise demanded of him*, etc.] Or "asked him": why our translators have rendered it, "demanded of him", I know not, unless they thought that such language best suited persons of a military character. Some think these were Gentile soldiers, since it does not look so likely that the Romans would employ Jews as soldiers in their own country; though it is more probable that they were Jews, in the pay of the Romans, who belonged to Herod, tetrarch of Galilee, or to Philip of Ituraea, whose dominions lay near the place where John was: since it is certain, that there were many of the Jews that betook themselves to a military life; and seeing John instructed them in no part of natural or revealed religion, but what was suitable to their character and employment: for upon these men saying,

what shall we do? to avoid the threatened ruin, and to prove the truth of our repentance, that so we may be admitted to the holy ordinance of baptism; John replied,

do violence to no man; or "shake" him, or put him, into bodily fear, by threatening, hectoring, and bullying him, and drawing the sword upon him, which is usual, upon the least offence, for such persons to do;

neither accuse any falsely, or play the sycophant; who, in order to flatter some, bring malicious accusations against others; and which was a vice that too much prevailed among the Jewish soldiery; who either to curry favour with the Roman officers and governors, would wrongfully accuse their fellow soldiers, or country men, to them; or in order to extort sums of money from them, that they might live in a more luxurious manner than their common pay would admit of: wherefore, it follows,

and be content with your wages; allowed by the government, and do not seek to increase them by any unlawful methods, as by mutiny and sedition, by rebelling against your officers, or by ill usage of the people. The Jewish Rabbins have adopted this word, aymspa, into their language in the Misnic and Talmudic writings [f189]: and their gloss explains it by the money, for the soldiers, and the hire of soldiers, as here; and it includes every thing which by the Romans were given to their soldiers for pay, and which was food as well as money.

Ver. 15. *And as the people were in expectation, of the coming of the Messiah*; Daniel's seventy weeks being now accomplished, the sceptre being departed from Judah, and the Romans having the government in their hands, from whom they hoped for a deliverance by Christ;

and all men mused in their hearts of John; whether he were the Christ, or no; about which they had many reasonings and debates: some doubting of it, others ready to believe it, from his extraordinary birth, the singular holiness of his life, the power and efficacy of his doctrine, the new ordinance he administered, the restoration of religion by him, the freedom he took in reproving the vices of men, and the apt answers he gave to the questions now put to him. And that the Messiah was born, though he was not, as yet, made manifest, they might conclude, not only from the fulfilment of several prophecies, but from the song of Zacharias, the declaration of Simeon and Anna in the temple, and of the wise men that came from the east; and John appearing in such an unusual manner, they

were ready to hope that he was the person; though they did not consider that he was of the tribe of Levi, and not of Judah; from which latter the Messiah was to spring; but this might be unattended to by them, and Satan might have an hand in it to hide the true Messiah from them.

Ver. 16. *John answered, saying unto them all*, etc.] For some of them might not only so think in their hearts, but express with their mouths the apprehension they had of him; and might put the question to him, as the priests and Levites from Jerusalem afterwards did; or he might know the secret thoughts of their hearts by divine revelation; or be apprized by his disciples of the private sentiments of the people concerning him: and therefore, to put them out of doubt, and that he might not have an honour conferred on him, which did not belong to him, he addressed himself, in a very public manner, to the whole multitude, in the hearing of them all: though the word "all" is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions, but rightly retained in others, being in all copies, and having a considerable emphasis on it: and said the following words.

I indeed baptize you with water; Matthew adds "unto repentance"; upon the profession of repentance:

but one mightier than I cometh; that is, *after me*; as Matthew records it:

the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; neither to bear his shoes after him, as Matthew says, nor to untie his shoe string, or unbuckle his shoe, both which were menial actions with the Jews: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; as he did some of their nation, his own disciples, on the day of pentecost; (See Gill on "Matthew 3:11")

Ver. 17. *Whose fan is in his hand*, etc.] (See Gill on "Matthew 3:12")

Ver. 18. *And many other thing's*, etc.] Relating to the person and office of the Messiah, to the nature of his kingdom, the Gospel dispensation, and to faith in him; for he pointed him out to the people, and exhorted them to believe in him, and expressed much joy and pleasure on the hearing of his success and increase; and these, with others beside, in his "exhortation", or whilst he was

exhorting, or "comforting", *preached he unto the people*: publishing the Gospel, the good news, and glad tidings of the Messiah's being come, and of life, righteousness, and salvation by him.

Ver. 19. *But Herod the tetrarch being reproved by him*, etc.] By John, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions add:

for Herodias his brother Philip's wife; for taking her to wife, whilst his brother Philip was living. The account, which the Jewish chronologer [f190] gives, of this Herod, and of this fact of his, and John's reproving him for it, and the consequence of it, perfectly agrees with this of the evangelist.

> "Herod Antipater, and there are some that call him, yqrjyj "the tetrarch", was a son of Herod the first, and brother of Archelaus'; and he was the third king of the family of Herod; and he was very wicked, and a destroying man: many of the wise men of Israel he slew with the sword; and he took the wife of his brother Philip, whilst he was alive, to himself for wife; and John, the high priest, because wjykwh, "he reproved him" for this, he slew him with the sword, with many of the wise men of Israel."

And John reproved him not only for this sin, but others:

and for all the evils which Herod had done; his revellings, debaucheries, murders, etc. all which John, in great faithfulness, and with much freedom, told him and rebuked him for: for Herod had had a particular respect for him, and often had him with him, and heard him gladly, when John had an opportunity of speaking personally to him.

Ver. 20. *Added yet this above all*, etc.] This sin to all other sins, and which was of a more flagitious nature; and attended with more aggravating circumstances, especially in the issue of it:

that he shut up John in prison; in the castle of Machaerus, by the instigation of Herodias; (See Gill on "Matthew 14:3").

Ver. 21. *Now when all the people were baptized*, etc.] That came from several parts to John for this purpose, even as many as he judged to be proper subjects of that ordinance, as many of the common people, publicans, soldiers, etc.

it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized; of John in Jordan, he coming from Galilee thither on that account:

and praying; after he was baptized, for the coming down of the Spirit upon him, as man, to anoint, and qualify him for his office he was now about to

enter on publicly: and for success in it, and for a testimony from heaven, that he was the Son of God, and true Messiah:

the heaven was opened; (see Gill on "<4016>Matthew 3:16").

Ver. 22. *And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape*, etc.] In a corporeal form, in a visible manner, and was seen with bodily eyes, at least by John the administrator; to whom this was a signal of his being the Messiah, and a fresh confirmation of it:

like a dove upon him; either in the form of a dove, or this corporeal form, whatever it was, descended and hovered on him as a dove does:

and a voice came from heaven; at the same time the Holy Ghost came down upon him; which said,

thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased: and was the voice of the Father; and the whole of this was an answer of Christ's prayer; (See Gill on "<4016>Matthew 3:16-17") (See Gill on "<4011>Mark 1:11").

Ver. 23. *And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age*, etc.] Or Jesus, when he was baptized and began his public ministry, was about thirty years of age: an age at which the priests, under the law, who were typical of Christ, entered on their work, (<0423>Numbers 4:23 <1323>1 Chronicles 23:3) The word, "began", is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions: and is often indeed redundant, as in (<4008>Luke 3:8) and frequently in Mark's Gospel. The Arabic version renders it, "Jesus began to enter into the thirtieth year", which carries the sense the same with our translation:

being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph; who had espoused Mary before she was with child of the Holy Ghost, and afterwards took her to wife, and brought up her son; so that it was not known but that he was the son of Joseph. Whether or no the Jewish notion of the Messiah, the son of Joseph [f191] may not take its rise from hence, may be considered: however, Joseph might very rightly be called, as he was supposed to be, the father of Jesus, by a rule which obtains with the Jews [f192] that he

> "that brings up, and not he that begets, is called the father,"

or parent; of which they give various instances [f193] in Joseph, in Michal, and in Pharaoh's daughter.

Which was the son of Eli; meaning, not that Joseph was the son of Eli; for he was the son of Jacob, according to (<4016>Matthew 1:16), but Jesus was the son of Eli; and which must be understood, and carried through the whole genealogy, as thus; Jesus the son of Matthat, Jesus the son of Levi, Jesus the son of Melchi, etc. till you come to Jesus the son of Adam, and Jesus the Son of God; though it is true indeed that Joseph was the son of Eli, having married his daughter; Mary was the daughter of Eli: and so the Jews speak of one Mary, the daughter of Eli, by whom they seem to design the mother of our Lord: for they tell [f194] us of one,

> "that saw, yl[tb µyrm, "Mary the daughter of Eli" in the shades, hanging by the fibres of her breasts; and there are that say, the gate, or, as elsewhere [f195], the bar of the gate of hell is fixed to her ear."

By the horrible malice, in the words, you may know who is meant: however, this we gain by it, that by their own confession, Mary is the daughter of Eli; which accords with this genealogy of the evangelist, who traces it from Mary, under her husband Joseph; though she is not mentioned, because of a rule with the Jews [f196], that

> "the family of the mother is not called a family."

Ver. 24. *Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi*, etc.] These two, Grotius says, are omitted in the ancient exemplars; and he thinks they ought to be left out; and for which he mentions the authorities of Irenaeus, Africanus, Eusebius, Nazianzen, Jerom, and Augustin: but not only the Vulgate Latin, but all the Oriental versions, retain them:

which was the son of Melchi: and who, he thinks, was the immediate father of Eli:

which was the son of Janna: frequent mention is made, in the Jewish writings [f197] of aklm yany, "king Jannai", who is said to be the same with king Jochanan, or John, the son of Simeon, the son of Mattithiah, that was called Hyrcanus; and his son Alexander, that reigned after him, was also called Jannai [f198]; but whether either of these is the same with this Janna, is not certain: but this may be observed, that they were both before the times of Herod, and the birth of Jesus, some years. And Jannai is called; in the chronicle of Jedidiah of Alexandria, or Philo the Jew [f199], Hyrcanus the second, who reigned sixteen years:

which was the son of Joseph. This Joseph, according to the same chronicle, is called Joseph the second, and surnamed Arsis, and was greatly honoured by Ptolemy, and governed sixty years; and accordingly we shall meet with another Joseph anon.

Ver. 25. *Which was the son of Mattathias*, etc.] Surnamed Siloah, by the same Philo, who governed ten years:

which was the son of Amos; whose surname, according to the same author, was Sirag; or, as some, Syrach, or Shyrach, who governed fourteen years:

which was the son of Naum; who was called Mesalut, or Maslot, who governed seven years:

which was the son of Esli; or Eli, surnamed Haggai, who governed eight years;

which was the son of Nagge: with Philo he is called Nagid Artasat, or Artaxat, and said to govern ten years.

Ver. 26. *Which was the son of Maath*, etc.] Surnamed Aser, who governed nine years:

which was the son of Mattathias; called Eli Matathias, who governed twelve years:

which was the son of Semei; and named Abner Semei, who governed eleven years:

which was the son of Joseph; called Joseph the first, who governed seven years:

which was the son of Juda; who, according to the same writer, must be Judas, surnamed Hyrcanus the first, who governed fourteen years.

Ver. 27. *Which was the son of Joanna*, etc.] Johannes, or John, the son of Rhesa Mesullam, who governed fifty three years:

which was the son of Rhesa, called, by the above writer, Rhesa Mesullam; (<1319>1 Chronicles 3:19) and said, by him, to govern sixty six years:

which was the son of Zorobabel who governed fifty eight years:

which was the son of Salathiel; the same with Shealthiel; (See Gill on "<4012>Matthew 1:12")

which was the son of Neri; the same with Jechonias, according to the Alexandrian, chronicle; (See Gill on "<40112>Matthew 1:12")

Ver. 28. *Which was the son of Melchi*, etc.] This, with the following, "Addi, Cosam, Elmodam, Er, Jose, Eliezer, Jorim, Matthat, Levi, Simeon, Juda, Joseph, Jonan, Eliakim, Melea, Menan, and Mattatha", all lived before the captivity, and were of the house of David, in the line of Nathan; for it follows,

which was the son of Nathan: of which persons no mention is made in the Old Testament, nor even of Mattatha, the son of Nathan: his sons that are mentioned are Azariah, Zabud, and Ahishar, (<110405>1 Kings 4:5,6) which last is thought to be the same with Mattatha: that Nathan was the son of David, as the order of things here directs,

which was the son of David, is clear from (<100514>2 Samuel 5:14 <130305>1 Chronicles 3:5, 14:4).

Ver. 32. *Which was the son of Jesse*, etc.] The order of the persons from Jesse to Abraham, as Obed, Boaz, Salmon, Naasson, Aminadab, Aram, or Ram, Esrom, (for Joram, which the Arabic version here inserts, is to be rejected,) Phares, Judah, Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, perfectly agrees with the genealogy of Matthew, and the accounts of the Old Testament:

which was the son of Thara; the same with Terah, (<011126>Genesis 11:26,27) called by the Septuagint, Tharra:

which was the son of Nachor;, the same with Nahor, (<011124>Genesis 11:24,25) called there, by the Septuagint, as here.

Ver. 35. *Which was the son of Saruch*, etc.] The Septuagint call him Serouch, the same with Serug, (<011122>Genesis 11:22,23)

which was the son of Ragau; so the Septuagint, the same with Reu, (<011420>Genesis 40:20,21)

which was the son of Phaleg; the same with Peleg, (<011118>Genesis 11:18,19) the Septuagint reads as here: "which was the son of Heber", or Eber, (<011116>Genesis 11:16,17)

which was the son of Sala, or Salah, (<011114>Genesis 11:14,15) the Septuagint there call him Sala.

Ver. 36. *Which was the son of Cainan*, etc.] This Cainan is not mentioned by Moses in (<011112>Genesis 11:12) nor has he ever appeared in any Hebrew copy of the Old Testament, nor in the Samaritan version, nor in the Targum; nor is he mentioned by Josephus, nor in (<130124>1 Chronicles 1:24) where the genealogy is repeated; nor is it in Beza's most ancient Greek copy of Luke: it indeed stands in the present copies of the Septuagint, but was not originally there; and therefore could not be taken by Luke from thence, but seems to be owing to some early negligent transcriber of Luke's Gospel, and since put into the Septuagint to give it authority: I say “early”, because it is in many Greek copies, and in the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, even in the Syriac, the oldest of them; but ought not to stand neither in the text, nor in any version: for certain it is, there never was such a Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, for Salah was his son; and with him the next words should be connected,

which was the son of Arphaxad; (<011112>Genesis 11:12,13)

which was the son of Sem, or Shem, (<011110>Genesis 11:10,11)

which was the son of Noe, or Noah, (<010532>Genesis 5:32)

which was the son of Lamech, (<010528>Genesis 5:28,29)

Ver. 37. *Which was* the son *of Mathusala*, etc.] The same with Methuselah; and so he is called by the Septuagint in (<010525>Genesis 5:25-27)

which was the son of Enoch, (<010521>Genesis 5:21,22)

which was the son of Jared (<010518>Genesis 5:18,19),

which was the son of Maleleel; the same with Mahalaleel; who is also so called by the seventy interpreters, in (<010515>Genesis 5:15,16) as here; which was the son of Cainan, (<010512>Genesis 5:12,13).

Ver. 38. *Which was the son of Enos*, etc.] (<010509>Genesis 5:9,10)

which was the son of Seth, (<010506>Genesis 5:6,7)

which was the son of Adam (<010503>Genesis 5:3,4)

which was the son of God: not begotten, as all the rest were, by their immediate parents, but created by God, in a supernatural manner, out of the dust of the earth, and quickened with the breath of God: so Adam is, by the Jews [f200] called, µyhl a ^b, “the son of God”: though this may be

understood of Jesus; the son of Joseph, of Heli, etc. and so on to this clause, “the son of God”; being so as a divine person, to whom the human nature was united, and on that account so called; (see <4001 35>Luke 1:35) Thus, as Matthew gives us the regal line of Christ, showing him to be heir to the throne of his father David, Luke gives the natural line of Christ; and as Matthew traces his genealogy down from Abraham, in a descending line, to Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus, Luke traces it upwards, in an ascending line, from Mary by Joseph, even up to Adam; to whom the Messiah was first promised, and who was a type of the second Adam, from whom he descended, though not by ordinary generation; nay, even to God himself: Christ, according to his divine nature, was the only begotten of the Father; and as to his human nature, had a body prepared by him, and in the fulness of time was God manifest in the flesh.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 4

Ver. 1. *And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost*, etc.] The Spirit of God having descended on him at his baptism, and afresh anointed, and filled his human nature with his gifts, whereby, as man, he was abundantly furnished for the great work of the public ministry, he was just about to enter upon; yet must first go through a series of temptations, and which, through the fulness of the Holy Spirit in him, he was sufficiently fortified against.

Returned from Jordan; where he came, and had been with John, and was baptized by him; which, when over, he went back from the same side of Jordan, to which he came:

and was led by the Spirit; the same Spirit, or Holy Ghost he was full of; (see Gill on "Matthew 4:1")

into the wilderness; of Judea, which lay near Jordan, and where John had been preaching and baptizing, namely, in the habitable: part of it: but this was that part, which was uninhabited by men, and was infested with wild beasts, and where Christ could neither have the comfort and benefit of human society, nor any thing for the sustenance of life, and where he was exposed to the utmost danger; and so in circumstances very opportune and favourable for Satan to ply him with his temptations, for which purpose he was led thither.

Ver. 2. *Being forty days tempted of the devil*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read the phrase, "forty days", in connection with the latter part of the preceding verse; according to which the sense is, that Jesus was led by the Spirit forty days in the wilderness, before he was tempted by Satan, and in order to it: but our reading is confirmed by (Mark 1:13) who affirms, as here, that he was so long tempted by Satan; as he might be invisibly, and, by internal suggestions, before he appeared visibly, and attacked him openly, with the following temptations. The Ethiopic version adds, "and forty nights": and such were these days in which Christ was in the wilderness, and fasted, and was

tempted there: they, were such as included nights, as well as days; (see Matthew 4:2)

and in those days he did eat nothing not any sort of food whatever; he tasted of no kind of eatables or drinkables, during the whole space of forty days; nor in the nights neither, in which the Jews allowed persons to eat in times of fasting; (See Gill on "Matthew 4:2"). And this entire abstinence, as it shows the power of Christ in the supporting of his human nature, without food, for such a time, and the disadvantages under which, as man, combated with Satan; so, that this fast was never designed as an example to his followers, and to be imitated by them:

and when they were ended; the forty days, and forty nights:

he afterward hungered; which he did not before; and which shows the truth of his human nature; and is mentioned to observe the occasion of the following temptation, and the advantage on the tempter's side.

Ver. 3. *And the devil said unto him*, etc.] Who now visibly appeared, and spoke unto him with an articulate voice:

if thou be the Son of God; as has been just now declared by a voice from heaven; or seeing thou art in such a relation to God, and so equal to him, and possessed of all divine perfections, and among the rest, of almighty power; wherefore, since thou art hungry, and in a wilderness, where no food is to be had,

command this stone that it be made bread; say but the word, and this stone, which he held out to him, or pointed at, as lying before them, or any one of the stones, which were in sight, for Matthew speaks of them in the plural number, will immediately be converted into bread, if he was what he was said to be: this he suggests might easily be effected by him, and he had no need to continue hungry.

Ver. 4. *And Jesus answered him, saying, it is written*, etc.] In (Deuteronomy 8:3)

that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God; suggesting hereby, that when it is the will of God, human nature may be maintained by the influence of divine power, without the use of ordinary means; and that bread itself, without a divine blessing, would not support life; and so not this stone, or stones, if turned into it: wherefore, it became

him, as man, to depend upon God, submit to his will, and wait the issue of providence, who had brought him thither, and not take any such steps to remove his hunger; and especially at his solicitations, who had no other end, but to have him, if he could, at his beck and will. By “every word of God”, is not meant all Scripture, and every part of it, which is given by inspiration of God, and may be said to proceed out of his mouth; neither the law, and the precepts of it, as the Jews interpret it, by obedience to which the Israelites lived in the land Canaan; nor the Gospel, and the truths of it, which are the wholesome words of Christ, and the words of faith and good doctrine, with which believers are nourished, and are that to the soul, as bread, or any other wholesome food, is to the body; for of spiritual living, and the means of that, the text is not to be understood; but either of the word of God's power, by which he upholds and sustains all things in being, which he has created; and with which he could, if he would, support the bodies of men without the use of any sort of food; as the bodies of Moses and Elijah, and now the body of Christ, were for many days; and as the bodies of the saints will be after the resurrection, to all eternity: or else the blessing of God, which he commands on bread, and other food, and the virtue and strength which he puts into them, and conveys by them, are meant, without which not, any sort of food is nourishing; or rather every thing which God declares and orders to be eaten, even every creature of his which is good, and not to be refused, but received, with thanksgiving, being sanctified by the word of God, and prayer, as well as bread; so manna, which is mentioned in the text in Deuteronomy; and likewise any other food, as pulse: and water, he is pleased to direct to. Some little difference there is between Matthew and Luke, in citing this passage; in the latter it is, “by every word of God”; and in the former it is nearer the Hebrew text in (Deuteronomy 8:3) “by, every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”; and so some copies read here, as do also the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: but neither of them have the words exactly as in the original text, where it is added, “doth man live”; which, doubtless, were not produced by our Lord, as being unnecessary, and therefore not mentioned by any of the evangelists.

Ver. 5. *And the devil taking him up into an high mountain*, etc.] Somewhere near Jerusalem, but what mountain is not certain. The Evangelist Luke makes this to be the second temptation, which, with Matthew, is the third and last; and whose order seems to be more proper and natural than this, and to be the true and genuine one, which Luke

neglects, though he does not contradict it: he relates matters of fact, without attending to the strict order of them; whereas Matthew strictly regards it, observing, that after the first temptation, “then the devil taketh him, etc.” and that being finished, says, “again the devil taketh him, etc.” and upon those words, “get thee hence”, with what follows, remarks, that then the devil leaveth him: all which show, that his order is the most accurate, and to be followed. But to go on with the account; the devil having taken him from the pinnacle of the temple, and carried him to some high mountain, as Lebanon, or Pisgah, or some other near Jerusalem, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world; not of the Roman empire only, though that consisted of many kingdoms, and is called the whole world, (<4201>Luke 2:1) where the same word is used, as here; but of the whole universe, every kingdom that was under the heavens; which he represented to Christ, not in a map, since the glory of them could not be described in that way: for

he showed him all the glory of them, as Matthew adds; and for this a mountain was no more a proper place, than any other; nor was, it any real object he presented to his bodily sight, or any real prospect he gave him of the kingdoms of the world, which are not to be seen from any one place, no not one of them, not even from the highest mountain in the world, and still less to be seen together at once in a moment: but this was a mere phantasm, a deception of the sight, with which he endeavoured to impose on Christ, but could not; nor did Christ; who is the maker of the world, and the governor among the nations, need any representation of the kingdoms of the world from him, (see Gill on “<4008>Matthew 4:8”) and this he did in a moment of time; in the twinkling of an eye, not by succession, and in process of time, as one kingdom after another, but all at once, and in an instant: what a moment of time is, (see Gill on “<4008>Matthew 4:8”).

Ver. 6. *And the devil said unto him, all this power will I give thee*, etc.]. That is, all the kingdoms of the world, and all the government and jurisdiction over them:

and the glory of them; the riches, honours, and grandeur belonging to them:

for that is delivered unto me: so far he spoke modestly, in that he owned an original, superior governor of them, by whom he pretended they were transferred to him; but lied, in that he suggested they were put into his hands by him, who had the supreme power over them; and that he acted by

his constitution and appointment, as a deputy under him; when what power he had, as the God of the world, was by usurpation, and not by designation of God; and at most only by permission: and least of all was it true what follows;

and to whomsoever I will I give it; or “these”, as the Vulgate Latin reads; that is, these kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; when so to do is the peculiar and sole prerogative of God: nor can Satan dispose of the goods of a single man, nor of a herd of swine, nor enter into them without leave from God.

Ver. 7. *If thou therefore wilt worship me*, etc.] Or “before me”; that is, fall down before him, and give him divine worship and homage. A wide difference there is between a good angel and a fallen angel; a good angel will not suffer himself to be worshipped by men, but directs to the worship of God only, (Revelation 19:10, 22:9) but a fallen angel not only seeks to be worshipped by men, but by the Son of God himself, even by him whom all the holy angels worship, (Hebrews 1:6) This was what Satan at first aspired after, and by which he fell: he affected deity, and sought to have divine worship given him; and in this sin he still persisted, and grew worse and worse, more daring and insolent, desiring worship of him who is God over all, blessed for ever.

All shall be thine: he promises to give him a title to all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, on condition of homage done him, by which he should hold the tenure of them under him; these being delivered up solely to him, by the author of them; and he having them in his power, to dispose of them at pleasure. O horrid impudence, arrogance, and insolence!

Ver. 8. *Jesus answered and said unto him*, etc.] The following words, with indignation at him, and detestation of his proposals:

get thee behind me, Satan; which are omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and in three ancient copies of Beza's, and in his most ancient one; but stand in other copies, and in the Arabic version.

For it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. This passage stands in (Deuteronomy 6:13) where the words are, “thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and thou shalt swear by his name”: the last clause is not cited by Christ at all, swearing being only a species, or part of religious worship; and the other two clauses are somewhat different from the original text, as here cited, and may be

accounted for: instead of “fear the Lord”, it is “worship the Lord”; and the one well explains the other; the fear of God being often, in Scripture, put for the whole worship of God, both internal and external: and in the next clause, the word “only” is added by Christ, as expressing the true sense of it, and agreeably to other places of Scripture, particularly (<0903>1 Samuel 7:3), (see Gill on “<4004>Matthew 4:10”).

Ver. 9. *And he brought him to Jerusalem*, etc.] The holy city, as Matthew calls it, from the wilderness thither; where he found him, and first attacked him, and perhaps he brought him through the air: and set him on a pinnacle of the temple; which was in Jerusalem; (See Gill on “<4006>Matthew 4:6”).

And said unto him, if thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence; from the pinnacle of the temple, on which he was set; (See Gill on “<4006>Matthew 4:6”).

Ver. 10. *For it is written*, etc.] In (<1911>Psalm 91:11,12) “He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.” It is an observation made long ago by Jerom, on (<1911>Psalm 91:11,12) that Satan, in citing this text, has left out the middle clause,

to keep thee in all thy ways, which he knew was against him, and has only taken that which made for him; and on (<4006>Matthew 4:6) he observes, that this prophecy is not concerning Christ, but any holy man; therefore the devil wrongly interpreted Scripture; and that had he certainly known, that this is written concerning the Saviour, he ought to have cited what follows, “thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder, the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet”: and in these observations, he has been followed by many interpreters; but Surenhusius [f201] is not satisfied with them, especially with what respects the manner of citation, leaving out some words, and not mentioning others that follow; since such a way of citing perfectly agrees with the method of the Jewish doctors; who reckon one word of a passage being cited all that follows, if it makes to the purpose, all one as if it was cited, and to be so accounted; and since, if such a method is blame worthy, Christ, the evangelists, and apostles, must be blamed also, seeing they frequently use the same, which can never be allowed of: besides, supposing the clause omitted was added, he asks of what advantage it would be? since the two verses being connected together as they are, the sense with respect to God's providence and preservation, is clear enough and complete: and I must confess, though I have pursued the

above observation, in the note on (see Gill on "<4006>Matthew 4:6") yet by comparing the evangelists together, it is not a clear case to me, what Satan did leave out, or whether any thing at all; but it seems rather, that the words are put, as the evangelists themselves thought fit to transcribe them, in which they are not exactly alike; more is left out by one, than by another; Matthew leaves out the whole clause, "to keep thee in all thy ways"; but Luke only omits these words, "in all thy ways": but I am still of opinion, that the passage is applicable to Christ, as to any holy good man, yet it appears that Satan failed not, neither in the manner of citing it, nor in the application of it to Christ; but by wresting it to a wicked purpose, to countenance an action unwarrantable and criminal, being a tempting God; when the text only regards the preservation of good men in the way of duty, trusting in the Lord; and which is confirmed by the answer of Christ, who takes no notice of any faulty citation of the passage, or misapplication of it, as to his person; only suggests, by opposing another Scripture to him, that what he had produced, was to a wrong and wicked purpose; and to take it in his sense, would be to tempt God, (See Gill on "<4006>Matthew 4:6").

Ver. 11. (See Gill on "<4010>Luke 4:10")

Ver. 12. *And Jesus answering said unto him, it is said*, etc.] In (<0506>Deuteronomy 6:16)

Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God: in the text in Deuteronomy the words are, "ye shall not tempt the Lord your God." The second person plural, is here changed into the second person singular, to accommodate the words to Satan; whom Christ singly addresses, and makes answer to, and who was under this same general law as other rational creatures: and Jehovah may be called the Lord his God, as he is his creator and governor; by whom he is upheld in his being, and to whom he is subject, whether he will or not; though not his covenant God: and even if our Lord Jesus Christ is intended by the Lord God, as some think; he is God over all; over all principalities and powers, good and bad, by whom all are created, and in whom all consist; and whose power and authority over Satan and his angels, have abundantly appeared, in dispossessing devils out of men, sending them where he pleased, and in spoiling the powers of darkness, and in destroying him that had the power of death, the devil; and great insolence and wickedness it must be in a creature, to tempt the Lord his God, in any way, or form whatever; (See Gill on "<4007>Matthew 4:7")

Ver. 13. *And when the devil had ended all the temptation*, etc.] Or "all his temptations", as the Syriac version reads; not only the last mentioned, but all the rest, whether inward or outward, in a visible or in an invisible manner; whether during his forty days fast, or after he was an hungered, when he had tried every way, and all sorts of temptations with him; and when he had done this, "in", or "with all his power", as the Ethiopic version reads; "when he had done his utmost", and his best; and as the Persic version adds, "and profited nothing"; could not succeed, or get any advantage over him:

he departed from him for a season; till another opportunity should offer, or till that time should come, when would be the hour and power of darkness; and by means of one of his disciples, he should bruise his heel, and bring him to an accursed death; (<430140>John 14:30 <422253>Luke 22:53).

Ver. 14. *And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit*, etc.] Of which he was full, and by which he was led into the wilderness, and had combated with Satan, and had got the victory over him; and by virtue of which, he entered on his public ministry, wrought miracles, and taught with authority. A like way of speaking is used by the Targumist, on (<330308>Micah 3:8). I am filled, hawbn jwr Pwqtb, "with the power of the spirit of prophecy", from before the Lord. Moreover, this phrase is used, to show that his return

into Galilee, where he had been brought up, and from whence he came to John at Jordan, did not arise from a natural love to his country, and a fond desire of being there again; but was owing to the powerful impulse of the Holy Spirit, which was in him, and moved him to return thither; where he was to begin his ministry, and work his miracles, and so fulfil a prophecy of him, in (Is 9:1,2) (see <400412>Matthew 4:12-16).

And there went out a fame of him through all the region round about: throughout all Galilee and Syria, Decapolis and Judea; (see <400423>Matthew 4:23-25), the report of his doctrines and miracles, was spread far and near; and on account of them, he became the subject of the common talk of people every where, who highly applauded and commended him for them.

Ver. 15. *And he taught in their synagogues*, etc.] In the public places of worship used by the Galilaeans, where they met on sabbath days and weekdays, to read and pray, and hear the Scriptures expounded; and Christ

engaging here as a public teacher, was the reason of his fame being spread around the country:

being glorified of all; that heard him: they were astonished at his doctrine; they wondered at his gracious words; they praised him as a preacher; and glorified him, and God for him, because of the mighty works which were done by him.

Ver. 16. *And he came to Nazareth*, etc.] After some length of time, when he had gone through all Galilee, and had acquired great credit and reputation by his ministry and miracles; he came to the place,

where he had been brought up: where he was conceived, though not born; and where he had his education, and wrought at a trade, and was well known to the inhabitants; and therefore it was proper that he should first exercise his ministry, and obtain a character in other places, which would prepare him a reception among his townsmen, who otherwise, in all likelihood, would have treated him at once with neglect and contempt:

and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day. This was either his custom from his youth, when he dwelt at Nazareth, while a private person, and before he was engaged in public service, whither he had used to repair as an inhabitant of the city, and a member of the congregation, to attend synagogue worship, as he now did; or it refers to his custom, since he became a public preacher, who at Capernaum, or any other city of Galilee, where there was a synagogue, used to frequent it, whether on sabbath days, or any other, and so he did here:

and stood up for to read: by rising and standing up, and perhaps by some other gesture he signified his inclination to read a portion of Scripture, if liberty was given, and a book delivered him, for, as yet, he had no book to read in; nor might any read in public, unless he had an order from the congregation, or the chief of it; for so runs the Jewish canon [f202]:

> “a reader may not read until the chief of the congregation bids him read; yea, even a minister of the congregation, or a ruler of the synagogue, may not read of himself, until the congregation, or the chief among them, bids him read.”

This custom of reading the Scriptures publicly, was an appointment of Moses, according to the account of the Jews; who say [f203]

> “Moses our master, ordered the Israelites to read in the law publicly, on the sabbath, and on the second and fifth days of the week, in the morning; so that they might not be three days without hearing the law and Ezra ordered, that they should read so at the evening sacrifice, every sabbath, on account of those that sit in the corners of streets; and also he ordered, that three men should read on the second and fifth days of the week, and that they should not read less than twenty verses.”

It was also the custom to stand at reading the law and the prophets: with regard to the book of Esther, the rule is [f204] this;

> “he that reads the “Megilia”, or book of “Esther”, stands or sits.”

That is, as their commentators [f205] explain it, if he will he may stand, and if he will he may sit, he may do as he pleases; but so he might not in reading the law: hence it is asked [f206],

> “why is it not so in the law? R. Abhu replies, because the Scripture says, (<050503>Deuteronomy 5:3) “Stand thou here by me.””

Wherefore they say [f207], the law must be read standing, and it is even forbidden to lean on any thing. Christ conformed to these rules; he went into the synagogue to read on the sabbath day, and stood up when he read, and waited for order, and a book to be given him to read: it may be asked, how he came to be admitted to read publicly in the synagogue, when he was not of the tribe of Levi, nor was he brought up in the schools and academies of the Jews, and was known to be a mechanic? It may be observed, that common Israelites, as well as priests and Levites, were allowed to read the Scriptures publicly; every sabbath day, seven persons read, a priest, a Levite, and five Israelites: the order was this; the priest read first, and after him the Levite, and after him an Israelite: and it is said to be a known custom to this day, that even an unlearned priest read before the greatest wise man in Israel; and he that was greater than his companion in wisdom, read first [f208]. Now Christ, on account of the great fame he was in for his wisdom and mighty works, was admitted to this public service, though he was no Levite, and known by the inhabitants of this place, to have been brought up to a trade.

Ver. 17. *And there was delivered unto him*, etc.] By the “Chazan”, or minister, to whom he gave it again, (<420420>Luke 4:20), for the “Chazan” of

the synagogue, was, çmç, "the minister" [f209]; one part of whose business was, to deliver the book of the law to, and take it from him that read: when an high priest read, the method taken was this [f210];

> "the "Chazan", or minister of the synagogue, took the book of the law, and gave it to the ruler of the synagogue, and the ruler of the synagogue gave it to the "Sagan", and the "Sagan" gave it to the high priest, and the high priest stood and received, and read standing."

The same method was observed, when a king read in the book of the law [f211]; but when a common priest, or an inferior person read, so much ceremony was not used, as to hand the book from one to another: the manner in their synagogues and schools, was this [f212];

> "the "Chazan" brought out the book of the law, and the priest read, and after him a Levite; then the "Chazan" of the synagogue brought the book of the law down, to the head of the captivity, and all the people stood; and he took the book of the law into his hands, and "stood and read" in it; and the heads of the schools stood with him, and the head of the university of Sofa interpreted it; and returned the book of the law to the "Chazan", and he returned it to the chest."

That part of the sacred volume which was delivered unto Jesus at this time, was

the book of the prophet Esaias; it is very likely, that the lesson out of the prophets for that day, was to be read out of the prophecy of Isaiah; and it seems probable, that it was the single book of Isaiah, or that prophecy rolled up by itself, in one volume, that was delivered to Christ; as the law was divided, into five parts, each fifth part was sometimes in a book, or volume by itself: hence a fifth part of the law, is by the Jews interpreted [f213], rps, "a book" of the law, in which there is but one fifth part; so might the prophets be in separate and distinct books, and it as if they sometimes were, by the following account [f214] a man may

> "join together the law, the prophets, and the holy writings, as one, the words of R. Meir. R. Juda says, the law by itself, the prophets by themselves, and the holy writings by themselves; and the wise men say, each by themselves (i.e. each book by itself;) and says R.

> Judah, it happened to Baithus ben Zunin, that he had eight prophets joined together as one; and there are that say, that he had not, but, wmx[ynpb djа djа, "every one by itself.""

And when he had opened the book; or unrolled it, for books formerly were written in rolls of paper and parchment; and in this form, is the book of the law with the Jews, in their synagogues, to this day:

> "all books, they say [f215], are rolled from the beginning to the end of them, but the book of the law is rolled to the middle of it, and a pillar, or column, is made for it here and there; says R. Eliezer with R. Zadok, so the writers of books in Jerusalem made their books: the Rabbins teach, that they do not make the book of the law its length, more than its circumference, nor its circumference more than its length."

Such a roll, or volume, of the prophet Isaiah, Christ unrolled, till he came to the place he intended to read: it is a rule with the Jews [f216] that

> "they do not unroll the book of the law in the congregation, because of the glory of the congregation."

It may therefore be asked, whether Christ did not break this rule, since he unrolled the book that was given him, publicly in the synagogue? To which it may be replied, that it was lawful to unroll the book of the prophets, which was what Christ did, but not the law; for so runs another of their rules, [f217]

> "they skip in the prophets, but not in the law, because, µybrb aybn ˆylwgç, "that they unroll a prophet publicly", but they do not unroll the law publicly."

Christ having thus unrolled the volume of the prophet Isaiah, which was put into his hands by the "Chazan", or minister,

he found the place where it was written; as is expressed in the following verse, and which is to be seen in (<2610>Isaiah 61:1), and which was either the lesson of the day, or what Christ particularly sought for, and looked out; or was providentially directed to, as what was pertinent to himself, and proper to read and insist on at this time; for it was not by chance that he hit on this place, and read it, but it was according to purpose, and with design. Before

the reading of the prophets, a blessing used to be said, which was in this form [f218];

> “blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the king of the world, Who hath chosen the good prophets, and art well pleased with their words, which are said in truth; blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast chosen the law, Moses his servant, and Israel his people, and the prophets of truth and righteousness.”

Whether this was delivered by Christ, is not certain; however, he read the following passage.

Ver. 18. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*, etc.] By whom is meant, the third person in the Trinity; so called, to distinguish him from all other spirits; and who was given to Christ as man, without measure, whereby he was qualified for his great work: and intends the Spirit of Jehovah, with all his gifts and graces, who was, and abode on Christ, as a Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, of counsel and of might, of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; he was upon him, and in him, the first moment of his conception, which was by his power; and he visibly descended on him at his baptism; and the phrase denotes the permanency and continuance of him with him:

because he hath anointed me; or “that he might anoint me”: the Ethiopic version renders it, “by whom he hath anointed me”; for it was with the Holy Ghost he was anointed, as to be king and priest, so likewise to be a prophet: hence he has the name Messiah, which signifies anointed: and this unction he had, in order

to preach the Gospel to the poor: in Isaiah it is, “to the meek”; which design the same persons, and mean such as are poor in spirit, and are sensible of their spiritual poverty; have low and humble thoughts of themselves, and of their own righteousness; and seek to Christ for durable riches and true righteousness, and frankly acknowledge that all they have and are, is owing to the grace of God: and generally speaking, these are the poor of this world, and poor in their intellectuals, who have but a small degree of natural wisdom and knowledge: to these the Gospel, or glad tidings of the love, grace, and mercy of God in Christ, of peace, pardon, righteousness, life and salvation by Christ, were preached by him; and that in so clear a manner, and with such power and authority, as never was

before, or since; and for this purpose was he anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows:

he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted; whose hearts are broken, and made contrite by the word of God, under the influence of the Spirit of God, and with a sense of sin; and are wounded with it, and are humbled for it; and are in great pain and distress, and even inconsolable, and ready to faint and die; for a wounded spirit who can bear? now Christ was sent to heal such persons by his own stripes, by binding up their wounds, by the application of his blood to them, which is a sovereign balm for every wound; by the discoveries of pardoning grace to their souls, and by opening and applying the comfortable promises of the Gospel, by his Spirit, to them:

to preach deliverance to the captives; who are captives to sin, Satan, and the law; from which, there is only deliverance by him; who saves his people from their sins, redeems them from the law, and leads captivity captive; and which liberty and deliverance are preached and published in the Gospel, and by Christ the author of them:

and recovering of sight to the blind; which in the prophet is, "and the opening of the prison to them that are bound"; and which the Septuagint render, as here in Luke, and the Chaldee paraphrase in part agrees with it, interpreting it thus, "to the prisoners", rwhnl wlgta, "be ye revealed to the light" now because persons in prison are in darkness, and see no light, therefore they are represented as blind; and both are the case of sinners, they are in the prison of sin and of the law, and are blind, ignorant, and insensible of their state; until Christ both opens the prison, and sets them free, and opens their eyes, and gives them spiritual sight; when he says to the prisoners go forth, to them that are in darkness show yourselves, (<2409>Isaiah 49:9)

To set at liberty them that are bruised: these words are not in (<2601>Isaiah 61:1) but in the Septuagint version of (<2806>Isaiah 58:6) from whence they seem to be taken, or else from (<2407>Isaiah 42:7) it being allowable for a reader in the prophets, to skip from place to place, which our Lord here did, in order to explain this passage more fully.

Ver. 19. *To preach the acceptable year of the Lord*.] The time which he willed and fixed for the redemption of his people, and in which he showed his goodwill and pleasure unto sinful men, in the gift of his Son to them,

and for them; and which, as the Arabic and Syriac versions render it, was a time “acceptable to the Lord”: the sufferings of Christ were according to his will; his sacrifice was of a sweet smelling savour to him; his righteousness he was well pleased with; and the satisfaction and atonement for sin he made was a plenary and complete one: all Christ did, and suffered, were grateful to God, because hereby his perfections were glorified, his purposes, counsel, and covenant were accomplished, and his people saved. The Persic version renders it, “to preach the law acceptable to God”, neither agreeable to the original text, nor its sense; for Christ was sent to preach the Gospel, and not the law. In the Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions is added, “and the day of vengeance”, out of the prophecy in (<scripRef type="bible">Isaiah 61:2</scripRef>) but is not in any of the copies, or other versions. Our Lord did not read through all the three verses in the prophet, as it might be thought he would, and which was agreeable to the Jewish canon [f219]:

> “he that reads in the law may not read less than three verses, and he may not read to an interpreter more than one verse, and in a prophet three; and if those three are three sections, they read everyone; they skip in a prophet, but they do not skip in the law.”

This last our Lord did, though he did not strictly attend to the former. Indeed, their rule, as elsewhere [f220] given, obliged to read one and twenty verses; but this was not always observed; for

> “if on a sabbath day there was an interpreter, or a preacher, they read in a prophet three verses, or five, or seven, and were not solicitous about twenty and one [f221]”

Ver. 20. *And he closed the book*, etc.] “Or rolled it up”; and so the high priest did, after he read in the book of the law, on the day of atonement, all that was necessary to be read, hrwt rps llwg, “he rolled the book of the law”, and put it in his bosom [f222]:

and he gave it again to the minister; the Chazan [f223], who was the minister, or servant of the congregation, who had the affairs of it upon him, to let in, and bring out, and to order all things; and particularly to take care of the book of the law, and the chest, or ark in which it was. If the same rule was observed giving and taking the book of any prophet, as the book of the law; then Christ gave it to the minister, and he received it with his right hand: for so it is said [f224],

> “he that gives the book of the law to his friend, may not give it but with the right hand; and he that receives it may not receive it but with the right hand; for so was the giving of it on Mount Sinai, according to (<053302>Deuteronomy 33:2).”

And sat down; as was the manner of the Jews, when they taught, or preached; (see Gill on “<400501>Matthew 5:1”).

and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him: they looked very wistly at him, and were very attentive to what he should say, upon such a passage of Scripture, which they knew referred to the Messiah; and the rather, as they had known him formerly, and had heard that he was said to be the Messiah.

Ver. 21. *And he began to say unto them*, etc.] To preach from those words; the explanation of which he gave, though not here recorded, and applied them to himself, to whom they belonged, saying:

this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears; which is as if he should say, I am the person here spoken of; and at this present time the Spirit of God is upon me; I am anointed with the Holy Ghost, and now preach glad tidings to you, and all the good things here mentioned, and for the several ends proposed; and this Scripture has its full accomplishment which has been read unto you, and you have heard this day. So the Syriac version renders it, ˆwkyndabd, “which is in your ears”; that is, which you have now heard. The Jews themselves acknowledge, that these words are spoken of the Messiah. One of their writers [f225] says,

> “these are the words of the prophet with respect to the Messiah; for the Messiah shall say so, “because the Lord hath anointed me”, etc.”

And so said the true Messiah Jesus. Another of them expresses himself thus [f226]:

> “these are the words of the prophet with respect to the Messiah; for the Messiah shall say thus, “because the Lord hath anointed me”, etc. or they are the words of the prophet concerning himself.”

And elsewhere it is said by them [f227],

> “the holy, blessed God, will send his Messiah to us, and he shall be worthy of this, (i.e. the character of a meek person) as it is said,

(<26101>Isaiah 61:1) “he hath sent me to preach glad tidings to the meek.””

Ver. 22. *And all bare him witness*, etc.] That he was right in applying the words to the Messiah; but not that he himself was the Messiah, and that he was right in applying them to himself; for they did not believe in him, as appears from what follows

and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth; not so much at the matter, the sum, and substance of them, as expressive of the love, grace, and favour of God shown in the mission and unction of the Messiah, and in that liberty, deliverance, and salvation he was sent to effect and proclaim; as at the graceful manner in which he delivered himself, and the aptness of his words, the propriety of his diction, and the majesty, power, and authority, with which his expressions were clothed; and they were more amazed at all this, since they knew his parentage and education, and in what manner he had been brought up among them; and therefore it was astonishing to them, where he had his learning, knowledge, and wisdom:

and they said, is not this Joseph's son? the carpenter, and who was brought up, by him, to his trade, and never learned letters; from whom had he this doctrine? of whom has he learned this way of address, and to speak with so much eloquence and propriety, since his education was mean, and he has never been at the feet of any of the doctors, or has been brought up in any of the academies and schools of learning?

Ver. 23. *And he said unto them, ye will surely say unto me this proverb*, etc.] Or “parable”; for any pithy sentence, or proverbial expression, was, by the Jews, called a parable:

physician heal thyself; and which was a proverb in use with the Jews; and which is sometimes expressed thus, Æçpnysa lyz, “go heal thyself” [f228]; and sometimes in this form, Ætrgj ysa aysa, “physician, heal thy lameness” [f229]: the meaning of which is, that a man ought to look at home, and take care of himself, and of those that belonged to him; and Christ was aware that his townsmen would object this to him, that if he was the person he was said to be, and could do the miracles and cures which were ascribed to him, he ought to do something of this kind at home, among them, who were his townsmen, neighbours, relations, and acquaintance; that is, heal

their sick, lame, blind, leprous, deaf, and dumb: and that this is the sense of it, is manifest from what follows,

whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum: a place where Christ often was, and where he cured the centurion's servant of the palsy, and Peter's wife's mother of a fever, and another man sick of a palsy, and the woman of her bloody issue, and a man that had a withered hand, and where he raised Jairus's daughter from the dead:

do also here in thy country; or city, as the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions render it: hence it appears, that this was not the first of our Lord's ministry; he had preached elsewhere, and wrought miracles before he came to Nazareth, and of which his townsmen had heard; and therefore were desirous that he would do the like among them, if he was able, for they seem to be very incredulous, and to question the reports of him, and his ability to perform such things; however, if he could, they thought they had as good a right to his favours and benefits, as any, this being his native place.

Ver. 24. *And he said, verily I say unto you*, etc.] Another proverb in use among them, the meaning of which was well known to them, and was very appropriate to the present case:

no prophet is accepted in his own country; (See Gill on "Matthew 13:57")

Ver. 25. *But I tell you of a truth*, etc.] Or in truth: it answers to tmab, a phrase often used by the Jewish writers [f230]; and, which, they say [f231], wherever, and of whatsoever it is spoken, it signifies a tradition of Moses from Mount Sinai, and so that which is most true, sure, and firm, and to be depended on; and such is what our Lord hereafter delivers; yea, the word, atwnmyh, "truth", or "of a truth", and which is the same as "in truth", is used by the Jews [f232], as h[wbç ˆwçl, "the form of an oath": so that these words of Christ are a strong asseveration, and amount to a solemn oath with respect to what follows:

many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias; or Elijah, the prophet; that is, there were many that were not only widows, but poor widows, and in very famishing circumstances in the land of Israel, when Elijah was the prophet of the Lord to that people:

and when the heaven was shut up three years and six months; so that no rain descended all that time: the same is observed by (<59517>James 5:17) and though the space of time, in which there was no rain, is not so clear from the history of it in the book of Kings; yet, as this is fixed by Christ, and his apostle, and there is nothing in the history that contradicts it, it is to be received without scruple:

when great famine was throughout all the land of Israel; and which so long a drought must needs bring.

Ver. 26. *But unto none of them was Elias sent*, etc.] That is, to none of the poor widows in the land of Israel was the prophet sent, to supply them with food, and relieve them in their famishing circumstances, as might most reasonably have been expected:

save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon; which in (<111710>1 Kings 17:10) is called "Zarephath"; and by the Septuagint there, "Sarepta of Sidon", as here. Pliny [f233] speaks of it by the same name, and reckons it to Sidon:

unto a woman that was a widow: she is said by the Jews [f234], to be the mother of Jonah the prophet. Our Lord meant to observe, by this instance, as by the following, that God bestows his favours on persons in a sovereign way, and sometimes upon the most unlikely; as in a time of famine, he overlooked the poor widows in Israel, his peculiar people, and sent his prophet to a Gentile woman in one of the cities of Sidon; and therefore they should cease to wonder if he wrought his miracles in other places, and not in his own country; since this was agreeable to the divine procedure in other cases, especially since they were a cavilling and unbelieving people. The Jews say [f235], that in all that generation there was not found any one that was worthy, as this woman.

Ver. 27. *And many lepers were in Israel*, etc.] The leprosy was a disease very common among the Jews; hence those laws concerning it in (<031301>Leviticus 13:1-14:57) and it seems by this account, that it was very prevalent,

in the time of Eliseus the prophet; that is, the prophet Elisha; who, by the Septuagint, in <111916>*1 Kings 19:16* and, in other places, is called "Elisaie": and none of them was cleansed; from their leprosy, by any direction of the prophet,

saving Naaman, the Syrian: or but Naaman, who was not an Israelite, but a Syrian: he was cleansed and cured of his leprosy, being ordered by Elisha to dip himself seven times in Jordan, which he did, and was healed, (2Ki 5:142 Kings 5:14).

Ver. 28. *And all they in the synagogue*, etc.] The ruler and minister, and the whole multitude of the common people that were met together there for worship; and who before were amazed at his eloquence, and the gracefulness of his delivery; and could not but approve of his ministry, though they could not account for it, how he should come by his qualifications for it:

when they heard these things; these two instances of Elijah and Elisha, the one supplying the wants of a Sidonian woman, and the other healing a Syrian leper, when no notice were taken by them of poor widows and lepers in Israel:

were filled with wrath; for by these instances they perceived, that they were compared to the Israelites in the times of wicked Ahab and Jezebel; and that no miracles were to be wrought among them, or benefits conferred on them, though they were his townsmen; yea, that the Gentiles were preferred unto them: and indeed the calling of the Gentiles was here plainly intimated, which was always ungrateful and provoking to the Jews; and it was suggested, that the favours of God, and grace of the Messiah, are dispensed in a sovereign and discriminating way, than which nothing is more offensive to carnal minds.

Ver. 29. *And rose up*, etc.] In great wrath, and, in a noisy and tumultuous manner, before the service was well over, and without being regularly dismissed:

and thrust him out of the city; first out of the synagogue, and then out of their city, as unworthy to be in it, though an inhabitant of it; and as if he had done something deserving of death; and therefore to be punished as a malefactor without the city:

and led him unto the brow of the hill; the edge of it, where it run out, and hung over the precipice:

whereon their city was built; so that it was a city upon an hill, and very visible, to which Christ may allude in (Mat 5:14Matthew 5:14). That they might cast him down headlong; and break him to pieces: in this manner ten

thousand Edomites were destroyed by the Jews, in the times of Amaziah, (2 Chronicles 25:12) though this was not an usual way with the Jews of putting persons to death, as with some other nations [f236]; their four capital punishments were stoning, strangling, burning, and killing with the sword [f237]: nor did the inhabitants of Nazareth proceed in any judicial manner with Christ, but hurried him away, in order to destroy him, without any formal process, in the manner the zealots did; though to put any man to death, or to inflict any punishment on a person on the sabbath day, as this was, was contrary to their own canon, which runs thus [f238];

> "they do not inflict punishment on the sabbath day, even though it is the punishment of an affirmative precept; they do not beat one that is guilty, nor put to death, as it is said, (Exodus 35:3) "ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day": this is a caution to the sanhedrim, that they do not burn on the sabbath day he that is condemned to burning; and this is the law with respect to any one that is liable to the other punishments."

But these men, without any regard to the place where they were, and the worship they were concerned in, and the day of the sabbath which then was, rise up in great wrath and fury, and without any show of justice, and in the most brutish and barbarous manner attempt to take away the life of Christ.

Ver. 30. *But he passing through the midst of them*, etc.] Either in so strong and powerful a manner, and with so much swiftness, that being once out of their hands, they could not lay hold on him again; or else he put on another form, or made himself invisible to them; or he held their eyes that they could not see him, or know him, as in (Luke 24:16) however it was, he made use of, and showed his divine power; and which he did, because his time to die was not yet come, nor was he to die such a death: and this also shows, that when he did die, he laid down his life freely and voluntarily, since he could then have exerted his power, and delivered himself out of the hands of his enemies, as now: and

went his way; from Nazareth elsewhere; nor do we read of his returning there any more.

Ver. 31. *And came down to Capernaum*, etc.] Which was, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, sixteen miles or more from Nazareth; and Christ may be said to

“come down” to it, because of the situation of Nazareth, which was upon an hill:

a city of Galilee: of lower Galilee, near the sea of Galilee:

and taught them on the sabbath days: that is, he went into the synagogue at Capernaum, on the sabbath days, whenever he was there, and taught the inhabitants, explained some passage or other in the Old Testament, as he had done at Nazareth and instructed them in the doctrines of the Gospel.

Ver. 32. *And they were astonished at his doctrine*, etc.] At the matter of it, as well as the manner in which it was delivered, it being so different from the Scribes and Pharisees, they had been used to:

for his word was with power: he spake with great fervency, majesty, and authority, and not with coldness and indifference, and dependence on the sense and authority of others, as their teachers did; and besides, such power went along with the word, that it reached their hearts; and as the Persic version renders it, “he penetrated them with it”; and he also confirmed it by powerful operations, by miraculous works, such as casting out devils, and healing diseases, of which an account follows.

Ver. 33. *And in the synagogue there was a man*, etc.] That is, in the synagogue at Capernaum, as Christ was there teaching, on one of the sabbath days before mentioned; there was a certain man,

which had a spirit of an unclean devil: who was possessed with the devil, who is by nature and practice unclean; and was filled with the spirit of the devil, with a spirit of divination, and was acted by him, to impose upon the people; he influenced his mind as an enthusiast, as well as possessed his body: and this was on the sabbath day; whereas the Jews say [f239], that

> “Satan and the evil demon flee on the sabbath day to the mountains of darkness, and do not appear all the sabbath day, because that day is holy, and they are “unclean”; but in the evening of the sabbath they prepare themselves, and meet the children of men, and hurt them.”

And cried out with a loud voice; (See Gill on “Mark 1:23”).

Ver. 34. *Saying, let us alone*, etc.] Not that there were more spirits in him than one, as the whole account shows; but he includes the rest of the devils in that country; (See Gill on “Mark 1:24”).

Ver. 35. *And Jesus rebuked him*, etc.] Not the man, but the unclean spirit: or "that demon", as the Persic version reads it:

saying, hold thy peace, or "be thou muzzled", as the word signifies,

and come out of him; (See Gill on "Matthew 1:25").

and when the devil had thrown him in the midst; in the "midst of them", as the Arabic version adds; that is, in the midst of the people that were in the synagogue; or, as the Ethiopic version reads, "in the midst of the synagogue", where he threw him into convulsive fits, and left him:

he came out of him, and hurt him not; though he sadly convulsed him, and put him to great pain, yet he did not wound him in any part of his body, or take away the use of any of his limbs; and much less hurt his soul so as to destroy it; all which was desired and intended by him, but was hindered by Christ; (See Gill on "Mark 1:26").

Ver. 36. *And they were all amazed*, etc.] The people in the synagogue; they were astonished at his doctrine before, and now at his miracles:

and spake among themselves; as they were in the synagogue,

what a word is this? meaning, either what sort of doctrine is this which is attended with such power and miracles; or what a word of command is this, "hold thy peace, and come out of him?" and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "what is this mandatory", or "commanding word?" to which agrees the Syriac version, rendering it with the following clause thus; "what is this word", that "with authority and power it commands the unclean spirits, and they come out?" (See Gill on "Mark 1:27").

Ver. 37. *And the fame of him went out*, etc.] From hence on account of his dispossessing this unclean spirit, which seems to be the first instance of this kind:

into every place in the country round about; into every city, town, and village in Galilee, and even into all places round about Galilee; (Mark 1:28).

Ver. 38. *And he arose out of the synagogue*, etc.] That is, when he had dispossessed the unclean spirit, he rose up, and went out of the synagogue:

and entered into Simon's house; the house of Simon Peter, and which was also Andrew's; and in Beza's ancient copy, and in one of Stephens's, it is

added, “and of Andrew”; who, though they were both natives of Bethsaida, yet, it seems, had an house at Capernaum, whither Christ went of his own accord, or by an invitation given him:

and Simons wife's mother was taken with a great fever. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “with great fevers”. The fever is

> “a disease, or rather a class of diseases, whose characteristic is a preternatural heat felt through the whole body, or, at least, the principal parts thereof, attended with other symptoms — — “One” defines a fever, a strenuous endeavour, or effort of nature to throw off some morbific matter, that greatly incommodes the body. — — “Another”, an augmented velocity of the blood; others, a fermentation of the blood; accompanied with a quick pulse and excessive heat. — — The causes of fevers are innumerable, and the disease even often arises in the soundest bodies, where there was no previous morbific apparatus, as cachochymia, plethora, etc. but merely from a change of air, food, or other alteration in the non-naturals. A fever, “one” observes, is an inseparable companion of an inflammation. The symptoms are many: every fever, arising from any internal cause, is attended with a quick pulse, and unusual heat at different times, and in different degrees. Where these are intense, the fever is acute, where remiss, slow. The disease begins almost always with a sense of; chillness, and in its progress is chiefly distinguished by the velocity of the pulse: so that a too quick contraction of the heart, with an increased resistance, or impulse against the capillaries, furnishes the proper idea of a fever [f240].”

The fever Peter's wife's mother lay ill of, is said to be a “great one”; which circumstance is the rather mentioned, to illustrate the miraculous cure of it by Christ; (See Gill on “Matthew 8:14”).

And they besought him for her; either his disciples Peter, Andrew, James, and John, who were all present, or the other relations and friends of the sick person, which were in the house; who having heard of his casting out the unclean spirit in the synagogue, believed that he had power to heal this disease; and therefore intreat him, for her sake, and upon her account, that he would restore her health.

Ver. 39. *And he stood over her*, etc.] "At her head", as the Persic version reads: he inclined himself towards her, to see how she did, and to take her by the hand, and lift her up;

and rebuked the fever. The Syriac and Persic versions read, "her fever", that which was upon her;

and it left her, as Mark says, "immediately"; as soon as ever he had touched her hand, and rebuked the fever, and bid it be gone:

and immediately she arose, and ministered unto them; (See Gill on "Matthew 8:15").

Ver. 40. *Now when the sun was setting*, etc.] And so the sabbath was over; (See Gill on "Matthew 8:16").

all they that had any sick, with divers diseases, brought them unto him; that is, as many of the inhabitants of Capernaum as had sick persons in their houses, let their diseases be what they would, brought them to Christ in Simon's house; which, sabbath being over, they might do consistent with their laws, and the traditions of the elders, and without any just offence to the Scribes and Pharisees, who were tenacious of them; and they were encouraged to do so, partly through the dispossessing the unclean spirit in their synagogue that day, which many of them had been witnesses of; and partly through the cure of Peter's wife's mother, which they had heard of:

and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them; without the use of medicine, by the mere imposition of his hands; which was accompanied with such power and virtue from him, as to remove, at once, every disease; nor did he refuse any person, how unworthy soever they might be in themselves, and how obstinate their disease might be.

Ver. 41. *And devils also came out of many*, etc.] Not willingly, nor of themselves, but at the word and command of Christ, who ordered them to depart,

crying out and saying; as they left the bodies, of men, and not with any goodwill to Christ:

thou art Christ; the true Messiah, that was of old promised and prophesied of, and has been long expected to come:

the Son of God; the only begotten Son of God, possessed of the same perfections with God his Father; and particularly of almighty power, of which they were convinced by his dispossessing them;

and he rebuking them, suffered them not to speak; for he needed not their testimony, nor did he choose to be made known by them:

for they knew that he was Christ, or "that they knew that he was Christ"; so the Syriac version: they certainly did know that he was the Messiah, partly by the voice from heaven at his baptism, and partly by his power over them: but Christ would not suffer them to say that he was the Messiah, or that they knew him to be so; either because the time was not come for such a declaration to be made, or they were not the proper persons to make it; and lest such a publication, by them, should be made a handle of by the Scribes and Pharisees, to say that he had society with devils, and by them cast them out.

Ver. 42. *And when it was day*, etc.] The "day after", as the Persic version renders it;

at the dawning, or "break of day", as the Syriac. He rose a great while before it was day, as Mark says, (<41035>Mark 1:35) but did not go out till it was day, or till day was coming on, when

he departed from Peter's house, and from Capernaum:

and went into a desert place; for the sake of solitude, that he might be retired from company, and have an opportunity of privately praying to God:

and the people sought, and came unto him: they first went to Simon's house, and not finding him there, sought for him elsewhere: and when they understood where he was, they came to him,

and stayed him that he should not depart from them; they laid hold on him, and held him, and did all they could to persuade him, to abide with them constantly, and not think of removing from them: though perhaps this was not so much from love to Christ's person and presence, or any regard to his ministry, and the good and welfare of their immortal souls, as on account of the miracles he wrought, and the corporal benefits he bestowed on them.

Ver. 43. *And he said unto them*, etc.] In answer to their importunate requests:

I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also; as well as to Capernaum; and though they did not express their desire of his continuance with them, in order to preach the Gospel to them; yet Christ signifies, that a principal part of his work lay in preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, the Gospel dispensation on earth, the doctrines and ordinances of it, as well as the things which relate to the kingdom of glory; as what is the saints meetness for it, their regeneration, and their right unto it, which lies in his righteousness: and that as he had preached these things at Capernaum, there was a necessity upon him to preach them in other cities of Galilee and Judea: for therefore am I sent; as he was by his heavenly Father, and had himself also undertook and engaged to do it.

Ver. 44. *And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee*.] In the several synagogues that were in different cities and towns throughout all Galilee.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 5

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, that as the people pressed upon him*, etc.] As Christ went through Galilee, and preached in the synagogues there, great crowds of people attended on him, and they followed him wherever he went; and so large were their numbers, and so very eager were they to see him, and hear him, that they were even troublesome to him, and bore hard upon him, and were ready to press him down, though they had no ill design upon him, but only

to hear the word of God; the scriptures of the Old Testament explained, and the doctrines of the Gospel preached; and which were preached by him, as never were before or since, and in such a manner as were not by the Scribes and Pharisees; and both the matter and manner of his ministry drew a vast concourse of people after him:

he stood by the lake of Gennesaret; the same with the sea of Chinnereth, (<04411>Numbers 34:11, <06128>Joshua 12:3, 13:27) where the Targums of Onkelos, Jonathan, and the Jerusalem, call it, `rswngd amy`, "the sea of Geausar" or "Gennesaret": and so it is elsewhere called [f241], and is the same which is called the sea of Galilee, and of Tiberias, (<43001>John 6:1, 21:1) and is, by other writers [f242], as here, called the lake of Gennesaret, and said to be sixteen miles long, and six broad. Josephus says [f243], it is forty furlongs broad, and an hundred long. The Jews say [f244], that

> "the holy, blessed God created seven seas, but chose none of them all, but the sea of Gennesaret."

And indeed, it was a place chosen by Christ, and honoured, and made famous by him, by his preaching at it, his miracles upon it, and showing himself there after his resurrection.

Ver. 2. *And saw two ships standing by the lake*, etc.] Or two fishing boats; which were, as the Arabic version renders it, "detained by anchors at the shore of the lake"; the one belonging to Peter and Andrew, and the other to Zebedee, and his two sons, James and John:

but the fishermen were gone out of them; that is, either the above persons, or their servants:

and were washing their nets; on shore; they having gathered a great deal of soil and filthiness, but had caught no fish; and therefore were cleansing their nets, in order to lay them up, finding it to be in vain to make any further attempts with them at present; and which considered, makes the following miracle the more illustrious.

Ver. 3. *And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's*, etc.] Simon Peter's, and Andrew his brother's, who were both together at this time, though the last is not here mentioned:

and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land: as Simon was the owner of the vessel, Christ desired him; he asked the favour of him to put off a little way from shore; though the Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, "he commanded him", being his Lord and master: To which the Syriac and Persic versions agree; only they make the orders to be given not to Simon singly, but to others, to all in the boat; the former rendering it, and he said, or ordered, that they should carry him a little way from the dry land to the waters; and the latter thus, and said, carry ye the ship from dry land a little into the sea. And which adds, agreeable to the sense enough, though it is not in the text, "when they had executed his command": had done as he entreated, or ordered, and put off the vessel a little way from the shore:

he sat down and taught the people out of the ship; for the boat was not carried neither out of sight, nor beyond the hearing of the people: this method Christ took at another time, and that for conveniency, as now; (see Matthew 13:1-3) and whereas he sat while he taught, this was according to the then custom of the times with the Jews; (See Gill on "Matthew 5:1").

Ver. 4. *Now when he had left speaking*, etc.] Teaching the people, and preaching the word of God unto them out of the ship, as they stood on the shore before him.

He said unto Simon, launch out into the deep; he spoke to Simon Peter, being the master of the vessel, to thrust it out, or put it off further into deep water, more convenient for fishing;

and let down your nets for a draught; of fishes: his meaning is, that he would give orders to his servants, to put out the vessel to sea, to take their nets and cast them into the sea, in order to take and draw up a quantity of fish, which was their business.

Ver. 5. *And Simon answering said unto him, master*, etc.] Or Rabbi, as the Syriac version renders it: he knew him to be the Messiah, the king of Israel, and a teacher sent from God:

we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; which carries in it an objection to what Christ advised and directed to: they had been fishing that "night", which was the best time for catching fish; and they had been at it all the night, and had "laboured" hard; and were even "fatigued", and quite wearied out; and what was most discouraging of all, their labour was in vain; they had caught "nothing":

nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net; which showed faith in Christ, and obedience to him: thus the faithful preachers of the Gospel, sometimes labour and toil in the ministry of the word a great while, with little or no success; and are discouraged from going on, and would be tempted to leave off, were it not for the commission and word of command they have received from Christ, which they dare not be disobedient to; and for the word of promise he has given them, to be with them, on which they depend.

Ver. 6. *And when they had done this*, etc.] Had put the ship out further to sea, and had let down their net:

they enclosed a great multitude of fish; in their net, which by the secret divine power of Christ, were gathered together just in that place, where by his order they cast the net:

and their net brake; with the weight and number, of the fishes, yet not so as to let the fish out; the Arabic version reads, "it was within a little that their nets were broke": they were just upon breaking, the draught was so numerous, the struggling so great, and the weight so heavy.

Ver. 7. *And they beckoned unto their partners*, etc.] Zebedee, and his two sons, James and John; (Luke 5:10) who were at some distance from them, probably lay at anchor near the shore, not having put out to sea when the other vessel did, and so were not within call; but they were

obliged to make signs to them, and beckon with their hands to come to them:

which were in the other ship; mentioned in (<4052>Luke 5:2) which lay by the shore:

that they should come and help them; take up the net, and take the fish out of it:

and they came and filled both the ships; with the fishes they took out of the net, as full as they could hold, and which they were not well able to carry:

so that they began to sink; or “were almost immersed”, as Beza's ancient copy, and another manuscript, with the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read; the vessels were so heavy laden, with the vast quantity of fish that was taken, that they were just ready to sink with their burden.

Ver. 8. *When Simon Peter saw it*, etc.] The multitude of fish that was taken, and both vessels filled with them, and the danger they were in of sinking,

he fell down at Jesus' knees. The Arabic and Persic versions read, “at” his “feet”: he fell on his knees before him, and threw himself prostrate at his feet, as a worshipper of him, and a supplicant unto him:

saying, depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord; this he said, not as though the presence of Christ was burdensome, or disagreeable to him; but as one amazed at the greatness of the miracle wrought, and struck with the sense of the power of Christ, put forth therein; and with the greatness of his majesty so near him; and as conscious to himself of his own vileness and unworthiness to be in his presence; and so the Persic version adds, and which may serve as a comment, “and am not worthy that thou shouldst be with me”: he had much the same sense of things as the centurion had, (<4008>Matthew 8:8) and when it is considered how gracious persons have been struck with awe and fear, and a consciousness of sin, weakness, and unworthiness, at the appearance of an angel, as Zacharias, (<4201>Luke 1:12) and the shepherds, (<4209>Luke 2:9) yea, at the presence of an holy man of God, as the widow of Sarepta at Elijah, saying much the same as Peter does here, (<1178>1 Kings 17:18) it need not be wondered at, that Peter should so express himself, in these circumstances.

Ver. 9. *Far he was astonished, and all that were with him*, etc.] His brother Andrew, and the servants they had with them to manage the vessel, and cast the nets:

at the draught of the fishes they had taken; being so large and numerous, as the like was never seen, nor known by them before.

Ver. 10. *And so was also James and John, the sons of Zebedee*, etc.] Who were in the other ship, and had been beckoned to them to come and help them, and did come, and were witnesses of the miracle:

which were partners with Simon; were sharers with him in loss and gain in the fishing trade; these were equally astonished at the miracle, as Simon and his brother, and the men that were in the boat with them, where Jesus was:

and Jesus said unto Simon; who was at his knees, and expressed his dread of his majesty, and the consternation of mind he was in particularly:

fear not; do not be afraid of me, I shall do thee no harm, nor shall the boats sink, or any damage come to any person, or to the vessels, nor be so much amazed and affrighted, at the multitude of the fish taken:

from henceforth thou shalt catch men; alive, as the word signifies, or “unto life”, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; thou shalt cast the net of the Gospel, and be the happy instrument of drawing many persons out of the depths of sin and misery, in which they are plunged, into the way of life and salvation; and which was greatly verified, in the conversion of three thousand at one cast, under one sermon of his, (<4024>Acts 2:41)

Ver. 11. *And when they had brought their ships to land*, etc.] Both Simon Peter's, and the other in which his partners were, and which were laden with fish:

they forsook all; even all their fish, which they doubtless might have made much money of, and their nets, and their ships, and their servants, and their relations, and friends:

and followed him; Christ; and became his disciples, even all four of them, Peter, Andrew, James, and John.

Ver. 12. *And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city*, etc.] Or near it, hard by it, very probably Capernaum; (<4001>Matthew 8:1,2,5) Behold a

man full of leprosy; a disease to which the Jews were very incident, and concerning which, many laws and rules are given, in (<3B13>Leviticus 13:1-14:57). The symptoms of the ancient “lepra”, as laid down by Galen, Aretaeus, Pontanus, Aegineta, Cardan, Varanda, Gordon, Pharaeus, and others, are as follow. The patient's voice is hoarse, and comes rather through the nose than the mouth; the blood full of little white shining bodies, like groins of millet, which upon filtration, separate themselves from it; the serum is scabious, and destitute of its natural humidity, insomuch that salt applied to it, does not dissolve; it is so dry, that vinegar poured on it boils; and is so strongly bound together by little imperceptible threads, that calcined lead thrown into it swims. The face resembles a coal half extinct, unctuous, shining, and bloated, with frequent hard knobs, green at bottom, and white at top. The hair is short, stiff, and brinded; and not to be torn off, without bringing away, some of the rotten flesh, to which it adheres; if it grows again, either on the head or chin, it is always white: athwart the forehead, run large wrinkles or furrows, from one temple to the other; the eyes red and inflamed, and shine like those of a cat; the ears swollen and red, eaten with ulcers towards the bottom, and encompassed with little glands; the nose sunk, because of the rotting of the cartilage; the tongue dry and black, swollen, ulcerated, divided with furrows, and spotted with grains of white; the skin covered with ulcers, that die and revive on each other, or with white spots, or scales like a fish; it is rough and insensible, and when cut, instead of blood, yields a sanious liquor: it arrives in time to such a degree of insensibility, that the wrist, feet, or even the large tendon, may be pierced with a needle, without the patient's feeling any pain; at last the nose, fingers, toes, and even privy members, fall off entire; and by a death peculiar to each of them, anticipate that of the patient: it is added, that the body is so hot, that a fresh apple held in the hand an hour, will be dried and wrinkled, as if exposed to the sun for a week [f245]. Think now what a miserable deplorable object this man was, said to be full of it. Between this disease and sin, there is a very great likeness. This disease is a very filthy one, and of a defiling nature, by the ceremonial law; under which it was considered rather as an uncleanness, than as a disease; the person attended with it was pronounced unclean by the priest, and was put out of the camp, and out of the cities and walled towns, that he might not defile others; and was obliged to put a covering on his upper lip, and cry Unclean, Unclean, to acknowledge his pollution, and that others might shun him: all mankind, by reason of sin, are by the Lord pronounced filthy; and by their evil actions, not only defile

themselves, but others; evil communications corrupt good manners; and when they are made sensible, freely own that their righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and they themselves as an unclean thing: it is a very nauseous and loathsome disease, as is sin; it is abominable to God, and renders men abominable in his sight; it causes the sinner himself, when convinced of it, to loath and abhor himself: David calls his sin a loathsome disease, (<19B807>Psalm 38:7) it is of a spreading nature: this was a sign of it, if it did not spread, it was only a, scab; if it spread, it was a leprosy, (<03B135>Leviticus 13:5-8). Sin has spread itself over all mankind, and over all the powers and faculties of the soul, and members of the body; there is no place free of it: and as the leprosy is of consuming nature, it eats and wastes the flesh, (see <041210>Numbers 12:10) (<120510>2 Kings 5:10) so sin eats like a canker, and brings ruin and destruction upon men, both soul and body. This disease was incurable by medicine; persons that had it were never sent to a physician, but to a priest; and what he did was only this, he looked upon it, and if it was a clear case, he declared the person unclean; and if it was doubtful, shut him up for seven days, and then inspected him again; and after all he could not cure him; this was the work of God, (<120707>2 Kings 5:7). All which shows the nature and use of the law, which shuts men up, concludes them under sin, and by which they have knowledge of it, but no healing: the law heals none, it is the killing letter, the ministration of condemnation and death; Christ only, by his blood and stripes, heals the disease of sin, and cleanses from it. There is one thing in the law of the leprosy very surprising, and that is, that if there was any quick raw flesh, or any sound flesh in the place where the leprosy was, the man was pronounced unclean; but if the leprosy covered his skin, and all his flesh, then he was pronounced clean: this intimates, that he that thinks he has some good thing in him, and fancies himself sound and well, and trusts to his own works of righteousness, he is not justified in the sight of God; but if a man acknowledges that there is no soundness in his flesh, that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwells no good thing, but that his salvation is alone, by the grace and mercy of God, such a man is justified by faith in Christ Jesus: the parable of the Pharisee and publican will illustrate this, (<421810>Luke 18:10-14). “Who, seeing Jesus, fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean”; (See Gill on “<400802>Matthew 8:2”). Christ could cure lepers, and did; and which was a proof of his Messiahship, and is given among the signs of it, to John's disciples, (<401105>Matthew 11:5) and as there is a likeness between the leprosy and sin, so between the cleansing of a leper under the law, and the healing of a

sinner by Christ: for the cleansing of a leper, two birds were to be taken clean and alive, which were both typical of Christ, and pointed at the meekness of his human nature, his innocence, harmlessness, and purity, and that he had a life to lay down; one of these was to be killed, in an earthen vessel over running water, showing that Christ must be killed, his blood must be shed for the cleansing of leprous sinners; the earthen vessel denoted his human nature, his flesh, in which he was put to death; and the running water signified the purifying nature of his blood, and the continued virtue of it, to cleanse from all sin; and the blood and the water being mixed together, may put us in mind of the blood and water which flowed from the side of Christ, when pierced with the spear; which was an emblem of our justification and sanctification being both from him, on account of which, he is said to come both by water and by blood, (1 John 5:6). The other bird, after it was dipped with the cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop in the blood of the slain bird, was let go alive; which typified the resurrection of Christ, who was put to death in the flesh, and quickened in the Spirit; and who rose again, for the justification of his people from all sin: the cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop, which were used in the cleansing of the leper, may either relate to the sufferings, and death, and blood of Christ; the scarlet wool may denote the bloody sufferings of Christ, through which he was red in his apparel; the cedar wood may signify the incorruptibleness and preciousness of the blood of Christ, and the hyssop the purging virtue of it; or else these three may have regard to the three principal graces of the Spirit of God, which have to do with, and are in influenced by the sin cleansing blood of Christ: the cedar wood may signify the incorruptible and precious grace of faith; the green hyssop, the lively grace of hope; and the scarlet, the flaming grace of love, when it is in its full exercise: or else the grace of faith, by which dealing with the blood of Christ, the heart is purified, is only meant; signified by cedar wood, for its permanency; by scarlet, for its concern with the crimson blood of Christ; by which sins, though as scarlet, are made white as wool; and by hyssop, for its being an humble and lowly grace: now the cedar stick, with the scarlet wool, and bunch of hyssop bound unto it, was used to sprinkle the blood of the bird upon the leper seven times, when he was pronounced clean; and expresses the instrumentality of faith, in the application of the blood of Christ for cleansing: though after this, the leper was to shave off all his hair, and wash himself and clothes in water; suggesting to us, that holiness of life and conversation which should follow, upon cleansing through faith in the blood of Christ.

Ver. 13. *And he put forth his hand and touched him*, etc.] Having compassion on him, and commiserating his sad case:

saying, I will, be thou clean; and immediately the leprosy departed from him; (See Gill on "<40803>Matthew 8:3").

Ver. 14. *And he charged him to tell no man*, etc.] Of his cure, and by whom he received it;

but go show thyself to the priest. The Syriac and Persic versions read, "to the priests: and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses has commanded, for a testimony unto them"; (See Gill on "<40804>Matthew 8:4").

Ver. 15. *But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him*, etc.] For the more he charged the man to keep silence, the more he blazed it abroad, being elated with the cure he received, and filled with gratitude to his benefactor; (<40145>Mark 1:45).

And great multitudes came together to hear: him, or from him, as the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions add; to hear the doctrines of the Gospel preached by him: "and to be healed by him of their infirmities"; their bodily weaknesses and disorders.

Ver. 16. *And he withdrew himself into the wilderness*, etc.] Into a desert place, that he might have rest from the fatigues of preaching and healing diseases; and being alone, and free from company, might have an opportunity for private prayer to God, for so it lows:

and prayed; this is to be understood of Christ, as man: as God, he is the object of prayer, and petitions are often addressed unto him; and as mediator, he offers up the prayers of all saints, and presents them to his Father; which are acceptable to him, through the incense of his mediation; and as man, he prayed himself: what he now prayed for, is not known; sometimes he prayed for his disciples, and for all that should believe; for their conversion, sanctification, union, perseverance, and glorification; and sometimes for himself, that the cup might pass from him, and he be saved from death; but always with submission to the will of his Father.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass on a certain day*, etc.] When he was at Capernaum, as appears from (<40201>Mark 2:1)

As he was teaching: in the house where such numbers were gathered together, to hear the word of God preached by him, that there was not

room for them, neither within the house, nor about the door, (<40 2 12>Mark 2:2)

That there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by; who were sometimes called Scribes, and sometimes lawyers, and were generally of the sect of the Pharisees:

which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: having heard much of his doctrine and miracles, they came from all parts to watch and observe him, and to take all opportunities and advantages against him, that they might expose him to the people:

and the power of the Lord was present to heal them; not the Pharisees and doctors of the law, who did not come to be healed by him, either in body or mind; but the multitude, some of whom came to hear his doctrine, and others to be healed of their infirmities, (<42 5 15>Luke 5:15). The Persic version reads the words thus, “and from all the villages of Galilee, and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, multitudes came, and the power of God was present to heal them.”

Ver. 18. *And behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy*, etc.] Four men brought him, as Mark says, (<40 2 3>Mark 2:3) and which the Ethiopic version expresses here: “and they sought means to bring him in”: into the house where Jesus was:

and to lay him before him; at his feet, in hope of moving his compassion, and to obtain a cure of him: of the nature of this disease, and of the sort which this man's seems to be, (See Gill on “<40 2 3>Mark 2:3”).

Ver. 19. *And when they could not find by what way*, etc.] As by the door, or in at a window of the house:

they might bring him in; to Jesus, in the house:

because of the multitude; which was about the door, and all the fore part of the house:

they went upon the housetop; by a ladder, or pair of stairs, which usually were on the outside of houses; (See Gill on “<40 24 17>Matthew 24:17”) the houses of the Jews being flat roofed:

and let him down through the tiling with his couch, into the midst before Jesus; that is, they untiled the roof, or took away the tiles which were

about the trap door, or passage, into the inside of the house; and so making it wider, let down the man upon his couch, or bed, into the middle of the room and of the people, just before Jesus, where he was sitting; (See Gill on "Mark 2:4").

Ver. 20. *And when he saw their faith*, etc.] That is, Jesus, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it; when he saw the faith both of the paralytic man, and of the men that brought him, which was shown in the pains they took, and trouble they were at, in getting him to him;

he said unto him. The Vulgate Latin only reads, "he said"; but the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, still more fully express the sense, rendering it, "he said to the paralytic man"; and the Ethiopic version, "he said to the infirm man"; as follows:

man, thy sins are forgiven thee. The other evangelists say, he said "son"; perhaps he used both words: however, all agree that he pronounced the forgiveness of sins, which were the cause of his disease; and which being removed, the effect must cease; so that he had healing both for soul and body; (See Gill on "Matthew 9:2").

Ver. 21. *And the Scribes and the Pharisees began to reason*, etc.] To think and say within themselves, and it may be to one another, in a private manner:

saying, who is this which speaketh blasphemies? what vain boaster, and blaspheming creature is this, who assumes that to himself, which is the prerogative of God?

Who can forgive sins but God alone? against whom they are committed, whose law is transgressed, and his will disobeyed, and his justice injured and affronted. Certain it is, that none can forgive sins but God; not any of the angels in heaven, or men on earth; not holy good men, nor ministers of the Gospel; and if Christ had been a mere man, though ever so good a man, even a sinless one, or ever so great a prophet, he could not have forgiven sin; but he is truly and properly God, as his being a discerner of the thoughts of these men, and his healing the paralytic man in the manner he did, are sufficient proofs. The Scribes and Pharisees therefore, though they rightly ascribe forgiveness of sin to God alone, yet grievously sinned, in imputing blasphemy to Christ: they had wrong notions of Christ, concluding him to be but a mere man, against the light and evidence of his works and miracles; and also of his office as a Redeemer, who came to

save his people from their sins; and seem to restrain the power of forgiving sin to God the Father, whereas the Son of God, being equal with him, had the same power, and that even on earth, to forgive sin; (See Gill on "Mark 2:7").

Ver. 22. *But when Jesus perceived their thoughts*, etc.] Being God omniscient;

he answering said unto them, what reason ye in your hearts? This he said, not as being ignorant what their reasonings were, for it is before said he perceived their thoughts, but to expose the wickedness of them; in one exemplar of Beza's it is added, "evil things", as in (Matthew 9:4). (See Gill on "Matthew 9:4").

Ver. 23. *Whether is it easier to say*, etc.] Mark adds, "to the sick of the palsy"; to whom Christ had said that his sins were forgiven him, which had given offence to the Scribes and Pharisees, imagining that he had assumed too much to himself: wherefore he proposes the following case to them, which they thought was most easy for man, or more proper and peculiar to God to say,

thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, rise up and walk? Neither of them could be said by a mere man, with effect, so as that sins would be really remitted on so saying; or that a man sick of a palsy, by such a word speaking, would be able to stand upon his feet and walk; but both of them were equally easy to him, that is truly God; and he that could say the one effectually, could also say the other: or in other words, he that could cure a man of a palsy with a word speaking, ought not to be charged with blasphemy, for taking upon him to forgive sin: our Lord meant, by putting this question, and acting upon it, to prove himself to be God, and to remove the imputation of blasphemy from him; (See Gill on "Matthew 9:5"). (See Gill on "Mark 2:9").

Ver. 24. *But that ye may know, that the son of man*, etc.] Whom the Scribes and Pharisees took for a mere man, in which they were mistaken; for though he was really a man, and the son of man, yet he was God as well as man; he was God manifest in the flesh:

hath power upon earth to forgive sins; even in the days of his flesh, whilst he was in his humble form on earth; for he did not cease to be God by becoming man, nor lose any branch of his power, not this of forgiving sin, by appearing in the form of a servant; and, that it might be manifest,

he said unto the sick of the palsy: these are the words of the evangelist, signifying, that Christ turned himself from the Scribes and Pharisees to the paralytic man, and thus addressed him:

I say unto thee, arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.

Ver. 25. *And immediately he rose up before them*, etc.] As soon as ever these words were spoken by Christ, the man, before sick of the palsy, finding himself perfectly well, got off of his couch, and stood up on his feet before the Scribes and Pharisees, and all the people:

and took up that whereon he lay; his couch, or bed: and departed to his own house; with it upon his back: “and went to his business”, as the Persic version renders it:

glorifying God; both for the healing of his body, and for the pardon of his sins; each of which he knew none but God could do. This circumstance is only mentioned by Luke, and shows the sense the man had of the great favours bestowed upon him: he glorified God, by ascribing them to his goodness and power; by offering the sacrifice of praise, or giving thanks unto him for them; by publishing them among his neighbours, to the honour of his name; and by living a holy life and conversation, to his glory, under a grateful sense of his kindness: yea, he glorified Jesus Christ as God, who he knew must be God, by forgiving his sins, and curing his disease; he proclaimed his divine power, and ascribed greatness to him; he confessed him as the Messiah, and owned him as his Saviour, and became subject to him as his Lord.

Ver. 26. *And they were all amazed, and they glorified God*, etc.] Not the Pharisees, and doctors of the law, but the common people:

and were filled with fear; of the Divine Being, whose presence and power they were sensible must be in this case:

saying, we have seen strange things today; paradoxes, things wonderful, unthought of, unexpected, and incredible by carnal reason, and what were never seen, nor known before; as that a man, who was so enfeebled by the palsy, that he was obliged to be carried on a bed by four men, yet, on a sudden, by a word speaking, rose up, and carried his bed, on his back, home.

Ver. 27. *And after these things he went forth*, etc.] After his discourse with the Scribes and Pharisees, and his healing of the man, sick with the palsy, he went forth from the city of Capernaum, to the sea side; not only for retirement and recreation, after the work of the day hitherto, but in order to meet with, and call one that was to be a disciple of his:

and saw a publican named Levi who is said to be the son of Alphaeus, (<40214>Mark 2:14) and so it is said to be in Beza's ancient copy here; and who was also called Matthew, (see <40909>Matthew 9:9)

sitting at the receipt of custom; at the place where custom was received, and toll taken, near the sea side, of such that went over. The Syriac and Persic versions read, “sitting among publicans”, of which business he himself was; and these might be his servants under him, or partners with him; (See Gill on “<40214>Mark 2:14”)

and he said unto him, follow me: of all the publicans that were there, he singled out Levi, or Matthew, and directed his discourse to him, and called him to be a follower of him: an instance of powerful, special, and distinguishing grace this; (See Gill on “<40909>Matthew 9:9”).

Ver. 28. *And he left all*, etc.] His company, his business, and all the profits of it:

rose up; directly; such power went along with the words of Christ, that he could not withstand it:

and followed him; not only in a literal, but in a spiritual sense, and became a disciple of his.

Ver. 29. *And Levi made him a great feast in his own house*, etc.] At Capernaum, which, very likely, was made some time after his call, though recorded here; for it is not reasonable to think there could be time enough that day to get ready so great a feast, as this is said to be Levi, it should seem, was a rich man, and in gratitude to Christ for his special grace and honour bestowed on him, made this entertainment for him; and he seems to have had also another view in it, to bring him into the company of his fellow publicans, hoping he might be useful to them, as he had been to him; for of this nature is true grace, to wish for, and desire the salvation of the souls of others, as well as a man's own:

and there was a great company of publicans, and of others: µyrja, which word is sometimes used in Talmudic writings for Gentiles; so µyrja tça, "the wife of others", is interpreted the wife of the Cuthites, or Samantans [f246]: and thus the Jews explain the text in (<052414>Deuteronomy 24:14) "thou shalt not oppress an hired servant, that is poor and needy", whether he be "of thy brethren", on which they make this remark, µyrjal jrp, "this excepts others"; that, is, as the gloss interprets it, it excepts the nations of the world, or the Gentiles: they go on to expound the text, "or of thy strangers that are in thy land"; these are the proselytes of righteousness: "within thy gates"; these are they that eat things that are torn [f247]: so that the "others" are distinguished from the Jews, and from both the proselytes of righteousness, and of the gate; and it is easy to observe, that publicans and Heathens are sometimes mentioned together: here it means sinners, as appears from (<400910>Matthew 9:10, <410215>Mark 2:15) such the Gentiles were reckoned:

that sat down with them; being invited by Matthew.

Ver. 30. *But their Scribes and Pharisees*, etc.] Not the Scribes of the publicans and sinners that sat down, but the Scribes of the people in general; the Scribes of the Jewish nation: all the eastern versions leave out the word "their":

murmured against his disciples, saying; or, "murmured, and said unto his disciples", as the Syriac and Persic versions render it: that is, they either murmured at the publicans and sinners sitting down at meat; or "against him", as the Ethiopic version reads: either against Matthew for inviting them; or rather against Christ for sitting down with them: and not caring to speak to him, address themselves to his disciples in these words,

why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? The other evangelists represent these as saying, why does he, or your master, eat with such? doubtless, they included both Christ, and his disciples; though they chiefly designed him, and to bring an accusation against him, and fix a charge upon him, in order to render him odious to the people.

Ver. 31. *And Jesus answering, said unto them*, etc.] Knowing that they aimed at him; though, according to this evangelist, they only mentioned his disciples, however, he takes up the cause, and vindicates both himself and them, by observing to them the following proverb;

they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick: suggesting hereby, that as such who are in good health, who are free from all diseases, wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores, stand in no need of the advice and assistance of a physician, or surgeon, but such who have either distempers or sores on their bodies; so they, the Scribes and Pharisees, who, in their own opinion, were free from the disease of sin, original and actual, and touching the righteousness of the law, were blameless, stood not in any need of him, the physician, who came to cure the maladies of the souls, as well as of the bodies of men; but such persons, who not only are sick with sin, but sick of it, who are sensible of it, and desire healing: and therefore this was the reason of his conduct, why he conversed with sinners, and not with the Scribes and Pharisees; his business, as a physician, lying among the one, and not the other; (See Gill on "<40912>Matthew 9:12"). (See Gill on "<40217>Mark 2:17").

Ver. 32. *I came not to call the righteous*, etc.] Such as the Scribes and Pharisees were in their own apprehension, and in the esteem of others, who trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, and submitted not to the righteousness of Christ: these Christ came not to call by his grace, and therefore did not associate himself with them: but sinners to repentance; such as the publicans, and others, with them, were; and therefore he was chiefly with such, and chose to be among them: these he not only called to repentance by the outward ministry of the word, but brought them to it; he having power to bestow the grace of repentance, as well as to call to the duty of it; (See Gill on "<40913>Matthew 9:13"). (See Gill on "<40217>Mark 2:17").

Ver. 33. *And they say unto him*, etc.] The Scribes and Pharisees, or the disciples of John; (see <40914>Matthew 9:14)

why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers? set times apart frequently for fasting and prayer. The Ethiopic version reads, "why do the disciples of John baptize frequently, fast, and make prayers?" in which the former clause is added; and as without any authority, so without judgment, since it must suppose that the Pharisees did so likewise, whereas they rejected the baptism of John; for it follows, and "likewise" the disciples of "the Pharisees"; who fasted often, at least twice in the week, and made frequent prayers in the synagogues, and corners of the streets, and in widows' houses.

But thine eat and drink? instead of fasting and praying; (See Gill on "<40914>Matthew 9:14").

Ver. 34. *And he said unto them*, etc.] The disciples of John, or the Scribes and Pharisees:

can ye make the children of the bride chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? signifying, that he was the bridegroom, and his disciples the children of the bride chamber; and that as it is unreasonable to expect, and morally impossible, that persons, attending the festivals of a nuptial solemnity, should be engaged in severe fastings; so it was not to be thought, that whilst Christ was corporeally present with his disciples, that they should be prevailed upon to live such an austere and mortified life.

Ver. 35. *But the days will come*, etc.] And that in a very little time, as they did:

when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them: as their master, John, was taken away from them, and now in prison, and therefore it was no wonder they mourned and fasted; signifying, that in a short time he, the bridegroom of his church and people, should be taken away by death:

and then they shall fast in those days; mourn, and be humbled, of which fasting was, a sign, for the death of their Lord, and on account of the many afflictions and persecutions they should endure for his sake; (See Gill on "Matthew 9:15").

Ver. 36. *And he spake also a parable unto them*, etc.] The Scribes and Pharisees; illustrating what he had just now said:

no man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; by "a piece of a new garment" meaning the new and upstart notions and traditions of the elders, which were so in comparison of the law of Moses; and by the "old", the robe of their own righteousness, wrought out in obedience to the moral and ceremonial law: and Christ suggests, that to join these together, in order to patch up a garment of righteousness, to appear in before God, was equally as weak and ridiculous, as to put a piece of new and undressed cloth into a garment that was old, and wore threadbare.

If otherwise, then both the new, maketh the rent; that is, much worse than it was, as it is expressed both in Matthew and Mark; the old and new cloth being unsuitable, and not of equal strength to hold together: by this Christ intimates, that the Jews, by being directed to the observance of the traditions of the elders, were drawn off from a regard to the

commandments of God; so that instead of having a better righteousness, they had one much the worse, a ragged, and a rent one.

And the piece that was taken out of the new, agreeth not with the old; and so the statutes of men, and the ordinances of God, or the traditions of the elders, and the commands of God, are no more like one another, than the piece of a new and an old garment, and as unlike is obedience to the one, and to the other;

(See Gill on "<40>Matthew 9:16-17"). (See Gill on "<41>Mark 2:21-22") where this, and the following parable, are more largely explained.

Ver. 37. *And no man putteth new wine into old bottles*, etc.] To which the Scribes and Pharisees are here compared, into whose hearts the new wine of Gospel grace was not put; or to whom was not made known the love of God Comparable to new wine; nor the blessings of the new covenant of grace, now exhibited; nor the truths of the Gospel now more clearly and newly revealed.

Else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled; they not being able to receive and bear these things, no, not the relation of them: these were hard sayings to them, of which they said, who can hear them? they could not hear them with patience, much less receive them in the love of them; but were at once filled with wrath and indignation, and rejected them.

And the bottles shall perish; their condemnation shall be the greater.

Ver. 38. *But new wine must be put into new bottles*, etc.] Such as the disciples of Christ were, and sinners called to repentance are, who are renewed by the Spirit and grace of God: and these are filled with spiritual joy and comfort, as with new wine, arising from discoveries of the love of God, a view of interest in the blessings of the covenant, and an application of Gospel truths and promises.

And both are preserved; both these renewed ones, who are preserved unto the kingdom and glory of Christ; and the grace that is put into them, which is a well of living water, springing up to everlasting life; as well as the Gospel, and its blessings.

Ver. 39. *No man also having drunk old wine*, etc.] "Wine", though not in the text, is rightly supplied by our translators, as it is by the Syriac and Persic versions:

straightway desireth new; new wine: *for he saith, the old is better*; old wine is more grateful, more generous, and more reviving to the spirits, than new wine is. This is a proverbial expression, and which Luke only records; which may be applied to natural men, who having drunk the old wine of their carnal lusts and pleasures, do not desire the new wine of the Gospel, and of the grace of God, and of spiritual things, but prefer their old sins and lusts unto them: carnal lusts may be signified by old wine, both for the antiquity of them, being as old as men themselves, and therefore called the old man, and for the gratefulness of them to them; and who may be said to drink of them, as they do drink iniquity like water; which is expressive of their great desire and thirst after it, and delight in it: now whilst they are such, they cannot desire the new wine of the Gospel, which is insipid and ungrateful to them; nor the grace of God, to which their carnal minds are enmity; nor any thing that is evangelical and spiritual, at least, not straightway, or immediately; not until they are regenerated by the Spirit of God, and their taste is changed, but will prefer their old lusts and former course of life unto them: or it may be accommodated to legalists, and men of a "pharisaical spirit", to whom spiritual and evangelical things are very disagreeable: Scribes and Pharisees, who have drank of the old wine of the law, and the traditions of the elders, do not desire the new wine of the Gospel, but prefer the former to it: the ceremonial law may be expressed by old wine, being originally instituted of God, and acceptable to him; and one part of which lay in libations of wine, and was of long standing, but now waxen old, and ready to vanish away; and likewise the traditions of the elders, which were highly pleasing to the Pharisees, and which pretended to great antiquity: and of these they might be said to drink, being inured to them from their youth, and therefore could not like the new dispensation of the Gospel, neither its doctrines, nor its ordinances; but preferred their old laws and traditions to them: or rather this proverb, as used by Christ here, may be considered as intimating the reason why the disciples did not give into the practices of the Pharisees, because they had drank of the old wine of the Gospel; which, as upon some account it may be called new, because of the new dispensation, fresh discovery and clearer revelation of it; in other respects it may be said to be old, being what was prepared and ordained before the world began; and what Adam drank of, in the first hint and promise of the Messiah; and after him Noah, the preacher of righteousness; and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom the Gospel was preached before; and even Moses, who wrote and testified of Christ; and David, and Solomon, and Isaiah, and all the prophets of the

former dispensation: and now the disciples having more largely drank of it, under the ministry of Christ, could not easily desire the new wine of the fastings and prayers of the Pharisees, and John's disciples; for the old wine of the Gospel was much better in their esteem, more grateful to the taste, more refreshing to their spirits, and more salutary and healthful, being the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ. Old wine, with the Jews [f248] was wine of three years old, and was always by them preferred to new: so they descant on those words in (<5516>Deuteronomy 15:16) “because he is well with thee [f249], (i.e. the servant,)”

> “with thee in food, with thee in drink; for thou shalt not eat bread of fine flour, and he eat bread of bran; or thou drink, ˆçy ˆyy, “old wine”, and he drink, çdh ˆyy, “new wine”.”

And sometimes they use this distinction of old and new wine proverbially and parabolically, as here [f250].

> “Rabbi Jose bar Juda, a man of a village in Babylon, used to say, he that learns of young men, to what is he like? to him that eateth unripe grapes, and drinks wine out of the fat: but he; that learns of old men, to what is he like? to him that eats ripe grapes, and drinks, ˆçy ˆyy, “old wine””

signifying, that the knowledge of old men is more solid, and mature, and unmixed, and free from dregs of ignorance, than that of young men: though it follows, that

> “Ribbi had used to say, do not look upon the tankard, but on what is in it; for sometimes there is a new tankard full of old wine, and an old one in which there is not so much as new in it:”

signifying, that sometimes young men are full of wisdom and knowledge, when old men are entirely devoid of them.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 6

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass on the second sabbath day after the first*, etc.] Or "second first sabbath", concerning which interpreters are greatly divided. Some think, that it was either the seventh day of the feast of unleavened bread, or the eighth day of the feast of tabernacles. Others, that it was the sabbath which fell that year on the day of Pentecost; and that as there were three grand festivals among the Jews, the feasts of passover, Pentecost, and tabernacles; so when the sabbath day fell on the feast of the passover, it was called the first prime sabbath, when on the feast of Pentecost, it was called the second prime sabbath, and when on the feast of tabernacles, the third prime sabbath. Others have been of opinion, that as the Jews had two beginnings of their year, the one on civil accounts in Tisri, the other on ecclesiastical accounts in Nisan; so the first sabbath in Tisri was called the first first sabbath, and that in Nisan, which was this, the second first sabbath: but what seems most likely is, that this sabbath was, as it may be rendered, "the first sabbath after the second"; that is, the first sabbath after the second day of the passover, when the sheaf of the firstfruits was offered, and harvest might be begun; which suits well with ears of corn being ripe at this time, which the disciples rubbed. So the Jews reckoned the seven weeks from thence to Pentecost by sabbaths; the first after the second day they called the second first, or the first after the second day; the second they called the second second; and the third was named the second third; and so on, the second fourth, the second fifth, the second sixth, and second seventh, which brought on Pentecost, when the harvest was ended. So in the Jewish liturgies, there are collects for the first sabbath after the passover, and for the second sabbath after the passover, and so on to the sabbath before Pentecost. The eastern versions, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic, not knowing what should be meant by it, have only rendered it, "on the sabbath day", as in Mt. 12:1. (See Gill on "Matthew 12:1").

That he went through the corn fields; that is, Jesus, as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions:

and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands: after they had plucked them they rubbed them in their hands to get clean off the husk or beard, that were on them, and then ate the grains. And as plucking of the ears of corn was forbidden on a sabbath day, (see Gill on "Matthew 12:2"), so was rubbing them; though if they were rubbed before, the chaff might be blown off from them in the hand, and eat on the sabbath day: the rule is this [f251];

> "he that rubs ears of corn on the evening of the sabbath, (i.e. on the sixth day,) may blow them from hand to hand on the morrow, and eat"

But the disciples both plucked them, and rubbed them, and blew away the chaff from them on the sabbath day, and therefore were complained of by the Pharisees.

Ver. 2. *And certain of the Pharisees said unto them*, etc.] Unto the disciples. The Evangelists Matthew and Mark say, that they said this to Jesus: no doubt but they said it to both, first to one, and then to the other; probably last of all to Christ, who returned an answer to it:

why do ye that which is not lawful on the sabbath day? as to pluck ears of corn, and rub them, and eat them; (See Gill on "Matthew 12:2")

Ver. 3. *And Jesus answering them, said*, etc.] For they brought the charge against the disciples to him, being desirous to know what he would say, and that they might have something to accuse him of; and who, at once, took up the cause of his disciples, and vindicated them, by observing what David did, when he, and his men were an hungry; how that he went into the tabernacle, and took the showbread, and ate of it, and gave it to his men, who also ate of it; which, according to the law, was only allowed to priests; and by taking notice of another instance, which this evangelist does not relate; namely, how on the sabbath days the priests, by doing various servile works, profaned the sabbath day, and yet were not charged with any blame; (See Gill on "Matthew 12:3-5").

Ver. 5. *And he said unto them*, etc.] He adds this at the close of the instances he gave, at the end of his vindication of his disciples, and discourse with the Pharisees, as a full answer to their cavils;

that the son of man is Lord also of the sabbath; and may do what he will, and suffer his disciples to do whatever he pleases on that day; (See Gill on "<40128>Matthew 12:8").

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass also on another sabbath*, etc.] Whether the following sabbath, or some time after, is not certain,

that he entered into the synagogue. The Arabic version reads, "into their synagogue", as in (<40129>Matthew 12:9) the synagogue of the Jews; in what place, whether at Capernaum, or some other city of Galilee, is not so clear:

and taught; explained the Scriptures to the people, and instructed them in the doctrines of the Gospel:

and there was a man whose right hand was withered; who was in the synagogue, and one of his hearers; (See Gill on "<40120>Matthew 12:10")

Ver. 7. *And the Scribes and Pharisees watched him*, etc.] (See Gill on "<41302>Mark 3:2")

whether he would heal on the sabbath day: there being such an object before him:

that they might find an accusation against him; as they had before against his disciples.

Ver. 8. *But he knew their thoughts*, etc.] Being the omniscient God; though they had said nothing of their intentions, he knew what they designed, should he heal the man with his withered hand, as they expected he would:

and said to the man which had the withered hand, rise up, and stand forth in the midst. The Syriac and Persic versions add, "of the synagogue", and which is the true sense; (See Gill on "<41303>Mark 3:3")

and he arose and stood forth; he rose up from his seat, and stood up in the midst of the synagogue, and of the people, that he might be seen of all.

Ver. 9. *Then said Jesus unto them*, etc.] The Scribes and Pharisees, who were watching him, and whose thoughts, and the reasonings of their minds, purposes, and intentions, he full well knew:

I will ask you one thing; or question, as they had asked him one before; (<40120>Matthew 12:10)

is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it? (See Gill on "Mark 3:4") to which may be added, that to save life on the sabbath day was agreeable to their own canons: there were many things which they allowed might be done on the sabbath day, when life was in danger, which otherwise were not lawful; (See Gill on "Matthew 12:8").

Ver. 10. *And looking round about upon them all*, etc.] The Scribes and Pharisees, and the rest of the people in the synagogue; (See Gill on "Mark 3:5").

he said to the man; who had the withered hand,

stretch forth thy hand, and he did so; he stretched it out, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it, which he was not able to do before:

and his hand was restored well as the other; the phrase, "well as the other", is left out in one copy, and in the Vulgate Latin version; and so is the word "well" in the Syriac and Arabic versions; and the word "immediately" is added in the Ethiopic version. And certain it is, that his withered hand was restored sound and well as the other, directly.

Ver. 11. *And they were filed with madness*, etc.] Both at the cure, and because they could not answer him; nor properly fix a charge upon him, or accuse him before the people, without bringing their resentments on them:

and communed one with another what they might do with Jesus: this they did after they came out of the synagogue, and when with the Herodians, as in (see Gill on "Mark 3:6").

Ver. 12. *And it came to pass in those days*, etc.] When Christ was teaching by the lake of Gennesaret, or in one or other of the cities of Galilee near that place:

that he went out; of the synagogue and city where he had been:

into a mountain to pray; for the sake of solitude, and which lay near the sea of Tiberias; (See Gill on "Matthew 14:23").

and continued all night in prayer to God; or "with" God, as the Ethiopic version renders it; or "in the prayer of God" as the phrase may be literally rendered; not in a prayer of God's making; though the Jews [f252] sometimes speak of the prayer of God, and give us a form of it: but either this respects

the object of his prayer; it was made to God, as our translation suggests; or the nature, matter, and manner of it: it was a divine prayer, it regarded divine things, and was put up in a very fervent manner, and with great vehemence; so the coals of love or jealousy are said to be "coals of fire, which hath hy tbhlç, the flame of Jehovah"; that is as we render it, "a most vehement flame", (<2806>Song of Solomon 8:6) In like manner, "prayer of God" is a most vehement prayer; strong cries sent up to God with great eagerness and importunity, fervency, and devotion; and such was Christ's prayer, and in which he continued all night: unless by the prayer of God should be meant, as is thought by many, an house of prayer to God, in which Christ lodged all night, and spent it in prayer to God in it. Certain it is, the Jews had their "proseuchre", or prayer houses. Philo the Jew [f253] often speaks of them, and so does Josephus [f254]; and there seems to be mention made of them in the Talmudic writings: when R. Jochanan ben Zaccai came to Vespasian, in his camp before Jerusalem, Vespasian asked him, what he should give him? he replied [f255],

> "I desire nothing of thee but this "Jabneh", (a famous university,) that I may teach in it the disciples, and fix in it hlpt, "an oratory", or "prayer house", and do in it, all the commandments said in the law."

And in another place [f256],

> "R. Judah says, that Samuel said it is free for a man to make water within four cubits, hlypt lç, which I should choose to render, "of the proseucha", or "prayer house":"

though the Gemarists afterwards, and so the gloss seem to explain it of the time after prayer, in which a man should wait before he evacuates, even as long as he might go the length of four cubits. Juvenal [f257] has reference to one of these oratories, when he says, "in qua te qucero proseucha?" and in one of these, it is very likely, Christ was in prayer all night long; for by the sea side, and by the side of rivers, these oratories were used to be; (<4413>Acts 16:13,16).

Ver. 13. *And when it was day*, etc.] Or morning; having spent the whole night in prayer to God, no doubt for his disciples, whom he was about to send forth as his apostles, to preach his Gospel, and work miracles, and for their success therein:

he called unto him his disciples; the whole company of them, as in (<40617>Luke 6:17) all that were his followers, and professed to believe in him, or as many as he pleased; (see <41013>Mark 3:13).

And of them he chose twelve; and ordained them, and sent them out to preach, heal sicknesses, and cast out devils:

whom he also named apostles; or "messengers", from their being sent by him on such important business; and their names are as follow.

Ver. 14. *Simon, whom he also named Peter*, etc.] Which signifies a rock, or stone, as Cephas also does, (see <40142>John 1:42) from his constancy, steadfastness, and solidity:

and Andrew his brother; who was called at the same time with him, and were brethren, both in nature and grace:

James and John: the two sons of Zebedee, who were called next:

Philip and Bartholomew; the latter of these is by some thought to be Nathanael.

Ver. 15. *Matthew and Thomas*, etc.] The first of these was a publican, and who also was called Levi; and the latter had besides the name of Didymus, and was he that was so unbelieving of Christ's resurrection:

James the son of Alphaeus; sometimes called James the less, and the brother of our Lord: and

Simon called Zelotes; or the Canaanite; (See Gill on "<40104>Matthew 10:4").

Ver. 16. *And Judas the brother of James*, etc.] Of that James, that was the son of Alphaeus; though the Syriac and Arabic versions call him "the son of James", very wrongly: this Judas was also called Thaddaeus and Lebbaeus, and is the writer of the epistle that bears his name:

and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor; both his surname and his character are mentioned, to distinguish him from the other Judas: it is easy to observe, that these twelve are mentioned by pairs, or couples, and so they were sent out, two by two; (see <41067>Mark 6:7) as were also the seventy disciples afterwards; (see <42001>Luke 10:1) There seems to be an allusion to the pairs and couples of the Jewish fathers and doctors, who in their succession are thus paired: Jose ben Joezer, and Joseph ben Jochauan; Joshua ben Perachia, and Nathan the Arbelite; Simeon ben Shetach, and

Judah ben Tabai; Shemain and Abtalion; the two sons of Bethira, whose names were Judah and Joshua; Hillell and Shammai [f258]: all before Christ's time.

Ver. 17. *And he came down with them*, etc.] With the twelve apostles, from the top of the mountain, where he had been praying all night, and where he had been that morning, ordaining, and giving instructions to the twelve he had chosen:

and stood in the plain; in a lower part of the mountain, in a plain place on it; which was large, and capable of holding a great number of people; for it was still upon the mount, that Christ taught his disciples, and said many of the things hereafter mentioned in this chapter; (see <401501>Matthew 5:1).

And the company of his disciples: not only the twelve, but the large number out of which he had chosen twelve;

and a great multitude of people; who were hearers of him, and attendants on him, and who had a great esteem for him, though they were not as yet of the number of his disciples; who came

out of all Judea, and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon: drawn from these several parts by the fame of him, some for one thing, and some another; some of

which came to hear him: to hear him preach, and that they might know what manner of doctrine he taught: and others of them,

to be healed of their diseases; their bodily diseases, and some came perhaps for both.

Ver. 18. *And they that were vexed with unclean spirits*, etc.] Were possessed with devils, and sadly tormented and afflicted by them:

and they were healed: both such that had bodily diseases, and were under diabolical possessions.

Ver. 19. *And the whole multitude sought to touch him*, etc.] That is, the multitude of those that were sick and possessed; for they were persuaded, and they found it true by experience, that if they could but touch any part of his body, or his garments, they should be cured of their diseases:

for there went virtue out of him; in great abundance, as water from a fountain; without his speaking a word, or using any gesture, such as laying his hands on them:

and they were healed; in this secret and private way, of whatsoever disease they were afflicted with.

Ver. 20. *And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples*, etc.] Either the whole company of them, or rather the twelve apostles, whom he saw coming to him, and fixing his eyes on them, he sat,

and said; what follows, with many other things recorded by Matthew:

blessed be ye poor; not only in the things of this world, having left all for Christ, but poor in Spirit, as in (Matthew 5:3), (See Gill on "Matthew 5:3"):

for yours is the kingdom of God; or heaven, so in (Matthew 5:3).

Ver. 21. *Blessed are ye that hunger now*, etc.] Not only suffer hunger and thirst in a literal sense, in this present life, but who have hunger and thirst in a spiritual sense, after righteousness and eternal life, as in (Matthew 5:6) where it is also said as here:

for ye shall be filled: with righteousness and life; (see Gill on "Matthew 5:6").

blessed are ye that weep now; under afflictions and pressures of life, and mourn for sin, their own, and others:

for ye shall laugh; be filled with spiritual joy and pleasure, and be comforted with the consolations of the Spirit; (see Gill on "Matthew 5:4").

Ver. 22. *Blessed are ye when men shall hate you*, etc.] For the sake of Christ, and his Gospel:

and when they shall separate you from their company; either from civil conversation with them, as if they were Gentiles and uncircumcised persons; or from their religious assemblies, and so may have respect to that sort of excommunication in use, among the Jews, called ywdn or "separation": by which persons were not only excluded from the congregation, but from all civil society and commerce: such a person might

not sit nearer to another than four cubits, and this continued for thirty days; and if not discharged then, he continued thirty more [f259]:

and shall reproach you: as heretics, apostates, and enemies to the law of Moses, as the Jews did reproach the Christians;

and cast out your name as evil; or "as of evil men": as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it: this may have respect to the greater sorts of excommunication, used among them, called "Shammatha" and "Cherem", by which a person was accursed, and devoted to destruction; so that our Lord's meaning is, that the should be esteemed and treated as the worst of men, and stigmatized in the vilest manner they were capable of:

for the son of man's sake; not for any immorality committed by them, but only for professing and, preaching that the Messiah was come in the flesh, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he; and that he who was the son of man, according to his human nature, was, the Son of God according to his divine nature.

Ver. 23. *Rejoice ye in that day*, etc.] When they should be hated, discarded, reproached, and anathematized: and leap for joy; as if the greatest honour and happiness imaginable had been conferred on them; and as persons do, when in the greatest rapture:

for behold, your reward is great in heaven, for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets; (See Gill on "<4052>Matthew 5:12").

Ver. 24. *But woe unto you that are rich*, etc.] Not in worldly riches and substance, for some of these have been, and are happy persons in a spiritual sense; and at most, it can only mean such, who trust in their riches, and place their, happiness in them; but it chiefly regards such, as are rich in their own opinion, and stand in need of nothing; who place their confidence in their own righteousness, and do not apply to Christ, in whom alone are durable riches and righteousness:

for ye have received your consolation; which they take from their own works, and a very unstable and short lived one it is; for while they are crying Peace, Peace, to themselves, from their own services, sudden destruction comes upon them, and all their comforts vanish away: for there is no true solid comfort but in Christ, and in his righteousness; that administers consolation now, and lays a foundation for everlasting comfort hereafter.

Ver. 25. *Woe unto you that are full*, etc.] Not so much with the plenty and affluence of the things of this life, as of themselves, and their own righteousness, and so with conceit, vanity, and pride, and have no appetite for spiritual things, nor do they hunger and thirst after Christ, and the grace that is in him:

for ye shall hunger; not that they shall truly and spiritually desire an interest in Christ, and his righteousness, or heaven and eternal life hereafter; but they shall be in starving and famishing circumstances; and whilst the saints are feeding upon the joys and glories of the other world, compared to a banquet, they shall be without, and have no share in these things; (<23 65 13>Isaiah 65:13,14).

Woe unto you that laugh now; at sin, rejoice in iniquity, make a mock at it, instead of mourning for it; or that glory in themselves, and in their righteousness, and rejoice in their boastings:

for ye shall mourn and weep; shall be cast into outer darkness, where are weeping, waiting, and gnashing of teeth; and for all the fire they have kindled, and sparks they have encompassed themselves with, and danced in and about, this they shall have at the hand of God, they shall lie down in sorrow, and ever continue in it.

Ver. 26. *Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you*! etc.] The word “all”, is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic; Persic: and Ethiopic versions, and is wanting in many copies, though it is in the Alexandrian copy; and the meaning is, it looks ill in persons, when the men of the world, wicked men, all of them, or the greater part of them, applaud and commend them; for this can never be, if they are truly religious persons, and are faithful to their principles, and upright in their practices; and do not connive at, or comply with the errors and evil ways of wicked men; for it is no bad sign, to have the good word of good men, and therefore these must be excepted, and the passage must be limited to bad men;

for so did their fathers to the false prophets; they spoke well of them, and heaped favours, riches, and honours upon them, that they might prophesy unto them things; (<11 22 06>1 Kings 22:6,12,27 <23 30 10>Isaiah 30:10), smooth things and deceit.

Ver. 27. *But I say unto you which hear*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds “me”, and the generality of interpreters understand the passage of the

hearers of Christ, as distinct from the disciples, or together with them, and of the better sort of them; and of such as had ears to hear, and who heard with a desire of understanding, and of putting into practice what they heard; but I rather think it regards the hearers of the Scribes and Pharisees, then present, who had heard and received the traditions of the elders, to which the following rules of Christ are opposed; and to each of which, with others in Matthew, these words are prefixed;

ye have heard that it was said by them of old time — but I say unto you, etc.] (<4052>Matthew 5:21,27,33,38,43) with which compare this phrase, and the sense will appear to be this; to you that hear day by day, the traditions of the elders urged upon you, and the false glosses the Scribes and Pharisees put upon the word of God; in opposition to them, I say to you what follows:

love your enemies; whereas you have heard them say, hate your enemies, keep enmity in your hearts to them, and revenge yourselves on them:

do good to them that hate you; whereas you have heard it said, that you should only do good to your friends, and should keep anger in your bosoms to such who hate you, and do you an injury; (See Gill on "<4043>Matthew 5:43") (See Gill on "<4044>Matthew 5:44")

Ver. 28. *Bless them that curse you*; etc.] In common discourse, or anathematize you in their synagogues:

and pray for them which despitefully use you: so Christ himself did; (See Gill on "<4044>Matthew 5:44").

Ver. 29. *And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek*, etc.] The right cheek,

offer also the other; the left cheek, by turning it to him, that he may smite that likewise, if he thinks fit: by which proverbial expression, Christ teaches patience in bearing injuries and affronts, and not to seek private revenge; but rather, suffer more, than indulge such a temper; and for the same purpose is what follows urged:

and him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also: the phrase is inverted in Matthew; (See Gill on "<4039>Matthew 5:39. See Gill on "<4040>Matthew 5:40.

Ver. 30. And give to every man that asketh, etc.] See Gill on "Matthew 5:42")

And of him that taketh away thy goods; not by force, but by consent, having either lent them, or sold them to him: for if they were taken away by force, the person so taking them was to be deemed a thief and a robber, and to be treated as such; but one that takes them by agreement, and is not able to make a return of them, or to give a valuable consideration for them, of such an one ask them not again: do not exact or demand them, but give him a release, as the law requires, in (Deuteronomy 15:2) which seems to be respected here; and where the same word is used by the Septuagint, as here.

Ver. 31. *And as ye would that men should do to you*, etc.] In matters of justice and beneficence were they in your case, and you in theirs;

do ye also to them likewise: a golden rule this, agreeably to the light of nature, and divine revelation, and is the sum and substance of the law and prophets; (See Gill on "Matthew 7:12").

Ver. 32. *For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye?* etc.] Or, "what grace have ye?" this is no fruit, nor evidence of grace, nor any exercise of the true grace of love; nor is it any favour conferred upon the object loved, which deserves the respect shown, nor can any reward be expected for such treatment: and thus it is expressed in Matthew, "what reward have ye?" and the Arabic version renders it so here:

for sinners also love those who love them: men that are destitute of the grace of God, profligate sinners, even the worst of them, such as publicans, do this; (See Gill on "Matthew 5:46").

Ver. 33. *And if ye do good to them which do good to you*, etc.] As one good turn deserves another:

what thank have ye? what grace or goodness is there in such an action? what glory or merit is there in it?

for sinners also do even the same: wherefore no man should conclude himself a righteous man, or better than sinners, on such an account: this is to be found among the worst of men, and is natural to them, unless they are brutes indeed, to be kind to such as are kind to them. And yet, this was

the whole of the doctrine of the Jews about doing good to men: for so they say [f260],

> "an Israelite is obliged to do good to an Israelite his companion, and to lend without usury: this is kindness and goodness, and a greater good it is than a gift; for many men are ashamed to take a gift, and are not ashamed to take a loan: but not so an Israelite to a Gentile; for he is not bound to do good, or show kindness to him, or to lend him his money freely; for many of them hate the Israelites; but it must be owned, that if a Gentile does a kindness, or good, to an Israelite; the Israelite is also bound to show kindness to him, and do him good."

In direct opposition to such narrow sentiments does our Lord deliver himself in this, and the following verses.

Ver. 34. *And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive*, etc.] The same again, as from their brethren the Jews; or usury, as from the Gentiles:

what thank have ye? and yet they looked upon this, in the first instance of it, as a very great kindness, and act of goodness, as appears from the above citation:

for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again; or "what is equal", and answerable to what they have lent them; that is, the same, or what is equivalent to it.

Ver. 35. *But love ye your enemies*, etc.] As before urged in (Luke 6:27)

and do good and lend; not to your friends only, but to your enemies;

hoping for nothing again; either principal or interest, despairing of seeing either; lending to such persons, from whom, in all appearance, it is never to be expected again. The Persic version renders it, "that ye may not cause any to despair": and the Syriac version, "that ye may not cut off", or "cause to cease the hope of men"; and the Arabic version, "that ye do not deceive the hope of any" that is, by sending such away, without lending to them, who come big with expectations of succeeding:

and your reward shall be great: God will bless you in your worldly substance here, and will not forget your beneficence hereafter:

and ye shall be the children of the Highest: that is of God; one of whose names is ˆwyl["the Most High"; (<19B206>Psalm 82:6) the meaning is, that such who from principles of grace, and with right views do such acts of kindness and beneficence to their fellow creatures and Christians, shall be, made manifest, and declared to be the children of God; since they will appear to be born of him, and made partakers of the divine nature, and bear a resemblance to him, by their imitating him:

for he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil; by causing his sun to rise, and his rain to fall on them, as on the righteous and the good; for as Jews [f261] observe,

> "there is no difference with him, whether on the right hand or the left; for he is gracious, and does good, even to the ungodly."

And elsewhere they say [f262], that

> "he does good, and feeds the righteous and the ungodly."

Ver. 36. *Be ye therefore merciful*, etc.] Tenderhearted, kind, beneficent to all men, friends and foes:

as your Father also is merciful; that is your Father which is in heaven; who is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works: nothing is more common in Zohar [f263], and the Talmud [f264] than to express the Divine Being by no other name, than "the Merciful"; rma anmjr, "the Merciful said" so, and so; that is, God: and so the Arabians generally begin their books and chapters with these words, "in the name of God, exceeding merciful", or "the merciful commiserator": a saying much like to this in the text, is the Targum of Jonathan, on (<03228>Leviticus 22:28).

> "O my people, the children of "Israel, as your father", ˆmjr, "is merciful" in heaven, so be ye merciful on earth."

Ver. 37. *Judge not, and ye shall not be judged*, etc.] (See Gill on "<40701>Matthew 7:1").

Condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; censure not men's persons, and judge not their state, or adjudge them to condemnation, for every offence in practice, or because they differ in principle, lest you should be treated in like manner by others; and especially, lest you should fall under the righteous censure, judgment, and condemnation of God:

forgive; offences and trespasses committed against you, bear with, and pass by injuries and affronts:

and ye shall be forgiven; of God; (See Gill on "Matthew 6:14").

Ver. 38. *Give, and it shall be given unto you*, etc.] Give liberally of your worldly substance to indigent persons, as you have an opportunity, according to your ability, and as cases require: and it shall be returned again to great advantage; with great recompense, either in temporals or spirituals, or both:

good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. The allusion is to dry measure among the Jews, for to liquids, the terms used will not agree; and which, though right and full, which is here called good measure, they thrust and pressed to make it hold more; and shook it also for the same purpose, and then heaped it up as much as they could, till it fell over: of all these methods used in measuring, we have instances in their writings; which may serve to illustrate this passage: it is said of [f265] one, that

> "he measured, hçwtk hdmb, "with measure pressed down"; and therefore they measured to him, with measure pressed down."

Some of their measures they heaped, and some they did not: they say [f266];

> "all the measures which were in the sanctuary, twçwdgn "were heaped", except the high priest's, and his heap was contained in it."

And elsewhere they observe [f267] that

> "there were two decimaries (or tithing vessels) in the sanctuary, one was çwdg, "heaped", and the other was qwjm, "stricken": with that which was heaped they measured all the fine flour for the meat offerings, and with the stricken, that which was for the cakes of the high priest."

With respect to this distinction of measures, they say it is a tradition of the Rabbins [f268], that they do not "strike" in the place where ``they "heap", nor heap in the place where, they strike."

Between these two measures there was another, which was full measure and just, and right, without heaping or striking [f269], R. Papa inquired, whether the handful

> "(of sweet incense the high priest took on the day of atonement) which is spoken of (<031612>Leviticus 16:12) was of "stricken" or "heaped" measure; R. Abba said to R. Ase, come, hear, the handful spoken of, is neither of stricken nor heaped measure, twpwpj ala, "but of equal measure";"

sufficiently full, and no more. Dr. Lightfoot reads it, twpwxm, "flowing over"; by what authority I cannot say; though the gloss says, the word signifies,

> "flowing over, by reason of its height,"

But flowing or running over measure, was the same with that which was heaped, as appears from the following instance [f270]:

> "all those that hsg hdmb ^y[ypçmh "cause to abound", or run over with the great "measure", it is lawful for them to sell that, of which it is doubted whether it has been tithed or not; and these are they, that "cause to run over", or "heap" with the great measure, as corn factors and fruiterers."

Who buy corn and fruits to sell again, and which they buy by the large measure, and fill it up, add unto it, and heap it up; and so get more than what is properly due unto them, as the commentators observe [f271]: would you know the quantity of the heap, or that which ran over, or the difference between even measure, and that which was heaped, learn, it from hence: in (<110726>1 Kings 7:26) it is said, the molten sea held two thousand baths, and in (<140405>2 Chronicles 4:5) three thousand baths; which difficulty the Jewish writers solve this way, by observing, that the former text is to be understood of liquid measure, and the latter of dry measure, which was heaped: hence says R. Abai, we learn that, ywh atlt açdwg, "the heap is the third part" of the measure [f272]: now to this superabundant measure, Christ here refers; and signifies, that a large compensation should be made to such, who give liberally and generously to needy persons; that as they abounded in their acts of beneficence, so an overflowing plenty of good things should be returned to them: and when he says, that this should be "given into their bosom", he alludes to the long and large garments the Jews wore, into which they were capable of receiving large lapfuls of good things: the words may be read impersonally, "shall be given into your bosom"; or if personally, they may be understood of God, angels, and men,

in different senses: the phrase “shaken together”, is not in the Syriac and Persic versions: “for with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again”; a common proverb with the Jews: (See Gill on “<4702>Matthew 7:2”).

Ver. 39. *And he spake a parable unto them*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin reads, “he spake also a parable unto them”; besides what he said; and the Arabic version renders it, “another similitude”, parable, or proverb, distinct from the comparisons, allusions, and proverbial expressions in the preceding verses. Though it should be observed, that these words were not spoken at the same time, nor on the mount, as the foregoing were; but this, and what follow, are a collection of various expressions of Christ at different times, some delivered on the mount, and others elsewhere; unless it should be rather thought, that these proverbs and sentences were repeated at different places and times, which is not improbable:

can the blind lead the blind? they may do so, as the blind Scribes and Pharisees led the blind people of the Jews, which is what our Lord intends; but if they do, as they did,

shall they not both fall into the ditch? yes, verily, what else can be expected? (See Gill on “<4014>Matthew 15:14”).

Ver. 40. *The disciple is not above his master*, etc.] Or “more excellent”, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it; that is, in learning and knowledge; if the master is ignorant, the scholar will be so too; and thus it is with teachers, and their people under their care; if the leaders are blind and ignorant, those under their instructions will remain so likewise. These words are an illustration of the preceding parable, and are used to another purpose here than in (<4010>Matthew 10:24). (See Gill on “<4010>Matthew 10:24”)

but every one that is perfect shall be as his master. The Vulgate Latin reads it, “every one shall be perfect if he is as his master”; that is, if his master is a man of general learning, and a complete scholar, if he is like him, he will be so too: the Persic version renders it, “every disciple that desires perfection shall be as his master”: whoever is ambitious of being a thorough scholar, and is diligent and industrious, by all ways and means, to obtain such a character, shall be even as good an one as his master, under whom he learns, and better he cannot well expect to be; and this is

sufficient; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “is it not enough that every one be as his master?” agreeably to (<4010>Matthew 10:25)

Maimonides [f273] has an expression much like this:

> “he that learns, shall not be greater than he of whom he learns, but shall be, wtwmk, “as he”.”

Christ, in this last clause, seems to design his own disciples, who, when perfect in knowledge, which is not to be expected in this state, unless in a comparative sense, will be like himself.

Ver. 41. *And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye*, etc.] A lesser sin in comparison of others; for all sins are not alike, as the Stoics asserted: and though none are to be countenanced and indulged, yet some are not so severely to be animadverted upon as others, the nature, occasions, circumstances, and aggravations considered; for no man is perfect, or wholly free from sin; nor are the words preceding to be understood of such a perfection; for which reason perhaps these words, with what follow, are mentioned:

but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? meaning a greater sin, such are guilty of, who are inquisitive searchers into the faults of others, and severe animadverters on them; and yet are blind to their own iniquities, and take no notice of them. These proverbial expressions were delivered by Christ on the mount, and are the same with those in (<4003>Matthew 7:3-5).

Ver. 42. *Either how canst thou say to thy brother*, etc.] Guilty of the lesser sin;

brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye; that is, suffer me to reprove thee for thy sin: the word “brother” is omitted in the Cambridge copy of Beza's, and in the Persic version; nor is it in Matthew; but in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions it is read, “my brother”; pretending great affection and sincerity:

when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? that is, takest no notice of, and dost not refrain from a greater iniquity continued in:

thou hypocrite; as such an one must be, that bears hard upon his brother, and severely censures him for a small crime, when he indulges in himself a far more abominable sin:

cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye: the sense is, that a man should first reform himself, and then others.

Ver. 43. *For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit*, etc.] The particle, "for" is left out in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; and so it is in Beza's ancient copy: nor do these words stand in close connection with the preceding in Matthew's Gospel, though they may be very well considered as an illustration of them; for as that cannot be called a good tree, which brings forth bad fruit; so such men cannot be accounted good men, let them make ever so large pretensions to such a character, who are very busy in espying, discovering, and censuring the faults of their brethren; when they take no notice of, nor refrain from, nor relinquish their own. These words, with what follow in this, and the next verse, and the similes in them, are used by our Lord in Matthew, on account of false prophets or teachers; where he suggests, that as good and faithful ministers of the Gospel cannot, and do, not bring forth, and publish corrupt notions, and false doctrines, usually and knowingly; even usual, nor can it be, that a good tree should bring forth corrupt fruit; so,

neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit; or men of corrupt minds deliver good and sound doctrine, or the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ: but here they seem to be applicable to other persons, even true believers and hypocrites: the former are comparable to good trees, and are called trees of righteousness, which being planted by the river of the love of God, and rooted in Christ, and filled with the fruits of righteousness by him, do not bring forth the evil fruit of sin, as the common and constant course of their lives and conversations; for that they never commit sin, or are entirely without it, cannot be said; but sin is not their usual and common practice, or they do not live in sin: and the latter, hypocrites, who pretend to a great deal of religion, and have none that is true and real, these are comparable to corrupt trees; which, though they may make a fair show, yet do not bring forth good fruit, or perform works of righteousness which are truly such; what they do have only the appearance of good works, and are not properly so;

(See Gill on "Matthew 7:16-18").

Ver. 44. *For every tree is known by its own fruit*, etc.] Good and bad preachers are known by their doctrines, the one being agreeable, the other disagreeable to the word of God; and good and bad men are known by their lives and conversations: the grace of God revealed to good men, and wrought in them, teaches them to live soberly, righteously, and godly; a holy life is the fruit of grace, and an evidence of it; and the wickedness that is in the heart of unregenerate men, and even the hypocrisy of formal professors, will show themselves in the common and ordinary course of their conversations:

for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes; nor can they be expected from them: and no more can an unregenerate man perform good works, or bring forth: fruits of righteousness acceptable unto God; for these require a knowledge of his will, obedience to it, a principle of grace, love to God, faith in Christ, and a view to the glory of God; all which are wanting in such a person.

Ver. 45. *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart*, etc.] This, because of its suitableness and agreement with what goes before, is placed by Luke here; though, according to Matthew, it was spoken at another time and place, unless it should be a repetition there; (See Gill on "Matthew 12:35")

for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, Ethiopic, Syriac, and Persic versions, leave out the word "his"; and the two latter read "lips", instead of "mouth"; (See Gill on "Matthew 12:34").

Ver. 46. *And why call ye me Lord, Lord*, etc.] Or, "my Lord, my Lord", as the Syriac version renders it; acknowledging, in words, his government over them; claiming an interest in him, and making use of his name and authority:

and do not the things which I say; or "command"; and therefore such words in their mouths would be of no use to them, since they neither did his Father's will, which he taught them, nor observed his commands and ordinances which he enjoined them; and therefore should not enter into the kingdom of heaven, nor be owned by him another day, but should be bid to depart from him; (See Gill on "Matthew 7:21-23").

Ver. 47. *Whosoever cometh to me*, etc.] To be a disciple and follower:

and heareth my sayings, and doth them; (See Gill on "[4072]Matthew 7:24").

I will show you to whom he is like; or "to what thing he is like"; so the Syriac and Arabic versions; though what follows seems better to agree with person than thing.

Ver. 48. *He is like a man which built an house*, etc.] That is, intended to build one, having drawn the scheme of it in his mind, and provided materials, and fixed upon the spot of ground:

and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock; that is, he dug deep in the earth, till he came at a rock, and there, and then, he laid the foundation of his house; in which he acted the part of a wise man, as he is called in Matthew: so a sensible sinner, desirous of building his soul, and the salvation of it, on a sure bottom, digs deep into the Scriptures, diligently searches them, till he finds out the scheme of salvation by Christ; which lies deep in God's counsel and covenant, was ordained before the world began, and was hid in God till revealed in the Gospel: and finding Christ to be the rock of ages, in whom is everlasting strength, and the foundation which God has laid, nor is there another; he makes use of him as such, and builds the hope of his eternal salvation on him:

and when the flood arose; an inundation, a multitude of waters, the swelling of the sea; or rather "when it was tide", as the word here used signifies[f274]:

the stream beat vehemently upon the house; or the river, up which the tide came, dashed and broke against it; by which may be signified the temptations of Satan, the persecutions of the world, the corruptions of men's hearts, and the errors and heresies of false teachers:

and could not shake it; as none of these can so shake as to move a soul, thus built on Christ, off of him the foundation:

for it was founded upon a rock; (See Gill on "[4072]Matthew 7:24-25").

Ver. 49. *But he that heareth, and doth not*, etc.] Hears Christ's sayings externally, but does not obey his commands:

is like a man that without a foundation built upon the earth: that is, without digging for a foundation, built his house upon the surface of the earth; "upon the dust of it", as the Syriac version renders it; or, "upon the sand", as Matthew says: "against which the stream did beat vehemently,

and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great”; (See Gill on “[4076]Matthew 7:26-27”)

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 7

Ver. 1. *Now when he had ended all his sayings*, etc.] That is, when Jesus, as the Persic version expresses it, had finished all the above sayings, doctrines, and instructions; not all that he had to say, for he said many things after this:

in the audience of the people; of the common people, the multitude besides the disciples; and that openly, and publicly, and with a loud and clear voice, that all might hear:

he entered into Capernaum; Jesus entered, as the Syriac version reads, into his own city, and where he had been before, and wrought miracles.

Ver. 2. *And a certain centurion's servant*, etc.] The same that Matthew makes mention of, (Matthew 8:5,6).

who was dear unto him; to the centurion, being an honest, upright, faithful, and obliging servant; as Tabi was to Rabban Gamaliel, of whom his master said [f275],

> "Tabi my servant, is not as other servants, hyh rçk, "he is upright"."

was sick: of a palsy; (see Matthew 8:6),

and ready to die; in all appearance his case was desperate, and there was no help for him by any human means, which makes the following cure, the more remarkable.

Ver. 3. *And when he heard of Jesus*, etc.] That he was come, as the Ethiopic version adds, into the city of Capernaum; or of his miracles, which he had done there, and elsewhere:

he sent unto him the elders of the Jews: in whom he had an interest, judging himself, being a Gentile, very unworthy and unfit to go himself, and ask a favour of so great a person as Christ was, such was his modesty and humility. These elders he sent, were not the more ancient inhabitants of

the city, called ϵdah µ[ynqz, “the elders of, or among the common people”, as distinguished from hrwt ynqz, “the elders of the law”, or those that were old in knowledge; of both which it is said by R. Simeon ben Achasia [f276], that

> “the elders of the common people, when they grow old, their knowledge fails in them, as it is said, (<43 12 20>John 12:20) but so it is not with the “elders of the law”; but when they grow old, their knowledge rests in them, as it is said, (<18 12 12>Job 12:12).”

But these were either some principal officers of the city, called the elders of the people elsewhere; particularly, who were members of the sanhedrim; for as elders, when they design the elders in Jerusalem, mean the great sanhedrim [f277] there; so elders, in other places, intend the sanhedrim, consisting of twenty one persons, or the bench of three; and such were these, the centurion sent to Christ:

beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant: he besought him most earnestly by these messengers, that he would come to his house, and cure his servant of the palsy, by laying his hands on him, or commanding the distemper off, by a word speaking; or in what way he should think fit, for he made no doubt that he was able to heal him.

Ver. 4. *And when they came to Jesus*, etc.] To that part of the city where he was; either at Peter's house, where he used to be when in this place; or rather it might be as he was passing along the streets, that they came up to him

they besought him instantly; or with great vehemence and importunity; very studiously and carefully they urged the case, and pressed him much to it:

saying, he was worthy for whom he should do this; or, “for whom thou shouldst do this”, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, and some copies; and which reading connects the words best. This speech of theirs savours of their “pharisaic” tenet and notion of merit, and is very different from the sense the poor centurion had of himself.

Ver. 5. *For he loveth our nation*, etc.] The Jewish nation, which was Christ's nation, as well as theirs, he being a Jew; (see <43 18 35>John 18:35). This they mention as an argument to induce him to have a regard to the

centurion, though he was a Gentile; since he was a friend of the Jews, and well affected and disposed to them, which was very rare: it was not common for the Gentiles to love the Jews, any more than the Jews the Gentiles; there was an hatred, yea, an enmity between them; but this man, very likely, was a proselyte to their religion, as the following instance seems to show:

and he hath built us a synagogue; at his own private charge, and by the assistance of his soldiers under him, whom he might employ in this work: sometimes a single person built a synagogue at his own expense, and gave it to the citizens; of which the Jews say, [f278]

> "if a man builds an house, and afterwards devotes it to a synagogue, it is as a synagogue."

Ver. 6. *Then Jesus went with them*, etc.] The elders of the Jews, towards the centurion's house, after hearing their request, and their reasons for it; and that without any reluctancy, he at once complied, made no hesitation, or difficulty about it, but went with them very freely:

and when he was now not far from the house; of the centurion, where his servant lay sick; he having some notice of his coming, and of his being near his house, in his great humility, and being conscious to himself of his unworthiness to have such a person under his roof, sent messengers to prevent him:

the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself; or do not fatigue thyself by coming to the house, stop, go no further;

for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof: he might know full well the law of the Jews, that it was not lawful for a Jew to go into the house of an uncircumcised Gentile; and though he might be a proselyte of righteousness, and so his house was free of entrance; yet considering his own meanness, and the greatness of Christ, who was become so famous for his doctrines and miracles, he thought it too great a stoop for Christ to come into his house, and too high a favour for him to enjoy.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee*, etc.] In person; therefore he sent the elders of the Jews to him first, and now some of his friends, who delivered these words in his name:

but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed; speak but the word only, rebuke the distemper, command it off, and it will be gone; so great was his faith in the power of Christ.

Ver. 8. *For I also am a man set under authority*, etc.] Of the Roman senate; "or belonging to the emperor", as the Arabic version renders it; and under the command of a tribune, as a centurion was: so that this is not an amplification, but a diminution of his office; and his sense is, that even he who was but an inferior officer, yet had such power as after related:

having under me soldiers; an hundred, or more:

and I say unto one, go, and he goeth, and to another, come, and he cometh, and to my servant, do this, and he doth it; as this his servant used to do, and whom he may intend, who now lay sick, and therefore was dear unto him. His meaning is, that Christ could as easily command, and call off a distemper, add it would obey him, as he could command obedience from his soldiers and servant, and have it, and more so.

Ver. 9. *When Jesus heard these things*, etc.] Which the friends of the centurion related from him, and in his name; or which he himself delivered, coming up to Christ after them:

he marvelled at him; at his great humility and modesty, and the strength of his faith, and his manner of reasoning:

and turned him about; from him, and his friends:

and said unto the people that followed him; from the mount to Capernaum, and as he was passing along the streets:

I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel; or "among the Israelites", as the Syriac; or "among the children of Israel", as the Persic; or "in all Israel", as the Arabic version reads, as he did in this single Gentile; (See Gill on "Matthew 8:10").

Ver. 10. *And they that were sent*, etc.] Both the elders of the Jews, and the friends of the centurion:

returning to the house; of the centurion, where his servant lay, and from whence they came:

found the servant whole that had been sick; for he was healed directly, as soon as the centurion had expressed his faith, and Christ had declared that it should be according to it, (<40 8:13> Matthew 8:13).

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass the day after*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin reads "afterward", not expressing any day, as in (<42 8:1> Luke 8:1), but the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, read to the same sense as we, the day after, the next day, on the morrow, after he had cured the centurion's servant in Capernaum, where he staid all night:

that he went into a city called Naim; which Jerom [f279] places near Mount Tabor, and the river Kison. The [f280] Jews speak of a Naim in, the tribe of Issachar, so called from its pleasantness, and which seems to be the same place with this. The Persic version reads it, "Nabetis", or "Neapolis", the same With Sychem in Samaria, but without reason:

and many of his disciples went with him; not only the twelve, but many others:

and much people; from Capernaum, and other parts, that followed him to see his miracles, or for one end or another, though, they did not believe in him; at least these were only hearers, and had, not entered themselves among the disciples,

Ver. 12. *Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city*, etc.] Of Naim:

behold: there was a dead man carried out; of the city; for they, used not to bury in cities, but in places without, and at some distance: the burying places of the Jews were not near, their cities [f281]; and they had different ways of carrying them out to be buried, according to their different ages: a child under a month old was carried out in the bosom of a person; if a full month old, in a little coffin, which they carried in their arms; one of a twelve month old was carried in a little coffin on the shoulder; and one of three years old on a bier or bed, [f282] and so upwards; and in this manner was this corpse carried out: who was

the only son of his mother; hence the sorrow and mourning were the greater; (see <38 12:10> Zechariah 12:10)

and she was a widow; and if she had been supported by her son, her loss was very considerable; and having neither husband, nor son, to do for her, her case was very affecting:

and much people of the city was with her; according to the age of persons was the company that attended them to the grave: if it was an infant, not a month old, it was buried by one woman, and two men, but not by one man, and two women; if a month old, by men and women; and whoever was carried out on a bier or bed, many mourned for him; and whoever was known to many, many accompanied him [f283]; and which was the case this dead man: he seems to have been well known and respected by the company that attended him to his grave; of these some were bearers, and these had their deputies, and these again theirs; for as they carried their dead a great way, they were obliged often to change their bearers; and of the company, some went before the bier, and others went after it [f284]: besides, what served to increase company at a funeral was, that it was looked upon as an act of kindness and mercy to follow a corpse to the grave [f285]; to which may be added, and what must always tend to increase the number at such a time, that, according to the Jewish canons [f286]

> "it was forbidden to do any work at the time a dead man was buried, even one of the common people."

Ver. 13. *And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her*, etc.] Knowing her case, that she was a widow, and had lost her only son:

and said unto her, weep not; signifying, that he would help her, which he did without being asked to do it, as usual in other cases.

Ver. 14. *And he came and touched the bier*, etc.] Or "bed", as the Syriac version renders it; and such was hjm, "the bier", or bed, on which one of three years old, and upward, was carried as above mentioned: so that on which Herod was carried to his grave is called κλινη "a bed", by Josephus [f287]. As for the bed, or bier, of what sort it was that they carried out their dead upon, take the following account: [f288]

> "formerly the rich carried out (their dead) upon a bed called Dargash, (which is said [f289] to be a bed that was not platted with ropes, and is called a bed of fortune [f290],) and the poor carried out (their dead) upon one that was called Celicah, (or Celibah, as sometimes read; and this was made in the form of an iron horn, on which they bound the corpse, that it might not fall; and it was called so, because it was made like a coup of birds [f291] as the word is used in (<24527>Jeremiah 5:27)) and the poor, were made ashamed; and

> therefore they ordered that all should carry out (their dead) on a Celicah, for the honour of the poor."

To this Christ came near and touched: not that by his touching of that, the dead should be raised; but this he did as a signal, that the bearers should stop. The Jews [f292] say, one of the charges that Jacob gave to his sons before his death, was, to:

> "take care (says he) that no uncircumcised person, ytjmb [gy, touch my bed, or "bier", lest the Shekinah remove from me; but, according to this order, do unto me, carry me, three on the north, three on the south, three on the east, and three on the west, etc."

From whence it should seem, that a circumcised person, as Christ was, might touch a bier without offence, or hurt, and without contracting any ceremonial pollution: to touch a dead body, or the bone of man, or a grave, was forbidden by the law, (Numbers 19:16) and so, according to the traditions of the elders [f293], the stone that was rolled at the mouth of the sepulchre, and the, side of the sepulchre, defiled by touching; but I do not find that touching a bier was ever forbidden.

And they that bare him stood still: these are they that are called hjmh yaçwg "the bearers of the bed", or "bier": and Maimonides [f294] says,

> "they carry the dead upon their shoulders to the grave; and the bearers of the bier are forbidden to put on their sandals, lest the latchet of any one of them should fail, and should be found to hinder him doing his duty."

And elsewhere it is said [f295],

> "the bearers of the bed, or bier, and their deputies, and their deputies' deputies, both before the bier and after it, find whoever the bier stood in need of, were free;"

i.e. from reading the Shema, or, "hear, O Israel", etc. and from prayer: the reason of their having so many bearers was, because they carried the dead a great way to be buried. King Herod was carried after this manner two hundred furlongs from Jerusalem, to the castle of Herodion [f296]:

and he said, young man, I say unto thee, arise. The Ethiopic version adds, "and he arose": Christ spoke as one that had the keys of death and the

grave; and divine power went along with his words, which raised the dead man to life; and full proof this is of the true and proper deity of Christ.

Ver. 15. *And he that was dead*, etc.] That had been dead, (for he was now alive,) as it was a clear case to all his relations and friends, or they would never have brought him out to bury him:

sat up; upon the bed, or bier: and began to speak; both which, his sitting up and speaking, were plain proofs of his being brought to life:

and he delivered him to his mother; for whose sake he raised him from the dead, commiserating her case: wherefore, as Christ showed his power in raising the dead man, he discovered great humanity, kindness, and tenderness, in delivering him alive to his mother; which might be done after he came off of the bier, by taking him by the hand, and leading him to his mother, and giving him up into her arms: think what affecting scene this must be!

Ver. 16. *And there came a fear on all*, etc.] That were there present, and heard, and saw what was done. Not a fear of dread, and terror, and of punishment, as in devils and wicked men; but a fear and reverence of the divine majesty, whose power and presence they were sensible must be there at that time:

and they glorified God; they praised him, and gave thanks to him, ascribing this amazing action to divine power, and gave God the glory of it; and blessed him for the Messiah, who was sent unto them, as they concluded Jesus to be, from this wonderful instance:

saying, that a great prophet is risen up among us; even that great prophet Moses wrote of, and said should be raised up from among the children of Israel, (Deuteronomy 18:15,18) and that God hath visited his people. The Arabic version adds, “for good”. For God sometimes visits for evil, in a wave of wrath and sore displeasure; but this was a visitation for good: they concluded that God had looked upon them with a look of love, and had a gracious regard to them, and had sent them the Messiah, who, they hoped, would deliver them from the Roman yoke; as he had formerly looked upon, and visited their fathers, and sent a redeemer to them, to deliver them from Egyptian bondage. The Ethiopic version renders it, “and God hath mercy on his people”; and the Persic version, “God hath looked upon his people, and hath taken care of them.”

Ver. 17. *And this rumour of him*, etc.] Or the report of this surprising miracle in raising a dead man to life, that was carrying to his grave,

went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about; not only Judea, and the several cities, towns, and villages in it, but all the country round about it, especially Galilee. The Persic version reads, "all countries which are round about Jordan"; see (<4005>Matthew 3:5).

Ver. 18. *And the disciples of John showed him of all these things*.] The miracles that were wrought by Christ; particularly the healing of the centurion's servant, and the raising from the dead the widow of Naim's son, and what fame and reputation Christ got every where by his doctrine, and mighty works. John was now in prison, when these his disciples came and related these things to him; (see <4002>Matthew 11:2) and they spoke of them, not as commending Christ for them; but as envying, grieving, and complaining, that he carried away all the honour and glory from John their master, for whom they had the greatest regard.

Ver. 19. *And John calling unto him two of his disciples*, etc.] Which were a sufficient number to be sent on an errand, to ask a question, and report the answer, or bear witness to any fact they should see, or hear done.

Sent them unto Jesus, saying, art thou he that should come, or look we for another? not that he doubted that Jesus was the Messiah; nor was it for his own satisfaction so much that he sent these disciples of his with this question, but for theirs; and to remove all doubt and hesitation from them about Christ.

Ver. 20. *When the men were come to him*, etc.] To Jesus; "those two men", as the Arabic version reads; "the disciples", as the Persic version; the same that John sent from the castle of Machaerus, where he was now a prisoner, to Christ, who was teaching in some city or town of Galilee:

they said, John the Baptist; so well known by his being the administrator of the ordinance of baptism:

hath sent us unto thee, saying, art thou he that should come, or look we for another? (See Gill on "<4003>Matthew 11:3").

Ver. 21. *And in that same hour*, etc.] Or at that same time, for a precise hour is not intended: one exemplar reads, "in that day", in which these men came to Christ,

he, Jesus, as the Persic version expresses it,

cured many of their infirmities; bodily weaknesses and disorders: and plagues; which were inflicted on them as scourges and corrections for sin, very severe diseases, as epilepsies, leprosies, palsies, etc. and of evil spirits; or devils, which he dispossessed and commanded out of the bodies of men; though sometimes evil spirits, with the Jews, signify some kinds of bodily diseases: as when it is said [f297]

> "whoever puts out a lamp because he is afraid of Gentiles, or of thieves, or of hr jwr, "an evil spirit", or because of a sick man that is asleep, he is free."

Upon which Maimonides observes,

> "an evil spirit they call all kinds of diseases, which, in the Arabic language, go by the name of "melancholy"; for it is one kind of the diseases mentioned, which makes a sick man to fly, and separate himself from mankind, as if he was afraid of the light, or of coming into the company of men:"

and unto many that were blind he gave sight; freely, as an act of grace and kindness, as the word signifies, without any merit, or motive, in them.

Ver. 22. *Then Jesus answering said unto them*, etc.] "To the disciples", as the Persic; to both, as the Arabic: when he had wrought these cures, he turned himself to the disciples of John, and made answer to their question. The Vulgate Latin leaves out the word "Jesus", rendering it, "and he answering"; in the following words:

go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard. They had just seen many cured of infirmities, plagues, and evil spirits, and they had heard the doctrines of the Gospel preached by him; and the former were in confirmation of the latter, and both were proofs of his being the Messiah: the particulars of which follow,

how that the blind see; that is, they that had been blind, and some that were born blind received their sight, which was what was never heard of before, from the beginning of the world; and which, as it is an instance of Christ's almighty power, showing him to be God; so it was a fulfilment of a prophecy concerning him as the Messiah, who, when he came, was to open the eyes of the blind, (Isaiah 35:5) and this was true, not only in a

corporeal, but in a spiritual sense: and generally so it was, that when the blind received their bodily sight, they also received their spiritual sight; and both were evidences of the true Messiahship of our Lord Jesus.

The lame walk; these were among those who were cured of their infirmities; and this also was prophesied of the Messiah, and was now accomplished by Jesus, that "the lame man" should "leap as an hart", (<23506>Isaiah 35:6) and so was to be considered by John, and his disciples, as another proof of his being the true Messiah:

the lepers are cleansed; of this sort were they who were cured of their plagues: the leprosy was called a plague; hence the treatise of leprosy, in the Misna, is, by the Jews, called Negaim, or "plagues".

The deaf hear; so in the above prophecy in Isaiah, it is predicted, that "the ears of the deaf should be unstopped" in the days of the Messiah; and which therefore must be considered as a further confirmation of Jesus being he that was to come, and that another was not to be looked for.

The dead are raised: whether there were any raised at this time, or no, is not certain; but certain it is, that there had been one raised from the dead, if not in the presence of these disciples, yet just before they came to Christ, of which John had been informed by some of his disciples, if not these; and of which an account is given before in this chapter, and which is what none but the mighty God can do.

To the poor the Gospel is preached: it was preached both by the poor, the disciples of Christ, and to the poor, mean, base, and illiterate among the Jews; and also to the poor, meek, and lowly in heart, as was prophesied should be, by the Messiah, (<23610>Isaiah 61:1) so that put all together, here were undoubted proofs, and a full demonstration, that Jesus was the Messiah; (See Gill on "<40104>Matthew 11:4"). (See Gill on "<40105>Matthew 11:5").

Ver. 23. *And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me*.] The Arabic version renders it, "blessed is he that doubts not of me". The Persic and Ethiopic versions both add to the text, the former rendering the words thus, "blessed is he that is not brought into offence and doubt concerning me"; and the latter thus, "blessed are they who do not deny me, and are not offended in me": particular regard is had to the disciples of John, who both doubted of Christ as the Messiah, and were offended at his popularity and success; (See Gill on "<40106>Matthew 11:6").

Ver. 24. *And when the messengers of John were departed*, etc.] The Syriac and Persic versions read, “the disciples of John”; and the Arabic version, “the two disciples of John”; the two that he sent, when they were gone back with the answer of Christ;

he, “Jesus”, as the Persic version expresses it,

began to speak unto the people concerning John; not caring to say any thing about him to the messengers, or whilst they were present, lest he should be charged with flattery; (See Gill on “<4011>Matthew 11:7”)

What went ye into the wilderness for to see? a reed shaken with the wind? an inconsistent, wavering, and unstable man? if so, they were greatly mistaken; or the motions and gesture of the man? (See Gill on “<4011>Matthew 11:7”).

Ver. 25. *But what went you out for to see*? etc.] If not his air and action, what was it? was it his apparel and dress? was it to see

a man clothed in soft raiment? If this was the case, their labour was in vain, and they had their walk for nothing; for John was clothed with camels' hair, rough and undressed, and was girt with a leathern girdle; there was nothing in his person, mien, and garb, that was attractive:

they which are gorgeously, apparelled; or richly clothed, as John was not:

and live delicately; in the most elegant manner, and on the richest dainties, as John did not, his food being locusts and wild honey:

are in kings' courts; and not in a wilderness, where John; came preaching.

Ver. 26. *But what went ye out for to see*? etc.] What led your curiosity to go into the wilderness after him, since it could not be any of the above things? was it to see

a prophet? which was the case; for John was a prophet, and was known to be one; and the fame of him, as such, drew vast numbers to see and hear him, there not having been a prophet among the Jews, for some hundreds of years:

yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet; not that he was the prophet Moses did say should come; nor was he the priest that should arise with the “Urim” and “Thummim”, that the “Tirshatha”, Nehemiah spoke of; nor was he the king Messiah; but he was his forerunner, he saw him and

baptized him, and so was greater than any of the prophets that went before him.

Ver. 27. *This is he of whom it is written*, etc.] In (<3001>Malachi 3:1). (See Gill on "<4011>Matthew 11:10"). (See Gill on "<4012>Mark 1:2").

Ver. 28. *For I say unto you — — here is not a greater prophet*, etc.] The word "prophet" is left out in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, as in (<4011>Matthew 11:11). (See Gill on "<4011>Matthew 11:11").

Ver. 29. *And all the people that heard him*, etc.] Either Christ saying these things in commendation of John, and gave their assent to them, and showed their approbation of them, having been baptized by him; or rather, the people that had heard John preach the doctrines of repentance and faith, and of baptism; for these words seem rather to be the words of Christ, relating the success of John's ministry among different persons:

and the publicans justified God; even those wicked men, who were before profligate and abandoned sinners, when they came under John's ministry, were so wrought upon by the power and grace of God through it, that they approved of, and applauded the wisdom, goodness, and grace of God, in sending such a prophet as John; in qualifying him in the manner he did, and giving in him a commission to preach such doctrines, and administer such an ordinance as he did: and this their approbation of the divine conduct, and their thankfulness for the same, they testified by their

being baptized with the baptism of John; they expressed their sentiments by their obedience; they declared it was right in God to institute such an ordinance, and for John to administer it; and that it became them to submit to it, as a part of righteousness to be fulfilled; they hereby signified, that they thought that it was agreeable to the nature of God, who is holy, just, and good, suitable to the Gospel dispensation, and very fit and proper for them.

Ver. 30. *But the Pharisees and lawyers*, etc.] Or Scribes, as the Syriac and Persic versions read; for the Scribes and lawyers were the same sort of persons. The Ethiopic version calls them, "the Scribes of the city": these "rejected the counsel of God against themselves"; against their own advantage, to their hurt and detriment; since by their impenitence and unbelief, and through their rejection of Christ and his forerunner, and the Gospel and the ordinances of it, they brought ruin and destruction, both temporal and eternal, upon themselves: or "towards themselves", or "unto

them”; that is, they “rejected the command of God unto them”, as the Arabic version renders it: for by “the counsel of God” here, is not meant his purpose, intention, and design, with respect to these persons, which was not, nor never is frustrated; but the precept of God, and so the Ethiopic version renders it,

they despised the command of God: that is, the ordinance of baptism, which was of God, and the produce of his counsel and wisdom, as the whole scheme, and all the ordinances of the Gospel are, and not the invention of men: or they rejected this “in themselves”, as it may be rendered, and is by the Syriac and Persic versions; not openly and publicly, for they were afraid of the people, but inwardly and privately, and which their actions and conduct declared:

being not baptized of him; of John: by their neglect of this ordinance, they testified their aversion to it, and rejection of it.

Ver. 31. *And the Lord said*, etc.] This clause is not in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, nor in some copies, nor in Beza's most ancient copy; and being omitted, more clearly shows, that the two former verses are the words of Christ, and not an observation the evangelist makes, on the different behaviour of Christ's hearers, upon the commendation he had given of John:

whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation; or “to what men shall I liken them”, as the Persic version: the phrase “men of this generation”, is Rabbinical; so yçwa awhh ard, the men of that “generation”, are more beautiful in work than these, says the Targumist on (<2071>Ecclesiastes 7:11). “And to what are they like?” To that which follows.

Ver. 32. *They are like to children*, etc.] The Pharisees and lawyers, who rejected the counsel of God, and the baptism of John, were like to “children”; not for innocence, simplicity, meekness, and humility; their characters were the reverse; but rather, for their ignorance, and want of understanding, their folly and weakness; nor are they here compared to the children that piped and mourned, but to those surly and ill natured ones, who made no answer to those that did. They, together with Christ, and John the Baptist, are in general likened to children,

sitting in the market place; where children were wont to be, there being a variety of persons and things to be seen; and which may design the temple,

or the synagogues, or any place of concourse, where the Pharisees met, with John, Christ, and their disciples:

and calling one to another, and saying; they that were good natured, and more disposed to mirth and innocent diversions:

we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept: they imitated the pipers at weddings, expecting their companions would have danced, as was usually done by the others, when the pipe was played upon; and they mimicked the mourning women at funerals, expecting their fellows would have made as though they had wept; whereas they would do neither, showing a dislike both to the one and to the other. The children that imitated the pipers, represent Christ and his disciples, who delivered the joyful sound of the Gospel; and the children that acted the part of the mourners, signify John the Baptist, and his disciples, who preached the doctrine of repentance; and the children that would not join with, nor make any answer to the one, or the other, intend the Scribes and Pharisees, who were not pleased with either of them, as the following words show; (See Gill on "<40116>Matthew 11:16"). (See Gill on "<40117>Matthew 11:17").

Ver. 33. *For John the Baptist*, etc.] Who is designed by the children that mourned in the above simile, with whom his character and conduct agree; he preached very mournful doctrine, delivered it in a very solemn and awful manner, and lived a very austere life, and fasted much, as did also his disciples. The word "Baptist" is here added by Luke, which Matthew has not, to distinguish him from others; and it may be, because he had just spoke of his baptism. The Persic version only reads, "the Baptist"; of him our Lord says, that he

came neither eating bread, nor drinking wine; which were the common food and drink of men, but his diet were locusts and wild honey, and from this he often abstained; nor would he attend festivals and entertainments, or be free and sociable with men: "bread" and "wine" are here mentioned, which are not in Matthew:

and ye say, he hath a devil; is mad, or melancholy; for madness and melancholy, or the hypochondriac disorder, was by them sometimes imputed to a diabolical possession, and influence, as the cause of it; and though these men pretended to great austerity of life, and frequent fastings,

yet John was too abstemious for them, and they could not agree with his doctrine nor method of living; (See Gill on "Matthew 12:18").

Ver. 34. *The son of man is come eating and drinking*, etc.] That is, eating bread and drinking wine, as other people do; and shuns no man's company, goes to a wedding, dines with a Pharisee, and eats with publicans and sinners, and carries it freely and courteously to all men:

and ye say, behold a gluttonous man and a wine bibber; an epicurian, a drunkard, a mere sot, one that gives up himself to sensual pleasures:

a friend of publicans and sinners; a good fellow, a boon companion, that sits with them, and encourages them in their revellings and drunkenness: such an ill use did the Jews make of our Lord's free, harmless, and innocent conversation with men; and in such a horrid manner did they traduce and vilify him, who was holy in his nature, harmless in his life, separate from sinners, knew no sin, nor ever committed any.

Ver. 35. *But wisdom is justified of all her children*.] That is, Christ, who is the wisdom of God, and who acted the wise part, in behaving in such a free manner with all sorts of men, and even with publicans and sinners, whereby he became useful to their souls, called them to repentance, converted and saved them: and these are his children, which were given him by the Father; for whose sake he partook of flesh and blood, and whom he redeemed, that they might receive the adoption of children; and to whom, believing in him, he gives power to become the children of God: and these justify him from all such scandalous imputations, and by their lives and conversations show, that the doctrine of Christ is not a licentious one, or leads to libertinism, and indulges men in their carnal sensual lusts and pleasures; but, on the contrary, teaches them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly: the word "all", is inserted by Luke, which is not in Matthew; signifying, that this is the universal sense and practice of all the real offspring of Christ, the sons of wisdom, who are wise to do good.

Ver. 36. *And one of the Pharisees*, etc.] Whose name was Simon, (Luke 7:40,43,44)

Desired that he would eat with him; take a meal with him, either a dinner or a supper: this he did under a disguise of respect, and show of affection to him; though very likely with a design upon him to ensnare him, or take some advantage against him if he could; for it is certain, that he did not

treat him with those civilities and ceremonies commonly used to guests; (see <4044>Luke 7:44-46).

And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat: he made no hesitation about it, but at once accepted of his invitation, though he knew both the man and his intentions; having nothing to fear from him, and being willing to carry it courteously to all men, and give proof of what he had just now said of himself, (<4034>Luke 7:34).

Ver. 37. *And behold, a woman in the city*, etc.] Not Mary Magdalene, spoken of in (<4002>Luke 8:2) under another character; and is a different person, who had not been taken notice of by the evangelist before; nor Mary the sister of Lazarus, who is said to anoint the feet of Christ, and wipe them with her hair, (<4203>John 12:3). The character given of this woman, does not seem so well to agree with her; at least, the fact here recorded, cannot be the same with that; for this was in Galilee, and that in Bethany; this in the house of Simon the Pharisee, that in the house of Lazarus; this was some time before Christ's death, and after this he went a circuit through every city and village, that was but six days before his death, and after which he never went from those parts; nor is this account the same with the history, recorded in (<4006>Matthew 26:6,7) (<4103>Mark 14:3) for that fact was done in Bethany also, this in Galilee; that in the house of Simon: the leper, this in the house of Simon the Pharisee; that was but two days before the death of Christ, this a considerable time before; the ointment that woman poured, was poured upon his head, this upon his feet: who this woman was, is not certain, nor in what city she dwelt; it seems to be the same in which the Pharisee's house was; and was no doubt one of the cities of Galilee, as Naim, Capernaum, or some other at no great distance from these:

which was a sinner; a notorious sinner, one that was known by all to have been a person of a wicked, life and conversation; a lewd woman, a vile prostitute, an harlot, commonly reputed so: the Arabic word here used, signifies both a sinner and a whore [f298]; and so the word, sinners, seems to be used elsewhere by Luke; (see <4201>Luke 15:1,2) compared with (<4023>Matthew 21:31,32). Some think she was a Gentile, Gentiles being reckoned by the Jews sinners, and the worst of sinners; but this does not appear:

when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house; having observed it herself, that he was invited by him, and went with him, or being informed of it by others,

brought an alabaster box of ointment: ointment was used to be put in vessels made of "alabaster", which kept it pure and incorrupt; and this stone was found about Damascus, [f299] so that there might be plenty of it in Judea; at least it might be easily had, and such boxes might be common; and as this woman appears to have been a lewd person, she might have this box of ointment by her to anoint herself with, that she might recommend herself to her gallants. The historian [f300] reports, that

> "Venus gave to Phaon an alabaster box with ointment, with which Phaon, being anointed, became the most beautiful of men, and the women of Mitylene were taken with the love of him."

If this box had been provided with such a view; it was now used to another and different purpose.

Ver. 38. *And stood at his feet behind him*, etc.] Christ lay upon a bed, or couch, as was the custom of the ancients, both Jews and others, at meals, with his feet put out behind; and between the couches and the walls of the room, there was a space for servants to wait and serve, and such are therefore said to "stand at the feet"; and the phrase is used, as descriptive of servants in waiting [f301]; and in such a situation this woman put herself, as being also ashamed and afraid to come before Christ, and look him in the face; and here she stood weeping for her sins, and melted down with the love of Christ to her soul, and at his discourse:

and began to wash his feet with tears: which fell from her eyes in such abundance upon his feet, as she stood by him that they were like a shower of rain, as the word signifies, with which his feet were as it were bathed and washed; his shoes or sandals being off, as was the custom at eating so to do, lest they should daub the couch or bed, on which they lay [f302]. Her tears she used instead of water; for it was the custom first to wash the feet before they were anointed with oil, which she intended to do; and for which purpose she had brought with her an alabaster box of ointment: it is said [f303] of one,

> "when he came home, that his maid brought him a pot of hot water, and he washed his hands and his feet in it; then she brought him a golden basin full of oil, and he dipped his hands and his feet in it, to

> fulfil what is said, (<53324>Deuteronomy 33:24) and after they had eaten and drank, he measured out oil, etc."

And it is: a general rule with the Jews [f304],

> "that whoever anoints his feet, is obliged to washing or dipping."

And did wipe them with the hairs of her head; which were long, and hung loose about her shoulders, it being usual and comely for women to wear long hair, (<461115>1 Corinthians 11:15). That which was her ornament and pride, and which she took great care of to nourish and put in proper form, to, render her desirable, she uses instead of a towel to wipe her Lord's feet, and her tears off of them. A like phrase is used of one by Apuleius,

> "his verbis & amplexibus mollibus decantatus maritus, lachrymasque ejus suis crinibus detergens, etc. [f305]:"

"and kissed his feet". This was no unusual practice with the Jews; we often read of it [f306]:

> "R. Jonathan and R. Jannai were sitting together, there came a certain man, ywlgr qçnw, "and kissed the feet" of R. Jonathan."

Again [f307]

> "R. Meir stood up, and Bar Chama, hy[rka hyqçn, "kissed his knees", or "feet"."

This custom was also used by the Greeks and Romans among their civilities, and in their salutations [f308]:

and anointed them with the ointment; which she brought with her.

Ver. 39. *Now when the Pharisee, which had bidden him, saw it*, etc.] Simon, who had invited Christ to eat with him, when he saw what was done by the woman, how she stood at his feet, and washed them with her tears, and wiped them with her hairs, and then kissed and anointed them:

he spoke within himself; not openly and publicly, being in good manners, though not in real respect to Christ, unwilling to affront his guest; but turned these things over in his mind, and reasoned upon them within himself:

saying, this man, if he were a prophet; as he was said, and believed to be by many, but questioned by this Pharisee:

would have known who and what manner of woman this is, that toucheth him; he took it for granted that Christ did not know this woman personally, that she was one of the city; nor her character, or "what" was "her fame", as the Syriac version renders it, which was very ill; or "her condition", as the Arabic version, she being not a religious person, but a notorious lewd one: this he concluded, from his admitting her to such nearness to him, and familiarity with him; and from hence argues within himself, that he could not be a prophet; since, according to his notion of a prophet, he must know persons and their characters; though this was not always requisite in a prophet, nor did the prophetic gift at all times show itself in this way: however, this man reasoned upon the commonly received notions of the Pharisees, both of the Messiah, the prophet that Moses said should come, and of their own conduct, and of all religious men: their notion with respect to the Messiah was, that he should be of so quick an understanding, or smell, as in (<2Ch 3>Isaiah 11:3) that he should know at once who was a wicked person, and who not.

> "Bar Coziba (they say [f309]) reigned two years and a half; he said to, the Rabbans, I am the Messiah; they replied to him, it is written of the Messiah, (<2Ch 3>Isaiah 11:3) that he smells, or is of quick understanding and judges (the gloss on it is, he smells on a man, and judges and knows, byyhh ym, "who is a wicked man"): let us see whether he smells and judges; and when they saw that he did not smell and judge, they killed him."

But Jesus, the true Messiah, could do so; he knew who were sinners, he knew this woman to be one, as the following account shows: and their notion with respect to the conduct of religious persons towards the common people, and those of a bad character, and which the Pharisee here suggests, was, that the touch of such persons was defiling, and therefore to be avoided: for they say [f310], that

> "the Pharisees, if they touched the garments of the common people, they were defiled." And therefore when they walked in the streets,
>
> "they walked in the sides (of the ways), that they might not be defiled, [gmb, "by the touch" of the common people [f311]"

For she is a sinner; a notorious one; or “that she is a sinner”; and the sense is, Christ, had he been a prophet, the Pharisee intimates, would have known that this woman was a vile creature; and he would have shown it; by his abhorrence and rejection of her; or as the Persic version adds, “would have declared her sins”.

Ver. 40. *And Jesus answering said unto him*, etc.] Christ being God omniscient, knew not only the character and conversation of this woman, which were publicly known by all, that knew any thing of her, but also the secret thoughts and reasonings of the Pharisee, and makes answer to them; which shows, that he was a prophet, in the sense of this man; yea, more than a prophet:

Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee; this could not be Simon Peter, Christ spoke to, as some have suggested; for the answer is made unto the Pharisee, and he is the person addressed by the name of Simon; even he, into whose house Christ entered, and now was, as appears from (<4744>Luke 7:44).

And he saith, Master; or teacher, or doctor; or as the Syriac version, “Rabbi”; which was the common salutation of doctors:

say on. This was a way of speaking in use with the Jews, giving leave to proceed in a discourse; and as Christ was now a guest in this man's house, he asks leave of him, and he grants him it: so we read of R. Simeon ben Gamaliel [f312] that he said to R. Ishmael ben Elishah,

> “is it thy pleasure that I should say before thee one thing? he said unto him, rwma, “say on”.”

Again, R. Jochanan ben Zaccai said [f313] to a certain governor,

> “suffer me to say one thing to thee: he replied to him, rwma, “say on”.”

Ver. 41. *There was a certain creditor*, etc.] All the Oriental versions premise something to this. The Syriac version reads, “Jesus said unto him”. The Arabic version, “then he said”. The Persic version, “Jesus said”; and the Ethiopic version, “and he said to him”; and something of this kind is understood, and to be supplied in the text:

which had two debtors, the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty; these were, as the word shows, Roman “denarii” or “pence”; the former of these sums, reckoning a Roman penny at seven pence halfpenny of our money, amounted to fifteen pounds and twelve shillings and six pence; and the latter, to one pound eleven shillings and three pence; the one of these sums was ten times larger, than the other. This is a parable: by “the creditor”, God is meant, to whom men owe their beings, and the preservation of them, and all the mercies of life; and are under obligation to obedience and thankfulness: hence: no man can merit any thing of God, or pay off any old debt, by a new act of obedience, since all is due to him: by the “two debtors” are meant, greater and lesser sinners: all sins are debts, and all sinners are debtors; not debtors to sin, for then it would not be criminal, but lawful to commit sin, and God must be pleased with it, which he is not, and men might promise themselves impunity, which they cannot; but they are debtors to fulfil the law, and in case of failure, are bound to the debt of punishment: and of these debtors and debts, some are greater, and others less; not but that they, are all equally sinners in Adam, and equally guilty and corrupted by his transgression; and the same seeds of sin are in the hearts of all men, and all sin is committed against God, and is a breach of his law, and is mortal, or deserving of death, even death eternal; but then as some commands are greater, and others less, so must their transgressions be: sin more immediately committed against God, is greater than that which is committed against our neighbour; and besides, the circumstances of persons and things differ, which more or less aggravate the offence.

Ver. 42. *And when they had nothing to pay*, etc.] Neither the lesser nor greater debtor; for though not alike in debt, yet both insolvent: man has run out his whole stock, which the God of nature gave him, in his original creation and primitive state; and is become a bankrupt and a beggar, is poor, wretched, and miserable; he has no money, he has nothing to offer for a composition, much less for payment; he has no righteousness, and if he had, it would be nothing to pay with; since that itself, even in perfection, is due to God, and cannot discharge a former debt: sin being committed against an infinite being, is in some sense an infinite debt, and requires an infinite satisfaction, which a finite creature can never give; and he is therefore liable to a prison, and that for ever: but behold the wonderful grace of God, the creditor!

he frankly forgave them both: their whole debts, without regard to any merits of theirs, which they could not have, or any motives in them, or any conditions to be performed by them, but purely of his sovereign will, free grace, and rich mercy, though not without regard to the satisfaction of his Son; which by no means hinders the frankness of the pardon, or obscures the grace of it, but increases and illustrates it; seeing this satisfaction is of God's own finding out, providing, and accepting; and is at his own expense, and without money and price, to the debtors:

tell me therefore, which of them will love him most; or "ought to love him most", as the Ethiopic version. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, leave out the first part of this clause, "tell me".

Ver. 43. *Simon answered and said*, etc.] Very readily, without any hesitation, not being aware of the application of it, to the instance he had been pondering in his mind:

I suppose, that he to whom he forgave most; it was his opinion, and to him a plain case, that he that owed the largest debt, and that being forgiven him fully, and freely, as he was under the greatest obligation, so as he ought, he would show the greatest love and affection to his kind and gracious creditor:

and he said unto him; that is, Jesus said, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it:

thou hast rightly judged; this is a right and true judgment of the case; it is according to the nature and truth of things, and what is obvious and clear at first sight, and which every one must agree to.

Ver. 44. *And he turned to the woman*, etc.] That stood behind him at his feet,

and said to Simon, seest thou this woman? and what she has done? pointing to her, and comparing him, and her, and their actions together, whereby he might judge of the preceding parable, and how fitly it might be applied to the present case:

I entered into thine house; not of his own accord, but by the invitation of Simon, and therefore might have expected the usual civilities:

thou gavest me no water for my feet: to wash them with, no, not so much as water; a civility very common in those hot countries, where walking

without stockings, and only with sandals, they needed often washing; and which was very refreshing, and was not only used to travellers and strangers, but to guests, and was usually done by the servants of the house; (See Gill on "Luke 7:38").

but she hath washed my feet with tears. The Persic version reads, "with the tears of her eyes"; which made a bath for his feet;

and wiped them with the hairs of her head. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read only, "with her hair", which she used instead of a towel, when Simon neither gave him water to wash with, nor a towel to wipe with.

Ver. 45. *Thou gavest me no kiss*, etc.] A token of civility among friends, when they met together on any occasion. The Jews have a saying [f314], that

> "all kisses are foolish, excepting three; the kiss of grandeur or dignity, as in (1 Samuel 10:1) and the kiss at parting, as in (Ruth 1:14) and the kiss at meeting, as in (Exodus 4:27) (of which sort this kiss may be thought to be), to which some add the kiss of consanguinity (or that used by relations to one another), as in (Genesis 29:11)"

but this woman, since the time I came in. The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, "since she came in"; and so two of Stephens's copies; which seems to be the more agreeable reading, seeing Christ was in Simon's house before this woman came; for she knowing that he was there, came thither after him:

hath not ceased to kiss my feet; which shows, that this action was repeated by her times without number, even ever since she came into the house.

Ver. 46. *Mine head with oil thou didst not anoint*, etc.] No not with common oil, so usually done at feasts, (see Psalm 23:5)

but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment; even "with ointment" amsbd, "of spices", as the Syriac version renders it. There is, throughout the whole account, an opposition between the conduct of Simon, and this woman: he gave him no common water to wash his feet with, she shed floods of tears, and with them bathed his feet, and then wiped them clean with the hairs of her head; he gave him not the usual salutation by kissing his head or lips, but she kissed his feet, and that over and over again; he did

not so much as anoint his head with common oil, when she anointed his feet with costly ointment brought in an alabaster box. These several ceremonies to guests were used by their hosts, in other nations, such as washing, anointing, and kissing [f315].

Ver. 47. *Wherefore I say unto thee*, etc.] Not “for this that she hath done”, as the Persic version very wrongly renders it; not because she had washed Christ's feet with tears, and wiped them with her hairs, and kissed and anointed them, therefore her sins were forgiven; nor upon this account, and for those reasons did Christ say, or declare, that they were forgiven; but ου χαριν, “for this cause”, or reason, he said this to Simon the Pharisee, to remove his objections, to rectify his mistakes, and stop his murmuring and complaining, by observing, that though she had been a great sinner, yet she was now not such an one as he took her to be; she was a pardoned sinner, and not that guilty and filthy creature he imagined; the guilt of all her sins was removed, and she was cleansed from all her filthiness:

her sins, which are many, are forgiven; though she was like the largest debtor in the parable, which owed five hundred pence, yet the whole score was cleared; though her sins were numerous, and attended with very aggravating circumstances, which denominated her a sinner in a very emphatic sense, a notorious one, yet they were all fully, and freely forgiven:

for she loved much; or “therefore she loved much”: her great love was not the cause of the remission of her sins, but the full and free remission of her many sins, which had been, manifested to her, was the cause of her great love, and of her showing it in the manner she had done: that this is the sense of the words, is clear from the parable, and the accommodation of it to the present case, otherwise there would be no agreement. Upon relating the parable of the two debtors, Christ puts the question to Simon, which of the two it was most reasonable to think would love most? his answer is and which Christ approved of, he to whom most was forgiven; where, it is plain, that according to our Lord's sense, and even Simon's opinion of the case, that forgiveness is the cause, and love the effect; and that according as the forgiveness is of more or less, love is proportionate; and which is applied to the case in hand: this poor woman had been a great sinner; her many sins were pardoned; and therefore she expressed much love to him, from whom she had received her pardon by the above actions, and much more than Simon had done:

but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little; this is an accommodation of the other part of the parable, and has a very special respect to Simon, the Pharisee, whose debts, in his own opinion, were few or none, at least ten times less than this woman's; and he had little or no sense of the forgiveness of them, or of any obligation to Christ on that account; and therefore was very sparing of his love and respect, and even of common civilities to him.

Ver. 48. *And he saith unto her*, etc.] Directing his discourse to the woman that now stood before him:

thy sins are forgiven; which was said, partly on account of the Pharisee, to let him see, that he knew this woman, what she was, and had been; that she had been a sinner, a great sinner, one that owed five hundred pence, but was now forgiven, washed, cleansed, sanctified, and justified, and therefore not to be shunned and avoided; and partly on the woman's account, that she might have a fresh discovery of the forgiveness of her sins, for her comfort under the severe censure of the Pharisee, and that her faith in it might be strengthened; as also on his own account, to show that he was not only a prophet that had extraordinary knowledge of persons, and their characters, but that he was the most high God, to whom belonged the prerogative of pardoning sin.

Ver. 49. *And they that sat at meat with him*, etc.] Other Pharisees that sat at Simon's table with Christ, whom he had invited as guests, on this occasion of seeing and conversing with Jesus; or some of Simon's family, that sat down to eat with him;

began to say within themselves; that is, either thought and reasoned in their own minds, or whispered among themselves:

who is this that forgiveth sins also? who not content to transgress the traditions of the elders, by admitting a sinful woman to touch him, but assumes that to himself which is peculiar to God, to forgive sin: this they said, not as wondering at him, what manner of person he must be, that with such authority pronounced the forgiveness of sin, as Grotius thinks; but rather as offended with him, and filled with indignation against him, and so censuring and reproaching him for wickedness and blasphemy.

Ver. 50. *And he said to the woman*, etc.] Notwithstanding the Pharisee's censure, both of him and her:

thy faith hath saved thee; meaning either the object of her faith, himself, who was the author of eternal salvation to her; or that she, through faith in him, had received the blessings of salvation, pardon, righteousness, and life from him, and the joys and comfort of it; and had both a right unto, and a meetness for eternal glory and happiness:

go in peace; of conscience, and serenity of mind; let nothing disturb thee; not the remembrance of past sins, which are all forgiven, nor the suggestions of Satan, who may, at one time or another, present them to view; nor the troubles and afflictions of this present life; which are all in love; nor the reproaches and censures of men of a “pharisaic” spirit: go home to thy house, and about thy business, and cheerfully perform thy duty both to God and men; and when thou hast done thy generation work, thou shalt enter into eternal peace and joy.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 8

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass afterwards*, etc.;] After Christ had healed the centurion's servant at Capernaum, and had raised a widow's son that was dead, to life, at Naim; after John's disciples had been with and he had dismissed them, and had said many things in commendation of John, and in vindication both of him, and of himself: and after he had taken a meal in a Pharisee's house, where he met with a woman that had been a notorious sinner, who showed great affection for him, which occasioned much course between him and the Pharisee:

that he went throughout every city and village: that is, in Galilee, where he now was, as is clear from the foregoing chapter, and from what follows in this, (<40826>Luke 8:26) and besides, it was by the sea of Galilee that he delivered the following parable concerning the sower; (see <40101>Matthew 13:1)

preaching, and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God; of the Gospel dispensation, which was now taking place, and had been long expected; publishing the doctrines and mysteries of it, such as free and full remission of sins for his own sake, justification by his righteousness, acceptance in him the beloved Son of God, and complete salvation by him as the Saviour of his people, than which nothing could be more welcome news, or better tidings; pointing out the ordinances of that dispensation, and showing who were the proper subjects of them, and directing and encouraging such to submit unto them; as also signifying what the kingdom of grace lies in, not in meats and drinks, or any outward things, but in inward holiness, peace, and joy; and what is a meetness for entrance into the kingdom of glory, namely, regenerating grace; and what gives a right unto it, even a better righteousness than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, and which was no other than his own:

and the twelve were with him; the twelve apostles, whom Christ had chose, and ordained as such: these attended him wherever he went, that they might be witnesses of his miracles, and learn his doctrines; that so they

might be thoroughly furnished for their future ministry, both in Judea, and among the Gentiles.

Ver. 2. *And certain women which had been healed of evil spirits*, etc.] Of devils, who had possessed them, and were healed by Christ, dispossessing them; (see Gill on "<4072>Luke 7:21").

and infirmities: various diseases of body: some were dispossessed of devils, and others freed from bodily disorders; of the first sort was

Mary Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils: by the order of Christ, for he cast them out, (<4169>Mark 16:9) and which shows, that this is to be understood, in a literal sense, of devils, and the dispossession of them by Christ; and not in a figurative sense, of vices, and the expulsion of them by the power of divine grace; for this same phrase is used where real dispossessions are intended: nor need it be thought strange that seven devils should be in one person, when, in this same chapter, we read of a legion in one man, and which also Christ cast out, (<4080>Luke 8:30,33,35). This woman seems to be a different person from her spoken of in the latter part of the preceding chapter, seeing this looks as if it was the first time of her being taken notice of by this evangelist, and is described by a different character. She is called "Magdalene", to distinguish her from others of the same name; the reason of which (see Gill on "<4076>Matthew 27:56"). She is said [f316] to be a widow, and so not being bound to an husband, was at leisure to follow Christ.

Ver. 3. *And Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward*, etc.] Joanna, or Juchan, as the Syriac version calls her, was a name, among the Jews, for a woman, as Jochanan, or John, was for a man. In the Talmud [f317] we read of one Jochani, or Joanni, the daughter of Retibi, the same name with this. Her husband's name was Chuza. Dr. Lightfoot observes, from a Talmudic treatise [f318], such a name in the genealogy of Haman, who is called the son of Chuza; and Haman being an Edomite, and this man being in the family of Herod, who was of that race, suggests it to be an Idumean name. But in my edition of that treatise, Haman is not called the son of Chuza, but azyk rb, "the son of Ciza"; and besides, Chuza is a Jewish name, and the name of a family of note among the Jews: hence we read [f319] of R. Broka the Chuzite; where the gloss is, "for he was", yazwj ybm, "of the family of Chuzai". And elsewhere [f320] mention is made of two sons of Chuzai; and both the gloss, and Piske Harosh upon the place, say, "they were Jews": so

Abimi is said to be of the family of Chuzai, or the Chuzites [f321]; and the same is said of R. Acha [f322]. This man, here mentioned, was Herod's steward; a steward of Herod the “tetrarch”, of Galilee. The Arabic version calls him his “treasurer”; and the Vulgate Latin, and the Ethiopic versions, his “procurator”; and some have thought him to be a deputy governor of the province under him; but he seems rather to be a governor, or “chief of his house”, as the Syriac version renders it: he was one that presided in his family, and managed his domestic affairs; was an overseer of them, as Joseph was in Potiphar's house; and the same Greek word that is here used, is adopted by the Jews into their language, and used of Joseph [f323]: and who moreover say [f324],

> “let not a man appoint a steward in his house; for if Potiphar had not appointed Joseph, swpwr jwpa, “a steward” in his house, he had not come into that matter,”

of calumny and reproach. It was common for kings, princes, and great men, to have such an officer in their families. We read [f325] of a steward of king Agrippa's, who was of this same family. The Persic version is very foreign to the purpose, making Chuza to be “of the family of Herod”. This man might be either dead, as some have conjectured; or, if living, might be secretly a friend of Christ, and so willing that his wife should follow him; or, if an enemy, such was her zeal for Christ, that she cheerfully exposed herself to all his resentments; and chose rather meanness, contempt, and persecution with Christ, and for his sake, than to enjoy all the pleasures of Herod's court without him.

And Susannah; this also was a name for a woman with the, Jews, as appears from the history of one of this name with them, which stands among the apocryphal writings. She, as well as Joanna, and perhaps also Mary Magdalene, were rich, and persons of substance, as well as note, as should seem by what follows: “and many others”; that is, many other women; for the words, are of the feminine gender:

which ministered unto him of their substance; four ancient copies of Beza's, and five of Stephens's, and the Syriac version read, “which ministered unto them”; that is, to Christ, and his disciples, as the Persic version expresses it. This shows the gratitude of these women, who having received favours from Christ, both for their souls and bodies, make returns to him out of their worldly substance, in a way of thankfulness; and also the low estate of Christ, and his disciples, who stood in need of such

ministrations; and may be an instruction to the churches of Christ to take care of their ministers, and to communicate in all good things to them, of whose spiritual things they partake; and may be a direction to them to minister to them of what is their own substance, and not another's; and to minister a proper part, and not the whole, as these women ministered to Christ, and his apostles, of substance which was their own, and that not all of it, but out of it.

Ver. 4. *And when much people were gathered together*, etc.] To Jesus, as he was by the sea side, the sea of Galilee, or Tiberias:

and were come to him out of every city; of Galilee, to hear him preach, and see miracles:

he spake by a parable; the following things.

Ver. 5. *A sower went out to sow his seed*, etc.] By whom Jesus Christ is chiefly designed; though it is true of every preacher of the Gospel: who goes forth, being sent by Christ, with the precious seed of the word: for the phrase, “his seed”, which only Luke has, best agrees with Christ, he being the proprietor and subject of it. The Alexandrian copy reads, “the seed of himself”, The Persic version reads the whole clause thus, “a sower chose ground, and there he sowed seed”: he fixed on the spot of ground to sow his seed in, as Christ did on the people of the Jews, and afterwards the Gentiles.

And, as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; on the road, which was by the side of the field, in which people commonly walked, and so was beaten hard, and the seed lay upon it, and was not received; which designs such hearers of the word, as are not susceptive of it, do not take it in, and have no manner of understanding of it.

And it was trodden down; by every one that passed by, as the Gospel preached to such hardened and ignorant hearers, is despised and trampled under foot by them.

And the fowls of the air devoured it; who generally flock about places where seed is sowing; and here intend the devil and his angels, that have their dwelling in the air; and frequent places of public worship to hinder the usefulness of the ministry of the word, as much as in them lies.

Ver. 6. *And some fell upon a rock*, etc.] Which the other evangelists call “stony places”, and “stony ground”; by which are meant such hearers whose hearts are, hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, and continue so notwithstanding the preaching of the word unto them.

And as soon as it sprung up; as it did immediately, as the other evangelists say; and that for this reason, which they give, “because it had no depth of earth”; only a small crust, or shell of earth over the rock; and signifies, that these hearers had only a superficial knowledge of the word, and hastily made a profession of it, which soon came to nothing:

it withered away, because it lacked moisture; the other evangelists say, “when the sun was up, it was scorched”; meaning tribulation and persecution, the grace of God being wanting to support under fiery trials: the reason given in Matthew and Mark why it withered, is,

because it had no root; and so read the Persic and Ethiopic versions here.

Ver. 7. *And some fell among thorns*, etc.] On ground which had within it the roots of thorns and briars; and design such hearers who have their hearts filled with worldly cares, and sensual lusts and pleasures:

and the thorns sprang up with it; and grew faster than that:

and choked it; as the above things do the word, and make it useless and unprofitable; so that though it took place for a while, and was professed, yet process of time was neglected and dropped; and, as Mark says, “it yielded no fruit”; at least that came to perfection.

Ver. 8. *And other fell on good ground*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, “on good and beautiful ground”; and so the Cambridge copy of Beza's; ground which both looked well, and proved well; and signifies such hearers who have good and honest hearts, made so by the Spirit of God; who receive the word in the love of it, have a spiritual understanding, and real experience of it;

and sprang up, and bare fruit, an hundred fold; or, “a hundred for one”, as the Syriac version renders it; a hundred grains for one that was sown. The Ethiopic version adds, “and it was to thirty, and it was to sixty”: that is, as the other evangelists say, “some thirty”, and “some sixty fold”; for the word of God is more fruitful in some of those gracious hearers, than in others:

and when he had said these things, he cried: with a loud voice, that what he was about to say might be attended to:

he that hath ears to hear, let him hear; see this parable more largely explained in the following notes. (See Gill on "<40130>Matthew 13:3-9")

Ver. 9. *And his disciples asked him*, etc.] That is, as Mark says, "when he was alone"; after the multitude were departed, and they were by themselves, it may be in some house with other disciples:

saying, what might this parable be? what is the sense and meaning of it? According to Matthew, they asked why he spake in parables to the people; and to such a question the following words are a proper answer.

Ver. 10. *And he said, unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God*, etc.] The doctrines of the Gospel, which to have spiritual knowledge is a special and peculiar gift of God. The Vulgate Latin and Persic versions read, "the mystery", in the singular, as in Mark: "but to others in parables"; that is, the doctrines of the Gospel are delivered in a parabolical way to others; to such as "are without", as the Evangelist Mark expresses it, who are strangers and foreigners, and not children, who are not the favourites of heaven, and the disciples of Christ:

that seeing they might not see, and hearing, they might not understand; what was delivered to them; see the following notes. (See Gill on "<40131>Matthew 13:11-13")

Ver. 11. *Now the parable is this*, etc.] "Or this is the sense of the parable", as the Arabic version renders it: "the seed is the word of God", the Gospel, as preached by Christ, his apostles, and faithful ministers, which has God for its author, is concerning the grace of God, and is what he blesses, and makes effectual to answer any good purpose.

Ver. 12. *Those by the wayside are they that hear*, etc.] The word of God, though only by accident, and very carelessly, and without understanding what they hear:

then cometh the devil; signified by the fowls of the air:

and taketh away the word out of their hearts, or memories; that little of it, which is retained there, and diverts their minds from it by other objects; so that they quite forget what they have heard;

lest they should believe, and be saved: this clause is only in Luke; and with it may be compared (2 Corinthians 4:4) for with true faith in Christ the sum and substance of the word salvation is connected; and Satan being an enemy to the salvation of souls, does all he can to hinder their faith in him.

Ver. 13. *They on the rock are they, which when they hear*, etc.] The seed that fell upon the rock, or stony ground, signify such sort of hearers,

who receive the word with joy. The Ethiopic version reads, “with joy of heart”. But, this sort of hearers receive not the word into their hearts, or with their hearts believe it, and from their hearts obey it, only into their heads; and have only, an historical faith of it; nor with hearty, spiritual, solid joy, or joy in the Holy Ghost: for their hearts remain like a rock, unbroken by the word; but with a flash of natural affection, which quickly goes off.

And these have no root; neither “in themselves”, as the other evangelists say, they have no true grace in them; nor have they any root in Christ, nor in the love of God:

which for a while believe: their faith is a temporary one, like that of Simon Magus; which shows it is not true faith; for that is an abiding grace, Christ, who is the author, is the finisher of it, and prays for it, that it fail not. The Persic version renders it, “in the time of hearing they have faith”; and such sort of hearers there are, who, whilst they are hearing, assent to what they hear, but when they are gone, either forget it, or, falling into bad company, are prevailed upon to doubt of it, and disbelieve it. The Arabic version renders it, “they believe for a small time”; their faith do not continue long, nor their profession of it, both are soon dropped:

and in the time of temptation fall away: “or go back”, as the Vulgate Latin version, they draw back unto perdition; or “forsake that”, as the Arabic version reads, the word, they have heard, and received, their faith in it, and profession of it: “and soon become apostates”, as the Persic version renders it. By “the time of temptation”, is not meant any particular and sore temptation of Satan, but a time of affliction and persecution, as appears from the other evangelists; which is a trying time to professors of religion, and when those who have not the root of the matter in them, fall away.

Ver. 14. *And that which fell among thorns are they*, etc.] The seed that fell among thorns, or were sown on thorny ground, represent such hearers:

which, when they have heard, go forth; from hearing the word to their worldly business; or go on in the pursuit of their worldly lusts and pleasures notwithstanding; for the word translated, “go forth”, belongs to the next clause;

and are choked with cares and riches, and pleasures of this life; and with it to be read thus, “and going on in or under”, that is, under the power and influence of, “the cares, and riches, and pleasures of life”, they are choked; to which agrees the Arabic version, which renders it, “in which they walk”, or “which they follow”. The Vulgate Latin version is, “and from the cares, and riches, and pleasures of life, going, they are choked”: but it is not going from them, but going on in them, which chokes them, or suffocates the word they have heard, whereby it becomes of no effect; unless it should be rendered, “by the cares”, etc. “they are choked, and bring no fruit to perfection”; for what fruit such hearers do bring forth, in a way of profession, soon drops off, and perishes.

Ver. 15. *But that on the good ground are they*, etc.] The seed that fell on good ground design such hearers,

which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it: who hear with an honest and good intention, and faithfully keep it, and hold it fast:

and bring forth fruit with patience; with great constancy, suffering much for the sake of it; and the more they suffer, the more fruitful they are. See this explanation of the parable more largely insisted on in the following notes. (See Gill on “Matthew 13:19-23”)

Ver. 16. *No man, when he hath lighted a candle*, etc.] Christ by this, and some proverbial sentences following, observes to his disciples, that though the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven were delivered in parables for the present, that they might not be seen and understood by some; and though he gave to them the explanation of such parables, as of the above, in a private manner; yet his intention was not, that these things should always remain a secret with them; but as they were the lights of the world, they should communicate them to others; and that that light of the Gospel, and the knowledge of the doctrines of it, which he had imparted to them, were not to be retained and concealed in their bosoms, but to be diffused and spread among others: even as no man, when he lights a candle,

covereth it with a vessel; any sort of vessel, as with a bushel, (See Gill on "[40]Matthew 5:15"), or with a bucket, or with a shell, as the Persic version here interprets, rather than translates:

or putteth it under a bed; whether a bed to sleep on, or a couch to sit or lie upon at meals:

but setteth it on a candlestick; a vessel, or instrument made for that use and purpose, to put and hold a candle in:

that they which enter in; to the house, or room, where it is,

may see the light of it, and be enlightened by it: even so it is the will of Christ, that what evangelical light and knowledge he bestows on any persons, they should not hide it, nor their gifts and talents, or keep it back from the view of others, but should hold it forth both in their preaching, and in their practice.

Ver. 17. *For nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest*, etc.] Meaning, whatever was then wrapped up in parables and dark sayings, or was secretly, and in a private manner, committed to them, should be made manifest by them to others hereafter:

neither any thing hid, that shall not be made known, and come abroad; for what had been whispered to them, in the most secret and silent manner, was to come abroad not only in Judea, but in all the world, and to be published upon the house tops; (See Gill on "[40]Matthew 10:26") (See Gill on "[40]Matthew 10:27")

Ver. 18. *Take heed therefore how ye hear*, etc.] That ye hear not in a careless and negligent manner, since what truths and doctrines ye now hear with the ear, are to be preached by you unto others:

for whosoever hath; that is, hath knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel, and hath gifts and abilities to preach them to others:

to him shall be given; more knowledge, and by using his gifts they shall be increased:

but he that hath not; true, solid, spiritual knowledge of divine things, though he has had considerable advantages and opportunities of learning it, as the apostles especially had:

from him shall be taken, even that which he seemeth to have; or "that which he thinks he has", as the Syriac version renders it; that which he seemed to others to have, or thought himself he had: the knowledge he had of truth, and which was rather a show of knowledge than real, shall be taken from him; his seeming gifts and parts shall die, and vanish away, and he shall be left to fall into ignorance, error, and heresy. Observe that this is to be understood not of internal grace, and experimental knowledge, but of speculative notions of the Gospel, and of external gifts; and so furnishes out no argument against the final perseverance of real saints; (See Gill on "<4013>Matthew 13:12"). (See Gill on "<4025>Matthew 25:29").

Ver. 19. *Then came to him his mother and his brethren*, etc.] It was when Christ was preaching in an house at Capernaum, that Mary his mother, and some of his near kinsmen with her, came from Nazareth to him: these brethren of his were relations according to the flesh, either by Joseph, or his mother's side: who they were, cannot be said with certainty: it may be they were Joses and Simon; for as for James and Judas, they were among the twelve apostles, and with him; and these are the four only persons that are mentioned by name, as his brethren, (<4013>Matthew 13:55) though there were others that were so called, who did not believe in him, (<4005>John 7:5)

and could not come at him for the press; the multitude of people that were about him, who were so thick, that there was no coming near him, much less was there an opportunity of speaking privately, with him. The Syriac version renders it, "they could not speak unto him for the multitude".

Ver. 20. *And it was told him by certain, which said*, etc.] The phrase, "which said", is omitted in the Vulgate Latin version, and in Beza's most ancient copy. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions only read, "and they said unto him"; and the Persic version renders it, "a certain person said"; some one person, as in (<4012>Matthew 12:47)

thy mother, and thy brethren, stand without, desiring to see thee; and to speak with thee, as in (<4012>Matthew 12:47).

Ver. 21. *And he answered and said unto them*, etc.] Not to his mother and brethren, but to those that told him of them, who either designed to reproach him with them, by reason of the meanness of them, or to interrupt him in his work:

my mother and my brethren are these; pointing to his disciples:

which hear the word of God; which he had been preaching, and was meant by the seed in the preceding parable:

and do it; behave in their lives and conversations agreeably to it; and observe the precepts and ordinances in it; elsewhere called the will of God his Father; (See Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:49-50").

Ver. 22. *Now it came to pass on a certain day*, etc.] The same day at even, as Mark says, (<40>Mark 4:35) in which he delivered the parables of the sower, and of the seed cast into the ground, and of the grain of mustard seed:

that he went into a ship with his disciples; they following him into it, (<40>Matthew 8:23)

and he said unto them, let us go over unto the other side of the lake; of Gennesaret, or sea of Galilee:

and they launched forth; into the sea; they set sail, and proceeded: this clause is omitted in the Syriac and Persic versions.

Ver. 23. *But as he sailed he fell asleep*, etc.] On a pillow, in the hinder part of the ship, as in (<40>Mark 4:38)

and there came down a storm of wind on the lake, (See Gill on "<40>Matthew 8:24").

and they were filled; with water: not the disciples, but the ship in which they were; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "their ship was filled with water". The Syriac and Persic versions render it, "the ship was almost sunk", or immersed:

and were in jeopardy; of their lives, in the utmost danger, just ready to go to the bottom. This clause is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions.

Ver. 24. *And they came to him, and awoke him*, etc.] That is, the disciples came from some part of the ship, to the hinder part of it, where Christ was asleep; and by their shrieks and cries, and repeated vociferations, awaked him out of sleep:

saying, Master, Master, we perish. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, only read "master", without a repetition of the word, as in Matthew and Mark; but the Syriac and Persic versions repeat it, and

render the words, “our master, our master”; (See Gill on “Matthew 8:25”).

Then he rose, and rebuked the wind, and the raging of the water, and they ceased, and there was a calm; (See Gill on “Matthew 8:26”).

Ver. 25. *And he said unto them, where is your faith*? etc.] That is, he said so to his disciples, who had professed faith in him, but now discovered very little:

and they being afraid, wondered; being filled with awful sense of his majesty, were amazed at his power and authority, in rebuking the wind and sea, which at once obeyed him, and were still:

saying one another; among themselves, privately:

what manner of man is this? for he commandeth even the winds and water; or the sea, as the Vulgate Latin. The Syriac version reads both, “the floods and the sea”;

and they obey him: according to Matthew, these words seem to be spoken by the men of the ship, the mariners; but here, according to Luke, they seem to be the words of the disciples; (See Gill on “Matthew 8:27”) (See Gill on “Mark 4:41”).

Ver. 26. *And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes*, etc.] In (Matthew 8:28) it is called the country of the Gergesenes,as it is here, in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; and “of the Gerasenes”, in the Vulgate Latin; but the Syriac and Persic versions read, “of the Gadarenes”, as in (Mark 5:1).

which is over against Galilee: from whence the ship launched, and Christ and his disciples came.

Ver. 27. *And when he went forth to land*, etc.] The Persic and Ethiopic versions read,

when they went forth to land; when Christ and his disciples came out of the ship, and went ashore:

there met him out of the city a certain man; or rather, there met him a certain man of the city; that is, one that belonged to, and was an inhabitant of Gadera, or some city thereabout; who had been born and brought up, and had lived there; for certain it is, that he did not now come out of the

city, but out of the tombs, as in (Matthew 8:28, Mark 5:2) and to which agrees the account of him that follows here; in the Vulgate Latin version, these words, “out of the city” are omitted; which the interpreter not understanding, might leave out, as carrying in it a seeming contradiction to the accounts of him:

which had devils long time. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Arabic versions, read in the singular number, which had a devil: and which agrees with (Luke 8:29) for though more are after mentioned, yet the many might be under one head, and chief of them; but in all the copies, it is read in the plural number, “devils”; and to this agrees the name of legion, for there were many devils in him, and they had a possession of him a long time which aggravates the miserable condition of this man, and illustrates the power of Christ in freeing him from them:

and wore no clothes; but went naked, and when any were put upon him, would tear them in pieces:

neither abode in any house, but in the tombs; (See Gill on “Mark 5:3”).

Ver. 28. *When he saw Jesus*, etc.] Even afar off, at some considerable distance, he ran towards him, (Mark 5:6).

He cried out, and fell down before him; that is, the man possessed with the devil did so, under his impulse, and through his agitation of him:

and with a loud voice said; which was the unclean spirit in the man:

what have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God, most high? I beseech thee torment me not; i.e. before the time; (See Gill on “Matthew 8:29”).

Ver. 29. *For he had commanded the unclean spirit*. etc.] That had the rest of the devils under his authority, and power,

to come out of the man; this he had done, either before, or just as he came up to him; (See Gill on “Mark 5:8”).

For oftentimes it had caught him; possessed him, and wrought so strongly in him, and with so much fury, that there was no governing him:

and he was kept bound with chains and fetters; attempts were made to bind him, and keep him bound, but in vain: and he brake the bands; (See Gill on “Mark 5:4”).

And was driven of the devil into the wilderness: into some desert and desolate place, where were the tombs and sepulchres of the dead; this was done by the prince of the legion.

Ver. 30. *And Jesus asked him, saying, what is thy name*? etc.] This question was put, not out of ignorance in Christ, but for the sake of those that were with him; and partly, that the miserable condition of this man might be the more known; and partly, that his own power might be the more manifest in the dispossession:

and he said, legion, because many devils were entered into him; (See Gill on "Mark 5:9").

Ver. 31. *And they besought him*, etc.] That is, all the devils, the whole legion of them, entreated Jesus, under whose power, and at whose dispose they were:

that he would not command them to go out into the deep; meaning, not the deep waters of the sea, for thither they ran the swine at their own request; but the bottomless pit of hell, where others of these spirits lay in chains of darkness; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "into hell": they desired, that when they went out of this man, they might not be ordered thither, or remanded to their former prison; for they knew that if he gave the word of command, they must obey; but that they might be suffered to continue in that country, and range about on earth, or be any where, rather than in hell.

Ver. 32. *And there was there an herd of many swine*, etc.] About two thousand, (Mark 5:13),

Feeding on the mountain; (See Gill on "Mark 5:11")

And they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them; which they could not do, without his leave: and he suffered them: (See Gill on "Mark 5:12-13")

Ver. 33. *Then went the devils out of the man*, etc.] Being obliged by the power of Christ, sore against their wills, having had possession of him a long time:

and entered into the swine; possessed them:

and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake; that is of Gennesaret; or the sea, as the Syriac and Persic versions read; that is, the sea of Galilee, the same with the former:

and were choked; in the waters, and died, as the Ethiopic version adds.

Ver. 34. *When they that fed them saw what was done*, etc.] That the devils went out of the man possessed by them, and entered into the herd of swine, which becoming mad therewith, ran furiously down the precipice into the sea, and were drowned:

they fled; as persons affrighted, at these uncommon and surprising events, and as afraid to see their owners:

and went and told it in the city; that is, of Gadara, or some other city near at hand; the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, "in the cities"; in all the cities round about, in that country:

and in the country, or "fields", in the villages adjacent, and in the houses which were scattered about in the fields for conveniency, for rural business.

Ver. 35. *Then they went out to see what was done*, etc.] That is, the inhabitants of the city, or cities and villages, and houses in the fields; these went out from their respective places of abode, to see with their own eyes, what the swine herds had related to them, concerning the man that had been possessed with devils, and what was become of the swine:

and came to Jesus; where he was, which was not far from the sea shore:

and found the man out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus; quiet and serene, in an humble posture, and as a disciple of Christ, receiving instructions from him:

clothed, and in his right mind, and they were afraid; (See Gill on "Mark 5:15").

Ver. 36. *They also which saw it*, etc.] The disciples of Christ, or the men of the ship, or persons who lived hard by in the fields, who were eyewitnesses of these several things:

told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed; (See Gill on "Mark 5:16").

Ver. 37. *Then the whole multitude*, etc.] For it seems, a very large number of people were presently gathered together, from all parts of the country, upon the report of the swine herds, who fled, it is very likely, some one way, and some another:

of the country of the Gadarenes round about; of the country that was round about Gadara. The Vulgate Latin reads, “of the Gergesenes”; and the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, “of the Gergesenes”: and they all, with one accord,

besought him to depart from them, for they were taken with great fear: lest they should suffer other and greater losses, than the loss of the swine; choosing rather that the devils should be retained among them, than Christ continue with them:

and he went up into the ship; directly, granted their request at once; not desirous of staying with such an ungrateful people, that loved their swine more than him, yea, than the bodily health and welfare of their countrymen:

and he returned back again; to Galilee, at least in a very little time, after some short discourse with the dispossessed man; having staid but a very small time in that place, just landed as it were, and not having proceeded far from the seashore.

Ver. 38. *Now the man out of whom the devils were departed*, etc.] Sensible of the power of Christ, and of the favour he had received from him, was of a quite different mind from his countrymen: and

besought him that he might be with him; (See Gill on “Mark 5:18”).

But Jesus sent him away; from him, into the country:

saying, as follows.

Ver. 39. *Return to thine own house*, etc.] Which very likely was in the city of Gadara, whither he went, and throughout the whole of which he published the account of the dispossession of the devils from him: Mark adds, “to thy friends”; relations, acquaintance, and countrymen:

and show how great things God hath done unto thee; for none but God could effect such things, tacitly suggesting to him hereby, that he himself was God. Mark adds, “and hath had compassion on thee”: signifying, that

what he had done for him, did not arise from merit in the man, but from mercy in himself; (See Gill on "Mark 5:19").

And he went his way; he obeyed the orders of Christ, as love and gratitude obliged him:

and published throughout the whole city; of Gadara, and not only there, but in the rest of the ten cities, called Decapolis, (Mark 5:20) one of which was this of Gadara, as Pliny relates [f326]:

how great things Jesus had done unto him; having cast out a legion of devils from him, clothed him, and brought him to his right mind; and had not only delivered his body from a diabolical possession, but had given him spiritual and saving instructions for his soul, on which he had wrought a real work of grace.

Ver. 40. *And it came to pass, that when Jesus was returned*, etc.] From the country of the Gadarenes, to the other side of the sea of Tiberias, to Galilee; and particularly to his own city, Capernaum; (Matthew 9:1).

The people gladly received him; who were of a different cast from those he had just left; being sensible of the benefits they received from him, both by his ministry and miracles; and which was the reason of their receiving him with so much joy and gladness:

for they were all waiting for him; on the shore, looking out very eagerly for him, being earnestly desirous of his speedy return to them; having many that wanted his assistance, both for their souls and bodies, of which the following are instances.

Ver. 41. *And behold, there came a man named Jairus*, etc.] (See Gill on "Mark 5:22").

and he was a ruler of the synagogue; at Capernaum; and it was the more remarkable, that such an one should come to Christ, and express any regard to his person, or faith in his power, and therefore a "behold" is prefixed to this account; (See Gill on "Matthew 9:18").

And he fell down at Jesus' feet; showing great reverence and humility, and as Matthew says, "worshipped him"; if not in a religious, yet in a civil way:

and besought him that he would come into his house; which was at some distance from thence, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 42. *For he had one only daughter*, etc.] And so exceedingly dear to him:

about twelve years of age; (See Gill on "Matthew 9:18")

And she lay a dying, or "was near death", as the Syriac and Persic versions; or "was just ready to die", as the Ethiopic version. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it, "she was dead", or "now dead", and which agrees with (Matthew 9:18).

but as he went; along the streets of Capernaum, from Matthew's house; where he had been entertained with his disciples, and others, and where he had a conversation with some of the Pharisees and John's disciples, to the ruler's house:

the people thronged him; such a vast multitude followed him to see the cure, that he was even crowded, and so pressed on all sides, that it was difficult to walk along.

Ver. 43. *And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years*, etc.] The Persic version reads, "there was a woman in that city", etc. in the city of Capernaum; (See Gill on "Matthew 9:20").

Which had spent all her living upon physicians; she had applied to one physician and another, and had consumed all her substance in this way:

neither could be healed of any; though she had followed the directions and prescriptions of many, who pretended they were able to cure her; (See Gill on "Mark 5:26").

Ver. 44. *Came behind him*, etc.] In the press and crowd of people, being ashamed to come before him, and tell him her case:

and touched the border of his garment the fringe the Jews were obliged to wear at the bottom of their garments, (Numbers 15:38, Deuteronomy 22:12) and which the more religious sort did, for by this they were distinguished from the common people: it is asked [f327],

> "who is a plebeian, or one of the common people? every one that does not read "Keriat Shema", (i.e. hear, O Israel), etc. (Deuteronomy 6:4) morning and evening, with the blessings belonging to it, the words of R. Meir: but the wise men say, whoever does not put on the "Tephillin" (the frontlets,

(<05608>Deuteronomy 6:8)) Ben Azzai says, whoever has not tyxyx, "the fringe" on his garment"

(See Gill on "<04020>Matthew 9:20"). This woman was persuaded in her own mind, if she could but touch the clothes of Christ, she should be healed, and accordingly she was:

and immediately her issue of blood staunched; stopped, and was dried up; (<04058>Mark 5:28,29).

Ver. 45. *And Jesus said, who touched me*? etc.] This he said, not as ignorant of the person that had done it, but in order to discover her to the people, and the cure she had received, as well as her faith; (See Gill on "<04050>Mark 5:30").

When all denied; both the disciples and the multitude, as many as were near him, and who might be thought to have done it; all excepting the woman, who afterwards came and declared it; for it is very likely, that as soon as she had touched his garment, and got her cure, she drew further off:

Peter, and they that were with him; the rest of the disciples, who were in company together, as appears from (<04031>Mark 5:31)

Said, Master, the multitude throng thee, and press thee, and sayest thou, who touched me? or "my garment", as the Ethiopic version reads; (See Gill on "<04051>Mark 5:31").

Ver. 46. *And Jesus said, somebody hath touched me*, etc.] Not in a common and accidental way, but with design, and in the strength of faith:

for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me: for the cure of the person that had touched him, and that not without his knowledge and will; (See Gill on "<04069>Luke 6:19").

Ver. 47. *And when the woman saw that she was not hid*, etc.] From Christ, among the crowd, nor the thing that she had done. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, "that he had not forgot her"; she hoping he would be diverted from taking any notice of her and her action, through the crowd of people about him;

she came trembling; for fear of the anger and resentment of Christ, and lest the favour would be revoked, and the penalty of the law inflicted; (See Gill on "<4053>Mark 5:33").

And falling down before him; in the most humble manner, "at his feet", as the Arabic version reads; "and worshipped him", as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions have it; gave him the glory of the cure, and thanks for it:

she declared unto him before all the people; the whole truth of the matter, what a disease she had laboured under for so long a time, what means she had used to no purpose:

for what cause she had touched him; namely, in order to have a cure, which she believed she should have in that way:

and how she was healed immediately; as soon as ever she had touched him.

Ver. 48. *And he said unto her, daughter*, etc.] Instead of frowning upon her, and chiding her for what she had done, he addressed her in a very affable and affectionate manner; bidding her

be of good comfort; and not be afraid; this clause is left out in the Vulgate Latin version, as in (<4054>Mark 5:34) but is in the copies, and other versions:

thy faith hath made thee whole, go peace; (See Gill on "<4082>Matthew 8:2"). (See Gill on "<4054>Mark 5:34"). (See Gill on "<4750>Luke 7:50").

Ver. 49. *While he yet spake*, etc.] The above words to the woman;

there cometh one: Mark suggests there were more than one, (<4055>Mark 5:35), and the Persic version here reads, "some of the ruler's family came"; that is, to him, who was now with Jesus: from the ruler of the synagogue's house; so the word "house" is supplied by the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; otherwise the words would be,

from the ruler of the synagogue; which could not be, since he was still with Christ: hence some versions, as the Vulgate and Arabic, render them, "to the ruler of the synagogue"; and which give a true sense, and a right view of the case; for this messenger both came from his house, and to him:

saying to him, thy daughter is dead, trouble not the master; to bring him any further, since all hope of help was now gone. The Vulgate Latin

version, instead of “master”, reads “him”; and the Ethiopic version, “Jesus”.

Ver. 50. *But when Jesus heard it*, etc.] The message that was brought to the ruler, and the hint that was given, that it was needless to give him any further trouble:

he answered him; not the messenger, but the father of the child, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read:

saying, fear not: do not be dismayed at this message, nor despair of help, notwithstanding such is the case:

believe only, and she shall be made whole; exercise faith in me, that I am able to raise her from the dead, and I will do it; and she shall be restored to life, and to perfect health and strength again.

Ver. 51. *And when he came into the house*, etc.] Of the ruler of the synagogue;

he suffered no man to go in: to the room, where the dead body lay:

save Peter, James and John; not one of the multitude that followed him, nor any of the disciples, but these three; who were his favourite ones, and were a sufficient number to be witnesses of the miracle:

and the father and mother of the maiden; these also were admitted. The Persic version very wrongly joins these last words with the beginning of the next verse, reading them thus, “the father and mother of the maiden, with the domestics, wept and bewailed her”.

Ver. 52. *And all wept and bewailed her*, etc.] Not only her relations and friends, and the servants of the house, but the mourning women, that were hired on this occasion, and employed for this purpose:

but he said, weep not; neither in show, as the mourning women did, nor in reality, as the friends of the deceased:

she is not dead, but sleepeth; (See Gill on “Matthew 9:24”). (See Gill on “Mark 5:39”).

Ver. 53. *And they laughed him to scorn*, etc.] The servants, neighbours, and relations, the pipers, and mourning women: these, from weeping for

the dead, fell to laughing at Christ, having him and his words in the utmost derision:

knowing that she was dead: some of them having been employed in laying her out, and all of them having seen her, and were satisfied, and thoroughly assured, that she was actually dead, as ever any person was, as she doubtless was; but they were ignorant in what sense Christ meant she was not dead, but asleep; (See Gill on "<4024>Matthew 9:24"). (See Gill on "<4039>Mark 5:39").

Ver. 54. *And he put them all out*, etc.] Of the room, where the maiden lay, all the mourners and pipers; all excepting the parents of the child, and his three disciples, This clause is left out in the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions; nor was it in two of Beza's ancient copies, and in two of Stephens's; but in the rest, and in the other versions:

and took hereby the hand, and called, saying; in the Syriac language, "Talitha cumi", as in (<4041>Mark 5:41)

Maid, arise; (See Gill on "<4041>Mark 5:41").

Ver. 55. *And her spirit came again*, etc.] Her soul, which was departed from her, upon the all-powerful voice of Christ, returned to her body; and "re-entered", as the Ethiopic version adds: this shows that the soul is immortal, and dies not with the body; that it exists in a separate state from it after death, and will hereafter re-enter the body, and be again united to it in the resurrection, of which this instance was a kind of pledge and emblem: where her spirit was during this time of separation, is needless, and would be curious and rash to inquire; it is enough to say with the Scripture, that it had returned, to God, that gave it, (<211207>Ecclesiastes 12:7) and by whom it was sent back to its body again:

and she arose straightway: from off the bed, and as Mark says, "walked"; for she was at an age capable of it, and which actions of arising and walking, clearly proved that she was alive, and in health:

and he commanded to give her meat; which was done, partly to show, not only that she was alive, but that her disorder was removed, and her appetite restored, and that she could eat and drink, as she had done before her illness; and partly, to observe that she was raised not to an immortal life, as none were before Christ, but to an animate life, which was to be

supported by eating and drinking, and so a mortal one; (See Gill on "[4158]Mark 5:43").

Ver. 56. *And her parents were astonished*, etc.] At the miracle that was wrought, to see their child restored to life; to see her arise, walk, and eat, being in perfect health and strength, and no disorder attending her;

but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done. The Ethiopic version reads, "what he had done, nor any thing that was done" not that the thing itself could be concealed, but the way and manner in which, and the means by which it was done, and the circumstances of it; how that by taking her by the hand, and commanding her to arise, she forthwith arose, and walked and ate: Christ's meaning is, that he would not have them take any pains to publish this affair, or to make it more known than was necessary; not to acquaint any person with the particulars of it, but keep them as private as they could: his reasons for this, (See Gill on "[4158]Mark 5:43").

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 9

Ver. 1. *Then he called his twelve disciples together*, etc.] The Persic version reads, “all his twelve disciples”, the other nine, besides the three that were with him, when he raised Jairus's daughter, recorded in the foregoing chapter; the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “the twelve apostles”, for so Christ had named his disciples; (See Gill on “<4006>Matthew 6:13”). The Syriac version only reads, “his own twelve”; and this is agreeably to Luke's way of speaking; (see <4001>Luke 8:1, 9:12).

And gave them power and authority over all devils; that is, all kinds of devils, particularly to cast them out of the bodies of men, possessed by them:

and to cure diseases; of all sorts.

Ver. 2. *And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God*, etc.] The Gospel, which gives an account of the kingdom of the Messiah; of his kingly office and power; of his church, which is his kingdom, and of the government of it, by the ministration of the word, and the administration of ordinances; of the kingdom of grace in the hearts of Christ's subjects, and the nature of it; and of the kingdom of glory, and what is the saints' meetness for it, and right unto it:

and to heal the sick; of every disease of body, and thereby confirm their mission and commission from Christ, to preach the Gospel; and recommend it to men.

Ver. 3. *And he said unto them, take nothing for your journey*, etc.] Throughout the towns and cities of Judea, where they were sent to preach the Gospel:

neither staves, The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read in the singular number, “neither staff, rod, or club”; and so it was in one of Beza's ancient copies, but in all the rest in the plural, as in Matthew; which last

must be the true reading, since one staff was allowed, according as in (<4006B>Mark 6:8) though more than one were forbidden:

nor scrip; or bag to put provision in; (See Gill on "<4010>Matthew 10:10")

Neither bread, neither money; gold, silver, or brass, to buy bread with; because they were to have it, wherever they came, given them, as their due, and the reward of their labour;

neither have two coats apiece; the word "apiece" is left out in one copy, nor is it expressed in the Vulgate Latin and the eastern versions, which read as in (<4010>Matthew 10:10) though the word does aptly and clearly express the sense of the prohibition, which was not that they should not have two coats among them, but not two apiece; or each man should not have two, or have change of raiment; (See Gill on "<4010>Matthew 10:10")

Ver. 4. *And whatsoever house ye enter into*, etc.] In any town, or city, they should come to in their journey through Judea, and should enter into for the sake of lodging, during their stay:

there abide; do not shift quarters, or move from house to house:

and thence depart; the house you come into first, go out of last, when ye leave the town or city. The Vulgate Latin and Persic versions read, and thence do not depart: and so Beza says it is read in a certain copy, but then the sense is the same, as the Ethiopic version renders it, "do not go out from thence, until ye depart"; that is, do not leave the house, till you depart out of the town or city; agreeably to which is the Arabic version, "remain in it until the time of your going out"; (See Gill on "<4011>Matthew 10:11").

Ver. 5. *And whosoever will not receive you*, etc.] Unto their houses:

when ye go out of the city; where lodging and entertainment are refused you;

shake off the very dust from your feet, for a testimony against them; (See Gill on "<4014>Matthew 10:14") (See Gill on "<4611>Mark 6:11")

Ver. 6. *And they departed*, etc.] That is, the apostles, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it: they went from Christ, and the place where he was, from Capernaum, at least from some place in Galilee:

and went through the towns; the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions add, "and cities"; that is, of Judea, as well as Galilee, even the whole land of Israel:

preaching the Gospel; which explains what is meant by the kingdom of God, (<4902>Luke 9:2) and healing everywhere; all sorts of bodily diseases, wherever they came.

Ver. 7. *Now Herod the tetrarch*, etc.] Of Galilee, and who is called a king in (<4014>Mark 6:14) as he is here in the Ethiopic version:

heard of all that was done by him; of all the miracles that were wrought by Christ, and his apostles; the fame of which were the more spread through the mission of the apostles, and the journey they took through all the towns and cities of Galilee, which were in Herod's jurisdiction; by which means he, and his court, came to the knowledge of them, the whole country, ringing with the account of the same:

and he was perplexed; anxious, and distressed, not knowing well what to think of Christ, and the different sentiments of men about him: be was afraid lest he should be John the Baptist risen from the dead, whom he had beheaded: he hesitated about it at first, though he afterwards was fully persuaded, in his own mind, that it was he, as some affirmed; and this gave him great uneasiness, and filled him with distress and horror:

because that it was said of some that John was risen from the dead; and he began to fear it was true, though willing to disbelieve it, at least to make a question of it, especially in public; though in private, to his own family and servants, he was free to tell his mind.

Ver. 8. *And of some, that Elias had appeared*, etc.] Who had been translated, body and soul, to heaven, and whom the Jews expected a little before the coming of the Messiah:

and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again; that is, one of the former prophets. It is well known, that the Jews distinguish the prophets into the former and latter; the books of the prophets of the Old Testament are so distinguished; the writings of the former prophets are those of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 of Samuel, and the first and second of Kings: the latter prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, which are the greater prophets, and the twelve lesser ones: and in the Talmud [f328] it is asked,

> "who are µymwçarh µyaybn, "the former prophets?" Says R. Huna, they are David, Samuel, and Solomon — and why are they called former prophets? to except (or distinguish) them from Haggai, Zachariah, and Malachi, who are the latter."

So that by one of the old prophets, may be meant one of those that were before the times of Elias, as Samuel or David.

Ver. 9. *And Herod said, John have I beheaded*, etc.] That is, he had ordered him to be beheaded, and which was accordingly done by the executioner; of which he had full proof, since the head was brought him in a charger, and which he delivered to the daughter of Herodias:

but who is this of whom I hear such things? such, wonderful things, such amazing miracles, as were done by Christ: he seems to have reasoned after this manner with himself, surely this cannot be John, for I have beheaded him! and yet who should it be? and whereas some affirmed, that it was John that was risen from the dead, he began to fear that it was he;

and he desired to see him: that he might be satisfied whether it was he or not; for he had had personal knowledge of John, and converse with him, and therefore, upon sight of him, could tell whether it was he that was risen from the dead, or not; but we do not find Herod had a sight of Christ, until he was sent by Pilate to him at Jerusalem; (see <422307>Luke 23:7,8).

Ver. 10. *And the apostles, when they were returned*, etc.] From the several parts of the land where they had been sent, and had been preaching and working miracles, having gone through their circuit, and finished the service they were sent to do:

told him all they had done; what doctrines they had taught, how they had been received, and what success they met with, what miracles they had wrought, how they had dispossessed devils, and healed all sorts of diseases:

and he took them and went aside privately; by ship, over some part of the sea of Galilee; (See Gill on "<401632>Mark 6:32")

into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida; the city of Andrew and Peter, (<430144>John 1:44), and which, as Josephus [f329] says, was by the lake of Gennesaret, and by Philip called Julias; and this desert place was the desert of Bethsaida, a lonely, wild, uncultivated, and desolate place, not

far from it. Hither Christ went with his disciples, that they might be retired and alone, and have some refreshment and rest from their labours, and where they might privately converse together; and he give them some fresh instructions, and directions, and comfort.

Ver. 11. *And the people, when they knew it*, etc.] Having heard of his departure from others, and seeing him go off themselves:

followed him; not by ship, but on foot, going over the bridge at Chainmath of Gadara, and got thither before Christ and his disciples did:

and he received them; very kindly, and in a very affectionate manner, and with great respect, though they had prevented the private interview between him and his apostles;

and he spake unto them of the kingdom of God; of the Gospel dispensation, now setting up, and of the doctrines and ordinances of it, of the governing principle of grace in the hearts of his people, and of the glory of the world to come:

and healed them that had need of healing; for their bodies; as well as preached the doctrines of grace for the good of their souls; he both taught doctrine and wrought miracles.

Ver. 12. *When the day began to wear away*, etc.] Or “to decline”, as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions; or “to incline”, as the Syriac; that is, as the Ethiopic version renders it, “when the sun was declining” towards the “horizon” and was almost set; or “when the evening time was come”, as the Persic version:

then came the twelve; that is, “the disciples”, as the Persic version; or “his disciples”, as the Syriac: and

said unto him, send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about; the place where they were, round about the city of Bethsaida, the several adjacent houses in the fields, villages, towns, and cities:

and lodge, and get victuals; where they might have lodging for that night, it being too far for them to reach their habitations that evening; and also that they might provide themselves with proper and sufficient food, which was not to be had in the place where they were:

for we are here in a desert place; which afforded no conveniency for lodging, nor any supply of food.

Ver. 13. *And he said to them, give ye them to eat*, etc.] Signifying, that it was not his will to dismiss people, and send them scattering abroad into the adjacent cities, towns, or houses; and that there was no need of it, but that his will was, that they should be supplied with provisions out of their stock:

and they said, we have no more than five loaves and two fishes; and these loaves were barley loaves, and the fishes small, (<40609>John 6:9)

except we should go and buy meat for all this people; which would at least cost them two hundred pence; and which they represent as impossible to be done, either through want of so much money, or the scarcity of provision in those parts; where, had they money, it would be difficult, at least to get such a quantity of provisions at once, which so great a number of persons required.

Ver. 14. *For they were about five thousand men*, etc.] Beside women and children, (<40142>Matthew 14:21),

and he said to his disciples, make them to sit down by fifties in a company; and by hundreds also; some companies had a hundred apiece in them, and others fifty; and which was done partly, for the more easy numbering of them, and partly and chiefly for the more convenient distribution of food to them; (See Gill on "<40639>Mark 6:39-40")

Ver. 15. *And they did so, and made them all sit down*.] The disciples did not dispute the case any longer with Christ, but obeyed his orders, and ranged the multitude in companies, a hundred in one, and fifty in another; and ordered them to sit down in their distinct companies and ranks upon the green grass. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, "and they all sat down"; and so it is read in some copies of the Vulgate Latin version.

Ver. 16. *Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes*, etc.] Into his hands, being brought him by the disciples from the lad that had them:

and looking up to heaven: to his Father there, from whom all the mercies and blessings of life come;

he blessed them; either asked, or commanded a blessing on them, that they might multiply and increase, that there might be a sufficiency for all the people, and that, they might be nourishing to them. Beza observes, that in

his most ancient copy, it is read, “he blessed upon them”; which perfectly agrees with the Jewish way of speaking, tph l[Ædb “he that blesseth upon the bread”; ˆyyh l[Ærb “he that blesseth upon the wine”; and so upon the fruits of trees, and upon the fruits of the earth, and upon other things[f330];

and brake; the loaves, and divided the fishes into parts:

and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude; as they sat in ranks, and in their distinct companies.

Ver. 17. *And they did eat, and were all filled*, etc.] Every one had a part, and enough:

and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them, twelve baskets; (See Gill on “<4014>Matthew 14:20”).

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, as he was alone praying*, etc.] To his God and Father, for himself as man, and mediator; for the success of his Gospel, and the increase of his interest; and for his disciples, that they might have a clearer revelation of him; and which they had, as appears in their after confession of him by Peter, as the mouth of them all. The place where he now retired for private devotion, was somewhere in the coasts of Caesarea Philippi; for he was now gone from the desert of Bethsaida, as appears from (<4013>Matthew 16:13) and when he is said to be alone, the meaning is, that he was retired from the multitude, but not from his disciples; for it follows,

his disciples were with him, in this solitary place:

and he asked them, being with them alone;

saying, Whom say the people that I am? what are the sentiments of the common people, or of the people in general concerning me? The Alexandrian copy, and the Arabic version read, “men”, as in (<4013>Matthew 16:13). (See Gill on “<4013>Matthew 16:13”).

Ver. 19. *They answering said, John the Baptist*, etc.] This was the opinion of some who thought that he was risen from the dead, as in (<4907>Luke 9:7).

but some say Elias; the prophet, and the Tishbite; who according to the Jewish notion, was to be the forerunner of the Messiah, so in (<4708>Luke 7:8).

and others say: that one of the old prophets is risen again; thus were they divided in their sentiments about him. (See Gill on "Luke 9:8")

Ver. 20. *He said unto them, but whom say ye that I am*? etc.] Which was the main thing he had in view in this private conference; and in order to introduce which, he puts the former question:

Peter answering: in the name of the rest of the disciples, they assenting to it:

said, the Christ of God; The Persic version reads, "Christ God"; the Messiah, who is the Son of God, and God over all, blessed for ever. The Cambridge copy of Beza's reads, "the Christ, the Son of God". (See Gill on "Luke 2:26").

Ver. 21. *And he strictly charged them, and commanded them*, etc.] Though he highly approved of this their confession, and pronounced Peter blessed upon it; and signified that it was a discovery which flesh and blood could not make, but what was made to him his Father: yet he gave them a strict charge, and laid his commands on them,

to tell no man that thing; that he was the Messiah, and the eternal Son of God, and the true God, as well as the son of man, and really man: the reasons for this: (See Gill on "Matthew 16:20").

Ver. 22. *Saying, the son of man must suffer many things*, etc.] In his person and character, in his soul and body, at the hands of God, and of men, and devils:

and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and Scribes; who made up the grand sanhedrim of the nation: by these he was to be, and was rejected as the Messiah; and when put up with another which should be released, that other should be preferred, and he rejected; and which was done at the instigation of these men, who were the builders; of whom it was foretold that they should reject the head stone of the corner, (Psalm 118:22)

and be slain; or put to death, with the death of the cross:

and be raised the third day; according to the types and prophecies of the Old Testament. This he added for the comfort of his disciples.

Ver. 23. *And he said to them all*, etc.] Not only to all the disciples, but "to the multitude", as the Arabic version renders it, who were now called unto him, with his disciples, as is clear from (<40834>Mark 8:34),

any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me; the same is said here, as in (<40164>Matthew 16:24, <40834>Mark 8:34), only here the word, "daily", is added; and which, though as Beza observes, is not in the Complutensian edition, nor in five ancient copies; yet is in others, and in the Vulgate Latin, and in all the Oriental versions; and to be retained, as having a very considerable emphasis in it; showing that afflictions, trials, and persecutions of one sort or another, are to be expected every day by the people of God, and to be continually submitted to, and borne with cheerfulness.

Ver. 24. *For whosoever will save his life*, etc.] (See Gill on "<40165>Matthew 16:25").

Ver. 25. *For what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world*, etc.] Or what profit will it be unto him? all the honours, riches, and enjoyments of it will be of no use and service to him if he himself is lost:

and lose himself; or his own soul; for he that loses his soul, which is his better and immortal part, loses himself:

or be cast away: finally, and eternally, or "suffer loss" of eternal happiness and glory; that is, perishes, and is destroyed with an everlasting destruction; (See Gill on "<40166>Matthew 16:26").

Ver. 26. *For whosoever shall be ashamed of me*, etc.] Of my person and offices, of me, as the Messiah, Saviour, and Redeemer, of my grace, righteousness, blood, and sacrifice:

and of my words; of the doctrines of the Gospel, one and another of them. In Mark, it is added, "in this adulterous and sinful generation"; having a peculiar respect to the people of the Jews, and the age in which Christ lived; but is true of any other people and age in which men live:

of him shall the son of man be ashamed when he shall come in his own glory; in the glory of his human nature, when his glorious body, as now, in heaven, shall be seen by all; and in the glory of his office, as mediator, and the judge of all the earth; and in the glory of his divine nature, which will appear in the resurrection of the dead, in the gathering of all nations before

him, in separating one sort from another, and in passing and executing the definitive sentence on them; particularly the glory of his omnipotence and omniscience will be very conspicuous:

and in his Father's; which is the same with his own, as he is the Son of God, and the brightness of his glory; and which, as mediator, he has from him, and will be the object of the saints' vision to all eternity;

and of the holy angels; who shall attend him at his second coming, and be employed in various offices under him. The Syriac version renders, these last clauses as they are in (<40162>Matthew 16:27 <41038>Mark 8:38) in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels;

Ver. 27. *But I tell you of a truth*, etc.] And let it be received as such; you may assure yourselves of it, that not only at the last day, the son of man will come in this glorious manner, and show his resentment to all such as have been ashamed of him; but, also

there be some standing here, which shall not, taste of death till they see the kingdom of God; the Gospel dispensation visibly taking place, both among Jews and Gentiles, upon the resurrection of Christ, and the pouring fourth of his Spirit; and when it should come in power both in the conversion of God's elect in great numbers, and in the destruction of the Jewish nation, for their rejection, of the Messiah: (See Gill on "<40163>Matthew 16:28")

Ver. 28. *And it came to pass, about an eight days after those sayings*, etc.] About a week after he had declared the above things, at, or near to Caesarea Philippi. The other evangelists, Matthew and Mark, say it was six days after: the reason of this difference is, because Luke takes in the day in which he delivered these sayings, and that in which he was transfigured, and they only reckon the intermediate days:

he took Peter, and John, and James; the same that he admitted to be with him at the raising of Jairus's daughter, and in the garden afterwards:

and went up into a mountain to pray; to his God and Father, that his disciples might have a visible display of his glory, as an emblem and pledge of that in which he shall hereafter appear: it was usual with Christ to go up into a mountain to pray; (<40142>Matthew 14:23 <42612>Luke 6:12). (See Gill on "<40170>Matthew 17:1").

Ver. 29. *And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered*, etc.] It became exceeding bright and glorious, it shone like the sun, (Matthew 17:2) and hereby his prayer was answered; and thus, as Christ was heard and answered, whilst he was yet speaking, so are his people sometimes; and even their countenance is altered, when they are favoured with communion with God, and instead of a sad and dejected countenance, they have a cheerful one.

And his raiment was white and glistering; it was as white as the light, as snow, and whiter than any fuller on earth could whiten, as the other evangelists say, and so glistened exceedingly; (See Gill on "Matthew 17:2"). (See Gill on "Mark 9:3").

Ver. 30. *And behold there talked with him two men*, etc.] Of great note and fame:

which were Moses and Elias; the one the giver of the law from God to the people "of Israel", as well as the redeemer of them from Egyptian bondage, and who led them through the wilderness, to the borders of Canaan's land; and the other a prophet famous for his zeal for God, and his worship, and who was translated, soul and body, to heaven: these appeared and talked with Christ on the mount; and what they talked of is mentioned in the following verse; (See Gill on "Matthew 17:3").

Ver. 31. *Who appeared in glory*, etc.] In a very glorious manner, in most divine and beautiful forms to Christ, and to his disciples:

and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem; the word, rendered "decease", is "Exodus", the name of the second book of Moses; so called from the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, it gives an account of; and which departure is expressed by this word, in (Hebrews 11:22) and to which the allusion is here. Death is a departure out of this world, and goes by this name, (2 Peter 1:15) and so here it signifies Christ's death, or exit, which he was to make at Jerusalem; and Moses and Elias talk with him about this; the nature, manner, use, and near approach of it; and to which they might encourage him, as man. The sufferings and death of Christ were what Moses and the prophets had foretold; and these two speak of the same things now; and which must serve to confirm what Christ a few, days ago had showed his disciples, that he must go to Jerusalem, and there suffer and die. Dr. Lightfoot thinks that the ascension of Christ to heaven is contained in the word "Exodus", which

was his final departure out of this world, as well as his sufferings and death; and especially if there is any, allusion to the Israelites' departure out of Egypt, which was in victory and triumph; and the rather, because “the time of his receiving up”, (<40951>Luke 9:51) may be thought to refer to this; and so Moses and Elias conversed with him, not only about, his sufferings and death; but his ascension, and of which also the “Exodus”, or going of Elias out of this world to heaven, which was by a translation and ascension, was a figure. Some render this word, “Expedition”, and think it refers to the whole affair of the redemption of Christ's people by him, from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law, by his sufferings and death; of which the deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt was a lively representation: an expedition which Moses was sent upon, and accomplished: but now the discourse turns upon an expedition of greater importance, which shortly was to be accomplished at Jerusalem, where Christ was to be arraigned, and condemned, and then suffer without the gates of it, in order to obtain eternal redemption for the whole Israel of God.

Ver. 32. *But Peter, and they that were with him*, etc.] The other two disciples, James and John;

were heavy with sleep; as they afterwards were in the garden, while Christ was praying, as he had been now; being weary with the labours of the day past, and it being now night, as is very probable, since that was an usual time Christ spent in prayer:

and when they were awake, The Syriac version reads, “scarcely awake”; they were so heavy with sleep, that it was with difficulty they were awaked out of it, even by the rays of light and glory that were about them. The Ethiopic version adds, “suddenly”; such a lustre darted from these glorious forms, especially from the body of Christ, as at once surprised them out of their sleep; and being thoroughly awake,

they saw his glory; the brightness of his countenance, and the whiteness of his raiment: and the two men that stood with him: Moses and Elias, and the glory in which they appeared.

Ver. 33. *And it came to pass, as they departed from him*, etc.] That is, as Moses and Elias departed from Christ; or “when they began to depart”, as the Syriac version renders it; or “would depart”, as the Arabic and Persic versions; seemed desirous of going, or made some signal or other by which

the disciples perceived they were about to go; for, as yet, they were not gone;

Peter said unto Jesus, master, it is good for us to be here, let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias; (See Gill on "Matthew 17:4")

not knowing what he said, nor "what to say", as Mark observes, being in a surprise, and not in a situation to consider and weigh things well, whether what he said was right and proper, or not; (See Gill on "Matthew 17:4")

Ver. 34. *While he thus spake there came a cloud*, etc.] While Peter was making the above request, before an answer was returned, a cloud appeared, a very uncommon one, as a symbol of the divine presence: "and overshadowed them"; Jesus, Moses, Elias, and the disciples:

and they feared as they entered into the cloud; either as they themselves entered into it, that coming gradually over them, because of the glory of it, and the solemnity that attended it; or as Moses and Elias entered into it; and so the Syriac and Persic versions read, "they feared when they saw Moses and Elias enter into the cloud"; which took them out of their sight: just as the cloud received Jesus out of the sight of his disciples, when he ascended to heaven, (Acts 1:9).

Ver. 35. *And there came, a voice out of the cloud*, etc.] (See Gill on "Matthew 17:5").

Ver. 36. *And when, the voice was past*, etc.] The above words were delivered, and it was heard no more: Jesus was found alone; by his disciples; Moses and Elias being gone, and he in the same form in which he was before his transfiguration.

And they kept it close; as Christ strictly charged them, when coming down from the mount with them; (Matthew 17:9).

And told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen; no, not any of their fellow disciples, until that Christ was risen from the dead.

Ver. 37. *And it came to pass, that on the next day*, etc.] For Jesus and his disciples staid all night on the mountain:

when they were come down from the hill; to the bottom of it:

much people met him. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions read, “met them”.

Ver. 38. *And behold, a man of the company*, etc.] One that was in the company, and among the multitude, that met him:

cried out; with great vehemence and earnestness:

saying, Master; doctor, or “Rabbi”:

I beseech thee: most humbly, for he was now on his knees:

look upon my son: with pity and compassion, and help him:

for he is mine only child; wherefore he was dear unto him, and he was greatly concerned for him, and earnestly desirous of his being restored to health; and this he mentions, to move the compassion of Christ.

Ver. 39. *And, lo, a spirit taketh him*, etc.] An evil spirit, the devil, as in (<4094>Luke 9:42) seizes and possesses him at once,

and he suddenly crieth out; in a most terrible manner, giving dreadful shrieks, as soon as he perceives that he is seized by the demon:

and it teareth him, that he foameth again; throws him into convulsions, so that he foams at the mouth: and so we read [f331] of a son of a certain Jew, that

> “a certain spirit passed before him and hurt him, convulsed his mouth, and his eyes, and his hands were convulsed, and he could not speak.”

And bruising him; by dashing him against the wall, or throwing him to the ground:

hardly departeth from him; is very loath to leave him, even after he has distressed, convulsed, and bruised him in this dreadful manner, such was his cruelty and malice; (See Gill on “<4075>Matthew 17:15”) (See Gill on “<4098>Mark 9:18”)

Ver. 40. *And I besought thy disciples*, etc.] The nine disciples that were left behind, whilst Christ, and the other three, were gone up to the mountain:

to cast him out; the devil out of his child:

and they could not; (See Gill on "[40]17:16 Matthew 17:16").

Ver. 41. *And Jesus answering, said*, etc.] To the father of the child, and those that were with him; and with a particular view to the Scribes and Pharisees, who had been insulting the disciples, and triumphing over them, because of their inability to cast out the evil spirit: for the words are not spoken to the disciples, as they might seem at first view to be, and as the Persic version renders them, "and Jesus turned his face to the disciples, and said"; but to the unbelieving Jews,

O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? bring thy son hither; (See Gill on "[40]17:17 Matthew 17:17").

Ver. 42. *And as he was yet a coming*, etc.] Whilst he was in the way bringing to Jesus, before he came to him:

the devil threw him down, and tare him; knowing who Jesus was, and that he was able to dispossess him: and having reason to believe he would, was resolved to do all the mischief he could, and give him all the pain add distress he was able, whilst he was in him; and therefore threw him to the ground, and convulsed him in a terrible manner at the same time:

and Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit; for his malice and cruelty, and ordered him to depart:

and healed the child; by dispossessing the spirit:

and delivered him again to his father; free from the possession, and in perfect health, and which must be very pleasing and acceptable to him.

Ver. 43. *And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God*, etc.] Or at "the greatness", or "majesty of God"; which was displayed in this cure: for the great power of God was manifestly seen in it, to the astonishment of the disciples, who could not cure this child, and of the parent and friends of it, and of the whole multitude: and to the confusion of the Scribes and Pharisees:

but while they wondered every one, at all things which Jesus did; and were applauding him for them, and speaking in his praise on account of them:

he said unto his disciples; privately, when they were alone together, the following words, that he might not seem to be lifted up with the praise of

men; and also to show their inconstancy, that those who, now admired him, would one day crucify him; and to take off the thoughts of the disciples from a temporal kingdom and glory, they were so much in expectation of, and which every miracle of Christ, and the applause he got thereby among men, strengthened them in.

Ver. 44. *Let these sayings sink down into your ears*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “in your hearts”: Christ's sense is, that they would, diligently attend to them, seriously consider them, and carefully lay them up in their memories; and what he refers to are not the words he had spoken, but what he was about to say; namely, as follow:

for the son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men; by whom he should be killed, though he should rise again the third day; (See Gill on “40172Matthew 17:22-23”)

Ver. 45. *But they understood not this saying*, etc.] What was meant by being betrayed into the hands of men, and by his being put to death; they knew not, how these things could possibly be, for they could not by any means reconcile them with the notions they had of a temporal Redeemer, and victorious Messiah:

and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not; the true meaning of this saying was hid from their understanding, which was veiled with the above notion of the worldly grandeur of the Messiah, that they did not take it in;

and they feared to ask him of that saying, of the meaning of it; imagining that he had a secret mystical meaning in it, which they could not reach; lest he should reproach them with their dulness and stupidity; or should rebuke them with the like sharpness and severity he had reproved Peter not long ago, upon the same head.

Ver. 46. *Then there arose a reasoning among them*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, “a thought entered into them”; suggested very likely by Satan, which broke out into words, and issued in a warm dispute among them; and this was in the way, as they were travelling from Caesarea Philippi, to Capernaum; (see 41033Mark 9:33).

Which of them should be greatest; that is, “in the kingdom of heaven”, as in (40181Matthew 18:1) in the kingdom of the Messiah, which they expected would be a temporal one: wherefore the dispute was not about degrees in

glory, nor in grace; nor who should be the greatest apostle and preacher of the Gospel; but who should be prime minister to the king Messiah, when he should set up his monarchy in all its grandeur and glory.

Ver. 47. *And Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart*, etc.] Not by any words he had heard; for the dispute was on the road, as they came along behind him; but as the omniscient God, who is the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, he was privy to all their ambition, and the vanity of their minds, and to all their reasonings and debates: though he was before them, and out of the reach of hearing of them: and when he came to Capernaum, after having asked them what they disputed about by the way;

he took a child and set him by him. The Ethiopic version reads, "before them", the disciples; and Matthew and Mark say, "he set him in the midst of them"; all which were true, Jesus sitting in the midst of them; so, that the child he set by him, was in the middle of them and before them; (See Gill on "Matthew 18:2").

Ver. 48. *And said unto them, whosoever shalt receive this child*, etc.] Or "one such little child", as in (Matthew 18:5) and so the Syriac version here, "a child like to this"; and the Arabic version, "one like to this child"; not in age, but in meekness and humility; one that is not proud and haughty, ambitious of worldly honour, and envious at the superior state of others: whoever receives such an one into his house and heart, and the Gospel he preaches,

in my name; because he belongs to me, is sent by me, and represents me, and delivers my message:

receiveth me; represented by him, and will be so taken:

and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me; (See Gill on "Mark 9:37")

For he that is least among you all; that is so, in his own opinion, and behaves as such in his conduct, who is lowly and meek, and humble; and so the Ethiopic version, rather interpreting than translating, renders it, "for he that makes himself humble, who is lesser than all"; who considers himself as the least of the apostles, and unworthy to be one, as did the Apostle Paul:

the same shall be great; shall be highly honoured with gifts, and made greatly useful, as the above mentioned apostle was: a saying like this, the Jews have [f332];

> "every one, wmx[^yjqmh, "that makes himself little", for the words of the law in this world, lwdg hç[n, "shall be made great" in the world to come;"

that is, in the days of the Messiah: and again it is said by [f333] them,

> "worthy is he that makes himself little in this world, how great and high shall he be in that world! — whoever is little shall be great, and he that is great shall be little."

Ver. 49. *And John answered and said, Master*, etc.] The Syriac and Persic versions read, "our Master":

we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbad him; (See Gill on "<4038>Mark 9:38")

Because he followeth not with us; the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, "because he followeth not thee with us"; did not join in company with them, and follow Christ along with them, and as they did.

Ver. 50. *And Jesus said unto him, forbid him not*, etc.] "Or forbid not" him, or any other so doing:

for he that is not against us, is for us: in two exemplars of Beza's it is read, "for he is not against you": the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions, instead of "us", in both clauses read "you", and so likewise the Persic and Ethiopic versions; (See Gill on "<4039>Mark 9:39-40")

Ver. 51. *And it came to pass, when the time was come*, etc.] Or "days were fulfilled", an usual Hebraism; when the period of time fixed for his being in Galilee was come to an end: when he had fulfilled his ministry, and finished all his sayings, and wrought all the miracles he was to work in those parts; when he was to quit this country, and go into Judea, and up to Jerusalem, signified in the next clause:

that he should be received up; or as all the Oriental versions rightly render the words, "when the time, or days of his ascension were fulfilled"; not of his ascension to heaven, as interpreters generally understand the passage, because the word is used of that, in (<4116>Mark 16:19) (<4001>Acts 1:2,11,22,

(54016)1 Timothy 3:16) much less as others, of his being taken and lifted up from the earth upon the cross, and so signifies his crucifixion, and sufferings, and death; for of neither of these can it be said, that the time of them was come, or the days fulfilled, in which either of these should be: for if Christ was now going to the feast of tabernacles, as some think, it must be above half a year before his death, and still longer before his ascension to heaven: and if to the feast of dedication, it was above three months to his ascension: hence interpreters that go this way, are obliged to interpret it, that the time drew near, or was drawing on, or the days were almost fulfilled; whereas the expression is full and strong, that the time was come, and the days were fulfilled; and which was true in the sense hinted at, that now the time was up, that Jesus must leave the low lands of Galilee, having finished his work there; and go into the higher country of Judea, and so up to Jerusalem; for of his ascension from Galilee to Jerusalem are the words to be understood; (See Gill on "(40190)Matthew 19:1") (See Gill on "(41001)Mark 10:1") And it is observable that after this, he never went into Galilee any more; and this sense is confirmed by what follows:

he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem; or "strengthened his face", as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; set his face like a flint, as in (23007)Isaiah 1:7) denoting not impudence, as hardening of the face is used in (21229)Proverbs 21:29) but boldness, courage, constancy and firmness of mind: or "he prepared his face", as the Syriac; or "turned his face", as the Arabic, he looked that way, and set forward; or as the Persic version renders it, "he made a firm purpose", he resolved upon it, and was determined to go to Jerusalem, his time being up in Galilee; and though he knew what he was to meet with and endure; that he should bear the sins of his people, the curse of the law, and wrath of God; that he should have many enemies, men and devils to grapple with, and undergo a painful, shameful, and accursed death; yet none of these things moved him, he was resolutely bent on going thither, and accordingly prepared for his journey; (See Gill on "(12017)2 Kings 12:17").

Ver. 52. *And sent messengers before his face*, etc.] Who very likely were his two disciples, James and John, since they so highly resented the ill treatment their master met with from the Samaritans:

and they went; before him:

and entered into a village of the Samaritans; or "city", as the Vulgate Latin, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, and so one of Stephens's copies;

which lay in the way from Galilee to Judea, where the disciples had been forbid to enter, that is, in order to preach, (<4010 05>Matthew 10:5)

To make ready for him; to prepare a lodging, and proper food for him and his disciples, as they passed on in their journey, for his intention was not to make any stay there.

Ver. 53. *And they did not receive him*, etc.] The Ethiopic version reads "them", the messengers; but it should rather seem that they did receive the messengers, and promised them lodging and entertainment; being glad that so great a person would honour them with his presence, hoping that miracles would be done by him, among them; and that he would stay with them, and show some approbation of them, and their worship; but when Christ came in person, with his disciples and the multitude, they would not admit him; the reason follows,

because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem: by all circumstances, by his words and looks, and gestures; by all that they could see and hear, and learn from him, his determination was to make no stay with them, but proceed on to Jerusalem, after he had took a night's lodging with them, and had refreshed himself and company and therefore they would not receive him: it had been of a long time a controversy between the Jews and Samaritans, which was the right place of worship; whether at the temple at Jerusalem, or whether at their temple on Mount Gerizzim? Now if Christ would have interested himself in this contest, in favour of them, and would have staid with them, and worshipped where they did, they would have gladly received him; but they perceived he was going to Jerusalem, either to keep the feast of "tabernacles" there, or the feast of the dedication of the temple; and if the latter, it must be still more provoking to them, because it showed, that he preferred that temple to theirs: and however, it seems to be on this account that they would not admit him, because he favoured the temple worship at Jerusalem; otherwise his bare going thither, could not give the offence.

Ver. 54. *And when his disciples, James and John, saw this*, etc.] The Persic version reads thus; when "James and John, and the disciples saw this"; that is, the other disciples besides them, so making all the disciples say what follows; whereas only those two are intended, who having been the messengers, were the more provoked at this indignity to their Lord and master:

they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them; being enraged at this conduct of the Samaritans towards, Christ, and burning with love to him, and zeal for his honour; being “Boanerges's”, sons of thunder, they were for punishing of them in a most terrible manner, even with, fire from heaven; by which Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain, were destroyed: this they doubted not of doing, knowing what miraculous power was conferred upon them; but did not think proper to attempt to exert it, until they had asked leave of Christ to do it:

even as Elias did; upon the two captains of fifties, with their fifties, as recorded in (<120109>2 Kings 1:9-12) This clause was wanting in a certain copy of Beza's, and is not in the Vulgate Latin version; but is in other copies and versions, and by all means to be retained.

Ver. 55. *But he turned and rebuked them*, etc.] He turned himself about to them, and looking upon them with a stern countenance, sharply reproved them for their intemperate zeal, their passion of wrath, and anger, and desire of revenge:

and said, ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; or do not consider that this is not the true spirit of zeal, but of anger and revenge; and is not agreeable to the spirit of the meek and humble followers of Christ, or to the Spirit of God, and those gifts of his bestowed on them, nor to the spirit of the Gospel dispensation: so good men, for want of attention, may not know sometimes from what spirit they act; taking that for a good one, which is a very bad one; being covered with specious pretenses of love and zeal, and the examples of former saints; not observing the difference of persons; times, and things.

Ver. 56. *For the son of man*, etc.] Meaning himself, in his state of humiliation:

is not come to destroy men's lives; the word “men's” is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions: and both words, “men's lives”, are left out in the Arabic version:

but to save them; as they might easily observe, by his casting out devils from the bodies of men, and healing all sorts of diseases: and therefore, though it was agreeably to the legal dispensation, and the times of Elijah, to punish offenders in such a manner, it was not agreeably to the Gospel dispensation, and to the ends of the Messiah's coming into the world: so far

in this verse, and the latter part of the former verse, are left out in five ancient copies of Beza's, and in the Ethiopic version, but are in the rest of the Eastern versions, and in other copies, and are rightly retained:

and they went to another village; in Samaria, more civil and courteous, and less prejudiced, and where they got lodging and entertainment.

Ver. 57. *And it came to pass, as they went in the way*, etc.] From one village of the Samaritans, to the other; though if this is the same history related in (<4089>Matthew 8:19) it was as Christ went from Capernaum to the sea side, in order to go to the other side of it; and must be inserted here, without regard to the order of time:

a certain man said unto him; if the same as in Matthew, he is there said to be a "Scribe";

Lord, I will follow thee, wheresoever thou goest. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read these words by way of question, "Lord, shall I not follow thee wheresoever thou goest?" (See Gill on "<4089>Matthew 8:19").

Ver. 58. *And Jesus said unto him, foxes have holes*, etc.] Both the words of this man to Christ, and Christ's answer to him, are exactly the same as in Matthew, which makes it look as if it was the same history; though it is not improbable, that Christ might be accosted in the same manner by another person, at another time and place, and return a like answer to each; (See Gill on "<4089>Matthew 8:20").

Ver. 59. *And he said unto another, follow me*, etc.] According to Matthew, one of his disciples, who had attended him some time, and whom he now called to the ministerial work; (See Gill on "<4089>Matthew 8:20"). The Ethiopic version reads, "another said to him, shall I not follow thee?" but without any foundation: they are certainly the words of Christ, directed to another person, at the same time he met with the former:

but he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father; (See Gill on "<4089>Matthew 8:21").

Ver. 60. *Jesus said unto him, let the dead bury the dead*, etc.] (See Gill on "<4089>Matthew 8:22").

but go thou and preach the kingdom of God; that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, the Gospel dispensation is now ushering in, and the kingdom of the Messiah is setting up; go and publish the things concerning the

kingdom of grace, which lies not in outward rites and ceremonies, but in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and declare the things relating to the kingdom of glory, and eternal life and happiness; assert, that unless a man is born again, and has a better righteousness than his own, he is neither fit for, nor has he a right unto everlasting bliss.

Ver. 61. *And another also said*, etc.] "To him", as the Syriac and Arabic versions add, that is, to Christ; the Ethiopic version reads, "and a third said to him"; for this is the third person mentioned in this relation of Luke's; only two are spoken of by Matthew, but a third is added here:

Lord, I will follow thee; he moves it himself, to be a disciple of his, and a preacher of his Gospel, only with this condition:

but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house: as Elisha desired Elijah, that he might go and kiss his father and his mother and then he promises he would follow him, (<11190>1 Kings 19:20). The Syriac version adds, "and I will come"; and the Persic, "and give commands, and then, will I come": and the phrase not only signifies, that he desired to take leave of his friends, but to compose and set in order his family affairs, and dispose of his worldly effects among his domestics, relations, and friends, in the best manner he could; and then he should have leisure, and be at liberty to follow Christ, and attend his service.

Ver. 62. *And Jesus said unto him*, etc.] The copulative "and", is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions:

no man having put his hand to the plough; or "ploughshare", as reads the Syriac version; or "plough handle", as the Persic; referring, as Beza thinks, to the business of Elisha, in (<11199>1 Kings 19:19)

And looking back; behind him; for the ploughman ought to look before him, on his plough, and the ground he is ploughing, or he is not fit to be a ploughman; nor will he make proper furrows, or do his work well; and so he that enters upon the ministerial work, and looks back, and engages himself in the affairs of the world, sets his heart on them, and spends his time in them,

is not fit for the kingdom of God: that is, to preach the kingdom of God, as in (<42960>Luke 9:60). He cannot serve God and mammon, his own interest, and the interest of Christ; he cannot rightly perform the work of the

ministry, whilst his thoughts and time are taken up in the affairs of the world.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 10

Ver. 1. *After these things*, etc.] After the calling and mission of the twelve apostles, and giving them their powers, commissions, and instructions, with other things that followed thereon; (<40 09 01>Luke 9:1)

the Lord appointed other seventy also; not that he had appointed before seventy, and now made an appointment of seventy more; but as the Syriac version renders it, “Jesus separated out of his disciples, seventy others” that is, besides the twelve, whom he chose and called out, from among the multitude of the disciples, and ordained them apostles, he selected and ordained seventy others, in allusion to the seventy elders of Israel, (<04 11 16>Numbers 11:16,24,25). The Vulgate Latin and Persic versions read, “seventy two”, and so does Epiphanius [f334]. The Jewish sanhedrim is sometimes said to consist of seventy one [f335], and sometimes of seventy two [f336]; though commonly said to be of the round number seventy, as these disciples might be. The above mentioned ancient writer gives the names of some of them, as the seven deacons; Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas; together with Matthias, Mark, Luke, Justus, Barnabas, Apelies, Rufus, and Niger. The names of all these disciples, according to ancient traditions, though not to be depended on, are given in an alphabetical order, with the places where they afterwards presided as bishops, or pastors, by a late learned writer [f337], and are as follow, viz. Agabus, the prophet; Amphias, of Odyssus, sometimes called Amphiatus; Ananias, who baptized Paul, bishop of Damascus; Andronicus, of Pannonia, or Spain; Apelies, of Smyrna, or, according to others, of Heraclea; Apollo, of Caesarea; Aristarchus, of Apamea; Aristobulus, of Britain; Artemas, of Lustra; Asyncritus, of Hyrcania; Barnabas, of Milgin; Barnabas, of Heraclea; Caesar, of Dyrrachium; Caius, of Ephesus; Carpus, of Berytus, in Thracia; Cephas, bishop of Konia; Clemens, of Sardinia; Cleophas, of Jerusalem; Crescens, of Chalcedon, in Galatia; Demas, a priest of idols; Epaenetus, of Carthage; Epaphroditus, of Andriace; Erastus, of Paneas, or, according to others, of the Philippians; Evodus, of Antioch; Hermas, of Philippi, or Philippolls; Hermes, of Dalmatia;

Hermogenus and Phygellus, who followed Simon Magus; Hermogenus, bishop of the Megarenes; Herodion, of Tarsus; James, the brother of our Lord, of Jerusalem; Jason, of Tarsus; Jesus Justus, bishop of Eleutheropolis: Linus, of Rome; Luke, the evangelist: Lucius, of Laodicea, in Syria; Mark, who is also John, of Biblopohs, or Byblus; Mark the evangelist, bishop of Alexandna; Mark, the sister's son of Barnabas, bishop of Apolloma; Matthias, added to the apostles; Narcissus, of Athens; Nicanor, he died when Stephen suffered martyrdom; Nicolaus, of Samaria; Olympius, a martyr at Rome; Onesiphorus, bishop of Corone; Parmenas, of the Soli, Patrobulus, the same with Patrobas, in (⁴⁵1614 Romans 16:14) of Puteoli, or as others, of Naples; Philemon, of Gaza; Philemon (in the Acts he is called Philip), by whom the eunuch of the queen of Ethiopia was baptized, of Trallium, of Asia; Philologus, of Sinope; Phlegon, bishop of Marathon; Phygellus, of Ephesus; Prochorus, of Nicomedia, in Bithynia; Pudens; Quartus, of Berytus; Rhodion, a martyr at Rome; Rufus, of Thebes; Silas, of Corinth; Sylvanus, of Thessalonica; Sosipater, of Iconium; Sosthenes, of Colophon; Stachys, of Byzantium; Stephen, the first martyr; Tertius, of Iconium; Thaddaeus, who carried the epistle of Jesus to Edessa, to Abgarus; Timon, of Bostra, of the Arabians; Trophimus, who suffered martyrdora with the Apostle Paul; Tychicus, bishop of Chalcedon, of Bithynia; Tychicus, of Colophon; Urbanus, of Macedonm; and, Zenas, of Diospolis. According both to this account, and Epiphanius, Luke was one of these seventy, and he is the only evangelist that makes mention of the appointment of them:

and sent them two and two before his face: as he did the twelve before, to be his harbingers and forerunners:

into every city and place, whither he himself would come: which he intended to visit: he sent them beforehand to acquaint the inhabitants of it; and prepare them by their ministry, for the reception of him; as John the Baptist, who was in a more eminent sense the harbinger and forerunner of Christ, went before him in his ministry, and prepared the way for him.

Ver. 2. *Therefore said he unto them*, etc.] That is, the “Lord Jesus”, as the Ethiopic version expresses it; he said to the seventy disciples, what he had before said to the twelve apostles in (⁴⁰0937 Matthew 9:37,38) where are the same words as here:

the harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few, pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest; for

though there was such a number of disciples called to the ministerial work, and sent out, there was still need of more; so great was the harvest of souls, or number of hearers, that the labourers were yet but few; and therefore the Lord of the harvest and whose all souls are, was to be prayed unto to send forth more laborious preachers; (See Gill on "Matthew 9:37"). (See Gill on "Matthew 9:38").

Ver. 3. *Go your ways*, etc.] Into all the villages, towns, cities, and places, where he directed them to go, to make ready for him.

Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves; as harmless, innocent, profitable, and defenceless creatures, among spiteful, malicious, cunning, and cruel men; (See Gill on "Matthew 10:16").

Ver. 4. *Carry neither purse*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, "purses, "to put money, gold, silver, and brass in; and the prohibition regards the money in the purse chiefly:

nor scrip; the Syriac version here also reads in the plural number, "scrips", to put victuals in, provisions or any sort for their journey, which they were not to carry with them, any more than money, to buy food with

Nor shoes; any more than those they had upon their feet; (See Gill on "Matthew 10:9-10") and salute no man by the way; that they might not be retarded, and hindered in their journey by tedious ceremonies, and long inquiries into the health of persons and friends, and the business they were going about, and places where; and by discourses and confabulations, drawn out to great length, as was often the case at meeting on the road: and, for the same reason, a like charge is given to Gehazi, (2 Kings 4:29), and which, as the Jewish commentators on the place observe [f338], was, that he might not multiply words with persons he met with, and might not be stopped by the way; and that his intention might be in his work, and his mind might not turn to any other thing, either by word or deed. So our Lord's intention, by this order was, not to teach them incivility, or to be morose and uncourteous; but that they might dispatch their business with the utmost expedition, and rather forego some common civilities and ceremonies, than to neglect, or, in the least, to hinder a work of so much importance they were sent about: and this was the more necessary, since, according to the Jewish maxim [f339],

> "prevent every man with a salutation;"

they saluted all that they met, which took up time, and hindered business. Some sorts of persons indeed were excused, as those who were mourners [f340] for the dead, and such as kept fasts for rain [f341]: but such were not these disciples; they neither mourned, nor fasted, nor could they, so long as the bridegroom was with them.

Ver. 5. *And into whatsoever house ye enter*, etc.] When ye come into any city, town, or village,

first say, peace be to this house: salute the inhabitants in the usual form, saying, peace be to you; wishing them all happiness and prosperity, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. This shows our Lord did not disapprove of civil salutations.

Ver. 6. *And if the son of peace be there*, etc.] If there be any elect person or persons in the house, whom God has chosen to partake of peace by the blood of Christ, and the benefits arising from it; and of a conscience peace in their souls, upon the best foundation; and of eternal peace in the world to come, though yet in a state of nature; and which may be known by this sign;

your peace shall rest upon it: the salutation, or wish of peace, shall be well taken, and gratefully received; and upon this you will be kindly invited into the house, and used well by, those of the family;

if not, it shall turn to you again: if there are no sons of peace, no elect persons there, your salutation, or wish of peace and prosperity to the family, will be despised and rejected, and will return to you without any good effect upon them.

Ver. 7. *And in the same house remain*, etc.] Where the sons of peace are, and the peace rests, and into which you are invited, and kindly received and used:

eating and drinking such things as they give; or rather, “such things as are with them”, as the Vulgate Latin renders it; or “of that which is theirs”, as the Syriac version; all one, and with as much freedom, as if they were your own; the reason follows,

for the labourer is worthy of his hire; what you eat and drink is your due; what you ought to have; your diet is a debt, and not a gratuity; (See Gill on “<4010>Matthew 10:10”)

go not from house to house; as if fickle and inconstant, as if not satisfied with your lodging and entertainment, and as seeking out for other and better, or as if burdensome where they were; (See Gill on "Matthew 10:11"). The Jews have a proverb, expressing the inconvenience and expensiveness, and the danger of moving from place to place:

> "he that goes, tybl tybm, "from house to house", (loses his) shirt, (i.e. comes to distress and poverty,) from place to place (his) life[f342];"

or he is in great danger of losing his life.

Ver. 8. *And into whatsoever city ye enter*, etc.] Into whatsoever house in it ye go, and apply to for lodging and entertainment,

and they receive you, readily and cheerfully,

eat such things as are set before you; though ever so mean, accept of them, and do not object to them on that account, lest it should be thought you serve your own bellies, and seek to gratify your appetites; nor, on the other hand, do not think anything too good for you, or that you are burdensome and chargeable, but eat as if it were your own; nor ask questions about the cleanness and uncleanness of it, or whether it has been tithed or not; but feed upon it without any scruple.

Ver. 9. *And heal the sick that are therein*, etc.] Of all their bodily diseases, which would not only show their power and warrant, theft mission and commission, but also their goodness and beneficence to men; and would be a sufficient return for what they ate and drank:

and say unto them; not only to the sick that are healed, and those in the house in which they were, but to all the inhabitants of the city;

the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you: the Gospel dispensation, the kingdom of the Messiah, and even the Messiah himself, as might be concluded from the miracles they wrought; and thus by their ministry and works, were they to go before Christ, and prepare his way.

Ver. 10. *But into whatsoever city ye enter*, etc.] On the other hand Christ here directs how to behave towards other cities they should come to, and be rejected:

and they receive you not; refuse to admit them into their houses, or provide in any shape for them, nor hear their message:

go your ways out into the streets of the same. The Ethiopic version reads, “cast the dust off your feet into the streets of it: and say”; aloud, in the most public manner, in the ears of all the people, as follows.

Ver. 11. *Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us*, etc.] The Syriac version adds, “to our feet”; and so in Beza's most ancient copy, and the Arabic and Persic versions read, “which cleaves to our feet”; which agrees with (<40104>Matthew 10:14, <41611>Mark 6:11).

we do wipe against you: for a testimony against them, that they had been with them, and were rejected by them; (See Gill on “<40104>Matthew 10:14”) (See Gill on “<41611>Mark 6:11”)

notwithstanding be ye sure of this; they might assure themselves of this, and which will be an aggravation of their guilt, and increase their punishment another day:

that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you; was at their very doors, since the ministers of it, of the Gospel dispensation, the harbingers of the Messiah, who were sent to publish his Gospel, to proclaim him as king, and de clare that his kingdom was at hand, had been with them, and they had despised them.

Ver. 12. *But I say unto you*, etc.] The same that he said to the twelve apostles, when he sent them out, (<40105>Matthew 10:15),

that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city. By “that day” is meant, the famous day to come, the last day; the day of judgment, as it is expressed in Matthew; and so the Ethiopic version reads here, “it shall be better in the day of judgment”. Sodom was a very wicked city, and was destroyed by fire from heaven for its iniquity, and its inhabitants suffer the vengeance of eternal fire: and there was also Gomorrha, a neighbouring city, guilty of the same crimes, and shared the same fate; and which is mentioned along with Sodom in Matthew; and is here read in the Persic version. And the sense of the whole is, that though the iniquities of Sodom and Gomorrha were very great, and their punishment very exemplary; yet, as there will be degrees of torment in hell, the case of such a city, which has been favoured with the Gospel, and has despised and rejected it, will be much worse than the case of those cities,

which were devoured by fire from heaven; and than that of the inhabitants of them in the future judgment, and to all eternity; (See Gill on "Matthew 10:15").

Ver. 13. *Woe unto thee Chorazin*, etc.] (See Gill on "Matthew 11:21").

Woe unto thee Bethsaida; a city of Galilee, a fishing town, from whence it has its name, and was the native place of those two fishermen, Peter and Andrew: very likely Chorazin was near it, since they are here, and in Matthew, mentioned together; and woe is pronounced upon them both for their impenitence and unbelief, which were attended with aggravating circumstances:

for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you; meaning both the ministry of the word by Christ, which was with power and authority, and the miracles of Christ, which were the works of almighty power, and showed him to be the mighty God: these were not done in Tyre and Sidon, cities in Phoenicia; for though our Lord was on the borders of those places, yet not in them, they being Gentile cities, to which he was not sent, and in which he did not preach, nor do miracles; but he did both in Bethsaida and Chorazin, and they repented not of their sins; nor did they embrace his doctrine, though confirmed by miracles; whereas, in all likelihood, humanly speaking, had the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon had the like advantages,

they had a great while ago repented: they would have repented immediately, it would have been soon visible in them, of which they would have given proof, by

sitting in sackcloth and ashes; which was an outward token of repentance, used by penitent sinners, as by the Ninevites, and others. The same things are said at another time, and on another occasion, as here; (See Gill on "Matthew 11:21-24")

Ver. 14. *But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment*, etc.] Or "in the day of judgment", as read the Syriac, Persic, Ethiopic, and Gothic versions; and as it is in (Matthew 11:22)

than for you; the inhabitants of Chorazin and Bethsaida, who will be more severely punished than these Gentile cities; for by how much greater were their light, privileges, and advantages against which they sinned, by so much will be their severer punishment.

Ver. 15. *And thou Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven*, etc.] Referring either to the situation of it, which was on a very high hill; or to its privileges, through the ministry and miracles of Christ; or the phrase may be expressive of the pride and loftiness of the inhabitants of it, who were elated with the mercies they enjoyed, it being a most delightful, pleasant, and comfortable place to live in, as its name signifies. It was a famous port, commodiously situated by the sea of Tiberias; and, as Josephus [f343] says, was in an excellent temperament of the air, and watered with a most choice fountain, called by the same name.

Shalt be thrust down into hell; meaning either the low condition to which it was to be, and has been reduced in a temporal sense, and continues in to this day; there being nothing of it now remaining, as travellers, who have been eyewitnesses of it, say [f344], but a few little houses and cottages; or else the sad and miserable condition of the inhabitants of it hereafter: and so it is, that such who have lived in great plenty and pleasure in this life, and have thought themselves to be the favourites of heaven, and that they should enter there, shall be thrust down to hell by the arm of vengeance, with the utmost indignation in God, and shame to themselves: it follows in Matthew, "for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day; but I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for thee".

Ver. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me*, etc.] This is said for the encouragement of the seventy disciples, that though they would be rejected by some, they would be received by others, who would hear them, and embrace their doctrine, as if the Messiah himself had been among them; they looking upon them as representing him: and so Christ himself considers them as ambassadors in his name, and as representing his person, taking what is done to them, as done to himself; (See Gill on "Matthew 10:40")

and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: every degree of contempt cast upon them by words or actions, Christ looked upon as cast on himself, and will resent it another day, and punish for it. The despising of wise men, or doctors, and their disciples or scholars, was accounted with the Jews a very heinous crime, and was severely punished both by excommunication and fines: for thus it is said [f345],

> “a great iniquity it is to despise the wise men, or to hate them. Jerusalem was not destroyed until the disciples of the wise men were despised in it, as it is said, (<14616>2 Chronicles 36:16) “but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets”: as if he should say, they despised those that taught his words: and thus saith the law, “if ye despise my statutes”; they that teach my statutes ye will despise; and every one that despiseth the wise men, hath no part in the world to come; and lo! this is included in that general rule, “for he hath despised the word of the Lord”. Although he that despiseth the wise men hath no part in the world to come, if witnesses come (and depose) that he hath despised them even in words, he is guilty of excommunication: and the sanhedrim excommunicate him publicly, and fine him a pound of gold in every place, and give it to the wise men: and he that despiseth a wise man by words, even after his (the wise man's) death, the sanhedrim excommunicate him; and they free him when he returns by repentance: but if the wise man is alive, they do not free him till he pleases.”

And he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me: this is said to aggravate the sin of the despisers of Christ's ministers, and to deter from it; since the contempt does not terminate in them, nor even in Christ, but reaches his Father also. The Ethiopic version adds, “and he that heareth me, heareth him that sent me”: but is not supported by any copy, or any other version.

Ver. 17. *And the seventy returned again*, etc.] The Syriac version adds, “whom he had sent”: these disciples having received orders and instructions from Christ, went as he directed them; and when they had finished their embassy, they returned again to him, and gave him an account of their journey and success. The Vulgate Latin and Persic versions read here, “the seventy two”, as they do in (<42101>Luke 10:1)

with joy; with great joy, as read the Syriac and Persic versions; notwithstanding the difficulties that had attended them, reproaches cast upon them, the ill treatment they might have met with in some places, and the labours and fatigues of their journey, and the dangers they had been exposed to:

saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name: they found the miraculous power conferred on them was greater than they at

first imagined, or could collect from what Christ said to them, who only bid them heal the sick, (<42109>Luke 10:9), but when they came to make use of it they found they had a power of casting out devils; not in their own name and strength, but in the name, and through the power, and by the authority of Christ; and this had thrown them into an ecstasy of joy, and in a sort of a rapture: they express themselves as men astonished at the powers bestowed on them.

Ver. 18. *And he said unto them*, etc.] In order to abate their surprise, and reduce their transport of mind:

I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven; meaning, that this was no news to him, nor any surprising event, that devils should be cast out of men, and be in a state of subjection; for as he existed as the eternal Son of God before his incarnation, he was present, and saw him and his angels fall from heaven, from their first estate, their habitation of bliss and glory, down to hell, upon their sin and rebellion, as violently, swiftly, and suddenly, as the lightning falls from heaven to earth; and when he sent out these his disciples, as soon as they began their work, and all along in it, he, by his divine omniscience, saw the powers of darkness falling before their ministry and miracles; and he also foresaw how Satan hereafter, in a more conspicuous manner, would fall before the preaching of his Gospel by his apostles, not only in Judea, but especially among the Gentiles, where he, the prince of this world, would be cast down from his throne, and out of his kingdom; so that what they related, as it was what he knew before, it was but little in comparison of what he himself had seen long ago, and of what he foresaw would be; and even he would give them power to do other miraculous works besides these.

Ver. 19. *Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions*, etc.] Which may be literally understood, as in (<411618>Mark 16:18, <442803>Acts 28:3), or figuratively of the devil, and his principalities and powers, and all his emissaries, who, for their craft and cunning, and for their poisonous and hurtful nature and influence, may be compared to serpents and scorpions:

and over all the power of the enemy; of mankind in general, and of the seed of the woman, Christ and his people in particular, Christ has a power over all his power, his whole posse of devils, even the power of the air, of which he is prince; and he communicated this power to his disciples, even to the seventy: adding,

and nothing shall by any means, hurt you; not the most hurtful and poisonous animals, nor the most malicious persecutors on earth, nor all the devils in hell: as the former venomous creatures, when took up in their hands, should not hurt, their bodies; so the other, whatever they might be permitted to do with respect to their lives, and outward estate, should never hurt their souls, and the eternal welfare of them; nor even hinder the work of God prospering in their hands.

Ver. 20. *Notwithstanding in this rejoice not*, etc.] That their power was enlarged, or that they had, the same as before:

that the spirits, evil spirits, devils, are subject unto you; and come out of men at your command; rejoice not so much in this, or chiefly and principally; not but that it was matter of joy both with respect to the gift bestowed upon them, and the benefits men received by it, and the glory that was brought to Christ through it;

but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven; in the book of life, called the Lamb's book of life, written from the foundation of the world: in divine predestination to everlasting glory and happiness: which shows that God's election to eternal life is of particular persons, of persons by name; that it is sure, and certain, and immutable, being in opposition to what is written in earth, (Jeremiah 17:13), that the knowledge of this may be attained to, through the grace of God, the revelation of Christ, and the witnessings of his Spirit; and that this is matter of the greatest job, since it is the foundation and security of all the blessings of grace and glory.

Ver. 21. *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in Spirit*, etc.] In his human soul: his heart was filled with joy, not so much at the success of the seventy disciples, and the subjection of the devils to them, as in the view he had of the spread of the Gospel, and of the revelation and application of the truths of it to multitudes of mean and despicable persons, while it was rejected by the wise and learned; and particularly at the sovereign and distinguishing grace of God towards the elect, whose names are written in heaven; upon the mention of which his soul was so affected, that he broke out in, an exulting strain, into thanksgivings to God, in the following manner,

and said, I thank thee, O Father, etc.] In three ancient copies of Beza's, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions it is read, “in the Holy Spirit”; and the Persic version reads, “he spake, or confabulated with

the Holy Spirit": but the former reading and sense are best. (See Gill on "⁴⁰11²⁵Matthew 11:25-26")

Ver. 22. *All things are delivered to me of my Father*, etc.] In some ancient copies, and in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, before these words, are read, "and turning to his disciples he said, all things", etc.

and no man knoweth who the Son is; what is his name, his nature, his perfections and glory; and how he is the Son of God, his only begotten Son:

but the Father; who begat him, and whose own, and proper Son he is:

and who the Father is; what are his perfections, purposes, grace, greatness, mind, and will:

but the Son; who is of him, and lay in his bosom:

and he to whom the Son will reveal him: in himself, by his Spirit; (See Gill on "⁴⁰11²⁷Matthew 11:27").

Ver. 23. *And he turned him unto his disciples*, etc.] Both to the twelve apostles, and seventy disciples;

and said privately; or to them apart: the phrase "privately" is wanting in the Vulgate Latin version:

blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see; the person of the Messiah, his kingdom setting up in the world, miracles wrought by him, and Satan falling before him; (See Gill on "⁴⁰13¹⁶Matthew 13:16").

Ver. 24. *For I tell you that many prophets and kings*, etc.] As Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, who were prophets, as well as patriarchs, and David, Solomon, and others:

have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them, meaning himself, doctrines, and miracles; (See Gill on "⁴⁰13¹⁷Matthew 13:17").

Ver. 25. *And behold a certain lawyer stood up*, etc.] From his seat, having been hearing Christ preach, very likely, in some synagogue; when and where this was, is not certain. The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions call this man a Scribe; and a lawyer and a Scribe were the same, as appears from (⁴⁰22³⁵Matthew 22:35) compared with (⁴¹12²⁸Mark 12:28)

and tempted him; or tried him whether he understood the law, or whether he would say any thing contrary to it, and see if he could gain any advantage against him, and expose him, and get credit and applause to himself:

saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? the same question as was put by the young ruler in (<41017>Mark 10:17) for they were both of the same complexion, and upon the same foundation, seeking eternal life by their own works: (See Gill on "<40916>Matthew 19:16")

he said unto him; that is, Jesus, as all the Oriental versions express it.

Ver. 26. *What is written in the law?* etc.] Christ, with great propriety, sends him to the law, to see and observe what was written there, what are the terms and conditions of life, as fixed there; partly, because this man, by his office and character, was an interpreter of the law; and partly, because his question was, what shall I do?

how readest thou? in the law, every day; referring to the "Keriat Shema", the reading of the Shema, i.e. those words in (<050604>Deuteronomy 6:4), etc., "Hear, O Israel, etc." morning and evening [f346] as appears by his answer

Ver. 27. *And he answering said, thou shalt love the Lord thy God*, etc.] This was part of their phylacteries, which they recited every day; (See Gill on "<402237>Matthew 22:37-39") (See Gill on "<411228>Mark 12:28-29")

Ver. 28. *And he said unto him, thou hast answered right*, etc.] It is so written, and read; and this, as if he should say, is the sum and substance of the law, and what that requires men should do; wherefore,

do this, and thou shalt live; for the bare reading of it was not sufficient; though these men placed great confidence in reading this passage, or in reciting their phylacteries, of which this was a part, morning and night. Our Lord intimates by this, that, according to the tenor of the law, eternal life was not to be had without a complete and perfect performance of the duties of love to God, and to the neighbour, contained in these words; and this he suggests, in order to convict him of the impossibility of obtaining life by the works of the law, since such a performance cannot be made by man.

Ver. 29. *But he willing to justify himself*, etc.] Upon the foot of his own righteousness, and to make himself appear to be righteous to others; for

this the Jews thought themselves able to do, both to justify themselves before God by their own works, and make it out to men, that they were truly righteous persons; and it is a maxim with them, that

> "every one wmx[ta qydxmh that justifies himself, below (on earth), they justify him above (or in heaven) [f347]."

No wonder then that this man was desirous of justifying himself; and in order to which

he said, and who is my neighbour? he takes no notice of God, and love to him, as coming into the account of his justification, only of his neighbour; thinking when this question was answered, he should be very able to make it out, that he was not wanting neither in doing justice between himself and his neighbour, nor in showing kindness and beneficence to him; for by his neighbour he meant only an Israelite; one of the same nation and religion with him. So the Jews commonly interpret the word neighbour, either of one that is related to them in nature, wbwrq, that is, near akin to them in blood [f348]; or that professes the same religion as they do, and whom they call a neighbour in the law; and so they explain the passage now cited, "and thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself", hrwtb Æ[r awhç; "that is, who is thy neighbour in the law" [f349]: for they will not allow a Gentile, no, not even a proselyte of the gate to be a neighbour: for thus they say [f350],

> "an Israelite that slays a proselyte of the gate, or the stranger that dwells with him, is not slain for him by the sanhedrim; for it is said, (<022114>Exodus 21:14) but if a man comes presumptuously upon his neighbour to slay him, etc. and there is no need to say he is not slain for a Gentile."

And again [f351],

> "when a man sees one of them (the Gentiles) fall into the sea, he need not take him up; as it is said, (<031916>Leviticus 19:16) "neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour", Æ[r hz ˆyaw "but this is not thy neighbour.""

This notion Christ opposes and disproves in the following parable, which is an answer to the lawyer's question.

Ver. 30. *And Jesus answering, said*, etc.] The following things; which may either be considered as a narrative of matter of fact, or as a supposed case,

and delivered by way of parable; and in either way, though the general design of it is in answer to the lawyer's question, to show who may be called a neighbour; and that a man who is a stranger, and accounted an enemy, yet doing acts of mercy, kindness, and beneficence, to one in distress, ought to be accounted a neighbour: and has a much better title to such a character, than one of the same nation and religion, who takes no notice of a distressed object; yet it may be considered, as representing the sad estate and condition of mankind by the fall, and their recovery by Christ; whereby he shows himself to be their best neighbour, and truest friend:

a certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. The distance between these two places, the Jews say [f352], was ten “parsas”, that is, forty miles; for every “parsa” was four miles, and ten “parsas” are expressly said [f353] to be forty miles; which must be understood of the lesser miles, otherwise a parsa itself was but a mile: the Jews had two sorts of miles, the greater was 2000 cubits, the lesser 1000 cubits: the man is said to go down from the one to the other, because Jerusalem stood on high ground, and Jericho in a valley. This “certain man”, may represent mankind failing in Adam, from a state of happiness, into misery: human nature was originally in one man, but one man was created at first, and he had all human nature in him, and was the representative of mankind; he was made upright, but sinned, and fell from his uprightness, and all mankind in him: he may be said to go down, from Jerusalem, which signifies peace, and the vision of it; and was a city compact together, beautiful and well situated; where were the worship of God, and his Shekinah, or divine presence; to Jericho, a city accursed by Joshua, and a very wicked place in the days of Christ: since man by sinning against God, departed from his happy and peaceful state, from a state of peace and tranquillity with God, with the holy angels, and even with the beasts of the field; and also from peace and serenity in his own conscience, as well as from communion with God; and from his pure worship and service, to a sensual, earthly, worldly, wicked, and accursed state:

and fell among thieves: in the way to Jericho, was a place called Adomim, which signifies “bloods”, because much blood was shed there, by the frequent incursions of thieves and robbers, as Jerom observes [f354]; and was about four hours journey from Jericho [f355]: and by the man's falling among thieves, may be expressed mankind coming into the hands of sin and Satan, which are as robbers, that steal, kill, and destroy; since these have robbed

man of his honour, defaced the image of God in him, and deprived him of the glory of God, and were murderers of him from the beginning:

which stripped him of his raiment; as thieves and robbers are used to do; signifying the loss of original righteousness, by sin, which was a covering to man, in which he could appear before God; and was very ornamental to him, being pure and perfect in its kind, though only a creature's righteousness, and a created one; and which was natural and loseable, as the event has shown: hence man is become a naked creature, has nothing to cover himself with, but stands exposed to the law, justice, and wrath of God; is destitute of a righteousness, nor can he work out one that will stand him in any stead, or justify him before God:

and wounded him: which is the common usage of such men; and may set forth the morbid and diseased condition that sin has brought man into; being from the crown of the head, to the sole of the foot, full of wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores; and such as are in themselves mortal, and incurable by any, but the great physician of souls, the Lord Jesus Christ; and yet men are naturally insensible of them, and unconcerned about there:

and departed, leaving him half dead; or "near death", as the Arabic version renders it; which may be applied to death natural, spiritual, and eternal: to death natural, which comes by sin, seeing it is but one part, or half of the man that dies this death, namely, his body; and to a spiritual death, or the death of the soul, which is dead in trespasses and sins, whilst the body is alive; and to eternal death, to which men are exposed for sin, and are under the sentence of it, though not executed; and in each of these senses may be said to be "half dead": and which is no ways to the advantage of the doctrine of man's freewill, and the powers and abilities of; as if man was not in a spiritual sense so dead, that he can do nothing in a spiritual manner; but the phrase is used, to show the power of sin, and the malice of Satan, and yet that man is still recoverable by the grace of God.

Ver. 31. *And by chance there came down a certain priest that way*, etc.] Who had been at Jerusalem, to take his turn in the courses, and was now returning to Jericho, where the stationary men were, to which he belonged: for it is said [f356], that

> "the former prophets appointed twenty and four courses; and for every course there was a station at Jerusalem, of priests, and of Levites, and of Israelites; and when the time of the course came to

> go up, the priests and Levites went up to Jerusalem. The Rabbins teach, that there were twenty four courses in the land of Israel, and there were twelve at Jericho."

And which is elsewhere [f357] related thus;

> "the former prophets appointed four and twenty courses, and for every course there was a station at Jerusalem, of priests, of Levites, and of Israelites; the tradition is, that four and twenty thousand were the station from Jerusalem, and half a station from Jericho; though Jericho was able to furnish out a perfect station itself; but for the sake of dividing the glory to Jerusalem, it produced but half a station."

So that it is no wonder to hear of priests and Levites passing to and fro in this road. Nor was this a chance matter with respect to God, by whose providence all things are ordered, directed, and governed; nor any wonderful thing with respect to men, which fell out in an uncommon way, beyond expectation; the phrase only signifies, that so it came to pass:

and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side: when he saw him naked, and in such a bloody condition, he might take him for one really dead, and therefore crossed the way on purpose, lest he should any ways touch him, and be defiled by him, and so break the law, and incur the penalty of it, mentioned in (Numbers 19:16) or to shun so horrible a sight; or rather, through hardness of heart, and want of compassion.

Ver. 32. *And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place*, etc.] Where the poor man lay in this deplorable condition:

came and looked on him; and that was all; but neither spoke a comfortable word, nor administered any relief to him, or in the least assisted him:

and passed by on the other side; as the priest had done before him: by the "priest" may be meant, the moral law, and by the Levite the ceremonial law; and so by both, the whole law of Moses; and intimates, that no mercy is to be expected from thence: the law makes no abatement in its demands, nor any allowance for the fall and weakness of man: nor is it become milder under the Gospel dispensation; nor will it accept of an imperfect, though sincere obedience, in the room of a perfect one; and is deaf to all repentings, cries, and tears: no relief is to be had from thence, for a naked, wounded, and dead man; no robe of righteousness to cover a naked soul;

for by the law is the knowledge of sin, but not a justifying righteousness by the deeds of it: for the deeds of the law, performed by sinful men, are impure and imperfect; and were they pure and perfect, they would be unprofitable, and could not justify in the sight of God from former sins; for could they, they would establish boasting, and disannul the death of Christ, and frustrate the grace of God; and therefore righteousness cannot be by the law, that leaves a man as naked as it finds him: nor is there any healing by it to a wounded conscience; there is no pity from it, no justification by it, no pardon through it, no expiation or atonement of sin, by obedience to it; no word of comfort is spoken by it; so far from it, that when it comes with power, it opens the wounds of sin, fills the conscience with wrath and terror, destroys all the man's former hopes of happiness, and leaves him where it found him; without healing him itself, or pointing out a physician to him: much less can it give life to a dead sinner: spiritual life is not communicated by it, nor can eternal life, or any true hope of it, be attained through it; it is so far from it, that it is the killing letter, and the ministration of condemnation and death.

Ver. 33. *But a certain Samaritan*, etc.] By whom Christ may be meant; not that he was really so, for he was a Jew, a son of Abraham, and of David, according to the flesh, but he was so called by the Jews, (<4848>John 8:48) and was treated as such by them: and since it is the design of the parable in general to show, that he that does acts of kindness and mercy to persons in distress, is a neighbour in the truest sense, though he is not an Israelite, but even a Samaritan, who was, above all men, hated by the Jews; why may it not be thought to be the view of Christ in particular, to prove himself the best neighbour and friend of men, though he was traduced by the Jews as a Samaritan?

as he journeyed; which may design the assumption of human nature, which is sometimes expressed, by his coming from his Father, by his descending from heaven, and coming into this world; which phrases intend his incarnation, and carry in them the idea of journeying: for as his ascent to heaven is expressed by taking a journey, (<4025>Matthew 25:15) so may his descent from heaven; and while he was here on earth, he was as a stranger and pilgrim, as a sojourner and traveller:

came where he was; put himself in the legal place, and stead of his people, who fell with the rest of mankind in Adam; he became their surety from eternity, and clothed himself with their nature in time; he took upon him

their sins, as their representative, and fulfilled the righteousness of the law on their account, and bore the penalty of it in their room:

and when he saw him; Christ saw the elect before the fall, as they were chosen in him, and given unto him, in all the glory they were to be brought into; when he loved them, and his delight was with them: and when he came to redeem them, he saw them as follows; as lost, as weak and strengthless, as wicked, and as the worst of sinners, as ungodly, and enemies, as children of wrath by nature, as others; and he shed his blood for them, and washed them from their sins, that he might present them to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; just such an one he had seen them to be, in the glass of his Father's purposes, in his council and covenant; and he sees them in their blood, and in the impurity of their nature, when he comes to call them by his grace:

and he had compassion on him. The compassion of Christ on his elect, is to be seen in his eternal covenant engagements; for his tender mercies have been ever of old; and in his assumption of their nature, which was through his own, as well as the tender mercy of his Father; and in the redemption of them, which was in love and pity; and also in their regeneration and conversion, for the great things there, and then done for them by him, are owing to his compassion.

Ver. 34. *And went to him, and bound up his wounds*, etc.] Which sin had made; it being part of the work of Christ, to bind up the broken-hearted, to heal wounded sinners, and restore comforts to mourners; and which he does, by

pouring in oil and wine: by which, in general, may be designed, the blood of Christ, applied to the conscience of a wounded sinner; which cleanses from all sin, heals all the wounds and diseases of sin, cheers and revives fainting spirits, gives ease, peace, and pleasure, and is therefore exceeding valuable and precious: and in particular by “oil” may be meant, the grace of the Spirit of God; compared unto it, for its sweet smell, its cheering and refreshing virtue and efficacy, and its cooling, softening, supplying, and healing nature: and by “wine”, the doctrines of the Gospel; such as free justification by Christ's righteousness, and pardon through his blood; which when applied to distressed minds, cause joy and gladness, and them to forget their sorrow, and remember their misery no more: and the pouring in of these, may denote the plentiful effusion of Christ's blood, and the riches of his grace in the application of it; and the freeness and generousness of

this action, which is his own: for man cannot do it. It was usual with the Jews, to mix oil and wine together, for the healing of wounds: hence those rules and traditions [f358];

> "they anoint a linen cloth for a sick man on the sabbath; when? when they mingle the oil and the wine on the sabbath eve, but if they do not mingle it on the sabbath eve, it is forbidden; it is a tradition, says R. Simeon ben Eleazer, R. Meir pronounced it lawful, ^mçw ^yy Pwrjl to mingle wine and oil, and to anoint the sick on the sabbath."

So oil and wine were mingled together, and used to heal the sore occasioned by circumcision [f359]

and set him on his own beast; by which may be meant, either the red horse of Christ's humanity, (<380108>Zechariah 1:8) to which he has united all his people; and in which he has bore their persons, and has represented them, and still bears them on his heart: or the white horse of the Gospel, (<660602>Revelation 6:2) compared to a horse for its strength, swiftness, and usefulness in battle; and to a "white" one, for the purity of its doctrines, the joy and peace it brings, and the victory it obtains: and this is Christ's own, and on which he himself rides, and shows his glory, and goes forth conquering and to conquer: and on which he sets his people, and they are carried out of the reach of men and devils to destroy them, and are caused to ride on the high places of the earth:

and brought him to an inn; a church of Christ, where the Gospel guides, directs, and carries souls: saints are not at home in their proper city and country, they are travellers here, and need refreshment by the way; and a church of Christ is as an inn, for the entertainment of such: it is large, and has room enough for as many as come to it; and is well stored with provisions of all sorts, signified by bread, and milk, and wine, a feast of fat things, a furnished table, Zion's provisions, the goodness and fatness of God's house; and has rivers of pleasure, and very good lodgings, sure dwellings, and quiet habitations; all which is agreeable to weary travellers: and hither Christ brings his people, whom he saves and calls; it is his will that they should be in a church state, and it is his own act to bring them there, and it is their great privilege to be thither brought:

and took care of him; clothed him with his righteousness, fed him with the choicest of provisions, gave him reviving cordials of love, refreshing

promises, exceeding great and precious ones; and larger supplies of grace, with protection and preservation from all evils.

Ver. 35. *And on the morrow when he departed*, etc.] Having taken care of him all night, and put him into a comfortable way, leaves him, though in good hands; as Christ does his people, to learn to live by faith upon him:

and he took out two peace; two Roman denarii, or pence; which amount to about fifteen pence of our money, and were equal to the half shekel, paid for the redemption of an Israelite: by which may be meant, not the law and Gospel; for though these both bear the image and superscription of God, and are his current coin, and are both delivered by Christ, and to be regarded and dispensed by the ministers of the word; yet they are not of equal value and use, as these two pence seem to be: wherefore, rather the two Testaments, Old ann New, may be designed, since they are both inspired by God, and dictated by the same Spirit, and bear the same impress; and are alike, and exactly agree, as two pence do; and are given to the ministers of the Gospel to handle, and make use of for the good of souls: unless the two ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper, should rather be thought to be intended: these bear the same stamp and authority, and are both jointly necessary to communion, and church order; and are given by Christ to his ministers, to be administered by them, for the good of his church; and are similar, as two breasts are, they being both breasts of consolation, and agree in setting forth the sufferings and death of Christ: or rather, the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, to qualify men for the work of the ministry; which both come from the selfsame Spirit of God, and are jointly necessary to fit a man for such service; and are given for the benefit and advantage of the Lord's people, and in an eminent manner by Christ, on his departure from hence, when he ascended on high, and received gifts for men, and gave them to them:

and gave them to the host; or the keeper and master of the inn; by whom are meant, the ministers of the Gospel; who are governors, in the church, the masters of that spiritual inn; who have the provisions of God's house under their care, and whose business it is to invite travellers in, and to dress their food for them, and set it before them, and bid them welcome:

and said unto him, take care of him: which is the work of Christ's ministers to do, by feeding souls with the words of faith and sound doctrine; by ministering the Gospel to them in a faithful manner; and by a constant administration of the ordinances of it; and by keeping a diligent watch over

them, both with respect to principles and practice; and by speaking a word in season to them:

and whatsoever thou spendest more: faithful ministers spend much, and are at great expense in taking care of the souls of men; in fervent and frequent prayer to God; in diligent searching the Scriptures; in the laborious ministry of the word and ordinances; and in the constant exercise and improvement of their spiritual gifts; and in the loss of reputation and credit, and of health, and sometimes of life itself:

when I come again, I will repay thee: Christ will certainly come again a second time, to judge both quick and dead; and then he will recompense his ministers, for all their toil and labour, care and expense; he will then bid them, as good and faithful servants, enter into the joy of their Lord; and when they shall every one receive the reward of his own work, in a way of grace, and shall shine as the stars in the firmament, for ever and ever.

Ver. 36. *Which now of these three*, etc.] The priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan,

thinkest thou, was neighbour to him that fell among the thieves? the priest and Levite that passed by, and took no notice of him, and gave him no relief, neither by words nor actions; or the Samaritan, that did all the above kind and generous things to him?

Ver. 37. *And he said, he that showed mercy to him*, etc.] Meaning the Samaritan; which he was obliged to declare, though of another country and religion, and accounted as an enemy; yet the case was so plain, as put by Christ, that he could not with any honour or conscience, say otherwise:

then said Jesus unto him, go and do thou likewise; such like acts of beneficence and kindness, though to a person of a different nation and religion, and though even an enemy; and by so doing, thou wilt not only appear to be a good neighbour thyself, but to love thy neighbour as thyself.

Ver. 38. *Now it came to pass as they went*, etc.] As Christ and his disciples went from Jerusalem, having been at the feast of tabernacles, (<4B07 02>John 7:2,10) or at the feast of dedication, (<4B10 22>John 10:22) to some other parts of Judea:

that he entered into a certain village; called Bethany, which was about fifteen furlongs, or two miles from Jerusalem, (<4B11 01>John 11:1,18)

and a certain woman named Martha. This is a common name with the Jews; hence we read of Samuel bar Martha [f360], and of Abba bar Martha [f361], and of Isaac bar Martha [f362]; and of Martha, the daughter of Baithus [f363], who is said to be a rich widow; and this Martha here, is thought by Grotins to be a widow also, with whom her brother Lazarus, and sister Mary lived: though sometimes, this name was given to men; so we read of Martha, [f364] the uncle of Rab, who had five brethren; and the same writer observes [f365], that it is not known whether Martha is, a man or a woman, but this is determined here:

received him into her house; in a very kind and courteous manner, she being mistress of it; and having known Christ before, or at least had heard much of him, and believed in him, as the true Messiah.

Ver. 39. *And she had a sister called Mary*, etc.] Which also was a common name with the Jews, and is the same with Miriam; so we read of Mary, the daughter of Nicodemon, the same perhaps with Nicodemus; and the same person that is before called Martha, the daughter of Baithus, is sometimes called Mary, the daughter of Baithus [f366], though these two names are certainly distinct:

which also sat at Jesus' feet; was a disciple of his, as well as Martha; for it was usual for disciples, or the scholars of the wise men, to sit at the feet of their masters, to which the allusion is in (<053303>Deuteronomy 33:3), (See Gill on "<442203>Acts 22:3") The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Coptic versions, read "at the Lord's feet": so Beza's ancient copy, and one of Stephens's; and the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, "at our Lord's feet". The phrase is expressive of her great affection for Christ, her humble deportment, and close attention:

and heard his word; or discourse; for as soon as he entered into the house, he began to preach to those that were in it, and that came along with him, improving every opportunity for the good of souls; and Mary heard him with great eagerness and diligence, affection, pleasure, and profit.

Ver. 40. *But Martha was cumbered about much serving*, etc.] "Or was drawn off", from hearing the word, from attending on Christ; being taken up in providing for him, and those that came with him; in dressing food, or in ordering her servants, how she would have every thing done, and in overlooking them, that every thing was done in proper order; so that she had a great deal of business upon her head and hands, which distracted her

thoughts, or took them off of divine things, and put her in great hurry and concern. The Ethiopic version renders it, “Martha laboured in preparing many things for him”; making a large and sumptuous entertainment: and the Persic version, which is rather a comment than a translation, renders it, “Martha was busied in preparing food, and making a feast”: sparing no cost nor pains, thinking nothing too good, nor too grand, for such a guest she had in her house:

and she came to him and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? she came to him; that is, to Jesus, as the Persic version expresses it: she came out of the room where she was getting ready the entertainment, into the room where Christ was preaching; and, as the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “she stood and said”: she did not sit down at his feet, as Mary did, to hear his word, but stood as about to go away again, after she had said what she came about: she did not think fit to speak to Mary herself, though perhaps she might do that first; who, showing an unwillingness to go with her, she therefore applies to Christ, as believing that he would, with her, look upon it as a very reasonable thing that she should take her part with her; and that a word from him would go a great way with her sister. And she seems to speak, not only by way of complaint of Mary, who had left her to prepare and serve up this entertainment alone; but even of Christ himself, in some sort, as if he had not showed that care and concern in this matter, which she thought was necessary. However, she was willing to have his sense of her sister's conduct, and hoped, and even doubted not, but that he would be of the same mind with herself:

bid her therefore that she help me; that she join, assist, and put an helping hand in this service; speak but a word to her, give her orders, and she will observe and obey.

Ver. 41. *And Jesus answered and said unto her*, etc.] Calling her by her name, and repeating it, Martha, Martha, which expresses great intimacy and friendship, and much earnestness, and, as it were, pitying her present situation and circumstances:

thou art careful and troubled about many things; intimating, that she was over anxious, and too solicitous, and more thoughtful and careful than she need be: he did not require such preparations for him, and so much attendance; she gave herself an unnecessary trouble in providing so many things for his entertainment, when less would have sufficed; so that instead

of joining with her in her request, he reproves her for her over anxious care and solicitude, to have a nice and plentiful feast. The Persic version gives a sense quite contrary to the design of the text, rendering the words thus, “thou art adorned in all things, and hast the preference above many women”.

Ver. 42. *But one thing is needful*, etc.] Meaning not that one dish of meat was sufficient, and there was no need of any more, in opposition to Martha's carefulness in preparing many; for this is too low a sense of the words; which yet some ancient writers have given into: but rather the hearing of the word, the Gospel of Christ, which Mary was engaged in; and which, ordinarily speaking, is necessary to the knowledge of Christ, and salvation by him, and to faith in him, (^[45]Romans 10:14,17) not that this is the only needful thing; nor does Christ say there is but one thing needful, but that there is one thing needful; for there are other things that are also needful, and useful, as meditation and prayer, and attendance on, and submission to the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper, and all the duties of religion: but Christ's meaning seems plainly to be, that Mary hearing the word from his mouth, and at his feet, was one necessary thing, in opposition to Martha's many unnecessary ones, about which she was cumbered:

and Mary hath chosen that good part; or “the good part”, or “portion”; Christ, the sum and substance of the word she heard, and eternal life and salvation by him. God himself is said to be the portion of his people, and a good one he is, and a portion that lasts for ever; and so is Christ; (see ^[19]Psalm 73:26 ^[20]Lamentations 3:24) where the Septuagint use the same word as here. The heavenly inheritance also, eternal glory and happiness, is the saints' portion; it is called in (^[51]Colossians 1:12) the part, or portion of the inheritance with the saints in light. The word answers to the Hebrew word, qlj; as in that saying of the Misnic doctors [f367], ``all Israel have, qlj, “a part”, or “portion” in the world to come.”

All the Oriental versions add, “for herself”, and this choice she made, not from the natural power of her own freewill, but as directed, influenced, and assisted by the Spirit and grace of God, and in consequence of God's eternal choice of her unto salvation by Jesus Christ: and the part she chose is, that

which shall not be taken away from her; by men or devils: faith which comes by hearing of the word, and so every other grace of the Spirit is what can never be lost; nor an interest in God, as a covenant God, or in Christ as a Saviour, nor a right and title to, nor meetness for eternal life, nor that itself, can be taken away, or the believer ever be deprived thereof.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 11

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass that as he was praying*, etc.] The following directions concerning prayer, though they agree with those in (<4069>Matthew 6:9) etc. yet were delivered at another time, and in another place, and upon another occasion: Christ was then in Galilee, now in Judea: he gave the former directions unasked for, these at the request of one of his disciples; the other were given as he was preaching, these immediately after he had been praying; as soon as he had done a work he was often employed in, as man and mediator, on account of himself, his disciples, cause, and interest: and this was done

in a certain place; perhaps in the Mount of Olives, which was not far from Bethany, where we hear of him last, since this was a place where he used to abide in the night, and pray, (<4221>Luke 21:37). The Arabic version reads, “in a desert place”; and after he had been at Bethany, he did go to a country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, (<4311>John 11:54)

when he ceased; from praying; when he had concluded his prayer, and finished all his petitions, and was off of his knees:

one of his disciples; perhaps one of the seventy disciples who had not heard the summary of prayer, and the directions about it before given on the mount, (<4069>Matthew 6:9) The Persic version reads, “his disciples”: as if they all united in the request:

and said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples, who, as Tertullian says [f368], brought in a new order and method of praying, and gave his disciples some instructions and directions concerning it, much better than what the Jews in common had: and this disciple looking upon his Lord and master as much better qualified to give directions in this important affair than even John himself was, requests of him that he would; and what might put him upon it at this time seems to be, his observing that Christ had now been at prayer.

Ver. 2. *And he said unto them*, etc.] That is Jesus, as the Syriac and Persic versions express, who directed his speech to all the disciples; for though but one of them addressed him, it was in the name of the rest: and besides, the instructions Christ was about to give concerned them all, even those that heard them before, and those that had not:

when ye pray, say, our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth; the last petition is left out in the Vulgate Latin; (see Gill on "<4069>Matthew 6:9"), (see Gill on "<4010>Matthew 6:10").

Ver. 3. *Give us day by day our daily bread*.] Or "for the day"; or "every day", as the Syriac version renders it; (see Gill on "<4011>Matthew 6:11")

Ver. 4. *And forgive us our sins*, etc.] Beza's most ancient copy reads "debts", as in (see Gill on "<4012>Matthew 6:12"); and which best agrees with the phrase "indebted", after mentioned:

for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; (see Gill on "<4012>Matthew 6:12"), (see Gill on "<4013>Matthew 6:13"). The doxology there used, and the word "Amen", are here omitted. Some of the petitions in this prayer are not delivered in the very same words as they are in Matthew. The three first petitions are word for word the same; for though the third petition is different in our translation, it is the same in the original. The fourth and fifth vary: in Matthew the fourth is, "give us this day our daily bread"; here in Luke, "give us day by day our daily bread." The fifth in Matthew is, "and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors"; here, "and forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us". And these verbal variations, though the sense is the same, together with the omission of the doxology, and the word "Amen", show, that this prayer was not designed to be an exact form, and to be so used, but as a directory of prayer. I have, in my notes (see Gill on "<4069>Matthew 6:9") etc. shown the agreement there is between the petitions in this prayer, and some that were made use of among the Jews; and have supposed that our Lord took notice of such petitions, which the good people among the Jews frequently used; and which he approved of, and singled out, and put them into the order and method in which they stand, with some alterations for the better, to be a directory to his disciples and followers. Which to suppose, I apprehend, does not at all countenance the making and using stinted forms of prayer; since the petitions used by good men among the Jews, were not used as

forms of prayer, but what they were led unto by the Spirit of God from common and constant experience to make use of; just as we may observe now, that good people in different parts, who use no form of prayer, nor have ever heard one another pray, and yet make use of the same petitions, and almost, if not altogether, in the selfsame words, their wants, necessities, cases, and circumstances being the same; and these frequently returning, oblige to a repeated use of them, in the same words, or near unto them. And though forms of prayer might not be in use among the Jews in the times of Christ, yet it is easy to account for it, how Christ came to be acquainted with the petitions in general use with good men; since not only he is God omniscient, and knows all the prayers of his people, both in public and private; but, as man, must know what were used, by his attendance on public worship, and by the private communion he had with the saints and children of God. It must indeed be owned, that forms of prayer very early obtained among the Jews; and if not in Christ's time, yet in the times of his apostles. There is frequent mention [f369] of the eighteen prayers in the times of Gamaliel, the master of the Apostle Paul; and of a nineteenth composed by one of his disciples [f370], Samuel the little, who is thought, by some, to be Saul himself, whilst he was a scholar of his; and which is directed against the heretics, or Christians, as they were called by the Jews; and this easily accounts for, how the petitions of the ancient good men among the Jews came to be put with others into their forms of prayer, where we now find them. For that they should take these petitions from this directory of Christ's, is not reasonable to suppose, considering their implacable enmity against him. Moreover, supposing, but not granting, that these petitions which our Lord took, and put into this order, for the use and instruction of his disciples, had been used by good men as forms of prayer, it will not justify the use of forms by any authority of Christ, or as being agreeably to his will; since it is certain, that however these petitions were used by good men before, our Lord never designed they should be used as an exact, precise form of prayer by his disciples; seeing there are several variations in them as here delivered, from what they are as they stand in Matthew; whereas, had they been intended as a stinted form, they would have been expressed in the selfsame words: and moreover, to approve of here and there a petition, which for their matter are excellently good, and to approve of them all together, as a form, are two different things: to which may be added, that though there is an agreement between the petitions, as used by the Jews, and those our Lord

directs to; yet there are some variations and alterations much for the better, which destroy the form of them.

Ver. 5. *And he said unto them, which of you shall have a friend*, etc.] A neighbour, or acquaintance:

and shall go unto him at midnight; which may seem a very unseasonable time, and which nothing but real distress, not knowing what otherwise to do, would put a man upon:

and say unto him, friend, lend me three loaves: it was usual of the Jews to borrow bread of one another, and certain rules are laid down, when, and on what condition, this is to be done; as for instance, on a sabbath day [f371],

> "a man may ask of his friend vessels of wine, and vessels of oil, only he must not say, lend me: and so a woman, twrkk htrybjm, "bread of her friend"."

Again [f372],

> "so said Hillell, let not a woman lend htrbjl rkk "bread to her friend", till she has fixed the price; lest wheat should be dearer, and they should be found coming into the practice of usury."

For what was lent, could not be demanded again under thirty days [f373].

Ver. 6. *For a friend of mine in his journey*, etc.] Or "out of the way"; having lost his way, being benighted; and has rambled about for some time, and at length,

is come to me; for lodging and entertainment:

and I have nothing to set before him; to refresh him with, after such a fatigue, before he goes to bed, which was very requisite and proper.

Ver. 7. *And he from within shall answer and say*, etc.] The friend within doors, shall reply to him that is without at his door, in the street:

trouble me not; by knocking at the door, and importuning to rise and lend loaves; whereby his rest would be disturbed, and trouble given him;

the door is now shut; being very late at night, and which could not be opened without noise and inconvenience:

and my children are with me in bed: sleeping, as the Persic version adds; there were none, children, or servants up, to let him in:

I cannot rise; without disturbing them:

and give thee; the loaves desired.

Ver. 8. *I say unto you*, etc.] This is the accommodation of the parable; to these words are premised, in the Vulgate Latin version, the following, "if he continue knocking":

though he will not rise and give him, because he is a friend; though mere friendship will not influence and engage him to rise from his bed, at such an unseasonable time, and fulfil the request of his friend;

yet because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth: as he asks for, or more, if necessary: the design of this parable, is the same with that of the widow and the unjust judge, in (Luke 18:1-6) which is to show the force of importunity, where friendship, as here, and the fear of God, and regard of men, which were wanting there, have no influence; and so to encourage to constancy and perseverance in prayer, with earnestness; taking no denial at the hand of God, but still continuing to make pressing instances.

Ver. 9. *And I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you*, etc.] This is said by Christ, to encourage to prayer, and importunity in it; that if any one asks of God, in the name of Christ, and in faith, whether it be bread for the body, or food for the soul; or any blessing whatever, whether temporal or spiritual, it shall be given; not according to their deserts, but according to the riches of the grace of God; who is rich unto all that call upon him, in sincerity and truth:

seek, and ye shall find: whether it be Christ, the pearl of great price, or God in Christ; or particularly, pardoning grace and mercy through Christ, or the knowledge of divine things; and both grace here, and glory hereafter, as men seek for hidden treasure; such shall not lose their labour, but shall enjoy all these valuable things, and whatever they are by prayer, and in the use of other means, seeking after:

knock, and it shall be opened to you; the door of mercy with God; the door of fellowship with Christ; the door of the Gospel, and the mysteries of it and of the Gospel dispensation and church state, into which is admission,

to all that seek; and the door of heaven, into which there is entrance by the blood of Jesus: the several phrases denote prayer, the continuance of it, and importunity in it; (see Gill on "Matthew 7:7")

Ver. 10. *For every one that asketh receiveth*, etc.] Some indeed ask and receive not, because they ask amiss, (James 4:3) who either apply to a wrong person, or ask in a wrong manner, or from wrong principles, or with wrong ends in view: but when a man is right in the object of prayer, and in the matter and manner of prayer, and in the end he proposes to himself, let him be what he will, of whatsoever nation, or ever mean a person, he has the petitions which he asks, either immediately, or, at least, he may be assured he shall have them in God's due time:

and he that seeketh findeth; whoever not only prays, but makes use of means, as attendance on other ordinances, and is diligent in the use of them, sooner or later finds his account herein, and what his soul seeks for:

and to him that knocketh it shall be opened; not only who prays heartily, and seeks diligently, but who is importunate, and will have no denial; continues knocking; though there may be some time a seeming delay, yet the door will not always be shut to him; after much knocking it will be opened; (see Gill on "Matthew 7:8")

Ver. 11. *If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father*, etc.] Our Lord illustrates and confirms what he had said before by an instance common among men: the relation between a father and a son is natural, and it is very near; and it is usual for a son, when hungry, and at the proper times of meals, to ask bread of his father: and when he does,

will he give him a stone? should he do so, he would show that his heart was as hard, or harder than the stone he gives:

or if he ask a fish, will he, for a fish, give him a serpent? And endeavour to deceive him by the likeness of the one to the other, especially some sort of fish, which would poison or sting him, but not refresh and nourish him: such inhuman brutish parents are not surely to be found; (see Gill on "Matthew 7:9"), (see Gill on "Matthew 7:10").

Ver. 12. *Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion* etc.] Of which there are three sorts; some are terrestrial, or land scorpions, scorpions of the earth, a kind of serpents, very venomous and mischievous, to whom the wicked Jews are compared, (Ezekiel 2:6) and the locusts

in (Revelation 9:3,5) others are airy, or flying scorpions, a sort of fowl; and others are sea scorpions; of the fish kind: it is not easy to say which of them is here meant. There is an herb which is called ^ynb r q [[f374], "the scorpion": it leaves are like unto a scorpion, as the Jewish commentators say [f375]. This is observed with the same view as the former. By it may be meant here, either the fish that is so called, since a fish is mentioned before; or rather, the land scorpion, which is of the serpent kind; this brings forth little worms, in the form of eggs, as [f376] Pliny says: and it is said, that a scorpion put into an empty eggshell, has been used to be given to persons, whose death has been desired; which it bursting from, at once strikes and kills: but what father would do so to a child!

Ver. 13. *If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children*, etc.] (see Gill on "Matthew 7:11").

How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? instead of the Holy Spirit here, the Vulgate Latin version reads, "good Spirit", and so two copies of Beza's; and the Ethiopic version, "the good gift of the Holy Spirit"; and doubtless intends the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, in distinction from, and as preferable to the good things given by earthly parents, to their children.

Ver. 14. *And he was casting out a devil*, etc.] At a certain time, either the same that is recorded in (Matthew 9:32) or in (Matthew 12:22) for both of them were attended with the same effect upon the people, and with the same calumny of the Pharisees, mentioned here:

and it was dumb. The Ethiopic version reads, "deaf and dumb"; that is, the devil, which possessed the man, made him both deaf and dumb; if the same as in (Matthew 12:22) he was blind, as well as dumb:

and it came to pass, when the devil was gone out; of the man possessed by him, by the command of Christ:

the dumb spake; as other men did, and as he had done before; the cause being removed, the effect ceased:

and the people wondered; at the power of Christ, and concluded that he must be the Messiah, the son of David.

Ver. 15. *But some of them said*, etc.] The Pharisees, (Matthew 9:34) (Matthew 12:24) who could not bear that he should be thought to be the Messiah, and therefore put an ill construction on the miracle:

he casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of devils; in several copies he is called Beelzebul, and in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; which last adds these words, "and he answered and said, how can Satan cast out Satan?" (see Gill on "Matthew 12:20").

Ver. 16. *And others tempting him*, etc.] Others of the Scribes and Pharisees, or Sadducees: *sought of him a sign from heaven*; (see Gill on "Matthew 12:38"), (see Gill on "Matthew 16:1").

Ver. 17. *But he knowing their thoughts*, etc.] Being God omniscient,

said unto them; the following parables, as they are called in (Mark 3:23) or proverbial expressions, very pertinent to the purpose, and sufficient to set aside the base calumnies of the Pharisees:

every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation; in process of time, division will end in destruction; and as it does in the kingdoms of the world, of which there have been fatal instances, so it would in the kingdom of Satan, was there in it a division, which the calumny of the Pharisees supposes:

and an house divided against an house, falleth. The Persic version renders it, "an house divided from the foundation, falls"; the sense is, a family, in which one part is opposed to the other, issues in the ruin of both; (see Gill on "Matthew 12:25"), (see Gill on "Mark 3:24"), (see Gill on "Mark 3:25").

Ver. 18. *And if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand*? etc.] This is the accommodation of the above parables, or proverbial sentences; suggesting, that Satan must be against himself, if what the Pharisees said was true; and consequently, his kingdom and government, could not long subsist:

because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub; which is all one as to say, that Satan is divided against himself, which is not reasonable to suppose; (see Gill on "Matthew 12:26") and (see Gill on "Mark 3:26").

Ver. 19. *And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils*, etc.] Which is what the Pharisees charged him with; in the Greek copies, and so in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions it is read, "by Beelzebul", and so in the preceding verses; (see Gill on "Matthew 10:25")

By whom do your sons cast them out? by whose help? or in whose name? for the Jews pretended to cast out devils, and to heal those that were possessed with them; which they did sometimes, by making use of the names of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and sometimes of the name of Solomon: Josephus [f377] speaks of many in his time, who had this power of healing; and he himself saw one Eleazar, in the presence of Vespasian, his children, officers, and soldiers, cure many that were possessed of devils: and his method was, by putting a ring to the nose of the possessed, under the seal of which, was a root directed to by Solomon, and thereby brought out the unclean spirit; and as soon as the man was healed, he adjured the devil never to return more; at which time he made mention of the name of Solomon, and rehearsed the enchantments written by him: the said Eleazar, to give a specimen of the efficacy of his art, set a cup full of water upon the ground, and commanded the devil when he went out of the man, to turn it over, as a sign that he had left the man, and the devil immediately obeyed his order: now if these sons of theirs cast out devils, which they would not say were done by the help of the devil, or in his name, why should they ascribe the ejection of devils by Christ, to a diabolical assistance?

therefore shall they be your judges; or "judges against you", as the Arabic version; or "shall reprove you", as the Ethiopic; convict and condemn you; (see Gill on "Matthew 12:27")

Ver. 20. *But if I with the, finger of God*, etc.] The power of God, referring to (Exodus 8:19) and so the Cabalistic Jews [f378] explain it,

> "the finger is one of the five in the hand, and is that finger which works by the power of Elohim;"

it is the same with the Spirit of God; (see Gill on "Matthew 12:28") which is often called the hand of the Lord, (Ezekiel 1:3 3:22 37:1 40:1).

Ver. 21. *When a strong man armed*, etc.] By the strong man, is meant the devil; (see Gill on "Matthew 12:29") and who may be said to be "armed", both with his own temptations, which are as fiery darts, and which are thrown by him thick and fast, suddenly and swiftly, privily, and

with great art and cunning, and with great strength, and are very injurious; and also with the sins and lusts of men, which are armour of unrighteousness, and which Satan turns upon them, and makes use of against them, to their great detriment; and who

keepeth his palace: which is the corrupt heart of an unregenerate man, where he dwells as a king, has his throne, keeps his court, and has his courtiers, and attendants, the lusts of the flesh, and the desires of the will, and the carnal affections; and which, as filthy a palace as it is, is perfectly agreeable to his nature; and this is kept by a guard of devils, and worldly lusts, till its strong holds are demolished by the Gospel, and Christ the King of glory enters in; till such time,

his goods are in peace: there is no concern in such an heart about sin, no uneasiness on that account, no sense of danger, nor inquiry after salvation; no dread upon the mind at the curses of the law, nor fears of hell, and damnation; but such a man lives in entire security, crying Peace, Peace, to himself.

Ver. 22. *But when a stronger than he*, etc.] By whom is meant Christ, who is the mighty God, the Almighty; and appears to be so, in the creation of all things, in upholding them by the word of his power, in the government of the world, and the works of providence, in the redemption of his people from sin, Satan, and the law, and in the conversion of them, by the efficacy of his grace, and in the preservation of them by his power; and who is manifestly stronger than Satan; not only by these instances, but by what follows:

shall come upon him; as he did in person, when he dispossessed him from the bodies of men; and does by his Spirit in conversion, when he enters into his palace, the heart of man, binds him, and looses men from him, and turns them from the power of Satan, to God, and sets up a throne of grace, where he himself dwells and reigns: so he comes upon him as an adversary, and often at an unawares; and always with great power and strength, and succeeds: Satan came upon Christ in the wilderness, in the garden, and on the cross, and attacked him, but without success; whence it is clear, that he is stronger than he:

and overcame him; he overcame him in the wilderness, and obliged him to retreat; and on the cross, when he obtained a complete victory over him, destroyed him, his principalities and powers, and all his works, and led him

captive; and in conversion, so as to deliver his people from him, that were led captive by him, as that he can never regain his dominion over them more; and though he is suffered to tempt them; he cannot destroy them; and the saints shall overcome him at last, and have him bruised under their feet: and at the same time,

he taketh from him all his armour, wherein he trusted; as his temptations, which he himself repelled in the wilderness, and wrenched out of his hands, and made them useless, and he gives power to his people to resist them, and succours them under them, and delivers them out of them; and also the sins of men, which he took away on the cross, when he bore them, and the punishment of them there: and in conversion, he greatly weakens the power of sin, and takes away the dominion of it; and though the being of it is not removed, hence Satan has something to work upon, yet its power is so far gone, that neither that nor Satan, can destroy such who are truly called by the grace of God:

and divideth his spoils: he spoils his house, the heart of man, from being any longer a palace for him, and his goods, his mind and conscience, which are enlightened and awakened, and purged: or by his spoils are meant, the souls of men; which are taken as a prey out of his hands, and become trophies of victorious grace.

Ver. 23. *He that is not with me, is against me*, etc.] Our Lord does not mean one, that was not personally with him; for there might be some, and doubtless were many, who were not in person with him, and yet were not against him, but friends to him, and to his interest; nor one that was not a professed disciple of his, or not a follower of him, and his apostles; for there were some who called themselves John's disciples, and did not attend on Christ, and yet were not against him, but cast out devils in his name; and such an one perhaps was he, that is made mention of in (<4809B>Mark 9:38-40) on occasion of whom, Christ there says some words, which may seem at first view, not so well to accord with these: but such are intended, who acted a neutral part between him and the Pharisees; who could bear to hear them accuse him of casting out devils by the prince of devils, and be easy at it: and such persons are condemned, who can hear all manner of blasphemy against the deity, sonship, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and express no indignation at it; these, as they cannot be said to be with Christ, may be truly ranked among those that are against him:

and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth; whoever did not encourage persons to attend on the ministry of Christ, which was confirmed by such miracles the Pharisees spoke so reproachfully and contemptuously of, were reckoned by Christ as such, who were the means of hindering persons gathering unto him; as well as those who menaced and excommunicated them for so doing: the allusion is either to the gathering of the sheep into the fold, and the scattering of them by the wolf; or to the gathering of the wheat, and binding it in sheaves, and bringing it home in harvest; and to the scattering of the wheat loose in the field, whereby it is lost, and comes to nothing; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:30").

Ver. 24. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man*, etc.] That is, the devil, who is in, and works in the children of disobedience, whether under a profession of religion or not; whose hearts are unclean like himself, wherefore there he delights to dwell; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "the evil demon": who may be said to go out of a man in appearance, when he outwardly reforms and takes up a profession of religion.

He walketh through dry places; or "a desert", as the Ethiopic version; to which the Gentile world is sometimes compared in the Old Testament (<23>Isaiah 35:1, 41:18,19, 42:11) whither Satan might go, being disturbed in Judea, through the many dispossessions by Christ; or rather leaving for a while the Scribes and Pharisees, who outwardly appeared righteous before men, he went to the Gentiles;

seeking rest, and finding none; being also made uneasy among them, through the preaching of the Gospel, which was sent unto them after Christ's resurrection; and not being able to keep his place in the hearts of men, nor do the mischief he was desirous of.

He saith, I will return unto my house, whence I came out; to the Jews again, who were blinded and filled with rage and enmity to the Gospel by him, and whom he instigated to persecute the apostles of Christ, and preachers of the word, wherever they came; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:43") and (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:44").

Ver. 25. *And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished*.] In Matthew it is also said to be "empty"; and so it is read here in the Arabic version; and in the Ethiopic version, "empty of men": but rather the sense is, that he found it empty of all goodness, notwithstanding all the sweeping and garnish of an outward reformation. The Persic version renders it,

“heated and prepared”; heated with wrath and fury against Christ, and his Gospel, and so was prepared and fitted to be a proper habitation for Satan; and in such a case as this was the Jewish nation from the time of Christ's death to the destruction of Jerusalem; (see Gill on “[4024]Matthew 12:44”)

Ver. 26. *Then goeth he and taketh to him seven other spirits*, etc.] Or “demons”, as the Ethiopic version, whom he took to him as his consorts and companions, as the same version calls them.

More wicked than himself; for it seems there are degrees of wickedness among the devils, as well as among men:

and they enter and dwell there; the unclean spirit, and the other seven: so seven devils were in Mary Magdalene, and a legion in another man; and indeed the evil heart of man is an habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit: here it may chiefly design the place and power which the devil had among the Jews before their destruction:

and the last state of that man is worse than the first; the Persic version adds, “and more miserable”; as was the case of the Jews, to which this parable refers; as appears by what is subjoined in Matthew, which manifestly applies it to them,

even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation; (see Gill on “[4025]Matthew 12:45”).

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass as he spoke these things*, etc.] That is, as Christ spoke, or “had finished these sayings”, as the Persic version expresses it, before related, in vindication of himself and his miracles, from the blasphemy of the Scribes and Pharisees to their entire confusion, and had delivered the above parable concerning the unclean spirit, which had a particular regard to them:

a certain woman of the company: observing the miracle he had wrought, in casting out a devil, and being affected with his discourse, in which he so fully cleared himself, and so strongly confuted his enemies, and set them forth in so just a light:

lift up her voice, and said unto him, aloud, in the hearing of all the people, and with great earnestness and fervour:

blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked: whether this woman personally knew Mary, the mother of Christ, is not

certain; it may be that she was now present, or at least not far off; and this woman hearing that she, with the brethren of Christ, were without, and desired to speak with him, might be the occasion of her uttering these words; (<4012 46>Matthew 12:46) though they are said not so much in praise, and to the honour of Mary, as in commendation of Christ, from whom, and for the sake of bearing and suckling so great a person, she was denominated blessed as before, both by the angel and Elisabeth, (<4012 8><4012 8>Luke 1:28,42) This was a form of blessing among the Jews: so it is said [f379] of R. Joshuah ben Chananiah, a disciple of R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, who lived about these times, wtdlwy yrça, "blessed is she that bore him": and they had also a form of cursing among them, much after the same manner, as qnyya ˆkd azyb jyl, "cursed be the paps that suckled him" [f380]. The Jews, in their blasphemous rage against Christ, and all that belong to him, say of Mary, the daughter of Eli, by whom they seem to design the mother of our Lord, that she hangs in the shades by the fibres of her paps [f381] but this woman had a different opinion of her.

Ver. 28. *But he said*, etc.] Christ said "to the woman", Persic version reads, as correcting her, though not denying it, nor reproving her for it, but improving upon it:

yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it; intimating, that though his mother was happy in bearing and suckling such a son, yet it was a far greater happiness to hear the word of God; meaning either himself, the eternal "Logos", so as to embrace him, believe on him, and have him formed in the heart; or the Gospel preached by him, so as to understand it, receive it as the ingrafted word, and bring forth fruit, and act in obedience to it, observe it, and abide by it, and never relinquish it. This is a greater happiness than to be related to Christ in the flesh, though ever so nearly. The Ethiopic version reads, "that hear the word of God, and believe, and keep it": for faith comes by hearing, and shows itself in doing. Barely to hear the word, and even give an assent to it, will be of little avail, unless what is heard and believed is put in practice.

Ver. 29. *And when the people were gathered thick together*, etc.] Upon this woman's lifting up her voice, and saying the things she did; or rather to see what sign he would give, which some had desired (<4211 16>Luke 11:16)

he began to say, this is an evil generation. The Alexandrian copy, two copies of Beza's, and the Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions read, "this

generation is an evil generation"; and also it was an "adulterous one", as is added in (<40>Matthew 12:39)

they seek a sign; for they had asked one of him, (<42>Luke 11:16)

and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet; one like unto it: (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 12:39")

Ver. 30. *For as Jonas was a sign to the Ninevites*, etc.] As he was by lying three days and three nights in the whale's belly, and then cast on shore alive; which sign, or miracle was wrought to confirm his mission and message, and to engage the Ninevites to give credit to him, and repent, or they might assure themselves they would be utterly destroyed;

so shall also the son of man be to this generation; by lying three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, and then rising again from the dead the third day; and which should be done to confirm the truth of his Messiahship, and to declare him to be the Son of God with power, and to engage persons to believe in him; and to assure that wicked generation, that in case they remained, after such a sign, impenitent and unbelieving, wrath would come upon them to the uttermost; (see <40>Matthew 12:40).

Ver. 31. *The queen of the south*, etc.] That is, the queen of Sheba, which was a country of Arabia, which lay south of Judea; of whom it is said, that

she shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: the sense is, that at the last day, when all shall rise from the dead, both Jews and Gentiles, this Heathen queen shall rise together with the men of the present generation among the Jews, stand in judgment with them, and against them; and that her conduct would be brought as an evidence against them, and be improved as an aggravation of their condemnation:

for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here: the difference between them, and what aggravates the case is, that she was a Gentile that knew not God, they were Jews, his professing people; she came from afar, they were near, upon the spot, where Christ was, he was preaching in their streets, temple, and synagogues; she came to hear only natural or moral wisdom, but they might have heard spiritual and heavenly wisdom, with which eternal happiness is connected; she came to hear only a mere man,

but they might have heard him who is the wisdom of God, and the only wise God, and our Saviour; (see Gill on "<40124>Matthew 12:42").

Ver. 32. *The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it*, etc.] Luke changes the order of these instances; Matthew mentions this before the instance of the queen of Sheba; but Luke puts it last: this circumstance is not material, and the design of it is the same with the former:

for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here: what in this case will aggravate the condemnation of the Jews in the day of judgment is, that these men were Heathens, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, and were not used to have prophets sent to them; and yet as soon as Jonas, a mere man, came to them, and preached but one sermon among them, they repented of their sins, and turned from them; whereas the Jews, who had a better notion of religion, and who, though they had the Son of God himself among them, and preached to them, and that many sermons, and whose ministry was confirmed by miracles, and afterwards his apostles for a course of years, had yet remained impenitent and unbelieving; (see Gill on "<40124>Matthew 12:41").

Ver. 33. *No man when he hath lighted a candle*, etc.] These words are often repeated by Christ on different occasions, (see Gill on "<40515>Matthew 5:15") and (see Gill on "<42816>Luke 8:16") and here seem to design the free, open, and clear ministry of Christ, who excelled Solomon in wisdom, and Jonas in powerful preaching. It being as a candle, which, when lighted, no man

putteth in a secret place; as under a bed, (<41021>Mark 4:21) where it cannot be seen, and its light be of any use:

neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come may see the light; intimating, that Christ and his disciples did not preach in corners, or in private houses, and secret places, but in the streets of the city, and in the temples and synagogues, the public places of worship: and therefore the Jews were the more inexcusable, that they did not attend to the ministry of the word; and this would be their condemnation, that light was come among them, and they preferred darkness to it, (<43019>John 3:19).

Ver. 34. *The light of the body is the eye*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin and all the eastern versions read "the light of thy body is thine eye". The sense is,

that as the eye gives light, to the body, and the several members of it, by which they are guided and directed; so the understanding is the light of the soul, and the guide to all the powers and faculties of it;

therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light: as when the eye is free from vicious humours, and its sight is clear, the whole body reaps the advantage of it, and is perfectly illuminated by it; so when the eye of the understanding is opened and enlightened by the Spirit of God, into the truths of the Gospel, and a single regard is had unto them, and to the glory of Christ in them, the whole soul is filled with light, joy, and comfort:

but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness; as when the eye of the body is attended with any bad humours that hinder the sight, all the members of it are in darkness; so, when the understanding is darkened through the blindness and ignorance there is in men, with respect to Gospel truths, all the powers and faculties of the soul are in a very miserable and uncomfortable condition. The 35th and 36th verses are not in Beza's most ancient copy.

Ver. 35. *Take heed therefore*, etc.] By attending to the light of the Gospel, shining in the ministration of it, and do not neglect and despise it:

that the light which is in thee be not darkness; lest being given up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, not only the light of nature, which the Jews had in common with the Gentiles, but even that notional light and knowledge of divine things, which they had by being favoured with an external revelation, the writings of the Old Testament, should be lost.

Ver. 36. *If thy whole body therefore be full of light*, etc.] That is, if the whole soul, as the Ethiopic version reads, be full of Gospel light, through the illuminating influences of the blessed Spirit accompanying the word:

having no part dark; every power and faculty of the soul being affected with it, and influenced by it, though, as yet, the light and knowledge of evangelical things is not perfect in any:

the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light; the whole soul shall be as full of light and joy, which the Gospel always brings with it, as a room is full of light, when a candle is lighted, and shines brightly, and burns clearly in it.

Ver. 37. *And as he spake*, etc.] Either the above words, or others at another time:

a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: as one of the same sect had before, in (<40 7:36>Luke 7:36) and who either was better affected to Christ than the generality of them were; or had a design upon him to get him into company with others, in private, and ensnare him if they could, and overcome him, who was an overmatch for them before the people; among whom they feared, should they go on thus publicly to attack him, their credit and reputation would sink, and be lost.

And he went in and sat down to meat: whatever were the intentions of the Pharisee, Christ, who was always affable and free with all sorts of men, readily accepted of the invitation, and at once went along with him to his house; and dinner being ready, and on the table, he immediately sat down without any ceremony.

Ver. 38. *And when the Pharisee saw it*, etc.] That Christ laid himself down on one of the couches and began to eat:

he marvelled; that so great a prophet as he was, and a man of so much religion and holiness, should show no regard to a common custom with them, and which was one of the traditions of their elders, and which they put upon a level with the commands of God. The Vulgate Latin version, and so Beza's most ancient copy, and another exemplar, read, “he began to say, thinking” (or judging) “within himself”: he was “moved” at it, as the Persic version renders it; he was filled with astonishment and indignation,

that he had not first washed before dinner; especially since he had been in a crowd of people, (<42 11:29>Luke 11:29) for the Pharisees not only washed their hands, by immersing them up to the elbow before eating; but when they had been at market, or among any large number of people, or had reason to think they had, or feared they had touched any unclean person or thing, they immersed themselves all over in water: and which is the sense of the word βαπτιζομαι, here used; (see Gill on “<41 7:2>Mark 7:2-4”).

Ver. 39. *And the Lord said unto him*, etc.] Jesus, as the Syriac and Persic versions read; the Lord Jesus, as the Ethiopic.

Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup, and the platter; being very tenacious of the traditions of the elders, concerning the washing of cups and pots, which had been of late years brought in among them, and

therefore the word “now” is used; (see Gill on “Matthew 23:25”) and (see Gill on “Mark 7:4”),

but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness: meaning either their souls, which were full of all manner of sin, the cleansing and purity of which they had no concern about, whilst they were very strict and curious in washing their bodies, their cups and platters; or rather the vessels which were filled with meat and drink got by extortion, rapine, and oppression; (see Matthew 23:25).

Ver. 40. *Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without*, etc.] That is, made clean that which is without, or the outside of the cup and platter;

make that which is within also? does not he make the inside clean likewise? whoever washes a cup or platter, but washes and makes clean the inside, as well as the outside? and so ye who are so very careful to have your cups and platters clean, should be as careful what you put in them, that they are clean also; not only that they are clean according to the law, in a ceremonial sense, but in a moral sense, that they are honestly and lawfully got. The word, ποιεω, rendered “made” and “make”, answers to the Hebrew word hçf, which sometimes signifies to beautify and adorn, and to cleanse, and remove away filth, as by paring nails, and washing the feet; so in (Deuteronomy 21:12) it is said of a captive woman that a man takes into his house for his wife, among other things, htçfw, “she shall make her nails”; that is, “pare” them, as we render it, and remove the filth from them. Again, in (2 Samuel 19:24) it is said of Mephibosheth, that from the day king David departed, he had not, hçf, “made his feet”; that is, as the Targum renders it, Pjç al, “he had not washed his feet”; and so other Jewish interpreters understand it, either of his having not washed his feet, much less his whole body [f382], or of not having pared his nails [f383]; and so the Vulgate Latin renders it, that he came to meet the king “with unwashen feet”; which may serve to illustrate and confirm the sense before given: though interpreters generally understand this of God, as the maker of the soul, as well as of the body; and therefore the purity of the former should be regarded, as well as that of the latter.

Ver. 41. *But rather give alms of such things as ye have*, etc.] The phrase τα ενοντα, is variously rendered, and so furnishes out various senses: the Syriac version renders it, “give that which is”, which is yours; or “which is given to you”, as the Persic version, and agrees with ours, “such things as

ye have”; and which carries in it but a very odd sense; for none can give of that which they have not. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “that which is over and above”; superfluous substance, and which may be easily spared without hurting a man, or his family: others, “as much as you can”: according to a man's ability, and as God has prospered him in the world. The Ethiopic version renders it, “that which is necessary”; which the necessities of the poor call for, and is right and proper to give them: and the Arabic version, very foreign from the sense of the phrase, reads, “before every thing”; above all things give alms. But the true sense of it is contained in the literal version of it, “things that are within”; that is, that are within the cup and the platter; give meat and drink to the poor, your platters and cups are full of, gotten by injustice and oppression. Some read it not imperatively, “give”, but indicatively, “ye do give”: you oppress and defraud men, devour widows' houses, and fill your own with the spoils of others; and then give out of your cups and platters drink to the thirsty, and meat to the hungry, to make atonement for your avarice and extortion:

and behold all things are clean unto you; that is, according to their own opinion, who fancied that alms deeds justified them in the sight of God, cleansed them from their sins, delivered them from hell, and gave them a title to eternal life; (see Gill on “Matthew 6:1”) for it can never be thought to be our Lord's meaning in earnest, that either their persons, or what they had, should be pure and clean unto them, by giving a part of their ill-gotten goods to the poor; but he speaks their sense, in an ironic way. From this opinion of theirs it is, that the Hebrew word, hkz, which signifies “to be clean”, is used by them for giving alms: so it is said [f384], that

> “R. Jonathan and Resh Lekish went down to bathe themselves in the baths of Tiberias; and a certain poor man met them, and said unto them, yb ˆyykz, “give me alms”; they said unto him, when we come back we will Æb ˆyykz, “give thee alms”:”

and so the Mahometans call alms by the same name, because they imagine that they cleanse their other substance from pollution, and their souls from avarice.

Ver. 42. *But woe unto you Pharisees*, etc.] Though these words, with several other passages in this chapter, are much alike with those in Matthew 23 yet it is clear that they were spoken at different times, these in the house of a Pharisee, and they in the temple at Jerusalem:

for ye tithe mint and rue; (see Gill on "Matthew 23:23") the Persic version here reads, "mint and anise", as there; and the Ethiopic version only "hyssop":

and all manner of herbs; or "every herb"; that is, all sorts of herbs that grow in the garden, and were not common to all;

and pass over judgment, and the love of God: by "judgment" may be meant justice, or doing that which is right between man and man, both publicly and privately, which was greatly neglected by these extortioners and unjust men: and by "the love of God" may be intended, both love to God, which shows itself in the observance of the first table of the law, and love to the neighbour, which God requires, and regards the second table:

these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone; (see Gill on "Matthew 23:23").

Ver. 43. *Woe unto you Pharisees, for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues*, etc.] And also the uppermost rooms at feasts, (Matthew 23:6)

and greetings in the market; (see Gill on "Matthew 23:6-7").

Ver. 44. *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*, etc.] As they are all along called by Matthew; though only here by Luke. The Vulgate Latin only reads, "woe unto you", leaving out all the rest: but the whole is retained in all the Oriental versions;

for ye are as graves which appear not; being covered with grass; "or which were not marked", as the Ethiopic version renders it; that is, were not whited or covered with lime, as some were, that they might be seen at a distance, and be known what they were; that so men might avoid going near them, and prevent their being defiled with them; (see Gill on "Matthew 23:27")

and the men that walk over them

are not aware of them; and so are defiled by them. Christ compares the Pharisees, because of their hypocrisy, and secret iniquity, both to whited sepulchres, and to those that were not: to those that were, because, like them, they looked beautiful without, and righteous in the sight of men, and yet were inwardly full of all manner of pollution and sin; and to those that were not, because they did not appear to be what they were, and men were

deceived by them; and under specious pretences to religion and holiness, were by their corrupt doctrines and practices unawares drawn into the commission of sin. Regard may not only be had to graves covered with grass, or not marked with lime, by which they might be known; but also to what the Jews call, µwhth rbq, "the grave of the abyss" [f385]; a grave that is not known no more than if it was in the bottomless pit: so uncleanness by touching a dead body, which a man is not conscious of, is called the uncleanness of the abyss, or an unknown one [f386].

Ver. 45. *Then answered one of the lawyers*, etc.] Or Scribes, as the Syriac and Persic versions read: and so the Ethiopic version calls him, "a Scribe of the city": the Scribes and lawyers were the same sort of persons who were interpreters of the law, and equally tenacious of the traditions of the elders Christ had referred to, as the Pharisees, and in general were Pharisees; though some of them might be of the sect of the Sadducees. This man observing that Christ, in his last words, joined the Scribes and Pharisees together, and charged them both with hypocrisy, and pronounced a woe upon them, was very uneasy at it:

and saith unto him, master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also; us lawyers, or Scribes also; both by mentioning their names, and accusing the Pharisees of the same things, which they must be conscious to themselves they were equally guilty of; so that if the one were criminal, the others were also. The Ethiopic version reads by way of interrogation, "what thou sayest, does it not injure us?"

Ver. 46. *And he said, woe unto you also, ye lawyers*, etc.] Christ was so far from calling back what he had said or suggested, that he repeats and confirms it, and more particularly names them, and enlarges on their evil practices:

for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers; (see Gill on "Matthew 23:4").

Ver. 47. *Woe unto you*, etc.] Meaning particularly the lawyers or Scribes, together with the Pharisees, and even the whole body of the people, who in general were of the cast and complexion here described:

for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets; (see Gill on "Matthew 23:29")

and your fathers killed them; the prophets; “or whom your fathers killed”, as read the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; the one put them to death, and the other erected stately monuments over them, or adorned them; and yet both had the same malignant spirit against the faithful servants and messengers of God; and which showed their great hypocrisy.

Ver. 48. *Truly ye bear witness, that ye allow the deeds of your fathers*, etc.] Or “ye bear witness, and ye allow”; that is, they both witnessed that their fathers killed the prophets, and they consented to what they did, and approved of their actions:

for they indeed killed them; it must be owned, and not their sons:

and ye build their sepulchres; which was a bearing and keeping up a testimony against them, and a continuing a remembrance of their crimes; and which looked as though they approved of them, or otherwise they should have been content to have the prophets lie buried in silence, and not erected stately monuments over them, which seemed to be raised more for the honour of those that put them to death, than of the prophets themselves. Or, whereas they did this under specious pretences of disliking their fathers' sins, which yet secretly they loved, and were of the same wicked disposition against the ministers of the word, and which they would quickly show; this discovered their hypocrisy, and confirmed the character Christ had before given of them; for it follows,

Ver. 49. *Therefore also said the wisdom of God*, etc.]. The Syriac version only reads “wisdom”; by which seems to be meant not the perfection of God's wisdom: though it is usual with the Jews to represent the divine perfections as speaking, as the justice and mercy of God. They say [f387], that

> “when the holy blessed God sought to make Hezekiah the Messiah, and Sennacherib, Gog, and Magog, ˆydh tdym, “the property of judgment”, or “justice, said” before the holy, blessed God, Lord of the world, etc.”

and so the sense may be here, that the infinite wisdom of God said within himself, determined in his own breast, to do what follows. But I rather think that Christ is intended, who, as God, is the essential wisdom of God; and, as man and mediator, has the spirit of wisdom resting on him, and the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in him; since this is said by Christ, (Matthew 23:34) though the words here seem to be the words of the

evangelist relating what Christ had said. Some have thought, that some book, under the name of “The Wisdom of God”, is here cited, which had in it the following words,

I will send them prophets and apostles; which, in Matthew, are called prophets, wise men, and Scribes; and by whom are meant the apostles of Christ, and the ministers of the Gospel. The Persic version reads, “lo, I send to you”, as in (<40234>Matthew 23:34),

and some of them they shall slay and persecute; some of them they shall put to death, and others they shall persecute from one place to another; (see Gill on “<40234>Matthew 23:34”).

Ver. 50. *That the blood of all the prophets*, etc.] The same with “all the righteous blood”, or the blood of all the righteous men, in (<40235>Matthew 23:35),

which was shed from the foundation of the world: for there were prophets from the beginning, which prophesied of Christ, (<42070>Luke 1:70) and whose blood was shed very early; for Abel, the son of the first man, and who was the first whose blood was shed, was not only a righteous man, but a prophet; for by the sacrifice which he offered up, he gave a prophetical hint of the sacrifice of Christ, in that he spoke beforehand of it, as being dead he yet speaks: and now the Lord was about to send apostolical prophets, whom the Jews would slay, and he would suffer them to slay, that so the blood of all the former ones,

may be required of this generation; and they be punished for it: just as in Babylon will be found, when God makes inquisition for blood, as he sooner or later always does, the blood of the prophets and saints, and of all that are slain upon earth, ever since Rome papal has been in power, (<66824>Revelation 18:24).

Ver. 51. *From the blood of Abel*, etc.] “Righteous Abel”, as in (<40235>Matthew 23:35) and so read the Arabic version here, and two manuscripts in the Bodleian library, and three of Stephens's copies; the Persic version renders it, “innocent Abel”: he is mentioned because he was the first man that was slain, and he was slain because of his righteousness.

Unto the blood of Zacharias; in the Cambridge copy of Beza's, it is added, “the son of Barachias”, as in (<40235>Matthew 23:35) and so the Arabic

version, “the son of Barasciah”; who he was, (see Gill on “Matthew 23:35”)

which perished between the altar and the temple; or “the house”, that is, the holy place: and the Ethiopic version renders it, “the holy house”; here he died, being slain by the Jews; see the note, as before.

Verily I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation; as it was at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem.

Ver. 52. *Woe unto you lawyers*, etc.] Who are particularly addressed again in distinction from the Pharisees, though much the same things are said to them both in (Matthew 23:13)

for ye have taken away the key of knowledge; of the Scriptures, of the law, and the prophets, and the true interpretation of them, and especially of such places as refer to the Messiah, and the Gospel dispensation, called the kingdom of heaven, (Matthew 23:13) they had not only arrogated the knowledge of these to themselves, setting up for the only interpreters of the sacred writings; but they had took away from the people the true knowledge and sense of them, by their false glosses upon them, so that they were destroyed for lack of knowledge: and hence came that famine of hearing the word, which they say [f388] should be before the coming of the King Messiah, and now was. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, “the keys of knowledge”; and the Ethiopic version, “the key of righteousness”. The Jews sometimes speak of “the keys of the law”, and represent the oral law as the root and key of the written law [f389]: but, alas! it was by the oral law, or traditions of the elders, that they took away the key, or obscured the true sense of the written law. Some think, that here is an allusion to the custom of delivering a key to any one, when he was ordained or promoted to the dignity of a doctor: it is said of R. Samuel [f390], that

> “when he died they put, wjtpm, “his key”, and his writing book into his coffin, because he was not worthy of a son”

to succeed him:

ye entered not in yourselves; into the kingdom of heaven, the Gospel dispensation, neither receiving doctrines, nor submitting to its ordinances:

and them that were entering in ye hindered; by reproaching the miracles and ministry of Christ; by threatenings and excommunications; (see Gill on "Matthew 23:13").

Ver. 53. *And as he said these things unto them*, etc.] Denounced the above woes upon them, charging them with the above crimes, and threatening them with divine vengeance:

the Scribes and Pharisees began to urge him vehemently; to fall upon him with their tongues, and express great rage, wrath, and virulence against him:

and to provoke him to speak of many things; they put questions to him, and urged him to answer them, and did all they could to irritate him to say things that they could improve against him, to draw words out of his mouth, and then wrest and pervert them.

Ver. 54. *Laying wait for him*, etc.] To ensnare and entangle him, watching his words, observing what he said, and laying hold thereon:

and seeking to catch something out of his mouth; like beasts of prey, or hunters, that were watching for their prey; or lay ambush, diligently looking out, and greedily catching at every thing they thought for their purpose:

that they might accuse him; either of heresy or sedition, to the Jewish sanhedrim, or the Roman governor.

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 12

Ver. 1. *In the mean time*, etc.] While Christ was discoursing with the Pharisees, and they were using him in the vilest manner, throwing out their invectives against him in order to draw off the people from him:

when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people. There were “myriads” of them, as in the original text, and a myriad is ten thousand; the meaning is, that there were several thousands of them:

insomuch that they trod one upon another; striving to get near to Christ, either to see his person, or to hear his discourses; and particularly, what he would say to the Pharisees, who had fallen upon him in so violent a manner:

he began to say unto his disciples first of all; he directed his discourse not to the Pharisees, nor to the multitude, but to his disciples in the first place; at least, chiefly to them; for whom he had a regard, who were his dear friends, and were to be the preachers of his Gospel every where; and therefore it was proper that they should be aware of the dissembling arts of the Scribes and Pharisees, and have their minds fortified against approaching dangers, persecutions, and death itself: the last phrase, “first of all”, is omitted in the Vulgate Latin version; and by all the Oriental versions, it is joined to the next clause, and read thus, “especially”, or

before all things, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy; expressed both in their doctrines, and in their lives; which carried a great show of piety and holiness, but was in appearance only: very aptly is hypocrisy in doctrine and manners, compared to leaven; which at first is small and little, but gradually increases and spreads itself, and lies hid and covered, and is not easily discerned, nor its influence and effects observed; but in time, it infects and corrupts the whole of men's principles and practices, and puffs and swells them up with a vain opinion of themselves; and when our Lord bids his disciples beware of it, his meaning not only is, that they take heed that they were not infected with it

themselves, but that they were not imposed upon by the specious pretences of these artful and designing men.

Ver. 2. *For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed*, etc.] No sin, be it ever so secret or privately done, as nothing is more covered than hypocrisy, but what shall be detected sooner or later; if not in this world, which is often the case, yet the last judgment, and in the world to come:

neither hid, that shall not be known; for how careful soever men may be to hide their vices from others, they are known to God; who will bring every thing into judgment, and make manifest the secrets of all hearts. These were general sentences, which were used by Christ at different times, upon different occasions, and applied to particular cases; (see Gill on "Matthew 10:26").

Ver. 3. *Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness*, etc.] In the most private manner, to one another:

shall be heard in the light; which makes all things manifest, the day shall declare it:

and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets; whispered to persons in their bedchambers, and places of the most secret retirement;

shall be proclaimed upon the housetops; declared in the most public manner: in (Matthew 10:27) these words are so expressed, as to carry in them such a sense as this; that what was told the disciples by Christ, in the most private place and way, should be published by them, in the most free and open manner; (see Gill on "Matthew 10:27").

Ver. 4. *And I say unto you, my friends*, etc.] Whom he dearly loved, and had taken into the greatest intimacy and familiarity; making known to them whatever he had heard from his Father; giving them the best instructions, the most faithful and friendly advice, and proper precautions; all which, and more, showed them to be his friends, and for whom he after laid down his life:

be not afraid of them that kill the body; though he would have them beware of the Pharisees, he would not have them be afraid of them; he would have them know them, and avoid their hypocrisy, and guard against it; but not fear them, or the worst they could do unto them, which was to kill the body; and that they had no need to be afraid of, since at death, their

souls would be immediately happy, in the enjoyment and vision of God; and their bodies would sleep in Jesus, and be raised in the resurrection morn, and be united to their souls, and be both for ever blessed:

and after that have no more that they can do; they have nothing more to kill, or which they can put to pain or misery; the soul is out of their reach, is an immortal spirit, and cannot be hurt or destroyed by them.

Ver. 5. *But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear*, I will be your monitor, and direct you to the proper object of fear and reverence, and whom you should be careful to displease and offend:

fear him, which after he hath killed; your body, as the Persic version adds; hath taken away the life of it, by separating soul and body asunder, by sending one disease or another, or death in one shape or another:

hath power to cast into hell; your soul, as the above version also adds; yea, to destroy both body and soul in hell, as in (see Gill on "Matthew 10:28")

yea, I say unto you, fear him; and none else, not with a servile, but with a filial fear.

Ver. 6. *Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings*, etc.] As two were sold for one farthing, (see Gill on "Matthew 10:29"); so in buying and selling, where more money is laid out, things are bought cheaper; the Persic version reads, "for two barley corns":

and not one of them is forgotten before God; a single sparrow, a bird of little value and worth, is taken notice and care of by him; it has its life from him, and is provided for with food by him, and is under his protection; nor does he ever forget it, nor can any thing be done to it, without his permission; it cannot be struck, so as to cause it to fall on the ground, or be taken in a snare, or be killed in any shape, without the knowledge of God: his providence reaches to the minutest creatures and things, and much more then to rational creatures, to men; and still more to his dear children, ministers, and apostles.

Ver. 7. *But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered*, etc.] Not only their persons had passed under the hands of him that telleth them, who is the "Palmoni", or "wonderful numberer", as in the margin of (Daniel 8:13) and not only the several members of their bodies, or the more

substantial parts of them, were written in the book of his purposes, according to which they were fashioned in time, but the more minute parts, and less to be regarded, were all told over, and kept in account; even the very hairs of their head, and not one of them could fall to the ground, any more than a sparrow; or be plucked off by men, without the knowledge and will of God; so careful is the providence of God, of all his people:

fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows; for if the hairs of their heads are as much regarded as sparrows, their persons and their lives must be of more account, than an infinite number of them, nor are they to be mentioned with them.

Ver. 8. *Also I say unto you*, etc. The same as in (Matthew 10:32)

whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the son of man also confess before the angels of God; only instead of I, he here calls himself "the son of man"; and instead of "before my Father which is in heaven", here it is, "before the angels of God"; who will accompany Christ when he comes to judgment, and will be present, when he shall acknowledge his true followers as the blessed of his Father, the chosen of God, his redeemed and sanctified ones; and reject others before his Father, and the whole universe of rational beings: it is said in the Targum on (Song of Solomon 1:15).

> "when the children of Israel do the will of their king, he by his word (the Logos) praises them in the family of the holy angels."

This Christ, the eternal word, will do at the great day.

Ver. 9. *But he that denieth me before men*, etc.] That is, that continues to deny Christ, and lives and dies a denier of him; for otherwise it is possible for a person to deny Jesus to be the Son of God, or the Messiah, and afterwards confess him, as a Pagan or Jew; and through temptation, a real Christian may be left for a while, in one shape or another, to deny him and his truths, and afterwards truly repent, and at last be saved, as Peter; but they that deny Christ publicly, and persist in it,

shall be denied before the angels of God: they will be denied by Christ as belonging to him; they will be denied admission into heaven; they will be covered with shame and confusion publicly; they will be sent into everlasting burnings, and be ever tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels.

Ver. 10. *And whosoever shall speak a word against the son of man, it shall be forgiven him*, etc.] These words, though introduced by Luke among the sayings of Christ, recorded in Matt. 10 yet were said by Christ, on occasion of the Pharisees, ascribing his works to diabolical influence and assistance, (see Gill on "<4012>Matthew 12:32")

but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost; as the Pharisees did, by charging the miracles of Christ with being done by the help of the devil, when they were wrought by the finger of the Spirit:

it shall not be forgiven. The Ethiopic version adds at the close of this verse, as in Matthew, "neither in this world, nor in that which is to come".

Ver. 11. *And when they bring you unto the synagogues*, etc.] Of the Jews, to be examined and scourged by the rulers of them:

and unto magistrates and powers; Heathen ones; the Persic version reads, "princes and kings"; and the Ethiopic version, "princes, kings, and judges"; (see <4010>Matthew 10:18)

Take ye no thought how, or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say; be not anxiously concerned, neither about the manner, nor the matter of your answer, apology, and defence: in the first part of this clause, the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, only read, "how"; and the Arabic version only, "what"; (see Gill on "<4010>Matthew 10:19").

Ver. 12. *For the Holy Ghost shall teach you*, etc.] Shall give both words and matter: in the same hour; instantly, immediately:

what ye ought to say; what will be proper to be said, for the honour of Christ, the defence of the Gospel, and the confusion of enemies; (see Gill on "<4010>Matthew 10:20").

Ver. 13. *And one of the company said unto him*, etc.] Not one of the disciples of Christ, but one of the multitude, or crowd, about him, (<4212>Luke 12:1)

Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me: the firstborn, according to the law, in (<5217>Deuteronomy 21:17) had a double portion: but the eider brother here, it seems, was for keeping all, and would not divide any part to his younger brother; wherefore he applies to Christ, to interpose his authority, which he imagined would have great weight with his brother, who might be a hearer of Christ, and favourer of him: or

however, such was the fame of Christ, and such credit he obtained by his ministry and miracles, that he concluded a word from him, would go a great way with his brother, to engage him to make a right and proper division, as he ought; and especially, if he looked upon him, as the king Messiah the Jews expected, he might take this to be part of his work and office, to settle such civil affairs as these: we often read in the Jewish writings, of brethren dividing their substance, left by their parents; so it is said [f391],

> "wqljç ^yjaj, "brethren that divide", (a field,) give two corners (to the poor); if they return and become partners, they give but one."

Where there were but two brethren, as here, the one was called rwkb, "the firstborn"; and the other, jwçp, "simple"; having no title or character: and concerning dividing inheritances, there are the following rules [f392]:

> "the firstborn takes a double portion of his father's goods, as is said, (<05217>Deuteronomy 21:17) how? a man leaves five children, and one of them is the firstborn: the firstborn takes the third part of the substance, and every one of the four simple ones, takes a sixth part: if he leaves nine children, and one of them is the firstborn, he takes the fifth part, and every one of the eight simple ones, takes a tenth part; and so according to this division, they divided for ever — — he that has two sons, a firstborn and a simple one, and they both die in his lifetime, the firstborn leaves a daughter, and the simple one leaves a son; lo, the son of the simple one inherits the third part of the old man's goods, which is his father's part; and the daughter of the firstborn, inherits the two thirds, which is the part of her father."

And again [f393],

> "two brethren that "divide", and a brother comes to them from the province of the sea: and so three brethren that "divide", and a creditor comes and takes the part of one of them, though the one takes land, and the other money, the division is void, and they return and divide the rest equally: if any one orders at the time of death, that there should be given to such an one a palm tree, or a field out of his substance, and the brethren "divide", and do not give such an one any thing, lo, the division is void; and how do they

> do? they give what he ordered the heirs, and after that they return and divide as at the beginning: brethren that divide, value what is upon them; but what is upon their sons and their daughters, which they have in possession, they do not value — he that leaves fatherless children, some that are grown up, and others little ones, and they are willing to divide their father's goods, so that those that are grown up may take their part, the sanhedrim appoint a guardian for the little ones, and he chooses a good part for them: and when they are grown up, they cannot make it void, for lo, by the decree of the sanhedrim, they divided for them; but if the sanhedrim err in computation, and give them less, they may make it void, and make another division when, they are grown up."

But it would be tedious to transcribe all the rules, relating to such cases.

Ver. 14. *And he said unto him, man*, etc.] Or "friend", as the Ethiopic version renders it; that is, Jesus said to him, as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions express it:

who made me a judge, or a divider over you? referring to the words of one of the Hebrews to Moses, when he interposed in a difference, (Exodus 2:14) suggesting, that the same might be retorted on him, should he engage in such an affair: the reason why Christ avoided meddling with it, was not because it is unlawful for Christians to concern themselves in arbitrations about civil affairs, and in making up family differences, which is very commendable; but lest by such a step, he should give occasion to them, to conclude he was a temporal king: whereas his kingdom was not of this world, and his business lay not in civil affairs, and the management of them; but in spiritual concerns, in preaching the Gospel, and doing good to the souls of men; wherefore this was out of his province: and besides, it was a matter of covetousness, either in this person, or his brother, or both; which Christ takes an occasion from hence to expose, agreeably to his office; to which may be added, that this man seems to have disturbed Christ in his public work, and was of such a worldly spirit, as to prefer the care of his secular affairs, to the hearing of the word, and the welfare of his immortal soul.

Ver. 15. *And he said unto them*, etc.] Either to the two brethren, or to his disciples, as the Syriac and Persic versions read, or to the whole company:

take heed, and beware of covetousness; of all covetousness, as read the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and some copies; that is, of all sorts of covetousness, and every degree of it, which of all vices is to be avoided and guarded against, being the root of all evil; and as the Persic version renders it, is worse than all evil, and leads into it:

for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth; of flocks and beasts, as the Persic version renders it: a man's natural life cannot be prolonged by all the good things of the world he is possessed of; they cannot prevent diseases nor death; nor do the comfort and happiness of life, lie in these things; which are either not enjoyed by them, but kept for the hurt of the owners of them, or are intemperately used, or some way or other imbittered to them, so that they have no peace nor pleasure in them: and a man's spiritual life is neither had nor advantaged hereby, and much less is eternal life to be acquired by any of these things; which a man may have, and be lost for ever, as the following parable shows.

Ver. 16. *And he spake a parable unto them, saying*, etc.] He supposed the following case, and made use of it by way of illustration of what he had said:

the ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; who notwithstanding his riches, was but a fool, as the sequel shows; rich men are not always wise in things natural and civil; and very few of them are spiritually wise, or wise in spiritual things, in things which relate to the welfare of their souls; but however, this man was very prosperous in his worldly affairs, as a man of a small share of common sense may be, and wicked men often are: the word translated “ground”, signifies a “region”, or “country”, which expresses the more, the riches of this man, that he had not a common and ordinary farm, but a whole country as it were; at least a very large part of one, and all this fruitful.

Ver. 17. *And, he thought within himself*, etc.] And foolish thoughts they were; he did not think of God, or that there was one, and much less that he was the author, of all his outward prosperity and plenty; and was still further off of thinking of returning thanks to God for it: or of asking counsel of him, what he should do with it; but he consults himself only, and thought only within, and for himself; and not at all of his poor neighbours, or for the good of others; nor did he think even of his own soul, but altogether about his worldly substance:

saying, what shall I do? he does not say what shall I do for God? for his interest service, and glory? for the poor, the hungry, and thirsty, and naked? or for my own soul, that that may be eternally saved? but what shall I do with my goods?

because I have no room where to bestow my fruits: he had gathered in his harvest, and filled his barns as full as they could hold, so that they had no room for more; and yet had still an abundance to lay up, and about which he was anxiously concerned; not thinking of the empty bellies, barns, and houses of the poor, where he might have stowed much.

Ver. 18. *And he said, this will I do*, etc.] This was the resolution he came to, and which he took up, without consulting God, or asking leave of him:

I will pull down my barns, and build greater; which was not a very wise one; for he might have let his present barns have stood, and have added new ones to them:

and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods; he ascribes the increase of his substance to himself, and reckons them his own acquisitions, and entirely owing to his diligence and industry; and therefore calls them my fruits, and my goods; and accounts them his good things, his only good things; as worldly men place all good and happiness in outward enjoyments, having no notion of spiritual and eternal good things he determines to lay up all in his barns, for his own use and service, and nothing for God and his interest, nor any thing for the poor and their relief.

Ver. 19. *And I will say to my soul*, etc.] Himself, (see <1908>Psalm 49:18) or to his sensual appetite, which he sought to indulge and gratify, for he was wholly a sensual and carnal man:

soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: he foolishly promises himself a long life, when no man can boast of tomorrow, or knows what a day will bring forth; or can assure himself he shall live a day, an hour, or moment longer: and he also depended upon the safety of his goods, thus laid up; whereas his barns might be consumed by fire at once, or his goods be devoured by vermin, or plundered by thieves, and by various ways taken out of his hands; for riches are uncertain things, and make themselves wings and fly away:

take thine case, eat, drink, and be merry; spend thy life in ease, luxury, and mirth; put away the evil day far from thee: never trouble thyself about a

future state, tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundantly; and thou hast enough to make thyself happy, and let nothing disturb thee, and give a loose to all sensual pleasures, and carnal joys. This is the language of epicure among the Jews, and is forbidden to be used, especially on fast days; for so it is said, [f394]

> "let not a man say I will go to my house, "and I will eat and drink", (and say) yçpn Æyl[µylç, "peace to thee, O my soul"; if he does so, of him the Scripture says, (Isaiah 22:13,14) "Behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die — surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye die, etc.""

Ver. 20. *But God said unto him*, etc.] He determined within himself he should die that night; for the time of a man's death, as well as of his birth, is fixed by God; or he sent the messenger of death, some disease or another, the language of which was, immediate death, or death in a very short time; or spoke to his conscience, and impressed it on his mind, that he should die that night, and not live:

thou fool: as he appeared to be, throughout the whole of his conduct:

this night thy soul shall be required of thee: which is of God's immediate formation, is immortal, of more worth than a world, and its loss is irreparable; and for which a man is accountable to God, the Father of spirits; and which he requires at a man's hands at death, which is here designed; and shows, that a man has no power over it to retain it, but must give it up when it is called for, even that very instant, "this night" which may refer to the time when covetous persons are employing their thoughts about their worldly goods, or when epicures and sensual persons are indulging themselves in luxury and intemperance; and to the condition the soul is in, being in the night and in darkness, and knows not whither it is going; and denotes its immediate remove, and the suddenness of divine wrath and vengeance; the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions, agreeably to the Greek text, read the words, "this night do they require thy soul of thee"; or "out of thy body", as the Persic version reads: the Ethiopic version renders it, "they shall take thy soul from thee"; that is, the evil angels, the devils having a commission from God, shall demand thy soul; and as soon as ever it is separated from the body, shall seize upon it, and

carry it to hell; just as the good angels carry the souls of the saints to heaven, (⁴²¹⁶²Luke 16:22)

Then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? not his own, for he can carry nothing with him; nor does he know whose they will be, whether the persons he designed them for, or some others whom he abhorred, and would, if possible, have prevented their enjoyment of them; and should he have them for whom he intended them, he does not know how he will turn out, whether a wise man or a fool, or what use he will make of them.

Ver. 21. *So is he that layeth up treasure for himself*, etc.] This is the accommodation of the parable. Just such a fool is he, and this will be the end or him, who employs all his thoughts, and spends all his time, in amassing to himself worldly riches and wealth, in laying up treasures on earth for himself, for futurity: and makes no use of his earthly substance to be the good of others; nor shows any concern for spiritual and eternal riches; but places all his hope, trust, and confidence, in uncertain riches:

and is not rich towards God; or "in God", as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; in things pertaining to God, in spiritual things, in faith, and in good works; and is not concerned to lay up a treasure in heaven, to have an interest in durable riches and righteousness; whereas one that is rich towards God, acknowledges that he receives all his riches from God, as the Ethiopic version reads; he gives up all into the hands of God, depends upon his providence for the increase, security, and continuance of it; and uses it to his honour and glory, and for the good of his interest; and is chiefly concerned for the riches of grace and glory; and enjoys much of God, and places all his riches in him: such a man is a wise man, but the reverse of this is the fool in the parable.

Ver. 22. *And he said unto his disciples*, etc.] Having finished the parable which he spake to the whole audience in common, he directed himself to his disciples, who were poor, and apt to be over anxious about their living in the world:

therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat. The Ethiopic version adds, "and what ye shall drink"; and so a manuscript in Gonvill and Caius College in Cambridge, which seems to be transcribed from (⁴⁰⁶²⁷Matthew 6:27) life is very near and dear to man; all that a man has, he will give for it; and it is his duty to be careful to preserve it, and to

make use of means for the support of it; but then, as he should not be dainty about the food he eats, and should refuse no good creature of God, but receive it with thanksgiving, so he should not distress himself for fear of wanting bread, nor distrust the promises of God, and a supply from him; but should cast all his care upon the Lord, who daily cares for him:

neither for the body, what ye shall put on: it is highly proper and necessary that the body should be clothed, partly for decency, and partly to secure it from the inclemency of the weather; but then persons should not be difficult and over nice about what they wear, nor be distressed, fearing they should be clothed with rags; but should trust in the Lord, who gives food and raiment, and all things richly to enjoy.

Ver. 23. *The life is more than meat*, etc.] What in Matthew is put by way of question, is here strongly affirmed; and these words contain a reason or argument to dissuade from an anxious, distressing thought and care about the necessaries, conveniencies, and comforts of life: and all the Oriental versions read, "for", or "seeing the life is more than meat"; that is, it is more excellent and valuable in its own nature, being that for the support of which meat is provided; and seeing God is the author and giver of life, it need not be doubted but he will give meat for the maintenance and continuance of it, so long as is his pleasure it should subsist.

And the body is more than raiment; it is of more worth than the richest clothing that can be had; the finest piece of embroidery is not comparable to the curious workmanship of the body, (<19D915>Psalm 139:15) and he that has so curiously wrought that, will not fail to provide suitable and proper clothing for it; and therefore there ought to be no anxiety on this account; (see Gill on "<4006>Matthew 6:5").

Ver. 24. *Consider the ravens*, etc.] According to the Jews [f395] there are three sorts of ravens, the black raven, the raven of the valley, which is said to be white, and the raven whose head is like a dove. In Matthew the "fowls of the air" in general are mentioned, as they are here in the Cambridge copy of Beza's; but in others, "the ravens" in particular, they being fowls of very little worth, and disregarded by men, and odious to them, as well as unclean by the law; and yet these are taken care of by God. The Arabic version reads, "the young ravens"; and these are which are said to cry unto God, who provides food for them, and gives it to them, (<183841>Job 38:41, <19E709>Psalm 147:9)

for they neither sow nor reap, which neither have storehouse nor barn; and yet they are provided for, and therefore, why should men, and especially God's own people, distrust his providence over them, when they both sow and reap, have the seedtime, and harvest in the appointed seasons: they cast their seed into the earth, and it springs up and brings forth much fruit, which they reap when ripe, and gather into their barns and storehouses, from whence they are supplied till another season returns; wherefore they have no reason to distress themselves, seeing, though this is not the case of ravens, yet

God feedeth them; their young ones, as the above places show. Jerom says [f396], that it is affirmed by some philosophers, that they live upon dew. The Jews [f397] have a notion, that the old ravens being cruel to their young, and hating them, the Lord has pity on them, and prepares flies, or worms for them, which arise out of their dung, and enter into their mouths, and they them. One of their commentators says [f398], when the young ones are hatched they are white, and the old ones leave them, not taking them for their own, and therefore bring them no food, and then they cry to God; and this is mentioned by some Christian writers, but not sufficiently confirmed: and another of them observes [f399], that the philosophers of the Gentiles say, that the ravens leave their young as soon as they are hatched; but what Aristotle [f400], Pliny [f401], and Aelianus [f402] affirm of these creatures is, that as soon as they are able to fly they turn them out of their nests, and even drive them out of the country where they are; when, as it is said in Job, "they wander for lack of meat, and cry unto God, who gives it to them": and since this is the case, and the providence of God is so much concerned for such worthless creatures, the people of God, and disciples of Christ, ought by no means to distrust it: for as it follows,

how much more are ye better than the fowls: or "than these", as the Vulgate Latin version reads; that is than these ravens, or any other fowls whatever; (see Gill on "<4066>Matthew 6:26").

Ver. 25. *And which of you with taking thought*, etc.] In an anxious and distressing manner, for food and raiment, in order to preserve and continue life,

add to his stature one cubit? The Persic version reads, "to his stature and height", as if this referred to the height of stature; whereas it seems rather to regard the age of a man, and the continuance of his life; (see Gill on "<4067>Matthew 6:27").

Ver. 26. *If ye then be not able to do that which is least*, etc.] As to make the smallest addition to a man's stature, or rather to add one moment to his days:

why take ye thought for the rest? which are much greater, as to preserve the body in its whole bulk, and all its parts, or for the feeding and clothing of it, or rather for the continuation and preservation of life to any length of time; for if it cannot be by all a man's care and solicitude lengthened out one moment longer than is the pleasure of God, how should it be by such anxiety continued for months and years?

Ver. 27. *Consider the lilies how they grow*, etc.] Some copies read, "the lilies of the field", as in (<4062>Matthew 6:28) The Persic version renders the word, "the roses and lilies of the field": and the Arabic version, the "flowers"; any flowers of the field; for what is afterwards said, is true of any of them, but particularly of the lilies: now, as the former instance of God's feeding the ravens is designed to remove all anxious and distressing thoughts about food for the body; this is mentioned to take off every thing of that kind with respect to clothing for it; wherefore, in Matthew, these words are premised to it, "and why take ye thought for raiment?" there will be no need of it, when it considered how the lilies, or tulips, or any other flowers grow up out of the earth, and in what a fine beautiful dress they appear, without any care or labour of their own, and even without the care and management of a gardener; for flowers of the field are here meant:

they toil not, they spin not; they neither labour as men do, in sowing flax, and dressing it, or in combing of wool, or in spinning of either:

and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. The Ethiopic version renders it, "in the whole time of his glory"; throughout his glorious reign, at any time; whenever upon any extraordinary occasion he was dressed out in the finest manner, yet even then a lily outdid him; its glory being natural to it, whereas his, at best, was but artificial, and an imitation of nature; (see Gill on "<4062>Matthew 6:29").

Ver. 28. *If then God so clothe the grass*, etc.] lilies and tulips; for they are no other than grass, weak, frail, fading, short lived flowers, which have all their gaiety and beauty from the great Creator of them:

which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven: the grass is one day in the field, in all its verdure, glory, and beauty; and being cut

down before evening, the next day it is withered and dried, and made fit to put into an oven, or under a furnace to heat them with:

how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? The Persic version renders the words, “how much more excellent are ye than that, O ye of little faith?” they are more excellent in their nature, and of a longer duration, and are designed for greater ends and purposes; and therefore if God clothes the one in such a manner as he does, how much more will he not clothe the other? and such who are distrustful and diffident in this matter, may well be called men of little faith; (see Gill on “<4060>Matthew 6:30”).

Ver. 29. *And seek not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink*, etc.] That is, in an anxious and distressing manner, with a tormenting and vexatious care; otherwise food is to be both asked of God every day, and to be sought for and after in the use of proper means:

neither be ye of doubtful minds; questioning and distrusting that ye shall have any thing to eat or drink: be not fickle, unstable, and inconstant, and wandering in your thoughts about these things, like the meteors in the air, which are carried about here and there; let not your minds be disturbed and distracted about them; or be anxiously solicitous for them; (see Gill on “<4061>Matthew 6:31”).

Ver. 30. *For all these things do the nations of the world seek after*, etc.] That is, the Gentiles, as in (<4062>Matthew 6:32) who are frequently, in the Jewish writings, called, in distinction from the Jews, µlw[h twmwa, “the nations of the world” [f403]. This is an argument used to dissuade from an immediate and anxious concern for food and raiment, because it is Heathenish, and therefore very unbecoming the disciples and followers of Christ: it need not be wondered at in those that know not God, and do not acknowledge his providence, and are strangers to his covenant and promises; but must be very unsuitable to the characters of such who know that godliness has the promise of this life, and of that which is to come:

and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things; and therefore it is needless to be so anxious about them: the Persic version reads, “all these things”, and so some copies; that is, meat, drink, and clothing, all the necessaries of life; (see Gill on “<4062>Matthew 6:32”).

Ver. 31. *But rather seek ye the kingdom of God*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version adds, “first”, as also, “and his righteousness”, as in (<4033>Matthew 6:33) and the Ethiopic version reads, “seek his kingdom and righteousness” meaning either the grace of God, which is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, (<5147>Romans 14:17) or the heavenly glory; unless the Gospel, and the dispensation of it, which is the Messiah's kingdom, and which was then just ushering in, should rather be intended.

And all these things shall be added unto you; food and raiment, which are as much as can be enjoyed; and godliness with these, and contentment with them, is great gain; (see Gill on “<4033>Matthew 6:33”).

Ver. 32. *Fear not little flock*, etc.] these words are particularly directed to the immediate apostles and disciples of Christ; but are true of all the saints in all ages of time, who are compared to a “flock of sheep”, being separated from the rest of the world in election, redemption, and the effectual calling, and being folded together in a Gospel church state; and also for their patience, meekness, humility, and harmlessness: these are a “little” flock; few in number, when compared with the wicked of the world; and mean and despicable in the account of men; and little in their own eyes: these are subject to many “fears”; some relate to their outward state, and condition, as that they shall want food and raiment, and not have the necessaries of life; which seems to be in the first place here intended, as appears from the context: and some regard their spiritual and eternal estate, as lest they should have no interest in the love of God, and in the covenant, in the blessings and promises of his grace; lest they should not belong to Christ; or the good work of grace should not be begun in them; or that they should not persevere to the end, and should at last miscarry of eternal life and happiness: and these fears arise from a body of sin, from the temptations of Satan, the hidings of God's face, and the prevalence of unbelief; for they have no true reason for them: God is on their side, and will not leave, nor forsake them, nor shall they want any good thing Christ is their shepherd, and he has bought them, with his own blood, and will lose none of them; and therefore they need not fear being taken care of both in soul and body, for time and eternity: and especially when what follows is considered,

for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom; not only the Gospel, and the knowledge of the mysteries of it; nor the Gospel church

state, and a right to all its ordinances; nor only the kingdom of grace, which cannot be moved; but the kingdom of glory: and which is a gift unto them, not obtained by any deserts or works of theirs; nor is their right unto, and enjoyment of it depending upon any such thing: and it their Father's gift, who is so by adopting grace, and through Christ Jesus their Lord; and which he gives according to his sovereign will and pleasure, and with a good will, delighting in them, and rejoicing over them to do them good, both here and hereafter: so that they may depend upon every good thing needful for them both in this world, and in the world to come; nor should they indulge anxious cares, or slavish fears.

Ver. 33. *Sell that ye have, and give alms*, etc.] Since they had a kingdom bequeathed them by their heavenly Father, they should be so far from indulging an anxious care about food and raiment, that when there was a call in providence for it, and rather than the poor should go without a supply, it became them to sell their houses and lands, and whatever possessions they had, and relieve them; and so they did not long after; for some of those who sold their estates, and brought the money to the apostles, (<40404>Acts 4:34,35), might be now present; and the more readily and cheerfully do what they did, remembering these words of Christ:

provide yourselves bags which wax not old; as do the bags of misers: their bag is, bwqn rwrx, "a bag pierced through", or that has a hole in it, which lets the money out as it is put in, (<37106>Haggai 1:6) and which the Targum renders by, atraml, "for a curse"; as money hoarded up in bags by covetous persons generally is: Christ would have his followers put their money up in other bags; not in such which rot through age, or are worn out, and are full of holes through use; but into the hands and bellies of the poor, the fruit and reward of which will always abide;

a treasure in the heavens that faileth not: whereas treasure on earth does, being either taken away from the possessors of it by various ways, or they from that:

where no thief approacheth; can come near to steal it away, which is often the case here on earth:

neither moth corrupteth; as it does the best of garments, wore by men: but the robes of glory and immortality can never be corrupted: (see Gill on "<40620>Matthew 6:20").

Ver. 34. *For where your treasure is*, etc.] Whether in heaven, or in earth, there will your heart be also: the heart is always set upon the treasure, and as is a man's treasure, such is his heart, that is, set upon it; if his treasure is only here, and he has not the true riches, his heart is only earthly and carnal; but if his treasure is heavenly, his heart and conversation will be in heaven; (see Gill on "<4062>Matthew 6:21").

Ver. 35. *Let your loins be girded about*, etc.] With the girdle of truth, (<4914>Ephesians 6:14) keeping close to the doctrines of the Gospel, abiding faithfully by them, even unto death: the allusion is either to the eating of the first passover, (<0212>Exodus 12:11) or rather to servants, who, in these eastern countries, wore long garments; and therefore, when in business, used to gather them up, and gird them about them, that they might perform their service with greater strength, more ease, quicker dispatch, and less hinderance: the phrase denotes readiness for business:

and your lights burning. The Vulgate Latin version adds, "in your hands"; meaning torches that were held in the hand: and may design either the Scriptures of truth, which were to be a light or lamp unto them, guiding and directing them in the ministration of the Gospel; or the lamps of profession, which should be kept clear and bright, and good works, becoming them, that should so shine before men, that all may see them, and glorify God. The allusion is to persons waiting at a wedding in the night, with torches and flambeaus in their hands.

Ver. 36. *And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord*, etc.] Who either was at a wedding, or was the bridegroom himself; so be ye in a readiness, waiting for the coming of Christ, the bridegroom of the church:

when he will return from the wedding, The Syriac version renders it, "from the house of feasting"; from any entertainment, or from the marriage feast, or rather the marriage itself, to the bride chamber: so when Christ has, by the preaching of the Gospel, and the power of his grace, espoused all his elect, he will descend from heaven, and take them to himself; they shall then be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and enter with him into the nuptial chamber, and be for ever with him:

that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately; and let him in without any delay, as soon as ever he comes to the door; and at the first knock, open it to him at once, having light, and being in a posture of readiness, and in constant expectation of him: so such who have

believed in Christ, and have been faithful to his cause and interest, and have held fast the profession of their faith without wavering, when Christ shall either come and knock at their doors by death, or shall come to judgment, and sound the alarm of it, they shall be ready to obey the summons with the greatest cheerfulness, and meet him with the utmost pleasure.

Ver. 37. *Blessed are those servants whom the Lord*, etc.] The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "their Lord", the master of them, or the Lord Jesus Christ:

when he cometh shall find watching: for him, and not asleep. The Ethiopic version reads, "so doing, and watching"; girding up their loins, trimming their lamps, and waiting for their Lord's coming: such servants are happy, they will appear to be in the favour of their master, who will take notice of them and show some marks of respect to them; as Christ will to all his good and faithful servants, whenever he comes, whether at death, or at judgment; and who will be happy then, being found so doing, and found in him:

verily I say unto you that he shall gird himself; not that Christ shall really do this, or appear in the form of a servant; but that he shall readily, cheerfully, and at once introduce his servants into his joy, and make them partakers of all the glories of the other world:

and make them to sit down to meat; at his table in his kingdom; (see <40811>Matthew 8:11, <42230>Luke 22:30)

and will come forth and serve them; with food, yea, will feed them himself, and lead them to fountains of living water, (<660717>Revelation 7:17) The Arabic version renders it, "he shall stand to minister unto them": the phrase is expressive of the posture of a servant; who, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, is Æ l wh, "walking", and who goes round about the table, whilst others sit [f404]: some think there is allusion in the words to a custom used at some feasts, particularly at the feasts in honour of Saturn, in which servants changed clothes with their masters, and sat at their tables, and their masters served them [f405]

Ver. 38. *And if he shall come in the second watch*, etc.] Of the night, that is, after nine o'clock, or any time between nine or twelve; for the second watch was from nine o'clock till twelve; and this was coming early from an

entertainment, or a wedding, which were commonly kept in the night, and late;

or come in the third watch, or after twelve o'clock, or any time between twelve and three; for the third watch was from twelve o'clock to three, which was late; (see Gill on "Mt 14:25") The Persic version reads, "in the second, or third part of the night"; and the Ethiopic version, "in the second or third hour of the night";

and find them so. The Arabic version adds, "doing"; as above described, with their loins girt, lights burning, and they watching for their Lord's coming:

blessed are those servants; since they shall be used and treated as before related.

Ver. 39. *And this know*, etc.] The Ethiopic version reads, "this only know"; only take notice of this one thing, and it may be of some use to direct you in your conduct how to behave during the absence of your Lord, until the time he shall come again:

that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come; that is, if the owner, or master of the house, whose the goods in the house are, could by any means know what time of the night the thief would come to break into his house, in order to plunder it, and carry off his goods:

he would have watched; either he himself in person, or he would have set a watch about his house, or in it:

and not have suffered his house to be broken through; either the door to be broken up, or the wall to be dug through, but by a guard about it, or within it, would have prevented such a design. And so in like manner, could it be known in what time Christ would come, either to the destruction of Jerusalem, or at death, or to judgment, every thoughtful, prudent man that should know it, would be upon his guard, that he might not be surprised with it; and though the precise time could not be known, yet inasmuch as the thing itself is certain, it became all the servants of Christ to be watching for it; (see Gill on "Mt 24:43").

Ver. 40. *Be ye therefore ready also*, etc.] Not habitually, but actually, in the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty, with loins girt, and lights

burning. This may be understood either of a readiness to meet the Lord in the way of his judgments, and particularly the destruction of Jerusalem, which was to be in a few years; or of a preparation for death, and the last judgment, which lies in the righteousness of Christ imputed, and his grace imparted: and to have a comfortable view of the one, and a gracious experience of the other, as they will engage to the performance of good works, to which such are ready; so they make meet for the coming of Christ, be it in what way, and whensoever it will: and the rather, a concern should be had for such a preparation, because of the following reason,

for the son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not; in either of the above ways; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:44").

Ver. 41. *Then Peter said unto him, Lord*, etc.] The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, "our Lord":

speakest thou this parable: of the master at the wedding, and his servants waiting for him, or of the housekeeper watching that his house be not broken up, or both:

unto us, or unto all? Peter was in doubt whether the above discourse was peculiarly directed to them, the apostles, as containing special instructions to them in the discharge of the ministerial work; or whether it was designed for all his disciples and followers, both in the present age, and in time to come, to the end of the world.

Ver. 42. *And the Lord said, who then is that faithful and wise steward*, etc.] Christ does not directly, and in express words, answer to Peter's question, but suggests, that though he intended it as a caution to all his people, and in it spoke to them all to be upon their watch and guard, (Mark 13:37) yet that he had a special regard to them, his apostles, and succeeding ministers of the Gospel, whose characters, office, work, dignity, and honour, are here described. Such are stewards in Christ's family, they are entrusted with the stores and provisions of his house, and "faithfulness" and "wisdom" are requisite in them; the one, that they do not corrupt and adulterate the word of God, and mix it with human doctrines, but that they deliver it out pure and sincere as it is; and the other, that they may rightly divide it, and wisely distribute it:

whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household: Christ's "household", or family, is his church, over which the ministers of the Gospel are appointed "rulers", to govern the house according to the laws of Christ,

and keep every thing in good decorum and order; and particularly their work, and which agrees to their character as stewards is,

to give them their portion of meat in due season: in doing which they answer the characters of faithful and wise stewards: they are faithful who give out the whole portion allotted, without adulterating it, or keeping back any part of it; and they are wise, who deliver it to them in proper time and season. The word translated "portion of meat", is only used in this place, and is rendered in the Vulgate Latin version, "a measure of wheat"; but it may be applied to any food in general, and an allotment of it; and signifies such a portion as was given to servants for one month, or rather every day; and may signify that portion of the word of God, and the interpretation of it, which is to be given forth every Lord's day to his people, suitable to their condition, cases, and circumstances. The Septuagint translators use the verb in (<01472>Genesis 47:12) who render the text thus, "and Joseph, εσιτομετρει, measured out to his father", and to "his brethren, and to all the house of father, wheat", or bread, "according to their persons", i.e. the number of them: to which passage there may be some reference here; at least it serves to illustrate this; (see Gill on "<4045>Matthew 24:45").

Ver. 43. *Blessed is that servant*, etc.] Who is faithful and wise, rules well, and discharges his trust with integrity, and disposes of the provisions of the house, in his hands, with great discretion and prudence:

whom his Lord, when he cometh; to take vengeance on the wicked Jews, or by death, or at judgment:

shall find so doing; behaving as a good ruler, and as a wise and faithful steward.

Ver. 44. *Of a truth I say unto you*, etc.] This, with Christ, was a strong way of asserting the truth of any thing; and the sense is, you may assure yourselves of it, this will certainly be the happy case of such servant:

that he will make him ruler over all that he hath; as Joseph was made by Pharaoh. Such an one shall reign with Christ on earth a thousand years, and then in heaven with him to all eternity, where he shall enjoy all things; (see Gill on "<4047>Matthew 24:47")

Ver. 45. *But and if that servant say in his heart*, etc.] Not the same servant before spoken of as a wise and faithful steward, that gives to all in

the family the portion of meat in due season, and shall be found doing, and be made ruler over his master's goods but another, who also, as he, is made by his Lord ruler over his household, and is in a like post, and in the same office, but is an “evil servant”, as Matthew calls him, to distinguish him from the other; and so the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read here:

my Lord delayeth his coming; though a wicked servant, he calls Christ his Lord; but it is not saying Lord, Lord, that will be of any avail, but doing the will of God, by believing in Christ, and obeying his commands: he had a notion of the coming of Christ, though he did not desire it; and because he tarried longer than was expected, supposed him to be slack concerning his promise, and began to think, and hope, and at length to believe, that he would not come at all, and therefore gave himself up to a wicked and licentious way of living:

and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens; to persecute the ministers of the Gospel, and the true disciples of Christ, the undefiled virgins, that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes:

and to eat, and drink, and to be drunken: to live a voluptuous and sensual life, to give himself up to intemperance and debauchery: and, generally speaking, as professors of religion, when they turn apostates, are the most violent persecutors of the saints; so such persecutors of Christ's, faithful followers are commonly drunkards and debauchees; (see Gill on “Matthew 24:48-49”).

Ver. 46. *The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him*, etc.] For, not coming as was expected, he gives over looking, and concludes he will not come at all; in which he will find himself mistaken, for he will come in the very day which is appointed, though men know not of it, and do not look for it:

and at an hour when he is not aware; for as neither the day, nor hour of Christ's coming are known to any man, it becomes men to look for it every day and hour, lest it come upon them unawares; as it will, on such evil servants before described, with whom it will go ill, as follows:

and will cut him in sunder, and appoint him his portion with unbelievers; whose portion is the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death, (Revelation 21:8) and by these are meant, not only the Heathens, who never heard of Christ; nor the Jews only, who disbelieved the Messiah, and rejected him when he came; but all deists and atheists,

who deny revelation; even all unbelievers of, and scoffers at the coming of Christ, and who put away the evil day far from them; compare with this (Job 20:29 see Gill on "Matthew 24:50-51").

Ver. 47. *And that servant which knew his Lord's will*, etc.] Not his secret, but his revealed will; the will of God, which lies in the declarations of his grace and mercy in the Gospel, and in the commands and ordinances expressed in his word; and which are the good, perfect, and acceptable will of God; the knowledge of which is necessary, in order to practice: and where there is a spiritual and saving knowledge, there will be practice: but there may be knowledge, where there is no practice, and which was the case here: Christ here distinguishes between wicked servants, some being knowing, and others ignorant; and accordingly the aggravations of their guilt are more or less:

and prepared not himself; so the Arabic and Ethiopic versions supply, but the Syriac version, "for him", that is, for his Lord: but it may as well be read as in the Vulgate Latin, without any supplement, "and prepared not"; he took no thought nor care about doing it; there is no preparation, readiness, nor disposition, in a natural man, to the will of God: no man is prepared or ready to do it, but he that is regenerated, or is made a new creature; who has the laws of God written on his heart, and who has the Spirit of God put within him, to cause him to keep them; and who has faith in Christ, and strength from him to observe them; but there may be knowledge, where such a preparation is wanting; persons may know much, and profess to know more, and in works deny all, and be to every good work, unfit, disobedient, and reprobate: this clause is left out in the Persic version:

neither did according to his will; the will of God is done aright, when what is done, is done according to the command of God, in the strength of Christ, from love to him, in the exercise of faith on him, and with a view to his glory, and without any dependence on what is done; but there may be knowledge, without any thing of this: the words, "neither did", are wanting in the Syriac version: and such a man that has knowledge without practice,

shall be beaten with many stripes; alluding to the law of the Jews, by which a wicked man was to be punished, by beating him with stripes, not exceeding, forty, according to the nature of his fault, (Deuteronomy 25:2,3) and here it signifies, that persons who have light and knowledge, and the means thereof, and act not according to them, shall be punished

with the greatest severity, and endure the greatest degree of torments in hell; (see <4012>Matthew 11:21-24)

Ver. 48. *But he that knew not*, etc.] His Lord's will; either not having the means of knowing it, as the Heathens; or through neglect of them, not attending to them, and making use of them, which is the case of many, where the Gospel revelation is:

and did commit things worthy of stripes; or punishment; as the Gentiles, by sinning against the law, and light of nature; and those who might have the advantage of a divine revelation, but neglect it: the Septuagint in (<5502>Deuteronomy 25:2) have the same phrase as here, αξιος πληγων, "worthy of stripes":

shall be beaten with few stripes; their punishment shall be less, and it shall be more tolerable for them in the day of judgment, than for knowing professors. The Jews did not always inflict forty stripes, or forty save one, upon delinquents; but according to their crimes, and as they were able to bear them, more or fewer: so it is said [f406],

> "when they judge a sinner, how many (stripes) he can bear, they do not reckon, but by stripes that are fit to be trebled: if they judge he is able to bear "twenty", they do not order that he be beaten with twenty one, that so they may be trebled, but that he be beaten with "eighteen": if they condemn him to receive forty, and after he is begun to be beaten, they observe him to be weak, and they say he cannot bear any more than these "nine", or "twelve", with which he has been beaten, lo, he is free; if they condemn him to receive "twelve", and after that he is beaten, they see that he is strong and able to bear more, lo, he is free, and he is not to be beaten any more, upon that estimation: if they condemn him today that he is to be beaten with "twelve" (stripes), and they do not beat him till tomorrow, and lo, tomorrow he is able to bear eighteen, they do not beat him but with twelve."

And elsewhere the rule is [f407],

> "he that commits a sin, in which there are two negative (commands broken) if they pronounce but one sentence, he is beaten and is free; but if not (i.e. if more than one) he is beaten, and when he is healed, he is beaten again."

For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall, much be required: the more knowledge a man has, the more practice is expected from him; and the greater his gifts are, the more useful he ought to be, and diligent in the improvement of them:

and to whom men have committed much, or to whom much is committed, of him they will ask the more; not more than what was committed to him, but more than from him, who has less committed to him; in proportion to what a man is entrusted with, the greater increase and improvement it is expected he should make.

Ver. 49. *I am come to send fire on the earth*, etc.] Meaning either the Gospel, which is as fire, that gives both light and heat, warms the hearts of God's people, and causes them to burn within them; though very distressing and torturing to wicked men; so the word of God is compared to fire, in (~~2409~~Jeremiah 20:9 23:29). Or else zeal for it, and which would be opposed with sharp contentions by others; or rather persecution for the sake of the Gospel, called sometimes the fiery trial; which tries men, as gold is tried in the fire, what they are, and what their principles and profession be; unless the Holy Ghost, and baptizing with him, and with fire, should be meant; since Christ in the next verse, speaks of the baptism of his sufferings, which that was to follow:

and what will I? what shall I say concerning this fire? what shall I wish and pray for? what would be pleasing and agreeable to me? even this,

if it be already kindled; or "that it were already kindled", or "O that it were already kindled"; meaning either that the Gospel was warmly preached by his disciples, and zealously defended by them, as it was after his death and resurrection; or that hot persecution was raised against it which was now beginning, since the advantage of it would be far greater than the evil in it: or that the Holy Ghost was come down in cloven tongues, like as of fire.

Ver. 50. *But I have a baptism to be baptized with*, etc.] Not water baptism, for he had been baptized with that already; nor the baptism of the Spirit, which he had also received without measure; though the Ethiopic version reads it actively, "with which I shall baptize", referring doubtless to that; but the baptism of his sufferings is meant, which are compared to a baptism, because of the largeness and abundance of them; he was as it were immersed, or plunged into them; and which almost all interpreters observe

on the text, and by which they confess the true import and primary signification of the word used; as in baptism, performed by immersion, the person is plunged into water, is covered with it, and continues awhile under it, and then is raised out of it, and which being once done, is done no more; so the sufferings of Christ were so many and large, that he was as it were covered with them, and he continued under them for a time, and under the power of death and the grave, when being raised from thence, he dies no more, death hath no more dominion over him. This baptism he “had”, there was a necessity of his being baptized with it, on his Father's account; it was his will, his decree, and the command he enjoined him as Mediator; it was the portion he allotted him, and the cup he gave unto him: and on his own part, he obliged himself unto it, in the counsel and covenant of peace; for this purpose he came into this world, and had substituted himself in the room and stead of his people; and it was necessary on their part, for their sins could not be atoned for without sufferings, nor without the sufferings of Christ; moreover, the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament concerning them, made them necessary:

and how am I straitened until it be accomplished: these words express both the trouble and distress Christ was in, at the apprehension of his sufferings as man; which were like to the distress of persons, closely besieged by an enemy; or rather of a woman, whose time of travail draws nigh, when she dreads it, and yet longs to have it over: and likewise they signify, his restless desire to have them accomplished; not that he desired that Judas should betray him, or the Jews crucify him, as these were sins of theirs; nor merely his sufferings as such; but that thereby the justice of God might be satisfied, the law might be fulfilled, and the salvation of his people be obtained: and this eager desire of his, he had shown in various instances, and did show afterwards; as in his ready compliance with his Father's proposal in eternity; in his frequent appearances in human form before his incarnation; in sending one message after another, to give notice of his coming; in his willingness to be about his Father's business, as soon as possible; in rebuking Peter, when he would have dissuaded him from all thoughts of suffering: in going to Jerusalem on his own accord, in order to suffer there; in his earnest wish to eat the last passover with his disciples; in the joy that possessed him, when Judas was gone out, in order to betray him; in stopping in the midst of his sermon, lest he should overrun, or outslip the time of meeting him in the garden, ([Joh 14:30,31]John 14:30,31) in his going thither, and willingly surrendering himself up into the hands of his

enemies; and in cheerfully laying down his life: all which arose from the entire love he had for the persons he died for; and because it was his Father's will, and his glory was concerned herein, and his own glory also was advanced thereby; moreover, his death was the life of others, and the work required haste.

Ver 51. *Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth*? etc.] To set up a temporal kingdom, in great pomp, and outward peace and tranquility? Christ came to make peace with God for men, and to give the Gospel of peace, and spiritual and eternal peace to men; but not external peace, especially that, which is not consistent with the preservation of truth:

I tell you, nay; whatever suppositions you have made, or whatever notions you have entertained, I solemnly affirm, and you may depend upon it, I am not come into the world on any such account, as to establish outward peace among men;

but rather division; so he calls the Gospel, which in Matthew is styled a "sword"; and the Ethiopic version seems to have read both here, since it renders it, "but a sword that I may divide": the Gospel is the sword of the Spirit, which divides asunder soul and Spirit, and separates a man from his former principles and practices; and sets men apart from one another, even the nearest relations, at the greatest distance; and is, through the sin of man, the occasion of great contention, discord, and division.

Ver. 52. *For from henceforth there shall be five in one house*, etc.] Which are the five following, mentioned in the next verse; the father and the son, the mother and the daughter, and her daughter-in-law, or son's wife; for the mother and mother-in-law are one and the same person, only standing in different relations; as a mother to her own daughter, and a mother-in-law to her son's wife, or to her husband's daughter by his first wife; though the former best answers to the word used: now from the time of Christ's saying these words, or quickly after this, immediately upon his baptism of sufferings, or soon after his death, when the Gospel should be preached more publicly and extensively, this should be the effect of it; that supposing a family consisting of the above number, they should be

divided from one another, in the following manner:

three against two, and two against three; three that did not believe in Christ, against two that did believe in him; or two that did not believe, against three that did; or three that did, against two that did not; or two

that did, against three that did not. The Ethiopic version reads, “two shall be separated from three, and one shall be separated from two”.

Ver. 53. *The father shall be divided against the* etc.] Shall oppose him, differ with him, and be alienated from him, and so the other relations as follow; (see Gill on “<40105>Matthew 10:35-36”).

Ver. 54. *And he said also to the people*, etc.] For what Christ had before said, were chiefly, if not solely, directed to his disciples; but now he turned himself to the innumerable multitude that were about him, and particularly addressed himself to the Scribes and Pharisees that were among them:

when ye see a cloud rise out of the west; the watery vapours being attracted by the heat of the sun, out of the Mediterranean Sea, which lies west of the land of Judea, and formed into a cloud, and drove by the wind:

straightway ye say there comes a shower; as soon as it is seen, it is presently concluded and affirmed, that a very heavy shower will soon fall, it having been frequently observed so to do, when this has been the case:

and so it is; for the most part, there commonly follows a large shower on such an appearance, and they were seldom mistaken in their conclusions.

Ver. 55. *And when ye see the south wind blow*, etc.] From the hot countries of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Arabia, which lay south of Judea:

ye say there will be heat; or hot sultry weather, scorching heat, which such a wind brings with it:

and it cometh to pass; generally speaking, as is asserted.

Ver. 56. *Ye hypocrites*, etc.] A word often used of the Scribes and Pharisees, and which suggests, that there were such in company, to whom Christ more especially directs his discourse; and this may be the rather thought, since much the like things are said by him to the Pharisees, with the Sadducees, in (<40160>Matthew 16:1-3) and the same appellation is given them there, as here:

ye can discern the face of the sky, and of the earth; from the appearance of the sky, they could tell how it would be with the earth, and the inhabitants of it, whether they should have dry or wet weather, heat or cold:

but how is it that ye do not discern this time? that this is the time of the Messiah's coming, and that it is the accepted time, and day of salvation, if

ye receive him, and believe in him; and a time of vengeance, if ye reject him: this might have been discerned by the prophecies of the Old Testament, which fix the characters of the Messiah, and the time of his coming; and describe the manners of the men of that generation, in which he should come: and point out both their happiness and their ruin; as also by the doctrines they heard Christ preach, and especially by the miracles which were wrought by him, it might have been known he was come.

Ver. 57. *Yea, and why even of yourselves*, etc.] From their own observation, as in discerning the signs of the weather; in a rational way, by the light of reason, and according to the dictates of their own consciences; by what they themselves saw and heard; by the signs and wonders which were done, they might have concluded, that now was the time of the Messiah's coming; and that he was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he: this was as easy, by observation, to be discerned, as the face of the sky was; even of themselves, without any hints or directions from others:

judge ye not what is right? or "truth", as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; concerning the present time, the coming of the Messiah, and the accomplishment of the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament in him: or why do ye not of yourselves judge, what is fit and right to be done between man and man, without going to law? and that, in cases which are plain and clear, the consequences of which may be as easily discerned, as what weather it will be by the signs in the heavens; to which sense the following words incline.

Ver. 58. *When thou goest with thine adversary*, etc.] The creditor, as the Persic version, and who is the prosecutor, that has commenced a suit of law against another, in order to obtain his right: for Christ is here speaking of a bad man, that will not pay his just debts, so that his creditor is obliged to prosecute him, and have him to the

magistrate; ruler, or prince; the Nasi, or prince of the sanhedrim, who sat as judge there: as thou art in the way; going along with the creditor, or prosecutor, to the court of judicature;

give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him. The Persic version renders it, "give him the money"; and the Arabic version, "give what thou owest"; and the Syriac version, "give the gain"; or pay the interest, about which the dispute is, and so escape out of his hands; lest when the matter is brought into court, sentence should be given, to pay both interest and

principal, with all costs and charges; or however, make up matters with him, satisfy him in some way or other, before things are brought to an extremity:

lest he hale thee to the judge; the same that is called the magistrate, or prince before, that sits chief upon the bench, hears and tries causes, and passes sentence:

and the judge deliver thee to the officer: who upon hearing the matter in difference, and giving the cause against the defendant, and for the prosecutor, delivers the debtor into the hands of a proper officer, in order to commit him to prison: the word rendered "officer", signifies an exactor of debts, or fines, and was one that obliged such as were cast, to do what the judge appointed to be done: in the Septuagint on (<23312>Isaiah 3:12) it answers to an "oppressor"; and such men were wont to use rigour, to bring persons to the payment of their debts, or fines:

and the officer cast thee into prison; which he had power to do, when committed into his hands by the judge, in case the sentence pronounced was not immediately complied with; (see Gill on "<40525>Matthew 5:25").

Ver. 59. *I tell thee*, etc.] The Syriac version before these words, prefixes an "Amen", or "verily", for the sake of the stronger affirmation, which seems to be taken from (<40526>Matthew 5:26)

thou shalt not depart thence; get out of prison:

till thou hast paid the very last mite: of the sum in debate, which was what the Jews call a "prutah", and that was the eighth part of an Italian farthing, and half a common farthing; (see Gill on "<41242>Mark 12:42"): with this agrees what Mainonides says [f408], that

> "when he that lends, requires what he has lent, though he is rich, and the borrower is distressed, and straitened for food, there is no mercy showed him in judgment, but his debt is, demanded of him, hnwrja hjwrp d[, "unto the last prutah, or mite"."

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 13

Ver. 1. *There were present at that season*, etc.] Among the innumerable multitude of people, (<42120>Luke 12:1) that were then hearing the above discourses and sayings of Christ:

some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. These Galileans were very likely some of the followers of Judas Gaulonitis, or Judas of Galilee; (see <44537>Acts 5:37) who endeavoured to draw off the Jews from the Roman government, and affirmed it was not lawful to give tribute to Caesar; at which Pilate being enraged, sent a band of soldiers, and slew these his followers; who were come up to the feast of the passover, as they were offering their sacrifices in the temple, and so mixed their blood with the blood of the passover lambs: this being lately done, some of the company spoke of it to Christ; very likely some of the Scribes and Pharisees, whom he had just now taxed as hypocrites; either to know his sense of Pilate's conduct, that should he condemn it as brutish and barbarous, they might accuse him to him; or should he approve of it, might traduce him, and bring him into contempt among the people; or to know his sentiments concerning the persons slain, whether or no they were not very wicked persons; and whether this was not a judgment upon them, to be put to death in such a manner, and at such a time and place, and which sense seems to be confirmed by Christ's answer. Josephus [f409] relating a slaughter of the Samaritans by Pilate, which bears some likeness to this, has led some, though without any just reason, to conclude, that these were Samaritans, who are here called Galileans. This history is neither related nor hinted at, by any other writer but Luke. The phrase of mingling blood with blood, is Jewish; it is said of one Trogianus the wicked (perhaps the Emperor Trajan), that he slaughtered the Jews, ˆmdb ˆmd bry[w, “and mingled their blood with their blood”; and their blood ran into the sea, unto Cyprus [f410]. The Jews [f411] have a notion, that

> “in the age in which the son of David comes, Galilee shall be destroyed.”

Here was a great slaughter of the Galileans now, (see <4157>Acts 5:37) but there was a greater afterwards by the Romans: it may be that the Pharisees made mention of this case to Christ, to reproach him and his followers, who were called Galileans, as his disciples chiefly were.

Ver. 2. *And Jesus answering, said unto them*, etc.] Neither approving, nor condemning Pilate's action; and though he allowed the Galileans to be sinners, which could not be denied, he does not bear hard upon them, but improves the instance for the conviction of his hearers, and in order to show them the necessity of repentance, and to bring them to it:

suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? such a supposition they seem to have made, by their speaking to Christ concerning this matter; and concluded from their violent and untimely deaths, that they had been notorious and uncommon sinners, and guilty of the most enormous crimes, which had brought upon them the just judgments of God: whereas this is not a rule of judging; oftentimes the best of men suffer exceedingly in this life; God's judgments are a great deep, and not to be fathomed by us, nor is it to be easily known, when any thing befalls persons in a way of judgment; there is nothing comes by chance, but every thing by the wise disposal of divine providence, to answer some end or another; nor are persons that are punished, either immediately by the hand of God, or by the civil magistrate, to be insulted, but rather to be pitied; besides, love and hatred, the characters and states of men, are not to be known by these effects in providence.

Ver. 3. *I tell you, nay*, etc.,] They were not greater sinners than others of their neighbours, nor is it to be concluded from the bloody slaughter that was made of them; others might be much more deserving of such an end than they, who yet escaped it:

but except ye repent; of sin, and particularly of the disbelief of the Messiah:

ye shall likewise perish; or perish, in like manner, as these Galileans did: and so it came to pass in the destruction of Jerusalem, that great numbers of the unbelieving Jews, even three hundred thousand men were destroyed at the feast of passover [f412]; and that for sedition, as these men very likely were.

Ver. 4. *Or those eighteen*, etc.] Men; the Persic version reads, “those twelve”; but all copies, and other versions, agree in this number:

upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them; there was a pool near Jerusalem, called the Pool of Siloam, (<43>John 9:7) near, or over which, was a tower built, which fell down and killed eighteen men; very likely as they were purifying themselves in the pool, and so was a case very much like the other, and might be a very late one: and this Christ the rather observes, and puts them in mind of, that they might see that not Galileans only, whom they had in great contempt, but even inhabitants of Jerusalem, died violent deaths, and came to untimely ends; and yet, as not in the former case, so neither in this was it to be concluded from hence, that they were sinners of a greater size, or their state worse than that of other men:

think ye that they were sinners; or debtors; for as sins are called debts, (<40>Matthew 6:12) so sinners are called debtors:

above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? there might be, and doubtless there were, as great, or greater sinners, in that holy city, and among such that made great pretensions to religion and holiness, as they were.

Ver. 5. *I tell you, nay*, etc.] I affirm it, and you may depend upon it, they were not greater sinners than others: though such a melancholy accident befell them, not without the providence of God:

but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish; or perish in the same manner; that is, shall be buried under the ruins of the city and temple of Jerusalem, when one stone should not be left upon another; just as these eighteen men were buried under the ruins of the tower of Siloam, of which it was a pledge and emblem; and accordingly great numbers of them did perish in the temple, and were buried under the ruins of it [f413].

Ver. 6. *He spoke also this parable*, etc.] That is, Jesus spake, as the Persic version expresses it, that which follows; and at the same time, and upon the above occasion; setting forth the patience of God towards the Jewish nation, their unfruitfulness, and the danger of their being destroyed, in case of non-amendment:

a certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. This was not at all contrary to the law in (<52>Deuteronomy 22:9) "thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds": for according to the Jewish canons [f414],

> "the prohibition on account of divers seeds in a vineyard, concerned divers sorts of corn, (as wheat, barley, etc.) and divers sorts of

> herbs only: but it was lawful to sow other sorts of seeds in a vineyard, and there is no need to say other trees."

And there are cases put, and instances given, which express, or suppose fig trees, particularly, to have been planted in vineyards; for it is said [f415],

> "if a man carries a vine over part of a tree for meat, he may sow seed under the other part of it — it happened that R. Joshua went to R. Ishmael to Cephar Aziz, and he showed him a "vine", carried over, hnat hxqm, "part of a fig tree"."

Again, more than once it is said in a parabolical way [f416],

> "this is like unto a king that has a paradise, or orchard planted, µynpg lçw µynat lç hrwç, "a row of fig trees, and of vines", and of pomegranates, and of apples, etc."

By the "certain man" may be meant, either God the Father, who is sometimes called an husbandman; or rather the Lord Jesus Christ, who is truly man, as well as properly God; and "by his vineyard" may be meant, the Jewish nation; (see Isaiah 5:1,2,7) which were his own nation and people, from whence he sprung, and to whom he was particularly sent, and among whom he had a special property; and may also be applied to the church of God in any age or nation, which is often compared to a vineyard, consisting of persons separated from the world, and planted with various plants, some fruitful, pleasant, profitable, and valuable, and are Christ's by his Father's gift, and his own purchase. And by "the fig tree planted" in it, may be principally meant the Scribes and Pharisees, and the generality of the Jewish people; who were plants, but not of Christ's Father's planting, and therefore to be cut down, or rooted up: and may be accommodated to professors of religion; some of which are true and real, and may be compared to the fig tree, because of its large and green leaves, expressive of their profession; and become fruitful, as they are, being filled with the fruits of the Spirit, of righteousness, and of grace; and because it puts forth its fruit before its leaves, as there should be the fruit of grace before a profession of faith is made. Others are only nominal professors; and are like a fig tree, of which sort was this in the parable, that has large leaves, but no fruit; make a large profession, but bring forth no fruit to the glory of God; and though they are planted in the house of God, yet not by God the Father, nor by Christ, only at best by ministers and churches hoping well of them, but mistaken in them:

and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. This, if understood of God the Father, designs his coming to the Jewish people by his servants and prophets, time after time, and at last by John the Baptist, and Jesus Christ, and his apostles, seeking and requiring fruits of holiness, righteousness, and judgment, but found instead thereof the wild grapes of wickedness, oppression, and violence: but if of Christ, which sense is rather to be chosen, it denotes his incarnation, or his coming into the world in human nature, and seeking by his ministry, the fruits of faith in himself, and repentance towards God among the people of the Jews, but found none; at least instances of faith in Israel were very rare, and few repented of their evil works; and hence he upbraided many with their impenitence and unbelief; (see <40 11 20>Matthew 11:20).

Ver. 7. *Then said he unto the dresser of the vineyard*, etc.] If by the owner of the vineyard is meant God the Father, then by the dresser of the vineyard Jesus Christ is intended; but as he seems rather designed by the owner, the vinedresser, or "the gardeners", as the Persic version reads, in the plural number, may signify the ministers of the word, to whom Christ, who is Solomon's antitype, lets out his vineyard to dress and cultivate it, and to keep the fruit of it; (see <22 08 11>Song of Solomon 8:11,12),

behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none; or "behold, there are three years since I came"; so read the Vulgate Latin and Persic versions, and Beza's most ancient copy. Some think Christ here refers to the three years of his public ministry, which he had now gone through among the Jews with little success; but he seems rather to allude to the nature of fig trees, which, if fruitful, bear in three years time; for even jwç twnb, "a sort of white figs", which are the longest before they bring forth fruit to perfection, yet their fruit is ripe in three years time. These trees bear fruit once in three years; they bear fruit indeed every year, but their fruit does not come to maturity till after three years [f417]; and this may be the reason why this number is fixed upon; for if such fig trees do not bring forth ripe fruit in three years time, there is little reason to expect any from them: and thus it was time after time with the Jewish nation; and so it is with carnal professors: hence it follows,

cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? or "that it may not cumber"; or "render the ground useless", as read the Arabic version, and one of Beza's copies; for unfruitful trees suck up the juices of the earth, and draw away nourishment from other trees that are near them, and so make the earth

barren, and not only hurt other trees, but stand in the way and place of fruitful ones; and therefore it is best to cut them down. So barren professors, as were the Jews, are not only useless and unprofitable themselves, being fruitless, but make churches barren, and stand in the way of others, who are stumbled by them; they are grieving to God, to Christ, and to the blessed Spirit, and are troublesome and burdensome to churches, ministers, and true believers: and the cutting them down may regard the judgment of God upon the nation of the Jews, which Christ would not have his apostles and ministers interpose for the averting of; or the excommunication of such worthless and hurtful professors out of the churches by them.

Ver. 8. *And he answering, said unto him, Lord*, etc.] Which, if understood of God the Father, may intend the intercession of Christ with him, who not only intercedes for his elect, for those that are unconverted, that they may be converted; and for converted ones, for the carrying on of the work of sanctification; for fresh discoveries of pardoning grace; for consolation and support under trouble; for their final perseverance, and eternal glorification: but also for his enemies, for profane sinners, and for formal professors; for the sake of his own people among them, and for their preservation, and for the averting of divine judgments from them, at least as yet: and so the Jewish nation was spared for some time after this, though now deserving of immediate destruction. But rather, the intercession of the ministers of Christ, and other good men, may be here meant; who, as Abraham interceded for Sodom, and Moses and Aaron for Israel, so do they for a sinful nation, a barren and unfruitful church and people, and particular persons, that they may be spared, at least a little longer, as here:

let it alone this year also; have patience one year more, or a little while longer. The Ethiopic version renders it, “until the winter”, that being a time for digging about, and dunging of trees, as follows,

till I shall dig about it, and dung it; these same phrases are used in the “Misna” [f418],

> “ˆyrd[mw ˆylbzm, “they dung and dig” in gardens of cucumbers, and gourds, until the beginning of the year:”

upon which their commentators say [f419], that they carry dung into their gardens to moisten the earth, and dig about the roots of the trees, and lay them bare, and cover them again, and prune them, and smoke them to kill

the worms. And by these phrases may be signified the various means Christ made use of by his own ministry, and by the ministry of his apostles, to make the Jews a fruitful people; and rather the means Christ's ministers make use of, as did the apostles with the Jews, to reach the cases of barren professors; as by “digging”, striking at, and exposing some secret sin or sins, which are the root and source of their barrenness; showing them, that they have no root in Christ, nor the root of the matter in them; and declaring to them the insufficiency of a mere profession of religion to save them: and “dunging”, which as it supposes want of heat, or coldness, which is the cause of barrenness, and signifies, that such professors are without spiritual life, and without spiritual heat, or real warmth of love to Christ, his truths, ordinances, and people, and discharge their duty in a cold and lifeless manner; so it may design the means they make use of to warm and fire them with zeal for God, and true religion; by preaching the soul quickening doctrines of the Gospel, and by laying before them the agreeableness of a becoming zeal, and the disagreeableness of a lukewarm spirit and disposition, an indolence and unconcern for the glory of God, and interest of Christ.

Ver. 9. *And if it bear fruit, well*, etc.] If hereby barren professors, as the Jews, become fruitful, it is well, a good thing is done; it is well for themselves, they shall eat the fruit of their doings; it is well for the churches where they are, for good works are profitable to men; and it is well for the owner of the vineyard, and the dresser of it too, for when Christ has his fruit from his churches, his ministers have theirs also:

and if not, then

after that; “for the time to come”, as the Vulgate Latin; or “year following”, as the Persic version renders it:

thou shall cut it down; do with it as thou pleasest, nothing more will be said or pleaded in its behalf; full consent shall be given, and no more intercession used: any trees might not be cut down, only barren ones; there is a law in (Deuteronomy 20:19,20) about cutting down trees, and which the Jews explain thus [f420];

> “they may not cut down trees for meat without the city, nor withhold from them the course of water, that so they may become dry; as it is said, “thou shall not destroy the trees”; and whoever cuts any down is to be beaten, and not in a siege only, but in any

place: whoever cuts down a tree for meat, by way of destroying it, is to be beaten; but they may cut it down if it hurts other trees, or because it hurts in the field others, or because its price is dear; the law does not forbid, but by way of destroying. Every barren tree it is lawful to cut down, even though a man hath no need of it; and so a tree for meat, which does hurt, and does not produce but little fruit, and it is not worth while to labour about it, it is lawful to cut it down: and how much may an olive tree produce, and it may not be cut down? the fourth part of a "Kab" of olives; and a palm tree which yields a "Kab" of dates, may not be cut down."

Much such a parable as this is formed by the Jews, upon Moses's intercession for the people of Israel [f421]

"Says R. Abin, in the name of R. Simeon ben Josedech, a parable, to what is it like? to a king that hath an uncultivated field; he says to his gardener, go and manure it, and make it a vineyard: the gardener went and manured that field, and planted it a vineyard; the vineyard grew, and produced wine, and it turned to vinegar; when the king saw that the wine turned to vinegar, he said to the gardener, go, htwa wqw, "and cut it down", why should I seek after a vineyard that brings forth that which is sour? the gardener replied, my lord, the king, what expense hast thou been at with this vineyard before it was raised? and now thou seekest to cut it down; and shouldst thou say because its wine turns sour; the reason is, because it is young, therefore its wine turns sour, and it does not produce good wine: so when Israel did that work (of the golden calf), the holy blessed God sought to consume them; said Moses, Lord of the world, hast thou not brought them out of Egypt from a place of idolatry, and now they are young, or children, as it is said, (<280101>Hosea 11:1) wait a little for them, and go with them, and they will do good works in thy presence."

Ver. 10. *And he was teaching in one of the synagogues*, etc.] That is Jesus, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it; which was his work, he being a teacher sent from God, and who took all opportunities of instructing men in the truths of the Gospel; this was done either in Galilee, or in Judea, in one of the synagogues of some city there, for in their larger cities there were more synagogues than one. In Jerusalem, we are told [f422], there were three hundred and ninety four synagogues; and other writers [f423]

increase their number, and say, there were four hundred and eighty: and it was

on the sabbath; which was now in force, and was religiously observed by Christ.

Ver. 11. *And behold there was a woman*, etc.] In the synagogue, who, as infirm as she is hereafter described, got out to the place of worship; and which may be a rebuke to such, who, upon every trifling indisposition, keep at home, and excuse themselves from an attendance in the house of God:

which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years; or a weakness that was brought upon her by an evil spirit, by Satan; as appears from (⁴²Luke 13:16) who, by divine permission, had a power of inflicting diseases on mankind, as is evident from the case of Job; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “whom a demon had made infirm”: and this disorder had been of a long standing; she had laboured under it for the space of eighteen years, so that it was a known case, and had been given up as incurable, which made the following miracle the more illustrious and remarkable.

And was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself; or lift up her head, look up, or stand upright; it was a thing utterly impossible, which she could by no means do; her body was convulsed, and every part so contracted, that, as the Persic version renders it, “she could not stretch out a hand or foot”.

Ver. 12. *And when Jesus saw her*, etc.] In the synagogue among the people, either whilst, or after he had done teaching:

he called her to him, to come nearer him, and said unto her; of his own accord, without being asked by the woman, or any other for her, out of great compassion to her, seeing her in this miserable condition, and knowing full well the nature, cause, and long continuance of her disorder:

woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity; which had not only bowed her, but it had bound her, as if she had been bound with cords; but Christ by saying these words, with his hands laid upon her, burst her bonds asunder, dispossessed the evil spirit, and delivered her from her long affliction.

Ver. 13. *And he laid his hands on her*, etc.] As he spoke the above words, which he sometimes did when he healed diseases.

And immediately she was made straight; she lift up herself, stood upright, and her body, and all the parts of it were as straight as ever they had been, or as any were in the synagogue.

And glorified God; that is, "the woman" glorified God, as the Persic version expresses it; she was filled with thankfulness for the mercy, and gave God the glory of it. This woman was an emblem of a poor sinner held in the bonds of iniquity by Satan, and led captive by him at his will, who can by no means raise himself; nor is he able to lift up his head to heaven, or look upwards to Christ for deliverance; and yet attends upon the outward ministry, when Christ, in his own time, meets with him under it, and manifests his power and grace, breaks his bonds asunder, delivers him out of Satan's hands, and from the bondage of his own corruptions, sets him straight, and causes him to lift up his head, and look to him for life and salvation; and so puts a new song into his mouth, even praise to God, to whose free grace and favour he readily ascribes his deliverance.

Ver. 14. *And the ruler of the synagogue*, etc.] For there never was but one in a synagogue, whatever some writers have observed to the contrary; (see Gill on "Matthew 9:18") the Ethiopic version reads, "the chief priests", but wrongly; these dwelt at Jerusalem, and in Galilee:

answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day; his indignation was at Christ, and the miracle he had wrought, being filled with envy at the honour it would bring unto him; though he covered it under pretence of its being a violation of the sabbath, and that it ought not to have been done on such a day, and in such a place, which were appropriated not to servile works, but to religious worship;

and said unto the people; over whom he had an authority, and who stood in awe of him, because of his office and dignity; and not daring to attack Christ himself, at least not directly, though he struck at him through the people, whose doctrine and miracles were so extraordinary.

There are six days which men ought to work, in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day; referring to the fourth command: but this observation and reproof were impertinent and needless, for the people did not come to be healed; for ought appears, the cure was unthought of and unexpected; nor was healing, especially as performed by

Christ, by a word and a touch, a servile work, and therefore could not be any breach of the law referred to. The Ethiopic version reads, “is there not a sixth day? — — come on that day”; the day before the sabbath.

Ver. 15. *The Lord then answered him and said*, etc.] Though he did not direct his speech to him, he knew that he struck at him, and suggested that he was a violator of the sabbath, as well as the people: and therefore in defence of himself, and of what he had done, and to expose the hypocrisy of this man, made answer as follows,

thou hypocrite; the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read in the plural, “hypocrites”; as do the Complutensian edition, and four ancient copies of Beza's, and the Alexandrian copy; but the Syriac and Persic versions read in the singular, “hypocrite”; as this man was, who covered his malice and envy at Christ, with a show of zeal for the sabbath day; and yet did that upon it, which must be allowed by themselves, and others, to be a much greater violation of the sabbath, than this cure could ever be thought to be:

doth not each one of you, on the sabbath day, loose his ox, or his ass, from the stall, or rack, where he is fastened with a rope;

and lead him away to watering? to some place of water, where he may drink, after having filled himself at the rack: and that this was agreeably to their own canons and practice, that beasts may be led out on a sabbath day, is certain; for they deliver various rules concerning leading them out, with what they might, and with what they might not be brought out; and particularly, among others, mention asses and heifers [f424]; and they speak [f425] of leading them to water, not only to drink of it, but to wash their chains in it, which, it seems, received pollution, and needed washing, and might be done on a sabbath day; yea, they allow, that not only a beast may be led out to watering, but a man might fill a vessel of water, and pour it out into a trough for it, provided he did not directly set it before it: the rule is this [f426]

> “a man may not fill water (a vessel of it), and put it on a sabbath day before his beast, but he may fill it, and pour it out, and it may drink of it.”

And particularly on a feast day, their rule is [f427], that

> “they do not water nor slay beasts of the desert, but they water and slay domestic ones. Domestic ones are such as lie in the city (i.e. as Maimonides says [f428], within the sabbatical border, 2000 cubits from the city), and those of the desert are such as lie in pastures.”

And therefore very justly does our Lord observe to the ruler of the synagogue their own practices towards a beast, in defence of his works of mercy to men.

Ver. 16. *And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham*, etc.] Not only a woman, or rational creature, and much preferable, as such, to an irrational one; but a descendant of Abraham, of whom the Jews gloried, and in descent from him prided themselves, and trusted; and chose to call their women by this name [f429], which gave them a character above others: and who, besides all this, was doubtless a good woman, a spiritual worshipper of the God of Israel; who, in a spiritual sense, was a daughter of Abraham, that walked in the steps of his faith, and was now a believer in Christ, and appeared to be a chosen vessel of salvation:

whom Satan hath bound, lo these eighteen years; with a bodily distemper that none could loose her from in so long a time. The Persic version, very wrongly, reads “twelve years”; though in (Luke 13:11) it observes the right number.

Should not such an one be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? the force of Christ's reasoning is this, that if it was lawful, on a sabbath day, to lead out a beast to watering, to quench its thirst, that so it may not suffer so much as one day for want of water, how much more reasonable must it be, that a rational creature, one of Abraham's posterity, and a religious person, who had been for eighteen years under a sore affliction, through the power of Satan over her, by divine permission, should be freed from so long and sore an affliction on the sabbath day? if mercy is to be shown to beasts, much more to men and women.

Ver. 17. *And when he had said these things*, etc.] Had argued with them from their own practices, and in a way so strong and rational, that carried such evidence and conviction with it:

all his adversaries were ashamed; not only the ruler of the synagogue, but the Scribes and Pharisees, that were present, who followed him wherever he went, and were his implacable enemies; these were confounded and

silenced; shame appeared in their countenances; they could not lift up their heads, and look him in the face.

And all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him; for the doctrines he taught, and the miracles he wrought, and his wise and close reasonings at this time, to the shame and confusion of all that opposed him: for his audience consisted of different sorts, and what he said, and did, had different effects upon them. Some were filled with joy, and others with wrath, malice, and envy. And this is true with respect to spiritual and eternal things. Glorious things have been done by Christ in eternity, by becoming the surety of his people, by entering into a covenant with his Father on their account, and by taking the care and charge of their persons, and of all grace, blessings, and promises for them; and in time, by assuming their nature, fulfilling the law, bringing in an everlasting righteousness, making peace and reconciliation, procuring pardon, and finishing the work of redemption and salvation; and now in heaven, by entering as the forerunner for them, appearing in the presence of God on their account, presenting their prayers, and making intercession for them: and these are glorious things; they make for the glory of all the divine perfections; they issue in the glory of Christ himself; and in consequence of them, the saints enjoy eternal glory and happiness: these are things of the greatest importance, are wonderful and amazing, and for which saints and angels will glorify God both here and hereafter; and these occasion joy, and gladness in the Lord's people now. For not carnal and profane persons, or hypocrites, and formal professors, or Pharisees, and self-righteous persons rejoice at these things; but such as are the Lord's own people, who are openly his; who have passed under a work of the Spirit of God, who have seen their need of these things, and are sensible of the value of them; who know Christ, and love him, and believe in him.

Ver. 18. *Then said he, unto what is the kingdom of God like*? etc.] The same with the kingdom of heaven, in (<4013>Matthew 13:31) and so the Ethiopic version reads it here, “and whereunto shall I resemble it?” of this way of speaking, (see Gill on “<4130>Mark 4:30”).

Ver. 19. *It is like a grain of mustard seed*, etc.] Both for its smallness at first, and its after increase; wherefore both the Evangelists Matthew and Mark observe, that it “is the least of all seed”: which is true of the ministry of the Gospel, of the Gospel church state, and of the grace of God in the hearts of his people:

which a man took and cast into his garden; the Ethiopic version renders it, "and sowed in his field", as in (<4013>Matthew 13:31) though mustard used to be sowed in gardens as well as in fields. [f430] Says R. Simeon ben Chelphetha, I have one stalk of mustard seed, ylç dwtb, "in my garden": so [f431] Buxtorf translates it. And by the place in the text, where this seed is cast, may be meant, either the "field" of the world, where the Gospel is preached, and churches are raised; or the "garden" of the church, where the word and ordinances are administered, and in the hearts of the members of it, the grace of God is implanted and increased; (see <2012>Song of Solomon 4:12,13)

and it grew and waxed a great tree, which may design the spread of the Gospel in the world, the flourishing state of the church of Christ, and the growth of grace in the hearts of believers.

And the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it; the Syriac version reads in the singular number, "the fowl of the air"; not Satan, and his principalities and powers, which devour the seed sown by the wayside; nor the angels of heaven; but rather gracious men on earth, who sit under the shadow of a Gospel ministry with great delight; and "make their nests", as the Persic version here renders the words, and take up their residence in Gospel churches; (see Gill on "<4013>Matthew 13:31-32") (see Gill on "<4093>Mark 4:31-32").

Ver. 20. *And again he said*, etc.] That is, Jesus, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it; besides the parable of the grain of mustard seed, that also of the leaven hid in three measures of meal:

whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God; either the Gospel of the kingdom, and the mysteries of it; or the church, which is Christ's kingdom; or the grace of God in the heart, which makes meet for the kingdom of glory; the first seems rather to be intended; (see Gill on "<4013>Matthew 13:33").

Ver. 21. *It is like leaven*, etc.] Which is small in quantity, but is of a swelling, spreading quality; and fitly expresses the small beginnings of the Gospel ministry, and its increase, also the state and case of Gospel churches, and the nature of the grace of God; unless false doctrine should rather be meant, which privately, secretly, and by little and little, got into the churches of Christ, the kingdom of God, and spread itself all over them, as in the times of the papacy:

which a woman took; Christ, and his ministers, Wisdom, and her maidens, understanding it of the Gospel; but if the leaven of error is intended, that woman, Jezebel, is meant, who calls herself a prophetess, and teaches, and seduces the servants of God, (Revelation 2:20)

and hid in three measures of meal: among a few of God's people at first, both among Jews and Gentiles,

till the whole was leavened; until all the elect of God are gathered in, and evangelized by it; even the whole fulness of the Gentiles, and all the people of the Jews, which shall be saved in the latter day; but if the parable is to be understood of the false doctrine and discipline of the Antichristian and apostate church of Rome, it may denote the small beginnings of the mystery of iniquity, which began to work in the apostle's time by the errors and heresies then propagated, and the manner in which the man of sin was privately introduced; whose coming is after the working of Satan, with signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, first among a few, and then more, until at length the whole world wondered after the beast, (2 Thessalonians 2:7-10, Revelation 13:3).

Ver. 22. *And he went through the cities and villages*, etc.] Either of Galilee, or of Judea, or both; since he was upon his journey from Galilee, through Judea, to Jerusalem, as it follows:

teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem; as he was journeying he taught in every place he came, where he could have an opportunity; his delight was to do good both to the bodies and souls of men; and he was constant and assiduous in it.

Ver. 23. *Then said one unto him*, etc.] Not one of his disciples, but one of the company, in some one of the cities or villages he passed through, or as he was in the road to Jerusalem:

are there few that be saved? It is a received opinion among the Jews [f432], that all Israel shall have a part in the world to come; and this man might put the question to know whether Christ was of this sentiment or not. And by some things he had observed drop from him, and it may be the foregoing parables, which express the small beginnings of his kingdom, and seem to signify, that at first his Gospel should be received but by a few, though it should afterwards spread, he might collect, that his sense was, there would be but a few saved; or this might be a question of mere curiosity and speculation, as it seems to be, by Christ's treatment of it, who does not give

a direct answer to it, but puts him and others upon showing a concern for their own salvation.

And he said unto them; not to the man only that put the question, but to the whole company; though the Persic and Ethiopic versions read, "he said unto him", as follows.

Ver. 24. *Strive to enter in at the strait gate*, etc.] What is meant by the strait gate, and by entering in at it, (see Gill on "Matthew 7:13"). To "strive", is to be diligent in the use of means; to search the Scriptures with care; to attend on the preaching of the word with constancy, neglecting no opportunity; to pray earnestly for spiritual light, knowledge, and grace; to contend with every enemy that opposes the salvation of the soul, as sin, Satan, and the world; to bear all reproaches and persecutions, and press through all difficulties, for the prize of the incorruptible crown: the metaphor seems to be taken from the striving, wrestling, and combat in the Olympic games, for a corruptible crown:

for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able: either when it is too late, when the door is shut; or else before, very faintly, in a superficial manner, from a mere natural affection, from a principle of self-love, which leads every one to desire happiness; and by very indirect and improper methods, by their own civility, morality, and righteousness; by works of the law, moral, or ceremonial; or by a profession of religion, and an outward compliance with the ordinances of the Gospel, and not by Christ, and faith in him.

Ver. 25. *When once the master of the house is risen up*, etc.] From table, or off of his couch, the entertainment being over: and so here, the Gospel feast, or dispensation, being at an end, and all the guests come in, who were effectually called, and long patience and forbearance being used towards others; or has entered in, as the Vulgate Latin version reads, and so Beza's ancient copy, and one of Stephens's; is come from the wedding; (see Luke 12:36) Christ having espoused all his elect to himself, by the ministry of the word: for by "the master of the house" is meant, the bridegroom of the church, the head of the body, the King of saints, who is Son over his own house, and high priest there; of whom the whole family in heaven and earth, is named:

and hath shut to the door; the door of mercy and of hope; the door of faith; the preaching of the word, and the administration of ordinances, when these shall be no more:

and ye begin to stand without; or “do stand without”; without the holy city, where dogs are; having no admittance to the nuptial chamber, to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and the joys of heaven:

and to knock at the door; which shows how near some persons may come to heaven, and yet not enter there, even to the very door; and what an expectation, yea, an assurance they may have, of admission into it, not at all doubting of it; and therefore knock as if they were some of the family, and had a right to enter; but not finding the door opened to them, so soon as they imagined, they begin to call as well as knock:

saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; they acknowledge Christ to be Lord, as all will at the last day, to the glory of God the Father, even professors and profane; they repeat the word, to show the vehemency and earnestness of their entreaty; and according to the Syriac and, Persic versions, they claim an interest in Christ, which read, “our Lord, our Lord”; and on account of which they doubted not, but the door would be opened: but alas! he was only their Lord in a professional way; they had only called him Lord, Lord, but had never truly and heartily yielded obedience to him; their hearts had never been opened to him, and he had never had a place there, nor his Gospel; wherefore though they knock, he will not open;

and he shall answer and say unto you. The Persic version adds, “nay, but be ye gone hence”, for the following reason,

I know you not, whence you are: not but that Christ being the omniscient God, will know who they are, from whence they come, of what country and place they be, and to whom they belong; but the sense is, that he will not own them, and express any approbation of them, as his; but will treat them as strangers, that come, it is not known, from whence; he will reject them, as not being born from above, as not being the sheep of his fold, or members of his true church: they did not come from heaven, they were not heaven born souls, or partakers of the heavenly calling, and therefore shall not be received there; they belonged to the men of the world, and were of their father the devil, and shall be sent to him: so the foolish virgins, or formal professors of religion, and such as have been preachers of the Gospel, will entreat Christ at the last day, and shall have such an answer as

this returned to them, which will be very awful and startling; (see Gill on "⁴⁰⁰⁷Matthew 7:23"), (see Gill on "⁴⁰⁵²Matthew 25:12").

Ver. 26. *Then shall ye begin to say*, etc.] Or ye shall say; in favour of themselves, and in order to be admitted within, the following pleas will be made by them:

we have eaten and drank in thy presence: which may be understood both literally of many, who were miraculously led by Christ, or at whose tables he had ate and drank, and they with him; as did not only publicans and sinners, but some of the Pharisees, who invited him to their houses; and in a religious sense, of many who eat of the legal sacrifices; and of others, who eat the bread, and drink the wine at the Lord's table; all which will be insufficient to introduce men into the kingdom and glory of Christ: natural relation to Christ, which the Jews may claim, being born of them, and personal acquaintance with him, and a bare profession of him, will be of no avail another day:

and thou hast taught in our streets; in the streets of many cities in Galilee and Judea: it was customary with the Jewish doctors to teach in the streets:

> "says Rabba, behold I am as Ben Azzai, in the streets of Tiberias [f433];"

the gloss upon it is,

> "who was yqwçb çrwd, "expounding in the streets of Tiberias.""

And it is said [f434] of Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai,

> "that he was sitting in the shade of the temple, and expounding all the whole day;"

the gloss on the place is,

> "the temple being an hundred cubits high, its shade went very far "in the street", which is before the mountain of the house; and because "the street" was large, and held abundance of men, he was expounding there by reason of the heat, for no school could hold them:"

and it is also said of R. Chija [f435], that

> "he went out and taught his brother's two sons, qwçb, "in the street"."

So that what our Lord did, was no other than what was usual with their doctors; nor is this contrary to what is said in (see Gill on "Matthew 12:19"): this is also a fruitless plea and which will be of no service; it will signify nothing, to have heard Christ preached, or Christ himself preach, unless there is faith in him, which works by love; for not hearers of the word only, but doers of it are regarded.

Ver. 27. *But he shall say*, etc.] The Persic version adds, "be gone from my sight, and be far from my door"; expressing indignation at them, an abhorrence of them, as not being able to bear them in his sight, or near unto him:

I tell you, I know you not whence you are; this is repeated, and with a strong asseveration, to denote the certainty of the truth expressed, and to cast off all hope in them, of ever succeeding by their entreaties and importunity:

depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; or "of a lie", as the Syriac and Persic versions render it: for they were deceitful workers, they professed what they did not from the heart believe; they said they were Christians, but were not, and now are found liars; they only attended on the word and ordinances in an hypocritical way, and trusted in, and depended upon, their outward profession of religion, and subjection to ordinances; and by so doing, instead of working righteousness, wrought iniquity; and so as they did not submit to Christ and his righteousness, they are bid to depart from him, as wicked and unrighteous men, as they were: the word "all" is here used, which is not in (Matthew 7:23) which agrees with (Psalm 6:8) to which there seems to be a reference, though it is omitted here, in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; (see Gill on "Matthew 7:23").

Ver. 28. *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*, etc.] (See Gill on "Matthew 8:12"). This will be upon hearing the above sentence and character, "depart from me", etc. and will be increased,

when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: whose offspring they were, and to whom they stood related according to the flesh; and of descent, from whom they boasted, and even trusted in it, thinking themselves the favourites of heaven, and expecting to be admitted into the kingdom of

God, on account of it: sad will be the disappointment of such persons; a being born of religious parents, will neither give right unto, nor meetness for eternal glory; regeneration is not of blood:

and all the prophets in the kingdom of God; whose prophecies were transmitted to them, and whose books they had in their hands, and read; and who desired to see and hear what they did, and which they now plead, and yet they did not enjoy, but were nevertheless happy: and

you [yourselves] thrust out: with indignation and contempt, with shame and "ignominy", as the Persic version adds; not suffered to go in with them, though their sons and successors; but bid to depart, and ordered to be for ever separated from them, as only fit company for devils and damned spirits.

Ver. 29. *And they shall come*, etc.] From all parts the world, from every nation under the heavens; meaning the Gentiles, and which will be a greater aggravation of the punishment of the Jews, and cause still more rage and madness: these shall

come from the east and from the west; from the rising of the sun, to the going down of the same, (<23E606>Isaiah 45:6, <39011>Malachi 1:11)

and from the north, and from the south; from the most distant parts of the world inhabited by men; (see <23E605>Isaiah 43:5,6). God has his chosen ones, and Christ has a people in all parts of the world; and therefore his Gospel must be preached to all nations, for the gathering of them in, which will be done in the latter day; and in the resurrection morn, as these will be raised in the several places where they will have been buried, they will come from thence, and make one body, and will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and will be for ever with him:

and shall sit down in the kingdom of God; in Christ's kingdom, in the new heavens, and new earth, as persons that sit down at a table, to partake of a feast; (see <42230>Luke 22:30) and in the ultimate glory, where they shall have rest, peace, and joy, for evermore. The Ethiopic version renders it, "they shall rejoice in the kingdom of God"; they shall partake of the joys of heaven; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away; and the Persic version, "and they shall take a repose, and sit and rest"; they shall rest from all their labour, and be in perfect ease and peace; (see Gill on "<40811>Matthew 8:11").

Ver. 30. *And behold, there are last which shall be first*, etc.] The Gentiles, the most mean and abject, afar from God, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, called last of all; these shall be first, and sit down among patriarchs and prophets, men of the first rank here on earth, in the kingdom of heaven, and enjoy the same glory and happiness with them:

and there are first which shall be last: the Jews, who were first the visible professing people of God, to whom the oracles of God, and outward privileges and ordinances were given; who had the Messiah first sent to them, and the Gospel first preached among them; these shall be last, be rejected and despised, and shut out of the kingdom of heaven, they thought themselves heirs of, and expected to enjoy; (see <4019>Matthew 19:30 20:16).

Ver. 31. *The same day there came certain of the Pharisees*, etc.] Who dwelt in Galilee, for they were in all parts of the country: these being nettled and filled with indignation at Christ, because of the parables he had that day delivered, the miracles he had wrought, and the several awful and striking things which dropped from him, and which they knew respected them; contrived to get rid of him, by frightening him with a design of Herod's, to take away his life, should he continue there: for this seems to be rather a stratagem of theirs, than of Herod's; though it may he, that Herod might take this method, and make use of these men in this way, to terrify him; fearing to lay hold on him, and put him to death; partly because of the people, and partly because of the remaining uneasiness and terror of his mind, for taking off the head of John the Baptist:

saying, get thee out and depart hence; in all haste, as soon as possible:

for Herod will kill thee: he is resolved upon it, he has formed a design, and will quickly take methods to execute it. This was Herod the tetrarch, of Galilee; from whence we learn, that Christ was as yet in Galilee, though he was journeying towards Jerusalem, (<4222>Luke 13:22) for Herod's jurisdiction reached no further than Galilee: this was either a device of Herod's, or of the Pharisees, or of both, to get rid of Christ in the easiest manner.

Ver. 32. *And he said unto them, go ye and tell that fox*, etc.] Herod, who it may be sent them, of which Christ was not ignorant, nor of his design in it; and who, as Nero, for his cruelty, is compared to a lion, so he for his subtlety in this instance, as well as in the whole of his conduct, to a fox; though some think Christ has a regard to the Pharisees, and their craftiness,

in forming this story, pretending good will to him, by acquainting him of Herod's malicious designs, when their view was only to scare him out of their country; so the false prophets and teachers, are for their cunning, subtlety, and flattery, compared to foxes, (<2215>Song of Solomon 2:15, <2604>Ezekiel 13:4) as well as for their greediness and voraciousness: the word is used with the Jews, for a vain and empty man, in opposition to a good man; as in that saying [f436] of R. Jannai, ``be thou the tail of lions, and not the head of "foxes;""

or "vain men", as the gloss explains it:

behold, I cast out devils; or "I will cast out devils", as the Ethiopic version reads, in spite of him, let him do his worst:

and I do cures today and tomorrow; and so for some time to come; and which was doing good, and was what Herod and the Pharisees, had they any humanity in them, would have rejoiced at, and have chose that he should have continued with them, and not have threatened him with his life, or have took any methods to send him from them:

and the third day I shall be perfected; that is, in a little time after, I shall be made perfect by sufferings, my course will be finished, and I shall have done all the work completely, I came about; and till that time come, it is not in his power, nor yours, nor all the men on earth, or devils in hell, to take away my life, or hinder me doing what I am about.

Ver. 33. *Nevertheless, I must walk*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, "I must work", and so the Arabic: as going about doing good, casting out devils, and healing diseases:

today and tomorrow, and the day following: a few days more in Galilee, and towards Jerusalem: all the Oriental versions read, "the day following I shall depart"; either out of this world; or out of Galilee, and go to Jerusalem, and there suffer and die:

for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem; because the great sanhedrim only sat at Jerusalem, to whom it belonged to try and judge a prophet; and if found false, to condemn him, and put him to death; the rule is this [f437];

> "they do not judge, neither a tribe, nor a false prophet, nor an high priest, but by the sanhedrim of seventy and one."

Not but that prophets sometimes perished elsewhere, as John the Baptist in Galilee; but not according to a judicial process, in which way Christ the prophet was to be cut off, nor was it common; instances of this kind were rare, and always in a violent way; and even such as were sentenced to death by the lesser sanhedrim, were brought to Jerusalem, and publicly executed there, whose crimes were of another sort; for so runs the canon [f438];

> "they do not put any one to death by the sanhedrim, which is in his city, nor by the sanhedrim in Jabneh; but they bring him to the great, sanhedrim in Jerusalem, and keep him till the feast, and put him to death on a feast day, as it is said (<5517>Deuteronomy 17:13) "and all the people shall hear and fear.""

And since Jerusalem was the place where the prophets were usually put to death, it follows,

Ver. 34. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets*, etc.] These words, with what follow, as they stand in (<4023>Matthew 23:37-39) were delivered by Christ, when he was in the temple at Jerusalem; but here they were spoken by him when in Galilee, in Herod's jurisdiction; so that it appears, that the same words were spoken by Christ at different times, in different places, and to different persons: unless it can be thought, that Luke transcribed them from Matthew, and inserts them here, on occasion of Christ's having mentioned the perishing of a prophet in Jerusalem; where many had been killed and put to death, in one way or another, and particularly in the following:

and stonest them that are sent unto thee; as Zechariah, (<1424>2 Chronicles 24:20-22)

how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not? and therefore ought not to have been condemned as a false prophet by their sanhedrim, as he suggests he should be, and as he afterwards was; (see Gill on "<4023>Matthew 23:37").

Ver. 35. *Behold, your house is left unto you desolate*, etc.] That is, would be in a little time, both city and temple; (see Gill on "<4023>Matthew 23:38")

and verily I say unto you; affirm in the strongest manner:

ye shall not see me; the Arabic version adds, “from henceforth”, and so some copies, as in (4023Matthew 23:39) and so the Ethiopic version, “from this time”; that he spoke these words, whether in Galilee, or in the temple:

until the time come; or “until he shall come”, meaning himself, and his second coming:

when ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; not they themselves in person, but their posterity, who will be converted in the latter day: and shall acknowledge the Messiah, the blessed of the Lord, who will come in his name, to judge the world in righteousness: or else the meaning is, that when Christ shall come a second time, and every eye shall see him, these Jews, among the rest, shall behold him, whom they have pierced, and mourn; and wish themselves among those, that shall receive him with joyful acclamations; and however, will be obliged to own him as the Messiah, and to confess that he comes in the name, and with the authority of the Lord, and that he is blessed for evermore.

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 14

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass*, etc.] The Persic version adds, “on a certain day”; and it is afterwards said to be the sabbath day. This seems to have been somewhere or other in Galilee; (see <2717>Luke 17:11).

As he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees; or rather, one of the rulers, and of the sect of the Pharisees: and he might be either a ruler of a synagogue, or a member of one of the lesser or greater sanhedrim; such another as Nicodemus, who was of the Pharisees, and a ruler of the Jews, (<4001>John 3:1) for that there was any distinction among the Pharisees as a sect, does not appear: to this man's house Christ went, after he came out of the synagogue, being invited by him;

to eat bread on the sabbath day. The sabbath day was a feasting day with the Jews, in which they made very large and magnificent entertainments, for the honour of the sabbath; and he was reckoned the most praiseworthy, that exceeded this way; and no doubt, since this man was a Pharisee, one that was tenacious of the traditions of the elders, and was also a ruler, his table was well spread: the rules concerning this part of keeping the sabbath, are these [f439];

> “what is this delight? the wise men say, a man ought to prepare abundance of food and spiced liquids, for the sabbath, all according to a man's substance; and whoever multiplies in the expenses of the sabbath, and in preparing food, much and good, lo, he is praiseworthy; and if he is not able, though he only prepares boiled food, and such like, on account of the glory of the sabbath, lo, this is the delight of the sabbath: and he is not obliged to straiten himself, nor to ask of others, to increase the food of the sabbath: the ancient wise men said, make thy sabbath a common day, and do not make thyself necessitous to men; he who is delicate and rich, and lo, all his days are as a sabbath day, ought to have food on a sabbath day, different from that on a weekday; and if it is not possible to change, let him alter the time of eating; if he had been

> used to have it soon, let him have it late; and if late, let him have it sooner: a man is obliged to eat three meals, or feasts, on a sabbath day; one in the evening, and one in the morning, and one at the time of the meat offering; and he ought to take heed to those three feasts, that he does not diminish them at all; and even a poor man that is maintained by alms, must keep the three feasts."

And this last canon, or rule, is of the utmost importance with them; for they [f440] say,

> "whoever keeps the three feasts on the sabbath day, shall be delivered from three punishments, from the sorrows of the Messiah, from the judgment of hell, and from the war of Gog and Magog."

That they watched him; that is, those that sat down to meat with him, the lawyers and Pharisees: and it is very probable, that it was not out of pure respect to him, that he was asked to eat meat at this ruler's house; but with a design to observe whatever might be said, or done by him, they could take any advantage from, against him.

Ver. 2. *And behold, there was a certain man before him*, etc.] Who sat just before him, as he was at table; who either came there of himself, in order to receive a cure; or rather, since it was in a private house, and he at table too, was brought and set there on purpose by the Pharisees, to try whether Christ would heal him on the sabbath day, that they might have somewhat against him; which they doubted not but he would do, knowing his compassionate and beneficent disposition to do good to creatures in distress, whenever he had an opportunity:

which had the dropsy: or "gathered waters", as the Syriac version renders it; was filled with water, which is the nature of that disease, and distinguishes it from what is called the dry dropsy: this disease is a preternatural collection of serum, or water in some part of the body; or a too great proportion thereof in the blood. The "dropsy" acquires different names, from the different parts it afflicts, or the different parts the waters are collected in; that of the "abdomen", or lower belly, called simply and absolutely "dropsy", is particularly denominated "ascites"; that of the whole habit of the body, "anasarca", or "leucophlegmatia"; that of the head, "hydrocephalus"; that of the scrotum, "hydrocele". — -There is also a species of this disease, supposed to be caused instead of water, by a collection of wind, called "tympanites"; and by Hippocrates, the "dry

dropsy": we also meet with dropsies of the breast, pericardium, uterus, ovaries, etc. The causes of dropsies in general, are whatever may obstruct the serous part of the blood, so as to make it stagnate in the vessels; or burst the vessels themselves, so as to let the blood out among the membranes; or weaken and relax the tone of the vessels; or this the blood, and make it watery; or lessen perspiration. These causes are various, viz. sometimes acute diseases, scirrhous tumours of any of the more noble viscera, excessive evacuations, particularly haemorrhages, hard drinking, etc. The "ascites", or "water dropsy" of the "abdomen", is the most usual case, and what we particularly call the "dropsy": its symptoms are tumours, first of the feet and legs, and afterwards of the "abdomen." which keep continually growing; and if the belly be struck or shook, there is heard a quashing of water: add to this, three other attendants, viz. a dyspnoea, intense thirst, and sparing urine; with which may be numbered heaviness, listlessness, costiveness, a light fever, and an emaciation of the body [f441]. Such we must suppose to be the case of this man, and that he was now in such a condition, as to be thought incurable.

Ver. 3. *And Jesus answering, spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees*, etc.] All the Oriental versions, for "lawyers", read "Scribes": these, with the Pharisees, were got together in a body, in their brother Pharisee's house, to watch the motions of Christ; who knew their designs upon him, and the thoughts of their hearts, and made answer to them, by putting the following question;

saying, is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? The occasion of the question was the object before him, whom Christ had a compassionate regard to, and determined to cure; but knowing that these men were catching at every thing, to traduce him, was desirous of having their sentiments first; not but that he knew full well, what was agreeable to the law of God, and what was not; and what also were the traditions of their elders, which they held, and which allowed of healing on the sabbath day, where life was in danger.

Ver. 4. *And they held their peace*, etc.] Or were silent, choosing to say nothing, which might countenance such an action; and yet knew not how to condemn it:

and he took [him], and healed him, and let him go; he took him by the hand, or laid his hands on him; he touched him, and, it may be, stroked the part affected, and in an instant the prodigious swelling of his body came

down: for he who at his rebuke could dry up the sea, could by a touch dry up such a quantity of water, as was in this man's body; and then he dismissed him from the table and company, and he went home perfectly cured.

Ver. 5. *And answered them, saying*, etc.] Murmuring secretly at what he had done:

which of you shall have an ass, or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? being just ready to be drowned there; and therefore it must be much more right and necessary to cure a man, a reasonable creature, just drowning with a dropsy, as this man was. The Syriac and Persic versions, instead of "an ass", read "a son", very wrongly: a like kind of reasoning is used by Christ, in (see Gill on "Matthew 12:11"), (see Gill on "Luke 13:15").

Ver. 6. *And they could not answer him again to these things*, etc.] The justice, equity, mercy, and humanity that appeared in our Lord's reasonings, and the cases he instanced in, being agreeable to their own tenets and practices, their mouths were shut up, and they could not return an answer to them, without being exposed,

Ver. 7. *And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden*, etc.] To the dinner at the Pharisee's house, particularly the lawyers, or Scribes and Pharisees:

when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; the uppermost places at the table, which these men loved, coveted, and sought after; (see Gill on "Matthew 23:6")

saying unto them; as follows.

Ver. 8. *When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding*, etc.] To a wedding dinner, or to any other; such an one as the present entertainment was, which was not a marriage feast, for they might not marry on the sabbath day; (see Gill on "John 2:1") but a common sabbath meal:

sit not down in the highest room: in the chief place at table, as soon as come in:

lest a more honourable man; for age, office, dignity, wisdom, learning, or riches:

than thou be bidden of him: the master of the feast; and who may not yet be come, and for whom the chief place may be designed, and will better suit him.

Ver. 9. *And he that bade thee and him*, etc.] To the feast, and who is the master of it, and has a right to dispose of, and order his guests at his table, as he thinks fit:

come and say to thee, give this man place; pray rise up, and give this honourable man this seat, which is more suitable for a person of his rank and figure, and take another:

and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room; or place, which must unavoidably fill a man with shame and confusion; because hereby his pride and vanity, in affecting the uppermost room, will be publicly exposed; and he who before sat in the chief place, will have the mortification, before all the guests, to be seated in the lowest.

Ver. 10. *But when thou art bidden*, etc.] To an entertainment, and the time is come,

go and sit down in the lowest room: place thyself at the lower end of the table, or in the most inferior seat; which will show humility and lowliness of mind, and prevent shame and mortification; since there can be no putting into a lower place, and there may be an advance to an higher:

that when he that bade thee cometh; into the dining room, and observe in what place thou art:

he may say unto thee, friend, go up higher; to a more honourable seat at table, pointing to it, and saying, there is such a seat empty, go up and take it, it best becomes thee:

then shalt thou have worship; or glory, as the word signifies; honour and esteem, instead of shame and blushing; not only from the master of the feast,

but in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee; and from them, who will take notice of the honour done thee, and will entertain an high opinion of thee, and commend thee for thine humility and modesty. Advice, like to this, is given by Solomon in (<20256>Proverbs 25:6,7) and which is explained by the Jews in like manner as here [f442]:

> "Ben Azzai used to say, descend, from thy place two or three degrees, and sit; it is better that it should be said to thee, hl[, "go up", than that it should be said to thee, descend, as it is said in (<120717>Proverbs 25:7)."

Which is elsewhere [f443] thus expressed:

> "R. Akiba taught it (or expounded, (<120717>Proverbs 25:7)) in the name of R. Simeon ben Azzai, remove from thy place two or three seats, and sit until it is said to thee, hl[, "go up"; but do not go up (i.e. first,) for it will be said to thee descend; it is better that it should be said to thee go up, go up, than that it should be said to thee go down, go down: and Ben Hillell used to say, my humiliation is my exaltation, and my exaltation is my humiliation."

Ver. 11. *For whosoever exalteth himself*, etc.] Either in the above way, or any other, shall be abased, humbled and mortified:

and he that humbleth himself; behaves in an humble and modest manner,

shall be exalted; (see Gill on "<401212>Matthew 23:12").

Ver. 12. *Then said he also to him that bad him*, etc.] As he had given advice and instructions to the guests, so he likewise thought fit to give some to the master of the house, that had given both him and them an invitation to the present meal; observing, very likely, that his guests consisted of such persons as are hereafter described.

When thou makest a dinner, or a supper; any entertainment for other persons, at what time of the day soever, whether sooner or later, at noon, or at night, on sabbath days, or others:

call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours: that is, do not invite thy rich friends, rich brethren, and rich kinsmen, as well as not rich neighbours: not that our Lord's meaning is, that such should not be invited at all; which would be to destroy friendship and sociable conversation among persons in such a relation, and of such rank and fortune: but his sense is, that not these only should be invited, to the neglect of poor friends, poor brethren, poor kinsmen, and poor neighbours; and who, comparatively speaking, should rather be invited than the former, as being what would be more serviceable to them, and of a greater advantage in the issue to the master of the feast himself.

Lest they also bid thee again; and thee only, and not the poor, to as grand an entertainment, which is commonly done:

and a recompense be made thee: one feasting bout for another, so that there will be no obligation on either side; and this will be all the advantage that will be gained; the return is made here, and there will be no reward hereafter.

Ver. 13. *But when thou makest a feast*, etc.] An entertainment for others, a dinner, or a supper:

call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind; that is, the poor maimed, the poor lame, and the poor blind; otherwise it is possible that rich men may be maimed, lame, and blind; whereas these are not intended, but such who are in indigent circumstances, that stand in need of a meal, and to whom it is welcome.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt be blessed*, etc.] By God, with an increase of worldly substance, or with spiritual blessings, and with eternal glory and happiness; and by these poor objects, who will pray to God for a blessing upon such a kind benefactor:

for they cannot recompense thee; by inviting again to a like entertainment, as rich guests can do, and when they have done that there is nothing else to be expected; but such that entertain the poor can have no return from them, and yet a retaliation will be made:

for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just; when the just shall rise again, which will be the first resurrection; and happy is he that has part in it: for the righteous, or dead in Christ will rise first; and notice will be taken of the good works of the saints, particularly of their acts of beneficence to the poor members of Christ; and which they have done in faith, from a principle of love to Christ, and with a view to the glory of God, and the good of their fellow creatures and Christians.

Ver. 15. *And when one of them that sat at meat with him*, etc.] One of the Scribes, lawyers, or Pharisees, that were guests at this feast:

heard these things: which were spoken by Christ, and was pleased and affected with them, though he was ignorant:

he said unto him, blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God; in the world to come, in the kingdom of the Messiah; concerning feasting

in which, the Jews had entertained very gross notions; and which this man was reminded of by Christ's making mention of the resurrection of the just, and of recompense at that time, which the Jews expected at the Messiah's coming. They suppose, that God will make a splendid feast, a sumptuous entertainment; in which, besides "bread", which they call, twklm lç hmjl, "the bread of the kingdom", and "the bread of the world to come" [f444], there will be great variety of flesh, fish, and fowl, plenty of generous wine, and all sorts of delicious fruit: particularly they speak of a large ox, which they suppose to be the Behemoth in Job, that will then be prepared; and of Leviathan and his mate, which will then be dressed; and of a large fowl, called Ziz, of a monstrous size; and of old wine kept in the grape from the creation of the world, which will then be drank; and of the rich fruits of the garden of Eden, that will then be served up [f445]: such gross and carnal notions have they entertained of the world to come; and which this man seemed to have imbibed, and placed happiness in.

Ver. 16. *Then said he unto him*, etc.] That is, Jesus, as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions express it; he said to the man that was so affected with the happiness of such that shall share in the provisions of the Messiah's kingdom;

a certain man made a great supper: by which is meant not the Lord's supper, which was not as yet instituted; nor the supper of the Lamb, which will be at the end of the world; but the Gospel dispensation, which was now taking place, and the provisions of it in the word and ordinances: and which is called a "supper"; because made in the end of the world, in the last days: and a "great" one, because of the maker of it, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; and the matter of it, a variety of rich provisions, a feast of fat things, an entertainment consisting of the greatest dainties, and most delightful food; and on account of the number of the guests invited, all people, every creature, to whom the outward ministration of the Gospel comes; and those who are properly guests that come, are a great number which no man can number; as well as because of the cost and charges of it to the maker, though it is all free to the guests; and likewise because of the circumstances of exceeding great joy and pleasure that attend it; to which may be added, the long duration of it, even from the first to the second coming of Christ.

And bade many. This first bidding more especially respects the Jews, who are said to be "many", in reference to the promise made to Abraham, that

his seed should be as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand of the sea; and to set off the magnificence of the feast; and in distinction from all the world, and every creature, which were afterwards put into the Gospel commission: a foundation was laid for this supper in eternity, in the purposes, counsel, and covenant of God; and many prophecies concerning it were given out from the beginning; and sacrifices and ordinances were instituted, as emblematical of it, and to lead on to it, and give notice of it.

Ver. 17. *And sent his servant at supper time*, etc.] Either John the Baptist, the harbinger and forerunner of Christ, who declared that the kingdom of heaven, or the Gospel dispensation, was at hand; and exhorted the people to believe in Christ that should come after him; or Christ himself, who is God's servant as man, of his choosing and appointing, and whom he sent in the fulness of time in the form of a servant, as the minister of the circumcision, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and to call sinners to repentance; or servant may be put for servants, since in (Matthew 22:3,4) mention is made of more; and so the Persic version here; which parable bears some likeness to this, if it is not the same; and may design the apostles of Christ, who were the servants of the most high God, and the ministers of Christ, who were first sent by him to preach the Gospel to the Jews, and to them only for a while:

to say to them that were bidden, come: this call, or invitation, was not the internal call, which is a fruit of love, and by grace, and of mighty power; to special blessings, grace, and glory; and is irresistible, effectual, and unchangeable: but external, to outward ordinances: and is often slighted and neglected; and is sometimes of persons who are neither chosen, nor sanctified, nor saved:

for all things are now ready; the Syriac version adds, “for you”: righteousness, pardon of sin, peace, and reconciliation, sin put away by the sacrifice of Christ, redemption obtained, and life and salvation secured; which shows the perfection of the present dispensation, and the large provisions of the Gospel, to which nothing is, or can be brought to be added to them, or qualify for them.

Ver. 18. *And they all with one consent began to make excuse*, etc.] Or, “they all together”, as the Vulgate Latin version, tjab, “in one”, or “at once”: in (Jeremiah 10:8) rendered “altogether”; and so the Ethiopic version, which adds, “with one voice”: but their words and language were

not the same: their excuses are differently expressed. Some render απο μιας, “from one hour”: or the selfsame hour; immediately, directly, as soon as ever they were bidden, they began to frame excuses; they at once agreed, as by common consent, to excuse themselves from coming.

The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, or a field, and I must needs go and see it: he ought to have seen it before he bought it; and however, it was a very improper time, at evening, at supper time, as this was, to go and see a piece of ground; and at least it might have been put off till next morning; so that it was a mere excuse indeed.

I pray thee have me excused: coming to the supper: these were the principal men among the Jews, the Pharisees and rulers among the people; who were rich and covetous, worldly men; seeking their own worldly advantage more than their spiritual and eternal welfare, or the interest of God and religion.

Ver. 19. *And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen*, etc.] To plough the field with,

and I go to prove them: this also being at, or near evening, was an unsuitable time to go into the field with yokes of oxen to try them, how they would draw the plough, and work in the field; the morning would have been a much more proper time:

I pray thee have me excused; to the master of the feast: this man represents also the carnal and worldly Jews, who preferred temporal things before spiritual.

Ver. 20. *And another said, I have married a wife,* etc.] And his pretence might be, that he had his own marriage feast, and friends to attend, nor could he leave his wife directly; but his circumstances were such as made an invitation to a feast the more agreeable, and he might have brought his wife and friends along with him, who would have been as welcome as himself:

and therefore I cannot come. The Arabic version renders it, “therefore I will not go”: this man is more rustic and rude than the former; he does not so much as desire to be excused; and represents such who are fond of their sensual lusts and pleasures, and are resolved to indulge them, and will not be taken off from them by any means whatever.

Ver. 21. *So that servant came and showed his Lord these things*, etc.] The several excuses which those that were bidden to the supper made. So the ministers of the Gospel come to God and Christ, and give an account of the success of their ministry, which is often with grief, and not with joy:

then the master of the house being angry; as well he might, at their ingratitude to him, their slighting of his kindness, and the contempt they poured upon his entertainment. Christ resented the impenitence and unbelief of the Jews, who were favoured with his ministry and miracles; and looked upon them with anger, and was grieved because or the hardness of their hearts; and threatened them with a sorer punishment, more aggravated condemnation, and more intolerable torments, than other men.

And said to his servants; the apostle, when their commission was enlarged to preach to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem:

go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city; to the Jews, who lived under a civil government, under the law of Moses; though the meaner sort of them, the poor, and such as knew not the law in such sort as the Scribes and Pharisees did, who rejected the counsel of God against themselves; and so are comparable to persons that lie about the streets, and live in lanes and alleys: and, it may also regard the Jews that were scattered abroad in other places, and the proselytes to their religion among the Gentiles; to whom the Gospel was first preached, after it was rejected by the Jews at Jerusalem and in Judea:

and bring in hither the poor; not in a literal, but in a mystical and spiritual sense; such as have no spiritual food to eat, but ashes, gravel, wind, and husks of carnal lusts and sins; nor any spiritual clothing, no righteousness, but what may be justly called filthy rags; nor money to buy either, but are in debt, owe ten thousand talents, and have nothing to pay; of which spiritual poverty some are sensible, and others are not.

And the maimed; who are debilitated and enfeebled by sin; and so weak and strengthless, that they are not able to keep the law of God; to atone for sin; to redeem themselves, or others, from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law; to begin and carry on a work of grace and holiness in them; or to do any thing that is spiritually good:

and the halt; which is sometimes a character of persons that are in suspense about matters in religion, and know not which side to take; or

who halt in religion, and falter and fail in the exercise of it: but here, of such who are in an incapacity of going or walking in a spiritual sense; as unto Christ, for life and salvation, without the drawings and influences of the Father's grace:

the blind: who are so, as to any saving knowledge of God in Christ; of Christ, and the way of righteousness, life, and salvation by him; of the plague of their own hearts, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the need of a Saviour; of the work of the Spirit of God upon their souls, and the necessity of it; and of the truths of the Gospel, in a spiritual and experimental way. In short, under these characters are represented natural and unconverted men, and the most vile, profligate, and abandoned of them; which are sometimes under the power of divine grace accompanying the ministration of the Gospel brought to Christ, and into his church. So the "blind and the lame", in (2 Samuel 5:6,8) are by the Targum on the place, explained of, ayybyjw ayyajj, "sinners and wicked persons".

Ver. 22. *And the servant said*, etc.] After he had been and brought in a large number of such as are before described, and he was directed to, and succeeded to the gathering of them in:

Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded; the apostles exactly observed the orders of their Lord and master; they began to preach the Gospel at Jerusalem; and being drove from thence, they went and preached to the Jews of the dispersion, and to the proselytes among the Gentiles:

and yet there is room; that is, for the Gentiles, after God's elect, among the Jews, for that time were gathered in: there was room provided for them in the heart and love of God from everlasting, and in electing grace; in the suretyship engagements of Christ, in the covenant of his grace; and they had a place in the redeeming grace of Christ, in time; and in the last commission he gave to his disciples; and there was now room for them in the church of God; and will be in the new Jerusalem, and in the heavenly glory.

Ver. 23. *And the Lord said unto the servant*, etc.] A second time; that since the Jews put away the word of eternal life from them, and judged themselves unworthy of it by their contradicting and blaspheming it, he commanded his apostles to turn from them to the Gentiles; (see Acts 13:45-47),

go out into the highways and hedges: the Persic version adds, “of the vineyards”; (see <130423>1 Chronicles 4:23) and may in general design the mean, base, vile, and sinful state of the Gentiles; who might be said to be “in the highways”, because they were without the commonwealth and church of the Jews; were not admitted to civil conversation, nor to religious worship with them; and were left to walk on in their own ways, of their own devising and choosing, in which they delighted: they were not in God's highway, which is a way of holiness, (<233508>Isaiah 35:8) but in their own highways; either following the various sects of the philosophers, which were vain and foolish; or going into different practices of idolatry, and walking in very sinful and vicious courses; and so were in the broad road and highway to destruction: and their being in, and under “the hedges”, may denote their state of separation from God; being without him, alienated from the life of him, and afar off from him; being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, (<490212>Ephesians 2:12) they were not in the gardens and enclosures, but under the hedges:

and compel them to come in; to the house of God, and church of Christ; to come and hear the word, and quit their former course of living, and attend the word and worship of God; and upon an evidence of the truth of grace upon their souls, to come into a Gospel church state, and partake of all privileges and ordinances in it; to which they are to be compelled, not by outward force, but by forcible words, by powerful arguments, and by the strength of persuasion; which expresses the nature of the Gospel ministry, which is to persuade Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem; and the power that attends it by the divine Spirit; the case and condition of souls, who are generally bashful and backward, judging themselves unworthy; as also the earnest desire, and great liberality of Christ, the master of the feast, whose end in it is as follows:

that my house may be filled; with men, like a flock, and these with gifts and grace; with such as shall be saved, as with elect Jews, so with the fulness of the Gentiles.

Ver. 24. *For I say unto you*, etc.] Most solemnly affirm it, and even swear to it, nothing is more certain, or will be found more true:

that none of those men that were bidden: the impenitent and unbelieving Jews, the Scribes, and Pharisees, and the greater part of the nation; who

first had the Gospel published to them, who are the many that were called, though few were chosen, and therefore came not; nor did, nor

shall taste of my supper: nor had they so much as a superficial knowledge of the Gospel, of the truths, blessings, promises, and ordinances of it; being given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart; and from whom, in a little while, the Gospel was wholly taken; and is not yet afforded to them as a body; nor will till the latter day, when the veil shall be taken away, and they shall turn to the Lord, and all Israel shall be saved; but as for the first disbelievers and rejecters of Christ among the Jews, they died in their sins, and perished eternally.

Ver. 25. *And there went great multitudes with him*, etc.] From Galilee, as he journeyed from thence to Jerusalem; some for one thing, and some another, and all perhaps were in expectation of his setting up a temporal kingdom when he came there; and hoped they should share, more or less, the worldly advantages of it; for the whole nation was big with such carnal notions of the Messiah. Jesus therefore, to draw off their minds from such views, and that they might not be disappointed, acquaints them, that if they would be his disciples, they must part with all that was near and dear to them; and prepare to suffer great hardships and difficulties for his name's sake: for it follows,

and he turned; himself to the company that was behind: and said unto them; with a grave and stern countenance, looking wistly at them, and in the most solemn manner delivered what is hereafter related.

Ver. 26. *If any man come to me*, etc.] Not in a corporeal, but in a spiritual way; nor barely to hear him preach; but so come, as that he believes in him, applies to him for grace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation; professes to be his, submits to his ordinances, and desires to be a disciple of his;

and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple: not that proper hatred of any, or all of these, is enjoined by Christ; for this would be contrary to the laws of God, to the first principles of nature, to all humanity, to the light of nature, to reason and divine revelation: but that these are not to be preferred to Christ, or loved more than he, as it is explained in (40 10 37Matthew 10:37) yea, these are to be neglected and forsaken, and turned from with indignation and resentment, when they

stand in the way of the honour and interest of Christ, and dissuade from his service: such who would be accounted the disciples of Christ, should be ready to part with their dearest relations and friends, with the greatest enjoyment of life, and with life itself, when Christ calls for it; or otherwise they are not worthy to be called his disciples. The Ethiopic version inserts, "his house", into the account.

Ver. 27. *Whosoever doth not bear his cross*, etc.] All reproach, afflictions, persecutions, and death itself, cheerfully and patiently; the Ethiopic version renders it, "of his death the cross"; it signifies whatever is trying and disagreeable to flesh and blood:

and come after me; bearing his cross; as Christ himself was about to do, and which doubtless he had in view;

cannot be my disciple; he is not so in reality, nor does he deserve the name.

Ver. 28. *For which of you intending to build a tower*, etc.] Taking up a profession of Christ and his Gospel, is like building a tower; which, as a tower, must be laid on a good foundation; not on carnal descent and parentage; nor on a sober and religious education; nor on a civil, moral life and conversation; nor on a bare knowledge of Gospel truths and a flash of affection for them, and the people of God; but upon Christ the sure foundation; and on principles of grace formed by his Spirit, in their hearts: and this, like a tower, is carried very high; not by professing high things, but by living on high amidst a profession; by having the affections set on things above; and by looking down with contempt on things below; and by looking to, and pressing after, the prize of the high calling of God in Christ: the profession of some persons is very low; it arises from low principles, and proceeds on low views, aims, and ends; but where it is right, and well founded, it is like a tower, firm and steady, and is a fortress and bulwark against apostacy. Now what person acting deliberately in such a case as this, and proceeding with intention and design,

sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? as every wise man would, who has any thoughts of building a tower, or any other edifice: and so such that have an intention to take up a profession of religion, should sit down and well consider of it; which does not imply, that persons should delay making a profession, on whom it is incumbent; but that this should be done with thoughtfulness, care, and

prudence: it should be considered on what foundation a man is going to build: whether the work of grace is truly wrought upon his soul; what be the nature and use of Gospel ordinances; with what views he takes up a profession, and submits to ordinances; what the church and minister are, he intends to walk with; and what the charge and cost of a profession; for such a work is chargeable and costly, and should be thought of and considered, whether he is able to bear it: for he will be called to self-denial; and must expect to suffer the loss of the favour of carnal relations and friends; and to be exposed to the scorn and rage of the world; a cross must be took up and bore; and great grace and strength are requisite to all this.

Ver. 29. *Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation*, etc.] Has begun to build, has taken up a profession, has submitted to ordinances, and got into a church state:

and is not able to finish it; a foundation may be laid, and the building may never be finished, because the foundation is not laid right; was it, it would continue, and the building go on, and at last be finished; though no man is able to finish it of himself, yet those hands which have laid the foundation, will raise up the superstructure, and complete the whole building, through the power and efficacy of divine grace: but where there is a beginning, and which at first looks well, and there is no progress, but the work is dropped and left unfinished,

all that behold it, begin to mock; as follows;

Ver. 30. *Saying, this man began to build*, etc.] He set out well, he promised great things, and made a considerable bluster and stir, as if he would carry things at once to a very high pitch:

and was not able to finish; it was all noise and talk, and nothing else: falling off from a profession of religion, exposes men to contempt and scorn; such are not only cast out of churches with disgrace, but are despised by men, by wicked men; and are a reproach, a proverb, and a taunt in all places; and even are mocked by devils too.

Ver. 31. *Or what king going to make war against another king*, etc.] Our Lord illustrates the same thing, the business of a profession, by another similitude, or parable; taking up a profession of religion, is like to two kings engaging in a war. The king on the one side, is the Christian professor; true believers are kings, they have the apparel of kings, the royal robe of Christ's righteousness; they live like kings, at the table of the King

of kings; have the attendance of kings, angels ministering unto them; have crowns and thrones as kings have, and greater than theirs; and have a kingdom of grace now, and are heirs of the kingdom of glory. The king on the other side, is the devil; who is the king and prince of the rest of the devils, and over the men of the world; a kingdom is ascribed to him, which is a kingdom of darkness; and he is said to be a great king, and is represented as proud, cruel, and tyrannical: now the Christian professor's life is a warfare; he is engaged with many enemies; the corruptions of his own heart within, and the world without; and especially Satan, who is to be resisted, and by no means to be yielded to, though there is a great inequality between them: and therefore what man that engages in such a warfare,

sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? and such a difference there is between the Christian professor and the devil; the one is flesh and blood, the other a spirit; the one is raw and undisciplined, the other a veteran soldier; the one a stripling, and the other the strong man armed: their numbers are unequal; the people of Christ are few, and their force and strength in themselves small; and they have a large number of devils, and of the men of the world, and of the lusts of their own hearts, to grapple with; wherefore it is necessary to sit down and consult, not with flesh and blood, but with other Christians; and chiefly, and above all, with God himself; what will be the charges of this warfare; the hardships to be endured; in whose name and strength they are to engage; what weapons to take, and how to use them; and how to get knowledge of the designs, methods, and strength of the enemy, and take every advantage of him.

Ver. 32. *Or else, while the other is a great way off*, etc.] Upon his march, with resolution to come up and give battle, though as yet at a distance:

he sendeth an ambassage; or men, with an embassy to him:

and desireth conditions of peace; greatly to his disadvantage and reproach: so to give out, and leave off fighting with sin, Satan, and the world, and make peace with them, is shameful and scandalous; but on the other hand, such who have engaged in this war, should pursue it with rigour and courage; considering that God is on their side; that Christ is the captain of their salvation; that the Spirit of God that is in them, is greater than he that is in the world; that angels encamp around them; that it is a good cause they are engaged in; that they have good weapons, the whole armour of

God provided for them; are sure of victory, and shall at last enjoy the crown of life, righteousness and glory.

Ver. 33. *So likewise whosoever he be of you*, etc.] Let him be ever so forward to follow me, to make a profession of me and of my Gospel, and to become a disciple of mine:

that forsaketh not all that he hath; when called to it, relations, friends, possessions, estates, and what not, which is an explanation of (<42146>Luke 14:26)

he cannot be my disciple; he is not in fact one, and is not worthy to be called one.

Ver. 34. *Salt is good*, etc.] (See Gill on "<40513>Matthew 5:13"), (see Gill on "<41050>Mark 10:50").

Ver. 35. *It is neither fit for the land*, etc.] For the manuring of it, when it has lost its savour and spirit; otherwise it makes land fruitful, if too much is not used, and especially fixed salts have this use; though Pliny says [f446],

> "every place in which salt is found, it is barren and brings forth nothing."

Nor yet for the dunghill; to mix with dung, and help it, that it may be the more serviceable for the earth; and just such useless things, are a mere external profession of religion, and professors of it, and ministers of the word, without the grace of God; they are of no use, but hurtful to the church, and to the world; these phrases are left out in the Persic and Ethiopic versions:

but men cast it out; into the streets, as entirely useless: and so such graceless professors and ministers, are to be cast out of the churches of Christ now, and will be excluded the kingdom of heaven hereafter:

he that hath ears to hear, let him hear; this being a point of great importance and consequence; (see Gill on "<40115>Matthew 11:15").

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 15

Ver. 1. *Then drew near to him*, etc.] To “Jesus”, as the Persic and Ethiopic versions express it: this was on the sabbath day, and either when he was in the Pharisee's house, where he was invited to dinner, (<42140>Luke 14:1) or rather when he came out of it, when the multitude, who could not come near him whilst there, took the opportunity of gathering about him;

even all the publicans and sinners; whom the Pharisee would not admit into his house, it being contrary to their traditions to eat, and drink, and converse with persons of such an infamous character; (see Gill on “<40910>Matthew 9:10”) (see Gill on “<40911>Matthew 9:11”) The word “all” is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; but the Arabic version has it, and the Greek copies; and signifies that there were a very large number of them, even all that were in that place, and in the adjacent cities and towns, that got together

for to hear him, or “from him”, as the Arabic version; or “doctrine” from him, as the Persic version adds: these having heard much of him; and it may be, might be under some remorse of conscience on account of their vicious lives, came to hear him preach.

Ver. 2. *And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured*, etc.] When they saw the easy access these wicked men had to Christ; and that he stopped and stayed with them, and very freely imparted instructions to them: saying,

this man receiveth sinners. The Persic version reads, “publicans and sinners”, as in the preceding verse: the word “man” is not in the original text, it is only “this”; which is to be understood not by way of eminence, as this great person, this prophet, this master in Israel; but by way of diminution and reproach, this fellow; as it is sometimes supplied: the word “man” be very rightly inserted, for they took him to be a mere man; though it is certain he was more than a man, even the true and mighty God; and therefore was able to save those sinners that came to him: and great condescension and grace did he show in receiving them who were “sinners”, not only by nature, but by practice; and not merely guilty of

common infirmities, but were notorious sinners, covetous, extortioners, oppressors of the poor, and very debauched persons; and such as these Christ “receives”: hence no man should be discouraged from coming to Christ, on account of sin; all that do come to him, should come as sinners, for he receives them as such; nor does he receive any for any worthiness there is in them: these persons he received first at his Father's hand, as he did all the elect, as his portion, and to be preserved and saved by him; with all gifts, grace, blessings, and promises for them; and in consequence of this, he receives them upon their coming to him as sinners, into his open love and affection, into his arms; which denotes communion and protection; into his house and family, and not only to hear him preach, or preached, but to converse and eat with him at his table, and even to live by faith upon him; and when he has freed them from all their sins, he will receive them to himself in glory. And there is the greatest reason imaginable to believe, that Christ still does, and will receive sinners; since he came to save the chief of sinners; and has bore their sins, and died for them; and now makes intercession for transgressors; and by the ministers of the word calls sinners to repentance.

And eateth with them; as he did in the houses of Matthew the publican, and of Zaccheus; (see <40910>Matthew 9:10 <42407>Luke 14:7) each of which occasioned great murmurings among the Pharisees; and who therefore traduced him as a friend of publicans and sinners; and he is indeed so in the best sense: and not only did he eat with them corporeally, but in a spiritual sense, as he still does; admitting them into his house to eat of the provisions of it, to live on him the bread of life, to sup with him, and he with them; and feeding and delighting himself in the exercise of those graces, which he himself is the donor and author of, in them.

Ver. 3. *And he spake this parable unto them*, etc.] To the Pharisees, for their conviction and confutation; and to the publicans and sinners for their encouragement; and in vindication of himself; and not only this, but the other two, concerning the lost piece of money, and the prodigal son, which were said at this time, and on the same occasion;

saying, as follows.

Ver. 4. *What man of you having an hundred sheep*, etc.] A flock of sheep, consisting of such a number; (see Gill on “<401812>Matthew 18:12”),

if he lose one of them, by straying from the flock,

doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, upon the common where they were feeding,

and go after that which is lost until he find it? by which parable Christ vindicates his conduct in conversing with sinners, and neglecting the Scribes and Pharisees; for if it was right for an owner of an hundred sheep, when he had lost one of them, to leave all the rest, and go in search after that one till he had found it; then it was right in Christ to do what he did. The Jewish nation seems to be designed "by the hundred sheep", who are frequently represented as a flock of sheep, (<19720>Psalm 77:20, 95:7, 100:3, <26402>Ezekiel 34:2,3,30,31) which are divided into ninety nine, and one: for by the "ninety nine" left in the wilderness, cannot be meant angels, as some have thought; for angels are never called sheep; and besides, the one lost sheep is of the same kind with the ninety and nine; and, according to this sense, must design an angel, or angels likewise; whereas none of the fallen angels are sought up, recovered, and saved. Moreover, when Christ became incarnate, he did not leave the angels; they accompanied and attended him in his state of humiliation; and much less in a wilderness, and still less can heaven be so called; to which may be added, that the angels in heaven are distinguished from the ninety nine as well as from the one lost sheep in (<42507>Luke 15:7,10) nor can elect men be designed by them, who are already called by grace, whether they be in heaven or on earth; for though they in heaven are the spirits of just men made perfect, and are in a state that need no repentance, yet it cannot be said of them, that they went not astray, as in (<40183>Matthew 18:13) for all God's people have been like sheep going astray, and were as such considered when Christ was here on earth, and bore their sins; and especially those could never be said to be left in a wilderness: nor the saints on earth: for though they are just persons, being justified by the righteousness of Christ, yet they daily need repentance; nor can it be said of them that they went not astray; nor are they left by Christ in the wilderness of this world; nor can there be more joy in heaven over one repenting sinner, than over these; but the self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees, that murmured at our Lord's receiving sinners, are meant. These were sheep, at least were in sheep's clothing; they were nominal professors, and belonged to the Jewish fold, or national church state; their number was ninety nine, to one; which is not to be taken strictly, as though only one in a hundred of them were saved; but it shows, that the greater part of the Jews were of this sort. The dividing of an

hundred after this manner, into ninety nine and one, was usual with the Jews; so in their traditions [f447], concerning distributing filberts to the poor,

> "R. Simeon says, if "ninety nine" say "divide", and "one" says spoil, or scatter, they hearken to him, because he speaks according to the constitution; but of a vine and date, it is not so: if "ninety and nine" say spoil, and "one" says divide, they hearken to him, for he speaks according to the constitution."

And elsewhere [f448] they say,

> ""ninety and nine" die by an (evil) eye, and "one" by the hand of heaven; R. Chanina and Samuel, both of them say, "ninety and nine" die by cold, and "one" by the hand of heaven — R. Samuel bar Nachman, in the name of R. Jonathan says, "ninety and nine" die by heat, and "one" by the hand of heaven; and the Rabbans say, "ninety and nine" die by transgression, and "one" by the hand of heaven. Says R. Eleazar, "ninety and nine" die by bitterness, and "one" by the hand of heaven."

And in another place [f449] it is said,

> ""ninety and nine" die by an evil eye, and "one" by the way of the earth;"

in the common way: once more it is said [f450],

> "of the "hundred" cries which a woman cries, when she sits upon the stool (in travail), "ninety and nine" are death, and "one" for life."

And this way of speaking also prevailed in other eastern nations, as in Arabia; in the Alcoran of Mahomet [f451] there is such an expression as this;

> "this my brother had "ninety nine sheep", and I had only "one" ewe."

The "one lost sheep" in this parable, though it may include all the elect of God, and be accommodated to a single elect sinner, yet chiefly respects the chosen of God among the Jews; which were very few, a remnant according to the election of grace: and which lay among the profane part of them, the publicans and sinners; Who are particularly pointed out here, as appears from the context: these are called "sheep", even before conversion; not

because they had the agreeable properties of sheep, for they were all the reverse; nor could some things be said of them before as after, as, that they heard the voice of Christ, and followed him; nor because they were unprejudiced against, and predisposed to receive the Gospel: but they are so called by anticipation, because they would be so; or rather in virtue of electing grace, by which they were chosen, and separated from others, and made the care and charge of Christ the great shepherd, and were the sheep of his hand: these are represented as going astray from the shepherd, and from the fold, and out of the right way; and who being like sheep, stupid and insensible of their danger, wander about, and never return of themselves till they are returned to, and by the great shepherd and bishop of souls. And in their unregenerate estate they are lost sheep, not irretrievably and eternally lost, as the world's goats; for though they are lost in Adam, yet not in Christ; and though lost in themselves, so as there is no possibility of ever recovering and saving themselves; yet as they were preserved in Christ, they are recovered and saved by him; who is the owner and proprietor of the whole flock, of all the “hundred” sheep, of the whole body of the Jewish nation; who were his by creation, and by being chosen from, and above all other people; and were distinguished by peculiar favours, had the “Shekinah”, and presence of God among them, and his worship, word, and ordinances. Christ was peculiarly promised to them, and was born of them; and was a minister of the circumcision, being sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: though the “ninety and nine” were not his sheep in the most peculiar sense, or in such sense as the “one” lost sheep, which were his by his Father's gift, as all the elect are; hence he knows them, calls them, and receives them, and keeps them, and highly values them: he had them, they were put into his hands, he took the care and charge of there, he undertook to bring them in, to feed them, to die for them, and save them; and they are his by purchase, and he asserts his right to them, by calling them by his grace, and will distinguish them as his own, at the last day: and now, because of the different interest Christ has in the ninety and nine, and the one, different regards are had to them; the ninety and nine, the self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees,

he leaves in the wilderness, in a state of unregeneracy; so called, because in those that are in such a state, nothing is sown or planted, what grows there is natural; there is no seed of grace, no plants of pleasure, no ingrafted word, no fruits of righteousness, nothing but thorns and briers, of sins and corruptions: and also because of the want of provisions; no bread

of life, nor water of life; no sincere milk of the word, no breasts of consolation; nothing but husks, and bread of deceit: and it is like a wilderness, because of solitariness; such as are in this state, are alone, without God, and Christ, and the blessed Spirit; they are aliens from the people of God, and converse with none but wicked men, comparable to savage beasts of the desert: moreover, it may be so called, because of the various perplexing cross ways in it; the ways of sin are many, and crooked, and dark; and indeed, such are the religious ways of unregenerate men: to which may be added, that it bears this name, because of the danger of it; for such as are in it are exposed to beasts of prey; particularly to Satan, the red dragon, and roaring lion; and to pits, gins, and snares, to hellfire, destruction, and misery. Christ's “leaving” persons in such a state, supposes they were in it, antecedent to their being left: man was originally placed in a garden, sinning against God, he forfeited his happy situation, and was drove out from it; and wandering from God he fell into this wilderness state. Christ does not lead any into it, but leaves them in it; which is done in consequence of his Father's act of preterition, or passing them by when he chose others; and this he does, when he does not call them by his grace, as he does others; does not manure, till, and cultivate them as he does his own husbandry and vines; makes no provision of food and pasture for them; leaves them to themselves, and without the enjoyment of himself; to follow their own ways, without a guide, and to beasts of prey without a guard. Now the persons he thus leaves are such whom the Father has left out in his choice and covenant; and who left Christ, rejected and despised him; and were persons that made great pretensions to religion, were righteous in their own eyes, and in their own account never were astray, nor needed repentance. On the other hand, the one lost sheep, the chosen of God among publicans and sinners, a special regard is had to them: Christ

goes after that which is lost until he find it; not after all mankind; for though they are all lost, yet they are not all redeemed by Christ; nor are they made sensible of their lost condition; nor effectually called by grace; nor brought home: nor does he go after the ninety nine, for Christ came not to call the righteous; though these were lost, and irretrievably too, yet they were not sensible of their condition: but God's elect among the Jews are the persons here said to be lost; to show their common condition with the rest of mankind; to express the love of Christ towards them the more; and to magnify the riches of his grace in their salvation: these he went after in redemption, he came forth from his Father, and came down from heaven

for their sakes; he died to gather them together, and represented them all in his sufferings and death; he bore all their sins, and made reconciliation for them, and procured the full pardon of them; he satisfied the law and justice of God, wrought out an everlasting righteousness, and obtained eternal redemption, and a complete salvation for them: and he went after them in the effectual calling; before conversion an elect sinner is without Christ, and goes astray from him; nor does he ever come to Christ till Christ comes after him, and lays hold upon him; he sends his ministers after such, and his Spirit into them, and comes himself, and takes possession of them. To find his lost sheep by redeeming grace he came into this world, a world of wickedness, sorrow, and trouble, of cruelty, and barbarity; and the reason of his coming here was, because his sheep were here; he came after them, and on their account: and to find them by effectual calling, he still comes into the world by his word and Spirit; God's elect are in the world, Christ sends his Gospel into it, and by his Spirit and grace comes and separates them from the men of it. In (⁴⁰18:12) he is said to go "into the mountains" after his lost sheep; which, with respect to redemption, may denote the difficulties that lay in the way of it; such as his incarnation, obedience, sufferings and death, and the many enemies he had to grapple with and subdue; and with respect to calling grace, may express the state and condition God's elect are in by nature, being on the mountains of sin, of Sinai, of the law, and of their own righteousness. Now Christ goes after them "till he finds" them; which denotes continuance, his indefatigable industry and diligence, his resolution and courage, and his success. The reasons why he thus goes after them are not their number, for they are the fewest of all; nor their nature, which is no better than others, nor any previous dispositions, or good characters, for those designed here were publicans and sinners; nor any future improvements and service by them, for they were the base and foolish things of this world; nor because near at hand, and so easily looked up, for they were afar off; but because of his love to them, and the relation between them as shepherd and sheep; and because of his Father's will, and his own obligation by covenant; and because of his own interest and glory.

Ver. 5. *And when he hath found it*, etc.] In a sad plight and condition: so Christ finds his sheep in a most desolate one, in a pit, in the mire and clay of nature; in the paw of the roaring lion, Satan; helpless, hopeless, wretched, miserable, and naked; and not only starving, famishing, and dying, but even dead in trespasses and sins: and finding them with respect

to redemption, designs his procuring eternal salvation for them; and with regard to calling, his laying hold upon them by his Spirit and grace, and bringing them to a sense of themselves, and to the knowledge of himself. There are several things which Christ does to his sheep when he has found them, which are not here expressed, but understood: finding them dead in sin he speaks life into them; he calls them by name, and asserts his property in them; he takes them out of the pit of nature; he rescues them out of the hands of Satan; he washes them from their filthiness, and heals all their diseases; he feeds and refreshes them; he covers them with his robe of righteousness; he beautifies and adorns them, and brings them home in the manner after described:

he layeth it on his shoulders; he does not put them on their own legs to go alone; nor does he lead them, and much less drive them before him; but he takes them up in his arms, and lays them on his shoulders: which shows the passiveness of men in conversion, and their weakness and impotency to any thing that is spiritually good of themselves; they cannot think a good thought, nor do a good action, and still less begin and carry on the work of grace in their hearts; as also the strength of Christ in bearing and carrying them, as he does, through all afflictions, temptations, and difficulties, safe to glory; and likewise his great love and affection for them; he loved them before the world began, and he showed it in dying for them, and manifests it to them, when he calls them by grace; and this also expresses the safety of his sheep; for being on him, they are in no danger from the law and justice of God; nor from Satan, or any other enemy; nor of a final and total falling away: and moreover this signifies the spiritual ease and rest which such have in Christ: the manner in which Christ the shepherd carries them, having found them, and laid them on his shoulders, is

rejoicing: not upbraiding them with going astray; nor complaining of, or groaning under the burden; but rejoicing in a kind of triumph, and carrying them as a trophy of victory, and a spoil obtained.

Ver. 6. *And when he cometh home*, etc.] The house, or home, to which Christ comes and brings thither his lost sheep on his shoulders when found, is either the church of God, which is Christ's house and home, and into which he himself comes; it is his by gift and purchase, and which he has built, and here comes and dwells as a son over it, as king in it, and as priest and prophet there, and as the master of it; and hither he brings his people when he has called them by his grace, where they have a good fold and

green pastures, and where they delight to be; or else heaven is this home, which is an house of God's building, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; and which is Christ's Father's house, and his own house and home, and also the saints' house and home, whither they are all brought by Christ; for they cannot go there alone, and of themselves; they are brought by the power of divine grace as trophies of it, as to their own home; and such that Christ takes into his arms, and on his shoulders, he never drops them till he has brought them safe to heaven:

he calleth together his friends and neighbours: the friends of Christ are the saints, so called, because of their share in his friendship to them; shown by his becoming a surety for them; by his assuming their nature, and dying in their room and stead; by his paying their debts, and redeeming their persons; by his intercession for them, and preparing a place for them in his Father's house; by supplying all their wants, and by his kind and comfortable visits to them; by his free and familiar converses with them, and by unfolding his secrets, and giving wholesome advice and counsel to them: as also on account of their bearing and showing friendship to him; as by their great affection to his person; by their attachment to his cause and interest; by their strict regard to his Gospel, and the truths of it; and by their diligent observance of his commands and ordinances; and by their regard to his people, and disregard to his enemies: and these are also Christ's “neighbours”, they dwell near to each other; he dwells in them, and they in him; they love each other as themselves, and perform every office cheerfully in love to one another: moreover, the angels may be meant by the friends and neighbours of Christ, as may be collected from (Luke 15:10) these are his “friends” whom he has shown himself friendly to, in the confirmation of them in the state in which they were created; in the choice of them to eternal happiness; and in being an head of protection to them, as well as of eminence over them: and these are friendly to him; as they were at his incarnation, and when tempted in the wilderness, and when in agony in the garden, and at his resurrection and ascension; and will attend him at his second coming: and they are friendly to his; are ministering spirits to them, rejoice at their conversion, encamp about them in life, and at death carry their departed souls to heaven: and these are likewise his “neighbours”: their habitation is in heaven where he is, and they always behold the face of his Father there, and will come along with him when he appears a second time. Now saints are called together to hear what great things Christ has done for poor sinners when he brings them to

Zion; and angels are also made acquainted with their conversion; and both saints and angels will be called together, when the sheep of Christ shall be brought home to glory.

Saying unto them, rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost: the joy of Christ, and his friends, is mutual on this occasion; Christ rejoices himself, and his friends with him: he rejoiced in his people from everlasting; they were the objects of his Father's love, and of his own; and he took delight in them, as he saw them in the glass of his Father's purposes, as they were chosen in him, and given to him; and this joy in them still continued, notwithstanding their fall in Adam, and their own actual sins and transgressions; but whereas they were lost in the fall, and by their own sins, there were some new expressions of joy upon Christ's finding them in redemption: it was with the utmost pleasure he engaged in that work; and with the greatest readiness did he come into the world to do it; and he went through it with great delight; he was, as it were, straitened until it was accomplished; the consideration of it made him easy under the apprehensions of what he was to endure, and supported him under his most dolorous sufferings; his rising again from the dead as the presentative of his people, filled him with gladness, and he ascended to heaven in a triumph: but yet still these persons, though redeemed, are in a lost estate with respect to themselves; wherefore in conversion there are fresh breakings forth of joy in Christ; for that is the day of his open espousals to them, and so the day of the gladness of his heart; when he sees of the travail of his soul with satisfaction; and large expressions of love are made to him; and his people are brought to some conformity to him; and communion with him, but still they are not yet at home; wherefore with joy he brings them into his church, which is his house, and their home, where he rejoices over them to do them good; and will express still more joy in the new Jerusalem church state, and still more when he shall have brought them to glory, and have presented them to himself, and to his Father, which will be done with exceeding joy. Christ's friends and neighbours, his saints and people, also rejoice at the conversion of a sinner; because the glory of the Father, Son, and Spirit, is displayed therein; and because Satan has lost his prey, and Christ has got a new subject; and because of the grace of God bestowed upon the sinner, and the addition that is made to their number; particularly this is matter of joy to the ministers of the Gospel: and angels also rejoice at it, because of the glory of God that is advanced thereby.

Ver. 7. *I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be heaven*, etc.] In the church below, and among the members of it; which is sometimes called heaven, especially in the book of the Revelations; or in heaven above, and among the angels there; (see <42150>Luke 15:10)

Over one sinner that repenteth; for the joy in heaven, is not over sinners as such; for as such, they are not grateful to God, nor to Christ, nor to the angels, nor to saints; only sinners delight in each other, as such; but as repenting sinners, who are truly so: and these are not such, who only legally and outwardly repent; nor all that declare a sense of sin; or that are externally sorry for it; or are terrified about it, and shed tears on account of it; or that cease from grosser sins of life, and outwardly reform: but such who repent in an evangelical way; who are turned to God, and are instructed by his Spirit; who believe in Christ, and have views, at least hopes, of pardon through his blood; and have the love of God and Christ shed abroad in their hearts; from whence arise a true sight and sense of sin, a godly sorrow for it, an hearty loathing of it, shame on account of it, an ingenuous confession, and a real forsaking of it. Now the reason why there is joy in heaven over such persons is, because, without such a repentance, they must perish; and by this they appear to be openly in a state of grace; and become proper subjects of the ordinances of Christ; and this repentance is unto life and salvation; or these are inseparably connected with it; and this joy is abundantly

more, than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance; by whom are meant, either such who are really righteous persons; not naturally and of themselves, nor legally by the deeds of the law, but by the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them: and who need no repentance to be added to their righteousness, it being perfect of itself; nor the grace and principle of repentance, because they have it, and it cannot be lost; or change of life and manners, which is not to be seen in such: and the more joy over repenting sinners, than over these is, because the salvation of the one is before certain to them, and the other is unexpected: but to this sense it may be objected, that saints, even righteous persons, need frequent conversions, and the continual exercise of the grace of repentance; nor does it seem feasible, that there should be more joy over a repenting sinner, than over one, whose life, through grace, is a series of righteousness: rather therefore, such who seem to be just, or are so in their own opinion, are here meant; for only such sort of righteous persons and repenting sinners, are opposed to each other, as in (<40913>Matthew 9:13) moreover, the

occasion and scope of the parable, determines this to be the sense; the Scribes and Pharisees, that murmured at Christ's receiving sinners, are the ninety and nine just persons, who were only outwardly righteous before men, and trusted in themselves that they were righteous, perfectly righteous, and without sin, and so stood in no need of repentance for it; now there is more joy in heaven over one repenting sinner, than over all these: hence learn, that a self-righteous person, is an impenitent one; that a repenting sinner is more regarded in heaven than a self-righteous man: our Lord here seems to have regard to a conceit of the Jews, who distinguish between penitents that were allowed to be righteous, and such who never were guilty of any notorious crime, and so were perfectly righteous, and needed no repentance, and were preferred to penitent sinners: some of them say [f452], that

> “the prophets did not prophesy (good things and comforts), but hbwçt yl[bl, “to penitents”; but as for µyrwmg µyqydx, “the perfect righteous”, to them belongs that, “eye hath not seen”, O God, “besides thee”. — -But R. Abhu says, the place in which “penitents” stand, the “perfect righteous” do not stand.”

Though Maimonides seems [f453] to understand this, as if it gave the preference to penitents; his words are these:

> “let not a penitent man imagine that he is afar off from the excellency, or degree of the righteous, because of the sins and iniquities he has committed, the thing is not so; but he is beloved and desired before the Creator, as if he had never sinned; for his reward is great; for lo, he hath tasted the taste of sin, and hath separated from it, and hath subdued his evil imagination: the wise men say, the place where “penitents” stand, the “perfect righteous” cannot stand; which is as if it was said, their degree of excellency is greater, than those who never sinned, because they have subdued their imagination more than they.”

However, these instances, with others that might be produced, show that the Jews had a notion of some men being perfectly righteous and without sin; which they oppose to penitent sinners, and which our Lord here designs, and seems to describe in their own language, and serves to confirm the sense given; (see Gill on “Hebrews 12:23”).

Ver. 8. *Either what woman, having ten pieces of silver*, etc.] Or "drachmas": a "drachma" was the fourth part of a shekel, and of the same value with a Roman penny; and was worth of our money, seven pence half penny; so that the ten pieces amounted to six shilling's, and three pence: the Ethiopic version renders it "ten rings": this parable is delivered, with the same view as the former; the scope and design of them are alike, being occasioned by the same circumstance, only the passiveness of a sinner in conversion is here more fully signified; who can contribute no more to the first act of conversion, which is purely God's work, than a lost piece of silver to its being found: by the "ten pieces or silver" are designed, all the Jews, or the whole body of that people; as they were before signified, by the hundred sheep; they having been God's peculiar treasure, though they were now in general become reprobate silver: and by the "woman" the proprietor of them, is meant Christ; and in what sense he was the owner of them, has been shown on (Luke 15:4). The "nine" pieces design the Scribes and Pharisees; and the one lost piece, expressed in the next clause,

if she lose one piece, intends the elect among the Jews, and who chiefly consisted of publicans and sinners; and the regard had to these, is signified by the following expressions,

doth not light a candle: by which is meant, not the light of nature or reason in man: for though this is called a candle, and is of Christ's lighting, yet that by which he looks up his lost people, for this is become very dim: and though by it men may know there is a God, and the difference between moral good and evil, by it they cannot come at the knowledge of things spiritual; as of God in Christ, of the sin of nature, and of the plague of the heart; nor of the way of salvation by Christ, nor of the work of the Spirit, and the nature and need of it; nor of the Scriptures of truth, and of the doctrines of the Gospel, nor of the things of another world: neither is the law of Moses intended; for though there was light by it into the knowledge of sin, yet not clear; and though the ceremonial law was a shadow of Christ, and did give some instructions about him, and the doctrines of the Gospel, and blessings of grace, yet but very obscure hints: but by this candle is meant, the Gospel itself; which, like a candle, is lighted up in the evening of the world; and may be removed, as it sometimes is, from place to place; and where it is set, and blessed, it gives light, and is useful both to work and walk by; it does not always burn alike clear, or is always held forth in the same purity: and it will give the greatest light at last, as a candle does, even at the end of the world: now Christ is the lighter of this,

and from him it has all its light, who is the maker of it; he keeps it light, and by it he looks up and finds out his elect ones; though this is not a direction to him, who perfectly knows who they are, and where they be, but is rather a light to them, that they may know and find him:

and sweep the house: which phrase sometimes designs outward reformation, as in (<40124412>Matthew 12:44) and sometimes God's judgments upon a people, as in (<23142312>Isaiah 14:23) but here the preaching of the Gospel, and the power that goes along with it, to the the effectual calling of the elect: the “house” in which Christ's lost piece of silver, or his chosen ones were, may design the nation of the Jews, who are often called the house of Israel; this was a house of God's building and choosing, and where he dwelt; and among these people for a long time, God's elect lay, though all of them were not so; and about this time the Lord was about to break up house keeping with them; yet as there were some few among them, that were to be looked up and called, therefore this house must be swept, as it was by the ministry of John the Baptist, by Christ himself, and by his apostles: and this suggests, what must be the state and condition of God's elect, being in this house, before it was swept, and they found out; they were out of sight, in great obscurity and darkness, with a deal of rubbish and dirt upon them, and pollution in them; and impotent to that which is good, and to their own recovery, and yet capable of being recovered: and this phrase hints at the power and efficacy of divine grace, that goes along with the word, in looking up and finding lost sinners; in enlightening their dark minds, quickening them, being dead in sin, taking away their stony hearts, regenerating them, enstamping the divine image upon them, removing every thing from them they trusted in, and working faith in them, to look to, and believe in Christ: and as in sweeping of an house, a great stir is made, a dust raised, and things are moved out of their place; so by the preaching of the Gospel, an uproar is made in the sinner himself; in his conscience, which is filled with a horrible sight of sin; which is very loathsome, and causes uneasy reflections, fills with shame and confusion, and greatly burdens and distresses, and with the terrors of the law, and with dreadful apprehensions of hell and damnation; in his will there is a reluctancy to part with sinful lusts and pleasures, with sinful companions, and with his own righteousness, and to be saved by Christ alone, and to serve him, and bear his cross: and in his understanding, things appear in a different light than they before did: and great stir and opposition is made by Satan, to hinder the preaching of the Gospel, as

much as in him lies, and persons from coming to hear it; and if they do, he endeavours to hinder, by catching it from them, or diverting them from that; by insinuating, it is either too soon or too late, to mind religion; or that sin is either so great that it cannot be forgiven, or so trivial, that a few prayers, tears, alms deeds, etc. will make amends for it; by distressing them about their election, or about the willingness of Christ to save them; or by stirring up others to dissuade and discourage them. Moreover, when the Gospel is preached in purity and with power, and souls are converted, there is a great stir and uproar in the world, and among the men of it; because the doctrines of it are foolishness, and strange things to them; and oppose their sense of things, and strip them of what is valuable; and men are hereby distinguished from them, and taken from among them: and there is also a stir and an uproar made by it, among carnal professors of religion, as there was at this time among the Scribes and Pharisees; and all this bustle is made, for the sake of a single piece of money:

and seek diligently till she find it? not only a light is set up, an hand of power put forth in using the besom, but a quick sharp eye looks out for the piece of silver: this diligent seeking and finding, are to be understood not of the grace of Christ in redemption; nor of his restoring backsliders; but of his converting sinners, through the preaching of the Gospel, both in his own person, and by his ministers, his Spirit making their ministrations effectual: the diligence, care, and circumspection of Christ, to find out lost sinners, while the Gospel is preaching, are here signified: it is not the preacher that looks out for them, though he that is a faithful minister of the word performs his office diligently and carefully, and he desires nothing more earnestly than the conversion of sinners; but then he knows not who are, and who are not the elect of God, and is ignorant of what Christ is doing, whilst he is preaching: Christ's eye is upon his lost piece; he perfectly knows the persons of the elect, as they are his Father's choice, and his gift to him; he knew them in the counsel of peace, and covenant of grace, in the fall of Adam, and their natural estate; he knows the places where they all are, and the time when they are to be converted; and distinguishes them amidst all the filth that attends them, and the crowd among which they are; and he continues seeking, till he finds them; which shows the perpetuity of the Gospel ministry the indefatigableness of Christ, and his sure and certain success: the reasons of all this care and diligence, are his love to them, his propriety in them, his Father's will, and his own

engagement; and because they must be for ever lost, did he not seek after them.

Ver. 9. *And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends*, etc.] (See Gill on "Luke 15:6") a parable somewhat like to this, the Jews [f454] have on those words in (Proverbs 2:4) "If thou seekest her as silver", etc.

> "it is like to a man that has lost a "shekel", (a piece of money,) or beryl rings, within his house; he lights up many lamps and many candles, until he lights on them; and lo, these things much more: for if a man for the things of the temporary life of this world, lights many lamps and candles, until he lights upon them and finds them; the words of the law, since they are the life of this world, and the life of the world to come, shouldest thou not search after them as for hidden treasure?"

Ver. 10. *Likewise I say unto you*, etc.] As before, in (Luke 15:7)

there is joy in the presence of the angels of God; who are the friends and neighbours of Christ: (see Gill on "Luke 15:6"),

over one sinner that repenteth; which they have knowledge of, either by immediate revelation from God, or by observation in the church where they attend: the reason of this joy is, because there is one rescued out of the hands of Satan and his angels, between whom and them, there is an implacable enmity; and because another subject is added to Christ's kingdom, and by which it is enlarged, the prosperity of which they greatly desire; and because another heir is born in that family, to which they belong, and they have another social worshipper with them: and this joy is said to be "in the presence of" them; and so may design the joy of others, as of Father, Son, and Spirit, which is in their sight and knowledge; and also the joy there is among themselves.

Ver. 11. *And he said*, etc.] The Syriac and Persic versions read "and Jesus said again"; he added another parable to the two former, at the same time, of the same import, with the same view, and on the same occasion; setting forth the different characters of the Scribes and Pharisees, and of the publicans and sinners; and what little reason the one had to murmur, at his conversation with the other:

a certain man had two sons; by "the certain man" is meant, God the Father: God indeed is not a man, nor is he to be represented by any human

image; but inasmuch as man is the image of God, God is sometimes compared to man, and is called a man of war, an husbandman, etc. which no ways contradict his being a spirit; and true it is, that the second person only assumed human nature; and therefore, whenever a divine person is spoken of as man, Christ is commonly intended: but though the Father never appeared in an human form, yet he seems here to be designed; because the character of a Father, and having sons, more properly belong to him; and the reception of sinners, and the forgiveness of them for Christ's sake, agree with him: and besides, Christ is distinguished from the Father in this parable; and he and his blessings of grace, are signified by other things: by the “two sons” are meant, not angels and men, as that angels are the elder, and men the younger son; for though angels are called the sons of God, and may be said to be elder than men, with respect to creation; and good angels may be said to have been ever with God, and always serving him, and never sinned against him; yet they are never called the brethren of men, nor men their brethren; and besides, are never angry at the return and reception of repenting sinners; for this would be to represent them just the reverse of what they are said to be, in the preceding verse: nor are the Jews and Gentiles here intended, which is the more received and general sense of the parable: those who go this way, suppose the Jews to be the elder brother; and indeed they were so, with respect to external privileges; and were with God, being his household and family; all he had were theirs, that was external; and the character of the elder brother throughout the parable, agrees with the far greater part of that nation; and it is certain, that they did resent the calling of the Gentiles: and these suppose the Gentiles to be the younger brother, who indeed were brought into a church state, later than the Jews; and might be said to be afar off in a far country, and to have spent their substance in idolatry and wickedness; to have been in the utmost distress, and in the most deplorable condition: but to this sense it may be objected, that the Gospel was not as yet preached to the Gentiles; nor were they brought to repentance; nor were they openly received into the divine favour; nor as yet had the Jews murmured at, and resented the kindness of God to them: rather standing and fallen professors may be designed: since the former are very apt to carry it toward the latter, in like manner as the elder brother is represented in this parable, as carrying himself towards the younger: but the true sense, and which the context and occasion of the parable at once determine, is, that by the elder son are meant, the Scribes and Pharisees, and self-righteous persons, among the Jews; and by the younger, the publicans and

sinners among the same people; as it is easy to observe, the same are meant by the two sons in the parable in (Matthew 21:28-32). Now these are called the sons of God because the Jews in general were so by national adoption; and the self-righteous Pharisees looked upon themselves as the children of God, and favourites of heaven, in a special sense; and God's elect among them, even those that lay among publicans and sinners, were truly so; and that before conversion; for they were not only predestinated to the adoption of children, but were really taken into the relation of children, in the covenant of grace; and as such were given to Christ, and considered by him, when he assumed their nature, and died for them; and are so antecedent to the spirit of adoption, who is sent to witness their sonship to them; and which is consistent with their being children of wrath, as the descendants of Adam, and their being the children of God openly and manifestatively, by faith in Christ Jesus.

Ver. 12. *And the younger of them said to his father*, etc.] God's chosen ones among the publicans and sinners, are fitly signified by the younger son, since man, as a sinner, is younger than man as righteous; and since there are instances of God's choice of the younger, before the elder, as Jacob before Esau, etc. and the characters and conduct of young men agree with God's elect, in a state of nature; who are imprudent and ignorant, without any knowledge of divine and spiritual things, and of themselves, their state and condition, and of Christ, and salvation by him; and yet are conceited of themselves, and fancy themselves very wise and knowing, and capable of acting for themselves, independent, and without any assistance or advice; do not care to be under restraints, withdraw from all yokes, and break all bands asunder; and so become children of disobedience, prone to every vice, and servants and slaves to every lust; by which they are deceived, and in which they take a great deal of imaginary pleasure; and are often envious and spiteful, and live in malice, hateful, and hating one another: the request made by this younger son, is “to his Father”; to God, who was his Father by creation, by providential care, and by national adoption, and by special grace; though as yet he knew it not, nor could he call him so in faith: many call God Father, who should not, and many that should, do not: the request follows;

father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me: this portion may be considered, as internal or external; as internal, and such who think the Gentiles are meant by the younger son understand it of the light of nature, and of natural gifts and talents. The ancients generally interpret it, of man's

free will: it may intend natural knowledge in general, to which there is in man a natural desire, and in which he is self-sufficient: or rather as external, such as the outward blessings of food, raiment, health, etc. the honours, pleasures, and riches of the world: the good things of this world belonged to men by right of creation, and according the laws and dues of it, but have been all forfeited by the sin of man; and yet this is a portion, which in the apprehension of men, of right belongs to them; and which suits their nature, which is carnal and worldly:

and he divided unto them his living; natural gifts, external privileges, and worldly good things; which of all men in the earth, the Jewish nation shared; (see <19516>Psalm 115:16, 106:15).

Ver. 13. *And not many days after the younger son gathered all together*, etc.] That his father had divided to him, all his goods and substance: as soon as a man has any internal substance, any considerable degree of natural knowledge, he immediately sets out from God, and employs it against him, in reasoning against him, against his being, his works, his providence, his purposes, his revelation, and will; as soon as a man has the exercise of his reason, as soon as he can think and speak, nay, as soon as he is born, he goes astray from God, speaking lies; and as soon as a wicked man has of this world, what his carnal heart desires, he is for living independent of God, and his providence; he is for gathering together all for himself, in order to spend it on his lusts, and at a distance from his father, the father of his mercies, of whom he is not mindful; and to whom he says, depart from me, having no regard to his worship and service, to his honour and glory, to his cause and interest:

and took his journey into a far country; which sets forth the state of alienation a sinner is in, while unconverted; he is afar off from God, from God the Father; from the presence of God, and communion with him: from the knowledge of God, and desire after it; from love to him, or fear of him; and from the life of God, or a living soberly, righteously, and godly; and from Christ, from the knowledge of him, from faith in him, love to him, fellowship with him, and subjection to his ordinances; and from the Spirit of God, and every thing that is spiritual; and from all that is good, from the law of God, and from the righteousness of it, and from righteous men:

and there wasted his substance in riotous living; his internal substance, his knowledge and understanding, even in natural things, and became brutish, and even like the beasts that perish; and his worldly substance in rioting

and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness, with harlots, as in (Luke 15:30) whereby he was brought to a piece of bread, and to the want of it,

Ver. 14. *And when he had spent all*, etc.] Sin strips a man of all that is good and valuable; of the image of God, of the knowledge of divine things, of natural holiness, of moral righteousness, and of strength to perform moral good; hence man is in a wretched and miserable condition, he is poor, and blind, and naked: and if man has spent all, and sin has stripped him of all, where is his free will? there is no good thing in man, but what comes from the grace of God; nor has he any thing to recommend him to God, or to offer to his creditor, to compound his debts with; nor can he prepare himself for conversion, or any good work:

there arose a mighty famine in that land; sin brings men into a starving and famishing condition; for in the far country, the land of sin, there is a famine of the word: though the Gospel is preached, it is only food to spiritual persons; unregenerate men have no desire to it, but neglect and despise it; and if they attend it, it has no place in them: they that are in this land, are aliens from the ordinances of God, the breasts of consolation, the goodness and fatness of his house; they are in a pit, wherein is no water; their taste is vitiated to every thing that is spiritually good; they live on bread of deceit, and labour after that which satisfies not; wherefore they look like skeletons, and are as the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision:

and he began to be in want; or was in want: when the above is the case, the sinner may be truly said to be in want; an unregenerate man is in want of every thing that is good; of wisdom and knowledge, of grace and holiness, of righteousness or clothing, of food, and of all the necessaries of life: and he may be said to “begin” to be in want, because man was not originally so, but was possessed of a natural fulness; and because sin is the beginning of want, as soon as one takes place, the other does: moreover, this man now began to see and feel himself to be in want, though as yet he was not rightly and truly sensible of his wants, at least of the way to redress them.

Ver. 15. *And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country*, etc.] Not to any one of the saints, for they are not citizens of the far country, but of the church of God below, and of heaven above; besides, carnal men do not like the company of such citizens: nor is the devil intended, for though he dwells in this country, he is more than a citizen, than an inhabitant; he is

king and governor, the prince of the world, and the god of it; nor is it feasible, that a man under conviction, and beginning to be sensible of his want, should go and join himself to the devil: but an unregenerate, "pharisaical", legal preacher, is designed; a man may be a preacher, and yet in the far country of sin and unregeneracy; there may be large gifts, where there is no grace; and a man may have a form of religion and godliness, and know nothing of the power of it; and a great stir and bluster may be made about good works, as were by the Pharisees, when few or none are done: now it is common for persons under legal convictions, to seek after such a preacher, and such a ministry, and to such an one this man "went"; he went not out of the land of sin, nor to his father's house, but to one in the same country, where the famine was, and he was starving: "he went"; it was his own choice, he took his own way; he went and told him his case, how he had spent all he had, and in what manner, and what condition he now was in; and he asked his advice and assistance: and he "joined himself" to him; he sat under his ministry, and became a member with him, and stuck close to him, as the word signifies; and was a stickler for him, and his principles:

and he sent him into his field to feed swine; he did not give him the least bit of bread to satisfy his hunger; nor did he say one word to him of Christ, the bread of life; nor did he advise him to go to his father's house, where there was bread enough, and to spare: but he "sent him, into his fields"; to work, to cleanse his heart, to reform his life, to fulfil the law, to perform the conditions of the covenant, to make his peace with God, and get an interest in his love and favour; and go through a round of duties continually, and all would be well: he sent him to "feed swine" there; to converse with self-righteous persons, who may be compared to swine, because of their selfishness; doing all they do for themselves, and not for God and his glory; because they prefer dung before pearls, their own righteousness before Christ, the pearl of great price; and live upon the husks of their own duties and never look upwards to heaven, as this creature does not, but always downwards on the earth; and though they were outwardly reformed, yet inwardly filthy, and often return to wallowing in the mire again: he sent him there also to gratify the selfish principles of nature; to please himself with his wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and other excellencies he fancied he had attained unto. In short, the expression shows the base employment of a self-justitiary amidst all his pretensions to religion and virtue: for feeding of swine was very disagreeable to the Jews, and with them scandalous; to whom the eating of

swine's flesh was forbidden by the law of God, and the breeding of swine by their traditions; and this is said to be done in a country, out of Judea.

Ver 16. *And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks*, etc.] abwrj, the fruit of the "Charub" tree, as the Syriac version interprets it; and which the Jews [f455] say is hmhb lkam, "the food of beasts": though, according to what is elsewhere said of it, it should be the food of men also. It is said [f456] of R. Simeon ben Jochai, and his son, that they hid themselves in a cave for fear of the king, and a miracle was wrought for them, abwrj whl yrbya, a "Charub" tree was created for them, and a fountain of water; the one, as the gloss observes, was to eat the fruit of, and the other to drink of: but be they what they will, by them are meant, not worldly riches and honours, and carnal lusts and pleasures; though these are the principal things of the far country, of this world, or an unregenerate estate; and are greatly desired by carnal minds, and are but swine's meat, very mean food, yea, pernicious, empty, unsatisfying, and perishing; but these were the things this man had been desirous of, and lived upon before, and had ran through them, and had spent all his substance in the pursuit and enjoyment of them; and now he felt the gripes of a natural conscience for them, and found himself in want of something else: wherefore by these "husks" are meant works of righteousness done by men; which are like husks, external things, done only before men; empty things that have nothing within them; mere trash, and not food; and which can give no satisfaction; mere sordid food, fit only to be cast to dogs or swine; of an ill savour, hard to eat, and difficult digestion, and which affords no real nourishment; these this man greatly desired to fill his belly with: he found himself empty, and in want; as yet he had no thought of, at least not any desire after the bread in his father's house; but would fain have satisfied himself with his own doings, and have quieted his mind and conscience with a few external performances, a negative holiness, a legal repentance, and outward reformation: he laboured hard to make his own righteousness do; which was but striving to fill his belly with the east wind; and is what can never satisfy, because it is not answerable to the law and justice of God; and was no other than

that the swine did eat, self-righteous persons, like himself; for such an one was now the publican and sinner become, though he did not continue so. Christ's lambs and sheep do not eat such food, nor will, nor can they, only swinish, selfish persons; this is suitable to their nature, they eat it, and live

upon it; which shows them to be unrenewed, and that their taste is not changed.

And no man gave unto him: not the husks, though this is the sense of the Arabic version, which renders it, “neither did he obtain them”; and so it seems to be ours and others: but these were at hand, which he might have taken himself, and did; nor is it reasonable to think he should wait to have them given him by another; or that he should be restrained from them; but it is to be understood of bread, or proper food, and that no man gave that unto him: and the words, as Calvin observes, may be read causally, “for no man gave to him”; and so are a reason why he craved husks, because no man gave him any bread: the citizen, or legal preacher, to whom he joined himself, gave him none; nor the swine, the self-righteous persons, to whom he was sent, and with whom he conversed, gave him none; he had nothing under the ministry, nor in conversation, that was proper food to him; there were nothing but these husks that presented, and he tried to satisfy himself with them; and indeed none but Christ can give the true bread, the bread of life, to those that are hungry, and in want.

Ver. 17. *And when he came to himself*, etc.] An unregenerate man, whether while a voluptuous man, or a self-righteous man, is not himself; he is beside himself; and is no other than a madman. The man that pursues his worldly lusts and pleasures, promises himself liberty, while he is a slave; he ruins himself, his soul, body, and estate, and chooses to do it rather than part with his lusts; he takes delight in doing mischief himself, and in seeing it done by others; he proclaims his folly publicly, declares his sin, and glories in it; all which a man in his right mind would never do. The self-righteous person trusts in his own heart, which is the greatest madness and folly in the world; he compasses himself about with sparks of his own kindling, and sacrifices to his own net; he dresses himself in his rags, and pleases and prides himself with them, when a robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, are provided; which no man in his senses would ever do. But when the Spirit of God comes to work upon a sinner's heart in conversion, he brings him to himself; which a man may be said to be, when he is brought to true evangelical repentance for sin; and that is, when he has a true sense of it, as committed against God, and a godly sorrow for it, and makes an hearty and ingenuous acknowledgment of it, and forsakes it; and when he is brought to a sense of the insufficiency of his own righteousness, and is made willing to part with it, and desires to be found in Christ, and in his righteousness alone, which he is encouraged to lay hold

on, and receive by faith, trust to, and rejoice in; when he has his spiritual senses exercised on Christ, and to discern between good and evil; and is brought to the feet of Jesus, as to submit to his righteousness, so to serve him; when he is all this, then, like the man in the Gospel, he is clothed, and in his right mind:

he said, how many hired servants of my father's; who, according to some, were the Scribes and Pharisees, men of a servile disposition, and of mercenary views; and were, by profession, the servants of God, and had plenty of bread, because they had all the external means and ordinances: but these are designed by the elder brother in the parable; and besides, this man had endeavoured to live as they did in this far country. It may be queried, whether the ministers of the Gospel are not intended, since these are the servants of the most high God; are labourers hired by him, and are worthy of their hire, and abound with Gospel provisions for the service of others. But to this it may be objected, the desire of this man to be made as one of them, (Luke 15:19) which petition expresses his humility; whereas to be a servant, in this sense, is to have the highest place and office in his father's house. Rather therefore the meanest of the saints, and household of God, are here meant, who have the least degree of evangelical light, whose faith is weak, and their consolation small; and who, though they are sons, yet by reason of that legality and mercenariness that appear in their frames and services, differ little from servants: and yet these, in comparison of him, who was in a hungry and starving condition,

have bread enough, and to spare; as the doctrines, promises, and ordinances of the Gospel, the fulness of grace that is in Christ, and Christ himself the bread of life; which are more than enough for them, and sufficient for the whole family in heaven, and in earth; and even the meanest and weakest believer may be said to have enough and to spare, because he has an interest in all these; though by reason of the weakness of his faith, it is but now and then he has a full and comfortable meal; but this is infinitely better than to be starving, as this man was:

and I perish with hunger. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions add, “here”; in this far country, in the citizen's fields, among his swine, and their husks: all mankind are in a lost and perishing condition; for having sinned against God, they have exposed themselves to the curses of the law, and are destitute of a justifying righteousness, and are in the way, to ruin and destruction; but all are not sensible of it, being ignorant of God, and

his righteousness, of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and of the insufficiency of their own righteousness; but some are sensible of it, and in their own apprehensions are ready to perish: these see sin in its true light, without a view of pardon; an angry God without a smile; injured justice without a righteousness; and a broken law without a satisfaction for the violation of it; and such was this man's case. The Jewish writers [f457] say,

> “a sinner is like to a son that runs away from his father, and turns his back upon him, who yet afterwards repents, and has a mind to return to his father's house:”

so it was now with the publicans and sinners, signified by this man.

Ver. 18. *I will arise*, etc.] This is the resolution which at last, through divine grace, he came into: he determines to quit the country, and his companions; he had left his harlots, and his old course of living before, but was in the same country still; for this a man may do, and yet remain unregenerate: but he is now for leaving the country itself, and his new acquaintance; he is now determined to drop his legal preacher, to be gone out of his fields, and from under his ministry, and to leave his swine and husks;

and go to my father: not to his old companions in debauchery and sin; nor to his elder brother, the Pharisees; he had made trial of both these to his cost already; nor to his father's servants, but to his father himself; to which he was moved and encouraged, from his being ready to perish, from the fulness of bread in his father's house and from the relation he stood in to him; notwithstanding, all that had passed, he was his father, and a kind and merciful one: this shows, that he knew him as his father, having now the Spirit of adoption sent down into him; and the way unto him, which lies through Christ the mediator:

and will say unto him, father; or, “my father”, as the Syriac and Persic versions read:

I have sinned against heaven; by preferring earthly things to heavenly ones; and have sinned openly in the face of the heavens, who were witnesses against him; and against God, who dwells in heaven. It was usual with the Jews to call God, µymç, “heaven”; (see Gill on “Matthew 21:25”). They have this very phrase;

> “there is a man, (say [f458] they), who sins against earth, and he does not µymçb ajh, “sin against heaven”; against heaven, and he does not sin against earth: but he that speaks with an ill tongue sins against heaven and earth, as it is said, (<19739>Psalm 73:9) “they set their mouth against the heavens and their tongue walketh through the earth.””

And so the sense is, that he had sinned against God himself, and not merely against men, and human laws. All sin is a transgression of the law of God; and the thought of sin being committed against a God of infinite holiness, justice, goodness, grace, and mercy, is cutting to a sensible sinner: and this being the case, this man determined to go to God his Father, and him only, for the pardon of his sin, against whom it was committed. It is added,

and before thee; for he was now convinced of his omniscience. Sin may be committed against a man, and not before him, or he not know it; but whatever is committed against God, is before him, it is in his sight, he knows it: he is God omniscient, though sinners take no notice of this perfection of his, but go on in sin, as if it was not seen, known, and observed by God. But when God works powerfully and effectually upon the heart of a sinner, he convinces him of his omniscience, as this man was convinced: hence he determined to go to God, and acknowledge his sin before him; and that it was committed before him, and was in his sight; and that he could not be justified in his sight by any righteousness of his own; and therefore humbly desires pardon at his hands. This man's sense of sin and sorrow for it, and confession of it, appear very right and genuine, which he determined to express; they appear to be the convictions of the Spirit of God: it was not a sense of sin, and sorrow for it, as done before men, but God; and the concern was not so much for the mischief that comes by sin, as for the evil that was in it; and this did not drive him to despair, as in the cases of Cain and Judas, but brought him home to his father; and his confession appears to be hearty, sincere, and without excuse.

Ver. 19. *And am no more worthy to be called thy son*, etc.] As all the Jews were; not only by creation, and providential care, as all men are; but by national adoption: and however worthy this man might think himself to be called a Son of God before, and value himself upon it; he now sees, and was ready to own his unworthiness to be called so in any sense; and much more to be called and accounted a Son of God by special adoption;

make me as one of thy hired servants; this is said not from a servile spirit, but to express the mean thoughts he had of himself, and the great desire he had to be fed from his father's table, in the meanest way; and what an happiness and honour it would be to him, could he be the meanest in his family, a doorkeeper in his house; which was more eligible to him, than to dwell in the tents of sin, or continue in this hungry and starving condition.

Ver. 20. *And he arose*, etc.] This shows that his resolution to arise was not of nature, but of grace, by its being put into execution; for it was made and executed, not in his own strength, but in another's. He did not confer with flesh and blood; nor listen to discouragements which might present; as the distance of the way, the danger in it, the cold reception, if not rejection, he might expect from his father: but he arose immediately; he arose and stood upon his feet, in obedience to the heavenly call, being assisted by divine grace; he arose, and quitted the far country, the citizen, swine, and husks, and denied both sinful and righteous self;

and came to his father; his own father; “the father of himself”, as in the Greek text, who was so before he came to him; a sense of which he had, and was what encouraged him the rather to go to him: and this coming to him denotes a progression towards him; for as yet he was not come to him, but was at some distance, as the next clause expresses; and means not so much attendance on ordinances, as some inward secret desires after God:

but when he was yet a great way off. This is not to be understood of his state of alienation from God, which is before signified by his being in a far country; but the distance he observed, as conscious of his vileness, and unworthiness; and the humility he expressed on a view of himself; and a sense he had of his need of divine grace: and which is grateful to God; he looks to such that are of an humble, and of a contrite spirit, and dwells among them, and gives more grace to them:

his father saw him; he saw him when in the far country, spending his substance with harlots, and in riotous living; he saw him when among the swine and husks; he saw him when he came to himself, and all the motions and determinations of his heart; he saw him in his progress towards him, and looked upon him with an eye of love, pity, and compassion, as it follows,

and had compassion: God is full of compassion, and pities him, as a father does his children; yea, as a woman's heart of compassion yearns after the

son of her womb: he had compassion on him, and his heart of pity moved towards him, he being as one grieved in spirit for his sins, and wounded with a sense of them, and wanting a view of pardon, as starving and famishing, and as naked, and without clothing.

And ran; to him, which shows the quick notice God takes of the first motions of his own grace in the hearts of sensible sinners; the speedy relief he gives to distressed ones; and this points out his preventing grace and goodness.

And fell on his neck; expressive of the strength of his affection to him, (<01451401>Genesis 45:14 46:29, <44203701>Acts 20:37) and of his great condescension and grace to fall on that neck which had been like an iron sinew, so stiff and rebellious; though now, through divine grace, was made flexible and pliable, and subject to him, and willing to bear the yoke, and to do whatever he would have him; and this was grateful to his father:

and kissed him; as a token of love; and as owning the relation he stood in to him; as a sign of reconciliation and friendship; and was an admission of him to great nearness to his person; and an application and manifestation of great love indeed to him; and a strong incentive of love in the son to him again; (see <62041901>1 John 4:19).

Ver. 21. *And the son said unto him, father*, etc.] Or "my father", as the Syriac version reads; and the Persic version adds, "pardon me": sin lay heavy on him, and he wanted a view and application of pardoning grace, though he seems to be prevented making this request by the kiss he received from his father:

I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight; this is what he determined to say, and was allowed to say, having a deep sense of his sin and vileness, and which was increased by the love and kindness his father had shown him. The phrase is Jewish; (see Gill on "<42151821>Luke 15:18") to which may be added, what is elsewhere said [f459],

> "what is the sense of that passage, (<19120401>Psalm 12:4) "who have said, with our tongues we will prevail?" etc. it designs all the transgressions a man sins against earth; and if µymçb ˆyajwj, "they sin against heaven", and earth; what is the sense of that in (<19730901>Psalm 73:9)?"

and am no more worthy to be called thy son: so much he was suffered to say, which fully expresses his sense of his vileness and unworthiness: but he was not allowed to say, “make me as one of thy hired servants”; because this could not be granted; for a son is always a son, and cannot become a servant; (see <480406>Galatians 4:6,7).

Ver. 22. *But the father said to his servants*, etc.] The word “but”, with which those words begin, is expressive of much grace, as it often is; (see <460611>1 Corinthians 6:11 <490204>Ephesians 2:4 <540113>1 Timothy 1:13 <560304>Titus 3:4) and signifies, that though the son had behaved so badly, and was now so sensible of it himself, as that he desired to be a hired servant, being unworthy to be called a son; but the “father”, against whom he had sinned, would hear nothing of it: but

said to his servants; not the angels, but the ministers of the Gospel; who are the servants of the most high God; and whose business it is to set forth, in the ministry of the word, the righteousness of Christ, and the everlasting love of God; and to direct souls to a life and conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ; and to set before them the rich provisions of the Gospel for their nourishment, joy, and comfort. These servants, the father of the son ordered, not to take him away from his presence, as one whose person he could not endure in his sight; nor to terrify and affright him with the curse and condemnation of the law, and fill his mind with wroth and terror; nor even to chastise and correct him for his former course of living, and to upbraid him with it; but to confer upon him all the honour, and high favours, and blessings that could be expressed in the following language:

bring forth the best robe; out of the wardrobe, that it is in. The Vulgate Latin version adds “quickly”; which increases the father's regard to him and shows that he was in haste to have his son appear in a better condition: the Arabic version adds it in the next clause, “and put it on him quickly”; which expresses the same thing: and the Ethiopic version renders it, “hasten ye, bring”, etc. By the “best robe” is meant, not water baptism; nor an holy life and conversation; nor any particular grace, as faith, or hope, or charity; or the whole of sanctification; nor Adam's robe of innocence; but the righteousness of Christ which is often compared to a robe, or garment, (<236110>Isaiah 61:10 <380304>Zechariah 3:4 <661908>Revelation 19:8) because it is not any thing in believers, but what is unto them, and upon them, and is put there by an act of God's grace in imputation; and is what covers their naked souls, and hides their sins from the avenging eye of divine justice; protects

them from all injuries, and saves them from wrath to come; as well as beautifies and adorns them, and renders them acceptable in the sight of God; and keeps them warm and alive; and gives them a right and title to eternal life. This is as in the Greek text “the first robe”; and so it is rendered by the Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions; because it was first in God's designation and counsel, and in Christ the head of his people, in whom they are blessed with all spiritual blessings before the foundation of the world, and so with this blessing; and it was also provided and secured in the everlasting covenant of grace, long before Adam's robe of innocence and righteousness was made and wore by him: the reference is not to the first that should be come at in the wardrobe; or to that which the son wore before he went into the far country; but to the tylj, “Talith”, which was the first and uppermost garment wore by the Jews, and answers to the Greek word στολη, “the stole”, here used: so the Babylonish garment is called, atlymd aljxya, [f460] which the gloss interprets a “Talith”, made of pure wool. The Ethiopic version renders the phrase, “fragrant garments”; and such are Christ's garments of salvation, and robe of righteousness; (see <19B608>Psalm 45:8) the Persic version renders it, “the splendid robe”; and the Syriac, as ours, the “chief”, or “best robe”; and such is Christ's righteousness: it is a better righteousness, not only than that of a self-righteous Pharisee; but better than the outward conversation garment of a real good man, which, at best, is imperfect; or than the inward sanctification of the Spirit of God, which, though pure, is not yet perfect: it is better than the robe of innocence wore by Adam in his sinless state; for that was but a natural righteousness, and the righteousness of a creature, and was loseable, as the event has shown; and had he kept it, would not have given him a title to eternal life: yea, it is better than the righteousness of the angels heaven; for what is said of Adam's, may be said of theirs, that it is natural, the righteousness of a creature; and had it not been for confirming grace, a loseable one: but Christ's righteousness is pure and perfect; the righteousness of God, and an everlasting one: and when the servants of God, the ministers of the Gospel, are ordered to bring it out,

and put it on him: this is done, not by the imputation of it to men, for that is the Father's act; nor by application of it to them, that is the Spirit's work; but by a declaration of it, setting it forth in a ministerial way before them; declaring it to be a justifying one, and encouraging their faith to lay hold upon it as such:

and put a ring on his hand; on one of the fingers of his hand: by which is intended not the grace of faith; that is, rather the hand on which the ring is put; and though this grace is both precious and ornamental, as will be allowed, yet it does not unite to Christ, this must be denied; it being a grace which flows from union, as all grace does; and by which souls have communion with Christ: nor are good works designed; such indeed who are called by grace, are to be set to work from a right principle, to a right end; and true grace does show itself by works; and good works are the seal and token of grace to the world; but then, as before, these are rather meant by the hand; since that is the instrument of action: nor is the seal and earnest of the Spirit meant by the ring. The Spirit of God is certainly the seal of grace, and the earnest of glory; and to have this is a high favour, and a precious benefit indeed, and what will never be taken away; but as faith, so not the Spirit is the bond of union between God and his people, but the fruit of it: by the "ring" is meant the everlasting love of God; and which, as a ring, is round, and has neither beginning nor end; it does not begin with the obedience of his people, nor with their love to him; nor with their conversion; nor with the mission, sufferings, and death of Christ; but was from all eternity; nor will it have any end, nor can there be any separation from it: this is the bond of union, that can never be dissolved; and this being manifested to the soul, is a token of freedom; it sets a man free from the bondage of corruption, and from the slavery of Satan, and introduces into the liberty of the children of God: it is a mark of great honour, a sign of riches, both of grace and glory; it is a declaration of sonship, and heirship; and is a seal and pledge of everlasting happiness: now the putting on of this ring does not design the shedding abroad of this love in the heart by the Spirit of God; but the declaration of it by his servants in a ministerial way; setting it forth in its nature and effects, to the great joy and comfort of souls; when believers receive it by the hand of faith, and which constrains them, and makes them active, and puts them upon doing good works to the glory of God.

And shoes on his feet: by feet are meant the outward walk and conversation; which in persons called by grace should be different from what it was before, and from that of others: it should not be loose and naked, as those that walk barefoot, but should be upright, straight, and regular; not carnal and earthly, but spiritual and heavenly; and should be with prudence, care, and circumspection, and worthy of their calling, and as becomes the Gospel of Christ: and by "the shoes" may be meant, the

preparation of the Gospel of peace, (Ephesians 6:15). The Gospel is as shoes to the feet; it beautifies and adorns, (Song of Solomon 7:1) it keeps the feet tight and straight, the conversation regular and upright; preserves from slipping and failing; strengthens and makes more fit for walking; directs, guides, and influences in walking, and protects from the stones, thorns, and scorpions of the world's reproaches; and the doctrines of it are shoes that will never wear out: and to walk according to the Gospel of Christ, is what Gospel ministers direct and exhort unto, and may be meant by their putting on those shoes; they pressing a good life and conversation from, and by the doctrines of grace. A person with all these things on him was reckoned, among the Jews, as one thoroughly dressed: a canon of theirs, relating to the defilement of leprosy, runs thus [f461];

> “a man of Israel that goes into a house infected with the plague of leprosy, wydyb wytw[bjw wylgrb wyldnsw wydgbb çwbl, “clothed with garments, and his sandals on his feet, and his rings on his hands”, lo, that man is immediately defiled.”

Ver. 23. *And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill* it, etc.] By which Christ is designed, in allusion to the calves offered in sacrifice, which were offered for sin offerings, and for peace offerings, and for burnt offerings; and were one of the sacrifices on the day of atonement: so Christ has offered up himself in soul and body, freely and voluntarily, in the room and stead of his people, an offering and sacrifice to God, of a sweet smelling savour; which is well pleasing to him, and effectual to the purposes for which it was offered, and therefore will never be repeated; and has hereby satisfied law and justice, procured peace and reconciliation, and made full atonement and expiation for all their sins and transgressions: or else in allusion to the feasts and liberal entertainments of friends, when the fatted calf made a considerable part, (Genesis 18:7,8 1 Samuel 28:24,25 Amos 6:4 Malachi 4:2) Christ is the best provision that can be set before a believer, or he can feed upon; yea, the best that God can give, or saints desire: he is true and real food, spiritual, savoury, satisfying, and durable; what both gives and preserves life; nourishes, strengthens, refreshes, delights, and fattens. Now by “bringing it hither”, is meant preaching Christ; opening the Scriptures concerning him; setting him before believers, as their only proper food, both in the ministry of the word, and in the Lord's supper: and “killing” him does not design either the slaying of him in purpose, promise, and type, from the foundation of the world; nor the actual crucifixion of him by the Jews; but the setting him

forth in the Gospel in a ministerial way, as crucified and slain, for saints by faith to feed and live upon:

and let us eat and be merry: for as the Jews [f462] say,

> "there is no mirth without eating and drinking:"

this is a mutual invitation or encouragement to eat of the fatted calf: the parties called upon to eat of it are the Father, the servants, and the returned son. The Father, to whom the salvation of his people, by the death of Christ, is as a feast; his heart was set upon this from everlasting; and he was infinitely well pleased with Christ, as the surety of his people from all eternity; his eye was upon him as such throughout the several dispensations before his coming; he sent him forth with great pleasure in the fulness of time; and not only did not spare him, but it even pleased him to bruise him; and he accepted of his sacrifice with delight; and takes pleasure in seeing his people feed upon their crucified Saviour; and this is expressive of that communion which God admits his people to with himself, and which, as it is signified by walking and talking, and sitting and dwelling, so by eating together; and is in consequence of union to him; and is only enjoyed by true believers; and is the greatest blessing on earth, and what is next to heaven. The servants, the ministers of the Gospel, they are among the "us", who are to eat; and it is but reasonable they should, and it is even necessary that they do eat, and live upon a crucified Christ themselves, whose business it is to set him forth as such to others: and especially the returned son makes a principal guest at this entertainment; for whom it is made, and for whose sake chiefly the invitation to eat is given: by which is meant not corporeal eating, but eating by faith; which supposes food to eat, of which there is plenty in the Gospel provision; a principle of life infused, for a dead man cannot eat; and spiritual hunger and thirst, otherwise there will be no appetite; and the grace of faith; which is the hand that takes, and the mouth that receives, and eats spiritual food: and believers have full and free liberty to eat of it; nor should they object their own unworthiness, but consider the suitableness of the food unto them; that it is on purpose prepared for them; that they are in their Father's house, and at his table; and the invitation to eat is hearty and cordial; and both the Father and Christ give this food, and bid welcome to it; and there is a necessity of eating it, for without this there can be no living in a spiritual sense: it is hereby that life is supported and maintained; without this the saints must be starving; it is this which preserves from hunger, and satisfies it, and nourishes up unto eternal life.

The manner of eating, or the circumstance attending it, is “mirth”, both in Father, son, and servants; and as corporeal, so spiritual eating should be with joy, and with a merry heart, (Ecclesiastes 9:7) and indeed is the most proper means of stirring and increasing spiritual joy and pleasure; see the note on the latter part of the following verse, (see Gill on “Luke 15:24”).

Ver. 24. *For this my son was dead*, etc.] These words contain the reasons of the above entertainment, and of all that spiritual joy and mirth; in which the father acknowledges the returning penitent as his son; though he had behaved so wickedly before, and though he judged himself unworthy of the relation; and this he did, by sending the Spirit of adoption into his heart, to witness his sonship to him; and takes notice of his past state and condition, to show the great reason there was for joy, at his present one: for before be was “dead”, dead in Adam, in whom all died; dead in law, being under a sentence of condemnation and death; and dead in trespasses and sins, which is a spiritual or moral death: in which all mankind by nature are: and which lies in a separation from God, Father, Son, and Spirit; in an alienation from the life of God; in a deformation of the image of God; in a loss of original righteousness; in the darkness of the understanding; in the inordinateness of the affections; in the pollution of the mind and conscience; in the stubbornness of the will; and in an impotency to that which is spiritually good; and in a privation of spiritual sense and motion: this had been the case, but now it was otherwise:

and is alive again: the Spirit of life from Christ had entered into him, and Christ was formed in his heart; and a principle of life was infused into him; a divine image was enstamped upon his soul; the understanding was enlightened in divine things; the affections were set upon them; the will was subjected to God, to his will and law, and to Christ and his righteousness, and the way of salvation by him, and to his commands and ordinances; and principles of grace and holiness were wrought in him, to do as well as to will; a spiritual sense of things were given him; a spiritual sight, hearing, tasting, and feeling, and savouring; he lived a life of holiness from Christ, of faith upon him, and of communion with him, and to his glory: and he came to be so, not of himself, nor by any creature; for no man can quicken himself, nor can any creature do it for him; it was entirely owing to the power and grace of God: and great reason here was for joy and mirth, as there is for every one that is quickened by the Spirit of God; for such shall

never enter into condemnation, nor die again, but shall live and reign with Christ for ever:

he was lost; lost in Adam, and in himself; so he was when in the far country, and when among the swine and husks; so as that he knew not where he was, nor what a condition he was in; nor did he know how to get out of it, nor could he help himself; nor could any other creature; though not irretrievably and irrecoverably lost; not to the love of God, his knowledge of him, care and provision for him in Christ, in his counsel and covenant: hence the following mercy,

and is found; not only by Christ, in redemption, but by the Spirit of Christ in the effectual calling; when he was brought and came to himself, and saw his lost state and condition by nature; and when he was directed and brought home to his Father's house, and entertained with all the provisions of it; and such have reason to rejoice and be glad, for they shall be found in Christ at death and at judgment, and shall be with him to all eternity:

and they began to be merry: all parties. The Father expressed his joy, and the gladness of his heart, upon the return of his son to him; he exhorted to be merry on this account, (Luke 15:23) and enforces it with reasons in this verse, taken from the relation he stood in to him, and the wonderful change that had passed upon him, and the finding of him; and he rejoices himself at his conversion, in the exercise of that grace which he himself implanted, and in the performance of duty by his assistance: not that any new joy arises in God's heart at such a time; for he always rejoiced in the persons of his elect, as they were the objects of his love, as chosen in Christ, and given to him, and as interested in the covenant of grace; and he rejoiced in the accomplishment of their salvation, by his Son: but in conversion, there are new expressions of joy; he rejoices over them to do them good, and rejoices in the good he does them; and this is the open beginning of his joy, and but the beginning of it; for it will continue, it is not all over, not all expressed, but will be in the fullest manner hereafter, to all eternity: the returned son began to be merry, as he had good reason for it; as that he was come back from the far country, where a mighty famine had been: and from the citizen of that country, his fields, and swine; that he was come to his father, and his father's house, where was bread enough and to spare; an house well furnished with all suitable provisions; a family made up of saints, where ministers of the Gospel are stewards, and angels guards, and where Christ is Son, priest, and master; and that he was

received here, and owned as a son; not only was one secretly, but was owned as such openly; and was not only called so by the servants, but by the father himself; and that after he had behaved so vilely, and in his own conscience knew he was unworthy of the relation; and that he was received immediately, as soon as ever he came, and that in the most tender manner; and was entertained in the most free, generous, and sumptuous way; though he went away from his father of himself, and had spent his substance in a scandalous manner; and was in a most filthy, ragged, and piteous condition; and that he should be clothed with the best robe, the robe of Christ's righteousness; and so had nothing to fear from law and justice; nor was he in any danger of wrath to come because of his sins; nor had he any reason to doubt of his right and admission to the heavenly glory; and that he had the ring of love on the hand of faith, and could believe his interest in it, which is better than life, and will continue for ever; and that his feet were shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; that he understood the Gospel, and was brought to a submission to Gospel ordinances, and had his conversation agreeably to it; and that the fatted calf was killed, and set before him to eat of, and feed upon: and now he began to live and fare sumptuously, and to have spiritual joy and pleasure, which he never knew before; and this was but the beginning of joy to him: spiritual joy is not all over at once, it continues and increases; nor is it full and perfect in this life, but in heaven it will be complete, and without interruption; the servants also, the ministers of the Gospel, began to be merry on this occasion; who express their joy at the conversion of sinners, because of the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit, concerned in it; because of the grace bestowed then on sinners themselves; and because the interest of Christ is strengthened, and his churches increased, and Satan's kingdom weakened; and because their own ministry is blessed; and which strengthens their hands and hearts, and encourages them to go on in their work: and this is but the beginning of their joy; for they continue to rejoice at the growth of grace in believers, and when they are in a thriving and flourishing condition; when they walk becoming the Gospel of Christ, and live in peace among themselves; and persevere in faith and holiness to the end; and these will be their joy and crown of rejoicing, at the coming of Christ Jesus.

Ver. 25. *Now his elder son was in the field*, etc.] By “the elder son” is meant, not angels, as has been observed on (Luke 15:11) nor truly converted persons, of some standing in the church; for though these may

be said to be elder than young converts, and are more solid and settled, yet they are not ignorant of spiritual mirth; nor of the Gospel sound; nor are they angry at the conversion of sinners; nor will they ever speak in such commendation of themselves; or say that they never had a kid, much less a fatted calf, as this elder brother does: nor the Jews in general, in distinction from the Gentiles, as has been remarked in the above place: the Scribes and Pharisees in particular are meant, in opposition to the publicans and sinners: now these are said to be “in the field”; in the world, which is comparable to an uncultivated field; being overrun with the briers and thorns of sin, and sinful men; where beasts of prey inhabit, and who are fitly signified by lions, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword; and out of which the garden of the church is taken and separated, and fenced by distinguishing grace: now this elder brother, the Scribe and Pharisee, notwithstanding all his sobriety and morality, was in a state of nature and unregeneracy, in the same condition he came into the world; and was under the influence of the god of the world; and was taken up with the things of the world, the honours, riches, and profits of it; and though he was in the Jewish church state, yet was in the field of the world; the ceremonies of that state, were the rudiments of the world; and the sanctuary in it, was a worldly sanctuary; and the chief men in it, were the princes of the world: and this elder son was in the field at work, working for life: to work is right, when men work from a principle of grace, in the name, faith, and strength of Christ, to the glory of God and religion, and their own and others good; and ascribe all they do to the grace of God, and acknowledge their own unworthiness; but to work, in order to obtain righteousness, life, and salvation, proceeds from wretched ignorance, and is an instance of the pride and vanity of human nature; and is not only a vain and fruitless attempt, but a piece of wickedness, it being a denial of Christ, as God's salvation: now while the younger son, the publicans and sinners, were received and entertained in the house and kingdom of God their Father, the elder son, the Scribe and Pharisee, were without in the field, labouring to obtain life by doing;

and as he came and drew nigh to the house. The Ethiopic version reads, “to the border of the city”: he “came” out of the field, the world; not that he was come out from the world, and had left the company of the men of it, or parted with the sins and lusts of it; but he came from his labour, having done his day's work, and the task of duty he had set himself; and was now going for his hire, for what he imagined he had merited: and

drew nigh to the house; for he did not go in, (⁴²15:28Luke 15:28) he only made some advances to it, and took some steps towards entrance into it; namely, into a visible church; he came to hear the word, as the Scribes and Pharisees did; and to attend on ordinances, particularly at the administration of the ordinance of baptism, and seemed desirous of submitting to it in John's time; but never came to Christ in a spiritual way; nor entered into the kingdom of heaven, the Gospel dispensation; and did all that could be, to hinder others, especially publicans and sinners;

he heard music and dancing. The Syriac; Persic, and Ethiopic versions, leave out “dancing”: the former only reads, “the voice of the singing of many”, and the next, “the voice of singing”; and the last, “pipes and songs”; by “music” is meant not the instrumental music used in the Old Testament church; nor vocal singing in the new; but the preaching of the Gospel by the ministers of it, the servants, in (⁴²15:22,23Luke 15:22,23) setting forth the love of God, the righteousness of Christ, peace, pardon, and salvation by him; in which, as in music, there is a distinction of sounds, the voice of Christ in the Gospel, and the several doctrines of it, are distinctly pronounced, discerned, and understood: and there is also, as in music, an harmony and agreement; the Gospel does not give an uncertain sound, nor contradict itself; it is not yea and nay: and, like music, it is delightful and charming; it is a sound of love in all the three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; of free grace, and rich mercy; of liberty, reconciliation, forgiveness, righteousness, and eternal life: and as music, has a powerful and attractive virtue in it; so the Gospel is mighty and efficacious in the hand of the Spirit of God to quicken even dead sinners, to draw them to Christ, to allure, charm, and comfort them: “dancing” may design those expressions of joy, which are delivered by young converts at hearing the Gospel, as by the three thousand, in (⁴⁴2:41Acts 2:41) by the inhabitants of Samaria, (⁴⁴8:6,8Acts 8:6,8) and by the jailor and his household, (⁴⁴16:34Acts 16:34) and by many others: now all this the elder brother, the Scribes and Pharisees, “heard”; not so as to know the true meaning of it, as appears from the following verse; nor as to approve of it; or so as to feel the power, and enjoy the sweetness of it; nor as to practise what was heard; only externally hearing, they heard, but understood not, their eyes were blinded, and their hearts were hardened.

Ver. 26. *And he called one of the servants*, etc.] One of the ministers of the word, one of the disciples of Christ, as the Scribes and Pharisees

sometimes did: choosing rather to speak to one of the disciples, than to Christ himself, when they were offended; (see <40216>Mark 2:16)

And asked what these things meant: for self-righteous persons, as these Scribes and Pharisees were, are ignorant of the truths of the Gospel; they do not understand them, nor conceive what is meant by them they cannot take in the doctrine of God's everlasting love, that it should be so early; be towards some, and not others; that it should be independent of men's works, both in the rise and continuance of it; that it should be exercised towards sinners, and yet be no licentious doctrine: and as much at a loss are they about the doctrine of election: as that it should be eternal, personal, discriminating, irrespective of works, and yet give no liberty to sin: they know nothing of the covenant of grace, nor have any other notion but of a covenant of works; and if of any other, yet a conditional one, made with them upon their conversion; or rather, one of their own making, and which depends on their good behaviour: they are ignorant of salvation by Christ; of justification by his righteousness; of peace and pardon by his blood; of the doctrine of regeneration, and of living by faith on Christ; and of eternal life as God's free gift; and so likewise of spiritual joy, and mirth: they are strangers to themselves, their lost state and condition, and a deliverance out of it; to the kingdom of God, or an internal work of grace, the fruits of which are peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; and to the person, offices, and grace of Christ; to justification and atonement by him; to the promises of the Gospel, and to that itself which is the joyful sound; all which produce spiritual joy, delight, and pleasure in sensible souls: the rejoicing of such persons is only in themselves, and in their own works and duties; but as for true solid spiritual joy, they intermeddle not with it, nor know they what it means.

Ver. 27. *And he said unto him*, etc.] The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, leave out the copulative “and”, and the latter reads, “they said unto him”; the servants, one or other of them:

thy brother is come; for in the relation of a brother, the younger son stood to him; being of the same nature and species, of the same nation, and both sons by national adoption: who was “come” to his father, and to his father's house; not as a righteous and worthy person in himself, but as a sinner, a sensible and penitent one; as hungry, naked, and ready to perish; and as unworthy, in his own opinion, of the least mercy and favour, and especially to be called a son:

and thy father; who was so by creation, by national adoption, and by profession:

hath killed the fatted calf, by which Christ is meant: (see Gill on "Luke 15:23") and designs either the concern the Father had in the death of Christ; or rather, his orders to his ministering servants, to preach a crucified Christ, to the comfort of poor sinners; and in general, expresses the large and rich entertainment God makes for souls, when they are brought home to him by repentance: and the Persic version adds, "and hath made a feast"; the reason of which is given in the next clause:

because he hath received him safe and sound; or "in good health". This is left out in the Persic version, but rightly retained in all others: the word translated "received", signifies the recovery, or enjoyment of any thing before had, but since lost, and the taking it at the hands of another: the elect of God, signified by the younger son, were his in a peculiar sense, being chosen by him; but through the fall of Adam, and their own transgressions, were in some sense lost unto him; but in consequence of redemption by Christ, and through efficacious grace in calling, are found, received, and enjoyed again: and so the Ethiopic version reads it, "because he found him alive"; and so took him again, as he did, at the hands of his son: all the elect of God were put into the hands of Christ, as the surety of them; and being redeemed by his blood in the effectual calling, they are brought by him to the Father, and come to God by him: as they are also received by the Father from the hands of his Spirit, who convinces them of sin, causes them to believe in Christ, witnesses their adoption to them; in a view of which, they come to God, and are received by him; and even from their own hands too, for under the power of divine grace, they are made willing to give up themselves to the Lord, and do so; who kindly and graciously receives them into his arms; into his heart's love, and affection, into the open enjoyment of it; into his care and protection, into his family, and into communion with himself, and will afterwards receive them to glory: the case and condition in which he was received is,

safe and sound; there is but one word in the original; some translate it "safe", as the Arabic version; and others "sound", as the Syriac; and ours both: he was received "safe", though he had been in a far country, and in a mighty famine, and almost starved: God's elect fell in Adam, as others; their nature is corrupted by sin, and they are guilty of actual transgressions, which deserve death; yet they were preserved in Christ, and being

redeemed by him, are safe; so that the law cannot lay hold on them, nor sin, nor any thing else condemn them, nor Satan destroy them: and he was received “sound”; in his right mind, being come to himself, and brought to true repentance for his sin; and willing to part with his own righteousness, and to be clothed with the best robe; and having his spiritual senses exercised, to discern between good and evil, and upon the person and grace of Christ; or he was received “sound”, being in good health, and as opposed to being sick or diseased: sins are diseases, and as all men, so God's elect, are attended with them; but being made sensible of them, they come to Christ for healing; and they are perfectly cured by him; by his stripes and wounds, all their iniquities are forgiven; so that they have no reason to say any more, they are sick: and hence the Father receives them safe and sound; and which is matter of joy, and was the occasion of all this music, dancing, and feasting.

Ver. 28. *And he was angry*, etc.] Particularly that the fatted calf was killed, (Luke 15:27,30) the preaching of a crucified Christ, and of free and full salvation by him, is highly displeasing and provoking to self-righteous persons; they are angry at it, that it should be free, that election to salvation should be of grace, that justification should be freely by the grace of God, and that pardon of sin should be according to the riches of God's grace, and salvation be by grace, and not by works; and that it should be discriminating, that God should appoint some, and not all unto salvation; that Christ should redeem some, and not all; and that all men are not called unto it, by his Spirit and grace; and that it should be full and complete, so as nothing can be added to it; and that it should be for sinners, and alone by Christ, and by him as crucified: it would be agreeable, was it taught that salvation was by Christ in a doctrinal way, by giving laws and rules to men, whereby to save themselves; or that Christ saves by example, and not by his sacrifice, in a way of satisfaction for sin. Now, though no grievous words were used, nor any thing said that might justly provoke, yet such was the pride of his heart, that he could not bear that his brother should be taken so much notice of, who had acted and lived so scandalously; and besides, his own character as a righteous person, was neglected by this doctrine; and his own righteousness laid aside, in the business of justification and salvation, which was intolerable by him:

and would not go in; into his father's house, nor to the feast, nor into the kingdom of heaven, or Gospel dispensation; the Scribes and Pharisees shut it up to themselves, and others; would neither go in themselves, nor suffer

others; they did not believe Jesus to be the Messiah, nor did they receive, but reject him; nor did they give any credit to the doctrines, nor submit to the ordinances of that dispensation:

therefore came his father out; not in a way of wrath and judgment, but in the ministry of the word; for though the Jews rejected it, it was not at once taken away from them, but was continued time after time, and for some considerable time: the Jews of old had the ministry of the word, both by angels and men; God frequently went forth to them by his prophets, and at last by his Son; and though they were angry with him, and rejected him, yet still the ministry of the word, by the disciples of Christ, were continued a good while to them; which shows the condescending goodness and grace of God, and his patience and longsuffering towards them:

and entreated him; the Persic version reads, "and said unto him, why dost thou not go in?" this regards the external call by the ministry of the word, to the outward duties of religion, to means of grace; to give credit to the doctrines, and to attend the ordinances of the Gospel.

Ver. 29. *And he answering, said to his father*, etc.] Commending himself, and reflecting on his father:

lo, these many years do I serve thee; for though he was called a son, yet differed little from a servant; he was of a servile disposition, and under a spirit of bondage; he served his father, not in the Gospel, but in the law, moral and ceremonial; in the letter of it, and not in the newness of the Spirit; externally, and not internally; from fear, and not from love; with mercenary views, and not freely; with trust in, and dependence on his service, seeking justification and eternal life by it, and not with a view to the glory of God; and this he had done "many years"; from his youth upwards, as the Pharisee in (40 19 20Matthew 19:20) whereas his younger brother had never served him, but his own lusts; and yet as soon as ever he was come home, before he could enter upon service, this entertainment was made for him, and which he therefore resented: moreover, he does not say I have served thee, but "I do"; denoting the continuance and constancy of his service; and intimating that his life had been, and was one continued series of obedience:

neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; which though true of the elect angels, can never be said of any of the sons of men; and which shows, that he had never been under a work of the Spirit of God, who

convinces of sin; and had never seen himself in a true light, in the glass of that law, he pretended to serve God in; that he was a stranger to the plague of his own heart, and was a self-deceiver, and the truth of grace was not in him: he could not be a good man, for so to say, is contrary to the experience of all good men; to their groans, complaints, and confessions; to their prayers, for fresh application of pardoning grace; and to the observation of all wise and good men in all ages; and most fully proves him to be, a Pharisee:

and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends; some by a "kid", or "goat", as Theophylact, understand a persecutor, as Saul was of David, and Ahab of Elijah; and so means that God had not delivered up such an one into his hands; or took him away by death, that he might have some peace and rest, amidst his labours and service; and others understand this of the Jews, desiring Barabbas, a goat, and not Jesus, the Lamb of God; but his meaning seems to be, that he had never received any favour in proportion to the services he had done; and so charges his father with ingratitude.

Ver. 30. *But as soon as this thy son was come*, etc.] He will not own him in the relation of a brother, though the father had owned him in that of a son; and the offence he took was, that the fatted calf should be killed, or that a crucified Christ should be preached; that he should be preached at all, and much less that he should be preached to sinners; and still less that he should be preached so soon to them, as soon as ever they became sensible of their sin, as it was the will of his father it should be: for such are not to be sent away to cleanse themselves from sin by any thing they do, and then apply to Christ; or to heal themselves, and then come to him for a cure; or to get peace by doing so, and then come to him for rest; or to do any thing to fit themselves for him, for their case requires present help: now at this the self-righteous man is displeased. The elder brother would have had another method taken with this younger son: he would have had him soundly whipped with the rod of the law, for his former sins; and sent into the fields along with him to work out his salvation; and not to have a rag put upon him, or a shoe on his foot, or a morsel of bread given him, till he had earned them; but instead of this, to be received and entertained in the manner he was, and so soon, highly provoked him: for he thought such a conduct was unbecoming God, and his moral perfections; and what his brother was undeserving of; and opened a door to, licentiousness; and highly reflected on his services, as of no value and regard.

Which hath devoured thy living: given to his son; that part of his goods he had divided to him, (Luke 15:12,13)

with harlots; in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness, in gluttony and debauchery:

thou hast killed for him the fatted calf; (see Gill on "Luke 15:23")

Ver. 31. *And he said to him, son*, etc.] For so he was, as before observed, by creation, national adoption, and profession:

thou art ever with me; not in such a sense as Christ the Son of God was: nor can it design the gracious presence of God, or communion with him; for this man did not walk with God; and besides, this is more frequently expressed by God's being with his people, than by their being with him; nor are good men always with God, or God with them, in this sense; sometimes the phrase designs the saints being with God, or Christ, in heaven; but here it intends only attendance on public worship, in the place where the symbol of God's presence was, the temple; and the "ever" denotes the term of the legal dispensation, which in many branches of it, as circumcision, the passover, and other ordinances and statutes, is said to be for ever.

And all that I have is thine: which must be understood with a limitation; for it cannot mean, that he had all the perfections of God, as Christ the Son of God has; nor all spiritual blessings, as the adopted sons of God have; nor indeed any of them, but all the outward ordinances of the legal dispensation, which belonged to the Jews; particularly those that are enumerated in (Romans 9:4,5) as the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, the promises, their descent from the fathers, and the Messiah's descent from them; they had him in person among them, and his personal ministry, the word and ordinances of the Gospel; and had as much as they could have, or desire to have, in an external way.

Ver. 32. *It was meet that we should make merry*, etc.] Both father, son, and servants; (see Gill on "Luke 15:23") (see Gill on "Luke 15:24") and this elder brother also, because of the relation he stood in to him: and if he had had the same spiritual affection the apostle had for his brethren and kinsmen, according to the flesh, (Romans 9:3 10:1) and he would have rejoiced at the conversion and return of sinners by repentance:

and be glad; as his father was, and the angels in heaven be; (see Luke 15:10)

for this thy brother, though he would not own him as such,

was dead, and is alive again, and was lost, and is found: (see Gill on “Luke 15:24”) and so the parable is concluded, the elder brother being silenced, and having nothing to say against such strong reasoning.

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 16

Ver. 1. *And he said also to his disciples*, etc.] The Syriac version adds, “a parable”, as the following is; and which is directed to the disciples, as those in the preceding chapter are to the Pharisees; and who also are designed in this; though it is particularly spoken to the disciples, because it might be of some use to them, with respect, to the stewardship they were in. The Persic and Ethiopic versions read, “Jesus”, or “the Lord Jesus said”: and which is to be understood, though not expressed; for the parable was delivered by him, and is as follows:

there was a certain rich man: by whom God is meant, who is rich in the perfections of his nature, in the works of his hands, in his government, and the administration of it, in providential goodness, and in the large revenues of glory due to him from his creatures; for all temporal riches are from him; and so are all the riches of mercy, grace, and glory:

which had a steward; by whom is designed, not all mankind; for though all men are, in a sense, stewards under God, and are entrusted with the good things of life, the gifts of nature, endowments of mind, health, strength of body, time, etc. yet all cannot be meant, because some are distinguished from this steward, (⁴²1605Luke 16:5,8) nor are the disciples intended, though the parable is directed to them; and they were stewards of the mysteries and manifold grace of God; and one among them was an unfaithful one, and was turned out of his stewardship; but the character of an unjust man will not suit with them: and besides, this steward was of the children of this world, (⁴²1608Luke 16:8) but the Pharisees are meant: for these are taken notice of as gravelled at this parable, (⁴²1614Luke 16:14,15) and to them agrees the character of the men of this world, who were worldly wise men; as also that of a steward; these are the tutors and governors mentioned in (⁴⁸0402Galatians 4:2) who had the care of the house of Israel, the family of God, under the legal dispensation; and to whom were committed the oracles of God, the writings of Moses, and the prophets; and whose business it was to open and explain them to the people.

And the same was accused unto him, that he had wasted his goods; put false glosses upon the Scriptures; fed the family with bad and unwholesome food, the traditions of the elders, called the leaven of the Pharisees: made havoc of the souls of men; and made the hearts of the righteous sad: and hardened sinners in their wicked ways: and fed themselves, and not the flock; and plundered persons of their temporal substance; of all which they were accused by Moses, in whom they trusted; by his law which they violated; and by their own consciences, which witnessed against them; and by the cries of those whom they abused, which came into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

Ver. 2. *And he called him*, etc.] By the prophets, sent one after another; by John the Baptist, by Christ himself, and by his apostles:

and said unto him, how is it that I hear this of thee? of thy corrupting the word; of thy covetousness, rapine, and theft; of thy adultery and idolatry, and sad violation of the law; (see <450221>Romans 2:21-23)

give an account of thy stewardship: what improvement is made of thy gifts; what care has been taken of my vineyard, the Jewish church; and where are the fruits that might be expected to have been received at your hands:

for thou mayest be no longer steward. This was foretold by the prophets, that God would write a “Loammi” upon the people of the Jews; that he would cut off three shepherds in one month, and particularly lay aside the idol shepherd, by whom the Pharisees may be meant, (<381108>Zechariah 11:8,17) and by John the Baptist, who declared the axe was laid to the root of the tree, and it was just ready to be cut down, (<400310>Matthew 3:10,12) and by Christ, that the kingdom of God should be taken from them, (<402143>Matthew 21:43) and by the apostles, who turned from them to the Gentiles, (<441346>Acts 13:46).

Ver. 3. *Then the steward said within himself*, etc.] As the Scribes and Pharisees were wont to do, (<400309>Matthew 3:9 9:3 <420739>Luke 7:39,49)

what shall I do? he does not say, what will become of me? I am undone, and what shall I do to be saved? or what shall I do for my Lord and Master I have so much injured? or what shall I do to make up matters with him? or what account shall I give? but what shall I do for a maintenance? how shall I live? what shall I do to please men, and gain their opinion and good will, and so be provided for by them? of this cast were the Pharisees, men pleasers, and self-seekers:

for my Lord taketh away from me the stewardship: the priesthood was changed, and there was a change also of the law; the ceremonial law was abrogated, and the ordinances of the former dispensation were shaken and removed; so that these men must of course turn out of their places and offices:

I cannot dig; or "plough", as the Arabic version renders it; or do any part of husbandry, particularly that which lies in manuring and cultivating the earth; not but that he was able to do it; but he could not tell how to submit to such a mean, as well as laborious way of life; for nothing was meaner among the Jews than husbandry: they have a saying, that [qrqh ^m htwjp twnmwa Æl ^ya, "you have no trade", or business, "lesser", or meaner "than husbandry" [f463]:

and to beg I am ashamed; for nothing could be more disagreeable, to one who had lived so well in his master's house, and in so much fulness and luxury, as the Scribes and Pharisees did. The Jews have a saying, that [f464]

> "want of necessaries, wtlaçm bwj, "is better than begging": (and says one) I have tasted the bitterness of all things, and I have not found any thing more bitter "than begging:""

and which was literally true of the Jews, after the destruction of Jerusalem; when multitudes of them were condemned to work in the mines; and vast numbers were scattered about every where as vagabonds, begging their bread; both which were very irksome to that people: though both these phrases may be mystically understood: and "digging" may intend a laborious searching into the Scriptures, and a diligent performance of good works: neither of which the Pharisees much cared for, though they made large pretensions to both; nor did they dig deep to lay a good foundation whereon to build eternal life and happiness: nor could they attain to the law of righteousness by all their toil and labour, they would be thought to have taken: and for "begging", they were above that: read the Pharisee's prayer in (Luke 18:11,12) and you will not find one petition in it. To ask any thing at the throne of grace, in a way of mere grace and favour, and not merit: or to beg any thing at the hands of Christ, as life, righteousness, pardon, cleansing, healing, food, etc. they were ashamed of, and cared not for.

Ver. 4. *I am resolved what to do*, etc.] Or “I know what to do”; I have a scheme in my head, and I am determined to execute it, which will provide for me, and secure me a maintenance:

that when I am put out of the stewardship; drove from Jerusalem, and from the temple and the synagogues:

they may receive me into their houses; either Jews or Gentiles, after their dispersion.

Ver. 5. *So he called every one of his Lord's debtors*, etc.] Either the Gentiles, who were greatly indebted to God, having sinned against him, and the law, and light of nature, at a great rate; into whose affections, houses, and palaces, the Jews found ways and means to introduce themselves; and, in process of time, got leave to have synagogues built, and their worship set up again: or else the Jews, their countrymen; since these were under those stewards, tutors, and governors, and were debtors to do the whole law; and had, by breaking the law, contracted large debts; and against whom the ceremonial law stood as an handwriting: these the steward called

unto him, and said unto the first, how much owest thou unto my Lord? and it is observable, that the debts of these men, of the first, lay in oil, and of the other in wheat; things much used in the ceremonial law, in the observance of which they had been, greatly deficient; (see <022940>Exodus 29:40,41 <041504>Numbers 15:4-12 <266503>Ezekiel 45:13,14)

Ver. 6. *And he said an hundred measures of oil*, etc.] Or “baths of oil”, the same quantity as in (<150722>Ezra 7:22) where Aben Ezra [f465] calls them, twdm, “measures”, as we do here; and Jarchi [f466] observes, that they were, twjnm lwlbl, “to mingle with the meal, or flour offerings”; which illustrates the above observation, that they were for the temple service; and the bath was the measure of oil, as the ephah was of wheat [f467]; and they were both of the same quantity, (<266611>Ezekiel 45:11). According to Godwin [f468] it held four gallons and a half; so that a hundred of them contained four hundred and fifty gallons; though some make the measure much larger. Some say the “bath” held six gallons, one pottle, and half a pint; and others, seven gallons, two quarts, and half a pint; and others, nine gallons, and three quarts.

Take thy bill, or "writing"; which showed the bargain made for so many measures; and which acknowledged the receipt of them, and promised payment:

and sit down quickly; for his case required haste;

and write fifty; just half; that it might appear he had bought but fifty, and was accountable for no more.

Ver. 7. *Then said he to another, and how much owest thou*? etc.] To my Lord, as before:

and he said, an hundred measures of wheat, or "cors of wheat"; the same with "homers", (<262514>Ezekiel 45:14) the same quantity as in (<150722>Ezra 7:22) where, as here, they are called an hundred measures of wheat; and were, as Jarchi on the place observes, twjnml, "for the meal, or flour offerings": according to the above writer[f469], this measure held five bushels, and five gallons; so that the whole was five hundred, sixty bushels, and a half: some make the measure to hold eight bushels and a half; and others, fourteen bushels and a pottle, which greatly increases the quantity.

And he said unto him, take thy bill and write fourscore. The Persic version reads "seventy". Inasmuch now as oil and wheat were things expended in the observance of the ceremonial law, and these men's debts lay in them, it may have regard to the deficiency of the Jews in those things: wherefore by "the bill" may be meant the law; and which is sometimes called by the same name as here, γραμμα, the "writing", or "letter", (<470306>2 Corinthians 3:6 <450229>Romans 2:29 7:6) and is so called, not merely because it was written in letters; but because it is a mere letter, showing only what is to be done and avoided, without giving strength to perform, or pointing where it is to be had; and it is so, as obeyed by an unregenerate man; and as abstracted from the spirituality of it; and as weak, and without efficacy, to quicken, justify, or sanctify: and whereas the steward, the Scribes and Pharisees, ordered the debtors to write a lesser sum; this may regard the lessening, and even laying aside of many things in the law, after the destruction of the temple; as particularly the daily sacrifice, and other things; (see Dan 9:27 <280304>Hosea 3:4) and the doctrine of the Pharisees was always a curtailing of the law, and making less of it than it was; as appears from the glosses they put upon it, refuted by our Lord in (<400501>Matthew 5:1-48). They compounded the matter with the people, as some men do now, and taught them, that an imperfect righteousness would do in the room of a perfect one: a doctrine

very pleasing to men, and which never fails of gaining an access into the hearts and houses of carnal men; though very injurious to God, and to his divine perfections, particularly his justice and holiness; as the methods this steward took were unjust to his Lord, though very agreeable to his debtors, and were well calculated to answer the end he proposed, an after provision for himself. I am much indebted to a learned writer [f470], whose name is in the margin, for several thoughts and hints in the explanation of this parable; and also of that of the rich man and Lazarus, in the latter part of this chapter.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord commended the unjust steward*, etc.] Not the Lord Jesus Christ, who delivered this parable, as the Syriac version seems to suggest, rendering it, “our Lord”; but the Lord of the steward, or “God”, as the Ethiopic version reads: not that he commended him for the fact he did, or the injustice of it for this is contrary to his nature and perfections; but for his craft and cunning in providing himself a maintenance for time to come: for he is on that account branded as an “unjust steward”, as he was, in wasting his Lord's goods; putting false glosses on the Scriptures; doing damage both to the souls and worldly estates of men: and in neglecting and despising lawful and honest ways of living, by digging or begging, asking favours at the hand of God, and doing good works; and in falsifying accounts; breaking the least of the commandments, and teaching men so to do; and in corrupting others, making proselytes twofold more the children of hell than himself; and in being liberal with another's property, to wrong objects, and for a wrong end. It was not therefore because he had done justly to his Lord, or right to others, that he is commended; but

became he had done wisely for himself: the wit, and not the goodness of the man is commended; which, in the language and sense of the Jews, may be thus expressed [f471]:

> “because a man, wmx[l hbwj hçw[, “does good” for himself with “mammon” which is not his own.”

For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light: by “the children of this world” may be meant the Israelites, who belonged to the Jewish nation and church, called the “world”, and “this world”, (<460111>1 Corinthians 10:11 2:6,8) especially the princes of it, the ecclesiastical doctors and rulers: and who also were the men of this present world; in general they were such who were, as they

were born into the world; in their sins, in the pollution, and under the guilt of them; were carnal, in the flesh, or unregenerate, and in darkness and blindness: they were such as were not only in the world, but of it; they belonged to it, having never been called out of it; and were under the influence of the God of it; and were taken with the things of it, its riches, honours, and pleasures; and had their portion in it, and were of worldly spirits; all which agrees with the Scribes and Pharisees; (see <19174>Psalm 17:14) and Aben Ezra on it, who has the very phrase here used: aml[d synya, a "man of the world", is sometimes [f472] distinguished from a scholar, or a wise man; but aml[ynb, "the children of the world", as they frequently intend the inhabitants of the world [f473], are sometimes distinguished from ytad aml[^b, "a son of the world to come" [f474]; and from "the children of faith" [f475], the same as "the children of light" here; by whom are meant the children of the Gospel dispensation; or persons enlightened by the Spirit and grace of God, to see the sinfulness of sin, and their wretched state my nature; the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them before God; the way of life, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; who see that the several parts of salvation, and the whole, are of grace; have some light into the Scriptures of truth, and doctrines of the Gospel; and some glimpse of heaven, and the unseen glories of another world, though attended with much darkness in the present state: and who shall enjoy the light of glory. Now, the men of the world, or carnal men, are, generally speaking, wiser than these; not in things spiritual, but in things natural, in the affairs of life, in worldly matters. The phrase seems to answer to twdlwt, "generations" used in (<010609>Genesis 6:9 37:2) "these are the generations of Noah", etc. and "the generations of Jacob"; by which are meant, not the genealogies of them, but their affairs; what befell them in life: as so the Jewish writers [f476] explain the phrase by twrwqh, "the things which happened" unto them in this world, in the course of their pilgrimage: or they are wise, εις την γενεαν την εαυτων, "for their own generation": for the temporal good of their posterity, than saints are for the spiritual good of theirs: or they are wiser for the time that is to come in this life, than good men are concerning themselves for the time to come in the other world: or they are wiser, and more prudent in disposing of their worldly substance for their own secular good, and that of their offspring, than men of spiritual light and knowledge are, in disposing of their worldly substance for the glory of God, the interest of Christ, the honour of religion, their own spiritual good, and that of their posterity.

Ver. 9. *And I say unto you*, etc.] These are the words of Christ, as are also the latter part of the preceding verse, accommodating and applying the parable to his disciples, and for their instruction:

make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness: by "mammon" are designed riches, wealth, and substance; (see Gill on "<40624>Matthew 6:24") and is called "mammon of unrighteousness", because such wealth is often unrighteously detained, and is not made use of to right and good purposes, by the owners of it; or because, generally speaking, it is possessed by unrighteous men; and, for the most part, used in an unrighteous manner, in luxury, pride and intemperance, and is the root, instrument, and means of such unrighteousness: or it maybe rendered "mammon of hurt", or "hurtful mammon"; as it often is to those who are over anxious and desirous of it, or other disuse or misuse of it: or, as best of all, "mammon of falsehood", or "deceitful mammon"; so in the Targum [f477], frequent mention is made of rqçd ˆwmm, "mammon of falsity"; and stands opposed to "true riches" in (<421610>Luke 16:10) for worldly riches are very empty and fallacious; wherefore deceitfulness is ascribed to them; and they are called uncertain riches, which are not to be depended upon. (<401322>Matthew 13:22 <540617>1 Timothy 6:17) unless it should be rather thought that it is so called, because gotten in an unrighteous way; as it was by Zacchaeus, and might be by Matthew, one of the disciples, Christ now speaks to, and the publicans and sinners, who were lately become his followers, and whom he advises, as the highest piece of wisdom and prudence, to dispose of in such a manner, as of it to "make" themselves "friends"; not God, Father, Son, and Spirit. These indeed are friends to the saints, but they are not made so by money; reconciliation and redemption are not procured this way; nor is the favour of the judge to be got by such means; the only means of reconciliation, are the blood and death of Christ; though indeed acts of beneficence, rightly performed, are well pleasing to God: nor are the angels meant, who are very friendly to all good men; nor rich men, to whom riches are not to be given, (<202216>Proverbs 22:16) but rather riches themselves, which, if not rightly used, and so made friends of, will cry, and be a witness against the owners of them, (<590501>James 5:1-3) though it may be the poor saints are intended; who by their prayers are capable of doing either a great deal of hurt, or a great deal of good; and it is the interest of rich men to make them their friends:

that when ye fail: of money; or "that fails", as the Ethiopic version reads; or rather, when ye leave that, that is, when ye die; so in (<241722>Jeremiah

42:22) “know certainly that ye shall die”; the Septuagint renders it, εκλειθετε, “ye shall fall by the sword”, etc.

they may receive you into everlasting habitations: the mansions of glory, which are many, and of an eternal duration: this is to be understood of their being received thither, not by the poor, to whom they have been benefactors; for though these may now pray for their reception to glory when they die, and will hereafter rejoice at their reception thither; yet they themselves will not be receivers of them, or their introducers into the everlasting tents, or tabernacles: nor are the angels intended, who carry the souls of the righteous into Abraham's bosom, and will gather the elect together at the last day; for not they, but God and Christ, receive the saints to glory: the words may be rendered impersonally, “you may be received”; in a way of welldoing, though not for it; mention is made of the “everlasting tabernacles”, in

> “Their glory also will I take unto me, and give these the everlasting tabernacles, which I had prepared for them.” (2 Esdras 2:11)

and so the phrase may be rendered here, as opposed to the earthly and perishable tabernacles of the body (2 Corinthians 5:1 2 Peter 1:13,14)

Ver. 10. *He that is faithful in that which is least*, etc.] In quantity and quality, especially the latter; in that which is of little value and worth, at least when compared with other things:

is faithful also in much: in matters of greater consequence and importance: the sense of the proverb is, that, generally speaking, a man that acts a faithful part in a small trust committed to him, does so likewise in a much larger; and being tried, and found faithful in things of less moment, he is intrusted with things of greater importance; though this is not always the case: for sometimes a man may behave with great integrity in lesser matters, on purpose that he might gain greater confidence, which, when he has obtained, he abuses in the vilest manner; but because it is usually otherwise, our Lord uses the common proverb; and of like sense is the following;

and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much: that man that acts the unfaithful part in a small matter, and of little worth, generally does the same, if a greater trust is committed to him.

Ver. 11. *If therefore ye have not been faithful*, etc.] This is the application of the above proverbial expressions, and seems to be directed to the disciples of Christ, though not without a view to the covetous Scribes and Pharisees, who were in hearing of it, and were disturbed at it, (⁴²1614Luke 16:14) and the meaning is, that whereas some of them might have been unfaithful, and have acted the unjust part of gathering of riches, as Matthew, and other publicans, that were now become the followers of Christ; if therefore they should be unfaithful

in the unrighteous mammon; in the disposing of it to improper uses, which was either unrighteously gotten, and therefore called, as it sometimes was, [çrd ˆwmm, "mammon of ungodliness", or "ungodly mammon" [f478]; or, which was fallacious, deceitful, vain, and transitory:

who will commit to your trust the true riches; or mammon? that is, how should you expect to be intrusted with the riches of grace, as the blessings and promises of the covenant of grace, the graces of the Spirit of God, which truly enrich persons, and are solid and durable? or the riches of glory, the better and more enduring substance in heaven, signified by a kingdom, and an inheritance that fadeth not away? so the Jews call the good things of another world, and say [f479], that

> "all the good things of this world are not twytma twbwj, "true good things", in comparison of the good things of the world to come."

And they use the same distinction with respect to "mammon", as here:

> "the holy, blessed God, they say [f480], gives him, tma lç ˆwmm, "mammon of truth", or true mammon; and he makes it rqç, "false", or deceitful:"

or rather the rich treasure of the Gospel is meant, called a treasure in earthen vessels, and the unsearchable riches of Christ; and is comparable to, and of more worth than gold, silver, and precious stones. And so the Syriac version renders it, "who will trust you with the truth?" with the truth of the Gospel.

Ver. 12. *And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's*, etc.] Which is not a man's own, but what is committed to him by another; µyrja ˆwmmb, "with the mammon of others [f481]", to speak in the language

of the Jews; and of mammon, our Lord is speaking, and here of another man's, of which they were only stewards, as he in the preceding parable was: hence we read [f482] of ˆwmm yrmwç, “keepers of mammon”, who were intrusted with another's substance; and such are here supposed, which, if unfaithful in,

who shall give you that which is your own? that is, should you unjustly detain, or make an ill use of another man's substance lodged in your hands, how can you expect but that you will be dealt with in like manner by others, who will not pay you yours, they have in their possession, but convert it to their own use? A like distinction of another's and a man's own, may be observed among the Jews:

> “there are (say they [f483],) four sorts of men in respect of giving alms; he that would give, but would not have others give, his eye is evil, µyrja lçb, “in that which is other men's” (i.e. as the commentator observes [f484], lest the goods of others should be increased, and they get a good name); he that would that others should give, but he will not give himself, his eye is evil, wlçb, “in that which is his own”; he that gives, and would have others give, he is a “good man”; he that neither gives, nor would have others give, he is an “ungodly man”;”

(see <scripRef passage="Romans 5:7,8" />). Interpreters generally understand by “that which is another man's”, in the first clause, the things of this world, which men are possessed of, because these are not of themselves, but from another, from God; and they are but stewards, rather than proprietors of them; and they are for the good of others, and not for themselves; and are not lasting, but in a little while will pass from them to others: and by “that which is your own”, they understand the good things of grace and glory, which, when once bestowed on man, are his own property, and for his own use, and will never be alienated from him, but will always abide with him: but if he is unfaithful in the former, how should he expect the latter to be given to him?

Ver. 13. *No servant can serve two masters*, etc.] (See Gill on “<scripRef passage="Matthew 6:24" />”).

Ver. 14. *And the Pharisees also who were covetous*, etc.] Or lovers of money, the love of which is the root of all evil; and that they were, is

evident from their devouring widows' houses, under a pretence of making long prayers for them, (Matthew 23:14)

heard all these things; as well as the disciples, being in company with them, (Luke 15:2) even the parable concerning the unjust steward, and the application of it; and the directions given about using the things of this world, and the distributing of them to the poor, and showing a greater concern for riches of an higher nature:

and they derided him: lift up their nose, or drew it out to him, as the word signifies, in a sneering way; they rejected and despised what he said about their injustice, in their stewardship; the calling of them to an account for it, and the turning of them out of it; and concerning the true use of worldly riches, and the contempt of them; they looked upon themselves safe and secure in the good opinion of the people, and happy in the enjoyment of worldly things; and looked upon him as a weak man, to talk in the manner he did.

Ver. 15. *And he said unto them*, etc.] That is, Jesus said unto them, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it: “ye are they which justify yourselves before men”: from the sins of injustice, unfaithfulness, covetousness, and all others; and would be thought, and appear to be righteous; but it is only in the sight of men, who can only see the outside of things, and judge thereby:

but God knoweth your hearts; and what is in them, the deceitfulness, hypocrisy, covetousness, and cruelty of them, which are hid from the eyes of men:

for that which is highly esteemed among men; or what is high in the account and esteem of men, as the outward appearance of these men for morality, religion, and holiness; their zeal for the ceremonies of the law, and the traditions of the elders:

is abomination in the sight of God; who knew full well from what principles, and with what views they acted, to gain popular applause, and amass riches to themselves, without any concern for the glory of God, and the good of men: (see Isaiah 65:5).

Ver. 16. *The law and the prophets were until John*, etc.] Till the time that John the Baptist began his ministry; for till then, the law and the prophets, with the Hagiographa, or holy writings, for into these three parts the Jews

divided the books of the Old Testament, were the only writings they had; and which contained the whole of the revelation granted to them; and which they wrested, and put false glosses on; and therefore it was no wonder that they derided Christ, and despised his ministry: and whereas spiritual things were promised in these writings, under the notion of temporal ones; which they not understanding, might imagine the doctrine of Christ, concerning the contempt of worldly riches, was contrary to: and since they valued themselves on having the law and the prophets, Christ observes, that

since that time, the kingdom of God is preached; the Gospel, and the mysteries of relating to the kingdom of the Messiah, his person, office, and grace; and to the kingdom of grace, which lies not in outward, but in inward and spiritual things; and to the kingdom of heaven, or glory hereafter; and which is a superior dispensation to that of the law and the prophets, and sets things in a clearer, plainer, and better light:

and every man presseth into it; the Gospel dispensation, the kingdom of the Messiah; "that he may enter into it", as the Syriac and Persic versions add; which the Scribes and Pharisees did all they could to hinder; (see Matthew 23:13) large multitudes crowded the ministry of John, of Christ, and of his apostles; the people flocked in great numbers to hear the word, and seemed disposed to embrace the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; they pressed on one another to hear it, and through many difficulties, discouragements, and obstacles, the Pharisees threw in their way; there was scarce a man but seemed very desirous of attending upon the preaching of it, and pressed hard for it; and with much force and violence, with great eagerness and endeavour broke his way to it; though a different sense is given by others reading the words, and "every one suffers violence to himself for it", as the Arabic version; or "is oppressed for it", as the Ethiopic; that is, suffers reproach, contradiction, and persecution, for the sake of hearing it.

Ver. 17. *And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass*, etc.] This is said by Christ, lest it should be thought by his saying, that the law and the prophets were until John, that they were no longer, nor of any more use; but were now abrogated and laid aside; whereas heaven and earth might sooner pass away, and the whole frame of nature be dissolved:

than one tittle of the law to fail; which, and the prophets, in all the precepts, promises, types, figures, prophecies, etc. thereof, had their full

accomplishment in the person, miracles, obedience, sufferings, and death of Christ; (see <4005 18>Matthew 5:18).

Ver. 18. *Whosoever putteth away his wife*, etc.] For any other cause than for adultery, as the Jews used to do upon every trifling occasion, and for every little disgust: by which instance our Lord shows, how the Jews abused and depraved the law, and as much as in them lay, caused it to fail; and how he, on the other hand, was so far from destroying and making it of none effect, that he maintained the purity and spirituality of it; putting them in mind of what he had formerly said, and of many other things of the like kind along with it; how that if a man divorces his wife, for any thing else but the defiling his bed,

and marrieth another, committeth adultery: with her that he marries: because his marriage with the former still continues, and cannot be made void by, such a divorce:

and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband; the phrase "from her husband", is omitted in the Syriac and Persic versions:

committeth adultery; with her that he marries, because notwithstanding her husband's divorce of her, and his after marriage with her, she still remains his lawful and proper wife; (see Gill on "<4005 32>Matthew 5:32"). The Ethiopic version reads this last clause, quite different from all others, thus, "and whosoever puts away her husband, and joins to another, commits adultery", agreeably to (see Gill on "<4110 12>Mark 10:12").

Ver. 19. *There was a certain rich man*, etc.] In Beza's most ancient copy, and in another manuscript of his it is read by way of preface, "he said also another parable": which shows, that this is not a history of matter of fact, or an historical account of two such persons, as the "rich" man and the beggar, who had lately lived at Jerusalem; though the Papists pretend, to this day, to point out the very spot of ground in Jerusalem, where this rich man's house stood: nor is it to be understood parabolically of any particular rich man, or prince; as Saul the first king of Israel; or Herod, who now was reigning, and was clothed in purple, and lived in a sumptuous manner: nor of rich men in general, though it greatly describes the characters of such, at least of many of them; who only take care of their bodies, and neglect their souls; adorn and pamper them, live in pleasure, and grow wanton, and have no regard to the poor saints; and when they die go to hell; for their riches will not profit them in a day of wrath, nor deliver from it, or be regarded by

the Judge, any more than hills and mountains will hide them from his face: but by the rich man are meant, the Jews in general; for that this man is represented, and to be considered as a Jew, is evident from Abraham being his father, and his calling him so, and Abraham again calling him his son, (⁴²Luke 16:24,25) of which relation the Jews much boasted and gloried in; and from his brethren having Moses and the prophets, (⁴²Luke 16:29) which were peculiar to the Jewish people; and from that invincible and incurable infidelity in them, that they would not believe, though one rose from the dead, (⁴²Luke 16:31) as the Jews would not believe in Christ though he himself rose from the dead, which was the sign he gave them of his being the Messiah: and the general design of the parable, is to expose the wickedness and unbelief of the Jews, and to show their danger and misery, for their contempt and rejection of the Messiah; and particularly the Pharisees are designed, who being covetous, had derided Christ for what he had before said; and, who though high in the esteem of men, were an abomination to God, (⁴²Luke 16:14,15). These more especially boasted of Abraham being their father; and of their being the disciples of Moses, and trusted in him, and in his law; and thought they should have eternal life through having and reading the books of Moses and the prophets: these may be called "a man", because this was the name by which the Jews style themselves, in distinction from the Gentiles, whom they compare to beasts; (see Gill on "⁴⁰Matthew 15:26") and this they ground on a passage in (²⁶Ezekiel 34:31) "and ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men": upon which their note is [f485],

> "ye are called, μda, "men", but the nations of the earth are not called men."

And they may be called a "certain" man, a famous man, a man of note, as the Jews, and especially the Pharisees, thought themselves to be; and therefore coveted the chief places in the synagogues, and at feasts, and loved salutations and greetings in market places, and to be called of men Rabbi, and master: as also a "rich man"; for the Jews in general were a wealthy people, lived in a very fruitful country, and were greatly indulged with the riches of providential goodness; and particularly the Pharisees, many of whom were of the great sanhedrim, and rulers of synagogues, and elders of the people; and who by various methods, amassed to themselves great riches, and even devoured widows' houses; (see ⁴²Luke 6:24 18:18,23 20:47) and they were also rich in outward means and ordinances, having the oracles of God, his word, worship, and service; and as to their

spiritual and eternal estate, in their own esteem; though they were not truly rich in grace, not in faith, nor in spiritual knowledge, nor even in good works, of which they so much boasted; but in appearance, and in their own conceit, they were rich in the knowledge of the law, and in righteousness, which they imagined was perfect, and so stood in need of nothing; no, not of repentance, and especially of Christ, or of any thing from him:

which was clothed in purple and fine linen; or "byssus", which is said to [f486] grow on a tree, in height equal to a poplar, and in leaves like a willow, and was brought out of India into Egypt, and much used there, as it also was among the Jews: hence we often read [f487] of axwb or wbd ˆyçwbl "garments of byssus", or fine linen: the Jews in general dressed well; their common apparel were fine linen and silk; (see <261610>Ezekiel 16:10,13) and so the Arabic version here renders it, "silk and purple"; and the Persic version, "silks and bombycines": and the priests particularly, were arrayed in such a habit; the robe of the ephod, and also its curious girdle, were of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen, and at the hem of it were pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, (<022806>Exodus 28:6,8,33). And as for the Pharisees, they loved to go in long robes, and to make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, which were fringes of blue, joined unto them; and which may figuratively express the fine outside show of holiness and righteousness, they made;

and fared sumptuously every day. The Jews in common lived well, being in a land that flowed with milk and honey; (see <261613>Ezekiel 16:13) and especially the priests, who offered up lambs every day, besides other offerings, of which they had their part; as also the Pharisees, who were often at feasts, where they loved the chief places: and this may signify the easy and jocund life they lived; knowing no sorrow upon spiritual accounts, having no sense of sin, nor sight of the spirituality of the law, nor view of danger; but at perfect ease, and not emptied from vessel to vessel.

Ver. 20. *And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus*, etc.] By whom is designed, not any particular beggar in the times of Christ, that went by this name; though there were such persons in Israel, and in the times of our Lord; as blind Bartimaeus, and others: nor David, in the times of Saul, who was poor and needy; and who sometimes wanted bread, and at a certain time went to Abimelech for some: nor the godly poor in common, though the heirs of the heavenly kingdom are, generally speaking, the poor of this world; these receive Christ and his Gospel, and have their evil things here,

and their good things hereafter; they are now slighted and neglected by men, but shall hereafter have a place in Abraham's bosom, and be for ever with the Lord: nor are the Gentiles intended; though they may be said to be poor and helpless, as they were without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, and without hope and God in the world; and were despised and rejected by the Jews, and not suffered to come into their temple, and were called and treated as dogs; though, as the Syrophenician woman pleaded, the dogs might eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table; and who, upon the breaking down of the middle wall of partition, were called by grace, and drawn to Christ, and were blessed with faithful Abraham, and made to sit down with him in the kingdom of heaven: but our Lord Jesus Christ himself is here meant; as appears from the cause and occasion of this parable, which was the derision of Christ by the covetous Pharisees, who, though high in the esteem of men, were an abomination to God; and from the scope and design of it, which is to represent the mean and despicable condition of Christ in this world, whilst the Pharisees, his enemies, lived in great pomp and splendour; and the exaltation of Christ hereafter, when they would be in the utmost distress; and also the infidelity of that people, who continued in their unbelief, notwithstanding the resurrection of Christ from the dead: the name Lazarus well agrees with him. The Syriac version calls him “Loozar”, as if it signified one that was helpless, that had no help, but wanted it, and so a fit name for a beggar; and well suits with Christ, who looked, and there was none to help, (<236305>Isaiah 63:5) nor did he receive any help from men; though rather, the word is the contraction of Eleazar, and so the Ethiopic version reads it here; and it is easy to observe, that he who is called R. Eleazar in the Babylonian Talmud, is in the Jerusalem called, times without number, rz[l br, R. Lazar [f488]; and R. Liezer, is put for R. Eliezer: it is a rule given by one of the Jewish writers [f489], that

> “in the Jerusalem Talmud, wherever R. Eleazar is written without an “aleph”, R. Lazar ben Azariah is intended.”

And Christ may very well be called by this name; since this was the name of one of his types, Eleazer the son of Aaron, and one of his ancestors, who is mentioned in his genealogy, (<401515>Matthew 1:15) and especially as the name signifies, that the Lord was his helper: (see <021804>Exodus 18:4). Help was promised him by God, and he expected it, and firmly believed he should have it, and accordingly he had it: God did help him in a day of

salvation: and which was no indication of weakness in him, who is the mighty God, and mighty to save; but of the Father's regard to him as man, and mediator; and of the concern that each of the divine persons had for, and in man's salvation: and on account of his circumstances of life, he might be called πτωχος, a “poor man”, as he is in (<470809>2 Corinthians 8:9) and frequently in prophecy; (see <190406>Psalm 34:6, 40:17, 41:1, 69:29 <210905>Ecclesiastes 9:15 <236602>Isaiah 66:2) (<380909>Zechariah 9:9) and though by assuming human nature, he did not cease to be God, or to lose the riches of his divine nature and perfections, yet his divine perfections, and the glory of them, were much hid and covered in his state of humiliation; and he was much the reverse of many of them in his human nature; in which he was exposed to much outward poverty and meanness: he was born of poor parents; had no liberal education; was brought up to a trade: had not a foot of ground to call his own, nor where to lay his head: and lived upon the ministrations of others to him; and when he died, had nothing to bequeath his mother, but left her to the care of a disciple: and he is further described, by his posture and situation,

which was laid at his gate; that is, at the “rich man's”, as is expressed in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions: this was the place where beggars stood, or were laid, and asked alms; hence is that rule with the Jews [f490], and in many other places the following phrase;

> “if a man dies and leaves sons and daughters — -if he leaves but a small substance, the daughters shall be taken care of, and the sons, µyjtph l[wlaçy, “shall beg at the gates.””

This denotes the rejection of Christ by the Jews; he came to them, and they received him not; he had no entrance into their hearts, and was admitted but into few of their houses; they put those that confessed him out of their synagogues; and caused him himself to depart out of some of their cities; they delivered him up unto the Gentiles that were without; and at last led him without the gate of Jerusalem, where he suffered:

full of sores; so Nahum Gamzu [f491] is said to have his whole body, ˆyjç alm, “full of ulcers”: sometimes the Jewish phrase, which answers to the word here used, is ˆyjç hkwm, “one plagued with ulcers” [f492]; and this by the commentators [f493], is explained of a “leprous” person; so one of the names of the Messiah is with the Jews [f494], arwyj, which signifies “leprous”, in proof of which, they produce (<235304>Isaiah 53:4). “Surely he

hath borne our griefs", etc. By these "sores" may be meant, sins; (see [19]Psalm 38:5,7 [20]Isaiah 1:6). Christ was holy and righteous in himself, in his nature, life, and conversation; he was without both original, and actual sins, yet he was in the likeness of sinful flesh, and was reproached and calumniated by men as a sinner; and had really and actually all the sins of his people on him, by imputation; and was made even sin itself, for them; so that in this sense he might be said to be full of them, though in himself he was free from them: they may also intend the temptations of Satan, those fiery darts which were flung at him, and by which he suffered; as also the reproaches and persecutions of men, which attended him more or less, from the cradle to the cross; together with all his other sorrows and sufferings, being scourged, buffeted, and beaten, and wounded for our sins, and bruised for our transgressions; of which wounds and bruises he might be said to be full.

Ver. 21. *And desiring to be fed with the crumbs*, etc.] The offal food, broken bread, fragments of meat: that food which falls from the knife, or plate, in eating, and from thence on the ground; and literally understood, may express the low condition Christ was in, in his human nature: he assumed a true body, like to ours, and partook of the same flesh and blood with us, and was liable to the same infirmities as ours, which are sinless; and among the rest, was subject to hunger and thirst, and was obliged to the ministration of others for a subsistence: and it may also express his contentment in such a condition; he never murmured at the providence of God, but was entirely, resigned to his will; he did not desire to live in fulness and affluence, but avoided and shunned every step that led unto it; nor did he envy the plenty of others, and was fully satisfied with his meanness; nor did he ever work a miracle for the sake of feeding himself. Moreover, the words being understood mystically, may design the elect of God among the Jews, who, like crumbs, were few in number, a seed, a remnant, according to the election of grace; there were but few among them that were chosen of God, and effectually called by his grace; and but a little flock to whom he gave the kingdom; and a small number, who entered in at the strait gate, and were saved; and these few were very mean and despicable for their outward poverty; for the poor had the Gospel preached to them, and they received it, when the rich, and the rulers of the people, rejected it: and they were like crumbs their small degree of worldly wisdom and knowledge, being babes, simple, and foolish, who followed Christ, while the learned, wise, and prudent despised him; and for their

sinfulness and vileness, being, generally speaking, notorious sinners, publicans and harlots; and of these it may be said what follows,

which fell from the rich man's table; being originally of the Jews, but separated from them by the grace of God, and rejected by them with scorn and contempt. These Christ "desired"; (see <22070>Song of Solomon 7:10) his desire was towards them from everlasting, when he asked them of his Father, and they were given to him; and it was not only after their persons, but after their salvation, and that both in eternity and in time; and which he signified by various words and actions; and it is towards them, while in a state of unregeneracy, that they may be converted, and believe in him; and when they are called, he delights in the grace he puts in them, and in the righteousness he puts upon them; he takes pleasure in their company; he desires them for his habitation; he stands at the door and knocks for admission to them; and nothing is he more earnestly solicitous for, and eager after, than their being with him in glory to all eternity; and his end in all, "is to be fed" or "satisfied with them"; (see <23511>Isaiah 53:11) he came into the world to gather these scattered crumbs and fragments together; it was his meat and drink, to work out their salvation; and it will be his highest joy and pleasure to present them to his Father, and himself, complete and perfect, and introduce them into his kingdom and glory: he will be fully satisfied in them, and they in him, when they shall awake in his likeness. Then will all Christ's desires, prayers, and intercessions, have their full accomplishment. The Vulgate Latin adds, "and no man gave to him"; which seems to be transcribed from (<42516>Luke 15:16) and is not supported by any copy or version.

Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores: by the dogs are meant not the Jews, though they are sometimes so called, and especially the Scribes and Pharisees, (<19216>Psalm 22:16,20 <23610>Isaiah 56:10,) (<23611>Isaiah 56:11 <50302>Philippians 3:2) for these made his sores and wounds, or were the authors of his sorrows and sufferings; but rather the Gentiles, who were so called by the Jews; (see Gill on "<40526>Matthew 15:26") because these creatures were unclean by the law, and had in the greatest contempt by the Jews; and for their barbarity, malice, and cruelty, (<052318>Deuteronomy 23:18 <091444>1 Samuel 24:14 <120812>2 Kings 8:12,13) as the Gentiles were by the Jews esteemed unclean and unfit, either for civil or religious conversation; and were treated as aliens by them; and were indeed in their Heathenish state, barbarous and inhuman, and lived in malice, hateful, and hating one another: these, some of them came to Christ in person, as the centurion,

and Syrophenician woman, many of the Samaritans, who, with the Jews, were all one as Heathens, and several Grecians at the feast; and many of them also came to him by faith, through the ministry of his servants, under the influence of divine grace, and that according to various prophecies in the Old Testament, concerning the calling and gathering of the Gentiles to him: these embraced a crucified Christ; and fed upon the slain Lamb of God; eat his flesh, and drank his blood; stretched forth the hand of faith, and thrust it into his bleeding wounds; and lived by faith on him, who was wounded and bruised for their sins, and whose blood was shed for the remission of them.

Ver. 22. *And it came to pass that the beggar died*, etc.] The death of Christ was not a casual thing, a fortuitous event; it was agreed unto, and settled in the covenant of grace; it was spoken of by the prophets of the Old Testament; it was typified by the sacrifices of the law, and other things; it was foretold by Christ himself, and was the end of his coming into this world, wherein the great love, both of him and of his Father, is expressed; and is the main article of the Christian faith; so that this came to pass according to the decrees of God, the counsel, and covenant of peace, the will of Christ, and his predictions, and as the accomplishment of the law, and prophets: it was not a natural, but violent death which Christ died; and yet it was both voluntary and necessary; it was but once, and is of an eternal efficacy, and is a sacrifice acceptable to God; it was not for himself, or any sin of his, who knew none, nor for the angels, and their redemption, whose nature he did not assume; but for men, and for their sins. Christ died not merely as an example to them, or only to confirm his doctrines; but as a substitute, in the room and stead of his people; to atone for their sins, and satisfy divine justice; to procure the pardon of them in a way of justice; to take them away, and utterly abolish them; to bring in an everlasting righteousness; to obtain eternal redemption, and bring such nigh to God who were afar off, and that men might live through him now, and have eternal life by him hereafter:

and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: by Abraham's bosom is meant heaven, a phrase well known to the Jews, by which they commonly expressed the happiness of the future state: of Abraham's happy state they had no doubt; and when they spake of the happiness of another's, they sometimes signified it by going to Abraham; as when the mother of the seven sons, slain by Caesar, saw her youngest going to be sacrificed [f495]

> “she fell upon him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and said unto him, my son, µkyba µhrba lxa Æl, “go to Abraham, your father”, and tell him, thus saith my mother, etc.”

and sometimes, as here, by being in his bosom. So it is said [f496], that Eliezer his servant (Abraham's, the same name with Lazarus) wqyjb hnwm, “is laid in his bosom”: and which may refer to the account in the Talmud [f497], that when R. Benaah, the painter of caves, came to the cave of Abraham, he found Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, hymq yaqd, “standing before him”. And it is also said [f498] of Rabbi, when he died, µhrba lç wqyjb bçwy µwyh, “this day he sits in the bosom of Abraham”; for as it was usual with them to represent the joys of heaven by a feast, so the partaking of them, by sitting down at a table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; (see <401811>Matthew 8:11) and as their manner at meals was by lying along on couches at eating; he that lay next another might be said to lie, or lean, in his bosom: hence Abraham's bosom came to signify the near and intimate enjoyment of happiness with him in the other world. The ascension of Christ is expressed by a being “carried up into heaven”, (<422451>Luke 24:51) and here he is entered, and has been received, and will be retained, until the time of the restitution of all things; here he is glorified in human nature, sits at the right hand of God, and appears in his presence, on the behalf of his people; and indeed, the ends of his going there, were to receive gifts for them, to be their advocate and intercessor, to take possession of heaven in their name, and prepare that for them, and them for that; and hither “he was carried by angels”: these were the chariots in which he rode; and these the guard that attended him, when he was seen, looked upon, and gazed at by them with adoration, faith, and wonder; which shows the ministration of angels to him, and seems to set forth the glory and magnificence in which he ascended; and this agrees with the notions of the Jews, that when good men die, their souls are immediately received by angels, and taken under their care, and carried to heaven. So one of their paraphrasts [f499] having mentioned the garden of Eden, which is but another name for heaven with them, adds,

> “into which no man can enter but the righteous, whose souls are “carried” thither, aykalm dyb, “in the hand”, or “by the means” of angels.”

And elsewhere they say [f500],

> "with the Shekinah come three ministering angels to receive the soul of a righteous man."

Particularly it is said of Moses, at the time of his death [f501], that

> "the holy blessed God descended from the highest heavens, to take the soul of Moses, and three ministering angels with him."

And sometimes they say [f502], not only three angels, but three companies of angels attend at such a time: their words are these;

> "when a righteous man departs out of the world, three companies of ministering angels meet him; one says to him, "come in peace"; and another says, "walking in his uprightness" and the other says, "he shall enter into peace", etc."

No mention is made in this parable of the burial of this man, nor any words used expressive of it, or that in the least hint it. The reason is, because Christ lay so short a time in the grave, and he was not left there, nor did he see corruption; but in a very little while was raised from the dead, and delivered from the power of the grave; when, after some stay on earth, he was attended by angels to the highest heavens: for this is to be understood, not of his soul being had to paradise immediately upon his separation from the body; but of his ascension to heaven after his resurrection, when he was escorted by angels thither.

The rich man also died. This may be understood both of the natural death of the Scribes and Pharisees; who, though they were dignified persons, were as gods, yet were mortal, and died like men; (see <19B206>Psalm 82:6,7) compared with (<43B034>John 10:34,35) and they died in their sins, in their unbelief of the Messiah, and so were damned; in their impenitence and hardness of heart, for as they thought they needed no repentance, they were not called unto it; and in the sin against the Holy Ghost, blaspheming the miracles of Christ done by him, and which was a sin unto death; and under the power and guilt of all their other sins, and so were lost and perished. And it may also be understood of the political and ecclesiastical death of the Jewish people; which lay in the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, and of the temple, and in the abolition of the temple worship, and of the whole ceremonial law; a "Lo-ammi" was written upon their church state, and the covenant between God and them was broken; the Gospel was removed from them, which was as death, as the return of it, and their call by it, will be as life from the dead; as well as their place and

nation, their civil power and authority were taken away from them by the Romans: and a death of afflictions, by captivity and calamities, of every kind, have attended them ever since. And it is to be observed, that Lazarus died before the rich man, as Christ died before the destruction of the Jewish polity and church state: the city and sanctuary were not destroyed, nor the daily sacrifice made to cease, nor the consummation, and that determined, poured upon the desolate, until some time after the Messiah was cut off, according to the prophecy in (<270726>Daniel 7:26,27). Moreover, no mention is made of the rich man being carried by angels, as Lazarus was; and if he was, he was carried, not by the good, but by the evil angels, and not into Abraham's bosom, but to hell. So the Jews [f503] say,

> “if a soul is worthy, how many holy troops, or companies, are ready to join it, and bring it up into paradise? but if not worthy, how many strange troops are ready to bring it in the way of hell? these are the troops of the destroying angels.”

However, this is said of him, as is not of Lazarus,

and was buried: as wicked men are, when sometimes the saints are not; (see <211010>Ecclesiastes 8:10 <197912>Psalm 79:2,3). The Scribes and Pharisees, who were so diligent to build and garnish the sepulchres of the prophets, among their other instances of pride and vanity, took care, no doubt, to provide and erect stately monuments for themselves: and who were buried in great pomp and splendour. Though this may respect their church state, service, and ceremonies, which received their death blow at the crucifixion of Christ, but remained for some time unburied, it being with difficulty that these things were got under the feet of the church; and may also refer to the political state of the Jews, who, as a nation, are represented as in their graves, where they are to this day, and will be until they shall be turned unto the Lord, when they shall be brought out of their graves, and shall live and return to their own land, (<263712>Ezekiel 37:12-14). The Vulgate Latin adds, “in hell”; but this belongs to the following verse.

Ver. 23. *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments*, etc.] Which may design the place of torment, and the miserable state the Scribes and Pharisees, as all wicked men, enter immediately into upon death, (<199017>Psalm 9:17) who in their lifetime were blind, and are called blind guides, blind watchmen, blind leaders of the blind, and who were given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart; but in hell their eyes are opened, and they see their mistakes about the Messiah, and find themselves in torments,

under dreadful gnawings, and remorse of conscience; and having a terrible sensation of divine wrath, their worm dies not, and their fire is not quenched: or this may regard the vengeance of God on the Jews, at the destruction of Jerusalem; when a fire was kindled against their land, and burned to the lowest hell; and consumed the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains; and the whole land became brimstone, salt, and burning; and they were rooted out of it in anger, wrath, and great indignation; (see <05292>Deuteronomy 29:23,27,28 32:22) or rather, the dreadful calamities which came upon them in the times of Adrian at Bither; when their false Messiah Bar Cochab was taken and slain, and such multitudes of them were destroyed in the most miserable manner [f504], when that people, who before had their eyes darkened, and a spirit of slumber and stupidity fallen upon them, in those calamities began to be under some convictions:

and seeth Abraham afar off: the covenant of circumcision given to him, and to them his natural seed, now of no use to them; their descent from him, of which they boasted, and in which they trusted, now of no avail; and him in the kingdom of heaven, and themselves thrust out; (see <42328>Luke 13:28).

And Lazarus in his bosom; they now found the Messiah was come, and was gone to heaven, whither they could not come, (<43033>John 7:33,34). The Jews are convinced that the Messiah is born, though not revealed; and they sometimes confess, that he was born the same day Jerusalem was destroyed; and sometimes they say, he sits at the gates of Rome among the lepers, and at other times, that he is in the walks of paradise [f505]. This is said in agreement with the notions of the Jews, that wicked men will see the righteous in happiness, and themselves in torment; by which the latter will be aggravated, to which the allusion is; for they say [f506],

> “the gates of paradise are fixed over against the gates of hell, so that they can see the righteous in rest, and themselves in distress.”

Ver. 24. *And he cried and said, father Abraham*, etc.] The Jews used to call Abraham their father, and were proud of their descent from him, (<40309>Matthew 3:9 <43033>John 8:33,39) and so persons are after death represented by them, as speaking to, and discoursing with him; as in the passage cited in the note (see Gill on “<42162>Luke 16:22”) to which the following may be added [f507];

> "says R. Jonathan, from whence does it appear that the dead discourse with each other? it is said, (<05304>Deuteronomy 34:4) "And the Lord said unto him, this is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying", etc. what is the meaning of the word "saying?" the holy blessed God said to Moses, "go say to Abraham", etc."

And here the Jews, in their distress, are represented as applying to him, saying,

have mercy on me, and send Lazarus; which seems to have respect to the mercy promised to Abraham, the covenant made with him, and the oath swore unto him, to send the Messiah, (<42070>Luke 1:70,73) and which now, too late, these wretched Jews plead, the Messiah being sent already:

that he may dip the tip of his finger in water; in allusion to the washings and purifications among the Jews, and the sprinkling of blood by the finger of the high priest; which were typical of cleansing, pardon, comfort, and refreshment, by the grace and blood of Christ:

and cool my tongue; which had spoken so many scurrilous and blasphemous things of Christ; saying that he was a sinner, a glutton, and a winebibber, a Samaritan, and had a devil; that he cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils; and that he was a seditious person, and guilty of blasphemy: so the Jews represent persons in hell, desirous of cooling water, and as sometimes favoured with it, and sometimes not: they say [f508], he that reads "Keriat Shema, (i.e. hear, O Israel", etc.) and very accurately examines the letters of it, ^ynnxm, "they cool hell for him", as it is said, (<19814>Psalm 68:14). And elsewhere [f509], they speak of a disciple, or good man, that was seen after death amidst gardens, and orchards, and fountains of water; and of a publican, or wicked man, seen standing by the bank of a river, seeking yjm alw aym yjmm, "to come to the water, but could not come at it". So Mahomet [f510] has a passage that is somewhat like to this text;

> "the inhabitants of hell fire, shall call to the inhabitants of paradise, saying, pour upon us some water, or of those refreshments God hath bestowed on you."

This man could not so much as get a drop of water to cool his tongue, not the least refreshment, nor mitigation of the anguish of his conscience, for the sins of his tongue:

for I am tormented in this flame; in the destruction of Jerusalem, and calamities at Bither, and other afflictions; together with the wrath of God poured into the conscience, and the bitter remorses of that for speaking against the Messiah; and which are still greater in hell, where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched.

Ver. 25. *But Abraham said, son*, etc.] He calls him "son", not in a spiritual sense; he was not one of Abraham's spiritual seed, that trod in the steps of his faith; but because he was so according to the flesh; and in return to his calling him father: good men have not always good children, nor is any trust to be put in birth and parentage:

remember, that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things; temporal good things; a land flowing with milk and honey; all the outward blessings of life that could be wished for, the Jews had, whilst they were in their own land; and also ecclesiastical good things, as the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, the fathers, and the Messiah according to the flesh, even all external privileges and ordinances, (Romans 9:4,5).

And likewise Lazarus evil things; Christ was surrounded with the infirmities of human nature, he assumed; was attended with much outward meanness and poverty; was loaded with calumnies and reproaches; and followed with the wrath, hatred, and persecution of men; and suffered many evil things, as buffetings, scourging, spitting, and cruel mockings, and at last death itself:

but now he is comforted; (see Psalm 16:9-11) compared with (Acts 2:25-28). Christ being raised from the dead, and set in human nature at the right hand of God, is comforted with the presence of God, which for a while he was deprived of, when on the cross; and is delighted with the glory that it put upon him as man; and with pleasure sees the travail of his soul continually, his elect and redeemed ones, called and gathered by the grace of God, who are his jewels, his portion, and goodly heritage:

and thou art tormented; as were many of the Jews, his implacable enemies and persecutors in hell, and others in captivity, bondage, and distress.

Ver. 26. *And besides all this*, etc.] The different circumstances of each, both past and present, which should be observed and considered:

between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; as this may regard the state of the Pharisees after death, it intends not the natural distance between heaven and hell; though there may be an allusion to the notions of the Jews concerning that, who on those words in (Ecclesiastes 7:14). "God hath set the one over against the other", say [f511],

> "this is hell and paradise, what space is there between them? an hand's breadth; R. Jochanan says a wall, but the Rabbans say, they are both of them even, so that they may look out of one into another."

Which passage is cited a little differently [f512], thus;

> "wherefore did the holy blessed God create hell and paradise? that they might be one against another; what space is there between them? R. Jochanan says, a wall, and R. Acha says an hand's breadth: but the Rabbans say, two fingers."

And elsewhere it [f513] is said,

> "know that hell and paradise are near to one another, and one house separates between them; and paradise is on the north east side — -and hell on the north west."

Mahomet seems to have borrowed this notion from them, who says [f514],

> "between the blessed and the damned, there shall be a vail; and men shall stand on "Al Araf", (the name of the wall or partition, that shall separate paradise from hell,) who shall know every one of them by their mouths."

But not this natural space, be it what it will, but the immutable decree of God is intended here, which has unalterably fixed the state of the damned, and of the blessed:

so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence; not that those in heaven can desire to go to those in hell; though those in hell, may wish to be in heaven; but the sense is, that by this irrevocable decree of God, the saints in heaven are eternally happy, and the wicked in hell eternally miserable: and this also

agrees with the notions of the Jews [f515], who represent it impossible: for a man, after he has descended into hell, to come up from thence any more: but as this may regard the Jews state of captivity and affliction, since the destruction of their city and temple, upon, and for their rejection of the Messiah; it may denote the impossibility of Christ's coming again upon the same errand he came on before, to be a Saviour of sinners, and a sacrifice for sin; and of the Jews believing in him, so long as they lie under the spirit of slumber, and are given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart.

Ver. 27. *Then he said, I pray thee therefore father*, etc.] The Cambridge, copy of Beza's, and the Ethiopic version read, “father Abraham”; finding he could have no redress of his misery, nor any relief for himself, he applies for others:

that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; the house of Israel and Jacob, the surviving Jews: and this agrees also with a notion of theirs, that the dead seek for mercy for them [f516]. The Persic and Ethiopic versions read, “that thou wouldst send Lazarus”, etc. whom the one calls Gazarus, and the other Eleazar.

Ver. 28. *For I have five brethren*, etc.] Meaning his brethren and countrymen, according to the flesh; who when he was alive, stood in such a relation to him; said to be “five”, in allusion it may be to the children of Israel coming out of Egypt, μyçmj, “by fives”, or five in a rank, (<021318>Exodus 13:18) as a learned man [f517] conjectures, to whom I am beholden for several hints, in the explanation of this parable; and certain it is, that these five brethren were Jews, since they had the writings of Moses and the prophets with them, (<421629>Luke 16:29). Wherefore I shall venture to propose another conjecture, though it may be liable to exception, as all conjectures usually are: it is plain that there were “six” brethren in all; let it be observed then, that the Jewish nation were usually divided into “three” parts, “priests, Levites, and Israelites”; of these three the great sanhedrim usually consisted [f518]; and these read the law every sabbath day; first a priest, then a Levite, and then “five Israelites” [f519]; (let that number also be remarked;) now these were again divided into “three” sects, “Pharisees, Sadducees”, and “Essenes”. The former of these are represented in this parable; this I only propose, I lay no stress on it: it may be, that the twice five, or ten tribes of Israel, which were not known where they were, nor are they to this day, may be designed by a “synechdoche”, of a part for the

whole; whose return the Jews are yet expecting, and for whose welfare they are greatly concerned.

That he may testify unto them: that is, preach unto them, as the word is used in (<4402040>Acts 2:40 10:42 20:21,24). Christ, when here on earth, did testify to that people of their sins, showed them the heinousness of them, inveighed against them, and reproved for them; and of their righteousness, and showed the hypocrisy, deficiency, and insufficiency of it to justify them; of himself as the Messiah; of truth in general; and of their ruin, temporal and eternal; but he had now finished his testimony, and which, though faithful, was not heard nor received by them; the reason of this request is,

lest they also come into this place of torment; as hell is, and which these brethren of his, he left behind, were deserving of, and in danger of coming into; and his concern for them did not arise from any regard to Christ, and the enlargement of his interest; nor from any love to his testimony, the Gospel; nor from any real notion or desire of converting grace for his brethren; nor from true love to them; but from a selfish principle, lest his own torments should be aggravated by their coming: this, as it may regard the Jews in their affliction, and if the ten tribes should be meant by the five brethren, may design the very passionate concern the Jews had, and still have for them, who yet, to this day, hope for the return of them; see Manasseh ben Israel's book, called, “Spes Israelis”.

Ver. 29. *Abraham said unto him*. etc.] In reply to this his request:

they have Moses and the prophets; that is, their writings; which shows this man, and his five brethren, to be Jews; for to them were the oracles of God committed; and these had the writings of Moses and the prophets read to them every sabbath day; and is true, whether the contemporaries and immediate successors of the Pharisees are meant, or the ten tribes: and also shows, that one view of the parable, is to establish the authority of these writings; (see <4216>Luke 16:16,17) and that it is a peculiar privilege to have them; and that they ought to be attended to and regarded;

let them hear them; for they testified concerning Christ, and concerning the sins of the Jews, and the calamities, both temporal and eternal, that should come upon them; and which, testimony was sufficient to leave them without excuse: and indeed, the word of God, read, explained, and heard,

is the ordinary means of conversion, or of bringing men to faith and repentance.

Ver. 30. *And he said, nay, father Abraham*, etc.] He contradicts his father Abraham, or at least desires it might not be so; this way he suggests, was not so right, and would not succeed; for he knew his brethren were a rebellious, and stiffnecked people, and would not hear Moses and the prophets, notwithstanding all their outward boast of them, and pretensions of regard to them:

but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent; but alas! repentance is not of man's will, but a gift of God's grace; nor could these men repent, because in a judicial way their eyes were shut, their ears were stopped, and their hearts were hardened; and though Christ came in person to them, and preached, as never man did, with power and authority, and confirmed his doctrine with miracles, yet they repented not, nor did they when he arose from the dead.

Ver. 31. *And he said unto him*. etc.] That is, Abraham said unto him, as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions express it:

if they hear not Moses and the prophets; as they did not, nor regarded what they said of Christ, but disbelieved both him and them:

neither will they be persuaded: or brought to repent and believe;

though one rose from the dead; as Christ did; whose resurrection, the truth of it they endeavoured to baffle, stifle, and suppress: this was the sign Christ gave them, of the truth of his Messiahship; and yet they repented not of what they had done to him, that they might believe in him; but remained still in their impenitence and infidelity, and so died. This shows the regard that ought to be had to the written word, as read, or preached; and that it is a sad sign of a desperate condition, when men reject divine revelation. Beza's ancient copy adds, “and should go unto them”.

CHAPTER 17

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 17

Ver. 1. *Then said he unto his disciples*, etc.] In the Alexandrian copy, and in “three” of Beza's exemplars it is read, “his disciples”; and so read the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions; that is, Jesus said to his disciples what follows, as the Syriac and Persic versions express, and the latter reads, he said “again”. About the time that he delivered the above parable concerning the rich man and Lazarus, he repeated to his disciples what he had before said to them on another occasion, (<40187>Matthew 18:7)

it is impossible but that offences will come; considering the decree of God, the malice of Satan, the wickedness of men, the corruption both of their principles and practices. The Ethiopic version renders it, “temptation will come”; that which will be trying to the faith of the saints, and a stumblingblock to weak minds, as reproach and persecution, errors, and heresies, and the evil lives of professors:

but woe [unto him] through whom they come; (see Gill on “<40187>Matthew 18:7”)

Ver. 2. *It were better for him that a millstone*, etc.] (See Gill on “<40186>Matthew 18:6”) and (See Gill on “<41042>Mark 9:42”).

Ver. 3. *Take heed to yourselves*. etc.] Or to one another, that ye neither give, nor take offence. Take heed to your spirits, to your doctrines, walk, and conversation, that you give no offence to any, that you are not stumbled by what you shall see in, and meet with from others:

if thy brother trespass against thee; (see Gill on “<40185>Matthew 18:15”)

rebuke him; privately, and proceed according to the rules there directed to; lay his sin before him; endeavour not only to convince him of the fact, but of the evil of it; how contrary to the will of God; how unbecoming the Gospel of Christ, and the profession he makes; how hurtful to himself, as well as injurious to his brother; and how such evils give the enemy occasion to reproach the saints, to speak evil of the ways of God, and

blaspheme the name and doctrines of Christ, and harden sinners in their sins, as well as stumble weak Christians, and sadden the hearts of the righteous.

And if he repent; if he is made sensible of his evil, and is truly sorry for it, and ingenuously acknowledges it:

forgive him; the injury committed against a man's self; and pray to God for him, for an application of his pardoning grace and mercy to him; and comfort him with the hope of forgiveness with God, by the gracious promises and declarations of pardon made to such persons; drop all resentment and anger, and behave towards him with all sweetness of temper, and affability, and respect: and this is to be done immediately, as soon as a man repents: and so say the Jews [f520];

> "says R. Chanina bar Papa, whoever commits a thing, and repents of it, they forgive him directly; as it is said, (<3805>Malachi 3:5) "and fear not me": lo, they that fear me, forgive immediately:"

such were reckoned good men, men fearing God.

Ver. 4. *And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day*, etc.] For good men are frequently apt to fall into sin, and offend both God and man; (see <202416>Proverbs 24:16) "and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent"; as often as he sins, and appears to be truly sensible of it, and humble for it, and makes acknowledgments of it; and not only barely in words professes his concern for it, but there is reason to believe that he is heartily grieved for it, and to hope that he will behave better for the future:

thou shalt forgive him; this seems to be occasioned by Peter's putting such a question to Christ, how often a brother might sin against him, and he forgive him; (see <401821>Matthew 18:21,22). The Jews plead for great tenderness and readiness to forgive penitents, when they ask for forgiveness; which they insist upon should be done: they say [f521],

> "it is forbidden an injured person to be cruel, and not forgive; this is not the way of the seed of Israel: but when he that has done the injury asks of him, and prays him once and again, and he knows that he has returned from his sin, and hath repented of his evil, he ought to forgive him; and whoever makes haste to forgive, is praiseworthy."

But then, they say [f522],

> "if he brings all the rams of Nebaioth that are in the world, he is not to have pardon, unless he asks it of him."

And they seem also to have set times for it, as well as restrain the frequent repetition of it: they observe [f523];

> "if a man returns by repentance, in the intermediate time, (i.e. as the gloss explains it, between the beginning of the year, or New Year's Day, and the day of atonement,) they pardon him; but if he does not return in the intermediate time, though he brings all the rams of Nebaioth in the world, they do not pardon him."

A man that was always forgiving, was reckoned by them an extraordinary man: it is said [f524] of Mar Zutra bar Nachman, that he was µwy lkb l jwm, "forgiving every day"; but yet they do not seem to care to carry it to so great a length, and to repeat it so often as our Lord directs; they allow a man to forgive three times, but not a fourth; (see Gill on "<0182>Matthew 18:22").

Ver. 5. *And the apostles said unto the Lord*, etc.] Either on account of what was now said by Christ concerning offences, and forgiving injuries; being conscious to themselves of their own weakness to withstand temptations; and fearful lest they should be stumbled and offended with what they should meet with; or that they should give offence to others: and being also sensible of what spirits they were of, and of the difficulties of conquering them, and mastering the resentment of their minds, when injured and provoked; and also the necessity of divine assistance, of having fresh supplies of grace, and of having their graces, and particularly faith, strengthened, and drawn into a lively exercise; or on account of their not being able to cast out a devil from one that was possessed, (<0179>Matthew 17:19,20) when words, to the same purpose, were spoken by Christ, as in the following verse; on occasion of one or other of these, though more likely the former, the apostles addressed Christ in this manner,

increase our faith; both the faith of working miracles, and the grace of believing in him: by which, as they express their sense of the weakness, and imperfection of their faith; and their great desire to have it increased, which might be for their comfort, and his glory; so they acknowledge his divine power, and that he is the author and finisher of faith; and that as the

beginning, so the increase of it is from him: wherefore faith is not of a man's self, or the produce of man's freewill and power, but is the gift of God; and even where it is, it is not in man to increase it, or add to it, or to draw it forth into exercise; this also is the operation of God. And if the apostles had need to put up such a petition to Christ, much more reason have other men.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord said*, etc.] In answer to the disciples. The Syriac version leaves out the word "Lord": and the Persic version, in the room of it reads, "Jesus":

if ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed; (see Gill on "<4017 20>Matthew 17:20")

ye might say unto this sycamine tree; which was near at hand; for in Galilee, where Christ now was, such trees grew, especially in lower Galilee: hence those words [f525];

> "from Caphar-Hananiah, and upwards, all the land which does not bear ^ymqç, "sycamines", is upper Galilee, and from Caphar-Hananiah, and downwards, all which does bear "sycamines", is lower Galilee."

This, by Maimonides [f526], is said to be a wild fig tree; but the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it, the "mulberry tree": and that the sycamine and mulberry tree are the same, Beza shows from Dioscorides, Athenaeus, and Galen; though whether it is the same with the sycamore in (<4219 04>Luke 19:4) is not certain. The first of these writers makes them to be the same; and the last asserts they are different, and so they should seem by their different names.

Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea, and it should obey you: for such a tree to be plucked up by the root at a word speaking, is very wonderful and miraculous, and beyond the power of nature; and much more for it to remove into the sea, and plant itself there, where trees grow not; and to believe this should be done, and such a word of command obeyed, one should think required very great faith; and yet, if it was but as a grain of mustard seed, which is very small, it might be done. The design is to show, what great things are done by faith, and what an increase of it they should have.

Ver. 7. *But which of you having a servant ploughing*, etc.] In order to keep the disciples humble in the performance of such miraculous works; and that they might not imagine they could have any thing at the hands of God by merit; and to excite them to go on from one duty to another; and never think they have done, or done enough, or more than what is their duty, Christ delivers the following parable.

Which of you having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattle; or "sheep", as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; or a "ploughman", or a "shepherd", as the Ethiopic version; which are both servile works, and done in the field: not that the disciples had any such servants under them, though the words are directed to them, for they had left all, and followed Christ; nor were they brought up to husbandry, but most of them in the fishing trade; Christ only puts this for instance, and supposes such a case:

will say unto him by and by; or straightway, immediately, directly,

when he is come from the field; and has done ploughing, and feeding his cattle, sheep, or cows, or whatever they are; as soon as ever he comes home; or "first", as the Persic version; the first thing he shall say to him, upon his return from thence,

go; to the other side of the room, and to the table there ready spread, and furnished; or "go up", as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it; go up to the upper room where they used to dine or sup; (see <4222>Luke 22:12) or "come in", as the Persic version renders it; and which some learned men observe, is the sense of the Greek word here used; come into the house,

and sit down to meat? or fall, and lie down on the couch, as was the custom in those countries at eating.

Ver. 8. *And will not rather say to him*, etc.] Or, "will he not say to him?" it is very likely, it is more agreeable to the language of a master, and the condition of a servant, that he should say to him,

make ready wherewith I may sup: by dressing the food, spreading the table, and putting the food on it; for it was the business of servants to prepare, as at the passover, (see Gill on "<4067>Matthew 26:17") so at ordinary suppers:

and gird thyself and serve me; by giving him drink, or whatsoever he called for: and as they used to wear long garments in those countries, servants

girded them up about their loins, that they might be fit for service, expedite in it, and perform it more readily, and with greater ease and dispatch:

till I have eaten and drunken; finished his meal:

and afterward thou shalt eat and drink: the, Persic and Ethiopic versions read in the imperative, “then eat thou and drink”. If he was an Hebrew servant, he ate and drank the same as his master did: for so one of the Jewish canons runs [f527];

> “every Hebrew servant, or handmaid, their master is obliged to make them equal to himself “in food and in drink”, in clothing, and in dwelling, as it is said, (Deuteronomy 15:16) “because he is well with thee”: wherefore, thou shalt not eat fine bread, and he eat coarse bread, nor drink old wine and he drink new wine, etc.”

And even a Canaanitish servant was to be provided with proper food and drink: they say indeed [f528],

> “it is lawful to cause a Canaanitish servant to serve with rigour: but though the law is such, the property of mercy, and the ways of wisdom are, that a man should be merciful, and not make his yoke heavy on his servant, nor oppress him; but cause him to “eat and drink” of all sorts of food and drink; and the former wise men used to give their servants of all sorts of food that they themselves ate of;”

which was using them as they did their Hebrew servants: yea, it is added;

> “and they gave their beasts, and their servants, food, before they ate their own meal;”

but this was not commonly done: it does not appear to have been the practice in Christ's time; nor was it necessary.

Ver. 9. *Doth he thank that servant*, etc.] As if he had done him a favour, and what he was not obliged to;

because he did the things that were commanded him? for, as a servant, he ought to do them, and in so doing does but his duty: he may indeed be commended for it, but not thanked:

I trow not; or "I think not"; it do not seem so to me, as if he would, or, as though it was proper and necessary he should. The Ethiopic version leaves out this last clause.

Ver. 10. *So likewise ye*, etc.] This is the accommodation and application of the parable to the disciples of Christ, who whether ministers or private believers, are as servants, and should be as laborious as the ploughman, and the shepherd; and as their condition is, so their conduct should be like theirs: the employment of the ministers of the word lies in reading, prayer, meditation, and study; in preaching the word, and administering the ordinances; and in performing other duties of their office: and every private believer has business to do, which lies in the exercise of grace, as the work of faith, the labour of love and patience, of hope: and in the discharge of duty with regard to themselves, in their families, the church, and the world; and these servants should be continually employed; and when one work is done, another is to be taken in hand: saints should be always believing, hoping, waiting, loving, and doing one good work or another; as preaching or praying, reading, hearing, and doing acts of benevolence and charity; and God and Christ are to be served by them in the first place, and then themselves: but some that would be called the servants of Christ, mind their own bellies, and not the service of Christ at all; others in the service of Christ, seek nothing but themselves; others are for the serving themselves first, and then Christ; but the true servants of Christ, serve him in the first place, and seek first his righteousness, and his kingdom, and the honour of it, believing that all other things shall be added to them: and when these have done all that are commanded them, they are not to think their service thank worthy: as for instance, if the service be preaching the word, a man so employed ought to be thankful to God, that has bestowed ministerial gifts upon him, and makes his labours useful, and uses him as an instrument, to do much good to the souls of men, and for his glory, and has put such an honour upon him; but he is not to expect thanks from God, for his most diligent and faithful performance of his work, or imagine that he merits any thing at his hand thereby: or if the business be hearing the word, a man should be thankful to God, for the word, ordinances, and ministers, for liberty of waiting upon God in such a way; for health of body, and inclination of mind, for such service; and for all the good, profit, and advantage, he gains hereby; but he is not to think that he lays God under any obligation to him by so doing, or deserves thanks, or a favour from him on account of it: or if the employment be prayer, a man should be greatly

thankful to the God of all grace, that there is a throne of grace for him to come to; and for a mediator, who is the way of access to God; and for the assistance of the Spirit in prayer; and for all the blessings which are given, as an answer of prayer; but he is never to entertain such a thought, that God is obliged to him for his prayers, or should thank him for them: or if the work be doing of good with worldly substance, such should be thankful to God for their substance he has given them, and for hearts to make use of it; but ought not to conclude, that they hereby merit his favour, or that this is any gain to him: but on the other hand, Christ directs his disciples, saying,

when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you; as preaching, or hearing, or reading, or praying, and every other act of divine and religious worship; or all acts of justice and benevolence among men; every duty both for matter and manner, as it should be, according to the will of God, from right principles, and to right ends, and by the assistance of the Spirit and grace of God:

say we are unprofitable servants; not in such sense as unregenerate men are, who are disobedient, and to every good work reprobate and unfit, (Romans 3:12 Titus 1:16) or as the slothful servant, who did not what his Lord commanded, (Matthew 25:30). Nor is this the sense, that they are unprofitable to men; for they may be, and are very useful and serviceable to men, and to the saints; but that they are so to God, by whose grace and strength they are what they are, and do what they do; and can give nothing to him but what is his own, and his due; and so can lay him under no obligation to them, nor merit any thing from him; no, not even thanks, and much less heaven and eternal life. The Persic version, quite contrary to the sense of the words reads, “we are pure or clean servants, for we have done”, etc. and the Ethiopic version leaves out the word “unprofitable”, and reads “we are servants”; we acknowledge ourselves to be servants:

we have done that which is our duty to do; wherefore, as diligence is highly proper, and reasonable in doing the work of the Lord, humility is necessary, that a man may not arrogate that to himself, which do not belong to him; or boast of his performances; or place any dependence on them: or have his expectations raised on account of them; since when he has done the most and best, he has done but what he should, and what he

was obliged to, and in that is greatly deficient: a saying somewhat like this, is used by R. Jochanan ben Zaccai [f529];

> “if thou hast learned the law much, do not ascribe the good to thyself; for, for this wast thou created.”

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass as he went to Jerusalem*, etc.] That is, Jesus, as the Persic version expresses it; though the Ethiopic version reads in the plural, “they going to Jerusalem passed”, etc. that is, the disciples, or Christ with his disciples; who was now going thither to eat his last passover, and suffer and die for his people:

that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee; or “between Samaria and Galilee”; as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; he steered his course through the borders of both these countries; and as he passed, Samaria was on his right hand, and Galilee on the left.

Ver. 12. *And as he entered into a certain village*, etc.] Whether in Samaria or Galilee, is not certain; perhaps it bordered on both, since there were both Jews and Samaritans in it, as appears by what follows; and since Christ was passing between both places:

there met ten men that were lepers; who either were confined to this place, this village, for they might not be in the larger cities, and walled towns; (see Gill on “Matthew 8:2”) or else having heard that Jesus of Nazareth was going to such a place, got together, and met him as he entered in it, in hope of being cured by him:

which stood afar off; from Christ, by reason of their uncleanness, as they were obliged to by the law, in (Leviticus 13:46).

Ver. 13. *And they lifted up their voices*, etc.] Together, and cried aloud, being at a distance, that they might be heard; as well as to express their vehement desire, and great importunity to be cleansed; (see Judges 9:7).

And said, Jesus, Master; or “Rabbi, Jesus”, thou great Master in Israel; who art a teacher come from God, and who dost surprising miracles, and art able to cure us:

have mercy on us; and cleanse us from our leprosy; we believe thou art able, if thou wilt; show compassion to us, miserable objects, as they were; their faith was the same with that of the other leper, in (Matthew 8:2).

Ver. 14. *And when he saw [them], he said unto them*, etc.] When upon their loud cry he looked up, and towards them, and saw what a condition they were in, his compassion moved towards them, and he ordered them to do as follows;

go show yourselves unto the priests. The Ethiopic version reads in the singular number, "to the priest", as in (<40804>Matthew 8:4) whose business it was to inspect into this matter, to see whether a person was healed, or not; and if he was to, pronounce him clean, when a gift was offered according to the law, in (<031402>Leviticus 14:2-4). So careful was Christ that the ceremonial law, which was as yet in force, might be strictly observed: though these ten lepers could not be viewed and examined by the priest together, but one after another; for so is the tradition of the Jews [f530],

> "two leprosies are not looked upon together, whether they be in one man, or in two men; but he views one, and either shuts him up, or declares or dismisses him, and then goes to a second:"

And it came to pass that as they went, they were cleansed; before they came to the priests, whilst they were in the way, they at once found themselves entirely healed of their disease; as Christ very likely gave them reason to believe they should; whereby his power was seen in it; and it was a clear case, that it was owing to him, and not the priests, that they had their cleansing. On the nature of the disease of leprosy, and of the likeness there is between that and sin, and of the agreement between the cleansing of a leper, and the cleansing of a sinner by the blood of Christ, (see Gill on "<420512>Luke 5:12"). Here it may be observed, that as these lepers had a cure while they were in the way of their duty, going, as Christ ordered them; so generally speaking, it is in the way of means, in an attendance on ordinances, that souls receive a spiritual cure from Christ: the man at Bethesda's pool waited long, and had healing at last; it is good to watch at Wisdom's gates, and wait at the posts of her door; faith in Christ, whereby the heart is purified, comes by hearing the word of God.

Ver. 15. *And one of them, when he saw that he was healed* etc.] When he felt perfect soundness in his body, and perceived that he was restored to his health, and saw with his eyes that the leprosy was gone from him, which must be visible enough:

turned back; either immediately, before he went to the priests; or afterwards, came back to Jesus, when he bad been with them:

and with a loud voice glorified God; Jesus Christ, who is truly God, and whose proper divinity might be seen in this miracle; (see 2 Kings 5:7) or God the Father, through Christ, and for his sake, by ascribing his cure to his power, and by returning thanks for it, and acknowledging with gratitude, Christ to be the author of it; which he did, with as loud a voice, as he cried to him for mercy; that all might know the miracle that was wrought, and join in giving glory to Christ: and it was but one of them that did so; gratitude is a rare thing, it is found but in few; unthankfulness cleaves to most persons; it is the general character of men to be unthankful and unholy; multitudes, even all men, share in the providential goodness of God, yet few take notice of, and are thankful for it; God is therefore said to be good, to the unthankful and to the evil, (Luke 6:35). Few there are who are of Jacob's spirit, that judge themselves unworthy of the least of mercies, and are heartily thankful for every favour: and this the leper did, when he was sensible that he was healed; no man will seek after a cure, till he sees, or is sensible of his sickness and his wound; and when he does, he will inquire after, and make use of the proper means of healing; and when he has got a cure, he is, or at least ought to be, thankful for it: and so it is in spiritual things, the whole need not a physician, or see no need of the physician, Christ; but those who are sick, and sensible of the sickness of sin, do; and when they perceive that their diseases are healed, and their sins forgiven, then they call upon their souls, and all within them, to bless the Lord, who has done this for them: and it becomes such who are cured of the leprosy of sin, to glorify God; not only with their mouths, by bringing their offering and sacrifice of praise to him, as the leper by the law was obliged to bring his offering, at the time of his cleansing; but by deeds also, with their bodies, and with their spirits; by a holy, humble, and spiritual conversation before men, signified by the leper's washing himself, and clothes, and shaving off all his hair; and by attending on the word and ordinances, by a professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ, signified by the blood being put upon the tip of the right ear of the leper, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the great toe of his right foot, (Leviticus 14:14).

Ver. 16. *And he fell down on his face at his feet*, etc.] For being cleansed, he might draw nigh unto Jesus; and which he did, with the most profound respect unto him, and reverence of him; and having a deep sense of the favour he had received from him, prostrated himself in this manner before him:

giving him thanks; who had shown compassion to him, had exerted his power on him, and had favoured him with such a singular mercy, as restoring him to health:

and he was a Samaritan; this is particularly remarked by the evangelist, because the Samaritans were reckoned by the Jews, to be ignorant and irreligious persons, and no better than Heathens; and yet this man behaved as a religious good man, who had a sense of his mercy, knew his duty, and his obligations, and performed them; when the other nine, who very likely were all Jews, acted a very stupid and ungrateful part.

Ver. 17. *And Jesus answering, said*, etc.] After the Samaritan had paid his respects to him, and made his acknowledgments in this grateful way:

were there not ten cleansed? so many applied for a cure, and so many had it:

but where are the nine? or nine of them; here was one, but where were the rest? they went and showed themselves to the priests, and then returned to their several places of abode, and took no notice of their physician and Saviour, to make any returns to him. They are many, that are cleansed by the blood of Christ; his blood was shed for many, for the remission of sins; and by his righteousness, he justifies many; at least there are many who profess themselves to be cleansed by him, and yet there are but few that glorify him, by keeping close to the rule of his word, by giving up themselves to the churches of Christ, and by walking with them in the ordinances of the Gospel: Christ's flock, which is separated from the world, and walks in Gospel order, within the inclosures of it, is but a little flock; they are but a few names in Sardis, who have not defiled themselves, with corruptions in doctrine and discipline; and these few are often such, who have been the worst of men, the vilest of sinners, from whom it has been least expected, they should glorify Christ: publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven, the Gospel church state, embrace its doctrines, and submit to its ordinances, when the Scribes and Pharisees, self-righteous persons, do not: ingratitude is a crime many are guilty of, and it is highly resented by Christ; instances of gratitude are few, but as one in ten; now and then a single Samaritan, a stranger, one that has been a vile sinner, comes and acknowledges the grace of Christ in cleansing him; comes to the ministers of Christ, and to the churches, and tells them what God has done for his soul: but where are the rest, the many others, who have received

spiritual advantages, and never come to relate them, and express by words and deeds, thankfulness for them?

Ver. 18. *There are not found that returned*, etc.] Or it do not appear, that any have returned:

to give glory to God; for inasmuch as they did not return to give thanks to Christ, and acknowledge him the author of their cure and cleansing they did not give glory to God:

save this stranger; for so the Samaritans were reckoned by the Jews, even as the Gentile, aliens from the commonwealth, of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise. Christ speaks in the language and dialect of the nation, and yet we find sometimes, that, ytwk, "a Cuthite", or a Samaritan, is distinguished from, yrkn, "a stranger", Or a Gentile: they might set up their beasts in the inns of the Samaritans, but not in the inns of "strangers"; and a man might let out his bath to a Samaritan, but not to a "stranger" [f531]; but this must be understood of them in times past, before they were found out to be idolaters; when, as Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel says [f532], they were as Israelites in all things, and kept the law and the precepts of it, and even more exactly than the Israelites themselves did [f533]; but afterwards a Samaritan was reckoned a Gentile, and so he was in the times of Christ; and therefore he calls a Samaritan a stranger: that tradition of the Jews, requires some notice and consideration [f534]; all are defiled

> "with leprosies, except µyrknh, "strangers", and the proselyte of the gate."

And yet here is a stranger among the Jews, and reckoned unclean, on account of leprosy, and sent with them to show himself to the priest.

Ver. 19. *And he said unto him, arise*, etc.] For, as yet, he lay at his feet upon his face, adoring and praising him; nor did he attempt to rise till Jesus bid him: adding,

go thy way; to thine own country, town, or city, and to thy friends and relations, and about thy business:

thy faith hath made thee whole: or "saved thee", in soul, as well as body; that is, Christ, the object of faith, had saved him; for his salvation is ascribed to his faith, not as the efficient cause of it, but as that was wrought in him, and drawn forth from him, and exercised by him, in

receiving this blessing from Christ, the author of it, even both corporeal and spiritual salvation.

Ver. 20. *And when he was demanded of the Pharisees*, etc.] Or "asked" by them; who expected the Messiah, and that when he was come he would set up a temporal kingdom, and deliver them from the Roman yoke; when they should enjoy great liberty, peace, and prosperity; so that they might put the following question to Christ in a serious manner, agreeably to these expectations: or it may be occasioned by the frequent mention that had been made of the kingdom of God by John, and Christ, and his disciples in their ministry, and so be put in a way of derision; or, as most of their questions were, with a view to ensnare or puzzle:

when the kingdom of God should come; either the kingdom that God had promised, or the kingdom of the Messiah, who is truly God, that had been so often spoken of by John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles. The Ethiopic version reads, "the kingdom of heaven", which is the same with the kingdom of God; for these phrases are promiscuously used. This question they need not have asked, had they carefully attended to the writings of the Old Testament they had in their hands; and had they diligently observed the signs of the times, in which they lived; and had they seriously regarded the ministry and miracles of Christ among them; from these things, they might have concluded, not only that the time was at hand, when the kingdom of God should be set up, but that it was already come: they might have observed, that not only the harbinger of the Messiah was come, who was John the Baptist; but that the Messiah himself was among them, by the many wonderful things which he wrought among them, and by the many Scripture prophecies which were fulfilled in him; they might have seen that the sceptre was manifestly departing from Judah; that all power and authority were falling into the hands of the Romans; and that only a mere shadow and appearance of it were among them; they might have known, by calculation, that the time fixed in Daniel's prophecy, for the coming of the Messiah, was now up, and therefore he must be come; and they had very good reason to believe that Jesus was he.

He answered them and said, the kingdom of God cometh not with observation; or so as to be observed by the eye, or to be distinguished when it comes as the kingdoms of this world, by outward pomp and splendour, by temporal riches, external honours, and worldly power and grandeur; though it so far came with observation, that had they had eyes to

see, they might have observed that it was come, by what they saw done by Christ, particularly the power that he showed in the dispossessing devils out of the bodies of men; (see <4012 8>Matthew 12:28). The Syriac version reads, “with observations”; and some understand the words of the observances of the ceremonies of the law, of days, months, and years, and the difference of meats, and the like, which the kingdom of God is not in, and which were to cease upon its coming; but the former sense is best.

Ver. 21. *Neither shall they say*, etc.] Or shall it be said by any, making their observations, and pointing to this, or that place:

lo here, or lo there; in this, or that place, country or city, the kingdom of God is set up; the throne of the Messiah is there; and there are the “regalia”, or ensigns of his regal power; no such thing will fall under the observations of man, not but that this would be said, and was said by some persons, as it is suggested it should, (<4217 3>Luke 17:23) and it appears from (<4012 6>Matthew 24:26) that some would say he was in such a wilderness, and others, that he was in some private retirement in a house, or that he was in such a town or city; as particularly it was said in Adrian's time, that he was in a place called Bither, where Bar Cochab set up himself for the Messiah: but the sense of the words is, that no such thing ought to be said; and if it was said, it would not be true; nor should it be credited: and the Cambridge copy of Beza's adds, “believe not”; as in (<4012 6>Matthew 24:26)

for behold the kingdom of God is within you: in the elect of God among the Jews, in their hearts; it being of a spiritual nature, and lying in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; in the dispossession of Satan, the strong man armed; in the putting down of the old man, sin, with its deceitful lusts, from the throne; and in setting up a principle of grace, as a governing one; and so escapes the observation of natural men, and cannot be pointed at as here, or there: hence it appears, that the work of grace is an internal thing; it is wrought in the hearts of men; it has its seat in the inward parts, and is therefore called the inner, and the hidden man: it does not lie in words, in an outward profession of religion: it is oil in the vessel of the heart, and is distinct from the lamp of a visible profession; it does not lie in external works and duties, but it is an inward principle of holiness in the soul, or spirit of man, produced there by the Spirit of God, and is therefore called by his name, (<4300 6>John 3:6) and it also appears to be a very glorious thing, since it is signified by a kingdom: it is a rich treasure; it is gold tried in the fire, which makes rich; it is an estate,

that good part, and portion, which can never be taken away; it is preferable to the greatest portion on earth men can enjoy; even the largest and richest kingdom in the world is not to be compared with it; it is a kingdom which cannot be moved; and as it is glorious in itself, it makes such glorious who are partakers of it: “the king's daughter is all glorious within”, (<19513>Psalm 45:13) and it is high in the esteem of God; it is the hidden man of the heart, but it is in his sight; it is in his view, and is in his sight of great price: it is likewise evident from hence, that it has great power and authority in the soul; it has the government in it; it reigns, through righteousness, unto eternal life; and by it, Christ, as king of saints, dwells and reigns in his people. Now this is not to be understood of the Scribes and Pharisees, as if they had any such internal principle in them, who were as painted sepulchres, and had nothing but rottenness and corruption in them: but the sense is, that there were some of the people of the Jews, of whom the Pharisees were a part, who had been powerfully wrought upon under the ministry of John, Christ, and his apostles; and were so many instances of efficacious grace, and of the kingdom of God, and of his Gospel coming with power to them. Though the words may be rendered,

the kingdom of God is among you; and the meaning be, that the king Messiah was already come, and was among them, and his kingdom was already set up, of which the miracles of Christ were a full proof; and if they could not discern these signs of the times, and evident appearances of the kingdom of God among them, they would never be able to make any observation of it, hereafter, or elsewhere.

Ver. 22. *And he said unto his disciples*, etc.] Who also were expecting a worldly kingdom, and external honours, and temporal emoluments, and riches; and therefore to take off their minds from these things, and that they might not have their expectations raised this way, but, on the other hand, look for afflictions and persecutions, he observes to them,

the days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the son of man; jyçmh twmy, “the days of the Messiah”, a phrase frequently used in Jewish writings; that is, when they should be glad to enjoy one such a day in the personal presence of Christ, as they now did; and instead of looking forward for happy days, in a temporal sense, they would look back upon the days they have enjoyed with Christ, when he was in person among them, and wish they had one of those days again; when besides his corporeal presence, and spiritual communion with him, and the advantage

of his ministry and miracles, they bad much outward peace and comfort: whereas in those days nothing but afflictions and persecutions abode them, wherever they went; so that by these words Christ would have them to understand, that they were not to expect better times, but worse, and that they would be glad of one of the days they now had, and in vain wish for it:

and ye shall not see [it], or enjoy it. Moreover, days and opportunities of public worship, of praying to the Lord, of singing his praise, of hearing his word, and of attending on his ordinances, may be called days of the son of man, or Lord's days; (see <66110>Revelation 1:10) even the first days of weeks, on which days the apostles, and primitive churches, met together for religious worship: and these may very well be called days of the son of man, since, on those days, he first appeared to his disciples, after his resurrection, (<43019>John 20:19,26) and on the same days his disciples and followers met together to preach in his name, to hear his Gospel, and to commemorate his sufferings and death, (<44007>Acts 20:7 <46601>1 Corinthians 16:1,2) and still continue to do so; and seeing he often meets with his people at such seasons and opportunities, fills them with his Spirit, communicates his grace, and indulges them with fellowship with himself, which make those days desirable ones: but sometimes so violent has been the persecution of the saints, that they have not been able, for a long time, to enjoy one of those days openly, and with freedom, though greatly desired by them; which may be considered as a fulfilment, at least in part, of this prediction of our Lord's: and therefore, whenever this is the case, it should not be thought strange; it is no other than what Christ has foretold should be: and it may teach us to prize, make use of, and improve such days and opportunities, whilst we have them, we know not how soon our teachers may be removed into corners, when we shall wish in vain for them; and seasons of hearing them, as is here suggested: sad it is to know the worth of Gospel opportunities, by the want of them!

Ver. 23. *And they shall say unto you, see here, or see there*, etc.] That is, there is Christ; and in two of Beza's exemplars, the word Christ is added as in (<40423>Matthew 24:23) from whence it seems to be transcribed: and the sense is, it shall be said by one or another; Christ is in such a place, or he is in such a place, and he will quickly appear, and deliver the people of the Jews out of all their distresses and calamities by the Romans,

Go not after them nor follow [them]: the last clause, “nor follow them”, is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions; the meaning is, give no credit to

them; as if Christ was come again in person, and was in such a place, do not go along with them, where they direct, as into the desert, or into the secret chambers; for to follow them will be very dangerous, of bad consequence, as well as vain and fruitless; (see <4456>Acts 5:36,37).

Ver. 24. *For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one [part] under heaven*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, “out of heaven”, and the Arabic version, “in heaven”; which is the seat of lightning, and from whence it arises:

and shineth unto the other part under heaven; enlightens the earth, which is under the heaven: though the sense of the words, as they lie in the original text, seems to be, that as the lightning lightens at one end of the heavens, and shines to the other; which is done at once, in a moment, in a twinkling of the eye, and to which agrees the Ethiopic version;

so shall also the son of man be in his day: which is not to be understood of the swift progress of the Gospel, after his resurrection and ascension, and the pouring forth of his Spirit; but of his sudden coming, first to take vengeance on the Jewish nation for their rejection of him, and then at the last day, to judge both quick and dead. By his day, is meant his kingdom and glory, or his appearance with power, and great glory: Thus we read [f535] for Solomon, wt[çb, “in his hour”, that is, in his glory, in the time of his kingdom, when he was in his greatest magnificence.

Ver. 25. *But first must he suffer many things*, etc.] By cruel mockings, spitting, buffeting, scourging, and, at last, death itself; all which must be, and were before his day came, or he entered into his glory, or came in it:

and be rejected of this generation; as the Messiah, and be treated with the utmost scorn and contempt, and in the most base and ignominious manner: being put to the death of the cross, and hanged upon the accursed tree: all which were necessary, “must” be; on account of the purposes and decrees of God; the covenant engagements of Christ; the predictions of the prophets of the Old Testament, and his own; and the salvation of his people.

Ver. 26. *And as it was in the days of Noe*, etc.] Whilst he was building the ark, and before he went into it; for this respects the days of Noah before the flood, and not after it; for he lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years, (<0109>Genesis 9:28)

so shall it be also in the days of the son of man; some time before, and at his coming in power, and great glory, to destroy the Jews, their nation, city, and temple; and as then, so it will be when he shall come in person, at the last day, to destroy the world: the times of Noah's flood, of Jerusalem's destruction, and of the end of the world, bear a great resemblance to each other: and when the son of man comes in either of these senses, then will the kingdom of God come; or then will it appear that the Messiah is come, and has took to himself his great power, and reigns.

Ver. 27. *They did eat, they drank*, etc.] That is, the inhabitants of the old world ate and drank, not merely in a common way, with moderation, and for the support and comfort of life, which is not blameworthy, nor inconsistent with religious exercises; but they lived in an extravagant and luxurious manner; they indulged their sensual appetites, and put away the evil day far from them, that Noah told them of:

they married wives, they were given in marriage; not as should have been done by professors of religion among themselves; but the sons of God, or professors of the true religion, the posterity of Seth took them wives of the daughters of men, of the wicked, of the seed of Cain; and very likely gave their daughters in marriage to the sons of men; (see Genesis 6:2,4) and so they went on in a secure manner, notwithstanding all the remonstrances, warnings, and threatenings of God, by his servant:

until the day that Noe entered into the ark; which he had built by divine direction, for the saving of himself and family, and the creatures that were with him, from the waters of the flood; and this was in the six hundredth year of his life, in the second month, the month of October, and in the seventeenth day of that month; (Genesis 7:11,13)

and the flood came and destroyed them all; all the inhabitants of the earth, every living substance, men, cattle, creeping things, and fowls of the heaven; all but Noah, and his wife, and his three sons, and their wives, and the creatures that were with him in the ark: the flood came not of itself, or by chance, or through the influence, or by the concurrence of second causes merely; though these were used, ordered, and directed by the first cause of all things; but it came by the power of God, according to his will; he brought it on the world of the ungodly; (see 2 Peter 2:5) The mode of expression is Jewish; it is said of Cain, who is supposed by the Jews to

have lived till the flood, wpjçw lwbmab, “the flood came”, and washed him away [f536].

Ver. 28. *Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot*, etc.] When he lived in Sodom, and before, and at the time of the destruction of that city with other neighbouring ones:

they did eat, they drank; (see Gill on “<4217>Luke 17:27”), and (<2616>Ezekiel 16:49). This is to be understood of the inhabitants of Sodom, and the other cities that perished with it:

they bought, they sold: they traded among themselves, and with their neighbours; and, as it appears from the text referred to, they had no regard to the poor and needy; they made no conscience of defrauding and oppressing them:

they planted; vineyards, and fruit trees; living in a very fruitful soil, like the garden of God, (<011310>Genesis 13:10)

they builded; houses for themselves and posterity; and thus, as a Jewish writer [f537] observes of them, in agreement with our Lord's design in all this, being filled with the increase of the earth, they lived in security, peace, and tranquillity.

Ver. 29. *But the same day Lot went out of Sodom*, etc.] Being plucked and brought from thence by the angels early in the morning; and a fine morning it was; the sun was risen, and shone out upon the earth, as Lot got into Zoar, (<011915>Genesis 19:15,16,23). “The Jews” [f538] say it was the sixteenth day of Nisan:

it rained fire and brimstone from heaven; the Syriac version reads, “the Lord rained”; so it is said in (<011924>Genesis 19:24) “the Lord rained from the Lord”; Jehovah the Son, rained from Jehovah the Father; or the word of the Lord, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem render it; and which is no inconsiderable proof of the deity of Christ: and the Persic version here reads, “God rained”; and so this amazing shower of fire and brimstone, and which was a violent storm of thunder and lightning, is ascribed to God in (See Gill on “<610206>2 Peter 2:6”). The Hebrew word, tyrpg, used in (<011924>Genesis 19:24) though it is rendered in the Targum of Jonathan, atyrbk, and by the Septuagint, ψειον; both which words signify “sulphur”, or brimstone; and which last word is used here, following the

Greek version; yet it is observed, by some learned men, that it rather signifies “pitch”, or “rosin”, which proceeds from some sort of trees; and indeed, by its derivation, it seems to signify something belonging to or that comes out of the wood of Gopher, of which the ark was made, (<01064>Genesis 6:14) which some think to be the pine tree, from whence comes pitch: and this, though it comes from the inside of a tree, may as well be said to be rained from heaven, as brimstone, which is taken out of the bowels of the earth: and the rather, since pitch is sometimes fluid; and especially it being combustible, may be joined with fire, as well as sulphur, or brimstone; though a shower of neither, can be accounted for in an ordinary way, but must be extraordinary and miraculous: the destruction of this city, with others, by fire from heaven, and the lake Asphaltites, being a bituminous and sulphureous one, into which the tract of land they stood upon was converted, are confirmed by the testimonies of Heathen writers; as Tacitus [f539], Solinus [f540], Strabo [f541], Justin [f542], and Pliny [f543]; as well as by Josephus [f544], and Philo the Jew [f545].

And destroyed them all; all the inhabitants of Sodom, and all of Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim; and which was an ensample of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the land of Judea. (<052923>Deuteronomy 29:23) and of the burning of the world, and of the perdition of the wicked in hell, (<610206>2 Peter 2:6 Jude 7).

Ver. 30. *Even thus shall it be in the day when the son of man is revealed*.] In his power, when he comes to avenge himself on the Jews; and when he is revealed from heaven in flaming fire, at the last day. As in the days of Noah and Lot, men lived in great carnality and security, thoughtless and fearless of danger, so were the Jews before the destruction of their city and temple, buoying themselves up with deliverance to the last; and such will be the times of indolence and supineness, before the coming of the day of the Lord to judgment: and as the destruction of the old world, and men of Sodom, and the adjacent parts, was sudden and unexpected, so was the destruction of Jerusalem, and so will be the burning of the world; that day will come, as a thief in the night: and as in the above calamities, there was a remnant saved, who were taken care of; as Noah and his family in tim ark, and as Lot, and his wife and daughters were snatched out of Sodom, when the rest were destroyed; so when the Christians removed from Jerusalem, and went to Pella, being directed by a divine oracle, then came on the siege of Jerusalem [f546]; and when all the elect will be gathered in, and brought to faith and repentance, then shall the earth, and the works in it be burnt up:

and as these judgments were universal, so was that upon the people of the Jews: and such will be the general desolation in the last day.

Ver. 31. *In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop*, etc.] Either for diversion or devotion, when he shall hear that the Roman armies are approaching to Jerusalem, to besiege it:

and his stuff in the house; or "his vessels", his goods and furniture; or his utensils, and instruments of trade and business:

let him not come down; the inner way of the house, from the top:

to take it away; with him in his flight, but let him descend by the steps, or ladder, on the outside of the house, and make his escape directly to Pella, or the mountains:

and he that is in the field; at work, and has laid down his clothes in some certain part of the field, or at home:

let him likewise not return back; to fetch them, but make the best of his way as he is; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:17") and (see Gill on "Matthew 24:18").

Ver. 32. *Remember Lot's wife*.] Whose name by the Jews, is said to be Adith, as some [f547]; or Irith, as others [f548]: and who, they also say, was a native of Sodom; and that the reason of her looking, was either to see what would be the end of her father's house and family [f549]; or as others [f550], because her heart yearned after her daughters, and she looked back to see if they followed her; upon which she became a pillar of salt, (Genesis 19:26) They say [f551], that her bones were burnt with the brimstone, and along with which was salt, into which she was turned, according to (Deuteronomy 29:23). They often speak of tymwrs jlm, "salt of Sodom" [f552]; where the gloss says, it is thick and hard, as a stone; and to which they sometimes [f553] ascribe this virtue, that it blinds the eyes: and there is a sort of salt, which they call [f554] Galilaean salt, of like hardness; and Pliny [f555] speaks of salt in the Indies, which they cut out, as stones out of quarries; and that, at Carthis, a town in Arabia, is salt with which they build houses and walls: of a very durable nature it is certain, was this pillar of "salt", Lot's wife became; for Josephus reports [f556], that he saw this pillar of salt in his time; and Irenaeus asserts [f557], that it was in being when he lived; and modern writers, as Burchardus and Adrichomius, speak of it as still existing; and the Jerusalem "paraphrast" on (Genesis 19:26) says it

shall endure till the time the resurrection comes, in which the dead shall live: the reason of her becoming a pillar of salt, the Jews say, is, that she sinned by salt, and so was punished by salt; and which is differently related, and in a very fanciful way: one writer [f558] reports, that when the angels came, Lot said to her, give me a little salt for these travellers; she replied to him, truly this is a bad custom, which thou bringest to be used in this place; and elsewhere [f559] it is said, that upon their coming, she went to all her neighbours, and said to them, give me some salt, for we have travellers; but her intention was, that the men of the city might know them: but leaving those things, our Lord's design in these words, is to instruct his followers by this instance, not to look back in their flight, or to turn back to their houses, to save their goods, when the desolation of Jerusalem was coming on, lest they should suffer in it; and to warn all professors of religion, in all ages, against looking back to things that are behind, or turning their backs on him, in a time of distress and persecution; since such are not fit for the kingdom of God; and in these God has no delight and pleasure.

Ver. 33. *Whosoever shall seek to save his life*, etc.] By fleeing to some strong hold, or by continuing in the metropolis, and strongest city in the nation, Jerusalem:

shall lose it: there he will be in the greatest danger:

and whosoever shall lose his life; or expose it to danger, by fleeing to the mountains, or going to Pella, a small town beyond Jordan, of no strength, and where there might be thought no security;

shall preserve it; he shall be safe; (see Gill on "Matthew 16:25").

Ver. 34. *I tell you, in that night*, etc.] Of affliction and calamity, that shall be upon the Jewish nation, and which is before called that day, (Luke 17:31) and therefore is not to be understood literally of the night:

there shall be two [men] in one bed; this is said agreeably to the time, the night before mentioned, that being the time to be in bed, at rest and asleep; for they that sleep, sleep in the night; and still suggests the security the people of the Jews would be in, at the time of their destruction. The word "men" is not in the text, it is only, "there shall be two in one bed"; and may as well be understood of a man and his wife, since it is not so usual for two men to lie in one bed; and this the rather more strongly expresses the distinguishing providence of God in saving one, and suffering the other to be taken and lost: the words may be rendered, "there shall be two upon one

couch": that is, sitting together at supper, which was also in the night season: it was the custom of the ancients to sit upon beds, or couches, at meals; and they had a bed, or couch, which held two persons only, and was called Biclinium [f560]: and so this likewise intimates, that the destruction of the Jews would be at a time when they were thoughtless of it, and were eating and drinking, as in the days of Noah and of Lot, (Luke 17:27,28).

The one shall be taken; by the Roman soldiers:

and the other shall be left; being, by one providence or another preserved; which is mentioned, to show the distinction God will make in his providence, and to encourage believers to trust in it.

Ver. 35. *Two [women] shall be grinding together*, etc.] In (Matthew 24:41) it is added, "in the mill"; in the house where the mill was, and at one and the same mill; and so the Ethiopic version here, "two shall grind in one mill": and it was common for two women to grind at one hand mill; and though the word "women" is not in the text, it is rightly put into the translation; since the word used is of the feminine gender, and since grinding was the business of women; and so the Persic version here supplies it, as we do; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:42").

The one shall be taken and the other left; the Roman soldiers entering the mill, will lay hold on the one, and carry her away with them, and leave the other; and for which no other reason can be given, but the sovereign will and providence of God, which should overrule and dispose the minds of these men, to act in such a manner.

Ver. 36. *Two men shall be in the field*, etc.] At work there, tilling the ground, or sowing the seed in it, or reaping the corn; which of them soever was the work of the field, at the time of Jerusalem's destruction:

the one shall be taken, and the other left: the circumstances attending these several, instances show, that they cannot be considered as expressive of the use and effect of the preaching of the Gospel, that being the savour of life unto life to some, and the savour of death unto death to others, some being effectually called by it, and others being left to die in their sins; since these men and women are said to be either in a bed asleep, or on a couch feasting, or grinding in a mill, or at work in the field, and so not in proper places, and at leisure to hear the Gospel preached. The whole verse is left out in the Ethiopic version, and in some Greek copies; though it is in

the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, and in the Complutensian edition, and in some ancient copies, as Beza observes.

Ver. 37. *And they answered and said unto him, where, Lord*? etc.] That is, either the Pharisees put this question to Christ, who demanded of him when the kingdom of God would come, (<2172>Luke 17:20) or rather the disciples, to whom Christ more especially directed his discourse, (<2172>Luke 17:22) who hearing of the distinction that would be made of persons in these dismal times, ask where it should be; not where the persons would be left, but whither the others would be taken, and by whom: and he said unto them,

wheresoever the body is; the carcass of the Jewish nation, as at Jerusalem chiefly, and in whatsoever place:

thither will the eagles be gathered together; the Roman army, whose ensign was the eagle; these will come, seize upon them, and take them and devour them, as they did: the Persic version renders it, "vultures"; (see Gill on "<4028>Matthew 24:28"). These words can by no means be understood of sinners fleeing to Christ for eternal life and salvation; nor of the gathering of saints to him, at the last day; for how fitly soever such persons may be compared to "eagles", the word "body", or "carcass", as in (<4028>Matthew 24:28) and which is so read in some copies here, is not so suitable to Christ; and especially at his glorious appearing; and besides, the words are an answer to a question, where such persons would be, who would be taken and destroyed, when others would be left, or preserved; and manifestly refer to the body, or carcass of the Jewish people at Jerusalem, and other fortified places; where they should think themselves safe, but should not be so, the Roman armies gathering about them, and seizing them as their prey: it is yet a more strange interpretation, which is proposed by a very learned man [f561]; that by the "eagle" is meant, Christ; and by "the body", or "carcass", the church in the times of antichrist; and by "gathering" to it, the coming of Christ: for though Christ may be said to bear and carry his people, as the eagle bears and carries its young upon its wings, which he observes from (<2004>Exodus 19:4 <5211>Deuteronomy 32:11 <2609>Isaiah 63:9) yet not a single eagle, but "eagles", in the plural number, are here mentioned; which shows, that not a single person, as Christ, but many are here intended, even legions of Roman soldiers: nor can the church of Christ be compared to a dead and filthy carcass, in the worst of times, even in the times of antichrist; for however forlorn, distressed, and

afflicted her condition is, she is kept alive, and in some measure pure from antichristian pollutions; and is represented by a woman, to whom two wings of a great eagle are given (wherefore she should rather be designed by the eagles) to fly with into the wilderness, where she is preserved and nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, (<66124>Revelation 12:14). Nor is Christ's coming ever expressed by the gathering of him to his people; but on the other hand, they are always said to be gathered unto him; (see <53201>2 Thessalonians 2:1).

CHAPTER 18

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 18

Ver. 1. *And he spoke a parable unto them*, etc.] To his own disciples, as the Ethiopic version reads, in order to encourage them to prayer, with perseverance in it; since such sore times of trial and affliction were coming upon the Jews, of which he had spoken in the preceding chapter; and such times more especially call for prayer; (see <19A015>Psalm 50:15)

[to this end], that men ought always to pray. This is opposed to them, who pray not at all, or have left off prayer before God, or who pray only in distress; and suggests, that a man should pray as often as he has an opportunity; should be constant and assiduous at the throne of grace, and continue putting up his requests to God, though he does not presently return an answer:

and not to faint; by reason of afflictions, temptations, desertions, and delays in answering prayer; and prayer itself is an admirable antidote against fainting under afflictive providences: it is with the Jews an affirmative precept that a man should pray, µwy lkb, "every day" [f562]; it was usual with them to pray three times a day; (see <19551>Psalm 55:17 <27060>Daniel 6:10) there is no set time fixed by Christ; men should be always praying. This is not to be understood, that a man should be always actually engaged in the work of prayer; that he should be continually either in his closet, in private devotion to God, or attending exercises of more public prayer, with the saints; for there are other religious exercises to be performed, besides prayer; and besides, there are many civil affairs of life, it is every man's indispensable duty to regard: nor does our Lord mean in the least to break in upon, or interrupt the natural and civil duties of life; but his meaning is, that a man should persevere in prayer, and not leave off, or be dejected, because he has not an immediate answer; and this is clear from the following case.

Ver. 2. *Saying, there was in a city a judge*, etc.] In every city in the land of Israel, there was a sanhedrim, or court of judicature; in Jerusalem was the great sanhedrim, consisting of seventy one; and in every city where there

were an hundred and twenty men, or more, there was a lesser sanhedrim, consisting of twenty three; and in a city in which there were not an hundred and twenty men, were three judges; for there was no sanhedrim, or court of judicature, that consisted of less than three [f563]: but

> "although there is no judicature less than three, ^wrl djal rtwm, "it is lawful for one to judge", according to the law, as it is said, (<031915>Leviticus 19:15) "In righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour"; but according to the words of the Scribes, (only,) when there are three, and two that judge, their judgment is no judgment: one who is publicly approved or authorized, or who has taken a licence from the sanhedrim, it is lawful for him to judge alone, but it is not accounted a judicature; and though it is lawful, it is the command of the wise men, that he set others with him; for lo, they say, do not judge alone, for there is none that judgeth alone, but one [f564]."

It may be, this judge was, hjmwm, an authorized and approved one; however, we have instances of single judges, or of persons that have judged alone, at least by the consent of parties.

> "R. Abhu was sitting judge, in a synagogue in Caesarea, by himself, his disciples said to him, did not Rabbi so teach us, do not judge alone? he replied to them, when ye see me sit judge by myself, and ye come to me, as those that have taken upon themselves (or agreed to be judged by me); for the tradition is, of things in which they do not take upon them; but if they take upon them, (or agree to be judged,) one may judge, though alone [f565]."

And again, elsewhere [f566];

> "if he is publicly authorized or approved, he judges, though alone; says R. Nachman, as I judge pecuniary causes alone; and so says R. Chijah, as I judge pecuniary judgments alone. — Mar Zutra, the son of R. Nachman, judged a cause, and erred; he came to R. Joseph, who said to him, if they have received thee upon them (agreed to be judged by thee) thou needst not finish; but if not, go and finish."

The qualifications of one to be a judge, even of the bench of three, were these [f567];

> "wisdom, meekness (or modesty), and fear, (i.e. of God,) and hatred of mammon, (or money,) love of truth, and to have the love of men, and to be masters of a good name (or to be of good report)."

But the judge in the text, came greatly short of these qualifications: his character follows,

which feared not God, neither regarded man; and therefore, according to the canon, was disqualified from being a judge, since he was destitute of the fear of God; and seeing he regarded not men, he could neither have any love to men, nor any share in the affections of men, and such an one is very unfit to be a judge, for he cannot be thought to have any regard to his conscience, or his credit, and so not to justice and equity. The former of these characters, is what belongs to every man in a state of unregeneracy; there is no true fear of God before the eyes, or in the heart of any unconverted man; wherever it is, it is put there by the grace of God: this is one of the first things which appears in conversion, and shows itself in an hatred of sin, and in the performance of duties; and is increased by the discoveries of the grace and goodness of God; but the want of this is more visible in some than in others: some, though they have not the grace of fear, yet are under some awe of the Divine Being, and pay a regard to the word of God; and what through the force of education, and the dictates of a natural conscience, dare not go such lengths in sin, as some do: but there are others, who even say there is no God, and at least live as if there was none; they endeavour to work themselves, and others, into a disbelief of the being of God; and set their mouths against heaven, deny his providence, and despise his word; stretch out their hands, and strengthen themselves against the Almighty; and in a fearless manner, run upon the thick bosses of his bucklers; they declare their sin as Sodom, and hide it not, yea, glory in it; they promise themselves impunity, and laugh at a future judgment; and of such a cast was this judge, and therefore a very improper person for such an office; for civil magistrates, and rulers of every sort, ought to be just, ruling in the fear of God: and as for the other part of his character, it is not to be wondered at; for such that fear not God, will have little regard to men; no otherwise, or further, than they are obliged to it: indeed, judges ought not to regard men in judgment; that is, to respect the persons of men, and through affection, or flattery, or bribes, wrest judgment: but this is not the sense of the phrase here, since this agrees not with the other part of the character, and since he is called an

unjust judge; but the meaning is, that he had no regard to the laws of men, any more than the laws of God; but made his own will the rule of his actions, and had no regard to doing justice between man and man; nor did he care what any man said of him; he had no concern about his reputation and character, having none to lose.

Ver. 3. *And there was a widow in that city*, etc.] Poor and helpless, and none among men to counsel, direct, and assist her, and take her part: now as in the accommodation of this parable, the elect of God answer to this widow; such an one is rather pitched upon to represent the helpless, desolate, and forlorn condition they are in among men in this world, though they are espoused to one husband, Christ; and especially to signify the state and condition of God's elect among the Jews in those sad times, before the destruction of Jerusalem, this parable has respect unto. Christ is the bridegroom of his church and people; he is their husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and they are espoused as a chaste virgin to him; and whilst he was here on earth, his disciples, who were the children of the bridegroom, could not fast and mourn, for which they had no reason; but upon the death of Christ, when he was removed from them, they had great sorrow of heart; they were left like widows and orphans; hence those words of Christ, (<4B14B>John 14:18) and were persecuted by the Jews in their own land; and wherever they went, they stirred up the Gentiles against them; and so things continued till near the destruction of Jerusalem; during which time many a request was made to God, the judge of the widows and fatherless, to the following purport:

and she came unto him, saying, avenge me of my adversary; or do me justice in the cause depending between me, and him that has wronged me; hear the cause, and do right; vindicate, and deliver me. Many are the adversaries of God's people, as the sins and corruptions of their own hearts, Satan, and his angels, wicked oppressors, and persecutors; the last seem, in the mystical sense, to be designed here: it is lawful to pray for vengeance on them; it is right to apply to God, and leave it with him, to whom it belongs; and it has been the suit and cry of the best of men; (see <660109>Revelation 6:9,10). It does not become the people of God to avenge themselves, even when it is in the power of their hands; nor should they desire it for their own sakes, so much as for the glory of God; they should ask it, not to gratify a revengeful spirit in them, but for the honour or divine justice; and this should be always with submission to the will of God, leaving it to his own time and way, to whom vengeance belongs, and

who has said it is mine, and I will repay it; as he certainly will sooner or later: the purity of his nature, his abhorrence of sin, and sinful men, and his love to his own people engage him to it.

Ver. 4. *And he would not for a while*, etc.] He would give no ear to her cries, nor take her cause in hand, nor right her wrongs, and clear her of her adversary:

but afterward he said within himself; as he was considering the matter in his own mind, and reflecting on this woman's case and the frequent application she had made to him:

though I fear not God, nor regard man; a monster in iniquity he was, to say so of himself; for though the character belongs to many, there are few that are so impudent in sin, as to take it to themselves, and glory in it.

Ver. 5. *Yet because this widow troubleth me*, etc.] By often knocking at his door, by loud cries and earnest entreaties, with strong arguments, and floods of tears, and could not easily be removed from his presence, or got out of his house:

I will avenge her; I will hear her cause, do her justice, and deliver her from her troublesome adversary:

lest by her continual coming she weary me: so that it was not from a conscience of duty in him, as a judge, or from a commiseration of the poor widow's case; but from a selfish end, for his own ease, in perfect agreement to his character, that his house might not be disturbed, and his ears stunned with her noise and cry, and he was pestered with her company day after day. The character of this judge, his reasoning with himself upon it, his principles from which he acted, and the ends he had in view, are wholly to be left out in the accommodation of this parable; and no farther to be considered than as the argument from the lesser to the greater may be strengthened by them; the intention of the parable being only to show the force, efficacy, and usefulness of importunity in prayer, as appears by the application of it, by our Lord, in the verses following.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord said*, etc.] The Lord Jesus Christ, who delivered out this parable to his disciples:

hear what the unjust judge saith; and take encouragement from hence to be frequent and importunate in prayer with God; for if such a cruel,

merciless, and unjust judge is to be wrought upon by importunity to do justice, who has no principle to influence him, how much more will not God, who is a just judge, the judge of widows, and of the oppressed, a God of great mercy and compassion, who delights in the prayers of his people, knows their cases, and is able to help them, and who has an interest in them, and they in him? how much more will not he regard their importunate requests, and arise, and save them much such like reasoning this is used by the Jews:

> "says R. Simeon ben Chelphetha, an impudent man overcomes a good man, or a modest man, (by his importunity,) how much more the goodness of the world itself [f568]?"

that is, how much more will a man, by his continual prayer, prevail with God, who is goodness itself? And they have another saying [f569], that agrees with this:

> "says R. Nachman, impudence (i.e. importunity) even against God is profitable."

The application of this parable follows:

Ver. 7. *And shall not God avenge his own elect*, etc.] Who are a select number, a special people, whom he has loved with an everlasting love, so as of his own sovereign good will and pleasure to choose in his Son Jesus Christ unto everlasting life and salvation, through certain ways and means of his own appointing, hence they are peculiarly his: and these he will avenge and vindicate, right their wrongs, do them justice, and deliver them from their adversaries, and take vengeance on them; as may be concluded from his hatred of sin, his justice, and his holiness, from his promises, and from his power, and from the efficacy of prayer, and the regard he has to it: for it follows,

which cry unto him day and night; whose prayers he always hears; whose tears he puts up in his bottle; and whose importunity must surely be thought to have more regard with him, than that of the poor widow with the unjust judge:

though he bear long with them? either with their adversaries, their oppressors, and persecutors, who are vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, whom he endures with much longsuffering, till the sufferings of his people are accomplished, and the iniquities of these men are full; or

rather with the elect, for the words may be rendered, “and is longsuffering towards them”: delays his coming, and the execution of vengeance, as on the Jewish nation, so upon the whole world of the ungodly, till his elect are gathered in from among them; (see 2 Peter 3:9).

Ver. 8. *I tell you that he will avenge them speedily*, etc.] As he did in a few years after the death of Christ, when God's elect among the Jews were singled out, and gathered in from them, and were delivered from their persecutors, and saved from temporal ruin and destruction, whilst the Roman army made sad havoc of their enemies; and so will he do in the end of the world.

Nevertheless, when the son of man cometh; either to destroy Jerusalem, or to judge the world:

shall he find faith on the earth? either in the land of Judea, the believers being removed from thence, and scattered among the Gentiles, and not a man, at least in Jerusalem, that had any faith in Jesus, as the Messiah; or in the world at the last day: there will then be little of the doctrine of faith, and less of the grace of faith, and still less of the exercise of faith, particularly in prayer, and especially about the coming of Christ; it will be little thought of, and expected, or faith little exercised about it. With this agree some expressions in the Jewish writings[f570]:

> “Says R. Jose, the holy, blessed God, will not be revealed to Israel, but in the time, atwnmyhm jktça ald, “that faith is not found among them.””

And elsewhere[f571], speaking of the times of the Messiah, and of a star that shall then appear, it is said

> “when that star shall be seen in the world at that time mighty wars shall be stirred up in the world, on all the four sides, jktçy al atwnmyhmw, “and faith will not be found” among them.”

They seem to regard the first coming of the Messiah: and which was true with respect to the majority of their nation; and the same holds good with regard to his second coming; in the apocrypha it says: ``Nevertheless as coming the tokens, behold, the days shall come, that they which dwell upon earth shall be taken in a great number, and the way of truth shall be hidden, and the land shall be barren of faith.” (2 Esdras 5:1)

Ver. 9. *And he spake this parable unto certain*, etc.] Or with respect to certain men; having a view to them, in order to expose their pride, vanity, arrogance, and self confidence:

which trusted in themselves that they were righteous; or, as if they were righteous; or because they were so in their own eyes, and in the esteem of others: the ground of their trust and confidence were themselves, their hearts, and the supposed goodness of them, their outward holiness, their moral behaviour, their duties, and good works, their almsdeeds, and religious exercises, their ceremonial observances, and fleshly privileges; on account of which they thought themselves very righteous persons, such as could not fail of being accepted with God, and justified in his sight; whereas there are none righteous in, and of themselves, no, not one. All the descendants of Adam, as such, are sinners, destitute of a righteousness, and filled with all unrighteousness, and are enemies to true righteousness: no man is naturally righteous, nor is he capable of making himself so, by any thing he can do: none are righteous by their obedience to the law of works, for that is imperfect, and cannot justify before God, in whose sight no flesh living can be justified on this account, however righteous they may appear before men, or may be in their own eyes: for this is contrary to God's way of making men righteous, and would disannul the death of Christ, and encourage boasting in men. Such trust and confidence must be very vain, and arise from ignorance; from ignorance of God, of the perfection of his justice, and of the nature of his righteous law; and of themselves, of the impurity of their hearts, and the imperfection of their obedience. These were of the “pharisaical” sort, and of which complexion were the generality of the Jews; and many of these were now standing by Christ, and within the hearing of this parable, and for whose sake it was delivered:

and despised others; or, “every man”, as the Syriac and Persic versions read; all the rest of mankind, all but themselves; they made nothing of them, had them in no account; treated them as persons unworthy of the regard of God, and not fit to stand near them, or to be named with them.

Ver. 10. *Two men went up into the temple to pray*, Which is called an house of prayer, (<23567>Isaiah 56:7) the Jews had a mighty notion of praying in a place of religious worship, as in the temple, or in a synagogue; imagining that their prayers were more acceptable to God, and sooner heard by him in such a place than in private:

> “the prayers of the congregation, they say [f572], are heard always; and though there are sinners among them, the holy; blessed God, does not despise the prayer of many; wherefore, a man ought to join himself with the congregation, and not pray alone, whenever he can pray with that: and let a man go always, morning and evening, to the synagogue; for there is no prayer heard at all times but in the synagogue; and whoever has a synagogue in his city, and does not pray in it with the congregation, is called an ill neighbour. — -A divinity school is greater than a synagogue; and the great wise men, though they had many synagogues in their cities, did not pray but where they studied in the law.”

And they say [f573], that

> “he that prays (in the synagogue) is as if he offered a pure offering. — -Says R. Abhu, in the name of R. Abhu, “seek the Lard where he may be found”; where is he to be found? in the synagogues, and in the schools.”

These two men had, doubtless, both of them a notion of the sanctity of the place, and acted according to the prevailing sense of the people. They went up hither, not by consultation, agreement, and appointment; for they were of a different cast from each other; but so it happened. Had they went by consent, there was a rule for them [f574]:

> “two men that go to a synagogue to pray, and one has finished his prayer before his neighbour, if he stays for him, his reward is double; and if he does not stay for him, his prayer is not heard.”

And they had rules also for the manner of their going to, and from the place of prayer: when they went thither, they were to go nimbly, in haste, and even run; but when they came back, they were to go very slowly and gently [f575].

> “The commandment (they say [f576]) is to run to a synagogue; for it is said, (Hosea 6:3) “we shall know, we shall follow on to know the Lord”: but when a man comes out of the synagogue, let him not take large steps; but let him walk, little by little, or take short steps.”

How far these rules were complied with by these men, is of no great moment to know; who they were follows:

the one a Pharisee; one of those that trusted in themselves, as righteous, and despised all others, especially publicans and sinners; of these (see Gill on "Matthew 3:7"). This was the strictest sect among the Jews; they were men that prayed, and fasted much, and were great sticklers for the ceremonies of the law, and the traditions of the elders, and did all they did to be seen of men:

and the other a publican; a gatherer of the Roman tax, though by nation a Jew; and therefore such were had in great contempt by the Jews in general; nor would they eat and drink and converse with them; (see Gill on "Matthew 9:10-11")

Ver. 11. *The Pharisee stood*, etc.] Standing was a praying posture; (see Gill on "Matthew 6:5") nor is this observed, as if it was something amiss: but the sense is, either that he stood in some place of eminence, that he might be seen of others; or he stood in a set, fixed posture, in a very grave and solemn manner, showing great devotion and seriousness; or he stood with great boldness and confidence:

and prayed thus with himself; the phrase, "with himself", may be read either with the word "stood", as it is in the Syriac version; and then the sense is that he stood alone, apart from the publican, at a distance from him, as despising him; and lest he should be polluted by him; (see Isaiah 65:4) or with the word "prayed", and does not design internal prayer, which was what the Pharisees did not use; for all they did was to be seen, and heard of men: but the meaning is, that he prayed only with respect to himself; he was wholly intent upon himself; his own self, and the commendation of himself, were the subject of his prayer: his whole dependence in it was on himself; and he was only seeking by it his own glory: he had no regard to the people of God, to aid the saints, nor did he put up one petition for them; nor had he any respect to Christ, the mediator, through whom access is had to God, and acceptance with him; nor to the Holy Spirit for his assistance; and though he addressed himself to God, yet in praise of himself, saying,

God I thank thee: there is no petition in this prayer of his for pardoning grace and mercy; nor larger measures of grace; nor for strength to perform duties, and to hold on to the end; nor for any favour whatever; nor is there any confession of sin in it. So that it scarce deserves the name of a prayer, for in it is only a thanksgiving: indeed, thanksgiving in prayer is right; and had he been a man that had received the grace of God, it would have been

right in him to have given thanks to God for it, by which he was made to differ from others: nor would he have been blameworthy, had he thanked God for the good things which he had received from him, or which by his assistance he had done; but nothing of this kind is said by him: he thanks God, in order to exalt himself, and places his righteousness in his own works, and treats all other men in a censorious and disdainful manner; thanking God, or rather blessing himself, saying,

that I am not as other men are; and yet he was as other men, and no better: he was a sinner in Adam, as other men; and a sinner by nature, as others are; and had the same iniquities and corruptions in his heart, as others; and had no more goodness in him than other men, and as far from true real righteousness. Perhaps he means the Gentiles, whom the Jews looked upon as sinners, and the worst of men; and yet they were in no wise better than the Gentiles, as to their state and condition by nature: it was usual to call the Gentiles µyrja, "other men"; which phrase is sometimes explained by "the nations of the world" [f577]; and sometimes by the "Cuthites", or "Samaritans" [f578]; (see Gill on "<4059>Luke 5:29"). — -He goes on,

extortioners, unjust, adulterers; and yet all these characters belonged to the men of sect: the Pharisees were oppressors of the poor, devoured widows' houses, and extorted money from them, under a pretence of long prayers: they are aptly represented by the unjust steward, in (<4601>Luke 16:1,8) and they were au unclean, unchaste, and an adulterous generation of men, (<4029>Matthew 12:39 <4808>John 8:8,9)

or even as this publican; pointing to him at some distance, with great scorn and disdain. This was his prayer, or thanksgiving. It may gratify the curiosity of some to have some other prayers of the Pharisees; and it may be worth while to compare them with this, between which there will appear a pretty deal of likeness.

> "R. Nechunia ben Hakkana used to pray, when he went into the school, and when he came out, a short prayer: they said unto him, what is the goodness (or the excellency) of this prayer? he replied to them, when I go in, I pray, that no offence might come by means of me; and when I go out, "I give thanks" for my portion: when I go in, this is what I say, let it be thy good pleasure before thee, O Lord, my God, the God of my fathers, that I may not be angry with my colleagues, nor my colleagues be angry with me; that I may not pronounce that which is pure defiled, and that which is defiled,

pure; that I may not forbid that which is lawful, nor pronounce lawful that which is forbidden; and that I may not be found ashamed in this world, and in the world to come: and when I come out, this is what I say; I confess before thee, (or I thank thee) O Lord God, and the God of my fathers, that thou hast given me my portion among those that sit in the schools, and synagogues, and hast not given me my portion in the theatres and shows: for I labour, and they labour; I watch, and they watch; I labour to inherit paradise, and they labour for the pit of corruption [f579].”

And these two prayers the Jews were obliged to recite at their going in, and coming out of the synagogue.

“It is a tradition of R. Juda, saying, three things a man ought to say every day; blessed be thou, ywg ynç[alç, “that thou hast not made me a Gentile”; blessed art thou, that thou hast not made me an unlearned man (or one that is vain and foolish, uncivil and uncultivated); blessed art thou, that hast not made me a woman [f580].”

In their prayer books [f581], these thanksgivings stand thus:

“blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, that thou hast made me an Israelite; (in some books it is, as before, that thou hast not made me a Gentile;) blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, that thou hast not made me a servant; blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, that thou hast not made me a woman:”

when the women, instead of this last, say:

“blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who has made me as he pleases.”

And very agreeable to one of these benedictions does the Ethiopic version render the prayer of the Pharisee here; “I thank thee, O Lord that thou hast not made me as other men”.

Ver. 12. *I fast twice in the week*, etc.] Not “on the sabbath”, as the words may be literally rendered, and as they are in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; for the sabbath was not a fasting, but a feasting day with the Jews; for they were obliged to eat three meals, or feasts, on a sabbath day,

one in the morning, another at evening, and another at the time of the meat offering: even the poorest man in Israel, who was maintained by alms, was obliged to keep these three feasts [f582]. It was forbidden a man to fast, until the sixth hour, on a sabbath day; that is, till noon [f583]: wherefore, it is a great mistake in Justin [f584] and Suetonius [f585], that the sabbath was kept by the Jews as a fast. But the word is rightly rendered, "in the week"; the whole seven days, or week, were by the Jews commonly called the sabbath; hence, tbçb dja, "the first of the sabbath", and the second of the sabbath, and the third of the sabbath [f586]; that is, the first, second, and third days of the week. Now the two days in the week on which they fasted were Monday and Thursday, the second and fifth days; on which days the law of Moses, and the book of Esther were read, by the order of Ezra [f587]; and fasts for the congregation were appointed on those days [f588]; and so a private person, or a single man, as in this instance, took upon him, or chose to fast on the same [f589]: the reason of this is, by some, said to be, because Moses went up to Mount Sinai on a Thursday, and came down on a Monday [f590]. But though these men fasted so often, they took care not to hurt themselves; for they allowed themselves to eat in the night till break of day. It is asked [f591],

> "how long may a man eat and drink, i.e. on a fast day? until the pillar of the morning ascends (day breaks); these are the words of Rabbi (Judah): R. Eliezer ben Simeon says, until cock crowing."

So that they had not so much reason to boast of these performances: he adds,

I give tithes of all that I possess; not only of what was tithable by the law of Moses, as the produce of his ground; and by the traditions of the elders, as the herbs in his garden, (Luke 11:42Matthew 23:23) but of every thing he had, which was not required by either of them; upon which he thought himself a very righteous person, and more than a common man: it is asked [f592],

> "who is a plebeian? (one of the people of the earth, or the common people) whoever does not eat his common food with purity with hands washed; these are the words of R. Meir; but the wise men say, whoever does not tithe his fruit."

This man would not be thought to be such an one.

Ver. 13. *And the publican standing afar off*, etc.] Not at the outermost porch, or at the door: for

> "a man might not fix his place at the door of the synagogue, but, qyjry, "he must go afar off", the space of two doors, and then pray [f593];"

it may be in the court of the Gentiles, when the Pharisee was in the court of the Israelites; at least he was afar off from him: and indeed, those who came to humble themselves before the Lord, and confess their sins, were obliged to stand at the distance of four cubits one from another, that one might not hear the prayers and confessions of the other [f594]: and it might be, that this poor man might stand at a greater distance than was required, that he might not displease the Pharisee, who, he knew, would resent it, should he stand near him; or rather this was done, to testify the sense he had of his state and condition, and of his unworthiness; as that he was afar off from God, and unworthy to draw nigh unto him, and deserved to be kept at a distance from him for ever. So it is said [f595] of the Israelites, that they trembled at Mount Sinai, and "stood afar off", µtwntwn[twrwhl, "to show their humility": and under a work of the law, and under such a like dispensation was this publican; and therefore

would not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven: and which, as it was an humble posture he stood in, agrees with the rules the Jews give [f596];

> "the order (or posture) of the body, how is it? when a man stands in prayer he ought to set his feet one by the side of the other, and fix his eyes, hjml, "below", as if he looked to the earth; and his heart must be open above, as if he stood in the heavens; and lay his hands upon his heart, putting the right hand over the left; and must stand as a servant before his master, with trembling, and fear, and dread, and may not put his hands upon his loins."

And agreeably to this, it is elsewhere [f597] said,

> "he that prays, ought to fix his eyes below, and his heart above."

And the Jews used to look downward, or shut their eyes, for the sake of attention in prayer; and it was even forbidden them to open their eyes to look upon the wall [f598]. This showed in the publican, that the guilt of his sins lay heavy on him; that he could not look up; that shame filled him with

blushing; that sorrow caused his countenance to fall; and that fear of divine wrath, and displeasure, possessed him; and that he looked upon himself as unworthy of the smiles of heaven,

but smote upon his breast: pointing at the fountain of his sin; expressing by this action, his sorrow, and repentance for it; and an aversion and abhorrence of himself on account of it, joined with indignation and revenge; and he did this to arouse and stir up all the powers and faculties of his soul, to call upon God. The Persic version renders it, “he fell on his knees, and beat the earth with his head”; taking a sort of revenge on himself for sin:

saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. This is his prayer; a short, but a very full one, and greatly different from that of the Pharisee: in which is a confession that he was a sinner; a sinner in Adam, who had derived a sinful nature from him, being conceived and born in sin; and a sinner by practice, having committed many actual transgressions, attended with aggravating circumstances; a guilty and filthy sinner, a notorious one, deserving of the wrath of God, and the lowest hell: he speaks of himself, as if he was the only sinner in the world; at least, as if there was none like him: and there is in this prayer also a petition; and the object it is put up to, is “God”, against whom he had sinned; with whom there is mercy and forgiveness; and who only can forgive sin; and who has promised that he will: and has proclaimed his name, a God, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin; and has given instances of his forgiving grace and mercy; and therefore the publican was right in addressing him by confession: the petition he makes to him is, to be “merciful”, or “propitious” to him; that is, to show mercy to him, through the propitiary sacrifice of the Messiah, which was typified by the sacrifices under the law: the first thing a sensible sinner wants, is an application of pardoning grace and mercy; and forgiveness springs from mercy; and because the mercy of God is free and abundant, therefore pardon is so: but this is not to be expected from an absolute God, or God out of Christ. God is only propitious in Christ: hence it may be observed, that God pardons none but those to whom he is propitious in his Son; and that he forgives sin upon the foot of a reconciliation, and satisfaction made to his law, and justice, and so pardon is an act of justice, as well as of mercy; and that there is no pardoning mercy but through Christ. The Arabic version renders it, “spare me, because I am a sinner”; (see Psalm 25:11).

Ver. 14. *I tell you that this man*, etc.] The publican that so freely owned himself to be a sinner, and by his carriage acknowledged he was unworthy of any favour; and who was treated with so much contempt by the Pharisee:

went down to his house; from the temple which was built on a mountain,

justified, [rather] than the other: accounted as a righteous person in the sight of God; justified from all his sins, and accepted by him, when the other was abhorred and neglected. The Syriac and Persic versions, and so Beza's most ancient copy, read, "than the Pharisee", who had such an high opinion of himself, and despised others: not that the Pharisee was justified at all, when the publican really was; but the sense is, that if judgment had been to have been made, and sentence passed according to the then conduct and behaviour of both parties, the publican had greatly the advantage, in the sight of God; an humble demeanour being well pleasing and acceptable to him, when pride, and arrogance, boasting of, and trusting in a man's own righteousness, are abhorred by him;

for every one that exalteth himself, shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted. This was a proverbial expression, often mentioned by Christ on different occasions, and frequently used by the Jews; (see Gill on "(40 23 12)Matthew 23:12") to which may be added the following passages;

> "whoever is of a haughty spirit, at last shall be made low[f599]."

And again,

> "whosoever humbleth himself, the holy blessed God will lift him up[f600]."

Ver. 15. *And they brought unto him also infants*, etc.] As well as grown persons, that were sick, to be healed by him:

that he would touch them; in order, as some learned men think, to cure them of diseases that attended them; for one of the ways by which Christ healed persons, was by touching them; nor do we read of his touching in common for any other purpose, or of persons desiring him to touch them, or theirs, but for this end; in (40 19 13Matthew 19:13) it is read, "that he should put his hands on them"; and so the Arabic and Persic versions here read, in order to pray over them, and bless them: but neither in one place, nor the

other, is any mention of their baptism, or of their being brought for such a purpose; nor can it be concluded from hence;

but when [his] disciples saw [it], they rebuked them; the persons that brought the infants; (see Gill on "Matthew 19:13").

Ver. 16. *But Jesus called them unto him*, etc.] Not the disciples, as the Ethiopic version reads, nor the persons that brought the children, but the children themselves; for the antecedent to the relative αυτα, "them", can be no other; which shows, that these infants were not new born babes, or children at the breast, but such as were more grown up, since they were capable of being called to, and of coming to Christ:

and said; that is, to the disciples; so the Persic version expresses it:

suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; (see Gill on "Matthew 19:14")

for of such is the kingdom of God; or "of heaven", as the Syriac version reads, and as in (Matthew 19:14) that is, the kingdom of God belongs to such, "who are as these"; or, "like to these": as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render the words; ((see Gill on "Matthew 19:14").)

Ver. 17. *Verily I say unto you*, etc.], Christ takes an occasion from hence to teach his disciples humility, and guard them against pride and vanity:

whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God; the King Messiah, the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, even the whole Gospel dispensation;

as a little child; without prejudice, pride, ambition, and vanity, with meekness, and humility:

shall in no wise enter therein; a very unfit and improper person to be a professor of the Gospel; or to be admitted to Gospel ordinances: or be a member of a Gospel church; or be reckoned a subject of the Messiah's kingdom, which is of a spiritual nature; and as he has not a meetness for, and a right unto the kingdom of glory, he shall never see it, and enjoy it.

Ver. 18. *And a certain ruler asked him*, etc.] A young man, (Matthew 19:20) a ruler among the Jews, a civil magistrate, and a very rich man; he ran after Jesus, and overtook him in the way, as he was going towards Jericho, (Mark 10:17)

saying, good master; “Rabbi”; or doctor,

what shall I do to inherit eternal life? (see Gill on “[40]16Matthew 19:16”).

Ver. 19. *And Jesus said unto him*, etc.] In answer to his question, beginning with the character he gave him:

why callest thou me good? it being unusual to address men, even their Rabbins, under such a title:

none is good, save one, [that is], God: or “but God alone”; as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it; or, “but the one God”, as read the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; (see Gill on “[40]17Matthew 19:17”).

Ver. 20. *Thou knowest the commandments*, etc.] The ten commandments given to Moses, and delivered to people; and which they were careful to teach their children; though five are only here mentioned, and not in the order in which they stand: suggesting hereby that these must be kept, or the law must he fulfilled, and satisfaction made for the violation of it, or there can be no inheriting eternal life. The five commandments mentioned are, the seventh, sixth, eighth, ninth, and fifth:

do not commit adultery; do not kill; do not steal; do not bear false witness; honour father and thy mother; (see Gill on “[40]17Matthew 19:17”) and (see Gill on “[41]19Mark 10:19”).

Ver. 21. *And he said*, etc.] That is, the ruler said to him, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions add; “to Jesus”, as the Persic version expresses it;

all these have I kept from my youth up; (see Gill on “[40]20Matthew 19:20”) where it is added, what lack I yet?

Ver. 22. *Now when Jesus heard these things*, etc.] That he had kept all these commandments, and that ever since he was a child, and to that very time:

he said unto him, yet lackest thou one thing; not but that he lacked many other things, and even every thing: for he had performed no one thing as it should be: but Christ said, partly in answer to his pert question, “what lack I yet?” and partly by an ironical concession, granting he had kept them all, as he had said, yet one thing was wanting; and chiefly with a view to mortify his pride and vanity:

sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me; (see Gill on "<40>1921>Matthew 19:21").

Ver. 23. *And when he heard this*, etc.] That one thing was wanting, and what that was, which was to part with all his worldly substance, and follow Christ;

he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich; (see Gill on "<40>1922>Matthew 19:22").

Ver. 24. *And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful*, etc.] As he might, by his looks and gestures; and perceived that he was determined not to part with his possessions, and follow him:

he said to his disciples, how hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! embrace the Gospel, and submit to the ordinances of it; deny themselves, part with their worldly substance for the cause of Christ, and interest of religion. Riches, which should be a reason for, are often a bar unto a profession of Christ, and his Gospel. This is delivered as an affirmation, or by way of assertion, (see Gill on "<40>1923>Matthew 19:23").

Ver. 25. *For it is easier for a camel*, etc.] These words were spoken to the disciples again, and were a second address to them, after they had shown astonishment at the former; (see Gill on "<40>1924>Matthew 19:24") and (see Gill on "<41>1024>Mark 10:24").

Ver. 26. *And they that heard it, said, who then can be saved*?] These were the disciples of Christ, who so said; (see <40>1925>Matthew 19:25).

Ver. 27. *And he said*, etc.] That is, Jesus, as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions express it:

the things which are impossible with men, are possible with God; (see Gill on "<40>1926>Matthew 19:26").

Ver. 28. *Then Peter said*, etc.] "To him", as the Syriac and Arabic versions add; that is, to the Lord Jesus, as the Ethiopic version expresses it; who was always the most forward to speak on any occasion: he observing what was required of the young man, and how unwilling he was to comply with it, and the difficulty in every rich man's way of entrance into the kingdom of God, spoke as follows;

lo, we have left all: the Arabic version reads, “all ours”; all we had, our friends, trades, and worldly substance;

and followed thee: in (Matthew 19:27) it is added, “what shall we have therefore”; referring to the promise of Christ, to the young man, that should he sell all he had, and give it to the poor, he should have treasure in heaven; (see Gill on “Matthew 19:27”).

Ver. 29. *And he said unto them*, etc.] To his disciples, as the Ethiopic version reads; though the Syriac and Persic versions read, “and Jesus said to him”; that is, to Peter; he particularly replied to him:

verily I say unto you, there is no man: not only you shall have peculiar honour done you, as to sit on thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel; but there is not a single person of a more private character,

that hath left house, or “houses”, as read the Syriac and Persic versions;

or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake: that is, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of his Gospel, as the other evangelists have it; and which teaches us how to understand the kingdom of God here, and elsewhere.

Ver. 30. *Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time*, etc.] Not more houses, parents, brethren, etc. but that which is abundantly preferable to them; such comfort, peace, satisfaction, and pleasure, as are not to be found in such enjoyments:

and in the world to come life everlasting; which was what the young man was desirous of inheriting, (Luke 18:18 (see Gill on “Matthew 19:29”)).

Ver. 31. *Then he took unto him the twelve*, etc.] His twelve disciples, as the Ethiopic version expresses it; he took them aside from the rest of the company, as they were travelling on the road, and privately delivered to them, what follows; (see Matthew 20:17)

and said unto them, behold, we go up to Jerusalem; to the feast of the passover, which was drawing near, and the last Christ was to eat with his disciples, the time of his sufferings, and death, being now at hand; and of which he thought fit to give his disciples notice: and therefore he called them aside, and in a private manner, told them,

that all things that are written by the prophets, concerning the son of man, shall be accomplished; particularly, (Psalm 2:1,2) (Psalm 22:6-8 Isaiah 1:6 Micah 5:1 Isaiah 53:5,6,12 Psalm 22:15 26:10 Hosea 6:2) for to these the following things have respect.

Ver. 32. *For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles*, etc.] As he was by the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, to Pilate, the Roman governor, and by him to the soldiers:

and shall be mocked; as he was by the latter, when they crowned him with thorns, arrayed him in a purple robe, and put a reed into his hand, and bowed the knee to him, saying, hail king of the Jews; and likewise by the Jews when he hung upon the cross:

and spitefully entreated. The Syriac and Persic versions leave out this clause here, and read it the next verse. It may regard the injuries done him, the abuses and affronts he received, both by words and blows:

and spitted on; as he was both by officers in the high priest's palace, and by the Roman soldiers in Pilate's hall; (see Isaiah 50:6).

Ver. 33. *And they shall scourge him*, etc.] As he was by Pilate's order, before he was crucified:

and put him to death; a shameful, and a painful one, the death of the cross:

and the third day he shall rise again; as he accordingly did.

Ver. 34. *And they understood none of these things*, etc.] "Not one of them", as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; every article of his sufferings and death were unintelligible by them; they knew not how to understand him in any one point: or how to reconcile these things to the notions they had entertained of the temporal grandeur, and glory, of the Messiah, and his kingdom; and which shows their great ignorance of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning these things.

And this saying, or "thing"; for it answers to the Hebrew word rbd, which signifies any affair, or matter, as well as a word, or saying: and so here, the whole of this affair

was hid from them; unless it should have a peculiar regard to that part of it, which expresses his resurrection from the dead; (see Mark 9:10) or the delivery of him to the Gentiles, (Luke 9:44,45)

neither knew they the things which were spoken; the meaning of them. The Ethiopic version leaves out this, and puts the former clause, by way of question, “and he said unto them, and is this saying hid from you?”

Ver. 35. *And it came to pass that as he was come nigh unto Jericho*, etc.] Which lay in his way to Jerusalem;

a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: this was not blind Bartimaeus, nor his companion, for they were cured by Christ as he went out of Jericho; but this man before he came to it; for we afterwards read of his entrance into, and passing through Jericho, (^{Luke 19:1}) though much the same things are related in this account, as in that of the other two blind men; (see Gill on “^{Matthew 20:30}”).

Ver. 36. *And hearing the multitude pass by*, etc.] Their “voice”, as the Syriac version expresses it; the noise of their feet, and especially of their tongues;

he asked what it meant? what was the meaning of this concourse of people, and of this clamorous noise; or, as the Syriac version reads, “who it should be?” what person of note was passing by, that there was such a multitude after him? to which the answer best agrees.

Ver. 37. *And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by*.] Some of the company answered him, that Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, so much talked of, and said to be the Messiah, who was become so famous for his doctrines and miracles, for healing diseases, and dispossessing devils, was just “then” passing by; and this occasioned the noise and clamour.

Ver. 38. *And he cried, saying, Jesus thou son of David*, etc.] Believing him, at once, to be the Messiah; whence he calls him the son of David, which was a character and title of the Messiah, well known to the Jews; (see Gill on “^{Matthew 1:1}”) and therefore immediately called out unto him, being willing to take that opportunity as he passed, and whilst he was within hearing, to make his suit to him for his sight:

saying, have mercy on me: a poor, blind, and miserable creature, and restore me to my sight, which will be an act of singular mercy, and goodness, and will always be gratefully owned as such.

Ver. 39. *And they that went before*, etc.] In the company that preceded Christ; for he, as yet, was not come right over against the blind man:

rebuked him that he should hold his peace; being not well pleased that he should call him the son of David, which was acknowledging him to be the Messiah; or that he might not be troublesome to Christ, and retard his journey:

but he cried so much the more, thou son of David, have mercy on me; he neither dropped the character of Christ, nor his request to him; but called out more loudly, and with greater vehemence, earnestness, and importunity: so persons sensible of their need of Christ, and of his worth, excellency, and ability, are not to be discouraged from an application to him, by whatsoever they meet with from men, or devils.

Ver. 40. *And Jesus stood*, etc.] He stood still; he made a full stop, and went no further, when, it is very likely, he was just over against him:

and commanded him to be brought unto him; either by the disciples, or by some of the multitude:

and when he was come near he asked him; the following question.

Ver. 41. *Saying, what wilt thou that I shall do unto thee*? etc.] Is it alms thou askest? or is it thy sight thou wouldst have restored?

and he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight; this he chose, this was his request, and what he cried so vehemently for; and which he believed Christ, the son of David, was able to do for him.

Ver. 42. *And Jesus said unto him, receive thy sight*, etc.] Be it to thee as thou desirest, look up and see: thus by a word speaking, and power going along with it, without making use of any means, he fulfilled his desire.

Thy faith hath saved thee; or has obtained salvation for thee, a temporal salvation; and it may be also a spiritual and an eternal one: for that is the concern faith has in salvation; it is the means of obtaining and enjoying it: Christ, the object of faith, is the author of it.

Ver. 43. *And immediately he received his sight*, etc.] As soon as ever the word was gone out of Christ's mouth, virtue went forth from him, and cured the man of his blindness; his eyes were at once opened, and he saw as other men;

and followed him; his kind benefactor, with a grateful sense of his goodness, with strong affection for him, and faith in him;

glorifying God, who had sent such a Saviour to him; who had wrought such a wonderful miracle for him: for he was sensible that none but God could do this.

And all the people, when they saw [it]; what was done, how that the man they just before saw was blind, and begging by the way side, now had his sight restored to him, in an instant, and was following Jesus, in the crowd, along with them:

gave praise unto God; or, as Beza's most ancient copy reads, “glory”; they ascribed the glory to God, and praised his name, that he had raised up the Messiah among them; of which this was a clear proof, inasmuch as the eyes of the blind were opened, according to (Isa 35:5Isaiah 35:5).

CHAPTER 19

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 19

Ver. 1. *And [Jesus] entered, and passed through Jericho*.] Though the word “Jesus” is not in the original text it is rightly supplied in our version; as it is also in the Syriac, Persic, Ethiopic versions; for of him the words are manifestly spoken: after he had healed the blind man he met with near to Jericho, he entered into it, but made no stay in it, passed through it at once without stopping, though a very populous city; but here he had no work, either to perform miracles, or to convert sinners; though both, before he entered, and after he passed through it.

Ver. 2. *And behold [there was] a man named Zacchaeus*, etc.] Or `yakz`, “Zaccai”, a name in use among the Jews; (see <1509>Ezra 2:9). We often read of `yakz ybr`, “Rabbi Zaccai”, or “Zacchaeus” [f601], and very frequently of R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, a famous doctor that lived in the times of Christ, and even till after the destruction of Jerusalem. The Jews also make mention of one R. Zaccai, a prince of the seed of David the king, in later times [f602]. So that this man, as appears by his name, was a Jew, though some have thought him to have been a Gentile [f603], perhaps because of his employment: but it does not follow from thence; for there were Jews that were publicans, as Levi, or Matthew, afterwards one of Christ's disciples; and also in Jewish writings, mention is made, as of `yrkn skwm`, “a stranger”, or “a Gentile publican” [f604], so likewise of `larçy skwm`, “an Israelite publican” [f605]; and such an one was Zacchaeus, as follows:

which was chief among the publicans; the head of them in that place, to whom the rest brought the tax, tribute, or toll; he was the receiver general of the tax: at the toll booths, at bridges, for people's going over the water, there was `lwdg skwm`, “the greater publican”, and `ˆwjq skwm`, “the lesser publican” [f606], who was deputy to the other. What sort of tax Zacchaeus was concerned in collecting, is not certain; however, he was a principal man in this employ, and had got great riches by it.

And he was rich; was a person of figure among the publicans, and of substance, which he had gained in his post. And though the instances of rich men being called by grace are few, yet there have been some; and the rather this circumstance is mentioned, because it had been observed in the preceding chapter, how difficult, but not impossible, as this instance proves, it was for rich men to enter into the kingdom of God.

Ver. 3. *And he sought to see Jesus who he was*, etc.] What sort of a person he was for complexion, stature, and age: having heard much of him, he was very desirous of indulging his curiosity with a sight of him; having, as yet, nothing else that induced him to desire to see him: his desire to see Jesus was not of the same kind with the kings and prophets, (<40 13 16>Matthew 13:16) but rather like that of Herod, (<42 23 8>Luke 23:8)

and could not for the press; the multitude of people that were flocking to meet Jesus, or who came before him, or were about him; for one part of the multitude went before him, and the other followed after him; so that he was in the crowd, and therefore could not easily be seen;

because he was little of stature. The Syriac and Persic versions read, "because Zacchaeus was little of stature", lest it should be thought that this is said of Jesus; for the reason why Zacchaeus could not see him for the crowd, was not because Christ was little of stature, and was hid among them, but because Zacchaeus was little of stature, and could not see over their heads.

Ver. 4. *And he ran before*, etc.] Jesus, and the company that was with him; so very desirous was he of seeing him:

and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: which sort of trees were very common about Jericho: hence we read of, hmqç lç twrwq, "beams of sycamore" in Jericho, which those that were strong took up in their arms, and the owners stood and devoted them to God [f607]; and among the things which the men of Jericho did, this was one, that they permitted the branches of trees devoted to sacred uses, and of the "charub" tree, and of the "sycamore", to be cut down and used [f608]. This sort of trees used to grow in plains and valleys, as appears from some passages of Scripture, (<11 10 27>1 Kings 10:27 <14 09 27>2 Chronicles 9:27) and from Jewish writings [f609]; and certain it is, that Jericho was in such a situation. Josephus [f610] says, it was seated in a plain; and Strabo says [f611], that Jericho is a plain surrounded with mountains; to which agrees the account that [f612] Justin gives of it.

There is a valley, which is enclosed by mountains on all sides, as with a wall, like a castle; the space of the place is two hundred acres, and it is called Jericho. Hence we read of the plains and valley of Jericho in Scripture, (<05340>Deuteronomy 34:3 <12505>2 Kings 25:5) so that it is very probable sycamore trees grew there in great plenty; though the place was more famous for palm trees: hence it is called the city of the palm trees, (<05402>Deuteronomy 24:3 <07083>Judges 3:13) which the Targumist, in both places, interprets, the city of Jericho: to which agree the accounts given of it by Pliny [f613], Strabo [f614], and Justin [f615], who all affirm, that it abounded with palm trees; and the latter says also with balsam trees, from the sweet smell of which it might have its name: so the Jews say [f616], the ointment of balsam is called the ointment of our land, because it grows in Jericho, and because of the smell of it, it is called Jericho; though some think it has its name from the plain, being in the form of a half moon; the moon, in the Hebrew language, being called jry [f617]. This tree seems to have been without the city: and indeed, according to the Jewish canon, it ought to be, which runs thus [f618];

> "they set a tree at a distance from a city, twenty and five cubits, but a "charub tree", and "sycamore", fifty cubits."

The reason of the greater distance of the latter is, as one of their commentators says [f619], because their branches were large; and this is the reason why Zacchaeus went up into one of these trees, because it was large and able to bear him, and tall, from whence he could have a full view of Christ:

for he was to pass that [way]; or rather, "pass by that"; for the word "way" is not in the text; and the sense is, he was to pass by that tree; or "under" it, as the Arabic version renders it. The tree stood by the road side, in which Jesus came, for which reason Zacchaeus made choice of it, as fit for his purpose.

Ver. 5. *And when Jesus came to the place*, etc.] Where the tree stood, in which Zacchaeus was. Christ knows where his people are, and where to find them, where they commonly dwell, or where at any time they are, he being God omniscient: besides, the bounds of their habitations are fixed by the determination and appointment of God, and were foreknown by Christ, who, before the world began, was "rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth", where he knew his saints would dwell, who are "the sons of men",

with whom his delights were; and he knows where they are, when the time is come to call them: he knew Zacchaeus was in the sycamore tree, as he saw Nathanael under the fig tree, before Philip called him, (<4001:48>John 1:48) and Christ comes to the very place where his people are, either in person, as here; and so he came to Galilee, and to the sea there, and walked by it, and on the very spot, where he knew he should meet with Peter, and Andrew, and James, and John, whom he called to follow him, (<4001:13>Matthew 4:13,18,21). He came to his own city Capernaum, and to the place of receipt of custom near unto it, where Matthew was, and called him, (<4001:1>Matthew 9:1,9) and he came to Samaria, and to Jacob's well, where he knew the woman of Samaria would be at such a time, in order to call her: or, though he comes not in person to others, where they are, yet by his word, and by his Spirit; and he comes to them before they come to him; and is found of them, and finds them, who sought him not; and is made manifest to them, who asked not for him; and in this he acts the part of the good shepherd, that leaves the ninety nine in the wilderness, and goes after that which is lost till he finds it; and agreeably to his character as a Saviour, and to the end of his coming into the world, which was to call sinners to repentance, and to seek, and save that which is lost, (<4219:10>Luke 19:10).

He looked up and saw him; he knew him, he being one of those the Father had given to him, and he had loved and undertook for, and was come into the world to seek, and to save, and now, at this time, was come hither to call by his grace. He had seen him before in the glass of his Father's purposes and decrees, he being chosen in him to grace and glory, and being a vessel of mercy, afore prepared for glory: he had seen him when he was brought into the bond of the covenant; and passed under the rod of him, that telleth all the covenant ones, as they were put into it, and given to him the Mediator of it: he had seen him among them that were lost in Adam, whom he came to recover out of the ruins of their fall in him; and now he saw him in his state of nature and unregeneracy; he saw him in his blood, and said unto him, live: this look was a look of love, grace, and mercy; he looked upon him, and loved him, and was gracious to him, and had compassion on him; and it was a distinguishing look, he looked on him, and not on others. There was a great crowd both before and behind him, and all about him; but he looked not on these, but he looked up to Zacchaeus.

And he said unto him, Zacchaeus; he knew him, and could call him by his name, as he did Saul, when he called him, and revealed himself to him. His

name was written in the Lamb's book of life, and so must be known to Christ, who was present at the making of that book, and was concerned in setting down the names in it, and has it in his keeping: he was one of the sheep the Father had given him, he came to lay down his life for, and of whom he had such perfect knowledge, as to call them by name, as he does all the chosen and redeemed ones; (see <2340>Isaiah 43:1 <4310>John 10:3). It must be very surprising to Zacchaeus to hear Christ call him by his name, who was an utter stranger to him, and whom he had never seen before; and it is a very considerable instance of the omniscience of Christ, as well as of the great condescension and affectionate regard he has to his own, and the familiar way in which he uses them.

Make haste, and come down; from the tree. The dangerous estate and condition of a sinner requires haste; it is like that of Lot in Sodom, when it was just going to be destroyed; and like that of the manslayer, when pursued by the avenger of blood; both whom it became to escape for their lives, and flee for refuge as fast as they could: and so it became Zacchaeus to come down with all speed to Christ, who was come hither to call and save him; and the enjoyment of Christ, and his grace, calls for haste; (see <4112>John 11:28,29). Such who come to Christ must quit all their exalted thoughts of themselves, of their riches, fulness, and self-sufficiency, and come to him as poor and needy, for such only he fills with his good things; and of their health and soundness, and come to him the great physician, as sick and diseased; and of their purity and goodness, holiness and righteousness, and come to him as sinners: but it must be mighty grace to cast down imaginations, and high things, that exalt themselves against Christ, and the knowledge of him, and to humble a proud sinner, and bring him to the feet of Jesus.

For this day I must abide at thy house; for a little while; not so much for the sake of refreshment for himself, and his disciples, as for the good of Zacchaeus; to make known the great salvation to him, and to bestow his grace upon him, and converse with him in a spiritual way.

Ver. 6. *And he made haste*, etc.] Such power went along with the words of Christ, that they immediately reached his heart, awakened his conscience, affected his mind, and drew his soul to Christ, and knit him to him, that be made all imaginable haste to be with him. So souls sensible of their dangerous state and condition by nature, and apprehensive of impending ruin and destruction, and having some intimation of safety and

happiness in Christ, and being filled with love to him, and a liking of him flee with all haste to him for refuge, for righteousness, peace, pardon, life, and salvation:

and came down; from the tree he had climbed, merely to indulge his curiosity, little thinking that he should be called by name by him; that he should have him a guest at his house, and have such a knowledge of him, and familiar acquaintance with him: so souls, when called by Christ, and made sensible of their need of him, and the worth there is in him, quit their former post and place, part with their carnal lusts and sinful companions, and renounce their own righteousness and works, and come as sinners, humble and lowly, and venture upon Christ:

and received him joyfully; not only into his house, but into his arms and heart: Christ was a welcome guest to him, as he is to every sensible sinner, who by faith receives him, as the Father's free gift; as the alone Saviour and Redeemer; as the great Mediator, in all his offices, of prophet, priest, and king; and in every relation and character he bears; and embraces his doctrines, and submits to his ordinances, and that with, the greatest joy; as there is reason for it, since with him, he receives the free and full forgiveness of his sins, a justifying righteousness, an abundance of grace, and a right unto, and meetness for heaven.

Ver. 7. *And when they saw it*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, “when they all saw this”; that is, as the Persic version, rather paraphrasing than translating, says, “the men and the multitude that were with him”; the “pharisaical” sort, the priests and Levites, of which there were great numbers in Jericho; (see Gill on “<42>10<31>Luke 10:31”).

They all murmured; as the Scribes and Pharisees did, at his eating with publicans and sinners, (<42>15<2>Luke 15:2).

Saying, that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner; a notorious one, an abandoned profligate creature; one of the worst of sinners, as being a publican, and the chief of them; who had amassed vast riches to himself, by extortion and oppression; and they thought it was not agreeable to the character of an holy man, and a venerable prophet, which Christ bore, to go into such a man's house, eat at his table; and have familiar conversation with him; (see <40>9<10>Matthew 9:10).

Ver. 8. *And Zacchaeus stood*, etc.] Before Christ, in respect to him, and reverence of him; and in the presence of others, to make a public

confession before them, and that they might all hear it, when come to his own house:

and said unto the Lord; that is, to "Jesus", as the Syriac and Persic versions, and some copies read; he addressed himself to Christ, and made his confession to him, as the Israelite, when he brought the basket of the firstfruits to the priest, confessed before the Lord his God, (<5304>Deuteronomy 26:4,5). And the rather Zacchaeus directed his speech to Christ, being, as he was now convinced, the discerner of the thoughts, and intents of the heart; who knew the genuineness of his repentance, that it was hearty and real; and the sincerity of his expressions and resolutions, and upon what principles he acted, and proposed to do as follows:

behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give unto the poor; not to make satisfaction for the sins he had committed, but to testify his sense of them, and his repentance for them, and as willing to do good with what he had gotten; which shows, that the disposition of his mind was altered, and of a covetous oppressor, he was become tender, kind, and liberal. According to an order made by the Jews in Usha, a man might not give away more than a fifth part of his estate, unless in some extraordinary cases [f620]; and we read of one, that gave a "third" part of his goods to the poor [f621]; and of another, that gave, as here, half of his mammon, or wealth [f622]; and another, half of his food to the poor [f623]; and of another, that gave away all his goods to them [f624]; (see <4603>1 Corinthians 13:3); to give a tenth part, was reckoned a medium [f625]:

and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation; or by extorting any thing from him on any pretence, by making an unjust demand upon him; or in any oppressive way, by defrauding and tricking, and by doing him any injury, in any form or manner:

I restore him fourfold: the same that was done in case of sheep stealing, (<2201>Exodus 22:1) but in such a case as this, the law only required the principal, with the fifth part added to it; (see <3605>Leviticus 6:5 <0507>Numbers 5:7) but Zacchaeus proposes as much as in the case of theft, and which was rarely used. The Jews [f626] say,

> "that the manner of paying double, was more used than the manner of paying fourfold, or fivefold; for the manner of paying double was used, both in things animate and inanimate; but the manner of

> paying fourfold and fivefold, was used but with respect to an ox, and a sheep only."

This was done by Zacchaeus, to show the truth and reality of his repentance; for with that nation,

> "the repentance of shepherds, and of collectors, and of "publicans", is said [f627] to be very difficult:"

the reason given by the gloss is, because they rob many, and do not know who to return to.

Ver. 9. *And Jesus said unto him*, etc.] The Persic version reads, "Jesus said to the multitude, and to his disciples"; to which well enough agree the following words:

this day is salvation come to this house: to the master of it, and it may be to others in it; the Arabic version reads, "to the inhabitants of this house". The Persic version reads, "great salvation"; by which may be meant, the Gospel, as in (Hebrews 2:3) so called, because it brings the account of salvation by Christ, which is not discoverable by the light of nature, nor made known by the law of Moses; but the Gospel publishes and proclaims it; the ministers of it show unto men the way of salvation, and direct them, and encourage to go to Christ for it; likewise the Gospel is the means of bringing near this salvation, and of applying it to them; and when it comes with the demonstration of the Spirit, it is the power of God unto salvation: and this might be truly said to come to Zacchaeus's house; inasmuch as Christ the great preacher of it, and by whom it first began to be spoken, and was spoken by him, as it never was by any one besides, was now in his house, preaching it; the sum and substance of which lie in the words delivered by him in the following verse; and the Gospel came to him to purpose, and was effectual: sometimes it comes to a people, city, town, or family, and it is rejected, and becomes of no effect; but here it came to Zacchaeus, and into him; and wrought effectually in him, as his words in the preceding verse declare: moreover, the blessing of salvation itself, which is wrought out by Christ, and published in the Gospel, was brought home to him; he was not only made sensible that he stood in need of salvation, but this was brought near unto him, and set before him, and applied to him; he had not only hopes of it, but faith of interest in it; it was made known unto him, that Christ was his salvation; and it was revealed and applied to the rest of the family, as well as to him: sometimes the Lord

takes one of a city, and two of a family; and sometimes whole families, as Lydia's and the jailor's, and here Zacchaeus's, as seems probable; for by his house may be meant, his family: though this may be understood of Christ, the author of salvation; who came into his house in a literal sense, as well as in a spiritual sense; and was made known to Zacchaeus, as his Saviour and Redeemer. The Alexandrian copy reads, “in this house”: it follows,

forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham. These words are to be considered, either as a reason, or evidence, of salvation being come to his house; and therefore cannot be understood of him as a son of Abraham, by natural descent: he was indeed a Jew, as appears by his name, and by his knowledge of the Jewish law, concerning restoration; and which may be confirmed by the silence of the Pharisees, who murmured at Christ's going along with him; who, had he been a Gentile, would not have failed to have mentioned it; but then, though this might be a reason justifying Christ in going to his house, who did not exceed the bounds of his office, as the minister of the circumcision, and as sent, and that only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; yet this could be no reason of spiritual salvation coming to him, which was not confined to Abraham's natural seed, nor was it necessary to them, more than others, and much less general; and indeed, very few of them then in being, partook of it; for though salvation was of them, and Christ the Saviour came unto them, yet they rejected him, and died in their sins: nor is this a reason of salvation coming to his family; for though by virtue of the covenant of circumcision made with Abraham and his natural seed, there were many outward privileges bestowed upon them, yet spiritual salvation was not ensured by it to them; and with regard to that, natural descent from Abraham, and circumcision, were of no avail: but this is to be understood of him, as a son of Abraham in a spiritual sense, he being now a believer in Christ, and so one that walked in the steps of the faith of Abraham; and this was an evidence of his interest in salvation by Christ, the blessing with which he was blessed, with faithful Abraham: and also his being a son of Abraham, which is no other than to be a child of the promise, (Romans 9:8) or in other words, one of God's elect, a chosen vessel of salvation, was a reason why Christ, the author of salvation, came to him, why the Gospel of salvation was made known to him, and why the blessing of salvation was applied to him. The Jews use this phrase, not only of one whose natural descent is from Abraham, but whose knowledge in divine things is considerable: so when R. Eliezer ben Arach taught the Mercava, (the mystery of Ezekiel's

visions), ``R. Jochanan ben Zaccai stood and kissed his head, and said, blessed art thou, O God of Israel, that has given µhrbal ˆb, “a son to Abraham”, who has knowledge to understand, and to search out, and to explain the work of Mercava [f628].”

For Abraham is said [f629] to be a father in this sort of knowledge, for which reason, this man was genealogized a son of Abraham.

Ver. 10. *For the son of man*, etc.] Meaning himself, who was truly man, and the Messiah, and which was one of his names in the Old Testament:

is come: from heaven, into this world, being sent by the Father, and with the full consent and good will of his own:

to seek and save that which was lost: as all his elect were in Adam, and by their own actual transgressions; and are considered as such, whilst in a state of unregeneracy: and particularly the lost sheep of the house of Israel are meant, one of which Zacchaeus was; and so the words are a reason of Christ's looking him up, and calling him by his grace, and making a discovery of himself, and an application of salvation to him; (see <401811>Matthew 18:11).

Ver. 11. *And as they heard these things*, etc.] What Zacchaeus said to Christ, and what Christ said to Zacchaeus; particularly, that salvation, or the Saviour was then come to his house, and that he was come to save lost persons:

he added, and spake a parable; that is, as the Syriac version renders it, “he added a parable to the word”, or to what he had said:

because he was nigh to Jerusalem: within ten “parsas”, or large miles; for at such a distance was Jerusalem from Jericho [f630], where Christ now was, according to the Jewish writers; but according to Josephus [f631], it was a hundred and fifty furlongs, which must be eighteen or twenty miles, and this may be said to be nigh; and not long after this, we hear of Christ at the Mount of Olives, which was about a mile from Jerusalem, (<421929>Luke 19:29).

And because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear: or be revealed, or made manifest: the phrase is Jewish; so (<220212>Song of Solomon 2:12) “the time of the singing of birds is come”, is

interpreted [f632], the time that the “kingdom of heaven”, hlgtç, “shall be revealed”, is come, and elsewhere [f633],

> “say to the cities of the house of Judah, ˆwkhlad atwklm taylnta, “the kingdom of your God is revealed;””

meaning in both places, as here, the kingdom of the Messiah: what induced the disciples of Christ, or the multitude, or both, to imagine that the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, which they were expecting, would quickly be set up, might be what he had said to Zacchaeus, that salvation was that day come to his house, he being a son of Abraham; which they understanding of a temporal salvation, took it as a hint, that the outward prosperity of the seed of Abraham was at hand; as also what he had said, concerning his coming to seek and save that which is lost; which they were willing to interpret, of the civil state of Judea, and that he was come to restore its lost liberties and privileges; and partly, because he was now not a great way from Jerusalem, and was on his journey thither, in order to make his entrance in a very public manner; which was the metropolis of their nation, and the ancient seat of their kings, David, Solomon, and others: now the scope and design of the following parable, is to refute the notion of a temporal kingdom, and its near approach; by showing, that his kingdom lay a great way off, and was not of this world; and that his servants and disciples had a great deal of business to transact for him, and must not think of pomp and grandeur, but of labour and service; and that the Jews were so far from receiving any advantages by his kingdom, that they would not submit to his government, and would be treated as enemies, and utterly destroyed; even their nation, city, and temple.

Ver. 12. *He said therefore*, etc.] The following parable, with the above said design and view:

a certain nobleman; the son of a great family, as the Syriac version renders it; of noble descent, of an illustrious extract; by whom is meant Jesus Christ, who was a “man”, as he agreed to be, and was prophesied of as such; and who frequently appeared in an human form before his incarnation; and was now actually become man, though not a mere man: and he may truly be said to be “noble”; not only as the word may signify, as it sometimes does, a person of great authority and power, and of great generosity and goodness, but one of a noble birth; for Christ, as man, descended from the kings of the house of Judah, and was the son of David;

and from the Jewish fathers and ancestors of the greatest renown, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and he may be so called as man, because of the union of the human nature to the Son of God; or because of his divine relation, as the Son of God: this illustrious person,

went into a far country; by which, heaven is meant; so called, not only because of its distance from the earth, but in comparison of the earth, as a place of pilgrimage; and because that it is out of sight, and the views which are had of it, are very distant ones: hither Christ went at his ascension; he came from heaven at his incarnation, by the assumption of human nature; he stayed here awhile, till he had done his work he came about, and then went up to heaven; where he is received, and from whence he is expected again: the end of his going there is,

to receive for himself a kingdom: by which is intended, not the kingdom of nature and providence; for that he had, and did not receive from another; it was his of right, and by nature; nor the kingdom of grace, set up in the hearts of his people, and which was already within many of them; nor the kingdom of glory, prepared for them from the foundation of the world; though into this he entered at his ascension, and took possession of it for himself and them: but a more visible display of his mediatorial kingdom, he received from his Father; and which, upon his ascension, became more manifest, by the dispossessing of Satan, and casting him out of the Gentile world; by converting large numbers of his people, both among Jews and Gentiles; and by ruling in their hearts, subduing their enemies, and protecting and defending them; and by thus reigning till he has gathered them all in, either in Judea, or in the whole world, and then he will come again:

and return; either to destroy the Jews; the doing of which fully proved he had received his kingdom, was vested with power and authority, and was made, or declared Lord and Christ; or at the end of the world, to judge both quick and dead: and this is said, to show that his personal glorious kingdom on earth, or his kingdom in its greatest glory here, will not be till he comes a second time; and to engage diligence in his servants in the mean while; and to keep up the faith, hope, and expectation of his coming again.

Ver. 13. *And he called his ten servants*, etc.] By whom are meant, not all mankind; for though these are all his servants of right, yet not in fact; nor the elect of God, who are called by grace; for though these are the servants of Christ, and are peculiarly his, yet all that received the pound were not

such, for one of them was a wicked man; but the ministers of the Gospel, who are eminently, and in a special manner, the servants of the most high God: but as for the number “ten”, this cannot regard the apostles, for they were twelve; and though they are sometimes called the eleven, after the apostasy and death of Judas, yet not the ten; and besides, there was another chose in his room; but this number being a large and perfect one, a round number, it is sometimes made use of as a certain number, for an uncertain one; (see <4201>Matthew 25:1). The call of these by their Lord, is not to be understood of the call of them by his grace, but of a call of them to the office and work of the ministry:

and delivered them ten pounds; every one a pound: the hnm, “Maneh”, or pound of the Hebrews, if of gold, which contained an hundred drachmas, was of the value of our money, “seventy five pounds”; if of silver, the old “Maneh”, or pound, which contained sixty shekels, (<2652>Ezekiel 45:12) amounted to “seven pounds ten shillings”; but the “Maneh”, or pound, mentioned in the Misna [f634], and which was in use in our Lord's time, contained an hundred pence, and was of the value of our money, “three pounds two shillings and six pence”: and by these pounds are designed, not special grace; for they intend not any thing wrought in these servants, but something delivered to them, and what might be taken away again, which cannot be said of special grace; and besides, it is certain, that one of these servants that had the pound, was destitute of that: but gifts are meant, and these not merely natural, or the gifts of providence, as health, riches, wisdom, etc. nor only the outward means of grace, as the word and ordinances, but ministerial gifts, which are the greatest in the church, and are therefore signified by pounds; and are what may be improved or neglected, and be lost or taken away; and for which those that have them, are accountable: but though each of these servants are represented, as having every man a pound delivered to him, this must not be understood, as if the gifts of ministers were equal and alike, any more than the inequality of their rewards proves degrees in glory; for which sometimes this parable is produced:

and said unto him, occupy; negotiate, or trade, that is, with the pounds; make use of the ministerial gifts, exercise them, lay them out, and trade with them: the ministry is a trade and merchandise, to be carried on, not in the name of the ministers of Christ, nor on their own stock, nor for themselves, but for Christ, and for the good of souls; which shows, that they must not be slothful, but laborious and diligent:

till I come: which suggests the certainty of Christ's coming, the continuance of the Gospel ministry to that time; and that there is no rest nor ease for Christ's ministers, but a continued series of labour and service, until then; when, for their encouragement, they shall receive their reward.

Ver. 14. *But his citizens hated him*, etc.] Not those who are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; whose citizenship is in heaven, and who are seeking the better country, and heavenly city; but the Jews, who were his own people and nation, among whom he was born, to whom he was sent and came, and had an undoubted right to the government of them: these hated him with a mortal hatred, as appeared by their traducing his person in the most opprobrious manner; vilifying his doctrine as false; ascribing his miracles to a diabolical influence; and by persecuting his disciples and followers:

and sent a message after him; this seems to have respect to their outrage against the disciples of Christ, after his ascension; when they not only mocked them, as on the day of Pentecost, but laid hold on them, and put them in hold, even in the common prison, and persecuted them from place to place; and so virtually,

saying, we will not have this man to reign over us: they would neither receive his Gospel, nor submit to his ordinances; but put them away from them, and judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life: and this is the language of every graceless soul; and is to be observed in their opposition to, and neglect of the truths of Christ, and his divine institutions; which are a yoke they do not care to take upon them, though so mild and easy, and are cords which they cast away from them.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass that when he was returned*, etc.] Which return was either in power to Jerusalem, in the destruction of that city; or which will be in person to this earth, at the end of the world; and will be local and visible, and in great glory, attended with the holy angels, and with all the saints: the time is fixed and certain, though unknown, and will be sudden and unexpected; but will not be till after the Gospel has had a general spread all over the world, and the Jews are converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, and then will Christ come:

having received the kingdom; not only having been set down at the right hand of God, and crowned with glory and honour, and received gifts for men, which he bestowed on them; and which proved him to be Lord and

Christ; all which was done at his ascension, after which his kingdom came, or he returned in power and glory, to take vengeance on the Jews; but also having received the kingdom of glory for all his saints, and particularly having received the kingdom of priests, or all the elect of God, these being all called by grace, and gathered to him, as they will every one of them before his second coming; when this kingdom will be delivered to the Father complete and perfect; and this will a reckoning time, as follows:

then he commanded those servants to be called, to whom he had given the money. The servants are the ministers of the word, who must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; and give an account of themselves to God, the Judge of all; and of their gifts and talents, and ministrations, and the souls under their care: the persons who are “commanded” to call them are the angels, and who shall be employed in gathering all the elect together; the thing that will be inquired about, and must be accounted for, is the “money” given them; that is, the Gospel they are intrusted with, and the gifts to preach it bestowed on them: the end of this summons is,

that he might know how much every man had gained by trading; not but that Christ, who is the omniscient God, the searcher of the heart, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of it, knows full well the use that is made of every man's gift, and the benefits and advantages arising from it, both for his own glory, and the good of souls; but these summons will be given, this account taken, and inquiry made, that these things which are known to him, might be made manifest to all, and every man have praise of God; whose will it is that he should have it, and sloth and negligence be justly punished.

Ver. 16. *Then came the first*, etc.] Who were set in the first place in the church, the apostles of Christ, and who had the greatest gifts, and laboured more abundantly, and were eminently useful; such an one was the Apostle Paul:

saying, Lord; acknowledging the sovereignty and dominion of Christ over them, owning they were accountable to him, and that he had a right to inquire, what use they had made of their gifts, and what advantages these had produced;

thy pound hath gained ten pounds; it had been increased tenfold; or it has turned to a tenfold account, in the conversion of sinners, in the edification of the saints, and in the advancement of the kingdom, and interest of

Christ. This servant owns, that the gifts he had were Christ's; he calls them, “thy pound”; and therefore did not glory in them as his own attainments, or, as if he had received them not; and ascribes the great increase, not to himself, but to the pound itself; to the gifts of Christ, as they were his, and as used by his grace and strength, and as blessed, and owned by him, to these purposes.

Ver. 17. *And he said unto him, well, thou good servant*, etc.] Signifying he had well done, and had approved himself to be an honest, diligent, and laborious servant; who, having the grace of God, which made him a good man, and gifts and abilities, which made him a good minister of Christ, he made a good use them, freely communicated the good things of the Gospel, and being employed in a good work, he performed it well:

because thou hast been faithful in a very little; had preached the pure Gospel of Christ, and the whole of it, and sought not to please men, but the Lord only; not his own glory, but Christ's; abode by him and his interest, notwithstanding all reproaches and persecutions, and so acted a faithful part to Christ: “in a very little”; not that the Gospel is in itself little, or of small account; it is a treasure in earthen vessels; and contains the unsearchable riches of Christ: nor are gifts to preach it little things; they are instances of rich and amazing grace; but they are little, or, rather, the use and exercise of them are little, in comparison of the glory and happiness such faithful servants shall enjoy: from whence it appears, that since there is no proportion between what they do, and what they shall have, that therefore it is not of merit but of grace; and which is expressed in the following clause:

have thou authority over ten cities; which is to be understood, not in a literal sense, as if the apostles should have the jurisdiction over so many cities, or churches in so many cities among the Gentiles, after the destruction of Jerusalem, which were planted by their means and ministry; for nothing of this kind appears in the word of God: and much less after the second coming of Christ, shall faithful ministers of the word have power over so many cities, literally taken; for both in the kingdom state and in the ultimate glory, there will be but one beloved city, the holy city, the new Jerusalem: nor is any thing in particular, in a metaphorical sense, intended; only, in general, that the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of it, will be given unto them; and they shall reign with Christ on earth a thousand years; and shall also have a crown of glory, life, and

righteousness bestowed on them, and shall sit on the throne with Christ; and besides all this, the persons they have been instrumental to, will be their joy, and crown of rejoicing. A learned writer [f635] explains these ten cities, by the ten horns of the dragon, and beast in (<66123>Revelation 12:3 13:1) by which are meant ten kings, or kingdoms, (<66172>Revelation 17:12 <27024>Daniel 7:24). These indeed will be overcome by Christ, and they that are with him, and will hate the Romish antichrist, and destroy him; so that, it seems, there will be revolutions in these kingdoms; and large conversions to the faith of Christ, which seems to be what this writer means by authority over them.

Ver. 18. *And the second came*, etc.] He who was next, though less useful, yet equally diligent and active:

saying, Lord; acknowledging also the power and authority of Christ over him:

thy pound hath gained five pounds; is increased fivefold, or is turned to a fivefold account, to the interest of Christ, and good of immortal souls: the usefulness of the ministers of the Gospel is not alike; as they have gifts different one from another, so their improvements are different, and their labours, though faithful, do not turn to the same account,

Ver. 19. *And he said likewise to him*, etc.] He commended him as a good and faithful servant, though this is not expressed; and added,

be thou over five cities; which does not denote any inequality of glory in Christ's ministers, who will all shine as the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever; at least, there will be no inequality in the ultimate state of happiness, when all the saints shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, whatever there may be in the kingdom state, or in Christ's personal reign with his saints on earth. The above learned writer would have this passage compared with (<23918>Isaiah 19:18).

Ver. 20. *And another came*, etc.] Who was one of the servants; had a gift, but did not use, and improve it, nor did it turn to any account:

saying, Lord; owning also the lordship and dominion of Christ, as all will confess at the last day, even those who have no interest in him, and cannot call him their Lord;

behold, [here is] thy pound; he owns his gifts were the Lord's, and that he had received them from him, and now returns them:

which I have kept; he had kept that which was committed to him, and that even till his Lord came; he had not lost it, though it was not increased, or was of any advantage to Christ, or the souls of men, it being neglected by him; for it was

laid up in a napkin: the Greek word, here used for a napkin, is adopted by the Jews into their language, and is used for a veil and for a linen cloth: this puts me in mind of what the Jews call, `rdws ^ynq` "possession by a napkin", or linen cloth: their custom is this; when they buy, or sell any thing, to use a piece of cloth they call "sudar", the word in the text, which the contractors lay hold upon, whereby they ratify and confirm the bargain [f636]: but this man made no use of his "sudar", or napkin, in buying and selling; he traded not at all; he wrapped up his money in it, and both lay useless; his gift lay dormant and unexercised, which was given him to profit withal.

Ver. 21. *For I feared thee*, etc.] Not with a right fear, with a fear of his goodness, who had bestowed such an excellent gift on him; for this would have taught him to have departed from evil, and have put him on doing his master's will, and making use of his gift to his glory: his fear was not of the right kind, and was ill grounded, as appears by what follows:

because thou art an austere man; cruel and uncompassionate to his servants, and hard to be pleased; than which nothing is more false, since it is evident, that Christ is compassionate both to the bodies and souls of men; is a merciful high priest, and is one that has compassion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way, and cannot but be touched with the feeling of his people's infirmities; and is mild and gentle in his whole deportment, and in all his administrations:

thou takest up that thou layest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow; suggesting, that he was covetous of that which did not belong to him, and withheld what was due to his servants, and rigorously exacted service that could not be performed; a most iniquitous charge, since none so liberal as he, giving gifts, grace and glory, freely; imposing no grievous commands on men; his yoke being easy, and his burden light; never sending a man to a warfare at his own charge; but always giving grace and strength

proportionable to the service he calls to, and rewarding his servants in a most bountiful manner, infinitely beyond their deserts.

Ver. 22. *And he saith unto him*, etc.] By way of reply to his vile slander, and unrighteous charge;

out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant; as he might be justly called: he was not only a wicked man, as all men are, even enemies by wicked works, and lie in wickedness; and a wicked professor of religion, as there be some; but a wicked minister, and that not on account of his bad principles, and sinful life and conversation, but for his sloth and negligence, and the wrong thoughts he entertained of, and the false charges he brought against Christ; and Christ turns his own argument upon him, and by his own words condemns him:

thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow; not allowing this, but supposing it was as he said; then Christ argues as follows, for his conviction.

Ver. 23. *Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank*, etc.] Or "on the table", at which the bankers sat, and received and delivered money on interest. The Complutensian edition reads, "to the tablers", or "bankers": had Christ been such a person as he represents him, he ought to have been the more diligent, and made the greater use of his gifts, since he knew that he would, in a rigid manner, as he suggests, demand an account of them:

that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? not that Christ approves of usury in an unlawful way, by extortion, but reproves hereby the sloth of this man, and exposes his folly and wickedness upon his own principles.

Ver. 24. *And he said unto them that stood by*, etc.] The angels, it may be; though this may not be strictly taken, as if any persons, angels, or men, will be employed in what follows, only that it will be done, or may be expected:

take from him the pound; which shows, that it was not special grace, for that is a good part that shall never be taken away, but gifts which may be taken away from men, or they from them:

and give it to him that hath ten pounds; not that, strictly speaking, the gifts of some men are taken from them and bestowed on others; but the design

of the expression is to show, that to diligent and laborious ministers, there is an increase of gifts; their knowledge enlarges, and their light shines more and more to the perfect day, and they become more useful; and they appear brighter, and more illustrious, through the sloth of others, or when compared with indolent, negligent, and useless ministers.

Ver. 25. *And they said unto him*, etc.] The bystanders;

Lord, he hath ten pounds; which they say either through envy, at his superior gifts, and usefulness; for it is generally the lot of the most eminent and useful servants of Christ to be envied by others; or in surprise, as wondering at the conduct of Christ in giving more to such, who had so much already. The Ethiopic version reads the words by way of interrogation, "hath he not ten pounds?" is not that enough? why should he have more? This verse is left out in Beza's most ancient copy. However, it is rightly put into a parenthesis in our version; for the following verse is strictly connected with (<4219 24>Luke 19:24) and contains a reason of what is there ordered.

Ver. 26. *For I say unto you*, etc.] And it may be depended on as truth, and what will be found matter of fact:

that unto every one that hath, shall be given; greater and larger gifts, fitting him for greater usefulness: he that has gifts, and makes use of them, increases in them; they enlarge with their use, and become brighter, and he more useful. The Vulgate Latin version adds, "and he shall abound, or shall have abundance", as in (<4025 29>Matthew 25:29)

and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him: that is, that which he seemed to have, or thought he had, as in (<4208 18>Luke 8:18) for from him that has really nothing, nothing can be taken away: though the sense may be, that he that does not use the talent, or exercise the gift bestowed on him, but lays it up in a napkin, which is all one as if he had it not, even the gift itself shall be taken away from him; and as others receive no benefit by it, he shall receive no honour from it; (see Gill on "<4013 12>Matthew 13:12") and (see Gill on "<4025 29>Matthew 25:29").

Ver. 27. *But those mine enemies*, etc.] Meaning particularly the Jews, who were enemies to the person of Christ, and hated and rejected him, as the King Messiah; and rebelled against him, and would not submit to his government; and were enemies to his people, and were exceeding mad against them, and persecuted them; and to his Gospel, and the

distinguishing truths of it, and to his ordinances, which they rejected against themselves:

which would not that I should reign over them; (see <4219 14>Luke 19:14)

bring hither, and slay [them] before me; which had its accomplishment in the destruction of Jerusalem, when multitudes of them were slain with the sword, both with their own, and with their enemies; and to this the parable has a special respect, and of which Christ more largely discourses in this chapter; (see <4219 41>Luke 19:41-44) though it is true of all natural men, that they are enemies to Christ; and so of all negligent and slothful professors, and ministers of the word, who, when Christ shall come a second time, of which his coming to destroy the Jewish nation was an emblem and pledge, will be punished with everlasting destruction by him; and then all other enemies will be slain and destroyed, sin, Satan, the world, and death: of the first of these the Jews say [f637],

> "in the time to come the holy, blessed God, will bring forth the evil imagination (or corruption of nature), wj jwçw, "and slay it before" the righteous, and the wicked."

Ver. 28. *And when he had thus spoken*, etc.] When he had delivered the above parable, in order to remove the prejudices of his disciples, and the multitude, concerning a temporal kingdom, and to give them true notions of his own kingdom, and the case of the Jewish nation:

he went before; his disciples: he was the foremost of them in the journey; he proceeded at the head of them, with great cheerfulness and eagerness:

ascending up to Jerusalem; through the lower lands of Judea, to the city of Jerusalem, which was built on higher ground; where he was to eat his last passover, and suffer, and die, in the room, and stead, of his people; and this shows how willing, and greatly desirous he was to finish the work of redemption he came about.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass when he was come nigh*, etc.] The other evangelists, Matthew and Mark, add "unto Jerusalem"; but this Luke designs afterwards, (<4219 37>Luke 19:37) and therefore here means, as is expressed, that he was come nigh

to Bethphage and Bethany; two tracts of land which reached from Mount Olivet to Jerusalem; so that when he was there, he was nigh unto the city:

at the mount, called [the Mount] of Olives; or "Elaion", as the Ethiopic version, which retains the Greek word for it; and which has its name from the great number of olive trees that grew upon it:

he sent two of his disciples; their names are not mentioned by any of the evangelists, but it is very probable they were Peter and John; of the places here mentioned; (see Gill on "<4210>Matthew 21:1").

Ver. 30. *Saying, go ye into the village over against [you]*, etc.] What village this was, is not said by any of the evangelists; it seems to be either Bethany, or Nob; and rather the latter, since the village of Bethany was fifteen furlongs, or near two miles from Jerusalem, (<4311>John 11:18) and therefore must have been passed by Christ; whereas the tract called Bethany, at the Mount of Olives where Christ now was, was but a sabbath day's journey, or about a mile, (<4245>Luke 24:50) compared with (<4401>Acts 1:12). (See Gill on "<4210>Matthew 21:2")

in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied: in (<4210>Matthew 21:2) it is said, an ass, and a colt with her; which agrees with the prophecy in (<3809>Zechariah 9:9) and which, no doubt, was matter of fact: nor does Mark and Luke contradict it, though they do not express it:

whereon yet never man sat, loose him, and bring [him] hither; for it seems that Christ stayed at the above place, until the disciples went and fetched it.

Ver. 31. *And if any man ask you, why do ye loose [him]*? etc.] As our Lord, being God omniscient, knew this question would be asked by the owners, and therefore prepares his disciples with an answer to it:

thus shall ye say unto him, because the Lord hath need of him. The Syriac and Persic versions read "our Lord", yours, and ours; probably the owners of the colt might be such as knew the Lord Jesus Christ, and by this way of speaking of him, knew, at once, who was meant, and so made no scruple of sending him, as Christ told them they would not, and so they found it; (see Gill on "Matthew 21: 3") and (see Gill on "<4103>Mark 9:3")

Ver. 32. *And they that were sent went their way*, etc.] The two disciples that were sent by Christ, were obedient to him, and went, as he directed them, and did as he ordered them;

and found, even as he had said unto them. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and so some copies, add, “the colt standing”; that is, in the place, and manner which he had described to them; (see Gill on “Mark 9:4”).

Ver. 33. *And as they were loosing the colt*, etc.] In order to bring it away, as Christ bid them:

the owners thereof said unto them, why loose ye the colt? Mark takes notice of this, but does not tell us who they were, only that they were persons that stood there; but this evangelist informs us who they were: and it seems by this, that there were more owners of the colt than one, which might have made the taking away of the colt the more difficult; since, though one might agree to it, another might not; but Christ, who is God, and has the hearts of all men in his hands, could, as he did, dispose the minds of these men to let the colt go freely, and quietly, with his disciples; (see Gill on “Mark 11:5”).

Ver. 34. *And they said, the Lord hath need of him*.] Or, our Lord, as the above versions in verse 31 (Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic). They used the words Christ directed them to, and it had the effect he said it would; for the owners both let them go, and the colt with them directly; (see Gill on “Matthew 21:6”) and (see Gill on “Mark 11:6”).

Ver. 35. *And they brought him to Jesus*, etc.] That is, the colt:

and they cast their garments upon the colt; that is, the disciples, who brought him to Jesus; the Persic version here, as in (Matthew 21:7) renders it very wrongly, “Jesus put his own garment on its back, and sat on it”; it follows,

and they set Jesus thereon; in order to ride upon him, as he did to Jerusalem.

Ver. 36. *And as he went*, etc.] Riding on the colt towards Jerusalem:

they spread their clothes in the way; not the disciples, for they had put their garments upon the colt; but the multitude, which either came with him from Jericho, and other parts, or that met him from Jerusalem, or both; (see Matthew 21:8 Mark 11:8) and so the Persic version here; “men put off their clothes and cast them in the way, that he might pass over then”; (see Gill on “Matthew 21:8”).

Ver. 37. *And when he was come nigh*, etc.] To the city of Jerusalem, and which was then in sight,

even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives; being come to the foot of that mount, which lay to the east of Jerusalem, and was about five furlongs from it, or a little more than half a mile [f638]:

the whole multitude of the disciples: not only the twelve, but the large company that followed Christ out of Galilee, and were joined by more in Judea, as they came along, some going before him, and others behind him. The Arabic and Persic versions divide these words, and read, "the multitude, and the disciples"; not only the apostles, but the whole body of the people that were with Christ:

began to rejoice, and praise God, with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen; calling to mind the many miracles he had wrought in Galilee, at Cana, Capernaum, and other places, and now, as he passed through Judea, particularly about Jericho, where he had restored sight to two or three blind men; and especially the miracle he had lately wrought at Bethany, in raising Lazarus from the dead; from all which they might strongly conclude, that he must be the Messiah; and being filled with joy and gladness, at the remembrance of these things, and with thankfulness to God, that he had raised up the glorious Saviour and Redeemer, they lifted up their voices together, and exerted them to the uttermost, and made the air ring with their shouts, and acclamations of praise to God, on this occasion.

Ver. 38. *Saying, blessed be the King*, etc.] The King Messiah, the King of Israel, the son of David, the Christ of God; so the Ethiopic version adds, "blessed be the King of Israel"; they sung their "Hosannas" to him, as the other evangelists say:

that cometh in the name of the Lord; (see Gill on "<4209>Matthew 21:9")

peace in heaven; all heavenly peace and prosperity attend him; or let peace be made with God in heaven, by the Prince of Peace on earth, for sinful men:

and glory in the highest; glory be given to God for peace, life, and salvation by his son; and that in the highest heavens, by the angels there, as well as by men on earth, and in the highest notes and strains.

Ver. 39. *And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude*, etc.] Who had placed themselves there, to watch and observe what was said, and done, that they might have something to reproach Christ with, expose him for, or bring as a charge against him:

said unto him, master, rebuke thy disciples: not being able to bear such high encomiums of Jesus, and such open and public declarations of his being the Messiah; and would insinuate, that it was blasphemy in them to say what they did, and pride and vanity in him to allow of it; and that the consequence might be sedition, and tumult; and therefore it became him to check such a disorderly, noisy, evil, and dangerous practice.

Ver. 40. *And he answered and said unto them, I tell you*, etc.] As a truth, which may be depended on, and you may be assured of; this he spake with great earnestness, fervour, and courage:

that if these should hold their peace; be silent, and not sing the praises of God, and ascribe glory to him, and profess the Messiah, and make this public acknowledgment of him:

the stones would immediately cry out; either against them, or in a declaration of the Messiah: by which expression our Lord means, that it was impossible it should be otherwise; it would be intolerable if it was not; and rather than it should not be, God, who is able out of stones to raise up children to Abraham, would make the stones speak, or turn stones into men, who should rise up and praise the Lord, and confess the Messiah; hereby commending his disciples, and tacitly reflecting upon the Pharisees, for their stupidity; and also giving a hint of the conversion of the Gentiles, who might be compared to stones, especially in the opinion of the Jews.

Ver. 41. *And when he was come near, he beheld city*, etc.] Of Jerusalem; being now nearer, and in a situation to take a full view of it, he lift up his eyes, and looking wistfully on it, and beholding the grandeur and magnificence of it, the number of the houses, and the stately structures in it, and knowing what calamities, in a few years, would come upon it; with which being affected, as man, he looked upon it,

and wept over it; touched with a tender concern for it, his natural passions moved, and tears fell plentifully from his eyes. This must be understood of Christ merely as man, and is a proof of the truth of his human nature, which had all the natural properties, and even the infirmities of it; and as affected with the temporal ruin of Jerusalem, and as concerned for its

temporal welfare; and is not to be improved either against his proper deity, or the doctrines of distinguishing grace, relating to the spiritual and eternal salvation of God's elect; things that are foreign from the sense of this passage: some ancient Christians, and orthodox too, thinking that this was not so agreeable to Christ, but reflected some weakness and dishonour upon him, expunged this clause concerning his weeping; but we have another instance besides this; (see <43135>John 11:35) and even the Jews themselves cannot think this to be unsuitable to the Messiah, when they represent the Shekinah, and God himself weeping over the destruction of the temple [f639]; and it is particularly [f640] said by them of the Messiah, that he shall weep over the wicked among the Jews, according to (<23305>Isaiah 53:5) and they encourage persons to mourn over Jerusalem: they say [f641] whoever does any business on the ninth of Ab, (the day that city was destroyed,) and does not mourn over Jerusalem, shall not see its joy; but whoever does mourn over it, shall see its joy, according to (<23660>Isaiah 66:10) [f642].

Ver. 42. *Saying, if thou hadst, known, even thou*, etc.] As well as other cities; or who hast been so long a flourishing city, the metropolis of the nation, the seat of the ancient kings of Judah; yea, the city of the great God, the place of divine worship, whither the tribes came up, time after time, to serve the Lord; a city so highly honoured of God and man: or, who hast despised the messages of the servants of God, mocked and misused the prophets in time past, beat one, killed another, and stoned another: if such a city, after all this, had but known its true interest,

at least in this thy day; the day of thy visitation, the last day thou art to have, though it is so late:

the things [which belong] unto thy peace; meaning, not peace with God, and the things belonging, or conducing to that, which are not men's works of righteousness, nor tears of repentance, nor even faith itself, but the obedience and righteousness, the blood, sacrifice and death of Christ; nor spiritual peace, or internal peace of conscience, which comes in a Gospel way, through believing, in a course of obedience, and all from Christ, the peacemaker, and peace giver; nor eternal peace hereafter, which the grace of God gives a meetness for, and the righteousness of Christ a right unto; the knowledge of all which is not natural to men, or to be obtained of themselves, but is the gift of God's grace, and the operation of his Spirit: but supposing such a peace, and such things relating to it, were intended, nothing more can be inferred from hence, than that if the Jews had known

these things, they had been happy; and since they had the means of knowing them, they were, of all men, inexcusable; and that Christ, as man, and one of their nation, and as a minister of the circumcision, had a passionate concern for their welfare: but not that these Jews, or any men, can of themselves, and without the unfrustrable grace of God working upon their hearts, and enlightening their understanding, know these things; or that Christ acted any insincere part in wishing for these things for them, as man, and a minister of the word, when he knew, as God, it was not consistent with the will of God that they should have them; since Christ, as man, sometimes earnestly prayed for that, which he, as God, knew could not be, as in the case of his own sufferings and death; nor is this irreconcilable to his dying intentionally only for those who are actually saved: but after all, these words are, only spoken of Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of that city, and not of all mankind, and regard only their temporal peace and welfare, whose destruction Christ knew was near at hand; and of which he afterwards speaks in the following verses:

but now they are hid from thine eyes; their eyes were blinded; they were given up to a judicial blindness, and hardness of heart; a spirit of slumber and stupidity had seized them; they could not discern the signs of the times and so disbelieved Jesus as the Messiah, and rejected him as such; whom, had they received only in a notional way, though they had not believed in him spiritually, to the saving of their souls, they would have been secured from outward calamities, and would have enjoyed peace and prosperity, and the things belonging to it our Lord speaks of. Christ alludes to the name of Jerusalem, which signifies the vision of peace; or they shall see peace; but her name and case now did not agree. His wish is the same the Psalmist encourages in (Psalm 122:6) which, in the Septuagint version, is rendered, “pray for the things” that belong “to the peace Jerusalem”.

Ver. 43. *For the days shall come upon thee*, etc.] Suddenly, and very quickly, as they did within forty years after this:

that thine enemies; the Romans, and such the Jews took them to be, and might easily understand who our Lord meant:

shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side: which was not only verified in the Roman armies closely besieging them; but particularly in this, as Josephus relates [f643] that Titus built a wall about the city, of thirty nine furlongs long, and thirteen forts in it which reached ten furlongs, and all done in three days time; by which

means they were pent up, starved, and famished, and reduced to inexpressible distress.

Ver. 44. *And shall lay thee even with the ground*, etc.] Beat down all the houses in it, the stately edifices, and even the temple itself; (see Gill on "<4402>Matthew 24:2")

and thy children within thee; that is, the inhabitants of the place should be slain with the sword of the enemy, and so fall to the ground, and lie upon it;

and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon anther; such a consummate, and entire desolation shall be made, as was foretold by Daniel, (<2702>Daniel 9:27)

because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation; in which the dayspring from on high had visited them with his personal presence, preaching among them, and working miracles; and yet they knew him not, but despised and rejected him; yea, after that they had put him to death, and he was risen again, he ordered his disciples to begin their ministry, and preach the Gospel, at Jerusalem; and they continued for some time only preaching to them, or at least rarely elsewhere, till they put away the Gospel from them. The time of the ministry of John the Baptist, of Christ, and his apostles in Judea, was the time of Jerusalem's visitation in a way of mercy; which not being taken notice of, and observed, brought another kind of visitation upon them, even in a way of wrath and vengeance. The Jews pretend to assign other causes of Jerusalem's destruction; but the true cause was their rejection of Jesus, as the Messiah.

> "Says Abai, Jerusalem was not destroyed, but because they profaned the sabbath, as it is said, (<2622>Ezekiel 22:26) "and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths", etc. Says R. Abhu, Jerusalem was not destroyed, but because they ceased reading the "Shema (hear, O Israel", etc.) morning and evening, as it is said, (<2351>Isaiah 5:11-13) woe to them that rise up early", etc. Says Rab. Hamenuna, Jerusalem was not destroyed, but because there ceased in it the children of the school of Rabban, (children were not put to school,) as it is said (<2461>Jeremiah 6:11) "I will pour it out upon the children", etc. Says Ula, Jerusalem was not destroyed, but because there was no shame among them, as it is said, (<2465>Jeremiah 6:15) "were they ashamed", etc. Says R. Isaac, Jerusalem was not

destroyed, but because small and great were put upon a level, as it is said, (<232402>Isaiah 24:2,3) “as with the people, so with the priest”, etc. Says R. Amram, the son of R. Simeon bar Aba, R. Chanina said, Jerusalem was not destroyed, but because they did not reprove one another, as it is said, (<250106>Lamentations 1:6) “her princes are become like harts”, etc. Says R. Judah, Jerusalem was not destroyed, but because they despised the disciples of the wise men, as it is said; (<142616>2 Chronicles 36:16) but they mocked the messengers of God”, etc. [f644].”

Thus they shifted off the true cause of their ruin, and ascribed it to other things.

Ver. 45. *And he went into the temple*, etc.] Being come into the city, he alighted from the colt he rode on, and having committed it to the care of a proper person to return it to the owner, he went up directly to the temple, of which he was the Lord and proprietor, and where he had some work to do the few days he had to live.

And began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; that traded in sheep, and oxen, and doves; (see <430215>John 2:15 <402112>Matthew 21:12). The Ethiopic version adds here, as there, “and overthrew, the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves”.

Ver. 46. *Saying unto them, it is written*, etc.] In (<235607>Isaiah 56:7)

my house is the house of prayer; built and devoted for that service:

but ye have made it a den of thieves; which clause is not written in the above prophecy, but are the words of Christ referring to (<240711>Jeremiah 7:11). The Ethiopic version adds, “and robbers”; and the Persic version adds, “and a place of cut-purses”; (see Gill on “<402113>Matthew 21:13”).

Ver. 47. *And he taught daily in the temple*, etc.] Every day till the passover came, and only in the day; for at night he went out of the city to Bethany, or to the Mount of Olives: some of his discourses in the temple, the parables he delivered, and his disputations with the doctors, are recorded in (<402127>Matthew 21:27-46) (<411127>Mark 11:27-12:44):

but the chief priests, and the Scribes, and the chief of the people; or “the elders of the people”, as the Syriac version renders it; that is, the whole sanhedrim:

sought to destroy him; met and consulted together how to get him into their hands, and what charges to bring against him, in order to put him to death.

Ver. 48. *And could not find what they might do*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and so Beza's most ancient copy, add, “to him”; they could not find an opportunity of seizing him, nor any advantage against him; they knew not what steps to take, nor how to bring about their wicked design of destroying him.

For all the people were very attentive to hear him; there were great crowds always about him, that hung upon him, as the word rendered “attentive” signifies; they heard him with great eagerness and diligence, and were ready to catch every word that dropped from his lips; and were exceedingly taken with him, having never heard any man speak like him: wherefore having so many followers, and being so high in the opinion and affection of the people, the sanhedrim were at a loss what method to make use of to gain their point; and they feared the people, should they seize him publicly, lest they should rise and rescue him, and cause a tumult and disturbance.

CHAPTER 20

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 20

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, that on one of those days*, etc.] According to the account of the Evangelist Mark, it must be the second day, or two days after his public entrance into Jerusalem; for on the evening of the day he made his entry, he went out to Bethany with his disciples; the next morning, as he returned from thence, he cursed the barren fig tree; and when he came to the temple cast out the buyers and sellers; at evening he went out again, either to Bethany, or the Mount of Olives; and the next morning, as he and his disciples returned, the fig tree was observed to be dried up; and when they were come to Jerusalem, as he was walking in the temple, he was attacked by the sanhedrim, and had the following discourse with them:

as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the Gospel; for he taught them by preaching that, and which he did most clearly, faithfully, and publicly, being abundantly anointed and qualified for it, and sent to do it.

The chief priests, and the Scribes, came upon him, with the elders. The whole sanhedrim being purposely convened together, came upon him in a body; and it may be suddenly, and at an unawares, and came open mouthed against him, and attacked him with great warmth and vehemency.

Ver. 2. *And spoke unto him, saying, tell us by what authority doest thou these things*? etc.] The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, “this thing”; as if the sanhedrim only referred to his preaching the Gospel, which is mentioned in the preceding verse, and was what he was about when they came to him: but the Persic version reads, “all these things”; not only preaching, but working miracles; and particularly driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, which especially affected them, they losing their rents thereby:

or who is he that gave thee this authority? God or man? (See Gill on “Matthew 21:23”).

Ver. 3. *And he answered and said unto them*, etc.] That is, Jesus replied to them, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions express it:

I will also ask you one thing, and answer me; when he also promised, that if they would give him an answer to his question, he would satisfy them in the point they interrogated him about: and as this was a prudent decline to avoid the snare they laid for him, so it was not an impertinent reply to them; since it led on to a proper answer to their question, as appears by the case proposed; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:24").

Ver. 4. *The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men*?] This was a new ordinance, and John must have his authority for administering it either from God, or from men; and Christ is desirous to know from which he derived it in their opinion; suggesting, that by the same authority John, his forerunner, came baptizing, he himself came preaching and working miracles; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:25").

Ver. 5. *And they reasoned with themselves*, etc.] Or "they thought with themselves", as the Syriac version; or "within themselves", as the Vulgate Latin, though they did not express it; or "one with another", as the Arabic version; they took counsel together, and debated the matter among themselves, and reasoned after this manner:

saying, if we shall say from heaven; which was what, in their own consciences, they believed to be true,

he will say, why then believed ye him not? in what he said concerning the Messiah; which if they had, as they should, there would have been no reason for such a question they had put; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:25").

Ver. 6. *But and if we say of men*, etc.]. Which they had a good will to, against the dictates of their own consciences:

all the people will stone us; meaning the common people, that were then in the temple about Christ, hearing him preach; who would be so enraged at such an answer, that without any regard to their character and office, they would rise and stone them. The Ethiopic version adds, "whom we fear"; (see Matthew 21:26) for it seems that they had not so behaved as to have the good will and esteem of the people, at least they did not pin their faith on their sleeve:

for they be persuaded that John was a prophet; they were fully assured of it; and the sentiments and authority of the chief priests could have no weight and influence upon them to weaken their faith in this point; the evidence was so strong, and their faith so firm and sure.

Ver. 7. *And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was*.] Whether from heaven, or of men; in this, no doubt, they told an untruth: but they chose rather to sacrifice their consciences than their interest, and pretend ignorance rather than profess the truth, when they saw they should be put to confusion, or be exposed to the resentments of the people.

Ver. 8. *And Jesus said unto them*, etc.] Since they would not give him a direct answer to his question:

neither tell I you by what authority I do these things; nor was there any need of it; they might easily perceive by what he had said, from whence he professed to have received his authority, from God, and not men; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:27").

Ver. 9. *Then began he to speak to the people this parable*, etc.] According to the other evangelists it seems to be spoken to the chief priests, Scribes, and elders; and certain it is, that they looked upon themselves as struck at in it; it might be spoken to both. Christ having silenced the sanhedrim, turned himself to the people, and delivered the parable of the vineyard to them, though his principal view was to the priests:

a certain man planted a vineyard; the people of the Jews are designed by the vineyard, and the "certain man", or "householder", as Matthew calls him, (Matthew 21:28,33) is the Lord of hosts; and the planting of it is to be understood of his bringing and settling the people Israel in the land of Canaan. Luke omits certain things which the other evangelists relate, as setting an hedge about it, digging a winepress, and building a tower in it; and the Persic version here adds, "and planted trees, and set a wall about it"; all which express the care that was taken to cultivate and protect it; and signify the various blessings and privileges the Jew's enjoyed under the former dispensation; *Gill on "Matthew 21:33"* and (see Gill on "Mark 12:1").

and let it forth to husbandmen; put the people of the Jews under the care not only of civil magistrates, but of ecclesiastical governors, who were to dress this vine, or instruct these people in matters of religion, that they might be fruitful in good works:

and went into a far country for a long time; for a long time it was, from the times of Moses and Joshua, when the first settlement, both of the civil and ecclesiastical state of the Jews, was made, to the time of Christ; it was fourteen or fifteen hundred years; see the notes, as above.

Ver. 10. *And at the season*, etc.] Or "when it the time of fruit", as the Ethiopic version renders it, agreeably to (see Gill on "<4021 34>Matthew 21:34"):

he sent a servant to the husbandmen; or servants, as in (<4021 34>Matthew 21:34); the prophets of the Lord, his messengers, whom he sent to them, to exhort them to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, as follows:

that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard; that is, that they, bringing forth good fruit in their lives and conversations, whereby it might appear that they were trees of righteousness, and the planting of the Lord; he, or they observing them, might give an account of them to the Lord, to the glory of his name:

but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty; the Jews not only mocked these messengers of the Lord, and despised their words, but misused them, (<1466 5>2 Chronicles 36:15,16) they beat them with their fists, smote them on the cheek, and scourged them with scourges; so that they had no account to give of their fruitfulness in good works, but the contrary; (see Gill on "<4021 35>Matthew 21:35") and (see Gill on "<4112 03>Mark 12:3").

Ver. 11. *And again he sent another servant*, etc.] Or set of prophets in after times, and yet before the Babylonish captivity:

and they beat him also; as they had done the other; they continued in their malpractices, yea increased in them:

and entreated him shamefully; putting him to open shame, using him in a very ignominious and shameful manner, which it was a shame to relate, and which was shameful for them to do:

and sent him away empty; as they had done the other.

Ver. 12. *And again he sent the third*, etc.] Perhaps after the return of the Jews from captivity, and between that time and the coming of Christ, in which interval many good men were used in a very inhuman manner, (<5811 37>Hebrews 11:37,38)

and they wounded him also; by casting stones at him; (see <41204>Mark 12:4)

and cast him out; of the vineyard.

Ver. 13. *Then said the Lord of the vineyard*, etc.] Who planted it, and let it out to husbandmen, and expected fruit from it, and sent his servants from time to time for it:

what shall I do? or what can be done more than has been done? (<23504>Isaiah 5:4) who else can be sent that is likely to do any good with such an ungrateful and unfruitful people?

I will send my beloved Son; the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who lay in his bosom, was the darling of his soul, and the delight of his heart; him he determined to send, and him he did send to the lost sheep of the house of Israel:

it may be they will reverence him, when they see him: it might be thought after the manner of men, that considering the greatness of his person, as the Son of God, the nature of his office, as the Redeemer and Saviour of men, the doctrines which he preached, the miracles which he wrought, and the holiness and harmlessness of his conversation, and the great good he did both to the bodies and souls of men, that he would have been had in great esteem and veneration with the men, to whom he was sent, and among whom he conversed: but, alas! when they saw him, they saw no beauty, comeliness, and excellency in him, and nothing on account of which he should be desired by them.

Ver. 14. *But when the husbandmen saw him*, etc.] In human nature, heard him preach, and observed the miracles done by him:

they reasoned among themselves; as the Scribes and Pharisees, and elders of the people often did:

saying, this is the heir; the heir of God, being his Son; and so the Ethiopic version; “this Son is his heir”, or the heir of the vineyard; being, by appointment, heir of all things, and by his descent from David heir to the kingdom of Israel;

come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. The Arabic and Persic versions render it, “and his inheritance shall be ours”: the nation, city, temple, and all the emoluments and benefits thereof. The word

“come” is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Gothic and Vulgate Latin versions.

Ver. 15. *So they cast him out of the vineyard*, etc.] Rejected him as the Messiah, even denied that he was of the Jewish nation; said he was a Samaritan, and delivered him to the Gentiles that were without, and were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; and at last had him without their city, and put him to death, as follows:

and killed him; the Prince of life, the Lord of glory, and heir of all things; (see <4402>Acts 2:23,36 3:15 5:30 10:39)

what therefore shall the Lord of the vineyard do unto them? the husbandmen, the chief priests, elders, Scribes, and Pharisees; at whose solicitations the life of his Son, and heir, was taken away; by which he must be greatly provoked and incensed.

Ver. 16. *He shall come and destroy these husbandmen*, etc.] Which had its accomplishment at the destruction of Jerusalem: according to the other evangelists, these words are the answer of the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, to the above questions put to them by Christ, after he had delivered the parable; but here they seem to be the words of Christ, who also said the same, and confirmed what they had observed, and could not but own, that it was just and right, and what might be expected, with what follows:

and shall give the vineyard to others; the land of Judea to the Romans in particular, and the church state, with the Gospel and ordinances of it, to the Gentiles in general, sometimes called “others”; (see Gill on “<4229>Luke 5:29”) and (see Gill on “<4211>Luke 18:11”).

and when they heard it, they said, God forbid; though they were their own words, yet repeated and confirmed by Christ, and perceiving that they were the persons intended, deprecate the fulfilment of them; at least so far as they understood they related to the killing of the Messiah, and to the destruction of their nation, city, and temple.

Ver. 17. *And he beheld them*, etc.] Looked very earnestly and wistly at them, speaking as it were by his looks, signifying, that verily so it would be, as he had said; that they would reject the Messiah, and put him to death, and bring utter ruin upon themselves, and deprive their posterity of many advantages and privileges:

and said, what is this then that is written; that is, what else is the meaning of such a Scripture? is not the sense of that perfectly agreeable to what has been said, that the Messiah shall be rejected by the principal men among the Jews in church and state, and yet he shall be exalted, who will then take vengeance on them?

the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? The passage is in (<19B822>Psalm 118:22). (See Gill on "<4021A2>Matthew 21:42").

Ver. 18. *Whosoever shall fall on that stone, shall be broken*, etc.] Not who shall fall upon Christ by faith, and build upon him as the foundation stone, for such shall be saved; but that stumble at him, and are offended with him, and fall by unbelief and hardness of heart; such do themselves much hurt and mischief and expose themselves to danger and ruin; they bid very fair for destruction:

but on whomsoever it shall fall; as it did with its full weight upon the Jews at their destruction, and as it will upon all Christless sinners at the last day:

it will grind him to powder; the ruin of such will be unavoidable, and there will be no recovery; (see Gill on "<4021A4>Matthew 21:44").

Ver. 19. *And the chief priests, and the Scribes, that same hour*, etc.] As soon as he had delivered the above parable, together with that of the two sons:

sought to lay hands on him; they had a good will to it, being exceedingly gravelled with the question he put to them concerning John's baptism, which confounded them, and put them to silence; and with the parables he delivered, in which they were so manifestly pointed at:

and they feared the people; lest they should rise and stone them, as in (<420106>Luke 20:6) or rescue him out of their hands;

for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them: and that they were the husbandmen that had used the servants of God so ill, and would put to death the son of God, the Messiah; and who would at length be destroyed themselves, and the kingdom of God be taken from them, though they seem to detest and deprecate it, saying in (<420116>Luke 20:16) God forbid; that we should kill the heir, or that we should be destroyed, and the vineyard given to others: these things grievously nettled them, and

exasperated them against him; but they knew not how to help themselves at present.

Ver. 20. *And they watched him*, etc.] What he said, and what he did, and where he went, that they might take an advantage against him, or know where he was, to send to him, as they should think fit, and take the best opportunity of so doing. The Syriac and Persic versions leave out this clause:

and sent forth spies which should feign themselves just men: of virtue and religion, conscientious men, that would do nothing but what was just and right, and were desirous of being exactly informed of the truth of things, that they might act right in every punctilio:

that might take hold of his words; improve them, and form a charge upon them, of sedition and treason:

that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor; the Roman governor, and by him be put to death. These men were some of them the disciples of the Pharisees, and others were Herodians; (see <4122216>Matthew 22:16).

Ver. 21. *And they asked him, saying, master*, etc.] Rabbi, or doctor; hoping, by this flattering title, and the flattering words used by them, to work him up to an openness and freedom of conversation with them:

we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly; rightly dividest the word of God, and deliverest out sound doctrine according to it: and this he certainly did, though they spoke these words hypocritically, not believing what they themselves said; at least, they did not care that others should believe this of him:

neither acceptest thou the person of any. The Persic version very wrongly renders it, “and lookest not upon the countenance, and heart of any one whomsoever”; for though Christ did not look upon the countenances of men, and judge according to the outward appearance, nor regard men on account of outward circumstances, as riches, honours, learning, etc. yet he looked upon the heart, and knew what was in it, and respected sincerity and uprightness wherever he found it, and which were wanting in these men:

but teachest the way of God truly; the way of worshipping God, and of enjoying him, both in this world, and in that to come; (see Gill on "Matthew 22:16").

Ver. 22. *Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no*?] The Syriac and Persic versions here, as in the other evangelists, render it, "head money". The phrase, "for us", is here added, and on it lies the emphasis, and stress of the question; for the doubt pretended, was not whether it was lawful for the Romans to pay tribute to Caesar, but whether it was lawful for them who were Jews, were Abraham's seed, and, as they boasted, were never in bondage, but were the Lord's free people, to pay tribute to an Heathen emperor, or no.

Ver. 23. *But he perceived their craftiness*, etc.] Knowing what was in them, and being a discerner of the thoughts and intents of their hearts, he clearly saw that their view was either, that they might have a charge against him to the Roman governor, should he declare against payment of tribute; or that they might expose him to the people of the Jews, should he assert the lawfulness of it:

and said unto them, why tempt ye me? with this ensnaring question.

Ver. 24. *Show me a penny*, etc.] A Roman denarius, value seven pence halfpenny of our money. The Persic version adds, "they showed it, he asked of them"; and the Ethiopic version, "and they brought it, and he said unto them", as follows;

whose image and superscription hath it? for the penny had an head upon it, with something written, as the name of the emperor, whose image it was, his titles, the date of the coin, or some motto on it:

they answered and said, Caesar's; very likely Tiberius Caesar's, who was at that time emperor of Rome; (see Gill on "Matthew 22:20") and (see Gill on "Matthew 22:21").

Ver. 25. *And he said unto them, render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's*, etc.] The Arabic version renders it, "give to the king what is the king's"; the tribute that was due to him; since they were under his government, and were protected by him, and traded with his money; the currency of which among them was an acknowledgment of him as their sovereign:

and unto God the things which be God's; which relate to his worship, honour, interest, and kingdom; (see Gill on "Matthew 22:21").

Ver. 26. *And they could not take hold of his words before the people*, etc.] Which was what they wanted; that if he had dropped any seditious and treasonable expressions against the government, they might be witnesses against him; or if he had not vindicated the liberties of the people, and the rights of the Jewish nation, these might be exasperated against him, and leave him:

and they marvelled at his answer; which was so formed, as to give them no handle against him either way:

and held their peace; they were silenced, and had nothing to say to him, nor against him, but left him, and went their way.

Ver. 27. *Then came to him certain of the Sadducees*, etc.] That is, "to Jesus", as the Persic version expresses it; and it was the same day, as Matthew says, on which the disciples of the Pharisees, and the Herodians, had been with him, putting the question about tribute to him: (Matthew 22:16)

which deny that there is any resurrection; that is, of the dead; that there ever was any instance of it, or ever will be: this was the distinguishing tenet of that sect; (see Acts 23:8)

and they asked him, the following question, after they had put a case to him.

Ver. 28. *Saying, master, Moses wrote unto us*, etc.] In (Deuteronomy 25:5) where the substance of what follows is contained, though not in express words:

if any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother; the meaning of which is, that if a man died without issue, and left a wife behind him, his next brother, if unmarried, was to marry his wife, and the first child born of her, was to be reckoned the deceased's, and to inherit his estate; (see Gill on "Matthew 22:24").

Ver. 29. *There were therefore seven brethren*, etc.] In the place where these Sadducees dwelt; or, however, that were known by them; at least they supposed such a case, and it might be fact:

and the first took a wife, and died without children; son or daughter, and so had none to keep up his name, and to possess his inheritance.

Ver. 30. *And the second took her to wife*, etc.] As he was obliged by the above law, or pluck off the shoe:

and he died childless: as his eldest brother before him.

Ver. 31. *And the third took her*, etc.] To wife, by virtue of the same law:

and in like manner the seven also; the other four, one after another, when all seven married her:

and they left no children, and died; or they died, leaving no children behind them.

Ver. 32. *Last of all the woman died also*.] Having had no children by either of her seven husbands.

Ver. 33. *Therefore in the resurrection*, etc.] At the time of the resurrection of the dead, in that state, supposing there will be such an one, which they denied;

whose wife of them is she? the first, or the last, or any of the intermediate ones?

for seven had her to wife; and she had no child by either of them; so that their claim seems to be alike; this they thought unanswerable, and sufficient to set aside the notion of a resurrection.

Ver. 34. *And Jesus answering, said unto them*, etc.] After he had observed that their error arose from ignorance of the Scriptures, and the power of God:

the children of this world marry, and are given in marriage that is, such who live in this world, in the present mortal and imperfect state, being mortal men, and die, and leave their estates and possessions: these marry, and have wives given them in marriage; and it is very right, and fit, that so it should be, in order to keep up a succession of men, and that they may have heirs to enjoy their substance when they are gone.

Ver. 35. *But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world*, etc.] The world to come, eternal life and happiness; not by their own works

and merits, but through the blood, sacrifice, and righteousness of the Messiah;

and the resurrection from the dead; that is, the first resurrection, the resurrection unto life, which only the dead in Christ will enjoy; otherwise all will be raised: but some to the resurrection of damnation:

these neither marry, nor are given in marriage; there will be no need of any such practice, for the reasons that follow.

Ver. 36. *Neither can they die any more*, etc.] Therefore there will be no need of marrying to procreate children, to keep up a succession of men, any more than there is among the angels:

for they are equal unto the angels; in spirituality, purity and immortality; (see Gill on "Matthew 22:30")

and are the children of God: as they are now by adopting grace; but, as yet, it does not appear as it will then, what they are and will be:

being the children of the resurrection; as Christ was declared to be the son of God by his resurrection, so will they appear to be the children of God by their resurrection to eternal life; for though others will rise, yet not to everlasting life, and thus appearing to be children of God, they will also be heirs of God, and enjoy the inheritance, which they will always live to possess in their persons; and therefore the case being different with them from the children of the world, they will not marry, nor be given in marriage, as they are.

Ver. 37. *Now that the dead are raised*, etc.] Or that there will be a resurrection of the dead, this is a proof of it:

even Moses showed at the bush: when the Lord appeared to him out of it, and he saw it burning with fire, and not consumed; when the Lord called to him out of it by the following name, as he has recorded it in (Exodus 3:6). Hence it is said,

when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; for though the Lord called himself so, yet Moses likewise calls him by these names, when he gives an account of this affair, and when he went from him to the children Israel; (see Gill on "Matthew 22:32").

Ver. 38. *For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living*, etc.] (See Gill on "Matthew 22:32")

for all live unto him. The Persic version, reads, "all these live unto him"; namely, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for though they are dead to men, they are not to God; their souls live with him, and their bodies will be raised by him: he reckons of them, as if they were now alive, for he quickens the dead, and calls things that are not, as though they were; and this is the case of all the saints that are dead, as well as of those patriarchs. The Ethiopic reads, "all live with him"; as the souls of all departed saints do; the Arabic version reads, all live in him; so all do now, (Acts 17:28).

Ver. 39. *Then certain of the Scribes, answering said*, etc.] Who believed the doctrine of the resurrection, which the Sadducees denied, and so were pleased with our Lord's reasoning on this subject:

master, thou hast well said; thou hast spoken in a beautiful manner, reasoned finely upon this head, and set this matter in a fair and clear light; (see Gill on "Mark 12:28")

Ver. 40. *And after that, they durst not ask him any question at all*.] Neither the Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes, nor Herodians.

Ver. 41. *And he said unto them*, etc.] The Ethiopic version reads, "to the Pharisees"; and so it appears, that it was to them he spoke, from (Matthew 22:41)

how say they? The Syriac version reads, "how say the Scribes?" as in (Mark 12:35) and the Persic version, how say the wise men, the doctors in Israel,

that Christ is David's son? that which nothing was more common among the Jews.

Ver. 42. *And David himself saith in the book Psalms*, etc.] In (Psalm 110:1)

the Lord said to my Lord, sit thou on my right hand; which words were delivered by David, as inspired by the Spirit of God; and contain a speech of God the Father to his son Jesus Christ, upon his ascension to heaven, after his sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead; when he was bid to sit down in human nature, at the right hand of God, in token of having

done his work on earth to full satisfaction; and in the relation of which David calls Christ his Lord; and is the reason of their being mentioned.

Ver. 43. *Until I make thine enemies thy footstool*.] Which words are a continuation of the citation out of the above Psalm (<19B101>Psalm 110:1); and for the application of these words, with the preceding, to the Messiah, (see Gill on "<4244>Matthew 22:44").

Ver. 44. *David therefore called him Lord*, etc.] Or, "my Lord", as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read; or, "his Lord", as the Arabic version. This is the inference from the words before cited (<19B101>Psalm 110:1), upon which the following question is asked,

how is he then his son? how can these things be reconciled? in what sense can he be both his Lord and son? (see Gill on "<4245>Matthew 22:45").

Ver. 45. *Then in the audience of all the people*, etc.] Whilst they were about him, and hearing him, and for their sakes too;

he said unto his disciples; yea, he spake to the multitude, as well as to the disciples, as appears from (<4201>Matthew 23:1).

Ver. 46. *Beware of the Scribes*, etc.] And also of the Pharisees; for they are joined together in Matthew:

which desire to walk in long robes: the rule for the length of a scholar's garment was this [f645];

> "his flesh must not appear under his garments, as the light linen garments, and the like, they make in Egypt; nor must his garments be drawn upon the ground, as the garments of proud men, but must reach to his heel, and his glove must reach the top of his fingers."

According to this rule, the garments of the doctors were to be so long as to cover the whole body, even down to their heels, but were not to be any longer; and by this it appears their garments were very long; but they did not always go by this rule; some had their garments so long as to have a train after them; (see Gill on "<4235>Matthew 23:5")

and love greetings in the markets; or in courts of judicature; they loved to be saluted with the titles of Rabbi, Master, and the like:

and the highest seats in the synagogues; which were next to the place where the book of the law was read and expounded, and where they might be seen by the people:

and the chief rooms at feasts; the uppermost; (see Gill on "⁴¹²³Matthew 23:6") and (see Gill on "⁴¹²³Matthew 23:7").

Ver. 47. *Which devour widows' houses*, etc.] As the characters of them, in the preceding verse, expose their pride, this shows their avarice; they were very voracious and cruel; they did not spare widows, but devoured their substance:

and for a show make long prayers; to cover their wickedness, pretending great devotion and religion;

the same shall receive greater damnation: than openly profane sinners; doing such wickedness under a cloak of religion, will aggravate their condemnation; (see Gill on "⁴¹²³Matthew 23:14").

CHAPTER 21

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 21

Ver. 1. *And he looked up*, etc.] As Christ sat over against the treasury, looking upon the ground, he lift up his eyes; for the treasury was not in an high place, or above Christ, who was right against it. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions leave out this clause.

And saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury; (see Gill on "<41241>Mark 12:41").

Ver. 2. *And he saw also a certain poor widow*, etc.] Whom he took particular notice of above all the rest: the poor, and the widow, are regarded by him, and are his care; nor are their mean services, done in faith, and from a principle of love, despised by him, but preferred to the greater services of others, where faith and love are wanting:

casting in thither two mites; the value of a farthing. The Persic version renders it, "two bottoms of yarn"; (see Gill on "<41242>Mark 12:42"):

Ver. 3. *And he said*, etc.] To his disciples, as the Ethiopic version adds; these he called to him, upon this occasion, as appears from (<41243>Mark 12:43)

of a truth I say unto you, that this poor woman hath cast in more than they all: than all the rich men; not in quantity, but in proportion to her ability; (see Gill on "<41243>Mark 12:43").

Ver. 4. *For all these have of their abundance*, etc.] Which they had remaining; the same Hebrew word ytr signifying to remain, and to abound: they had large possessions, and gave in much, and yet had a great deal left; out of which they

cast in unto the offerings of God; or "gifts of God": not as gifts unto him; or among the gifts of God; but into the treasury where the gifts, and freewill offerings were put; the same with the "Corban", in (<402706>Matthew 27:6) and so the Syriac version here renders it, "the house of the offering of God": and it is expressed in the plural; because there were several

chests, in which these gifts were put, for various uses; (see Gill on "<41241>Mark 12:41")

but she of her penury hath cast in all the living she had; (see Gill on "<41244>Mark 12:44").

Ver. 5. *And as some spake of the temple*, etc.] These were the disciples; Mark says, one of them; but it seems there were more than one; one might begin the discourse, and others join him:

how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts; (see Gill on "<40401>Matthew 24:1").

he said; what follows. This was as he went out of the temple.

Ver. 6. *As for these things which ye behold*, etc.] Some, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, read these words by way of interrogation; "are these the things which ye behold?" do ye look upon these with wonder and delight?

the days will come; and they are hastening on; a little while, a few years more:

in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down; (see Gill on "<40402>Matthew 24:2").

Ver. 7. *And they asked him*, etc.] That is, his disciples, when they were come to the Mount of Olives, and as he sat upon that, (<40403>Matthew 24:3)

saying, master, but when shall these things be? when the temple shall be destroyed; and one stone shall not be left upon another;

and what sign [will there be] when these things shall come to pass? which shows that this refers to the destruction of the temple, and so the signs following; (see Gill on "<40403>Matthew 24:3").

Ver. 8. *And he said, take heed that ye be not deceived*, etc.] With false Christs, and false prophets:

for many shall come in my name; making use of his name, taking it to them; not that they would pretend they were sent by him, but that they were he himself:

saying, I am [Christ]; so the Syriac and Persic versions supply as we do:

and the time draweth near; not that such will come, but when come, they will say, that the time of the deliverance of the Jewish nation from the Roman yoke is at hand:

go ye not therefore after them; do not be their disciples, or follow them where they would lead you; for nothing but destruction will be the consequence of it.

Ver. 9. *But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions*, etc.] Or seditions and tumults; "wars" may design the wars of the Romans, against the Jews; and the "commotions", or seditions, the internal troubles among themselves:

be not terrified; as if the destruction of the nation, city, and temple, would be at once:

for these things must first come to pass, but the end is not by and by; or "immediately". The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions leave out this last word, and read, as in (see Gill on "<4006>Matthew 24:6").

Ver. 10. *Then said he unto them, nation shall rise*, etc.] (See Gill on "<4007>Matthew 24:7").

Ver. 11. *And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences*, etc.] (See Gill on "<4007>Matthew 24:7").

and fearful sights; or "terrible things"; whether heard, or seen, as dreadful thunderings, and lightnings; and a voice heard in the temple, saying, let us go hence; and an idiot that went about several years together, saying, woe to the people, woe to the city, etc. a flame was seen in the temple, and the doors of it opened of themselves:

and great signs shall there be from heaven; as comets and blazing stars, a flaming sword, or a comet like one, hanging over Jerusalem, and armies in the air engaged against each other[f646]. The Syriac version adds, "and great winters there shall be"; that is, very long and cold; and so the Persic version, "and winter, and cold, shall be protracted".

Ver. 12. *But before all these*, etc.] Before all these things come to pass:

they shall lay their hands on you; as the high priest, the priests, and the captain of the temple did upon the apostles, (<4001>Acts 4:1,3,17,18)

and persecute you; as upon the death of Stephen, (<4001>Acts 8:1)

delivering you up to the synagogues; to be scourged there; or to the courts of judicature, the consistories of the Jews, their great sanhedrim; before these the apostles were brought, (<4406>Acts 4:6,7,15,17)

and into prisons; as were all the apostles together, and Peter at another time separately, (<4403>Acts 4:3,18 12:4)

being brought before kings and rulers, for my name's sake; for being called by his name, and calling upon it; for professing, and preaching his Gospel; (See Gill on "<4010>Matthew 10:18").

Ver. 13. *And it shall turn to you for a testimony*.] By this means they would have an opportunity of leaving their testimony for Christ before kings and rulers; and what they should meet with from them, would be a means of strengthening and confirming them in the truths of the Gospel; and be a proof and evidence to them of the certainty of the above things Christ had said should be accomplished; as well as be for a testimony against the rulers and governors, Jews, and Gentiles, before whom they should be convened; (see <4010>Matthew 10:18).

Ver. 14. *Settle it therefore in your hearts*, etc.] Resolve on this in your minds, and let it be a rule never to be departed from:

not to meditate before what you shall answer; not to sit down, and study a form of words, and scheme of things, what to reply to the ensnaring questions, that may be thought would be asked, by kings and rulers, or any of the judges before whom they should be brought; it being natural for persons, especially of a low life, to be timorous and fearful, to appear before such great personages, and to be thoughtful and solicitous what to say to any question that may be asked them; (see Gill on "<4010>Matthew 10:19").

Ver. 15. *For I will give you a mouth*, etc.] A faculty of speaking, a freedom of expression, a door of utterance, a good degree of elocution, to speak properly, pertinently and freely to any point:

and wisdom; to answer with great propriety, and in the most prudent manner, to any difficult and ensnaring question; and to furnish with such knowledge of the Gospel, and with such gifts and abilities to preach and defend it, that they should be able to give a clear and distinct account of it, and prove every point in it, by the most strong and convincing arguments, and vindicate it against all objections:

which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. This was remarkably fulfilled in Peter, and John, and in Stephen, (Acts 4:13,14 6:10). The first word, “gainsay”, is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions.

Ver. 16. *And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren*, etc.] (See Gill on “Matthew 10:21”)

and kinsfolks, and friends. The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions add, “your”, to each of these relations, as your parents, etc.

and some of you shall they cause to be put to death; as Stephen was stoned to death, and James, the brother of John, Herod killed with the sword, (Acts 7:58 12:2) and indeed all of them were put to death, except John, before the destruction of Jerusalem.

Ver. 17. *And ye shall be hated of all men*, etc.] (See Gill on “Matthew 10:22”). (See Gill on “Matthew 24:9”).

Ver. 18. *But there shall not art hair of your head perish*.] That is, without the will of God, as in (Matthew 10:29,30) or not one shall perish, but what shall be restored again: or the sense is, that though they should be betrayed by their friends, and hated, and persecuted, and imprisoned by their enemies, yet they should be no losers in the main; all things should work together for their good; and though even they should be put to death, yet that would be to their advantage, since instead of a temporal, troublesome life, they should enjoy an eternal and happy one: for this cannot be understood of entire preservation from all corporeal damages and hurt; seeing it is, before declared, that they should be put into prisons, and some of them put to death; nor of their preservation at the destruction of Jerusalem, for none of them was living at that time, but the Apostle John, and he was not in those parts.

Ver. 19. *In your patience, possess ye your souls*.] By patiently bearing all afflictions, reproaches, indignities, and persecutions, enjoy yourselves; let nothing disturb or distress you; possess that peace and joy in your souls, which the world cannot take away; (see Romans 5:3-5). The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “ye shall possess”: and the sense may be this; by patient continuance, or by perseverance in the ways of God, and the truths of Christ unto the end, ye shall be saved; shall find your lives, and enjoy your souls, as in (Matthew 10:22, 24:13).

Ver. 20. *And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions read, “with an army”; that is, with the Roman army, as it was by the army which Titus Vespasian brought against it, and besieged it with:

then know that the desolation thereof is nigh; signifying, that there would be no deliverance to be expected, as when the Assyrian army under Rabshakeh appeared against it; but that whenever the Roman army besieged it, its destruction might be looked upon as inevitable; nor was the siege raised until it was destroyed, which was about four years after.

Ver. 21. *Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains*, etc.] (See Gill on “<40246>Matthew 24:16”).

And let them which are in the midst of it; either of Judea, as the preceding clause seems to direct the sense; or in Jerusalem, and which indeed was in the midst of Judea; and this sense is favoured by the Persic version, which renders it, “within the city”; let them go out of it, as the Christians did to Pella, Mount Libanus, and other places:

and let not them that are in the countries; either foreign countries, or in towns and villages;

enter thereinto: either into Judea, or into Jerusalem; contrary to this advice, they came from all countries to the feast of the passover at Jerusalem, and were there shut up by the siege and destroyed [f647].

Ver. 22. *For these be the days of vengeance*, etc.] Of God's vengeance on the Jewish nation, for their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah;

that all things which are written may be fulfilled; as in Moses and the prophets; (see <051930>Deuteronomy 28:20-68 32:22-26 <230610>Isaiah 6:10,11,12 <270926>Daniel 9:26,27)

Ver. 23. *But woe unto them that are with-child*, etc.] (See Gill on “<40249>Matthew 24:19”).

For there shall be great distress in the land; of Judea. The Greek word αναγκη, here used, properly signifies “necessity”, but here intends afflictions and distress; in which sense it is often used by the Septuagint, as in (<19A706>Psalm 107:6,13,19,28 119:143 <240915>Jeremiah 9:15) and it is also by the Targumists adopted into their language, and used in the same sense [f648]: and indeed, the distress was very great, and such a time of tribulation, as

was never known since the beginning of the world, nor never will be the like; what with the enemy without, and their seditions and divisions within, the robberies, murders, and famine, which prevailed and abounded, their miseries are not to be expressed:

and wrath upon this people; of the Jews; even the wrath of God, as well as of man, which came upon them to the uttermost; and their own historian observes, that God, who had condemned the people, turned every way of salvation to their destruction [f649].

Ver. 24. *And they shall fall by the edge of the sword*, etc.] Or "mouth of the sword", an Hebraism; see the Septuagint in (Judges 1:8,25). The number of those that perished by the famine and sword, were eleven hundred thousand [f650]:

and shall be led away captive unto all nations; when the city was taken, the most beautiful of the young men were kept for the triumph; and those that were above seventeen years of age, were sent bound into Egypt, to labour in the mines; many were distributed through the provinces, to be destroyed in the theatres, by the sword or beasts; and those that were under seventeen years of age, were led captive to be sold; and the number of these only, were ninety-seven thousand [f651]:

and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles; the Romans, who ploughed up the city and temple, and laid them level with the ground; and which spot has been ever since inhabited by such as were not Jews, as Turks and Papists: and so it will be,

until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled; that is, till the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in; until the Gospel is preached all over the world, and all God's elect are gathered in out of all nations; and then the Jews will be converted, and return to their own land, and rebuild and inhabit Jerusalem; but till that time, it will be as it has been, and still is possessed by Gentiles. The word "Gentiles", is left out in one of Beza's exemplars, and so it is likewise in the Persic version.

Ver. 25. *And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon*, etc.] They shall be darkened, and suffer very strange and surprising eclipses:

and in the stars; they shall fall from heaven, as in (Matthew 24:29) and so the Ethiopic version reads here: all which, as it may be understood in a literal sense, so it may likewise in figurative and mystical one, and be

interpreted of the changes there should be in the Jewish state; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:29"). So the Jewish writers [f652] interpret the sun, the light, the moon, and stars, in (Ecclesiastes 12:2). By the "sun" they understand the kingdom of the house of David; by "the light", the law; by "the moon", the sanhedrim; and by the stars, the Rabbins; and the same seem to be designed by the stars here:

and upon the earth distress of nations; upon the land of Israel; in the several nations and countries belonging to it; as Galilee of the nations, Judea, and the region beyond Jordan, shall be in great distress:

with perplexity; of mind, not knowing what to do, which way to go, or step to take; the Syriac version, instead of it, reads "clapping, or pressing of the hands"; which is done by persons, when in an agony and great distress:

the sea and the waves roaring; which design some unusual and extraordinary storms and tempests, and inundations in the sea of Galilee, or Tiberias, which would be so very terrible, as to cause great uneasiness, distress, and perplexity; and so some versions render it, "because of the sea", etc.

Ver. 26. *Men's hearts failing them for fear*, etc.] Of what these signs in the heaven, earth, and sea portend:

and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; on the land of Judea:

for the powers of heaven shall be shaken; (see Gill on "Matthew 24:29").

Ver. 27. *And then shall they see the son of man*, etc.] (See Gill on "Matthew 24:30").

Ver. 28. *And when these things begin to come to pass*, etc.] When the first of these signs appears, or any one of them:

then look up and lift up your heads; be cheerful and pleasant; do not hang down your heads as bulrushes, but erect them, and put on a cheerful countenance, and look upwards, from whence your help comes; and look out wistfully and intently, for your salvation and deliverance:

for your redemption draweth nigh; not the redemption of their souls from sin, Satan, the law, the world, death, and hell; for that was to be obtained,

and was obtained, before any of these signs took place; nor the redemption of their bodies at the last day, in the resurrection, called the day of redemption; for this respects something that was to be, in the present age and generation; (see <42132>Luke 21:32) but the deliverance of the apostles and other Christians, from the persecutions of the Jews, which were very violent, and held till these times, and then they were freed from them: or by redemption is meant, the Redeemer, the son of man, who shall now come in power and glory, to destroy the Jews, and deliver his people; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “for he draws nigh who shall save you”.

Ver. 29. *And he spake to them a parable*, etc.] That is, to his disciples:

behold the fig tree, and all the trees; that, or any other tree; (See Gill on “<40432>Matthew 24:32”).

Ver. 30. *When they now shoot forth*, etc.] Their buds, branches, and leaves; the Vulgate Latin adds, “of themselves”:

ye see and know of your own selves; without any hint, or direction from others, the case is so plain and obvious; the Syriac and Arabic versions read, “of them”; the trees, by their putting forth their buds and leaves; the Persic and Ethiopic versions leave out the clause “of yourselves”; and none of the Oriental versions lead the word see:

the summer is now nigh at hand: (see <40432>Matthew 24:32).

Ver. 31. *So likewise when ye see these things come to pass*, etc.] The signs before mentioned, in (<42108>Luke 21:8-11, 20,25,26).

Know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand: a more visible and glorious display of the kingdom of the Messiah, in the destruction of his enemies, the Jews; (see <41001>Mark 9:1).

Ver. 32. *Verily I say unto you, this generation*, etc.] (See Gill on “<40434>Matthew 24:34”). (See Gill on “<40435>Matthew 24:35”). All the Oriental versions read here as there, “all these things”; before related.

Ver. 33. (See Gill on “<42132>Luke 21:32”).

Ver. 34. *And take heed to yourselves*, etc.] To your souls and bodies, to your lives and conversations; be upon your watch and guard:

lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness; with excessive eating and drinking; for these, as they oppress and burden the

stomach, and disorder the body, so they stupefy the senses, and make the mind dull and heavy, and unfit for spiritual and religious exercises; such as reading, meditation, and prayer:

and cares of this life; concealing food and clothing, what you shall eat or drink, or wherewith ye shall be clothed; all such anxious and worldly cares, being that to the soul, as intemperance is to the body; for there is such a thing as being inebriated with the world, as well as with wine:

and so that day come upon you unawares; the day of Jerusalem's destruction; and this suggests, that such would be the carnality and security of some persons, and so they would be surprised with ruin at once; (see Luke 17:26-30).

Ver. 35. *For as a snare shall it come*, etc.] In which a bird is suddenly taken, and cannot get out again; the Persic version renders it, “as lightning and the splendour of the sun”; which break out at once, and enlighten the whole earth; so the destruction of the Jewish nation should be sudden and unavoidable, and universal; for it should come

on all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth: or land of Judea; and so it was, for not only Jerusalem, but all Judea, and Galilee, suffered in this desolation.

Ver. 36. *Watch ye therefore, and pray always*, etc.] Watch against every sin, snare, and temptation; particularly, against the above things, surfeiting, drunkenness, and worldly cares; pray continually, for fresh supplies of grace:

that ye may be counted worthy; not for watchfulness and prayer, but through the grace and goodness of God:

to escape all these things that shall come to pass; the dreadful miseries and distress, that shall come upon the Jews:

and to stand before the Son of man; with intrepidity, confidence, and pleasure; and meet him at his coming in this way, with joy and comfort; and likewise at death, and at judgment; (see 1 John 2:28).

Ver. 37. *And in the day time he was teaching in the temple*, etc.] That is, Jesus, as the Persic version expresses it; his constant method every day, till the feast of passover came, was to go up to the temple, and there openly

and freely preach the Gospel to the people, who resorted thither in great numbers, for that purpose:

and at night he went out; of the temple, and out of the city:

and abode in the mount that is called the Mount of Olives; very likely to pray, both for himself and for his disciples, his time with them being short.

Ver. 38. *And all the people came early in the morning*, etc.] Not all the people in Jerusalem, every inhabitant of the city; this word “all”, is often to be taken with a restriction, and here it designs a large number; the Persic version renders it, “vast multitudes”: these, some out of curiosity, and others from a real love to him, and his ministry, rose betimes, and came early,

to him in the temple, to hear him; which is said, in commendation of Christ's hearers, and is worthy of imitation; as the former verse is a commendation of the preacher, in his constancy and diligence in his work, and following it with his prayers.

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 22

Ver. 1. *Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh*, etc.] Which lasted seven days; during which the Jews eat their bread without leaven, in commemoration of the haste in which they went out of Egypt; being such, that they had not time to leaven their dough, but took it with their kneadingtroughs along with them, as it was; and as figurative of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, with which the Gospel feast is to be kept; (see <02234>Exodus 12:34, <461508>1 Corinthians 5:8).

Which is called the passover; because the Lord passed over the houses of the Israelites, when he slew all the firstborn in Egypt; now the time of this feast drew near, when the conspiracy was formed against the life of Christ: Matthew and Mark are more precise, and suggest, that it was two days before the passover; (see <402602>Matthew 26:2, <411401>Mark 14:1).

Ver. 2. *And the chief priests and Scribes*, etc.] Matthew adds, “and the elders of the people”; which made up the great sanhedrim and council of the nation; these met together, not in their usual place the temple, but at the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest; (see <402403>Matthew 24:3).

And sought how they might kill him; that is, “Jesus”, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read; they had determined before, upon the advice of Caiaphas, to put him to death, and very likely had fixed what kind of death he should die; (see <431149>John 11:49,50,53) and now they consult together, of the manner of bringing it about, and at what time; and the majority were not for doing it on a feast day, when there was a great concourse of people, but with more privacy:

for they feared the people: which were now in great multitudes with him, who came along with him, from Galilee, and other parts; and had hosanna'd him into the city, and still abode with him, and their numbers were increasing; and the sanhedrim were aware, that at the passover there would be still a greater company of people from all parts of the land; and they might conclude, that he would have a large number of his friends come out of Galilee, where he had been for the most part teaching, and working

miracles; and they were afraid, should they lay hold on him publicly, the people would rise and stone them; at least would rescue him out of their hands, and disappoint them of their designs.

Ver. 3. *Then entered Satan into Judas*, etc.] At the same time that the sanhedrim were sitting, and consulting about the death of Christ, Satan, or the adversary, as the word signifies, the devil, who is the enemy of the Messiah, the woman's seed, entered into Judas; not corporeally, as he did into those that were possessed by him; but he entered "into his heart", as the Ethiopic version renders it; he put it into his heart to betray him, as it is said in (<43202>John 13:2) he stirred up, and worked upon the corruptions of his heart; suggested evil things to his mind, and baited his temptations agreeable to his malice and covetousness: and this man was

surnamed Iscariot; to distinguish him from another apostle of the same name; concerning this his surname, (see Gill on "<40104>Matthew 10:4"), (see Gill on "<43202>John 13:2").

Being of the number of the twelve; apostles, or disciples of Jesus, as the Persic version reads, and which is an aggravation of his sin: now this being two days before the passover, shows, that the sop which Judas took, after which the devil entered into him, (<43227>John 13:27) could not be the passover sop, but was the sop he ate at the supper in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, so long before it.

Ver. 4. *And he went his way*, etc.] From Christ, and the rest of the apostles, out of Bethany; and when it was night, about two miles from Jerusalem, whither he went directly:

and communed with the chief priests and captains; that is, of the temple, as in (<42252>Luke 22:52) and so the Persic version reads, "the militia of the temple"; and the Syriac version renders it, "the captains of the militia of the temple"; instead of captains, the Ethiopic version, reads "Scribes", and so does the Arabic, and which, adds, "and the soldiers"; but these captains were not Roman officers, or soldiers, but ecclesiastical persons, who presided in the temple, and were heads and governors, over bodies of men employed there, of which sort were the following [f653]:

> "there were fifteen, ˆynwmm, presidents, or governors in the sanctuary, and so they were appointed for ever over each of these fifteen things, one governor; and they are these: one was over the

> times, or solemn seasons; the second, over the shutting of the gates: the third, over those that kept watch; the fourth, over the singers; the fifth, over the cymbal, with the rest of the singing instruments; the sixth, over the lots; the seventh over the nests (of doves); the eighth, over the seals, or tickets; the ninth, over the drink offerings; the tenth, over the sick (priests); the eleventh, over the waters; the twelfth, over the business of the shewbread; the thirteenth, over the business of the incense; the fourteenth, over the business of the vail; and the fifteenth, over the business of the priests' garments; and every one of these governors had under him "abundance of men", that so they might prepare the business they presided over."

These seem rather to be meant, than the watch in the temple; which, though kept in several places, there was but one single person that presided over it; as appears from the above account, and from what follows; and who was called the man of the mountain of the house, or the governor of the temple [f654]:

> "in three places the priests kept watch in the sanctuary, in the house of Abtines, and in the house of Nitzotz, and in the house of Moked, and the Levites in twenty and one places — the man of the mountain of the house, went round every ward with torches burning before him, and every one that was not standing, he said unto him, peace be on thee; and if he found he was asleep, he struck him with his staff, and had power to burn his garments."

Whence it does not appear to me, that there were heads or captains over every ward, as Dr. Lightfoot suggests, but one over them all; perhaps these captains may be the same with the governors of the temple, as in 1 Esdras: And Helkias, Zacharias, and Syelus, the governors of the temple, gave to the priests for the passover two thousand and six hundred sheep, and three hundred calves. (1 Esdras 1:8) Did very carefully oversee the holy works, assisting the ancients of the Jews and governors of the temple. (1 Esdras 7:2)

But be these who they will, Judas it seems was informed where, and upon what they were met together, and he went to them, and conversed with them:

how he might betray him unto them; in the most secret manner, and with, the least noise and disturbance.

Ver. 5. *And they were glad*, etc.] For nothing could be more opportune and agreeable to them, than that one of his disciples should meet them at this juncture, and offer to put him into their hands in the most private manner;

and covenanted to give him money. The Ethiopic version read, "thirty pieces of silver"; which was the sum they agreed to give him, and he accepted of; (see <4026>Matthew 26:15).

Ver. 6. *And he promised*, etc.] He undertook to deliver him into their hands; he laid himself under obligation to do it; he faithfully promised he would. The Arabic version renders it, he gave thanks; for the money he received, being well pleased he had made such a bargain; and so the word here used sometimes signifies; and indeed commonly either to confess; or to give thanks, in which latter sense it is used, in (<4025>Matthew 11:25) but here rather it is to be understood in the sense of promising:

and sought opportunity; the two days following before the passover:

to betray him unto them in the absence of the people: when they were gone from him, and he was alone; but found no opportunity of doing it this way, which they had agreed upon with him, and he had promised, until the night of the passover, when he was alone in the garden with his disciples.

Ver. 7. *Then came the day of unleavened bread*, etc.] The first of them, the fourteenth day of the month Nisan:

when the passover must be killed; that is, the passover lamb, as the Persic version renders it; and which, according to the law in (<2006>Exodus 12:6) was to be done between the two evenings; (see Gill on "<4027>Matthew 26:17").

Ver. 8. *And he sent Peter and John*, etc.] That is, Jesus sent them, as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions express it; these were two favourite disciples of Christ, and were now sent by him from Bethany to Jerusalem:

saying, go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat; it together; so servants used to be sent, to go and prepare the passover for their masters; (see Gill on "<4027>Matthew 26:17").

Ver. 9. *And they said unto him, where wilt thou that we prepare*?] Meaning, not in what village, town, or city, for it was a fixed and determined thing, that the passover should be eaten at Jerusalem, and nowhere else; (see <05:16:02>Deuteronomy 16:2), but in what house in Jerusalem?

Ver. 10. *And he said unto them, behold*, etc.] Giving them a sign, whereby they should know the very house, where he would keep the passover:

when ye are entered into the city; that is, the city of Jerusalem; for Christ and his disciples were now at Bethany, from whence he sent Peter and John thither, where only the passover was to be killed and eaten:

there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; the Persic version adds, “upon his back”; for which he had been to some well, or fountain in the city, in order to mix with wine at the passover:

follow him into the house where he entereth in; so that it seems they were to return, and go after him into the house, where he went with his pitcher of water; this was a trial of the faith and obedience of the disciples, and, as the sequel shows, a proof of the omniscience and deity of Christ.

Ver. 11. *And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house*, etc.] The master of it; for the man bearing the pitcher of water seems to be a servant only:

the master saith unto thee: by these his two disciples, Peter and John; it looks as if the word “master”, as peculiar to Christ, and by way of eminency belonging to him, (<40:23:10>Matthew 23:10) was well known to those who believed, and were followers of him, as the man of this house might be; (see <43:11:28>John 11:28). The Syriac and Persic versions read, “our master saith”, and leave out the other phrase, to thee:

where is the guest chamber; or dining room: the word properly signifies an inn, or place to wait at; so called, from travellers unloosing their burdens there, either from themselves, or their beasts; the Arabic version renders it, “the place of my rest”: a place for refreshment and feasting:

where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? who were a sufficient number to eat the passover lamb by themselves; (see Gill on “<40:26:18>Matthew 26:18”).

Ver. 12. *And he shall show you a large upper room furnished*, etc.] With all things necessary, to eat and drink out of, at the passover;

there make ready. The Ethiopic version adds, “for us”, as in (<41145>Mark 14:15). The Persic version renders it, “there prepare a place”; but this was prepared already; the words design the preparation of the passover, and every thing proper for it.

Ver. 13. *And they went*, etc.] From Bethany to Jerusalem:

and found as he had said unto them; they met the man with the pitcher of water, and by following him, found the house Christ meant to keep the passover at; they told the master of it, what Christ ordered them, who immediately showed them a very convenient room, as he had described to them:

and they made ready the passover; provided a lamb, and got it killed and dressed, and prepared every thing necessary for the keeping of the feast, according to divine appointment; (see Gill on “<40269>Matthew 26:19”).

Ver. 14. *And when the hour was come*, etc.] When it was evening, the last of the two evenings, when it was dark, at least after six o'clock; (see Gill on “<40120>Matthew 26:20”).

he sat down; or lay along on a couch, as was the custom; see the note, as before:

and the twelve apostles with him; for Judas, after he had made his bargain with the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, came and took his place with the rest of the apostles, both to cover his sin, and to watch the best opportunity of betraying his master.

Ver. 15. *And he said unto them*, etc.] The twelve apostles, as they were eating the passover, it being usual to talk and converse much at such a time; (see Gill on “<40121>Matthew 26:21”).

With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; not for the sake of eating; for though he was traduced as a glutton, and did often eat and drink in a free and familiar way, both at the tables of Pharisees, and of publicans and sinners; yet he was not a man given to appetite; witness his fast of forty days and forty nights, and his great negligence of himself, which sometimes obliged his disciples to pray him to eat; (see <43031>John 4:31,34). Indeed, according to the Jewish canons, it was not judged proper that a man should eat much on the day before the passover, that he might be hungry, and eat the passover, ^wbatb, “with

desire" [f655], or with an appetite. Our Lord may allude to this; but this was not the thing he meant; nor merely does he say this on account of the passover, as it was God's ordinance; though as he was made under the law, and that was in his heart, he had a great regard to it, and a delight in it, which he had shown in his frequent and constant attendance on it from his youth: but though he had kept many passovers, yet of none of them did he say what he does of this, which was his fourth passover from his entrance on his public ministry, and his last: two reasons are suggested in the text why he so greatly desired to eat this passover; the one is, because he should eat it "with" his disciples; an emphasis lies on the phrase, "with you", to whom, and not so much to the passover, and the eating of that, was his desire; as it is to all his people: it was so from everlasting, when he desired them as his spouse and bride; and in time, when he became incarnate, suffered, died, and gave himself for them: his desire is towards them whilst in unregeneracy, that they may be converted; and to them when converted, notwithstanding all their backslidings and revoltings. His desire is to their persons, and the comeliness and beauty of them, which he himself has put upon them; and to their graces, and the exercise of them, with which he is ravished; and to their company and communion with them, which he chooses and delights in: and his desire is towards their being with him to all eternity, and which he delighted in the fore views of from eternity; and is the joy set before him, and which carried him through his sufferings and death; and is the amount and accomplishment of all his prayers and intercession: and the other reason of this his strong desire in the text is, that this was the last passover, and that his sufferings and death were just at hand, and which he longed to have over; not that he desired these sufferings, for the sake of them, which could not be agreeable to, and desirable by his human nature; but because of the effects of them; since hereby justice would be satisfied, the law would be fulfilled, sin atoned for, and the salvation of his elect obtained; for whom he bore the strongest affection, and whom he loved with a love of complacency, and whose salvation he most earnestly desired, and even sufferings for the sake of it.

Ver. 16. *For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof*, etc.] Of the passover, and which now, with the rest of the ceremonial law, was to be abolished:

until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God; signifying, not that he should eat of it in the kingdom of God, where it would be fulfilled; seeing the passover was never more to take place, neither in the Gospel dispensation,

nor in the heavenly glory; both which may be meant by the kingdom of God; but that he should never eat more of it in this ceremonial way, since it would have its accomplishment in each of those states: and it has been already fulfilled under the Gospel dispensation, which is often meant by the kingdom of God; in himself, who is the passover sacrificed for us, (1 Corinthians 5:7) for the passover lamb was a type of Christ, and he is the sum and substance of that shadow, and the fulfilling end of that type; it had its accomplishment in him; of which (see Gill on "1 Corinthians 5:7") and it will also be fulfilled in the kingdom of heaven, or eternal glory, when there will be a perfect deliverance of the saints from sin, Satan, and the world; which the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt was typical of, commemorated in the passover; and therefore then will be sung the song of Moses, and the Lamb; and then will Christ, and his true followers, eat and drink together in his Father's kingdom, and spend an endless eternity in never fading joys and pleasures.

Ver. 17. *And he took the cup and gave thanks*, etc.] There were four cups of wine drank at the passover, which the poorest man in Israel was obliged to drink; and over each of which a blessing was pronounced [f656]: and this was one of them, and seems to be the first; for the passover was begun by mixing a cup of wine, and blessing it, or giving thanks over it [f657]; and which was usually done in the following manner [f658]:

> "blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, the King of the world, who hast created "the fruit of the vine": blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who hath chosen us above all people, and hath exalted us above every tongue, and hath sanctified us by his commandments; and thou hast given unto us, O Lord our God, in love, the stated festivals for joy, and the feasts and seasons for rejoicing; this day of the feast of unleavened bread, this time of our freedom, a holy convocation, in remembrance of the going out of Egypt; for thou hast chosen us, and thou hast sanctified us, above all people; and the feasts of thine holiness with joy and rejoicing thou hast made us to inherit: blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast sanctified Israel, and the seasons: blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who hath kept us alive, and preserved us, and hast brought us to this time."

After this every one drank of his cup, and put it on the table: accordingly it follows,

and said, take this and divide it among yourselves; that is, every one drink of it.

Ver. 18. *For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine*, etc.] That is, wine; see the blessing at the passover cup in the notes on the preceding verse:

until the kingdom of God shall come; with power, as in (<41901>Mark 9:1) in the resurrection of Christ from the dead; in his exaltation and session at God's right hand; in the pouring forth of the Spirit on the apostles; in the conversion of great multitudes, both in Judea, and in the Gentile world; in the destruction of the Jews; in the latter day glory; and in the ultimate state of happiness and bliss in the world to come. The Ethiopic version reads, "until I drink it new in the kingdom of God"; as in (<41425>Mark 14:25 (see Gill on "<40629>Matthew 26:29")).

Ver. 19. *And he took bread and gave thanks*, etc.] Or blessed it, as in (<40626>Matthew 26:26, <41422>Mark 14:22). Here begins the account of the Lord's supper after the passover was eaten;

and brake it, and gave unto them; the disciples, as is expressed in (<40626>Matthew 26:26)

saying, this is my body; (see Gill on "<40626>Matthew 26:26")

which is given for you; or will be given for you, as an offering for sin in your room and stead; and accordingly it was given into the hands of men, and of justice, and unto death. The phrase denotes the substitution and sacrifice of Christ in the room of his people, and the voluntariness of it; and is only mentioned by Luke in this account: the Apostle Paul writes, which is broken for you, (<461124>1 Corinthians 11:24) alluding to the breaking of the bread in the ordinance, and as expressing the bruises, wounds, sufferings, and death of Christ: the Ethiopic version here adds, "for the redemption of many".

This do in remembrance of me; that is, eat this bread in remembrance of my love to you, and in commemoration of my body being offered up for you. Observe this ordinance in the manner I now institute it, in time to come, in memory of what I am about to do for you; for this direction does not only regard the present time and action, but is intended as a rule to be observed by the churches of Christ in all ages, to his second coming: and it is to be observed, that the Lord's supper is not a reiteration, but a

commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ. This phrase is only mentioned by Luke here, and by the Apostle Paul, who adds it also at the drinking of the cup, (<46124>1 Corinthians 11:24,25). The Persic version here reads, “do this perpetually in remembrance of me”.

Ver. 20. *Likewise also the cup after supper*, etc.] Both after the passover, and the Lord's supper; that is, he took the cup after they had eaten the bread, and gave thanks over it, and gave it to his disciples, bidding them drink of it, as in (<40267>Matthew 26:27), (see Gill on “<40267>Matthew 26:27”):

saying, this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you. The Ethiopic version reads, “for many”; as in (<40268>Matthew 26:28) where it is added, “for the remission of sins”; (see Gill on “<40268>Matthew 26:28”).

Ver. 21. *But behold the hand of him that betrayeth me*, etc.] By the “hand” is meant, not figuratively the counsel, contrivance, and conspiracy of Judas to betray him, as the word is used in (<10419>2 Samuel 14:19) but literally the hand of Judas, which was then dipping in the dish with Christ, (<40623>Matthew 26:23) and it follows here, is

with me on the table; and is an aggravation of his sin, that one that sat with him at his table, ate bread with him, and dipped his morsel in the same dish, should be the betrayer of him, according to the prophecy in (<19409>Psalm 41:9) as well as describes and points at the person that should do this action, even one of his disciples; for which disciples, he had just now said, his body is given, and his blood is shed. The phrase, “with me”, is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions. From Luke's account it appears most clearly, that Judas was not only at the passover, but at the Lord's supper, since this was said when both were over.

Ver. 22. *And truly the son of man goeth*, etc.] That is, dies, which is going the way of all the earth, (<06314>Joshua 23:14)

as it was determined; in the counsels and purposes of God, and agreed to by Christ in the covenant of grace; (see <44223>Acts 2:23, 4:28) the death of Christ, the manner of it, and the means by which it was brought about, were all predetermined by God; yet this did not, in the least, excuse the sin of those concerned in it, nor exempt them from punishment:

but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed; who not only came to an untimely end, and died an infamous death by his own hands, but went to his own place, the place of everlasting torments allotted him: wherefore in

(<40>Matthew 26:24) it is added, “it had been good for that man if he had not been born”; (see Gill on “<40>Matthew 26:24”).

Ver. 23. *And they began to inquire among themselves*, etc.] Two days before, at the supper in Bethany, when the same thing was hinted to them, they looked at one another, (<43>John 13:22) as persons in the utmost surprise and consternation, not being able, for a while, either to speak to Christ, or one another; but now they inquired among themselves, and of Christ likewise, (<40>Matthew 26:21)

which of them it was that should do this thing; so barbarous, shocking, and horrible.

Ver. 24. *And there was also a strife among them*, etc.] The Persic version reads, “at a certain time there was a contention among the apostles”; and some think, that this refers to the time when the mother of Zebedee's two sons asked the favour of Christ, to set one of them at his right hand, and the other at his left, in his kingdom; which greatly incensed the other disciples, and occasioned a dispute about precedence; when our Lord interposed, and used much the same arguments as here; and which, it is thought, Luke here inserts out of the proper place. The Ethiopic version renders it, “then his disciples disputed among themselves”; pinning it down to this very time: and what might give occasion to the present dispute, may be what Christ had said concerning the kingdom of God, (<42>Luke 22:16,18) which they understanding of the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, and fancying, by his words, that it was near at hand, began to strive among themselves who should be the greatest in it; or it might be brought on by their inquiry among themselves, who should betray him, which might lead them on each one to throw off the imputation from himself, and to commend himself as a steady follower of Jesus, and to express his hopes of being his chief favourite, and principal minister in his kingdom: for the strife was,

which of them should be accounted the greatest; by Christ; or that should be so in his kingdom. Perhaps the contention might be chiefly between Peter, James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, and who were the favourite disciples of Christ; and Peter might urge his seniority, and what Christ had said to him, (<40>Matthew 16:18,19) and the rather, since it is certain Satan was now busy about him; wherefore Christ calls him by name, and singles him out among the rest, (<42>Luke 22:31).

Ver. 25. *And he said unto them*, etc.] The disciples; that is, Jesus said to them, as the Syriac and Persic versions express:

the kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; by which our Lord would dissuade his disciples from seeking to introduce a superiority over one another, since this was the practice of the Heathens, of the men of the world, of ignorant Gentiles; whereas Christ's kingdom was a spiritual kingdom, and not of this world, and therefore, not to be managed in such a way.

And they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors; either by themselves, or by their court flatterers, to cover their ambition, tyranny, and cruelty. Two of the King's of Egypt were called by the name Euergetes [f659]; the word that is here used, and translated "benefactors"; and it was commonly given to other kings, princes, and men in power: so Cyrus was called by the Armenians; Antigonus by the Greeks; and Phylacus among the Persians: the same name was given to Mithridates king of Pontus, to Titus Aelius Hadrianus, to Menander, to Marcus Aurelius Severus, and to Cato Uticensis, and others [f660].

Ver. 26. *But ye shall not be so*, etc.] (See Gill on "Matthew 20:26")

but he that is greatest among you; in age or gifts, or would be thought to be the greatest, who is most ambitious of grandeur and authority, which perhaps might be Peter's case, who was the oldest man:

let him be as the younger; as John, the beloved disciple, who was the youngest of them; and be as modest, and as humble as he, and reckon himself as in his place, and condescend to men of low estates, and esteem each other, even the youngest, better than himself. So the phrase, ary[zkyh abrkyh [f661], "both greater and lesser", is used of the elder and younger.

And he that is chief; that is, a spiritual ruler and governor in the church of God, as all the disciples were:

as he that doth serve; for the apostles and ministers of the word, though they are over others in the Lord, and have the rule over them, yet they are servants for Jesus' sake, and so ought to reckon themselves; (see Gill on "Matthew 20:27").

Ver. 27. *For whether is greater*, etc.] Christ appeals to themselves, and puts a case that is plain and obvious to any one, who is the greater, and more honourable person;

he that sitteth at meat; that sits, or lies down at table, and another waits on him:

or he that serveth? that stands behind, observes orders, and ministers to those that sit down:

is not he that sitteth at meat? you, and every one must own, that he is the greatest, and most honourable person:

but I am among you as he that serveth; Christ took upon him the form of a servant, and instead of being ministered unto, ministered to others; and had very lately, but two days before, gird himself, and took a basin and a towel, and washed and wiped the feet of his disciples: now our Lord, by his own example throughout the whole of his conduct among them, as well as by such a single action, would dissuade from their ambitious views of superiority over each other, and learn of him who was meek and lowly, and by love serve one another.

Ver. 28. *Ye are they which have continued with me*, etc.] From the beginning of his ministry, to that very time, they abode by him, and never departed from him, when others withdrew and walked no more with him:

in my temptations: not in the wilderness by Satan; for they were not with him then, not being as yet called to be his disciples and followers: but in his afflictions, by the reproaches, and cavils, and ensnaring questions of the Scribes and Pharisees, and their attempts upon him to take away his life by stoning, etc. which were trials and temptations to him. So the Ethiopic version renders it, “in my affliction”: now, since they had stood their ground, and firmly adhered to him in all his trials, he would have them still continue with him, and in his interest, though they should not have that temporal glory and grandeur they expected; but, on the contrary, fresh troubles and exercises, reproach, persecution, and death itself; and, for their encouragement, he promises both pleasure and honour, though of another sort, than what they were seeking after.

Ver. 29. *And I appoint unto you a kingdom*, etc.] Not a temporal one, but a spiritual one; and either intends that they should have in the government of the church, peculiar to them, as apostles, they being set in the first, and

highest place, and office, in the church; and have the keys of the kingdom of heaven, or the Gospel dispensation, and church state, committed to them, whereby they should open the door of faith to men, both to Jews and Gentiles; and have the power of binding and loosing, or of pronouncing things to be lawful or unlawful to be retained and used, and even of remitting sins in a ministerial and declarative way; and not only of rebuking and reproving for sin with authority, but even of inflicting corporeal punishment on delinquents, and that in a very severe way, as in the cases of Ananias and Sapphira, Elymas the sorcerer, the incestuous person at Corinth, and Hymenaeus and Philetus: or the kingdom of grace, which they had in common with all the saints, which lies not in outward things, but in righteousness, peace, and joy, and which can never be moved, or taken away; by virtue of which Christ reigns in the hearts of his people, and they are kings, and priests to God, and have power, as princes, with God and men, and overcome, and reign over their own lusts, and the world and Satan: or that kingdom, and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom, which shall be given to the saints of the Most High, (<27027>Daniel 7:27) in the latter day glory and kingdom state of Christ on earth, when the saints shall reign with him; or the kingdom of glory prepared from the foundation of the world; a gift of our heavenly Father's, which the saints are called unto, made meet for, and have a right unto, in Christ, and are heirs of, and into which he will introduce them at the last day: and indeed, all these senses may be taken into the account of this text:

as my Father hath appointed unto me; a kingdom, not of nature and providence, which he has in right of nature, being of the same essence, and having the same perfections with his Father; and in right of creation, all being made by him; for this is not given, or appointed to him; nor is he accountable for it to any, since he receives it not from any: but his mediatorial kingdom, which is given him, and which he will deliver up the account of to his Father another day; (see <27014>Daniel 7:14, <461524>1 Corinthians 15:24) which took place here on earth in the days of his flesh; though it was not of this world, nor came with observation, or with worldly pomp and splendour; and became more visible upon his resurrection from the dead, his exaltation at the right hand of God, the effusion of the Spirit, the great conversions among men, and the destruction of the Jewish nation. This kingdom takes in the whole Gospel dispensation, reaching from the times of Christ being in the flesh, to his second coming; and comprehends all the elect of God, who are a kingdom of priests, or a royal priesthood, in

whose hearts Christ reigns by his Spirit, and grace; it includes the whole visible Gospel church state on earth, which is God's holy hill of Sion, over which he has set Christ, as king, and which he governs by laws of his own enacting, and by governors appointed under him, among whom he will reign; first more spiritually in the latter day, when the Gospel shall be spread all over the world, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and next personally with all his saints together, for the space of a thousand years; and last of all triumphantly to all eternity, in the ultimate glory and kingdom of his Father.

Ver. 30. *That ye may eat, and drink, at my table, in my kingdom*, etc.] In the Gospel dispensation, or Gospel church state, in which Christ has a table, called the table of the Lord, (1 Corinthians 10:21) which is the Lord's supper, and is a table well furnished with the best of provisions, his flesh and blood, of which believers may eat and drink with a hearty welcome; Christ himself being present to sup with them: and in his personal reign on earth, where will be the marriage supper of the Lamb, to which all the saints will be called; and will sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and be regaled with joys and pleasures not to be expressed: and in the ultimate glory, when the Lamb shall feed them, and shall lead them to fountains of water; and they shall never hunger nor thirst more, but shall have fulness of joy, and be satiated with pleasures that will never fade nor end:

and sit on thrones; expressive of the great honour and dignity they were raised to, both in this, and the other world, from a low and mean estate, being before as beggars on the dunghill, now among princes, and on thrones, even on the same throne with Christ; (see 1 Samuel 2:8, Revelation 3:21)

judging the twelve tribes of Israel; doctrinally and ministerially; accusing the Jews, and arraigning them for the crucifixion of Christ; passing sentence upon them, and condemning them, and declaring that they should be damned for their disbelief and rejection of him; (see Gill on "Matthew 19:28").

Ver. 31. *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon*, etc.] Peter is particularly, and by name, spoken to, either because he might be a principal person in the debate and contention about superiority, mentioned in the context; or because he was chiefly to suffer in the following temptation of Satan; or

because he was generally the mouth of the rest of the apostles; and he is addressed, not by the name of Peter, the name Christ gave him, when he first called him, signifying his future solidity, firmness, and steadfastness; because in this instance, he would not give any proof of it; but by his former name, Simon, and which is repeated, partly to show the earnestness of Christ in the delivery of what follows, and partly to express his affectionate concern for him; so the Jews observe[f662] concerning God's calling, "Moses, Moses", (<02304>Exodus 3:4) that hbj ^wçl lwpk, "the doubling of the word", is expressive "of love", and finding grace and favour; even as it is said, "Abraham, Abraham", (<01221>Genesis 22:11) or it may be to excite attention to what Christ was about to say. Though the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read the first of these, "to Simon", thus: Jesus said to Simon,

Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you; not only Peter, but all the apostles; for the word υμας, "you", is plural: Satan, the enemy of the woman's seed, the accuser of the brethren, the wicked one, and the tempter, desired, asked leave of God, for he can do nothing without permission; that he might have these disciples under his power, and in his hand; just as he got leave to have the goods, and even the body of Job in his hand, and fain would have had his life, and soul too, could he have obtained it; and he would have the lives and souls of others; for he goes about, seeking to devour whom he may; and he had now an evil eye upon the apostles, and wanted an opportunity to gratify his malice and envy: his end in desiring to have them in his power was,

that he may sift you as wheat; not to separate the chaff from the wheat, but to make them look like all chaff, by covering the wheat of grace with the chaff of sin and corruption; or to destroy the wheat, was it possible; or to toss them to and fro as wheat is in a sieve; that is, to afflict and distress them; (see <33909>Amos 9:9) by scattering them both from Christ, and one another; by filling them with doubts about Jesus being the Messiah and Redeemer: and by frightening them with the fears of enemies and of death, which end he obtained; (see <40256>Matthew 26:56, <42431>Luke 24:31, <43019>John 20:19).

Ver. 32. *But I have prayed for thee*, etc.] Christ prayed for all the apostles; but particularly for Peter, because he was in the greatest danger: whether the prayer Christ refers to was that in (<43701>John 17:1-26) in which are many passages relating to the preservation, sanctification, final perseverance and

glorification of the apostles, as well as of other saints, as in (<4817>John 17:9,11,15,17,20,24) and so these words might be spoken a little after that prayer was ended, which was about this same time; or whether it was any other, and only mental, and not vocal, is not certain: however, the petition was,

that thy faith fail not; Satan in his temptations strikes principally at the faith of God's people; that being a grace which gives much glory to God, and in the exercise of which believers have much peace, joy, and comfort; both which he envies and grudges; and it is also a shield which keeps off, and quenches his fiery darts, and is a piece of armour he is sadly harassed with, and therefore endeavours all he can to weaken and destroy it, or wrest it out of their hands: but though, through the power of sin, and the force of temptation, it may fail as to some degree of the steadfastness of it, as to the acting and exercise of it, and as to the sense believers may have of it; yet never as to its principle, it being an irrevocable gift of God's grace; a work of his almighty power; a solid and substantial grace, even the substance of things hoped for; an immortal and incorruptible seed, and of which Christ is the author and finisher; and to nothing more is its security owing, than to the prayers of Christ, which are always heard, and to his powerful mediation, and prevalent intercession; Christ is the advocate of his people; he prays that they might have faith, and then he prays, that it may not fail; and it shall not, notwithstanding all the opposition of hell, and earth, unto it:

and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren: Peter was now a converted man, and had been for some years; but whereas he would fall by temptation into a very great sin of denying his Lord, and which was attended with such circumstances as made him look like an unconverted, and an unregenerate man; his recovery by the fresh exercise of faith in Christ, and repentance for his sins, is called conversion: and which was not his own act, but owing to the power and efficacy of divine grace; (see <2818>Jeremiah 31:18). Some versions render it in the imperative, “in time, convert, turn, or return, and strengthen thy brethren”; as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions: as he afterwards did: for whereas all the disciples forsook Christ, and fled, some one way, and some another, Peter, after his recovery, got them together again, and returned with them to Jerusalem; when they with him assembled together, till the third day Christ was risen: he strengthened their faith in the Messiah, and put them upon filling up the place of Judas, by choosing another apostle; and on the day of

“Pentecost” preached a most excellent sermon, which as it was made useful for the conversion of three thousand sinners, was, doubtless, a means of confirming the minds of the disciples; and he has left two exceeding useful epistles for the strengthening of his brethren in all ages of time; the design of which is to establish the saints in faith and holiness, that they may not be drawn aside, and fall from the steadfastness of their faith, either by the lusts of the flesh, or by the persecutions of men, or by the error of the wicked.

Ver. 33. *And he said unto him*, etc.] That is, Simon, or Simeon, said unto him, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it; he made a reply to Jesus, saying, as one fearless of danger, and confident in himself:

I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death; he suggests, that he was not afraid of Satan, nor of his temptations, of being sifted, shaken, and tossed by him: he was not to be frightened out of his faith by him, or to be scared with a prison, and death itself; he was ready for both; and they were welcome, come when they would; and rather than part from, or deny his Lord, he was then prepared to go with him, at once, to either of them. The phrase, to go, is not in the Syriac version.

Ver. 34. *And he said*, etc.] “To him”, as all the Oriental versions add; to Peter, as what is said shows; that is, Jesus said to him, as the Syriac and Persic versions express:

I tell thee, Peter; who knew him, and his heart, better than he did himself, as well as knew what was to come, and what would befall him; and therefore declares it, as he does with the greatest assurance and certainty, and which might be depended on, and accordingly came to pass:

the cock shall not crow this day; in this night, as in (<41140>Mark 14:30) or this night, as in (<40134>Matthew 26:34) for it was now night; a natural day includes both night and day; a like way of speaking, see in (<42008>Luke 2:8,11)

before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me; as he did, (<42257>Luke 22:57,58,60). (See Gill on “<40134>Matthew 26:34”).

Ver. 35. *And he said unto them*, etc.] To the disciples, as the Persic version reads; not to Peter only, but to them all:

when I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes; without the necessaries of life, without proper accommodations for a journey, without

provisions, or money, to buy any with: so ανευ βαλαντιου, “without a purse”, is, by the Scholiast on Aristophanes [f663], interpreted by ανευ αργυριου και δαπανης, “without money and expense”: Christ here refers to his mission of them in (<40 10 5>Matthew 10:5,9,10)

lacked ye any thing? any of the common blessings of life, food to eat, or raiment to wear?

and they said, nothing; they lacked nothing at all; wherever they came, they had friendly accommodations; they were provided with every thing necessary for them; they had both food and raiment, and good lodgings in every place; the houses and hearts of men were opened by Christ to receive them, though they were sent out by him so empty and destitute.

Ver. 36. *Then said he unto them*, etc.] That is, Jesus said unto them, as the Persic version expresses it:

but now he that hath a purse let him take it, and likewise his scrip; signifying hereby, that from this time forward, immediately after his departure from them, after his death, resurrection, and ascension, when they should be sent into all the world to preach the Gospel, it would be otherwise with them than before; that they should be reduced to great penury and distress, should neither have food, nor money to buy any with; and that they should suffer hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and have no certain dwellingplace, as was their case; (see <46 04 11>1 Corinthians 4:11) and that they would not be received, and entertained in the manner they had been; and therefore it would be advisable, if they had any provisions, to take them with them in their scrips; or if they had any money, to carry it with them in their purses; for glad would they be to provide themselves with necessaries at any rate:

and he that hath no sword; the word “sword” is not in this clause, but in the next; it is only in the original, “he that hath not”; which, at first sight; looks as if the sense was, he that hath not a purse, or a scrip, to sell, and buy a sword with, let him sell his garment, and buy one: but, as Deuteronomy Dieu observes, the phrase, “he that hath not”, is the same with “he that has nothing”; who is a poor man, and has no money to buy a sword with, let him part with his garment, which rich men, who had money, had no need to do; though the Syriac, Persic, and Arabic versions put the word sword, in both clauses;

he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy a sword; that is, if he could get one no other way. Christ here uses the common dialect of the nation, as Dr. Lightfoot observes. So on the feast of dedication of the temple,

> "if a man had not any thing to eat, but what he had by alms, he must beg, or wtwsk rkwm, "sell his garment", and take oil, and lamps, and light them [f664]."

These words of Christ are not to be understood literally, that he would have his disciples furnish themselves with swords at any rate, since he would never have said, as he afterwards does, that two were sufficient; which could not be enough for eleven men; or have forbid Peter the use of one, as he did in a very little time after this: but his meaning is, that wherever they came, and a door was opened for the preaching of the Gospel, they would have many adversaries, and these powerful, and would be used with great violence, and be followed with rage and persecution; so that they might seem to stand in need of swords to defend them: the phrase is expressive of the danger they would be exposed to, and of their need of protection; and therefore it was wrong in them to be disputing and quarrelling about superiority, or looking out for, and expecting temporal pomp and grandeur, when this would be their forlorn, destitute, and afflicted condition; and they would quickly see the affliction and distress begin in himself. In "seven" ancient copies of Beza's, it is read in the future tense, "he shall take, he shall sell, he shall buy".

Ver. 37. *For I say unto you, that this that is written*, etc.] In (<25312>Isaiah 53:12)

must yet be accomplished; it having not been as yet; at least not so perfectly fulfilled:

and he was reckoned among the transgressors. The Syriac and Arabic versions read in the first person, "and I shall be reckoned", etc. and so the Persic version, "that I may be numbered", etc. and the Ethiopic renders it, "and the Lord Jesus is numbered with sinners"; neither right: for the words are a proper citation from (<25312>Isaiah 53:12) which, as the whole prophecy belongs to the Messiah, was fulfilled in Jesus; who, though he was no transgressor, yet being in the likeness of sinful flesh, and dwelling among, and conversing with sinners, was traduced as one, and was joined with Barabbas, a murderer, a thief, and a robber, and put up with him for the

people to choose which of the two they would have released; and was at last crucified between two thieves; and more than this, being in the legal place, and stead of his people, and having their sins laid upon him, and imputed to him, he was made and accounted, by imputation, not only a sinner, but sin itself; and as such, was considered in the eye of the law, and by the justice of God, and was treated accordingly; (see Gill on "<41528>Mark 15:28")

for the things concerning me have an end. The Syriac version renders it, "all of them"; or "the whole of it", as the Ethiopic version; all that were concerning him; all the counsels, purposes, and decrees of God, relating to his sufferings and death; to the manner in which his death was brought about, by one of his disciples betraying him; to the several indignities he should be used with, by Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Jews, and Roman soldiers; and to his death itself; all which were by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God, and now were about to have, and quickly had their fulfilling end; as also all his own covenant engagements and agreements he entered into with his Father, to bear the sins of many, to make his soul an offering for sin, to be numbered with transgressors, and pour out his soul unto death; and likewise all the types and shadows of the law, all sacrifices in general, and the daily sacrifice in particular, with the passover, brazen serpent, and other things, even the whole law, both moral and ceremonial, had their full and final accomplishment in him; together with all the prophecies of the Old Testament relating to this matter, particularly (<01003>Genesis 3:15 <19222>Psalm 22:12 <25305>Isaiah 53:5-12 <27026>Daniel 9:26 <38120>Zechariah 12:10 13:6,7).

Ver. 38. *And they said, Lord, behold here are two swords*, etc.] That is, the disciples said so, as the Persic version expresses it; for they understood Christ's words literally; and two swords being among them, and which they might bring with them from Galilee, to defend themselves from thieves, and robbers, which infested the roads between that country and Jerusalem; and one of these, as appears afterwards, belonged to Peter; they mention them with a desire of knowing they were sufficient, or whether they must provide themselves with more:

and he said unto them, it is enough; or, "they are sufficient", as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it; which must be understood either ironically; yes, two swords, to be sure, are sufficient for eleven men, and against many and powerful enemies: or his meaning is, they were sufficient

to answer his purpose, and be an emblem of what he designed by the sword: or this was a short way of speaking, suggesting their stupidity and ignorance: it is enough, it is very well, I perceive you do not understand my meaning, and I shall say no more at present.

Ver. 39. *And he came out*, etc.] That is, "Christ", as the Persic version; or the "Lord Jesus", as the Ethiopic version expresses; he came out of the guestchamber, or upper room, and out of the house where he had been keeping the passover with his disciples; and he came out of the city of Jerusalem, to begin his sorrows and sufferings without the camp, where he was to end them:

and went, as he was wont, to the Mount of Olives. This had been his practice and custom for several nights past, as appears from (<42213>Luke 21:37). Hence Judas knew the place he now went to, and could direct the soldiers and officers where to go, and apprehend him; and this shows the willingness of Christ to be taken, in order to suffer and die; otherwise he would have gone to another place, and not this. The Ethiopic version adds, "to pray", as he did; and, as very likely he was used; for he would sometimes continue a whole night in prayer on a mountain; (see <40612>Luke 6:12)

and his disciples also followed him; eleven of them, for Judas was now gone to the chief priests to inform them where Christ was going, that they might seize him: but the other disciples followed him, which was so ordered, that they might be witnesses of his sorrows and agonies in the garden, and of his being betrayed by Judas, and apprehended by the Jews; though upon this they forsook him and fled.

Ver. 40. *And when he was at the place*, etc.] In the garden, at Gethsemane, which was at the foot of the Mount of Olives;

he said unto them; to the disciples, as the Persic version reads;

pray that ye enter not into temptation. This, according to the Evangelists Matthew and Mark, was said to them after he had prayed the first time, and returned to the disciples, and found them sleeping; (see Gill on "<40641>Matthew 26:41").

Ver. 41. *And he was withdrawn from them*, etc.] That is, from the three disciples, Peter, James, and John, whom he took along with him, leaving the rest at some further distance; and from these he removed,

about a stone's cast; fifty, or sixty feet from the place where they were:

and kneeled down and prayed; the following prayer.

Ver. 42. *Saying, Father, if thou be willing*, etc.] If it be consistent with thy will of saving sinners, and which thou hast declared to me, and I have undertook to perform: the other evangelists say, "if it be possible"; (see Gill on "[4169]Matthew 26:39")

remove this cup from me; meaning, either his present sorrows and distress, or his approaching sufferings and death, which he had in view, or both:

nevertheless not my will; as man, for Christ had an human will distinct from, though not contrary to his divine will:

but thine be done; which Christ undertook, and came into this world to do; and it was his meat and drink to do it, and was the same with his own will, as the Son of God; (see Gill on "[4169]Matthew 26:39"), and (see Gill on "[4162]Matthew 26:42").

Ver. 43. *And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven*, etc.] Whether this was Michael the archangel, as some have conjectured, or Gabriel, or what particular angel, is not for us to know, nor is it of any importance: it is certain, it was a good angel: "an angel of God", as the Ethiopic version reads; since he came from heaven, and was one of the angels of heaven, sent by God on this occasion; and it is clear also, that he was in a visible form, and was seen by Christ, since he is said to appear to him:

strengthening him; under his present distress, against the terrors of Satan, and the fears of death, by assuring him of the divine favour, as man, and of the fulfilment of the promises to him to stand by him, assist, strengthen, and carry him through what was before him; and by observing to him the glory and honour he should be crowned with, after his sufferings and death, find the complete salvation of his people, which would be obtained hereby, and which was the joy set before him; and which animated him, as man, to bear the cross, and despise the shame with a brave and heroic Spirit. Now, though God the Father could have strengthened the human nature of Christ, without making use of an angel; and Christ could have strengthened it himself, by his divine nature, to which it was united; but the human nature was to be brought into so low a condition, and to be left to itself, as to stand in need of the assistance of an angel: and this shows not

only the ministration of angels to Christ, as man, but that he was at this present time made a little lower than the angels, who was the Creator and Lord of them; as he afterwards more apparently was, through the sufferings of death.

Ver. 44. *And being in an agony*, etc.] Or in a conflict, and combat; that is, with thee devil, who now appeared visibly to him, in an horrible form: after his temptations in the wilderness Satan left him for a season, till another opportunity should offer; and now it did; now the prince of this world came to him; (see <scripRef type="bible">Luke 4:13</scripRef>, <scripRef type="bible">John 14:30</scripRef>) and attacked him in a garden, where the first onset on human nature was made: and now began the battle between the two combatants, the serpent, and the seed of the woman; which issued in the destruction of Satan, and thee recovery of mankind. The Arabic version leaves out this clause; and the Syriac version renders it, “being in fear”; and to the same purpose are the Persic and Ethiopic versions; that is, of death; and must be understood of a sinless fear of death in his human nature, to which death, being a dissolution of it, must be disagreeable; though not death, barely considered, was the cause of this fear, distress, and agony he was in; but as it was to be inflicted on him for the sins of his people, which he bore, and as it was the curse of the law, and the effect of divine wrath and displeasure:

he prayed more earnestly; repeating the words he had said before with great eagerness and importunity, with intenseness of mind, and fervour of Spirit, with strong crying, and tears to him that was able to save him from death, (<scripRef type="bible">Hebrews 5:7</scripRef>)

and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground. This account of Christ's bloody sweat is only given by Luke, who being a physician, as is thought, more diligently recorded things which belonged to his profession to take cognizance of; nor should it be any objection to the truth and credibility of this fact, that it is not mentioned by the other evangelists, since it is no unusual thing with them for one to record that which is omitted by another; nor that this is wanting in some Greek and Latin copies, as Jerom [f665] and Hilary [f666] observe; since it was expunged, as is supposed, either by some orthodox persons, who weakly thought it might seem to favour the Arians, who denied that Christ was of the same impassible nature with the Father; or rather by the Armenians, or by a set of men called “Aphthartodocetae”, who asserted the human nature of Christ to be incorruptible: but certain it is, that it is in the most ancient and

approved copies, and in all the Oriental versions, and therefore to be retained; to which may be added, that it is taken notice of, not to mention others, by those two early writers, Justin Martyr [f667], and Irenaeus [f668]; nor should its being so strange and unusual a sweat at all discredit the history of it, since there have been instances of this kind arising from various causes; and if there had been none, since the case of our Lord was singular, it ought to be credited. This bloody sweat did not arise from a cachexy, or ill state of body, which has sometimes been the cause of it, as Aristotle observes, who says [f669], that the blood sometimes becomes sanious, and so serous, insomuch that some have been covered with a "bloody sweat": and in another place he says [f670], that through an ill habit of body it has happened to some, that they have sweat a bloody excrement. Bartholinus produces instances in plagues and fevers [f671]; but nothing of this kind appears in Christ, whose body was hale and robust, free from distempers and diseases, as it was proper it should, in order to do the work, and endure the sufferings he did; nor did it arise from any external heat, or a fatiguing journey. The above writer [f672] a relates, from Actuarius, a story of a young man that had little globes of blood upon his skin, by sweat, through the heat of the sun, and a laborious journey. Christ's walk from Jerusalem to the garden was but a short one; and it was in the night when he had this sweat, and a cold night too; (see John 18:18), it rather arose from the agony in which he was, before related: persons in an agony, or fit of trembling, sweat much, as Aristotle observes [f673]; but to sweat blood is unusual. This might be occasioned by his vehement striving and wrestling with God in prayer, since the account follows immediately upon that; and might be owing to his strong cries, to the intenseness and fervour of his mind, and the commotion of the animal spirits, which was now very great, as some have thought; or, as others, to the fear of death, as it was set before him in so dreadful a view, and attended with such horrible circumstances. Thuanus [f674], a very grave and credible historian, reports of a governor of a certain garrison, who being, by a stratagem, decoyed from thence, and taken captive, and threatened with an ignominious death, was so affected with it, that he sweat a "bloody sweat" all over his body. And the same author [f675] relates of a young man of Florence, who being, by the order of Pope Sixtus the Fifth, condemned, as he was led along to be executed, through the vehemence of his grief discharged blood instead of sweat, all over his body: and Maldonate, upon this passage, reports, that he had heard it from some who saw, or knew it, that at Paris, a man, robust, and in good health, hearing that a capital sentence was pronounced upon

him, was, at once, all over in a bloody sweat: which instances show, that grief, surprise, and fear, have sometimes had such an effect on men; but it was not mere fear of death, and trouble of mind, concerning that, which thus wrought on our Lord, but the sense he had of the sins of his people, which were imputed to him, and the curse of the righteous law of God, which he endured, and especially the wrath of God, which was let into his soul: though some have thought this was owing to the conflict Christ had with the old serpent the devil; who, as before observed, now appeared to him in a frightful forth: and very remarkable is the passage which Dr. Lightfoot, and others, have cited from Diodorus Siculus, who reports of a certain country, that there are serpents in it, by whose bites are procured very painful deaths; and that grievous pains seize the person bitten, and also "a flow of sweat like blood". And other writers [f676] make mention of a kind of asp, or serpent, called "Haemorrhois"; which, when it bites a man, causes him to sweat blood: and such a bloody sweat it should seem was occasioned by the bite of the old serpent Satan, now nibbling at Christ's heel, which was to be bruised by him: but of all the reasons and causes of this uncommon sweat, that of Clotzius is the most strange, that it should arise from the angels comforting and strengthening him, and from the cheerfulness and fortitude of his mind. This writer observes, that as fear and sorrow congeal the blood, alacrity and fortitude move it; and being moved, heat it, and drive it to the outward parts, and open a way for it through the pores: and this he thinks may be confirmed from the fruit and effect of Christ's prayer, which was very earnest, and was heard, as is said in (Hebrews 5:7) when he was delivered from fear; which deliverance produced joy, and this joy issued in the bloody sweat. Some think the words do not necessarily imply, that this sweat was blood, or that there was blood in it; only that his sweat, as it came out of his body, and fell on the ground, was so large, and thick, and viscous, that it looked like drops, or clots of blood; but the case rather seems to be this, that the pores of Christ's body were so opened, that along with sweat came out blood, which flowed from him very largely; and as it fell on the ground, he being fallen on his face to the earth, it was so congealed by the cold in the night season, that it became really, as the word signifies, clots of blood upon the earth. The Persic version, different from all others, reads, "his tears, like blood, fell by drops upon the ground". This agony, and bloody sweat of Christ, prove the truth of his human nature; the sweat shows that he had a true and real body, as other men; the anxiety of his mind, that he had a reasonable soul capable of grief and sorrow, as human souls are; and they

also prove his being made sin and a curse for us, and his sustaining our sins, and the wrath of God: nor could it be at all unsuitable to him, and unworthy of him, to sweat in this manner, whose blood was to be shed for the sins of his people, and who came by blood and water, and from whom both were to flow; signifying, that both sanctification and justification are from him.

Ver. 45. *And when he rose from prayer*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, "from his prayer", having finished it; and the Persic and Ethiopic versions read, "from the place of prayer", or where he prayed:

and was come to his disciples; to the three, which he had left about the distance of a stone's cast:

he found them sleeping for sorrow; on his account; for he had signified unto them, how exceeding sorrowful he was; and they might perceive by his looks and gestures, the anxiety and distress of mind he was in, which must needs affect them; and besides, he had given them some intimations of his being to be betrayed by one of them, and of his sufferings and death, and speedy departure from them; and because of these things, sorrow had filled their hearts, and this had induced heaviness and sleep upon them; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:40").

Ver. 46. *And said unto them, why sleep ye*? etc.] The Arabic version prefaces this with these words, "and he awaked them"; and then rebuked them for sleeping, adding,

rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation; together with words recorded in (Matthew 26:45,46).

Ver. 47. *And while he yet spake*, etc.] The above words to his disciples,

behold a multitude. The Persic version adds, "of Jews, with arrows, swords, and spears"; but the multitude consisted partly of Roman soldiers, and partly of the officers of the chief priests:

and he that was called Judas: and sometimes Iscariot, to distinguish him from another Judas, who also was of the number of the apostles:

one of the twelve; disciples of Christ, whom he had chosen, called, and ordained:

went before them; as their guide, to show them where Jesus was, and to point him out unto them; (see ⁴⁰¹⁶Acts 1:16)

and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him; that being the signal he had given them, by which they should know him. The Syriac version here adds, “for this sign he had given to them, whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is he”: and so likewise the Persic and Ethiopic versions, adding also this, “lay hold upon him”; but the whole seems to be transcribed from (⁴⁰²⁶⁴⁸Matthew 26:48).

Ver. 48. *But Jesus said unto him, Judas*, etc.] Calling him by his name, that he might know he knew him, and to aggravate his sin; what, Judas, my apostle, my friend, my familiar friend, in whom I trusted, or with whom I trusted all my worldly affairs,

betrayest thou the son of man with a kiss! who assumed human nature for the good of mankind, who is the Messiah spoken of by the prophets, under the character of the son of man, and who is holy, harmless, and never did any mortal man any hurt or injury; and what, betray such an one into the hands of his most implacable adversaries, and in such an hypocritical and deceitful way! all which Christ said, to show he was no stranger to what he was about to do.

Ver. 49. *When they which were about him*, etc.] That is, the eleven disciples that were about Christ, and with him in the garden:

saw what would follow; that their Lord and master was about to be betrayed by Judas, and would be seized, and carried away by the multitude, that were with him:

they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? or “swords”, as the Syriac and Persic versions read; with the two swords which they had along with them. This they said, not being thoroughly acquainted with the mind of Christ in this matter, whether they should use the temporal sword or not; and might choose to show this forwardness to stand by him, and defend him, remembering how lately they had said, that though they died with him, they would not deny him: and might, no doubt, be thoroughly exasperated and provoked to see Judas at the head of such a mob, with swords and staves, and burned with true zeal for their Lord and master; and might be the more spirited up to this, by observing, that the men fell backwards to the ground, upon Christ's saying that he was the person they sought; at least their dependence was upon the exertion of his almighty

power; for they could never otherwise imagine that eleven men, with two swords only, would be able to defend him, and rescue him out of the hands of such a multitude.

Ver. 50. *And one of them smote the servant of the high priest*, etc.] The person that drew his sword, and performed this daring action, not waiting for an answer from Christ, was Peter, and the high priest's servant, that he smote, was Malchus; both which we learn from (<43B810>John 18:10)

and cut off his right ear; he aimed, no doubt, at his head, but missing his blow, took off his right ear. It is very likely, that this servant was very busy and forward to lay hold on Christ, and showed much virulence, and great malignity; and therefore Peter singled him out, and levelled his blow at him.

Ver. 51. *And Jesus answered and said*, etc.] Not to the question of the disciples, but either to Peter, who had done this rash action; and so the Persic and Ethiopic versions add, “to him”; or else to the multitude,

suffer ye thus far; or to them both, to Peter to stop his hand, to proceed no further, but put up his sword; and so the Arabic version reads, “refrain thyself”; and to the multitude to be easy, and not revenge the affront that was given them: and in order to pacify them, “he went to the wounded man”, as the Persic version inserts,

and he touched his ear and healed him; which shows, that though the human nature of Christ was in a very low condition, yet he still retained the power of doing miracles; and also his great humanity, by which example be confirmed his precept of doing good to enemies; and likewise hereby gave full proof of his willingness to be apprehended by them; for otherwise, he that wrought such a miracle as this, could easily have delivered himself out of their hands; and one would have thought this would have put a stop to them, and have convinced them of the truth of his being a divine person, and the Messiah.

Ver. 52. *Then Jesus said unto the chief priests*, etc.] After he had wrought this miracle, and had quieted the mob, and restrained them from falling upon the apostles, and cutting them to pieces, which in all likelihood they would otherwise have done; he addressed himself to “the chief priests”, who were members of the Jewish sanhedrim, and

the captains of the temple; (see Gill on “<422204>Luke 22:4”).

And the elders which were come to him; which came along with Judas and the multitude, in order to see things done to their mind, and to animate both Judas and the soldiers and their officers, by their presence, lest they should come without him, as they had before done, (John 7:45).

Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves? (see Gill on "Matthew 26:55").

Ver. 53. *When I was daily with you in the temple*, etc.] As he had been for some days past, teaching the people, and disputing with them, the chief priests, etc.

ye stretched forth no hands against me; to lay hold upon him, and kill him; the reason was, because his time was not come, and they had no licence or permission to hurt him, or any power given them against him from above:

but this is your hour; the time was now come for the betraying of him by Judas; for the seizing and apprehending him by the Roman soldiers and officers; and for the delivery of him into the hands of the "chief" priests and elders; and for them to insult, mock, buffet, scourge him, and spit upon him: and for the crucifixion of him, and putting him to death: the hour fixed for this was now come; it was now, and not before, and therefore they could not lay hold on him, and do to him what they listed, but now they might; yet this was but an hour, a short time that they had to triumph over him, in Caiaphas's palace, and Pilate's hall, upon the cross, and in the grave; for on the third day he arose again, notwithstanding all the precautions they took, and is ascended to heaven, and is received there, and is out of their reach: and since then, it has been his hour to take vengeance on them; on their nation, city, and temple, for their disbelief, rejection, and ill usage of him; and it will be likewise his hour at the day of judgment, when they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn; and hide their faces from him, and call to the mountains to cover them, and when they will be punished with everlasting destruction from his presence: he adds,

and the power of darkness. The Persic version reads, "the power of your darkness"; that is, either the power granted to them, who were darkness itself, born and brought up in darkness; were walking in darkness, and in the ignorance of their minds; and did works of darkness, and shunned the light, because their deeds were evil; and for which reason they now chose the night, to execute their black designs upon Christ: or rather, the power of the prince of darkness is here meant; that power which he usurped, and

was now permitted him to exercise against Christ: and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “the power of the lord of darkness”; who was, once an angel of light, but now full of darkness, and who darkens the minds of men, and for whom blackness of darkness is reserved: the Jews were used to call the evil angels by this name; for so they say [f677],

> “the destroying angels are called, hlpaw Æçj, “darkness, and thick darkness”.”

The sense of the whole passage is, that now was the time come, that Christ should be delivered up into the hands of wicked men and devils; that the former should have him in their power, and triumph over him for a season; and that hell was now let loose, and all the infernal powers were about him, throwing their poisoned arrows and fiery darts at him; all which Christ endured, to deliver his people from the present evil world, from the wrath of God, the curses of the law, and from the power of darkness.

Ver. 54. *Then took they him, and led him*, etc.] The band of soldiers, the captain, and the officers of the Jews, laid hold on Jesus, and bound him, (<43 18 12>John 18:12) and led him out of the garden; notwithstanding the miracle he had wrought, and the humanity he had shown in healing the servant's ear; and notwithstanding his moving address to the chiefs of them; and indeed, this was a confirmation of his last words; for by this it appeared, that now was their time, and power was given to them, as the emissaries of Satan, to act against him:

and brought him into the high priest's house; where the sanhedrim were assembled; but this was not in the temple where they used to sit: it is true, indeed, that the chamber in the temple, called the chamber “Parhedrin”, or “Palhedrin”, was, hryd tyb, “the dwelling house” of the high priest, seven days before the day of atonement [f678]; and this was also called the “chamber of the counsellors” [f679]; so that had the time of year agreed, it might have been thought that this was the place that Jesus was led to; but here the high priest did not usually dwell, and it is manifestly distinguished from his own house: for it is said [f680],

> “seven days before the day of atonement, they separate, or remove the high priest, wtybm, “from his house”, to the chamber of “Palhedrin”;”

(See Gill on “<40 26 03>Matthew 26:3”).

And Peter followed afar off; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:58").

Ver. 55. *And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall*, etc.] It being cold in the night time, though it was at the passover, and the beginning of harvest, the servants and officers of the high priest made a fire in the middle of the hall, whilst Jesus was examining before the sanhedrim, at the other end of it:

and were sat down together; about it, as the Syriac version adds, to warm themselves:

Peter sat down among them; for the same purpose, and as if he was one of them; and which he might do, not only to warm himself, but to prevent his being taken notice of, and suspected; as he might have been, had he been loitering about.

Ver. 56. *But a certain maid beheld him*, etc.] Looked upon him, and took notice of him, and observed his countenance and gesture: as he sat by the fire; or light; (see Gill on "Mark 14:54"). And both by the light of the fire, and other lights, which were doubtless in the hall, she discovered something in him, which made her look at him again with some earnestness;

and earnestly looked upon him, and said, this man was also with him; that fellow, that vile and contemptible wretch, now examining before the high priest; thus in a contemptuous manner, as was the custom and style of that nation, she disdained to mention the name of Jesus; though the Persic version here expresses it; and her sense was, that Peter was one of that clan, a disciple of his, and was only come hither as a spy.

Ver. 57. *And he denied him, saying, woman, I know him not.*] Startled at the maid's positive assertion, and knowing not how to clear himself any other way, roundly, and at once, denied that Jesus was his master; or that he was a disciple of his; or that he knew any thing of him, or had any acquaintance with him: and thus he that had said he would die with him, rather than deny him, is frighten at a servant maid, and denies him upon the first attack upon him.

Ver. 58. *And after a little while*, etc.] A quarter, or half an hour after, within an hour at least:

another saw him; not another maid, but another man, as appears from the answer; though the Syriac and Persic versions leave out the word man, it may be because Matthew and Mark represent the person, on account of whose words Peter denied Christ a second time, to be another maid; but then it is to be observed, that that maid did not speak directly to Peter, as this person did, but to those that were present, or that stood by: and one of these taking the hint from her, looked at him, and said,

thou art also of them; of the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth; thou belongest to that company; thou art certainly one of his followers;

and Peter said, man, I am not. This was after he had been out into the porch, and had mused upon it, and was come in again, but had not courage enough to withstand the temptation, and especially now, being attacked by a man; and so a second time denies that Christ was his master, or that he was a disciple of his.

Ver. 59. *And about the space of one hour after*, etc.] After the first assault, or rather after the second:

another confidently affirmed; who was one of them that stood by the fireside, and heard what had passed; and not only so, but was a kinsman to him, whose ear Peter had cut off, and who had seen him in the garden with Christ, and therefore with all assurance asserted it, as a matter of fact, as an unquestionable truth, and beyond all doubt:

saying of a truth, this fellow also was with him; a disciple and follower of Jesus, and was with him when he was apprehended; I saw him there, and it may be depended on as a truth; and then added this reason,

for he is a Galilean; you may be assured of this yourselves, his speech betrays him; you may know him by his language, and which confirms my assertion.

Ver. 60. *And Peter said, man, I know not what thou sayest*, etc.] Suggesting, that he was so far from being a follower of Jesus, or a disciple of his, and from having any personal acquaintance with him, that he did not know what he was talking of, or at least could not understand what he meant by this harangue, or by talking after this manner about him; and then began to curse and swear, and wish the most dreadful things to befall him, if he knew any thing of Jesus of Nazareth:

and immediately while he yet spake: in this shocking manner, with his mouth full of oaths, curses, and imprecations:

the cock crew; the second time, (<41472>Mark 14:72).

Ver. 61. *And the Lord turned*, etc.] Himself, his back being to Peter, whilst he was examining before the high priest; but he knew full well what was doing, what had been said to Peter, and how often he had denied him:

and looked upon Peter; with his bodily eyes, with great earnestness, expressing in his looks concern and pity for him; for it was a look, not of wrath and resentment, but of love and mercy, and power went along with it; it was not only a signal to Peter, to put him in remembrance of what he had said, but it was a melting look to him, and a means of convincing and humbling him, and of bringing him to repentance:

and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, before the cock crow, thou shall deny me thrice; (see Gill on "<4026>Matthew 26:75").

Ver. 62. *And Peter went out and wept bitterly*.] (See Gill on "<4026>Matthew 26:75").

Ver. 63. *And the men that held Jesus*, etc.] Whilst he was before the sanhedrim; and were either the Roman soldiers, or the servants of the high priest, who kept hold of him all the while, lest he should get away; though there was no reason for it; his time was come, nor would he escape out of their hands, though he could easily have rescued himself:

mocked him; insulted him, and gave him very opprobrious language, and used him in a very scurrilous way, and even spit upon him;

and smote him. This clause is left out in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; the word used, signifies plucking off the skin; they pinched him, and tore off his flesh with their nails; they plucked the hairs of his beard, and the skin of his cheeks along with them, and so fulfilled (<23506>Isaiah 50:6).

Ver. 64. *And when they had blindfolded him*, etc.] Or put a veil, or linen cloth over his eyes, as children do at play, to make themselves some sport with him:

they struck him on the face; on that part of it which was not covered, either with their hands, or with rods:

and asked him, saying, prophesy, who is it that smote thee? hereby deriding his prophetic office, and using such language as children do at blindman's buff; (see Gill on "<4068>Matthew 26:68").

Ver. 65. *And many other things blasphemously spake they*, etc.] As denying and ridiculing his deity, and divine sonship; mocking at, and burlesquing his offices, of prophet, priest, and king; asserting him to be a mere man, and a very wicked one; a profane sinner, a glutton, and a winebibber; a sabbath breaker, a blasphemer, and a seditious person; and one that had a devil, or dealt with familiar spirits: and thus spake they

against him; his person, office, and character.

Ver. 66. *And as soon as it was day*, etc.] (See Gill on "<4027>Matthew 27:1").

The elders of the people; or "the presbytery of the people", that were chosen from among the people to sit in the sanhedrim; the Israelites, as distinct from priests and Levites, and the doctors:

and the chief priests and the Scribes came together; which made up the great sanhedrim, or council of the nation:

and led him into their council; or sanhedrim, the place where the sanhedrim sat, which was in the temple, and in the chamber called tyzgh tkçl, "the paved stone chamber" [f681]; here they usually met, and so the Persic version renders it, "where their congregation was daily there".

Ver. 67. *Saying, art thou the Christ*, etc.] The Messiah, promised and prophesied of by Moses, and all the prophets, and long expected by us: "tell us". The Ethiopic version adds, openly; tell us frankly, freely, plainly, as in (<4324>John 10:24).

And he said unto them, if I tell you, you will not believe. The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, "will not believe me"; neither what he said, nor that he was the Messiah; they were determined not to believe in him, and receive him as such; their unbelief was wilful, obstinate, and invincible: they were proof against all arguments, evidence, and demonstration itself.

Ver. 68. *And if I also ask you*, etc.] Or enter into a discourse on this subject, and require an answer to the arguments, proving me to be the Messiah, or desire to know what objections can be made thereunto:

you will not answer me: fairly and directly, or go into a serious and sober conversation on this head: nor let me "go"; or dismiss me, though I should appear to be the Messiah, or ever so free from the charge of blasphemy and sedition; you are resolved, right or wrong, to detain me in bonds, and take away my life; so that it signifies nothing saying any thing to you.

Ver. 69. *Hereafter shall the son of man*, etc.] Meaning himself, who was truly man, and then in a low and mean form, and thought by the Jews to be a mere man; though this character was known by them to belong to the Messiah, especially what follows; as that he should

sit on the right hand of the power of God: as he did after his resurrection, and ascension, and which was manifest by the destruction of their nation, city, and temple; (see Gill on "Matthew 27:64").

Ver. 70. *Then said they all*, etc.] The whole sanhedrim, with one voice, being greedy to lay hold on, and improve these words, that they might have something to lay to his charge:

art thou the Son of God? for they knew that the Messiah, or the son of man, that was to sit at the right hand of God, and come in the clouds of heaven, was the Son of God:

and he said unto them, ye say that I am; or rather the words may be rendered, "ye say it", and ye say right; it is the very truth: "for I am"; that is, "the Son of God", as the Ethiopic version here adds; which sense agrees with (Mark 14:62) and the following words seem to require this sense and version.

Ver. 71. *And they said*, etc.] That is, the council, as the Persic version reads; some of the members of the sanhedrim, or the whole body of them:

what need we any further witness? or give any further trouble in getting witnesses, and hearing them:

for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth: his blasphemy, and what amounts to a sufficient charge of that kind; upon which they all pronounced him worthy of death, and determined to deliver him into the

hands of Pilate the Roman governor, in order to pass sentence on him, and put him to death.

CHAPTER 23

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 23

Ver. 1. *And the whole multitude of them*, etc.] Of the chief priests, Scribes, and elders; the whole of the sanhedrim, excepting Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, having in their court condemned Christ to death:

arose; from the council chamber, where they sat in judgment upon him:

and led him unto Pilate, the Roman governor, and into the praetorium, or judgment hall, where causes were tried by him; hither they brought Jesus, having bound him as a prisoner and a malefactor, that their sentence might be confirmed by civil authority, and that he might be put to the death of the cross, which was a Roman punishment.

Ver. 2. *And they began to accuse him*, etc.] After they found that Pilate would not receive him as a malefactor upon their word, and delivery of him to him as such; but insisted on knowing what they had to charge him with, and what accusation they had to bring against him:

saying, we have found this fellow perverting the nation; the nation of the Jews. Three of Beza's copies read, “our nation”; and so do the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions; and it is to be understood, either of his perverting the nation from the true doctrine of Moses and the prophets; by spreading among them new notions, and false principles of religion; whereby he was a troubler of God's Israel, as Ahab charged Elijah, (<11817>1 Kings 18:17) where the Septuagint use the same word as here; and so is a charge of heresy, or innovation in religion against Christ: and thus Jesus stands charged in their writings[f682]; on those words in (<19110>Psalm 91:10). “Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling”, they have this note;

> “that thou mayest not have a son, or a disciple, that corrupts his food publicly (i.e. his doctrine, who departs from the true doctrine and worship, to heresy and idolatry, and propagates the same), yrxwnh wçy ˆwgk, “as Jesus the Nazarene”.”

Which last clause, in some later editions of the Talmud, is left out: or it may be understood of his perverting the nation in their politics, and so is a charge of sedition against him, as follows;

forbidding to give tribute to Caesar; than which, nothing was more false; (see <4022> Matthew 22:21, 17:24-27) nor does what is after alleged, support this charge:

saying, that he himself is Christ, a King; or Christ the King, or the King Christ; that is, he whom the Jews so frequently in their writings call jyçmh Ælm, "the King Messiah", for so he might be, and was, without any hurt to Caesar's dignity, or revenue; for though he was a king, yet not an earthly one; and though he had a kingdom, yet not of this world: indeed they would insinuate by this, that he set himself up as an earthly king, in opposition to Caesar, to draw off the people from him, and their allegiance and duty to him; and so the Jews say of Jesus of Nazareth, that he was put to death, and had no mercy shown him, because he was twklml bwrq, "near to the kingdom" [f683]. The whole of this charge was untrue; he was so far from perverting the nation with false doctrine and worship, that he taught the true doctrine, and right way of worship, and refuted the false glosses of the Pharisees, and opposed the vain traditions of the elders, by which both were corrupted; and so far was he from any seditious principles and practices, or doing any injury to Tiberius Caesar, the then reigning emperor, that he taught the people to give Caesar the things that were Caesar's, and he himself paid the tribute money; and when the people would have took him by force, and have made him a king, he avoided it by getting out of the way, (<4606> John 6:15).

Ver. 3. *And Pilate asked him, saying*, etc.] Observing that it was said, he had given himself out to be a king; for as for what regarded religion, he took no notice of it; he put this question to him,

art thou the King of the Jews? that their prophecies speak of, and they have expected;

and he answered him and said, thou sayest it; that is, thou sayest well; it is as thou sayest, I am the King of the Jews; (see Gill on "<4027> Matthew 27:11") though he did not leave this without an explanation; without informing him what sort of a king he was, and what kind of a kingdom he had; (see <4836> John 18:36,37) which made Pilate perfectly easy, and desirous to release him, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 4. *Then said Pilate to the Chief priests, and to the people*, etc.] Both to the sanhedrim, and to the mob that were gathered together about the governor's palace on this occasion; and who were standing without the judgment hall, into which they would not enter, lest they should be defiled, and be unfit to eat the passover: wherefore Pilate came out to them; and this was the second time of his coming out to them, when he said the following words, (<43 18 28>John 18:28,38).

I find no fault in this man; no cause, or reason, why any punishment should be inflicted on him, and especially he be put to death; no crime that can be fastened on him, or accusation proved against him, or any thing that amounts to a charge of sedition: the man is an harmless and innocent man, that has done nothing against Caesar, or the government, and good of the nation; and therefore is not worthy of death, or of stripes, but should be discharged. This was Pilate's sense.

Ver. 5. *And they were the more fierce*, etc.] Or urgent to have him put to death; so the Hebrew word qzj is rendered in (<02 12 33>Exodus 12:33) which answers to that here used. “They cried out”, as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read; they were more clamorous and noisy; they cried out louder, and exerted themselves with great fury and violence, and added strength to their clamour, and increased their charges:

saying, he stirreth up the people; to sedition and rebellion:

teaching throughout all Jewry; or “Judea”; not in one, or a few places only, but every where:

beginning from Galilee; where indeed our Lord did begin his ministry, and where he chiefly taught; (see <40 04 12>Matthew 4:12,17,23) and which they rather chose to mention, because that the Galilaeans were reckoned a seditious people, and had been drawn into rebellion, and had suffered for it; (see <44 05 37>Acts 5:37, <42 13 01>Luke 13:1)

to this place; the city of Jerusalem, the metropolis of the nation; suggesting, that he taught seditious principles not only in Galilee, but all the way from thence throughout Judea, and even in their chief city, and had drawn many disciples after him every where; so that it was a notorious case, as well as of great consequence, and much danger, and ought not to be trifled with.

Ver. 6. *When Pilate heard of Galilee*, etc.] “The name of Galilee”, as the Syriac and Persic versions read when that was mentioned,

he asked; the Ethiopic version says, the “Galilaeans”; some of which might be present, being come to the feast of the passover, and were very proper persons to inquire of:

whether the man were a Galilean; so Jesus was reputed to be: for though he was born at Bethlehem of Judah, he was brought up at Nazareth in Galilee, where he spent the greater part of his private life, and his public ministry was chiefly exercised in those parts; hence the Jews thought, that he came out of Galilee, and was a Galilean, (John 7:41,52) and so he used to be called by Julian the apostate; and it seems, that the answer returned to Pilate was, that he was a Galilean; and so the Persic version adds, and they said, yes; for it follows,

Ver. 7. *And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction*, etc.] The country which was under his power, and he had the government of; for Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, (Luke 3:1). This was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the great, and the same that beheaded John the Baptist; wherefore as soon as Pilate found that Jesus was one of his province, immediately he sent him to Herod: to be examined, and to have his cause tried before him: and this he did partly, that he might be rid of this troublesome business; and partly that he might show to Herod what a regard he had to his jurisdiction, and power; and that he was unwilling to break in upon it, or usurp that to himself, which did not belong to him: the way from Pilate's hall, to the place where Herod was, is computed, by Adrichomius, to be about three hundred and fifty steps:

who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time; or “in those days”; the days of the passover; for Herod being born a Jew, and the son of a proselyte, was come to Jerusalem, at this time, to keep the feast of the passover.

Ver. 8. *And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad*, etc.] For though he had been brought up in his country, and had so frequently preached, and wrought miracles there, he had never seen him before; and to have a sight of him, was a great indulgence to his curiosity:

for he was desirous to see him of a long season; perhaps ever since he had heard of his fame, and had entertained a notion that Christ was John the

Baptist risen from the dead, whom he had beheaded; and therefore was desirous of seeing him, that he might know whether he was John or not:

because he had heard many things of him; concerning his doctrine, and miracles, and especially the latter; how that he cast out devils, and healed all manner of diseases, and even raised the dead to life:

and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him; which would have still more gratified his curiosity, and have been the subject of further inquiry and conversation.

Ver. 9. *Then he questioned with him in many words*, etc.] Or talked very much to him, inquiring who he was, whether John the Baptist, or no; whether it was true that he had wrought such miracles he had heard of, and how he wrought them, and by what power he performed them, and how he came by it; and used many arguments to persuade him to work a miracle at that time:

but he answered him nothing; would not give him one word in return to his many words, nor work any miracle in his presence; he answered him neither by words nor deeds; he would not indulge his curiosity, though he might have obtained his liberty by it.

Ver. 10. *And the chief priests and Scribes*, etc.] The sanhedrim that followed him from Pilate's hall, to Herod's palace; fearing, lest Herod should be disposed to let him go, should he gratify him by working a miracle:

stood; before Herod; so witnesses, and accusers, used to do; (see Gill on "Mark 14:57")

and vehemently accused him; of the same things they had accused him before Pilate, with great bitterness and constancy, increasing, and aggravating the charges against him.

Ver. 11. *And Herod, with his men of war*, etc.] Or his soldiers, his bodyguards that attended his person, who came with him from Galilee, and were both for his security and service, and for his pomp and magnificence:

set him at nought; made nothing of him; had him in no account; treated him as a silly, and contemptible creature, that could not do any thing that was reported of him; nor able to say any thing for himself; but took him to be a mere fool and idiot; and so they used him:

and mocked him; as a king, and made sport and pastime with him:

and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe. The Vulgate Latin renders it, “a white robe”; a token of his innocence, though not so designed by them, but rather by way of derision, as a symbol of his simplicity and folly. The Syriac version renders it, “scarlet”; and the Arabic and Persic versions, “red”. It is very likely that it was an old worn-out robe of one of the officers, or soldiers, which they put on him; in contempt of his being a king, as the Roman soldiers afterwards did, upon the same account:

and sent him again to Pilate; uncondemned, not knowing what to make of him, or the charge against him, and he might be unwilling to have any hand in his death, not having forgotten the case of John the Baptist; and therefore remits him to Pilate, to do as he thought fit with him.

Ver. 12. *And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together*, etc.] For it pleased Herod, that Pilate should show such a regard to his authority and power, as to send one that belonged to his jurisdiction to take cognizance of his case; and especially as it was a person that was much talked of, and he had long wanted to see; and Pilate, on the other hand, was pleased with Herod, that though he was one that was under his jurisdiction, and so had a right of trying the cause, and either absolve or condemn, yet chose not to use this his power, but referred the case to the Roman governor:

for before they were at enmity between themselves; it may be on account of the Galilaeans, the subjects of Herod, whom Pilate had slain, whilst they were sacrificing at Jerusalem, (Luke 13:1), which Herod might resent, as an infringement upon his authority and power; for had they been ever so deserving of punishment, it ought to have been left to him, to have inflicted it, and not the governor of Judea, who had nothing to do with them: but now matters were made up by this step of Pilate's, in sending Christ to him, supposed to be a Galilean, and so of Herod's jurisdiction; which was tacitly acknowledging his former conduct to be wrong, and showed a regard to Herod's authority: and thus they were reconciled together, and agreed in their contemptuous usage, and ill-treatment of Christ, and so fulfilled (Psalm 2:1,2).

Ver. 13. *And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests*, etc.] That is, after Herod had sent back Christ unto him, he then summoned the

chief priests together, to consider what should be done to him: and with them also,

the rulers and the people; both the civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and the chief among the people, who had been forward in accusing Jesus, and seeking his death: the latter of these is not read in the Persic version; and both are joined together in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, and read thus; by the former, “the princes, or chiefs of the people”: and by the latter, “the judges of the people”: in a word, he convened the whole sanhedrim, which consisted of the chief priests, Scribes, and elders of the people.

Ver. 14. *Said unto them, ye have brought this man unto me*, etc.] Pointing to Jesus, who stood before him;

as one that perverteth the people; from their religion, and laws, and allegiance to Caesar. The Syriac and Persic versions read, “your people”; of the same nation with them, and that were under their care and jurisdiction; at least in an ecclesiastical way:

and behold, I having examined him before you; not only privately, and alone, between themselves in the judgment hall, (John 18:33 19:9) but openly in the presence of them, when he brought forth Jesus to them, and heard their charges, and urged him to answer to them, (Matthew 27:11-14)

have found no fault in this man; cannot perceive any charge proved against him, or any crime he is guilty of, for which punishment should be inflicted on him; or at least, that he should be put to death:

touching, or with regard to

those things, whereof ye accuse him. The Syriac and Persic versions read, “all those things”; intimating, that he had carefully looked into, and examined every thing, and had omitted nothing, and that all their accusations, and charges, put together, did not make it appear that he was guilty of a single crime.

Ver. 15. *No, nor yet Herod*, etc.] Who was a Jew, and better versed in their religious affairs, and understood the nature of such charges, and the amount of them, and what was sufficient proof in such cases; and who had also examined Jesus, and that in their presence, and had heard all that they

had to accuse him with, and yet found no fault in him of any such kind, as to condemn him to death for it:

for I sent you to him; along with Jesus, to make your allegations against him good before him; or, "I sent him to him", as the Syriac version reads; that is, Jesus to him, as the Persic version expresses, he being of his country, and belonging to his jurisdiction; or, "he sent him back to us"; as the Arabic version reads, and three of Beza's copies: that is, Herod, after he had examined Jesus, and found no fault in him, sent him again to us; not being able to make out any crime against him, or to pass any judgment on the matter, for it follows;

and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him; or "by him": the sense is, either that it appeared to Herod, that Christ had done nothing that deserved death; or that nothing was done to him by Herod, which showed that he thought he was worthy of it; since he passed no sentence on him, nor ordered him to be scourged, nor delivered him into the hands of an executioner, or to be imprisoned until things could be cleared up.

Ver. 16. *I will therefore chastise him*, etc.] Give him some correction, as by scourging, or beating with rods: this he proposed, not because he thought him deserving of it, but in complaisance to the Jews; since it would look as if their charges were not altogether weak and groundless; and that Jesus was not entirely innocent: this would carry a show of guilt and punishment, and he hoped this might be thought sufficient, and so he should please them, and save Jesus from dying, which he much desired: and release him; from his bonds, and let him go.

Ver. 17. *For of necessity he must release one*, etc.] And therefore proposed to release Jesus

unto them at the feast; of passover, which now was; not that there was any law that obliged to it, but it having been customary with the Roman governor to do so, the people expected it; custom had made it necessary: and so the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it, "it was a custom to release", etc. not at each feast, or every feast, as the last of these versions read, only at the passover, as is expressed, (John 18:39).

Ver. 18. *And they cried out all at once*, etc.] The chief priests, rulers, and people, not bearing to hear of a release of him, now they had got him in their hands; and enraged at the proposal, in a most clamorous way, cried out, as one man, immediately:

Saying, away with this man; to the cross; to Calvary, the place of execution; away with him out of the world; he is not fit to live:

and release unto us Barabbas; whose character is given in the next verse; (see Gill on "Matthew 27:16").

Ver. 19. *Who, for a certain sedition made in the city*, etc.] Of Jerusalem: he had made an insurrection in it, in opposition to the government, in order to have thrown off the yoke, and to have asserted and maintained their liberties, as a free people; or rather to have seized and plundered the properties of other people, since he is represented elsewhere as a robber:

and for murder; which had either been committed by himself, or his accomplices, in the insurrection; and for these things, sedition, and murder, he

was cast into prison; where he lay till this feast, in order to be executed.

Ver. 20. *Pilate therefore willing to release Jesus*, etc.] Being more and more convinced of his innocence; and still seeing more clearly into the wickedness, malice, and envy of his accusers; and having received a message from his wife:

spake again to them; putting it again to them, which he should release; asking them what he should do with Jesus; plainly signifying his mind, that he thought him innocent, and that it would be right to let him go. The Ethiopic version represents him, saying, "will ye that I save for you, or release to you the Lord Jesus?"

Ver. 21. *But they cried, saying, crucify him, crucify him*.] They were fierce and furious, more noisy and clamorous, the more they perceived Pilate was for saving him; and they were more desirous to have him crucified, and more impatient until it was done, as the repetition of the word shows.

Ver. 22. *And he said unto them the third time*, etc.] After Christ had been sent back to him from Herod; for he had declared before he had sent him to him, that he found no fault in him, (John 18:38).

Why, what evil hath he done? what capital crime has he committed? is he guilty of murder? or sedition? or blasphemy? or robbery, and theft? or any other enormous a crime?

I have found no cause of death in him; why he should be put to death at all; and much less to this shameful and painful death of the cross, which was the punishment of slaves, and of the vilest of men, which they were desirous of:

I will therefore chastise him, and let him go; this he said, not as if he was determined to do it, whether they liked it, or not; but as signifying what he willed, or chose, and hoped they would be contented with, that he should be scourged, or beaten, and dismissed, as he at first proposed.

Ver. 23. *And they were instant with loud voices*, etc.] They were urgent, and insisted upon his crucifixion, and pressed hard for it, and exerted their voices, and more loudly called:

requiring him, that he might be crucified: desiring it in the most importunate manner; signifying, that it must be, that nothing else would content them:

and the voices of them, and the chief priests, prevailed; upon Pilate to grant their request, contrary to the dictates of his own conscience, the conduct of Herod, and the message of his wife; the people being set on by the chief priests, and the chief priests joining with them, their numbers were so great, and their requests were pressed with so much force, and violence, and importunity, that Pilate could not withstand them.

Ver. 24. *And Pilate gave sentence*, etc.] Resolved, determined, and gave out:

that it should be as they required; that they should have their request, what they asked for; namely, that Jesus should be crucified, and Barabbas released.

Ver. 25. *And he released unto them, him*, etc.] Barabbas, who is not named, as being a detestable person, and unworthy to be named; and is therefore described by the infamous, though just character of him, as follows:

that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, as in (<422319>Luke 23:19)

whom they had desired; to be granted to them, and released; (see <441314>Acts 3:14)

but he delivered Jesus to their will; to do as they would with him, to mock, and scourge, and crucify him.

Ver. 26. *And as they led him away*, etc.] From Pilate's hall, and out of the city of Jerusalem, towards Calvary; which was done by the Jews and Roman soldiers, after they had stripped him of his own clothes, and put on him a scarlet coat, and had platted a crown of thorn, and put it on his head, and a reed in his hand, and bowed the knee, and mocked him, saluting him as King of the Jews; after they had finished their sport and pastime with him, and had put on him his own clothes again:

they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian; father of Alexander and Rufus, (<41521>Mark 15:21), (see Gill on "<40232>Matthew 27:32").

coming out of the country; either out of the country part of Judea, to the city of Jerusalem; or out of the field where he had been about rural business, and was now returning home, and perhaps knew nothing of the matter, what had been doing at Jerusalem:

and on him they laid the cross; on which Jesus was to be crucified, and which he was bearing himself; but finding that he was weak, and languid, and unable to carry it himself, and fearing, should he die by the way, they should be disappointed of glutting their malice, and seeing him in shame and agony on the cross, and of triumphing over him there; and being in haste for the execution of their malicious designs, they put the cross, at least one end of it, upon this man's shoulders:

that he might bear it after Jesus: either the whole of it, following Jesus; or only one end of it, Jesus going before with the other end on his shoulder; which seems to be the order in which it was carried between them.

Ver. 27. *And there followed him a great company of people*, etc.] Not only of the common people, but of the principal inhabitants of the city; for among these were the chief priests, Scribes, and elders: some went for one thing, and some another; some pitying, and others mocking at him, and all to see the melancholy sight, (<42348>Luke 23:48) as is usual at executions: and what might make the crowd the greater, was the number of people in the city, which were come from all parts to the passover; as also the fame and character of the person, who was going to suffer:

and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him; not that these were the same with the preficae of the Romans, or the ιηλεμιστριαι of the

Grecians; for though the Jews had their twnnwqm, or mourning women, who were hired to assist in mourning; by using mournful gestures, tones, and songs, (see <2407>Jeremiah 9:17), yet public mourning was not allowed for persons that were executed as malefactors; and therefore it is the more remarkable, that here, and in (<4248>Luke 23:48) any public tokens of sorrow should be expressed: for,

> "those that are executed by the sanhedrim, ^hyl[^ylbatm ^ya, "they do not mourn for them"; but their near relations come and ask the peace of, or salute the witnesses, and they salute the judges, to show, that they have not any thing in their hearts against them, seeing they have passed a true sentence; but though they do not use mourning, lo, they grieve for them; for there is no grief but in the heart [f684]."

The reason why they did not mourn was, because their ignominy and death atoned for their crime [f685]: but it seems, there was a difference between those that were put to death by the order of the Roman government, and those that were put to death by the sanhedrim:

> "all that are put to death by the government, although they are executed by the order of the king, and the law gives power to slay them, lo, "they mourn for them"; and they do not restrain any thing from them, and their substance goes to the king, and they are buried in the sepulchres of their fathers; but all that are put to death by the sanhedrim, "they do not mourn for them"; but they grieve for them; for there is no grief but in the heart; and they are not buried with their fathers, till their flesh is consumed; and their substance goes to their heirs [f686]."

And since Christ was condemned to death by the Roman governor, hence it may be public mourning was allowed of, and might be done without notice; but these still were not the mourning women, but persons that followed on their own accord: some expressed their concern and sorrow through a natural tenderness of spirit, and from a principle of humanity, being grieved that so useful and innocent a person, as Christ appeared to be, should be put to such a cruel and shameful death; and others from a spirit of gratitude, they, or their friends, having received cures from him, being healed by him of sicknesses, or dispossessed of devils; and others from a spiritual, as well as natural affection for him; among whom were his own

mother and his mother's sister, and Mary Magdalene, and other women that followed him out of Galilee.

Ver. 28. *But Jesus turning unto them*, etc.] These women being behind Christ, at the back of him; and he knowing who they were, and what they were doing, turns himself to them, and addressed them in the following manner: and said,

daughters of Jerusalem; or ye Jerusalem women; just as the inhabitants of Jerusalem are called daughters of Zion in (<2316>Isaiah 3:16)

weep not for me; signifying, that they need not be under any concern on his account, for he was very willing to die; he desired nothing more; this was that he came into the world about; nor was he afraid to die; death was no king of terrors to him; he went to the cross with the greatest courage and intrepidity: besides, his sufferings, though he knew they would be very great and painful, yet that they would be soon over; nor could he be long held in the power of death, but would be raised again, and go to his Father, and be exalted at his right hand, and which should be matter of joy: to which might be added, that hereby his Father's counsels and covenant, purposes and promises, would have their accomplishment, the law would be fulfilled, justice satisfied, and all the perfections of God glorified, and the salvation of his chosen people effected; which, as it was the joy set before him, is a ground of rejoicing to believers: not that weeping on account of his sufferings and death was sinful; for he had offered prayers to God with cries and tears himself on this head; nor that it was altogether unreasonable, stupid, and preposterous; but Christ's meaning is, that when things were rightly considered, there would be great reason to assuage their grief, on this account, and rather express it on another;

but weep for yourselves, and for your children; not themselves personally, but their nation and posterity; and either for sin, their own, and others; the sins of professors, and of the profane; particularly the sin of crucifying him, which would be more injurious to that people than to him, and do them more hurt than him, since they had imprecated his blood upon them, and their children; or rather, and chiefly on account of those distresses and calamities, that would come upon them, in a short time, for their rejection and crucifixion of him; on account of which he himself had wept over Jerusalem, and its inhabitants, (<4241>Luke 19:41,42).

Ver. 29. *For behold the days are coming*, etc.] The time is hastening on; yet a little while, a few years more, and such times of distress will be:

in the which they shall say; or it shall be commonly said; it will be in every one's mouth:

blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck; that is, happy wilt those persons be who have no children, to be starved to death, for want of bread; or to be killed with the sword before their eyes, which must greatly enhance their own miseries. Dr. Hammond thinks, that one passage particularly is referred to, related by Josephus; that when Titus had so closely encompassed the city with a wall, that there was no coming out for provisions, upon which a sore famine commenced, so that they fed on dung and dirt, and shoes, and girdles, one rich and noble woman, whose name was Mary, the daughter of Eleazar, being stripped of all she had, by the seditious, killed her own child, and dressed it, and ate part of it; and the other part being found by the soldiers that broke in upon her, the news of this shocking fact was spread all over the city, and every one looked with horror upon it, and with the same compassion, as if they had done it themselves: and then might those words be said, "blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare", etc. who, though starving themselves, were under no temptation to do such a detestable action.

Ver. 30. *Then shall they begin to say*, etc.] The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, "then shall ye begin to say"; the tribulation being so great, as never was the like since the creation of the world, nor never will be to the end of it; and being so sore pressed with the sword and famine; with the enemy without, and divisions, robberies, and murders within; and their miseries being inexpressible, and intolerable, they will seek to go into the holes of the rocks, and caves of the earth, as is prophesied of them, (<23219>Isaiah 2:19) and as Josephus says, many of them did, when the city was taken; and, like those in (<28108>Hosea 10:8) will say, "to the mountains fall on us, and to the hills cover us"; will choose rather that the mountains and hills round about Jerusalem, should fall upon them, and they be buried under the ruins of them, than live in such terrible distress, or fall into the hands of their enemies! Compare with this (<66615>Revelation 6:15,16).

Ver. 31. *For if they do these things in a green tree*, etc.] Or it may be rendered impersonally, "if these things are done in a green tree"; by which is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, who is often compared to a tree, as to a

green fir tree, an apple tree, a vine, and is called the tree of life: and may be said to be a moist or green tree; because, as a green tree is full of juice, so is he of grace and goodness; as that is flourishing, so was he in the fame of his doctrine and miracles, in the spread of his Gospel, and in the increase of his kingdom and interest; and as that is fruitful and useful, so was he in preaching the Gospel, and healing diseases; and as that is not proper to be cut down, nor fit fuel for the fire, so he was not deserving of death, or to be used in the manner he was; the metaphor seems designed to express the righteousness and innocence of Christ; (see <3604>Ezekiel 20:47 24:4) who was pure in his nature, without sin in his life, harmless in his conversation, and did no hurt to any man's person or property: his enemies could find nothing, nor prove any thing against him; nor even the devil himself, but owned him to be the Holy One of God; and he was also declared innocent by his judge, the Roman governor: and yet, how many hard and grievous things were done unto him! He was persecuted in his infancy, and his life was sought for; he was despised and reproached by men all his days; he was apprehended as if he had been a thief, and was bound as a malefactor; and arraigned at the bar of men, as if he had been the greatest criminal on earth; he was mocked, buffeted, and spit upon in the palace of the high priest; be was scourged by Pilate, and misused by his soldiers, who arrayed him with a scarlet robe, put a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed in his hand, and in a mock way bowed the knee to him, and saluted him as King of the Jews; they crucified him between two thieves, and as he hung on the cross mocked him, and gave him gall and vinegar to drink. To which may be added, that he was forsaken by his God, and Father, and his wrath was poured out upon him, as he sustained the persons, and bore the sins of his people; the curse of the law was executed on him: and justice drew its sword, and sheathed it in him: and now if all these things were done to such an useful, holy, harmless, and innocent person, what shall be done in the dry? by whom wicked men are designed; who, as dry trees are without juice, so are they destitute of grace and righteousness, and all that is good, and bring forth no fruit, neither to God, nor themselves, nor others; but, like dead and withered trees, are dead in trespasses and sins, and full of all manner of sin, and rottenness, and impurity; and are deserving to be cut down, and are fit fuel for the fire of divine wrath and displeasure, both in this, and in the other world. The wicked Jews that rejected Christ, and crucified him, are particularly meant; and if such evil things were done by them to so just a person, what may not be expected will fall on them in retaliation for such usage? and if the Roman soldiers, under their

encouragement acted such a part to Christ, who had never done them any injury, what will they not do to these men, when provoked by their insults and rebellions? and if such things were done to Christ by his Father, according to the requirement of the law, and the strictness of divine justice, when he was made sin for his people, though he knew none, nor committed any himself, what vengeance will fall on them, who must answer for their sins in their own persons? What devouring flames, and everlasting burnings, will such dry trees be exposed to, as being fit for them, and deserving of them? so the children of men are, by the Jews, in their writings, called, µyçby µyx[, "dry trees" [f687]; the Targumist on (<2624>Ezekiel 17:24) paraphrases the words thus;

> "I have humbled the kingdom of the nations, which was strong as a green tree, and I have strengthened the kingdom of the house of Israel, which was weak as a dry tree."

It is a common proverb with the Jews [f688];

> "two dry sticks, or brands, and one green, the dry burn up the green:"

intimating, that a few righteous persons among wicked men suffer with them; but if righteous men suffer, how much more the wicked? (see <6017>1 Peter 4:17,18).

Ver. 32. *And there were also two other malefactors*, etc.] Not that Christ was one, though indeed he was looked upon and treated as one by the Jews; but as the words may be read, there were also two others that were malefactors; really such, two thieves, who had been guilty of theft and robbery, and were condemned to die: and these were led with him; for the greater ignominy and reproach of Christ, that it might be thought he was equally a malefactor, and as deserving of death as they:

to be put to death; the death of the cross, which was the death the Romans put slaves, thieves, and robbers, and the worst and basest of men to.

Ver. 33. *And when they were come to the place which was called Calvary*, etc.] Or Cranion, which signifies a skull; so called from the skulls of persons that lay about, who were executed. It is a tradition of the ancients [f689], that Adam was buried in this place where Christ was crucified, and that his skull lay here. It was usual to crucify on high places, and on mountains, such an one as this was [f690]:

there they crucified him, and the malefactors; the two thieves;

one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and so fulfilled the prophecy in (<25312>Isaiah 53:12).

Ver. 34. *Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them*, etc.] When he was crucified between the two thieves, and as he hung upon the cross, and while insulted and abused by all sorts of men, and put to the greatest pain and torture, he addressed himself to God his Father: the Arabic version reads, "my Father", who was so to him, not as he was man; for as such he had no father; but as he was God, being as a divine person, his beloved, and only begotten Son: and this he uses, whilst, as man, he is praying to him; partly to express his faith of relation to him; his confidence of being heard; and partly to set believers an example of praying, as he has directed, saying, "our Father", etc. and the petition put up by him is for forgiveness; which is with God, and with him only; and that for his enemies, his crucifiers: not for those who sinned the sin unto death, the sin against the Holy Ghost, who knowing him to be the Messiah, maliciously crucified him, for whom prayer is not to be made; but for those who were ignorantly concerned in it, as the next clause shows, even for his own elect, whom the Father had given him out of the world, which were among his crucifiers; for those, and not the world, he prays: and the fruit of this his prayer quickly appeared, in the conversion of three thousand of them under Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, next following, in six weeks time. Though such might be his affection, as man, in general, as to wish for, and desire, as such, was it consistent with the divine will, forgiveness for all of them; adding,

for they know not what they do, or "are doing", meaning, in crucifying him, which was the case of many of them, and of their rulers; they did not know that Jesus was the Messiah, nor the prophecies concerning him, nor the evil they were committing in putting him to death: not that their ignorance excused their sin; nor was it without sin; nor does Christ use it as a plea for pardon, or found his intercession upon it, which is always done upon his own propitiatory sacrifice; but this is mentioned as descriptive of the persons Christ prays for, and points out a branch of his priestly office he exercises, in having compassion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way;

and they parted his raiment, and cast lots: that is, upon his vesture, or seamless coat, and so fulfilled the prophecy in (<19>2218 Psalm 22:18). (See Gill on "<40>2735 Matthew 27:35"). (See Gill on "<43>1923 John 19:23-24").

Ver. 35. *And the people stood beholding*, etc.] This dismal and affecting sight; insulting and reviling him, and wagging their heads at him, as did also those that passed by: and the rulers also with them derided him; the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, the members of the sanhedrim, whose characters should have restrained them from such an inhuman conduct. The phrase, "with them", is wanting in the Oriental versions, and in one of Beza's copies: saying,

he saved others; by healing their diseases, or raising them from the dead:

let him save himself; from death, by unnailing himself, and coming down from the cross; (see Gill on "<40>2742 Matthew 27:42")

if he be Christ; the Messiah, he and his followers give out he is; even the chosen of God, referring to (<23>4201 Isaiah 42:1). The Arabic version reads, "the chosen Son of God", very wrongly; for Christ was not chosen to be the Son of God; he was so by nature; but he was chosen to be a servant, as the text cited shows, to be a Mediator between God and man, and the Saviour of his people.

Ver. 36. *And the soldiers also mocked him*, etc.] The Roman soldiers, to whom the execution was committed, who crucified him, and parted his garments, and stood at his cross watching; these joined in the insult, which is not to be wondered at. Coming to him and offering him vinegar; which was what was a part of their allowance, and was their drink; (see Gill on "<43>1929 John 19:29").

Ver. 37. *And saying, if thou be the King of the Jews*, etc.] Or their Messiah, who was spoken of as a divine person; for otherwise he might have been their king, and not have been able to have done what is proposed:

save thyself: or deliver thyself from the cross.

Ver. 38. *And a superscription also was written*, etc.] Containing the crime he was charged with, and accused of; (see Gill on "<40>2737 Matthew 27:37"); (see Gill on "<43>1919 John 19:19-20").

Ver. 39. *And one of the malefactors, which were hanged*, etc.] On the cross, one of the thieves crucified with Christ; the Oriental versions add, "with him"; according to the Evangelists Matthew and Mark, both of them reviled him, and threw the same things in his teeth as the priests, people, and soldiers did; which how it may be reconciled, (see Gill on "<4744>Matthew 27:44")

railed on him, saying, if thou be Christ, save thyself, and us; taking up the words of the rulers, and adding to them, perhaps, with a design to curry favour with them, hoping thereby to get a release; or, however, showing the wickedness and malice of his heart, which his sufferings and punishment, he now endured, could make no alteration in; (see <6609>Revelation 16:9).

Ver. 40. *But the other answering, rebuked him*, etc.] That is, the other malefactor made answer to him, and reproved him for his baseness and wickedness:

saying, dost not thou fear God; or "neither dost thou fear God", any more than these priests, people, and soldiers, that are acting such a barbarous and inhuman part to a man in misery: and wilt thou do the same, and show that thou art an impious wretch, now thou art just going out of the world, and neither fears God, nor regards man, and art without compassion to a fellow sufferer, adding sin to sin,

seeing thou art in the same condemnation? undergoing the same sort of punishment, though not on the same account, which might be the reason why they suffered on the same day: for the Jews say [f691], they never judge (or condemn) two in one day, but one today, and the other tomorrow; but if they are in one transgression,

> "tjahtymw, "and one death", as an adulterer with an adulteress, they condemn them both in one day; but if the adulterer lies with a priest's daughter, seeing he is to be strangled, and she to be burnt, they do not execute them both in one day."

Ver. 41. *And we indeed justly*, etc.] For sins committed against the law; our sentence is just, we are righteously punished: which shows that he had a true sense of sin; for where that is, there will be not only an acknowledgment of the offence, but a vindication of the justice of God, should he proceed to deal according to the demerit of sin: for we receive

the due reward of our deeds; though, according to the law of Moses, theft was not punishable with death, but with a restoration, either double, or fourfold, or fivefold, according to the nature of it; (see <2201>Exodus 22:1,4). It may be these men had committed murder along with the robbery:

but this man hath done nothing amiss; or absurd, unreasonable, wicked, and detestable: he did no injury to God, or man; wronged no man's person or property; did all things well; obeyed the law of God perfectly, and always did the things which were pleasing to God. Thus, from the mouth of one of the malefactors Christ suffered with, was he declared innocent; when the Jews designed, by crucifying him with them, to have led the people to have believed that he suffered for a crime equal, or superior to theirs.

Ver. 42. *And he said unto Jesus, Lord,* etc.] Acknowledging him to be the Messiah, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; the Lord of all, and especially of his church and people, and his own Lord. So the Syriac and Persic versions read, “my Lord”: however, he said this by the Spirit of God, who enlightened his understanding, and wrought faith in him to believe in Christ; (see <4603>1 Corinthians 12:3) “remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom”; or rather in thy kingdom, as in (<4016>Matthew 16:28) for this man had not only faith in the kingdom of Christ, as being of a spiritual nature, and not of this world, and not coming with outward pomp and observation; in which respect his faith exceeded that of the apostles themselves, who were looking for, and expecting a temporal kingdom; and he not only was without all doubt, or scruple, about Christ's entering into his kingdom and glory after death, but he had knowledge of, and faith in his second coming, when his glorious kingdom should appear, or his kingdom appear in glory; and when he desired he might be remembered by him, have favour shown him, and he share in the glories and happiness of it. This was great faith indeed to be exercised on Christ at such a time as this, when he was under the greatest reproach and ignominy; while he was insulted and derided by all sorts of people; and when he was forsaken by his own apostles, and was suffering a shameful punishment, and now dying.

Ver. 43. *And Jesus said unto him*, etc.] Jesus immediately answered him, though he said not one word to the other that railed at him, or to the multitude that abused him; and promised him more than he asked for, and sooner than he expected.

Verily I say unto thee, today thou shall be with me in paradise; ˆd[ˆgb, "in the garden of Eden"; not the earthly paradise, nor the church militant, but the future place, and state of the happiness of the saints, even heaven, and eternal glory, which the Jews frequently call by this name; (see Gill on "2 Corinthians 12:4") and is so called, because, as the earthly paradise, or Eden's garden, was of God's planting, so is the heavenly glory of his providing and preparing: as that was a place of delight and pleasure, so here are pleasures for evermore; as there was a river in it, which added to the delightfulness and advantage of it, so here runs the river of God's love, the streams whereof make glad the saints now, and will be a broad river to swim in to all eternity: as there were the tree of life, with a variety of other trees, both for delight and profit, so here, besides Christ, the tree of life, which stands in the midst of it, are an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect: and as the inhabitants of that garden were pure and innocent creatures, so into this paradise shall nothing enter but what is righteous, pure, and holy: and whereas the principal enjoyment of man in Eden was conversation with God, and communion with him, the glory of the heavenly paradise will lie in fellowship with God, Father, Son, and Spirit, in beholding the face of God, and seeing him as he is: and this is the happiness promised by Christ to the penitent and believing thief, that he should be here; and not only so, but with him here, which is far better than being in this world, and than which nothing can be more desirable: and which, when enjoyed, will be for ever: and this he was to enter upon that very day; which shows, that Christ's soul did not descend into hell, locally and literally considered, or into the "Limbus Patrum", the Papists talk of, to fetch the souls of the patriarchs thence, but as soon as it was separated from the body was taken up into heaven; and also, that the souls of departed saints are immediately, upon their separation from the body, there; which was the case of this wonderful instance of the grace of God; and shows the swiftness of the soul, or the velocity of angels in conveying it thither immediately: and this agrees with the sense of the Jews, who say [f692], that

> "the souls of the fathers, or patriarchs have rest, and in a moment, immediately enter into their separate places, or apartments, and not as the rest of the souls; of whom it is said, all the twelve months the soul ascends and descends, (goes to and fro,) but the souls of the fathers, ˆdrphb dym, "immediately, upon their separation", return to God that gave them."

Some would remove the stop, and place it after “today”, and read the words thus, “I say unto thee today”; as if Christ only signified the time when he said this, and not when the thief should be with him in paradise; which, besides it being senseless, and impertinent, and only contrived to serve an hypothesis, is not agreeably to Christ's usual way of speaking, and contrary to all copies and versions. Moreover, in one of Beza's exemplars it is read, “I say unto thee, οτι σημερον that today thou shalt be with me”, etc. and so the Persic and Ethiopic versions seem to read, which destroys this silly criticism. And because this was a matter of great importance, and an instance of amazing grace, that so vile a sinner, one of the chief of sinners, should immediately enter into the kingdom of God, and enjoy uninterrupted, and everlasting communion with him and that it might not be a matter of doubt with him, or others, Christ, who is the “Amen”, the faithful witness, and truth itself, prefaces it after this manner: “verily I say unto thee”; it is truth, it may be depended on. This instance of grace stands on record, not to cherish sloth, indolence, security and presumption, but to encourage faith and hope in sensible sinners, in their last moments, and prevent despair. The Papists pretend to know this man's name; they say his name was Disma; and reckon him as a martyr, and have put him in the catalogue of saints, and fixed him on the “twenty fifth” of March.

Ver. 44. *And it was about the sixth hour*, etc.] Or twelve o'clock at noon; and so the Ethiopic version, when it was noon; (see Gill on “Matthew 27:45”).

Ver. 45. *And the sun was darkened*, etc.] There was an eclipse of it, which was preternatural, it being now full moon, and lasted three hours, and so total, as to darken the whole earth; and now was the prophecy in (Amos 8:9) literally fulfilled: and the vail of the temple was rent in the midst. The Persic version renders it, “the gate of the temple”; and so the Syriac version, “the face of the gate of the temple”; (see Gill on “Matthew 27:51”).

Ver. 46. *And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice*, etc.] A second time; for at the first loud cry, he uttered these words, “Eli, Eli, lama, sabachthani”; and at the second what follows; (see Matthew 27:46-50).

he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit; not the Holy Spirit, nor his divine nature, but his human soul: for that he had a reasonable soul, as well as a true body, is certain; from his having an human understanding, will, and affections, ascribed to him; and indeed, without this he would not

have been a perfect man, nor like unto us; and could not have been tempted, bore sorrows and griefs, and endured the wrath of God; nor could he have been a Saviour of souls: now just as he was expiring, as he made his soul an offering for sin, and which he offered unto God, he committed it to his divine care and protection; and to enjoy his presence, during its separation from his body, using the words of the Psalmist in (<19>Psalm 31:5) and this shows, that his spirit, or soul, belonged to God, the Father of spirits, and now returned to him that gave it; that it was immortal, and died not with the body, and was capable of existing in a separate state from it, and went immediately to heaven; all which is true of the souls of all believers in Christ; and what the dying head did, dying members may, and should, even commit their souls into the same hands: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost; breathed out his soul dismissed his spirit, laid down his life, freely and voluntarily, and which no man, or devil, otherwise could have taken away from him.

Ver. 47. *Now when the centurion saw what was done*, etc.] The eclipse of the sun, the darkness upon the land, the earthquake, the rocks rent, and Jesus expire in so uncommon a manner:

he glorified God; by confessing that Christ was the Son of God, and declaring him an innocent person:

saying, certainly, this was a righteous man; clear of the charges exhibited against him, and has suffered wrongfully; and this he concluded from those unusual appearances, and which he considered as tokens of divine resentment.

Ver. 48. *And all the people that came together to that sight*, etc.] To see the execution of Jesus; and some of them might be his inveterate enemies, and came to insult him, and did insult him; many of these, though not every individual of them:

beholding the things which were done; the eclipse, earthquake, etc.

smote their breasts; as conscious of guilt, and as fearing some dreadful judgment would fall upon them, and their nation, for this sin of crucifying Christ. The Persic version reads, “they went back, and kneeled down, and prostrated themselves to the ground”; as being in the utmost astonishment, confusion, fear, and dread:

and returned; to the city, and to their own houses, where they might more seriously, and with the greater composure of mind, reflect on these things.

Ver. 49. *And all his acquaintance*, etc.] That were related to him in a natural, or in a spiritual sense, or both, as his own mother, and beloved disciple John, who were both present, (<43 19 26>John 19:26) or those that were known unto him, and familiar with him, who attended on his ministry, and often conversed, and were intimately acquainted with him:

and the women that followed him from Galilee; among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Joses, and Salome the mother of Zebedee's children:

stood afar off; from the cross:

beholding these things; with wonder, as well as looking upon their dear suffering Lord, with aching hearts, and flowing eyes.

Ver. 50. *And behold, there was a man named Joseph*, etc.] (See Gill on "<40 27 57>Matthew 27:57").

a counsellor; Mark says, he was an "honourable" one; he was either one of the council of the high priest, or a member of the great sanhedrim; (see Gill on "<41 15 43>Mark 15:43").

and he was a good man, and a just; he was kind and beneficent in his temper, and just, and righteous in his life and actions; a like character is given of Joseph the husband of Mary, the mother of our Lord, (<40 01 19>Matthew 1:19).

Ver. 51. *The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them*, etc.] Though he was with the Jews, the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, in the high priest's palace, being one of that great council; yet he did not agree with them; nor was it his advice and counsel, that they should put Christ to death; he was against it, at least did not consent to it:

he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews; (see Gill on "<40 27 57>Matthew 27:57"). This clause in the Syriac and Persic versions stands in the preceding verse, and follows after the mention of his name and office, and where it seems most natural;

who also himself waited for the kingdom of God; (see Gill on "<41 15 43>Mark 15:43").

Ver. 52. *This man went unto Pilate*, etc.] Mark says, he went "boldly" to him; (see Gill on "Mark 15:43").

and begged the body of Jesus; knowing he was dead; that he might bury it, as the Ethiopic version adds, and prevent its being inferred with the two malefactors, or abused by the mob.

Ver. 53. *And he took it down*, etc.] From the cross, with the help of others, having obtained leave of Pilate so to do;

and wrapped it in linen; as was the custom of the Jews in burying their dead; (see Gill on "Matthew 27:59").

and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone; cut out of a rock; (see Gill on "Matthew 27:60").

wherein never man before was laid; so that it could not be said it was another body, and not that of Christ's, that was raised from the dead. This circumstance, serves to confirm the truth of his resurrection.

Ver. 54. *And that day was the preparation*, etc.] Both for the sabbath, and for the "Chagigah", or grand festival, which they kept on the fifteenth day of the month, in a very pompous manner; so that the day following was an high day;

and the sabbath drew on, or "shone out"; which is so said, though it was evening, on account of the lights, which were every where, in every house, lighted up at this time, and which they were, by their traditions, obliged to: for so run their canons [f693];

> "three things a man is obliged to say in the midst of his house on the evening of the sabbath, when it is near dark, have ye tithed? have ye mixed? (i.e. the borders of the sabbath, the courts and food) rnh wqyldh, "light the lamp"."

This was what could by no means be dispensed with; for so they say [f694],

> "the lighting of the lamp on the sabbath is not in a man's power, (or at his liberty,) if he pleases he may light, and if not, he may not light. — — But it is what he is obliged to, and every man and woman are bound to have in their houses a lamp lighted up on the sabbath; and though he has nothing to eat, he must beg, and get oil, and light a lamp; for this is included in the delight of the sabbath. —

— And he that lights, ought to light within the day, before the setting of the sun."

So that when these lamps were every where lighting, before the sun was set, and the sabbath properly come, it might be said to draw on, or to be shining forth. Besides, it was usual to call the evening of any day by the name of "light": thus it is said [f695],

"rç[[bral rwa, on the light (i.e. the night) of the fourteenth (of the month "Nisan"), they search for leaven, etc."

So that the evangelist might, very agreeably to the way of speaking with the Jews, say, that the sabbath was enlightening, or growing light, though the evening was coming on.

Ver. 55. *And the women also which came with him from Galilee*, etc.] (See Gill on "<2330>Luke 23:49").

followed after; Joseph; and those that were with him, when they carried the body of Jesus, in order to inter it:

and beheld, the sepulchre; took notice of it, what an one it was, whereabout it stood in the garden, that they might know, and find it again:

and how his body was laid; in what position, form, and order; and observed that it was only wrapped in linen, and not anointed, or embalmed.

Ver. 56. *And they returned*, etc.] To the city, and to their own houses, or to some one of them;

and prepared spices and ointments; for the anointing, and embalming the body of Christ, called by the Jews the spices of the dead; see the note on (<4161>Mark 16:1)

and rested the sabbath day, according to the commandment, in (<2008>Exodus 20:8-11) not knowing as yet the abolition of it, with the rest of the ceremonial law; and therefore, though they had bought and prepared the spices and ointments, they did not carry them to the sepulchre to anoint the body with them, till the sabbath was over; for this was forbidden to be done on a sabbath day. It is asked [f696],

"what is that thing that is lawful to be done to a living man, and is forbidden a dead man? It is said, hkys hz, "this is anointing"."

Though elsewhere [f697] this

> “is allowed of; for so runs one of their traditions; they do all things necessary for the dead, (i.e. on a sabbath day,) ^yks, “they anoint”, and wash him, only they may not move a limb of him.”

But how he could be anointed, and washed, without a limb being moved, is not very easy to say, as his foot, or hand, or eye brows, which are the parts one of their commentators instances in [f698].

CHAPTER 24

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 24

Ver. 1. *Now upon the first day of the week*, etc.] On which day it appears by what follows, Christ rose from the dead, and which was the third day from his death, and so verified the Scriptures, and his own predictions:

very early in the morning; just as light began to spring, the day to dawn, and break; the first appearance of the morning; when it first began to dawn;

when it was yet dark, as in (<43201>John 20:1) and so read the Syriac and Persic versions here; and the Ethiopic version, “while it was yet night”: this must be understood of the time when the women set out from the city, or suburbs; for by that time they got to the sepulchre it was at sunrise, (<41602>Mark 16:2) and shows their great love, zeal, and devotion for Christ, and great courage and fearlessness to go out of the city at such a time, without any man with them, and to a grave:

they came unto the sepulchre, where Christ was laid; that is, the women who came with Christ from Galilee, and who had observed where, and how his body was interred:

bringing the spices which they had prepared; on the sabbath eve, to anoint the body, but were prevented by reason of the sabbath; (see <42356>Luke 23:56)

and certain others with them; that is, other women; besides Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Joses, and Salome, and other Galilean women, there were other Jerusalem women, or of Bethany, it may be, Mary, and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, and of the parts adjacent: this clause is left out in the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, and in one ancient copy of Beza's; but is retained in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions.

Ver. 2. *And they found the stone rolled away the sepulchre*.] Which Joseph had laid there, security of the body, and in the sight of these women; and which gave them a concern, as they went along, seeing they

were all women, who should roll away the stone for them, (Mark 16:3) but when they came to the sepulchre, to their great surprise, they found it rolled away, which was done by an angel, (Matthew 28:2).

Ver. 3. *And they entered in*, etc.] To the sepulchre, being invited, encouraged, and led on by the angel that sat upon the stone; for the Jews' sepulchres were built large enough for persons to go into; (see Gill on "Mark 16:5")

and found not the body of the Lord Jesus; as they expected, having seen him put there, and had observed in what cave in the sepulchre, and in what form he was laid.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass as they were much perplexed thereabout*, etc.] About the body of Christ, and its being gone, what should become of it, whither it was removed, and by what means, and by whom; whether by a friend, or foe, for they had no thought, nor expectation of a resurrection;

behold, two men stood by them in shining garments; who were angels in the form of men; and as these were the first witnesses of Christs resurrection, there were two of them; for by the mouth of two or three witnesses every thing is established. Matthew and Mark take notice but of one; but John makes mention of two, as here, seen by Mary Magdalene, though in a different posture; they were sitting, the one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain; but when the rest of the women came, they were risen up, and stood close by them, on a sudden, at an unawares, being arrayed in white raiment, as white as snow, as a token of their purity and innocence, and as bringers of good tidings; and as joining in the triumph of their Lord's resurrection: their garments were bright and glittering like lightning, to set forth the glory and majesty of these celestial spirits, and that they might be known to be what they were.

Ver. 5. *And as they were afraid*, etc.] That is, the women were afraid of these angels; these bright appearances and majestic forms, as it was usual for good men and women to be, as appears from the cases of Zacharias, the Virgin Mary, and others:

and bowed down their faces to the earth, through great fear and reverence of these heavenly spirits, and as not being able to bear the lustre of their countenances and garments:

they said unto them, that is, the angels:

why seek ye the living among the dead? intimating, that Christ, though he had been dead, was now living, and not to be sought for in a sepulchre; a way of speaking, much like this, is used in a parable of R. Levi's, concerning Pharaoh's not finding the name of God among the gods of the nations, upon searching for it. Moses and Aaron said to Pharaoh,

> "thou fool, is it usual for the dead to "seek" them among the living? µytmh lxa µyyjh amç, "or ever the living among the dead?" our God is living, these thou speakest of are dead [f699]."

Nor is Christ to be found among dead sinners, or lifeless professors, but among living saints, and among the churches of the living God; nor is life to be found among the dead works of the law, or to be obtained by lifeless performances on the dead letter of the law.

Ver. 6. *He is not here, but is risen*, etc.] So in (<40>Matthew 28:6) see the note there:

remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee; for these women that followed him from Galilee were along with the disciples when he said the following words to them; and which are recorded in (<40>Matthew 17:22,23).

Ver. 7. *Saying, the son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men*, etc.] As Christ was, who is intended by the son of man, he being the son of David, and the son of Abraham, and the son of Adam, though he was the seed of the woman, and born of a virgin; he was truly man, and subject to the infirmities of men; for this is sometimes used as a diminutive expression, though a title of the Messiah in the Old Testament, and regards him in his state of humiliation. He was delivered into the hands of the band of men and officers by Judas, who came against him with swords and staves, as against a thief; and by the Jews to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, a very wicked man; and by him, to the will of the Jews, who, with wicked hands, took him, and slew him; and into the hands of the Roman soldiers, who crucified him, and who may more especially be meant by sinful men, the Gentiles; and especially Heathen soldiers, being reckoned by the Jews notorious sinners: to be among sinners, in the company of such sinful men, must needs be very disagreeable to the holy and harmless Lamb of God; but to be in their hands, and at their mercy, whose tender mercies are cruel, must be very afflicting:

and be crucified: which was a Roman death, and a very shameful, and painful one:

and the third day rise again; it is for the sake of this chiefly that the angels put the women in mind of this whole paragraph, which so fully confirms their testimony of his resurrection; and which the women might be assured of, upon calling to mind these words, which they themselves had heard from Christ's mouth; and it being now the third day since the death of Christ. The words declare, that all these things must be; that there was a necessity of them; partly on account of the decrees of God, by which it was determined they should be; and partly on account of the covenant engagements of Christ, in which he agreed unto them; and also, by reason of the prophecies of the Old Testament, which gave out, that thus it must be; yea, our Lord's own predictions made them necessary; and the law and justice of God required them; or otherwise, the salvation of God's people could not have been obtained.

Ver. 8. *And they remembered his words*.] That is, the words of Christ, as the Persic version expresses it; which they had forgot, and it may be had never truly understood until now; and had now their memories refreshed with them by the angels, and their understandings opened by the Spirit of God. Saints are sometimes apt to forget even the gracious promises of God, they have understood and received comfort from; the word, or words, on which they have been caused to hope, until the Spirit of God, who is their best remembrancer, puts them in mind of them.

Ver. 9. *And returned from the sepulchre*, etc.] Quickly, immediately, as soon as ever the angel had done speaking to them; they fled from the sepulchre in great haste, as persons frightened and amazed, with fear and reverence, on account of the vision they saw, and with joy at what was told them; (see <4028>Matthew 28:8, <4168>Mark 16:8)

and told all these things; as that the stone was rolled away from the sepulchre: and that they found not the body of Jesus in it; that they had seen a vision of angels, who had told them, that Christ was risen, and had put them in mind of some words of his spoken to the disciples in their hearing in Galilee:

unto the eleven, and to all the rest; of the disciples: not only to the eleven apostles, but the seventy disciples, and as many others as were assembled together, perhaps the hundred and twenty, (<4115>Acts 1:15). The Persic

version very wrongly reads, “to all the twelve”; for Judas was not now one of them, nor alive; and Matthias was not yet chosen.

Ver. 10. *It was Mary Magdalene*, etc.] Out of whom Christ had cast seven devils, who was a sincere penitent, a true believer in Christ, and an affectionate lover of him, and to whom he first appeared:

and Joanna; the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, one that had been a follower of Christ, and had ministered to him of her substance; (see <4082>Luke 8:2,3)

and Mary the mother of James; called the less; and also of Joses, and Simon, and Judas, the brethren, or kinsmen of Christ; this Mary, being the wife of Cleophas, or Alphaeus, said [f700] to be the brother of Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of our Lord:

and other women that were with them; as Salome, the mother of Zebedee's children, and others, that came from Galilee; (<4115>Mark 15:40,41 16:1).

which told these things unto the apostles; before observed.

Ver. 11. *And their words seemed to them as idle tales*, etc.] As fabulous things, as mere whims, and the fancies of their brains: “as a dream”, according to the Persic version; or, “as a jest”, as the Arabic version renders it. They looked upon them as mere deceptions and delusions, and not real things; the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “these words”; what they related concerning what they saw, and heard, at the sepulchre:

and they believed them not: for they had no thought, nor expectation of Christ's rising from the dead; they did not know that he was to rise again, according to the Scriptures; nor did they understand him when he told them of his rising again; and had no faith in it, nor hope concerning it, and could give no credit to it, when it was told them; and the Arabic version reads, “they did not believe it”; the word or report which the women delivered to them.

Ver. 12. *Then arose Peter*, etc.] Who, though he did not believe the report made, yet listened to it, and was alarmed and aroused by it, and was willing to know the truth of it:

and ran unto the sepulchre; not alone, but with John, being in haste to be satisfied, how things were:

and stooping down; (See Gill on “Mark 16:5”). (See Gill on “John 20:5”).

he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves; in which the body of Jesus was wrapped; these lay by themselves, without the body, in one place; and the napkin about his head was wrapped together, and lay in another place by itself: so that it was a plain case, the body was not stolen, nor taken away; for neither friends, nor foes, would have taken the pains, or have lost so much time, as to have stripped the body, but would rather have carried off the clothes along with it. The Alexandrian copy leaves out the word μονα, alone, or by themselves:

and departed; from the sepulchre to Jerusalem, to John's house there:

wondering in himself at that which was come to pass; that the body should not be there, and yet the clothes should remain; he could not tell what to make of it. As for a resurrection, he had no notion of that, and yet could not account for the removal of the body, either by friends or foes, and the clothes left behind.

Ver. 13. *And behold two of them went that same day*, etc.] Two of the disciples, as the Persic version reads; not of the eleven apostles, for it is certain that one of them was not an apostle; but two of the seventy disciples, or of the society of the hundred and twenty that were together: one of these was Cleophas or Alphaeus, as appears from (Luke 24:18) the other is, by some, thought to be Luke the Evangelist, as Theophylact on the place observes, who, out of modesty, mentions not his name; others have thought that Nathanael was the other person; and Dr. Lightfoot seems very confident, from (Luke 24:34, 1 Corinthians 15:5) that the Apostle Peter was the other; but it is not certain who he was: however, this very remarkable affair happened, and therefore a “behold” is prefixed to it, on the “same day”; the first day of the week; the day on which Christ rose from the dead; and the third day from his death it was, (see Luke 24:1,21) that these two disciples travelled:

to a village called Emmaus; whither they might go either to see their friends, or upon some secular affair, or to be retired from the noise of the city, and be secure from danger by their enemies; or it may be this was the place of Cleophas's abode, who, with the other disciple, was returning home after the celebration of the passover. The place whither they went is particularly mentioned, not because it was a place of note, but for the

certainty of the fact. It was now but a village, having been burnt since the death of Herod the great, by the order of Varus, the Roman governors [f701]; though it afterwards became a considerable city, if it is the same with Nicopolis, as Jerom asserts [f702]; though that rather seems to be the Ammaus, or Chammath of Tiberias, since it was situated by the lake of Genesareth. However, it is certain, that Emmaus is reckoned, by Josephus [f703], one of their chief cities; and Jarchi, and Bartenora [f704] say, it is the name of a city; and Pliny [f705] calls it a toparchy, and says it was watered with fountains; which agrees with the account the Jews give of it [f706].

> "R. Jochanan ben Zaccai had five disciples; all the time that he stood, or lived, they sat before him; when he departed, they went to Jabneh; and R. Eleazar ben Arach went to his wife, swamal, "at Emmaus", a place of pleasant waters, and a beautiful habitation."

It is mentioned, in company with Bethoron, and Lud, or Lydda: it is said [f707],

> "from Bethoron, to swama, "Emmaus", is the mountain; and from "Emmaus" to Lydda, the plain; and from Lydda to the sea, the valley."

Bethoron is mentioned as near Nicopolis, by Jerom; and perhaps is the same with Betholone in Pliny: in Emmaus was a market: at least there was a butcher's market in it; hence we read of, swama lç µyljа, "the shambles of Emmaus" [f708]; mention is made of a place so called, as in:

> "So they went forth with all their power, and came and pitched by Emmaus in the plain country." (1 Maccabees 3:40)

> "So the camp removed, and pitched upon the south side of Emmaus." (1 Maccabees 3:57)

> "Now when Judas heard thereof he himself removed, and the valiant men with him, that he might smite the king's army which was at Emmaus," (1 Maccabees 4:3)

Another Emmaus is here meant:

which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs; or seven miles and a half; for eight furlongs make a mile. Josephus [f709] says the same, and confirms the account of the distance of this place from Jerusalem.

Ver. 14. *And they talked together*, etc.] As they went along, on their journey:

of all these things which had happened; concerning their dear Lord and master, Jesus Christ; how that he had been betrayed by Judas, one of his disciples; had been led bound, first to Annas, and then Caiaphas, the high priest, in whose palace he had been condemned to death; how that he was delivered by the chief priests and elders, to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of whom they requested, that he might be crucified: they very likely discoursed also, about the ignominious treatment he met with, both in the high priest's palace and: in Pilate's hall; and how at last he was crucified between two thieves, and was dead and buried; and particularly, they might be talking together of what they had heard that morning from the women, that had been at the sepulchre of Christ, and reported that he was risen.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, that while they communed together*, etc.] About the above said things:

and reasoned; with one another; about the truth and credibility of the late report:

Jesus himself drew near: the Persic version adds, “suddenly”; he came up at once to them, as if he had been a traveller on the road, and overtook them:

and went with them; joined himself in company to them, and travelled with them.

Ver. 16. *But their eyes were holden*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, “and were covered”; and the Arabic version renders it, “now he had veiled their eyes”, ascribing it to Christ; and the Persic version renders it, “and the eyes of the disciples were shut”: to me it seems, that their eyes: were held downwards; or they kept looking upon the ground as they walked, which was a posture suitable to their melancholy spirits; and there might be a peculiar influence of divine power and providence, so disposing them, that they did not look up to Christ their new fellow traveller, who walked on with them: and this was so ordered, that they should not know him; that so they might not be surprised at once, as they would have been, had they looked at him, and discerned who he was; and that they might converse the more freely with him; and that he might convince them of their stupidity and unbelief, by proper arguments.

Ver. 17. *And he said unto them*, etc.] That is, “Jesus”, as the Persic version, or “our Lord”, as the Ethiopic version, expresses it:

what manner of communications are these, that ye have one to another, as ye walk? what is the subject of your discourse; what is it your conversation one with another turns upon in your journey?

and are sad? what melancholy story are you telling to one another, which causes such sadness of countenance, and dejection of mind? for Christ by their countenances and gestures, as the shaking of their heads, and lifting up and wringing of their hands, could easily discern as man, as well as know as God, that they were full of sorrow and heaviness, and which were occasioned and increased by what they were talking of.

Ver. 18. *And one of them, whose name was Cleophas*, etc.] Or Alphaeus, for it is the same name; he was one of the seventy disciples, and father of the Apostles James and Jude, and brother to Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Christ, as before observed:

answering, said unto him, art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? The Persic version reads, “in these two days”: the sense that whereas he appeared to come from Jerusalem, that if he was only a stranger and a sojourner, and not a stated inhabitant there, he could not be ignorant of what had been done there a few days past; or if he was, that he must be the only stranger, and the only man, that was so; for the facts referred to were so notorious, that every one must know them, inhabitant or stranger.

Ver. 19. *And he said unto them, what things*? etc.] Still appearing as if he was ignorant, and in order to, draw out of them a particular relation:

and they said unto him; both of them, or rather Cleophas, for himself and his companion:

concerning Jesus of Nazareth; that is, what had happened to him, who was commonly known by this name, and was called so by way of contempt: but

which was a prophet; not only a foreteller of things to come, as he foretold his sufferings, death, and resurrection, the troubles that should befall his disciples, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world; but he was a preacher of the Gospel, an eminent one, a famous and extraordinary one, that prophet which Moses spake of should come; and who was mighty

in deed and word: he was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, which he showed by the miracles he wrought; such as healing the sick, cleansing lepers, casting out devils, restoring sight to the blind, causing the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, and raising the dead to life; and in the doctrines he taught, which were with authority, and such as never man spake:

before God and all the people; he was sent and anointed by God as a prophet, and approved by him; who bore a testimony to him by a voice from heaven, declaring him to be his beloved Son; and the works he wrought, were done publicly before men, who glorified God on that account; and the doctrines he taught, were not taught in secret, but in the synagogues and in the temple, in the audience of all the people, and to their surprise and admiration.

Ver. 20. *And how the chief priests and our rulers*, etc.] Civil and ecclesiastic:

delivered him; to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor:

to be condemned to death; the death of the cross, by the said governor, having first seized him and examined him before their sanhedrim, and pronounced him guilty of death:

and have crucified him; for though Pilate passed the sentence, and the Roman soldiers executed it, yet these men are said to do it, because it was at their request, and through their instigation, that it was done; hence Peter charges the Jewish sanhedrim with it, (<4040>Acts 4:10).

Ver. 21. *But we trusted*, etc.] "In him", as the Ethiopic version adds:

that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel; they thought, hoped, and believed, that he was the Messiah, spoken of under the character of the Redeemer of Israel; and they had been in expectation of redemption by him, though only of a temporal kind, from the Roman yoke and bondage; but now they could not tell what to think of it, since he was dead; indeed they were not altogether without hope, since there was a report of his being raised from the dead; but what credit was to be given to that, they could not say: but certain it is, that he was the true Messiah, and promised Redeemer; and who was to redeem, and has redeemed the whole Israel of God; even all the elect of God, whether among Jews or Gentiles, from the servitude and damning power of sin, from the slavery of Satan,

and the bondage of the law, and from every enemy; and that by his precious blood, his sufferings and death, the very things which were the occasion of these disciples' doubts about him, as the Redeemer: so the Jews say[f710],

> "that upon the death of the Messiah, the son of Joseph, all Israel shall flee to the deserts, and such as are of a doubtful heart shall turn to the nations of the world and say, "is this the redemption we have waited for", for the Messiah is slain?"

And besides all this, today is the third day, since these things were done; which is either mentioned, as an aggravation of the ignorance of the stranger, that these things should be done so lately, as within three days, and yet he should be ignorant of them, or not remember them, and need to be informed about them; or as a further reason of their doubting, that it was now the third day since the death of Jesus, and there was nothing certain of his resurrection, only the report of the women, which they could not depend upon; or else as a reason of their trusting, that he was the person that should redeem Israel; since this was the third day from his crucifixion; the day on which he said he should rise from the dead, and of which there was a report spread, not to be disproved, that he was that day actually risen: this day is greatly observed by the Jews[f711]: they take notice that the Scriptures speak of several remarkable third days; and besides (<012204>Genesis 22:4 <280602>Hosea 6:2) is cited a passage which refers to the resurrection of Christ on the third day; and they speak

> "of the third day of the tribes, (<014218>Genesis 42:18) of the third day of the spies, (<061216>Joshua 2:16) of the third day of the giving of the law, (<021916>Exodus 19:16) of the third day of Jonas, (Jon 1:17) (which was a type of the resurrection of the Messiah, (<401240>Matthew 12:40)) of the third day of those that came up out of the captivity, (<150815>Ezra 8:15) of the third day of the resurrection of the dead, (<280602>Hosea 6:2) and of the third day of Esther, (<170501>Esther 5:1)."

Ver. 22. *Yea, and certain women also of our company*, etc.] Who came with them from Galilee, who were of the same religion, professed the same faith, and belonged to the same society and community; who they were, and their names, (see <422410>Luke 24:10).

made us astonished; surprised us, with an account they brought, so that we could not, nor can we now tell, what to think or say of it; it is such an one,

we know not how to believe, nor to disprove; it is we fear too good to be true, and should it be as they report, it is amazing indeed:

which were early at the sepulchre; of the person now mentioned, Jesus of Nazareth; even this very morning, by break of day, at least at sunrise, whither they went to anoint his body, thinking nothing at all about the resurrection of him.

Ver. 23. *And when they found not his body*, etc.] In the sepulchre, as they expected, and so could not do what they intended:

they came; they returned from the sepulchre with great haste, and in a very great fright, and came to the disciples, where they were assembled;

saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels. The Syriac and Persic versions add, "there"; at the sepulchre, for there were two of them at least, if not three; (see <42404>Luke 24:4, <43012>John 20:12, <40182>Matthew 28:2). They not only reported, that they could not find the body of Jesus, but also that they had seen some angels: or the sense may be, that they told them, that though they could not find the dead body of their Lord, yet they had seen him alive, as they did by the way, as they were returning, (<40189>Matthew 28:9,10) and also that a vision of angels had appeared to them:

which said that he was alive; (see <42405>Luke 24:5,6). So that it was not a deception of their sight, they certainly saw both Christ and the angels; and were assured from their testimony, as well as by their own eyes and ears, that he was certainly risen: now, though this was so clear a point, and so well attested, the disciples knew not how to believe it; they were perplexed about it; they could neither receive it, nor discredit it; they hoped it might be so, but feared it was not.

Ver. 24. *And certain of them which were with us*, etc.] The apostles and brethren, who were together when the women came, and made the above report; particularly Peter, who is named, (<42412>Luke 24:12) and John, who also was with him, as appears from (<43012>John 20:2) these

went to the sepulchre; of Jesus, to satisfy themselves and their companions, as much as they could, about these things:

and found it even so as the women had said; that is, that the body of Jesus was not there, and that the linen clothes were laid by themselves:

but him they saw not; the Ethiopic version reads, “and him they found not”: the women, as before observed, might report, that though they found not the body in the grave, yet they saw him alive by the way, but so did not the disciples; which made it look very strange, doubtful, and suspicious, that the women should see him, and not his apostles; they could not tell how to account for this, and this made them to be in suspense about the fact.

Ver. 25. *Then he said unto them*, etc.] That is, Jesus said unto them, as the Syriac and Persic versions read:

O fools; not in a natural sense, as if they were destitute of the common understanding of men; nor in a moral sense, as wicked men, and as they themselves had been in their unregenerate estate; nor in a way of anger and contempt, and with a design to provoke; wherefore Christ did not act contrary to his own rule, in (<40522>Matthew 5:22) but because they were so void of understanding in the Scriptures, and were so very ignorant of them, and were so blind as to the knowledge of them; particularly those which concerned the sufferings and resurrection of the Messiah, being influenced by the popular prejudices of education: he therefore expresses himself with much warmth, concern, and surprise, that he should have been so long with them, and they so long under his doctrine and ministry; besides the advantages of having the Scriptures, and being conversant with them from their youth; and which they daily read, and had heard expounded, and yet were so very senseless and stupid:

and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; that is, upon these points, concerning the sufferings of Christ, and his resurrection from the dead; and indeed, they were very slow of heart to believe, not only what the women reported from the angels, but even those of their brethren, who had seen him after he was risen; for which Christ upbraids them, (<41614>Mark 16:14). Yea, one of them declared after all, that he would not believe, unless he saw the print of the nails in his hands and feet, and put his hand into it, and thrust it into his side; wherefore Christ had good reason to treat them in this sharp manner, and charge them with folly and incredulity; the Jews ought not to object to the word “fools”, as unbecoming Christ, since they frequently represent God as making use of it; as for instance, it is said, [f712]

"the holy blessed God said to them, µyjwç, "O ye fools" that are in the world, whatsoever ye do, ye do for your own necessities. — - And a little after, "O ye fools" that are in the world, he that labours on the evening of the sabbath, shall eat on the sabbath day."

Ver. 26. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things*, etc.] Mentioned in (⁴²2420Luke 24:20) as to be delivered by the chief priests, to be condemned to death, and to be crucified: Christ suffered many things in his personal character, being traduced as a sinful and wicked man, and a friend and encourager of sinners; as a man of immoral principles and practices; as an idolater, a blasphemer, an impostor, a seditious person; as one that had had familiarity with the devil, and did his miracles by his assistance, with a load of other reproaches; and these he endured, to answer to the loss of the divine honour and glory, sustained by the sin of man; and to teach his people patience, under the loss of their good names, characters, and reputations: and he suffered much in his body, in the infirmities of it; which he assumed with it, being in all things like to his brethren, excepting sin; and in the pains which he endured, through buffeting and scourging before his crucifixion, and when he hung upon the cross: and he suffered greatly in his soul, partly from the temptations of Satan; and partly from the treatment of his own disciples, through the frowardness of their spirits; and especially his being betrayed by one, denied by another, and forsaken by them all, must greatly afflict his mind; but chiefly from his bearing the loathsome sins of men, the strokes of justice, and the wrath of God; and particularly, through his being forsaken by him: and of all these there was a necessity; he ought to have suffered these things, as he did; the counsels and purposes of God, the covenant transactions and agreement he himself entered into with his Father, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and his own predictions concerning these things, together with the salvation of his people, in a way consistent with the justice of God, and the honour of his law, made them necessary:

and to enter into his glory; which began at his resurrection from the dead, and is seen in his exaltation and session at the right hand of God; upon his ascension he was received up to glory, entered into it, took possession of it, and is crowned with it; and which will still be more manifest, when he shall come to judge the world in righteousness; when his saints also shall appear in glory with him, and shall be everlasting spectators of his glory; and indeed, his entrance into glory is not merely for himself, but in the name and behalf of them. The Vulgate Latin version reads, "and so, or thus

to enter into his glory"; that is, by the way of sufferings, which is the way through which his saints enter the kingdom, (<44142>Acts 14:22). And by a view of the glory that was to follow them, and which he and his people were to enjoy together, was he animated to endure them cheerfully and patiently; and this he is entered into, possesses and enjoys, as the consequence and reward of his sufferings.

Ver. 27. *And beginning at Moses*, etc.] The writings of Moses, the book of Genesis particularly, (<01015>Genesis 3:15) which is the first prophecy of him, and speaks of the bruising of his heel, or of the sufferings of death by him; and proceeding to open and explain the types concerning his bearing the cross, and the lifting him upon it, in the business of Isaac, and of the brazen serpent; and concerning the shedding of his blood, and the oblation of himself in the sacrifices of the law of Moses:

and all the prophets; as David, Isaiah, Daniel, and others, very likely the passages in (<19201>Psalm 22:1-31, <23501>Isaiah 53:1-12, <27001>Daniel 9:1-27).

he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures in Moses, and the Prophets,

concerning himself; especially concerning these two points, his sufferings, and his glory, which the Spirit of Christ, in the Prophets, testified before hand: besides the above places referred to, concerning the sufferings of Christ, see the following, in reference to his resurrection and glory, (<19610>Psalm 16:10,11 68:18 110:1,7).

Ver. 28. *And they drew nigh unto the village*, etc.] Of Emmaus, before they were aware; their conversation was so very agreeable, that the way did not seem tedious, nor the time long:

whither they went: where they intended to go, when they set out; this was the end of their journey; wherefore this village was not some intermediate place between Jerusalem and Emmaus:

and he made as though he would have gone further; when they were come to Emmaus, and to the house where the two disciples intended to make their abode that night: whether it was a public house, or an house of one of their friends, or one of their own, it matters not; Christ stopped not, nor attempted to go in with them, but stepped a few steps onward, taking his leave of them. The Ethiopic version renders it, "he began to pass by them": which carried in it an appearance as if he intended to have travelled further; and in it there was no fraud, dissimulation, or collusion: he would have

gone some little way further, doubtless, had they not detained him; and he intended to stay with them, provided they should ask him, as he did, though not all night, which he never designed: the whole of it is nothing else but a piece of modesty, civility, and prudence; for guile was never found in his mouth.

Ver. 29. *But they constrained him*, etc.] The Arabic version renders it, "they held him by force": but the meaning is not, that they laid hands on him, and held him in a forcible manner against his will; but they were very urgent and importunate with him, that he would stay with them; they would take no denial. The sense is better given in the Persic version, "the disciples with importunity said unto him"; they were so pressing with arguments, that he could not withstand them:

saying, abide with us; his conversation was so engaging, and his discourses were so heavenly and instructive, so sweet and delightful, so powerful and moving, that they could not bear to part with him, but were exceeding desirous of his continuance with them, even though he was a stranger to them. And as they had in view their own pleasure and profit, so they urge the necessity and advantage of his stay, with respect to himself:

for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent; it might be four or five o'clock in the afternoon:

and he went in to tarry with them; for a while, not all night. So earnest, importunate, and resolute was the church, when she had found Christ, that he would abide with her, (Song of Solomon 3:4,5).

Ver. 30. *And it came to pass as he sat at meat with them*, etc.] When they were sat down at table with the provisions before them:

he took bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them; as if he was the master of the house, when he was both a guest, and a stranger, and as he used to do at common meals, when he ate with his disciples; and thus he did, when he fed five thousand at one time, and four at another, (Matthew 14:19 15:26) see the notes there. (See Gill on "Matthew 14:19"). (See Gill on "Matthew 15:26"). Whether only Christ, and the two disciples, sat down together, or whether others that belonged to the house sat down with them, is not certain: if they were only three, they were a proper company to bless the bread together; that is, one in the name of the rest, they joining with him: if there were but two, they blessed, or said

grace for themselves separately; but if three, the rules were these, according to the Jews [f713]:

> "three that eat together, they are obliged to call a blessing (or for one) — and how do they call a blessing among three? one says, let us bless: if there are three besides himself, he says, bless ye. — Three that eat together have no power to divide;"

that is, to make a separate blessing, but are obliged to it conjunctly: thus here, being three at least, Christ blessed bread for them all.

Ver. 31. *And their eyes were opened*, etc.] Not that they were before shut, or closed up, but what before held them was removed, and what hindered their sight and knowledge was taken away; and perhaps these actions of his taking the bread, and blessing, and breaking, and giving it to them, might put them in mind of him, and cause them to look wistfully at him, when, what beclouded their sight being gone, and he appearing in his usual form, they perceived who he was:

and they knew him; to be their dear Lord and master, for whose death they had been sorrowing, and of redemption by him, and of whose resurrection they had been doubting:

and vanished out of their sight; not that he vanished as a spectre, or as smoke vanishes into air; but agility being a property of his risen body, he very suddenly, and swiftly, and in a moment, withdrew himself from them; for if he could withdraw himself from company in a very speedy manner before his resurrection, much more after; (see <4030>Luke 4:30, <4053>John 5:13). The Syriac version renders it, "he was taken away from them"; as if some of the ministering angels were made use of to remove him at once; but this seems not necessary: the Arabic version renders it, "he was hidden from them"; that same power of his that held their eyes all the while they were travelling together, interposed some object between him and them, so that he could not be seen by them that very instant, even before he was gone out of the house.

Ver. 32. *And they said one to another*, etc.] After Christ was gone, being surprised at what happened, that they should not know him all that while; and that as soon as they did, he should disappear, or withdraw himself in this manner:

did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures? concerning himself, his sufferings, death, and resurrection, which are in Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms. The Scriptures are as a sealed book to men, learned and unlearned; and none so fit to open them as the lion of the tribe of Judah: he did open and explain them to these his disciples, as well as conversed with them about other things, as they travelled together; and his words came with such evidence, power, and sweetness, that they were ravished with them; their minds were irradiated with beams and rays of divine light; their hearts were warmed and glowed within them; they became fervent in spirit, and their affections were raised and fired; they found the word to be as burning fire within them; and they now knew somewhat what it was to be baptized with fire, which is Christ's peculiar office to administer; (see <19903>Psalm 39:3, <24009>Jeremiah 20:9) they seem as it were not only to reflect on these things with wonder and pleasure, but also to charge themselves with want of thought, with inattention and stupidity; since they might have concluded from the uncommon evidence, force, and energy with which his words came to them, who he was, seeing no man could speak as he did, and with such effect as his words had.

Ver. 33. *And they rose up the same hour*, etc.] Though it was now evening, and the day was spent and gone; and notwithstanding what business they might have to do at Emmaus, about which they came, and even might not have made an end of eating, or sufficiently refreshed themselves; and though they had had a walk of sixty furlongs that afternoon, yet being big with this appearance of Christ to them, and in haste to impart the joyful news to their fellow disciples, they immediately rose up from table:

and returned to Jerusalem; the same night, from whence they had come that day:

and found the eleven gathered together; at a certain house known to these two, and who met together in the night season, for the sake of privacy, and for fear of the Jews, and who were now up, though it was late: these are called “eleven”, because Judas was now gone from them, and dead; and this being their whole number, it is used, though every one might not be present, as particularly Thomas was not; (see <43019>John 20:19-24)

and them that were with them; the seventy disciples, and other believers, both men and women; (see <44015>Acts 1:15).

Ver. 34. *Saying*, etc.] The following words; and which are not the words of the two disciples, but of the apostles, whom they found gathered together; and who, just as these two entered the room, said to one another, or rather to these two disciples, to whom at once, and as soon as ever they saw them, not being able to hold it in, they communicated the good news they had just heard, and which; perhaps, Peter had been just telling them:

the Lord is risen indeed; it is certainly matter of fact: for though the women were not credited, but their accounts were as idle tales, and, at most, only occasioned some thoughts and reflections, which they could not settle; yet now they were satisfied of the reality of his resurrection, and speak of it with the greatest assurance and joy:

and hath appeared unto Simon; he appeared to him first, before he did to any of the rest, though he had denied him in so shameful a manner: which is an instance of great grace and goodness: and he appeared to him, on purpose, no doubt, to comfort him under his distress; as well as being the oldest, disciple, and a man of figure and credit among them, his report would be believed. None of the writers of the New Testament take notice of this appearance besides, only the Apostle Paul, (1 Corinthians 15:5). It is certain that it was the same day Christ rose from the dead; and was after the women had seen him, and after Peter had, been at the sepulchre; and before the return of the two disciples from Emmaus, and before he showed himself to the rest of the apostles.

Ver. 35. *And they told what things were done in the way*, etc.] That is, when the eleven had done speaking, and had finished their report, which they did with great joy and pleasure; then “these two disciples”, as the Persic version expresses it, to confirm them the more in the truth of Christ's resurrection, gave them a particular account, how, as they were travelling, Jesus joined himself to them, and entered into a conversation with them, and opened the Scriptures in a sweet and powerful manner to them; and yet their eyes were holden all the while, so that they did not perceive who he was:

and how he was known of them in breaking bread; that so it was, that whilst he was breaking bread, and giving it to them, and they were eating together, their eyes were opened, and they saw plainly who he was: now, though this was a common meal, and not the ordinance of the Lord's supper, yet since Christ made himself known to his disciples at an ordinary meal, may not his followers expect that he will make himself known to

them, and grant them communion with him at his table? and which should be no small argument to engage believers to a constant attendance on it.

Ver. 36. *And as they thus spake*, etc.] While the two disciples, that came from Emmaus, were giving the above relation; just as they had finished it, and had scarcely done speaking:

Jesus himself stood in the midst of them; the apostles; who were assembled together in a certain house, the doors being shut for fear of the Jews; and it was on the evening of the same day Christ rose from the dead, and late at night; (see <430>John 20:19) and without hearing the doors opened, or the sound of the feet of Jesus, and without seeing him come in, and approach unto them, he, in a moment, at once, stood in the middle of them, as if he had immediately rose up out of the earth before them; and so the Persic version renders it, "Jesus rose up out the midst of them": by his power he opened the and secretly let himself in, and shut them again at once; and by the agility of his body moved so swiftly, that he was not discerned until he was among them, where he stood to be seen, and known by them; whereby he made that good in a corporeal sense, which he had promised in a spiritual sense, (<401820>Matthew 18:20) and was an emblem of his presence in his churches, and with his ministers, to the end of the world.

And saith unto them, peace be unto you; which was an usual form of salutation among the Jews; (see Gill on "<430>John 20:19"). The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions add, "I am he, fear not"; but this clause is not in the Greek copies.

Ver. 37. *But they were terrified and affrighted*, etc.] At the sight of him, and at his sudden appearance among them, without being heard, or seen before, and the doors shut and bolted; they could not tell how to account for it, that it should be Jesus himself risen from the dead in his own body, though they had been just speaking of his resurrection, and had had a confirmation of it from the disciples that went to Emmaus:

and supposed that they had seen a spirit; that what they saw was a phantom, or apparition, or a spirit, that had assumed, and appeared in, the shape of Jesus, and was not he himself.

Ver. 38. *And he said unto them, why are ye troubled*, etc.] Who had more reason to rejoice, and be glad, as they were when they knew that it was Jesus:

and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? whether what they saw was Jesus, or an apparition, which gave them a great deal of trouble and uneasiness, and filled them with fright and terror; as it was, and is usual with persons when they fancy they see a spirit, or an apparition; (see <4014 6>Matthew 14:26).

Ver. 39. *Behold my hands, and my feet*, etc.] The Evangelist John adds, "and side"; that is, the prints of the nails and spear, in his hands, and feet, and side; and the wounds they made there, and the scars they left behind; by which they might be convinced he was not a spirit, and be assured of the truth of his resurrection, and that in the same numerical body in which he suffered; as well as that it might be observed by them how great was his love to them, to endure what he did for them.

Handle me and see; or know by feeling, as well as by sight; so that if the one was not sufficient, the other might confirm; sight might be deceived, but feeling could not: Apollonius Tyaneus, to them that did not know whether he was alive or dead, and who took him for a spirit, proposed himself to be touched, and handled, that they might be convinced [f714]:

for a spirit hath not flesh and bones; nothing but appearance, or air at most; no solid substance to be felt and handled:

as ye see me have; or may perceive, both by sight and feeling.

Ver. 40. *And when he had thus spoken*, etc.] And put them into a method of satisfying themselves by their senses:

he showed them his hands and his feet; that is, he held them forth to be seen and handled by them, which no doubt they did; and which were the infallible proofs by which he showed himself alive to them after his passion; and by which they knew the truth of his incarnation, or that he assumed a true and real body, and of the resurrection of the same body; (see <4401 3>Acts 1:3, <6101 2>1 John 1:1).

Ver. 41. *And while they yet believed not for joy*, etc.] Though they had been prepared for the belief of resurrection, by the report of the women, the relation of Simon Peter, and the account of the two disciples that came from Emmaus; yet such was the joy they were transported with, upon the evidence of it, the news was so good, and the favour and benefit so great, that they could scarcely believe their own senses of seeing and feeling:

and wondered; at the sight of their risen Lord, and at the power of God, which was seen herein: the thing was marvellous in their eyes, and was a wonderful confirmation of the truth of his deity, sonship, and Messiahship.

He said unto them, have ye any meat? not that he needed any, or was hungry and desirous of some to satisfy, or gratify his appetite, but to give them a further proof that he was not a spirit; and that he was risen from the dead in a true and real body, which was capable of eating and drinking.

Ver. 42. *And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish*, etc.] Which was left by them at supper, of which they had been eating; for being fishermen, most of them, this was agreeable food to them:

and of an honeycomb; not to eat with the fish, but after it.

Ver. 43. *And he took it, and did eat before them*.] That is, he took both the fish, and the honeycomb, and ate of them before them, they looking on all the while; and which was a proof of his being truly risen from the dead, and not a spectre, or apparition, and which they failed not afterwards to make use of; (see <44104>Acts 10:41). The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions add, “he took the rest, or what remained, and gave it to them”.

Ver. 44. *And he said unto them, these are the words which I spake unto you*, etc.] Or this is the substance of them, the sense and meaning of them; for what follows, we do not find any where expressed in so many words:

while I was yet with you; that is, whilst he was in his state of humiliation, whilst he dwelt among them, and had his abode with them; otherwise he was now with them, but not to continue with them; in a short time he was to ascend to his God, and their God, to his Father, and their Father:

that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me: concerning his sufferings, and death, and resurrection from the dead, spoken of in (<01035>Genesis 3:15 <23501>Isaiah 53:1-12 <27026>Daniel 9:26 <28602>Hosea 6:2 <19201>Psalm 22:1-31) (<19610>Psalm 16:10) and in this he refers to what he had said to his disciples in (<40162>Matthew 16:21 17:22,23 20:18,19) and alludes to the usual distinction among the Jews of the books of the Old Testament into the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa; among which last stands the book of Psalms, and is put for the whole; a division often to be met with in both their Talmuds [f715], and other writings [f716].

Ver. 45. *Then opened he their understanding*, etc.] He not only opened their hearts, to attend to what he said, and the proofs he gave of his resurrection from the dead in a true body; but he removed the veil from the eyes of their minds, and gave them an understanding of the sacred writings, respecting this matter:

that they might understand the Scriptures; concerning his sufferings, death, and resurrection, which they were very ignorant of before, and which were as a sealed book unto them, (<scripRef passage="John 20:9" />John 20:9) though they had been from their infancy brought up to the reading of the Scriptures, and had had the advantage of Christ's ministry for some years; which shows the necessity of the special illumination of the Spirit, and the influence of his grace to remove the darkness of the mind, and give the true sense of the sacred writings.

Ver. 46. *And he said unto them, thus it is written*, etc.] In the above cited books of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms; not what after follows, in so many words, but the matter and substance thereof:

and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; it was necessary, both because of the decree and appointment of God, and because of the prophecies and predictions of the Old Testament; (see <scripRef passage="Luke 24:25,26" />Luke 24:25,26).

Ver. 47. *And that repentance and remission of sins*, etc.] Which are the sum of the Gospel ministry; (see <scripRef passage="Acts 20:21" />Acts 20:21) the doctrine of "repentance" is not of the law, which neither requires, nor admits of it, but of the Gospel. The Persic version calls it, "the Gospel of repentance"; a doctrine preached by John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; and the thing itself is a blessing of the covenant, a gift of God's grace, and in the hands of Christ to bestow; and therefore the doctrine of it is published in his name, as well as remission of sins; which, though it springs from the free grace of God, is procured by the blood of Christ, and through him it is preached. These two are joined together, not because repentance is the cause of pardon; for repentance makes no satisfaction for sin, or atonement for it; nor does the law at all regard it: tears of repentance will not wash away sin; notwithstanding these, iniquity remains marked before God; Christ's tears themselves did not take away, nor atone for sin; his blood must be shed, and it was shed for the remission of it; and that is the only meritorious cause it. The Syriac version wrongly reads, "repentance for the remission of sins": the Jews[f717] indeed have a notion that repentance atones

for sin; but it is a very bad one, and has no countenance neither from the law of nature, nor the law of Moses: but these two are put together, because there is a connection between them, as there is between repentance, and life, and salvation: repentance issues in these things; and to whomsoever the grace of repentance is given, to them the forgiveness of sins is applied; nor need any truly repenting sinner despair of the pardon of his sin: and indeed, there is no true evangelical repentance without views, or at least hopes of pardoning grace, and mercy; for that is attended with faith in Christ, and is heightened by the discoveries of forgiving love: such who have the fullest view of the remission of their sins, have the clearest sense of sin, and have the most sorrow for it, and loath themselves on account of it, and are ashamed of it, and do most frankly confess it, and most thoroughly forsake it. And now it was necessary, according to Old Testament prophecies, that both these

should be preached in his name; in the name of the Messiah; by his authority, and as coming through him; since the remission of sin is by his blood; and he is exalted as a prince, and a Saviour, to give both repentance and forgiveness of sins to all the Israel of God, whether Jews or Gentiles; and therefore it is fitting and proper that these should be preached,

among all nations; of the world, where God's elect are; that so they may be brought hereby to repentance, and receive the forgiveness of their sins:

beginning at Jerusalem; from whence, according to the Old Testament, the word and doctrine of the Lord were to go forth, (Psalm 110:2, Isaiah 2:3) and is particularly mentioned, because the Gospel was to be first preached to the Jews, and be the power of God unto salvation to them; and because that in Jerusalem lived those who had been concerned in crucifying Christ, to whom repentance and forgiveness must be preached; and which would be a great encouragement to the vilest of sinners, to hope for mercy and forgiveness, since such received both.

Ver. 48. *And ye are witnesses of these things*.] As they were witnesses of the truth of his humanity, having seen, and heard, and handled him, both before, and after his resurrection from the dead, and of all that he did, of all the miracles that he wrought in Jerusalem, Judea, and Galilee, and of his transfiguration on the mount; so likewise of his sorrows in the garden, and of his sufferings in the palace of the high priest, and in Pilate's hall, and on the cross; and of his death, which was the death of the cross; and also of his resurrection from the dead, in the same body, to whom he showed

himself alive by many infallible proofs; by showing them the print of the nails in his hands and feet; by being handled by them; by eating and drinking in their presence; and by conversing with them for the space of forty days: and their business was also to testify the doctrine of repentance, and remission of sins, in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth, which they accordingly did; (see <40108>Acts 1:8 2:32,30-32, 10:39,41 20:21).

Ver. 49. *And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you*, etc.] By which is meant the promise of the Spirit, called the promise of the Father, because he was promised by the Father to be sent, and poured on the saints in the times of the Messiah, (<23403>Isaiah 44:3, <29228>Joel 2:28) and because Christ promised to pray the Father for him, and to send him from him; and that the Father should send him in his name, who would fit and qualify them for, and assist them in bearing a testimony for him; since he would teach them all things, lead them into all truth, take of the things of Christ, and show them to them, and bring to their remembrance all things they had seen and heard: and this promise of the Father was to be sent in a very short time, in ten days time, as accordingly it was; and might be very properly said to be sent "upon" them, since, when he was sent down, he sat upon them in the appearance of fire; and this being a marvellous thing, as well as of great moment and importance, it is introduced with a "behold", as a note both of admiration and attention.

But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem; for the space of ten days; here they were to continue during that time, and not depart thence; yea, they were to sit there, as the word used signifies: they were to sit still, and be silent; they were not to begin to preach; they were only to attend to prayer and Christian conversation, and to wait for the Spirit, the promise of the Father; and who also is designed in the following clause:

until ye be endued with power from on high; the Spirit of God is a spirit of might, and of power, as well as of knowledge, of understanding, of counsel, of love, and of a sound mind; whereby they were to be fortified, and inspired with courage and greatness of soul, so as to look their greatest adversaries in the face with boldness and intrepidity, and freely, and without fear, speak unto them; and whereby their ministrations would be succeeded to the conversion of many souls; and accordingly so it was: for after the Spirit was poured out upon them, they who before were timorous and fearful, came forth publicly, with undaunted courage, and resolution,

and boldness, to the amazement of their adversaries; and their preaching was with the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; who may be said to be “from on high”, since he descended from heaven upon them; and they may be said to be “endued”, or “clothed” with him, since there was such an extra ordinary and plentiful effusion of his gifts and graces on them: and now they were to wait in Jerusalem for this, that in the place where the Spirit had been dishonoured and blasphemed, and the unpardonable sin against him had been committed by the Scribes and Pharisees, the might be in a most visible and signal manner honoured; and also, because the doctrine of the Lord was to go out of Zion, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem. The Vulgate Latin version leaves out the word “Jerusalem”, and reads only, “sit ye in the city until”, etc. but then no other city can be designed.

Ver. 50. *And he led them out as far as Bethany*, etc.] Not the town of Bethany; could that be thought, it might be supposed that he led his disciples thither, to pay a visit to his dear friends there, Lazarus, Mary, and Martha, before his ascension; but the town of Bethany was fifteen furlongs, or near two miles distance from Jerusalem, (<43118>John 11:18) whereas the place from whence Christ ascended was but a sabbath day's journey from it, which was two thousand cubits, or about a mile, (<44012>Acts 1:12). This Bethany, therefore, was a tract of land, so called from the town, which began at the Mount of Olives, where Bethphage ended; (see <41110>Mark 11:1) and hither from Jerusalem Christ led his disciples, in order to ascend to heaven in their sight; and this was the spot of ground, where he began to ride in triumph to Jerusalem, and here he ascended in a triumphant manner to heaven; this was the place he frequently retired to for solemn, and solitary prayer, and where he had put up many a strong cry to God, and now from hence he ascended to him; this was the place whither he went after he had ate his last passover, where he was taken, and from whence he came to suffer and die for his people:

and he lift up his hands, and blessed them. The lifting up of his hands was not in order to put them upon his disciples; though the Ethiopic version adds, “and put them on”; nor was it used as a prayer gesture; nor was the blessing of them prayer wise, or by praying for a blessing on them; but as Aaron, his type, lift up his hands towards the people of Israel, and blessed them, when he had offered the offerings for them, (<03922>Leviticus 9:22) so Christ, as the great high priest, having offered himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people, lift up his hands towards his apostles, and blessed them

in an authoritative way, by bestowing blessings upon them: he blessed them with a larger measure of the Spirit; for though they were to wait some few days longer for the extraordinary effusion of the Spirit, yet, in the mean while, they received from him more of it than they had formerly had; for he breathed upon them, and said, receive the Holy Ghost, (<4822>John 20:22). He blessed them with larger measures of grace, and with more spiritual light, and understanding into the Scriptures of truth, and with much inward peace of mind, and with the fresh discoveries of pardoning love; and which seemed necessary, since by their conduct towards him, one by denying him, and the rest by forsaking him, the peace of their minds was broken, and they needed a fresh application of forgiving grace. The form of blessing the people used by Aaron, and his sons, the priests, who were types of Christ, is recorded in (<0623>Numbers 6:23-27) and though our Lord might not use the same form in blessing his disciples, yet it seems he used the same gesture, lifting up his hands, as they did. The Targumists say [f718], the blessing of the priests was done by stretching, or spreading out their hands; but other Jewish writers observe, it was by lifting them up: concerning which their rule is [f719];

> “in the province, the priests lift up their hands, as high as their shoulders, but in the sanctuary, above their heads, except the high priest, who did not lift up his hands above the plate of gold on his forehead.”

The reason of this was, because the name Jehovah was written upon it, and it was not proper his hands should be lifted up above that. The account Maimonides [f720] gives of this affair is;

> “how is the lifting up of hands? in the borders, at the time the messenger of the congregation comes to service, when he has said, who ever will, etc. all the priests that stand in the synagogue, remove from their places, and go, and ascend the desk (or pulpit), and stand there with their faces to the temple, and their backs to the people, and their fingers closed within their hands, until the messenger of the congregation has finished the confession, or thanksgiving; and then they turn their faces to the people, and stretch out their fingers, and lift up their hands to their shoulders and begin to bless, and the messenger of the congregation pronounces them (the blessings) word by word, etc. How is the blessing of the priests in the sanctuary? the priests go up into the

desk (or pulpit), after the priests have finished the morning daily service, and lift up their hands above, over their heads, except the high priest, who does not lift up his hands above the plate of gold, on his forehead; and one pronounces them (the blessings) word for word, as they do in the borders (in the country), etc."

And as our Lord used this gesture in blessing, it is very likely he complied with another rule, by expressing it in the Hebrew tongue; for the Jews say [f721], the blessing of the priests is not said in any place, but in the holy tongue.

Ver. 51. *And it came to pass, while he blessed them*, etc.] Just as he was finishing the words, by which he expressed the blessings he bestowed on them:

he was parted from them; as Elijah was from Elisha: their spiritual and mystical union by him remained, which is indissoluble; nor was his gracious presence from them withdrawn; nor was this parting in anger and resentment, as he sometimes does withdraw from his people, on account of their sinful conduct, in a little wrath, for a moment, resenting their unbecoming carriage; but this parting was while he was blessing them, and was only in body; his heart was still with them; it was a withdrawing of his corporeal presence from them, and that but for a while; he will come again a second time from heaven, from whence the saints expect him, and then they will meet, and never part more: and carried up into heaven; by his divine power, as God, by virtue of which he ascended himself, he went up gradually, till he became invisible to his disciples; or through the agility of his human body; for the bodies of the saints, when raised, will be like the angels, swift and nimble, and capable of moving from place to place, and of ascending and descending; and much more the glorious body of Christ, according to which, theirs will be conformed; though neither of these deny the use of means, that might be made, as of a cloud, and of angels; for a cloud received him out of the sight of the apostles; and there were the twenty thousand chariots of God, even thousands of angels, which attended him, when he ascended on high, and in which he may be properly said to be carried up into heaven, (<400109>Acts 1:9, <198817>Psalm 68:17,18) where he was received with a welcome, by his Father, by all the glorified saints, and holy angels, and where he is placed in human nature, at the right hand of God; is crowned with glory, and honour, and exalted above all creatures, human or angelic; and where he will remain until the time of the

restitution of all things, and then he will descend to judge the quick and dead. The Arabic and Ethiopic Versions read both these clauses actively, “he parted himself”, or “he departed from them, and went up into heaven”; and so reads the Syriac version the last clause.

Ver. 52. *And they worshipped him*, etc.] Not with a civil worship, as he was sometimes worshipped by men, in the days of his flesh, who, though they took him for some extraordinary person, knew him not to be the Son of God; but with religious worship as God: for by his resurrection from the dead, Christ was declared to be the Son of God, and both by that, and by his going to his Father, his ascension to heaven, the disciples were more confirmed in his proper deity, and divine sonship; and therefore worshipped him as God; by calling upon his name, ascribing blessings and honour, and glory, to him; by making him the object of their reverence and fear; and by trusting in him; and by doing every religious act in his name, and which they ever after continued to do:

and returned to Jerusalem: as they were ordered, where they were to tarry and wait for the pouring down of the Spirit: and this they did

with great joy; for though their Lord was parted from them, and was gone to heaven, this did not cause sorrow, as did his death, but, on the contrary, joy, even great joy; partly because of the glory he was entered into, and possessed of; and partly on account of what he was gone to do for them; to appear in the presence of God for them, to make intercession for them, to take possession of heaven in their name, and to prepare a place for them, as well as to receive gifts for them; and now they return to Jerusalem with great cheerfulness, in full hope and expectation, yea, assurance of faith, that they should shortly receive the promise of the Father.

Ver. 53. *And were continually in the temple*, etc.] At the time of worship, at the hours of prayer, or of public service; and perhaps always privately in an upper room in it, where they, with others, met frequently, and continued, with one accord, in prayer and supplication; (see Gill on “Acts 1:14”), a practice worthy of imitation, whether in the public or private way:

praising, and blessing God; for his Son Jesus Christ, who had died for their sins, was risen again for their justification, and was now ascended into heaven, to be their advocate there; and for all spiritual bless his Gospel to every creature.

Amen; so let him be praised, and blessed by all the saints, for all that is contained in this Gospel. In a manuscript copy of Beza's, it is added,

> “the Gospel according to Saint Luke was published fifteen years after the ascension of Christ;”

(See Gill on the title of this Gospel “Luke 1:1”)

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- In <4562>Romans 16:21.

Ft2 -- Catalog. Script. Ecclesiastes sect. 17. fol. 91. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 4.

Ft3 -- Praefat in Luc.

Ft4 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 11. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

Ft5 -- Ubi supra. (Hist. Eccl. 50:3. c. 39.)

Ft6 -- Praefat in Luc.

Ft7 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 24.

Ft8 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 53. 1.

Ft9 -- Epiphan. contra Haeres. 50:2. Haeres. 51. Theophylact. in Argument in Luc.

Ft10 -- Ut supra. (Epiphan. contra Haeres. 50:2. Haeres. 51. Theophylact. in Argument in Luc.)

Ft11 -- Salonio Epiat. p. 237.

Ft12 -- Ut supra.

Ft13 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

Ft14 -- T Bab. Taanith, fol. 27. 1.

Ft15 -- Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 4. sect. 3.

Ft16 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27. 1, 2. Eracin, fol. 12. 9. & 13. 1. T. Hieros. Taanioth, fol. 68. 1.

Ft17 -- Misn. Taanith, c. 4. sect. 2. 3.

Ft18 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft19 -- Piske Toseph. Moed Katon, art. 62.

Ft20 -- Misn, Biccurim, c. 3. sect. 2. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft21 -- T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 67. 4.

Ft22 -- Ib fol. 68. 1.

Ft23 -- Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 6. sect. 1, 2.

Ft24 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 49. 1.

Ft25 -- Misn. Kiddushin, c. 4. sect. 1.

Ft26 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 80. 2. Maimon. & Bartenora. in Misn. Yebamot, c. 1. sect. 1. & Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 2. sect. 6.

Ft27 -- In Koran, c. 3.

Ft28 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 2. sect. 1, 2.

Ft29 -- Ib. sect. 2, 3, 4.

Ft30 -- Misn. Tamid. c. 3. sect. 1.

Ft31 -- Ib. c. 5. sect. 2. 4.

Ft32 -- Misn. Tamid. c. 6. sect. 3.

Ft33 -- Hilchot Tamidin, c. 4. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 25. 1. & Gloss in fol. 22. 1. & Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Yoma, c. 2. sect. 1.

Ft34 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 26. 1.

Ft35 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tamidin, c. 3. sect. 3. 9. & Yore. haccipurim, c. 4. sect. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 44. 1.

Ft36 -- T. Bab. Berncot, fol. 7. 1.

Ft37 -- T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 42. 3.

Ft38 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 50:13. c. 18.

Ft39 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 33. 2.

Ft40 -- Hilch. Beth Habbechira, c. 1. sect. 7.

Ft41 -- Maimon. Hilch. Nezirut, c. 5. sect. 1.

Ft42 -- R. David Kimchi in Sepher Shorashim, rad. rkç

Ft43 -- Misn. Pesach. c. 3. sect. 1. & Jarchi, Maimom. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft44 -- Misn. Ediot, c. 8. sect. 7.

Ft45 -- Misn. Abot, c. 5. sect. 21. & Maimon. in ib.

Ft46 -- R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 24. 2.

Ft47 -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 24. 1.

Ft48 -- Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 3. sect. 8.

Ft49 -- T. Hicros. Rosh Hashana, fol. 56. 4.

Ft50 -- Targum Jon. in (12410)Exodus 24:10. Targum in Esth. 4:12. & in Psal. cxxxvii. 8. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 2. Shemot Rabba, fol. 91. 2. Sithre Toro in Zohar in Genesis fol. 65. 3. & 66. 2.

Ft51 -- Targum in Job. 3:3.

Ft52 -- T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 16. 2.

Ft53 -- Lex. Cabbal. p. 230.

Ft54 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 33. 1. & Tosephot in Sabbat, fol. 12. 2.

Ft55 -- Bernidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 179. 1.

Ft56 -- Lex. Cabbal. p. 230.

Ft57 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 2.

Ft58 -- C. 3. p. 40. Ed. Sale.

Ft59 -- C. 10. p. 249.

Ft60 -- Misna Yoma, c. 5. sect. 1.

Ft61 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft62 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 53. 2.

Ft63 -- T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 42. 3.

Ft64 -- Bartenora in Misa. Gittin, c. 5. sect. 7.

Ft65 -- Misn. ib.

Ft66 -- Misn. Trumot, c. 1. sect. 1, 2. Chagiga, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft67 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Cholin, c. 1. sect. 6.

Ft68 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 70. 1, 2. Maimon. Hilch. Issure Biah, c. 21.

Ft69 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

Ft70 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7, sect. 4. & passim alibi

Ft71 -- R. Sol. Jarchi, R. Aben Ezra, & R. Levi ben Gerson in Genesis 1. 2.

Ft72 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 49. 2. Vid. David de Pomis, Lex. Hebrews p. 67. 2.

Ft73 -- Targum, Jarchi, & Aben Ezra in loc.

Ft74 -- Misn. Sheviith, c. 9. sect. 2. Maimon & Bartenora in ib.

Ft75 -- T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 38. 4.

Ft76 -- Targum in Jud. 4:5. T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4.

Ft77 -- T. Hieros. Taanioth, fol. 69. 1.

Ft78 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 57. 1.

Ft79 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 34. 2. & Cetnbot, fol. 112. 1.

Ft80 -- Targum & R. Sol. Jarchi in loc.

Ft81 -- Targum in Psalm lxviii. 27. Zohar in Exodus fol. 23. 3. T. Hieros, Sota, fol. 20. 3. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 75. 3.

Ft82 -- Maimon. Hilch. Gerushin, c. 11. sect. 18. Vid. T. Bab. Becorot, fol. 47. 1.

Ft83 -- Misn. Yebamot, c. 4. sect. 10. T. Hieros, Yebamot, fol. 6. 1. T. Bab. ib. fol. 34. 2. & 35. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Yebum, c. 1. sect 19. T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 47. 1.

Ft84 -- Misn. Yebamot, c. 3. sect. 10.

Ft85 -- Maimon. Hilch. Milah, c. 2. sect. 1,

Ft86 -- Ib. c. 3. sect. 1, 2, 3.

Ft87 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 19.

Ft88 -- Misn. Gittin, c. 5. sect 7.

Ft89 -- Bartenora in ib.

Ft90 -- Maimon. Hitch. Nechalot, c. 2. sect. 15, & 4. 1.

Ft91 -- Haryocration. Lex. p. 244.

Ft92 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:2. c. 30.

Ft93 -- T. Hieros. Megilla, fol. 70. 1.

Ft94 -- T. Bab, Beracot, fol. 34. 2. & Sabbat, fol. 63. 1. Maimon. Hilchot Teshuva, c. 8. sect. 7.

Ft95 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 31. 1. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Teshuva, c. 10, sect. 1, 2.

Ft96 -- Suetonius in Vita Octav August. sect. 7.

Ft97 -- Apud Fabricii Biblioth Gr. Tom. 2. p. 608.

Ft98 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

Ft99 -- Contr. Marcion, 50:4. c. 19.

Ft100 -- Antiqu. 50:18. c. 1.

Ft101 -- Misn. Ediot. c. 7. sect. 7.

Ft102 -- T. Bab. Gittin. fol. 8. 1.

Ft103 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 14. 2.

Ft104 -- R. Benjamin Itin. p. 47.

Ft105 -- Apolog. 2. p. 75.

Ft106 -- T. Hieros. Berncot, fol. 5. 1.

Ft107 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 1.

Ft108 -- David Ganz, ut supra. (par. 2. fol. 14. 2.)

Ft109 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 7.

Ft110 -- Tzeror Hamrnor, fol. 73. 3.

Ft111 -- In <4016>Matthew 25:6.

Ft112 -- Misn. Betza, c. 5. sect. 7.

Ft113 -- Maimon. in ib.

Ft114 -- T. Bab. Betza, for. 40. 1. & Sabbat. fol. 45. 2. Vid Maimon Hilch. Yom Tob, c. 2. sect. 2.

Ft115 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 8. 1. & 98. 4.

Ft116 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 32.

Ft117 -- Maimon. Hilch Mechosre Cappara, c. 1. sect. 5.

Ft118 -- Misn. Sota, c. 1. sect. 5.

Ft119 -- Maimon. Hilch. Biccurim c. 11. sect. 10.

Ft120 -- Pirke Abot. sect 4. 5.

Ft121 -- Pirke Abot, sect. 2. T. Bab. Yoma, fol, 69. 1. T. Hieros. Yoma, 3. & 43. 3.

Ft122 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 1.

Ft123 -- Ib. par. 2. fol. 14.

Ft124 -- Juchasin, fol. 66. 2.

Ft125 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 1. T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 1.

Ft126 -- Kimchi in Zechariah 3:8.

Ft127 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 16. 2. & Maccot, fol. 5. 2.

Ft128 -- Tosaphot in Chagiga ib.

Ft129 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 37. 2. & Shebout, fol. 34. 1. Vid. & Cetubot, fol. 67. 1. & Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 2.

Ft130 -- Jarchi in Psal. 43:3. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 1. 3. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2.

Ft131 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

Ft132 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 33. 1.

Ft133 -- Contr. Haeres. 72.

Ft134 -- Maimon. Hilehot Ishot, c. 2. sect. 2.

Ft135 -- T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 61. 3.

Ft136 -- Eliahu Adderet, p. 39. apud Trigland. de Sect. Karaeorum, p. 28.

Ft137 -- Aben Ezra in <01774>Genesis 17:14.

Ft138 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 8. sect. 4. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 82. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Shebitat Asur, c. 2. sect. 10, 11.

Ft139 -- Massechet Sopherim, c. 18. sect. 5.

Ft140 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 39. 4.

Ft141 -- Misn. Maaser Sheni, c. 3. sect. 2.

Ft142 -- T. Bab. Betza, fol. 5. 1.

Ft143 -- David de Pomis Lex. Hebrews p. 141.

Ft144 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2. 3. T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 93. 2. & 94. & Tosaphta in ib. fol. 11. 2. Seder Tephillot, fol. 144. 1. Ed. Basil.

Ft145 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. sect. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 3.

Ft146 -- Jarchi in Misn. Yoma, c. 7. sect. 1.

Ft147 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 3, 4. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 7.

Ft148 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 5. sect. 4.

Ft149 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 46. fol. 143. 1.

Ft150 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 18. 2.

Ft151 -- Suetou. Octav. Aug. c. 62, 63. & Tiberius Nero, c. 21, 49, 73.

Ft152 -- R. David Ganz par. 2. fol. 15. 1.

Ft153 -- Joseph. de Bello, Jud. 50:2. c. 9. sect. 2, 3.

Ft154 -- Par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

Ft155 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 50:2. c. 6. sect. 5.

Ft156 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 23.

Ft157 -- Ib. ut supra. (de Bello, Jud. 50:2. c. 9. sect. 2, 3.)

Ft158 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 12.

Ft159 -- Lib. 5. c. 15.

Ft160 -- Targum Jon. in <0504>Deuteronomy 3:4. 14. <1043>1 Kings 4:13. & T. Hiefos. in <0514>Deuteronomy 3:14. & <0445>Numbers 34:15.

Ft161 -- Deuteronomy Excid. 50:1. c. 46. & 3. 26.

Ft162 -- Joseph de Bello Jud. 50:1. c. 28.

Ft163 -- Ib. Antiqu. 50:18. c. 6.

Ft164 -- Lib. 5. c. 18.

Ft165 -- Lib. 5. c. 15.

Ft166 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 59. 2.

Ft167 -- Hist. Eccl 50:1. c. 9. 10.

Ft168 -- Deuteronomy Belle Jud. 50:1. c. 13. sect. 1.

Ft169 -- In Misn. Menachot, c. 13. sect. 10.

Ft170 -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 4. sect. 15.

Ft171 -- T. Bab. Yorma, fol. 8. 2.

Ft172 -- Bartenora in Misn. Yoma, c 1. sect. 1.

Ft173 -- Targum in <1204>2 Kings 23:4. & 25:18. & in <2401>Jeremiah 20:1. 3. & 29:26, & 52:24.

Ft174 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 6. sect. 1. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 1. Juchasin, fol. 57. 1.

Ft175 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft176 -- T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 38. 4. Megilla, fol. 72. 1. Horayot, fol. 47. 4. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 47. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 180. 3.

Ft177 -- Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 4. sect. 16.

Ft178 -- T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 41. 1.

Ft179 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 4. sect. 1.

Ft180 -- Ib. c. 3. sect. 9.

Ft181 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 44.

Ft182 -- T. Hieros. Erubin, fol. 25. 2.

Ft183 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 177. 1, 2. Vid. Targ. in Cant. 2:6. & Jarchi in Cant. 3:6.

Ft184 -- In <3404>Isaiah 40:4.

Ft185 -- Vid. Surenhus. Biblos Katallages, de modis Allegandi, etc. Thes. 7. p. 45, 46, 319.

Ft186 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 113. 1.

Ft187 -- Hilch. Gezala, c. 5. sect. 11, 12.

Ft188 -- Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 214. Vid. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 25. 2. Gloss in ib.

Ft189 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 4. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 2. & 21. 2.

Ft190 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par, 1. fol. 25. 2.

Ft191 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1. Jarchi & Aben Ezra in Zechariah xii 10. & 13:7.

Ft192 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 46. fol. 143. 1.

Ft193 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 13. 1.

Ft194 -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 25. 3.

Ft195 -- Ib. Chagiga, fol. 77. 4.

Ft196 -- Juchasin, fol. 55. 2.

Ft197 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 11. 2. & passim.

Ft198 -- Juchasin. fol. 15. 1. & 16. 2.

Ft199 -- Apud. Vorst. Not. ad. Chronol. R. David Ganz, p. 311.

Ft200 -- Sepher Cosri, orat. 2. Sig. 14. fol. 68. 1.

Ft201 -- Biblos Katallages, p. 210, 211.

Ft202 -- Maimon. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 12. sect. 7.

Ft203 -- Maimon. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 12. sect. 1.

Ft204 -- Misn. Megilia, c. 4. 1.

Ft205 -- Jarchi & Bartenora in ib.

Ft206 -- T. Bab. Megilia, fol. 21. 1.

Ft207 -- Robbenu Asher in T. Megill. c. 3. sect. 1. & Piske Harosh in ib.

Ft208 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephillah, c. 12. sect. 16, 18.

Ft209 -- Jarchi & Battenora in Misn. Sota, c. 7. sect. 7. & Yoma, c. 7. 1.

Ft210 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 7. sect. 1. Maimon. Yom Haccippurim, c. 3. sect. 10.

Ft211 -- Misn. Sota, c. 7. sect. 8.

Ft212 -- Juchasin, fol. 123. 1.

Ft213 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 27. 1.

Ft214 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 13. 2. & Massechet Sopherim, c. 3. sect 1, 5.

Ft215 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 1.

Ft216 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 70. 1. Maimon. Hilch, Tephilla, c. 12. sect. 23.

Ft217 -- Massecheth Sepherim, c. 11. sect. 2.

Ft218 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 127. 2. Ed. Basil.

Ft219 -- Misn. Megilia, c. 4. sect. 4. Massechet Sopherim, c. 11. sect. 1.

Ft220 -- Piske Harosh Megilla, c. 3. art. 6.

Ft221 -- Massechet Sopherim, c. 12. sect. 7.

Ft222 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 7. sect. 1.

Ft223 -- Bartenora in Misn. Sota, c. 7. sect. 7.

Ft224 -- Massechet Sopherirn, c. 3. sect. 10.

Ft225 -- Kimchi in Sepher Shorash. rad. jçm

Ft226 -- R. Sol. Hamelec in Miclol Yophi in loc.

Ft227 -- Juchaain, fol. 69. 1.

Ft228 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 31. 2.

Ft229 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 20. 4.

Ft230 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 1. sect. 3. Trumot, c. 2. sect. 1.

Ft231 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 3. 2. & 12. 1. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Trumot, c. 3. sect. 1.

Ft232 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 55. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

Ft233 -- L. 5. c. 19.

Ft234 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 33.

Ft235 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 89. 2.

Ft236 -- Vid. Rycquium de Capitol. Born. c. 4.

Ft237 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 1.

Ft238 -- Moses Kotseneis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 67.

Ft239 -- Ib pr. affirm, 29.

Ft240 -- See Chambers's Cyclopaedia in the word “Fever”.

Ft241 -- Targum in Ezekiel 39:11. Zohar in Genesis fol. 3. 2. & 17. 2. & in Exodus fol. 52. 4. & 61. 4.

Ft242 -- Plin. 50:5. c. 15. Solin, c. 48. Ptolom. 50:5. c. 15.

Ft243 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 50:3. c. 18.

Ft244 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 18.

Ft245 -- Chambers's Cyclopaedia in the word “Leprosy”.

Ft246 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 52. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

Ft247 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 111. 2. & Gloss. in lb.

Ft248 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 51. 1. & Gloss. in ib. & Bava Bathra, fol. 98. 1. & Maimon. Hilch. Mecira, c. 17. sect. 6.

Ft249 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 22. 1.

Ft250 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 20.

Ft251 -- T. Bab. Betza, fol. 12. 2. & 13. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 21. sect. 14. 17.

Ft252 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 7. 1. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 56, fol. 50. 2.

Ft253 -- Deuteronomy Vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 685. in Flaccum, p. 971, 972, 982. leg. ad Caium. p. 1011, 1012, 1013, 1014, 1016, 1040, 1043.

Ft254 -- In Vita.

Ft255 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 4. fol. 2. 4.

Ft256 -- T. Bab. Megilia, fol. 27. 2.

Ft257 -- Satyr. 3. 50:295.

Ft258 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1.

Ft259 -- Vid. Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 7. sect. 4, 5, 6.

Ft260 -- Kimchi in Psal. 15:apud Huls. Theolog. Jud. par. 1. p. 420.

Ft261 -- R. Abraham ben Dior in Sepher Jetzira, p. 19.

Ft262 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 69. 2, 3.

Ft263 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 2. 2. & 9. 4. & 20. 1. & 22. 1.

Ft264 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 15. 2.

Ft265 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 107. 2. T. Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 13. 3.

Ft266 -- Misn. Menachot, c. 9. sect. 5.

Ft267 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 37. 1, 2.

Ft268 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 89. 1.

Ft269 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 48. 1.

Ft270 -- Misn. Demai, c. 2. sect. 4.

Ft271 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft272 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 14. 2. Vid Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, & R. Levi

ben Getshorn, in [1076]1 Kings 7:26. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 11. fol. 204. 3.

Ft273 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 2. sect. 5.

Ft274 -- Vid. Rivinum de Venilia Salacia, etc. p. 681, 632.

Ft275 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2.

Ft276 -- Misn. Kenim, c. 3. sect. 6.

Ft277 -- T. Hieros. Sota, fol. 23. 3.

Ft278 -- Piske Harosh Megilia, c. 4. art. 1.

Ft279 -- Tom. 1. ad Marcellum, fol. 44. B. & Epitaph. Paulae. fol. 60. A.

Ft280 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 98. fol. 86. 1.

Ft281 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 80. 2. Gloss.

Ft282 -- T. Moed Katon, fol. 24. 1, 2. & Kiddashin, fol. 80. 2. Massech. Semachot, c. 3. sect. 2, 3. Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 12. sect. 10, 11.

Ft283 -- Ut in locis supra citatis.

Ft284 -- Vid Misn. Beracot, c. 3. sect. 1.

Ft285 -- Maimon. in Misn. Peah, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft286 -- Piske Tosaphot Megilla, art. 106. T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 27. 2.

Ft287 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 50:1. c. 33. sect. 11.

Ft288 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 27. 1, 2.

Ft289 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 4.

Ft290 -- T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 56. 2.

Ft291 -- R. Sampson & Bartenora in Misn. Para, c. 12. sect. 9.

Ft292 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 100. fol. 87. 4.

Ft293 -- Misn. Oholot, c. 2. sect. 4.

Ft294 -- Hilchot. Ebel, c. 4. sect. 2. 3.

Ft295 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 3. sect. 1.

Ft296 -- Josephus, ut supra. (Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 50:1. c. 33. sect. 11.)

Ft297 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 2. sect. 5. Vid Maimon. Hilchot Gerushin, c. 2. sect. 14.

Ft298 -- Vid. Castell. Lex. Heptaglott. col. 1195.

Ft299 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. 50:36. c. 8.

Ft300 -- Aelian. var. Hist. 50:12. c. 8.

Ft301 -- Vid Alstorphium de lectis veterum, p. 106, 107.

Ft302 -- Ib. p. 123, 124.

Ft303 -- T. Bab. Meuachot, fol. 85. 2.

Ft304 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 26. 2. Maimon. Hilchot Biath Harnikdash, c. 5. sect. 5.

Ft305 -- Metamorph. 50:5.

Ft306 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 4. & Kiddushin, fol. 61. 3. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 49. 2. Vid. ib. fol. 63. 1.

Ft307 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol 27. 2.

Ft308 -- Vid. Aristophanem in vespis, p. 473. Arvian Epictet. 50:3. c. 26. & Alex. ab. Alex. Genesis Dier. 50:2. c. 19.

Ft309 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 9.

Ft310 -- Maimon. in Misn. Chagiga, c. 2. sect. 7.

Ft311 -- Ib. Hilchot Abot Hatumaot, c. 13. sect. 8.

Ft312 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 38. fol. 9. 2.

Ft313 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 4. fol. 183. 1.

Ft314 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 6. fol. 91. 3, 4.

Ft315 -- Vid. Apuleii Metamorph. 1:1. prope finem.

Ft316 -- Jerom in Mar. 15:40.

Ft317 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 22. 1.

Ft318 -- Massechet Sopherim, c. 13. sect. 6.

Ft319 -- T. Bab. Tasnith, fol. 22. 1.

Ft320 -- T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 22. 1.

Ft321 -- Juchasin, fol. 75. 1.

Ft322 -- Juchasin, fol. 78. 1.

Ft323 -- Targum Jon. & Jerus. in <1004>Genesis 39:4.

Ft324 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol 63. 1. & Maimon lssure Bia, c. 22. sect. 15. & Maggid Misn. in ib.

Ft325 -- T. Bab. Sacca, fol. 27. 1.

Ft326 -- Lib. 5. c. 18.

Ft327 -- T. Bab Succa, fol. 22. 1.

Ft328 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 48. 2.

Ft329 -- Antiqu. 50:18. c. 3.

Ft330 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 6. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7.

Ft331 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 21. 4.

Ft332 -- T. Bab Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 2.

Ft333 -- Zohar in Numbers for. 70. 1. & Tosaphta in Zohar in Genesis fol. 76. 2.

Ft334 -- Contr. Haeres. haeres. 20.

Ft335 -- Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrim, c. 1. sect. 3.

Ft336 -- Misn. Yadim, c. 3. sect. 5. Aben Ezra in Num 11. 25.

Ft337 -- Fabricii lux Evangelii, p. 115, 116, etc.

Ft338 -- Jarchi, Kimchi, & R. Levi Ben Gersom in <1029>2 Kings 4:29.

Ft339 -- Pirke Abot. c. 4. sect. 15.

Ft340 -- T. Bab. in Misn. Moed Katon, c. 3. sect. 6.

Ft341 -- Misn. Taanith, c. 1. sect. 7.

Ft342 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 39. fol. 34. 3.

Ft343 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 50:3. c. 35.

Ft344 -- Vid. L'Empereur, Not. in Benj. Itinerar. p. 68.

Ft345 -- Maimon. Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 6. sect. 11, 12.

Ft346 -- Vid. Misn. Beracot, c. 1. sect. 1, 2.

Ft347 -- T. Bab. Tasnith, fol. 8. 1.

Ft348 -- Kimchi in Psal. 15:3.

Ft349 -- Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 9.

Ft350 -- Maimon. Hilch. Rotzeach, c. 2. sect. 11.

Ft351 -- Ib. c. 4. sect. 11.

Ft352 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 20. 2. & 39. 20. Bartenora in Misn. Tamid, c. 3. sect. 8.

Ft353 -- T. Bab. Pesachim. fol. 93. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

Ft354 -- Ad Eustochium, Tom. I. fol. 59. I. K.

Ft355 -- Masius in (657)Joshua 15:7.

Ft356 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27. 1.

Ft357 -- T. Hieros. Pesachim, fol. 30. 3. & Taanith, fol. 67. 4.

Ft358 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 14. 3. & Beracot, fol. 3. 1.

Ft359 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 19. sect. 2.

Ft360 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 13. 2. & 25. 2. & Pesachim, fol. 106. 2. Yoma, fol. 19. 2. Juchuin, fol. 76. 2.

Ft361 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 121. 2. Juchasin, fol. 72. 2.

Ft362 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 33. 2. Juchasin, fol. 91. 1.

Ft363 -- Misn. Yebamot, c. 6. sect. 4. T. Bob. Yoma, fol. 18. 1. Succa, fol. 52. 2. Cetubot, fol. 104. 1. Gittin, fol. 56. 1. Juchasin, fol. 57. 1.

Ft364 -- Juchasin, fol. 99. 1.

Ft365 -- lb. fol. 105. 1.

Ft366 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 2.

Ft367 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.

Ft368 -- Contr. Marcion. 50:4. c. 26.

Ft369 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 4. sect. 3. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2. T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 65. 3. Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 7. sect. 7.

Ft370 -- T. Bab. Beracot, ib. Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 2. sect. 1, 2. Gauz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

Ft371 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 23. sect. 1.

Ft372 -- Misn. Bava Metzia. c. 5. sect. 9.

Ft373 -- T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 3. 2. Jarchi in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 148. 1. Bartenona in Misn. Sabbat, c. 23. sect. 1.

Ft374 -- Misn. Erubin, c. 2. sect. 6.

Ft375 -- Maimon. & Bartonora in lb,

Ft376 -- Lib. 11. c. 25.

Ft377 -- Antiqu. Jud. 50:8. c. 2.

Ft378 -- R. Mosch in Sepher Hashem, apud Cabal. Denudata. T. I. par. 50:p. 146.

Ft379 -- Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 8.

Ft380 -- T. Hieros. Celaim, fol. 27. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 5. fol. 5. 1.

Ft381 -- T. Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 77. 4. & Sanhedrin, fol. 23. 3.

Ft382 -- R. David Kimchi and Rabbenu Isaiah in loc. Vid Jarchi in ib.

Ft383 -- R. Levi ben Gersom in ib.

Ft384 -- Vajikra Rabba, Sect. 34. fol. 174. 2. Vid. fol. 173. 3, 4. & 174. 4.

Ft385 -- Misn Parah. c. 3. sect. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Parah. c. 3. sect.

Ft386 -- Maimon. in Misn. Nazir, c. 9. sect. 2. & Pesach. c. 7. sect. 7.

Ft387 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1. Vid. Targum in Eccl. 10:8. & in

<25001>Lamentations 1:1. & 2:20.

Ft388 -- Targum in Ruth i, 1.

Ft389 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 46. 1.

Ft390 -- Vid. Cameron. in loc.

Ft391 -- Misn. Peah, c. 3. sect. 5.

Ft392 -- Maimon. Hilchot Nechalot, c. 2. sect. 1. 7.

Ft393 -- Maimon. Hilchot Nechalot, c. 10. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Ft394 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 11. 1.

Ft395 -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 63. 1.

Ft396 -- Comment. in <18041>Job 38:41. & in Psal. cxlvii. 9.

Ft397 -- Jarchi in <18041>Job 38:41. & in Psal. cxlvii. 9. & Kimchi in lb.

Ft398 -- Kimchi ib. Vid. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 49. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

Ft399 -- Aben Ezra in Psal. cxivii. 9.

Ft400 -- Hist. Animal. 50:9. c. 31.

Ft401 -- Nat. Hist. 50:10. c. 12.

Ft402 -- Deuteronomy Animal. Natura, 50:2. c. 49.

Ft403 -- Vid. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 28. 2. & 29.

Ft404 -- Jarchi in T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 77. 2.

Ft405 -- Vide Lipsii Saturnal. 50:1. c. 2. p. 6.

Ft406 -- Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 17. sect. 2, 3.

Ft407 -- Misn. Maccot, c. 3. sect. 11.

Ft408 -- Hilchot M. vah. c. 1. sect. 4.

Ft409 -- Antiqu. 50:18. c. 5.

Ft410 -- T. Hieros. Succa, fol. 55. 2. Vid. Lightfoot Hor. in loc.

Ft411 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1.

Ft412 -- Vid. Joseph. de Bello Jud. 50:6. c. 11. & 50:7. c. 17. Euseb. 50:3. c. 5.

Ft413 -- Joseph. de Bello Jud. 50:6. c. 4.

Ft414 -- Maimon. Hilchot Celaim, c. 5. sect. 6.

Ft415 -- Misn. Celaim, c. 6. sect. 4.

Ft416 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 164. 3. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 9. 2.

Ft417 -- T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 35. 4. Jarchi, Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Demai, c. 1. sect. 1. & Sheviith, c. 5. sect. 1.

Ft418 -- Sheviith, c. 2. sect. 2.

Ft419 -- Jarchi, Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft420 -- Maimon. Hilch. Melacim, c. 6. sect. 8, 9.

Ft421 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 43. fol. 141. 2.

Ft422 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 105. 1.

Ft423 -- Pesikta in Jarchi in <2012>Isaiah 1:21. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 20. 3. Ecka Rabbati, fol. 37. 4.

Ft424 -- Misn. Sahbat, c. 5. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4. & 18. 2. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 51. 2. & Piske Tosephot in ib. art. 226, 227, 228, 233.

Ft425 -- Bartenora in Misn. Sabbat, c. 5. sect. 1.

Ft426 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 20. 2.

Ft427 -- Misn. Betza, c. 5. sect. 7.

Ft428 -- In ib.

Ft429 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 72. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 109. 1.

Ft430 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol 20. 2.

Ft431 -- Lex. Talmud. col. 823.

Ft432 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.

Ft433 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 29. 1.

Ft434 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 26. 1.

Ft435 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 2.

Ft436 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 15. & Jarchi in ib.

Ft437 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 5. & T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 2.

Ft438 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. sect. 4.

Ft439 -- Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 30. sect. 7, 8, 9.

Ft440 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 1. Kimchi in <2313>Isaiah 58:13.

Ft441 -- Chamber's Cyclopaedia on the word “Dropsy”.

Ft442 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 25. fol. 6. 4.

Ft443 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 146. 4. Vid. Shemot Rabba, sect. 45. fol. 142. 1.

Ft444 -- Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 82. fol. 72. 4.

Ft445 -- See my Notes on the Targum in Cant. 8:2.

Ft446 -- Nat. Hist. 50:31. c. 7.

Ft447 -- Misn. Pesach. c. 4. sect. 1, 2.

Ft448 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 14. 3. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 16. fol. 158. 4.

Ft449 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 107. 2.

Ft450 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 27. fol. 168. 3.

Ft451 -- C. 38.

Ft452 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. & Sanhedrim, fol. 99. 1.

Ft453 -- Hilchot Teshuba, c. 7. sect. 4. Vid. Kimchi in <2570>Isaiah 57:10. & Jarchi in <2405>Isaiah 44:5. & Zohar in Leviticus fol. 7. 2.

Ft454 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 1. 4.

Ft455 -- T. Hieros. Maascrot, fol. 50. 2.

Ft456 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 33. 2.

Ft457 -- R. Chayim in Lib. Chayim, par. 4. c. 6. apud Maii Jud. Theolog. loc 15. p. 243.

Ft458 -- Midrash Kohclet, in c. 9. 12. fol. 79. 4.

Ft459 -- T. Hieros Peah, fol. 16. 1.

Ft460 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 1. Vid. Targum in Jos. 7:21.

Ft461 -- Maimon Hilch. Tumaot Tzaraath, c. 16. sect. 6. T. Bab. Cholin, fol 71. 2.

Ft462 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 9. 1.

Ft463 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 63. 1.

Ft464 -- Mischar Hapeninim apud Buxtorf. Florileg, Hebrews p. 262.

Ft465 -- In Ezr. 7:22.

Ft466 -- In ib.

Ft467 -- Kimchi in <36514>Ezekiel 45:14.

Ft468 -- Moses & Aaron, 50:6. c. 9.

Ft469 -- Moses & Aaron, 50:6. c. 9.

Ft470 -- Teelnianni Specimen Explicat. Parabolarum.

Ft471 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 121. 1.

Ft472 -- T. Bab Bava Netzia, fol. 27. 2.

Ft473 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 26. 2. & 58. 3, 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 99. 3. & 101. 2. & 102. 4.

Ft474 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 59. 4.

Ft475 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 50. 4.

Ft476 -- Aben Ezra in <01009>Genesis 6:9. & 37:2. Sol. Urbin Obel Moed, fol. 85. 1.

Ft477 -- Targum in <18708>Job 27:8. & in <23523>Isaiah 5:23. & 33:15. & in <36227>Ezekiel 22:27. & in <28511>Hosea 5:11.

Ft478 -- Targum in Hab. 2:9.

Ft479 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 23. 2.

Ft480 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 31. fol. 134. 4.

Ft481 -- Jarchi in Pirke Abot, c. 5, sect. 13.

Ft482 -- T. Hieros. Succa, fol. 53. 1.

Ft483 -- Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 13.

Ft484 -- Jarchi in ib.

Ft485 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 114. 2. & Kimchi in loc.

Ft486 -- Philostrat. Vit. Appollon. 50:2. c. 9.

Ft487 -- Targum in <01442>Genesis 41:42. in <14652>2 Chronicles 5:12. & in <26447>Ezekiel 44:17.

Ft488 -- T. Hieros. Biccurim, fol. 63. 3, 4. & 64. 1. & 65. 3, 4. & Sheviith, fol. 36. 3. & passim.

Ft489 -- Juchasin, fol. 81. 1.

Ft490 -- Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 9. sect. 1. & T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 140. 2. Piske Tosaph. in Cetubot, art. 138, 372.

Ft491 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 1.

Ft492 -- Misn. Cetubot, c. 3. sect. 5. & 7. 10.

Ft493 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in lb.

Ft494 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

Ft495 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 4.

Ft496 -- In Sepher Emanah, c. 1. p. 20.

Ft497 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 58. 1.

Ft498 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 72. 2. Juchasin, fol. 75. 2.

Ft499 -- Targum in Cant. 4:12.

Ft500 -- Midrash Haneelam in Zohar in Genesis fol. 65. 1.

Ft501 -- Debarim Rabba, sect. 11. fol. 245. 4.

Ft502 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 104. 1.

Ft503 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 39. 3.

Ft504 -- Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. col. 372.

Ft505 -- Synagog. Jud. c. 50. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 1. Aben Ezra in Cant. 7:5. T. Hieros Beracot, fol. 5. 1.

Ft506 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 125. 3.

Ft507 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 18. 2.

Ft508 -- Ib. fol. 15. 2.

Ft509 -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 23. 3. & Chagiga, fol, 77. 4.

Ft510 -- Koran, c. 7. p. 121. (sura 7:50)

Ft511 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol 76. 1.

Ft512 -- Nishmat Chayim Orat. 1. sect. 12. fol. 31. 1.

Ft513 -- Raziel, fol. 15. 1.

Ft514 -- Koran, c. 7. p. 120.

Ft515 -- Caphtor, fol. 70. 2.

Ft516 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 16. 1.

Ft517 -- Teelmannus.

Ft518 -- Maimon Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 2.

Ft519 -- Ib. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 12. sect. 16.

Ft520 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 5. 1.

Ft521 -- Maimon. Hilchot Chobel Umezik, c. 5. sect. 10.

Ft522 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 92. 1.

Ft523 -- T. Bab. Rosh Hashama, fol. 17. 2.

Ft524 -- Juchasin, fol. 90. 2.

Ft525 -- Misna Sheviith, c. 9. sect. 2.

Ft526 -- In Misna Demai, c. 1. sect. 1. & in Bava Bathra, c. 2. sect. 11.

Ft527 -- Maimon. Hilch. Abadim, c. 1. sect. 9. Vid. T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 22. 1.

Ft528 -- Maimon. ib. c. 9. sect. 8.

Ft529 -- Pirke Abot. c. 2. sect. 8.

Ft530 -- Misn. Negaim, c. 3. sect. 1.

Ft531 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 15. 2. & 21. 2.

Ft532 -- T. Hieros Shekalim, fol. 46. 2.

Ft533 -- Maimon. in Misn. Beracot, c. 8. sect. 8. & Bartenora in ib. c. 7. sect. 1.

Ft534 -- Misn. Negaim, c. 3. sect. 1. Maimon. Tumaot Tzaraot, c. 9. sect. 1.

Ft535 -- Misna Bava Metzia, c. 7. sect. 1. & Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. Vid. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 15. 4. & 16. 1.

Ft536 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 32. fol. 27. 2. & Shemot Rabba, sect. 31. fol. 134. 4.

Ft537 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 25.

Ft538 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 50. fol. 45. 3.

Ft539 -- Hist. 50:5.

Ft540 -- Polyhistor. c. 48.

Ft541 -- Geograph. 50:16.

Ft542 -- Histor. 50:36. c. 3.

Ft543 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 16.

Ft544 -- Antiqu. 50:1. c. 11. sect. 4. & de Bello Jud. 50:5. c. 21.

Ft545 -- Deuteronomy Vita Mosis, 50:2. p. 662.

Ft546 -- Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 50:3. c. 5.

Ft547 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 25.

Ft548 -- Baal Hatturim in Genesis 19:26.

Ft549 -- Targum Jon. & Hieros. in ib.

Ft550 -- Pirke Eliezer ib.

Ft551 -- Aben Ezra in <01926>Genesis 19:26.

Ft552 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 20. 2. & Menachot, fol. 21. 1.

Ft553 -- Bartenora in Misna Erubin, c. 1. sect. 10.

Ft554 -- T. Bab Kiddushin, fol. 62. 1.

Ft555 -- Nat. Hist. 50:31. c. 7.

Ft556 -- Antiqu. 50:1. c. 12.

Ft557 -- Adv. Haeres. 50:4. c. 51.

Ft558 -- Jarchi in <01926>Genesis 19:26.

Ft559 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 51. fol. 46. 1.

Ft560 -- Vid. Alstorph. de Lectis Veter. c. 15. p. 90, 91.

Ft561 -- Teelmaunus.

Ft562 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft563 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 3, 4.

Ft564 -- Ib. c. 2. sect. 10, 11.

Ft565 -- T. Hieros, Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 1.

Ft566 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 5. 1.

Ft567 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 7.

Ft568 -- T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 65. 2.

Ft569 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 105. 1.

Ft570 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 118. 1.

Ft571 -- Ib. in Numbers fol. 86. 1.

Ft572 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 8. sect. 1, 3. Piske Harosh Beracot, c. 1. art. 7.

Ft573 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 8. 4.

Ft574 -- Piske Harosh, ib.

Ft575 -- Piske Harosh, & T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 9. 1.

Ft576 -- Maimon. ib. sect. 2.

Ft577 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 111. 2.

Ft578 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 52. 2.

Ft579 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 7. 4. Vid. Misna Beracot, c. 4. sect. 2. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft580 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 13. 2.

Ft581 -- Seder Tephillot, ed. Basil. fol. 2. 2. ed. Amst. fol. 4. 1.

Ft582 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 30. sect. 9.

Ft583 -- T. Hieros. Nedarim, fol. 40. 4.

Ft584 -- L. 36. c. 2.

Ft585 -- Octav. Aug. c. 76.

Ft586 -- Maimon. Hilch. Mechosre Caphara, c. 2. sect, 8.

Ft587 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 1. Megilla, 31. 1, 2.

Ft588 -- Maimon. Hilchot Taaniot, c. 1. sect. 5.

Ft589 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 12. 1.

Ft590 -- Godwin Moses & Aaron, 50:1. c. 10. Vid. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 88. 1.

Ft591 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 12. 1.

Ft592 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 61. 1.

Ft593 -- Piske Harosh Beracot, c. 1. art. 7. Vid. T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 9. 1.

Ft594 -- Jarchi & Bartenora in Pirke Abot. c. 5. sect. 5.

Ft595 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 80. 1.

Ft596 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 5. sect. 4. & Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 19.

Ft597 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 105. 2.

Ft598 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 25. 3.

Ft599 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 5. 1.

Ft600 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 39. 1.

Ft601 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 27. 2. & Yebamot, fol. 77. 2. Nazir, fol. 38. 1. & Nidda, fol. 41. 2. & Juchasin, fol. 90. 2.

Ft602 -- R. Benjamin Itinerar. p. 61, 94.

Ft603 -- Tertull. contr. Marcion. 50:4. c. 37.

Ft604 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 113. 1.

Ft605 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Bava Kama, c. 10. sect. 1.

Ft606 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 78. 2.

Ft607 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 57. 1. & Juchashin, fol. 69. 1.

Ft608 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 71. 1. & Pesachim, fol. 56. 1.

Ft609 -- Misn. Sheviith, c. 9. sect. 2.

Ft610 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 50:4. c. 27.

Ft611 -- Geograph. 50:16.

Ft612 -- Hist. 50:36. c. 3.

Ft613 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 14.

Ft614 -- Ut supra. (Geograph. 50:16.)

Ft615 -- Ib.

Ft616 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 43. 1.

Ft617 -- Vid. Masium in Joshua c. 2. p. 37.

Ft618 -- Misna Bava Bathra, c. 2. sect. 7.

Ft619 -- Bartenora in ib.

Ft620 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 50. 1. & Maimon. in Misn. Peah, c. 1, sect 1.

Ft621 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 44. 1.

Ft622 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 67. 2.

Ft623 -- Juchasin, fol. 105. 2.

Ft624 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 2.

Ft625 -- Maimon. Hilch. Mattanot Anayim, c. 7. sect. 5.

Ft626 -- Misna Bava Kama, c. 7. sect. 1.

Ft627 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 94. 2.

Ft628 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 14. 2.

Ft629 -- Caphtor, fol. 69. 1.

Ft630 -- Bartenora in Misn. Tamid, c. 3, sect. 8.

Ft631 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 50:4. c. 27.

Ft632 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.

Ft633 -- Targum in <2309>Isaiah 40:9.

Ft634 -- Peah, c. 8. sect. 5. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft635 -- Teelmanni Specimen Explic. Parabol. p. 51.

Ft636 -- Elias in Tisbbi in voce ˆynq.

Ft637 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1.

Ft638 -- Joseph. Antiqu 50:20. c. 6.

Ft639 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 114. 4. & in Exodus fol. 76. 1. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3. 2. Prafat Echa Rabbati, fol. 89. 4.

Ft640 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 85. 2.

Ft641 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 30. 2.

Ft642 -- T. Bab Bathra, fol. 60. 2. & Caphtor, fol. 118. 2.

Ft643 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 50:6. c. 8.

Ft644 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 119. 2.

Ft645 -- Maimon Hilch. Dayot, c. 5. sect. 9. Vid. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 57. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

Ft646 -- Vid. Joseph. de Bello Jud, 50:6. c. 5.

Ft647 -- Joseph. de Bello Jud. 50:7. c. 17.

Ft648 -- Vid. Targum in Gen 22:14. & 38:25. & Targum Sheni in Esth. 5:1.

Ft649 -- Joseph. de Bello Jud. 50:6. c. 15.

Ft650 -- Joseph. de Belio Jud. 50:7. c. 49. & Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 50:3. c. 7.

Ft651 -- Ib.

Ft652 -- In Prefat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 38. 4. Jarchi in <21202>Ecclesiastes 12:2.

Ft653 -- Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 7. sect. 1, 2. Misu. Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 1, 2.

Ft654 -- Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 1, 2.

Ft655 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Pesachim, c. 10. sect. 1.

Ft656 -- Maimon. Chametz Umetzah, c. 7. sect. 9, 10.

Ft657 -- Ib. c. 8. sect. 1.

Ft658 -- Haggada Shel Pesach. fol. 241. 1, 2. ed. Basil. p. 3, 4. ed. Rittangel.

Ft659 -- Alex. ab. Alexandro Genial. Dier. 50:1. c. 2.

Ft660 -- Vid. Cuper. Inscript. & Marmora. p. 283, 284.

Ft661 -- Targum in <14315>2 Chronicles 31:15.

Ft662 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 38. 4. Jarchi in <01221>Genesis 22:11. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 14. fol. 217. 1.

Ft663 -- In Avibus, p. 548.

Ft664 -- Maimon. Hilch. Megilla Uchanucha, c. 4. sect. 12.

Ft665 -- Advers. Pelag. 50:2. fol. 96. F.

Ft666 -- Deuteronomy Trinitate, 50:10. p. 155.

Ft667 -- Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 331.

Ft668 -- Adv. Haeres. 50:3. c. 32.

Ft669 -- Deuteronomy Hist. Animal. 50:3. c. 19.

Ft670 -- Deuteronomy Part. Animal. 50:3. c. 5.

Ft671 -- Deuteronomy Cruce Hypomnem. 4. p. 185, 186.

Ft672 -- lb. p. 184.

Ft673 -- Problem, sect. 2. c. 26, 31.

Ft674 -- Hist. sui Temporis, par. 1. 50:8. p. 804, 805.

Ft675 -- lb. par. 4. 50:82. p. 69.

Ft676 -- Solin, Polyhistor, c. 40, Isidor. Hispalens. Etymolog. 50:12. c. 4.

Ft677 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Leviticus fol. 37. 2.

Ft678 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 10. 1. Maimon. Hilch, Mezuza, c. 6. sect. 6.

Ft679 -- T. Bab, Yoma, fol. 8. 2.

Ft680 -- Misna Yoma, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft681 -- Misna Saobedrin, c. 10. sect. 2. & Middot, c. 5. sect. 3.

Ft682 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 103. 1. & Beracot, fol, 17. 2.

Ft683 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

Ft684 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 13. sect. 6. Vid. Misu. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect 4.

Ft685 -- Jarchi & Bartenora in Misn. ib.

Ft686 -- Maimon. Hilch. Ebel. c. 1. sect. 9.

Ft687 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 14. 2.

Ft688 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 1.

Ft689 -- Cyprian de Resurrectione Christi, p. 479. Hieron. Tom. 1. fol. 42. Bar Bahluli apud Castell. Lex. Polyglott. col. 3466.

Ft690 -- Lipsius de Cruce, 50:3. c. 13.

Ft691 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 14. sect. 10.

Ft692 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 58. 4.

Ft693 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 2. sect. 7.

Ft694 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 5. sect. 1, 3.

Ft695 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft696 -- T. Hieros. Sahbat. fol. 12. 2.

Ft697 -- Misn. Sabbat. c. 23, sect. 5.

Ft698 -- Bartenora in ib.

Ft699 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 5. fol. 95. 3.

Ft700 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 11. 32. & 4. 22.

Ft701 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:17. c. 12.

Ft702 -- Epitaph. Paul. fol. 59. B. Catalog. Script. Eccl. fol. 98. B. Tom. I. & in [2784]Daniel 8:14. Tom. V.

Ft703 -- Antiqu. I. 14. c. 18.

Ft704 -- In Misn. Ceritot, c. 3. sect. 7.

Ft705 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 14.

Ft706 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 74. 4.

Ft707 -- T. Hieros. Sheviith, c. 9. fol. 38. 4.

Ft708 -- Misn. Ceritot, c. 3. sect. 7. T. Bah, Cholin, fol. 91. 2. & Maccot, fol. 14. 1.

Ft709 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 50:7. c. 27.

Ft710 -- Abkath Rocel, 50:1. par. 1. sign. 7. p. 53.

Ft711 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 56. fol. 49. 3.

Ft712 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 2. 2. & 3. 1.

Ft713 -- Misn. Betasot, c. 7. sect. 4, 3, 4.

Ft714 -- Philostratus de Vita Apollon. 50:8, c. 5.

Ft715 -- T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 47. 3. T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 15. 1. & 18. 2. & 21. 1. Roshhashana, fol. 32. 1. Taanith, fol. 8. 1. & 16. 1. & 20. 1. & 30. 1. Megilla, fol. 21. 2. & 24. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 1. & 13. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 1.

Ft716 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 39. 2.

Ft717 -- T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 7. 1.

Ft718 -- Targum Jon. in <0462>Numbers 6:23. & Targum in Cant. 7:7.

Ft719 -- Misn Sota, c. 7. sect. 6. Bemidbar Rabba sect. 11. fol. 203. 3.

Ft720 -- Hilchot Tephilla, c. 14. sect. 3. 9.

Ft721 -- Hilchot Tephilla, c. 14. sect. 11. Vid. Targum Jon. & Rabba, ut supra, & T. Bab. Sota, fol. 38. 1.

JOHN

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JOHN

The author of this Gospel is John, the son of Zebedee and Salome, the brother of James the greater; he outlived the rest of the disciples, and wrote this Gospel after the other evangelists; and in it many things are recorded, which are not in the other Gospels; as various discourses of Christ, and miracles done by him; several incidents in his life, and circumstances that attended his sufferings and death: the occasion of it is generally thought to be the errors of Ebion and Cerinthus, who denied the divinity of Christ, asserted he was a mere man, and that he did not exist before his incarnation; and the design of it is to confute them: and it is easy to observe, that he begins his Gospel with the divinity of Christ; asserts him to be God, and proves him to be truly and properly so, by the works of creation, which were wrought by him, as well as shows that he was really man. Clemens [f1] calls this Gospel of John, πνευματικον ευαγγελιοῦ "a spiritual Gospel", as indeed it is; consisting of the spiritual discourses of our Lord, on various occasions, both at the beginning, and in the course of his ministry, and especially a little before his sufferings and death: and the same writer observes, that John, the last of the evangelists, considering that in the other Gospels were declared the things relating to the body of Christ, that is, to him, as he was after the flesh; to his genealogy and birth as man; to what was done to him, or by him, in his infancy; to his baptism, temptations, journeys, etc. at the request of his familiar friends, and moved by the Spirit of God, composed this Gospel. Moreover, it is observed by some [f2], that the other three evangelists only record what was done by Christ, in one year after John the Baptist was cast into prison, as appears from (<40042>Matthew 4:12, <40114>Mark 1:14 <42320>Luke 3:20) wherefore John, at the entreaty of his friends, put these things into his Gospel, which were done or said by Christ, before John was cast into prison. He was called very early by Christ, though young; and was with him throughout the whole of his ministry, and was an eye and ear witness of what he here relates, and his testimony is to be received; he was the beloved disciple, he

leaned on the bosom of Jesus, and had great intimacy with him; and might be privy to some things, which others were not acquainted with; and though he was a Galilean, and an unlearned man, (<40413>Acts 4:13) yet being endowed with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, he was abundantly qualified to write this book: for what some ancient writers [f3] say of him, that he was a priest, and wore a plate, that is, of gold upon his forehead, cannot be true, since he was not of the tribe of Levi; and besides, only the high priest wore that upon his mitre; unless they mean, as seems most likely, that he was a Christian bishop: perhaps the mistake may arise from John the Baptist, who was of the priestly order, and is called by some Jewish writers [f4], John the high priest. When and where this Gospel was written, is not certain; some say in [f5] Asia, after he had wrote his Revelation in Patmos; and others say particularly, that it was wrote at Ephesus; the title of it in the Syriac version, signifies much, which runs thus;

> “the holy Gospel, the preaching of John, which he spoke and published in Greek at Ephesus.”

And to the same purpose is the title of it in the Persic version;

> “the Gospel of John, one of the twelve apostles, which was spoken in the city of Ephesus, in the Greek Roman tongue.”

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 1

Ver. 1. *In the beginning was the word*, etc.] That this is said not of the written word, but of the essential word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is clear, from all that is said from hence, to (<430114>John 1:14) as that this word was in the beginning, was with God, and is God; from the creation of all things being ascribed to him, and his being said to be the life and light of men; from his coming into the world, and usage in it; from his bestowing the privilege of adoption on believers; and from his incarnation; and also there is a particular application of all this to Christ, (<430115>John 1:15-18). And likewise from what this evangelist elsewhere says of him, when he calls him the word of life, and places him between the Father and the Holy Ghost; and speaks of the record of the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus, as the same thing; and represents him as a warrior and conqueror, (<620101>1 John 1:1,2,7 <660102>Revelation 1:2,9 19:11-16). Moreover this appears to be spoken of Christ, from what other inspired writers have said of him, under the same character; as the Evangelist Luke, (<420102>Luke 1:2), the Apostle Paul, (<442032>Acts 20:32 <581242>Hebrews 4:12) and the Apostle Peter, (<610305>2 Peter 3:5). And who is called the word, not as man; for as man he was not in the beginning with God, but became so in the fullness of time; nor is the man God; besides, as such, he is a creature, and not the Creator, nor is he the life and light of men; moreover, he was the word, before he was man, and therefore not as such: nor can any part of the human nature be so called; not the flesh, for the word was made flesh; nor his human soul, for self-subsistence, deity, eternity, and the creation of all things, can never be ascribed to that; but he is the word as the Son of God, as is evident from what is here attributed to him, and from the word being said to be so, as in (<430114>John 1:14,18) and from those places, where the word is explained by the Son, compare (<620105>1 John 5:5,7 <402819>Matthew 28:19). And is so called from his nature, being begotten of the Father; for as the word, whether silent or expressed, is the birth of the mind, the image of it, equal to it, and distinct from it; so Christ is the only begotten of the Father, the express image of his person, in all things equal to him, and a distinct person from him: and he may be so called, from some action, or actions, said of him, or

ascribed to him; as that he spoke for, and on the behalf of the elect of God, in the eternal council and covenant of grace and peace; and spoke all things out of nothing, in creation; for with regard to those words so often mentioned in the history of the creation, and God said, may Jehovah the Son be called the word; also he was spoken of as the promised Messiah, throughout the whole Old Testament dispensation; and is the interpreter of his Father's mind, as he was in Eden's garden, as well as in the days of his flesh; and now speaks in heaven for the saints. The phrase, yyd armym, "the word of the Lord", so frequently used by the Targumists, is well known: and it is to be observed, that the same things which John here says of the word, they say likewise, as will be observed on the several clauses; from whence it is more likely, that John should take this phrase, since the paraphrases of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel were written before his time, than that he should borrow it from the writings of Plato, or his followers, as some have thought; with whose philosophy, Ebion and Cerinthus are said to be acquainted; wherefore John, the more easily to gain upon them, uses this phrase, when that of the Son of God would have been disagreeable to them: that there is some likeness between the Evangelist John and Plato in their sentiments concerning the word, will not be denied. Amelius [f6], a Platonic philosopher, who lived after the times of John, manifestly refers to these words of his, in agreement with his master's doctrine: his words are these;

> "and this was truly "Logos", or the word, by whom always existing, the things that are made, were made, as also Heraclitus thought; and who, likewise that Barbarian (meaning the Evangelist John) reckons was in the order and dignity of the beginning, constituted with God, and was God, by whom all things are entirely made; in whom, whatsoever is made, lives, and has life, and being; and who entered into bodies, and was clothed with flesh, and appeared a man; so notwithstanding, that he showed forth the majesty of his nature; and after his dissolution, he was again deified, and was God, as he was before he descended into a body, flesh and man."

In which words it is easy to observe plain traces of what the evangelist says in the first four verses, and in the fourteenth verse of this chapter; yet it is much more probable, that Plato had his notion of the Logos, or word, out of the writings of the Old Testament, than that John should take this phrase, or what he says concerning the word, from him; since it is a matter of fact not disputed, that Plato went into Egypt to get knowledge: not only

Clemens Alexandrinus a Christian writer says, that he was a philosopher of the Hebrews [f7], and understood prophecy [f8], and stirred up the fire of the Hebrew philosophy [f9]; but it is affirmed by Heathen writers, that he went into Egypt to learn of the priests [f10], and to understand the rites of the prophets [f11]; and Aristobulus, a Jew, affirms [f12], he studied their law; and Numenius, a Pythagoric philosopher [f13], charges him with stealing what he wrote, concerning God and the world, out of the books of Moses; and used to say to him, what is Plato, but Moses "Atticising?" or Moses speaking Greek: and Eusebius [f14], an ancient Christian writer, points at the very places, from whence Plato took his hints: wherefore it is more probable, that the evangelist received this phrase of the word, as a divine person, from the Targums, where there is such frequent mention made of it; or however, there is a very great agreement between what he and these ancient writings of the Jews say of the word, as will be hereafter shown. Moreover, the phrase is frequently used in like manner, in the writings of Philo the Jew; from whence it is manifest, that the name was well known to the Jews, and may be the reason of the evangelist's using it. This word, he says, was in the beginning; by which is meant, not the Father of Christ; for he is never called the beginning, but the Son only; and was he, he must be such a beginning as is without one; nor can he be said to be so, with respect to the Son or Spirit, who are as eternal as himself; only with respect to the creatures, of whom he is the author and efficient cause: Christ is indeed in the Father, and the Father in him, but this cannot be meant here; nor is the beginning of the Gospel of Christ, by the preaching of John the Baptist, intended here: John's ministry was an evangelical one, and the Gospel was more clearly preached by him, and after him, by Christ and his apostles, than before; but it did not then begin; it was preached before by the angel to the shepherds, at the birth of Christ; and before that, by the prophets under the former dispensation, as by Isaiah, and others; it was preached before unto Abraham, and to our first parents, in the garden of Eden: nor did Christ begin to be, when John began to preach; for John's preaching and baptism were for the manifestation of him: yea, Christ existed as man, before John began to preach; and though he was born after him as man, yet as the Word and Son of God, he existed before John was born; he was in being in the times of the prophets, which were before John; and in the times of Moses, and before Abraham, and in the days of Noah: but by the beginning is here meant, the beginning of the world, or the creation of all things; and which is expressive of the eternity of Christ, he was in the beginning, as the Maker of all creatures, and therefore must be

before them all: and it is to be observed, that it is said of him, that in the beginning he was; not made, as the heavens and earth, and the things in them were; nor was he merely in the purpose and predestination of God, but really existed as a divine person, as he did from all eternity; as appears from his being set up in office from everlasting; from all the elect being chosen in him, and given to him before the foundation of the world; from the covenant of grace, which is from eternity, being made with him; and from the blessings and promises of grace, being as early put into his hands; and from his nature as God, and his relation to his Father: so Philo the Jew often calls the Logos, or word, the eternal word, the most ancient word, and more ancient than any thing that is made [f15]. The eternity of the Messiah is acknowledged by the ancient Jews: (Micah 5:2) is a full proof of it; which by them [f16] is thus paraphrased;

> “out of thee, before me, shall come forth the Messiah, that he may exercise dominion over Israel; whose name is said from eternity, from the days of old.”

Jarchi upon it only mentions (Psalm 72:17) which is rendered by the Targum on the place, before the sun his name was prepared; it may be translated, “before the sun his name was Yinnon”; that is, the Son, namely the Son of God; and Aben Ezra interprets it, ˆb arqy, “he shall be called the son”; and to this agrees what the Talmudisis say [f17], that the name of the Messiah was before the world was created; in proof of which they produce the same passage.

And the word was with God; not with men or angels; for he was before either of these; but with God, not essentially, but personally considered; with God his Father: not in the Socinian sense, that he was only known to him, and to no other before the ministry of John the Baptist; for he was known and spoken of by the angel Gabriel before; and was known to Mary and to Joseph; and to Zacharias and Elisabeth; to the shepherds, and to the wise men; to Simeon and Anna, who saw him in the temple; and to the prophets and patriarchs in all ages, from the beginning of the world: but this phrase denotes the existence of the word with the Father, his relation and nearness to him, his equality with him, and particularly the distinction of his person from him, as well as his eternal being with him; for he was always with him, and is, and ever will be; he was with him in the council and covenant of grace, and in the creation of the universe, and is with him in the providential government of the world; he was with him as the word

and Son of God in heaven, whilst he as man, was here on earth; and he is now with him, and ever will be: and as John here speaks of the word, as a distinct person from God the Father, so do the Targums, or Chaldee paraphrases; (<19A001>Psalm 110:1) "the Lord said to my Lord", is rendered, "the Lord said to his word"; where he is manifestly distinguished from Jehovah, that speaks to him; and in (<280107>Hosea 1:7) the Lord promises to "have mercy on the house of Judah", and "save them by the Lord their God". The Targum is, "I will redeem them by the word of the Lord their God"; where the word of the Lord, who is spoken of as a Redeemer and Saviour, is distinguished from the Lord, who promises to save by him. This distinction of Jehovah and his word, may be observed in multitudes of places, in the Chaldee paraphrases, and in the writings of Philo the Jew; and this phrase, of "the word" being "with God", is in the Targums expressed by, µdq ^m rmym, "the word from before the Lord", or "which is before the Lord": being always in his presence, and the angel of it; so Onkelos paraphrases (<013122>Genesis 31:22) "and the word from before the Lord, came to Laban", etc. and (<122019>Exodus 20:19) thus, "and let not the word from before the Lord speak with us, lest we die"; for so it is read in the King of Spain's Bible; and wisdom, which is the same with the word of God, is said to be by him, or with him, in (<200801>Proverbs 8:1-36 30:1-33) agreeably to which John here speaks. John makes use of the word God, rather than Father, because the word is commonly called the word of God, and because of what follows;

and the word was God; not made a God, as he is said here after to be made flesh; nor constituted or appointed a God, or a God by office; but truly and properly God, in the highest sense of the word, as appears from the names by which he is called; as Jehovah, God, our, your, their, and my God, God with us, the mighty God, God over all, the great God, the living God, the true God, and eternal life; and from his perfections, and the whole fulness of the Godhead that dwells in him, as independence, eternity, immutability, omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence; and from his works of creation and providence, his miracles, the work of redemption, his forgiving sins, the resurrection of himself and others from the dead, and the administration of the last judgment; and from the worship given him, as prayer to him, faith in him, and the performance of baptism in his name: nor is it any objection to the proper deity of Christ, that the article is here wanting; since when the word is applied to the Father, it is not always used, and even in this chapter, (<430106>John 1:6,13,18) and which shows, that

the word “God”, is not the subject, but the predicate of this proposition, as we render it: so the Jews often use the word of the Lord for Jehovah, and call him God. Thus the words in (<28:20,21>Genesis 28:20,21) are paraphrased by Onkelos;

> “if “the word of the Lord” will be my help, and will keep me, etc. then “the word of the Lord” shall be, ahlal yl, “my God”:”

again, (<26:12>Leviticus 26:12) is paraphrased, by the Targum ascribed to Jonathan Ben Uzziel, thus;

> “I will cause the glory of my Shekinah to dwell among you, and my word shall “be your God”, the Redeemer;”

once more, (<26:17>Deuteronomy 26:17) is rendered by the Jerusalem Targum after this manner;

> “ye have made “the word of the Lord” king over you this day, that he may be your God:”

and this is frequent with Philo the Jew, who says, the name of God is his word, and calls him, my Lord, the divine word; and affirms, that the most ancient word is God [f18].

Ver. 2. *The same was in the beginning with God*.] This is a repetition of what is before said, and is made to show the importance of the truths before delivered; namely, the eternity of Christ, his distinct personality, and proper deity; and that the phrase, in the beginning, is to be joined to each of the above sentences; and so proves, not only his eternal existence, but his eternal existence with the Father, and also his eternal deity; and is also made to carry on the thread of the discourse, concerning the word, and not God the Father; and to express, not only his co-existence in nature, but his co-operation in the works of creation next mentioned.

Ver. 3. *All things were made by him*, etc.] Which is a proof at once of all that is said before; as that he was in the beginning; and that he was with God the Father in the beginning; and that he was God; otherwise all things could not have been made by him, had either of these been untrue: which is to be understood, not of the new creation; for this would be a restraining “all” things to a “few” persons only; nor is it any where said, that all things are new made, but made; and it is false, that all were converted, that have been converted, by the ministry of Christ, as man: all men are not renewed,

regenerated, nor reformed; and the greater part of those that were renewed, were renewed before Christ existed, as man; and therefore could not be renewed by him, as such: though indeed, could this sense be established, it would not answer the end for which it is coined; namely, to destroy the proof of Christ's deity, and of his existence before his incarnation; for in all ages, from the beginning of the world, some have been renewed; and the new creation is a work of God, and of almighty power, equally with the old; for who can create spiritual light, infuse a principle of spiritual life, take away the heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh, or produce faith, but God? Regeneration is denied to be of man, and is always ascribed to God; nor would Christ's being the author of the new creation, be any contradiction to his being the author of the old creation, which is intended here: by "all things", are meant the heaven, and all its created inhabitants, the airy, starry, and third heavens, and the earth, and all therein, the sea, and every thing that is in that; and the word, or Son of God, is the efficient cause of all these, not a bare instrument of the formation of them; for the preposition by does not always denote an instrument, but sometimes an efficient, as in (<460109>1 Corinthians 1:9, <470101>2 Corinthians 1:1, <480101>Galatians 1:1) and so here, though not to the exclusion of the Father, and of the Spirit:

and without him was not any thing made that was made: in which may be observed the conjunct operation of the word, or Son, with the Father, and Spirit, in creation; and the extent of his concern in it to every thing that is made; for without him there was not one single thing in the whole compass of the creation made; and the limitation of it to things that are made; and so excludes the uncreated being, Father, Son, and Spirit; and sin also, which is not a principle made by God, and which has no efficient, but a deficient cause. So the Jews ascribe the creation of all things to the word. The Targumists attribute the creation of man, in particular, to the word of God: it is said in (<010127>Genesis 1:27). "God created man in his own image": the Jerusalem Targum of it is,

> "and the word of the Lord created man in his likeness."

And (<010322>Genesis 3:22) "and the Lord God said, behold the man is become as one of us", the same Targum paraphrases thus;

> "and the word of the Lord God said, behold the man whom I have created, is the only one in the world."

Also in the same writings, the creation of all things in general is ascribed to the word: the passage in (<5D3327>Deuteronomy 33:27) "the eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms", is paraphrased by Onkelos,

> "the eternal God is an habitation, by whose word the world was made."

In (<2A4813>Isaiah 48:13) it is said, "mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth". The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziah on it is,

> "yea, by my word I have founded the earth:"

which agrees with what is said in (<581103>Hebrews 11:3, <610307>2 Peter 3:7,5), and the same says Philo the Jew, who not only calls him the archetype, and exemplar of the world, but the power that made it: he often ascribes the creation of the heavens, and the earth unto him, and likewise the creation of man after whose image, he says, he was made [f19]. The Ethiopic version adds, at the end of this verse, "and also that which is made is for himself".

Ver. 4. *In him was life*, etc.] The Persic version reads in the plural number, "lives". There was life in the word with respect to himself; a divine life, the same with the life of the Father and of the Spirit; and is in him, not by gift, nor by derivation or communication; but originally, and independently, and from all eternity: indeed he lived before his incarnation as Mediator, and Redeemer. Job knew him in his time, as his living Redeemer; but this regards him as the word and living God, and distinguishes him from the written word, and shows that he is not a mere idea in the divine mind, but a truly divine person: and there was life in Christ the word, with respect to others; the fountain of natural life is in him, he is the efficient cause, and preserver of it; whether vegetative, animal, or rational; and proves him to be truly God, and that he existed before his incarnation; since creatures, who have received such a life from him, did: and spiritual life was also in him; all his elect are dead in trespasses and sins, and cannot quicken themselves. Christ has procured life for them, and gives it to them, and implants it in them; a life of sanctification is from him; and a life of justification is upon him, and of faith is by him; all the comforts of a spiritual life, and all things appertaining to it, are from him, and he maintains, and preserves it. Eternal life is in him, and with him; not the purpose of it only, nor the promise of it barely, but the gift of it itself; which was granted in consequence of his asking it, and which he had by

way of stipulation; and hence has a right and power to bestow it: now, this being in him proves him to be the true God, and shows us where life is to be had, and the safety and security of it:

and the life was the light of men; the life which was in, and by the word, was, with respect to men, a life of light, or a life attended with light: by which is meant, not a mere visive faculty, receptive of the sun's light, but rational knowledge and understanding; for when Christ, the word, breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living soul, he filled him with rational light and knowledge. Adam had a knowledge of God; of his being, and perfections; of the persons in the Trinity; of his relation to God, dependence on him, and obligation to him; of his mind and will; and knew what it was to have communion with him. He knew much of himself, and of all the creatures; this knowledge was natural and perfect in its kind, but loseable; and different from that which saints now have of God, through Christ, the Mediator; and since this natural light was from Christ, the word, as a Creator, he must be the eternal God. The Socinians are not willing to allow this sense, but say that Christ is the light of men, by preaching the heavenly doctrine, and by the example of his holy life; but hereby he did not enlighten every man that cometh into the world; the greatest part of men, before the preaching, and example of Christ, sat in darkness; and the greatest part of the Jews remained in darkness, notwithstanding his preaching, and example; and the patriarchs that were enlightened under the former dispensation, were not enlightened this way: it will be owned, that all spiritual and supernatural light, which any of the sons of men have had, since the fall, was from Christ, from whom they had their spiritual life; even all spiritual light in conversion, and all after degrees of light; through him they enjoyed the light of God's countenance, and had the light of joy and gladness here, and of glory hereafter.

Ver. 5. *And the light shineth in darkness*, etc.] Which, through sin, came upon the minds of men; who are naturally in the dark about the nature and perfections of God; about sin, and the consequences of it; about Christ, and salvation by him; about the Spirit of God, and his work upon the soul; and about the Scriptures of truth, and the doctrines of the Gospel. Man was created a knowing creature, but, not content with his knowledge, sins, and is banished from the presence of God, the fountain of light; which brought a darkness on him, and his posterity, and which is increased in them by personal iniquity, and in which Satan, the god of this world, has an hand; and sometimes they are left to judicial blindness, and which issues in worse

darkness, if grace prevents not: now amidst this darkness there were some remains of the light of nature: with respect to the being of God, which shines in the works of creation and providence and to the worship of God, though very dimly; and to the knowledge of moral good and evil:

and the darkness comprehended it not; or "perceived it not"; as the Syriac version renders it. By the light of nature, and the remains of it, men could not come to any clear and distinct knowledge of the above things; and much less to any knowledge of the true way of salvation: unless, rather by the light should be meant, the light of the Messiah, or of the Gospel shining in the figures, types, and shadows of the law, and in the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament: and yet, such was the darkness upon the minds of men, that they could not very distinctly apprehend it, and much less fully comprehend it, so that there was need of a fresh and fuller revelation; an account of which follows;

Ver. 6. *There was a man sent from God*, etc.] John the Baptist: he was not the Logos, or word; nor was he an angel, but a man; yet an extraordinary one, in his conception of a barren woman, and in being born when both parents were stricken in years; and whilst he was in the womb, he leaped for joy at the salutation of Mary; and as soon as born was filled with the Holy Ghost; and when he was grown up, and appeared in public, it was in an uncommon manner: his dress and his diet were both out of the common way; and his temper and spirit were that of Elias the prophet; and as for his work and office, it was very peculiar; he was the forerunner of Christ, and the first administrator of the new ordinance of baptism, and the greatest of all the prophets: this person had his mission from God, both to preach and baptize:

whose name was John; the name given him by the angel before his conception, and by his mother Elisabeth, after her neighbours and cousins had given him another; and which was confirmed by his father Zacharias, when deaf and dumb: it signifies grace, or gracious; and a gracious man he was; he was very acceptable to his parents; a man that had the grace of God in him, and great gifts of grace bestowed on him; he was a preacher of the doctrines of grace; and his ministry was very grateful to many.

Ver. 7. *The same came for a witness*, etc.] The end of his being sent, and the design of his coming were,

to bear witness of the light: by which is meant, not the light of nature, or reason; nor the light of the Gospel: but Christ himself, the author of light, natural, spiritual, and eternal. This was one of the names of the Messiah with the Jews; of whom they say [f20], wmç aryhn, "light is his name"; as it is said in (<270222>Daniel 2:22) and the light dwelleth with him; on which they have [f21] elsewhere this gloss, this is the King Messiah; and so they interpret (<190403>Psalm 43:3) of him [f22]. Philo the Jew often speaks of the Logos, or word, as light, and calls him the intelligible light; the universal light, the most perfect light; represents him as full of divine light; and says, he is called the sun [f23]. Now John came to bear a testimony to him, as he did; of which an account is given in this chapter, very largely, and elsewhere; as that he testified of his existence before his incarnation; of his being with the Father, and in his bosom: of his deity and divine sonship; of his being the Messiah; of the fulness of grace that was in him; of his incarnation and satisfaction; of his descent from heaven; and of his relation to his church, as in (<430115>John 1:15,16,18,23,27,29,30,34,36 3:29,31) the end of which witness was,

that all men through him might believe; that is, that the Jews, to whom he preached, might, through his testimony, believe that Jesus was the light, and true Messiah; for these words are to be taken in a limited sense, and not to be extended, to every individual of mankind; since millions were dead before John began his testimony, and multitudes then in being, and since, whom it never reached: nor can it design more than the Jews, to whom alone he bore witness of Christ; and the faith which he taught, and required by his testimony, was an assent unto him as the Messiah; though the preaching of the Gospel is a means of true spiritual faith in Christ; and doubtless it was so to many, as preached by John: it points out the object of faith, and encourages souls to believe in Christ; and hence, Gospel ministers are instruments by whom ethers believe; and faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; and then is it, considerable end of the Gospel ministry answered.

Ver. 8. *He was not that light*, etc.] He was a light; he was the forerunner of the sun of righteousness, the "phosphorus" of the Gospel day; he had great light in him; he knew that the Messiah was ready to come, and declared it; and upon his baptism he knew him personally, and signified him to others: he had great light into the person and work of Christ; and into the way of salvation by him, and remission of sins through him; into the doctrines of faith in Christ, and of evangelical repentance towards God;

and into the abolition of the legal Mosaic and Jewish dispensation; and was an instrument of giving light to others; yea, he was a burning and shining light, in whose light the Jews rejoiced, at least for a season: but then he was not that light, the word and wisdom of God; that uncreated light that dwelt with him from all eternity; nor that which was the light of men, from the creation; nor that light, which was of old promised to the saints and patriarchs of the Old Testament, and shone in the ordinances and predictions of that state; nor that fountain and giver of light, of every sort, to men; not that light in which is no darkness, and always shines; not that true light, or sun of righteousness, the Messiah, or that lightens every man that comes into the world:

but was sent to bear witness of that light; which is repeated, to distinguish him from that light; to show what he was sent for, and that he acted according to his mission; and to express the honourableness to his work.

Ver. 9. *That was the true light*, etc.] Christ is that light, that famous and excellent light, the fountain of all light to all creatures; that gave light to the dark earth at first, and spoke light out of darkness; that light of all men in the earth, and of all the angels in heaven, and of all the saints below, and of all the glorified ones above: he is the true light, in distinction from typical lights; the "Urim" of the former dispensation; the candlestick, with the lamps of it; the pillar of fire which directed the Israelites by night in the wilderness; and from all the typical light there was in the institutions and sacrifices of the law; and in opposition to the law itself, which the Jews [f24] magnify, and cry up as the light, saying, there is no light but the law; and in opposition to all false lights, as priests, diviners, and soothsayers among the Gentiles, Scribes, and Pharisees, and the learned Rabbins among the Jews, so much boasted of as the lights of the world; and to all false Christs and prophets that have risen, or shall rise, in the world.

Which lighteth every man that cometh into the world: the sense is, either that every man that is enlightened in a spiritual manner, is enlightened by him, which is true of Christ, as the Son of God, existing from the beginning; but not in the Socinian sense, as if they were enlightened by his human ministry and example; for the Old Testament saints were not enlightened by his preaching; and many were enlightened by the ministry of John the Baptist; and multitudes afterwards, through the ministry of the apostles; and very few, comparatively, were enlightened under the ministry of Christ; and none we read of, in this sense, enlightened by him, when, and

as soon as they came into, the world: or, the meaning is, that he is that light which lighteth all sorts of men; which is true in, a spiritual sense: some connect the phrase, “that cometh into the world”, not with “every man”, but with the “true light”; and the Arabic version so reads, and joins it to the following verse; but this reading is not so natural and the order of the words requires the common reading; nor is the difficulty removed hereby; for still it is every man that is enlightened: it is best therefore to understand these words of the light of nature, and reason, which Christ, as the word, and Creator and light of men, gives to every man that is born into the world; and which serves to detect the Quakers’ notion of the light within, which every man has, and is no other than the light of a natural conscience; and shows how much men, even natural men, are obliged to Christ, and how great a person he is, and how deserving of praise, honour, and glory. The phrase, “every man that cometh into the world”, is Jewish, and often to be met with in Rabbinical writings, and signifies all men that are born into the world; the instances are almost innumerable; take one or two: on those words in (<182503>Job 25:3) on whom doth not his light arise? it is asked [f25], who is he that cometh,

> “µlw[yab lkm, “of all that come into the world”; and says, the sun hath not lightened me by day, nor hath the moon lightened me by night! thou enlightenest those above, and those below, and “all that come into the world”.”

Again, God is introduced thus speaking [f26]:

> “I am the God, µlw[yab lkl, “of all that come into the world”; and I have not united my name, but to the people of Israel.”

Once more [f27],

> “Moses, our master, from the mouth of power, (i.e. God; (see <402664>Matthew 26:64).) commanded to oblige, µlw[h yab lk ta, “all that come into the world”, to receive the commandments which were commanded the sons of Noah.”

Ver. 10. *He was in the world*, etc.] This is to be understood, not of his incarnation; for the word was denotes past existence in the world, even all the time past from the creation of the world; and the world intends the world in general, as opposed to Judea, and the people of the Jews in the next verse; besides, the incarnation of the word is spoken of in (<430114>John

1:14) as a new and distinct thing from this: but of his being in the world, when first made, and since, by his essence, by which he fills the whole world; and by his power, upholding and preserving it; and by his providence, ordering and managing all the affairs of it, and influencing and governing all things in it: he was in it as the light and life of it, giving natural life and light to creatures in it, and filling it, and them, with various blessings of goodness; and he was in the promise and type before, as well as after the Jews were distinguished from other nations, as his peculiar people; and he was frequently visible in the world, in an human form, before his incarnation, as in Eden's garden to our first parents, to Abraham, Jacob, Manoah, and his wife, and others.

And the world was made by him: so Philo the Jew often ascribes the making of the world to the Logos, or word, as before observed on (⁴⁰¹⁰³John 1:3) and this regards the whole universe, and all created beings in it, and therefore cannot design the new creation: besides, if all men in the world were anew created by Christ, they would know him; for a considerable branch of the new creation lies in knowledge; whereas, in the very next clause, it is asserted, that the world knew him not; and they would also love him, and obey him, which the generality of the world do not; they would appear to be in him, and so not be condemned by him, as multitudes will. To understand this of the old creation, best suits the context, and proves the deity of Christ, and his pre-existence, as the word, and Son of God, to his incarnation.

And the world knew him not; that is, the inhabitants of the world knew him not as their Creator: nor did they acknowledge the mercies they received from him; nor did they worship, serve, and obey him, or love and fear him; nor did they, the greater part of them, know him as the Messiah, Mediator, Saviour, and Redeemer. There was, at first, a general knowledge of Christ throughout the world among all the sons of Adam, after the first promise of him, and which, for a while, continued; but this, in process of time, being neglected and slighted, it was forgot, and utterly lost, as to the greater part of mankind; for the Gentiles, for many hundreds of years, as they knew not the true God, so they were without Christ, without any notion of the Messiah; and this their ignorance, as it was first their sin, became their punishment.

Ver. 11. *He came unto his own*, etc.] Not all the world, who are his own by right of creation; for these, his own, are opposed to the world, and

distinguished from them; and his coming to them designs some particular favour, which is not vouchsafed to all: nor yet are the elect of God intended; though they are Christ's own, in a very special sense; they are his by his own choice, by his Father's gift, by his own purchase, and through the conquest of his grace, and are the objects of his special love; and for their sake he came in the flesh, and to them he comes in a spiritual way, and to them will he appear a second time at the last day unto salvation: but they cannot be meant, because when he comes to them they receive him; whereas these did not, as the next clause affirms: but by his own are meant the whole body of the Jewish nation; so called, because they were chosen by the Lord above all people; had distinguishing favours bestowed upon them, as the adoption, the covenants, the promises, the giving of the law, and the service of God; and had the Shekinah, and the symbol of the divine presence in a remarkable manner among them; and the promise of the Messiah was in a particular manner made to them; and indeed, he was to be born of them, so that they were his kindred, his people, and his own nation: and this his coming to them is to be understood not of his incarnation; though when he came in the flesh, as he came of them, so he came to them, particularly being sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and was rejected by them as the Messiah; yet his incarnation is afterwards spoken of in (<40114>John 1:14) as a new and distinct thing from this; and to understand it of some coming of his before his incarnation, best suits with the context, and the design of the evangelist. Now Christ, the word, came to the Jews before his incarnation, not only in types, personal and real, and in promises and prophecies, and in the word and ordinances, but in person; as to Moses in the bush, and gave orders to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt: he came and redeemed them himself with a mighty hand, and a outstretched arm; in his love and pity he led them through the Red Sea as on dry ground; and through the wilderness in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night; and he appeared to them at Mount Sinai, who gave unto them the lively oracles of God:

and his own received him not; they did not believe in him, nor obey his voice; they rebelled against him, and tempted him often, particularly at Massah and Meribah; they provoked trim to anger, and vexed, and grieved his holy Spirit, as they afterwards slighted and despised his Gospel by the prophets. Of this nonreception of the word by the Jews, and their punishment for it, the Targumist on (<280917>Hosea 9:17) thus speaks:

> "my God will remove them far away, because, hyrmyml wlybq al, "they receive not his word"; and they shall wander among the people."

And so they treated this same "Logos", or word of God, when he was made flesh, and dwelt among them. Somewhat remarkable is the following discourse of some Jews among themselves [f28]:

> "when the word of God comes, who is his messenger, we shall honour him. Says R. Saul, did not the prophets come, and we slew them, and shed their blood? (compare this with (<401230>Matthew 23:30,31,37).) how therefore now, wrbdm lbqn, "shall we receive his word?" or wherefore shall we believe? Says R. Samuel, the Levite, to him, because he will heal them, and deliver them from their destructions; and because of these signs we shall believe him, and honour him."

But they did not.

Ver. 12. *But as many as received him*, etc.] This is explained, in the latter part of the text, by believing in his name; for faith is a receiving him as the word, and Son of God, as the Messiah, Saviour, and Redeemer; a receiving grace out of his fulness, and every blessing from him, as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified; for though the generality rejected him, there were some few that received him:

to them gave he power to become the sons of God; as such were very early called, in distinction from the children of men, or of the world; (see <010602>Genesis 6:2,4). To be the sons of God is a very special favour, a great blessing, and high honour: saints indeed are not in so high a sense the sons of God as Christ is; nor in so low a sense as angels and men in common are; nor in such sense as civil magistrates; nor merely by profession of religion; much less by natural descent; but by adopting grace: and in this, Christ, the word, has a concern, as all the three divine persons have. The Father predestinated men to the adoption of children, secures this blessing for them in the covenant of his grace, and puts them among the children, and assigns them a goodly heritage: the Spirit, and who is therefore called the spirit of adoption, discovers and applies this blessing to them, and witnesses to their spirits that they are the children of God: and Christ, the word, or Son of God, not only espoused their persons, and in time

assumed their nature, and by the redemption of them opened a way for their reception of the adoption of children; but actually bestows upon them the “power”, as it is here called, of becoming the sons of God: by which is meant, not a power of free will to make themselves the sons of God, if they will make use of it; but it signifies the honour and dignity conferred on such persons: so Nonnus calls it, “the heavenly honour”; as indeed, what can be a greater? It is more honourable than to be a son or daughter of the greatest potentate on earth: and it is expressive of its being a privilege; for so it is an undeserved and distinguishing one, and is attended with many other privileges; for such are of God’s household and family, and are provided for by him; have liberty of access unto him; are Christ’s free men, and are heirs to an incorruptible inheritance. This is a privilege that excels all others, even justification and remission of sins; and is an everlasting one: and it also intends the open right which believers have unto this privilege, and their claim of it: hence it follows,

even to them that believe in his name; that is, in himself, in Christ, the word: the phrase is explanative of the former part of the verse, and is a descriptive and manifestative character of the sons of God; for though the elect of God, by virtue of electing grace, and the covenant of grace, are the children of God before faith; and were so considered in the gift of them to Christ, and when he came into the world to gather them together, and save them; and so, antecedent to the Spirit of God, being sent down into their hearts, to make this known to them; yet no man can know his adoption, nor enjoy the comfort of it, or claim his interest in it, until he believes.

Ver. 13. *Which were born not of blood*, etc.] Or bloods, in the plural number. The birth, here spoken of, is regeneration, expressed by a being born again, or from above; by a being quickened by the Spirit and grace of God; by Christ being formed in men; and by a partaking of the divine nature; and by being made new creatures, as all that believe in the name of Christ are; and which is the evidence of their being the sons of God: and now this is owing not to blood, or bloods; not to the blood of circumcision; or of the passover, which the Jews had an high opinion of, and ascribe life and salvation to, and to which notion this may be opposed: so their commentators [f29] on (<26 16 6>Ezekiel 16:6) where the word “live” is twice used, observe on the first “live”, by the blood of the passover, on the second “live”, by the blood of circumcision; but, alas! these contribute nothing to the life of the new creature: nor is regeneration owing to the blood of ancestors, to natural descent, as from Abraham, which the Jews valued

themselves upon; for sin, and not grace, is conveyed by natural generation: all men are of one blood, and that is tainted with sin, and therefore can never have any influence on regeneration; no blood is to be valued, or any one upon it, but the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin.

Nor of the will of the flesh; man's free will, which is carnal and corrupt, is enmity to God, and impotent to every thing that is spiritually good: regeneration is ascribed to another will and power, even to the will and power of God, and denied of this:

nor of the will of man: of the best of men, as Abraham, David, and others; who, though ever so willing and desirous, that their children, relations, friends, and servants, should be born again, be partakers of the grace of God, and live in his sight, yet cannot effect any thing of this kind: all that they can do is to pray for them, give advice, and bring them under the means of grace; but all is ineffectual without a divine energy. So with the Jews, ça, "a man", signifies a great man, in opposition to "Adam", or "Enosh", which signify a mean, weak, frail man; and our translators have observed this distinction, in (<2Ch 2:9>) Isaiah 2:9) and the mean man (Adam) boweth down, and the great man (Ish) "humbleth himself": on which Jarchi has this note, "Adam boweth down", i.e. little men; "and a man humbleth himself", i.e. princes, and mighty men, men of power: and so Kimchi on (<19D402>) Psalm 4:2). "O ye sons of men", observes, that the Psalmist calls them the sons of men, with respect to the great men of Israel; for there were with Absalom the sons of great men. Though sometimes the Jews say [f30], Adam is greater than any of the names of men, as Geber, Enosh, Ish. But now our evangelist observes, let a man be ever so great, or good, or eminent, for gifts and grace, he cannot communicate grace to another, or to whom he will; none are born again of any such will:

but of God; of God, the Father of Christ, who begets to a lively hope; and of the Son, who quickens whom he will; and of the grace of the Spirit, to whom regeneration is generally ascribed.

Ver. 14. *And the word was made flesh*, etc.] The same word, of whom so many things are said in the preceding verses; and is no other than the Son of God, or second person in the Trinity; for neither the Father, nor the Holy Ghost, were made flesh, as is here said of the word, but the Son only: and "flesh" here signifies, not a part of the body, nor the whole body only, but the whole human nature, consisting of a true body, and a reasonable

soul; and is so called, to denote the frailty of it, being encompassed with infirmities, though not sinful; and to show, that it was a real human nature, and not a phantom, or appearance, that he assumed: and when he is said to be “made” flesh, this was not done by the change of one nature into another, the divine into the human, or the word into a man; but by the assumption of the human nature, the word, taking it into personal union with himself; whereby the natures are not altered; Christ remained what he was, and became what he was not; nor are they confounded, and blended together, and so make a third nature; nor are they separated, and divided, so as to constitute two persons, a divine person, and an human person; but are so united as to be but one person; and this is such an union, as can never be dissolved, and is the foundation of the virtue and efficacy of all Christ’s works and actions, as Mediator:

and dwelt among us; or “tabernacled among us”; in allusion to the tabernacle, which was a type of Christ’s human nature: the model of the tabernacle was of God, and not of man; it was coarse without, but full of holy things within; here God dwelt, granted his presence, and his glory was seen; here the sacrifices were brought, offered, and accepted. So the human nature of Christ was of God’s pitching, and not man’s; and though it looked mean without, the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in it, as well as a fulness of grace and truth; in the face of Christ the glory of God is seen, and through him, even the vail of his flesh, saints have access unto him, and enjoy his presence; and by him their spiritual sacrifices become acceptable to God: or this is observed, in allusion to the feast of tabernacles, when the Jews dwelt in booths, in remembrance of their manner of living in the wilderness: the feast of tabernacles was typical of Christ, and of his tabernacling in our nature. Solomon’s temple, which was also a type of Christ, was dedicated at the time of that feast; and it seems probable, that our Lord was born at that time; for as he suffered at the time of the passover, which had respect unto him, and the pouring forth of the Spirit was on the very day of Pentecost, which that prefigured; so it is highly probable, that Christ was born at the time of the feast of tabernacles, which pointed out his dwelling among us; and is therefore very pertinently hinted at, when mention is here made of his incarnation. However, reference is manifestly had to the Shekinah, and the glory of it, in the tabernacle and temple; and almost the very word is here used. The Targumists sometimes speak of the Shekinah of the word dwelling among the Israelites: so

Onkelos in (Numbers 11:20) where the Israelites are threatened with flesh, until they loath it; because, says the paraphrast,

> “ye have loathed “the word of the Lord”, whose Shekinah dwelleth among you.”

Jonathan ben Uzziel, on the same place, expresses it thus;

> “because ye have loathed the word of the Lord, the glory of whose Shekinah dwelleth among you.”

And it follows here,

and we beheld his glory; the glory of his divine nature, which is essential to him, and underived, is equal to the Father’s glory, is transcendent to all creatures, and is ineffable, and incomprehensible; some breakings forth of which there were in his incarnate state, and which were observed by the evangelist, and his companions; who, in various instances, saw plainly, that Christ was possessed of divine perfections, such as omniscience, and omnipotence; since he knew the thoughts of the heart, and could do the things he did: his Father declared him to be his beloved Son; and the miracles he wrought, and the doctrines he taught, manifested forth his glory; and not only there were some beams of his glory at his transfiguration, which were seen by the apostles, among which the Evangelist John was one, and to which he may have here a particular reference; but even at his apprehension, and death, and especially at his resurrection from the dead. The Jews speak of the glory of the Messiah to be seen in the world to come. They say [f31],

> “If a man is worthy of the world to come, (i.e. the times of the Messiah,) he shall “see the glory” of the King Messiah.”

And of Moses, they say [f32],

> “there was (or will be) no generation like that in which he lived, until the generation in which the King Messiah comes, which shall “behold the glory” of the holy, blessed God, as he.”

This our evangelist, and the other disciples of Christ have seen:

the glory, as of the only begotten of the Father; a glory becoming him, suitable to him as such; the very real glory of the Son of God; for the “as”, here, is not a note of similitude, but of certainty, as in (Matthew 14:5,

(19Psalm 2:8) and the word is here called, “the only begotten of the Father”; which cannot be said of Christ, as man; for as such, he was not “begotten” at all: nor on the account of his resurrection from the dead; for so he could not be called the “only begotten”, since there are others that have been, and millions that will be raised from the dead, besides him: nor by reason of adoption; for if adopted, then not begotten; these two are inconsistent; besides, he could not be called the only begotten, in this sense, because there are many adopted sons, even all the elect of God: nor by virtue of his office, as magistrates are called the sons of God; for then he would be so only in a figurative and metaphorical sense, and not properly; whereas he is called God’s own Son, the Son of the same nature with him; and, as here, the only begotten of the Father, begotten by him in the same nature, in a way inconceivable and inexpressible by us:

full of grace and truth; that is, he dwelt among men, and appeared to have a fulness of each of these: for this clause is not to be joined with the glory of the only begotten, as if this was a branch of that; but regards him as incarnate, and in his office, as Mediator; who, as such, was full of “grace”; the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit; of all the blessings of grace, of justifying, pardoning, adopting, sanctifying, and persevering grace; of all the promises of grace; of all light, life, strength, comfort, peace, and joy: and also of truth, of all Gospel truths; and as he had the truth, the sum, and substance of all the types and prophecies concerning him in him; and as he fulfilled all his own engagements, and his Father’s promises; and as possessed of sincerity towards men, and faithfulness and integrity to God.

Ver. 15. *John bare witness of him*, etc.] Which was his office and business, for which purpose he was sent, (40John 1:6-8)

and cried; this agrees with his work and office, according to the prophecy of him in (23Isaiah 40:3) and with the time of his ministry, the year of jubilee; and with the nature of his ministry, which was clear, open, and public; and performed with vigour, and in a powerful manner, with much assurance and certainty, with boldness and intrepidity, and with great zeal and fervency, and in an evangelical way; for it was such a cry as debased the creature, and exalted Christ:

this was he, of whom I spake; when he first entered upon his ministry and baptism, before he saw Christ, or baptized him; (see 40Matthew 3:11).

he that cometh after me; for Christ came into the world after John; he was born six months after him; he came after him to be baptized by him, and attended on his ministry; and came later into the public ministry than he did;

is preferred before me; by God, the Father, in setting him up as Mediator; constituting him the head of the church; causing a fulness of grace to dwell in him; appointing him the Saviour of his people; and ordaining him judge of quick and dead. And by the prophets, who spake much of him, and sparingly of John; and of him as the Messiah and Saviour, and of John only as his harbinger: and by John himself, who represents him as coming from above, and as above all; and himself as of the earth, earthly: and by all Gospel ministers, and every true believer; and good reason there is for it:

for he was before me; which cannot be meant of honour and dignity; for this is expressed before; and it would be proving one thing by the same: nor of his birth, as man; for John in that sense was before him, being born before him; besides, being born before another, is no proof of superior worth; others were born before John, whom he yet excelled: but of his eternal existence, as the word, and Son of God, who was before John, or any of the prophets; before Abraham, and Noah, and Adam, or any creature whatever: the Arabic and Persic versions read, “for he was more ancient than me”; being from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

Ver. 16. *And of his fulness have all we received*, etc.] These are the words not of John the Baptist; but of the evangelist carrying on his account of Christ, after he had inserted the testimony of the Baptist, in connection with (<40114>John 1:14) where he is said to be full of grace and truth; and which fulness is here intended; for the fulness of the Godhead in trim is incommunicable; and the fulness of his fitness, and ability for his office, as Mediator, was for himself; but his fulness of grace and truth is dispensatory, and is in him, on purpose to be communicated unto others: and “of it”, the evangelist says, “have all we received”; not all mankind, though they all receive natural light and life from trim; nor merely all the prophets of the Old Testament, though they had their gifts and grace from him, who then was, as now, the head of the church; nor only all the apostles of Christ, though these may be principally intended; but all believers, who, though they have not all the same measure of grace, nor the same gifts, yet all have received something: nor is there any reason for

discouragement, envy, or reproach. Faith is the hand which receives Christ, and grace from him; and the act of receiving, being expressed in the past tense, seems to regard first conversion, when faith is first wrought, and along with it abundance of grace is received; for a believer has nothing but what is given him, and what he has, is in a way of receiving; so that there is no room for boasting, but great reason for thankfulness, and much encouragement to apply to Christ for more grace, which is the thing received, as follows:

and grace for grace: according to the different senses of the preposition αντι, different interpretations are given of this passage; as that signifies a substitution of a person, or thing, in the room of another, the sense is thought to be, the Gospel, instead of the law; or the grace of the present dispensation, instead of the grace of the former dispensation; grace, different from the former grace, as Nonnus expresses it. If it designs the original, and moving cause, the meaning is, grace is for the sake of grace; for there is no other cause of electing, justifying, pardoning, adopting, and regenerating grace, and even eternal life, but the grace, or free favour of God; and the one is the reason why the other is received: if it signifies the end, or final cause, then it is explained in this way; the disciples received the grace of apostleship, or gift, of grace, in order to preach the Gospel of the grace of God, and for the implanting and increasing grace in men; and grace also, in this life, is received, in order to the perfection of grace, or glory, in the other: if it denotes the measure and proportion of a thing, as one thing is answerable to another, then if may be interpreted after this manner; the saints receive grace from the fulness of Christ, according, or answerable to the grace that is in him; or according to the measure of the gift of Christ, and in proportion to the place, station, and office they bear in the church. Some think the phrase only designs the freeness of grace, and the free and liberal manner in which it is distributed, and received; along with which, I also think, the abundance of it, at first conversion, with all after supplies, is intended; and that grace for grace, is the same with grace upon grace, heaps of grace; and that the phraseology is the same with this Jewish one [f33], wbyj awhh l[wbyj, "goodness upon that goodness", an additional goodness; so here, grace upon grace, an abundance of it, an addition to it, and an increase of it: so wdj l[wdj [f34], joy upon joy, is an abundance of joy, a large measure of it; and "holiness upon holiness" [f35], abundance of it.

Ver. 17. *For the law was given by Moses*, etc.] Both moral and ceremonial. The moral law was given to Adam, in innocence, which having been broken, and almost lost out of the minds, and memories of men, was given by Moses, in a new edition of it in writing; and points out what is man's duty both to God and men; discovers sin, accuses of it, convicts of it, and condemns for it; nor could it give strength to perform its demands; nor does it give the least hint of forgiveness; nor will it admit of repentance: and hence is opposed to grace; though it was a benefit to men, being in its own nature good and useful in its effects. The ceremonial law pointed out the pollution of human nature, the guilt and punishment of sin; was a type and shadow of deliverance by Christ, but could not give the grace it shadowed, and therefore is opposed both to grace and truth. Now both these were given by Moses to the people of the Jews, not as the maker, but the minister of them: it was God who appointed each of these laws, and ordained them in the hand of the mediator Moses, who received them from him, by the disposition of angels, and delivered them to the people of Israel; and a very high office this was he was put into, and a very great honour was conferred upon him; but Jesus Christ is a far greater person, and in an higher office:

but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ: by grace and truth, is meant the Gospel, in opposition to the law; which is called grace, because it is a declaration of the love, and grace, of God to men; it ascribes salvation, in all the parts of it, to the free grace and favour of God; and is the means of implanting and increasing grace in the hearts of men. And "truth", not only because it contains truth, and nothing but truth, it coming from the God of truth; and the substance of it being Christ, who is the truth; and being revealed, applied, and led into by the Spirit of truth; but because it is the truth of the types, and the substance of the shadows of the law: or these two may mean distinct things; grace may design all the blessings of grace which are in Christ, and come by him; and truth, the promises, and the fulfilment of them, which are all yea, and amen, in Christ: and when these are said to be by him, the meaning is, not that they are by him, as an instrument, but as the author of them; for Christ is the author of the Gospel, and the fulfiller of the promises, and the giver of all grace; which shows the superior excellency of Christ to Moses, and to all men, and even to angels also.

Ver. 18. *No man hath seen God at any time*, etc.] That is, God the Father, whose voice was never heard, nor his shape seen by angels or men; for

though Jacob, Moses, the elders of Israel, Manoah, and his wife, are said to see God, and Job expected to see him with his bodily eyes, and the saints will see him as he is, in which will lie their great happiness; yet all seems to be understood of the second person, who frequently appeared to the Old Testament saints, in an human form, and will be seen by the saints in heaven, in his real human nature; or of God in and by him: for the essence of God is invisible, and not to be seen with the eyes of the body; nor indeed with the eyes of the understanding, so as to comprehend it; nor immediately, but through, and by certain means: God is seen in the works of creation and providence, in the promises, and in his ordinances; but above all, in Christ the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person: this may chiefly intend here, man's not knowing any thing of God in a spiritual and saving way, but in and by Christ; since it follows,

the only begotten Son; the word that was with God in the beginning. The Jerusalem Targum on (Genesis 3:22) says almost the same of the word of the Lord, as here, where it introduces him saying,

> "the word of the Lord God said, lo, the man whom I created, the only one in my world, even as I am, ydyjy, "the only one", (or, as the word is sometimes rendered, "the only begotten",) in the highest heavens."

And to the same purpose the Targum of Jonathan, and also Jarchi, on the same place. The Syriac version here renders it, "the only begotten, God which is in the bosom of the Father"; clearly showing, that he is the only begotten, as he is God: the phrase,

which is in the bosom of the Father, denotes unity of nature, and essence, in the Father and Son; their distinct personality; strong love, and affection between them; the Son's acquaintance with his Father's secrets; his being at that time, as the Son of God, in the bosom of his Father, when here on earth, as the son of man; and which qualified him to make the declaration of him:

he hath declared him. The Persic and Ethiopic versions further add, "to us"; he has clearly and fully declared his nature, perfections, purposes, promises, counsels, covenant, word, and works; his thoughts and schemes of grace; his love and favour to the sons of men; his mind and will concerning the salvation of his people: he has made, and delivered a fuller revelation of these things, than ever was yet; and to which no other

revelation in the present state of things will be added. Somewhat like this the Jews [f36] say of the Messiah;

> “there is none that can declare the name of his Father, and that knows him; but this is hid from the eyes of the multitude, until he comes, whdygyw, “and he shall declare him”.”

He is come, and has declared him: so Philo speaks of the “Logos”, or word, as the interpreter of the mind of God, and a teacher of men [f37].

Ver. 19. *And this is the record of John*, etc.] The evangelist proceeds to give a large, and full account of the testimony John the Baptist bore to Christ, which he had hinted at before, and had signified was his work, and office, and the end of his being sent.

When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him, who art thou? The Jews that sent were the great sanhedrim that sat at Jerusalem, whose business it was to inquire into, examine, and try prophets, whether true or false [f38]; and John appearing as a prophet, and being so esteemed by the people, they deputed messengers to him to interrogate him, and know who he was. The persons sent were very likely of their own body, since priests and Levites were in that council. For it is said [f39],

> “they do not constitute, or appoint in the sanhedrim but priests, Levites, and Israelites, who have their genealogies — -and it is commanded, that there should be in the great sanhedrim priests and Levites, as it is said, (Deuteronomy 17:9) “and thou shalt come unto the priests, the Levites”, etc. and if they are not to be found, though they are all Israelites, (not of the tribe of Levi,) it is right.”

Such a sanhedrim is a lawful one; but priests and Levites, if such could be found, that had proper qualifications, were to be admitted in the first place. A message from so august an assembly, at so great a distance, (for Jordan was a day’s journey distant from Jerusalem [f40]; according to Josephus [f41], it was 210 furlongs, or 26 miles and a quarter,) and by the hands of persons of such character and figure, was doing John a great deal of honour, and serves to make his testimony of Christ the more public and remarkable; and it also shows what a noise John’s ministry and baptism made among the Jews, that it even reached Jerusalem, and the great council of the nation; and likewise the question put to him, which by John’s answer seems to

intimate as if it was thought he was the Messiah, shows the opinion that was entertained of him, and even the sanhedrim might not be without thoughts this way: and the question they put by their messengers might not be, as some have thought, to ensnare John, nor out of disrespect to Jesus, who, as yet, was not made manifest; but might be in good earnest, having, from many circumstances, reason to think there might be something in the people's opinion of him; since, though the government was not wholly departed from Judah, yet they could not but observe it was going away apace, an Idumean having been upon the throne for some years, placed there by the Roman senate; and now the government was divided among his sons by the same order; Daniel's weeks they could not but see were just accomplishing; and besides, from the uncommon appearance John made, the austerity of his life; the doctrine of remission of sins he preached, and the new ordinance of baptism he administered, they might be ready to conclude he was the person.

Ver. 20. *And he confessed, and denied not*, etc.] He freely, and without any reserve, declared, and in the plainest and strongest terms professed to the messengers before all the people, that he was not the Messiah; nor did he retract his confession, or draw in his words again, or drop any thing that looked doubtful or suspicious;

but confessed, I am not the Christ: he stood to it, and insisted on it, that he was not that illustrious person; nor had they any reason to entertain such an opinion of him; nor would he have them do so; they might assure themselves he was not Christ.

Ver. 21. *And they asked him, what then? art thou Elias*? etc.] Elijah, the prophet; the Tishbite, as Nonnus in his paraphrase expresses it; who was translated, soul and body, to heaven: the Jews had a notion that that prophet would come in person a little before the coming of the Messiah; (see Gill on "<40170>Matthew 17:10") wherefore these messengers inquire, that since he had so fully satisfied them that he was not the Messiah, that he would as ingenuously answer to this question, if he was Elias, or not:

and he saith, I am not; that is, he was not Elijah the prophet that lived in Ahab's time, and was called the Tishbite; for John's answer is to the intention of their question, and their own meaning in it, and is no contradiction to what Christ says of him, (<40114>Matthew 11:14) that he was the Elias that was to come; for he was the person meant by him in (<390405>Malachi 4:5) though not in the sense the Jews understood it; nor is it

any contradiction to what the angel said to Zacharias, (<40117>Luke 1:17) for he does not say that John should come in the body, but in the power and spirit of Elias; (see Gill on "<40114>Matthew 11:14").

Art thou that prophet? Jeremiah, whom some of the Jews [f42] have thought to be the prophet Moses spoke of, in (<051815>Deuteronomy 18:15) and expected that he would appear about the times of the Messiah; (see <401614>Matthew 16:14) or any one of the ancient prophets risen from the dead, which they also had a notion of, (<420908>Luke 9:8,19) or, as it may be rendered, "art thou a prophet?" for prophecy had long ceased with them:

and he answered, no; he was not Jeremiah, nor any one of the old prophets risen from the dead, nor a prophet in the sense they meant: he was not like one of the prophets of the Old Testament; he was a prophet, and more than a prophet, as Christ says, (<401109>Matthew 11:9) yet not such a prophet as they were; his prophesying lay not so much in predicting future events, as in pointing out Christ, and preaching the doctrine of the remission of sins by him.

Ver. 22. *Then said they unto him, who art thou*? etc.] Since, as yet, he had only answered in negatives, who he was not, that he was not the Christ, nor Elias, nor that prophet; they desire he would give them a positive account who he was:

that we may give answer to them that sent us; that their labour might not be in vain; that they might not come so far for nothing, without knowing who he was; and that they might be capable of giving an account of him to the sanhedrim:

what sayest thou of thyself? they insisted on it, that he would openly, and honestly declare who he was, and what was his office and business; that from his own mouth, and not from the opinion and conjectures of others, they might represent him in a true light to those who had deputed them on this errand.

Ver. 23. *And he said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness*, etc.] These words are cited by the other evangelists, and applied to John the Baptist; but then they are only to be considered as their citation, and as an application of them to him by them: but here they are used by John himself, who both expresses them, and interprets them of himself; and in which he was undoubtedly under the infallible direction of the blessed Spirit; and which confirms the sense of the evangelists, who apply the words to him.

The Jews give a different interpretation of the words; though one of their celebrated commentators [f43] owns, that the comforts spoken of in the preceding verses are what will be in the days of the King Messiah: one of them [f44] interprets, “the voice”, of the Holy Ghost; and so far it may be true, as John was filled with the Holy Ghost, and he spake by him in his ministry: and another [f45], of the resurrection of the dead, or the voice that will be heard then, which will be the voice of the archangel: though another of [f46] them better explains it by, µyrçbmh µh, “they are they that bring glad tidings”, or good news; such are Gospel preachers; only it should have been in the singular number: for the text speaks but of one voice; of one person crying; and of John the Baptist, who brought the good news, and glad tidings, that the Messiah was coming, yea, that he was already come, and that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. The Hebrew writers generally understand the passage, of the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, and of removing all obstructions in their way to Jerusalem; to which sense the Targum on the place inclines, which paraphrases it thus;

> “the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare the way before the people of the Lord, make in the plain, paths before the congregation of our God:”

but not the people of the Lord, but the Lord himself, and not the congregation of God, but God himself is intended; whose ways were to be prepared, and made plain, even the King Messiah; which was to be done, and was done by his forerunner John the Baptist, who, with great modesty, expresses himself in the language of this Scripture, as being a prophecy of him: he was a “voice”, but not a mere voice; nor was his ministry a mere voice of words, as the law was, but it was the sweet voice of the Gospel, proclaiming the coming of the Messiah; encouraging men to believe in him; calling them to evangelical repentance, and publishing remission of sins in the name of Christ, and pointing him out as the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world: this voice was “crying”; it was not a still small voice, it was a very loud one; John lifted up his voice like a trumpet; he delivered himself with great zeal and fervency; and it was “in the wilderness” where this voice was heard, in the wilderness of Judea, as in (<401301>Matthew 3:1) where Jesus came preaching; the Ethiopic version renders the words, “I am the voice of one that goes about in the wilderness”; that is, in the several towns and villages which were in the wilderness, to whom John went and preached the Gospel: the Persic version reads, “I am the voice and cry which cometh out of the

wilderness”; referring to the place where he was before he entered on his public ministry, and from whence he came; for he was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel, (Luke 1:80). The words this voice cried were,

make straight the way of the Lord; he called upon persons to reform their ways, and walk in the way of the Lord, to repent of their sins, believe in Christ, and submit to the ordinance of baptism: the Ethiopic version reads, “the way of God”; and such was the person he came to prepare the way for, even the Son of God, and who is truly and properly God,

as said the prophet Esaias, in (Isaiah 40:3 (See Gill on “Matthew 3:3”)).

Ver. 24. *And they which were sent were of the Pharisees*.] Who were the straitest sect of religion among the Jews; were very zealous of the traditions of the elders, and professed an expectation of the Messiah; and were famous in the nation for their knowledge and learning, as well as for their devotion and sanctity: and many of them were in the sanhedrim, as appears from (John 3:1, Acts 23:6), (See Gill on “Matthew 3:7”).

Ver. 25. *And they asked him, and said unto him*, etc.] They put a question, by saying to him,

why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? since he denied that he was the Messiah, or Elias that was to come before the Messiah, according to the expectation of the Jews, or that prophet, or a prophet, they demand by what authority he introduced a new rite and ordinance among them, which they had never been used to; for though there were divers washings or baptisms among them, enjoined by the law of Moses in certain cases, and others which obtained by tradition, as the immersion of themselves after they had been at market, and of cups, pots, brazen vessels, and tables, yet nothing of this kind that John administered: and as for the baptism of proselytes, it seems to be of a later date than this, and had no manner of likeness to it. The ordinance John administered was such, as they apprehended that no one ought to practise, unless he was the Messiah, or his forerunner, or some eminent prophet; they insist upon it therefore, that since he denied he was either of these, that he would show his credentials, and what commission he had from God to baptize; or they suggest he was liable to be called to an account by their

sanhedrim, and be condemned as a false prophet, or an innovator in religious affairs. From hence it appears, that the Jews expected that baptism would be administered in the times of the Messiah, and his forerunner; but from whence they had this notion, it is not easy to say, whether from (<38C01>Zechariah 13:1) as Grotius, or from (<26625>Ezekiel 36:25) as Lightfoot; nor do they speak contemptibly of it, but rather consider it as a very solemn affair, to be performed only by great personages: and this may teach modern ones to think and speak more respectfully of this ordinance than they do, who have given themselves great liberties, and have treated it with much contempt and virulence; calling it by the names of uncleanness, abomination, filthy water, and a devoting of persons to Satan [f47]: likewise, it is clear from hence, that they expected that this ordinance would be first administered by some person of very great note, either some very famous prophet, as Elias, whom they looked for before the coming of the Messiah, or else the Messiah himself, and not by a common teacher, or any ordinary person; wherefore this rite, as performed by John, could have no likeness with any thing that was in common use among them: besides, it was expressly done in the name of the Messiah, (<44105>Acts 19:5) therefore they conclude he, or his forerunner, must be come; and that John must be one, or other of them, otherwise, why did he administer it? and it is also evident from hence, that no such practice had obtained before among them, or they would not have been alarmed at it, as they were; nor would they have troubled themselves to have sent after John, and inquire of him who he was, that should practise in this manner.

Ver. 26. *John answered them, saying, I baptize with water*, etc.] Or in water, so the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions render it. The sense of the answer is, that he indeed baptized persons in water, which was all that he could do, or pretended to do; and he owned, that this was a new rite, and that he was the administrator of a new ordinance; but he suggests, as may be supplied from (<40311>Matthew 3:11) that there was one at hand, and even now among them, that should baptize, and so it is read in one of Stephens's copies here, in the Holy Ghost, and in fire; and it was by his authority, by a commission he had received from him, that he baptized in water; and that his speedy manifestation and appearance as the Messiah, which would be confirmed by his power of baptizing in the Holy Ghost, and by his ministry and miracles, would be a sufficient vindication of his conduct, and support him in his administration of water baptism:

but there standeth one among you; or “hath stood”, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; referring, not to his being among them at twelve years of age, but a few days ago when he came to John to be baptized, and was baptized by him; for from (<40129>John 1:29) it is plain he was not now, or “today”, as Nounus expresses it, standing in the midst of them. The Ethiopic version renders it, there is one about to stand among you, as he did the next day: though the meaning of the phrase may only be, that he was then in being, and dwelt somewhere among them, and not that he was personally present at that time:

whom ye know not; neither from whence he is, nor who he is, or what is his work and office; neither the dignity of his person, nor the end of his coming into the world, nor the nature of his business in it.

Ver. 27. *He it is who coming after me*, etc.] Both into the world, and into the ministry of the word; for John was before Christ, in both these respects, though greatly behind him in others, and therefore he adds,

is preferred before me: being not only of a more excellent nature, the Son of God, and of an higher extract, the Lord from heaven; but in an higher office, and having greater gifts, and the Spirit of God without measure on him; and also being more followed by the people; for John decreased, but he increased: or rather the words may be rendered, who was before me; being the eternal Son of God, whose goings forth were of old, from everlasting; who was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; the firstborn, or first bringer forth of every creature; and therefore must be before all things, which are created by him; (See Gill on “<40115>John 1:15”).

Whose shoes latchet I am not worthy to unloose; which was one of the meanest services done by a servant to his master; (See Gill on “<40311>Matthew 3:11”).

Ver. 28. *These things were done in Bethabara*, etc.] That is, this testimony was bore by John; and this discourse passed between him and the Pharisees, at the place here mentioned; which was a passage over Jordan, where much people walked to go on the other side,

beyond Jordan; and *where also John was baptizing*; which brought a great concourse of people together: so that this witness was bore in a very public manner, and before a large number; and it is to this that Christ refers, in (<40133>John 1:33) for this was so well known, that there was no hiding or

denying it: the place where this conversation passed, is in the Vulgate Latin, and all the eastern versions; and in the Alexandrian copy, and many other copies, and so in Nonnus, called Bethany; but as Deuteronomy Dieu observes, Bethany was not beyond Jordan, nor in the wilderness of Judea, but near to Jerusalem, about two miles distant from it; nor was it situated by waters convenient for baptizing, unless they went to the brook Kidron, which indeed was not far from it; but it is clear from the history, that John was not so near Jerusalem; nor did that brook which might be forded over, continues the same learned author, seem fit and proper enough, `"mergendis baptizandorum corporibus", for plunging the bodies of those that were to be baptized'; wherefore he rightly concludes, that either this reading is an error, or there was another Bethany near Jordan: Bethabara signifies "the house of passage", and is thought to be the place where the Israelites passed over Jordan, to go into the land of Canaan, (<06316>Joshua 3:16,17). And which, as it must be a very convenient place for the administration of baptism by immersion, used by John, so it was very significant of the use of this ordinance; which is, as it were, the passage, or entrance, into the Gospel church state; for persons ought first to be baptized, and then be admitted into a Gospel church, according to the example of the primitive Christians, (<44241>Acts 2:41) but whether there was a place of this name, where the Israelites went over Jordan, is not certain; and if there was, it does not seem so likely to be the place here designed, since that was right over against Jericho; whereas this seems to be rather further off, and over against Galilee: there were several passages of Jordan, (<07125>Judges 12:5,6). There was a bridge over it, between the lake of Samochon and Gennesaret, now called Jacob's bridge, where Jacob is supposed to have wrestled with the angel, and to have met with his brother Esau; and there was another over it at Chainmath, near Tiberias, and in other places: and it might be at one of these passages, by which they went over into Galilee, that John pitched upon to continue preaching and baptizing at; partly because of the number of people that went over, to whom he had the opportunity of preaching; and partly, for the sake of baptizing those who became proper subjects of that ordinance through his ministry. Some have thought, that this place is the same with Bethbarah, in (<07024>Judges 7:24), which was either in the tribe of Ephraim or of Manasseh, and not far from the parts where this place must be, but was on this side Jordan; and so Beza says the words should be rendered; and those who came to John at Jordan, are not said to pass over that river: others are of opinion, that Bethabara is the same with Betharabah, (<06516>Joshua 15:6,61),

since this is called Bethabara by the Septuagint, in (Joshua 18:22). However, be it what place soever, and wheresoever, it was no doubt very proper for John's purpose; and therefore he chose it, and for a while continued at it: and here, says Jerom [f48]

> "to this day many of the brethren, that is, of the number of believers, desiring there to be born again, are baptized in the vital stream;"

such veneration had they for the place where John first baptized: Origen says [f49], that in his time it was said, that Bethabara was showed by the banks of Jordan, where they report John baptized.

Ver. 29. *The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him*, etc.] Not to be baptized, for he had been baptized before by him. This seems to have been after Christ had been forty days in the wilderness, from whence he now returned, and came to attend on John's ministry; both to do honour to him, and that he might be made manifest by him; and this was the day after John had bore such a testimony concerning him, to the priests and Levites; and which Christ the omniscient God, knew full well, and therefore came at this season, when the minds of the people were prepared by John's testimony, to expect and receive him: one part of the work of Elias, which the Jews assign unto him, and the precise time of his doing it, exactly agree with this account of John the Baptist; they say [f50], that his work is

> "to bring to them (the Israelites) the good news of the coming of the Redeemer; and this shall be, djа µwy, "one day", before the coming of the, Messiah; and this is that which is written, "behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord". (Malachi 4:5)."

For John, the day before Christ Lord, came to him, had signified to the priests and Levites, that the Messiah was already come; and now on the day following, seeing him, pointed as with his finger to him,

and saith, behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world: he calls him a "lamb", either with respect to any lamb in common, for his harmlessness and innocence; for his meekness and humility; for his patience; and for his usefulness, both for food and clothing, in a spiritual sense; as well as for his being to be a sacrifice for the sins of his people: or else with respect to the lambs that were offered in sacrifice, under the legal

dispensation; and that either to the passover lamb, or rather to the lambs of the daily sacrifice, that were offered morning and evening; since the account of them best agrees with what is said of this Lamb of God, who was slain in type, in the morning of the world, or from the foundation of the world; and actually in the evening of the world, or in the end of it; and who has a continued virtue to take away the sins of his people, from the beginning, to the end of the world; and their sins, both of the day and night, or which are committed every day: for as they are daily committed, there is need of the daily application of the blood and sacrifice of Christ, to remove them; or of continual looking unto him by faith, whose blood has a continual virtue, to cleanse from all sin: the Jewish doctors say [f51], that

> “the morning daily sacrifice made atonement for the iniquities done in the night; and the evening sacrifice made atonement for the iniquities that were by day:”

and in various things they were typical of Christ, as that they were lambs of the first year, which may denote the weakness of the human nature of Christ, which had all the sinless infirmities of it; they, were also without spot, signifying the purity of Christ’s human nature, who was holy and harmless, a lamb without spot and blemish; these were offered as a sacrifice, and for the children of Israel only, as Christ has given himself an offering and a sacrifice to God, both in soul and body, for the sins of the mystical Israel of God, the Israel whom God has chosen for himself, whether Jews or Gentiles; for Christ is the propitiation for the sins of both: and these were offered daily, morning and evening; and though Christ was but once offered, otherwise he must have often suffered; yet as he has by one offering put away sin for ever, so there is a perpetual virtue in his sacrifice to take it away, and there is a constant application of it for that purpose; to which may be added, that these lambs were offered with fine flour, oil and wine, for a sweet savour to the Lord; denoting the acceptableness of the sacrifice of Christ to his Father, to whom it is for a sweet smelling savour, (Ephesians 5:2). And Christ is styled the Lamb “of God”, in allusion to the same, whom the Cabalistic Jews [f52] call the secret of the mystery, and anmjr yçbk, “the Lambs of God”; because God has a special property in him; he is his own Son; and because he is of his providing and appointing, as a sacrifice for sin, and is acceptable to him as such; and to distinguish him from all other lambs; and to give him the preference, since he does that which they could not do, “taketh away the sin of the world”: by the “sin of the world”, is not meant the sin, or sins of

every individual person in the world; for some die in their sins, and their sins go before hand to judgment, and they go into everlasting punishment for them; which could not be, if Christ took them away: rather, the sin which is common to the whole world, namely: original sin; but then it must be observed, that this is not the only sin Christ takes away; for he also takes away actual sins; and the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read in the plural, "the sins of the world"; and also that this he takes away, only with respect the elect; wherefore they are the persons intended by the world, as in (<43633>John 6:33,51), whose sin, or sins, Christ takes away: and a peculiar regard seems to be had to the elect among the Gentiles, who are called the world, in distinction from the Jews, as in (<43316>John 3:16 <62202>1 John 2:2), and the rather, since the lambs of the daily sacrifice, to which the allusion is, were only offered for the sins of the Jews: but John here signifies, that the Lamb of God he pointed at, and which was the antitype of these lambs, not only took away the sins of God's people among the Jews, but the sins of such of them also as were among the Gentiles; and this seems to me to be the true sense of the passage. The phrase "taking away sin", signifies a taking it up, as Christ did; he took it voluntarily upon himself, and became responsible to divine justice for it; and also a bearing and carrying it, for taking it upon himself, he bore it in his own body on the tree, and carried it away, as the scape goat did under the law; and so likewise a taking it quite away: Christ has removed it as far as the east is from the west, out of sight, so as never to be seen any more; he has destroyed, abolished, and made an utter end of it: and this is expressed in the present tense, "taketh away": to denote the continued virtue of Christ's sacrifice to take away sin, and the constant efficacy of his blood to cleanse from it, and the daily application of it to the consciences of his people; and which is owing to the dignity of his person, as the Son of God; and to his continual and powerful mediation and intercession: this must be a great relief to minds afflicted with the continual ebullitions of sin, which is taken away by the Lamb of God, as fast as it rises; and who, for that purpose, are called to "behold", and wonder at, the love and grace of Christ, in taking up, bearing, and taking away sin; and to look to him by faith continually, for everlasting salvation; and love him, and give him the honour of it, and glorify him for it.

Ver. 30. *This is he, of whom it is said*, etc.] Either the day before, as in (<43027>John 1:27), or some time before that, (<43015>John 1:15), when he first began to baptize, even before Christ came to be baptized by him, and before he personally knew him; (see <40311>Matthew 3:11,13).

After me cometh a man; not a mere man, but the man God's fellow: and this is said, not because he was now a grown man, or to show the truth of his human nature; but seems to be a common Hebraism, and is all one as if it had been said, "after me cometh one", or a certain person: for the sense of this phrase, and what follows, *see Gill "*⁴⁰1:15*John 1:15"*.

Ver. 31. *And I knew him not*, etc.] Ομμασιν, "by sight", as Nonnus paraphrases it; personally he had never seen him, nor had had any conversation and familiarity with him; for though they were related to each other, yet lived at such a distance, as not to know one another, or have a correspondence with each other: John was in the deserts, until the day of his showing unto Israel; and Christ dwelt with his parents at Nazareth, in a very mean and obscure manner, till he came from thence to Jordan to John, to be baptized by him; and which was the first interview they had: and this was so ordered by providence, as also this is said by John, lest it should be thought, that the testimony he bore to Jesus, and the high commendation he gave of him, arose from the relation between them; or from a confederacy and compact they had entered into:

but that he should be made manifest to Israel; who had been for many years hid in Galilee, an obscure part of the world: and though he had been known to Joseph and Mary, and to Zacharias and Elisabeth, and to Simeon and Anna; yet he was not made manifest to the people of Israel in common; nor did they know that the Messiah was come: but that he might be known:

therefore am I come baptizing with water; or in water, as before: for by administering this new ordinance, the people were naturally put upon inquiry after the Messiah, whether come, and where he was, since such a new rite was introduced; and besides, John, when he baptized any, he exhorted them to believe on him, which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus; and moreover, by Christ's coming to his baptism, he came to have a personal knowledge of him himself, and so was capable of pointing him out, and making him manifest to others, as he did.

Ver. 32. *And John bare record*, etc.] The same day that he said the above things, and at the same time:

saying, I saw the Spirit; that is, of God, as is said in (⁴⁰3:16Matthew 3:16) and which Nonnus here expresses; and the Ethiopic version reads, "the Holy Ghost",

descending from heaven like a dove; at the time of his baptism; *see Gill "⁴⁰16Matthew 3:16"*.

And it abode upon him; for some time; so long as that John had a full sight of it, and so was capable of giving a perfect account of it, and bearing a certain and distinct testimony to it.

Ver. 33. *And I knew him not*, etc.] That is, before he came to be baptized by him; when it was secretly suggested to him who he was, and the following signal was given him, to confirm him in it:

but he that sent me to baptize with water; or "in water"; that is, God; for John's mission was from God, as in (⁴⁰06John 1:6), and his baptism from heaven; he had a divine warrant and commission for what he did:

the same said unto me; either by an articulate voice, or by a divine impulse on his mind, or by the revelation of the Spirit:

upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost; that is, the Messiah; (see Gill on "⁴⁰11Matthew 3:11"), (see Gill on "⁴⁰16Matthew 3:16").

Ver. 34. *And I saw*, etc.] The Spirit descending from heaven as a dove, and lighting upon Jesus, and remaining some time on him; this he saw with his bodily eyes:

and bore record; at the same time, before all the people that were with him, when he baptized Jesus:

that this is the Son of God; the natural, essential, and eternal Son of God; who being sent in the fulness of time, had assumed an human nature, in which he became subject to all ordinances, and had the Spirit without measure bestowed on him; and which was an evidence who he was, and of what he came about.

Ver. 35. *Again, the next day after*, etc.] The third day from the priests and Levites having been with John, to know who he was. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, leave out the word "again":

John stood, and two of his disciples; one of these was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, as appears from (⁴⁰40John 1:40) and very likely the other was the Evangelist John, the writer of this Gospel, who always chooses to

conceal himself. John the Baptist stood, and these disciples by him, in some certain place near Jordan, where he was preaching and baptizing.

Ver. 36. *And looking upon Jesus as he walked*, etc.] Either by them; or as he was going from them to his lodgings; it being toward the close of the day, when John had finished his work for that day, and the people were departing home: John fixed his eyes intently on Christ, with great pleasure and delight, and pointing at him,

he saith, behold the Lamb of God; as in (⁴⁰⁰¹John 1:29), where it is added, "which taketh away the sin of the world"; and which the Ethiopic version subjoins here.

Ver. 37. *And the two disciples heard him speak*, etc.] The above words, and took notice of them; faith in Christ came by hearing them; they reached their hearts, and they found their affections, and the desires of their souls, to be after Christ:

and they followed Jesus; left their master, and went after him, in order to get some acquaintance with him, and receive some instructions from him.

Ver. 38. *Then Jesus turned, and saw them following*, etc.] That is, "him", as the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions add: he saw by their walk, and by their countenances, that they were following him; and which he knew before he turned himself: he knew what John had said, and what an effect it had upon these disciples, and what was working in their hearts, and how desirous they were of coming up to him, and conversing with him; and therefore he turned himself, that they might have an opportunity of speaking to him; or rather, in order to speak to them first, as he did:

and saith unto them, what seek ye? This he said, not as ignorant of whom, and what they were seeking, and desirous; but to encourage them to speak to him, which, through fear and bashfulness, they might be backward to do; and therefore, he who will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, but cherishes and encourages the first motions of grace, begins first with them, and treats them in a free and familiar manner; thereby to animate and engage them to use freedom with him, and which end was answered:

they said unto him, Rabbi; a title which now began to be in much use with the Jews, and which they gave to their celebrated doctors; and these disciples of John, observing how magnificently their master spoke of Jesus,

in great reverence to him, addressed him under this character; (see Gill on "Matthew 23:7");

which is to say, being interpreted, master. These are the words of the evangelist, interpreting the word "Rabbi", and not of the disciples, and are left out in the Syriac and Persic versions, who, for "Rabbi", read "our master", or our "Rabbi"; being said by both the disciples, or by one in the name of both, putting the following question:

where dwellest thou? signifying, that that was not a proper place, in the public way, to enter into a conversation with him, and acquaint him with what they were desirous of; but should be glad to know where he lodged, that they might wait upon him there, either then, or on the morrow, or at any convenient time.

Ver. 39. *He saith unto them, come and see*, etc.] He gave them an invitation, to go along with him directly, and see with their own eyes, where he dwelt, and there and then converse with him, and at any other time; to which they had a hearty welcome:

they came and saw where he dwelt; they accepted of the invitation, and went along with him immediately, and saw, and took notice of the place where he had lodgings, that they might know it, and find it another time; which Dr. Lightfoot conjectures was at Capernaum, which is very probable; since that was his own city, where he paid tribute, where he frequently resorted, and was on the banks of Jordan, near the lake of Gennesaret; and these disciples were Galilaeans:

and abode with him that day; the remaining part of the day, which they spent in delightful conversation with him; by which they knew that he was the Messiah; at least they were better instructed in this matter, and more confirmed in it. The Arabic version renders it, "they remained with him that his own day"; and Dr. Lightfoot thinks the next day is meant, and that it was the sabbath day, which they kept with him in private devotion and conference:

for it was about the tenth hour; which, according to the Roman way of reckoning, must be ten o'clock in the morning; so that there was a considerable part of the day before them; but according to the Jewish way of reckoning, who reckon twelve hours to a day, it must be four o'clock in the afternoon, when there were but two hours to night: and this being; about the time when the lamb of the daily sacrifice of the evening was

offered up, very seasonably did John point unto them, at this time, Christ the Lamb of God, the antitype of that sacrifice; for the daily evening sacrifice was slain at eight and a half, and was offered at nine and a half [f53], or between the ninth and tenth hours of the day. The Ethiopic version renders it, “they remained with him that day unto the tenth hour”.

Ver. 40. *One of the two which heard John [speak]*, etc.] The above things, concerning Jesus being the Lamb of God:

and followed him; that is, Jesus, as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; and the Persic version, Christ: and the Ethiopic version, “the Lord Jesus”; for not John, but Jesus they followed:

was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother: (see <4004B>Matthew 4:18) the other, as before observed, might be the writer of this Gospel.

Ver. 41. *He first findeth his own brother Simon*, etc.] Either before the other disciple, or before he found any other person: after he and the other disciple departed from Christ, being affected with the grace bestowed upon him, and his heart warm with the conversation he had had with him, and transported with joy at finding the Messiah, goes in all haste in search of his relations, friends, and acquaintance, to communicate what he had seen and heard, in order to bring them to the knowledge of the same; for such is the nature of grace, it is very communicative, and those that have it, are very desirous that all others should be partakers of it: and the first person he lighted on was Simon, who was afterwards called Peter, who was his own brother; not a brother-in-law, but his own brother, by father and mother’s side, and so dear unto him by the ties of nature and blood:

and saith unto him; with all eagerness imaginable, and in a rapture of joy:

we have found the Messias; I, and a fellow disciple have had the Messiah, so often foretold by the prophets, and so long expected by our fathers, pointed out to us; and we have followed him, and have had conversation with him, and are well assured he is that illustrious person:

which is, being interpreted, the Christ; which, as in (<43001>John 1:38), are the words of the evangelist, and not Andrew, and are therefore left out in the Syriac version; the word Messiah needing no interpretation in that language, and which was the language in which Andrew spoke. This name, Messiah, was well known among the Jews, for that who was promised, and they expected as a Saviour and Redeemer; though it is not very often

mentioned in the books of the Old Testament, chiefly in the following places, (<19202>Psalm 2:2 18:50 89:39,51 <27925>Daniel 9:25,26); but is very much used in the Chaldee paraphrases: Elias Levita [f54] says, he found it in more than fifty verses; and Buxtorf [f55] has added others to them, and the word appears in “seventy one” places, which he takes notice of, and are worthy of regard; for they show the sense of the ancient synagogue, concerning the passages of the Old Testament, respecting the Messiah: this Hebrew word is interpreted by the Greek word, “Christ”; and both signify “anointed”, and well agree with the person to whom they belong, to which there is an allusion in (<22103>Song of Solomon 1:3), “thy name is as ointment poured forth”: he is so called, because he was anointed from everlasting, to be prophet, priest, and king; (see <19206>Psalm 2:6 89:20) (<20802>Proverbs 8:22,23), and he was anointed as man, with the oil of gladness, with the graces of the Spirit, without measure, (<19507>Psalm 45:7) (<44038>Acts 10:38). And it is from him the saints receive the anointing, or grace in measure; and are from him called Christians, and are really anointed ones; (see <62027>1 John 2:27 <44124>Acts 11:24 <47021>2 Corinthians 1:21), hence it is a name precious to the saints, and savoury to them. These words were delivered by Andrew, in a very exulting strain, expressing great joy; as indeed what can be greater joy to a sensible soul, than to find Christ? which in a spiritual sense, is to have a clear sight of him by faith, to go unto him, and lay hold on him, as the only Saviour and Redeemer: who is to be found in the Scriptures of truth, which testify of him; in the promises of grace, which are full of him and in the Gospel, of which he is the sum and substance; and in the ordinances of it, where he shows himself; for he is not to be found by the light of nature, or by carnal reason, nor by the law of Moses, but by means of the Gospel, and the Spirit of God attending that, as a spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him: and happy are those souls that find Christ under his direction; for they find life, spiritual and eternal, in him; a justifying righteousness; free and full pardon of their sins; spiritual food for their souls; and peace, comfort, joy, and rest, and eternal glory: wherefore this must needs be matter of joy unto them, since such a finding is a rich one, a pearl of great price, riches durable and unsearchable; and which a man that has found, would not part with for all the world; but parts with all he has for it; and is what can never be lost again; and, particularly to two sorts of persons, finding Christ must give a peculiar pleasure, and an inexpressible joy; to such as are under a sense of sin and damnation, and to such who have been under desertion. The phrase of

“finding” a person, twice used in this text, and hereafter in some following verses, is frequent in Talmudic and Rabbinic writings; as

> “he went, brl hyjkça, “and found him with Rab” [f56].”

Ver. 42. *And he brought him to Jesus*, etc.] That is, Andrew brought his brother Simon to Jesus; he persuaded him to go along with him, and showed him where he was; which discovered great zeal for Christ, being desirous of, gaining souls unto him; and great affection to his brother, being heartily concerned that he might know Christ, as well as he; nor did he choose that he should take up with the bare account that he gave of him, but would have him go to him himself, that he might be personally acquainted with him, and instructed by him: and this also shows the readiness and willingness of Simon, to see and hear Christ himself, and not sit down contented with the bare relation his brother gave: no doubt he found his heart stirred up within him, and the desires of his soul going after Christ; and therefore he at once rose up and went with Andrew to him; and thus one person may be the means of bringing another to Christ: and it may be observed, that Peter was not the first of the apostles that was called by Christ, or first knew him; Andrew was before him, and the means of bringing him into an acquaintance with him; had it been the reverse, the Papists would have improved it in favour of Peter, as the prince of the apostles: this clause is omitted in the Persic version.

And when Jesus beheld him; as he was coming, or come to him: he had beheld him before in the glass of his Father’s purposes and decrees; he had viewed him in his blood, and said unto him, live; and he now looked upon him with a look of love, of complacency, and delight:

he said, thou art Simon, the son of Jona; thy name is Simon, and thy father’s name is Jona: he knew both their names, though he might have never seen their faces, nor heard of them: this he said to give Simon a testimony of his omniscience; and which, no doubt, must strike him at once. Simon, or Simeon, was a common name among the Jews, being the name of one of the twelve patriarchs; (see Gill on “<4010>Matthew 10:2”); and so likewise was Jona, being the name of a prophet of theirs; (see Gill on “<4016>Matthew 16:17”); and inasmuch as the prophet Jonah was of Gathhepher in Zebulun, which was in Galilee; (see Gill on “<4052>John 7:52”); this might be a common name among the Galilaeans; so that there seems no reason why it should be thought to be the same with John, as the

Ethiopic version reads it, and by way of interrogation, “art thou not Simon the son of John?”

Thou shall be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a stone; or Peter as it should rather be rendered; and as it is in the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions; and as “Cepha”, or “Cephas”, in the Syriac and Chaldee languages signifies a stone, or rock [f57], so does “Peter” in Greek: hence, the Syriac version here gives no interpretation of the word. Christ not only calls Simon by his present name, at first sight of him, but tells him what his future name should be; and which imports, not only that he should be a lively stone in the spiritual building, the church, but should have a considerable hand in that work, and abide firm and steadfast to Christ, and his interest, notwithstanding his fall; and continue constant and immoveable until death, as he did. The Jews also, in their writings, call him Simeon Kepha [f58].

Ver. 43. *The day following*, etc.] Not the day after John had pointed out Christ, as the Lamb of God, to two of his disciples; but the day after Simon had been with him, being brought by Andrew:

Jesus would go forth into Galilee; from whence he came to Jordan, to John, to be baptized by him; and which being done, and his temptations in the wilderness over, it was his will, resolution, and determination, to return to Galilee, the place of his education and conversation, till this time; and therefore chose to begin his ministry, and miracles, there, both to give honour to it, and to fulfil a prophecy in (<230901>Isaiah 9:1,2); and besides this, he had doubtless another end in going thither: which was to call some other disciples that dwelt there:

and findeth Philip; as he was going to Galilee, or rather when in it; not by hap or chance; but knowing where he was, as the shepherd and bishop of souls, looked him up and found him out, and called him by his grace, and to be a disciple of his; (see Gill on “<400103>Matthew 10:3”);

and saith unto him, follow me; leave thy friends, thy calling, and business, and become a disciple of mine: and such power went along with these words, that he at once left all, and followed Christ; as the other disciples, Peter, and Andrew, James, and John, and Matthew did, as is recorded of them, though not of this; but the following history makes it appear he did.

Ver. 44. *Now Philip was of Bethsaida*, etc.] A town on the lake of Gennesaret, afterwards made a city by Philip the tetrarch, and called Julias,

after the name of Caesar's daughter[f59]: it was a fishing town, and had its name from thence; and the disciples that were of it, were of this business:

the city of Andrew and Peter; or "Simon", as read the Syriac and Persic versions: three apostles were called out of this place, as mean, and wicked, as it was; (see <40112>Matthew 11:21); which was no small honour to it: it is a saying of the Jews[f60], that

> "a man's place (his native place) does not honour him, but a man honours his place."

This was the case here.

Ver. 45. *Philip findeth Nathanael*, etc.] Who was of Cana of Galilee, (<43202>John 21:2) and where, it is very likely, Philip found him; since we quickly read of Jesus, and his disciples being there. This man is thought, by some, to be the same with Bartholomew; and so he is called Bartholomew, in a Syriac dictionary[f61]; and the rather, since he and Philip are always mentioned together in the account of the apostles, (<40003>Matthew 10:3 <41618>Mark 3:18 <42614>Luke 6:14). And certain it is, from the above mentioned place, that Nathanael was among the apostles after our Lord's resurrection; and it is highly probable was one of them? his name might be Nathanael bar Tholmai, the son of Tholmai, Ptolomy, or Tholomew. It is the same name with Nethaneel, and which is read Nathanael, as here, in:

> "And of the sons of Phaisur; Elionas, Massias Israel, and Nathanael, and Ocidelus and Talsas." (1 Esdras 9:22)

and by the Septuagint on (<130214>1 Chronicles 2:14 15:24 24:6 26:4 <143619>2 Chronicles 35:9 <150122>Ezra 10:22) (<161236>Nehemiah 12:36); and signifies one given of God; and is the same with Theodore in Greek, and Adeodatus in Latin; a doctor of this name, R. Nathaniel, is mentioned in the Jewish writings[f62]:

and saith unto him, we have found him of whom Moses, in the law, and the prophets, did write. He does not say, that he, and Andrew, and Simon, had found the Messiah; though he designs him by this circumlocution; Nathanael being, as is generally thought, a person well versed in the law, and the prophets, and so would at once know who Philip meant: for Moses, in the law, or Pentateuch, in the five books written by him, frequently speaks of the Messiah as the seed of the woman, that should break the serpent's head; as the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations

should be blessed; and as the Shiloh to whom the gathering of the people should be; and as the great prophet, like to himself, God would raise up among the children of Israel, to whom they were to hearken: and as for the prophets, they wrote of his birth of a virgin; of the place of his birth, Bethlehem; of his sufferings, and the glory, that should follow; of his resurrection from the dead, his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God; and of many things relating to his person, and office, and work. And Philip having given this general account of him, proceeds to name him particularly; and affirms him to be

Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph; that his name was Jesus, which signifies a saviour; and answers to the promises, and prophecies, and character of him in the Old Testament; that he was of Nazareth, a place not above three hours walk from Cana, as Adrichomius says, where Philip and Nathanael were: Nazareth was the place where Christ had lived almost all his days hitherto, and therefore is said to be of it; though Bethlehem was the place of his birth, which Philip might not as yet know; as Capernaum afterwards was his city, or the more usual place of his residence: and that he was the son of Joseph; this Philip says, according to the common opinion of people, for he was supposed to be the son of Joseph; he having married his mother Mary.

Ver. 46. *And Nathanael said unto him*, etc.] Taking notice of, and laying hold on what Philip said, that he was of Nazareth, which at once stumbled, and prejudiced him against Jesus being the Messiah; knowing very well that Bethlehem was to be the place of his birth:

can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? The whole country of Galilee was had in contempt with the Jews; but Nazareth was so mean a place, that it seems it was even despised by its neighbours, by the Galilaeans themselves; for Nathanael was a Galilean, that said these words. It was so miserable a place that he could hardly think that any sort of good thing, even any worldly good thing, could come from thence; and it was so wicked, as appears from their murderous designs upon our Lord, that he thought no good man could arise from hence; and still less, any prophet, any person of great note; and still least of all, that that good thing, or person, the Messiah, should spring from it: so that his objection, and prejudice, proceeded not only upon the oracle in (Micah 5:2), which points out Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Messiah; but upon the wickedness, and meanness, and obscurity of Nazareth.

Philip saith unto him, come and see; who though he might not be master of this point, and knew not how to solve this difficulty, and remove this prejudice from Nathanael's mind, yet persuades him to go with him to Jesus; who, he doubted not, would give him full satisfaction in this, and all other points; and then it would most clearly appear to him, as it had done to him, that he was the true Messiah. The phrase, yzj at, "come, see", is often used in the book of Zohar [f63]: so it is, and likewise, harw ab, "come and see", in the Talmudic writings [f64].

Ver. 47. *Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him*, etc.] For notwithstanding his prejudices, he was a man of so much uprightness and honesty, that he thought Philip's request was very reasonable; and that it was but right, and fair, that he should see, and hear, and judge, for himself, whether the person Philip spoke of was the Messiah, or not; and therefore he came along with him; and as he was coming, Jesus saw him, who knew all that had passed between him and Philip:

and saith of him; to those that were standing by him, and in the hearing of Nathanael,

behold an Israelite indeed! a son of Israel, as the Syriac and Persic versions read; a true son of Jacob's; an honest, plain hearted man, like him; one that was an Israelite at heart; inwardly so; not one after the flesh only, but after the Spirit; (see <452829>Romans 2:28,29 <461018>1 Corinthians 10:18); and which was a rare thing at that time; and therefore a note of admiration is prefixed to it; for all were not Israel, that were of Israel; and indeed but a very few then: and so, larçy ^b, "a son of Israel", and rwmg larçy, "a perfect Israelite", are [f65] said of such who have regard to the articles of the Jewish faith, though not even of the seed of Israel: it is added,

in whom there is no guile; not that he was without sin; nor is this said of him; nor was he in such sense without guile, as Christ himself was; but guile was not a governing sin in him: the course of his life, and conversation, was with great integrity, and uprightness, and without any prevailing hypocrisy and deceit, either to God, or men. This Christ said to show how much such a character is approved by him; and that he knew the secrets of men's hearts, and the inward frames of their minds.

Ver. 48. *Nathanael saith unto him, whence knowest thou me*? etc.] This he said as one surprised, that he, who was a stranger to him, should hit upon his general character, and describe the internal state and frame of his soul:

this was more surprising to him, than if he had called him by his name Nathanael, as he did Simon; or had said what was the place, of his abode; Cana of Galilee; since this ordinarily was only to be observed, and learned, from a long and familiar acquaintance and conversation: by Nathanael's reply, it looks as if he had no doubt, or fears, about the character Christ gave him; but rather, that he believed it, as every good man must be conscious to himself of his own integrity; only it was amazing to him, how he should know it:

Jesus answered and said unto him; in order to satisfy him, how he could know this inward temper of his mind, and to give him some undeniable proofs of his omniscience, which he himself must acknowledge, being such as none but an all seeing eye could discover:

before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee; in which words Christ gives two instances of his omniscience; the one is, that he knew Philip had called him; he was privy to all that passed between them, though they were alone, and the conversation was had in the most private manner. Christ knew what an account Philip had given of him, and what objection Nathanael had made; and what an invitation Philip had given him to go along with him to Christ, and judge for himself; which is here meant by calling him, and with which he complied: and the other is, that he saw him under the fig tree before that: he was sitting under it, as men in those countries used to do; (see <330404>Micah 4:4), where he might be reading the Scriptures, and meditating upon them; and if, as some observe, he was reading, and thinking upon Jacob's dream, concerning the ladder which reached from earth to heaven, and on which he saw the angels of God ascending and descending, the words of Christ in (<430151>John 1:51) must strike him with fresh surprise, and give him another convincing proof of his omniscience: or he might be praying here in secret, and so acted a different part from the generality, of religious men of that nation, who chose to pray in synagogues, and corners of the streets, that they might be seen; and likewise proved him to be what Christ had said of him, a true and rare Israelite, without guile and hypocrisy, which were so visible and prevailing among others. It was usual with the doctors to read, and study in the law, under fig trees, and sometimes, though rarely, to pray there. It is said [f66],

> "R. Jacob, and his companions, were "sitting", studying in the law, hnyat adj twjt, "under a certain fig tree"."

And the rule they give about praying, on, or under one, is thus [f67]:

> "he that prays on the top of an olive tree, or on the top of a "fig tree", or on any other trees, must come down, and "pray below"."

It is said of Nathanael, in the Syriac dictionary [f68]; that his mother laid him under a fig tree, when the infants were slain, i.e. at Bethlehem; which, if it could be depended upon, must be to Nathanael a surprising and undeniable proof of the deity of Christ, and of his being the true Messiah; since, at that time, he was an infant of days himself, and was the person Herod was seeking to destroy, as the Messiah, and king of the Jews.

Ver. 49. *Nathanael answered and saith unto him*, etc.] Being fully convinced of his omniscience by these instances:

Rabbi; that is, master, as it is interpreted in (<430138>John 1:38), and is not here, because it is there:

thou art the Son of God; not by creation, for this would be to say no more of him, than may be said of every man; nor by adoption, for in that sense Nathanael himself was a Son of God, and many others; nor on account of his wonderful incarnation, which, it is very likely, at this time Nathanael knew nothing of; nor by reason of his resurrection from the dead, which, as yet, was not, and still less might be known by this person; nor because of his office, as Mediator, for this is expressed in the next clause; but by nature, as being of the same essence, and possessed of the same perfections God is; and of which he was convinced by the instances he gave of his omniscience; for it was from hence, and no other consideration, that he concludes him to be the Son of God: wherefore this phrase must be understood of him, not as Mediator, but as a divine person; as the natural, essential, and eternal Son of God; and who is truly and properly God: he adds,

thou art the King of Israel; having in view, no doubt, the passage in (<190206>Psalm 2:6,7), where the characters of Son of God, and King of Zion, meet in the same person: not King of Israel, in a literal sense; though he was the son of David, and a descendant of his in a right line, and was of the royal line, and had a legal right to the throne of Israel; and Nathanael might have a view to this, being tinctured with the common national prejudice, that the Messiah would be a temporal prince: but his kingdom is not of this world; nor with observation; but is spiritual; and he is a King over Israel in a spiritual sense, even of saints, whether Jews or Gentiles: whom he

conquers by his power, and rules in their hearts by his Spirit, and grace; and protects, and defends them from all their enemies.

Ver. 50. *Jesus answered and said unto him*, etc.] Not as reproving him for his faith, as if he was too credulous, and too easily gave into the belief of Christ, as the Son of God, and true Messiah, upon these single expressions of his; but as approving of it, and surprised at it:

because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? some read the words, not by way of interrogation, but as an assertion; "thou believest", or "hast believed", as the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Persic versions:

thou shall see greater things than these; meaning that he should have larger discoveries of his person, nature, and perfections, and should see things done by him, much more surprising than any thing he had seen yet; referring to the miracles of raising the dead, casting out devils, and healing all manner of diseases.

Ver. 51. *And he saith unto him, verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] Not only to Nathanael, but to the rest of the disciples that were then with him; and to show himself to be the "Amen", and faithful witness, as well as more strongly to asseverate what he was about to say, he doubles the expression:

hereafter you shall see heaven open; either in a literal sense, as it had been at his baptism; or, in a mystical sense, that there should be a clearer manifestation of heavenly truths made by his ministry; and that the way into the holiest of all should be made more manifest; and a more familiar intercourse he opened between God and his people; and also between angels and saints:

and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of man; or to the son of man, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it; meaning himself in human nature; the second Adam, and seed of the woman; and is expressive both of the truth, and infirmity of that nature. Reference may here be had to the ladder Jacob dreamed of, in (Genesis 28:12), which was a representation of Christ, in his person, as God-man; who, as God, was in heaven, whilst he, as man, was on earth; and in his office, as Mediator between God and man, making peace between them both; and in the ministration of angels to him in person, and to his body the church. And it is observable, that some of the Jewish writers [f69] understand

the ascent, and descent of the angels, in (<012812>Genesis 28:12), to be, not upon the ladder, but upon Jacob; which makes the phrase there still more agreeable to this; and so they render wyl[, in (<012813>Genesis 28:13), not “above it”, but “above him”. Or the, sense is, that there would be immediately made such clearer discoveries of his person, and grace by his ministry, and such miracles would be wrought by him in confirmation of it, that it would look as if heaven was open, and the angels of God were continually going to and fro, and bringing fresh messages, and performing miraculous operations; as if the whole host of them were constantly employed in such services: and this the rather seems to be the sense, since the next account we have, is, of the beginning of Christ’s miracles to manifest forth his glory in Cana of Galilee, where Nathanael lived; and since the word, rendered “hereafter”, signifies, “from henceforward”; or, as the Persic version renders it, “from this hour”; though the word is left out in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 2

Ver. 1. *And the third day there was a marriage*, etc.] Either from the second testimony bore by John the Baptist concerning Christ, and from the call of Simon Peter, which seem to be of the same date; (see <43501>John 1:35,36,42,43), or from Christ's coming into Galilee; or from the conversation he had with Nathanael; from either of which the date is taken, it matters not; the first is as agreeable and plain, as any. There is much dispute, and many rules with the Jews about the times, and days of marriage:

> "a virgin, (they say [f70],) marries on the fourth day (of the week), and a widow on the fifth, because the sanhedrim sit in the cities twice in the week, on the second, and on the fifth days; so that if there is any dispute about virginity, he (the husband) may come betimes to the sanhedrim."

This was a law that obtained since the times of Ezra; for it is said [f71],

> "before the order of Ezra, a woman might be married on any day;"

but in after times, feast days, and sabbath days, were particularly excepted. One of their canons is [f72]

> "they do not marry women on a feast day, neither virgins, nor widows:"

The reason of it was, that they might not mix one joy with another; and lest a man should leave the joy of the feast, for the joy of his wife. The account Maimonides [f73] gives of these several things is this;

> "it is lawful to espouse on any common day, even on the ninth of Ab, whether in the day, or in the night; but they do not marry wives neither on the evening of the sabbath, nor on the first of the week: the decree is, lest the sabbath should be profaned by preparing the feast; for the bridegroom is employed about the feast: and there is no need to say, that it is unlawful to marry a wife on the sabbath

day; and even on the common day of a feast they do not marry wives, as we have explained; because they do not mix one joy with another, as it is said in (<012927>Genesis 29:27), “fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also”: but on the rest of the days it is lawful to marry a wife, any day a man pleases; for he must be employed in the marriage feast three days before the marriage. A place in which the sanhedrim do not sit, but on the second and fifth days only, a virgin is married on the fourth day; that if there is any objection to her virginity, he (her husband) may come betimes to the sanhedrim: and it is a custom of the wise men, that he that marries one that has been married, he may marry her on the fifth day, that so he may rejoice with her on the fifth day, and on the evening of the sabbath, (i.e. the sixth,) and on the sabbath day, and may go forth to his work on the first day.”

But elsewhere it is said [f74], that

“now they are used to marry on the “sixth day of the week”.”

Yea [f75], that

“it is lawful to marry, and to make the feast on the sabbath day.”

But whether this marriage was of a virgin, or a widow, cannot be known; nor with certainty can it be said on what day of the week it was: if that day was a sabbath day on which the disciples abode with Christ, as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, then it must be on the first day that Christ went into Galilee, and found Philip, and conversed with Nathanael; and if this third day is reckoned from John’s second testimony, it must be on a Tuesday, the third day of the week; but if from Christ’s going into Galilee, then it must be on a Wednesday, the fourth day of the week, the day fixed by the Jewish canon for the marriage of a virgin. This marriage was

in Cana of Galilee. The Syriac and Persic versions, read, in “Kotne, a city of Galilee”; and which, in the Jewish map, is called lylgb anjq, “Katna” in “Galilee”, and is placed in the tribe of Zebulun, which was in Galilee, and not far from Nazareth; and bids fair to be the same place with this; though it is more generally thought [f76], that Cana, in the tribe of Asher, mentioned in (<061928>Joshua 19:28), which was also in Galilee, is here meant; and is so called to distinguish it from another Kanah, in the tribe of Ephraim, (<061608>Joshua 16:8 17:9). Josephus [f77] speaks of a town, or village,

of Galilee, called Cana, which was a day's march from it to Tiberias, and seems to be the same place: and another Jewish writer [f78] says,

> "to me it appears that Cepher Chanania, is Copher Cana; or the village of Cans, as is clear in Misna Sheviith, c. 9. sect. 1. for there is the beginning of lower, Galilee,"

which also accords with this. Now in the case of marriage, there was some difference between Judea and Galilee, and certain rules were laid down relating thereunto: and it is said [f79],

> "there are three countries, for the celebration of marriages; Judea, the country beyond Jordan, and Galilee;"

that is, that were obliged to marry among themselves; so that if any one married a wife out of any of these countries, she was not obliged to go along with him from one country to another [f80]: hence it follows,

> "they do not bring them out from city to city, (i.e. oblige them to go with them from city to city,) nor from town to town; but in the same country they bring them out from city to city, and from town to town."

And it is elsewhere observed [f81], that

> "in Judea, at first, they joined the bridegroom and bride together an hour before they went into the bride chamber, that so his heart might be lifted up in her; but in Galilee they did not do so: in Judea, at first, they appointed for them two companions, one for him, and another for her, that they might minister to, or wait on the bridegroom, and bride, when they went into the bride chamber; but in Galilee they did not do so: in Judea, at first, the companions slept in the house where the bridegroom and bride slept; but in Galilee they did not do so."

Next we have an account of the persons that were present at this marriage:

and the mother of Jesus was there; who seems to have been a principal person at this wedding, and was very officious; when wine was wanted, she signified it to her son, and ordered the servants to do whatever he bid them: and since she, and Jesus, and his brethren, were all here, it looks as if it was a relation of hers that was now married: and since these brethren were the kinsmen of Christ, Simon, Judas, and Joses, the sons of Cleophas

or Alphaeus, whose wife was sister to the mother of our Lord; and since one of them, to distinguish him from Simon Peter, is called Simon the Canaanite, or an inhabitant of Cana, as some have thought; hence it is conjectured by Dr. Lightfoot, that Alphaeus had an house in Cana, and that his family dwelt there, and that it was for one of his family that this marriage feast was made; (see <40202>John 2:2,3,5,12 19:25 <40155>Matthew 13:55 10:4). Joseph, the husband of Mary, perhaps, was now dead, since no mention is made of him here, nor any where else, as alive, after Christ had entered on his public ministry.

Ver. 2. *And both Jesus was called*, etc.] Or invited, as being a relation, according to the flesh:

and his disciples, to the marriage; who were bidden, on his account; and they seem to be these, Andrew, and the other disciple, that followed Jesus, and Simon Peter, and Philip, and Nathanael, who was of this place; and accordingly they all went to it. Christ, and his five disciples, made six of the ten, which were always necessary to be present at, the benediction of bridegrooms: for so runs the canon [f82];

> “they do not bless the blessing of bridegrooms, but with ten principal and free men; and the bridegroom may be one of the number.”

To attend a wedding, was reckoned, with the Jews, an act of beneficence and kindness [f83]. Our Lord, being at this wedding, was acting like himself, and his general character, of being free, affable, and courteous; who accepted of every invitation, and refused not to be at any entertainment, made by who it would, or on whatever occasion: and particularly in this instance, it shows his humility in not disdaining his poor relations, but giving them his company at such a time; as also it was bearing a testimony to the institution of marriage, as honourable; and teaches us to rejoice with them that rejoice: and as this was, at the first of Christ’s ministry and miracles, it is likely it might give the occasion of that calumny cast on him in (<40119>Matthew 11:19). The disciples of Christ followed the example of their master. According to the Jewish cations [f84], a disciple of a wise man might not partake of any feast, but what was according to the commandment, as the feast of espousals, and of marriage; and such a feast was this, which Christ and his disciples were at; and so not to be condemned for it, according to their own maxims.

Ver. 3. *And when they wanted wine*, etc.] Or wine was wanting; not through the intemperance of the guests, rather through the poverty of the family, who were not able to provide very largely; and it may be by reason of a larger number of guests than were expected; however, so it was ordered by Divine Providence, that there might be an opportunity for Christ to manifest forth his glory:

the mother of Jesus saith unto him, they have no wine; being concerned for the family, lest they should be put to shame and disgrace, and the entertainment should not proceed with becoming credit and honour; and knowing the power of Christ to help in this time of necessity, she modestly moves it to him, perhaps by a whisper, sitting next him; or, it may be, might call him out, and just drop the hint; being well persuaded of his power, as she might; not from any miracles wrought by him in her family for the support of it, when in distress; for as Christ wrought no miracle, in the time of his public ministry, for the support of himself, or his disciples, but for others, it is not likely he should do it for his family in private life; but from the wonderful things told her by the angel that brought the news of her conception, and by the shepherds, and by Simeon and Anna, which she had laid up in her heart; and from his being the Messiah, who, according to the general belief of the nation, was to work miracles; and particularly from the last words of the preceding chapter; (see Gill on "(40150)John 1:50"): for she might be present at the delivery of them; and therefore might hope that as this was the first opportunity that offered after, that he would display his power in supplying the family with wine in this time of exigence.

Ver. 4. *Jesus saith unto her, woman*, etc.] Calling her "woman", as it was no ways contrary to her being a virgin, ((48004)Galatians 4:4), so it was no mark of disrespect; it being an usual way of speaking with the Jews, when they showed the greatest respect to the person spoken to; and was used by our Lord when he addressed his mother with the greatest tenderness, and strongest affection, ((43926)John 19:26). The Jews frequently object this passage to us Christians: one of their writers his objection in this manner [f85]:

> "they (the Christians) say, the mother of Jesus is never called a woman their law; but here her son himself calls her a man."

Another puts it thus [f86]:

> "it is their (the Christians) belief, that Mary, even after she brought forth Jesus, was a virgin; but if she was, as they say, why does not her son call her by the name of virgin? but he calls her a woman, which signifies one known by man, as appears from (<43004>John 2:4 8:10)."

To which may be replied, that the mother of Jesus is never called a woman in the New Testament, is not said by us Christians: it is certain she is so called, both here, and elsewhere; but then this is no contradiction to her being a virgin; one, and the same person, may be a virgin, and a woman: the Abraham's servant was sent to take for wife for his son Isaac, is called a woman, though a virgin that had never known any man, (<01245>Genesis 24:5,8,14,16,43,44). Besides, we do not think ourselves obliged to maintain the perpetual virginity of Mary, the mother of our Lord; it is enough that she was a virgin when she conceived, and when she brought forth her firstborn: and as the Jews endeavour to take an advantage of this against the character of Mary, the Papists are very solicitous about the manner in which these words are said, lest they should be thought to contain a reproof, which they cannot bear she should be judged worthy of; or suggest any thing to her dishonour, whom they magnify as equal to her son: but certain it is, that the following words,

what have I to do with thee? show resentment and reproof. Some render the words, "what is it to thee and me?" and give this as the sense; what concern is this of ours? what business have we with it? let them look to it, who are the principal in the feast, and have the management of it. The Jew [f87] objects to this sense of the words, but gives a very weak reason for it:

> "but I say, (says he,) who should be concerned but the master of the feast? and he was the master of the feast:"

whereas it is a clear case that he was one of the guests, one that was invited, (<43002>John 2:2), and that there was a governor or ruler of the feast, who might be more properly called the master of it than Jesus, (<43008>John 2:8,10). However, since Christ afterwards did concern himself in it, it looks as if this was not his meaning. Others render it to the sense we do, "what have I with thee?" as the Ethiopic version; or "what business hast thou with me?" as the Persic version; and is the same with, Ælwyl hm, "what have I to do with thee?" used in (<111718>1 Kings 17:18 <120313>2 Kings 3:13), where the Septuagint use the same phrase as here; and such a way of speaking is common with Jewish writers [f88]: hereby signifying, that though,

as man, and a son of hers, he had been subject to her, in which he had set an example of obedience to parents; yet, as God, he had a Father in heaven, whose business he came to do; and in that, and in his office, as Mediator, she had nothing to do with him; nor was he to be directed by her in that work; or to be told, or the least hint given when a miracle should be wrought, by him in confirmation of his mission and doctrine. Moreover, he adds,

mine hour is not yet come: meaning not the hour of his sufferings and death, in which sense he sometimes uses this phrase; as if the hint was, that it was not proper for him to work miracles as yet, lest it should provoke his enemies to seek his life before his time; but rather the time of his public ministry and miracles, which were to go together, and the one to be a proof of the other; though it seems to have a particular regard to the following miracle, the time of doing that was not yet come; the proper juncture, when all fit circumstances meeting together, it would be both the more useful, and the more illustrious: or his meaning is, that his time of doing miracles in public was not yet; and therefore, though he was willing to do this miracle, yet he chose to do it in the most private manner; so that only a few, and not the principal persons at the feast should know it: wherefore the reproof was not so much on the account of the motion itself, as the unseasonableness of it; and so his mother took it.

Ver. 5. *His mother said unto the servants*, etc.] She took the reproof in good part, and by the words he said, and the manner in which he spoke them, or by the looks he gave, and the gestures he might use, she hoped, and even believed, that the thing she moved for would be done; and therefore went immediately to the servants, and gave them the following instructions:

whatsoever he saith unto you, do [it]; punctually observe and obey his orders in every circumstance.

Ver. 6. *And there were set six water pots of stone*, etc.] To distinguish them from other vessels made of different matter: for the Jews had

> “vessels made of dust, and the dung of beasts, µynba ylk,
> “vessels of stone”, vessels of earth, vessels made of shells, vessels of nitre, vessels made of the bones and skins of fishes[f89].”

And as these vessels were very likely for washing of hands, such were used for that purpose: their rule is [f90],

> "they may put water for the hands in all sorts of vessels; in vessels of dung, in stone vessels, and in vessels of earth."

At a wedding were set vessels of various sizes to wash hands and feet in; there was one vessel called alkyçm, which the gloss says was a large pitcher, or basin, out of which the whole company washed their hands and their feet; and there was another called atlkyçm, which was a lesser and beautiful basin, which was set alone for the more honourable persons, as for the bride, and for any gentlewoman [f91]; and such might be these six stone jars, or pots:

after the manner of the purifying of the Jews; or "for the purifying either Jews", as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it; that is, for the washing of them, their hands and feet, and their vessels, pots, and cups, according to the traditions of the elders; (see <4007>Mark 7:2,3,4);

containing two or three firkins apiece. The Ethiopic version reads, "some held two measures, and some three"; how large the "metreta", or "measure" was, which we render a "firkin", is not certain; it is most likely it answered to the "Hebrew bath", which was a common measure of liquids with the Jews, and held four gallons and a half, or more; (see Gill on "<4206>Luke 16:6"); so that such of these vessels, that held two of these measures, contained nine gallons, and such as held three of them, thirteen gallons and a half; and six of these contained a large quantity of wine, one with another: and which makes the following miracle the greater; and shows the liberality of Christ the more, in providing for the following days of the feast, for a marriage was kept seven days [f92]; and for the family, some time after it was over.

Ver. 7. *Jesus saith unto them*, etc.] To the servants that waited at the feast,

fill the water pots with water. The Ethiopic version adds, "to their brims", as they did. Christ chose the water pots, and not the vessel, or vessels, or bottles, now empty, out of which they had drank their wine; that it might not be said that there was any left therein, which gave colour and flavour to the water: and he ordered them to be filled with water by the servants, that they might take notice, and be witnesses, that that, and nothing else,

was put into them; and up to the brims, so that they could not he capable of having any other liquor infused into them:

and they filled them up to the brim; strictly observing the orders of Christ, and the instructions of his mother.

Ver. 8. *And he saith unto them, draw out now*, etc.] As soon as ever the vessels were filled with water, without any more delay, he ordered the servants to draw out of those larger, into lesser vessels; he does not say what, water or wine:

and bear unto the governor of the feast; who either had the ordering and management of the feast, and the command of the whole affair; hence the Ethiopic version calls him, "the master of the waiters", or servants: or he was the chief guest, as the word seems to import, who sat, or rather lay, on the chief couch at the table; and so a proper person to begin with, and put the cup round: or else he might be doctor or chaplain: for such an one was necessary at a marriage; since there were six or seven benedictions to be pronounced; and particularly a blessing was said over the cup of wine; for if there was any wine, a cup of it was brought, and he blessed over it first, and ordered every thing concerning the cup: and this made up seven blessings at such a time [f93]; and therefore was a very fit person to bear the wine to first:

and they bore it; the servants having drawn out of the stone vessels, by cocks, into smaller ones, carried the liquor, as they were ordered, to the above person.

Ver. 9. *When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water*, etc.] The Persic version reads, "tasted of the wine", and adds, what is not in the text, "it was of a very grateful savour": but the sense is, he tasted of that which was before water, but now

was made wine; not in such sense as the Papists pretend that the bread and wine, in the Lord's supper, are transubstantiated into the body and blood of Christ, by the consecration of the priest; after which they appear to have the same properties of bread and wine as before; but this water, that was turned into wine, ceased to be what it was before, and became what it was not: it had no more the properties, the colour, and taste of water, but of wine; of which the whole company were judges:

and knew not whence it was; from whence it came, where it was had, nor any thing of the miracle that was wrought, and therefore was a proper person to have it put into his hands first; since it cannot be thought he should say what he does in the following verse, from any compact with Christ, or in favour of him.

But the servants which drew the water knew; they knew from whence they had it, out of the water pots; and they knew that they filled them with water; and that that liquor, which the ruler of the feast had in his hands, and commended as most excellent wine, was drawn out of them; and that there was no juggle, nor deceit in the case: and, upon tasting of it,

the governor of the feast called the bridegroom to him; out of the place where he sat, and which might not be far from him.

Ver. 10. *And saith unto him*, etc.] The following words; expressing the common custom used at feasts:

every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; that is, it is usual with men, when they make entertainments, first to give the guests the best, the most generous, and strongest bodied wine; as being most suitable for them, and they being then better able to bear it, and it being most for the credit of the maker of the feast:

and when men have well drank; not to excess, but freely, so as that they are exhilarated; and their spirits cheerful, but their brains not intoxicated: so the word, as answering to the Hebrew word is רָוָה, used by the Septuagint in (Genesis 43:34 Song of Solomon 5:1),

then that which is worse; not bad wine, but τον ελασσω, "that which is lesser"; a weaker bodied wine, that is lowered, and of less strength, and not so intoxicating, and which is fittest for the guests. So Martial [f94] advises Sextilianus, after he had drank the tenth cup, not to drink the best wine, but to ask his host for wine of Laletania, which was a weaker and lower sort of wine.

[But] thou hast kept the good wine until now; which shows he knew nothing of the miracle wrought. And as the bridegroom here did, in the apprehension of the ruler of the feast, at this his marriage, so does the Lord, the husband of the church, in the marriage feast of the Gospel; and so he will do at the marriage supper of the lamb. The Gospel, which may be compared to wine for its purity, pleasant taste, and generous effects in

reviving drooping spirits, refreshing weary persons, and comforting distressed minds, as also for its antiquity, was published before the coming of Christ, in the times of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and the prophets, but in a lower and weaker way; at sundry times, here a little, and there a little, by piecemeals, as it were; and in divers manners, by promises, prophecies, types, shadows, and sacrifices; and was attended with much darkness and bondage: but under the Gospel dispensation, which is compared to a marriage feast, it is more fully dispensed, more clearly published, and more freely ministered. The whole of it is delivered, and with open face beheld; and saints are made free by it; it is set in the strongest and clearest light; the best wine is reserved till now; God has provided some better thing for us, (Hebrews 11:40). And so with respect to the future state of the saints, their best things are kept for them till last. They have many good things now; as the Gospel, Gospel ordinances, the blessings, and promises of grace, the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, presence of God, and communion with Christ, at least at times; all which are better than wine: but then there is an alloy to these; they are lowered by other things, as the corruptions of the heart, the temptations of Satan, the hidings of God's face, and a variety of afflictions; but they shall have their good and best things hereafter, and drink new wine in Christ's Father's kingdom, without any thing to lower and weaken it: they will have full joys, and never fading pleasures, and shall be without sin and sorrow; no more deserted, nor afflicted, and shall be out of the reach of Satan's temptations, and with Christ for evermore. Happy are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Ver. 11. *This beginning of miracles*, etc.] This miracle of turning water into wine, was the first miracle Christ ever wrought, either in public or private; for as for what miracles he is said to do in his infancy, there is no reason to give credit to them: and this he

did in Cana of Galilee; not that this was only the first he did in that place; he afterwards working another there, namely, the cure of a nobleman's son, (John 4:46,54), but the first he did any where, and it was in this place; and which the Syriac and Persic versions again call Kotne of Galilee; (see Gill on "John 2:1");

and manifested forth his glory; the glory of his deity and divine sonship, which was hid by his assumption of human nature, but broke forth and showed itself in his miraculous operations, and particularly in this:

and his disciples believed on him; the above five disciples; (see ⁴⁰⁰²John 2:2); whom he had called, and who were with him at this marriage, and were made acquainted with this miracle: and though they believed in him before, and had declared, and professed him to be the Messiah, Moses and the prophets spoke of, and the Son of God, and King of Israel; yet they were, by this miracle, more and more confirmed in the faith of these things: besides, others might be made his disciples at this time, and be hereby brought to believe in him.

Ver. 12. *After this he went down to Capernaum*, etc.] After he had been at Cana, and at the wedding there: after he had wrought the miracle of turning water into wine; and after he had manifested forth the glory of his deity thereby, and had confirmed the faith of his disciples, he departed from thence, and went lower into the country of Galilee, to Capernaum, a city near the sea of Tiberias; and which, from henceforward, he made the more usual place of his residence, and whither he frequently resorted, and therefore it is called his city, (⁴⁰⁰⁹Matthew 9:1). This refers not to the same journey recorded in (⁴⁰⁴²Matthew 4:12,13), for that was after John was cast into prison, whereas this was before; (see ⁴⁰²⁴John 3:24); the company that went with him, are as follow,

he, and his mother; who had been with him at Cana, and was a principal person at the wedding: and she now returning home, he accompanies her, to see her to her own habitation; or to settle her in Capernaum, whilst he went about discharging his public ministry.

And his brethren; or near kinsmen, according to the flesh, the sons of Alphaeus, or Cleophas, and Mary, sister to the mother of our Lord; whose names were James, Joses, Simon, and Judas, three of which afterwards became his apostles:

and his disciples: as many as he had yet called, which were Andrew, and the disciple that followed Jesus with him, and Simon Peter, and Philip, and Nathanael,

and they continued there not many days; not because of the impenitence, unbelief, and wickedness of the place, but for the reason following.

Ver. 13. *And the Jews' passover was at hand*, etc.] That feast which was kept on the fourteenth day of Nisan, in commemoration of the Lord's passing over, and by the houses of the Israelites, when he slew the firstborn in Egypt: and it is called the Jews' passover, because they only were

obliged to keep it: nor was it obligatory upon the Gentiles; and, besides, was now abolished when John wrote this Gospel, though still retained by the Jews. And moreover, John was now among the Gentiles, and for whose sake he penned this Gospel; and therefore so distinguishes this feast, which was typical of the Christian passover, or of Christ our passover that is sacrificed for us. This was the first "passover" after Christ's baptism, which is generally thought to have been about half a year before; though so much time cannot be made out from the scriptural account; for from his baptism, to his return out of the wilderness to John, were forty days; and from thence, to his coming to Cana, four or, five days more; and perhaps he might be seven days in Cana; for so long a wedding was usually kept; and his stay at Capernaum was but a few days; all which do not amount to above eight or nine weeks at most: the second passover after this, is, by some, thought to be the feast mentioned in (<scripRef passage="John 5:1" />John 5:1), and the third in (<scripRef passage="John 6:4" />John 6:4), and the fourth and last, at which he suffered, in (<scripRef passage="John 18:28" />John 18:28). The Evangelist John is the only writer that gives an account of the passovers after Christ entered on his public ministry; by which is known the duration of it, which is generally thought to be about three years and a half. "Three years and a half", the Jews say [f95], the Shekinah sat upon the Mount of Olives, expecting that the Israelites would repent, but they did not; and this seems to be the term of time for disciples to learn of their masters: it is said [f96], one came from Athens to Jerusalem, and he served "three years and a half" to learn the doctrine of wisdom, and he learned it not.

And Jesus went up to Jerusalem; not alone, but his disciples with him, as appears from (<scripRef passage="John 2:17" />John 2:17), to keep the passover as he had been wont to do, and as the law required; and he being under the law, as a son of Abraham, and the surety of his people, it became him to fulfil all righteousness, ceremonial, as well as moral, and which he strictly observed. He is said to go up to Jerusalem, because that stood on higher ground than the low lands of Galilee, and was the only place where the passover might be kept; (see <scripRef passage="Deuteronomy 16:2" />Deuteronomy 16:2).

Ver. 14. *And found in the temple*, etc.] Not in the holy place itself, nor in the court of the priests, where the sacrifices were offered, nor in the court of the women, nor in the court of the Israelites, where the people worshipped; but in the court of the Gentiles, or the outward court, even all that space of ground which was between the wall which divided the whole from common ground, and the buildings of the temple, and which was open to the air; for the whole sacred enclosure, or all within the wall, went

by the name of the temple. Into this all strangers might come; and the passover now being at hand, here were

those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves: the oxen, or bullocks, were for the Chagigah, or feast kept on the second day of the passover; (see Gill on "John 18:28"); and the sheep, or lambs, as the Persic version reads, for the passover supper; and the doves were for the offerings of the poorer sort of new mothers: with these they were supplied from the Mount of Olives. It is said [f97],

> "there were two cedar trees on the Mount of Olives, and under one of them were four shops of them that sold things for purification; and out of one of them they brought forty bushels of young doves every month: and out of them the Israelites had enough for the nests, or the offerings of turtle doves;"

(see Gill on "Matthew 21:12");

and the changers of money sitting: who changed foreign money into the current coin of the Jews, strangers coming, at this feast, from several parts of the world; and sometimes there was need of changing shekels into half shekels, which, at certain times, were paid for the ransom of Israelites; see the note on the place above mentioned.

Ver. 15. *And when he had made a scourge of small cords*, etc.] That is, Jesus, as the Persic version expresses it. This scourge might be made either of thongs cut out of the hides of beasts slain in sacrifice; or of the cords, with which the owners of the cattle had brought them to this place; or with which they had fastened them in it. And it seems to be made, and used, not so much for force and terror, as to intimate, that these persons, the violators of the holy place, deserved the scourge of divine wrath and punishment; as well as to show the miraculous power of Christ in driving such a number of men before him, with so small and insignificant a weapon; for the phrase is diminutive. The reason given by Dr. Lightfoot, and others, why Christ made use of a whip, or scourge, rather than a staff, is, because it was contrary to a Jewish canon [f98] to go into the mountain of the house, or temple, with a staff in the hand; and yet the man of the mountain of the house, or the master of it, who used to go about every ward with torches burning before him, if he found a Levite asleep in his ward [f99], struck him wlqmb, with his staff, and had power to burn his clothes.

He drove them all out of the temple; that is, he drove out “the men”, as the Persic version reads; the merchants, the sellers of oxen, sheep, and doves, and the money changers: “and the sheep, and the oxen” likewise; the Persic version adds, “doves”; but these are after mentioned:

and poured out the changers money; off of the tables, or out of the boxes, or dishes, or drawers, or purses, in which it was put:

and overthrew the tables; at which they sat, and on which they told their money.

Ver. 16. *And said unto them that sold doves*, etc.] For as these were kept in coups, or cages, they could not be drove, as the sheep and oxen, nor could they be let out, and fly, without the loss of the owners: and therefore Christ said to them,

take these things hence; not only the doves, but the pens, coups, or cages, in which they were, and both together:

make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise; so he calls the temple, which was built as an house for God, and where he took up his residence; where were the symbols of his presence; where his worship was kept, and sacrifices offered to him: and he asserts God, whose house this was, to be his Father, and himself to be his son, as none of the prophets that went before him did; and in such sense as neither men nor angels are; and which carries in it a reason why he was so much concerned for the honour of God, and so much resented the profanation of his house, because he was his Father. A like action with this, done by Christ at another time, is recorded in (<4212>Matthew 21:12,13). This was at the beginning of his ministry, that at the close of it, in which he expressed himself with more warmth and severity than here: here he only charges them with making his Father’s house an house of merchandise, but there with making it a den of thieves; since they had not only slighted, and despised his first reproof, but had returned to their evil ways, and might grow more wicked and audacious. This instance of Christ now coming into the temple as a public minister, and which was the first time of his entrance into it, after he had taken this character, was a further accomplishment of (<3001>Malachi 3:1), for he now went into it, as the Lord and proprietor of it; and which this action of his in driving out the merchants, with their cattle, shows; and was a surprising instance of his divine power; and is equal to other miracles of his, that a single person, a stranger, one of no power and

authority in the government, unassisted and unarmed, with only a scourge of small cords, should carry such awe and majesty with him, and inject such terror into, and drive such a number of men before him, who were selling things for religious uses, and were supported in it by the priests and sanhedrim of the nation.

Ver. 17. *And his disciples remembered that it was written*, etc.] In (<19609>Psalm 69:9), which Psalm belongs to the Messiah, as is manifest from the citations out of it in the New Testament, and the application of them to Christ, as in (<43155>John 15:25 19:28 <45503>Romans 15:3), compared with (<19604>Psalm 69:4,9,21). Christ is represented in it, as suffering for the sins of his people; for he himself was innocent; and was hated without a cause; but having the sins of his people imputed to him, he made satisfaction for them, and so restored what he took not away. His sufferings are spoken of in it as very great; and from it we learn, that they are fitly called, by himself, a baptism, which he desired to be baptized with, (<42250>Luke 12:50), since the waters are said to come into his soul, and he to be in deep waters, where the floods overflowed him; so that he was as one immersed in them: it is not only prophesied of him in it, that he should be the object of the scorn and contempt of the Jewish nation, and be rejected by them, and treated with the utmost indignity, and loaded with reproaches; but it foretold, that they should give him gall to eat, and vinegar to drink, which were literally fulfilled in him: and even the Jews themselves seem to be under some conviction, that the Psalm has respect to him; for Aben Ezra, a noted commentator of theirs, on the last words of the Psalm, has this note;

> "the sense is, they and their children shall inherit it in the days of David, or in the days of the Messiah."

It appears from hence, that the disciples of Christ were acquainted with the sacred writings, and had diligently read them, and searched into them, and had made them their study; and upon this wonderful action of Christ, called to mind, and reflected upon the following passage of Scripture, which they judged very proper and pertinent to him:

the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. This passage, so far as it is cited, agrees exactly, word for word, with the original text in (<19609>Psalm 69:9), wherefore it is very strange that Surenhusius[f100] should remark a difference, and give himself a good deal of trouble to reconcile it: he observes, that in the Hebrew text, it is read, hwhy tanq, "the zeal of the

Lord", in the third person; whereas it is there, Ætyb tanq, "the zeal of thine house", as here, in the second person: indeed, the word yk, "for", is left out, as he remarks, there being no need of it in the citation; the evangelist only historically relating the accommodation of it to Christ, by the disciples; whereas in the original text, the words contain a reason of the reproach and shame which Christ endured, and was put to by the Jews on account of his zeal for the house, honour, and worship of God; and the latter part of the text is not produced at all, being not for the present purpose, though very applicable to Christ; and is cited, and applied to him by the apostle, in (45153Romans 15:3). Such was Christ's regard to his Father's house, and which was typical of the church of God; and such his concern for his honour, ordinances, and worship, that when he saw the merchandise that was carried on in the temple, his zeal, which was a true and hearty affection for God, and was according to knowledge, was stirred up in him, and to such a degree, that it was like a consuming fire within him, that ate up his spirits; so that he could not forbear giving it vent, and expressing it in the manner he did, by driving those traders out of it. Phinehas and Elias were in their zeal, as well as other things, types of Christ; and in the Spirit and power of the latter he came; and Christ not only expressed a zeal for the house of God, the place of religious worship, but for the church and people of God, whose salvation he most earnestly desired, and most zealously pursued: he showed his strong, and affectionate regard to it, by his suretyship engagements for them, by his assumption of their nature, by his ardent desire to accomplish it, and by his voluntary and cheerful submission to death on account of it. And such was his zeal for it, that it eat him up, it inflamed his Spirit and affections, consumed his time and strength, and, at last, his life: and he also showed a zeal for the discipline of God's house, by his severe reflections on human traditions; by asserting the spirituality of worship; by commanding a strict regard to divine institutions; and by sharply inveighing against the sins of professors of religion: and he discovered a warm zeal for the truths of the Gospel, by a lively and powerful preaching of them; by his constancy and assiduity in it; by the many fatiguing journeys he took for that purpose; by the dangers he exposed himself to by it; and by the care he took to free the Gospel from prejudice and calumnies: and it becomes us, in imitation of our great master, to be zealous for his truths and ordinances, and for the discipline of his house, and not bear with either the erroneous principles, or the bad practices of wicked men.

Ver. 18. *Then answered the Jews, and said unto him*, etc.] They did not lay hands on him, or offer any violence to him; they did not, as the inhabitants of Nazareth did, thrust him out, and lead him to a precipice, to cast him down headlong; nor did they take up stones to stone him, as they afterwards did, when he asserted his deity: and it is surprising, that they did not rise up and destroy him at once, a single man, unarmed, and without assistance, having so highly provoked them; the restraint upon them must be his almighty power: nor do they deny what he suggested, that they had made his Father's house an house of merchandise; nor do they offer to vindicate their profanation of the temple, or object to the purging of it; only demand a proof of his right to do it: and which demand was made, not by the common people, or by the sellers of oxen, sheep, and doves, and the money changers, who were drove out, and had not spirit to rally again; but by the chief priests and elders, the sanhedrim of the nation, who had the care and government of the temple, and under whose authority the above persons acted; and whose gain and worldly interest were promoted hereby, as a like demand was afterwards made by the same persons; (see <40 21 23>Matthew 21:23);

what sign shewest thou unto us, seeing thou dost these things? they argued, that either he did these things of himself, by his own authority, and then they must be deemed rash and unjustifiable; or he did it by the authority of others: they knew it was not by theirs, who were the great council of the nation, from whom he should have had his instructions and orders, if he acted by human authority; and if he pretended to a divine authority, as they supposed he did, then they insisted upon a sign or miracle to be wrought, to prove that God was his Father, as he suggested; and that he was the proprietor and owner of the temple, and had a right to purge it, as he had done; (see <46 01 22>1 Corinthians 1:22).

Ver. 19. *Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc.] In a dark and enigmaticai way, though very properly and pertinently; since it was with respect to the temple, and his power over it, and right to purge it, that a sign was required of him:

destroy this temple; pointing, as it were, with his finger to his body; for of that he spake, as appears from (<43 02 21>John 2:21), the dissolution of which, by death he means, the separation of his soul from his body, though not of either from his divine person: and it is to be understood, not as a command, or a grant, or as an exhortation, and advice to them, to kill his body; but

rather as a prophecy of what they would do; or as putting the case, that should they, as he knew they would, destroy his body, then says he, as a sign of having a power to do what I have done,

in three days I will raise it again; by which he would appear to be the Son of God, with power, that had power of laying down his life, and taking it up again; and is the very sign, namely, his resurrection from the dead on the third day, he gives the Jews, when they sought one of him at another time, and upon another occasion.

Ver. 20. *Then said the Jews*, etc.] Unto him, as read the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions:

forty and six years was this temple in building; which cannot be understood of the temple as built by Solomon, for that was but seven years in building, (<1067>1 Kings 6:37,38). But rather of the temple, as built by Zorobabel, commonly called the second temple, and might be more properly said to be "this temple"; the calculations of this made by learned men, are various and endless to recite. Daniel's seven weeks, or forty nine days, which are so many years, can have nothing to do with this account; since they regard not the building of the temple, but the city of Jerusalem; though from the second year of Cyrus, in which the temple began to be built, to the thirty second of Darius exclusive, were just forty six years; Cyrus reigning three years, Artaxerxes Ahasuerus fourteen years, and Artaxerxes Darius thirty two; but their account is more likely, which begins at the first of Artaxerxes Longimanus, who reigned forty years, and ends in the sixth year of Darius, his successor, in which year the temple was finished, (<1065>Ezra 6:15). But to me it seems rather, that Herod's temple, or the temple as rebuilt, or repaired by Herod, is here meant; and which the Jews call, swdwrwh ˆyynb, "the building of Herod" [f101]; and say of it, that

> "he who has not seen Herod's building, never saw a beautiful building."

And this, according to Josephus [f102], was begun in the "eighteenth" year of his reign, in the "thirty fifth" of which Christ was born, who was now "thirty" years of age: so that reckoning either the eighteenth year of Herod, or the thirtieth of Christ, the present year exclusively, just forty six years had run out, since the rebuilding or reparations were first begun; and which were not yet finished; for some years after this, the above writer observes [f103], the temple was finished, even in the times of Nero and Agrippa: and

agreeably to this, the words may be rendered, “forty six years has this temple been building”; and which still adds more force to the following reasoning of the Jews:

and wilt thou rear it up in three days? the thing is impossible and impracticable; it is madness to the last degree, to talk at this rate: thus from the length of time which had run out from Herod’s first beginning to repair and beautify the temple, till now, and yet not finished, they argue the absurdity of his pretending to raise up such a fabric, should it be demolished, in three days time; they understanding him either ignorantly or wilfully, to speak of the material temple, when his sense was otherwise, as appears from the words of the evangelist, in the next verse. The Jew [f104] objects to this account, of the temple being forty six years in building; he observes, that

> “according to the sense of the Nazarenes, this was the building of king Herod, that was in the time of Jesus; and the whole time of his reign were but seven and thirty years, as is manifest from the book of Joseph ben Gorion, c. 65. Besides, that which Herod built, was built in eight years, as is evident from the same author, c. 55, wherefore the number of forty six years, in the words of the writer, (the evangelist,) is, a palpable error.”

To which may be replied, that admitting there is an error in this number, it is not the error of the evangelist, but of the Jews, whose words the evangelist relates; and supposing this was a mistake of theirs, either ignorantly or wilfully made, to aggravate the absurdity and impossibility of Christ’s rebuilding the temple; and that even the evangelist knew it to be a mistake; yet he acts the most faithful and upright part, in repeating the words of the Jews, as they delivered them; and it lies upon the Jew to prove, that these words were not said by them, or that it is not credible that they should: that this was the building of Herod which is here referred to; and that he reigned but thirty seven years, will be granted; but this is no objection to its being forty six years in building, since in this account it is not said that it was forty six years in building by Herod; the sense is only, that such a number of years had passed, since it first began to be built by him: as for what Joseph ben Gorion says, of its being built by him in the space of eight years, it is not to be depended upon, since he is not the true Josephus, that wrote the history of the Jews, and is to be corrected by the genuine historian; and from what has been before observed, from the time

which, according to the true Josephus, this building was begun, to this present year of Christ, when this discourse was had, were just forty six years; and admitting, that the main of the building was finished in eight years time, yet additions were continually made to it, so that it was not finished entirely, until many years after.

Ver. 21. *But he spoke of the temple of his body*.] Which was the antitype of the material temple; and might well be called so, since the bodies of the saints are called temples, (<460316>1 Corinthians 3:16,17 6:19) (<470616>2 Corinthians 6:16); and the human nature of Christ is called a tabernacle, (<580802>Hebrews 8:2); and he himself, in prophecy, is said to be çdqml, "for a sanctuary", or temple, (<230814>Isaiah 8:14), and that because the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily, the train of the divine perfections filled the temple of his human nature, (<510209>Colossians 2:9 <230601>Isaiah 6:1). And because here, as in the temple, God grants his presence, and communes with his saints, accepts of their prayers and praises, and all their spiritual sacrifices through him; and who is the oracle, the true "Urim" and "Thummim", by whom he delivers his whole mind and will to his people.

Ver. 22. *When therefore he was risen from the dead*, etc.] Which was three years after this:

his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; either to the Jews, or to them the disciples; though the phrase "to them", is not in the Vulgate Latin, nor in any of the Oriental versions. The disciples themselves were very dull of understanding the doctrine of Christ's resurrection; and so they continued, notwithstanding he gave them afterwards very full hints of it, until that he was actually risen; and then they called to mind these words of his, with others that dropped from him upon the same subject:

and they believed the Scripture; that spoke of his resurrection, (<191610>Psalm 16:10), and on the third day, (<280602>Hosea 6:2).

And the word which Jesus had said; concerning his rising again the third day at this time, and at others, as in (<401621>Matthew 16:21 17:23 20:19); and they believed his word equally with the Scripture, it agreeing to it, and being founded on it.

Ver. 23. *Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover*, etc.] Whither he went, in order to keep it, that being at hand, and now come; (see <430213>John 2:13);

in the feast day; either on the day the Chagigah was eaten, which was sometimes emphatically called “the feast”, as in (<04>2816Numbers 28:16,17), “and in the fourteenth day of the first month, is the passover of the Lord; and in the fifteenth day of this month, [is] the feast”; the passover lamb was eaten on the fourteenth day of the month “Nisan”, and the “Chagigah” was on the fourteenth; in the former only a lamb was eaten, in the other, cattle out of the herds; hence mention is made, both of flocks and herds, for the keeping the passover, (<05>1602Deuteronomy 16:2). Jarchi’s note upon the place is, that the herds were for the Chagigah, with which the Talmud [f105] agrees; and Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases the words thus,

> “and ye shall slay the passover before the Lord your God, between the evenings, and the sheep and oxen on the morrow, in that very day, for the joy of the feast;”

for it was observed with great joy and mirth: and the rather this is here meant, since the “Chagigah” is not only called “the feast”, but this here is distinguished from the passover, as that is in the passage above cited, (<04>2816Numbers 28:16,17). For the passover here, seems to be the general name for the whole seven days of the festival; and the feast to be the particular feast of the first day of it, which was the fifteenth; to which may be added, that on this day all the males made their appearance in court [f106]; and so was a very proper time for Christ to work his miracles in, when there were so many spectators: though it may design the whole time of the feast, all the seven days of unleavened bread; during which time Christ was at Jerusalem, and wrought miracles, which had the following effect:

many believed in his name; that he was some great prophet, or the prophet, or the Messiah; they gave an historical assent unto him as such, at least for that time:

when they saw the miracles which he did; for as miracles, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament, were to be performed by the Messiah, such as giving sight to the blind, causing the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk, (<23>3505Isaiah 35:5,6); so they were expected by the ancient Jews, that they would be wrought by him, when he came; wherefore these Jews, seeing such like wonderful things wrought by Jesus, they concluded he must be the Messiah: though the modern ones, in order to shift off the evidence of Jesus being the Messiah, from his miracles, deny that miracles are the characteristic of the Messiah, or will be performed by him; at least, that there is no necessity of them to prove him to be the

person. What miracles these were, which were now wrought by Christ, are not recorded by this, or any other evangelist; (see ⁴⁰⁰²⁰John 20:30). However, being surprised at the marvellous things he did, and upon the evidence of these extraordinary works, there were many that concluded he must be come from God; among these it seems as if Nicodemus was one; (see ⁴⁰⁰⁰²John 3:2); great part of these, at least some of them, were only nominal and temporary believers, who were not to be confided in as true disciples, and hearty followers of Christ; and who continued not long in the same mind and profession, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 24. *But Jesus did not commit himself unto them*, etc.] The sense according to some of the ancients is, that he did not commit the whole of the Gospel to them; he did not make known to them all his mind and will; this he only did to the twelve apostles, his special disciples and friends; nor was the time come, that he would make known, or have made known, the things concerning his person, office, obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead: but rather the meaning is, that he did not trust himself with these persons, who believed in him, on the basis of his miracles; he did not take them into the number of his associates; he did not admit them to intimacy with him; nor did he freely converse with them, or make any long stay among them; but soon withdrew himself from hence, and went into other parts of Judea, and into Galilee:

because he knew all men: good and bad: all openly profane sinners, and all their actions; not only their more public ones, but those that are done in the dark, and which are the most secretly devised, and levelled against the saints; and he so knew them, as to bring them into judgment: and all good men, true believers; he knows their persons, as they are his Father's choice, his gift of them to him, his own purchase, and as called by his grace; and so as to distinguish them at the last day, and give up the full account of every one of them to his Father: he knows the worst of them, the sin that dwells in them, their daily infirmities, their secret personal sins; their family sins, both of omission and commission; and their church sins, or which are committed in the house of God; and takes notice of them, so as to resent them, and chastise them for them; he knows the best of them, their graces, their faith, hope, love, patience, humility, self-denial, &c; he knows their good works, and all their weaknesses and their wants: and he knows all nominal professors, on what basis they take up their profession, and what trust they place in it; he can distinguish between grace and mere profession, and discern the secret lusts which such indulge, and the springs and

progress of their apostasy: he knew all these men, that upon seeing his miracles, professed at this time to believe in him; he knew the hypocrisy and dissimulation of some of them; and he knew the notions they had of a temporal Messiah, and the temporal views they had in believing in him; and their design to set him up as a temporal prince, as some afterwards would have done: knew the flashy affections of others, who were like John's hearers, that were pleased for a while; he knew what sort of faith it was they believed in him with, that it would not hold long, nor they continue with him; for he knew not only all persons, but παντα, "all things", as some copies read here; (see <43217>John 21:17).

Ver. 25. *And needed not that any should testify of man*, etc.] Of this or the other man, that he was a good or a bad man; he needed no proofs to be made, or testimonies bore, or evidence given of men's characters and actions; he was of quick understanding, and could distinguish at once between a wicked man and a good man; and so had the characteristic which the Jews require of the Messiah; for they rejected Bar Cozba from being the Messiah, and slew him, because he could not smell, referring to (<23103>Isaiah 11:3), or discern a bad man from a good man [f107]; but this Jesus could do, without any external evidence:

for he knew what was in man; which none but the spirit of a man can know; his inward thoughts, the secrets of the heart; thus Christ knew the thoughts of the Scribes and Pharisees, (<40904>Matthew 9:4), being a discerner of the thoughts, and intents of the heart, (<58412>Hebrews 4:12). This Apollonius Tyaneus, the ape of Christ, ascribed to himself [f108]; but is what is peculiar to God; and Christ being God, knows all that is in man; that there is no good in him naturally, nothing but what comes from his Father, is imparted by himself, or implanted by his Spirit; he knows the wickedness there is in man, that his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, and full of all manner of iniquities; he knows in what condition all the and faculties of the souls of men are; what their affections are set upon, on earthly or heavenly things; whether there is any light in their understandings, or not; whether their wills are subdued and resigned to the will of God, or not; whether their minds and consciences are defiled, or their hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience; in short, whether the internal good work of grace is begun upon their souls, or not; and he knows the secret springs of all actions, good and bad; all which prove his true and proper deity, and show him to be a suitable Saviour of sinners, and qualify him to be the Judge of the whole earth.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 3

Ver. 1. *There was a man of the Pharisees*, etc.] The Syriac version adds, "there"; that is, at Jerusalem; and who was among those that believed in the name of Christ, upon seeing the miracles he did at the feast of the passover, in that place. This man was not a common and ordinary man, but a man of note and eminence, of dignity and figure; and who was of the sect of the Pharisees, which was the strictest sect for religion and holiness, among the Jews; and which, as corrupt as it was, was also the soundest; as having not only a regard to a Messiah, and to all the writings of the Old Testament, but also believed the doctrines of angels and spirits, and the resurrection of the dead, which the Sadducees denied; but yet they were implacable enemies of Christ; and therefore it is the more to be wondered at, that such an one should come to him, and desire a conversation with him:

named Nicodemus; frequent mention is made of ^wyrwg ^b ^wmydqn, "Nicodemon ben Gorion", the brother of Josephus ben Gorion [f109], the writer of the Wars and Antiquities of the Jews; and there are some things which make it probable, that he was the same with this Nicodemus; for the Nicodemon the Jews speak so much of, lived in this age; as appears, not only from his being the brother of Josephus, but also from his being contemporary with R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, who lived in this time, and until the destruction of the temple; since these two are said [f110] to be together at a feast, made for the circumcision of a child. Moreover, he is represented as very rich, and is said to be one of the three rich men in Jerusalem [f111], and who was able to have maintained hnydm, a city ten years [f112]; and they speak of his daughter, as exceeding rich: they say, that she had for her dowry a thousand thousand golden denarii, or pence; and that her bed was strewed with (i.e. the furniture of it cost) twelve thousand golden denarii; and that a Tyrian golden denarius was spent upon her every week, for a certain kind of soup [f113]; and the wise men decreed her four hundred golden denarii, for a box of spices every day [f114]; and it is elsewhere [f115] said, five hundred: and this our Nicodemus was very rich, as

appears from his liberality at the funeral of our Lord, (⁴John 19:39). Moreover, the Nicodemon of the Jews, is said to be a counsellor [f116] in Jerusalem; and so was this, as seems evident from (⁴John 7:32,50,51) and it may be further observed [f117], that the right name of Nicodemon, was Boni [f118]; now Boni elsewhere [f119], is said to be one of the disciples of Jesus, as Nicodemus was secretly, and perhaps at, and after his death openly, as his associate Joseph of Arimathea was; to which may be added, the extreme poverty that his daughter is by them said to be reduced unto; for they report, that R. Jochanan ben Zaccai saw her gathering barley corns from under the horses' hoofs in Aco [f120]; or as it is elsewhere said, out of the dung of the beasts of the Arabians; when she asked alms of him, and he inquired of her, what was become of her father's substance. Now to this low estate, the family of our Nicodemus might be reduced, through the persecution of the Christians by the Jews. The name is Greek, as at this time many Greek names were in use among the Jews, and signifies the same as Nicolas; but the Jews give an etymology of it, agreeably to the Hebrew language; and say, that he was so called, because the sun, hdqn, "shone out for his sake": the occasion and reason of it, they tell us, were this [f121]; Nicodemon, upon want of water at one of the feasts, agreed with a certain man for twelve wells of water, to be returned on such a day, or pay twelve talents of silver; the day being come, the man demanded the water, or the money; Nicodemon went and prayed, and a plentiful rain fell, and filled the wells with water; but meeting the man, he insisted on it that the day was past, the sun being set, and therefore required the money; Nicodemon went and prayed again, and the sun shone out; and they add, that there are three persons for whom the sun hmdqn, "was prevented", detained, or hindered in its course, (a word nearer his name than the former,) Moses, and Joshua, and Nicodemon ben Gorion; for the two former they produce Scripture, and for the latter tradition: hence it is elsewhere said [f122], that as the sun stood still for Joshua, so it stood still for Moses, and for Nicodemon ben Gorion: but to proceed with the account of our Nicodemus, he was

a ruler of the Jews; not a civil magistrate; for the civil government was now in the hands of the Romans; but an ecclesiastical ruler; he was a member of the sanhedrim, which consisted of the doctors, or wise men, and priests, Levites, and elders of the people; and so was a dignified person, and as afterwards called, a master in Israel.

Ver. 2. *The same came to Jesus by night*, etc.] Through fear of the Jews, of being reproached or turned out of his place by them; or through shame, that such a doctor as he was, should be known to go to Jesus of Nazareth, to be instructed by him; or lest he should offend any of his brethren of the sanhedrim: though some things may be said in favour of this conduct of Nicodemus; for since Christ would not trust himself with those that believed in him upon seeing his miracles, (<43 2:23,24), among whom Nicodemus seems to be; or would not admit them into his company, and enter into a free conversation with him; it was necessary, that if he would have any discourse with him, that he should take this method; and if it was the same night, in which he had seen his miracles in the day, as is probable, he took the first opportunity he could, and which shows great readiness and respect; add to which, that it was very common with the Jewish doctors, to meet and converse together, and study the law in the night.

> "R. Aba rose, aylyl twglpb, "in the middle of the night", and the rest of the companions, to study in the law[f123]."

And it is often[f124] said of R. Simeon ben Joehal, and Eleazar his son, that they sat in the night and laboured in the law; and it was reckoned very commendable so to do, and highly pleasing to God: it is said[f125],

> "whoever studies in the law in the night, the holy blessed God draws a thread of mercy upon him in the day:"

and likewise[f126], that

> "every one that studies in the law in the night, the Shekinah is over against him."

But it seems, the Babylonian Jews did not study in the law in the night[f127]: it might seem a needless question to ask, whether Nicodemus came alone, or not, were it not that according to the Jewish canon[f128] a scholar might not go out in the night alone, because of suspicion:

and said unto him, Rabbi; a title which now greatly obtained among the Jewish doctors, and of which they were very fond; (see Gill on "<40 23:7"). It comes from a word, which signifies great and large; and was used by them, to suggest the large compass, and great plenty of knowledge they would be thought to have had; and best becomes and suits with our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom all the treasures of wisdom

and knowledge are: salutations among the Jews, were forbidden in the night [f129];

> "says R. Jochanan, it is forbidden a man to salute his neighbour in the night, lest it should be a demon:"

but here was no such danger; nor was this salutation made in the street, and in the dark, which the canon seems to respect:

we know that thou art a teacher come from God; the Jews expected the Messiah as a teacher, which they might learn from many prophecies, as from (<23D202>Isaiah 2:2,3 48:17 61:1). Upon the first of which, and on that passage in it, "he will teach us of his ways", a noted commentator [f130] of theirs has this remark;

> "hrwmh, "the teacher", he is the King Messiah."

And the Targum on (<23D223>Joel 2:23) paraphrases the words thus:

> "O ye children of Zion, rejoice and be glad in the word of the Lord your God, for he will return ^wkplm ty, "your teacher" to you."

And Nicodemus acknowledges Jesus as such; and as one that did not come, or was sent by men, as their doctors were; nor did he come of himself, as false teachers did; but he came from God, and had his mission and commission from him: and this was a known case, a clear point, not only to himself, but to many of the Jews; and even to some of his brethren, the members of the sanhedrim; who upon hearing of, and seeing the miracles done by Christ, might meet and converse freely together about him; and give their sentiments of him; and might then agree pretty much in this at that time, that he was at least a prophet, and some extraordinary teacher, whom God had sent among them; and Nicodemus coming directly from them, repeats his own sense and theirs, supported by the following reason:

for no man can do these miracles that thou dost, [except] God be with him: referring to the miracles he had done at the passover in Jerusalem, very lately; (see <430223>John 2:23). And which, though they are not particularly mentioned, may be concluded to be such, as the dispossessing of devils, the curing of all manner of diseases by a word, or touch, from what he at other times, and elsewhere did. Miracles were expected by the Jews, to be wrought by the Messiah, and many believed in Jesus on this account; (see

(John 6:14 7:31); though the modern Jews deny it to be necessary, that miracles should be done by the Messiah [f131]; but Nicodemus, and other Jews, thought otherwise, and considered the miracles of Christ as such, as could never be done by man, nor without the presence and power of God; and concluded that he was with God, and God with him, and was the true Immanuel, who is God with us.

Ver. 3. *Jesus answered and said unto him*, etc.] Not to any express question put by Nicodemus; unless it can be thought, that a question of this kind might be asked, what is the kingdom of God, so much spoken of in thy ministry? and what is requisite to the seeing and enjoying of it? though not recorded by the evangelist; but rather to the words of Nicodemus, concluding from his miracles, that he was the Messiah; and that the kingdom of God was now approaching, or the world to come, the Jews so much speak of; and in which all Israel, according to their notion, were to have a part [f132]; and which notion, our Lord in the following words, seems to oppose:

verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God; Nicodemus, according to the general sense of the nation, thought that when the Messiah came, and his kingdom was set up, they should all share in it, without any more ado; they being the descendants of Abraham, and having him for their father: but Christ assures him, that he must be “born again”; in distinction from, and opposition to his first birth by nature; in which he was vile, polluted, carnal, and corrupt, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and was a transgressor from the womb, and by nature a child of wrath; and in opposition to, his descent from Abraham, or being born of him, and of his seed; for this would be of no avail to him in this case, nor give him any right to the privileges and ordinances of the kingdom of God, or the Gospel dispensation; (see Matthew 3:9); as also to birth by proselytism; for the Jews have a frequent saying [f133], that

> “one that is made a proselyte, ymd dlwnç ˆwjqk, “is like a child new born”.”

Which they understand, not in a spiritual, but in a civil sense; such being free from all natural and civil relations, and from all obligations to parents, masters [f134], etc. And by this phrase our Lord signifies, that no man, either as a man, or as a son of Abraham, or as a proselyte to the Jewish religion,

can have any true knowledge of, or right unto, the enjoyment of the kingdom of God, unless he is born again; or regenerated, and quickened by the Spirit of God; renewed in the spirit of his mind; has Christ formed in his heart; becomes a partaker of the divine nature; and in all respects a new creature; and an other in heart, in principle, in practice, and conversation; or unless he be "born from above", as the word is rendered in (John 3:31); that is, by a supernatural power, having the heavenly image stamped on him; and being called with an heavenly calling, even with the high calling of God in Christ Jesus: if this is not the case, a man can have no true knowledge of the kingdom of the Messiah, which is not a temporal and carnal one; it is not of this world, nor does it come with observation; nor can he have any right to the ordinances of it, which are of a spiritual nature; and much less can he be thought to have any true notions, or to be possessed of the kingdom of grace, which lies in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; or to have either a meetness for, or a right unto the kingdom of glory: though by the following words it seems, that the word is rightly rendered "again", or a second time, as it is by Nounus.

Ver. 4. *Nicodemus saith unto him*, etc.] Understanding him of a natural birth, to be repeated:

how can a man be born when he is old? as it seems by this, he himself now was:

can he enter the second time into his mothers womb, and be born? the Ethiopic version adds, "again"; and the Arabic version, "and then be born"; this he urges, as absurd, impracticable, and impossible; and which shows him to have been as yet a natural man, who could not receive nor discern spiritual things.

Ver. 5. *Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee*, etc.] Explaining somewhat more clearly, what he before said:

except a man be born of water and of the Spirit: these are, twnç twlm, "two words", which express the same thing, as Kimchi observes in many places in his commentaries, and signify the grace of the Spirit of God. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, "the Holy Spirit", and so Nonnus; and who doubtless is intended: by "water", is not meant material water, or baptismal water; for water baptism is never expressed by water only, without some additional word, which shows, that the ordinance of water baptism is intended: nor has baptism any regenerating influence in it;

a person may be baptized, as Simon Magus was, and yet not born again; and it is so far from having any such virtue, that a person ought to be born again, before he is admitted to that ordinance: and though submission to it is necessary, in order to a person's entrance into a Gospel church state; yet it is not necessary to the kingdom of heaven, or to eternal life and salvation: such a mistaken sense of this text, seems to have given the first birth and rise to infant baptism in the African churches; who taking the words in this bad sense, concluded their children must be baptized, or they could not be saved; whereas by "water" is meant, in a figurative and metaphorical sense, the grace of God, as it is elsewhere; (see Ezekiel 36:25 John 4:14). Which is the moving cause of this new birth, and according to which God begets men again to, a lively hope, and that by which it is effected; for it is by the grace of God, and not by the power of man's free will, that any are regenerated, or made new creatures: and if Nicodemus was an officer in the temple, that took care to provide water at the feasts, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, and as it should seem Nicodemon ben Gorion was, by the story before related of him; (see Gill on "John 3:1"); very pertinently does our Lord make mention of water, it being his own element: regeneration is sometimes ascribed to God the Father, as in (1 Peter 1:3 James 1:18), and sometimes to the Son, (1 John 2:29) and here to the Spirit, as in (Titus 3:5), who convinces of sin, sanctifies, renews, works faith, and every other grace; begins and carries on the work of grace, unto perfection;

he cannot enter into the kingdom of God; and unless a man has this work of his wrought on his soul, as he will never understand divine and spiritual things, so he can have no right to Gospel ordinances, or things appertaining to the kingdom of God; nor can he be thought to have passed from death to life, and to have entered into an open state of grace, and the kingdom of it; or that living and dying so, he shall ever enter into the kingdom of heaven; for unless a man is regenerated, he is not born heir apparent to it; and without internal holiness, shall not enter into it, enjoy it, or see God.

Ver. 6. *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh*, etc.] Man by his natural birth, and as he is born according to the flesh of his natural parents, is a mere natural man; that is, he is carnal and corrupt, and cannot discern spiritual things; nor can he, as such, enter into, and inherit the kingdom of God; (see 1 Corinthians 2:14 15:50). And therefore there is a necessity of his being born again, or of the grace of the Spirit, and of his becoming a spiritual man; and if he was to be, or could be born again of the flesh, or

ever so many times enter into his mothers womb, and be born, was it possible, he would still be but a natural and a carnal man, and so unfit for the kingdom of God. By “flesh” here, is not meant the fleshy part of man, the body, as generated of another fleshy substance; for this is no other than what may be said of brutes; and besides, if this was the sense, “spirit”, in the next clause, must mean the soul, whereas one soul is not generated from another: but by flesh is designed, the nature of man; not merely as weak and frail, but as unclean and corrupt, through sin; and which being propagated by natural generation from sinful men, cannot be otherwise; for “who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one”, (Job 14:4). And though the soul of man is of a spiritual nature, and remains a spirit, notwithstanding the pollution of sin; yet it being defiled with the flesh, and altogether under the power and influence of the lusts of the flesh, it may well be said to be carnal or fleshly: hence “flesh”, as it stands opposed to spirit, signifies the corruption of nature, (Galatians 5:17); and such who are in a state of unregeneracy, are said to be after the flesh, and in the flesh, and even the mind itself is said to be carnal, (Romans 8:5-8).

And that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit: a man that is regenerated by the Spirit of God, and the efficacy of his grace, is a spiritual man; he can discern and judge all things of a spiritual nature; he is a fit person to be admitted to spiritual ordinances and privileges; and appears to be in the spiritual kingdom of Christ; and has a right to the world of blessed spirits above; and when his body is raised a spiritual body, will be admitted in soul, body, and spirit, into the joy of his Lord. “Spirit” in the first part of this clause, signifies the Holy Spirit of God, the author of regeneration and sanctification; whence that work is called the sanctification of the Spirit, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, (1 Peter 1:2 Titus 3:5). And “spirit”, in the latter part, intends the internal work of grace upon the soul, from whence a man is denominated a spiritual man; and as a child bears the same name with its parent, so this is called by the same, as the author and efficient cause of it: and besides, it is of a spiritual nature itself, and exerts itself in spiritual acts and exercises, and directs to, and engages in spiritual things; and has its seat also in the spirit, or soul of man.

Ver. 7. *Marvel not that I said unto thee*, etc.], For Nicodemus was quite astonished, at this doctrine of the new birth; it was altogether new to him, and unheard of by him; nor could he understand, nor conceive in what manner it could be:

ye must be born again; in “four” of Beza’s copies, it is read “we”; but as Christ was not begotten in a carnal way, or descended not from Adam in the ordinary way of generation, he was not carnal and corrupt, nor in the least tainted with sin; and so stood in no need of regeneration; wherefore such a reading must be rejected. There is a necessity of the regeneration of those, who are the chosen of God, and the redeemed of the Lamb; and of them only can the words be understood; for as for others, they neither can, nor will, nor must be born again: but the people of God “must”; partly because it is the will of God; it is his purpose and resolution, that they shall be regenerated; he has chosen them, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto salvation by Christ: this is the way and method of saving sinners he has fixed upon, namely, not to save them by works of righteousness, but by grace, and according to abundant mercy, through the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost: and partly, because of the case and condition of men, which requires it; for whereas the chosen people of God, are predestinated to the adoption of children, and are taken into the family of God, and are heirs to an inheritance, it is necessary they should have a nature, temper, and disposition of mind, suitable to the inheritance they are to enjoy; which they have not in their natural estate, and which is conveyed to them in regeneration: besides, their carnal minds are enmity to God, and it is necessary that they should be friendly to him, which cannot be without regeneration; nor can they, till they are born again, please God, or do those things which are pleasing to him: to which may be added, which Christ has before suggested, and which shows the necessity of it, that without it, no man can either see, or enter into the kingdom of God. To take off the surprise of Nicodemus, our Lord instances in a common natural case, and to which this affair of regeneration may be compared, and by it illustrated.

Ver. 8. *The wind bloweth where it listeth*, etc.] For ought any mortal can say, or do to the contrary: and so the Spirit of God is a free agent in regeneration; he works how, and where, and when he pleases; he acts freely in the first operation of his grace on the heart, and in all after influences of it; as well as in the donation of his gifts to men, for different purposes; (see 1 Corinthians 12:11); and this grace of the Spirit in regeneration, like the wind, is powerful and irresistible; it carries all before it; there is no withstanding it; it throws down Satan’s strong holds, demolishes the fortifications of sin; the whole posse of hell, and the

corruptions of a man's heart, are not a match for it; when the Spirit works, who can let?

and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; as the wind, though its sound is heard, and its force felt, it cannot be seen; nor is it known certainly, from whence it comes, and where are the treasures of it; from whence it begins, and where it ends; so is the grace of the Spirit of God in regeneration to a natural man; it is imperceptible, indiscernible, and unaccountable by him, (<461214>1 Corinthians 2:14).

So is every one that is born of the Spirit: he is regenerated by grace, that is, as free and sovereign, as powerful and irresistible, and as secret and imperceptible, as the wind is: and seeing so ordinary a thing as the blowing of the wind is of such a nature, and so little to be accounted for; regeneration by the Spirit of God, who is comparable to the wind, and whose name so signifies, need not be thought so marvellous and astonishing, though the natural man discerns it not, and cannot account for it. The beauty and propriety of this simile will more appear by observing, that the same Hebrew word, jwr, is used both for the wind, and for the Spirit of God; it is used for the "wind", in (<010308>Genesis 3:8 8:1 <111911>1 Kings 19:11 <210106>Ecclesiastes 1:6); and in other places, and for the Spirit of God, in (<010102>Genesis 1:2 6:3 <183304>Job 33:4), and elsewhere: and so likewise the Greek word πνευμα, is used for them both, for the wind in this place, and often for the Holy Ghost: and it may be observed, that the Holy Spirit, because of his powerful, comfortable, and quickening influences, is compared to the wind, especially to the south wind, in some passages of the Old Testament, which Christ might have in view, (<220416>Song of Solomon 4:16 <380914>Zechariah 9:14). What our Lord here says, concerning the wind, is confirmed by all experience, and philosophical observations; the rise of winds, from whence they come, and whither they go, cannot be ascertained; the treasures of them are only with God, and known to him; (see <211105>Ecclesiastes 11:5).

Ver. 9. *Nicodemus answered and said unto him*, etc.] Remaining still as ignorant as ever, though Christ had explained the phrase "born again", at which he stumbled, by a being "born of water and of the Spirit", or of the grace of the Spirit of God; and had illustrated this by the free, powerful, and invisible blowing of the wind:

how can these things be? The Arabic version reads, “how can this be?” referring either to the last thing said, that a man’s being born of the Spirit, is like the blowing of the wind; or to the explanation of the first expression, that a man should be born of water, and of the Spirit; or to the first assertion itself, that a man should be born again; which notwithstanding the explanation and illustration, seemed as impossible, and as impracticable as ever; or rather to them all, and so the Persic version reads, “how can all these things be?”

Ver. 10. *Jesus answered and said unto him*, etc.] Upbraiding him with his continued and invincible ignorance, which was aggravated by his dignified character:

art thou a master in Israel? or “of Israel”, as all the Oriental versions render it, as it literally may be rendered he was one of the larçy ymkj, “wise men”, or “doctors of Israel” [f135], so often mentioned by the Jews. One of the Jewish doctors was answered, by a boy, just in such language as is here used; who, not understanding the direction he gave him about the way into the city, said to him, larçy lç µkj awh hta, “art thou he, a doctor”, or “master of Israel?” did not I say to thee so? etc. [f136]. He was not a common teacher; not a teacher of babes, nor a teacher in their synagogues, or in their “Midrashim”, or divinity schools, but in their great sanhedrim; and the article before the word used will admit it to be rendered, “that master”, doctor, or teacher; that famous, and most excellent one, who was talked of all over Jerusalem and Judea, as a surpassing one: and now, though he was not only an Israelite, with whom were the laws, statutes, judgments, and oracles of God, the writings of Moses, and the prophets; but a teacher of Israelites, and in the highest class of teachers, and of the greatest fame among them, yet was he ignorant of the first and most important things in religion:

and knowest not these things? which were so plainly to be suggested in the sacred writings, with which he was; or ought to have been conversant: for the same things Christ had been speaking of, are there expressed by a circumcision of the heart; by a birth, a nation’s being born at once; by sanctification; by the grace of God signified under the metaphor of water; and by quickening persons, comparable to dry bones, through the wind blowing, and breathing into them, (<05D006>Deuteronomy 30:6 <234921>Isaiah 49:21 66:8 Ezekiel 36: 25 37:9,10).

Ver. 11. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know*, etc.] Meaning either himself, and John the Baptist his forerunner, who preached the same doctrine of regeneration, internal sanctification, and evangelical repentance, as well as outward reformation, as necessary to entrance into the kingdom of heaven, or the Gospel dispensation, he declared was just at hand; or his disciples with himself, who were now with him, and whom he had called to preach the same truths he himself did; or the prophets of the Old Testament, who agreed with him in these things; or the Father that was with him, and never left him alone, and the Holy Spirit that was upon him, by whom he was anointed to preach these things, and who spoke them in him; or else he may use the plural number of himself alone, as being one in authority, and speaking with it, as he sometimes did, (<4040>Mark 4:30), and the rather this seems to be the sense, since he immediately, in the next verse, speaks in the singular number, "if I have told you earthly things", etc. Now Christ must needs thoroughly, and certainly know what he spoke, since he was not only the omniscient God, but, as Mediator, had all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him, and the spirit of wisdom and knowledge rested on him:

and testify that we have seen; and therefore ought to have been received as a credible witness, as he was a faithful one; since "seeing" and "knowing" are qualifications in a witness, (<0301>Leviticus 5:1); and though these were eminently in Christ, the generality of the Jews gave no credit to his testimony:

and ye received not our witness; which was an aggravation of their sin and unbelief; (see <4332>John 3:32).

Ver. 12. *If I have told you earthly things*, etc.] Not that the doctrines he delivered were earthly ones; for he was not of the earth, but from heaven, and above all, and so spake not of the earth, but of heaven, (<4331>John 3:31); and this doctrine of regeneration was an heavenly doctrine; and the thing itself required supernatural power, and grace from above: but either they were the more easy doctrines of the Gospel; or were delivered in a plain and easy style, and illustrated by similes taken from earthly things, as from human birth, from the water, and from the wind:

and ye believe not; i.e. those things; ye do not receive them, nor give credit to them; or "me", as the Ethiopic Version adds, who relate them on the best evidence, having fully known, and clearly seen them:

how shall ye believe; give credit to me, or receive my testimony:

if I tell you of heavenly things? of the more sublime doctrines of the Gospel, such as the descent of the Messiah from heaven; the union of the two natures, human and divine, in him; his being the only begotten Son of God; his crucifixion and death, signified by the lifting up of the serpent on a pole in the wilderness; and the wonderful love of God to the Gentile world in giving Christ to, and for them; and the salvation, and eternal happiness of all that believe in him, whether they be Jews or Gentiles; and these delivered in language suitable to them, without figures, or natural similes, which help the understanding, and convey ideas of things more easily to it.

Ver. 13. *And no man hath ascended into heaven*, etc.] Though Enoch and Elias had, yet not by their own power, nor in the sense our Lord designs; whose meaning is, that no man had, or could go up to heaven, to bring from thence the knowledge of divine and heavenly things; in which sense the phrase is used in (<050012>Deuteronomy 30:12 <450006>Romans 10:6), and which may be illustrated by (<430118>John 1:18); wherefore inasmuch as Nicodemus had acknowledged Christ to he a teacher come from God, our Lord, would have him know, that he was the only teacher of heavenly things, as being the only person that had been in heaven, and in the bosom of the Father; and therefore, if he, and the rest of the Jews, did not receive instructions from him, they must for ever remain ignorant; for there never had been, nor was, nor could be, any mere man that could go up to heaven, and learn the mysteries of God, and of the kingdom of heaven, and return and instruct men in them:

but he that came down from heaven; meaning himself, who is the Lord from heaven, and came from thence to do the will of God by preaching the Gospel, working miracles, obeying the law, and suffering death in the room of his people, and thereby obtaining eternal redemption for them. Not that he brought down from heaven with him, either the whole of his human nature, or a part of it; either an human soul, or an human body; nor did he descend locally, by change of place, he being God omnipresent, infinite and immense, but by assumption of the human nature into union with his divine person:

[even] the son of man which is in heaven; at the same time he was then on earth: not that he was in heaven in his human nature, and as he was the son of man; but in his divine nature, as he was the Son of God; (see <430118>John 1:18); though this is predicated of his person, as denominated from the

human nature, which was proper to him only in his divine nature; for such is omnipresence, or to be in heaven and earth at the same time: just as on the other hand God is said to purchase the church with his blood, and the Lord of glory is said to be crucified, (<4402028>Acts 20:28 <4600102>1 Corinthians 2:8), where those things are spoken of Christ, as denominated from his divine nature, which were proper only to his human nature; and is what divines call a communication of idioms or properties; and which will serve as a key to open all such passages of Scripture: and now as a proof of our Lord's having been in heaven, and of his being a teacher come from God, and such an one as never was, or can be, he opens and explains a type respecting himself, in the following verse.

Ver. 14. *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness*, etc.] The history referred to is in (<042108>Numbers 21:8). There is, in many things, an agreement between this serpent, and Jesus Christ: as in the matter of it, it was a brazen serpent; it was made not of gold, nor of silver, but of brass, the meaner metal, and was a very unlikely means, of itself, to heal the Israelites; and might be despised by many: this may denote the meanness of Christ in his human nature, in his birth and parentage, and place of education and converse; and especially in his crucifixion and death; and which, to an eye of carnal sense and reason, seemed a very improbable means of saving sinners; and therefore were to some a stumbling block, and to others foolishness: though on the other hand, as brass is a shining metal, and might be chose for the serpent in the wilderness to be made of, that by the lustre of it the eyes of the Israelites might be attracted and directed to it, who were at the greatest distance in the camp; so it may be expressive of the glory of Christ, as the only begotten of the Father, and who is the brightness of his Father's glory; and which is the great attractive, motive, and inducement to engage souls to look unto him, and believe in him, (<235222>Isaiah 45:22); and whereas brass is both a strong and durable metal, it may signify the strength of Christ, who is the mighty God, and mighty to save; and his duration, as a Saviour, being the same today, yesterday, and for ever: likewise, the comparison between the serpent Moses lifted up, and Christ, may be observed in the form of it. The brazen serpent had the form of a serpent, but not the poison and venomous nature of one; so Christ was sent, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and was found in fashion as a man, as a sinful man, but was without sin, and was perfectly holy; and yet being in this form, was made both sin and a curse, that he might redeem his people both from sin, and from the curse of the law, by

dying a death which denominated him accursed, of which the serpent was, an emblem: besides, this serpent was a fiery one; at least it looked like one of the fiery serpents, being of brass, which shone as though it burned in a furnace; and may be an emblem both of Christ's Father's wrath, which was poured out like fire upon him, and of his love to his people, which was like burning fire, the coals whereof gave a most vehement flame. Moreover, this serpent Moses made, and was ordered to make, was but "one", though the fiery serpents, with which the Israelites were bitten, were many; so there is but one Mediator between God and man; but one Saviour, in whom alone is salvation, and in no other, even Jesus Christ. To which may be added the "situation" in which this serpent was put: it was set by Moses on a pole; it was lifted up on high, that every one in the camp of Israel might see it; and may point out the ascension of Christ into heaven, and his exaltation at God's right hand there, as some think; or his being set up in the ministry of the word, and held forth and exalted there as the only Saviour of lost sinners; or rather his crucifixion, which is sometimes expressed by a lifting up, ([40]John 8:28 12:32). Once more, there is an agreement in the effect that followed upon the lifting up of the serpent; and which was the design of it, viz. the healing of such Israelites as were bitten by the fiery serpents, who looked to this: for as the Israelites were bitten by fiery serpents, with the poison of which they were infected, and were in danger of death, and to many of them their bitings were mortal; so men are poisoned with the venom of the old serpent the devil, by which they are subjected to a corporeal death, and are brought under a spiritual, or moral death, and are liable to an eternal one: and as these bitings were such as Moses could not cure; so the wounds of sin, through the old serpent, are such as cannot be healed by the law, moral or ceremonial, or by obedience to either; and as they were the Israelites who were convinced of their sin, and acknowledged it, and had a cure by looking to the brazen serpent; so such whom the Spirit of God convinces of sin, and to whom he gives the seeing eye of faith, these, through seeing, the Son, and looking to Jesus, as crucified and slain, receive healing by his stripes and wounds: and as those, who were ever so much bit and poisoned by the fiery serpents, or were at ever so great a distance from the pole, or had the weakest eye, yet if they could but discern the serpent on the pole, though it only appeared as a shining piece of brass, had a cure; so the greatest of sinners, and who are afar off from God, and all that is good, and who have faith but as a grain of mustard seed, or but glimmering view of Christ, of his glory, fulness, and suitableness, shall be saved by him. To add no more, this was done "in the

wilderness": which may signify this world, Christ's coming into it, his crucifixion in it, and his going without the camp, bearing our reproach, or suffering without the gates of Jerusalem. It is certain, that the Jews had a notion that the brazen serpent was symbolical and figurative: Philo the Jew makes it to be a symbol of fortitude and temperance [f137]; and the author of the apocryphal book of Wisdom [f138], calls it "a sign of salvation". They thought there was something mysterious in it: hence they say [f139],

> "in four places it is said, "make thee", etc. In three places it is explained, viz. (<010614>Genesis 6:14 <041002>Numbers 10:2 <060502>Joshua 5:2), and one is not explained, (<042108>Numbers 21:8), "make thee a fiery serpent", çryp al, is not explained."

And elsewhere [f140] they ask,

> "and could the serpent kill, or make alive? But at the time that Israel looked up, and served with their hearts their Father which is in heaven, they were healed; but if not, they were brought low."

So that the look was not merely to the brazen serpent, but to God in heaven; yea, to the word of God, his essential Logos, as say the Targumists on (<042109>Numbers 21:9). The Jerusalem Targum paraphrases the words thus:

> "and Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a high place, and whoever was bitten by the serpents, and lift up his face, in prayer, to his Father which is in heaven, and looked upon the serpent of brass, lived."

And Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases them thus:

> "and Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a high place; and it was, when a serpent had bitten any man, and he looked to the serpent of brass, "and directed his heart", yyd armym µwçl, "to the name of the word of the Lord", he lived."

And this healing they understand not only of bodily healing, but of the healing of the soul: for they observe [f141], that

> "as soon as they said, "we have sinned", immediately their iniquity was expiated; and they had the good news brought them "of the healing of the soul", as it is written, "make thee a seraph"; and he does not say a serpent; and this is it: "and it shall come to pass, that

every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live", çpnh tawpr, "through the healing of the soul":"

yea, they compare the Messiah to a serpent; for so the Targum on (<28429>Isaiah 14:29) paraphrases that passage:

"the Messiah shall come forth from Jesse's children's children; and his works shall be among you as a "flying serpent"."

And who else can be designed by the "other serpent of life" [f142], and the "holy serpent" [f143] they speak of, in opposition to the evil serpent that seduced Eve? And it is well known, that çjn, "a serpent", and jyçm, "Messiah", are numerically, or by gematry, the same; a way of interpretation, and explanation, often in use with the Jews. Now, as this serpent was lifted up on a pole on high, that every one that was bitten with the fiery serpent might look to it, and be healed;

even so must the son of man be lifted up; upon the cross, and die: the crucifixion and death of Christ were necessary, and must be, because of the decrees and purposes of God, by which he was foreordained thereunto, and by which determinate counsel he was delivered, taken, crucified, and slain; and because of his own engagements as a surety, laying himself under obligations in the council and covenant of peace, to suffer, and die, in the room of his people; and because of the prophecies in the Old Testament, and his own predictions, that so it should be; as also, that the antitype might answer the type; and particularly, that he might be a suitable object of faith for wounded sinners, sensible of sin, to look unto.

Ver. 15. *That whosoever believeth in him*, etc.] Whether Jew or Gentile, a greater, or a lesser sinner, and of whatsoever state and condition, age or sex; and though ever so weak a believer, provided his faith, is of the right kind: not an historical or temporary one, a mere assent to the truth of things respecting his person, office, and work; but such a faith, by which a soul sees a glory, fulness, and suitableness in him as a Saviour; goes to him, ventures on him, commits itself to him, lays hold on him, and receives him, leans and relies upon him, and trusts in him, and lives upon him; and which is the faith of God's elect; a gift of his grace, and the operation of his Spirit; and which works by love, and is attended with the fruits of righteousness: now the end of Christ's crucifixion and death is, that such an one

should not perish; though he is in a lost and perishing condition in Adam, and by nature, and sees himself to be so, and comes to Christ as such; and though his frames and comforts are perishing, and he sometimes fears he shall be utterly lost; and though he is subject to slips and falls, and great spiritual decays; and shall perish as to the outward man by death; yet he shall never perish eternally, or be punished with everlasting destruction, as the wicked will:

but have eternal life; not by his works, but as the gift of God: and which he that truly believes; has already in the covenant of grace, in Christ his head, in faith and hope; and has the earnest and pledge of it, the Spirit of God; and the beginning of it, which is the knowledge of God in Christ; and shall hereafter possess it fully, and in person, to all eternity: even a life of perfect holiness and knowledge; a life of never ending pleasure; a life free from all the sorrows, distresses, and imperfections of this; and which will always continue.

Ver. 16. *For God so loved the world*, etc.] The Persic version reads "men": but not every man in the world is here meant, or all the individuals of human nature; for all are not the objects of God's special love, which is here designed, as appears from the instance and evidence of it, the gift of his Son: nor is Christ God's gift to every one; for to whomsoever he gives his Son, he gives all things freely with him; which is not the case of every man. Nor is human nature here intended, in opposition to, and distinction from, the angelic nature; for though God has showed a regard to fallen men, and not to fallen angels, and has provided a Saviour for the one, and not for the other; and Christ has assumed the nature of men, and not angels; yet not for the sake of all men, but the spiritual seed of Abraham; and besides, it will not be easily proved, that human nature is ever called the world: nor is the whole body of the chosen ones, as consisting of Jews and Gentiles, here designed; for though these are called the world, (⁴⁸⁶³John 6:33,51); and are the objects of God's special love, and to them Christ is given, and they are brought to believe in him, and shall never perish, but shall be saved with an everlasting salvation; yet rather the Gentiles particularly, and God's elect among them, are meant; who are often called "the world", and "the whole world", and "the nations of the world", as distinct from the Jews; (see ⁴⁵¹¹Romans 11:12,15 ⁶²⁰¹1 John 2:2) (⁴²¹²Luke 12:30), compared with (⁴¹⁰⁶Matthew 6:32). The Jews had the same distinction we have now, the church and the world; the former they took to themselves, and the latter they gave to all the nations around:

hence we often meet with this distinction, Israel, and the nations of the world; on those words,

> ""let them bring forth their witness", that they may be justified, (<2309>Isaiah 43:9) (say [f144] the doctors) these are Israel; "or let them hear and say it is truth", these are "the nations of the world"."

And again [f145],

> "the holy, blessed God said to Israel, when I judge Israel, I do not judge them as "the nations of the world":"

and so in a multitude of places: and it should be observed, that our Lord was now discoursing with a Jewish Rabbi, and that he is opposing a commonly received notion of theirs, that when the Messiah came, the Gentiles should have no benefit or advantage by him, only the Israelites; so far should they be from it, that, according to their sense, the most dreadful judgments, calamities, and curses, should befall them; yea, hell and eternal damnation.

> "There is a place (they say [f146],) the name of which is "Hadrach", (<3801>Zechariah 9:1). This is the King Messiah, who is, Ærwdj, "sharp and tender"; sharp to "the nations", and tender to "Israel"."

And so of the "sun of righteousness", in (<3902>Malachi 4:2), they say [f147],

> "there is healing for the Israelites in it: but the idolatrous nations shall be burnt by it."

And that [f148]

> "there is mercy for Israel, but judgment for the rest of the nations."

And on those words in (<2112>Isaiah 21:12), "the morning cometh", and also the night, they observe [f149],

> "the morning is for the righteous, and the night for the wicked; the morning is for Israel, and the night for "the nations of the world"."

And again [f150],

> "in the time to come, (the times of the Messiah,) the holy, blessed God will bring "darkness" upon "the nations", and will enlighten Israel, as it is said, (<2602>Isaiah 60:2)."

Once more [f151],

> "in the time to come, the holy, blessed God will bring the nations of the world, and will cast them into the midst of hell under the Israelites, as it is said, (<23>43<03>Isaiah 43:3)."

To which may be added that denunciation of theirs [f152]

> "woe to the nations of the world, who perish, and they know not that they perish: in the time that the sanctuary was standing, the altar atoned for them; but now who shall atone for them?"

Now, in opposition to such a notion, our Lord addresses this Jew; and it is as if he had said, you Rabbins say, that when the Messiah comes, only the Israelites, the peculiar favourites of God, shall share in the blessings that come by, and with him; and that the Gentiles shall reap no advantage by him, being hated of God, and rejected of him: but I tell you, God has so loved the Gentiles, as well as the Jews,

that he gave his only begotten Son; to, and for them, as well as for the Jews; to be a covenant of the people, the Gentiles, the Saviour of them, and a sacrifice for them; a gift which is a sufficient evidence of his love to them; it being a large and comprehensive one, an irreversible and unspeakable one; no other than his own Son by nature, of the same essence, perfections, and glory with him; begotten by him in a way inconceivable and expressible by mortals; and his only begotten one; the object of his love and delight, and in whom he is ever well pleased; and yet, such is his love to the Gentiles, as well as Jews, that he has given him, in human nature, up, into the hands of men, and of justice, and to death itself:

that whosoever believeth in him, whether Jew or Gentile,

should not perish, but have everlasting life; (see Gill on "<40>03<15>John 3:15").

Ver. 17. *For God sent not his Son into the world*, etc.] God did send his Son into the world in the likeness of sinful flesh, being made of a woman, and made under the law; and which is an instance of his great love, and not of any disrespect to his Son, or of any inequality between them: but then this was not

to condemn the world; even any part of it, or any in it: not the Gentiles, as the Jews thought he would; for though God had suffered them to walk in their own ways, and had winked at, or overlooked the times of their

ignorance, and had sent no prophet unto them, nor made any revelation of his will, or any discovery of his special grace unto them; yet he sent his Son now, not to destroy them for their idolatry, and wickedness, but to be the Saviour of them: nor the Jews; for as impenitent and unbelieving, and as wicked as they were, he did not accuse them to the Father, nor judge and condemn them; he was to come again in power and great glory, when he would take vengeance on them, and cause wrath to come upon them to the uttermost, for their disbelief and rejection of him; but this was not his business now: nor the wicked of the world in general; to judge, and condemn them, will be his work, when he comes a second time, in the day God has appointed to judge the world in righteousness.

But the end of his mission, and first coming is,

that the world through him might be saved; even the world of the elect in general, whom God determined to save, and has chosen, to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ, and has appointed Christ to be the salvation of; and who being sent, came into the world to seek and save them; and his chosen people among the Gentiles in particular: wherefore he is said to be God's salvation to the ends of the earth: and all the ends of the earth are called upon to look unto him, and be saved by him, (²⁴⁰⁵Isaiah 49:6 45:22).

Ver. 18. *He that believeth on him is not condemned*, etc.] Whether Jew or Gentile, because a believer is openly in Christ; and there is no condemnation to those that are in him: and though the sentence of death passed upon all in Adam, and judgment came upon all men to condemnation in him; yet this sentence being executed on Christ, the surety of his people, who has been condemned to death, and has suffered it in their stead, his death is a security to them from all condemnation: and they are delivered by him from the curse and condemnation of the law: and having in conversion openly passed from death to life, they shall never enter into condemnation; and this is the happy case of every one that believes in Christ:

but he that believeth not is condemned already. The Persic version renders it, "from the beginning"; he remains under the sentence of condemnation passed in Adam upon him; the law accuses him, and pronounces him guilty before God; he is under the curse of it, and it is a ministration of condemnation and death to him; nor has he any thing to secure him from its charge, curse, and condemnation: this must be understood of one that is a

final unbeliever, or that lives, and dies, in a state of impenitence, and unbelief:

because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God; whom God has sent to be the Saviour of lost sinners, and to deliver them from wrath to come; and there is no other name but his, whereby men can be saved; so that such that do not believe in him, must be damned.

Ver. 19. *And this is the condemnation*, etc.] Of him that believes not in Christ; that is, this is the matter and cause of his condemnation, and by which it is aggravated, and appears to be just:

that light is come into the world: by which is meant, not natural or corporeal light; though natural darkness is, by some, preferred to this, being more convenient for their evil works; as by thieves, murderers, and adulterers: nor is the light of nature designed, with which every man is enlightened that comes into the world; which, though but a dim light, might be of more use, and service, than it is; and is often rejected, and rebelled against, by wicked men, and which will be the condemnation of the Heathen world: but rather the light of divine revelation, both in the law of God, and Gospel of Christ; especially the latter is here intended; and which, though so great a favour to fallen men, is despised, and denied by the sons of darkness: though it may be best of all to understand it of Christ himself, the light of the world, and who is come a light into it; (see <4082>John 8:12 12:46), who may be called "light", because he has set revelation in its clearest and fullest light; he has declared the whole mind, and will of God concerning the affair of divine worship, and the business of salvation: grace, and truth, are come by him; the doctrines of grace, and the truths of the Gospel, are most clearly brought to light by him; the types, and shadows of the law are removed; and the promises, and the prophecies of the Old Testament, are most largely expounded by him, and most perfectly fulfilled in him: and besides; he is the author and giver of the light of grace, by which men see themselves to be what they are, lost and undone sinners; and see him to be the only able, willing, suitable, sufficient, and complete Saviour: and he it is that now gives the saints the glimpse of glory they have, and will be the light of the new Jerusalem, and the everlasting light of his people hereafter. He, by his incarnation, may be said to "come into the world" in general, which was made by him, as God; and as he was in it, as man; though he was not known by it as the God-man, Mediator, and Messiah: and particularly he came into the Jewish world, where he was

born, brought up, conversed, lived, and died; and into the Gentile world, by the ministry of his apostles, whom he; sent into all the world, to preach the Gospel to every creature, and spread the glorious light of it in every place:

and men loved darkness rather than light: the Jews, the greater part of them, preferred the darkness of the ceremonial law, and the Mosaic dispensation, and even the traditions of their elders, before the clear Gospel revelation made by Christ Jesus; and the Gentiles also, for the most part, chose rather to continue in their Heathenish ignorance, and idolatry, and to walk in their own ways, and in the vanity of their minds, than to embrace Christ, and his Gospel, and submit to his ordinances, and appointments; and the generality of men, to this day, love their natural darkness, and choose to walk in it, and to have fellowship with the works of darkness, and delight in the company of the children of darkness, rather than follow Christ, the light of the world; receive his Gospel, and walk in his ways, in fellowship with his saints: the reason of all this is,

because their deeds were evil; which they chose not to relinquish; and Christ, his Gospel and ordinances are contrary to them; for the doctrine of the grace of God, which has appeared, and shone out in great lustre, and splendour, in the world, teaches men to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts; and therefore it is hated, and rejected, by men.

Ver. 20. *For every one that doth evil, hateth the light*, etc.] Every man, the series of whose life and conversation is evil, hates Christ and his Gospel, cause they make manifest his evil deeds, convict him of them, and rebuke him for them:

neither cometh to the light; to hear Christ preach, or preached; to attend on the Gospel ministration and means of grace:

lest his deeds should be reproved; or discovered, and made manifest, and he be brought to shame, and laid under blame, and advised to part with them, which he cares not to do; (see <4051>Ephesians 5:11-13).

Ver. 21. *But he that doth truth*, etc.] That which is true, right and good: “he whose work is just”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; or, “he that does that which is right”, so the Persic; that which is according to the will of God, and from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory:

cometh to the light; to Christ, and to his word, and ordinances:

that his deeds may be made manifest; being brought to the light, to the test, and standard, whether they, are right, or wrong; and that it may appear,

that they are wrought in God; or "by God"; by his assistance, and gracious influence, without which men can do nothing; for it is God that works in them both to will and to do: or, "according to God", as others render it; according to the will of God, both for matter and manner: or "for God", as the Ethiopic version renders it; for the glory of God, which ought to be the aim, and end of every action. The Persic version reads the whole thus, "that the work which is between God and him may be known"; that such deeds may be discovered, which are only known to God and himself.

Ver. 22. *After these things*, etc.] After Christ's coming to Jerusalem, at the feast of the passover, with his disciples, and driving the buyers and sellers from the temple, and doing the miracles he did there, upon which many believed on him; and after the long discourse he had with Nicodemus, concerning regeneration, and other things:

came Jesus and his disciples, into the land of Judea; or "into Judea the country", having been in Jerusalem, the city part or chief city in Judea; so that the country is distinguished from, and opposed to the city. And thus, a countryman, and a Jerusalemite, or citizen of Jerusalem, are distinguished [f153];

> "if, ynt rqh, "a countryman", (one that lives in the country any where in the land of Israel out of Jerusalem [f154],) receives a field, yml çwrym, "from a man of Jerusalem", the second tithes belong to the Jerusalemite; but the wise men say, the countryman may bring them up, and eat them at Jerusalem."

Or, it may be, because that Jerusalem was part of it in the tribe of Benjamin, and the other in the tribe of Judah; therefore, when Christ, and his disciples, left Jerusalem, they might more properly be said to come into the land of Judea. Indeed, it is commonly said by the Jews [f155], that Jerusalem was not divided among the tribes, and that it did not belong to any tribe; and if so, then with greater propriety still might Christ be said to come into the land of Judea, when he departed from Jerusalem; unless it should be thought, that he went into Galilee, and after that came into the land of Judea; so Nonnus:

and there he tarried with them: with his disciples, as Nonnus; and with the inhabitants of those parts: he made a longer stay here than at Jerusalem, having more work to do here, and being more delighted with the plainness and simplicity of the country people; or "he conversed" with them, as the Syriac version renders it; he exercised, and employed himself among them, as the Greek word used signifies: he went about from village to village, doing good, healing diseases, and preaching the Gospel which was made useful to many:

and baptized; not he himself, but his disciples, by his orders, and in his name; (see <430402>John 4:2); whereby he gave fresh countenance and sanction to the ordinance of water baptism, administering it to others, as well as submitting to it himself.

Ver. 23. *And John also was baptizing in Aenon*, etc.] The Syriac and Persic versions call it "Ain", or "In you", the fountain of the dove; and the Arabic version reads it, the fountain of "Nun": and whether it was a town, or river, it seems to have its name from a fountain near it, or that itself was one, where was an abundance of water, as the text shows. There is a city of this name in the Septuagint version of (<061561>Joshua 15:61), and mention is made of Hazerenon in (<043409>Numbers 34:9 <264707>Ezekiel 47:17), but neither of them seem to be the same with this; but be it where, and what it will, it was

near to Salim; and where that was, is as difficult to know as the other, some take it to be Shalem, a city of Shechem, mentioned in (<013318>Genesis 33:18), but that is not the same name with this; and besides was in Samaria; and indeed is by some there thought not to be the proper name of any place. Others are of opinion, that it is the same with Shalim in (<090904>1 Samuel 9:4), though it seems rather to be the place which Arias Montanus calls [f156] "Salim juxta torrentem", Salim by the brook; and which he places in the tribe of Issachar: and might be so called, either because it was near this Aenon, and may be the brook, or river intended, by which it was; or because it was not far from the place where the two rivers, Jabbok and Jordan, met; and so the Jewish maps place near Jordan, in the tribe of Manasseh, bordering on the tribe of Issachar, a Shalem, and by it Ain-yon. And the Septuagint in (<061922>Joshua 19:22) mention "Salim by the sea", as in the tribe of Issachar. There is a passage in the Talmud [f157], which, whether it has any regard to this Aenon, and Salim, I leave to be considered:

> “the wine of Ogedoth, why is it forbidden? because of the village Pegesh; and that of Borgetha, because of the Saracene palace; and of Ain-Cushith, because of the village Salem.”

Nonnus here calls Aenon, a place of deep waters; and Salim he reads Salem; and so some copies. Aenon, where John baptized, according to Jerom [f158], was eight miles from Scythopolis, to the south, and was near Salim and Jordan; and he makes Salim to be at the same distance from Scythopolis. However, John was baptizing in these parts, at the same time that Christ was teaching and baptizing: he did not leave off on that account. This was the work he was sent to do, and which he continued in as long as he had his liberty; and be chose this place,

because there was much water there; or “many waters”; not little purling streams, and rivulets; but, as Nonnus renders it, abundance of water; or a multitude of it, as in the Arabic version; (see <660115>Revelation 1:15 14:2 17:1 19:6 <220107>Song of Solomon 8:7) and the Septuagint in (<197816>Psalm 78:16) (<197823>Psalm 107:23), and what was sufficient to immerse the whole body in, as Calvin, Aretius, Piscator, and Grotius, on the place, observe; and which was agreeable not only to: the practice of the Jews, who used dipping in their baptisms, and purifications, as Musculus and Lightfoot assert; but to John’s method and practice elsewhere:

and they came, and were baptized. The Ethiopic version renders it, “they came to him”, that is, to John, “and he baptized them”; as the Persic version adds, “there”, in Aenon, near Salim, in the much water there: it may be understood of the people coming both to John and Christ, and of their being baptized by them; though it seems rather to be said of John; and so Nonnus paraphrases it.

Ver. 24. *For John was not yet cast into prison*.] As he afterwards was by Herod, for the sake of Herodias, because he reproved Herod for taking her to be his wife, when she was wife to his brother Philip; (see <401403>Matthew 14:3,4); and this circumstance shows, that these things were done before that journey of Christ into Galilee, mentioned in (<400412>Matthew 4:12,13).

Ver. 25. *Then there arose a question*, etc.] A dispute, or controversy, occasioned by the baptism, of John and Christ:

between [some] of John’s disciples, and the Jews. The Syriac and Persic versions read, “between one of John’s disciples, and a certain Jew”; and Nonnus renders it, “with an Hebrew man”; and so the Alexandrian

manuscript; many others read, “with a Jew”: the contention between them was

about purifying; either about the ceremonial purifications, and ablutions commanded in the law of Moses; or concerning the various washings of persons, and vessels, according to the traditions of the elders, which the Jews in common were very tenacious of; and which they thought were brought into neglect, and contempt, by the baptism of John: and this seems to have been occasioned by the baptism of Christ; which the Jew might improve against the disciple of John, and urge, that since another, besides his master, had set up baptizing, who could tell which was most right and safest to follow? and therefore it would have been much better, if no such rite at all had been used by any, but that the purifications required by the law of Moses, and by their elders, had been strictly and solely attended to.

Ver. 26. *And they came unto John*, etc.] The Persic version reads, “he came unto John”; that disciple that had the controversy with the Jew about purifying, who not knowing well how to answer him, and which might be the case of more, applied to John:

and said unto him, Rabbi; or “master”; or, “our master”; as the Syriac and Persic versions read, which was a title of great respect, and reverence, and much in use in those times; (see Gill on “Matthew 23:7”) (see Gill on “Matthew 23:8”). The Arabic version joins this word to the following clause, and applies it to Christ, rendering it thus, “the master that was with thee beyond Jordan”; which is making them to speak more honourably of Christ than they intended; for though they speak very respectfully to John, yet with much disdain and neglect of Christ; not so much as mentioning his name, or using any term of honour or respect; only saying,

he that was with thee beyond Jordan; namely, at Bethabara; who came from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized by him, and who was baptized by him; and for some little time continued with him, and attended on his ministry; and as they thought, was a disciple of John’s:

to whom thou bearest witness; that he was before him, and to be preferred unto him; and that he was the Lamb of God, and even the Son of God; suggesting, that by this testimony of his, Christ had gained all the credit and reputation he had; and that therefore he had done a wrong thing in enlarging so much in the praise and commendation of him:

behold the same baptizeth; takes upon him to administer the ordinance of baptism; at least gives orders to administer it; which John's disciples thought was the proper, and peculiar business of their master; and therefore speak of this as an intrusion into his office, and an entering into his province; and an assuming that which only belonged to him: and what gave still more uneasiness, and increased the complaint, was,

and all men come to him; that is, "many", as the Syriac and Persic versions render it, even more than came to John; (see <400401>John 4:1). Large multitudes from all parts flocked to hear Christ preach, and great numbers were made disciples by him, and then baptized. That he should baptize, gave them great offence; and that he was so followed, raised their envy; and his being so near to John, might add to their uneasiness. It is a rule with the Jews, that

> "it is not lawful for a disciple to teach the constitutions, or sentences of the law, before his master; but must be twelve miles distant from him, as the camp of Israel."

And they say, that

> "a disciple that teaches before, or in the presence of his master, is guilty of death [f`159]."

Ver. 27. *John answered and said*, etc.] The Syriac and Arabic versions add, "to them"; the answer being made to the disciples of John, who came to him with their complaint:

a man can receive nothing; the Syriac and Persic versions add, "of his own will": some understand this of Christ, as man, who did not take upon him the character of the Messiah, nor the office of a Mediator, nor the honour of it of himself; and who received the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, without measure, and had his success in his work from above: and indeed, it is true of both Christ, and John; for as Christ, so John received his office, and honour, as the harbinger and forerunner of Christ, and all his gifts qualifying for it, and his success in it, not of himself, but of God: and since therefore the superior office, and honour, and usefulness of the one above the other, were according to the sovereign will of God, there was no room for complaint, murmuring, and envy; but there ought to be contentment and pleasure in the wise disposition of things by God. Yea, this is true of every man, who has nothing of his own; and whatever he has in nature,

providence and grace, is a gift to him; and all he enjoys is in a way of receiving: nor can he receive it,

except it be given him from heaven; from God who dwells there; (see Gill on "Matthew 21:25"); who is the author and donor of every gift, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; particularly he cannot perceive, and discern spiritual things, nor receive Gospel truths; as it appeared to John his disciples could not, unless spiritual light is given from above; and such a favour is bestowed, as to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven: and therefore, for every office, whether of a superior, or inferior kind, and for every degree of honour, and for whatsoever blessing and gift, whether for soul or body, for time, or for eternity, men ought to be thankful, and not glory in them, as though they had not received them; nor is there any reason to murmur against God, or envy one another, as these disciples did.

Ver. 28. *Ye yourselves bear me witness*, etc.] In what they now said, and referred to, in describing Christ, as he to whom John bore witness; and he appeals to them for what he said in their presence, and before all the people in that testimony:

that I said I am not the Christ; (see John 1:19,20); wherefore, if he, who is the Christ, is now come, and teaches, and baptizes, and has the greatest number of followers, it is not to be wondered at; and much less to be envied; but rather to be rejoiced at. For John, by repeating what he had before said, that he was not the Christ, suggests, that Jesus was; and therefore was superior to him in office, honour, and usefulness, who was only his harbinger and forerunner, as follows:

but I am sent before him; to prepare his way, to make straight his paths, to proclaim his coming, and kingdom, being at hand; and that the expectations of men may be raised, and they may be ready to receive him when come: and hereby the end of John's office, and ministry, had its accomplishment. The Ethiopic version adds, "to preach him".

Ver. 29. *He that hath the bride*, etc.] By whom particular persons seem here to be meant, who were called, converted, and brought to Christ, and were made his disciples, and baptized, and so were openly espoused unto him; though sometimes it designs a particular church of Christ, and even the whole general assembly, and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven; all the elect of. God, whether among Jews, or Gentiles; (see 2 Corinthians 11:2 Revelation 21:2,9). These Christ has in a

conjugal relation; and he came, and comes to have them after this manner: he saw them in his Father's purposes, and decrees, in all the glory he meant to bring them to; and loved them, and desired them of his Father, as his spouse, who gave them to him, as such; and he betrothed them to himself for ever; and in time he sends his ministering servants with his Gospel, to engage and betroth them to him; and by the power of his grace, he makes them willing to give up themselves to him; which is the open espousal of them; and at the last day, when the number of the elect are completed, the marriage of the Lamb will be publicly solemnized, and a marriage supper will be made; and all that are called, and ready, will enter into the marriage chamber, and share in the joys, and pleasures of that day: thus by virtue of the Father's gift, Christ has them now as his own property, as his portion, his jewels, his bride, and wife; and by, and through his great love to them, he has them not only in his arms, from whence they can never be plucked; but in his heart, where they are set as a seal; and by virtue of this love, they are united to him, become one with him, are members of his body, flesh, and bones; and are one spirit with him, and nothing can be able to separate them; and he will have them all with, him to all eternity, to be where he is, and behold his glory: and now, he that has the bride in this sense,

is the bridegroom; and such is Christ; (see [40]Matthew 9:15 25:1); and he acts, and behaves, as such; he loves the saints, as a bridegroom loves his bride, with a love prior to theirs; with a love of complacency and delight, which is single, chaste, and inviolable; free, and sovereign, wonderful, unchangeable, and from everlasting to everlasting: he sympathises with them in all their adversities, and afflictions; he nourishes, and cherishes them, and provides everything for them, for food, and clothing, for refreshment and protection; and interests them in all he has: and an amazing instance of grace this is, that such who are no better than others, children of wrath by nature; exceeding great sinners, guilty, and filthy; bankrupts, and beggars on the dunghill; and yet are taken into so near a relation to him; who is in the form of God, and equal to him, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, the Son of God, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells; the King of kings, and Lord of lords. And this being the case, John suggests, that by these persons following Christ, and giving up themselves to him, it appeared that he was the bridegroom; and to whom should they betake themselves but to him? Nor did it become him, or any other, to seek to draw them from him; nor

should any envy his enjoyment of them, since they were his in so peculiar a sense, and in so near a relation:

but the friend of the bridegroom; meaning himself: and such is every true minister of the Gospel; he is a lover of Christ, a friend to his interest, and seeks by all means to promote it, and to bring souls unto him. The allusion is to a custom among the Jews, who, at their marriages, used to have persons both on the side of the bride, and of the bridegroom, as companions that attended each, and were called their friends; (see <0744>Judges 14:20). Such an one is called by the Rabbins, ˆybçwç; and this word is interpreted by bhwa, "a lover", or "friend", the same as here; and by wh[r, "his" (the bridegroom's) "friend" in the time of his marriage [f160]. There were two of these, one for the bride, and another for the bridegroom; for so it is said [f161], formerly they appointed two ˆynybçwç,

> ""friends", one for him (the bridegroom), and one for her (the bride), that they might minister to the bridegroom, and do all things at their entrance into the marriage chamber. — And formerly, these friends slept where the bridegroom and bride slept."

And so as John is here represented as the friend of Christ, the bridegroom of the church; the Jews speak of Moses as the friend of God, the bridegroom of the people of Israel. So one of their writers [f162], having delivered a parable concerning a certain king going into a far country, and leaving his espoused wife with his maid-servants, who raising an evil report on her, his friend tore in pieces the matrimonial contract, thus applies it:

> "the king, this is the holy, blessed God; the maidens, these are the mixed multitude; and ˆybçwçh, "the friend", this is Moses; and the spouse of the holy, blessed God is Israel."

The Jews say [f163], that Michael and Gabriel were the ˆynbçwç, "bridal friends" to the first Adam.

Which standeth; the phrase may be seen in the above parable of the Jewish writer [f164] referred to, hnybçwç dm[, "his friend standeth": this was the posture of servants, and is fitly applied to John, who was the harbinger of Christ, and judged himself unworthy to bear his shoes; and well agrees with the ministers of the Gospel, who stand before Christ, wait upon him, and minister in his name, and are the servants of the churches for his sake:

and heareth him; hearkens to his words; observes, and obeys them; hears his voice, so as to understand it, and distinguish it from another's; and hears it with delight and pleasure, as every true friend of Christ does his Gospel, which is his voice, and is a joyful sound; and so

rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: such an one rejoices at the sight of his person, and in communion with him; he rejoices at the sound of his voice; and is delighted to hear him in the ministry of the word, calling to one, and to another, to come unto him, and causing them to believe in him, and give up themselves to him.

This my joy therefore is fulfilled; in Christ, he being come in person, and his voice heard in the land of Judea, and multitudes of souls flocking to him, who believing in him, were baptized; than which nothing could be a greater pleasure to John, or to any Gospel minister. This was the accomplishment and perfection of his joy, which carried it to its utmost height: this was what he wished for; and now he had the desire of his heart. It was usual for the friend of the bridegroom to carry provisions with him, and eat and drink with the bridegroom, and rejoice with him; and this rejoicing was mutual. Hence those words,

> "give me ynybçwç, "my friend", that I may rejoice with him:"

the gloss upon it is,

> "and eat at his marriage, even as he also rejoiced, and ate at my marriage[f165]."

To this rejoicing the allusion is here.

Ver. 30. *He must increase*, etc.] Not in stature of body, or in wisdom and understanding of mind, as man, he being come to maturity in these things already; but in fame, credit, and reputation among men; as he afterwards did in the land of Judea, by reason of his miracles and doctrines; and after that among the Gentiles, through the publication of his Gospel; and will more and more in the latter day, when he, and he alone, shall be exalted: and he must increase in the ministry of his word, which was published by him, and his disciples, throughout all the cities of Israel; and which, after his resurrection and ascension, grew and increased mightily, notwithstanding the opposition made unto it both by their civil and ecclesiastical rulers; and which, by the means of his apostles, was spread throughout the Gentile world, and will hereafter cover the earth, as the

waters do the sea: and also in his kingdom and interest, which at first were very small, like a grain of mustard seed, or like a little stone cut out of the mountain without hands; but in process of time grew exceedingly, and will, ere long, till the face of the whole earth; for the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; and of the increase of it there shall be no end. And so likewise in the number of his followers, which at first were but few in Judea, but afterwards greatly increased, and especially among the Gentiles; and will be very numerous in the latter day glory, when the nation of the Jews will be born at once, and the fulness and forces of the Gentiles are brought in:

but I must decrease; as he did in his esteem among the people; (see John 5:3,5); and in his work and office, which were now come to an end, Christ, whose forerunner he was, being come; and quickly after this he was put into prison, and there put to death.

Ver. 31. *He that cometh from above*, etc.] Meaning Christ; not that he brought his human nature with him from heaven, or that that is of a celestial nature; but he came from heaven in his divine person, not by change of place, he being God immense and infinite, but by assumption of human nature; which he took upon him, in order to do in it his Father's will, and the work of our salvation.

Is above all; above John, before whom he was preferred, for he was before him; above the prophets of the Old Testament, and even above Moses, the chief of them; yea, above all the angels in heaven, being God over all, blessed for ever: wherefore all glory is to be given him; no honour is to be envied him, or detracted from him.

He that is of the earth; as John was, and all mankind are, being descended from Adam, who was, made of the dust of the earth; and who dwell in houses of clay, and in earthly tabernacles, which are at last resolved into their original dust:

is earthly; of an earthly nature, frame, temper, and disposition; (see John 3:6). Men naturally mind earthly things; and it is owing to the Spirit and grace of God, if they mind and savour spiritual things, or have their affections set on things above, or their conversation in heaven; and even such, at times, find that their souls cleave unto the dust, and are hankering after the things of the earth:

and speaketh of the earth; of earthly things, as in (⁴⁰⁰³John 3:12); and indeed of heavenly things, in an earthly manner, in a low way, and by similes and comparisons taken from the things of the earth; not being able to speak of celestial things, as in their own nature, and in that sublime way the subject requires: but

he that cometh from heaven is above all; men and angels, in the dignity of his person; and all prophets and teachers, in the excellency of his doctrine, and manner of delivering it: and therefore it is not to be wondered at, that he should be followed as he is; but rather it should seem marvellous, that he has no more followers than he has; in the Apocrypha:

> "For like as the ground is given unto the wood, and the sea to his floods: even so they that dwell upon the earth may understand nothing but that which is upon the earth: and he that dwelleth above the heavens may only understand the things that are above the height of the heavens." (2 Esdras 4:21)

Ver. 32. *And what he hath seen and heard*, etc.] Of the Father, of his mind and will, of his purposes and promises, of his love, grace, and mercy, in the council and covenant of peace, lying in his bosom, and being privy to all his secrets. The phrases express the clear and perfect knowledge Christ has of all truths and doctrines; he having all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him.

That he testifieth; fully, freely, and faithfully; withholds nothing, but declares the whole counsel of God; and is deservedly called the faithful witness, (⁶⁶⁰⁵Revelation 1:5).

And no man receiveth his testimony; though it was the testimony of God, which is greater than that of man; yet few, and which were next to none at all, gave any heed or credit to it; few or none among the Jews, or among the disciples of John, or even among those that followed Christ. John, and his disciples, widely differed; they thought that all men came to Christ, and believed in him; and John thought few or none, in comparison of the numbers he could have wished, did: and indeed, no one person can receive the testimony of Christ, and believe in him, unless it be given him from above, by the grace of God: for the natural man receives not divine and spiritual things; (see ⁴⁰⁰³John 3:11).

Ver. 33. *He that hath received his testimony*, etc.] For there was here and there one that did, who believed in him as the Messiah, and embraced his

Gospel, and submitted to his ordinances, and truly and sincerely followed him: and for the encouragement of such, it is said,

hath set to his seal that God is true; faithful in fulfilling the promises he has made concerning the Messiah, and his coming: he firmly believes that God is true to every word of his, and will make good every promise; and this he seals, ratifies, and confirms by his embracing the testimony of Christ; whereas, on the contrary, he that believes not makes God a liar, than which, nothing can be more reproachful to him, (<61510>1 John 5:10). The Jews have a saying [f166] that "the seal of the blessed God is truth". The Arabic version renders it, "he is already sealed, because God is true"; and the Ethiopic version, "God hath sealed him, because he is true"; namely, with his holy Spirit; (see <47122>2 Corinthians 1:22 <49113>Ephesians 1:13 4:30).

Ver. 34. *For he whom God hath sent*, etc.] Still meaning Christ, who was sent in human nature, in the likeness of sinful flesh, in the fulness of time; to be the Saviour of the world, of that which was lost, of the chief of sinners; and to preach the glad tidings of the Gospel, which is more especially here designed; and for which he was abundantly qualified by the Spirit of God, with which he was anointed:

speaketh the words of God; the words which God gave unto him; the doctrines of grace; the word of truth; the word of faith; the word of righteousness; the word of reconciliation; the words of salvation and eternal life; the whole mind and will of God; and whatever he spoke were as true as the oracles of God, and were such.

For God giveth not the Spirit by measure [unto him], as he did to the prophets of the Old Testament, and to the apostles of the New; and to the ordinary ministers of the word, who have gifts differing one from another; to one is given one gift of the Spirit; and to another, another gift, as the Spirit pleaseth; and to everyone is given grace, or gifts of grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, (<49407>Ephesians 4:7). To which agrees what the Jews say [f167] of the Holy Spirit, and his gifts.

> "Says R. Joden bar R. Simeon, even the waters which descend from above are not given, but, hdmb, "in measure". — Says R. Acha, even the Holy Spirit, which dwells upon the prophets, does not dwell, but lqçmb, "in weight"."

But the Lord Jesus has every, gift of the Spirit, and the fulness of grace in him: he is anointed with the oil of gladness, with the Holy Ghost above his fellows; and has an immeasurable unction of the holy one; which, like the precious oil poured on Aaron, descends from him to the members of his body.

Ver. 35. *The Father loveth the Son*, etc.] There is such a relation as that of Father and Son subsisting between the first and second persons in the Trinity; which is not by constitution and appointment: or arbitrary, arising from, and depending on the will of the first, but is natural and necessary; the second person being begotten by the first, and is of the same nature, and equally a divine person: and which relation is the foundation of the distinction of their persons; and which existed from all eternity, and co-existed with their being and essence; and is what no other stand in, angels or men, in such sense as the second person does; and is not to be conceived of, expressed and explained by us: and from this relation arises love; hence, the Son of the Father is his dear Son, the Son of his love; as he must needs be, since he is of the same nature, has the same perfections he has, and is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person: and hence he continues to love him in every form and appearance of his; in every office he sustains; in every state and condition into which he comes: he delighted in him as his elect, as chosen and appointed by him to be the Saviour of his people; he took pleasure in him as the surety of them, and when he saw him engaging as such, and declaring it was his heart to do his will, and work out their salvation; he loved him when he appeared in human nature, the form of a servant; and in his state of humiliation, more than once he declared, by a voice from heaven, that he was his beloved Son, and particularly at his baptism: and indeed, as in that, so in every thing else, he always did the things that pleased him; he loved him when he laid down his life for the sheep: when he was bruised, and his soul made an offering for sin; he loved him when on the cross, and even when he hid his face from him; when lay in the grave he left him not, nor would he suffer him to see corruption; he raised him front the dead, and gave him glory; exalted him, and received him into heaven with a welcome, and placed him at his right hand; and now looks with pleasure upon him, upon his person, his sacrifice, blood, and righteousness: and this love is a love of complacency and delight, and is from everlasting to everlasting; the evidence of which lows,

and hath given all things into his hand; or "by his hand"; as the doctrines of the Gospel, the gifts of the Spirit, grace, and glory: or rather, "into his hand"; with which he, being the Son of God, a divine person, is fit to be entrusted, which otherwise he would not be: παντα, "all", includes "all persons"; all the angels, the good angels which are chosen in him, and he is the head of; and by whom they are confirmed in the state they are: and who are at his command and beck, and minister to him and his. The evil angels, though they have broke away from God, and rebelled against him, yet are, in some sense, in the hands of Christ, and under his power: as appears by his dispossessing them from the bodies of men on earth, his spoiling them on the cross, and triumphing over them in his ascension to heaven, and by his binding Satan a thousand years. All men are given to him; the elect in a special sense, as his bride and spouse, as his children, and as his sheep; hence, he died for them, and effectually calls them, and brings them to himself; and they shall never perish, or be plucked out of his hands, but shall have eternal life. And wicked men are, in a sense, given to him; their wrath he restrains, and makes it to praise him; he rules then with a rod of iron, and breaks them in pieces as a potter's vessel. And "all things" also are given into his hands; all temporal things, the things of nature and providence; the light of nature, and all the gifts and attainments of it; all the good things of the world, and which are wisdom's left hand blessings; and Christ disposes of them to his people in mercy, and as covenant ones: all spiritual things are in his hands; all the gifts of the Spirit, and the fulness of all grace, sanctifying, justifying, pardoning, adopting, and persevering grace; all the promises and blessings of the covenant; the government of the church, and the judgment of the world; all power, both in heaven and in earth; the salvation of the elect, and their eternal inheritance, happiness, and glory. For all which, creature, angels or men, are fit, only the Son of God.

Ver. 36. *He that believeth on the Son*, etc.] Who is a proper object of faith and trust; which, if he was not truly and properly God, he would not be: and this is to be understood not of any sort of faith, a temporary, or an historical one; but of that which is the faith of God's elect, the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; by which a man sees the Son, goes unto him, ventures and relies upon him, and commits himself to him, and expects life and salvation from him; and who shall not be ashamed and confounded; for such an one

hath everlasting life; he has it in Christ his head, in whom he believes; he has a right unto it through the justifying righteousness of Christ, and a meetness for it by his grace; he has it in faith and hope; he has the beginning of it in the knowledge of Christ, and communion with him; he has some foretastes of it in his present experience; and he has the earnest and pledge of it in his heart, even the blessed Spirit, who works him up for this selfsame thing:

and he that believeth not the Son; that does not believe Christ to be the Son of God, or Jesus to be the Messiah; or rejects him as the Saviour; who lives and dies in a state of impenitence and unbelief:

shall not see life; eternal life; he shall not enter into it, and enjoy it; he shall die the second death. Very remarkable are the following words of the Jews [f168] concerning the Messiah, whom they call the latter Redeemer:

> “whosoever believes in him “shall” live; but he that believes not in him shall go to the nations of the world, and they shall kill him.”

But the wrath of God abideth on him; as the sentence of wrath, of condemnation, and death, and the curse of the law were pronounced upon him in Adam, as on all mankind, it continues, and will continue, and will never be reversed, but will be executed on him, he not being redeemed from it, as his final unbelief shows; and as he was by nature a child of wrath, as others, he remains such; and as the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, it comes upon the children of disobedience, and remains there; it hangs over their heads, and lights upon them, and they will be filled with a dreadful sense of it to all eternity. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, “shall abide upon him”; so some copies.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 4

Ver. 1. *When therefore our Lord knew*, etc.] Or Jesus, as some copies, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read; who is Lord of all, Lord of lords, the one and only Lord of saints: and who knew all things as God; every man, and what is in man; who would believe in him, and who not, and who would betray him; he knew his adversaries, what they thought, said, or did; what was told them, and how it operated in them; and what were the secret motions of their hearts, and their most private counsels and designs; for this is not merely to be understood of his knowledge as man, which he might have by private intelligence from others; though what is here said, might be true also in this sense:

how the Pharisees; the inveterate and implacable enemies of Christ, and particularly those that dwelt at Jerusalem, and were of the great sanhedrim, or council of the nation:

had heard; either by their spies, which they constantly kept about Christ; or by John's disciples, who, through envy, might apply to the sanhedrim, to put a stop to, or check upon the baptism and ministry of Christ; or by common fame:

that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John; (see <4026>John 3:26). The method Christ took was, he first made men disciples, and then baptized them; and the same he directed his apostles to, saying, "go and teach", or "disciple all nations, baptizing them", etc. And this should be a rule of conduct to us, to baptize only such, who appear to have been made the disciples of Christ: now a disciple of Christ, is one that has learned of Christ, and has learned Christ; the way of life, righteousness, and salvation by him; who is a believer in him; who has seen a beauty, glory, fulness, and suitableness in him, as a Saviour; and is come to him, and has ventured on him, and trusted in him; and who has been taught to deny himself, sinful self, and righteous self; to part with his sins, and to renounce his own righteousness, and all dependence on it, for justification before God; and who has been made willing to leave and forsake all worldly things and

advantages, and to bear all reproach, indignities, and persecutions, for Christ's sake: and such who are Christ's disciples in this sense, are the only proper persons to be baptized; these are they, that ought to put on this badge, and wear Christ's livery: nor can baptism be of any use to any others; for such only are baptized into him, and into his death, and partake of the saving benefits of it; for whatsoever is not of faith, is sin; and without it also, it is impossible to please God.

Ver. 2. *Though Jesus himself baptized not*, etc.] And therefore as Nonnus observes, it was a false report that was made to the Pharisees; at least in part, so far as concerns the act of baptizing: though it may be this is observed, not so much to show the falsehood of that report, as to correct what is said of Christ's baptizing; lest it should be understood, as if he baptized in his own person; whereas he did not, that not so, well comporting with his greatness and majesty: wherefore "the king did not baptize in water", as Nonnus expresses it, but left that for his disciples and servants to do; he had other and greater work to perform, as to preach the Gospel, and work miracles, heal diseases, cast out devils, etc. And besides, had another sort of baptism, of a more excellent nature to administer, namely, the baptism of the Spirit; and since water baptism is administered in his name, as well as in the name of the Father and of the Spirit, it does not seem that it would have been administered with that propriety by himself, in his own name; add to which, as is also observed by others, it might have occasioned contentions and disputes among the baptized, had some, been baptized by Christ, and others by his disciples; the one valuing themselves on that account, above the others. The Persic version indeed suggests, as if both Christ and his disciples baptized, rendering the words thus, "Jesus was not alone who baptized, but the disciples also baptized": whereas the truth of the matter is, that Christ did not baptize in water at all:

but his disciples; they baptized in his name, and by his orders, such who were first made disciples by him.

Ver. 3. *He left Judaea*, etc.] Where he had been for some time: at the feast of the passover he went up to Jerusalem, and after a short stay there, he came into the country part of Judea, where he tarried longer; and in both about the space of eight months; for it was now but four months to harvest, which began at the passover; (see John 2:13 3:22 4:35). And now upon thee Pharisees being made acquainted with his success in these

parts, he leaves them; not through fear of them, but because he would not irritate and provoke them, and stir up their malice and envy against him, which might put them upon measures to seek to take away his life; whereas his time was not yet come, and he had other work to do elsewhere:

and departed again into Galilee; where he had spent the greatest part of his time, in private life; from whence he came to Jordan unto John to be baptized by him; and after that went thither again, where he wrought his first miracle: and now having been in Judea some time, he removes to Galilee again; and of this journey of his thither, after the imprisonment of John, an account is given, in (<4004>Matthew 4:12,13). The Persic version leaves out the word “again”, and so do the Alexandrian copy, and many copies; but is by others retained, and very justly.

Ver. 4. *And he must needs go through Samaria*.] Not the city, but the country of Samaria; for the way to Galilee from Judea, lay through the midst of Samaria; nor was there any other way, without going a great way about; (see <4005>Luke 9:51,52 17:11); and which is also confirmed by Josephus [f169]: and this accounts for his going through Samaria, consistently with his forbidding his apostles going in the way of the Gentiles, or into any of the cities of the Samaritans; since here was a necessity for it, or otherwise he himself would not have gone, where he forbid his disciples; though the prohibition may be understood, not of barely going into a Samaritan city; for it was lawful for them, notwithstanding that, to go into one of them, as appears from (<4008>John 4:8 <4052>Luke 9:52); but of going to preach there, (<4005>Matthew 10:5-7). And besides this necessity, there was another thing that lay upon him, and obliged him to take this tour, and that is, the calling and conversion of a certain woman, and other Samaritans, whom the Father had given to him, and he was to redeem by his blood; and the time of whose effectual calling was now come; and therefore he must needs go this way, and at this particular time. The Arabic and Persic versions represent it, as a purpose and determination in his mind to go this way.

Ver. 5. *Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar*, etc.] Now called Neapolis [f170]; the same with “Sichem”, or “Shechem”, as appears from its situation,

near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; (see <0133>Genesis 33:18,19 48:22 <0624>Joshua 24:32); and is either the same, only its termination is changed from “em” into “ar”, as Achan into Achar, (<0707>1

Chronicles 2:7). Or it is a new name that was given it, and by which it went in the time of Christ; and might be so called, either from rkws, “Socher”, which signifies a grave; because here, Joseph and the rest of the patriarchs were buried, (<062432>Joshua 24:32 <440716>Acts 7:16). Or rather, it was a name of reproach, and so called, from rkç, “drunken”; since the Ephraimites, the posterity of Joseph, which dwelt in these parts, were infamous for the sin of drunkenness; (see <232801>Isaiah 28:1). Hence “Sychar Sichem”, is “drunken Sichem”; mention is made in the Talmud [f171], of a place called arkys, “Sichra”. The “parcel of ground”, or of a “field”, as in (<013319>Genesis 33:19 <062432>Joshua 24:32), is in the Persic version, called “a vineyard”; and so Nonnus renders it, “a field planted with vines”; and which may serve to confirm the above conjecture, concerning “Sychar” being a nickname.

Ver. 6. *Now Jacob’s well was there*, etc.] So called, either because it was dug by him; or because he and his family made use of it, when in those parts, as in (<430412>John 4:12), though no mention is made of it elsewhere, unless any reference is had to it in the blessing of Joseph, to whom this place belonged, (<014922>Genesis 49:22), as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, or in (<053328>Deuteronomy 33:28), as Grotius suggests: in the Talmud [f172] there is mention made, of rkws ˆy[, “the fountain of Sochar”; and may not improperly be rendered, “the well of Sychar”: but whether the same with this, is not certain; that appears to be a great way from Jerusalem, as this also was, even forty miles:

Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey; having travelled on foot, from Judea thither; and he having a body like to ours, subject to weariness, and which proves the truth and reality of it, was greatly fatigued; having very probably travelled all that morning, if not a day, or days before:

sat thus on the well; or by it; by the side of it, upon the brink of it, as Nonnus paraphrases it, upon the bare ground. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, leave out “thus”; and the Ethiopic version reads it, “there”; but it is rightly retained, and is emphatical; and signifies, that he sat like a weary person, glad to set himself down any where; and not caring how, or where, he sat to rest his weary limbs:

and it was about the sixth hour; about twelve o’clock at noon. The Ethiopic version adds by way of explanation, and “it was then noon”; and all the Oriental versions omit ωσει, “about”; rendering it, “it was the sixth hour”: and now Christ had been travelling all the morning, and it was a

time of day to take some refreshment, which as yet he had not, the disciples being gone to buy food; and a time of day also, when the sun if out, and has any strength, beats with its greatest vehemence; and all which considered, it is no wonder that he should be weary, faint, and thirsty.

Ver. 7. *There cometh a woman of Samaria*, etc.] Or "out of Samaria"; not out of the city of Samaria, but out of the country of Samaria; out of Sychar, a city of Samaria: her coming was not by chance, but by the providence of God, and agreeably to his purpose, who orders all things according to the counsel of his will; and it is an amazing instance of grace, that a woman, a Samaritan woman, a lewd and infamous one, should be a chosen vessel of salvation, should be the object of divine favour, and be effectually called by the grace of God; when so many wise, learned, and religious men in Judea, were passed by; and not only so, but she was the happy means of conveying the knowledge of the Saviour to many of her neighbours: she came, indeed,

to draw water; for her present temporal use and service; she little thought of meeting at Jacob's well, with Christ the fountain of gardens, and well of living water; she came for natural water, having no notion of water in a spiritual sense: or of carrying back with her the water of life, even a well of it, springing up to everlasting life:

Jesus saith unto her, give me to drink; that is, water to drink, out of the pot or pitcher, she brought with her, for he was athirst; which is another proof of the truth of his human nature, and of his taking it, with the sinless infirmities of it: though indeed this request was made, to introduce a discourse with the woman, he having a more violent thirst, and a stronger desire, after the welfare of her immortal soul.

Ver. 8. *For his disciples were gone away*, etc.] This is related, not so much to give a reason why Christ asked the woman for water, because his disciples were not present, to minister to him; but rather to show, that Christ took the opportunity, in their absence, to converse with her; partly to avoid the scandal and offence they might take, at his conversation with her, being a Samaritan; as it appears to have been astonishing to them, when they found him talking with her, (<4007>John 4:27). And partly, that he might not put the woman to shame and blushing before them all; he chooses to tell her of the sins of her former life, in a private way. The disciples were gone

unto the city: to the city Sychar, which was hard by; and their business there, was

to buy meat: for though it is said, in the following verse, that the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans; yet this is not to be understood in the strictest sense; for they had dealings with them in some respects, as will be seen hereafter; particularly their food, eatables, and drinkables, were lawful to be bought of them, and used: it is said by R. Juda bar Pazi, in the name of R. Ame[f173],

> "a roasted egg of the Cuthites (or Samaritans), lo, this is lawful: says R. Jacob bar Acha, in the name of R. Lazar, the boiled victuals of the Cuthites (Samaritans), lo, these are free; this he says concerning boiled food, because it is not their custom to put wine and vinegar into it,"

for these were forbidden: hence it is often said[f174], that

> "the unleavened bread of the Cuthites (or Samaritans), is lawful, and that a man is allowed the use of it at the passover."

And there was a time when their wine was lawful; for one of their canons runs thus[f175];

> "he that buys wine of the Cuthites (Samaritans), says, the two logs that I shall separate, lo, they are first fruits, etc."

It is indeed said in one place, R. Eliezer[f176]

> "that, he that eats the bread of the Cuthites (or Samaritans), is as if he eat flesh; to when (who reported this) says (R. Akiba) be silent, I will not tell you what R. Eliezer thinks concerning it."

Upon which the commentators serve[f177], that this is not to be understood strictly; cause he that eats bread of the Samaritans, does deserve stripes according to the law, but according to the constitutions of the wise men; but these, Christ and his disciples had no regard to.

Ver. 9. *Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him*, etc.] In a scoffing, jeering way,

how is it, that thou being a Jew; which she might know, by his language and his dress:

askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? not that the waters of Samaria were unlawful for a Jew to drink of; for as

> "the land of the Cuthites (or Samaritans), was pure, or clean, so, hytwqm, "their collections of water", and their habitations, and their ways were clean [f178],"

and might be used; but because the Jews used no familiarity with the Samaritans, nor would they receive any courtesy or kindness from them, as follows:

for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans: some take these to be the words of the evangelist, commenting upon, and explaining the words of the woman; but they seem rather to be her own words, giving a reason why she returned such an answer; and which must be understood, not in the strictest sense, as if they had no dealings at all with them: indeed in some things they had no dealings with them, and at some certain times; hence that discourse of the Samaritans with a Jewish Rabbi [f179].

> "The Cuthites (or Samaritans) inquired of R. Abhu, your fathers, ˆyqptsm wyh, "used to deal with us" (or minister to us, or supply us with necessaries), wherefore do not ye deal with us? (or take a supply from us;) he replied unto them, your fathers did not corrupt their works, you have corrupted your works."

They might not use their wine and vinegar, nor admit them to their tables; they say of a man [180],

> "because the Cuthites (or Samaritans) ate at his table, it was the reason why his children went into captivity — and further add, that whoever invites a Cuthite (or Samaritan) into his house, and ministers to him, is the cause of captivity to his children."

And they forbid a man to enter into partnership with a Cuthite (or Samaritan [f181]): and particularly,

> "three days before the feasts of idolaters (for such they reckoned the Samaritans, as well as others), it is forbidden to have any commerce with them, to borrow of them, or lend to them [f182] etc."

But then at other times, and in other respects, they had dealings with them; they might go into their cities and buy food of them, as the disciples did, (⁴⁰⁰⁸John 4:8); they might send their wheat to a Samaritan miller, to be

ground [f183]; and as it appears from the above citations, their houses and habitations were clean, and might be lodged in, with which compare (<4052>Luke 9:52); the poor of the Samaritans were maintained with the poor of Israel [f184]; wherefore the sense is, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, that the Jews refused to receive the least favour or kindness at the hand of a Samaritan; and therefore the woman might justly wonder, that Christ should ask so small a favour of her, as a little water. The reason of this distance and aversion, was religion; and so the Ethiopic version, rather paraphrasing than translating, renders the words, "the Jews do not agree in religion, nor do they communicate with the Samaritans, nor mix together": and this was of long standing, and had been occasioned and increased by various incidents; for when the ten tribes revolted in Jeroboam's time, the calves were set up in Dan and Bethel, in order to draw off the people from worship at Jerusalem, which gave great umbrage to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; and when the ten tribes were carried away captive by the king of Assyria, he planted the cities of Samaria with colonies in their room, consisting of Heathenish and idolatrous persons, brought from Babylon, and other places; to whom he sent a priest, to instruct them in the manner of the God of the land; but with these instructions, they still retained their idols, and their idolatrous practices; (see <122417>2 Kings 17:24-41), which must render them odious to the Jews: and these were the principal adversaries of the Jews, after their return from captivity; and discouraged them, and weakened their hands, in the building of the second temple: but what latest, and most of all had fixed this aversion and enmity, was this; Manasseh, brother to Jaddua the high priest, having married Sanballat's daughter, governor of Samaria, was for it removed from the priesthood; who applying to his father-in-law, he proposed building for him a temple on Mount Gerizim, and making him an high priest; for which he obtained leave of Alexander the Great, and accordingly built one, and made his son-in-law high priest; which drew a great many profligate Jews over to him, who mixing with the Samaritans, set up a worship, religion, and priesthood, in distinction from the Jews; and this was ever after a matter of contention and quarrel between these people, and the reason why they would have no dealings with them.

Ver. 10. *Jesus answered and said unto her*, etc.] In a very serious manner, in a different way from hers:

if thou knewest the gift of God; meaning, not the Holy Spirit with his gifts and graces, as some think, but himself; for the following clause is explanatory of it;

and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink; and Christ is also spoken of in the Old Testament, as the gift of God, (<2916>Isaiah 9:6) and he had lately spoken of himself as such, (<4816>John 3:16) and he is, by way of eminency, "the gift of God"; which is comprehensive of all others, is exceeding large, and very suitable to the wants and cases of men; and is irrevocable, unchangeable, and unspeakable: for he is God's gift, as he is his own and only begotten Son; and he is given for a covenant to the people, with all the promises and blessings of it; and as an head, both of eminence and influence; and to be a Saviour of them, and a sacrifice for their sins; and as the bread of life, for them to feed and live upon; of which gift, men are naturally ignorant, as this woman was: they know not the dignity of his person; nor the nature and usefulness of his offices; nor the way of peace, righteousness, and salvation by him; nor do they see any amiableness, or loveliness in him; and whatever notional knowledge some natural men may have of him, they know him not spiritually and experimentally, or as the gift of God to them:

thou wouldst have asked of him; a favour and benefit; for such who truly know Christ, the worth and value of him, and their need of him, will apply to him for grace, as they have encouragement to do; since all grace is treasured up in him, and he gives it freely, and upbraideth not; and souls are invited to ask it of him, and take it freely; nor is it to be had anywhere else: but knowledge of Christ, is absolutely necessary, to asking anything of him; for till he is known, he will not be applied to; but when he is made known to any, in his fulness and suitableness, they will have recourse to him, and ask grace and mercy of him; and which is freely had: the Vulgate Latin very wrongly adds, "perhaps"; reading it, "perhaps thou wouldst have asked"; whereas our Lord's meaning is, that she would certainly have asked:

and he would have given thee living water; pardoning and justifying grace, every branch of sanctifying grace, and all the supplies of it; so called, because his grace quickens sinners dead in sin, and dead in law, and in, their own apprehensions; and causes them to live in themselves, and before God; and because it refreshes and comforts, revives and cheers, and is like rivers of water in a dry land; and because it maintains and supports spiritual

life in their souls; and it ever abides, and continues, and springs up unto everlasting life: for the allusion is to spring water, that bubbles up in a fountain, and is ever running; for such water the Jews call “living water”; (see <01:26:19>Genesis 26:19); where in the Hebrew text it is “living water”; which we, and also the Chaldee paraphrase, render “springing water”. So living waters with them, are said to be always flowing, and never cease [f185].

Ver. 11. *The woman saith unto him, Sir*, etc.] Which was an usual, way in those countries, of addressing men, and especially strangers; and expresses no uncommon respect to Christ, of whose dignity and greatness she was, entirely ignorant; and at whom she was now scoffing; for so the following words are to be understood:

thou hast nothing to draw with; no pail, or bucket, or rope, to let it down with, as Nonnus adds; for it seems, there was no bucket, or vessel, fastened at the well for the common use, but everyone brought one with them, when they came to draw: though it is strange there was not one; since, according to common usage, and even of the Jews [f186],

> “a public well had, lwq, “a bucket”, or pitcher; but a private well had no bucket:”

and the well is deep; that which is now called Jacob’s well, is by some said to be forty cubits deep, and by others thirty five yards:

from whence then hast thou that living water? this she said in a sneering, scoffing manner: she reasoned with him, either that he must have it out of this well; but that could not be, since he had no vessel to draw with, and the well was so deep, that he could not come at the water without one; or he must have it from some neighbouring spring; upon which she scoffs at him in the following manner.

Ver 12. *Art thou greater than our father Jacob*, etc.] A person of greater worth and character than he, who was content to drink of this water; or wiser and more knowing than he, who could find out no better fountain of water in all these parts? she calls Jacob the father of them, according to the common notion and boasting of these people, when it served their turn; otherwise they were not the descendants of Jacob; for after the ten tribes were carried away captive by the king of Assyria, he placed in their room, in the cities of Samaria, men from Babylon, Cuthah Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, Heathenish and idolatrous people; (see <12:17:24>2 Kings 17:24).

And from these, the then Samaritans sprung; only upon Sanballat's building a temple on Mount Gerizzim, for Manasseh his son-in-law, when put away from the priesthood by the Jews, for his marriage of his daughter, several wicked persons of the like sort, came out of Judea, and joined themselves to the Samaritans: and such a mixed medley of people were they at this time, though they boasted of Jacob as their father, as this woman did; and so to this day, they draw their genealogy from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and particularly call Joseph their father, and say, from whence are we, but from the tribe of Joseph the just, from Ephraim [f187]? as they formerly did [f188];

> "R. Meir saw a Samaritan, he said to him, from whence comest thou? (that is, from what family;) he answered, from the (tribe) of Joseph."

Which gave us the well; Jacob gave it indeed to Joseph and his posterity, along with the parcel of ground in which it was; (see <4005>John 4:5); but not to this mixed company:

and drank thereof himself and his children, and his cattle; which shows both the goodness and plenty of the water: though our Lord had spoken of living water, this woman understood him of no other water, but spring water; called living water, from its motion, because it is continually springing up, bubbling, and ever running: so carnal persons, when they hear of spiritual things under earthly metaphors, think of nothing but carnal things; as Nicodemus, when Christ talked of being born again; and the Jews at Capernaum, when he discoursed concerning eating his flesh, and drinking his blood; for spiritual things are neither known nor received by the natural man.

Ver. 13. *Jesus answered and said unto her*, etc.] In a mild and gentle manner, patiently bearing all her scoffs and flouts, and continuing to instruct and inform her, concerning this living water, showing the preferableness of it to all others:

whosoever drinketh of this water; meaning in that well called Jacob's well, or any other common water:

shall thirst again; as this woman had often done, and would again, as she herself knew, (<4005>John 4:15), and as Jesus did, who very likely afterwards drank of it, (<3028>John 19:28). For though water allays heat, quenches thirst, and refreshes and revives the spirits for a while, yet in process of time,

natural heat increases, and thirst returns, and there is a necessity of drinking water again.

Ver. 14. *But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him*, etc.] Meaning, the Spirit and his grace; (see ⁴⁰⁰⁷John 7:38,39); and which he more than once speaks of, as his gift here, and in the context: of which, whoever truly partakes,

shall never thirst; either after sinful lusts and pleasures, and his former vicious way of living, which he now disrelishes: not but there are desires and lustings after carnal things in regenerate persons, as there were lustings in the Israelites, after the onions, garlic, and flesh pots in Egypt, when they were come out from thence; yet these are not so strong, prevalent, and predominant; they are checked and restrained by the grace of God; so that they do not hanker after sin as they did, nor drink up iniquity like water, or commit sin with greediness, as before: or else it means thirsting after the grace of God; thirsty persons are invited to take and drink of the water of life freely, and are pronounced blessed; and it is promised, that they shall be filled, or satisfied; yet not so in this life, that they shall never thirst or desire more; for as they need more grace, and it is promised them, they thirst after it, and desire it; and the more they taste and partake of it, the more they desire it: but the sense is, either as some read the words, "they shall not thirst for ever"; though they may for a time, and be in a distressed condition for want of a supply of it, yet they shall always; God will open rivers and fountains for them, and give drink to his people, his chosen; and the other state, they shall hunger and thirst no more; for the Lamb shall lead them to fountains of living waters: or rather, they shall never thirst, so as to be like the thirsty and parched earth, dried up, and have no moisture in them; for however this may seem sometimes to be their case, God will, and does, pour out water and floods upon them; yea, that grace which is infused into their souls, is an abundant and an abiding principle, which will preserve them from languishing, so as to perish:

but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water; which denotes the plenty of it; for the grace of God given at conversion is exceeding abundant, it superabounds all the aboundings of sin; it comes in large flows into the hearts of regenerate persons, and flows out of them, as rivers of living water: and which also abides, for it continues

springing up into everlasting life: it is a seed which remains, an immortal and never dying principle; it is inseparably connected with eternal life; it is

the beginning of it, and it issues in it; whoever has grace, shall have glory; and whoever are called, sanctified, justified, and pardoned, shall be glorified: such is the nature, influence, and use of this living water, in Christ's gift: the words of the law are, in the Targum on (Song of Solomon 4:15) compared to a well of living water.

Ver. 15. *The woman saith unto him, Sir*, etc.] (See Gill on "John 4:11");

give me this water, that I thirst not. The Syriac and Persic versions add, "again":

neither come hither; the Ethiopic version adds here, "again";

to draw. This she said also, in the same sneering and scoffing way, as her talking of not thirsting and coming thither to draw water, shows; and it is as if she had said, pray give me some of this fine water you talk of, that I may never thirst again; and so have no occasion to be at all this fatigue and trouble, to come daily to this well for water: though some think, that she now spoke seriously, having some little knowledge of what our Lord meant by living water, but with a mixture of much ignorance, and that she heartily desired it; but the reason she gives, shows the contrary.

Ver. 16. *Jesus saith unto her*, etc.] Observing that she continued an ignorant scoffer at him, and his words, determined to take another method with her; and convince her, that he was not a common and ordinary person she was conversing with, as she took him to be; and also what a sinner she was, and what a vicious course of life she had lived; so that she might see that she stood in need of him, as the gift of God, and Saviour of men; and of the grace he had been speaking of, under the notion of living water: saying to her,

go, call thy husband, and come hither; go directly from hence to the city of Sychar, and call thy husband, and come back hither along with him again: this Christ said, not to have him come to teach and instruct him, and as if he would more readily and easily understand him, and that he might be with her, a partaker of the same grace; but to bring on some further conversation, by which she would understand that he knew her state and condition, and what a course of life she now lived, and so bring her under a conviction of her sin and danger, and need of him and his grace.

Ver. 17. *The woman answered and said, I have no husband*, etc.] Which was a truth she would not have spoke at another time and place, or to any of her neighbours; but Christ being a stranger, and no odium incurring upon her by it; and this serving a purpose to excuse her going to call him, she declares the truth of the matter:

Jesus said unto her, thou hast well said, I have no husband; this is the truth, it is really fact, and is the true state of the case, between thee and him, who goes for thy husband.

Ver. 18. *For thou hast had five husbands*, etc.] Which she either had had lawfully, and had buried one after another; and which was no crime, and might be: the Sadducees propose a case to Christ, in which a woman is said to have had seven husbands successively, in a lawful manner, (<4225>Matthew 22:25-28). Or rather, she had had so many, and had been divorced from everyone of them, for adultery; for no other cause it should seem did the Samaritans divorce; seeing that they only received the law of Moses, and rejected, at least, many of the traditions of the elders; and since they are particularly said [f189]

> "not to be expert in the law of marriages and divorces:"

and the rather this may seem to be the case, as Dr. Lightfoot observes; since these husbands are mentioned, as well as he with whom she lived in an adulterous manner; and which suggests, that she had not lived honestly with them:

and he whom thou now hast, is not thy husband; that is, not thy lawful husband, as the Persic version reads, and Nonnus paraphrases; being not married to him at all, though they cohabited as man and wife, when there was no such relation between them:

in that saidst thou truly; or that which is truth: thus Christ the omniscient God, who knew her full well, and the whole of her past infamous conversation, and her present lewd and wicked way of living, exposes all unto her.

Ver. 19. *The woman saith unto him, Sir*, etc.] With another countenance, and a different air and gesture, with another accent and tone of speech, dropping her scoffs and jeers:

I perceive that thou art a prophet; such an one as Samuel was, who could tell Saul what was in his heart, and that his father's asses were found, and where they were, (<091919>1 Samuel 9:19,20); and as Elisha, whose heart went with his servant Gehazi, when Naaman turned to him to meet him, and give him presents; and who could tell, ere the king's messenger came to him, that the son of a murderer had sent to take away his head, (<120526>2 Kings 5:26 6:32). And such a prophet, that had such a spirit of discerning, this woman took Christ to be; and who indeed is greater than a prophet, and is the omniscient God; who knows all men's hearts, thoughts, words and actions, and needs not that any should testify of them to him; for he knows what is in them, and done by them; and can tell them all that ever they did, as he did this woman, (<430429>John 4:29). Now in order either to shift off the discourse from this subject, which touched her to the quick; or else being truly sensible of her sin, and willing to reform, and for the future to worship God in the place and manner he had directed, she addressed Christ in the following words.

Ver. 20. *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain*, etc.] Mount Gerizim, which was just by, and within sight; so that the woman could point to it; it was so near to Shechem, or Sychar, that Jotham's voice was heard from the top of it thither, (<070906>Judges 9:6,7). By the "fathers", this woman claims as theirs, are meant, not the immediate ancestors of the Samaritans, or those only of some few generations past; but the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose descendants they would be thought to be; and they improved every instance of their worshipping in these parts, in favour of this mountain, being a sacred place. And Abraham did indeed build an altar to the Lord, in the plain of Moreh, (<011206>Genesis 12:6,7) and which the Jews themselves [f190] own, is the same with Sichem; but their tradition which Theophylact reports, that Isaac was offered upon the Mount of Gerizim, is entirely false: Jacob, it is true, came to Shalem, a city of Shechem; and upon this very spot of ground, the parcel of a field, he bought of the children of Hammor, and gave to his son Joseph, he built an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel, (<013318>Genesis 33:18-20). And also upon this very mountain, the tribe of Joseph, with others stood, when they were come over Jordan, and blessed the people; all which circumstances, the Samaritans failed not to make use of in vindication of themselves, and their worship in this mountain; and which this woman might be acquainted with, and might refer unto: but as for any temple, or place of worship on this mount, there was none till of late years, even after the second temple was

built. The occasion of it, as Josephus [f191] relates, was this; Manasseh, brother to Jaddua the high priest, having married Nicasso, daughter of Sanballat, governor of Samaria, was on that account driven from the priesthood; he fled to his father-in-law, and related the case to him, expressing great love to his daughter, and yet a regard to his office; upon which Sanballat proposed to build him a temple on Mount Gerizim, for which he did not doubt of obtaining leave of Darius the Persian monarch, and make him an high priest. Darius being overcome by Alexander the Great, Sanballat made his court to him, and petitioned him for the building of this temple, who granted him his request; and accordingly he built one, and Manasseh became the high priest; and many of the profligate Jews, that had married strange wives, or violated the sabbath, or had eaten forbidden meat, came over and joined him. This temple, we are told[f192], was built about forty years after the second temple at Jerusalem: and stood two hundred years, and then was destroyed by Jochanan, the son of Simeon, the son of Mattathiah, who was called Hyrcanus, and so says Josephus [f193]; it might now be rebuilt: however, this did not put a stop to worship in this place, about which there were great contentions, between the Jews and the Samaritans; of which we have some instances, in the writings of the former: it is said [f194], that

> "R. Jonathan went to pray in Jerusalem, and passed by that mountain (the gloss says, Mount Gerizim), and a certain Samaritan saw him, and said to him, whither art thou going? he replied, that he was going to pray at Jerusalem; he said to him, is it not better for thee to pray in this blessed mountain, and not in that dunghill house? he replied, why is it blessed? he answered, because it was not overflowed by the waters of the flood; the thing was hid from the eyes of R. Jonathan, and he could not return an answer."

This story is told elsewhere [f195], with a little variation, and more plainly as to the place, thus;

> "it happened to R. Jonathan, that he went to Neapolis, of the Cuthites, or Samaritans, (i.e. to Sichem, for Sichem is now called Naplous,) and he was riding upon an ass, and an herdsman with him; a certain, Samaritan joined himself to them: when they came to Mount Gerizim, the Samaritan said to R. Jonathan, how came it to pass that we are come to this holy mountain? R. Jonathan replied,

> whence comes it to be holy? the Samaritan answered him, because it was not hurt by the waters of the flood."

Much the same story is told of R. Ishmael bar R. Jose[f196]. It is to be observed in this account, that the Samaritans call this mountain the holy mountain, they imagined there was something sacred in it; and the blessed mountain, or the mountain of blessing; no doubt, because the blessings were pronounced upon it; though a very poor reason is given by them in the above passages. And they not only urged the above instances of the worship or the patriarchs at, or about this place, which this woman refers to; but even falsified a passage in the Pentateuch, as is generally thought, in favour of this mount; for in (<5204>Deuteronomy 27:4), instead of Mount Ebal, in the Samaritan Pentateuch Mount Gerizim is inserted. So stood the ease on one side of the question; on the other hand, the Jews pleaded for the temple at Jerusalem.

And ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship; that is, in the temple, there; who urged, and very rightly, that God had chosen that place to put his name, and fix his worship there; and had ordered them to come thither, and bring their offerings and sacrifices, and to keep their passover and other feasts; (see <5105>Deuteronomy 12:5,6 16:2 <1472>2 Chronicles 7:12). This was built by Solomon, according to the command and direction of God, some hundreds of years before Mount Gerizim was made use of for religious worship; and they had not only these things to plead, but also the worship which was here given to God in this place before the temple was built upon it, which they failed not to do. So the Targumist on (<1401>2 Chronicles 3:1) enlarges on this head;

> "and Solomon began to build the sanctuary of the Lord in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, in the place where Abraham worshipped and prayed in the name of the Lord: anjlwp [ra rta awh, "this place is the land of worship"; for there all generations worshipped before the Lord; and there Abraham offered up his son Isaac, for a burnt offering, and the word of the Lord delivered him, and a ram was appointed in his stead; there Jacob prayed when he fled from Esau his brother; there the angel of the Lord appeared to David, when he disposed the sacrifice in the place he bought of Ornan, in the floor of Ornan the Jebusite."

And since, now there were so many things to be said on each side of the question, this woman desires, that seeing Christ was a prophet, he would be pleased to give her his sense of the matter, and inform her which was the right place of worship.

Ver. 21. *Jesus saith unto her, woman, believe me*, etc.] In what I am now going to say, since you own me to be a prophet:

the hour cometh; the time is at hand; it is very near; it is just coming:

when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father; that is, God, whom the Jews, and so the Samaritans, knew under the character of the Father of all men, as the Creator and preserver of them; for not God as the Father of Christ, or of the saints by adopting grace, is here intended, which this ignorant woman at least had no knowledge of: and the reason of our Lord's speaking after this manner, signifying, that she need not trouble herself about the place of worship, was, partly, because in a little time Jerusalem, and the temple in it, would be destroyed, and not one stone left upon another; and that Samaria, and this mountain of Gerizim, with whatsoever edifice might be upon it, would be laid desolate, so that neither of them would continue long to be places of religious worship; and partly, because all distinction of places in religion would entirely cease; and one place would be as lawful, and as proper to worship in, as another; and men should lift up holy hands, and pray, and offer up spiritual sacrifices in every place, even from the rising of the sun, to the going down of the same, (Malachi 1:11).

Ver. 22. *Ye worship ye know not what*, etc.] However, as to her question, he more directly replies by condemning the Samaritans, and their ignorance in worship, and by approving the Jews; and so manifestly gives the preference to the Jews, not only with respect to the place, and object of worship, but with respect to knowledge and salvation. As for the Samaritans, he suggests, that they were ignorant, not only of the true object of worship, but knew not what they themselves worshipped; or, at least, were not agreed in it. The original inhabitants of those parts, from whence these Samaritans sprung, were idolatrous Heathens, placed by the king of Assyria in the room of the ten tribes he carried away captive; and these feared not the Lord, for they "knew not the manner of the God of the land": wherefore lions were sent among them which slew many of them; upon which the king of Assyria ordered a priest to be sent to instruct them: but notwithstanding this, they had everyone gods of their own, some one,

and some another; and so served divers graven images, they and their children, and their children's children, to the time of the writer of the Book of Kings; (see <122724>2 Kings 17:24-41). And though after Manasseh, and other Jews were come among them, and they had received the law of Moses, they might have some knowledge of the true God, yet they glorified him not as God; and though they might in words profess him, yet in works they denied him; and even after this they are very highly charged by the Jews with idolatrous practices on this mount. Sometimes they say [f197] the Cuthites, or Samaritans, worshipped fire; and at other times, and which chiefly prevails with them, they assert [f198], that their wise men, upon searching, found that they worshipped the image of a dove on Mount Gerizim; and sometimes they say [f199], they worshipped the idols, the strange gods, or Teraphim, which Jacob hid under the oak in Sichem; which last, if true, may serve to illustrate these words of Christ, that they worshipped they knew not what, since they worshipped idols hid in the mount.

> "R. Ishmael bar Jose, they say [f200] went to Neapolis, (Sichem, called Naplous,) the Cuthites, or Samaritans came to him (to persuade him to worship with them in their mountain); he said unto them, I will show you that ye do not "worship at this mountain", but "the images which are hid under it"; for it is written, (<013504>Genesis 35:4); "and Jacob hid them" under the oak which was by Shechem."

And elsewhere [f201] it is reported of the same Rabbi, that he went to Jerusalem to pray, as before related on (<430420>John 4:20), and after what passed between him, and the Samaritan he met with at Mount Gerizim, before mentioned, he added;

> "and said to him, I will tell you what ye are like, (ye are like) to a dog that lusts after carrion; so because ye know the idols are hid under it, (the mountain,) as it is written, (<013504>Genesis 35:4) and Jacob hid them, therefore ye lust after it: they said — this man knows that idols are hid here, and perhaps he will take them away; and they consulted together to kill him: he arose, and made his escape in the night."

But this was not the case of the Jews:

we know what we worship; Christ puts himself among them, for he was a Jew, as the woman took him to be; and, as man, was a worshipper of God; he feared, loved, and obeyed God; he trusted in him, and prayed unto him;

though, as God, he was the object of worship himself: and the true worshippers among the Jews, of which sort Christ was, knew God, whom they worshipped, spiritually and savingly; and the generality of that people had right notions of the God of Israel, having the oracles, and service of God, and being instructed out of Moses, and the prophets:

for salvation is of the Jews; the promises of salvation, and of a Saviour, were made to them, when the Gentiles were strangers to them; the means of salvation, and of the knowledge of it, as the word, statutes, and ordinances, were enjoyed by them, when others were ignorant of them; and the Messiah, who is sometimes styled "Salvation", (see <0149:18>Genesis 49:18 <1947>Psalm 14:7 <4229>Luke 2:30), was not only prophesied of in their books, and promised unto them, but came of them, as well as to them; and the number of the saved ones had been for many hundreds of years, and still was among them; the line of election ran among them, and few among the Gentiles were called and saved, as yet.

Ver. 23. *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers*, etc.] The worshippers of the true God, and who worship in a right manner, whether Jews or Samaritans, or of whatsoever nation:

shall worship the Father; the one true God, the Father of spirits, and of all flesh living:

in spirit; in opposition to all carnal conceptions of him, as if he was a corporeal being, or circumscribed in some certain place, dwelling in temples made with hands, or was to be worshipped with men's hands; and in distinction from the carnal worship of the Jews, which lay greatly in the observation of carnal ordinances: and this shows they should not worship with their bodies only, for bodily exercise profiteth little; but with their souls or spirits, with their whole hearts engaged therein; and by, and under the influence and assistance of the Spirit of God, without whom men cannot perform worship, neither prayer, praise, preaching, or hearing, aright:

and in truth; in opposition to hypocrisy, with true hearts, in the singleness, sincerity, and integrity of their souls; and in distinction from Jewish ceremonies, which were only shadows, and had not the truth and substance of things in them; and according to the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation; and in Christ, who is the truth, the true tabernacle, in, and through whom accent is had to God, prayer is made to him, and every part

of religious worship with acceptance: so Enoch is said, ajçwqb jlp, "to worship in truth", before the Lord, in the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, in (<010524>Genesis 5:24). And it may be that the worship of all the three persons in the Godhead, as more distinctly performed under the Gospel dispensation, is here intended: for the words may be thus read, "shall worship the Father, with the Spirit", and with the truth; so the preposition εν, is rendered in (<490602>Ephesians 6:2); and elsewhere; and then the sense is, they shall "worship the Father"; the first person in the Trinity, who is the Father of Christ, his only begotten Son, and together and equally with him "the Spirit"; the holy Spirit, as the Ethiopic version reads; and Nonnus calls it the divine Spirit: and the rather he may be thought to be intended, since it follows in (<430424>John 4:24), "the Spirit is God"; for so the words lie in the Greek text; and are so rendered in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; and therefore is the proper object of religious worship, whose temples the saints are, with whom they have communion, to whom they pray, and in whose name they are baptized: and also together "with the truth"; with Christ the way, the truth, and the life; who is the true God, and eternal life; and who is equally to be worshipped as the Father and Spirit, as he is by the angels in heaven, and by the saints on earth; who pray unto him, trust in him, and are also baptized in his name, as in the name of the other two persons: and the rather this may be thought to be the sense, since Christ is speaking, not of the manner, but of the object of worship, in the preceding verse:

for the Father seeketh such to worship him; it being agreeable to him to be worshipped in the manner, as above related; and his desire is, that the Son and Spirit should be honoured equally as himself; and such worshippers he has found, having made them such, both among the Jews and Gentiles; and such only are acceptable to him; (see <500303>Philippians 3:3).

Ver. 24. *God is a spirit*, etc.] Or "the Spirit is God"; a divine person, possessed of all divine perfections, as appears from his names, works, and worship ascribed unto him; (see Gill on "<430423>John 4:23"); though the Arabic and Persic versions, and others, read as we do, "God is a spirit"; that is, God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: for taking the words in this light, not one of the persons is to be understood exclusive of the other; for this description, or definition, agrees with each of them, and they are all the object of worship, and to be worshipped in a true and spiritual manner. God is a spirit, and not a body, or a corporeal substance: the nature and essence of God is like a spirit, simple and uncompounded, not made up of

parts; nor is it divisible; nor does it admit of any change and alteration. God, as a spirit, is immaterial, immortal, invisible, and an intelligent, willing, and active being; but differs from other spirits, in that he is not created, but an immense and infinite spirit, and an eternal one, which has neither beginning nor end: he is therefore a spirit by way of eminency, as well as effectively, he being the author and former of all spirits: whatever excellence is in them, must be ascribed to God in the highest manner; and whatever is imperfect in them, must be removed from him:

and they that worship him; worship is due to him on account of his nature and perfections, both internal and external; with both the bodies and souls of men; and both private and public; in the closet, in the family, and in the church of God; as prayer, praise, attendance on the word and ordinances:

must worship him in spirit and in truth; in the true and spiritual manner before described, which is suitable to his nature, and agreeably to his will.

Ver. 25. *The woman saith unto him*, etc.] Not knowing well what to say to these things Christ had been discoursing about, as the place, object, and manner of worship; and being undetermined in her judgment of them, by what he had said, was willing to refer them to the Messiah's coming; of which she, and the Samaritans, had some knowledge,

I know that Messias cometh which is called Christ: the last clause, "which is called Christ", are not the words of the woman explaining the Hebrew word Messiah; for as, on the one hand, she did not understand Greek, so, on the other, she could not think that the person she was conversing with, who she knew was a Jew, needed that word to be explained to him; but they are the words of the evangelist, interpreting the Hebrew word "Messiah", by the Greek word "Christ", in which language he wrote: hence this clause is left out in the Syriac version, as unnecessary to a Syriac reader, not needing the word to be explained to him. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions, and some copies, read in the plural number, "we know that Messias cometh"; the knowledge of the coming of the Messiah was not peculiar to this woman, but was common to all the Samaritans; for as they received the five books of Moses, they might learn from thence, that a divine and excellent person was to come, who is called the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head; Shiloh, to whom the gathering of the people should be; and a prophet like unto Moses: and though the word "Messiah" is not found in those books, yet, as it was usual with the Jews to call the same person by this name, they might easily

take it from them, and make use of it; and they not only knew that there was a Messiah to come, and expected him, but that he was coming, just ready to come; and this they might conclude, not only from the general expectation of the Jewish nation about this time, but from (<01490>Genesis 49:10). And it is certain, that the Samaritans to this day do expect a Messiah, though they know not his name, unless it be bhçh; the meaning of which they do not understand [f202] to me it seems to be an abbreviation of abhçh, or abh rça awh, "he that is to come"; by which circumlocution the Jews understand the Messiah; (see <401103>Matthew 11:3); and to which this Samaritan woman seems to have some respect:

when he is come he will tell us all things; the whole mind and will of God; all things relating to the worship of God, and to the salvation of men. This the Samaritans might conclude from his general character as a prophet, like unto Moses, to whom men were to hearken, (<051815>Deuteronomy 18:15), and from a common prevailing notion among the Jews, that the times of the Messiah would be times of great knowledge, founded on several prophecies, as (<230203>Isaiah 2:3 11:2,9 <243134>Jeremiah 31:34), and which they sometimes express in the following manner [f203]:

> "in the days of the Messiah, even the little children in the world shall find out the hidden things of wisdom, and know in it the ends and computations (of times), and at that time he shall be made manifest unto all."

And again [f204],

> "says R. Judah, the holy blessed God will reveal the deep mysteries of the law in the times of the King Messiah; for "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord", etc. and it is written, "they shall not teach every man his brother", etc."

And elsewhere [f205],

> "the whole world shall be filled with the words of the Messiah, and with the words of the law, and with the words of the commandments; and these things shall extend to the isles afar off; to many people, the uncircumcised in heart, and the uncircumcised in flesh; and they shall deal in the secrets of the law. — And there shall be no business in the world, but to know the Lord only; wherefore the Israelites shall be exceeding wise, and know secret

> things, and comprehend the knowledge of their Creator, as much as is possible for a man to do, as it is said, “the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord”, etc.”

Accordingly, the Messiah is come, who lay in the bosom of the Father, and has made known all things to his disciples, he hath heard of him; he has declared him to them, his love, grace, and mercy. God has spoken all he has to say that appertains to his own worship, and the salvation of the children of men by his Son Jesus Christ.

Ver. 26. *Jesus saith unto her*, etc.] Upon her making mention of the Messiah, of his coming, and of his work, he took the opportunity of making himself known unto her:

I that speak unto thee am [he]; the Messiah; (see [-2506]Isaiah 52:6). This is a wonderful instance of the grace of Christ to this woman, that he should make himself known in so clear and plain a manner, to so mean a person, and so infamous a creature as she had been: we never find that he ever made so clear a discovery of himself, in such express terms, to any, as to her, unless it were to his immediate disciples; and these he would sometimes charge not to tell who he was.

Ver. 27. *And upon this came his disciples*, etc.] Just as he was saying the above words, and making himself known in this full manner, his disciples, who had been into the city to buy food, came up to them:

and marvelled that he talked with the woman; or with a woman; for, according to the Jewish canons, it was not judged decent, right, and proper, nor indeed lawful, to enter into a conversation, or hold any long discourse with a woman. Their rule is this,

> “do not multiply discourse with a woman, with his wife they say, much less with his neighbour’s wife: hence the wise men say, at whatsoever time a man multiplies discourse with a woman, he is the cause of evil to himself, and ceases from the words of the law, and at last shall go down into hell [f206].”

And especially this was thought to be very unseemly in any public place, as in an inn, or in the street: hence that direction [f207],

> “let not a man talk with a woman in the streets, even with his wife; and there is no need to say with another man’s wife.”

And particularly it was thought very unbecoming a religious man, a doctor, or scholar, or a disciple of a wise man so to do. This is one of the six things which are a reproach to a scholar, “to talk with a woman in the street” [f208]. And it is even said [f209],

> “let him not talk with a woman in the street, though she is his wife, or his sister, or his daughter.”

And besides, the disciples might marvel, not only that he talked with a woman, but that he should talk with that woman, who was a Samaritan; since the Jews had no familiar conversation with Samaritans, men or women: and the woman was as much astonished that Christ should have anything to say to her, and especially to ask a favour of her; for though they might, and did converse in a way of trade and business, yet did they not multiply discourse, or enter into a free conversation with one another: and it may be, that the disciples might overhear what he said to the woman, just as they came up; so that their astonishment was not merely at his talking with a woman, and with a Samaritan woman, but at what he said unto her, that he should so plainly tell her that he was the Messiah, when he so strictly charged them to tell no man.

Yet no man said; no, not Peter, as Nonnus observes, who was bold and forward to put and ask questions: “what seekest thou?” or inquirest of her about? is it food, or drink, or what? “or why talkest thou with her?” when it is not customary, seemly, and lawful. It may be considered, whether or no these two questions may not relate separately, the one to the woman, the other to Christ; as, the first,

what seekest thou? to the woman; and the sense be, that no man said to her, what do you want with our master? what are you inquiring about of him? what would you have of him? or what do you seek for from him? and the latter,

why talkest thou with her? peculiarly to Christ. The Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and Beza’s ancient copy indeed read, “no man said to him”; which confines both the questions to Christ. Now this shows the reverence the disciples had for Christ, and the great opinion they entertained of him, that whatever he did was well, and wisely done, though it might seem strange to them, and they could not account for it: however, they did not think that he, who was their Lord and master, was accountable

to them for what he did; and they doubted not but he had good reasons for his conduct.

Ver. 28. *The woman then left her water pot*, etc.] Her pail, or bucket, she brought with her to the well to draw water in: this she left, either for Christ and his disciples to make use of; or rather through forgetfulness, her mind being greatly impressed, and her thoughts much taken up with what Christ had said to her, and she being in haste to acquaint others with it: so the disciples left their nets, their business, their friends, and all for Christ; and so the saints are brought to quit their earthly and worldly things for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel. The Ethiopic version renders it, "she left her disputation": she left off discoursing with Christ upon the disciples coming to him.

And went her way into the city: the city of Sychar, to inform her friends, relations, and neighbours what she had met with: so Andrew and Philip, when they had found Christ themselves, acquaint others with it, and bring them to him; so Levi, the publican, being called himself by Christ, makes a feast for Christ, and invites many publicans and sinners to sit down with him, that they might know him as well as himself; so the Apostle Paul, when converted, expresses a great concern for his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh; and such is the nature of true grace, that those that have it would have others partakers of it likewise:

and saith to the men. The Ethiopic version adds, "of her house"; no doubt the men of the place in general are meant; not only those of her family, but the inhabitants of the city. The Syriac version leaves out the words, "to the men". The Jews will not allow the Cuthites, or Samaritans, to be called "men"; this they peculiarly ascribe to priests, Levites, and Israelites [f210].

Ver. 29. *Come, see a man*, etc.] An uncommon, an extraordinary man, a prophet, and, who himself says, he is the Messiah, who is now at Jacob's well; come, go along with me, and see him and converse with him, and judge for yourselves, who, and what he is: she does not say, "go and see"; for she proposed to go along with them herself, that she might have more conversation with him, and knowledge of him, and grace from him: so such that have tasted that the Lord is gracious, desire more grace from him, and communion with him.

Which told me all things that ever I did; the more remarkable things that had been done by her in the whole series of her life and conversation;

referring more especially to the account he had given her of her having had five husbands, and what the man was she now lived with; when no doubt, all the transactions of her life were laid before her, and she had, at once, a view of all her iniquities; when her sins stared her in the face, and her conscience was filled with guilt and remorse, and her soul with shame and confusion; and so it is when Christ, by his Spirit, convinces of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment:

is not this the Christ? that was to come, has been promised and prophesied of, and we have expected, who is of quick understanding, and even God omniscient; surely this must be he, as he himself says he is.

Ver. 30. *Then they went out of the city*, etc.] "The men", as the Syriac version expresses it; the inhabitants of Sychar left their business, and came out of the city:

and came unto him; to Christ, to see him, and converse with him, that they might know who he was: for though the woman had been a woman of ill fame, yet such was the account that she gave of Christ, and such power went along with her words, that what with the strangeness of the relation, and the curiosity with which they were led, and chiefly through the efficacy of divine grace, at least in many of them, they were moved to regard what she said, and to follow her directions and solicitations.

Ver. 31. *In the mean while*, etc.] Whilst the woman was gone into the city, and had acquainted the inhabitants, that such a wonderful person was at Jacob's well, and invited them to come and see him:

his disciples prayed him, saying, master, eat; for they perceived a disinclination in him to food; and they knew that he was weary with his journey, and that it was the time of day, and high time, that he had had some food; and therefore out of great respect to him, and in concern for his health and welfare, they entreated him that he would take some food: so far was Christ from indulging his sensual appetite; and so little reason had the Scribes and Pharisees to traduce him as a wine bibber and glutton.

Ver. 32. *But he said unto them*, etc.] That is, "Jesus", as the Persic, or the Lord Jesus, as the Ethiopic versions express it:

I have meat to eat that ye know not of: meaning the conversion of the Samaritan woman, and of other Samaritans, who were flocking in great numbers to him, which he knew, though his disciples did not; and the

harvest of souls he had a prospect of, (see <4005>John 4:35), was as meat unto him, delightful and refreshing; and his mind and thoughts were so taken up with these things, that he had no inclination to any corporeal food.

Ver. 33. *Therefore said the disciples one to another*, etc.] Privately, among themselves, though in his hearing; at least he knew what they said by answer;

hath any man; or anyone, any angel from heaven, or any of the inhabitants of the city, or any man or woman, or this woman they had found him talking with:

brought him [ought] to eat? for they thought of nothing else but bodily food; just as when he cautioned them against the leaven of the Sadducees and Pharisees, they imagined he said it, because they had taken no bread; whereas he meant the doctrine of these persons: so dull of understanding spiritual things were the disciples themselves, that it is not so much to be wondered at that the Samaritan woman, whilst in her carnal state, when Christ spoke of living water, should understand him of material water, or spring water.

Ver. 34. *Jesus saith unto them*, etc.] His disciples:

my meat is to do the will of him that sent me. The Ethiopic version reads, "of my Father that sent me", and who is undoubtedly intended. Now as food is pleasant, and delightful, and refreshing to the body of man, so doing the will of God was as delightful and refreshing to the soul of Christ: he took as much pleasure in it, as an hungry man does in eating and drinking. One part of the will of God was to assume human nature; this he had done, and with delight and pleasure: another part of it was to fulfil the law; and this was in his heart, and was his delight, and he was now doing it: and another branch of it was to suffer and die, in the room and stead of his people; and as disagreeable as this was in itself to the human nature, yet he cheerfully agreed to it; and was sometimes, as it were, impatient till it was accomplished; and he voluntarily became obedient to it: no man could, with greater eagerness, fall to eating, when hungry, than Christ went about his Father's will and work, even that which was most ungrateful to him, as man.

And to finish his work; one part of which was to preach the Gospel, and for, which he was anointed and sent; and which he did with great assiduity and constancy: and another part of it was the conversion of sinners by it,

whom he was sent to call, and with whom he delighted to be; and was the work he was now about, and took the pleasure in, the text expresses: and beside these miracles were works his Father gave him to finish; such as healing diseases, and dispossessing of devils, and which he went about doing continually, with great delight: but the chief, work of all is, that of redemption and salvation of his chosen ones: this was a work his Father called him to, and sent him into this world to perform, which he gave unto him, and Christ accepted of, and agreed to do; and though it was a very toilsome and laborious one, there being a righteous law to be fulfilled, justice to be satisfied, the sins of all his people to bear, as well as the wrath of God, and the curse of the law, and numerous enemies to grapple with, and an accursed death to undergo; yet with pleasure he performed this: for the joy of his Father's will, accomplishing his counsels and covenant, and his own engagements, and procuring the salvation of his people, he endured the cross patiently, and despised the shame of it. The whole of the and work of God was done by him, just as the Lord commanded it; exactly, according to the pattern given him, with all faithfulness and integrity; with the most consummate wisdom and prudence; with all application, diligence, and constancy, and so as to finish it, and that without the help of any other; and in such a manner that nothing can be added to it to make it more perfect, or that it can be undone again by men or devils: and that the doing and finishing of this were his meat, or as delightful and refreshing to him as meat is to the body, appears from his ready and cheerful engaging in it in eternity; from his early and industrious entrance on it in time; from his constancy in it, when he had begun, insomuch that nothing could deter him from it; nor did he sink and fail under it, nor left it till he had finished it.

Ver. 35. *Say not ye, there are yet four months*, etc.] Our Lord had been in Jerusalem and Judea, about eight months from the last passover, and there remained four more to the next passover:

and then cometh harvest? barley harvest, which began at that time. Now as the passover was in the middle of the month Nisan, which was about the latter end of our March; reckoning four months back from thence shows, that it was about the latter end of our November, or beginning of December, that Christ was in Samaria, and at Jacob's well. Some think, that this does not refer to the then present time, as if there were so many months from thence to the next harvest, but to a common way of speaking, that there were four months from seed time to harvest; during which time there was a comfortable hope, and longing expectation of it: but this will,

by no means, agree either with the wheat or barley harvest. The wheat was sown before this time, and the barley a good while after.

> "Half Tisri, Marcheshvan, and half Cisleu, were, [rz, seed time [f211]"

The earliest they sowed their wheat was in Tisri, which answers to our September and October; i.e. to half one, and half the other. The month of Marcheshvan, which answers to October and November, was the principal month for sowing it [f212]: hence that paraphrase on (Ecclesiastes 11:2):

> "give a good part of thy seed to thy field in Tisri, and do not refrain from sowing even in Cisleu."

As for the barley, that was sown in the months of Shebet and Adar, and usually in the latter [f213]; the former of which answers to January and February, and the latter to February and March. And we read [f214] of their sowing seventy days before the passover, which was within six weeks of the beginning of barley harvest.

Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields: pointing to the lands which lay near the city of Sychar:

for they are white already to harvest; alluding to the corn fields, which, when ripe, and near harvest, look white: hence we read [f215] of ^blh hdç, "the white field": which the Jews say is a field sown with wheat or barley, and so called to distinguish it from a field planted with trees; though it may be rather, that it is so called from its white look when ripe. So the three Targums paraphrase (Genesis 49:12):

> "his hills (his valleys, or fields, as Onkelos) ^rwwjy, "are white" with corn, and flocks of sheep."

Christ here speaks not literally; for the fields could not be white at such a distance from harvest; but spiritually, of a harvest of souls; and has regard to the large number of Samaritans that were just now coming out of the city, and were within sight, and covered the adjacent fields: and these he calls upon his disciples to lift up their eyes and behold; and suggests to them, that it was not a time for eating and drinking, but for working, since here was such a number of souls to be gathered in: and thus as from corporeal food he proceeded to treat of spiritual food; so from a literal

harvest he goes on to speak of a spiritual one, and encourages his disciples to labour in it, by the following arguments.

Ver. 36. *And he that reapeth receiveth wages*, etc.] Angels are sometimes called reapers, and so are ministers of the Gospel here. The works and ministry of the apostles are here expressed by "reaping": for as in reaping, when the corn is ripe, the sickle is put in, and the corn is cut down, and laid to the ground, and then bound in sheaves, and gathered into the barn; so when things are ripe in providence, and God's set time is come to convert any of his people, he makes use of his ministers for the cutting them down, laying low the loftiness and haughtiness of man, stripping him of all his goodliness, and taking him off of a dependence on his own righteousness and works, and for the gathering them into his churches, which is done with a great deal of joy and pleasure: and such as are so employed, and in this way made useful, shall "receive wages", shall not only be taken care of in providence, and have a sufficient and comfortable maintenance, the labourer being worthy of his hire; but shall have pleasure, delight, and satisfaction in their work, that being blessed for the good of souls, and the glory of Christ, and they having the presence God in it; and also shall hereafter receive the crown of righteousness, when they have finished their course, and shall shine like the stars for ever and ever.

And gathereth fruit unto life eternal: by fruit are meant sinners converted and turned from the error of their ways which are the fruit of a Gospel ministry, of the efficacy and power of divine grace accompanying it; (see John 15:16); and these are gathered, by the preaching of the Gospel, out from among the rest of mankind, unto Christ, the Shiloh, or peace maker, and into his churches, and remain, abide, and persevere to the end; that grace, which is implanted in their souls, being a well of living water, springing up to everlasting life; so that they are at last gathered into Christ's garner, into heaven, where they shall live with him for ever:

that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together. The sowers are the prophets of the Old Testament, who sowed that seed in the prophecies, which sprung up in Gospel times, and laid the foundation therein of the great success of the apostles of Christ in preaching the word; for they so clearly described the Messiah, and pointed out Christ, his offices, and his work, in so distinct a manner, that when he was come he was readily known, and cheerfully embraced; they greatly facilitated the work of the apostles, who had nothing to do but to preach Christ, as come

in the flesh: and hence they reaped and gathered a vast harvest of souls every where. John the Baptist also was one that sowed; he prepared the way of the Lord, and made straight his paths: and our Lord himself was a sower, that went forth to sow, and who sowed good seed in the field; all which succeeded well, and were ripening apace for a general harvest, which began on the day of Pentecost, after our Lord's ascension to heaven. This was in Judea; and in the Gentile world there was a sowing in providence, which contributed to make the work of the disciples more easy there, and to bring on, in time, a large harvest. The books of the Old Testament were translated into the Greek language; and the Jews were scattered in the several parts of the world; and the Greek tongue, in which the New Testament was to be written, was every where generally spoken; and these providences were ripening apace to bring on a great work there. And now, as before observed, the apostles were the reapers; they were remarkably successful in the gathering in of souls, even more than the prophets, than John the Baptist, or Christ himself; never was such a harvest of souls, either in Judea, or in the Gentile world, before or since; of which the conversion of these Samaritans was a pledge or earnest. Now when the whole harvest is gathered in, at the end of the world, all these will rejoice together, the "patriarchs" and prophets, the forerunner of Christ, and Christ himself, and all his apostles and ministers; the different parts they have had in this work all concurring and agreeing together, and issuing in the glory of God, and the good of souls.

Ver. 37. *And herein is that saying true*, etc.] This verifies that proverbial expression so much in use, and which may be applied to different persons and cases:

one soweth, and another reapeth; the prophets sowed, and the apostles reaped.

Ver. 38. *I sent you to reap*, etc.] To preach the Gospel, and gather in souls by your ministry; referring to the mission of them in (Matthew 10:6,7);

that whereon ye bestowed no labour; being sent to the Jews, who had the writings of the prophets, and were versed in them; and had learned from them that the Messiah was to come, and were now in general expectation of him; so that they had nothing more to do, than to declare to those persons who were cultivated by the prophets, and were like to ground tilled and manured, that the Messiah was come, and the kingdom of heaven was at hand.

Other men laboured; the prophets, and John the Baptist:

and ye are entered into their labours; to finish the work they had begun, and which was almost done to their hands.

Ver. 39. *And many of the Samaritans of that city*, etc.] Of Sychar, which was a city of Samaria;

believed on him; that he was the true Messiah he had told the woman he was; and she put it to them whether he was or not: before they saw him, or had any conversation with him themselves, they believed in him; (see ⁴⁰²⁰John 20:29);

for the saying of the woman which testified, he told me all that ever I did: the account she gave was so plain, and honest, and disinterested, that they could not but give credit to it; and since the person was an utter stranger to her, and yet had laid before her the whole series of her past life and conversation, they concluded he could be no other than the Messiah, who should tell all things; and being of quick understanding or smell, was able to disclose the secrets of men.

Ver. 40. *So when the Samaritans were come unto him*, etc.] The Ethiopic version reads, all the Samaritans; they came to him at Jacob's well, upon the woman's solicitations, and the account she gave of this extraordinary person: and after they had conversed with him, and heard him themselves, they were taken with his divine discourses, and being thoroughly persuaded that he was the Messiah,

they besought him that he would tarry with them; they were not like the Gergesenes, who besought him to depart out of their coasts as soon he was in them: but these men were delighted with his company; and notwithstanding his being a Jew, desired a conversation with him, and entreated that he would go along with them to their city, and stay with them:

and he abode there two days; he went with them to Sychar. He would not deny their request, lest they should be discouraged; and yet would not make any long stay with them, that he might give no umbrage to the Jews; though it is very likely from this short stay in Samaria, they afterwards reproached him as a Samaritan, (⁴⁰⁰⁸John 8:48). Our Lord's direction to his disciples not to enter into any of the cities of the Samaritans, was not a rule

to himself, or binding upon him, and was only a rule to them “pro tempore”.

Ver. 41. *And many more believed*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions add, “on him”: when he was come into the city, and had preached to the inhabitants in general, a larger multitude than before believed in him as the Messiah, and professed him, and became followers of him.

Because of his own word; which came to them, not in word only, but in power, and was the power of God unto salvation to them; and was received by them, not as the word of man, but as the word of God; and it wrought effectually in them, and was an hammer to break their rocky hearts in pieces, and to bring them into subjection to himself, his Gospel and ordinances: whether his word or doctrine was accompanied with miracles is not certain; this shows, that their faith in him was founded on his own word, which fell with great weight upon them. It seems to have an emphasis laid upon it, his own word, in distinction from the woman’s saying.

Ver. 42. *And said unto the woman*, etc.] Who, it appears, kept hearing Christ, attending on him, and conversing with him; for having tasted of his grace, she could not leave him:

now we believe, not because of thy saying; not on account of that only: it should seem that these were the same persons that believed upon her word before they went out of the city; and who, when come to Christ, invited him into it; and now, having heard his excellent discourses, were confirmed in the faith of him:

for we have heard him ourselves; not only externally with their bodily ears, but internally, having ears given them to hear, so as to understand what he said; to mix it with faith, and receive it in love; to feel the power of it in their hearts, and taste the sweetness of it, and be nourished by it; and so as to distinguish his voice from another’s, as Christ’s true sheep are capable of.

And know that this is indeed the Christ; the true Messiah, and not a false one; the Messiah spoken of by Moses, whose books the Samaritans received, as the seed of the woman, the Shiloh, and prophet, like to Moses; the Christ of God, who is anointed to be prophet, priest, and King. The

Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the word “Christ”, and only read what follows,

the Saviour of the world: they knew him to be the Saviour, he who was spoken of as such; for his work to bruise the serpent’s head implies it, and his name Shiloh imports as much: and besides, he is called by Jacob God’s salvation, (<01498>Genesis 49:18). God appointed him as a Saviour; he sent him, and he came as such, and is become the author of salvation; and his name is called Jesus, on this account: and a great Saviour he is; both able, and willing; and he is suitable to the case of sinners; and is a complete, and an only one: and these Samaritans knew him to be “the Saviour of the world”; not of every individual person in it, for all are not saved by him; nor of the Jewish world, for many of them died in their sins; but of the Gentiles, in distinction from the Jews; (see <43616>John 3:16 <62202>1 John 2:2); even of all God’s elect, whether among Jews or Gentiles; of all that believe in him, of whatsoever nation, and in whatsoever state and condition: so that their knowledge of him, and faith in him, were beyond that of the Jews, who looked upon the Messiah only as a Saviour of their nation; and that the Gentiles would have no manner of benefit and advantage by him: though the Jews[f216] do call the angel in (<02320>Exodus 23:20) `aml[d aqwrp`, “the Saviour”, or “Redeemer of” the world. And this the Samaritans might know from the writings of Moses, as from (<01218>Genesis 22:18 49:10) their present knowledge of Christ was not a mere notional, speculative, and general one, but was special, spiritual, and saving, which they had from the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ; they approved of him as their Saviour; they trusted in him as such; they had an experimental acquaintance with him, and practically owned him; and which they attained to by hearing him.

Ver. 43. *Now after two days he departed thence*, etc.] When he had stayed two days at Sychar conversing with, and discoursing to the Samaritans, which were the means of the conversion of many of them; he departed out of that country, and passed on his way:

and went into Galilee; as he first intended; (see <43043>John 4:3).

Ver. 44. *For Jesus himself testified*, etc.] (<40457>Matthew 13:57);

that a prophet hath no honour in his own country: all the Oriental versions read, “in his own city”; that is, Nazareth: for these words must not be understood as a reason why Christ left Judea, and went into Galilee,

because he had no honour in Judea, in which was Bethlehem, the place of his nativity; but are a reason why, when he came into Galilee, he did not go to Nazareth, his own city, where he was educated, and had been brought up, and had lived the greatest part of his life, because they treated him with great disrespect and contempt; (see Gill on "<4001357>Matthew 13:57").

Ver. 45. *Then when he was come into Galilee*, etc.] That part of it in which Cana lay, as appears by what follows:

the Galilaeans received him; willingly, readily, and cheerfully, with much delight and pleasure, and with marks of great esteem and respect: they received him into their houses, and entertained him, and provided for him and his disciples:

having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem, at the feast of the passover; the miracles he wrought there, (see <4002223>John 2:23);

for they also went unto the feast; as well as Jesus and his disciples: they kept the feast of the passover, and went yearly to Jerusalem on that account: so Josephus speaks of the Galilaeans going to the Jewish festivals at Jerusalem, when he says [f217];

> "it was the custom, or usual with the Galilaeans, when they went to the holy city at the festivals, to go through the country of the Samaritans;"

which was the way that Christ now came from thence to them.

Ver. 46. *So Jesus came again unto Cana of Galilee*, etc.] Where he had been once before; (see <4002201>John 2:1,2). The Syriac version here, as there, calls it "Kotne" of Galilee; and the Persic version, "Catneh" of Galilee:

where he made the water wine; (see <4002209>John 2:9,11);

there was a certain nobleman; the Vulgate Latin renders it, "a petty king"; the Arabic version, and Nonnus, call him, "a royal man"; and the Syriac version renders it, "a king's servant"; with which agrees the Ethiopic, calling him "a minister, a steward, the king's domestic". The Persic version makes it to be his name, reading it, "there was a great man, whose name was Abdolmelic", which signifies a king's servant: from the whole he seems to be one that belonged to the palace of Herod Antipas, and was one of his courtiers; who, though he was but tetrarch of Galilee, yet is sometimes called a king, (<4001614>Mark 6:14);

whose son was sick at Capernaum; some versions, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic, read the phrase, “in Capernaum”, with the former clause, “there was a nobleman in Capernaum”: and others, as we do with this; and both may be true; for he might be an inhabitant of Capernaum, and his house be there where his son lay sick. Some think this nobleman was either Chuza, Herod’s steward, (<4808>Luke 8:3), or Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod, (<4401>Acts 13:1).

Ver. 47. *When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea*, etc.] For the fame of Christ, for his doctrine and miracles, was spread every where; so that it was known, and talked of, in most places, where he was, and what course he was steering: and this nobleman understanding that he had left Judea, and was come

into Galilee; and having inquired in what parts of Galilee he was,

he went unto him; though it was many miles from Capernaum, where Jesus was, at least a day’s journey; since, when the servants met their master, the child had been healed at one o’clock the day before; (see <4052>John 4:52). Some reckon it about fifteen miles, but one would think it should be more:

and besought him, that he would come down; for Capernaum, though it was built on a hill, lay lower down in the country of Galilee than Cana did, near the sea of Tiberias: a like way of speaking is used in (<4012>John 2:12);

and heal his son. The nobleman believed that Christ had power to do it, by what he had heard concerning him, but thought his corporeal presence was absolutely necessary to it:

for he was at the point of death; or “would die”: he was very near it; there was no likelihood of his recovery; the physicians had given him over; and when he left him, he seemed to be near his death, and must die for any human help that could be obtained, or natural means that could be used.

Ver. 48. *Then said Jesus unto him*, etc.] With some degree of roughness in his speech, and severity in his countenance, in a way of reproof for his unbelief, as if he could not heal his son without going down to Capernaum along with him:

except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe. This was the cast of the Jews every where, both in Judea and Galilee; they required signs and miracles to be wrought, in confirmation of Christ’s being the Messiah, and

which indeed was but right; and Christ did perform them for that purpose: but their sin of unbelief lay in this, that they wanted still more and more signs; they could not be contented with what they had seen, but required more, being sluggish and backward to believe. Our Lord seems to say this chiefly for the sake of the Galilaeans, that were about him; who, though they might be acquainted with his former miracles, when among them, of turning water into wine, and had seen his wondrous works at the feast at Jerusalem, yet were very desirous of seeing more, and perhaps very pressing for this cure.

Ver. 49. *The nobleman saith unto him, Sir*, etc.] Notwithstanding this reproof, and seeming denial, he presses him again, and addressing him in a handsome and courteous manner, importunately entreats him, saying:

come down ere my son die; here was faith with a mixture of unbelief; he believed that Christ was able to heal his son, but he still thought that his going down with him was necessary; that he must be corporeally present, and must lay his hands on him, or touch him, or speak, and command the distemper off, or something of this kind, and which must be done before he died; for otherwise, should he die first, all hope was then gone; he had no notion of Christ being able to raise him from the dead.

Ver. 50. *Jesus saith unto him, go thy way*, etc.] Return home in peace, be not over much troubled and distressed about this matter; leave it with me, I will take care of it; all will be well: so the Persic version reads, “be not anxious, and go thy way”; do not be solicitous for my presence, or urge me to go with thee; depart alone, there is no necessity for my being upon the spot:

thy son liveth; he is now recovered of his disease, and is well, and in perfect health, and lives, and will live:

and the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken to him; such power went along with the words of Christ, as not only cured the son at that distance, who lay at the point of death, but also the father of his unbelief; and he no more insisted on his going down with him, but firmly believed that his son was alive, and well, as Christ had said he was:

and he went his way; he took his leave of Christ, and set out for Capernaum; very probably, not the same day, it being now in the afternoon of the day; but the next morning, as it should seem from what follows.

Ver. 51. *And as he was now going down*, etc.] From Cana to Capernaum, the day after he had been with Christ:

his servants met him, and told [him], saying, thy son liveth; as soon as this cure was wrought, though it was not known in the family how, and by whom it was done, immediately some of the servants were dispatched to carry the news to their master, that his sorrow might be removed; and he give himself no further trouble in seeking for a cure: these meeting him on the road, with an air of pleasure, at once address him with the joyful news, that his son was thoroughly recovered of his disorder, and was alive, and well; news which he was acquainted with, and believed before; though it must give him an additional, pleasure to have it confirmed.

Ver. 52. *Then inquired he of them the hour*, etc.] He did not at all hesitate about the truth of it, or was in any surprise upon it; but that he might compare things together, he asked the exact time,

when he began to amend; or grow better; for he seemed to think, that his recovery might be gradual, and not all at once, as it was:

and they said unto him, yesterday at the seventh hour; which was one o'clock in the afternoon:

the fever left him; entirely at once, so that he was perfectly well immediately.

Ver. 53. *So the father knew that it was at the same hour*, etc.] Precisely;

in that which Jesus said to him, thy son liveth: he had observed what time of day it was, in which he conversed with Jesus; and particularly, when he told him his son was alive and well, and when he took his leave of him; and by comparing the account of his servants, with that, found that things entirely agreed, and that the cure was wrought exactly at the time, that Jesus spoke the words:

and himself believed, and his whole house; when he came home, he related the whole affair to his family, and he and they all believed, that Jesus was the Messiah, and became his disciples and followers: if this nobleman was Chuza, Herod's steward, we have an account of his wife, whose name was Joanna, that she followed Christ, and ministered to him of her substance, with other women, (Luke 8:3). There is a story, told by the Jews, and which seems somewhat like to this [f218];

> “it is reported concerning R. Chanina ben Dosa, that when he prayed for the sick, he used to say, yj hz, “this liveth”, and this dies; it was said to him, whence knowest thou this? he replied, if my prayer be ready in my mouth, I know that he is accepted (of God, i.e. the sick man for whom he prayed); but if not, I know that he will be snatched away (by the disease):”

upon which the Gemarists give the following relation [f219];

> “it happened that the son of Rabban Gamaliel (the Apostle Paul’s master) was sick, he sent two disciples to R. Chanina ben Dosa, to ask mercy for him; when he saw them, he went up to a chamber, and sought mercy for him; and when he came down, he said unto them, hmj wtxljç wkl, “go your way, for the fever has left him”; they said unto him, art thou a prophet? he replied, I am not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet; but so I have received, that if my prayer is ready in my mouth, I know that he is accepted; and if not, I know that he shall be snatched away; and they sat and wrote and observed “the very hour”; and when they came to Rabban Gamaliel, he said unto them, this service ye have not been wanting in, nor abounded in; but so the thing was, that in that hour the fever left him, and he asked of us water to drink.”

Which story perhaps is told, to vie with this miracle of Christ, and to obscure the glory of it.

Ver. 54. *This [is] again the second miracle [that] Jesus did*, etc.] That is, in that place, in Cana of Galilee; for otherwise, in Jerusalem and Judea, he had done many miracles, between the former and this; (see <4023>John 2:23 3:2); and so the following words explain it:

when he was come out of Judea into Galilee; this was the first he wrought, after his coming out of Judea into Galilee, this time, and was the second that he wrought in Cana of Galilee; (see <4021>John 2:11).

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 5

Ver. 1. *After this there was a feast of the Jews*, etc.] After Christ had been in Samaria, which was four months ago, (<4045>John 4:35), and had been in Galilee for that time, and had cured the nobleman's son, and had done other mighty works, the time came on for one of the three festivals of the Jews; either the feast of Pentecost, as some think; or as others, the feast of tabernacles; or rather, the feast of the passover, so called, in (<4045>John 4:45) since John is very particular, in giving an account of the several passovers, in Christ's ministry:

and Jesus went up to Jerusalem; according to the law of God, which obliged all the males to appear there at that time; and to show his compliance with it, and obedience to it, whom it became to fulfil all righteousness; and this he did also, that he might have an opportunity of discoursing, and doing his miracles before all the people, which came at this time, from the several parts of the land.

Ver. 2. *Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep [market]*, etc.] The word "market" is not in the text, and of such a market, no account is given in the Scripture, nor in the Jewish writings; and besides, in our Lord's time, sheep and oxen were sold in the temple; rather therefore this signifies, the sheep gate, of which mention is made, in (<160103>Nehemiah 3:1,32 12:39), through which the sheep were brought into the city, to the temple.

A pool. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, "there is at Jerusalem a sheep pool"; and so it is interpreted in the Arabic version, and Jerom calls it the "cattle pool" [f220]. The Targumist on (<243139>Jeremiah 31:39) speaks of a pool called hlg[hkyrb, "the calf", or "heifer pool", as Dr. Lightfoot renders it; though the translations of it, both in the London Polyglott, and in the king of Spain's Bible, interpret it "the round pool". This pool of Bethesda, is thought by some, to be the same which the Jews call the great pool in Jerusalem; they say [f221],

> “between Hebron and Jerusalem, is the fountain Etham, from whence the waters come by way of pipes, unto the great pool, which is in Jerusalem.”

And R. Benjamin [f222] speaks of a pool, which is to be seen to this day, where the ancients slew their sacrifices, and all the Jews write their names on the wall: and some think it was so called, because the sheep that were offered in sacrifice, were there washed; which must be either before, or after they were slain; not before, for it was not required that what was to be slain for sacrifice should be washed first; and afterwards, only the entrails of a beast were washed; and for this there was a particular place in the temple, called ˆyjydmh tkçl “the washing room”; where, they say [f223], they washed the inwards of the holy sacrifices. This pool here, therefore, seems rather, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, to have been a bath for unclean persons; and having this miraculous virtue hereafter spoken of, diseased persons only, at certain times, had recourse to it. The Syriac and Persic versions call it, “a place of a baptistery”; and both leave out the clause, “by the sheep market”, or “gate”: it is not easy to say where and what it was:

which is called in the Hebrew tongue, Bethesda; which signifies, according to the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, “an house of mercy”, or “grace”, or “goodness”; because many miserable objects here received mercy, and a cure. Hegesippus [f224] speaks of a Bethesda, which Cestius the Roman general entered into, and burnt; and which, according to him, seems to be without Jerusalem, and so not the place here spoken of; and besides, this is called a pool, though the buildings about it doubtless went by the same name. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read Bethsaida, very wrongly; and it is called by Tertullian [f225] the pool of Bethsaida. The Hebrew tongue here mentioned is rhnh rb[lç btk, “the language of those beyond the river” [f226], i.e. the river Euphrates; which is the Chaldee language, as distinct from the Assyrian language, which is called the holy and blessed language; the former is what the Cuthites, or Samaritans used; the latter, that in which the book of the law was written [f227].

Having five porches; or cloistered walks, which were very convenient for the diseased, which lay here for a cure, so Nonnus: Athanasius [f228] speaks of the pool itself, as in being, though the buildings round about lay in ruins in his time; and [f229] Daviler observes, there are still remaining five arches of the “portico”, and part of the basin. Now this place may be an emblem of

the means of grace, the ministry of the word, and ordinances: the house of God, where the Gospel is preached, may be called a Bethesda, an house of mercy; since here the free, sovereign, rich, and abundant grace and mercy of God, through Christ, is proclaimed, as the ground and foundation of a sinner's hope; the mercy of God, as it is displayed in the covenant of grace, in the mission of Christ, and redemption by him, in regeneration, and in the forgiveness of sin, and indeed, in the whole of salvation, from first to last, is here held forth for the relief of distressed minds: and this Bethesda being a pool, some of the ancients have thought, it was an emblem of, and prefigured the ordinance of baptism; and that the miraculous virtue in it, was put into it, to give honour and credit to that ordinance, shortly to be administered: but as that is not the means of regeneration and conversion, or of a cure or cleansing, but pre-requires them; rather it might be a symbol of the fountain of Christ's blood, opened for polluted sinners to wash in, and which cleanses from all sin, and cures all diseases; and this is opened in the house of mercy, and by the ministry of the word: or rather, best of all, the Gospel itself, and the ministration of it, mass be signified; which is sometimes compared to waters, and a fountain of them; (see <2304>Isaiah 4:1 <3848>Zechariah 14:8) (<2818>Joel 3:18); and whereas this pool was in Jerusalem, and that so often designs the church of Christ under the Gospel dispensation, it may fitly represent the ministry of the word there: and it being near the sheep-market, or gate, or a sheep-pool, may not be without its significancy; and may lead us to observe, that near where Christ's sheep are, which the Father has given him, and he has died for, and must bring in, he fixes his word and ordinances, in order to gather them in: and inasmuch as there were five porches, or cloistered walks, leading unto, or adjoining to this place, it has been thought by some of the ancients, that the law, as lying in the five books of Moses, may be intended by them; for under the law, and under a work of it, men are, before they come into the light and liberty, and comfort of the Gospel; and as the people which lay in these porches, received no cure there, so there are no relief, peace, joy, life, and salvation, by the law of works.

Ver. 3. *In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk*, etc.] Sick and weak persons; who were an emblem of men under the law of works, and in a state of unregeneracy; who are enfeebled by sin, and are impotent and unable to do anything of themselves; as to keep the law of God, to which they have neither will nor power, and to atone for the transgressions of it; nor to redeem themselves from the curse of the law or to begin and carry

on a work of grace upon their souls; or to do anything that is spiritually good; no, not to think a good thought, or to do a good action, as is required:

of blind; these also may represent men a state of nature, who are ignorant of, and blind to everything that is spiritual; as to the true knowledge of God in Christ, the way of salvation by him, the plague of their own hearts, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin; to the Spirit of God, and his work upon the soul; and to the truths of the Gospel, in the power of them:

halt, or "lame"; this word sometimes is used of persons in suspense about religious things, hesitating concerning them, halting between two opinions; and sometimes designs the infirmities of the saints, and their faulterings in religious exercises; and here maybe expressive in a figurative way, of the incapacity natural men, to go or walk of themselves; as to come to Christ for grace and life, which no man can do, except the Father draw him; or to walk by faith in him: it is added,

withered; one limb or another of them dried up: their arms or legs were withered, and their sinews shrunk, and were without radical moisture, or the free use of the animal spirits; and may point out carnal persons, such as are sensual, not having the Spirit, destitute of the grace of God, without faith, hope, love, knowledge, and the fear of God; without God, Christ, and the Spirit; and in a lifeless, helpless, hopeless, and perishing condition:

waiting for the moving of the water; hereafter mentioned: and so it is in providence, and a wonderful thing it is, that the hearts of so many unregenerate persons should be inclined to attend upon the outward means of grace, and should be waiting at Wisdom's gates, and watching at the posts of her door.

Ver. 4. *For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool*, etc.] This angel is not to be understood of a messenger sent from the sanhedrim, or by the priests, as Dr. Hammond thinks; who has a strange conceit, that this pool was used for the washing of the entrails of the sacrifices; and which at the passover being very numerous, the water in it mixed with the blood of the entrails, was possessed of an healing virtue; and which being stirred by a messenger sent from the sanhedrim for that purpose, whoever went in directly received a cure: but this angel was "an angel of the Lord", as the Vulgate Latin, and two of Beza's copies read; and so the Ethiopic version reads, "an angel of God"; who either in a visible form came down

from heaven, and went into the pool, the Ethiopic version very wrongly renders it, “was washed in the pool”; or it was concluded by the people, from the unusual agitation of the water, and the miraculous virtue which ensued upon it, that an angel did descend into it; and this was not at all times, but at a certain time; either once a year, as Tertullian thought, at the time of the feast of the passover, or every sabbath, as this was now the sabbath day; or it may be there was no fixed period for it, but at some times and seasons in the year so it was, which kept the people continually waiting for it:

and troubled the water; agitated and moved it to and fro, caused it to swell and rise, to bubble and boil up, and to roll about, and be as in a ferment. The Jews have a notion of spirits troubling waters; they speak of a certain fountain where a spirit resided, and an evil spirit attempted to come in his room; upon which a contest arose, and they saw ayymd ayybwbr[, “the waters troubled”, and think drops of blood upon them [f230]: the Syriac [f231] writers have a tradition, that

> “because the body of Isaiah the prophet was hid in Siloah, therefore an angel descended and moved the waters.”

Whosoever then first after the troubling of the waters stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had; from whence it seems, that only one person at a season received a cure, by going in first into the water, so Tertullian thought [f232]: the Jews ascribe an healing virtue to the well of Miriam; they say,

> “a certain ulcerous person went to dip himself in the sea of Tiberias, and it happened at that time, that the well of Miriam flowed, and he washed, ysytyaw, and was healed [f233].”

Now this angel may represent a minister of the Gospel, for such are called angels, (<66102>Revelation 1:20); being called of God, and sent by him, with messages of grace to the sons of men; and the preaching of the Gospel by such, may be aptly signified by the troubling of the waters, as it is by the shaking of heaven, earth, and sea; (see <37106>Haggai 2:6,7), compared with (<58125>Hebrews 12:25,26); especially when attended with the Spirit of God, who moved upon the face of the waters in the first creation; and who, in and by the ministry of the word, troubles the minds of men, and whilst the prophet prophesies, causes a shaking among the dry bones, which is done at certain seasons; for as there are certain seasons for the preaching of the

Gospel, so there is more especially a fixed, settled, and appointed one, for the conversion of God's elect; who are called according to purpose, and at the time the Lord has appointed: and whoever now, upon the preaching of the Gospel, are enabled to step forth and come to Christ, and believe in him, are cured of all their soul maladies and diseases, be they what they will; all their inquiries are pardoned, their persons justified, and they are saved in Christ, with an everlasting salvation: and as this cure was not owing to any natural virtue in the water, nor even to the angels troubling it, but to a supernatural power; so the conversion of a sinner is owing to ministers, and to the word and ordinances as administered by them, but to the superior power of the grace of God; and which is exerted in his time, and on whom he pleases.

Ver. 5. *And a certain man was there*, etc.] At Bethesda's pool, in one of the five porches, or cloisters, that belonged to it:

which had an infirmity thirty and eight years; what his infirmity was, is not said; he was one of the weak, or impotent folk, for so he is called, (John 5:7). Some think his distemper was the palsy, and though he had had this infirmity so many years, it is not certain that he had waited so long in this place for a cure; though it may be, for that he had attended some time, is clear from (John 5:7). Nor indeed can it be known how long there had been such a preternatural motion in this pool, and such a miraculous virtue in the water; some have thought, that it began at the repairing of the sheep gate by Eliashib, in Nehemiah's time; so Tremellius and Junius, on (Nehemiah 3:1); and others have thought, that it had been some few years before the birth of Christ, and about the time that this man was first taken with his disorder. Tertullian says [f234], that there was in Judea a medicinal lake, before Christ's time; and that the pool of Bethsaida (it should be Bethesda) was useful in curing the diseases of the Israelites; but ceased from yielding any benefit, when the name of the Lord was blasphemed by them, through their rage and fury, and continuance in it [f235]; but in what year it began, and the precise time it ceased, he says not. The Persic version here adds, "and was reduced to such a state that he could not move".

Ver. 6. *When Jesus saw him lie*, etc.] In such a helpless condition:

and knew that he had been now a long time, [in that case], or "in his disease", as the Ethiopic version supplies; even seven years before Christ was born; which is a proof of his omniscience: the words may be literally

rendered, as they are in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, “that he had had much time”; or as the Arabic version, “that he had had many years”; that is had lived many years, and was now an old man; he had his disorder eight and thirty years, and which seems from (John 5:14) to have arisen from some sin of his, from a vicious course of living, perhaps intemperance; so that he might be a middle aged man, when this distemper first seized him, and therefore must be now stricken in years:

he saith unto him, wilt thou be made whole? which question is put, not as if it was a doubt, whether he was desirous of it, or not; for to what purpose did he lie and wait there else? but partly to raise in the man an expectation of a cure, and attention in the people to it: and it may be his sense and meaning is, wilt thou be made whole on this day, which was the sabbath; or hast thou faith that thou shall be made whole in this way, or by me?

Ver. 7. *The impotent man answered him, Sir*, etc.] Which was a common and courteous way of speaking, much in use with the Jews, especially to strangers. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, “yea Lord”, which is a direct answer to the question:

I have no man; the Ethiopic version reads, “men”; he had no servant, so Nonnus, or servants, to wait upon him, and take him up in their arms, and carry him into the pool; he was a poor man, and such God is pleased to choose and call by his grace:

when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; that is, as soon as it is troubled by the angel, to put him in first before any other; for it was the first man only that had a cure this way:

but while I am coming; in a slow way, by the help of his crutches, or in the best manner he could:

another steppeth down before me; not so much disordered, or more active and nimble: so among those that wait on the ministry of the word, some are sooner in Christ, or earlier called by his grace, than others; some lie here a long time, and see one and another come to Christ, believe in him, profess his name, and are received into the church; and they still left, in an uncalled and unconverted estate.

Ver. 8. *Jesus saith to him, rise*, etc.] From thy bed, or couch, on which he lay in one of the porches: and

take up thy bed and walk; these words were spoken by the same power, as those to Lazarus, which called him out of his grave; as appears from the effect they had upon the man, who was in himself impotent, weak, and helpless.

Ver. 9. *And immediately the man was made whole*, etc.] As soon as ever the words were spoken by Christ, such power went with them, as restored the man to perfect health; and he finding himself to be quite well, rose up directly:

and took up his bed and walked; which may be expressive of a sinner's rising from the bed of sin, and taking up the cross, or carrying the body of sin and death with him; and walking by faith in Christ, as he has received him:

and on the same day was the sabbath; which is remarked, for the sake of what follows.

Ver. 10. *The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured*, etc.] When they saw him, either at the place, or as he walked through the streets, with his bed on his back:

it is the sabbath day: do not you know it? surely you forget yourself, or you would never be guilty of such an action as this;

it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. It was forbid by the law, to carry any burden on the sabbath day; (see <16B13:15,19>Nehemiah 13:15,19) (<24J17:22>Jeremiah 17:22); for

> "carrying out and bringing in anything, from one place to another, is said [f236] to be work, and one of the principal works;"

and therefore forbid by the law, which says, "thou shall not do any work"; and one of the traditions of the elders is this [f237],

> "whoever carries anything out (i.e. on the sabbath day), whether in his right hand, or in his left, in his bosom, or wpytk l[, "on his shoulder", is guilty; for so carried the Kohathites."

And particularly it is said [f238], that

> "he that rolls up a bed of the brasiers or tinkers (i.e. on the sabbath day) is bound to a sin offering."

Which was a fold up bed, such as tinkers, and those that went from city to city to work, had; and who carried their beds with them, as the gloss observes; and were so far from being lawful to be carried by them, on the sabbath, that they might not fold them up.

Ver. 11. *He answered them*, etc.] That is, the impotent man, who was now made whole, replied to the Jews:

he that made me whole, the same said unto me, take up thy bed and walk; intimating, that he that had such divine power, as to make him whole, had power to dispense with the sabbath, and such an action on it; and that his word was warrant and authority sufficient, to support him in what he did; for he that had wrought this cure for him, he concluded must be from God; was at least a great prophet, and to be hearkened to and obeyed, in one thing as well as another.

Ver. 12. *Then asked they him*, etc.] Suspecting who had made him whole, and gave him this order:

what man is that which said unto thee, take up thy bed and walk? they take no notice of the cure, being unwilling to give any glory to Christ, and still less to spread it; but chose rather that it should be obscured, hid, and unobserved; but they laid hold on that, which they thought might be improved to his reproach and scandal; and they call him a man, as supposing him to be a mere man, and a wicked man too, for giving orders to transgress a tradition of the elders, though no mere man could work such a cure as this was. And so the Jews since, though they cannot find fault with the cure, which they put an "if" upon, yet are highly displeased with the order, to take up his bed and carry it:

> "if (say they [f239]) he wrought a cure, lo, that is good, but why did he bid him take up his bed?"

the answer may be, to show that he was cured.

Ver. 13. *And he that was healed, wist not who he was*, etc.] He had never seen, and perhaps had never heard of Christ before, and so knew him not; and besides, Christ gave him no opportunity of conversing with him, or so much as to ask him who he was:

for Jesus had conveyed himself away; had slipped away, as soon as ever he had wrought the miracle:

a multitude being in [that] place; or "from the multitude that were in [that] place"; not that he hid himself among them, and there remained undiscovered; but he passed through them, and went his way to the temple, where he found the man he had healed, as in the following verse.

Ver. 14. *Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple*, etc.] Perhaps on the same day; for as soon as he had been at home, and laid down his bed, it is very likely he went directly to the temple, there to show himself, attend the worship of the place, and return thanks to God for the great mercy bestowed on him:

and said unto him, behold thou art made whole; cured of the disease that had attended him so many years; and a wonderful cure it was; well may a "behold" be prefixed; though this is here not only a note of admiration, but of attention, to what he was about to say to him: sin is a disease, which is original, natural, and hereditary to men; it is an epidemical one, all are affected with it, and all the powers and faculties of the soul; and it is a nauseous and loathsome one; and what is mortal and incurable in itself, and only to be cured by the great physician, Jesus Christ: God's elect are attended with it as others, and being made sensible thereof, they come to Christ for a cure, and receive one, as this man did, to whom he said,

sin no more; intimating, that as all diseases of the body spring from sin, so had his; and that the time past of his life should suffice, for a course of sinning; and that the mercy he had received, laid him under an obligation to guard against it, to which there would still be a proneness in him; nor did our Lord imagine, that he could hereafter live without sin, but that he should not indulge himself in it, and give up himself unto it, and live in it: so all the diseases of the soul arise from sin; and when a person is converted, he ought not to walk as others do, or he himself has done; and though there is a propensity to sin and backslide from God after conversion, yet the grace of God teaches men to deny sin, and to live righteously; and though it cannot be thought that they should be, and act without sin, yet it becomes them not to live in sin, or go on in a course of it, as heretofore:

lest a worse thing come unto thee; for God could send a worse disease, or a sorer affliction, than he had yet done; an heavier punishment, either in this world, or that to come: and apply this to a good man, a converted man, one called by grace and cured by Christ, and a worse thing through sin may come unto him than a bodily disorder, namely, the hidings of

God's face; for as his presence is life, his absence is death, to such persons; and as for such who only make a profession of religion, and are externally reformed only, such, if they sin and fall away, their latter end is worse than the beginning.

Ver. 15. *The man departed*, etc.] From Christ, and from the temple, not through displeasure, or as resenting what was said to him, but as highly delighted that he had found his kind benefactor and physician; and went either to Bethesda, where the miracle was wrought, and where a multitude of people were, and where he might expect to find some of the persons that had questioned him about carrying his bed, and who it was that bid him do it; or rather to the sanhedrim; (see ⁴⁰³³John 5:33) compared with (⁴⁰¹⁹John 1:19);

and told the Jews; the members of that great council, the chief priests, "scribes", and elders, whose business it was to judge of a prophet, and of anyone that should set up for the Messiah:

that it was Jesus; of Nazareth, of whom so much talk was about his doctrines and miracles, and who was thought to be the Messiah:

which had made him whole; this he did, not out of any ill will to Christ, with any bad design upon him, to impeach and accuse him as a violator of the sabbath, for what he had said and done to him; for this would have been most ungrateful, and even barbarous, brutish, and diabolical; but with a good intention, that Jesus might have the glory of the cure, and that others of his fellow creatures in distress might know where, and from whom to have relief; and chiefly that the sanhedrim might be induced hereby to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, and to declare and patronize him as such: and that his end was good, is clear from this, that he does not say it was Jesus that bid him take up his bed and walk, which was what the Jews cavilled at, not caring to hear of the cure; but that made him whole: he observes the miracle to them with a grateful spirit, to the honour of his physician, and that he might be thought to be what he really was.

Ver. 16. *And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus*, etc.] With their tongues, reproaching and reviling him, as a sabbath breaker, a destroyer of the law, and a sinful wicked man:

and sought to slay him; either in a violent way, by setting the zealots, a sort of ruffians under the pretence of religion, upon him; or rather in a judicial way, summoning him before the sanhedrim, in order to condemn

him to death for the breach of the sabbath, which by the law of Moses was punishable with death:

because he had done these things on the sabbath day; because he had cured the man of his disease, under which he had laboured eight and thirty years, and had ordered him to take up his bed, and walk home with it on his back on the sabbath day. This drew upon him their resentment to such a degree, that they not only persecuted him with their tongues, but sought to take away his life. Nothing would satisfy them but his blood.

Ver. 17. *But Jesus answered them*, etc.] Being convened before them, and charged by them with the violation of the sabbath, he vindicated himself in the following manner, saying;

my Father worketh hitherto: he who is my Father, not by creation, or adoption, but by nature, though he ended all his work on the seventh day, and rested from what he had done; yet he did not cease from working at all, but has continued to work ever since, on sabbath days, as well as on other days; in upholding and governing the world, in continuing the species of beings, and all creatures in their being; in providing for them, and in dispensing the bounties of his providence to them; in causing his sun to shine, and showers of rain to descend on the earth; and in taking care of, and protecting even the meanest of his creatures: and much more men; and still more his own people:

and I work; or "also I work"; as the Syriac and Arabic version reads; i.e. in conjunction with him, as a co-efficient cause in the works of providence, in the government of the world, in upholding all things in it, in bearing up the pillars of the earth, in holding things together, and sustaining all creatures: or I also work in imitation of him, in doing good both to the bodies and souls of men on the sabbath day, being the Lord of it: I do but what my Father does, and therefore, as he is not to be blamed for his works on that day, as none will say he is, no more am I. So Philo the Jew says [f240],

> "God never ceases to work; but as it is the property of fire to burn, and of snow to cool, so of God to work."

And what most men call fortune, he calls the divine Logos, or word, to whom he ascribes all the affairs of providence [f241].

Ver. 18. *Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him*, etc.] They were the more desirous to take away his life, and were more bent and resolute upon it, and studied all ways and means how to bring it about;

because he had not only broken the sabbath; as they imagined; for he had not really broken it: and if they had known what that means, that God will have mercy, and not sacrifice, they would have been convinced that he had not broke it by this act of mercy to a poor distressed object:

but said also that God was his Father; his own Father, his proper Father, his Father by nature, and that he was his own Son by nature; and this they gathered from his calling him "my Father", and assuming a co-operation with him in his divine works:

making himself to be equal with God; to be of the same nature, and have the same perfections, and do the same works; for by saying that God was his Father, and so that he was the Son of God, a phrase, which, with them, signified a divine person, as they might learn from (<19>Psalm 2:7,12), and by ascribing the same operations to himself, as to his Father, they rightly understood him, that he asserted his equality with him; for had he intended no more, and had they imagined that he intended no more by calling God his Father, than that he was so by creation, as he is to all men, or by adoption, as he was to the Jews, they would not have been so angry with him; for the phrase, in this sense, they used themselves: but they understood him otherwise, as asserting his proper deity, and perfect equality with the Father; and therefore to the charge of sabbath breaking, add that of blasphemy, and on account of both, sought to put him to death; for according to their canons, both the sabbath breaker, and the blasphemer, were to be stoned [f242].

Ver. 19. *Then answered Jesus, and said unto them*, etc.] They charged him with blasphemy for calling God his Father, and making himself equal to him: and his answer is so far from denying the thing, or observing any mistake, or misrepresentation of his words, that he allows the whole, and vindicates himself in so saying:

verily verily, I say unto you; nothing is more certain; it may be depended on as truth; I who am truth itself, the "Amen", and faithful witness, aver it with the greatest assurance:

the Son can do nothing of himself; or he does do nothing of himself, nor will he do anything of himself; that is, he neither does, nor will, nor can do

anything alone or separate from his Father, or in which he is not concerned; not anything without his knowledge and consent, or contrary to his will: he does everything in conjunction with him; with the same power, having the same will, being of the same nature, and equal to each other: for these words do not design any weakness in the Son, or want of power in him to do anything of himself; that is, by his own power: for he has by his word of power spoke all things out of nothing, and by the same upholds all things; he has himself bore the sins of his people, and by himself purged them away, and has raised himself from the dead; but they express his perfection; that he does nothing, and can do nothing of himself, in opposition to his Father, and in contradiction to his will: as Satan speaks of his own, and evil men alienated from God, act of themselves, and do that which is contrary to the nature and will of God; but the Son cannot do so, being of the same nature with God, and therefore never acts separate from him, or contrary to him, but always co-operates and acts with him, and therefore never to be blamed for what he does. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it, "the Son cannot do anything of his own will"; so Nonnus; as separate from, or contrary to his Father's will, but always in agreement with it, they being one in nature, and so in will and work. He does nothing therefore

but what he seeth the Father do; not that he sees the Father actually do a work, and then he does one after him, as the creation of the world, the assumption of human nature, and redemption of man, or any particular miracle, as if upon observing one done, he did the like; but that he being brought up with him, and lying in his bosom, was privy to the whole plan of his works, and saw in his nature and infinite mind, and in his vast counsels, purposes, and designs, all that he was doing, or would do, and so did the same, or acted agreeably to them; and which still shows and proves their unity of nature, and perfect equality, since there was nothing in the Father's mind but was known to the Son, seen, and observed, and acted up to by him: so Philo the Jew [f243] says of the

> "Father's most ancient Son, whom he otherwise calls the firstborn; that being begotten, he imitates the Father, and seeing, or looking to his exemplars and archetypes, forms species;"

that is, being conversant with the original and eternal ideas of things in the divine mind, acts according to them, which he could not do if he was not of the same nature with, and equal to his Father. Moreover, the Son sees what the Father does by co-operating with him, and so does no other than what

he sees the Father do, in conjunction with him: to which may be added, that the phrase shows, that the Son does nothing but in wisdom, and with knowledge; and that as the Father, so he does all things after the counsel of his will:

for whatsoever things he doth, these also doth the Son likewise; the Son does the selfsame works as the Father does, such as the works of creation and providence, the government both of the church, and of the world; and he does these things in like manner, with the same power, and by the same authority, his Father does, and which proves him to be equal with him; the very thing the Jews understood him to have asserted, and which they charged him with: and this he strongly maintained. The Syriac version reads, "for the things which the Father does, the same also does the Son"; and the Persic version, "whatsoever God has done, the Son also does like unto it".

Ver. 20. *For the Father loveth the Son*, etc.] As being his Son, his image, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; as being of the same nature, and having the same perfections, and so equal to him; (see Gill on "John 3:35");

and showeth him all things that himself doth; not as if he was ignorant of them, since he lies in the bosom of his Father, is the wisdom of God, is the omniscient God, that knows all things; not only all things in men, but all things in God, even the deep things of God: but this is said of the Father, as consulting with him, communicating his designs to him, as his equal; doing nothing without him, as he never did in the works of nature, or of grace: he drew the plan of peace, reconciliation, and salvation in him; he made the worlds by him; and he does nothing in the government of the world without him; and indeed he shows him all things he does, by doing all things; and by him he shows himself, and his works, to men:

and he will show him greater works than these, or he will do greater works by him than these: either than the works of creation; namely, the redemption of the elect, the justification of their persons by his righteousness, and pardon of their sins through his blood, and the regeneration and conversion of them by his Spirit and grace; either of which is a greater work than the making of the world: or greater than he has done under the Old Testament dispensation; than the redeeming of Israel out of Egypt, leading them through the wilderness, and settling them in the land of Canaan; giving them the law, the statutes, and ordinances of

God, and working miracles among them: for the redemption of God's people, by Christ, from sin, Satan, the world, the law, death, and hell, the publishing of the Gospel, the effusion of the Spirit, and setting up of the Gospel dispensation, are greater works than these; and more and greater miracles were wrought by Christ than by Moses, or any prophet under the former dispensation. Though rather the sense is, that greater miracles would be shown, and done by Christ, than these he had now done, in curing a man of his disorder, who had had it eight and thirty years, and bidding him take up his bed and walk; such as raising Jairus's daughter to life, when dead, and the widow of Naim's son, when he was carrying to the grave, and Lazarus, when he had been dead four days:

that ye may marvel; this was not properly the end of these greater works shown to, and done by Christ, which were to prove his divine sonship, his proper deity, his true Messiahship, to confirm the faith of his followers in him, and for the glory of God; but this eventually followed upon them: some wondered at them, and believed in him; and others were amazed at them, and confounded by them.

Ver. 21. *For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them*, etc.] Which may be understood either spiritually of raising dead sinners from the death of sin, to a life of grace and holiness; and the rather, because it is expressed in the present tense "raiseth", and not "hath raised"; or naturally of raising those that are dead in a corporeal sense, and quickening them, as the widow of Sarepta's son by Elijah, and the Shunamite's son by Elisha:

even so the Son quickeneth whom he will; both in a spiritual sense, being the resurrection and the life, or the author of the resurrection from a moral death to a spiritual life, whose voice, in the Gospel, the dead in sin hear, and live; and in a natural sense, as in the above instances of Jairus's daughter, the widow of Naim's son, and Lazarus; and in the general resurrection, when at his voice, and word of power, all that are in their graves shall come forth, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting damnation; and all this as he wills: he quickens, in a spiritual sense, whom he pleases, even as many as the Father has given him; and he will raise up to everlasting life, at the last day, whom he pleases, even as many as were made his care and charge, whom he has redeemed by his blood; and called by his grace. Now as the quickening of the dead is an act of almighty power, and this being exercised by the Son in a sovereign way, as is by his Father, it shows his proper deity, and full equality with the Father. The

resurrection of the dead is here expressed by “quickening”, as it frequently is by the Jews, who often speak of µytmh tyyht, “the quickening the dead”, for the resurrection; so the Targumist on (<38008>Zechariah 3:8), “in the quickening of the dead”, Ænyja, “I will quicken thee”; see the Jerusalem Targum on (<01216>Genesis 29:26 25:34).

Ver. 22. *For the Father judgeth no man*, etc.] That is, without the Son; which is another proof of their equality: for that he does judge is certain; he is the Judge of the whole earth; he is God that judgeth in the earth, or governs the world with his Son, who works together in the affairs of providence: he judged and condemned the old world, but not without his Son, who by his Spirit, or in his divine nature, went and preached to the spirits now in prison, then disobedient in the times of Noah; he judged and condemned Sodom and Gomorrah, but not without the Son; for Jehovah the Son rained, from Jehovah the Father, fire and brimstone upon those cities, and consumed them; he judged the people of Israel, and often chastised them for their sins, but not without his Son; the angel of his presence that went before them; he judges all men, and justifies and acquits whom he pleases, but not without his Son; but through his justifying righteousness, which he imputes to them; in doing which he appears to he a just judge, and to do right; and he will judge the world in righteousness at the last day by his Son, whom he has ordained; so as the Son does nothing without the Father, the Father does nothing without the Son, which shows perfect equality. The Jews had an officer in their sanhedrim, whom they called Ab Beth Din, or “the father of the house of judgment”, to whom belonged the trying of causes, and of judging and determining them. Hence the Targumist on (<22704>Song of Solomon 7:4) says,

> “anyd tyb baw, “and the father of the house of judgment”, who judgeth thy judgments, or determines thy causes, is mighty over thy people, etc.”

Whether there may not be some allusion here to this officer, I leave to be considered:

but hath committed all judgment to the Son; as the judgment, or government of his church and people, especially under the Gospel dispensation; and which he exercises by giving ordinances peculiar to it, such as baptism and the Lord’s supper; and by enacting laws, and prescribing rules for the discipline of his house, over which he is as a Son;

and by appointing proper officers under him, over his churches, to administer these ordinances, and see that these laws are put in execution, which he qualifies them for, by bestowing proper gifts upon them: and he exercises this judgment, by protecting and defending his people from all their enemies, so that they well safely under his government: as also the general judgment of the world at the last day, is committed to him; which affair will be managed by Christ, the Son of God, when he comes a second time; he will then raise the dead, that everyone may receive for the things done in his body, whether good or evil; he will gather all nations before him, and all shall stand before his judgment seat, both great and small; he will separate one from another, the sheep from the goats, and set the one on his right hand, and the other on his left; he will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, and show himself to be the searcher of the hearts, and the trier of the reins of the children of men, and will pass a most righteous and decisive sentence upon all: now for such a trust, and such a work as this, whether the particular government of the church, or the general judgment of the world, he would not be fit, was he not God equal with the Father; the thing he had suggested, and which he supports and maintains in this vindication of himself.

Ver. 23. *That all men should honour the Son*, etc.] This is the end of all judgment, and the exercise of all authority, and power being committed to him; namely, that he might have the honour given him by men that is due unto him:

even as they honour the Father; that the same honour and glory may be given to the one, as to the other, which must never have been done was he not equal with him, since he gives not his glory to another, (<23A208>Isaiah 42:8 48:11). Indeed, all men do not honour the Father as they should; the Gentiles, who had some knowledge of God, glorified him not as God; and the Jews, who had an external revelation of the one, true, and living God, which other nations had not, yet were greatly deficient in honouring him, which made him complaining say, “if then I be a father, where is mine honour?” (<390106>Malachi 1:6). And Christians, who are favoured with a clearer revelation still of the Father of Christ, are much wanting in giving him his due glory; but in common he is honoured, though in an imperfect manner; nor is there so much danger of his losing his honour, as of the Son’s losing his; the reason is this, though the Son is in the form of God, and equal with him, yet by taking upon him the form of a servant, by becoming man, he has veiled the glory of his divine person, and made

himself of no reputation; and by reason of this was reckoned by many, or most, as a mere man: wherefore, by agreement, that judgment, power, and authority, which equally belonged to the Father, and the Son, the exercise of it is put visibly and openly into the Son's hands, that he might have his due honour and glory from all men, whether they will or not: from true believers in him he has it willingly, by their ascribing deity to him, by putting their trust in him, by attributing the whole of their salvation to him, and the glory of it, and by worshipping him: and he will be honoured by all men at the last day; they will be obliged to do it; for all judgment being committed to him, and he being Judge of all, every knee shall bow to him, and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord, to his own glory, and to the glory of God the Father; (see <2345>Isaiah 45:23 <5010>Philippians 2:10,11).

He that honoureth not the Son; that denies his divine sonship, or his proper deity; that detracts from the dignity of his person or office; that shows no regard to him in point of salvation, or of obedience:

honoureth not the Father which hath sent him; they are so the same in nature and perfections, in power, will, affections, and operations; and their interests and honours are so involved together, that whatever dishonour is done to one, reflects on the other: and indeed, whatever is done in a way of disrespect to the Son, as incarnate, and in his office capacity, highly reflects on his Father, that sent him in the fulness of time, in human nature, to obtain eternal redemption for his people, according to a rule often expressed by the Jews, "a man's messenger is as himself"; (see Gill on "<4010>Matthew 10:40").

Ver. 24. *Verily verily, I say unto you*, etc.] Who am the Amen, the true and faithful witness:

he that heareth my word; by which is meant the Gospel, and is so called, both because it is spoken by Christ, and first began to be spoken by him; and because he is spoken of in it; his person, office, and work, peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation by him, being the sum and substance of it: and by "hearing" it is meant, not a bare external hearing it; for so it may be heard, and not understood; and it may be understood in a notional and speculative way, and yet the consequences hereafter mentioned may not follow: but an internal hearing it is here designed, so as to understand it spiritually, or to have an experimental knowledge of it; so as to approve of it, love, and like it; to distinguish it from that which is not his doctrine, and to feel the power of it on the heart, and yield the

obedience of faith unto it: for faith in Christ himself, the sum and substance of the word of the Gospel, is hereby expressed; to which is joined faith in God his Father, they being equally the object of it; and which is introduced as a further proof of the equality in nature which is between them; (see <4401>John 14:1);

and believeth on him that sent me; he does not say that believes on me, which might have been expected from him; but that believes on him that sent me, that is, on the Father; for as he that rejects Christ, and receives not his words, rejects and receives not him that sent him; so he that hears Christ's words, and receives him, and believes in him, receives and believes in him that sent him; and the same effects and consequences follow upon the one as on the other, upon hearing the word of Christ, as upon believing on the Father of Christ; and which is no inconsiderable proof of their perfect equality: for such a person that hears the one, and believes on the other,

hath everlasting life; not only in the purpose of God, and in the covenant of his grace, and in the hands of Christ, and in faith and hope; but he has a right unto it, and a claim of it, according to the declaration of the Gospel; and besides, has the principle of it in himself, the grace of God, which springs up into, is the beginning of, and issues in eternal life; he has also a meetness for it, and has the pledge and earnest of it, the Spirit of God, and shall certainly enjoy it:

and shall not come into condemnation; neither for original sin, though judgment has passed upon all men unto condemnation for it; nor for actual sins and transgressions: for though everyone deserves condemnation, yet were there as many sentences of condemnation issued out as sins committed, not one of them could be executed on such who are in Christ Jesus, as he that believes in him is openly and manifestatively in him: the reason is, because the death of Christ is a security against all condemnation; and whoever believes in him shall not be condemned, but saved; and though he may come into judgment, yet not into condemnation: he shall stand in judgment, and be acquitted by the righteousness of Christ, which he, by faith, receives as his justifying righteousness.

But is passed from death unto life; both from a moral death to a spiritual life, being quickened, who before was dead in trespasses and sins; and from under a sentence of condemnation, and eternal death, which as a descendant of Adam, and according to the tenor of the law of works, he

was subject to, to an open state of justification, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace; the righteousness of Christ being revealed to him, and received by faith, and the sentence of justification passed upon his conscience by the Spirit; so that he who before, in his own apprehension, was a dead man in a law sense, is now alive to God, and secure from the second death, and being hurt by it.

Ver. 25. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] With the same asseveration as before, and for the further illustration and confirmation of the same thing, occasioned by the last clause of the preceding verse, as well as improving upon the argument in (40521John 5:21) for his equality with the Father, which he is still pursuing:

the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live; which may be understood either of a corporeal resurrection, and of some particular instances of it, which should shortly be; and of some persons who would be in the state of the dead, and to whom the voice of Christ would be attended with such power as to cause them to hear and live; as did Jairus's daughter upon his saying "Talitha Cumi", damsel arise, and the widow of Naim's son upon his saying, young man arise, and Lazarus, upon his calling to him, Lazarus come forth; and which is a full proof of his being equal to God that quickens the dead: or rather this is to be understood of a spiritual resurrection, and the rather, because this sense best agrees with the foregoing verse; and a corporeal resurrection is expressed in somewhat different words, and seems to be distinguished from this in (40528John 5:28,29). And besides, the hour, or time of the resurrection of the above particular persons, was not strictly come; nor could they, with propriety, be said to be dead; to which may be added, that the phrase, "they that hear shall live", and none but them, best agrees with this sense: so then by the "dead" are meant such who are dead in trespasses and sins; who are separated from God, alienated from the life of God, and in whom the image of God is defaced; who are dead in all the powers and faculties of their souls, to that which is spiritually good; and are without spiritual breath, sense, feeling, and motion. And by "the voice" of Christ is intended his Gospel, which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy, of life and liberty, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by him; and which being attended with his power, is the means of quickening dead sinners; who may be said to hear it, when it comes not in word only, but in power, and works effectually in them; and is spirit and life, and the power of God unto

salvation to them; when they receive it, understand, believe, and obey it: and such persons “shall live”; comfortably, pleasantly, and delightfully, a life of faith on Christ, a life of communion with him, and shall live eternally with him hereafter.

Ver. 26. *For as the Father hath life in himself*, etc.] Is the living God, the fountain of life, and is the author of life to all living creatures; or rather has eternal life in his mind, his heart, his counsel, and his covenant, and in his hands, for all his chosen ones, which seems to he the peculiar sense here:

so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; he hath not only made the purpose of it in him, and given the promise of it to him; but even eternal life itself, he has put into his hands, and secured it in him for them, (⁶⁰⁵¹1 John 5:11), to give it to as many as he has given him: and he does give it to all his sheep, so that not one of them shall perish; which shows that he and his Father are one, though not in person, yet as in affection, will and power, so in nature and essence. The Son has life in himself, essentially, originally, and inderivatively as the Father has, being equally the living God, the fountain of life, and donor of it, as he; and therefore this is not a life which he gives, or communicates to him; but eternal life is what the one gives, and the other receives, according to the economy of salvation settled between them: and hence it is, that all that hear Christ’s voice spiritually shall live eternally; for these words are a reason of the former, and confirm the truth of them, as well as show the equality of the Son with the Father, in that he is equal to such a trust, as to have eternal life committed to him.

Ver. 27. *And hath given him authority to execute judgment also*, etc.] Both in his church and kingdom, in the present state of things, and at the last day, when all shall stand before his judgment seat: and that

because he is the son of man; truly and properly man; because though he was in the form of God, and equal to him, yet became man, and was in the form of a servant: and so reads the Ethiopic version, “because the Son of God is the son of man”; and therefore the authority of executing judgment, according to the council and covenant of peace, is committed to him; or that men might have a visible judge, or be judged by one in their own nature: agreeably the Persic version renders it, “because the Son himself is he who judges the sons of men”; or rather because he is that son of man spoken of in prophecy, especially in (²⁷¹³Daniel 7:13); by whom is meant the Messiah, as the Jews themselves allow [f244], and who was not a mere

man, but the man God's fellow; and so being omniscient and omnipotent, was equal to such a work, which otherwise he would not have been; (see Gill on "⁴⁰⁵²²John 5:22"). The Syriac version joins this clause to the beginning of (⁴⁰⁵²⁸John 5:28), and reads it thus, "because he is the son of man, marvel not at this"; let this be no obstruction to your faith of his quickening the dead, and having authority to execute judgment on all; since, though the son of man, he is not a mere man, but God over all, as what is next ascribed to him manifestly shows.

Ver. 28. *Marvel not at this*, etc.] Either at the cure of the man that had been diseased thirty and eight years, as some think; or at the Son of God being also the son of man, as the Syriac version suggests; or rather at the dead hearing the voice of the Son of God, and living upon it; and at his having authority to execute judgment upon all, to govern and defend his own church and people, and in the last day acquit them, and to take vengeance on his and their enemies, both now and hereafter:

for the hour is coming, in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice. This respects the general resurrection; for there will be a resurrection both of the just and unjust, of all that are in their graves; and though all that are dead are not in graves, or interred in the earth, as some are in the sea; yet, because the greater part are in graves, this phrase is chosen to express the universality of the resurrection: and this is also a proof of the resurrection of the same body; for what else are in the graves but bodies? and what else can come forth from them but the same bodies? and the time is hastening on when these bodies shall be quickened, and hear the voice of the Son of God; which whether the same with the voice of the archangel in (⁵²⁴¹⁶1 Thessalonians 4:16); and whether an articulate voice, or a violent clap of thunder, which is the voice of God, or only the exertion of Christ's mighty power is intended, is not easy to determine, and may be needless to inquire. Certain it is, that this voice of Christ will be attended with almighty power, as the effect following upon it will show. The Jews observe [f245], that

> "there are three things which do not come into the world but "by voices"; there is the voice of a living creature, as it is written, (¹⁰³¹⁶Genesis 3:16), "in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children", and as it is written, (¹³⁰²²Genesis 30:22), "and God hearkened to her"; and there is the voice of rains, as it is written, (¹¹¹⁸⁴¹1 Kings 18:41), "for there is a voice of abundance of rain", and it is written,

(<19293>Psalm 29:3), “the voice of the Lord is upon the waters”; and µytmh tyyht lwq, “there is the voice of the resurrection of the dead”, as it is written, (<23403>Isaiah 40:3), “the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness”;”

but that was the voice of John the Baptist. It will be the voice of the Son of God that will quicken and raise the dead.

Ver. 29. *And shall come forth*, etc.] Out of their graves, as Lazarus came forth from his at the word of command, and as the bodies of the saints did after the resurrection of Christ, when their graves were opened:

they that have done good; which none of Adam’s posterity naturally do, or can do of themselves: such are designed here who believe in Christ, which to do is the work of God, and the greatest and best of worlds; and without which it is impossible to please God in any; and indeed, whatever is not of faith is sin, and cannot be a good work: a good work is that which is done according to the will of God, from love to him, in faith, and with a view to his glory; and those that do such works shall come forth

unto the resurrection of life; that is, unto everlasting life, glory, and happiness; this is the first and better resurrection; and those that have part in it, over them the second death shall have no power. All shall rise to life, to an immortal life, so as never to die more; yet only good men shall rise to enjoy an happy and glorious life; which will lie in communion with God, angels, and saints, and in conformity to Christ, and in the everlasting vision of him:

and they that have done evil; who give up themselves to work wickedness; whose continual employment, and the business, series, and course of whose lives it is to commit sin; who are slaves unto it, and vassals of it, and are properly workers of iniquity; otherwise there is no man but what does that which is evil, and that daily: these shall come forth

unto the resurrection of damnation; that is, to everlasting damnation, shame, and reproach; they shall be condemned by the Judge of the whole earth, and shall be pronounced cursed; and shall be ordered to go into everlasting fire, and shall go into everlasting punishment; which will be a punishment both of loss and sense: they will lose, or be deprived of, the presence of God, and feel his wrath in their consciences. All will rise, but with a difference; the dead in Christ will rise first, in the morning of the

resurrection, in the beginning of the thousand years, and therefore are here mentioned first; the rest the wicked, will not rise until the evening of that day, till the thousand years are ended, and therefore are spoken of last. The former will rise by virtue of union to Christ, the other by his power, and both at hearing his voice; the saints will rise with bodies glorious, powerful, and spiritual; and wicked men, though with bodies immortal, yet vile, and dishonourable: the one will rise to a life of joy and happiness that will last for ever, and which will be properly life; the other, though they will rise and live for ever, yet in misery and woe, and which will be the second, or eternal death; see a like distinction in (<27D102>Daniel 12:2), to which there seems to be some, reference here. And he at whose voice all this shall be, must be equal to God.

Ver. 30. *I can of mine own self do nothing*, etc.] This is the conclusion of the matter, the winding up of the several arguments concerning the Son's equality to the Father, and the application of the whole to Christ. He had before been chiefly speaking of the Son, in relation to the Father, as if he was a third person; but now he applies what he had said of the Son to himself: and it is as if he had said, I am the Son that can do nothing separate from the Father, and contrary to his will, but do all things in conjunction with him; who sees all that he does, by being in him, and co-operating with him, and do the selfsame. I am the Son to whom the Father shows, and by whom he does, all he does; and to whom he will show, and by whom he will do, as a co-efficient with him, greater works than what, as yet, he has done: I am the Son that quickens whom he pleases, and to whom all judgment is committed, and have the same honour the Father has: I am he that quickens dead sinners now, and will raise all the dead at the last day; and have authority to execute judgment on all mankind: and,

as I hear, I judge; not as he hears men, or, according to the evidence men will give one of another; for it is denied of him, that he will proceed in judgment in this manner, (<23B103>Isaiah 11:3), but as he hears his Father; for being in his bosom, and one with him, as he sees, and knows all he does, his whole plan of operations, and acts according to them; so he hears, knows, and is perfectly acquainted with all his counsels, purposes, and rules of judgment, and never deviates from them. Hearing here signifies perfect knowledge, and understanding of a cause; and so it is used in the Jewish writings, in matters of difficulty, that come before a court of judicature [f246]:

> "there were three courts of judicature; one that sat at the gate of the mountain of the house; and one that sat at the gate of the court; and another that sat in the paved chamber: they go (first) to that which is at the gate of the mountain of the house, and say, so have I expounded, and so have the companions expounded; so have I taught, and so have the companions (or colleagues) taught: w[mç µa, "if they hear", they say; (i.e. as one of their commentators explains it [f247], if they know the law, and hear, or understand the sense of the law; in such a case they declare what they know;) if not, they go to them that are at the gate of the court, and say (as before). — And, "if they hear", they tell them; but if not, they go to the great sanhedrim in the paved chamber, from whence goes forth the law to all Israel."

Christ was now before the great sanhedrim, and speaks to them in their own language, and as a superior judge to them:

and my judgment is just; in the administration of the affairs of his church, which are done in the strictest justice; just and true are all his ways, as King of saints; and in the execution of the last judgment, which will be in righteousness and truth; the judgment he passes must be right, since it is according to that perfect knowledge he has of his Father's will, which is an infallible rule of judgment:

because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me; that is, he did not seek to gratify his own will, as distinct from his Father's, or in opposition to it; for he had no private end to answer, or separate interest, or advantage to pursue; and seeing therefore he acted according to his Father's will, and not his own, as contrary to that; his judgment must be just, and the sentence he passes right; since the will of God is indisputably such. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, the Alexandrian copy, and two of Beza's copies, leave out the word "father", without altering or hurting the sense at all.

Ver. 31. *If I bear witness of myself*, etc.] Which was not allowed any man to do; nor indeed is it proper that a man should be a witness in his own cause: and, according to the Jewish canons, a man might not be a witness for his wife, because she was reckoned as himself.

> "An husband is not to be believed in bearing witness for his wife, that had been carried captive, that she is not defiled, wmx[l dy[m µda ˆyaç, "for no man witness of himself" [f248]."

So likewise they say [f249],

> "a city that is subdued by an army, all the priestesses (or priests' daughters) that are found in it are rejected (from the priesthood, as defiled); but if they have witnesses, whether a servant, or an handmaid, lo, they are to be believed; but no man is to be believed for himself: says R. Zechariah ben Hakatzah, by this habitation (swearing by the temple) her hand was not removed from my hand, from the time the Gentiles entered Jerusalem, till they went out: they replied to him, "no man bears witness of himself"."

Christ reasons here upon their own principles, and according to their sense of things, that should he bear witness of himself; then, says he,

my witness is not true, ˆman al, not to be believed, or admitted as an authentic testimony: and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "is not credible"; not valid in law, or in such a court of judicature in which Christ now was; for, as according to the Jewish law, no man was admitted a witness for himself, so neither was anything established by a single testimony, but by the mouth of two or three witnesses, (<5D1915>Deuteronomy 19:15). Christ's meaning is, that his testimony alone, his single witness, how true soever it was, would stand for nothing in their court; and therefore he would not insist upon it, but drop it; for "true" here, is not opposed to that which is "false", but to that which is not valid in law. Christ's testimony was true in itself; nor could it be any other, it coming from him, who is truth itself, the "Amen", and faithful witness; but being considered as an human testimony, and in his own cause, was not to be admitted as sufficient; and this he allows. From arguments, proving his equality with the Father, he passes to testimonies; and without ranking use of his own, he had enough to produce, and which were valid and authentic, and are as follow.

Ver. 32. *There is another that beareth witness of me*, etc.] Meaning not his Father, who is another, and a distinct person, from him, as the Spirit is another comforter; and both distinct testifiers from him, as well as of him. This is indeed the sense of some interpreters; but the Father is particularly mentioned in (<430537>John 5:37); and the thread of the discourse, and the

climax, or gradation, here used, show, that it is to be understood of "another man", as Nonnus paraphrases it; of John the Baptist, who is spoken of by name in the next verse, as a witness; and then a greater than he, the works of Christ, and then the Father:

and I know that the witness, which he witnesseth of me, is true; for John was now alive, though in prison, and continued to bear a testimony to Christ; and therefore he speaks of him as now bearing witness of him, and abiding by that which he had bore; and Christ knew not only that what he testified of him was true in itself, but that his testimony was a valid and authentic testimony, with the generality of the Jews; who held John to be a prophet, and looked upon him as a man of great probity and integrity, and whose word was to be taken: nor indeed could the sanhedrim, before whom Christ now was, object to his character, nor to him as a witness; nor ought they, since they themselves had so judged of him, as appears by their message to him, which Christ next fails not to take notice of.

Ver. 33. *Ye sent unto John*, etc.] The sanhedrim at Jerusalem made a deputation of priests and Levites to him, to know who he was, whether the Messiah, or Elias, or that prophet, (<40>John 1:19). Now had they not looked upon him, from what they knew of him, or from the character they had of him, as a faithful witness, they would never have shown him so much respect, and have been at so much pains, and charge, as to send such a body of men so far unto him, as from Jerusalem to beyond Jordan; which circumstance our Lord improves in favour of this evidence he produces:

and he bare witness unto the truth; to Christ, who is the truth itself; and to the truth of his person, and office; to his dignity, and eternity, as being before him, though coming after him; and to his divine sonship, the thing now in debate, declaring, that he was the Son of God; and to his office, as Mediator, pointing to him as the Lamb of God, who, by his blood, and sacrifice, takes away the sins of men. The Ethiopic version reads by way of interrogation, "did not you send unto John?" etc.

Ver. 34. *But I receive not testimony from man*, etc.] He stood in no need of an human testimony, nor did he rest the truth of his deity and divine sonship thereon: he had other and greater testimonies to produce; as he needed not that any man should testify of man to him, he had no need that any man should testify of him; and if the testimony of men was received, as this of John could not well be objected to, the testimony of God is greater,

and which he had; and therefore should not have mentioned John's for his own sake:

but these things I say, that ye might be saved; that is, he produced this testimony of John, who was a person of so great a character among them, that they might be induced by it to believe in him as the Messiah; and so be saved from that ruin and destruction, that would come upon their nation, city, and temple, for their rejection and disbelief of him.

Ver. 35. *He was a burning and a shining light*, etc.] He was not that light, the famous light, the Messiah, the sun of righteousness; yet he was the "phosphorus", the forerunner of that light, and was himself a very great one: he had much light himself into the person and office of the Messiah; in the doctrines of faith in Christ, and repentance towards God; in the Gospel dispensation, and in the abolition of the Mosaic economy; and gave great light to others, in the business of salvation, and remission of sins, and was the means of guiding the feet of many in the way of peace. His light of pure doctrine, and of an holy and exemplary conversation, shone very visibly, and brightly before men; and he burned with strong love and affection for Christ, and the souls of men; and with flaming zeal for the honour of God, and true religion, and against all sin and profaneness, which he was a faithful reprover of, and for which he lost his life. It was common with the Jews to call their doctors, who were famous for their knowledge, and holiness of life, lights, burning lights, and shining lights; or in words which amount to the same. So R. Simeon ben Jochai is often called in the book of Zohar, açydq anyxwb, "the holy light"; and particularly it is said of him [f250],

> "R. Simeon, qyldad agrçd anyxwbk, is as "the lamp of light which burns above", and "burns" below; and by the light which burns below all the children of the world are enlightened: woe to the world, when the light below ascends to the light above."

So R. Abhu is called arwhnd anyxwb, "the lamp of light" [f251]: and it is [f252] said of Shuah, Judah's father-in-law, that he was artad anyxwb, "the light of the place"; that is, where he lived. The gloss on the place says, he was a man of note in the city, and enlightened their eyes; and it is very frequent with them still, when they are praising any of their doctors, to say of him, he was lwdgh rwamh, "a great light", who enlightened the eyes of Israel, and in whose light the people walked [f253]; so among the

philosophers, Xenophon, and Plato, are called duo lumina [f254], “two lights”; (see Gill on “Matthew 5:14”);

and ye were willing for a season, or “for an hour”,

to rejoice in his light; or “to glory in it”, or “boast of” it, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it. When John first appeared among them, they were fond, and even proud of him; they gloried in him, that a man of such uncommon endowments, and of such exemplary holiness, was raised up among them; and hoped that he was the Messiah, or Elias, that was to come before him; and pleased themselves, that times of great outward honour and prosperity were hastening: wherefore they flocked about him, and many of the Pharisees and Sadducees attended his ministry, and would have been baptized by him; but when they found that he was not the Messiah, nor Elias, nor that prophet, but bore a testimony to Jesus of Nazareth, that he was the Messiah; and ran counter to their notions of a temporal kingdom, and of birth privileges, and their own righteousness; and threatened them with ruin, and destruction, both in this world, and that which is to come, in case of their impenitence and unbelief; they grew sick of him, and said he had a devil, and rejected the counsel of God he declared, and despised his baptism. Such was their fickleness and inconstancy, which Christ here tacitly charges them with. They were like the stony ground hearers, and like some of the Apostle Paul’s admirers among the Galatians, who at first could have plucked out their eyes for him, but afterwards became his enemies for telling them the truth.

Ver. 36. *But I have greater witness than that of John*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions read, “greater than John”, but wrongly; for the testimonies of Christ’s works, and of his Father, are not compared with John himself, but with his testimony; and the sense is, that Christ had a greater witness than the witness of John; and so it is expressed in the Persic version: and his meaning is, that he had no need to insist upon John’s testimony; he had other, and greater witnesses to produce:

for the works which the Father hath given me to finish; such as the preaching of the Gospel, the fulfilling of the law, and the redemption of his people; all which were appointed by his Father, and given him to do, and which he completely finished. The whole Gospel came, and was published by Jesus Christ, and the law was entirely fulfilled by him; and the work of man’s salvation was finished by him, and these bear witness to the truth of his deity, and divine sonship; for none but the Son of God could have done

these things. The Ethiopic version reads in the singular number, “this work which my Father hath given me”, etc. and if it was a single work that is referred to, the work of redemption bids fair to be it. But, these works include not only what Christ did on earth, in his state of humiliation, but what he has done since, and will do; which his Father has given him to finish, and he has finished, or will finish them; such as the resurrection of himself from the dead, the effusion of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, the spreading and succeeding his Gospel in the world, the conversion of his redeemed ones, the gathering in the fulness of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Jews, the destruction of antichrist, the resurrection of all the dead, and the judgment of the whole world. Though more especially his miracles are here intended, and which, and not his mediatorial works, were demonstrations and proofs to men of his divine sonship; (see <40143>Matthew 14:33 27:54);

the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me; and that he was in the Father, and the Father in him; or that they were one in nature, and equal in power and glory, (<43030>John 10:30-37 14:11).

Ver. 37. *And the Father himself, which hath sent me*, etc.] Not only the works he gave him to do, and which he did, but he himself in person:

hath borne witness of me; not only in the writings of Moses, and the prophecies of the Old Testament, but by an audible articulate voice from heaven, at the time of Christ’s baptism, (<40317>Matthew 3:17); which was a full testimony of the sonship of Christ, and of the Father’s well pleasure in him; and which was repeated at his transfiguration on the mount, (<41705>Matthew 17:5); and the sonship of Christ is the grand thing which the three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, testify of, (<620507>1 John 5:7);

ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape; for the voices that were heard, and the forms that were seen under the Old Testament dispensation, from the first of this kind in Eden’s garden, to the incarnation of Christ, which are ascribed to God, or to a divine person, were either by the ministry of angels, or they were voices uttered by the Son of God, or forms assumed by him, who often appeared in an human form, as a prelude of his incarnation; so that it was unusual, and wonderful, and remarkable, that the Father should bear a testimony to the sonship of Christ by a voice from heaven; and which therefore ought to be attended to, and received as a sufficient and valid testimony.

Ver. 38. *And ye have not his word abiding in you*, etc.] Which some understand of Christ himself, the Logos, or word: who, though he was now with them, being made flesh, and dwelling among them, yet would not long continue with them: though rather this designs the written word, or the Scriptures of truth; and especially that part of them, which contains prophecies concerning the Messiah, which did not dwell in them richly, nor they dwell in their meditation on them, as was requisite. Or rather, it may intend that word of God expressed in the testimony he bore to the sonship of Christ at his baptism, by a voice from heaven, which made no lasting impression upon the minds and hearts of the Jews that heard it; as appears by what follows:

for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not; meaning himself; for if they had had either a due regard to the sacred oracles, or to that voice from heaven at his baptism, they would have received and embraced him as the Messiah, and sent of God, and not have disbelieved and rejected him, as now they did.

Ver. 39. *Search the Scriptures*, etc.] The writings of Moses, and the prophets, which were of divine inspiration and authority, and are often appealed unto by Christ, and his apostles, for the truth of what they delivered; and were the standard of faith, and the test of doctrines; and therefore to be searched diligently into, for finding divine knowledge and improvement in it, and for the trial of doctrines. The words may be rendered in the indicative, as an assertion, “ye do search the Scriptures”: the Jews had the sacred oracles committed to them, and these they read, not only their kings, princes, and judges, but the common people, who brought up their children to the reading of them, and instructed them in them: and besides this, these writings were read, and expounded publicly in their synagogues every sabbath day; and at this time especially these records were examined, and particularly those of them which respected the Messiah, since there was now a general expectation of him: and certain it is, that the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, or the sanhedrim, were very much versed in the Scriptures, and could readily refer to those which concerned the Messiah; see an instance of this in (Matthew 2:4-6);

for in them ye think ye have eternal life; not the doctrine of eternal life, nor the promises of it, nor the way to it; though all these are contained in them, and pointed out by them: for though life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel, and the promise of eternal life belongs to the covenant

of grace, and the way of life and righteousness by Christ is manifested without the law, and not by it; yet there is much of the Gospel, and an exhibition of the covenant of grace, and its promises, and Christ, the way of life, is directed to typically by the tree of life, and the brazen serpent, and other things in those writings. But the meaning here is, that they imagined, by having these writings in their hands, and by their reading them, and hearing them expounded every sabbath day, they should obtain and inherit everlasting life: hence they call [f255] the law eternal life, and say [f256] concerning the reading of it, that

> "he that begins to read in the book of the law is obliged to bless after this manner: blessed be he that has chosen us above all nations, and hath given us his law. — And he that finishes blesses after him in this manner: blessed is he who hath given us his law, the law of truth, and has planted "eternal life" in the midst of us."

This was an opinion of theirs: so the Persic version reads, "for such is your opinion"; and though this was a very vain one, yet it shows what a very high opinion they had of the Scriptures: and now to these our Lord appeals as witnesses for him, and against which they could not object, upon their own principles:

and they are they which testify of me; as they do of his proper deity and divine sonship, calling him Jehovah, God, the mighty God, and the Son of God; and of his offices as prophet, priest, and King; and of his incarnation of a virgin; and of the tribe, family, and place of his birth; of the miracles which he should work; of the treatment he should meet with from men; of his sufferings and death; of the circumstances leading on to them, and attending them; as his riding on an ass into Jerusalem, the betraying him by one of his familiar acquaintance, the selling him for thirty pieces of silver, the spitting upon, and scourging him, giving him gall for his meat, and vinegar for his drink, and parting his garments, and casting lots for his vesture, and the crucifixion of him, and that between two thieves; and of his burial, resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, and of his future coming to judgment.

Ver. 40. *And ye will not come to me*, etc.] Which is to be understood, not of a corporeal coming to him; for many of the Jews did come to him in this sense; some for one thing, and some for another; some for the loaves, that they might eat and be filled; some to see his miracles, and others to partake of the benefit of them; some to hear him preach, and others to catch and

cavil at what they could: nor is bare coming to hear Christ preached, or an outward attendance on, and submission to his ordinances, such a coming to him as is here designed; for with these eternal life is not connected: bodily exercise profiteth not in this way; but a spiritual coming to Christ, or a coming to him by faith is here meant; in which sense the phrase is frequently used in this Gospel, especially in the next chapter; (see <4665>John 6:35,37,44,45,65); and those who come aright to Christ, come to him as the alone, able, suitable, and sufficient Saviour; and in themselves as sinners, and ready to perish; and as such they are received by him with a welcome: but these men did not see themselves as such; nor did they see any need they had of coming to Christ; for they thought they had eternal life elsewhere: and such were their ignorance of themselves and Christ; and such their prejudices against him; and such the depravity, perverseness, and stubbornness of their wills, that they had no inclination, desire, and will to come to Christ, any more than power; which is an argument against, and not for the free will of man, unless it be to that which is evil: and this perverseness of their wills to come to Christ, when revealed in the external ministry of the word, was blameworthy in them, since this was not owing to any decree of God, but to the corruption and vitiosity of nature; which being blameworthy in them, that which follows upon it must be so too; and it was the greater aggravation of their sin, that they had the Scriptures which testified of Christ, and pointed at him as the way of life, and yet would not come to him for it:

that ye might have life; that is, eternal life, as is expressed in the foregoing verse, and is so read here in Beza's old copy, in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions. This is in Christ, not only the purpose and promise of it, but that itself: he has the disposal of it, gives the right unto it, and a meetness for it, with all the comforts arising from it, and all the promises and blessings relating to it; and all that come to Christ by faith may, and shall have it: this is the will of the Father, the end of his giving of Christ, and of his mission and coming into the world, and is inseparably connected with believing in him.

Ver. 41. *I receive not honour from men*.] Not but that honour from men was due to Christ; and it becomes all men to honour him, as they do the Father; and he does receive honour and glory, and blessing from his saints, by their praying to him, praising him, believing in him, and serving him; but his sense is, that in asserting his equality with the Father, and in producing the testimonies he did, in proof of it, his view was not to obtain honour and

applause among men, but to vindicate himself, and glorify his Father: nor did he say what he had just now said, about men's coming to him, with any such intention, to gather a party to him, to set up himself as a temporal king, in great pomp and splendour, and receive worldly homage and honour from men, as his subjects; for his kingdom was not of this world, and coming and subjection to him were things of a spiritual nature.

Ver. 42. *But I know you*, etc.] Being the omniscient God, he knew not only their persons, but their hearts, the thoughts of their hearts; what was in them, and what was wanting in them: particularly,

that ye have not the love of God in you; and which is not in any man's heart naturally; for the carnal mind is enmity to God; and men, by nature, are haters of him, and enemies in their minds to him, till this grace, which is a fruit of the Spirit, is implanted in them, in regeneration: love to God, is one of the weightier matters of the law, the Jews passed over; without which, all the actions of men signify nothing: this they made great pretensions to, and would have had it thought, that it was from love to God, that they sought to kill Jesus, for his violation of the sabbath, and making himself equal with God; but it was not from a delight in the sabbath, or from love to the Lord of it, but out of ill will to Christ, that they expressed such dissembled piety and false zeal: they were lovers of themselves, and not God; they were covetous men, and loved the world, and the things in it, which is inconsistent with the love of the Father; and besides, if they had loved him, they would have loved him that was begotten of him, and not sought to have killed him.

Ver. 43. *I am come in my Father's name*, etc.] Power and authority; by his consent, with his will, and according to a covenant with him: Christ came not of himself, of his own accord, by a separate power and will of his own, but was called, and sent, and came by mutual agree meat; and brought his credentials with him, doing the works and miracles which his Father gave him to finish:

and ye receive me not; notwithstanding this they rejected him as the Messiah, and would not receive him as such; yea, traduced him as an impostor, and a deceiver:

if another shall come in his own name; which some understand of Simon Magus, others of antichrist; rather the false Christs are intended, of whom our Lord speaks, in (Matthew 24:24), who would rise up of themselves,

and not be able to give any proof of their mission; or do anything which might entitle them to the character of the Messiah, or Christ, a name they would take to themselves: and so the Ethiopic version reads, “if another shall come in my name”; saying he is Christ, or the Messiah:

him ye will receive; as thousands of them did receive Barchocab, the false Christ, who rose up some years after in Adrian’s time; and even some of their greatest Rabbins, as particularly the famous R. Akiba, who was his armour bearer: and it is easy to observe, that though they were so backward to receive, and so much prejudiced against the true Messiah, they were always forward enough to embrace a false one: and indeed to follow any, that set up himself for a temporal deliverer of them; as the instances of Theudas, and Judas of Galilee, with others, show; (see Acts 5:36,37). And the true reason why they rejected Christ was, because he did not appear in outward pomp and glory, nor set up a temporal kingdom, or give out that he would deliver them from the Roman yoke.

Ver. 44. *How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another*? etc.] As the Scribes and Pharisees did, who were ambitious of honour and respect from one another, as well as from the common people; doing all they did to be seen of men, and to gain applause among them: choosing the uppermost rooms at feasts, and chief places in the synagogues, and delighting in the pompous title of Rabbi, Rabbi; and were in expectation of the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, when they hoped to be advanced to places of great honour and profit; and all this was an hinderance to them from believing in Christ, who appeared in such an abject form, and made so mean a figure; whose doctrine was so unsuitable to their carnal minds, and whose followers were so poor and contemptible; and besides it was made a law among them, that those who professed him to be the Messiah, should be cast out of the synagogue: hence many who were convinced that he was the Messiah, durst not confess him, lest they should lose their honour and respect among men, which they preferred to the praise of God:

and seek not the honour that cometh from God only; or “from the only God”, as the Vulgate Latin; or “from the one God”, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it: the honour that comes from him is, that of being born of him; of being a son or daughter of his, having that new name, which is better than that of sons and daughters of the greatest princes on earth; of being made all glorious within, and clothed with gold of Ophir, with raiment of needlework, with the robe of righteousness, and garments

of salvation; of being translated into the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and made kings and priests unto God by him; of being set on the same throne with Christ, having on a crown of life and righteousness, and enjoying a kingdom and glory; being heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; which honour all the saints have, or shall have, and which these men cared not for.

Ver. 45. *Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father*, etc.] To God the Father, as the Ethiopic version reads. The Syriac and Persic versions read by way of interrogation, "do ye think that I will?" etc. Christ is no accuser of men; no, not of the worst of men; (see <43>John 8:10,11); he came not into the world to bring charges against men and condemn them, but to save them; to be an accuser is not agreeable to his characters of a Surety, a Saviour, an Advocate, and Judge: there were enough to accuse these persons of; as their perverseness and stubbornness, in not coming to Christ for life; their want of love to God; their rejection of him, though he came in his Father's name; their reception of another, that should come in his own name; their taking honour one of another, and not seeking the true spiritual and eternal honour, which God gives; but though he hints these things to them, he would not have them think that he accused them of them to the Father: the Jews have a notion, that when the Messiah comes, there will be accusations lodged against their doctors and wise men [f257].

> "R. Zeira says, that R. Jeremiah bar Aba said, that in the generation in which the son of David shall come, there will be µymkj ydyml tb ayrwgwjq, "accusations against the disciples of the wise men"."

And one of their writers [f258] thus interprets, (<27>Daniel 12:1):

> "and at that time "shall Michael stand up"; he shall be as silent as a dumb man, when he shall see the holy blessed God contending with him, and saying, how shall I destroy a nation so great as this, for the sake of Israel? "and there shall be a time of trouble" in the family above, and there shall be "accusations" against the disciples of the wise men."

However, there was no need for Christ to accuse them; for as it follows,

there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust; by whom is meant, not Moses personally; for when on earth, he was a mediator

between God and the people of Israel, and an intercessor for them; and since he has been in heaven, as the dead know not any thing, he knew nothing of their affairs; and when he was on the mount with Christ, his discourse with him turned upon another subject: but either the writings of Moses, as in (<422629>Luke 16:29,31 24:27); or the doctrine of Moses, as (<461002>1 Corinthians 10:2 <430918>John 9:28); or rather the law of Moses, (<402224>Matthew 22:24 <411010>Mark 7:10 <441611>Acts 6:11 21:21). And in this the Jews trusted; they rested in it, and made their boast of it; and expected eternal life and salvation on account of their having it, and through their hearing it read every sabbath day, and by their obedience to it: and now sin being a transgression of the law, this same law brings charges against them, and accuses them of the breach of the several precepts of it, and pronounces them guilty before God; it curses and passes a sentence of condemnation on them, and according to it, will they perish eternally, without an interest in Christ; for their own righteousness by the law of works, will be of no avail to them; the law in which they trust for life, will rise up in judgment, and be a swift witness against them: so the Jews sometimes speak of the law, as witnessing against the people of Israel [f259].

Ver. 46. *For had ye believed Moses*, etc.] The doctrine of Moses, and what he says in his writings:

ye would have believed me; for there is an agreement between Moses and Christ; Christ is the end of the law of Moses, and in him is the accomplishment of his writings:

for he wrote of me; in the books written by him, Christ is spoken of, as the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head; as the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations of the earth should be blessed; as the Shiloh, to whom the gathering of the people should be; and as that prophet, who should be like unto himself, to whom the people of Israel should hearken; and he wrote many things typically of Christ; and indeed, the whole Mosaic economy was typical of Christ, as the epistle to the Hebrews shows: and therefore disbelieving Christ, was disbelieving Moses; who therefore would be an accuser of them, and a witness against them.

Ver. 47. *But if ye believe not his writings*, etc.] They believed them to be his writings, and that they were the word of God, and yet did not believe the things contained in them, respecting Christ; or did not see, and could not believe that they belonged unto, and were applicable to Jesus of

Nazareth; and therefore it could not be supposed they would give credit to him, or his words:

how shall ye believe my words? not that Moses was greater than Christ, or rather to be credited than he; Moses indeed was faithful, but Christ was worthy of more honour and credit than he was; Moses was but a servant, but Christ was a son in his own house: but this is said with respect to the Jews, with whom Moses was in great veneration and esteem; and it was more likely they should regard what he should say, than what Jesus of Nazareth should, whom they despised.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 6

Ver. 1. *After these things*, etc.] After Christ's curing the man at Bethesda's pool, and the vindication of himself for doing it or the sabbath day, and for asserting his equality with God; near a year after these things: for these were done at the feast of the passover, and now it was near another; and what is related here, was after the death of John the Baptist, and when the disciples had returned from preaching in the several cities and towns, where Christ afterwards went, and had given an account of their success; (see <401412>Matthew 14:12,13 <411630>Mark 6:30,31 <420910>Luke 9:10). Quickly after the passover was ended, Christ departed from Jerusalem, and went into Galilee, and preached in the several cities and towns in those parts, and wrought many miracles: and after these things, in process of time,

Jesus went over the sea of Galilee; the same with the lake of Gennesaret, (<420501>Luke 5:1);

which is [the sea] of Tiberias; and is frequently so called by the Jewish writers [f260], who often make mention of lç hmy hyrbj, "the sea of Tiberias"; and by other writers, it is called the lake of Tiberias [f261]; Pliny, who calls it the lake of Genesara [f262], says,

> "it was sixteen miles long, and six broad, and was beset with very pleasant towns; on the east were Julias and Hippo, and on the south Tarichea, by which name some call the lake, and on the west Tiberias, wholesome for the hot waters."

And these are the waters which the Jews call ayrbjd ^yswmyd, or, ymj, the hot baths of Tiberias [f263]; and from the city of Tiberias built by Herod, and called so in honour of Tiberius Caesar, the sea took its name.

Ver. 2. *And a great multitude followed him*, etc.] From several cities and towns in Galilee, where he had been preaching and working miracles:

because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased; so that it was not for the sake of his doctrine, or for the good of their souls,

they followed him; but either to gratify their curiosity in seeing his miracles, or to be healed in their bodies, as others had been.

Ver. 3. *And Jesus went up into a mountain*, etc.] In a desert place near Bethsaida, (<40>Luke 9:10);

and there he sat with his disciples; partly for security from the cruelty of Herod, having just heard of the beheading of John; and partly for privacy, that he might have some conversation alone with his disciples, upon their return from off their journey; as also for the sake of rest and refreshment; and according to the custom of the Jewish doctors, which now prevailed, (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 5:1"), he sat with his disciples, in order to teach and instruct them.

Ver. 4. *And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh*.] This was the third passover, since our Lord's baptism, and entrance on his public ministry; (see <43>John 2:13 5:1). Whether Christ went up to this feast is not certain; some think he did not; but from what is said in (<43>John 7:1), it looks as if he did: how nigh it was to the feast, cannot well be said. Thirty days before the feast, they began to talk about it; and especially in the last fifteen days, they made preparations for it, as being at hand [f264]; and if there was now so long time to it, there was time enough for Jesus to go to it.

Ver. 5. *When Jesus then lift up [his] eyes*, etc.] Being before engaged in close conversation with his disciples, and looking wistly and intently on them, whilst he was discoursing with them:

and saw a great company come unto him; who came on foot, over the bridge at Chammath, from Capernaum, and other cities of Galilee:

he saith unto Philip; he directed his discourse to him particularly, because he was of Bethsaida, near to which place Christ now was, and therefore might be best able to answer the following question:

whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? This, according to the other evangelists, must be said after Christ came from the mountain, and the people were come to him, and he had received them kindly, and had instructed them about the kingdom of God, and had healed the diseased among them, and expressed great compassion for them; and after the disciples had desired him to dismiss them, that they might go to the adjacent towns, and provide food for themselves; which Christ would not

admit of and declared it unnecessary, and then put this question, with the following view.

Ver. 6. *And this he said to prove him*, etc.] Or "tempting him", trying his faith, and not only his, but the rest of the disciples; not as ignorant of it himself, but in order to discover it to him and them, and to prepare them for the following miracle; and that it might appear the more illustrious and marvellous:

for he himself knew what he would do; Christ had determined to work a miracle, and feed the large number of people that were with him, with that small provision they had among them; and being God omniscient, he knew that he was able to do it, and that he was determined to do it, and it would be done; but he was willing first to try the faith of his apostles.

Ver. 7. *Philip answered him*, etc.] Very quick and short, and in a carnal and unbelieving way:

two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them. Two hundred pence, or "Roman denarii", which may be here meant, amount to six pounds five shillings of our money; and this sum is mentioned, because it might be the whole stock that was in the bag, or that Christ and his disciples had; or because this was a round sum, much in use among the Jews; (see Gill on "Mark 6:37"). Or this may be said by Philip, to show how impracticable it was to provide for such a company; that supposing they had two hundred pence to lay out in this way; though where should they have that, he suggests? yet if they had it, as much bread as that would purchase would not be sufficient:

that everyone of them might take a little; it would be so far from giving them a meal, or proper refreshment, that everyone could not have a small bit to taste of, or in the least to stay or blunt his appetite: a penny, with the Jews, would buy as much bread as would serve ten men; so that two hundred pence would buy bread enough for two thousand men; but here were three thousand more, besides women and children, who could not have been provided for with such a sum of money.

Ver. 8. *One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother*, etc.] Who also, and his brother Peter, were of Bethsaida, as well as Philip, and was a disciple of Christ's; he hearing what Christ said to Philip, and what answer he returned,

saith unto him; to Christ, with but little more faith than Philip, if any.

Ver. 9. *There is a lad here*, etc.] Who either belonged to Christ and his disciples, and was employed to carry their provisions for them; which, if so, shows how meanly Christ and his disciples lived; or he belonged to some in the multitude; or rather he came here to sell what he had got:

which hath five barley loaves. The land of Canaan was a land of barley, as well as wheat, (<050808>Deuteronomy 8:8); this sort of grain grew there in plenty, and was in much use; the Jews had a barley harvest, (<080122>Ruth 1:22), which was at the time of the passover; for on the second day after the passover, the sheaf of the first fruits was waved before the Lord, which was of barley; hence the Targumist on the place just cited, paraphrases it thus;

> "they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of the passover, and on the day the children of Israel began to reap the sheaf of the wave offering, which was of barley."

And it was now about the time of the passover, as appears from (<430604>John 6:4), and had it been quite the time, and the barley sheaf had been waved, it might have been thought that these loaves were made of the new barley; but though barley was in use for bread among the Jews, as is evident, from the mention that is made of barley loaves and cakes, (<120442>2 Kings 4:42 <070713>Judges 7:13); yet it was bread of the coarsest sort, and what the meaner sort of people ate; (see <260412>Ezekiel 4:12). Yea, barley was used for food for horses and dromedaries, (<110428>1 Kings 4:28); and since therefore these loaves were, if not designed for the use of Christ and his twelve apostles, yet for some of his followers, and which they all ate of; it is an instance of the meanness and poverty of them: but however, they had better bread than this, even the bread of life, which is afterwards largely treated of in this chapter, which some of them at least ate of; and as our countryman Mr. Dod used to say,

> "brown bread and the Gospel are good fare:"

and it may be further observed, that the number of these loaves were but few; there were but "five" of them, for "five thousand" persons; and these do not seem to be very large ones, since one lad was able to carry them; and indeed, these loaves were no other than cakes, in which form they used to be made:

and two small fishes; there were but “two”, and these “small”; it is amazing, that five thousand persons should everyone have something of them, and enough: these fishes seem to be what the Jews[f265] call ynynwm, and which the gloss interprets “small fishes”: and by the word which is used of them, they seem to be salted, or pickled fishes, and such it is very probable these were; Nonnus calls them, ιχψυας οπταλεους, “fishes which were broiled”, or perhaps dried in the sun; (see <42>Luke 24:42).

But what are they among so many? everyone cannot possibly have a taste, much less any refreshment, still less a meal.

Ver. 10. *Jesus said, make the men sit down*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, “all the men”; and the Persic version, “all the people”; men, women, and children: Christ, without reproving his disciples for their unbelief, ordered them directly to place the people upon the ground, and seat them in rows by hundreds and by fifties, in a rank and company, as persons about to take a meal:

now there was much grass in the place; at the bottom of the mountain; and it was green, as one of the evangelists observes, it being the spring of the year, and was very commodious to sit down upon:

so the men sat down, in number about five thousand; besides women and children, (<40>Matthew 14:21), so that there was but one loaf for more than a thousand persons.

Ver. 11. *And Jesus took the loaves*, etc.] Into his hands, as also the fishes, in order to feed the multitude with them:

and when he had given thanks; for them, and blessed them, or implored a blessing on them, that they might be nourishing to the bodies of men, as was his usual manner, and which is an example to us;

he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were sat down. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, only read, “he distributed to them that were sat down”: but it was not by his own hands, but by the means of the disciples, who received from him, and gave it to them; so that the sense is the same;

and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would; that is, they had as much, both of the bread and of the fishes, distributed to them, and which they took and ate, as they chose: in some printed copies it is read, “as

much as he would", and so the Persic version; that is, as much as Jesus would; but the former is the true reading, and makes the miracle more illustrious.

Ver. 12. *When they were filled*, etc.] Had not only eaten, but had made a full meal, and were thoroughly satisfied, having eaten as much as they could, or chose to eat:

he said unto his disciples, gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost; this he said, partly that the truth, reality, and greatness of the miracle might be clearly discerned; and partly, to teach frugality, that, in the midst of abundance, care be taken that nothing be lost of the good things which God gives; and which may be useful to other persons, or at another time.

Ver. 13. *Therefore they gathered [them] together*, etc.] The several broken bits of bread, which lay about upon the grass, which the people had left, after they had been sufficiently refreshed:

and filled twelve baskets; every disciple had a basket filled:

with the fragments of the five barley loaves; and it may be of the fishes also:

which remained over and above unto them that had eaten; such a marvellous increase was there, through the power of Christ going along with them; insomuch that they multiplied to such a degree, either in the hands of the distributors, or of the eaters.

Ver. 14. *Then those men*, etc.] The five thousand men, who had been fed with the loaves and fishes:

when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did; in feeding so many of them, with so small a quantity of food; in multiplying the provision in such a prodigious manner, that after they had eaten to the full, so many baskets of fragments were taken up:

said, this is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world; meaning that prophet, that Moses spoke of, in (Deuteronomy 18:15); for the ancient Jews understood this passage of the Messiah, though the modern ones apply it to others; (see Gill on "Acts 3:22"). And these men concluded that Jesus was that prophet, or the true Messiah, from the

miracle he wrought; in which he appeared, not only to be like to Moses, but greater than he.

Ver. 15. *When Jesus therefore perceived*, etc.] As being the omniscient God, who knew their hearts, and the secret thoughts and purposes of them; or, as man, understood by their words and gestures:

that they would come and take him by force, and make him a king; that they had "determined", as the Arabic version renders it; or "had it in their mind", as the Persic; to gather about him as one man, and seize him in a violent manner, whether he would or not; and proclaim him the King Messiah; place him at the head of them, to deliver the nation from the Roman yoke, and set up a temporal kingdom, in which they might hope for great secular advantages: and they might the rather be induced to take such a step, since, by this miracle, they could not doubt of his being able to support such an army of men, and to succeed in the enterprise; for he that could do this, what was it he could not do? but,

he departed again into a mountain, himself alone; he left the company directly, upon this resolution of theirs, and even took not his disciples with him, who were in the same way of thinking about a temporal kingdom, as the people, and might encourage them in this undertaking: the mountain Christ went into, very probably was the same he went up to before; the reasons of his departure, were to prevent the attempt; to show that his kingdom was not of this world; to teach his followers to forsake the honours and riches of this world, for his sake; and to let them know, that those who sought only for a temporal redeemer, were unworthy of his presence: and also he went away alone, for the sake of secret retirement, and private prayer; and it may be chiefly, that he prayed that God would open the minds of these men, and particularly the disciples; that they might be convinced of their mistaken notions of him as a temporal prince: some copies add, "and he prayed there"; the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Persic versions leave out the word "again"; and the latter, contrary to all others, renders it, "Christ departed from the mountain alone".

Ver. 16. *And when even was [now] come*, etc.] The last of the evenings, when night was coming on; for the first of the evenings took place before they sat down to eat, when the above miracle was wrought; (see <4014 15>Matthew 14:15,23).

His disciples went down unto the sea; of Galilee, or Tiberias, to the sea side; and this was by the order, and even constraint of Christ, who would have them go before him, that he might be clear of the multitude, and have an opportunity for solitary prayer, (see Gill on "<40142>Matthew 14:22") (see Gill on "<40645>Mark 6:45").

Ver. 17. *And entered into a ship*, etc.] In which they came, and was waiting for them; or into another:

and went over the sea towards Capernaum; steered their course from Bethsaida, where they took shipping over the sea of Galilee; at least over one part of it, a creek or bay of it, as they intended, towards the city of Capernaum, which lay over against Bethsaida:

and it was now dark; quite night, which made their voyage more uncomfortable, especially as it afterwards was tempestuous: but the worst of all was,

and Jesus was not come to them; as they expected, and therefore were obliged to set sail and go without him.

Ver. 18. *And the sea arose*, etc.] Swelled, and was tumultuous and raging; the waves mounted up, and tossed the ship to and fro:

by reason of a great wind that blew; which agitated the waters of the sea, and lifted up the waves; which storm seems to have arose after they had set sail, and were got into the midst of the sea.

Ver. 19. *So when they had rowed*, etc.] For the wind being contrary, they could not make use of their sails, but betook themselves to their oars, and by that means got

about five and twenty, or thirty furlongs; which were three or four miles, or little more than a league; no further had they got, though they had been rowing from the time it was dark, to the fourth watch, which was after three o'clock in the morning; all this while they had been tossed in the sea;

they saw Jesus walking on the sea; (see Gill on "<40145>Matthew 14:25"), (see Gill on "<40146>Matthew 14:26"), (see Gill on "<40149>Matthew 14:29").

And drawing nigh unto the ship; though Mark says, he "would have passed by them", (<40648>Mark 6:48); that is, he seemed as if he would, but his intention was to come to them, and save them from perishing, as he did:

and they were afraid; that he was a spirit, some nocturnal apparition, or demon, in an human form; (see Gill on "Matthew 14:26").

Ver. 20. *But he saith to them, it is I, be not afraid*.] (See Gill on "Matthew 14:27").

Ver. 21. *Then they willingly received him into the ship*, etc.] When they knew who he was; and especially he was the more welcome, as they were in distress; and he able, as they well knew, to help them:

and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went; which was done, as Nonnus observes, by a divine motion; for not only the wind ceased, but another miracle was wrought; the ship was in an instant at the place whither they intended to go.

Ver. 22. *The day following*, etc.] The day after that, in which the miracle of feeding live thousand men with five loaves and two fishes was done: the morning after the disciples had had such a bad voyage:

when the people which stood on the other side of the sea; from that in which the disciples now were, being landed at Capernaum; that is, they stood on that side, or shore, where they took shipping, near Bethsaida and Tiberias: here, after they were dismissed by Christ, they stood all night, waiting for boats to carry them over; or rather, knowing that Christ was not gone with his disciples, they continued, hoping to meet with him in the morning, and enjoy some more advantage by him: for they

saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone; from whence they concluded, that since there was only that boat, and Jesus did not go into it, but that the disciples went off without him, that he must be therefore somewhere on shore, and not far off, and they hoped to find him in the morning; wherefore it was very surprising to them, when they found him at Capernaum, when, and how he got there.

Ver. 23. *Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias*, etc.] A city by the sea side, built by Herod, and called so in honour of Tiberius Caesar; though the Jews give a different etymology of it; they say, it is the same with Rakkath, (Joshua 19:35), and that it was a fortified place from the days of Joshua, and that on one side, hmwj hmy, "the sea was its wall" [f266]: and so Jonathan the Targumist on (Deuteronomy 3:17) says, that

Tiberias was near the sea of salt: this place became famous for many of the wise men that lived here; here was a famous university, and here the Misna and Jerusalem Talmud were written; and here the sanhedrim sat, after it removed from Jerusalem:

nigh unto the place where they did eat bread; where the day before they had been fed in so miraculous a manner: the meaning is, either that Tiberias was near to the place where the miracle was wrought, or the boats from Tiberias came near that place, and both were true: so that these men that were waiting by the sea side, had an opportunity of going over in these boats in quest of Christ, to whom they were now become greatly attached, by feeding them in so wonderful a manner:

after that the Lord had given thanks; which clause is added to show, that the multiplication of the bread, and the refreshment the men had by it, were owing to the power of Christ, and his blessing it; though this is wanting in Beza's most ancient copy, and in some others.

Ver. 24. *When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there*, etc.] At the sea side, at the usual place of taking boat; and having reason to think he was not on that side of the lake, but was gone from thence:

neither his disciples; when they found that there were neither of them there, but both were gone, and considering that it was to no purpose for them to stay there:

they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum seeking Jesus; they might observe, that the disciples steered their course towards this place; and they knew that was a place of general resort with Christ and his disciples; therefore they took boat and came directly thither, and sought for him in the synagogue, it being on a day in which the people used to go thither; and where Christ, as often as he had opportunity, attended.

Ver. 25. *And when they had found him on the other side of the sea*, etc.] At Capernaum, and in the synagogue there; (see John 6:59).

They said unto him, Rabbi; or "master", a name now much in use with the Jewish doctors, and by which they delighted to be called; and these men being convinced by the miracle, that Christ was that prophet that should come, honour him with this title, saying,

when camest thou hither? since he did not go with his disciples, and there was no other boat that went off the night before, but that in which they went; and they came over in the first that came out that morning, and he did not come in any of them; and therefore it was amazing to them, both when and how he came, since they could not devise how he should get there by shipping, and also how he should so soon get there on foot.

Ver. 26. *Jesus answered them and said*, etc.] Not by replying to their question, or giving a direct answer to that, which he could have done, by telling them that he walked upon the water, and found his disciples in great distress, and delivered them, and came early that morning with them to the land of Gennesaret, and so to Capernaum: but not willing to gratify their curiosity; and knowing from what principles, and with what views they sought after him, and followed him; and willing to let them know that he knew them, being the searcher of hearts, and to reprove them for them, thus addressed them:

verily, verily, I say unto you; this is a certain truth, and was full well known to Christ, and what their own consciences must attest:

ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles; of feeding so large a number with so small a quantity of food, and of healing them that needed it, (Luke 9:11). Not but that they did regard the miracles of Christ, and concluded from thence he must be that prophet that was to come, and were for taking him by force, and proclaiming him king; but then they had a greater respect to their own worldly interest, and their carnal appetites, than to these, as follows:

but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled; they regarded their own bellies more than the honour and glory of Christ, and even than the good of their immortal souls, and the spiritual and eternal salvation of them: and it is to be feared that this is the case of too many who make a profession of religion; their view being their own worldly advantages, and not the spiritual and everlasting good of their souls, and the real interest of a Redeemer: hence the following advice.

Ver. 27. *Labour not for the meat which perisheth*, etc.] Meaning either food for the body, which is perishing; its virtue is perishing; man cannot live by it alone, nor does it last long; its substance is perishing; it is received into the stomach, and there digested; it goes into the belly, and is cast out into the draught; and that which it supports, for a while, is

perishing; and both the one, and the other, shall be destroyed; even meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: now, though it becomes men to work for their bread, to provide it for themselves and families; yet they should not be anxiously solicitous about it, or labour only for that, and prefer it to spiritual food: or else food for the mind is meant, and that either in a sensual way, as sinful lust and pleasures, the honours of this world, and the riches of it; which are sweet morsels, though bread of deceit, to carnal minds, and which they labour hard for: or, in a religious way, as superstition, will worship, external works of righteousness, in order to please God, and obtain eternal life and salvation; which to labour for in such a way, is to spend money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which profiteth not; and in each of these ways were these Jews labouring for perishing food, from which Christ dissuades them:

but for that which endureth unto everlasting life; either the grace of Christ, which, as meat, is quickening and refreshing, strengthening and supporting, and which causes nourishment and growth, and by virtue of which work is done; and this springs up unto everlasting life, and is inseparably connected with it; and particularly the blessings of grace, such as sanctification, adoption, pardon, and justification: or the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, which are refreshing, and strengthening, and by which the saints are nourished up unto everlasting life; or rather the flesh of Christ eaten, in a spiritual sense, by faith, of which Christ so largely discourses in the following part of the chapter:

which the son of man shall give unto you; meaning either everlasting life, which is in Christ's gift, and is a free grace gift of his; or else the meat which endures unto it: for though it is to be laboured for, not so as to prepare it, or to purchase it, but by asking for it in prayer, and by attending on ordinances, and exercising faith on Christ; yet it is his gift, and he gives it freely; grace, and the blessings of it, are freely given by him, and so are the Gospel and its ordinances; and also his own flesh, which is first given by him, by way of sacrifice, in the room and stead of his people, and for the life of them, (◁joh6:51▷John 6:51); and then it is given unto them to feed upon spiritually by faith, and which is here designed:

for him hath God the Father sealed; designated and appointed to be the Saviour, and Redeemer of his people, and has sent, authorized, and commissioned him as such; and has made him known, and approved of him, by the descent of the Spirit on him, and by a voice from heaven,

declaring him his beloved Son; and has confirmed him to be the Messiah by the miraculous works he gave him to finish; for all which several uses seals are, as to distinguish one thing from another, to render anything authentic, to point it out, or to confirm it.

Ver. 28. *Then said they unto him*, etc.] Understanding by what he said, that they must labour and work, though not for perishing food, yet for durable food; and as they imagined, in order to obtain eternal life by working:

what shall we do that we might work the works of God? Such as are agreeable to his will, are acceptable to him, and well pleasing in his sight: they seem to intimate, as if they desired to know whether there were any other works of this kind, than what Moses had directed them to, or than they had done; and if there were, they suggest they would gladly do them; for this was the general cast and complexion of this people; they were seeking for righteousness, and life not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law.

Ver. 29. *Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God*, etc.] The main and principal one, and which is well pleasing in his sight; and without which it is impossible to please him; and without which no work whatever is a good work; and this is of the operation of God, which he himself works in men; it is not of themselves, it is the pure gift of God:

that ye believe on him whom he hath sent; there are other works which are well pleasing to God, when rightly performed, but faith is the chief work, and others are only acceptable when done in the faith of Christ. This, as a principle, is purely God's work; as it is an act, or as it is exercised under the influence of divine grace, it is man's act: "that ye believe"; the object of it is Christ, as sent by the Father, as the Mediator between God and men, as appointed by him to be the Saviour and Redeemer; and believing in Christ, is believing in God that sent him. The Jews reduce all the six hundred and thirteen precepts of the law, for so many they say there are, to this one, "the just shall live by his faith", (Habakkuk 2:4). [f267]

Ver. 30. *They said therefore unto him*, etc.] Seeing he proposed believing in him as the grand work of God to be done, and what is most acceptable in his sight:

what sign showest thou then, that we may see and believe thee? The people of the Jews were always requiring signs and wonders, and when they had

one and another shown them, they still sought for more, and were never satisfied; (see <4012>Matthew 12:39 16:1). These men had lately seen various signs and miracles of Christ, as healing the sick, and feeding live thousand of them, and more, with five loaves, and two fishes; and though, for the time present, these had some influence upon them, and they were ready to believe he was that prophet; yet now, at least some of them, begin to retract, and signify, that unless some other, and greater signs were shown, they should not believe in him as the Messiah:

what dost thou work? more than others, or Moses. They seem to make light of the miracle of the loaves, or at least require some greater sign and miracle, to engage their belief in him as the Messiah; and as they were lovers of their bellies, and expected dainties in the times of the Messiah, they seem to move for, and desire miracles of that kind to be wrought; and which sense the following words confirm.

Ver. 31. *Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness*, etc.] Which was a sort of food prepared by angels in the air, and rained down from thence about the tents of the Israelites; it was a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground; it was like a coriander seed, and the colour of it was the colour of bdellium: it was so called, either from hnm, "to prepare", because it was prepared, and got ready for the Israelites; or from the first words that were spoken upon sight of it, wh ^m, "what is it?" for they knew not what it was: and this the Jewish fathers fed upon all the while they were in the wilderness, till they came to Canaan's land, and they only; it was food peculiar to them: "our fathers did eat"; and so the Jews [f268] observe on those words in (<2165>Exodus 16:35):

> ""and the children of Israel did eat manna forty years"; the children of Israel, arjaalw, "not another". And the children of Israel saw, and said, what is it? and not the rest of the mixed multitude."

Now these Jews object this miracle to Christ, and intimate, that he indeed had fed five thousand of them with barley loaves, and fishes, for one meal; but their fathers, in the times of Moses, to the number of six hundred thousand, and more, were fed, and that with manna, very sweet and delightful food, and for the space of forty years; even all the white they were in the wilderness: and therefore, unless he wrought as great a miracle, or a greater than this, and that of the like kind, they should not think fit to

relinquish Moses, and follow him; and in proof of what they said, they produce Scripture,

as it is written in (Psalm 78:24,25), or rather in (Exodus 16:15); and perhaps both places may be respected:

he gave them bread from heaven to eat; they leave out the word Lord, being willing it should be understood of Moses, to whom they ascribed it, as appears from the following words of Christ, who denies that Moses gave it; and add the phrase "from heaven", to set forth the excellent nature of it, which is taken from (Exodus 16:4), where the manna, as here, is called "bread from heaven".

Ver. 32. *Then Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] It is truth, and may be depended on, whether it will be believed or not:

Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; in which Christ denies that that bread, or manna, did come from heaven; that is, from the highest heavens, only from the air, and was not such celestial bread he after speaks of, and which came down from the heaven of heavens: and moreover, he denies that Moses gave them that bread; it was the Lord that gave them it, as is expressly said in the passage referred to, in the above citation. Moses had no hand in it; he did not so much as pray for it, much less procure it, or prepare it: it was promised and prepared by God, and rained by him, and who directed to the gathering and use of it. This stands opposed to a notion of the Jews, that the manna was given by means of Moses, for his sake, and on account of his merits: for they say [f269],

> "there arose up three good providers, or pastors for Israel, and they are these, Moses, and Aaron, and Miriam; and three good gifts were given by their means, and they are these, the well, the cloud, and the manna; the well by the merits of Miriam; the pillar of cloud by the merits of Aaron; hçm twkzb ˆm, "the manna, by the merits of Moses"."

This our Lord denies; and affirms,

but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven: he not only gave the manna to the Jewish fathers, and not Moses; but he also gives that bread which the manna was typical of, by which he means himself; who may be compared to bread, because of the original of it, or the matter of it, of which it is made, wheat, he is called a corn of wheat, (John 12:24); and

from its preparation for food, being threshed, and winnowed, and ground, and kneaded, and baked; all which may express the sufferings and death of Christ, by which he becomes fit food for faith; and from its being the main part of human sustenance, and from its nourishing and strengthening nature, and from its being a means of maintaining and supporting life: and he may be called the "true" bread, because he is the truth and substance of the types of him; the unleavened bread, eaten at the passover, was typical of him, as he was free from sin in nature and life; and from all error in doctrine; and so was the showbread a type of his intercession, and set forth the continuance of it, its efficacy and acceptance, of which the priests only shared; and so were the meat offerings in the sacrifices, which were offered up day by day: and particularly the manna, the bread from heaven, the Jews were now speaking of: Christ was the truth of that type; that was but shadowy bread, Christ is the true bread, or the antitype of it in its name; whether it be derived from "manah", to prepare, Christ being the bread of life, and salvation of God, prepared in the council and covenant of grace, and by his sufferings and death before the face of all people; or from the words "man hu", what is it? Christ being as little known by carnal men, as the manna was at first to the Israelites: and in its nature, kind, form, and quality; it was round in form, which might be expressive of the perfections of Christ, and particularly his eternity, being without beginning or end; it was white in colour, which may denote the purity and innocence of him; it was sweet in taste, as he, his fruits, his word, and ordinances, are to them that are born again; it was small in quantity, which may set forth the meanness of Christ in his state of humiliation: it was also typical of Christ in its usefulness; it was sufficient to supply a, great multitude, and that for many years, as the fulness of grace in Christ is sufficient for the whole family in heaven, and in earth, in time, and to all eternity; the Israelites all shared in it, and had all an equal portion of it; so all the people of God have an interest in Christ, and equally participate of the blessings of his grace, and shall enjoy the same eternal life and glory by him: one has neither more nor less than another; Christ is all in all, and made alike all things to them: and he may be called the bread "from heaven"; because he came from thence, not by change of place, but by assumption of nature, even from the highest heavens, the third heaven, from whence the manna came not: he is the Lord from heaven, and is such bread as has a virtue and tendency in it to nourish men for heaven, and is truly of a heavenly nature: and this is Christ's Father's gift, and is of pure grace, without any consideration of works and merits in men. Philo the Jew says [f270], the heavenly food of the

soul, which is called “manna”, the divine word distributes alike to all that ask.

Ver. 33. *For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven*, etc.] In the way and manner just now mentioned: and which clearly points out Christ himself, who may be called “the bread of God”; to distinguish him from common bread, and to show the excellency of him, and that he is of God’s providing and giving, and which he would have his children feed upon:

and giveth life unto the world; a spiritual life, which he is the author, supporter, and maintainer of; and eternal life, which he gives a right unto and meetness for, and nourishes up unto; and this not to a few only, or to the Israelites only, but to the Gentiles also, and even to the whole world of God’s elect: not indeed to every individual in the world, for all are not quickened now, not shall inherit eternal life hereafter; but to all the people of God, in all parts of the world, and in all ages of time; of such extensive virtue and efficacy is Christ, the bread of God, in which he appears greatly superior to that manna the Jews instance in.

Ver. 34. *Then said they unto him*, etc.] At least some of them:

Lord, evermore give us this bread; that is so divine and heavenly, and has such a quickening virtue in it: these words are said by them either seriously, and to be understood of bread for their bodies, of which they imagined Christ was speaking; and so sprung from ignorance of his sense; and from sensuality in them who followed him for the loaves; and from a covetous disposition, being desirous of being supplied with such excellent food without charge; and from idleness, to save labour and pains in working for it; and from a vain desire of the continuance of this earthly life, being willing to live for ever, and therefore would have this bread evermore; and from a gross opinion of plenty and delicacy of corporeal food in the times of the Messiah; (see Gill on “Luke 14:15”); or else these words are spoken ironically, by way of derision, as if there was no such bread; and if there was, that Christ could not give it. However, the words may be improved, when considered as a petition coming from, and suitable to, a sensible and enlightened soul: for such who are sensible of their famishing condition by nature, and of their need of Christ, the bread of life, and whose taste is changed, and have tasted how good this bread is, will earnestly desire always to be supplied with it, and to live upon it; for nothing is more grateful to them, and more nourishing and satisfying to

their souls; they are never weary of it; it is always new and delightful to them, and they always stand in need of it, and wait in the use of means and ordinances for it; and this has always an abiding, lasting, virtue in it, to feed their souls, and nourish them up to everlasting life. Josephus [f271] says of the "manna", which was a type of this bread, that there was such a divine quality in it, that whoever tasted of it needed nothing else: and the Jews also say [f272], that

> "in the manna were all kinds of tastes, and everyone of the Israelites tasted all that he desired; for so it is written in (Deuteronomy 2:7), "these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee, thou hast lacked nothing", or "not wanted anything"; what is anything? when he desired to eat anything, and said with his mouth, O that I had fat to eat, immediately there was in his mouth the taste of fat. — Young men tasted the taste of bread, old men the taste of honey, and children the taste of oil."

Yea, they say [f273],

> "whoever desired flesh, he tasted it, and whoever desired fish, he tasted it, and whoever desired fowl, chicken, pheasant, or pea hen, so he tasted whatever he desired."

And to this agrees what is said in the apocryphal book of Wisdom, 16:20,21:

> "Thou feddest thine own people with angels' food, and didst send them from heaven bread, prepared without their labour, able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste; for thy sustenance (or manna) declared thy sweetness unto thy children, and serving to the appetite of the eater, tempered itself to every man's liking."

All which must be understood of that pleasure, satisfaction, and contentment which they had in it; for it was a very uncommon case to eat it, and live upon it as their common food for forty years together: and no doubt but that there was something remarkable in suiting it to their appetites, or giving them appetites suitable to that, to feed upon it, and relish it for so long a time: twice indeed in that length of time we read they complained of it, saying, that they had nothing but this manna before their eyes, and their souls loathed it as light bread, (Numbers 11:6 21:5), and lusted after the flesh, and the fish they had eaten in Egypt. And so it is with

some professors of Christ, and his Gospel; for there is a mixed multitude among them, as there was among the Israelites, who disrelish the preaching of Christ, and the truths of the Gospel respecting his person, blood, and righteousness, and salvation by him; they cannot bear to have these things frequently inculcated and insisted upon; their souls are ready to loath them as light bread, and want to have something else set before them, more suitable to their carnal appetites: but to such who are true believers in Christ, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, Christ, the true manna, and bread of God, is all things to them; nor do they desire any other: they taste everything that is delightful, and find everything that is nourishing in him.

Ver. 35. *And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life*, etc.] Christ is so called, because he gives life to dead sinners: men in a state of nature are dead in trespasses and sins; and whatever they feed upon tends to death; Christ, the true bread, only gives life, which is conveyed by the word, and made effectual by the Spirit: and because he supports and maintains the life he gives; it is not in the power of a believer to support the spiritual life he has; nor can he live on anything short of Christ; and there is enough in Christ for him to live upon: and because he quickens, and makes the saints lively in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, and renews their spiritual strength, and secures for them eternal life.

He that cometh to me shall never hunger; not corporeally to hear him preach, or preached, or merely to his ordinances, to baptism, or the Lord's table; but so as to believe in him, feed, and live upon him, as the next clause explains it:

and he that believeth on me shall never thirst; and which is owing, not to the power and will of man, but to divine teachings, and the powerful drawings of the efficacious grace of God; (see John 6:44,45). Now of such it is said, that they shall never hunger and thirst; which is true of them in this life, though not to be understood as there were no sinful desires in them; much less, that there are no spiritual hungerings and thirstings after they are come to Christ; but that they shall not desire any other food but Christ; they shall be satisfied with him; nor shall they hereafter be in a starving and famishing condition, or want any good thing: and in the other world there will be no desires after that which is sinful, nor indeed after outward ordinances, in order to enjoy communion with God in them, as now, for they will then be needless; nor shall they have any uneasy desires

after Christ, and his grace, and the enjoyment of him, since he will be all in all to them.

Ver. 36. *But I said unto you*, etc.] The substance of what follows in (<4065>John 6:26) though the Persic and Ethiopic versions render it, “I say unto you”; and so refers not to anything before said, but to what he was about to say:

that ye also have seen me, and believe not; that is, they had not only seen him in person, which many kings, prophets, and righteous men had desired, but not enjoyed, yet nevertheless believed; but they had seen his miracles, and had shared in the advantages of them, being healed, and fed corporeally by him, and yet believed not in him as the spiritual Saviour and Redeemer of their souls; nor did they come to him in a spiritual way, for eternal life and salvation.

Ver. 37. *All that the Father giveth me*, etc.] The “all” design not the apostles only, who were given to Christ as such; for these did not all, in a spiritual manner, come to him, and believe in him; one of them was a devil, and the son of perdition; much less every individual of mankind: these are, in some sense, given to Christ to subserve some ends of his mediatorial kingdom, and are subject to his power and control, but do not come to him, and believe in him: but the whole body of the elect are here meant, who, when they were chosen by God the Father, were given and put into the hands of Christ, as his seed, his spouse, his sheep, his portion, and inheritance, and to be saved by him with an everlasting salvation; which is an instance of love and care on the Father’s part, to give them to Christ; and of grace and condescension in him to receive them, and take the care of them; and of distinguishing goodness to them: and though Christ here expresses this act of his Father’s in the present tense, “giveth”, perhaps to signify the continuance and unchangeableness of it; yet he delivers it in the past tense, in (<4069>John 6:39), “hath given”; and so all the Oriental versions render it here. And it certainly respects an act of God, antecedent to coming to Christ, and believing in him, which is a fruit and effect of electing love, as is clear from what follows:

shall come unto me; such who are given to Christ in eternal election, and in the everlasting covenant of grace, shall, and do, in time, come to Christ, and believe in him to the saving of their souls; which is not to be ascribed to, any power and will in them, but to the power and grace of God. It is not here said, that such who are given to Christ have a “power” to come to

him, or “may” come if they will, but they shall come; efficacious grace will bring them to Christ, as poor perishing sinners, to venture on him for life and salvation:

and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out; such who come to Christ in a spiritual manner, and are brought to believe in him truly and really, he not only receives kindly, but keeps and preserves them by his power, and will not cast them out, or thrust them from him into perdition: the words are very strongly and emphatically expressed in the original, “I will not, not, or never, never, cast out without”; or cast out of doors. Christ will never cast them out of his affections; nor out of his arms; nor out of that family that is named of him; nor out of, and from his church, which is his body, and of which they are members; nor out of a state of justification and salvation; and therefore they shall never perish, but have everlasting life. The three glorious doctrines of grace, of eternal election, efficacious grace in conversion, and the final perseverance of the saints, are clearly contained in these words.

Ver. 38. *For I came down from heaven*, etc.] by change of place, or local motion; for Christ is the immense, infinite, and omnipresent God, and cannot be said properly to move from place to place; for he fills all places, even heaven and earth, with his presence, and was in heaven as the Son of God, at the same time he was here on earth as the son of man: wherefore this must be understood in a manner becoming his proper deity, his divine sonship, and personality: this descent was by the assumption of the human nature into union with his divine person, which was an instance of amazing grace and condescension. The Jew [f274] objects to this, and says,

> “if this respects the descent of the soul, the soul of every man descended from thence; but if it respects the body, the rest of the evangelists contradict his words, particularly Luke, when he says, (Luke 2:7) that his mother brought him forth at Bethlehem.”

But this descent regards neither his soul nor body, but his divine person, which always was in heaven, and not any local descent of that; but, as before observed, an assumption of human nature, which he took of the virgin on earth; and so there is no contradiction between the evangelists; nor is descent from heaven unsuitable to Christ as a divine person, since it is ascribed to God, (Genesis 11:7) (Genesis 18:21); and if God may be said to go down from heaven by some display of his power, and intimation of his presence, Christ may be said to descend from heaven by

that marvellous work of his, taking upon him our nature, and walking up and down on earth in the form of a servant; and which was done with this view, as he says,

not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; that is, not to do his own will, as separate from his Father's, and much less as contrary to it; otherwise he did come to do his own will, which, as God, was the same with his Father's, he being one with him in nature, and so in power and will; and though his will, as man, was distinct from his Father's, yet not repugnant, but resigned unto it: and this will he came to do, was to preach the Gospel, fulfil the law, work miracles, and obtain the eternal redemption and salvation of his people. What the above Jewish writer [f275] objects to this part of the text is of very little moment: whose words are;

> "moreover, what he says, "not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me", shows, that he that sent, is not one and the same with him that is sent, seeing the will of him that is sent, is not as the will of him that sends."

It is readily granted that they are not one and the same person; they are two distinct persons, which sending, and being sent, do clearly show; but then they are one in nature, though distinct in person, and they agree in will and work. Christ came not to do any will of his own different from that of his Father's; nor do these words imply a difference of wills in them, much less a contrariety in them, but rather the sameness of them.

Ver. 39. *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me*, etc.] This explains both who he was that sent him; the Father of him, and of his people; whose sending of him does not suppose any change of place, or inequality between them, or disrespect unto him, or compulsion of him, but agreement between them, and love to the persons on whose account he was sent; and also what is the will he came to do, and is what was declared by him to Christ, when he gave the elect to him: for this expresses his secret will in the council and covenant of grace,

that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing; that is, that of all the elect which were given to Christ by his Father, in eternal election, he should not lose anyone of them, not the meanest among them, nor anything of theirs, their grace, or glory, or anything belonging to them, either to their souls or bodies, and particularly the latter;

but should raise it up again at the last day; even every part of their bodies, and every dust belonging to them; their bodies being given to Christ, and redeemed by his blood, as well as their souls: so the Jews [f276], speaking of the resurrection, and making mention of that passage in (Numbers 23:10), "who shall count the dust of Jacob?" add,

> "and he (i.e. God) shall order it all, µwlk dybaty alw, "and not anything shall be lost", but all shall rise again; for, lo, it is said, (Daniel 12:2), "and many of them that sleep in the dust", etc."

Ver. 40. *And this is the will of him that sent me*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin adds, "of my Father"; and all the Oriental versions read only, "and this is the will of my Father"; this is his declared, his revealed will in the Gospel, which the sons of men are made acquainted with, as the other was his secret will, which was only known to the Son till he discovered it.

That everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him; who so sees him as to believe in him; for this is not to be understood of a corporeal sight of Christ, or of a mere speculative knowledge of him, or historical faith in him; for it is not so to see him, as merely to believe what he is, the Son of God, the Messiah and Saviour of the world, or what he says, but to trust in him for righteousness, life, and happiness. Men are by nature blind, their eyes are shut to all that is spiritually good; it is the Spirit of God that opens blind eyes, and illuminates the understanding: and in his light men see not only themselves, their sin, and want of righteousness, and their lost state and condition, but Christ, and a beauty, glory, and excellency in him, ability and willingness to save, a suitableness in him for them, and a fulness of all grace; they see righteousness, peace, pardon, cleansing, wisdom, strength, grace, life, and salvation, and go out of themselves to him for all: and such a sight, though it may be but glimmering, is saving, and is self-abasing, soul rejoicing, surprising, and transforming; is attended with certainty, reality, and evidence, and is a foretaste of glory; for it is the will of God, and not man, of a gracious Father, of an unchangeable and eternal being, whose will cannot be resisted, and made void, that such

may have everlasting life; which will be a life of glory, and will consist in possessing glory both in soul and body; in beholding glory, the glory of one another, the glory of angels, the glory of divine truths, and mysterious providences, the glory of the divine perfections, and of the Lord Jesus Christ; and it will be a life of perfection, of perfect knowledge, holiness,

obedience, love, peace, and joy; a life free from all the miseries and inconveniences of this, both in a natural and spiritual sense; a life of pleasure, and which will last for ever: to which Christ adds,

and I will raise him up at the last day; Christ will be the efficient cause, as well as he is the exemplar, the earnest, and first fruits of the resurrection of the dead; he will indeed raise all the dead by his power, but the saints particularly, by virtue of union to him, as the members of his body, and in the first place; and the very same shall rise, and with the same numerical body, that were given to him, and believe in him: and this will be at the last of the last days, at the end of all things; and is mentioned to show, that length of time will not hinder the resurrection of the dead, and in opposition to a Jewish notion, that the resurrection of the dead would be at the Messiah's coming: it will be at his second coming, but was not to be at his first; there was indeed then a resurrection of some particular persons, but not a general one of all the saints: that the Jews expect the resurrection of the dead when the Messiah comes, appears from their Targums, Talmuds, and other writers; so the Targumist on (Hosea 14:8):

> "They shall be gathered from their captivity, they shall sit under the shadow of their Messiah, "and the dead shall live", and good shall be multiplied in the land."

And in the Talmud [f277] it is said,

> "the holy blessed God will quicken the righteous, and they shall not return to their dust."

The gloss upon it is,

> "the holy blessed God will quicken them "in the days of" the Messiah."

And so the land of the living is said to be,

> "the land, whose dead live first in the days of the Messiah [f278]."

And hence R. Jeremiah desired to he buried with his clothes and shoes on, and staff in his hand, that when the Messiah came, he might be ready [f279] with which agree others of the more modern writers; so Kimchi on (Isaiah 66:5).

> "They shall live at the resurrection of the dead, in the days of the Messiah."

And the same writer on (<2420>Jeremiah 23:20) observes it is said,

> ""ye" shall consider, and not "they" shall consider; which intimates the "resurrection of the dead in the days of the Messiah"."

And says Aben Ezra on (<2702>Daniel 12:2):

> "The righteous which die in captivity shall live, when the Redeemer comes;"

though some of their writers differ in this point, and will not allow the days of the Messiah, and the resurrection of the dead, to be one and the same [f280].

Ver. 41. *The Jews then murmured at him*, etc.] When they found that he spoke of himself as the true bread, the bread of God, and bread of life, and as descending from heaven: and which was to be fed upon in a spiritual manner by faith, which they were ignorant of, and had no desire unto: and thus being disappointed of the delicious corporeal food they expected, they grew uneasy, and displeased,

because he said I am the bread which came down from heaven; for though, as yet, he had not said this in so many words, and in this direct form, as afterwards, in (<4051>John 6:51); yet he had said what amounted to it, and which might be easily gathered from (<4035>John 6:35,) (<4038>John 6:38). The Vulgate Latin reads, "I am the living bread"; and the Persic version, "I am the bread of life". And this last renders the first clause "mocked at him".

Ver. 42. *And they said, is not this Jesus the son of Joseph*? etc.] From murmuring they go to mocking and scoffing at his parentage and descent, and object this to his coming down from heaven; and intend by it to upbraid him with the meanness of his birth, being the son of Joseph, a poor carpenter; and suggest, that it was great arrogance in him to claim an heavenly original, and to ascribe such things to himself, that he was the bread of God, and the bread of life, and came from heaven:

whose father and mother we know? for Capernaum and Nazareth were not at a great distance from each other; so that Joseph and Mary might be

personally known by the inhabitants of Capernaum, and they might be intimately acquainted with them.

How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? they could not tell how to reconcile these things, not knowing either his miraculous conception and incarnation, nor his divine sonship; otherwise his being made of a woman, or born of a virgin on earth, is consistent with his being the Lord from heaven.

Ver. 43. *Jesus therefore answered and said unto them*, etc.] Either overhearing what they said, or knowing, as God, their secret murmurs, and private cavils among themselves, thus addressed them,

murmur not among yourselves: meaning neither about his descent from heaven, nor about coming to him, and believing in him; for it follows,

Ver. 44. *No man can come to me*, etc.] That is, by faith, as in (<4665>John 6:35); for otherwise they could corporeally come to him, but not spiritually; because they had neither power nor will of themselves; being dead in trespasses and sins, and impotent to everything that is spiritual: and whilst men are in a state of unregeneracy, blindness, and darkness, they see no need of coming to Christ, nor anything in him worth coming for; they are prejudiced against him, and their hearts are set on other things; and besides, coming to Christ and believing in Christ being the same thing, it is certain faith is not of a man's self, it is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; and therefore efficacious grace must be exerted to enable a soul to come to Christ; which is expressed in the following words,

except the Father which hath sent me, draw him: which is not to be understood of moral persuasion, or a being persuaded and prevailed upon to come to Christ by the consideration of the mighty works which God had done to justify that he was the true Messiah, but of the internal and powerful influence of the grace of God; for this act of drawing is something distinct from, and superior to, both doctrine and miracles. The Capernaites had heard the doctrine of Christ, which was taught with authority, and had seen his miracles, which were full proofs of his being the Messiah, and yet believed not, but murmured at his person and parentage. This gave occasion to Christ to observe to them, that something more than these was necessary to their coming to him, or savingly believing in him; even the powerful and efficacious grace of the Father in drawing: and if it be considered what men in conversion are drawn off "from" and "to", from

their beloved lusts and darling righteousness; to look unto, and rely upon Christ alone for salvation; from that which was before so very agreeable, to that which, previous to this work, was so very disagreeable; to what else can this be ascribed, but to unfrustrable and insuperable grace? but though this act of drawing is an act of power, yet not of force; God in drawing of unwilling, makes willing in the day of his power: he enlightens the understanding, bends the will, gives an heart of flesh, sweetly allures by the power of his grace, and engages the soul to come to Christ, and give up itself to him; he draws with the bands of love. Drawing, though it supposes power and influence, yet not always coaction and force: music draws the ear, love the heart, and pleasure the mind. “Trahit sua quemque voluptas”, says the poet. The Jews have a saying [f281], that the proselytes, in the days of the Messiah, shall be all of them, µyrwrg µyrg, “proselytes drawn”: that is, such as shall freely and voluntarily become proselytes, as those who are drawn by the Father are.

And I will raise him at the last day; (see Gill on “<4864>John 6:40”); compare with this verse (<4864>John 6:40 <0707>Judges 4:7).

Ver. 45. *It is written in the prophets*, etc.] In the book of the prophets, as the Ethiopic version renders it: the Jews divided the books of the Old Testament into three parts, the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa; now in that division which was called the Prophets, are the following words: or in one of the prophets, namely, in (<2543>Isaiah 54:13); so the Syriac version reads, “in the prophet”; though some think reference is had to more prophets, and more passages than one, as besides the above mentioned, (<2433>Jeremiah 31:34) (<3302>Micah 4:2);

and they shall be all taught of God; by his Spirit to know themselves, and Jesus Christ; that is, all that are ordained to eternal life; all that are given to Christ, and are chosen in him; all the children of Zion, and who are the children of God; these are all, sooner or later, in a special manner, taught of God: and which does not intend mere external instructions, and objective teachings by the ministry of the word, for many are so taught, who never come to Christ; but special teachings, such as are attended with the energy of divine grace, and the power of the Spirit of God, who guides into all truth, savingly and spiritually: for this is to be understood of their being taught in the Gospel of Christ, and not in the law, as the Targum paraphrases it,

> “all thy children shall learn in the law of the Lord.”

And that this prophecy refers to Gospel times, is clear from the citation and application of the first verse of it, to the church in the times of the apostles, (Galatians 4:27). The Jews themselves acknowledge the prophecy belongs to the times of the Messiah, to which they expressly apply [f282] the words in (Isaiah 54:5), “thy Maker is thy husband”, etc. And one of their modern commentators allows [f283], that this very passage, “all thy children shall be taught of God”, refers, dyt [l, “to the time to come”; that is, to the times of the Messiah: in this citation, those words, “thy children”, are left out, to show that the words are not to be restrained to the people of the Jews, as they might seem by that clause, and to whom the Jews would limit them: for so they say [f284],

> “they are truly taught of God from whom prophecy comes, which does not to all the world, but to Israel only, of whom it is written, “and all thy children are taught of God”.”

But our Lord, by these words, instructs us, and would have us observe, that all that the Father hath given him, whether Jews or Gentiles, of whom he had been speaking in the preceding verses, should be taught of God; and so taught, as to be drawn and brought to him, and believe in him, and have everlasting life: wherefore he infers from hence, that every man, whether a Jew or a Gentile, that is taught of God, will come to him in a spiritual way, and trust in him for eternal life and happiness, as follows:

every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me; everyone that has heard the voice of the Father’s love, grace, and mercy in the Gospel, and has learned of him the way of peace, life, and salvation by Christ, under the influence of his grace, comes unto Christ; being encouraged by the declarations and promises of grace he has heard and learned, and ventures his soul on Christ, and commits it to him; trusting and relying on his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, for justification, pardon, atonement, acceptance with God, and eternal life.

Ver. 46. *Not that any man hath seen the Father*, etc.] This is said, lest it should be thought from the above words, that our Lord meant that men should be so taught of God, as that they should visibly see the Father, and vocally hear his voice, and be personally instructed by him; for his voice is not heard, nor his shape seen; (see John 1:18 5:37);

save he which is of God; who is begotten of him, and of the same nature and perfections with him, though a distinct person from him, and who was always with him, and lay in his bosom:

he hath seen the Father; has perfect knowledge of him, personal communion with him; has seen the perfections and glory of his person, and the thoughts, purposes, and counsels of his heart, his whole mind, and will, and all the grace, goodness, and mercy which is in him, and has declared it; (see <4018>John 1:18).

Ver. 47. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] This is a certain truth, and to be depended on:

he that believeth on me hath everlasting life; not only he may have it, as in (<4040>John 6:40), and shall have it, but he has it; he has it in Christ, his head and representative; he has it in the covenant of grace; he has it in faith and hope; he has a right unto it, and a meetness for it; he has the earnest of it, the grace and Spirit of God; and he has the beginning and foretastes of it in his soul, and shall certainly enjoy it.

Ver. 48. *I am that bread of life*.] (See Gill on "<4035>John 6:35").

Ver. 49. *Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness*, etc.] All the while they were in the wilderness, for the space of forty years, till they came to the borders of the land of Canaan; this was their only food on which they lived, during their travels through the wilderness. It is observable, that Christ says, not "our fathers", but "your fathers"; for though Christ, as concerning the flesh, came of these fathers, yet in every sense they were rather theirs than his; because regard may be had to such of them more especially who ate the manna as common food, and not as spiritual meat, as typical of the Messiah, as others did; and whom these, their offspring, did very much resemble. Though perhaps the reason of the use of this phrase may be, because the Jews themselves had used it in (<4031>John 6:31), and Christ takes it up from them.

And are dead. This food, though it supported them in life for a while, could not preserve them from a corporeal death, and still less from an eternal one: for some of them not only died the first, but the second death.

Ver. 50. *This is the bread which cometh down from heaven*, etc.] Namely, that of which he had spoken (<4032>John 6:32,33,35,48), meaning himself:

that a man may eat thereof, and not die; for this heavenly bread is soul quickening, soul strengthening, and soul satisfying food; nor can there be any want where this is: eating of it is not to be understood corporeally, as these Capernaites took it; nor sacramentally, as if it was confined to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, which was not, as yet, instituted; but more largely of eating and feeding upon Christ spiritually by faith: he is, by the believer, to be fed upon wholly, and only; all of him, and none but him, and that daily; for there is the same need of daily bread for our souls, as for our bodies; and also largely and freely, as such may do; and likewise joyfully, with gladness and singleness of heart: such as are Christ's beloved, and his friends, "may" eat; they have liberty, a hearty welcome to eat; and so have everyone that have a will, an inclination, a desire to eat; and all overcomers, whom Christ makes more than conquerors, (Song of Solomon 5:1) (Revelation 2:7,17 22:17); which liberty is owing to Christ's gracious invitation, and to his and the Father's free gift; and to the openness and ease of access of all sensible sinners to him: and the consequence and effect of such eating is, that it secures from dying, not from a corporeal death, to which men are appointed, and saints themselves are subject; though it is indeed abolished by Christ as a penal evil; nor shall his people continue under the power of it, but shall rise again to everlasting life: but then they are, through eating this bread, secured from a spiritual death; for though there may be a decline, as to the exercise of grace, and a want of liveliness, and they may fear they are ready to die, and conclude they are free among the dead, and that their strength and hope are perished; yet he that lives and believes in Christ, the resurrection, and the life, shall never die; and such are also secure from an eternal death, on them the second death shall have no power, nor shall they ever be hurt by it.

Ver. 51. *I am the living bread which came down from heaven*, etc.] This is the same with what is said in (John 6:33,35,48), which is true of Christ, as he has life in him; and is the author and giver of life to others; and is of an heavenly original, and came from heaven to give life to men: and such is the virtue of this living and heavenly bread, that

if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever; not a natural, but a spiritual life; a life of sanctification, which is begun here, and will be perfected hereafter; and a life of glory, which will never end:

and the bread that I will give is my flesh; or "body", as all the Oriental versions render it. Here our Lord explains more clearly and fully what he means, under the notion of bread; and which shows, that by bread he did not design merely his doctrine, but his flesh, his human nature; though not as abstracted from his deity, but as in union with it:

which I will give for the life of the world; and which he did by the offering up of his body, and making his soul, or giving himself an offering, a propitiatory sacrifice for sin; which was done in the most free and voluntary manner, in the room and stead of his people, to procure eternal life for them, even for the whole world of his elect; whether among Jews or Gentiles; particularly the latter are here meant, in opposition to a notion of the Jews, that the world, or the Gentiles, would receive no benefit by the Messiah when he came; (see Gill on "John 3:16").

Ver. 52. *The Jews therefore strove among themselves*, etc.] Fell to cavilling and disputing one among another; some understanding Christ, and others not; some being for him, and vindicated what he said; and others being against him, and who were the majority, objected,

saying how can this man give us his flesh to eat? which is to be understood, not physically, but as morally impossible and unlawful; since, with the Jews, it was not lawful to eat the flesh of any creature alive, and much less the flesh of man; for the Jews understood Christ of a corporeal eating of his flesh, being strangers to a figurative or spiritual eating of it by faith, in which sense he meant it.

Ver. 53. *Then Jesus said unto them*, etc.] The Jews, who were litigating this point among themselves:

verily, verily, I say unto you; or you may assure yourselves of the truth of what follows,

except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you: by "the son of man", Christ means himself; under which title he often speaks of himself; because it was a title of the Messiah under the Old Testament; and was expressive of the truth of his human nature, though as attended with weakness and infirmities. The "flesh" and "blood" of Christ do not design those distinct parts of his body; much less as separate from each other; nor the whole body of Christ, but his whole human nature; or Christ, as having united a perfect human nature to him, in order to shed his blood for the remission of sin, and to offer up his soul and body a sacrifice

for it: and the eating of these is not to be understood of a corporeal eating of them, as the Capernaites understood them; and since them the Papists, who affirm, that the bread and wine in the Lord's supper are transubstantiated into the very body and blood of Christ, and so eaten: but this is not to be understood of eating and drinking in the Lord's supper, which, as yet, was not instituted; and some, without participating of this, have spiritual life in them now, and will enjoy eternal life hereafter; and all that partake of that ordinance have not the one, nor shall have the other: and besides, having a principle of spiritual life in the soul, is previously necessary to a right eating of the supper of the Lord. These words, understood in this sense, once introduced infants to the Lord's supper; as misinterpretation of (John 3:5) brought in the baptism of them. But the words design a spiritual eating of Christ by faith. To eat the flesh, and drink the blood of Christ, is to believe that Christ is come in the flesh, and is truly and really man; that his flesh is given for the life of his people, and his blood is shed for their sins, and this with some view and application to themselves: it is to partake of, and enjoy the several blessings of grace procured by him, such as redemption, pardon, peace, justification, etc. and such a feeding upon him as is attended with growth in grace, and in the knowledge of him, and is daily to be repeated, as our corporeal food is, otherwise persons have no life in them: without this there, is no evidence of life in them; not such live as feed on sinful pleasures, or on their own righteousness; only such that believe in Christ are living souls; and without this there is nothing to support life; everything else that a man eats tends to death; but this is what will maintain and preserve a spiritual life; and without this there is no just expectation of eternal life; but where there is this, there is good reason to expect it, and such shall enjoy it: some copies and versions read, "ye shall not have life in you"; eternal life. Now, though the acts of eating and drinking do not give the right to eternal life, but the flesh, blood, and righteousness of Christ, which faith lays hold, and feeds upon; yet it is by faith the right is claimed; and between these acts of faith, and eternal life, there is an inseparable connection.

Ver. 54. *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood*, etc.] Spiritually by faith, as explained in the preceding verse:

hath eternal life; the principle of spiritual life, which is evidently implanted in him, as appears from his eating and drinking; and is a durable and lasting principle: grace is an incorruptible seed; every part of it is abiding and permanent; and it is itself the beginning, pledge, and earnest of everlasting

life, and is inseparably connected with it: moreover, such have eternal life itself, not only in Christ their head, but in themselves: they have a right unto it, and a meetness for it: and may be assured of it, as if they were personally possessed of it, from their election to it; the security of it in Christ; from the grace they have received, which is the beginning of glory; and the earnest of it in themselves:

and I will raise him up at the last day; to enjoy it in soul and body; (see Gill on "John 6:39-40").

Ver. 55. *For my flesh is meat indeed*, etc.] Not in a corporeal, but in a spiritual sense; and the same is said of his blood:

and my blood is drink indeed, etc. that is, they are both "truly" meat and drink, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions render it; or are "true" meat and drink, as the Arabic version: in opposition to what was typical meat and drink; as the manna in the wilderness, the water out of the rock, the flesh and wine at the passover, the meat and drink offerings under the law, or any other meats and drinks under that dispensation; and which, though not when Christ said these words, yet now are abolished, being unprofitable, and not to be fed upon. Moreover, these phrases may denote the reality, substance, and solidity of that spiritual food believers have in Christ, in opposition to the imaginary food of sensual sinners, who feed on ashes and bread of deceit; and to that of self-righteous persons, who spend their labour and money for, and live upon that which is not bread, even upon their works of righteousness; and to the superficial tastes of hypocrites and formal professors; and to the charge of enthusiasm; and even to the outward elements of bread, and wine, in the Lord's supper, since instituted; and as it may be attended upon by persons destitute of the grace of God. And these words may also be expressive of the virtue, efficacy, and excellency of this food, it being soul quickening, nourishing, strengthening, satisfying, and delightful food, as well as spiritual and savoury; not to carnal persons, or outward professors, but to new born babes, and true believers; and which, by them, may be had, and to the full, and that in due season, even every day, and is what will abide for ever.

Ver. 56. *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood*, etc.] In the sense above given; (see Gill on "John 6:53");

dwelleth in me, and I in him. There is a mutual indwelling of Christ, and believers; Christ is the habitation, or dwelling place of his people: there is a

secret dwelling in Christ; so the elect of God dwelt in the heart, and in the hands, and arms of Christ from everlasting; and as members in their head in election grace; and representatively in him, as the Mediator of the covenant; and they secretly and safely dwelt in him, when all mankind fell in Adam; and when he was on the cross, in the grave, and now he is in heaven; all which is owing to his own love, his Father's gift, and to secret union to him. But there is an open dwelling in him in time, which is here meant: God's elect, as in their natural state, are without Christ, and lie open to the law and justice of God; the Spirit of God convinces them of this state, and directs them to flee to Christ, as a city of refuge; when they find him a stronghold, a place of defence, and a proper dwelling for them, where they resolve to abide, and do abide; and where they dwell safely, peaceably, comfortably, and pleasantly; and from which dwelling place they will never be turned out. Likewise, the saints are the habitation or dwelling place of Christ; he dwells not in their heads and to tongues, but in their hearts, and by faith; which is here expressed, by eating his flesh, and drinking his blood; and which, though it is not the cause of Christ's dwelling here, yet is the means or instrument by which men receive him into their hearts, and retain him, and have communion with him; for he dwells in believers, not in such sense as he dwells in the world, by his omnipresence, and power; or in the human nature, by hypostatical union to it; but by his Spirit, and by faith, which is an instance of wonderful condescending grace, and is owing to union to him, and is expressive of communion with him, and is what will continue for ever.

Ver. 57. *As the living Father hath sent me*, etc.] Into the world, to be the Saviour of it; not by local motion, but by assumption of human nature; and not against his will, or as having superiority over him; but by joint consent and agreement: the first person in the Godhead is here styled, "the living Father"; not because he is the Father of spirits, of angels, and the souls of men; and the Father of all men by creation, and of saints by adoption; and the Father, or author of all mercies, spiritual and temporal; but because he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and this character is peculiar to him: he is indeed the living God, and has life in himself, and is the fountain of life to others; but not in distinction from, and to the exclusion of the Son, or Spirit; but then none but he is the living Father, who ever did, and ever will, live as the Father of Christ:

and I live by the Father; which is to be understood of Christ, not as God, but as Mediator, and as man. As Mediator he was set up by his Father, as

the head of life to the elect; and was intrusted by him with a fulness of life for them; and was sent to open the way of life unto them, and bestow it on them. As man, he had his human life from God, and was preserved and upheld in it by him; and he laid it down at his command, and at his death committed his soul or spirit to him; and which was restored unto him, and is continued with him. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, “for the Father”, or “because of him”; and may design either that near union and conjunction of Christ with him, by virtue of which they live the same life; or else his living to the glory and honour of his Father, as he did, and does:

so he that eateth me; in a spiritual sense, by faith. The phrase of eating the Messiah was a familiar one, and well known to the Jews; though these Capernaites cavilled at it, and called it an hard saying.

> “Says Rab, the Israelites shall “eat” the years of the Messiah: (the gloss on it is, the fulness which the Israelites shall have in those days:) says R. Joseph, it is certainly so; but who shall “eat him?” shall Chellek and Billek (two judges in Sodom) hl ylka, “eat him?” contrary to the words of R. Hillell, who says, Israel shall have no Messiah, for whwlka, “they ate him” in the days of Hezekiah [f285];”

that is, they enjoyed him then; for he thought that Hezekiah was the Messiah; but that was the doctor’s mistake. The Messiah now was, and to be enjoyed and eaten by faith in a spiritual sense, and everyone that does so,

even he shall live by me: such have their life from Christ; he is their food, on which they lived; and by him they are continued, upheld, and preserved in their spiritual life, and are by him brought to the life of glory: or they live “for”, or “because of” him, as the above versions render it; they derive their life from him, and because he lives, they live also; and they live to his glory, and will do so to all eternity.

Ver. 58. *This is that bread which came down from heaven*, etc.] That true bread, the bread of God, the bread of life, living bread; meaning himself, as in (<4062>John 6:32,33,35,48,50,51);

not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: this is bread of a quite different nature from that; that was only typical bread, this true; that was

the bread of angels, but this is the bread of God; that came but from the air, this from the third heaven; that men ate of, and died; but whoever eats of this, lives for ever; (see <4649>John 6:49); as follows:

he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever; (see Gill on "<4651>John 6:51").

Ver. 59. *These things said he in the synagogue*, etc.] Openly and publicly, in the place of divine worship, where the Jews resorted for that purpose:

as he taught in Capernaum; his own city, and where there was a synagogue, into which he often went and taught his doctrines, and wrought miracles; (see <4013>Matthew 3:13 8:5,14 9:1,2 12:9).

Ver. 60. *Many therefore of his disciples*, etc.] Not of the twelve, nor of the seventy, but of the multitude of the disciples, who followed him from place to place, attended on his ministry, and might be baptized in his name; (see <4001>John 4:1);

when they had heard [this]; that his flesh and blood were truly and really meat and drink, and that none had life in them, or should have eternal life, but such as eat and drink the same:

said, this is an hard saying; or it is to be objected to; so ayçq, "an hard thing", the word here used in the Syriac version, and yl[awh hçq, "it is to me a hard thing", are phrases used to express an objection in the Talmudic writings, where they are often met with: or it is difficult to be understood and received; so hçqh rbdh, "an hard saying", or "an hard cause", is a cause difficult to be tried and determined, (<2026>Exodus 18:26), and is used of that which seems incredible and absurd, and is surprising and unaccountable: so it is said [f286], that

> "it happened to a certain woman, that she came before R. Abika: she said to him, I have seen a spot; he said to her, perhaps there is a wound in thee; she answered him, yes, and it is healed; he replied, perhaps it may be opened, and the blood brought out; she answered him, yes; and he pronounced her clean. R. Abika saw his disciples look upon one another; and he said unto them, hçq rbdh hm, "is this an hard saying with you?""

is it a difficult thing with you? does it seem absurd to you? or are you surprised at it? anything difficult, or which seems irreconcilable, is so

called: so the slaying the passover between the two evenings is called by Aben Ezra, in (<2212 06>Exodus 12:6), hçq hlm, “an hard saying”. In like sense the phrase is used here; and the allusion may be to food that is hard of digestion, since Christ had been speaking of himself under the metaphors of bread and meat. As some of the doctrines of Christ are comparable to milk, which is easy of digestion; others are like to strong meat, which belongs to those of full age, and cannot be digested by children, by babes in Christ, and much less be received, ate, and digested, with ease and pleasure, by carnal minds; who therefore say, as these Capernaites did,

who can hear it? this saying, or doctrine, concerning eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of Christ; or “him” Christ, who delivered this doctrine: such preaching, and such a preacher, are intolerable; there is no hearing, nor bearing them: hence we afterwards read, that these withdrew from the ministry of Christ, (<4066 66>John 6:66).

Ver. 61. *When Jesus knew in himself*, etc.] And of himself, without any intelligence from others, or hearing what was said, being the omniscient God:

that his disciples murmured at it; at the doctrine he had delivered, looking upon it as absurd, incredible, and contrary to sense and reason:

he said unto them, does this offend you? or trouble you? cannot you get over this? cannot you understand it? or account for it? if not, how will you be able to digest some other things, or reconcile them to your minds, which are less known, and more unexpected, and will appear at first sight more surprising?

Ver. 62. *[What] and if ye shall see the son of man*, etc.] Meaning himself then in a state of humiliation, and was taken for a mere man, though the true Messiah, and Son of God:

ascend up where he was before? for Christ was, he existed before his incarnation, and he was in heaven before; not in his human nature, but as the word and Son of God: and he intimates, that when he had done his work, and the will of his Father, for which he came down from heaven, by the assumption of the human nature, he should ascend up thither again; and which would be seen, as it was, by his apostles; and which would prove that he came down from heaven, as he had asserted; (see <4909 Ephesians 4:9,10); and that his flesh and blood were not to be eaten in a corporeal

sense; in which sense they understood him: and he hereby suggests, that if it was difficult to receive, and hard to be understood, and was surprising and incredible, that he should come down from heaven, as bread, to be eat and fed upon; it would be much more so to them to be told, that he who was in so mean and lowly a form, should ascend up into heaven.

Ver. 63. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth*, etc.] It is the spirit of man that quickens him; or which being breathed into him, he becomes a living soul; for the body, without the spirit, is dead; it is a lifeless lump: and it is the Spirit of God that quickens dead sinners, by entering into them as the spirit of life, and causing them to live: and it is spiritual eating, or eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of Christ in a spiritual sense, which quickens, refreshes, and comforts the minds of believers; it is that by, and on which they live, and by which their spiritual strength is renewed: unless, by spirit, is meant the divine nature of Christ, by which he was quickened and raised from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and was declared to be the Son of God with power:

the flesh profiteth nothing; the human nature of Christ, though profitable, as in union with the Son of God, to be given for the life of his people, and to be an offering, and a sacrifice for their sins, yet not as alone, or as abstracted from the divine nature; nor would his flesh and blood, corporeally eaten, could, or should it be done, be of any avail to eternal life; nor is any other flesh, literally understood, profitable of itself for life; for man lives not by bread, or meat, or flesh alone, but by the word and blessing of God upon it, and along with it; nor flesh, in a figurative sense, as creature acts and performances, self-righteousness, obedience to the ceremonial law, carnal descent, and birth privileges:

the words that I speak unto you, [they] are spirit, and [they] are life; the doctrines which Christ had then been delivering concerning himself, his flesh and blood, being spiritually understood, are the means of quickening souls. The Gospel, and the truths of it, which are the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, are the means of conveying the Spirit of God, as a spirit of illumination and sanctification, into the hearts of men, and of quickening sinners dead in trespasses and sins: the Gospel is the Spirit that giveth life, and is the savour of life unto life, when it comes not in word only, or in the bare ministry of it, but with the energy of the Holy Ghost, and the power of divine grace.

Ver. 64. *But there are some of you that believe not*, etc.] Notwithstanding the ministry they sat under, and the words they heard; for though they professed to believe in Jesus, as the Messiah, yet they did not truly believe in him; their faith was not a living faith, or of a spiritual kind, but a mere historical and temporary one, and was feigned and hypocritical:

for Jesus knew from the beginning; of his ministry, and of their profession of him, being God omniscient, and the searcher of hearts:

who they were that believed not; i.e. in him, as the Arabic version reads: notwithstanding their following him, and professing to believe in him, and the great outward respect and esteem they showed to him, he could see through all those masks they put on, and knew they had no true faith of him in them; and the same knowledge he has of every professor of his name: he knows whether their faith is of the right kind or not; whether they have obtained the like precious faith with God's elect; or whether their profession is only a verbal one. In some copies it is read, "who they were that believed"; who were true believers, as well as who were hypocrites.

And who should betray him: he not only knew how it was with the multitude of the disciples that professed love to him, and faith in him; but he also particularly knew the case of the twelve apostles, and that one of them should betray him, and who he was. This was determined in the decrees of God, and was foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and was predicted by Christ; and the person was pointed at by him before it was done.

Ver. 65. *And he said, therefore said I unto you*, etc.] Referring to (John 6:44), where the substance of what is here said, is there delivered; though the Ethiopic version reads, therefore I say unto you, what follows:

that no man can come to me, except it be given him of my Father; which is the same, as to be drawn by the Father; for faith in Christ is the gift of God, and coming to him, is owing to efficacious grace, and is not the produce of man's power and freewill; (see Gill on "John 6:44").

Ver. 66. *From that [time] many of his disciples went back*, etc.] Not any of the twelve apostles, for they are distinguished from these in the next verse; nor any of the seventy disciples, for their names were written in heaven, and could not apostatize totally and finally, as these did; but some of the multitude of the disciples, who followed Christ, heard him, and professed to believe in him, and were baptized in his name, but were not

true disciples, only nominal ones: they had never heard and learned of the Father, otherwise they would have known what it was to come to Christ, as the Father's gift, and under the drawings of his grace; and would not have been offended at the words of our Lord, just now spoken by him, concerning that sort of coming to him: but from the time he spoke those words; "because of this word", as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it; they withdrew themselves from his ministry, they dropped their profession of faith in him, and relinquished him as a Saviour and Redeemer: for finding that he would not be made king, nor set up for a temporal redeemer; and talking of himself as the bread of life, and of coming to him, in a sense they did not understand; they turned their backs on him; and as the words may be literally read, "returned to the things that were behind"; to the world, and to their old companions, to Satan and their own hearts lusts; like the dog to its vomit, and the swine to its wallowing in the mire: their true picture is drawn, in the parable of the unclean spirit going out of the man, and returning, (Matthew 12:43). And they returned to their quondam teachers, the Scribes and Pharisees, and to the law of works, and to seek for righteousness by it; setting up their own righteousness, and not submitting to the righteousness of Christ; and thus to look back and draw back, is a sad case indeed:

and walked no more with him; never returned to him more, or went with him from place to place as before: never more attended on his ministry, or had any intimacy and fellowship with him: and so it commonly is with apostates from the profession of Christ; they seldom or ever return, or are recovered; it is difficult, if not impossible, which is sometimes the case, to renew them again to repentance.

Ver. 67. *Then said Jesus unto the twelve*, etc.] "To his own twelve", as the Persic version reads; that is, to his twelve apostles, whom he had chosen to that office: Christ takes no notice of those that went away from him, he showed no concern about them; he knew what they were, that the truth of grace was not in them, and that they did not belong to him, and therefore was not uneasy about their departure; but turns himself to his apostles, whom he dearly loved, and in a very tender manner thus said to them,

will ye also go away? this he said, not as ignorant of what they were, or of what they would do in this case; he knew full well their faith in him, their love to him, and esteem of him, and close attachment to him, at least in eleven of then; nor did he say this, as having any fears or jealousies

concerning them, by observing any thing in their countenances or gestures, which looked like a departure from him; but it was said out of a tender regard and strong affection for them: and it is as if he should have said, as for these men that have walked with me for some time, and have now turned their backs upon me, it gives me no concern; but should you, my dear friends and companions, go also, it would give me, as man, real pain and great uneasiness: or he might say this to show, that as they were not pressed into his service, but willingly followed him, and became his disciples, being made a willing people by him, in the day of his power on them; so they willingly continued with him, and abode by him; as also to strengthen their faith in him, and cause them the more to cleave to him, with full purpose of heart, when others left him; as well as to draw out from them expressions of their regard for him, and faith in him, which end was answered.

Ver. 68. *Then Simon Peter answered him*, etc.] Who was strong in the faith of Christ, and full of zeal for him, and love to him; and who was the mouth of the apostles, and always forward to speak out of the abundance and sincerity of his heart, in their name; believing, that they all of them, for he had now no suspicion of Judas, no more than of the rest, had the same faith in Christ, love to him, and esteem of him, as he himself had; wherefore out of a good opinion of them, and love to Christ, he thus addressed him:

Lord; or "my Lord"; as the Syriac version renders it; which was either a title of respect, and the same with "Sir" with us; or else, as acknowledging the dominion and authority of Christ, as Lord of all, and especially of the saints, and as claiming his interest in him; and which carries in it a reason, why he should abide by him:

to whom shall we go? as a teacher, whose ministry we can attend upon, to greater profit and advantage? not to the Scribes and Pharisees, whose leaven, or doctrine, Christ had bid them beware of; who taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and were blind leaders of the blind; nor to John the Baptist, who had declared he was not the Messiah; but had pointed him out to them in his person, as the son of God; and in his office as the Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of men; and perhaps, he might not be now living; and if he was, he would have encouraged them not to follow him, but abide with their master; so that there was no other, that was "better", as Nonnus expresses it, that they could go unto; and

therefore it would be folly and madness in them to leave him: and as it was with Peter and the rest of the disciples, so it is with all sensible sinners, and true believers, who see there is no other to go to for life and salvation, but Christ; not to the law of Moses, which accuses, curses, and condemns, and by which there is neither life nor righteousness; nor to any creature, or creature performance, for there is a curse on him that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm; nor to their own righteousness, which is impure and imperfect, and cannot justify before God, nor answer for them in a time to come; nor to their tears of repentance, which will not satisfy the law, atone for sins, or wash them away; nor to carnal descent, birth privileges, a religious education, sobriety, and civility, to trust to which, is to have confidence in the flesh, which will be of no avail; nor to ceremonial services, or moral duties, or even evangelical ordinances, neither of which can take away sin. There is no other Saviour, but Christ, to look to; no other Mediator between God and man, to make use of; no other physician of value, for diseased and sin sick souls to apply unto; no other fountain but his blood, for polluted souls to wash in, and be cleansed; no other city of refuge, or strong hold, for souls sensible of danger, to flee unto and be safe; no other to come to as the bread of life, where hungry souls may be fed; no other place of rest, for those that are weary and heavy laden; nor is there any other, where there is plenty of all grace, and security from every enemy, as in him: and therefore, to whom can they have recourse, but unto him? and that for the following reason,

thou hast the words of eternal life: meaning, either the promises of eternal life, which were made before the world began, and were put into Christ's hands, for his people, and are yea and amen in him; or the doctrines of eternal life; for so the Gospel, and the truths of it, are called, (Acts 5:20); and that because the Gospel brings life and immortality to light, gives an account of eternal life; of the nature of it, that it is a glorious life, a life free from all the sorrows of the present one; a life of pleasure, and of perfect knowledge and holiness, and which will last for ever: and because it points out the way to it, that it is not by the works of the law, but by the grace of God; that it is his free gift, through Christ; and that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, or the true way to eternal life: and because it is a means of quickening dead sinners, and of reviving true believers, and of nourishing them up unto everlasting life: or this phrase may design the power and authority which Christ has, to dispose of, and dispense eternal life; for he has the firing itself in his hands, and a power to give it to as

many as the father has given him; and to them he does give it: and each of these senses carry in them a reason why souls should go to Christ, and to him only, for life and salvation.

Ver. 69. *And we believe and are sure*, etc.] Or know of a certainty: they believed upon the first call of them by Christ, and their following of him, that he was the true Messiah; and they came to an assurance of it, by the miracles he wrought, and by the doctrines which he taught; their faith, how weak soever it might be at first, rose up to a full assurance of faith, and of understanding; there was a reality and a certainty in it, as there is in all true faith, with respect to the object, though not always with respect to interest in it; which was the case here, as appears by what follows:

that thou art that Christ; or Messiah, that was promised by God of old, spoken of by the prophets, and expected by the Jews; that anointed prophet Moses had spoken of, that should arise out of Israel, like unto him that anointed priest, who, according to the oath of God, was to be priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek; and that anointed King, whom God has set over his holy hill of Zion:

the son of the living God; this they knew, and were sure of, both by John's testimony, and by the father's voice from heaven; which three of them heard, at Christ's transfiguration on the mount: God the father is called "the living God"; though the Vulgate Latin version leaves out the word "living"; not to distinguish him from his son; for he also is the living God; and is so called, (ᵛᵉHebrews 3:12), but to distinguish him from the idols of the Gentiles, who have no life nor breath in them: and Christ is called the son of the living God, as he is a divine person, as he is truly God; and to show that he has the same life his father has; being a partaker of the same nature, and divine perfections: and this is another reason why sensible souls will go to Christ, and no other; because he is the Messiah, the Saviour, and Redeemer, and an able one; and because he is God, and there is none else.

Ver. 70. *Jesus answered them*, etc.] The disciples, taking Peter's answer to his question, as delivered in the name of them all, and as expressing their mind and sense:

have not I chosen you twelve; not to grace and glory, to holiness and happiness; though this was true of eleven of them, but to be apostles:

and one of you is a devil? or like to one, is a deceiver, a liar, and a murderer, as the devil is from the beginning; all which Judas was, and appeared to be, in the betraying of his master. The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, “is Satan”; which name, if given to Peter, as it once was on a certain occasion, (<4016 23>Matthew 16:23), might very well be given to Judas; who, notwithstanding his profession of faith in Christ, was in the hands and kingdom of Satan, and under his influence and power: and this our Lord said, partly that they might not too much presume upon their faith and love, and steady attachment, and be over confident of their standing; and partly, to prepare them for the apostasy of one from among them.

Ver. 71. *He spake of Judas Iscariot, [the son] of Simon*, etc.] These are the words of the evangelist, pointing out the person Christ intended, lest any other should be suspected:

for he it was that should betray him: as it was determined and foretold, and which Christ knew full well, and therefore said the above words:

being one of the twelve; apostles, whom Christ had chosen, and which was an aggravation of his crime.

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 7

Ver. 1. *After these things Jesus walked in Galilee*, etc.] That is, after he had fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, near Bethsaida; and had had that long discourse with the Jews at Capernaum, concerning himself, as the bread of life, and about eating his flesh, and drinking his blood; and had been up to the feast of the passover at Jerusalem, said to be nigh, when he went over the sea of Galilee, (⁴⁰⁰⁴John 6:4); otherwise the above places were in Galilee: but the case seems to be this, that after he had been at Capernaum, he went to Jerusalem, to keep the passover; and finding that the Jews still sought to take away his life, he returned to Galilee, and "walked" there; he did not sit still, or lie at home, and live an inactive indolent life, but went about from place to place, preaching the Gospel, and healing diseases; he walked, and walked about; but not as the enemy of souls, seeking to do all mischief, but to do all good, to the bodies and souls of men:

for he would not walk in Jewry; in the land of Judea, where he had been, and tarried, and made disciples; but being rejected and ill treated, he left them; which was a prelude of the Gospel being taken from them, and carried to another people; which afterwards took place, in the times of the apostles: his reason for it was,

because the Jews sought to kill him; for healing a man on the sabbath day, and for asserting his equality with God: not that he was afraid to die, but his time was not come; and he had work to do for the glory of God, and the good of men; and therefore it was both just and prudent to withdraw and preserve his life; for like reasons he advised his disciples, when persecuted in one city, to flee to another: and very lawful and advisable it is for good men, when their lives are in danger, to make use of proper means to preserve them, for further usefulness in the cause of God, and for the benefit of men.

Ver. 2. *Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand*.] Which began on the fifteenth day of the month Tisri, which answers to part of our

September; when the Jews erected tents or booths, in which they dwelt, and ate their meals during this festival; and which was done, in commemoration of the Israelites dwelling in booths in the wilderness; and was typical of Christ's tabernacling in human nature; and an emblem of the saints dwelling in the earthly houses and tabernacles of their bodies, in this their wilderness and pilgrimage state. Some assign other reasons of this feast, as that it was appointed in commemoration of the divine command, for building the tabernacle; and others, that it was instituted in memory of the protection of the people of Israel under the cloud, as they travelled through the wilderness; by which they were preserved, as in a tent or booth; and to this inclines the Targum of Onkelos, on (<03243>Leviticus 23:43), which paraphrases the words thus, "That your generations may know, that in the shadow of the clouds, I caused the children of Israel to dwell, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt": and one of the Jewish commentators [f287] suggests, that the reason why the first place the Israelites pitched at, when they came out of Egypt, was called Succoth, which signifies "tents", or "tabernacles", is, because there they were covered with the clouds of glory: but the true reason of this feast is that which is first given, as is clear from (<03243>Leviticus 23:43), and because they were obliged to dwell in tents, as soon as they came out of Egypt, therefore the first place they encamped at, was called "Succoth", or tabernacles, (<021237>Exodus 12:37 <043305>Numbers 33:5). This feast was not kept at the time of year the people came out of Egypt; for that was at the time of the passover; but was put off, as it seems, to a colder season of the year; and which was not so convenient for dwelling in booths; lest it should be thought they observed this feast for the sake of pleasure and recreation, under the shade of these bowers; which, as appears from (<160815>Nehemiah 8:15,16), were made of olive, pine, myrtle, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees; and were fixed, some on the roofs of their houses, others in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God; and others in the streets: an account of the sacrifices offered at this feast, is given in (<042913>Numbers 29:13-38), in which may be observed, that on the first day thirteen young bullocks were offered; on the second, twelve; on the third, eleven; on the fourth, ten; on the fifth, nine; on the sixth, eight; and on the seventh, seven; and on the eighth, but one. The Jews, in their Misna, have a treatise called "Succa", or the "Tabernacle", in which they treat of this feast; and which contains various traditions, concerning their booths, their manner of living in them, and other rites and usages observed by them, during this festival: they are very particular about the measure and form, and covering of their booths; a

booth might not be higher than twenty cubits, nor lower than ten hands' breadth; and its breadth might not be less than seven hands' breadth by seven; but it might he carried out as wide as they pleased [f288], provided it had three sides: they might not cover their booths with anything, but what grew out of the earth, or was rooted up from thence; nor with anything that received uncleanness, or was of an ill smell, or anything that was fallen and faded [f289]: into these booths they brought their best goods, their best bedding, and all their drinking vessels, etc. and left their houses empty; for here was their fixed dwelling; they only occasionally went into their houses [f290]; for here they were obliged to dwell day and night, and eat all their meals, during the seven days of the feast; and however, it was reckoned praiseworthy, and he was accounted the most religious, who ate nothing out of his booth [f291]; they were indeed excused when it was rainy weather, but as soon as the rain was over, they were obliged to return again [f292] and besides, their dwelling and sleeping, and eating and drinking, in their booths, there were various other rites which were performed by them; as particularly, the carrying of palm tree branches in their hands, or what they call the "Lulab"; which was made up of branches of palm tree, myrtle, and willow, bound up together in a bundle, which was carried in the right hand, and a pome citron in the left; and as they carried them, they waved them three times towards the several quarters of the world; and every day they went about the altar once, with these in their hands, saying the words in (<19B825>Psalm 118:25): "Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord, O Lord I beseech thee, send now prosperity": and on the seventh day, they went about the altar seven times [f293]: also there were great illuminations in the temple; at the going out of the first day of the feast, they went down to the court of the women; they made a great preparation (i.e. as Bartenora explains it, they set benches round it, and set the women above, and the men below); and there were golden candlesticks there, and at the head of them four golden basins, and four ladders to every candlestick; and four young priests had four pitchers of oil, that held a hundred and twenty logs, which they put into each basin; and of the old breeches and girdles of the priests, they made wicks, and with them lighted them; and there was not a court in Jerusalem, which was not lighted with that light; and religious men, and men of good works, danced before them, with lighted torches in their hands, singing songs and hymns of praise [f294]; and this continued the six nights following [f295]: there was also, on everyone of these days, another custom observed; which was that of fetching water from the pool of Siloah, and pouring it with wine upon the altar, which was attended with

great rejoicing; of which, *see Gill "*(43737)*John 7:37"*: to which may be added, the music that was used during the performance of these rites; at the illumination in the court of the women, there were harps, psalteries, cymbals, and other instruments of music, playing all the while; and two priests with trumpets, who sounded, when they had the signal; and on every day, as they brought water from Siloah to the altar, they sounded with trumpets, and shouted; the great "Hallel", or hymn, was sung all the eight days, and the pipe was blown, sometimes five days, and sometimes six [f296]; and even on all the eight days; and the whole was a feast of rejoicing, according to (03234)Leviticus 23:40).

Ver. 3. *His brethren therefore said unto him*, etc.] That is, the brethren of Jesus, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it; who were not James and Joses, and Simon and Judas, the sons of Alphaeus, the brother of Joseph, the husband of Mary, so called, (40135)Matthew 13:55), for some of these were of the number of the twelve; and all of them believers in Christ; whereas these his brethren were not. The Jew [f297] therefore is mistaken, who supposed the above persons are here intended; and objects this their unbelief to Jesus, as if they knew him too well to give him any credit; whereas they did believe in him, and abode by him to the last; and some of them, if not all, suffered death for his sake. They therefore are to be understood of some distant relations of Mary or Joseph, that dwelt at Nazareth, or Capernaum, or in some of those parts; and the feast of tabernacles being at hand, they put him upon going up to it, being willing to be rid of him: saying,

depart hence: which is the language of carnal men, who desire not the company of Christ, nor the knowledge of his ways; and like the Gergesenes, who preferred their swine to Christ, and desired him to depart out of their coasts:

and go into Judea; among his most inveterate enemies, who sought to take away his life; and which doubtless they knew; which showed a quite different regard to him, from that of his true disciples, (43107)John 11:7,8), for which they give some plausible reasons:

that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest: meaning not his twelve disciples, who were now with him, but the disciples he had made, and baptized in Judea, (40401)John 4:1,2). Or his disciples in the several parts of the land, who would all be at Jerusalem, at the feast of tabernacles; and

so, should he go, would have an opportunity of seeing his miracles, and thereby be the more confirmed in the faith of him,

Ver. 4. *For there is no man that doeth anything in secret*, etc.] For so they reckoned his doing miracles in such a corner of the land, and in so obscure a place as Galilee:

and he himself seeketh to be known openly; suggesting hereby, that Christ was an ambitious person, and sought popular applause, and honour and glory from men, when nothing was more foreign from him; (see <4054>John 5:41 8:50).

If thou do these things; for they question whether the miracles he wrought were real; and suspected that they were deceptions of the sight, and delusions; or at least they questioned their being done by him; and rather thought that they were done by diabolical influence, by Beelzebub the prince of devils: but if they were real ones, they advise him, saying,

shew thyself to the world; or do these openly, and in the presence of the great men of the world; the princes of it, the rulers of the people, the chief priests and sanhedrim; and before all the males of Israel; who at this feast would come up from all parts of the land, and are for their multitude called the world: the reason of this their advice was, that if his miracles were real, and he was the person he would be thought to be, the doing of them before such, would gain him great credit and esteem; and if not, he might be detected by such numbers, and by men of such penetration as were among them.

Ver. 5. *For neither did his brethren believe in him*.] At first they might take to him, and embrace him as the Messiah, and expect he would set up a temporal kingdom; in which they might hope, on account of their relation to him, according to the flesh to enjoy great honours and privileges; but finding that he was not inclined to anything of that nature, and talked in a quite different way, they grew sick of him, and rejected him, as the Messiah; so, little regard is to be had, or confidence placed, in carnal descent from, or alliance to the best of men; as to Abraham, or any other true believer, if they have not the same grace, or the same faith as such have; and which comes not by blood, or natural generation, but by the free favour of God; for it matters not, if men have known Christ, or have been allied to him after the flesh, unless they are new creatures in him; they may be the one, and not the other; even the carnal brethren of Christ, and yet

not believers in him; and it is only such who are so in a spiritual sense, that are regarded by him, (<4012 49>Matthew 12:49,50).

Ver. 6. *Then Jesus said unto them*, etc.] In answer to their solicitations and arguments used with him, to go up to the feast:

my time is not yet come; meaning, not the time of his death, or of his exaltation and glorification, or of the showing of himself forth unto the world; though all this was true; but of his going up to this feast; as appears from (<4008 >John 7:8);

but your time is always ready; intimating, they might go at any time; their lives were not in any danger, as his was, and had nothing to consult about the preservation of them; it was all one to them when they went up, whether before the feast, that they might be ready for it, or at the beginning, middle, or end of it, as to any notice that would be taken of them, unless they should be guilty of an omission of their duty; but not on any other account; which was not his case.

Ver. 7. *The world cannot hate you*, etc.] Because they were of the world, belonged to it; they were like unto it, and every like loves its like; and they were the world's own, and therefore instead of being hated, were loved by it; and they walked according to the course of it; and wicked men not only take pleasure in sin, but in them that do it:

but me it hateth; though without a cause; that is, without a just cause, or reason; a cause there was, and it follows:

because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil; even those works of it, which were reckoned good works; Christ bore his testimony of these, that they were evil; being done either not according to the command of God, but the traditions of the elders; or not from a right principle, as of faith and love, nor to a right end, as the glory of God; but only to be seen of men: and very severely did he inveigh against the pride, covetousness, hypocrisy, and uncleanness of the Scribes and Pharisees: and so he continued to do, and this drew upon him their hatred and ill will.

Ver. 8. *Go we up unto this feast*, etc.] Suggesting, that he would not have them stay for him, or hinder themselves on his account: he encourages them to go up, and observe this festival; for the ceremonial law was not yet abolished; and though they were carnal men, and did not understand what it typified: and so unregenerate persons ought to attend on the outward

means, as the hearing of the word, etc. though they do not understand it; it may be God may make use of it, for the enlightening of their minds; and blessed are they that wait at Wisdom's gates, and there find Christ, and life and salvation by him:

I go not up yet unto this feast; this clause, in one of Beza's copies, is wholly left out; and in some, the word "this" is not read; and in others it is read, "I go not up unto this feast"; leaving out the word "yet"; and so read the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; and the Persic version only, "I do not go up"; which occasioned Porphyry, that great enemy of Christianity, to reproach Christ, as guilty of inconstancy, or of an untruth, since he afterwards did go up: but in almost all the ancient copies the word is read; and so it is by Chrysostom and Nonnus; and to the same sense the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, "I do not go up now to this feast"; that is, just at that very time, that very day or hour: which is entirely consistent with what is afterwards said,

for my time is not yet full come; not to die, or to be glorified, but to go up to the feast.

Ver. 9. *When he had said these words unto them*, etc.] Had exhorted them to go up to the feast, and told them that he should not go yet, and the reason of it:

he abode [still] in Galilee; and went not up with his brethren, nor at all at present; showing hereby a firmness and resolution of mind, not using lightness of speech; and his words being not yea, and nay, but all of a piece, and by which he abode.

Ver. 10. *But when his brethren were gone up*, etc.] To the feast, as all the Oriental versions read, from the next clause:

then went he also up unto the feast; the Ethiopic version reads, "he went up that day"; which is very likely, and no ways contrary to what is said, in (⁴⁰John 7:14); for though he did not go up to the temple to teach, till the middle of the feast, he might be up at the feast sooner: and according to the law, it was necessary that he should be there on the first and second days, and keep the Chagigah, and make his appearance in the court; though there was a provision made for such that failed, the canon runs thus [f298];

> "he that does not make his festival sacrifice, on the first good day of the feast, may make it throughout the whole feast, and on the

last good day of the feast; and if the feast passes, and he has not made the festival sacrifice, he is not obliged to a compensation; and of this it is said, (<20105>Ecclesiastes 1:15): “That which is crooked cannot be made straight”; etc.”

But however, whatever day he went on, he went up

not openly, but as it were in secret: as he was made under the law, and came to fulfil all righteousness, it was necessary that he should observe every precept, and fulfil the whole law: and therefore he went up to this feast; yet in the most private manner, that he might escape those who would lie in wait for him, and sought to kill him: and this he did, not through fear of death, but because his hour was not yet come; this was not the feast he was to suffer at, but the passover following; which when near at hand, he went up to it, and entered Jerusalem in the most public manner.

Ver. 11. *Then the Jews sought him at the feast*, etc.] Some to take him and kill him, and others to hear his doctrine, and see his miracles: for all expected him at the feast, knowing it was always his custom, as it was his duty, as an Israelite, to attend at it:

and said, where is he? not naming his name; either through contempt, which might be the case of the far greater part; or through fear of the Jews; or because that he was so well known.

Ver. 12. *And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him*, etc.] There was a general whisper, and a private controversy and contention among the people about him, upon inquiry being made after him:

for some said he is a good man; a man of a good principle, of a good life and conversation; and who is good, kind, and beneficent, both to the bodies and souls of men; preaches good doctrine, and does many good things:

others said: nay, or denied him to be a good man:

but he deceiveth the people; drawing them off from the law of Moses, teaching them to break the sabbath, setting himself up for the Messiah, and asserting himself to be the son of God.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit, no man spoke openly of him*, etc.] So loud as to be overheard, at least by many, but in a secret and whispering way; or did not

speak with freedom, or all their mind, what they really thought of him, nor with courage and boldness:

for fear the Jews; for fear of being mobbed by them, or up and prosecuted, or turned out of the synagogue; for a law was made, that whoever confessed him, should be so used; and this deterred persons from expressing the true sentiments of their minds about him.

Ver. 14. *Now about the midst of the feast*, etc.] About the fourth day of it, for it lasted eight days; this might be on the sabbath day, which sometimes was gjh Æwtb, "in the middle of the feast" [f299]; and the rather, since it follows,

Jesus went up into the temple; as the Lord and proprietor of it, and as was his usual method; he had for some reasons kept himself retired till now, and now he appeared publicly:

and taught the people his doctrine; he expounded the Scriptures, gave the true sense of them, and instructed the people out of them.

Ver. 15. *And the Jews marvelled*, etc.] Both at the matter, and manner of his doctrine; it was such, as never man spake; his words were so gracious, and there were such truth and evidence in them, and they were delivered with such power and authority, that they were astonished at them:

saying, how knoweth this man letters? or "the Scriptures", as the Arabic and Persic versions render it; which are called "holy letters", (<550315>2 Timothy 3:15); according to which, the sense is, that they were surprised at his knowledge of the Scriptures, that he should be conversant with them, and be able to interpret them, and give the sense and meaning of them, in so full and clear a manner, as he did: or else the sense is, how came this man to be such a learned man? whence has he this wisdom, and all this learning which he shows? as in (<401354>Matthew 13:54). So a learned man is in (<232911>Isaiah 29:11), said to be one that rpsh [dwy, επισταμενος γραμματα, "knows letters", as the Septuagint there translate the Hebrew text; but how Christ should know them, or be a learned man,

having never learned, was surprising to them: that is, he had not had a liberal education, but was brought up to a trade; he was not trained up at the feet of any of their Rabbins, in any of their universities, or schools of learning; and in which they were certainly right. Modern Jews pretend to say he had a master, whom they sometimes call Elchanan [f300], but most

commonly they make him to be R. Joshua ben Perachiah [f301]: with whom they say, he fled into Alexandria in Egypt, for fear of Jannai the king: and one of their writers [f302], on this account, charges the evangelist with a falsehood: but who are we to believe, the Jews who lived at the same time with Jesus, and knew his education and manner of life, or those that have lived ages since?

Ver. 16. *Jesus answered them and said*, etc.] Having heard them express their surprise, and state their objection:

my doctrine is not mine: it was his, as he was God; as such, he was the author of it, it was from him, by the revelation of him; and it was of him, or he was the subject of it, as Mediator; it respected his person as God-man, his offices, as prophet, priest, and King, and his grace, righteousness; and salvation; and it was his, as preached by him as man; it came by him, and first began to be spoken by him; and was so spoken by him, as it never was before, or since: but it was not human; it was not acquired by him, as man; he did not learn it of man; he needed no human teachings; he increased in wisdom without them, from his infancy: they said right, in saying he had never learned; the spirit of wisdom and knowledge rested on high, and the treasures of them were hid in him; nor was it a device or invention of his, as man; it was not from himself as such, but it was from heaven, from his Father: wherefore he adds,

but his that sent me; thereby intimating, that it was of God, and was communicated to him by his Father; from whom he received it, and from whom he had a commission to preach it; so that his doctrine was that wisdom which comes from above, and is pure and peaceable, divine and heavenly, and ought to be received by men.

Ver. 17. *If any man will do his will*, etc.] Meaning, not one that perfectly fulfils the law, which is the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God; for there is no man that does this, or can do it; nor is it so said here, “if any man do his will”, but “if any man will do” it; that is, is desirous of doing it; who has it wrought in him both to will and do, of the good pleasure of God, by his grace and Spirit; with whom to will is present, though, he has not power to perform, and so is a spiritual man; and who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, which is one branch of the will of God; and who depends upon the Spirit and grace of God, and acts from a principle of love to God, and in the exercise of faith on Christ:

he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or [whether] I speak of myself; not a man of mere natural knowledge and learning, or a man of theory and speculation, is a judge of doctrine; but he that leans not to his own understanding, and implores the assistance of the Divine Spirit, and who is for reducing doctrine into practice: he knows by the efficacy of the doctrine upon his heart, and the influence it has on his life and conversation; by its coming not in word only, but in power; and by its working effectually in him, whether it is divine or human, of God or of man.

Ver. 18. *He that speaketh of himself*, etc.]. What he himself has devised, and is a scheme of his own; for which he has no divine warrant and commission:

seeketh his own glory; honour and applause from men; as did the Scribes and Pharisees, who taught for doctrines the commandments of men, the traditions of the elders, their own glosses upon the law, and their own decisions and determinations: and as did the false teachers, who had nothing else in view but themselves, their worldly interest, or vain glory; these suited their doctrines to the minds and lusts of men, in order to gain their point:

but he that seeketh his glory that sent him; that gave him in commission what he should say and speak, and his only; as did Christ, and so his apostles after him:

the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him; he is an upright and faithful man, and what he says is truth; he brings true doctrine along with him, and there is no fraud or imposture in him; nor any insincerity “in his heart”, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; nor any dishonesty in his conduct; he is no cheat or deceiver; was he, he would seek his own glory and interest; but as he appears to be a man of no design, his doctrine is to be depended on and received; and such was Christ.

Ver. 19. *Did not Moses give you the law*, etc.] After Christ had vindicated himself and his doctrine, he proceeds to reprove the Jews for their breaking the law, which contained the will of God: by which it appeared, that they were no proper judges of his doctrine, though they cavilled at it: the question he puts could not be denied by them; for though, properly speaking, God was the lawgiver, yet inasmuch as it was delivered by Moses, it is ascribed to him, and said to come by him; and it was put into

his hands, to be delivered by him, peculiarly to the people of Israel; and being given to the Jewish fathers, not only for themselves, but for their posterity in ages to come, is said to be given to the then present generation; and may be understood, either of the whole system of laws, moral, ceremonial, and, judicial, belonging to that people; or else of the particular law, concerning the keeping of the sabbath, which was a peculiar law of Moses, and proper to the children of Israel only:

and [yet] none of you keepeth the law; though they boasted of it as a singular privilege, and rested in it, and their obedience to it for life and salvation, yet daily broke it in various instances, in thought, word, or deed; yea, those that sat in Moses's chair, and taught it, did not observe and do what they taught; nor could the most holy and righteous man among them perfectly keep it: and many of them, who were most forward to censure others, for the violation of it, paid the least regard to it; and particularly to the law of the sabbath, which both priests and people transgressed, in one point or another, every sabbath day: wherefore our Lord reasons with them,

why go ye about to kill me? an harmless and innocent man, who never injured you in your persons and properties; and which is a proof of their not keeping that body of laws Moses gave them, since "thou shalt not kill" is one of them: though rather this may refer to the law of the sabbath, and the sense he, that since Moses had given them the law of the sabbath, and they did not keep it themselves, why should they seek to take away his life, for what they pretended was a breach of it? for our Lord here, as appears by what follows, refers to what they sought to do, above a year and a half ago, and still continued to seek after; namely, to kill him, because he had healed a man on the sabbath day, (John 5:16,18 7:1).

Ver. 20. *The people answered and said*, etc.] These seem to be the country people, who came from Galilee and other parts, who knew nothing of the designs of the Jerusalem Jews upon him; nor were they his downright enemies at least, but rather seemed to favour him, and were on his side, though greatly provoked to hear him talk after this manner:

thou hast a devil; or art possessed with one; thou talkest like one of the demoniacs, like a madman, one beside thyself; whom the devil has so much power over, and has so deprived of thy senses, that thou knowest not what thou sayest:

who goeth about to kill thee? no man; for they could not believe that any man, or body of men, would be so wicked, as to attempt to take away the life of so harmless a person, and who did so much good both to the bodies and souls of men.

Ver. 21. *Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc.] Taking no notice of their passion, reproach, and blasphemy; but proceeding upon the thing he had in view, and which he was determined to reassume, and vindicate himself in;

I have done one work; that is, on the sabbath day; meaning, his cure of the man that had had a disorder eight and thirty years, who lay at Bethesda's pool; which single action, they charged with being a breach of the sabbath, he mentions with a view to their many, and daily violations of it:

and ye all marvel; at it, as a thing unheard of, as a most shocking piece of iniquity, as an intolerable evil; wondering that any man should have the front, to bid another take up his bed and walk, on the sabbath day: they did not marvel at the miracle that was wrought; but were amazed, offended, and disturbed, at its being done on the sabbath day.

Ver. 22. *Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision*, etc.] The command of circumcision, which he renewed and established, (<3120>Leviticus 12:3);

(not because, or that it is of Moses; originally, or that he was the first giver of it, for it was enjoined before his time; this is a correction of what is before said, giving a more accurate account of the rise of circumcision:

but of the fathers); Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom it was enjoined by God, and who practised it before the times of Moses; so that this command was in force before him, and obligatory upon the descendants of Abraham, before he delivered it; and would have been, if he had never mentioned it; though the Jews say [f303],

> "we do not circumcise because Abraham our father, on whom be peace, circumcised himself and his household, but because the holy blessed God commanded us by Moses, that we should be circumcised, as Abraham our father was circumcised."

But no doubt it would have been binding on them, if Moses had said nothing about it; the command to Abraham is so express, for the circumcision of his male offspring, (<011710>Genesis 17:10-12); however, it

being both of Moses and of the fathers, laid a very great obligation on the Jews to observe it:

and ye on the sabbath day, circumcise a man; a male child, as they did, when the eighth day fell on a sabbath day; for the law of circumcision was before the law of the sabbath, and therefore was not to be made void by it, nor was it made void by it; and so much is intimated by our Lord's observing, that it was not of Moses, but of the fathers; and this is the reason which the Karaite Jews give for circumcision on the sabbath day: for [f304]

> "say they, because it is a former command, from the time of Abraham our father, on whom be peace, before the giving of the law of the sabbath, tbçb µylm wyh, "they circumcise on the sabbath day", and when the command of the sabbath afterwards took place, it was not possible it should disannul circumcision on the sabbath day; and for the same reason, they also allow the sacrifice of the passover to be done on the sabbath day, because it is a command which went before the command of the sabbath."

And this was also the sense and practice of the other Jews: thus citing the law of Moses in (<BIBLE>Leviticus 12:3). "And in the eighth day, the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised", by way of gloss upon it add, tbçb wlypaw, "and even on the sabbath day" [f305]; and on the same text another writer observes [f306], that by Gematry, every day is fit for circumcision. R. Jose says [f307],

> "they do all things necessary to circumcision, on the sabbath day."

R. Abika says [f308],

> "all work that can be done on the evening of the sabbath, does not drive away the sabbath; but circumcision, which cannot be done on the evening of the sabbath, drives away the sabbath: they do all things necessary to circumcision; they circumcise, and make bare, and suck, and put (on the wound) a plaster and cummin; and which, if not bruised on the evening of the sabbath, they may chew with their teeth."

Also it is allowed of [f309], to

> "wash the infant on the third day of circumcision, which happens to be on the sabbath."

Moreover, a case is put after this manner [f310];

> "if a man has two infants, one to be circumcised after the sabbath, and the other to be "circumcised on the sabbath", and forgets, and circumcises that, that was to be after the sabbath, on the sabbath, he is guilty of sin; if one is to be circumcised in the evening of the sabbath, and the other on the sabbath, and he forgets, and circumcises that which should be on the evening of the sabbath, on the sabbath, R. Eliezer pronounces him guilty, but R, Joshua absolves him."

And we have an instance [f311] of

> "R. Sheshana, the son of R. Samuel bar Abdimo, that when he was to be circumcised, it was the sabbath day, and they forgot the razor; and they inquired of R. Meni and R. Isaac ben Eleazar, and it was drove off to another day."

From all which it appears, that circumcision on the sabbath day, was a common practice, and which confirms the assertion of Christ.

Ver. 23. *If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision*, etc.] As it was certain in many instances he did:

that the law of Moses might not be broken; either the law concerning circumcision, which confirmed the law given to Abraham, and required it should be on the eighth day, let it fall when it would, even on a sabbath day; and therefore on that day, male children received circumcision, that that law might be kept, and not be broken: or else the law concerning the sabbath; and the sense be, if circumcision was administered on the sabbath day, "without breaking the law of Moses", as some render the words, which commanded the observation of the sabbath,

are ye angry at me; and pursue me with so much wrath and bitterness,

because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day? or "a man that was whole, sound on the sabbath day"; who was wholly, or all over disordered, every limb of whom shook with the palsy: or as some think the sense is, he was made every whit whole, both in soul and body; and then the argument is, if it was, no breach of the sabbath to make a

wound, and lay a plaster on it, as in circumcision; it would be no violation of it, nor ought any to be offended with it, that Christ should heal a diseased man, who was so in every part of his body, and restore health to his soul likewise and nothing is more common with the Jews than to say, the danger of life, and çpn jwqyp, "the preservation of the soul", or life, drive away the sabbath [f312].

Ver. 24. *Judge not according to the appearance*, etc.] Or through respect of persons, and so as to please men, the Scribes and Pharisees; who had condemned the action of Christ, in curing the diseased man on the sabbath day, and sought to kill him for it:

but judge righteous judgment; give your sense and judgment of things, according to the truth and evidence of them; and do not find fault with that, which you yourselves allow of, and which Moses and his law, and your own practices, justify.

Ver. 25. *Then said some of them of Jerusalem*, etc.] Who were inhabitants of Jerusalem, and so are distinguished from the people, (⁴John 7:20), who came up out of the country to the feast; so Jose ben Jochanan is called µylçwry çya, "a man of Jerusalem" [f313]; that is, an inhabitant of it: now these men living in the city, knew more of the temper and disposition, the designs and attempts, of the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, to take away the life of Christ; and therefore say,

is not this he whom they seek to kill? they knew that they had formed a design to kill him, ever since the passover before the last; when he wrought the miracle referred to in the text, and that they had been ever since plotting against his life, and were now at this feast seeking an opportunity to lay hold on him and kill him.

Ver. 26. *But lo, he speaketh boldly*, etc.] And with great freedom, and openly and publicly in the temple, as if he had a licence from the chief priests for so doing:

and they say nothing to him; do not contradict him, or forbid him speaking; he goes on without control; though he takes great liberty in charging the Jews with an intention to kill him, in arguing from their practices in vindication of himself, and in suggesting that they judged in favour of men, and not according to the truth of things.

Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? have they changed their minds concerning him, and so their conduct towards him? are they convinced, and do they know by plain demonstrations, and full proof, that he is really the Messiah that has been promised of old, and long expected?

Ver. 27. *Howbeit, we know this man whence he is*, etc.] They signify, that if the rulers had altered their minds, and had gone into the belief of Jesus of Nazareth being the Messiah, they should not follow them in it, for this reason; because they knew from whence he came; meaning not so much the place of his birth, which they supposed was Galilee, and Nazareth in Galilee, in which they were mistaken, as the manner of his birth, which they could account for: they pretended to know his extract, that he was the son of Joseph and Mary, that he was begotten in wedlock, and was born as other persons are; there was no difficulty with them in accounting for his coming into the world, no more than any other ordinary person; his descent from Joseph and Mary was well known to them, and to be accounted for in a rational way, and therefore concluded he could not be the Messiah:

but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is; they knew the place from whence he was to come; so the chief priests and Scribes did, (<40 2 4>Matthew 2:4,5); and so did these Jews, (<43 7 42>John 7:42). They knew he would come from Bethlehem, and they knew that he would come out of the seed of David; but then he was to be born of a virgin, according to (<23 7 14>Isaiah 7:14), and such a coming into the world was not to be known, reasoned upon, and accounted for: wherefore since Jesus, according to the notion of these men, came into the world in the common and ordinary way, they thought they had an invincible argument against his being the Messiah; and therefore, let their rulers do what they would, for their parts, they were determined to reject him: and because it could not be known from whence the Messiah should come; hence the ancient Jews used to call him the seed which comes from another place; not from the place from whence seed ordinarily comes, from the loins of men, but from some other place they knew not where: their words are very remarkable on that passage in (<01 4 25>Genesis 4:25): “and she called his name Seth, for God hath appointed me another seed”, etc. This observation is made by R. Tanchuma, in the name of R. Samuel [f314]; says he,

> “she has respect to that seed, which is he that comes, rha µwqmm, “from another place”, and what is this? this is the King Messiah.”

And elsewhere [f315], the same Rabbi observes on those words in (<01932>Genesis 19:32): “that we may preserve seed of our father”: it is not written, “that we may preserve a son of our father”, but “that we may preserve seed of our father”; that seed which is he that comes from “another place”; and what is this? this is the King Messiah. The modern Jews [f316] endeavour to explain away the sense of this phrase, “another seed”, as if it regarded strange seed; and that the sense of the expression is only, that the Messiah should spring from the family of Moab, and from Ruth the Moabitess: nor is their sense what Aquinas [f317] at tributes to the Jewish Rabbins,

> “that the more noble part of that mass, of which Adam was made, remained untouched (by sin), and was afterwards transfused into Seth; and so through all descending from him, unto Joakim, or Eliakim, or Heli, the father of the virgin, out of which the body of the blessed Virgin was made:”

which is no other than a Popish device, fathered upon the Jews, and made for the sake of the, Virgin Mary, rather than for the sake of Christ. But their meaning is, that Christ should not be gotten of man, or come into the world in the ordinary way of generation, but should be born of a virgin; and so it could not be known, and accounted for from whence he was, or from whence that seed was of which he was made. The angel gives the best account of this in (<42035>Luke 1:35): a body was prepared for Christ by the Lord; it was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost; his birth of a virgin was miraculous; it is beyond the comprehension of men, and cannot explained by any mortal; from whence he is it cannot be said; no man can be pointed to as his father; all that can be said is, he was made of a woman, a virgin.

Ver. 28. *Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught*, etc.] Overhearing the reasonings of these men, however, knowing what they said; so the Persic version adds, “having secretly known this”; exalted his voice as he was teaching in the temple, and in the midst of his discourse, publicly before all the people, in the temple, spoke out with a loud voice, that all might hear:

saying, ye both know me, and ye know whence I am; some, as the Ethiopic version, read these words by way of interrogation, “do ye both know me, and do ye know from whence I am?” no; you do not. Or they may be considered as an ironical concession; yes, you know me, and you know whence I am; you know me to be Jesus of Nazareth, but you are wrong, I am not of Nazareth; you suppose I come, from Galilee, but that is your

ignorance; you take me to be the real son of Joseph, to be begotten by him on Mary, but that is your mistake: such is your knowledge of me: you know me indeed who I am, and from whence I come.

And I am not come of myself; into this world, by incarnation, or the assumption of human nature, to work out the salvation of men; the Father called him to it, and he agreeing to do it, was in the fulness of time sent about it; this was not a device of his own, or an honour he took to himself; he was not alone in it; it was a mutual agreement between him and his Father, in consequence of which he was sent and came.

But he that sent me is true; to the covenant he made with Christ, and to the promises he made to the fathers of the Old Testament, concerning the mission of his Son; and he is true to be believed, in the testimonies he gave of him, particularly by a voice from heaven, declaring him his beloved Son.

Whom ye know not; so that notwithstanding all their boasted knowledge of him, they knew not his Father, from whence he came, and by whom he was sent; and notwithstanding also their boasted knowledge of the one, only, true, and living God, (see Romans 2:17); yet they knew him not in a spiritual sense; they knew him not in Christ, nor as the Father of Christ; they knew neither the Father nor the Son: and this their ignorance of both was the reason of their hatred of Christ, and of his followers, (John 15:21 16:3).

Ver. 29. *But I know him*, etc.] His nature and perfections, his purposes and promises, his council and covenant, his mind and will; and indeed none knows him but he, and those to whom he pleases to reveal him; and there is good reason why he should have intimate and perfect knowledge of him:

for I am from him; being the only begotten of him, and as such lay in his bosom, and knew him, and his whole heart, and was privy to all of him, and that that is within him;

and he hath sent me; in an office capacity to redeem his people. This is the original descent of Christ, which the Jews knew not, though they pretended to know him, and whence he was.

Ver. 30. *Then they sought to take him*, etc.] By force, and carry him before the sanhedrim, in order to be tried and condemned as a blasphemer, being enraged to hear him claim a descent from God, whom they took to be a mere man, the son of Joseph the carpenter:

but no man laid hands on him; though they had a good will to it, they had no power to do it, being restrained by the, secret providence of God from it, and awed by the majesty of Christ, which showed itself in his looks and words; and perhaps also they might be afraid of the people, lest they should rise in his favour; and so every man being fearful of being the first that should seize him, no man did: however, so it was ordered by divine providence, that he should not be apprehended at, this time,

because his hour was not yet come; to suffer and die, to depart out of this world, and go to the Father: there was a precise time fixed for this in the council and covenant of God, by mutual compact, called "due time"; as his coming into the world is called "the fulness of time"; nor could he die before that time, and therefore no man was suffered to lay hands on him, whatever good will he had to it. And there is a time for every man's death, nor can any man die before that time, or live beyond it; (see <21002>Ecclesiastes 3:2 <18405>Job 14:5); and this is the sense of the ancient Jews; for they say [f318],

> "a man before his years, or his time, does not die;"

that is, before he comes to the years appointed for him: and they ask [f319],

> "who is there that goes before his time? i.e. dies before his time?"

And it is said [f320] of a certain person who was in his house, and hynmz ajm, "his time was come"; and he died without sickness: though it must be owned some of them were otherwise minded, and say [f321], that death, by the hand of heaven, or God, shortens a man's years; and that there are some reasons for which righteous men depart out of this world before their time is come; and particularly of Enoch they say, God took him before his time was come [f322].

Ver. 31. *And many of the people believed on him*, etc.] Whilst some were displeased at his doctrine, others were induced by his miracles to believe on him, as an extraordinary person, if not the Messiah; and these were the common people, especially those that came out of the country; for the city Jews, and above all the rulers, were very averse to him: and it is easy to observe, that faith in Christ, and true religion, spread and flourish most among the meaner sort of people.

And said, when Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this [man] hath done? referring not so much to the miracles many of them might have seen done by him in other parts of Judea, and in Galilee; nor

only to those he had done in the preceding feasts at Jerusalem, but to those that were done by him now, though not recorded by the evangelist. The Jews expected many miracles to be wrought by the Messiah when he came, and they had good reason for it from (<235605>Isaiah 35:5,6). To these Christ sends John the Baptist, and the Jews, for proofs of his being the Messiah, (<401104>Matthew 11:4 <431037>John 10:37,38); and by these he was approved of God as such, (<442022>Acts 2:23). And it is certain that the ancient Jews expected miracles in the days of the Messiah.

> "Says R. Simeon to Eleazar his son, Eleazar, at the time that the King Messiah is raised up, how many "signs and other wonders" will be done in the world? a little after, from that day all the signs, and "wonders", and "mighty works", which the holy blessed God did in Egypt, he will do to the Israelites, as it is said, (<330715>Micah 7:15), "according to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt, will I show unto him marvellous things" [f323]."

So the Targumist on (<235308>Isaiah 53:8) paraphrases thus,

> "from afflictions and punishment he will deliver our captivity, and "the wonderful things" which shall be done for us in his days, who can tell?"

It is true indeed that the modern Jews have laid aside such expectations, and pretend they were not looked for formerly. Maimonides says [f324],

> "let it not enter into thy heart, that the King Messiah hath need to do signs and wonders (as that he shall renew things in the world, or raise the dead, and the like; these are things which fools speak of); the thing is not so."

And he instances in Ben Coziba, who set up for the Messiah, of whom R. Akiba, and the rest of the wise men of that age, did not require a sign or miracle: yet this same writer elsewhere says [f325], that

> "all nations shall make peace with the Messiah, and serve him, because of his great righteousness, and the miracles which shall be done by him."

Ver. 32. *The Pharisees heard that the people murmured*, etc.] Or whispered, privately talked among themselves:

such things concerning him; as that surely he must be the Messiah, since such wonderful things were done by him, and might also express some uneasiness and surprise, that the rulers did not receive him as such:

and the Pharisees, and the chief priests, sent officers to take him: and bring him before the sanhedrim, by them to be condemned, and so a stop be put to the people's receiving him, and believing in him as the Messiah; fearing, that should things go on at this rate, their principles and practices would be rejected, and their persons and authority be brought into contempt.

Ver. 33. *Then said Jesus unto them*, etc.] To the officers that were sent to take him, and other unbelieving Jews that were about him:

yet a little while am I with you; no longer than till the next passover, which was but about half a year at most: this he might say, partly to quicken the attention of the people to him, to make the best use and improvement of his ministry whilst they had it, since in a little time he would be removed from them; and partly to suggest to the officers that were sent to take him, that they, and their masters, need not have given themselves that trouble, for in a short time he should be gone from them, and till that time he should continue in spite of them.

And [then] I go unto him that sent me; still confirming his mission from God, expressing his death by going, and as being voluntary, and signifying his glory and happiness after it.

Ver. 34. *Ye shall seek me*, etc.] That is, the Messiah, who he was; meaning, that after his departure they should be in great distress, and be very much on the inquiry after, and solicitous for the coming of the Messiah, to be a Redeemer and Deliverer of them out of their troubles:

and shall not find [me]; no Messiah will appear, no Saviour will be sent, no Redeemer will come to relieve them; they shall inquire, and look for one in vain, as they did.

And where I am, [thither] ye cannot come; intimating hereby, that not only their temporal estate and condition would be very distressed and miserable, but also their eternal estate; since they should not be able to come where he would be in his human nature, and where he now was as a divine person, namely, in heaven.

Ver. 35. *Then said the Jews among themselves*, etc.] That is, the unbelieving, scoffing Jews; it may be the officers, at least some of them, that were sent to take him:

whither will he go that we shall not find him? what distant, or obscure part of the world will he betake himself to, and there hide himself, that so he cannot be found?

will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles? or Greeks; and so may design the Jews, who were scattered abroad in the times of the Grecian monarchy, under the successors of Alexander, and particularly Antiochus, in distinction from the Babylonish dispersion; or the strangers scattered through Pontus Galatia, etc. to whom Peter writes, (1 Peter 1:1). The Arabic version renders it, "the sect of the Greeks" by which the Hellenistic Jews seem to be meant: or the Jews in general, wherever, and by whomsoever scattered, who might be thought to be more ignorant than the Jews in Judea, and therefore more easily to be imposed upon: hence, in a flouting manner, they inquire, whether he will go to those when he is rejected by them. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, "will he go into the countries, or country of the Gentiles"; into Heathen countries, not to the Jews there, but to the Gentiles themselves:

and teach the Gentiles? suggesting, that he was more fit to be a teacher of them, than of the Jews, and might meet with more encouragement and success among them, who would not be able to detect him.

Ver. 36. *What [manner] of saying is this that he said*, etc.] It is not easy to be understood; and if that is not meant, which is suggested, what should he mean by saying,

ye shall seek me, and shall not find me, and where I am, thither ye cannot come? repeating the words of Christ just now expressed by him.

Ver. 37. *In the last day, that great day of the feast*, etc.] That is, of tabernacles, as appears from (John 7:2), which was usually called gj, "the feast", in distinction from the passover and Pentecost [f326]; and the eighth day of it was called ˆwrjah lgrh, "the last day of the feast" [f327], as here: and it was a "great day", being, as is said in (Leviticus 23:36), an holy convocation, a solemn assembly, in which no servile work was done, and in which an offering was made by fire unto the Lord. According to the traditions of the Jews, fewer sacrifices were offered on this day than

on the rest; for on the first day they offered thirteen bullocks, and lessened one every day; so that on the seventh, day, there was but seven offered, and on the eighth day but one, when the priests returned to their lots, as at other feasts [f328]; but notwithstanding the Jews make out this to be the greater day for them, since the seventy bullocks offered on the other seven days, were for the seventy nations of the world; but the one bullock, on the eighth day, was peculiarly for the people of Israel [f329]: and besides, they observe, that there were several things peculiar on this day, as different from the rest; as the casting of lots, the benediction by itself, a feast by itself, an offering by itself, a song by itself, and a blessing by itself [f330]: and on this day they had also the ceremony of drawing and pouring water, attended with the usual rejoicings as on other days; the account of which is this [f331]:

> “the pouring out of water was after this manner; a golden pot, which held three logs, was tilled out of Siloah, and when they came to the water gate, they blew (their trumpets) and shouted, and blew; (then a priest) went up by the ascent of the altar, and turned to the left hand, (where) were two silver basins — that on the west side was filled with water, and that on the east with wine; he poured the basin of water into that of wine, and that of wine into that of water.”

At which time there were great rejoicing, piping, and dancing, by the most religious and sober people among the Jews; insomuch that it is said [f332], that

> “he that never saw the rejoicing of the place of drawing of water, never saw any rejoicing in his life.”

And this ceremony, they say [f333], is a tradition of Moses from Mount Sinai, and refers to some secret and mysterious things; yea, they plainly say, that it has respect to the pouring forth of the Holy Ghost [f334].

> “Says R. Joshua ben Levi, why is its name called the place of drawing water? because, from thence çdwqh jwr µybawç, “they draw the Holy Ghost”, as it is said, “and ye shall draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation”, (<23>Isaiah 12:3).”

Moreover, it was on this day they prayed for the rains for the year ensuing: it is asked [f335],

> "from what time do they make mention of the powers of the rains (which descend by the power of God)? R. Eliezer says, from the first good day of the feast (of tabernacles); R. Joshua says, from the last good day of the feast. — They do not pray for the rains, but near the rains;"

that is, the time of rains; and which, one of their commentators says [f336], is the eighth day of the feast of tabernacles; for from the feast of tabernacles, thenceforward is the time of rains. The Jews have a notion, that at this feast the rains of the ensuing year were fixed: hence they say [f337], that

> "at the feast of tabernacles judgment is made concerning the waters;"

or a decree or determination is made concerning them by God. Upon which the Gemara [f338] has these words,

> "wherefore does the law say pour out water on the feast of tabernacles? Says the holy blessed God, pour out water before me, that the rains of the year may be blessed unto you."

Now when all these things are considered, it will easily be seen with what pertinency our Lord expresses himself on this day, with respect to the effusion of the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, as follows:

Jesus stood and cried; he now stood up, whereas at other times he used to sit, and spoke with a loud voice, both to show his fervour and earnestness, and that all might hear:

saying, if any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. This is to be understood not of a natural thirst, though the allusion is to it, which is very painful and distressing; as the instances of the Israelites in the wilderness, Samson after he had slain the Philistines, and our Lord upon the cross, show; much less a sinful thirst, a thirst after the riches, honours, and pleasures of this life; but a spiritual thirst, or a thirst after spiritual things, after salvation by Christ, and a view of interest in it, free and full pardon of sin through him, justification by his righteousness, a greater degree of knowledge of him, more communion with him, and conformity to him, and after the sincere milk of the word, and the breasts of Gospel ordinances: and such that thirst after these things, and eagerly desire them, and are in pain and uneasiness without them, as a man is, who has a violent thirst upon him, are such as are regenerated and quickened by the Spirit of God,

and are made sensible of themselves, and of their state and condition by nature. Now these Christ invites to come unto him, not to Moses and his law, moral or ceremonial, and to obedience to them, and works of righteousness done by them, to any creature, or creature acts; for these are cisterns without water, where no true peace, joy, righteousness, and salvation are to be had; but to himself, who is the fountain of gardens, the well of living waters, and who is as rivers of water in a dry land, to thirsty souls: and when come to him, which is by believing in him, they are encouraged to drink; that is, to take of the water of life freely, or to take of his grace freely; salvation by him is of free grace, and the pardon of sin is according to the riches of grace, and justification is freely by his grace, and so all other blessings; and of this they may drink abundantly, or they may partake of it largely: there is a fulness of grace in Christ, and there is an abundance of it communicated to his people; it is exceeding abundant; it flows, and overflows, and may be drank of to satisfaction, till their souls are as a watered garden, and they are satisfied with the goodness of the Lord.

Ver. 38. *He that believeth on me*, etc.] Which explains what is meant by coming to Christ, and drinking; for these acts are no other than for a man to go out of himself to Christ, and live by faith on him, and his grace. To which what follows is a great encouragement;

as the Scripture hath said: some refer these words to the preceding clause concerning believing in Christ, which the writings of the Old Testament speak of, as in (Deuteronomy 18:15 Isaiah 28:16 Habakkuk 2:4), and the sense is, that he that believes on Christ, the object of faith the Scripture points at, and in him, as that directs and requires; that believes in him as the mighty God, and as the prophet, priest, and King, and as the only foundation of the church, and lives by faith upon him, as just men do, then

out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water, though rather they belong to what follows; and do not design any particular place of Scripture; for no such one is to be found, where the following passage is expressed in so many words; but all those Scriptures which speak of grace, under the metaphors of water, and abundance of water, as rivers and floods of water, and of the effusion of the Holy Spirit, under such figurative expressions, such as (Isaiah 41:17,18 43:20 44:3 58:11 Joel 2:28). Hence the Syriac version reads in the plural number, “as the Scriptures hath said”;

referring to more than one: “out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water”; the grace of the Spirit of God is signified by water, because it is of a cleansing and purifying nature, as faith and hope are, having to do with the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin; and because it fructifies and causes the saints, as trees of righteousness, to grow, and bring forth fruit; and especially because it is cooling to those who are scorched with the heat of a fiery law, and very refreshing to thirsty souls: and it is called “living” water, because by it dead sinners are quickened, drooping saints are revived, and comforted; spiritual life in them is maintained and supported, and it springs up to, and issues in eternal life: and it is expressed by “rivers” of living water, because of the abundance of it in regeneration, justification, and pardon; it is grace for grace, abundance of grace believers receive from Christ; and from him, in whom those large measures of grace are, they “flow out” again, even “out of his belly”: from within him, out of his heart, the seat of it, by his lips, both in prayer to God, and in conversation with the saints, to whom he communicates his rich experiences of grace, to their comfort, and the glory of God: for grace is of a diffusive and communicative nature; out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh: and also it flows out by his life and conversation, which is sober, righteous, and godly; and this the grace of God teaches and influences: and this grace, as it is permanent and lasting itself, even perpetual, and always abiding; so it continues to flow, and to show itself in its acts and effects, in one way or another. The Jews ought not to find fault with Christ’s using such expressions, mystically understood, since they, comparing Moses and the Messiah together, say,

> “as the first Redeemer caused a well to spring up, so the last Redeemer shall cause waters to spring up, according to (<2918>Joel 3:18)[f339].”

Ver. 39. *But this spake he of the Spirit*, etc.] These are the words of the evangelist, explaining the figurative expressions of Christ; showing, that by rivers of living water, he meant the Spirit in his gifts and graces; and which is the plain sense of the passages referred to by him, particularly (<2803>Isaiah 44:3 <2928>Joel 2:28), and which, as before observed, the Jews supposed were intimated by their drawing and pouring water at the feast of tabernacles.

Which they that believe on him should receive; the apostles, and others, that had believed in Christ, and had received the Spirit, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification; as a spirit of illumination and conversion;

as a spirit of faith and adoption; but on the day of Pentecost they were to receive a larger, even an extraordinary measure of his gifts and grace, to qualify them for greater work and service:

for the Holy Ghost was not yet [given]; the word "given" is not in the original text; but is very properly supplied, as it is in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions. The Arabic version renders it, "for the Holy Ghost was not yet come"; he was; he was in being as a divine person, equal with the Father and Son, so he was from everlasting; and he had been bestowed in his grace upon the Old Testament saints, and rested in his gifts upon the prophets of that dispensation; but, as the Jews themselves confess [f340],

> "after the death of the latter prophets, Haggai, Zachariah, and Malachi, the Holy Ghost removed from Israel."

And they expressly say, be was not there in the time of the second temple. Maimonides says [f341],

> "they made the Urim and Thummim in the second temple, to complete the eight garments (of the priests) though they did not inquire by them; and why did they not inquire by them? because the Holy Ghost was not there; and every priest that does not speak by the Holy Ghost, and the Shekinah, does not dwell upon him, they do not inquire by him."

They observe [f342] there were five things in the first temple which were not in the second, and they are these,

> "the ark with the mercy seat, and cherubim, the fire (from heaven), and the Shekinah, çdwqh jwrw, "and the Holy Ghost", and the Urim and Thummim."

Now, though he had removed, he was to return again; but as yet the time was not come, at least for the more plentiful donation of him: the reason of which was,

because that Jesus was not yet glorified; he had not as yet gone through his state of humiliation; he had not yet suffered, and died, and rose again, and ascended, and sat down at the right hand of God; for the Holy Spirit was to come upon his departure, and in consequence of his sufferings and death, and being made sin, and a curse for his people; and through his

mediation and intercession, and upon his exaltation at the Father's right hand; when being made, and declared Lord and Christ, this should be notified by the effusion of his Spirit; (see <4023>Acts 2:33,36).

Ver. 40. *Many of the people therefore*, etc.] Of the common people, and it may be chiefly those that came out of the country:

when they heard this saying; or discourse of Christ, on the last and great day of the feast, relating to the large measure of grace, and the effusion of the Spirit on him, that believed:

said, of a truth this is the prophet; spoken of in (<5018>Deuteronomy 18:15), which some understood not of the Messiah, but of some extraordinary prophet distinct from him, who should come before him, or about the same time; or they imagined he was one of the old prophets raised from the dead, whom they also expected about the times of the Messiah: or their sense might only be, that he was a prophet, which was true, though not all the truth; they had some knowledge, though but small; and they spake of him, though but as children in understanding.

Ver. 41. *Others said, this is the Christ*, etc.] The true Messiah, which they concluded, not only from the miracles, (<4031>John 7:31), but from his speaking of rivers of living water flowing from him that believes in him; for the same prophecy that speaks of miracles to be performed in the times of the Messiah, speaks also of waters breaking out in the wilderness, and streams in the desert, of the parched ground becoming a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water, (<2335>Isaiah 35:5-7).

But some said, shall Christ come out of Galilee? as they supposed Jesus did; and because he was educated at Nazareth, and Capernaum was his city, and he chiefly conversed, preached, and wrought his miracles in these parts, they concluded that he was born there; and therefore object this to his being the true Messiah. For if they did not mean this, according to their own accounts, the Messiah was to be in Galilee, and to be first revealed there; for they affirm[f343] this in so many words, that lylgd a[rab ajyçm aklmylgty, "the King Messiah shall be revealed in the land of Galilee"; accordingly Jesus, the true Messiah, as he was brought up in Galilee, though not born there, so he first preached there, and there wrought his first miracle; here he chiefly was, unless at the public feasts; and here he manifested himself to his disciples after his resurrection.

Ver. 42. *Hath not the Scripture said*, etc.] These objectors were those who were accounted the more wise and knowing; who were conversant with the Scriptures, and pretended at least to a large knowledge of them:

that Christ cometh out of the seed of David; that he should be a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots; that he should be one out of David's loins, and of the fruit of his body, referring to (<23 11 01>Isaiah 11:1 <19 13 21>Psalm 132:11,17), which was very true, and what was commonly known, and expected among the Jews, that the Messiah should be David's son, as Jesus of Nazareth was, (<44 13 23>Acts 13:23);

and out of the town of Bethlehem where David was? where his parents lived, and he was born; and, according to Jerom [f344], he was buried here. The account he gives of this city, where he himself for some time lived,

> "is Bethlehem, the city of David, in the lot of the tribe of Judah, in which our Lord and Saviour was born, is six miles from Aelia, (i.e. Jerusalem) to the south, by the way which leads to Hebron, where also is showed the sepulchre of Jesse and David."

In which may be observed likewise the exact distance of this place from Jerusalem; which, according to Josephus [f345], at least as he is generally understood, was but twenty furlongs: and, according to Justin [f346], thirty five: but that this is the true distance, is clear from the old Jerusalem Itinerary [f347], and which agrees with Jerom about the sepulchre of David; for not far from it is the monument of Ezekiel, Asaph, Job, Jesse, David, and Solomon: however, it is certain that David was born here, and therefore it is called his city; and from hence the Messiah was to come; and here Jesus, the true Messiah, was born, and which the Jews themselves own; (see Gill on "<40 02 01>Matthew 2:1"), (see Gill on "<42 02 04>Luke 2:4"); and in vain it is for them to expect the Messiah from thence, where none of their nation live, nor have lived, for many hundreds of years; being particularly forbid by Adrian, after he had subdued them, living in or near Jerusalem, and also Bethlehem. Tertullian [f348] refers to this when he thus argues with them, and very justly, and strongly;

> "if he is not yet born, who, it is said, shall come forth a ruler out of Bethlehem, of the tribe of Judah, he must come (says he) out of the tribe of Judah and from Bethlehem; but we now observe, that no one of the stock of Israel remains in Bethlehem, because it is forbidden that anyone of the Jews should continue on the border of

> that country — how shall the governor be born in Judea, come forth from Bethlehem, as the divine books of the Prophets declare, when there is none of Israel left there at this day, of whose lineage Christ can be born? — how shall he come out of Bethlehem, when there is none in Bethlehem of the stock of Israel?”

And the passage they had in view, is (³Micah 5:2). Now these very things they object to Jesus being the Messiah, were what were fulfilled in him, and proved him to be the person; for his supposed father, and real mother Mary, were of the house and lineage of David; and though he was conceived at Nazareth, and brought up there, yet by a remarkable providence, which brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, he was born there, (⁴Luke 2:4-7).

Ver. 43. *So there was a division among the people concerning him*.] Some, though they did not go so far as to believe him to be the Messiah, yet took him to be a prophet, and a very extraordinary one; others made no difficulty to assert him to be the Christ; and others objected to it on account of the country from whence he came, and so fulfilled the words of Christ, (⁴Luke 12:51).

Ver. 44. *And some of them would have taken him*, etc.] Some of the latter sort, who did not believe he was the Messiah; who were the most averse to him, and hot and furious against him; these were for seizing him at once in a violent manner, and for carrying him before the sanhedrim, as an impostor and blasphemer to be examined and tried, and judged by them, to whom it belonged to judge and determine concerning such persons:

but no man laid hands on him; though they had a good will to it, no man had power to do it; they were held back and restrained by the providence of God; and were diverted from it upon one consideration or another; either fearing the people, or being awed by the majesty of Christ’s countenance, or words; the true reason of which was, that which is before given, that his hour was not yet come.

Ver. 45. *Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees*, etc.] Who were assembled together in council, as the great sanhedrim of the nation; who were sitting and expecting Jesus to be brought before them. The same officers they sent to take him, (⁴John 7:32), returned to them without him; for though they were sent on that errand which they intended to have performed, yet they were not on the side of those who were for

seizing him by force, nor of those who objected to his being the Messiah; but rather took part with those who affirmed he was the Messiah; or at least looked upon him to be some extraordinary prophet:

and they said unto them; that is, the chief priests and Pharisees said to the officers; the Syriac version reads, "the priests said unto them":

why have ye not brought him? They mention not the name of Jesus by way of contempt, and knowing that the officers would easily understand them; though the Persic version expresses it, reading the words thus, "why have ye not brought Jesus?" seeing them returned without him, they were transported with rage and fury, and fell upon them in a fierce and furious manner, for disobeying their orders, who had sat there waiting some time: and hoping, and not doubting, but they should have him in their hands, whose blood they were thirsting after: wherefore it was a great disappointment to them, and much enraged them to see them come without him.

Ver. 46. *The officers answered*, etc.] Very honestly and uprightly, making use of no shifts and excuses; as that they could not find him, or could not come at him, because of the multitude about him, or that they were afraid of the people, lest they should rise upon them, and stone them, and rescue Jesus; which would have carried a show of probability, and have brought them off; but they tell the naked truth,

never man spake like this man; not Moses, the spokesman of the people of Israel; nor David, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet Psalmist of Israel; nor Solomon, the wisest of men; nor that sublime and evangelical prophet Isaiah; nor any of the other prophets; nor John Baptist his forerunner, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: never man spoke words for matter like him; such gracious words, or words, and doctrines of grace, which so fully express the grace of God, and are so grateful to men; such as free justification by his righteousness, full pardon by his blood, peace and reconciliation by his sacrifice, the liberty captives from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law, and spiritual and eternal salvation by him: never man spoke such words of truth, as he who is full of truth, and truth itself did: or such words of wisdom, who is the wisdom of God, on whom the spirit of wisdom rested, and in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; nor such wholesome and salutary words, which nourish up unto eternal life. Nor did ever any speak words for form and manner, as he did; words so apt and pertinent, with such propriety, beauty,

and gracefulness, with such majesty and authority, and with such power and efficacy; which at once charmed the ear, affected the heart; carried evidence and conviction with them, enlightened the understanding, and fastened attention to them; which was the case with these men, so that they had not power to execute their commission. He delivered such excellent things, and in such a charming manner, they could not find in their hearts to use any violence towards him; or be the means of bringing him into any trouble or danger. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, “never man spake as this man speaks”.

Ver. 47. *Then answered them the Pharisees, are ye also deceived*?] As well as the common people; you that have been so long in our service, and should know better; or who, at least, should have taken the sense of your superiors, and should have waited to have had their opinion and judgment of him, and been determined by that, and not so hastily have joined with a deluded set of people. It was the common character of Christ, and his apostles, and so of all his faithful ministers in all succeeding ages, that they were deceivers, and the people that followed them deceived, a parcel of poor deluded creatures, carried aside by their teachers; when, on the other hand, they are the deceived ones, who live in sin, and indulge themselves in it; or who trust in themselves that they are righteous; who think they are something, when they are nothing; who imagine, that touching the righteousness of the law, they are blameless, are free from sin, and need no repentance; who follow the traditions and commandments of men: whereas these cannot be deceived, who follow Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, and his faithful ministers, who show unto men the way of salvation.

Ver. 48. *Have any of the rulers*, etc.] In the sanhedrim, or of the synagogues; or the civil magistrates, the noble, rich, and wealthy:

or of the Pharisees, believed on him; men famous for wisdom, learning, and holiness. It must be owned, there were but very few of this sort, and perhaps not an instance of this kind had as yet occurred to them; there was Nicodemus, who is mentioned in the context, who was both a ruler and a Pharisee; and Joseph of Arimathea, a rich counsellor; but they neither of them openly showed themselves to be the disciples of Christ till his death: and besides these, there were some women, as Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, Susanna, and some other women, who ministered to him of their substance; but the far greater part of his followers were poor and illiterate: and this has been the common case of those that have believed in

Jesus, for the most part, ever since, and therefore should not be a stumbling to any. God is pleased to hide the great things of the Gospel from the wise and prudent, the rich and noble, and preach and reveal them to the poor and foolish: nor is a doctrine a whit the truer for being espoused by the rich, and wise men of this world, but rather to be suspected on that account.

Ver. 49. *But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed*.] With great contempt they style the followers of Jesus "this people"; the common people, the dregs of them, the refuse of the earth; and whom they call, Wah µ[, "the people of the earth", in distinction from the wise men, and their disciples: and when they speak the best of them, their account is this [f349];

> "one of the people of the earth is one that has moral excellencies, but not intellectual ones; that is, there is in him common civility, but the law is not in him;"

as here, "who knoweth not the law": they always reckon them very ignorant. Says one [f350] of their writers,

> "they that are without knowledge are the multitude."

And elsewhere it is said [f351],

> "the old men of the people of the earth, when they grow old their knowledge is disturbed (or is lost), as it is said, (<181220>Job 12:20), but so it is not with the old men of the law, when they grow old, their knowledge rests upon them, as it is said, (<181212>Job 12:12), "with the ancient is wisdom"."

Upon which one of the commentators [f352] has this gloss;

> "these are the disciples of the wise men; for the people of the earth, what wisdom is there in them?"

By the "law" here, is meant either the written law of Moses, which the Pharisees boasted of, and of their knowledge of it, as having the key of knowledge to open it; as understanding the true sense, and capable of giving a right interpretation of it, to the people; though they themselves were wretchedly ignorant of it, as appears by their false glosses on it, refuted by our Lord in (<400517>Matthew 5:17-48); or else the oral law is here intended, which they pretended was given by word of mouth to Moses, and

handed down to posterity from one to another; and this lay among the doctors: they tell us [f353], that Moses received it at Sinai, and delivered it to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the great synagogue (Ezra's), the last of which was Simeon the just: Antigonus, a man of Socho, received it from him; and Jose ben Joezer, and Jose ben Jochanan, received it from him; and Joshua ben Perachia, (whom they sometimes say was the master of Jesus of Nazareth,) and Nittai the Arbelite, received it from them; by whom it was delivered to Judah ben Tabia, and Simeon ben Shetach; and from them it was received by Shemaiah, and Abtalion, who delivered it to Hillell, and Shammai; who, or whose scholars, were, at this time, when these words were spoken, the present possessors of it, and taught it their disciples in their schools: and thus it was handed down from one to another, until the times of R. Judah, who collected the whole of the traditions of the elders together, and published it under the title of the Misna; and then, as Maimonides says [f354], it was revealed to all Israel; whereas before it was but in a few hands, who instructed others in it; but as for the common people, they knew little of it, especially of the nice distinctions and decisions of it; and these people were always had in great contempt by the wise men: they would not receive a testimony from them, nor give one for them, nor deliver a secret to them, nor proclaim anything of theirs that was lost, nor walk with them in the way, nor make a guardian of any of them [f355]. The people of the earth were not reckoned holy or religious [f356], but generally profane and wicked; that they were abandoned to sin, rejected of God, and to be cast off by men; yea, they will not allow that they shall rise again at the last day, unless it be for the sake of some wise men they are allied unto, or have done some service for. They say [f357]

> "whoever ministers in the light of the law, the light of the law will quicken him; but whoever does not minister in the light of the law, the light of the law will not quicken him — though it is possible for such an one to cleave to the Shekinah — for everyone that marries his daughter to a scholar of a wise man, or makes merchandise for the disciples of the wise men, and they receive any advantage from his goods, this brings on him what is written, as if he cleaved to the Shekinah."

Thus we see in what contempt the common people were with the learned doctors, and what an opinion these men had of the followers of Christ; though, in truth, they were not so ignorant of the law as themselves: they

knew the spirituality of it, that it reached to the thoughts of the heart, as well as to external actions; they knew what it required, and their own impotence to answer its demands; they knew the wrath, terror, and curses of it, and that Christ only was the fulfilling end of it, for righteousness to those that believed in him: and they were far from being cursed persons: they were blessed with all spiritual blessings: with the pardon of their sins, and the justification of their persons; with grace and peace in their souls, and would be introduced as the blessed of the Father into his kingdom and glory.

Ver. 50. *Nicodemus saith unto them*, etc.] To the Jewish sanhedrim, who were running down Christ, and his followers, in great wrath and fury:

he that came to Jesus by night; (see <430301>John 3:1,2);

being one of them; a member of the sanhedrim.

Ver. 51. *Doth our law judge any man*, etc.] Or condemn any man; or can any man be lawfully condemned:

before it hear him: what he has to say for himself; is this the usual process in our courts? or is this a legal one to condemn a man unheard?

and know what he doth? what his crimes are. This he said, having a secret respect for Christ, though he had not courage enough openly to appear for him.

Ver. 52. *They answered and said unto him*, etc.] Being displeased with him, and as reproaching him, though they could not deny, or refute what he said:

art thou also of Galilee? a follower of Jesus of Galilee, whom, by way of contempt, they called the Galilean, and his followers Galilaeans, as Julian the apostate after them did; for otherwise they knew that Nicodemus was not of the country of Galilee;

search and look; into the histories of former times, and especially the Scriptures:

for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet; but this is false, for Jonah the prophet was of Gathhepher, which was in the tribe of Zebulun, which tribe was in Galilee; (see <121425>2 Kings 14:25 <061910>Joshua 19:10,13,16). And the Jews[f358] themselves say, that Jonah, the son of Amittai, was, ˆwlwbzm, of

“Zebulun”, and that his father was of Zebulun, and his mother was of Asher[f359]; both which tribes were in Galilee: and if no prophet had, as yet, arose from thence, it did not follow that no one should arise: besides, there is a prophecy in which it was foretold, that a prophet, and even the Messiah, the great light, should arise in Galilee; (see <230901>Isaiah 9:1,2); and they themselves say, that the Messiah should be revealed in Galilee; (see Gill on “<430741>John 7:41”).

Ver. 53. *And every man went unto his own house*.] The officers not bringing Jesus with them, and the sanhedrim being posed with Nicodemus, broke up without doing any business, and every member of it went home: this we may suppose was about the time of the evening sacrifice: for

> “the great sanhedrim sat from the time of the morning daily sacrifice, to the time of the evening daily sacrifice[f360]:”

and it is said[f361], that

> “after the evening daily sacrifice, the sanhedrim went, µtybl, “to their own houses”;”

as they now did, and not to their booths, the feast of tabernacles being now over.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 8

Ver. 1. *Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives*.] Which lay eastward of Jerusalem, about a mile from it; hither Christ went on the evening of the last day of the feast of tabernacles; partly to decline the danger, and avoid the snares the Jews might lay for him in the night season; having been disappointed and confounded in the daytime; and it may be for the sake of recreation and diversion, to sup with his dear friends Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, who lived at Bethany, not far from this mount; and chiefly for private prayer to God, on account of himself as man, and for his disciples, and for the spread of his Gospel, and for the enlargement of his interest; this being his common and usual method, (<42>Luke 21:37).

Ver. 2. *And early in the morning he came again into the temple*, etc.] Which shows his diligence, constancy, and assiduity, in his ministerial work, as well as his courage and intrepidity; being fearless of his enemies, though careful to give them no advantage against him, before his time:

and all the people came unto him; which also commends the industry and diligence of his hearers, who were forward to hear him, and were early at the temple for that purpose, and that in great numbers:

and he sat down and taught them; he sat, as his manner was; (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 5:1"); and taught them as one having authority, and such doctrine, and in such a manner, as never man did; with all plainness, boldness, and freedom.

Ver. 3. *And the Scribes and Pharisees*, etc.] The members of the sanhedrim, who had been so miserably disappointed the day before, were no less diligent and industrious in their wicked way, seeking all opportunities, and taking all advantages against Christ; and fancying they had got something whereby to ensnare him, and bring him into disgrace or danger, they pursue it; and

brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; who, as some conjecture, might have been taken in it the day before, in one of their booths; being

drawn into it through intemperance and carnal mirth, which at this feast they greatly indulged themselves in; which shows, that they were far from drawing the Holy Ghost at this time upon them; that on the contrary, they fell into the hands, and under the power of the unclean spirit: who this woman was, is not material to know; what is pretended to be taken out of the annals of the Spanish Jews, is no doubt a fable; that she was the wife of one Manasseh of Jerusalem, an old man, whose name was Susanna [f362]:

and when they had set her in the midst; of the company, as the Persic version reads, to be seen by all the people. This history of the woman taken in adultery, is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in other ancient copies; nor is it in Nonnus, Chrysostom, and Theophylact; nor in any of the editions of the Syriac version, until it was restored by Deuteronomy Dieu, from a copy of Archbishop Usher's; but was in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, and in the Harmonies of Tatian and Ammonius; the former of which lived about the year 160, and so within 60 years, or thereabouts, of the death of the Evangelist John, and the other about the year 230; it was also in Stephens's sixteen ancient Greek copies, and in all Beza's seventeen, excepting one; nor need the authenticness of it be doubted of; Eusebius [f363] says, it is in the Gospel according to the Hebrews; nor should its authority be called in question.

Ver. 4. *They say unto him, Master*, etc.] They applied to him in a handsome and respectful manner, the better to cover their ill design:

this woman was taken in adultery; by two persons at least, who could be witnesses of it; otherwise the accusation was not legal; (see <05 19 15>Deuteronomy 19:15); though in the case of a wife suspected of adultery, they admitted a single witness as valid [f364]:

in the very act; or "in the theft itself", for adultery is a theft; it is an unlawful use of another's property; see this word used in the same sense, in Heliodor, l. 1. sect. 11.

Ver. 5. *Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should, be stoned*, etc.] Not in (<03 20 10>Leviticus 20:10); for though according to the law there, an adulteress, one that was a married woman, and so an adulterer, that was a married man, were to be put to death; yet the death was not stoning, but strangling; for it is a rule with the Jews [f365], that where death is simply mentioned (without restraining it to any particular kind) strangling is intended, and which rule they apply to this law: and accordingly in their

Misna, or oral law, one that lies with another man's wife, is reckoned among those that are to be strangled [f366]: Kimchi indeed says [f367], that adulteresses, according to the law, are to be stoned with stones; but then this must be understood of such as are betrothed, but not married; and such a person, Moses has commanded in the law, to be stoned, (Deu 22:23Deuteronomy 22:23,24). And with this agree the traditions of the Jews [f368];

> "a daughter of Israel must be stoned, who is hawçn alw hswra, "betrothed, but not married"."

And such an one we must believe this woman was; she was betrothed to a man, but not married to him, and therefore to be stoned: the Jews [f369] have also a saying, that

> "if all adulterers were punished with stoning, according to the law, the stones would be consumed; but they would not be consumed;"

adultery was so common with that people:

but what sayest thou? dost thou agree with Moses, or not?

Ver. 6. *This they said, tempting him*, etc.] For they brought this woman, and exposed her in this manner, not because of their abhorrence and detestation of the sin; nor did they put the above question to Christ, out of their great respect to the law of Moses; which in many instances, and so in this, they in a great measure made void, by their traditions; for they say, that for such an offence as adultery, they did not put to death, nor beat, unless there was a previous admonition; the use of which was, to distinguish between presumptuous sins, and wilful ones [f370]; but if there was no admonition, and the woman, even a married woman, if she confessed the crime, all her punishment was to have her dowry taken from her, or to go away without it [f371]: now these masters say nothing about the admonition, nor do they put the question, whether this woman was to be dealt with according to their traditions, or according to the law of Moses? but what was the sense of Christ, whether Moses's law was to be attended to, or whether he would propose another rule to go by? and their view in this was,

that they might have to accuse him; that should he agree with Moses, then they would accuse him to the Roman governor, for taking upon him to condemn a person to death, which belonged to him to do; or they would

charge him with severity, and acting inconsistently with himself, who received such sort of sinners, and ate with them; and had declared, that publicans and harlots would enter into the kingdom of heaven, when the Scribes and Pharisees would not; and if he should disagree with Moses, then they would traduce him among the people, as an enemy to Moses and his law, and as a patron of the most scandalous enormities:

but Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground; some think [f372] he wrote in legible characters the sins of the woman's accusers; and the learned Wagenseil [f373] makes mention of an ancient Greek manuscript he had seen, in which were the following words, "the sins of everyone of them": Dr. Lightfoot is of opinion, that this action of Christ tallies with, and has some reference to, the action of the priest at the trial of the suspected wife; who took of the dust of the floor of the tabernacle, and infused it in the bitter waters for her to drink; but it is most likely, that Christ on purpose put himself into this posture, as if he was busy about something else, and did not attend to what they said; and hereby cast some contempt upon them, as if they and their question were unworthy of his notice: and this sense is confirmed by what follows,

[as though he heard them not]; though this clause is not in many copies, nor in the Vulgate Latin, nor in any of the Oriental versions, but is in five of Beza's copies, and in the Complutensian edition.

Ver. 7. *So when they continued asking him*, etc.] For observing that he put himself in such a posture, they concluded that they had puzzled and perplexed him, and that he knew not what to say; and therefore they were more urgent for a speedy answer, hoping they should get an advantage of him; and that they should be able to expose him, and that his confusion would appear to all the people:

he lift up himself and said unto them; having raised up himself, he looked wistly at them, and returned them this wise answer to, their confusion:

he that is without sin among you; meaning, not that was entirely free from sin, in heart, in lip, and life; for there is no such person; the most holy man in life is not, in such sense, free from sin; but that was without any notorious sin, or was not guilty of some scandalous sin, and particularly this of adultery; which was in this age a prevailing sin, and even among their doctors; hence our Lord calls that generation an adulterous one, (<4012>Matthew 12:39); and which was literally true of them; with this

compare (^{Romans 2:22}Romans 2:22). Adultery increased to such a degree in this age, that they were obliged to leave off the trial of suspected wives, because their husbands were generally guilty this way; and the waters would have no effect, if the husband was criminal also: so the Jews say [f374],

> "when adulterers increased, the bitter waters ceased; and Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai (who was now living) caused them to cease."

In vindication of which, he cited the passage in (^{Hosea 4:14}Hosea 4:14); and this agrees with their own account of the times of the Messiah, and the signs thereof, among which stands this [f375];

> "in the age in which the son of David comes, the house of assembly (the gloss interprets it the place where the disciples of the wise men meet to learn the law) shall become, twnwzl, "a brothel house"."

And that this sin so greatly prevailed, our Lord well knew; and perhaps none of those Scribes and Pharisees were free from it, in one shape or another; and therefore bids him that was,

let him first cast a stone at her; alluding to the law in (^{Deuteronomy 17:7}Deuteronomy 17:7), which required the hands of the witnesses to be upon a person first, to put him to death; and as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, referring to their own sense and opinion, in trying a wife suspected of adultery; that if the husband was guilty the same way, the waters would have no effect: by this answer of our Lord, he at once wrought himself out of the dilemma, they thought to distress him with; for though he passed no sentence upon the woman, and so took not upon him the judiciary power, with which they could accuse him to the Roman governor, yet he manifestly appeared to agree with Moses, that such an one deserved to be stoned; wherefore they could not charge him with being contrary to Moses; and by putting him that was without sin, to cast the first stone at her, he showed himself merciful to the woman, and to them, to be the searcher of hearts.

Ver. 8. *And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground*.] As before, having said enough to confound them; and yet unwilling to pursue the matter any further, or publicly expose them in any other way; and that they might have an opportunity of withdrawing themselves without any further notice of his, he took this method.

Ver. 9. *And they which heard it*, etc.] Not all, not the disciples of Christ, nor the multitude, but the Scribes and Pharisees:

being convicted by their own conscience; that they were not without sin, nor free from this; they had a beam in their own eye, who were so forward to observe the mote in another's; and oftentimes so it is, that those who are most forward to reprove, and bear hardest on others for their sins, are as culpable in another way, if not in the same; when sin lies at the door, and conscience is awakened and open, it is as good as a thousand witnesses; and lets in, and owns the sin which lies heavy, and makes sad work; and fills with anguish, confusion, and shame, as it did these men: who

went out one by one; from the temple, in as private a manner, and as unobserved as they could:

beginning at the eldest: who might have been most culpable, or however soonest took the hint; being more wise and sagacious:

unto the last; this is wanting in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions, and in two of Beza's copies, and the Basil edition:

and Jesus was left alone; not by his disciples, nor the multitude, but his antagonists, who came to tempt and ensnare him: for it follows,

and the woman standing in the midst; that is, of the company as before.

Ver. 10. *When Jesus had lift himself up*, etc.] From the earth, towards which he stooped, and on which he had been writing:

and saw none but the woman; that is, none of those that had brought her there, and had accused her to him:

he said unto her, woman, where are those thine accusers? the Syriac and Arabic versions read only, "where are these?" these men, that brought thee here, and charged thee with this crime:

hath no man condemned thee? has no one offered to do unto thee what I proposed? what, not one that could take up a stone, and cast at thee? was there not one of them free from this sin? could no man take upon him to execute this sentence?

Ver. 11. *She saith, no man, Lord*, etc.] No man said a word to me, or lift up his hand against me, or moved a stone at me:

and Jesus said unto her, neither do I condemn thee; Christ came not into the world to act the part of a civil magistrate, and therefore refused to arbitrate a case, or be concerned in dividing an inheritance between two

brethren, (<scripRef passage="Luke 12:13,14" />). Nor did he come into the world to condemn it, but that the world, through him, might be saved, (<scripRef passage="John 3:17" />); nor would he pass any other sentence on this woman, than what he had done; nor would he inflict any punishment on her himself; but suitably and agreeably to his office; as a prophet, he declares against her sin, calls her to repentance, and bids her

go and sin no more; lest as he said to the man he cured at Bethesda's pool, a worse thing should come unto her. Wherefore the Jew [f376] has no reason to object to this conduct of Christ, as if he acted contrary to the law, in (<scripRef passage="Deuteronomy 13:5" />). "Thou shalt put the evil away from the midst of thee"; and also to the sanctions of all civil laws among men, which order the removal of evil, by putting delinquents to death; and he observes, that those that believe in him, do not follow him in this, but put adulterers and adulteresses to death; and that indeed, should his example and instructions take place, all courts of judicature must cease, and order be subverted among men: but it should be observed, that our Lord manifested a regard, even to the law of Moses, when he bid this woman's accusers that were without sin, to cast the first stone at her; though as for the law in (<scripRef passage="Deuteronomy 13:5" />), that respects a false prophet, and not an adulterer or an adulteress; nor do the civil laws of all nations require death in the case of adultery; and did they, Christ here, neither by his words nor actions, contradicts and sets aside any such laws of God or man; he left this fact to be inquired into, examined, and judged, and sentence passed by proper persons, whose business it was: as for himself, his office was not that of a civil magistrate, but of a Saviour and Redeemer; and suitably to that he acted in this case; he did not connive at the sin, he reproved for it; nor did he deny that she ought to suffer according to the law of Moses, but rather suggests she ought; but as this was not his province, he did not take upon him to pronounce any sentence of condemnation on her; but called her to repentance, and, as the merciful and compassionate Saviour, gave her reason to hope pardon and eternal life.

Ver. 12. *Then spake Jesus again unto them*, etc.] Syriac fragment of Bishop Usher's, published by Deuteronomy Dieu, prefaces this verse thus, "when they were gathered together", Jesus said, etc. that is, the Scribes and Pharisees, who went out and returned again; or some others of them, who came after this, to whom Christ addressed himself thus:

I am the light of the world; which he might say, on occasion of the rising sun, which was now up, and might shine brightly in their faces; (see <43802>John 8:2); which is µlw[h rwa, "the light of the world", as Aben Ezra in (<19908>Psalm 19:8) rightly calls it: thus on occasion of the water in Jacob's well, he discoursed of living water; and upon the Jews at Capernaum mentioning the manna, he treated at large concerning himself as the bread of life: and he might also make use of this character, and apply it to himself, with a view to some passages in the Old Testament, which speak of him under the metaphor of the sun, as (<19811>Psalm 84:11 <30402>Malachi 4:2), and represent him as the light; and the Jews [f377] themselves say, that light is one of the names of the Messiah; and God himself is called by them, the light of the world [f378]: and likewise he may have regard to those pompous titles and characters, which the Jewish doctors assumed arrogantly to themselves, and oppose himself to them; for they not only called Moses their master, µlw[h rwa, "the light of the world" [f379], and also the law of Moses [f380], but their Rabbins and doctors; (see Gill on "<40514>Matthew 5:14"). By the world here is meant, not the whole world, and all the individuals of it; for though Christ, as the Creator of all things, is the light of men, and does lighten every individual man with the light of nature and reason, yet not in a spiritual and saving manner, as is here intended; nor the whole body of the elect of God, though they are sometimes called the world, being the better part of it, and are made light in the Lord, in a special sense; nor the Jews only, and the chosen of God, among them, though Christ was a great light to many of them, that sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death; but the Gentiles are here designed, who were usually called by the Jews, the world; (see Gill on "<43016>John 3:16"). And these were in gross darkness before the coming of Christ, about the Divine Being, concerning the object, nature, and manner of worship; the Scriptures, the law, and Gospel; the Messiah, and his office and work; the Spirit of God, and his operations of grace; the resurrection of the dead, and a future state; now Christ came to be a light of the Gentiles, as well as the glory of his people Israel: our Lord seems to have respect to the prophecy of him, in (<23406>Isaiah 42:6), as well as alludes to the sun in the firmament; whose light is diffused to all the nations of the earth, and not confined to one spot of land only: but since Christ was the minister of the circumcision, and was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, it may be asked, how could he be the light of the Gentiles? to which it may be replied, that he was so by his apostles, who were sent by him with the light of the Gospel, into all the world; and by his Spirit, who enlightens the minds of men, who

were darkness itself, with the light of Christ: for he is not only the author and giver of the light of nature to all men, but also of the light of grace to all his chosen ones, Gentiles as well as Jews; who, in his light, see light; see themselves lost and undone, and him to be the only willing, able, suitable, and complete Saviour; and behold wondrous things in the doctrines of the Gospel, and have some glimpse of glory; and he is likewise the author of all the light of glory the saints enjoy in the other world; the Lamb is the light of that state; he is their everlasting light, and their glory; and happy are they who are his followers now:

he that followeth me; not corporeally, but spiritually, by faith; for as believing is expressed by coming to Christ, so by following after him: compare with this, (<43 12 46>John 12:46); and with love and affection to him, the desires of the soul being unto him, and to the remembrance of him; and in the exercise of every grace and discharge of every duty, in imitation of him; and through a variety of sufferings and tribulations, pressing after him as the guide, captain, and forerunner: and such

shall not walk in darkness; in the darkness of unregeneracy, not knowing what they are, and where they are, and whither they are going; for such know they are in the light; and though they were blind, now they see; they know in whom they have believed, and that they are in Christ, in the covenant of grace, and in the love of God, and are going to heaven and eternal happiness; such shall not walk in the darkness of unbelief; but walk by faith on Christ; nor in the darkness of error, but in the truth of the Gospel, and as becomes it; and though they may sometimes walk without the light of God's countenance, yet light shall arise to them; and such "shall not go into darkness", as the Ethiopic version renders the words, into outer darkness, or the darkness of eternal death:

but shall have the light of life; the grace of God abiding in them now; which as it is a well of living water, springing up to eternal life, so it is a shining light, which increases to the perfect day: as darkness and death, so light and life go together; grace, which is enlightening, is also quickening and comforting, and issues in eternal light and life; a light that will never be extinguished, and a life that will continue for ever, with never fading joys and pleasures; (see <18 33 30>Job 33:30).

Ver. 13. *The Pharisees therefore said unto him*, etc.] On account of his declaring himself the light of the world: these were either the same who went out of the temple, filled with remorse of conscience, and were now

returned, and bearing him a grudge, came to take some advantage against him, if they could; or they were others of the same complexion, sent by them, to make their observations on him:

thou bearest record of thyself. The Ethiopic version renders it, "dost thou thyself?" which does not seem so decent and comely; (see <20>Proverbs 27:2); though it does not follow, that what a man says of himself is not truth, as these suggest:

thy record is not true; for John testified of himself, that he was not the Christ, nor Elias, nor that prophet; but the voice of one crying in the wilderness; and this testimony he bore of himself, at the importunity of the Jews themselves, (<43>John 1:19-23); and his testimony was true; so was that which Christ bore of himself; but their sense rather seems to be, that it was not firm and authentic, and would not pass in any court of judicature, since no man can be a witness in his own cause.

Ver. 14. *Jesus answered and said unto them*, etc.] In vindication of himself, and his testimony:

though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true; which seems contradictory to what he says, in (<43>John 5:31), and may be reconciled thus; there he speaks of himself as man, and in the opinion of the Jews, who took him to be a mere man; and also as alone, and separate from his Father, as the context shows; therefore his single testimony, and especially concerning himself, could not be admitted as authentic among men; but here he speaks of himself as a divine person, and in conjunction with his Father, with whom he was equal; and therefore his testimony ought to be looked upon, and received as firm and good, giving this as a reason for it:

for I know whence I came, and whither I go; that he was truly the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, and had his mission and commission from him into this world; and which, as he knew himself, he was able to make known, and make appear to others, by his credentials, the doctrines taught, and the miracles wrought by him; which proved him to be what he said he was, the light of the world; and he knew that when he had done his work he came about, he should go to his God and Father, and take his place at his right hand:

but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go; they took him to be the son of Joseph, and that he came out of Galilee; in which they were mistaken; and when he talked of going away, they did not understand him,

nor know whither he was going; they ask if he was going to the dispersed among the Gentiles, to teach them? and at another time, whether he would kill himself? they knew not, that through a train of sufferings and death, he must, and would enter into his glory: the Persic version inserts another clause without any foundation; “but ye know not from whence ye come, and whither ye go”, and then follows the former; there might be a truth in this, they did not know their true original, that they were from beneath; nor whither they were going, to what dismal abode, when they expected to enter, and enjoy the kingdom of heaven.

Ver. 15. *Ye judge after the flesh*, etc.] According to their carnal affections and prejudices; taking the Messiah to be a temporal prince, and his kingdom to be of this world, they judged that Jesus could not be he; they looked upon him as a mere man, and seeing him in much outward meanness, in his human nature, they judged of him according to this outward appearance: or “ye” that are “after the flesh judge”; to which sense the Persic version agrees, “for ye are carnal”; and so judged as carnal men, who are very improper persons to judge of spiritual things:

I judge no man; in the same way, after the flesh, or in a carnal manner, nor according to outward appearances, according to the sight of the eyes, or the hearing of the ears: Christ did not take upon him to judge and determine in civil affairs, or in things pertaining to a court of judicature among men; this was not his province; an instance of this there is in the context, in not condemning the woman brought to him; nor did he judge the persons and states of men, or proceed to pass any sentence of condemnation on them; he came not to condemn, but save the world; this was not his business now; otherwise, all judgment is committed to him, and which he will exercise another day.

Ver. 16. *And yet if I judge, my judgment is true*, etc.] Because he saw not as man did, nor looked unto, and judged according to the outward appearance of things; but looked into the heart, and knew what was in it, being the searcher and trier of it; to whom all things are naked and open, and therefore cannot be deceived or imposed upon; his judgment must be sure and infallible:

for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me; he was not separate from the Father, or at a distance from him, when he was here on earth; he was in his bosom, and in heaven, as the Son of God, when as the son of man, he was below; nor was he alone in his testimony and judgment, the

Father joined with him therein: and which is a further proof of the truth of his testimony, and the certainty of his judgment.

Ver. 17. *It is also written in your law*, etc.] The law of Moses, which was given unto them, and they boasted of; the passage referred to is in (<05 19 15>Deuteronomy 19:15); see also (<05 17 06>Deuteronomy 17:6); where though what follows is not to be found in so many words, yet the sense is there expressed:

that the testimony of two men is true: concerning which the Jewish writers say [f381],

> "they used not to determine any judiciary matter by the mouth of one witness, neither pecuniary causes, nor causes of life and death, as it is said, (<05 17 06>Deuteronomy 17:6). It is asked [f382] in their oral law, if the testimony of two men stand, why does the Scripture particularly mention three? (for no other reason) but to compare or equal three with two, that as three convict two of a falsehood, two may also convict three."

On which one of their commentators [f383] has this observation, taking notice of (<05 19 18>Deuteronomy 19:18), which speaks of a single witness;

> "Mar (a doctor) says, wherever it is said a "witness", it is to be understood of two, unless the Scripture particularly specifies one."

In the case of a wife suspected of adultery, and in the business of striking off the neck of the heifer in case of murder, they admitted of one witness [f384].

Ver. 18. *I am one that bear witness of myself*, etc.] As he does of his sonship, in (<61 05 07>1 John 5:7).

And the Father that sent me, beareth witness of me; as he did, by the descent of the Spirit upon him at his baptism, and by a voice from heaven, both at that time, and at his transfiguration, and by the miracles which he wrought; and particularly he bore testimony of him, long before, in prophecy, that he was the light of the world he now said he was, (<23 42 06>Isaiah 42:6); so that here were two testifiers, his Father and himself; which show them to be two distinct divine persons, and equal to each other: and now if the testimony of two men is true, firm, and authentic, and to be depended

upon and received, then much more the testimony of two divine persons; (see 1 John 5:9).

Ver. 19. *Then said they unto him, where is thy Father*? etc.] The Persic version adds, “show [him] unto us”: produce this witness boasted of, let us see him; this they said in a sneering, taunting, and insulting manner; where is thy Father? what! he is in Galilee; fetch him from thence; it is Joseph the carpenter you mean; a goodly witness indeed!

Jesus answered, ye neither know me nor my Father; if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; they did not know the divine original of Christ, that he was the Son of God, and that God was his Father; they greatly boasted of their knowledge of God, but they knew him not; their ignorance of Christ showed it: the knowledge of both go together, and which is life eternal; nor can any truly know the one, without the other: and where the one is known, the other will be also; Christ is the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person: so that he that has seen the one, must know the other; and indeed, no one can know the Father, but he to whom the Son reveals him: this was a severe mortification to these men of knowledge.

Ver. 20. *These words spake Jesus in the treasury*, etc.] The place where the thirteen chests stood, into which the people put their voluntary contributions for the sacrifices, and service of the temple: the Ethiopic version renders it, “at the alms chest”; (see Gill on “Mark 12:41”). The design of this observation of the evangelist, is to suggest to us, that it was in a very public place, in the temple, openiy, that Christ delivered the above words:

as he taught in the temple; where the Jews resorted, where his ministry was public, and he spake freely, and without reserve; in a very bold manner, with intrepidity, and without fear of man:

and no man laid hands on him; though they had sought to do it the day before; had sent officers to take him; and they themselves had a good will to it; and yet they were so awed and over ruled by one means, or one account or another, that no man did it; the reason was,

for his hour was not yet come; the time appointed for his sufferings and death.

Ver. 21. *Then said Jesus again unto them*, etc.] It may be, immediately after he had said the above words; or rather some time after, it may be on the same day:

I go my way; meaning, the way of all flesh, or that he should die: the way of speaking shows, that his death was certain, a determined thing; which must be, and yet was voluntary: he was not driven, nor forced, but went freely; this being the path, the way, through which he must enter into his kingdom and glory:

and ye shall seek me; that is, shall seek the Messiah, as their deliverer and Saviour, when in distress; and whom he calls himself, because he was the true Messiah, and the only Saviour and Redeemer of his people, in a spiritual sense; otherwise they would not, nor did they seek Jesus of Nazareth:

and shall die in your sins; or "in your sin"; so it is in the Greek text, and in the Vulgate Latin, and Persic versions: meaning, in their sin of unbelief, and rejection of him the true Messiah: the sense is, that in the midst of their calamities, which should come upon them, for their sin against him, they should in vain seek for the Messiah, as a temporal deliverer of them; for their nation, city, and temple, and they therein should utterly perish, for their iniquity; and their ruin would not only be temporal, but eternal: since it follows,

whither I, go ye cannot come, signifying, that whereas he was going to his Father, to heaven and glory; to enjoy eternal happiness at his Father's right hand, in the human nature; they should never come there, but whilst many sat down in the kingdom of heaven, with their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who should come from afar, they would be shut out, and not suffered to enter in.

Ver. 22. *Then said the Jews, will he kill himself*? etc.] Which was not only a wicked, but a foolish consequence, drawn from his words: for it by no means followed, because he was going away, and whither they could not come, that therefore he must destroy himself; this seems to be what they would have been glad he would have done, and suggested the thought that he might do it, in which they imitated Satan, (<4006>Matthew 4:6), under whose influence they now apparently were, and hoped that he would, which would at once extricate them out of their difficulties on his account:

because he sayeth, whither I go ye cannot come: this is no reason at all; for had Christ's meaning been, as they blasphemously intimate, they might have destroyed themselves too, and have gone after him.

Ver. 23. *And he said unto them*, etc.] Upon this wicked remark of theirs, and query on his words:

ye are from beneath: not only of the earth, earthy, and so spoke of the earth, and as carnal men; but even of hell, they were the children of the devil; they breathed his Spirit, spoke his language, and did his lusts, as in (⁴⁰44John 8:44).

I am from above; not with respect to his human body, which he did not bring with him from heaven, that was formed below, in the Virgin's womb; otherwise he would not have been the seed of the woman, the son of Abraham, David, and Mary: but either with regard to his divine nature and person, he was of God, the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, who then lay in his bosom, and was in heaven above at that time; or to his mission, which was from heaven.

Ye are of this world; they were, as they were born into the world, sinful, carnal, and corrupt; they were in it, and belonged to it, had never been chosen, or called out of it; they had their conversation according to the course of it, and conformed to its evil customs and manners; they were under the influence of the God of the world, and were taken with the sinful and sensual lasts thereof; they were men of worldly spirits; they minded earth, and earthly things, and had their portion in this world, and might be truly called the men of it.

I am not of this world; he was in it, but not of it; he was come into it to save the chief of sinners, but he did not belong to it, nor did he conform to it; for though he conversed with sinners, ate with them, and received them, being called to repentance by him; yet he was separate from them, and did not as they did: nor did he pursue the pleasures, honours, and riches of this world, being all his days a man of sorrows, and despised of men; and though Lord of all, had not where to lay his head.

Ver. 24. *I said therefore unto you*, etc.] Because they were from beneath, and of the world, and discovered an earthly, worldly, carnal, yea, devilish disposition, in their conduct towards him:

that ye shall die in your sins; this he had said in (⁴⁰8²¹John 8:21), and now repeats it, and confirms it by the following reason:

for if believe not that I am he; the everlasting and unchangeable I am, the true God, God over all, blessed for ever; the eternal Son of God, God manifest in the flesh, really made flesh, and become incarnate; the true Messiah, the only Saviour of sinners; the one and only Mediator between God and man; the Head of the church, prophet, priest, and King, and the Judge of quick and dead; as also the light of the world he had declared himself to be: these are things that are necessary to be believed concerning Christ; indeed, carnal and unregenerate men may believe all these things; the devils themselves do, and tremble at them; but then they, and so unconverted men, have no faith in them, with an application of them to themselves: true faith in Christ deals not with him in a general way, but in a special regard to a man's self; it is a seeing of Christ for a man's self; it is not an implicit faith, or a believing him to be what he is, merely upon report, but upon sight; it is a going out of the soul to Christ, a renouncing its own righteousness, and a trusting in him alone for life and salvation; it is with the heart, and from it, and is unfeigned; it works by love to Christ, and his people, and is attended with the fruits of righteousness, and a cheerful obedience to the commands and ordinances of Christ. Though perhaps no more than a general faith is here intended, for want of which, and their rejection of Jesus, as the Messiah, the Jews suffered temporal ruin; and had they but believed that Jesus was the Son of God, and true Messiah, they had been saved from that temporal destruction which came upon their nation, city, and temple; but not believing this in a general and notional, way, they perished, as is here threatened:

ye shall die in your sins; in which they were, being defiled with them, guilty before God for them, under the power of them, and liable to punishment for them; and so they remained, and did remain, and were yet in their sins, even until death, when they died in them, and for them, not only a corporeal, but an eternal death: for dying in their sins, these would be found upon them, and they would be charged with them, and must be answerable for them, and consequently endure the punishment of them, which is the second death. Dying in sin, and dying in Christ, are two widely different things. They that die in faith, die in Christ: they that die in unbelief, die in sin; and this is a dreadful dying; (see ⁰⁶2²⁰Joshua 22:20),

where the Targum paraphrases it, “and he, one man”, (or alone,) hybwjb twm al, “did not die in his sins”.

Ver. 25. *Then said they unto him, who art thou*? etc.] That talks at this rate, and threatens with death, in case of unbelief; this they said with an haughty air, and in a scornful manner:

and Jesus saith unto them, even [the same] that I said unto you from the beginning; meaning, either of this discourse, as that he was the light of the world, and which he continued to assert; or of his being had before the sanhedrim, when he affirmed that God was his Father, and by many strong arguments proved his divine sonship; or of his ministry, when by miracles, as well as doctrines, he made it to appear that he was he that was to come, the true Messiah; or who spake from the beginning to Moses, saying, I am that I am, hath sent thee, and to the church, and Jewish fathers in the wilderness; and who is that word that was from the beginning with God; and who is called the beginning, the first cause of all things, and of the creation of God; and some think this is intended here.

Ver. 26. *I have many things to say, and to judge of you*, etc.] Being God omniscient, he knew their persons and actions, their lives and conversations, and all their sins and transgressions, which he could justly have complained of, and charged them with, and proved against them, and judged and condemned them for; but this was not his present business, he came not to judge and condemn, but to save: wherefore he waved these things, and took no notice of them, leaving them to his Father, who would call them to an account, and punish them for them:

but he that sent me is true; as to his promises concerning the mission of his Son, to be the Saviour of sinners; so to his threatenings, to bring down vengeance on those that disbelieve him, and reject him:

and I speak to the world, or “in the world”,

those things which I have heard of him; as concerning his love, grace, and mercy to those that should believe in him, so of the destruction of the despisers and rejecters of him; which things he spoke not in secret, in a corner, but publicly and openly, before all the world, to Jews and Gentiles, and to as many as were in the treasury, in the temple at this time; (see <4818>John 18:20).

Ver. 27. *They understood not that he spake to them of the Father*.] That sent him, and who was true and faithful to all he had said, whether in a way of promise, or threatening; such was their stupidity, that they did not know that he meant God the Father by him that sent him, so deriving his mission and doctrine from him; their hearts were made fat, and hardened, and their eyes were blinded. The Vulgate Latin version reads, "they did not know that he said, God was his Father"; and so Beza's most ancient copy, and another exemplar of his.

Ver. 28. *Then said Jesus unto them*, etc.] Upbraiding them with their ignorance, and giving them a sign, as well as pointing out the time when they either, by good or sad experience, should have knowledge of him:

when ye have lift up the son of man; meaning himself, who was to be lifted up upon the cross, as the serpent was upon the pole, in the wilderness; and which signified the manner of death he should die, the death of the cross; and suggested, that what the Jews designed for his reproach, shame, and abasement, would be the way and means of his rise and exaltation; and this lifting him up, or crucifying him, he ascribes to them, because they would deliver him to Pontius Pilate to be condemned, and stir up the people to ask, and be importunate themselves for his crucifixion:

then shall ye know that I am [he]; the Son of God, and true Messiah, as the centurion, and those that were with him, did, when they observed the earthquake; and the things that were done at his death; and after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, and the pouring forth of his Spirit, many of the Jews had not only a notional, but a true and spiritual knowledge of Jesus, as the Messiah; and upon the destruction of their temple, city, and nation, and their disappointment by false Christs, they doubtless many of them must, and did know, that the true Messiah was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he:

and that I do nothing of myself; (see Gill on "<4859>John 5:19");

but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things; this he says not as lessening himself, or making himself inferior to the Father, but to show the excellency of his doctrine, and to assert the original, authority, and divinity of it; suggesting that it was not an human doctrine, or a device of man's, or his own, as man, but was divine, and from God; (see <4816>John 7:16).

Ver. 29. *And he that sent me is with me*, etc.] By virtue of that near union there is between them, they being one in nature, essence, power, and glory,

and by the gracious, powerful, comfortable, assisting, and strengthening presence of his Father, which he vouchsafed to him as man, and Mediator;

the Father hath not left me alone; Christ, as the word, was with the Father from all eternity, and, as the Son of God, was in heaven, and in the bosom of the Father, when he, as the son of man, was here on earth; for though he came forth from the Father into this world, by assumption of the human nature, yet the Father was always with him, and he with the Father, through the unity of the divine nature; nor did he withhold his supporting and assisting presence from him as man; nor did he withdraw, at least he had not yet withdrawn his gracious and comfortable presence from him, though he afterwards did, when upon the cross: compare with this (John 16:32);

for I do always those things that please him; by submitting to Gospel ordinances, as to baptism, at which the Father declared his well pleasedness in him; and by complying with the ordinances of the ceremonial law, which were typical of him; and by perfectly obeying the precepts of the moral law, and bearing the penalty of it; or by suffering and dying in the room and stead of his people; all which were the will of God, and well pleasing to him.

Ver. 30. *As he spake these words*, etc.] Concerning his being lifted up, or his crucifixion, and the knowledge the Jews should then have of him; of the excellency and divinity of his doctrine, of his mission from the Father, and of the Father's presence with him, and of his always doing the things that are pleasing in his sight; which were spoken by him with majesty and authority, and came with power:

many believed on him: as the Son of God, and true Messiah: faith came by hearing; Christ's hearers were of different sorts; some understood him not, and disbelieved, and rejected him; others had their eyes, and their hearts opened, and received him, and his words.

Ver. 31. *Then said Jesus to those Jews that believed on him*, etc.] For he knew instantly who they were, and when they believed on him; and therefore he immediately turned himself to them, and thus addressed them;

if ye continue in my word; meaning the Gospel, called his, because he was both the author, and preacher, and sum, and substance of it: and to continue in it, is having cordially received it, to abide by it, and hold it fast, and not to be moved from it, by the temptations of Satan; the cunning of

those that lie in wait to deceive; nor by the revilings and persecutions, the frowns and flatteries of men: and when men continue thus steadfast in it, and faithful to it, it is an evidence that it has come with power, and has a place in their hearts, and that they are the true followers of Christ:

then are ye my disciples indeed; there are two sorts of disciples of Christ; some are only nominal, and merely in profession such; and these sometimes draw back from him, discontinue in his word, and go out from among his people; which shows that they never were of them, nor are the true disciples of Jesus; for the genuine disciples of Christ continue in his Gospel, hold fast to him, the head, and remain with his people; which to do to the end, is an evidence, of their being disciples indeed.

Ver. 32. *And ye shall know the truth*, etc.] Either the truth of the Gospel, the truth as it is in Jesus; meaning, that they should have a larger knowledge of it, while others are ever learning, and never come to the knowledge of the truth; but the spirit of truth should lead them into all truth, and cause them to grow and increase in Gospel light and knowledge; or Jesus himself, who is the way, the truth, and the life; and the sense is, that they should know more of him, of the dignity of his person, of the nature and usefulness of his offices; of the efficacy of his blood, the excellency of his righteousness, and the fulness of his grace, and that for themselves:

and the truth shall make you free; from ignorance and error, and the prejudices of education, under which the whole nation laboured, and from the thraldom of the law.

Ver. 33. *They answered him*, etc.] Not the believing Jews, whom he peculiarly addressed, but the unbelieving Jews, who were present, and heard these things:

we be Abraham's seed; this the Jews always valued themselves upon, and reckoned themselves, on this account, upon a level with the nobles and the princes of the earth.

> "Says R. Akiba[f385], even the poor of Israel are to be considered as if they were ˆyrwj ynb, "noblemen", that are fallen from their substance, because they are the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;"

and were never in bondage to any man; which is a very great falsehood, for it was declared to Abraham himself, that his seed should serve in a land not theirs, and be afflicted four hundred years, as they were; and as the preface to the law which the Jews gloried in shows, which says, that the Lord their God brought them out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; and they were frequently overcome by their neighbours, the Moabites, Ammonites, and Philistines, and reduced to servitude under them, until delivered by one judge, or another: and not to take notice of their seventy years' captivity in Babylon, they were at this very time under the Roman yoke, and paid tribute to Caesar; and yet such was the pride of their hearts, they would not be thought to be in bondage; and therefore, with an haughty air, add,

how sayest thou, ye shall be made free? when they thought themselves, and would fain have been thought by others, to have been free already, and so to stand in no need of being made free.

Ver. 34. *Jesus answered them, verily verily I say unto you*, etc.] Taking no notice of their civil liberty, to which he could easily have replied to their confusion and silence, he observes to them their moral servitude and bondage, and in the strongest manner affirms, that

whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin; which must be understood, not of one that commits a single act of sin, though ever so gross, as did Noah, Lot, David, Peter, and others, who yet were not the servants of sin; or of such who sin through ignorance, weakness of the flesh, and the power of Satan's temptations, and especially who commit sin with reluctance, the spirit lusting against it; nor indeed of any regenerate persons, though they are not without sin; nor do they live without the commission of it, in thought, word, or deed; and though they fall into it, they do not continue and live in it, but rise up out of it, through the grace of God, and by true repentance; and so are not to be reckoned the servants of sin, or to be of the devil. But this is to be understood of such whose bias and bent of their minds are to sin; who give up themselves unto it, and sell themselves to work wickedness; who make sin their trade, business, and employment, and are properly workers of it, and take delight and pleasure in it: these, whatever liberty, they promise themselves, are the servants of corruption; they are under the government of sin, that has dominion over them; and they obey it in the lusts thereof, and are drudges and slaves unto

it, and will have no other wages at last but death, even eternal death, if grace prevent not; (see <4Romans 6:16 <6002 Peter 2:19).

Ver. 35. *And the servant abideth not in the house for ever*, etc.] The servant of God, and of Christ, does, but not the servant of sin: there may be servants of sin in the house or church of God here below; and such were these Jews Christ is speaking to; but such shall not abide there for ever: some that get into this house are quickly discerned, as Simon Magus was, and are soon removed; and others that may stay longer, are sometimes suffered to fall into some foul sin, or into some gross error and heresy, for which they are cast out of the house or church of God, according to the rules of God's word; others make parties, draw disciples after them, and separate themselves, and go out of their own accord, to serve their own purposes: and others, when persecution and tribulation arise because of the word, they are offended and gone; this is the fan with which Christ sometimes winnows his floor, and removes the chaff; and those that continue longest, even to the end of their days, or of the world, or the second coming of Christ, as the foolish virgins, will then be discerned and separated; for the ungodly shall not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; they shall not enter into the house above, into the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, which is Christ's Father's house: none but sons are brought to glory; these are the only heirs of salvation; others will be bid to depart, as workers of iniquity, as the servants of sin; even such who have made a profession of religion, and have been, and have had a standing in the house of God below. The allusion is to the case of servants in common; and, in a literal sense, it is true both of good and bad servants: good servants do not always continue in their master's house; even an Hebrew servant, that loved his master, and would not go out free at the end of his servitude; and who, after having his ear bored, is said to serve him for ever, (<02106 Exodus 21:6); yet that "for ever" was but until the year of jubilee, whether near or remote, as the Jewish commentators [f386] in general explain it; nay, if his master died before that time, he went out free: he was not obliged to serve his son or heirs; and so say the Misnic doctors [f387]:

> "one that is bored is obtained by boring, and he possesses himself (or becomes free) by the year of jubilee, and by the death of his master."

And to this agrees what Maimonides [f388] says;

> "he that has served six years, and will not go out, lo, this is bored, and he serves until the year of jubilee, or until his master dies; and although he leaves a son, he that is bored does not serve the son; which may be learned from the letter of the words, "he shall serve him", not his son, "for ever", until the jubilee: from whence it appears, that he that is bored does not possess himself (or is free) but by the jubilee, and by the death of his master."

And one of their writers [f389] observes, that the word rendered, "shall serve him", is by Gematry, and not his son. And among the Romans, good servants were oftentimes made free, and bad ones were turned out, and put into a work house, to grind corn in mills, a sort of bridewell; and such evil servants may more especially be respected, since Christ is speaking of servants of sin:

but the Son abideth ever: the Son of God, the only begotten Son of God the Lord Jesus Christ will always continue as a Son in his own house, as the Lord and proprietor of it; and as an high priest over it, having an unchangeable priesthood; and as he that takes care of it, provides for it, and manages all the affairs thereof, the family in heaven and in earth being named of him. And as he, so all the adopted sons of God shall continue, being pillars in this house, that shall never go out: such are no more servants, nor foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and being sons, are heirs and shall never be cast out, as the bondwoman and her son have been: but these being the children of the free, shall for ever enjoy the inheritance they are adopted to; once sons, always so; the relation ever continues; they will ever remain in the family, and being entitled to the heavenly estate, shall ever possess it.

Ver. 36. *If the Son therefore shall make you free*, etc.] Alluding to the custom of adoption by the sons or brethren in the family, which obtained in Greece, called αδελφοψεσια, "the adoption of brethren", as Grotius, and others have observed; or rather to a custom among the Romans, of a son's making free after his Father's death, such as were born slaves in his house. Such a case as this is supposed [f390];

> "a man having a son or a daughter by his maidservant, that which is born of her, since of a servant, is without doubt a servant: wherefore if he (the son) should say, this is my natural brother or my natural sister; for since my father had children by his maidservant, "whom he did not make free"; and he dying the law

has made me lord of these, εγω τουτους ελευψερωσα, "I have made these free", because of their natural kindred."

This is allowed to be a just and good reason of manumission. Now this answers very much to the case in hand. Men are home born slaves; the chosen people of God are such by nature; they are born in sin, and are the servants of it; Christ the Son makes them free; and then they are no more foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. This suggests, that true freedom is by Jesus Christ, the Son of God; (see Galatians 5:1). He it is that makes the saints free from sin; not from the being of it in this life, but from the bondage and servitude of it, from its power and dominion, and from its guilt and liableness to punishment for it, by procuring the pardon of their sins through his blood, and justifying their persons by his righteousness: he also makes them free, or delivers them from the captivity of Satan, by ransoming them out of his hands, taking the prey from the mighty, binding the strong man armed, and delivering them from him, and from the power of darkness, and putting them into his own kingdom; he does not indeed free them altogether from his temptations, but he preserves them by his power from being hurt and destroyed by him: he likewise makes his people free from the law, not only the ceremonial law, which is abolished by him, but from the moral law; not from obedience to it, as it is in his hands, and a rule of walk and conversation to them, but as in the hands of Moses, and as a covenant of works, and from the rigorous exaction of it, and from seeking justification and life by it, and from its curse and condemnation: and he gives them freedom of access to God, as their Father, through his blood and by his Spirit; and admits them to all the privileges and immunities of the church below; and gives them a right to, faith in, and an expectation of the glorious liberty of the children of God hereafter; and such are truly Christ's freemen:

ye shall be free indeed; this is true freedom; what the Jews boasted of, supposing what they said was right, was but a shadow of freedom in comparison of this; and that liberty which sinful men promise themselves in sin, is all deceit; there is no true, solid, substantial freedom but what is by Christ, the Son of God. Even that freedom which the children of God had under the legal dispensation, was a servitude, in comparison of that which the saints enjoy by Christ under the Gospel dispensation; though they were sons and heirs, yet being in bondage, differed nothing from servants, being under tutors and governors, in bondage under the elements of the world,

and under the influence of a spirit of bondage unto fear; (see <480401>Galatians 4:1-3 <450815>Romans 8:15); but such that have received the spirit of adoption from Christ, they are really free: they have not only the name of children, and of freemen, but they are truly such, and wholly so; perhaps there may be some reference had to such sort of persons among the Jews, who were partly servants, and partly free: so it is said [f391],

> “db[wyxjç ym, “he who is half a servant”, or partly a servant, and partly free, shall serve his master one day, and himself another.”

And such an one, as the commentators [f392] say, is one who is a servant of two partners, and is made free by one of them; or who has paid half his price to his master (for his freedom), but the other half is still due: and of one in such circumstances it is said [f393], that

> “he that is partly a servant, and partly free, may not eat of his master’s (lamb at the passover):”

but now those who are made free by Christ the Son of God, they are not in part only, but are wholly free, and have a right to all the privileges of his house, to the supper of the Lord, and to every other immunity.

Ver. 37. *I know that ye are Abraham’s seed*, etc.] In answer to the other part of the Jews’ objection to Christ, and in favour of themselves, Christ owns that they were the natural seed of Abraham; for truth must be allowed to an adversary. But then this hindered not but they might be, as they were, in moral bondage to sin, and a generation of vipers, as those of them who came to John’s baptism were; and might not be the sons of God, for not because they were the natural seed of Abraham, were they all the adopted sons of God; and might be cast out of the house of God, as Ishmael was cast out of Abraham’s, though he was his natural seed. And what follows proves them to be under the power, and in the servitude of sin, and that they were the seed of the serpent that was to bruise the heel of the woman’s seed, or put the Messiah to death, though they were the natural seed of Abraham:

but ye seek to kill me; which none but such who are under the governing power of sin, are slaves unto it, and the vassals of the devil, would ever do: the reason of which is,

because my word hath no place in you; their hearts were barred and bolted against it, with ignorance, enmity, and unbelief; it had no entrance into them; it did not come with power to their hearts, nor work effectually in them; it had no place at all in them, much less a dwelling; had it had one, it would have produced another effect in them, even love to Christ; which the doctrine of Christ, wherever it comes with power, and takes place in the soul, brings along with it; but where it does not, as here, hatred and indignation, envy and malice, more or less, show themselves. This clause is differently rendered, and so admits of different senses. The Vulgate Latin renders it, "my word does not take in you"; it did not take place in them, nor did it take with them; they could not receive it; in which sense the word is used in (<4019 11>Matthew 19:11); for the natural man cannot receive the doctrines of Christ; they are not suited to his taste: they are disagreeable to him. The Syriac version renders it, "ye are not sufficient for my word", to take it in; they were not capable of it; they could not understand it; it requires divine illumination, and a spiritual discerning, which they had not: the Persic version is, "ye are not worthy of my words"; of having the Gospel preached to them, and continued with them; they contradicting and blaspheming it, and rejecting the author of it; (see <4413 45>Acts 13:45,46). The Ethiopic version renders it, "my word does not remain with you"; and to the same purpose the Arabic version, "my word is not firm in you"; as soon as it was heard by them, it was caught away from them by Satan, whose children they were; it made no lasting impressions on them, but was like water spilt upon the ground: it may be rendered, "my word does not enter into you"; it did not make its way and penetrate into their hearts; for though, when attended with the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, it is quick and powerful, and sharper than a twoedged sword, and enters into the conscience, and penetrates to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and lays open the secret thoughts and intents of the heart; yet of itself is an insufficient means of conversion; it cannot make its own way; there must be an exertion of powerful and efficacious grace; which shows the hardness and obstinacy of the heart of man.

Ver. 38. *I speak that which I have seen with my Father*, etc.] This is an aggravation of the sin of the Jews, in seeking to kill Christ, on account of his doctrine, since it was not his own, but his Father's; was not merely human, but divine; was what he the only begotten Son, that lay in the bosom of his Father, had seen in his heart, in his purposes, and decrees, in

his council, and covenant, and so was clear, complete, certain, and to be depended on:

and ye do that which ye have seen with your father; meaning the devil, whom, though they had not scan with their eyes, nor any of his personal actions; yet acted so much under his influence, and according to his will, as if they had close and intimate consultation with him, and took their plan of operation from him, and had him continually before them, as their example and pattern, to copy after. The Ethiopic version reads, "what ye have heard"; and so it is read in three of Beza's copies, and in three of Stephens's.

Ver. 39. *They answered and said unto him*, etc.] On account of his making mention of a father, whose works they did, and whom they imitated:

Abraham is our father; meaning their only one, nor had they any other:

Jesus saith unto them, if ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham; for who should children imitate but their parents? Abraham was a merciful, charitable, and hospitable man, as well as a man of strict justice and integrity; he feared God, believed in him, and was ready to receive every message and revelation which came from him; and they are his genuine children and offspring, who walk in the steps of his faith, charity, justice, and piety: and this is a rule which the Jews themselves give [f394], whereby the seed of Abraham may be known:

> "whoever is merciful to the creature (man), it is evident that he is of the seed of Abraham, our father; but whoever has not mercy on the creature, it is a clear case that he is not of the seed of Abraham our father."

And if this is a sure rule of judging, these men could not be the seed of Abraham, who were a merciless, barbarous, and cruel generation. Another of their writers [f395] has this observation, agreeably to the way of reasoning Christ uses;

> "a disciple is to be judged of according to his manners; he that walks in the ways of the Lord, he is of the disciples of Abraham, our father, seeing he is used to his manners, and learns of his works; but the disciple who is corrupt in his manners, though he is of the children of Israel, lo, he is not of the "disciples of Abraham", seeing he is not accustomed to his manners."

Whence it appears, that they say these things not to distinguish themselves from other people who claimed a descent from Abraham, as the Ishmaelites or Saracens did; as did also the Spartans or Lacedemonians; for so writes Areus their king, to Onias the high priest of the Jews,

> "it is found in writing, that the Lacedemonians and Jews are brethren, and that they are of the stock of Abraham," (1 Maccab. 12:20,21)

But to distinguish those who were religious and virtuous among the Jews themselves, from those that were not; and so our Lord means not to deny, that the Jews, though they were evil men, were the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh; but that they were not so in a spiritual sense, they did not tread in his steps, or do the works he did. The Persic version reads in the singular number, "ye would do the work of Abraham"; and if any particular work is designed, it is most likely to be the work of faith, since it was that which Abraham was famous for; and the doing of which denominated men, even Gentiles, the children of Abraham, and which the Jews were wanting in, they disbelieving and rejecting the Messiah.

Ver. 40. *But now ye seek to kill me*, etc.] A temper and disposition very foreign from that of Abraham's:

a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God; to seek to kill a man is a very great crime, and punishable with death; to kill an innocent one, that had done no sin, who was pure, holy, harmless, and inoffensive to God and man, was an aggravation of the iniquity; and to kill a prophet, and one more than a prophet, who brought a revelation from God himself, and declared the whole truth of the Gospel, and particularly that of his divine, eternal sonship, which incensed them against him, and put them upon seeking to take away his life, still increased the sin.

This did not Abraham: the sense is not, that Abraham did not tell the truth he had heard of God; for he did instruct, and command his children after him, to walk in the ways of the Lord, which he had learned from him; but that Abraham did not reject any truth that was revealed unto him, and much less seek to take away the life of any person that brought it to him; and indeed not the life of any man that deserved not to die: and our Lord suggests, that if he had been on the spot now, he would not have done as these his posterity did, since he saw his day by faith, and rejoiced in the

foresight of it, (<4005>John 8:56). The Jew [f396] makes an objection from these words against the deity of Christ;

> "you see (says he) that Jesus declares concerning himself that he is not God, but man; and so says Paul concerning him, (<4505>Romans 5:15); and so Jesus, in many places, calls himself the son of man: for do we find in any place that he calls himself God, as the Nazarenes believe."

To which may be replied, that Jesus does not declare in these words, nor in any other place, that he is not God; he says no such thing; he only observes, that he was a man, as he really was: nor is his being man any contradiction to his being God; for he is both God and man; and so those that believe in him affirm: and though Christ does not in express terms call himself God, yet he owned himself to be the Son of God, (<4146>Mark 14:61), and said such things of himself, as manifestly declared him to be God; and upon account of which the Jews concluded, that he not only made himself equal with God, but that he made himself God, (<4005>John 5:17,18 10:33). Besides, he suffered himself to be called God by a disciple of his, which he would never have done, had he not been really and truly God, (<4028>John 20:28); yea, he seems to call himself so, when being tempted by Satan, he observed to him what is written, "thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God", (<4007>Matthew 4:7). The reason why he so often calls himself the son of man is, because it was more suitable to him in his state of humiliation; and indeed, there was no need for him to assert his deity in express words, since his works and miracles most clearly proved that he was God: and as for the Apostle Paul, though he sometimes speaks of him as a man, he also says of him, that he is God over all, blessed for ever; and calls him the great God, and our Saviour, and God manifest in the flesh, (<4505>Romans 9:5 <5601>Titus 2:13 <5401>1 Timothy 3:16).

Ver. 41. *Ye do the deeds of your father*, etc.] Not Abraham, but the devil.

Then said they unto him, we be not born of fornication: meaning either literally, that they were not a brood of bastards, children of whoredom, illegitimately begotten in unlawful copulation, or wedlock; or figuratively, that they were not the children of idolaters, idolatry being called fornication in Scripture; but that they were the holy seed of Israel, and children of the prophets, who had retained the pure word, and the true worship of God, though in all this they might have been contradicted and refuted; to which they add,

we have one Father, [even] God; Israel being called by God his Son, and firstborn to them belonged the adoption, in a national sense, and of this they boasted; though few of them were the children of God by special adoption, or God their Father by regenerating grace.

Ver. 42. *Jesus said unto them, if God were your Father*, etc.] By adoption; and this was discovered by the grace of regeneration; or in other words, if they had been born of God,

ye would love me; for in regeneration love to Christ is always implanted: it is a fruit of the Spirit, which always comes along with the superabounding grace of God in conversion; whoever are begotten again, according to abundant mercy, love an unseen Jesus; and where there is no love to Christ, there can be no regeneration: such persons are not born again; nor is God their Father, at least manifestatively:

for I proceeded forth; and came from God; the former of these phrases is observed by many learned men to be used by the Septuagint, of a proper natural birth, as in (Genesis 15:4 35:11); and here designs the eternal generation of Christ, as the Son of God, being the only begotten of the Father, and the Son of the Father in truth and love; and the other is to be understood of his mission from him, as Mediator:

neither came I of myself; or did not take the office to himself, without being called unto it, and invested with it, by his Father:

but he sent me; not by force, or against the will of Christ, or by change of place, but by assumption of nature; he sent him at the time agreed upon, in human nature, to obtain eternal redemption for his people: and upon both these accounts Christ is to be loved by all regenerate persons, or who have God for their Father; both on account of his being the Son of God, of the same nature and essence with him, (see 1 John 5:1); and on account of his mission into this world, as Mediator, since he was sent, and came to be the Saviour of lost sinners.

Ver. 43. *Why do ye not understand my speech*? etc.] Language, idiom, dialect, and form of speaking, in a figurative way; for they did not know what he meant by liberty, and bondage, and by having another father than Abraham, or by his own procession and coming forth from God:

[even] because ye cannot hear my word; as they had no spiritual discerning and understanding of the doctrine of Christ, which showed them to be

carnal, and natural men, and not regenerate ones, and the children of God; so they had an aversion to it, and could not bear to hear it.

Ver. 44. *Ye are of your father the devil*, etc.] Not of his substance, but by imitation and example; and as being under his authority and influence, his instructions and directions, and ready to follow after him, and obey his commands; the word "your" is rightly supplied, and is in some copies:

and the lusts of your father ye will do; the Syriac and Persic versions read in the singular number, "the lust", or "desire of your father"; by which may be particularly meant, his eager desire after the death of Christ, which he showed at different times; he instigated Herod to seek to destroy his life in his infancy, and when he was just entering on his public ministry, he tempted him to destroy himself; and often stirred up the Scribes and Pharisees, to stone him or kill him, some other way; and at last put it into the heart of one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, to betray him: this looks as if though the devil had a notion of the salvation of men by Christ, yet that he thought, as some erroneous men have also done, that it was only by his doctrine and example, and therefore he was in haste to get him out of the world, that he might not be useful, or any more so that way; and not by the shedding of his blood, the sacrifice of himself, or by his sufferings and death, in the room of sinners; or otherwise it is scarcely credible, that he would have sought his death so earnestly: now this selfsame lust and insatiable desire after the death of Christ prevailed in the Jews; and they were resolute and bent upon fulfilling it at any rate, nor could anything divert them from it; this is the thing Christ is speaking of in the context, and is what fully proved the devil to be their father, and them to be his children:

he was a murderer from the beginning; he was not only spoken of from the beginning, as he that should bruise the Messiah's heel, or should compass his death, but he was actually a murderer of Adam and Eve, and of all their posterity, by tempting them to sin, which brought death and ruin upon them; and who quickly after that instigated Cain to slay his brother; and has had, more or less, a concern in all murders committed since; and has been in all ages, and still is, a murderer of the souls of men; and therefore is rightly called Abaddon, and Apollyon, which signify the destroyer: the phrase, "from the beginning", does not intend the beginning of his own creation; for he was created a holy creature, was in the truth, though he abode not in it; and was in an happy state, though he lost it: nor strictly the

beginning of time, or of the creation of the world, which were some days at least before the fall of man, when the devil commenced a murderer; but it being very near it, therefore this phrase is made use of: the Syriac version renders it, “from Bereshith”, which is the first word in the Hebrew Bible, and is frequently used by the Jewish Rabbins for the six days of the creation; and if Adam fell, as some think, the same day he was created, it might be properly said that the devil was a murderer from thence. Philo [f397] speaks of Eve’s serpent, as ανψρωπου φονωντα, “a murderer of man”; applying to this purpose the text before referred to, (<010315>Genesis 3:15);

and abode not in the truth; neither in the integrity, innocence, and holiness, in which he was created; nor in veracity, or as a creature of veracity, but spake lies, and formed one, by which he deceived Eve, saying, “ye shall not surely die”, (<010304>Genesis 3:4), when God had said they should, (<010217>Genesis 2:17); nor in the truth of the Gospel, which was at least in part made known unto him; particularly that the Son of God should become man, and in that nature be the head of angels and men: this he and his associates, in the pride of their hearts, not bearing that the human nature should be exalted above that of theirs, left their first estate, broke off their allegiance to God, and turned rebels against him:

because there is no truth in him; not that this is a reason why he continued not in the truth, for there was originally truth in him; though he abode not in it; but a reason, showing there was none in him now, since he was fallen from it, and abode not in it; there is no truth in him, that is natural and genuine, and essential to him; and if at any time he speaks it, it is not from his heart, but because he is forced to it, or has an evil design in it:

when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; that is genuine and natural, of his own devising, willing, and approving:

for he is a liar, and the father of it; he was a liar, as early as he was a murderer, or rather earlier; it was with a lie he deceived, and so murdered our first parents, and he has continued so ever since; he was the first author of a lie; the first lie that ever was told, was told by him; he was the first inventor of one; he was the first of that trade; in this sense the word “father” is used, (<010420>Genesis 4:20,21); so the serpent is by the Cabalistic Jews [f398] called, the lip of lie, or the lying lip.

Ver. 45. *And because I tell you the truth*, etc.] And no lie, the whole truth of the Gospel, and particularly the truth of his divine sonship:

ye believe me not; to such an infatuation and judicial blindness were they give up, to disbelieve him, because he told the truth, and to believe a lie, that they might be damned; which showed them to be the children of the devil, and under his power and influence.

Ver. 46. *Which of you convinceth me of sin*? etc.] Of any immorality in life, or of any imposture, corruption, or deceit in doctrine. There were many of them that were forward enough to charge him with both scandalous sins, and false doctrines; but none of them all could prove anything against him, so as to convict him according to law: they called him a wine bibber, and a glutton; gave out they knew he was a sinner; charged him with blasphemy and sedition; sought to bring proof of it, but failed in their attempt:

and if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? since as no sin in life, so no corruption in doctrine, could be proved against him, what he said must be truth; and therefore it was a most unreasonable thing in them, and showed invincible obstinacy, not to believe him.

Ver. 47. *He that is of God*, etc.] Who is born, not of blood, by carnal descent from any person, or of the carnal will, or by the power of freewill, or of the will of the best man in the world; but of God, according to his abundant mercy, of his own will, by the power of his grace; and so has God to be his Father: such an one

heareth God's words; the doctrines of the Gospel, which have God for their author, being of his ordaining, sending, and publishing; and his grace for the matter of them, displayed in election, redemption, justification, pardon, adoption, and eternal salvation, and his glory for the end: now a regenerate man has eyes to see into the glory, loveliness, excellency, suitableness, and usefulness of these things; and he has ears to hear, and a heart to understand them, which others have not; and therefore hears them with pleasure, receives them in the love of them, cordially embraces them by faith, and distinguishes them from the words of man; and puts such of them in practice, as requires it:

ye therefore hear [them] not, because ye are not of God; because God was not their Father, or they were not born of him, as they boasted; therefore they had not eyes to see, nor ears to hear, nor hearts to understand: and it may as fairly be inferred, that because they did not hear the words of God, therefore they were not of God; for these two necessarily imply each other;

it looks very dark on such persons, who neither hear the doctrines of the Gospel externally nor internally.

Ver. 48. *Then answered the Jews, and said unto him*, etc.] Being incensed to the last degree, that he should say they were of their father the devil, and not of God; and that he spoke the truth, and no one could convince him of sin:

say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan? it seems they had said so before, though it is not recorded; and now they thought themselves justified in it, since he treated them, the true sons of Abraham, in such a manner; and the rather, since he had been lately among the Samaritans, and had in a parable spoken in favour of a Samaritan: they meant by this expression, that he was an irreligious man, and one that had no regard to the law of Moses; or at least played fast and loose with religion and the law, and was for any thing, as times served: the Jews had a very ill opinion of the Samaritans, on these accounts and to call a man a Samaritan, was all one as to call him an heretic, an idolater, or an excommunicated person; for such were the Samaritans with the Jews; they charged them with corrupting the Scriptures, and with worshipping idols, which were hid in Mount Gerizim; and they give us a dreadful account of their being anathematized by Ezra, Zorobabel, and Joshua; who, they say [f399],

> "gathered the whole congregation into the temple, and brought in three hundred priests, and three hundred children, and three hundred trumpets, and three hundred books of the law, in their hands; they blew the trumpets, and the Levites sung, and they anathematized the Samaritans, by the inexplicable name of God, and by the writing on tables, and with the anathema of the house of judgment, above and below; (saying,) let not any Israelite for ever eat of the fruit, or of the least morsel of a Samaritan; hence they say, whoso eateth the flesh of a Samaritan, it is all one as if he ate swine's flesh; also let not a Samaritan be made a proselyte, nor have a part in the resurrection of the dead; as it is said, "You have nothing to do with to build an house unto our God", (<15 4:3>Ezra 4:3), neither in this world, nor in the world to come: moreover, also let him have no part in Jerusalem; as it is said, "But you have no portion, nor, right, nor memorial in Jerusalem", (<16 2:20>Nehemiah 2:20); and they sent this anathema to the Israelites that were in Babylon, and they added thereunto, curse upon curse moreover,

> king Cyrus added an everlasting anathema to it, as it is said, “And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there, destroy”, etc. (<15612>Ezra 6:12).”

And hence, because the Samaritans were had in such abhorrence by the Jews, they would not ask a blessing over food in company with them [f400], nor say Amen after they had asked one [f401]; nor indeed, after the better sort of them had asked, unless the whole blessing was distinctly heard [f402], that so they might be sure there was no heresy in it; by all which it appears, how opprobrious this name was, and what a sad character was fixed upon a man that bore it; *see Gill “<4004>John 4:9”*; and as Christ was called by the Jews a Samaritan, they having no name more hateful and reproachful to call him by, so the Christians are still in their writings called Cuthites, or Samaritans; and it is indeed with them a general name for all Gentiles and idolaters, or whom they esteem such:

and hast a devil; familiarity and converse with one; by which means they imagined he knew their thoughts, and their actions, and by his assistance performed his miracles; or they took him for a lunatic, or a madman; whose lunacy and madness proceeded from the devil, with whom he was possessed: and this rather seems to be the sense, since in (<4005>John 8:52) the Jews say they knew he had a devil, which they concluded from his saying, that such that observed his words, and kept them, should never die; which they considered as the words of a man out of his senses, seeing all men, even the best of men die, they not understanding his meaning; whereas they could not gather from hence, that he dealt with familiar spirits; and what still confirms this sense is, that these two are joined together in (<4300>John 10:20), “he hath a devil, and is mad”, and such as were demoniacs, men possessed with devils, were either mad, or lunatic, and melancholy; (see <4033>Matthew 8:28 <4052>Mark 5:2-5 <4075>Matthew 17:15), compared with (<4097>Mark 9:17,25). To which may be added, that it was a prevailing notion with the Jews, that madness and melancholy were owing to evil spirits, which had the predominancy over men: and seeing Christ was thought to be besides himself by his friends and relations, (<4021>Mark 3:21), it need not be wondered at, that his enemies should fix such a character on him; nor was this an unusual one to be given to good men; the prophets and spiritual men of the Old Testament were accounted madmen, (<1211>2 Kings 9:11 <2807>Hosea 9:7). And since our Lord was used in this abusive manner, it need not seem strange, that his followers should be

treated in the same way; as the Apostle Paul and his companions in the ministry were, (<44624>Acts 26:24 <47513>2 Corinthians 5:13); (see <43820>John 10:20).

Ver. 49. *Jesus answered, I have not a devil*, etc.] He takes no notice of the first charge and scandalous character, that he was a Samaritan; it being so notorious to all the Jews, that he was not; but was, as they supposed, a Galilean, and of Nazareth; and besides, this was a term of reproach, which they gave to any man, that they had no good opinion of; just as we call a man a Turk, or a Jew; not meaning that he is in fact such an one, but behaves like one: to the other Christ replies, that he had not a devil, had no conversation with one, nor was he possessed or assisted by him, or was mad, and acted the part of a madman: in proof of which he observes,

but I honour my Father; by ascribing his doctrine and miracles to him, by doing his will, seeking his glory, and speaking well of him; all which he would not, had he been in confederacy with the devil; for no man can be familiar with him, or be assisted by him, and honour God; nor could a man out of his senses do all this:

and ye do dishonour me: by such wicked charges, and scandalous imputations: and Jews, who deny Jesus to be the Messiah, and treat him in this opprobrious manner, are not the only persons that dishonour Christ; there are many that are called by his name, who greatly dishonour him; some by their bad principles, and others by their evil practices: such highly reflect upon him, who deny his proper deity, and eternal sonship; who assert, that he is only God by office, and did not exist before his incarnation; who despise and reject his righteousness, submit not to it, but establish their own; who account his blood as common and useless, and speak disrespectfully of his sacrifice and satisfaction; and who consider his sufferings and death only as an example to men, and for the confirmation of his doctrine, but not as in the room and stead of his people, to answer and satisfy divine justice for them: and others they dishonour him, though they talk much of him, and pretend to faith in him, and love to him, and hope of eternal life by him, through their scandalous lives and conversations; dishonour his name and Gospel; give the enemy an occasion to reproach and blaspheme, and by reason of them, the ways and truths of Christ are evil spoken of.

Ver. 50. *I seek not mine own glory*, etc.] In his doctrine, or in his miracles; which showed that he was no impostor, but a true, faithful, and upright person; and though he was so very much reproached and abused, he was

not over solicitous of his own character, and of retrieving his honour, and of securing glory from man; he knew that Wisdom was justified of her children, and he committed himself to God that judgeth righteously, who would take care of his glory, and vindicate him from all the unjust charges and insults of men:

there is one that seeketh and judgeth; meaning God his Father, who had his glory at heart; who had glorified him on the mount, and would glorify him again, when he should raise him from the dead, and spread his Gospel in all the world; and when he would judge the nation of the Jews, and bring wrath upon them, upon their nation, city and temple, for their contempt and rejection of him.

Ver. 51. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] This is truth, and may be depended upon, as coming from the "Amen", and faithful witness:

if a man keep my saying; or doctrine, receives the Gospel in the love of it, obeys it from his heart, and cordially embraces and firmly believes it; and retains and holds it fast, having a spiritual and comfortable experience of the doctrines of Christ, and yielding a cheerful and ready obedience to his commands and ordinances, in faith and love:

he shall never see death; the second death, eternal death, which is an everlasting separation of a man, body and soul, from God: this death shall have no power on such a person, he shall never be hurt by it; and though he dies a corporeal death, that shall not be a curse, a penal evil to him; nor shall he always lie under the power of it, but shall rise again, and live in soul and body, for ever with the Lord: seeing and tasting death, as in (<40052>John 8:52), are Hebraisms expressive of dying.

Ver. 52. *Then said the Jews unto him*, etc.] Upon these last words that he spake, giving assurance, that whoever kept his saying, should not die:

now we know that thou hast a devil; they thought and said so before, but now they were assured, that he must be under diabolical influence, must be possessed with the devil, and mad, and out of his senses; for they thought no man in his senses would ever talk at this rate:

Abraham is dead, and the prophets; that is, they are dead also, as the Ethiopic version adds; (see <380105>Zechariah 1:5);

and thou sayest, if a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death: Abraham and the prophets were so far from pretending by their doctrine to communicate life and secure men from death, that they could not keep themselves from dying; and therefore it must be diabolical madness and frenzy to assert anything of this kind.

Ver. 53. *Art thou greater than our father Abraham*? etc.] So the woman of Samaria said, concerning Jacob, (<430412>John 4:12). The Jews had a mighty opinion of their ancestors, especially of Abraham; and yet they allow the Messiah to be greater than he, as Jesus truly was: so one of their ancient commentators [f403] on those words of (<235213>Isaiah 52:13) thus paraphrases them,

> ""Behold my servant shall deal prudently", this is the King Messiah; "he shall be exalted" above Abraham, as it is written, (<011422>Genesis 14:22), "and extolled" above Moses, as it is written, (<041112>Numbers 11:12), and he shall be higher than the ministering angels, as it is written, (<260126>Ezekiel 1:26 <380407>Zechariah 4:7), for he shall be twba ^m lwdg, "greater than the fathers"."

They add here, of Abraham,

which is dead; he was a great and good man, and yet dead:

and the prophets are dead; though they truly kept, and faithfully delivered the word of God:

whom makest thou thyself? who art a poor carpenter's son, a Galilean, a Nazarene, and yet makest thyself greater than Abraham, or any of the prophets; yea, makest thyself to be God, to promise security from death, and an everlasting continuance of life upon keeping thy word.

Ver. 54. *Jesus answered, if I honour myself, my honour is nothing*, etc.] It is empty and vain, and will not continue; (see <471018>2 Corinthians 10:18);

it is my Father that honoureth me: by a voice from heaven, both at his baptism, and transfiguration, declaring him to be his beloved Son, and by the works and miracles he did by him; as he afterwards also honoured him by raising him from the dead, and setting him at his own right hand, by pouring forth his Spirit on his disciples, and succeeding his Gospel in every place:

of whom ye say that he is your God; your covenant God and Father, being the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; of this the Jews boasted. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and all the Oriental versions read, “our God”.

Ver. 55. *Yet ye have not known him*, etc.] Not as the Father of Christ, nor as in Christ, whom to know is life eternal: they had no spiritual knowledge of him, nor communion with him; nor did they know truly his mind and will, nor how to worship and serve him as they ought:

but I know him; his nature and perfections, being of the same nature, and having the same perfections with him; and his whole mind and will lying in his bosom: nor did, or does any know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom he is pleased to reveal him:

and if I should say, I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you. Our Lord still intimates, that they were of their father the devil, and imitated him not only as a murderer, but as a liar: this is quite contrary to the character they give of themselves, for they say [f404], that an Israelite will not tell a lie.

But I know him, and keep his saying: do his will, and always the things that please him, observe his law, preach his Gospel, fulfil all righteousness, and work out the salvation of men, which were the will and work of his Father he came to do.

Ver. 56. *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day*, etc.] Or “he was desirous to see my day”, as the Syriac and Arabic versions rightly render the word; or “very desirous”, as the Persic version: and indeed, this was what many kings and prophets, and righteous men, were desirous of, even of seeing the Messiah and his day: we often read of jyçmh twmy, “the days of the Messiah”: and the Jews, in their Talmud [f405], dispute much about them, how long they will be; one says forty years, another seventy, another three ages: it is the opinion of some, that they shall be according to the number of the days of the year, three hundred and sixty five years; some say seven thousand years, and others as many as have been from the beginning of the world; and others, as many as from Noah; but we know the day of Christ better, and how long he was here on earth; and whose whole time here is called his day; this Abraham had a very great desire to see:

and he saw [it] and was glad; he saw it with an eye of faith, he saw it in the promise, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed; and when it was promised him he should have a son, which was the beginning of the fulfilment of the other, he laughed, and therefore his son was called Isaac, to which some reference is here made; he saw him in the birth of his son Isaac and rejoiced, and therefore called his name Isaac, that is, "laughter": he saw also Christ and his day, his sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead, in a figure; in the binding of Isaac, in the sacrifice of the ram, and in the receiving of Isaac, as from the dead; and he not only saw the Messiah in his type Melchizedek, and who some think was the Son of God himself, but he saw the second person, the promised Messiah, in an human form, (Genesis 18:2); and all this was matter of joy and gladness to him. This brings to mind what the Jews say at the rejoicing at the law, when the book of the law is brought out [f406]

> "Abraham rejoiced with the rejoicing of the law, he that cometh shall come, the branch with the joy of the law; Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Samuel, David, Solomon, rejoiced with the joy of the law; he that cometh shall come, the branch with the joy of the law."

Ver. 57. *Then said the Jews unto him, thou art not yet fifty years old*, etc.] One copy reads forty, but he was not that; no, not much more than thirty; not above two or three and thirty years old: the reason of their fixing on this age of fifty might be, because Christ might look like such an one, being a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs, as well as of great gravity; or they might be free in allowing him as many years, as could be thought he should be of, and gain their point; for what were fifty years, when Abraham had been dead above two thousand? and therefore he could never see Abraham, nor Abraham see him; moreover, this age of fifty, is often spoken of by the Jews, and much observed; at the age of fifty, a man is fit to give counsel, they say [f407]; hence the Levites were dismissed from service at that age, it being more proper for them then to give advice, than to bear burdens; a Methurgeman, or an interpreter in a congregation, was not chosen under fifty years of age [f408]; and if a man died before he was fifty, this was called the death of cutting off [f409]; a violent death, a death inflicted by God, as a punishment; Christ lived not to that age, he was now many years short of it:

and hast thou seen Abraham? if he had not, Abraham had seen him, in the sense before given, and in which Christ asserted it, and it is to be understood.

Ver. 58. *Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] Whether it will be believed or not, it is certainly fact:

before Abraham was, I am; which is to be understood, not of his being in the purpose and decree of God, foreordained to sufferings, and to glory; for so all the elect of God may be said to be before Abraham, being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world: or that Christ was man, before Abraham became the father of many nations; that is, before the calling of the Gentiles; for nothing is said in the text about his being the father of many nations; it is a bold and impudent addition to it: and besides, Abraham was made the father of many nations, as Ishmaelites, Israelites, Hagarenes, etc. long before the incarnation of Christ; yea, he was so from the very promise in (Genesis 17:5), which so runs, "a father of many nations have I made thee"; so that this appears a false sense of the text, which is to be understood of the deity, eternity, and immutability of Christ, and refers to the passage in (Exodus 3:14). "I am that I am — I am hath sent me unto you", the true Jehovah; and so Christ was before Abraham was in being, the everlasting I am, the eternal God, which is, and was, and is to come: he appeared in an human form to our first parents before Abraham was, and was manifested as the Mediator, Saviour, and living Redeemer, to whom all the patriarchs before Abraham looked, and by whom they were saved: he was concerned in the creation of all things out of nothing, as the efficient cause thereof; he was set up from everlasting as Mediator; and the covenant of grace was made with him, and the blessings and promises of it were put into his hands before the world began; the eternal election of men to everlasting life was made in him before the foundation of the world; and he had a glory with his Father before the world was; yea, from all eternity he was the Son of God, of the same nature with him, and equal to him; and his being of the same nature proves his eternity, as well as deity, that he is from everlasting to everlasting God; and is what he ever was, and will be what he now is: he is immutable, the same today, yesterday, and for ever; in his nature, love, grace, and fulness, he is the invariable and unchangeable I am.

Ver. 59. *Then they took up stones to cast at him*, etc.] Supposing that he had spoken blasphemy; for they well understood that he, by so saying,

made himself to be the eternal God, the unchangeable Jehovah. Should it be asked how they came by their stones in the temple? it may be replied, the temple was still building, (<4620>John 2:20), and stones, or pieces of stones, might lie about, with which they furnished themselves, in order to have destroyed Christ: and this they attempted, though it was on the sabbath day, as appears from (<4900>John 9:1,14); and with them, tbçb hlyqs, "stoning on the sabbath day" [f410] was allowed in some cases.

But Jesus hid himself, not in any corner of the temple, or behind a pillar; but he withdrew himself from them directly, and made himself invisible to them, by holding their eyes, or casting a mist before them, that they could not see him:

and went out of the temple; by one of the gates of it:

going through the midst of them; not of the persons that took up stones to stone him; but the rest of the people, who were there in great multitudes to hear his doctrine, and see his miracles: and so passed by, and escaped out of their hands; the last words, going through the midst of them,

and so passed by, are not in Beza's most ancient copy, and in the Vulgate Latin version.

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 9

Ver. 1. *And as [Jesus] passed by*, etc.] The word “Jesus” is not in the Greek text, but is rightly supplied by us, as it is in the Vulgate Latin, and as the word “Christ” is in the Persic version; for of his passing from the temple, and by the multitude that were there, and on his way to the place he designed to make to, is this said, as appears from the close of the preceding chapter; though some think this is to be understood of his passing by at another time and place, since the preceding fact of the woman’s being taken in adultery, and the discourse of our Lord with the Jews, were quickly after the feast of tabernacles; whereas the following ones, both in this, and the next chapter, seem to be at the feast of dedication, (<43 10 22>John 10:22), which was some months after: but it may be, that the parable of the sheep, though it runs in connection with what is said in this chapter, might be delivered then; or what follows, (<43 10 22>John 10:22), might be said at the feast of dedication, when the parable, and what is related here, might be delivered before, seeing there is so very strict a connection between this, and the preceding chapter; and the Ethiopic version is very express, rendering it, “and departing from thence”; that is, from the temple, at that time when the Jews took up stones to stone him:

he saw a man which was blind from his birth; which man was an emblem of God’s elect in a state of nature, who being conceived in sin, are transgressors from the womb, and so are alienated from the life of God through their ignorance and blindness: they are blind as to any true and spiritual knowledge of God in Christ; as to any true sight of sin, or sense of their own estate and condition; and with respect to Christ, and the way of peace, righteousness, and salvation by him; and as to the Spirit, and the operations of his grace, and with regard to the Scriptures, and the doctrines of the Gospel: and as Christ saw this man first, and not the man him, for he was blind, so Christ first looks upon his chosen ones with an eye of love and mercy, as he passes by them, and both enlightens and quickens them, (<26 16 6>Ezekiel 16:6,8). He saw Matthew the publican first, as

he passed along, and called him from the receipt of custom to be a follower of him, (<40>Matthew 9:10).

Ver. 2. *And his disciples asked him*, etc.] It may be that some of the twelve apostles, or others of his disciples, might put the following question to him on sight of this blind man, who by some means or another knew was born blind:

saying, master, who did man, or his parents, that he was born blind? the first of these questions, whether the man himself had sinned before he was born, which might be the occasion of his blindness, proceeds not upon the doctrine of original sin, though the Jews then believed that; (see Gill on "<45>Romans 5:12"); since that was common to all men, and therefore could not admit of such a question; but either upon the notion of transmigration of souls into other bodies; and so the disciples might ask whether this man had sinned in a pre-existent state when in another body, which was the reason of this blindness, or of his being put into a blind body. This notion, Josephus says [f411], was embraced by the Pharisees; though, according to him, it seems, that they only understood it of the souls of good men; and if so, this could lay no foundation for such a question, unless these disciples had given into the Pythagorean notion of a transmigration of all souls, which was to be known by defects, as blindness, etc. [412]; or else this question proceeded upon a principle received by the Jews, that an infant might do that which was faulty and criminal, and actually sin in the womb; of which Dr. Lightfoot has given instances: the second question proceeds upon the methods which sometimes God has taken with men, by visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children; or, as the above learned writer observes, upon a notion the Jews had, that a child might suffer for what the mother did whilst it was in the womb; or on another, which prevailed among them, that there should be neither merit nor demerit in the days of the Messiah; that is, that neither the good deeds, nor bad deeds of their parents, should be imputed to their children, neither the one to their advantage, nor the other to their disadvantage: and therefore since he the Messiah was come, they ask, how this blindness should come to pass? what should be the reason of it?

Ver. 3. *Jesus answered, neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents*, etc.] Not but that both were guilty of original sin, and had committed actual transgressions; but Christ's answer is to be considered agreeable to the design of the question; and the sense is, that it was not any sin that

either of them had committed, whilst he was in the womb, or previous to his birth, that was the cause of this blindness; otherwise, all such irregularities and afflictions arise from sin, and the fall of man, as does that spiritual blindness with which all mankind are attended:

but that the works of God should be manifest in him; that is, that Christ might have an opportunity of working a miracle in the cure of him, whereby it might appear that he is truly and properly God, the Son of God, and the Messiah; and so spiritual blindness, which has followed the fall of man, takes place in the elect of God in common with others, that the power of divine grace might be displayed in bringing them out of darkness into marvellous light.

Ver. 4. *I must work the works of him that sent me*, etc.] This shows, that the works of God, that were to be manifest, were to be done by Christ: many were the works which the Father gave him to do, and which he undertook to perform; and therefore there was a necessity of doing them, as principally the work of redemption, by fulfilling the law, and satisfying justice: and besides this, there were the preaching of the Gospel, and doing of miracles, and among these was this of giving sight to the blind, (see <23E505>Isaiah 35:5), both in a natural and spiritual sense: and with a view to this he speaks of the works he mast do,

while it is day; while the day of life lasts, for in the grave there is no work nor device:

the night cometh when no man can work; meaning the night of death, and of the grave, and suggesting his own death hereby, that he had but a little time to be in this world, and therefore would make the best use of it, to do the will and work of his Father that sent him; and which should be a pattern to us. This life is but short, it is but as the length of a day; a great deal of business is to be done; and death is hastening on, which will put a period to all working.

Ver. 5. *As long as I am in the world*, etc.] Which had been now two or three and thirty years; but was not to be much longer.

I am the light of the world; (see Gill on "<4808C2>John 8:12"). Though doubtless he said this with some view to the cure he was about to perform, it being agreeable to his character and work, while he was in the world.

Ver. 6. *And when he had thus spoken*, etc.] In answer to the disciples' question, and declaring his own work and office in the world, and the necessity he was under of performing it:

he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle; the Misnic doctors speak [f413] of qwrn jyj, "clay that is spitted", or "spittle clay", which their commentators say [f414] was a weak, thin clay, like spittle or water; but this here was properly spittle clay, or clay made of spittle, for want of water; or it may be rather, through choice Christ spat upon the dust of the earth, and worked it together into a consistence, like clay:

and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay; however, spittle, especially fasting spittle, might be thought proper in some disorder of the eyes, to be used, as it was by the Jews; (see Gill on "<43>John 9:16"); yet clay was a most unlikely means of restoring sight to a man that was born blind, which might be thought rather a means of making a man blind that could see. This may be an emblem of the word of God, the eye salve of the Gospel; which is a very unlikely means in the opinion of a natural man, who counts it foolishness, of enlightening and saving sinners; and yet by this foolishness of preaching God does save those that believe.

Ver. 7. *And said unto him, go wash in the Pool of Siloam*, etc.] A fountain of this name is called Siloah, (<23>Isaiah 8:6), and according to the Jewish writers, sometimes Gihon [f415]; and this, they say [f416], was without Jerusalem, though near unto it: hither the Jews went at the feast of tabernacles [f417], and drew water with great rejoicing, and brought it, and poured it on the altar; the waters thereof also the priests drank for digestion, when they had eaten too much flesh [f418]; and this was likewise made use of to wash in, in case of uncleanness. It is said [f419] of Benaiah, one of David's worthies, that

> "one day he set his foot upon a dead toad, and he went down to Siloah, and broke the pieces of hail, (or ice congealed together,) and dipped himself."

This fountain was to the south west of Jerusalem; and was, as Josephus says, sweet and large [f420]; and from it were two watercourses, upper and lower, (<142030>2 Chronicles 32:30), which ran into two pools; the one was called the Pool of Siloam, which may be the same that Josephus [f421] calls the Pool of Solomon, and is here meant, and which was situated on the south of the wall of Sion, towards the east; and the other was called the Pool of Shelah, and which, in (<160315>Nehemiah 3:15), is called in our

translation, and in some others, the Pool of Siloah. Now both the fountain, and the pool, were without the city; and yet we read of a Siloah in the midst of the city [f422]. This blind man was sent, not to wash himself all over, but only his face or eyes; and so the Arabic and Persic versions read, “wash thy face”; the clay from it: this may be emblematical of the grace of the Spirit, sometimes signified by water and washing, which accompanying the word, makes it effectual to the salvation of souls:

which is by interpretation sent. This interpretation of the word Siloam does not determine which of the pools is meant, the upper or lower, “Siloah” or “Shelah”, since they both come from the word j l ç, which signifies to “send”; but by the flexion of the word, the upper pool “Siloah” seems plainly intended, which was not so forenamed, as Nonus suggests, from the sending this man thither, but rather from the sending forth its waters, which flowed softly and gently for the supply of the city of Jerusalem, Some think Christ gave this interpretation of it with a view to himself, as the sent of God, the true Messiah: but the words seem not to be the words of Christ, but of the evangelist, who interprets this word; wherefore they are left out in the Syriac and Persic versions, where such an interpretation was needless.

He went his way therefore and washed, and came seeing: he did as he was commanded; he was obedient to the directions and orders of Christ, though they seemed so unlikely to answer the end; and yet that was brought about through the divine power of Christ, which appeared the more in making use of such unlikely means.

Ver. 8. *The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him*, etc.] For it seems the blind man was not a stranger, one that came out of the country to the city to beg; but a native of Jerusalem, that had long lived in a certain neighbourhood in it, and was well known to be what he was;

that he was blind; the Alexandrian copy, and one of Beza’s exemplars, and the Vulgate Latin version read, “that he was a beggar”; to which agree the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions: wherefore they

said, is this not he that sat and begged? they particularly remark his begging posture; he was not laid all along, as the lame man in (Acts 3:2); nor did he go from door to door, as others were used to do, but he sat in some certain place, as blind men generally did; (see Matthew 20:30).

Ver. 9. *Some said, this is he*, etc.] It is the same man that was blind, and begged:

others [said]; in one of Beza's copies it is added "no", and so read the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions; though they owned and said,

he is like him. This discourse of the neighbours concerning the blind man restored to sight, resembles the talk that generally is among relations, acquaintance, and neighbours, when anyone belonging to them is called by grace, and converted, saying, what is come to such an one? is he mad or melancholy? he is not the man he was: he is scarcely the same; is it he, or another? what is the matter with him?

[but] he said, I am [he]; and so put an end to the dispute between them, by his frank acknowledgment that he was the blind man, and the beggar they before knew as such: so persons enlightened by the Spirit of God, and effectually called by his grace, are very free and ready to acknowledge what they were before conversion, what poor, blind, and miserable, and contemptible creatures they were: Matthew owns himself to have been a publican; and Paul confesses he was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an injurious person, and the chief of sinners.

Ver. 10. *Therefore said they unto him*, etc.] When the case was clear, and it was out of question that he was the man:

how were thine eyes opened? or made to see: they might well ask this question, since such a thing was never known before, that one born blind received his sight; and as great a miracle it is in grace, and as great a mystery to a natural man, how one should be born again, or be spiritually enlightened.

Ver. 11. *He answered and said, a man that is called Jesus*, etc.] Whom he had as yet little knowledge of, only by some means or another he had learned his name;

made clay and anointed mine eyes, etc. (see Gill on "John 9:6"), (see Gill on "John 9:7").

Ver. 12. *Then they said unto him, where is he*? etc.] For Christ had withdrawn himself and was gone; whether on account of the Jews, who he knew would be irritated by this miracle, or whether to avoid all popular applause and glory, which he sought not, is not certain; it may be on both

accounts: this question, however, was put, not out of good will to Christ, but that they might apprehend him, and bring him before the sanhedrim, for doing work on the sabbath day; and such enmity there is in carnal men, at the conversion of sinners, their acquaintance, instead of rejoicing at it:

he said I know not; for when he returned from the pool, Jesus was gone: and so it sometimes is, that when Christ has wrought a good work of grace upon the heart, he withdraws himself for a while, and the converted sinner knows not where he is.

Ver. 13. *They brought to the Pharisees*, etc.] That is, to the sanhedrim, which chiefly consisted of Pharisees; and so Nonnus calls them the priests and chief priests:

him that was aforetime blind; to be examined by them. And something like this is the method used by carnal relations and friends, who when they have any belonging to them under a work of grace, have them to their learned doctors of a different religion, to talk to them, and dissuade them from the ways of truth and godliness.

Ver. 14. *And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay*, etc.] Which was reckoned a violation of the sabbath, (<4009>John 9:16), and was one reason why they had the man to the Pharisees to be examined, and why they were desirous of knowing where Jesus was:

and opened his eyes; by putting on the clay, and sending him to wash in the Pool of Siloam: nor did the miracle, nor the good done to the man, excuse with them, what they thought a breach of the sabbath.

Ver. 15. *Then again the Pharisees asked him*, etc.] Not that they had put any question of this kind to him before; but they also, as well as the neighbours, inquired of him,

how he had received his sight; from whom, and by what means:

he said unto them, he put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed and do see. This account agrees with the matter of fact, and with that he gave to his neighbours: he did not vary as to the truth of the relation, but this is somewhat more concise and short; and it is reasonable to suppose, that the Pharisees had talked much with him before, which made it less necessary to be more particular; for he makes no mention of the name of Jesus, nor of his making the clay, and the manner of it, nor of the Pool of Siloam, or his

orders to go there and wash; (see Gill on "[4006]John 9:6"), (see Gill on "[4007]John 9:7").

Ver. 16. *Wherefore said some of the Pharisees*, etc.] Or sanhedrim, for they were not all of one mind, as appears by what follows:

this man is not of God; meaning not the blind man, but Jesus; and their sense is, he is not sent of God, he does not come from him to do his will and work, nor does he seek his glory, nor is he on his side, or for his interest;

because he keepeth not the sabbath day: this they concluded from his making clay of spittle, and spreading it on the blind man's eyes, which was contrary to the traditions of their elders: one of whose rules and canons is [f423], that

> "it is forbidden to put fasting spittle even on the eyelid on a sabbath day."

An eye salve, or a plaster for the eye, if it was put on for pleasure, was lawful, but not for healing [f424]: but if it was put on, on the evening of the sabbath, it might continue on the sabbath day [f425].

Others said, how can a man that is a sinner, or a sabbath breaker,

do such miracles? as curing a man born blind, the like of which was never heard: those that reasoned after this manner may be supposed to be Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.

And there was a division among them; even in the sanhedrim, they could not agree about the character of the person that had done this miracle.

Ver. 17. *They say unto the blind man again*, etc.] After they had discoursed among themselves, and could not agree about the author of the miracle, they turn to him that had been blind, who is called the blind man, because he had been so, and ask him his sentiments of him:

what sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? the question seems, at first sight, as if it was, whether Jesus had opened his eyes or not; but by the answer it appears, that it required his thoughts of him, "who hath opened thine eyes", as the Vulgate Latin and Persic versions read; or "seeing", or "because he hath opened thine eyes", as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions:

he said, he is a prophet; the Syriac and Persic versions read, “I say he is a prophet”; or, “he is certainly a prophet”, as the Arabic version. The Jews were wont to conclude a man’s being a prophet from miracles wrought by him; (see <4614>John 6:14 7:31); though it does not appear that he believed him, as yet, to be that prophet, or the Messiah, that was to come; (see <4936>John 9:36).

Ver. 18. *But the Jews did not believe concerning him*, etc.] Not Jesus, but the blind man;

that he had been blind, and received his sight; they imagine there was a fraud in the case, that it was collusion between Jesus and this man; that he was a man who had never been blind, but only had given out that he was, and pretended he had now received his sight from Jesus, on purpose to spread his fame, and induce people to believe he was the Messiah; and in this imagination they endeavoured to strengthen themselves and others:

until they called the parents of him that had received his sight; they sent messengers to them, and summoned them before them, that they might examine them about this matter, hoping, they might get something out of them, which might detect the supposed fraud, and bring Jesus under disgrace.

Ver. 19. *And they asked them, saying, is this your son*, etc.] The first question they put was, whether the man that stood before them, pointing to him, was their son or not; whether they knew him by any marks to be their son, and would own him as such: had they answered to this in the negative, they would have got an advantage against him, and would have convicted him of a lie, since he had given out that he was the son of such parents; and proving such a lie upon him, would at once have brought the whole affair into suspicion at least: they add,

who ye say was born blind; this contains a second question, whether, if this was their son, he was born blind or not; and if he was not born blind, though he had been blind, it would have greatly lessened the miracle: and besides, they would have put other questions upon this, whether his blindness was real, and by what means it came. Next follows a third question,

how then doth he now see? By what means has he received his sight? They might hope, that if he was their son, and was really born blind, that he had his sight some other way than by Jesus; or they might object this to his

being born, blind, as being a thing impossible, or at least not credible that he should ever see, was that the case.

Ver. 20. *His parents answered them, and said*, etc.] What follows, which contains distinct answers to the several questions: and to the first they reply very freely, and with great confidence,

we know that this is our son; for though his receiving his sight made a considerable alteration in him, yet his features were the same; and there might be some marks in his body, which they were acquainted with, by which they knew assuredly he was their son: and if even the neighbours, though they disagreed about him, yet some of them knew him to be the same person that had been blind and begged, then much more his parents; and even those who said it was not he, yet they owned he was like him: and with respect to the second question they answer,

and that he was born blind: this they were ready to attest, and did attest.

Ver. 21. *But by what means he now seeth we know not*, etc.] As to the third question they could say nothing to it, they were not present when the cure was wrought, and knew nothing of the matter, but what they had heard from their son, or from others, or both:

or who hath opened his eyes we know not; they had heard it was Jesus, and their son had doubtless told them it was he; but since they could say nothing of their own personal knowledge, they choose not to say anything of him:

he is of age; at man's estate, as, with the Jews, one was, who was at the age of thirteen years, if he could produce the signs of puberty: and such an one was allowed a witness in any case, but not under this age; nor if he was arrived to it, if the above signs could not be produced [f426]. This man very likely was much older, as may be thought from the whole of his conduct, his pertinent answers, and just reasoning: wherefore his parents direct the sanhedrim to him for an answer to their third question,

ask him, he shall speak for himself; or "of himself", as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions render it: their sense is, he is capable of giving an account of himself in this matter, and he will do it, and let him do it; put the question to him, and a proper answer will be returned; and so they left the affair to be issued in this way.

Ver. 22. *These words spake his parents*, etc.] these were the answers they returned to the three questions put to them: and the reason why they answered in the manner they did to the third, was,

because they feared the Jews; the Jewish sanhedrim, otherwise they were Jews themselves:

for the Jews had agreed already; the sanhedrim had made a decree, either at this time, upon this account, or some time before,

that if any man did confess that he was Christ; that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah,

he should be put out of the synagogue; which was not that sort of excommunication which they called ywdn, "Niddui", a separation from civil society for the space of four cubits, and which held but thirty days, if the person repented; if he did not, it was continued to sixty days; and after that, in case of non-repentance, to ninety days; and if no amendment, then they proceeded to another excommunication called µrj, "Cherem", or atmç, "Shammatha", whereby such were anathematized, and cut off from the whole body of the Jewish church and people, called sometimes the synagogue and congregation of Israel [f427]; and this struck great terror in the minds of the people; and this was what intimidated the parents of the blind man, being what is intended here. Though these are sometimes put one for another, and signify the same thing; and he that was under the former of those censures, is said to be rwbyx ˆm ldbwm, "separated from the congregation" [f428], a phrase by which the word here used may be very well rendered: but in some things there was a difference between them; the one was without cursing, the other with; he that was under "Niddui", might teach others the traditions, and they might teach him; he might hire workmen, and be hired himself: but he that was under "Cherem" might neither teach others, nor they teach him; but he might teach himself, that he might not forget his learning; and he might neither hire, nor be hired; and they did not trade with him, nor did they employ him in any business, unless in very little, just to keep him alive [f429]; yea, the goods which he was possessed of, were confiscated, and which they conclude should be done from [f430] (<150108>Ezra 10:8), which may be compared with this passage; so that this greatly and chiefly affected them in the affairs of civil life, and which made it so terrible: for I do not find that they were obliged to abstain from the temple, or temple worship, or from the synagogue, and the worship of

it, and which is the mistake of some learned men: it is certain, they might go into places of worship, though with some difference from others; for it is said [f431], that

> "all that go into the temple, go in, in the right hand way, and go round, and come out in the left, except such an one to whom anything has befallen him, and he goes about to the left; (and when asked) why dost thou go to the left? (he answers) because I am a mourner; (to whom it is replied) he that dwells in this house comfort thee: (or) hdwnm ynaç, "because I am excommunicated"; (to whom they say) he that dwells in this house put it into thy heart (that thou mayest hearken to the words of thy friends, as it is afterwards explained) and they may receive thee."

And it is elsewhere said [f432], that

> "Solomon, when he built the temple, made two gates, the one for bridegrooms, and the other for mourners and excommunicated persons; and the Israelites, when they went in on sabbath days, or feast days, sat between these two gates; and when anyone came in by the gate of the bridegrooms, they knew he was a bridegroom, and said unto him, he that dwells in this house make thee cheerful with sons and daughters: and when anyone came in at the gate of mourners, and his upper lip covered, they knew that he was a mourner, and said unto him, he that dwells in this house comfort thee: and when anyone came in at the gate of mourners, and his upper lip was not covered, they knew hdwnm hyhç, "that he was excommunicated"; and said unto him, he that dwells in this house comfort thee, and put it into thy heart to hearken to thy friends."

And it is afterwards also said in the same place, that when the temple was destroyed, it was decreed that such persons should come into synagogues and schools; but then they were not reckoned as members of the Jewish church, but as persons cut off from the people of Israel, and scarce allowed to be of their commonwealth. And it may be further observed, that excommunication with the Jews was not only on religious accounts, but on civil accounts; on account of money, or when a man would not pay his debts, according to the decree of the sanhedrim [f433]. The twenty four reasons of excommunication, given by Maimonides [f434], chiefly respect contempt of the sanhedrim, and of the wise men, and breach of the

traditions of the elders; sometimes they excommunicated for immorality, particularly the Essenes, as Josephus relates, who says [f435], that such who are taken in grievous sins, they cast them out of their order; and he that is so dealt with commonly dies a miserable death; for being bound by oaths and customs, he cannot eat the food of others, and so starves. The same is reported [f436] by R. Abraham Zachuth: and sometimes excommunication was for Epicurism, or heresy, and such they reckoned the belief of Jesus of Nazareth, as the Messiah, on account of which this decree was made, and which continued with them; for not only this blind man was cast out of the synagogue by virtue of it, but our Lord tells his disciples, that they should be so treated by the Jews after his death; and we find it remained in force and practice many hundreds of years afterwards. Athanasius [f437] relates of a Jew, that lived in Berytus, a city in Syria, between Tyre and Sidon, that an image of Christ being found in his house by another Jew, though unknown to him; and this being discovered to the chief priests and elders of the Jews, they cast him out of the synagogue. Sometimes this sentence was pronounced by word of mouth, and sometimes it was delivered in writing: the form of one is given us by Buxtorf [f438], out of an ancient Hebrew manuscript; and a dreadful shocking one it is; and is as follows:

> “according to the mind of the Lord of lords, let such an one, the son of such an one, be in “Cherem”, or anathematized, in both houses of judgment, of those above, and those below; and with the anathema of the saints on high, with the anathema of the “Seraphim” and “Ophanim”, and with the anathema of the whole congregation, great and small; let great and real stripes be upon him, and many and violent diseases; and let his house be an habitation of dragons; and let his star be dark in the clouds; and let him be for indignation, wrath, and anger; and let his carcass be for beasts and serpents; and let those that rise up against him, and his enemies, rejoice over him; and let his silver and his gold be given to others; and let all his children be exposed at the gate of his enemies, and at his day may others be amazed; and let him be cursed from the mouth of Addiriron and Actariel, (names of angels, as are those that follow,) and from the mouth of Sandalphon and Hadraniel, and from the mouth of Ansisiel and Pathchiel, and from the mouth of Seraphiel and Zaganzael, and from the mouth of Michael and Gabriel, and from the mouth of Raphael and Meshartiel; and let him be anathematized from the mouth of Tzabtzabib, and from tile

mouth of Habhabib, he is Jehovah the Great, and from the mouth of the seventy names of the great king, and from the side of Tzortak the great chancellor; and let him be swallowed up as Korah and his company, with terror, and with trembling; let his soul go out; let the reproof of the Lord kill him; and let him be strangled as Ahithophel in his counsel; and let his leprosy be as the leprosy of Gehazi; and let there be no raising him up from his fall; and in the sepulchres of Israel let not his grave be; and let his wife be given to another; and let others bow upon her at his death: in this anathema, let such an one, the son of such an one be, and let this be his inheritance; but upon me, and upon all Israel, may God extend his peace and his blessing. Amen."

And if he would, he might add these verses in (Deuteronomy 29:19-21): "and it come to pass when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: the Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord shall separate, him unto evil, out of all the tribes of Israel, according, to all the curses of the covenant, that are written in this book of the law". There were many rites and ceremonies, which in process of time were used, when such a sentence was pronounced, as blowing of horns and trumpets, and lighting of candles, and putting them out: hence, trumpets are reckoned [f439] a among the instruments of judges. It is said [f440] of R. Judah, that being affronted by a certain person, he resented the injury, and brought out the trumpets and excommunicated him: and they tell us [f441], that Barak anathematized Meroz, whom they take to be some great person, with four hundred trumpets: and they also say [f442], that four hundred trumpets were brought out, and they excommunicated Jesus of Nazareth; though these words are left out in some editions of the Talmud. Now this was done in order to inject terror both into those that were guilty, and also into the whole congregation of the people, that they might hear and fear; for the "Cherem", or that sort of excommunication which goes by that name, was done publicly before the whole synagogue, all the heads and elders of the church being gathered together; and then candles were lighted, and as soon as the form of the curse was finished, they were put out, as a sign that the excommunicated person was unworthy of the

heavenly light [f443]. Very likely the Papists took their horrible custom from hence of cursing with bell, book, and candle.

Ver. 23. *Therefore said his parents, he is of age*, etc.] (See Gill on "John 9:21").

Ver. 24. *Then again called they the man that was blind*, etc.] That had been blind. After they had examined his parents, and could get nothing from them for their purpose, they try a second time what they could do with the son:

and said unto him, give God the praise; a phrase used when confession of sin was required; (see Joshua 7:19); and this may be the meaning of it here; confess this fraud and imposture before the omniscient God, the searcher of hearts, and in so doing glorify that perfection of his. One and the same word, hdy, signifies both to confess the truth of anything, as a sinful action, (Proverbs 28:13), and to give thanks and praise to God for any mercy and blessing, (Psalm 45:17 Daniel 2:23). Some take this to be the form of an oath, and that the Pharisees adjured the than by the living God, that he would tell the truth, and discover the cheat and collusion used in this affair of receiving his sight; and thought hereby to have deterred him from speaking of this benefit he had received from Christ, especially in such a manner as to reflect any honour upon the author of it. Or the sense may be, if this really is matter of fact, that thou wast born blind, and hast received thy sight by the means of this man, give all the glory of it to God, to whom alone it is due, and not to him. God sometimes works by wicked instruments, when the glory of what is done ought not to be ascribed to them, but to him.

We know that this man is a sinner; this they concluded from his breaking the sabbath, as they supposed; though they also aspersed his character, and accused him of other things, yet falsely; (see Matthew 11:19 Luke 23:2); nor could they prove one single instance of sin in him, though they express themselves here with so much assurance.

Ver. 25. *He answered and said*, etc.] That is, the man who had been blind, who takes no notice of the confession they pressed him to, which is what he could not do; there being no collusion in this case, he only replies to the reproachful character they had given of his benefactor.

Whether he be a sinner or not, I know not: or "if he is a sinner I know not", as the Vulgate Latin version renders it, suggesting that he did not know he was a sinner; he could not charge him with being one; nor could he join with them in saying he was a sinner; nor did he think and believe he was: however, he was sure he had done a good thing to him, and in that he was no sinner; and what proof they had of his being one he could not tell: and be that as it will, adds he,

one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see; as if he should say, whatever charges you bring against the person that has done me this favour, which I am not able to answer to, you cannot reason me out of this; this I am sure of, that once I had no eyes to see with, and now I have, and that by the means of this man you reproach. And so it is with persons enlightened in a spiritual sense, whatever things they may be ignorant of, though they may not know the exact time of their conversion, nor have so much Gospel light and knowledge as others, or be so capable of expressing themselves, or giving such a distinct and orderly account of the work of God upon them as some can, nor dispute with an adversary for the truths of the Gospel, or have that faith of assurance, and discoveries of God's love, and the application of such great and precious promises as others have; yet this they know, that they were once blind, as to the knowledge of spiritual things, as to a saving knowledge of God in Christ, as to a true sight and sense of themselves, their sins and lost estate, as to the way of righteousness and salvation by Christ, or the work of the Spirit of God upon their souls, or as to any true and spiritual discerning of the Scriptures, and the doctrines of grace in them: but now they are comfortably assured, they see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the plague of their own hearts, the insufficiency of their righteousness to justify them before God, and the beauty, fulness, suitableness, and ability of Christ as a Saviour; and that their salvation is, and must be of free grace; and that they see the truths of the Gospel in another light than they did before, and have some glimpse of eternal glory and happiness, in the hope of which they rejoice.

Ver. 26. *Then said they to him again*, etc.] Finding they could not bring him to deny the fact, or cause him to entertain an ill opinion of him that did it, they examine him again about the manner of it:

what did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? These questions they had put before, (John 9:15), and propose them again, in hope he would vary in the account, which they would not fail of improving against him; or that

it would appear that he had not been really blind, at least from his birth; or that Christ made use of some unlawful means, as magic art, which they were always ready to charge him with, and to impute his miracles to a diabolical familiarity and influence; and they would have been glad to have had something to support such a calumny.

Ver. 27. *He answered them, I have told you already*, etc.]. As he had, (⁴⁹¹⁵John 9:15),

and ye did not hear; the Vulgate Latin version reads, and ye have heard; and so some copies of Stephens's; that is, an account had been given of the manner how his eyes were opened, and they had heard the account with their bodily ears, though not with the ears of their minds; and therefore, according to most copies and versions, it is read, "ye did not hear"; did not regard it, or give credit to it; and so the Persic version renders it, "and ye have not believed"; they would not believe the man had been blind, until they sent for his parents; much less would they believe the account of his cure:

wherefore would ye hear it again? once is sufficient, especially since the former account has been disregarded and discredited: their view could not be their own information but to baffle and confound the man, if they could. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions leave out the word "again", and only read, "wherefore would ye hear?" what end can you have in it? of what avail would it be? or what purpose can be answered by it?

will ye also be his disciples? as many whom you call ignorant and accursed people are, and as I myself desire to be. This he might say either in an ironical and sarcastic way; or else seriously, suggesting, that if they were willing to examine into this fact, with upright views and sincere intentions, that should it appear to be a true miracle, they would become the disciples and followers of Jesus, then he would, with all his heart, relate the account to them over and over again, or as often as they pleased.

Ver. 28. *Then they reviled him*, etc.] Called him an impertinent, saucy, impudent fellow, for talking in this pert manner to them, the great sanhedrim of the nation; or, as the Vulgate Latin version reads, they cursed him; they thundered out their anathemas against him, and pronounced him an execrable and an accursed fellow:

and said, thou art his disciple; for they looked upon it a reproach and scandal to be called a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth; though there is nothing

more honourable than to be a follower of him the Lamb whithersoever he goes: wherefore these Jews threw off what they thought a term of reproach from themselves to the blind man; and perhaps they might say this to ensnare him, hoping that he would own himself to be a disciple of Jesus, and profess him to be the Christ, that they might, according to their own act, excommunicate him. The Vulgate Latin, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, “be thou his disciple”; if thou wilt, we despise the character; far be it from us that we should be followers of him:

but we are Moses’s disciples. Thus they preferred Moses to Christ, and chose to be the disciples of Moses the servant, rather than of Christ the Son; though indeed they were not the genuine disciples of Moses; for if they had, they would have been the disciples of Christ, and believers in him, since Moses wrote and testified of him: they might indeed be so far the disciples of Moses, or of his law, since they sought for righteousness and justification by obedience to his law. This was a phrase in use among the Jews: so the Targumist [f444] on (Numbers 3:2) says,

> “these are the names of they sons of Aaron the priests, hçmd aydymlt, “the disciples of Moses”, the master of the Israelites;”

particularly the Pharisees, as here, claimed this title to themselves: for it is said [f445],

> “all the seven days (before the day of atonement) they delivered to him (the high priest) two of the disciples of the wise men, to instruct him in the service (of that day), who were, hçm lç wydymltm, “of the disciples of Moses”, in opposition to the Sadducees:”

from whence it appears, that these disciples of Moses were of the sect of the Pharisees, who assumed this character as peculiar to themselves; sometimes they call themselves the disciples of Abraham, though the description they give of such, by no means belongs to them; (see Gill on “John 8:39”). They say [f446],

> “whoever has three things in him, is µhrba lç wydymltm, “of the disciples of Abraham” our father, and who has three other things is of the disciples of Balaam the wicked: he that has a good eye, (beneficence, or temperance, or contentment,) a lowly spirit, and an humble soul, he is of “the disciples of Abraham” our father;

but he that has evil eye, and a proud spirit, and a large soul (lustful or covetous), is of the disciples of Balaam."

This last character best agrees with those very persons, who would be thought to be the disciples of Abraham and of Moses.

Ver. 29. *We know that God spoke to Moses*, etc.] Out of the bush, and told him who he was, and sent him to deliver the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, and spoke the ten words, or law unto him, and by him delivered them to the children of Israel, and to whom he spake face to face, as a man does to his friend, and mouth to mouth, and not in dark sayings; they mean, they knew that Moses had his mission, commission, and credentials from God:

but as for this fellow; so they contemptuously called the Lord Jesus Christ,

we know not from whence he is; contradicting what others of them had said, (John 7:27). They imagined they knew the country from whence he came, which they supposed to be Galilee, and the place where he was born, which they concluded was Nazareth; though in both they were in the wrong; and they knew his parents, Joseph and Mary, and his brethren and sisters; but as to his divine filiation, they knew nothing of it; nor would they own his mission, commission, and credentials to be from heaven; and pretended they had no reason to conclude they were.

Ver. 30. *The man answered and said unto them*, etc.] Very appropriately and pertinently,

why herein is a marvellous thing; strange and unaccountable,

that ye know not from whence he is; that you learned doctors, men of sagacity and penetration, should not be able to discern that this man is of God, is a prophet sent by him, and that there should be any doubt from whence he comes, or from whom he has his commission:

and [yet] he hath opened mine eyes; which was so clearly and plainly the work of the Messiah, and to be done by him when he came, (Isaiah 35:4,5 42:7).

Ver. 31. *Now we know that God heareth not sinners*, etc.] All mankind are sinners, even God's elect; yea, such who are truly gracious and righteous persons; for there is no man without sin; and God hears such who cry unto him day and night; such Christ came to save; for such he died; and these he

calls to repentance; and every penitent sinner God hears: but by “sinners” are meant notorious sinners, such in whom sin reigns, who live in sin, and particularly impostors. The man takes up the word the Jews had made use of, and applied to Christ, (<43>John 9:24), and suggests, that had Jesus been a sinner, that is, an impostor, God would not have heard him, or have assisted him in doing a miracle, to support an imposture, or cover and encourage a fraud; but that he was heard and assisted, was a plain case: whereas not only they, the learned doctors of the nation, but such an illiterate man as himself knew, that notoriously wicked men, cheats, and deceivers, were not heard of God; and this was known from the Scripture, and all experience; (see <19>Psalm 66:18 <23>Isaiah 1:15). The Persic and Ethiopic versions read, “I know, that God”, etc.

but if any man be a worshipper of God; fears the Lord, and worships him in spirit and in truth, both with internal and external worship:

and doth his will; for it is not everyone that Lord, or draws nigh to God with his mouth, and honours him with his lips, that is a true and sincere worshipper of him; but he that does his will in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to his glory: and

him he heareth; for he is nigh to all that call upon him in truth; and such an one the man intimates Jesus must be, since it was out of all dispute that God had heard him, and had bore a testimony to him.

Ver. 32. *Since the world began*, etc.] εκ του αιωνος, “from eternity”, or never: the phrase answers to µlw[m, frequently used by the Jews[f447], for never; and so the Arabic version renders it, “it was never heard”, etc. since time was:

was it not heard, that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind; as not any physician by any natural means, or art, so not any prophet in a miraculous way, no not Moses himself; among all the miracles he wrought, which the Jews say[f448] were seventy six, and which were two more than were wrought by all the prophets put together, this is not to be found in the list of them, nor in the catalogue of miracles done by others. Elisha indeed prayed to God to restore sight to an army smitten with blindness; but then they were persons who saw before, and were not blind from their birth. Wherefore it must follow, that Jesus, the author of this miracle, must be greater than any of the prophets, even than Moses himself, and has a greater confirmation of his mission from God, than either he or they had:

and as this was a miracle in nature, it is no less a miracle in grace, that one born in the blindness and darkness of sin, ignorance, and infidelity, should have the eyes of his understanding opened, to behold divine and spiritual things.

Ver. 33. *If this man were not of God*, etc.] If he had not his mission, commission, and credentials from God; if he had not been sent by him, and had not authority from him, and was not assisted by him, as man, or God was not with him,

he could do nothing; or "not do these things", as the Syriac version reads; that is, such miraculous works; or, as the Persic version, "he could not do this miracle": open the eyes of a man born blind. His doing this is a full proof that he is of God, and comes from him.

Ver. 34. *They answered and said unto him*, etc.] Being nettled, and stung at what he said, and not able to confute his reasoning; and it is amazing that a man that could never read the Scriptures, who had had no education, was not only blind, but a beggar from his youth, should be able to reason in so strong and nervous a manner, and should have that boldness and presence of mind, and freedom of speech before the whole sanhedrim. Certainly it was God that gave him a mouth and wisdom which these learned doctors could not resist, and therefore they reply in the following manner,

thou wast altogether born in sins; meaning not in original sin, as all mankind are, for this might have been retorted on themselves; but having imbibed the Pythagorean notion of a transmigration of souls into other bodies, and of sinning in a pre-existent state, or a notion of infants sinning actually in the womb, and so punished with blindness, lameness, or some deformity or another for it, they reproach this man, calling him vile miscreant, saying, thou vile, sinful creature, who came into the world covered with sin, with the visible marks of having sinned, either in another body, or in the womb before birth, and therefore wast born blind:

and dost thou teach us, holy, wise, and learned men! which breathes out the true pharisaical spirit they were possessed of, and which appeared in their ancestors before them; (see <23E615>Isaiah 65:5 <4218>Luke 18:9).

And they cast him out; not merely out of the place where the sanhedrim sat, or out of the temple; this would have been no great matter, nor have made any great noise in the city, or have been taken notice of by Christ, or

moved his compassion towards him; nor merely out of any particular synagogue, or was the excommunication called “Niddui”, which was a separation for thirty days, and for the space of four cubits only; but was what they call “Cherem”, which was a cutting him off from the whole congregation of Israel; (see Gill on “[4012]John 9:22”); an anathematizing him, and a devoting him to ruin and destruction: and now in part was fulfilled, ([2805]Isaiah 66:5), for this was done in pretence of zeal, for the honour and glory of God; and Christ appeared to the joy and comfort of this man, and to the shame and confusion of those that cast him out, as the following verses show.

Ver. 35. *Jesus heard that they had cast him out*, etc.] this being perhaps the first instance, of putting in execution the act they had made, ([4012]John 9:22), and was a stretching of that act; which only threatened with an ejection, in case any should confess Jesus to be the Messiah; which this man had not done as yet, only had said he was a prophet, and that he was of God; it made a very great noise in the city, and the report of it was soon spread over it; and it became the talk of everyone, and so Jesus, as man, came to hear of it; though he, as God, knew it the very instant it was done, and needed not any to make report of it to him:

and when he had found him: not by chance, meeting him at an unawares, but seeking him; and knowing where he was, went to the very place, and found him in this piteous condition, abandoned by all mankind: this is an emblem of Christ’s seeking after his chosen ones, both in redemption, and in the effectual calling, who are like sheep going astray, and never come to, and lay hold on Christ, till he comes first, seeks after, and apprehends them: he sends his ministers and his Gospel after them, where they are, and his Spirit into their hearts; yea, he comes himself, and enters there, and dwells in them by faith: he knows where they are, as he did Matthew the publican, Zacchaeus, and the woman of Samaria; and even though they are at the ends of the earth; and he goes and looks them up, and finds them; and he finds them in a deplorable condition, in a desert, in a waste howling wilderness, hopeless and helpless, poor and miserable, and blind and naked; in a pit wherein is no water; in the mire and clay of sin; in the paw of Satan, and under the power of darkness.

He said unto him, dost thou believe on the Son of God? the Persic version adds, “who hath healed thee”: this supposes that there was a Son of God, or a divine person known by the Jews under this character, and that the

expected Messiah would appear as such; and that, as such, he is the object of faith, and therefore, as such, must be God, since a creature, though ever so much dignified, or with whatsoever office invested, is not the object of faith, trust, and confidence, with respect to everlasting life and happiness: and it may be observed, that whenever Christ finds any of his people, he brings them to believe in him as the Son of God for righteousness and life: he himself is the author of faith in them, as well as the object of it; and no doubt power went along with these words, creating faith in this man: this was a most proper and pertinent question put to him in his present case, and suggests, that if he believed in the Son of God, it was no matter in what situation he was among men: since he would then appear to be a Son of God himself by adopting grace, and so an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ; would receive the remission of his sins, openly justified in the court of conscience, as well of God, and be everlastingly saved: and this question is put by Christ, not as though he was ignorant, whether he believed in him or not; for he knew from the beginning, who would, and who would not believe in him: he that knew whether Peter loved him or not, knew whether this man believed in him or not; but this he said to draw forth the principle of faith, which was wrought in him, into act and exercise, and to direct it to its proper object. And this effect it had, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 36. *He answered and said*, etc.] That is, “he that was healed”, as the Syriac version reads:

who is the Lord that I might believe in him? which shows, that though he knew there was a Messiah expected, and he believed in him as to come, yet he knew not that he was already come, nor the particular person in human nature, who was the Messiah, and the Son of God; even though he had been cured of his blindness by him, and had vindicated him, and pleaded for him before the sanhedrim, and had also suffered for him; which makes it appear, that Christ does many and great things for his people before they know him: nor does their interest in him, in his favour, and in the blessings of his grace, depend upon their knowledge of him, and faith in him; as likewise, that a man may plead for Christ, and suffer much for him, and yet be ignorant of him: however, there were in this man desires of knowing Christ; he was not like those in (<18214>Job 21:14); and there was a readiness in him to believe on him, as soon as he was pointed out to him; not that there is any natural disposition in men to believe, or any readiness in themselves to it, or that it is of themselves; nothing of this nature was in

this man; but he having, by the power and grace of Christ, the principle of faith implanted in his heart, what he wanted was to be directed to the proper object of it, as he is in (<4009737>John 9:37).

Ver. 37. *And Jesus said unto him*, etc.] Giving him the tokens by which he might know him: thou hast both seen him; not that he had seen him before now, with his bodily eyes; for he was blind when Christ anointed him, and sent him to Siloam to wash; nor when he came back, since Jesus was gone, and he knew not where he was; but he had seen him, that is, he had perceived and felt the power of him in restoring him to sight; and now he had seen him bodily, and did at this present time: but as this was not sufficient to distinguish him from other persons in company, he adds,

and it is he that talketh with thee; in like manner he made himself known to the woman of Samaria, (<4004026>John 4:26).

Ver. 38. *And he said, Lord, I believe*, etc.] He immediately found faith in his soul, and that in exercise, moving towards, and acting upon Christ, as the Son of God, and true Messiah, for everlasting life and salvation; and as soon as he did perceive it, he made an open and hearty profession of it:

and he worshipped him: as God, with religious worship and adoration, not only trusting in him, but ascribing honour, glory, and blessing to him, which are due to God only, and not a creature.

Ver. 39. *And Jesus said, for judgment I am come into this world*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, "for the judgment of this world I am come"; and with which agrees the Ethiopic version, "for the judgment of the world I am come into the world"; and the Arabic and Persic versions still more expressly, "to judge this world", or "the world, am I come"; which seems contrary to what Christ elsewhere says, (<4003017>John 3:17 12:47). Nor is the sense of the words that Christ came by the judgment of God, or the order of divine providence, or to administer justice in the government of the world, in a providential way, or to distinguish his own people from others, though all these are true; but either to fulfil the purpose and decree of God in revealing truth to some, and hiding it from others; or in a way of judgment to inflict judicial blindness on some, whilst in a way of mercy he illuminated others. So Nonnus interprets it of κριμα ψισσον, a twofold "judgment", which is different the one from the other.

That they which see not, might see; meaning, not so much corporeally as spiritually, since in the opposite clause corporeal blindness can have no

place; for though Christ restored bodily sight to many, he never took it away from any person. The sense is, that Christ came as a light into the world, that those who are in the darkness of sin, ignorance, and unbelief, and who are sensible of the same, and desire spiritual illuminations, as this man did, might see what they are by nature, what need they stand in of him, and what fulness of grace, life, righteousness, and salvation, there is in him for them.

And that they which see might be made blind; that such who are wise and knowing in their own conceit, who fancy themselves to have great light and knowledge, to have the key of knowledge, and to have the true understanding of divine things, and to be guides of the blind, such as the Scribes and Pharisees, might be given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart, so as to shut their eyes, and harden their hearts against the Gospel, and the truths of it, and which was in judgment to them: such different effects Christ and his Gospel have, as to illuminate and soften some, and blind and harden others; just as some creatures, as bats and owls, are blinded by the sun, whilst others see clearly by the light of it; and as that also has these different effects to soften the wax, and harden the clay; (see [23]Isaiah 6:9).

Ver. 40. *And some of the Pharisees which were with him*, etc.] Who had followed him, and were watching him, and observing what he said and did, in order to take all advantages, and every opportunity against him, they could,

heard these words, and said unto him, are we blind also? they perceived he pointed at them, and therefore with indignation ask this question, taking it as a great affront unto them, to put such wise, learned, and knowing men as they in company with the ignorant and unlearned common people; (see [23]Isaiah 42:19).

Ver. 41. *Jesus said unto them, if ye were blind*, etc.] And sensible of it, and knew yourselves to be blind, and were desirous of light and knowledge,

ye would have no sin: or your sin would not be so aggravated; it would not be imputed to you; it would be pardoned and taken away from you: for the sense cannot be, that their blindness would not have been criminal, or they should have no sin in them, or any done by them; only, that had this been barely their case, there would have been some hope of them, that their sin

might be forgiven, and put away, and be no more; (see <540113>1 Timothy 1:13);

but now ye say we see; they thought themselves to be wise and knowing, and stood in no need of any illumination from him, but were obstinate and hardened in their infidelity, and wilfully opposed and shut their eyes against all the light and evidence of truth:

therefore your sin remaineth; untaken away, yea, immoveable, or unpardonable; the guilt of it abode upon them; nor was there any hope of its being removed from them; owning that they saw, and yet believed not: sinning wilfully against light and knowledge in rejecting Jesus, as the Messiah, they sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is never forgiven. And so the Ethiopic version renders it, “your error shall not be forgiven you”; (see <401232>Matthew 12:32).

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 10

Ver. 1. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] To the Scribes and Pharisees, who had taken it ill that they should be thought to be blind; and who had cast out the man that Christ had cured of blindness, for speaking in favour of him; and who had traduced Christ as an impostor, and a deceiver, and set up themselves to be the shepherds of the flock, and the guides and rulers of the people; all which occasion the following parable; the design of which is to show, that Christ is the true and only shepherd, who was appointed, called, and sent of God, whose the sheep are, whose voice they hear, and know, and whom they follow; and that they, the Scribes and Pharisees, were thieves and robbers, and not shepherds of the flock; who were not sent of God, nor did they come in at the right door, but in another way, and usurped a domination, which did not belong to them.

He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold: the sheepfold, with the Jews, was called ryd; and this, as their writers say[f449], was an enclosure sometimes in the manner of a building, and made of stone, and sometimes was fenced with reeds, and in it was a large door, at which the shepherd went in and out, when he led in, or brought out the sheep. At tithing, which was done in the sheepfold, they made a little door, so that two lambs could not come out together; and to this enclosure is the allusion here; and by the "sheepfold" is meant the church of God; (see <43016>John 10:16); and a good fold it is, (<26344>Ezekiel 34:14). The church may be compared to a sheepfold, because it is separated from the world: it is where the people of God, and sheep of Christ are gathered together; where there is a strict union between them; have society with each other; keep one another warm and comfortable; and where they are fed and nourished, and are preserved; and where they lie down and have rest; and which, like a sheepfold, will be taken down, and not always continue in the form it now is: and by "the door" into it, is meant Christ himself, as appears from (<43007>John 10:7,9); faith in him, a profession of him, and authority from him. Now he that does not come into the church of God, whether as a member of it, or officer in it, at this door,

but climbeth up some other way; by hypocrisy and deceit: or, like the prophets of old, who ran and were not sent; prophesied when they were not spoken to, but took their place and post by usurpation:

the same is a thief and a robber; steals into the church, or into an office in it, and robs God or Christ of their power and authority; and such were the Scribes and Pharisees: the Persic version renders the words, "whoever does not introduce the sheep through the door of the sheepfold, know that that man is a thief and a robber"; which these men were so far from doing, that they would not suffer those that were entering to go in, (<4023>Matthew 23:13). The difference between a thief and a robber, with the Jews, was, that the former took away a man's property privately, and the latter openly [f450].

Ver. 2. *But he that entereth in by the door*, etc.] With a divine commission, and by a divine authority, who comes not of himself, but is sent; does not take the honour to himself, or thrust in himself, and assume an office to himself, but is called unto it, and invested in it, he

is the shepherd of the sheep; by whom Christ means himself, as is evident from (<4301>John 10:11,14), whose the sheep are, and who takes care of them, and feeds them, as a shepherd does his flock; and which holds true of any under shepherd, having his mission and commission, and deriving his authority from Christ.

Ver. 3. *To him the porter openeth*, etc.] There is nothing in the explanation of this parable given by Christ, that directs to the sense of this clause; the allusion cannot be, as some have thought, to great men, who have porters at their gates, to open them, and let in persons that come and knock; since the parable is concerning the sheepfold, and the shepherd, and the sheep that go into it; and therefore must refer to one that at least, at certain times, stood by the door of the sheepfold, and had the care of it, and opened it upon proper occasions: by whom is designed not Michael the Archangel, nor the Virgin Mary, nor Peter, the supposed doorkeeper of heaven, as say the Papists, nor Moses, as others, who wrote of Christ; nor does it seem so well to understand it of the ministers of the Gospel, who preach Jesus Christ, and open the door of faith, or set open the door of the Gospel, whereby Christ comes into the souls of men, and they come to him; though this is a sense not to be despised; but rather this intends God the Father, from whom Christ, as man and Mediator, derives his authority, and by whom he is let into, and invested with his office, as the shepherd of the

sheep; or else the Holy Spirit, who opens the everlasting floors of the hearts of men, of Christ's sheep, and lets him in unto them.

And the sheep hear his voice; not the porter's; though they do hear the voice of Christ's ministers, and of God the Father, and of the Holy Ghost; but the shepherd's, even the voice of Christ; and which is no other than the Gospel, which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy; which proclaims peace, pardon, liberty, life, righteousness, and salvation; and which is a soul quickening, alluring, delighting, refreshing, and comforting voice: this the people of Christ are made to hear, not only externally, but internally; so as to understand it, delight in it, and distinguish it from another: and these are called "sheep", and that before conversion; not because they have the agreeable properties of sheep; nor because predisposed unto, and unprejudiced against the Gospel of Christ, for they are the reverse of these; nor can some things be said of them before, as after conversion, as that they hear the voice of Christ, and follow him; nor merely by anticipation, but by reason of electing grace, and because given to Christ the great shepherd, under this character, to be kept and fed by him. And they are so called after conversion, because they are harmless and inoffensive in their lives and conversations; and yet are exposed to the malice, cruelty, and butchery of men; and are meek and patient under sufferings; and are clean, social, and profitable.

And he calleth his own sheep by name; the Ethiopic version adds, "and loves them". These are Christ's own, by the Father's gift of them to him, by the purchase of his own blood, and by the power of his grace upon them; who looks them up, and finds them out, and brings them home, and takes care of them as his own, and feeds them as a shepherd his flock: these he may be said to "call by name", in allusion to the eastern shepherds, who gave names to their sheep, as the Europeans do to their horses, and other creatures, and who could sit and call them by their names: this is expressive not only of Christ's call of his people by powerful and special grace, but of the exact and distinct knowledge he has of them, and the notice he takes of them, as well as of the affection he has for them; (see <234301>Isaiah 43:1,2 <550219>2 Timothy 2:19).

And leadeth them out; from the world's goats, among whom they lay, and from the folds of sin, and the barren pastures of Mount Sinai, and their own righteousness, on which they were feeding, and out of themselves, and from off all dependence on anything of their own; and he leads unto

himself, and the fulness of his grace, and to his blood and righteousness, and into his Father's presence and communion with him, and in the way of righteousness and truth, and into the green pastures of the word and ordinances, beside the still waters of his sovereign love and grace.

Ver. 4. *And when he putteth forth his own sheep*, etc.] The Ethiopic version reads, "when he leads them all out"; in order to bring them into proper pastures:

he goeth before them; in allusion to the eastern shepherds, who when they put out their flocks, did not, as ours do, drive them before them, and follow after them, at least not always, but went before them: so Christ, the great shepherd, goes before his flock, not only to provide for them, but by way of example to them; in many instances he is an ensample to the flock, as under shepherds, according to the measure of grace received, should be: he has left them an example in many respects, that they should tread in his steps:

and the sheep follow him; in the exercise of the graces of humility, love, patience, self-denial, and resignation of will to the will of God; and in the discharge of duty, walking, in some measure, as he walked.

For they know his voice; in the Gospel, which directs and encourages them to exercise grace in him, and to walk in the path of duty: this they know by the majesty and authority of it; and by the power with which it comes to their souls; and by its speaking of him, and leading to him; and by the evenness, harmony, and consistency of it. The Persic version renders the whole thus; "when he calls and leads out the sheep, they go before him, and their lambs after them, for they know his voice".

Ver. 5. *And a stranger will they not follow*, etc.] One that knows not Christ, is not sent by him, and who does not preach him:

but will flee from him; shun him and his ministry, as not only disagreeable, but dangerous:

for they know not the voice of strangers: they do not approve of their doctrine, nor take any delight in it, or receive any profit from it. The Persic version, as before, reads, "neither will the lambs ever go after strange sheep, and if they see [them], they will flee [from them]".

Ver. 6. *This parable spake Jesus unto them*, etc.] To the Pharisees, who were with him, (⁴⁰John 9:40);

but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them; the things spoken by him being delivered in a parabolical way, though in lively figures, and in terms plain and easy to be understood; yet what through the blindness of their minds, and the hardness of their hearts, and their prejudices in favour of themselves, and against Christ, they did not understand what were meant by them; (see ⁴⁰Matthew 13:13-15).

Ver. 7. *Then said Jesus unto them again*, etc.] By way of explanation of the above parable, since they did not understand it:

verily, verily, I say unto you; this is certainly truth, and what may be depended on as such, whether it will be believed or not:

I am the door of the sheep; and of none but them; not of goats, dogs, or swine; none but sheep enter at this door; and all the sheep do sooner or later: Christ is the door to them, by which they enter into a visible church state, and are let into a participation of the ordinances of it, as baptism and the Lord's supper: no man comes into a church, at the right door, or in a right way, or has a right to partake of Gospel ordinances, but he that truly believes in Christ, and makes a profession of faith in him: Christ is the door of the under shepherds of the sheep; none are fit to be pastors of churches, but who first enter into a Gospel church at this door, and are qualified, and called, and sent forth by Christ: he is the door of the sheep, by which they are let into the presence of his Father, and have communion with him, and partake of all the blessings of grace; it is through him that sanctifying, justifying, pardoning, and adopting grace, are conveyed unto them, and they brought into the enjoyment of them; it is through him they have all their peace, joy, and comfort, and deliverance from, and victory over all their enemies; through him they have heirship, and a right unto eternal life, and that itself; for he is the door into heaven itself, through which they shall have an abundant entrance into it: and he is the only door into each of these; there is no coming to God the Father but by, and through him; nor to a participation of the blessings of the covenant, nor rightly into a Gospel church state, and to the ordinances of it, nor into heaven at last, but in at this door: and this is a door of faith and hope, and an open one, for all sensible sinners, for all the sheep of Christ, to enter in at; though it is a strait gate, the number being few that enter in at it; and those that do,

though they are certainly, yet but scarcely saved; for it is through many tribulations and afflictions that they enter.

Ver. 8. *All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers*, etc.] This must be understood with some restrictions, not of every individual person, nor of every individual prophet or shepherd; not of Moses, nor of the prophets of the Lord, nor of John the Baptist, who came immediately before Christ, was his harbinger, and prepared his way; but of those prophets who came, and were not sent of God, and so did not come in by the door; of the shepherds of Israel, who fed themselves, and not the flock, but lorded it over God's heritage; and of such, as Theudas, and Judas the Galilean, who boasted that they were some great persons, but were only thieves and robbers; and particularly of the three shepherds cut off in one month, (<38108>Zechariah 11:8), supposed to be the three sects among the Jews, and the leaders of them, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, especially the former; who were wolves in sheep's clothing, usurped a power that did not belong to them, robbed God of his authority, and glory; and, in a literal sense, plundered men of their substance, and devoured widows' houses, as well as destroyed their souls. The phrase, "before me", is wanting in seven of Beza's exemplars, and in several others; and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions:

but the sheep did not hear them; the elect of God, some of which there were in all ages, though their number is comparatively few, did not attend to the false prophets, and false teachers, and idol shepherds; did not receive their doctrines, nor follow their practices; for it is not possible that these should be finally and totally deceived, or carried away with the error of the wicked.

Ver. 9. *I am the door*, etc.] Of the sheep, as before, (see <43007>John 10:7). The Ethiopic version reads, "I am the true door of the sheep"; which is repeated for further confirmation, and for the sake of introducing what follows:

by me if any man enter in; into the sheepfold, the church,

he shall be saved; not that being in a church, and having submitted to ordinances, will save any, but entering into these, at the right door, or through faith in Christ, such will be saved, according to (<41616>Mark 16:16); such shall be saved from sin, the dominion of it, the guilt and condemning power of it, and at last from the being of it; and from the law, its curse and

condemnation, and from wrath to come, and from every evil, and every enemy; such are, and for ever shall be, in a safe state, being in Christ, and in his hands, out of which none can pluck them:

and shall go in and out; in allusion to the sheep going in and out of the fold: not that those who come in at the right door, shall go out of the church, or from among the saints again; but this phrase rather denotes the exercises of faith in going unto Christ, and acting upon him, and in coming forth in the outward confession of him, and the performance of good works; or in going unto him, and dealing with his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and coming out of themselves, and all dependence on their own righteousness; or it may regard the conversation of the saints in the church, their attendance on ordinances, their safety there, their free and open communion one with another, and with Christ, in whose name and strength they do all they do, coming in and out at this door:

and find pasture; green and good pasture; pasture for their souls; the words of faith, and good doctrine; the wholesome words of Christ Jesus; the ordinances, the breasts of consolation; yea, Christ himself, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed: the Persic version renders it, “and shall a pastor”, or “shepherd”; (see <4015>Jeremiah 3:15).

Ver. 10. *The thief cometh not but for to steal*, etc.] That is his first and principal view; to steal, is to invade, seize, and carry away another’s property. Such teachers that come not in by the right door, or with a divine commission, seek to deceive, and carry away the sheep of Christ from him, though they are not able to do it; and to steal away their hearts from him, as Absalom stole the hearts of the people from their rightful lord and sovereign, David his father; and to subject them to themselves, that they might lord it over them, and make a property of them, as the Pharisees did, who, under a pretence of long prayers, devoured widows’ houses.

And to kill and to destroy; either the souls of men by their false doctrines, which eat as doth a cancer, and poison the minds of men, and slay the souls that should not die, subverting the faith of nominal professors, though they cannot destroy any of the true sheep of Christ; or the bodies of the saints, by their oppression, tyranny, and persecution, who are killed all the day long for the sake of Christ, and are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, by these men, they thinking that by so doing they do God good service.

I am come that they might have life; that the sheep might have life, or the elect of God might have life, both spiritual and eternal; who, as the rest of mankind, are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, and liable in themselves to an eternal death: Christ came into this world in human nature, to give his flesh, his body, his whole human nature, soul and body, for the life of these persons, or that they might live spiritually here, and eternally hereafter; and so the Arabic version renders it, "that they might have eternal life"; Nonnus calls it, "a life to come"; which is in Christ, and the gift of God through him; and which he gives to all his sheep, and has a power to give to as many as the Father has given him:

and that they might have [it] more abundantly; or, as the Syriac version reads, "something more abundant"; that is, than life; meaning not merely than the life of wicked men, whose blessings are curses to them; or than their own life, only in the present state of things; or than long life promised under the law to the observers of it; but even than the life Adam had in innocence, which was but a natural and moral, not a spiritual life, or that life which is hid with Christ in God; and also than that which angels live in heaven, which is the life of servants, and not of sons: or else the sense is, that Christ came that his people might have eternal life, with more abundant evidence of it than was under the former dispensation, and have stronger faith in it, and a more lively hope of it: or, as the words may be rendered, "and that they might have an abundance": besides life, might have an abundance of grace from Christ, all spiritual blessings in him now, and all fulness of joy, glory, and happiness hereafter.

Ver. 11. *I am the good shepherd*, etc.] A shepherd of his Father's appointing, calling, and sending, to whom the care of all his sheep, or chosen ones, was committed; who was set up as a shepherd over them by him, and was entrusted with them; and who being called, undertook to feed them; and being promised, was sent unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and under the character of a shepherd, died for them, and rose again, and is accountable to his Father for everyone of them; the shepherd, the great and chief shepherd, the famous one, so often spoken and prophesied of, (<01494>Genesis 49:24 <23011>Isaiah 40:11) (<26323>Ezekiel 34:23). And discharging his office aright, he is the good shepherd; as appears in his providing good pasture, and a good fold for his sheep; in protecting them from their enemies; in healing all their diseases; in restoring their souls when strayed from him; in watching over them in the night seasons, lest any hurt them; in searching for them, when they have been driven, or

scattered in the dark and cloudy day; in caring for them, so that he lose none of them; and in nothing more than in what follows,

the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep: not only exposes it to danger, as David did his, for the sake of his father's flock, but gives it away freely and voluntarily, for the sake of the sheep; in their room and stead, as a ransom for them, that they may be delivered from death, and might have eternal life: the Ethiopic version renders it, "the good shepherd gives his life for the redemption of his sheep"; so Nonnus paraphrases it, the "ransom price of his own sheep": this belongs to Christ's priestly office, and with the Jews priests were sometimes shepherds hence we read [f451] of µynhk µy[wr, "shepherds that were priests". Philo the Jew speaks [f452] of God as a shepherd and king; and of his setting his word, his firstborn Son, over the holy flock, to take care of it: and a good shepherd is thus described by the [f453] Jews;

> "as bwj h[wr, "a good shepherd", delivers the flock from the wolf, and from the lions, ((see <431012>John 10:12)) so he that leads Israel, if he is good, delivers them from the idolatrous nations, and from judgment below and above, and leads them to the life of the world to come, or eternal life; ((see <431010>John 10:10))."

Which description agrees with Christ, the good shepherd; and so the Lord is said to be bwj h[wr, "the good shepherd", and merciful, and there is none like him [f454].

Ver. 12. *But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd*, etc.] That is, who is not the owner of the sheep, though he keeps them, yet only for reward: by whom are meant, not the faithful ministers of the word, who live upon the Gospel, as Christ has ordained, and who are worthy of their reward, and are not to be called hirelings by way of reproach; since they teach not for hire and reward, but for the good of souls, and the interest of the Redeemer; but such who seek only their gain, from their quarter, and mind their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ:

whose own the sheep are not; who have neither a propriety in them, nor an hearty affection for them, and so care not what becomes of them: such an one "seeth the wolf coming"; by whom may be meant, either Satan; so the Jews compare Israel to a flock of sheep, and Satan, they say, bazh awh, "he is the wolf" [f455]; or any false prophet, or teacher, who are ravenous

wolves; though sometimes in sheep's clothing; or any tyrant, oppressor, or persecutor of the saints:

and leaveth the sheep; as the idol shepherd, against whom a woe is pronounced, (<38:11:17>Zechariah 11:17).

And fleeth; not being willing to bear any reproach or persecution, for the sake of Christ; not such a keeper of the flock as David, who went after the lion and the bear, and when they rose up against him, did not flee, but caught them by the beard and slew them; nor like the Apostle Paul, who fought with beasts at Ephesus, and would turn his back on none, nor give place, no, not for an hour, that truth might continue;

and the wolf catcheth them; some of them:

and scattereth the sheep; the rest; so are the sheep of Christ and his churches sometimes scattered, by persecution raised against them; (see <44:8:1>Acts 8:1,4). The Jews have a rule concerning such an hireling shepherd [f456], which is this;

> "a shepherd that feeds his flock, and leaves it, and goes to the city, and a wolf comes and ravines, and the lion comes and tears in pieces, he is free; but if he leaves by it his staff and his scrip, he is guilty."

Which Maimonides thus [f457] expresses and explains;

> "a shepherd who can deliver that which is torn, and that which is carried captive, with other shepherds, and with staves, and does not call the other shepherds, nor bring the staves to deliver them, he is guilty: one that keeps freely, and one that keeps for hire; he that keeps freely, calls the shepherds, and brings the staves freely; and if he does not find them, he is not guilty; but he that keeps for hire, is obliged to hire shepherds and staves, in order to deliver them."

Ver. 13. *The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling*, etc.] And has no propriety in the sheep; had he, he would abide by them, and defend them; but because he has not, he will not expose himself to any danger, but leaves them:

and careth not for the sheep; what becomes of them, providing only for his own safety. Abarbinel [f458] has a note on (<23:40:11>Isaiah 40:11) which may serve to illustrate this passage:

> ““he shall feed his flock like a shepherd”; not as he that feeds the flock of others, for the hire they give him, but as a shepherd that feeds his own flock; who has compassion more abundantly on it, because it is his own flock; and therefore he saith, “behold his reward is with him”, for he does not seek a reward from another; “and his work is before him”; for he feeds what is his own, and therefore his eyes and his heart are there.”

Which is not the case of the hireling; he does not care for them, he has not their good at heart; but the good shepherd has, such an one as Christ is.

Ver. 14. *I am the good shepherd*, etc.] (See Gill on “John 10:11”).

And know my [sheep]; so as to call them all by their names: Christ has an universal, special, distinct, and exact knowledge of all his sheep, as they are the choice of his Father, as his Father’s gift to him; and as his own purchase; he bears an affectionate love to them, and takes special care of them; indulges them with intimate communion with himself; and owns and acknowledges them as his, both here and hereafter:

and I am known of mine; not in a general way, as devils and external professors may know him, but with a special, spiritual, and saving knowledge: Christ’s own approve of him, as their shepherd and their Saviour, and desire no other; they love him above all, in the sincerity of their souls, and with a love as strong as death; they trust in him as their shepherd, believing they shall not want; and appropriate him to themselves, as their own; and care for him, his cause and interest, his Gospel, ordinances, and ministers; and are not ashamed to own him as theirs, in the most public manner.

Ver. 15. *As the Father knoweth me*, etc.] These words, with what follow, are in connection with (John 10:14); and the sense is, that the mutual knowledge of Christ, and his sheep, is like that which his Father and he have of each other. The Father knows Christ as his own Son, and loves him as such, in the most strong and affectionate manner; and has entrusted him with the persons, grace, and glory, of all his people:

even so know I the Father; or rather, “and I know the Father”; as he needs must, since he lay in his bosom, and still does, and knows his nature, perfections, purposes, and his whole mind and will; and loves him most ardently, which he has shown by his coming down from heaven, to do his

will; and trusts in him for the accomplishment of everything he promised unto him:

and I lay down my life for the sheep; which proves him to be the good shepherd, (⁴³⁰¹¹John 10:11). The Vulgate Latin version reads, “for my sheep”; which were his, by the Father’s gift, and for no other has he laid down his life. The Ethiopic version, as before, renders it, or rather explains it, “I lay down my life for the redemption of my sheep”.

Ver. 16. *And other sheep I have*, etc.] Not distinct from those for whom he laid down his life, but from those who were under the Old Testament dispensation, and who heard not the thieves and robbers that were before Christ, (⁴³⁰⁰⁸John 10:8); others besides the lost sheep of the house of Israel, or the elect among the Jews, to whom Christ was sent; and by whom are meant the chosen of God among the Gentiles, who were sheep, though not called and folded, for the reasons given: (see Gill on “⁴³⁰⁰³John 10:3”). These, though uncalled, belonged to Christ; he had an interest in them, they were given him by his Father; he had them in his hands, and upon his heart; his eye was upon them, and they were under his notice, inspection, and care:

which are not of this fold, of the Jewish nation and church, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise; were as sheep going astray, and were scattered about in the several parts of the world; and were to be redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation:

them also I must bring; out of the wilderness of the world, from among the men of it, their former sinful compassions, from the folds of sin and Satan, and the pastures of their own righteousness; to himself, and into his Father’s presence, to his house and ordinances, to a good fold and green pastures, and at last to his heavenly kingdom and glory: and there was a necessity of doing all this, partly on account of his Father’s will and pleasure, his purposes and decrees, who had resolved upon it; and partly on account of his own engagements, who had obliged himself to do it; as well as because of the case and condition of these sheep, who otherwise must have eternally perished:

and they shall hear my voice; in the Gospel, not only externally, but internally; which is owing to his powerful and efficacious grace, who quickens them, and causes them to hear and live; unstops their deaf ears,

and gives them ears to hear; and opens their hearts, to attend to his word, and gives them an understanding of it. The Arabic version reads this in connection with the preceding clause, thus, “and I must bring them also to hear my voice”; as well as the rest of the sheep among the Jews, and therefore the Gospel was sent among them:

and there shall be one fold, [and] one shepherd; one church state, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles; the middle wall of partition being broke down, these two coalesce in one, become one new man, and members of one and the same body; for though there may be several visible Gospel churches, yet there is but one kind of church state, and one general assembly and church of the firstborn, one family to which they all belong; for what reasons a church is comparable to a fold, (see Gill on “<4801>John 10:1”). And over this fold, or flock, there is but one shepherd, Jesus Christ; who is the rightful proprietor, and whose own the sheep are; and who knows how to feed them, and does take care of them; though there are many under shepherds, whom he employs in feeding them; in the original text the copulative “and” is wanting, and the words stand thus, “one fold, one shepherd”; which not only expresses a peculiar elegance, but answers the proverb delivered in the same form; and to which agree the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, which render them, “and there”, or “they shall be one fold of one shepherd”; or one flock which belongs to one shepherd only; (see <2342>Ezekiel 34:23 37:24).

Ver. 17. *Therefore doth my Father love me*, etc.] Christ was the object of his Father’s love from all eternity, and was loved by him on various accounts; first and chiefly, as his own Son, of the same nature with him, equal to him; and also as Mediator, engaging for, and on the behalf of his chosen people; and likewise as he was clothed with their nature, and even in his state of humiliation; and not only as subject to his ordinances, and obedient to his will, and doing what was pleasing in his sight, but likewise as suffering in their room and stead, and he loved him on this account; the bruising of him was a pleasure to him, not for the sake of that itself, but because hereby his counsels and decrees were accomplished, his covenant fulfilled, and the salvation of his people obtained: hence it follows here,

because I lay down my life; that is, for the sheep; to ransom them from sin and Satan, the law, its curse and condemnation, and from death and hell, wrath, ruin and destruction: and the laying down his life on this account,

was not only well pleasing to his Father, but likewise was done, with the following view; or at least this was the event of it,

that I might take it again; as he did, by raising himself from the dead, by which he was declared to be the Son of God; and to have made full satisfaction to divine justice, for the sins of his people, and therefore rose again for their, justification; and to be the victorious conqueror over death, having now abolished it, and having in his hands the keys of it, the power over that, and the grave: and which life he took up again, by his divine power, and as the surety of his people, to use it for their good; by ascending to his God and theirs, entering into heaven as their forerunner, appearing in the presence of God for them, as their advocate, and ever living to make intercession for them.

Ver. 18. *No man taketh it from me*, etc.] It was indeed taken away at the instigation of the Jews, and by the order of Pilate, and by means of the Roman soldiers, who crucified him; and the former of these are often charged with slaying him, and killing him, the Prince of life; and it is expressly said, "his life is taken from the earth", (Acts 8:33); and yet no man could, nor did take it away, without his Father's will, and determinate counsel and knowledge, by which he was delivered up into the hands of the above persons, and by which they did to him what they did, or otherwise they could have had no power over him; nor could any man, nor did any man, take away his life from him, without his own consent; he voluntarily surrendered himself, or he could never have been taken; he went freely to the cross, or he could never have been led there; he suffered himself to be nailed to the accursed tree, and when he hung on it, he could easily have disengaged himself, and come down; and when they had him there, they could not have taken away his life, had he not of himself given up the ghost, and breathed out his life and soul:

but I lay it down of myself; of my own will, or of my own accord, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it; which was done with the greatest patience and meekness, resolution, courage and magnanimity; and with a full will, and with the greatest cheerfulness and alacrity; and that as a ransom for his people, and that they might live through him:

I have power to lay it down; this was not his life as God, but as man; and was so his own, as it was not his Father's, and was entirely at his own dispose; for it was the life of that individual human nature, which was united to his divine person; and so in a sense his, as it was not either the

Father's or the Spirit's; and was so his own, as ours are not, which are from God, and dependent on him, and entirely to be disposed of by him, and not by ourselves: but Christ, the Prince of life, had a power of laying down his life of his own accord, as a ransom price for his sheep:

and I have power to take it again; as he was the Son of God, and truly God, and as the surety of his people; having satisfied law and justice, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and for the ends mentioned in note, (see Gill on "<4810>John 10:17"):

this commandment have I received of my Father; which may respect both branches of his power, but is not the foundation of it, but the reason of is exercising it; because it was so agreeable to his Father's will, which is the same with his own, as he is the Son of God, and one with his Father, and equal to him; and what he delights in as Mediator, in which capacity he is considered as a servant; and in which he cheerfully became obedient, even unto death, to his Father's command, or in compliance with his will: the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, "because this commandment have I received of my Father": this is a reason why he so readily exerted his power, both in laying down his life, and taking it again, because it was his Father's command and will, and which he received from him, with the utmost pleasure; his and his Father's love, good will, gracious ends and views towards the elect, herein being the same.

Ver. 19. *There was a division therefore again among the Jews*, etc.] As there had been before; (see <4012>John 7:12 9:16).

For these sayings; concerning his being the good shepherd, and laying down his life for the sheep, and having both a power to lay it down, and take it up again.

Ver. 20. *And many of them said, he hath a devil, and is mad*, etc.] It was a notion of the Jews, that madness or distraction was from the devil, and therefore these two are here joined together, having a devil, and being mad: there is a spirit which they call Tazazith, and which, they say [f459], is an evil spirit that takes away the understanding of men; and under the influence of such a "demon", the Jews thought Christ to be: and therefore say,

why hear ye him? he is a lunatic, he is distracted, he is a madman; how can you bear to hear such ranting blasphemous stuff, which no man in his, senses would ever utter? nor is anything he says to be regarded, since he is

not in his right mind; but is under the power and influence of some evil spirit, which instills these wild and frantic notions into him, and puts him upon venting them; but surely no sober man will ever heed to them.

Ver. 21. *Others said, these are not the words of him that hath a devil*, etc.] No madman or demoniac, one possessed of a devil, and under the influence of Satan, would ever talk in so divine a manner, and speak such words of truth and soberness: these were, some of the wiser sort, and were well disposed to Christ, who reasoned thus, and they were but few: whereas those that charged him with madness and distraction were many, as in the preceding verse;

can a devil open the eyes of the blind? referring to the late instance, of Christ's curing a man that was blind from his birth; if it was in the power of a devil to do such an action, which it is not, yet it is not in his nature, it is not usual with him to do any good; but to do all the hurt he can, both to the bodies and souls of men: in one of Beza's copies it is read, "can one that has a devil open the eyes of the blind?" so the Persic version, can a "demoniac", etc.? which reading suits best with what is before said; and then the sense is, can a madman, one that is a lunatic, one possessed with the devil, either talk in the manner this man does, or do such wonderful actions as he has done, particularly cure a man that was born blind?

Ver. 22. *And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication*, etc.] That is, of the temple; not as built by Solomon, as Nonnus in his paraphrase suggests; or as rebuilt by Zerubabel, for there were no annual feasts appointed in commemoration of either of these; and besides, they were neither of them in the winter time; the dedication of Solomon's temple was in autumn, at the feast of tabernacles, about September, (<1 Kings 8:2,65,66); and the dedication of the house in Zorobabel's time, was in the spring, about February, (<Ezra 6:15,16); but this was the feast of dedication, appointed by Judas Maccabaeus and his brethren, on account of the purging the temple, and renewing the altar, after the profanation of them by Antiochus; which feast lasted eight days, and began on the twenty fifth of the month Cisleu, which answers to part of our December; see the Apocrypha:

> "52 Now on the five and twentieth day of the ninth month, which is called the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and eighth year, they rose up betimes in the morning, 56 And so they kept the dedication of the altar eight days and offered burnt offerings with gladness,

> and sacrificed the sacrifice of deliverance and praise. 59 Moreover Judas and his brethren with the whole congregation of Israel ordained, that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their season from year to year by the space of eight days, from the five and twentieth day of the month Casleu, with mirth and gladness." (1 Maccabees 4)

> "5 Now upon the same day that the strangers profaned the temple, on the very same day it was cleansed again, even the five and twentieth day of the same month, which is Casleu. 8 They ordained also by a common statute and decree, That every year those days should be kept of the whole nation of the Jews." (2 Maccabees 10:8)

with which the Jewish writers agree [f460]: the account Maimonides gives [f461] of it is this;

> "when the Israelites prevailed over their enemies and destroyed them, it was on the twenty fifth of the month Chisleu; and they went into the temple and could not find any pure oil in the sanctuary, but one vial; and it was not enough to light but one day only, and they lighted lamps of it for eight days, until the olives were squeezed, and they brought forth pure oil: wherefore the wise men of that generation ordered, that those eight days beginning at the twenty fifth of Chisleu, should be days of rejoicing and praise, and they lighted lamps at the doors of their houses; every night of these eight nights, to show and make known the miracle; and these days are called hkwnj "the dedication"; and they are forbidden mourning and fasting, as the days of "purim"; and the lighting of the lamps on them, is a commandment from the Scribes, as is the reading of the book of Esther. How many lamps do they light at the feast of the dedication? the order is, that every house should light one lamp, whether the men of the house be many, or whether there is but one man in it; but he that honours the command, lights up lamps according to the number of the men of the house, a lamp for everyone, whether men or women; and he that honours it more, lights up a lamp for every man the first night, and adds as he goes, every night a lamp; for instance, if there be ten men in the house, the first night he lights up ten lamps, and on the second night

> twenty, and on the third night thirty; until he comes to the eighth night, when he lights up fourscore lamps."

Wherefore, as Josephus says [f462], this feast was called φωτα, "lights"; though he seems to assign another reason of its name, because that prosperity and happiness appeared to them beyond hope, and unexpected: and though this was only an order of Judas and his brethren, and the congregation of Israel, yet the Jews observe it as religiously, as if it was the appointment of God himself, and they do not spare to call it so; for in the service of this feast, they have these words [f463];

> "blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who hath sanctified us by his commandments, and hath "commanded" us to light the lamp of the dedication; blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who did wonders for our fathers on those days, at this time; blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who has kept us alive, and preserved us, and brought us to this time; these lamps we light, because of the wonders and marvellous things, and salvations, and wars, thou hast wrought for our fathers on those days at this time, by the hand of thine holy priests. — These lamps are holy, we have no power to use them, but only to behold them, so as to confess and praise thy great name, for thy miracles, and for thy wonders, and for thy salvations."

And though this feast is said to be at Jerusalem, yet it was not confined there, as were the other feasts of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles, for this might be kept in any part of the land: mention is made of the feast of dedication at Lydda [f464], and in other countries; Maimonides [f465] says

> "it is a common custom in all our cities in Spain, that all the men of the house light up a lamp the first night, and add as they go along, a lamp every night, till he lights up on the eighth night eight lamps, whether the men of the house be many, or there be but one man."

Some have been of opinion, that this feast of dedication was on the account of the victory Judith gained over Holophernes, by cutting off his head; or however, that the commemoration of that victory was a part of this festival: in the Vulgate Latin edition of Judith 16:31 it is said,

> "the day of the festivity of this victory is received by the Hebrews into the number of holy days; and is kept by the Jews from that time, to the present day."

And Sigonius [f466] asserts, that it is celebrated by the Jews on the twenty fifth day of the month Chisleu; which is the same day the feast began, that was instituted by Judas Maccabaeus, on the above account; and certain it is, that the Jews do make mention of that fact of hers, in the service for the first sabbath of this feast [f467]; and some of their writers would have this fact to be in the times of the Maccabees, though as one of their chronologers [f468] observes, it appears from the history of Judith, to have been in the times of Nebuchadnezzar; and there are some that say it was in the times of Cambyses, son of Cyrus, king of Persia, and was two or three hundred years before the miracle of the dedication: but he serves, that the wise men of that age agreed to comprehend the memorial of that wonderful event, with the miracle of the dedication: and so R. Leo Modena [f469] says,

> "they have a tradition, that in ordaining this feast to be kept, they had an eve also upon that famous exploit performed by Judith upon Holophernes; although many are of opinion, that this happened not at this time of the year; and that they make a commemoration of that piece of gallantry of hers now, because she was of the stock of the Maccabees."

But that cannot be, since she must be some hundreds of years before them; wherefore others make mention of another Judith, a daughter of one of the Maccabees, who performed a like exploit upon Nicanor, a general of Demetrius's army: to which R. Gedaliah has respect, when he says [f470],

> "the wise men agreed to comprehend together in the joy of the feast of dedication, the affair of Judith, seeing there was another Judith, from her that killed Holophernes, a daughter of the Maccabees."

But it is not clear that there was any such woman, nor that Nicanor was slain by one; and besides, he was killed on the thirteenth of Adar, and that day was ordained to be kept yearly on that account, in the Apocrypha:

> "43 So the thirteenth day of the month Adar the hosts joined battle: but Nicanor's host was discomfited, and he himself was first slain in the battle. 49 Moreover they ordained to keep yearly this day, being the thirteenth of Adar." (1 Maccabees 7)

> "And they ordained all with a common decree in no case to let that day pass without solemnity, but to celebrate the thirtieth day of the twelfth month, which in the Syrian tongue is called Adar, the day before Mardocheus' day." (2 Maccabees 15:36)

and the month of Adar answers to part of February.

And it was winter; for the month Chisleu answers to our November and December; so that the twenty fifth of that month might be about the tenth of December, and the Jews reckon part of that month winter, and it must be the part in which this feast was; they say [f471],

> “half Chisleu, Tebeth, and half Shebet, are Prwj, “winter”:”

so that the evangelist might with propriety say, according to the sense of the Jewish nation, that it was winter; though it was but just entered, even not more than ten days: the reason why this is observed, may be for what follows.

Ver. 23. *And Jesus walked in the temple*, etc.] To keep himself warm, and to secure him the better from the inclemency of the weather:

in Solomon’s porch; which was covered over, and the outside of it was enclosed with a wall, which made it very convenient for such a purpose: this was on the outside of the temple eastward, and was a very magnificent structure: the account Josephus [f472] gives of it is this;

> “there was a porch without the temple, overlooking a deep valley, supported by walls of four hundred cubits, made of four square stone, very white; the length of each stone was twenty cubits, and the breadth six; the work of king Solomon, who first founded the whole temple.”

Now, though this was not the porch that was built by Solomon, yet as it was built on the same spot, and in imitation of it, it bore his name; mention is made of it in (<441011>Acts 3:11 5:12).

Ver. 24. *Then came the Jews round about him*, etc.] Who might be walking there on the same account, and seeing Jesus, took this opportunity, and got about him in great numbers, and hemmed him in; having a design upon him to ensnare him, if possible:

and said unto him, how long dost thou make us doubt? or as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions literally render it, “how long dost thou take away our soul?” that is, deprive us of the knowledge of thee; Nonnus renders it, “wherefore dost thou steal away our minds with words?” so Jacob when he went away privately, without the knowledge of Laban, is said to steal away the heart of Laban, as it is in the Hebrew text,

in (<013120>Genesis 31:20,26)[f473]. In like manner the Jews charge Christ with taking away their soul, or stealing away their heart, or hiding himself from them; not telling them plainly, who he was: therefore say they,

if thou be the Christ, tell us plainly; freely, boldly, openly, in express words; this they said, not as desirous of knowing who he was, or for the sake of information, but in order to ensnare him; that should he say he was not the Christ, as they might hope he would, for fear of them, now they had got him by himself, hemmed him in, it would then lessen his credit among the people; and should he say he was the Messiah, they would have whereof to accuse him to the Roman governor, as an enemy to Caesar, as one that set up for king of the Jews.

Ver. 25. *Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not*, etc.] He had often said, what amounted to it, in his ministry and doctrine; as that God was his Father, and he was the light of the world, and the good shepherd, and the like; but they gave no heed nor credit to his words, even though he told them, that unless they believed he was such a person, they should die in their sins:

the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me; such as healing the sick, dispossessing devils, cleansing lepers, giving sight to the blind, causing the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk, and raising the dead to life; suggesting, that besides his words, his doctrine and ministry, they had his miracles before them, which plainly showed who he was; so that they need not have been in any doubt of mind, or suspense about him; nor had they any reason to complain of his hiding himself from them, or depriving them of the knowledge of him.

Ver. 26. *But ye believe not*, etc.] In me, as the Messiah:

because ye are not of my sheep; they were not among the sheep given him by his Father, were they, they would have come to him; that is, have believed in him, according to (<430637>John 6:37), they were not the chosen of God, predestinated unto eternal life; for as many as are ordained of God to eternal happiness, do believe in God's own time, (<441348>Acts 13:48); but these not being the elect of God, had not the faith of God's elect. Christ, as the omniscient God, knew this, that they were not the chosen of God; for he was present, when the names of God's elect were written in the book of life; had they been his sheep, he must have known them, for he knows all the sheep, and calls them by name; had they been given him by the Father,

he must have known it, and would have owned them as such; but so it was not, and therefore they were left to hardness and unbelief:

as I said unto you: which seems to refer to what follows, since he had said before, that the sheep bear the voice of the shepherd, and follow him, and that he knows them, (<43104>John 10:4,14). This clause is omitted in the Vulgate Latin version, and in Nonnus, but is in the Greek copies, and Oriental versions.

Ver. 27. *My sheep hear my voice*, etc.] The voice of Christ in his Gospel, both externally and internally; (see Gill on "<43104>John 10:4"), (see Gill on "<43016>John 10:16"); and since therefore these Jews did not, it was a plain case they were not of his sheep:

and I know them; (see Gill on "<43014>John 10:14"); but Christ knew not these as the elect of God, or as the Father's gift to him, and therefore they could not be his sheep:

and they follow me; both in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty, and whithersoever he the good shepherd leads them; (see Gill on "<43003>John 10:3"), (see Gill on "<43104>John 10:4"). But now, whereas these Jews did not follow Christ, but turned their backs on him, and rejected him, it was notorious that they were none of his sheep; but both happy and safe are those persons, that are the sheep of Christ, as appears from what is next said of them.

Ver. 28. *And I give unto them eternal life*, etc.] Christ gives eternal life to his sheep, or people now; he gives them a spiritual life, or a life of grace, which issues in eternal life; he gives them himself, who is the true God and eternal life, and whoever has him has life; he gives them the knowledge of himself, which is life eternal; and he gives them his righteousness, which is their justification of life, or what entitles them to eternal life; and he gives them the foretastes of it, in faith and hope, in the enjoyment of himself, and the discoveries of his love; he gives them the earnest and pledge of it, his own Spirit; and they have this life in him as their representative, and it is hid with him in God, and is safe and secure for them; and he will actually give it to them in their own persons, to be for ever enjoyed by them; and because of the certainty of it, he is said to do it now: this is a pure gift, it is of grace, and not of works; and it is in the gift of Christ as Mediator, who has power to give it to as many as the Father has given him:

and they shall never perish; though they were lost in Adam, and in a perishing condition in themselves, during their state of unregeneracy; in which condition they see themselves to be, when convinced by the Spirit of God; and come as persons ready to perish to Christ, as a Saviour, resolving, that if they perish, they will perish at his feet: and though after conversion, they are subject to many falls and spiritual declensions, and lose their peace, joy, and comfort, and imagine their strength and hope are perished, or at least fear they shall one day perish through one sin, or snare, or temptation or another, yet they shall never perish in such sense as the wicked will; they will not be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power:

neither shall any pluck them out of my hand; Christ's sheep are in his hands, being put there by God the Father, both as an instance of his love to Christ, and them; and this was done from all eternity, even when they were chosen in him; so that they were in the hands of Christ, before they were in the loins of Adam; and were preserved in him, notwithstanding Adam's fall, and through the ruins of it. To be in the hands of Christ, is to be high in his esteem and favour; the saints are a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of their God; they are a signet on his right hand that shall never be plucked off; they are engraven on the palms of his hands: to be in the hands of Christ, is to be in his possession, and at his dispose, as all the elect of God are; and to be under his guidance, care, and protection, as they be; they are fed according to the integrity of his heart, and guided by the skilfulness of his hands; they are always under his care and watchful eye, who protects them from all their enemies, and hides them in the hollow of his hand: hence, because they are so, they are called "the sheep of his hand", (¹⁹Psalm 95:7). And none shall ever pluck them from thence; no man can do it, not any false teacher can remove them from Christ, by all the art and cunning he is master of; nor any violent persecutor, by all the force and power he can use; nor can any sin, or snare, or temptation, draw them out of Christ's hands; nor any adversity whatever separate them from him: they must be safe, and always abide there, who are in the hands of Christ; for his hands have laid the foundations of the heavens and the earth, they grasp the whole universe, and hold all things together; and who then can pluck any out of these hands? Moreover, Christ, as Mediator, has all power in heaven and earth; and even as man, he is the man of God's right hand, made strong for himself.

Ver. 29. *My Father which gave [them] me*, etc.] So the sheep came to be Christ's, and to be in his hand; the Father gave them to him, put them into his hands, and made them his care and charge:

is greater than all; than all gods, than all beings, than all creatures, angels and men, and than all the enemies of his people; this must be allowed: the Vulgate Latin version, and so some of the ancients read, "what my Father gave to me, is greater than all"; meaning, that the church given to him, and built on him, is stronger than all its enemies:

and none is able to pluck [them] out of my Father's hand; so that these sheep have a double security; they are in the hands of Christ, and they are in the hands of the Father of Christ; wherefore could it be thought, which ought not to be, that they could be plucked out of Christ's hands, yet it can never be imagined, that any can pluck them out of the hands of God the Father; and there is no more reason to think that they can be plucked out of the hands of the one, than there is that they can be plucked out of the hands of the other, as is clear from what follows in (<43010>John 10:30); see the Apocrypha: ``But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them." (Wisdom 3:1)

Ver. 30. *I and [my] Father are one*.] Not in person, for the Father must be a distinct person from the Son, and the Son a distinct person from the Father; and which is further manifest, from the use of the verb plural, "I and [my] Father", εσμεν, "we are one"; that is, in nature and essence, and perfections, particularly in power; since Christ is speaking of the impossibility of plucking any of the sheep, out of his own and his Father's hands; giving this as a reason for it, their unity of nature, and equality of power; so that it must be as impracticable to pluck them out of his hands, as out of his Father's, because he is equal with God the Father, and the one God with him. The Jew [f474] objects, that

> "if the sense of this expression is, that the Father and the Son are one, as the Nazarenes understand and believe it, it will be found that Jesus himself destroys this saying, as it is written in (<41132>Mark 13:32), for saith Jesus, "that day and that hour, there is knoweth, not the angels, nor the Son, but the Father only"; lo, these words show, that the Father and the Son are not one, since the Son does not know what the Father knows."

But it should be observed, that Christ is both the Son of God, and the son of man, as the Christians believe; as he is the Son of God, he lay in the bosom of his Father, and was privy to all his secrets, to all his thoughts, purposes, and designs; and as such, he knew the day and hour of judgment, being God omniscient; and in this respect is one with the Father, having the same perfections of power, knowledge, etc. but then as the son of man, he is not of the same nature, and has not the same knowledge; his knowledge of things was derived, communicated, and not infinite; and did not reach to all things at once, but was capable of being increased, as it was: and it is with regard to him as the son of man, that Jesus speaks of himself in (<41 13 32>Mark 13:32); whereas he is here treating of his divine sonship, and almighty power; wherefore considered in the relation of the Son of God, and as possessed of the same perfections with God, he and his Father are one; though as man, he is different from him, and knew not some things he did: so that there is no contradiction between the words of Christ in one place, and in the other; nor is he chargeable with any blasphemy against God, or any arrogance in himself, by assuming deity to himself; nor deserving of punishment, even to be deprived of human life, as the Jew suggests; nor is what he produces from a Socinian writer, of any moment, that these words do not necessarily suppose, that the Father and the Son are of the same essence; since it may be said of two men, that they are one, end yet are not the same man, but one is one man, and the other another; for we do not say they are one and the same person, which does not follow from their being of one and the same nature, but that they are one God, and two distinct persons.

Ver. 31. *Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him*.] As they had done before, (see Gill on "<43 08 59>John 8:59");

Ver. 32. *Jesus answered them, many good works*, etc.] Such as healing the sick, and all manner of diseases; dispossessing devils, cleansing lepers, giving sight to the blind, causing the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk; which were not only works of power, but of mercy and beneficence; and therefore are called good works, as well as they were great and miraculous ones:

have I showed you from my Father; which Christ did in the name, and by the command and authority of the Father; who gave him them to do, and did them by him; and which were evident and notorious, and were done so openly and publicly, that they could not be denied:

for which of these works do ye stone me? suggesting, that his public life had been a continued series of such kind actions to the sons of men, and it could be for nothing else surely, that they took up stones to stone him; wherefore the part they acted, was a most ungrateful, cruel, and barbarous one.

Ver. 33. *The Jews answered him, saying*, etc.] As follows;

for a good work we stone thee not: they could not deny, that he had done many good works; this was too barefaced to be contradicted; yet they cared not to own them; and though they industriously concealed their resentment at them, yet they were very much gravelled and made uneasy by them, but chose to give another reason for their stoning him:

but for blasphemy; which required death by stoning, according to (<03246>Leviticus 24:16), and according to the Jews' oral law [f475]:

and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God; which they concluded very rightly, from his saying, (<43010>John 10:30), that God was his Father, and that he and his Father were one; that is, in nature and essence, and therefore he must be God; but then this was no blasphemy, but a real truth, as is hereafter made to appear; nor is there any contradiction between his being man, and being God; he is truly and really man, but then he is not a mere man, as the Jews suggested; but is truly God, as well as man, and is both God and man in one person, the divine and human nature being united in him, of which they were ignorant: two mistakes they seem to be guilty of in this account; one that Christ was a mere man, the other that he made himself God, or assumed deity to himself, which did not belong to him, and therefore must be guilty of blasphemy; neither of which were true: the phrase is used by the Jews, of others who have taken upon them the name and title of God; as of Hiram king of Tyre, of whom they say, hwla wmx[hç[ç, "that he made himself God" [f476]; the same they say of Nebuchadnezzar; and the modern Jews still continue the same charge against Jesus, as their ancestors did, and express it in the same language, and say of him, that he was a man, and set himself up for God [f477].

Ver. 34. *Jesus answered them, is it not written in your law*, etc.] In the law which was given unto them, of which they boasted, and pretended to understand, and interpret, even in (<19806>Psalm 82:6); for the law includes not

only the Pentateuch, but all the books of the Old Testament: it is an observation of one of the Jewish doctors [f478], that

> "with the wise men of blessed memory, it is found in many places that the word law comprehends the Prophets and the Hagiographa."

Among which last stands the book of Psalms; and this may be confirmed by a passage out of the Talmud [f479]; it is asked,

> "from whence does the resurrection of the dead appear, hrwth ^m, "out of the law?""

It is answered,

> "as it is said in (Psalm 84:4): "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will still praise thee, Selah; they do praise thee", it is not said, but "they will praise thee"; from hence is a proof of the resurrection of the dead, "out of the law"."

The same question is again put, and then (Isaiah 52:8) is cited, and the like observation made upon it. Moreover, this is a way of speaking used by the Jews, when they introduce another citing a passage of Scripture thus [f480], µktrwtb bytk alh, "is it not written in your law", (Deuteronomy 4:9), "only take heed to thyself", etc. so here the Scripture follows,

I said, ye are gods? which is spoken to civil magistrates, so called, because of their authority and power; and because they do, in some sort, represent the divine majesty, in the government of nations and kingdoms. Many of the Jewish writers, by "gods", understand "the angels". The Targum paraphrases the words thus:

> "I said ye are accounted as angels, as the angels on high, all of you;"

and to this sense some of their commentators interpret it. Jarchi's gloss is, ye are gods; that is, angels; for when I gave the law to you, it was on this account, that the angel of death might not any more rule over you: the note of Aben Ezra is, "and the children of the Most High": as angels; and the sense is, your soul is as the soul of angels: hence the [f481] Jew charges Christ with seeking refuge in words, that will not profit, or be any help to him,

when he cites these words, showing that magistrates are called gods, when the sense is only, that they are like to the angels in respect of their souls: but let it be observed, that it is not said, “ye are as gods”, as in (<0305>Genesis 3:5), but “ye are gods”; not like unto them only, but are in some sense gods; and besides, to say that they are like to angels, with respect to their souls, which come from above, is to say no more of the judges of the earth, than what may be said of every man: to which may be added, that this objector himself owns, that judges are called µyhla, “gods”, as in (<2209>Exodus 22:9); the cause of both parties shall come before µyhla, “the judges”; and that even the word is used in this sense in this very psalm, from whence these words are cited, (<1982>Psalm 82:1), “he judgeth among” µyhla, “the gods”; and both Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret this text itself in the same way, and observe, that judges are called gods, when they judge truly and aright: all which is sufficient to justify our Lord in the citation of this passage, and the use he makes of it.

Ver. 35. *If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, “because the word of God came to them”; either the divine “Logos”, the essential word, the Son of God, who appeared to Moses, and made him a God to Pharaoh, and who appointed rulers and magistrates among the Jews; and who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, from whom all receive their power and dominion: this sense is favoured by the Ethiopic version, which renders it, “if he called them gods to whom God appeared, the word of God was with them”: or else the commission from God, authorizing them to act in the capacity of rulers and governors, is here meant; or rather the word of God, which, in the passage of Scripture cited, calls them so, as it certainly does:

and the Scripture cannot be broken; or be made null and void; whatever that says is true, there is no contradicting it, or objecting to it: it is a Jewish way of speaking, much used in the Talmud [f482]; when one doctor has produced an argument, or instance, in any point of debate, another says, Ærpyml akya, “it may be broken”; or objected to, in such and such a manner, and be refuted: but the Scripture cannot be broken, that is not to be objected to, there can be no confutation of that.

Ver. 36. *Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified*, etc.] Not by making his human nature pure and holy, and free from all sin, and by bestowing the holy Spirit on him without measure, though both true; but

these were upon, or after his mission into the world; whereas sanctification here, designs something previous to that, and respects the eternal separation of him to his office, as Mediator, in the counsel, purposes, and decrees of God, and in the covenant of his grace, being pre-ordained thereunto, before the foundation of the world; which supposes his eternal existence as a divine person, and tacitly proves his true and proper deity:

and sent into the world; in human nature, to obtain eternal redemption and salvation his people: to save them from sin, Satan, the world, law, hell and death, which none but God could do:

thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God; for what he had said in (<43010>John 10:30) is equivalent to it; and in it he was rightly understood by the Jews, and what he here and afterwards says confirms it: the argument is what the Jews call rmwjw lq, "from the lesser to the greater", and stands thus; that if mere frail mortal men, and some of them wicked men, being made rulers and judges in the earth are called gods, by God himself, to whom the word of God came in time, and constituted them gods, or governors, but for a time; and this is a fact stands recorded in Scripture, which cannot be denied or disproved, then surely it cannot be blasphemy in Christ, to assert himself to be the Son of God, who existed as a divine person from all eternity; and was so early set apart to the office of prophet, priest, and king; and in the fulness of time was sent into this world, to be the author of eternal salvation to the sons of men.

Ver. 37. *If I do not the works of my Father*, etc.] Not only what the Father had given him to finish, and which he wrought by him as man, but such as were as great as the Father had done, and were equal to them; and which could not be done by any, but by the Father, or by one that is equal with him:

believe me not: Christ appeals to his miracles as proofs of his deity, sonship, and Messiahship, and desires no other credit than what they demand; (see <40113>Matthew 11:3-5 <43536>John 5:36).

Ver. 38. *But if I do*, etc.] Works, which none but God can do:

though ye believe not me; what Christ said in his doctrine and ministry, though they paid no regard to that, and did not receive his testimony, on the credit of him the testifier, as they ought to have done:

believe the works; not only that they are true and real, and not imaginary and delusory; but for the sake of them believe the above assertion, that Christ is the Son of God, he and his Father being one; or take such notice of these works and miracles, consider the nature, evidence, and importance of them, and the divine power that attends them,

that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him; or "in the Father", as one of Beza's exemplars; the Vulgate Latin, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, or "in my Father", as read the Syriac and Arabic versions; that they are one in nature, distinct in person, equal in power, and have a mutual inhabitation and communion in the divine essence; all which is manifest, by doing the same works, and which are out of the reach and power of any mere creature.

Ver. 39. *Therefore they sought again to take him*, etc.] Not to take away his life by stoning him, as before, in the manner the furious zealots did, and was the part they were about to act just now; but to lay hold upon him and bring him before the sanhedrim, as they had done in (John 5:18): he being so far from clearing himself from the charge of blasphemy, they had brought against him, that in their opinion he had greatly strengthened it; and they thought they had now sufficient proof and evidence to convict him as a blasphemer, in their high court of judicature; and therefore attempted to lay hands on him, and bring him thither:

but he escaped out of their hands; either by withdrawing from them in some private way; or by open force, exerting his power, and obliging them on every side to fall back, and give way to him; or by rendering himself invisible to them; and this he did, not through fear of death, but because his time was not yet come, and he had other work to do, before he suffered and died.

Ver. 40. *And went away again beyond Jordan*, etc.] Where he had been before; and whither he went; not merely for the security of his person, much less to indulge himself in ease, but to preach the Gospel, work miracles, and bring many souls to believe on him, as did: and he went

into the place where John at first baptized; that is, Bethabara, where he baptized before he was at Aenon, near Salim, (John 1:28 3:23), and was the place where Christ himself was baptized, and where John bore such a testimony of him:

and there he abode; how long is not certain, perhaps till he went to Bethany, on account of raising Lazarus from the dead.

Ver. 41. *And many resorted to him*, etc.] From all the parts adjacent, having heard of his being there, and of the fame of him; and many of them doubtless personally knew him; these came to him, some very likely to be healed by him, others to see his person and miracles, and others to hear him preach:

and said, John did no miracle; though it was now three years ago, yet the name, ministry, and baptism of John, were fresh in the memory of men in those parts; and what they say one to another, was not to lessen the character of John, but to exalt Jesus Christ, and to give a reason why they should receive and embrace him; for if John, who did no miracle, who only taught and baptized, and directed men to the Messiah, was justly reckoned a very great person, and his doctrine was received, and his baptism was submitted to, then much more should this illustrious person be attended to; who, besides his divine doctrine, did such great and amazing miracles; to which they add, though John did no miracle to confirm his mission, ministry, and baptism,

but all things that John spake of this man, were true; as that he was greater than he, was the Lamb of God, yea, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, and true Messiah, who should baptize men with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

Ver. 42. *And many believed on him there*.], Through the doctrine he preached, the miracles he wrought, and through comparing these things with what John had said of him: this shows the reason of Christ's leaving Jerusalem, and coming into these parts; there were others that were to believe in his name: the word "there", is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 11

Ver. 1. *Now a certain man was sick*, etc.] Very likely of a fever; Nonnus calls it a morbid fire, a hot and burning disease:

[named] Lazarus of Bethany; for his name, which the Ethiopic version reads "Eleazar", and the Persic version "Gazarus", (see Gill on "Luke 16:24"); and for the place Bethany, (see Gill on "Matthew 21:1"), (see Gill on "Matthew 21:17").

The town of Mary and her sister Martha; where they were both born, as well as Lazarus, or at least where they dwelt; of the former, some account is, given in the next verse, and of the latter, (see Gill on "Luke 10:38").

Ver. 2. *It was [that] Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment*, etc.] Not the woman in (Luke 7:37), as some have thought, whose name is not mentioned, and which history is not related by John at all: but Mary in (John 12:3), who is both mentioned by name, and along with Lazarus her brother, and with whom all the circumstances of the affair suit; and though the fact was not yet done, yet John writing many years after it was done, and when it was well known, proleptically, and in a parenthesis, takes notice of it here:

and wiped his feet with her hair; instead of a napkin, after she had anointed them with oil; (see Gill on "Luke 7:37"), (see Gill on "John 12:3").

Whose brother Lazarus was sick; this is observed, to show how well they were all acquainted with Christ, and affected to him.

Ver. 3. *Therefore his sisters sent unto him*, etc.] Both the sisters of Lazarus, Mary and Martha, sent to Jesus; they did not go themselves, being women, and the place where Jesus was, was at some distance; and besides, it was necessary they should abide at home, to attend their brother in his sickness, and therefore they sent a messenger, or messengers to Christ,

saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick; for it seems that Lazarus was in a very singular manner loved by Christ, as man, as John the

beloved disciple was; and this is the rather put into the message by the sisters, to engage Jesus to come to his assistance; and they were very right in applying to Christ in this time of need, who is the physician, both of the bodies and souls of men; and are greatly to be commended both for their modesty and piety, in not prescribing to Christ what should be done in this case: and it may be further observed, that such who are the peculiar objects of Christ's love, are attended in this life with bodily sickness, disorders, and diseases, which are sent unto them, not in a way of vindictive wrath, but in love, and as fatherly chastisements; which, as they are designed, so they are overruled for their good; and are to be considered, not as instances of wrath, but as tokens of love.

Ver. 4. *When Jesus heard that*, etc.] That his friend Lazarus was sick,

he said; either to his disciples, or to the messenger or messengers that brought the account to him, and that on purpose to yield some relief to the afflicted family when it should be reported to them:

this sickness is not unto death; it was to issue in death, but not in death which was to continue, or under which Lazarus was to continue till the general resurrection; for though he should die, yet he should be so quickly restored again to life, that it scarcely deserved the name of death. The Jews distinguish between sickness and sickness; there are some that are sick, the greater part of whom are, µyyjl, "for life"; and there are others that are "sick", the greater part of whom are, htyml, "for death" [f483], or are sick unto death, whose sickness issues in death; but this of Lazarus's was not to be unto death, at least not finally:

but for the glory of God; of his power and goodness in raising him again:

that the Son of God might be glorified thereby; that is, that his glory, as the Son of God, might be made manifest in the resurrection of him from the dead; (see <43211>John 2:11).

Ver. 5. *Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus*.] Not only with an everlasting love, a love of complacency and delight, an unchangeable one, and which never varies, nor will ever end, with which he loves all his people alike; but with a very great human affection, and which was very singular and peculiar to them: these were the intimate friends, and familiar acquaintance of Christ, whom he often visited, at whose house he frequently was when in those parts; they were very hospitable to him; they

kindly received him into their houses, and generously entertained him, and which he returned in love to them: hence Nonnus paraphrases the words,

> “Jesus loved the women, φιλοξεινους, “who were lovers of hospitality”, by the law of kindness.”

Ver. 6. *When he had heard therefore that he was sick*, etc.] Though Christ had heard that Lazarus was sick, and by such good hands, a message being sent him by his sisters, to acquaint him with it; and though he had such a very great love for him, and the whole family, yet he did not go directly to him, and to his assistance:

but he abode two days still in the same place where he was; at Bethabara, beyond Jordan; this he did to try the faith and patience of the sisters of Lazarus, and that the miracle of raising him from the dead might be the more manifest, and his own glory might be the more illustrious, and yet equal, if not greater tenderness and love be shown to his friends.

Ver. 7. *Then after that*, etc.] The next day, the third day after he had heard of Lazarus’s sickness:

saith he to [his] disciples, let us go into Judea again; for the country beyond Jordan was distinguished from Judea; (see Gill on “<4025>Matthew 4:25”).

Ver. 8. *[His] disciples said unto him, master*, etc.] Addressing him very reverently, and with great concern for his safety, as well as their own:

the Jews of late, or but now,

sought to stone thee; as they had attempted to do twice in a very little time; (see <4059>John 8:59 10:31);

and goest thou thither again? where there are so many enemies; and so much danger, and but little hope of doing much good; whereas here he was among his friends, and in safety, and very useful.

Ver. 9. *Jesus answered, are there not twelve hours in the day*? etc.] So the Jews reckoned, and so they commonly say [f484], µwyh ywh tw[ç hrç[µytç, “twelve hours are a day”, or a day consists of twelve hours, which they divided into four parts, each part consisting of three hours this was a matter well known, and Christ puts the question as such, it being what might be easily answered, and at once assented to:

if any man walk in the day: within any of the twelve hours, even in the last of them,

he stumbleth not, at any stone or stumbling block in the way,

because he seeth the light of this world; the sun in the horizon not being as yet set, by the light of which he sees what is before him, and avoids it; (see Gill on "<4812>John 8:12"). So our Lord intimates, that as yet it was day with him, his time of life was not expired; and so, as yet, it was a time of walking and working; nor did he fear any danger he was exposed to, or any snares that were laid for him, since he could not be hurt by any, nor his life taken from him before his time.

Ver. 10. *But if a man walk in the night*, etc.] After the sun is set, and there is no light in the air and heavens to direct him:

he stumbleth; at everything that lies in the way,

because there is no light in him; there being none from above communicated to him. So our Lord suggests, that when the time of his death was come, he should then fall a prey into the hands of his enemies, but till then he should walk safe and secure; nor had he anything to fear from them, and therefore could go into Judea again, with intrepidity and unconcern.

Ver. 11. *These things said he*, etc.] In answer to his disciples, and made a pause.

And after that he saith unto them, our friend Lazarus sleepeth; meaning, that he was dead; in which sense the word is often used in the Old Testament, and in the common dialect of the Jews, and frequently in their writings; and especially it is so used of good men: and it is an observation of theirs [f485], that

> "it is usual to say of the righteous, that there is no death in them, hnyç ala, "but sleep";"

(see Gill on "<4092>Matthew 9:24"), (see Gill on "<4658>1 Corinthians 15:18"), (see Gill on "<4650>1 Corinthians 15:20"), (see Gill on "<5043>1 Thessalonians 4:13"), (see Gill on "<5044>1 Thessalonians 4:14");

but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep; that is, to raise him from the dead, for, the resurrection of the dead is expressed by awaking; (see

(19Ps 17:15) (23Isa 26:19) (27Dan 12:2); which for Christ to do, was as easy as to awake a man out of natural sleep: these words respecting Lazarus's sleeping and awaking, express both the omniscience and omnipotence of Christ; his omniscience, that he should know that Lazarus was dead; when at such a distance from him; and his omnipotence, that he could raise him from the dead; and yet his great modesty to signify it in, such covert language, though not difficult to be understood.

Ver. 12. *Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep*, etc.] Soundly, quietly, and comfortably, and takes rest in it:

he shall do well; or "be saved" from the disease; he will be delivered from it; he will recover out of it; it is a sign the distemper is leaving him, and he is growing better, and will be restored to his health again: the Ethiopic version renders it by many words, "he will be well", and "will awake", and "will live". Sound sleep is a sign of health. This they said to, put off their master from going into Judea, fearing the danger he would be exposed unto.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit Jesus spake of his death*, etc.] Under the figurative phrase of sleeping:

but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep; in a literal and natural sense.

Ver. 14. *Then said Jesus unto them plainly*, etc.] Without a figure, when he perceived they did not understand him, and yet it was a very easy and usual metaphor which he had made use of; but such was the present stupidity of their minds, that they did not take in his meaning: wherefore, without reproaching them with it, he said to them in so many words,

Lazarus is dead. The Persic version reads, "Lazarus is dead indeed", as he really was.

Ver. 15. *And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there*, etc.] At Bethany, before he died, or when he died; because he might have been prevailed upon through the solicitations of his dear friends, Mary and Martha, and through tender affection to Lazarus, to have prevented his death, by rebuking the distemper, and restoring him to health, or to have raised him immediately as soon as he was dead; and in either case the miracle would not have been so illustrious, nor have been such a means of confirming the faith of his disciples, as now it would be:

to the intent ye may believe; more strongly, that he was the Son of God, and true Messiah:

nevertheless, let us go unto him; to Lazarus, to the grave where he lies: the Syriac version reads, “let us go there”; to Bethany, where he lived, and died, and now lay interred.

Ver. 16. *Then said Thomas, who is called Didymous*, etc.] The former was his Hebrew name, and the latter his Greek name, and both signify a twin; and perhaps he may be so called because he was one:

the same said unto his fellow disciples; the other eleven; though the Ethiopic version reads, “to the next of the disciples”; as if he addressed himself only to one of them, to him that was nearest to him:

let us also go, that we may die with him; either with Lazarus, as some think, or rather with Christ; for he, and the rest of the disciples, imagined that Christ, by returning to Judea, would be in great danger of losing his life; yea, by this expression they seem to be positive in it, that it was a matter out of question with them, that he would die, should be venture there again: and therefore Thomas stirs up his fellow disciples to go along with him, and die altogether; signifying, that they should have but little comfort when he was taken from them: but both Thomas, and the rest, were differently minded, when Christ was apprehended, for they all forsook him and fled, and provided for their own safety, and left him to die alone, (<4056>Matthew 26:56).

Ver. 17. *Then when Jesus came*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and all the Oriental versions add, “to Bethany”; though it seems by what follows, that he was not come to the town itself, but near it; and it looks as if it was not far from Lazarus’s grave; and it was usual to bury without the city; and here he had intelligence of his, Lazarus’s, death, and how long he had been dead:

for he found he had lain in the grave four days already; it is very likely that he died the same day that Mary and Martha sent to Christ to acquaint him with his sickness, and the same day he was buried; for the Jews used to bury the same day a person died, and so they do now: and after Christ had this account, he stayed two days where he was, and on the third day, he proposed to his disciples to go into Judea; and very probably on that, or on the next day, which was the fourth, they set out and came to Bethany; (see Gill on “<4819>John 11:39”).

Ver. 18. *Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem*, etc.] Which was a reason why them were so many of the Jews come there to condole the two sisters upon the death of their brother; and by this means the following miracle became more known there: it was

about fifteen furlongs off; that is, about two miles, for seven furlongs and a half made a Jewish mile, as appears from one of their canons [f486], which runs thus:

> "they do not spread nets for doves, except it be distant from an habitable place, syr µyçlç, "thirty furlongs";"

which the commentators say [f487] are "four miles": and still more expressly it is said [f488], that

> "between Jerusalem and Zuck, (the place where the scape goat was had,) there were ten tents, and ninety furlongs, lym lkl hxjmw h[bç "seven and a half to every mile"."

Hence a furlong was called one seventh and a half of a mile [f489], which was 266 cubits, and two thirds of one.

Ver. 19. *And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary*, etc.] Or "to those that were about Martha and Mary"; in order to have access to them, they came to them, and to the rest of the family; though the phrase may design them only, as the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions read: these Jews, as appears from the context, (<431118>John 11:18,45,46), came from Jerusalem, and might be some of the principal inhabitants; and it may be concluded, that these persons, Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, were people of note and figure; and indeed all the accounts of them here, and elsewhere, show the same; (see <421038>Luke 10:38 <431201>John 12:1-3). The end of their coming to them was

to comfort them concerning their brother; by reason of his death, as was usual with the Jews to do, after the dead was buried; for they did not allow of it before: hence that saying [f490] of R. Simeon ben Eleazar,

> "do not comfort him (thy friend) in the time his dead lies before him."

The first office of this kind was done when they returned from the grave; for it is said [f491], when they return

> "from the grave they make rows round about the mourner, wmjnl, "to comfort him", and they make him to sit, and they stand, and there never were less than ten in a row."

It was an ancient custom for the mourners to stand in their place in a row, and all the people passed by, and every man as he came to the mourner comforted him, and passed on [f492]. But besides these consolations, there were others administered at their own houses, which were usually done the first week, for it is said [f493],

> "the mourner the first week does not go out of the door of his house; the second he goes out, but does not sit, or continue in his place; the third he continues in his place, but does not speak; the fourth, lo, he is as every other man. R. Judah says, there is no need to say, the first week he does not go out of the door of his house, for behold, all come to his house, wmjnl, "to comfort him"."

And is was on the third day more particularly on which these consolatory visits were paid [f494]:

> "on the first day he (the mourner) did not wear his phylacteries; on the second, he put them on; on the third day, others come to comfort him."

This rule the Jews here seem to have observed, since Lazarus had been dead four days; and they were come from Jerusalem hither to comfort his sisters on account of his death. The whole of this ceremony is thus related by Maimonides [f495],

> "how do they comfort mourners? after they have buried the dead, the mourners gather together, and stand on the side of the grave; and all that accompany the dead stand round about them, one row within another: and there is no row less than ten; and the mourners are not of the number; the mourners stand on the left hand of the comforters; and all the comforters go to the mourners, one by one, and say to them, µymçh ˆm wmjwnt, "may ye be comforted from heaven": after that the mourner goes to to his house, and every day of the seven days of mourning, men come to comfort him; whether new faces come, or do not, the mourner sits down at the head, (or in the chief place,) and no comforters may sit but upon the floor, as it is said, (<18213>Job 2:13), "and they sat with him on the ground": nor

> may they say any thing until the mourner has opened his mouth first, as it is said, (<18213>Job 2:13), “and none spake a word unto him”: and it is written afterwards, (<18301>Job 3:1), “so opened Job his mouth”, etc. and Eliphaz answered, (<18401>Job 4:1), and when he nods with his head, the comforters may not sit with him any longer, that they may not trouble him more than is necessary. If a man dies, and there are no mourners to be comforted, ten worthy men go and sit in his place all the seven days of mourning; and the rest of the people gather to them; and if there are not ten fixed every day, ten of the rest of the people gather together, and sit in his place:”

for this business of comforting mourners was reckoned an act of great piety and mercy [f496]; and these Jews here might come, not so much out of respect to the dead, or to his sisters, as because it was thought to be a meritorious act.

Ver. 20. *Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming*, etc.] Which she might hear of, either by a messenger sent by Christ to her, to acquaint her of it; or rather by some of the people of the town, who knew him, and ran and told her of it; and she being an active person, and stirring about house, might receive the report unknown to her sister, as it seems she did; and as soon as she had the hint, without staying to communicate it to her sister,

went and met him; either through her great affection to him, and eager desire of seeing him; or to consult his safety, and let him know what number of Jews were in their house, that he might consider whether it would be safe for him to be at their house or not.

But Mary sat [still] in the house; not out of disrespect to Jesus, or through want of affection to him, or through any indifference and sloth, but because she knew not that Jesus was coming; (see <43128>John 11:28,29).

Ver. 21. *When said Martha unto Jesus*, etc.] When she was come to him,

Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died: which expresses much faith, but with a mixture of weakness, as if the presence of Christ was necessary for the working a cure; whereas he could as well have restored her brother to health absent, as present, had it been his will, as he did the centurion’s servant, and the nobleman’s son of Capernaum.

Ver. 22. *But I know that even now*, etc.] At this distance of time, though her brother had been in the grave four days:

whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give [it] thee; whether Martha had such a clear notion of the deity of Christ, as yet, as she afterwards had, is not so certain: however, she was persuaded that he had great interest with God, and that whatever he desired of him was granted to him; and though she does not mention the resurrection of her brother, yet it seems to be what she had in view.

Ver. 23. *Jesus saith unto her, thy brother shall rise again*.] Christ knew what she meant, and accordingly gave her an answer, and yet in such general terms, that she could not tell whether his meaning was, that he should rise now, or at the general resurrection.

Ver. 24. *Martha saith unto him*, etc.] Being desirous of knowing the sense and meaning of Christ, as well as to express her own faith;

I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection, at the last day. The Jews were divided about the doctrine of the resurrection, the Sadducees denied it, the Pharisees asserted it; and on this latter side was Martha; she believed there would be a resurrection of the dead; that this would be at the last day, or at the end of the world; and that her brother would rise at that general resurrection: wherefore, if Christ meant no more than that, this was what she always believed. The Syriac version renders it, “in the consolation at the last day”; and so the time of the resurrection is, by the Jews, called “the days of consolation” [f497]. And good reason there is for it in those who shall have part in the first resurrection, or come forth to the resurrection of life; their bodies will rise glorious, powerful, spiritual, and incorruptible, fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; they will no more be attended with infirmities, disorders, and diseases; they will feel no more pain, nor die any more; being reunited to their souls they will meet the Lord in the air, and in the judgment they will stand at his right hand; they will enter into his joy, and be for ever with him; with their bodily eyes they will behold Christ, and see him for themselves, and not another; they will meet their spiritual friends and acquaintance, and enjoy their company for ever; they will have uninterrupted communion with angels and saints, and with God, Father, Son, and Spirit; their consolation will be inconceivable and inexpressible.

Ver. 25. *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life*, etc.] Signifying, that he was able of himself to raise men from death to life, without asking it of his Father; and that he could do it now, as well as at the general resurrection; at which time Christ will be the efficient cause of it; and which will display both his omniscience and his omnipotence; as his resurrection is the earnest and pledge, and will be the model and exemplar of it. This is true of Christ, with regard to a spiritual resurrection, from a death of sin, to a life of grace; he is concerned both in the life itself, and in the resurrection to it: he is the meritorious and procuring cause of it; he died for his people, that they, being dead to sin, might live unto God, and unto righteousness: he is the author of it; he says unto them, when dead in sin, live; he speaks life into them: he commands it in them, and by his Spirit breathes into them the breath of spiritual life, and implants the principle of it in their souls; and he supports and maintains it by giving himself to them as the bread of life to feed upon, and by supplying them with grace continually; yea, he himself is their life; he lives in them, and their life is hid with him. It is owing to his resurrection, that they are begotten again to a lively hope, or are quickened, that has a virtual influence upon it; and it is not only the cause, but the exemplar of it. Saints, as they are planted together in the likeness of his death, so in the likeness of his resurrection: to which may be added, that it is his voice in the Gospel, attended with an almighty power, which is the means of quickening them, which they hear, and so live; and it is his image that is stamped upon them; and by his Spirit they are made to live, and to walk in newness of life.

He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: believers in Christ die as well as others, though death is not a penal evil to them; its curse is removed, its sting is taken away, being satisfied for by Christ, and so becomes a blessing and privilege to them, and is desirable by them; but though they die, they shall live again; their dust is under the peculiar care of Christ; and they shall rise by virtue of union to him, and shall rise, first in the morning of the resurrection, and with peculiar privileges, or to the resurrection of life, and with the peculiar properties of incorruption, power, glory, and spirituality. So likewise such that have been dead in sin, and dead in law, under a sentence of condemnation, as all mankind are in Adam, and being in a natural and sinful estate, and as the chosen of God themselves are; yet being brought to believe in Christ, that is, to see the excellency and suitableness of him as a Saviour, and the necessity of salvation by him; to go out of themselves to him, disclaiming their own

righteousness; venture their souls upon him, give up themselves to him, trust in him, and depend upon him for eternal life and salvation; these live spiritually; they appear to have a principle of life in them; they breathe after spiritual things; they see the Son of God, and behold his glory; they handle the word of life; they speak the language of Canaan, and walk by faith on Christ, as they have received him; they live a life of sanctification and justification; they are manifestly in Christ, and have him, an interest in him, and so must have life; they live comfortably; they live by faith on Christ, and his righteousness, and have communion with him here, and expect to have, and shall have eternal life hereafter.

Ver. 26. *And whosoever liveth and believeth in me*, etc.]. Whoever will be found alive at Christ's second coming, and is a believer in him,

shall never die, but shall be changed, and shall be for ever with Christ; and such as shall be raised to life by him, shall never die any more, not even a bodily death, and much less an eternal one, or the second death: and though believers die a corporeal death as others do, yet their souls live, and live in happiness, whilst their bodies are under the power of death; nor shall they always continue so, but being raised, shall become immortal, and die no more. So living believers in Christ shall never die more a spiritual death; they are passed from death to life, and shall never return to death more; their spiritual life cannot be lost; grace in them is an immortal seed, a well of living water springing up into everlasting life: grace may be very low in its exercise, and may seem to be ready to die; they may be in lifeless frames, and without the comforts of a spiritual life, and be under the hidings of God's face, which is as death unto them, and may reckon themselves as free among the dead; yet the principle of life will never be extinct in them; nor shall they die the second death, which lies in an eternal separation from God, and in an everlasting sense of his wrath; that shall have no power on them, nor shall they be in the least hurt by it; for they are ordained to eternal life, and have the promise of it; they are united to Christ, and their life is secured in him; and he has redeemed them from death; and they have the Spirit of life dwelling in them, as the pledge and earnest of eternal glory.

Believest thou this? the whole of this concerning the power of Christ, and privilege of believers; every tittle of it is to be believed. And as with respect to a corporeal resurrection, so with regard to a spiritual one; that men by nature are dead in sins; that Christ is the author of the resurrection from

such a state, to a spiritual life; that this life is only by Christ, and can never be lost: this is a doctrine to be believed; it is the doctrine of the Scriptures; it is according to godliness; it makes for the comfort of the people of God, and glorifies the divine perfections.

Ver. 27. *She saith unto him, yea, Lord*, etc.] That is, she firmly believed all that he said concerning himself, and the happiness of those that believed in him: and for the confirmation of it adds,

I believe: or "I have believed", as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; that is, long ago, ever since she knew him:

that thou art the Christ the Son of God, which should come into the world; that he was the true Messiah, and the proper and natural Son of God, of the same nature with God, equal to him, having the same perfections with him; and who was long promised, much prophesied of, and greatly expected to come into the world; and was now come into the world by the assumption of human nature, to work out salvation for his people, and therefore, since she believed all this of him, she must believe that he was able to raise the dead to life, and to secure those that believe in him from dying eternally.

Ver. 28. *And when she had so said*, etc.] Had expressed her faith in Christ in such terms, as the apostles themselves did, (<40 16 16>Matthew 16:16) (<43 01 49>John 1:49 6:69).

She went her way; from Christ, being ordered by him to go to her sister Mary, and fetch her to him:

and called Mary her sister secretly; either beckoned her to come to her, or whispered her in the ear privately, as Nonnus paraphrases it, that the Jews, who were enemies to Christ, might not hear:

saying, the master is come; near the town; is not a great way off: she might use the phrase, "the master", for greater privacy, that should she be overheard, it would not be who she meant; and because it was an usual appellation by which Christ was called in that family, and by which he was well known; and was expressive of honour to him, and subjection in them as his disciples:

and calleth for thee; to come to him; Christ asked after her, desired to see her, and ordered her to come to him; which was an instance of his respect for her.

Ver. 29. *As soon as she heard that*, etc.] That Christ was come, and inquired for her, and wanted to see her:

she arose quickly, and came unto him; having an equal affection for him as her sister Martha; and which she showed, by leaving her comforters at once, and by making the haste she did, to another and better comforter: both Martha and Mary, out of their great love to Christ, break through the rule for mourners mentioned in note, (see Gill on "⁴John 11:19"), of not going out of the door of the house the first week of mourning.

Ver. 30. *Now Jesus was not yet come into the town*, etc.] Of Bethany, but stayed without, being nearer to Lazarus's grave, which he intended to go to, in order to raise him to life, it being usual to bury the without the towns and cities; (see Gill on "⁴Matthew 8:28"), (see Gill on "⁴Luke 7:12").

but was in that place where Martha met him; here he stopped, and here he continued: the Persic version reads, "but was sitting in the same place", etc. waiting for the coming of Mary along with Martha; judging this to be a more suitable place to converse together in, than their own house, which was thronged with Jews; and especially he chose it for the reason above given.

Ver. 31. *The Jews then which were with her in the house*, etc.] Who came from Jerusalem to visit this afflicted family, and continued in the house with them

and comforted her; which was the end of their coming, (⁴John 11:19). This they endeavoured to do, though they did not succeed:

when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed her; they did not know what Martha whispered to her, but observed that she rose off her seat in great haste, and went out of the house at once; and therefore they went after to see where she went, and to persuade her to return;

saying, within themselves; "thinking", as all the Oriental versions seem to read,

she goeth unto the grave to weep there: the Jews were wont to go to the graves on different accounts; one was to see whether the persons were dead or not: for so it is said [f498],

> “they go to the graves and visit until three days.”

It happened that they visited one, and he lived five and twenty years, and after that died: and another was on a religious account; such went to the graves of the prophets, wise men, and righteous, and prostrated themselves upon them, to pray with weeping and supplication, and seek mercy for themselves, and for their brethren, expressing their faith in the resurrection [f499]. Dr. Pocock [f500] has given a large form of prayer used by them at such times, from Solomon bar Nathan; and is as follows:

> “let it be the will of the Lord our God, our Creator, our Holy One, the Holy One of Jacob, who hath created all the children of his covenant in judgment, and causes them to die in judgment, and will raise them again to the life of the world to come, who knows the number of them all; that he would hasten to awake our master and doctor, (such an one,) that holy, (or that righteous, or that wise doctor,) whose body dwells in this sepulchre, whose bones rest in the midst of these stones; and that he would quicken him with that eternal life which no death follows; with that life which swallows up all death, and which wipes away all tears, and takes away all reproach; together with all those who are written unto life in Jerusalem; with the seven shepherds, and eight principal men, who are spoken of in (<330505>Micah 5:5), and give him a part with them that understand, and with them that justify many, who will be like the stars for ever and ever; and the whole residue of the people of the Lord, the house of Israel, who keep the covenant of our God, and do his pleasure, may the Lord our God shake all these out of their dust, and let their lot, and our lot, be in life, in everlasting life, that in it he may establish all, both great and small, according to what is written, (<197216>Psalm 72:16): “there shall be an handful of corn”, etc. and confirm the assurance he gave by Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amos, (<232619>Isaiah 26:19): “thy dead men shall live”, etc. and as he promised to Daniel, a man of desires, (<271213>Daniel 12:13): “but go thou thy way till the end be”, etc. and as he promised to all the congregations of Israel, by his servant Ezekiel, the son of Buzi the priest, (<263712>Ezekiel 37:12): “therefore prophesy and say to them”,

> etc. that the saints may rejoice with glory, and sing upon their beds, and that the righteous may rejoice, and exult before God, and be glad in his salvation, and say in that day, “behold this is our God, we have waited for him”, etc. (<2250>Isaiah 25:9); and we will bless the Lord from this time forth, and for ever, Hallelujah.”

A shorter one, which is in their liturgies, and is used as they pass by the sepulchres of the Israelites, is this:

> “blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who has formed you in judgment, and has quickened you in judgment, and has fed you in judgment, and knows the number of all of you, and he will quicken you, and restore you; blessed art thou, O Lord, that quickens the dead.”

But sometimes they went only to vent their grief, and lament the loss of their deceased friends, which the Jews imagined was the case of Mary. And such a custom as this is used by the Turks, whose women on Friday, which is their day of worship, go before sun rising to the graves of the deceased, which are without the city, where they mourn over the death of their friends, and sprinkle their monuments with water and flowers; and even such as are not at the funeral or interment of the dead, after some days, will go to the graves, and make their lamentations there, and inquire of the dead the reason of their departure, and, as it were, expostulate with them, and to their lamentations add oblations of loaves, cheeses, eggs, and flesh [f501]. The Persians also visit the sepulchres of their principal “Imams”, or prelates [f502]; and the Jews were wont to visit the graves of their great men, in honour to them; yea, the disciples of the wise men used to meet there to study the law, thereby showing respect, and doing honour to the deceased. It is said of Hezekiah, (<142233>2 Chronicles 32:33): “that all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, did him honour at his death”; from whence say the Talmudists [f503] we learn, that they fixed a sitting or a school at his grave; the gloss is, a session (or school) of the wise men to study in the law there. So says Maimonides [f504], when a king dies they make a sitting at his grave seven days, as it is said, (<142233>2 Chronicles 32:33): “they did him honour at his death”; that is, they made a sitting at his grave.

Ver. 32. *Then when Mary was come where Jesus was*, etc.] Where Martha met him, and where she left him. Travellers tell us, that close by a well, about a stone’s cast out of the town of Bethany, is showed the place where Martha met our Lord when he came to raise Lazarus, and where Mary,

being called also, met him; but this is not to be depended on, nor is it of any moment to know it. It is blessed meeting Christ any where; and where he is preached, and his ordinances administered, let it be in what place it will, there may the presence of Christ be expected; and it is an encouragement to go there where others have met with him: Martha had been here before, and had had some conversation with Christ to her great satisfaction, and she goes and calls her sister, that she might enjoy the same: so souls that have met with Jesus under such a ministry, in such a place, invite others to go thither also; and often it is that this is a means, in providence, of finding Christ, and enjoying communion with him.

And saw him, she fell down at his feet; in great respect to him, and reverence of him, worshipping him as her Lord and God.

Saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died; which were the same words Martha uttered upon her first meeting Jesus, (⁴⁸¹²John 11:21); and it is very likely that they had often expressed themselves in such language one to another, saying to each other, if our Lord Jesus had been but here, our dear brother Lazarus would not have died.

Ver. 33. *When Jesus therefore saw her weeping*, etc.] At his feet, who, for sorrow and grief of heart, could say no more to him; but having expressed these words, burst out into floods of tears:

and the Jews also weeping, which came with her; either through sympathy with her, or hypocritically:

he groaned in the spirit; in his human soul; and which shows, that he had a real human soul, subject to passions, though sinless ones. The word signifies an inward motion of the mind, through indignation and anger; and it may be partly at the weakness of Mary's faith, and at her immoderate sorrow; and partly at the hypocrisy of the Jews: or else this inward groaning was through grief, sympathizing with Mary, and her friends, his human soul being touched with a fellow feeling of their griefs and sorrows:

and was troubled; or troubled himself; threw himself into some forms and gestures of sorrow, and mourning, as lifting up his eyes, wringing his hands, and changing the form of his countenance.

Ver. 34. *And said, where have ye laid him*? etc.] This he might say as man, though he, as the omniscient God, knew where he was laid; and that it

might appear there was no juggle and contrivance between him, and the relations of the deceased; and to raise some expectation of what he intended to do; and to draw the Jews thither, that they might be witnesses of the miracle he was about to work.

They say unto him; That is, Martha and Mary,

Lord, come and see; it being but a little way off.

Ver. 35. *Jesus wept*.] As he was going along to the grave, (see ⁴⁸¹¹²⁸John 11:28); as he was meditating upon the state of his friend Lazarus, the distress his two sisters were in, and the greater damnation that would befall the Jews then present, who, notwithstanding the miracle, would not believe in him. This shows him to be truly and really man, subject to like passions, only without sin.

Ver. 36. *Then said the Jews, behold, how he loved him*!] Lazarus; for they supposed that these tears were shed purely on his account; and by all circumstances they could not but judge, that they proceeded from an hearty and sincere affection to him; and it was amazing to them, that his love to him should be so strong, when he was no relation, only, as they imagined, a common friend. Christ's love to all his people, even when they are dead in trespasses and sins, is wonderful, and passes knowledge. And it is amazing indeed, if it be considered who the lover is, the eternal Son of God, who is God over all, blessed for ever, the Creator of all things, the King of kings, and Lord of lords: and also, who they are that are loved by him, not only creatures, but sinful ones, exceeding mean and abject; the base things of this world, bankrupts, beggars, yea, comparable to the beasts that perish; who had nothing external, nor internal, to recommend them to him, and engage his affections; yea, everything to give him an aversion to them, and render them odious in his sight, being enemies in their minds by wicked works, and children of wrath, as others: and likewise, if it be considered what he has done for these, in which his love appears to them; as before time, in espousing their persons, becoming their surety, engaging in covenant with his Father for them, agreeing to all he proposed, taking the care of their persons, and of all blessings and promises, grace and glory for them; and in time here on earth, by assuming their nature, fulfilling the law for them, dying in their room and stead, paying their debts, procuring all blessings for them, peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal redemption; and now in heaven, by preparing a place for them, being their intercessor and advocate there, supplying their wants, frequently visiting them, and

indulging them with communion with himself, preserving them safe to his kingdom and glory, into which he will introduce them, presenting them to his Father with exceeding joy; all which are marvellous acts of love and grace: to which may be added, the consideration of the nature of his love, that it should be from everlasting, before these persons were born; that it should be a love of complacency and delight in them; that it should be free, and unmerited, without any reason, or motive on their part; that it should be distinguishing, that they, and not others, should be the objects of it; and that it should continue unchangeably the same, notwithstanding their manifold transgressions, and provocations; wherefore it may be justly said, behold, how he loved them!

Ver. 37. *And some of them said*, etc.] Who were averse to him, and bore him a secret grudge, and were willing to put the worst construction on every action of his:

could not this man which opened the eyes of the blind; as it is said, at least pretended, that he did, (John 9:6,7), for this must be understood as calling the miracle into question, and as a sneer upon it, and not as taking it for granted that so it was; and even supposing that, it is mentioned to his reproach, since if so, he might

have caused that, even this man should not died: for either the above cure was a sham, or, if it was a real thing, he who did that could have prevented Lazarus's death; and if he could, and would not, where is his friendship? and what must be thought of all this show of affection to him? and what are these tears, but crocodile ones? but this reasoning, as specious as it may seem, was very fallacious; for he that cured the man born blind could raise Lazarus from the dead, which he intended; and therefore did not prevent his death, that he might still give more joy to the family, bring more glory to God, and himself, and more shame and confusion to his enemies.

Ver. 38. *Jesus therefore groaning in himself*, etc.] Not only through grief, just coming up to the grave, where his dear friend lay, but through an holy anger and indignation at the malice and wickedness of the Jews;

cometh to the grave of Lazarus,

it was a cave; either a natural one, such as were in rocks and mountains, of which sort there were many in Judea, and near Jerusalem being a rocky and mountainous country, of which Josephus [f505] makes mention; where thieves

and robbers sheltered themselves, and could not easily be come at and where persons in danger fled to for safety, and hid themselves; and the reason why such places were chose to bury in, was because here the bodies were safe from beasts of prey: or this was an artificial cave made out of a rock, in form of one, as was the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; and it was the common custom of the Jews to make caves and bury in; yea, they were obliged to it by their traditions: thus says Maimonides [f506],

> "he that sells a place to his friend to make in it a grave or that receives from his friend a place to make in it a grave, hr[m hçw[, "must make a cave", and open in it eight graves, three on one side and three on another, and two over against the entrance "into the cave": the measure of "the cave" is four cubits by six, and every grave is four cubits long, and six hands broad, and seven high; and there is a space between every grave, on the sides a cubit and a half, and between the two in the middle two cubits."

And elsewhere [f507] he observes, that

> "they dig twr[m, "caves" in the earth, and make a grave in the side "of the cave", and bury him (the dead) in it."

And such caves for burying the dead, were at and near the Mount of Olives; and near the same must be this cave where Lazarus was buried; for Bethany was not far from thence: so in the Cippi Hebraici we read [f508], that at the bottom of the Mount (of Olives) is a very great "cave", said to be Haggai the prophet's; and in it are many caves. — And near it is the grave of Zachariah the prophet, in a "cave" shut up; and frequent mention is made there of caves in which persons were buried; (see Gill on "~~Luke 11:47~~ Matthew 23:29"); perhaps the custom of burying in them might take its rise from the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham, their father, bought for a buryingplace for his dead. The sepulchre of Lazarus is pretended [f509] to be shown to travellers to this day, over which is built a chapel of marble, very decent, and comely, and stands close by a church built in honour of Martha and Mary, the two sisters of Lazarus, in the place where their house stood; but certain it is, that the grave of Lazarus was out of the town:

and a stone lay upon it. Our version is not so accurate, nor so agreeable to the form of graves with the Jews, nor to this of Lazarus's; their graves were not as ours, dug in the earth and open above, so as to have a stone

laid over them, for they often were, as this, caves in rocks, either natural, or hewn out of them by art; and there was a door at the side of them, by which there was an entrance into them; and at this door a stone was laid it would be better rendered here, and "a stone was laid to it"; not "upon it", for it had no opening above, but to it, at the side of it; and accordingly the Syriac and Persic versions read, "a stone was laid at the door of it"; and the Arabic version, "and there was a great stone at the door of it", as was at the door of Christ's sepulchre. In the Jewish sepulchres there was rxj, "a court" [f510] which was before the entrance into the cave; this was four square; it was six cubits long, and six broad; and here the bearers put down the corpse, and from hence it was carried into the cave, at which there was an entrance, sometimes called hr[mh yp, "the mouth of the cave" [f511]; and sometimes, rbqh jtp, "the door of the grave" [f512]; of its form, measure, and place, there is no express mention in the Jewish writings: it is thought to be about a cubit's breadth, and was on the side of the cave; so that at it, it might be looked into; and at the mouth of the cave was a stone put to stop it up, which was called llwg, from its being rolled there; though that with which the mouth of the cave was shut up, was not always a stone, nor made of stone; Maimonides [f513] says, it was made of stone, or wood, or the like matter; and so in the Misna [f514] it is said,

> "rbql llwg, "the covering for a grave", (or that with which it is stopped up,) if it be made of a piece of timber, whether it stands, or whether it inclines to the side, does not defile, but over against the door only;"

(see Gill on "Matthew 27:60").

Ver. 39. *Jesus said, take ye away the stone*, etc.] This was said either to the Jews, or rather to the servants that came along with Martha and Mary; and this he ordered, not to facilitate the resurrection, or merely in order to make way for Lazarus: he that could command him to come forth, could have commanded away the stone, but he chose to have it removed this way, that the corpse might be seen, and even smelt; and that it might be manifest, there was no fallacy, nor any intrigue between him, and the sisters of the deceased in this matter: this order was contrary to a rule of the Jews, which forbid the opening of a grave after it was stopped up [f515]; but a greater than the fathers of the traditions was here, even he who has the

keys of hell, or the grave, and can open, or order it to be opened, when he pleases:

Martha the sister of him that was dead: that is, of Lazarus, as the Persic version expresses it, calling him, "Gazarus",

saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh; or smells; not that she perceived this upon their moving the stone, but she concluded it from the time he had been dead, and had lain in the grave, in which dead bodies usually putrefy and smell: whether she said this out of respect to her brother, being unwilling he should be exposed to the view of persons, in such a state of corruption, she knew he must now be; or whether out of respect to Christ, lest he should be disordered with the offensive smell, is not certain: however, it seems as if she had no notion that Christ was about to raise her brother from the dead; and that the stone was commanded to be removed for that purpose, not merely for a sight of the dead, but that the dead might be seen to come forth alive: she imagined that Christ only wanted to have the stone removed, that he might have a sight of his deceased friend, which she thought would be very disagreeable and nauseous; so soon had she forgot what Christ had said to her, and lost that little exercise she had of faith and hope, with respect to the resurrection of her brother. Frames of soul, and acts of grace, are very changeable, and uncertain things; and especially when carnal reasoning is indulged.

For he hath been [dead] four days; he had been so long in the grave, (^{Joh 11:17}John 11:17). The word "dead" is not in the text; he might have been dead longer; though the Jews usually buried on the same day a person died: however, the sense is here, he had been so long in the grave; and so the Persic version renders it, "for it is the fourth day that he has been in the grave"; in the original text it is, "he is one of four days"; so many days he had been in the house appointed for all living; so long he had been removed from the sight of men, and had been in another world, and had begun another era, and four days had passed in it; he was so many days old according to that: so that his countenance was changed, he was not fit to be seen, nor approached unto; nor was there any hope of his returning to life. The Jews [f516] say, that

> "for three days the soul goes to the grave, thinking the body may return; but when it sees the figure of the face changed, it goes away, and leaves it, as it is said, (^{Job 14:22}Job 14:22)."

So of Jonah's being three days and three nights in the whale's belly, they say [f517],

> "these are the three days a man is in the grave, and his bowels burst; and after three days that defilement is turned upon his face."

Hence, they do not allow anyone to bear witness of one that is dead or killed, that he is such an one, after three days, because then his countenance is changed [f518], and he cannot be well known.

Ver. 40. *Jesus saith unto her, said I not unto thee*, etc.] Not in so many words, but what might be concluded from what he said; yea, the following express words might be delivered by Christ, in his conversation with Martha, though they are not before recorded by the evangelist:

that if thou wouldst believe thou shouldest see the glory of God; a glorious work of God, wherein the glory of his power and goodness would be displayed, and the Son of God be glorified, or should see such a miracle wrought, which should engage her to glorify God; and on account of which, she would see just reason to do it, and would be concerned in it: and when it would appear that the sickness and death of her brother, which had given her and her sister so much distress and uneasiness, were for the glory of God, and the honour of Christ; (see <43104>John 11:4). Moreover, to "see the glory of God", is to see Christ, who is the brightness of his father's glory; and though she had a sight of him now, and before this time, with her bodily eyes, and also with the eyes of her understanding, and knew that he was the Son of God, and the true Messiah; yet it is suggested, that upon a fresh and strong exercise of faith on Christ, with respect to the resurrection of her brother, and by means of that, she should have a clearer view of his glory, as the only begotten of the Father; for as he was declared to be the Son of God, by his own resurrection from the dead afterwards, so he was more fully manifested to be that glorious and divine person, by his raising others from the dead, than by any other miracle; and to be indulged with such a sight of him, is a very high favour; (see <19602>Psalm 63:2); and such who have their faith most in exercise, see much of the glory of God, both in the face of Christ, and in his providences, and the performance of his promises.

Ver. 41. *Then they took away the stone*, etc.] "From the door of the sepulchre", as the Arabic version adds;

from the place where the dead was laid: this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions:

and Jesus lift up his eyes; to heaven; this is a praying gesture, as in (⁴⁸⁰¹John 17:1),

and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me; which cannot refer to the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead, or to any assistance given him in performing that miracle, because that as yet was not done; and when it was done, was done by his own power, as all the circumstances of it show; but it relates to everything in which he had before heard him, and was a foundation for him, as man, to believe he still would, in whatever was to come; and particularly to the present opportunity of showing his power in so remarkable a manner, and before so many witnesses.

Ver. 42. *And I knew that thou hearest me always*, etc.] Which was not only a support to the faith of Christ, as man, but is also to his people, whose advocate, intercessor, and mediator he is.

But because of the people which stand by, I said [it]; that he was heard, and always heard by God; and, therefore must have great interest in his affection, and knowledge of his will; yea, their wills must be the same:

that they may believe that thou hast sent me: for if he had not sent him, he would never have heard him in anything, and much less in everything; wherefore this was a full proof, and clear evidence of his divine mission.

Ver. 43. *And when he had thus spoken*, etc.] To God his Father, in the presence and hearing of the people;

he cried with a loud voice; not on account of the dead, but for the sake of those around him, that all might hear and observe; and chiefly to show his majesty, power and authority, and that what he did was open and above board, and not done by any secret, superstitious, and magical whisper; and as an emblem of the voice and power of his Gospel in quickening dead sinners, and of the voice of the arcangel and trumpet of God, at the general resurrection;

Lazarus come forth; he calls him by his name, not only as being his friend, and known by him, but to distinguish him from any other corpse that might lie interred in the same cave; and he bids him come forth out of the cave, he being quickened and raised immediately by the power which went forth

from Christ as soon as ever he lifted up his voice; which showed him to be truly and properly God, and to have an absolute dominion over death and the grave.

Ver. 44. *And he that was dead came forth*, etc.] That is, he who had been dead, being now made alive, and raised up, and set on his feet, came out of the cave:

bound hand and foot with grave clothes; not that his hands were bound together, and much less his hands and feet together, with any bands or lists of cloth; but his whole body, as Nonnus expresses it, was bound with grave clothes from head to foot, according to the manner of the eastern countries, Jews, Egyptians, and others, who used to wrap up their dead in many folds of linen cloth, as infants are wrapped in swaddling bands: and their manner was to let down their arms and hands close by their sides, and wind up altogether from head to foot: so that there was another miracle besides that of raising him from the dead; that in such a situation, in which he could have no natural use of his hands and feet, he should rise up, stand on his feet, walk, and come forth thus bound, out of the cave:

and his face was bound about with a napkin; the use of which was not only to tie up the chin and jaws, but to hide the grim and ghastly looks of a dead corpse; and one of the same price and value was used by rich and poor: for it is said [f519],

> “the wise men introduced a custom of using `rdws`, “a napkin”, (the very word here used, which Nonnus says is Syriac,) of the same value, not exceeding a penny, that he might not be ashamed who had not one so good as another; and they cover the faces of the dead, that they might not shame the poor, whose faces were black with famine.”

For it seems [f520],

> “formerly they used to uncover the faces of the rich, and cover the faces of the poor, because their faces were black through want, and the poor were ashamed; wherefore they ordered, that they should cover the faces of all, for the honour of the poor.”

Jesus saith unto them; to the servants that stood by:

loose him, and let him go; unwind the linen rolls about him, and set his hands and feet at liberty, and let him go to his own house.

Ver. 45. *Then many of the Jews which came to Mary*, etc.] To her house, to comfort her, and that came along with her to the grave:

and had seen the things which Jesus did; in raising the dead body of Lazarus, and causing him to walk, though bound in grave clothes:

believed on him; that he was the true Messiah: such an effect the miracle had on them; so that it was a happy day for them, that they came from Jerusalem to Bethany to pay this visit.

Ver. 46. *But some of them went their way to the Pharisees*, etc.] At Jerusalem, who were members of the sanhedrim; so far were some of them from receiving any advantage by this miracle, that they were the more hardened, and filled with malice and envy to Christ, and made the best of their way to acquaint his most inveterate enemies:

and told them what things Jesus had done; at Bethany; not to soften their minds, and bring them to entertain a good opinion of him, but to irritate them, and put them upon schemes to destroy him; thus even miracles, as well as the doctrines of the Gospel, are to some the savour of death unto death, whilst to others the savour of life unto life.

Ver. 47. *Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council*, etc.] They convened the sanhedrim, the great council of the nation together, of which they were some of the principal members:

and said, what do we? that is, why is nothing done? why are we so dilatory? why do we sit still, and do nothing? or what is to be done? this now lies before us, this is to be considered and deliberated on:

for this man doth many miracles; this is owned, and could not be denied by them; and should have been a reason why they should have acknowledged him to have been the Messiah, and embraced him; whereas they used it as a reason, why they should think of, and concert some measures, to hinder and put a stop to the belief of him as such.

Ver. 48. *If we let him thus alone*, etc.] Going about from place to place, teaching the people, and doing such miracles:

all men will believe on him; the whole nation will receive him as the Messiah, and proclaim him their king, and yield a cheerful obedience to all his commands:

the Romans will come; against us, with their powerful armies; interpreting the setting him up as Messiah, to be an instance of rebellion against Caesar, and his government:

and take away both our place and nation; that is, will destroy the temple, their holy place, the place of their religion and worship; and their city, the place of their habitation, and lay waste their country; and take away from them that little share of power and government they had, and strip them both of their civil and religious privileges: the Persic version renders it, "they will take away our place, and make a decree against our religion".

Ver. 49. *And one of them, [named] Caiaphas*, etc.] (See Gill on "Matthew 26:3"), (See Gill on "Luke 3:2"), (See Gill on "John 18:13").

being the high priest that same year; the high priesthood originally was not annual, but for life; but towards the close of the second temple, it came into the hands of the king, to appoint who would to be high priest [f521]; and it became venal; it was purchased with money; insomuch that they changed the priesthood once a twelve month, and every year a new high priest was made [f522] now this man being in such an high office, and a man of no conscience, and of bad principles, being a Sadducee, as seems from (Acts 4:6 5:17), who denied the resurrection of the dead, and was unconcerned about a future state; and having no restraint upon him, in a bold, haughty, and blustering manner,

said unto them, ye know nothing at all; ye are a parcel of ignorant and stupid creatures, mere fools and idiots, to sit disputing and arguing, pro and con about such a fellow as this; what is to be done is obvious enough, and that is to take away this man's life, without any more ado; it matters not what he is, nor what he does; these are things that are not to be considered, they are out of the question; would you save the nation, destroy the man; things are come to this crisis, that either his life must go, or the nation perish; and which is most expedient, requires no time to debate about.

Ver. 50. *Nor consider that it is expedient for us*, etc.] Priests, Levites, Pharisees, the sanhedrim, and ecclesiastical rulers of the people; who, as

Caiaphas apprehended, must suffer in their characters and revenues, must quit their honourable and gainful posts and places, if Jesus went on and succeeded at this rate: wherefore it was most expedient and advantageous for them, which was the main thing to be considered in such a council, so he thought it was,

that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not; he proceeded entirely upon this political principle, that a public good ought to be preferred to a private one; that it was no matter what the man was, whether innocent or not; common prudence, and the public safety of the nation, required him to fall a sacrifice, rather than the Romans should be exasperated and provoked to such a degree, as to threaten the utter ruin and destruction of the whole nation.

Ver. 51. *And this spake he not of himself*, etc.] Not of his own devising and dictating, but by the Spirit of God; as a wicked man sometimes may, and as Balaam did; the Spirit of God dictated the words unto him, and put them into his mouth; nor did he use them in the sense, in which the Holy Ghost designed them:

but being high priest that year; by his office he was the oracle of God, and was so esteemed by the people, and therefore a proper person to be made use of in this way; and especially being high priest that year, in which the priesthood was to be changed, and vision and prophecy to be sealed up:

he prophesied; though he did not know he did, as did Pharaoh, (<2Exodus 10:28), and the people of the Jews, (<4Matthew 27:25).

That Jesus should die for that nation; these words, with what follows in the next verse, are the words of the evangelist, interpreting the prophecy of Caiaphas, according to the sense of the Holy Ghost that Jesus should die, which was contrary to a notion the Jews had imbibed, concerning the Messiah; (see <4John 12:34). But Jesus the true Messiah must die; this was determined in the counsel of God, agreed to by Christ in the covenant of grace, foretold by the prophets from the beginning of the world, typified by sacrifices and other things, under the former dispensation, predicted by Christ himself, and accordingly came to pass; and upon the above accounts was necessary, as well as for the salvation of his people, who otherwise must have perished; and yet was free and voluntary in him, and a strong expression, and a demonstrative proof of his love to them: and not only this prophecy declared, that Jesus should die, but that he should die for that

nation, for the nation of the Jews; not for every individual in it, for all of them were not saved by him; some received him not; they rejected him as the Messiah, Saviour, and Redeemer, and died in their sins; but for all the elect of God among them, the sheep of the house of Israel, to whom he was sent, and whom he came to seek and save; and whom he blessed, by turning them away from their iniquities, and by taking away their iniquities from them: and moreover, this prophecy suggests, that Jesus was to die, not merely as a martyr, to confirm with his blood the doctrine he preached, nor only as an example of courage, meekness, patience, and love, but for, or in the room and stead of his people, as their surety; giving his life a ransom and himself a sacrifice to the justice of God, for them; there by fulfilling the law and satisfying it, and appeasing the wrath of God on their account.

Ver. 52. *And not for that nation only*, etc.] For though Christ, as prophet, was sent to the Jews only, and was the minister of the circumcision, yet as a priest he did not die for them only, but for the Gentiles also; even for the whole mystical Israel of God all the world over, whether among Jews or Gentiles; (see 1 John 2:2).

But that also he should gather together in one, the children of God that were scattered abroad; by which may be meant, not only the elect of God among the Jews, who were scattered amidst the nations of the world, for whom Christ died, and to whom the Gospel was in the first place sent, and who were gathered together into a Gospel church state; (see John 7:35 1 Peter 1:1,2 James 1:1); but rather the elect of God among the Gentiles, called “the children of God”, in opposition to a notion of the Jews, who took this character to themselves, on account of their national adoption, and denied it to the Gentiles, reckoning them no other than as dogs; and because they were the children of God by special adoption, in divine, predestination, and in the covenant of grace; and were so considered, when given to Christ, who looked upon them as in this relation, when he assumed their nature, and died in their room and stead; and not merely because they would hereafter appear to be the children of God in regeneration, and by faith in Christ Jesus, and have the witnessings of the Spirit that they were so; and much less because they had a fitness and disposition to be the children of God, since they were by nature as others, children of wrath: and these are said to be “scattered abroad”, both from God, as they were by the fall, and by their own transgressions; which separated between God and them, and set them at a distance from him; for

in their nature head, and nature state, they are afar off from him, and from one another; which may regard not only distance of place, being scattered about in the several parts of the world, but their disagreement in mind and judgment, in religion and manners; every one pursuing his own way, going astray like lost sheep: now Christ died for them, in order to bring them nigh to God, to the one true and living God; and to gather them together under one head, himself, their common head; by whom they were represented in his crucifixion, burial, and resurrection; and to make them one body, and bring them into one fold, into one church state here, and at last to one place, to heaven, there to be for ever with him; and so the Persic version renders it, "that he might gather them into one place": and in this, the red heifer was a type of Christ; whose blood was sprinkled directly before the tabernacle of the congregation, and without the camp; and which was done, as a Jewish writer says [f523],

> "to call to mind the design of the heifer, which was to bring µyqjwrmh, "those that were afar off", from the camp of the Shekinah, to be near unto it."

Ver. 53. *Then from that day forth*, etc.] Caiaphas's reasoning appeared so good, and his advice so agreeable, that it was at once, and generally assented to, except by one or two, as Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea; that ever after this,

they took counsel together; at certain times, and that very often, and agreed in their counsel,

for to put him to death; this they resolved upon, before there was any legal process, before any crime was charged upon him, or any proof given, or he was heard what he had to say for himself; so highly approved of was Caiaphas's motion, to put him to death, right or wrong, whether he was innocent or not; that they had nothing to do, but to consult of ways and means of getting him into their hands, and of taking away his life in a manner, as would he most for their own credit among the people, and to his shame and disgrace, and at the most proper and suitable time.

Ver. 54. *Jesus therefore*, etc.] Knowing the resolution the sanhedrim had taken to put him to death, and the schemes they were forming to apprehend him:

walked no more openly among the Jews; at, or near Jerusalem; he did not teach in their streets, nor work miracles, nor appear in public company:

but went thence, from Bethany:

unto a country near to the wilderness: whether this was the wilderness of Judea, where John came preaching, and near to which our Lord was before he came to Bethany, or the wilderness of Bethaven, (<06B212>Joshua 18:12), is not certain:

into a city called Ephraim; the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, call it Ephren, and so some copies; it seems to be the same with the Ephraim of the Misnic and Talmudic doctors; concerning which they say [f524],

> "Micmas and Mezonicha are the first for fine flour, and the next to them is Ephraim in the valley."

For it seems there were two Ephraims, one in the valley, and another in the mount [f525] it was a place very fruitful for wheat; hence that saying of Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of Egypt, to Moses [f526];

> "do you bring straw to Ephraim?"

which was a proverbial expression, the same with ours of carrying coals to Newcastle: they seeing Moses do signs and wonders, supposed he did them by enchantment; and the sense of their proverb is, do you bring enchantments into Egypt, where there are so many already? This Ephraim, the Jews say [f527], is the same with that in (<140319>2 Chronicles 13:19), and as there Bethel is mentioned with it, it seems to have been in the tribe of Benjamin: and it may be observed, that Josephus [f528] speaks of an Ephraim, along with Bethel likewise; so that they all seem to mean the same place; and according to the same writer, it was but a little city, and it may be an obscure one, for which reason Christ withdrew to it. Epiphanius [f529] makes mention of the wilderness of Bethel and Ephraim, through which he travelled, accompanied by a Jew, as he came up from Jericho to the hill country; and is very likely the same wilderness which is here spoken of; and by some called Quarentana, and placed by the river Chereth, in the tribe of Benjamin, north east of Jerusalem; and the same writer elsewhere calls [f530] Ephraim, the city of the wilderness: according to Jerom [f531], it was twenty miles from Aelia, or Jerusalem; though according to Eusebius, it was but eight miles, which is thought to be the truest account; and by them both is

said to be a very large village, and in which they may not differ from Josephus; for it might be a large village, and yet a little city. Jerom [f532] takes notice of a place called Aphra, in the tribe of Benjamin, which he says at that time was called the village Effrem, and was five miles from Bethel eastward; and of another called Aphraim, a city in the tribe of Issachar, which in his time went by the name of the village Affarea, six miles from the legion, northward; the former agrees best with this Ephraim.

And there continued with his disciples; spending his time in private conversation with them, teaching and instructing them in things concerning the kingdom of God, his time with them being now but short.

Ver. 55. *And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand*, etc.] Which was the fourth passover from Christ's entrance on his public ministry, and the last he ate with his disciples; when he, by being sacrificed for his people, put an end to that, and all other ceremonial observances:

and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem, before the passover: not only from the country where Ephraim was, but from all other countries in Judea and Galilee: all the males were obliged to go up to Jerusalem, at the time of the passover, where it was only kept; but many went before that time, for the reason following:

to purify themselves; we read in (2 Chronicles 30:18) of many that had not cleansed themselves, and yet ate the passover; for whom Hezekiah prayed, that they might be pardoned, which shows that they had done amiss: upon which place, Jarchi has this observation; that

> "Judah (the men of Judah) were all clean, because they were near to Jerusalem, and could purify and sanctify themselves, and return to Jerusalem; but many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and Issachar, and Zabulon, could not do so."

And this seems to be the case of these people, they were country people, that lived at a distance, and not having purified themselves from several uncleannesses, came up before the time, that they might cleanse themselves, and be ready at the time: in several cases purification was required; as with new mothers, menstruous and profluvious persons, and such that had touched a dead body, or any creeping thing, and in other cases; and which by reason of distance, might be neglected; wherefore it was necessary they should come up before the time of the passover, to fit

themselves for it: the rule about defiled persons eating the passover, is this [f533];

> “if the congregation is polluted, or the greatest part of it, or the priests are unclean, and the congregation pure, it is kept in uncleanness; but if the lesser part of the congregation is defiled, the pure keep the first passover, and the unclean the second.”

This, their commentators say [f534], is to be understood of uncleanness, by touching the dead, which required seven days of purification; and it is very probable that this was the case of these persons, since it was about so many days before the passover, that they came up; (see <43201>John 12:1). The account Maimonides [f535] gives of this matter is this;

> “who is a defiled person, that is put off to the second passover? everyone who cannot eat the passover, on the night of the fifteenth of Nisan, because of his uncleanness; as profluvious men and women, menstruous and new mothers, and the husbands of menstruous women; but he that toucheth the dead carcass of a beast, or a creeping thing, and the like, on the fourteenth, lo, he dips, and they slay for him (the passover) after he has dipped; and in the evening, when his sun is set, he eats the passover; he that is defiled by touching the dead, whose seventh day happens to be on the fourteenth, though he dips and is sprinkled on, and lo, he is fit to eat the holy things at evening, yet they do not kill for him, but he is put off to the second passover; as it is said, (<04906>Numbers 9:6). “And there were certain men who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day”; by tradition it is learned, that it was their seventh day, and therefore they asked if it should be killed for them, and they should eat at evening? and it was declared to them, that they should not kill for them: of what is this to be understood? when he is polluted with a defilement by the dead, which Nazarites shave for; but if he is polluted with other defilements by the dead, which the Nazarites do not shave for, they kill for him on his seventh day, after he has dipped, and is sprinkled upon; and when his sun is set, he eats his passover; a profluvious person, who sees two appearances, and reckons seven days, and dips on the seventh, they kill for him, and he eats at evening. — They do not kill for a menstruous woman on

her seventh day, for lo, she does not dip till the eighth night, and she is not fit to eat holy things until the ninth night."

These, with many other cases there instanced, may serve to illustrate this passage.

Ver. 56. *Then sought they for Jesus*, etc.] That is, the country people; some on one account, and some on another; some out of curiosity to see his person, others to see his miracles, and others to hear his doctrine; and some, it may be, to take him, and deliver him up to the sanhedrim, who had issued out a proclamation to that purpose, and doubtless offered a reward:

and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple; whither they came to purify themselves, according to the law of the sanctuary:

what think ye, that he will not come to the feast? it was a matter of dispute with them, whether Christ would come or not, to the feast; some might be of opinion that he would not, at least they very much questioned it, since the sanhedrim had published such an order for the discovery of him; and since upon it he was gone from Bethany, farther into the country; though others might be differently minded, and believe he would come, since all the males of Israel were obliged to appear at that feast, and it was his duty; and they could not persuade themselves that he would neglect his duty, for fear of the Jews.

Ver. 57. *Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees*, etc.] Who were of the sanhedrim:

had given a commandment; or published an edict, a decree of the senate:

that if any man knew where he were, he should show [it], that they might take him; and this made it a doubtful point with some, whether he would come to the feast or not; and was the reason why others sought for him, and inquired after him, that they might discover him to the chief priests and Pharisees, and have the promised reward.

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 12

Ver. 1. *Then Jesus, six days before the passover*, etc.] Or “before the six days of the passover”; not as designing the days of that feast, for they were seven; but as reckoning so many days back from it, that is, before the sixth day from the ensuing passover: if there were six complete days between this and the passover, as this way of speaking seems to imply; then this must be the day before the Jewish sabbath, and this is more likely, than that Christ should travel on the sabbath day: but if this was the sixth day before it, it was their sabbath day, and so at the going out of it in the evening, a supper was made for him, which with the Jews on that night, was a plentiful one; for they remembered the sabbath in its going out, as well as in its coming in [f536], and this was to prevent grief at the going out of it: so some days before the passover, the lamb was separated from the flock, and kept up till the fourteenth day, (<2120>Exodus 12:3,6) particularly it may be observed, that seven days before the day of atonement, the high priest was separated from his own house, and had to the chamber Palhedrin [f537]; and much such a space of time there was, between the day of the great atonement by Christ, and his unction by Mary; which is said to be against the day of his burial, which being the same day with his sufferings, was the great day of atonement: at this time Jesus

came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead; the last clause is left out in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions:

whom he raised from the dead; that is, “Jesus”, as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions express; and the Ethiopic version adds, “in Bethany”. This was the town of Lazarus; here he lived, and here he died, and here he was raised from the dead; and here he continued and dwelt, after his resurrection; and hither Christ came to see him, and the rest of the family, though he knew he exposed himself to danger in so doing.

Ver. 2. *There they made him a supper*, etc.] At Bethany, in the house of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary; by whose order, and at whose charge it was

prepared for him; and not in the house of Simon the leper, which was four days after this, (<4026>Matthew 26:2,6).

And Martha served; who was always a busy, active, and stirring woman; and this she did, to testify her love to Christ, and great respect for him; otherwise, as she was a person of substance, she had servants enough to wait at table:

but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him; and ate, and drank, and conversed; by which it appeared, that he was really risen from the dead, and was in a good state of health.

Ver. 3. *Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard very costly*, etc.] Worth three hundred pence, according to Judas's estimation of it. This Mary was the other sister of Lazarus; (see Gill on "<4026>Matthew 26:7"), (see Gill on "<4114>Mark 14:3"), concerning the nature and value of this ointment:

and anointed the feet of Jesus; as he lay upon the bed or couch, at supper:

and wiped his feet with her hair; (see Gill on "<4038>Luke 7:38").

And the house was filled with the odour of the ointment; (see <2203>Song of Solomon 1:3,12); ointment of spikenard was very odoriferous: this may be an emblem of the sweet savour of Christ, in the ministration of the Gospel, throughout the whole world.

Ver. 4. *Then saith one of his disciples*, etc.] Who had no true love for his master, was an hypocrite, and a covetous person:

Judas Iscariot; so called, to distinguish him from another Judas, an apostle; (see Gill on "<4004>Matthew 10:4").

Simon's [son]; this is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; (see Gill on "<4302>John 13:2");

which should betray him; and so he did; this was pre-determined by God, foretold in prophecy, and foreknown by Christ; and is observed here, to show the temper and character of the man.

Ver. 5. *Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence*, etc.] Meaning Roman pence, one of which is, of the value of our money, seven pence halfpenny; so that three hundred pence amount to nine pounds seven shillings and six pence:

and given to the poor? this was his pretence, and with which he covered himself; his uneasiness was, because it was not sold, and the money put into his hands, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 6. *This he said, not that he cared for the poor*, etc.] He had no affection for them, and was unconcerned about them, and took no care of them to feed and clothe them; he was no ways solicitous for their support, refreshment, and more comfortable living:

but because he was a thief; to his master, and purloined the money he was intrusted with by him, and put it to his own use:

and had the bag, and bare what put therein; the word rendered a "bag", is adopted by the Rabbinical Jews, into their language; and is sometimes read "Gloskema", and at other times "Dloskema", and is used by them for different things; sometimes [f538] for a bier, or coffin, in which the dead was buried, which sense can have no place here; sometimes for a chest, or coffer [f539]; and so the Septuagint use the Greek word, in (<14 08>2 Chronicles 24:8,10,11), for the chest into which the people put their collection; and it may be so interpreted here, and so Nonnus renders it; it may signify the chest or coffer, which Judas had the care of, the keys of which were in his hands, and whatever were to be put into it, he bore, or carried thither: and it is also used by the Jewish writers, for a purse [f540]; it is asked,

> "what is "Dloskema?" says Rabbah bar Samuel, ybsd aqyl j, "the purse of old men";"

or such as ancient men use; and this is the signification of it here: it may be the same with the "Loculi" of the Romans, and so the Vulgate Latin renders it here; which were different from a chest, or coffer, being moveable, and to be carried about, and which were carried by servants, as well as the purse [f541]. Judas had the purse, into which was put whatsoever was ministered to Christ, for the common supply of him and his disciples, and for the relief of the poor.

Ver. 7. *Then said Jesus, let her alone*, etc.] Do not disturb her in what she does, or hinder her, or blame her for it:

against the day of my burial hath she kept this; this ointment, which she now poured on Christ; it was usual to embalm the dead with ointments and spices: Christ suggests, that the time of his death and burial were nigh, and that this woman had kept this ointment till now, for such a purpose; and

whereas she would not be able to make use of it at the time of his interment, she had embalmed his body with it now, beforehand; though without any knowledge of his death, or any such intention and design in her, but the Holy Ghost so directing her: for this is not to be understood of her keeping any part of it till that time, which it does not appear she did.

Ver. 8. *For the poor always ye have with you*, etc.] And so would not want opportunities of showing a regard to them, which Christ always recommended; nor does he here in the least discourage an industrious and affectionate concern for them: the words seem to be a sort of prophecy, that there would be always poor persons in the churches of Christ, to be taken care of and provided for; (see Gill on "Matthew 26:11"); and yet the Jews suppose cases, in which the collectors of alms may have no poor to distribute to, and direct what they shall do in such cases [f542]:

but me ye have not always; meaning, with respect to his corporeal presence, which would be quickly withdrawn from them, when there would be no more an opportunity of showing him personal respect, in such a way.

Ver. 9. *Much of the people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there*, etc.] That is, many of the Jews that dwelt at Jerusalem, knew that Jesus was at Bethany; for it being but two miles from Jerusalem, the report of his being come soon reached thither:

and they came from Jerusalem to Bethany,

not for Jesus' sake only; to see him, and hear him, and observe what he said and did:

but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead; that is, whom Jesus had raised from the dead, as the Alexandrian copy, and the Ethiopic version express it; for it equally excited their curiosity, to see the person that had been dead, and was raised from the dead, as to see him who raised him: and it is very likely before they had no opportunity of seeing him; it may be he did not appear publicly before, but kept himself retired; but now Jesus being come, he showed himself openly; which the Jerusalem Jews being informed of, induced them to come to see both the one and the other.

Ver. 10. *But the chief priests*, etc.] With the rest of the sanhedrim:

consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; as well as Jesus, and that for no other crime, but because he was raised from the dead by him; which shows what consciences these men had, and how horribly wicked they were; that they stopped at nothing, whereby they might satisfy their malice and envy, and secure their worldly interests and advantages.

Ver. 11. *Because that by reason of him*, etc.] Of the miracle which was wrought upon him, in raising him from the dead, of which he was a living and an abiding witness:

many of the Jews went away; not from Jerusalem only, but from the chief priests and Pharisees, and the rest of the Jews, that combined against Christ; they withdrew themselves from their party, and deserted them:

and believed on Jesus; as the Messiah; so that they found their interest was decreasing and weakening every day, and that those on the side of Christ were increasing; and this they could not bear, and therefore consulted to take away the life of Lazarus, as well as Jesus; who they imagined, as long as he lived, would be a means of inducing persons to believe in Jesus as the Messiah: whereas if he was dead, the fact would be forgotten, or be more easily denied.

Ver. 12. *On the next day, much people that were come to the feast*, etc.] Of the passover; and they were much people indeed, that came yearly to this feast, from all parts of the nation; for all the males in Israel, were obliged to appear at this time; and though the women were not obliged, yet multitudes of them came, and the fame of Jesus might bring the more; add to which, that there was now a general expectation of the Messiah's coming, which brought the Jews from all parts of the world, to Jerusalem; so that this might be called indeed, ^ykw[m jsp, "a crowded passover": and though the following account is a stretching it too far, yet it may serve to illustrate this matter:

> "would you desire to know what multitudes were at Jerusalem of the priests, you may know, as it is written, (<1086>1 Kings 8:63), and the tradition is, that an ox was offered for twenty four, and a sheep for eleven. — King Agrippa sought to know what was the number of the multitude, which were in Jerusalem; he said to the priests, lay by for me one kidney of every passover lamb; they laid by for him six hundred thousand pair of kidneys, double the number of those

> that came out of Egypt: and there is never a passover lamb, but there are more than ten numbered for it [f543], etc."

Now the day following the supper at Bethany, and which seems to be the first day of the week, this multitude of people,

when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem; from Bethany, which was soon known, it being so near.

Ver. 13. *Took branches of palm trees*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, "and young shoots from Jerusalem"; these grew in great plenty, on one part of the Mount of Olives, that next to Bethany, from whence that town had its name; for it signifies the house of dates, the fruit of the palm tree; (see Gill on "<4217>Matthew 21:17"). And as that tree was a sign of joy and victory, they carried branches of it in their hands, as they met the King Messiah, who was about to make his public entrance into Jerusalem, in triumph; and where by his sufferings and death, he should gain the victory over sin, Satan, the world, and death; and lay a solid foundation for joy and peace, to all that believe in him: the Jews say [f544],

> "if a man takes ˆyyab, (the very Greek word here used,) palm tree branches in his hands, we know that he is victorious."

The Persic version reads, "branches of olives".

And went forth to meet him, and cried; when they came up to him, and as he passed by them:

Hosanna, blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord; (see Gill on "<4209>Matthew 21:9").

Ver. 14. *And Jesus, when he had found a young ass*, etc.] Which he sent his disciples for, to a neighbouring village, and they brought to him:

sat thereon, as it is written; in (<3809>Zechariah 9:9) though some part of the words seems to be taken out of (<2611>Isaiah 62:11); (see Gill on "<4205>Matthew 21:5"); and so Nonnus paraphrases it here, "that it might be fulfilled which Esaias said".

Ver. 15. *Fear not, daughter of Zion*, etc.] But rejoice; (see <3809>Zechariah 9:9) and (see Gill on "<4205>Matthew 21:5").

Ver. 16. *These things understood not his disciples at the first*, etc.] Or "at that time", as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; or "on that day", as

the Ethiopic version; they did not then know the sense of that prophecy, nor that the things which were now doing were a fulfilling of it:

but when Jesus was glorified; was raised front the dead, and ascended to heaven, and was set down at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honour; and when having received the promise of the Father, the Holy Ghost, and his gifts, he poured them forth in a very plenteous and extraordinary manner upon them; whereby their minds were greatly illuminated, and they had a very distinct knowledge of the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and saw clearly how they severally had their accomplishment in Christ:

then remembered they that these things were written of him; in the prophecies of the Old Testament;

and [that] they had done these things unto him; both the disciples and the multitude, or that these things were done to him; such as bringing the ass to him, laying their clothes on it, and setting him upon it, attending him with shoutings and hosannas to the city of Jerusalem, etc.

Ver. 17. *The people therefore that was with him*, etc.] The Jews, that came from Jerusalem to Bethany, to comfort the two sisters of Lazarus upon his death, who believed in Christ; and others of the town of Bethany, who with them were along with Christ:

when he called Lazarus out of his grave; saying, Lazarus, come forth:

and raised him from the dead; to life:

bare record: to the Jews at Jerusalem, and to the people that came out of the several countries, of the truth of that fact; declaring, that they were eye and ear witnesses of the whole, and that it was a truth that might be depended on.

Ver. 18. *For this cause the people also met him*, etc.] This was a principal reason, among others, which induced them to set out in the manner they did, with palm tree branches in their hands, and accost him as the king of Israel, when they met him, and hosanna'd him into the city:

for that they heard that he had done this miracle; the witnesses were so many, and the proofs they gave so strong, that they firmly believed it: and this being a most amazing miracle, and which exceeded even any of the same kind; Jairus's daughter was but just dead, and the widow of Nain's

son was not buried, when they were raised, but Lazarus had been dead and buried four days; it made a very strong impression upon the minds of the people, and engaged their attention to him, and belief in him.

Ver. 19. *The Pharisees therefore said among themselves*, etc.] Either when assembled in their own private houses, or in the sanhedrim; or as they stood together in the streets, seeing Jesus pass by in such pomp, and such a multitude with him:

perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, "we prevail nothing", so Nonnus; the sense is the same; suggesting, that all their wise schemes and crafty councils signified nothing; the commands they enjoined the people not to follow him, or to apprehend him, or to show them where he was, were disregarded; their threatenings to put out of the synagogue such as should confess him, were taken no notice of; their promises of reward were slighted; their examples were not followed; and all their artifice and cunning, backed with power and authority, did not succeed:

behold, the world is gone after him; the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "the whole world", and so Nonnus; the Persic version, "all the people"; that is, a very great number of people; for they could not mean, that all the inhabitants of the world, or every individual of mankind were followers of him, and became his disciples, nor even all in their own land; they themselves, with multitudes more of the same complexion, were an exception to this: but they speak in the common dialect of that nation, of which take two or three instances;

> "it happened to a certain high priest, that he went out of the sanctuary, hyrtb aml[ylwk ylza wwhw, "and the whole world went after him"; and when they saw Shemaiah and Abtalion, they left him, and went after them [f545]."

And again [f546],

> "R. Aba proclaimed, whoever seeks riches, and whoever seeks the way of life in the world to come, let him come and study in the law, and aml[ylwk, "the whole world" will gather together to him."

Once more [f547],

> "Jonathan said to David, (^{1Sa 23:17}1 Samuel 23:17): "Thou shall be king over Israel, and I will be next to thee"; what is the meaning of this? perhaps Jonathan the son of Saul saw amlu, "the world" draw after David."

This shows the sense of those phrases, "the world", and "the whole world", when used in the article of redemption by Jesus Christ; (see Gill on "^{1Jo 2:2}1 John 2:2").

Ver. 20. *And there were certain Greeks*, etc.] "Hellenes", so called, from Hellen, a king of that name, as Pliny says [f548] These were not Graecizing Jews, or Jews that dwelt in Greece, and spoke the Greek language; for they were called not Hellenes, but Hellenists; but these were, as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions render it, Gentiles; and were either mere Gentiles, and yet devout and religious men, who were allowed to offer sacrifice, and to worship, in the court of the Gentiles; or they were proselytes, either of righteousness, and so were circumcised, and had a right to eat of the passover, as well as to worship at it; or of the gate, and so being uncircumcised, might not eat of the passover, yet might worship at it; which latter seems to be the case, by what follows: for these were

among them, that came up to worship at the feast; of the passover, which was near at hand: these were among those, that went forth to meet Jesus, and that attended him to Jerusalem, who were come up out of the country to this feast; and these came along with them to worship at it, to offer their sacrifices, and join in prayer, though they might not eat of the passover.

Ver. 21. *The same came therefore to Philip*, etc.] Who might know him; they might have been some of his neighbours formerly, for that Philip's parents, though Jews, dwelt among Greeks, seems probable, from the name given to him, which is a Greek one; some have thought, that these Greeks were Syrophoenicians, who dwelt upon the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and were not far off from Galilee, and from Bethsaida, the native place of Philip, and is therefore mentioned as follows:

which was of Bethsaida of Galilee; (see Gill on "^{Joh 1:44}John 1:44"). This place may be interpreted, "the house of hunting", or "of fishing"; for it is not easy to say which it has its name from, since adyx, "saida", signifies both hunting and fishing: and seeing it was in or near the tribe of Naphtali, where was plenty of deer, and a wilderness was near it, where might be wild beasts, it might be so called from hunting: and as it was situated near

the lake of Gennesaret, it might have its name from the fishing trade used in it; for Peter and Andrew, who were of it, were both fishermen: but it is yet more difficult to determine, whether this is the same with, or different from the Bethsaida Josephus [f549] speaks of, as rebuilt by Philip, and called by him Julius, after the name of Caesar's daughter, as I have observed in (see Gill on "<4910>Luke 9:10"), (see Gill on "<4044>John 1:44"); since this was in Galilee, of which Herod Antipas was tetrarch, and where Philip could have no power to rebuild places, and change their names; and besides, the city, which he repaired, and called Julian, according to Josephus [f550] was in lower Gaulonitis, and therefore must be different, unless that, or any part of it, can be thought to be the same with Galilee: wherefore the learned Reland [f551] thinks, that there were two Bethsaidas, and which seems very probable; and it is likely, that this is here purposely called Bethsaida of Galilee, to distinguish it from the other, which, by some persons, might still be called Bethsaida, though it had got a new name. Moreover, this Bethsaida is mentioned in other places along with Capernaum and Chorazin, (<4012121>Matthew 11:21,23), which were in Galilee. And Epiphanius says [f552], that Bethsaida and Capernaum were not far distant one from another: and according to Jerom [f553], Chorazin was but two miles from Capernaum; and who elsewhere says [f554], that Capernaum, Tiberias, Bethsaida, and Chorazin, were situated on the shore of the lake of Gennesaret. It is said to be fifty six miles from Jerusalem:

and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus; that is, they entreated him, that he would introduce them into the company of Jesus; they wanted to be admitted into his presence, to have some discourse and conversation with him; and what might make them the more desirous of it, was the miracle he had lately wrought in raising Lazarus from the dead; as also the uncommon manner of his entering into Jerusalem, which they saw; and which shows, that it was not a bare sight of his person they meant, but the enjoyment of his company, for a while; and this favour they ask of Philip, with great respect to him, and in a very polite way, and yet with great sincerity, and strong affection, and earnest importunity; and was a pledge and presage of the future conversion of the Gentiles, when the Jews would be rejected. And it may be observed, that sensible sinners are very desirous of having a spiritual sight of Christ, of the glories of his person, and the fulness of his grace, and to see their interest in him, and to have communion and fellowship with him: he is all in all to them; no object so

delightful, and satisfying to them as he is; and they never see him, but they receive something from him, and are made more like unto him.

Ver. 22. *Philip cometh and telleth Andrew*, etc.] The request the Greeks made to him, and this he did, that he might have his advice in this matter; and that not only because he might be a senior man as well as apostle, but because he was of the same town, and might know these men as well as Philip:

and again, Andrew and Philip told Jesus; after they had consulted together, whether it was proper or not, to move this thing to their master; since he had forbid them going in the way of the Gentiles, they agreed to acquaint him with it, that he might do his pleasure.

Ver. 23. *And Jesus answered them*, etc.] Not directly and particularly; he did not in plain terms signify what was his will, whether these Greeks should be admitted or not; and yet expressed himself in such a manner as shows he was not averse to it, but was pleased with it, and takes notice of it, as an evidence of the near approach of his glorification:

saying, the hour is come, that the son of man should be glorified; by rising from the dead, ascending to heaven, sitting at the right hand of God, and from thence pouring forth the Spirit upon his disciples, who should go and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, as well as Jews; and which would issue in the conversion of many of them, and so in his glory, of which the coming of these Greeks was an earnest. But he intimates, in the next verse, that he must first die.

Ver. 24. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] This is a certain truth in nature, Christ was about to assert; and what he signifies by it would be a certain fact, and which he mentions, that his death might not be a stumbling block to his disciples, or any objection to his glorification; but was rather to be considered as a means of it, and necessary in order to it:

except a corn of wheat fall into the ground; or is sown in the earth; for sowing with the Jews is expressed by the falling of the seed into the earth; (see Gill on "Matthew 13:4"); and is a very fit phrase to set forth the death of Christ by, who fell a sacrifice to justice by the hands of men:

and die; or is corrupted, and putrefies; and which is done in three days time in moist land, but is longer in dry ground ere it perishes [f555]: and a corn of

wheat is almost the only seed, that being cast into the earth, does die; and therefore is very aptly used by Christ:

it abideth alone; a mere single corn as it is:

but if it die; if it wastes, consumes, and rots, as it does, being cast into the earth, in the time before mentioned:

it bringeth forth much fruit; it shoots out, and rises above ground, and appears in blade, and stalk, and ear, and produces many corns or grains of wheat; all which our Lord intends should be accommodated to himself, and to his death, and the fruits of it. He compares himself to a corn of wheat; to wheat, for the choiceness and excellency of it above all other grain, he being the chiefest among ten thousand, angels or men; and for the purity and cleanness of it, he being, even in his human nature, pure, and free from sin; and for its fruitfulness, he being fruitful in himself, and the cause of all fruitfulness in his people; and for its usefulness for food, he being the bread of life, and the finest of the wheat: and whereas the wheat must be threshed, and ground, and sifted, and kneaded, and baked, before it is fit for food; all this may express the sufferings and death of Christ, in order to be proper food for the faith of his people: and Christ here compares himself to a single corn of wheat, because he was of little account among men, and but little or nothing was expected by them from him; and chiefly because he was alone in the salvation of his people. The death of Christ is signified by the falling of the corn of wheat into the ground, and dying, and shows that Christ's death was not accidental, but designed; it was determined in the counsels and purposes of God, and intended for his glory and the redemption of men; even as wheat falls out of the hands of the sower, not casually, but on purpose, that it may die and spring up again, and produce an increase: and also, that the death of Christ was voluntary, both on his Father's part, and on his own; and was real, and not in appearance only, and yet was but for a short time; as the corn of wheat that dies, soon revives again, and is quickly above ground, so Christ, though he really died, did not long continue under the power of death, but rose again the third day, and now lives for ever. Moreover, Christ intimates by this simile, that if he had not died, he should have been alone; not without his Father, and the blessed Spirit; nor without the holy and elect angels, but without any of the sons of men, who all fell and died in Adam; and had not Christ died, none of them would have lived; none of them could have been justified; nor could their sins have been expiated; nor would any of them

have been regenerated: Christ must have been without them in heaven; wherefore he chose rather to die for them, that they might be for ever with him, than be alone in the human nature. And he further observes hereby, that his death would be productive of much fruit; which may be understood both of a large harvest of souls, that should be saved, among Jews, and Gentiles, and especially the latter; and of the blessings of grace, as redemption, justification, peace, pardon, and eternal life, that should follow upon it.

Ver. 25. *He that loveth his life shall lose it*, etc.] The sense is, that whoever is so in love with this present temporal life, as to be anxiously careful of it, and takes all precautions to secure it; and rather than to expose it to any danger, chooses to deny the faith of Christ, and desert his cause and interest; as such an one shall not long enjoy this life, so he shall come short of an eternal one:

and he that hateth his life in this world: on the other hand, whoever seems careless about it, and not to consult the safety of it, but is unconcerned about it; yea, as if he was throwing it away, as of no great moment and significancy, rather than do anything to preserve it, which would be scandalous to himself, and be dishonourable to his Lord and master; he

shall keep it unto life eternal: he shall be preserved in his temporal life, in a remarkable manner, until he has done the will and work of God, notwithstanding all attempts upon it; and he shall appear to have that spiritual life, which is the beginning and pledge of, and which springs up unto, and issues in eternal life; and that he shall enjoy in the world to come. This Christ said to let his disciples and followers know, that they must suffer and die, as well as he, though not on the same account, and for the self-same reasons; and that their sufferings and death in his cause, and for his Gospel, would turn to their advantage.

Ver. 26. *If any man serve, me*, etc.] Or is willing to be a servant of Christ, and to be esteemed as such;

let him follow me; as in the exercise of the graces of love, humility, patience, self-denial, and resignation of will to the will of God, and in the discharge of every duty, walking as he walked, so in a way of suffering; for as the master, so the servants, as the head, so the members, through many tribulations, must enter the kingdom; to which he encourages by the following things:

and where I am; in heaven, as he now was, as the Son of God; or “where I shall be”, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it, even as man, in the human nature, when raised from the dead:

there shall also my servant be; when he has done his work, and the place is prepared for him, and he for that, and where he shall ever abide; and as a further encouragement, he adds,

if any man serve me, him will [my] Father honour; by accepting his service, affording him his gracious presence here, and by giving him eternal glory hereafter, to which he has called him.

Ver. 27. *Now is my soul troubled*, etc.] At the hardness and unbelief of the Jews, and the rejection of them, when the Gentiles would be called, and converted, by which he would be glorified: and at the conduct and carriage of his disciples to him, he had a foreknowledge of; at the betraying of him by one, and the denial of him by another, and the flight of them all from him; and at the devil, and the furious and violent attack he knew he would make upon him, though he had obliged him to leave him, when he assaulted him before, and knew he could find nothing in him now, and that as God, he was able to destroy him; but this was to be done by him, as man, and by lying too: he was in his human soul troubled at the thoughts of his death, though it was his Father’s will, and he had agreed to it, and was for the salvation of his people, his heart was so much set upon; yet it was terrible to the human nature, and especially as attended with the wrath of God; at the apprehensions of which, his soul was exceedingly troubled; not as about to fall on him on his own personal account, but as being the surety of his people, and as having their sins upon him to satisfy angry and injured justice for:

and what shall I say? this question he puts, as being in the utmost distress, and difficulty, as if he knew not what to say; and yet not as advising with his disciples, what was to be said or done in his case; but is rather used to introduce another question, as the following words may be formed: shall I say,

father, save me from this hour? as requesting his Father, that he might be strengthened under his sufferings and death, and carried through them, and out of them; or rather as deprecating them, desiring the cup might pass from him, as he afterwards did; and then the sense is, shall I put up such a petition to my Father, to save me from sorrows, sufferings, and death? no,

I will not: the human nature through frailty might prompt him to it, and he be just going to do it, when he corrects himself, saying;

but for this cause came I unto this hour: this hour or time of sorrow and suffering was appointed for him; it was fixed in the covenant of grace, and Christ had agreed to it; he was sent into this world, and he came into it, on account of this hour; and was preserved hitherto for this purpose; and was now come to Jerusalem, and was there at this instant, for that very reason, namely, to suffer and die. And since this was the case, he would not put up such a petition to his Father, but the following one.

Ver 28. *Father, glorify thy name*, etc.] The perfections of his nature, particularly his justice and holiness, meaning in himself; by his sufferings and death; intimating hereby, that his Father's glory was what he had in view, and that the securing of that would give him an infinite pleasure amidst all his sorrows. The Arabic version, and Nonnus, read "glorify thy Son", as in (<430701>John 17:1), and the Ethiopic version takes in both, "glorify thy name, and thy Son": and indeed, what glorifies the one, glorifies the other; (see <431331>John 13:31,32).

Then came there a voice from heaven; as at his baptism and transfiguration, and which came from the Father, and was an articulate one, and what the Jews call "Bath Kol", or "the daughter of the voice":

[saying], I have both, glorified [it]; meaning in the incarnation, ministry, obedience and miracles of Christ; and particularly in that late one in raising Lazarus from the dead:

and will glorify [it] again; by supporting him under, and carrying him through his sufferings and death, and by raising him from the dead, and setting him at his own right hand.

Ver. 29. *The people therefore that stood by and heard [it]*, etc.] Some more confusedly, who were farthest off; others more distinctly, who were nearer: the first of these,

said that it thundered; as it used to do when "Bath Kol" was heard, which, as the Jews say [f556],

> "is a voice that comes out of heaven proceeding from the midst of another voice,"

as thunder; wherefore some took this for thunder, and others for the voice of an angel out of the thunder:

others said, an angel spoke to him; these being nearer, perceived it was an articulate voice, which expressed certain distinct words, which they thought were delivered by an angel; for the Jews had a mighty notion of the discourse and conversation of angels with men, which their doctors pretended to understand; particularly R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, a Rabbi, who was living at this time, had learned their speech, and was well versed in it [f557].

Ver. 30. *Jesus answered and said*, etc.] To the people that stood by, and were disputing among themselves about what they heard, whether it was thunder, or the voice of an angel:

this voice came not because of me; at least not only and chiefly; it was not so much in answer to his prayer, or in order to comfort him under the apprehensions he had of his sufferings and death, or to assure him of his future glorification, though all this was true:

but for your sakes; to convince them that he was the Messiah, and engage them to believe in him, or to leave them without excuse; since not only miracles were wrought before their eyes, but with their ears they heard God speaking to him, and which is the rule that they themselves prescribe; for according to them, no man is to be hearkened to, though he should do as many signs and wonders as Moses, the son of Amram, unless they hear with their ears, that the Lord speaks to him as he did to Moses [f558].

Ver. 31. *Now is the judgment of this world*, etc.] That is, in a very short time will be the judgment either of the Jewish world, when that shall be reproved, convinced, and condemned for their sin of rejecting Christ, and crucifying him, by the Spirit, in the ministration of the Gospel; and they still continuing in their impenitence and unbelief, in process of time wrath will come upon them, upon their nation, city, and temple, to the uttermost; or of the Gentile world, when there shall be a discrimination, and separation made in it, of the chosen of God, who shall be called by special grace, and with the converted and believing Jews, shall form a Gospel church state, separate from the world of the ungodly; or of the world of God's elect among Jews and Gentiles, whose cause, being undertook by Christ, he will now vindicate it, and redeem them from sin and Satan, who have usurped a power and dominion over them: hence it follows,

now shall the prince of this world be cast out. The phrase, µlw[h rç, "the prince of the world", is much used by Jewish writers [f559], by whom an angel is meant; and they seem to design the angel of death, which is the devil: and it is certain, that he is here intended, and is so called, not because he has any legal power and authority over the world; but because he has usurped a dominion over it, and has great power and efficacy in the hearts of the children of disobedience, who yield a voluntary subjection to him, as if he was their proper lord and sovereign: now the time was at hand, when he should be cast out of the empire of the world he had assumed, and out of the temples of the Gentiles, and out of the hearts of God's elect among them.

Ver. 32. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth*, etc.] The death of Christ is here signified by his being "lifted up from the earth", in allusion to the lifting up of the brazen serpent on the pole; and shows, that his death would not be natural, but violent, and would be public, and not private; and fitly expresses his mediation between God, and men, being lifted up between the heavens and the earth; and points out the death of the cross, as is intimated in the next verse: and the "if" here does not suppose that his death, and the manner of it, were uncertain, for it was determined by God, agreed to by himself, predicted in the Scriptures, signified by types, and foretold by himself, and was necessary for the salvation of his people; but it designs the time of his drawing persons to himself, which is afterwards expressed, and may be rendered, "when I am lifted up", as it is by the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions: now when this will be, Christ says,

I will draw all men to me; which is not to be understood of the concourse of people about him, when on the cross, some for him, and others against him, some to bewail him, and others to reproach him; but rather of the gathering of the elect to him, and in him, as their head and representative, when he was crucified for them; or of the collection of them, through the ministry of the apostles, and of their being brought to believe on him for eternal life and salvation: and this drawing of them to him, in consequence of his death, supposes distance from him, want of power, and will, to came to him, and the efficacious grace of God to bring them, though without any force and compulsion; and this is to be understood not of every individual of human nature; for all are not drawn to Christ, or enabled to come to him, and believe in him. There were many of the Jews who would not, and did not come to him for life; and who instead of being drawn to him in this sense, when lifted up on the cross, vilified and reproached him; moreover,

in the preceding verse, “a world” is spoken of, whose judgment, or condemnation, was now come; and besides, there was at this time a multitude of souls in hell, who could not, nor never will be, drawn to Christ; and a greater number still there will be at the last day, who, instead of drawing to him in this gracious way and manner, will be bid to depart from him, as having been workers of iniquity. Christ died indeed for all men who are drawn unto him; but this is not true of all men, that are, were, or shall be in the world. Add to this, that the word “men” is not in the text, it is only παντας, “all”: Beza’s most ancient copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read παντα, “all things”; and by “all” are meant, all the elect of God, all the children of God, “that were scattered abroad”; the Persic version reads, “I will draw my friends to me”; it designs some of all sorts of men, of every state, condition, age, sex, and nation, Gentiles as well as Jews, and especially the former; which agrees with the ancient prophecy, (<01490>Genesis 49:10), and with the context, and the occasion of the words, which was the desire of the Greeks, that were come to the feast, to see Jesus; and which was a specimen of the large numbers of them, that should be drawn to Christ, through the preaching of the Gospel, after his death: the Jews say, that in the time to come, or in the days of the Messiah, all the proselytes shall be µyrwrg, “drawn”, shall freely become proselytes [f560]. The allusion here, is to the setting up of a standard or ensign, to gather persons together. Christ’s cross is the standard, his love is the banner, and he himself is the ensign, which draw souls to himself, and engage them to enlist themselves under him, and become his volunteers in the day his power; (see <23110>Isaiah 11:10).

Ver. 33. *This he said*, etc.] These are the words of the evangelist, interpreting the design of Christ in the above words, thereby

signifying what death he should die; the phrase of being lifted up from the earth, not only signified his death, but the kind, or manner of it, that it should be by crucifixion; a person crucified being stretched forth upon a cross, and that erected, was lifted up between earth and heaven.

Ver. 34. *The people answered him*, etc.] Not the Greeks, but the Jews, and these not such as were friends to Christ, but cavillers at him:

we have heard out of the law; not the five books of Moses, but the Prophets, and Hagiographa; even all the books of the Old Testament are called the law; (see Gill on “<43034>John 10:34”);

that Christ abideth for ever; referring to those places which speak of the perpetuity of his priesthood and the everlasting duration of his kingdom, (<19A104>Psalm 110:4 45:6 72:17 89:36,37 <270244>Daniel 2:44 7:13,14), in which last text express mention is made of the son of man, and that and the first may be more especially respected; from whence it appears, that these passages were understood of the Messiah by the ancient Jews: they knew he was designed in (<19A104>Psalm 110:4). He is David's Lord that was bid to sit at the right hand of Jehovah, after he was raised from the dead, and had ascended on high; whose Gospel went forth with power, and whose people, by it, were made willing to submit to him, to his righteousness, and the sceptre of his kingdom; and who also is a priest for ever; and which is appealed to as a proof of the nature, kind, and duration of Christ's priesthood, (<580506>Hebrews 5:6 7:17); and so it may be observed it is expressly applied to him by Jewish writers: in (<380414>Zechariah 4:14) it is said "these are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth"; of which this interpretation is given [f561].

> "These are Aaron and the Messiah; and it would not be known which of them is (most) beloved, but that he says, (<19A104>Psalm 110:4), "the Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever"; from whence it is manifest that the Messiah is more beloved than Aaron the righteous priest."

And so another of them [f562], speaking of Melchizedek, says,

> "this is that which is written (<19A104>Psalm 110:4), "the Lord hath sworn", etc. who is this? this is he that is just, and having salvation, the King Messiah, as it is said, (<380909>Zechariah 9:9)."

So the 45th Psalm is understood by them of the Messiah; the King, in (<19A501>Psalm 45:1), is by Ben Melech, said to be the King Messiah; (<19A502>Psalm 45:2) is thus paraphrased by the Targum,

> "thy beauty, O King Messiah, is more excellent than the children of men."

And Aben Ezra observes, that this Psalm is either concerning David, or the Messiah his son, whose name is David, (<263725>Ezekiel 37:25) [f563]; and the passage in (<19A717>Psalm 72:17) is frequently interpreted of the Messiah and his name, and is brought as a proof of the antiquity of it [f564]; and (<19A936>Psalm 89:36) is also applied to him; and as for (<270713>Daniel 7:13), that is by many, both ancient and modern Jews, explained of the Messiah [f565] and since then

they understood these passages of him, it is easy to observe from whence they took this notion that the Messiah should abide for ever; but then they should have observed out of the same law, or Holy Scriptures, that the Messiah was to be stricken and cut off, was to be brought to the dust of death, and to pour out his soul unto death; all which is consistent with his abiding for ever, in his person and office; for though according to the said writings, he was to die and be buried, yet he was not to see corruption; he was to rise again, ascend on high, sit at the right hand of God, and rule till all his enemies became his footstool; his sufferings were to be in the way, and in order to his entrance into the glory that should always abide. The Jews have entertained a notion that Messiah the son of David shall not die, and they lay down this as a rule, that if anyone sets up for a Messiah, and does not prosper, but is slain, it is a plain case he is not the Messiah; so all the wise men at first thought that Ben Coziba was the Messiah, but when he was slain it was known to them that he was not [f566]. And upon this principle these Jews confront the Messiahship of Jesus, saying,

and how sayest thou, the son of man must be lifted up? for it seems Christ used the phrase the son of man in his discourse, though John has not recorded it; he attending to his sense, and not to his express words. The Jews rightly understood him, that by the son of man he meant the Messiah, and by his being lifted up, his death; but they did not understand, how the Messiah could die, and yet abide for ever; and therefore since he intended himself by the son of man, they concluded he talked very inconsistent with the Scriptures, and with the character he assumed, and ask very pertly,

who is this son of man? is there any other son of man besides the Messiah? and can the son of man, that is the Messiah, be lifted up, or die, who is to abide for ever? and if thou art to be lifted up, or die, thou art not the Messiah or Daniel's son of man, whose kingdom is everlasting: but how come the Jews themselves to say, that the days of the Messiah, according to some, are but forty years, according to others seventy, according to others, three hundred and sixty five [f567]? yea, they say, he shall be as other men, marry, have children, and then die [f568]. And how comes it to pass that Messiah ben Joseph shall be slain [f569]? the truth of the matter is this, they having lost the true sense of the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and observing some that seem to differ, and which they know not how to reconcile, have fancied two Messiahs, the one that will be much distressed and be overcome and be slain; the other, who will be potent and victorious.

Ver. 35. *Then Jesus said unto them*, etc.] Not directly answering to their questions, but suggests to them their ignorance and stupidity, amidst so much light, that was about them:

yet a little while is the light with you: meaning either himself, the light of the world, (<43812>John 8:12 12:46), who was to be but a very little while longer with them, a few days more, and he was to go away from them by death, and be seen and heard no more by them: or the Gospel, which, though that was to continue somewhat longer, it being, after Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, to be preached to the Jews, both in Judea, and in other parts of the world; yet that would be but for a little while, as the event has shown; for the Jews rejecting the Gospel, and putting it away from them, the apostles, as they were ordered, turned to the Gentiles, (<44346>Acts 13:46,47);

walk while ye have the light: that is, as it is explained in (<43236>John 12:36), "believe ye in the light": which the Persic version adds here, and leaves out there: and the sense is, believe in the Messiah, and in his Gospel; embrace him and that, and walk on in him, and worthy of him and of his Gospel, as children of the light:

lest darkness come upon you; suddenly, at an unawares; either a greater degree of the darkness of ignorance and unbelief; even a judicial blindness and stupidity, which did seize on that people, and continues upon them to this day; or the darkness of afflictions, calamities, and distress, and which have come upon them to the uttermost, to the destruction of their temple, city, and nation; or else a worse darkness, even blackness of darkness, outer darkness in hell, where are weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

For he that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth; he cannot see his way, nor the stumbling blocks that lie in it, and the dangers he is exposed unto; nor does he know where it leads, and what is the end of it; and just so it is with a man in a state of unregeneracy, and more especially under judicial blindness: he is not aware of the pits and snares that lie in his way, or of the dark mountains on which he stumbles; and though destruction and misery are in his ways, he knows not that he is going thereunto.

Ver. 36. *While ye have light, believe in the light*, etc.] Receive the Messiah, and credit the Gospel revelation; this is an explanation of the exhortation in the preceding verse:

that ye may be the children of the light; that is, that they might appear to be such who are enlightened persons; and such are truly so, who are made light in the Lord, or who are enlightened by the Spirit of God to see their own sinfulness, impotency, and unrighteousness, and their need of Christ, and his righteousness and strength, and of salvation by him; and who are made meet, by the grace of God, to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; and which is made manifest by believing in Christ, and walking on in him, as they have received him, and by walking honestly, as in the daytime, and circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, for such walk as children of the light.

These things spake Jesus, and departed; from those Jews, as being unworthy of any further conversation with him; and from Jerusalem, very likely to Bethany, whither he frequently retired, especially at night, during the few days before the passover:

and did hide himself from them: for his safety, for he knew that they were irritated by what he said, and would seek to lay hold upon him, and deliver him to the sanhedrim; and whereas his hour was not yet fully come, there were a few more sands in the glass to run, he provided for his security, by absconding from them; and this was an emblem of his wholly removing from them, and leaving them, and their house, desolate; and it is very likely that from this time forward they saw him no more as ministering the word unto them; and also of his taking his Gospel from them in a little time, and of his hiding the things of it from them, which respected himself, and salvation by him.

Ver. 37. *But though he had done so many miracles before them*, etc.] Openly, and in the presence of them; meaning those miracles which were done at Jerusalem, as those which brought Nicodemus to him, and to an acknowledgment of him as a teacher sent from God; and particularly the cure of the lame man at Bethesda's pool, the giving sight to the man that was born blind, by anointing his eyes with clay, and sending him to wash in the Pool of Siloam, and the raising Lazarus from the dead at Bethany, which was within two miles of Jerusalem, in the presence of many of them who were come there to comfort Martha and Mary. Yet

they believed not on him; the miracles done by Christ before their eyes, which they could not deny, nor disprove, and were so many, and so great, were aggravations of their unbelief; and such indeed is the nature of that sin, and so deeply rooted is it, that the most powerful means, and mighty

works, will not bring a person to believe in Christ, without the powerful and efficacious grace of God.

Ver. 38. *That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled*, etc.] For though this was not the end of these men in disbelieving Christ, that the words of Isaiah might be fulfilled, yet hereby they were eventually fulfilled; and though the predictions of the prophet had no such influence on the wills of these men, as to lay upon them a coactive necessity, or force them to do, or to answer to the things foretold; yet they were to have, and had an infallible event or completion, otherwise the foreknowledge of God, and the authority of the prophetic writings, could not be maintained:

which he spake in (<2501>Isaiah 53:1);

Lord, who hath believed our report? which words the prophet delivered by way of complaint to God the Father; not so much with respect to his own time, and the men of it, as to the times of Christ, and his apostles, whom he represents; for the whole chapter is a prophecy of the Messiah, and suggests, that in those times there would be but few that would believe the report made in the ministry of the Gospel, concerning the Messiah, his person, office, and grace; though so true in itself, and so much confirmed by miracles, and mighty deeds; the reason of which, he intimates, would be his outward mean appearance in the world; and which, it is certain, was the true reason, God denying the influence of his powerful and special grace, as follows:

and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? meaning either the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, and which was bid from the wise and prudent; or the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who is the power of God, by whom he made the heavens and the earth, and upholds them in their being, and by whom he has redeemed and saved his people; and who was not revealed neither to them in the ministry of the word, nor in them the hope of glory: or the Holy Spirit is meant, the finger of God, by whom these surprising miracles were done; and yet he did not exert himself in these persons, in the special operations of his grace; or the powerful and efficacious grace of God itself is designed, which was not put forth, and did not attend the report of the Gospel, and therefore it was not believed.

Ver. 39. *Therefore they could not believe*, etc.] God had determined to leave them to the blindness and hardness of their hearts, and to deny them his grace, which only could cure them of it, and enable them to believe: he

had foretold this in prophecy, and they were manifestly the persons spoken of; and therefore considering the decrees of God, the predictions of the prophet, and the hardness of their hearts, they were left unto, it was morally impossible they should believe,

because that Esaias said again, in (<23A609>Isaiah 6:9,10).

Ver. 40. *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart*, etc.] It is of no great moment, whether the he, who is said to blind and harden, be God or Christ, or whether the words be rendered, "it hath blinded", etc. that is, malice or wickedness; or whether they be read impersonally, "their eyes are blinded", etc. since God or Christ blind and harden not by any positive act, but by leaving and giving men up to the blindness and hardness of their hearts, and denying them the grace which could only cure them, and which they are not obliged to give; and which was the case of these Jews, so as never to be converted, or be turned even by external repentance and reformation, that they might be healed in a national way, and be preserved from national ruin, as it follows,

that they should not see with their eyes, etc.] (see Gill on "<401314>Matthew 13:14"), (see Gill on "<401315>Matthew 13:15"). The Syriac and Persic versions read, "they have blinded their eyes", etc.

Ver. 41. *These things said Esaias*, etc.] Concerning the blinding and hardening of the Jews:

when he saw his glory, and spake of him; when he saw, in a visionary way, the glory of the Messiah in the temple, and the angels covering their faces with their wings at the sight of him; and when he spake of him as the King, the Lord of hosts, whom he had seen, (<23A601>Isaiah 6:1-10), from whence it is clear that he had respect to the Jews in the times of the Messiah. The prophet says in (<23A601>Isaiah 6:1) that he "saw the Lord": the Targumist renders it, "I saw", yyd arqy ta, "the glory of Jehovah"; and in (<23A605>Isaiah 6:5) he says, "mine eyes have seen the King", Jehovah, Zebaot, the Lord of hosts; which the Chaldee paraphrase renders, "mine eyes have seen", rqy ta, "the glory" of the Shekinah, the King of the world, the Lord of hosts. Agreeably to which our Lord says here, that he saw his glory, the glory of his majesty, the glory of his divine nature, the train of his divine perfections, filling the temple of the human nature; and he spoke of him as the true Jehovah, the Lord of hosts; and which therefore is a very clear and strong proof of the proper divinity of Christ. And it may be

observed from hence, that such persons who have a true, spiritual, and saving sight of Christ, of the glory of his person, and the fulness of his grace, cannot but be speaking of him to others, either in private, or in public, as Isaiah here did, and as the church in (Song of Solomon 5:10-16); and as the apostles of Christ, (John 1:1,4 1 John 1:1,2); and indeed, should they hold their peace, the stones would cry out; such must, and will speak of his glory in his temple, (Psalm 29:9 145:4-7,11,12).

Ver. 42. *Nevertheless among the chief rulers also*, etc.] These were the members of the Jewish sanhedrim, as Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and others:

many believed on him; that he was the Messiah, though they did not believe in him in a spiritual and saving manner, as their Redeemer and Saviour, only in their minds, being convicted by his miracles, gave an assent unto him, as the promised Messiah. The two persons just mentioned may be thought truly to have believed in Christ; but the many here spoken of seem to have had only an historical faith in him, as appears by what follows:

but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him; as they ought to have done, and as they would have done, if their faith had been right; for where with the heart men believe in Christ to righteousness, there, with the mouth, confession is made to salvation; and between a non-confession of Christ, and a denying him, is no medium; and Christ interprets the one to be the same with the other; (see Romans 10:9,10 Matthew 10:32,33); and this they did not do, because of the Pharisees, who were the inveterate and implacable enemies of Christ, and were the prevailing party in the sanhedrim: wherefore these chief rulers, though many, were afraid of them,

lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they had made a decree in the sanhedrim, that whoever confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, should be cast out; and they had put it into execution upon the man born blind, whose eyes Christ opened, for speaking in favour of his benefactor; and this had struck terror in the minds, not only of the common people; but of the chief rulers themselves; for it was looked upon as a very dreadful thing to be put out of the synagogue; (see Gill on "John 9:22").

Ver. 43. *For they loved the praise of men*, etc.] To be in the esteem of men, to have their applause, and receive honour from them:

more than the praise of God; than either to receive honour from him, and be praised by him, or to praise and glorify him. By confessing Christ they knew they should run the risk of losing their places of honour and profit, and of falling under the disgrace and contempt of men; and therefore they chose rather not to confess Christ, than by so doing to glorify God, and please him, and be praised by him, as all the faithful professors of Christ will be at the last day; for then every such an one will have praise of God, and it will be said, well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord.

Ver. 44. *Jesus cried and said*, etc.] Upon this occasion, on account of the prevailing hardness and unbelief of the Jewish nation, and the non-confession of him by those who did believe him to be the Messiah. He cried with a loud voice, that he might be heard, and his audience left inexcusable; it denotes the concern of his mind, the vehemence of his spirit, and that openness and freedom in which he discharged his ministry, by showing the nature, excellency, and usefulness of believing in him, and the dangerous consequences of unbelief:

he that believeth on me, believeth not on me; which is not to be understood simply and absolutely, for this would be a contradiction in terms: they that believe in Christ, do believe in him, and they do right to believe in him; Christ is the object of faith; he is proposed as such in the Gospel; and it is his Father's will, and his own advice, that his people should believe in him: but then those that truly believe in him, do not believe in him as a mere man, but as God, as the Son of God; and not as separate from, or to the exclusion of his Father: nor do they believe in him as a new, or another God, but as the one God with the Father, and the Spirit; for he and his Father are one: nor do they believe in him "only"; and so the Arabic version reads; but in God the Father also: nor does their faith rest in him, but it proceeds through him, as the Mediator unto God; (see 1 Peter 1:21). Besides, he is here to be considered in his office capacity, as being sent of God; and he that believes on him as the sent of God, does not so much believe on him, as on the sender of him, as follows:

but on him that sent me; just as whatever honour or dishonour are done to an ambassador, sent by an earthly king to a foreign court, are not so much done to the ambassador that is sent, as to the king that sends him; for what is done to him, is all one as if it was personally done to his prince: so he that despises Christ, despises him that sent him; and he that receives Christ,

receives him that sent him; and he that believes on Christ, believes on him that sent him; (see <42106>Luke 10:16 <40104>Matthew 10:40).

Ver. 45. *And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me*.] Not with bodily eyes, for there were many that saw Christ, who never saw the Father: they saw Christ as a mere man, and were offended at the meanness of his outward appearance; they saw nothing divine in him, nor the glory of the Father through him; but with the eyes of the understanding, whoever saw or perceived the glory of Christ in his miracles, saw the glory of God in them also, for the Father that dwelt in him did the works, (<43211>John 2:11 11:40 14:10), and whoever truly sees Christ with an eye of faith, sees his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, as the brightness of his Father's glory, as having the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him, the same perfections as in the Father; so that he that hath seen the one, hath seen the other also, (<43149>John 14:9).

Ver. 46. *I am come a light into the world*, etc.] And even as the light of it, being the sun of righteousness, that was to arise, and now was risen, to enlighten men with the light of the living; (see <43319>John 3:19 8:12);

that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness; God's elect themselves, whilst in a state of unregeneracy and unbelief, are in darkness; when Christ shines in upon them, and infuses the light of faith into them, they are no longer in darkness; the darkness is past, at least in a great measure, and the true light shines; in which they see light, see glory and grace of Christ, and the invisible realities of another world: nor do they continue in the darkness of sin, ignorance, and unbelief; but walk in the light of truth, faith, and holiness, until the perfect day comes, when all the shadows of remaining darkness will flee away.

Ver. 47. *And if any man hear my words and believe not*, etc.] Men may hear the Gospel of Christ, and not understand it; and they may understand it literally and grammatically, though not spiritually and experimentally, and not believe it; not so much as give credit or an assent to the truth of it, but reject and deny it; for though faith comes by hearing to some, it does not come to all: some receive no profit by hearing it, because it is not mixed with faith by them. The Alexandrian copy, and all the Oriental versions, and also Nonnus, read the last clause thus, "and keep [them] not"; or does not observe them, is negligent of them, and shows no regard, and yields not the obedience of faith to them; the sense is the same.

I judge him not; I do not accuse him to the Father, nor do I condemn him, nor shall I take vengeance on him for so doing; meaning, that he should do none of these things now, though hereafter he will be a swift witness against him, and will convict and condemn him, and pass sentence on him, and execute it:

for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. Christ, at his first coming, came not under the character of a judge, but a Saviour; wherefore suitable to his character, and the end of his coming, he would not accuse, condemn, or judge any man, even the greatest unbelievers in him, and despisers of him, but would leave them to another day, when righteous judgment shall take place.

Ver. 48. *He that rejecteth me*, etc.] As the Messiah, with abhorrence and contempt, as many among the Jews did, who would not have him to reign over them, but sought to put him to death:

and receiveth not my words; the doctrines of the Gospel, but disbelieves them, and denies them to be true, looking upon them as the doctrines of a mere man, and an impostor:

hath one that judgeth him; let not such an one think that he shall escape righteous judgment; though Christ does not judge him now, there is one that judges him, yea, even now; and declares, that he that believeth not shall be damned, and that he is condemned already:

the word that I have spoken unto you, the same shall judge him in the last day; according to the different dispensations wicked men are under in this world, will be the rule of their judgment hereafter: such who are only under the law of nature, will be judged according to that, that will accuse them, convict them, and condemn them: such who have been under the law of Moses, or the written law, will be arraigned, proved, and pronounced guilty, and punished by, and according to that law; and such who have been under the Gospel dispensation, and have been favoured with the revelation of the Gospel, but have condemned and denied it, that will judge them at the last day. The judge will act by its present declaration, and according to that proceed, as it stands in (<41616>Mark 16:16). It will rise up in judgment against such persons, and be an aggravation of their condemnation.

Ver. 49. *For I have not spoken of myself*, etc.] As man, or as separate from his Father; his doctrine was not human, but divine, and therefore a rejection of it cannot escape notice at the future judgment:

but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak; Christ, as man, had his mission, and commission, and his instructions from his Father to preach the Gospel unto men; he was anointed for it by the Holy Ghost; he was enjoined the preaching of it by his Father, and the several doctrines he published were delivered him by him; (see <4008>John 8:28 17:8).

Ver. 50. *And I know that his commandment is life everlasting*, etc.] By "his commandment" is not meant the law; that indeed is often styled the commandment; and it is the commandment of God; and many excellent things are said of it; and among the rest it is called "life", (<5015>Deuteronomy 30:15), but not everlasting life: it only promised a continuation of natural life to man, on condition of obedience to it; more than this it did not promise to Adam, in innocence; and what it promised to the obedient Israelites, was only a prolongation of natural life in the land which God gave unto them: but it neither promises, nor gives spiritual life to the fallen sons of Adam; it leaves men as it finds them, dead in trespasses and sins; and cannot communicate either a life of sanctification, or of justification to them; nor does it so much as give them any hopes of life, or show where it is to be had; nor is everlasting life to be obtained by the works of it: justification is not by the works of the law; nor salvation by works of righteousness done by men; and consequently eternal life is never to be attained unto by obedience to the commands of the law: it is so far from being in this sense life everlasting, that it is the ministration of condemnation and death. But the Gospel is here meant, and is called a commandment; not that it has the nature of a law, or consists of precepts, as the law does; but because it is by the commandment of the everlasting God published by Christ, and his apostles. Christ, as appears from the preceding verse, had a commandment from his Father, what he should say and speak; now, not the doctrine he delivered was the commandment itself, but it was a commandment of the Father that he should deliver that doctrine; besides, the word "commandment" sometimes signifies no other than a doctrine, as in (<1908>Psalm 19:8 <6207>1 John 2:7); and the sense is, that the doctrine of the Gospel, which Christ had in commission from the Father to preach, is life everlasting; and is so called, because it is a means of quickening sinners with a spiritual life, which issues in an eternal one; it is

the savour of life unto life, and the Spirit which giveth life, and is the ministration of it; and it is a means of implanting the graces of the Spirit of God in the heart, which sprung up unto everlasting life; and of bringing souls to the knowledge of Christ, which is the beginning, pledge, and earnest of eternal life: and besides all this, it gives an account of the nature of eternal life; it directs the way unto it, which is by Christ, and describes the persons who shall enjoy it; showing, that their title to it is the righteousness of Christ, and their meetness for it the regenerating grace of the Spirit; and that all that believe in Christ shall have it:

whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me so I speak; and no otherwise, and therefore ought to be received, and not rejected. This is to be understood not of what Christ spoke in common conversation, but in the ministry of the word, even of the doctrines of the Gospel, which were given him by his Father, and which he knew were agreeable to his mind and will, and to his council and covenant, and to everything done and agreed therein, to which he was privy: these he delivered as he received them, and both as to matter and manner, as it was his Father's will and pleasure he should: he preached the righteousness of God, and hid it not; he declared his faithfulness, and his salvation, and concealed not his lovingkindness and truth, (¹⁹⁰⁰⁹Psalm 40:9,10). Now, though it is a sufficient ground of faith to receive and believe the doctrines of the Gospel, because Christ has spoken them, who is truth itself; yet it is a further confirmation of them, that they are what his Father, the God of truth, said unto him: and his delivering them as he had them from him, is an instance of his faithfulness to him that sent him; and should be imitated by his ministers, who ought to declare the whole counsel of God, and keep back nothing they have received from Christ, and which may be profitable to the souls of men.

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 13

Ver. 1. *Now before the feast of the passover*, etc.] This feast was instituted as a memorial of the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and was an eminent type of Christ; and this passover was what Christ had greatly desired, it being his last, and when he was to express his great love to his people, mentioned here, by dying for them. It was two days before this feast, so the Persic version reads this text, at Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, that the things recorded in this chapter were transacted; (see <40 26 2,6>Matthew 26:2,6);

when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world to the Father. The death of Christ is here signified by a departing out of this world, a way of speaking frequently used by the Jews as expressive of death; (see Gill on "<50 1 23>Philippians 1:23"). Much such a phrase is made use of concerning Moses, of whom it is said [f570], that the fourth song that was sung in the world, was sung by him

> "when "his time was come", amlh ^m rjpml, "to depart out of the world";"

an easy and familiar form of speech to express death by, as if it was only a removing front one place to another. The place from whence Christ was about to remove is called "this world": this present world, into which he was come to save sinners, and in which he then was, and where he had already met with very ill usage, and barbarous treatment, and was to meet with more: where he was going is said to be "to the Father", in whose bosom he lay, by whom he was sent, from whom he came; to his God and Father, and the God and Father of all his people, to take his place in their nature at his right hand. A time or hour was fixed for this; for as there was a set time, called "the fulness of time", agreed upon for his coming into the world, so there was for his going out of it: and now this "his hour was come"; the time was now up, or at least very near at hand; and he "knew" it, being God omniscient, which gave him no uneasiness: nor did it in the least alienate his affections from his people: for

having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end. The objects of his love are described by his property in them, "his own"; by whom are meant, not all mankind, who are his by creation; nor the Jews, who were his nation and countrymen according to the flesh; nor the twelve apostles only, whom he had chosen; but all the elect of God, who are his own, by his choice of them, by the Father's gift of them to him, by the purchase he made of them with his blood, and by his effectual call of them by his grace: these are also described by their condition and situation, "which were in the world"; which is not said to distinguish them from the saints that were in heaven, or to express their former state of unregeneracy, but their present situation in this vain and evil world, which is no objection to Christ's love to them; for though whilst in this world they carry about with them a body of sin and death, are liable to many snares and temptations, and are involved in the troubles, and exposed to the hatred of the world, yet are, and always will be, the objects of the love and care of Christ. The acts of his love to them are expressed both in time past, and to come: "having loved" them; so he did from everlasting, with a love of complacency and delight, which he showed as early by espousing their persons to himself, by undertaking their cause, by taking the charge of their persons, and the care of both their grace and glory, and in time by assuming their nature; and having done all this, "he loved them to the end": and which he showed by dying for them; and continues to show by interceding for them in heaven, by supplying them with all grace, and by preserving them from a final and total falling away; and he will at last introduce them into his kingdom and glory, when they shall be for ever with him; and so that love to them continues not only to the end of his own life, nor barely to the end of theirs, but to the end of the world, and for ever; and so εις τελος, signifies, and is rendered "continually", (<2815>Luke 18:5), and in the Septuagint on (<1906>Psalm 9:6,18 44:23) answers to jxnl, which signifies "for ever"; and is so translated here by the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 2. *And supper being ended*, etc.] Or rather "supper being", or it "being supper time", for it was not ended; not the paschal supper, nor the Lord's supper, but the supper in Simon's house at Bethany, two days before the passover. There is no mention made in this whole chapter of the passover supper, or of any of its rites: the washing of the disciples' feet was a peculiar action of our Lord's, and had no manner of regard to any usage among the Jews at such a time; nor was it ever usual with them, at the passover, to wash the feet of those that ate of it; there is not the least

trace of any such custom in any of their writings: besides, it is said in so many words, in (<43131>John 13:1), that this was "before the feast of the passover"; and by comparing it with (<401602>Matthew 26:2,6), it appears to be two days before it; and so much time seems necessary to be allowed, for Judas to do what he did after this supper, in which he was first instigated to it: and that the feast of the passover was yet to come, when this supper was ended, and Judas had taken the sop, and was bid to do quickly what he did, is manifest from the sense the disciples put upon those words of Christ, who thought he ordered him to get the necessaries for the feast, (<431329>John 13:29), which can be understood of no other than the feast of the passover, which was at hand, and for which many things were to be got ready; to which may be added, that Satan's entering into Judas, and putting it into his heart to betray his master, and his covenanting with the high priests to do it for such a sum, were before the passover supper, as is clear from (<422201>Luke 22:1,3,4,7). Nor is it reasonable to suppose that Judas could meet that night, after the supper, with the chief priests, captains, and all the council, the great sanhedrim, who could not be together; since by the law of the passover, every head of a family was to be with his respective family: and if this could be supposed, yet there seems to be some time between this agreement, and the execution of it, in which he sought for a proper opportunity, (<401616>Matthew 26:16). Nor can it be thought there was time enough to do all he did, as to covenant with the chief priests, form his scheme for apprehending Christ, and get such a number of men together for that purpose, between the supper, and the time of night in which Christ was betrayed. Besides, certain it is, that Christ and his disciples arose from the place where he ate his supper, and went from thence elsewhere, (<431431>John 14:31), which cannot be understood very well of any other departure than his going from Bethany to Jerusalem, and not of his going from Jerusalem to the garden, which is afterwards spoken of as a distinct thing, (<431801>John 18:1). And to say no more, there is not in this chapter the least hint of the institution of the Lord's supper, which all the other evangelists make mention of, when they relate the last passover of our Lord. The reader may be more fully satisfied of the truth of this by consulting Dr. Lightfoot on (<401606>Matthew 26:6).

The devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; the person Satan influenced and acted upon, for his purpose, was Judas iscariot, Simon's son: whether this was Simon the Pharisee, or Simon the leper, in whose house Christ and his disciples were, or who he

was, is not certain: was there any reason to think it might be Simon the tanner that was the father of Judas, or that either he or his father were tanners, I would venture to add one conjecture more to what has been made on (Matthew 10:4 27:5), concerning Judas's surname, Iscariot, as that it may come from "Iscortia", which signifies a tanner's coat: for so it is said in the [f571] Talmud,

> "what is ayjrwqsya, "Iscortia?" says Rabba bar Chanah, it is alxd anwtyk, "a tanner's coat":"

a sort of a leathern garment, as the gloss says, which tanners put over their clothes. However, this man was an apostle of Christ's whom Satan tempted to betray him; so that we see that the highest office, and greatest gifts, cannot secure men from the temptations of Satan: the manner in which he tempted him was, he "put", or "cast [it] into his heart"; it was a dart, and a fiery one, he threw into him, into his very heart; which shows the access Satan has into, and the influence he has upon the minds of men: his end in this temptation was to work upon him "to betray" Christ, his Lord and master, who had chosen him to be an apostle of his, and had invested him with this high office, into the hands of his enemies, in order to be put to death. This was an affair determined by God, known by Christ, and which he foretold to his disciples; yet all this did not in the least excuse the malice of Satan, and the wickedness of Judas: it was an action devilish indeed, and which, one would think, could never have entered into his heart, had not the devil put it there; and this was at supper time, whilst they were at table together, that this thought was darted into his mind; which is mentioned to show, that no place and company can preserve persons from the evil suggestions of the devil, and to aggravate the sin of Judas, who when, and while he was eating bread with Christ, first thought of, and determined to lift up his heel against him: moreover, it was when the ointment was poured on the head of Christ, and whilst Judas was fretting at it, that Satan took the opportunity of his choler and wrath, to stir him up to so vile an action. This account is prefaced to Christ's washing the feet of his disciples, to show the great composure of mind Christ was in, though he knew what was doing; and his wonderful condescension in washing the feet of so vile a creature, into whose heart Satan had already put it to betray him; and also his care of, and love to the rest of the disciples, when Satan had got possession of one of them.

Ver. 3. *Jesus knowing that the Father*, etc.] These words express the sense Christ had of his own greatness and dignity as Mediator:

had given all things into his hands; all the persons of the elect, all blessings both of grace and glory for them, and power and authority over all other persons and things, to make them subservient to his purposes:

and that he was come from God; had his mission and commission, as man, from God; did not come of himself, but he sent him:

and went to God; or was going to him in a very little time, to sit at his right hand, to have a name above every name, and to have angels, authorities, and powers subject to him; which, as it shows his high esteem with his Father, and his exalted character as Mediator, so it greatly illustrates his wonderful humility, that in the view, and under a sense and consideration of all this, he should condescend to wash the feet of his disciples; of which an account is given in the following verses.

Ver. 4. *He riseth from supper*, etc.] In the midst of the entertainment, and which no doubt was considerable, his mind being intent on something else; and it being his meat and drink to do his Father's will, he rises and leaves his disciples sitting to finish their meal; and whilst they were murmuring at the waste of the ointment poured on his head, and were filled with indignation at it, as they all of them were, (see <4026>Matthew 26:8); he rises up to wash their feet; amazing patience and humility!

And laid aside his garments; not all his garments, only his upper ones, that he might better dispatch the business he was going about; and which was an emblem of his laying aside, as it were for a while, his glory and dignity as the Son of God, and of his appearing in the form of a servant.

And took a towel; or "linen cloth", λεντιον, the same with tyjnwl in the Jerusalem Talmud [f572]:

and girded himself; with the towel, or linen cloth, which served both for a girdle, and after he had washed his disciples' feet, to wipe them with. This was a servile habit; so servants used to stand at the feet of their masters, girt about with a linen cloth [f573]; and shows, that the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

Ver. 5. *After that he poureth water into a bason*, etc.] This also was a servile work, and what properly belonged to servants to do; (see <4026>John

2:5-7). The bason to wash the feet in, called by the Jews µylgr tbyr[, was fixed by their doctors to hold, “from two logs to nine kabs” [f574]; not “from two logs to ten”, as Dr. Lightfoot has rendered the passage referred to. A “kab” held about a quart of our measure, and a “log” was the fourth part of a “kab”.

And began to wash the disciples feet. This custom of washing the feet was not used by the Jews at their passover, nor at their private entertainments, or common meals, but at the reception of strangers or travellers, which were just come off of a journey, whereby they had contracted dirt and filth, and was a servile work, never performed by superiors to their inferiors, but by inferiors to superiors; as by the wife to the husband, by the son to the father, and by the servant to his master; and was an instance of great humility in any others, as in Abigail, who said to David, “let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord”, (1 Samuel 25:41), upon which place some Jewish Rabbins [f575] have this note:

> “this she said, hwn[h dx l[, “by way of humility”, to show, that it would have been sufficient to her, if she became a wife to one of the servants of David, and washed his feet, as was the custom of a wife to her husband.”

But what a surprising instance of humility and condescension is this, that Christ, the Lord and master, should wash the feet of his disciples, when it was their proper work and business to have washed his? Though Dr. Lightfoot says, he does not remember that this was expected from the disciple toward his master, unless included in that rule, “that the disciple is to honour his master, more than his father”; whereas it was a fixed point [f576] with the Jews,

> “that all works which a servant does to his master, a disciple does to his master, except unloosing his shoe.”

Since therefore it was the work of a servant to wash his master’s feet, a disciple was obliged to do this to his master likewise:

and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded; as he began he went through with his work; and having washed their feet, he wipes them clean; which may design the purity of the lives and conversations of the saints in general, and of the ministers of the Gospel in particular, whose feet are beautiful when shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace,

and their conversations are as become the Gospel they preach; both which they have from Christ.

Ver. 6. *Then cometh he to Simon Peter*, etc.] After having washed the feet of some of the disciples, as is thought by some interpreters, and particularly the feet of Judas, without any repulse; though others are of opinion that he began with Peter, who modestly, and out of reverence to him, refuses to be washed by him:

and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet! he speaks as one surprised and astonished that Christ should offer to do any such thing to him; that he, who was the Son of the living God, should wash the feet of such a sinful man as he was; that those hands, with which he had wrought such miracles, as the opening the eyes of the blind, cleansing lepers, and raising the dead, should be employed in washing his defiled feet, the meaner and inferior parts of his body; this he thought was greatly below his dignity and character, and too much to be done by him to such a worthless creature as he was.

Ver. 7. *Jesus answered and said unto him*, etc.] Christ replies,

what I do, thou knowest not now: Peter knew that he was about to wash his feet, and the rest of his disciples, but he did not know the meaning and mystery of it, what Christ designed by it, and what instruction they were to receive from it,

but thou shalt know hereafter; as he did, when he had performed this service, and explained it to him. This may teach us, under dark providences, the meaning of which is not yet known by us, to wait the Lord's own time, to make things clear and plain to us, and in the mean time patiently submit to the divine will.

Ver. 8. *Peter saith unto him, thou shall never wash my feet*, etc.] Before he had behaved with modesty, but now with obstinacy and perverseness; and though these expressions might arise from great reverence to Christ, yet they were wrong and rashly spoken. Peter ought to have been satisfied with Christ's reply, and have submitted, since though he then did not know the reason of such surprising conduct, he should hereafter. In order therefore to bring him to a compliance,

Jesus answered him, if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me; he does not say, if I wash not thy feet, but thee, meaning not with water, but with

his blood, and by his Spirit; for Christ uses the word wash here, not literally, but in a mystical and figurative sense, and takes an occasion, as he sometimes does, from things natural, to discourse of things spiritual: moreover, he does not say, thou hast no part "in" me, but thou hast no part "with" me, that is, no fellowship and communion with me; (see <4064>2 Corinthians 6:14,15); and it is as if he should say, Peter, if I had not washed thee with the washing of regeneration by my Spirit, and if I should not shed my blood for thee, and wash thee in it from thy sins, sad would be thy case; thou couldest have no communion with me in this world, nor any part and portion with me in the heavenly inheritance hereafter. Hence it may be observed, that unless a man is washed by Christ, he can have no part with him in this, or the other world. God's elect have a part, an interest in Christ through eternal, electing, and covenant grace, and in consequence of this are washed by Christ both with his blood, and with the washing of regeneration: and this is done in order that they may have a part with Christ, spiritual fellowship with him now, and possess with him the undefiled inheritance, when time shall be no more.

Ver. 9. *Simon Peter saith unto him*, etc.] Being convinced of his mistake in not submitting to Christ, fearing he should he deprived of communion with him, than which nothing was more desirable to him, or more highly esteemed of by him, says,

Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head; which shows the sense he had of the general pollution of his nature, and the need he stood in particularly of having his feet, hands, and head washed both as a minister, and a believer. By his "feet" may be meant, either the grace of faith, which is the foot of the soul, by which it goes to Christ, and walks on in him, and was not without its imperfections; or the affections of the mind, which are that to the soul, as feet are to the body; and when they move right, move heavenward, Godward, and Christward; but sometimes they are inordinate, and cleave to the things of this world: or the outward life and conversation is meant, which is attended with daily infirmities; and each of these need washing in the blood of Christ. His "hands" may design all his actions, works, services, duties, and performances, the hand being the instrument of action; and not only the hands of wicked men, but even of saints, need washing, their best righteousnesses being as filthy rags. By his "head" may be meant doctrines and principles imbibed in the mind, and expressed by the lips, which were not free from mistake and pollution, and needed purging and cleansing; for the disciples were not as yet clear from the

prejudices of the Jewish nation, especially relating to the nature of the Messiah's kingdom.

Ver. 10. *Jesus saith to him, he that is washed*, etc.] Not he that is baptized; for every such person is not wholly clean, but he who is regenerated by the Spirit of God, or rather, who is washed in the blood of Christ: such an one "is clean every whit"; is all over clean; not that he has no sin in him, nor commits any; but as he is washed in the blood of Christ, and justified by his righteousness, he is wholly and entirely clean in the sight of God; for he is justified from all things he could not be justified from by the law of Moses; all his sins are pardoned, and he is perfectly righteous before God; and so is perfectly clean through the word or sentence of justification and absolution pronounced on him, which must be understood in a forensic or law sense. And such an one

needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; the feet of his life and conversation, which are continually gathering dirt, and need daily washing in the blood of Christ; and therefore recourse must be constantly had to that fountain to wash in, for sin and for uncleanness. The allusion is either to persons washed all over in a bath, who have no need to wash again, unless their feet, which may contract some soil in coming out of it; or to travellers, who have often need to wash their feet, though no other part, and such is the case of the children of God in this life; or rather to the priests, who having bathed themselves in the morning, needed not to wash again all the day, except their hands and feet, on certain occasions [f577].

And ye are clean, but not all; which shows, that justifying and regenerating grace are common to all the true disciples of Christ; they are equally born again, alike justified, and are as clean one as an other in the sight of God; not only Peter, but all the apostles, were clean, excepting one; there was one of them, Judas, who was not clean; and therefore he says, but not all: whence it may be observed, that among the purest societies, there are some unclean persons; there was a Judas, an unclean person among the pure disciples of Christ; there are chaff and tares among his wheat, goats among his sheep, and foolish virgins along with the wise ones.

Ver. 11. *For he knew who should betray him*, etc.] That is, Jesus, as Beza's ancient copy, and the Syriac and Persic versions read. This he knew from the beginning; not only from the beginning of his ministry, when he chose his twelve apostles, but from the beginning of time, yea, from everlasting; this being fixed by the determinate counsel of God, which he,

as the omniscient God, was privy to: he knew what preparations were making, and how things were then working, in order to bring it about; he knew that Satan had already put it into Judas's heart, and that he had consented to it;

therefore, said he, ye are not all clean: he does not mention his name, though he could have done so, it not being as yet proper to make so full a discovery of him, before the matter was ripe for execution; and also to put all the disciples upon examination of themselves.

Ver. 12. *So after he had washed their feet*, etc.] Not Peter's only, but the rest of the disciples also: some have thought, that he washed only the feet of some of them, and not all; but it seems, by this expression, that he performed this service to each of them: and when he had gone through it with everyone of them:

and had taken his garments, and put them on,

and was sat down again; at the table with his disciples, supper not being yet ended; when having done his work as a servant, he reassumes the air and authority of Lord and master, and begins to teach and instruct, into the design and use of what he had been doing, which he introduces by putting this question;

he said unto them, know ye what I have done to you? They knew the outward action he had done to them, that he had washed their feet; but, as yet, they did not know the mystery of it, Christ's design in it, and what he would have them learn from it.

Ver. 13. *Ye call me Master and Lord*, etc.] ybr, and rm, "Master" and "Lord", were dignified titles among the Jews, which they frequently [f578] gave to their doctors and men of learning, and are often to be met with in their writings: hence the disciples called Christ by these names, not out of flattery, but reverence of him, and esteem for him; nor are they blamed, but commended for it:

and ye say well, for so I am; though he had acted the part of a servant in such a surprising manner, by washing their feet; yet he had not dropped and lost, but still maintains his place and authority as a "Master" to teach and instruct them, and as a "Lord" to rule and govern them.

Ver. 14. *If I then your Lord and Master*, etc.] Christ argues from these titles and characters, which his disciples rightly gave him, and from what he had done to them, though he stood in such a superior relation to them, to their duty one towards another; that since, says he, I

have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet: by which he does not mean barely, that they should perform this single action; but as this was an instance of humility and condescension, and doing a good office to strangers and travellers, and was afterwards an expression of love to the saints, (see <5410>1 Timothy 5:10), so he would teach them hereby, to behave in a spirit of humility and condescension to one another, to do every kind and good office, and by love to serve one another in all things.

Ver. 15. *For I have given you an example*, etc.] Christ is an example to his people, in many things; not in his miraculous performances and mediatorial work, but in the exercise of grace, of meekness, humility, love, patience, and the like; and in the discharge of duty, in submission to ordinances, and in attending on them; and in the several duties, both to them that are without, and to them that are within; and also in his sufferings and death; not that he died merely as an example, but likewise in the room and stead of his people; but here he is spoken of, as an example, in a particular instance:

that ye should do as I have done to you; wash one another's feet, as he had washed theirs; which is not to be understood literally and singly of this action, as though this was an ordinance binding upon all persons, in all places, and to be attended to at certain stated times, as has been the practice of some: it was so understood by the church at Milain, and there practised; and this custom was continued and defended by St. Ambrose, even though not received by the church of Rome; in some places the bishop used to wash the feet of those that were baptized, which in process of time being thought sufficient, instead of baptism, was forbidden by the council at Eliberis. In imitation of this, the pope every year, on Thursday in the passion week, washes the feet of twelve men; and it is an anniversary ceremony performed by the kings of England and France, to wash the feet of twelve poor people, in commemoration of this action of Christ's: but our Lord is not to be understood literally, nor of anything that was to be done once a year, but of what was daily and constantly to be practised; and which was to be done not by one only, to all the rest, but what they were mutually to do; what they were to do to one another; for the thing

signified, reaches to, and is obligatory upon all Christians. Our Lord's meaning is, that as he had, by this action, given them an example of humility, condescension, and love; so they should exercise these graces, and perform such kind offices to one another, and to all their fellow Christians.

Ver. 16. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] This is a strong way of asseveration, and is used when anything of moment and importance, and worthy of attention and observation is delivered.

The servant is not greater than his Lord; it is enough that he be as his Lord, which was a common phrase among the Jews; (see Gill on "Matthew 10:24"), (see Gill on "Matthew 10:25"); and as it is there made use of, to inform the disciples they must expect persecution, and to encourage them to bear it with patience; here it is designed to engage to humility; for if a master condescends to perform such an action, much more may a servant:

neither he that is sent, is greater than he that sent him. This is also a way of speaking in use among the Jews;

> "R. Meir says, [f579] who is greatest, he that keeps, or he that is kept? from what is written in (Psalm 91:11), he that is kept, is greater than he that keeps: says R. Judah, which is greatest, he that carries, or he that is carried? from what is written in (Psalm 91:12), he that is carried, is greater than he that carries: says R. Simeon, from what is written, in (Isaiah 6:8), jltçmh ^m lwdg jlçmh ywh, "he that sends, is greater than he that is sent"."

Which is the very phrase here used by Christ; and his meaning is this, that if it was not below him, who had chose and called, and sent them forth as his apostles, to wash their feet, they who were sent by him, should not disdain to wash one another's.

Ver. 17. *If ye know these things*, etc.] The duties they owed to him, and one another; those kind offices of love and respect to each other; the humility, condescension, and brotherly love, which ought to be in them, and of which he had given them an example:

happy are ye if ye do them; for the bare theory, or a mere speculative knowledge of these things, is not sufficient; not he that knows and does not, but he that knows and does his master's will, is blessed; he is blessed

with communion with his Lord, and shall hereafter enter into his joy, with "well done good and faithful servant". There is an happiness "in" doing well, and which follows "on" it, though not "for" it, in a way of merit; on the other hand, persons who know and do not, are very unhappy; the Jews have a saying [f580],

> "twç[l alç dmlhç, "he that learns but not to do", it would have been better for him, if he had never been created; and says R. Jochanan, he that learns but not to do, it would have been better for him if his secundine had been turned upon his face, and he had never come into the world."

Ver. 18. *I speak not of you all*.] What he had before said on the one hand, "ye are not all clean", (<43B131>John 13:11), for one of them was not; and on the other hand, when he put an "if" upon, or seemed to doubt of their knowing and doing these things, (<43B137>John 13:17); or what he was about to say concerning his being betrayed, this he did not speak of them all:

I know whom I have chosen; not to apostleship, for they were all chosen to that, Judas as well as the rest, but to grace and glory, to everlasting salvation and happiness; of these he was well assured, that they were all clean, pure, and spotless, in the sight of God; were truly regenerated by the Spirit of God, and had an experimental and practical knowledge of the things he recommended by his example, and would be the happy persons he spake of;

but he observes, so it is, and will come to pass, that there is one of you which will betray me:

that the Scripture may be fulfilled: (<19A109>Psalm 41:9), as it literally [f581] was in Judas's betraying Christ. The passage is by many interpreted either of Ahithophel, or of some other counsellor of Absalom's, or of Absalom himself; and is applied to their conduct, with respect to David, at the time of their rebellion against him; and which is thought to be typical of the treatment Christ met with from an apostle of his: but we do not find that, at the time of that rebellion, David was sick, or had any disease upon him, from whence they might hope for his death; it does not seem, as though it could be literally understood of David at all, and of the behaviour of any of his servants; but most properly of David's son, the Messiah, Jesus, with whom everything in the psalm agrees; and particularly this verse, which so plainly describes Judas, and expresses his base ingratitude, hypocrisy, and

malice: the former part of the text is not cited, “yea, mine own familiar friend”, or “the man of my peace, in whom I trusted”; though it fully agrees with him, he being admitted to great familiarity with Christ, and lived peaceably with him; and who was intrusted by him with the bag, into which the money was put, which was ministered, either for the sustenance of him and his apostles, or for the use of the poor: but our Lord thought fit to cite no more of it than what follows, that being sufficiently descriptive of him; and especially at this present time, when he was at table with his Lord.

He that eateth bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me; he sat down with him at table frequently, and ate bread with him; and was doing so, when Satan put it into his heart to betray him; which is strongly expressed, by “lifting up” his “heel against him”; and sets forth the ingratitude, wickedness, and cruelty of him; who, like an unruly horse, that has thrown his rider, spurns at him, to destroy him; and also the insidious manner in which he did it; he supplanted, he tripped him, as wrestlers do, in order to cast him down to the ground, and then trample upon him, and triumph over him: he first `bram`, “laid snares for him”, as Jarchi explains the phrase used in the “psalm”, and then `lydgh`, “he magnified his heel”, he behaved proudly and haughtily to him.

Ver. 19. *Now I tell you before it come*, etc.] That is, gave them notice of this before hand, that one of them should betray him:

that when it is come to pass; and they had seen it fulfilled exactly to a tittle, and according to this Scripture:

ye may believe that I am he: the Lord God omniscient, who knows and declares things before they come to pass, just as they do come to pass, which none but the eternal God can do; and that he was the Saviour and Redeemer, the Messiah spoken of and promised, the very person prophesied of, in Psalm 41. For that whole “psalm” is applicable to Jesus Christ, the true Messiah; in (<19401>Psalm 41:1-3), the happiness of such is declared, who “consider the poor”; the Messiah, in his low estate of humiliation, who became poor for the sake of his people; in (<19405>Psalm 41:5), his enemies are represented as wishing for his death; their hypocrisy, perfidy, and vile designs upon his life, are aptly described in (<19406>Psalm 41:6,7), which they executed by suborning false witnesses, bringing a wrong charge, `l[ylb rbd`, “a wicked accusation against him”, (<19408>Psalm 41:8), which succeeded, to the taking away of his life; and then

they are introduced as triumphing over him, lying dead in the grave, whom they believed would never rise more; but in this they were mistaken, for he was raised up again; for which he prays, (<19410>Psalm 41:10), that he might requite them, as he did, by destroying their city, temple, and nation; and the whole is concluded with thankfulness to God, for raising and exalting him, and setting him before his face for ever, (<19411>Psalm 41:11-13). There is but one passage in it, which has any difficulty in applying it to Christ, and that is, (<19404>Psalm 41:4), where he is spoken of as having sinned against the Lord; but the words may be rendered thus, "heal my soul", i.e. deliver me out of my sorrows and afflictions, Æl ytajh yk, "because I have made an offering for sin unto thee"; and well agrees with Christ, who was to make, and has made his soul an offering for sin.

Ver. 20. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] You may assure yourselves of the truth of what I am going to say, and which I say for your comfort and encouragement:

he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me; I have sent you in my name to preach the Gospel; you are my ambassadors, and you will be honourably received by many; and which I shall regard and take notice of, and esteem, as though they had received me; even as my Father has sent me into this world, as a Saviour and Redeemer, a prophet, priest, and King; and as many as have received me, are looked upon by my Father, as having received him: in short, such as cordially receive and embrace the ministers of the Gospel, receive Christ, in whose name they come, and whom they preach; and such who receive Christ, as preached and held forth in the everlasting Gospel, receive the Father of Christ; and partake of his love, grace, and kindness, shown forth in the mission and gift of Christ to them: Christ, as Mediator, represented his Father that sent him; and the ministers of Christ represent him; so that what is done to them, either in a way of reception or rejection, he takes as done to himself: it is a common saying among the Jews [f582], wtwmk µda lç wjwlçç, "that the messenger of a man is as himself".

Ver. 21. *When Jesus had thus said*, etc.] Having spoken of the mission of his disciples by him, of their reception among men, and the notice that would be taken of it by him:

he was troubled in spirit; in his soul, which shows him to be truly and really man, and to have an human soul, which some have denied; and that

to be of like passions with ours, only without sin: he was troubled, not at what he had said, but at what he was about to say concerning the betrayer; and that not so much on his own account, because of the danger, the sorrows, and sufferings he should be exposed to, as on account of the horrible blackness of the crime, and the vengeance that would fall upon the criminal; and being thus inwardly distressed at this affair,

he testified and said: he spake out openly and plainly, what he had before secretly intimated, and that with the greatest certainty:

verily, verily, I say unto you; it is truth, it may be believed, however unexpected and strange it may seem to be:

that one of you shall betray me; to the chief priests and elders, in order to be put to death.

Ver. 22. *Then the disciples looked one to another*, etc.] As persons surprised and astonished, and as scarce crediting what was said; not having had the least suspicion of anyone among them, that could be guilty of such an action; and expressing by their looks their detestation of, and indignation at so horrible an iniquity; or they looked one to another, to observe if they could, whether the countenance of anyone would discover who the person was:

doubting of whom he spake; not being able to conceive and imagine, who the person was he had in view; from whence it appears, that Judas, to this time, had behaved outwardly as well as any of the other disciples; he had given no occasion, by his conduct, to suspect him more than any other: upon this broad intimation, or rather strong protestation which Christ made, that one of them should betray him, their eyes were not turned to him directly and particularly, but to one another.

Ver. 23. *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom*, etc.] Not pressing upon that part of Christ's body, which would have been irreverent in John, and troublesome to Christ; but leaning at table upon his bed or couch, on which he lay; and which was next to, and just before Christ; so that he was very near unto, and seemed to lie in the bosom of Christ; as such are said to do, who sit next at table to another. The posture of the Jews at table, was either "sitting" or "lying", and a difference they make between these two;

> "if, say they [f583], ^ybçwy wyh, "they sat" to eat everyone asked a blessing for himself; but if wbysh, "they lay down", one asked a blessing for them all."

This lying down was not on their backs, nor on their right side, but on their left; for they say [f584], that

> "lying down on the back, is not called hbysh, "lying down"; and lying on the right side, is not called lying down."

And the reason given is [f585], because they have need of the right hand to eat with; but as they elsewhere [f586] observe,

> "they used to eat lying along, leaning on the left side, their feet to the ground, and every man on a single couch."

Would you know the order in which they, lay, take the account as they have given it [f587];

> "when there were but two couches, the principal person lay first, and the second to him above him; and when there were three, the principal person lay in the middle, the second to him above him, and the third below him; and if he would talk with him, he raised himself upright, and sitting upright he talked with him; that is, as the gloss explains it, if the principal person was desirous to talk with him that was second to him, he must raise himself up from his lying down, and sit upright; for all the white he is leaning, he cannot talk with him, because he that is second to him, is behind the head of the principal person, and the face of the principal person is turned to the other side; and it is better for the second to sit below him, that he may hear his words, whilst he is leaning."

The form in which Christ and his disciples sat or lay at table, we may conceive was this [f588]; a table was placed in the middle and as many beds or couches round it, as there were persons; Christ the principal and most worthy person lay first, with his head toward the table, his face somewhat turned from it, leaning on his left elbow upon the couch; in this posture lay Jesus, upon the first couch; in the same posture lay John, in the next to him, and just before him; the hinder part of his head being towards, and near the breast and bosom of Jesus; whence he is said to lean upon it: now to lie next to the principal person, was a very great honour, as well as a

mark of great affection; and for John to lie next to Jesus, and as it were to lean on his bosom, showed how much he was respected and honoured by him; and therefore John modestly conceals his name, and only says,

one of his disciples whom Jesus loved; Christ, as the Son of God, and surety of his people, loved his true disciples, as he does all his elect, alike; not one more than the other; but as man, he had a particular affection for this disciple, and therefore admitted him near his person, and was very familiar with him.

Ver. 24. *Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him*, etc.] Peter perhaps lay at a distance from Christ, or in some such position, that he could not whisper to him himself; and besides, knew that John might use more freedom, as he was admitted to more familiarity with him; and being at some distance also from him, he beckoned to him; which was usually done at meals, when they could not, by reason of their posture, discourse together: this being the case, gwjmb hyl ywjm, "they made signs", by nodding to one another [f589]; that is, as the gloss explains it, they pointed with their hands and fingers, and by nodding or beckoning; such a method Peter took, signifying his desire,

that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake: which he did not out of mere curiosity, but from an honest intention and pure zeal, that he, with the rest, might show their abhorrence of such a person, and avoid him; and do all that lay in their power to hinder him from putting his designs into execution, and that the innocent might be free from all suspicion.

Ver. 25. *He then lying on Jesus' breast*, etc.] Being on the couch just before Jesus, with his back to him, he bends backwards, and falling on Jesus' breast, whispers in his ear:

and saith unto him, Lord, who is it? using his interest in Christ, and making thus free with him, in compliance with Peter's request; and was no doubt desirous himself of knowing who the person was.

Ver. 26. *Jesus answered, he it is*, etc.] Jesus replied, by whispering; for had he spoken out, the rest could not have been so ignorant, as they still continued, after the sign was given: Christ, I say, whispered to John, and told him by what sign he might know the person, and that it was he,

to whom, says he,

I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. This was not the passover sop, which was dipped into a sauce made of various things, called by the Jews `tswrj`; for this was not the "paschal" supper, but a common supper at a private house, two days before the feast of the passover; but this sop, or rather crust of bread, which whether dipped into a liquid, or only a piece of dry bread, which Christ dipped his hand into the dish for, and took, as some think, is not very material, was a piece of common bread, which Christ took up, without regard to any custom, or ceremony used at any feasts, and gave it to the betrayer, as a sign by which John might know him:

and when he, had dipped the sop; either into some sort of broth, or any other liquid, or had dipped his hand into the dish for it:

he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon; so called, to distinguish him from another apostle, whose name was Judas, and was then present.

Ver. 27. *And after the sop, Satan entered into him*, etc.] After he had taken and eaten the sop, or crust of bread, by which he was pointed out to be the betrayer, "Satan entered into him"; possessed his body, and filled his mind, and stirred him up more eagerly to pursue with rigour his wicked design. The Jews have a saying [f590], that

> "no man commits a transgression, until `twjç jwr wb snkn`, "a spirit of madness enters into him"."

Such an evil spirit entered into Judas, which pushed him on to commit this horrid iniquity:

then said Jesus to him, that thou doest, do quickly; this he said, not as approving his wicked design, and exhorting him to it as a laudable action, but rather as deriding him, having nothing to care about, or fear from him; or as upbraiding him with his perfidy and wickedness, and signifying that he should take no methods to prevent him, though he fully knew what was in his heart to do; and it seems also to express the willingness of Christ, and his eager and hearty desire to suffer and die for his people, in order to obtain salvation for them.

Ver. 28. *Now no man at the table*, etc.] Not one of those who lay upon the couches at the table, excepting John, to whom the signal was given:

knew for what intent he spake this unto him; and perhaps he might not know the meaning of his last words, that he spoke concerning the act of betraying him; nor did not imagine that the thing was so near and so speedily to be done, as it was.

Ver. 29. *For some of them thought*, etc.] This was the thought of some of the disciples, it may be of all of them but John;

because Judas had the bag: which was for the common supply of Christ and his disciples, and for the relief of the poor; (see Gill on "John 12:6").

That Jesus had said unto him, buy those things that we have need of against the feast; the feast of the passover, which was to be two days after; and shows, that this was not the passover which Christ now ate with his disciples:

or that he should give something to the poor; for whom Christ cared, and had a hearty concern, and for whom Judas had very little, notwithstanding his high pretensions.

Ver. 30. *He then having, received the sop*, etc.] As soon as ever he received it, he

went immediately out; fearing lest an entire discovery should be made, and he be prevented accomplishing his design; or being more violently stirred up to it by, Satan, who after the sop entered into him, he directly went from Bethany to Jerusalem, to the chief priests, there, in order to consult and agree upon the delivery of him into their hands:

and it was night; this circumstance is added, to show how eagerly he was bent upon it; that though it was night, it did not hinder or discourage him from setting out on his journey to Jerusalem; and as this was a work of darkness, the night was the fittest time for it, and was a proper emblem of the blackness of the crime he was going to perpetrate.

Ver. 31. *Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said*, etc.] Christ and his true disciples being together alone, he used a greater freedom of conversation with them, and entered into some discourse about his sufferings and death; with a view to give them some instructions about their future conduct and behaviour, and in order to support them under the loss of his presence; and tells them in the first place, that

now is the son of man glorified: by "the son of man", he means himself; a phrase he often uses, when speaking of himself; this was a title the Messiah went by in prophecy; was true in fact of Jesus, who was the son of Abraham, and the son of David, and expresses the truth of his humanity; and he the rather chooses to use it now, because he is speaking of a glorification, which he in his divine nature was incapable of, and which regards either time past, present, or to come: the meaning may be, either that he had been already glorified by his doctrines and miracles; or that he was now glorified, by discovering the traitor, before he made one single overt act towards betraying him; or that in a very short time he should be glorified, meaning at his death; (see John 17:1). But how was he then glorified, when it was an accursed one, and attended with so much ignominy and reproach? he was then glorified by his Father, who supported him in it, and carried him through it; so as that he conquered all his enemies, and obtained eternal salvation for his people: moreover, the death of Christ was not only his way to glory, but was attended with many wonderful and surprising events; as the darkness, the earthquake, the rending of the rocks, and vails of the temple, and the like; and it was also glorious in the eyes of his Father, because hereby his purposes were accomplished, his covenant transactions brought about, his law and justice were satisfied, and the salvation of his people finished:

and God is glorified in him. The glory of God was great, in the salvation of his elect by the death of Christ; for hereby his wisdom and power, his truth and faithfulness, his justice and holiness, as well as his love, grace, and mercy, were glorified.

Ver. 32. *If God be glorified in him*, etc.] Seeing this is a certain truth, is indisputably matter of fact, that all the perfections of God are glorified in Christ, by his sufferings and death:

God shall also glorify him in himself; either "with himself"; with his own glory, which was promised to Christ, and which he had before the world was, and for which he prays, (John 17:5), or by himself: by his own power, in raising him from the dead, setting him at his own right hand, and crowning him with glory and honour:

and shall straightway glorify him; this he will do very quickly, he will not leave him in the grave, nor suffer him to see corruption; he will raise him again the third day, and give him glory.

Ver. 33. *Little children, yet a little while I am with you*, etc.] Christ having removed the scandal of his death, by observing, that both he and his Father would be glorified by it, begins more freely to open his mind to his disciples, and acquaint them with it; whom he addresses in the most kind, tender, and affectionate manner, “little children”, expressing the relation which subsisted between them, of which he was not unmindful; his great affection for them, his consideration of their weakness, and sympathy with them on that account; who were very ill able to bear his departure, which he now thought high time to acquaint them with, that it would be very shortly: it was but a little while he was to be with them, a few days more; the time of his departure was at hand, his hour was as it were come, and the last sands were dropping:

ye shall seek me; as persons in distress, under great concern, not knowing what to do, or where to go:

and as I said unto the Jews, (<4B073>John 7:33,34);

whither I go ye cannot come, so now I say unto you; but with this difference, whereas the unbelieving Jews, who died in their sins, could never come whither he went, these his disciples, though they could not come now, yet they should hereafter, all of them, as well as Peter, (<4B136>John 13:36).

Ver. 34. *A new commandment I give unto you*, etc.] As parents, when they take their leave of their children, in their dying moments, give them proper instructions and orders, and lay their dying injunctions on them, so Christ taking his leave of his disciples, gives them his; which were, that they

love one another: as brethren in the same family, children of the same Father, and fellow disciples with each other; by keeping and agreeing together, praying one for another, bearing one another’s burdens, forbearing and forgiving one another, admonishing each other, and building up one another in faith and holiness: and this he calls “a new commandment”; that is, a very excellent one; as a “new name”, and a “new song”, denote excellent ones; or it is so called, because it is set forth by Christ, in a new edition of it, and newly and more clearly explained, than before; and being enforced with a new argument and pattern, never used before,

as I have loved you; and to be observed in a new manner, not “in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit”: besides, though this

commandment, as to the matter of it, is the same with that of Moses, (<3Leviticus 19:18); yet it takes in more, and "new" objects; since by "neighbour" there, seems to be meant "the children of their people", the Jews; and so they understood it only of their countrymen, and of proselytes at furthest, whereas this reaches to any "other" person; (see <45Romans 13:8); and as the measure, as well as the motive is new, for it is not now "as thy self", but "as I have loved you", the Jew has no reason to object as he does [f591], to its being called a "new commandment": and its being "new", carries in it a reason or argument, why it should be observed, as does also the following clause;

as I have loved you, that ye also love one another; than which, nothing can, or should, more strongly engage to it: as Christ has loved his people freely, notwithstanding all their unworthiness and ungratefulness, so should they love one another, though there may be many things in them observable, which are disagreeable; as Christ loves all his children without any distinction, so should they love one another, whether poor or rich, weaker or stronger, lesser or greater believers; and as Christ loves them not in word only, but in deed and in truth, so should they love one another with a pure heart fervently, and by love serve one another.

Ver. 35. *By this shall all men know*, etc.] Not only by this you yourselves will know that ye have passed from death to life, that the true work of grace is begun upon your hearts; nor only by this will you know one another to be Christians; but by this all men, even the men of the world will know,

that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another: and own and acknowledge it, as Tertullian [f592] says the very Heathens did in his time; who would say, when they saw the Christians pass along the streets, and meet and express their affection to each other, "see how they love one another": would to God the same was as observable now. The distinguishing badge and character of a disciple of Christ, is not any outward garb, or any austerities of life, by which the disciples of John and of the Pharisees were known; nor were the ordinary nor extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, bestowed upon the disciples of Christ, what distinguished them as such; since those who were not truly his disciples, had these bestowed on them; but love to one another, brotherly love was the distinguishing character, and this is another reason or argument enforcing a regard unto it.

Ver. 36. *Simon Peter said unto him*, etc.] One might have expected that Peter would have taken some notice of what Christ said last, about love to one another; but he passes over it, and takes no manner of notice of it; which did not arise from inattention to it, or from any dislike of it, or disaffection to it; for it appears from his whole conduct and writings, that he had the utmost regard for it; he very frequently presses it, and most fervently practised it; but having observed some words which dropped from Christ's lips, "whither I go ye cannot come", (<4813>John 13:33); his mind was intent upon them, was uneasy about them, and very much wanted to know the meaning of them; and as soon as Christ had done speaking, took the opportunity to put the question:

Lord, whither goest thou? imagining he was going to some distant place in the country, and which was difficult of access; whereby he betrayed his weakness and ignorance, as the Jews did, (<4625>John 6:25).

Jesus answered him, whither I go thou canst not follow me now; which words imply, that Christ was going somewhere in a little time; he was going to the garden to surrender himself up into the hands of his enemies, and hither Peter could, and did follow him, and therefore is not here meant; he was going to die for his people, in order to take away the sting of death and the curse of the law, and work out salvation for them; he was going to his Father in heaven, to receive gifts for men, and to send the Comforter; to open the way to heaven, take possession of it, and prepare it for his saints; to plead the cause, and transact the business of his dear children; and to receive a kingdom for himself, and return: now hither, as yet, Peter could not follow him; for his time of suffering death was not yet come; Christ had some other work for him to do first; he must open the door of faith to the Gentiles, and preach the Gospel to them:

but thou shall follow me afterwards; when thy time is come, and thou hast done the work allotted for thee, thou shalt follow me by dying for me; and thou shall follow me into my kingdom and glory, and be for ever with me: all the saints shall follow Christ to heaven, who is their forerunner for them entered; and as sure as he is there, so sure shall they be also; the counsels of God are unalterable, the covenant of grace is firm and sure, the blood of Christ can never be spilled in vain, his prayers and preparations cannot be fruitless, nor the work of the Spirit be ever lost; wherefore not one of those who are given to Christ, and come to him, and follow him here, but shall follow him hereafter.

Ver. 37. *Peter said unto him*, etc.] Not understanding Christ's answer, and being dissatisfied with it, inquires:

Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? is the place inaccessible? are the difficulties in the way to it insuperable? the roughness of the road, or the dangers of it, will not discourage me; I am ready to go through the greatest dangers and difficulties, to follow thee: yea,

I will lay down my life for thy sake; whatever enemies I should meet with in, following thee, would not dismay me; I would readily hazard my life, and cheerfully lay it down in defence of thee.

Ver. 38. *Jesus answered him, wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake*, etc.] Christ speaks these words as questioning, not Peter's sincerity, but his strength; or as deriding him, or rather pitying him; as if he should say, thou poor vain self-sufficient man, thou dost not know what thou talkest of:

verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice; not that Peter should deny him three times, before the cock crowed once; for certain it is, that Peter denied Christ but once, before the cock crew, (<4114B>Mark 14:68); but the meaning is, that before the cock had, lone crowing, or within the time of cock crowing, he should deny him thrice: whence it follows, that there is no necessity of concluding from hence, that this night was the passover night, and the night in which Judas betrayed Christ, and Peter denied him, but was two nights before; and therefore it is not said here, as by the other evangelists, "this day", or "this night", or "this day, even this night thou shalt deny me"; only in general before the cock crow, or within the time of cock crowing: so that it appears, that Peter twice expressed his confidence, in laying down his life for Christ; once at the supper in Simon's house at Bethany, two days before the "passover", and again at the passover supper in Jerusalem; and as often Christ rebuked his confidence by this expression, only varying it as the different times required, and therein gave a full proof of his omniscience.

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 14

Ver. 1. *Let not your heart be troubled*, etc.] In some copies this verse begins thus, and he said to his disciples; and certain it is, that these words are addressed to them in general, Peter being only the person our Lord was discoursing with in the latter part of the preceding chapter; but turning, as it were, from him, he directs his speech to them all. There were many things which must needs lie heavy upon, and greatly depress the minds of the disciples; most of all the loss of Christ's bodily presence, his speedy departure from them, of which he had given them notice in the preceding chapter; also the manner in which he should be removed from them, and the circumstances that should attend the same, as that he should be betrayed by one of them, and denied by another; likewise the poor and uncomfortable situation they were likely to be left in, without any sight or hope of that temporal kingdom being erected, which they had been in expectation of; and also the issue and consequence of all this, that they would be exposed to the hatred and persecutions of men. Now in the multitude of these thoughts within them, Christ comforts them, bids them be of good heart, and exhorts them to all exercise of faith on God, and on himself, as the best way to be rid of heart troubles, and to have peace:

ye believe in God, believe also in me; which words may be read and interpreted different ways: either thus, "ye believe in God, and ye believe in me"; and so are both propositions alike, and express God and Christ to be equally the object of their faith; and since therefore they had so good a foundation for their faith and confidence, they had no reason to be uneasy: or thus, "believe in God, and believe in me"; and so both are exhortations to exercise faith alike on them both, as being the best antidote they could make use of against heart troubles: or thus, "believe in God, and ye believe in me"; and so the former is an exhortation, the latter a proposition: and the sense is, put your trust in God, and you will also trust in me, for I am of the same nature and essence with him; I and my Father are one; so that if you believe in one, you must believe in the other: or thus, and so our translators render them, "ye believe in God, believe also in me"; and so the

former is a proposition, or an assertion, and the latter is an exhortation grounded upon it: you have believed in God as faithful and true in all his promises, though yon have not seen him; believe in me also, though I am going from you, and shall be absent for a while; this you may be assured of, that whatever I have said shall be accomplished. The words considered either way are a full proof of the true deity of Christ, since he is represented as equally the object of faith with God the Father, and lay a foundation for solid peace and comfort in a view of afflictions and persecutions in the world.

Ver. 2. *In my Father's house are many mansions*, etc.] This he says to draw off their minds from an earthly kingdom to an heavenly one; to point out the place to them whither he was going, and to support them with the views and hopes of glory under all their troubles. By his "Father's house" is meant heaven; (see <470501>2 Corinthians 5:1); which is of his Father's building, where he has, and will have all his family. This Christ says partly to reconcile the minds of his disciples to his departure from them, and partly to strengthen their hope of following him thither; since it was his Father's, and their Father's house whither he was going, and in which "are many mansions"; abiding or dwelling places; mansions of love, peace, joy, and rest, which always remain: and there are "many" of them, which does not design different degrees of glory; for since the saints are all loved with the same love, bought with the same price, justified with the same righteousness, and are equally the sons of God, their glory will be the same. But, it denotes fulness and sufficiency of room for all his people; for the many ordained to eternal life, for whom Christ gave his life a ransom, and whose blood is shed for the remission of their sins, whose sins he bore, and whom he justifies by his knowledge; who receive him by faith, and are the many sons he will bring to glory. And this is said for the comfort of the disciples who might be assured from hence, that there would be room not only for himself and Peter, whom he had promised should follow him hereafter, but for them all. Very agreeable to this way of speaking are many things in the Jewish writings:

> "says R. Isaack[f593], how many ^yrwdm l[^yrwdm, "mansions upon mansions", are there for the righteous in that world? and the uppermost mansion of them all is the love of their Lord."

Moreover, they say[f594], that

"in the world to come every righteous man shall have rwdm, "a mansion", to himself."

Sometimes they [f595] speak of "seven mansions" (a number of perfection) being prepared for the righteous in the other world, though entirely ignorant of the person by whom these mansions are prepared: who here says,

if it were not so, I, would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you. This expresses the certainty of it, that his Father had a house, and in it were many mansions, room enough for all his people, or he would have informed them otherwise, who must needs know the truth of these things, since he came from thence; and who never deceives with vain hopes of glory; and whatever he says is truth, and to be depended on; everything he here delivers; both what he said before, and also what follows: "I go to prepare a place for you"; heaven is a kingdom prepared by the Father for his saints, from the foundation of the world; and again, by the presence and intercession of Christ, who is gone before, and is as a forerunner entered into it, and has took possession of it in the name of his people; and by his own appearance there for them with his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, he is, as it were, fitting up these mansions for their reception, whilst they are by his Spirit and grace fitting and preparing for the enjoyment of them.

Ver. 3. *And if I go and prepare a place for you*, etc.] Seeing I am going to prepare, and will prepare a place for you, of the truth of which you may be fully assured:

I will come again; either by death or in person a second time, here on earth:

and receive you unto myself; I will take you up with me to heaven; I will receive you into glory;

that where I am there you may be also: and behold my glory, and be for ever with me, and never part more.

Ver. 4. *And whither I go ye know*, etc.] They might have known, at least, whither he was going, since he had spoke of his Father's house, and of his going to prepare a place for them there, and doubtless had some knowledge thereof, though very confused and imperfect:

and the way ye know: this also they might have known from some expressions of his, that the way to his Father's house lay through sufferings and death, in which way they also were to follow him to his kingdom and glory. Though these words may be with an interrogation, "and whither I go do ye know? and the way do ye know?" which best agrees with Thomas's answer, and removes all appearance of contradiction between Christ's words and his.

Ver. 5. *Thomas saith unto him, Lord*, etc.] Who was one of his apostles, and here betrays his ignorance, as elsewhere his unbelief; and not only speaks for himself, but for the rest of the apostles, of whom he judged by himself; and who, it may be, might understand things better than himself, though their knowledge at present was but small:

we know not whither thou goest; though he had but just told them of his Father's house, and of his going to prepare a place for them:

and how can we know the way? for if we do not know the place, it is not reasonable to think we should know the way to it. Thomas seemed to have no other notion than that Christ was talking of some particular place in Judea, whither he was going, and of the road to it.

Ver. 6. *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way*, etc.] Our Lord takes the opportunity of this discourse about the place he was going to, and the way unto it, more fully to instruct his disciples concerning himself, saying, "I am the way"; Christ is not merely the way, as he goes before his people as an example; or merely as a prophet, pointing out unto them by his doctrine the way of salvation; but he is the way of salvation itself by his obedience and sacrifice; nor is there any other; he is the way of his Father's appointing, and which is entirely agreeable to the perfections of God, and suitable to the case and condition of sinners; he is the way to all the blessings of the covenant of grace; and he is the right way into a Gospel church state here; no one comes rightly into a church of Christ but by faith in him; and he is the way to heaven: he is entered into it himself by his own blood, and has opened the way to it through himself for his people: he adds,

the truth he is not only true, but truth itself: this may regard his person and character; he is the true God, and eternal life; truly and really man; as a prophet he taught the way of God in truth; as a priest, he is a faithful, as well as a merciful one, true and faithful to him that appointed him; and as a King, just and true are all his ways and administrations: he is the sum and

substance of all the truths of the Gospel; they are all full of him, and centre in him; and he is the truth of all the types and shadows, promises and prophecies of the Old Testament; they have all their accomplishment in him; and he is the true way, in opposition to all false ones of man's devising. And this phrase seems to be opposed to a notion of the Jews, that the law was the true way of life, and who confined truth to the law. They have a saying [f596], that tma wt rwtw hçm, "Moses and his law are the truth"; this they make Korah and his company say in hell. That the law of Moses was truth, is certain; but it is too strong an expression to say of Moses himself, that he was truth; but well agrees with Christ, by whom grace and truth came in opposition to Moses, by whom came the law: but when they say [f597], hrwt ala tma ˆya, "there is no truth but the law", they do not speak truth. More truly do they speak, when, in answer to that question, tma hm, "what is truth?" it is said, that he is the living God, and King of the world [f598], characters that well agree with Christ.

And the life: Christ is the author and giver of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal; or he is the way of life, or "the living way"; in opposition to the law, which was so far from being the way of life, that it was the ministration of condemnation and death: he always, and ever will be the way; all in this way live, none ever die; and it is a way that leads to eternal life: and to conclude all the epithets in one sentence, Christ is the true way to eternal life It is added by way of explanation of him, as the way,

no man cometh unto the Father but by me; Christ is the only way of access unto the Father; there is no coming to God as an absolute God, not upon the foot of the covenant of works, nor without a Mediator; and the only Mediator between God and man is Christ: he introduces and presents the persons and services of his people to his Father, and gives them acceptance with him.

Ver. 7. *If ye had known me*, etc.] Christ having made mention of his Father's house, and of himself, as the way thither, and the way of access to the Father, was willing to inform his disciples better concerning him before his departure from them, which he introduces, saying: "if ye had known me"; that is, more fully and perfectly; for that they knew Christ to be the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, and true Messiah, is certain, though they were not so thoroughly acquainted, as afterwards, with his person, power, and office:

ye should have known my Father also; for the knowledge of the Father, and of Christ, go together; he that sees the one, sees the other; he that believes in the one, believes in the other; and the knowledge of both is necessary to eternal life; and as a person increases in the knowledge of the one, so of the other. The disciples had some knowledge of them both, but what was very small and obscure, in comparison of what they afterwards had:

and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him; some read these words, "henceforwards ye shall know him, and see him"; that is, in a very short time, when the Spirit is poured down from on high upon you, and you have received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, you shall then have an enlarged knowledge both of me and my Father. Others render them, as an exhortation, "henceforward know ye him"; acknowledge the Father in all that I have done, believing that you see the Father in me, and in all my works; though they are rather to be considered as an assertion, declaring, that they then had some knowledge of the Father; "and now ye know him, and", or "because ye have seen him"; in me, who am "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person".

Ver. 8. *Philip saith to him, Lord*, etc.] Another of his disciples addresses him in a reverend and becoming manner, as Thomas before had done, calling him Lord, and saying to him, "show us the Father, and it sufficeth us": he speaks in the name of them all, seems to own their ignorance of the Father, and expresses their desire of seeing him:

shew us the Father; it was a corporeal sight of him he asked for; such a sight of the glory of God as Moses desired, and the elders of Israel had at Mount Sinai; and signifies, that if this could be obtained, it would give them full satisfaction:

and it sufficeth us; we shall be no more uneasy at thy departure from us; we shall have no doubt about thy Father's house, and the many mansions in it; or of thyself, as the way unto it, and of our everlasting abode with thee in it; we shall sit down easy and contented, and trouble time no more with questions about this matter.

Ver. 9. *Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long time with you*, etc.] Conversing familiarly with you, instructing you by my ministry, and performing so many miraculous works among you, for so long a time; (see ‹ЯБЛ›Hebrews 5:11,12);

and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? Surely you cannot be so ignorant as this comes to; as you have seen me with your bodily eyes, as a man, you must, know that I am God by the doctrines I have taught you, and the miracles I have wrought among you: and

he that hath seen me; not with the eyes of his body, but with the eyes of his understanding; he that has beheld the perfections of the Godhead in me:

hath seen the Father; the perfections which are in him also; for the same that are in me are in him, and the same that are in him are in me: I am the very image of him, and am possessed of the same nature, attributes, and glory, that he is; so that he that sees the one, sees the other:

and how sayest thou then show us the Father? such a request is a needless one, and betrays great weakness and ignorance.

Ver. 10. *Believest thou not that I am in the Father*? etc.] This surely is, as it must needs be, and ought to be, an article of your faith, “that I am in the Father”,

and the Father in me; phrases which are expressive of the sameness of nature in the Father and the Son; of the Son’s perfect equality with the Father, since the Son is as much in the Father, as the Father is in the Son; and also of the personal distinction there is between them; for nothing with propriety can be said to be in itself. The Father must be distinct from the Son who is in him, and the Son must be distinct from the Father, in whom he is; the Father and Son, though of one and the same nature, cannot be one, and the same person:

the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself. The doctrines which I preach among you are a proof of what I assert, and to them I appeal; for these are not of myself, as man,

but the Father that dwelleth in me; and so prove that I am truly God, of the same nature with my Father; that he is in me, and I in him; since they are such as none but the only begotten, who is in the bosom of the Father, could ever have declared and made known unto you; Likewise, the works which I do, as man, I do not of myself; but

he doth the works: for so this passage must be understood and supplied, in which Christ proceeds to another argument, taken from his works, proving

the Father to be in him, and that he is in the Father, which, is enlarged on in (⁴⁸⁴¹John 14:11).

Ver. 11. *Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me*, etc.] Take my word for the truth of this; you may assure yourselves that nothing is more certain; but if you will not believe upon my saying so, either believe for the sake of the doctrines I have preached unto you, which are such as never any mere man spoke, and which have been delivered in such a manner, and with such authority, as never were by man. Some copies read, by way of interrogation, and so the Ethiopic version; and the Vulgate Latin version reads, "believe ye not?"

or else believe me for the very work's sake: meaning his miraculous works, such as raising the dead, cleansing the lepers, causing the deaf to hear, and giving sight to the blind; and which were such as none but a divine person could ever perform.

Ver. 12. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me*, etc.] Having mentioned his miracles as proofs of his deity, he assures his disciples, in order to comfort them under the loss of his bodily presence, that they should do the same, and greater works; for we are not to understand these words of everyone that believes in Christ, of every private believer in him, but only of the apostles, and each of them, that were true believers in him: to whom he says,

the works that I do shall he do also; he shall raise the dead, heal all manner of diseases, and cast out devils; things which Christ gave his apostles power to do, when he first gave them a commission to preach the Gospel, and when he renewed and enlarged it: and which they did perform, not in their own name, and by their own power, but in the name, and by the power of Christ:

and greater works than these shall he do; meaning, not greater in nature and kind, but more in number; for the apostles, in a long series of time, and course of years, went about preaching the Gospel, not in Judea only, but in all the world; "God also bearing them witness with signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost", (⁵⁸⁰¹Hebrews 2:4), wherever they went: though perhaps by these greater works may be meant the many instances of conversion, which the apostles were instrumental in, and which were more in number than those which were under our Lord's personal ministry: besides, the conversion of a sinner is a greater work than any of

the miracles of raising the dead, etc. for this includes in it all miracles: here we may see a sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, quickened; one born blind made to see; one who was deaf to the threatenings of the law, and to the charming voice of the Gospel, made to hear, so as to live; and one that had the spreading leprosy of sin all over him, cleansed from it by the blood of the Lamb yea, though a miracle in nature is an instance and proof of divine power, yet the conversion of a sinner, which is a miracle in grace, is not only an instance of the power of God, and of the greatness of it, but of the exceeding greatness of it: and the rather one may be induced to give in to this sense of the passage, since it is added, as a reason,

because I go to my Father; and upon my ascension the Spirit will be given, to you, which shall not only enable you to perform miracles, as proofs of your apostleship, and the doctrine you preach, but which shall powerfully attend the Gospel to the conversion of multitudes of souls.

Ver. 13. *And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name*, etc.] Whether it be for assistance in preaching of the Gospel; or for the performance of miraculous operations in confirmation of it; or for success to attend it; or for any blessings whatsoever, whether for themselves or others:

that will I do; he does not say, that he would be a Mediator between God, and them, an advocate with the Father for them, and would intercede, and use his interest with him that it might be done, which would have been saying much, and all which he does; but he declares he will do it himself, which is a proof of his deity, and an instance of his omnipotence:

that the Father may be glorified in the Son. This may be referred either to the petition, which must be made with this view, that the Father may be glorified by, or in the Son, in whose name it is put up, and for whose sake it is made; or to Christ's promise to do it; who in doing it, seeks not his own glory, at least not singly; but as the good of his people, so the glory of his heavenly Father.

Ver. 14. *If ye shall ask anything*, etc.] These words are much, the same with the former, and have been thought, by some, to have crept into the text from the margin; though they seem rather to be repeated by Christ, the more to strengthen and confirm the faith of his disciples in this matter; that whatsoever they asked

in my name, either calling upon it, he being equally the object of prayer with the Father, or making mention of it, pleading the merits of his blood,

righteousness, and sacrifice; whatever was according to the will of God, was for his glory, and their real good, he would do it for them, as well when absent from them, as present with them.

Ver. 15. *If ye love me*, etc.] Not that Christ doubted of the love of his disciples to him; but he argues from it to their observance of his precepts, seeing ye do love me; as all do who are born again, who have had any spiritual sight of him, of his glory, suitableness, and fulness; who believe in him, and have received from him; who have had his love shed abroad in their hearts, having enjoyed communion with him, and know the relation he stands in to them; these love him above all others, and all of him, and that belong to him, unfeignedly, and in the sincerity of their souls, as did the disciples; and since they professed to love, and did love him, as they ought to do, he exhorts them, saying,

keep my commandments: Christ is Lord over his people, as he is the Creator and Redeemer of them, and as he is an head and husband to them, and as such he has a right to issue out his commands, and enjoin a regard unto them; and these are peculiarly "his", as distinct from, though not in opposition to, or to the exclusion of, his Father's commands; such as the new commandment of loving one another, and the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper, which are to be observed and kept as Christ has ordered them, constantly, in faith, and with a view to his glory.

Ver. 16. *And I will pray the Father*, etc.], Here Christ speaks as Mediator, and promises his disciples, that he would intercede for them with the Father; which is designed as an encouragement to them to ask for what they want, in his name, and to comfort their hearts, which were troubled at the news of his departure from them;

and he shall give you another Comforter. This is no inconsiderable proof of a trinity of persons in the Godhead; here is the Father prayed unto, the Son in human nature praying, and the Holy Ghost the Comforter prayed for; who is the gift of the Father, through the prevalent mediation of the Son, and is another "Comforter"; distinct from the Messiah, to whom reference is here had! One of the names of the Messiah, with the Jews, is µ j nm [f599], "a Comforter"; such an one Jesus had been to his disciples; and now he was about to leave them, and for their support under their sorrows, he promises to use his interest with his Father, that he would give them another Comforter, meaning the Spirit, who performs this his work and

office, by taking of the things of Christ, and showing them to his people; by shedding abroad the love of the Father, and of the Son, into their hearts; by opening and applying the precious promises of the Gospel to them; by being a spirit of adoption in them; and by abiding with them as the seal, earnest, and pledge of their future glory; and with this view Christ promises to pray for him,

that he may abide with you for ever: not a few years only, as I have done, but as long as you live; and with all those that shall succeed you in the work of the ministry, and with the church, and all true believers unto the end of the world: this is a proof of the saints' final perseverance. When we consider these words, in connection with the preceding exhortation, to keep the commands of Christ, and as an encouragement so to do, it brings to mind a saying of R. Eliezer ben Jacob [f600];

> "he that does one commandment gets for himself djа jylqrp, ενα παρακλητον, the very word here used, "one advocate", or "comforter"; and he that transgresses one command, gets for himself one accuser."

But though the word signifies both an advocate and a comforter, the latter seems to be the meaning of it here, as being more suited to the disconsolate condition of the disciples.

Ver. 17. *Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive*, etc.] These words explain who is meant by the Comforter, "even the Spirit of truth"; the true Spirit of God, the dictator of the Scriptures of truth, who leads men into the truths of the Gospel, confirms them in them, and gives boldness and freedom to own, and confess them before men:

whom the world cannot receive; the men of the world, who are as they came into the world, carnal and natural men, can neither receive the Spirit nor the things of the Spirit, the truths and doctrines of the Gospel; they can neither receive them into their understandings, nor into their affections; and indeed, because they cannot understand them, therefore they do not love them, but despise and hate them:

because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; the world, and the men of it, can neither see him with their bodily eyes, because he is a "spirit"; nor know him with their understandings, because he is the "Spirit of truth", which they are ignorant of, for want of a spiritual discerning.

But ye know him; as a spirit of illumination, regeneration, and conversion:

for he dwelleth with you; he is an inhabitant in your hearts, he has taken up his residence in you as his temples:

and shall be in you; as a Comforter, when I am gone from you; and as a spirit of truth to guide you into all truth, to stand by you, and assist you in preaching it, and to enable you to bear a faithful and glorious testimony for it.

Ver. 18. *I will not leave you comfortless*, etc.] Gr. "orphans", or "fatherless". Christ stands in the relation of a Father to his people, and they are his children, his spiritual seed and offspring; and so the disciples might fear, that as Christ was going from them, they should be left as children without a father, in a very desolate and comfortless, condition: to support them against these fears, Christ promises that he would not leave them thus, at least not long:

I will come to you; in a very short time, as he did; for on the third day he rose again from the dead, and appeared to them, which filled them with great joy. So among the Jews, disciples, and the world too, are represented as fatherless, when their doctors and wise men are removed by death. Says R. Aba, [f601] and so sometimes others, concerning R. Simeon ben Jochai,

> "woe to the world when thou shall go out of it, woe to the generation that shall be in the world when thou shall remove from them, ˆymty ˆwratçyw, "and they shall be left fatherless by thee"."

And in another place [f602];

> "afterwards R. Akiba went out and cried, and his eyes flowed with water, and he said, woe Rabbi, woe Rabbi, for the world is left, µwty, "fatherless by thee"."

Ver. 19. *Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more*, etc.] The men of the world now see me with their bodily eyes, which is all the sight they have of me; and this they will be deprived of in a very little time; they will see me no more until the time that I shall come in the clouds of heaven to judge the world; and then every eye shall see me:

but ye see me; ye see me now, and shall see me after my resurrection, as they did; for then he appeared alive and conversed with them for forty

days; and when he ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God, they saw him by faith crowned with glory and honour; and will see him as he is when he comes a second time to take them to himself in glory.

Because I live, ye shall believe also: Christ lives as God, as man, and as Mediator: as God, he lives the same life his Father does, partaking of the same nature, and possessing the same perfections; so he lived from everlasting, and will live to everlasting; as man, he lived first a private, and then a public life, attended with meanness, reproaches, sorrows, and sufferings; a life which was filled up with acts of devotion and piety to God, and with doing good to the bodies and souls of men; he lived in all obedience to the law of God, and at last endured the penalty of that law, in the room and stead of his people; when his life was taken away for a while, and then taken up by him again; and now, as man, he lives, and lives for evermore. As Mediator, he has his life from the Father, which is dependent upon him, by whom he was set up in an office capacity from everlasting; and as such will live to everlasting, to see the travail of his soul, the fruit of his sufferings, to make intercession for his people, and to rule until all enemies are made his footstool. And his people "live also", which is to be understood, not of the preservation of his disciples from dying with him, when he died; for then it should rather have been said, "because I die, ye shall live": nor of the continuance of their natural life in this world; for the saints are not to live always here; nor do they desire it, nor is it proper they should; death is for their advantage; it is a blessing to them. Though these words may be understood of a corporeal life, which they shall live after the resurrection; for though they die, they shall live again, and never die more; they shall not only live and reign with Christ a thousand years, but to all eternity. They also live a spiritual life now; a life of grace and holiness from Christ; a life of faith on him, and sometimes of communion with him, and desire to live to his honour and glory; and shall hereafter live an eternal life of perfection and pleasure, with Father, Son, and Spirit, for evermore. Now between these two lives, the life of Christ, and his people, there is a close connection; the one is dependent on the other, and secured by the other: "because I live, ye shall live also"; the spiritual life of a believer is from Christ, and is maintained by him; the same which is in the head, is in the members; yea, it is not so much they that live, as Christ that lives in them, and therefore their life can never be lost; it is bound up in the bundle of life with Christ, and is hid safe and secure with him in God, and so out of the reach both of men and devils. The corporeal life of the saints after

death, in the resurrection morn, springs from, and is secured by the life of Christ: his resurrection from the dead is the pattern and pledge of theirs; he undertook to raise them from the dead, and will do it; as sure as his dead body is raised and lives, so sure shall theirs; their bodies, as well as their souls, are united to Christ; and by virtue of this union, which death does not, and cannot dissolve, they shall be raised and live again. They are in Christ whilst they are dead; and because they are “the dead in Christ”, they shall “rise first”. Their eternal life is in the hands of Christ, and when he, who is the true God, and their eternal life, shall appear, they shall appear with him in glory.

Ver 20. *At that day ye shall know*, etc.] The things they should know, or the objects of knowledge are,

that I [am] in my Father; in his bosom, in union with him, partaker of the same nature, perfections, and glory with him, and equal to him:

and you in me: that they were in union with him as the branches in the vine, and as the members are in the head, and how they were loved in him, chosen in him, righteous in him, risen with him, and made to sit together in heavenly places in him:

and I in you; formed in their hearts, living in them, dwelling in them, as in his temples, and filling them with grace and glory. The knowledge of these things promised, designs a more clear and distinct knowledge of them; something of them was known already, but not so perfectly as should be hereafter; and this does not suppose that these unions between the Father and Christ, and between Christ and his people, shall then begin to be; for as the union between the Father and the Son is as eternal as themselves; so the union between Christ and his people, as he is the head and representative of them, is as early as his investiture with the office of a Mediator, and his suretyship engagements for them, which were from eternity; and are the ground, and foundation of his being in them, and they in him in the effectual calling; nor does it suggest that they shall begin to be known; only that they shall be known in a more perfect manner: the time when this will be, is “at that day”: meaning either when he should “live” in the body again, be raised from the dead, when he should he declared to be the Son of God with power, when it would appear, that he had the same power with the Father, by raising himself from the dead, and when he would rise as a public head representing them, for their justification, and they should see themselves justified and discharged in him; or the day of

“Pentecost”, when “the Spirit of truth”, he promises to pray for, should come to them in an extraordinary manner, and lead them into the knowledge of these things; or the last day, the resurrection morn, when, by virtue of union to Christ, the saints shall rise and “live” with him for ever, and shall have a perfect knowledge of these several unions; (see <4B172I>John 17:21,23,24).

Ver. 21. *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them*, etc.] He that has not merely the external revelation of them in the Bible; but has them written on his heart, by the finger of the Spirit of God, and keeps them under the influence of grace and strength received from him:

he it is that loveth me: others may talk of loving Christ, but this is the man that truly does love him; for his observance of Christ’s commands is a proof and evidence that he loves him not in word only, but in deed and in truth: and to encourage souls to love and obedience, Christ adds,

he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father; not that love to is the cause, condition, or motive of the Father’s love to his people; nor does his love to them begin when they begin to love Christ; but this expression denotes some further and greater manifestation of the Father’s love to such persons, and shows how grateful to the Father are love and obedience to the Son:

and I will love him; which must be understood in the same manner; Christ does not begin to love his people when they begin to love, and obey him; their love and obedience to him, spring from his love to them; which love of his towards them was from everlasting: but this phrase signs a clearer discovery of his love to them, which passeth knowledge; and some fresh mark and token of his affection for them; and which is explained in the next clause:

and will manifest myself to him; not in a visible way, or in a corporeal form, as he did to his disciples after his resurrection; but in a spiritual manner, as when he makes himself known to his people in ordinances, and favours them with communion with him, and they see his beauty, his fulness, his grace and righteousness, his power, and his glory.

Ver. 22. *Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot*, etc.] This was Judas Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus, the same with Jude the apostle, the author of the epistle which bears his name; and is said to be “not Iscariot”, to distinguish him from the betrayer. The question put by him, Lord,

how is it, τι γεγονεν, which answers to ad yam, or yah yam, or whm, with the Talmudists, “what is this thou sayest”; what is the meaning of it? how can it be? or what is the reason of it,

that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world? arises either from ignorance of what Christ was speaking, imagining he meant a spectre, or some apparition of himself after his death, which should be visible to his disciples, and not to others; and how this could be, he wanted to know; or from that national prejudice which Judas and the rest of the apostles had given into, of a temporal kingdom of the Messiah, the glory of which should be visible to all the world; and therefore he wonders that he should talk of the manifestation of himself, only to some, or from an honest hearty desire that the glory of Christ might not be confined to a few only; but that the whole world might see it, and be filled with it: or rather from his modesty, and the sense he had of his own unworthiness, and of the rest of the apostles, to have such a peculiar manifestation of Christ to them, when they were no more deserving of it than others: the question is put by him with admiration and astonishment; and as not being able to give, or think of any other reason of such a procedure, but the amazing grace of Christ, his free favour and sovereign will and pleasure.

Ver. 23. *Jesus answered and said unto him*, etc.] This answer is returned, and these words are spoken, for the further confirmation and explanation of what was before said:

if a man love me, he will keep my words; by his “words” are meant not his doctrines, but his ordinances; the same with his commandments, (John 14:21), which he has said, ordered, and commanded to be observed, and which are observed by such who truly love him, and that from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory: and for the encouragement of such persons as before, he says,

and my Father will love him: which is to be understood not of the love of the Father, as in his own heart, which is not taken up in time, but was in him from all eternity; nor of the first discovery of it to his people, but of greater manifestations of it to them, and a quicker sense of it in their hearts, and also of some other effects of it, to be enjoyed by them in an higher manner; such as larger measures of grace, more communion with him here, and eternal honour and glory hereafter:

and we will come unto him: I who am now going away, and my Father to whom I am going, and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, I have promised to pray for: hence a proof of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, of a trinity of persons, of there being neither more nor fewer than three; since neither more nor less can be collected from the context; and of their distinct personality, or it could not be said with any propriety, "we" each of us "will come unto him"; not locally and visibly, but spiritually, by affording our gracious and comfortable presence, the continuance of which is promised next:

and make our abode with him; which denotes habitation; for the saints are the dwelling places or temples of the living God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and the constancy and perpetuity of their residence in them, not as a wayfaring man, but always, though this may not be always discerned by believers; and is a wonderful instance of the grace and condescension of God to dwell on earth with sinful men; and a far greater one it is, than if the most mighty potentate on earth should take up his abode in a poor despicable cottage with the meanest of his subjects.

Ver. 24. *He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings*, etc.] These words may have respect both to external professors of religion, who being destitute of true love to Christ, though they outwardly observe his ordinances and commands; yet inasmuch as this does not spring from a principle of love to him, and is done only to be seen of men, or to obtain life for themselves, may be said, not to keep his words or commands, because they do not keep them aright; and to the profane world, who, as they have no affection to Christ, pay no regard to any orders or ordinances of his: and they may be considered as having in them a reason or argument, justifying the conduct of Christ, in manifesting himself to his disciples, and not unto the world; as the following words give a reason why the Father takes so much notice of, comes and makes his abode with such as keep the words of Christ:

and, or "for"

the word which you hear, is not mine, but the Father's which sent me: that is, it is not only mine, but my Father's also: it is not mine as man; it is not a scheme of things of my own devising; it is not from earth, but from heaven; my Father has a concern in it, and therefore regards such who hear, receive, and keep it: and this is said by him partly to engage a greater regard and attention to his word, his truths, and ordinances, by his

disciples; and to expose and aggravate the sin of those who despised and rejected them; since it was not barely casting contempt on him, but on his Father likewise.

Ver. 25. *These things have I spoken unto you*, etc.] Concerning his Father, and his Father's house, and the way to both; concerning his being in the father, and the Father in him; concerning keeping his commandments, and the advantages and benefits following upon it:

being, says he,

[yet] present with you; which is a strong intimation that in a little time he should not be present with them; and that whilst he was present with them, he was desirous of saying such things to them in a brief compendious manner, as they were able to bear; which might be of future use and instruction to them.

Ver. 26. *But the Comforter, [which is] the Holy Ghost*, etc.] Before spoken of, (<scripRef type="bible">John 14:16</scripRef>), for whom Christ promised to pray the Father that he might be given to them. The word used there, as here, signifies an "advocate", and is so rendered, (<scripRef type="bible">1 John 2:1</scripRef>), a patron, one that pleads and defends, the cause of another, before kings and princes; so the Jewish writers [f603] use the word jylqrp, the same with παρακλητος, here, and give this as the sense of it: and which agrees well enough with the work and office of the Spirit of God, who has promised to the apostles to speak in them and for them, when they should be brought before kings and governors for Christ's sake; and would so thoroughly plead his cause and theirs, as to convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgment; and who acts the part of an intercessor, or advocate, for private believers, in prayer to the King of kings: but inasmuch as it also signifies a "comforter", and this being agreeably to the present condition of the apostles, as before observed; it may be most proper to retain that sense of it here, who is explained to be the Holy Ghost; which is a more clear and explicit account of him than before, and very distinctly points out the third person in the Trinity, who is in his nature holy, equally with the Father and Son, and the author of holiness in all the saints:

whom the Father will send in my name. The mission of the Spirit is here ascribed to the Father, but not to the exclusion of the Son, who is also said to send him, (<scripRef type="bible">John 15:26 16:7</scripRef>), which was not so proper to be mentioned here, because he speaks of his being sent, "in his name"; that is,

at his request, through his mediation and intercession, in his room and stead, acting, the same part, and bearing the same flame of an advocate or comforter, and for the glory and honour of his name: which act of sending does not suppose any local motion, which cannot agree with an infinite and immense spirit; nor inferiority in him to the other two persons, since he who is sent by Christ, and in his name, is also the sender of Christ; but it denotes the joint consent and agreement of Father, Son, and Spirit, in this affair:

he shall teach you all things: this is the proper work and business of the Spirit, to teach, interpret, and explain all things which Christ had said to them; to make them more plain and easy to their understandings; to instruct them in all things necessary to salvation, and to be known by them, that they might teach them others:

and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you; which through inattention, or want of understanding in them, had slipped their minds, and were forgotten by them. This accounts for it, how the evangelists some years after the death of Christ; at different times and places, and without consulting each other, could commit to writing the life, actions, sayings, and sermons of Christ, with all the minute circumstances attending them.

Ver. 27. *Peace I leave with you*, etc.] Christ being about to die and leave his disciples, makes his last will and testament, and as the best legacy he could leave them, bequeaths peace unto them;

my peace I give unto you: he left the Gospel of peace with them, to be preached by them to all the world; which is a declaration and publication of peace made by his blood; is a means of reconciling the minds of men to God and Christ, to the truths, ordinances, and people of Christ; of relieving and giving peace to distressed minds; and which shows the way to eternal peace: and as Christ had kept his disciples in peace one with another, so he left them in peace; and left orders with them to maintain it one among another: but what seems chiefly designed here, is peace with God, which Christ is the sole author of; he was appointed in the council and covenant of peace to effect it; he became incarnate with that view, and did procure it by his sufferings and death; and as it was published by angels, when he came into the world, he left it, and gave it to his disciples when he was going out of it: or else that peace of conscience is meant, which follows upon the former, which arises from the sprinklings of the blood of Christ,

and from a comfortable view, by faith, of an interest in his justifying righteousness, and is enjoyed in a way of believing, and commonly in the use of ordinances “leaving” it supposes that Christ was about to leave his disciples, but would not leave them comfortless; he leaves a Comforter with them, and bequeaths peace unto them as his last legacy: “giving” it, shows that it is not to be acquired by any thing that man can do, but is a pure free grace gift of Christ; and which being given as his legacy, is irrevocable; for the allusion is to the making of a will or testament when persons are about to die: though some have thought it refers to the custom of wishing peace, health, and prosperity, among the Jews; but Christ does not say “peace be to you”; which was the more usual form of salutation among them, and which was used by them when they met, and not at parting; especially we have no instance of such a form as here used, by dying persons taking their leaves of their relations and friends. It must indeed be owned that the phrase, “to give peace”, is with them the same as to salute, or wish health and prosperity. Take two or three of their rules as instances of it;

> “whoever knows his friend, that he is used µwlç wl ˆtyl [f604], “to give him peace”; he shall prevent him with peace (i.e. salute him first), as it is said, “seek peace and pursue it”; but if he “gives” it to him, and he does not return it, he shall be called a robber.”

Again,

> “[f605] a man may not go into the house of a stranger, on his feast day, µwlç wl ˆtyl, “to give peace unto him” (or salute him); if he finds him in the street, he may give it to him with a low voice, and his head hanging down;”

once [f606] more,

> “a man µwlç ˆty al, “not give peace to”, or salute his master, nor return peace to him in the way that they give it to friends, and they return it to one another.”

Likewise it must be owned, that when they saluted persons of distinction, such as princes, nobles, and doctors, they repeated the word “peace” [f607], though never to any strangers; however, certain it is, that it was another sort of peace which Christ left, and gave to his disciples, than what the Jews were wont to give, or wish to one another;

not as the world giveth, give I you. The peace Christ gives is true, solid, and substantial; the peace the world, the men, and things of it give, is a false one; and whilst they cry, “peace, peace, sudden destruction is at hand”: the peace of the world is at best but an external one, but the peace Christ is the giver of, is internal; the peace the world affords is a very transient, unstable, and short lived one, but the peace of Christ is lasting and durable; the peace of the world will not support under the troubles of it, but the peace which Christ gives, cheerfully carries his people through all the difficulties and exercises of this life: and as these differ in kind, so likewise in the manner of giving, and in the persons to whom they are given; the world gives peace in words only, Christ in deed; the world gives feignedly, Christ heartily; the world gives it for its own advantage, Christ for his people’s sake; the world gives its peace to the men of it, to the ungodly, none to the godly, whom it hates; Christ gives his; not to the wicked, for there is no peace to them, but to the saints, the excellent in the earth. Wherefore says Christ,

let not your heart be troubled; at my departure from you, since I leave such a peace with you:

neither let it be afraid: at the dangers you may be exposed unto, and the trouble you may be exercised with; for in the midst of them all, “in me ye shall have peace”, (ⁿ⁹⁶³John 16:33).

Ver. 28. *Ye have heard how I said unto you*, etc.] Christ had not only told his disciples that he should depart from them in a little time, but also that he should return again to them, and comfort them with his presence, and receive them to himself, to be with him in his Father’s house for ever: and this he again suggests,

I go away, and come again unto you; so that they had not so much reason to be troubled and afraid, as they were: had he only said to them that he should go away, without giving any hint of his coming again, they might well have been uneasy; what made the friends of the Apostle Paul so sorrowful at his departure, was most of all, because he had signified to them they should see his face no more; but Christ assured his disciples that in a little time they should see him again, to their unspeakable joy and comfort:

if ye loved me, adds he,

ye would rejoice; not but that the disciples did truly love Christ, and their concern for the loss of his bodily presence is a proof of it; nor was their love unknown to him, nor does he call it in question, only corrects it, or rather uses means to increase it, to draw it forth aright, that it might move and run in a proper channel; they loved him, and therefore were unwilling to part with him, but this was not a pure expression of love to him, it showed too much a regard to themselves, than to the object loved; whereas had they considered things aright, since it was to his greater advantage to remove, they should rather have discovered a willingness to it, and have rejoiced at it; this would have shown pure love and unbiased affection to him: two reasons our Lord gives why they should have rejoiced at his departure; one is,

because, says he,

I said, I go unto the Father; who was not only his, but their Father also; at whose right hand he was to sit, an honour which no mere creature ever had; where he was to be glorified and exalted above all created beings; and besides, his glorification would secure and bring on theirs; as sure as he lived in glory, so sure should they; yea, they should immediately sit down in heavenly places in him, as their head and representative, and therefore had good reason to rejoice at his going away: the other is,

for my Father is greater than I: not with respect to the divine nature, which is common to them both, and in which they are both one; and the Son is equal to the Father, having the self-same essence, perfections, and glory: nor with respect to personality, the Son is equally a divine person, as the Father is, though the one is usually called the first, the other the second person; yet this priority is not of nature, which is the same in both; nor of time, for the one did not exist before the other; nor of causality, for the Father is not the cause of the Son’s existence; nor of dignity, for the one has not any excellency which is wanting in the other; but of order and manner of operation: these words are to be understood, either with regard to the human nature, in which he was going to the Father, this was prepared for him by the Father, and strengthened and supported by him, and in which he was made a little lower than the angels, and consequently must be in it inferior to his Father; or with regard to his office as Mediator, in which he was the Father’s servant, was set up and sent forth by him, acted under him, and in obedience to him, and was now returning to give an account of his work and service; or rather with regard to his present

state, which was a state of humiliation: he was attended with many griefs and sorrows, and exposed to many enemies, and about to undergo an accursed death; whereas his Father was in the most perfect happiness and glory, and so in this sense “greater”. That is, more blessed and glorious than he; for this is not a comparison of natures, or of persons, but of states and conditions: now he was going to the Father to partake of the same happiness and glory with him, to be glorified with himself, with the same glory he had with him before the foundation of the world; wherefore on this account, his disciples ought to have rejoiced, and not have mourned.

Ver. 29. *And now I have told you before it came to pass*, etc.] This is a strong proof of his true and proper deity, for none but the omniscient God can tell of things before they come to pass; this is peculiar to him, and distinguishes him from the gods of the Gentiles; (see <23412>Isaiah 41:22,23 45:21 46:9,10);

that when it is come to pass, ye might believe: that is, that when he was removed from them, and gone to his Father, they might then believe that he was truly God, the Son of God, the promised Messiah; and that he was then in glory, and at the right hand of God.

Ver. 30. *Hereafter I will not talk much with you*, etc.] Meaning before his death; for after his resurrection he talked much with them, about the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; being seen of them and conversing with them, for the space of forty days; not much, he says, chiefly what is delivered in the two next chapters: the design of this was, to observe to them that his time of departure was near at hand, and to quicken their attention to what he did say to them; since they could not expect to hear him long, or much more from him; he would be otherwise engaged;

for the prince of this world cometh: by “the prince of this world”, is meant the devil; why he is so called, (see Gill on “<43031>John 12:31”); the reason why Christ chooses to use this circumlocution, rather than to say Satan or the devil cometh, is partly to point out what a powerful adversary he had, and was about to engage with, and partly to observe to his disciples, what they must expect from the world, even hatred and persecution; since Satan was the prince of it, and had such powerful influence over the minds of the men of it. When it is said that he cometh, it is to be understood of his coming to Christ, though it is not expressed, and that with an intent agreeably to his character, as a thief, to kill and to destroy; and not of his coming merely by Judas, into whom he had already entered, and had put it

into his heart to betray him; and by the armed soldiers, who would accompany him to apprehend him; and by the chief priests, rulers, and people of the Jews, who with united voices would cry, Crucify him, Crucify him; nor only invisibly by his angels, his principalities and powers, he was now employing in different ways, to bring about his purposes; but of his coming himself personally, and visibly: as he visibly appeared to Christ in the wilderness, tempting him, where he left him for a season; so this season or opportunity being come, he takes it, and visibly appears to him in the garden, where a sharp agony and combat was between them; what success he had in this conflict, is next mentioned;

and hath nothing in me; or as some copies read it, “shall find nothing in me”; or as others, “hath nothing to find in me”; Christ had no sin in him, which can be said of none but him. The Jews say [f608], that Samuel, by whom they mean the devil, when he wrestled with Jacob, ˆw[wb axm alç, “could not find any iniquity in him”, he had committed; but this is only true of Jacob’s antitype: for though his emissaries sought diligently for it, they could find none in him; though he had sin upon him, he had none in him; the sins of his people were imputed to him, but he had no sin inherent in him; hence, though he the Messiah was “cut off”, according to (<270926>Daniel 9:26), “but not for himself”; which by the Septuagint is rendered και κριμα ουκ εστιν εν αυτω, “but there is no judgment” or “condemnation in him”, i.e. no cause of condemnation; which agrees with what is here said: though the accuser of men sought to have something against him, to accuse him of, he could find none; some pretences indeed were made, and charges brought, but could not be made good, insomuch that the judge himself said, “I find in him no fault at all”, (<431838>John 18:38): so that the devil had no power over him, no rightful power, nor any but what he had by permission, nor indeed did he prevail over him; for though according to the first prophecy of the Messiah, Satan bruised the heel of Christ; yet Christ bruised his head, destroyed him and his works, spoiled him, and his principalities and powers; whence it appears that the death of Christ was not owing to any sin of his own, for he had none, nor could any be found in him; nor to the superior power of the devil over him; he submitted to death, not through the power of Satan over him, and complied with all the circumstances leading to it, not out of fear of him, but in love to his Father, and obedience to his command; as is clear from the following verse.

Ver. 31. *But that the world may know*, etc.] Not the wicked and unbelieving world, but the world of God's elect, such as are brought to believe in Christ:

that I love the Father; Christ must needs love the Father, as being of the same nature and essence with him, and as standing in the relation of a son to him; he loved all that the Father loves, and approved of all his purposes, counsels, and determinations, concerning himself and the salvation of his people; and therefore he voluntarily laid down his life for them:

and as the Father gave me commandment, so I do: as a son is obedient to a father, so was Christ in all things obedient to the commands of his heavenly Father, in preaching the Gospel, obeying the law, and suffering death; all which he did and suffered, as the Father gave commandment to him, as man and Mediator: and that it might fully appear how much he loved his Father, and agreed with him in all his designs of grace; how much his will was resigned to his, and what respect he paid to whatever he said or ordered; he said to his disciples,

arise, let us go hence: not from the passover, or the supper, for the passover was not as yet, and the Lord's supper was not instituted; nor in order to go to Mount Olivet, or to the garden, where Judas and his armed men would be to meet him, and lay hold on him, as is generally thought; but from Bethany, where he and his disciples now were, in order to go to Jerusalem and keep the passover, institute the supper, and then surrender himself into the hands of his enemies, and die for the sins of his people; for between this and the sermon in the following chapters, was the Lord's supper celebrated; when Christ having mentioned the fruit of the vine, he should drink new with his disciples in his Father's kingdom, he very pertinently enters upon the discourse concerning the vine and branches, with which the next chapter begins: the phrase is Jewish; so R. Jose and R. Chiyah say to one another as they sat, Æhynw µwq, "arise, and let us go hence" [f609].

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 15

Ver. 1. *I am the true vine*, etc.] The fruit of which he had been just speaking of at supper with his disciples; and then informs them, that he himself is the vine from whence that fruit must be expected, which should be partook of by them in his Father's kingdom; for though Christ may be compared to a vine for its tenderness, weakness, and being subject to cuttings and prunings; all which may express his outward meanness in his birth, parentage, and education, Which exposed him to the contempt of men; the weakness of the human nature in itself, his being encompassed with the infirmities of his people, and his sufferings and death for their sakes; yet he is rather called so with respect to his fruitfulness: for as the vine is a fruitful tree, brings forth and bears fruit in clusters, so Christ, as man and Mediator, is full of grace and truth, of all spiritual blessings, and exceeding great and precious promises; from him come the wine of divine love, of Gospel truths and Gospel ordinances, the various blessings of grace, and the joys of heaven, which are the best wine reserved by him till last: Christ is the "true" vine; not that he is really and literally so, without a figure; but he is, as the Syriac renders it, ארçד אטפנ, "the vine of truth". Just as Israel is called a noble vine, wholly a right seed, תמא [רז, "a seed of truth", (<24021>Jeremiah 2:21); right genuine seed; or, as the Septuagint render it, "a vine", bringing forth fruit, πασαν αληψινην, "wholly true"; to which the allusion may be here. Christ is the noble vine, the most excellent of vines, wholly a right seed, in opposition to, and distinction from, the wild and unfruitful, or degenerate plant of a strange vine: to him agree all the properties of a right and real vine; he really and truly communicates life, sap, juice, nourishment, and fruitfulness to the several branches which are in him. The metaphor Christ makes use of was well known to the Jews; for not only the Jewish church is often compared to a vine, but the Messiah too, according to them: thus the Targumist explains the phrase in (<19801>Psalm 80:15), "the branch thou madest strong for thyself", of the King Messiah: and indeed, by comparing it with (<19817>Psalm 80:17) it seems to be the true sense of the passage [f610]. The

Cabalistic doctors say [f611], that the Shekinah is called, ˆpg, "a vine"; (see <014911>Genesis 49:11); where the Jews observe [f612], the King Messiah is so called. The Jews [f613] say, there was a golden vine that stood over the gate of the temple, and it was set upon props; and whoever offered a leaf, or a grape, or a cluster, (that is, a piece of gold to the temple, in the form of either of these,) bought it, and hung it upon it. And of this vine also Josephus [f614] makes mention, as being in Herod's temple; of which he says, that it was over the doors (of the temple), under the edges of the wall, having clusters hanging down from it on high, which filled spectators with wonder as for the size of it, so for the art with which it was made. And elsewhere he says [f615], the inward door in the porch was all covered with gold, and the whole wall about it; and it had over it golden vines, from whence hung clusters as big as the stature of a man: now whether our Lord may refer to this, being near the temple, and in view of it, and point to it, and call himself the true vine, in distinction from it, which was only the representation of one; or whether he might take occasion, from the sight of a real vine, to compare himself to one, nay be considered; since it was usual with Christ, upon sight or mention of natural things, to take the opportunity of treating of spiritual ones: though it may be rather this discourse of the vine and branches might be occasioned by his speaking of the fruit of the vine, at the time he ate the passover, and instituted the ordinance of the supper.

And my Father is the husbandman; or vinedresser. So God is called by Philo the Jew [f616], γεωργος αγαψος, "a good husbandman"; and the same the Targumist says of the word of the Lord [f617],

> "and my word shall be unto them, abj arkak, "as a good husbandman"."

Now Christ says this of his Father, both with respect to himself the vine, and with respect to the branches that were in him: he was the husbandman to him; he planted the vine of his human nature, and filled it with all the graces of the Spirit; he supported it, upheld it, and made it strong for himself, for the purposes of his grace, and for his own glory; and took infinite delight in it, being to him a pleasant plant, a plant of renown. The concern this husbandman has with the branches, is expressed in the following verse.

Ver. 2. *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit*, etc.] There are two sorts of branches in Christ the vine; the one sort are such who have only an historical faith in him, believe but for a time, and are removed; they are such who only profess to believe in him, as Simon Magus did; are in him by profession only; they submit to outward ordinances, become church members, and so are reckoned to be in Christ, being in a church state, as the churches of Judea and Thessalonica, and others, are said, in general, to he in Christ; though it is not to be thought that every individual person in these churches were truly and savingly in him. These branches are unfruitful ones; what fruit they seemed to have, withers away, and proves not to be genuine fruit; what fruit they bring forth is to themselves, and not to the glory of God, being none of the fruits of his Spirit and grace: and such branches the husbandman

taketh away; removes them from that sort of being which they had in Christ. By some means or another he discovers them to the saints to be what they are; sometimes he suffers persecution to arise because of the word, and these men are quickly offended, and depart of their own accord; or they fall into erroneous principles, and set up for themselves, and separate from the churches of Christ; or they become guilty of scandalous enormities, and so are removed from their fellowship by excommunication; or if neither of these should be the case, but these tares should grow together with the wheat till the harvest, the angels will be sent forth, who will gather out of the kingdom of God all that offend and do iniquity, and cast them into a furnace of fire, as branches withered, and fit to be burnt.

And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. These are the other sort of branches, who are truly and savingly in Christ; such as are rooted in him; to whom he is the green fir tree, from whom all their fruit is found; who are filled by him with all the fruits of his Spirit, grace, and righteousness. These are purged or pruned, chiefly by afflictions and temptations, which are as needful for their growth and fruitfulness, as the pruning and cutting of the vines are for theirs; and though these are sometimes sharp, and never joyous, but grievous, yet they are attended with the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and so the end of bringing forth more fruit is answered; for it is not enough that a believer exercise grace, and perform good works for the present, but these must remain; or he must be constant herein, and still bring forth fruit, and add one virtue to another, that it may appear he is not barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ, in whom he is implanted. These different acts of

the vinedresser “taking away” some branches, and “purging” others, are expressed by the Misnic doctors [f618] by hlwsyp, and hdwryz. The former, the commentators [f619] say, signifies to cut off the branches that are withered and perished, and are good for nothing; and the latter signifies the pruning of the vine when it has a superfluity of branches, or these extend themselves too far; when some are left, and others taken off.

Ver. 3. *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you*.]. These words being inserted in the discourse concerning the vine and branches, and the pruning and purging them to make them fruitful, are thought, by the learned Dr. Lightfoot, to be an allusion to the law in (<032319>Leviticus 19:23); by which the fruit of trees, for the first three years, were accounted uncircumcised or unclean, and in the fourth year fit for use; concerning which the Talmudists have a whole tract, called hlr[, “Orla”; the apostles having enjoyed the ministry of Christ, and been his disciples about such a time. Though the “now” seems to refer to the removal and taking away of that withered and unfruitful branch, Judas. Christ, in (<431310>John 13:10), had told his disciples, that they “were clean, but not all”, because the betrayer was among them; but he being discovered by Christ, and ordered by him to be gone, went out from among them about his wicked design; and now Christ could say of them all, that they were clean: which may be understood of their regeneration and sanctification, in which their hearts were sprinkled with clean water; were washed with the washing of regeneration; had their hearts purified by faith in the blood of Christ, and had pure principles of grace formed in their souls; of all which the Gospel of Christ was the instrumental means: or of their justification by the righteousness of Christ, by which they were justified from all sin; and were all fair, and without spot; which was through the Gospel of Christ revealing his righteousness to them, or through the sentence of justification he, by his Spirit, passed upon their consciences.

Ver. 4. *Abide in me, and I in you*, etc.] The former of these is an exhortation to continue in the exercise of faith and love upon Christ, holding to him the head, cleaving to him with full purpose of heart, and so deriving life, grace, strength, and nourishment from him; the latter is a promise encouraging to the former; for as Christ is formed in the hearts of his people, he continues there as the living principle of all grace. And so,

as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me; which strongly expresses the necessity

of abiding in Christ by fresh repeated acts of faith: and it is easy to observe, that when believers depart from Christ, though it be but partially, and for a time, for they cannot finally and totally depart from him, in what a poor, withered, fruitless condition they are, both in their frames and duties.

Ver. 5. *I am the vine, ye are the branches*, etc.] Christ here repeats what he said of himself, "the vine", for the sake of the application of "the branches" to his disciples: which expresses their sameness of nature with Christ; their strict and close union to him; and the communication of life and grace, holiness and fruitfulness, of support and strength, and of perseverance in grace and holiness to the end from him:

he that abideth in me, and I in him; which is the case of all that are once in Christ, and he in them:

the same bringeth forth much fruit; in the exercise of grace, and performance of good works; and continues to do so as long as he lives, not by virtue of his own free will, power, and strength, but by grace continually received from Christ:

for without me ye can do nothing; nothing that is spiritually good; no, not anything at all, be it little or great, easy or difficult to be performed; cannot think a good thought, speak a good word, or do a good action; can neither begin one, nor, when it is begun, perfect it. Nothing is to be done "without Christ"; without his Spirit, grace, strength, and presence; or as "separate from" him. Were it possible for the branches that are truly in him, to be removed from him, they could bring forth no fruits of good works, any more than a branch separated from the vine can bring forth grapes; so that all the fruitfulness of a believer is to be ascribed to Christ, and his grace, and not to the free will and power of man.

Ver. 6. *If a man abide not in me*, etc.] Christ does not say, "if ye abide not in me"; he would not suppose this of his true disciples; Judas now being removed, to whom he may have some respect in this verse; though it may be applied to anyone who has made a profession of Christ, and denies the truths of the Gospel, neglects the ordinances of it, or walks unworthy of his profession: of whom the following things may be truly said,

he is cast forth as a branch; that is unfruitful, and is therefore taken away from the vine, and cast forth out of the vineyard. This signifies the ejection of worthless and fruitless professors out of the churches; for such who are either unsound in their principles, or are remiss and negligent in their

attendance on the worship of God, with the church, or are loose and vain in their lives and conversations, are to be removed from communion with the people of God.

And is withered. Some versions, as the Arabic, Syriac, and Persic, read this as an epithet of the word “branch”, thus; “the branch that is withered”; expressing the condition the branch is in before it is cast forth out of the vineyard, and the reason of its being cast forth: but others read it as a new and distinct predicate of the branch, showing the case it is in, immediately upon its being cast forth: it may be cut off, and cast out with its leaves upon it, though without fruit; but as soon as ever it is ejected, it withers away. So mere external professors of religion, when they are cast out, of the communion of the church, presently the leaf of profession, which once seemed green, decays, loses its verdure, and that seeming fruit which grew upon them shrinks to nothing, and they become “trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit”, (Jude 1:12): their show of life, zeal, religion, and holiness, disappears, and all their external gifts, light, knowledge, and understanding, even in a speculative way, vanish:

and men gather them; or, as some copies have it, αυτο, “it”, which best agrees with the word “branch”. This was a common thing, when branches were thrown out of a vineyard, for men to come and gather them up for an use hereafter mentioned. So when unworthy members are put out of a church of Christ, the men of the world gather them into their society: or they are taken into the congregations of false teachers, who being sensual, and without the Spirit, separate themselves; or it may be read impersonally, “they are gathered”, or “it is gathered”: so wicked men, and Christless professors, will be gathered by the angels at the last day, and severed by them from the righteous, whom they will place at Christ’s left hand to receive their awful doom:

and cast them, or “it”,

into the fire, and they are burned, or “it is burned”; for nothing else is such a branch good for; (see Ezekiel 15:2-5). This may respect either the gnawings of conscience, that distress of mind, if not despair, that fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which attend apostates in this life; or their being cast into the everlasting burnings of hell fire by angels at the last day, as will be the case of every unfruitful tree, of the chaff and tares.

Ver. 7. *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you*, etc.] Abiding in Christ is here explained by his words or doctrines abiding in his disciples; by which are meant his Gospel, and the truths of it. This abides when it comes in power, and becomes the engrafted word; and may be said to do so, when such, in whose hearts it has a place, and has taken deep root, continue to have a relish and savour of it, a true and hearty affection for it, esteeming it above their necessary food; when they hold fast the profession of it, stand fast in it, steadfastly abide by it, and constantly attend on it; all which is a considerable evidence that they do, yea, there is a promise that they "shall continue in the Son and in the Father", (1 John 2:24); The blessing and privilege that such shall enjoy is,

ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you; or, as some copies read it, "it shall be given you": but this must be understood not of temporal things, as riches, honours, profits, pleasures, or whatever even the carnal mind of a believer himself may sometimes desire; but of things spiritual, and with such limitations and restrictions as these; whatever is according to the will of God, for the Spirit of God himself asks for no other for the saints; whatever is for the glory of God, and for their own spiritual profit and edification; and whatever is agreeably to the words and doctrines of Christ, which abide in them. Every thing of this kind they ask in faith, and with a submission to the divine will, they may expect to receive.

Ver. 8. *Herein is my Father glorified*, etc.] This does not so much refer to what goes before, concerning the disciples abiding in Christ, and he and his words abiding in them, and doing for them whatever they ask, though by all this God is glorified; as to what follows, the fruitfulness of the disciples:

that ye bear much fruit; of doctrine, grace, and good works, which show them to be trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, and the work of his hands; wherein the glory of his power, grace, and mercy, is greatly displayed. All the fruits of righteousness, with which they were filled by Christ, were by him to the praise and glory of God; yea, by the fruitfulness of grace, and of life and conversation, by the lively exercise of grace, and conscientious discharge of duty, as well by light of doctrine, and usefulness in the ministration of the Gospel, the disciples and servants of Christ not only glorify God themselves, but are the means of others glorifying him. It follows,

so shall ye be my disciples; or "disciples to me"; to my honour and glory also, as well as to my Father's; not that their fruitfulness made them the

disciples of Christ, but made them appear to be so, or made them honourable ones. Just as good fruit does not make the tree good; the tree is first good, and therefore it brings forth good fruit; but shows it to be good: as by continuing in his word, abiding by his Gospel they appeared to be "disciples indeed", (John 8:31), really and truly such; and as by loving one another, so by other fruits of righteousness, other men, all men know that they are the disciples of Christ.

Ver. 9. *As the Father hath loved me*, etc.] As his own Son, and as Mediator, from everlasting; and in time, in his state of humiliation, throughout the course of his obedience, and under all his sufferings; which he testified more than once by a voice from heaven; which he showed by concealing nothing from him as Mediator, by giving all things into his hands, by showing him all that he himself did, by appointing him the Saviour of the body, and making him the head of the church, by exalting him at his right hand, and ordaining him to be judge of quick and dead.

So have I loved you: Christ loves his as his spouse and bride, as his dear children, as members of his body, as branches in him the vine, as believers in him, and followers of him; which he has shown by espousing both their persons and cause, by assuming their nature, by suffering and dying in their room and stead, and making all suitable provision for them, both for time and eternity. And there is a likeness between the Father's love to him, and his love to his disciples and followers: as his Father loved him from everlasting, so did he love them; as his Father loved him with a love of complacency and delight, so did he, and so does he love them; and as his Father loved him with a special and peculiar affection, with an unchangeable, invariable, constant love, which will last for ever, in like manner does Christ love his people; and with this he enforces the following exhortation.

Continue ye in my love: meaning either in his love to them, which, as he always continues in it without any variableness or shadow of turning, so he would have them continue in believing their interest in it, prizing and valuing it, in imitating and remembering it; or else in their love to him, to his person, to his people, to his Gospel, to his ordinances, ways, and worship, which he knew was liable to wax cold, though it could not be lost.

Ver. 10. *If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love*, etc.] Not that their continuance in the heart's love and affection of Christ depended

upon their observation of his commands; for as the keeping of them is not the cause or reason of the saints having an interest in the love of Christ, so it is not the cause or reason of their abiding in it; but to such that observe the commandments of Christ he will continue to make further discoveries of his love, and let them see more clearly and largely what a value he has for them, and how much he loves them: or the sense is, that by keeping the commandments of Christ, his disciples and followers show that they love him, and continue in their affection to him:

even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. The commandments of the Father kept by Christ were not only the precepts of the moral law, and the rites of the ceremonial one, which he strictly observed; but the preaching of the Gospel, and submitting to the ordinances of it, doing of miracles, and laying down his life for his people; in performing which, as his Father testified his approbation of them, and how strongly he was affected to him, what an abiding he had in his love; so Christ hereby showed his constant and continued love to his Father; and which was done by him, that the world, as well as his disciples, might know how much he loved him; (see <4814>John 14:31).

Ver. 11. *These things have I spoken unto you*, etc.] Concerning the vine and branches, his abiding in them, and they in him, their fruitfulness from him, and perseverance in him, his love to them, and theirs to him:

that my joy might remain in you; meaning either that joy with which he joyed in and over them, as united to him, and which is of the same nature as the joy of the bridegroom over the bride, and which will always remain and continue the same; or rather that joy which he is the author, object, ground, and matter of, for there is always reason to rejoice in him, even in the most afflictive circumstances of life:

and that your joy might be full; that grace of joy which is implanted in the soul, by the Spirit of God in regeneration, and arises from, and is increased by discoveries of the person, grace, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; and is "full of glory", (<6108>1 Peter 1:8); upon a clear sight of him in this life, and will be entirely full, completely perfected in the other world, when he will be seen as he is,

Ver. 12. *This is my commandment, that ye love one another*, etc.] Christ had been before speaking of his commandments; and he mentions this as the principal one, and to which all the rest may be reduced; for as the

precepts of the second table of the moral law may be briefly comprehended in this one duty, love to our neighbour, so all the duties of Christianity, relative to one another, are reducible to this, by love to serve each other. This was the commandment which lay uppermost on Christ's heart, and which he knew, if attended to, the rest could not fail of being observed. The argument by which, and the manner in which, he presses it, is as before:

as I have loved you; than which nothing can be more strong and forcible; (see ⁴⁸¹³⁴John 13:34).

Ver. 13. *Greater love hath no man than this*, etc.] By these words our Lord shows, how far love to another should extend, even to the laying down of our lives for the brethren; which is the highest instance of love among men;

that a man lay down his life for his friends; and in which believers, should not come short of them; and also his great love to his people, and explains what he had just said, "as I have loved you", (⁴⁸¹³⁴John 13:34 15:12); which in a little time would be seen, by his laying down his life for them: for he not only came down from heaven, and laid aside his glory and royal majesty, but he laid down his life; not his gold and silver, and the riches of this world, which were all his, but his life; than which, nothing is dearer to a man, is himself, his all: and besides, Christ's life was not a common one, it was not the life of an innocent person only, or the life of a mere man, but of a man in union with the Son of God; it was the Lord of glory and Prince of life, who was crucified, and slain; a life that was entirely at his own dispose; it had never been forfeited by sin, nor could it have been forced away from him by men or devils; it was laid down of and by himself, freely and voluntarily; and that "for", in the room, and instead of his people, as a ransom for them; he being their surety and substitute, and standing in their legal place and stead, he took their sins upon him, bore the curse of the law, sustained his Father's wrath, and all the punishment due to sin; and so suffered death, the death of the cross; the just, in the room and stead of the unjust; the persons for whom be laid down his life, are described as "his friends"; not that they were originally so; being enemies and enmity itself to God, when he laid down his life for them, and reconciled them; they were not such as had carried themselves friendly, or had shown any love and affection to him, but all the reverse: but they are so called, because he had chosen them for his friends; he had pitched upon them, and resolved to

make them so; and by dying for them, reconciled them who were enemies; and in consequence of this, by his Spirit and grace, of enemies makes them friends; so that his love in dying for his people, is greater than any instance of love among men: he laid down his life for his enemies, without any sinister selfish views, and that freely and voluntarily; whereas among men, when one man has laid down his life for others, either they have been very deserving, or he has been forced to it, or it has been done with the view of popular applause and vain glory.

Ver. 14. *Ye are my friends*, etc.] This is an application of the foregoing passage, and more, clearly explains it. The character of "friends", is applied to the disciples of Christ; and belongs, not only to his apostles, but to all that love him, believe in him, and obey him; to whom he has showed himself friendly, by laying down his life for them: for this clearly shows, that Christ had respect in the former words, to his own laying down his life for his people, in consequence of his great love to them; whereby he has made them friends, and who appear to be so by their cheerful obedience to him:

if ye do whatsoever I command you; not that their doing of the commandments of Christ interested them in his favour; or made them his friends; or was the reason and motive of his laying down his life for them, and showing himself in such a friendly manner to them: but the sense is, that by observing his commands from a principle of love, they would make it appear that they were his friends, being influenced by his grace, and constrained by a sense of his love in dying for them, to act such a part.

Ver. 15. *Henceforth I call you not servants*, etc.] As they and the rest of the people of God had been, under the legal dispensation; for though they were children, yet differed nothing from servants; and were very much influenced and impressed with a servile spirit, a spirit of bondage unto fear, being kept under tutors and governors by a severe discipline; but now Christ being come in the flesh, and being about to lay down his life, and make reconciliation for them, henceforward he would not use, treat, or account them as servants:

for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; designs to do, or is about to do; he is not made privy to all his counsels and purposes; these are only opened to him as necessity requires; which was pretty much the case of the Old Testament church, who, comparatively speaking, were used as

servants; and had not the knowledge of the mysteries of grace, and of the counsels of God, as they are now laid open under the Gospel dispensation:

but I have called you friends; that is, accounted, reckoned of them, used them as his friends and familiar acquaintance; whom he told all his mind unto, and would go on to treat them as such; by leading them more and more, as they were able to bear it, into the designs of his grace, and the doctrines of his Gospel: just as Abraham was called the friend of God, and proved to be so, by his not concealing from him the thing he was about to do:

for all things I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you; not all that he knew as the omniscient God, for there was no necessity that all such things should be made known to them; but all things which he had delivered to him as man and Mediator, by his Father, respecting the salvation of men; all things which he himself was to do and suffer, in order to obtain eternal redemption; and the whole of the Gospel, as to the essential and substantial parts of it, they were to preach; for otherwise, there were some things which as yet they were not able to bear, and were reserved to another time, to be made known unto them by his Spirit.

Ver. 16. *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you*, etc.] Not but that they had made choice of him as their Lord and Master, Saviour and Redeemer; but not first, he was before hand with them; he chose them, before they chose him; so that his choice of them was entirely free, did not arise from any character, motive, or condition in them: the allusion is to a custom of the Jews, the reverse of which Christ acted; with whom it was usual for disciples to choose their own masters, and not masters their disciples: hence that advice of R. Joshuah ben Perachiah, said [f620] to be the master of Jesus of Nazareth,

> “brÆl hç[[f621], “make”, provide, or chose “thyself a master”, and get thyself a companion.”

Those words in (Song of Solomon 2:16); “my beloved is mine, and I am his”, are thus paraphrased by the Jews [f622];

> “he hath chosen me, and I have chosen him:”

which is not amiss, provided the latter choice is thought to be by virtue, and in consequence of the former; if not, our Lord directly opposes the words and sense. This may be understood both of election to salvation, and

of choice to the office of apostleship; in both which Christ was first, or chose them before they chose him, that good part, which shall never be taken away; for as they were chosen in him, so by him, before the foundation of the world; being as early loved by him, as by his Father; and in consequence thereof, were chosen by him, for his people and peculiar treasure; he first chose and called them to be his disciples and apostles, to follow him, preach his Gospel, and become fishers of men; and clothed them with full power and authority to exercise their high office:

and ordained you; which may design either ordination to eternal life, or apostleship, before the world began; as Jeremiah was ordained to be a prophet, before he was born; or else the investiture of them with that office, and with all gifts and graces necessary for the discharge of it; for when he called and sent forth his disciples to preach the Gospel, he is said to "ordain" them, (<4103414>Mark 3:14); and the rather this may be meant here, because the former is designed by his choosing them; or he set them, or planted them in himself, a fruitful soil, that they might shoot up and bear much fruit, as it follows:

that ye should go and bring forth fruit; go first into Judea, and then into all the world; and brings forth the fruits of righteousness and holiness in themselves, and be the happy means of the conversion, and so of bringing in a large harvest of souls to Jesus Christ:

and that your fruit should remain; as it has done; for they not only persevered themselves in faith and holiness, in preaching the Gospel, and living according to it, but the persons whose conversion they were instruments of, continued steadfastly in their doctrine, and in the fellowship of the saints; and the Gospel which was preached by them, has remained, though not always in the same place, yet in the world ever since:

that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. This is added, to encourage their perseverance in the work he chose and called them to, which would be attended with many difficulties and discouragements; wherefore as they would stand in need of divine assistance, they might assure themselves of it; for be it what it would they should ask of his Father, making mention of his name and righteousness; whether for a sufficiency of gifts and grace in the discharge of their duty; or for success in it; or for the confirmation of the truths delivered by them; or for liberty and boldness to speak in vindication of themselves, when called to it before kings and governors, it should be given them.

Ver. 17. *These things I command you*, etc.] The doctrines which Christ spake, as one having authority, concerning the vine and branches; his love to his disciples, in laying down his life for them, and in accounting and using them as friends, and not servants; in choosing, ordaining, and sending them forth, for the ends above mentioned; these were delivered by him with this view, to promote brotherly love among them: that ye love one another; this lay much upon his heart, he often mentions it; this is the third time it is expressed by him, in these his last discourses; and indeed, since he had declared such strong love and affection for them, it was but right and proper they should love one another; nor does anything more tend to increase mutual love among the saints, than the consideration of their common interest in the unchangeable love of their Lord.

Ver. 18. *If the world hate you*, etc.] After our Lord had signified how much he loved his disciples and what great things he had done for them, he faithfully acquaints them with the world's hatred of them, and what they must expect to meet with from that quarter, and says many things to fortify their minds against it; his words do not imply any doubt about it, but he rather takes it for granted, as a thing out of question; "if", or "seeing the world hate you"; they had had some experience of it already, and might look for more, when their master was gone from them: wherefore, he, in order to engage their patience under it, says,

ye know that it hated me before it hated you; which words are an appeal of Christ to his apostles, for the usage he had met with from the wicked and unbelieving world of the Jews; how they had expressed their hatred, not only by words, calling him a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a sinner, a Samaritan, a madman, one that had a devil, yea, Beelzebub himself, but by deeds; taking up stones to stone him more than once, leading him to the brow of an hill, in order to cast him down headlong, consulting by various means to take away his life, as Herod did in his very infancy; which was done, before they showed so much hatred to his disciples; and perhaps reference may be had to the original enmity between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent, mentioned (Genesis 3:15); as well as to these instances. Moreover, the words πρωτον υμων, rendered "before you", may be translated "the first" or "chief of you", your Lord and head; and denotes the dignity, excellency, and superiority of Christ; wherefore it is suggested, that if he, who was so much before them in personal worth and greatness, was hated by the world, they should not think it hard, or any strange thing, that this should be their case.

Ver. 19. *If ye were of the world*, etc.] Belonged to the world, were of the same spirit and principles with it, and pursued the same practices:

the world would love its own; for every like loves its like; the men of the world love each other's persons, company, and conversation:

but because ye are not of the world: once they were, being born into it, brought up in it, had their conversation among the men of it, were themselves men of carnal, worldly, principles and practices; but being called by Christ, and becoming his disciples, they were no more of it; and as he was not of the world, so they were not of it, though they were in it. The Jews distinguish the disciples of the wise men, from `aml[d yçnya`, "the men of the world" [f623], pretending that they were not; but this is a character that only belongs to the disciples of Christ, in consequence of their being called by him out of it:

but I have chosen you out of the world: which designs not the eternal election of them, but the separation of them from the rest of the world in the effectual calling, and the designation of them to his work and service:

therefore the world hateth you; and since it was upon that account, they had no reason to be uneasy, but rather to rejoice; seeing this was an evidence of their not belonging to the world, and of being chosen and called by Christ out of it.

Ver. 20. *Remember the word that I said unto you*, etc.] For their further consolation under the hatred of the world, he puts them in mind of a saying of his, which he had lately used, (<431316>John 13:16); to teach them humility, self-denial, and brotherly love, and elsewhere, as in (<401024>Matthew 10:24); for the same purpose as here; namely, to engage them patiently to bear the hatred of men, and all indignities and insults from them, for his name's sake:

the servant is not greater than the Lord: nor so great, and consequently not more, nor so: much deserving of respect, or to be treated in a better manner; suggesting, that Christ was their Lord and master, as he was, and they were his servants; and therefore were not greater than him, but much inferior to him, and could not expect better usage from men than he had:

if they have persecuted me; as they did, both by words and deeds, as before observed:

they will persecute you; and so they did in like manner, and from place to place:

if they have kept my saying; which is either ironically spoken, or designs that insidious malicious observation of Christ's words, made by the Jews, with an intent to catch and lay hold on something to improve against him:

they will keep yours also; that is, either they will attend to your doctrines, or they will make the same spiteful remarks, and put the same evil constructions on your words as on mine.

Ver. 21. *But all these things will they do unto you*, etc.] Christ here signifies, that all the hatred and persecutions raised against his people by the world, would not be on their own account, for any evil actions done by them; they would not suffer as thieves, murderers, and evildoers, but as Christians; or as he says,

for my name's sake: because they were called by his name, and called upon his name; because they professed his name, and confessed him to be the Messiah and Redeemer; because they loved his name Jesus, a Saviour, believed in his name, and hoped in him for eternal life; and also preached him, and in his name salvation, and encouraged others to believe in him; and therefore they had no reason to be ashamed, but rather to rejoice; as they afterwards did, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name: besides, this malice and hatred of theirs arose from ignorance of the Father of Christ:

because they know not him that sent me; they did not know that Jesus was the Christ, and sent of God; they did not acknowledge him to be so, or the Father to be the sender of him; and because Christ and his disciples asserted this, therefore they were the objects of their hatred.

Ver. 22. *If I had not come and spoken unto them*, etc.] The ignorance of the Jews is represented as inexcusable, since Christ was come, and had preached unto them; if he had not come and told them that he was the Messiah, they might have pleaded an excuse for their ignorance of him, and his mission, and of the Father that sent him: but inasmuch as he was come in the flesh, and came to them his own; and came also a light into the world, carrying along with him evidence, conviction, and demonstration, of his being the Messiah; speaking such words as never man did; preaching with such authority as the Scribes and Pharisees did not; declaring in plain terms he was the Christ of God, and that if they did not believe him to be

so, they would die in their sins; they could have no pretext to make for their ignorance and disbelief: if all this had not been done,

they had not had sin; or been guilty of the sin of unbelief, in the rejection of the Messiah; not that they would have been without sin in any sense, or without any kind of sin, but without this particular sin; at least they would have excused and wiped themselves clean, and would have looked like innocent and sinless persons, under all their ignorance and unbelief:

but now they have no cloak for their sin; they could not say, had he come to us, and told us that he was the Messiah, and given evidence of his being sent by the Father, we would have believed him, and received him as the Messiah; for he did do this, and so cut off all excuses and pretences from them.

Ver. 23. *He that hateth me, hateth my Father also*.] The hatred the world bears to the followers of Christ, is interpretatively hatred to Christ himself; and hatred to Christ himself, is no other than hatred to his Father; and indeed, all the hatred that is shown by the men of the world to Christ, to his Gospel, and to his faithful ministers and followers, originally arises from that enmity, that is naturally in the heart of every unregenerate man against God: now since not only Christ, but the Father also, is hated by the world, the children of God and disciples of Christ may sit easier under all the resentment, frowns, and malice of the world.

Ver. 24. *If I had not done among them the works*, etc.] This is another, and a new argument, evincing the inexcusableness of their ignorance, and infidelity, and sin, taken from the works that Christ did; such as healing the sick, raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, causing the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk, cleansing lepers, and casting out devils; which were clear proofs, and full demonstrations of his deity, and of his being the true Messiah:

and which none other man did; in his own name, and by his own power; and which none of the men of God ever did; as Moses, Elijah, Elisha, or others; and particularly that of giving sight to one that was born blind: now if these works had not been done among them, openly, visibly, and publicly,

they had not had sin; or so much sin; or their sin of unbelief would not have been so great, or attended with such aggravating circumstances; or they would not have been guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost, as many

of them were; who saw his works and miracles, and were convicted in their own consciences that he was the Messiah, and yet rejected him, against all the light and evidence which the Spirit of God gave by them, and by whom Christ wrought his miracles:

but now have they both seen; the works which were done, and the Messiah, whose mission from the Father they proved;

and hated both me and my Father; for their rejection of him as the Messiah, notwithstanding the doctrines he taught, and the miracles he wrought, plainly arose from obstinacy, malice, and inveterate hatred against Christ, and against the Father that sent him.

Ver. 25. *But this cometh to pass*, etc.] This hatred against Christ, and which is pointed at his people for his sake, and reaches to the Father also on his account, is suffered to be, and therefore should be patiently borne:

that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law: either in (<19519>Psalm 35:19), or rather in (<19904>Psalm 69:4); which is a psalm of Christ, as appears by citations out of it in the New Testament, or references to it; (see <43217>John 2:17 19:28 <42748>Matthew 27:48). The whole Scripture is sometimes called the law, as here; for not the law of Moses is meant, or the five books of Moses, but the writings of the Old Testament; which the Jews had in their hands, to them being committed the oracles of God; and sometimes are so called, when the book of Psalms is particularly referred to as now; (see <43034>John 10:34 12:34); the words cited are,

they hated me without a cause; without any reason for it, Christ having given them no provocation, or just cause of offence, anger, or hatred. This sin of hating without a cause, is represented by the Jews as a very heinous one, and as the reason of the destruction of the second temple; under which they observe, that men studied in the law, and in the commandments, and in doing of good; and therefore ask why it was destroyed? the answer is, because there was under it, µnj tanç, "hatred without a cause": to teach us, that hatred without a cause is equal to the three (capital) transgressions, idolatry, adultery, and murder, for which they say the first temple was destroyed [f624]. This is a tacit acknowledgment that the sin here mentioned was a reigning one, or that it much abounded in the time of Christ.

Ver. 26. *But when the Comforter is come*, etc.] Or advocate, the Spirit of God; who was to be, and has been an advocate for Christ, against the world, and for his people, against all their enemies; and who as he was to reprove, and did reprove the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, in favour of Christ, so he was to assist his people, and plead their cause, and help them, in vindication of themselves, before the princes of the earth, as he did: and who also was to act, and has acted the part of a "comforter" to them, under all the hatred and violence they have met with from the world; by taking and applying the things of Christ to them; by shedding the love of God in them; by applying the promises of the Gospel to them; by witnessing their adoption, and sealing them up to the day of redemption:

whom I will send unto you from the Father; visibly, as on the day of Pentecost, in cloven tongues as of fire; and invisibly into their hearts, by the secret influence of his light and grace; which mission, as it suggests no inferiority in the spirit, either to the Father or the Son; since the same spirit with the Father, was the sender of Christ; so it is expressive of the equal deity of Christ, and his joint power and authority with the Father:

even the Spirit of truth; who is the true Spirit, truth itself; yea, the true God, with the Father and Son; the Spirit of him who is truth; the dictator of the Scriptures of truth; who leads his people into all truth; and is the Spirit of truth, as he is a witness or testifier of Christ, hereafter promised:

which proceedeth from the Father; Christ is not content to describe him by his work and office, as, an, advocate and comforter, and as the Spirit of truth: and from his mission by him from the Father; all which shows his usefulness and authority; but also from his nature and essence, which is the same with the Father's; and from his peculiar personal and distinctive character, expressed by his proceeding from the Father; and which is mentioned, as what is distinct from his mission by Christ, from the Father before spoken of; and designs no other, than the eternal, ineffable, and continued act of his procession, from the Father and the Son; in which he partakes of the same nature with them, and which personally distinguishes him from them. The ancient Jews [f625] spoke of him just in the same language; "the Spirit of God", in (<0102>Genesis 1:2); they say is the Holy Spirit, µyhlam qypnd, "which proceedeth from God": very pertinently does Christ take notice of this his character here, when he was about to speak of him as his testifier:

he shall testify of me: of his deity and sonship, of his incarnation, of his being the Messiah, of his sufferings and death, of his resurrection and ascension, of his exaltation at the right hand of God, and of his ordination to be the Judge of quick and dead; all which he bore testimony to, by the gifts bestowed upon the apostles, and the great grace that was upon them all; by the signs, wonders, and divers miracles, by which the Gospel of Christ was confirmed; and by the power, influence, and success, which attended the preaching of it every where. Thus he testified of Christ, against the blaspheming Jews, and persecuting Gentiles, to the reproof and confusion of them; and he testified of him to the apostles, and all true believers, to their great joy and comfort, and to the support of them, under all the malice and hatred of the world.

Ver. 27. *And ye shall also bear witness*, etc.] That is, of Christ; of all the things he did in Jerusalem, and in the land of the Jews; being eyewitnesses, and ministers, or servants of the word, who constantly attended upon him; of all the good he did to the bodies and souls of men; of the various miracles he wrought, and of the several doctrines which were taught by him: what they saw with their eyes, heard with their ears, and with their hands handled of the word of life, that they could declare, and did declare, and bore a faithful testimony to; they were to be, and were witnesses of his sufferings and death, of his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven; they were a company of select men, chosen before of God, for this purpose; they were the most proper to be concerned herein, having been for a considerable time his intimates and associates:

because ye have been with me from the beginning; from the beginning of his ministry; for as soon as he entered on his public work, he called them to be followers of him; and who continued with him to the end, and therefore were the most capable of bearing a testimony concerning his person, doctrines, and works; of all he did and suffered, from first to last.

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 16

Ver. 1. *These things have I spoken unto you*, etc.] Concerning the world's hatred and persecution of them, and the little regard they would show to their doctrine: these things Christ thought, proper to give them notice of before hand, that expecting them, they might be prepared for them, and be fortified against them;

that, says he,

ye should not be offended: his view in speaking of them, was not to discourage them, but to prevent their stumbling at them, and falling by them. Hardships coming upon persons at unawares, bear the harder upon their spirits, and they are more apt to take offence at them and be impatient under them, which is prevented by previous intimation: had Christ said nothing of these things that should befall his disciples, they might have surprised them, and have been a stumbling to them; and might have tempted them to have relinquished their profession of him, and dropped their ministerial work; whereas being apprized of them before hand, they were not so shocking to them. This shows the tender concern of Christ for his disciples, how careful he was to remove, every occasion of stumbling, or what might be matter of offence to them; and may teach us to act in such like manner towards one another, in this, or any other case.

Ver. 2. *They shall put you out of the synagogues*, etc.] The Jews had made a law already, that he that confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, should be cast out of their synagogues; and they had put it in execution upon the blind man Christ restored to sight, for his profession of faith in him; which struck such a terror upon the people, that even many of the chief rulers who believed that Jesus was the true Messiah, durst not confess him, because of this law; for it was what they could not bear the thoughts of, to be deemed and treated as heretics and apostates, and the vilest of wretches: for this putting out of the synagogue, was not the lesser excommunication, which was called ywdn "Niddui", and was a "separation" from a particular synagogue for a while; but the greater excommunication, either by µrj,

“Cherem”, or atmç, “Shammatha”; when a person was cut out from the whole body of the Jewish church, called often the synagogue, or congregation of the people; and was devoted and consigned to utter destruction, which was the height of their ecclesiastical power, their rage and malice could carry them to; and this the apostles were to expect; nay, not only this, but to have their lives taken away by ruffians, under a pretence of zeal for the service of God, and interest of religion:

yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service. For this is not to be understood of their being delivered up into the hands of civil magistrates, and of their being tried, judged, condemned, and put to death by their orders, but of their being murdered by a set of men called “zealots”; who, in imitation of Phinehas, as they pretended, took upon them, whenever they found any person guilty of a capital crime, as idolatry, blasphemy, etc. or what they judged so, to fall upon him at once, and without any more ado kill him; nor were they accountable to any court of judicature for such an action, and which was reckoned laudable and praiseworthy: in this way, and by the hands of such miscreants, Stephen the protomartyr lost his life; for though they had him before a council, and suborned witnesses against him, yet when in his own defence he said what these “zealots” interpreted blasphemy, they ran upon him at once, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him to death; and without any leave or authority from the sanhedrim, as appears: and these men were accounted good men, zealous, µwqm lç wtanq [f626] “with a zeal for God”, his honour and glory; and valued themselves much upon such butcheries and inhumanity, and thought, as our Lord here says, that they “did God service”; or as the Syriac renders it, brqm anbrwqd, “offered a sacrifice to God”, and so the Arabic and Ethiopic: and indeed this is a rule the Jews [f627], and which they form upon the instance and example of Phinehas;

> “that whoever sheds the blood of wicked men, (and such they reckoned the apostles and followers of Christ to be,) ^brq byrqh wlak, “it is all one as if he offered a sacrifice”;”

they looked upon this to be a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing to God: so the Apostle Paul, in his unregenerate state, thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Christ: and that he was doing God service,

when he prosecuted the church, and gave his voice with these ruffians, to put the saints to death.

Ver. 3. *And these things will they do unto you*, etc.] Christ here opens the true spring and source of the furious zeal of the Jews, against the apostles, in putting them out of their synagogues, and taking away their lives; it was pure wilful ignorance of the Father and himself;

because they have not known the Father nor me; though they boasted of their knowledge of God; yet they knew him not as the Father and sender of Christ, at least they would not own him as such: nor Jesus as the true Messiah, and sent of the Father, to redeem and save his people from their sins; and since they neither knew the Father, nor Christ, it is no wonder they did not know, own, and acknowledge, the disciples of Christ, but used them in the ill manner they did; their zeal was not according to knowledge, it was a blind and misguided one: and this is mentioned, not to extenuate or excuse their sin, though it shows they were not out of the reach of mercy, because they, as the apostle says of himself, "did it ignorantly in unbelief", (<5013>1 Timothy 1:13); but as an argument with the disciples to bear their ill usage with patience, and to pity them and pray for them.

Ver. 4. *But these things have I told you*, etc.] Christ enlarged on this disagreeable subject, and was the more particular in enumerating the evils his apostles were to endure for his name's sake:

that when the time shall come; some copies read it, "their time"; so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic render it; that is, the time when wicked men will be suffered to vent all their rage and malice:

ye may remember that I told you of them; which might serve greatly to confirm them in the faith of him as the omniscient God, and the true Messiah, and encourage them to depend on his veracity and faithfulness in his promises; that since the evil things which he spoke of came upon them, so they might hope, believe, and expect, that all the good things he had assured them of, should be accomplished; and also to engage them to bear their sufferings with the greater patience, since they were appointed by God, and foretold by their Lord and master.

And these things, adds Christ,

I said not unto you at the beginning; when he first called them to be followers of him; for though when he ordained them, and sent them forth

to preach the Gospel in the cities of Judea, which was some time after he had called them by his grace, he did acquaint them with some of the troubles and exercises they should meet with; as that they should be hated by all men, persecuted from city to city, beat in the synagogues, delivered up to councils, and brought before kings and governors; (see <4010>Matthew 10:17-19); yet he did not so fully and distinctly speak of these things, as here and at this time: his reason for such a conduct was this,

because, says he,

I was with you: wherefore he never spoke so fully and distinctly of their troubles, because he was with them, and took them upon himself; and indeed, whilst he was with them, the rage and malice of the Jews were not so much against his disciples, as himself; nor did he for the same reason speak so largely of the Comforter, and of the comforts they should receive from him, because as they had not the exercises they should afterwards have, so they had him to be their comforter.

Ver. 5. *But now I go my way to him that sent me*, etc.] These words seem to belong to (<4316>John 16:4), and to contain a reason why Christ spoke of the trials and afflictions of his disciples now, because he was going away from them to his Father; when as they would be at the head of his affairs in this world, so they would the more become the butt of the rage of men:

and none of you asketh me, whither goest thou? Peter indeed asked the question, (<4336>John 13:36); but his meaning was, what part of the country he was going to? what private and inaccessible place he was about to betake himself to? he had no notion of his going out of the world, or to heaven to his Father, and therefore inquired nothing about it; and when Christ had suggested to his disciples, that he was going to his Father's house, to prepare mansions for them, they did not seem to understand him, (<4402>John 14:2,3,5). Nor did they ask what he meant by his Father's house, or what those mansions were he was going to prepare; and what the glory was he was going to possess for himself and them; they ask neither about the place he was going to, nor the way to it, nor the happiness to be enjoyed there.

Ver. 6. *But because I have said these things to you*, etc.] Of being hated and persecuted by the Jews, of being put out of their synagogues, and of losing of their lives; and particularly of his departure from them, or the loss of his bodily presence:

sorrow hath filled your heart; sorrow for his absence so possessed their minds, seized on all the powers and faculties of their souls, and engrossed all their thoughts, that it never entered into the heart of any of them, to inquire about the place he was going to, or the state he should enter upon; which had they had any right notions of, would have greatly contributed to have abated their sorrow, quieted their minds, made them easy under, and reconciled them unto, his departure from them.

Ver. 7. *Nevertheless, I tell you the truth*, etc.] Christ was truth itself, and could say nothing else; but he makes use of this way of speaking, to raise the attention of his disciples, and to engage their belief of what he was about to say, and of which they were not easily persuaded; which was, that however overwhelmed they were with grief and sorrow, because of his going away from them, a greater truth he could not tell them, than that this would be to their real good and advantage:

it is expedient for you that I go away; Christ's death here, as in many other places in these discourses of his, is signified by going away, a departure, taking a sort of a journey, such an one as indeed is common to all mankind; death is the way of all the earth, and which Christ took by agreement with his Father; a dark way is the valley of the shadow of death, and so it was to Christ, who went away in the dark, under the hidings of his Father's face; it is a man's going to his long home, and a long journey it is, till he returns in the resurrection morn; though it was a short one to Christ, who rose again the third day. The phrase supposes the place and persons he went from, this world and his disciples; and the place and persons he went unto, the grave, heaven, his Father, the blessed Spirit, angels, and glorified saints; and is expressive of the voluntariness of his death; he was not fetched, or thrust, and forced away, but he went away of himself; and is a very easy and familiar way of expressing death by, and greatly takes off the dread and terror of it; it is only moving from one place to another, as from one house, city, or country, to another; and shows, that it is not an annihilation of a man, either in body or soul, only a translating of him from one place and state to another. Now the death of Christ was expedient, not only for himself, which he does not mention; he being concerned more for the happiness of his people than of himself; but for his disciples and all believers; for hereby a great many evils were prevented falling upon them, which otherwise would; as the heavy strokes of divine justice, the curses and condemnation of the law, the wrath and vengeance of God, and eternal death, ruin, and destruction; as well as many good things were hereby

obtained for them; as the redemption of their souls from sin, law, hell, and death; peace; reconciliation, and atonement; the full and free forgiveness of all their sins, an everlasting righteousness, and eternal life. Moreover, Christ's going away was expedient for his people; since he went to open the way for them into the holiest of all, by his blood; to take possession of heaven in their name and stead; to prepare mansions of glory for them; to appear in the presence of God for them; to be their advocate, and make intercession for all good things for them; to transact all their business between God them; to take care of their affairs; to present their petitions; to remove all charges and accusations; and to ask for, and see applied every blessing of grace unto them. The particular instanced in, in the text, of the expediency of it, is the mission and coming of the Spirit:

for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you. The Spirit of God in some sense had come, before the death of Christ; he had appeared in the creation of all things out of nothing, as a joint Creator with the Father and Son; he was come as a spirit of prophecy upon the inspired writers, and others; the Old Testament saints had received him as a spirit of faith; he had been given to Christ as man, without measure, and the disciples had been partakers of his gifts and graces; but he was not come in so peculiar a manner as he afterwards did; as the promise of the Father, the glorifier of Christ, the comforter of his people, the spirit of truth, and the reprover of the world: there are reasons to be given, why the Spirit of God should not come in such a manner before, as after the death of Christ. The order of the three divine persons in the Trinity, and in the economy of man's salvation, required such a method to be observed; that the Father should first, and for a while, be more especially manifested; next the Son, and then the Spirit: besides, our Lord has given a reason himself, why the Spirit "was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified", (⁴⁰⁷⁹John 7:39); And the coming of the Spirit as a comforter, and the spirit of truth, was to be through the intercession, and by the mission of Christ; and therefore it was proper he should go away first, in order to send him; add to all this, that if Christ had not gone away or died, there would have been nothing for the Spirit to have done; no blood to sprinkle; no righteousness to reveal and bring near; no salvation to apply; or any of the things of Christ, and blessings of grace, to have taken and shown; all which are owing to the death of Christ, and which show the expediency of it: the expediency of Christ's death for the mission of the Spirit to his disciples, is very conspicuous; for hereby they

were comforted and supported under a variety of troubles; were led into all truth, and so furnished for their ministerial work; and were made abundantly successful in it, that being attended with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

Ver. 8. *And when he is come*, etc.] The coming of the Spirit here, chiefly designs his descent upon the apostles, at the day of "Pentecost": as the things ascribed to him, and which were then done by him, clearly show; though it may also include his coming along with, and by the ministration of the Gospel, into the hearts of his people at conversion, in all after ages of time:

he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment: by "the world" is principally meant, the Jews; the world among whom Christ personally was, who knew him not, disbelieved him, rejected him as the Messiah, hated and persecuted him, even unto death; though not to the exclusion of the Gentiles, the whole world that lies in wickedness; since both joined, and were concerned in these things, and reproved of them; which "reproving", as it may respect different persons, may intend both such reproofs and convictions, as are not attended with conversion, and issue in salvation; and such as are powerful, spiritual, and to saving purposes: the several things the Spirit of God is said to reprove of, being repeated in the following verses, with reasons or specifications annexed to them, will be there considered.

Ver. 9. *Of sin, because they believe not on me*.] The "sin" here primarily intended, is that of the Jews, in disbelieving, rejecting, and crucifying Christ; and which the Spirit of God, by Peter, charged upon them on the day of "Pentecost", and fully proved against them; gave such clear evidence, and wrought such strong convictions of in their minds and consciences, that being pricked to the heart, they cried out, "what shall we do?" (<4402 23>Acts 2:23,36,37); though as this passage may be applied to the ordinary work of the Spirit of God upon the souls of men, through the ministry of the word; so it may take in convictions of sin of all sorts, as of original and actual sins, and particularly the sin of unbelief: for the Spirit of God convinces of the sinfulness and corruption of nature, the wickedness and plague of a man's heart, the sin that dwells in him; how that has overspread all the powers and faculties of his soul, rendered both him and his services unacceptable to God, loathsome in his sight, and himself hopeless and helpless, and deserving of his wrath and displeasure: he also

convinces of actual sins and transgressions, showing that they are breaches of the law of God, and are committed against God himself; that they are deserving of death, even eternal death; that the wrath of God is revealed against them, and for them comes upon the children of disobedience; and that there is no atonement for them, or cleansing from them, but by the blood of Christ: he likewise convinces of the sin of unbelief, here particularly mentioned: showing the evil nature and consequences of it, to persons enjoying a Gospel revelation; that such who disbelieve the Messiah, shall die in their sins; that whoever believes not in him shall be damned; and that faith in Christ is necessary to salvation, and that without it there is none.

Ver. 10. *Of righteousness, because I go to my Father*, etc.] The "righteousness" here spoken of, does, in the first sense of the word, design the personal righteousness of Christ. The Jews had traduced him as a wicked man, said he was a sinner himself, and a friend of publicans and sinners; that he was guilty of blasphemy and sedition, maintained a familiarity with Satan, yea, that he had a devil: now the Spirit of God, by the mouth of Peter, on the day of "Pentecost", proved, to the conviction of the Jews, that all this was slander; that Christ was an innocent, holy, and righteous person, and a man approved of God among them, as they themselves must be conscious of, (<40 22>Acts 2:22); of all which, his going to the Father, and being received by him, were a full proof and demonstration. The effusion of the Spirit in that extraordinary manner upon the disciples, showed that he was gone to the Father, and had received from him the promise of the Holy Ghost, which he then shed abroad; and his going to the Father, and being set down by him at his right hand, made it clear that he came from him, and was no impostor; that he had acted the faithful and upright part, and was free from all the charges the Jews had laid against, him. Moreover, this may also be very well understood of the mediatorial righteousness of Christ, which he, as the surety and Saviour of his people, was to work out and bring in for them, in obedience to the law of God; which required holiness of nature, perfection of obedience, and bearing its penalty, death; all which were complied with by Christ, and so the whole righteousness of the law was fulfilled by him; and which is imputed by God as the justifying righteousness of all that believe in Jesus; and the proof of his having wrought out this, lies in his going to the Father; for as this was the work he came about, the will of his Father he came to do, had he not done it, it is reasonable to think he would never have met with such a

welcome from him: besides, the donation of the Spirit, in consequence of its being wrought out, most clearly demonstrates it: likewise in the ordinary work of the Spirit of God upon the souls of his people, he always convinces them of the necessity of a righteousness to justify them before God, to render them acceptable in his sight, and to give them a right to the heavenly glory; for to admit them without a righteousness, or any unrighteous persons there, would be contrary to the justice of God, disagreeable to his pure and holy nature, and destructive of the comfort and happiness of the saints. He, the Spirit of God, convinces men of the insufficiency of their own righteousness for such purposes; that they have no righteousness that deserves the name of one, and that what they have will not justify them before God, and entitle them to heaven: and this he does, by showing them the corruption of their nature, their daily sins and infirmities, in thought, word, and deed; the purity of the divine perfections, and the spirituality and extensiveness of the law of God; which when a man is thoroughly apprized of, he can never hope for and expect justification before God by his own righteousness: hence the Spirit of God proceeds to convince men of the glory, excellency, fulness, and suitableness of the righteousness of Christ; which he does, by revealing it to them in the Gospel, setting it before them, and working faith in them to lay hold upon it; when they desire to be found in Christ, not having on their own, but his righteousness; which convictions appear by the mean thoughts they have of their own righteousness, by hungering after Christ's, by disclaiming all but his, by their constant mention of it, dependence on it, and satisfaction in it; and thus to convince of it, is the peculiar work of the Spirit, since naturally men are fond of their own righteousness, are ignorant of Christ's, and set against it. It is added,

and ye see me no more; not but that the disciples were to see Christ, and did see him after his resurrection, and will with the rest of the saints see him at his second coming: but the meaning is, that they should see him no more, in a mean and despicable condition on earth, in a state of humiliation, in the form of a servant, he having faithfully performed the whole work he came about, and particularly that of righteousness, he came to bring in.

Ver. 11. *Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged*.] This is to be understood of the judiciary power and authority of Christ, who has "all judgment" committed to him by the Father, as Mediator; has all power in heaven and in earth; and as he is appointed, so he is a very fit person to

judge the world at the last day. Now this being disputed and disbelieved by the Jews, the Holy Ghost, in the ministry of Peter, most clearly demonstrated to their full conviction, that he was raised from the dead, set upon his throne, and was made, or declared, Lord and Christ, (<4402 4>Acts 2:24,34-36); of which the pouring forth of the Holy Ghost was an evidence; and the instance in the text proving it, and which is a very considerable one, is the judgment, or condemnation and destruction of Satan, the prince of the world; for Christ, by his death, has destroyed him and his works; has spoiled his principalities and powers; and by his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven, has carried him and them captive, triumphing over them; and, through the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, and the power of it attending their ministry, Satan was judged, condemned, and cast out of the Heathen world, their temples, and the souls of men; the prey was taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered: but as this may refer to the ordinary work of the Spirit in conviction and conversion, it may be differently applied; for he convinces of various things, which come under this name: he convinces of the wrong judgment which men in a state of nature form of God, whom they take to be such an one as themselves; of a crucified Christ, whom they esteem foolishness; of the doctrines of Christ, which they judge to be absurd and irrational; of the people of Christ, whom they reckon the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things; of the ways and, ordinances of Christ, which are thought to be grievous, unpleasant, and unprofitable; and of themselves, and their own state and condition, which they fancy to be good, and they in a fair way for heaven: he also convinces them of the excellency, truth, power, and usefulness of the Gospel, which is called "judgment", (<2300 1>Isaiah 42:1,4 51:4), so as to understand it truly, believe it cordially, receive it in the love of it, and feel the power of it: he convinces them of a future judgment; of the reality and certainty of it; that it will be universal, reach to all persons and things; that it will be carried on in the most righteous manner, and there will be no escaping it, of which the judgment and condemnation of Satan is a standing proof: and he moreover convinces of judgment or damnation; that men are under a sentence of condemnation in Adam; that they are liable to eternal damnation in themselves; that except they believe in Christ they will be damned, as sure as the prince of this world is.

Ver. 12. *I have yet many things to say unto you*, etc.] Not with respect to the main doctrines of the Gospel, for everything of this kind he had made

known unto them, (John 15:15); but what regarded the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, the abrogation of the Mosaic economy, and settling the Gospel church state, which were to come to pass after the death and resurrection of Christ, and the sending of the Spirit:

but ye cannot bear them now; because of their prejudices in favour of their own nation, the law of Moses, and the ceremonies of it, and the setting up of a temporal kingdom.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come*, etc.] Of this character of the Spirit, (see John 14:17). His coming, as before, intends more especially his descent on the apostles at Pentecost; though what is here said of him is true of his office, and of his operations on other persons, and at other times:

he will guide you into all truth; necessary to be known, useful to men, profitable to the churches, even the whole counsel of God; what relates to worship, the nature, form, and spirituality of it, as well as doctrine. He is as a guide, he goes before, leads the way, removes obstructions, opens the understanding, makes things plain and clear, teaches to profit, and leads in the way men should go, without turning to the right hand or left, which, without such a guide, they would be apt to do. The Jews[f628] have a notion of the Holy Ghost being a guide into all wisdom and knowledge.

> "R. Phinehas says, the Holy Spirit rested upon Joseph from his youth to the day of his death, and "guided him into all wisdom", as a shepherd leads his flock, according to (Psalm 80:1,2);"

For he shall not speak of himself: as Christ, the Son, spoke not of himself in opposition to the Father, so the Spirit speaks not of himself in opposition either to the Father, or the Son, but in perfect agreement with both; being, as of the same nature and essence, power and glory, so of the same mind, understanding, and will; and as they agreed and wrought jointly and harmoniously, in the works of nature and providence, so in the economy of grace and salvation.

But whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; as Christ himself did, (John 15:15); and they are such things as ear has not heard besides; what were secretly transacted in the council and covenant of peace, and agreed upon by all the three persons; things which concern the salvation of men, the Gospel church state, another world, and the glory of all the divine persons:

and he will show you things to come; which would come to pass after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; things relating to the state and settlement of the Gospel church, the partition wall being broken down, the law of commandments contained in ordinances abolished, and a new face of things appearing in the kingdom and interest of Christ, in consequence of the Spirit being sent forth, and poured down: or this may respect the spirit of prophecy in the apostles, who showed to them many things to come in after ages; as the rise of the man of sin, the great departure from the faith, and decline of the power of godliness in the last days, the calling of the Jews, the destruction of antichrist, the burning of the world, and the making of new heavens and new earth; and, in short, what would be the state of the church of Christ, and religion, in all the several periods of time, quite down to the coming of Christ, when dead saints shall be raised, and living ones changed, as is declared throughout the book of Revelation.

Ver. 14. *He shall glorify me*, etc.] In the ministration of the Gospel, which is "the ministration of the Spirit", (2 Corinthians 3:8); and asserts Christ to be God over all, to have all that the Father hath, to be possessed of all divine perfections, to have the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him; ascribes the same works and worship to him as to, the Father; and, as in a glass, holds him forth to be beheld as the brightness of his glory, and his glory to be seen in it, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth: it declares him to be the only Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners, that justification is solely by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice; and which ministration the Spirit makes effectual to the bringing of many souls to Christ to believe in him, profess his name, and expect life and salvation from him, by all which he is glorified. Moreover, the Spirit of God glorifies Christ in the experience of the saints, by leading them to him for righteousness, peace, and pardon, for grace, and fresh supplies of it, for wisdom and strength, for food and rest, for life and happiness; and by enabling them to live by faith on him, on whom he has encouraged them to venture, and to whom they have committed their all; and by instructing them to glory in him, as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and by ascribing the glory of their salvation to him, and by making continual application to him, under his direction and influence; by leaning on him, and expecting every good thing from him both for time and eternity. The particular instance in which he glorifies Christ, follows,

for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you; which is to be understood not of gifts Christ received from his Father, and which he gives to men by his Spirit; nor of internal grace, as faith, love, etc. which the Spirit from Christ works in the hearts of men; but either of the doctrines of the Gospel, the deep things of God and Christ, which the Spirit searches, and reveals in the ministration of the word. The Gospel is a sort of a "Kabala", though of a different kind from the oral law of the Jews. Christ received it from the Father, the Spirit received it from Christ, the apostles received it from the Spirit, and the churches of Christ from them in succeeding generations: or this may be understood of the blessings of grace held forth in the Gospel, such as justification, pardon, adoption, etc. which are in Christ; and which the Spirit from Christ takes and shows to the saints, and witnesses their special and particular interest in, and so comforts them, and glorifies Christ.

Ver. 15. *All things that the Father hath are mine*, etc.] Though it is true that the same divine nature the Father is possessed of, the Son is; and the same divine perfections belong to the one, as to the other; and the Son shares in the same glory and felicity the Father does; so that in the utmost extent of the phrase, all that the Father hath are his; yet since Christ is speaking of things received of him by the Spirit, and shown unto his people, it rather seems that the blessings of grace, which the Father has in store for his chosen ones, and the doctrines of grace, those deep things of his, are here more especially meant; which to reveal and apply, is the peculiar work of the Spirit; and in these Christ is equally concerned with the Father:

therefore, said I, he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you; he does not mention the things of the Father, only his own; nor was there any necessity for it, because whatever is his, is the Father's, and whatever the Father has is his: they are jointly concerned in every thing relating to the salvation, benefit, comfort, and happiness of the saints; so that when the Spirit of God takes of the things of the one, he takes of the things of the other, and discovers, and applies them.

Ver. 16. *A little while and ye shall not see me*, etc.] Meaning, that he should be quickly taken from them by death. And in a very little time after this, having put up a prayer for them, recorded in the next chapter, he went into the garden, where he was met by Judas with his band of men, who laid hold on him, bound him, and led him first to Annas, then to Caiaphas, and

from him to Pilate, when all the disciples forsook him and fled, and saw him no more in this mortal state, except Peter and John. He took his trial, was soon condemned, and crucified, and laid in the dark tomb, and silent grave, where, for a while, he was out of sight.

And again, a little while and ye shall see me; referring either to his rising again the third day from his death, as was prophesied of, (Hosea 6:2); and was typified by Jonah's lying three days and three nights in the whale's belly, when he appeared to, and was seen by his disciples, to their great joy; or else to the short time in which he was to be, and was seen by them; namely, forty days between his resurrection and ascension; a longer stay it was not necessary he should make, for he had other work to do, for himself and them:

because I go to the Father; to give an account of the work he had finished on earth; to carry in his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; to present himself to his Father on behalf of his people; to appear in the presence of God for them; to be their advocate, plead their cause, and make intercession for them, and take possession of heaven in their name; to take his place at the right hand of God in their nature; to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return.

Ver. 17. *Then said some of his disciples among themselves*, etc.] It may be, some of them might better understand the meaning of Christ than others, or they might all be ignorant of it; for before the effusion of the Spirit on them, they were attended with a great deal of ignorance; and what through their being overwhelmed at this time with sorrow, and what with their national sentiments they retained about a temporal kingdom, they understood very little of what Christ said to them concerning his death, the nature, use, and end of it. Wherefore some might make the motion first, and inquire,

what is this that he saith unto us, a little while and ye shall not see me? they knew not what he meant by it, though he had so often and so clearly spoken of his death unto them: and as ignorant were they what he should design by saying,

and again a little while and ye shall see me; though he had expressly told them, in so many words, some time ago, that whereas he should die, he should rise again the third day: and as much at a loss were they to guess what he should intend by the reason he gives,

and because I go to the Father; though he had often mentioned it already, and as what might be matter of joy unto them.

Ver. 18. *They said therefore*, etc.] One, and all of them; the inquiry became universal;

what is this that he saith, a little while? it seems as if this phrase was the most intricate and perplexing to them; for whatever conceptions they might have of not seeing, and seeing him again, as expressive of his going from them, and returning to them, yet had no notion at all what he should mean by "a little while": and therefore add,

we cannot tell what he saith: they knew his words, but not his meaning.

Ver. 19. *Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him*, etc.] This is a proof of Christ's deity, that he is the omniscient God who knows all things, what is in man, even the secrets of the heart; for he not only knew the whisperings of the disciples, and their inquiries among themselves about the sense of his words, but also their secret desires to ask him concerning it:

and said unto them, do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, a little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me? which he said before they could put the question to him, they being bashful, and backward, through fear or shame; and which not only confirms what is before observed of his omniscience, but also shows his readiness to open his mind and meaning, and explain himself to his disciples, as he does in the following words.

Ver. 20. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] A strong asseveration, a way of speaking often used by him, when he solemnly affirms any thing, and would assure of the truth of it, as here:

that ye shall weep and lament; meaning at his death, when he should be removed from them, so that they should not see him; when they should be filled with inward grief on account thereof, and express it by mournful gestures, and a doleful voice; and which was fulfilled in them, (<41610>Mark 16:10); and how pensive the two disciples were that were going to Emmaus, it is easy to observe from the account given of them;

but the world shall rejoice; the unbelieving Jews; and not only the common people, but the chief priests, with the Scribes and elders, mocked at him,

insulted him, and triumphed over him when on the cross, being glad at heart they had got him there; imagining now, that it was all over, the day was their own, and they should be no more disturbed by Christ and his followers:

and ye shall be sorrowful; Christ repeats it again, and uses a variety of words to express the greatness of their sorrow, and the many ways in which they would signify it:

but your sorrow shall be turned into joy; as it was, when he was raised from the dead, which was so wonderful and surprising to them, that for joy they could scarce believe their own eyes; it being a mercy unexpected, though they had been told of it, and too great for them to enjoy; yea, that very thing which was the occasion of their sorrow, became the foundation of their joy; namely, the death of Christ, salvation, and all the benefits and blessings of grace coming to them in this way.

Ver. 21. *A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow*, etc.] As was said she should have, (<0103>Genesis 3:16); This is God's ordination and appointment for sin:

because her hour is come; is at hand; the fixed time in nature is up, and there is no avoiding it:

but as soon as she is delivered of the child; for though the sorrow is great, yet there is a deliverance, and she is saved in child bearing: when

she remembereth no more the anguish; the sharp pains she has endured in her travail;

for joy that a man is born into the world. Much such a way of speaking is used by the Jews[f629], who observe,

> "if a woman brings forth a male child, all is forgot, and she repents (i.e. of her impatience, or any unbecoming expression in the time of labour), rkzh tjmçb, "for the joy of a man child"."

And our Lord seems to have respect to a prevailing notion among them, as well as many others, of the felicity of male children: it is a common saying with them[f630],

> "blessed is he whose children are males, and woe to him whose children are females:"

for they say [f631],

> "when µlw[b rkz abç, "that a man child comes into the world", peace comes into the world."

Now our Lord, by this instance, illustrates the sorrow his disciples should have by his departure, and the joy that they should be possessed of upon his return to them; that as the pains of a woman in travail are very sharp and severe, and the distress of her mind, about the issue of things respecting herself and offspring, is very great, so would be the grief and trouble of the disciples on account of the death of their Lord and master: but as when a woman is safely delivered of a man child, she is so filled with joy, that her sorrow is remembered no more so should it be with them, when Christ should appear to them; all their trouble, concern, anxiety of mind, and fears, that attended them, would all vanish away, and they be distressed with them no more.

Ver. 22. *And ye now therefore have sorrow*, etc.] This is the application of the preceding case. As it is with a woman in travail, when her hour is come, so it was now with them, and would be when Christ was removed from them; and as it is with every believer, when Christ is absent: for though there are many things that cause sorrow now, as sin, Satan, and afflictive dispensations of providence, yet nothing more sensibly touches believers to the quick, and gives them more uneasiness, than when Christ is out of sight: the reasons are, because he is so nearly related to them, being their everlasting Father, kind husband, loving brother, and faithful friend; and because they are so strongly affected to him, there is none like him in their esteem in heaven and in earth: he is the person whom their souls love; he is the very life of their souls; his favour, his gracious presence is life to them, and his absence is as death; nor can they be easy, but are restless, and upon the inquiry after him, until he returns to them, which he does in his own time; and therefore this sorrow is but now, for the present, it is not perpetual.

But I will see you again; as he did see his disciples upon his resurrection once and again, for the space of forty days, at certain times, by intervals: and so, in a spiritual sense, he comes and sees his people, makes them a visit, manifests himself unto them, and abides with them: they are always under his omniscient eye; he always sees them as God; and they are always under his eye of love, grace, and mercy, as Mediator: but this means such a

seeing of them, as that they see him as well as he sees them; and is expressive of a delightful intercourse between Christ and them, than which nothing is more desirable:

and your heart shall rejoice: as did the hearts of the disciples, when they saw Christ risen from the dead; and as the hearts of believers do, when Christ so looks upon them that they can view him with an eye of faith; such a sight is a heart rejoicing one. To see the glory and beauty of Christ's person, the fulness and suitableness of him as a Saviour; to have an appropriating view of him as such; or to see him so as to have sensible communion with him, must needs fill the heart of a believer with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: such a sight of Christ will rejoice the heart under a sense of sin, the pollution and guilt of it, when tempted by Satan, or under God's afflicting hand, and even in the view of death and eternity.

And your joy no man taketh from you. The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment, and the joy of the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, was a short lived one, on account of Christ's death; for Jesus was soon raised from the dead, and the apostles were filled with the Spirit, and went forth boldly preaching in the name of Christ, to the great grief of these men. But the joy of the disciples was durable; their risen Lord would never die more; the blessings of grace, such as redemption, pardon, righteousness, and atonement, would, and do ever remain as the foundation of solid joy: nor could a stranger intermeddle with it; ουδεις, "not one", either man or devil could take it away, not by all the reproaches they could cast upon them, or persecutions they could follow them with: and so, though a believer's joy may be damped by sin, and Satan, and the world, it may not be always in lively exercise; yet the matter of it always remains in Christ, and the principle of it in themselves can never be destroyed, but will issue in everlasting joy in another world.

Ver. 23. *In that day ye shall ask me nothing*, etc.] Meaning, not the whole Gospel dispensation, so often called, in prophetic language, "that day"; and is, in the New Testament, opposed to the night of Jewish and Gentile darkness; and, in comparison of the former dispensation, is a time of great spiritual light and knowledge: nor the latter part of that day, when there will be no night of darkness and desertion, of error and security, of affliction and persecution, with the church; when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord; when all the children of God shall be taught of him, and there will be no need to say, know the Lord, for all shall

know him, from the least to the greatest: nor the day of judgment, which, by way of emphasis, is so frequently called “that day”: nor the state of ultimate happiness, the everlasting day of glory; when all imperfections shall be done away, when saints will know, as they are known, and see Jesus as he is, and need not ask any questions about him: but the time when Christ, and his apostles, should meet again, and see each other’s faces with joy and pleasure, is meant; and the time following thereon, especially the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit was poured down upon them, and, according to his promise, came to them, taught them all things, and led them into all truth. This asking is not to be understood of asking in prayer; for it appears, by what follows, that they should ask in his name then, and he encourages to it; but of asking him questions, and that not of any sort; for it is certain, that, within this time, they did ask many things. Peter asked what John, the beloved disciple, should do; and they all asked him, a little before his ascension, whether he would, at that time, restore again the kingdom to Israel; but it is to be restrained to such things they had been, or were, desirous of asking him; such as, whither goest thou? show us the Father? how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? and more especially these last questions, they greatly desired to put to him, what is this, “a little while and ye shall not see me?” and what is this, “a little while and ye shall see me?” and what is the meaning of these words, “because I go to the Father?” (⁴³John 16:17). Now our Lord intimates, that at this time all these things would be so clear and evident to them, that they should ask him no questions about them. But he adds,

verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Asking here signifies prayer, and a different word is here used than before. The object of prayer is the Father, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, who were both separately, or in conjunction with the Father, prayed unto after this; (see ⁴⁴Acts 7:59 22:16 ⁵³2 Thessalonians 3:5 ⁴⁵Romans 1:7 ⁴⁶1 Corinthians 1:2,3 ⁶⁶Revelation 1:4,5). The medium of access to the Father is the name of Christ; he is the Mediator between God and man, the way of access unto him; whatever is asked, is to be asked on account of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and then there is no doubt of success; whatever is asked will be given; his blood within the vail speaks loud for every blessing; his righteousness, God is always pleased with; his sacrifice is a sweet smelling savour: his mediation is powerful; and his name is always prevalent.

Ver. 24. *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name*, etc.] Not that they had never prayed as yet; for they had desired him to teach them to pray, which he did: they had prayed to him particularly for an increase of faith, and for many other things; but either they had only asked him, he being present with them, and not the Father; or if they had asked the Father anything, yet not in the name of Christ: they had made no mention of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, nor any use of his mediation; things they had not as yet such clear knowledge of; or they had not asked as yet any extraordinary thing, as they afterwards did; (see <4429>Acts 4:29,30);

ask, and ye shall receive; that is, in my name, and whatever ye ask for, ye shall have it, to fit you for your work, to carry you through it, and to give you success in it: (see <4007>Matthew 7:7);

that your joy may be full; go cheerfully through your work, find much pleasure in it, and with great satisfaction see the Gospel spread, souls converted, Satan's kingdom weakened, and the interest of your Redeemer thrive and flourish; than which nothing can more contribute to complete the joy of the ministers of Christ.

Ver. 25. *These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs*, etc.] Concerning his Father, and his Father's house, and the many mansions in it, of his going to prepare a place for them there, and of the way unto it, all which they seemed not to understand; of the nature of communion with him and his Father, and of the manifestation of them to them, so as not unto the world, which they could not account for; of their union to him under the simile of the vine and its branches; and of his departure from them, and return unto them; and of the sorrow that should follow upon the one, and the joy that should attend the other, set forth in the case of a woman in travail, having sorrow, and being joyful when delivered. All which, one would think, were plain and easy to be understood; but such was the then present state and case of the disciples, that these all seemed as proverbs, parables, and dark sayings, which they did not clearly understand: wherefore our Lord says,

but the time cometh; meaning either the time of his appearing unto them, after his resurrection, or the day of Pentecost:

when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show plainly of the Father; by pouring forth his Spirit upon them, who should not only take of his things, but of his Father's also, and show them unto them

clearly and plainly; so as that they should have a clear understanding of them, as they were capable of; of the perfections of his nature, his distinct personality, his being the Father of Christ, and of all the elect in him; of his everlasting love to their persons; of his choice of them in Christ; of his covenant with them in him; of his mind and will concerning them, and his gracious designs towards them; of his Father's house, and the way to it; and of the nature, design, and usefulness of his going to him; of the distinction between speaking in parables and dark sayings, and speaking plainly, openly, and apparently; (see <04208>Numbers 12:8).

Ver. 26. *At that day ye shall ask in my name*, etc.] For when the Spirit was poured upon them, they not only received his extraordinary gifts, and had a larger measure of his grace bestowed upon them; but were also blessed with him, as a spirit of grace and supplication, in a more remarkable manner than ever they had been before: they then better understood the throne of grace, and the advantages of it; had greater enlargements and assistances at it; and were better acquainted with the mediation of Christ, and the necessity of making use of his name, blood, and righteousness, in all their petitions and requests.

And I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you. This Christ had promised before, (<43146>John 14:16); nor was there any occasion to repeat it now, of which they might be strongly assured: besides, at that day the Spirit would be given to them by virtue of his intercession; so that there would be no need of praying to the Father for them on that account. This is said, not as if the intercession of Christ for his people would then cease; for he is always their advocate with the Father, and ever lives to make intercession for them; though it may not be carried on in the same manner, by prayer, as when he was here on earth, his personal appearance, and the presentation of his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness, being sufficient; but to declare the disposition and readiness of his Father to hear them, and grant unto them whatsoever they should ask of him in his name.

Ver. 27. *For the Father himself loveth you*, etc.] The Father loved them as well, and as much as the Son did, and of himself too, without any merit or motive in them: he loved them from everlasting, and had given proofs of it in time, in the gift of his Son to them, and for them; and in calling them by his grace; and therefore being thus strongly affected to them, they might depend upon a ready and speedy answer from him, as might be best for his glory, and their good.

Because ye have loved me; not that their love to Christ was the cause of the Father's love to them; but, on the contrary, the Father's love to them was the cause of their love to Christ; and therefore as the cause is known by its effect, they might be assured of the Father's love to them by their love to Christ; for if the Father had not loved them, they had never loved God, nor Christ; but since they did love Christ, it was a clear case the Father loved them: and this their love is joined with faith;

and have believed that I came out from God; being sent by him, and am no impostor, but the true Messiah that was to come: faith in Christ, and love to him, go together; where the one is, there is the other; faith works by love; they are both the gifts of God's grace, and the fruits and effects of his everlasting love; and those who are possessed of them may be firmly persuaded of their interest therein.

Ver. 28. *I came forth from the Father*, etc.] This is the sum of what the apostle believed, and Christ, in these discourses of his, had been speaking of. This his coming forth from the Father is to be understood, not of his eternal filiation; nor of his coming forth in a way of grace towards his own people in the council and covenant of grace and peace; nor of his constitution, as Mediator, from everlasting; but of his coming in the flesh in the fulness of time: which supposes that he was, that he existed as a divine person before; that he was with the Father before; that he came forth from him with his knowledge, mind, and will; he came not of himself, but he sent him; and yet he came willingly, was not forced, or did not come against his will: and this does not suppose any local motion, or change of place, but only intends an assumption of the human nature into unity with his divine person, who fills heaven and earth with his presence; nor any separation from his Father, with whom he was, and in whose bosom he lay when he was made flesh, and dwelt among men; nor any absence from heaven, for he was there when on earth.

And am come into the world; where he was before, as the Creator and upholder of it, by his immensity and powerful presence; this designs his coming and manifestation in the flesh, which in general was to do the whole will of God, which he in council and covenant agreed to do, and for which he came down from heaven; and in particular to preach the Gospel, call sinners to repentance, give life and light to many, and to fulfil the law, by obeying its precepts, and bearing its penalty, and both to do and suffer

in the room and stead of his people, and to save lost sinners, even the chief of them.

Again, I leave the world; not that he relinquished the sustaining and government of it, as God, nor the care of his people in it, as Mediator, for whom he retains the same love as ever, and will not leave them fatherless and comfortless; nor was he leaving it as never to return more; for he will descend, in like manner he ascended, and will come a second time and judge the world in righteousness: but he was about to depart from it by death, having done the work and business for which he came about.

And go to the Father; to give an account of his work unto him, as his righteous servant, being faithful to him that had appointed him; and to transact the affairs of his people; to appear in the presence of God for them; to present their petitions, be their advocate, make intercession for them, take possession of heaven in their name, and prepare it for them; to take his place at the right hand of God in human nature, and to be glorified with the glory promised him before the world was.

Ver. 29. *His disciples said unto him*, etc.] Upon the above discourse of Christ, such rays and beams of light darted into the minds of the apostles, and things stood so clear in their view, and they so well understood what Christ had said, that they declare,

lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb: what he had said before, were to them like proverbial, or parabolical expressions, not easy to be understood; they were like enigmas, riddles, and dark sayings, the meaning of which they could not apprehend; but now they observe, with admiration, that what he delivered was plain, and intelligible; which was not so much owing to Christ's different way of speaking now, from what it was before, as to their former dulness of hearing, and now having some further degree of light given unto them.

Ver. 30. *Now are we sure that thou knowest all things*, etc.] Not only all men, but all things, even the secrets of men's hearts, of which the apostles had now a convincing proof; for whereas Christ had delivered some expressions, (^[B16]John 16:16); which they did not understand, and were desirous to ask him the meaning of, (^[B19]John 16:19); which he knowing, being God omniscient, prevents their putting the question to him, and enters upon a discourse, in which he so clearly explained what they wanted

to be informed of, without their asking him, that they were fully assured that he must know all things;

and, as they add,

needest not that any man should ask thee: the meaning is, that should Christ deliver anything not so intelligible to any of his audience, and they were desirous of knowing the sense of it, there would be no need of putting the question in form to him, since he is privy to the first motion of desire rising up in the mind; and can, and will, if he thinks fit, explain himself on such an head, to the satisfaction of the person, without ever asking him; at least there is no need of putting the question to make him acquainted with his desire, this being before known unto him. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God; was the true Messiah, and had his mission and commission from God, as such; doubtless they believed this before, but this instance of Christ's omniscience was a strengthening proof of it. So Nathanael, by Christ's saying to him, that before Philip called him, and when he was under the fig tree, he saw him when he thought no eye did but an omniscient one; it laid him under such full convictions of him, as at once to acknowledge him the Son of God, the King of Israel. This is one of the signs and characters of the Messiah with the Jews, that he should have a discerning spirit of men and things, according to (<23>Isaiah 11:3) [f632].

Ver. 31. *Jesus answered them, do ye now believe*?] Not as calling their faith in question; or as denying they had any; or as despising it for the smallness of it; but as reproving them for their security, vain confidence and boasting, as if their faith was so very strong that it would never be moved; and perhaps for the lateness of it too: the words may be read affirmatively, without an interrogation, "ye do believe now"; they are in the Syriac and Arabic versions read imperatively, "believe ye now". Though the "now" is left out by the former, which is not to be spared, for the emphasis lies on it; and a regard seems to be had both to time past and to come. The words carry in them a tacit reproof, that they believed no sooner, or were not before this time more established in their faith, when he had been so long with them, and they had heard so many discourses from him, and had seen so many miracles wrought by him: however, it was not too late, and they would do well to go on believing; but it is suggested to them they would meet with something that would try their faith: and it is as if Christ had said, ye believe in me now, while I am with you, and all

things go according to your mind; but what will you do anon, when I shall be taken from you, be apprehended by mine enemies, be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles, be crucified, die, and be laid in the grave? will ye believe then? one of you will betray me, another deny me, and all will forsake me, and some express their doubts about me.

Ver. 32. *Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come*, etc.] The time is at hand, yea, it may, in a sense, be said to be already come, it was within an hour: and indeed the following prayer might be delivered in less than an hour's time; when he went immediately into the garden, and was apprehended; or at least in a very little while it would come to pass,

that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own; to his own friends, relations, and acquaintance; to his own house and home; to his own country, Galilee, whither they all went, and to their trade of fishing again; (see <43203>John 21:3); and so was fulfilled the prophecy in (<38137>Zechariah 13:7);

and shall leave me alone; as they did in the hands of his enemies; for they all forsook him and fled, some one way, some another; though one or two of them, Peter and John, followed him at a distance; and all came together again, but not to Christ, until his resurrection from the dead.

And yet I am, not alone; he was not alone at this time; and his meaning is, that he should not be alone then when they should be scattered from him:

because the Father is with me; not only as the Son of God, by virtue of union to him, and as one with him; but as Mediator, in consequence of his promise to uphold him, and assist him in his human nature; and though he withdrew his gracious and comforting presence from him, he bearing the sins, and standing in the room and stead of his people, yet not his powerful and supporting presence.

Ver. 33. *These things I have spoken unto you*, etc.] As this is the conclusion of our Lord's sermons to his disciples, these words may well enough be thought to have regard to all that he had said in general; as concerning his departure from them; his going to prepare a place for them; his union to them, and their communion with him; and the various persecutions and afflictions they should endure for his sake; and the many blessings both of grace and glory they should enjoy; and particularly what he had said in the context, concerning their forsaking him, which supposed tribulation, and would be a prelude of what they were afterwards to have in

the world; and concerning the presence of his Father with him, and which they might also expect to have:

that in me ye might have peace; not in the world, in which they were to have tribulation: there is no true, solid peace, to be enjoyed in the world, and the things of it; the world can neither give it, nor take it away; nor have the men of it any knowledge and understanding of it; and much less enjoy it: nor in themselves; spiritual peace does not arise from any duties, services, and performances of men; no, not from an attendance on the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; nor even from the graces of the Spirit; for though peace may be enjoyed herein, and hereby, and through these, as means; yet does not come from them, but from Christ, in whose strength alone all duties are performed aright; who is the sum and substance of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, and the object of all grace: it is in him, and in him only, in his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, which speak peace, pardon, and atonement, that a soul finds any true, solid peace, rest, comfort, and joy; and here he may, and does find it, in opposition to the cry of sin, law, and justice, for wrath, ruin, hell, and damnation. There is a peace by Christ, which he has made for his people by the blood of his cross; and there is a peace in him, which is enjoyed through faith's looking to his blood for pardon, to his righteousness for justification, to his sacrifice for atonement and satisfaction; and by having communion with him, and discoveries of his love, and by seeing safety and security in him.

In the world ye shall have tribulation; this is certain from this declaration of Christ, who is the omniscient God, and truth itself; from the instance and example of Christ, who was all his life a man of sorrows; from the conformity of the members to the head; from the divine appointment that has so determined it; from the natural enmity of the world to the saints; from the experience of the people of God in all ages; from the usefulness of tribulation to try the graces, and bring about the temporal, spiritual, and eternal good of believers: and though they have tribulation in the world, yet not by way of punishment for sin, but as fatherly corrections and chastenings for their good, that they may not be condemned with the world; and it is only in this present world they have it; as soon as they have done with the world, they will have done with tribulation:

but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world; it is very observable how the phrase, "in the world ye shall have tribulation", stands, and is encompassed, before, with these words, "that in me ye might have peace",

and behind, with these, “be of good cheer”, etc. Believers, of all men, notwithstanding their tribulations, have reason to be of good cheer, since their sins are forgiven, the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, their redemption draws nigh, and they have hopes of glory; and particularly, because as Christ here says, for their encouragement under all their tribulations in the world, “I have overcome the world”: Satan, the god and prince of the world, with all his principalities and powers, which Christ has led captive, ransomed his people from, and delivers them from the power of; and all that is in the world, the lusts and sins of it, their damning power by the sacrifice of himself, and their governing power by his Spirit and grace; and the men of the world with all their rage and fury, whom he has trodden down in his anger, restrains by his power, and causes the remainder of their wrath to praise him; in all which conquests he makes his people share, and even makes them more than conquerors, through himself: so that they have nothing to fear from the world; nor any reason to be cast down by the tribulation they meet with in it.

CHAPTER 17

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 17

Ver. 1. *These words spake Jesus*, etc.] Referring to his sermons and discourses, his words of comfort, advice, direction, and instruction, delivered in the three preceding chapters:

and lift up his eyes to heaven; the seat of the divine majesty, the throne of his Father. This is a prayer gesture. It is said [f633] of R. Tanchuma, that µymçl wynp hybgh, "he lift up his face to heaven", and said before the holy blessed God, Lord of the world, etc. and this is expressive of the ardency and affection of the mind of Christ, and of his confidence of the divine favour: it shows that his mind was filled with devotion and faith, and was devoid of shame and fear, and was possessed of great freedom, boldness, and intrepidity:

and said, Father; or "my Father", as the Syriac, Arabic and Persic versions read; and no doubt but he used the word Abba, which signifies "my Father", thereby claiming his interest in him, and relation to him:

the hour is come; to depart out of the world, to suffer and die for his people, which was agreed upon between him and his Father from all eternity; and it was welcome to him, on account of the salvation of his people, and therefore he spoke with an air of pleasure and satisfaction; and it would be quickly over, was but an hour, as it were, though a time of great trouble, distress and darkness, and so a fit time for prayer:

glorify thy Son; as man and Mediator; for as God, he needed no glory, nor could any be added to him: but it designs some breakings forth of glory upon him at his death; by supporting him under all the sorrows and sufferings of it; and in carrying him through it; so that he conquered all his people's enemies, and his own, sin, Satan, the world, and death, and obtained eternal redemption for them: and at his resurrection; by not suffering him to remain so long in the grave, as to see corruption; and by raising him at the exact time that was foretold by the prophets and himself; and by sending an angel to roll away the stone; and by raising some of the

saints along with him; and by putting such a glory on his body, as that it is the pattern and exemplar of the saints' resurrection: and at his ascension to heaven, when he led captivity captive; and at his session at the right hand of God, above all principalities and powers; and through the effusion of the Spirit upon his disciples, and the divine power that attended his Gospel, to make it effectual to great multitudes, both to Jews and Gentiles; by all which he was glorified, pursuant to this petition of his; in which his end is,

that thy Son also may glorify thee; as he had done throughout the whole of his life and conversation, and by his ministry and miracles; so now at his sufferings and death, through the salvation of his chosen ones, in which the wisdom, grace, justice, holiness, power, and faithfulness of God are greatly glorified; and in the after discharge of other branches of his mediatorial office, in making intercession for his people, in the ministry of his word and ordinances, by his servants, attended with his holy Spirit, and by the administration of his kingly office.

Ver. 2. *As thou hast given him power over all flesh*, etc.] All men, in distinction from angels; and these as fallen, as weak, frail, sinful, and mortal creatures; men of every nation, Jew or Gentile, and of every character, elect or non-elect: not but that he has also a power over angels; nor is his power over men limited to their "flesh" or bodies, but reaches to their spirits or souls also: which power is a governing, disposing, and judicial one; he rules them with a sceptre of righteousness, he disposes of them in providence as he pleases, and will judge them at the last day: and this is a power that is "given" him by his Father, and is not that original power over all things he has as God, and the Creator of them, which is natural, essential, and underived; but is a derived and delegated power, which he has as Mediator, as subservient to the ends and designs of his office: and as God glorified him as such, by giving him this power; so he glorifies him again, by acknowledging it, and by using it for the end for which it is given:

that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him; eternal life is a gift, and not owing to the merits of men; indeed there is no merit in men's works, no, not in the best; for these are previously due to God, cannot be profitable to him, if done aright, are not done in the creature's strength, but through the grace of God, and bear no proportion to eternal life; which is in Christ's gift: not only the promise of it is in him, but that itself; it is put into his hands, and he came into this world, that his people

might have it; he has procured it, and has removed what lay in the way of their enjoyment of it; he has a right to bestow it, and their right unto it comes by him, through his blood and righteousness: the persons on whom he confers this gift, are not all men, but such as the Father in the everlasting covenant has given to him, as his people and portion, his spouse and children, his jewels and his treasure, to be saved and enjoyed by him; whom he has chosen and preserved in him, and made his care and charge; to these, and every one of these, Christ gives this great blessing; nor shalt any of them come short of it; and it is for the sake of this, that all creatures and things, all power in heaven and in earth, are given to him.

Ver. 3. *And this is life eternal*, etc.] That is, the beginning and pledge of it, the way unto it, and means of it, and what will certainly issue in it:

that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. The knowledge of God here spoken of, is not the knowledge of him by the light of nature, and works of creation; for a man may know God in this sense, and not know him in Christ, nor anything of Christ; yea, may know God and profess him in words, and in works deny him, as the Heathens did; nor is eternal life known hereby, nor connected with it: nor is it such a knowledge of God as is to be obtained by the law of Moses, in which God is represented as a righteous and incensed Being; nor is there in it any discovery of God, as a God of love, grace, and mercy in Christ; nor any revelation of a Mediator, Saviour and Redeemer; nor can it either show, or give to persons eternal life; and yet what is here said of the knowledge of God and Christ, the Jews say of the law [f634],

> "one man said to his friend, let us dash them against that wall and kill them, because they have left abh µlw[yyj, "eternal life"; (the gloss upon it is, hrwt, "the law";) and employ themselves in a temporary life, the gloss says of this world, which is merchandise."

More truly does Philo the Jew say [f635], that

> "fleeing to the Divine Being, "is eternal life"; and running front him is death."

But this is to be understood of an evangelic knowledge of God, as the God and Father of Christ, as the God of all grace, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin, and of Christ Mediator; not a general, notional, and speculative knowledge; but a practical and experimental one; a knowledge

of approbation and appropriation; a fiducial one, whereby a soul believes in Christ, and trusts in his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice for salvation; and which, though imperfect, is progressive. The Arians and Unitarians urge this text, against the true and proper deity of our Lord Jesus, and his equality with the Father, but without success; since the Father is called the only true God, in opposition to the many false gods of the Heathens, but not to the exclusion of the Son or Spirit; for Christ is also styled the one Lord, and only Lord God, but not to the exclusion of the Father; yea the true God and eternal life; was he not, he would never, as here, join himself with the only true God; and besides, eternal life is made to depend as much upon the knowledge of him, as of the Father. The reason of this different mode of expression, is owing to the character of Christ as Mediator, who is said to be sent by the only true God, about the business of man's salvation. Nor is it of any moment what the Jew [f636] objects, that Jesus here confesses, that the true God is only one God; nor does he call himself God, only the Messiah sent by God; and that the Apostle Paul also asserts the unity of God, (<540117>1 Timothy 1:17); and therefore Jesus cannot be God: for Christ and his Father, the only true God, are one; and that he is the one true God with his Father, he tacitly suggests here by joining himself with him; and what the Apostle Paul says of the one and only wise God, may as well be understood of Christ, the Son of God, as of the Father; since all the characters in the text agree with him, and of him he had been speaking in the context.

Ver. 4. *I have glorified thee on the earth*, etc.] This is made use of as a reason and argument, why the Father should glorify him: Christ glorified his Father personally, as he held forth and expressed the glory of his person; and verbally, by ascribing, on all occasions, praise and glory to him; and really, or by deeds, and that by various ways: as in and by his ministry; by asserting he had his mission, qualifications, and doctrine, from him as a prophet; his principal work was to declare his Father's mind and will, his love and grace; nor did he seek his own, but his Father's glory: and by his miracles: for though these were proofs of his deity and Messiahship, and displays of his own glory; yet the glory of his Father, especially of his power, was eminently seen in them, for he referred them to him; and these were often the means of men's glorifying the God of Israel: and by his whole life and conversation, which was entirely according to the will of God; and every action of it was directed to his glory; particularly he glorified him by his early regard to his will, and the business he sent him

about; by his zeal for his Father's house; and by the exercise of the various graces of faith, hope, and love upon him: and as by his life, so at his death, even all the while he was "on the earth"; where God had been dishonoured by the sin of men; where Christ now was debased in human nature, and even that was for the glory of God; and this is said in distinction from heaven, where God is glorified by the angels, and where Christ would shortly be glorified in his human nature:

I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; by "the work" is meant obedience to the will of God; the destruction of all spiritual enemies, as sin, Satan, the world, and death; and the redemption and salvation of his people, which was "given" him to do: he did not take it upon himself, but being called to it he readily accepted of it; it was appointed, and cut out for him, in the council and covenant of grace; he was thoroughly acquainted with it; and though it was difficult, it was pleasant and delightful to him; nor did he leave it till he could say it is "finished"; as it was by himself alone, without the help of man; and is so complete that nothing can be added to it; and so firmly done, that it cannot be unravelled by men and devils: he speaks of it as done, because the time was come to finish it, and he was sure of the accomplishment of it.

Ver. 5. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self*, etc.] Not with his perfections, these he had, they dwelt bodily in him; or with his nature, in which he was one with him; but as Mediator, with his glorious presence in heaven, by setting him at his right hand, and crowning him with glory and honour. The Jews have a notion that God will give to the King Messiah, hl[m lç dwbkh ˆm, "of the supreme glory" [f637]: the glory Christ prays for is, as he says,

the glory which I had with thee before the world was; the same phrase with µlw[l, or µlw[h µdwq, used by the Jews [f638]. This is not to be understood of the glory of the human nature of Christ, abstractly considered; for that is no person of itself, but what is taken up into personal union with the Son of God; and therefore cannot be intended by this personal character I; nor did it exist from eternity; it was indeed written in God's book of predestination, even all its members, when as yet there were none of them in actual being; it was set up in God's thoughts and counsel, as the pattern and exemplar of human nature; it had a federal union with the Son of God, or a covenant subsistence with him; and in the Old Testament Christ was often spoken of as man, because of his frequent

appearances in an human form, and because of the certainty of his incarnation; but he did not really and actually exist as man, until he took flesh of the virgin; for Christ, as man, is the seed of the woman, the son of David, Abraham, and Adam; he is called the last and second Adam, and was not as man before the first: the Old Testament speaks of his incarnation as future, nor is it possible that a creature can exist before time; for as soon as a creature exists, time begins, which is nothing else than the measure of a creature's duration; nor was the human nature of Christ with the Father from eternity; nor had it a glory before the world began, neither in whole, nor in part: nor is the glory of the divine nature abstractly considered here meant; this glory indeed Christ had from everlasting; he had it with his Father, in common with him, being in union to him; and it is true that it was in some measure veiled and covered in his state of humiliation; for though there were some breakings forth of it in that state, these were seen but by a few; wherefore he is thought by some, to pray here for the manifestation of this glory; but this glory was essential to him, was his natural right, and not to be prayed for, and which he then had as much as ever, and of which there could be no suspension: but this designs the glory of him as Godman, and Mediator; he was not only predestinated to be a Mediator, but was really set up as such from everlasting, and had a mediatorial fulness of grace put into his hands, and had the honour and glory of that office given unto him by the other two persons; and now that he might appear to be what he was, to be made, that is, made manifest that he was both Lord and Christ, he here prays; which was to be done, upon his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, by the pouring down of the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 6. *I have manifested thy name*, etc.] Not the "Nomen Tetragrammaton", the name of four letters, the name "Jehovah", and which the Jews call "Shemhamphorash", and say is ineffable, and to be pronounced by Adonai; who also speak of other names, and say [f639],

> "truly the former wise men had holy names, which they received from the prophets, as the name of "seventy two" letters, and the name of "forty two" letters, and the name of "twelve" letters, and many other holy names; and by which they could do new signs and wonders in the world; but they did not make use of them, only in case of necessity, as in a time of persecution and distress."

The name of twelve letters, Galatinus[f640] pretends, is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the words for which in the Hebrew language consist of twelve letters; and that of forty two letters he makes to be this, the Father God, the Son God, the Holy Ghost God, yet there are not three Gods, but one God; or thus, the Father God, the Son God, the Holy Ghost God, three in one, one in three; the Hebrew words for which contain forty two letters; but the authorities by which he would support all this are insufficient. However, it is none of these names, nor any other scriptural ones, that are here meant; but either God himself, or the perfections of his nature, or his will of command, or rather his Gospel; unless Christ himself, or his name Jesus, God by the angel gave him, and in whose name there is salvation, and no other can be thought to be meant; and which, as it was manifested to his disciples, so it is to all whom God has chosen and given to Christ:

unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; which is to be understood, not merely of their being given to him as apostles, nor of their being given and brought to him in the effectual calling only, but of an eternal act of God's in election, and in the covenant of grace; when these persons were given to Christ as his spouse, his spiritual seed and offspring, the sheep of his pasture, and his portion and inheritance, to be saved and preserved by him; which as it is an instance of love and care on God's part to give, and of grace and condescension on Christ's to receive, so of distinguishing goodness, to the persons given; since not all the world, but some of it, share in this favour:

thine they were, and thou gavest them me; the persons given were not the Father's merely by creation; for so others are his also; nor would they be peculiarly his, for they are the son's likewise in this sense; but they are his by electing grace, which is the peculiar act of the Father in Christ, and is unto salvation by him, through the sanctification of the Spirit; these are chosen to be his peculiar people, and given to Christ as such:

and they have kept thy word; the Gospel, not only in their memories, but in their hearts; and having publicly professed it, they defended it valiantly against the enemies of it, and kept it pure and incorrupt; this shows that the Gospel is meant by the name of God manifested to these persons.

Ver. 7. *Now they have known*, etc.] The Syriac version reads it t [dy, "I have known"; and so the Persic and Gothic versions, contrary to most copies and other versions, which read, as we render, "they have known", that is, the disciples and apostles of Christ:

that all things whatsoever thou hast given me; all temporal things, the world and the fulness of it; all power in heaven, and in earth, or a power of disposing of all things for his own service, as Mediator; all spiritual things, the covenant of grace, with all its blessings and promises, the Spirit of God, with all his, gifts and graces, a fulness of all grace for his people, yea, eternal life and glory; and everything relating to his mediatorial office and character, power to perform miracles, knowledge and wisdom to preach the Gospel, strength to procure the salvation of his people; every thing to qualify him for the government of church and the judgment of the world:

are of thee; owing to his good will and pleasure, by his appointment and constitution, as an instance of love to him, and that he might, as man, and Mediator, be honoured, and in all things have the pre-eminence, and all for the good of his chosen ones: now the knowledge of this by his disciples, must greatly confirm the mission of Christ, render him very suitable to them, cause them to entertain a greater esteem for him, lead them into some admiring views of the grace of God, in giving so much into Christ's hands for them, and engage them the more cheerfully to obey his commands.

Ver. 8. *For I have given unto them the words*, etc.] Not commands, but doctrines; and these not the doctrines of men; nor any of the divers and strange doctrines; but what are called in Scripture the doctrine of God, of Christ, of the apostles, are agreeably to the Scriptures, and according to godliness; and are styled the word of truth, of faith, of righteousness, of peace and reconciliation, of life and salvation, and of the Gospel; and which Christ gave to his disciples, and gifts along with them to preach them, and abilities to help them:

which thou gavest me; for the words and doctrines which Christ, as the great prophet in Israel spoke, were not his own, but his Father's; and these were given him to speak and deliver to others, and in which he was faithful; so Jonathan ben Uzziel [f641] paraphrases the text in (Deuteronomy 18:18); concerning that prophet, the Messiah, God would raise up, after this manner;

> "a prophet will I raise up unto them from among their brethren, in whom the Holy Spirit shall be, like unto thee; ymgtp ^tyaw, "and I will give the words", of my prophecy into his mouth, and he shall speak with them all that I have commanded."

And so the Messiah Jesus did:

and they have received them; willingly and gladly, with reverence and meekness, with love, and thankfulness; so as to understand them and believe them, and so as to be affectionately and closely attached to them:

and have known surely that I came out from thee; which is meant, not of his eternal filiation, but of his constitution and commission, as Mediator by his Father: of which they had certain knowledge, full assurance of faith, and sincerely owned and confessed being fully persuaded he was the true Messiah, and no impostor:

and they have believed that thou didst send me; into this world, to seek and to save lost sinners, to redeem all the chosen ones, and perform everything necessary to their salvation.

Ver. 9. *I pray for them*, etc.] This is to be understood of Christ, not as God; for as such he is the object of prayer; nor need he pray to any other; nor is there any superior to him under that consideration to pray unto; but as man and Mediator: nor is his praying any argument against his deity; nor proof of inferiority to his Father with respect to his divine nature; since it is not in that, but in his human, nature, that he prayed; though this may be ascribed to his whole person as Godman; hence he had the greatest qualifications and abilities for this work, and his prayers were always heard: praying, as attributed to Christ, must be restrained to his state of humiliation; prayer is never spoken of Christ but whilst he was here on earth; his intercession in heaven is never expressed by prayer; and the saints when they come thither, will have done praying, Christ whilst on earth, was an excellent pattern of prayer; of private and solitary prayer; of social prayer; for and with his disciples; of frequent and fervent prayer; of submission to the will of God in prayer; and of praying even for enemies: the persons he is here said to pray for are his apostles; which shows their danger and their wants, his care over them, and concern for them, and his love unto them:

I pray not for the world; the inhabitants of it, the carnal unbelieving part of the world, which lie in sin, and will be condemned; as he died not for them, so he prayed not for them; for whom he is the propitiation, he is an advocate; and for whom he died, he makes intercession; and for no other in a spiritual saving way:

but for them which thou hast given me; out of the world, as distinct from them, to be saved with an everlasting salvation by him; and to be preserved safe to his kingdom and glory; for these he prays, for the conversion of them, the application of pardon to them, their final perseverance and eternal glory:

for they are thine; not merely by creation, and as the care of his providence, but by eternal election, and special grace in calling; which is a reason why Christ prayed for them, and an argument why the Father should, and would regard his prayers.

Ver. 10. *And all mine are thine, and thine are mine*, etc.] Christ is speaking not of things but of persons; otherwise all the perfections of his nature as God, and all the works he did, and doctrines he taught as man, were of his Father; as all the perfections of his Father, his nature, his names, his works, his worship, were his; the same that belongs to the one belongs to the other: but persons are here meant, and these the elect of God, particularly the apostles, who were his and his Father's; belonged to them both by election, covenant transactions, redemption, and efficacious grace in conversion; which mutual interest arises from an union in nature, an agreement in covenant, and a conjunction in operation:

and I am glorified in them: or by them, they ascribing all divine perfections, works and worship to him; attributing the whole of their salvation to him, and giving him all the glory of it; believing in him; walking worthy of him, in their lives and conversations; suffering patiently and cheerfully for his sake; and abiding by his Gospel and ordinances; and he will be glorified by them, and in them hereafter, and that to all eternity.

Ver. 11. *And now I am no more in the world*, etc.] In the earth; which is no contradiction to his resurrection from the dead, and stay with his disciples for a while; nor to his return to judge the world at the last day; nor to his reigning on earth with his saints a thousand years; since it will not be the world as it now is, but it will be a new earth, renewed, purified and refined, and clear of the wicked inhabitants of it; and in which will only dwell righteous persons: besides, Christ was to be, and will be no more in the world, in such circumstances, and doing such work as he then was: the meaning is, that whereas he had been in the world, and had done, or as good as done the work he came about, he was now just going out of it; it was but a very little while he had to stay in it; nor should he continue long with his disciples when he rose from the dead; and whereas his bodily

presence had been a guard unto them, a protection of them, and he had bore the heat and burden of the day for them, and had took all reproaches and persecutions upon himself, now he was going from them:

but these are in the world; and will continue for some time, they having much work to do, and be exposed to the evils, snares and temptations of it; where they were hated, and were liable to great hardships, afflictions and persecutions; which shows that Christ was not so intent on his own glory, as to neglect the good of his people, and to be unconcerned for them:

and I come to thee; signifying his death; the deposition of his soul into his Father's hands; his ascension in soul and body to him; his entrance into heaven, and session at the right hand of God; and therefore had nothing to ask for on his own account: but his disciples he was parting with lay near his heart, and therefore he prays;

holy Father, keep, through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me: the person prayed unto is God the Father, the Father of Christ, and of his people; a very proper relation to consider God in and under in prayer to him: since it must give freedom, boldness, and hope of success: the epithet "holy" is exceeding suitable, as it perfectly agrees with him who is essentially so; and since it was holiness and an increase of it Christ prays for; and that there his disciples might be kept from the evil of sin: the persons prayed for are those that were given to Christ in election, and in the covenant, to be kept by him, and therefore he is the more solicitous for their preservation: his request is, that his Father would keep them from the evil of the world; from sinking under temptations and afflictions; faithful to him and to his Gospel, and in unity among themselves; and that "through" or "in" his own name; in it, in the doctrine of the Gospel, and in the worship of God, and profession of him; "through" it, through himself, as a wall of fire about them, and by his power through faith unto salvation:

that they may be one as we are; in nature, will, affection and understanding; which must be understood not of equality, but of likeness; and designs not their union to Christ, but to one another; abiding together, cleaving to each other, standing fast in one Spirit, having the same designs, and the interest of a Redeemer in view, and at heart.

Ver. 12. *While I was with them in the world*, etc.] This does not imply that Christ was not in the world now, for he was; but signifies that he was just going out of it; and that his continuance in it was very short: nor that he

was, and would be no longer with his disciples; for this is to be understood of his bodily, not of his spiritual presence; in which respect Christ is with his people whilst they are on earth, and they are with him when he is in heaven:

I kept them in thy name; by his Father's authority and power, in his doctrine:

those that thou gavest me I have kept; that is, those that were given him to be his apostles;

and none of them is lost; these he kept close to himself, and from the evil of the world, and from temporal and eternal ruin:

but the son of perdition; Judas, a child of Satan, whose name is Apollyon the destroyer, who was now about to betray his Lord and master; and was one that was appointed to eternal ruin and destruction, of which he was justly deserving; and which is no instance of the apostasy of saints, since though he was given to Christ as an apostle, yet not in eternal election, to be saved by him:

that the Scripture might be fulfilled; this respects either Christ's keeping of his people, and their final perseverance, whereby the Scriptures that speak of it are fulfilled; or rather the destruction of Judas, whereby such passages as speak of that, have their accomplishment, particularly (Psalm 109:8); Some have thought that this only refers to the general sense of the Scriptures, both the law and prophets; that some are chosen to everlasting life, and others are appointed to wrath; that some are saved, and others lost; some sons of God, and others sons of perdition; but it rather seems to regard some particular passage or passages of Scripture relating to Judas, his character, condition and end, and which are very manifestly pointed at, in the psalm referred to;

> "As for the servants whom I have given thee, there shall not one of them perish; for I will require them from among thy number." (2 Esdras 2:26)

Ver. 13. *And now come I to thee*, etc.] As in (John 17:11), which he repeats as a very great happiness to himself, and with much pleasure and joy, but not without concern for those he was parting from:

and these things I speak in the world; which he had expressed in this prayer concerning the nature of eternal life, and his power to give it to all the Father had given him; concerning the work of redemption finished by him, and the glory due unto him on that account; concerning his chosen ones, particularly the apostles, and the mutual interest he and his Father had in them; and what he had done for them, in revealing the Gospel to them, keeping them by the powerful influence of his grace, and the great concern he had for their future preservation: and these things he took notice of in his prayer, whilst he was in the world, before he took his leave of them;

that, says he,

they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves: either the joy which Christ had in them, which was of an early date, is still continued towards them, and will be more fully expressed, when they shall all be brought safe home to glory, and be for ever with him; or else the joy of which Christ is the author and object, which comes from him, and centres in him: saints rejoice in the person of Christ; in the greatness and dignity of his person, as God over all; hence they know that what he did and suffered answered the purpose, that he must have great interest in heaven, and they must be safe in his hands; and in the fitness of it, to be a Mediator, he being God and man in one person; and in the fulness of it, which is all theirs, it is with delight they view it, with joy they receive from it, and believe they shall not want; and in the beauty of it, he being fairer than the children of men. The offices Christ bears as prophet, priest, and King, the relations he stands in as father, husband, brother and friend; his Gospel and communion with him, the blessings of grace in him, as peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation, lay a foundation for solid joy in them that believe; as do also his death, resurrection, exaltation and intercession. This joy in him is a grace of the Spirit, and is attended with faith in Christ; it should be constant, but is frequently interrupted; though the ground and foundation of it is always the same; it is therefore at present imperfect, but may be increased; it is unknown to the world, and inexpressible by the saints; and may be said to be “fulfilled” in them, when it abounds in them more and more; when they are full of it, and that is full of glory, and which will be fulfilled in glory.

Ver. 14. *I have given them thy word*, etc.] The Gospel, and a commission and abilities to preach it, and which is a reason of what follows, namely, the world’s hatred of them; because this word is not of men, nor agreeably

to carnal reason; it magnifies the grace of God, and destroys boasting in men; it is against the carnal interest, worldly views and lusts of men:

and the world hath hated them; the inhabitants of the world, worldly men, such as are what they were when they first came into the world; are under the influence of the god of the world, and led by the spirit of it, and are wholly taken up with the things thereof: the unbelieving Jews are chiefly designed, who bore an implacable hatred to Christ and his apostles; and the same fate do the faithful ministers of Christ and his members share, in all ages and places, more or less: the men of the world gnash their teeth at them, secretly plot against them, and inwardly curse them; rejoice at any evil that befalls them; greedily catch at anything to reproach them; stick not to say all manner of evil of them, and to do all manner of evil to them:

because they are not of the world; they were of the world by their natural birth, and had their conversation with the men of it, whilst in a state of unregeneracy; but now they were called out of it, and were guided and led by another spirit; and were separate from the world in their lives and conversations, and which brought the hatred of the world upon them; inasmuch as they had been of them, but now had left them, and professed they did not belong to them; and because their religious lives put a distinguishing mark on them, and reproved and condemned them:

even as I am not of the world; not that Christ and his people are alike in their original; they are of the earth earthly, he is the Lord from heaven; nor are they so perfect in their walk and conversation in the world, and separation from it as he; yet there is some likeness between him and them, and some conformity in them to him, which makes the world hate them.

Ver. 15. *I pray not that thou shouldest take theft of the world*, etc.] Either in an unusual manner, by a translation, as Enoch and Elijah were; or by death in its common form, before their time, and purely to be rid of afflictions: this he prayed not for; for he had much work for them to do, by preaching the Gospel, for the conversion of sinners and comfort of saints; and it was for his interest they should live longer; and it would make most for his glory, and be best for his chosen people and churches:

but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil; either of sin, which is an evil and bitter thing, being committed against a good God, and a righteous law, and brings ruin and destruction upon men; from this the apostles were kept, and all the saints are; not from indwelling sin, nor from the

commission of sin, but from the dominion of it, and from falling into it and by it, so as to perish eternally: or from the evil of the world; not from afflictions in it; nor from the reproach and persecution of it; but from its wickedness and lusts, and from the evil men of it: or from Satan the evil one, who is eminently, originally, and immutably so; not from being tempted by him, but from sinking under his temptations, and from being devoured by him. Christ's praying for this, after this manner, shows that evil is very abhorrent, pernicious and powerful; the danger saints are in by it; their incapacity to keep themselves from it; and that the Lord alone is the keeper of his people; but does not suggest that Christ has dropped the charge of them, or is unequal to it; but by so doing he expresses his great love to them, how dear they are to him, and what care he takes of them, and what concern he has for them.

Ver. 16. *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world*.] These words are repeated from (John 17:14), where they are given as a reason of the world's hatred to them; and here, as showing that they are exposed to the evil of it; and in both are used as an argument with his Father, that he would take notice of them, and preserve them.

Ver. 17. *Sanctify them through thy truth*, etc.] The Syriac version introduces this petition, with the appellation aba, "Abba, Father": and the sanctification prayed for regards the apostles, either as ministers of the word, and may intend their separation for their work and office; for which though they were sanctified or separated from their mother's womb, and by Christ when he sent them forth, yet were to have a fresh commission and unction after our Lord's resurrection, and upon his ascension to heaven; and also their qualification for it, with the truth of grace and doctrine, with holiness of heart and life, and with a preservation in the truth, by being kept faithful to it: or it may also regard them as Christians and believers, and intend a greater degree of the sanctification of the Spirit, which is imperfect in this life; for though sanctification in Christ is perfect, and so it is in the saints, as to parts, yet not as to degrees; which appears from the imperfection of faith, hope, love, and knowledge, from indwelling sin, being in the best of saints, from their necessities, from their disclaiming perfection, and their desires after it. Sanctification is a progressive work, which is carried on gradually; as is clear from the characters of regenerate ones, who are first newborn babes, then young men, and afterwards fathers in Christ; from the similes, by which it is expressed as seed which opens and grows up by degrees, and light which shines more and more unto the

perfect day from exhortations to a concern for the growth of it, and prayers for it: and it is indeed continually carrying on, as may be concluded from the hand in which it is; and the progress and finishing of this work, as well as the beginning of it, are entirely the Lord's; and the way and means in which this is done, are by or through the truth of the Gospel:

thy word is truth; it is "peculiarly" so, as the Arabic version reads it. The Gospel is here meant, and is so called on account of its original, it comes from the God of truth; and because of the concern which Christ, who is the truth, has in it, he being the author, preacher, and sum and substance of it; and because the Spirit of truth has dictated it, leads into it, qualifies men to preach it, and makes it effectual: and because it contains all truth necessary to salvation, and nothing but truth, and particularly that eminent truth, salvation alone by Christ; and because it is opposed to the law, which is but a shadow, of which the good things in the Gospel are the substance: now this is the means both of the beginning, and increasing, and carrying on the work of sanctification in the hearts of God's people, as well as of an experimental knowledge of it; and an increase of that knowledge does more and more qualify the ministers of it for their ministerial work and service, which seems here chiefly designed.

Ver. 18. *As thou hast sent me into the world*, etc.] Which does not suppose inequality of nature, nor change of place, nor any force upon him, nor disrespect unto him, or a state of separation from his Father; but that he was before he was sent; that he was a person, a divine distinct person from his Father; and designs the manifestation of him in human nature; and shows, that as Mediator, he had a divine warrant and authority, and was no impostor: what he was sent into the world to do, was in general the will of God; particularly to preach the Gospel, and chiefly and more especially to work out the salvation of his people:

even so have I also sent them into the world; to preach the Gospel likewise: he had already sent them forth on this errand, and in a little time they were to receive a new and enlarged commission for this service; which mission of them to such work, implies great honour put upon them, authority in them, and qualifications with them; and hence success attended them: the place into which they were sent is, "the world"; first the Jewish and then the Gentile world, and every part of it; out of which he would not have them taken; and where they were sure to meet with reproach and persecution; and where God's elect lay, who were to be converted through

their ministry; for the work they were sent thither for, was to open blind eyes, turn men from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sin, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified: now though there is not an equality between the mission of Christ by his Father, and of the apostles by him, yet there is a likeness; there is an agreement in their original, both are divine and of authority; in the place they were sent, the world; and in their work to declare the mind and will of God: all which carries in it a strong argument with his Father to regard these persons; for inasmuch as they were in a world that hated them, they needed divine power and protection; and being in a wicked world they needed sanctification and preservation; and having such work to do, they therefore needed divine assistance, and fresh supplies of grace.

Ver. 19. *And for their sakes I sanctify myself*, etc.] Which is to be understood, not of his making himself holy; for he never was a sinner, and so stood in no need of sanctification: he was made like unto us, yet without sin; he looked like a sinner, but was not one; he was traduced, charged, and treated as such, but was perfectly holy, and free from all sin; he was essentially and infinitely holy as God; and as man, he was holy in his conception and birth; he was filled with the Holy Ghost, and was holy in his life and in his death: rather this may be meant of his being separated, and set apart for his office as Mediator, which, though done by the Father, and is ascribed unto him, (<scripRef type="bible" osis="John.10.36">John 10:36</scripRef>); yet may also be attributed to himself; since he voluntarily devoted himself to this work, and cheerfully accepted of it: though it seems best to understand it of his offering himself a sacrifice for, and in the room and stead of his people, in allusion to the offerings under the law, the sacrificing of which is expressed by sanctifying, (<scripRef type="bible" osis="Exod.13.2,Exod.13.14,Exod.13.15">Exodus 13:2,14,15</scripRef>); and because his sacrifice was an Holy One: what he sanctified or offered was “himself”: not his divine, but human nature, his body and his soul; and these as in union with his divine person; which gives his sacrifice the preference to all others, and is the true reason of its virtue and efficacy; and this is expressive of his great love. He himself is also the sanctifier or offerer, which shows him to be a priest, and that he had a power over his own life, and that he sacrificed it voluntarily; and this he is said to do at that present time, because the time was very near that he was to be offered up, and his present prayer and intercession were a part of his priestly office. This he did not for his own sake, nor for the sake of angels, nor for all men, but for his disciples, as distinct from the world; and not for

the apostles only, but for all that the Father had given to him; and that as their substitute and surety, in their room and stead:

that they also might be sanctified through the truth; that is, have all their sins expiated, and they be cleansed from all the guilt and filth of them, through Christ himself and his sacrifice, who is the truth; or "in truth"; as it may be rendered, really and truly, in opposition to the legal sacrifices which atoned for sin, not really, only typically; or through the. Gospel of truth, bringing the good news of atonement by the blood and sacrifice of Christ, and which the Spirit of God seals to the conscience with comfort and joy.

Ver. 20. *Neither pray I for these alone*, etc.] Meaning his immediate apostles and disciples, for whose preservation and sanctification he had been particularly praying in (<48179>John 17:19); and now, that it might not be thought that these were his only favourites, and the only persons he had a regard for, and to whom his intercession and sacrifice were confined; he adds,

but for them also which shall believe in me through their word: Christ is the object of true faith; which faith is not a mere assent of the mind to any truth concerning Christ, as that he is the Son of God, the Messiah and Saviour of the world; but it is a spiritual sight of him, of the necessity, fitness, and suitableness of him as a Saviour, a going forth unto him, laying hold on him, and depending upon him for life and salvation; of which the preaching of the Gospel is the instrumental means: it is indeed a gift of God, and a fruit of electing grace, and which is secured by it; hence our Lord knew that there would be a number, in all successive generations, that would believe in him, through the ministry of the word; and for these persons, and their conversion, and the success of the Gospel, to the good of their souls, he prays.

Ver. 21. *That they all may be one*, etc.] Among themselves. This may regard their unity in faith, and in the knowledge of Christ; for there is but one faith which all truly experienced souls agree in: they are converted by the same Spirit, and have the same work of grace wrought in them; and though they have not the same degree of light, and measure of spiritual knowledge, yet they agree in the main point of the Gospel, salvation alone by the Lord Jesus Christ; and such an agreement in the doctrine of faith, and the grand articles of it, respecting the person and offices of Christ, is absolutely necessary to their comfortably walking together in church fellowship, and the more honourable carrying on the worship of God

together; and which will be more manifest in the latter day, when saints shall see eye to eye: likewise an unity in affection may be here designed, a being knit together in love to each other; which is the bond of perfectness, the evidence of regeneration, the badge of the Christian profession, the beauty of church communion, and the barrier and security from the common enemy; and without which, social worship and mutual service will be either neglected or coldly performed. Moreover, this petition may have respect to the gathering together all the saints at the last day, as one body united together in faith and love; as one general assembly and church of the firstborn; as one fold of which Christ is the head, Saviour, and shepherd:

as thou, Father, [art] in me, and I in thee. There is a mutual in being of the Father and the Son, who are one in nature and essence, in power and will, and in understanding and affection; which union, though it infinitely transcends any kind of union among men, or that can be conceived of by men, yet is the exemplar of the saints' union one with another, and to the divine persons; and which must be understood not of an equality, but a likeness:

that they also may be one in us: there is an union of all the elect to God and Christ, which is already complete, and not to be prayed for; they are all loved by God with an everlasting love, by which they are inseparably one with him; they are all chosen in Christ, as members in their head, and are federally united to him, as their Mediator, surety, and representative; in consequence of which he has assumed their nature, stood in their place and stead, and brought them nigh to God. There is a manifestation of union in conversion, when persons openly appear to be in Christ; and as a fruit and effect of everlasting love, are with loving kindness drawn unto him; and which will be more gloriously seen, when all the elect shall be brought in, and God shall be all in all, and is what Christ here prays for:

that the world may believe that thou hast sent me; either the rest of God's chosen people in the world, not yet called; or rather the wicked and reprobate part of the world, particularly Jews and Deists: they shall see the concord and agreement of the saints in doctrine, worship, and affection in the latter day; and when all the elect shall be gathered together, and not only their union to each other, but to the divine persons, shall clearly appear; they will then believe, ant be obliged to own, that Jesus is the true Messiah, was sent of God, and is no imposter.

Ver. 22. *And the glory which thou gavest me*, etc.] Not the glory of his deity; this is the same with his Father, what he has in right of nature, and not by gift; nor can it be communicated to creatures; this would be to make them one in the Godhead, as the three are one, which is not the design of the expression in the close of the verse: nor his mediatorial glory, which he had with the Father before the world began; this indeed was given him by the Father, but is not given to the saints: nor the glory, of working miracles; which glory Christ had, and which, as man, he had from the Father, and in which his own glory was manifested; this he gave to his disciples; but all that are his have not had it, and some have had it who are none of his: rather the Gospel is meant, which is glorious in its author, matter and subject, in its doctrines, in the blessing: grace it reveals, and promises it contains, and in the efficacy and usefulness of it to the souls of men. This was given to Christ, and he gave it to his disciples:

I have given them; as he did the words that were given to him, (John 17:8),

that they may be one, even as we are one; for the Gospel was given to the apostles, and still is to the ministers of it, to bring men to the unity of the faith, for the perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ: or else the fulness both of grace and glory, which is in Christ's hands for his people, is here designed. This is one considerable branch of the glory of Christ, as Mediator, to be full of grace and truth; this was given him by the Father, and is what he communicates to his; even the Spirit, and all sorts of grace, and every supply of it; and which greatly contributes to the union of the saints among themselves: yea, eternal happiness is often signified by glory; and this is given to Christ; he has it in his hands to give to others; and he does give it, a view of it, a right unto it, a meetness for it, a pledge of it, some foretastes of it, and a kind of a possession of it; for the saints have it already, at least in him; and he will give them the actual enjoyment of it, and this in order to their consummate and perfect union together, as a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Ver. 23. *I in them*, etc.] Christ is in his saints; not as he is in all the world, being the omnipresent God; or as he is in every man, communicating the light of nature as Creator; or as he is in the human nature, which is united to his divine person; or circumscriptively to the exclusion of him elsewhere; for he is in heaven, his blood is within the veil, and his righteousness without us: but he is in them, in a gracious manner, in regeneration; when

he is revealed to them, formed in them, enters into them, takes possession of them, communicates his grace, grants fellowship with himself, and dwells in them; not only by his Spirit and grace, but in person, as the head in the members, as the master of the house, and the King of them; which is an instance of condescending grace, and is peculiar to God's elect: hence all their holiness and fruitfulness; nor shall they ever perish; their bodies shall rise from the dead, and being reunited to their souls, Christ will be in them in a glorious manner to all eternity:

and thou in me; the Father is in Christ, not only by union of nature, nor merely in him, as Mediator, in a way of grace; but as he will show himself in and through him in glory for evermore, and is what is here prayed for:

that they may be made perfect in one; this regards not their justification, which is already perfect; nor their sanctification, which will be; but either perfection in glory, when they will be perfect in knowledge, in holiness, in peace, joy and love: or rather the perfection of their numbers is meant, when the whole election of grace will be completed in regeneration, sanctification, and glorification:

and that the world may know that thou hast sent me: as before; (see Gill on "John 17:21");

and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. The Oriental versions, the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic, all read the words thus, "and I have loved them, as thou hast loved me"; contrary to all the Greek copies, and other versions, which read as we do. The Father loved Christ as his own Son, and as Mediator; so he loved him when he assumed human nature, and became obedient to his will both in doing and suffering; when his Father left him, and poured out his wrath upon him, and when he laid down his life for the sheep. The instances of his love to him as Mediator are, his putting all things into his hands, showing him all that he does, and concealing nothing from him, and appointing him the only Saviour, the head of the church, and Judge of the world. The nature of this love is, that it is from eternity; is a love of complacency and delight; it is special and peculiar, unchangeable and inseparable, and will last for ever: now God has loved his people, as he has loved his Son; he loves them not merely as creatures, as the descendants of Adam, or as considered in themselves, but as in Christ. The instances of his love to them are, his choosing them in Christ; making a covenant with them in him; the mission of him into this world, to obtain salvation for them; the quickening and calling of them by

his grace; the care he takes of them afterwards in supplying their wants, supporting them under temptations, delivering them out of afflictions, and causing all things to work together for their good; to all which add the provisions he makes for them, both for time and eternity. The nature of this love is such as that he bears to Christ; it is from everlasting; a love of the utmost delight and pleasure; it is special and peculiar, unchangeable, and will continue for ever: there is not the same reason for his loving them as his Son; and this as must not be thought to denote equality, but similitude and order.

Ver. 24. *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me*, etc.] Not all the world, but a select number; not apostles only, nor as such; nor believers, or as such, for as such they were not given to Christ; nor as considered in the effectual calling; but as the elect of God, and by that eternal act of his grace; when they were given to Christ as his children, as his spouse, as his church, as the sheep of his hand, as his portion, and to be preserved by him; which is known by their calling and conversion: the form in which these words are delivered, is not so much by way of entreaty, as demand; they are a declaration of Christ's will, in which he insists on it as his right, upon the foot of his purchase, and those covenant transactions which passed between him and his Father, on the behalf of those that were given to him: that they

be with me where I am; not where he was then, unless it may be meant of him as the omnipresent God, and as such then in heaven; though he rather designs where he should be as man, after his resurrection, and where the souls of saints are after death; and where they will be, soul and body, when raised again; and which is desirable both to Christ, and to his people; this was the joy that was set before him, and what they comfort one another with, that they shall be for ever with him:

that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; not the simple abstract glory of his deity; which, as it was not given to him, is not to be seen by them; but his glory as Mediator: this was seen, though imperfectly by some, in the days of his flesh; and in the glass of the Gospel, a believer now has some views of it, and by faith sees, knows, and is assured that Christ is glorified in heaven; but hereafter the saints in their own persons, and with their own eyes, shall see him as he is, and appear in glory with him; which sight of his glory will be near, and not at a distance, appropriating and assimilating, rejoicing, satisfying, and for ever:

for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world; this is mentioned both as a reason why such a glory was given him, because of his Father's early love to him as Mediator; and as an argument why he might expect to be heard and answered, because of the interest he had in his affections, which had been strongly towards him, even from everlasting; and because the persons he asks, or rather demands these things for, shared in the same ancient love.

Ver. 25. *O righteous Father*, etc.] God is righteous in all the divine persons: the Father is righteous, the Son is righteous, and the Holy Spirit is righteous: he is so in his nature; righteousness is a perfection of it; he is so in all his purposes and promises; in all his ways and works of providence and grace; in predestination, redemption, justification, pardon of sin, and eternal glory. Christ makes use of this epithet, as containing a reason why he might justly expect that all his petitions and claims, on behalf of himself and people, would be regarded:

the world hath not known thee; the unbelieving Jews, and idolatrous Gentiles, wicked men, one or another, know not God: as not the Father, so neither the Son, nor Spirit; though deity may be known by them, or that there is a God, yet they know not God in Christ, nor as the Father of Christ, or as their Father in him, nor what it is to have communion with him; nor do they know any of the things of God in a spiritual way; which shows the darkness and blindness of men by nature, the necessity of a divine illumination, and the miserable state of men without one:

but I have known thee; his nature, perfections and glory, his secret thoughts, purposes and designs, his covenant, promises and blessings, his love, grace and good will to his people, his whole mind and will; as he needs must, since he was one with him, and lay in his bosom;

and these have known that thou hast sent me; meaning his disciples and apostles, whom he distinguishes from the world; these knew the Father that sent him, and that he was sent by the Father; they knew the love of the Father in sending of him, the manner in which he was sent, and the end, man's redemption, for which he was sent; and acknowledged all this, and which laid them under an obligation to trust in him, love him, and magnify his grace; and is used by Christ as an argument with the Father to be concerned for them.

Ver. 26. *And I have declared unto them thy name*, etc.] Himself, his nature, his perfections, especially of grace and mercy, his mind and will, his Gospel; (see Gill on "John 17:6"). A very fit person Christ was to make this declaration, since he was with him from all eternity, and was in his bosom; the Father did all in him, and his name is in him; and he is the faithful witness; nor is anything of God to be known savingly, but in and through Christ; the apostles are here particularly meant, though the same is true with respect to all that are given to Christ, who are his children and brethren, to whom he also declares the name of God:

and will declare it; more fully to them after his resurrection, during his forty days' stay with them, and upon his ascension, when he poured down his Spirit in such a plentiful and extraordinary manner upon them; and will declare it to others besides them in the Gentile world; and still more in the latter day glory, and to all believers more and more:

that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them; that is, that a sense of that love with which God loves his Son, as Mediator, might be in them and abide in them, and which is the rather mentioned because they are loved by the Father with the same love, and share all the blessed consequences of it, the knowledge and sense of which they come at, through Christ's declaring his Father's name unto them; and which they will have a greater sense of, and will be swallowed up in it in heaven to all eternity:

and I in them; dwelling in them, taking up his residence in them; not only by his Spirit and grace here, but by his glorious presence with them hereafter; when they shall be brought to his Father's house, behold his glory, and be for ever with him.

CHAPTER 18

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 18

Ver. 1. *When Jesus had spoken these words*, etc.] Referring either to his discourses in (<430401>John 14:1-16:33), in which he acquaints his disciples with his approaching death; comforts them under the sorrowful apprehension of his departure from them; gives them many excellent promises for their relief, and very wholesome advice how to conduct themselves; lets them know what should befall them, and that things, however distressing for the present, would have a joyful issue: or else to his prayer in the preceding chapter, in which he had been very importunate with his Father, both for himself and his disciples; or to both of these, which is highly probable:

he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron; the same with "Kidron" in (<101523>2 Samuel 15:23); and elsewhere: it had its name, not from cedars, for not cedars but olives chiefly grew upon the mount, which was near it; and besides the name is not Greek, but Hebrew, though the Arabic version renders it, "the brook" `zra la`, "of Cedar": it had its name either from the darkness of the valley in which it ran, being between high mountains, and having gardens in it, and set with trees; or from the blackness of the water through the soil that ran into it, being a kind of a common sewer, into which the Jews cast everything that was unclean and defiling; (see <142916>2 Chronicles 29:16 30:14). Particularly there was a canal which led from the altar in the temple to it, by which the blood and soil of the sacrifices were carried into it [f642]. This brook was but about three feet over from bank to bank, and in the summer time was quite dry, and might be walked over dry shod; and is therefore by Josephus sometimes called the brook of Kidron [f643], and sometimes the valley of Kidron [f644]: in this valley were corn fields; for hither the sanhedrim sent their messengers to reap the sheaf of the firstfruits, which always was to be brought from a place near to Jerusalem [f645]; and it is very likely that willows grew by the brook, from whence they might fetch their willow branches at the feast of tabernacles; for the Jews say [f646], there is a place below Jerusalem called Motza, (in the Gemara it is said to be Klamia or Colonia,) whither they went down and gathered willow branches; it seems to be the valley of

Kidron, which lay on the east of Jerusalem, between that and the Mount of Olives [f647]; it had fields and gardens adjoining to it; (see <122304>2 Kings 23:4). So we read of a garden here, into which Christ immediately went, when he passed over this brook. The blood, the filth and soil of it, which so discoloured the water, as to give it the name of the Black Brook, used to be sold to the gardeners to dung their gardens with [f648]. It was an emblem of this world, and the darkness and filthiness of it, and of the exercises and troubles of the people of God in it, which lie in the way to the heavenly paradise and Mount of Zion, through which Christ himself went, drinking "of the brook in the way", (<191007>Psalm 110:7); and through which also all his disciples and followers enter into the kingdom of heaven: it may also be a figure of the dark valley of the shadow of death, through which Christ and all his members pass to the heavenly glory. And I see not why this black and unclean brook may not be a representation of the pollutions and defilements of sin; which being laid on Christ when he passed over it, made him so heavy and sore amazed in the human nature, as to desire the cup might pass from him. Once more let it be observed, that it was the brook David passed over when he fled from his son Absalom; in this David was a type of Christ, as in other things: Absalom represented the people of the Jews, who rejected the Messiah, and rebelled against him; Ahithophel, Judas, who betrayed him; and the people that went with David over it, the disciples of our Lord; only there was this difference; there was a father fleeing from a son, here a son going to meet his father's wrath; David and his people wept when they went over this brook, but so did not Christ and his disciples; the sorrowful scene to them both began afterwards in the garden. This black brook and dark valley, and it being very late at night when it was passed over, all add to that dark dispensation, that hour of darkness, which now came upon our Lord; yet he went forth over it of his own accord, willingly and cheerfully; not being forced or compelled by any; and his disciples with him, not to be partners of his sufferings, but to be witnesses of them, and to receive some knowledge and instruction from what they should see and hear:

where was a garden into which he entered; and his disciples: there were no orchards nor gardens within the city of Jerusalem, but rose gardens, which were from the times of the prophets [f649]; all others were without; and this was a very proper place for gardens, where so much dung was near at hand. Whether this garden belonged to one of Christ's friends, is not certain; but since he often resorted hither, no doubt it was with the leave,

and by the consent of the proprietor of it. However, so it was, that as the first Adam's disobedience was committed in a garden, the second. Adam's obedience to death for sin, began here; and as the sentence of death, on account of sin, was passed in a garden, it began to be executed in one.

Ver. 2. *And Judas also which betrayed him, knew the place*, etc.] This character is given of Judas, to distinguish him from another disciple of the same name; and though as yet he had not betrayed him, yet it was determined he should, and Christ knew it, and he was now about to do it: and it is observed, that Judas was as well acquainted with the place of Christ's resort, and knew the garden he frequently retired to, as the rest of the disciples; to show that Christ did not go there to hide and secure himself from him, but to meet him, and that he might have an opportunity of finding him with the greater case:

for Jesus often times resorted thither with his disciples; when at Jerusalem at any of the feasts, and at this festival; partly for refreshment and rest after he had been preaching in the temple, and partly for prayer, and also for private conversation with his disciples.

Ver. 3. *Judas then having received a band of men*, etc.] From the captain of this band, who in (<43 18 12>John 18:12); is called a "Chiliarch", that is, a commander of a thousand men, one might conclude there were so many in this band; but it seems, that such an officer might have two bands under his command; and if this was, the case, there were at least five hundred men in this company; a large number indeed, to take an unarmed person; and yet, as if this was not sufficient, it is added,

and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees; servants that belong to each of these, and who seem to be a considerable number also; for these are said to be "a great multitude"; (<40 26 47>Matthew 26:47); nay, not only so, but the chief priests, captains of the temple, and elders of the people, were themselves among them, (<42 22 52>Luke 22:52); to see that the men did their work, and did not return without him; as these officers, when sent by them once before, did:

cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons: `snp`, which is no other than the Greek word here used for a lantern, the Jews tell us [f650], was an earthen vessel, in which a candle was put and covered, that the wind might not put it out, and it had holes in the sides of it, through which light was let out; their `dypl`, or "lamp", here rendered "torch", they say [f651],

was also an earthen vessel in the form of a reed, at the top of which was a proper receptacle, in which they burnt old rags dipped in oil: now though it was full moon, being the time of the passover, they brought these along with them to discover him by the light of, and find him out with them, if he should hide himself among the trees, or in any of the more shady places in the garden; and they took warlike instruments, as swords, spears, and staves, as if they had a thief or a murderer to apprehend, or a little army of men to encounter with; whereas there were only Christ, and his eleven disciples; and these in no condition, nor had any design, to defend themselves in an hostile manner.

Ver. 4. *Jesus therefore knowing all things*, etc.] As being the omniscient God, so his knowledge reaches to all persons and things, without any limitation, and restriction; though here it has a regard to all the things,

that should come upon him; even all the sufferings he should endure, which were all determined by God; agreed to by him, in the covenant of grace; predicted in the Old Testament, and foretold by himself: he knew all the circumstances that would attend his sufferings, as that he should be betrayed by Judas; be forsaken by the rest of his disciples; that the Jews would give him gall and vinegar in his thirst; and the soldiers part his garments among them: he knew the time of his sufferings; and that it was now at hand; and that Judas and his company were not far off: and therefore, went forth out of the garden, or at least from that part of it where he was, and his disciples with him: this was done to show his willingness to suffer; he

went forth of his own accord; he did not hide himself in the garden, as the first Adam did: he did not stay till those that sought his life came up to him: he went forth, not to make his escape from them, but to meet them, and make himself known unto them;

and said unto them; whom seek ye? this question was put, not out of ignorance; for he knew full well who they were seeking after: nor with a design to deceive them, and make his escape; but to show that he was not afraid of them, and that they could not have known him, nor have taken him, had he not made himself known; and offered himself to them; and which makes it appear, that he was willingly apprehended by them, and voluntarily suffered.

Ver. 5. *They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth*, etc.] Their answer is not, "thee"; for they knew him not, their eyes were holden, or struck with dimness, or blindness, as the men of Sodom were; or they that answered might be such, who never personally knew him: nor do they say "Christ", for they rejected and denied him as the Messiah; nor do they call him that deceiver, or seditious person, as they sometimes did, being willing to cover their malicious views and intentions; but Jesus of Nazareth, a name by which he was commonly known, being taken from his education and conversation in that place; though this was sometimes given him in a contemptuous way:

Jesus saith unto them, I am [he]; or "I am", respecting his name Jehovah, averring himself to be the Christ, and owning himself under the name they were pleased to call him by; which shows how willing he was to be taken by them, and may teach us not to be ashamed of him, or of any nickname we may bear for his sake:

and Judas also which betrayed him stood with them; this circumstance is recorded to show, that Judas at first did not know him any more than the rest; so that he might easily have passed them if he had pleased; and that Judas did not stand with them as an idle spectator; he came with them to betray him, and was looking out for him; though when he spake he knew him not: it also expresses the different company Judas was in; a little while ago, he was at supper with Christ, and the other disciples, and now he is at the head of a band of soldiers, and others, to betray him; and also his continuance in his iniquity and wicked resolutions and agreement; as yet he had no remorse of conscience, or sense of his sin: and it seems to be mentioned also with this view, to inform us, that he fell to the ground with the rest; which is related in (<430806>John 18:6). The Jew [f652] asserts, that there is a disagreement between the Evangelist John and the rest of the evangelists in this account: he observes, that when Judas came with his armed men to take Jesus, Jesus went out to meet them, and asked them, saying, whom Seek ye? they say Jesus of Nazareth; to whom he replies, I am he; and then Judas, that betrayed him, stood with them: but Matthew, in his Gospel, (<401647>Matthew 26:47), and Mark, (<411443>Mark 14:43); and Luke, (<422247>Luke 22:47); relate, that Judas gave a sign to the soldiers, when they came to take Jesus, saying, him whom I shall kiss, lay hold on, and they did so. But here is no contradiction, John does not deny that Judas gave a sign to the soldiers; though he omits it, it being so particularly observed by the other evangelists, and only relates what is not taken notice of by them, and

which no ways contradicts what they have asserted: the force of the objection seems to lie here; that, according to the other evangelists, Judas, as soon as he came into the garden, made up to Christ, and gave the signal by which he might be known, whereas he is here said to stand with the soldiers and officers; and that seeing such a signal was given, he must be, and was known by it, whereas he is here represented as if he was not known by them until he had made himself known to them; and that as soon as Judas had given the sign, they immediately seized him, whereas, according to this account, they did not, until some words had passed between Christ and them, and they first fell to the ground. In answer to which it may be said, that admitting that Judas did make up to Christ as soon as he entered the garden, and gave the signal to the soldiers, he might upon that immediately retire, and place himself among the multitude; either to give further directions and instructions to them, or that they might defend him from Jesus, should there be any occasion for it: and though it should be allowed that the signal was given by Judas before this, it might not be discerned by the soldiers, either not being near enough to observe it; or, as some think, being stricken with blindness, for a time, as the Sodomites were; or even supposing it was seen, and they knew by it which was Jesus, it is still a fuller proof of the courage and intrepidity of Christ to go forth, and present himself to them, and put the questions he did, and confirm unto them the truth of it, that he was Jesus whom they sought: to which may be added, that it does not appear that Christ was immediately seized by the soldiers, upon the signal given them by Judas, without some intervening words and actions; for though the signal and the seizure lie very near together in the accounts of Matthew and Mark; yet Luke relates many things between them, as the question of the disciples, whether they should smite with the sword; Peter's cutting off the ear of the high priest's servant; Christ's rebuking him, and touching the servant's ear, and healing it; and some discourse which passed between him, and the chief priests, captains, and elders. All which agree with the account the Evangelist John here gives.

Ver. 6. *As soon then as he had said unto them I am he*, etc.] Immediately upon his speaking these words, which were delivered with so much majesty and authority, and were attended with such a divine power:

they went backward, and fell to the ground; they were confounded, surprised, and intimidated, and seemed as if they would have chose rather to have fled from him, than to have apprehended him; and as they retired

and went backward, they fainted away, as it were, either at the majesty of his looks, or at the power of his words, or both, so that they became like ad men, falling to the ground. Sometimes the majesty of a man's person, or his fame for some remarkable things done by him, or the innocence and uprightness of his cause, have had such an influence upon his enemies, that they have not been able to execute upon him what they intended. It is reported of Caius Maxius that being reduced to the utmost misery, and shut up in a private house at Minturnae, (a town in Italy,) an executioner was sent to kill him; and though he was an old man, and unarmed, and in the most miserable condition, yet the executioner having drawn his sword, could not attempt to use it; but, as the historian [f653] says, being struck with blindness at the glory of the man, ran away astonished and trembling. Now, besides the above things, in their highest perfection, there was in our Lord something more than human; he was God as well as man, and he displayed his divine majesty, glory, and power. This was done, not to make his escape from them; but to give proof of his deity, and a specimen of his power at the great day; and to let them know, that if he had not thought fit to have surrendered himself voluntarily to them, though he was an unarmed person, they, with all their men and arms, could never have laid hold on him; and to show them, that he could as easily have struck them dead, as to cause them to fall to the ground: and sometimes striking a person dead immediately, is expressed by this phrase of striking to the ground; and is ascribed to God, who does it by the ministry of angels: says R. Simeon ben Shetach [f654], to some persons at variance,

> "let the master of thoughts come, (i.e. the blessed God,) and take vengeance on you; immediately Gabriel came, [qrqb ˆjbhw, "and smote them to the ground"; and they died immediately."

The like is elsewhere said [f655],

> "if thou transgresseth thy father's command, immediately comes Gabriel, and "smites to the ground"."

Ver. 7. *Then asked he them again, whom seek ye*? etc.] This supposes them to be risen up again and on their feet; no hurt being done to them; for Christ always did good, and not hurt, to the bodies of men; he never disabled any, or took away life, or limb: he only did this to show his power, and not to do them any real damage; and the same divine person that struck them down, suffered them to rise, and gave them power and

strength to get up; which showed his great clemency and goodness: but they, on the contrary, persisted in their wicked intentions, and were still seeking after him; a plain proof of that judicial hardness of heart, under which they were; and that even miracles wrought will not bring hardened sinners to repentance without powerful and efficacious grace. When Christ, as fearless of them, and to show that this action he had no design to make his escape them, though he could easily have done it, and that he was willing to be apprehended by them, puts the question a second time, and asks them who they were seeking for. Something like this Josephus [f656] reports concerning Elisha the prophet, though not repeated as here, nor attended with the like effect: he relates that Elisha having requested of God that he would smite his enemies with blindness, and that being granted he went into the midst of them, and asked them, τινα επιζητουντες ηλψον, "whom do ye come to seek?" they say Elisha the prophet: he promised them to deliver him to them, if they would follow him into the city, where he was; and so they being blinded by God, both in their sight and in their mind, followed the prophet.

They said Jesus of Nazareth; having recovered their spirits, and being hardened in desperate malice and wickedness, impudently make this reply to him; nor would they, notwithstanding this instance of his power, own him to be the Messiah; but still contemptuously style him Jesus of Nazareth.

Ver. 8. *Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he*, etc.] This he said, upbraiding them with their stupidity; signifying he was ready to deliver himself up into their hands; and which he did with intrepidity and calmness, only on this condition, with this proviso for his disciples;

if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: Christ was about to suffer for them, and therefore it was not just that they should suffer too; nor was it proper that they should suffer with him, lest their sufferings should be thought to be a part of the price of redemption. Besides, their suffering time was not come, and they had other work to do: this shows the love of Christ to his disciples, and his care of them, and also his power, and that he could have saved himself as well as them. Moreover, these words may be considered as an emblem and pledge of the acquittance and discharge of God's elect, through the suretyship engagements, and performances of Christ, who drew near to God on their account, substituted himself in their room, and undertook for them in the council and covenant of peace, and

laid himself under obligation to pay their debts, to satisfy for their sins, to bring in an everlasting righteousness, to keep and preserve them in this world, and to make them happy in another. Accordingly, in the fulness of time he was made under the law, and stood in their place and stead, and was taken, suffered, died, and rose again. Now, as there was a discharge and acquittance of them from eternity, a non-imputation of sin to them, and a secret letting of them go upon the suretyship engagements of Christ, and in virtue thereof, a passing by, and over, the sins of the Old Testament saints so there was an open acquittance and discharge of them all upon the apprehension, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ; complete deliverance from wrath and condemnation being obtained, and a full title to eternal glory made. Moreover, these words may be considered not only and merely as spoken to the Jews, but as addressed to the law and justice of God; or however, as having some respect to them, while directed to the others; for justice finding the sins of all the elect upon Christ, on whom the Father had laid them, and Christ had took them upon himself, was seeking for, and about to demand satisfaction of him for them; and he being under the law, and coming into the world to fulfil it, in the room and stead of his people, was about to bear the curse of it; wherefore seeing this was the case, he insists upon it, that they who were convicted of the law as transgressors, and held under it as condemned criminals and malefactors, and who were liable, as considered in themselves, to be seized upon by the justice of God, and to have the sentence of condemnation and death executed upon them, might be discharged and let go; and accordingly, upon the satisfaction made by Christ, this is the case: Christ's people are no longer under the law, as a ministration of condemnation and death, nor liable to suffer the vindictive wrath of God; they are become free from the curses of a righteous law, and are let go by divine justice, and will never suffer the strokes of it, neither in this world nor in that to come; there is no demand to be made upon them, either by the law or justice of God; there is no wrath or punishment will be inflicted on them, either here or hereafter; and they may, and shall go their way into everlasting life, when time shall be no more with them, neither law nor justice having anything to say to the contrary.

Ver. 9. *That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake*, etc.] (<4817 12>John 17:12);

of them which thou gavest me have I lost none; which though it has a peculiar respect to the apostles, is true of all the elect of God; who are

given to Christ, and shall none of them be lost, neither their souls nor bodies; for Christ's charge of them reaches to both: both were given to him, both are redeemed by him, and both shall be saved in him with an everlasting salvation: he saves their souls from an eternal death, and will raise their bodies from a corporeal one; wherefore that his care of his disciples, with respect to their bodies as well as souls, with respect to their temporal lives as well as eternal happiness, might be seen; he made this agreement with the Jews that came to take him, or rather laid this injunction on them, to dismiss them; and which it is very remarkable they did; they laid hands on none of them, even though Peter drew his sword and struck off the ear of one of them: and which is a very considerable instance of the power which Christ had over the spirits of these men, to restrain them; and so a proof of his proper deity, as well as of the care of Christ for the preservation of his apostles, whilst he was here on earth; for to that time only the words cited have a respect; in which Christ speaks of his keeping them whilst he was with them, and uses this as an argument with his Father to keep them, now he was removing from them: wherefore their losing their lives afterwards for his sake, as they all did excepting the Apostle John, is no contradiction to this expression of his; and besides, they were preserved by the power of God so long, until they had done the work which was appointed them to do, and for which they were given him, and chosen by him to be his apostles, and for which they were better furnished after his resurrection and ascension; for had they been, apprehended by the Jews at this time, in all probability, according to an human view of things, such was their weakness, they would have fallen most foully and shamefully, as the instance of Peter, the strongest of them, shows; and therefore to prevent such a temptation and to preserve them, our Lord took this method to deliver them out of the hands of the Jews; the saving clause, "but the son of perdition", is here left out, because Judas, who is designed by that character, was now openly declared to be what he was; he was no longer among the disciples; he was separated from them, and had betrayed his master, and was not of the number of those Christ insisted upon might be let go.

Ver. 10. *Then Simon Peter having a sword*, etc.] Girt about him, which he either wore in common, or particularly at the feast, as the Galilaeans are said to do, to preserve them from thieves and wild beasts by the way; or was one of the two the disciples had with them in the garden; or what Peter

purposely furnished himself with to defend his master, taking a hint from what was said by him, (<22236>Luke 22:36);

drew it; before Christ could give an answer to the question put by his disciples, whether they should smite or not, (<22249>Luke 22:49); being encouraged thereunto by what Christ said, (<22238>Luke 22:38); or by what he had just done in, striking the man to the ground; and being provoked by that servant's going to lay hold on Christ, and who it is probable was more forward and busy than any of the rest; for it appears from the other evangelists, that Peter did this, though he is not mentioned by name by any of the rest, just as they were seizing and apprehending Christ:

and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear; he doubtless struck at his head, and intended to have cleaved him down, but missed his aim, and took off his ear: the person is particularly described, that he was a servant, and the servant of the high priest, and he is mentioned also by name;

and the servant's name was Malchus; that if the truth of this relation was called in question, it might easily be looked into and examined, when it would appear that it was perfectly right. All the evangelists give an account of this action of Peter's, but none of them mention his name but this evangelist; perhaps the reason might be, that Peter was alive when the other evangelists wrote, and therefore it was not safe to say who it was that did it, lest he who was the minister of the circumcision, and dwelt among the Jews, should be persecuted for it, or their minds should be prejudiced against him on that account; but John writing his Gospel many years after his death, the reason for the concealment of his name no longer subsisted: nor indeed is the name of the high priest's servant mentioned by any other of the evangelists: John had, or however he writes, a more exact and particular account of this matter. This was a name frequent with the Syrians, Phoenicians, and Hebrews. Jerom [f657] wrote the life of one Malchus, a monk or Eremite, who was by nation a Syrian; and Porphyry, that great enemy of Christianity, who was by birth a Tyrian, his original name was Malchus, as was his father's; and "which", in the Syrian, and his country dialect, as he himself [f658] and others [f659] say, signifies a "king". Josephus [f660] speaks of one Cleodemus, whose name was Malchus, that wrote a history of the Hebrews. And some Jewish Rabbins were of this name; hence we read of Æwlm br, "R. Maluc" [f661], and of wyklm br, "R. Malcio" [f662]; the name is the same with Malluch, (<161004>Nehemiah 10:4).

Ver. 11. *Then said Jesus unto Peter*, etc.] By way of rebuke, and to prevent his repeating the blow, and that further mischief might not ensue; for such a bold imprudent action risked the lives of all the disciples, who, in all probability, would have fallen a sacrifice to the fury and resentment of these men, had not Christ interposed in this prudent manner; who, also, Luke says, touched the servant's ear and healed him, (⁴²Luke 22:51), which no doubt tended greatly to conciliate their minds, and make them easy:

put up thy sword into the sheath: Peter was not a proper person to bear the sword, and use it; it was a very daring attack, and a dangerous one, and was very unnecessary; since Christ could have defended himself, had he thought fit, without Peter's drawing his sword; and besides, for a word speaking, he could have had of his Father more than twelve legions of angels; and it was also contrary to the nature of his kingdom, which was not of this world, nor to be supported and defended in any such manner; and was, moreover, as much as in Peter lay, an hinderance of his sufferings, and of the execution of his Father's will and decree; wherefore he adds,

the cup which my Father hath given me: by the cup is meant, the wrath of God, and punishment due to sin, endured by Christ in his sufferings, and is said to be given him by his Father; because he called him to these sufferings, they were appointed and determined by him; yea, he was even ordered, and commanded by his Father, to drink of this cup; justice mixed it up, and put it into his hands; and he took it as coming from his Father, who delighted in seeing him drink it up, as the stately of his people; and a dreadful one it was, a cup of trembling and astonishment, of curse, and not of blessing, of wrath and fury: the allusion seems to be to the master of the family, who appointed, and gave to everyone their cup:

shall I not drink it? which expresses his, willingness to do it, his eager desire after it, his delight in it, and displeasure at Peter's attempt to hinder him; he being now perfectly reconciled in his human nature to drink it, though it was so bitter a potion: he found it was impossible, considering the decree of God, his own agreement, and the salvation of his people, that it should be otherwise; and besides, it was his Father's will and pleasure, he considered it as coming from him; and therefore cheerfully accepted it, and was, resolved to drink it up, and that nothing should hinder him. The Persic version reads it, "I will not give it to another to drink"; Peter, by this rash action, seeming as if he would have the cup out of Christ's hands, and have

drank it himself; which, as it could not be, nor would Christ suffer it, so if he had, it would have been of no advantage to the salvation of his people.

Ver. 12. *Then the band, and the captain, and the officers of the Jews*, etc.] Which Judas received, and which came along with him, (^[BIBLE]John 18:3). When Jesus had rebuked Peter, and healed the servant's ear, and showed such a willingness to surrender himself to them;

they took Jesus and bound him. This they did, partly for safety and security, he having several times escaped from them; and partly for contempt, and by way of reproach, using him as they would do the vilest of malefactors: and this was submitted to by Christ, that his people might be loosed from the cords of sin, be delivered from the captivity of Satan, and be freed from the bondage of the law; hereby the types of him were fulfilled, as the binding of Isaac, when his father was going to offer him up, and the binding of the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar: who that has read the ceremonies of the sheaf of the firstfruits, but must call them to mind, upon reading this account of the apprehension and binding of Christ, and leading him to the high priest? This sheaf was fetched from places the nearest to Jerusalem, particularly from the fields of Kidron: the manner was this [f663]:

> "the messengers of the sanhedrim went out (from Jerusalem) on the evening of the feast day (the sixteenth of Nisan, and over the brook Kidron to the adjacent fields), and bound the standing corn in bundles, that it might be the easier reaped; and all the neighbouring cities gathered together there, that it might be reaped in great pomp; and when it was dark, one (of the reapers) says to them, is the sun set? they say, yes; and again, is the sun set? they say, yes: with this sickle (shall I reap?) they say, yes; again, with this sickle (shall I reap?) they say, yes; in this basket (shall I put it?) they say, yes; again, in this basket (shall I put it?) they say, yes; if on the sabbath day he says to them, is this sabbath day? they say, yes; again, is this sabbath day? they say, yes; (it was sabbath day this year;) Shall I reap? they say to him reap, shall I reap? they say to him reap; three times upon everything; then they reap it, and put it into the baskets, and, bring it to the court, where they dry it at the fire."

Whoever reads this, will easily observe a likeness: the messengers of the great sanhedrim go to the fields of Kidron, in the evening, with their sickles

and baskets; bind the standing corn; questions and answers pass between them and the people before they reap; and when they have done, they bring the sheaf in their basket to the court, to be dried at the fire. So the officers of the high priest, with others, pass over the brook Kidron, with lanterns, torches, and weapons; in the night go into a garden; there apprehend Jesus; questions and answers pass between them there; then they lay hold on him, bind him, and bring him to the high, priest.

Ver. 13. *And led him away to Annas first*, etc.] Who is elsewhere mentioned with Caiaphas as an high priest also, (<4032>Luke 3:2 <4046>Acts 4:6). He was the "sagan" of the high priest; he and Caiaphas seem to have had the high priesthood alternately; and either now, because his house lay first in the way, or rather, because he was a man of age, learning, and experience, as these men usually were, that they might supply the deficiencies of the high priests, who were sometimes very weak and unlearned men [f664]; therefore they first lead him to him, to have his advice how to proceed, and to take him along with them to his son-in-law, where the great council was convened, and that he might use his interest and authority, in taking proper measures, in order to put Jesus to death; and especially they led him to him, for the reason here assigned;

for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas; so that he was, it is very probable, the older man: and being related to him, had an interest in him; and to whom such a sight was equally pleasing as to the high priest himself, or any of the council:

which was the high priest that same year; for the high priesthood was not for life, but was often changed, being bought and sold for money; (see Gill on "<4032>Luke 3:2"); so that this clause is very properly added, though Caiaphas held it longer, or, at least, had it more years than one; for Caiaphas was high priest when John began to preach, (<4032>Luke 3:2); but he now succeeded Simeon ben Camhith, who was priest the year before; as was Eleazar the son of Ananus, the year before that; and before him Ishmael ben Phabi, who were all three successively put into the priesthood by Valerius Gratus, the Roman governor; as was also Caiaphas this year, and whose name was Joseph.

Ver. 14. *Now Caiaphas was he which gave council to the Jews*, etc.] The chief priests and Pharisees, who met in council about Jesus, (<4347>John 11:47-52), the counsel he gave was,

that it was expedient that one man should die for the people; and which advice was given out of ill will and malice to Christ, and to prevent, as he thought, the people of the Jews being destroyed by the Romans; though the words have a very good sense which he did not understand. The people Christ was to die for, was not all the, people of the world, nor only the people of the Jews, nor all of them; but all the elect of God, whom God has chosen for his special and peculiar people, and has given to Christ as such: these Christ were to die for, and did, not merely as a martyr, to confirm his doctrine to them, or as an example to teach them meekness, patience, and courage, but in the room and stead of them, as a surety for them; and it was expedient that he should, in such sense, die for them, because of his suretyship engagements, that he might make satisfaction to the law and justice of God, and procure the salvation of his people, and send forth the Spirit to make application of it to them.

Ver. 15. *And Simon Peter followed Jesus*, etc.] It is certain, he first fled with the rest, and forsook him, as they all did, notwithstanding his resolution to abide by him; however, he was very desirous to know what would become of Jesus, and what would be the issue of things; with this view he followed him, and not to deny him; though that was the consequence. Other evangelists say he followed him afar off, at a distance, (<4026>Matthew 26:58 <4114>Mark 14:54 <4225>Luke 22:54); which showed some fear; and yet to follow him at all discovered love and zeal. To follow Christ is a property of his sheep, and is highly commendable, especially to follow him in sufferings; a greater character a person cannot well have, than to be a follower of Jesus, in the exercise of grace, in the discharge of duty, and in bearing the cross; and yet it does not appear that Peter did well in following Christ now; for Christ had cautioned him of his over confidence, had hinted to him that he should deny him, and had dismissed him, and took his leave of him, and the rest, on whose discharge he insisted, when he was apprehended, (<4308>John 18:8);

And so did another disciple, and that disciple was known unto the high priest. This is thought to be the Apostle John, because he frequently speaks of himself, without mentioning his name; and these two, Peter and John, were generally together; and certain it is, that John was present at the cross at the time of Christ's crucifixion; and who is supposed to be known to the high priest, by carrying fish to his house, and selling it to him; so Nonnus says, he was known from his fishing trade: but it is not probable that he was known, or could be known by the high priest, so as to have any

intimacy with him; nor is it likely that he, being a Galilaean, would venture in; he was discoverable by his speech, and would have been in equal danger with Peter; rather it was some one of the disciples of Christ, who had not openly professed him; one of the chief rulers that believed in him, but, for fear of the Pharisees, had not confessed him; it may be Nicodemus, or Joseph of Arimathea, or the man at whose house Christ had eaten the passover. In the Syriac version he is called one of the other disciples; not of the twelve, but others. However, through his knowledge of the high priest, he

went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest; not Annas, but Caiaphas; for Christ was now brought from Annas's house to Caiaphas's, where the Scribes and elders were assembled together.

Ver. 16. *But Peter stood at the door without*, etc.] It being difficult to get in; and perhaps he might be fearful too of going in, lest he should be known; however, he waited, if he could hear or see anything, and for a proper opportunity of entrance: it would have been well if he had took the hint of providence, access not being easy, and have gone his way; for he was now at the door of temptation: it would have been best for him, if he had kept without; and indeed at a greater distance; but his curiosity had led him thus far, and he hoped for an opportunity of getting nearer, which offered in the following manner:

then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest; seeing Peter through the window, by the light of the moon, for it was full moon; and knowing him, who he was, concluded he had a mind to come in, and hear and see what he could, steps out,

and spake unto her that kept the door; which might be thought more properly the business of menservants; but these being employed in apprehending and guarding Jesus, the maid, servants might be obliged to take this post. The Ethiopic version, in the next verse, calls her the doorkeeper's daughter; her father might be the porter, and he being busy, she supplied his place. Though there is no need of these conjectures, since it was usual with other nations, and it might be with the Jews, for women to be doorkeepers, as Pignorius [f665] has shown out of Plautus, Petronius, Pausanias, and others. However, the other disciple, who was a man of figure and authority, and was known by the servants of the family, ordered her to open the door, and let Peter in; who accordingly did:

and brought in Peter; into the hall, where Jesus was, under the examination of the high priest.

Ver. 17. *Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter*, etc.] She being relieved, either by her father, if porter, or by a fellow servant, had the opportunity of coming into the hall, where Peter was, and was curious to observe him, who he should be, that that person of note should order him to be admitted, when an affair of so much privacy and importance was transacting; and either by Peter's language, or the trouble that appeared in his countenance, or fancying: she had seen him in the temple, or in some part of the city in company With Jesus, addresses him after this manner:

art not thou also one of this man's disciples? She speaks of Christ in the vulgar dialect of the Jews, calling him "this man"; not only esteeming him a mere man, but a worthless man; and knowing he had disciples, challenges him as one of them; when he, all in flight and surprise, not expecting such a question to be put to him, without any further thought, rashly and suddenly

he saith I am not: he never denied that Christ was God or the Son of God, or that he was come in the flesh, or that he was the Messiah and Saviour of sinners; but either that he did not know what the maid said, or the person she spoke of; or, as here, that he was one of his disciples; which was a very great untruth: and many are the aggravations of his fall; which came to pass as soon as ever he was entered almost; and that by the means of a maid, a servant maid, a very inferior one; and at first perhaps they were alone; and the question put to him might not be in a virulent way, nor proceed from malice, but commiseration of him; and yet he had not resolution enough to own himself a disciple of Jesus; which he might have done, and in all likelihood might have gone safe off directly: but he that had so much confidence as to say, though all men deny thee, yet will not I; and had so much courage, as, in the face of a band of soldiers, to draw his sword, and smite one of the high priest's servants, but a few hours before, has not spirit enough in him to own his master before a servant maid!

Ver. 18. *And the servants and officers stood there*, etc.] In a certain part of the hall, the middle of it; the Vulgate Latin reads, "by the coals": it follows,

who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold; though it was the passover, and harvest near. Dr. Lightfoot has observed from our countryman Biddulph, who was at Jerusalem at this time of the year, that though in the

daytime it was as hot as with us at Midsummer, yet such very great dews fell as made it very cold, especially in the night; and from one of the Jewish canons [f666], that the year was not intercalated, (which when done was chiefly on account of the passover,) neither for snow nor frost; which, as he justly remarks, supposes there might be frost and snow at the time of the passover. The same is observed in the Talmud [f667], where the gloss upon it is,

> "that they might not desist, on that account, from coming to the passover."

The sense is, that whereas sometimes snow fell about the time of the passover; which might be thought to be an hinderance to some from coming to it; this never was a reason that came into consideration with the sanhedrim, or prevailed upon them to intercalate a month, that so the passover might not fall at a time of year when there was usually snow. The passover was always in the spring of the year, when nights are commonly cold, as they are generally observed to be at the vernal equinox: this night might be remarkably cold; which seems to be suggested by the Persic version, which reads, "for it was cold that night"; and the Ethiopic version, "for the cold of that night was great"; and adds what is neither in the text, nor true, "for the country was cold". The Arabic version, as it should seem, very wrongly renders it, "for it was winter"; since the passover was never kept in the winter season, but always in the spring, in the month Nisan: the winter season, with the Jews, were half the month of Chisleu, all Tebeth, and half Shebet [f668]; though this is to be observed in favour of that version, that the Jews distinguish their winter into two parts; the one they call Prwj, which, as the gloss says, is the strength of winter, the coldest part of it, and which lasts the time before mentioned; and the other they call rwq, which is the end of winter, and when the cold is not so strong; and half Nisan is taken into this; for they say that half Shebat, all Adar, and half Nisan, are reckoned to this part of winter: so that, according to this account, the fourteenth of Nisan, which was the day on which the passover was killed; or at least the fifteenth, which was now begun, was the last day of winter, and so just secures the credit of the above version.

And they warmed themselves, and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself: he was cold both inwardly and outwardly; and being so, he gets into bad company; and it may be with a view that he might not be suspected, but be taken for one of their own sort, as one who had the same

ill opinion of Jesus they had; and by the light of the fire he is again discovered and challenged, which makes way for a second denial.

Ver. 19. *The high priest then asked Jesus*, etc.] Being now brought from Annas to Caiaphas, who was the high priest and mouth of the sanhedrim, and to whom it appertained to hear and try a cause relating to doctrine. And what he did was by putting questions to him, instead of opening the charge against him, and calling for witnesses to support it. The person he interrogated was a greater high priest than himself; was that prophet Moses spoke of, to whom the Jews were to hearken, and no other than the Son of God, and King of Israel; who, when at twelve years of age, asked the doctors questions, and answered theirs, to their great astonishment. He first inquires

of his disciples, not so much who they were, and what they were, and how many they were, and where they were now, as for what purpose he gathered them together; whether it was not with some seditious views to overturn the present government, and set up himself as a temporal prince; and this he did, that he might be able to send him, with a charge against him, to the Roman governor: he did not ask for his disciples to come and speak on his behalf, if they had anything to say for him, which, by their canons [f669], was allowed and encouraged:

> "if any of the disciples (of the person accused) says, I have a crime to lay to his charge, they silence him; but if one of the disciples says, I have something to say in his favour, they bring him up, and place him between them; nor does he go down from thence all the day; and if there is anything in what he says, wl ^y[mwç, "they hearken to him"."

The Jews indeed pretend [f670] that after Jesus was found guilty, a herald went before him forty days declaring his crime, and signifying, that if anyone knew anything worthy in him, to come and declare it; but none were found: but this is all lies and falsehood, to cover their wickedness; no disciple of his was allowed to speak for him. The high priest next asked Jesus

of his doctrine; not for the sake of information and instruction, nor to see whether it was according to the Scriptures; but if it was a new doctrine, and his own, and whether it tended to idolatry or blasphemy, and whether it was factious and seditious, that so they might have wherewith to accuse

him; for though they had got his person, they were at a loss for an accusation; and yet this self-same man that put these questions, and was fishing for something against him, had before given counsel to put him to death, right or wrong: all this was doing, and these questions were put to Jesus, whilst Peter was denying him.

Ver. 20. *Jesus answered him*, etc.] Not to the first of these questions, concerning his disciples; not because they had all now forsaken him, and one was denying him; nor because he would not betray them; nor because he would suffer alone; but because if his doctrine was good; it could not be blameworthy to have disciples, and to teach them: and the charge of sedition, blasphemy, and idolatry, they wanted to fasten on him, would sufficiently appear to be groundless by the doctrine he preached; and as to that he answers not directly what he taught, but declares the manner in which he delivered it, and which was such, that they that heard him could not be strangers to it.

I spake openly to the world; with all plainness, freedom, and boldness, without any reserve or ambiguity; and that not to a few persons only, to his own particular disciples, but to all the people of the Jews, who crowded in great numbers to hear him; insomuch that it was said by his enemies, that the world was gone after him.

I ever taught in the synagogue; the Arabic, “the synagogues”; the places of public worship in all parts of the nation, where the Jews met to pray, and read, and hear the word:

and in the temple; at Jerusalem, whenever he was in that city;

whither the Jews always resort; for prayer, and to offer sacrifice, and particularly at the three grand festivals of the year, the passover, Pentecost, and feast of tabernacles, when all the males from all parts appeared before the Lord. Accordingly, the Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, “whither all the Jews resort”; and so read the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions.

And in secret have I said nothing; not but that our Lord taught in other places than what are here mentioned, as on mountains, in deserts, by the sea shore, and in private houses, yet generally to great multitudes; and though he sometimes conversed alone, and in secret with his disciples, yet what he taught them was either an explanation of what he had said in public, or was perfectly agreeable to it.

Ver. 21. *Why askest thou me*? etc.] He seems surprised at the high priest's conduct, that he should put such questions to him, who stood bound before him; was brought there as a criminal, and was the defendant, and not obliged to accuse himself; nor could it be thought, that whatever evidence or testimony he should give, would have much weight with the persons before whom he stood.

Ask them which heard me, what I said unto them; he appeals to his hearers, many of whom were then present; and these his enemies, even his worst enemies, so clear was his case, so free was his doctrine from sedition and blasphemy, so innocent was he in the whole of his deportment and conduct, that he even submits to have his case issued and determined by what his hearers should say of him; and these not his friends, but his enemies; (see <2500>Isaiah 50:8);

behold, they, or these,

know what I have said; pointing at some persons present, perhaps the very officers who had been sent to take him before, but returned without him, declaring that never man spake like him.

Ver. 22. *And when he had thus spoken*, etc.] What was so right and reasonable, in so becoming a manner, without heat or passion:

one of the officers which stood by; it may be one of those who had been sent to him and had been a hearer of him, whom Jesus might look wistfully at, or point unto, when he said the above words, at which he might be provoked: and therefore

stroke Jesus with the palm of his hand; or gave him a rap with a rod, or smote him with a staff, as some think, is the sense of the phrase; though the Syriac, agreeably to our version, reads it, he smote him, yhw[wl l[, "upon his cheek"; gave him, what we commonly call, a slap on the face; and which is always esteemed a very great affront, and was a piece of rudeness and insolence to the last degree in this man:

saying, answerest thou the high priest so? This he said, as well as gave the blow, either out of flattery to the high priest, or to clear himself from being a favourer of Christ; which, by what had been said, he might think would be suspected: some have thought this was Malchus, whose ear Christ had healed; if so, he was guilty of great ingratitude.

Ver. 23. *Jesus answered him*, etc.] For the high priest took no notice of him, nor any of the sanhedrim, though the action was so insolent and indecent, both as to the manner in which it was done, and the person, an officer, by whom it was done; and considering the circumstances of it, in the palace of the high priest, in his presence, and before so grand a council, and whilst a cause was trying; and it was a barbarous, as well as an impious action, considering the person to whom it was done. Wherefore Jesus replies to him, without making use of his divine power as the Son of God, or discovering any warmth of spirit, and heat of passion, as a man, mildly and rationally argues with him;

if I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: meaning, either if he had, to his knowledge, delivered any wicked doctrine in the course of his ministry, or had at that time said any evil thing of the high priest, or any other person, he desires that he would make it to appear, and give proper proof and evidence of it:

but if well, why smitest thou me? If he had said nothing contrary to truth, reason, and good manners, then he ought not to be used and treated in such an injurious way. And moreover, the officer ought to have been corrected by the Council, and have been made to pay the two hundred "zuzim", or pence, the line for such an affront, according to the Jewish canon, or more, according to the dignity of the person abused [f671].

Ver. 24. *Now Annas had sent him bound*, etc.] As he found him, when the captain, band, and officers brought him to him; who having pleased himself with so agreeable a sight, and had asked him some few questions, and perhaps insulted him, sent him away in this manner,

unto Caiaphas the high priest: his son-in-law, as the more proper person to be examined before; and especially as the grand council was sitting at his house. This was done before Peter's first denial of Christ; which, it is plain, was in the palace of the high priest, and not in Annas's house; though there seems no reason on this account to place these words at the end of the 13th verse, as they are by some, since they manifestly refer to time past, and do not at all obscure or hinder the true order of the history, as standing here.

Ver. 25. *And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself*, etc.] This is repeated from (John 18:18) to connect the history, and carry on the thread of the account of Peter's denial of Christ, which is interrupted by

inserting the examination of Christ before the high priest, which was made at the same time. Peter stood among, and continued with the servants and officers of the high priest, warming himself by a fire they had made, it being a cold night; and this proved of bad consequence to him. The company and conversation of wicked men should be abstained from; no good is got thereby; continuance among such is very dangerous; men are too often more concerned for their bodies than their souls; Satan baits his temptations for the fleshly and sensitive part; and that which is thought to be for good, is the occasion of hurt.

They said therefore unto him; the servants and officers, among whom he stood warming himself, having observed what the maid had said to him:

art thou not also one of his disciples? suspecting that he was, though he had denied it, and therefore press him to give a direct answer: they might observe his countenance to fall, when the maid put the question to him; there might be something in his dress, and especially in his speech, which increased the suspicion:

but he denied it, and said, I am not; a second time. This denial of his being a disciple of Christ, as before, did not arise from a sense of his unworthiness to be one; nor from diffidence and distrust of a right to such a character; but from the fear of men; and being ashamed of Christ, he denies that which was his great mercy, privilege, and glory.

Ver. 26. *One of the servants of the high priest*, etc.] Hearing him so stiffly deny that he was a disciple of Jesus, when he had great reason to believe he was:

being his kinsman, whose ear Peter cut off; a near relation of Malchus, to whom Peter had done this injury; and who was present at the same time, and no doubt took particular notice of him; and the more, because of what he had done to his kinsman:

saith unto him, did not I see thee in the garden with him? as if he should have said, I saw thee with my own eyes along with Jesus, this very night in the garden, beyond Kidron, where he was apprehended, how canst thou deny it? and wilt thou stand in it so confidently, that thou art not one of his disciples?

Ver. 27. *Peter then denied again*, etc.] A third time, as the Ethiopic version renders it; and that, according to other evangelists, with cursing

and swearing; for now he was more affrighted than before, lest should he be taken up, and it be proved upon him, that he was the person that cut off Malchus's ear, he should be sentenced to a fine, or it may be some capital punishment. The fine for plucking a man's ears, and which some understand of plucking them off, was four hundred "zuzim" [f672], or, pence; which, as they answer to Roman pence, amount to twelve pounds ten shillings; a sum of money Peter perhaps could not have raised, without great difficulty: and therefore, that it might be believed he was not a disciple of Christ, so not the man; he swears in a profane manner, and imprecates the judgments of God upon him:

and immediately the cock crew; the second time; which was a signal by which he might call to remembrance, what Christ had said to him; that before the cock crowed twice, he should deny him thrice, (<41472>Mark 14:72). It was now early in the morning, about three o'clock, or somewhat after.

Ver. 28. *Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas*, etc.] When Peter had denied him, one of the officers had smote him, the high priest had examined him, and they thought they had enough, out of his own mouth, to condemn him; they, the chief priests, elders, Scribes, and the whole multitude, led him bound as he was, from Caiaphas's house,

unto the hall of judgment; or the "praetorium"; the place where the Roman governor, who was now Pontius Pilate, used to hear and try causes in; the Romans now having matters and causes relating to life and death, in their hands:

and it was early; the morning indeed was come; but it was as soon as it was day; they had been all night in taking and examining Jesus, and consulting what to do with him; and as soon as they could expect the governor to be up, they hurry him away to him, eagerly thirsting after his blood, and fearing lest he should be rescued out of their hands:

and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; that is, the Jews, only the band of Roman soldiers went in; the reason of this was, because it was the house of a Gentile, and with them, µyamj µwk[h twrwdm, "the dwelling houses of Gentiles", or idolaters, "are unclean" [f673]; yea, if they were the houses of Israelites, and Gentiles were admitted to dwell in them, they were defiled, and all that were in them; for so they say [f674],

> “if the collectors for the government enter into a house to dwell in, all in the house are defiled.”

They did not think it lawful to rent out a house in Judea to an Heathen [f675], or to assist in building a Basilica for them; which they explain to be a palace, in which judges sit to judge men [f676]: hence the reason of their caution, and which they were the more observant of,

that they might eat the passover; pure and undefiled; not the passover lamb, for that they had eaten the night before; but the “Chagigah”, or feast on the fifteenth day of the month. Many Christian writers, both ancient and modern, have concluded from hence, that Christ did not keep his last passover, at the same time the Jews did; and many things are said to illustrate this matter, and justify our Lord in it: some observe the distinction of a sacrificial, and commemorative passover; the sacrificial passover is that, in which the lamb was slain, and was fixed to a certain time and place, and there was no altering it; the commemorative passover is that, in which no lamb is slain and eaten, only a commemoration made of the deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt; such as is now kept by the Jews, being out of their own land, where sacrifice with them is not lawful; and this it is supposed our Lord kept, and not the former: but it does not appear that there was such a commemorative passover kept by the Jews, in our Lord’s time, and whilst the temple stood: and supposing there was such an one allowed, and appointed for those that were at a distance from Jerusalem, and could not come up thither, (which was not the case of Christ and his disciples,) it is reasonable to conclude, that it was to be kept, and was kept at the time the sacrificial passover was, in the room of which it was substituted, as it is by the Jews to this day; so that this will by no means clear the matter, nor solve the difficulty; besides it is very manifest, that the passover our Lord kept was sacrificial; and such an one the disciples proposed to get ready for him, and did, of which he and they are said to eat: “and the first day of unleavened bread, when they KILLED the passover, his disciples said to him, where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest EAT the passover?” (<41142>Mark 14:12) and again, “then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover MUST be KILLED”, (<42207>Luke 22:7). “They made ready the passover”, (<42213>Luke 22:13) “and he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him”, (<42214>Luke 22:14) “and he said unto them, with desire I have desired to eat this passover”, (<42215>Luke 22:15). Others suggest, that this difference of observing the passover by Christ and the Jews arose from fixing the

beginning of the month, and so accordingly the feasts in it, by the φασις, or appearance of the moon; and that our Lord went according to the true appearance of it, and the Jews according to a false account: but of this, as a fact, there is no proof; besides, though the feasts were regulated and fixed according to the appearance of the moon, yet this was not left to the arbitrary will, pleasure, and judgment of particular persons, to determine as they should think proper; but the sanhedrim, or chief council of the nation sat, at a proper time, to hear and examine witnesses about the appearance of the moon; and accordingly determined, and none might fix but them [f677]; and as this was doubtless the case at this time, it is not very reasonable to think, that Christ would differ from them: besides, it was either a clear case, or a doubtful one; if the former, then there would be no room nor reason to keep another day; and if it was the latter, then two days were observed, that they might be sure they were right [f678]; but then both were kept by all the Jews: and that the time of this passover was well known, is clear from various circumstances; such and such facts were done, so many days before it; six days before it, Jesus came to Bethany, (<43B201>John 12:1) and two days before it, he was in the same place, (<402602>Matthew 26:2,6) and says to his disciples, "ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover", etc. Others taking it for granted, that Christ kept the passover a day before the usual and precise time, defend it, by observing the despotic and legislative power of Christ, who had a right to dispense with the time of this feast, and could at his pleasure anticipate it, because the betraying of him and his death were so near at hand: that he had such a power will not be disputed; but that he should use it in this way, does not seem necessary, on account of his death, seeing none but the living were obliged to it; nor so consistent with his wisdom, since hereby the mouths of his enemies would be opened against him, for acting not agreeably to the law of God: moreover, when it is considered that the passover, according to the Jews, was always kept wd[wmb, "in its set time" [f679], and was not put off on the account of the sabbath, or anything else, to another day; and that though when it was put off for particular persons, on account of uncleanness, to another month, yet still it was to be kept on the fourteenth day at even, in that month, (<040910>Numbers 9:10,11) it will not easily be received that Christ observed it a day before the time: besides, the passover lamb was not killed in a private house, but in the temple, in the court of it, and that always on the fourteenth of Nisan, after noon: so says Maimonides [f680],

> “it is an affirmative command to slay the passover on the fourteenth of the month Nisan, after the middle of the day. The passover is not slain but in the court, as the rest of the holy things; even in the time that altars were lawful, they did not offer the passover on a private altar; and whoever offers the passover on a private altar, is to be beaten; as it is said, “thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee”, (<05165>Deuteronomy 16:5).”

And seeing therefore a passover lamb was not to be killed at home, but in the court of the priests, in the temple, it does not seem probable, that a single lamb should be suffered to be killed there, for Christ and his disciples, on a day not observed by the Jews, contrary to the sense of the sanhedrim, and of the whole nation: add to this, that the sacred text is express for it, that it was at the exact time of this feast, when it was come according to general computation, that the disciples moved to Christ to prepare the passover for him, and did, and they with him kept it: the account Matthew gives is very full; “now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread”; that is, when that was come in its proper time and course, “the disciples came to Jesus”; saying unto him, where wilt “thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?” He bids them go to the city to such a man, and say, “I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples, and the disciples did as Jesus had appointed, and they made ready the passover; now when the even was come”, the time of eating the passover, according to the law of God, “he sat down with the twelve, and as they did eat”, etc. (<40617>Matthew 26:17-20) and Mark is still more particular, who says, “and the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover”; that is, when the Jews killed the passover, on the very day the lamb was slain, and eaten by them; and then follows much the same account as before, (<41412>Mark 14:12-18) and Luke yet more clearly expresses it, “then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed”; according to the law of God, and the common usage of the people of the Jews; yea, he not only observes, that Christ kept the usual day, but the very hour, the precise time of eating it; for he says, “and when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him”, (<42207>Luke 22:7-14). Nor is there anything in this text, that is an objection to Christ and the Jews keeping the passover at the same time; since by the passover here is meant, the “Chagigah”, or feast kept on the fifteenth day of the month, as it is sometimes called: in (<05602>Deuteronomy 16:2) it is said,

“thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and the herd”: now the passover of the herd, can never mean the passover lamb, but the passover “Chagigah”; and so the Jewish commentators explain it; “of the herd”, says Jarchi, thou shalt sacrifice for the “Chagigah”; and says Aben Ezra, for the peace offerings; so Josiah the king is said to give for the passovers three thousand bullocks, and the priests three hundred oxen, and the Levites five hundred oxen, (1 Esdras 1:7–2 Chronicles 35:7-9) which Jarchi interprets of the peace offerings of the “Chagigah”, there called passovers; and so in 1 Esdres 1:7-9 mention is made of three thousand calves, besides lambs, that Josias gave for the passover; and three hundred by some other persons, and seven hundred by others: the passage in Deuteronomy, is explained of the “Chagigah”, in both Talmuds [f681], and in other writings [f682]; so besides the passover lamb, we read of sacrifices slain, jsp µwçl, “in the name of” the passover, or on account of it [f683]; and particularly of the calf and the young bullock, slain for the sake of the passover [f684]: and now this is the passover which these men were to eat that day, and therefore were careful not to defile themselves, that so they might not be unfit for it; otherwise had it been the passover lamb in the evening, they might have washed themselves in the evening, according to the rules of µwy lwbj, or “the daily washing”, and been clean enough to have eat it: besides, it may be observed, that all the seven days were called the passover; and he that ate the unleavened bread, is said by eating that, to eat the passover; and thus they invite their guests daily to eat the bread, saying [f685],

> “everyone that is hungry, let him come and eat all that he needs, jspyw, “and keep the passover”.”

It is easy to observe the consciences of these men, who were always wont to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel; they scruple going into the judgment hall, which belonged to an Heathen governor, and where was a large number of Heathen soldiers; but they could go along with these into the garden to apprehend Christ, and spend a whole night in consulting to shed innocent blood: no wonder that God should be weary of their sacrifices and ceremonious performances, when, trusting to these, they had no regard to moral precepts: however, this may be teaching to us, in what manner we should keep the feast, and eat of the true passover, Christ; not with malice and wickedness, as these Jews ate theirs, but with sincerity and truth: besides, a sanhedrim, when they had condemned anyone to death,

were forbidden to eat anything all that day [f686]; and so whilst scrupling one thing, they broke through another.

Ver. 29. *Pilate then went out unto them*, etc.] Either into the street, or rather into the place called the pavement, and in Hebrew Gabbatha; (see <43913>John 19:13) the place where the Jewish sanhedrim used to sit; wherefore in complaisance to them, since they would not come into his court of judicature, he condescends to go into one of theirs, which showed great civility and humanity in him:

and said, what accusation bring ye against this man? meaning, what offence had he committed? what crime had they to charge him with? what did they accuse him of? and what proof had they to support their charge? His view was, to have the matter stated, the cause opened, and evidence given; that the accused being face to face with the accusers, might answer for himself; and he, as a judge, be capable of judging between them: all which were very commendable in him, and agreeably to the Roman laws; and have an appearance of equity, justice, and impartiality.

Ver. 30. *They answered and said unto him*, etc.] Offended at the question put to them, and filled with indignation that they should be so interrogated, with an air of haughtiness and insolence reply to him:

if he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee; insinuating, that he was guilty of some very wicked action; not merely of a breach of some of their laws peculiar to them; for then they would have tried and judged him according to them, and not have brought him before him; but they suggest, that he was guilty of some crimes recognizable by Caesar's court; and which they did not care to mention expressly, lest they should not succeed, not having it may be as yet, their witnesses ready; and hoped he would have took their own word for it, without any further proof, they being men of such rank and dignity, and of so much knowledge, learning, and religion; and therefore took it ill of him, that he should ask such persons as they were, so famous for their prudence, integrity, and sanctity, such a question: however, they own themselves to be the betrayers and deliverers up of our Lord, which Christ had before foretold, and which Stephen afterwards charged them with.

Ver. 31. *Then said Pilate unto them*, etc.] Either ironically, knowing that they did not, or it was not in their power, to judge in capital causes; or seriously, and with some indignation, abhorring such a method of

procedure they would have had him gone into, to condemn a man without knowing his crime, and having evidence of it:

take ye him, and judge him according to your law; this he said, as choosing to understand them in no other sense, than that he had broken some peculiar law of theirs, though they had otherwise suggested; and as giving them liberty to take him away to one of their courts, and proceed against him as their law directed, and inflict some lesser punishment on him than death, such as scourging, etc. which they still had a power to do, and did make use of:

the Jews therefore said unto him, it is not lawful for us to put any man to death; thereby insinuating, that he was guilty of a crime, which deserved death, and which they could not inflict; not that they were of such tender consciences, that they could not put him to death, or that they had no law to punish him with death, provided he was guilty; but because judgments in capital cases had ceased among them; nor did they try causes relating to life and death, the date of which they often make to be forty years before the destruction of the temple [f687]; and which was much about, or a little before the time these words were spoken: not that this power was taken away wholly from them by the Romans; though since their subjection to the empire, they had not that full and free exercise of it as before; but through the great increase of iniquity, particularly murder, which caused such frequent executions, that they were weary of them [f688]; and through the negligence and indolence of the Jewish sanhedrim, and their removal from the room Gazith, where they only judged capital causes [f689]: as for the stoning of Stephen, and the putting of some to death against whom Saul gave his voice, these were the outrages of the zealots, and were not according to a formal process in any court of judicature. Two executions are mentioned in their Talmud; the one is of a priest's daughter that was burnt for a harlot [f690], and the other of the stoning of Ben Stada in Lydda [f691]; the one, according to them, seems to be before, the other after the destruction of the temple; but these dates are not certain, nor to be depended upon: for since the destruction of their city and temple, and their being carried captive into other lands, it is certain that the power of life and death has been wholly taken from them; by which it appears, that the sceptre is removed from Judah, and a lawgiver from between his feet; and this they own almost in the same words as here expressed; for they say [f692] of a certain man worthy of death,

> "why dost thou scourge him? he replies, because he lay with a beast; they say to him, hast thou any witnesses? he answers, yes; Elijah came in the form of a man, and witnessed; they say, if it be so, he deserves to die; to which he answers, "from the day we have been carried captive out of our land, ljqml atwçr ˆl tyl, we have no power to put to death"."

But at this time, their power was not entirely gone; but the true reason of their saying these words is, that they might wholly give up Christ to the Roman power, and throw off the reproach of his death from themselves; and particularly they were desirous he should die the reproachful and painful death of the cross, which was a Roman punishment: had they took him and judged him according to their law, which must have been as a false prophet, or for blasphemy or idolatry, the death they must have condemned him to, would have been stoning; but it was crucifixion they were set upon; and therefore deliver him up as a traitor, and a seditious person, in order thereunto.

Ver. 32. *That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled*, etc.] That he should be delivered by the Jews to the Gentiles, to crucify him; and that he should be lifted up from the earth, and as the serpent upon the pole:

which he spake, signifying what death he should die; (<4010>Matthew 20:19, <4812>John 12:32,33, 3:14) and which was brought about this way, by the providence of God conducting this whole affair; and was cheerfully submitted to by Christ, in great love to his people, to redeem them from the curse of the law, being hereby made a curse for them.

Ver. 33. *Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again*, etc.] Where he went at first, but the Jews refusing to come in thither to him, he came out to them; and now they speaking out more plainly, that he was guilty of a crime deserving of death; as that he set up himself as a king, in opposition to Caesar, and taught the people not to pay tribute to him; he goes into the "praetorium" again, and called Jesus; beckoned, or sent for him; or ordered him to come in thither to him, that he might alone, and the more freely, converse with him; which Jesus did, paying no regard to the superstitious observances of the Jews:

and said unto him, art thou the king of the Jews? This he might say, from a rumour that was generally spread, that there was such a person to come, and was born; and by many it was thought, that Jesus was he; and

particularly from the charge of the Jews against him, which though not here expressed, is elsewhere; (see <42 23 2>Luke 23:2). Wherefore Pilate was the more solicitous about the matter, on account of Caesar, and lest he should be charged with dilatoriness and negligence in this affair: some read these words not by way of question, but affirmation, “thou art the king of the Jews”; which method he might make use of, the more easily to get it out of him, whether he was or not: and to this reading, Christ’s answer in the next verse seems best to agree.

Ver. 34. *Jesus answered him, sayest thou this thing of thyself*, etc.] That he was the king of the Jews: Christ’s meaning is, whether he asserted this from the sentiments of his own mind; or moved the question from anything he himself had observed, which might give him just ground to suspect that he had, or intended to set up himself as the king of that nation:

or did others tell it thee of me? Whether the Jews had not intimated some such thing to him, out of malice and ill will? not but that Christ full well knew where the truth of this lay; but he was desirous of convincing Pilate of his weakness, if he so judged of himself, and of his imprudence and hastiness, if he took up this from others; and also to expose the baseness and wickedness of the Jews, to charge him with this, when they themselves would have made him a temporal king, and he refused; and when he had not only paid tribute himself to Caesar, but had exhorted them to do the like.

Ver. 35. *Pilate answered, am I a Jew*? etc.] This he said, in a sort of derision and contempt; who was not a Jew, neither by birth, nor by religion, and so had never imbibed any notions of their King Messiah, nor read anything about him; and knew nothing of his distinguishing characters and properties, by which he was described, and might be known; and therefore it remained, that what he had said, though not expressed, was not of himself, of his own knowledge or observation, but arose from some intimations and suggestions the Jews had given him:

thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me; that is, the men of his nation, his countrymen the Jews, who best understood their own laws and books of prophecy; and what expectations they had formed from thence, concerning their king, and his kingdom; and the principal of the priesthood, who were accounted men of the greatest learning, piety, and integrity, they had brought him bound before him; they had entered a

charge against him, and had delivered him up into his hands, as an enemy to Caesar, and a traitor to his government:

what hast thou done? as an occasion of such treatment, and as the foundation of such a charge; surely there must be something in it, or men of such character would never impeach a man altogether innocent, and one of their own country too!

Ver. 36. *Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world*, etc.] By saying which, he tacitly owns he was a king: as such he was set up, and anointed by his Father from everlasting; was prophesied of in the Old Testament; declared by the angel, both when he brought the news of his conception, and of his birth; was owned by many, who knew him to be so in the days of his flesh; and since his resurrection, ascension, and session at God's right hand, more manifestly appears to be one: he also hereby declares, that he had a kingdom; by which he means, not his natural and universal kingdom, as God, and the Creator and Governor of all things; but his mediatorial kingdom, administered both in the days of his flesh, and after his resurrection; which includes the whole Gospel dispensation, Christ's visible church state on earth, and the whole election of grace; it takes in that which will be at the close of time, in the latter day, which will be more spiritual, and in which Christ will reign before his ancients gloriously; and also the kingdom of God, or of heaven, even the ultimate glory: the whole of which is not of this world; the subjects of Christ's kingdom are not of the world, they are chosen and called out of it; the kingdom itself does not appear in worldly pomp and splendour, nor is it supported by worldly force, nor administered by worldly laws; nor does it so much regard the outward, as the inward estates of men; it promises no worldly emoluments, or temporal rewards. Christ does not say it is not "in" this world, but it is not of it; and therefore will not fail, when this world does, and the kingdoms thereof. Every thing that is carnal, sensual, and worldly, must be removed from our conceptions of Christ's kingdom, here or hereafter: and to this agrees what some Jewish writers say of the Messiah, and his affairs;

> "the Messiah (they say [f693]) is separated from the world, because he is absolutely intellectual; but the world is corporeal; how then should the Messiah be in this world, when the world is corporeal, and ymçg al yhla awh jyçmh ˆym[, "the business of the Messiah is divine, and not corporeal?""

And since this was the case, Caesar, or any civil government, had no reason to be uneasy on account of his being a king, and having a kingdom; since his kingdom and interests did not in the least break in upon, or injure any others: and that this was the nature of his kingdom, he proves by the following reason;

if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews: if Christ's kingdom had been a worldly one, set up on worldly views, and governed with worldly policy, and was to answer some worldly ends, Christ would have had servants enough among the Jews, who would have declared for him, and took up arms in his favour against the Romans; his own disciples would not have suffered him to have been betrayed into the hands of the Jews by Judas; nor would he have hindered them from attempting his rescue, as he did Peter; nor would they suffer him now to be delivered by Pilate into their hands, to put him to death; since they had such a Prince at the head of them, who, was he to make use of his power, was able to drive all the Roman forces before them out of the nation, and oblige a general submission among the Jews, to the sceptre of his kingdom:

but now is my kingdom not from hence; it does not rise out of, nor proceed upon, nor is it supported by worldly principles, wherefore none of the above methods are made use of.

Ver. 37. *Pilate therefore said unto him*, etc.] Upon this free and full declaration of Christ, concerning his kingly office, and the nature of his kingdom:

art thou a king then? or thou art a king then: for, from his having a kingdom, it might be very justly inferred that he was a king:

Jesus answered, thou sayest that I am a king; and which was very rightly said; and Christ by these words owns and confesses, that he was one: adding,

to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. The end of Christ's being born, which was of a virgin, in a very miraculous manner, and of his coming into the world, which was by the assumption of human nature, among many other things, was to bear testimony to truth in general; to the whole Gospel, the word of truth, and every branch of it, which he brought with him,

constantly preached in life, and confirmed by his death; and particularly to this truth, that he was a King, and had a kingdom in a spiritual sense:

everyone that is of the truth; that is of God, belongs to the sheep of Christ, knows the truth as it is in Jesus, and is on the side of truth, and stands by it:

heareth my voice; the voice of his Gospel; and that not only externally, but internally; so as to approve of it, rejoice at it, and distinguish it; and the voice of his commands, so as cheerfully to obey them from a principle of love to him.

Ver. 38. *Pilate saith unto him, what is truth*? etc.] That is, in general, or that which Christ then particularly spoke of: many things might be observed in answer to this question, as that there is the truth and faithfulness of God in his word and promises; the truth of grace in the hearts of his people; Jesus Christ himself is truth, he is true God, and true man; the truth of all covenant transactions, of all types, promises, and prophecies; whatever he said and taught was truth, and the truth of all doctrine comes from him. The Gospel is truth in general; it comes from the God of truth; lies in the Scriptures of truth; Christ, who is truth itself, is the substance of it; the Spirit of truth has an hand in it, leads into it, and makes it effectual; the whole of it is true, and every particular doctrine of it; as the manifestation of the Son of God in human nature, his coming into the world to save the chief of sinners, justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, atonement by his sacrifice, the resurrection of the dead, etc. The same question is put in the Talmud[f694], `tma hm`, "what is truth?" and it is answered, that he is the living God, and the King of the World: we do not find that our Lord gave any answer to this question, which might be put in a scornful, jeering way; nor did Pilate wait for one; for

when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews: as soon as he had put the question about truth, having no great inclination to hear what Christ would say to it; nor did he put it for information sake, or as having any opinion of Christ, and that he was able to answer it; he directly goes out of the judgment hall, taking Jesus along with him, and addresses the Jews after this manner:

and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all; and indeed how should he? there was no sin in his nature, nor guile in his lips, nor any iniquity in his life; the devil himself could find none in him. This confession is both to the shame of Pilate and the Jews; to the reproach of Pilate, that after this

he should condemn him; and of the Jews, that after such a fair and full declaration from the judge, they should insist upon his crucifixion; it shows, however, that he died not for any sin of his own, but for the sins of others.

Ver. 39. *But ye have a custom*, etc.] Not a law, either of God or man's, but a custom; and which was not originally observed at the feast of the passover, and perhaps was not of any long standing; but what the Roman governors, by the order of Caesar, or of their own pleasure, had introduced to ingratiate themselves into the affections of the people; and being repeated once and again, was now looked for:

that I should release unto you one at the passover; which was at this time; and more than one it seems it was not customary, to release:

will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? who they had said called himself so, and was so accounted by others, and which Pilate says, in a sneering, sarcastic way; though he was heartily willing to release him, and was in hopes they would have agreed to it, since nothing could be proved against him; however, he proposes it to them, and leaves it to their option.

Ver. 40. *Then cried they all again*, etc.] For it seems that Pilate had made this proposal once before, and that this was the second time, though not mentioned; yet some copies, and the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word "again": they all, priests and people, in a very clamorous manner, cried out as one man, with one united voice, all at once;

saying, not this man, but Barabbas; now Barabbas was a robber; who was an emblem of God's elect in a state of nature, released and set free when Christ was condemned. These, as he, many of them at least, are notorious sinners, the chief of sinners, robbers and murderers; who have robbed God of his glory, and destroyed themselves; are prisoners, concluded in sin and unbelief, and shut up in the law, and in a pit, wherein is no water, in their natural state; and were, as this man, worthy of death, and by nature children of wrath; and yet children of God by adopting grace, as his name Bar Abba signifies, "the son of the father": these, though such criminals, and so deserving of punishment, were let go free, when Christ was taken, condemned, and died; and which was according to the wise and secret counsel of Jehovah, and is a large discovery of divine grace; and what lays

those who are released under the greatest obligations to live to him, who suffered for them, in their room and stead.

CHAPTER 19

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 19

Ver. 1. *Then Pilate therefore took Jesus*, etc.] Finding that the Jews would not agree to his release, but that Barabbas was the person they chose, and being very desirous, if possible, to save his life, thought of this method: he ordered Jesus to be taken by the proper officers,

and scourged him; that is, commanded him to be scourged by them; which was done by having him to a certain place, where being stripped naked, and fastened to a pillar, he was severely whipped: and this he did, hoping the Jews would be satisfied therewith, and agree to his release; but though he did this with such a view, yet it was a very unjust action in him to scourge a man that he himself could find no fault in: however, it was what was foretold by Christ himself, and was an emblem of those strokes and scourges of divine justice he endured, as the surety of his people, in his soul, in their stead; and his being scourged, though innocent, shows, that it was not for his own, but the sins of others; and expresses the vile nature of sin, the strictness of justice, and the grace, condescension, and patience of Christ: and this may teach us not to think it strange that any of the saints should endure scourgings, in a literal sense; and to bear patiently the scourgings and chastisements of our heavenly Father, and not to fear the overflowing scourge or wrath of God, since Christ has bore this in our room.

Ver. 2. *And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns*, etc.] This was an emblem of his being surrounded by wicked men, sons of Belial, comparable to thorns, whilst he hung suffering on the cross; and of the sins of his people compassing him about, which were as thorns, very grievous to him; and of his various troubles in life, and of his being made a curse for us at death; thorns being the produce of the curse upon the earth.

And put it on his head: not only by way of derision, as mocking at his character, the King of the Jews, but in order to afflict and distress him.

And they put on him a purple robe: Matthew calls it a scarlet robe; and the Arabic and Persic versions here, “a red” one: it very probably was one of

the soldiers' coats, which are usually red: this was still in derision of him as a king, and was an emblem of his being clothed with our purple and scarlet sins, and of the bloody sufferings of his human nature for them, and through which we come to have a purple covering, or to be justified by his blood, and even to be made truly kings, as well as priests, unto God.

Ver. 3. *And said, hail, King of the Jews*! etc.] Some copies before this clause read, "and they came unto him"; and so read the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, Coptic, and Ethiopic versions; that is, they came and prostrated themselves before him; bowed the knee unto him, and addressed him in a mock way, as if he was an earthly monarch just come to his crown, and whom they wished long to live; thus mocking at his kingly office, and despising him under that character, as many do now: some will not have him to reign over them, but reject him as King; and others, though in words they own him to be King, yet disregard his commands, and act no better part than these scoffing soldiers did:

and they smote him with their hands: upon his cheeks, as the Syriac version reads it. These, and many other affronts they gave him; in all which they were indulged by Pilate, and was a pleasing scene to the wicked Jews, whose relentless hearts were not in the least moved hereby, though Pilate hoped they would; and which was his view in allowing the soldiers to use such incivilities and indecencies to him.

Ver. 4. *Pilate therefore went forth again*, etc.] When all this was done to Jesus, Pilate went again out of the judgment hall, or however from the place where Jesus had been scourged, and ill used in the manner he was: he went a little before him unto the Jews that stood without,

and saith unto them, behold I bring him forth unto you; that is, he had ordered him to be brought forth by the soldiers, and they were just bringing him in the sad miserable condition in which he was, that the Jews might see, with their own eyes, how he had been used:

that ye may know that I find no fault in him; for by seeing what was done to him, how severely he had been scourged, and in what derision and contempt he had been had, and what barbarity had been exercised on him, they might know and believe, that if Pilate did all this, or allowed of it to be done to a man whom he judged innocent, purely to gratify the Jews; that had he found anything in him worthy of death, he would not have stopped here, but would have ordered the execution of him; of this they might

assure themselves by his present conduct. Pilate, by his own confession, in treating, or suffering to be treated in so cruel and ignominious a manner, one that he himself could find no fault in, or cause of accusation against, was guilty of great injustice.

Ver. 5. *Then came Jesus forth*, etc.] Out of the judgment hall, or place where he had been scourged, as soon as Pilate had said these words:

wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe; with his temples scratched and torn with the thorny crown, and the blood running down from thence, and his face and eyes swollen with the blows he had received from their closed fists, and all besmeared with his own blood, and the soldiers' spittle; his body appearing to be almost of the same colour with the purple or scarlet robe, through the stripes and lashes he had received, when that was thrown back.

And Pilate saith unto them, behold the man; not their king, that would have provoked them; though he did say so afterwards, when he found he could not prevail upon them to agree to his release; but the man, to move their compassion; signifying, that he was a man as they were, and that they ought to use him as such, and treat him with humanity and pity; and that he was a poor despicable man, as the condition he was in showed; and that it was a weak thing in them to fear anything with respect to any change of, or influence in, civil government from one that made such a figure; and therefore should be satisfied with what had been done to him, and dismiss him.

Ver. 6. *When the chief priests therefore, and officers, saw him*, etc.] In this piteous condition, in his mock dress, and having on him all the marks of cruel usage, enough to have moved an heart of stone: and though they were the principal men of the priesthood, and who made great pretensions to religion and piety, and the officers were their servants and attendants, and all of them used to sacred employments; which might have been thought would have at least influenced them to the exercise of humanity and compassion to fellow creatures; yet instead of being affected with this sight, and wrought upon by it, to have agreed to his release, as Pilate hoped,

they cried out, saying, Crucify him, Crucify him; which was done in a very noisy and clamorous way; and the repetition of their request shows their malignity, vehemence, and impatience; and remarkable it is, that they

should call for, and desire that kind of death the Scriptures had pointed out, that the Messiah should die, and which was predicted by Christ himself.

Pilate saith unto them, take ye him, and crucify him, for I find no fault in him. This was not leave to do it, as appears from the reason he gives, in which the innocence of Christ is again asserted; nor did the Jews take it in this light, as is evident from their reply; and it is clear, that after this Pilate thought he had a power either to release or crucify him; and he did afterwards seek to release him; and the Jews made a fresh request to crucify him; upon which he was delivered to be crucified: but this was said in a way of indignation, and as abhorring the action; and is an ironical concession, and a bitter sarcasm upon them, that men that professed so much religion and sanctity, could be guilty of such iniquity, as to desire the death of one that no fault could be found in; and therefore, if such were their consciences, for his part, he desired to have no concern in so unrighteous an action; but if they would, they must even do it themselves.

Ver. 7. *The Jews answered him*, etc.] Finding they could make nothing of the charge of sedition against him, and that Pilate could not be prevailed upon to condemn him to death upon that score, they try another method, and charge him with blasphemy; which, if the other had succeeded, they would have concealed; because this, if proved, according to their law, would not have brought on him the kind of death they were desirous of:

we have a law; meaning the law of Moses, which they had received by his hands from God:

and by our law he ought to die; referring either to the law concerning blasphemy in general, or concerning the false prophet, or to the having and asserting of other gods, and enticing to the worship of them; in either of which cases death by stoning was enjoined:

because he made himself the Son of God; the natural and essential Son of God; not by adoption, or on account of his incarnation and mediatorial office; but as being one with the Father, of the same nature with him, and equal to him in all his perfections and glory. This he had often asserted in his ministry, or what was equivalent to it, and which they so understood; and indeed had said that very morning, before the high priest in his palace, what amounted thereunto, and which he so interpreted; upon which he rent his garments, and charged him with blasphemy: for that God has a son, is

denied by the Jews, since Jesus asserted himself to be so, though formerly believed by them; nor was it now denied that there was a Son of God, or that he was expected; but the blasphemy with them was, that Jesus set up himself to be he: but now it is vehemently opposed by them, that God has a son; so from (<2048>Ecclesiastes 4:8) they endeavour to prove [f695], that God has neither a brother, ˆb alw, "nor a son"; but, "hear, O Israel, they observe, the Lord our God is one Lord". And elsewhere [f696],

> ""there is one"; this is the holy blessed God; "and not a second"; for he has no partner or equal in his world; "yea, he hath neither child nor brother"; he hath no brother, nor hath he a son; but the holy blessed God loves Israel, and calls them his children, and his brethren."

All which is opposed to the Christian doctrine, relating to the sonship of Christ. The conduct of these men, at this time, deserves notice, as their craft in imposing on Pilate's ignorance of their laws; and the little regard that they themselves had to them, in calling for crucifixion instead of stoning; and their inconsistency with themselves, pretending before it was not lawful for them to put any man to death; and now they have a law, and by that law, in their judgment, he ought to die.

Ver. 8. *When Pilate therefore heard that saying*, etc.] That Jesus had asserted himself to be the Son of God, and that the Jews had a law to put such a person to death that was guilty of such blasphemy:

he was the more afraid; he was afraid to put him to death, or to consent to it before; partly on account of his wife's message to him, and partly upon a conviction of the innocence of Christ, in his own conscience: and now he was more afraid, since here was a charge brought against him he did not well understand the meaning of; and a law of theirs pretended to be violated hereby, which should he pay no regard to, might occasion a tumult, since they were already become very clamorous and noisy; and he might be the more uneasy, test the thing they charged him with asserting, should be really fact; that he was one of the gods come down in the likeness of man; or that he was some demi-god at least, or so nearly related to deity, that it might be dangerous for him to have anything to do with him this way: and in this suspicion he might be strengthened, partly from the writings of the Heathens, which speak of such sort of beings; and partly from the miracles he might have heard were performed by Jesus; and also

by calling to mind what he had lately said to him, that his kingdom was not of this world, and that he was come into it to bear witness to the truth.

Ver. 9. *And went again into the judgment hall*, etc.] From whence he came out, taking Jesus along with him, in order to interrogate him alone upon this head:

and saith unto Jesus, whence art thou? meaning not of what country he was, for he knew he was of the nation of the Jews; nor in what place he was born, whether at Bethlehem or at Nazareth, for this was no concern of his; but from whence he sprung, who were his ancestors, and whether his descent was from the gods, or from men; and if from the former, from which of them; for as Pilate was an Heathen, he must be supposed to speak as such:

but Jesus gave him no answer; for his question was frivolous, and deserved none; and besides, he was not worthy of one, who had used him so ill, when he knew, in his own conscience, that he was innocent; nor was he capable of taking in an answer, or able to judge whether it was right or wrong; and since Christ was come to die for the salvation of his people, it was not proper he should say anything that might be a means of hindering it.

Ver. 10. *Then saith Pilate unto him*, etc.] Being angry with him, resenting his silence, and looking upon it as a contempt of him;

speakest thou not unto me? he wondered that he stood in no fear of him, who was the Roman governor, his judge; who had the power of life and death; and that he should make no answer to him, who was in so much dignity, and in so high and exalted a station.

Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? proudly boasting of his authority to do one or the other. The sudden change of the man from fear, to vain and proud boasting, is to be observed; just now he was afraid of the divine power of Christ, lest he should have any divinity in him; and now he boasts and brags of his own power, and menaces and threatens with his authority to punish with death, even the death of tho cross; in which he discovers his wickedness, as a magistrate, to endeavour to terrify one that he himself believed to be innocent: and besides, his assertion is false; for he had no power, neither from God nor man, to crucify innocent men, and release criminals: and moreover, he himself must be self-condemned, who had a power, as he

says, of releasing him, and yet did not do it, though he had once and again declared he found no fault in him.

Ver. 11. *Jesus answered*, etc.] With great intrepidity and courage, with freedom and boldness, as being not at all dismayed with his threatenings, or affected with his proud boasts, and in order to expose the vanity of them:

thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: meaning, not from the Jewish sanhedrim, whose court of judicature was in the temple, which was higher than the other part of the city; nor from the Roman emperor, or senate of Rome, the higher powers; by whom Pilate was made governor of Judea, and a judge in all causes relating to life and death; but reference is had to the place from whence he came, and to the decree and council of God above, and the agreement between the eternal three in heaven. Christ speaks of a power he had against him, that is, of taking away his life; he had no lawful power to do it at all; nor any power, right or wrong, had it not been given him by God: and which is to be ascribed, not merely to the general providence of God, without which nothing is done in this world; but to the determinate counsel of God, relating to this particular action of the crucifying of Christ; otherwise Christ, as God, could have struck Pilate his judge with death immediately, and without so doing could as easily have escaped out of his hands, as he had sometimes done out of the hands of the Jews; and, as man and Mediator, he could have prayed to his Father for, and have had, more than twelve legions of angels, which would soon have rescued him: but this was not to be; power was given to Pilate from heaven against him; not for any evil he himself had committed, or merely to gratify the envy and malice of the Jews, but for the salvation of God's elect, and for the glorifying of the divine perfections: and to this the Jews themselves agree in general,

> "that all the things of this world depend on above; and when they agree above first, (they say [f697],) they agree below; and that there is no power below, until that `aly[l atwnjlwç byhyytad`, "power is given from above"; and the whole of that depends on this:"

therefore he that delivered me unto thee, hath the greater sin; `Ælyd ^m`, "than thine", as the Syriac version adds; and to the same purpose the Persic. Pilate had been guilty of sin already in scourging Christ, and suffering the Roman soldiers to abuse him; and would be guilty of a greater in delivering him up to be crucified, who he knew was innocent: but the sin

of Judas in delivering him into the hands of the chief priests and elders, and of the chief priest and elders and people of the Jews, in delivering him to Pilate to crucify him, according to the Roman manner, were greater, inasmuch as theirs proceeded from malice and envy, and was done against greater light and knowledge; for by his works, miracles, and ministry, as well as by their own prophecies, they might, or must have known, that he was the Messiah, and Son of God: and it is to be observed, that as there is a difference in sin, and that all sins are not equal, the circumstances of things making an alteration; so that God's decree concerning the delivery of his Son into the hands of sinful men, does not excuse the sin of the betrayers of him.

Ver. 12. *And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him*, etc.] From the time that Christ spoke the above words; or, as the Syriac version renders it, adh lwjm, "because of this", or on account of the words he had spoken; to which agree the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: he sought by all means, and studied every way to bring the Jews to agree to his release: his reasons were, because of the consciousness of guilt, and the danger of contracting more; the sense he might have of a Divine Being, to whom he was accountable for the exercise of his power; his suspicion that Jesus was the Son of God, or that he was more than a man; for he perceived that power went along with his words, by the effect they had on him: but though he sought to release him, he did not do it, nor use the power he boasted he had; the reason in himself was, he was desirous, that the Jews would concur with him; the secret one in providence was, God would not have it so; and yet things must be carried to this pitch, that it might appear that Christ suffered not for his own sins, but ours, and that he suffered willingly:

but the Jews cried out, saying, if thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend. These were the chief priests, Scribes, and elders of the people, more especially, and by whom, the common people were stirred up to request his crucifixion: these still made a greater outcry, and in a more clamorous way urged, that should he be released, Pilate would show but little regard to Caesar, by whom he was raised to this dignity; who had put him into this trust; whom he represented, and in whose name he acted. This was a piece of craftiness in them, for nothing could more nearly affect Pilate, than an insinuation of want of friendship and fidelity to Tiberius, who was then Caesar, or emperor; and also, it was an instance of great hypocrisy in them, to pretend a regard to Caesar, when they scrupled

paying tribute to him, and would have been glad, at any rate, to have been free from his yoke and government; and is a very spiteful hint, and carries in it a sort of threatening to Pilate, as if they would bring a charge against him to Caesar, should he let Jesus go with his life, whom they in a contemptuous manner call “this man”: adding,

whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Caesar; returning to their former charge of sedition, finding that that of blasphemy had not its effect: their reasoning is very fallacious, and mere sophistry; for though it might be allowed that whoever set up himself as a temporal king in any of Caesar’s dominions, must be an enemy of his, a rebel against him; and such a declaration might be truly interpreted as high treason; yet Christ did not give out that he was such a king, but, on the contrary, that his kingdom was not of this world, and therefore did not assume to himself any part of Caesar’s dominions and government; and though the Jews would have took him by force, and made him a king, he refused it, and got out of their hands.

Ver. 13. *When Pilate therefore heard that saying*, etc.] Of the Jews, that a freeing of Jesus would show an unfriendliness to Caesar; and gave very broad hints that they would accuse him to Caesar of treachery and unfaithfulness, in letting go a man, that made pretensions to be a king in his territories; and knowing well the jealousies and suspicions of Tiberius, and fearing lest it would turn to his own disrepute and disadvantage, immediately

he brought Jesus forth out of the judgment hall, the place where he had been examined in; not to declare his innocence, nor to move their pity, nor to release him, but to pass sentence on him.

And he sat down in the judgment seat: for that purpose. He had sat but little all this while, but was continually going in and out to examine Jesus, and converse with the Jews; but he now takes his place, and sits down as a judge, in order to give the finishing stroke to this affair; and where he sat down, was

in the place that is called the pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. This place, in the Greek tongue, was called “Lithostrotos”; or “the pavement of stones”, as the Syriac version renders it: it is thought to be the room “Gazith”, in which the sanhedrim sat in the temple when they tried

capital causes [f698]; and it was so called, because it was paved with smooth, square, hewn stones:

> "it was in the north part; half of it was holy, and half of it common; and it had two doors, one for that part which was holy, and another for that which was common; and in that half which was common the sanhedrim sat [f699]."

So that into this part of it, and by this door, Pilate, though a Gentile, might enter. This place, in the language of the Jews, who at this time spoke Syriac, was "Gabbatha", front its height, as it should seem; though the Syriac and Persic versions read "Gaphiphtha", which signifies a fence, or an enclosure. Mention is made in the Talmud [f700] of the upper "Gab" in the mountain of the house; but whether the same with this "Gabbaths", and whether this is the same with the chamber "Gazith", is not certain. The Septuagint use the same word as John here does, and call by the same name the pavement of the temple on which the Israelites felt and worshipped God, (<14708>2 Chronicles 7:3).

Ver. 14. *And it was the preparation of the passover*, etc.] So the Jews [f701] say, that Jesus suffered on the eve of the passover; and the author of the blasphemous account of his life says [f702], it was the eve both of the passover and the sabbath; which account so far agrees with the evangelic history; but then this preparation of the passover was not of the passover lamb, for that had been prepared and eaten the night before. Nor do I find that there was any particular day which was called "the preparation of the passover" in such sense, and much less that this day was the day before the eating of the passover. According to the law in (<021203>Exodus 12:3-6) the lamb for the passover was to be separated from the rest of the flock on the tenth day of the month, and to be kept up till the fourteenth; but this is never called the preparation of the passover; and was it so called, it cannot be intended here; the preparing and making ready the passover the evangelists speak of, were on the same day it was eaten, and design the getting ready a place to eat it in, and things convenient for that purpose, and the killing the lamb, and dressing it, and the like, (<401617>Matthew 26:17,19 <411412>Mark 14:12,15,16 <422208>Luke 22:8,9,12,13) there is what the Jews call jsph swrp, which was a space of fifteen days before the passover, and began at the middle of the thirty days before the feast, in which they used to ask questions, and explain the traditions concerning the passover [f703]: but this is never called the preparation of the passover: and on the night of the fourteenth month

they sought diligently, in every hole and corner of their houses, for leavened bread, in order to remove it [f704]; but this also never went by any such name: wherefore, if any respect is had to the preparation for the passover, it must either design the preparation of the "Chagigah", which was a grand festival, commonly kept on the fifteenth day, and which was sometimes called the passover; or else the preparation for the whole feast all the remaining days of it; (see Gill on "<4828>John 18:28") but it seems best of all to understand it only of the preparation for the sabbath, which, because it was in the passover week, is called the passover preparation day: and it may be observed, that it is sometimes only called "the day of the preparation", and "the preparation", (<4027>Matthew 27:62, <4254>Luke 23:54, <4831>John 19:31) and sometimes the "Jews' preparation day", (<4842>John 19:42) and it is explained by the Evangelist (<4154>Mark 15:42). "It was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath"; on which they both prepared themselves for the sabbath, and food to eat on that day; and this being the time of the passover likewise, the preparation was the greater: and therefore to distinguish this preparation day for the sabbath, from others, it is called the passover preparation; nor have I observed that any other day is called the preparation but that before the sabbath: the Jews dispute about preparing food for the sabbath on a feast day, as this was; they seem to forbid it, but afterwards soften their words, and allow it with some provisos: their canon runs thus [f705];

> "a feast day which falls on the eve of the sabbath, a man may not boil (anything) at the beginning of the feast day for the sabbath; but he may boil for the feast day; and if there is any left, it may be left for the sabbath; and he may make a boiling on the eve of a feast day, and depend on it for the sabbath: the house of Shamtoni say two boilings; and the house of Hillell say one boiling."

Bartenora on the passage observes, that some say the reason of this boiling on the evening of a feast day, is for the honour of the sabbath; for because from the evening of the feast day, the sabbath is remembered, that which is best is chosen for the sabbath, that the sabbath may not be forgotten through the business of the feast day. The account Maimonides [f706] gives of this matter is,

> "on a common day they "prepare" for the sabbath, and on a common day they prepare for a feast day; but they do not prepare

> on a feast day for the sabbath, nor is the sabbath, hnykm, “a preparation” for a feast day.”

This seems to be contrary to the practice of the Jews in the time of Christ, as related by the evangelists, understanding by the preparation they speak of, a preparation of food for the sabbath; but what he afterwards says [f707] makes some allowance for it:

> “a feast day, which happens to be on the eve of the sabbath, (Friday,) they neither bake nor boil, on a feast day what is eaten on the morrow, on the sabbath; and this prohibition is from the words of the Scribes, (not from the word of God,) that a man should not boil any thing on a feast day for a common day, and much less for the sabbath; but if he makes a boiling (or prepares food) on the evening of a feast day on which he depends and boils and bakes on a feast day for the sabbath, lo, this is lawful; and that on which he depends is called the mingling of food.”

And this food, so called, was a small portion of food prepared on a feast for the sabbath, though not less than the quantity of an olive, whether for one man or a thousand [f708]; by virtue of which, they depending on it for the sabbath, they might prepare whatever they would, after having asked a blessing over it, and saying [f709],

> “by this mixture it is free for me to bake and boil on a feast day what is for the morrow, the sabbath; and if a man prepares for others, he must say for me, and for such an one, and such an one; or for the men of the city, and then all of them may bake and boil on a feast day for the sabbath.”

And about the sixth hour; to which agrees the account in (Matthew 27:45), (Luke 23:44) but (Mark 15:25) says that “it was the third hour, and they crucified him”; and Beza says, he found it so written in one copy; and so read Peter of Alexandria, Beza’s ancient copy, and some others, and Nonnus: but the copies in general agree in, and confirm the common reading, and which is differently accounted for; some by the different computations of the Jews and Romans; others by observing that the day was divided into four parts, each part containing three hours, and were called the third, the sixth, the ninth, and the twelfth hours; and not only that time, when one of these hours came, was called by that name, but also from that all the space of the three hours, till the next came, was called

by the name of the former: for instance, all the space from nine o'clock till twelve was called "the third hour"; and all from twelve till three in the afternoon "the sixth hour": hence the time of Christ's crucifixion being supposed to be somewhat before, but yet near our twelve of the clock, it may be truly here said that it was about the sixth hour; and as truly by Mark the third hour; that space, which was called by the name of the third hour, being not yet passed, though it drew toward an end. This way go Godwin and Hammond, whose words I have expressed, and bids fair for the true solution of the difficulty: though it should be observed, that Mark agrees with the other evangelists about the darkness which was at the sixth hour, the time of Christ's crucifixion, (<41538>Mark 15:33,34) and it is to be remarked, that he does not say that it was the third hour "when" they crucified him, or that they crucified him at the third hour; but it was the third hour, "and" they crucified him, as Dr. Lightfoot observes. It was the time of day when they should have been at the daily sacrifice, and preparing for the solemnity of that day particularly, which was their Chagigah, or grand feast; but instead of this they were prosecuting his crucifixion, which they brought about by the sixth hour. And about this time Pilate said, and did the following things:

and he saith unto the Jews, behold your king; whom some of your people, it seems, have owned for their king, and you charge as setting up himself as one; see what a figure he makes; does he look like a king? this he said, in order to move upon their affections, that, if possible, they might agree to release him, and to shame them out of putting such a poor despicable creature to death; and as upbraiding them for their folly, in fearing anything from so mean and contemptible a man.

Ver. 15. *But they cried out, Away with him*, etc.] As a person hateful and loathsome to them, the sight of whom they could not bear; and this they said with great indignation and wrath, and with great vehemency, earnestness and importunacy, in a very clamorous way; repeating the words

away with him: they were impatient until he was ordered away for execution; and nothing would satisfy them but the crucifixion of him; and therefore they say,

crucify him; which is also repeated in the Syriac version; for this was what they thirsted after, and were so intent upon; this cry was made by the chief priests:

Pilate saith unto them, shall I crucify your King? This he said either seriously or jeeringly, and it may be with a view to draw out of them their sentiments concerning Caesar, as well as him; however it had this effect;

the chief priests answered, we have no king but Caesar; whereby they denied God to be their king, though they used to say, and still say in their prayers; "we have no king but God" [f710]: they rejected the government of the King Messiah, and tacitly confessed that the sceptre was departed from Judah; and what they now said, came quickly upon them, and still continues; for according to prophecy, (<2004>Hosea 3:4) they have been many days and years "without a king": and this they said in spite to Jesus, and not in respect to Caesar, whose government they would have been glad to have had an opportunity to shake off. They could name no one as king but Jesus, or Caesar; the former they rejected, and were obliged to own the latter: it is a poor observation of the Jew [f711] upon this passage, that it

> "shows that before the crucifixion of Jesus, the Roman Caesars ruled over Israel; and that this Caesar was Tiberius, who had set Pilate over Jerusalem, as is clear from (<4201>Luke 3:1). Wherefore here is an answer to the objection of the Nazarenes, who say that the Jews, for the sin of crucifying Jesus, lost their kingdom."

To which may be replied, that this is not said by any of the writers of the New Testament, that the kingdom of the Jews was taken away from them for their sin of crucifying Jesus; and therefore this is no contradiction to anything said by them; this is only the assertion of some private persons, upon whom it lies to defend themselves; and what is asserted, is defensible, nor do the words of the text militate against it: for though before the crucifixion of Christ the Jews were tributary to the Roman Caesars, and Roman governors were sent to preside among them; yet the government was not utterly taken from them, or their kingdom lost; they indeed feared this would be the case, should Jesus succeed and prosper, as he did, saying, "the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation", (<4348>John 11:48), which shows, that as yet this was not done; though for their disbelief and rejection of the Messiah, their destruction was hastening on apace; and after the crucifixion of him, all power was taken from them; the government was seized upon by the Romans entirely, and at last utterly destroyed; besides, the Jews did not own Caesar to be their king, though they said this now to serve a turn; and after this they had kings of the race of Herod over them, though placed there by the Roman emperor or senate.

Ver. 16. *Then delivered he him therefore*, etc.] Perceiving he could not by any means work upon them, and that nothing would satisfy them but his death; he therefore passed sentence on him, and gave him up to their will,

unto them to be crucified; as they requested, and which was done in a judicial way, and all by divine appointment, according to the counsel and foreknowledge of God:

and they took Jesus and led him away; directly from the judgment hall, out of the city to the place of execution, whither he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, without opening his mouth against God or man; but behaved with the utmost patience, meekness, and resignation.

Ver. 17. *And he bearing his cross*, etc.] Which was usual for malefactors to do, as Lipsius [f712] shows out of Artemidorus, and Plutarch; the former says,

> “the cross is like to death, and he that is to be fixed to it, first bears it;”

and the latter says,

> “and everyone of the malefactors that are punished in body, “carries out his own cross”.”

So Christ, when he first went out to be crucified, carried his cross himself, until the Jews, meeting with Simon the Cyrenian, obliged him to bear it after him; that is, one part of it; for still Christ continued to bear a part himself: of this Isaac was a type, in carrying the wood on his shoulders for the burnt offering; and this showed that Christ was made sin, and a curse for us, and that our sins, and the punishment which belonged to us, were laid on him, and bore by him; and in this he has left us an example to go forth without the camp, bearing his reproach:

went forth in a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha: and signifies a man’s skull: it seems, that as they executed malefactors here, so they buried them here; and in process of time, their bones being dug up to make room for others, their skulls, with other bones, lay up and down in this place; from whence it had its name in the Syriac dialect, which the Jews then usually spake: here some say Adam’s skull was found, and that it had its name from thence. This was an ancient tradition, as has been observed in the notes on (see Gill on

"(40 27 33)Matthew 27:33"), and (see Gill on "(42 23 33)Luke 23:33") the Syriac writers have it [f713], who say,

> "when Noah went out of the ark there was made a distribution of the bones of Adam; to Shem, his head was given, and the place in which he was buried is called "Karkaphta": where likewise Christ was crucified;"

which word signifies a skull, as Golgotha does: and so likewise the Arabic writers [f714]; who affirm that Shem said these words to Melchizedek,

> "Noah commanded that thou shouldst take the body of Adam, and bury it in the middle of the earth; therefore let us go, I and thou, and bury it; wherefore Shem and Melchizedek went to take the body of Adam, and the angel of the Lord appeared to them and went before them, till they came to the place Calvary, where they buried him, as the angel of the Lord commanded them:"

the same also had the ancient fathers of the Christian church; Cyprian [f715] says, that it is a tradition of the ancients, that Adam was buried in Calvary under the place where the cross of Christ was fixed; and Jerom makes mention of it more than once; so Paula and Eustochium, in an epistle supposed to be dictated by him, or in which he was assisting, say [f716], in this city, meaning Jerusalem, yea in this place, Adam is said to dwell, and to die; from whence the place where our Lord was crucified is called Calvary, because there the skull of the ancient man was buried: and in another place he himself says [f717], that he heard one disputing in the church and explaining, ((49 05 14)Ephesians 5:14) of Adam buried in Calvary, where the Lord was crucified, and therefore was so called. Ambrose [f718] also takes notice of it; the place of the cross, says he, is either in the midst of the land, that it might be conspicuous to all, or over the grave of Adam, as the Hebrews dispute: others say that the hill itself was in the form of a man's skull, and therefore was so called; it was situated, as Jerom says [f719], on the north of Mount Zion, and is thought by some to be the same with the hill Gareb, in ((24 03 39)Jeremiah 31:39). It was usual to crucify on high hills, so Polycrates was crucified upon the highest top of Mount Mycale [f720].

Ver. 18. *Where they crucified him*, etc.] Namely, at Golgotha, the same with Calvary; and so had what they were so desirous of:

and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst: these other two men were thieves, as the other evangelists declare; among whom

Christ was placed, being numbered and reckoned among transgressors: he was no transgressor of the law of God himself, but he was accounted as such by men, and was treated as if he had been one by the justice of God; he, as a surety, standing in the legal place, and stead of his people; hence he died in their room, and for their sins: this shows the low estate of Christ, the strictness of justice, the wisdom of God in salvation, and the grace and love of the Redeemer; who condescended to everything, and every circumstance, though ever so reproachful, which were necessary for the redemption of his people, and the glory of the divine perfections, and for the fulfilment of purposes, promises, and predictions.

Ver. 19. *And Pilate wrote a title*, etc.] Luke calls it a superscription, Mark, the superscription of his accusation, and Matthew, the accusation itself; it contained the substance of the charge against him, and was written upon a table or board, and nailed to the cross, as Nonnus suggests; to this is the allusion, (<51 02 14>Colossians 2:14). The form of it was drawn up by Pilate, his judge, who ordered it to be transcribed upon a proper instrument, and placed over him:

and put it on the cross; not with his own hands, but by his servants, who did it at his command; for others are said to do it, (<40 27 37>Matthew 27:37). It was put upon "the top of the cross", as the Persic version reads it; "over him", or "over his head", as the other evangelists say; and may denote the rise of his kingdom, which is from above, the visibility of it, and the enlargement of it, through the cross:

and the writing was; the words written in the title were,

Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews: Jesus was his name, by which he was commonly called and known, and signifies a Saviour, as he is of all the elect of God; whom he saves from all their sins, by bearing them in his own body on the cross, and of whom he is the able and willing, the perfect and complete, the only and everlasting Saviour: he is said to be of Nazareth; this was the place of which he was an inhabitant; here Joseph and Mary lived before his conception; here he was conceived, though born in Bethlehem; where he did not abide long, but constantly in this place, till he was about thirty years of age; this title was sometimes given him as a term of reproach, though not always: "the King of the Jews"; which both expresses his accusation, and asserts him to be so.

Ver. 20. *This title then read many of the Jews*, etc.] Who were in great numbers, at the place of execution, rejoicing at his crucifixion, and insulting him as he hung on the cross:

for the place where Jesus was crucified, was nigh unto the city; Golgotha, the place of Christ's crucifixion, was not more than two furlongs, or a quarter of a mile from the city of Jerusalem: so that multitudes were continually going from thence to see this sight; the city also being then very full of people, by reason of the feast of the passover; to which may be added, that the cross stood by the wayside, where persons were continually passing to and fro, as appears from (<4027>Matthew 27:39, <4115>Mark 15:29) and where it was usual to erect crosses to make public examples or malefactors, and to deter others from committing the like crimes: so Alexander, the emperor, ordered an eunuch to be crucified by the wayside, in which his servants used commonly to go to his suburb [f721] or country house: Cicero says [f722] the Mamertines, according to their own usage and custom, crucified behind the city, in the Pompeian way; and Quinctilian observes [f723], as often as we crucify criminals, the most noted ways are chosen, where most may behold, and most may be moved with fear: and now Christ being crucified by a public road side, the inscription on the cross was doubtless read by more than otherwise it would:

and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin; that it might be read by all, Jews, Greeks, and Romans; and to show that he is the Saviour of some of all nations; and that he is King over all. These words were written in Hebrew letters in the Syriac dialect, which was used by the Jews, and is called the Hebrew language, (<4913>John 19:13,17) and in which it is most likely Pilate should write these words, or order them to be written; and which, according to the Syriac version we now have, were thus put, aydwhyd aklm ayrxn [wçy; in Greek the words stood as in the original text, thus, Ιησους ο Ναζωραιος ο βασιλευς των Ιουδαιων: and in the Latin tongue, as may be supposed, after this manner, "Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum". These three languages may be very well thought to be understood by Pilate; at least so much of them as to qualify him to write such an inscription as this. The Latin tongue was his mother tongue, which he must be supposed well to understand; and the Greek tongue was very much used by the Romans, since their conquest of the Grecian monarchy; and the emperors' edicts were generally published in Greek, which it was therefore necessary for Pilate to understand; and as he was a governor of Judea, and had been so for some time, he must have acquired some

knowledge of the Hebrew language; and these being the principal languages in the world, he chose to write this title in them, that persons coming from all quarters might be able to read it, and understand it in some one of them.

Ver. 21. *Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate*, etc.] Who were not only informed of this inscription, but might read it themselves, for they were present at the crucifying of Christ, and mocked at him as he hung on the tree; these, when they read the title, were greatly offended at it, partly because it was doing too great an honour to Jesus to call him the King of the Jews: and partly because it fixed a public brand of infamy upon their nation, that a king of theirs should be crucified: wherefore they went to Pilate and addressed him, saying,

write not the King of the Jews: because they did not own him for their king, which this title seemed to suggest, nor had he in their opinion any right to such a character; wherefore they desired that in the room of these words he would be pleased to put the following,

but that he said, I am King of the Jews; that so he might be thought to be a seditious person and a traitor; one that laid claim to the temporal crown and kingdom of Israel, and one that suffered justly for attempts of that kind.

Ver. 22. *Pilate answered, what I have written I have written*, etc.] He seems to say this, as one angry and displeased with them; either because they would not consent to release Jesus, which he was desirous of, but pressed him so very hard to crucify him; or at their insolence, in directing him in what form to put the superscription, which he determines shall stand unaltered, as he had wrote it. This he said, either because he could not alter it after it was written, for it is said [f724], that

> “a proconsul’s table is his sentence, which being once read, not one letter can either be increased or diminished; but as it is recited, so it is related in the instrument of the province;”

or if he could have altered it, he was not suffered by God to do it; but was so directed, and over ruled by divine providence, as to write, so to persist in, and abide by what he had wrote inviolably; which is the sense of his words. Dr. Lightfoot has given several instances out of the Talmud, showing that this is a common way of speaking with the Rabbins; and that words thus doubled signify that what is spoken of stands good, and is

irrevocable: so a widow taking any of the moveable goods of her husband deceased for her maintenance, it is said [f725], hspt hsptç hm, "what she takes, she takes"; that is, she may lawfully do it, and retain it: it continues in her hands, and cannot be taken away from her; and so the gloss explains it, "they do not take it from her"; and in the same way Maimonides [f726] interprets it: so of a man that binds himself to offer an oblation one way, and he offers it another way, aybh aybhç hm, "what he has offered, he has offered [f727]"; what he has offered is right, it stands good, and is not to be rejected: and again, among the rites used by a deceased brother's wife, towards him that refuses to marry her, if one thing is done before the other, it matters not, ywç[ywç[ç hm, "what is done, is done [f728]"; and is not to be undone, or done over again in another way; it stands firm and good, and not to be objected to: and the same writer observes, that this is a sort of prophecy of Pilate, and which should continue, and for ever obtain, that the Jews should have no other King Messiah than Jesus of Nazareth; nor have they had any other; all that have risen up have proved false Messiahs; nor will they have any other; nor indeed any king, until they seek the Lord their God, and David their king, (Hos 3:5Hosea 3:5) that is, the son of David, as they will do in the latter day; when they shall be converted, and when they shall own him as their king, their ancestors at this time were ashamed of.

Ver. 23. *Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus*, etc.] The crucifixion of Christ was at the request and solicitation of the Jews, was ordered by the Roman governor, and performed by the Roman soldiers; the sinful men into whose hands Christ was to be delivered:

took his garments; which they had stripped his body of, crucifying him naked; as what properly belonged to them, it being usual then, as now, for executioners to have the clothes of the persons they put to death; these were his inner garments:

and made four parts, to every soldier a part; for it seems there were four of them concerned in his execution, and who were set to watch him:

and also his coat; or upper garment;

now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout: in such an one the Jews say [f729] Moses ministered: and of this sort and make was the robe of the high priest, said to be of "woven work", (Exo 28:32Exodus 28:32) upon which Jarchi remarks, jjmb alw, "and not with a needle"; it was all

woven, and without any seam: and so the Jews say [f730] in general of the garments of the priests:

> "the garments of the priests are not made of needlework, but of woven work; as it is said, (<2828>Exodus 28:32). Abai says, it is not necessary (i.e. the use of the needle) but for their sleeves; according to the tradition, the sleeve of the garments of the priests is woven by itself, and is joined to the garment, and reaches to the palm of the hand."

So that this was an entire woven garment from top to bottom, excepting the sleeves, which were wove separately and sewed to it; of this kind also was his coat, which Jacob Iehudah Leon says [f731],

> "was a stately woollen coat of a sky colour, wholly woven, all of one piece, without seam, without sleeves;"

such a garment Christ our great High Priest wore, which had no seam in it, but was a curious piece of texture from top to bottom. The very learned Braunius [f732] says, he has seen such garments in Holland, and has given fine cuts of them, and also of the frame in which they are wrought. What authority Nonnus had to call this coat a black one, or others for saying it was the work of the Virgin Mary, I know not.

Ver. 24. *They said therefore among themselves*, etc.] When they saw what a curious piece of work it was, and that it was pity to divide it into parts: and besides, that it would have been rendered entirely useless thereby: they moved it to each other, saying,

let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be, that the Scripture might be fulfilled: not that they knew anything of the Scripture, or had any intention of fulfilling it hereby, but they were so directed by the providence of God, to take such a step; whereby was literally accomplished the passage in (<1922>Psalm 22:18)

which saith, they parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. The whole psalm is to be understood of the Messiah, not of David, as some do [f733]; many passages in it cannot be applied to him, such as speak of the dislocation of his bones, the piercing of his hands and feet, and this of parting his garments, and casting lots for his vesture: all which had their literal accomplishment in Jesus: nor can it be understood of Esther, as it is by some Jewish [f734] interpreters; there is not one word in it

that agrees with her, and particularly, not the clause here cited; and there are some things in it which are manifestly spoken of a man, and not of a woman, as (<19218>Psalm 22:8,24) nor can the whole body of the Jewish nation, or the congregation of Israel be intended, as others say [f735]; since it is clear, that a single person is spoken of throughout the psalm, and who is distinguished from others, from his brethren, from the congregation, from the seed of Jacob and Israel, (<19222>Psalm 22:22,23) and indeed, no other than the Messiah can be meant; he is pointed at in the very title of it, Aijeleth Shahar, which words, in what way soever they are rendered, agree with him: if by "the morning daily sacrifice", as they are by the Targum; he is the Lamb of God, who continually takes away the sins of the world; and very fitly is he so called in the title of a psalm, which speaks so much of his sufferings and death, which were a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of his people: or by the morning star, as others [f736] interpret them; Christ is the bright and morning star, the day spring from on high, the sun of righteousness, and light of the world: or by "the morning help", as by the Septuagint; Christ had early help from God in the morning of his infancy, when Herod sought his life, and in the day of salvation of his people; and early in the morning was he raised from the dead, and had glory given him: or by "the morning hind", which seems best of all, to which he may be compared, as to a roe or hart, in (<22209>Song of Solomon 2:9,17, 8:14) for his love and loveliness, and for his swiftness and readiness in appearing for the salvation of his people; and for his being hunted by Herod in the morning of his days; and being encompassed by those dogs, the Scribes and Pharisees, Judas and the band of soldiers; (see <19216>Psalm 22:16). The first words of the psalm were spoken by Jesus the true Messiah, when he hung upon the cross, and are truly applied to himself; his reproaches and sufferings endured by him there, are particularly and exactly described in it, and agree with no other; the benefits which the people of God were to enjoy, in consequence of his sufferings, and the conversion of the Gentiles spoken of in it, which is peculiar to the days of the Messiah, show to whom it belongs. The Jews "themselves" are obliged to interpret some parts of it concerning him; they sometimes say [f737], that by Aijeleth Shahar is meant the Shekinah, a name that well suits with the Messiah Jesus, who tabernacled in our nature; the (<19226>Psalm 22:26) is applied by Jarchi to the time of the redemption, and the days of the Messiah; so that upon the whole, this passage is rightly cited with respect to the Messiah, and is truly said to be fulfilled by this circumstance, of the soldiers doing with his garments as they did:

these things therefore the soldiers did; because they were before determined and predicted that they should be done: and therefore they were disposed and directed by a superior influence, in perfect agreement with the freedom of their wills to do these things. The whole of this account may be spiritually applied. The Scriptures are the garments of Christ; or, as a prince of Anhalt said, the swaddling clothes in which the infant of Bethlehem was wrapped; these exhibit and show forth Christ in his glory, and by which he is known and bore witness to, and are pure and incorrupt, fragrant, and savory. Heretics are the soldiers that rend and tear the Scriptures in pieces, part them, add unto them, or detract from them; who corrupt, pervert, wrest, and misapply them; but truth is the seamless coat; it is all of a piece, is of God, there is nothing human in it; though it may be played with, betrayed, sold, or denied, it cannot be destroyed, but is, and will be preserved by divine providence: or the human nature of Christ is the vesture, with which his divine person was as it were covered, was put on and off, and on again as a garment; is of God, and not man; is pure and spotless; and though his soul and body were parted asunder for a while, this could never be parted from his divine person: or else the righteousness of Christ may be signified by this robe, which is often compared to one, because it is put on the saints, and they are clothed with it: it covers, keeps warm, protects, beautifies, and adorns them; this is seamless, and all of a piece, and has nothing of men's works and services tacked unto it; is enjoyed by a divine lot by some men, and not all, and even such as have been sinful and ungodly; it is pure, perfect and will last for ever.

Ver. 25. *Now there stood by the cross of Jesus*, etc.] So near as not only to see him, but to hear him speak:

his mother; the mother of Jesus, Mary; which showed her affection to Christ, and her constancy in abiding by him to the last; though it must be a cutting sight, and now was fulfilled Simeon's prophecy, (Luke 2:35) to see her son in such agonies and sorrow, and jeered and insulted by the worst of men; and though she herself was exposed to danger, and liable to be abused by the outrageous multitude; and it also showed that she stood in need, as others, of a crucified Saviour; so far was she from being a co-partner with him in making satisfaction for sin, as the Papists wickedly say:

and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas. The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions distinguish Mary the wife of Cleophas from his mother's

sister, by placing the copulative and between them, and so make two persons; whereas one and the same is intended, and who was the sister of Mary, the mother of Christ; not her own sister, for it is not likely that two sisters should be of the same name; but her husband Joseph's sister, and so her's; or else Cleophas was Joseph's brother, as Eusebius from Hegesippus says [f738]: and who was also not the daughter of Cleophas, as the Arabic version has here supplied it; much less the mother of him; but his wife, as is rightly put in our translation: for, according to the other evangelists, she was the mother of James and Joses, and who were the sons of Cleophas or Alphaeus; which are not the names of two persons, nor two names of one and the same person, but one and the same name differently pronounced; his true name in Hebrew was ypl j, or yapl j, or yplyj, "Chelphi", or "Chelphai", or "Chilphi", a name frequently to be met with in Talmudic and Rabbinic writings; and so a Jewish writer [f739] observes, that aplya awhw aplyj, "Chilpha is the same as Ilpha"; and in Greek may be pronounced either Cleophas, or Alphaeus, as it is both ways: ignorance of this has led interpreters to form different conjectures, as that either the husband of this Mary had two names; or that she was twice married to two different persons, once to Alphaeus, and after his death to Cleophas; or that Cleophas was her father, and Alphaeus her husband; for neither of which is there any foundation. She was no doubt a believer in Christ, and came and stood by his cross; not merely to keep her sister company, but out of affection to Jesus, and to testify her faith in him:

and Mary Magdalene; out of whom he had cast seven devils, and who had been a true penitent, a real believer in him, an hearty lover of him, was zealously attached to him, and followed him to the last. Three Marys are here mentioned as together; and it is observable, that the greater part of those that are taken notice of, as following Christ to the cross, and standing by it, were women, the weaker, and timorous sex, when all his disciples forsook him and fled; and none of them attended at the cross, as we read of, excepting John; no, not even Peter, who boasted so much of his attachment to him. These good women standing by the cross of Christ, may teach us to do, as they did, look upon a crucified Christ, view his sorrows, and his sufferings, and our sins laid upon him, and borne and taken away by him; we should look unto him for pardon, cleansing, and justification, and, in short, for the whole of salvation: we should also weep, as they did, whilst we look on him; shed even tears of affection for, and sympathy with him; of humiliation for sin, and of joy for a Saviour: and

likewise should abide by him as they did, by his persons, offices, and grace; by the doctrine of the cross, continuing steadfastly in it; and by the ordinances of Christ, constantly attending on them, and that notwithstanding all reproaches and sufferings we may undergo.

Ver. 26. *When Jesus therefore saw his mother*, etc.] Standing near him, within the reach of his voice, as well as sight, he took notice of her, and showed a concern for her temporal, as well as for her eternal good:

and the disciple standing by; either by his cross, his mother, or both:

whom he loved: meaning John, the writer of this Gospel, who for modesty's sake often describes himself in this manner; he being distinguished by Christ from the rest, by some peculiar marks of affection as man; though as God, and as the Redeemer, he loved his disciples alike, as he does all his true and faithful followers:

he saith unto his mother, woman, behold thy son; meaning not himself, but the disciple, who was her son, not by nature, nor adoption; but who would show himself as a son, by his filial affection for, care of, honour and respect unto her. Christ calls her not mother, but woman; not out of disrespect to her, or as ashamed of her; but partly that he might not raise, or add strength to her passions, by a tenderness of speaking; and partly to conceal her from the mob, and lest she should be exposed to their rude insults; as also to let her know that all natural relation was now ceasing between them; though this is a title he sometimes used to give her before.

Ver. 27. *Then saith he to the disciple*, etc.] The same disciple John:

behold thy mother; take care of her, and provide for her, as if she was thine own mother: this shows the meanness of Christ, who had nothing to leave her, though Lord of all; it is very probable that Joseph was dead, and Mary now a widow; and whereas Christ had taken care of her, and maintained her hitherto, he now, in his dying moments, commits her to the care of this disciple; which is an instance of his humanity, and of his regard to every duty; and this in particular, of honouring parents, and providing for them in distress, and old age:

and hour that disciple took her to his own home: or house; so the Septuagint render wtyb, "to his house", by εις τα ιδια, in (17612Esther 6:12) the phrase here used, and in (48162John 16:32). Some say she lived with John at Jerusalem, and there died; and others say, that she died in the

twelfth year after the resurrection of Christ, being 59 years of age, and was buried by John in the garden of Gethsemane: where his house was is not certain, whether at Jerusalem or in Galilee, nor how long she lived with him; but this is not to be doubted, that he took care of her, and provided for her, as if she was his own mother; and his doing this forthwith shows his great regard to Christ, his readiness and cheerfulness to comply with his orders and directions, and his unfeigned love unto him.

Ver. 28. *After this*, etc.] After he had committed his mother to the care of John, which was about the sixth hour, before the darkness came over the land: and three hours after this was the following circumstance, which was not without the previous knowledge of Christ:

Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished; or just upon being accomplished, were as good as finished; and as they were to be, would be in a very short time; even all things relating to his sufferings, and the circumstances of them, which were afore appointed by God, and foretold in prophecy, and of which he had perfect knowledge:

that the Scripture might be fulfilled: might appear to have its accomplishment, which predicted the great drought and thirst that should be on him, (<19225>Psalm 22:15) and that his enemies at such a time would give him vinegar to drink, (<19921>Psalm 69:21)

saith, I thirst; which was literally true of him, and may be also understood spiritually of his great thirst and eager desire after the salvation of his people.

Ver. 29. *Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar*, etc.] In a place near at hand, as Nonnus observes; not on purpose, for the sake of them that were crucified, either to refresh their spirits, or stop a too great effusion of blood, that they might continue the longer in their misery; but for the use of the soldiers who crucified Christ, vinegar being part of the allowance of Roman soldiers [f740], and what they used to drink: sometimes it was mixed with water; which mixed liquor they called "Posca" [f741], and was what even their generals sometimes used; as Scipio, Metellus, Trajan, Adrian, and others: vinegar was also used by the Jews for drink, as appears from (<08214>Ruth 2:14) and "dip thy morsel in the vinegar", which Boaz's reapers had with them in the field; "because of heat", as the commentators say [f742]; that being good to cool, and to extinguish thirst; for which reason the soldiers here offer it to Christ; though the Chaldee paraphrase of the above

place makes it to be a kind of sauce or pap boiled in vinegar; and such an "Embamma" made of vinegar the Romans had, in which they dipped their food [f743]; but this here seems to be pure vinegar, and to be different from that which the other evangelists speak of, which was mingled with gall, or was sour wine with myrrh, (<402734>Matthew 27:34, <411523>Mark 15:23). Vinegar indeed is good to revive the spirits, and hyssop, which is after mentioned, is an herb of a sweet smell; and if the reed, which the other evangelists make mention of, was the sweet calamus, as some have thought, they were all of them things of a refreshing nature: vinegar was also used for stopping blood [f744], when it flowed from wounds in a large quantity; and of the same use were sponges; hence Tertullian [f745] mentions "spongias retiariorum", the sponges of the fencers, which they had with them to stop any effusion of blood that should be made in their exercises; but then it can hardly be thought that these things should be in common prepared at crucifixions for such ends, on purpose to linger out a miserable life a little longer, which would be shocking barbarity; and especially such a provision would never be, made at this time, on such an account, since the Jews sabbath drew nigh, and they were in haste to have the executions over before that came on, that the bodies might not remain on the cross on that day; for which reason they would do nothing, at this time, however, to prolong the lives of the malefactors; wherefore it is most reasonable, that this vessel of vinegar was not set for any such purpose, but was for the use of the soldiers; and therefore this being at hand when Christ signified his thirst, they offered some of it in the following manner:

and they filled a sponge with vinegar; it being the nature of a sponge (which Nonnus here calls βλαστημα ψλασσης, "a branch of the sea", because it grows there) to swallow up anything that is liquid, and which may be again squeezed and sucked out of it; hence the Jews say [f746] of it, ˆyqçm [lbç gwps, "the sponge which swallows up liquids"; and used it for such a purpose; "and put it upon hyssop"; meaning not the juice of hyssop, into which some have thought the sponge with vinegar was put, but the herb, and a stalk of it: the other evangelists say, it was put "upon a reed"; meaning either that the sponge with the hyssop were put about a reed, and so given him; or rather it was a stalk of hyssop, which was like a reed or cane; and in this country of Judea grew very large, sufficient for such a purpose. The hyssop with the Jews was not reckoned among herbs, but trees; (see <110433>1 Kings 4:33) and they speak [f747] of hyssop which they gather µyx[l, "for wood"; the stalks of which therefore must be of some

size; yea, they call [f748] a stalk which has a top to it, hnq, "a reed", or cane; which observation seems to reconcile the other evangelists with this: and they distinguish their hyssop which was right for use from that which had an epithet joined to it; as, Roman hyssop, Grecian hyssop, wild and bastard hyssop [f749]: and some writers [f750] observe even of our common hyssop, that it has sometimes stalks of nine inches long, or longer, and hard and woody, nay, even a foot and a half; with one of which a man with his arms stretched out might possibly reach the mouth of a person on a cross: how high crosses usually were is not certain, nor was there any fixed measure for them; sometimes they were higher, and sometimes lower; the cross or gallows made by Haman for Mordecai was very high indeed, and the mouth of a person could not have been reached with an hyssop stalk; but such an one might, as was erected for Saul's sons, whose bodies on it could be reached by the beasts of the field, (2 Samuel 21:10) and so low was the cross on which Blandina the martyr suffered, as the church at Lyons relates [f751], when on the cross she was exposed to beasts of prey, and became food for them: so that there is no need to suppose any fault in the text, and that instead of "hyssop" it should be read "hyssos"; which was a kind of javelin the Romans call "Pilum", about five or six foot long, which, it is supposed, one of the soldiers might have, and on it put the hyssop with the sponge and vinegar; but this conjecture is not supported by any copy, or ancient version; the Syriac version, which is a very ancient one, reads "hyssop". The Arabic and Persic versions render it, "a reed", as in the other evangelists; and the Ethiopic version has both, "they filled a sponge with vinegar, and it was set round with hyssop, and they bound it upon a reed"; and so some have thought that a bunch of hyssop was stuck round about the sponge of vinegar, which was fastened to the top of a reed; and the words will bear to be rendered; "setting it about with hyssop": this they might have out of the gardens, which were near this place, or it might grow upon the mountain itself; for we are told [f752], it grew in great plenty upon the mountains about Jerusalem, and that its branches were almost a cubit long. Josephus [f753] makes mention of a village beyond Jordan called Bethezob, which, as he says, signifies the house of hyssop; perhaps so called from the large quantity of hyssop that grew near it:

and put it to his mouth; whether Christ drank of it or no is not certain; it seems by what follows as if he did; at least he took it, being offered to him: the Jews themselves say [f754], that Jesus said, give me a little water to drink,

and they gave him qzj hdwj, “sharp vinegar”; which so far confirms the evangelic history.

Ver. 30. *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar*, etc.] Of the Roman soldiers, who offered it to him, either by way of reproach, or to quench his thirst; and he drank of it, as is very likely:

he said, it is finished; that is, the whole will of God; as that he should be incarnate, be exposed to shame and reproach, and suffer much, and die; the whole work his Father gave him to do, which was to preach the Gospel, work miracles, and obtain eternal salvation for his people, all which were now done, or as good as done; the whole righteousness of the law was fulfilled, an holy nature assumed, perfect obedience yielded to it, and the penalty of death endured; hence a perfect righteousness was finished agreeably to the law, which was magnified and made honourable by it, and redemption from its curse and condemnation secured; sin was made an end of, full atonement and satisfaction for it were given; complete pardon procured, peace made, and redemption from all iniquity obtained; all enemies were conquered; all types, promises, and prophecies were fulfilled, and his own course of life ended: the reason of his saying so was, because all this was near being done, just upon finishing, and was as good as done; and was sure and certain, and so complete, that nothing need, or could be added to it; and it was done entirely without the help of man, and cannot be undone; all which since has more clearly appeared by Christ’s resurrection from the dead, his entrance into heaven, his session at God’s right hand, the declaration of the Gospel, and the application of salvation to particular persons:

and he bowed his head; as one dying, and freely submitting to his Father’s will, and the stroke of death:

and gave up the ghost; his spirit or soul into the hands of his Father; freely laying down that precious life of his which no man could take away from him.

Ver. 31. *The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation*, etc.] That is, either of the passover, as in (<48194>John 19:14) which was the Chagigah or grand festival in which they offered their peace offerings and slew their oxen, and feasted together in great mirth and jollity; or of the sabbath, the evening of it, or day before it, as in (<41542>Mark 15:42)

that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day; which was now drawing near: according to the Jewish law, (<05 21 22>Deuteronomy 21:22,23) the body of one that was hanged on a tree was not to remain all night, but to be taken down that day and buried; though this was not always observed; (see <10 21 09>2 Samuel 21:9,10). What was the usage of the Jews at this time is not certain; according to the Roman laws, such bodies hung until they were putrefied, or eaten by birds of prey; wherefore that their land might not be defiled, and especially their sabbath, by their remaining on the cross, they desire to have them taken down:

for that sabbath day was an high day; it was not only a sabbath, and a sabbath in the passover week, but it was the day in which all the people appeared and presented themselves before the Lord in the temple, and the sheaf of the first fruits was offered up; all which solemnities meeting together made it a very celebrated day: it is in the original text, "it was the great day of the sabbath"; which is the language of the Talmudists, and who say [f755],

> "lwdgh tbç arqn "is called the great sabbath", on account of the miracle or sign of the passover;"

and in the Jewish Liturgy [f756] there is a collect for the "great sabbath": hence the Jews pretending a great concern lest that day should be polluted, though they made no conscience of shedding innocent blood,

besought Pilate that their legs might be broken; which was the manner of the Jews [f757], partly to hasten death, since, according to their law, the body was to betaken down before night; and partly that it might be a clear point that the person was rightly executed; for this was not the Roman custom, with whom breaking of the legs, or rather thighs, was a distinct punishment, and was done by laying a man's legs or thighs upon an anvil, and striking them with an hammer [f758]; which could not be the case here; this seems to have been done by striking the legs of those that were crucified, which were fastened to the cross, with a bar of iron, or some such instrument. Nonnus suggests that their legs were cut off with a saw or sword; but the former seems more reasonable:

and that they might be taken away; which it seems the Jews had not power to do, but must be done by the Roman soldiers, or by leave at least from the Roman governor; and therefore they make their request to him.

Ver. 32. *Then came the soldiers*, etc.] Pilate having granted the Jews what they desired; either the soldiers that crucified Christ, and the others with him, and watched their bodies, being ordered by Pilate, went from the place where they sat; or a fresh company, which were sent for this purpose, came from the city:

and brake the legs of the first; they came unto, which whether it was he that was crucified on his right hand, and was the penitent believer in him, as some have thought, is not certain:

and of the other which was crucified with him; who, if the former is true, must be he that reviled him; and was this their position, it was a lively emblem of the last day, when the sheep shall stand at the right, and the goats on the left hand of Christ.

Ver. 33. *But when they came to Jesus*, etc.] Whom they passed by before, and now returned to; this they did not out of tenderness to him, but that he might be the longer in his torture, and whom they reserved till last, that they might use him with the greater cruelty and barbarity:

and saw that he was dead already; as they might, from the bowing down of his head, the ghastliness of his countenance, the falling of his jaws, and other signs:

they brake not his legs; there being no occasion for it, nor would it have answered any end, were they ever so spiteful and malicious against him; though the true reason was, and which restrained them from it, divine providence would not suffer them to do it.

Ver. 34. *But one of the soldiers*, etc.] Whose name some pretend to say was Longinns, and so called from the spear with which he pierced Christ:

with a spear pierced his side; his left side, where the heart lies; though the painters make this wound on the right, and the Arabic version of Erpenius, as cited by Dr. Lightfoot, adds the word “right” to make the miracle the greater: this the soldier did, partly out of spite to Christ, and partly to know whether he was really dead; and which was so ordered by divine providence, that it might beyond all doubt appear that he really died, and was not taken down alive from the cross; so that there might be no room to call in question the truth of his resurrection, when he should appear alive again:

and forthwith came there out blood and water; this is accounted for in a natural way by the piercing of the "pericardium", which contains a small quantity of water about the heart, and which being pierced, a person, if alive, must inevitably die; but it seems rather to be something supernatural, from the asseverations the evangelist makes. This water and blood some make to signify baptism and the Lord's supper, which are both of Christ's appointing, and spring from him, and refer to his sufferings and death; rather they signify the blessings of sanctification and justification, the grace of the one being represented by water, as it frequently is in the Old and New Testament, and the other by blood, and both from Christ: that Christ was the antitype of the rock in the wilderness, the apostle assures us, in (<460104>1 Corinthians 10:4) and if the Jews are to be believed, he was so in this instance; Jonathan ben Uzziel, in his Targum on (<042011>Numbers 20:11) says that

> "Moses smote the rock twice, at the first time amda tpyja, "blood dropped out": and at the second time abundance of waters flowed out."

The same is affirmed by others [f759] elsewhere in much the same words and order.

Ver. 35. *And he that saw it, bare record*, etc.] Meaning himself, John the evangelist, the writer of this Gospel, who, in his great modesty, frequently conceals himself, under one circumlocution or another; he was an eyewitness of this fact, not only of the piercing of his side with a spear, but of the blood and water flowing out of it; which he saw with his eyes, and bore record of to others, and by this writing; and was ready to attest it in any form it should be desired:

and his record is true; though it is not mentioned by any of the other evangelists, none of them but himself being present at that time:

and he knoweth that he saith true; meaning either God or Christ, who knew all things; and so it is a sort of appeal to God or Christ, for the truth of what he affirmed, as some think; or rather himself, who was fully assured that he was under no deception, and was far from telling an untruth; having seen the thing done with his eyes, and being led into the mystery of it by the Divine Spirit; (see <620506>1 John 5:6,8) wherefore he could, and did declare it with the strongest asseverations:

that ye might believe; the truth of the fact, and in Christ, both for the expiation of the guilt of sin, and cleansing from the filth of it; both for sanctifying and justifying grace, which the water and the blood were an emblem of.

Ver. 36. *For these things were done*, etc.] The not breaking his bones and piercing his side, and that not by chance, and without design; but,

that the Scripture should be fulfilled, a bone of him shall not be broken; referring either to (<19A20>Psalm 34:20) he keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken; which if to be understood of the righteous in general, had a very particular and remarkable accomplishment in Christ; though a certain single person seems to be designed; nor is it true in fact of every righteous man, some of whom have had their bones broken; and such a sense would lead to despair in case of broken bones; for whereas such a calamity befalls them, as well as wicked men, under such an affliction, they might be greatly distressed, and from hence be ready to conclude, that they are not righteous persons, and are not under the care and protection of God, or otherwise this promise would be made good: nor have the words any respect to the resurrection of the dead, as if the sense of it was, that none of the bones of the righteous shall be finally broken; and though they may be broken by men, and in their sight, yet the Lord will raise them again, and restore them whole and perfect at the general resurrection; for this will be true of the wicked, as well as of the righteous: and much less is the meaning of the words, one of his bones shall not be broken, namely, the bone "luz", the Jews speak of; which, they say [f760], remains uncorrupted in the grave, and is so hard that it cannot be softened by water, nor burnt in the fire, nor ground in the mill, nor broke with an hammer; by and from which God will raise the whole body at the last day: but the words are to be understood of Christ, he is the poor man that is particularly pointed at in (<19A06>Psalm 34:6) who, was poor in his state of humiliation, and who cried unto the Lord, and he heard him, and saved him; and he is the righteous one, whose afflictions were many, and out of which the Lord delivered him, (<19A19>Psalm 34:19) whose providential care of him was very particular and remarkable; he kept his bones from being broken, when others were; and by this incident this passage had its literal fulfilment in him: or else it may refer to the passover lamb, a type of Christ, (<461E07>1 Corinthians 5:7) a bone of which was not to be broken, (<021246>Exodus 12:46, <041912>Numbers 9:12). The former of these passages is a command, in the second person, to the Israelites, concerning the paschal lamb, "neither shall ye break a bone

thereof"; and the latter is delivered in the third person, "nor shall they break any bone of it"; which may be rendered impersonally, "a bone of it, or of him, shall not be broken; or a bone shall not be broken in him"; and so the Syriac and Persic versions read the words here; and in some copies it is, "a bone shall not be broken from him"; and so read the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; and he that violated this precept, according to the traditions of the Jews, was to be beaten. Maimonides [f761] says,

> "he that breaks a bone in a pure passover, lo, he is to be beaten, as it is said, "and a bone ye shall not break in it": and so it is said of the second passover, "and a bone ye shall not break in it"; but a passover which comes with uncleanness, if a man breaks a bone in it, he is not to be beaten: from the literal sense it may be learned, that a bone is not to be broken, whether in a pure or defiled passover: one that breaks a bone on the night of the fifteenth, or that breaks a bone in it within the day, or that breaks one after many days, lo, he is to be beaten; wherefore they burn the bones of the passover in general, with what is left of its flesh, that they may not come to damage: none are guilty but for the breaking of a bone on which there is flesh of the quantity of an olive, or in which there is marrow; but a bone in which there is no marrow, and on which there is no flesh of the quantity of an olive, a man is not guilty for breaking it; and if there is flesh upon it of such a quantity, and he breaks the bone in the place where there is no flesh, he is guilty, although the place which he breaks is quite bare of its flesh: he that breaks after (another) has broken, is to be beaten."

And with these rules agree the following canons [f762],

> "the bones and sinews, and what is left, they burn on the sixteenth day, but if that falls on the sabbath, they burn them on the seventeenth, because these do not drive away the sabbath or a feast day."

And so it fell out this year in which Christ suffered, for the sixteenth was the sabbath day: again,

> "he that breaks a bone in a pure passover, lo, he is to be beaten with forty stripes; but he that leaves anything in a pure one, and breaks in an impure one, is not to be beaten with forty stripes;"

yea, they say [f763], though

> "it was a little kid and tender, and whose bones are tender, they may not eat them; for this is breaking of the bone, and if he eats he is to be beaten, for it is the same thing whether a hard or a tender bone be broken."

Now in this as in many other respects the paschal lamb was a type of Christ, whose bones were none of them to be broken, to show that his life was not taken away by men, but was laid down freely by himself; and also the unbroken strength of Christ under the weight of sin, the curse of the law, and wrath of God, and conflict with Satan, when he obtained eternal redemption for us: and also this was on account of his resurrection from the dead, which was to be in a few days; though had his bones been broken he could easily have restored them, but it was the will of God it should be otherwise. Moreover, as none of the bones of his natural body were to be broken, so none that are members of him in a spiritual sense, who are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, shall ever be lost.

Ver. 37. *And again another Scripture saith*, etc.] (Zechariah 12:10) which as the former is referred to on account of the not breaking of his bones, this is cited as fulfilled by the piercing of his side:

they shall look on him whom they pierced; in the Hebrew text it is, "upon me whom they have pierced"; the reason of this difference is, because Christ, who is Jehovah, is there speaking prophetically of himself, here the evangelist cites it as fulfilled in him, that is, that part of it which regards the piercing of him; for that of the Jews looking upon him and mourning is yet to be fulfilled, and will be at the time of their conversion in the latter day, and at the day of judgment. And as the piercing of the Messiah has been literally fulfilled in Jesus, there is reason to believe, though the Jews are to this day hardened against him, that that part of the prophecy which concerns their looking to him, and mourning for him on account of his being pierced by them, will also, in God's own time, be fulfilled. Nor is it any objection to the application of this prophecy to our Lord Jesus, that not the Jews, but the Roman soldiers pierced him, since what one does by another, he may be said to do himself: though it was a Roman soldier that pierced the side of Christ, the Jews might desire and urge him to do it; and however, they agreed to it, and were well pleased with it; and just so Christ is said to be crucified and slain by them; though this was done by the above soldiers, because they prevailed upon Pilate to pass the sentence of death upon him, and to deliver him to the soldiers to be crucified. From the

citation of this passage it appears, that the writers of the New Testament did not always follow the Greek version of the Old Testament, which here renders the words very differently, and very wrongly; but John cites them according to the Hebrew text, even which we now have, and which is an instance of the truth, purity, and integrity of the present Hebrew books of the Old Testament. The Jewish doctors [f764] themselves own that these words respect the Messiah, though they pretend that Messiah ben Joseph is meant, who shall be slain in the wars of Gog and Magog; for since their disappointment, and the blindness and hardness of heart which have followed it, they feign two Messiahs as expected by them; one Messiah ben David, who they suppose will be prosperous and victorious; and the other Messiah ben Joseph, who will suffer much, and at last be killed.

Ver. 38. *And after this*, etc.] That is, after Jesus had given up the ghost, when it was a clear case that he was dead; as it was before the soldiers came to break the legs of the crucified, and before one of them pierced the side of Jesus with his spear, though that confirmed it: but it seems to be before these last things were done, and yet after the death of Christ, that Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate, and desired leave to take down the body of Jesus. This Joseph was a counsellor, one of the Jewish sanhedrim; though he did not give his consent to the counsel of the court concerning Jesus: he is here described by the place of his birth, Arimathea. This place has been generally thought to be the same with Ramah or Ramathaim Zophim, the birth place of Samuel the prophet; and so I have taken it to be in the note (see Gill on "Matthew 27:57") but there seems to be some reason to doubt about it, since Ramathaim Zophim was in Mount Ephraim, or in the mountainous parts of that tribe, (1 Samuel 1:1) whereas Arimathea is called a city of the Jews, (Luke 23:51). But if it was in the tribe of Ephraim, it would rather, as Reland [f765] observes, be called a city of the Samaritans, to whom that part of the country belonged; besides, as the same learned writer shows from (Judges 4:5, 2 Chronicles 19:4) the mountainous parts of Ephraim were about Bethel, to the north of Jerusalem; whereas Arimathea is mentioned along with Lydda, which lay to the west of it, as it is by Jerom, and others: that ancient writer says [f766], that not far from Lydda, now called Diospolis, famous for the raising of Dorcas from the dead, and the healing of Aeneas, is Arimathia, the little village of Joseph, who buried the Lord; though he makes this elsewhere [f767] to be the same with Ramathaim Zophim: his words are, Armatha Zophim, the city of Elkanah and Samuel, is in the region of Thamna by Diospolis, (or Lydda,)

from whence was Joseph, who, in the Gospels, is said to be of Arimathia; and so in Josephus [f768], and in the Apocrypha: ``Wherefore we have ratified unto them the borders of Judea, with the three governments of Apherema and Lydda and Ramathem, that are added unto Judea from the country of Samaria, and all things appertaining unto them, for all such as do sacrifice in Jerusalem, instead of the payments which the king received of them yearly aforetime out of the fruits of the earth and of trees." (1 Maccabees 11:34)

Lydda and Ramatha, or, as in the latter, Ramathem, are mentioned together, as added unto Judea from the country of Samaria; which last clause, "from the country of Samaria", seems to bid fair for a reconciliation of this matter, that those two are one and the same place: and as the birth place of Samuel the prophet is called, by the Septuagint, Armathaim, as has been observed *see Gill "Matthew 27:57"* so it is likewise called, atmr, "Ramatha", by the Targumist on (Hosea 5:8) as it is also by Josephus [f769]. The city of this name, near Lydda, is now called Ramola, and is about thirty six or thirty seven miles from Jerusalem. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it, "who was of Rama". Some take this Joseph to be the same with Joseph ben Gorion, the brother of Nicodemus ben Gorion, and who is supposed to be the same Nicodemus mentioned in the next verse. The character the Jews [f770] give of Joseph ben Gorion is, that he was a priest, and of the richest and most noble of the priests in Jerusalem; that he was a very wise, just, and upright man; and that three or four years before the destruction of Jerusalem, he was about sixty seven years of age.

Being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews; not one of the twelve, but a private hearer, who had sometimes secretly attended on the ministry of Christ, loved him, and believed in him as the Messiah, but had not courage enough to confess him, and declare for him, for fear of being put out of the synagogue and sanhedrim: but now being inspired with zeal and courage, "went in boldly", as Mark says,

and besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: from off the cross, that it might not be any more insulted by his enemies, and might not be thrown with the other bodies into the place where the bodies of malefactors were cast, but that it might be decently interred. This Pilate, the Roman governor, had the disposal of, and to him Joseph applies for it; which was a great instance of his affection for Christ, and was a declaring

openly for him, and must unavoidably expose him to the malice and resentment of the Jews:

and Pilate gave him leave; having first inquired of the centurion, whether he was dead; of which being satisfied, he readily granted it; not only in complaisance to Joseph, who was a man of note and figure, but on account of the innocence of Jesus, of which he was convinced, and therefore was very willing he should have an honourable burial:

he came therefore; to the cross, with proper servants with him,

and took the body of Jesus; down from the cross, and carried it away. The Alexandrian copy, different from all others, and in language uncommon, reads, “the body of God”.

Ver. 39. *And there came also Nicodemus*, etc.] To the cross, at the same time as Joseph did; who, whether they were brethren, as some conjecture, and met here by consent, since one prepared one thing, and another, for the interment of Christ, is not certain. This Nicodemus is thought to be the same with Nicodemus ben Gorion, the Talmudists speaks of, who, they say [f771], was one of the three rich men in Jerusalem; as this appears to be a rich man, from the large quantity of myrrh and aloes he brought with him, and which must be very costly. Moreover, they say [f772], that he had another name, which was Boni; and they themselves observe [f773], that Boni was one of the disciples of Jesus, as this Nicodemus was, though a secret one, as Joseph: this is he

which at the first came to Jesus by night; who, when Christ first entered on his ministry, or when he first came unto him, came to him by night to discourse with him about his Messiahship, doctrine, and miracles, (<430301>John 3:1,2) for being one of the Pharisees, a ruler of the Jews, and a Rabbi or master in Israel, he was ashamed or afraid to converse publicly with him; however, he went away a disciple; and though he did not openly profess him, he loved him, and believed in him, and now being dead showed his respect to him:

and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight: not himself, but by his servants. This mixture of myrrh and aloes together, and which was a very large quantity, and exceeding costly, was not designed the embalming of his body, and preserving it from putrefaction; for he was not embalmed, though myrrh and cassia and other odours were used in embalming [f774]; but for perfuming it, and in honour and

respect unto him: it was sweet smelling myrrh, and an aromatic spice called "aloe" he brought, and not the common aloe. Nonnus calls it the "Indian aloe", which was of a sweet odour; for which reason it was brought. These are both reckoned with the chief spices, (Song of Solomon 4:14). Myrrh was one of the principal spices in the anointing oil and holy perfume, (Exodus 30:23,34). It is a kind of gum or resin called "stacte", that issues either by incision, or of its own accord, out of the body or branches of a tree of this name, which grows in Arabia and Egypt; and being of an agreeable smell, was used at funerals: hence those words of Martial [f775] " — -& olentem funera myrrham"; and so Nazianzen, speaking of his brother Caesarius, says [f776],

> "he lies dead, friendless, desolate, miserable, σμυρνης ολιγης ηξιωμενος, "favoured with a little myrrh"."

And so the aloe was used to perfume, and to give a good scent, (Proverbs 7:17) and Christ's garments are said to smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, (Psalm 45:8). Some have thought, that this was a mixture of the juice of myrrh, and of the juice of the aloe plant, and was a liquid into which the body of Christ was put: but this will not so well agree with the winding of the body in linen, with these in the next verse, where they are called spices. A Jew [f777] objects to this relation of the evangelist as unworthy of belief: he affirms, that this was enough for two hundred dead bodies, and that it could not be carried with less than the strength of a mule, and therefore not by Nicodemus. In answer to which, it is observed by Bishop Kidder [f778], that we having nothing but the Jew's own word for it, that this was enough for two hundred bodies, and a load for a mule; and that it should be told what was the weight of the λιτρα, or pound, mentioned by the evangelist, ere the force of the objection can be seen; and that it is a thing well known, that among the Jews the bodies of great men were buried with a great quantity of spices: it is said of Asa, that "they buried him in his own sepulchre which he had made for himself, in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours, and divers kinds of spices", (2 Chronicles 16:14). To which may be added, what is before observed, that this was not brought by Nicodemus himself, but by his servants; and what they did by his orders, and he coming along with them, he may be said to do. Just as Joseph is said to take down the body of Jesus from the cross, wind it in linen, and carry it to his sepulchre, and there bury it; this being done by his servants, at his orders, or they at

least assisting in it; and as Pilate is said to put the title he wrote upon the cross, though it was done by others, at his command.

Ver. 40. *Then took they the body of Jesus*, etc.] It being taken down from the cross, and carried to the designed place of interment; they, Joseph and Nicodemus, either themselves, or by their servants, took the body;

and wound it in linen clothes; or "swathed", or "wrapped it in linen"; rolled it about the body many times, as was the custom of the eastern nations to do; this was what Joseph prepared:

with the spices; which they either wrapped up with the linen, or strowed over the body when it was wound up; these Nicodemus brought;

as the manner of the Jews is to bury; both was usual with them; both to wind up the dead in linen; hence R. Jonathan, alluding to this custom, when R. Isai was taken, and others would have delivered him, said, wnydsb tmh Ærky, "let the dead be wrapped in his own linen [f779]"; and also to bury them with spices; hence we read of "the spices of the dead" in a Jewish canon [f780]:

> "they do not say a blessing over a lamp, nor over the spices of idolaters; nor over a lamp, nor over µytm lç µymçbh, "the spices of the dead":"

the use of which, Bartenora on the place says, was to drive away an ungrateful smell. The wrapping up the body of Christ in a fine linen cloth, was a token of his purity and innocence; and significative of that pure and spotless righteousness he had now brought in: the strewing it with spices may denote the fragrancy of Christ's death to Jehovah the Father, in whose sight it was precious, and whose sacrifice to him is of a sweet smelling savour; and also to all sensible sinners, to whom a crucified Christ is precious; since by his death sin is expiated, the law fulfilled, justice satisfied, reconciliation made, security from condemnation obtained, and death is abolished.

Ver. 41. *Now in the place where he was crucified*, etc.] Which takes in all that spot of ground that lay on that side of the city where he was crucified; or near to the place of his crucifixion, for it was not a garden in which he was crucified:

there was a garden; all gardens, except rose gardens, were without the city, as has been observed, (see Gill on "John 18:1"). This, it seems, belonged to Joseph: rich men used to have their gardens without the city for their convenience and pleasure:

and in the garden a new sepulchre; they might not bury within the city. Some chose to make their sepulchres in their gardens, to put them in mind of their mortality, when they took their walks there; so R. Dustai, R. Janhal, and R. Nehurai, were buried, sdrpb, "in a garden", or orchard [f781]; and so were Manasseh and Amon, kings of Judah, (2 Kings 21:18,26). Here Joseph had one, hewn out in a rock, for himself and family, and was newly made. The Jews distinguish between an old, and a new sepulchre; they say [f782],

> "çdj rbq, "a new sepulchre" may be measured and sold, and divided, but an old one might not be measured, nor sold, nor divided."

Wherein was never man yet laid; this is not improperly, nor impertinently added, though the evangelist had before said, that it was a new sepulchre; for that it might be, and yet bodies have been lain in it; for according to the Jewish canons [f783],

> "there is as a new sepulchre, which is an old one; and there is an old one, which is as a new one; an old sepulchre, in which lie ten dead bodies, which are not in the power of the owners, çdj rbqk hzyrh, "lo, this is as a new sepulchre"."

Now Christ was laid in such an one, where no man had been laid, that it might appear certainly that it was he, and not another, that was risen from the dead.

Ver. 42. *There laid they Jesus therefore*, etc.] Because it was a new sepulchre, and no man had been ever laid there before; and some other reasons are added:

because of the Jews' preparation day; either for the Chagigah, or the sabbath, which was just at hand; the Persic version reads, "the night of the sabbath": for this reason, they could not dig a grave purposely for him; for it was forbidden on feast days; and therefore they put him into a tomb ready made: the canon runs [f784],

> “they may not dig pits, twrbqw, “nor graves”, on a solemn feast day.”

The former of these, the commentators say [f785], are graves dug in the earth, and the latter edifices built over graves; and for the same reason, because it was such a day, they did not take his body to any of their houses, and embalm and anoint it, as they otherwise would have done; but this being a solemn day, and the sabbath drawing on apace, they hastened the interment, and took the most opportune place that offered:

for the sepulchre was nigh at hand; some say about an hundred and eight feet from the cross, and others an hundred and thirty feet, though some say but fifty or sixty, at furthest it was not far off.

CHAPTER 20

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 20

Ver. 1. *The first day of the week*, etc.] On the sixth day of the week, towards the close of it, Christ was interred; he lay in the grave all the seventh day, and on the first day of the week rose from the dead: so the women, after they had observed where the body was laid, went home and prepared spices and ointments, to anoint it; but the sabbath coming on, they were prevented; on which they rested, according to the Jewish law: but as soon as it was over,

cometh Mary Magdalene; not alone, but other women with her; who had attended Christ at the cross, observed where he was buried, and had prepared spices to anoint him, and now came for that purpose; for not merely to see the sepulchre, and weep at the grave, did she with the rest come, but to perform this piece of funeral service:

early, when it was yet dark; as it was when she set out, the day just began to dawn; though by that time she got to the sepulchre, the sun was rising:

unto the sepulchre; where she saw the body of Jesus laid by Joseph, in a tomb of his, and in his garden; by whose leave, it is probable, being asked over night, she with her companions were admitted:

and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre: which Joseph rolled there, and the Pharisees sealed and set a watch to observe it. This was removed by an angel; for though Christ himself could easily have done it, it was proper it should be done by a messenger from heaven, by the order of divine justice, who had laid him as a prisoner there. Mary's coming so early to the grave, shows her great love and affection to Christ, her zeal, courage, and diligence, in manifesting her respect unto him: and oftentimes so it is, that the greatest sinners, when converted, are most eminent for grace, particularly faith, love, and humility; and are most diligent in the discharge of duty.

Ver. 2. *Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter*, etc.] That is, after she had not only seen that the stone was took away, but had looked into

the sepulchre, and saw that the body of Christ was removed; for otherwise she could not have said, that it was took away out of it: upon which she made all the haste she could to Peter; who, where he was she knew; and she was particularly bid by the angel she saw in the sepulchre, to go to him:

and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved; John the writer of this Gospel; for these two were together, as they usually were; nor were they alone, for the rest of the disciples were with them:

and saith unto them, they have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. The Oriental versions, the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic, read, "I know not where they have laid him"; who they were that had taken the body of Christ away, whether friends or enemies, she could not say; nor did she, or any of the women that were with her, know where it was put; whether in some other grave, or was exposed to the insults of men, or to birds and beasts of prey; whether it was laid in a more suitable and convenient place, or in a scandalous one; and whether this removal was for his greater honour, or reproach; to know this, gave her great concern and uneasiness, as she knew it must the disciples also: so Christ, in a spiritual sense, may be removed from his people for a time, and they know not where he is; sometimes he removes himself, to chastise them for their former carriage, to try and exercise their grace, to inflame their love to him, and sharpen their desires after him, and to endear his presence to them the more, when they enjoy it again; sometimes he is taken away from them by preachers, when they leave him out of their discourses; and by their own sins and transgressions, which separate between him and them, with respect to communion; and who, for a time, may not know where to find him: and for the direction of such it may be observed, that he is to be found in the ministration of his word and ordinances in his churches.

Ver. 3. *Peter therefore went forth*, etc.] Out of the house where he was, upon hearing the account Mary gave:

and that other disciple; John, the Evangelist and Apostle; the rest of the disciples staying at home and continuing together, waiting to hear what account these two would bring:

and came to the sepulchre; to see with their own eyes what was done, and whether things were as Mary had related; and to make a more particular inquiry into, and examination of them.

Ver. 4. *So they ran both together*, etc.] At first setting out, and for a while; not content to walk, they ran, being eagerly desirous to know the truth of things:

and that other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre; John was a younger man than Peter, and so more nimble, and swift of foot, and got to the sepulchre before him; and besides, had not that concern of mind to retard him, Peter might have; as, supposing Christ was risen, and he should see him, how he should be able to look him in the face, whom he had so shamefully denied.

Ver. 5. *And he stooping down and looking in*, etc.] That is, John; when he came to the sepulchre, stooped down to look into it, and see what he could see; he only went into the court, or stood upon the floor, where the bearers used to set down the bier, before they put the corpse into one of the graves in the sepulchre, which were four cubits lower; (See Gill on "Mark 16:5"). Hence he was obliged to stoop down, ere he could see anything within: when he

saw the linen clothes lying; in which the body had been wrapped, but that itself not there:

yet went he not in; to the sepulchre itself, but waited in the court or porch, till Peter came; and perhaps might be timorous and fearful of going into such a place alone; the Arabic version reads it, "he dared not go in".

Ver. 6. *Then cometh Simon Peter following him*, etc.] In a very little time after him:

and went into the sepulchre; itself, though not without first stooping down, as John did; (see Luke 24:12).

And seeth the linen clothes lie; as John did; and as by the mouth of two or three witnesses everything is confirmed, so was this; both saw the linen in which the body was wrapped, but that was gone; and which was a sign that the body was not stolen away, otherwise the linen would not have been left; and besides, it would have taken up some time, and given a good deal of trouble, to have unwrapped the body, when it is considered how many foldings the Jews used to wind up their corpse in.

Ver. 7. *And the napkin that was about his head*, etc.] The word σουδαριον, rendered "napkin", is thought to be originally Latin, and

signifies an handkerchief, with which the sweat is wiped off the face, and so it is used in (<44912>Acts 19:12) but Nonnus says it is a common word with the Syrians, and the word ardws is used in the Syriac version; and which he renders, κεφαλης ζωστηρα, "the girdle, or binding of the head", for with this the head and face of the dead person were bound; (see <43144>John 11:44). Now Peter, by going into the sepulchre, and looking about him, and examining things more strictly and narrowly, observed that which neither he nor John had taken notice of, when only stooping they looked in: and that is, that this head binder, or napkin, was

not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself: and was plainly the effect of thought, care, and composure; and clearly showed, that the body was not taken away in a hurry, or by thieves, since everything lay in such order and decency; and which was done, either by our Lord himself, or by the angels.

Ver. 8. *Then went in also the other disciple*, etc.] John, being animated by the example of Peter, went down into the sepulchre likewise; whither Peter also might beckon, or call him, to be witness with him of the order and situation in which things lay:

which came first to the sepulchre; yet went last into it; so it was, that the first was last, and the last first:

and he saw; the linen clothes lie in one place, and the napkin folded up in order, lying by itself in another:

and believed; that the body was not there, but either was taken away, or was raised from the dead; but whether as yet he believed the latter is doubtful, by what follows; unless what follows is considered as an illustration, especially of the faith of John, that he should believe the resurrection of Christ, though till now he did not know nor understand the Scriptures that spake of it.

Ver. 9. *For as yet they knew not the Scripture*, etc.] Meaning not some particular passage of Scripture, but the writings of the Old Testament in general, and the various places in it, which spoke of the resurrection of Christ, either in a way of type, or prophecy; such as (<01203>Genesis 22:3,4, 10:13, Jon 2:1-7, <19610>Psalm 16:10, <28602>Hosea 6:2, <23619>Isaiah 26:19) and though our Lord had often referred to some of them, at least as in (<40124>Matthew 12:40, 16:21, 20:18,19) yet such was the dulness of the

disciples, or such their prejudices in favour of the Messiah being to continue, and set up a temporal kingdom, that even John, who leaned on his breast, and Peter, who was so inquisitive and desirous of knowing our Lord's meaning in everything, did not understand the sense of his words, nor of those places of Scripture he had reference to:

that he must rise again from the dead: so it was determined, thus it was predicted, and the justification and salvation of God's elect required it; and yet they knew not the thing, nor the necessity and importance of it.

Ver. 10. *Then the disciples*, etc.] Peter and John, after they had seen and examined things, and satisfied themselves as much as they could:

went away again unto their own home; or "to themselves", as in the original text, and so the Vulgate Latin reads it; not that the meaning is, that they had been out of their minds, and proper exercise of them, and now came to themselves; but they returned to their own company, to the rest of the disciples they left at home, who were as themselves. The Syriac renders it, ˆwh t kwd l, "to their own place", and so the Arabic and Persic versions; the place from whence they came, and where the rest were assembled together, to pray, converse, and consult together, what was to be done at this juncture.

Ver. 11. *But Mary stood without at the sepulchre*, etc.] She returned from the city to the sepulchre again, following Peter and John thither, who continued here when they departed, being willing to get some tidings of her Lord, if possible. The word "without", is omitted by the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, but is in the Greek copies; and is properly put by the evangelist, when rightly understood; for the meaning is not, that she stood without the sepulchre, taken in its full extent; for she stood, r x j b, "in the court", where the bearers set down the corpse, in order to carry it into the cave, or vault; she stood without the innermost part of the sepulchre, but not without side the sepulchre itself; as appears from her stooping and looking into it:

weeping; that the body of her dear Lord was taken away, and she was prevented of showing that respect unto it she designed; and not knowing in whose hands it was, but fearing it would be insulted and abused by wicked men, her heart was ready to break with sorrow:

and as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre; to see if she could see him, if she and the disciples were not mistaken, being loath to go without finding him: so it is in a spiritual sense, the absence of Christ is cause of great distress and sorrow to gracious souls; because of the excellency of his person, the near and dear relations he stands in to them and on account of the nature of his presence and company, which is preferable to everything in this world; nor can such souls, when they have lost sight of Christ, sit down contented; but will seek after him in the Scriptures, under the ministry of the word, and at the ordinances of the Gospel, where a crucified, buried, risen Jesus is exhibited.

Ver. 12. *And seeth two angels in white*, etc.] Matthew and Mark speak but of one, but Luke of two, as here; whom he calls men, because they appeared in an human form, and in shining garments, or white apparel; and which appearance is entirely agreeable to the received notion of the Jews, that as evil angels or devils are clothed in black, so good angels, or ministering spirits, µynbl yçwbl, "are clothed in white" [f786], expressive of their spotless purity and innocence:

sitting the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain; in what position the body of Christ was laid, whether from west to east, as some, or from north to south, as others, is not certain; since the Jews observed no rule in this matter, as appears from the form of their sepulchres, and the disposition of the graves in them; some lying one way, and some another, in the same vault; (See Gill on "<4912>Luke 24:12").

Ver. 13. *And they say unto her, woman, why weepest thou*? etc.] Signifying, that she had no reason to weep, but to rejoice and be glad; since, though the body of her Lord was not there, yet he was risen from the dead, and was alive. This they said, partly to rebuke her for her grief, and to comfort her under it: Beza's ancient copy adds here, as in (<4320>John 20:15) "whom seekest thou?" and so does the Ethiopic version: "she saith unto them"; without any concern of mind about what they were, and as if they had been of the human kind; for her grief made her fearless, and she cared not who she opened the case to, so that she could get any relief, and any tidings of her Lord:

because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him; and which she thought was reason sufficient for her weeping; could she but have known, that if he was taken away, it was by his friends,

and was well used, and she could have had the opportunity of paying her last respects to him, it would have been a satisfaction; but nothing short of this could dry up her tears.

Ver. 14. *And when she had thus said*, etc.] As soon as the words were out of her mouth, before she could have an answer from the angels:

she turned herself back; perceiving, either by the looks and gesture of one of the angels, or by hearing a noise, that somebody was behind her:

and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus; she saw a person, but did not know who he was, by reason of the form of his appearance, the difference of his clothes, and not expecting to see him alive; or through modesty, she might not look wistfully at him; and besides, her eyes were filled with tears, and swollen with weeping; so that she could not see clearly; and her eyes might be holden also, as the disciples were, that as yet she might not know him: so sometimes, in a spiritual sense, Christ is with, and near his people, and they know it not: Christ, as God, is omnipresent; he is every where, and in all places; the spiritual presence of Christ, is more or less, in some way or another, always in all his churches, and among his dear people; but the sight of him is not always alike to them, nor does he appear to them always in the same form; sometimes against them, at least in their apprehensions, nor always in a manner agreeably to their expectations; nor is his grace always discovered in the same way, nor has it the same effect.

Ver. 15. *Jesus saith unto her, woman, why weepest thou*, etc.] The same question he puts to her, as was put by the angels: adding,

whom seekest thou? for she was not only weeping for the loss of him, but was inquiring after him, if anyone saw him removed from thence, and where he was carried:

she supposing him to be the gardener; that had the care of the garden, in which the sepulchre was; for not the owner of the garden, who was Joseph, but the keeper of it is meant; she could not imagine that Joseph should be there so early in the morning, but might reasonably think the gardener was:

saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away; she addresses him, though she took him to be but the gardener, in a very civil and courteous manner; which was rightly judged, especially since she had a favour to ask of him: she does not

mention the name of her Lord, but imagined he knew who she meant, being so lately buried there; and suggests, that perhaps it might not have been so agreeable to the gardener to have his body lie there, and therefore had removed it; and would he but be so kind as to let her know where he was put, she, with the assistance of her friends close by, would take him away with them: so in a spiritual sense, a truly gracious soul is willing to do anything, and to be at any trouble, so that it may but enjoy Christ; it dearly loves him, as this good woman did; it early, and earnestly, and with its whole heart, seeks after him, as she did; and absence of him, or loss of his presence for a while, sharpens the desire after him, and makes his presence the more welcome.

Ver. 16. *Jesus saith unto her, Mary*, etc.] He might alter the tone of his voice, and speak unto her as he used to do, calling her by her name in his usual manner: so Christ has personal knowledge of all his people, and can call them by name; he knows them, and makes himself known to them, before they can know him; and though he may absent himself from them for a while, yet not always:

she turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master; it seems, as if she had dropped her conversation with the supposed gardener at once, and scarce waited for an answer from him, but turns herself to the angels again, if she could hear any tidings from them; acting like a person in the utmost distress, hurry and confusion; looking this way and that way, to this or the other person: and now upon Christ's speaking to her, in this plain, familiar manner, she turns herself again; when fully knowing him, she addresses him with the greatest faith and affection, reverence and humility; calling him her Lord and master, and throws herself at his feet: thus when Christ is pleased to manifest himself to his people, there goes a power along with his word, making himself known; and a word from Christ, attended with divine power, will give a soul a turn to him from the most excellent creatures, even angels; and when Christ is known, he will be acknowledged with all love, humility, and obedience. The word Rabboni, is of the Chaldee and Syriac form, and signifies "my Lord, or master"; and is commonly applied to one that has a despotic power over another; though all the Oriental versions say, that she spoke to him in Hebrew. The Syriac and Ethiopic, "Rabboni", but the Arabic and Persic, "Rabbi". The titles of Rab, Rabbi, and Rabban, are frequent with the Jewish doctors; who say [f787], that Rabbi is greater than Rab, and Rabban is greater than Rabbi; and a man's own name greater than Rabban: but the word in the form here used

Rabbon, I do not remember ever to have observed applied to any of the doctors; but is frequently used of the Divine Being, who, in their prayers, is often addressed in this manner, µlw[lç wnwbr "Lord of the world"[f788]. I conjecture therefore, that Mary used this word, as expressive of her faith in his power and Godhead, seeing him alive from the dead; though it might be a name she was used to call him by before, being convinced from what he had done to her, and by the miracles she had observed performed by him on others, of his proper deity; as the poor blind man expresses his faith in the power of Christ to cure him, by addressing him in the same language, using the same word, (<41065>Mark 10:51).

Ver. 17. *Jesus saith unto her, touch me not*, etc.] Not that his body was an aerial one, or a mere "phantom", which could not be touched; the prohibition itself shows the contrary; and besides, Christ's body was afterwards presented to Thomas, to be touched by him, and to be handled by all the disciples; and his feet were held by the women, which is what Mary would have now done: upon the discovery of him, she threw herself at his feet, and was going to embrace and kiss them, to testify her affection and joy, when she is forbid; not as unworthy of the favour, because she sought him among the dead, for which the angels reproved her and the rest; but either because he was not to be conversed with, as before his death, his body being raised immortal and glorious; or rather, because he had an errand to send her on to his disciples, which required haste; nor need she stay now to show her respect to him, since she would have opportunity enough to do that, before his ascension; which though it was to be quickly, yet not directly and immediately; and this seems to be the sense of our Lord's reason:

for I am not yet ascended to my Father; nor shall I immediately go to him; I shall make some stay upon earth; as he did, forty days before his ascension; when he intimates, she might see him again, and familiarly converse with him; at present he would have her stay no longer with him:

but go to my brethren; this he says, to show that their carriage to him, being denied by one of them, and forsaken by them all, and the glory he was raised unto, as all this made no alteration in their relation to him, so neither in his affection to them: Mary was a very proper person to be sent unto them, since she had lately been with them, and knew where they were all assembled together:

and say unto them; as from himself, representing him as it were:

I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God; God was his Father, not by creation, as he is to angels, and the souls of men, and therefore is called the Father of spirits; nor by adoption, as he is to the saints; nor with respect to the incarnation of Christ, for, as man, he had no father; or with regard to his office as Mediator, for as such he was a servant, and not a Son; but he was his Father by nature, or with regard to his divine person, being begotten of him, and so his own proper Son, and he his own proper Father; which hold forth the natural and eternal sonship of Christ, his equality with him, and distinction from him: and God was the Father of his disciples by adopting grace, in virtue of the covenant of grace made with Christ, and through their spiritual relation to him, as the natural and eternal Son of God: God the Father is the God of Christ as man, who prepared, formed, anointed, supported, and glorified his human nature; and in which nature, he prayed to him as his God, believed in him, loved and obeyed him as such; wherefore the Jew [f789] very wrongly infers from hence, that he is not God, because the God of Israel was his God; since this is spoken of him as he is man: and he was the God of his disciples, in and by the covenant of grace made with Christ, as their head and representative; so that their interest in God, as their covenant God and Father, was founded upon his being the God and Father of Christ, and their relation to, and concern with him; and which therefore must be firm and lasting, and will hold as long as God is the God and Father of Christ: this was good news to be brought to his disciples; which, as it carried the strongest marks of affection, and expressions of nearness of relation; and implied, that he was now risen from the dead; so it signified, that he should ascend to God, who stood in the same relation to them, as to him; when he should use all his interest and influence on their behalf, whilst they were on earth; and when the proper time was come for a remove, that they might be with him, and with his God and Father and theirs, where they would be to all eternity.

Ver. 18. *Mary Magdalene came*, etc.] Directly and immediately, being ready and willing to obey the commends of her Lord, with the utmost cheerfulness; and glad to go on such an errand, and carry such news to his disciples, even though her private interest and personal affection might have inclined her to desire to stay with Christ:

and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord; not only that he was risen from the dead, and she had been told so by the angels, but she had seen him herself, and was an eyewitness of his resurrection, and which she firmly believed; this she said, not only with all the marks of pleasure, joy and transport, but with an air of assurance and confidence:

and that he had spoken these things unto her; as that he called them brethren, and bid her go unto them, and acquaint them, that as he was risen, he should in a short time ascend to his Father and theirs, to his God and theirs; all which she faithfully related to them.

Ver 19. *Then the same day at evening*, etc.] The same day Christ rose from the dead, and appeared to Mary; at the evening of that day, after he had been with the two disciples to Emmaus, about eight miles from Jerusalem, and they had returned again to the rest; and after there had been such a bustle all day in Jerusalem, about the body of Jesus; the soldiers that watched the sepulchre, giving out, by the direction of the elders, that the disciples of Christ had stolen away the body, while they slept:

being the first day of the week; as is said in (<430>John 20:1) and here repeated, to prevent any mistake; and that it might be clear what day it was the disciples were assembled together, and Christ appeared to them:

when the doors were shut; the doors of the house where they were, which it is plain was in Jerusalem, (<420>Luke 24:33) but whether it was the house where Christ and his disciples ate the passover together, or whether it was John's home or house, to which he took the mother of Christ, since he and Peter, and the rest, seem to be afterwards together in one place, is not certain: however, the doors were shut; which is not merely expressive of the time of night, when this was usually done; but signifies that they were really locked and bolted, and barred, for which a reason is given as follows:

where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews; after their scattering abroad upon the taking of Christ, and after his crucifixion was over; and especially after the report of his body being took away, they gathered together, and made fast the doors of the place, lest the Jews should come in upon them, and surprise them; for they might fear, that since they had took away their master's life, theirs must go next; and especially since it was rumoured abroad that they had stole away his body, they might be under the greater fear, that search would be made after them, and they be apprehended and brought into trouble on that account:

came Jesus and stood in the midst of them; on a sudden, at once, and when they had no thought or fear of anyone's coming upon them, without some previous notice; but he being the Almighty God, did, by his omnipotent power, cause the bars and bolts, and doors, in the most secret and unobserved manner, to give way to him, and let him in at once among them: when as a presage and pledge of the accomplishment of his promise to be with, and in the midst of his, when met together, either in private or public, he stood and presented himself in the midst of them: and to let them know at once he was no enemy,

he saith unto them, peace be unto you: µkl µwlç, "peace be unto you", is an usual form of salutation among the Jews; (see <01423>Genesis 43:23) expressive of all prosperity in soul and body, inward and outward, spiritual and temporal; and here may have a special regard to that peace he said he gave unto them, and left with them, upon his departure from them; and which he had obtained by the blood of his cross, and now preached unto them.

Ver. 20. *And when he had so said*, etc.] The above salutation, in the most kind, tender, and affectionate manner: and to put them out of all pain, and that they might know certainly who he was,

he showed them his hands and his side; his hands, which had been pierced with the nails, the marks of which were then to be seen; and which they all knew must be the case, since he was crucified; and his side, which was pierced with a spear, and which left a wide open wound, and which John, who was among them, was an eyewitness of. These he showed, partly to convince them that he was not a spirit, or an apparition, which at first sight they took him to be, from his sudden appearance among them, the doors being locked and barred; and partly to assure them of the truth of his resurrection, and in the same body, as well as to lead them into a view of his great love his suffering the death of the cross for them; and also to observe to them from whence that peace and happiness sprung he had just now saluted them with. It is needless to inquire, whether these marks in his hands, feet, and side, still continue; he was raised with them, that he might show them, for the reasons above given; and should they be thought to continue till all the effects of his death are wrought, since he appears in the midst of the throne and elders, a lamb, as it had been slain, and till his second coming, when they that pierced his hands and feet, and side, shall look and mourn, it is not very unreasonable:

then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord; for by these marks in his hands and feet, and side, they were fully convinced, and entirely satisfied, that it was he; and that he was risen from the dead; and who now appeared to them, than which a more delightful sight could not be enjoyed by them; whereby was fulfilled, what he had foretold and promised, (⁴⁸¹⁶John 16:22). So a spiritual sight of Christ is always rejoicing to a disciple of his; that is, one that has learned of Christ, and learned Christ, who has believed in him, and is enabled to deny sinful, righteous, civil, worldly, and natural self, for Christ; and is made willing to take up the cross, bear it, and follow after him: a sight of Christ as God and man, of his personal beauties and excellencies, of his fulness and suitableness, as a Saviour and Redeemer, and so as to have sensible communion with him, is exceeding delightful to such an one; especially when under a sense of sin, when accused or tempted by Satan, or when Christ has been long absent, or when under affliction, and on a death bed; for Christ is a believer's all; he stands in all relations to him; and such a soul never sees Christ aright, but it receives something from him, his leaning on his breast; and who being so near his person, and allowed to use a liberty with him, everyone did not take, at the motion of Peter, asked our Lord at supper, who the person was he meant that should betray him; all this is said as descriptive of the disciple here spoken of, which leaves it without any doubt, that it was the Apostle John; and who, from (⁴⁸²¹John 21:2) appears to be one of this company, and is further confirmed at (⁴⁸²⁴John 21:24).

Ver. 21. *Then said Jesus to them again*, etc.] The words he said before:

peace be unto you; which he repeated, to put them out of their fright, by reason of which they returned him no answer; and to raise and engage their attention to what he was about to say; and to pacify their consciences, distressed with a sense of their conduct towards him; and with a view to the Gospel of peace, he was now going to send them to preach:

as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; Christ's mission of his disciples, supposes power in him, honour done to them, authority put upon them, qualifications given them, and hence success attended them; what they were sent to do, was to preach the Gospel, convert sinners, build up saints, plant churches, and administer ordinances. The pattern of their mission, is the mission of Christ by his Father, which was into this world, to do his will, preach the Gospel, work miracles, and obtain eternal redemption for his people; and which mission does not suppose inferiority

in his divine person, nor change of place, but harmony and agreement between the Father and Son: the likeness of these missions lies in these things; their authority is both divine; they are both sent into the same place, the world; and in much the same condition, mean, despicable, hated and persecuted; and in part for the same end, to preach the Gospel, and work miracles, for the confirmation of it; but not to obtain redemption, that being a work done solely by Christ; in which he has no partner, and to whom the glory must be only ascribed.

Ver. 22. *And when he had said this*, etc.] That is, declared he sent them forth in like manner as his Father sent him:

he breathed on them; in allusion to God's breathing the breath of life into man, at his creation; or rather, to the Spirit himself, who is the breath of God, and proceeds from him, as from the Father; and who breathes both upon persons in regeneration, and in qualifying for ministerial service, at the instance and influence of Christ: and such an opinion the Jews have of the Spirit of the Messiah, who say [f790], that

> "the Spirit went from between the wings of the cherubim, hybçnw, "and breathed upon him" (Menasseh) by the decree, or order of the word of the Lord."

And saith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost; meaning not the grace of the Holy Ghost in regeneration, which they had received already; but the gifts of the Spirit, to qualify them for the work he now sent them to do, and which were not now actually bestowed; but this breathing on them, and the words that attended it, were a symbol, pledge, and confirmation, of what they were to receive on the day of Pentecost: hence it appears, that it is the Spirit of God, who, by his gifts and grace, makes and qualifies men to be ministers of the Gospel; and our Lord by this action, and these words, gives a very considerable proof of his deity: the Papists show their impudence and wickedness, in imitating Christ by their insufflations, or breathing on men; pretending thereby to convey the Holy Spirit to them.

Ver. 23. *Whose soever sins ye remit*, etc.] God only can forgive sins, and Christ being God, has a power to do so likewise; but he never communicated any such power to his apostles; nor did they ever assume any such power to themselves, or pretend to exercise it; it is the mark of antichrist, to attempt anything of the kind; who, in so doing, usurps the divine prerogative, places himself in his seat, and shows himself as if he

was God: but this is to be understood only in a doctrinal, or ministerial way, by preaching the full and free remission of sins, through the blood of Christ, according to the riches of God's grace, to such as repent of their sins, and believe in Christ; declaring, that all such persons as do so repent and believe, all their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake: and accordingly,

they are remitted unto them; in agreement with Christ's own words, in his declaration and commission to his disciples; (see <41616>Mark 16:16,) (<42447>Luke 24:47). On the other hand he signifies, that

whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained: that is, that whatsoever sins ye declare are not forgiven, they are not forgiven; which is the case of all final unbelievers, and impenitent sinners; who dying without repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the Gospel declaration, shall be damned, and are damned; for God stands by, and will stand by and confirm the Gospel of his Son, faithfully preached by his ministering servants; and all the world will sooner or later be convinced of the validity, truth, and certainty, of the declarations on each of these heads, made by them.

Ver. 24. *But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus*, etc.] The person here spoken of, is described by his Hebrew name Thomas, and his Greek one Didymus, which both signify a twin; and perhaps he was one. It was common with the Jews to have two names, a Jewish and a Gentile one; by the one they went in the land of Israel, and by the other when without the land [f791]; nay, they often went by one name in Judea, and by another in Galilee [f792]; where Thomas might go by the name of Didymus with the Greeks, that might live with the Jews in some of those parts: he is also said to be "one of the twelve" apostles, which was their number at first, though Judas now was gone off from them, and therefore are sometimes only called the "eleven"; but this having been their complement, it is still retained; but what is observed of him to his disadvantage and discredit is, that he

was not with them when Jesus came: Beza's ancient copy reads, "he was not there with them"; and so read the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; he either had not returned to the rest after their scattering one from another upon the apprehending of Christ; or did not choose to assemble with the rest, for fear of the Jews; or was taken up with some business and affair of life; however, he was not with the rest of the disciples, when they were assembled together, and Jesus appeared among them: as it is of good

consequence to attend the assemblies of Christ's disciples and followers, so it is of bad consequence to neglect or forsake them: it is frequently to good purpose that persons attend them; here God comes and blesses his people, Jesus grants his presence, the graces of the Spirit are increased, and drawn forth into exercise; souls that have lost sight of Christ find him, disconsolate ones are comforted, weak ones strengthened, and hungry ones fed: on the other hand, not to attend is of bad consequence; neglect of assembling together exposes to many snares and temptations; brings on a spiritual leanness; leads to an indifference and lukewarmness: issues in a low degree of grace, and a non-exercise of it, and in a loss of Christ's presence.

Ver. 25. *The other disciples therefore said unto him*, etc.] Some time in the same week, as they had opportunity of seeing him, with great joy, and full assurance of faith in Christ's resurrection:

we have seen the Lord; they had not only the testimony of the women, and the declaration of the angels, but they saw him with their own eyes, and beheld even the very prints of the nails in his hands and feet, and of the spear in his side, and therefore could not be mistaken and imposed upon: a spiritual sight of Christ is a blessing often enjoyed by attending the assembly of the saints to see Christ, is the desire of every gracious soul; this is the end of their meeting together for social worship; the word and ordinances have a tendency in them to lead souls to a sight of him; and it may be expected, because it is promised; and whenever it is enjoyed, it is very delightful; and a soul that meets with Christ in an ordinance, cannot but speak of it to others; and which he does with joy and pleasure, in an exulting, and even in a kind of a boasting manner; and that for the encouragement of others to attend likewise:

but he said unto them, except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. That nails were used in the crucifixion of Christ, is certain from this place, though nowhere else mentioned; whereby the prophecy of him in (<19>2216Psalm 22:16) was fulfilled; for these were not always used in this kind of death. The bodies of men were sometimes fastened to the cross with cords, and not nails [f793]. How many were used, whether three, as some, or four, as others, or more, as were sometimes used [f794], is not certain, nor material to know. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions read, "the

place of the nails"; that is, the place where the nails were drove. Thomas knew that Christ was fastened to the cross with nails, and that his side was pierced with a spear; which he, though not present, might have had from John, who was an eyewitness thereof; but though they had all seen him alive, he will not trust to their testimony; nay, he was determined not to believe his own eyes; unless he put his finger into, as well as saw, the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side, as well as beheld the wound made by the spear, he is resolved not to believe. And his sin of unbelief is the more aggravated, inasmuch as this disciple was present at the raising of Lazarus from the dead by Christ, and had heard Christ himself say, that he should rise from the dead the third day. We may learn from hence how great is the sin of unbelief; that the best of men are subject to it; and that though this was over ruled by divine providence to bring out another proof Christ's resurrection, yet this did not excuse the sin of Thomas: and it may be observed, that as Thomas would not believe without seeing the marks of the nails and spear in Christ's flesh; so many will not believe, unless they find such and such marks in themselves, which often prove very ensnaring and distressing. Just such an unbeliever as Thomas was, the Jews make Moses to be, when Israel sinned: they say,

> "he did not believe that Israel had sinned, but said, ˆymam ynya hawr ynya µa, "if I do not see, I will not believe" [f795]."

Ver. 26. *And after eight days*, etc.] That is, after another week, the same day a week later, which taking in the day in which Christ rose and appeared to Mary Magdalene, and his disciples, and the day in which he now appeared to the disciples with Thomas, made eight days; a like way of speaking see in (<4018>Luke 9:28) compared with (<4017>Matthew 17:1). And Dr. Hammond has proved from Josephus [f796], that the Jews used to express a week by eight days.

Again, his disciples were within; within doors, in some private house; probably the same as before, in some part of the city of Jerusalem:

and Thomas with them: which shows their harmony and agreement, their frequency and constancy in meeting together, and their Christian forbearance with Thomas, notwithstanding his unbelief; whom they looked upon as a good man, and retained in their company, hoping by one means or other he would be convinced: and it also shows Thomas's regard to

them, and affection for them, by meeting with them, though he had not the same faith in the resurrection of Christ:

then came Jesus; when the disciples, with Thomas, were together; so making good his promise to meet with his people when they meet; and thereby putting an honour upon, and giving encouragement to with the saints: if it should be asked, why did not Christ come sooner? it may be replied, that the reason, on his part, was, it was his will and pleasure to come at this time, and not before; Christ has his set times to himself, when he will appear and manifest himself to his people: on Thomas's part the reasons might be, partly to rebuke him for his sin, and that the strength of his unbelief might appear the more, and that some desire might be stirred up in him to see Christ, if he was risen. And on the part of the disciples, because they did not meet together sooner; and for the further trial of their faith, whether it would continue or not, Thomas obstinately persisting in his unbelief:

the doors being shut; as before, and for the same reason, for fear of the Jews, as well as for the privacy of their devotion and conversation:

and stood in the midst; having in the same powerful manner as before caused the doors, locks, and bars to give way, when at once he appeared in the midst of them all, not to Thomas alone, but to all the eleven; and this the rather, because the disciples had bore a testimony to Christ's resurrection, and which he meant now to confirm; and to rebuke Thomas publicly, who had sinned before them all:

and said, peace be unto you; which he had said before, and now, saluting Thomas in like manner as he did the rest, notwithstanding his unbelief.

Ver. 27. *Then saith he to Thomas*, etc.] For whose sake he chiefly came, and whom he at once singled out from the rest, and called by name in the most friendly manner, without upbraiding or reproaching him for not believing the testimony that had been given him:

reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thine hand and thrust it into my side; that is, make use of every way by seeing, feeling, and examining the scars in my hands, and the hole in my side, and satisfy thyself in the manner thou hast desired; which shows the omniscience of Christ, who knew what had passed between him and the other disciples, and the very words Thomas had expressed himself in; also his great

humility and condescension in submitting himself to be examined in the very manner he had fixed; and likewise the reality of his resurrection:

and be not faithless, but believing; in which words Christ dissuades him from unbelief, which is very evil in its own nature, and in its effects; it is the root of all evil; it unfits for duty, and renders the word unprofitable, and leads men off from Christ; and is the more aggravated in the people of God, by the instances, declarations, and promises of grace, and discoveries of love made unto them: and he also encourages him to believe. The exercise of the grace of faith is well pleasing to Christ; it gives glory to him, and makes for the soul's comfort; and a word from Christ, his power going along with it, will enable men to believe, as it did Thomas; which appears by what follows.

Ver. 28. *And Thomas answered and said unto him*, etc.] Without examining his hands and side, and as astonished at his condescension and grace, and ashamed of his unbelief:

my Lord and my God; he owns him to be Lord, as he was both by creation and redemption; and God, of which he was fully assured from his omniscience, which he had given a full proof of, and from the power that went along with his words to his heart, and from a full conviction he now had of his resurrection from the dead. He asserts his interest in him as his Lord and his God; which denotes his subjection to him, his affection for him, and faith in him; so the divine word is called in Philo the Jew, κυριος μου, "my Lord" [f797].

Ver. 29. *Jesus saith unto him, Thomas*, etc.] The word Thomas is omitted in the Alexandrian copy, and in Beza's ancient copy, and in some others, and in the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions.

Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; which carries in it a tacit and gentle reproof for his unbelief, and suggests, that if he had not seen, he would not have believed; but is not so harsh as if that had been expressed; and which the Jews were wont to do in a severe manner [f798].

> "One said to R. Jochanan, expound Rabbi; for it is beautiful for thee to expound: for as thou sayest, so I see: he replied to him, Raka, tnmah al tyar al almla, "if thou seest not, thou wilt not believe"."

Christ here allows that Thomas had believed, that he was risen from the dead, and that he was his Lord and God; and though his faith was late and slow, it was sure and certain, and was appropriating; it was a faith of interest, though upon sight, and not on hearing, or the report of the other disciples: now faith on sight may be in persons who have no true spiritual faith; as in some that saw both the person and miracles of Christ on earth, and in others who will see him come in the clouds of heaven; and it has been in others who have truly believed in Christ, as the apostles of the Lamb: but yet, though it may be, as in many it has been, right, yet not so commendable as that without it. From hence may be observed, that Christ allows of the epithets and titles given him by Thomas, and therefore must be Lord and God; and approves of Thomas's faith, and therefore that must be right; though he prefers faith without personal sight of him to it, in the next clause.

Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. The author of the apocryphal book of 2 Esdras 1:37 says of

> "the people to come, whose little ones rejoice in gladness",

in the person of the Almighty Lord, "though they have not seen me with bodily eyes, yet in spirit they believe the thing that I say". It seems as if there were some at this time in the city of Jerusalem, who firmly believed that Christ was risen from the dead, upon the testimony of others, though they had not seen him themselves. Faith without sight, in other respects, may be considered as opposed to the beatific vision in heaven; and as destitute of sensible communion with God; and as giving credit to doctrines and things above carnal sense and reason; such as the doctrines of the Trinity, the sonship of Christ, his incarnation, and the union of the two natures in him, and the resurrection of the dead; and as believing whatever is said in the word of God, upon the credit of his testimony; and which has for its objects things past, as what were done in eternity, in the council and covenant of grace; the works of creation and providence in time, the birth, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ; and also things present, Christ, and the blessings of grace, and things to come, the invisible glories of the other world. Now such are happy that have true faith in these things, for they enjoy many blessings now, as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, adoption, freedom of access to God, and security from condemnation; they have spiritual peace, joy, and comfort in their souls, and shall at last be saved with an everlasting salvation.

Ver. 30. *And many other signs truly did Jesus*, etc.] Besides these wonderful appearances to his disciples once and again, when the doors were shut about them: and which signs refer not to what was done before, but after his resurrection; and which he did,

in the presence of his disciples; for he appeared to, and conversed with no other but them after his resurrection:

which are not written in this book; of John's Gospel; though they may be elsewhere; such as his appearing to the two disciples going to Emmaus, and to the eleven on a mountain in Galilee, and to five hundred brethren at once, which other inspired writers speak of: and many there are which he did; which are not particularly written in this, nor in any other book; for he was seen of his disciples forty days, and showed himself alive, by many infallible proofs; all of which are not recorded.

Ver. 31. *But these are written*, etc.]. The several ends of recording what is written in this book, in proof of Christ's resurrection, are as follow: one is,

that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; that Jesus, who was diminutively called Jesus, the son of Mary, the son of Joseph, the carpenter's son, Jesus of Nazareth, and of Galilee, was the Christ, or true Messiah; which signifies anointed, and takes in all his offices of prophet, priest, and King, to which he was anointed; and is an article of faith of the greatest importance; and is to be believed through the signs proving his resurrection, who, according to the Scriptures, was to rise again; and which, by the signs here recorded, it appears he is risen indeed, and therefore must be the true Messiah of the prophets, and also "the Son of God"; which was a known title of the Messiah among the Jews; and is not a name of office, but of nature and relation to God, and designs Christ in his divine nature, or as a divine person; and is an article of great moment, and well attested, by God, by angels, and men; and receives a further confirmation by the resurrection of Christ, who is thereby declared to be the Son of God with power; and with this view did this evangelist write the signs, proving it, herein to be found. And his other end in recording them, is,

and that believing ye might have life through his name: believers have their spiritual and eternal life through Christ; their life of grace, of justification on him, of sanctification from him, and communion with him; the support and maintenance of their spiritual life, and all the comforts of

it: and also their life of glory, or eternal life, they have through, or in his name; it lies in his person, it comes to them through him as the procuring cause of it; it is for his sake bestowed upon them, yea, it is in his hands to give it, and who does give it to all that believe: not that believing is the cause of their enjoyment of this life, or is their title to it, which is the name, person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; but faith is the way and means in which they enjoy it; and therefore these signs are written by the evangelist for the encouragement of this faith in Christ, which is of such use in the enjoyment of life, in, through, and from him. Beza's ancient copy, two of Stephens's, the Coptic, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, "eternal life".

CHAPTER 21

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 21

Ver. 1. *After these things*, etc.] The resurrection of Christ from the dead, his appearance to Mary Magdalene, and twice to his disciples; once when Thomas was absent, and at another time when he was present:

Jesus showed himself again to the disciples, a third time, as in (⁴³21:14 John 21:14) though not to them all; seven are only mentioned, as together, when he appeared to them:

at the sea of Tiberias; the same with the sea of Galilee; (see ⁴³6:1 John 6:1) for after the second appearance of Christ to his disciples, they went from Jerusalem to Galilee, by the order of Christ, who appointed to meet them there, (⁴⁰28:10,16 Matthew 28:10,16)

and on this way showed he himself; the manner in which he made his appearance, and the persons to whom, are as follow.

Ver. 2. *There were together*, etc.] In one place, in one house, in some town, or city of Galilee, not far from the sea of Tiberias; nor, as very likely, far from the mountain where Christ had promised to meet them. Simon Peter, who though he had denied his Lord, dearly loved him, and truly believed in him, kept with the rest of his disciples, and was waiting for another interview with him:

and Thomas, called Didymus; who, though for a while an unbeliever with respect to the resurrection of Christ, was now fully assured of it, and, for the future, was unwilling to lose any opportunity of meeting with his risen Lord.

And Nathanael of Cana in Galilee; an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. Dr. Lightfoot thinks he is the same with Bartholomew, and so one of the eleven. The Syriac version reads it, “Cotne”, and the Persic, Catneh of Galilee; no doubt the same place is meant, where Jesus turned water into wine, of which Nathanael was an inhabitant:

and the sons of Zebedee; who were James, whom Herod killed with the sword, and John, the writer of this Gospel:

and two other of his disciples; who are thought to be Andrew and Philip; which is very likely, since they were both of Bethsaida, (⁴⁸⁰¹John 1:44) a city in Galilee, and not far from the sea of Tiberias. Andrew is particularly mentioned by Nonnus: so that here were seven of them in all; four of them, according to this account, being wanting; who must be James the less, the brother of our Lord, Judas called Lebbaeus, and surnamed Thaddaeus, Simon the Canaanite, or Zealot, and Matthew the publican.

Ver. 3. *Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing*, etc.] Which was his business before his conversion; and now having nothing to do, and his Lord and master having, as yet, no service for him in the ministry of the word, until the Spirit was poured down in an extraordinary manner, which was given to be expected, in the mean while he was inclined to, and resolved upon taking up his former employment; partly that he might not live an idle life, and partly to obtain a livelihood, which was now to be sought after in another manner, since the death of Christ; and these inclinations and resolutions of his he signifies to the rest of the disciples, who agreed with him:

they say unto him, we also go with thee; that is, a fishing; for it seems to have been the business and employment of them all formerly: the place they went to was the sea of Tiberias, as appears from (⁴⁸²¹John 21:1) a place free for any to fish at. This is said to be one of the ten traditions which Joshua delivered to the children of Israel, when he divided the land among them [f799]:

> “that any man should be free to catch fish in the waters (or sea) of Tiberias; and he might fish with an hook only; but he might not spread a net, or place a ship there, except the children of the tribe to whom that sea belonged in their division.”

But now these disciples, or the greater part of them at least, belonging to the tribe and division in which the sea was, had a right to carry a ship or boat thither, and make use of a net, as they did. Besides, there was another reason for fishing here, because there were no unclean fish; for the Jews say [f800], that

"in a place of running water no clean fish goes along with unclean fish, and lo, the sea of Tiberias is ˆh ˆyk l hm µymh ˆwgk, "as running waters"."

They went forth: from the house, town, or city where they were, whether Capernaum, or Bethsaida, or Tiberias itself:

and entered into a ship immediately; which was either one of their own, that belonged to some one of them before their call; which though they had left, had reserved their right and claim unto; (see <4005>Luke 5:3) or which they hired for their present purpose: the word immediately is not in the Vulgate Latin, nor in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, nor in Beza's ancient copy:

and that night they caught nothing. They went out in the evening of the day, and fished all night, that being a proper time for such business, and the most likely to succeed in, but caught no fish, or very little: and so it is sometimes with Gospel ministers, who are fishers of men, though they take every opportunity, and the most proper methods to gain souls to Christ, yet sometimes do not succeed; which makes things look dark and gloomy in their apprehensions.

Ver. 4. *But when the morning was now come*, etc.] The day began to dawn, and light to appear, very early in the morning; for Christ visits his right early, and is a present help to them in their time of trouble.

Jesus stood on the shore: on firm ground, whilst his disciples were beating about in the waves, and toiling to no purpose. So Christ, risen from the dead, is glorified, is in heaven; but not unmindful of his people amidst all their afflictions in this world:

but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus; though he was so near them that they could hear what he said; but it not being broad daylight they could not distinctly discern him, or their eyes might be held that they could not know him. So Christ is sometimes near his people, and they know it not.

Ver. 5. *Then Jesus saith unto them, children*, etc.] And still they knew him not, though he used this endearing and familiar appellation, and which they had been wont to hear from him; and he had called them by a little before his departure from them, (<4333>John 13:33) and which he uses here as

expressive of his tender affection for them, their relation to him, and that he might be known by them:

have ye any meat? that is, as the Syriac renders it, s[lml µdm, "anything to eat"; meaning fish that they had caught; and whether they had got a sufficient quantity to make a meal of for him and them.

They answered him no; they had got nothing at all; or at least what they had was far from being enough to make a breakfast of; for so a meal early in a morning may be most properly called, though it is afterwards called dining. Christ's children, true believers, are sometimes without spiritual food; there is always indeed enough in Christ, and he has an heart to give it; but either through prevailing iniquity they feed on something else, or do not go to him for food, or go elsewhere; but he will not suffer them to starve; for as he has made provisions for them in the ministry of the word and ordinances; and he himself is the bread of life; if they do not ask him for food, he will ask them whether they have any; will kindly invite them to the provisions he himself makes; will bid them welcome, and bless them to them.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto them*, etc.] Willing to make himself known by a miracle, since they knew him not by his person, nor voice:

cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find; that is, a large multitude of fish, as they did. The ship was an emblem of the church in its present afflicted state; the right side of it points to the elect, and where they are to be found in this world; the casting of the net signifies the preaching of the Gospel; the promise of finding fish, the assurance Christ gives of the success of his word, which he owns and blesses for the conversion of elect sinners:

they cast therefore; the net, willing to try what success they might have at the instance of this person, whom they knew not. The Ethiopic version reads the passage thus, "and they said unto him, we have laboured all night, and have found nothing, but at thy word we will let down"; which seems to be taken out of (<40>Luke 5:5). However, they obeyed his orders and directions, as the faithful ministers of the Gospel do, and should, and, succeeded.

And now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. The Syriac adds, "which it held"; being in number, as in (<42>John 21:11) an

hundred and fifty, and three great fishes; which was an emblem and presage of that large number of souls both among the Jews and Gentiles, which they should be instrumental in bringing to Christ, through the preaching of the Gospel.

Ver. 7. *Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved*, etc.] Which was John the Evangelist and Apostle, the writer of this Gospel:

saith unto Peter, it is the Lord; which two disciples were very intimate with each other, and communicated their thoughts freely to one another. John knew that it was the Lord, either by some special revelation, or from the multitude of fishes which were taken, and which showed a divine hand and power to be concerned. So faithful ministers of the Gospel know when Christ is with them, by his power attending their ministrations to the conversion of souls. The Cambridge copy of Beza's reads, "our Lord"; as do the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; and it is reasonable to think, John speaking to a fellow disciple, who had equal interest in him with himself, might so say.

Now when Simon heard that it was the Lord; faith came by hearing, he was immediately convinced, and thoroughly satisfied, having received the hint upon a reflection on the surprising capture of the fishes, that it must be the Lord:

he girt his fisher's coat unto him. The Greek word επενδυτης, here used, is manifestly the tdnwpa of the Hebrews; and which, the Jewish writers say [f801], was a strait garment, which a man put on next his flesh to dry up the sweat; and a very proper one for Peter, who had been toiling all night, and very fit for him to swim in; and, by what follows, appears to be put on him next his flesh: for he was naked; for to suppose him entirely naked, whilst fishing, being only in company with men, and those parts of nature having a covering, which always require one, was not at all indecent and unbecoming:

and did cast himself into the sea; the Syriac adds, "that he might come to Christ"; and the Persic, "and he came to Christ"; showing his great love and eagerness to be with him; and, as fearless of danger, risks all to be with Christ; his love being such, that many waters could not quench, nor floods drown.

Ver. 8. *And the other disciples came in a little ship*, etc.] The same that they were fishing in, in which they came to Christ as soon as they could, not choosing to expose themselves, as Peter did; nor was it proper that they should leave the ship, and, as it was, might have hands few enough to bring ship and net, so full of fish, safe to shore; and the rather, they did not think fit to do as he did,

for they were not far from land, but, as it were, two hundred cubits; which was about an hundred yards:

dragging the net with fishes: towing the net full of fishes all along in the water, till they came to land; an emblem of laborious Gospel ministers, who being once embarked in the work of the ministry, continue in it to the end, notwithstanding all toil, labour, and difficulties that attend them; and will at last bring the souls with them they have been made useful to, with great satisfaction and joy, to their dear Lord and master.

Ver. 9. *As soon then as they were come to land*, etc.] As soon as they were come out of the ship, and safe on shore, not only Peter, but all the rest of the disciples:

they saw a fire of coals there: on the shore, to their great surprise:

and fish laid there; which could not be any that they had taken, for, as yet, the net was not drawn up, and the fish took out:

and bread; not upon the coals baking, but hard by, being ready prepared to eat with the fish, when sufficiently broiled. This was all of Christ's preparing, and a considerable proof of his deity; and a confirmation of that provision he will make for his ministering servants, whilst they are about his work, and in this world; and a representation of that spiritual and eternal refreshment they shall have with him in heaven to all eternity, when they have done their work.

Ver. 10. *Jesus saith unto them*, etc.] The disciples:

bring of the fish which ye have now caught: for they might have caught some before, though so few and small, as scarcely to be reckoned any; nor were they bid to bring all they had taken, only some of them, to add to these Christ had prepared for them on land; they being both indeed of a miraculous production, and the effects of his divine power. Christ's view in ordering to bring some of them, and put to those that lay upon the coals,

was partly that they might have enough to make a meal of for them all; and also, that they might have a more perfect knowledge of the miracle wrought, by seeing the number and largeness of the fishes, and by bringing the net full of them to shore unbroken; and may be an emblem of the bringing of souls to Christ by the ministry of the word, thereby adding to those that are already gathered.

Ver. 11. *Simon Peter went up*, etc.] Either to the sea, that being higher than the land, or to the ship which lay by the shore: he went aboard it, and

drew the net to land full of great fishes; not alone, but others of the disciples with him; though he only is mentioned, being the leading person in this affair; an emblem of the whole number of God's elect being brought safe to shore, to Christ, and to heaven, through various tribulations and afflictions in the world, fitly signified by the waves of the sea. What mystery there may be in the number, I know not. The conjecture of Grotius, that it is a figure of the proselytes in the days of David and Solomon, seems to be without foundation; since they were not only so many thousands, but six hundred over. And as little to be regarded is the thought of others, that the larger number, one hundred, regards the converted among the Gentiles, and the lesser those among the Jews; much better is the observation of others, that it may design a collection, out of all sorts of people, to Christ, and his church.

And for all there were so many; in number, and these so large and big, and the weight of them so great. The Syriac reads arqwy hlk anhb, "with all this weight", or "burden", and so the Persic; but the Arabic, "with such a number"; both ideas of number and weight are to be preserved, to make what follows the more observable:

yet was not the net broken; which must be ascribed to the divine power of Christ; and is an emblem of the power of God attending the Gospel to the regeneration, conversion, and salvation of his people, and of the great usefulness of it, however mean and despicable it may be in the eyes of men, and of its permanence and duration, until all the elect of God are gathered in by it.

Ver. 12. *Jesus saith unto them, come and dine*, etc.] One would think it should rather have been said, come and take a breakfast than a dinner, since it was so early in the morning: but Grotius has observed, out of Homer, that αριστον, is used for food taken in a morning; so that it may

signify here, not what we properly call dining, but eating a morning's meal; and may be an emblem of that spiritual refreshment believers enjoy with Christ in his house and ordinances now, and of those everlasting pleasures they will partake with him in the resurrection morn: and it is to be observed, that he does not say go and dine, but come and dine; that is, along with himself: he does not send his disciples elsewhere for food, but invites them to come to him, to hear his word, which is food for faith, to wait in his house, where plenty of provision is made, and to attend on his ordinances, and in all to feed upon himself, and to feed with him; to all which they are heartily welcome.

And none of the disciples durst ask him, who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord: to ask such a question was altogether unnecessary, and would have been impertinent, and they might justly have been upbraided and rebuked for it: it would have looked like insolence, or unbelief, or both, and that greatly aggravated, when it was so clear a case that it was the Lord; who might be known by his voice and person, especially when they came near to him, and also by the miracles which he wrought: so at the last day, when every eye shall see him coming in the clouds of heaven, none will ask who he is; all will know him.

Ver. 13. *Jesus then cometh and taketh bread*, etc.] After they had taken the fish out of the net, and all was prepared for the meal, and the disciples were set down to eat, Christ came and took his place as the master of the feast, and head of the family; and taking up the bread, as was his usual method, he asked a blessing over it, and gave thanks for it. Beza's ancient copy, and one of Stephens's read, "and having given thanks he gave", etc. which is agreeably to his usual practice at meals.

And giveth them, and fish likewise; he distributed both bread and fish to his disciples. So, in a spiritual sense, he provides plentifully for his people; gives them to eat of the hidden manna, and tree of life, and leads to fountains of living waters; encourages them to eat and drink freely, what is of his own preparing, and at his own expense provided for them.

Ver. 14. *This is now the third time*, etc.] Or day of Christ's appearance to his disciples: he appeared to them first on the same day he rose, and then a second time eight days after, or that day a week later, and now at the sea of Tiberias; for within this compass of time he had made more appearances than three, though to particular persons, and not to such a number of the disciples as at these three times:

that Jesus showed himself to his disciples after that he was risen from the dead: and thus, as by the mouth of two or three witnesses, everything is established; so by these three principal appearances of Christ to his disciples, his resurrection from the dead was confirmed.

Ver. 15. *So when they had dined*, etc.] The Persic version adds,

Jesus turned his face to Simon Peter; he did not interrupt them whilst they were eating; but when they had comfortably refreshed themselves, he looked at Peter, and singled him out from the rest, and directed his discourse to him; and saith unto Simon Peter,

Simon, son of Jonas; not John, as the Vulgate Latin, and Nonnus, and some copies read; for this answers not to the Hebrew word Jochanan, but Jonah, the same name with the prophet. Some have observed, that Christ spoke to him particularly by his original name, and not by that which he himself had given him, with a view to his strong faith, as Cephas, or Peter; but it should be known that Christ calls him by this name of Simon bar Jonah, when he made the most ample profession of his faith in him, and was pronounced blessed by him, (<4016>Matthew 16:16,17)

lovest thou me more than these? meaning, not than the fishes he had caught, nor the net and boat, or any worldly enjoyment, nor than he loved the disciples; but the question is, whether he loved Christ more than the rest of the disciples loved him: the reason of which was, because he had some time ago declared, though all the disciples were offended at Christ, and should deny him, he would not; and had just now thrown himself into the sea to come to him first, as if he loved him more than they did: which question is put, not out of ignorance, or as if Christ knew not whether he loved him or not, and what was the degree of his affection to him; but because the exercise of this grace, and the expressions of it, are very grateful to him; and that Peter also might have an opportunity of expressing it before others, who had so publicly denied him:

he saith unto him, yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee: not in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth; in sincerity, and without dissimulation, fervently and superlatively; for the truth of which he appeals to Christ himself; for he was so conscious to himself of the reality of his love, and the sincerity of his affection, that he chooses to make Christ himself judge of it, rather than say any more of it himself; though he modestly declines saying that he loved him more than the rest of the

disciples did, having had an experience of his vanity and self-confidence. He was sure he loved Christ heartily; but whether he loved him more than the rest did, he chose not to say:

he saith unto him, feed my lambs; the younger and more tender part of the flock, weak believers, Christ's little children, newborn babes, the day of small things, which are not to be despised, the bruised reed that is not to be broken, and the smoking flax that is not to be quenched; but who are to be nourished, comforted, and strengthened, by feeding them with the milk of the Gospel, and by administering to them the ordinances and breasts of consolation. These Christ has an interest in, and therefore calls them "my lambs", being given him by the Father, and purchased by his blood, and for whom he has a tender concern and affection; and nothing he looks upon as a firmer and clearer proof and evidence of love to him, than to feed these lambs of his, and take care of them.

Ver. 16. *He saith unto him again the second time*, etc.] Willing to have the expressions of his love repeated and confirmed;

Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? he leaves out the words, "more than these", though Nonnus expresses them; he saw Peter's heart, and observed the modesty of his answer, and would not urge him any more in that comparative way, only required a repetition of his sincere and hearty love to him:

he saith unto him, yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee; expressing himself in the same language as before; and it is, as if he should say, Lord, what can I say more? I can say no more than I have done, and by that I abide:

he saith unto him, feed my sheep; both the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and his other sheep among the Gentiles, whom the Father had given him, and he had paid a price for, and must be brought in; these being called, he would have fed with the word and ordinances, with the bread of life, and water of life, not lorded over, and fleeced, and much less worried and destroyed; every instance of care and love shown to these, he takes as a mark of affection and respect to himself.

Ver. 17. *He saith unto him the third time*, etc.] That by these three testimonies, out of his mouth, the thing might be established, and be out of all doubt:

Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? is it so indeed that thou lovest me? is thy love really so hearty and sincere as thou savest? may it be depended upon?

Peter was grieved, because he said unto him the third time, lovest thou me? because it put him in mind of his having denied his Lord three times; the remembrance of which cut him to the heart and it added to his grief, that his love, which he knew was unfeigned, notwithstanding his conduct, should seem to be suspected:

and he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee; he appeals with great warmth and earnestness to him, as the omniscient God, and the searcher of all hearts, who knows all persons and things, and the secret thoughts, dispositions, and affections of men's minds, for the truth of his love to him; for though he knew the treachery of his own heart, and durst not trust to it; and therefore chose not to be determined by his own assertions, and was well aware that the sincerity of his love might be called in question by fellow Christians, because of his late conduct; but as everything was naked and open to his Lord, with whom he had to do, he lodges and leaves the appeal with him: so every soul that truly loves Christ, whatever Satan, the world, professors, or their own hearts under unbelieving frames, may suggest to the contrary, can appeal to Christ, as the trier of the reins of the children of men, that he it is whom their souls love; and though their love may be greatly tried, and they themselves be sorely tempted by Satan, and suffered to fall greatly; yet their love to Christ can never be lost; the fervency of it may be abated, the exercise of it may be very languid, but the principle itself always remains, as it did in Peter:

Jesus saith unto him, feed my sheep. It may be observed from the repetition of this phrase following upon Peter's declaration of his love to Christ, that such only are proper persons to feed the lambs and sheep of Christ, who truly and sincerely love him: and in doing which they show their love to him: and who indeed would be concerned in this service, but such? since the work is so laborious, the conduct of those to whom they minister oftentimes is so disagreeable, the reproach they meet with from the world, and the opposition made unto them by Satan, and all the powers of darkness: it is true indeed, there are some that take upon them this work, and pretend to do it, who do not love Christ; but then they are such who feed themselves, and not the flock; and who feed the world's goats,

and not Christ's lambs and sheep, and in time of danger leave the flock; only the true lovers of Christ faithfully perform this service, and abide in it by preaching the pure Gospel of Christ, by administering his ordinances, in their right manner, and by directing souls in all to Christ, the heavenly manna, and bread of life. Dr. Lightfoot thinks that by the threefold repetition of the order to feed Christ's lambs and sheep, is meant the threefold object of Peter's ministry; the Jews in their own land, the Gentiles, and the Israelites of the ten tribes, that were in Babylon.

Ver. 18. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee*, etc.] A way of speaking often used by Christ, when about to deliver anything of considerable moment, partly to raise the attention, and partly for the more strong asseveration of what is spoken; and may have reference both to what went before, confirming Peter's declaration of his love, which would be demonstrated by dying for him, and the testimony of his omniscience, by foretelling his death, and the kind of it; and to what follows after, which contains an account of Peter in his younger years, and a prophecy of what should befall him in old age:

when thou wast young; not that he was old now, and capable he was of doing, and he did do but just now, what our Lord ascribes to his younger years:

thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldst; that is, he could put on his clothes himself, and gird them about him with a girdle, as was the custom of the eastern nations, who usually wore long garments; and as he, a little before, had girt his fisher's coat about him, and walked where he pleased; denoting the liberty of his will in things natural and civil, which every man is possessed of, though not in things spiritual, without the grace of God; and also his power of doing what was most grateful to him, without being hindered by, or obliged to ask the leave of others:

but when thou shalt be old; implying, that he should live to a good old age, and be continued to be useful and serviceable in the cause of Christ, in preaching his Gospel, and feeding his lambs and sheep, as he did; for he lived to the times of Nero [f802], under whom he suffered, about forty years after this:

thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee. This refers not so much to an inability through old age to gird himself, and therefore should stretch forth his hands, that another might with more ease do it for him, and which would be the reverse of his former and present case; for the

word gird is used in another sense than before, and signifies the binding of him as, a prisoner with cords, or chains; so “girding”, with the Jews, is the same as hrysahw hryçqh, “tying and binding” [f803]: but either to the stretching out of his hands upon the cross, when he should be girt and bound to that; for persons were sometimes fastened to the cross with cords, and not always with nails [f804]: or, as others think, to his carrying of his cross on his shoulders, with his hands stretched out and bound to the piece of wood which went across; though his being girded or bound may as well be thought to follow the former, as this: indeed, what is added best suits with the latter,

and carry thee whither thou wouldst not; to a painful, cruel, shameful, and accursed death, the death of the cross; not that Peter in spirit would be unwilling to die for Christ, nor was he; but it signifies, that he should die a death disagreeable to the flesh.

Ver. 19. *This spake he*, etc.] These are the words of the evangelist, explaining the meaning of Christ in like manner, as in (BIBLEJohn 12:33)

signifying by what death he should glorify God; for by the above words Christ not only intimated that Peter should die, not a natural, but a violent death, or that he should die a martyr in his cause, but the very kind of death he should die, namely, by crucifixion; and that Peter was crucified at Rome, ecclesiastical history confirms [f805], when Christ was magnified, and God was glorified by his zeal and courage, faith and patience, constancy and perseverance to the end:

and when he had spoken this: concerning the usage and treatment he should meet with, the sufferings he should undergo, and death he should die for his sake, for the present trial of him:

he saith unto him, follow me: which may be understood literally, Jesus now rising up, and ordering him to come after him; and yet as a sign of his following him, in a spiritual sense, exercising every grace upon him, discharging every duty towards him, faithfully and constantly performing his work and office, as an apostle and preacher of the Gospel, in which he had now reinstated and confirmed him, and patiently bearing and suffering all kind of reproach, persecution, and death, for his name’s sake.

Ver. 20. *Then Peter turning about*, etc.] After he was risen, and was following Christ:

seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following also; by whom is designed John the Evangelist, and writer of this Gospel; who hearing Christ bid Peter follow him, rose up likewise, and went after him, in token of his willingness to serve him, and suffer for him too:

which also leaned on his breast at supper; at the "paschal supper", as the Persic version here reads it: "and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?" This disciple had a peculiar share in the love of Christ, as man, and was admitted to great nearness and freedom with him, signified by his leaning on his breast; and who being so near his person, and allowed to use a liberty with him, everyone did not take, at the motion of Peter, asked our Lord at supper, who the person was he meant that should betray him; all this is said as descriptive of the disciple here spoken of, which leaves it without any doubt, that it was the Apostle John; and who, from (John 21:2) appears to be one of this company, and is further confirmed at (John 21:24).

Ver. 21. *Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus*, etc.] Peter took a great deal of notice of John, and very likely understood, that he meant by his rising up and following Christ, to signify his readiness for service and suffering in the cause of Christ: and therefore says,

Lord, and what shall this man do? The phrase in the original is very short and concise, "Lord, and this what?" The Arabic version renders it, "and this, of what mind is he?" it looks as if he was of the same mind with me to follow thee; but it is better rendered by us, "what shall this man do?" in what work and service shall he be employed, who seems as willing as I am to serve thee? or it may be rendered thus, "and what shall this man suffer?" shall he suffer at all? and if he shall, what kind of death shall he undergo? what will become of him? what will be his end? how will it fare with him? this he said, partly out of curiosity, and partly out of concern for him, they two being associates and intimates, who had a strong affection for each other.

Ver. 22. *Jesus saith unto him*, etc.] Christ vouchsafes an answer to Peter, but not a very clear one, nor such an one as he wished for, and not without a rebuke to him:

if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? meaning, that if it was his pleasure that he should live, not till his second coming to judge the quick and dead at the last day, but till he should come in his power and

take vengeance on the Jewish nation, in the destruction of their city and temple by the Romans, and in dispersing them through the nations of the world; till which time John did live, and many years after; and was the only one of the disciples that lived till that time, and who did not die a violent death; what was that to Peter? it was no concern of his. The question was too curious, improper, and impertinent; it became him to attend only to what concerned himself, and he was bid to do:

follow thou me; whence it may be observed, that it becomes the saints to mind their duty in following Christ, and not concern themselves in things that do not belong to them. Christ is to be followed by his people as their leader and commander; as the shepherd of the flock; as a guide in the way, and the forerunner that is gone before; as the light of the world; as the pattern and example of the saints, and as their Lord and master; and that in the exercise of every grace, as humility and meekness, love, zeal, patience, and resignation to the will of God; and also in the discharge of duty, both with respect to moral life and conversation, and instituted worship, as attendance on public service, and submission to ordinances; and likewise in enduring sufferings patiently and cheerfully for his sake. Saints are under obligation to follow Christ; it is their interest so to do; it is honourable, safe, comfortable, and pleasant, and ends in happiness here and hereafter.

Ver. 23. *Then went this saying abroad among the brethren*, etc.] It not being rightly understood by some one or more of the disciples present: it was divulged with a wrong sense annexed to it among other persons; who, though not of the eleven, yet were followers of Christ, children of God, that belonged to the same family, and were, in a spiritual relation, brethren to each other, and to the apostles:

that that disciple should not die; but should remain till the second coming of Christ, and be found among them that shall be then alive, and be changed. And such a notion not only was among the ancients; but Beza, in his notes on this text, tells us of a strolling wicked fellow, that gave out that he was the Apostle John; and was encouraged by some, particularly Postellus, a Sorbonic doctor, but was afterwards burnt at Tholouse.

Yet Jesus said not unto him he shall not die, but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? These are the words of John himself, the disciple spoken of, who gives a true and just account of Christ's words, freeing them from the false sense that was put upon them; which shows his ingenuous disposition, his integrity and love of truth; being unwilling that

such an error should obtain among the disciples, and pass in the world for truth.

Ver. 24. *This is the disciple which testifieth of these things*, etc.] Recorded in this chapter concerning the appearance of Christ to his disciples at the sea of Tiberias, and what were done by him in their presence, what passed between them; particularly the conversation he had with Peter, both concerning himself, and the disciple John: and also, of all things that are written in this whole Gospel. These are testified to be true by this very disciple John, concerning whom the above report went upon a mistaken sense of Christ's words, and who himself

wrote these things; all that is contained in this book, as well as the particulars relating to this conversation of Christ with Peter:

and we know that his testimony is true. The testimony of one that was an eye and ear-witness, as John was, of all that he testified and wrote, must be known, owned, and allowed by all to be true, firm, and unquestionable; and therefore the apostle speaks in the plural number, as being not only his own sense, but the sense of all men. Though some take this to be the attestation of the Ephesian church, or of the bishops of the Asiatic churches, who put John upon writing this Gospel; of which they give their judgment and testimony, as believing it to be a true and faithful narrative.

Ver. 25. *And there are also many other things which Jesus did*, etc.] Which refer not to his doctrines and discourses, his sermons and prayers, and the conversation he had with his disciples, and others, on different accounts; but to the signs, and wonders, and miraculous operations, which were done by him, that are neither recorded in this, nor in any of the evangelists:

the which, if they should be written everyone; with all the particular circumstances relating to them:

I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. The Arabic version renders it, "the things written in the books"; and the Syriac, "that the world would not be sufficient for the books that should be written"; and so the Persic, which adds, "and the Scribes of the world would fail, or be deficient"; there would not be Scribes enough in the world to write them; nor could they be read by men, if they were written; the world would be overloaded with them; and therefore the Holy Ghost has not thought fit to lay such a burden on men

they could not bear, as to read such numbers of volumes; but has reduced them into a brief compendium, which may be read with ease, delight, and pleasure; and which is abundantly sufficient to attest the truth of Christ's incarnation, miracles, doctrines, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, session at God's right hand, etc. and of the whole of Christianity, and all that appertains to it, or whatever is necessary to be known, for the salvation of men: for this cannot be understood of the carnal and unbelieving part of the world, not receiving and bearing what would be contained in such volumes, were they written; for they are not able to receive and bear what is now written, but reject and despise it as foolishness. Some understand this as an hyperbolical expression; but the sense above given, may be admitted without an hyperbole; though an hyperbole may very well be allowed of; nor, taken literally, will it appear greater than some others used in Scripture; as when the posterity of Abraham are said to be as numerous as the stars of the sky; and especially when said to be as the sand by the sea shore, innumerable, (<58112>Hebrews 11:12, <28210>Hosea 1:10) and when Capernaum is said to be exalted unto heaven, or to reach unto it, (<40123>Matthew 11:23, <01104>Genesis 11:4) and particularly the Jews have no reason to object, as one of them does [f806], to such a way of speaking, whose writings abound in hyperbolical expressions, and in some like to this; as when one of their Rabbins says [f807],

> "if all the seas were ink, and the bulrushes pens, and the heavens and the earth volumes, and all the children of men Scribes, hrwt bwtkl ^yqypsm ^ya, "they would not be sufficient to write the law", which have learned, etc."

and it is commonly said [f808] by them, if this, or that, or the other thing was done, lbsml aml[lyky al, "the world would not be able to bear them". And a later writer [f809] of theirs, speaking of the different interpretations given by some of their Rabbins of a certain passage, says, they are so many, that an ass is not able to carry their books. And the intention of this expression, supposing it hyperbolical, is to show, that but a few of the wonderful things done by Christ were recorded by the evangelist, in comparison of the many which he every day did, in all places where he came; for he was continually going about doing good, and healing all manner of diseases; but these that were written are sufficient to prove him to be the true Messiah, and to require faith in him as such. To all which the evangelist sets his "Amen", as attesting and confirming the truth

of all he had written; and which may be depended upon, and assented to, as truth, by all that read this Gospel. The Alexandrian copy, and Beza's Cambridge copy, have not the word "Amen"; nor have the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions. In some copies the following words are added,

> "the Gospel according to John was given out thirty two years after the ascension of Christ;"

which would fall on the year of Christ 66, and so before the destruction of Jerusalem; which is contrary to the common opinion of learned men, some placing it in the year 97, others in the year 99.

(John starts his Gospel by stating: "All things were made by him". If one were to attempt to even summarise the works of creation, there is no way the world could contain the resulting volumes! Editor.)

FOOTNOTES

ft1 -- Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:6. c. 14.

ft2 -- Ib. 50:3. c. 24.

ft3 -- Polycrates in ib. 50:3. c. 31. & 50:5. c. 24. & Hieron. Catalog. Script. Ecclesiastes fol. 96. sect. 55.

ft4 -- Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

ft5 -- Hieron. Prolog. Evang. Joannis.

ft6 -- Apud Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. 50:11. c. 19.

ft7 -- Stromat. 50:1. p. 274.

ft8 -- Ib. p. 303.

ft9 -- Ib. Paedagog. 50:2. c. 1. p. 150.

ft10 -- Valer. Maxim. 50:8. c. 7.

ft11 -- Apuleius de dogmate Platonis, 50:1. in principio.

ft12 -- Apud. Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. 50:13. c. 12.

ft13 -- Hesych. Miles. de Philosophis. p. 50.

ft14 -- Prepar. Evangel. 50:11. c. 9.

ft15 -- De Leg. Alleg. 50:2. p. 93. de Plant. Noe, p. 217. de Migrat. Abraham, p. 389. de Profugis, p. 466. quis. rer. divin. Haeres. p. 509.

ft16 -- Targum Jon. in loc.

ft17 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 54. 1. & Nedarim, fol. 39. 2. Pirke Eliezer, c. 3.

ft18 -- De Allegor. 50:2. p. 99, 101. & de Somniis, p. 599.

ft19 -- De Mundi Opificio, p. 4, 5, 31, 32. De Alleg. 50:1. p. 44. De Sacrificiis Abel & Cain, p. 131. De Profugis, p. 464. & de Monarch. p. 823.

ft20 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2.

ft21 -- Bereshit Rabba, fol. 1. 3.

ft22 -- Jarchi in ib.

ft23 -- De Maudi Opificio, p. 6. De Allegor. 50:2. p. 80. & de Somniis, p. 576, 578.

ft24 -- T. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1.

ft25 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 31. fol. 171. 4.

ft26 -- Midrash Ruth, c. 50:5:1. fol. 27. 3.

ft27 -- Maimon. Hilch. Melakim. c. 8. sect. 10. Vid. Misn. Roshhashana, c. 50:sect. 2. T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 25. 4. & 26. 3. Sepher Bahir apud Zohar in Genesis fol. 30. 3. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 21. 2. & 22. 3. & 24. 3. & 27. 2. Caphter, fol. 56. 1. Jarchi in Exodus 15. 2.

ft28 -- Ben Arama in <01470>Genesis 47:4. apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. Ver. 50:3. c. 5,

ft29 -- Jarchi & Kimchi in loc. Shemot Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 103. 2. & 104. 4. & Mattanot Cehuna in Vajikra Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 164. 2. Zohar in Leviticus fol. 39. 2.

ft30 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 20. 2.

ft31 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 58. 1.

ft32 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 9. 4.

ft33 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 45. 1.

ft34 -- lb. in Leviticus fol. 28. 1. & in Numbers fol. 69. 2. & 71. 2.

ft35 -- lb. fol. 40. 3. & in Numbers fol. 61. 1.

ft36 -- R. Moses Haddarsan in Psal. 85. 11. apud Galatin. de Arcan, Cathol. ver. 50:8. c. 2.

ft37 -- De nominum mutat. p. 1047.

ft38 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 5.

ft39 -- Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 1, 2.

ft40 -- Misna Maaser Sheni, c. 5. sect. 2. Juchasin, fol. 65. 2. Jarchi in <23246>Isaiah 24:16.

ft41 -- De Bello Jud. 50:5. c. 4.

ft42 -- Baal Hatturim in <051815>Deuteronomy 18:15. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 127. 4. & 143. 4. Siphre in Jarchi in <240105>Jeremiah 1:5.

ft43 -- Kimchi in <234001>Isaiah 40:1.

ft44 -- Jarchi in <2403>Isaiah 40:3.

ft45 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 70. 4.

ft46 -- Aben Ezra in Isaiah ib.

ft47 -- Vet. Nizzachon, p. 56, 62, 64, 70, 74, 77, 148, 191, 193.

ft48 -- De Locis Hebraicis, fol. 89. L.

ft49 -- Comment in Joannemo, Tom. 8. p. 131.

ft50 -- R. Abraham ben David in Misn. Ediot, c. 8. sect. 7.

ft51 -- R. Menachem, fol. 115. apud Ainsworth, in <0229>Exodus 29:39.

ft52 -- Raya Mehimna, in Zohar in Leviticus fol. 33. 2.

ft53 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 5. sect. 1.

ft54 -- Prefat ad Methurgemen, & in voce jçm.

ft55 -- Lexicon Talmud p. 1268.

ft56 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 108. 1. Zohar in Leviticus fol. 15. 3.

ft57 -- Vid. Targum in Psal. 40:3. & <2017>Proverbs 17:8. T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 6. 1. & Gloss. in ib. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 63. 2.

ft58 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 20, 21, 22, 23.

ft59 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:18. c. 3.

ft60 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 2.

ft61 -- Bar Bahlui apud Castell Lex. Polyglott. col. 2437.

ft62 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 48.

ft63 -- In Genesis fol. 13. 1. & 14. 3. & 16. 1, 2. & in Exodus fol. 83. 4. & passim.

ft64 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 8. 1. & 23. 2. & 24. 1. Kiddushin, fol. 20. 1. & 33. 1. & Sota, fol. 5. 1, 2. & passim.

ft65 -- Addareth Eliahu apud Trigland de Sect. Karaeorum, c. 10. p. 175, 176.

ft66 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 3. Vid. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 16. 4.

ft67 -- Ib col. 1. & T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 1.

ft68 -- Bar Bahluli apud Castell. Lexic. Polyglott. col. 8437.

ft69 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 68. fol. 61. 2. & sect. 69. fol. 61. 3, 4.

ft70 -- Misn. Cetubot, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft71 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 3. 1.

ft72 -- Misa. Moed Katon, c. 1. sect. 7. & T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 8. 2. & 18. 2.

ft73 -- Hachot Ishot, c. 10. sect. 14, 15.

ft74 -- Piske Toseph. Cetubot, art. 6.

ft75 -- Ib art. 28.

ft76 -- Jerom de Locis Hebraicis, fol. 90. B.

ft77 -- In vita sua.

ft78 -- Juchasin, fol. 57. 2.

ft79 -- Misn. Cetubot, c. 13. sect. 10. T. Hieros. Cetubot, fol. 36. 2.

ft80 -- Bartenora in ib.

ft81 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 12. 1.

ft82 -- Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 10. sect. 5. Pirke Eliezer, c. 19. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 9. 3.

ft83 -- Maimon in Misn. Peah, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft84 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 49. 1. & Maimon. Hilchot Deyot, c. 5. sect. 2.

ft85 -- Vet. Nizzachon, p. 222.

ft86 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 42. p. 433.

ft87 -- Vet. Nizzachon, p. 223.

ft88 -- Vid. Kimchi in Psal. 2:12. Bechinat Olam, p. 70.

ft89 -- Misn. Celim, c. 10. sect. 1. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ft90 -- Misn. Yadaim, c. 1. sect. 2.

ft91 -- Gloss in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 77. 2.

ft92 -- Maimon. Hilchot Ishot, c. 10. sect. 12, 13.

ft93 -- Maimon. Hilchot Ishot, c. 10. sect. 3, 4.

ft94 -- A Caupone tibi faex Laletana petatur Si plus quam decics, Sextiliane, bibis. L. 1. Ep. 25.

ft95 -- Praefat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 40. 4.

ft96 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 44. 4.

ft97 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 52. 4.

ft98 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 9. sect. 5.

ft99 -- Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 2.

ft100 -- Biblos Katallages, p. 347.

ft101 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1.

ft102 -- Antiqu. Jud. 50:15. c. 14.

ft103 -- Antiqu. Jud. 50:20. c. 8.

ft104 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 43. p. 434.

ft105 -- Pesachim, fol. 70. 2.

ft106 -- Maimon. Hilch. Chagigah, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft107 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 2.

ft108 -- Philostrat. Vit. Apollonii, 50:1. c. 13.

ft109 -- Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 1. Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 19. 1.

ft110 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 2. & Juchasin, fol. 23. 2.

ft111 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 56. 1.

ft112 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 75. 4.

ft113 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 6. fol. 3. 2.

ft114 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 66. 2.

ft115 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 2.

ft116 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 46. 3. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 75. 1.

ft117 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 1.

ft118 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

ft119 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 3.

ft120 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 66. 2.

ft121 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 1.

ft122 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 25. 1.

ft123 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 84. 1.

ft124 -- Ib. fol. 8S. 2. in Leviticus fol. 5. 3, 4. & 10. 1. & passim.

ft125 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 12. 2. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Talmud Tora, c. 3. sect. 13.

ft126 -- T. Bab. Tamid. foi. 32. 2.

ft127 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 9. 2.

ft128 -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 91. 1. Piske Tosephot Pesach, art. 12. & Maimon. Hilch, Deyot. c. 5. sect. 9.

ft129 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 1. & Megilla, fol. 3. 1. & Piske Tosephot Megilla, art. 4. & in Yebamot, art. 238.

ft130 -- R David Kimchi in loc.

ft131 -- Maimon. Hilch. Melacim, c. 11. sect. 3.

ft132 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.

ft133 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 22. 1. 48. 2. 62. 1. & 97. 2.

ft134 -- Vid. Maimon. Issure Bia, c. 14. sect. 11. & Eduth, c. 13. sect. 2.

ft135 -- Derech Eretz, fol. 18. 1.

ft136 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 44. 4.

ft137 -- De Agricult. p. 202. & Allegor. 50:3. p. 1101, 1102, 1103, 1104.

ft138 -- C. 16. 5:6.

ft139 -- T. Hieros. Roshhashanah, fol. 59. 1.

ft140 -- Misn. Roshhashanah, c. 3. sect. 3.

ft141 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 123. 2.

ft142 -- Zohar in Gen fol. 36. 2.

ft143 -- Tikkune Zohar in Jetzira, p. 134.

ft144 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 2. 1.

ft145 -- Ib. fol. 4. 1. Vid. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2. & Bereshit Rabba, fol. 11. 3.

ft146 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 24. 1. Jarchi & Kimchi in <3801>Zechariah 9:1.

ft147 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 112. 2.

ft148 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 15. 1, 2.

ft149 -- T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 64. 1.

ft150 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 14. fol. 99. 4.

ft151 -- Ib sect. 11. fol. 98. 3.

ft152 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 55. 2.

ft153 -- Misn. Demai, c. 6. sect. 4.

ft154 -- Maimon. Bartenora in ib.

ft155 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 12. 1, & Megilla, fol. 26. 1.

ft156 -- Antiqu. Jud. 50:2. c. 3.

ft157 -- T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4.

ft158 -- De Locis Hebraicis fol. 89. C. & fol, 94. F.

ft159 -- T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 37. 3.

ft160 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 3. sect. 5. & Bartenora in ib.

ft161 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 12. 1.

ft162 -- Jarchi in (2340)Exodus 34:1. Vid. Shemot Rabba, sect. 46. fol. 142. 2.

ft163 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 8. 2.

ft164 -- Jarchi in ib.

ft165 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 144. 2. & 145. 1.

ft166 -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 1. & T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 64. 1. & Yoma, fol. 69. 2.

ft167 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 157. 3.

ft168 -- Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2.

ft169 -- Antiqu. Jud. 50:20. c 5. & in vita sua, p. 1019.

ft170 -- Hieron. Epitaph. Paulae, Tom. I. fol. 59. & R. Benjamin Itin. p. 38.

ft171 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, foi. 42. 1. & 83. 1. & Cholin, fol. 94.

ft172 -- T. Hieron. Shekalim, fol. 48. 4. T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 2. & Menachot, fol. 64. 2. & Gloss. in Sanhedrin, fol. 11. 2.

ft173 -- T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4.

ft174 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 10. 1. & Cholin, fol. 4. 1. & Kiddushin, fol. 76.

1.

ft175 -- Misn. Demai, c. 7. sect. 4. Vid. Bartenora in ib.

ft176 -- Misna Sheviith, c. 8. sect. 10. Pirke Eliezer, c. 38.

ft177 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. ib.

ft178 -- T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4.

ft179 -- Ib.

ft180 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 104. 1.

ft181 -- T. Bab. Becorot, fol. 7. 2. Piske Toseph. ib. art. 4. & in Megilla, art 102.

ft182 -- Misna Avoda Zara, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft183 -- Misua Demai, c. 3. sect. 4.

ft184 -- Piske Tosephot Yoma, art. 63.

ft185 -- Bartenora in Misn. Negaim, c. 14. sect. 1.

ft186 -- T. Hieros. Erubin, fol. 20. 2.

ft187 -- Epist. Samar. ad Scaliger. in Antiqu. Eccl. Oriental. p. 123, 124, 126.

ft188 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 94. fol. 82. 1.

ft189 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol 76. 1.

ft190 -- Misna Sota, c. 7. sect. 5. T. Bab. Sota, fol. 33. 2.

ft191 -- Antiqu. 50:12. c. 1. Vid. Juchasin, fol. 14. 2.

ft192 -- Juchasin, fol. 14. 2. & 15. 1.

ft193 -- Antiqu. 50:13. c. 17.

ft194 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 32. fol. 27. 4. & Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 16. 3.

ft195 -- Debarim Rabba, sect. 3. fol. 238. 2.

ft196 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 81. fol. 71. 1.

ft197 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 5. 2.

ft198 -- Maimon. in Misn. Beracot, c. 8. sect. 8. & Bartenora in ib. c. 7. sect. 1. & in Nidda, c. 4. sect. 1.

ft199 -- Shalshelet Hakkabala, fol. 15. 2.

ft200 -- T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4.

ft201 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 81. fol. 71. 1.

ft202 -- 1 Epist. Samar. ad Scaliger, in Antiq. Eccl. Oriental, p. 125.

ft203 -- Zohar in Genesis fol, 74. 1.

ft204 -- Zohar in <BIBLE>Leviticus 10:1.

ft205 -- Maimon. Hilch. Melachim, c. 11. sect. 4. & 12. 5.

ft206 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 5. Abot R, Nathan, c. 7. fol. 3. 3. & Derech Eretz, fol. 17. 3.

ft207 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect 10. fol. 200. 2.

ft208 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 43. 2.

ft209 -- Maimon. Hilch. Dayot, c. 5. sect. 7.

ft210 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 61. 1. & Tosephot in ib.

ft211 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 106. 2.

ft212 -- Gloss in T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 16. 1.

ft213 -- Gloss in Bava Metzia & in Roshhashana ib.

ft214 -- Misn. Menachot, c. 8. sect. 2.

ft215 -- Misn. Sheviith, c. 2. sect. 1. & Moed Katon, c. 1. sect. 4.

ft216 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 124. 4.

ft217 -- Antiqu. Jud. 50:20. c. 5.

ft218 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 5. sect. 5.

ft219 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2.

ft220 -- De Locis Hebraicis, p. 89. L. Tom. III.

ft221 -- Cippi Hebraici, p. 10.

ft222 -- Itinerar. p. 43.

ft223 -- Misn. Middot, c. 5. sect. 2. Maimon. Beth Habbechira, c. 5. sect. 17.

ft224 -- De Excidio, 50:2. c. 15.

ft225 -- Adv. Judaeos, c. 13.

ft226 -- De Semente, p. 345. Tom. I.

ft227 -- In Chambers' Dictionary, in the word "Piscina".

ft228 -- Vid. Gloss. in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 115. 1. Megilla, fol. 18. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 21. 2.

ft229 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Yadaim, c. 4. sect. 5. Vid. Gloss. in T. Bab. Megillia, fol. 8. 2.

ft230 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 24. fol. 165. 2.

ft231 -- Vid. Hackspan. Interpr. Errabund. sect. 20.

ft232 -- De Baptismo, c. 5.

ft233 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 71. 4.

ft234 -- De Anima, c. 50.

ft235 -- Adv. Judaeos, c. 13.

ft236 -- Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 12. sect. 6.

ft237 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 10. sect. 3.

ft238 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 47. 1. & 138. 1.

ft239 -- Vet. Nizzachon, p. 207.

ft240 -- Leg. Ailegor. 50:1. p. 41.

ft241 -- Quod Deus sit Immutab. p. 318.

ft242 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 4.

ft243 -- De Confus. Ling. p. 329.

ft244 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 85. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 13. fol. 209. 4. Jarchi & Saadiah Gaon in 2073Daniel 7:13. & R. Jeshuah in Aben Ezra in ib.

ft245 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 70. 4.

ft246 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. sect. 2.

ft247 -- Maimon. in ib.

ft248 -- Maimon. Issure Bia, c. 18. sect. 19.

ft249 -- Misn. Cetubot, c. 2. sect. 9. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 27. 2. Juchasin, fol. 56. 1.

ft250 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 79. 1.

ft251 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 17. 1.

ft252 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 85. fol. 74. 4. & Mattanot Cehunah in ib.

ft253 -- Vid. R. David Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 38. 1. 41. 1. 44. 2. 45. 1. 46. 2. & 47. 1.

ft254 -- A. Gell. Noct. Attic. 50:14. c. 3.

ft255 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 100. 3.

ft256 -- Maimon. in Misn. Megilla, c. 4. sect. 1.

ft257 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 112. 2.

ft258 -- Jarchi in Dan 12:1. Vid. Abkath Rocel, par. 2. p. 265.

ft259 -- Prefat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 40. 1.

ft260 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 81. 2. & Bava Bathra, fol. 74. 2. Becorot, fol. 55. 1. Megilla, fol. 5. 2. & 6. 1. Moed. Katon, fol. 18. 2. & T. Hieros. Kilaim, fol. 32. 3. & Erubin, fol. 25. 2.

ft261 -- Solin, c. 48. Pausan. 50:5. p. 298.

ft262 -- Lib. 5. c. 15.

ft263 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol 21. 2. & Sheviith, fol. 38. 4. Kiddushin, fol. 61. 1. R. Benj. Itinerar. p. 53.

ft264 -- T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 6. 1. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Shekalim, c. 3. sect. 1.

ft265 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 60. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 49. 1.

ft266 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 5. 2. & Hieros. Megilla, fol. 70. 1.

ft267 -- T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 23. 2. & 24. 1.

ft268 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 75. 2.

ft269 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 9. 1. Seder Olam Rabba, p. 28.

ft270 -- Quis rer. divin. haeres. p. 507.

ft271 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 1. sect. 6.

ft272 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 25. fol. 108. 4.

ft273 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 188. 1.

ft274 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 44. p. 434.

ft275 -- R. Chizzuk Emmuna, par. 2. c. 44. p. 434.

ft276 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 43. 4.

ft277 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 92. 1.

ft278 -- T. Hieros. Kilaim, fol. 32. 3.

ft279 -- T. Hieros. Kilaim, foi. 32. 3. col. 2.

ft280 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 82. 4.

ft281 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2. & 24. 1.

ft282 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 102. 4.

ft283 -- Kimichi in loc.

ft284 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 70. 1.

ft285 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2. & 99. 1.

ft286 -- Misn. Nidda, c. 8, sect. 3.

ft287 -- Baal Hatturim in Numbers 33:5.

ft288 -- Misn. Succa, c. 1. sect. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Succa, c. 4. sect. 1.

ft289 -- Misn. Succa, sect. 4, 5, 6. Maimon. ib. c. 5. sect. 1, 2, etc.

ft290 -- Maimon. ib. c. 6. sect. 5.

ft291 -- Misn. ib. c. 2. sect. 5, 6. Maimon. ib. sect. 6, 7.

ft292 -- Maimon. ib. sect. 10.

ft293 -- Misn. ib. c. 4. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Maimon. Hilch. Lulab, c. 7. sect. 5, 6, 9, 23.

ft294 -- Misn. Succa, c. 5. sect 2, 3, 4.

ft295 -- Maimon. ib. c. 8. sect. 12.

ft296 -- Misn. ib. c. 4. sect. 8, 9. & c. 5. 1, 4, 5. & Eracin, c. 2. sect. 3.

ft297 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 45. p. 434, 435.

ft298 -- Misn. Chagiga, c. 1. sect. 6. Maimon. Hilch. Chagiga, c. 2. sect. 4, 5, 6, 7.

ft299 -- Misa. Succa, c. 5. sect. 5.

ft300 -- Toldos Jesu, p. 5.

ft301 -- Juchasin, fol. 159. 1. Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1, fol. 21. 1. & 24.

ft302 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 46. p. 435.

ft303 -- Maimon. in Misn. Cholin, c. 7. sect. 6.

ft304 -- R. Eliaha in Adderet apud Trigland. de Sect. Karaeorum, c. 9. p. 134.

ft305 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 132. 1. Mitzvot Tora, pr. Affirm. 28.

ft306 -- Baal Hatturim in Leviticus 12:3.

ft307 -- Misna Sabbat, c. 18. sect. 3.

ft308 -- Misna Sabbat, c. 19. sect. 1, 2. T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 69. 2. Maimon. Hilchot Milah, c. 2. sect. 6, 7.

ft309 -- Ib. sect. 3. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 70. 3. Maimon. ib. sect. 6.

ft310 -- Ib. sect. 4. T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 19. 2.

ft311 -- Juchasin, fol. 105. 2.

ft312 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 132. 1.

ft313 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 4, 5.

ft314 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 20. 4. Midrash Ruth, fol. 36. 1.

ft315 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 51. fol. 46. 1. Midrash Ruth, fol. 35. 4.

ft316 -- Mattanot Cehunah & Jade Moseh in ib.

ft317 -- In 3 sent distinct. 3. art. 2.

ft318 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 114. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 1.

ft319 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 4. 2.

ft320 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 71. 4.

ft321 -- Piske Tosephot. Sabbat, art. 113.

ft322 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 4. 4.

ft323 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 3. 4. & 4. 2.

ft324 -- Hilchot Melakim, c. 11. sect. 3.

ft325 -- In Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.

ft326 -- Shirshashirim Rabba, fol. 5. 3. & 7. 3.

ft327 -- Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 7. sect. 6. & Maimon. in ib.

ft328 -- Bartenora in Misn. Succa, c. 5. sect. 6.

ft329 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 55. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 231. 1.

ft330 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 48. 1.

ft331 -- Misn. Succa, c. 4. sect. 9.

ft332 -- Misn. Succa, c. 5. sect. 1, 4.

ft333 -- T. Zebachim, fol. 110. 2. Maimon. in Misn. Succa, c. 4. sect. 9. & Hilthot Tamidin, c. 10. sect. 6.

ft334 -- T. Hieros. Succa, fol. 55. 1. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 70. fol. 62. 3. & Midrash Ruth, fol. 32. 2. Caphtor, fol. 52. 1.

ft335 -- Misn. Taanith, c. 1. sect. 1, 2.

ft336 -- Bartenora, in ib.

ft337 -- Misn. Roshhashana, c. 1. sect. 2.

ft338 -- T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 16. 1.

ft339 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 63. 2.

ft340 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 9. 2. Sota, fol. 48. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 11. 1.

ft341 -- Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 10. sect. 10. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 73. 2.

ft342 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 21. 2. Vid. Jarchi & Kimchi in Hagg. 1:8.

ft343 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 74. 3. & in Exodus fol. 3. 3. & 4. 1.

ft344 -- De Locis Hebraicis, fol. 89. E.

ft345 -- Antiqu. 50:7. c. 12. sect. 4.

ft346 -- Apolog. 2. p. 75.

ft347 -- In Reland. Palestina illustrata, 50:2. c. 4. p. 416. Vid. c. 9. p. 445. & 50:3. p. 645.

ft348 -- Adv. Judaeos, c. 13. p. 224, 225.

ft349 -- Maimon. in Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 5. & c. 5. sect. 7.

ft350 -- Abarbinel in proph. post. fol. 473.

ft351 -- Misn. Kenim, c. 3. sect. 6. Vid. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 152. 1.

ft352 -- Bartenora in Misn. ib.

ft353 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1-12.

ft354 -- Praefat. ad Yad Hazaka.

ft355 -- Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. col. 1626.

ft356 -- Ib. Florileg. Hebrews p. 276.

ft357 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 111. 2.

ft358 -- T. Hieros. Succa, fol. 55. 1,

ft359 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 98. fol. 85. 4.

ft360 -- Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 3. sect. 1.

ft361 -- Piske Tosephot Sanhedrin, art. 35.

ft362 -- Vid. Selden. Uxor Hebr. 50:3. c. 11. p. 377.

ft363 -- Hist. Ecless. 50:3. c. 39.

ft364 -- Maimon. Hilchot Eduth, c. 5. sect. 2.

ft365 -- Maimon. Hilchot Issure Bia, c. 1. sect. 6.

ft366 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. sect. 1.

ft367 -- In <26160>Ezekiel 16:40.

ft368 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 51. 2.

ft369 -- Apud Castell. Lex. Polyglott, col. 2180.

ft370 -- Maimon. ib. sect. 3.

ft371 -- Misn. Sota, c. 1. sect. 5.

ft372 -- Hieron. adv. Pelagianos, 50:2. fol. 96. H. Tom. II.

ft373 -- In Misn. Sota, c. 1. sect. 5.

ft374 -- Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 9.

ft375 -- Misn. ib c. 9. sect. 15. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1.

ft376 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 47. p. 435, 436.

ft377 -- Bereshit Rabba, fol. 1. 3. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2. & Jarchi in Psal 43:3.

ft378 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 217. 2.

ft379 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 114. 3.

ft380 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1.

ft381 -- Maimon. Hilchot Eduth. c. 5. sect. 1.

ft382 -- Misn. Maccot. c. 1. sect. 7.

ft383 -- Bartenora in ib.

ft384 -- Maimon. Hilchot Eduth, ib. sect. 2.

ft385 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 8. sect. 6. & T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 86. 1. & 91. 1.

ft386 -- Jarchi, Aben Ezra, & ben Gersom in <02106>Exodus 21:6.

ft387 -- Misn. Kiddushin, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft388 -- Hilchot Abadim, c. 3. sect. 6, 7.

ft389 -- Baal Hatturim in <02106>Exodus 21:6.

ft390 -- Theophili Antecensor. Institut. Imperat. Justinian. 50:1. tit. 6. sect. 5. p. 38.

ft391 -- Misn. Gittin, c. 4. sect. 5. & Ediot, c. 1. sect. 13.

ft392 -- Maimonides, Jarchi, & Bartenora in ib.

ft393 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 8. sect. 1.

ft394 -- T. Bab. Betza, fol. 82. 2.

ft395 -- Abarbinel Naehaleth Abot, fol. 183. 1.

ft396 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 48. p. 436. & par. 1. c. 10. p. 118.

ft397 -- De Agricultura, p. 203.

ft398 -- Lex. Cabalist. p. 724.

ft399 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 38.

ft400 -- Bartenora in Misn. Beracot, c. 7. sect. 1.

ft401 -- Elias in Tishbi in voce twk.

ft402 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 8. sect. 8. & Maimon. & Bartonera in ib.

ft403 -- Tachuma apud Huls. p. 321.

ft404 -- Maimon. in Misn. Pesachim, c. 8. sect. 6.

ft405 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 1.

ft406 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 309. 1. Ed. Basil.

ft407 -- Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 21.

ft408 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 14. 1. Juchasin, fol. 44. 2.

ft409 -- T. Hieros. Biccurim, fol. 64. 3. T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 28. 1. Macsecheth Semachot, c. 3. sect. 9. Kimchi in <23810>Isaiah 38:10.

ft410 -- T. Hieros. Yom Tob, fol. 63. 2.

ft411 -- De Bello Jud. 50:2. c. 8. sect. 14.

ft412 -- Sallust. de Diis, c. 20.

ft413 -- Misn. Mikvaot, c. 7. sect. 1.

ft414 -- Jarchi, Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ft415 -- Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, & Solomon ben Melech in <1003>1 Kings 1:39.

ft416 -- Jarchi & Bartenora in Misn. Succa, c. 4. sect. 9.

ft417 -- Misn. Succa, c. 4. sect. 9.

ft418 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 35. fol. 8. 3.

ft419 -- Targum in <1312>1 Chronicles 11:22.

ft420 -- De Bello Jud. 50:5. c. 4. sect. 1.

ft421 -- Ib. 50:6. c. 6. vel. 50:5. c. 4. sect. 1.

ft422 -- T. Hieros. Chagigah, fol. 76. 1.

ft423 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 14. 4. & Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 4. & T. Bab. Sabbat, fol 108. 2. & Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 21. sect. 25.

ft424 -- Piske Tosephot Sabbat, art. 67.

ft425 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 3, 4. Maimon. ib.

ft426 -- Maimon. Hilchot Eduth, c. 9. sect. 7.

ft427 -- Vid. Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 7. sect. 6. Buxtorf. Lex. Rab. col. 1303. & Epist. Hebrews Institut. p. 57.

ft428 -- Maimon. Hilchod Talmud Tora, c. 7. sect. 4.

ft429 -- Ib. sect. 5.

ft430 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1.

ft431 -- Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 2.

ft432 -- Pirke Eiiezer, c. 17.

ft433 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1. & Gloss in ib.

ft434 -- Hilchot Talmud Tora, c. 6. sect. 14.

ft435 -- De Bello Jud. 50:2. c. 8. sect. 8.

ft436 -- Juchasin, fol. 139. 2.

ft437 -- Oper. ejus, Tom. 2. p. 12, 17. Ed. Commelin.

ft438 -- Lex Rab. col. 828.

ft439 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol 7. 2.

ft440 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, c. 4. in Beth Israel, fol. 57. 1.

ft441 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1. & Shebuot, fol. 36. 1.

ft442 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 107. 2. Ed. Venet.

ft443 -- Buxtorf. Epist. Hebrews Institut. c. 6. p. 56.

ft444 -- Jonathan ben Uzziel in ib.

ft445 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 4. 1.

ft446 -- Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 19.

ft447 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 35. fol. 8. 2. Maimon. Mechira, c. 20. sect. 8. & Shelchim & Shotaphim, c. 10. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4. & passim.

ft448 -- Menasseh ben lsrael, Conciliat. in De Quaest. 11. p. 240.

ft449 -- Maimon & Bartenora in Misn. Becorot, c. 9. sect. 7.

ft450 -- Maimon. Hilchot Genuba, c. 1. sect. 3.

ft451 -- Misn. Becorot, c. 5. sect. 4.

ft452 -- De Agricultura, p. 195. & de nom. mutat. p. 1062.

ft453 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 9. 3.

ft454 -- Aben Ezra in Psal. 23:3. & Kimchi in Psal. 23:2.

ft455 -- Caphtor, fol. 58. 1.

ft456 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 41. 1. & 93. 2. & 106. 1.

ft457 -- Hilchot Shechirut c. 3. sect. 6.

ft458 -- Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 20. 4.

ft459 -- R. David Kimchi, Sepher Shorash rad. ^zt.

ft460 -- Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 22. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 137. 2.

ft461 -- Hilchot Megilla Uchanucha, c. 3. sect. 2, 3. & 4. 1, 2. Vid. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 21. 2.

ft462 -- Antiqu. 50:12. c. 7. sect. 7.

ft463 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 234. 1, 2. Ed. Amsterd.

ft464 -- T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 18. 2.

ft465 -- Hilchot Chanuca, c. 4. sect. 3.

ft466 -- De Repub. Hebrews 50:3. c. 17.

ft467 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 133. 2.

ft468 -- Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 22. 1.

ft469 -- History of the Rites, etc. of the Jews, c. 9.

ft470 -- Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 17. 2.

ft471 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 34. fol. 30. 2. T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 106. 2.

ft472 -- Antiqu. 50:20. c. 8. sect. 7.

ft473 -- See De Dieu in loc.

ft474 -- Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 50. p. 438, 439.

ft475 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 4.

ft476 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 96. fol. 83. 4. & Tzeror Hammor, fol. 134. 4.

ft477 -- Aben Ezra in <01739>Genesis 27:39. & Abarbinel Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 5. 1.

ft478 -- R. Azarias in Meor Enayim, c. 7. fol. 47. 1.

ft479 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2.

ft480 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 32. 2.

ft481 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 51. p. 440, 441.

ft482 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 4. 1. & Becorot, fol. 32. 1. & passim.

ft483 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 71. 2.

ft484 -- T. Bab Sanhedrin, fol. 88. 2. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2. Vid. Philo. de Somniis, p. 1143.

ft485 -- Gloss in T. Hieros. Celaim in En Yaacob, fol. 4. 4.

ft486 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 7. sect. 7.

ft487 -- Maimon. Jarchi, & Bartenora in ib.

ft488 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 6. sect. 4.

ft489 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 33. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Rotzeach, c. 13. sect. 6.

ft490 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 18.

ft491 -- Gloss in Cetubot, fol. 8. 2. & in Beracot, fol. 16. 2.

ft492 -- Gloss in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 1.

ft493 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 23. 1.

ft494 -- Massech. Semachot, c. 6. fol. 14. 3.

ft495 -- Hilch. Ebel, c. 13. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4.

ft496 -- Maimon. in Misn. Peah, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft497 -- Targum Jon. in Gen 1:21. & in [2002]Hosea 6:2.

ft498 -- Massech. Semachot, c. 8. fol. 15. 1.

ft499 -- Cippi Hebrews p. 3, 4.

ft500 -- Misc. not. in port. Maimon. p. 224.

ft501 -- Gejer de Ebraeor. Luctu, c. 6. sect. 26.

ft502 -- Reland de Relig. Mohammed. 50:1. p. 72.

ft503 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 16. 2.

ft504 -- Hilchot Ebel. c. 14. sect. 25.

ft505 -- Antiqu. 50:14. c. 15. sect. 5.

ft506 -- Hilchot Mecira, c. 21. sect. 6.

ft507 -- Hilchot Ebel, c. 4. sect. 4.

ft508 -- P. 27, 29. Ed. Hottinger.

ft509 -- Itinerar. Bunting. p. 364.

ft510 -- Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 6. sect. 8.

ft511 -- Misn. ib.

ft512 -- Maimon. R. Samson, & Bartenora in Misn. Ohalot, c. 15. sect. 8.

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ft514 -- Ib c. 15, sect. 8.

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ACTS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF ACTS

This book, in some copies, is called, “The Acts of the holy Apostles”. It contains an history of the ministry and miracles of the apostles of Christ, and is a sort of a journal of their actions, from whence it takes its name. It begins at the ascension of Christ, and reaches to the imprisonment of the Apostle Paul at Rome; and is a history of upwards of thirty years: it gives an account of the first Gospel church at Jerusalem, and of the progress of the Gospel there, and in Judea, by the means of all the apostles, and particularly Peter, the minister of the circumcision, and who also first opened the door of faith to the Gentiles: it shows how the Gospel went forth from Jerusalem, and was spread in the Gentile world, especially by the Apostle Paul, whose companion Luke was, that was the writer of this book; for that it was written by him is very evident from the beginning of it, it being dedicated to the same person his Gospel is, and of which he makes mention; and in the Complutensian edition the book is called, “The Acts of the Apostles of Saint Luke the Evangelist”; and so the title of it in the Syriac version is, “the Book of the Acts: that is, the history of the blessed apostles, which my Lord Luke the Evangelist collected for the saints”. It was by him written in the Greek language; and we are told [f1], that there was a version of it into the Hebrew language, and which was laid up in the library of the Jews at Tiberias; and is cited by R. Azarias [f2] under the name of twlw[ph, “the Acts”: of the authority of this book there has been no doubt, among the ancients, only Cerinthus the heretic endeavoured to discredit it; and it was not received by another sort of heretics called Severiani, from Severus, a disciple of Tatian [f3]. It is a most excellent and useful work, showing the first planting of Christianity, and of Christian churches, both among the Jews and Gentiles; the spread and progress of the Gospel in several parts of the world; what sufferings the apostles endured for the sake of it; and with what patience and courage they bore them; and what success attended them; and is a standing proof and confirmation of the Christian religion.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 1

Ver. 1. *The former treatise have I made*, etc.] Meaning the Gospel written by him the Evangelist Luke, for from that he makes a transition to this, beginning here where he there left off; namely, at the ascension of Christ; (see <42451>Luke 24:51).

O Theophilus; (See Gill on "<42103>Luke 1:3")

of all that Jesus began both to do and teach. This is a summary of his former treatise, his Gospel, which gave an account of what Christ began to do, and did; not of the common and private actions of his life; or of what was done, either in public, or private, throughout the whole of his life; for excepting that of his disputing with the doctors at twelve years of age, no account is given by him of what he did, till he was about thirty years of age; but of his extraordinary actions, of the miracles he wrought; and these not all, and everyone of them; but many of them, and which were sufficient to prove him the Messiah; and particularly of all things he did relating to the salvation of his people; of the whole of his obedience; of his compliance with the ceremonial law; of his submission to baptism; of his holy life and conversation, and entire conformity to the law; of his sufferings and death, how that thereby he made full atonement for sin, brought in an everlasting righteousness, and obtained eternal redemption for his people: and not only Luke, in his Gospel, gave an account of these his actions, but also of many of his excellent discourses, his parables, and his sermons, whether delivered to the people in common, or to his own disciples: and now, as this was the subject of his former book, he intended in this latter to treat, as he does, of what the apostles of Christ began to do and teach.

Ver. 2. *Until the day in which he was taken up*, etc.] That is, into heaven. The historian suggests, that his former treatise took in the main and principal things Jesus did and taught, until such time that he ascended to heaven:

after that he, through the Holy Ghost, had given commandments unto the apostles, whom he had chosen: our Lord having chosen twelve of his own

free grace and goodness, and not according to their worth and merit, to be his apostles, a little before his ascension to heaven, gave them more express and explicit commands and orders where they should go, into all the world, to all nations; and what they should preach, the whole Gospel, salvation by faith in him, and particularly repentance and remission of sins; and what ordinances they should require believers to attend to; and how they themselves should conduct and behave in their work: the phrase, "through the Holy Ghost", may either be read in connection with "had given commandments", as the Vulgate and Arabic versions read, and as we do; and the sense be, that these commands which Christ gave to his apostles, were not merely his orders, as man, but were what the Holy Ghost was equally concerned in with him, and were from him as God, and so carried a divine authority with them; and at the same time that he gave them to them, he breathed into them the Holy Ghost, whereby they had a more clear view of his doctrines and ordinances, and were more qualified to minister them; and besides, had an intimation given them, that they might expect still greater gifts of the Holy Ghost: or it may be read with the latter clause, "whom he had chosen"; as in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; and then the meaning is, that just before his being taken up to heaven, he gave some special orders and directions to his apostles, whom he had chosen to that office through the Holy Ghost, and not through human affection in him, or according to any desert of theirs; but as under the influence of the Holy Spirit, with which, as man, he was anointed without measure; and whose gifts and graces he communicated to his disciples, to fit them for the service to which they were appointed: or with the apostles; they being sent by the Holy Ghost, as well as by Christ.

Ver. 3. *To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion*, etc.] That is, after his sufferings and death; for that he suffered many things, and at last death itself, is certain from the acknowledgment of the Jews themselves, who own, that they put him to death on the passover eve [f4]; as well as from the accounts of the evangelists; and from the soldiers not breaking his legs, when the rest that were crucified with him were broken, because he was already dead; and from his "ricardium" being pierced with a spear, from whence blood and water sprung, after which it was impossible he should be alive; and from the testimony of the centurion who watched him, to whom Pilate sent to know if he was dead, and how long he had been dead; and from his being buried, and lying in the grave so long as he did: and yet after, and not withstanding this, "he showed himself

alive"; he raised himself from the dead, and hereby declared himself to be the Son of God with power, which cannot be said of others; there were others that were alive after death, but not by their own power; as the widow of Sarepta's son, the daughter of Jairus, Lazarus, and the widow of Nain's son; but these did not "show themselves alive", as Christ did, who appeared often to his apostles: for after he had first appeared to Mary Magdalene, he showed himself to the two disciples going to Emmaus; then to ten of them, Thomas being absent; after that to them all, Thomas being present, when he convinced him of the truth of his resurrection; after that he appeared to seven of the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and then to all the apostles; and to five hundred brethren at once on a mountain in Galilee; and once to James alone, and to them all again when he was parted from them and went up to heaven; and so they must be proper and sufficient witnesses of his resurrection: and this evidence of his being alive, he gave to them, by many infallible proofs; or by many signs and tokens, and which were most sure and unquestionable arguments of his being alive; as his eating and drinking with them, walking and talking with them in a free and familiar manner, showing them his hands and his feet, and side, that they might see the scars which the nails and spear had made; and which were not only a proof that he was risen again, but risen again in the same body in which he suffered; and that they might feel and handle him, and know that he was not a spirit, a phantom, a mere apparition, but was really risen and alive: being seen of them forty days; not that he was seen by them for forty days together continually, but at certain times, within the space of forty days; for between his first and last appearance, many others intervening, such a length of time run out; so that it was not a single and sudden appearance that surprised them; but there were many of them, and a distance between them, and this for a considerable term of time; hence they had opportunity of reflecting upon these appearances, and of satisfying themselves of the truth of things. This number of "forty days" is a remarkable one in Scripture. The flood was forty days upon the earth; and so long Moses was in the mount with God; such a number of days the spies were searching the land of Canaan; so many days Goliath presented himself to the armies of Israel; and so long a time Elijah went in the strength of the meat the angel provided for him; and for such a length of time the prophet Ezekiel was to bear the iniquity of the house of Judah; and such a term of time was given out by Jonah for the destruction of Nineveh; and so many days Christ fasted, and was tempted in the wilderness. The Jews pretend [f5], that forty days before Jesus was put to death he was led forth, and a crier

went before him, declaring, that whoever would, had liberty to testify to his innocence if they could, but no man appeared for him: but this is false; the truth of the matter is, that for forty days after his resurrection he showed himself to his disciples, and by proving the truth of his resurrection, he proved his own innocence and uprightness. If the testimony of Rabbenu Hakadosh, as cited by Galatinus, could be depended on, the Jews had a notion of this forty days' conversation of the Messiah with his disciples, after his resurrection; who say [f6],

> "the Messiah, after his resurrection, shall converse with the righteous, and they shall hear his precepts "forty days", answerable to those forty days in which he shall be in the wilderness to afflict his soul, before they shall kill him; and these being finished, he shall ascend to heaven, and sit at the right hand of God, as it is said, (<19901>Psalm 110:1)."

But this seems rather to be the pious fraud of some Christian, than the words of a Jew: however, they do say [f7], that

> "the days of the Messiah are "forty days", as it is said, (<19510>Psalm 95:10) "forty years long was I grieved"; or, as they interpret it, "shall I be grieved with this generation":"

intimating, that the generation of the Messiah, and of the wilderness, would be much alike, and equally grieving to God, and reckoning a day for a year, as the Lord did with that generation, (<04433>Numbers 14:33,34). These forty days Christ was with his disciples, may be an emblem of the forty years which were to run out from his death, to his coming again to take vengeance on the Jewish nation; for so long time was there from thence to the destruction of Jerusalem. And Christ was not only seen of the disciples at certain seasons during this space of time, but he was also heard by them: for it follows,

and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; the kingdom of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation; concerning the doctrines of the Gospel they were to preach, and the ordinances of it they were to administer; concerning the church of God, the nature, order, and officers of it, and the laws and rules by which it should be governed; concerning the kingdom of grace, what it consists of, and wherein it lies; and of the kingdom of glory, of meetness for it, his own grace, and of the right unto it, his own justifying righteousness: some of these things they might have

before but very little knowledge of; and may be these are the things he had to say to them, and which, till now, they could not bear; and being no more to be with them in person, he instructs them in them.

Ver. 4. *And being assembled together with them*, etc.] At their last meeting at Bethany, or Mount Olivet, which was by appointment: some render the words, as the Vulgate Latin, “and eating with them”; which was one of the proofs he gave of his being alive; and so the Syriac version renders it, “and when he had ate bread with them”, and the Ethiopic version, “and dining with them”, which he might do more than once; (see <43212>John 21:12,15) this was the last time, when he

commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem; which does not necessarily infer, that they were then at Jerusalem; for they might be, and they seem rather to be at Bethany, or on the Mount of Olives, from whence they afterwards returned to Jerusalem; and from thence they had orders not to depart, where the blood of Christ had been shed, and where were his greatest enemies, and where the disciples might have no inclination to have gone, and much less to abide, but so it must be, partly for the glorifying of Christ by the effusion of his Spirit on the apostles in the place where he had suffered the most reproach; and partly because the Gospel, the word of the Lord, was to go out of this place, according to the prophecy in (<230203>Isaiah 2:3) as also because a Gospel church was to be fixed there, and a very large number of souls to be converted, and added to it: wherefore they were bid to go thither, and not stir from thence,

but wait for the promise of the Father; that is, the pouring forth of the Spirit, which God the Father of Christ; and of his people, had promised should be in the last days, (<290228>Joel 2:28) and which Christ had promised his disciples from the Father, (<431416>John 14:16, 15:26, 16:7).

which, saith he, ye have heard of me; or “by”, or “out of my mouth”, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and Beza’s most ancient copy read; referring to the above passages, or to what follows: and which he the rather mentions, to assure them of its accomplishment, since it was both a promise of the Father, all whose promises are yea and amen; and he had also told them of it, neither of whose words could possibly fall to the ground.

Ver. 5. *For John truly baptized with water*, etc.] Or “in water”, as he himself says, (<400311>Matthew 3:11) John’s baptism was water baptism, an

immersion of persons in water: he was the first administrator of it, and therefore is here mentioned by name; and his, and the baptism of the Spirit, are opposed; for there were others, as the disciples of Christ, that baptized in water as well as John: and these words are not to be understood of the words of the Lord, by the mouth of John, which the disciples heard, for they were not then called when John spoke the words in (<40311>Matthew 3:11) nor indeed are they the same with these; but these are the words of Christ himself, and which the apostles heard from his own mouth, as is clear from (<44116>Acts 11:16) though they are not recorded by any of the evangelists; and these are not the only words which Luke repeats, that the evangelists are silent about; (see <44035>Acts 20:35)

but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost; that is, by himself; for it is Christ's prerogative to baptize with the Spirit, as John foretold of him, and it designs such an extraordinary and plentiful donation of the gifts of the Spirit, as may be expressed by a baptism; in which the apostles, on the day of "Pentecost", were, as it were, to be immersed, and with them covered; as Cyril of Jerusalem [f8] observes,

> "as he, ο ενδυνων εν τοις υδασι, "who is plunged in water, and baptized", is encompassed by the water on every side, so are they that are wholly baptized by the Spirit."

Not many days hence; within ten days, for this was on the fortieth day from his death, which was at the passover, these words were said; and on the fiftieth day from thence was the feast of Pentecost, when this had its fulfilment.

Ver. 6. *When they therefore were come together*, etc.] That is, Christ, and his eleven apostles; for not the hundred and twenty disciples hereafter mentioned, nor the five hundred brethren Christ appeared to at once, are here intended, but the apostles, as appears from (<40102>Acts 1:2-4)

they asked of him, saying, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? The kingdom had been for some time taken away from the Jews, Judea was reduced to a Roman province, and was now actually under the power of a Roman governor. And the nation in general was in great expectation, that upon the Messiah's coming they should be delivered from the yoke of the Romans, and that the son of David would be king over them. The disciples of Christ had imbibed the same notions, and were in the same expectation of a temporal kingdom to be set up by their master,

as is evident from (⁴⁰²⁰²¹Matthew 20:21) and though his sufferings and death had greatly damped their spirits, and almost destroyed their hopes, (see ⁴²²⁴²¹Luke 24:21) yet his resurrection from the dead, and his discoursing with them about the kingdom of God, and ordering them to wait at Jerusalem, the metropolis of that nation, for some thing extraordinary, revived their hopes, and emboldened them to put this question to him: and this general expectation of the Jews is expressed by them in the same language as here;

> "the days of the Messiah will be the time when larçyl twklmh bwçtç, "the kingdom shall return", or "be restored to Israel"; and they shall return to the land of Israel, and that king shall be exceeding great, and the house of his kingdom shall be in Zion, and his name shall be magnified, and his fame shall fill the Gentiles more than King Solomon; all nations shall be at peace with him, and all lands shall serve him, because of his great righteousness, and the wonderful things which shall be done by him; and whoever rises up against him God will destroy, and he shall deliver him into his hands; and all the passages of Scripture testify of his and our prosperity with him; and there shall be no difference in anything from what it is now, only "the kingdom shall return to Israel" [f9]."

Ver. 7. *And he said unto them*, etc.] To his disciples,

it is not for you to know the times or the seasons; meaning, not the times that are past from Adam to Christ; as how long the world stood; when the flood came; when Sodom and Gomorrha were burned to ashes; when the children of Israel came out of Egypt, and the law was given to them; when the kingdom of Israel began, and when the Jews were carried captive, and when they returned; when the sceptre departed from Judah, and Daniel's weeks had an end: or the particular seasons of the year, and the times for planting, ploughing, sowing, reaping, etc. but when should be the time, the day, and hour of the coming of the son of man, when he shall set up his kingdom in a more glorious manner, and the kingdoms of this world shall become his; or when the kingdom shall be restored to Israel. This, by the Jews, is said to be one of the seven things hid from men [f10]:

> "seven things are hid from the children of men, and these are they; the day of death, and the day of consolation, and the depth of judgment, and a man knows not what is in the heart of his neighbour, nor with what he shall be rewarded, and "when the

> kingdom of the house of David shall return", and when the kingdom of Persia shall fall."

Which the Father hath put in his own power; and not in the power of a creature, no, not of the angels; (see <4246>Matthew 24:36) wherefore it is vain and sinful, as well as fruitless, to indulge a curious inquiry into these things, or into the times and seasons of what is future; as of the time of a man's death, of the end of the world, of the second coming of Christ; only those things should be looked into which God has revealed, and put into the power of man to know by diligent search and inquiry. Says R. Simeon[f11],

> "flesh and blood, (i.e. man), which knows not wy[grw wyt[, "its times and its moments", (and so the Vulgate Latin renders the words here), ought to add a void space to the blessed God, who knows the times and moments."

Ver. 8. *But ye shall receive power*, etc.] From on high, with which they were to be endured, (<4249>Luke 24:49) meaning the power of the Holy Ghost, strength from him to preach the Gospel, and work miracles in confirmation of it, and courage and greatness of mind, amidst all reproaches and persecutions, to face and oppose their enemies, profess the name of Christ, abide by his truths and ordinances, make their way through all opposition and difficulties, and spread the Gospel all over the world; for intend of enjoying worldly ease, honour, wealth, and riches, they were looking for, our Lord gives them to understand that they must expect labour, service, afflictions, and trials, which would require power and strength, and which they should have:

after that the Holy Ghost shall come upon you; from above, from heaven, as he did, and sat upon them in the form of cloven tongues, and of fire; upon which they were filled with knowledge and zeal, with strength and courage, and with all gifts and abilities necessary for their work:

and ye shall be witnesses unto me; of the person of Christ, of his deity and sonship, of his incarnation, his ministry, and his miracles, of his suffering and death, of his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension to heaven. This was to be their work, and what belong to them, and not to enquire about a temporal kingdom, and the setting up of that, and the times and seasons of it; their business was to testify of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that followed, and to preach a crucified Jesus, as the only Saviour of lost sinners: and this

both in Jerusalem, the “metropolis” of the nation, and there, in the first place, where such dwelt who had been concerned in the crucifixion of Christ, many of whom were to be called by grace, and converted through their ministry:

and in all Judea; that part of the land of Israel which was distinct from Samaria and Galilee, and from beyond Jordan; where churches were to be planted, as afterwards they were; (see <44 09 31>Acts 9:31).

And in Samaria; where Christ had before forbid his disciples to go; but now their commission is enlarged, and they are sent there; and here Philip went upon the persecution raised against the church at Jerusalem, and preached Christ with great success, to the conversion of many; and hither Peter and John went to lay their hands on them, and confirm them; (see <44 08 05>Acts 8:5,14)

and unto the uttermost part of the earth; throughout the whole world, whither the sound of the apostles, and their words went, (<45 10 18>Romans 10:18).

Ver. 9. *And when he had spoken these things*, etc.] That the times and seasons were not to be known by them, but to be kept a secret by the Father: that they should tarry at Jerusalem, and in a few days be baptized with the Holy Ghost, and receive such power, abilities, strength, and courage thereby, as to bear a noble testimony for Christ, not only there, but in all the world; and when he had given them a fresh commission, and told them where they should go, what they should preach, and what miracles they should perform, and blessed them.

While they be held; all the Oriental versions, add, “him”; that is Christ, while they looked wistly at him, being attentive to what he said to them, so that they were not asleep; nor did Christ become invisible to them, or disappear before his ascension, but was visible to them in it; hence they were eyewitnesses of it:

he was taken up. Luke in his Gospel says, “carried up”: very likely by angels, since these not only attended him in his ascension, but are the chariots of the Lord, in which he went up to heaven; (see <19 68 17>Psalm 68:17,18) nor is this at all inconsistent with his proper deity, or that divine power he had of elevating himself, which he could do without the assistance of others; but this makes for the glory of his majesty.

And a cloud received him out of their sight; which was done partly for the same purpose, to add to the grandeur and magnificence of Christ's ascension; and partly to check the curiosity of the disciples, and prevent their gazing any more at him: and it may be that this, cloud was no other than a number of angels that appeared in this form; just as Elijah was taken up to heaven by angels, who appeared in the form of horses and chariots of fire; and the rather this may be the sense here, since it is certain, that there was a large number of angels which attended Christ at his ascension; and by whom he was then seen, (<19B817>Psalm 68:17,18, <430151>John 1:51, <540316>1 Timothy 3:16) whereas, if these are not intended by the cloud, no more than two are here taken notice of, and these not as going along with Christ, but staying behind to converse with his disciples; to which may be added, that Christ was "received" by this cloud which descended to meet him, and joining him, escorted him to heaven: at least it may be thought, if it was a real cloud, that there was a multitude of angels in it, which accompanied him to the heavenly regions; for it can hardly be thought that a multitude of the heavenly host should descend at his birth, and sing glory to God upon his coming into this world; and not as large a number attend him with shouts and acclamations, at his going out of it, when he had done his work he came about, and was ascending to his God and Father, to take his place at his right hand on his throne; (see <19A705>Psalm 47:5). The Ethiopic version adds, "and he ascended to heaven".

Ver. 10. *And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven*, etc.] For though he was taken out of their sight by the cloud, they kept looking upwards, and after him, if they could see him again, or any more of him:

as he went up; they looked up to heaven after him, as he went up from the earth, before the cloud took him out of their sight; and still they continued looking, as the cloud carried him up, until it was out of the reach of their sight, being willing to see the last of him in this way:

behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; that is, two angels in the form of men; it being usual with them to appear in human form: these on a sudden appeared and stood on the earth just by them; though the Ethiopic version renders it, "they stood above them", as if they were in the air over their heads; and they appeared in white apparel, as the angel at the sepulchre in (<402802>Matthew 28:2,3) which was a symbol both of their purity and holiness, and of their lustre and glory. The Ethiopic version renders it, "they were clothed with lightning"; they appeared in such a dazzling form,

that it looked as if they were covered with lightning; as the angel that appeared at Christ's resurrection, his countenance is said to be as lightning; which must at once fix the attention of the disciples to them, and strike them with surprise: hence a "behold" is prefixed to this: and hereby they knew that they were not common and ordinary men, or mere men, but angels in such a form.

Ver. 11. *Which also said, ye men of Galilee*, etc.] And which was said by them, not to reproach them with their country, but partly to let them know that they knew them, who they were, and from whence they came; and partly to observe the rich and distinguishing grace of God in choosing such mean and contemptible persons to be the apostles of Christ, and eyewitnesses of his majesty:

why stand ye gazing up into heaven? reproving them for their curiosity in looking after Christ with their bodily eyes, who was no more in common to be seen this way, but with an eye of faith; and for their desire after his corporeal presence, which they were not to look for; and as if they expected he would return again immediately, whereas his return will not be till the end of the world: and besides, they were not to remain on that spot, or stand gazing there; they were to go to Jerusalem, and abide there, as Christ had ordered, till they should receive the Holy Spirit in an extraordinary way; and then they were to preach a crucified Christ, and declare that he was risen from the dead, and was gone to heaven, and was ordained to be the Judge of quick and dead.

This same Jesus; and not another; the same in person, in body and soul:

which is taken up from you into heaven; who was taken up in a cloud out of their sight, and received into heaven, where he will be till the times of the restitution of all things; and which might be matter of grief to them, because of the loss of his bodily presence; though it should have been rather joyful to them, since he was gone to the Father, and as their forerunner, to prepare a place, and make intercession for them:

shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven; he shall come in the same flesh, in the same human nature; he shall come in the clouds of heaven, and shall be attended with his mighty angels, as he now was; he shall descend himself in person, as he now ascended in person; and as he went up with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet, (see <19705>Psalm 47:5) so he shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and

the trump of God; and, it may be, he shall descend upon the very spot from whence he ascended; (see <380404>Zechariah 14:4) and it is a notion of the Jews, that the resurrection of the Israelites will be there: they say [f12], that

> "when the dead shall live, the Mount of Olives shall be cleaved asunder, and all the dead of Israel shall come out from under it; yea, even the righteous which die in captivity shall pass through a subterranean cavern, and come out from under the Mount of Olives."

Ver. 12. *Then returned they unto Jerusalem*, etc.] With great joy, after the angels had told them that he should come again in like manner:

from the mount called Olivet; which was on the east side of Jerusalem, a mountain Christ much frequented, and from whence he ascended to heaven. This is the hill which in (<111107>1 Kings 11:7) is said to be "before Jerusalem"; and accordingly Jarchi interprets it of the Mount of Olives; and in (<380404>Zechariah 14:4) it is expressly said to be "before Jerusalem on the east"; hence, when our Lord sat upon it, he is said to be over against the temple, (<411303>Mark 13:3). It has its name from the multitude of olive trees which grew upon it: it is by the Jewish writers sometimes called µytyzh rh, "the Mount of Olives" [f13], as in (<380404>Zechariah 14:4) and sometimes hjçmh rh [f14], and ajçm rwj [f15], "the Mount of Oil"; i.e. of olive oil, which was made out of the olives that grew upon it. It is said, that in an old edition of the Latin version of this text it is called "the Mountain of Three Lights"; and this reason is given for it, because on the west side it was enlightened in the night by the continual fire of the altar in the temple; and on the east side it had the first beams of the sun before the city was enlightened with them; and it produced plenty of olives, by which the light is maintained in the lamps. Josephus [f16] relates, that in the earthquake in the times of Uzziah, half part of this mountain, which was to the west, was divided from it, and was rolled four furlongs to the eastern part of it, so that the ways and king's gardens were stopped up.

Which, is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. The Syriac version renders it, "about seven furlongs", or near a mile; though Josephus [f17] writes, that the Mount of Olives was but five furlongs from Jerusalem: perhaps this may be a mistake in the present copies of Josephus, since Chrysostom on this place cites this passage of Josephus, and reads seven furlongs; which exactly agrees with the Syriac version. A sabbath day's

journey, according to the Jews, was two thousand cubits from any city or town, and which they often called, tbç µwjt, “the bound of the sabbath” [f18]; and which they collect partly from (<0404>Numbers 35:4,5) which they understand thus [f19]:

> “a thousand cubits are the suburbs (of the city), and two thousand cubits the bounds of the sabbath.”

And these were so many middling paces; for so they say [f20],

> “a walk of two thousand middling paces, this is the bound of the sabbath.”

And that this was the proper space they also gather from (<0604>Joshua 3:4) it being the distance between the ark and the people when they marched; and though this was not fixed by the law, yet being a tradition of the elders, was strictly observed by them: so when Ruth desired to become a proselytess, the Targumist on (<0801>Ruth 1:16) introduces Naomi thus speaking to her;

> “says Naomi, we are commanded to keep the sabbaths, and the good days, (or feasts,) and not to walk above “two thousand cubits”;”

i.e. on those days; for to go further was reckoned a profanation of them: so it is said [f21],

> “the sabbath day is profaned with the hands by work, and with the feet by walking more than “two thousand cubits”.”

Yea, this was punishable with beatings [f22]:

> “a man might go on the sabbath without the city two thousand cubits on every side — but if he went beyond two thousand cubits, they beat him with the beating of rebels,”

or in the same manner a rebellious son was beaten. Nay, not only they might not go out of a city or town where they were, further than this, but from whatsoever place they happened to be, as appears by these following rules [f23];

> “if anyone falls asleep in the way (or on the road), and he does not know that it was dark (and so that the sabbath is begun), he has two thousand cubits (allowed him) on every side. — Whoever is on

> a journey, and it is dark, and he knows a tree, or a hedge, and says, let my sabbath (or sabbatical seat) be under it, he says nothing; but if he says, let my sabbath be at the root of it, then he may go from the place of his feet, and to the root of it, two thousand cubits, and from the root of it to his house two thousand cubits; by which means he may go four thousand cubits after it is dark. But if he does not know (any), and is not expert in walking, and says, let my sabbath be in my place, (i.e. in which he stands,) then from his place he has two thousand cubits on every side."

Hence, in some copies it is here inserted, "such being the distance that the Jews could walk"; that is, were allowed to walk by their canons. They call two thousand cubits a mile [f24]; and if the Mount of Olives was seven furlongs from Jerusalem, it was pretty near a mile; but if but five furlongs, it was little more than half a mile: perhaps the true distance might be six furlongs, since Josephus says [f25], the tenth legion was ordered to encamp six furlongs from Jerusalem, at the Mount of Olives, which was over against the city to the east; agreeably to which Epiphanius [f26], who had been a Jew, and was born in Palestine, says,

> "it was not lawful to go on the sabbath day beyond six furlongs,"

which were three quarters of a mile.

Ver. 13. *And when they were come in*, etc.] "Into it", as the Arabic version reads; that is, into the city of Jerusalem, and into some house in that city; but what house it was is needless to inquire, since it cannot be known. Some think it was the house of John the Evangelist, whither he had taken Mary the mother of our Lord, (<43 19 27>John 19:27) which is not improbable: others, that it was the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where the disciples met for prayer when Peter was put into prison, (<44 12 12>Acts 12:12) others, that it was the house of Simon the leper; but his house was not at Jerusalem, but in Bethany, (<40 26 06>Matthew 26:6). Some have thought it was the house of Nicodemus, or of Joseph of Arimathea; but after all it seems most likely, that it was not any private house, but the temple into which the disciples immediately went, and where they continued; (see <42 24 52>Luke 24:52,53) and (<44 02 46>Acts 2:46).

they went up into an upper room; which, if in a private house, they might choose for retirement and secrecy; and might be the same in which they had eaten the passover; and so a Syriac scholiast, in manuscript, on the

place, says it was the same. It was usual to meet in upper rooms for devotion and religious conversation; (See Gill on "Mark 2:4") though this upper room might be one of the chambers in the temple; for not only from the scriptural account of the temple, there were chambers round about it, and upper chambers; (see 1 Kings 6:5, 1 Chronicles 28:11, 2 Chronicles 3:9) and one of these is called the chamber of Gemariah, in which Baruch read the prophecies of Jeremiah, (Jeremiah 36:10) but also from the Jewish writings, in which frequent mention is made of the chamber Palhedrin, where the high priest was brought seven days before the day of atonement [f27]; and the chamber of the counsellors [f28]; and the chamber Gazith, where the sanhedrim sat; and the chamber of the house of Abtines [f29]; and the chamber of wood; and the chamber of the lepers; and the chamber of the house of oil [f30]; and the chamber of salt; and the chamber of Parvah; and the chamber of them that wash, besides others [f31]. And into a chamber, or upper room in the temple they might be let by Joses Barnabas, a Levite, one of their own company, (Acts 4:36) who might have the care of it, for they are said to be continually in the temple, (Luke 24:53).

Where abode both Peter, and James, and John. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, "Peter, and John, and James"; and so the Alexandrian copy. These were the three favourite disciples of Christ, and are often mentioned together, as here first;

and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions put Matthew before Bartholomew.

James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas, the brother of James; all the Oriental versions read, "Judas the son of James": of the names of the apostles, (see Gill on "Matthew 10:2"), (see Gill on "Matthew 10:3"), (see Gill on "Matthew 10:4"). They are all here mentioned but Judas the betrayer, who was dead, to show, that though one had disbelieved the resurrection of Christ, another had denied him, and all of them had forsook him, and fled; yet they were got together again, and were firm and steadfast in the faith of Christ, waiting for the pouring forth of the Spirit.

Ver. 14. *These all continued, with one accord, in prayer and supplication*, etc.] For the promise of the Spirit Christ had given them reason to expect; and that they might be preserved from their enemies, and kept faithful to their Lord; and be abundantly qualified for the preaching of the Gospel,

and succeeded in it; and that their hearts might be comforted, and knit together in love: and they were unanimous in their requests, and so were under the promise of being heard; and in this work they were constant, and assiduous, and followed it with importunity. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions leave out the last clause, “and supplication”; and so likewise the Alexandrian copy: “with the women”; that followed Christ from Galilee, and were at his cross, and at his grave; among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Salome the wife of Zebedee. Some render the words, “with their wives”; the wives of the apostles; and as many as had wives, no doubt but they were with them; and it was necessary they should be, that they might be strengthened and confirmed in the faith of Christ. Beza’s most ancient copy adds, “and children”;

and Mary the mother of Jesus. This is the last we hear of her; how long she lived after this, is not certain: her continuance with the apostles of Christ shows her religion and piety, and was both for the increase of her faith, and spiritual comfort:

and with his brethren; (See Gill on “Matthew 13:55”).

Ver. 15. *And in those days Peter stood up*, etc.] That is, in one of the days after Christ’s ascension, and before the day of Pentecost, whilst the disciples were waiting for the promise of the Spirit. The Ethiopic version reads, “on that day”; as if it was the same day they came first into Jerusalem, and went into the upper room; and which is likely enough; for no time was to be lost in choosing one in the room of Judas; when Peter, not only as a forward person, and who had been used to be the first mover and actor in any affair; but as willing to show his zeal for Christ, whom he had so lately denied, and as being the senior man in company, as well as the minister of the circumcision, rises, and stands up, as persons used to do, when about to make an oration, and in respect and reverence to the persons addressed:

in the midst of the disciples; not only the other ten, but the whole hundred and twenty. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, “in the midst of the brethren”, and so reads the Vulgate Latin version; and the Ethiopic version, “in the midst of his own brethren”;

and he said what is expressed in the following verses, which before the historian relates, he inserts in a parenthesis this clause,

the number of the names; that is, of persons; (see <66113>Revelation 11:13). Some copies read, “of the men”, and so the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; who

together, all put together in one sum, or as meeting together in one and the same place, or as agreeing in the same faith and judgment, so the Arabic version, “and there was there a company whose names and wills agreed in this same opinion”; they were all in one place, and of the same mind; and the sum of them

were about an hundred and twenty; among whom were the eleven apostles, and seventy disciples, which made eighty one; so that there were thirty nine persons more in this company: not that it is to be thought that these were all that were in Jerusalem that believed in Christ; but these were the number of the persons that met and embodied together in a church state, and who not only gave themselves to the Lord, but to one another, by the will of God; and their names being taken and registered, the historian calls the account of them, the number of the names, and not persons; though he means persons. This was a number pretty famous among the Jews; the sanhedrim of Ezra, called the men of the great synagogue, consisted of an “hundred and twenty elders”; the last of which was Simeon the just, and he comprehended the hundred and twenty [f32]. And such a number was requisite for a sanhedrim in any place; it is asked,

> “how many must there be in a city, that it may be fit for a sanhedrim? “an hundred and twenty”; R. Nehemiah says two hundred and thirty [f33]:”

but the decision is according to the former: hence they say [f34], that

> “they fix in every city in Israel, where there is an “hundred and twenty”, or more, a lesser sanhedrim. — -A city in which there is not an hundred and twenty, they place three judges, for there is no sanhedrim less than three.”

Ver. 16. *Men and brethren*, etc.] Which is said not so much by Peter to express his modesty, and humility, and his brotherly love; or on account of the spiritual relation that subsisted between him and the persons he speaks to, as it was a common form used in addresses; (see <44072>Acts 7:2, 15:7, 22:1, 23:1) it should seem, that the women, were not reckoned into the number of the hundred and twenty here addressed; and the Syriac version

calls that number, “the number of men”, unless they are supposed to be included in them:

this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled; or “must needs be fulfilled”: referring either to (<19409>Psalm 41:9) or rather to the passages after cited out of (<19625>Psalm 69:25, 109:8). There was a necessity of the fulfilling of it, consistent with the prescience of God, his counsel, and decree, and the veracity of the Scripture; which necessity does not at all excuse the sin of Judas, who acted freely from the wickedness of his own heart, and not from any force that this laid upon him: and the apostle might observe this also, to make the minds of the disciples easy, under this awful providence, since it was no other than what was predicted: and

which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before; even many hundreds of years before the event; and which shows the omniscience, and so the deity of the Holy Ghost, and the divine authority of David’s Psalms; as well as the honour that was put upon him to be the instrument by which the Holy Ghost speaks, and to be his amanuensis: the particular referred to, is, “concerning” Judas; who is sometimes called Iscariot, to distinguish him from another apostle of the same name; and what is hereafter said sufficiently does that; or

concerning that Judas, as the Syriac version renders it:

which was a guide to them that took Jesus; to the band of soldiers and officers, who came with swords and staves, as to take a thief, or a robber; before these Judas went and showed them, not only the place where he was, but gave them a sign by which they should know him, and also advice to take him and hold him fast, and lead him away safely; so that he was not only a guide as to the way, but was a director, and conductor, and manager of the whole affair. And it may be observed, that though Peter did not conceal, but declares the sin of Judas; yet not in a rough manner, aggravating it, but with much softness and tenderness; though with no design to lessen it, as appears by what follows, and which may be instructive to us in speaking of other men’s sins.

Ver. 17. *For he was numbered with us*, etc.] He was chosen an apostle with: the rest, and was ordained into that office when they were, and was always reckoned one of the twelve, and stands in the catalogue when they are mentioned:

and had obtained part of this ministry; by lot, as the word signifies; the providence of God so ordering it, according to his eternal purpose and decree, that he was not only called an apostle, and enrolled among them, but he really had a part in that ministry; he preached, and baptized, and wrought miracles; and besides all this, carried the bag, was the treasurer, and a sort of a steward in Christ's family, and provided for it.

Ver. 18. *Now this man purchased a field*, etc.] This verse, with the following, seem to be the words of Luke the historian, which should be read in a parenthesis; for there was no need to have acquainted the disciples with the manner of Judas's death, which was so well known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; nor would Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of it, be mentioned with that propriety by Peter, when he, and those he spoke of, were upon the spot; nor could there be any necessity of his explaining a word in their own tongue, which they understood, and that in a language unknown unto them; nor does it seem likely, that in so short a time as five or six weeks, the field should have obtained the name of "Aceldama", and be commonly known by it. The Ethiopic version calls this field, "a vineyard"; and so it might be, and yet the potter's field too. It is somewhat difficult, that Judas should be said to purchase it, when Matthew says the chief priests bought it, (Matthew 27:7). Both are true; Judas having received his money of the chief priests two days ago, might not only intend to purchase, but might really strike a bargain with the potter for his field; but repenting of his sin, instead of carrying the money to make good the agreement, went and threw it to the chief priests, and then hanged himself; when they, by a secret providence, might be directed to make a purchase of the same field with his money; or he may be said to purchase it, because it was purchased with his money. The Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions render it, "he possessed" it; not in person, unless he was buried there, as he might be; and so all that he got by his wretched bargain, was only so much ground as to be buried in; or the sense may be, "he caused it to be possessed"; by returning the money which the chief priests used this way;

with the reward of his iniquity; that is, with the thirty pieces of silver, given him as a reward for that vile action of his betraying of his Lord and master: so the reward of divination, or what Balsam got by soothsaying, which was an iniquitous and wicked practice, is called, "the wages of unrighteousness", (2 Peter 2:15)

and falling headlong he burst in the midst; either falling from the gallows, or tree on which he hanged himself, the rope breaking, upon a stone, or stump, his belly was broke, and burst; or falling from the air, whither he was violently snatched up by Satan, who was in him, and by whom he was thrown down to the earth, and who went out of him by a rupture made in his belly; or being in deep melancholy, he was strangled with the squinancy, and fell down on his face to the ground, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it,

and burst asunder: and all his bowels gushed out; through the rupture that was made. So we read of a man that fell from the roof of a house, hynyy[m qypnw hysrk hy[qp, "and his belly burst, and his bowels came out" [f35]. And this was the miserable end of Judas. The death of Arius, as related by Athanasius [f36], from Macarius the presbyter, who was present, was much after the same manner; who reports, that having swore to the orthodox faith, and being about to be introduced into the church at Constantinople, after the prayer of Alexander, the bishop of it, he went out to the seat, to ease nature; when he, on a sudden, fell down headlong, and burst in the middle, and immediately expired: and Epiphanius [f37] compares his exit with this of Judas, who observes, that he went out in the night to the vault, as before related, and burst asunder, as Judas of old did; and came to his end in a filthy and unclean place. Ruffinus says [f38], that as he sat, his entrails, and all his bowels, came from him into the vault; and so he died in such a place, a death worthy of his blasphemous and corrupt mind. As to the seeming difference between the Evangelist Matthew and the Apostle Peter, it may be reconciled by either of the ways before mentioned; (See Gill on "Matthew 27:5") though it seems most likely, that Judas not being able to bear the torments of his mind, he hanged himself, as Achitophel did, and was not strangled by the devil, or by any disease; and that he fell down from the tree on which he hung, either the rope breaking, or the tree falling; and so the things happened to him which are recorded: or he might fall from hence, either through a violent strong wind which blew him down; or through the rushing of wild beasts against the gallows, on which he hung; or by the devil himself, who might throw him down from hence after he had dispatched himself, as some have conjectured: or, which seems best of all, he might be cast down from hence by men, either of themselves, or by the order of the civil magistrates, not enduring such a sight, that one that had destroyed himself should hang long there; and which, according to the law, was not to be admitted; and these not taking him down, in a gentle

manner, but using some violence, or cutting the rope, the body fell, and burst asunder, as is here said: and it should be observed, that the Evangelist Matthew speaks of the death of Judas, in which he himself was concerned; and the Apostle Peter reports what befell his carcass after his death, and in which others were concerned. The Vulgate Latin renders it, and being hanged, he burst in the middle; as if this happened to him upon the gallows, without falling.

Ver. 19. *And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem*, etc.] As that he betrayed Jesus of Nazareth into the hands of the chief priests, for thirty pieces of silver; that this was the reward of his iniquity; and that with this a field was purchased for the burying of strangers in; and that he died in such a miserable way: there was scarce an inhabitant in Jerusalem but knew all this,

insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue; or "in their own dialect", the "Jerusalem dialect", Which was now Chaldee, or Syriac; and such is the word that follows, "Aceldama; that is to say, the field of blood": because it was bought with the price of Christ's blood: and if, as some say, Judas hanged him self here, or was thrown headlong here by Satan, and that this was the place where his bowels gushed out; then it may be likewise so called, because it was sprinkled with his blood. It is called in the Alexandrian copy "Acheldamach"; and often by Jerom [f39] "Acheldemach", but very wrongly; for not "Demach", but "Dema", in the Syriac and Chaldee dialect, signifies "blood"; which Peter calls the dialect of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, being now spoken by them, in distinction from the Galilean dialect used by him; which, it is plain, was different from the Jerusalem dialect by what is said, (<4140>Mark 14:70). This field, as it is reported by some, was by the appointment of the Empress Helena compassed about with four walls, in the manner of a tower, upon the top of which are seven distinct doors, like windows, by which the dead bodies of Christians are let down into it; and that it is fifty feet wide, and seventy two long: it stands not far from the valley of Himom, and is upon the south side of Mount Zion, where, as Jerom says [f40], it was showed in his time. Masius [f41] affirms, there was a very high mountain near Jerusalem, called Mount Aceldema, from the adjacent field, which was bought with the price of Christ's blood, to bury strangers in.

Ver. 20. *For it is written in the book of Psalms*, etc.] In (<19B925>Psalm 69:25). These are the words of Peter, citing the Scripture he had said must be fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by David, had spoke concerning Judas:

let his habitation be desolate. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, "his city"; meaning, perhaps, the city of Jerusalem; and which afterwards did become desolate, and was utterly destroyed:

and let no man dwell therein; in his habitation. The psalm, out of which these words are cited, is a psalm concerning the Messiah, and there are many passages cited out of it in the New Testament, and applied to him, or referred unto; (see <430217>John 2:17 15:25 19:28 <451503>Romans 15:3) compared with (<19B904>Psalm 69:4,9,21) and what the psalmist says of the enemies of the Messiah in general, is applied by the apostle to Judas in particular. In the Hebrew text, in (<19B925>Psalm 69:25) the words are in the plural number, "let their habitation be desolate, and let none dwell in their tents"; and refer to all the enemies of Christ, the chief priests, elders of the people, Scribes and Pharisees, who covenanted with Judas to give him so much money to betray Christ into their hands; and who delivered him to the Roman governor, by whom, at their instigation, he was crucified; and particularly may well be thought to include Judas, who betrayed him to them; and therefore are very fitly interpreted of him: though not to be understood to the exclusion of the others, whose house was to be left desolate, and was left desolate, as our Lord predicted, (<402338>Matthew 23:38). The first word in the Hebrew text rendered "habitation", signifies a very magnificent dwelling; it is sometimes translated a "castle", (<012516>Genesis 25:16, <043110>Numbers 31:10, <130654>1 Chronicles 6:54) and sometimes a "palace", Cant. 8:9, (<262504>Ezekiel 25:4) and it is interpreted by ^wmra, "a palace", here, by several Jewish writers [f42]; and so may intend the dwelling places of the richer sort of Christ's enemies, as the palaces of the high priest, and of the prince, or president of the sanhedrim, and the stately houses of the members of it, of the chief priests and elders of the people, and of the Scribes and Pharisees; all which became desolate at the destruction of Jerusalem: the other word, rendered "tents", may design the cottages of the meaner sort of people, who, with united voices, cried aloud for the crucifixion of Christ; and which also shared the same fate when Jerusalem was destroyed: now inasmuch as Judas was of the meaner sort, the apostle here makes use of a word which signifies but a poor and mean habitation, though it is sometimes used of grander ones, and which seems to answer to the latter; for as there are two words in the original text expressive of

habitation, he might choose which he would, and did choose that which was most pertinent in the application of the passage to Judas. However, a Jew has no reason to find fault with this version, since the Targum renders both words by “habitation”, thus;

let their habitation be desolate, and in their habitations let no one dwell: where Judas’s habitation was is not certain; but that he might have one as well as the Apostle John, is not at all improbable, and from hence seems evident:

and his bishopric let another take; which passage stands in (<19A908>Psalm 109:8) and is fitly applied to Judas, and was verified in him, who not only died a violent and infamous death, by which he was in consequence stripped of his office, as a bishop, or overseer; but another was to be put into it, invested with it, and exercise it; and therefore very pertinently does Peter produce it, his intention being to move the disciples to choose another in his room. These words are produced by the apostle, as if they were to be found in the same place with the preceding; whereas they stand in another psalm, as has been observed: and this is no unusual thing with the writers of the New Testament, to put several passages of Scripture together, as if they were in one place, when they are to be sought for in different places; an instance of this, among many, that might be mentioned, is in (<450310>Romans 3:10-18) and this is a very common way of citing Scripture with the Jews. Surenhusius [f43] has given a variety of instances, in proof of this, out of their writings, as in the margin [f44], which the learned reader may consult and compare at leisure. The psalm, out of which this passage is cited, is not to be understood of David literally, and of what he met with from his enemies, and of his imprecations upon them, either Doeg the Edomite, as Kimchi interprets it, or Ahithophel, as others, but of the Messiah, with whom the whole agrees; against whom the mouth of the wicked Jews, and particularly of the deceitful Pharisees, were opened; and against whom the false witnesses spoke with lying tongues; and who, all of them, compassed him with words of hatred to take away his life, and acted a most ungenerous and ungrateful part; opposed him without a cause, and became his enemies for his love showed to them, both to soul and body, preaching the Gospel, and healing diseases, (<19A902>Psalm 109:2-5). The poverty and distress he submitted to; the griefs and sorrows which he bore; the fatigues he underwent at his examination; and the weakness of body he was then reduced to, as well as the reproach cast upon him on the cross, when his enemies shook their heads at him, are in a very lively manner

described, (<19A922>Psalm 109:22-25) and whereas one of his enemies particularly is singled out from the rest, what is said concerning him, by way of imprecation, suits with Judas, and had its accomplishment in him, (<19A906>Psalm 109:6-8) who had a wicked man set over him, as over the rest of the Jews, Pilate, the Roman governor, a very wicked man; and at whose right hand Satan stood, as one of his council, as Aben Ezra interprets it, and put it into his heart to betray his master, and prompted him to it, and then accused him of it, and brought him to black despair for it; and who, when this affair was brought home to his own conscience, and there arraigned for it, was convicted and self-condemned, as he also will be at the general judgment; and as he found no place of mercy then, whatever prayers or entreaties he might make, so neither will he hereafter: his days were but few, being cut off in the prime of them, as may be concluded from the many years which some of his fellow apostles lived after him; and his bishopric, or office, as an apostle, was taken by another, even by Matthias, who was chosen in his room, of which we have an account in the following part of this chapter; for this is to be understood neither of his money, nor of his wife, nor of his own soul committed to his trust, as some of the Jewish writers [f45] explain it; but of his apostleship, with which he was invested by Christ. The word signifies an oversight, care, or charge; and so the Hebrew word hdwqp is rendered in (<040332>Numbers 3:32, 36) and designs any office, as the office of the priests and Levites in the house of God; (see <040416>Numbers 4:16). Jarchi interprets it here by wtlwdg, "his greatness", or "dignity"; and explains it by the Spanish word "provostia", an office of honour and authority, as this of being an apostle of Christ was; than which, a greater external dignity could not be enjoyed in the church of God, in which he has set first apostles, (<461228>1 Corinthians 12:28). That this psalm refers to Judas Iscariot, and to his affair, was so clear a point with the ancients, that they used to call it the Iscariotic Psalm. I lay no stress upon the observation some have made, that thirty curses are contained in it, the number of the pieces of silver for which he betrayed his master, since this may be thought to be too curious.

Ver. 21. *Wherefore of these men which have companied with us*, etc.] Seeing there was such an imprecation, which carried in it the nature of a prophecy, that another should take the bishopric of Judas, or be made an apostle in his room, it was absolutely necessary that one should be immediately chosen to that office; and this is the force of the illative particle, wherefore; and it was highly proper that this choice should be of

one among the men, and not the women; whom it did not become to bear any office, and exercise any authority in the church; hence it is said, “of these men”, to the exclusion of women: and it was exceeding right, and a very good notion, that the choice should be of one from among themselves, and who was known unto them; with whose abilities, integrity, wisdom, and holy conversation, they were acquainted: and therefore it is added, “which have companied with us”; one of our own company, and not a stranger; with whom we have familiarly conversed, and whose character is well known to us: a rule which ought to be attended to, in the choice of inferior officers, as pastors and deacons; who ought to be of the body and community, among whom they are chosen to an office; and their qualifications for it be well known, and that for some time past, as follows:

all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us; that is, ever since Christ called them to be his disciples and followers; and conversed with them, and discharged his office among them, governed, directed, taught, and instructed them; for it was not proper that a novice, a new plant, or one that was lately become a disciple, should be put into such an office; and the same holds good in proportion in other offices; men called to office should be of some standing, as well as of superior gifts.

Ver. 22. *Beginning from the baptism of John*, etc.] Not from the time trial John first administered the ordinance of baptism; for Christ was not so soon made known, or had followers; but from the time of the administration of it by John, to Christ, when he was made known to Israel; and quickly upon this, he called his disciples, and entered on his public ministry: now Peter moves, that one who had been so early a follower of Christ, who had heard his excellent discourses, and seen his miracles, and who had steadfastly and constantly adhered to him, might be chosen in the room of Judas; one whose faith in Christ, love to him, and firmness of mind to abide by him, had been sufficiently tried and proved; who had continued with Christ and his apostles, from the beginning of his ministry, to that time: or as Peter adds,

unto the same day that he was taken up from us; by angels, and received by a cloud, and carried up to heaven; or “he ascended from us”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; or “lifted up himself from us”, as the Arabic version; for as he raised himself from the dead by his own power, by the same he could raise himself up from earth to heaven; the sense is, to the

time of his ascension to heaven, whether by himself, or by the ministry of angels:

must one be ordained; there was a necessity of this, partly on the account of the above prophecy, and partly to keep up the number of the twelve apostles, Christ had thought fit to pitch upon; answering to the twelve tribes of Israel, and to the twelve gates, and twelve foundations of the new Jerusalem: and this choice or ordination was moved to be made, and was made, not by the other eleven apostles, but by the whole company of an hundred and twenty; for these are the persons addressed by the apostle, and to whom he said, as the Arabic version renders it, “one of these men ye must choose”: and if the choice and ordination of such an extraordinary officer was made by the whole community, then much more ought the choice and ordination of inferior officers be by them: the end of this choice was,

to be a witness with us of his resurrection; the resurrection of Christ from the dead, which supposes his incarnation and life, and so his obedience, ministry, and miracles in it; and also his sufferings and death, with all the benefits and advantages thereof; and is particularly mentioned, because it not only supposes and includes the above things, but is the principal article, basis, and foundation of the Christian religion; and the sign which Christ gave to the Jews, of the truth of his being the Messiah; and was what the disciples were chosen to be witnesses of; and a principal part of their ministry was to testify it to men: and since this was their work and business, it was necessary that one should be chosen, and joined with them, who had been with them, and with Jesus, from the beginning, to the time of his ascension; and who was an eyewitness of his resurrection, that he might join with the apostles in their testimony.

Ver. 23. *And they appointed two*, etc.] The motion made by Peter was attended to by the whole company; they approved of it, and accordingly proposed two persons by name; one of which was to be chosen, not by the apostles, but by the whole assembly. The Arabic version reads, “he appointed two”, as if Peter singly did this: contrary to all copies, and other versions, and to the context; which shows, that the whole body of the people were concerned in this affair, who prayed and gave forth their lots and suffrages: the persons nominated were,

Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. The former of these has three names; in one ancient copy of Beza’s he is called

Joses; and by some thought to be the same with Joses, surnamed Barnabas, in (Acts 4:36) partly because in one copy, and in the Syriac version there, that Joses is called Joseph; and partly, because of the nearness in sound between Barsabas and Barnabas: hence the Ethiopic version here reads, “Joseph, who was called Barnabas”, and so Beza’s most ancient copy; but though Joses is here meant for Jose, or Joses is, with the Jews, an abbreviation of Joseph; yet not Joses the Levite, who was of the country of Cyprus, but Joses of Galilee, the son of Alphaeus and Mary; and who had two brothers, James and Jude, already apostles; (see Matthew 13:55, Mark 15:40). Moreover, though the two names, Barnabas and Barsabas, differ little in sound, yet much in sense: the former is interpreted “the son of consolation”, (Acts 4:36) but the latter signifies much the same with Bathsheba; as that may be interpreted “the daughter”, this “the son of an oath”; or as others, “a son of wisdom”; and by others, “the son of fulness”; I should choose to take it to be the same name with abs rb, and interpret it, “the son of an old man”; as Alphaeus might be, when Joses, or Joseph was born, and he be the younger brother of James and Jude; as for his surname Justus, this was a name not only in use among the Grecians and Romans, especially the latter, but among the Jews: hence we often read of Rabbi ajswy, “Justa”, and sometimes, yjswy, “Justi”, and at other times, yajswy “Justai” [f46] whether he had this surname from his being a very just man, as Aristides was called Aristides the just; and so Simeon the high priest, the last of Ezra’s great synagogue, was called Simeon the just [f47]; and so James the brother of this Joseph, or Joses, was called by the Jews [f48]; and it may be, that he himself might have his name from the patriarch Joseph, who used to be called by them, Joseph, qydxh, “the just” [f49]: for Matthias, his name is Jewish, and he was no doubt a Jew; hence we read aytmybr, “Rabbi Matthia ben Charash” [f50]; his name signifying the same as Nathanael does, namely, the gift of God, made Dr. Lightfoot conjecture they might be the same; but this agrees not with another conjecture that learned man, who elsewhere thinks, that Bartholomew and Nathanael were the same; and if so, he must have been an apostle already; Clemens of Alexandria was of opinion, that this Matthias was Zacchaeus [f51].

Ver. 24. *And they prayed and said*, etc.] Having proposed the above two persons, and not well knowing which to pitch upon, they being both very agreeable and fit for such service; they chose not to determine the affair

without seeking to God for direction; a method to be taken in all cases, and especially in matters of importance: and the substance of their petition, though perhaps not in just the same words, was,

thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men; which is a character peculiar to the one only living, and true God; for none knows the hearts of men, but God, who is the Maker of them; and he knows all the thoughts, counsels, and purposes of them, and the good or bad that is in them:

shew whether of these two thou hast chosen; being desirous of having their choice directed by the choice God had made, in his eternal mind; and which they desired might be signified and pointed out to them, in some way or another, that they might be certain of the mind and will of God, and act according to it.

Ver. 25. *That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship*, etc.] Of the ministry of the apostles, or of the apostolical ministration; which lay in preaching the Gospel, administering ordinances, planting churches, and working miracles; and which part, lot, or inheritance, Judas had; (see <44017>Acts 1:17).

And from which Judas by transgression fell; by betraying his Lord, whose apostle he was, he was turned out of his office, and had no longer part in the apostolical ministry:

that he might go to his own place; which may be understood of Judas, and of his going to hell, as the just punishment of his sin; which is commonly so called by the Jews, who often explain this phrase, “his place”, by hell; as when it is said of Laban, (<013155>Genesis 31:55) that he “returned to his place”, it intimates, say they [f52], that he returned to his place, which was prepared for him in hell; and so likewise when it is said of Balaam, (<042425>Numbers 24:25) that he “returned to his place”, they observe [f53], that

“he did not return from his evil way, but returned to his place; and so intimates by saying, to his place, that which was prepared for him in hell, as the Rabbins of blessed memory say [f54]; “they came everyone from his own place”, (<180211>Job 2:11) a man from his house, a man from his country it is not written, but a man from his place, which was prepared for him in hell; and because they came to show mercy to Job, they were delivered from hell, and became worthy of the world to come; and so here, and “he

returned to his place", µnyhgb wl ^kwmh, "which was prepared for him in hell"."

And another of their writers[f55], on the same passage, has this remark, and he returned to his place, and he does not say,

> "he went on his way, for he was driven out of his way, and went down to hell."

And agreeably to what is said of Job's friends, the Targumist on (<18211>Job 2:11) paraphrases the words thus;

> "and there came a man, or everyone from his place, and by this merit they were delivered from the place, prepared for them in hell."

And which place the same Targumist on (<18804>Job 8:4) calls ^whydrm rta, "the place of their rebellion"; that is, procured by it: and so Judas's own place was what he had merited by his sin, and was righteously appointed for him; and though it was not peculiar to him, but common to all impenitent sinners, yet very proper for him, as a betrayer; for it is a settled point with the Jews[f56], that

> "he that betrays an Israelite into the hands of the Gentiles (so Judas betrayed his master), whether in his body, or in his substance, has no part in the world to come."

This clause is by some understood not of Judas, but of Matthias, or of him that was to come in the room of Judas; and by "his own place" it is thought is meant, the "part of the ministry and apostleship", in the former clause, and which the Alexandrian copy reads, "the place of this ministry", he was to take; and now Judas by his iniquity falling from it, made way for another, for Matthias to go to his own place, which God had in his counsel and purposes designed for him; or "into his place", as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; that is, into the place of Judas, to take his place among the apostles, in his room and stead: the Alexandrian copy reads, "into that righteous place".

Ver. 26. *And they gave forth their lots*, etc.] Or "gave forth lots for them", as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; for Joseph and Matthias; some for one, and some for another; and which were cast into a man's lap, or into a vessel, and was no other than balloting for them; and so he that had

the majority upon casting them up, when taken out, was declared the person chosen; or "they cast their lots"; that is, into an urn, or vessel; which lots had the names of the two persons on them; and into another vessel, as is thought, were put two other lots; the one had the name of "apostle" upon it, and the other nothing; and these being taken out by persons appointed for that purpose, the lot with Matthias's name on it, was taken out against that which had the name of apostle on it, upon which he was declared to be the apostle: it may be that this was done in the same manner, as the goats on the day of atonement had lots cast on them, (<scripRef type="bible">Leviticus 16:8</scripRef>) which the Jews say was thus performed: there was a vessel which they call "Kalphi", set in the court, into which two lots, which were made of wood, or stone, or metal, were put; the one had written on it, for Jehovah, and on the other was written, "for the scapegoat"; the two goats being, the one at the right hand of the priest, and the other at the left; the priest shook the vessel, and with his two hands took out the two lots, and laid the lots on the two goats; the right on that which was at his right hand, and the left on that which was at his left [f57]; and so the goat which had the lot put upon him, on which was written, "for the Lord", was killed; and that which had the other lot, on which was written, for the scapegoat, was presented alive; so the lot here is said to fall upon Matthias: or the lots being cast into the vessel, as above related, these two drew them out themselves; and Matthias taking out that which had the word apostle on it, the lot fell on him: the manner of Moses's choosing the seventy elders, is said to be this [f58]:

> "Moses took seventy two papers, and on seventy of them he wrote, ˆqz, "an elder"; and upon two, q l j, "a part"; and he chose six out of every tribe, and there were seventy two; he said unto them, take your papers out of the vessel; he into whose hand came up "an elder" (i.e. the paper on which it was so written) he was sanctified (or set apart to the office); and he, in whose hand came up "a part" (the paper that had that on it), to him he said, the Lord does not delight in thee."

And the lot fell upon Matthias; that is, either he had the largest number for him, their minds being so disposed by the providence of God; and it may be, contrary to the first thoughts and general sense of the body; since Joseph is mentioned first, and was a man of great character, and of many names and titles; but God, who knows the hearts: of men, and can turn them as he pleases, and to whom they sought for direction, inclined their

minds to vote for the latter; or it was so ordered by divine providence, that in the casting or drawing the lots, the lot of the apostleship should fall on him:

and he was numbered with the eleven apostles; either chosen by the common suffrages of the people, as the word used signifies; or rather, he took his place among the apostles; he was registered among them, and ever after was reckoned one of them; Beza's ancient copy reads, "with the twelve apostles", their number being now complete.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 2

Ver. 1. *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come*, etc.] Or "was come", was begun and entered upon; for it was not over, or ended, it being but the third hour of the day, or nine of the clock in the morning, when Peter began his sermon; (see <44 02 15>Acts 2:15). The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, "when the days of Pentecost were fulfilled"; not that there were more days than one, kept at this festival; for though the feasts of passover and tabernacles were observed each of them seven days, according to the law, and eight days according to the Scribes, yet the feast of Pentecost was kept but one day; and hence it is often said by the Jews, that Atzereth, which is one of the names they call this feast by, is but one day [f59]; in the captivity they kept two days [f60], as they did for the beginning of the year, because of the uncertainty of calculations; but the sense is, when the whole fifty days from the passover to this time were fully come, or fulfilled, when the fiftieth day from thence, which was properly the day of Pentecost, was come: on the second day of the passover, on the sixteenth of Nisan, the sheaf of the first fruits was offered up; after which, and not before, it was lawful to reap the corn, (<03 23 10>Leviticus 23:10,11) from this time the Jews reckoned their feast of weeks, or seven weeks, or fifty days; (see <02 34 22>Exodus 34:22, <05 16 09>Deuteronomy 16:9) (<03 23 15>Leviticus 23:15,16) which measured out the time of their harvest. Now the last of these fifty days was the day of Pentecost, on which day was offered the two wave loaves, as a thanksgiving that their harvest was ended. Josephus calls [f61] this feast by the same name that Luke here does; and says [f62], the Jews so call it, from the number of the days, that is fifty; and so R. Sol Jarchi [f63] calls this day, µyçymj µwy, "the fiftieth day": on this day, the Jews say [f64], the law was given; and observe [f65], that

> "from the day that Israel went out of Egypt, unto the day that the law was given, were fifty days."

And on this day, and which was the first day of the week, the Spirit was poured forth upon the disciples; the Gospel began to be preached to all nations, and a harvest of souls was gathered in:

they were all with one accord in one place; in two ancient copies of Beza's, and in some others it is read, "all the apostles"; Matthias, and the eleven, with whom he was numbered, who are last spoken of, in (<4401 26>Acts 1:26). Though this need not be restrained to the twelve apostles, but may be understood of the hundred and twenty, on whom, as well as on the apostles, the Holy Ghost might be poured forth, that so they might speak with tongues; since among these were many ministers of the Gospel, as the seventy disciples, and it may be more; and that his extraordinary gifts should be bestowed on others, is but what was afterwards done; (see <4401 87>Acts 8:17, 10:14, 11:15) and though there were so many of them together, they were very unanimous and peaceable; there were no jars nor contentions among them; they were of the same mind and judgment in faith and practice, and of one heart and soul, and had a cordial affection for one another; and were all in one place, which seems to be the temple; (see <4401 46>Acts 2:46). And indeed, no other place or house could hold so many as came to hear them, of which number three thousand were converted.

Ver. 2. *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven*, etc.] Which is expressive of the original of the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, which come from above, from heaven, from the Father of lights; and of the freeness of them, being unmerited; and so come suddenly, at an unawares, being unthought of, undesired, and unexpected, and so certainly undeserved; and may be a symbol of the sound of the Gospel, which from hence was to go forth into all the earth; and may likewise express the rise of that, and the freeness of the grace of God in it, and its sudden spread throughout the world:

as of a rushing mighty wind; it was not a wind, but like one; and the noise it made, was like the rushing noise of a strong and boisterous wind, that carries all before it: the Spirit of God is sometimes compared to the wind, because of the freeness of his operations; as that blows where it listeth, so he works when and where, and on whom he pleases; and also because of the power and efficacy of his grace, which is mighty and irresistible, and works with great energy upon the minds of men; and as the wind is secret and invisible, so the operations of the Spirit are in a manner secret and imperceptible unto men: this may likewise be applied to the Gospel, when

it comes with the Holy Ghost, and with power; it makes its way into the heart, and throws down the strong holds of sin and Satan; there it works effectually, though secretly, and is the power of God to salvation:

and it filled all the house where they were sitting; which was the temple, or the upper room or chamber in it, where they were assembled; so in the Ethiopic confession of faith [f66] it is said,

> "the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles, in the upper room of Zion;"

this may be a symbol of the Gospel filling the whole world.

Ver. 3. *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire*, etc.] An emblem of the various tongues and languages, in which they were to preach the Gospel; these appearances were like flames of fire parted, and these parted flames looked like tongues; so, a flame of fire is with, the Jews called, ça ˆwçl, "a tongue of fire", (<23D524>Isaiah 5:24) hence the Apostle James compares a tongue to fire, (<590306>James 3:6) this was the baptism with fire, John the Baptist speaks of, (See Gill on "<400311>Matthew 3:11"); and the Jews say [f67],

> "the holy blessed God baptizeth with fire, and the wise shall understand."

Through this baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, the apostles became more knowing, and had a greater understanding of the mysteries of the Gospel, and were more qualified to preach it to people of all nations and languages. The Holy Spirit, in his gifts and graces, is compared to fire, because of its purity, light, and heat, as well as consuming nature; the Spirit sanctifies, and makes men pure and holy, purges from the dross of sin, error and superstition; and enlightens the minds of men, and gives them knowledge of divine and spiritual things; and fills them with zeal and fervour for the glory of God and Christ, and the good of his church and interest, and for the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel; as well as fortifies them against their enemies, whom he consumes, according to (<380205>Zechariah 2:5) a passage of Scripture the Jews make use of in an uncommon sense; for they say [f68], that as

> "Jerusalem was destroyed by fire, "by fire it shall be built again"; as it is said, (<380205>Zechariah 2:5) "For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about"."

The pouring forth of the Spirit upon the apostles, in this form of cloven tongues, as of fire, was indeed the means of rebuilding Jerusalem, in a spiritual sense; or of founding the Gospel church state in the world:

and it sat upon each of them; the fire, or the Holy Ghost in the appearance of fire. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, “and they sat upon each of them”; and so Beza’s most ancient copy; that is, the cloven tongues sat on them; either one upon one of them and another upon another, or many upon each of them: where they sat, whether on their lips, or on their heads, it not certain, probably on the latter; nor how long they sat; however, their sitting upon them may denote the continuance of the gifts and graces of the Spirit with them. These cloven tongues cannot but bring to mind the division and confusion of the tongues or languages at Babel; which gave rise to different nations, and different religions; but these divided tongues gave rise to the spreading of the Gospel, and settling the true religion among the nations of the world. The Jews [f69] seem to have respect to this account, when they tell us of

> “lights from above, that came forth and dwelt in the synagogues, ˆwhyçyrb, “on the heads” of those that prayed, and the lights ˆygl p tm, “were divided” upon their heads.”

Ver. 4. *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*, etc.] With the gifts of the Holy Spirit; they had received the Spirit before, as a Spirit of grace, and were endowed with great gifts; but now they had great plenty of them, a large abundance; they were like vessels filled to the brim; they were as it were covered with them; there was an overflow of them upon them; and now it was, that they were baptized with him; (See Gill on “<40105>Acts 1:5”). Not only the twelve apostles, but the seventy disciples; and it may be all the hundred and twenty, that were together, even women as well as men: (<40217>Acts 2:17,18).

And began to speak with other tongues; besides, and different from that in which they were born and brought up, and usually spake; they spake divers languages, one spoke one language, and another, another; and the same person spoke with various tongues, sometimes one language, and sometimes another. These are the new tongues, Christ told them they should speak with, (<41617>Mark 16:17) such as they had never heard, learned, nor known before:

as the Spirit gave them utterance; they did not utter anything of themselves, and what came into their minds, things of little or no importance; nor in a confused and disorderly manner; but they were wise and weighty sentences they delivered, as the word signifies; even the wonderful works of God, (<40211>Acts 2:11) the great doctrines of the Gospel; and though in different languages, yet in a very orderly and distinct manner, so as to be heard and understood by the people. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, "as the Holy Spirit", etc.

Ver. 5. *And there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, "proselytes"; but they were not all such, as appears from the following account of them; many, and it seems the most of them were of Jewish extract and descent, and others were proselytes to the Jewish religion: these were not natives of Jerusalem, but such as were born in other countries, (<40108>Acts 2:8) but were come to Jerusalem, either to learn the Hebrew language, which was necessary to their reading and understanding the books of Moses, and the prophets written in it; or for an increase of spiritual knowledge and piety; or, as is generally thought, to keep the feast of Pentecost; or rather, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, they were come hither in great numbers front all parts, in expectation of the Messiah and his kingdom; the time being up, according to Daniel's weeks, and other prophecies, that he should appear: and these were

devout men; men of religion and piety, of faith and holiness; and as the Syriac version renders it, "who feared God"; for in these worst of times, among this wicked generation of men, there were some who had the fear of God before their eyes, and on their hearts; and these were collected from different quarters, to be witnesses of this amazing dispensation: for they came

out of every nation under heaven; that is, wherever the Jews were dispersed; being the descendants of those that were carried captive at different times, and into different places; as by Salmanezer, Nebuchadnezzar, Ptolomy Lagus, Antiochus, and in other lesser dispersions.

Ver. 6. *Now when this was noised abroad*, etc.] Or "when this voice was made"; referring either to the sound, as of a mighty rushing wind, which came from heaven; and might not only be heard by those in the house, into which it came, but by the inhabitants of the city, as it came down from heaven; so the Arabic version renders it, "when the aforesaid sound was

made": or else to the apostles' voice, and their speaking with divers tongues; which being heard by some, was told to others, and a rumour of it being made through the city,

the multitude came together; to the house, or temple, where the disciples were; and this multitude did not consist only of the devout Jews, before mentioned; but of others who scoffed and mocked at the apostles, and who had been concerned in the crucifying of Christ:

and were confounded; or "confused"; they ran and came together in a disorderly and tumultuous manner; the whole city was in an uproar, the assembly on this occasion was a perfect mob; their numbers were so large, that they were ready to thrust each other down, and trample one another under foot: the Vulgate Latin adds, "in mind"; they did not know what to think of things, they were so astonished at what they heard, that they were scarcely themselves; they were as persons stupid and senseless; being filled partly with shame and confusion, and partly with wonder and amazement, that these illiterate men, the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified, and whose disciples they had in so much contempt, should have such extraordinary gifts bestowed on them:

because that every man heard them speak in his own language; which shows, what has been before observed, that one spake in one language, and another in another language; or the same person sometimes spoke one language, and sometimes another; so that in course, all languages were spoken by them; whence it appears, that it was not one language only which was spoken by the apostles, which men of different languages heard and understood, as if it was their own; for then the miracle must have been in the hearers, and not in the speakers; and the cloven tongues, as of fire, should rather have sat on them, than on the disciples; and these men be said to be filled with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, rather than they.

Ver. 7. *And they were all amazed, and marvelled*, etc.] They were struck with surprise, they were as it were out of themselves, like persons in an ecstasy, not knowing what could be the cause or meaning of this:

saying one to another; the phrase "one to another", is left out in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and so it is in the Alexandrian copy:

behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? rude, unpolished, and unlearned men; who had never been brought up in any school of learning, and had never learned any language but their mother tongue; and that they

pronounced with an ill grace, and in a very odd manner; and which made the thing the more astonishing to them. The apostles were inhabitants of Galilee, and so very likely were the greatest part of those that were with them: hence the Christians afterwards, by way of contempt, were called Galilaeans; as they are by Julian [f70] the apostate, and others [f71].

Ver. 8. *And how hear we every man in our own tongue*, etc.] Them speaking, as the Ethiopic version reads; that is, we everyone of us hear one or another, speak in the same language,

wherein we were born; our native language; for though these men were Jews by descent, yet were born and brought up in other countries, which language they spake; and not the Hebrew, or Syriac, or Chaldee.

Ver. 9. *Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites*, etc.] These are the words of the men continued, and not of the historian, as appears from (<44210>Acts 2:10) and so the Arabic version reads, "of us Persians, Parthians, and Medes"; that is, we hear them speak in the language of everyone of us: the order in this version is inverted, otherwise the same persons are intended; for the Elamites and Persians are the same: by the Parthians are meant, Jews that were born in Parthia, and had dwelt there, and who spoke the language of that country; and that there were Jews, in those parts, is clear from Josephus [f72], who speaks of them together with the Jews of other nations. Many of the Parthian Jews were afterwards converted to the Christian faith; to whom the Apostle John is thought, by some, to have written his first epistle; and which, by some of the ancients, is called the epistle to the Parthians. The kingdom of Parthia, according to Pliny [f73], Ptolomy [f74], and Solinus [f75], had Media on the west, Hyrcania on the north, Aria, or Ariana, on the east, and the desert of Carmania on the south; the metropolis of it was Hecatompylos, so called from the hundred gates that belonged to it; and which, it is thought, stood on the same spot of ground that Ispahan does now, the seat of the Sophies of Persia. And by the Medes are intended the Jews that were natives of Media: so called from "Madai", one of the sons of Japhet, (<01002>Genesis 10:2) and this, according to Ptolomy [f76], has on the north the Hyrcanian, or Gasptan sea, on the west Armenia Major and Assyria, and on the east Hyrcania and Parthia, and on the south Parthia. The Elamites are so called, from Elam the son of Shem, (<01022>Genesis 10:22) and these, according to Josephus [f77], were the founders of the Persians, or from whom they sprung; and so we find Elam and Media, and the kings of Elam, and the kings of the Medes, mentioned

together in Scripture, (<232102>Isaiah 21:2, <242525>Jeremiah 25:25). And certain it is, that Elam was at least a part of the empire of Persia, in Daniel's time; for Shushan, where the kings of Persia then kept their palace, was in the province of Elam, (<270802>Daniel 8:2) and it is evident, that hither the Jews were carried captive, (<231111>Isaiah 11:11, <244934>Jeremiah 49:34-39). So that there might be some remaining in those parts, that were their descendants; and from hence also were people brought by Asnapper, into the cities of Samaria, to supply the room of those who were carried captive, and are called Elamites, (<150409>Ezra 4:9) And that there were Elamite Jews, may be concluded from the writings of the Jews; for so they say [f78], that

> "the Hagiographa, or holy writings, which were written in the Coptic, Median, Hebrew, tymly[, "Elamite", and Greek tongues; though they did not read in them (on the sabbath day in time of service) they delivered them from the fire,"

when in danger of being burned: so the Megilla, or book of Esther, might not be read in the Coptic, Hebrew, Elamite, Median, and Greek languages; but it might be read in Coptic to Coptites, in Hebrew to Hebrews, µymly[l tymly[, in "Elamite" to the "Elamites", and in Greek to the Greeks [f79]; and such sort of Jews as the Elamite ones, were these in the text: the Syriac version reads Elanites; and so R. Benjamin in his Itinerary [f80], makes mention of a country called, hyla, "Alania", and of a people called, ^ala, "Alan"; and whom he speaks of in company with Babylon, Persia, Choresan, Sheba, and Mesopotamia; and may intend the same people as here: now these Parthian, Median, and Elamite Jews were such who descended from the captives of the ten tribes, carried away by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, whom he placed in Halah and Habor, and in the cities of the Medes, (<121706>2 Kings 17:6, 18:11). But besides these, there were also at Jerusalem, at this time, those who are next mentioned:

and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia; who came not quite so far off as the former: Mesopotamia is the same with what is called in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, Aram Naharaim, or Syria between the two rivers; that is, Tigris and Euphrates; the former was on the east of it, and the latter on the west, and Babylon was on the south, and Caucasus on the north; and so the Greek word Mesopotamia signifies a place between two rivers; (see <012410>Genesis 24:10, <052304>Deuteronomy 23:4, <070308>Judges 3:8, 10, <130106>1 Chronicles 19:6). And the Jews have adopted it into their own language,

calling it, aymjwpsm, “Mesopotamia” [f81]; and the same name obtains with other writers [f82], and it has since been called Azania and Halopin; it belonged to that part of Assyria, called Chaldea; and these Mesopotamian Jews were the remains of those who were carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; and though the Chaldean, or Syriac language was now spoken by the Jews, yet in a different manner than it was in Chaldea and Syria: and there were also the dwellers in Judea; by which is meant, that part of the land of Israel, which was distinct from Galilee, and where they used a different dialect from the Galilean Jews; and there were others, who were born, and had lived in Cappadocia. This was a country in Asia, in which were many famous cities; as Archalais, where Claudius Caesar put a Roman colony; and Neo Caesarea (the birth place of Gregory Thaumaturgus); and Melita, built by Semiramis; and Mazaca [f83], which was the chief city; and so called from Meshech, the son of Japhet, since called Caesarea. The inhabitants of this country, Herodotus says [f84],

> “were by the Greeks called Syrians, and they were Syrians; and before the Persians had the government, they were subject to the Medea, and then to Cyrus.”

And by Pliny [f85] they are called, Leucosyrians. This country, according to Ptolomy [f86], had Galatia, and part of Pamphylia on the west, and on the south Cilicia, and part of Syria, and on the east Armenia the great, and on the north, part of the Euxine Pontus; it is now called Amasia, or Almasin: here were many Jews scattered abroad, some of which were afterwards believers in Christ, to whom Peter sent his epistles, (<600101>1 Peter 1:1). It had its former name from the river Cappadox, which, as Pliny [f87] says, divided the Galatians and Leucosyrians, and this indeed is the reason of its name; in the Syriac language it is called, Ædpq, “Capdac”, which comes from dpq; which signifies to “cut off”, or “divide”, as this river did the above people from one another; and hence the country was called Cappadocia, and the inhabitants Cappadocians: in the Jewish writings it is called, ayqjwpq, Capotakia; and which Maimonides [f88] says, is the same with Caphtor; and in the Arabic language, is called Tamiati; and so Caphtor is rendered Cappadocia, and the Caphtorim Cappadocians, in the Targums of Onkelos, Jonathan, and Jerusalem, in (<011014>Genesis 10:14, <051223>Deuteronomy 2:23, <244704>Jeremiah 47:4, <300907>Amos 9:7) and so in the Septuagint version of (<051223>Deuteronomy 2:23, <300907>Amos 9:7). This country was near the land of

Israel, and in it dwelt many Jews; they had schools of learning here, and had traditions peculiarly relating to it: as for instance,

> "if a man married a wife in the land of Israel, and divorced her in Cappadocia, he must give her (her dowry) of the money of the land of Israel; and if he marries a wife in Cappadocia, and divorces her in the land of Israel, he may give her of the money of the land of Israel; Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel says, he must give her of the money of Cappadocia [f89];"

for it seems the Cappadocian money was larger, and weighed more than that in the land of Israel: however,

> "if a man marries a wife in Cappadocia, and divorces her in Cappadocia, he must give her of the money of Cappadocia."

And so R. Akiba speaks [f90] of one, that he saw shipwrecked at sea; and when, says he, I came to the province of Cappadocia, he came and sat, and judged before me in the constitutions and traditions of the elders: from whence it is manifest, that here were people of the Jewish nation that dwelt in this country, and so at this time. As also in Pontus; hence the first epistle of Peter is sometimes called the epistle to the Pontians; that is, to the Jews of Pontus, then become Christians; Pontus was a country in lesser Asia, and according to Ptolomy [f91], it had on the west the mouth of Pontus, and the Thracian Bosphorus, and part of Propontis, on the north, part of the Euxine sea, and on the south the country which is properly called Asia, and on the east Galatia by Paphlagonia; it was the birth place of Marcion the heretic, of which Tertullian gives a most dismal account [f92]: Asia here intends, neither Asia the greater, nor the less, but Asia properly so called; which had Lycia and Phrygia on the east, the Aegean shores on the west, the Egyptian sea on the south, and Paphlagonia on the north [f93]; in which were Ephesus the chief city, and Smyrna and Pergamus, and where were many Jews; these might be the remains of those that were carried captive, and dispersed by Ptolomy Lagus; those who dwelt in the three last places spoke the Greek language.

Ver. 10. *Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt*, etc.] Phrygia was a country in Asia, and had part of Galatia on the north, Lycaonia, Pisidia, and Mygdonia on the south, and on the east Cappadocia [f94]; here the Apostle Paul afterwards travelled, and strengthened the Christians; (see Acts 16:6, 18:23). Pamphylia, now called Setilia, is another country in Asia,

formerly called Mopsopia [f95]; which had on the west Lycia, and part of Asia, on the north Galatia, on the east Cilicia, and part of Cappadocia, and on the south the sea of Pamphylia [f96], of which mention is made in (<442705>Acts 27:5). The chief city in it was Perga, where was a temple of Diana [f97], and here the Apostle Paul also was; (see <441313>Acts 13:13, 14:24,25, 15:38). Others of these sojourning Jews lived in Egypt, which was a large country in Africa; which had on the east the deserts of Arabia, on the west Libya, on the south Ethiopia, and on the north the Mediterranean sea; hither many Jews were carried captive by Ptolomy Lagus, and these spoke the Egyptian language:

and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene; there were others at Jerusalem, which came from hence, The Arabic version reads this clause, "and in the parts of Africa, which is our country"; and Pliny says [f98], the Greeks call Africa, Libya. The Jews say [f99], Libya in Egypt; and for proselytes from Libya, they wait three generations; that is, before they receive them: Cyrene, or Cyreniaca, which is no other than upper Libya, is called by Pliny [f100], the Pentapolitan country, from the five cities in it; Berenice, Arsinoe, Ptolemais, Apollonia, and Cyrene: to these are added,

and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes; that is, as the Syriac version renders it, "those that came from Rome"; to which the Arabic agrees: they were natives and inhabitants of the city of Rome, though now they were at Jerusalem; and some of these were Jews by birth, and lineal descent, though born at Rome; and others were such as were proselytes of righteousness, who were originally Gentiles, but were now circumcised, and had embraced the Jewish religion; concerning such, (See Gill on "<402315>Matthew 23:15"). These doubtless spoke in the Roman, or Latin tongue.

Ver. 11. *Cretes and Arabians*, etc.] The former are either the same with the Cretians, (<560112>Titus 1:12) the inhabitants of the island of Crete, (<442707>Acts 27:7) now called Candia or Candy, which has on the north the Aegean sea, on the south the Libyan or African sea, on the west the Adriatic sea, and on the east the Carpathian sea. In it were an hundred cities; the most famous of which were, Gnosos, Cortyna, Lyctos, Lycastos, Holopixos, Phaestos, Cydon, Manethusa, Dyctynna [f101], and others; these spoke the Greek language; yet not the Attic, for the Cretian and Attic speech are distinguished [f102]: or else, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, these were the same with the Cherethim or Cherethites, in (<260516>Ezekiel 25:16,

(Zephaniah 2:5) whom the Septuagint interpreters call Cretes, as here; since these are mentioned with the Philistines, to whose land Arabia joined; the inhabitants of which are next mentioned here. There were three Arabias; Arabia Petraea, which had on the west part of Egypt, and on the north Judea, and part of Syria, on the south the Red sea, and on the east Arabia Felix. The second was called Arabia Deserta, and had on the north part of Mesopotamia, and on the east Babylonia, on the south Arabia Felix, and on the west, part of Syria and Arabia Petraea. The third was called Arabia Felix, and had on the north the south sides of Petraea and Arabia Deserta, and the more southern part of the Persian gulf, on the west the gulf of Arabia, and on the south the Red sea, and on the east, part of the Persian gulf [f103]; and here dwelt Jews who spoke the Arabic language. Now these Jews, of different nations, declared concerning the apostles, saying,

we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God; not the works of creation and providence, though these are great and wonderful; but of redemption, pardon, atonement, justification, and salvation, by the Messiah, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and also of his resurrection from the dead; things which struck them with amazement, and the more, that such illiterate persons should have such knowledge of them, and should be able to speak of them in such a clear, distinct, and powerful manner; and still the more, that they should speak of them in their several tongues in which they were born, and to which they were used, and which the apostles had never learned: and this they heard with their own ears, and were fully satisfied that they did speak divers languages.

Ver. 12. *And they were all amazed*, etc.] That is, all these devout men, Jews and proselytes, which came from other nations before mentioned:

and were in doubt; not whether the apostles spoke in various languages, nor about the sense of their words; for they not only heard them with their ears, and were assured of the facts, but they seem also to understand what was said, since they call the things delivered, the great or wonderful things of God; but they were at a loss in their minds what should be the cause of this, or the reason of such a dispensation,

saying, one to another, what meaneth this? from whence is it? what is the design of it? or what the end to be answered by it? or what will follow upon it? surely something considerable.

Ver. 13. *Others mocking, said*, etc.] These were the native inhabitants of Jerusalem, the common people; and it may be also the Scribes and Pharisees, who did not understand the languages in which the apostles spake, and therefore derided them both by words and gestures:

these men are full of new wine; the Syriac, version adds, "and are drunk"; a very foolish and impertinent cavil this; there was, at this time of the year, no new wine, just pressed, or in the fat; and if there had been any, and they were full of it, it could never have furnished them with a faculty of speaking with many tongues; men generally lose their tongues by intemperance. They were indeed filled with wine, but not with wine, the juice of the grape, either new or old; but with spiritual wine, with the gifts of the Spirit of God, by which they spake with divers tongues. They might hope this insinuation, that they were drunk with wine, would take and be received, since it was a feasting time, the feast of Pentecost; though, as Peter afterwards observes; it was too early in the day to imagine this to be their case.

Ver. 14. *But Peter standing up with the eleven*, etc.] Apostles; their number being now complete, Matthias being chosen in the room of Judas. These all at once rose up, as abhorring the fact they were charged with, and to show the falsehood of it, and to vindicate themselves; when Peter, as their mouth, stood "in the midst" of them, as the Ethiopic version reads, with great courage, boldness, and intrepidity of mind: and "lift up his voice"; that he might be heard by the whole multitude, that was gathered together, as well as to show his zeal and fervour of spirit, and fortitude of mind; for being endued with the Spirit from on high, he was fearless of men, who but a little while ago was frightened by a servant maid.

And said unto them, ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem; which shows that they were the natives and citizens of Jerusalem that mocked and scoffed; for to these the apostle addresses himself.

Be this known unto you, and hearken to my words; as follows.

Ver. 15. *For these are not drunken*, etc.] Meaning not only the eleven apostles, but the rest of the hundred and twenty, on whom also the Spirit was poured forth, and who were endowed with his extraordinary gifts:

as ye suppose; and had given out that they were: and this shows the sense of being filled with new wine; that they meant that they were really drunk, and which they believed, or at least would have had others believe it; the

unreasonableness of which supposition and suggestion the apostle argues from the time of day:

seeing it is but the third hour of the day; or nine of the clock in the morning: for till this time it was not usual with the Jews, if men of any sobriety or religion, so much as to taste anything: the rules are these [f104],

> “it is forbidden a man to taste anything, or do any work after break of day, until he has prayed the morning prayer.”

Now

> “the morning prayer, the precept concerning it is, that a man should begin to pray as soon as the sun shines out; and its time is until the end of the fourth hour, which is the third part of the day [f105].”

So that a man might not taste anything, either of eatables or drinkables, until the fourth hour, or ten o’clock in the morning: hence it is said [f106], that

> “after they offered the daily sacrifice they ate bread, ˆy[ç [bra ˆmzb, “at the time of four hours”:”

or on the fourth hour, and sooner than this it was not lawful to eat, even ever so little; and whoever did, was not reckoned fit to be conversed with.

> “Says R. Isaac [f107], whoever eats a green or herb before the fourth hour, it is forbidden to converse with him; and the same says, it is unlawful to eat a raw herb before the fourth hour. Amemar, and Mar Zutra, and Rab Ashe were sitting, and they brought before them a raw herb before the fourth hour. Amemar and Rab Ashe ate, and Mar Zutra did not eat: they said to him, what is thy meaning? (he replied) that R. Isaac said, whoever eats a herb before the fourth hour, it is forbidden to converse with him.”

The time for taking food by persons of different characters, is thus expressed by them:

> “the first hour is the time of eating for the Lydians, the second for thieves, the third for heirs, the fourth for labourers, the fifth for every man; is it not so? Saith R. Papa, the fourth is the time of repast for every man; but (the truth is) the fourth is the time of eating for every man, the fifth for labourers, and the sixth for the disciples of the wise men [f108].”

Hence that advice [f109],

> ""at the fourth hour", go into a cook's shop, (or tavern,) if thou seest a man drinking wine, and holding the cup in his hands, and slumbering, inquire about him, if he is one of the wise doctors, etc."

The "gloss" upon it is,

> "at the fourth hour, for that is the time of eating, when all go into the shops (or taverns) to eat."

Now whereas they that are drunken are drunken in the night, and not in the day, and much less so soon in the day, when it was not usual, at least with religious men, to have tasted anything by this time; and whereas the apostles, and their company, were sober and religious men, and had never done thing to forfeit their character, it was unreasonable to suppose anything of this kind in them.

Ver. 16. *But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel*.] This affair, which is a matter of wonder and amazement with some, and of speculation with others, and of ridicule and contempt with the most, not the effect of wine, but the fulfilment of a prophecy in (<2028>Joel 2:28-32) and is that effusion of the Spirit there foretold; and this prophecy is by the Jews themselves allowed to belong to the world to come, or to the times of the Messiah. Some of their commentators [f110] say, that it refers dyt[l, "to time to come"; by which they frequently mean the times of the Messiah; and another says [f111] expressly, that they belong jyçmh tymyl, "to the days of the Messiah"; and in one of their Midrashes [f112] it is observed, that

> "the holy blessed God says in this world they prophesy single, (particular persons,) but "in the world to come" all "Israel" shall become prophets, as it is said, (<2028>Joel 2:28) "and it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your old men", etc. So expounds R. Tanchums with R. Aba."

Ver. 17. *And it shall come to pass in the last days*, etc.] In Joel it is, "afterwards"; instead of which Peter puts, "in the last days"; the sense is the same: and so R. David Kimchi, a celebrated commentator with the Jews, observes, that "afterwards" is the same "as in the last days", and which design the times of the Messiah; for according to a rule given by the

same writer on (<2302>Isaiah 2:2) wherever the last days are mentioned, the days of the Messiah are intended.

Saith God, or "the Lord", as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read. This clause is added by Peter, and is not in Joel; and very rightly, since what follow are the words of God speaking in his own person:

I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; not "upon every animal", as the Ethiopic version renders it: this is extending the sense too far, as the interpretation the above named Jewish writer gives, limits it too much, restraining it to the people of Israel. It being a maxim with them, that the Shekinah does not dwell but in the land of Israel; and also that prophecy, or a spirit of prophecy, does not dwell on any but in the holy land [f113]. For though as it regards the first times of the Gospel, it may chiefly respect some persons among the Jews, yet not to the exclusion of the Gentiles; and it designs all sorts of persons of every age, sex, state, and condition, as the distribution afterwards shows. Jarchi's note upon it is,

> "upon everyone whose heart is made as tender as flesh; as for example, "and I will give an heart of flesh", (<2636>Ezekiel 36:26)."

By the Spirit is meant the gifts of the Spirit, the spirit of wisdom and knowledge, of understanding the mysteries of the Gospel, of explaining the Scriptures, and of speaking with tongues; and by the pouring of it out, is intended the abundance and great plenty of the gifts and graces of the Spirit bestowed; but yet not all of him, or all his gifts and grace in the large extent of them: therefore it is said, not "my Spirit", but "of my Spirit", or "out of it"; as out of an unfathomable, immeasurable, and inexhaustible fountain and fulness:

and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy: or foretell things to come, as Agabus, and the four daughters of Philip the Evangelist, (<4421>Acts 21:9,10)

and your young men shall see visions; as Ananias, (<4410>Acts 9:10), and Peter, (<4410>Acts 10:17) and Paul when a young man, (<4422>Acts 22:17, 26:19) and John, the youngest of the apostles, (<6610>Revelation 1:10) though he was in years, when he saw the visions in the Revelations:

and your old men shall dream dreams; or shall have night visions, as Paul at Troas, (<4409>Acts 16:9) and in his voyage when at sea, (<4423>Acts 27:23). The order of the words is inverted, this last clause stands first in Joel;

perhaps the change is made, because the apostles were young men, on whom the Spirit was poured; and the thing was the more wonderful that so it should be, than if they had been old men.

Ver. 18. *And on my servants, and on my handmaidens*, etc.] In Joel it is only the servants and the handmaids; and which Kimchi interprets of strangers that should stand in the land of Israel, and serve the Israelites. But these phrases do not seem so much to describe the civil state and condition of those persons, as their religious character, being such as were brought, by the power of divine grace, to yield a cheerful obedience to the will of God; though it may also regard the former, and show, that with God there is no distinction and difference of bond or free, of rich or poor; contrary to a maxim of the Jews [f114], that the Shekinah does not dwell but upon a wise man, a mighty man, and a rich man.

I will pour out, in those days, of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy; see the note on the preceding verse, from whence this clause, "and they shall prophesy", is repeated; for it is not in the text in Joel; which is done to point at the end and effect of the Spirit being poured down upon them.

Ver. 19. *And I will show wonders in heaven above*, etc.] The word above is not in Joel, nor in the Syriac version here, as neither the word "beneath", in the next clause. This may refer either to the appearance of angels, and of an extraordinary star at the birth of Christ; or rather to comets and blazing stars, and particularly to that comet which, in the form of a flaming sword, hung over Jerusalem, and the forms of armies in the heavens engaged together, which were seen before, and portended the destruction of that city [f115]:

and signs in the earth beneath; meaning either the miracles done by Christ, and his apostles, on earth; or those surprising events in Judea and in Jerusalem, a flame was seen in the temple, the doors of it opened of themselves, and a voice was heard in it, saying, let us go hence; and an idiot went about several years together, saying, woe to the people, woe to the city, etc.

blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: by blood is meant not the blood of Christ, either his bloody sweat in the garden, or what he shed on the cross, but the blood of the Jews, shed in war, and in internal seditions and murders: and by "fire" is designed not the Holy Ghost, who now appeared in cloven tongues, as of fire, but the conflagration of the city and temple of

Jerusalem, and of many other towns and villages. And by “vapours of smoke”; or, as in the Hebrew text, “pillars of smoke”, ascending in upright columns, like palm trees, are intended literally, the vast quantities of smoke that would arise from such burnings; so that the very heavens would be clouded and darkened with them, and sun and moon appear in the following form.

Ver. 20. *The sun shall be turned into darkness*, etc.] As at the death of Christ, by a total eclipse of it:

and the moon into blood; as at the opening of the sixth seal, (Revelation 6:12)

before that great and notable day of the Lord come; when he shall come in power and great glory, as he did in a few years after this, to take vengeance on the Jews, and destroy their nation, city, and temple; in which there was a display of his greatness, and power, and which was awful and “terrible” to them, as in Joel it is called; (See Gill on “Matthew 24:29”).

Ver. 21. *And it shall come to pass*, etc.] Even at that time, when these signs shall appear, and the destruction is hastening on, that

whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord; shall believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with the heart, and shall confess him with the mouth, and shall worship him in Spirit and in truth, and submit to all his ordinances and commands; for invocation of the Lord includes the whole of worship, internal and external:

shall be saved; or delivered from that temporal destruction which came upon the Jews, as the Christians were by removing from Jerusalem to Pella, as they were directed [f116]; and shall be saved with a spiritual and everlasting salvation by Jesus Christ; (See Gill on “Romans 10:13”).

Ver. 22. *Ye men of Israel hear these words*, etc.] The Arabic version prefaces this passage with these words, “in those days Peter stood and said unto the people”; as if it was not on the same day, and the following oration was a new one, and not a continued discourse with the former; whereas it was delivered at the same time, and is in connection with what goes before. Only the apostle having finished the vindication of his brethren, and the whole society, and set that matter in a clear light; and being willing to take this opportunity of preaching Christ to the Jews, addresses them under another character in a new form of words, though to

the same sense as in (⁴⁰¹⁴Acts 2:14) in order to soften their minds, and raise their attention, and proceeds to describe the person, the subject of his following discourse:

Jesus of Nazareth; first by his name Jesus, which the angel gave him before his birth; and that for this reason, because he is the Saviour of his people from their sins, and which his name signifies; and next by the place, not where he was born, for that was Bethlehem, but where he was educated and brought up, and where he lived the greatest part of his life, Nazareth, a city in Galilee; whence he was so called, generally by way of contempt, and not so much to distinguish him from any of the same name:

a man approved of God; he was truly and really a man, who in his incarnation assumed a true body, and a reasonable soul; but he was not a mere man, and much less a common and ordinary man: he was the famous son of man the Scriptures speak of; the man of God's right hand, the man his fellow, a great, mighty, and wonderful man: "approved by God"; or shown, declared, and demonstrated by him, to be sent by him in human nature, to be the true Messiah and Saviour of the world, who was the chosen of God, loved and honoured by him, whom he sealed, and bore a testimony to; and that not privately, but openly and publicly:

among you; in the face of all the people in Jerusalem, and in the temple, and at the time of public feasts:

by miracles, and wonders, and signs; by dispossessing devils, cleansing lepers, restoring sight to the blind, causing the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk, and by raising the dead:

which God did by him in the midst of you; not but that he did the miracles himself, as and the Son of God; but as he was man, God did them, by his human nature, as the instrument: the meaning is, that his miracles were wrought by a divine power, and not by a diabolical influence, by Beelzebub the prince of devils, as the Pharisees blasphemously said of him; and these were done, not in a corner, but in the midst of them:

as ye yourselves also know; for they must be sensible and convicted in their own consciences, not only that these things were done by him, but that they could not be done by him, unless God was with him, or he was from God; and so were testimonies both of the divine approbation of him, and of his deity and Messiahship.

Ver. 23. *Him being delivered*, etc.] By himself, according to his own will, for he gave, or delivered himself for his people; and by his Father, who spared him not, but delivered him up for us all; and by Judas, one of his disciples, who, for a sum of money, delivered him into the hands of the Jews; and by them he was delivered up to Pilate, the Roman governor; and by him back again to the Jews, and to the soldiers, to crucify him: and all this

by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; God not only foreknew that it would be, but determined that it should be, who does all things after the counsel of his own will; and this for the salvation of his people, and for the glorifying of his divine perfections: though this fixed resolution, settled purpose, and wise determination of God, did not in the least excuse the sin of Judas in betraying him, or of Pilate in condemning him, or of the Jews in crucifying him; nor did it at all infringe the liberty of their wills in acting, who did what they did, not by force, but voluntarily:

ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; they took him in the garden, and bound him, and had him first before the high priest, then before Pilate, the Roman governor, and cried out with one voice, in a most vehement manner, for the crucifying of him, which, at their importunity, was granted, though no fault was found in him; and therefore are justly charged with slaying, or murdering him.

Ver. 24. *Whom God raised up*, etc.] From the dead; for though his life was taken away by men, he was raised to life again by God the Father, to whom the resurrection of Christ is generally ascribed, though not to the exclusion of Christ himself, and the blessed Spirit; and this being what the apostles were witnesses of, and the Jews endeavoured to stifle as much as they could, it being the sign Christ gave them of the truth of his Messiahship; and this being also a fundamental article of the Christian religion, the apostle enlarges upon it:

having loosed the pains of death; this may be understood either of what Christ had done for his people by dying for them; he had abolished death; he had took away its sting, and delivered them from the curse of it, having fulfilled the law, satisfied justice, and made full atonement for their sin; so that though they die, death is not a penal evil to them, nor shall they always continue under the power of it: or of what God did in raising Christ from the dead; he delivered him from the power of death, by which he was held in the grave, and which is expressed by a word which signifies pains and

sorrows, even those of a woman in travail; which though he felt not now, he had gone through them; his low state in the grave was the effect of them; and these are said to be loosed when he was raised up, he being so entirely delivered from them, as that they should never come upon him more: and it is to be observed, that the same word in the Hebrew language, and so in the Chaldee and Syriac, in which Peter might speak, signifies both cords and sorrows; and we often read in Talmudic and Rabbinic[f117] writings, of jyçm lç wlbj, "the sorrows", or "pains" of the Messiah. The death which Christ died, being the death of the cross, was a very painful one: he endured great pains in his body, smote with rods, and buffeted with the hands of men; by being scourged and whipped, and having a crown of thorns platted on his head; but the pains of the cross were still greater, his body being stretched out upon it, and fastened to it by nails drove through his hands and feet, and then reared up, and jogged in the earth, where he hung upon it in extreme agony, till he expired: and these pains he endured, not through want of love to him in his Father, who, as he does not willingly grieve and afflict the children of men, so neither would he his own Son; nor was it on account of any sin of his, for he knew none, nor did he commit any; but he was wounded, and bruised, and endured these sorrows and pains for the sins of his people: as he was their surety, it was necessary he should die, because the wages of sin is death, and the justice and veracity of God required it; and it was proper he should die the painful death of the cross, because of the types and prophecies of it, and chiefly that he might appear to be made a curse for his people: though more must be meant here than the pains he endured in the moment and article of death, since they ceased at death, and he was then freed from them; whereas the text speaks of a loosing him from them at his resurrection, which supposes that they continued on him until that time; wherefore these pains of death also signify the power and dominion death had over him, and continued to have over him in the grave; with the cords of which he was bound and held, till he was loosed by raising him from the dead. Dr. Goodwin is of opinion, that these words are to be understood, not of the resurrection of Christ's body from the pains and power of death, but at least chiefly of the recovery and revival of his soul from those spiritual agonies which attended him, and from which he was loosed and delivered before his death; and the rather, because as before observed, at death the pains of it are gone, the bitterness of it is over, and nothing is felt in the grave; besides, the word here used signifies the pains of a woman in travail, (1 Thessalonians 5:3) and seems best to agree with those inward

sufferings of Christ, which are called “the travail of his soul”, (<235311>Isaiah 53:11) and which, like the pangs of a woman in labour, came upon him gradually: four or five days before his death he said, “now is my soul troubled”, (<431227>John 12:27). The night in which he was betrayed, when he came into the garden, he began to be sorrowful, and heavy, and sore amazed; and at length he breaks out, and says, “my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death”, (<401637>Matthew 26:37,38) and after some time his pains increase, and being in agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood, (<422244>Luke 22:44) but the sharpest pains were yet to come, and which he endured when on the cross, being forsaken by his God and Father, (<401746>Matthew 27:46) and which arose partly from the sins of his people, the filth and guilt of them laid upon him, which must be very distressing to his pure and holy mind; and from the wrath of God, and curse of the law, which he sustained as the punishment for them; and it was necessary he should bear the whole punishment due to sin, the punishment of sense, or feel the wrath of God, and the strokes of divine justice, and the punishment of loss, or be deprived of the divine presence; and these sorrows of soul may be well called the pains or sorrows of death, because they were unto death, and issued in it; a corporeal death followed upon them; and when he was in the garden, and on the cross, it might be truly said, “the sorrows of death compassed him about”, (<191804>Psalm 18:4) but from these he was loosed just before his death, when he said, “it is finished”; the darkness was over; the light of God’s countenance broke out upon him; he heard his cry, and helped him in the acceptable time, in the day of salvation; his anger, as a judge, was turned away from him, justice being entirely satisfied; and therefore it was not possible he should be held any longer with these cords and sorrows of death; for he being an infinite person, was able to bear all the wrath of God at once, which was due to sin, and therefore did not bring on him an eternal death as on the wicked, he sustaining and satisfying for all at once; and, like another Samson, broke asunder these cords like threads, and was loosed from them. But after all, though these are very great truths; yet, according to the order in which these words lie, being placed after the account of the crucifixion and death of Christ, they seem rather to respect the resurrection of his body, and the loosing it from the power and dominion of death; and in such sense as never to return to it, or any more feel the pains of it. One of Stephen’s copies reads, “the pains of Hades”, or the invisible state; and the Vulgate Latin version, “the pains of hell”; as in (<191805>Psalm 18:5) where the grave is meant; and the Syriac version,

hylbj, “the pains”, or “cords of the grave”: the word “cords”, or “bands”, best agrees with the word “loosing”; and the Ethiopic version renders it, “the bands of death”.

Because it was not possible he should be holden of it: of death, and under the power of it; partly, because of the power and dignity of his person, as the Son of God, he being still the Prince of life, and who by dying abolished death, and him that had the power of it; and partly, because as the surety of his people, he had made full satisfaction for sin, and had brought in an everlasting righteousness, and therefore ought in justice to be discharged, and detained a prisoner no longer; as also because of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning his resurrection, which must be fulfilled, as follows.

Ver. 25. *For David speaketh concerning him*, etc.] The Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, in (<19608>Psalm 16:8-11). The whole psalm belongs to the Messiah, and everything concerning the person in it agrees with him; such as his trust in God, (<19601>Psalm 16:1) as he was man and Mediator; his very great regard to the saints, and delight in them, (<19602>Psalm 16:2,3) his disregard to others who were hastening after another God, or another Saviour, whose sacrifices, as an high priest, he would not offer up, nor make intercession for them, (<19604>Psalm 16:4) his exceeding great satisfaction in having the God of Israel for his portion, and in having his lot cast among his peculiar people, who were a delightful inheritance to him, (<19605>Psalm 16:5,6) his thankfulness for advice and direction in the time of his sorrows and sufferings; and his dependence on the almighty power of God to support and protect him, (<19607>Psalm 16:7,8) and the joy and comfort he was filled with in the view of his resurrection from the dead, and his enjoyment of the heavenly glory, (<19609>Psalm 16:9-11),

I foresaw the Lord always before my face; Christ always had Jehovah in view throughout the whole of his life; and in his last moments he had respect unto the glory of his perfections, as the ultimate end of his obedience and sufferings; and to his purposes, council, and covenant, which were to be accomplished by him; and to his will and command in preaching the Gospel, working miracles, going about to do good, in obeying the precept, and bearing the penalty of the law; as well as to his promises, and his power to assist, support, and preserve him, as man and Mediator:

for he is on my right hand; which expresses his nearness to him, his presence with him, his readiness to assist him, and his protection of him; as if he was his second that stood by him, to take his part, and, if need be, to take up his cause, and defend him from his enemies; (see <19A931>Psalm 109:31, 110:5)

that I should not be moved; from his station, place, and duty; from the cause he was engaged in, so as to relinquish it; or with the fear of men, or fury of devils, or wrath of God, whilst he was doing and suffering, according to the will of God.

Ver. 26. *Therefore did my heart rejoice*, etc.] Because that he had always the truth, faithfulness, and power of God in his view, and the presence and protection of God with him; and which are sufficient to make the hearts of his people, as well as of him, to rejoice:

and my tongue was glad: in the Hebrew text it is, “my glory”; and so the Syriac version renders it here; which Kimchi explains of the soul, because that is the glory of the body; but our apostle rightly interprets it of the tongue, which is so called, (<19B012>Psalm 30:12) and (<19570B>Psalm 57:8) and (<19A801>Psalm 108:1) because it is both the glory of man, for that being endowed with the faculty of speaking, gives him a glory above the brute creatures; and because it is that by which he glorifies God, by ascribing greatness to him, speaking of his marvellous works, and singing his praises, as Christ did, in the great congregation, among his apostles, a little before his death.

Moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope, or “safely”; meaning, that his body should lie quietly in the grave, as in its resting place from all toil and labour, pains and sorrows, and be secure from worms, or any corruption. Or this may be understood of his person being in a quiet, firm, and full hope of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal life and glory.

Ver. 27. *Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, etc.] This is an apostrophe, or an address to his Father, who he believed would not leave his soul, as separate from his body, in Hades, in the invisible world of souls, in the place where the souls of departed saints are, but would quickly return it to its body, and reunite them; or else, that he would not leave his dead body, for so çpn sometimes signifies; (see <031928>Leviticus 19:28, 21:1 <041910>Numbers 9:10, 19:11,13) in the grave; which is no unusual sense of

lwaç; (see <014238>Genesis 42:38, <233818>Isaiah 38:18) that is, so long as to be corrupted and putrefy, as the next clause shows:

neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. The character of an "Holy One" well agrees with Christ, both as God, or with respect to his divine nature, holiness being a perfection in it, and in which he is glorious; and as man, he being holy in his nature, harmless in his life and conversation: all his doctrines were pure and holy, and so were all his works; and all his administrations in the discharge of every of his office; and he is the efficient cause and lain of all the holiness of his people; they are sanctified in him, and by him, and have all their sanctification from him. The word may be rendered, "thy merciful", or "bountiful one"; and such Christ is, a merciful, as well as faithful high priest; and who has shown great compassion both to the bodies and souls of men, and has been very beneficent and liberal in the distributions of his grace and goodness. Now, though he died, and was laid in the grave, and buried, yet God would not suffer him to lie there so long as to be corrupted and putrefied, which is the sense of seeing corruption: and so the Jews themselves explain the last clause of the preceding verse, in connection with this, "my flesh shall rest in hope", that no worm or maggot should have power over it, or corrupt it.

> "Seven fathers (they say [f118]) dwell in eternal glory, and there is no h[lwtw hmr, "worm or maggot", rules over them; and these are they, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and Aaron, and Amram their father; and there are that say also David, as it is said, (<191601>Psalm 16:1-11), "therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth, my flesh also shall rest in hope"."

And which sense also is mentioned by one of their commentators of note [f119], who thus paraphrases the words:

> "whilst I am alive it shall rest safely, for thou wilt deliver me from all hurt; and in the mystical sense, or according to the Midrash, after death; intimating, that no maggot or worm should have power over him;"

which was not true of David, but is of the Messiah.

Ver. 28. *Thou hast made known to me the ways of life*, etc.] That is, thou hast raised me from the dead. When God raised Christ from the dead, he showed him, or made him to know experimentally the way of life, or the

way of the resurrection from death to life; and this path of life, or of the resurrection to an immortal and eternal life, was first shown to Christ, who is the first fruits of them that slept, and the first begotten from the dead.

Thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance; or glorious presence, in which is fulness of joy; which Christ, as man, is in, and fully possessed of, being exalted at the right hand of God, and crowned with glory and honour, and has all the joy that was set before him in his sufferings and death.

Ver. 29. *Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you*, etc.] The apostle calls the Jews, brethren, whom he before only styled men of Judea, and men of Israel, because they were his brethren according to the flesh, as many of them afterwards were in a spiritual relation; and the rather he adds this affectionate appellation to soften their minds, and prepare them to receive the account he was about to give of David, and of his prophecy of the Messiah, and his resurrection; in which he used much freedom of speech, consistent with truth, good sense, and strong reasoning; which he thought might be allowed to take, and they would not be displeased at, in discoursing to them

of the patriarch David; who was a “head of the fathers”, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; a prince of the tribes of Israel; one of the greatest kings the tribes of Israel ever had; and therefore this name well becomes him; though it is more commonly given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the heads of the twelve tribes:

that he is both dead, and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day; it is a plain case, and a certain matter of fact, which nobody disputes or denies, that David really died, and was laid in the grave, and that his monument, or tomb, was still extant, so that he was not risen from the dead; and therefore the above citation could not respect him, but another, even the Messiah, and had been literally fulfilled in Jesus. The Jews say [f120], that David died on the day of Pentecost; which was the very day on which Peter was now preaching; he was buried in Jerusalem, and his sepulchral monument was in being when Peter said these words. And Josephus relates [f121], that the sepulchre of David was opened by Hyrcanus, who took out of it three thousand talents; and that it was afterwards opened by Herod [f122]: which, if true, may serve to render credible what Peter says concerning its continuance to that day. Though it may be questioned whether any such treasure was ever in it, or taken out of it; and still less credible is the

account which R. Benjamin [f123] gives of two men in his time, who, under the wall of Zion, found a cave, which led them to a large palace built on pillars of marble, and covered with gold and silver; and within it was a table, and a golden sceptre, and a crown of gold; and this, says the author, was the sepulchre of David, king of Israel.

Ver. 30. *Therefore being a prophet*, etc.] Who could foretell things to come, as he did many things concerning the sufferings and death of Christ, and the circumstances attending it, concerning his resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God. So the title of his "Psalms", in the Syriac version, runs thus; the "Book of the Psalms of David, King and Prophet": and in the Arabic version, "the First Book of the Psalms of David the Prophet, King of the Children of Israel". Though the Jews [f124] will not allow him, nor Solomon, nor Daniel, to be strictly and properly prophets, they make a difference between prophecy, and the Holy Spirit. They own, that the book of Psalms was written under the influence of the Holy Spirit, but not by prophecy; and therefore they place it among the Hagiographa, or holy writings, but not among the Prophets: though after all, Kimchi allows David to be a prophet, since he is called a man of God; for he says this name is not said of any but aybn l[, "of a prophet" [f125]; and Peter is right in calling him so:

and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him; as he did in (<19D21>Psalm 132:11).

that of the fruit of his loins; of one that should be of his seed, that should spring from him, even the Virgin Mary, who was of the house and lineage of David:

according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ; would send him forth, according to the human nature; for this phrase respects not his resurrection from the dead, but his incarnation or exhibition in the flesh, as in (<44326>Acts 3:26, 13:23). This clause is wanting in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and in the Alexandrian copy, and should be read in a parenthesis; since it is not in the text in (<19D21>Psalm 132:11).

to sit on his throne; on the throne of David his father; (See Gill on "<42032>Luke 1:32").

Ver. 31. *He seeing this before*, etc.] Or by a spirit of prophecy foreseeing it, that according to God's promise and oath, the Messiah would be raised

up, and spring from his seed; and also by the same Spirit foresaw that he would suffer and die, and be laid in the grave, the pit of corruption:

spake of the resurrection of Christ; from the dead, to the sense of the following words, in (<19610>Psalm 16:10).

that his soul was not left in hell: neither his separate soul in Hades, nor his body in the grave;

neither his flesh did see corruption; or his body, or his "carcass", as the Syriac version renders it, did not lie so long in the grave as to rot and putrefy.

Ver. 32. *This Jesus hath God raised up*, etc.] That is, from the dead,

whereof we are all witnesses; namely, of his resurrection, they having seen him, and heard him, and ate, and drank, and conversed with him since his resurrection; and which was true, not of the twelve apostles only, but of the whole company: or "we are all his witnesses"; either of God, who raised Christ from the dead; or of Christ who was raised by him; and indeed, they bore testimony to the whole of this, to Christ, and to his resurrection, and to its being done by God the Father.

Ver. 33. *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted*, etc.] After his resurrection he ascended to heaven, and was exalted in human nature; "to the right hand of God", as the Ethiopic version; and the Arabic version used by Deuteronomy Dieu read; an honour that never was conferred on any creature, angels or men, besides: or he was exalted and raised to the high honour and dignity of a Prince and Saviour, of Lord, Head, and King, so as to have a name, dominion, and authority over all, by the mighty power of God, which is sometimes called his right hand; (see <19815>Psalm 118:15,16).

and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost; which the Father had promised to pour forth in the last days, (<23803>Isaiah 44:3, <29228>Joel 2:28) and which Christ had promised to send from the Father, (<43416>John 14:16,26, 15:26, 16:7) and which, upon his ascension and exaltation, he received as Mediator from him; (see <19818>Psalm 68:18) compared with (<49008>Ephesians 4:8)

he hath shed forth this; this Holy Spirit, or promised Spirit, these gifts of his; and so the Syriac version renders it, "he hath shed forth this gift";

which expresses both the plenty and abundance of the gifts bestowed, and the liberality of Christ in the donation of them: it is added,

which ye now see and hear; meaning the cloven tongues, as of fire, which they saw sitting on the disciples, and the various languages which they heard them speak. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word “now”: and the Syriac, in the room of it, reads, “behold”.

Ver. 34. *For David is not ascended into the heavens*, etc.] In his body, that being still in the grave, in his sepulchre, which remained to that day, though in his soul he was ascended to heaven; his Spirit had returned to God that gave it, and was among the spirits of just men made perfect: but he saith himself, in (<19B001>Psalm 110:1) “the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand”; (See Gill on “<402244>Matthew 22:44”).

Ver. 35. *Until I make thy foes thy footstool*.] (See Gill on “<402244>Matthew 22:44”).

Ver. 36. *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly*, etc.] “With certain knowledge”, as the Arabic version renders it; with full assurance of it: this is a case that is plain and clear, a matter of fact that may be depended on; which all the people of Israel, called “the house of Israel”, a phrase frequently used of that people in the Old Testament, which every individual of that body of men might be assured of:

that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ; that is, that God the Father had not only constituted and appointed Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah, the Lord of lords, and King of kings, and had invested him with that office, power, and authority, but he had made him manifest to be so by the Holy Spirit which he had received, and now poured forth the same, and not another; even him whom they had rejected with so much contempt; whom they had treated in such a scornful and brutish manner; had spit upon, buffeted, and scourged, and at last crucified; and yet, now, even he had all power in heaven, and in earth, given him, and was exalted above every name; that in his name every knee should bow. The phrase of “making a Messiah”, or “Christ”, is used in the Talmudic writings[f126].

> “The holy blessed God sought to make Hezekiah the Messiah, or Christ, and Sennacherib Gog and Magog; the property or attribute of justice said before the holy blessed God, Lord of the world, and

what was David, the king of Israel, who said so many songs and hymns before thee, and thou didst not make him Christ? Hezekiah, for whom thou hast done all these wonders, and he hath not said a song before thee, wilt thou make him the Messiah, or Christ? wherefore his mouth was shut up; and the earth opened, and said a song before him; Lord of the world, I have said a song before thee, for this righteous one, jyçm whç[w, and he made him Messiah, or Christ."

Ver. 37. *Now when they heard this*, etc.] Or "him", as the Arabic version; that is, Peter speaking these things, describing the character of Jesus of Nazareth; opening the prophecies concerning him; asserting his resurrection from the dead, and exaltation at the right hand of God; ascribing this wonderful affair, of speaking with divers tongues, to his effusion of the Spirit; and charging them home with the iniquity of crucifying him:

they were pricked in their hearts; the word of God entered into them, and was as a sharp sword in them, which cut and laid open their hearts, and the sin and wickedness of them; they saw themselves guilty of the crime laid to their charge, and were filled with remorse of conscience for it; they felt pain at their hearts, and much uneasiness, and were seized with horror and trembling; they were wounded in their spirits, being hewn and cut down by the prophets and apostles of the Lord, and slain by the words of his mouth; they were as dead men in their own apprehension; and indeed, a prick, a cut, or wound in the heart is mortal:

and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do? the persons they before mocked at, they are glad to advise with, what should be done in this their sad and wretched case; what they should do to obtain the favour of God, the forgiveness of their sins, and everlasting salvation. Convinced, awakened sinners, are generally at first upon a covenant of works; are for doing something to atone for their past crimes, to set themselves right in the sight of God, to ingratiate themselves into his favour, and procure the pardon of their sins, and the inheritance of eternal life. And they seem also to be at a loss about the way of salvation, what is to be done to attain it, or how, and by what means it is to be come at; and are almost ready to despair of it, their sin appearing in so dreadful a light, and attended with such aggravating circumstances.

Beza's ancient copy reads, "some of them said to Peter", etc. not all that heard, but those that were pricked to the heart.

Ver. 38. *Then Peter said unto them*, etc.] Being the mouth of the apostles, and being ready to give advice, and speak a word of comfort to their distressed minds:

repent: change your minds, entertain other thoughts, and a different opinion of Jesus of Nazareth, than you have done; consider him, and believe in him, as the true Messiah and Saviour of the world; look upon him, not any more as an impostor, and a blasphemer, but as sent of God, and the only Redeemer of Israel; change your voice and way of speaking of him, and your conduct towards his disciples and followers; a change of mind will produce a change of actions in life and conversation: bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and make an open and hearty profession of repentance for this your sin. And this the apostle said, to distinguish between a legal and an evangelical repentance; the former is expressed in their being pricked to the heart, on which they were not to depend; the latter he was desirous they might have, and show forth; which springs from the love of God, is attended with views, or at least hopes of pardoning grace and mercy, and with faith in Christ Jesus: it lies in a true sight and sense of sin, under the illuminations and convictions of the Spirit of God; in a sorrow for it, after a godly sort, and because it is committed against a God of love, grace, and mercy, and it shows itself in loathing sin, and in shame for it, in an ingenuous acknowledgement of it, and in forsaking it: and this is moreover urged, to show the necessity of it, as to salvation, for such that God would not have perish, he will have come to repentance; so to their admission to the ordinance of baptism, to which repentance is a pre-requisite; and to which the apostle next advises:

and be baptized everyone of you; that repents and believes; that is, in water, in which John administered the ordinance of baptism; in which Christ himself was baptized, and in which the apostles of Christ administered it; in this Philip baptized the eunuch; and in this were the persons baptized that were converted in Cornelius's house; and it is distinguished from the baptism of the Spirit, or with fire, the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit mentioned in the last clause of this verse; and which ordinance of water baptism was administered by immersion, as the places, Jordan and Aenon, where John performed it, and the instances of it particularly in Christ, and in the eunuch, and the end of it, which is to

represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, as well as the primary signification of the word, show. And this is to be done,

in the name of Jesus Christ; not to the exclusion of the Father, and of the Spirit, in whose name also this ordinance is to be administered, (<4019>Matthew 28:19) but the name of Jesus Christ is particularly mentioned, because of these Jews, who had before rejected and denied him as the Messiah; but now, upon their repentance and faith, they are to be baptized in his name, by his authority, according to his command; professing their faith in him, devoting themselves to him, and calling on his name. The end for which this was to be submitted to, is,

for the remission of sins; not that forgiveness of sin could be procured either by repentance, or by baptism; for this is only obtained by the blood of Christ; but the apostle advises these awakened, sensible, repenting, and believing souls, to submit to baptism, that by it their faith might be led to Christ, who suffered and died for their sins, who left them buried in his grave, and who rose again for their justification from them; all which is, in a most lively manner, represented in the ordinance of baptism by immersion: the encouragement to it follows,

and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: not the grace of the Spirit, as a regenerator and sanctifier; for that they had already; and is necessary, as previous to baptism; unless it should mean confirmation of that grace, and stability in it, as it appears from (<4042>Acts 2:42) they afterwards had; but rather the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, particularly the gift of speaking with tongues, which Christ had received from the Father, and had now shed on his apostles; (see <4405>Acts 19:5-6).

Ver. 39 *For the promise is unto you*, etc.] Either of the Messiah, and salvation by him, which was particularly given forth to the people of the Jews; or of the remission of sins, which was a branch of the covenant made with the house of Israel, in a spiritual sense, even the whole household of God; or of the pouring forth of the Spirit: and this promise was not only to them, but to theirs, even to as many of them as belonged to the election of grace; and whom the Lord their God would effectually call by his grace, as the last and limiting clause of the text, and which is to be connected with every part of it, shows:

and to your children: this is the rather mentioned, because these awakened, and converted souls, were not only in great concern about themselves, for

their sin of crucifying Christ, but were in great distress about their children, on whom they had imprecated the guilt of Christ's blood, as upon themselves; the thought of which cut them to the heart, and made their hearts bleed, within them: wherefore to relieve them, and administer comfort to them in this their distress, the apostle informs them, that the promise of Christ, and of his grace, was not only to them, who were now called, but it was also to their children; to as many of them as the Lord God should call; and who are the children of the promise, which all the children of the flesh were not, (<4906>Romans 9:6) and to these the promise should be applied, notwithstanding this dreadful imprecation of theirs:

and to all that are afar off; either in place, as those that were dispersed, among the several nations of the world; and so carried in it a comfortable aspect on the multitude of Jews, that were of every nation under heaven; or in time, who should live in ages to come; or else the Gentiles are intended, who were afar off from God and Christ, and the way of life and salvation by him; (see <4912>Ephesians 2:12-13,17) even as many as the Lord our God shall call: not externally only, by the ministry of the word, but internally, by his grace and Spirit; with that calling, which is according to the purpose and grace of God, and is inseparably connected with eternal glory; the promise is to all such, and is made good to all such, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, fathers, or children, greater or lesser sinners. The Syriac version reads, "whom God himself shall call".

Ver. 40. *And with many other words did he testify and exhort*, etc.] For Luke does not give the sermons of the apostles at length, but a compendium, or specimen of them, and some of the more remarkable things in them; and which, it seems, lay partly in testifying concerning Christ, his person, office, grace, righteousness, and salvation; and against sins and errors, and false doctrine; and in "exhorting" to the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty; or in comforting distressed minds: for the word used signifies to comfort as well as to exhort; though it seems to have the latter sense here, since it follows:

saying, save yourselves from this untoward generation: meaning, the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, and elders of the people, chiefly, who were a perverse generation of men; and upon whom, for their impenitence and unbelief, for their rejection of the Messiah, and their evil treatment of him, wrath and ruin would come upon them, to the uttermost, very quickly; wherefore the apostle exhorts to separate from them, and not partake of

their sins, lest they should also of their plagues; but come out from among them, and so, in a temporal sense, save themselves from the destruction that would quickly come on their nation, city, and temple; and so the Arabic version renders it, “escape from this rough generation”.

Ver. 41. *Then they that gladly received his word*, etc.] The Syriac version adds, “and believed”; what Peter said concerning repentance and baptism, and especially concerning remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; and concerning the promise of Christ, and salvation by him, of the pardon of sin, and of the Holy Spirit; which doctrine they received with great joy and gladness, it being suitable to their case; and very “readily”, and “willingly”, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; for they were now made a willing people in the day of God’s power, and now that promise, or prophecy, in (<19B003>Psalm 110:3) had a remarkable accomplishment; these converts were the dew of Christ’s youth, as well as instances of his powerful and efficacious grace: not all that heard this sermon of Peter’s received his doctrine in this manner, only some; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions render the words, “and some of them readily received”, etc. which shows the distinguishing grace of God in this instance. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the word “gladly”, which should not be omitted: and as soon as they had received the word, and were comforted by it, they

were baptized; in water, by immersion, for which there was great conveniency in Jerusalem, and in the temple, where the apostles now were: in the city of Jerusalem, in private houses, they had their baths for purifications, by immersion, as in the case of menstruous, gonorrhoeas, and other defilements, by touching unclean persons, and things, which were very frequent; so that a digger of cisterns, for such uses, and others, was a business in Jerusalem.

> “Says Simeon Sicana[f127], who was a digger of cisterns, ditches, and caves, in Jerusalem, to R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, I am as great a man as thou art; he made answer to him, why? (or your reason for it;) he replied to him, because I am employed in the necessary affairs of many, (or of the public,) as you are; for says he, if a man comes to you for judgment, or to ask a question, you say to him, drink out of this cistern, whose waters are pure, and cold; or, if a woman asks thee concerning her monstrous, you say to her, ylbj, dip in this cistern, whose waters purify.”

And in the temple there was an apartment, called hlybj tyb, "the dipping place", or "room", where the high priest dipped himself on the day of atonement [f128]: and besides, there were ten lavers of brass, made by Solomon; and every laver held forty baths of water, and each was four cubits broad and long, sufficient for immersion of the whole body of a man; and to these Herbanus [f129] the Jew seems to have respect, when he says, that in the outer part of Solomon's temple, there were λουτηρης, "lavers", in every side, (or all around,) which were free, or open, for the use of all; to which, he thinks, the prophet Isaiah has respect, in (<230116>Isaiah 1:16). Those were for the priests, both to wash their hands and feet at, and also to wash the burnt offerings; (see <023018>Exodus 30:18-19 <140406>2 Chronicles 4:6) [f130]: and who were likewise obliged, very often, to bathe, or dip their whole bodies in water; for if a priest went out of the temple for a little while to speak with a friend, hlybj ^w[j, "he was obliged to dipping": and if he nodded, he was obliged to wash his hands and his feet; but if he slept, he was obliged to dip himself; yea, a man might not go into the court, or to service, even though he was clean, lbwj awhç d[, "until he dip himself" [f131]. Add to this, that there was the molten sea also for the priests to wash in, (<140406>2 Chronicles 4:6) which was done by immersion; on which one of the Jewish commentators [f132] has these words:

> "the sea was tlybjl, "for the dipping" of the priests; for in the midst of it, they dipped themselves from their uncleanness; but in the Jerusalem Talmud [f133] there is an objection, is it not a vessel? as if it was said, how can they "dip" in it, for is it not a vessel? and there is no "dipping" in vessels: R. Joshua ben Levi replied, a pipe of water was laid to it from the fountain of Etam, and the feet of the oxen, (which were under the molten sea,) were open at the pomegranates; so that it was as if it was from under the earth, and the waters came to it, and entered, and ascended, by the way of the feet of the oxen, which were open beneath them, and bored."

The reason of the objection is, because bathing, or dipping for purification, was not made in vessels, but in gatherings, or pools of water upon the ground; and which objection is removed, by observing, that a pipe was laid from the fountain of Etam, which supplied it with spring, or running water; so that the molten sea, and the lavers, were looked upon all one as pools of water, or springs of water, and as fit for immersion. This sea was ten cubits from brim to brim, and five cubits high, and held two thousand baths, (<110723>1

Kings 7:23,26). Yea, three thousand, as in (14065 2 Chronicles 6:5) and every laver held forty baths, (11038 1 Kings 7:38) and every bath held four gallons and a half, and between seven and eight gallons of wine measure. And it may be observed, that there were also in Jerusalem the pool of Bethesda, into which persons went down at certain times, (43001 John 5:1) and the pool of Siloam, where persons bathed, and dipped themselves, on certain occasions; *See Gill "43007 John 9:7"*. So that there were conveniences enough for baptism by immersion in this place: and the same day there were added; unto them, or to the church, as in (44047 Acts 2:47) the whole company of the hundred and twenty disciples; the Arabic version supplies, "among the believers": the number of those, that were added to them, were about three thousand souls; or persons, men, and women; and their number is no objection to their being baptized by immersion. As for convenient places to baptize in, there were enough, as we have seen already; and there were administrators sufficient for this work: had there been no more than the twelve apostles, it was but two hundred and fifty men apiece; and there were twelve separate places in the temple, where they might be baptizing at the same time; there were the ten lavers, the molten sea, and the dipping room, so that the work was not so very heavy nor difficult; but besides, there were seventy disciples, who, as they were preachers of the word, were administrators of this ordinance; and supposing them all employed, as they might be, at the same time, either in the temple, or at the pools in Jerusalem, or at the baths, and cisterns, in private houses; they would not have more than six or seven and thirty persons apiece to baptize; and there was time enough in the day for it; it was but the third hour, or nine o'clock in the morning, when Peter began his sermon; and allowing an hour for that, there were eight hours more in the day, according to the Jewish reckoning of twelve hours in a day; so that the business might be done without any hurry, or great fatigue; and indeed, the objection, as to time, would equally lie against sprinkling, or pouring, as dipping; at least the difference is very inconsiderable; for the same form of words must be pronounced in administering the ordinance by the one, as by the other; and a person being ready, is very near as soon dipped into water, as water can be taken, and sprinkled, or poured on the face. Besides, after all, though these persons were added to the church the same day, it does not necessarily follow from the text, that they were all baptized in one day; the words do not oblige us to such a sense: I own, I am of opinion, that they were all baptized in one day; and that on the same day they were baptized, they were joined to the church; and that day was the day of Pentecost, the

day on which the law was given on Mount Sinai, and on which now the Gospel was published to men of all nations under the heavens; the day on which the firstfruits were offered to the Lord, and on which now the firstfruits of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ were brought in to him. Let the order be observed, they were first baptized, and then added to the church.

Ver. 42. *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine*, etc.] And which is the same with the doctrine of Christ, of which he is the author, preacher, and subject; the substance of which is peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by him: this the apostles received from Christ, and constantly taught in their ministry; for which reason, it is called theirs; and this these young converts had embraced gladly; and were not only believers of it, but persevering believers; they were constant hearers of it; they continually attended on the ministry of the apostles, and held fast the form of sound words they had received from them; and stood fast in the faith of the Gospel, notwithstanding all the reproach cast upon it, and the afflictions they endured for it:

and fellowship; with the apostles and other saints, in spiritual conversation with them, in private, and in communion with them at the Lord's table in public: and so the Vulgate Latin reads this clause, in connection with the next, thus, "in the communication of breaking of bread"; to which agrees the Syriac version, and "they communicated in prayer, and in breaking of the eucharist"; though it seems better to understand this of a distinct branch of fellowship, or communication, and may rather intend liberality and beneficence, in which sense it is used, (Romans 15:26 2 Corinthians 8:9 Hebrews 13:16) and so expresses their constant contributions towards the support of the apostles, as ministers of the word and of the poor members of the church; a duty which, in both its branches, is incumbent on those who have it in their power to perform, and which these first Christians were remarkable for:

and in breaking of bread; or "of the eucharist": as the Syriac version renders it, which was an usual name with the ancients for the Lord's supper; and which seems to be intended here, and not eating common bread, or a common meal; seeing it is here mentioned with religious exercises: and though the Jews used to begin their meals with breaking of bread, yet the whole repast, or meal, is never by them called by that name; and for what reason these saints should be commended for keeping their

common meals, cannot be said, unless to show their sociableness, agreement, and brotherly love in eating together; and which is not hinted at here, but in (<4046>Acts 2:46) where it is mentioned as something distinct from this: it seems rather therefore to design, that they were constant at the Lord's table, kept their places there, and duly attended whenever the ordinance was administered:

and in prayers: not only in their closets, and in their families, but in the church; in the public prayers of the church, they observed all opportunities of this kind, and gladly embraced them.

Ver. 43. *And fear came upon every soul*, etc.] Upon every inhabitant of Jerusalem, at least upon a great many of them; and upon all, or the greater part of them that saw, and heard these things; that heard the apostles speak with divers tongues, and Peter preach in the awful manner he did, and saw so many thousands at once embrace the Gospel of Christ, and profess his name, when it now, by reason of his crucifixion but a few weeks ago, lay under the greatest reproach and scandal; and such a number baptized in water; and also because of the miracles done by the apostles, after mentioned. The Ethiopic version is very odd, "and all animals feared the apostles": as if the very brute creatures stood in awe of them:

and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles: the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions add, "in Jerusalem"; such as casting out devils, healing the sick, causing the lame to walk, etc. which were promised by Christ should be done by them; and which were necessary for the confirmation of the Gospel, and of the apostles' mission to preach it. The Vulgate Latin version adds another clause, much like the first part of the text, "and great fear was upon all": and the Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, "in Jerusalem, there was great fear upon all."

Ver. 44. *And all that believed were together*, etc.] Not in one place, for no one house could hold them all, their number was now so large; but they "agreed together", as the Arabic version renders it: all these believers were of one mind and judgment, as to doctrines, they agreed in their sentiments and principles of religion; and they were of one heart and soul, were cordially affected to each other, and mutually were assisting to one another in temporals, as well as in spirituals:

and had all things common: that is, their worldly goods, their possessions and estates; no man called anything peculiarly his own; and whatever he

had, his brother was welcome to, and might as freely take, and use it, as if it was his own.

Ver. 45. *And sold their possessions and goods*. etc.] Their houses and lands, their fields and vineyards, their goods, moveable or immoveable:

and parted them to all men; that were of their society, not to others:

as every man had need: the rich sold their estates, and divided them among the poor, or gave them such a portion thereof as their present exigencies required. This was done by Jews, and by Jews only; who, when they embraced the Gospel of Christ, were informed that the destruction of their city, and nation, was at hand; and therefore they sold their estates before hand, and put them to this use; which was necessary to be done, both for the support of the Gospel in Judea, and for the carrying and spreading of it among the Gentiles: but is not to be drawn into a precedent, or an example in after times; nor is ever any such thing proposed to the Christian churches, or exhorted to by any of the apostles.

Ver. 46. *And they continued daily with one accord in the temple*, etc.] Every day they went up to the temple, at the time of prayer, or whenever any religious service was to be performed; this was their constant practice, and in this they agreed:

and breaking bread from house to house; either administering the Lord's supper in private houses, as the Jews kept their passover, sometimes administering it at one house, and sometimes at another; or because their number was so large, that one house could not hold them, they divided themselves into lesser bodies; and some met, and had the ordinance administered to them in one house, and some in another: or this may be understood of their common meals, which they ate together at one another's houses in great love and friendship; for

they did eat their meat with gladness; with great thankfulness to the God of their mercies for their daily food, acknowledging that all came from him, and that they were undeserving of it, and with much cheerfulness and affability one among another, without murmuring and repining at their lot, or envying each other, or grudging what each other partook of:

and singleness of heart; without deceit and hypocrisy; either in their thanksgivings to God, or in their welcome and entertainment of each other; and with great sincerity, openness, and frankness before God, and one

another. The Syriac version joins this clause with the beginning of the next verse, “with singleness of heart, praising God”.

Ver. 47. *Praising God*, etc.] Not only for their temporal mercies and enjoyments of life, which they partook of in so delightful and comfortable a manner; but for their spiritual mercies, that the Lord had been pleased to call them by his grace, and reveal Christ to them, and pardon them who had been such vile sinners, give them a name, and a place in his house, and favour them with the ordinances of it, and such agreeable and delightful company as the saints were, they had fellowship with:

having favour with all the people; they not only behaved with such true and sincere love towards one another in their church state, but with so much wisdom, courteousness, and affability towards them that were without, and walked so becoming the profession they made, that they gained the good will of the generality of the people:

and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved: partly by the conversation of these young converts, and chiefly by the ministry of the word, many souls were won and gained to Christ, were wrought upon, and converted, whose hearts the Lord inclined to give up themselves to the church, and walk with them in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord; and these were such whom God had chosen to salvation by Jesus Christ, and whom he had redeemed by his precious blood, and who were now regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God, and so should certainly be saved; which is not always the case of persons added to churches, many of whom have not the root of the matter in them, and so fall away; but is of those who are added by the Lord, for there is a difference between being added by the Lord, and being added by men.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 3

Ver. 1. *Now Peter and John went up together into the temple*, etc.] These two disciples were intimate companions, and great lovers of each other; they were often together: they are thought, by some, to have been together in the high priest's palace at the trial of Christ; and they ran together to his sepulchre, (<43 18 15>John 18:15,16 20:2-4) and they now went together to the temple, not to attend the daily sacrifice, which was now abolished by the sacrifice of Christ, but to attend to the duty of prayer, which was still in force, and that they might have an opportunity of preaching Christ, where there was a number of people together:

at the hour of prayer; being the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon. This was one of their hours of prayer; it was customary with the Jews to pray three times a day, (<27 06 10>Daniel 6:10) which, according to the Psalmist in (<19 55 17>Psalm 55:17) were evening, morning, and at noon; to which seems to answer the three times that are taken notice of by Luke in this history: that in the morning was at the third hour, as in (<44 02 15>Acts 2:15) or nine o'clock in the morning; that at noon was at the sixth hour, as in (<44 10 09>Acts 10:9) or twelve o'clock at noon; and that in the evening at the ninth hour, as here, or three o'clock in the afternoon. Not that these were times of divine appointment. The Jews [f134] themselves say,

> "there is no number of prayers from the law, and there is no repetition of this or that prayer from the law, and there is no [wbq ^mz, "fixed time" for prayer from the law."

But according to the traditions of the elders,

> "the morning prayer was to the end of the fourth hour, which is the third part of the day — the prayer of the "Minchah", (or evening prayer,) they fixed the time of it to answer to the evening daily sacrifice; and because the daily sacrifice was offered up every day from the ninth hour and a half, they ordered the time of it to be from the ninth hour and a half, and it is called the lesser "Minchah";

> and because in the evening of the passover, which falls upon the evening of the sabbath, they slay the daily sacrifice at the sixth hour and a half, they say, that he that prays after the sixth hour and a half is excused; and after this time is come, the time to which he is obliged is come, and this is called the great "Minchah" — -lo, you learn, that the time of the great "Minchah" is from the sixth hour and a half, to the ninth hour and a half; and the time of the lesser "Minchah" is from the ninth hour and a half, until there remains of the day an hour and a quarter; and it is lawful to pray it until the sun sets."

So that it was at the time of the lesser "Minchah" that Peter and John went up to the temple; which seems to be not on the same day of Pentecost, but on some day, or days after; it may be the sabbath following, when there was a great number of people got together.

Ver. 2. *And a certain man, lame from his mother's womb*, etc.] He was born so; his lameness came not through any disease or fall, or any external hurt, but from a defect in nature, in one of his limbs, or more; which made the after miracle the more extraordinary: and he was so lame that he

was carried; he could not walk of himself, or go, being led, but they were obliged to carry him:

whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple; it had been a common usage, it may be, for years past, to bring him every day, at prayer time, and lay him at the gate of the temple where the people went in; hence he was well known by the people, and to have been of a long time lame, even ever since he was born; so that there could be no imposture in this case: and it was at the gate of the temple he lay,

which is called beautiful; which some think was the gate Shushan, which was the eastern gate of the mountain of the house, or the outmost wall, and was so called, because Shushan, the metropolis of Persia, was pourtrayed upon it [f135], which made it look very beautiful. The reason commonly given by the Jewish commentators [f136] why this was done, is this; when the Jews returned from captivity, the king of Persia commanded that they should make a figure of the palace of Shushan upon one of the gates of the temple, that they might fear the king, and not rebel against him; and accordingly they drew one upon the eastern gate: but some say [f137], that the children of the captivity did this (upon their return) that they might

remember the wonder of Purim, (their deliverance from Haman,) which was done in Shushan; moreover, it might be so called from the word Shushan, which signifies joy and gladness: but this does not bid so fair to be the gate here meant, since it was lower than all the rest; for as the eastern wall was lower than the rest of the walls, that when the high priest burnt the red heifer on the top of Mount Olivet, he might see the gate of the temple at the time of the sprinkling of the blood; so the gate itself was four cubits lower than the others [f138], and therefore could not look so grand and beautiful as the rest. Indeed, concerning this eastern gate of the mountain of the house, it is said [f139], that

> "in the time when the sanctuary stood, when they prayed on the mountain of the house, they went in by the way of the eastern gate."

And as this was now the hour of prayer, and the people were going to the temple to pray, whose entrance was at the east gate; here it might be thought, in all probability, was laid the lame man: though it seems rather to be the eastern gate of the court of the women, which was made of Corinthian brass, and looked brighter than gold itself; of which Josephus [f140] thus speaks:

> "nine of the gates were covered all over with gold and silver, likewise the side posts and lintels; but there was one, without the temple, of Corinthian brass, which in dignity greatly exceeded the silver and golden ones."

And since at this gate was the greatest frequency of persons, both men and women entering here; it is most likely, that here lay the lame man a begging: this is thought, by some, to be the higher gate of the house of the Lord; said to be built by Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, (2 Kings 15:35) upon which text, a Jewish commentator of great note [f141] has this remark,

> "observe it is said of Jotham, that he built it, because he made a building on it, lwdgw dbkn "more glorious and great" than it had been:"

and this is also called the new gate of the house of the Lord, (Jeremiah 26:10) and which both the Targum and Kimchi on the place say is the eastern gate.

To ask alms of them that entered into the temple; who going to religious exercises, might be thought to be more disposed to acts of liberality and charity: and besides, these were known to be Jews, of whom only alms were to be asked and taken; for so run their canons [f142],

> "it is forbidden to take alms of Gentiles publicly, except a man cannot live by the alms of Israelites; and if a king, or a prince of the Gentiles, should send money to an Israelite for alms, he must not return it, because of the peace of the kingdom, but must take it of him, and give it to the poor of the Gentiles secretly, that the king may not hear."

Ver. 3. *Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple*, etc.] Just as they were entering through the gate at which he lay, he looked at them; and though they were strangers to him, he concluded they were Israelites by their going into the temple at that time:

asked an alms; of them; prayed them to give him something for his relief and support.

Ver. 4. *And Peter fastening his eyes upon him*, etc.] Or looking very wistly and intently at him, being, no doubt, under some uncommon impulse of the Spirit of God to take notice of him, and cure him of his disease:

with John; who was also under a like impulse at the same time; and who was equally concerned in this cure, as appears by the notice the man, when healed, took of the one, as well as the other; and by Peter's declaration, (<4011>Acts 3:11,12) as also by the following words:

said, look on us; which was said to raise his attention to them, to put him upon observing what manner of men they were, and how unlikely to perform the following cure, and to take notice of the manner in which it would be done. The Jews speak of a supernatural cure effected in such a manner, using such words; and which perhaps is told, with a view to lessen the glory of this [f143].

> "Elias appeared to one in the likeness of R. Chiyah Rabbah; he said to him, how does my Lord do? he replied to him, a certain tooth distresses me; he said to him, ylymj, "look on me"; and he looked on him, and put his finger on it, and he was well."

Ver. 5. *And he gave heed unto them*, etc.] Or "he looked at them", as the Syriac version renders it, as they bid him: he was not only attentive to them in his mind, but he directed his eyes towards them, and looked wistly at them. This clause is left out in the Ethiopic version.

Expecting to receive something of them; not a cure for his lameness, which he little thought of, but some money, as an alms.

Ver. 6. *Then Peter said, silver and gold have I none*, etc.] The Ethiopic version reads, "we have none"; and so it reads the next clause in the first person plural; that is, they had no money either of gold or silver coin; they had none about them, nor any of their own perhaps any where; none but what was brought to them, and put into their hands as a common stock for the whole church, or the poor of it: nor indeed might any money be carried in a purse into the temple; (See Gill on "<40109>Matthew 10:9"), (see Gill on "<41116>Mark 11:16") though doubtless they might carry it in their hands, or otherwise, for the offerings, or for the poor, or this man would not have lain here for alms.

But such as I have, give I thee; meaning the gift of healing; not that he communicated that to him, but exercised the gift upon him, by curing him of his lameness; and which was much preferable to large quantities of gold and silver, had he had them to give unto him:

in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth: signifying, that it was by the command of Christ he said what follows; and by his power he wrought the cure which commenced upon it; even by the authority and virtue of him, who was treated with so much contempt by the Jews, and had lately been crucified by them: in his name he bid him

rise up and walk; without making use of any medicines, or applying anything to him; but believing that power would go along with the words, and strength would be communicated to him, by him in whose name he spoke, he said these words: and herein lies the difference between the miracles wrought by Christ, and by his disciples; those that were done by him were done in his own name, and by his own power; those that were performed by his disciples, were done in the name of Christ, and by his power alone; and the Jews themselves own, that the disciples performed cures wçy hymçb, "in the name of Jesus" [f144].

Ver. 7. *And he took him by the right hand*, etc.] In imitation of Christ, whom he had often seen using the same action on such occasions:

and lift him up; believing he was cured, and that it might be manifest. The word him is expressed in the Alexandrian copy, and in some others, and in the Oriental versions, which is a supplement in our translation:

and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength; where, it seems, his lameness lay. The Vulgate Latin renders it, his bases and soles, which may include his legs and thighs, as well as feet; and the Syriac version, "his feet and soles"; and the Arabic version, "his soles, and the muscles adjoining to his heels"; and the Ethiopic version furthest off of all, "he was strengthened in his feet, and in his loins"; his disorder might be of the paralytic kind.

Ver. 8. *And he leaping up*, etc.] From off the bed or couch, or ground on which he lay:

stood and walked; stood firm and strong upon his feet, and walked about; by which it was abundantly manifest to himself and others, that he had a perfect cure. The Ethiopic version is a very ridiculous one, "and he went with them catching fishes"; as if upon this, before they went into the temple, he and the apostles went a fishing together, which has not the least foundation in the text:

and entered with them into the temple; to join with them in divine worship, to acknowledge the goodness of God to him, and to show respect to the instruments he made use of in his cure:

and leaping; for joy of the mercy, and that it might appear to all that he was thoroughly cured of his lameness: and thus the prophecy in (Isaiah 35:6) "then shall the lame man leap as an hart", was literally fulfilled:

and praising God; and not the apostles; for he knew that this was owing to the power of God, and could never have been done by man; though he might not be ungrateful to the instruments.

Ver. 9. *And all the people*, etc.] That were in the temple,

saw him walking; who before lay on a couch, or on the ground, and was so lame, that he was obliged to be carried;

and praising God; for this miraculous cure. The Arabic version renders it, “saw him walking to praise God”: that is, entering into the temple with the apostles, in order to offer up the sacrifice of praise to God there.

Ver. 10. *And they knew it was he that sat for alms*, etc.] The Syriac version renders it, “they knew him to be that beggar that sat daily and asked alms”. As he was daily brought thither, and had, for many years, it is very likely, sat there to ask alms of the people as they went into the temple; he was well known by them, and they had but just now passed him, and observed him in the same condition he had for a long time been, and knew him to be the same. It was a clear and indisputable point with them.

At the beautiful gate of the temple (See Gill on “Acts 3:2”).

And they were all filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him; that he should have a cure so suddenly, and in such an extraordinary manner; they wondered at the power of God, which was seen in it, and that he should make use of such mean and contemptible persons as the apostles were.

Ver. 11. *And as the lame man which was healed*, etc.] This is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and in the Alexandrian copy, which only read, and as he

held Peter and John; by their clothes or arms, either through fear, lest his lameness should return on their leaving him; or rather out of affection to them for the favour he had received, and therefore hung about them, and was loath to part with them; unless it was to make them known, and point them out as the authors of his cure, that they might be taken notice of by others, and the miracle be ascribed unto them:

all the people ran together unto them; to the man that was healed, and to Peter and John, when they saw him standing, walking, and leaping, and clinging about the apostles; who were

in the porch that is called Solomon’s; (See Gill on “John 10:23”)

greatly wondering; at the man that was cured; at the cure that was wrought upon him; and still more at the persons who did it, and the manner in which it was done.

Ver. 12. *And when Peter saw it*, etc.] That the people ran to them, and looked wistly upon them, and wondered at what was done:

he answered unto the people, ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? either at this man, who was cured of his lameness, or at the cure itself:

or why look ye so earnestly on us; suggesting, that they ought to look to God, and observe his divine power, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they had crucified, whose apostles they were, and in whose name, and by whose power they had wrought this miracle; which shows that they were not self-seeking and vain glorious men, but discovers great sincerity and integrity, much love to Christ, and great regard to his honour, and to the glory of God:

as though by our own power and holiness we had made this man to walk? as if it was any natural power of theirs; or for any merit of theirs, because of their strict religion and piety; or "laudable conversation", as the Arabic version; because they were mightier in themselves and holier than others, that they had such a faculty of curing lame persons; all which they utterly reject, and place it to a right account in the next verse. Instead of "holiness", the Syriac version reads "authority"; and to the same, or like sense, the Vulgate Latin, which seems most agreeable.

Ver. 13. *The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob*, etc.] These titles and epithets of God, which are used in the Old Testament, (ꝛ Exodus 3:6,15,16 4:5) the apostle chooses to retain, partly to distinguish him from the gods of the Gentiles, and partly to show his regard to the God of Israel, the one, only true, and living God; and that, though he and his fellow apostles were preachers of Christ, yet they were not setters forth of another, or a strange God, but believed in the same God their forefathers did, and to whom they ascribe the glory of this miracle:

the God hath glorified his Son Jesus; by raising him from the dead, setting him at his own right hand, and giving him the gifts of the Spirit for men; which he having bestowed on the apostles, by virtue of this they wrought this miracle, which was a means of setting forth the glory of Christ, and of putting men upon glorifying him, or ascribing honour and glory to him. And in order to awaken their minds, to convict them of their sin, ingratitude, and folly, the apostle adds,

whom ye delivered up; to Pilate, the Roman governor; having first seized him as a thief, bound him as a malefactor, and arraigned, and condemned him to death in the high priest's palace as a blasphemer:

and denied him in the presence of Pilate; or "to", or "against the face of Pilate"; contrary to his sense of things, who more than once called him the King of the Jews, and wrote this as the superscription over him, when they denied him to be their King Messiah, and the Son of God, saying, they had no king but Caesar:

when he was determined to let him go; or release him; that is, "when he judged it right that he should be released", as the Syriac version renders it; for he never came to a point, to a resolution to let him go; though he thought it was but just and equitable that he should be dismissed, being, in his apprehension, an innocent man; and therefore pressed it on the people to agree to release him, to which he was himself strongly inclined.

Ver. 14. *But ye denied the Holy One, and the just*, etc.] Who is "holy" both in his divine and human nature, and the fountain of holiness to his people; (see <19610>Psalm 16:10) and who is "just" or "righteous", both in his person, and in the discharge of his office, and has wrought a righteousness for his people, which is imputed to them. These characters may have a particular regard to the purity of Christ, as man, and to the innocence of his life, and the harmlessness of his actions, in opposition to the unjust charges of his enemies, and the base treatment he met with from them who denied him to be the Christ, the Redeemer and Saviour:

and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; when it was put to their choice, who they would have released, Christ or Barabbas; they requested it as a favour, and desired they might be gratified in having Barabbas, a thief, and a robber, who, with others, had raised an insurrection, and committed murder in it, released, and Christ crucified. They desired an act of grace for him, and a sentence of condemnation to a most shameful and painful death on Christ.

Ver. 15. *And killed the Prince of life*, etc.] Or author of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal; who not only is the living God, and has life in himself; and as man, had such a power over his own life, as no man ever had; but he is the author of a spiritual resurrection from the death of sin, to a life of grace, and has procured eternal life for his people, and gives it to them. Now this Lord of life and glory they crucified. His death is laid to them because it was at their request, and through their instigation, and at their earnest solicitations, that Pilate condemned him, and delivered, him to his soldiers to crucify him.

Whom God hath raised from the dead; notwithstanding all their spite and malice; so that they had not their whole will, and all their end, not being able to retain him under the power of death, and under the shame and reproach of the cross; and this the apostle the rather mentions, as being the reason why such gifts, and such power were bestowed on them to do the miracles they did.

Whereof we are witnesses; either of Christ, for it may be rendered, "whose witnesses we are"; they testifying of his person, office, grace, and righteousness; or of the resurrection of Christ, of which they were eyewitnesses; and of which they had the fullest proof, and were capable of bearing a sufficient testimony, and for which they were chosen and appointed.

Ver. 16. *And his name, through faith in his name*, etc.] That is, the name of Christ, or the power of Christ, through the faith of the apostles in him, while they made use of his name, and said, "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth", etc. (<4406>Acts 3:6) or Christ, through the faith of the lame man in him; and when his name was used in this manner by the apostles; not that either their faith, or his, had any causal influence on the cure, but was the way and means in which they, glorifying Christ, he was pleased to effect this cure:

hath made this man strong; who was before exceeding weak; strengthened the parts that were infirm, his feet and ankles, and consolidated them, so that he could use them, and walk with them:

whom ye see and know; they knew him before, when he was lame, and now knew him to be the same man, and whom they saw now perfectly well; so that they could be appealed to that there was no fraud or imposture in the case:

yea, the faith which is by him; by Christ, of which he is the object, and the author, and finisher: this is repeated out of affection to Christ, and a passionate concern for the glory of his name; or because that faith, in one clause, may regard the faith of the apostles, and in the other, the faith of the man that was cured:

hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all: he had perfect soundness both in body and mind; though the former may chiefly be designed, it being that which was only visible to these persons; and which

was done, not in a corner, but publicly, before them all, at the gate of the temple, where the multitude passed to and fro.

Ver. 17. *And now, brethren*, etc.] He calls them brethren, because they were so according to the flesh; and to testify his cordial love and affection for them.

I wot, or "I know",

that through ignorance ye did it; delivered up Jesus into the hands of Pilate; denied him to be the Messiah before him; preferred a murderer to him, and put him to death.

As did also your rulers; the members of the sanhedrim, some of them; (see 1 Corinthians 2:8) for others of them knew him to be the Messiah, to be sent of God, by the miracles he did, and yet blasphemously ascribed them to Satan; and so sinning against light and knowledge, in such a malicious manner, sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, to which ignorance is here opposed; and which did not excuse from sin: nor was it itself without sin; nor is it opposed to any sin, but to this now mentioned.

Ver. 18. *But those things which God before had showed*, etc.] In the Scriptures of the Old Testament, concerning the betraying of the Messiah, and his sufferings and death, with the various causes, concomitants, and circumstances of them:

by the mouths of all his prophets; which were since the world began; some pointing out one thing or circumstance, and some another:

that Christ should suffer. The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, "that his Christ should suffer"; but then they leave out the word "his" in the preceding clause, which they put into this; and this entire clause is omitted in the Alexandrian copy:

he hath so fulfilled; in the manner he has, so exactly, so perfectly agreeable to the predictions of them, and yet were unknown to the persons by whom they were fulfilled. So wisely and surprisingly are things ordered and overruled by the wise providence of God, who is a God of knowledge, and by whom all actions are weighed.

Ver. 19. *Repent ye therefore*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, "and be baptized", (See Gill on "Acts 2:38"),

and be converted. The apostle's sense is, repent of the sin of crucifying Christ, which is what he had been charging them with, and turn unto him, and acknowledge him as the Messiah; receive his doctrines, and submit to his ordinances; externally reform in life and conversation, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, such as will show it to be true and genuine:

that your sins may be blotted out; or forgiven, (see <19509>Psalm 51:9) (<23325>Isaiah 43:25, 44:22). Not that repentance and reformation procure the pardon of sin, or are the causes of it, for forgiveness is entirely owing to the free grace of God, and blood of Christ; but inasmuch as that is only manifested and applied to repenting and converted sinners; and who are encouraged to repent, and turn to the Lord from the promise of pardon; it is incumbent on them, and is their interest so to do, that they may have a discovery of the remission of their sins by the blood of Christ. Though no other repentance and conversion may be here meant than an external one; and the blotting out of sin, and forgiveness of it, may intend no other than the removing a present calamity, or the averting a threatened judgment, or the deliverance of persons from national ruin, (<02232>Exodus 32:32, <110834>1 Kings 8:34-39). These Jews had crucified the Lord of glory, and for this sin were threatened with miserable destruction; the apostle therefore exhorteth them to repentance for it, and to a conversion to the Messiah, that so when ruin should come upon their nation, they might be delivered from the general calamity; when it would be terrible times to the unbelieving and impenitent Jews, but times of refreshment, ease, peace, and rest from persecution, to the believers, as is next expressed.

When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; or "that the times of refreshing may come", as the Syriac version; either seasons of spiritual refreshment, joy, and peace, through the great and precious promises of the Gospel, and by the application of the blood and righteousness of Christ, to such penitent and converted sinners; which refreshment and comfort come from the Lord, and are accompanied with his gracious presence: or else seasons of rest, and deliverance from the violent heat of persecution; which was the case of the saints at the destruction of Jerusalem; they were not only saved from that ruin, but delivered from the wrath of their most implacable enemies. The Ethiopic version renders it, "and the day of mercy shall come from the presence of the Lord", repenting sinners find mercy; and a discovery of pardon is a time of mercy; and when God grants this, he affords his presence. The Jews call the world to come a time of refreshment; and say [f145],

"better is one hour jwr trwq lç, "of refreshment", in the world to come, than the whole life of this world."

Ver. 20. *And he shall send Jesus Christ*, etc.] Or "that he may send Jesus Christ", as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it: not in person, for this regards neither his first, nor his second coming, both which might be terrible to the awakened Jews; the former, because he had been sent, and was come, and was gone again; and therefore might fear there was no hope for them, who had denied him, and crucified him; the latter, because they might conclude he would be sent, and come to take vengeance on them, when they should look upon him whom they had pierced with horror and trembling; but here it regards his being sent, and his coming in the ministration of the word, and by his Spirit, to the comfort of their souls:

which before was preached unto you; in the writings of the Old Testament, in the books of Moses, and of the Prophets, (<4402>Acts 3:22,24) or, as it is read in the Alexandrian copy, and in other copies, and in the Complutensian edition, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions, who was "predetermined" or "prepared for you"; that is, in the purposes, council, and covenant of God. The Ethiopic version reads, "whom he before anointed"; to be prophet, priest, and King; and from each of these considerations much comfort might be drawn by sensible sinners.

Ver. 21. *Whom the heaven must receive*, etc.] Hold and retain in his human nature; and which does not at all hinder or confront his mission, and coming to his people, in the mean while, in a spiritual way and manner, to their joy and comfort: or, "who must receive heaven"; the kingdom, and glory, and reign there:

until the times of the restitution of all things: not of all created beings to their original estate, which there is no reason to believe ever will be; or of the churches of Christ to purity of doctrine, discipline, and conversation, which is to be hoped for, and will be in the spiritual reign of Christ; but of the accomplishment of all promises and prophecies concerning the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Jews, and so the gathering in all the elect of God; and concerning all the glorious things spoken of the church of Christ in the latter day; which sense is confirmed by what follows:

which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began: ever since the world was, God has had more or less holy

men, set apart and sanctified by him, and on whom he bestowed the spirit of prophecy; and by the mouth of everyone of these he has spoken one thing or another concerning his church and people, and the filling up of the number of them, or the gathering of them all in; and till this is done, Christ will remain in heaven and reign there: and this sense is further confirmed by the Syriac and Arabic versions, the former rendering the words, "until the filling or fulfilling of the times of all things"; and the latter, "until the times which will confirm the perfection of all the words which God hath spoken", etc. and from the sense of the word used, which some lexicographers explain by τελειωσις, "perfection" or "fulfilling".

Ver. 22. *For Moses truly said unto the fathers*, etc.] The Jewish fathers, the Israelites in the times of Moses. The Ethiopic version reads, "our fathers". This phrase, "unto the fathers", is left out in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, and in the Alexandrian copy: the passages referred to are in (<5B185>Deuteronomy 18:15,19)

a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you: which is not to be understood of a succession of prophets, as some of the Jewish writers [f146] think; for the Jews never had a constant succession of prophets, and those they had, were not like to Moses: but of a single prophet, and so the Targums or Onkelos and Jonathan understood it; but not to be applied to Joshua, as some [f147], or to Jeremiah [f148] as others, or to David [f149]; but to the Messiah, and which is the Lord Jesus Christ, who answers to all the characters: he was a prophet in every sense, who brought a revelation of the divine will, taught the way, and explained the Scriptures of truth perfectly, and foretold things to come; he was raised up by the Lord God of Israel, and was anointed by his Spirit, and sent by him, and that to the people of the Jews, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; he was the minister of the circumcision:

of your brethren; in the Hebrew text in (<5B185>Deuteronomy 18:15) it is also said, "out of the midst of thee"; but as these phrases are synonymous, the apostle here only retains one of them, which suggests that this prophet, the Messiah, should be of Jewish extract; as Jesus was, of the seed of David, and a son of Abraham:

like unto me; that is, to Moses, who is, the person speaking, between whom and Christ there is an agreement; the law was given by Moses, and the Gospel came by Christ; Moses was a mediator between God and the people of Israel, and Christ is the Mediator between God and men; Moses,

under God, was an instrument of redeeming the people of Israel out of Egypt, and Christ, he is the Redeemer of his people from sin, Satan, and the law, and all their enemies: the Jews [f150] have a common saying,

> "as was the first Redeemer, so shall be the last Redeemer;"

and they moreover observe [f151], that,

> "as Israel was redeemed in the month Nisan, so they shall be redeemed in the month Nisan;"

in the future redemption by the Messiah: let the Jews abide by this; the Messiah Jesus suffered in the month Nisan, and obtained eternal redemption for his people: one of their [f152] writers has a notion, that when the Messiah comes, there will be the same disposition of the constellations, as when Moses brought the people out of Egypt, and gave them the law; and that the conjunction will be of Jupiter and Saturn, in the constellation Pisces: there was likewise between Moses and Christ, an agreement in the miracles they wrought, and in other things:

him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you: all his doctrines are to be believed, embraced, and professed; and all his commands are to be obeyed, and all his ordinances submitted to; and this is hearing, or hearkening, to him in all things, delivered or enjoined by him.

Ver. 23. *And it shall come to pass, that every soul*, etc.] Every person, man or woman:

which will not hear that prophet; neither believe what he says, nor do what he commands; or as it is in (Deuteronomy 18:19) "will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name": for he that hears not him, hearkens not to God, in whose name he speaks, and whose word he delivers,

shall be destroyed from among the people; in the Hebrew text it is, "I will require it of him"; the Hebrew word, wm[m, there used, by having different points, may be rendered "of him", or "from his people", which seems to be the reason of this difference: and requiring often intends punishment, or a cutting off; or as Aben Ezra explains it here,

> "death by the hand of heaven;"

that is, immediate destruction from God; and so Maimonides says [f153], he that transgresses the words of that prophet, is guilty of death by the hand of heaven; and which was remarkably fulfilled in the Jewish nation, for their rejection of Jesus as the true Messiah, and that prophet.

Ver. 24. *Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel*, etc.] Who was, as the Jews call him, µyaybn lç ˆbr, "the master of the prophets" [f154]; and they say, that Samuel the prophet is ˆwçarh aybnh, "the first prophet" in the chain of the Kabbala [f155]; and therefore is here particularly mentioned, as at the head of the prophets, and next to Moses; there being but very few prophets between him and Moses, when there were many after him; and in his days, the schools of the prophets were set up: now not only Moses spoke of Christ, but all the prophets from the time of Samuel; in the books that bear his name, stands a famous prophecy concerning Christ, (<100713>2 Samuel 7:13,14,16).

And those that follow after; in order, as David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc.

and as many as have spoken; anything by way of prophecy:

have likewise foretold of these days; of the days of the Messiah, of his person, office, incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, the pouring down of the Spirit, the times of refreshing, the Gospel dispensation, the conversion of the Jews, the calling of the Gentiles, and the gathering in all the elect of God.

Ver. 25. *Ye are the children of the prophets*, etc.] Of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who are called prophets, (<19A515>Psalm 105:15) being lineally and naturally descended from them; to them belonged the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, and the promises of him; they were heirs of them;

and of the covenant which God made with our fathers; so the phrase tyrb ynb, "children of the covenant", is used by the Jews, as peculiar to themselves; (See Gill on " <450908>Romans 9:8") and so ˆyyrwa rb, "a son of the law" [f156], is also used by them in a like sense; the law, the covenant, and the promises, externally belonging to them:

saying unto Abraham, (<012218>Genesis 22:18)

and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed; meaning the Messiah, that sprung from him, and is called the son of Abraham; in whom, not only all Abraham's spiritual seed among the Jews, or the elect of God in that nation, and who were truly the children of Abraham, and of the promise, but even all the chosen of God among the Gentiles, in every nation, and of every kindred and family among them, are blessed in Christ, with all spiritual blessings; with peace, pardon, righteousness, redemption, and salvation: for this is not a form of blessing the Gentiles would use, when they blessed themselves, or others; saying, God bless thee, as he blessed Abraham's seed; for no one instance can be produced, when the Gentiles ever used such a form of blessing as this; but a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles by the Messiah, and of their being blessed in him; (see Galatians 3:16) and though this sense is departed from by modern Jews, it was what the ancient synagogue gave into [f157].

Ver. 26. *Unto you first, God having raised his Son Jesus*, etc.] Which may be understood, either of the incarnation of Christ, and his exhibition in the flesh; which is sometimes expressed by raising him up, and is no other than the mission, or manifestation of him in human nature, as in (Luke 1:69, Acts 13:23). Or of the resurrection of him from the dead, and the exaltation of him at the right hand of God:

sent him to bless you; in person, according to the former sense; for he was indeed sent only to the people of Israel, and to them he preached; many of whom were blessed with converting grace under his ministry; but according to the latter sense, and which seems most agreeable, he was sent in the ministry of the word, and came by his Spirit, first to the Jews, among whom the Gospel was first preached for a while, and was blessed to the conversion of many thousands among them, both in Judea, and in the nations of the world, where they were dispersed:

in turning away everyone of you from his iniquities; in this the blessing lay, and is rightly in our version ascribed to Christ, and to the power of his grace, in the ministration of the Gospel and not to themselves, as in many other versions; as the Syriac version, "if ye convert yourselves, and turn from your evils"; making it both their own act, and the condition of their being blessed; and the Arabic version likewise, "so that everyone of you departs from his wickedness"; but that work is Christ's, and this is the blessing of grace he himself bestows, and is a fruit of redemption by his blood, (Titus 2:14).

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 4

Ver. 1. *And as they spake unto the people*, etc.] For though only mention is made of Peter's preaching in the preceding chapter, yet doubtless John preached as well as he; either in turn, or to a part of the people at some distance: and this shows their diligence, faithfulness, and integrity, in the ministration of the word; and it is recorded to their honour, that whilst they were about their master's business, and discharging the duty of their office,

the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them; by agreement, with great violence, and at unawares: the "priests" might be those who kept the watch in the temple; for

> "in three places the priests kept watch, in the house of the sanctuary; in the house of Abtines, in the house of Nitsots, and in the house of Moked, and the Levites in one and twenty places [f158]."

And it now being eventide, they might be about to take their stands; "and the captain of the temple" might be he, whom they call, `tyb rh çya`, "the man of the mountain of the house"; who was `rç`, a ruler, or governor, and `hnwmm`, a president over all the wards [f159]; he is sometimes called `rmçm çar`, "the head of the ward" [f160]; and of him it is said [f161],

> "the man of the mountain of the house goes his round through every ward, with burning torches before him; and every ward that does not stand (is not on his feet), the man of the mountain of the house, says to him, peace be to thee; and if he observes that he is asleep, he strikes him with his staff, and he has power to burn his garments."

The Vulgate Latin and the Oriental versions read in the plural number, as in (see Gill on "Luke 22:4"), (see Gill on "Luke 22:52"). The Sadducees were a sect among the Jews, that denied the resurrection of the dead; of their rise, name, and tenets, (See Gill on "Matthew 3:7").

Ver. 2. *Being grieved that they taught the people*, etc.] Any doctrine, and especially that which follows, and which particularly gave uneasiness to the Sadducees, they were exceedingly distressed by it; it pained them to the very heart, and they were filled with wrath and indignation:

and preached through, or in Jesus, the resurrection of the dead; they not only preached the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead in general, but gave an instance and proof of it in the resurrection of Christ, affirming that he was risen from the dead; and they also preached up the resurrection of the dead in his name, and asserted, that he would be the author of it, and it would be erected by his power: so that their doctrine was equally disagreeable to the Pharisees and Sadducees; to the Sadducees, who denied that there was, or would be any resurrection of the dead; and to the Pharisees, who though they believed it, yet were highly offended that it should be said, that Jesus was risen from the dead; and that the general resurrection of the dead should be attributed to him.

Ver. 3. *And they laid hands on them*, etc.] The Arabic version renders it, "on both"; on Peter and John; seized them by force, and drew them out of the temple:

and put them in hold unto the next day; not in the common public prison, as in (4518Acts 5:18) but they put them into the hands, and under the care and custody of a set of men, to keep and guard them; that they might not go away, until they had an opportunity of bringing them before the sanhedrim, to be examined and punished by them:

for it was now eventide; it was at the ninth hour, or about three o'clock in the afternoon, when Peter and John went up to the temple, where they healed the lame man; after which, both of them preached to the people; so that it must now be evening; at least, as the Syriac version renders it, "the evening was near", or was drawing on.

Ver. 4. *Howbeit, many of them which heard the word*, etc.] The doctrine of the Gospel, preached by Peter and John:

believed; the report of it, and in Christ, as risen from the dead, which was the sum and substance of it: and this they did, notwithstanding the opposition made by the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducces, and the violence they used to the apostles; for though they kept their persons in hold, they could not stop the free course of the word, which ran and was glorified:

and the number of the men was about five thousand; or "was five thousand", as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions read; that is the number, not of the hearers, but "of them that believed", was so many; and so read the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: there were so many persons converted at this time; for this number does not include the three thousand that were converted under the first sermon, but regards those who now became true believers, and were added to the church; so that there were now eight thousand persons added to it; a great increase indeed! now had Christ the dew of his youth, and now were these fishermen fishers of men indeed: that our Lord's feeding five thousand men with five barley loaves and two fishes, should have any regard to the conversion of these five thousand men, is but a conceit.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass on the morrow*, etc.] The disciples being kept in custody all night:

that their rulers, and elders, and Scribes; that is, their ecclesiastical rulers; the chief priests, who, with the Scribes, and elders of the people, made up the great council at Jerusalem, consisting of seventy one persons, so they are called in (Matthew 26:3,57 27:1 Mark 14:53 15:1).

Ver. 6. *And Annas the high priest*, etc.] So called, either because he had been an high priest, though he was not now, but Caiaphas his son-in-law; or because he was the Sagan of the high priest, and had all the other priests under his government; and is mentioned first, because he was father-in-law to Caiaphas; (see Gill on "Luke 3:2") he could not be called so, because he was ayçn, "prince", or president of the council; for not he, but Gamaliel, was president at this time. And

Caiaphas; who was properly high priest, and continued so for three years after the death of Christ:

and John; who is thought by Dr. Lightfoot to be the same with Jochanan, or John ben Zaccai; a famous Jewish Rabbi, who lived at this time, and until, and after the destruction of Jerusalem: this Rabbi was ^hk, "a priest" [f162], as this John was, of the kindred of the high priest; he lived also at Jerusalem; for it is said of him [f163], that he sat in the shadow of the temple, and expounded all the whole day; and a very remarkable story is told of him, which happened just about this time [f164]; which is, that

> “forty years before the destruction of the temple — the doors of the temple opened of themselves, when Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai reproved them, saying, O temple, temple, wherefore dost thou fright thyself? I know thee, that thine end shall be, to be destroyed; for so prophesied of thee Zechariah, the son of Iddo, (<3811001>Zechariah 11:1). “Open thy doors, O Lebanon”, etc.”

The chief objection to him, as that learned writer observes, is, that he lived and died a Pharisee, whereas this John seems to have been a Sadducee; (see <440517>Acts 5:17). This puts me in mind of John the high priest, who ministered in the high priesthood fourscore years, and at last became a Sadducee [f165]: Beza’s ancient copy reads “Jonathan: and Alexander”; whose surname was Lysimachus, and had the title of “Alabarcha”; he was a very rich man [f166]: after Alexander the great had been at Jerusalem, this name became frequent among the Jews; and it is said [f167] to be promised him, and was fulfilled, that every son that was born to the priests that year he entered Jerusalem, should be called Alexander; and therefore it is no wonder to hear of an Alexander among the kindred of the high priest; frequent mention is made of yrdnskla ybr, “Rabbi Alexander”, in the Jewish writings [f168]:

and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest; by whose means they were become members of the sanhedrim:

were gathered together at Jerusalem; where the great council only sat, until the destruction of it; it seems by this, that some of the members of it lived in the country; it may be in some of the villages adjacent, where they might be easily and quickly sent for, upon any occasion, as they very likely now were; the Syriac version leaves out the words “at Jerusalem”.

Ver. 7. *And when they had set them in the midst*, etc.] Of the assembly, as the Ethiopic version adds; in the middle of the sanhedrim, which sat in a semicircular form; or as the Jews express it, as the half of a round corn floor, or as a half moon, and not in a perfect circle; because it was necessary that the contending parties, and the witnesses, might go in and speak before them all [f169]; so that those that were set before them, were placed in the middle of them: and here Peter and John were set; so the Arabic version renders it, “when they set both”: they sent for them out of the hold, or custody, where they had been all night, and ordered them to be brought before them, to be examined about their doctrine and practice:

they asked, by what power, or by what name have ye done this? they inquired of them, whether it was by a natural, or by a divine, or by a diabolical power, that they had wrought the cure upon the lame man? whether it was by the use of medicine, or by the help of magic art, and the assistance of the devil, which they were very ready to charge Christ and his disciples with? or whether they pretended to a divine and supernatural aid? and also what name they had made use of, and by whose authority they acted?

Ver. 8. *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost*, etc.] At that very instant, having received a fresh measure of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, besides what he had poured forth upon him at the day of Pentecost; so that he had great courage and presence of mind, and freedom of speech, as Christ had promised his disciples they should have, when they were brought before governors and magistrates, (⁴⁰Matthew 10:18,19,30, ⁴²Luke 21:14,15). The case was much altered with Peter, he who but a little while ago was frightened by a servant maid, now stands before the Jewish sanhedrim, with undaunted courage and resolution:

and said unto them, ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel; he addresses them in a very handsome manner, and gives them their proper titles as magistrates; which ought to be done by men and Christians; honour should be given, to whom honour is due: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and some copies, add “hear”, which seems very necessary; he called for audience, or desired to be heard a few words, in the defence of himself and fellow apostle, and in answer to their questions.

Ver. 9. *If we this day be examined of the good deed*, etc.] Or “seeing” we are; for it was not a matter of doubt, but a clear case, that they were brought into court, and were passing under an examination, about the cure of the lame man; which the apostle rightly calls a

good deed, it being done in faith, and to the glory of God, and for the good of the man; and hereby tacitly suggests, that they were dealt very hardly with, to be seized and kept in custody, and be called in question, for doing an action so beneficent and kind, as this was, which was

done to the impotent man; who could not help himself, nor get his bread any other way, than by begging:

by what means he is made whole; restored to perfect health, and the proper use of his limbs; that is, by what power, and in what name this was done; the answer is ready, and it is as follows.

Ver. 10. *Be it known unto you all*, etc.] The members of the sanhedrim:

and to all the people of Israel; who might hear of this affair; for the apostle was not ashamed of what he had done, nor of the person in whose name he had done it:

that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth; by calling, on that name, and by making use of it, and by the power and authority of Jesus Christ, who by way of contempt was called the

Nazarene: whom ye crucified; for though Pilate delivered him to be crucified, and the Roman soldiers did crucify him, yet this was at the request and instigation of the chief priests, Scribes, and elders; and therefore it is ascribed to them, who were bent upon his death; and no other would satisfy them, but the shameful and painful death of the cross:

whom God raised from the dead; of which the apostles were witnesses, having seen him and conversed with him after his resurrection; and this was the doctrine they were sent to publish, and for which they were apprehended and detained in custody; but this did not deter them from preaching it, no, not before the sanhedrim; which was an instance of great courage and faithfulness: and this is the rather mentioned; to show, that it was not by the name of one that was dead, but of one that was alive, that this cure was performed; as well as to observe to them, that their efforts against Christ were vain and fruitless:

even by him doth this man stand here before you whole; from whence it appears, as well as from (Acts 4:18) that the man that was healed, was now present: and either he was laid hold on, and detained in custody with the apostles, in hope to discover fraud if they could; or hearing that the apostles were before the sanhedrim, and examining on his account, might come of himself, in order to attest and prove the matter of fact, and to vindicate them.

Ver. 11. *This is the stone*, etc.] That is, this Jesus of Nazareth, by whose name the lame man was made whole, is that stone spoken of in (Psalm 118:22) by whom is meant the true Messiah, comparable to a stone, for his

strength and duration, and usefulness, as a foundation and corner stone, in the spiritual building of the church; and yet notwithstanding is the stone

which was set at nought of you builders: the priests, elders, and Scribes; who were fond of being called builders, but made miserable work of it; despising and rejecting the stone of Israel, and instead of him as a foundation, built themselves, and others, on the traditions of the elders, and their own righteousness: but though Christ was rejected by them, both in person and in doctrine, and was ignominiously treated, and at last put to death, yet he was raised from the dead, and exalted at the right hand of God; and is the stone,

which is become the head of the corner; or the chief corner stone, that adorns, strengthens, knits, and keeps together, the whole building; in which Jews and Gentiles, saints in all ages and places, even all the elect of God, are united together; (See Gill on "Matthew 21:42").

Ver. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other*, etc.] Meaning not corporeal healing, but spiritual and eternal salvation; the Syriac version renders it, neither is there anqrwp, "redemption in any other": Christ is the only Saviour and Redeemer, who was promised and prophesied of as such; who has saved and redeemed his people from the law, sin, and Satan; nor is salvation to be sought and hoped for from any other; not in a man's self, nor in any other creature, angels or men; not in and by his own works, and legal righteousness; not by obedience to the law of Moses, moral or ceremonial; nor by the light of nature, much less by an observance of the traditions of the elders:

for there is none other name; thing or person, be it ever so great, or whatever show of power and strength, of holiness and religion, it makes; as the name of kings, princes, and the great men in the world; or of ministers and preachers in the church; or even of Christians and believers, which may be only a name to live; none but the name of Jesus, his person, blood, and righteousness:

under heaven: throughout the whole earth, in all the nations and kingdoms of it; nor even in heaven itself, among all the mighty angels there, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers; none but the Father and the Spirit, who are one with Christ: there is none but he

given among men; and he has been freely given by his Father, as an instance of his matchless love to the world; and also freely given by himself, to be a sacrifice for the sins of his people; and is freely preached among men, as the only Saviour of them; for there is no other,

whereby we must be saved: God resolved in his purposes and decrees, in his council and covenant, upon the salvation of his chosen people; and he appointed his Son to be the salvation of them, and determined he would save them by him, and by no other, and in no other way; wherefore, whoever are saved, must be saved by him, (see <2007>Hosea 1:7) the Arabic version adds, “unless by him only”.

Ver. 13. *Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John*, etc.] With what courage and intrepidity they stood before them, the presence of mind they had, and the freedom of speech they used, as the word properly signifies: they observed their elocution, the justness of their diction, the propriety of their language, and the strength and nervousness of their reasoning; as well as their great resolution, constancy, and firmness of mind; not being afraid to profess the name of Christ, or to charge them with the murder of him; and that they seemed to be determined to abide by him, at all events; to assert him to be the true Messiah, though rejected by the Jewish builders; and that he was risen from the dead; and not only to ascribe unto him the miracle now wrought, but the salvation of men; and to declare, that there was none in any other but him: the Syriac version renders it, “when they heard the word of Simeon and John, which they spoke openly”: and freely, without any reserve: they answered readily to the question, that it was by the name of Jesus of Nazareth that they had done this miracle; they dealt freely with the Jewish sanhedrim, and told them in so many words, that they were the crucifiers of Christ, and the rejecters of that stone, which God had made the head of the corner, and that there was no salvation for them in any other: it appears from hence, that John spoke as well as Peter, though his words are not recorded:

and perceived that they were unlearned ignorant men; not by what they now said, but by what they heard and understood of them before: they were informed that they were “unlearned” men, or who did not understand letters; not but that they had learned their mother tongue, and could read the Scriptures; but they had not had a liberal education; they had not been brought up at the feet of any of the doctors, in any of the schools and universities of the Jews; they were not trained up in, and conversant with,

the nice distinctions, subtle argumentations, and decisions of the learned doctors, in the interpretation of the law of Moses, and the traditions of the elders: and understood that they were also “ignorant” men, ιδιωται, “idiots”, or private men; for men might be unlearned, and yet not be such; it seems the high priests themselves were sometimes unlearned men: hence, on the day of atonement,

> “they used to read before him, in the order of the day, and say to him, Lord high priest, read thou with thine own mouth; perhaps thou hast forgot, or it may be, tdml al, “thou hast not learned” [f170].”

The Jews have adopted the word here used into their language; and express by it, sometimes a man that is mean, abject, and contemptible: thus instead of “children of base men”, or “without a name”, the Targumist on (Job 30:8) reads, ^yjwydh ynb, “the children of idiots”, or “private men”: and in the Targum on (1 Samuel 18:23 24:14) it is used for one lightly esteemed, and comparable to a flea: it sometimes designs persons in a private life, though men of learning and knowledge, in distinction from those that are in office; so we read [f171], that

> “three kings, and four twjwydh, “private” persons, have no part in the world to come; the three kings are Jeroboam, Ahab, and Manasseh; the four “idiots”, or private men, are Balaam, Doeg, Ahithophel, and Gehazi.”

And so a bench of idiots, or private men, is distinguished from a bench of authorized and approved judges [f172]; and sometimes the word is used of such, as are distinguished from doctors, or wise men; so when it is said [f173],

> “the command of plucking off the shoe, is done before three judges, and though the three are “idiots”;”

the note of Maimonides upon it is,

> “not wise men, but that know how to read the language,”

the Hebrew language: and such were the disciples, in every sense of the word; they were mean and abject, poor fishermen, men of no name and figure, that were in no office, and exalted station of life, nor versed in Jewish learning, but common private men: so that

they marvelled; the sanheddrim were astonished to hear them talk with so much fluency and pertinence:

and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus; looking wistly upon them, they knew them again, and remembered that; they were persons that were the disciples of Jesus, and whom they had seen in company with him; not in the high priest's palace, when Jesus was arraigned, examined, and condemned there; though Peter, and some think John was there at that time, yet not to be observed and taken notice of by the sanhedrim; but in the temple where Jesus taught, and where the chief priests, Scribes, and elders came, and disputed with him about his authority, and cavilled at him, (<4021 15>Matthew 21:15,23).

Ver. 14. *And beholding the man which was healed*, etc.] Who either was taken into custody, and brought before the sanhedrim, along with the apostles; or rather, who came here of his own accord to be witness for them: for he was

standing with them; in company with them, and close by them, and on their side; and so they could, and did point and appeal unto him, who was ready to justify, that it was not by the use of medicine, or of magic art, or in the name of Satan or Beelzebub, but by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, that his cure was wrought:

they could say nothing against it; they could not gainsay the fact, for the man was before them, perfectly well, whom they personally knew, by his lying so long at the gate of the temple; they knew that he had been lame from his mother's womb, who was now above forty years of age; and they could say nothing against the manner of his cure, who was present to attest it; nor could they say anything against them; the apostles, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; they could not blame them for doing it, it being a good deed, nor charge them with fraud and imposture.

Ver. 15. *But when they had commanded them*, etc.] That is, when the sanhedrim had ordered the apostles; or "commanded that both", as the Arabic version reads, both Peter and John; and, it may be, the man that was healed too:

to go aside out of the council; or place where the council, or sanhedrim sat; which, whether it was in the chamber "Gazith", in the temple where they used to sit [f174], or in the shops, or in the city, whither they removed, is not certain. We are told [f175], that

> "the sanhedrim removed from the chamber Gazith, to the shops, and from the shops to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to Jabneh;"

that is, after the destruction of the city. And the first remove was much about this time; for it is said [f176], that

> "forty years before the destruction of the temple, the sanhedrim removed, and sat in the shops."

Not in the shops where things were sold for the use of the temple, but in a court adjoining to them, which took its name from them.

They conferred among themselves; what was proper to be done, the apostles being withdrawn.

Ver. 16. *Saying, what shall we do to these men*? etc.] Whether they should punish them by scourging them, or detain them longer in custody, or commit them to prison, or dismiss them:

for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them: they were convicted that a miracle was wrought; that it was a clear case, a well known thing, of which there was no room to doubt, and that it was done by the apostles; but this was not all the difficulty, had it been a thing only within their knowledge, and which they could have concealed, it would have given them no uneasiness; but, as they observe,

it is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem: for the man having been so long lame, and had lain so long at the temple, where all the inhabitants frequently went, he was known and took notice of by them; and his cure being wrought so openly, and in such a miraculous way, it was the common talk of the city: so that there was no smothering it:

and we cannot deny it; the fact is so certain and evident; nor hide it, as the Ethiopic version renders it, it being so notorious and public.

Ver. 17. *But that it spread no further among the people*, etc.] Meaning not in Jerusalem; for the fame of this miracle was spread among all the inhabitants of that city; but in other parts of the nation:

let us straitly threaten them; or "in threatening threaten them"; that is, severely threaten them with imprisonment, or with the scourging of forty stripes save one, or with death itself.

That they speak henceforth to no man in this name; which through indignation and contempt they do not mention, but mean the name of Jesus: and their sense is, that the apostles, from this time forward, should not teach, or preach the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, or any other doctrine of the Gospel, in the name of Jesus, to any man, Jew or Gentile; or perform any miracle in his name, or call upon his name, and make use of it, for the healing of any person, or doing any miraculous work. The Ethiopic version is a very odd one, and quite contrary to the sense of the sanhedrim, "that they should not speak any more but in the name of the man Jesus".

Ver. 18. *And they called them*, etc.] From the apartment where they were; or ordered their servants to call them in to them:

and commanded them not to speak at all; either privately or publicly, in the ministry of the word, or in working of miracles, in the city, or in the country:

nor teach in the name of Jesus; any doctrine whatever; or "the name of Jesus", as the Arabic version reads; that is, the doctrine of Jesus, that which respects his person, his carnation, his offices, his sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead.

Ver. 19. *But Peter and John answered and said unto them*, etc.] With great boldness and courage, and without any fear of man, but in the true fear of God

whether it be right in the sight of God; who is omniscient, and sees, and knows all things, all the actions of men, and the springs of them; who is holy, just, and true, and sits and judges among the gods, that which is right:

to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye: it is not denied that magistrates are to be hearkened to, and obeyed: but not more than God, or in things that are contrary to his nature, will, law, honour, and glory: whatever is agreeable to the law and will of God, commanded by magistrates, should be attended to, and cheerfully obeyed; but what is not should be disregarded, whatever follows upon it: and this was so just and reasonable, that the apostles appeal to the sanhedrim, or council itself, to determine.

Ver. 20. *For we cannot but speak*, etc.] It was not physically, but morally impossible; or it was not lawful, and therefore they would not speak any other, and they could not avoid speaking, say they,

the things which we have seen and heard; as the miracles and doctrines of Christ, his resurrection from the dead, of which they were eye and ear witnesses. This shows their great fidelity and integrity, their inviolable attachment to Christ, and their fearlessness of the displeasure and wrath of men.

Ver. 21. *So when they had further threatened them*, etc.] Either repeated the same, as before; or added some more severe ones, to terrify them, if possible; not being able to answer their arguments, or invalidate their reasoning:

they let them go; they did not acquit them as innocent persons, but dismissed them from custody:

finding nothing how they might punish them; not being able, though they sought most diligently for it, to fix anything upon them, which might be a cause, or occasion, or pretence of inflicting any punishment upon them:

because of the people: they would not have stuck at the injustice of it, or have been under any concern about offending God; but they were afraid of the people, of losing their credit among them, and lest they should rise up against them, and on the side of the apostles:

for all men glorified God for that which was done; they saw the hand of God in it, and ascribed it to his mercy, goodness, and power, and gave him the glory of it; and therefore to punish the instruments of so great and good a work, would have been esteemed barbarous and wicked, and would have been highly resented by them; since, on the contrary, they judged them worthy of great honour and respect.

Ver. 22. *For the man was above forty years old*, etc.] So that the miracle was the greater, that a man born lame, and who had been so above forty years, should have a cure; and he was the more known to the people, and his testimony met with more credit:

on whom this miracle of healing was showed; both for the good of men, for the glory of God, and for the confirmation of the Gospel of Christ.

Ver. 23. *And being let go*, etc.] Or dismissed from custody, by the order of the sanhedrim:

they went to their own company; or "to their own men", as the Ethiopic version reads; or "to their own brethren", as the Syriac; either to the other ten apostles; or to the hundred and twenty, who first met together; or the whole multitude of them that believed, (<4402>Acts 4:32) the eight thousand that had been added to them, the whole church. Saints love to be together, and delight in the company of each other; and especially when they have anything to communicate, that may be for their mutual good, or for the honour of God:

and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them; what commands and injunctions they had lain upon them, and what threatenings they had given them, and, no doubt likewise, what answers they had returned to them.

Ver. 24. *And when they heard that*, etc.] The whole of the report the apostles made; and which they heard with patience, and without making any unworthy reflections upon the sanhedrim; and being, on the one hand, not over much terrified, and cast down, and, on the other hand, not sluggish, careless, and secure; they betake themselves, not to plots, conspiracies, and seditions; nor to arms to defend and avenge themselves, though their numbers were large; but to prayer, that they might not be deterred by threatenings, from speaking boldly the word of the Lord:

they lift up their voice to God with one accord; being inspired by the Holy Ghost, they not only agreed in the matter of their petitions, which agreement is of great avail with God; for whatever two or more agree in to ask of God, shall be given to them; but also in the very words which were vocally expressed by them, and that in a very loud and sonorous way, to signify the vehemency and ardour of their minds and affections:

and said, Lord, thou art God; or, as in one of Beza's copies, "Lord our God"; or, as in the Ethiopic version, "Lord, thou art our God"; addressing God, the Father of Christ, as appears from (<4427>Acts 4:27) as their own God, their covenant God and Father in Christ, from whom they might hope for help, and in whom they might expect safety, and every supply of grace:

which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; and which is a full proof of the omnipotence of God; an attribute of singular use to the saints in distressed circumstances; for what is it he

cannot do, who made all things that are? and what is it he will not do for his saints, for the accomplishment of his purposes, the making good of his covenant and promises, the fulfilment of prophecies; the good of his people, and the glory of his name?

Ver. 25. *Who by the mouth of thy servant David has said*, etc.] In (<19201>Psalm 2:1,2) from whence we learn, that that psalm, though it is without a title, and does not bear David's name, yet is one of his and so Kimchi says, that David composed it at the beginning of his reign; though Aben Ezra thinks, that it was composed by one of the singers for him, on the day he was anointed; yet he afterwards seems to doubt of it, and on (<19207>Psalm 2:7) says, they are the words of David, or the words of the singer. And certain it is, that in the apostles' time this psalm was reckoned to be David's by the Jews in common; and therefore they speak of it as such: and it was the sense of the ancient doctors of the synagogue, that this psalm is to be understood of the Messiah. Jarchi says, our Rabbins expound the business (of this psalm) concerning the King Messiah; and Kimchi observes, that there are some that interpret this psalm of Gog and Magog [f177], and the Messiah, or anointed, that is the King Messiah; though one of these writers was of opinion, that it is best to understand it of David himself; and Aben Ezra says, that it was composed either for David, or for the Messiah, and to understand it of the Messiah, the thing is more clear. The verses (<19207>Psalm 2:7,8) are particularly applied to the Messiah in some of their most ancient writings [f178], and also in modern ones [f179], as is (<19202>Psalm 2:2) to Messiah ben Joseph [f180]: and indeed the whole psalm belongs to the Messiah, as appears from the express mention of him, and the vain attempts of the kings of the earth against him; from the decree and resolution of God to make and declare him king of Zion, notwithstanding their utmost efforts; from his having the Gentiles for his inheritance, which is true of no other; and especially from that reverence, adoration, and worship, which were to be given to him, and that trust and confidence to be placed in him, which can by no means agree with David, nor with any mere creature. The Syriac version reads, "who in the Holy Ghost, by the mouth", etc. and so read Beza's most ancient copy, and five other manuscripts of his; and the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, read, "who in the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of our father David", etc. and the Alexandrian copy, but does not seem to be a genuine reading; since the Jews were not used to call David, but Abraham, their father; nor is it, with

propriety, expressed, that God the Father said in, or by the Spirit, what follows,

why did the Heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? that is, the Gentiles, and the people of the Jews, Pilate, and his council, with the Roman soldiers, and the Jewish sanhedrim, with the common people; who raged against Christ, seized him in a furious manner, led him as a malefactor, and hurried him from bar to bar, in a tumultuous way, and with great noise and clamour urged the crucifixion of him; nor did their rage cease until they had put him to death: yet it was a vain thing in them to imagine he should be held under the power of death; or that this would put a stop to the spread of his doctrine, and the enlargement of his kingdom and interest; since he rose from the dead, as a triumphant conqueror, over all his enemies, and pouring forth his Spirit, in an extraordinary way, he spread his Gospel, and his glory throughout the earth.

Ver. 26. *The kings of the earth stood up*, etc.] Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, sometimes called a king, (<4014>Mark 6:14) and Pilate the Roman governor, who represented his master Caesar; these stood, or rose up in an hostile manner, and set themselves against, and opposed themselves to the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth:

and the rulers were gathered together; the Jewish rulers, Annas, Caiaphas, and the rest of the members of the sanhedrim, who met together more than once; and particularly at the high priest's palace, to consult how they should take Jesus and put him to death; and who also gathered together at the same place, when he was taken, to arraign, examine, and condemn him. And this opposition, and these conspiracies and consultations, were

against the Lord: Jehovah, the Father of Christ, who sent him, and anointed him; so that what was done against Christ, was done against the Lord, their views and designs, their interest and glory, being the same:

and against his Christ; or anointed one, who was anointed by him, with the Holy Ghost, from his birth, and at his baptism, to be prophet, priest, and King.

Ver. 27. *For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus*, etc.] This is the interpretation of the above passages in (<9001>Psalm 2:1,2) and the application of them to Jesus; who is called the "child" of God, because the human nature of Christ was taken into union with the second person, who is the Son of God: unless the word should rather be rendered "servant", as it is in

(<40425>Acts 4:25) and which is a character that belongs to Christ, and is often given him as Mediator, who, as such, is God's righteous servant; and he is called "holy", because he was so in his conception and birth, and in his life and conversation, being free both from original sin, and actual transgression; and which is an aggravation of the sin and guilt of these men, that they should rise up, and gather together against him; and yet it was a clear case, a notorious fact, a certain truth, that could not be denied: and for the further aggravation of their crime, as well as for the sake of explaining the phrase "his, Christ", it is added,

whom thou hast anointed; with the oil of gladness, above his fellows. Christ was, in some sense, anointed to be prophet, priest, and King, from eternity, being so early set up as Mediator, or called unto, and invested with that office; (see <200822>Proverbs 8:22, 2:6) and he was anointed in time, both at his incarnation and baptism, having the Spirit without measure given unto him, which is that anointing, that teacheth all things.

Both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together. This Herod was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the great, and who beheaded John the Baptist; and Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea, at the time of Christ's death; the Gentiles were those of Pilate's council, and the Roman soldiers;

and the people of Israel, were the Jews, both the rulers, and the common people; the Syriac version renders it, "the synagogue of Israel": and these, though they were of different nations, and of different interests, yea enemies to one another, as the Jews and Gentiles in general were; and as were Herod and Pontius Pilate in particular; yet all gathered, consented, and agreed together to mock, scourge, and crucify this innocent and holy person. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions add, "in this city"; and so the above copies of Beza's, and others; meaning, in the city of Jerusalem, where the apostles now were, and where the above persons met together, and from whence a prophet could only perish. The Alexandrian copy reads, "in this thy city": which was called the city of God, and the holy city; and yet in this was this wicked convention, and all this wickedness done.

Ver. 28. *For to do whatsoever thy hand*, etc.] It was not the end of their gathering together against Christ, or it was not their intention and design, to fulfil the purposes and decrees of God, but to fulfil their own lusts, and satiate their rage and malice against him; but it was so in the event,

according to the wise disposal of providence, that by their gathering together, by their consultations and conspiracies, they brought about what God in his everlasting council had decreed. By “the hand” of the Lord here is not meant, the grace and favour of God; or the power and providence of God; or his word of precept, his revealed will; but his secret will, the counsel of his will, the hidden purpose of his heart, the wise consultation of his mind, which is formed according to his infinite wisdom: so in (2 Samuel 14:19) it is said, “is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?” that is, the head of Joab, the wise counsel of Joab; and so the Jewish writers interpret it, wtx[, “his counsel” [f181]: and so the word is explained here immediately; for it follows,

and thy counsel determined before to be done: God’s decrees are from eternity; there is nothing comes to pass in time but what he has beforetime determined should be done, either by effecting it himself, or doing it by others, or suffering it to be done, as in the case here. Whatever was done to Christ, either by Jews or Gentiles, by Herod or Pontius Pilate, was according to the secret will of God, the covenant he made with Christ, and the council of peace that was between them both: what they wickedly did, God designed for good, and hereby brought about the redemption and salvation of his people: this neither makes God the author of sin, nor excuses the sinful actions of men, or infringes the liberty of their wills in acting.

Ver. 29. *And now, Lord, behold their threatenings*, etc.] Meaning not with his eye of omniscience, which he could not but do; but that he would so take notice of them, as in his providence to rebuke them for them, or restrain them, or make them fearless of them:

and grant unto thy servants; the apostles, and all the ministers of the word, who are the servants of the most high God, and who serve him in the Gospel of his Son, with great cheerfulness and faithfulness:

that with all boldness they may speak thy word; and not their own, or another’s; the Gospel, which is God’s speech, or a word, a message of grace and mercy from him to sinful creatures. The request of the whole church is, that the ministers of the word might not be intimidated by the menaces of the sanhedrim; but go on to declare it with all freedom of expression, with all boldness, courage, and intrepidity of mind, and all openness and faithfulness, and in the most public manner. And such a

petition shows, that as it is gift of God to speak his word, or preach his Gospel, so it also is, to speak it freely, boldly, and faithfully, as it should be spoken.

Ver. 30. *By stretching forth thine hand to heal*, etc.] That is, by exerting his power in healing sicknesses, diseases, and lameness, as in the above instance, by the hands of the apostles; which, as it would be contrary to the schemes of the Jewish sanhedrim, and would confirm the doctrines of the Gospel; so it would animate the preachers of the word to preach it with more readiness, cheerfulness, and firmness of mind;

and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus; as had been done already, and by whose name particularly the lame man at the temple had received a cure, and in whose name the sanhedrim had forbid the apostles to preach, or to make use of it, in doing any other miracle.

Ver. 31. *And when they had prayed*, etc.] Either while they were praying, or as soon as they had done; for sometimes, as here, prayer is immediately heard, and an answer is returned, whilst the saints are speaking, or as soon as prayer is ended:

the place was shaken where they were assembled together; which, whether it was a private house, or the temple, is not certain: the latter seems more probable, because their number was so great, that no private house could hold them; and since this was the place where they used to assemble; this was now shaken with a rushing mighty wind, as on the day of Pentecost, and was a symbol of the divine presence, and a token that their prayers were heard, and an emblem of the shaking of the world by the ministry of the apostles:

and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, even with extraordinary ones, such as speaking with divers tongues, as before on the day of Pentecost; (see Acts 2:4) and this was the case not only of the apostles, but of the other ministers of the word, and it may be of the whole church:

and they spoke the word of God with all boldness; that is, the apostles, and preachers of the Gospel, spoke it with great freedom, and without fear, not only privately, in their community, but publicly, in the temple: this was what was particularly prayed for, and in which they had a remarkable answer.

Ver. 32. *And the multitude of them that believed*, etc.] The Gospel, and in Christ, the substance of it; and a multitude they were, for they were now about eight thousand persons. And though their number was so great, they

were of one heart and of one soul; there was an entire consent and agreement in doctrine, in matters of faith they were all of one mind and judgment, and there was a perfect harmony in their practice, they all performed the same duties, and observed the same commands and ordinances; and all pursued the same interest, and had the same ends and views; and there was a strict union of their affections to each other; their souls were knit to one another; so that there was, but as it were, one soul in this large body of Christians. Aristotle, being asked what a friend was, answered, one soul dwelling in two bodies [f182]: and so the Jews say, it is fit and proper that lovers or friends should be djа çyak djа blb, "of one heart, as one man" [f183]; and such friends and hearty lovers were these.

Neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; though he had a peculiar right unto them, yet he did not claim that right, nor insist on it, nor so much as speak of it, nor make use of his substance as if it was his own, reserving it for himself, or even disposing of it himself; but exposed it to the free use of the whole body, to enjoy it equally with himself:

but they had all things common; which was what they were not obliged to, but it was a free and voluntary action of their own, and so is not binding on others; nor indeed is their practice to be imitated, in the direct manner in which they did it, for their case was peculiar. They were not only every day liable to persecutions and to have their possessions seized, and their goods confiscated; but they also knew, that in process of time, Jerusalem would be destroyed, and they could not tell how soon; and therefore judged it right to sell off their possessions, and throw the money into one common stock, for their mutual support, and for the carrying on the common cause of Christ.

Ver. 33. *And with great power*, etc.] Either in a very powerful way, with great fervency of spirit, and ardour of mind, and uncommon zeal; or with great efficacy on the souls of men; or with many miracles, and powerful operations in healing the sick, casting out devils, etc.

gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; which they were chosen to be witnesses, and were eyewitnesses of; and which is a

fundamental article of the Gospel, and was what the Sadducees were particularly disturbed at, and on account of which they forbade them to preach any more in Christ's name.

And great grace was upon them all; not only upon the apostles and ministers, but upon the whole church: and which may be understood either of the large gifts of the Spirit of God, which were poured out upon them, and plentifully bestowed on them; or of the gracious protection of God over them, preserving them from the rage and malice of men; or of that grace and favour which they had among thee people in common; or of that charity, liberality and beneficence, which were among them, which sense is confirmed by what follows; though it may be all these senses may be taken in.

Ver. 34. *Neither was there any among them that lacked*, etc.] Bread to eat, or clothes to wear, or any of the necessaries of life; which shows their great charity, and gives a reason why they were in so much favour with the people, because they took so much care of their poor; and this flowed from the grace of God bestowed upon them:

for as many as were possessors of lands and houses; or "vineyards", as the Ethiopic version reads, whether in Jerusalem or elsewhere;

sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold; whether lands, houses, or vineyards.

Ver. 35. *And laid them down at the apostles' feet*, etc.] Showing great veneration and respect to the apostles, and a sort of neglect and contempt of their worldly substance; and signifying that they entirely delivered them to the apostles, and subjected them to their disposal:

and distribution was made unto every man, according as he had need; though they had all things in common, yet there was an order observed; a man might not go to the common stock and take out of it what he would; but as all was committed to the care of the apostles, and was in their power; the distribution was made by them, to every man, to the original proprietors, as well as to others, and that not as much as a man would have, or he might crave; but as much as he needed, for the present, of which the apostles were the judges.

Ver. 36. *And Joses*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read "Joseph", and so do Beza's most ancient copy, and two of his

manuscripts, and the Alexandrian copy, and others; for “Jose”, or “Joses”, is only an abbreviation or contraction of “Joseph”; though according to others it is the same with “Josiah”: there is one of this name, who was the sort of Alphaeus, and brother to two of the apostles, James and Jude, (<40135>Matthew 13:55) and another called “Joses Barsabas”; and it may be to distinguish the one from the other this is called “Joses Barnabas”; for so it follows,

who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas: his name before his conversion was “Joses”, or “Joseph”, or “Josiah”; and afterwards, or at least after he came to be acquainted with the apostles, and to be in their company, they called him “Barnabas”, The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, “who was of the apostles”; and so Barnabas is spoken of as if he was an apostle, (<46905>1 Corinthians 9:5,6)

which is, being interpreted, the son of consolation; or “of exhortation”; from the excellent gift and talent he had at exhorting; (see <441123>Acts 11:23 14:22) and from the use he was of for the comforting of distressed minds; for abn, “Naba, to prophesy”, includes both exhortation and comfort; and he having the gift of prophecy or preaching the Gospel, was called abnrb, “Barnabas”, a son of comfort, or a comforter, or an exhorter: and so Jerom [f184] interprets it, “the son of a prophet”. Drusius conjectures that his right name was amjn rb, “Bar Nachama”, and by contraction “Barnama”, and with a Greek termination “Barnamas”; which properly signifies, in the Chaldee and Syriac languages, “the son of consolation”, as it is here interpreted; and he observes, that the letters “M” and “B” are sometimes used one for an other: thus one and the same man is called “Berodach” and “Merodach”, (<122012>2 Kings 20:12, <233901>Isaiah 39:1) and the same river is called “Abana”, (<120512>2 Kings 5:12) and in the margent “Amana”; but others think he had his name from the same word that Noah had his, and which signifies rest and comfort, as appears from the reason of his name. “This same shall comfort us”, etc. And so the name of this man in the Chaldee or Syriac language was aba jn rb, which may be literally rendered “the son of the fathers’ rest”, or “comfort”. And this man is said to be

a Levite; of the tribe of Levi, and of the priestly race:

and of the country of Cyprus; or “by birth”, or “nation, a Cyprian”; for though he was a Jew, as is clear from his being of the tribe of Levi, and was born of Jewish parents, yet in Cyprus, and so was a native of that

place. The Ethiopic version renders it, “of the city of Cyprus”; but Cyprus was not a city, but a country; wherefore the Syriac version renders it, “of the place, or country of Cyprus”, as we do: it was an island in the further part of the Mediterranean sea; it had its name from the plant Cyprus, and is now by the Turks called “Kibris”. According to Pliny [f185], it lay to the east and west of Cilicia, and was opposite Syria, and was formerly the seat of nine kingdoms; its circumference was three hundred and seventy miles, and had been called by various names; as Acamantis, Cerastis, Aspella, Amathusia, Macaria, Crypton, and Colinia; in it were fifteen towns or cities, which wcre Paphos, Palsepaphos, Curias, Citium, Corineum, Salamis, Amethus, Lapethos, Solce, Tamaseus, Epidarum, Chytri, Arsinoe, Carpasium, and Golgi. According to the same writer [f186], it was by an earthquake divided from Syria; and that part of it which lay to the east from Syria, is said to be less than a hundred miles distant from it. And according to Mela [f187], its chief cities were Salamis and Paphos, mentioned in (<440405>Acts 13:5,6). And according to Ptolomy [f188], it had on the west Pamphylia, on the south the Egyptian and Syrian seas, and on the east the Syrian sea, and on the north the straits of Cilicia: it was inhabited by people of various nations, and, among the rest, by Jews; and R. Benjamin makes mention of Jewish Rubbans in Cyprus, in his time [f189].

Ver. 37. *Having land, sold it*, etc.] Whether this was in Cyprus, or in Judea, is not certain; nor how he came by it, whether he had bought it, as the priests and Levites might, and as Jeremiah, who was of the priests, bought a field at Anathoth, (<243209>Jeremiah 32:9) or, whether it was his wife’s dowry; for the Levites had nothing by inheritance: they had forty two cities, and the six cities of refuge to dwell in, and the field of the suburbs of these cities; which field or land was never to be sold, but to be a perpetual possession, (<032534>Leviticus 25:34) but now the ceremonial law was abolished, and this precept was not attended to, if the land was of this sort. Moreover, the Jewish doctors interpret the above law otherwise; and understand it only of changing, and not of selling, which they allow of; one of their canons runs thus [f190],

> “the priests and Levites, µyrkwm, “sell” always, and redeem always, as it is said, (<032532>Leviticus 25:32), “the Levites may redeem at any time”.”

Upon which canon, one of their commentators [f191] says,

> “they sell always; and not as an Israelite, who cannot sell less than two years before the jubilee; — but these “sell” even near the jubilee; “and they redeem always”: if they sell houses in walled towns, they are not confirmed at the end of the year, as the houses in the walled towns of Israelites; and if “they sell fields”, it is not necessary that they should remain in the hands of the buyer two years, but they may redeem them immediately, if they will.”

And another of them [f192] has this observation,

> “all agree that the Levites may not change a city, or suburb, or field, which are theirs, because it is said, (<03Le 25:34>Leviticus 25:34) “but the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold”; and the wise men of blessed memory say, the meaning of it is, it shall not be changed, for they do not change anything from what it was before.”

And agreeably to this is what Maimonides [f193] elsewhere says,

> “they do not make in the cities of the Levites a city a suburb, or a suburb a city, or a suburb a field, or a field a suburb, as it is said, (<03Le 25:34>Leviticus 25:34) “but the field of the suburbs of their cities shall not be sold”; from report (or tradition) we learn, that that is said, “shall not be sold”, means, shall not be changed; but the field, suburbs, and city, everyone of these three shall be as they are for ever. Priests and Levites who “sell” a field, of the fields of their cities, or an house of any of the houses of their walled towns, do not redeem according to this order (i.e. as the other Israelites), but “they sell fields”; and even near to the jubilee, and redeem them immediately.”

So that if this land of Barnabas lay in Judea, as is most likely, it might be sold, and much more, if in Cyprus. But, be it what and where it will, he sold it:

and brought the money; from Cyprus or Judea, or that part of the land of Canaan where it lay, and where he had sold it:

and laid it at the apostles’ feet; perhaps he might be the first person that did so, and set an example which was universally followed; however, he is particularly mentioned, being a man of note among the apostles, and of great usefulness in after times, and of whom frequent mention is made in other places.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 5

Ver. 1. *But a certain man named Ananias*, etc.] A name common among the Jews, the same with Hananiah, (<2800>Jeremiah 28:1, <4010>Acts 9:10, 23:2) it signifies not the humility of the Lord, or the affliction of the Lord, or the answer of the Lord, as say some, as if it was derived from hn[; but the grace of the Lord, or the Lord's gracious one, coming from ^nj: there is no dependence on names; though this man's name signified one that was in the grace and favour of God; he was not so, but a graceless person, as appears by what follows. It is very likely he was a minister of the word, since the account of him follows upon that of Barnabas, and is opposed to it; it may be he was one of the hundred and twenty, on whom the Holy Ghost fell on the day of Pentecost; and yet, though he had great gifts, had no grace. This shows there are hypocrites among men of the greatest names and characters, and in the purest churches; this first and pure church, which, in the preceding chapter, has such large encomiums, was not free from them:

with Sapphira his wife; whether this is the same name with "Shiphrah", (<0215>Exodus 1:15) or "Zipporah", (<0221>Exodus 2:21) both which are by the Septuagint called "Sephora", or whether another, and may signify "beautiful", is not very material. Jerom [f194] says, in the Syriac language this name signifies "beautiful"; though he first gives other explanations of it, as "narrantem, literatam, sive librariam", as though it was derived from the Hebrew word rps. The precious stone called sapphire seems to come from the same root as this, and to be so called because of its beautiful azure colour. The name "Sappho", which was the name of a famous poetess, the inventress of a kind of verse called "Sapphic" verse, is said to be the diminutive of this name "Sapphira". Drusius observes, it may be read arypx, "Tzephira"; which comes near to "Zipporah", and among other things signifies a "she goat"; and it was usual to give women names taken from such creatures. So "Rachel", a "sheep", and "Tabitha", or

“Dorcas”, a “doe”. But whatever her name or person were, her actions were disagreeable:

sold a possession; which was their own. So the Arabic and Syriac versions read, “their own field”, or “farm”; find the Ethiopic version, “their own vineyard”: it might be his wife’s dowry or jointure, and so her consent was necessary; or they might be jointly concerned in this sale, to show not only their concord and harmony among themselves; but that they agreed in their devotion and religious actions, and that being both filled with zeal for God, and love to the brethren, sold their estate to support the common cause.

Ver. 2. *And kept back part of the price*, etc.] At which the possession was sold; he reserved it for his own use, after he had given out that he sold it for the service of the church:

his wife also being privy to it; to this private reserve:

and brought a certain part; whether the greater part, or an equal part, half of it, or a lesser part; some little part of it, so the phrase seems to signify, is not certain:

and laid it at the apostles’ feet; as the rest did, thereby to make a show of charity, and cover the deceit.

Ver. 3. *But Peter said, Ananias*, etc.] Peter, by divine revelation, or by a spirit of discerning, such as Elisha had, who knew what his servant Gehazi had done, knowing what a reserve Ananias had made, calls him by his name, and says to him,

why hath Satan filled thine heart? or emboldened thee, given thee so much spirit and courage to act in such an impudent and audacious manner; so the phrase is used in (<17006>Esther 7:5 <21081>Ecclesiastes 8:11) see the Septuagint there, and often in Talmudic writings.

> “Says R. Joshua, I never ybl ynalm, “filled my heart”; or my heart never filled me to say to a man, go and take the change of these three things, etc. [f195].”

And says another Rabbi [f196],

> “though I say so, ybl ynalm al, “I never filled my heart”, or my heart never filled me to transgress the words of the companions;”

that is, I never durst do so. And again [f197], it being observed, that Isaiah should say, “hear, O heavens!” it is said,

> “who, or what is this, who wbl walm, “hath filled his heart”, or whose heart has filled him to call to the heavens to hear.”

But this instance of Ananias was such, that none but Satan could have put him upon, or emboldened him to have done; who from hence appeared to have the power over him, and to have possessed him, to have great access to him, even to his heart, and great influence upon it, so as to prompt him

to lie to the Holy Ghost; who was in the apostles, and by whom they were acted, and to whom he had given a discerning of spirits; so that it was a daring action, and downright madness, to go about to deceive them: or he pretended he had an impulse from the Spirit of God to sell his estate, and give the whole price of it to the apostles, and yet kept back part of it; which was acting contrary to that Spirit he pretended to be influenced by.

And to keep back part of the price of the land: that is, he lied against the Holy Ghost, by keeping back part of the price the land was sold for; when he had declared he sold it with this view, to give the whole for charitable uses, and affirmed that what he brought was the whole.

Ver. 4. *Whiles it remained, was it not thine own*, etc.] Before it was sold, it was his own proper estate; he had the sole propriety in it, and could have kept it, or disposed of it as he pleased: he was not obliged to sell it, he might have kept it as his own property; for selling of possessions at this time was a voluntary thing; it was what no man was forced to; it was a pure act of liberality, and what was not enjoined by the apostles; every man was left to his liberty.

And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? that is, the price for which it was sold: before he had declared that he sold it, in order to give the whole of it to the church, had brought it to the apostles as the whole; it was in his own power to dispose of, as he pleased, whether to give the whole, or a part of it, or it. He might have kept it all if he had thought fit, or have given what portion he pleased.

Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? for though Satan had an hand in it, and greatly solicited him to it, and spirited him up to do it, yet in conjunction with his own heart; and perhaps it began there, which Satan helped forward. It was not so of Satan as to excuse the wickedness of his

heart. It was owing partly to the sin of covetousness, which reigned in him, and partly to a desire of vain glory, and being thought a very religious man, that he acted such a part, and was so notoriously guilty of lying and hypocrisy.

Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God; that is, not to men only, for he had lied to the apostles; but to God also, to the Holy Ghost, who is truly and properly God, of which this passage is a full proof; and it was owing to his omniscience, which is a peculiar attribute of deity, that this wicked man, and this fraud of his, were discovered.

Ver. 5. *And Ananias hearing these words*, etc.] Of Peter's; by which he found his sin was detected, and by which he was convicted of it: and which set forth the evil nature of it, with its aggravated circumstances; and such power went along with them, and they cut so deep, as that immediately

he fell down and gave up the ghost; which is an instance of what the Jews call death by the hand of heaven: and this was done either by an angel; or rather by an extraordinary gift bestowed on Peter, being such an one as the Apostle Paul had, and used, when he smote Elymas the sorcerer with blindness, and delivered the incestuous person, and Alexander and Hymeneus to Satan.

And great fear came upon all them that heard these things; both upon the members of the church, and so was of service to make them careful of their words and actions, and cautious and circumspect in their lives and conversations; and upon those that were without, and might be a means of making them fearful of speaking against them, or mocking at them, or of joining themselves to them, without being thoroughly satistied that they should, and had a right, and were meet for it.

Ver. 6. *And the young men arose*, etc.] The younger brethren of the church, who were robust, and strong, and fit for the following service: these rose up from their seats at once, not willing that such an awful spectacle should lie long before them:

and wound him up; in linen clothes, as was the manner of the Jews:

and carried him out: of the house where they were, and out of the city; for the burying places of the Jews were without the city:

and buried him; which was all done in a very short time, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 7. *And it was about the space of three hours after*, etc.] The death of Ananias. So much time was taken up in burying of him; and in less time it could not well be, since the burying places of the Jews were without the city, as before observed: and if they were as distant from other cities, as they were from the cities of the Levites, they were, as Dr. Lightfoot shows from Maimonides [f198], above a mile and half off: though there is a Jewish canon which runs thus [f199];

> "they put carcasses, graves, and tanners, fifty cubits from a city."

So that to go thither, open the grave, inter the dead, and return, must take up so much time; and so much time his wife had to reflect upon what she and her husband had done, but seems not to have had any thought about it, at least not any remorse of conscience for it:

when his wife, not knowing what was done; she knew that her husband kept back part of the price of the land, and how much it was, and what he brought to the apostles; but she did not know that the fraud was detected, nor what followed; as that her husband was immediately struck dead, and was carried out and buried; which it is pretty much she should not in this time, when the thing was awful and shocking, the news of which must fly apace all over the city: but it looks as if the company of the saints was not broke up all this while, and that no one went out to carry it abroad, but the young men that went to bury him. Sapphira therefore, being ignorant of the whole affair,

came in; to the temple or house where the apostles were, expecting to see her husband among the apostles, and chief men, in great honour and esteem for what he had done; and that he would be on equal foot with Barnabas and others, who had sold all they had, and brought the whole price of their possessions into the common stock.

Ver. 8. *And Peter answered unto her*, etc.] Who might be inquiring for her husband; though such a way of speaking was common with the Jews, when nothing goes before to which the answer is made; of which there are frequent instances in the sacred writings:

tell me whether ye sold the land for so much; naming the sum of money which Ananias had brought; though the historian does not mention it. The

Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, “tell me, O woman”, etc. not calling her by her name, as he did her husband, (Acts 5:3)

yea, she said for so much; just that sum, and no more.

Ver. 9. *Then Peter said unto her, how is it that ye have agreed together*, etc.] For husband and wife to agree together in what is good, in things civil, honest, and lawful, and in religious matters, is very commendable; but to agree in a fraud, in a lie, is very dreadful:

to tempt the Spirit of the Lord; to try whether the apostles had the Spirit of the Lord, or not; and whether the Spirit of the Lord that was in them was omniscient and omnipotent, would take any notice of it, and inflict punishment for it:

behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door; which Peter knew either by hearing the sound of their feet, as Ahijah the prophet heard the sound of the feet of Jeroboam’s wife, as she came in at the door, (1 Kings 14:6) or by the same spirit as Elisha knew that Gehazi ran after Naaman, and received money and garments from him, (2 Kings 5:26) and shall carry thee out; of this house dead, and bury thee, as they have thy husband.

Ver. 10. *Then fell she down straightway at his feet*, etc.] In like manner, and by the same hand of God as her husband before:

and yielded up the ghost; died directly:

and the young men came in and found her dead; the young men who had been to inter her husband came into the house at that instant, and found her dead upon the floor, at the feet of the Apostle Peter:

and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband; as it was usual with the Jews to do. So they say [f200], that in the cave of Machpelah were buried Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah.

Ver. 11. *And great fear came upon all the church*, etc.] Which was still more increased by this instance of Sapphira’s death:

and upon as many as heard these things; who were not of the church; (See Gill on “Acts 5:5”).

Ver. 12. *And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought*, etc.] That is, by their means, or by them as instruments, or through the imposition of their hands on persons, many miraculous and wonderful cures, as well as other extraordinary actions, were performed:

among the people; the common people, who attended in great numbers on their ministry, when the chief men and rulers of the nation despised them.

And they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch; which is to be understood not of the whole church, nor of the hundred and twenty disciples, but of the twelve apostles, who met in this place to preach the Gospel to the people; and they were agreed in their doctrine and practice, and were united in their affections to one another. Of Solomon's porch, (See Gill on "<3102>John 10:23"). These words, with what follow to the 15th verse, are to be read in a parenthesis.

Ver. 13. *And of the rest durst no man join himself to them*, etc.] By the rest are meant, either those that were without the church, and those either the profane and persecuting sort, who durst not come nigh the apostles to touch them, or say one word to them, for fear of being struck dead; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "and then there was no more any man that durst restrain them", or go about to hinder them from preaching: or the better sort, such who attended on the word, and were either real believers or hypocrites, who durst not, one nor the other, join themselves to them, because of what happened to Ananias and Sapphira; which not only deterred hypocrites from coming into the church, but also kept off such who were really converted persons; but this sense seems to be contradicted in the following verse. Rather therefore by them are meant those within the church, and not only the private members of it, but the ministers of the word, of which number Ananias might have been; these, the rest of them, durst not come nigh the apostles, or familiarly converse with them, much less put themselves upon an equal foot with them, but with great reverence of them kept their distance from them:

but the people magnified them; both the ministers of the word, as Barnabas and others, who showed such a respect to the apostles, they having extraordinary gifts, and extraordinary things also being done by them, and especially the twelve apostles; these the people in general spoke well of, praised and cried up as marvellous men, because of what was done by them.

Ver. 14. *And believers were the more added to the Lord*, etc.] That is, to the church, as in (Acts 2:47) over which Christ was Lord and head; for they were added to the Lord before, by believing in him, when they gave up themselves to him, to be saved by him; and now to the apostles, and the church by the will of God; and this case of Ananias and Sapphira was so far from hindering persons from coming into the church, that there were greater additions made to it than before, even of such as were true believers in Christ. The Ethiopic version reads, “and many were added who believed in our Lord”; the Arabic version, “they that believed in the Lord increased”; the Syriac version, “and they more increased who believed in the Lord”; and so the Vulgate Latin version, “but the multitude of them that believe in the Lord were the more increased”; all of them reading the phrase, “the Lord”, not in construction with the word “added”, but with “believers: multitudes both of men and women”; the weaker sex were not intimidated any more than the men, such power went along with the word, and such grace was bestowed upon them. This church must now be prodigiously numerous, for before these additions, eight thousand had been added to the hundred and twenty; such success the Gospel had, and such progress it made in the hands of such mean and contemptible persons, notwithstanding the opposition of the chief men of the nation to it.

Ver. 15. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, etc.] These words are to be read in connection with the former part of the twelfth verse. Such miraculous cures being wrought by the apostles, the people who had sick persons in their houses, hearing of it brought them out; either “into the streets”, as we render it, and as the Alexandrian copy reads; or “in every street” in Jerusalem, waiting for the apostles as they came, to receive a cure from them:

and laid them on beds and couches; for the better conveniency of carrying them to the apostles, or for their lying upon them until they came by that way:

that at the least, the shadow of Peter passing by, might overshadow some of them. The Vulgate Latin version adds, “and be delivered from their infirmities”; but this is not supported by any copy, nor is it in any other version. Peter is only mentioned because he was most known, he being the chief speaker and actor. Who these were that fancied there was such a virtue in Peter’s shadow, and whether any were cured by it, is not certain. However, it is a vain thing in the Papists to conclude from hence the

primacy of Peter, the worshipping of images, and that the Pope is Peter's shadow, and has his power.

Ver. 16. *There came also a multitude out of the cities round about*, etc.] The fame of the apostles' miracles spread in the cities round about Jerusalem; those that were at some distance as well as near, and large numbers of people came from thence,

unto Jerusalem; where the apostles were: the Syriac version adds, "unto them", that is, to the apostles; and the Arabic version, "with them"; along with those of the city of Jerusalem, who brought out their infirm persons into the streets to be cured:

bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits; with devils, by whom they were not only possessed, but greatly harassed and afflicted: sometimes tearing and convulsing them, and sometimes throwing them on the ground, and bruising them; or into fire and water, of which there are some instances in the evangelists:

and they were healed everyone; none went without a cure, which served greatly to confirm the Gospel preached by the apostles, and to irritate and provoke their enemies, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 17. *Then the high priest rose up*, etc.] Annas, or rather Caiaphas; (See Gill on "<4006>Acts 4:6") he having heard what miracles were wrought by the apostles, and what additions were made to them, rose up from his seat and went out of the sanhedrim, in great haste, and in much wrath and passion:

and all they that were with him; in council, that were of his kindred or his party, as John and Alexander, and others, (<4006>Acts 4:6)

which is the sect of the Sadducees; who denied the resurrection of the dead; which doctrine the apostles preached; and this made the high priest and his party very uneasy; whence it seems that the then high priest was a Sadducee, and also the sanhedrim at that time, and which was sometimes the case. Great care indeed was taken of an high priest, that he should not be a Sadducee; on the eve of the day of atonement they always swore the high priest, lest he should be a Sadducee, that he would make no innovation in what was ordered him; and particularly that he would not put the incense upon the fire without, and then carry it in a censor into the most holy place, as the Sadducees understood [f201], (<030603>Leviticus 16:3). But

notwithstanding all their care, sometimes they had a Sadducee for an high priest; we read of one John, an high priest, who ministered in that office fourscore years, and at last became a Sadducee [f202]. And sometimes a sanhedrim consisted only of Sadducees: hence we read of yqwd[lç ˆyd tyb, "a sanhedrim of Sadducees" [f203]; and such an one was this; and therefore it is not to be wondered at what follows,

and they were filled with indignation; or "zeal", for Sadducism; and which was a blind zeal, and not according to knowledge: or "with envy" at the apostles for the miracles done by them, and because of the success that attended them; fearing lest, should they go on at this rate, their religion and authority would come to nothing. Sadducism now seemed greatly to prevail among men in power; and the Jews say [f204],

> "the son of David will not come until the whole government is turned to the opinion of the Sadducees."

Ver. 18. *And laid their hands on the apostles*, etc.] That is, laid hold on them, and took them, and carried them away; at least their servants did so, by their orders:

and put them in the common prison; where malefactors were put; and this both for greater security, and for greater disgrace.

Ver. 19. *But the angel of the Lord*, etc.] Or "of God", as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, whether Michael, as some have thought, or Gabriel, or what particular angel, is not material to know. However, it was a good angel, an elect angel, one of those ministering spirits sent by God to minister to the heirs of promise; one of those angels that excel in strength, as appears by what he did: for he

by night opened the prison doors; where the apostles were put, and which had more doors than one, and these strong and close shut, and guarded by keepers; but were easily opened by the angel. It was very likely at, or towards the evening, when the apostles were taken, and therefore they were committed to prison, there to lie all night, till next morning, when the sanhedrim would meet together to consult what to do with them:

and brought them forth; out of the prison, leading them out at the doors he had opened for them:

and said; the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions add, “to them”; that is, to the apostles, as follows.

Ver. 20. *Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people*, etc.] They were not delivered out of prison, in order to go and secure themselves from danger; but to go about the work they were called to, to preach the Gospel “in the temple”, the place of worship; and a proper place to meet with persons to preach to, being a public place, whither the Jews always resorted; and there they were to stand, and continue with courage and intrepidity, not fearing the reproach and wrath of men, seeing they had both Christ and truth on their side; and there declare it “to the people”, the common people, the multitude, even all that came to hear: the Gospel is to be preached to all; the Spirit of God makes it effectual to some, and others are rendered inexcusable: the substance of what they were to speak follows,

all the words of this life; all the doctrines of the Gospel; none of them are to be dropped or concealed, but to be spoken out, fully, freely, and faithfully, with all boldness and constancy; though they cannot be comprehended by reason, and are rejected by learned men, and the majority of the people; though charged with novelty and licentiousness, and attended with reproach and persecution: and these may be called, “the words of life”, even of eternal life, as in (John 6:68) because they show the nature of it, and point out the way unto it; not by the law, and obedience to that, but by Christ and his righteousness; and are the means of quickening dead sinners, of reviving drooping saints, and of nourishing them up unto eternal life: and also the words of “this” life; not of this present frail, mortal, and sinful life; but of life by Christ, which is begun to be enjoyed now, and will be perfectly enjoyed hereafter: and particularly the doctrine of the resurrection unto life may be intended; in opposition to the Sadducees, who denied it, and were the men that, being filled with indignation against them for preaching it, had seized them, and put them into prison; and being now delivered from prison, they are bid to go and preach this same doctrine again, in the most public manner: though some think there is an hypallage in the words; and so the Syriac version renders them, “all these words of life”; and the Ethiopic version, “this word of life”; meaning the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, they had in commission to preach, and for which they were reproached and persecuted.

Ver. 21. *And when they heard that*, etc.] Or “his word”, as the Arabic version supplies; that is, the word of the angel, the orders enjoined them by him, to go to the temple, and there preach the Gospel; this clause is left out in the Syriac version:

they entered into the temple early in the morning; they were obedient to the command of the angel, believing him to be a messenger of God, who declared his will, which they readily complied with, and were indeed eager of doing it; and therefore early in the morning, as soon as ever the temple doors were opened, and there were any people got together, they went in:

and taught; as the Ethiopic version adds, “the people, this word of life”; the doctrine or doctrines of the Gospel which the angel had bid them teach:

but the high priest came, and they that were with him: as before, to the place where the sanhedrim used to meet; either the chamber Gazith, or the shops, or some other place in Jerusalem; (See Gill on “<4045>Acts 4:15”).

and called the council together; the sanhedrim, consisting of seventy one, which usually met at the time of the morning daily sacrifice; perhaps on this occasion they might be called together sooner, and everyone of them summoned to attend; for otherwise it was not necessary that every particular member should be present, but when there was any business of importance which required it, they were all gathered together [f205]:

and all the senate of the children of Israel; or the elders, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, the rest of the elders of the city, besides those of the great sanhedrim. Dr. Lightfoot thinks, that the two other sanhedrim, or courts of judicature in Jerusalem, which consisted of twenty three persons apiece, are designed; and who, as he rightly observes from Maimonides [f206], sat the one in the gate of the court, the other in the gate of the mountain of the house; so that all the courts in Jerusalem were called together at this time; and if they all met, they made up a hundred and seventeen men:

and sent to the prison to have them brought; that is, “the apostles”, as the Syriac version reads. The sense is, that the high priest, and those that were with him at the same time that they convened all the courts of judicature in Jerusalem together, sent their officers to the prison, to fetch the apostles; or else the sanhedrim, and senate of Israel being met, they ordered their officers to go to the common jail, and bring the apostles before them, to be examined, tried, and judged by them.

Ver. 22. *But when the officers came*, etc.] The Arabic version adds, “to it”; that is, to the prison;

and found them not in the prison. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “the prison being opened they found them not”; when they came to the prison, they opened the doors of it, or the keepers for them; for though the angel had opened them for the apostles, yet he shut them again, as he brought them out; for these men found the doors shut, as the following verse shows, and who upon opening them and searching the prison, for the apostles, could find none of them in it; wherefore they returned; the Arabic version reads, “to them”; to the sanhedrim:

and told; that is, them, as both the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read.

Ver. 23. *Saying, the prison truly found we shut with all safety*, etc.] Locked, barred and bolted;

and the keepers standing without before the doors; both inner and outer in their proper places, diligently discharging their office:

but when we had opened we found no man within; that is, none of the apostles, for there might be other prisoners in it, who were not released by this means.

Ver. 24. *Now when the high priest*, etc.] Or “the priests”, as it is read in most copies; the Complutensian edition reads, “the high priest”; and he is certainly designed, since he is distinguished from the chief priests after mentioned: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, leave out this word; as does also the Alexandrian copy:

and the captain of the temple; the same versions read in the plural number; (See Gill on “<42204>Luke 22:4”), (See Gill on “<42252>Luke 22:52”), (See Gill on “<44001>Acts 4:1”).

and the chief priests heard these things; which the officers related, that the prison doors were shut and sure, and the keepers upon their watch, and yet the apostles gone:

they doubted of them, whereunto this would grow; they did not doubt of the truth of the things their officers told them, but they were amazed at them, and hesitated in their minds about them, and were anxiously thoughtful; what this would, or should be, or how this should be done; that the prison doors should be shut, and yet the prisoners gone; they were in

suspense and anxiety of mind, what to impute it to; whether to a divine and supernatural power, or to magic art; and were uneasy in their minds what would be the issue of so strange and surprising an event.

Ver. 25. *Then came one and told them, saying*, etc.] Who this man was, is of no consequence to know; it can hardly be thought that he was one of the number of the disciples, or a member of the church, or a professor of the Christian religion; but rather an enemy, and one that sought his own interest, and to obtain the favour and affection of the chief priests and elders, and therefore very officiously came to them, and reported as follows:

behold, the men whom ye put in prison, last night,

are standing in the temple; openly and publicly, and without fear;

and teaching the people; in the name of Jesus, which the sanhedrim had forbid them to do.

Ver. 26. *Then went the captain with the offcers*, etc.] That is, the captain of the temple, who had the command of it; he went thither attended with the officers and servants of the chief priests, the same that had been sent to the prison, to fetch the apostles:

and brought them without violence; they did not lay hold upon them, and drag them away in a violent manner; but gave them good words, and allured them, and entreated them to go along with them, and perhaps promised them, that no hurt should come to them, and that they should have full liberty to speak for themselves; the Ethiopic version renders it, “they brought them, behaving themselves mildly towards them”; they used no forcible, but gentle methods; they did not seize them in a violent way, and bind them, and carry them away by force:

for they feared the people; who had them in great esteem, because of the miracles done by them, and the benefit they received from them, both for their souls and bodies:

lest they should have been stoned; by the populace, who had they used them in a severe and cruel manner, would have risen upon them, and stoned them to death; the Ethiopic version renders it, “because they feared the people, they did not stone them”; as if the captain of the temple, and

the officers would have stoned the apostles, but that they were afraid of the people.

Ver. 27. *And when they had brought them*, etc.] From the temple, to the place where the sanhedrim sat, which, by this, seems to have been not in the room Gazith, nor in the shops, which were both in the temple, but in some part of the city of Jerusalem:

they set them before the council; whereby was fulfilled what Christ had foretold, (<4010>Matthew 10:17) "they will deliver you up to the councils"; they placed them before the whole sanhedrim; in the midst of it, (see Gill on "<4407>Acts 4:7"); and as the Ethiopic version here reads:

and the high priest asked them; though he was not president of the council, but Gamaliel, after mentioned; yet being in so high an office, and a principal member of the council, took upon him the examination of the apostles.

Ver. 28. *Saying, did not we straitly command you*, etc.] Or give you strict orders, with severe threatenings,

that you should not teach in this name? the Ethiopic version reads, "in the name of Jesus"; which is what is meant, but was not expressed by the sanhedrim; (see <4017>Acts 4:17)

and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine; they disregarded the council, and its orders, its commands and threatenings, and preached the doctrines of the Gospel; and particularly that concerning the resurrection of Christ, and through him the resurrection of all the dead; and with such success, that great part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem received it; at least there were great numbers in all parts of the city which attended to it, and embraced it: and this they represent as a novel doctrine, devised by the apostles, and peculiarly theirs; and which Moses, and the prophets, were strangers to:

and intend to bring this man's blood upon us; by charging us with the murder of him, and representing us as guilty of shedding innocent blood, and so stirring up the people, and the Romans against us, to take vengeance on us for it: this, as if they should say, seems to be the intention and design of your ministry, particularly in asserting, that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, is now risen from the dead, and was a holy, innocent, and righteous person, as his resurrection shows; and therefore, as

we have been guilty in shedding his blood, the punishment of it will, one day or other, be inflicted on us; as it accordingly was, and as they themselves imprecated in (<40 27 25>Matthew 27:25). It is to be observed, that they do not mention the name of Jesus, only by way of contempt, call him "this man", as it is usual with the Jews to do, when they speak of him. So a commentator [f207] on (<01 27 39>Genesis 27:39) says of some,

> "they believed in a man whom they set up for God; and Rome believed, in the days of Constantine, who renewed all that religion, and put upon his banner the form awhh çyah, "of that man":"

and so another of their writers [f208] uses the phrase several times in a few words. Judah ben Tabai fled to Alexandria,

> "that they might not make him president, and in the way, with one disciple; as it happened to Joshua ben Perachiah, with çyah wtwa, "that man"; and ye may receive it for a truth, that "that man" was his disciple — and the truth is, that "that man" was born in the fourth year of the kingdom of Jannai the Second."

So an heretic is said to be one that confesses "that man"; and heretics are the disciples of "that man", who turned to evil the words of the living God [f209]. Thus blasphemously and contemptuously do they speak of Christ.

Ver. 29. *Then Peter, and the other apostles, answered and said*, etc.] Peter began, as the mouth of the apostles, being the eldest man, and very bold and zealous; and the rest followed, or joined, with him in what he said:

we ought to obey God rather than men; this is said in answer to the charge of disobedience to the orders and commands of the council: men, civil magistrates, and ecclesiastical rulers, are to be obeyed in things which are not repugnant to the will of God; but in things that are, God is to be obeyed, and not men. God had commanded by an angel, that the apostles should go to the temple, and there preach the doctrines of the Gospel; the sanhedrim had forbid them to speak and teach in the name of Christ; who were now to be obeyed? God, and not men: from whence it appears that the apostles were to be justified in disregarding the council, and neglecting its orders; and which is no ways contrary to that obedience and submission, that is to be yielded to those that are in authority, in things civil and lawful.

Ver. 30. *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus*, etc.] Not from the dead, though this was true; but called him to the work and office of a Saviour, inverted him with that office, and sent him to perform that work; so that this refers rather to the incarnation of Christ, in consequence of the ancient council and covenant of grace: and this the apostles attribute to God the Father, under the character of "the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob", as in (<4403>Acts 3:13), to show that they did not bring in and worship any strange God; nor introduce any novel doctrine; or speak of any other Saviour or Redeemer, than he whom the God of their fathers had appointed, and who was made known to them, whom they looked for and believed in, and were justified and saved by:

whom ye slew and hanged on a tree; this is said in defence of themselves, being charged that they intended to bring this man's blood upon them; they therefore insist upon it that they had slain Jesus whom God raised up, inasmuch as they had condemned him to death in their sanhedrim, and had urged and importuned Pilate to crucify him, and had imprecated his blood upon them and on their children; and were not content to put him to any kind of death, but insisted on his being crucified, or hanged on a tree; that is, stretched out upon the cross, which was both a painful and shameful death, to which they were manifestly accessary, and therefore justly charged with it.

Ver. 31. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand*, etc.] Not at his right hand, though he is exalted to it, and is set down at it, but with, or by his right hand; that is, by his power: for being by him raised from the dead, he was exalted to the highest heavens, and placed in human nature at the right hand of God, on the same throne with him, crowned with glory and honour; and having a name above every name, and all power and authority both in heaven and in earth given him,

to be a Prince and a Saviour: being made and declared both Lord and Christ, Lord of lords, and Prince of the kings of tHe earth, the Prince of life and peace, the Head of the church, and over all things for the sake of it, and the Saviour of his body the church, of all the elect of God; not with a temporal, but a spiritual and eternal salvation, of which he is become the author by his obedience, sufferings, and death; and is an able and willing, a suitable and an only Saviour: and some of the branches of his power and grace are

for to give repentance to Israel; to the Israel whom God has chosen for himself, and Christ has redeemed by his blood, and whom the Spirit calls by his graee: these being sinners, as well as others, stand in need of repentance; and whereas this is not in any man's power, but is the free gift of God's grace; for though he should give men time and space to repent, and afford them the means of it, yet if he does not give them grace to repent, they never will, such is the hardness of man's heart; Christ is appointed to give this grace to the chosen ones, which he does by sending his Spirit to convince of sin, and to take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh:

and forgiveness of sins; free and full forgiveness of all sins; which being obtained by his blood, is applied by his Spirit to all that truly repent of them; for these two always go together; where he gives the one, he also gives the other: the manifestations and applications of pardoning grace are only made to repenting sinners; and there are none that truly, and in an evangelical way, repent of sin, but who have some views, or, at least, hopes of pardoning grace; and none ever mourn more over sin, than those that see it in the glass of forgiving love.

Ver. 32. *And we are his witnesses of these things*, etc.] Of the incarnation of Christ, of his crucifixion and death, of his resurrection from the dead, of his exaltation by the right hand of God, and of his offices as a Prince and a Saviour, and of the influences of his grace, in giving repentance and remission of sins to his people; and even to many of the Jews, who had been his crucifiers, and who were now converted under the ministry of the apostles:

and so is also the Holy Ghost; in his descent upon the apostles, through the miraculous gifts bestowed upon them, and the wonderful works done by them, and the mighty power accompanying their ministry to the conversion of sinners:

whom God hath given to them that obey him; that hearken to his Gospel, and believe in Christ, even to all private Christians, as well as ministers of the word; if not in his extraordinary gifts, yet in the ordinary measures of his grace.

Ver. 33. *When they heard that*, etc.] This defence of the apostles, in which they still insisted upon it, that they had been the crucifiers of Christ, and yet

that he was raised from the dead, and exalted in heaven, and was a spiritual Saviour of men:

they were cut; to the heart, as if they had been cut asunder with a saw; the Ethiopic version renders it, "they were angry", and "gnashed with their teeth", as if a saw was drawn to and fro; they were filled with rage and madness:

and took counsel to slay them; not in a legal and judicial way, but in a private manner, or by force; stirring up the zealots to rise up against them, and dispatch them at once, as blasphemers and heretics.

Ver. 34. *Then stood there up one in the council*, etc.] Or "in the sanhedrim", which the high priest had called together; this phrase is left out in the Syriac version: yet certain it is, that the great council was now assembled, and the disciples were now before them, and this man, who was one of the members of it, stood up in it; for it seems to have been the custom, that though they usually sat, yet when anyone had anything to say, or made a speech, he rose up from his seat.

A Pharisee named Gamaliel; he is described by his sect of religion, a Pharisee; of which, (See Gill on "Matthew 3:7") and by his name Gamaliel: he was the son of Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillell the great; which Simeon is, by some, thought to be the same that took Christ into his arms, (Luke 2:25) and this Gamaliel was also the master of the Apostle Paul, (Acts 22:3). This was a very ancient name in Israel; the prince of the children of Manasseh, that offered at the dedication of the tabernacle, was of this name, (Numbers 7:54) and perhaps this man might be of the same tribe. He is further described by his profession,

a doctor of law; he was one of the Misnic doctors, one of the fathers of tradition, that received the oral law from those before him, and handed it down to others; and was the five and thirtieth of this sort, as the Jews say [f210], from the giving of the law at Mount Sinai; or, as others [f211], the thirty first:

had in reputation among all the people; and therefore his advice was the more likely to take place, without giving offence, or exposing to danger, seeing he was highly esteemed, not only in the sanhedrim, but among the common people; and that not only because he was a Pharisee, and a very strict one, the glory of that sect, insomuch that it is said [f212], that

> “when he died, the glory of the law ceased, and purity and pharisaism died;”

that but because of his years, dignity, and place also; he is called commonly Gamaliel, ^qzh, “the elder”, because he lived to a great age [f213]. He died eighteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem [f214], and was had in veneration to the last. It is said of him [f215],

> “he ordered, before his death, that they should carry him to his grave in linen; for before this time they used to carry out the dead in silk; and this was more grievous to his relations than his death itself;”

because they thought he was not interred honourably enough. And it is also reported, that Onkelos, the proselyte, at his death, burnt as much for him in goods and spices, as came to seventy Tyrian pounds [f216]. He was also commonly called by the name of Rabban, which was a more honourable title than that of Rabbi or Rab; and his father Simeon was the first that had it [f217]; and he was now president of the sanhedrim: and hence he used that authority which is expressed in the next words,

and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; he ordered the apostles to be put out of the sanhedrim for a little while, that they might not hear what he had to say, and take encouragement from it; and that he might more freely speak his mind without giving them any countenance. The Alexandrian copy reads, “the men”, instead of “the apostles”; and so the Vulgate Latin version.

Ver. 35. *And said unto them, ye men of Israel*, etc.] This he said after the apostles were put out, when the council was by themselves; and he addressed them as “men of Israel”; not as distinct from the priests and Levites in the council, but because they were all of the stock of Israel; for this council did not consist of Israelites only, as distinct from priests and Levites, as appears from (<4452>Acts 5:21,27). A sanhedrim commonly consisted of each of these; though if only of Israelites it was a lawful one. Maimonides says [f218],

> “they did not use to appoint any in the sanhedrim, but priests, Levites, and Israelites, that were genealogized and fit to be married into the priesthood — -and that it was a command, that in the great sanhedrim there should be priests and Levites; as it is said, “thou

> shalt go to the priests and Levites"; but if they are not found, if they are all Israelites, lo, this is lawful,"

or a proper sanhedrim. His speech to them follows,

take heed to yourselves; consider well, do not act a rash and precipitant part; do not give way to passion and wrath, and hastily lay hands on these men, and destroy them; lest ye bring yourselves into disgrace and danger, and bring upon yourselves the ill-will and resentment of men, and the wrath of God: take time to consider of the matter, and deliberately consult

what ye intend to do as touching these men; what punishment to inflict upon them, whether imprisonment, scourging, or death; do nothing rashly.

Ver. 36. *For before these days rose up Theudas*, etc.]. There is one of this name Josephus [f219] speaks of, who set up for a prophet, and drew a large number of people after him; pretending, that if they would follow him to the river Jordan, and take their goods along with them, he would but give the word, and the waters would divide and leave them passage to go over dryfoot; but Cuspius Fadus, who then had the administration of Judea, sent out some troops of horse, before they were aware, and killed many of them, and took divers others, and brought them in triumph to Jerusalem, with the head of Theudas. This account agrees with this instance of Gamaliel, only differs in chronology; since, according to Gamaliel's account, this case of Theudas was some time ago, and must have been before now, or he could not have mentioned it; whereas the story Josephus relates, as being in the times of Cuspius Fadus, was several years after this. Some think Josephus is mistaken in his chronology, and then all is right. Others, that another Theudas is intended; who, as Origen says [f220], was before the birth of Christ, since he was before Judas of Galilee, who rose up in the days of the taxing, at which time Christ was born: and the phrase, before these days, seems to design a good while ago. This name was in use among the Jews, and is either the same with `hdwt`, "Thuda", or "Thoda", so the Syriac version reads; one of the disciples of Christ was so called by the Jews [f221], whose name was Thaddeus: or with `swdwt`, "Thudus"; one of this name, said [f222] to be a man of Rome, is frequently mentioned in the Talmud; and another also that was a physician [f223]; but both different from this "Theodas". The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, Theodas; and some take it to be a contraction of Theodotus, Theodorus, or Theodosius. Just as Theucharis is put for Theocharis, and Theudosia for Theodosia: but

it seems rather to be an Hebrew name; and so Jerom [f224] took it to be, who renders it “praise”: but who the man was is not certain; however, he rose up, as Gamaliel says, and made an insurrection,

boasting himself to be some body, or “some great one”, as the Alexandrian copy, and three of Beza’s copies read, and two of Stephens’s, and the Complutensian cdition; and as read also the Syriac and Arabic versions; just as Simon Magus did afterwards, (<4089>Acts 8:9) and so Josephus’s Theudas gave out, that he was a prophet, and promised great things to the people, as to divide the waters of Jordan for them, by a word speaking and lead them through it as on dry land:

to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves; who believing what he said, put themselves under his command, and set him at the head of them:

who was slain: so Josephus’s Theudas had his head cut off by the troops of Cuspius Fadus, the Roman governor:

and as many as obeyed him were scattered and brought to nought; some killed, and others taken; and so the faction was quelled, and came to nothing. This instance Gamaliel produces, to show that impostors and seditious persons, such as the apostles were thought to be, seldom succeeded, but generally failed in their attempts, and were blasted; and with the same view he mentions the following one.

Ver. 37. *After this man rose up, Judas of Galilee*, etc.] Of whom Josephus thus says [f225]:

> “there was a man of Galilee, by name Judas, who led his countrymen into rebellion, declaring it an evil, should they suffer tribute to be paid to the Romans, and introduce mortal rulers after God.”

And not unlike this is what another Jewish writer says [f226] of Judas the Galilean, and his party:

> “these were the cause of the Jews rebelling against the Romans, for they said, it was not fit that any should rule over men but God alone; and that no one should be called Lord, but the blessed God.”

And this insurrection was “in the days of the taxing”; which was made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria; and the reason of it was, because he

and his party would not pay that tax, for the reasons suggested in the above citations: and this is what Josephus refers to, when he says [f227],

> “Cyrenius came to Syria, sent from Caesar as judge of the nation, and appraiser of their estates; upon which Judas, the Gaulonite, (the same with Judas of Galilee,) rebelled, and Saddochus with him; saying, that this appraisment brought nothing else but servitude upon them; and therefore exhorted the nation to vindicate their liberty.”

And his exhortations and arguments prevailed with the people: wherefore it follows here,

and drew away much people after him; perhaps a much larger number than Theudas did, since they are not expressly mentioned how many they were:

he also perished; being killed in the insurrection, or taken and put to death by the Romans. So Origen says [f228], that he was punished, and his doctrine was destroyed, and remained only among a few contemptible persons:

and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed; were forced to fly, some one way, and some another, and could make nothing of it: and as this instance was after the other before mentioned; and was so early as under the government of Cyrenius, and at the time of the taxing under him; it shows that Theudas could not be the Theudas of Josephus, unless the words should be rendered as see choose to do, “besides this man rose up Judas”, etc. And others observe, that “after him”, is the same as “before him”; and which, however, at first hearing, may seem very absurd, yet is justified by instances, as being a very proper way of speaking, seeing, when an account proceeds from the last as nearest, the first must be last, and the last first. Some, in order to reconcile this passage, think, that there is a transposition in the words of Luke, and that they should be read thus, “for before those days rose up Judas of Galilee”, etc. and then, “after this man rose up Theudas”, etc. so making Judas of Galilee more ancient than Theudas, as he must be, if he is the same Theudas Josephus speaks of: but still it is a difficulty how he could be the same, when that fact of his, the above historian speaks of, was seven, or eight, or ten, and, as some say, twelve years after this speech of Gamaliel’s. To remove this, it is proposed, that what is said concerning Theudas is to be put into a parenthesis, and to be considered not as the words of Gamaliel saying them in the sanhedrim, but as the words of Luke the historian, who wrote after this fact was done;

and because of the agreement of it with that of Judas, mentioned by Gamaliel, he inserts it; here, and joins it with it [f229]. And yet, after all, it looks as if it was another Theudas that is here spoken of, who was before Judas; and that he that Josephus speaks of, might be, as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, one of his posterity, who was of, the same name, and trod in his steps, and. was guilty of sedition as his ancestor was, and as the sons of Judas were, mentioned by the same historian in the same place.

Ver. 38. *And now I say unto you*, etc.] This is the sum of my advice upon the observation of these and other instances:

refrain from these men, and let them alone; keep your hands off of them, do not attempt to take away their lives, but dismiss them quietly, nor go about to hinder them, in what they are concerned:

for if this counsel, or this work be of men; if the doctrine these men preach is an human device; or this business they are engaged in is only an human affair, projected by men, and carried on upon selfish principles, and worldly views, seeking only themselves, and their secular interests, and not the glory of God:

it will come to nought; as did the designs of Theudas and Judas.

Ver. 39. *But if it be of God*, etc.] If it is according to the counsel of his will; if it is a scheme of his forming, and a work to which he has called these men, and they proceed in it on good principles, and with a view to the honour and glory of God:

ye cannot overthrow it; it will proceed and get ground, and stand, maugre all the opposition of hell and earth; therefore do nothing to them, or hinder them from going on. Some copies read, “ye cannot overthrow them”; and add, “neither you, nor kings, nor tyrants; wherefore refrain from these men”; so Beza’s Cambridge copy.

Lest haply ye be found even to fight against God; which to do is downright madness, and which no man in his senses can expect to succeed in. There are some sayings of the Jewish doctors which seem to agree with these reasonings of Gamaliel [f230].

> “Says R. Jochanan the shoemaker, every congregation, which is for the name of heaven (or God) at length shall be established, but that

> which is not for the glory of God shall not be established in the end."

Which one of the commentators [f231] interprets in words still nearer to Gamaliel's language, thus:

> "it shall be that that counsel which is for God shall stand and prosper, but that which is not for God shall cease."

And in another place it is said [f232],

> "all contention (or dispute) which is for God, at length shall be established, but that which is not for God shall not in the end be established: what is contention that is for God? the contention of Hillell and Shammai, (two famous doctors among the Jews,) but that which is not for God is the contention of Korah, and his whole company."

Some have thought from this advice of Gamaliel, that he was a Christian, or greatly inclined to Christianity; but when it is considered what respect was shown him at his death by the Jews, before observed on (Acts 5:34) it will appear that he died a Pharisee; and especially it cannot be thought he had any favourable sentiments of the Christians, since a little before his death he ordered a prayer to be made against them. Maimonides says [f233], that

> "in the days of Rabban Gamaliel, the Epicureans (so the Amsterdam edition reads, but former editions read μynym, "heretics", by whom are meant Christians) increased in Israel; and they distressed the Israelites, and seduced them to turn aside from God; and when he saw that this was greater than all the necessities of the children of men, he stood up, and his council or sanhedrim, and composed another prayer, in which there was a request to God to destroy the Epicureans,"

or heretics, meaning the Christians: and though this prayer is sometimes ascribed to Samuel the little, yet it was composed by him at the hint and instigation of Gamaliel; for so it is said [f234], R. Gamaliel said to the wise men,

> "is there no man that knows how to compose a prayer for the Sadducees? (R. Asher reads "heretics";) Samuel the little stood up and composed one."

And it is also said [f235], that

> "Samuel the little composed, ^ynym tkrb, "the prayer for the heretics", before, or in the presence of Gamaliel the elder."

He made it when he was present, assisting, dictating, directing, and approving. The prayer was this [f236],

> "let there be no hope for apostates, and may all heretics perish in a moment, and all the enemies of thy people be quickly cut off: root out the kingdom of pride, and break, destroy, and subdue them in haste in our days."

In some forms it is added,

> "blessed art thou, O Lord, that breakest the wicked in pieces, and humblest the proud."

Upon the whole, Gamaliel does not seem to have been a Christian, or to have favoured the Christian religion; but he was, as he is said, (<4034>Acts 5:34) to be, a Pharisee: and this council, or sanhedrim, were, for the greater part of them, Sadducees, as seems from (<4057>Acts 5:17) who, as the Jews say, were wicked and base men, men of very ill manners, whereas the Pharisees were µynmjr, "merciful men" [f237]; and such an one was Gamaliel: he was a religious man in his way; a man of humanity, a mild and moderate man, that had compassion and pity for his fellow creatures; and could not give in to any schemes of cruelty and persecution, which the Sadducees were forward to; and upon these principles he acted, and upon these he gave this advice.

Ver. 40. *And to him they agreed*, etc.] They were convinced and persuaded by his reasonings, approved of his advice, and agreed to follow it:

and when they had called the apostles; into the council again, having sent their servants for them, or ordered them to be brought in:

and beaten them; or scourged and whipped them with forty stripes save one, whereby was fulfilled what Christ had foretold, (<4010>Matthew 10:17)

they commanded they should not speak in the name of Jesus; as they had strictly commanded them before, (<40418>Acts 4:18). Perhaps both in this, as well as in bearing the apostles, they did not closely attend to Gamaliel's counsel, who advised them to keep their hands off of them, and not hinder them, but let them alone in what they were about: but this might be thought by them not to their reputation, nor sufficiently asserting their authority, to dismiss them, without saying or doing anything to them:

and let them go; from the council to their own company: they released them, and loosed them from their bonds; they set them at liberty, and let them go where they would; and so far they followed Gamaliel's advice.

Ver. 41. *And they departed from the presence of the council*, etc.] Having been threatened and beaten by them:

rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name; Beza's ancient copy, and others; the Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions read, "for the name of Jesus"; in which name they were forbid to speak, and for speaking in it they were beaten; the Alexandrian copy, and the Syriac version read, "for the name": that is, for God, for the glory of God, and in the cause of God; μçh, "the name", is often used in Jewish writings for God: the shame they suffered for him was by being scourged with forty stripes save one; which was reckoned an infamous and ignominious punishment, and which was inflicted on persons guilty of very scandalous crimes [f238]: but this gave the innocent minds of the apostles no uneasiness; they accounted it an honour conferred on them to be called to suffering for the sake of God and Christ, and in so good a cause; they did what Christ exhorted them to, (<40511>Matthew 5:11) which shows they had much of the presence of God, and large measures of grace communicated to them, by which they were supported; and thus cheerfully bore all indignity and reproach, for the name of Christ, which was exceeding dear and precious to them.

Ver. 42. *And daily in the temple, and in every house*, etc.] Every day, with great constancy and assiduity, both publicly and privately; in the temple, the place of public worship, where the Jews resorted on that account; and in each of their private houses, as often as they had opportunity:

they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of God, truly and properly God, the only Saviour of sinners: they preached up the dignity of his person, the grace of his incarnation, the obedience of his

life, the benefits of his sufferings and death; they preached his resurrection from the dead, and the resurrection of the dead through him; they declared his ascension to heaven, his session at the right hand of God, and intercession for his people; they preached peace and pardon by his blood, atonement of sin by his sacrifice, justification by his righteousness, and complete redemption and salvation by him. And this they did without ceasing, not regarding the orders and threats of the sanhedrim; they waxed bolder and bolder in the ministry of the word, and were more constant and assiduous in it; their reproaches and persecutions increased their zeal for Christ, and his cause.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 6

Ver. 1. *And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied*, etc.] From an hundred and twenty to three thousand more, from thence to five thousand more, and after that a multitude of men and women were added, and still they were increasing; (see <40115>Acts 1:15) (<40241>Acts 2:41 4:4 5:14). This increase of the disciples agrees with what Maimonides says[f239], before observed, that

> "in the days of Gamaliel, µynym wbr, "the heretics were multiplied in Israel"."

The word "disciples" was a common name to all Christians, to all that believed in Christ, and was the name they went by, before they were called Christians, (<441126>Acts 11:26)

there arose a murmuring of the Grecians, or Hellenists, against the Hebrews; by the Hebrews are meant the Jews that dwelt in Judea, and were the inhabitants of that country, and chiefly of Jerusalem, who spoke the Hebrew, or rather the Syriac language; and by the Grecians, or Hellenists, are meant, not the Greeks that were proselyted to the Jewish religion, though there might be some few among them; but Jews who were born, and had dwelt, in some parts of Greece, and spoke the Greek language, and used the Septuagint version of the Bible; between these two a murmuring arose, a complaint was made by one against the other: so that, as it appears from the instance of Ananias and Sapphira, that this first and pure Gospel church was not free from hypocrites; it is also manifest, that though they were at first so united and harmonious in their affections and judgments, yet they were not always clear of feuds, animosities, and contentions; Satan bestirred himself, and got footing among them, as he commonly does where the Gospel is preached, and there is an increase of it: the reason of this uneasiness was,

because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration; that is, they had not that distributed which was necessary for them, nor so much as the

Hebrew widows; they complained of partiality, as if because the Hebrew widows were the natives of the country, and might be nearly related to many of the community, that therefore they were more regarded and better supplied every day, than their widows were, whose husbands had dwelt in foreign lands, and were not so well known, and had fewer acquaintance and relations; for it seems the ministration or distribution was made every day: and such a practice obtained among the Jews in common, who used to collect every day for the poor, and give it daily to them. Maimonides [f240] speaks of it in this manner;

> "they appoint collectors, who receive "every day", from every court, a piece of bread, or any sort of food, or fruit, or money, from whomsoever that offers freely for the time; and they divide that which is collected, "in the evening", among the poor, and they give to every poor person of it "his daily sustenance"; and this is called ywjmt, "Tamchui", or "the alms dish"."

And from hence the apostles might take up this custom, and follow it. The Ethiopic version renders it, "because they saw their widows minister", or "employed daily"; as if the complaint was, that their widows were too much made use of, and obliged to more frequent and to harder service in taking care of the poor, the sick, and helpless, than the other widows were, who had not their share of labour with them, but lived more at ease. Though others rather think the murmur was, because the Grecian widows were not taken into the number, and employed in taking care of the poor, as the Hebrew widows were; but the sense first given, of not having so good a share in the distribution, seems to be the best.

Ver. 2. *Then the twelve*, etc.] The twelve apostles, as the Syriac version reads; for their number was now complete, Matthias being chosen in the room of Judas: these being informed of the murmur there was between the two sorts of believers, the Hebrew and thc Hellenistic Jews,

called the multitude of the disciples unto them; either the hundred and twenty, the original members of the church, which first formed it, and on whom the Holy Ghost descended on the day of Pentecost; or rather the whole body of the church: for what the apostles had to say concerned them all; and they all had an equal right to chose their officers, that should minister unto them; and when they were convened together, they addressed them after this manner:

and said, it is not reason; or "it is not pleasing", neither to God, nor to us; so the Arabic version reads, "this does not please us"; nor could it be pleasing to the church itself:

that we should leave the word of God the study of the word, meditation upon it, and preaching it: not that they did relinquish either of these; but they were sometimes obliged to omit them, or not so frequently attend them; the care of the poor taking up more of their time, than the work of the ministry, or preaching of the Gospel would admit of; and therefore thought it not so right and proper, or so acceptable a thing to God and man, that they should in the least neglect a work of so great importance to the souls of men, and cause it to give way to that which only regarded their bodies:

and serve tables; the tables of the poor, collect for them, inspect into their several cases, and circumstances, and distribute accordingly to them; which required a good deal of time, care, thought, and circumspection, especially in such a church, where the numbers were so large. From hence we learn what is the business of deacons, who were afterwards appointed to take this part of the apostles' work off of their hands, and attend to it; which is to serve tables: the table of the Lord, by providing the bread and wine for it; receiving both from the minister, when blessed, and distributing them to the members; and collecting from them for the poor, and the defraying the charge; and observing what members are missing at the ordinance, whom they are to admonish; and if their admonitions are not regarded, to report it to the church: and they are likewise to serve the minister's table, by taking care that he has a sufficient competency for his support; and it belongs to them to stir up the members of the church to their duty in communicating to him; and what they receive of them, they are to apply to his use: and also, they are to serve the poor's table; to whom they are to distribute of the church's stock, with all impartiality, simplicity, cheerfulness, and sympathy.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore brethren look ye out among you*, etc.] Or "choose out among you", as the Syriac version adds, and as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it; which shows that this sort of officers, deacons, must be members of the church, and of the same church to which they are ordained deacons; and that they must be chosen to that office by the whole community, or by the common suffrages and votes of the people. So the [f241] Jews

> “did not appoint snrp, (which may be rendered) “an overseer of the poor”, in a congregation, without consulting the congregation;”

which officer seems pretty much to answer to a deacon.

Seven men, of honest report; why the number seven is fixed upon, perhaps no other solid reason is to be given, but that that number was judged sufficient for the care of the poor in that church, and at that time; nor is it obligatory on other churches to have just so many, neither more nor fewer; for such officers are to be chosen as the church requires: perhaps some regard might be had to ry[h ybwj h[bç, “the seven good men of the [f242] city” among the Jews, who had great authority in their synagogues, and who had power to sell them, when old and useless; and who seem, according to Maimonides [f243], to be the elders of the people. It is necessary that this sort of officers in the church should be men “of honest report”; that have a good testimony both from within the church and without, of their honesty and fidelity; since they are intrusted with the church’s stock, and have the care of many devolved upon them: so the collectors of alms among the Jews were to be men µynmanw µy[wdy, “known and faithful” [f244]; men of known probity and integrity: and, besides this good and honest report they were to have from others, they were also to be men

full of the Holy Ghost, of wisdom; they were to be men, not only that had the Spirit of God in them, but who were eminent for their rich experiences of grace; and who had superior gifts of the Spirit, whereby they were capable both of defending the truth against opposers, and of speaking a word of exhortation to duty, or of comfort under distress, or of reproof to members, as circumstances required; and it may be at this time when the church consisted of some of all nations, as seems from (<4209>Acts 2:9-11) it might be necessary that they should have the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, especially that of speaking with divers tongues, that they might be able to converse with persons of different languages: and “wisdom” is highly requisite in them, that they may be good economists of the church’s stock, and dispose of it in the most prudent manner: and conduct themselves agreeably to the different tempers and spirits of men they have to do with, and especially in composing differences among members.

Whom we may appoint over this business; assign or make over that part of their office to them, which hitherto they had exercised, and install them into it, and invest them with it.

Ver. 4. *But we will give ourselves continually to prayer*, etc.] Both in private for themselves, and the church; and in the houses and families of the saints, with the sick and distressed;. and in public, in the temple, or in whatsoever place they met for public worship:

and to the ministry of the word; the preaching of the Gospel, to which prayer is absolutely prerequisite, and with which it is always to be joined. These two, prayer and preaching, are the principal employment of a Gospel minister, and are what he ought to be concerned in, not only now and then, but what he should give himself up unto wholly, that his profiting might appear; and what he should be continually exercised and employed in: and if parting with that branch of the ministerial function, the care of the secular affairs of the church, and of the poor of it, was necessary in the apostles, that they might be more at leisure to attend to the more important and useful duties of prayer and preaching; it therefore seems necessary that those who are called to labour in the word and doctrine, if possible, should be exempt from all worldly business and employment; that of the ministry being sufficient to engross all a man's time and thoughts.

Ver. 5. *And the saying pleased the whole multitude*, etc.] The speech the apostles made took with them; all things they proposed were universally approved of; the whole body of the church came into it at once unanimously; they all judged it highly reasonable, that the apostles should be eased of the burden in taking care of the poor, and that it should be transferred to some other persons, and they fixed on the following:

and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost; he was a man eminent for his faith in Christ, and his faithfulness to him, and in everything he was concerned, and for his courage and boldness in the cause of Christ and for other gifts and graces of the Spirit, with which he was filled; he was, it is very likely, the most eminent person of all the seven, and is therefore named first; he is afterwards taken notice of, and was the first that suffered martyrdom for Christ, with which he was crowned, answerable to his name, which signifies a crown:

and Philip; who was also an evangelist, and had four daughters that prophesied; and perhaps is the same that went down to Samaria, and preached Christ there with great success, and after that baptized the Ethiopian eunuch;

and Prochorus; of this and the rest, no other mention is made in the sacred writings. He is said by some to be a nephew of Stephen's, and first bishop of Nicomedia; but these are things not certain; and as for the life of the Apostle John, said to be written by him, it is a spurious and fabulous piece.

And Nicanor; of this man we have no other certain account; for that he suffered martyrdom with "Stephen" is not to be depended on. It is a Grecian name; there is one of this name who was a general in Demetrius's army, who was sent by him against the Jews,

> "Then the king sent Nicanor, one of his honourable princes, a man that bare deadly hate unto Israel, with commandment to destroy the people." (1Mac 7:26)

and there was a gate of the temple, which was called the gate, of Nicanor:

and Timon; he is said to be afterwards bishop of Bersea; though others make him bishop, of Bostra; but with what truth cannot be asserted:

and Parmenus; of him no other account is given, than in the Roman martyrology, which is not to be depended upon, that he suffered martyrdom under Trajan:

and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch; who was first a Greek or Gentile, and then became a Jew, a proselyte of righteousness, and then a Christian, and now made a deacon. Some think, that from this man sprung the sect of the Nicolaitanes, spoken of in the Revelations; though others think, that that wicked set of men only covered themselves with his name, or that they abused some words of his, and perverted the right meaning of them; though was it certain he did turn out a wicked man, it is not to be wondered at, that since there was a devil among the twelve apostles, there should be a hypocrite and a vicious man among the first seven deacons. It is observable, that the names of all these deacons are Greek names; from whence, it seems, that they were of the Grecian or Hellenistic Jews; so that the church thought fit to chose men out of that part of them which made the complaint, in order to make them easy; which is an instance of prudence and condescension, and shows of what excellent spirits they were of.

Ver. 6. *Whom they set before the apostles*, etc.] They did not barely nominate and propose them to them, but they brought them into their

presence, and placed them before them, as the persons whom they had chosen, in order to be ordained by them.

And when they had prayed; for these seven men set before them, that they might appear to be richly qualified for this office, and might honourably and faithfully discharge it, to the peace of themselves, the advantage of the church, and the glory of God:

they laid their hands on them; that is, they ordained them, they installed them into their office, and invested them with it, using the rite or ceremony of laying on of hands, which was used by the apostles for the conferring of gifts, and in benedictions, and at the ordination of officers; and seems to be borrowed from the Jews, who used, it at the creation of doctors among them, and at the promotion of them to that dignity; and which they call hkyms, or ordination by imposition of hands; though that rite was not looked upon to be essentially necessary: for so they say [f245],

> "ordination or promotion to doctorship is not necessarily done, dyb, "by the hand", as Moses did to Joshua, but even rwbydb, "by word" only; it was enough to say, I ordain thee, or be thou ordained or promoted."

Ver. 7. *And the word of God increased*, etc.] This stratagem of Satan did not succeed to divide the church, but issued in the better decorum and discipline of it, and in the spread and success of the Gospel; God thus making all things to work together for good;

and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; where Christ was crucified, the apostles were scourged, and treated with the utmost contempt, the sanhedrim and rulers of the Jews dwelt, who used all their power and craft to crush the Gospel, and hinder the progress of it, but in vain, there the word increased; which it may be said to do, when saints are edified by it, and sinners are converted under it; and in this last sense it is chiefly to be understood here: the instances of conversion were very numerous; how large must this church now be!

and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith; that is, to the Gospel, which contains things to be believed, articles of faith; proposes Christ the great object of faith; and is the means of producing faith, and which is of no profit, unless it is mixed with faith: and to obey this is cordially to embrace the doctrines of the Gospel, and cheerfully to submit

to the ordinances of it. And that the priests, and a large number of them, should do this, is very marvellous; since they were the most inveterate enemies of the Gospel, and persecutors of the saints; but what is it that efficacious grace cannot do? the Syriac version instead of “priests” reads “Jews”, but unsupported by any copy.

Ver. 8. *And Stephen, full of faith and power*, etc.] The historian proceeds to give a narrative of Stephen particularly, the first of the seven deacons; of his faith and miracles, of his elocution and wisdom, of his courage and intrepidity, of his constancy, and of his suffering martyrdom. He is said to be full of faith, as before, (<4405>Acts 6:5) the Alexandrian copy, and four of Beza’s copies read, “full of grace”; and so do the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; the Ethiopic version reads, “full of the grace of God”: he had an uncommon share of it; it was exceeding abundant in him; he had a sufficiency of it for the service and sufferings he was called to: and he was full of power to preach the Gospel, and teach it the people, which he did with authority; to defend it, and oppose the adversaries of it; to bear reproach and indignities for it, and even death itself; and to do miraculous works for the confirmation of it, as follows:

did great wonders and miracles among the people; openly before them, such as speaking with divers tongues, healing diseases, casting out devils, etc.

Ver. 9. *Then there arose certain of the synagogue*, etc.] Being filled with indignation at the doctrine of Stephen, and with envy at his miracles, they rose up in great wrath, and warmly opposed him: and they be longed to that synagogue

which is called the synagogue of the libertines; or free men: it is a Roman name, and signifies the sons of free men; and these were either the sons of such Jews, who of servants, or slaves, had been made µyrrjwçm, “free men”; or rather such Jews whose parents were born free, or had obtained their freedom at Rome, or in some free city under the Roman government, as Paul at Tarsus; since it is not so easy to account for it, that there should be a peculiar synagogue for the former, whereas there might be for the latter, seeing they could not speak the language of the native Jews. The Arabic version reads, “of the Corinthians”, as if they were the Jews from Corinth: and some have thought the word “Libertines” to be the name of a

nation or people, as well as the names that follow; and some think it designs the Lybians or Lybistines in Africa; but neither of these is likely:

and Cyrenians: natives of the city or country of Cyrene, from whence were many Jews; (see <40210>Acts 2:10 11:20) such as Simon the Cyrenian, the father of Alexander, and Rufus, who carried the cross of Christ after him, (<41521>Mark 15:21) these, with those that follow, either belonged to the same synagogue with the Libertines, or rather they severally had distinct synagogues: and this will not seem strange, when it is said [f246], that there were in Jerusalem four hundred and eighty synagogues; though it is elsewhere said [f247] four hundred and sixty:

and Alexandrians; for that there were a peculiar synagogue of these at Jerusalem is certain; for there is express mention made of it in Jewish writings [f248].

> "It happened to R. Eleazar bar Tzadok, that he bought tsnkh tyb µyyrdnskla lç "the synagogue of the Alexandrians", which was at Jerusalem, and he did with it whatever he pleased."

And that they should have a synagogue at Jerusalem need not be wondered at, when there was such an intercourse and correspondence between Jerusalem and Alexandria: it is said [f249],

> "the house of Garmu were expert in making of the shewbread, and they would not teach it; the wise men sent and fetched workmen from Alexandria in Egypt, and they knew how to bake as well as they. — — The house or family of Abtines were expert in the business of the incense, and they would not teach it; the wise men sent and fetched workmen from Alexandria in Egypt, and they knew how to mix the spices as well as they."

Again it is said [f250],

> "there was a brass cymbal in the sanctuary, and it was cracked, and the wise men sent and brought workmen from Alexandria in Egypt, and they mended it — -and there was a mortar in which they beat spices, and it was cracked, and the wise men sent and fetched workmen from Alexandria, and they mended it."

Hence many of them doubtless settled here, and had a synagogue of their own:

and of them of Cilicia; the metropolis of which country was Tarsus, (Acts 21:39 22:3). I make no doubt of it, that Saul of Tarsus was among them, or belonged to this synagogue, and was one of the fierce disputants with Stephen; at least violently opposed him, since he afterwards held the clothes of those that stoned him; we read[f251] of µyysrj lç tsnkh tyb, which I should be tempted to render, the "synagogue of the Tarsians", the same with the Cilicians here; but that it is elsewhere said[f252], that

> "it happened to the synagogue of the Tursians, which was at Jerusalem, that they sold it to R. Eliezer, and he did all his business in it."

Where the gloss explains the word "Tursians" by "brass founders"; and it seems to design the same synagogue with that of the Alexandrians, who may be so called, because many of them wrought in brass, as appears from a citation above. There was a synagogue of these Tarsians at Lud, or Lydda[f253]: it is added, and of Asia; that is, the less; which joined to Cilicia, and in which were great numbers of Jews; (see Acts 21:27) this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy: at Jerusalem, there were synagogues for the Jews of different nations; as here in London, are places of worship for protestants of several countries; as French, Dutch, Germans, Danes, Swedes, etc. Now several persons out of these synagogues, met together in a body,

disputing with Stephen; about the doctrine he preached, and the miracles he wrought, and by what authority he did these things.

Ver. 10. *And they were not able to resist the wisdom*, etc.] In Beza's most ancient copy, and in another manuscript it is added, "which was in him"; that divine wisdom, which the Spirit of wisdom gave him; they were not a match for him with respect to the knowledge of divine things; they could not answer the wise arguments he made use of, fetched out of the Scriptures of truth, in which he was well versed, and had a large knowledge of:

and the Spirit by which he spake; that is, the Holy Spirit, as the above exemplars of Beza, and the Ethiopic version read; the meaning is, they could not resist the Holy Spirit, by which Stephen spake, so as to overcome him, or put Stephen to silence, or confute him; otherwise they did resist him, or oppose themselves to him, but in vain, and without

success; for they always resisted the Holy Ghost in Christ and in his apostles, as their fathers before them resisted him in the prophets, as Stephen observes to them, (<44075>Acts 7:51) hereby was fulfilled what our Lord promised to his disciples, (<40109>Matthew 10:19,20) (<42115>Luke 21:15).

Ver. 11. *Then they suborned men*, etc.] Hired false witnesses, which seems to have been commonly done by the Jews; so they did in the case of Christ:

which said, we have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God; that is, against the law of Moses, and so against God, who gave the law to Moses, as appears from (<44063>Acts 6:13) the blasphemous words seem to be, with respect to the ceremonial law, and the abrogation of it, which Stephen might insist upon, and they charged with blasphemy; (see <44064>Acts 6:14).

Ver. 12. *And they stirred up the people*, etc.] The common people, who were easily wrought upon, and soon incensed and provoked, when at any time it was suggested to them that the rituals and ceremonies of the law of Moses were treated with any neglect or contempt; (see <44027>Acts 21:27,28).

And the elders and the Scribes; who belonged to the sanhedrim, to whom they reported these things, as persons, under whose cognizance they properly came:

and came upon him; at an unawares, and in an hostile way:

and caught him; seized him with violence:

and brought him to the council; the great sanhedrim, then sitting at Jerusalem, to whom it belonged to judge of blasphemy.

Ver. 13. *And set up false witnesses*, etc.] Having hired them, they brought them and set them before the sanhedrim, to bear witness against Stephen:

which said, this man; meaning Stephen, who was now before the council, at whom they pointed, and whose name, through contempt, they would not mention:

ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place; either the city of Jerusalem, which is sometimes called the holy city, and which was foretold by the angel to Daniel, and by Christ, that it should be destroyed, and which Stephen might speak of; or rather the temple, so the Ethiopic

version; in a part of which, or in a place contiguous to it, the sanhedrim might now be sitting:

and the law; the ceremonial law: the sense is, that Stephen was continually telling the people, that in a little time their temple would be destroyed, and an end be put to temple worship, and to all the rituals and ceremonies of the law of Moses; the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions leave out the word "blasphemous"; and so do the Alexandrian copy, and Beza's most ancient one; but as Beza observes, it is certain, or at least it is most likely, that it was not omitted by the false witnesses; though speaking against the temple and the law was sufficient to make good a charge of blasphemy.

Ver. 14. *For we have heard him say*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, "besides"; but rather these words are a reason, giving evidence to, and supporting the general charge:

that this Jesus of Nazareth; Stephen spoke of, and whom they so called by way of contempt:

shall destroy this place; meaning the temple, as the Ethiopic version renders it; and is the same charge, the false witnesses at Christ's examination brought against him:

and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us; that is, the rites, ceremonies, institutions, and appointments of the Mosaic dispensation; and yet this is no other, than what the Jews themselves say will be done, in the times of the Messiah; for they assert [f254], that

> "awbl dyt[l, "in time to come" (i.e. in the days of the Messiah) all sacrifices shall cease, but the sacrifice of thanksgiving."

Ver. 15. *And all that sat in the council*, etc.] The whole sanhedrim,

looking steadfastly on him; to observe whether his countenance altered, his tongue stammered, or he trembled in any part of his body, neither of which appeared; but on the contrary, they

saw his face, as if it had been the face of an angel. The Ethiopic version adds, "of God"; there was such a calmness and serenity in it, which showed his innocence and unconsciousness of guilt; and such a beauty and glory upon it, that he looked as lovely and amiable as the angels of God, who when they appeared to men, it was in very glorious and splendid forms: his face might shine as Moses's did, when he came down from the mount; or

in some degree as Christ's did at his transfiguration; and this might, as it ought to have been, taken as an acquittance of him by God, from the charge of blasphemy, either against God or Moses: the Jews [f255] say of Phinehas, that when the Holy Ghost was upon him, his face burned or shone like lamps, and Stephen was now full of the Holy Ghost, (<405>Acts 6:5,8).

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 7

Ver. 1. *Then said the high priest*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, “to him”; that is, to Stephen; for to him he addressed himself: or he “asked him”, as the Syriac version renders it; he put the following question to him:

are these things so? is it true what they say, that thou hast spoken blasphemous words against the temple, and the law, and hast said that Jesus of Nazareth will destroy the one, and change the other? what hast thou to say for thyself, and in thine own defence? this high priest was either Annas, or rather Caiaphas; (See Gill on “<4006>Acts 4:6”).

Ver. 2. *And he said*, etc.] Stephen replied, in answer to the high priest’s question, and addressed himself to the whole sanhedrim, saying:

men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; to the following oration and defence; he calls them men, brethren, by an usual Hebraism, that is, “brethren”; and that, because they were of the same nation; for it was common with the Jews to call those of their own country and religion, brethren; and he calls them “fathers”, because of their age and dignity, being the great council of the nation, and chosen out of the senior and wiser part of the people:

the God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham; he calls God “the God of glory”, because he is glorious in himself, in all his persons, perfections, and works, and is to be glorified by his people; and his glory is to be sought by all his creatures, and to be the end of all their actions; and the rather he makes use of this epithet of him, to remove the calumny against him, that he had spoke blasphemous things against God; and because God appeared in a glorious manner to Abraham, either in a vision, or by an angel, or in some glorious form, or another; and it is observable, that when the Jews speak of Abraham’s deliverance out of the fiery furnace, for so they interpret Ur of the Chaldees, they give to God much such a title; they say [f256]

> ““the King of glory” stretched out his right hand, and delivered him out of the fiery furnace, according to (<0115>Genesis 15:7).”

Stephen uses a like epithet; and he calls Abraham “our father”, he being a Jew, and according to the common usage of the nation: and this appearance of God to Abraham was “when he was in Mesopotamia”; a country that lay between the two rivers Tigris and Euphrates, from whence it had its name; and is the same with Aram Naharaim, the Scriptures speak of; (See Gill on “<4010>Acts 2:9”). Of this appearance of God to Abraham, mentioned by Stephen, the Scriptures are silent; but the Jewish writers seem to hint at it, when they say [f257],

> “thus said the holy blessed God to Abraham, as thou hast enlightened for me Mesopotamia and its companions, come and give light before me in the land of Israel.”

And again, mentioning those words in (<2340>Isaiah 41:8,9) “the seed of Abraham my friend, whom I have taken from the ends of the earth”; add by way of explanation, from Mesopotamia and its companions [f258]: and this was

before he dwelt in Charan; or Haran; (see <0113>Genesis 11:31) where the Septuagint call it “Charan”, as here; and by Herodish [f259] it is called καρραι, where Antoninus was killed; and by Pliny [f260], “Carra”; and by Ptolomy [f261], “Carroe”; it was famous for the slaughter of M. Crassus, by the Parthians [f262]. R. Benjamin gives this account of it in his time [f263];

> “in two days I came to ancient Haran, and in it were about twenty Jews, and there was as it were a synagogue of Ezra; but in the place where was the house of Abraham our father, there was no building upon it; but the Ishmaelites (or Mahometans) honour that place, and come thither to pray.”

Stephanus [f264] says it was a city of Mesopotamia, so called from “Carra”, a river in Syria.

Ver. 3. *And said unto him*, etc.] Not the words in (<0120>Genesis 12:1) for they were said in Haran, these in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt there, and besides, these are different from them; no mention is here made of getting out from his father’s house, as there; because his father’s house sent along with him, or rather he with them from Mesopotamia to Haran:

get thee out of thy country; from Ur of the Chaldees, where he was born:

and from thy kindred; his relations that lived in the same place, who did not go along with him:

and come into the land which I shall show thee; not telling him the place whither he was to go; wherefore when he had his first call, and first set out, he knew not whither he went; (see <58B108>Hebrews 11:8). This was an emblem of the calling of the saints out of the world, from their former course of life, and from among their old companions and friends, to follow Christ whithersoever he is pleased to lead them; and who at last will bring them safe to the land afar off, the better and heavenly country.

Ver. 4. *Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans*, etc.] The same with Mesopotamia; so Pliny says [f265], that

> "because of Babylon the head of the Chaldean nation — -the other part of Mesopotamia and Assyria is called Babylonia."

And he places Babylon in Mesopotamia; it was out of Ur, in the land of the Chaldeans particularly, that Abraham came, upon his first call:

and dwelt in Charan: according to the Jewish writers [f266], he dwelt here five years:

and from thence, when his father was dead; who died in Haran, as is said in (<011132>Genesis 11:32) and that it was after the death of Terah his father, that Abraham went from thence, is manifest from (<011131>Genesis 11:31,32) (<011204>Genesis 12:4,5) and yet a Jew [f267] has the impudence to charge Stephen with a mistake, and to affirm, that Abraham went from Haran, whilst his father was yet living; proceeding upon a false hypothesis, that Terah begat Abraham when he was seventy years of age: but Philo the Jew is expressly with Stephen in this circumstance; he says [f268],

> "I think no man versed in the laws can be ignorant, that Abraham, when he first went out of the land of Chaldea, dwelt in Charan; τελευτησαντος τε αυτω του πατρος εκενψι "but his father dying there", he removed from thence:"

and so says Stephen:

he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell; the land of Canaan; (see <011205>Genesis 12:5) or "he removed himself", as the Ethiopic version renders it; or rather "God removed him", as the Syriac version reads, and so one copy in the Bodleian library; for it was by the order and assistance,

and under the direction and protection of God, that he came into that land: after the words

wherein ye now dwell, Beza's ancient copy adds, "and our fathers that were before us".

Ver. 5. *And he gave him none inheritance in it*, etc.] To be personally enjoyed by him; and which was a great trial to Abraham's faith, to be brought out of his country, and into another land, and which was promised to him and his; and yet, as not the whole, so not a single part of it was given him to possess:

no, not so much as to set his foot on: so that when Sarah his wife died, he was obliged to buy a piece of ground for a burying place to bury her in: and which could not be said to be given him by the Lord, for he bought it with his money:

yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child; which was another exercise of Abraham's faith, that he should have a whole country promised him and his seed, and yet had no seed given him; (see <01207>Genesis 12:7 13:15 15:2,3,7).

Ver. 6. *And God spake on this wise*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, "and God spake to him", and so does one of Beza's copies; and the Ethiopic version reads it both ways, God "said thus to Abraham", as in (<01513>Genesis 15:13).

That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; or "be a stranger in a land not theirs"; first in the land of Canaan, and then in Egypt, which were possessed by other persons, the natives of them:

and that they should bring them into bondage; that is, the inhabitants of the lands, and particularly Egypt, should bring the seed of Abraham into bondage, as they did; and very hard bondage it was, at least some part of it:

and entreat them evil four hundred years; which must be reckoned not from the time of their going down into Egypt, which to their coming up out of it were but two hundred and ten years, but from the birth of Isaac: which was as soon as Abraham had the promised seed, and may be reckoned after this manner; from the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob, sixty years, (<01256>Genesis 25:26) and from thence to the coming of Jacob

into Egypt, one hundred and thirty years, (<01470>Genesis 47:9) and from thence to the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt, two hundrd and ten years; which in all make up four hundred years; for the sojourning and evil entreating of Abraham's seed are not to be confined to the land of Egypt, but belong to other lands, where they were within this time, though that land is more especially intended; and so the Septuagint version renders the text in (<02140>Exodus 12:40). "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, which they (and some copies add, and their fathers) sojourned in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, were four hundred and thirty years": and this text is differently read in the Talmuds, in one of them thus [f269]; "and the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt", twxrah lkbw, "and in all the lands, were four hundred and thirty years"; and in the other of them thus [f270], "and the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt", twxra raçbw, "and in the rest of the lands, were four hundred years"; upon which latter the gloss has these words;

> "from the time that the decree of the captivity was made between them to the birth of Isaac, were thirty years; and from the birth of Isaac, until the Israelites went out of Egypt, were four hundred years; take out of them the sixty of Isaac, and the one hundred and thirty that Jacob had lived when he went down into Egypt, and there remain two hundred and ten; and so is the decree, that "thy seed shall be a stranger in a land not theirs", (<01513>Genesis 15:13) and it is not said in Egypt, but in a land not theirs; and when Isaac was born, Abraham was a sojourner in the land of the Philistines; and from thence, till they went out of Egypt, it will be found that Isaac and his seed who were the seed of Abraham, were strangers: and the thirty years before that are not numbered in the decree;"

(See Gill on "<48317>Galatians 3:17").

Ver. 7. *And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage*, etc.] At the end of the four hundred years, and which was the Egyptian nation:

I will judge, said God; that is, condemn and punish them, as he did, by inflicting the ten plagues upon them:

and after that they shall come forth; out of the land of Egypt, and their hard bondage there; and which was brought about by the judgments executed upon the Egyptians:

and serve me in this place; in the land of Canaan; though these words are not to be found in (Genesis 15:13) what comes nearest them is in (Exodus 3:12). “Ye shall serve God upon this mountain”; meaning Mount Horeb, where Moses then was, and from whence the law was afterwards given.

Ver. 8. *And he gave him the covenant of circumcision*, etc.] Or the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign or token, (Genesis 17:11). Stephen speaks here in the language of the Jews, who are wont to speak of circumcision after this manner; hence in the Jewish liturgy, there is a collect, hlym tyrbl, “for the covenant of circumcision” [f271]; and so it is said [f272],

> “when Joseph died, they made void the “covenant of circumcision”:”

and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; according to the express command in (Genesis 17:12 (See Gill on “Philippians 3:5”))

and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs; the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Ver. 9. *And the patriarchs, moved with envy*, etc.] (see Genesis 37:11) the sons of Jacob and brethren of Joseph were filled with envy, and enraged at him, because of the evil report of them he brought to his father; and because he had a greater share in his father’s love than they had; and because of his dreams, which signified that he should have the dominion over them, and they should be obliged to yield obedience to him: wherefore they

sold Joseph into Egypt; they sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver, who were going down to Egypt, and who carried him thither with them: these twenty pieces of silver, the Jews say, the ten brethren of Joseph divided among themselves; everyone took two shekels, and bought shoes for his feet; to which they apply the passage in (Amos 2:6) “they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes” [f273]: and they suggest, that the redemption of the firstborn among the Israelites on account of the selling of Joseph; they say [f274],

> “because they sold the firstborn of Rachel for twenty pieces of silver, let everyone redeem his son, his firstborn, with twenty pieces

> of silver; says R. Phinehas, in the name of R. Levi, because they sold the firstborn of Rachel for twenty pieces of silver, and there fell to each of them a piece of coined money (the value of half a shekel), therefore let everyone pay his shekel coined."

They also affirm[f275], that the selling of Joseph was not expiated by the tribes, until they were dead, according to (<22214>Isaiah 22:14) and that on the account of it, there was a famine in the land of Israel seven years. There seems to be some likeness between the treatment of Joseph and Jesus Christ, which Stephen may have some respect unto; as Joseph was sold by his brethren for twenty of silver, so Christ was sold by one of his disciples, that ate bread with him, for thirty pieces of silver; and as it was through envy the brethren of Joseph used him in this manner, so it was through envy that the Jews delivered Jesus Christ to Pontius Pilate, to be condemned to death: of this selling of Joseph into Egypt, Justin the historian speaks[f276]; his words are,

> "Joseph was the youngest of his brethren, whose excellent wit his brethren fearing, secretly took him and sold him to strange merchants, by whom he was carried into Egypt."

And then follow other things concerning him, some true and some false; Stephen here adds,

but God was with him; (see <013902>Genesis 39:2) he was with him, and prospered him in Potiphar's house; he was with him, and kept him from the temptations of his mistress; he was with him in prison, and supported and comforted him, and at length delivered him from it, and promoted him as follows; and caused all the evil that befell him to work for good to him and his father's family.

Ver. 10. *And delivered him out of all his afflictions*, etc.] From the evil designs of his mistress, and from all the miseries of a prison:

and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; so Justin in the place above cited says, that Joseph was very dear to the king; but not through his knowledge of magic arts, as he suggests, but on account of the wisdom which God gave him; for when he is said to have favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, the meaning is, that he was highly esteemed of by him, because of the wisdom he saw in him; and both the favour he had with him, and the wisdom he had in himself, were from the Lord; and in a very humble and modest manner does he speak of

himself, in (<01416>Genesis 41:16) which Onkelos the Targumist paraphrases thus:

> ""not from my wisdom", but from the Lord, shall the peace of Pharaoh be answered;"

the name of this Pharaoh was Misphragmuthosis; by the Jews he is called Rian ben Walid [f277]:

and he made him governor over Egypt: a deputy governor under him; for Pharaoh kept the throne, and in it was greater than Joseph, and had the other ensigns of royalty, and Joseph rode in the second chariot to him:

and all his house; (see <01440>Genesis 41:40,41,43) as he had the affairs of the kingdom committed to him, so likewise the domestic affairs of Pharaoh, he was steward of his household.

Ver. 11. *Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt, and Canaan*, etc.] This dearth, or famine, is said to be in all lands, (<01454>Genesis 41:54) though only Egypt and Canaan are mentioned here, because the history is concerned with no other. The Jewish writers [f278] speak of three lands particularly, which were affected with it, Phenicia, Arabia, and Palestine; and this famine in the land of Israel, they say [f279], which lasted seven years, was on account of the selling of Joseph into Egypt, as before observed. The Heathen writers make mention of this famine, particularly Justin [f280], who speaking of Joseph says, that he foresaw many years before the barrenness of the fields; and all Egypt would have perished with famine, had not the king, through his advice, ordered by an edict, that corn should be laid up for many years: this was the fifth of the ten famines, the Jews say have been, or shall be in the world [f281]:

and great affliction; meaning the famine, which was very severe, and lasted a long time, even seven years: want of eating is called ywny [, "affliction", by the Jews [f282]; by which they mean fasting, which is a voluntary want of eating, or abstinence from it; and if that is an affliction, then much more want of food, or abstinence through necessity; compare (<540510>1 Timothy 5:10).

And our fathers found not sustenance; Jacob and his family could not get sufficient provision for them in the land of Canaan, where they then were, but were obliged to go to Egypt for it.

Ver. 12. *But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt*, etc.] Not then growing, or gathering in there, or that was of that year's produce; for the famine was strong in the land of Egypt, as well as in Canaan; but was what had been laid up, and preserved in the seven years of plenty, by the order and care of Joseph; which by some means or another, Jacob had heard of; (see <01420>Genesis 42:1,2) the Jews suggest [f283], that it was by divine revelation:

he sent out our fathers first; the first time, or the first year of the famine; or he sent them first, he laid his commands on them, or they had not gone; these were the ten sons of Jacob, and brethren of Joseph, who were sent the first time, for Benjamin stayed with his father: (see <01420>Genesis 42:3,13).

Ver. 13. *And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren*, etc.] That is, when the brethren of Joseph went a second time down to Egypt for corn, Joseph made himself known unto them, (<01401>Genesis 45:1).

And Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh; for though it was known before that he was an Hebrew, (see <01917>Genesis 39:17 41:12) yet it was not known of what family he was, who was his father, or his brethren, but now it was known, (<01416>Genesis 45:16).

Ver. 14. *Then sent Joseph*, etc.] Gifts and presents to his father, and wagons, to fetch down him and his family into Egypt, (<01421>Genesis 45:21,23).

and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls; which seems to disagree with the account of Moses, who says, that "all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten", (<01427>Genesis 46:27). But there is no contradiction; Moses and Stephen are speaking of different things; Moses speaks of the seed of Jacob, which came out of his loins, who came into Egypt, and so excludes his sons' wives; Stephen speaks of Jacob and all his kindred, among whom his sons' wives must be reckoned, whom Joseph called to him: according to Moses's account, the persons that came with Jacob into Egypt, who came out of his loins, and so exclusive of his sons' wives, were threescore and six; to which if we add Jacob himself, and Joseph who was before in Egypt, and who might be truly said to come into it, and his two sons that were born there, who came thither in his loins, as others in the account may be said to do, who were not yet born, when Jacob went

down, the total number is threescore and ten, (<01466>Genesis 46:26,27) out of which take the six following persons, Jacob, who was called by Joseph into Egypt, besides the threescore and fifteen souls, and Joseph and his two sons then in Egypt, who could not be said to be called by him, and Hezron and Hamul, the sons of Pharez not yet born, and this will reduce Moses's number to sixty four; to which sixty four, if you add the eleven wives of Jacob's sons, who were certainly part of the kindred called and invited into Egypt, (<01450>Genesis 45:10,19 45:5) it will make up completely threescore and fifteen persons: or the persons called by Joseph maybe reckoned thus; his eleven brethren and sister Dinah, fifty two brother's children, to which add his brethren's eleven wives, and the amount is threescore and fifteen: so that the Jew [f284] has no reason to charge Stephen with an error, as he does; nor was there any need to alter and corrupt the Septuagint version of (<01457>Genesis 45:27) to make it agree with Stephen's account; or to add five names in it, in (<44720>Acts 7:20) as Machir, Galaad, Sutalaam, Taam, and Edom, to make up the number seventy five: and it may be observed, that the number is not altered in the version of (<05102>Deuteronomy 10:22) which agrees with the Hebrew for seventy persons.

Ver. 15. *So Jacob went down into Egypt*, etc.] At the invitation of his son Joseph:

and died, he, and our fathers; both Jacob and his twelve sons died in Egypt, though we have no account of the death of any of them, but Jacob and Joseph, particularly; only in general, that Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation, (<01493>Genesis 49:33 50:26) (<02106>Exodus 1:6) the Syriac version adds "there", that is, in Egypt.

Ver. 16. *And were carried over into Sichem*, etc.] The Syriac version reads in the singular number, "and he was translated into Sichem, and laid", etc. as if this was said of Jacob only, whereas he is not spoken of at all, only the fathers, the twelve patriarchs; for Jacob, though he was carried out of Egypt, he was not buried in Sichem, but in the cave of Machpelah, (<01503>Genesis 50:13). But Joseph and the rest of the patriarchs, who died in Egypt, when the children of Israel came out from thence, they brought their bones along with them, and buried them in Sichem: of the burial of Joseph there, there is no doubt, since it is expressly affirmed in (<06242>Joshua 24:32) and that the rest of the patriarchs were buried there, and not in Hebron, as Josephus asserts [f285], may be concluded from hence; because in the cave of Machpelah at Hebron, there are never mentioned more in

Jewish writers [f286], than these four couple; Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah; from whence, they say, Hebron was called Kirjath Arba, the city of four; as also, because it is the general consent of the Jews; and if they had not agreed in it, or said nothing about it, the thing is natural to suppose, that the children of Israel brought the bones of all the patriarchs out of Egypt, along with Joseph's [f287]; and since they buried the bones of Joseph in Sichem, it is most reasonable to believe, that the rest were buried there likewise; though it must be owned, that there is an entire silence about them, even when the sepulchre of Joseph is taken notice of: so R. Benjamin speaking of the Samaritans says [f288],

> "among them is the sepulchre of Joseph the righteous, the son of Jacob our father, on whom be peace, as it is said, (<06242>Joshua 24:32)."

And says another of their writers [f289],

> "from Sichem about a sabbath day's journey, in a village, called Belata, there Joseph the just was buried;"

but of the rest, no mention is made:

and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor, the father of Sichem; the last clause, the father "of Sichem", is left out in the Syriac version; and the Alexandrian copy reads it, "in Sichem"; as if it was the name of a place, and not of a man: the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "the son of Sichem"; whereas it is certain, that Sichem was the son of Emmor, or Hamor, (<01319>Genesis 33:19 34:6) unless it can be thought there were two Sichems, one that was the father of Emmor, and another that was his son: but the great difficulty is, how the sepulchre in which the fathers were laid at Sichem, can be said to be bought by Abraham of the sons of Emmor, when what Abraham bought was the field and cave of Machpelah; and that not of the sons of Emmor, but of the sons of Heth, and of Ephron, the son of Zohar the Hitrite, (<01236>Genesis 23:16,17). Whereas the parcel of ground in Sichem, bought of the sons of Emmor, the father of Sichem, was bought by Jacob, (<01319>Genesis 33:19) (<06242>Joshua 24:32). Various things are suggested, to reconcile this; some think the word Abraham is an interpolation, and that it should be read, which he (Jacob) bought; but to support this, no copy can be produced: others observe, that it may be read, which he bought for Abraham; that is, which Jacob bought for Abraham

and his seed, as a pledge of the inheritance of the whole land, promised unto him; others think that by Abraham is meant a son of Abraham, that is, Jacob; as children are sometimes called by their father's name; as the Messiah is called David, and the like; but what best seems to remove the difficulty is, that the words refer to both places and purchases; to the field of Machpelah bought by Abraham, and to the parcel of field is Sichem bought by Jacob, of the sons of Emmor; for the words with the repetition of the phrase, "in the sepulchre", may be read thus; "and were laid in the sepulchre, that Abraham bought for a sum of money", and in the sepulchre (bought by Jacob) "of the sons of Emmor", the father of Sichem; or the words may be rendered thus, "they were carried over into Sichem, and laid in the sepulchre which Abraham bought for a sum of money, besides" that "of the sons of Emmor", the father "of Sichem"; namely, which Jacob bought, and in which Joseph was laid, (<01B319>Genesis 33:19, <062432>Joshua 24:32). And this agrees with Stephen's account and design, in the preceding verse; he observes, that Jacob died in Egypt, and all the twelve patriarchs; and here he tells us how they were disposed of, and where they were buried, both Jacob and his sons; they were removed from Egypt, and brought into the land of Canaan; Jacob, he was laid in the cave of Machpelah, in the sepulchre Abraham bought of the children of Heth; and Joseph and his brethren, they were laid in the sepulchre at Sichem, which Jacob bought of the sons of Emmor: upon the whole, the charge of several errors brought by the [f290] Jew against Stephen appears to be groundless; the sum this sepulchre was bought for was an hundred pieces of money, (<01B319>Genesis 33:19).

Ver. 17. *But when the time of the promise drew nigh*, etc.] That is, the time of the four hundred years; when God promised to deliver the seed of Abraham out of their affliction and servitude, and bring them into the land of Canaan to inherit it:

which God had sworn to Abraham; in (<01B153>Genesis 15:13,14) for though there is no express mention made of an oath, yet there is a most solemn affirmation, which is equivalent to one; the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read,

which God promised unto Abraham; the people grew and multiplied in Egypt; (see <02B107>Exodus 1:7) insomuch, that though their number were but threescore and ten when they went down to Egypt, and though various methods were taken to destroy them, and lessen their numbers, yet in little

more than two hundred years, their number was increased to six hundred thousand, and three thousand and five hundred and fifty men, besides old men, women, and children, and besides two and twenty thousand Levites, (<scripRef>Numbers 1:46, 3:39</scripRef>). And it seems, that they multiplied the more towards the time when the promise of deliverance drew nigh to be accomplished, and even when they were the most afflicted, (<scripRef>Exodus 1:12,20</scripRef>).

Ver. 18. *Till another king arose*, etc.] In, or over Egypt, as the Alexandrian copy, and others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read; in (<scripRef>Exodus 1:8</scripRef>) it is a new king; the Jewish writers are divided about him, whether he was a different king from the former; or only so called, because he made new edicts [f291]:

> "Rab and Samuel, one says a new one absolutely: and the other says, because his decrees were renewed; he that says a new one absolutely, (thinks so) because it is written a new one; and he who says, because his decrees are renewed (or he makes new decrees, he thinks so) from hence, because it is not written, and he died, and there reigned; and (it makes) for him that says, because his decrees are renewed, what is written, "who knew not Joseph"; what is the meaning of that, "who knew not Joseph?" that he was like one who knew not Joseph at all."

The Septuagint version of (<scripRef>Exodus 1:8</scripRef>) renders it "another" king, as does Stephen here; another king from the Pharaoh of Joseph: the name of this was Ramesses Miamun; and one of the treasure cities built for him seems to be called after his name, Raamses, (<scripRef>Exodus 1:11</scripRef>). The Jews call him Talma [f292] and by Theophilus of Antioch [f293] he is called Tethmosis; and by Artapanus [f294], Palmanotha: "which knew not Joseph"; nor what great things he had done, to the advantage of the Egyptian nation; he was acquainted with the history of him, and of his worthy deeds, and therefore had no regard to his people, as the other Pharaoh had Josephus [f295] says, the kingdom was translated to another family; which might be the reason why he was not known, nor his friends taken notice of: Aben Ezra says, he was not of the seed royal; wherefore it is written, "and there arose"; he the kingdom, and had not a just right and title so that being a stranger, it is no wonder that he should not know Joseph; Jarchi's note is,

> "he made himself as if he did not know him"

he dissembled, he pretended ignorance of him, because he would show no respect unto his people. Beza's ancient copy, and another in the Bodleian library, read, "which remembered not Joseph".

Ver. 19. *The same dealt subtilly with our kindred*, etc.] See (<2201010>Exodus 1:10) he took crafty, and yet cruel methods, to diminish the children of Israel, and to humble them; weakening their strength by labour, that they might not be able to beget children; ordering the Hebrew midwives to kill all the males that were born; and charging all his people to drown such male children that should escape the hands of the midwives;

and evil entreated our fathers; keeping them to hard labour, in mortar and brick, and all rural service; in which he made them to serve with rigour, and thereby made their lives bitter to them; employing them in building cities, pyramids, walls, and towers; making ditches, throwing up trenches, cutting watercourses, and turning rivers, with other things; which he added, setting taskmasters over them, to afflict them with burdens:

so that they cast out their young children, or "by making their children cast outs": or as the Arabic version renders it, "by making that their children should be cast out": that is, by ordering his people to expose them to ruin, and to cast them in the rivers; and so the Syriac version, "and he commanded that their children be cast out"; for this refers to Pharaoh, and his orders to his officers and people, to cast out the male children of the Israelites; and not to the parents of the children, which our version and the Vulgate Latin incline to: for though Moses's mother, after she had hid him three months, put him into an ark of bulrushes, and laid him among the flags by the river's side, yet that was in order to save his life: whereas the end of the casting out of these young children was as follows,

to the end they might not live: for this has not respect unto the parents of the children, that they might not increase or multiply their offspring, but to the young children, that they being cast into the waters, might perish, and not live and become men; the Ethiopic version is rather a paraphrase, "and he commanded that they should kill every male that was born".

Ver. 20. *In which time Moses was born*, etc.] The word Moses, is differently written in the New Testament; sometimes Moses, as here, sometimes Mo-yses, as in (<440735>Acts 7:35,37) sometimes Mo-yseus, as in (<441501>Acts 15:1,5,21) and sometimes Moseus, as in (<450514>Romans 5:14). He had his name from the Hebrew word, hçm, which signifies "to draw",

(<19116>Psalm 18:16) according to the reason of it given by Pharaoh's daughter,

she called his name Moses; and she said, because I drew him out of the water, (<020210>Exodus 2:10) Though Josephus [f296], Philo [f297], and others [f298], make it to be an Egyptian name; the former of which serves, that the Egyptians call water "Mo", and "yses", such who are saved from water; wherefore compounding the name of both, they gave it to him: though according to Aben Ezra [f299], his name in the Egyptian language was Monios; his words are these,

> "the name of Moses is interpreted out of the Egyptian language into the Hebrew language, for his name in the Egyptian language was Monios; and so it is written in a book of agriculture, translated out of the Egyptian language into the Arabic, and also in the books of some Greek writers."

Moses had many names, as a Jewish chronologer observes [f300];

> "Pharaoh's daughter called his name Moses; his father called him Chabar, or Heber; his mother called him Jekuthiel; and his sister called him Jether (perhaps Jared, since this was one of his names); and his brethren called him Abizanoah; and Kohath called him Abi Socos; and the Israelites called him Shemaiah ben Nathaneel, and sometimes Tobiah, sometimes Shemaiah, and sometimes Sopher; but the Egyptians called him Monios."

For "Mo", in the Egyptian language, signifies "water", and "Ni" is "out"; and so both together signify, "out of the water", which agrees with the Hebrew etymology of his name. Now he was born at the time that orders were given by Pharaoh to cast all the male children of the Israelites into the rivers, to drown them; Moses was born, whose parents were Amram and Jochebed, of the tribe of Levi; he was born, according to the Jews [f301], on the seventh day of Adar, or February:

and was exceeding fair; or "fair to God"; divinely fair and beautiful; and so Pharaoh's daughter, acccording to Josephus, said to her father, that she had brought up a child that was μορφη ψειον [f302] "in form divine": and so the Jews say [f303], that his form was as an angel of God; or he was fair in the sight of God, as the Ethiopic version; the Syriac version renders it, "he was dear to God"; and the Vulgate Latin version, grateful to God; was well-pleasing to him, in whom he delighted, having designed to do great things

by him: or “fair by God”: he had a peculiar beauty put upon him by God; partly to engage his parents the more to seek the preservation of him; and partly to engage the affection of Pharaoh’s daughter to him, when she should see him. Justin the historian [f304] makes mention of his extraordinary beauty, for which he was praised; but very wrongly makes him to be the son of Joseph; and the account Josephus gives of it, is very remarkable [f305];

> “as to beauty, says he, no man could be so out of love with it, as to see the goodly form of Moses, and not be amazed; it happened to many who met him, as he was carried along the way, that they would turn back at the sight of the child, and neglect their business, to indulge themselves with the sight of him; for such was the loveliness of the child, that it detained those that saw him.”

The Arabic version renders it, he “was consecrated by a vow to God”; but of this we have no account: the Jews say [f306], that

> “the Spirit of God came upon Miriam, and she prophesied; saying, behold a son shall be born to my father and to my mother at this time, who shall save Israel out of the hand of the Egyptians — and it is further said, that at the time of his birth, the whole house was filled with a great light, as the light of the sun and moon;”

upon which they had raised expectations of him: though this phrase, “fair to God”, may be only an Hebraism, just as Niniveh is said to be a city “great to God”, i.e. exceeding great, (Jon 3:3) it being usual with the Jews to join the word God to an adjective, to express the superlative degree; and so it is rightly rendered here, “exceeding fair: and nourished up in his father’s house three months”; so long he was hid by his mother there, which was a great instance of her faith; (see <2202>Exodus 2:2, <581123>Hebrews 11:23). The reason why he was kept no longer there was, because as the Jews say [f307], the three months after Jochebed was delivered of a son, the thing was known in the house of Pharaoh, wherefore she could hide him no longer.

Ver. 21. *And when he was cast out*, etc.] Into the river, or by the river, as some copies read; the Syriac version adds, by his own people; by his father and mother and sister; who might be all concerned in it, and were privy to it; and which was done after this manner; his mother perceiving she could keep him no longer, made an ark of bulrushes, daubed with slime and pitch, into which she put him; and then laid it in the flags, by the river’s side, and

set his sister Miriam at a proper distance, to observe what would be done to him, (^{ꝏꝏꝏ}Exodus 2:3,4).

Pharaoh's daughter took him up; her name, according to Josephus [f308], was "Thermuthis"; she is commonly, by the Jews [f309], called "Bithiah"; and by Artapanus in Eusebius [f310], she is called "Merrhis". This princess coming down to the river to wash, as she and her maidens were walking by the river side, spied the ark in which the child was laid, among the flags, and ordered one of her maids to go and fetch it; and which being done by her orders, is attributed to her; and opening the ark, she was struck at once with the loveliness of the babe, and being filled with compassion to it, which wept, she took him,

and nourished him for her own son: not that she took him to the king's palace, and brought him up there, but the case was this; Miriam the sister of Moses, observing what was done, and perceiving the inclination of Pharaoh's daughter to take care of the child, offered to call an Hebrew nurse, to nurse the child for her; to which she agreed, and accordingly went and fetched her own and the child's mother, who took it upon wages, and nursed it for her; and when it was grown, brought it to her, who adopted it for her son, (^{ꝏꝏꝏ}Exodus 2:5-10). According to Josephus [f311], and some other Jewish writers [f312], so it was, that when the child was taken out of the ark, the breast was offered it by several Egyptian women, one after another, and it refused to suck of either of them; and Miriam being present, as if she was only a bystander and common spectator, moved that an Hebrew woman might be sent for; which the princess approving of, she went and called her mother, whose breast the child very readily sucked; and at the request of the princess she took and nourished it for her: according to Philo the Jew [f313], this princess was the king's only daughter, who had been a long time married, but had had no children, of which she was very desirous; and especially of a son, that might succeed in the kingdom, that so the crown might not pass into another family; and then relating how she came with her maidens to the river, and found the child; and how that the sister of it, by her orders, fetched an Hebrew nurse to her, which was the mother of the child, who agreed to nurse it for her; he suggests that from that time she gave out she was with child and feigned a big belly, that so the child might be thought to be γνησιος αλλ μη υποβολιμαιος "genuine, and not counterfeit": but according to Josephus [f314], she adopted him for her son, having no legitimate offspring, and brought him to her father, and told him how she had taken him out of the

river, and had nourished him; (Josephus uses the same word as here;) and that she counted of him to make him her son, and the successor of his kingdom; upon which Pharaoh took the child into his arms, and embraced him, and put his crown upon him; which Moses rolling off, cast to the ground, and trampled upon it with his feet: other Jewish writers say [f315], that he took the crown from off the king's head, and put it on his own; upon which, the magicians that were present, and particularly Balaam, addressed the king, and put him in mind of a dream and prophecy concerning the kingdom being taken from him, and moved that the child might be put to death; upon which his daughter snatched it up, and saved it, the king not being forward to have it destroyed: and they also tell this story as a means of saving it, that Jethro who was sitting by, or Gabriel in the form of one of the king's princes, suggested that the action of the child was not to be regarded, since it had no knowledge of what it did; and as a proof of it, proposed that there might be brought in a dish, a coal of fire, and a piece of gold, or a precious stone; and that if he put out his hand and laid hold on the piece of gold, or precious stone, then it would appear that he had knowledge, and deserved death; but if he took the coal, it would be a plain case that he was ignorant, and should be free: the thing took with the king and his nobles, and trial was made, and as the child put out his hand to lay hold on the piece of gold or precious stone, the angel Gabriel pushed it away, and he took the coal, and put it to his lips, and to the end of his tongue; which was the cause of his being slow of speech, and of a slow tongue: by comparing Philo's account with this text, one would be tempted to think that Pharaoh's daughter did really give out, that Moses was her own son; and the author of the epistle to the Hebrews seems to confirm this, (<58 11 24>Hebrews 11:24) who says, "that Moses denied to be called, or that he was the son of Pharaoh's daughter"; as the words may be rendered.

Ver. 22. *And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*, &c,] Which was reckoned very considerable: (<11 04 30>1 Kings 4:30) Philo the Jew says [f316] that he learned arithmetic, geometry, and every branch of music, the hieroglyphics, the Assyrian language, and the Chaldean knowledge of the heavens, and the mathematics; yet was not a magician, or skilled in unlawful arts, as Justin suggests [f317]:

and was mighty in words; he had a command of language, and a large flow of words, and could speak properly and pertinently upon any subject; for though he was slow of speech, and of tongue, and might have somewhat of

a stammering in speaking, yet he might have a just diction, a masculine style, and a powerful eloquence, and the matter he delivered might be very great and striking:

and in deeds; or in "his deeds", as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read: he was a man of great abilities, and fit for business both in the cabinet and in the field. Josephus [f318] relates an expedition of his against the Ethiopians, whilst he was in Pharaoh's court, in which he obtained victory over them, when the Egyptians had been greatly oppressed by them; in which his prudence and fortitude were highly commended.

Ver. 23. *And when he was full forty years old*, etc.] This Stephen had from tradition, and not from Scripture, which is silent about the age of Moses at this time, and only says, "it came to pass in those days when Moses was grown", (Exodus 2:11) but that he was at this time at such an age, is the general sense of the Jews. Upon the above mentioned passage they have this note [f319]

> "twenty years old was Moses at that time; and there are that say, that he was forty years old. And [f320] elsewhere still more particularly; Moses was "forty" years in the palace of Pharaoh, forty years in Midian, (the Amsterdam edition reads, rbdmb, "in the wilderness", wrongly,) and he served Israel forty years."

Indeed, the fabulous history of his life makes him to be but fifteen years of age at this time [f321]; but Stephen's account is undoubtedly right, and which is confirmed by the above testimonies.

It came into his heart; by the Spirit of God, under a more than ordinary impulse of which he now was:

to visit his brethren, the children of Israel; whom he knew to be his brethren, partly from the common report in Pharaoh's court concerning him, and partly from the mark of circumcision in his flesh, and chiefly from divine revelation: for some years he had lived a courtly and military life, and had took no notice of the Israelites in their oppressions; but now the Lord laid it upon his heart to visit them, and observe how things were with them; and though he could not use any public and open authority, yet Philo the Jew says [f322], that he exhorted the officers to use mildness and moderation with them, and comforted and encouraged the Israelites to bear

their burdens with patience and constancy, and not sink under them; suggesting, that things would take another turn, and would change for the better in time.

Ver. 24. *And seeing one of them suffer wrong*, etc.] Beza's Cambridge copy, and one of Stephens's, and one in the Bodleian library add, "of his own kindred": and so (Exodus 2:11) he is said to be "one of his brethren"; which Aben Ezra explains, wtjpçmm, "of his family", one of the tribe of Levi; and so another Jewish writer [f323] is very particular, and says,

> "Moses went out to the camp of the Israelites, and saw an Egyptian smite one of the sons of Kohath, who was of his brethren of the tribe of Levi, as it is said, (Exodus 2:11)."

This man, according to some of the Jewish writers [f324], was the husband of Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, (Leviticus 24:11) but, according to others, it was Dathan [f325]: the cause and manner of his suffering wrong was this, as they report [f326]; one of the taskmasters having set his eyes upon his wife, who was a beautiful woman, came early one morning, and got him out of his house to work, and then went into his wife, and lay with her; which when the man understood, he made some disturbance about it, for which he caused him to serve in very hard bondage, and beat him severely; who flying to Moses for protection,

he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed; he took his part, and screened him from the insults and blows of the officer, and avenged his cause:

and smote the Egyptian; and killed him: it is commonly said by the Jews [f327], that he killed him by the sword of his mouth, by making use of the word Jehovah; though others [f328] say, he smote him with his fist, which is more likely; or rather with his sword; the Ethiopic version adds, "and buried him in the sand". Beza's ancient copy, and one of Stephens's, add, "and he hid him in the sand", as it is in (Exodus 2:12) and which the Jews understand not literally of any sand pit, into which he might cast him, and cover him; or of the sand of the sea, near which he was, and which does not appear; but mystically of the people of Israel, comparable to the sand of the sea, among whom he hid him. So in one of their Midrashes [f329] it is observed on these words,

> “and “he hid him in the sand”; though there were none there but the Israelites — -who are like to sand: he said unto them, ye are like the sand; take this man here and put him there, and his voice is not heard; so this thing will be hid among you, and not heard. And so you find that the thing was not heard but by the means of the Hebrews, as it is said, “and he went out on the second day, and two men of the Hebrews”, etc.”

And another of their [f330] writers, says, that when Moses saw the Egyptian smiting the Hebrew,

> “he began to curse him, and took the sword of his lips, and killed him, and hid him in the camp of the Israelites, as it is said, (<2012>Exodus 2:12) not in the sand, but among the Israelites: hence it is said, “the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea”, (<2810>Hosea 1:10).”

To which may be added what one of their chronologers [f331] affirms, that

> “Moses slew the Egyptian with the ineffable name of God, and hid him among the children of Israel, who are like to sand.”

This Egyptian is said, by Jarchi, to be one of the taskmasters who was appointed over the officers of Israel, who, from the cockcrowing, kept them to their work, which is very probable.

Ver. 25. *For he supposed his brethren would have understood him*, etc.] From his being an Hebrew in such high life; from his wonderful birth, and miraculous preservation in his infancy, and education in Pharaoh’s court; and from the promise of God that he would visit them and save them:

how that God by his hand would deliver them: wherefore he was the more emboldened to kill the Egyptian, believing that his brethren would make no advantage of it against him; but look upon it as a beginning and pledge of their deliverance by him:

but they understood not; or “him not”, as the Ethiopic version reads; they did not understand that he was to be their deliverer, or that this action of his was a token of it.

Ver. 26. *And the next day he showed himself to them, as they strove*, etc.] To two men of the Hebrews, who were quarrelling and contending with one another: these are said by the Jews [f332] to be Dathan and Abiram; who

were disputing and litigating the point, and were very warm, and at high words. The occasion of their contention is [f333] said to be this,

> "the Hebrew man (that had been abused) went to his house to divorce his wife, who was defiled, but she fled and told the affair to Abiram her brother: and on the morrow, Moses returned a second time to the Hebrew camp, and found Dathan and Abiram contending about the divorce."

Though some think this is prophetically said, because they afterwards contended and divided in the business of Korah [f334] Moses came up to them, and let them know who he was; and this was the day after he had killed the Egyptian. So Stephen explains the "second day" in (Exodus 2:13) and to this agrees what a Jewish writer [f335] says, that in the morning, Moses returned a second time to the camp of the Hebrews:

and would have set them at one again; persuaded them to peace and concord, composed their difference, reconciled them, and made them good friends:

saying, sirs, ye are brethren; as Abraham said to Lot, when there was a strife between their herdsmen, (Genesis 13:8) and if these two were Dathan and Abiram, they were brethren in the strictest sense, (Numbers 16:1)

why do ye wrong one to another? by abusing each other, calling ill names, or striking one another; or by lifting up the hand to strike, as Jonathan the Targumist says Dathan did against Abiram.

Ver. 27. *But he that did his neighbour wrong*, etc.] Who seems to be the same person whom Moses had defended the day before; and, according to the Jews, must be Dathan [f336]: the same

thrust him away; from them, when he went to part them, and persuade them to be good friends:

saying, who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? which was very ungrateful, if he was the man he had delivered the day before; and very impertinent, since he did not take upon him to rule and judge, but only to exhort and persuade to peace and brotherly love: the language suits with the spirit of Dathan or Abiram; (Numbers 16:3,12,13) This is thought to be said to him by way of contempt of him, as being a very young man:

the words are thus commented on in one of the ancient commentaries of the Jews [f337],

> "R. Judah says, Moses was twenty years of age at that time: wherefore it was said to him, thou art not yet fit to be a prince and a judge over us, seeing one of forty years of age is a man of understanding. And R. Nehemiah says, he was forty years of age; (See Gill on "Acts 7:23") and it was said to him, truly thou art a man, but thou art not fit to be a prince and a judge over us: and the Rabbans say, he said to him, art thou not the son of Jochebed, though they call thee the son of Bithiah? and dost thou seek to be a prince and a judge over us? it is known concerning thee what thou didst to the Egyptian."

Ver. 28. *Wilt thou kill me as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday*?] That is, is it thy will? dost thou design to kill me? or, as in (Exodus 2:14) "intendest" thou to kill me? In the Hebrew text it is, "wilt thou kill me, dost thou say?" that is, as Aben Ezra rightly interprets it, dost thou say so "in thine heart?" which is a much better observation than that of Jarchi's;

> "from hence we learn, says he, that he slew him by the ineffable name:"

though this is the sense of some of their ancient doctors [f338];

> ""to kill me dost thou say?" it is not said, "dost thou seek?" but "dost thou say?" from whence you may learn, that the ineffable name was made mention of over the Egyptian, and he slew him."

The word "yesterday" is added by Stephen, but with great truth and propriety, and is in the Septuagint version of (Exodus 2:14). The "as" here does not intend the manner of killing, whether by the fist or sword, or by pronouncing the word Jehovah, as Jarchi thinks, but killing itself, by whatsoever way; and the words were very spitefully said, on purpose to publish the thing, and to expose Moses to danger of life, as it did.

Ver. 29. *Then fled Moses at this saying*, etc.] For hereby the thing was known to Pharaoh, being presently carried to court, who sought to kill him for it, (Exodus 2:15) The Jews have a very fabulous story, that Moses was taken up upon it, and put in prison, and delivered into the hands of an executioner to be put to death; but that God wrought a miracle for him; he made his neck as hard as a pillar of marble, and the sword turned upon the

neck of the executioner, and he died; and God sent Michael, the prince, in the likeness of the executioner, who took Moses by the hand, and led him out of Egypt, and left him at the borders of it, the distance of three days' journey [f339] but the truth of the matter is, as Stephen relates, he fled directly, as soon as he heard the above words, for he knew his life was in the utmost danger:

and was a stranger in the land of Madian; which, as Josephus says [f340], lay near the Red sea, and took its name from one of the sons of Abraham by Keturah. Philo the Jew [f341] says, it was on the borders of Arabia; and according to Jerom [f342], it was near Arnon and Areopolis, the ruins of which only were shown in his days; here he sojourned many years with Jethro the priest of that place:

where he begat two sons; whose names were Gershom and Eliezer, having married Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro, (<02I802>Exodus 18:2-4).

Ver. 30. *And when forty years were expired*, etc.] "Forty other years" the Arabic version reads; for so long the Jews [f343] say Moses kept Jethro's flock, and so many years he lived in Midian; and so the Syriac version, "when then he had filled up forty years"; which agrees exactly with the account of the Jewish writers observed on (<440723>Acts 7:23) who say, that he was forty years in Pharaoh's court, and forty years in Midian; so that he was now, as they [f344] elsewhere justly observe, fourscore years of age:

there appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai; the same with Horeb, (<020301>Exodus 3:1) where it is said, "Moses came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb"; where he saw the sight of the burning bush, and out of which the angel appeared to him: and Stephen is to be justified in calling it Mount Sinai; the account which Jerom [f345] gives of it is this;

> "Horeb is the Mount of God in the land of Midian, by Mount Sinai, above Arabia, in the desert, to which is joined the mountain and desert of the Saracenes, called Pharan: but to me it seems, that the same mountain was called by two names, sometimes Sinai, and sometimes Horeb;"

and in which he was right. Some think the same mountain had two tops, and one went by one name, and the other by another; or one side of the mountain was called Horeb, from its being dry and desolate; and the other Sinai, from the bushes and brambles which grew upon it. So ^ynys,

“Sinin”, in the Misna [f346], signifies the thin barks of bramble bushes; and the bush hereafter mentioned, in the Hebrew language, is called סנה, “Seneh”; from whence, with the Jews, it is said to have its name.

> “Says [f347] R. Eliezer, from the day the heavens and the earth were created, the name of this mountain was called Horeb; but after the holy blessed God appeared to Moses out of the midst of the bush, from the name of the bush “(Seneh)”, Horeb was called Sinai.”

Some say the stones of this mountain, when broken, had the resemblance of bramble bushes [f348] in them. Add to this, that Josephus [f349] calls this mountain by the same name as Stephen does, when he is reciting the same history. Moses, he says,

> “led the flock to the Sinaean mountain, as it is called: this is the highest mountain in that country, and best for pasture, abounding in good herbage; and because it was commonly believed the Divine Being dwelt there, it was not before fed upon, the shepherds not daring to go up to it.”

Here Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law; for to such a life did he condescend, who for forty years had been brought up in the court of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Here appeared to him

an angel of the Lord, and who was no other than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as appears from (Acts 7:32) and was the second person in the Trinity, the Son of God, the angel of the divine presence, and of the covenant, an uncreated angel. And this is the sense of many of the Jewish writers, who interpret it of the angel the Redeemer, the God of Bethel [f350]; though Jonathan the paraphrast seems to understand it of a created angel, whose name he calls Zagnugael [f351], and some say it was Michael, and some Gabriel [f352].

In a flame of fire in a bush; and which yet was not consumed by it. This bush was a bramble bush, or thorn; so Aben Ezra [f353] says it was a kind of thorn, and observes, that in the Ishmaelitish or Turkish language, the word signifies a kind of dry thorn; and so Philo the Jew says [f354], it was a thorny plant, and very weak; and therefore it was the more wonderful, that it should be on fire, and not consumed. Josephus [f355] affirms, that neither its verdure, nor its flowers were hurt, nor any of its fruitful branches

consumed, though the flame was exceeding fierce. The Jerusalem Targum of (<2Ex 3:2>Exodus 3:2) is,

> “and he saw and beheld the bush burned with fire, and the bush byjrm: “became green”; or, as Buxtorf renders it, “emitted a moisture”, and was not burnt.”

This sight, the Arabic writers [f356] say, Moses saw at noon day. Artapanus [f357], an ancient writer, makes mention of this burning, but takes no notice of the bush; yea, denies that there was anything woody in the place, and represents it only as a stream of fire issuing out of the earth: his words are,

> “as he (Moses) was praying, suddenly fire broke out of the earth, and burned, when there was nothing woody, nor any matter fit for burning in the place.”

But Philo better describes it; speaking of the bush, he says [f358],

> “no one bringing fire to it, suddenly it burned, and was all in a flame from the root to the top, as if it was from a flowing fountain, and remained whole and unhurt, as if it was no fuel for the fire, but was nourished by it.”

The Jews allegorize this vision different ways: sometimes they say [f359],

> “the fire designs the Israelites, who are compared to fire, as it is said, (Obidiah 1:18) “the house of Jacob shall be a fire”; and the bush denotes the nations of the world, which are compared to thorns and thistles; so shall the Israelites be among the people, their fire shall not consume the people, who are like to thorns and briers; nor shall the nations of the world extinguish their flame, which is the words of the law: but in the world to come, the fire of the Israelites shall consume all people, who are compared to thorns and thistles, according to (<2Is 33:12>Isaiah 33:12)”

But it is much better observed in the same place;

> “the bush pricks, afflicts, and gives pain, why does he (the Lord) dwell in affliction and anguish? because he saw the Israelites in great affliction, he also dwelt with them in affliction, as it is said, (<2Is 63:9>Isaiah 63:9) “in all their affliction he was afflicted””

And very appropriately is it remarked by Philo [f360];

> "the burning bush (says he) is a symbol of the oppressed, the flaming fire, of the oppressors; and whereas that which was burning was not burnt, it shows, that they that are oppressed shall not perish by those who attempt it; and that their attempt shall be in vain, and they shall escape safe."

And so Aben Ezra has this note on (Exodus 3:2).

> "the enemy is compared to fire, and Israel to the bush, wherefore it was not burnt:"

this may be very well considered as an emblem of the state of the Jewish people in fiery trials, and very severe afflictions; who were like a bush for the number of its twigs and branches, they being many, and for its weakness and liableness to be consumed by fire, and yet wonderfully preserved by the power and presence of God among them.

Ver. 31. *When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight*, etc.] To see a bush on fire was no extraordinary thing; but to see a bush on fire, and yet not consumed by it, which was the case here, was wonderful indeed: and that an angel of the Lord, or the Lord himself, should appear in it, made it still more amazing; though, as yet, this was not observed by Moses, only the former; and which struck him with wonder, and excited his curiosity:

and as he drew near to behold it; to take a more exact view of it, and satisfy himself with the truth of it, and, if it was possible, to find out the reason why it was not burnt:

the voice of the Lord came unto him; to his ears, out of the bush, and expressed the following words.

Ver. 32. *Saying, I am the God of thy fathers*, etc.] Who made a covenant with them, promised the land of Canaan to them, and to their posterity, and to bring the children of Israel out of their servitude and bondage, and into the possession of the promised land:

the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; words which our Lord makes use of to prove the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, since God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, (See Gill on "Matthew 22:32")

Then Moses trembled; this Stephen had by tradition; in which way also the author of the epistle to the Hebrews had the account of his trembling and quaking at the same mount, when the law was given, (Hebrews 12:21)

and durst not behold; either "the sight" of the burning bush, and curiously consider and inquire into that, as the Syriac version reads; or him, as the Ethiopic version; that is, God, and which is expressed in (Exodus 3:6)

Ver. 33. *Then said the Lord to him*, etc.] To Moses, who through curiosity had made too near an approach:

put off thy shoes from thy feet; in token of humility, obedience, and reverence:

for the place where thou standest is holy ground; not really, but relatively, on account of the divine presence in it, and only so long as that continued.

Ver. 34. *I have seen, I have see the affliction of my people*, &c] The repetition of the phrase denotes the certainty of it, the exquisite and exact knowledge the Lord took of the affliction of his people, and how much his heart was affected with it:

which is in Egypt; from whence Moses had fled and had left them, he being now in the land of Midian, which was the place of his sojourning: and

I have heard their groaning; under their various oppressions and burdens, and by reason of the cruel usage of their taskmasters:

and am come down to deliver them; not by local motion, or change of place, God being omnipresent, who fills all places at all times; but by the effects of his grace and power.

And now come, I will send thee into Egypt; to Pharaoh, the king of it, (Exodus 3:10) to require of him to let the children of Israel go, and to deliver them out of their bondage.

Ver. 35. *This Moses, whom they refused*, etc.] That is, the Israelites; the Ethiopic version reads, "his kinsmen denied"; those of his own nation, and even of his family: "saying, who made thee a ruler and a judge?" as Dathan, or whoever said the words in (Acts 7:27).

the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer; or "a redeemer"; so the Jews often call Moses, saying [f361]

> “as was the first redeemer, so shall be the last Redeemer.”

He was an eminent type of the Messiah; and the redemption of the people of Israel out of the Egyptian bondage, by him, was emblematical of redemption from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law by Jesus Christ; and as Moses had his mission and commission from God, so had Jesus Christ, as Mediator; and as Moses was despised by his brethren, and yet made the ruler and deliverer of them, so, though Jesus was set at nought by the Jews, yet he was made both Lord and Christ, and exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. Moses was sent “by the hands of the angel, which appeared to him in the bush”; and who was the second person in the Godhead; the Father sent him by the Son, not as an instrument, but as having the power and authority over him, to govern, direct, and assist him. The Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin version read, “with the hand of the angel”; he sent Moses along with him to be used by him as an instrument in his hand, to deliver the people of Israel; nor does this at all contradict what the Jews say [f362] at the time of the passover:

> “and the Lord hath brought us out of Egypt, Æalmydy l[al, “not by the hands of an angel”, nor by the hands of a seraph, nor by the hands of a messenger, but the holy blessed God, by his own glory, by himself;”

for he did not deliver them by a created angel, but by an uncreated one.

Ver. 36. *He brought them out*, etc.] Of Egypt, and delivered them from all their oppressions in it:

after that he had shown wonders and signs in the land of Egypt; by turning his rod into a serpent, and by his rod swallowing up the rods of the Egyptians, and by the ten plagues, which were inflicted on Pharaoh, and his people, for not letting the children of Israel go:

and in the Red sea; by dividing the waters of it, so that the people of Israel went through it as on dry ground, which Pharaoh and his army attempting to do, were drowned. This sea is called the Red sea, not from the natural colour of the water, which is the same with that of other seas; nor from the appearance of it through the rays of the sun upon it, or the shade of the red mountains near it; but from Erythrus, to whom it formerly belonged, and whose name signifies red; and is no other than Esau, whose name was Edom, which signifies the same; it lay near his country: it is called in the

Hebrew tongue the sea of Suph, from the weeds that grew in it; and so it is in the Syriac version here:

and in the wilderness forty years; where wonders were wrought for the people in providing food for them, and in preserving them from their enemies, when at last they were brought out of it into Canaan's land, by Joshua. This exactly agrees with what has been before observed on (<440723>Acts 7:23) from the Jewish writings, that Moses was forty years in Pharaoh's court, forty years in Midian, and forty years in the wilderness.

Ver. 37. *This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel*, etc.] What is recorded in (<051815>Deuteronomy 18:15).

a prophet, etc. (See Gill on "<440322>Acts 3:22").

Ver. 38. *This is he that was in the church in the wilderness*, etc.] Which must be understood of the children of Israel, who were the then church of God, whom he had chosen and separated from the rest of the world, to be a peculiar people to himself, to whom were given the word and ordinances, the service of God, and the promises; and God always had, and will have a church, though that is sometimes in the wilderness; which has been the case under the Gospel dispensation, as well as before; (<661206>Revelation 12:6,14) and it was a peculiar honour to Moses, that he was in this church, though it was in the wilderness; even a greater honour than to be in Pharaoh's court. This has a particular respect to the time when all Israel were encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai, when Moses was not only in the midst of them, and at the head of them; but was

with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sina: this is the same angel as before, in (<440730>Acts 7:30) and refers either to his speaking to him then, saying, I am the God of thy fathers, etc. which was at Mount Sinai; or rather to the time when the law was given on that mount; and it may be to both; it is true of each, though it, may more especially regard the latter; for it was the angel of the divine presence, the second person in the Trinity, the word of God, that bid Moses come up into the mount; and who spake all the ten words to him; and who is described in so grand and august a manner in (<053302>Deuteronomy 33:2)

and with our fathers; the Jewish ancestors, who came out of Egypt under Moses, with whom he was as their deliverer and ruler, their guide and governor:

who received the lively oracles to give unto us; he received from the angel which spake to him the law, to deliver to the children of Israel; which is called “the oracles”, because it came from God, and contained his mind and will, and was a sure and infallible declaration of it; and “lively” ones, because delivered “viva voce”, with an articulate voice, and in audible sounds, and because it is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions render it, “the words of life”: not that the law gives life, or points out the way of life and salvation to sinful men; it is to them all the reverse; it is the killing letter, and the ministration of condemnation and death: it is indeed a rule of life, or of walk and conversation to men, and it promises life in case of perfect obedience, (<03185>Leviticus 18:5, <05019>Deuteronomy 30:19,20, 32:47) but this is impracticable by fallen men, and therefore there is no life nor righteousness by the law. Though these lively oracles may be considered in a larger extent, as including all the promises of God respecting the Messiah, delivered to Moses, and all the rites and ordinances of the ceremonial law, which pointed out Christ, as the way of life, righteousness, and salvation, from whence they may very well take this name.

Ver. 39. *To whom our fathers would not obey*, etc.] But often murmured against him, and were disobedient to him, and to the oracles he delivered to them, and so to God, whose oracles they were:

but thrust him from them; as one of the two Hebrews did, when he interposed to make up the difference between them; and which was an emblem and presage of what that people would afterwards do; (<44027>Acts 7:27)

and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt; they wished themselves there again, they lusted after the fish, the cucumbers, the melons, leeks, onions, and garlic there; and went so far as to move for a captain, and even to appoint one to lead them back thither again.

Ver. 40. *Saying unto Aaron, make us gods to go before us*, etc.] This is a proof of their disobedience to the law of Moses, and of their rejection of him, and of the inclination of their hearts to the idolatry of the Egyptians; which shows the gross stupidity, as well as ingratitude of this people, to think that gods could be made; and that those that are made could go before them, be guides unto them, and protectors of them; when they have eyes, but see not, and hands, but handle not, and feet, but walk not:

for as for this Moses; whom they speak of with great contempt, and in a very irreverent way:

which brought us out of the land of Egypt; which they mention not with gratitude, but as reflecting upon him for doing it:

we wot not what is become of him; they thought he was dead, according to the Targum of Jonathan on (<2320>Exodus 32:1) they concluded he was consumed with fire on the mount which flamed with fire. [f363] The following story is told by the Jews;

> "when Moses went up on high, he said to the Israelites, at the end of forty days, at the beginning of the sixth hour I will come; at the end of forty days came Satan, and disturbed the world; he said to them, where is Moses your master? they answered him, he is gone up on high: he said to them, the sixth hour is come; they took no notice of him; he is dead (says he); they had no regard to him; he showed them the likeness of his bier; then they said to Aaron, "as for this man Moses", etc."

Ver. 41. *And they made a calf in those days*, etc.] Whilst Moses was in the mount; this was done in imitation of the Egyptian idol Apis or Serapis, which was an ox or a bullock; and it was made of the golden earnings of the people, which were melted down, and cast into the form of a calf, and graved by Aaron with a graving tool, (<2320>Exodus 32:2-4) And so the Syriac version here reads in the singular number, "and he made them a calf"; this was a most shameful and scandalous piece of idolatry. The Jews themselves are so sensible of the horribleness of it, and of the guilt of it, and of the reproach that lies on them for it, that it is common for them to say [f364],

> "there is not a generation, or an age, in which there is not an ounce of the sin of the calf."

Or, as elsewhere [f365] expressed,

> "no punishment befalls thee, O Israel, in "which there is not an ounce of the sin of the calf"."

And offered sacrifice unto the idol; an altar was built, and proclamation made, that the next day would be the feast of the Lord; and accordingly early in the morning the people rose, and offered both burnt offerings and

peace offerings, (<2Ex 32:5,6>Exodus 32:5,6) and rejoiceth in the works of their own hands; for so the calf was; and which rejoicing they showed by eating, and drinking, and singing, and dancing.

Ver. 42. *Then God turned*, etc.] Away from them, withdrew his presence, and his favours from them:

and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; not angels, but the sun, moon, and stars; for since they liked not to retain the knowledge and worship of the true God, who made the heavens, and the earth, God in righteous judgment, in a judicial way, gave them up to a reprobate mind, to commit all the idolatry of the Gentiles, as a punishment of their former sin in making and worshipping the calf:

as it is written in the book of the prophets; of the twelve lesser prophets, which were all in one book; and which, as the Jews say [f366], were put together, that a book of them might not be lost through the smallness of it; among which Amos stands, a passage in whose prophecy is here referred to; namely, in (<Am 5:25>Amos 5:25) "O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness"; no; they offered to devils, and not to God, (<De 32:17>Deuteronomy 32:17) and though there were some few sacrifices offered up; yet since they were not frequently offered, nor freely, and with all the heart, and with faith, and without hypocrisy, they were looked upon by God as if they were not offered at all.

Ver. 43. *Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch*, etc.] Sometimes called Molech, and sometimes Milcorn; it was the god of the Ammonites, and the same with Baal: the one signifies king, and the other lord; and was, no doubt, the same with the Apis or Serapis of the Egyptians, and the calf of the Israelites. Frequent mention is made of giving seed to Molech, and causing the children to pass through fire to him. The account the Jews give of this image, and of the barbarous worship of it, is this [f367]:

> "though all idolatrous places were in Jerusalem, Molech was without Jerusalem; and it was made an hollow image, placed within seven chancels or chapels; and whoever offered fine flour, they opened to him the first; if turtle doves or two young pigeons, they opened the second; if a lamb, they opened the third; if a ram, they opened the fourth; if a calf, they opened the fifth; if an ox, they opened the sixth; but whoever offered his son, they opened the

> seventh: his face was a calf's, and his hands were stretched out, as a man opens his hands to receive any thing from his friend; and they make him hot with fire, and the priests take the infant and put it into the hands of Molech, and the infant expires: and wherefore is it called Topher and Hinnom? Tophet, because they make a noise with drums, that its father may not hear the voice of the child, and have compassion on it, and return to it; and Hinnom, because the child roars, and the voice of its roaring ascends."

Others give a milder account of this matter, and say, that the service was after this manner[f368]; that

> "the father delivered his son to the priests, who made two large fires, and caused the son to pass on his feet between the two fires,"

so that it was only a sort of a lustration or purification by fire; but the former account, which makes the child to be sacrificed, and put to death, seems best to agree with the scriptural one. Now this idol was included in chancels or chapels, as in the account given, or in shrines, in tabernacles, or portable temples, which might be taken up and carried; and such an one is here mentioned: by which is meant, not the tabernacle of the Lord made by Bezaleel; as if the sense was, that the idolatrous Israelites, though not openly, yet secretly, and in their hearts worshipped Moloch, as if he was included in the tabernacle; so that to take it up means no other, than in the heart to worship, and to consider him as if he had been shut up and carried in that tabernacle; nor is it to be thought that they publicly took up, and carried a tabernacle, in which was the image of Moloch, during their forty years' travels in the wilderness; for whatever they might do the few days they worshipped the golden calf, which is possible, it cannot be received, that Moses, who was so severe against idolatry, would ever have connived at such a practice: this therefore must have reference to after times, when they sacrificed their children to him, and took up and carried his image in little shrines and tabernacles.

And the star of your god Remphan. The Alexandrian copy reads "Raiphan"; some copies read "Raphan"; and so the Arabic version; others "Rephan"; the Syriac version reads "Rephon"; and the Ethiopic version "Rephom". Giants, with the Hebrews, were called "Rephaim"; and so Moloch, who is here meant, is called "Rephan", and with an epenthesis "Remphan", because of his gigantic form; which some have concluded from the massy crown on his head, which, with the precious stones,

weighed a talent of gold, which David took from thence, (2 Samuel 12:30) for not the then reigning king of the Ammonites, but Molech, or Milchom, their idol, is meant: this is generally thought to be the same with Chiun in Amos; but it does not stand in a place to answer to that; besides, that should not be left untranslated, it not being a proper name of an idol, but signifies a type or form; and the whole may be rendered thus, "but ye have borne the tabernacle of your king, and the type, or form of your images, the star of your god"; which version agrees with Stephens's, who, from the Septuagint, adds the name of this their king, and their god Rephan, or Remphan. Drusius conjectures, that this is a fault of the Scribes writing Rephan for Cephan, or that the Septuagint interpreters mistook the letter k for r, and instead of Cevan read Revan; and Chiun is indeed, by Kimchi and Aben Ezra[f369], said to be the same with Chevan, which, in the Ishmaelitish and Persian languages, signifies Saturn; and so does Rephan in the Egyptian language: and it is further to be observed, that the Egyptians had a king called Remphis, the same with Apis; and this may be the reason why the Septuagint interpreters, who interpreted for Ptolomy, king of Egypt, put Rephan, which Stephen calls Remphan, instead of Chiun, which they were better acquainted with, since they both signify the same deity, and the same star; and which also was the star of the Israelites, called by them yatbç, because supposed to have the government of the sabbath day, and therefore fitly called the "star of your god". Upon the whole, Moloch, Chiun, Rephan, or Remphan, and Remphis, all are the same with the Serapis of the Egyptians, and the calf of the Israelites; and which idolatry was introduced on account of Joseph, who interpreted the dream of Pharaoh's kine, and provided for the Egyptians in the years of plenty against the years of famine, and was worshipped under the ox with a bushel on his head;

figures which ye made to worship them; in Amos it is said, "which you made for yourselves": meaning both the image and the tabernacle in which it was, which they made for their own use, to worship their deity in and by:

and I will carry you beyond Babylon; in Amos it is beyond Damascus, and so some copies read here, which was in Babylon; and explains the sense of the prophet more fully, that they should not only be carried for their idolatry beyond Damascus, and into the furthermost parts of Babylon, but beyond it, even into the cities of the Medea, Halah, and Habor, by the river Gozan; and here is no contradiction: how far beyond Damascus, the

prophet does not say; and if they were carried beyond Babylon, they must be carried beyond Damascus, and so the words of the prophet were fulfilled; and Stephen living after the fulfilment of the prophecy, by which it appeared that they were carried into Media, could say how far they were carried; wherefore the Jew [f370] has no reason to cavil at Stephen, as if he misrepresented the words of the prophet, and related things otherwise than they were; and so Kimchi interprets it, far beyond Damascus; and particularly mentions Halah and Habor, cities in Media, where the ten tribes were carried.

Ver. 44. *Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, "of Sinai"; there it was that the tabernacle was first ordered to be built, and there it was built, and set up; which was a sort of a portable temple, in which Jehovah took up his residence, and which was carried from place to place: of it, and its several parts and furniture, there is a large account in (<02501>Exodus 25:1-27:21). It is sometimes called Ohel Moed, or "the tabernacle of the congregation", because there the people of Israel gathered together, and God met with them; and sometimes "the tabernacle of the testimony", or "witness", as here; (<02821>Exodus 38:21) (<04103>Numbers 1:50,53) because the law, called the tables of the testimony, and the testimony, it being a testification or declaration of the will of God, was put into an ark; which for that reason is called the ark of the testimony; and which ark was placed in the tabernacle; and hence that took the same name too. The Jewish writers say [f371], it is so called,

> "because it was a testimony that the Shekinah dwelt in Israel";

or as another [f372] expresses it,

> "it was a testimony to Israel that God had pardoned them concerning the affair of the calf, for, lo, his Shekinah dwelt among them."

This tabernacle, in which was the testimony of the will of God, what he would have done, and how he would be worshipped, and which was a token of his presence, was among the Jewish fathers whilst they were in the wilderness; and is mentioned as an aggravation of their sin, that they should now, or afterwards, take up and carry the tabernacle of Moloch. The Alexandrian copy reads, "your fathers"; the sense is the same.

As he had appointed; that is, as God appointed, ordered, and commanded:

speaking unto Moses, (⁂Exodus 25:40)

that he should make it according to the fashion he had seen; when in the Mount with God; (⁂Hebrews 8:5) for it was not a bare account of the tabernacle, and its vessels, which he hearing, might form an idea of in his mind; but there was a visible form represented to his eye, a pattern, exemplar, or archetype of the whole, according to which everything was to be made; which teaches us, that everything in matters of worship ought to be according to the rule which God has given, from which we should never swerve in the least.

Ver. 45. *Which also our fathers that came after*, etc.] Who came after those that died in the wilderness, and never saw nor entered into the land of Canaan; the children of that generation whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, who sprung from them, came up in their room, and succeeded them:

brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles; that is, they having received the tabernacle from their fathers, brought it into the land of Canaan, which was possessed by the Gentiles, when they entered into it with Joshua their leader, and captain, at the head of them; who is here called Jesus, as he is in (⁂Hebrews 4:8) for Joshua and Jesus are the same name, and signify a saviour; for such an one Joshua was to the people of Israel; and was an eminent type of Jesus Christ, the captain of our salvation, in his bringing many sons to glory:

whom God drove out before the face of our fathers; the Gentiles, who before possessed the land of Canaan, were drove out by God before the Israelites, to make way for their settlement there; for to whom can the success of those victories over the Canaanites be ascribed, which the Israelites under Joshua obtained, but to God? The language on the "Tingitane", or Hercules's pillars, said to be set up by some of these Canaanites, agrees with this, on which they inscribed these words;

> "we are they who fled from the face of Joshua the robber, the son of Nave,"

or Nun:

unto the days of David; this clause must not be read in connection with the words immediately preceding, as if the sense was, that the inhabitants of Canaan were drove out of their land unto the times of David, and then

returned and resettled, as in the Ethiopic version; but with the beginning of the verse, and the meaning is, that the tabernacle which the Israelites received from their fathers, and brought into the land of Canaan with them, was there unto the times of David.

Ver. 46. *Who found favour before God*, etc.] That is, David, who had an interest in the free favour and love of God, was chosen of God, a man after his own heart, and raised up to do his will; and who had the grace of God implanted in him, and was acceptable, and well pleasing to God through Christ; the same is said of Noah, (Genesis 6:8)

and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob; from whom the Israelites descended: David having a deep sense of the love of God to him, and the grace of God wrought in his heart, was exceeding desirous of finding a place for the building of an house, or fixed habitation for God; for there was a tabernacle already, which had been from the time of Moses, and which the children of Israel brought with them into Canaan, and was moved from place to place; sometimes it was at Gilgal, sometimes at Shiloh, and then it was at Nob, and Gibeah, and at length it was brought by David into his own city; but he wanted to build a settled and stable house for the Lord, of which there was a hint given that the Lord would choose a place to put his name in, (Deuteronomy 16:2) but it seems, where that was to be was not known; and therefore David very anxiously sought after it; the reference is had to (Psalm 132:3-5) where David determines not to go to his house, nor up to his bed, nor give sleep, to his eyes, nor slumber to his eyelids, till he had found out a place for the habitation of the God of Jacob.

Ver. 47. *But Solomon built him an house*.] Though David was so set upon it, and made such large provisions for it, he was not to be the man that should build it, he having been greatly concerned in wars, and in the effusion of blood; but Solomon his son, who enjoyed much peace, was the person designed for this work, and who did accomplish it; of which there is a large account in the (1 Kings 6:1-7:51).

Ver. 48. *Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands*, etc.] Such an one as Solomon's was; he did indeed dwell in his temple, but he was not confined to it, nor included in it, or circumscribed by it; and so much Solomon himself suggests, when he expresses his wonder at his dwelling on earth, seeing the heaven of heavens could not contain him, and

still less the house which he had built, (<110827>1 Kings 8:27), ˆwyl[, “the most High”, is one of the names of God, (<011418>Genesis 14:18,19,22) the Apostle Paul says the same of God as Stephen does here; (<441724>Acts 17:24) “as saith the prophet”; the prophet Isaiah, (<236601>Isaiah 66:1,2).

Ver. 49. *Heaven is my throne*, etc.] There is the seat of the divine Majesty; there his glory is most conspicuous; there he keeps his court, that is his palace; and there are his attendants, the angels; and from thence are the administrations of his regal power and government, over the whole world:

and earth is my footstool; which is under his feet, is subject to him, and at his dispose, and which he makes use of at his pleasure: these things are not to be literally understood, but are images and figures, representing the majesty, sovereignty, and immensity of God; who is the maker of all things, the governor of the universe, and is above all places, and not to be contained in any:

what house will ye build me? saith the Lord; or where can any be built for him, since he already takes up the heaven and the earth? what house can be built by men, or with hands, that can hold him, or is fit for him to dwell in?

or what is the place of my rest? not in any house made with hands, but in the church among his saints, who are the temples of the living God; and this is his rest for ever, and here will he dwell, because he has chosen and desired them, and built them up for an habitation for himself, (<191213>Psalm 132:13,14)

Ver. 50. *Hath not my hand made all these things*? The heaven, and the earth, and all that is in them; the Arabic version renders it, “all these creatures”; and therefore what can be made for God? or what house built for him? in Isaiah the words are read without an interrogation, and affirm that his hand had made all these things, and therefore nothing could be made for him suitable to him, by the hands of men.

Ver. 51. *Ye stiffnecked*, etc.] Or “hard necked”, the same with Prw[hçq, which is a character frequently given of this people, (<023209>Exodus 32:9, 33:3,5, 34:9) and elsewhere, and is expressive of their obstinacy, stubbornness and refractoriness; who would not submit their necks to the yoke of God’s law, and be obedient to his commands:

and uncircumcised in heart and ears; for though they had the mark of circumcision in their flesh, of which they boasted; yet they had not the true

circumcision of the heart; their hearts were not circumcised to fear and love the Lord, nor their ears to hear the word of the Lord and the Gospel of Christ; so that notwithstanding their confidence in carnal privileges, they were uncircumcised persons:

ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; the resistance made by these persons was not to the Spirit of God in them, of which they were destitute, but to the Spirit of God in his ministers, in his apostles, and particularly in Stephen; nor to any internal operation of his grace, but to the external ministry of the word, and to all that objective light, knowledge, evidence, and conviction that it gave of Jesus's being the Messiah: and such who resist Christ's ministers, resist him, and such who resist him, may be said to resist his Holy Spirit; and the word here used signifies a rushing against, and falling upon, in a rude and hostile way, and fitly expresses their ill treatment of Christ and his ministers, by falling upon them and putting them to death: which is the resistance here designed, as appears by the following verse: so that this passage is no proof of the resistance of the Holy Spirit, and the operations of his grace in conversion, when he is in men, and acts with a purpose and will to convert them; since it does not appear that he was in these persons, and was acting in them, with a design to convert them; and if he was, it wilt be difficult to prove that they so resisted, and continued to resist, as that they were not hereafter converted; since it is certain that one of them, Saul, was really and truly converted, and how many more we know not. Though it will be allowed, that the Holy Ghost in the operations of his grace upon the heart in conversion may be resisted, that is, opposed; but not so as to be overcome or be hindered in, or be obliged to cease from, the work of conversion, insomuch that may come to nothing:

as your fathers did, so do ye; or as "your fathers were, so are ye"; as they were stiffnecked, self-willed, obstinate, and inflexible, so are ye; as they were uncircumcised in heart and ears, so are ye; and as they resisted the Spirit of God in his prophets, so do ye resist him in the apostles and ministers of the Gospel.

Ver. 52. *Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted*? etc.] Either by reviling and speaking all manner of evil of them, (Matthew 5:11,12) or by killing them, (Matthew 23:31,37) and they have slain them; as Isaiah, Zachariah, and others:

which showed before of the coming of the just one; of Jesus the Messiah, whose character in the prophecies of the Old Testament is righteous servant, righteous branch, just, and having salvation; and whom Stephen styles so partly on account of the holiness of his nature, and the innocence and harmlessness of his life; and partly because he is the author of righteousness, and the end of the law for it to all that believe; of whose coming in the flesh all the prophets more or less spoke: and this being good news, and glad tidings, made the sin of the Jewish fathers the greater, in putting them to death, as the innocent character of Christ was an aggravation of the Jews' sin, in murdering of him, as it follows:

of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers; Judas, one of their nation, betrayed him into the hands of the chief priests and elders; and they betrayed, or delivered him into the hands of Pontius Pilate to be condemned to death, which they greatly importuned, and would not be satisfied without; and therefore are rightly called the murderers, as well as the betrayers of him.

Ver. 53. *Who have received the law, by the disposition of angels*, etc.] Who attended the angel that spake to Moses on Mount Sinai, (<4478>Acts 7:38) who is the head of all principality and power, and whom he might make use of in giving the law to Moses: hence the law is said to be ordained by angels, in the hand of a Mediator, and is called the word spoken by angels, (<4819>Galatians 3:19, <5012>Hebrews 2:2) and certain it is, that there were great numbers of angels on Mount Sinai, when the law was given, (<5302>Deuteronomy 33:2, <1987>Psalm 68:17) And so the Jews say [f373], that

> "when the holy blessed God descended on Mount Sinai, there came down with him many companies of angels, Michael and his company, and Gabriel and his company"

Indeed they often say [f374],

> "the law was not given to the ministering angels:"

their meaning is, it was not given to them to observe and keep, because there are some things in it, which do not concern angels; but then it might be given to them to deliver to Moses, who gave it to the Israelites, and so may be said to receive it by the ministration of angels, through the hands of Moses. And now the law being given and received in so grand a manner, was an aggravation of the sin of the Jews in violating it, as it follows:

and have not kept it; but broke it in innumerable instances, and scarce kept it in any; for no man can keep it perfectly.

Ver. 54. *When they heard these things*, etc.] How that Abraham, the father of them, was called before he was circumcised, or the law was given to Moses, or the temple was built, which they were so bigoted to, and charged with speaking blasphemously of; and how that Joseph and Moses were very ill treated by the Jewish fathers, which seemed to resemble the usage Christ and his apostles met with from them; and how their ancestors behaved in the wilderness when they had received the law, and what idolatry they fell into there, and in after times; and how that though there was a temple built by Solomon, yet the Lord was not confined to it, nor would he dwell in it always; and especially when they heard him calling them a stiffnecked people, and uncircumcised in heart and ears; saying, that they persecuted and slew the prophets, and were the betrayers and murderers of an innocent person; and notwithstanding all their zeal for the law, and even though it was ministered to them by angels, yet they did not observe it themselves:

they were cut to the heart; as if they had been sawn asunder; they were filled with anguish, with great pain and uneasiness; they were full of wrath and madness, and could neither bear themselves nor him:

and they gnashed on him with their teeth: being enraged at him, and full of fury and indignation against him.

Ver. 55. *But he being full of the Holy Ghost*, etc.] That is, Stephen, as Beza's ancient copy, and some others express it; and so the Ethiopic version; the Syriac version reads, "full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost", as in (<4405>Acts 6:5) and so some copies; being under the influences of the Spirit of God, and filled with his divine comforts, and strong in the faith of Jesus Christ, and having a holy boldness, courage, and intrepidity of mind; instead of being discouraged and dejected, of being cast down in his spirits, and looking down upon the ground, he

looked up steadfastly to heaven; where he desired to be, and hoped and believed he should be; and from whence he knew his help came, and which he might now implore, as well as forgiveness for his enemies.

And saw the glory of God; not the essential glory of God, but some extraordinary light and brightness, which was a token and representation of him:

and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; of that glory which was a Symbol of him: Jesus being risen from the dead, and ascended on high, was set at the right hand of God, in human nature, and so was visible to the corporeal eye of Stephen; whose visual faculty was so extraordinarily enlarged and assisted, as to reach the body of Christ in the third heavens; where he was seen by him standing, to denote his readiness to assist him, and his indignation at his enemies.

Ver. 56. *And said, behold, I see the heavens opened*, etc.] As they were at the baptism of Christ, (See Gill on "<4016>Matthew 3:16"):

and the son of man standing at the right hand of God; he calls Jesus "the son of man"; a name by which he often called himself in his state of humiliation; and that though he was now glorified, it being the name of the Messiah in (<1907>Psalm 80:17, <2713>Daniel 7:13) as was well known to the Jews; and this Stephen said to show that God was on his side, and to let them know what honour was done him, what divine supports and comforts he had, and that he was an eyewitness of Jesus, and of his being alive, and in glory.

Ver. 57. *Then they cried out with a loud voice*, etc.] These were not the sanhedrim, but the common people; the Ethiopic version reads, "the Jews cried out"; which, they did, in a very clamorous way, either through rage and madness, or in a show of zeal against blasphemy; and cried out, either to God to avenge the blasphemy, or rather to the sanhedrim to pass a sentence on him, or, it may be, to excite one another to rise up at once, and kill him, as they did:

and stopped their ears; with their fingers, pretending they could not bear the blasphemy that was uttered. This was their usual method; hence they say, [f375]

> "if a man hears anything that is indecent, (or not fit to be heard,) let him put his fingers in his ears hence the whole ear is hard, and the tip of it soft, that when he hears anything that is not becoming, he may bend the tip of the ear within it."

By either of these ways these men might stop their ears; either by putting in their fingers, or by turning the tip of the ear inward.

And ran upon him with one accord; without any leave of the sanhedrim, or waiting for their determination, in the manner the zealots did; (See Gill on "⁴⁰⁰⁴Matthew 10:4") (See Gill on "⁴³¹⁶John 16:2").

Ver. 58. *And cast him out of the city*, etc.] Of Jerusalem; for the place of stoning was without the city. The process, when regular, according to the sentence of the court, was after this manner [f376];

> "judgment being finished, (or the trial over,) they brought him out (the person condemned) to stone him; the place of stoning was without the sanhedrim, as it is said, (³²⁴⁴Leviticus 24:14) "bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp", when he was ten cubits distant from the place of stoning, they order him to confess and when four cubits from it, they take off his garments — the place of stoning was twice a man's height."

And elsewhere [f377] it is said, that the place of stoning was without three camps (the camp of the Shekinah, the camp of the Levites, and the camp of the Israelites): upon which the gloss has these words;

> "the court is the camp of the Shekinah, and the mountain of the house the camp of the Levites, and every city the camp of the Israelites; and in the sanhedrim in every city, the place of stoning was without the city like to Jerusalem."

And these men, though transported with rage and fury, yet were so far mindful of rule, as to have him out of the city before they stoned him:

and they stoned him; which was done after this manner, when in form [f378]:

> "the wise men say, a man was stoned naked, but not a woman; and there was a place four cubits from the house of stoning, where they plucked off his clothes, only they covered his nakedness before. The place of stoning was two men's heights, and there he went up with his hands bound, and one of the witnesses thrust him on his loins, that he might fall upon the earth; and if he died not at that push, the witnesses lifted up a stone, which lay there, the weight of two men, and one cast it with all his strength upon him; and if he died not, he was stoned by all Israel."

And the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul; for the witnesses, according to the above account, were

first concerned in the stoning; and this was agreeably to the rule in (<5170>Deuteronomy 17:7) and which they seem to have observed amidst all their hurry and fury: and that they might perform their work with more ease and expedition, they plucked off their upper garments, and committed them to the care of Saul of Tarsus; who was now at Jerusalem, and belonged to the synagogue of the Cilicians, that disputed with Stephen, and suborned false witnesses against him. He is called a young man; not that he was properly a youth, for he must be thirty years of age, or more; since about thirty years after this he calls himself Paul the aged, (<5709>Philemon 1:9) when he must be at least sixty years of age, if not more; besides, Ananias calls him a "man", (<4913>Acts 9:13) nor would the high priests have given letters to a mere youth, investing him with so much power and authority as they did; but he is so called, because he was in the prime of his days, hale, strong, and active. The learned Alting has taken a great deal of pains to show, that this Saul, who was afterwards Paul the apostle, is the same with Samuel the little, who is frequently mentioned in the Talmud; he living at this time, and being a disciple of Rabban Gamaliel, and a bitter enemy of the heretics, or Christians; and who, at the instigation of his master, composed a prayer against them; and his name and character agreeing with him: but it is not likely that the Jews would have retained so high an opinion of him to the last, had he been the same person: for they say [f379],

> "that as the elders were sitting in Jabneh, Bath Kol came forth, and said, there is one among you fit to have the Holy Ghost, or the Shekinah, dwell upon him; and they set their eyes on Samuel the little; and when he died, they said, ah the holy, ah the meek disciple of Hillell!"

Ver. 59. *And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God*, etc.] As he was praying, and putting up the following petition;

and saying, Lord Jesus receive my Spirit; from whence we learn, that the spirit or soul of man sleeps not, nor dies with the body, but remains after death; that Jesus Christ is a fit person to commit and commend the care of the soul unto immediately upon its separation; and that he must be truly and properly God; not only because he is equal to such a charge, which none but God is, but because divine worship and adoration are here given him. This is so glaring a proof of prayer being made unto him, that some Socinians, perceiving the force of it, would read the word Jesus in the

genitive case, thus; “Lord of Jesus receive my Spirit”: as if the prayer was made to the Father of Christ, when it is Jesus he saw standing at the right hand of God, whom he invokes, and who is so frequently called Lord Jesus; whereas the Father is never called the Lord of Jesus; and besides, these words are used in like manner in the vocative case, in (<65220>Revelation 22:20) to which may be added, that the Syriac version reads, “our Lord Jesus”; and the Ethiopic version, “my Lord Jesus”.

Ver. 60. *And he kneeled down*, etc.] It seems as if he stood before while they were stoning him, and while he was commending his soul to Christ, but now he kneeled down; prayer may be performed either kneeling or standing:

and cried with a loud voice; not only to show that he was in good spirits, and not afraid to die, but chiefly to express his vehement and affectionate desire to have the following petition granted:

Lord, lay not this sin to their charge: do not impute it to them, or place it to their account; let it not rise and stand in judgment against them, or they be condemned for it; grant them forgiveness for it, and for every other sin: there is a great deal of likeness between Christ and this first martyr of his at their deaths; Christ committed his Spirit into the hands of his Father, and Stephen commits his into the hands of Christ; both prayed for forgiveness for their enemies; and both cried with a loud voice before they expired; for so it follows here,

and when he had said this, he fell asleep; or died; for death, especially the death of the saints, or dying in Jesus, is expressed by sleep. This way of speaking is common with the Jews, who say [f380], that Rabbi such an one Æymd, “slept”; i.e. “died”; and this they say is a pure and honourable way of speaking with respect to an holy body, whose death is no other than as it were a sleep: and elsewhere [f381] it is said, that one saw such an one µnmnm, “sleeping”; the gloss upon it is, sswg, “expiring”: (See Gill on “<431111>John 11:11”), (See Gill on “<520413>1 Thessalonians 4:13”). The Vulgate Latin version adds, “in the Lord.”

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 8

Ver. 1. *And Saul was consenting unto his death*, etc.] This clause, in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic and Ethiopic versions, stands at the close of the preceding chapter, and which seems to be its proper place; and so it does in the Alexandrian copy: that Saul consented to the death of Stephen, and approved of that barbarous action, is evident from his taking care of the clothes of the witnesses that stoned him; but the word here used signifies not a bare consent only, but a consent with pleasure and delight; he was well pleased with it, it rejoiced his very heart; he joined with others in it, with the utmost pleasure and satisfaction; this, and what is before said concerning his having the clothes of the witnesses laid at his feet, as well as what follows, about his persecuting the saints, are, the rather mentioned, because this violent persecutor was afterwards converted, and became an eminent preacher of the Gospel; and these accounts serve to set off and illustrate the grace of God, which was abundant towards him.

And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem: it began "on that day", as the words may be rendered, on which Stephen was stoned. As soon as they had put him to death, these bloodthirsty wretches were the more greedy after the blood of others; and being now in great numbers, and filled with rage and fury, fell upon the members of the church wherever they met them, and killed them; for that more, besides Stephen, were put to death, seems plain from (Acts 26:10) and, according to some accounts, though they cannot be depended on, two thousand persons suffered at this time: and if this was the case, it might be called a great persecution:

and they were all scattered abroad; not all the members of the church, nor perhaps any of the private ones; for we afterwards read of devout then that carried Stephen to his grave; and of the church being made havoc of by Saul; and of men and women being haled out of their houses, and committed to prison by him; but all the preachers of the word, except the apostles; for they that were scattered, went about preaching the word, (Acts 8:4, 11:19) They seem to be the seventy disciples, and other

ministers of the word, on whom the Holy Ghost fell at the day of Pentecost, or was since bestowed; among who were Philip, who went to Samaria; and Ananias, who was at Damascus; and others that went as far as Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch: and particularly they are said to be dispersed

throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria; where their ministry was so greatly blessed, to the conversion of souls, that there were quickly many churches planted and formed in these parts, as appears from (Acts 9:31) so that this persecution was for the furtherance and spread of the Gospel: that upon this dispersion any of them came into France and England, or into any other parts of Europe, is not probable; since the particular places they went to are mentioned; and since they preached to Jew only: and this scattering by reason of the persecution, was of all the preachers,

except the apostles; the twelve apostles, who stayed at Jerusalem to take care of the church; to encourage the members of it to suffer cheerfully for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; and to animate them to abide by him: and this was not only an instance of courage and constancy in them, and of the divine protection and preservation of them, in the midst of their enemies; but also of the timidity of their adversaries, who might be afraid to meddle with them; remembering what miraculous works were performed by them, and how they had been delivered out of prison, and especially the case of Ananias and Sapphira, who were struck dead by Peter. Beza's ancient copy adds, "who remained in Jerusalem".

Ver. 2. *And devout men carried Stephen to his burial*, etc.] These men were not Jewish proselytes, but members of the Christian church; who were eminent for their religion and piety, and who had courage enough, amidst this persecution, to show a respect to the dead body of this holy martyr; which they took from under the stones, washed it, and wound it up in linen clothes, and put it into a coffin, or on a bier: they did everything preparatory to the funeral, which, is chiefly designed by the word here used, rather than the carrying of him out to his grave; though this also they did, and buried him: and to bear a corpse and follow it to the grave, and bury it, were with the Jews [f382] reckoned among acts of kindness, mercy, and piety, and which would not fail of a reward; they have a saying [f383], that

> "he that mourns, they shall mourn for him; and he that buries, they shalt bury him and he that lifts up (his voice in weeping lamentation), they shall lift up for him; he that accompanies (a dead

> corpse), they shall accompany him; he that "carries", they shall carry him;"

as these devout men did, who would not suffer Stephen to be buried in the common burying place of malefactors, but interred him elsewhere, in a more decent manner: but whether they had leave from the sanhedrim so to do, or whether they did this of themselves, is not certain; if the latter, which seems most likely, it is an instance of great boldness and resolution, and especially at this time; for

> "they did not bury one that was stoned in the sepulchres of his fathers, but there were two burying places appointed by the sanhedrim, one for those that are stoned and burnt, and another for those that are slain with the sword and strangled [f384]."

So that, they acted contrary to the Jewish canon, as they also did in what follows:

and made great lamentation over him; though they did not sorrow as those without hope, yet they did not put on a stoical apathy; but as men sensible of the loss the church of Christ had sustained, by the death of a person so eminent for his gifts and grace, they mourned over him in a becoming manner: in this they went contrary to the Jewish rule, which forbids lamentation for those that died as malefactors, and runs thus [f385]

> "they do not mourn, but they grieve; for grief is only in the heart;"

their reason for this was, as the commentators say [f386], because they thought that

> "their disgrace was an atonement for their sin:"

but these devout men knew that Stephen needed no such atonement, and that his sins were atoned for another way: otherwise the Jews looked upon mourning for the dead to be to the honour of him; hence they say [f387], that mourning

> "is the glory of the dead — whoever is backward to the mourning of a wise man shall not prolong his days; and whoever is sluggish in mourning for a good man, ought to be buried alive; and whoever causes tears to descend for a good man, lo, his reward is reserved for him with the holy blessed God."

Ver. 3. *As for Saul, he made havoc of the church*, etc.] Did evil to the saints, destroyed them that called upon the name of Christ, (<4409>Acts 9:13,21) and persecuted and wasted the church of God, as he himself says, (Gal 1:13) and now did Benjamin, of which tribe Saul was, ravine as a wolf, (<0127>Genesis 49:27)

Entering into every house; where the saints dwelt:

and haling men and women: in a violent manner, without any regard to age or sex:

committed them to prison; delivered them up into the hands of the chief priests and magistrates, in order to be committed and sent to prison; this he himself confesses, (<4204>Acts 22:4, 26:10).

Ver. 4. *Therefore they that were scattered abroad*, etc.] By reason of the persecution in Jerusalem: the seventy disciples, and other ministers of the word; or the hundred and twenty, excepting the apostles,

went every where; or *went through* the countries of Judea and Samaria, as far as Phenice, Cyrus, and Antioch:

preaching the word; the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions add, "of God", and so some copies; the Gospel, which is the word of God, and not man; which was not of men, nor received from men, but came from God, and by the revelation of Christ; and which was good news and glad tidings, of peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation, by Jesus Christ.

Ver. 5. *Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria*, etc.] The city which was formerly called Samaria, but now Sebaste; it had been destroyed by Hyrcanus, and was rebuilt by Herod; and called by him, in honour of Augustus, by the name of Sebaste [f388]; and so R. Benjamin says [f389], that

> "from Luz he came in a day to Sebaste, ˆwrmwç ayh, "this is Samaria"; where yet may be discerned the palace of Ahab king of Israel — — -and from thence are two "parsas" to Neapolis, this is Sichem."

Which last place, Sichem, is by Josephus said to be the "metropolis" of Samaria; and is thought by Dr. Lightfoot to be the city Philip went to, and where our Lord had before been, and preached to the conversion of many persons: this place lay lower than Jerusalem, and therefore Philip is said to go down to it; and who was not Philip the apostle, but Philip the deacon,

for the apostles abode at Jerusalem; and beside, though this Philip preached the Gospel, and baptized, and wrought miracles, yet did not lay on hands, in order that persons might receive the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost; this was peculiar to the apostles, and therefore Peter and John came down for this purpose, when they heard of the success of Philip's ministry: the subject matter of which follows:

and preached Christ unto them; that Christ was come in the flesh, that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, and that he was the Son of God, and the alone Saviour of men; who by his obedience, sufferings, and death, had wrought righteousness, procured peace and pardon, and obtained eternal redemption for his people; and was risen again, and ascended into heaven, and was set down at the right hand of God, where he ever lived to make intercession, and would come again a second time to judge both quick and dead.

Ver. 6. *And the people with one accord*, etc.] The inhabitants of the city of Samaria, as one man, came to hear the word:

and gave heed to those things which Philip spake; they listened to them, took notice of them, gave their ascent to them, believed and embraced them; being induced thereunto, not only upon the evidence by which these things came, but by reason of the miracles which he wrought, for the confirmation of them: for it follows,

hearing and seeing the miracles which he did; and which are particularly mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 7. *For unclean spirits*, etc.] Devils, so called because they were unclean themselves, defiled others, add delighted in impure persons and places; (See Gill on "Matthew 10:1")

crying with loud voice; showing their unwillingness to remove, and the irresistibleness of divine power they could not withstand:

came out of many that were possessed with them; who had for a long time dwelt in them, and had greatly afflicted them:

and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed; by Philip, in the name of Christ, through a word speaking, or by touching them, without making use of any means or medicines.

Ver. 8. *And there was great joy in that city*.] Both on a spiritual account, for the good of their souls, through the preaching of Christ and his Gospel to them; and on a temporal account; for the good of their bodies, or their friends, being dispossessed of devils, and healed of their diseases.

Ver. 9. *But there was a certain man called Simon*, etc.] Who, as Justin Martyr [f390] says, was a Samaritan, and of a village called Gitton; and so a Jewish writer [f391] calls him Simeon, ynwrmçh, "the Samaritan", a wizard: here is a

but upon this new church, the success of the Gospel in this place, and the joy that was there; a man of great wickedness and sophistry plays the hypocrite, feigns himself a believer, and gets in among them; (See Gill on "<4401>Acts 5:1"),

which beforetime in the same city used sorcery; who before Philip came thither, practised magic arts; wherefore he is commonly called "Simon Magus", for he was a magician, who had learned diabolical arts, and used enchantments and divinations, as Balaam and the magicians of Egypt did:

and bewitched the people of Samaria; or rather astonished them, with the strange feats he performed; which were so unheard of and unaccountable, that they were thrown into an ecstasy and rapture; and were as it were out of themselves, through wonder and admiration, at the amazing things that were done by him:

giving out that himself was some great one; a divine person, or an extraordinary prophet, and it may be the Messiah; since the Samaritans expected the Messiah, as appears from (<4025>John 4:25) and which the Syriac version seems to incline to, which renders the words thus, "and he said, I am that great one"; that great person, whom Moses spake of as the seed of the "woman", under the name of Shiloh, and the character of a prophet.

Ver. 10. *To whom they all gave heed*, etc.] Were not only attentive to the strange things he did, and to the wonderful things he gave out concerning himself; but they believed what he said and did as real things, and were obedient to him: and that

from the least to the greatest; which does not so much respect age, though the Ethiopic version renders it, "from the younger of them to the eldest of them", as state and condition; persons of every rank and quality, high and

low, rich and poor, magistrates and subjects, from the meanest to the greatest of them; and so the Syriac version renders it, “both great”, or “noble, and mean”; he drew the attention, and commanded the regard, both of princes and peasants, of the learned and unlearned, of the great men, and of the common people, who one and all wondered at him, and applauded him:

saying, this man is the great power of God; or as the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, “this is the power of God which is called great”; they took him for the supreme Deity, or as Justin Martyr [f392] expresses it, they accounted him the first, or chief God, or they looked upon him to be the Messiah, “the great power of God”: as the Syriac version renders it; and who should be great, and called the Son of the Highest, (<4001032>Luke 1:32).

Ver. 11. *To him they had regard*, etc.] Which is repeated from the foregoing verse, for the sake of what follows:

because that of a long time he had bewitched them with sorceries; or because he had, it may be for many years, astonished them with his magic arts, and the pranks he played in the use of them.

Ver. 12. *But when they believed Philip*, etc.] Though they had been carried away so long with this deceiver, and had been so much attached unto him, and held in admiration of him; yet when Philip came and preached Christ unto them, such was the power that attended his ministry, and such the efficacy of divine grace that was exerted, that they not only gave heed unto him, but believed what he said:

preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God; concerning the kingdom of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation, the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel; and concerning the kingdom of grace, which is spiritual and internal, and which lies not in external things, as meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace, and joy; and concerning the kingdom of glory, the meetness for it, which lies in regenerating grace, and the right unto it, which is the righteousness of Christ:

and the name of Jesus Christ; concerning the person of Christ, as the Son of God: and the offices of Christ, as prophet, priest, and King; and the virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, for pardon, justification, and atonement: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read this

clause, “in the name of Jesus Christ”: and connect it with the following words,

they were baptized, both men and women: that is, when, they heard Philip preach the Gospel, and believed in Christ, the sum and substance of it, and made a profession of faith, they were of each sex, both men and women, baptized by immersion, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Ver. 13. *Then Simon himself believed also*, etc.] With an historical and temporary faith, as that Jesus was the Messiah, etc. or at least he pretended, to believe this, and professed that he did believe, what others did, and Philip preached:

and when he was baptized; upon profession of his faith, which he so artfully made, that Philip could not discover his hypocrisy: but taking him to be a sincere believer, admitted him to baptism: after which,

he continued with Philip; kept close to him, and got into a familiar acquaintance with him; and constantly attended on his ministry, as if he had been a sincere disciple and follower of Christ:

and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done; he was as much amazed at the miraculous performances of Philip, as the inhabitants of Samaria had been at his, which he could observe were real things; and this increased his wonder, and threw him into an ecstasy, that he was scarce himself: whereas he knew that what he did were only sham performances, and legerdemain tricks.

Ver. 14. *Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem*, etc.] Not that there were some at Jerusalem, and some elsewhere; for they all tarried at Jerusalem, when the rest of the ministers of the word were scattered abroad; though it is possible, that by this time, some of them might have departed from hence; but it seems more probable, that they were as yet all here: these

heard that Samaria had received the word of God; that is, they heard that the Samaritans, who only received the five books of Moses, and that not the Hebrew, but their own copy of them, now received not only the whole Bible, but the Gospel of Christ, as preached by Philip; which they might hear by a letter, or messengers sent from Philip to them, to acquaint them with the success of the Gospel; or from some persons, who had been in those parts: upon which

they sent unto them Peter and John: who were not only fellow apostles, but very familiar and intimate companions; these they sent to confirm the doctrine of Philip, and establish the young converts in it, and to form them into a Gospel church state, and ordain ministers over them.

Ver. 15. *Who when they were come down*, etc.] To the city of Samaria, where Philip was, and these converts dwelt:

prayed for them; for some of them, unto God:

that they might receive the Holy Ghost; the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, as to be able to speak with tongues, to prophesy and work miracles: they might pray for them all, that they might have a larger measure of grace, and more spiritual light and knowledge; and that they might be established in the doctrines of the Gospel, and hold fast the profession of their faith unto the end; but it can hardly be thought that they should pray for them all, both men and women, that they might have the above extraordinary gifts, which were not necessary to them all: and that these are meant by the Holy Ghost is clear from what follows, since he was not yet fallen on any of them, which cannot be understood in any other sense; and seeing it was something visible, which Simon could discern, and therefore cannot mean internal grace, and an increase of that.

Ver. 16. *(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them*, etc.] They had received him as a spirit of illumination and sanctification, and as, a spirit of conversion and faith; they had been regenerated, enlightened, and sanctified by him; and were converted by him, and brought to believe in Christ, and live, by faith upon him; they were baptized believers, and no more; as yet, none of them had gifts qualifying them for the ministry; and still less could any of them speak with tongues, or prophesy, or work miracles; the Holy Ghost had not yet descended on them for such purposes:

only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus: all as yet appeared in them was, that they were believers in Christ, and had been baptized in his name, upon a profession of their faith; and more than this they had been called to, or qualified for: the word “only”, does not respect the form of baptism, as if they had been baptized only in the name of Christ; whereas they were doubtless baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; but refers to baptism itself, which was the only ordinance as yet administered to them.

Ver. 17. *Then laid they their hands on them*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, “who had been baptized”; but not upon all of them, men and women, only on some they were directed unto by the Spirit of God; whom he had designed, and now would qualify for the work of the ministry, that so this new church, might be supplied with proper officers, pastors, and teachers, to feed them with knowledge and with understanding, and who might not only have ministerial gifts to qualify them for preaching the Gospel, but extraordinary ones, which would serve for the confirmation of it; and for this purpose the apostles, “both” of them, as the Arabic version reads, laid their hands on them: for it will not seem probable, that they laid their hands upon the women, on such an account; and it will hardly be received, that they should lay their hands on Simon Magus, otherwise he would have received the Holy Ghost too; so that it seems a plain case, that imposition of hands was not used to them all:

and they received the Holy Ghost; that is, they received the gifts of the Holy Ghost; so that they could prophesy and speak with tongues, and heal diseases, and do other wonderful works: and since now these effects have ceased, the rite and ceremony which was peculiar to the apostles as such, it should seem should cease likewise.

Ver. 18. *And when Simon saw*, etc.] Whence it appears, that the Holy Ghost, or his gifts, which were received by imposition of hands, were something visible and discernible; and so something external, and not internal; otherwise they would have been out of Simon’s reach, and would not have fallen under his notice; but he saw,

that through laying on of the apostles’ hands, the Holy Ghost was given: he saw, that upon this men began to prophesy, and to speak with divers tongues they had never learned, and to work miracles, cure men of their diseases, and the like: and when he observed this,

he offered them money; to purchase such a power of conferring the like gifts, on whomsoever he should lay his hands: hence buying and selling spiritual things, or what relate thereunto, are commonly called “simony”: a vice which has greatly prevailed in the church of Rome, and among its popes; and who therefore may be more properly called the successors of Simon Magus, than of Simon Peter.

Ver. 19. *Saying, give me also this power*, etc.] He does not ask them to lay their hands on him, that he might receive the Holy Ghost, and have these

gifts to exercise himself, but that he might have the power of conferring them on others:

that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost; in which he discovered his ambition and avarice: his ambition, that he might be above Philip; who though he had these gifts, yet had not a power to lay on hands, and thereby convey them unto others; he perceived that this was purely apostolical; and indeed, what he requested was more than what the apostles could do; for though upon their prayers, and through the imposition of their hands, the gifts of the Spirit were bestowed upon men; yet they never could, nor did give a power to others, to do as they did; and his avarice prompted him to this, that he might make gain of it; not by doing miracles himself, but by conveying a power to others to do them.

Ver. 20. *But Peter said to him*, etc.] With great abhorrence and indignation, resenting and detesting his proposal:

thy money perish with thee; or "go into destruction with thee"; signifying, that he would not touch his money, or have anything to do with that or him either, in any such way: the words do not so much design an imprecation on his person, as an abhorrence of his sin; and rather show what his sin deserved than what he desired might be; for the apostle did not simply wish his damnation, since he afterwards exhorts him to repentance, and to pray for forgiveness; but threatens, and even predicts what would be his case, should he live and die in such a state, in which he appeared to be:

because thou hast thought that the gift of God; the Holy Ghost, and his extraordinary gifts, which are freely given, when and to whom the Lord himself pleases:

may be purchased with money; he appears to have a wrong notion of the Spirit of God and his gifts, and of the grace of in bestowing them; as well as a wicked design of purchasing them with money, in order to sell them again; so that it was a sullying and lessening of the grace of God, as well as seeking himself, his own ambition, and filthy lucre: and let such observe how near they come to his sin, who seek to obtain the grace of justification, and the free gift of eternal life, by their own works.

Ver. 21. *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter*, etc.] Or business of the gift of the Holy Ghost; signifying, that as he had not the grace of the Spirit of God implanted in him, so he should not have any of the gifts of the Spirit bestowed on him; and much less a power of communicating them

to others, through laying on of hands: or “in this word”; the word of the Gospel, preached by the apostles; and in any of the blessings published in it, as the forgiveness of sins, a justifying righteousness, and eternal life; and so the Syraic version renders it, “in this faith”; neither in the grace of faith, nor in the doctrine of faith: it seems to answer to a way of speaking frequently used among the Jews, that such and such persons, qlh µhl ˆya, “have no part or lot”, in the world to come [f393]. The Ethiopic version reads, “because of this thy word”; because for his money, he had desired to have a power of bestowing the Holy Ghost on persons, through the imposition of his hands; which showed he had no share in the grace of God, and would have no part in eternal life, thus living and dying:

for thy heart is not right in the sight of God; he had not a clean heart, nor a right spirit created in him; he had not true principles of grace wrought in him; his heart was full of covetousness, ambition, and hypocrisy; he had no good designs, ends, and aims, in what he said and did; in his profession of faith, in his baptism, in his attendance on Philip’s ministry, and in his request for the above power, of conferring the Holy Ghost: his view was not the spread and confirmation of the Gospel, or the enlargement of the kingdom and interest of Christ, and the glory of God, but his own applause and worldly interest; and therefore, however he might be thought of by men, to be a good and disinterested man, he was otherwise in the sight of God, who is the searcher of the heart, and the trier of the reins of the children of men.

Ver. 22. *Repent therefore of this thy wickedness*, etc.] For a great piece of wickedness it was, to offer money for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and to imagine, that could be purchased with money; and what made the wickedness still greater was, the evil design he had in this, to advance himself in opposition to Christ and his apostles, as he afterwards did; and when the apostle puts him upon repentance, his view is to show the heinousness of his crime, the need he stood in of repentance, and that without it, his case must be miserable:

and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee; though he was in a state of nature, the apostle exhorts him to the duty of prayer; for prayer is a natural duty, and binding upon all men, though none but a spiritual man can perform it in a spiritual way: and though this sin of Simon’s was a very heinous one, and came very near unto, and looked very much like the sin against the Holy Ghost, yet it was not the unpardonable

one; it might be pardoned by the grace of God, and through the blood of Christ; and therefore Peter, who wished his salvation and not his damnation, put him upon prayer for it; which was possible, though difficult, but not certain: the apostle says not this, as doubting; if it was a case wholly to be despaired of, then he would not have directed him to the means; and yet the wickedness was so horribly great, and he in such a wretched hardened state, that there was no great hope or expectation of his repentance, and so of the application of pardon to him: however, this advice was not given ironically: Peter was too grave and serious to speak sarcastically, or break a jest upon a man in such circumstances; whom no doubt he heartily pitied, though he abhorred his sin: the Syriac version renders it, "the deceit of thine heart": and the Ethiopic version, "the evil thought of thine heart"; and such it was.

Ver. 23. *For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness*, etc.] Alluding to (Deuteronomy 29:18, 32:32) with which compare (Hebrews 12:15) and signifying, that he was in a state of nature and unregeneracy; under the power and dominion of covetousness, ambition, and hypocrisy; and in a way pernicious to himself, infectious to others, and ungrateful to God, and to good men; and that instead of the root of the matter, the truth of grace being in him, there was nothing in him but the bitter root of sin; which bore gall and wormwood, and everything that was nauseous and disagreeable:

and in the bond of iniquity; referring to (Proverbs 5:22, Isaiah 58:6) and suggesting, that he was held fast bound in the bonds of sin, and with the cords of iniquity, or was entirely under the government of his lusts: the preposition εις, which we render "in", may retain here, as is by some observed, its proper sense of "for", or "into"; and have the same signification it has in (Hebrews 1:5) "I will be to him for a father", or "a father", and "he shall be to me for a son", or "a son": and then the sense of Peter is, I plainly perceive and clearly see by thy words and actions, that thou art nothing else but a lump of bitter gall, and a bundle of sin and wickedness.

Ver. 24. *Then answered Simon, and said*, etc.] Whose conscience might be touched, and smote with what Peter had said; and he might be terrified with the wrath of God, and filled with fear of his judgment coming upon him for his wickedness, and might now stand trembling before the apostles: and if this was not his case, he was a most hardened and audacious wretch;

and his following words must be understood in a different sense, from what they might seem to have, when they came out of his mouth:

pray ye to the Lord for me; the Arabic version reads, “pray ye two”; the words are addressed both to Peter and John; for though Peter only spake to him, yet John joined with him, and assented to what he said, and approved of it; and which he might signify either by word or gesture; wherefore Simon desires both of them, that they would pray to the Lord for him; but whether he was serious, and in good earnest in this, is a question; since there is no reason to believe he truly repented, from the accounts given of him by ancient writers; who always represent him as an opposer of the apostles and their doctrine, as the father of all heresies, as a blasphemous wretch; who gave out that he was the Father in Samaria, the Son in Judea, and the Holy Ghost in other places; and as a very lewd and wicked man, who carried about with him a whore, whose name was Helena; whom he called the mother of the universe, and gave out the angels were made by her, and the world by them; with many other errors, blasphemies, and impieties: so that it should rather seem, that though Peter was serious in his advice to Simon, yet he was not so in his request to him; but in a sarcastic sneering way, desired his prayers for him; suggesting, that he was not in any pain about what he had said: and if he was in earnest, he did not take Peter’s advice to pray for himself; nor did he declare any repentance for his sin; and his desire that the apostles would pray for him, might not be from any sense he had of the evil of his sin, but from a slavish fear of the evil, or mischief, that was like to come upon him for his sin, as appears by what follows:

that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me; as that his money should perish with him, and he with that; or that he should go into destruction; that everlasting destruction and ruin would be his portion; and that he should have no part nor lot in eternal life, unless he repented, and his sin was pardoned: and this confirms what has been before observed, that John assented to what Peter spoke, or said the same, or such like things to Simon as he did.

Ver. 25. *And they, when they had testified*, etc. That is, Simeon (or Peter) and John, as the Syriac version expresses it; when they had bore their testimony to, and by it confirmed the Gospel as preached by Philip, and had established the young converts in it, and against the errors of Simon Magus:

and preached the word of the Lord; or of "God", as read the Alexandrian copy, and the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; when they had preached the Gospel in the city of Samaria, the same as Philip had preached before; whereby it appeared, that there was an harmony and agreement between them:

returned to Jerusalem; to the rest of the apostles there, to give them an account, how they found things at Samaria; what they had done, and what they had met with: and upon their return, whilst on their journey, they stopped at several places, which lay in their way;

and preached the Gospel in many villages of the Samaritans; their first commission in (<40 10 05>Matthew 10:5) being now cancelled, and a new one given them to preach the Gospel to every creature; and being appointed witnesses for Christ in Samaria, as well as in Jerusalem and Judea; (<44 01 08>Acts 1:8).

Ver. 26. *And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip*, etc.] To inquire who this angel was, whether Michael or Gabriel, or the tutelar angel of Ethiopia, or of the eunuch, or of Philip, is too curious; it was one of the ministering spirits sent forth by Christ, to serve a gracious purpose of his, and for the good of one of the heirs of salvation:

saying, arise; at once, make haste and speed, and quick dispatch; the phrase denotes readiness, alacrity, and expedition:

and go toward the south; the southern point from the city of Samaria, where Philip now was; or to the south of Jerusalem: the parts of Gaza, Lydda, Jamnia, Joppa, etc. were called the "south": hence often mention is made of such a Rabbi and such a Rabbi, that he was amwrd, "of the south" [f394]; so R. Joshua, who was of Lydda, is said to be of the south [f395]. The Ethiopic version renders it at "noon time", and so the Arabic of Deuteronomy Dieu; as if it respected not the place whither he was to go, but the time when he was to go; and that it might be about the middle of the day, the following narrative seems to confirm:

unto the way which goes down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert: this place is sometimes called Azzah, and sometimes Gaza, which is owing to the different pronunciation of the first letter of it; it was first inhabited by the Avim, or Hivites, who being destroyed by the Caphtorim, they dwelt in their stead, (<50 02 23>Deuteronomy 2:23). It fell to the lot of the tribe of

Judah, but could not be held by it, because of the giants which remained in it; and was, as Jerom says [f396], a famous city of Palestine in his day; and was formerly the border of the Canaanites towards Egypt; and the way to Egypt lay through it, in which the eunuch was travelling: the way from Jerusalem to this place lay through Bethlehem, as the above ancient writer observes, on (<24B15>Jeremiah 31:15) where he says

> "some of the Jews interpret this place thus; that Jerusalem being taken by Vespasian, through this way (Bethlehem and Ephratah, of which he is speaking) to Gaza and Alexandria, a vast number of captives were led to Rome."

And as the same writer elsewhere says [f397], Bethlehem was six miles from Aella (or Jerusalem) to the south, in the way which leads to Hebron; and it is commonly believed that the way to Gaza was through Hebron, and is the way in which they go to it now; and to a hill near this place Samson, carried the gates of Gaza, (<070601>Judges 16:1-3) And this also was to the south of Jerusalem, and two and twenty miles from it [f398]: and it is also said by the same author [f399], that there is a village called Bethzur, and in his time Bethhoron, in the way from Jerusalem to Hebron, about twenty miles from the former, at which there was a fountain, where it was reported the eunuch was baptized by Philip. There was it seems another way from Jerusalem to Gaza, through Diospolis, or Eleutheropolis, and so to Ascalon, and from thence to Gaza [f400]: and this was the road the eunuch went, if their conjecture is right, that he was baptized in the river Eleutherus; but which way he went is not certain, nor where he was baptized. The situation of Gaza was, according to Arrianus [f401], as follows:

> "Gaza is distant from the sea at least twenty furlongs (two miles and a half), and the access unto it is sandy and deep, and the sea near the city is all muddy. Gaza was a great city, and was built on high ground, and encompassed with a strong wall: it was the last of those cities inhabited, as you go from Phoenicia into Egypt, επι τη αρχη της ερημου "at the beginning of the desert"."

Which last words seem to furnish out a reason why it is here called Gaza, "which is desert"; because it was situated where the desert began: though this clause is differently understood; some apply it to Gaza; as if the sense was "Gaza the desert", to distinguish old Gaza which was destroyed by Alexander the great, and as Strabo says [f402], "remained desert", from new Gaza, built at some distance from it: Jerom has [f403] this distinction of old

and new Gaza; there is scarce any appearance, he says, of the foundations of the ancient city; and that which is now seen is built in another place; and an unknown Greek writer makes express mention of new Gaza, which is the city itself; and speaks of another Gaza at some distance, which he calls Gaza, η ερημος, "the desert" [f404]: but the haven, which was seven furlongs distant from Gaza, was not called new Gaza till Julian's time: it was first called Majuma, and afterwards Constantia, by Constantine; either from his son Constantius, or his sister Constantia, it having embraced the Christian religion [f405]: wherefore, as Beza observes, no regard could be had to this distinction in the times of Luke; and though it was besieged by Alexander and taken, yet it did not become a desolate place; it had its walls, gates, and fortifications afterwards; and was after this taken by Ptolomy, and then by Alexander Janneeus; it was repaired by Gabinius, and given to Herod by Augustus [f406]: so that it could not be said to be desert, in the times of Philip and the eunuch, with respect to its inhabitants and fortifications: it seems rather therefore to be so called, for the above reason, because situated at the beginning of the desert; and the whole space between the parts of Egypt next the Nile, and Palestina, is called "the desert", both by Arrianus [f407] and Josephus [f408]: others apply this epithet to the way, and read it as do the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, "to the way of the desert which goes from Jerusalem"; meaning the wilderness, which lay in the way from Jerusalem to Gaza. This place was distant from Jerusalem about seventy five miles; for from Jerusalem to Ascalon was, as Josephus [f409] says, five hundred and twenty furlongs, which make sixty five miles; and from Ascalon to Gaza were ten miles, as our countryman Mr. Sandes Says [f410]; though according to the Itinerary of Antoninus [f411], the distance was sixteen miles. The Talmudists make mention of this place, they represent it as a very pleasant place to dwell in; they say [f412], Gaza is hpy hywyn, "a beautiful habitation"; they speak of three famous markets, and one of them was the market of Gaza [f413]; and very near to this city there was a beast market [f414]; and to which may be added, though it may not serve to strengthen the reason of its name being called Gaza the desert, there was a place on the border of the city, which was named atrygs atbrwj, "the desert of the leper" [f415]: there were also brooks about the parts of Gaza and Azotus [f416]; in one of which, if the eunuch was near Gaza, to which he was going, he might be baptized; since it is uncertain whereabout Philip met him, and where the place of water was, in which the ordinance of baptism was administered to him. This city is now called Gazera, or Gazara, and is inhabited by Greeks, Turks, and Arabians.

Ver. 27. *And he arose and went*, etc.] As soon as he had his orders, he immediately obeyed them; he made no dispute about the matter, though he was directed only part of his way, and had no account of what he went about, or was to do;

and behold, a man of Ethiopia; or "a man, an Ethiopian"; an Hebraism, such as "a man a Jew", (<380823>Zechariah 8:23) wherefore his being called a man, is no contradiction to his being an eunuch; for the word "man" does not regard his sex, but with the other the country of which he was; and it is the same as if he had only been called an Ethiopian, which signifies one of a black countenance; for Ethiopia was not so called from Ethiops, the son of Vulcan, who is said to reign over it, but from the colour of its inhabitants; (<241323>Jeremiah 13:23, <300907>Amos 9:7). This country in the Hebrew language is called Cush, and the people of it Cushites, from Cush the son of Ham, (<010106>Genesis 10:6) And so Josephus says [f417], that the Ethiopians over whom he (Cush) reigned, are now by themselves, and by all in Asia, called Chuseans; and so likewise the inhabitants of upper Ethiopia, or the Abyssines, are to this day called Cussinns, by the Portuguese. Geographers make mention of two Ethiopias, one in Africa, divided into upper and lower, and which is here meant; and the other in Asia and a part of Arabia, and which is the Ethiopia spoken of in the Old Testament: a note of admiration is prefixed, to observe to us what was remarkable in providence that just at this time, and in this way, such a man should be travelling; and what was still a greater wonder of grace, that such an one should be the object of God's peculiar favour, and should be chosen and called, have the Gospel preached to him, and be admitted to an ordinance of it; whereby some prophecies began to have their accomplishment in part, (<198831>Psalm 68:31, <360310>Zephaniah 3:10)

An eunuch of great authority; he might be one that was literally so, it being common for eastern princes and great men to have such persons as guards over their wives, to preserve their chastity; and so hereby was a fulfilment in part of (<235603>Isaiah 56:3-5) though this word is used to denote a person in office: so Potiphar is called `syrs`, an eunuch, though he had a wife, and which we rightly render an officer; and the Chaldee paraphrase renders it, `abr`, "a prince", or great man, (<013901>Genesis 39:1). So Balaam is said [f418] to be one of the king's eunuchs, and yet Jannes and Jambres are said to be his sons; and the word Dynastes here used, which we translate "of great authority", may be considered as explanative of the word eunuch; to teach

us, that this word was not expressive of his case, but a title of office: it is reported of this eunuch, that after his conversion he preached the Gospel to the inhabitants of Zeylan and Arabia Felix, and in the island of Traprobane in the Red sea, and at last suffered martyrdom [f419]: this great person said to be

under Candace queen of the Ethiopians; that is, of those Ethiopians who inhabited the island of Meroe; for Candace, or Candaoce, as Pliny [f420] reads it, was a common name of the queens of that island, as Pharaoh was of the Egyptian kings, and Caesar of the Roman emperors: the word Candace signifies a governor of children, that is, servants; it is derived from the Ethiopic word ynq, "Kani", which signifies to govern; and from qd, "Dak, a child", or servant; and the king of the Abyssines is to this day called Prestar Chan, or Kan, a prince of servants, who is commonly and corruptly called Prester John; and Chan, or Kan, is a well known name for an emperor or governor in the eastern countries as with the Tartars and Persians, witness the late famous Kouli Kan. Some say [f421], her proper name was Judith, others Lacasa [f422], and others Hendake, or Indich; which, as Ludolphus [f423] observes, is no other than Candace; though this last name Indich, according to Zaga Zabo, an ambassador of the king of the Ethiopians, was the name of the eunuch himself; his words, as reported by Damianus a Goes [f424], are these;

> "we, almost before all other Christians, received baptism from the eunuch of Candace, queen of Ethiopia, whose name was Indich:"

who had the charge of all her treasure; was her lord treasurer; which shows, that he was not an eunuch to her on account of chastity, but an high officer in her kingdom: the word Gaza here used, signifies in the Persian language treasure, or treasury [f425]. The Ethiopic version takes it for the name of a place, and renders it, "and he was governor of the city of Gaza", but very wrongly: "and had come to Jerusalem for to worship"; hence he seems to have been either a Jew by birth, or rather a proselyte to the Jewish religion; and had been at Jerusalem at one of their annual feasts, the passover, "pentecost", or tabernacles, to worship the God of Israel, whom he believed to be the only true God.

Ver. 28. *Was returning*, etc.] From Jerusalem, having finished the parts of divine worship he came to perform; and it is remarkable, that though he must doubtless have heard of Jesus of Nazareth, and what had passed in

Jerusalem lately, and of his apostles, yet heard them not; or however, was not converted by them, nor believed in Jesus; his conversion being ordered to be at another time, in another place, and by another instrument:

and sitting in his chariot: as was the manner of princes and great persons:

read Esaias the Prophet; the Book of the Prophecies of Isaiah the Prophet; and in (<4204717>Luke 4:17) it is called the "Book of the Prophet Esaias"; and in the note there, (see Gill on "<4204717>Luke 4:17, I have observed, that the prophets, especially the larger ones, were sometimes in separate and distinct books, and so might be the prophecy of Isaiah; and such an one was delivered to Christ, in the synagogue of Nazareth; and such an one the eunuch might have, and be reading in it: hence we read [f426], that Daniel should say to the Israelites, who came to discourse with him about the prophecies of Jeremiah, bring me, says he, hy[çy dps, "the Book of Isaiah"); he began to read, and went on till he came to this verse, "the burden of the desert of the sea", etc. (<232101>Isaiah 21:1) and both the Arabic and Ethiopic versions here read, "the Book of the Prophet Isaiah." (See Gill on "<4204717>Luke 4:17"). Some think the eunuch might be reading over some passages of Scripture in this prophet, which he had heard expounded at Jerusalem, to refresh his memory with what he had heard. This prophet is a very evangelical one, and very delightful and profitable to read: many things are prophesied by him concerning the Messiah, and particularly in the chapter in which the eunuch was reading; and this being a time when there was great expectation of the Messiah, such passages might be read and expounded in their synagogues, which concerned him: however, the eunuch improved his time, as he was travelling in a religious way, which was very commendable; and as this was the occasion and opportunity which the Holy Ghost took to bring on his conversion, it may serve greatly to recommend the reading of the Scriptures.

Ver. 29. *Then the Spirit said unto Philip*, etc.] Not the angel, a ministering Spirit, as in (<440826>Acts 8:26) but the Holy Spirit, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, the same with the Spirit of the Lord, (<440839>Acts 8:39) who spoke unto him, either by an articulative voice, such as was the Bath Kol among the Jews; or inwardly, by a secret impulse upon him, he directed him, saying:

go near, and join thyself to this chariot; he bid him make up to the chariot, he saw driving on the road at such a distance, and follow it, and attend it

closely; and not leave it, till an opportunity of conversing with the person in it offered.

Ver. 30. *And Philip ran thither to him*, etc.] Being very ready to obey the divine order, and hoping he might be an instrument of doing some good, which might issue in the glory of God, and the welfare of men:

and heard him read the prophet Esaias; that is, "the Book of Isaiah the Prophet"; as before; and so the Ethiopic and Arabic versions read here, as there: he read it out, with a clear and distinct voice, so that Philip could hear him; and this he did, partly through reverence to the word of God, and partly to fix his attention to it the more, that he might the better understand and remember it, and also for delight and pleasure: it is very likely, that it was the Book of Isaiah in the Hebrew tongue in which he was reading, and which language he might understand, though he might be at a loss about the sense of the prophet:

and said, understandest thou what thou readest? meaning not the language, but the sense; for overhearing him, he perceived it was a prophecy in Isaiah he was reading; which was not so easy to be understood as laws and precepts are, which command this, and forbid that; whereas prophecies were more abstruse, and regarded things to come.

Ver. 31. *And he said, how can I, except some man should guide me*? etc.] Which shows that he was of an excellent spirit and temper; since instead of answering in a haughty and disdainful manner, as great men are too apt to do; and instead of charging Philip with, impertinence and insolence, in interrupting him whilst reading, and putting such a question to him, he expresses himself with great and uncommon modesty; with a sense and confession of his ignorance and incapacity and of the necessity and usefulness of the instructions of men, appointed of God to open and explain the Scriptures: and though he wanted such a guide, and could have been glad of one, yet he was willing to use all diligence himself in reading, that he, might, if possible, come at some knowledge of the truth; which was very commendable in him; and no doubt but the spirit he was in was much owing to his reading the word, and to the Spirit of God disposing his mind in this manner:

and he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him; which is an instance of his great humanity and courteousness, and of his meekness and condescension, as well as of his vehement thirst after the knowledge of the

Scriptures; he concluding, or at least hoping by Philip's question, and by the air and look of the man, that he was one that might be useful to him this way.

Ver. 32. *The place of the Scripture which he read was this*, etc.] Or the paragraph or section of Scripture; that part of it in which he was reading was (Isaiah 53:7,8) which shows, that by this time the Scriptures were divided into sections, chapters, and verses; whereas the Jews say the whole law at first was but one verse [f427].

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before the shearer. The metaphors of sheep and lamb express the innocence, meekness, and patience of Christ in his sufferings and death; and his being like these when led to the slaughter, and dumb before the shearer, show his willingness to suffer and die for his people, and to become a sacrifice for their sins. The allusion is to the sheep led either by the butcher to the slaughter house, or by the priest to the altar, and to the lamb of a year old being silent while it is shearing; and both denote the voluntariness of Christ in his sufferings, the stripping him of his good name, credit, and reputation among men, and of all worldly substance, though Lord of all, and even of the common blessings of nature, as of meat, drink, and raiment, and the light of the sun; and particularly the stripping him of his clothes, when his raiment was parted, and lots cast on his vesture, is very aptly signified by the shearing of the lamb, all which he took very patiently; and his being led forth to be crucified, when he was offered up as a sacrifice on the cross, very fitly answers to the sheep being led to the slaughter, without showing any reluctance. It was a custom with the Heathens to offer no creature in sacrifice, that struggled as it was led, or made an opposition, or showed any reluctance: it is remarkable, that there was nothing of this kind to be observed in Christ, who gave himself an offering, and a sacrifice; the reasons of which were, because of the great love he bore to his people: and because of the good and advantage that would come to them thereby: he was content to be poor, that they might be rich; to be made sin, that they might be made righteousness; to become a curse, that the blessings of the covenant might come upon them; to be stripped of all things, that they might enjoy all: and because no other sacrifice could atone for their sins; and because it was his Father's will, which always involves his own.

So opened he not his mouth: in defence of himself, when such false things were laid to his charge, and which he could have so easily refuted, and yet

answered to nothing, to the astonishment of his judge; the reason was, because he had the sins of his people on him, for which he was willing to suffer; and therefore declined self-vindication, lest he should hinder the judicial process against him; nor did he open his mouth against his enemies by way of threatening or complaint, when they spat on him, blindfolded, and buffeted him, and bid him prophesy who smote him; and when the chief priests, Scribes, the common people, and thieves mocked at him, and reviled him on the cross, he opened not his lips unto them, nor against them, only for them, saying, Father, forgive them; nor did he open his mouth against the justice of God, as bearing hard upon him; neither did he complain of the strictness of its demands, abating him nothing; nor of the severity and weight of its strokes, not sparing him at all; nor did he say one word against his people, whose sins brought all his sorrows and sufferings on him, but made intercession for the transgressors, whose sins he bore.

Ver. 33. *In his humiliation his judgment was taken away*, etc.] The humiliation, or low estate of Christ, lay in his assumption of human nature, with the weaknesses and imperfections of it; in the meanness of his parentage and education; in the sorrows he endured from his cradle to his cross; in his last conflict with Satan in the garden; in his being apprehended, bound, scourged, and condemned, both by the sanhedrim, and the Roman governor; and in being enclosed with the assembly of the wicked soldiers, who put on him their own clothes, and a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed in his hand, and then in a mock manner bowed to him as king of the Jews; and last of all in his obedience to death, even the death of the cross, and in his being laid in the grave. Now in this his low estate, "his judgment was taken away"; in the text in (Isaiah 53:8) the words are, "he was taken from prison and from judgment"; which some understand of his sufferings, and render the words thus, "by an assembly, and by judgment he was taken away"; that is, by the Jewish sanhedrim, and by the judgment or sentence of Pontius Pilate, his life was taken away: and others interpret it of his resurrection from the dead, when he was taken or delivered from the prison of the grave, and could not be held any longer by the cords and pains of death; and from the judgment or condemnation under which he lay, being justified in the Spirit, when he was raised from the dead. The words, as here cited, differ from the original text; which have caused some to think, that there was a different reading of these words, which the Septuagint followed, and Luke after them. Dr. Pocock [f428] has proposed a translation of the Hebrew text, as agreeable to this citation,

without supposing a various reading, thus, “because of affliction, even from judgment he is taken; or when he was humbled, he was taken from judgment”; it being all one whether he was taken from judgment condemnation, and punishment, as at his resurrection, or whether his punishment was taken from him: though the sense of the words, as they are here cited, rather seems to be this; when he was taken and bound by the Jews, and detained by them a prisoner, and arraigned before the high priest, and at Pilate’s bar, and false witnesses suborned, which was his time of humiliation and affliction; when he was reproached, blasphemed, buffeted, and spit, upon, justice was not done him, right did not take place, but was removed from him, and he was treated in a most unjust and unrighteous manner:

and who shall declare his generation? not his divine or human generation; nor the sorrows of his life; or the duration of his life since his resurrection; nor the numbers of his spiritual seed and offspring; senses put upon the words they will by no means bear; but the generation or age in which Christ lived, which for its wickedness among themselves, and their barbarity to him, and ill usage of him, cannot be sufficiently described and declared; and a great deal of it they themselves own; (See Gill on “Matthew 10:36”) (See Gill on “Matthew 12:39”)

for his life is taken from the earth, not in a common, but in a judicial way; in the most cruel, barbarous, and unjust manner, in a violent way; though not without his Father’s will, and his own consent; and though his life was taken from the earth, he now lives in heaven, and that for evermore.

Ver. 34. *And the eunuch answered Philip, and said*, etc.] After he had read the passage out, and Philip had put the question to him, whether he understood it; and after he had taken him up into his chariot to sit with him, and instruct him:

I pray thee, of whom speakest the prophet this? being desirous of knowing who was the subject of this famous prophecy: which to know was very useful and edifying, and was not a matter of mere indifference and speculation, but of great moment and concern. A like way of speaking, in order to know the sense of a passage, is used by the Jews [f429]: thus upon reading (Proverbs 31:2), it is asked,

> “of whom does Solomon say this Scripture? he does not say it but of his father David.”

Does he speak

of himself or of some other man? which is very properly and pertinently put; since there might be some appearance of its application to Isaiah, who suffered under Manasseh; and it might be applied to different persons, as it has been since by the Jews; as to Josiah, Jeremiah in particular, and to the people of Israel in general, though very wrongly: Josiah could never be intended, as one of their noted commentators [f430] expounds the paragraph; since it was not the sins of the people that were the cause of his death, but his own, and his vanity in meddling with what he had nothing to do with, and had no real call unto; nor can it be said of him that he did no violence, or that he bore the sins of others, and died for them, and made his soul an offering for sin; nor were his days prolonged; nor did the pleasure of the Lord prosper in his hand: nor is the passage applicable to Jeremiah, as another of their writers [f431] would have it; he was not free from sin; nor was he wounded for the sins of his people; nor did he undergo his sufferings with patience; nor had he a large number of disciples; nor was he extolled and exalted, as this person is said to be: much less, as others [f432] say, is the whole body of the people of Israel in captivity intended; since one single individual as spoken of throughout the whole; and is manifestly distinguished from the people of Israel, whose sins and sorrows he was to bear, and for whose transgressions he was to be stricken and wounded. In all which they go contrary to their Targum [f433], Talmud [f434], and other ancient writings [f435], which interpret many things in this section or paragraph of the Messiah [f436]: however, as it might be differently understood, or difficult to be understood, the eunuch very appropriately puts this question.

Ver. 35. *Then Philip opened his mouth*, etc.] With freedom and boldness, and spoke clearly and distinctly, and expounded the passage to him. This is a phrase frequently used in Jewish writings, especially in the book of Zohar [f437], when they give an account of this or the other Rabbi interpreting any place of Scripture; as for instance, R. Eleazar jtp, "opened", and said, "my sabbaths you shall keep", etc. Again, R. Aba jtp, "opened", and said, "and Manoah said unto his wife", etc. Once more, "R. Simeon opened", and said, "the heavens declare the glory of God", etc. and

began at the same Scripture: "the fifty third of Isaiah": and preached unto him Jesus of Nazareth; how that he was the true Messiah, and the person there designed, and that very rightly; for the Jews themselves, the ancient

ones, have interpreted several passages in that chapter of the Messiah, as has been before observed; he showed him how that he was born of a virgin, made under the law, and yielded perfect obedience to it in his life; and that he suffered and died for the sins of his people, and made satisfaction for them, and brought in an everlasting righteousness to justify them before God, and had obtained eternal redemption for them; that he was risen from the dead, was ascended into heaven, and now sat at the right hand of God, and ever lived to make intercession for transgressors; and would come a second time to judge both quick and dead; and in the mean while had left rules for the gathering, and forming, and governing his churches; and had appointed persons to preach his Gospel, and to administer the ordinances of baptism, and the supper of the Lord, which were to continue till his second coming.

Ver. 36. *And as they went on their way*, etc.] In the road from Jerusalem to Gaza; Philip preaching, and the eunuch hearing, and conversing in a religious and spiritual way together; and Beza says in one exemplar it is added, “conferring one with another”; about the person and office of Christ, the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; as appears by what follows, both by the eunuch’s request to be admitted to baptism, and his confession of faith:

they came unto a certain water; which some say was at Bethhoron, in the tribe of Judah or Benjamin; and others think it was the river Eleutherus; the former is more likely; concerning which Jerom [f438] gives this account:

> “Bethzur in the tribe of Judah, or Benjamin, and now called Bethhoron, is a village as we go from Aella (or Jerusalem) to Hebron, twenty miles from it; near which is a fountain, springing up at the bottom of a mountain, and is swallowed up in the same ground in which it is produced; and the Acts of the Apostles relate, that the eunuch of queen Candace was baptized here by Philip.”

This place was about two miles from Hebron; since that, according to the same writer [f439], was twenty two miles from Jerusalem. Borchardus [f440] seems to place it further off from Hebron:

> “from Hebron are three “leucas”, or six miles, northward, declining a little to the west, to Nehel Escol, that is, “the brook of the cluster”, from whence the spies carried the cluster of grapes; to the left of this valley, for the space of a mile, or half a leuca, runs a

river, in which Philip baptized the, eunuch of queen Candace, not far from Sicelech."

And, according to Jerom [f441], Escol lay in the way from Bethzur to Hebron. This account of the historian sets aside that weak piece of criticism on *Ac# 8:38* used by some persons; as if when Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, no more is meant, than that they went to the water side, or descended to the bank and brink of the river; seeing, here it is said, they came to a certain place of water; they came to the river itself, or the river side, and after this went down into it.

And the eunuch said, see here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? This question shows, that he had some knowledge of the ordinance of baptism, which he had received from the ministry and conversation of Philip; and that he had some desire after it, as regenerate persons have, after divine things, after Christ, his word, and ordinances; and that he was willing to take the first opportunity of submitting to it, but was jealous lest he should not be qualified for it; and therefore modestly proposes the affair to Philip, and desires to be examined and judged by him: and it also suggests, that there are some things which might be a just bar to this ordinance, as want of grace, and a disorderly life and conversation, which were the hindrances to the Pharisees and Sadducees, who came to John's baptism; and these are sufficient ones, even though persons may be born in a Christian land, and of believing parents, and have had a good education; yea, though they may have much notional light and speculative knowledge: but where the good work of grace is begun, and when a soul is spiritually enlightened, and has evangelical repentance for sin, and true faith in Christ, and sincere love to him, nothing should hinder: not any thing on his side; not a sense of his own unworthiness, which will never be otherwise, but rather increase; nor the corruptions of his heart and nature, which will always remain, as long as he is in the body; nor fears of falling away, since there cannot be more danger after baptism than before, and Christ is the same who is always able to keep from it; nor the reproaches of the world, which should be esteemed above riches; and more especially, since to be ashamed of Christ, his word, or ordinances, is highly resented by him; nor the opposition of relations and friends, who, though they are to be regarded and listened to in civil matters, yet should have no sway in religious ones to move from the cause of Christ; nor any difficulty in the ordinance itself, since it is but water baptism, and not a bloody one, such as Christ was baptized with, and some of his followers have been

called unto: nor should anything hinder on the side of the administrator, when the above is the case; as not being circumcised, but Gentiles, as in the times of the apostles, (<4410047>Acts 10:47) so not the former life and conversation of the person, though it has been ever so wicked, as the instances of the crucifiers of Christ, of the jailor, of Saul the persecutor, and many of the Corinthians, show; nor the weakness of grace; the day of small things is not to be despised, nor a bruised reed to be broken, or smoking flax to be quenched: agreeably to this the Ethiopic version renders it, “who doth hinder”, etc.

Ver. 37. *And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest*, etc.] Intimating, that if he did not believe, he had no right to that ordinance; though he was a proselyte to the Jewish religion, a serious and devout man, and was employed in a religious way, when Philip came up to him, and was very desirous of being instructed in the knowledge of divine things; and yet notwithstanding all this, he had no right to the ordinance of baptism, unless he had faith in Christ, and made a profession of it; nor would Philip administer it to him without it; from whence it appears, that faith in Christ, and a profession of it, are necessary prerequisites to baptism: and this faith should not be a mere historical and temporary faith, nor a feigned one, but a believing in Christ with the heart unto righteousness; or such a faith by which a soul relinquishes its own righteousness, and looks and goes unto Christ for righteousness, life, and salvation, and rests and relies upon him for them; and it should be a believing in him with the whole heart, which does not design a strong faith, or a full assurance of faith, but an hearty, sincere, and unfeigned one, though it may be but weak, and very imperfect. And that this is necessary to baptism is manifest, because without this it is impossible to please God; nor can submission and obedience to it be acceptable to him: nor indeed can the ordinance be grateful and pleasing to unbelievers; for though it is a command that is not grievous, and a yoke that is easy, yet it is only so to them that believe; nor can any other see to the end of this ordinance, or behold the burial, and resurrection of Christ represented by it, or be baptized into his death, and partake of the benefits of it; and besides, whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God: which though a short, is a very comprehensive summary of the articles of faith respecting the person, offices, and grace of Christ; as that he is a divine person, truly and properly God, the only begotten of the Father, of

the same nature with him, and equal to him; that he existed from all eternity, as a divine person with him, and distinct from him; and that he is the Christ, the anointed of God, to be prophet, priest, and King; and is Jesus, the only Saviour of lost sinners, in whom he trusted and depended alone for righteousness, life, and salvation. This whole verse is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in five of Beza's copies, and in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; but stands in the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, and in the Complutensian edition; and, as Beza observes, ought by no means to be expunged, since it contains so clear a confession of faith required of persons to be baptized, which was used in the truly apostolic times.

Ver. 38. *And he commanded the chariot to stand still*, etc.] That is, the eunuch ordered his chariot driver to stop; for to him it better agrees to give this order than to Philip; though otherwise the words are so placed, that it would be difficult to say who gave the command.

And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him: upon which Calvin has this note;

> "hence we see what was the manner of baptizing with the ancients, for they plunged the whole body into water."

And indeed, other mode had been practised then, as sprinkling or pouring of water, there would have been no necessity of their going out of the chariot, and much less of their going down into the water; and as for change of apparel, it cannot be reasonably thought that so great a man should take so long a journey without it. In like manner the Jewish ablutions and purifications, which were performed by immersion, and therefore called baptisms, (Hebrews 9:10) are spoken of in the same sort of language as here: so a profluvious person, and a woman that had lain in, were obliged lwbjl hdryç, "to go down and dip" [f442].

> "It is a tradition of the Rabbins [f443], that he that sees any nocturnal pollution on the day of atonement, lbwjw drwy, "goes down and dips himself". — And so all that are obliged to dipping, dip according to their custom on the day of atonement; the profluvious person, man or woman, the leprous person, man or woman, the husband of a menstruous woman, and one defiled with the dead, dip according to their custom on the day of atonement."

Ver. 39. *And when they were come up out of the water*, etc.] Which is another circumstance, showing that baptism was then performed by immersion; with this compare (<40316>Matthew 3:16) and so it is said of the high priest, when he washed himself on the day of atonement, hl[lbjw dry, "he went down and dipped, and came up" [f444]; and so any other person that was obliged to dipping on any account, hl[w lbjw dry, "went down and dipped, and came up" [f445]. And again it is said [f446], it happened to a servant maid of Rabbi, htl[w hlbjç, "that she dipped herself and came up".

The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; as soon as the ordinance was over; so that the eunuch had no opportunity of rewarding him for his instructions and labour; and this might be done on purpose to show that he had no mercenary end in joining himself to his chariot; and this sudden rapture and disappearance might be a confirmation to the eunuch that this whole affair was of God. The Spirit of the Lord took up Philip, just as he is said to lift up Ezekiel, between earth and heaven, (<260803>Ezekiel 8:3) and carried him above the earth as far as Azotus. The Alexandrian copy, and one of Beza's, and some others, read the words thus, "the holy Spirit fall upon the eunuch, but the angel of the Lord caught away Philip"; the same angel, it may be, that bid him go toward the south:

that the eunuch saw him no more; neither at that time, nor perhaps ever after; for one went one way, and another way:

and he went on his way; towards Ethiopia; and, as the Ethiopic version reads, "into his own country"; which is one reason why he saw Philip no more: however, he went thither

rejoicing, as he had great reason to do; being blessed with the saving knowledge of Christ, and true faith in the Son of God, and admitted to the holy ordinance of baptism; having first received the baptism of the Spirit, or having the grace of the Spirit bestowed on him, and implanted in him: and, according to some copies just now mentioned, after his baptism the Spirit fell on him in an extraordinary manner, and that without imposition of hands; so that, upon the whole, he had great reason to rejoice.

Ver. 40. *But Philip was found at Azotus*, etc.] The same with the Ashdod of the Philistines, famous for the temple of Dagon, (<090501>1 Samuel 5:1)

where the Septuagint call it Azotus, as here: and so it is called in the Apocrypha:

> “Howbeit all the hindmost of them were slain with the sword: for they pursued them unto Gazera, and unto the plains of Idumea, and *Azotus*, and Jamnia, so that there were slain of them upon a three thousand men.” (1Mac 4:15)

> “Whereof when Apollonius heard, he took three thousand horsemen, with a great host of footmen, and went to *Azotus* as one that journeyed, and therewithal drew him forth into the plain. because he had a great number of horsemen, in whom he put his trust.” (1Mac 10:77)

> “But Jonathan set fire on *Azotus*, and the cities round about it, and took their spoils; and the temple of Dagon, with them that were fled into it, he burned with fire.” (1Mac 10:84)

> “And when he came near to *Azotus*, they shewed him the temple of Dagon that was burnt, and *Azotus* and the suburbs thereof that were destroyed, and the bodies that were cast abroad and them that he had burnt in the battle; for they had made heaps of them by the way where he should pass.” (1Mac 11:4)

where mention is made of Beth Dagon, and the idol’s temple in it; and by Herodotus [f447], Pliny [f448], and Ptolomy [f449]; and it is now called Palmis, according to R. Benjamin [f450]; it was about fifty four miles from Jerusalem, and two hundred and seventy furlongs, Or four and thirty miles [f451] from Gaza:

and passing through; or, as he passed along through that and other places:

he preached in all the cities; that lay in his way; which shows his zeal and diligence:

till he came to Caesarea; not Caesarea Philippi, (<4016>Matthew 16:13) but that which was before called Strato’s tower, and was rebuilt by Herod, and called Caesarea, in honour of Augustus Caesar [f452]; and not by Caesar himself, as R. Benjamin says [f453]: it was six hundred furlongs, or seventy five miles from Jerusalem [f454], This place was famous for Jewish Rabbins, and their schools of learning; frequent mention is made of ˆyr syqd

ˆynbr, “the Rabbins of Caesarea” [f455]; here Philip seems to have stopped, and stayed awhile.

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 9

Ver. 1. *And Saul yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter*, etc.] The historian having given an account of the dispersion of all the preachers of the Gospel at Jerusalem, excepting the apostles, and of their success in other parts, especially of Philip's, returns to the history of Saul; who, not satisfied with the murder of Stephen, and with the havoc he made of the church at Jerusalem, haling them out of their houses to prison, continued not only to threaten them with confiscation of goods and imprisonment, but with death itself. The phrase here used is an Hebraism; so in (<19272>Psalm 27:12) `smj jpy`, "one that breathes out violence", or cruelty; and this shows the inward disposition of his mind, the rage, wrath, malice, envy, and blood thirstiness he was full of; and is observed to illustrate the riches of divine grace in his conversion. And wonderful it is, that that same mouth which breathed out destruction and death to the followers of Christ, should afterwards publish and proclaim the Gospel of the grace of God; that he whose mouth was full of cursing and bitterness, should hereafter, and so very quickly, come forth in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. And this rage of his, who now ravened as a wolf, as was foretold of Benjamin, of which tribe he was, was against the lambs of Christ, and the sheep of his fold:

against the disciples of the Lord; not against wicked men, murderers, and thieves, and other evildoers, but against the harmless and innocent followers of Jesus, and which was an aggravation of his cruelty: and being thus heated, and full of wrath,

he went unto the high priest; Annas or Caiaphas, who, notwithstanding the Jews were under the Roman government, had great authority to punish persons with stripes and death itself, who acted contrary to their law.

Ver. 2. *And desired of him letters to Damascus*, etc.] Damascus was the head or metropolis of Syria, (<23708>Isaiah 7:8) And so Pliny [f456] calls it Damascus of Syria: it was a very ancient city; it was in the times of Abraham; his servant Eliezer is said to be of it, (<01512>Genesis 15:2) and some

say it was built by him the said Eliezer; though Josephus [f457] makes Uz, a grandson of Shem, to be the founder of it; whose surname is conjectured, by some, to be Dimshak, seeing that and Uz differ not in sense: and Justin says [f458], it had its name from Damascus, the king of it, in honour of whom the Syrians made a temple of the sepulchre of his wife Arathis, and her a goddess; after Damascus, he says, Azelus, then Azores, Abraham, and Israel were kings of it. Some think it has its name from blood, and that it signifies a "sack" or bag, or, as Jerom explains, a cup of blood [f459], or one that drinks blood; who says, it is a true tradition, that the field in which Abel was killed by Cain, was in Damascus [f460]: but it seems rather to be so called from the redness of the earth about it; for some very good writers affirm, that the earth in the fields of Damascus is like wax tinged with red lead; so if it be read Dammesek, as it commonly is, in the Arabic language, "Damma" signifies to tinge, and "Meshko" is used for "red earth"; or if "Dummesek", as it is in (2 Kings 16:10 *marg), "Daumo", in the same language, is "permanent", what always abides, and "Meshko", as before, "red earth", and so "Dummesek" is never failing red earth; or if it be Darmesek", as in (1 Chronicles 18:5 *marg) the same with Darmsuk", it may be observed, that the Syrians call red earth "Doro sumoko": so that, upon the whole, this seems to be the best etymology of the word [f461], and the rise of the name of this famous city, which Justin calls the most noble city of Syria. It is said [f462] to be an hundred and sixty miles from Jerusalem. Here might be many Christians before, and others might flee hither upon this persecution; and Saul, not content with driving them from their native place, persecuted them, as he himself says, to strange cities: and that he might do this with safety to himself, and with the greater force and cruelty to them, he got letters from the high priest, and sanhedrim, at Jerusalem; either recommending him to the Jews at Damascus, and exhorting them to assist him in what he came about; or empowering him to act under his authority, or both: and these were directed to be delivered

to the synagogues; to the rulers of them; for the Jews being numerous in this place, they had more synagogues than one. Josephus says [f463], that under Nero the inhabitants of Damascus killed ten thousand Jews in their own city: and Benjamin Tudelensis [f464] in his time says, there were about three thousand Jews (Pharisees), besides two hundred Karaites (or Scripturarians), and four hundred Samaritans, who lived in peace together. Now to these synagogues, and the chief men of them, was Saul recommended for assistance and direction,

that if he found any of this way; of thinking; that were of this sect of religion, and either professed to believe, or preach, that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah:

whether they were men or women; without any fear of one, or mercy to the other:

he might bring them bound to Jerusalem; to be examined and punished by the sanhedrim there, as they should think fit; and for this purpose he must take with him a considerable number of men; and that he had men with him is certain from (<4409>Acts 9:7).

Ver. 3. *And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus*, etc.] Some say it was a mile from Damascus: though, no mention is made of his obtaining letters from the high priest, only of his desiring them; yet there is no doubt but they were granted him; the design of the historian, under a divine direction, being to give an account of the temper and disposition of Saul; and he having got them, set out on his journey in high spirits, and proceeded on with the same wicked intentions, till he came near the city; where he designed to open and show his commission, and execute his wrathful purposes; but he is not suffered to go into the city with such a Spirit:

and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; which exceeded the light and brightness of the sun, for it was at midday, (<4426>Acts 26:13) and so the Ethiopic version here inserts this clause, “and it was noon time”; which circumstance shows that the light was very extraordinary; and it was an emblem of that inward and spiritual light which was now quickly communicated to him, light being the first thing in the new, as in the old creation; and of that Gospel light he was hereafter to spread in the world.

Ver. 4. *And he fell to the earth*, etc.] Not being able to bear the light, and still less the divine glory and majesty which he perceived was present; and therefore, in great confusion, amazement, and fear, he fell with his face to the ground, and lay there prostrate and so did also those that were with him, (<4426>Acts 26:14)

and heard a voice, saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? this voice was the real voice of Christ in his human nature, and who visibly and in person appeared, and was seen by the apostle; (<4426>Acts 26:16, <4608>1 Corinthians 15:8) the language he spoke in was the Hebrew tongue, and he

calls him by his Hebrew name Saul, and which is doubled to denote vehemency and affection; (See Gill on "<42223>Luke 22:31") he knew him as one of his sheep, though straying, and calls him by name, and expostulates with him, wherefore he should persecute him in his members as he did; for the union between Christ and his people is so close, that what is done to them is done to him. There seems to be a considerable emphasis on the word "me"; "me", who have been they surety from everlasting; "me", who hath loved thee and given myself for thee; "me", who have shed my blood, laid down my life, and died for thee; "me", who am now at my Father's right hand, interceding for thee, that grace might be bestowed upon thee, the set time being now come.

Ver. 5. *And he said, who art thou, Lord*? etc.] For he knew not whether it was God, or an angel, or who it was that spake to him; he knew not Christ by his form or voice, as Stephen did, when he saw him standing at the right hand of God; he was in a state of ignorance, and knew neither the person, nor voice of Christ, and yet his heart was so far softened and wrought upon, that he was desirous of knowing who he was;

and the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. The Alexandrian copy, and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, "read Jesus of Nazareth"; and one of Beza's copies, and another of Stephens', as in (<44208>Acts 22:8) whose name thou art doing many things against, and whose people thou art destroying:

it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks; or "to resist me", as the Arabic version renders it; and which is the sense of the phrase; it is a proverbial expression, taken from beasts that are goaded, who kick against the goads or pricks, and hurt themselves the more thereby; and Christ uses it, suggesting hereby, that should Saul go on to persecute him and his people, to oppose his Gospel, and the strong evidence of it, in doctrine and miracles, and notwithstanding the present remonstrances made in such an extraordinary manner; he would find himself in the issue greatly hurt by it, and could not rationally expect to succeed against so powerful a person. This clause in the Syriac version is placed at the end of the fourth verse.

Ver. 6. *And he trembling and astonished*, etc.] At the light and voice, and appearance of Christ, and especially at the words last spoken; he was now pricked to the heart, and filled with a sense of sin, and loaded with guilt, and had dreadful apprehensions of his state and condition, on account of his past wickedness, and the present course of sin he was in: so persons

under first convictions “tremble” at the sight of their sins, which rise up like so many ghosts, and stare them in the face, and load their consciences with guilt; at the swarms of corruptions they see in their carts, which appear to them an habitation of devils, a hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird; at the curses of a righteous law which threatens with damnation and death; at the future judgment, and the apprehensions of divine wrath; and at the voice and word of God, which strikes terror, cuts them to the heart, and like an hammer breaks the rock in pieces: and they are “astonished” at their own wickedness and vileness, which they had no conception of before; at the sparing mercy and forbearance of God, who has continued them in being, and not sent them to hell, to be among devils and damned spirits; at the light around by which they see their sins, the plague of their own hearts, the insufficiency of their own righteousness, their lost state by nature, and need of salvation by Christ; and at the doctrines of the Gospel, so far as they have light into them; and at the person of Christ, and at his Father’s love and his in procuring salvation for them:

said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? he was willing to do any thing he should him to, whereby he might make satisfaction for the injury he had done him, and by which he might be saved; for he was still upon the covenant of works, as persons under first convictions commonly are:

and the Lord said unto him; this, with all that goes before in this verse, is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and Syriac version: “arise and go into the city”; that is, of Damascus, as the Ethiopic version reads:

and it shall be told thee what thou must do; what was appointed for him to do, (Acts 22:10) and there it was told him both what he should do and suffer for Christ, but not to obtain salvation; and this was done internally by the Spirit of God, who instructed him in the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, and externally by Ananias: in two of Beza’s copies, and in the Syriac version, it is read, “there shall it be told thee”, etc.

Ver. 7. *And the men which journeyed with him*, etc.] Out of respect to him, to keep him company; or rather to assist him in his designs:

stood speechless: astonished and amazed, they had not power to speak one word, nor to rise from the ground, and move one step forward; they were as if they were thunderstruck, and fastened to the earth; for this standing is

not opposed to their being fallen to the earth, but to their going forward, and only expresses the surprise and stupidity that had seized them:

hearing a voice, but seeing no man; that is, they heard the voice of Saul, saying, who art thou? and what wilt thou have me to do? but saw nobody that he spoke to, which surprised them; for it is certain they did not hear the voice of Christ, that spake to him, (Acts 22:9) or if they heard the voice of Christ, it was only the sound of his voice, but did not understand what he said; but the former seems rather to be the sense, and the best way of reconciling the two passages.

Ver. 8. *And Saul arose from the earth*, etc.] As he was bid by Christ, (Acts 9:6)

and when his eyes were opened he saw no man; neither Christ, who appeared to him from heaven, whom he had before seen, nor even any of his companions, nor indeed any object: the Syriac version renders it, "he saw nothing"; not anything at all; and the Ethiopic version, "he could not see": when he opened his eye lids, he perceived his sight was gone, and this showed it to be real blindness; and which was an emblem of the ignorance and blindness he had been in:

but they led him by the hand; the men that were with him, perceiving that he could not guide himself, took him by the hand, and led him on his journey;

and brought him into Damascus; and now was fulfilled, at least in part, the prophecy in (Zechariah 9:1).

Ver. 9. *And he was three days without sight*, etc.] Without bodily sight; for otherwise all this while his spiritual sight was increasing, and Christ was giving him by his Spirit a full view of himself, his state and case, and where his salvation was; and a clear insight into the doctrines of the Gospel, which he is said to have by the revelation of Christ, whereby he was fitted for the immediate preaching of it:

and neither did eat nor drink; having no regard unto, or time for either; being filled with grief and sorrow, and true repentance for sin, and taken up in prayer to God, and employed in attending to, and receiving the doctrines of grace, he was afterwards to publish.

Ver. 10. *And there was a certain disciple at Damascus*, etc.] Who perhaps came hither upon the persecution at Jerusalem, or rather might have lived here some time; (<440913>Acts 9:13) that he was more than a private or ordinary disciple of Christ seems manifest, from his being sent to Saul on such an, important affair; from his putting his hands upon him, upon which he was filled with the Holy Ghost; and from his baptizing him: some think he was one of the seventy disciples; some say he was a deacon; but it is certain he was not one of the first seven; others affirm he was a presbyter, and some report that he was afterwards bishop of Damascus, and died a martyr there; but these are things not to be depended on:

named Ananias; a Jewish name, the same with Hananiah, (<270106>Daniel 1:6) there was an high priest of this name, (<442302>Acts 23:2) and it was a name in much use among the Jews; frequent mention is made in the Misnic and Talmudic writings of R. Hananiah, or Ananias:

and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias; by "the Lord", is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, as is evident from (<440917>Acts 9:17) who appeared to Ananias in a vision; the Arabic version adds, "by night"; perhaps in a dream, as the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph the husband of Mary, and called him by his name Ananias, to which he answered:

and he said, behold, I am here, Lord; in like manner as Samuel did, when a child, when the Lord called to him; showing his readiness to hearken to his voice, to do his will, and obey his orders, be they what they would.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord said unto him, arise*, etc.] Quickly, directly, immediately, from off thy bed; the case required haste and dispatch:

and go into the street which is called Straight; a street in the city of Damascus so called; the streets of cities were called by different names, to distinguish them as ours now are. So in Jerusalem there was the street of the house of God, which led to the temple, (<150109>Ezra 10:9) and the upper street, in which idolatrous Gentiles, and such as were fullers by trade, dwelt [f465]; and the street of the butchers; and the street of the wool staplers [f466]: and this street in Damascus might be called "Straight"; because it might be a long straight street, without any windings and turnings, which might go through the city. Whether or no this was one of the streets which Benhadad allowed Ahab to make in Damascus, (<112034>1 Kings 20:34) cannot be said;

and inquire in the house of Judas; which was in that street: who this Judas was is not certain, that he was a Jew appears by his name, but whether a believing, or an unbelieving Jew, is not known; however, he was Saul's host, and if this was the house he was recommended to from Jerusalem, or designed to go to when he set out from thence, it is very probable he was an unbeliever; but if it was an house he pitched on after his conversion, it is likely this Judas was a believer, and whether the same with Judas surnamed Barsabas may be considered, who is mentioned in (<44152>Acts 15:22,32) however, at this man's house Ananias was to inquire

for one called Saul of Tarsus; or Saul "by name the Tarsian". So it is said [f467] of Bigthan and Teresh, (<17002>Esther 6:2) that they were µyysrj ynç, "two Tarsians", perhaps citizens of Tarsus, as Saul was. Tarsus was a city in Cilicia, and which Solinus [f468] calls the mother of cities, and is the same with the Tarshish of the Old Testament; here Saul was born, and of it he was a citizen; (<44219>Acts 21:39, 22:3) and therefore is here called Saul of Tarsus, or Saul the Tarsian:

for behold he prayeth: so as he had never prayed before; now he prayed with the Spirit, and with the understanding, from a feeling sense of his wants, for spiritual blessings, such as he had no knowledge of, nor desire after before. God has no stillborn children; as soon as any are quickened by his grace, they cry unto him; prayer is the breath of a regenerate man, and shows him to be alive. He who before was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ, now breathes after communion with Christ and them. This is said, no doubt, to encourage Ananias to go to him. The Syriac and Arabic versions place this clause at the beginning of the next verse, "for behold, whilst he prayed he saw", etc. the Ethiopic version has it not.

Ver. 12. *And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias*, etc.] Some read this verse in a parenthesis, and take them to be the words of Luke the historian; but it is rather a continuation of the words of Christ, telling Ananias, for his greater encouragement to go to Saul, that he had seen him in a vision, and had knowledge both of his person, and of his name, and of what he was to do to him; for in the vision or dream, he had been represented to him as

coming in; to the house, and into the room where he was:

and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight; without which he had been three days, and which he did receive upon Ananias's putting his hands on him.

Ver. 13. *Then Ananias answered, Lord*, etc.] Though Ananias knew that it was the Lord that spoke, and acknowledged his power and dominion, and expressed his readiness to obey his commands; yet there was a timidity in him, and which was the more inexcusable, that it should appear after the Lord had told him of the vision which Saul had had of him; and yet still he was fearful of putting himself into his hands, who had been so violent a persecutor; and therefore obliquely excuses himself, by observing what Saul had done at Jerusalem, and the powers he came with to Damascus:

I have heard by many of this man; which shows that Ananias had been at Damascus some time, and was not an eyewitness of the havoc Saul made of the church, only had the account of it from others; and these many who fled to Damascus upon the persecution, which Saul was at the head of; and being so, was particularly spoken of, and his name was well known, and was become infamous for his cruelty and barbarity;

how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem; by entering into their houses with violence, haling men and women from thence, committing them to prison, and persecuting them unto death. Believers in Christ are called his "saints", because separated by his grace for his service, and sanctified by his Spirit, and to whom he is made sanctification; and because they live holy lives and conversations; all which is an aggravation of the evil done them, and which will be avenged by Christ in his own time.

Ver. 14. *And here he hath authority from the chief priests*, etc.] His fury and madness against the saints did not stop at Jerusalem, but he had received a commission from the sanhedrim to go to Damascus, where he now was:

to bind all that call on thy name; to take up all such persons and put them in bonds, and carry them bound to Jerusalem, whom he should find either praying to Christ, as God, as the first Christians used to do, and which is no inconsiderable proof of the deity of Christ; or professing the name of Christ, or were called by it.

Ver. 15. *But the Lord said unto him, go thy way*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, "arise, go thy way"; make no delay, nor any excuse, there is no reason for it; nothing is to be feared from him:

for he is a chosen vessel unto me; a choice and excellent one, full of the heavenly treasure of the Gospel, full of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and so very fit and richly qualified for the use and service of Christ; and was htdmj ylk, "a vessel of desire", or a desirable one, as the Jews speak [f469]: or he was, to render the words literally, "a vessel of election"; both an instrument gathering in the election, or the elect of God, through the preaching of the Gospel; and was himself chosen of God, both to grace and glory, a vessel of mercy, and of honour prepared for glory; and was separated, predestinated, and appointed to the Gospel of God, to preach it among the Gentiles; which sense is confirmed by what follows:

to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; by "the name" of Christ is meant his Gospel, which is a declaration of his person, perfections, glories, and excellencies, of his offices, grace, righteousness, and salvation; and to "bear" it, is to preach it, to carry it about, spread abroad, and propagate it; in allusion either to the prophets of old, whose prophecies are often called a "burden", which they bore and carried to the several nations to whom they were sent; or to the Levites bearing the tabernacle of the Lord, and its vessels, "be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord", (<25211>Isaiah 52:11). Upon which Aben Ezra has this note,

> "they are the Israelites, hrwth yaçwn, "that bear the law";"

but Saul was a chosen vessel to bear the Gospel; or to the sower of seed, (<19606>Psalm 126:6) "before the Gentiles", or nations of the world; and he was an apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity; the Gospel of the uncircumcision was particularly committed to him: and before "kings", as he did before Agrippa, king of the Jews, and before Nero, emperor of Rome; and his bonds for the Gospel, and so the Gospel through his bonds became manifest in all the palace, or court of Caesar. And before

the children of Israel; the Jews, to whom he first preached it; but when they put it away he turned to the Gentiles, and afterwards, before the Jews, he bore a testimony for it.

Ver. 16. *For I will show him*, etc.] In vision, and by prophecy, either now, or hereafter; or by facts, as they come upon him:

how great things he must suffer for my name's sake; such as weariness, pain, and watchings, hunger, thirst, fastings, cold, and nakedness, perils on

various accounts, and from different quarters, stripes, scourges, imprisonment, shipwreck, stoning, and death, of which he himself gives a detail, (<471123>2 Corinthians 11:23-28) so that Ananias had no reason to be afraid to go to him, and converse with him, and do unto him as he was directed.

Ver. 17. *And Ananias went his way*, etc.] He arose from off his bed or seat, where he was, went out of his house, and on the way to the place where Saul was; he had nothing more to say, his objections were answered; there was no room to excuse himself, nor did he now desire it, but quietly yields, and cheerfully obeys:

and entered into the house; or "that house", the house of Judas, where Saul was, and whither Ananias was directed, (<440911>Acts 9:11)

and putting his hands on him; on Saul, in the same form Saul had seen him, in vision, doing it: and which was done, either as a prayer gesture; or for the healing of him, the restoring him to his sight; or that he might receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost; and it may be on all these accounts: and

said, brother Saul; he calls him "brother", not because he was of the same nation, but because he was now of the same faith; because he was a regenerate person, and belonged to the family of God, and was of the same household of faith: and this he said, not upon what he had received from Saul's own mouth, for he addressed him in this manner as soon as he came to him; but upon what the Lord had said concerning him; though it was indeed common with the Jewish doctors to salute one another with this name.

> "When R. Jose ben Kisma was sick, R. Chanina ben Tradion went to visit him; he said unto him, Chanina, yja yja "my brother, my brother", etc. [f470]."

So Shemaiah called Abtalion his brother [f471]. And in like manner R. Eleazar ben Azariah saluted R. Ishmael [f472]. And R. Joshua speaks of R. Tarphon in the same language [f473]:

the Lord, even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest; that is, who appeared to Saul as he was in the way to Damascus; not that Jesus was in the way, for he was in heaven, and appeared from thence to Saul, who was in the way: and he mentions Jesus by name, and this

appearance of his, partly to assure him of his mission from him; for otherwise he could have known nothing of his appearance to him; and partly to show the love of Christ to him, and though he had persecuted him in so violent a manner, he had a compassionate regard for him; as also to encourage and comfort him, who had been trembling, and astonished at what he had heard from Jesus. This same glorious person, adds he,

hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight; his bodily sight, which he had been without three days, by the imposition of hands:

and be filled with the Holy Ghost; with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, such as speaking with divers tongues, healing diseases, and the like; for as for the graces of the Spirit, and even Gospel light and knowledge, and gifts for preaching it, he had received these already.

Ver. 18. *And immediately there fell from his eyes, as it had been scales*, etc.] Which were little thin skins or films, like the scales of fishes, which were formed from the defluxions that fell from his brain, through the excessive light that shone around him, and the surprise he was thrown into by it: these, as soon as Ananias put his hands upon him, dropped off; which were an emblem and representation of the scales of ignorance, of himself, of sin, of righteousness, of the law, of the Gospel, and of Jesus as the Messiah; and of unbelief in him, and of pride, malice, and envy, and of superstition and bigotry, and of error and false doctrine, which, upon his being enlightened by the Spirit of God, fell from him:

and he received sight forthwith; his corporeal sight, which was an emblem of that spiritual sight he had also received: the word “forthwith”, or “immediately”, is not in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, but seems necessary; and indeed, if it was not expressed, it would be understood; for as soon as the scales fell from his eyes, he must receive his sight: the Ethiopic version places it after the word “baptized”, in the next clause:

and arose, and was baptized; that is, after Ananias had appointed it to him, as his duty, had pressed him to it, and called upon him to submit to it without delay, (Acts 22:16) And this shows that baptism was performed by immersion; for had it been done in any other way, either by pouring or sprinkling a little water, Saul might have kept his seat, and water might have been brought to him, and so the ordinance might have been performed; but he arose and went, either to a bath that might be in Judas’s

house, fit for such a purpose; for the Jews had their baths to bathe their whole bodies in on certain occasions; or he went to some certain place of water without doors, convenient for the administration of baptism, where it was administered by Ananias unto him. And this also may suggest to us, that only enlightened persons are the proper objects of this ordinance; such as have the scales of darkness, ignorance, and unbelief removed from them, and have a spiritual sight and sense of divine things: hence the ancients used to call baptism by the name of φωτισμος, "illumination", and baptized persons "enlightened" ones.

Ver. 19. *And when he had received meat*, etc.] Which was set before him when he had received his sight, and after he was baptized, of which he had not tasted for three days:

he was strengthened; in body, being before very weak and feeble; not so much through fatigue of his journey, as through the fear and surprise the appearance of Christ to him, and his words, threw him into; as also through his fasting so long, and his continuance and constancy in prayer all this while, and the attention he gave to the divine instructions which were communicated to him, internally and externally:

then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus; who came from Jerusalem upon the persecution raised against them there; with these Saul continued some few days after his conversion and baptism, for quickly after he went into Arabia, as appears from (Gal 1:17). These disciples, with the new converts afterwards, it is highly probable, formed a church state in Damascus; Ananias is said to be the bishop or pastor of it, and which remained in several ages. In the catalogue of the council of Nice, which was held in the beginning of the "fourth" century, Damascus is mentioned as the seat of a church; in the "fifth" century a bishop of Damascus was in the council at Ephesus; and in the same century it was reckoned a metropolitan church in Asia; in the seventh century it appears there was a church in this place; and even in the "eighth" century, though the Arabians ravaged in those parts, yet still a church continued here for some time, till Ulid, the prince of the Saracens, took away the temple from the Christians of this place, and dedicated it to Mahomet; after which we hear no more of the church at Damascus [f474].

Ver. 20. *And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues*, etc.] The Syriac version adds, "of the Jews"; that is, which were in Damascus, (Acts 9:2) from whence it appears, that he was immediately, as soon as

converted, qualified for the work of preaching the Gospel: nor did he confer with flesh and blood, or stand disputing and debating with himself and carnal reason, what was best for him to do; but as soon as he knew Christ himself, he preached him to others, and whom he always made the subject of his ministry; and particularly,

that he is the Son of God; the only begotten of the Father, the eternal Son of God, truly and properly God, of the same nature and essence with God his Father, and equal to him. His design was to assert and maintain the dignity of his person, which is the foundation of his office, as Mediator, and of all the wonderful things he performed: had he meant no more than that he was the Messiah, the sense would only be, that he preached that Christ was the Christ; but the meaning is, that he preached that Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah, was not a mere man, but a divine person, even the Son of God: he set out in his ministry, with the principal and most fundamental article of the Christian religion, that which Christ asserted, and for which he suffered, and which all the apostles, and first Christians believed. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read “Jesus”, instead of “Christ”.

Ver. 21. *But all that heard him were amazed*, etc.] Not the disciples that believed in Christ, but the unbelievers, as appears from their words:

and said, is not this he that destroyed them that called on this name in Jerusalem? they do not express the name of Christ, out of malice and ill will; which shows who they were that said these words, and were astonished to hear Saul preaching in this name, and proving him to be the Son of God, and the true Messiah; when it was but a little while ago he consented to the death of Stephen, made havoc of the church, wasted and destroyed it as much as was in his power, and persecuted unto death such as called upon the name of Christ, or were called by his name, he could find in Jerusalem: nor did this satisfy him, for it follows,

and came hither, that is, to Damascus,

for that intent, that he might bring them bound to the chief priests: whom he should find professing or invocating the name of Christ, or bearing it; now to see and hear him preach this same name, was surprising to them.

Ver. 22. *But Saul increased the more in strength*, etc.] Not of body, but of mind; his gifts and graces, and spiritual light and knowledge increased; his abilities were greater; his fortitude of mind, boldness, and freedom of

speech, every day increased: he got more, and new, and fresh arguments, by which he himself was confirmed, and he confirmed others in the truths of Christ. Some copies read, “he was more strengthened in the word”; either in the word of God, having a clearer understanding, and being more confirmed in the truth of it; or in speech, being more ready and powerful in speaking it.

And confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus; confuted them, and put them to silence, so that they had nothing to say for themselves, or against the truth:

proving that this is very Christ; by joining and knitting passages of Scripture in the Old Testament together, by producing and citing express testimonies from thence, and by comparing the prophecies and the characters of the Messiah in them, with Jesus of Nazareth, he proved to a demonstration that he must be the Messiah.

Ver. 23. *And after that many days were fulfilled*, etc.] This phrase is used by the Septuagint on (<02021>Exodus 2:11,23, 4:18) for a considerable length of time, for many years. The Jewish writers observe [f475], that the phrase, “many days”, signify at least three days; for by “days”, in the plural number, two must be designed, and many signifies a third, or that one at least is added to them; but here it signifies three years, as it also does, (<11801>1 Kings 18:1) where it is said, “and it came to pass after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year”; and such a space of time is designed by the many days here; for when the apostle had stayed a little while at Damascus, and preached Christ in the synagogues, he went into Arabia, where he continued about three years, and then returned to Damascus, where what is related happened to him; (<48017>Galatians 1:17,18 <47132>2 Corinthians 11:32,33).

the Jews took counsel to kill him; being filled with indignation at him, that he had changed his religion, and from a persecutor was become a preacher of the Gospel; this they had meditated some time, and now upon his return to Damascus attempted to put their counsel into execution.

Ver. 24. *But their laying await was known of Saul*, etc.] Either by divine revelation, or by some friends, who had got knowledge of it, and gave him information, as in (<442316>Acts 23:16) and they watched the gates night and day to kill him; that is, the Jews, together with the governor of the city, and the garrison of soldiers in it. These all watched at the several gates of the

city, night and day, that Saul might not make his escape, and that they might take him, and put him to death.

Ver. 25. *Then the disciples took him by night*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy reads, “his disciples”; the disciples of Saul, such as he had been instrumental in making at Damascus: but it is not usual for the saints to be called in Scripture the disciples of any man; therefore the common reading is best, and designs the disciples and followers of Christ; who being concerned for the preservation of so valuable a life, took Saul in the night season,

and let him down by the wall in a basket. Damascus was a walled city; hence we read of the wall of Damascus, (<2402>Jeremiah 49:27). And the house where Saul was, and which very likely was one of the disciples, was built upon the wall, as the house of Rahab was upon the town wall of Jericho; and as she let down the spies from thence by a cord through the window, (<0602>Joshua 2:15) so the disciples let down Saul in a basket with cords through the window of the house, as appears from <4713>2 Corinthians 11:33. (See Gill on “<4713>2 Corinthians 11:33”): no doubt, the disciples were directed by the overruling providence of God, in order to preserve the life of the apostle, who had much work to do for Christ in several parts of the world, and therefore must not fall into the hands of his enemies and die, his time not being yet come; and this shows, that it is lawful to make use of all prudent means and proper methods to prevent the designs of wicked men, and escape out of their hands, and preserve life when in danger; by which means Saul escaped their hands.

Ver. 26. *And when Saul was come to Jerusalem*, etc.] After he had escaped out of Damascus, in the manner before related, and which was three years after his conversion:

he assayed to join himself to the disciples; not to the private members of the church, or ordinary disciples, as distinct from the apostles, but to the whole society, as consisting of apostles and private Christians; for his chief view in going to Jerusalem was to see Peter; and the Ethiopic version reads, “to the apostles”: the sense is, that he tried either to get into a free and familiar conversation with them, or to become one of their body, and a member of the church. He did not return to the high priest from whom he had received letters to Damascus, to give him an account of the execution of his commission, or what use he had made of the letters he gave him, but to the disciples, against whom he had breathed out threatenings and

slaughter. Grace had made a strange alteration in him; those whom he hated, and was exceeding mad against, he now loves; they are the excellent ones in the earth in whom is all his delight; and whom he persecuted to strange cities, he now courts their company, and attempts to get among them; accounting it his greatest honour and happiness to be one of their society. It is the duty and interest of every gracious soul to join himself to a church of Christ, which consists of the disciples of Christ, as the church at Jerusalem did; of such who have learned Christ, and the way of life and salvation by him; who have believed in him, and have been taught to deny themselves for his sake, and to take up the cross and follow him, in the way of his ordinances and appointments; and to be "joined" to a church, is to become an open subject of Christ's kingdom, a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, one of the family of God, and a member of the body of Christ visibly. The phrase is expressive of that strict union there is between the saints in church relation, and of that close and intimate communion they have with each other, and shows that their incorporation together is by mutual consent and agreement. And a great privilege it is to be in such a relation, having the grace of God; for such have the best of company, and the most refreshing ordinances; are in the greatest safety, being under the watch and care of ministers and members, of angels, and of God himself; and shall never be disfranchised, or become foreigners and strangers; they may expect the presence of God, fresh supplies of his grace, and even life for evermore, and need fear no enemy. That which qualifies for church membership, is not natural descent from religious parents, nor a religious education, nor mere morality and civility, nor even a constant attendance on the word of God, but faith in Christ Jesus, and a profession of it; and according to the order of the Gospel it is necessary that baptism in water should go before it; and these qualifications the apostle had.

But they were all afraid of him; knowing him to have been such an enemy to Christ, and so violent a persecutor of his church in times past:

and believed not that he was a disciple; or a true follower of Christ, but only pretended to be one, having some wicked design upon them in attempting to get among them: the reason of their not knowing anything of his conversion might be, because not only of the distance between Damascus and Jerusalem, and the continuance of the persecution in the latter place, which might occasion few comers to and fro of the Christians; but because the apostle, soon after his conversion, went to Arabia, where he had been all this while. Hence it appears, that the primitive churches

were very careful in the admission of persons into fellowship with them; as they could not bear them in their communion who were evil, so they would not admit any among them but such as they looked upon to be the true disciples of Christ: and this is a method worthy of imitation; and such persons who, before a profession of religion, have been either very scandalous in their lives and conversations, or notorious enemies to Christ and his Gospel, ought to be thoroughly examined into, and full satisfaction obtained concerning them, ere they be received into the bosom of the church.

Ver. 27. *But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles*, etc.] To Peter and James, the brother of our Lord, for no other apostles did he see at this time, (Gal 1:18,19). It is probable that Barnabas had been at Damascus, and had there related to him, the whole account of Saul's conversion and entrance on the ministry, which he gives a particular relation of, as follows:

and declared unto them, how he had seen the Lord in the way; he told the apostles, Peter and James, how that Christ had appeared to him in person, as he was on his way to Damascus:

and that he had spoken to him; and expostulated with him about his persecution of him in his members, and bid him go into the city, where it should be told him what he should do:

and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus; that he had used great freedom of speech, and had shown courage and greatness of mind in preaching Christ at Damascus, both as soon as he was converted, and now upon his return thither. Hence it is manifest, that previous to admission into a church of Christ, and in order to satisfy the members of it, and gain their assent to such an admission, there ought to be a declaration made of the work of grace upon the souls of such, who propose to be joined to it; as how the Lord has met with them, and shown them the evil of their ways, and given them repentance unto life; and how they have had a sight of him by faith, and have looked to Christ and believed in him for the salvation of their souls; and how they have embraced the doctrines of the Gospel, and have found much sweetness and comfort in them; and that from a principle of love to him, and faith in him, and with a view to his glory, they are willing to submit to his ordinances, and to walk in holy fellowship with his people; and such an account of Saul being given by Barnabas, who had had it from him; and this being, no

doubt, declared and attested by Saul himself, he was received into fellowship with the disciples: hence it follows,

Ver. 28. *And be was with them*, etc.] Peter and James, and the rest of the disciples; he lived with them, conversed with them, and joined with them in all religious exercises; which is signified by his

coming in and going out at Jerusalem; no one of the apostles or disciples forbidding or hindering him.

Ver. 29. *And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus*, etc.] He spoke the Gospel of Christ boldly, as it ought to be spoken; he spoke it openly, publicly, freely, and faithfully, not fearing the faces or revilings of any: the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions add, “to the Gentiles”; but this is not in any of the Greek copies: and disputed against the Grecians; or Hellenists, that is, the Hellenistical Jews; by whom are meant, not Greeks proselyted to the Jewish religion, but Jews who had been born and brought up in Greece, or at least had learned the Greek language, and used the Greek Bible; and so the Syriac version renders it, “he disputed with the Jews that knew Greek”; perhaps the same persons, of the synagogue of the Libertines, Alexandrians, Cyrenians, and of Cilicia and Asia, who disputed with Stephen, with whom he had before joined, (<4406>Acts 6:9,10)

but they went about to slay him; he being an over match for them; and they not being able to resist him, but being confuted, and confounded, and put to silence, they were filled with indignation; and since they could not conquer him by arguments, they were for slaying him with the sword.

Ver. 30. *Which when the brethren knew*, etc.] When the members of the church heard of it, by some means or another:

they brought him down to Caesarea; not that which was before called Strato’s tower, the same as in (<4408>Acts 8:40) but Caesarea Philippi, mentioned in (<4016>Matthew 16:13) the Syriac version adds, “by night”, and some copies, “and sent him forth to Tarsus”; a city of Cilicia, his own native place, where he might be more safe, and also useful among his friends and acquaintance; (<4801>Galatians 1:21).

Ver. 31. *Then had the churches rest*, etc.] Meaning not spiritual rest in Christ; this they had before, even in tribulation, but rest from persecution; not so much because of the conversion of Saul, the great persecutor of them, for his conversion had been three years before; but rather because of

his removal to other parts, the sight of whose person, and especially his ministry, had afresh stirred up the Jews to wrath and fury. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read in the singular number, “the church”: but the several countries hereafter mentioned shows that more are designed: for it follows,

throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria; for by means of the dispersion, on account of persecution, the Gospel was preached in these several places, and churches gathered, and which shared in the persecution until this time, when they began to have rest; (⁴⁸Galatians 1:22) (⁵²1 Thessalonians 2:14) and were edified; or built up on the foundation Christ, and their most holy faith, through the ministry of the word and ordinances, and their mutual love and holy conversation; and had an increase of members, and of grace, and of spiritual knowledge:

and walking in the fear of the Lord; which was always before their eyes, and upon their hearts, continuing in religious exercises, and in the discharge of every duty, both to God and man. Not in a slavish fear of the wrath of the Lord, and of damnation for sin committed against him; for this is not consistent with their characters, as Gospel churches, made of persons who had received not the spirit of bondage to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, nor with their edification in faith and holiness; for “he that feareth is not made perfect in love”; (⁶²1 John 4:18) which edifies; nor with the comforts of the Holy Ghost, they are afterwards said to walk in: but in a godly fear, which has the Lord for its author, is not of a man’s self, but of the grace of God, and is encouraged and increased by the discoveries of his grace and goodness: and which has the Lord for its object, whose name is holy and reverend, and is to be feared by all his saints: it shows itself in an hatred of sin; in a departure from it; in a carefulness not to offend the Lord; in withholding nothing from him, though ever so dear and valuable, he calls for; and in attending to all the parts of divine worship: and walking in it denotes a continuance in it, a constant progression in all the acts of internal and external worship, which are both included in the fear of the Lord; and it requires strength, and supposes pleasure and freedom. It is said of Enoch, that “he walked with God”; which the Targum of Onkelos paraphrases, “he walked in the fear of the Lord”, (⁰¹Genesis 5:22,24) the same phrase which is here used.

And in the comfort of the Holy Ghost: which he communicated by shedding abroad the love of God in them, taking the things of Christ, and

showing them to them, applying covenant blessings and Gospel promises to their souls, owning the word and ordinances, and making them useful to them, thereby leading them into fellowship with the Father, and with the Son. In all which he acts the part of a Comforter, and answers to the character he bears, and the office he is in: the love of God, which he directs into, and sheds abroad in the heart, refreshes and revives the Spirit of God's people; it influences and encourages every grace that is wrought in them; and makes them easy and comfortable under all providences, even the most afflicting ones: the things of Christ he takes and shows unto them are his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; which being applied, and interest in them shown, produce abundance of peace, joy, and comfort: the promises of the covenant, and of the Gospel, he opens and applies, being such as hold forth the blessings of grace unto them; and being exceeding great, and precious, and suitable to their cases; and being absolute and unconditional, immutable, and sure, afford them much pleasure and satisfaction: and the word and ordinances being attended with the Holy Ghost, and much assurance, are breasts of consolation to them: and "walking" in those comforts which he administers, by such means, denotes a continuance of them, a long enjoyment of them, which is not very common; for, generally speaking, these comforts last but for a small time; and also it intimates much delight and pleasure in them, (<1949>Psalm 94:19) and so "were multiplied"; both in their gifts and graces, and in the number of converts added to them.

Ver. 32. *And it came to pass, as Peter passed through all quarters*, etc.] The Arabic version reads, "all the foresaid places", as Judea, Galilee, and Samaria; through which he took a tour, in order to visit the new churches here planted, fix pastors over them, and confirm the Gospel by miracles, which they had received:

he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda: a city which lay on the west of Jerusalem, and is said [f476] to be a day's Journey from it; and a day's journey were ten parsas, or forty miles [f477]: it was but thirty two miles from Jerusalem, and was a place famous for Jewish doctors; for which reason it is frequently mentioned in the Talmudic writings, under the name of Lod or Lud. Mention is made of R. Simlai, who was of Lydda [f478], and of the chambers of Beth Nithzah, and of Arum in Lydda [f479] where the doctors disputed; there was a school here, of which R. Akiba was president [f480] here also the sanhedrim sometimes sat, since we are told that Ben Sutda was tried and stoned at Lud or Lydda [f481]; and here likewise they

intercalated the year [f482], it being in Judea: this place was situated in a plain; so says Jerom [f483],

> "they that dwell in Sephela, that is, in the plain, Lydda and Emmaus, which design Diospolls and Nicopolis, shall possess the Philistines."

And with this agrees the account the Talmudists [f484] give of it,

> "the country of Judea was divided into three parts, the hill country, the plain, and the valley; from Bethhoron to Emmaus was the hill country; from Emmaus to Lydda was the plain or champaign country; and from Lydda to the sea, the valley."

Hence also we read [f485] of dwl tlpç, "the plain of Lydda": and now Peter coming from Jerusalem, and the hill country of Judea, into this plain and champaign country, is properly said to come down to the saints there. So Quadratus in Josephus [f486] is said to come up from Lydda to Jerusalem. This place was near the Mediterranean sea; and was in Jerom's time called Diospolis [f487], and in the time of R. Benjamin [f488] Seguras; it is the same with Lod in (<150233>Ezra 2:33, <161137>Nehemiah 7:37) The builder of it was Shamed the son of Elpaal, (<130812>1 Chronicles 8:12). It was in the times of Josephus [f489] a village, yet not inferior to a city for greatness. It is now called S. Georgia. And here it seems some saints or Christians dwelt, whom Peter, among the rest, visited; and which is mentioned for the sake of the miracle he there wrought, next related. And these saints at Lydda very likely were converted under Philip's ministry, as he passed from Azotus to Caesarea, (<440840>Acts 8:40) and, it may be, were in a church state, or, however, were afterwards. Zenas the lawyer, the Apostle Paul speaks of in (<560313>Titus 3:13) is said to be bishop of Diospolis, or Lydda; in the beginning of the fourth century Aetius was bishop of this place, who assisted in the council of Nice; and in the same century, anno 331, Dionysius, another bishop of this place, was present at a council at Constantinople; and in the fifth century Photinus wrote himself bishop of Lydda, in the Chalcedon council, anno 451 [f490].

Ver. 33. *And there he found a certain man*, etc.] In a house in that city, into which he entered:

named Aeneas; which is a Gentile name, and so might the person be; though there is mention made of this name among the Jews. We read of

one R. Samuel Bar, ayyna "Aenea, or Aeneas" [f491]; but it was more common among the Greeks. Aeneas the Trojan is well known in history, who, after the destruction of Troy, went into Italy, and settled there; and from him the Trojans are sometimes called Aeneadae. The name comes from the Greek word αινω, "ainoo", which signifies "to praise"; and Aeneas is one "worthy of praise": though Jerom [f492] takes it to be an Hebrew name, which he interprets "one that answers", or a "poor man", or "misery"; as if it came from the Hebrew word hn[, "anah", which signifies "to answer, or to afflict".

Which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy; so that the distemper was grown stubborn, and thought incurable; nor perhaps had he, or his friends, any hope of his ever being restored to health again.

Ver. 34. *And Peter said unto him, Aeneas*, etc. He called him by his name, which he might without divine revelation know, though he was a stranger to him, by the people of the house, where he was:

Jesus Christ maketh thee whole; Peter knew, by some secret impulse upon his mind, that Christ would cure this man by him as an instrument at this time, and therefore said these words; not as a prayer, as some render them, "may Jesus Christ heal thee", though was it so, it was a prayer of faith; but as a promise that he would, or rather as a declaration of the then present exertion of his power to heal him; which he ascribes not to himself, but to Christ, in whose name, and by whose power the apostles wrought all their miracles; (<4032>Acts 3:12,14, 4:9,10) "arise, and make thy bed"; which would be a full demonstration that he was perfectly whole:

and he arose immediately; and also, no doubt, made his bed, as the man at Bethesda's pool was bid by Christ, to take up his bed and carry it, as a proof of his soundness.

Ver. 35. *And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron*, etc.] Saron, which is here joined to Lydda, is the name of a fruitful country on the borders of the Mediterranean sea, between Joppa and Caesarea, beginning at Lydda. There were two countries in the land of Israel called Saron, as Jerom observes [f493]; there was one between Mount Tabor, and the lake of Tiberias; and there was another which reached from Caesarea of Palestine, to the town of Joppa; the former was inhabited by the Gadites, and was beyond Jordan, (<130516>1 Chronicles 5:16) the other was on this side Jordan, near Lydda. And this is what is here meant; and of which the same writer

elsewhere says [f494], the whole country by Joppa and Lydda is called Saron, in which are large and fruitful fields; and on (<236510>Isaiah 65:10) which the Vulgate Latin renders, “and the plains shall be for folds of flocks”, he observes, that “Sharon”, in the Hebrew text, is put for plains or champaign country; and adds, all the country about Lydda, Joppa, and Jamnia, is fit to feed flocks: and agreeably to this, in Jewish writings, the calves of Sharon [f495] are spoken of as the best; and the word is by the commentators of the Misna interpreted [f496] by rçym “a plain”, or champaign country; for this was not the name of a single town or city, but of a country, bordering on Lydda, and the above mentioned places; in which were several towns and villages, and the inhabitants of those that were nearest Lydda are here designed. It was such a fruitful and delightful country, that the Targum on (<220201>Song of Solomon 2:1) has rendered it by the garden of Eden: it had its name either from rwç, “Shur”, which signifies to behold afar off, from the fine and large prospect that might be taken on it; or from rç “Shar”, which signifies the navel, because it was a valley or plain surrounded on every side with mountains and hills: it abounded in flowers and fruits; hence mention is made of the rose of Sharon, (<220201>Song of Solomon 2:1) and in vines; hence we frequently read of the wine of Saron [f497], and which was so very good, that they mixed two parts of water with one of wine [f498]. It was a country, the Jews say [f499], whose earth was not fit to make bricks of; and therefore houses made of them did not stand long, but needed repairing often in seven years: hence the high priest, on the day of atonement, used to pray for the Saronites, that their houses might not become their graves [f500]. Now when the inhabitants of this place, as well as of Lydda,

saw him; that is, Aeneas, made whole, who had been ill of a palsy, and had kept his bed eight years, they were so impressed with it, that it issued in their conversion:

and turned to the Lord: they believed in Christ, embraced his Gospel preached by Peter, professed faith in him, and submitted to his ordinances; being turned by powerful efficacious grace, they turned their feet to keep his testimonies.

Ver. 36. *Now there was at Joppa*, etc.] The same with Japho, (<061946>Joshua 19:46) a sea port town in the tribe of Dan, said by some historians [f501] to be a very ancient one, even before the flood. It is now called Jaffa, and its name, in the Hebrew tongue, signifies beauty: some say it had its name from Jope, the daughter of Aeolus, the wife of Cepheus, the founder of it;

and others derive it from the name of Japhet, because it looks towards Europe, which is inhabited by the sons of Japhet. It was built upon a hill, as Pliny [f502] says; and so high, as Strabo [f503] reports, that Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea, might be seen from thence, which was distant from it forty miles; as may be concluded from what Jerom, [f504] says, who lived at Bethlehem many years: his words are; from Joppa, to our little village Bethlehem, are forty six miles; now Bethlehem was six miles distant from Jerusalem, to the south of it, and Joppa was to the west of it. The place is well known by Jonah's taking ship there, and going for Tarshish, when he was cast into the sea, and devoured by a fish; from whence the Ionian sea might have its name: and this was the occasion of the fable of Andromeda being exposed to a fish of a prodigious size at this place; the bones of which, Pliny [f505] relates, were brought to Rome from hence, being forty foot long; and, the stones, to which she was bound, Jerom [f506] says, were shown in his time on this shore: and here also, the inhabitants report, may be seen some stones in the sea, on which Peter stood and fished, when he dwelt in this place.

A certain disciple, called Tabitha; this was a woman's name, the masculine name was Tabi. R. Gamaliel had a manservant of this name [f507], and also a maidservant, whose name was Tabitha [f508]; yea, every maidservant of his was called mother Tabitha, and every manservant father Tabi [f509]:

which by interpretation is called Dorcas; which signifies a roe in the Greek language, as Tabitha does in the Syriac:

this woman was full of good works; was constantly employed in doing good; her works were both many and good:

and alms deeds which she did; she was very kind and beneficent to the poor; she wrought with her hands much for their sakes, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 37. *And it came to pass in those days*, etc.] While Peter was in those parts, and particularly at Lydda, which was near:

that she was sick and died; fell ill with some disorder, and died of it:

whom, when they had washed; as was the manner of the Jews; and this they did, even though it was on a sabbath day: for so their canon runs [f510],

> “they do all the necessaries for the dead (on the sabbath), they anoint him, ^yjydmw, “and they wash him”;”

yet that of Maimonides deserves some notice [f511];

> “it is forbidden to anoint part of the body, as the whole body; but if it is to remove filth, it is lawful; and so it is forbidden to wash part of the body with hot water, but with cold water they may wash his face, his hands, and his feet, but not the whole body.”

This custom still continues, and their usual method is to wash the body with hot water, in which they put dried roses and camomile flowers: likewise, they take an egg, and beat it up in wine, and therewith anoint the head; and this washing and anointing are done by some at the house before the corpse is carried out (as here); but in some places, especially where there is a large number of Jews, all this is done in the burying places; where they have a little house, whither they carry the corpse, and put it on a table, and there wash it; and after washing, put, it into a coffin, and inter it [f512]: and this has been the custom of other nations, if not of all nations: the custom with the Turks is this [f513]; the body being laid upon a board, and covered with a linen cloth, one of the ecclesiastical elders washes it with hot water and soap, another being present to hand the water; but they do not suffer others to look on: the body is thrice washed; and the third time they mingle camphire with it; and being washed, it is put into a coffin. And Ludolphus [f514] reports of the Abyssines, that their bodies being well washed and perfumed, they wrap them up in garments, and then are put upon a bier, and buried. And this was the practice both of the ancient Grecians and Romans, that as soon as ever anyone was dead, the body was immediately washed and anointed. Thus Creon is said to fetch Jocaste to wash her dead son; and Antigone requests of Creon, that she might wash her brother [f515]. It has been the custom of some countries to wash their dead bodies in rivers: and some people, in the northern parts, have chose, for this reason, to have their burying places near the banks of rivers, that their dead bodies might be washed in running water: and the Indians, which live at a distance from the river Ganges, will go fifteen or twenty days journey thither, to wash their corpse in it, though then putrefied, and then burn them; yea, they take their sick alive when they think they will die, and put them up to their middle in rivers, that they may die in pure and clear water; and they enjoin a very severe penance on those who omit to bring such as are near death, to a river to be washed [f516]:

they laid her in an upper chamber. The Ethiopic version reads quite the reverse; “they put her in the lower part of the house”: which is not likely. Dr. Lightfoot conjectures that this upper chamber might be the common meeting place of the saints; and that they put her here, that if Peter should work a miracle all might be spectators of it; and certain it is, that the Jewish doctors used to meet in upper rooms, and confer together; (See Gill on “<4004>Mark 2:4”), and such there were in Lydda; (See Gill on “<4013>Acts 1:13”) and such there were in Lydda; (<4032>Acts 9:32).

Ver. 38. *And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa*, etc.] Some say it was six miles distant, but it must be eight; since from Jerusalem to Joppa were forty miles, and from Jerusalem to Lydda thirty two, and therefore it must be eight miles from thence to Joppa:

and the disciples had heard that Peter was there; and also no doubt that he had healed Aeneas of his palsy, and which might induce them to do as follows:

they sent unto him two men; very likely of their own company or church; for it is certain here were disciples or believers in Christ, and very likely were formed into a church state; these seem to be converts under Philip’s ministry, who when he went from Azotus, preached in all the cities, and so in Joppa, till he came to Caesarea, (<4040>Acts 8:40) though we read nothing in ecclesiastical history of this church at Joppa, until the fifth century, when it appears there was a church in that place [f517]; and in the same century we read of Fidus bishop of Joppa, that was present in the synod held at Ephesus, anno 431 and in the sixth century of Elias bishop of the same place, in the council at Jerusalem, anno 536 [f518] and in the same century a bishop of the church here assisted in the synod of Rome and Constantinople [f519].

desiring him, that he would not delay to come to them; they entreated he would not refuse to come, and think it too great a burden on him, or make any difficulty about it, or show any aversion to it; but that he would with all readiness and cheerfulness, and without delay immediately come unto them; for the case they wanted him for required speed and haste.

Ver. 39. *Then Peter arose and went with them*, etc.] After the messengers had delivered their message, and made their request to Peter in the name of the brethren, he at once agreed to go with them, and accordingly did; whether he went to restore Dorcas to life, whose death the messengers had

informed him of, and whether this was the view of the brethren with respect to that, is not certain. However, he might go with them on other accounts, as to comfort them under the loss of so valuable and useful a person, and to strengthen and establish them in the faith, and to exhort and animate them to the discharge of their duty.

When he was come; that is, to Joppa, and to Dorcas's house there:

they brought him into the upper chamber; where the corpse of Dorcas lay:

and all the widows stood by him weeping; these were poor widows, to whom Dorcas had been very liberal and beneficent, who stood about the apostle lamenting the death of their benefactress, and by their tears expressing their desire of her return to life, if it could be:

and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them; the Vulgate, Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "which Dorcas made for them"; and the Syriac version renders it, "which Tabitha gave unto them, while she was alive"; which last clause aptly explains, "while she was with them"; for now she was not, with respect to her better part, her immortal soul: the coats and garments were the inner and upper ones, wore in these countries; and it seems that she did not buy these garments, and give them unto them, but that she made them up herself for them, or at least wrought with them in making of them; which shows her diligence and industry, as also her humility, as well as her beneficence: and these the widows produced, and are shown as proofs of the same; which was expressive of gratitude in them, and was done with a design to move Peter to be concerned for restoring so useful a life.

Ver. 40. *But Peter put them all forth*, etc.] As he had seen his Lord and Master do, when he raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead, (Luke 8:54)

and kneeled down and prayed; it may be, as yet, he had not the mind of God in this matter, and therefore betook himself to prayer, in which he chose to be private and alone:

and turning him to the body; the corpse of Dorcas, after he had prayed, and was well assured that the power of Christ would be exerted in raising of it:

said, Tabitha, arise; which words were spoken in the name and faith of Christ, and were all one as, if Christ himself had spoken them; for to his power, and not to the apostles, is the following miracle to be ascribed: and she opened her eyes; which, upon her death, had been closed by her friends; and perhaps the napkin was not yet bound about her face: or if it was, she must remove it ere she could open her eyes and see Peter:

and when she saw Peter; whom she might know:

she sat up; upon the bed or bier on which she lay.

Ver. 41. *And he gave her his hand, and lift her up*, etc.] Off of the bed or bier where she was:

and when he had called the saints and widows; the disciples, brethren and sisters, who were come together on this occasion, as well as the poor widows she had been kind to; the Ethiopic version reads without a copulative, "the holy widows"; and so might these widows be, even such as are described in (<540510>1 Timothy 5:10)

presented her alive; as Christ did the widow's son of Naam to her, (<420715>Luke 7:15) and which no doubt was matter of great joy as well as astonishment to all the saints, and especially to the poor widows.

Ver. 42. *And it was known throughout all Joppa*, etc.] The report of such a miracle, and wrought upon a person of note, was soon spread all over the place, which was very large, for it was a city, as it is called, (<441105>Acts 11:5), and it had, as Josephus [f520] says, villages and little towns or cities round about it; all which might go by the name of Joppa, and throughout which the fame of this miracle might pass:

and many believed in the Lord; in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom Peter preached, and the saints in Joppa professed, and in whose name, and by whose power, this miracle was done.

Ver. 43. *And it came to pass*, etc.] Or so it was;

that he tarried many days in Joppa; conversing with the saints, confirming the disciples, and preaching the Gospel, to the conversion of sinners; and his abode

was with one Simon a tanner; it seems as if persons of this trade used to dwell in towns near the sea, as fit for their business; so we read of some at Sidon, a city on the sea coast, as Joppa was;

> "it happened at Sidon that a certain ysrwb, "tanner", (the same word here used, adopted into the Hebrew language,) died, and he had a brother a tanner, etc. [f521]"

where the Gemara [f522] distinguishes between a great tanner and a little tanner; the latter, the gloss says, is one that is poor and has but few skins: which of these Simon was, cannot be said. This business was very contemptible with the Jews; they say [f523],

> "woe to him whose trade is a tanner:"

and further observe [f524] that they never make one a king, nor a high priest: but their doctors many of them were of as mean trades, as shoemakers, skinners, etc. (See Gill on "<4008>Mark 6:3") and Simon the Athenian philosopher was σκυτοτομος "a leather cutter" [f525]; and according to the Ethiopic version, this our Simon was a shoemaker; with him Peter chose to abide, and not with Dorcas.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 10

Ver. 1. *There was a certain man in Caesarea*, etc.] This was the Caesarea formerly called Strato's tower, not Caesarea Philippi; for the former, and not the latter, lay near Joppa:

called Cornelius; which was a Roman name, and he himself was a Roman or an Italian:

a centurion of the band called the Italian band; which consisted of soldiers collected out of Italy, from whence the band took its name, in which Cornelius was a centurion, having a hundred men under him, as the name of his office signifies.

Ver. 2. *A devout man*, etc.] A truly religious person, who had forsaken the Roman idolatry and superstition, in which he was brought up:

and one that feared God: the one only living and true God, the God of Israel; he had the fear of God wrought in his heart, which is a part of the covenant of grace, a blessing of it, and the beginning of wisdom; he was truly a gracious man, a converted person, and who from an internal principle worshipped God externally:

with all his house; he brought up his family in a religious way, as every good man should; and which was very remarkable in a Gentile, a soldier, and an officer:

which gave much alms to the people; to the Jews that dwelt at Caesarea, and therefore was of good report among them, and much beloved by them, (Acts 10:22) he had regard to both tables of the law, both to the worship of God, and the love of the neighbour: and prayed to God always; every day, at the usual times of prayer; prayed privately in his closet, and with his family, as well as attended public service of this kind.

Ver. 3. *He saw in a vision evidently*, etc.] He was not in a dream, or in a trance, but he was thoroughly awake, and his eyes open, and was himself; it was not in the night, but in clear day:

about the ninth hour of the day; or three o'clock in the afternoon, which was the hour of prayer, (Acts 3:1) in which exercise he was now engaged, (Acts 10:30) at this time he saw

an angel of God coming to him; into the room where he was at prayer:

and saying unto him, Cornelius; he called him by his name, to let him know that he knew him, as angels are very knowing spirits; and to express his affection and friendship to him, and that he was a messenger, not of bad, but of good news to him; as well as to engage his attention to him; for he might be so intent at his devotion, that had he not called him by name, he would not have minded him.

Ver. 4. *And when he looked on him, he was afraid*, etc.] What with the brightness of his clothing, (Acts 10:30) and the lustre of his countenance, and the majestic form in which he appeared, he perceived there was something uncommon and divine in this vision, and therefore was filled with awe and reverence, yea, with something of a panic fear; as it was usual, even with good persons, as the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, Zacharias, the Virgin Mary, and others; from a sense of the greatness of the divine majesty, which they supposed to be near, or this to be an emblem of it, and from a notion that, at the sight of God, they should die.

And said, what is it, Lord what is the matter? what is to be said or done? What is the reason of this unusual appearance? Some of the Latin copies, and the Ethiopic version, read, "who art thou, Lord?" but by the angel's answer, not this, but the former was the question: for it follows,

and he said unto him, thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God; that is, the prayers which he had put up in faith, for himself and family, and the charitable actions he had performed from a principle of love, were like sacrifices upon the altar, which ascended to God with acceptance; so these sacrifices of prayer and beneficence came up with acceptance from off that altar which sanctities the gift, or were acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ; these were taken notice of, approved by God, and remembered by him, and the fruits and effects he was shortly to enjoy; for that Cornelius was a believer, need not be questioned; since he was not only a devout and religious person, but one that feared God, which includes the whole of religion, internal and external; and so faith in Christ, without which he could not pray aright: there is no

doubt of it, but he had read the prophecies of the Old Testament, attended the synagogues of the Jews, and believed in the Messiah to come, though he did not know that he was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he; so that his faith was of the same kind with that of the saints before the coming of Christ; and in this faith he did all the good works he did, which became acceptable to God through Christ, and without which it is impossible to please him.

Ver. 5. *And now send men to Joppa*, etc.] Which lay near to Caesarea;

and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: the angel was not sent to instruct Cornelius himself, but to direct him to an apostle of Christ, and minister of the Gospel, who should do it; for not angels, but men, are employed in the ministry of the word, which is the ordinary means of spiritual knowledge, and of increasing it. So the eunuch was instructed by Philip, and Saul by Ananias; which shows the excellency and usefulness of the Gospel ministry and ministers, and what dignity is put upon them, what use should be made of them, and in what esteem they should be had.

Ver. 6. *He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner*, &c] Simon the tanner was his host; this man very probably was a good man, and one that lodged strangers; of his trade, (See Gill on "Acts 9:43")

whose house is by the sea side; Joppa was a sea port, (2 Chronicles 2:16) (Jon 1:3) hence we read of wpyd amy, "the sea of Joppa" [f526]; and also of wpy lç hnyml, "the port of Joppa" [f527]; now Simon's house was in the outer part of the city, and by the sea side, as well for convenience for his business, as because such trades might not be exercised within a city; being nauseous and disagreeable, because of their skins and manner of dressing them, and the dead carcasses from whence they often took them off; hence that rule of the Jews [f528],

> "they place dead carcasses, graves, yqsrwbh taw, "and a tanner's workshop", (in which he dresses his skins,) fifty cubits from the city; nor do they make a tanner's workshop, but at the eastern part of the city. R. Abika says, it may be made at every part excepting the west."

The reason of that, as given by the [f529] commentators, is, because prayer was made towards the west, where the temple stood, and the divine

presence was. The Ethiopic version very wrongly renders it, “and the house of Cornelius is near the sea”; for not his, but Simon’s is meant:

he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do; he was to tell him words, or to deliver doctrines to him, by which he and his family would be better instructed in the way of salvation, and arrive to a greater degree of knowledge of Christ, and faith in him, and be brought to a submission to his commands and ordinances; (see <4402>Acts 10:22,32, 11:14), this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in some others, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions.

Ver. 7. *And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed*, etc.] For when be had delivered his message, he either disappeared, or withdrew, and immediately Cornelius showed himself ready to obey the heavenly vision: for

he called two of his household servants; who were not of the band of soldiers under him, but were servants in his family, and such as feared God with him;

and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually: besides his household servants, there were soldiers that continually attended him, and among these there was one at least that was a devout and religious man; and him he called out from among the rest, and to him with the two household servants he communicated the vision: these three persons being religious, were very proper ones to be informed of this matter, and to be sent on the errand they were; and three might be particularly pitched upon, being a sufficient number to attest to Peter what they had from the mouth of their master, for by the mouth of two or three witnesses is everything established; and partly for the honour of Peter, and to show a proper respect to him, he would not send a single person, who could have told the story, and done the errand as well as three, but this would not have looked respectful enough.

Ver. 8. *And when he had declared all these things unto them*, etc.] Which he had heard and seen in the vision, and of which he gave them a particular account; partly to engage them the more cheerfully to go on the errand, and partly that they might be able to give a distinct relation of it to Peter, that so he might be moved the more to comply with the request, and come along with them:

he sent them to Joppa; perhaps not that evening, since it was at the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon, when Cornelius had the vision; and some time must be taken up in discourse with the angel, and afterwards in sending for his servants, and relating the affair to them, and giving them their proper instructions. So that it may be they did not set out till early the next morning, as seems from the following verse.

Ver. 9. *On the morrow, as they went on their journey*, etc.] From Caesarea to Joppa; Joppa is said to be six and thirty miles distant from Caesarea; so far Caesarea was from Lydda, but it seems to be further from Joppa; for according to Josephus [f530], from Joppa to Antipatris were a hundred and fifty furlongs, which are almost nineteen miles, and from thence to Caesarea were twenty six miles; unless there was a nearer way by the sea shore, as there was a way by that from Caesarea to Joppa, of which the above author makes mention [f531]; wherefore they must either have set out the evening before, or early that morning, to get to Joppa by the sixth hour, or twelve o'clock at noon; as it seems they did, by what follows:

and drew nigh unto the city; that is, of Joppa, were but a little way distant from it:

Peter went up upon the housetop to pray; the roofs of houses in Judea were flat, and persons might walk upon them, and hither they often retired for devotion and recreation; (see Gill on "<4027>Matthew 10:27"), (see Gill on "<4024>Matthew 24:17"), it was on the former count, namely for prayer, that Peter went up thither, and that he might, be private and alone, and undisturbed in the discharge of that duty. This being at a tanner's house, though not in his shop, brings to mind a canon of the Jews [f532],

> "a man may not enter into a bath, nor into a tanner's shop, near the Minchah,"

or time of prayer. Now this was about the sixth hour or twelve o'clock at noon, when Peter went up to pray; at which time the messengers from Cornelius were near the city of Joppa; this was another time of prayer used by the Jews, and is what they call the great Minchah, which began at the sixth hour and an half, and so was as is here said, about the sixth hour (See Gill on "<4401>Acts 3:1")

Ver. 10. *And he became very hungry*, etc.] It being in the middle of the day, when it was usual to eat; and perhaps he had ate nothing that day, for

those were reckoned the most religious persons, who eat nothing before the Minchah:

and would have eaten; though the Jews say [f533], a man ought not to eat near the Minchah, not even the least, lest he should continue at it, and so neglect his prayers:

but while they made ready, while Simon's family were getting dinner ready, preparing the food for it:

he fell into a trance; or an ecstasy, or an ecstasy fell upon him; it was what was supernatural, and came from above, and did not arise from any natural cause in him; he was as it were out of the body, and entirely in the spirit; all the bodily organs and senses were shut up, and all sensible objects removed from him; and he was wholly intent on what was proposed to him in the vision, which filled him with wonder and astonishment.

Ver. 11. *And saw heaven opened*, etc.] Not literally, as at the baptism of Christ, and the stoning of Stephen; but in a visionary way, and which was an emblem of the opening and revealing the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles, which in other ages was not made known, as it now and afterwards was:

and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet: which seems to represent the church of God, whose original is from heaven, and consists of persons born from above, who have their conversation in heaven, and were designed for it; and especially as under the Gospel dispensation, which Peter had a vision of in this emblematic way; the doctrines and ordinances of which are from heaven: and which may be compared to a linen sheet for its purity and holiness; through the blood and righteousness of Christ, and the grace of his Spirit, and with respect to its discipline and conversation; and so to a great one for its largeness; for though the number of its members, when compared with the world, are few, yet in themselves are a number which no man can number; and though it was but small at first, yet the Gospel being carried among the Gentiles it increased, and in the last times will be large:

knit at the four corners; which may denote the preaching of the Gospel, and the spread of it, and the planting of churches by it in the four parts of the world; and also the church being knit to Christ, and the members of it one to another:

and let down to the earth; for Peter to see it, and where it was to continue for a while, even to the second coming of Christ, and when the whole church of the firstborn will be let down to earth again; (see ‹6202›Revelation 21:2).

Ver. 12. *Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth*, etc.] Not as if they were painted upon it, and these were only pictures and representations of them made on the linen sheet; but as if they really add actually were upon it alive; since Peter is afterwards called upon to kill and eat: and these design four-footed beasts of every kind, that are tame, as distinct from the wild ones, after mentioned, as horses, camels, oxen, sheep, hogs, dogs, etc.

and wild beasts; lions, tigers, panthers, bears, etc. This clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions:

and creeping things; the above copy and versions here add, “of the earth”, which they omit in the first clause; these intend serpents, snakes, worms, &c:

and fowls of the air; birds of all sorts: now the whole of this signifies, that the church of Christ, under the Gospel dispensation, consists of all sorts of persons, of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, the one being reckoned clean, the other unclean; of men of all sorts of tempers and dispositions, comparable to wild or tame beasts; and of all sorts of sinners, who before conversion have been greater or lesser sinners; as well as denotes that the distinction of food under the ceremonial law was now ceased. This is not designed to represent that there are good and bad in Gospel churches, as there certainly are and much less that immoral persons are to be received and retained there; but that those who have been of the blackest character, if called by grace, should be admitted into them; and chiefly to show that Gentiles reckoned unclean, when converted, are not to be rejected.

Ver. 13. *And there came a voice to him*, etc.] Formed by an angel, or rather by Christ himself:

rise, Peter, kill and eat; he might be on his knees when he fell into this trance, being at prayer, and therefore is bid to rise; and he is called by name, the more to encourage him to do as he was ordered; and he is bid to kill and eat of all the creatures without distinction, which were represented to him in the sheet; and the design of this was to teach him, that both the distinction between clean and unclean creatures in the law was now

abolished, and men might lawfully eat of whatsoever they pleased; and that he might and should without any difference converse with all sorts of men, Jews and Gentiles, circumcised and uncircumcised, and preach the Gospel to one as to another, and maintain a church communion and fellowship with all equally alike.

Ver. 14. *But Peter said, not so, Lord*, etc.] God forbid I should do this, so contrary to the law of God, and to my own practice, throughout the whole course of my life:

for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean; in a ceremonial sense, which was in common use with Gentiles, but unclean by the law of Moses: this shows that Peter as yet closely adhered to the ceremonial law, nor did he know that it was abolished by Christ; and notwithstanding the commission given to him and the rest of the apostles to preach the Gospel to every creature, and the extraordinary gifts of speaking with divers tongues for that purpose, bestowed on them at the day of Pentecost; yet he and they remained greatly strangers to the calling of the Gentiles, and the admitting of them to a civil and religious conversation with them; the knowledge of every truth was not at once communicated to them, but gradually, as it pressed the Lord to enlighten their minds.

Ver. 15. *And the voice spake unto him again the second time*, etc.] The following words,

what God hath cleansed; that is, hath pronounced clean and lawful to be used, as he now had all sorts of food, (<40151>Matthew 15:11, <451414>Romans 14:14, <540104>1 Timothy 4:4).

[that] call not thou common; or pronounce it to be unholy or unclean, and unlawful to be used: and the same holds good of men, as well as things; for as hereby the Lord instructed Peter, that there was nothing of itself common, or unclean, and unfit for use; so that no man, not any Gentile, Barbarian, Scythian, or be he who he would, was common or unclean, and his company to be avoided as such. Distinctions both of men and meats were now to be laid aside; and the Jews themselves own, that what is now unclean, will be clean in the time to come, or the times of the Messiah; they say [f534],

> "every beast which is unclean in this world, *the holy blessed God* htwa rhjm, *cleanses it*, in the time to come, (the times of the Messiah,) as they were at first clean to the sons of Noah (Genesis 9:3), wherefore, as the herb was clean to all, and as the beasts were clean to the sons of Noah; so also in the time to come he will loose what he has bound, or forbidden."

And particularly they observe, that a swine is call ryzh from rzh, "to return", because the Lord will return it unto Israel. [f535]

Ver. 16. *This was done thrice*, etc.] That is, either the voice spoke the same words three times, or the sheet was let down three times; and it may be both; it may be, that every time the voice was spoke, the sheet was let down: this was done, not with respect to any mystical meaning in the number three, but for the confirmation of Peter, that he might be the more firmly assured of the truth of the things represented unto him:

and the vessel was received up again into heaven; to denote, that when the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, whether Jews or Gentiles, are all gathered in, by the preaching of the Gospel to them, they will be taken up to heaven, their original and native place, and be for ever with the Lord; as well as to certify to Peter, that what was now shown him on earth, concerning the taking away the distinction of men and meats, was ratified in heaven.

Ver. 17. *Now while Peter doubted in himself*, etc.] For notwithstanding what he had heard and seen, he had not at once a full knowledge of this matter. Beza's most ancient copy reads, "as he was in himself, he doubted"; that is, when he came to himself, for he was before, as it were, out of himself, and was in a trance, or ecstasy; and now being come to himself, and reflecting on what he had seen and heard, he had some doubts and hesitations in his mind:

what this vision which he had seen should mean; what the vessel or sheet should signify, what should be meant by the four-footed beasts, etc. why he should be called to arise, and kill, and eat such creatures, and what should be designed by God's cleansing them; and while he was revolving these things in his mind, and at some uncertainty about them, something providentially happened, which was a key unto, and opened the whole vision clearly to him:

behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius, had made inquiry for Simon's house; they were come to Joppa, and, according to the direction given them, had inquired and found out the house of Simon the tanner, where Peter was:

and stood before the gate; of the house; perhaps knocking at it, in order to bring out somebody within to them, of whom they might inquire for Peter.

Ver. 18. *And called, and asked*, etc.] That is, they called to the people of the house, Simon's family; and in a civil and courteous manner asked them,

whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter; which they said to distinguish him from Simon the master of the house, and as Cornelius was directed, and they were instructed by him: concerning him they inquired, whether he

were lodged there; the Ethiopic version adds, without any foundation for it, "and the place where they called at was Peter's lodging room".

Ver. 19. *While Peter thought on the vision*, etc.] Which greatly amused him, affected his mind, and employed his thoughts what should be the meaning and design of it:

the Spirit said unto him; the holy Spirit of God, either by an articulate voice, or by making an impulse on his mind;

behold, three men seek thee; the Arabic version leaves out the word "three": the Spirit of God is omniscient, and knows all things; if the deep things of God, then much more man, and the things of man.

Ver. 20. *Arise, therefore, and get thee down*, etc.] From the top of the house where he was:

and go with them; the three men, to Caesarea

doubting nothing; whether it is right or wrong, lawful or unlawful, to go with them, because not Jews, but uncircumcised Gentiles, laying aside all such Jewish scruples:

for I have sent them: the Spirit of God is said to do what Cornelius did at his instigation and direction, signified by an angel he sent to him, (<44105>Acts 10:5,8).

Ver. 21. *Then Peter went down to the men*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, “from the third floor”; to the place where the men were: the following clause,

which were sent unto him from Cornelius, is not in Beza’s most ancient copy, nor in the Alexandrian copy, nor in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions:

and said, behold, I am he whom ye seek; without being called by any of the family he came down, and without being informed in that way who the men were inquiring for; it being suggested to him by the Spirit of God, he declared himself to be the person they were seeking after: and put this question to them,

what is the cause wherefore ye are come? for that was not intimated to him by the Spirit; it was only told him there were three men seeking him, and he was bid to go with them, without any scruple or hesitation; but what they came for, or he was to go with them about, was not suggested.

Ver. 22. *And they said, Cornelius, the centurion*, etc.] A certain person, by name Cornelius, a Roman or Italian, as his name shows, and by office a “centurion”, that was over an hundred soldiers: a just man; before God, and in his sight, through the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to him; and who was a new man, created in righteousness and true holiness; and lived soberly, righteously, and godly, and did justice between man and man; and so was just in the sight of men, which was very rare in a Gentile, and in a soldier:

and one that feareth God; the true God, the God of Israel, and worshipped him, both internally and externally; for both sorts of worship are included in the fear of God:

and of good report among all the nation of the Jews; that knew any thing of him, especially at Caesarea, where many Jews, and even many of their most celebrated doctors lived: and this is the rather observed, to induce Peter, a Jew, to go along with them to him, since his character was so very good, and he was in so much credit and esteem with the people; for he must be something extraordinary to have their good word, who had such an abhorrence of uncircumcised Gentiles in general: this man, they add,

was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house; they intimate hereby, that he did not send for him of himself, he was not led

to it by any fancy of his own, or any curiosity in him; nor should he have presumed to have used such freedom with Peter, but that he had some instructions from God himself, who had sent an holy angel to him, and had ordered him to send men to Joppa, and fetch Peter from thence to his house, for the end next mentioned: *and to hear words of thee*: the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it: that being taught by the one, he and his might submit to the other.

Ver. 23. *Then called he them in*, etc.] Into Simon's house; not "into his own house", as the Ethiopic version adds; as yet they stood without, before the gate of the house; he took them in, no doubt, with the leave of Simon, his host, and set provisions before them, and lodged them that night:

and in the morning Peter went away with them; the next morning he set out with them towards Caesarea:

and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him; there were six of them, as appears from (44112Acts 11:12) these went with him, not only to bear him company, and out of respect to him; but to be witnesses of what might be seen, heard, said, or done, and for Peter, should there be any occasion for it, as there afterwards was.

Ver. 24. *And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea*, etc.] So that they were one day, and part of another, on their journey:

and Cornelius waited for them; he had an eager desire to hear the word from Peter's mouth; and was longing and looking for the coming of him, with the men he sent for him; and he and his family were in a waiting posture, and ready to hear the word, when the apostle of Christ should come: it would be well if this was always the case of the hearers of the word, to assemble before their ministers come; and be waiting for them, and in full expectation of them, and ready to receive them, and the words of grace which drop from their lips:

and had called together his kinsmen and near friends; or necessary ones: not only his relations according to the flesh, which might be in the Italian band, but his most familiar acquaintance, with whom he was in the strictest friendship; who may be called "necessary", as they are both by the Greeks and Romans, because they are often necessary for assistance and counsel: this shows the true grace of God in him, which wherever it is, puts a man

on seeking after the spiritual and eternal welfare of all with whom he is concerned, and especially his relatives and friends.

Ver. 25. *And as Peter was coming in*, etc.] Not into the city of Caesarea, for his entrance there is mentioned before, but into the house of Cornelius:

Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet; to testify his great affection for him, and reverence of him:

and worshipped [him]; not with a religious adoration, or with worship due to God; for that would have been contrary to his character as a devout man, and one that feared God; but with civil worship and respect, in which he might exceed just bounds, and therefore is reproved by Peter: nor could he take him for an angel of God, or for one sent immediately from heaven to him; for he had been informed who he was, and what he was, and from whence he came, and what he was to do.

Ver. 26. *But Peter took him up*, etc.] As he lay at his feet, and lifted him up and set him on his legs:

saying, stand up; and continue in this posture:

I myself also am a man; a mortal man, a man of like passions with others, no better than others by nature: and it was by grace, and not any merit of his own, that he was a believer in Christ, and an apostle of his; and therefore he chose not to have any distinguishing homage and respect paid to him, and especially in any excessive and extravagant way; which though not designed, might carry in it a suggestion, as if he was more than a man.

Ver. 27. *And as he talked with him*, etc.] About the excessive respect he showed him, and his own infirmity and frailty, and unworthiness, as a creature:

he went in; to Cornelius's house, at the door, and through the porch, to some interior room and apartment in it:

and found many that were come together; besides his family, many of his relations and intimate friends, whom he had got together on this occasion, that they might receive some advantage, as well as himself.

Ver. 28. *And he said unto them*, etc.] The whole company that were met together, who were chiefly, if not altogether Gentiles:

ye know that it is an unlawful thing; what is forbidden by the law of Moses, (Deuteronomy 7:2,3) and by the traditions of the elders, which carry the matter further than the law did, and made it very criminal:

for a man that is a Jew, to keep company with, or come unto one of another nation; besides entering into covenants and marriages with them, which were forbidden by the law, though they allowed of trade and commerce with the Gentiles, yet not any familiar conversation with them; it was prohibited to eat and drink any sort of liquor with them in their houses [f536], nor might they walk with them in the streets, or on the road; says Maimonides [f537],

> "it is forbidden a Jew to unite himself to Gentiles, because they are suspected of shedding blood, and he may not join himself with them in the way; if he meets a Gentile in the way, he causes him to turn to the right hand; if they ascend by an ascent, or descend by a descent, the Israelite may not be below, and the Gentile above: but the Israelite must be above, and the Gentile below, lest he should fall upon him and kill him; and he may not go even with (or along side by him) lest he break his skull."

It is said [f538] of some Rabbins, that they saw a certain man coming;

> "says R. Chiyah, let us be gone, perhaps this man is an idolatrous Gentile, or one of the people of the earth, and it is forbidden to join with him in the way."

They looked upon the houses of Gentiles unclean, and therefore would not enter into them: (See Gill on "John 18:28").

yea they say [f539], that:

> "the court of a stranger (or Gentile) is as the habitation of a beast."

Such an aversion was there in that people to all civil society with Gentiles: and so Apoltonius says of them [f540], that

> "they not only departed from the Romans, but from all men, living a separate life from others; nor did they communicate at table with others; neither in things sacred, nor in any ceremonies;"

and this was well known to Jews and Gentiles:

but God hath showed me; partly by the vision he had seen, and partly by discourse with the men that came from Cornelius to him; and by comparing the vision and their message to him together, he saw that he was not obliged to abide by the customs and laws of the Jews: but was showed, as he says,

that I should not call any man common or unclean; that is, in a ceremonial sense; for otherwise, all by nature are morally unclean; and none are pure, but such who are washed in the blood of Christ, and are justified by his righteousness, and sanctified by his Spirit: he saw there was now no difference between Jew and Gentile; that the one was not clean because of his circumcision, nor the other unclean on account of his uncircumcision, or to be avoided for that reason; that the Gospel was to be preached to all; and that every believer of whatsoever nation, was acceptable to God, and ought to be regarded by his ministers and people.

Ver. 29. *Therefore came I unto you, without gainsaying*, etc.] Readily and cheerfully, without objecting to it, or saying one word against it, or making any excuse to put it off:

as soon as I was sent for: he immediately consented to go, as soon as ever the messengers from Cornelius acquainted him with their message, being previously directed so to do by the Spirit of God; though he did not set out with them till the next day, it being more suitable and convenient:

I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me? this he said, not as ignorant of the true cause, for he had inquired of the messengers, who had informed him of the reason of it; but he was willing to have it from the mouth of Cornelius himself; not only for further confirmation's sake, but for order sake, to lead him on regularly to what he had to say.

Ver. 30. *And Cornelius said*, etc.] The Syriac version adds, "to him", to the apostle; the following he said, in a very submissive and humble manner:

four days ago I was fasting unto this hour; in the Greek text it is, "from the fourth day unto this hour I was fasting": which looks as if he had been fasting four days, and was still fasting at that hour; though the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the phrase "I was fasting": but the sense which our version and others give is the truest; that four days ago, or reckoning four days back, Cornelius was fasting on that day, until such time in that day as now it was in this present day; and which perhaps might be the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon: the account of days

exactly agrees; as soon as Cornelius had had the vision, he sends men to Joppa, which was one day; on the morrow they came to Joppa, which makes two days; Peter lodged them all night there, and the next day set out on the journey with them, so you have three days; and the day after that, which was the fourth, he entered into Caesarea, and came to Cornelius's house, where he now was:

and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house; which was one of the stated times of prayer; (see Gill on "Acts 3:1").

And behold a man stood before me in bright clothing; or "in a white garment", as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read: which was an emblem of the excellency, glory, and purity of the angel, and of the divine majesty in him: he calls him a man, because he appeared in the form of one, as angels used to do.

Ver. 31. *And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard*, etc.] What he was now particularly making to God, as well as others he had before put up to him:

and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God; (See Gill on "Acts 10:4").

Ver. 32. *Send therefore to Joppa*, etc.] (See Gill on "Acts 10:5"), (see Gill on "Acts 10:6").

who when he cometh shall speak unto thee, is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, but agrees with (Acts 10:6,22).

Ver. 33. *Immediately therefore I sent unto thee*, etc.] This he said, to show his obedience to the heavenly vision, and his faith in it; and to remove from himself any suspicion of pride, vanity, and imperiousness: he did not send for the apostle of himself, but by a divine order; which as soon as he had, he executed; for the very same hour, he called his servants and gave them their instructions, and sent them away:

and thou hast well done, that thou art come; a phrase expressive of benignity and goodness in Peter, and of thankfulness to him for his coming; it was not only doing that which was right in the sight of God, but was kind in him, and acceptable to Cornelius and his house:

now therefore are we all here present before God; the searcher of hearts, the omniscient God, who knew the sincerity of their intentions in meeting

together, and the eagerness of their souls, and their fervent desire to hear the word: it is a sort of an appeal to God, for the truth of all this: in Beza's most ancient copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, it is read "before thee"; before the apostle: to hear all things that are commanded thee of God; or "of the Lord", as the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin versions read; that is, of the Lord Jesus Christ; and designs all things, both with respect to doctrine and practice, which Christ had commanded his apostles to teach: and particularly, what he had ordered Peter to instruct Cornelius and his friends in.

Ver. 34. *Then Peter opened his mouth*, etc.] (See Gill on "Acts 8:35")

And said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; which is to be understood, not of the substances of men, but of the outward state and condition, circumstances and qualities of men; he respects the proper persons of men themselves, but not because of their outward appearances; he does not prefer or despise men, because of their being of this or the other nation, as Jews or Gentiles; or because they are circumcised, or not circumcised; or because they are high or low, rich or poor, free or bound, or the like: the true sense here is, that God valued no man the more, because he was a Jew and circumcised, nor anyone the less, because he was a Gentile and uncircumcised; and this the apostle found to be a most certain truth, of which he was fully persuaded; partly by the vision which he himself saw, and partly by that which Cornelius had, and which the more confirmed him in this matter: these words do not at all militate against the doctrines of personal election and reprobation; and indeed, those acts in God, are not according to the outward state and condition of men, or any circumstances that attend them, or any qualities they have, internal or external; but entirely proceed from the sovereign will of God; (See Gill on " Romans 2:11")

Ver. 35. *But in every nation*, etc.] In any Gentile nation in the Roman empire, and in any part, even in Scythia, or in the most uncultivated parts of the universe, as well as in Judea:

he that feareth him; God, not with a slavish fear, or with the fear of punishment to be inflicted by him, with a fear of hell and damnation, with which Cain, Pharaoh, Judas, and even the devils themselves have feared him; nor with an hypocritical fear; but with a godly filial fear; which is a new covenant blessing, springs from the love of God, is a grace implanted in the soul and regeneration, and includes all true religion, both external

and internal; and faith among the rest, without which it is impossible to please God, or do works of righteousness acceptable in his sight, as it follows:

and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him; that is, he who from such principles, as the fear of the Lord; love to him, and faith in Christ, does works of righteousness, particularly alms, as Cornelius did, and which the Jews often call hqdx, "righteousness"; (see Gill on "<4001>Matthew 6:1"), such an one is acceptable, or well pleasing to God, let him be of what nation he will: it should be observed, that though God accepts of such who fear him, and work righteousness from a right principle, and to a right end, without any regard to their being circumcised, or not circumcised, or to their being of this or the other nation, yet their fear of him, and working righteousness, are not the ground of their acceptance; but are to be considered as descriptive of the persons, who are accepted by him in Christ; for there is no acceptance of persons or services, but in Christ Jesus: the Jews themselves say, that

> "the godly of the nations of the world shall have their part and portion in the world to come. [f541]"

Ver. 36. *The word which God sent unto the children of Israel*, etc.] Now the apostle enters on his sermon or discourse, of which the above were only a preface, or an introduction; and his sense is, that the doctrine which he was now about to preach to them, was the doctrine of the Gospel; which it pleased God, of his infinite wisdom and rich grace, to send first to the people of the Jews, by the ministry of the apostles: this word is sometimes called the word of God, of which he is the author; and the word of Christ, of which he is the sum and substance; and the word of salvation, salvation by Christ alone being the principal part of it; and the word of righteousness, because therein is the righteousness of Christ revealed, from faith to faith; and the word of faith itself, because it is the means by which faith comes; and the word of truth, because it contains nothing but truth; and sometimes, the word of reconciliation, because it publishes peace and reconciliation by Christ, as is hereafter signified: this word God is said to send; which shows that it comes from him, and is of a divine original, and therefore ought to be received, not as the word of man, but as: the word of God; and it may be said to be "sent", because the apostles were sent with it by Christ; who ordained them, and sent them forth to preach it in the several cities of Judea; and which shows that Christ is God, who sent this

word by them, and so the text is a proof of his deity; and this was sent to the children of Israel and to them only at first; the apostles were forbidden going in the way of the Gentiles, or entering into any of the cities of the Samaritans; and though their commission was now enlarged, and they might go to the Gentiles, as yet they had not done it, only published the Gospel to the Jews: the substance of which was,

preaching peace by Jesus Christ: that word preached, or the apostles in the ministry of it preached; or rather God, who sent the word by them, preached through them the doctrine of peace and reconciliation, by the blood of Christ; and this being so principal a doctrine of the Gospel, the whole is called from it, the Gospel of peace, and the word of reconciliation: by "peace" here is meant, not peace with the creatures of the earth, the beasts of the field, which, through the sin of men, are become troublesome to them; nor peace with men, which is desirable, and to be sought after, and to a good man the Lord makes his enemies to be at peace with him; nor peace with the saints, which ought by all means to be maintained, and which should rule in the hearts of God's people, and to which the Gospel calls them; but peace with God, which was broken by the sin of man, which filled his mind with enmity to God; and now he is incapable of restoring it, and reconciling himself to God; he has neither disposition, nor ability to perform it; but Christ is the sole author of it: a council of peace was held, in which the scheme of it was drawn; a covenant of peace was entered into, between the Father and the Son; Christ was provided, promised, and prophesied of, as the peace maker; he came into the world for this purpose; the chastisement of our peace was laid on him, and he procured it by his obedience, sufferings; and death: and this is what the Gospel publishes; not peace made by men, by their repentance, humiliation, and works of righteousness; but made by Christ, the Prince of peace, by his blood and sacrifice: and not as to be made by him, or any other, but as already made; being not only a plan drawn, but executed, a finished work; and that not conditionally, if men will repent, believe, and obey, but absolutely, as a thing done, and not dependent on any condition required of man; and a wonderful blessing this is, being made on honourable terms, and so lasting, and bringing with it a train of other blessings; and this being an article in the Gospel, makes that to be good news, and glad tidings indeed: and these doctrines of peace with God by the blood of Christ, and reconciliation for sin by his sacrifice, were to be preached to them that were afar off, and to

them that are nigh, both to the Jews and Gentiles; to strengthen which observation, the following clause put into a parenthesis is added,

he is Lord of all: of the whole world, and all things in it; of all the nations of the world, Gentiles as well as Jews, and particularly of God's elect among them both; and therefore he will have the Gospel preached to one, as to another; (<4017>Ephesians 2:17).

Ver. 37. *The word [I say] you know*, etc.] By common fame and report, which had for some years past been published by John, Christ, and his apostles, in Judea and Galilee; especially some parts of it, or points in it, such as the apostle hereafter mentions must have reached their ears:

Which was published throughout all Judea; by Christ, his twelve apostles, and seventy disciples; who were sent out by him into all places, where he himself would come:

and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; that is, after John had began to preach the ordinance of water baptism, and to administer it; which were done, to set the Jews inquiring after the Messiah, and to make him manifest in Israel; upon which the word of the Gospel quickly began to be preached by Christ and his apostles, and that in Galilee; for here Christ began to preach himself, and here he called his apostles, and sent them forth to preach it.

Ver. 38. *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth*, etc.] And so declared him to be the Messiah, that was promised to the Jews, and expected by them; the anointed prophet, priest, and King; who because his parents lived at Nazareth, and he was educated there, and there he chiefly preached and wrought his miracles, he was by way of contempt called Jesus of Nazareth: and him God anointed, with

the Holy Ghost and with power; with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, without measure; signified by the descent of the Spirit, as a dove upon him at his baptism, and is what in (<1907>Psalm 45:7) is called, "the oil of gladness". The person anointed is elsewhere represented as a divine person; as God, and the Son of God, (<1906>Psalm 2:6,7, 45:6,7) but here under his most contemptible character, by which he was known among men, because it was in his human nature, that he was anointed; and this anointing belongs to him, as considered in his office capacity; from whence he is called the Christ, or anointed of God. The anointer of him is God, which must be understood of God the Father, who is the God of Christ,

and the same that anoints his people, (⁴⁰¹²2 Corinthians 1:21) and none but God can anoint with the Holy Ghost; and he it is, with whom Christ is here said to be anointed; who is compared to oil, in allusion to the anointing oil under the former dispensation, used for the anointing of persons, prophets, priests, and kings, and of the tabernacle, and the vessels of it; to the oil that was poured on Aaron's head, which ran down to the skirts of his garments, emblematical of the Spirit poured on Christ, the head, and which from him descends to all the members of his body; and to common oil, both for ornament and refreshment: "power" is added, which is but another name for the Holy Spirit, (⁴²⁴⁹Luke 24:49). And one particular branch of the extraordinary and immeasurable gifts of the Spirit, bestowed on him as man, was a power of doing miracles: for it follows,

who went about; the land of Judea and all Galilee; which shows laboriousness, diligence, and delight:

doing good; both to the bodies and souls of men; to the latter, by preaching the Gospel to them; and to the former, by curing all their diseases, of whatsoever sort: he did what none of Adam's sons could do, for there is none of them that does good, no not one, (⁴⁵¹⁰Romans 3:10) he was good himself, essentially and naturally good, and therefore he did good, and he did nothing but good: he knew no sin, he did none, nor could any be found in him; and he always did good, that which was according to the will of God, and well pleasing in his sight; and without him no good is done, even by his own people; they have all the grace and strength from him, by which they perform the good things they do: he is the reverse of Satan, who goes about doing all the mischief he can; and he is to be imitated by his followers, who, as they have opportunity, should do good to all men, especially to the household of faith.

And healing all that were oppressed of the devil; both in body, as "lunatics, epileptics, and demoniacs"; and in soul, such as were led captive by him:

for God was with him; as his Son, essentially, through union to him; and as man, from his cradle to his cross, supporting and assisting him, and with his gracious presence comforting him; and by various instances, showing that he came from heaven, and had a divine mission and commission; which had he not, he would never have been encouraged and assisted as he was, as man, and could never have done the things he did: the Ethiopic version very wrongly reads, "for God was with them"; (⁴³⁰²John 3:2, 8:29)

Ver. 39. *And we are witnesses of all things*, etc.] That is, Peter, and the rest of the apostles, were witnesses, even eyewitnesses, of Christ's going about from place to place, and of the good he did every where, and of the miracles which he wrought; and even of every thing

which he did both in the land of the Jews; which takes in not only Judea, but Galilee, and beyond Jordan;

and in Jerusalem; the metropolis of Judea:

whom they slew and hanged on a tree; whom the Jews put to death; for since it was by their instigation, and at their request, it is ascribed to them; and who not content with any death, desired he might be crucified, or hanged on a tree; partly because of the pain and torture of it, and partly because of the shame and ignominy that attended it; as well as to throw off the scandal of his death from themselves to the Romans, crucifixion being a Roman punishment.

Ver. 40. *Him God raised up the third day*, etc.] According to the Scriptures, particularly (Hosea 6:2). The resurrection, of Christ, though it is sometimes ascribed to himself, as God, whereby he was declared to be the Son of God, yet generally to God the Father, as here:

and showed him openly; in a glorious body, and yet numerically the same he before lived and suffered in, so as to be heard, seen, and handled; by which full proof was given of the truth of his resurrection, in which he appeared to be the conqueror over death and the grave.

Ver. 41. *Not to all the people*, etc.] Of the Jews, who crucified him; nor to the whole body of the Christians, though at one time to a large number, even five hundred brethren at once:

but unto witnesses chosen before of God; by Christ himself, who is God:

even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead; namely, to the apostles, with whom he familiarly conversed by times, for the space of forty days after his resurrection; and Beza's most ancient copy; and the Ethiopic version here add, "forty days"; and particularly he did sometimes eat and drink with them; (Luke 24:42,43, John 21:12,15) and though drinking is not mentioned, it is included in eating, as in (Luke 7:36) wherefore there is no need to connect the last clause,

"after he rose from the dead", with the latter part of the preceding verse, as some do, on that account.

Ver. 42. *And he commanded us, to preach unto the people*, etc.] Not only of the Jews, but of the Gentiles; to all nations, to the whole world, and every creature; for the apostle seems to refer to the commission given to him, and the rest of the apostles, after Christ's resurrection, (<40>Matthew 28:19-20 <41>Mark 16:15-16).

And to testify that it is he which was ordained of God, to be the Judge of quick and dead: the preaching of the Gospel is a testification of Christ, or a bearing a testimony for him; and among the rest to this truth, that he was from all eternity in the council and covenant of grace; appointed by God to have all power in heaven and in earth; and not only to judge and govern his church and people on earth, but to be the Judge of all men at the last day, of such who will be found alive at his coming, and of those that are dead; who will be raised again, and stand before his judgment seat, to receive their proper sentence; and though this is not expressed in the commission given the apostles, yet is implied therein; (<40>Matthew 28:18) That there will be a general judgment at the last day is certain, from the reason of things; from the relation of creatures to God as their Creator, to whom they are accountable for their conduct and actions; from the justice of God, which requires it, which does not take place in the present state of things; and it has a testimony in the consciences of men, which the most daring of infidels, at times, show by the fears they are possessed of about it; and it is abundantly clear from revelation, from the writings of the Old and New Testament; from whence it appears that it is future, it is yet to come; that it is certain, being appointed by God, though the time to men is uncertain; that it will be universal, and reach to all men, righteous and wicked, quick and dead, and to all actions, good and bad, open and secret; and that it will be a righteous one, and be administered according to the strictest rules of justice and equity; and that it is an eternal one; not that it will be ever carrying on, but will issue in the determination of the states of men to all eternity: now Christ he is appointed to do this work, he was ordained to unto it in the purposes of God from everlasting; this was settled in the covenant between them; and for the execution of which, he has all power and authority given him as Mediator: and for it he is every way qualified: he is of great and infinite majesty, being the mighty God; of great sagacity and wisdom, having, as Mediator, the spirit of wisdom and knowledge upon him, whereby he is of quick understanding and discernment; and he is

of great faithfulness and integrity, and will judge not after the sight of his eyes, and the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness and equity, and will do the thing that is right; and especially, inasmuch as he is omniscient, and knows the secrets of all hearts, and so capable of bringing every work into judgment, with every secret thing; and also omnipotent, and so able to raise the dead, summon all nations before him, separate the wicked and the righteous, and not only denounce the proper sentences upon them, but execute them.

Ver. 43. *To him give all the prophets witness*, etc.] As David, (<19201>Psalm 32:1,2,5 103:3 <23525>Isaiah 43:25, 44:22, 53:5, 55:7 <24034>Jeremiah 31:34 <26625>Ezekiel 36:25) (<27009>Daniel 9:9,24 Hos 14:2,4 <33718>Micah 7:18 <38004>Zechariah 3:4,9 13:1 <39107>Malachi 3:17)

that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive the remission of sins; the meaning is, that whoever believes in Christ with a right and true faith, with the heart, he shall receive, not as what his faith procures or deserves, but as a gift of God's grace, the free and full forgiveness of his sins, through Christ; through the effusion of his blood, and the virtue of his sacrifice. Christ was set forth in the purposes of God, in the types, figures, and sacrifices of the law, and in the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, as he that should obtain the remission of sins by his blood, without which there is no remission; he came in the fulness of time, and shed his blood for this purpose, and accordingly it is procured by it; and this is published in the everlasting Gospel, that whoever believes in Christ, not with an historical or temporary faith, or in profession only, but with the faith of God's elect, which is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit, which works by love, and makes Christ precious, shall receive it as a free gift; for it is not to be purchased by money, nor obtained by works of righteousness, nor procured by repentance, or by anything done by the creature, but is according to the riches of divine grace and mercy: through the name of Christ: through the blood of Christ, which was shed for it; through the power of Christ, as God, who is able to forgive it; and through the hands of Christ, as Mediator, who is exalted to bestow it; and for the sake of Christ, and his mediation, whose blood calls aloud for it; and whoever looks by faith to him for it, shall have it, of whatsoever sex, state, or condition they be, of whatsoever people or nation, and how great sinners soever they have been, and whether they are weak or strong believers. Some copies read, "through his blood".

Ver. 44. *While Peter yet spake these words*, etc.] As he was thus discoursing concerning Christ, his person, his miracles, his death and resurrection, and the efficacy of his blood for pardon, before he had done speaking,

the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. This is not to be understood of the operations of the Spirit of God upon the souls of men, under the ministry of the word; though true it is, that the Spirit of God attends the preaching of thee Gospel, and not only qualifies men for it, and assists them in it, but makes it effectual to many that hear it: hearers of the word lie in the way of the gracious operations of the Spirit; and the gifts and graces of the Spirit are given to persons, or the Spirit falls upon them under such means: which may denote the original of the grace of the Spirit, it falls down from above, from heaven; the freeness of it, it is bestowed on whom he pleases, under the same ministry; the suddenness of it, it comes at once, unthought of, and undesired, as well as undeserved; the power and efficacy of it, it falls with weight, it melts the heart, and converts the sinner; and the plenty of it, it falls in abundance, it is exceeding abundant with faith and love; and the permanency of it, it continues where it falls, and is a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life: and also the invisibility of it unto others. But this is not here intended, at least it is not only designed; for though the Spirit of God, in the operations of his grace, might fall upon them that heard the word, whereby they were regenerated, converted, and sanctified, and so became proper subjects for baptism; yet also the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit came upon them, as they were hearing; not upon the men, the believing Jews, that came along with Peter; but upon Cornelius and his family, and upon all his relations and friends, who came together to hear the word at his invitation, and now were hearing it; and as they were, the Holy Ghost, in his miraculous gifts of speaking with divers tongues, fell upon them in a visible form, as upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost; for that it was in the same way seems probable from (Acts 11:15). These extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were necessary at the first preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, for the confirmation of it: as well as for the further confirmation of Peter, that he was right in so doing; as also for the sake of the believing Jews he brought along with him.

Ver. 45. *And they of the circumcision which believed*, etc.] Or “of the Jews that believed”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; the circumcised Jews who believed in Jesus Christ:

were astonished, as many as came with Peter; who were six brethren, as appears from (<44112>Acts 11:12) these were amazed,

because that on the Gentiles also was poured out of the gift of the Holy Ghost; which they before thought was peculiar to the Jews; and this was according to their former notions, and the sentiments of the whole nation, that the Shekinah does not dwell without the land, and only in the land of Israel [f542]; yea, they sometimes say, only upon the families in Israel, whose genealogies are clear [f543]: the same they say of prophecy [f544], which is one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and was one of those which were now bestowed. They own, that before the giving of the law, the Holy Ghost was among the Gentiles, but from that time ceased to be among them [f545]: hence even these believing Jews wonder at the pouring it forth upon them; which they needed not, had they known that the legal dispensation was now at an end, and the Gospel dispensation had taken place; in which it had been foretold the Spirit should be poured forth on the dry ground of the Gentiles.

Ver. 46. *For they heard them speak with tongues*, etc.] With divers tongues, which they had never learned, and before did not understand: and magnify God; they spoke of the wonderful works of God in these languages, as the apostles did at Pentecost, (<44211>Acts 2:11) they spoke greatly in the praise of God, and gave thanks for his rich grace and mercy bestowed on them:

then answered Peter; as follows.

Ver. 47. *Can any man forbid water*, etc.] The use of his river, or bath, or what conveniency he may have for baptizing persons: which shows, that it required a place of some quantity of water, sufficient for baptism by immersion, otherwise it would not be in the power of any man to hinder them having a little water, to be sprinkled or poured on the face: unless rather by water should be meant baptism itself; and then the sense is, who can forbid these persons the ordinance of baptism, or deny the administration of it to them? for such who have the Spirit of Christ, are openly Christ's, and therefore have a right to his ordinances; such, being enlightened by him, are able to see to the end of the ordinance; and to such only can it be of use, and they only can please God in it: nor should it be forbidden them; this is to withstand God, act contrary to the commission of Christ, and resist the Holy Ghost; no, not though Gentiles: converted Gentiles, have as good a right as any to this ordinance; descent from

Abraham gives no right to it; there is no difference among men under the Gospel dispensation; Christ's commission reaches both to Jews and Gentiles; and there is but one baptism for both.

That these should not be baptized; though they are uncircumcised Gentiles:

which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we; the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; though, no doubt also, they had received the Spirit, as a spirit of illumination and conviction, as a spirit of regeneration, sanctification, and conversion, and as a spirit of faith and adoption, and as a witness, earnest, and pledge of future glory: and receiving him supposes, that they were without him before, and that he is a gift of God's free grace unto them; and which is no other than the baptism of the Spirit, and is a necessary pre-requisite to water baptism; and they that have the one, are right subjects of the other; nor ought it to be denied them. From hence it appears that water baptism is an ordinance of Christ, to be continued under the Gospel dispensation; it was not only what was practised in the times of John and of Christ, but what was practised by the apostles after the ascension of Christ, in compliance with the commission he gave, which could have respect to no other baptism; since the apostles were not capable of baptizing with any other, not with the baptism of the Spirit: and it is certain from hence, and by other instances, that they did baptize in water; and from the apostle's question it seems, that it must be by immersion in water, as before observed; and from what follows it is clear, that such who are partakers of the Holy Spirit and his grace, are the proper subjects of it.

Ver. 48. *And he commanded them to be baptized*, etc.] By some of the six brethren that came with him from Joppa, who might all of them, at least some of them, be ministers of the Gospel: and this he ordered to be done

in the name of the Lord; that is, of the Lord Jesus Christ, though not to the exclusion of the Father, and of the Spirit: perhaps the phrase, "in the name of the Lord", may stand connected with the word commanded; and the sense be, that in the name of the Lord, and by authority from him, he ordered them to be baptized:

then prayed they him to tarry certain days; partly to express their gratitude to him for the favour they had received through him as an instrument, and partly that they might be more instructed and established by him. And these baptized persons very likely laid the foundation of a Gospel church state in this place, which we find to continue in succeeding ages; in the "second"

century Theophilus presided over it; and in the “third” century Origen and Pamphilus, were presbyters of it; and in the same age, succeeding one another, Theoctistus, Domnus, and Theotecnus were bishops of it; and in the beginning of the “fourth” century, Eusebius the famous ecclesiastical historian was bishop of this church, after him Acacius; in the fifth century Gelasius the successor of Eunomius bore the same office in it; and in the “sixth” century the bishop of this place was present in the fifth synod at Constantinople; and in the “seventh” century it appears there was a church in this place: in which century the Arabians, after they had besieged this city seven years, took it, and killed seven thousand persons in it; and since it has been in the hands of the Turks; and this seems to have put an end to the ecclesiastical state of this place, as Christian [f546].

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 11

Ver. 1. *And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea*, etc.] The rest of the twelve apostles, and the private members of the churches that were in Judea, for there were in it now more churches than that at Jerusalem, (<44 09 31>Acts 9:31)

heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God; as well as Samaria, (<44 08 14>Acts 8:14) the news by some means or other were quickly brought to them, and no doubt but they also heard that they had received the Holy Ghost, his extraordinary gifts, as well as his special grace, though no mention is made of them.

Ver. 2. *And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem*, etc.] From Caesarea, after he had stayed some certain days in Cornelius's house; so a journey from Caesarea to Jerusalem is called an ascending from the one to the other, (<44 25 01>Acts 25:1) because Jerusalem stood on higher ground, as well as was the metropolis of the country; and this was a journey of six hundred furlongs, or seventy five miles, for so far, according to Josephus [f547], was Caesarea distant from Jerusalem:

they that were of the circumcision, which phrase designs not only the circumcised Jews that believed in Christ, for such were all they of the church at Jerusalem, or at least proselytes that had been circumcised, for as yet there were no uncircumcised Gentiles among them; but those of them, who were most strenuous for circumcision, and made it not only a bar of church communion, but even of civil conversation:

these contended with him; litigated the point, disputed the matter with him, complained against him, and quarrelled with him. Epiphanius says [f548], that Cerinthus, that arch-heretic, was at the head of this contention.

Ver. 3. *Saying, thou wentest into men uncircumcised*, etc.] Into the houses of such, and lodged with them, and familiarly conversed with them:

and didst eat with them; which, according to the traditions of the Jews, were unlawful; (See Gill on "Acts 10:28") they say nothing about his preaching to them, and baptizing them, because these were so manifestly agreeable to the commission of Christ, in (Matthew 28:19 Mark 16:15) and yet how these could be without the other, is not easy to say.

Ver. 4. *But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning*, etc.] Of the vision at Joppa;

and expounded it by order unto them; or related every particular, in a very methodical and orderly manner: he did not insist upon his authority as an apostle, and much less pretended to a primacy to the rest of the apostles; but submitted to have his case heard, examined, and judged of by the body of the brethren.

Ver. 5. *I was in the city of Joppa*, etc.] And so it is called by Josephus [f549], and in the Apocrypha:

> "And he pitched his tents against Joppa: but; they of Joppa shut him out of the city, because Apollonius had a garrison there." (1 Maccabees 10:75)
>
> "The men of Joppa also did such an ungodly deed: they prayed the Jews that dwelt among them to go with their wives and children into the boats which they had prepared, as though they had meant them no hurt." (2 Maccabees 12:3)

here he was praying in an house of Simon the tanner, upon the top of it, and about the sixth hour of the day, or twelve o'clock at noon, which was one of the times of prayer with the Jews; (See Gill on "Acts 10:9"),

and in a trance I saw a vision; with the eyes of his understanding; for the organs of his body were quite senseless and useless, which was as follows:

a certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet; a vessel which looked like a great sheet,

let down from heaven by four corners; to the earth, which four corners were knit, and perhaps were held and let down by angels, and in this visionary way were seen by Peter, though not expressed:

and it came even to me; descended upon the housetop where Peter was praying; and which was necessary, that he might see what was upon it, and

receive instruction from it; and that it was very near him is evident from what is after said to him, when he was bid to arise, and kill and eat what was upon it; and therefore it could not be hanging in the air, but must be let down upon the very spot where he was.

Ver. 6. *Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes*, etc.] Not of his body, but of his mind; for this was only in vision presented to him, when he was as Paul was, not knowing whether in the body or out of it:

I considered: being intent upon this object, he considered in his mind what it was, and what it should mean; it being something strange and unusual; which came down from heaven, and out of it, and came so close and near to him, that it engrossed all his thoughts, and was the subject of deep meditation:

and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air; not pourtrayed upon the sheet, but standing or walking upon it; the Syriac Version leaves out, “the wild beasts”; and the Ethiopic versions, “the creeping things”; but both are in the Greek copies, and in other versions.

Ver. 7. *And I heard a voice saying unto me*, etc.] As he apprehended in his mind; and this voice he heard in the same sense and manner, as the Apostle Paul heard when in a trance, (<442217>Acts 22:17,18 <471204>2 Corinthians 12:4).

arise, Peter, slay and eat; that is, get up and slay some of these creatures upon the sheet, and dress them and eat them.

Ver. 8. *But I said, not so, Lord*, etc.] For he took the voice he heard to be the voice of the Lord, and yet he was not obedient to the heavenly vision, and even though he was an hungry; which shows what a strict observer he was of the ceremonies of the law, and how much he was prejudiced in favour of them:

for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth; he had not suffered anything to come within his lips; he had not even tasted, and much less ate anything that was forbidden by the ceremonial law, so strictly had he observed it.

Ver. 9. *But the voice answered me again from heaven*, etc.] From whence the former voice came, and was the voice of the Lord, or of an angel of the Lord, and which answered him again, or

a second time; not that it said to him a second time kill and eat, but what follows;

what God hath cleansed, that call not thou common; that is, had declared to be clean and fit for use, and did not defile, and could not defile the man into whose mouth it entered, and therefore ought not to be pronounced unclean, and of a defiling nature; this Jesus Christ did, who is God over all blessed for ever, and by whose death an end was put to the ceremonial law, and the distinctions of meats by it; (<401511>Matthew 15:11 <451414>Romans 14:14).

Ver. 10. *And this was done three times*, etc.] That is, the voice from heaven answered three times, and encouraged Peter to kill and eat; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "and he likewise said unto me the third time"; the words as before:

and all were drawn up again into heaven; the sheet with all the creatures upon it, by the same hands that let it down; the Syriac version renders it, "and all betook themselves to heaven"; as if it all went up to heaven of itself; and the Ethiopic version, "and the whole returned again to heaven"; (See Gill on "<441016>Acts 10:16").

Ver. 11. *And behold, immediately*, etc.] The moment the vision was over;

there were three men already come unto the house where I was; they stood before the gate, as in (<441017>Acts 10:17) and as the Syriac and Ethiopic here have it, and were inquiring for Peter, whether he lodged there; and these men were

sent from Caesarea unto me; the Syriac version adds, "by Cornelius": now this incident being just at the close of the above vision, served greatly to explain it to the apostle, and encouraged him to do what he had done; and besides which, he had also the express order of the Spirit, for his going with them to Cornelius's house, as follows.

Ver. 12. *And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting*, etc.] (see Gill on "<441020>Acts 10:20"),

moreover, these six brethren accompanied me; it seems by this, that the six brethren that went along with Peter from Joppa to Caesarea, came also with him from thence to Jerusalem, and were now present, whom he points to; so that it looks as if Peter was aware, that he should be called to an account for his conduct, when he should come to Jerusalem; and therefore

brought these six brethren with him, to be witnesses for him, of what they had seen and heard, which was a very wise and prudential step:

and we entered into the man's house; the house of Cornelius, for entering into whose house they were contending with him, and where he entered not alone, but the six brethren with him; the Ethiopic version wrongly reads "three".

Ver. 13. *And he showed us how he had seen an angel in his house*, etc.] The clause, "in his house", is very appropriately put; for since an angel had entered into his house, it could not be criminal in Peter, and the six brethren, to follow him. In one place he is called a man, and in another place an angel; (see <44103>Acts 10:3,30), because, though he was an angel, yet he appeared in the form of a man, as it was usual for angels to do; but whether Cornelius knew that he was an angel, is not certain, since he calls him a man; and not he, but Luke the historian, and Peter, who repeats the account of the vision, call him an angel; however, he looked upon him as an extraordinary person, as sent to him from God, and therefore obeyed the heavenly vision. The Ethiopic version reads, "an angel of God; which stood and said unto him, send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter"; (See Gill on "<44105>Acts 10:5").

Ver. 14. *Who shall tell thee words*, etc.] Preach doctrines, such as relate to the person and office of Christ, to peace and pardon, and righteousness and salvation by him; such as Peter did preach, as appears by his discourse in the preceding chapter:

whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved; that is, which would be a means of instructing him and his family in the right and true way of salvation; for the Gospel only points out the way of salvation, and is only effectual to it, when it is accompanied with, the power of God: multitudes hear it, and yet are not saved by and those to whom it comes not in word only, but in power, are saved only by Christ, who is revealed in it, as God's way of salvation; it is not bare hearing the word and attending on ordinances that will save any, only such who believe in Christ with the heart, who is the sum and substance of the Gospel, are saved; and still less are any saved by the faith of others; the house or family of Cornelius were not saved by his believing in Christ; but the words of faith and sound doctrine being preached to them, as to him, and faith coming thereby to one as to another, they were saved in one and the same way, namely, through faith in Christ Jesus.

Ver. 15. *And as I began to speak*, etc.], That is, whilst he was speaking; the word “begin” with Luke, both, in his Gospel and in this history, is used not to denote the time or order of any action, but the thing itself; as in (<400421>Luke 4:21 20:9 <400101>Acts 1:1) for otherwise it was towards the close, and not at the beginning of his discourse, that what follows happened:

the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning; of our ministry, since the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; meaning on the day of Pentecost, and that the Holy Ghost fell on Cornelius and those that were with him, in a like visible form, and in the same kind of gifts, as speaking with tongues, as on them.

Ver. 16. *Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said*, etc.] Just before his ascension, (<400105>Acts 1:5).

John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost; as they were on the day of Pentecost, and as now Cornelius and his family were; and since they had the greater baptism, the baptism of the Spirit, the lesser baptism of water could not be denied them.

Ver. 17. *Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift*, etc.] Of the Spirit, of speaking with divers tongues:

as he did unto us; the apostles: who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ: which clause stands either connected with “us” the apostles, and so is descriptive of them who first believed in Christ, and became followers of him; or with “them” the Gentiles, as the Syriac version renders it, “if therefore God gave that gift equally to these Gentiles which believed on our Lord Jesus Christ, as unto us”; for it seems most likely, that faith in Christ came by hearing Peter’s discourse, before the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit fell upon them:

what was I that I could withstand God? or hinder the baptism of these persons in water, whom God baptized with the Holy Ghost, and who believed in Christ Jesus: from whence it appears that the Spirit of God is a gift, which he bestows on whomsoever he pleases, without any desert of man’s, and that both in his extraordinary operations, and in the common influences of his grace; for it is equally the gift of God to believe in Christ, which is a grace of the Spirit, as it was to speak with divers tongues; and these, though they did not always go together, yet here they did, as on the apostles, so on Cornelius and his house: and hence they became qualified for the ordinance of baptism; not by the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit,

but by his special grace; the extraordinary gifts were partly to confirm the Gospel preached unto them by Peter; and partly to assure him that he was right in going in to the Gentiles, and preaching to them; and to encourage him to baptize these persons who appeared to have also the grace of the Spirit, and to have believed in Christ; as well as to fit them, at least some of them, for public work and service: and now faith in Christ being a pre-requisite to baptism, and it being the will of Christ, and what he gave in commission to his disciples to baptize such as believed in him, and these being apparently such; to have refused to administer baptism to them, would have been acting contrary to the commission of Christ, a withstanding the will of God, and opposing the grace of the Spirit of God.

Ver. 18. *When they heard these things*, etc.] Peter's vision at Joppa, and Cornelius's at Caesarea, and the wonderful pouring forth of the Spirit upon these Gentiles under Peter's sermon:

they held their peace; and ceased contending and disputing with Peter, or blaming him for his conduct; for otherwise they were not silent, but made use of their tongues:

and glorified God; praised his name, adored his rich grace, and gave him the glory of all the wonderful things related to them:

saying, then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. The phrase "unto life", is left out in the Ethiopic version, which only reads, "God hath also given to the Gentiles that they should repent"; but it ought not to be omitted, being in the Greek copies in general, and of considerable moment, rightly understood; the Arabic version directs to a wrong sense of it, "perhaps God hath given also to the Gentiles repentance, that they may live by it"; the word "perhaps", is very wrongly put instead of "then", which affirms that God had given them repentance, whereas this makes a doubt of it; and upon a supposition of it, the version ascribes too much to it; for it is not by repentance that men live spiritually, but by faith in Christ Jesus; nor do they obtain eternal life by it, but by Christ; though true repentance is an evidence of spiritual life, and it begins with it, for as soon as ever God quickens a sinner, he shows him the evil of sin, and gives him repentance for it: "repentance" here designs the grace of evangelical repentance, which is attended with faith in Christ, as it was in these Gentiles, and with views of pardon in Christ, and which springs from the love of God, and this is "unto life"; is a repentance from dead works, and is attended with a life of faith, and issues in eternal life: and it is also a

“grant” from God; it is not in the power of man’s free will, who though he may have time and means, yet if he has not grace given him to repent, he never will; his heart is hard and obdurate, and no means will do without an almighty power; not the most severe judgments, nor the greatest mercies, nor the most powerful ministry; it is a pure gift of God’s free grace, and a blessing of the covenant of grace: and this being given to Gentiles, shows that the covenant of grace belongs to them, as well as to the Jews; and discovers a false opinion of the Jews, that the Gentiles should not be saved; and answers the design of the Gospel being sent among them, whereby the doctrines both of repentance and remission are preached unto them; and opens the glorious mystery of the calling of them, and may encourage sinners of the Gentiles to hope for this grace, and apply to Christ for it, who is exalted to give it.

Ver. 19. *Now they which were scattered abroad*, etc.] These were not the apostles, but the other ministers of the word; (see <440801>Acts 8:1) who were dispersed

upon the persecution that arose about Stephen; his preaching and miracles, his oration in defence of himself, and his death: these

travelled as far as Phenice; a country near to Syria and Galilee; its chief towns and cities were Tripolis, Botrys, Biblus, Berytus, Tyre, Sidon, Ecdippa, Ptolemais, and Dora. It was famous, as Pliny says [f550], for the invention of letters, and of the constellations, and of naval and warlike arts. It was a maritime country, reaching from Orthosia (now called Tortosa) to Pelusium, or from Sidon to the borders of Egypt: it is the same with Old Canaan, and was so called, and had its name from Canaan; who, according to Sanchuniathon [f551], also had the name of Phoenix, from whom this country was called Phoenice, or Phoenicia. Some think the name is the same with qn[p, “Pahanah”, or qn[twap, “Peoth Anak”, the corners of the Anakites; it being the tract of land which the children of Anak, or the giants inhabited, when drove out of Hebron by Caleb, (<061513>Joshua 15:13,14). Others say, it had its name from the palm trees, with which it abounded; and here, it seems, dwelt some of God’s elect, who being made righteous, flourished like the palm trees;

and Cyprus and Antioch; the former of these was an island, lying between the shores of Syria and Cilicia: it had Syria on the east, Pamphilia on the west, and Phoenice on the south, and Cilicia on the north; (See Gill on

"(44036 Acts 4:36") and the latter was a city of Syria, built by Seleucus, king of Egypt, and called Antiochia, after his father's name Antiochus. The account Josephus gives [f552] of it is, that it is the metropolis of Syria, and that for its greatness, and other happy acquirements, it has, without doubt, the third place among the cities in the Roman empire; meaning, that it was the next to Rome and Alexandria: and elsewhere [f553] he calls it the palace or royal seat of the Syrians; and the Jews, when they speak of a great city, and would describe one, instance in Antioch, a great city, say they [f554], as Antioch; with them, it is the same as Hemath the great, spoken of in (30602 Amos 6:2) on which words Jerom has this note:

> "Hemath the great is what is now called Antioch; and it is called the great, to distinguish it from the lesser Hemath, which is called Epiphania"

And so the Jerusalem Targum on (01008 Genesis 10:18) renders the Hamathite, "Antioch": and the Targum of Jonathan on (04132 Numbers 13:21) renders Hamath by "Antioch". Here many Jews dwelt, to whom the ministers of the word preached the Gospel only at first. Josephus [f555] speaks of many in this place, and gives reasons for it:

> "the nation of the Jews, he says, was much spread throughout the whole world, and great part of Syria, because near, was mixed with them, especially there were many in Antioch; partly because of the greatness of the city, and chiefly because of the liberty of dwelling there, granted them by the successors of Antiochus; for Antiochus, called Epiphanes, having wasted Jerusalem, robbed the temple; but those that reigned after him, whatsoever among the things devoted to sacred use were of brass, they returned to the Jews in Antioch, to be laid up in their synagogue; and they granted to them equally to partake of the city with the Greeks; and many of the Grecians they brought over to their religion, and made them, in some sort, a part of themselves."

Here the Jews also had schools and taught: it is said [f556] R. Samlai taught in Antioch; and here also was a sanhedrim. It is often said [f557], that Nebuchadnezzar came and sat down at Daphne of Antioch, and the great sanhedrim went out to meet him. Now Antioch was formerly called Epidaphne, because it was near a fountain of that name; and in the Targumists on (04411 Numbers 34:11) Daphne answers to Riblah, which was in the land of Hamath, (12333 2 Kings 23:33) and Riblah, Jerom [f558] says, is

what is now called Antioch of Syria: and that you may know, says he, that Riblah signifies this city, which is now the most noble in Coele Syria, it follows, over against the fountain, (in Numbers it is, “on the east side of Ain”,) which, it is clear, signifies Daphne, out of which fountain the above said city enjoys abundance of water. And so Josephus calls Antioch [f559], Antiochia which is by Daphne of Syria; and in:

> “Which when Onias knew of a surety, he reproved him, and withdrew himself into a sanctuary at Daphne, that lieth by Antiochia.” (2 Maccabees 4:33)

Daphne is said to be by Antioch. Some make it to be two hundred and eighty miles from Jerusalem. So far they went who were scattered abroad at Stephen’s death, and carried the Gospel to this and other places, in which there was a manifest appearance of divine Providence, and of rich grace.

Preaching the word to none but to the Jews only, which dwelt in those parts; so little was the commission of Christ, to preach the Gospel to all nations, understood, though it was so plain; or so it was ordered in providence, that as it was to be first preached to them, so it should be only for a while, till the elect of God of that generation were brought in, and until the rest put it away from them, and so were left without excuse.

Ver. 20. *And some of them were men of Cyprus*, etc.] That is, some of the preachers, that were scattered abroad, were Jews born at Cyprus: such was Barnabas particularly, (<44036>Acts 4:36) though he was not among these, as appears from (<44122>Acts 11:22) “and Cyrene”; such were Simon that carried the cross after Christ, and his sons Alexander and Rufus, (<41521>Mark 15:21) and others that heard the apostles speak with tongues on the day of Pentecost, (<44210>Acts 2:10)

which when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians; or Hellenist Jews, who were born and brought up in Greece, and spoke the Greek language; though the Alexandrian copy, and the Syriac version, read “Greeks”, as if they were native Greeks, and properly Gentiles, to whom these ministers spoke the word of the Lord; but the former seems most likely.

Preaching the Lord Jesus; the dignity of his person, as the Son of God; what he did and suffered to obtain salvation for lost sinners; his resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and intercession; the

virtue of his blood for peace and pardon of his sacrifice for atonement of sin, and of his righteousness for justification.

Ver. 21. *And the hand of the Lord was with them*, etc.] Not only his hand of providence, which brought them thither, and protected them; and his hand of love, grace and mercy, which was upon them, and supplied them with gifts and grace, and everything necessary for them; and his hand of wisdom, which guided and directed them; but his hand of power, the same with the arm of the Lord, which when revealed, and made bare, the report of the Gospel is believed: but if that is not put forth, or efficacious grace is not exerted, no work is done, none are brought to believe, or are converted; ministers labour in vain, and spend their strength for nought: but this was not the case here, it was otherwise with these preachers; though they had travelled many miles, and were come into strange places, they were not left of God, nor without success, the power of God attended their ministry; so that the Gospel preached by them came not in word only, but in power, and it was the power of God unto salvation: hence it follows,

and a great number believed; not the Gospel only, but in Christ preached in it, (Acts 11:20) which was not owing to the force of moral persuasion in the ministers, nor to the power of free will in the people, but to the hand or power of the Lord; for the work of faith is not a work of man's will, but of God's almighty power and grace; and when that is displayed, multitudes believe in Christ for righteousness and life: and turned to the Lord; and obeyed his commands; (see Psalm 119:59,60) as a fruit, effect, and consequence of believing in Christ; for not first conversion is here intended, which is not man's work, but God's, and in which God is the agent, and man is passive; but obedience to the ordinances of Christ, as the fruit of faith, is meant.

Ver. 22. *Then tidings of these things*, etc.] Of the spread of the Gospel in several parts, and the success of it in the conversion of sinners, especially at Antioch:

came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem; these tidings were brought to the apostles and brethren there, by messengers which the ministers of the word sent unto them to let them know what success they met with; notwithstanding the persecution raised against the church of Jerusalem at the death of Stephen, and the havoc that was made of the members of it, and the dispersion of others, yet it still continued a church, and so it did for ages after: there are reckoned fifteen bishops of it unto the

times of Trajan, and the destruction of the city by him, when the Jews were no longer suffered to live in it; and they are these, James the brother of our Lord, Simeon, Justus, Zacchaeus, Tobias, Benjamin, John, Matthias, Philip, Seneca, Justus, Levi, Ephres, Joseph, and Judas; and these are said [f560] to be all originally Hebrews: but after the destruction of the city by Trajan, and the Jews were forbid inhabiting it, the church consisted of Gentiles only; and of them bishops were constituted over it, and were as follow: Marcus, Cassianus, Publius, Maximus, Julianus, Gaianus, Symmachus, Caius, another Julianus, Capito, another Maximus, Antoninus, Valens, Dolychianus, Narcissus, Aelius, Germanio, Gordius, and another Narcissus; all these governed this church in the "second" century: and in the "third" century, the bishops of this church were Alexander, Mazabanes, Labdas, and Hermon, who was the last before the Dioclesian persecution: in the "fourth" century, Macarins, Maximus, and Cyril, presided over it; and these were succeeded in the "fifth" century by Joannes Nepos, Prayllius, Juvenalis, Anastasius, and Martyrius; in this age also Lucian and Hesychius were presbyters of this church. In the "sixth" century, the names of the bishops of this church were Salustius, Helias, Johannes, Petrus, Macarius, Eustochius, Johannes, Neamus, and Isicius: in the "seventh" century were Thomas, Johannes, Neannus, Isaac, Zacharias, and Sophronius, who was the last bishop of Jerusalem before the utter and last devastation of it by the Saracens [f561]; since which time the city has underwent various fates, being sometimes in the hands of the Christians, and at other times possessed by the Turks, in whose power it now is.

And they sent forth Barnabas; who was himself an Hellenist, and of the country of Cyprus, and so very fit to be sent to the Grecians or Hellenists at Antioch, who had received the Gospel to confirm them in it: for his orders were,

that he should go as far as Antioch which is said to be about fifteen or sixteen days journey from Jerusalem: the phrase, "that he should go", is not in the Alexandrian copy, nor in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 23. *Who when he came, and had seen the grace of God*, etc.] The many instances of the powerful and efficacious grace of God in regeneration and conversion; the great goodness, love, and favour of God in enlightening, quickening, and converting so many souls; and the

wonderful gifts of the Spirit bestowed upon many of them, fitting them for public use and service:

was glad; rejoiced at heart, and gave glory to God, as every good man will, at the success of the gospel in the conversion of sinners, let it be by what instrument or means it will, and at the gifts and grace bestowed on them:

and exhorted them all; in whom he saw the grace of God implanted, who had received the doctrine of the grace of God, and had gifts of grace qualifying them for usefulness, in some nation or another:

that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord; that is, with a fixed resolution in the grace and strength of Christ, they would hold to his person, exercising grace upon him, abide by his truths and ordinances, keep close to his people, adhere to his cause and interest, and hold on and out unto the end. The Arabic version takes "the purpose of heart" to be meant of Barnabas, and reads the words thus, "and he exhorted them according to the usual firmness of his heart, that they would continue in the faith of the Lord"; in the doctrine and grace of faith in Christ.

Ver. 24. *For he was a good man*, etc.] He had the grace of God wrought in his soul, and did good works; he was very kind, and generous, and charitable; he sold what land he had, and gave the money to the apostles, for the use of the community, (<4437>Acts 4:37)

and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith; he was full of the several graces of the Spirit, and particularly of faith; and he was full of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and of the faith of miracles; he was full of the doctrine of faith, and of spiritual gifts for the preaching of it: the same character is given of Stephen, (<4405>Acts 6:5)

and much people was added unto the Lord; by the means of Barnabas, through his ministry, and the exercise of those gifts he was full of; so the Arabic version, "and he drew a large multitude to the Lord".

Ver. 25. *Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus*, etc.] "In Cilicia" to seek Saul; who had been sent thither by the brethren that he might escape the rage of the Grecians, who sought to slay him, (<4429>Acts 9:29,30).

Ver. 26. *And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch*, etc.] That he might be useful in directing, and assisting in settling this new and numerous church; in the establishing the members of it, and in putting them

into Gospel order, and in a method to secure and maintain peace, especially as they might consist both of Jews and Gentiles; and none so proper to be concerned in such a work as the apostle of the Gentiles.

And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church; preaching the Gospel, and administering the ordinances to them, during that time, at proper seasons. For here being a number of converts, they were embodied together in a church state, very probably by the direction and assistance of Barnabas, who was sent to them from the church at Jerusalem, and in which he might be assisted by Saul: the first bishop, or pastor of this church, was Evodius, as Ignatius observes unto them [f562]; Remember Evodius, your worthy and blessed pastor, who was first ordained over you by the apostles; and Ignatius himself was the next, of whom Origen speaking, says [f563], that he was the second bishop of Antioch after Peter, who in persecution fought with beasts at Rome; next to him was Heron, after him Cornelius, then, Eros; to whom succeeded Theophilus, who wrote three books to Autolycus, in vindication of the Christian religion, which are now extant, in the times of the emperor Aurelius Verus, about the year of Christ 171. He was succeeded by Maximinus [f564] about the year 179, under Marcus Antoninus; and after him was Serapion, about the tenth year of the emperor Commodus, and of Christ 192; and about the year 214, Asclepiades succeeded in his room; next to him was Philetus, in the year 220, and then Zebennus in the year 231; next succeeded Babylas, the famous martyr, who suffered under Decius, and then followed Demetrianus, or Demetrius, about the year 255; and after him was the famous heretic Samosatenus, who was excommunicated from this church for his blasphemy against the Son of God; and Domnus, the son of Demetriauus, was put into his room, about the year 270; after him was Timaeus, in the year 274; and then Cyrillus, about the year 283: and these were the bishops or pastors of this church in the three first centuries [f565].

And taught much people; besides the church, and with success, as to enlighten, convince, convert, comfort, and establish:

and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch; before they were called among themselves, the disciples, brethren, believers, the church, etc. and by others the Nazarenes, and Galilaeans: whether this name of Christians, which comes from Christ, and signifies anointed ones, was given by their enemies, or their friends, by others, or themselves, is not

certain, though it is most likely the latter; and it may be they hit upon this general appellation, upon the union of the Jews and Gentiles in one Gospel church state, and so happily buried the distinction of Jews and Gentiles, or those of the circumcision that believed, and those of the uncircumcision. Luke is particular in relating the affairs of this church, he being himself a native of this place. John of Antioch [f566] gives an account of this matter in these words;

> “at the beginning of the reign of Claudius Caesar, ten years after Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, was ascended up into heaven, Evodus, the first after the Apostle Peter, being chosen bishop of Antioch, the great city of Syria, became a patriarch, and under him they were called Christians: for this same bishop, Evodus, conferring with them, put this name upon them, whereas before the Christians were called Nazarenes and Galilaeans.”

Epiphanius says [f567], the disciples were called Jessaeans before they took the name of Christians first at Antioch: they were called Jessaeans, says he, I think, because of Jesse, seeing David was of Jesse, and Mary of David: and so the Scripture was fulfilled, in which the Lord says to David, of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne, etc. — Or else, they were called Jessaeans from the name of Jesus our Lord; and refers the reader to a book of Philo’s, written by him, concerning the Jessaeans, whom Epiphanitius takes to be Christians; but those that Philo [f568] treats of were not Jessaeans, but Essaeans, and seem to be the same with the Essenes, who were not Christians, but a sect of the Jews. Nor do we ever find that the Christians were called by this name.

Ver. 27. *And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem to Antioch*.], That is, some time in that year that Saul and Barnabas were at Antioch, there came from Jerusalem thither some Christian prophets; for such there were in the Christian church, who had not only a gift of expounding the more mysterious prophecies of the Old Testament, but also of foretelling things to come; (see <441301>Acts 13:1 <490411>Ephesians 4:11).

Ver. 28. *And there stood up one of them named Agabus*, etc.]] The same name with Hagaba in (<160748>Nehemiah 7:48) and with Hagabah, or Hagab in (<150245>Ezra 2:45,46) and which the Septuagint there call Agaba and Agab. The name signifies a “grasshopper”, (<031122>Leviticus 11:22) or “a locust”, (<140713>2 Chronicles 7:13). In a book that goes under the name of Jerom [f569], it is interpreted, “a messenger of tribulation”; respecting, it may be, not the

true signification of the word, as the things which Agabus predicted, as the general dearth here, and the binding of the Apostle Paul, (<42110>Acts 21:10). And the same writer observes, that this interpretation is a violent, or a forced one. Some take it to be the same with bg[, "Agab", which signifies "to love"; and so may be the same with the Greek name "Agapetus", which may be interpreted "beloved". This Agabus is said to be one of the seventy disciples that Christ sent forth: he seems to have been an itinerant prophet, who went from place to place delivering out his prophecies; we hear of him again at Caesarea, in (<42110>Acts 21:10). Some say he was a native of Antioch; but this does not follow from his being here, any more than that he was a native of Caesarea from his being there also; it seems most likely that he was a native of Judea, and perhaps of Jerusalem, since in both places he is said to come from thence: it is reported that he died at Antioch; and he is placed in the Roman martyrology on the third of February.

And signified by the Spirit; not by the position of the stars, or by any natural causes, or by mere conjecture, but by the Spirit of God:

that there should be great dearth throughout all the world; not only throughout all the land of Judea, but at least throughout the whole Roman empire; (see <42001>Luke 2:1) since other writers speak of it in other parts: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar; in the second year of his reign, as Dion Cassius [f570], the Roman historian, says: and [f571] Eusebius seems to speak of it, as in the beginning of his reign; for he says, Caius, who scarce reigned four years, Claudius the emperor succeeded, in whose time a famine afflicted the whole world; for this some writers, different from our religion, have made mention of in their histories: though he elsewhere affirms [f572], that it was in the fourth year of his reign; both may be true, it might last so long: and indeed, according to what this writer [f573] cites from Josephus, it must be after this time that the famine raged in Judea; for having observed the defeat of Theudas by Cuspius Fadus, the Roman governor, he observes, that at the same time a very great famine happened in Judea: now Fadus was sent into Judea, after the death of king Agrippa, towards the end of the fourth year of Claudius; so that it must be in the fifth or sixth year of Claudius that this famine was [f574]. The Magdeburgensian Centuriators say [f575], it was about the ninth and tenth years of Claudius that this famine raged in Greece, Rome, and other parts of the world. Suetonius [f576] makes mention of it, and ascribes it to a constant sterility or barrenness: and that it particularly affected Judea

appears from hence, that Helena, queen of the Adiabeni, was at this time at Jerusalem, who sent for, and brought corn out of Egypt, and distributed it to the poor [f577]; of which Josephus [f578] gives this account:

> "her coming was very seasonable to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for a famine at that time much afflicted their city, and many perished through want of food. Helena, the queen, sent of her own people some to Alexandria, who bought a great quantity of corn, and some to Cyprus, who brought loads of dry figs; who, as soon they came back, distributed the food to the needy. — And her son Izates, hearing of the famine, sent much money to the chief men of Jerusalem."

The Misnic doctors [f579] speak of various gifts which Helena, and her son Monbaz, as they call him, gave to the Jews for the use of the temple, but make no mention of this bounty; though they represent the son as very liberal to the poor, and giving all his goods unto them [f580].

Ver. 29. *Then the disciples*, etc.] That were at Antioch, *every man according to his ability*; whether rich or poor, master or servant, everyone according to the substance he was possessed of; whether more or less, which was a good rule to go by:

determined to send relief to the brethren which dwelt in Judea; either because that Agabus might have suggested, that the famine would be the severest in those parts; or because that the Christians there had parted with their substance already, in the support of one another, and for the spread of the Gospel in other parts; and therefore the Christians at Antioch, in gratitude to them for having received the Gospel, and Gospel ministers from them, resolved to help them with their temporal things, when in distress.

Ver. 30. *Which they also did*, etc.] They not only determined, but they put their resolutions into execution, and acted according to a rule which the apostle recommends, (2 Corinthians 8:11 9:7)

and sent it to the elders; to the apostles; for though there were deacons there, yet they chose to send it to them, that they might put it into proper hands to distribute to the necessitous: and this collection they sent

by the hands of Saul and Barnabas; of this journey to Jerusalem, Paul makes no mention in (Galatians 1:17-19,21, 2:1).

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 12

Ver. 1. *Now about that time*, etc.] That the famine was in Judea, and Saul and Barnabas were sent thither with what the church at Antioch had collected.

Herod the king; not Herod the great that slew the infants at Bethlehem, nor Herod Antipas that beheaded John, but Herod Agrippa; and so the Syriac version adds here, "who is surnamed Agrippa"; he was a grandson of Herod the great, and the son of Aristobulus: this prince

stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church; Beza's ancient copy adds, "in Judea": it seems to be the church at Jerusalem; perhaps some of the principal members of them; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, the rulers of the house of God. It is scarcely credible that he should lay hands on any of them himself in person; but it is very likely he encouraged his soldiers, or his servants, to abuse them, reproach them, strike and buffet them, as they met with them in the streets; or when at worship, might disturb them, and break them up.

Ver. 2. *And he killed James the brother of John with the sword*.] This was James, the son of Zebedee, whom our Lord told, that he should be baptized with the baptism he was baptized with, (Matthew 20:22) meaning the baptism of martyrdom; and he was the first martyr among the apostles: the death he was put to was one of the four capital punishments among the Jews, and was reckoned by them the most disgraceful of them all, and was inflicted upon deceivers of the people; and such an one James was thought to be [f581].

Ver. 3. *And because he saw it pleased the Jews*, etc.] That is, as Beza's ancient copy adds, "his stretching out his hands upon the faithful"; this pleased the Jews, a bloodthirsty generation of men, who had killed the prophets, and the Lord Jesus, and who were now greedy after the death of the apostles: it may easily be seen from what principle and spirit Herod

acted; it was not out of regard to the Jewish religion, rites, and ceremonies, but to ingratiate himself into the affections of the people:

he proceeded further to take Peter also; a principal apostle, and who was well known, and against whom the Jews had doubtless a particular antipathy, and would have been glad to have been rid of him; this Herod was, sensible of, and therefore to please them, ordered him to be taken up:

then were the days of unleavened bread; or the feast of the passover.

Ver. 4. *When he had apprehended him*, etc.] When his officers he sent to take him had brought him:

he put him in prison; in the common prison, very likely where he had been once before, (<4458>Acts 5:18)

and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; each quaternion consisted of four soldiers, so that they were in all sixteen; and so the Syriac version renders it, “and delivered him to sixteen soldiers”: how the Ethiopic version should make “seventeen” of them is pretty strange: these perhaps might take their turns to watch him by four at a time, two to whom he was chained, and two others to keep the doors; or all the sixteen together, being posted in one place or another for greater security: and it may be, that the reason of all this caution, and strong guard, might be, because it was remembered that he, and the rest of the apostles, when committed to the same prison some years ago, were delivered out of it:

intending after Easter, or the passover,

to bring him forth to the people; to insult and abuse him, and to put him to what death they should desire.

Ver. 5. *Peter therefore was kept in prison*, etc.] Till the feast of the passover was at an end:

but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him; this was not done by them as a body together, but either by them in several bands at different places, or by some of the principal of the church at some one certain place, and where they might frequently change companies, and keep on a continual incessant prayer for days together; and whereas it is very likely it might be at the beginning of the passover, when Peter was taken up, and it was now at the close of it, when he was delivered, the

church might be engaged by companies alternately, a whole week together, in prayer, on this occasion.

Ver. 6. *And when Herod would have brought him forth*, etc.] The next morning; so he had determined not to dismiss him, but to expose him to the people, and to put him to such a death they should choose:

the same night, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers; fearless of death, being in a good cause, and having nothing to ruffle and disturb his mind; and though he was in a prison, and in such company, God gave him, his beloved, sleep:

bound with two chains; one on one hand, and one on the other, each of which were fastened to the soldiers; that on his right hand was fastened to the left hand of the soldier, that was on that side; and that on his left hand to the right hand of the soldier, on the other side him; such security was made, that he might not get away from them; to which is added,

and the keepers before the door kept the prison; or watched it, that nobody went in, or came out.

Ver. 7. *And behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him*, etc.] Suddenly and at once, and stood by him; this was one of the ministering spirits sent forth by Christ, to minister to a servant of his:

and a light shined in the prison; the Syriac version renders it, "in the whole house"; and the word that is used does signify an habitation, or a dwelling house properly, but is used also by the Greek writers [f582] for a prison: this was an uncommon light produced by the angel, partly as an emblem of the presence, majesty, and power of God, who was present, to work a great deliverance; and partly for the use of Peter, that when being awaked he might see to rise and walk by:

and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up; he touched him on that side which lay uppermost, or punched him on it, in order to awake him, and raise him out of his sleep:

saying arise up quickly; without delay, make haste:

and his chains fell off from his hands; from both his hands, and were left with the soldiers, between whom he slept; which must be ascribed to an almighty power, which caused them to drop off.

Ver. 8. *And the angel said unto him, gird thyself*, etc.] He slept in his inner garment loose about him; wherefore the angel bids him gird it up with his girdle, and prepare to walk out after him:

and bind on thy sandals; which were a sort of shoes that covered only the soles of the feet, and were fastened to the leg, with strings:

and so he did; he did not ask any question, or the reason of these orders; he did not dispute the matter, but at once obeyed:

and he saith unto him, cast thy garment about thee; meaning his upper garment, or cloak, which lay by him:

and follow me; suggesting hereby, that he should take care of him, and show him his way, and bring him safe out of the prison.

Ver. 9. *And he went out and followed him*, etc.] He came out from between the two soldiers, and out of that apartment in the prison, in which he was, and followed the angel where he led him:

and wist not that it was true that was done by the angel; not that he thought the angel was a mere apparition, and all this that was done was a delusion; but he did not know whether this was matter of fact, or whether it was, not represented to him in a visionary way, as what could be, or would be done:

but thought he saw a vision; imagined he was in a dream or a trance, and only saw these things in a vision, and that they were not really done, the whole was so amazing and astonishing.

Ver. 10. *When they were past the first and the second ward*, etc.] Or watch, which were set within the prison, and might be some of the quaternions of soldiers to whom Peter was delivered; two of them were with him, and others might be placed at these two wards for further security; and these circumstances make the deliverance the more wonderful and remarkable; the watch must either be asleep, or their eyes were holden, or the angel and Peter passed by so swiftly that they were unobserved:

they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city: which was not one of the gates of the city, as if the prison was without the walls of it; but was the great and strong gate of the prison, which for the security of the prisoners was made of iron, and this gate led directly into the city of Jerusalem:

which opened to them of his own accord; as the gates of the temple are said to do [f583], forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem: this was done by a divine power; and because no human creature had any hand in it, it is said to be done of its own accord:

and they went out. The Cambridge copy of Beza's adds, "they went down seven steps"; that is, from the prison into the city:

and passed on through one street; what street this was is not certain; there were several streets in Jerusalem: (See Gill on "<4911>Acts 9:11") and forthwith the angel departed from him: he being now safe and out of danger, he left him to himself, to betake himself to what house he should think fit.

Ver. 11. *And when Peter was come to himself* etc.] For upon his being awaked out of sleep, what with the uncommon light, which shone around him, and with the appearance of the angel, and the chains dropping from his hands, and his surprising escape through the several wards, together with the iron gate opening of itself, he was so filled with amazement, that he was not himself; he could scarcely tell whether he was in the body or not, and whether he was in a dream or a trance, or whether he saw a vision or not; but upon the angel's leaving him he came to himself, the amazement wore off, and he found himself thoroughly awake, and perfectly in his senses, and that the deliverance was real: and then,

he said, now know I of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel; this was a thanksgiving to God, and an acknowledgment, that the deliverance, though it was by the ministry an angel, yet was owing to the goodness and power of God; it was God that sent his angel, and the salvation was of the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in the eyes of Peter, and gratefully owned by him:

and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod; who intended that morning to have brought him forth, and sacrificed him to the will of the people:

and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews; not only the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but the body of the Jewish nation, who were now at Jerusalem, on account of the passover; and who before they departed into their several cities and towns, expected to have had Peter brought forth, and put to death before them; but now both Herod and they were disappointed.

Ver. 12. *And when he had considered the thing*, etc.] The whole of the salvation wrought for him; or rather, where he should go, to what house he should betake himself; ere he was aware,

he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark. This good woman seems to be a widow, no mention being made of her husband, and was sister to Barnabas, (<510410>Colossians 4:10). She is described by a son she had, whose name was John Mark, because of the frequent mention made of him hereafter; her house being large, and her heart as large as her house, the saints met here, and were welcome, and where they were at this time, though so late:

where many were gathered together, praying; the Ethiopic version adds, "for him"; and there were some in other places, for one place could not hold them all; (see <441217>Acts 12:17) they held out to the end in prayer; this was their last effort in this way, and in this they were no doubt exceeding vehement and importunate, and they succeeded; so true is that observation in (<590516>James 5:16).

Ver. 13. *And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate*, etc. The lesser door in the great gate, or the door of the porch through which they entered into the house. So the Jews distinguish between j t p, "the door", and r [ç, "the gate"; (see <070816>Judges 18:16,17) (<264011>Ezekiel 40:11) where the Septuagint use the same words as here. Kimchi [f584] says,

> "j t p, "the door" is what is of the gate, without the folding doors; for all is called r [ç, "the gate", whether within or without, with the folding doors, and the outward threshold, as that is joined to the side posts and lintel."

The door was kept shut, for fear of the Jews, lest they should be disturbed: here Peter stood and knocked:

a damsel came to hearken; hearing a knocking, she came out to the door, and listened, to try if she could know who it was, a friend or a foe, before she opened; or she came "to answer", as the Syriac version renders it, to know who was there, and what he or she wanted, and to give an answer. And the damsel was

named Rhoda, which signifies a rose in the Greek language: so the Jewish women often had their names, in the Hebrew tongue, from flowers and

trees, as Susanna from a lily, or rose: and which, perhaps, was the Hebrew name of this damsel; and Esther was called Hadassah, from the myrtle tree.

Ver. 14. *And when she knew Peter's voice*, etc.] often heard him preach and converse in the family:

she opened not the gate for gladness, filled with joy to hear his voice, and that he was delivered from prison, and in haste to carry the welcome news to the company within, stayed not to open the gate, and let Peter in:

but ran in and told how Peter stood before the gate: she went into the house in a great hurry, and related to them within, that Peter was at the door without.

Ver. 15. *And they said unto her, thou art mad*, etc. "Or art thou not mad?" as the Ethiopic version, and two of Beza's exemplars read, and some others: they thought the girl must be out of her senses; they looked upon the thing impossible; for though they were praying for him, and praying in faith, yet they might have no expectation of a deliverance; but were praying that they might be supported under such a trial, and that it might be sanctified to them; and for Peter, that he might be strengthened and made steadfast, and kept faithful to the last; and bear, by his sufferings and death, a glorious and honourable testimony for Christ:

but she constantly affirmed that it was even so; she asserted it over and over, and was positive in it; nothing they could say could put her off of it; she was sure of it; which when they observed, they could not tell what to say to it, but as follows: then said they,

it is his angel; not his tutelar or guardian angel, everyone having, as some think, a particular angel to attend him; whereas sometimes one angel attends many persons, and sometimes many angels encamp about, and are a guard to a single saint; nor did they think it was an angel sent to give notice of his death, as some persons, by one means or another, have had previous notices of the death of their friends; but rather, that it was an angel in Peter's shape, who had something to communicate: and this agrees with the notions of the Jews, who think that angels do assume the shapes of men on certain occasions: so they say [f585], when Moses was in danger in Pharaoh's court, God sent Michael, the prince of the host of heaven, "in the shape of an executioner"; who brought him at once out of Egypt, and set him at the border of it, the distance of three days journey: Bar Kaphra

says [f586], an angel descended hçm twmdb, "in the likeness of Moses", and caused him to flee, and they thought the angel had been Moses: and so it is elsewhere said [f587], that an angel descended "in the likeness of Solomon", sitting upon his throne: there are some who think, that the sense of the brethren praying for Peter, was not that it was an angel, a celestial spirit, but a messenger sent by Peter from the prison on some errand: who represented him, or mentioning his name, the damsel took him for Peter himself. Beza's ancient copy reads, "then said they unto her, perhaps it is his angel", and so the Syriac version.

Ver. 16. *But Peter continued knocking*, etc.] That they might come to him, and let him in; beginning to be impatient, and being very desirous of seeing his friends, as well as being in danger of being taken up, and had to prison again, should any of his enemies come by, who knew him:

and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished: they could hardly believe their own eyes; it was amazing to them, how it should be, that he should be delivered out of prison, when they knew there was such a strong guard about him.

Ver. 17. *But he beckoning unto them with the hand*, etc.] This is what the Jews call hzymr, "an hint" [f588], which is a beckoning, or making signs, either with the head or hand: and this was now made, to hold their peace; to be silent, and not clamorous in their expressions of joy and wonder, lest it should alarm the neighbourhood, and the consequence be bad both to him and them; as also that he might have an opportunity of relating the whole affair to them; which he did, after he had entered into the house; which though not expressed is understood, and is added in Beza's ancient copy, and in the Syriac version:

and he went in; that is, into the house: and declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of prison: how he had sent his angel to him in prison, what a light shone about him, how his chains fell from his hands, and how the angel conducted him through the several wards, till they came to the iron gate, which opened of itself; and how when he had brought him into the public streets, he left him; he ascribes this wonderful deliverance not to the angel, but to the Lord himself:

and he said, go show these things to James; the son of Alphaeus, sometimes called the brother of our Lord; for James the son of Zebedee, the brother of John, Herod had lately killed with the sword, (Acts 12:2)

and this other James very likely succeeded him as pastor of the church at Jerusalem, or at least had the superintendency of affairs there:

and to the brethren; the rest of the apostles, and even all the members; whom he would have acquainted with these things, which he knew would be matter of joy unto them, and a means of strengthening them in the ways of the Lord:

and he departed, and went into another place; to Rome, say the Papists, but without any foundation; if he went out of the city, and to any distant place for more safety, very likely he went to Antioch; but the words do not necessarily oblige us to conclude, that he went out of the city at that time, only that he went from Mary's house; "and went", as the Ethiopic version reads, "to another house": where another company of saints might be assembled, and where he might be more private and secure.

Ver. 18. *Now as soon as it was day*, etc.] When it was morning; as soon as there was any light in the prison, by which the guards could discern one another and their prisoners:

there was no small stir among the soldiers: the two between whom Peter slept, and the rest of the quaternions that were employed in the wards to keep watch; who were now all in an uproar, and in the utmost concern and fright:

what was become of Peter; whether he was in any other part of the prison, by what means he could escape, and whither he was gone.

Ver. 19. *And when Herod had sought for him and found him not*, etc.] Neither in the prison, nor in any part of the city:

he examined the keepers; of the prison, and those that were upon the watch, whether they had not been accessary to his escape:

and commanded that they should be put to death: or brought forth, not before a judge to be tried and judged, because they had been examined by Herod already; but either that they should be carried and laid in bonds, or be led forth to suffer punishment; and so our version directs, and which is confirmed by the Syriac; and the Greeks say [f589], that απαγωγη is a kind of punishment:

and he went down from Judea to Caesarea; not Peter, but Herod:

and there abode; of this journey of Agrippa's to Caesarea, Josephus makes mention [f590]; this place was distant from Jerusalem six hundred furlongs, or seventy five miles [f591].

Ver. 20. *And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon*, etc.] Two cities on the sea coast, in the land of Phoenicia; with the inhabitants of which Herod was so enraged, that though he had not declared war against them, yet he had meditated it in his mind, and intended to do it at a proper time: what gave him this offence is not certain; that it should be for entertaining and concealing of Peter, when he made his escape, is without any foundation; and nothing but this following on that account, could ever occasion such a thought:

but they came with one accord to him; the ambassadors from both cities united in an address to him, and joined in ways and means to reconcile him to them:

and having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend; not merely by arguments, entreaties, and good works, but very likely by gifts, by making presents to him: persons in such an office had usually very great interest in the princes they served [f592], as Blastus doubtless had with Herod; Commodus the emperor did every thing at the instances of his chamberlains, and so other princes; for these officers had access when others could not, the king's bedchamber next to sacred; and therefore the Tyrians and Sidonians privately applied to him first:

desired peace; either of Herod himself, to whom, by the means of Blastus, they were introduced; and in their address to him, entreated he would forgive the offence, and be at peace with them; or else of Blastus, whom by some means or another they made their friend; and therefore entreated of him, that he would use his interest with the king, and procure peace for them: and this sense the Arabic version inclines to, which renders the words thus, "and they prayed him that he would take care of reconciliation and peace"; though the former seems to be the true sense: "because their country was nourished by the king's country". These cities were seaports, and the inhabitants of them were much concerned in sending ships to sea, and in merchandise; and it was in Judea and Galilee, which were under Herod's jurisdiction, where they vented the goods they imported, and from whence they were supplied with wheat, honey, and oil, both for their own use, and perhaps to export abroad; (see <1K1 5:1,11> 1 Kings 5:1,11) (<EZK 27:17> Ezekiel

27:3,17), etc. And it looks as if Herod had forbid all commerce with them, which if it had been continued, would have been the ruin of them.

Ver. 21. *And upon a set day*, etc.] Either on some feast day of divine appointment, as a feast day was by the Jews called dqwm, "a stated day"; or on some day appointed by Herod, for the receiving of the ambassadors of Tyre and Sidon, and of hearing their petitions; or as Josephus [f593] says, it was on the second day of the sports and plays, instituted by him in honour of Caesar:

Herod, arrayed in royal apparel; the same Jewish historian in the same place says, that this his apparel was all of silver, and of a wonderful contexture; and that going in this very early in the morning into the theatre, the silver shone so with the rays of the rising sun, that it struck the spectators with terror and admiration:

sat upon his throne; and very likely with the other ensigns of royalty, as a crown on his head, and a sceptre in his hand:

and made an oration unto them; either unto the ambassadors from Tyre and Sidon, or rather unto the common people, the multitude that were gathered together in the theatre, where the above historian says he was.

Ver. 22. *And the people gave a shout*, etc.] At the end of the oration; these were flatterers, as Josephus says in the place before referred to, who cried out one from another, saluting him as God; saying, be merciful to us, hitherto we have revered thee as a man, henceforward we confess thee somewhat more excellent than mortal nature: and so it follows here,

saying it is the voice of a God, and not of a man; the Vulgate Latin version reads, "the voices of God and not men"; and the Ethiopic version, "the city shouted in, or with the voice of God", with the voice of man; as if this referred to the acclamation of the people, and not the speech of the king; very wrongly.

Ver. 23. *And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him*, etc.] With a disease after mentioned; this angel, according to Josephus, appeared in the form of an owl; for he says, that a little after (the shout of the people) the king looked up, and saw an owl sitting upon a rope over his head; whom he immediately understood to be an angel, or messenger of evil things to him, as it had been before of good things; for it seems by the same historian [f594], that when he was bound by the order of Caligula, he saw an owl sitting

on that tree, on which he leaned; when a certain German predicted, that things would in a short time be changed with him, and he should be advanced to great honour; but remember, says he, whenever you see that bird again, you will die within five days. Eusebius [f595], out of Josephus, makes no mention of the owl, but relates it thus; that a little after (the oration and the salutation of the people) the king looked up, and saw an angel sitting over his head, whom he immediately understood to be the cause of evil things to him, as he had formerly been of good: the reason of the angel's smiting him was,

because he gave not glory to God; or as the Jewish historian says, because he reproved not the flatterers, nor rejected their impious flattery, but tacitly took that to himself, which belonged to God:

and he was eaten of worms: Beza's most ancient copy adds, "while he was alive"; Josephus only makes mention of pains in his belly, but these were occasioned by the gnawing of the worms: this was accounted by the Jews a very accursed death; they say [f596], that the spies which brought an ill report on the good land, died this death: their account is this, that

> "their tongues swelled and fell upon their navels, and worms came out of their tongues and went into their navels, and out of their navels they went into their tongues,"

and Herod the great, the grandfather of this, according to Josephus [f597]; and Maximianus Galerius, according to Eusebius [f598], and many of this death died many tyrants, oppressors, and persecutors! as Antiochus,

> "So that the worms rose up out of the body of this wicked man, and whiles he lived in sorrow and pain, his flesh fell away, and the filthiness of his smell was noisome to all his army." (2 Maccabees 9:9)

others:

and gave up the ghost: not directly, but five days after, as Josephus relates, in the fifty fourth year of his age, and when he had reigned seven years; but before he died, and as soon as he was smitten, he turned to his friends and said, I your God am obliged to depart this life, and now fate reproves the lying words you have just now spoke of me; and I who was called immortal by you, am led away to die, with more, as related by Josephus: by

such a token as this, a man was discovered to be a murderer with the Jews; for so they say [f599], that

> "out of the beheaded heifer went a vast number of worms, and went to the place where the murderer was, and ascended upon him, and then the sanhedrim laid hold on him and condemned him."

Ver. 24. *But the word of God grew and multiplied*.] The number of those who were converted by it, and embraced and professed it, increased; otherwise the word is the same, whether the professors of it be more or fewer; and this it did, notwithstanding the persecution raised against it by Herod whilst he was living; and after his death, it still gained more ground, met with less opposition, and was more freely professed.

Ver. 25. *And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem*, etc.] Two of Beza's exemplars, the Complutensian edition and the Syriac version, add, "unto Antioch"; and certain it is, that from thence they were sent, and thither they returned, for we find them there in the beginning of the next chapter:

when they had fulfilled their ministry; which was the carrying the relief, or the money collected by the Christians at Antioch, for the brethren in Judea, on account of the famine that was there:

and took with them John, whose surname was Mark: the son of Mary, at whose house the disciples were met together, and praying; and where Peter first went, after he was delivered from prison, (<44 12 12>Acts 12:12) him they brought with them from Jerusalem to Antioch, being a kinsman of Barnabas; and a man of promising gifts and usefulness, and judged to be a fit companion with them in their travels, for the spread of the Gospel.

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 13

Ver. 1. *Now there were in the church that was at Antioch*, etc.] This was Antioch in Syria, where was a Gospel church, and where the disciples were first called Christians; from whence Saul and Barnabas had been sent to Jerusalem, with a supply for the poor saints there, in a time of famine, and from whence they were now returned: and here were

certain prophets and teachers; who were both prophets and teachers, though these are sometimes distinguished; who had both a gift of foretelling things to come, as Agabus and others, and of explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, and of teaching the people evangelic truths; these, at least some of them, came from Jerusalem hither, (<44127>Acts 11:27).

As Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger; the former of these was a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, who sold his land and brought the money to the apostles; and who was first sent hither by the church at Jerusalem, upon hearing that many in this place believed, and turned to the Lord, (<44036>Acts 4:36,37 11:22) but of the latter no mention is made elsewhere; by his first name he appears to be a Jew, who by the Romans was called Niger; very likely from the blackness of his complexion, for that word signifies “black”: and so the Ethiopic version interprets it:

and Lucius of Cyrene; who very probably was one of the synagogue of the Cyrenians, and seems manifestly to be one of the men of Cyrene, that went abroad upon the persecution raised at the death of Stephen, (<44069>Acts 6:9 11:19,20) he is said to be bishop of Cyrene; some take him to be the same Lucius mentioned in (<45621>Romans 16:21) and others think he is the same with Luke the Evangelist:

and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch: or his foster brother. The Syriac version calls him Manail, and one of Stephens’s copies Manael, and the Ethiopic version Manache, and renders what is said of him, “the son of king Herod’s nurse”; which accounts for their being brought up, nourished, and suckled together: the name seems to be the

same with Menachem, or Menahem, a name frequent with the Jews; there was one of this name, who was very intimate with Herod the great, and was in his service, though before he was vice president of the sanhedrim: the account that is given of him is this [f600]:

> "Hillell and Shammai received from them (i.e. from Shemaia and Abtalion, who were presidents before them), but at first there were Hillell and Menahem, but Menahem went out, dlmh tdwb[l, "into the service of the king", with fourscore men clad in gold — - Menahem was a very wise man, and a sort of a prophet, who delivered out many prophecies; and he told Herod when he was little, that he should reign; and after he was king, he sent for him, and he told him again, that he should reign more than thirty years, and he reigned thirty seven years, and he gave him great riches."

Of this Menahem, and of his going into the king's service, mention is made elsewhere [f601]: now though this Menahem cannot be the same with Manaen here, yet this Manaen, as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, might be the son of him, and called after his name; who might be brought up with the son of Herod the great, here called the tetrarch; and who was Herod Antipas, the same that beheaded John the Baptist: and Saul; who afterwards was called Paul.

Ver. 2. *As they ministered to the Lord*, etc.] That is, the five prophets and teachers before mentioned; and whose ministry lay in preaching the Gospel, teaching the people the doctrines of it, and expounding prophecies, and also in prayer; to which latter the Syriac version restrains their ministry, rendering it, "as they prayed to God"; but the phrase seems to be more extensive: "and fasted"; which the Jews were much used to, and the believing ones had not yet left it off; their custom was to fast on Mondays and Thursdays: (See Gill on "Luke 18:12"). Whether it was on one of those days, that these men were ministering and fasting, is not certain; but this we may be sure of, it was not on the Jewish sabbath, for on that day they never fasted; very likely that this was a fast appointed and fixed among themselves, on some particular occasion; it may be on account of the famine, which was at this time, (Acts 11:28).

The Holy Ghost said; either with an articulate voice, or by an internal impulse, upon the minds of three of the prophets:

separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them; the work which the Holy Ghost had appointed, and called them to before this, was to go and preach the Gospel among the Gentiles, distinct from the Jews, of which we read in the latter part of this chapter; and now he would have them be separated from their brethren, as Aaron and his sons were from theirs, and be sent forth from hence directly, upon that work: this shows the Spirit to be a person, since speaking and commanding in an authoritative way, and calling to a work, are ascribed unto him; and that he is a divine person, and truly God, and equal with God, since calling to a sacred office is attributed to him; and a separation to it is ordered for himself, for his service, honour, and glory; he does not say separate them to the Lord, or to God, but to me.

Ver. 3. *And when they had fasted and prayed*, etc.] Not when they had done fasting and praying, at the time the Holy Ghost made an impulse on their minds, to separate two of their brethren to a work they were appointed to; but at another time, which was fixed for that purpose; when they fasted and prayed, not for direction, who they were to set apart and send; for the persons were before pointed out to them, but that they might have every needful gift and qualification for the work, and be succeeded in it:

and laid their hands on them; not as ordaining them, for this was not an ordination; the Apostle Paul particularly was not ordained an apostle by man, but by Jesus Christ; who personally appeared to him, and made and ordained him his minister and apostle; and much less by men inferior to himself, as Simeon, Lucius, and Manaen were; but this was a gesture and ceremony used among the Jews, when they wished any blessing or happiness to attend any persons; and so these prophets, when they separated Paul and Barnabas from their company, and were parting from them, put their hands on them, and wished them all prosperity and success: could this be thought to be an ordination, as it cannot, since both of them were stated and authorized ministers of the word, and one of them an apostle long before this; there might seem some likeness between it and the Jewish ordination of elders, which was done by three [f602], as here were Simeon, Lucius, and Manaen; but then this was not done without the land of Israel, as here, nor by imposition of hands [f603]: now when they had thus prayed for them, and wished them well, they sent them away; to do the work they were called unto; not in an authoritative way, but in a friendly manner they parted with them, and bid them farewell.

Ver. 4. *So they being sent forth of the Holy Ghost*, etc.] This is said, lest it should be thought they were sent by men; it was the Holy Ghost that moved the prophets at Antioch to separate them from them, and to send them away; and who inclined their minds to go, and directed them what course to steer: and accordingly they

departed to Seleucia; which was a city of Syria, called by Pliny, Seleucia Pieria [f604]; it had its name from Seleucus Nicanor, king of Egypt, who was the builder of it: it was not far from Antioch, it is said to be twenty four miles from it; it is the first city of Syria from Cilicia, and was situated at the mouth of the river Orontes; wherefore Saul and Barnabas made no stay here; and it seems that their coming hither was only in order to take shipping for the island of Cyprus; for Seleucia was upon the sea coast, as appears from:

> "King Ptolemee therefore, having gotten the dominion of the cities by the sea unto Seleucia upon the sea coast, imagined wicked counsels against Alexander." (1 Maccabees 11:8)

and was the proper place to set sail from to Cyprus. So we read of Apollonius Tyaneus and his companions [f605], that

> "they went down to the sea by Seleucia, where having got a ship, "they sailed to Cyprus:" and so it follows here,"

and from thence they sailed to Cyprus; an island in the Mediterranean sea, the native country of Barnabas, (<406>Acts 4:36 (See Gill on "<406>Acts 4:36"))

Ver. 5. *And when they were at Salamis*, etc.] A chief city of Cyprus; and so Herodotus [f606] calls it Salamis of Cyprus; and in this island it is placed by Pliny [f607] and Ptolomy [f608]: it was built by Teucer, the son of Telamon, after his return from the Trojan war; and so called by him, from his native country Salamine, in Greece, as is generally agreed by historians [f609]: it was the birth place of the famous philosopher Solon, who is from thence called Salaminius; he died in the island of Cyprus, in the eightieth year of his age; and before he died, gave orders to carry his bones to Salamis, and being reduced to ashes, to scatter them throughout the province [f610]: it was also claimed by the Cyprians, as the birth place of Homer, and is said [f611] to be prophesied of that it should be; it was afterwards called Constantia, and now Famagusta, and is in the hands of the Turks; of it Jerom [f612] thus writes:

> “Salamis, a city in the island of Cyprus, now called Constantia, which, in the time of the Emperor Trajan, the Jews destroyed, having killed all the inhabitants of it:”

which shows what a multitude of Jews dwelt in this island, and even in this place; hence, in this verse, mention is afterwards made of synagogues of Jews in it, where the apostles preached, and which was the reason of their coming hither. This place, with the whole island, was taken from the Venetians by Mustapha, general to Selimus the Second, emperor of the Turks, in the year 1571, after a siege of eleven months; which, when he was possessed of, contrary to the agreement made, he put all the Christians to death; and having cut off the ears and nose of Bragadinus, the governor of it, took off his skin alive [f613]. Epiphanius, an ancient writer of the fourth century, famous for his books against heresies, was bishop of this place [f614], when it was called Constantia, from Constantins Augustus, the emperor; and before him, we read of Gelasius, bishop of this place, who was in the council of Nice; there was a church here in the fifth century; and mention is made of a presbyter of it, in the sixth century, present at the fifth council at Constantinople; and in the seventh century, a bishop of this church was in the sixth council of Constantinople; and in the Nicene synod, in the “eighth” century, John, bishop of this place, assisted [f615]:

they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; the Jews being in great numbers in these parts, to them the apostles first preached, though they were sent unto the Gentiles; and this they continued to do, till the Jews put away the Gospel, which made their way more clear and open to the Gentiles:

and they had also John to their minister: this was John Mark, whom they brought with them from Jerusalem, (<44 12 12>Acts 12:12,25) who waited upon them, and provided for them the necessaries of life; for this is not to be understood of the ministry of the word, which is peculiarly ascribed to them, or of his being an assistant to them in it; nor can it be understood of his being the minister in any of the synagogues for them, to bring out the book of the law, and direct public service, where it cannot be thought he should have any such office and authority; but of his ministering in civil and secular things to the apostles, or to the poor by their orders.

Ver. 6. *And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, “the whole isle”; for through the midst of the whole island they must go, to go

from Salarnis to Paphos; for Salamis was on the east, and Paphos on the west of the islands [f616]: it had its name from the Phoenician word, twap tap, “peathpaoth”, “the corner of corners”; because both old and new Paphos were situated in the extreme part of the island; and not from Paphus, the son of Pygmalion, by any ivory statue which he had made, whom Venus, at his request, according to the fables of the Heathens, turned into a woman: some say [f617], that Cinyras, a king of the Assyrians, coming into Cyprus, built Paphos; but Pausanias [f618] affirms, that Agapenor, who came hither after the Trojan war, was the builder of this place, and also of the temple of Venus in it, for which it was famous [f619]; and in a certain area of which, Pliny [f620] says it never rained; and from this place, Venus was called Paphia: according to Chrysostom, it was the metropolis of Cyprus; and it is indeed mentioned by Pliny [f621], first of the fifteen cities that were in it; and seems at this time to have been the seat of the Roman deputy Paulus Sergius, afterwards spoken of: concerning this place Jerom says [f622],

> “Paphus, a city on the sea coast, in the island of Cyprus, formerly famous for the sacred rites of Venus, and the verses of the poets; which fell by frequent earthquakes, and now only shows, by its ruins, what it formerly was:”

so Seneca [f623] says, “quotiens in se Paphus corruit?”, “how often has Paphus fell within itself?” that is, by earthquakes: the ruins of many goodly churches and buildings are to be seen in it; and the walls of a strong, and almost impregnable tower, situated upon a hill in the middle of the city, supposed to be the habitation of Sergius Paulus; there is also shown, under a certain church, a prison divided into seven rooms, where they say Paul and Barnabas were imprisoned, for preaching the Gospel; what remains of it, is now called Bapho: here

they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus, or the son of Jesus; Jesus was a name frequent among the Jews, and is the same with Joshua, and was in use long before our Saviour’s time; there was Jesus the son of Sirach, the author of Ecclesiasticus, and who had a grandfather of the same name, the Syriac version here calls him “Barsuma”, which some render “the son of a name”; that is, a man of note, a famous person, of great renown; others, “the son of a swelling”, or “the son of ulcers”; he professing to be a physician, and to cure them, with which they make the name of Barjesus to agree, deriving it from a root,

which signifies to heal: Jerom [f624] pronounces this name Barieu, and observes, that some corruptly read it Barjesu; and he makes it to signify an evil man, or one in evil; and Drusius says, he found the name βαριηου, "Barjeou", in some papers of his; and a very learned man [f625] of later years says, it is the same with Bar-Jehu, the son of Jehu; and affirms, that the Greek word is βαριηους, "Barjeus", which others wrongly turn into "Bar-jesus"; the Magdeburgensian Centuriators call him, "Elymas Barjehu"; the reason Beda gives, why it should be so read, and not Bar-jesus, is because that a magician was unworthy to be called the son of Jesus, the Saviour, when he was a child of the devil; but the Greek copies agree in Barjesus; his name shows him to be a Jew, as he is here called: and he was one of those false prophets our Lord said should arise, and deceive many; he pretended to foretell things to come, and practised sorcery, and was given to magic arts.

Ver. 7. *Which was with the deputy of the country*, etc. Or the Roman governor of the island; who very likely dwelt at Paphos, it being a principal, if not the principal city in the island, since Pliny mentions it first of all the cities in it, as before observed: and with this governor, or proconsul, as the word signifies, or rather praetor, Bar-jesus was: either he lived with him, making great pretensions to knowledge and learning, which the governor might be a favourer of, or in quality of a physician; the Ethiopic version adds, "and he was a servant of the governor"; or he might be only with him occasionally and accidentally, just at that time, though the former seems most likely: and the name of this deputy was Sergius Paulus; the name of Paulus was common among the Romans; Pliny the younger speaks [f626] of one Passienus Paulus, a famous Roman knight, and very learned, who wrote elegies; and Trajan [f627], in an epistle to him, makes mention of Paulus the proconsul; and Pliny the older, among his authors from whom he compiled his history, cites one of this very name, Sergius Paulus [f628]. The island of Cyprus was at this time in the hands of the Romans, and this man was the governor of it; it was first inhabited by some of the sons of Japhet; Josephus [f629] assigns it to Cittim: Cittim, he says,

> "had the island Chetima, which now is called Cyprus; and from it all the islands, and most places about the sea, are called Chethim by the Hebrews; and as a proof of what I say, (adds he,) one of the cities in Cyprus still retains the name; for it is called Citium by those who have made it Greek, and not much differing from the name Chethimus."

After the Trojan war, it came into the hands of the Grecians; and continued with them from the times of Teucer, until Evagoras and his son Nicocles; and then it fell into the hands of the Romans, and through them to the kings of Egypt; and after them became a Roman colony, in the following manner: Clodius Pulcher condemned Cyprus to the Roman people, to possess which Cato being sent, Ptolomy the king of the island, having cast his money into the sea, prevented the ignominy of it by a voluntary death, Anno U. C. 698 [f630]. The Roman historian says [f631], Cyprus being conquered, the glory of it was not assigned to any, seeing it was made a province by the decree of the senate, by the means of Cato, through the death of the king, which he brought upon himself; and from that time, as Strabo says [f632], it became a praetorian province, and was now governed by a praetor, though he is called a deputy, or proconsul; the reason of which Dr. Hammond thinks was, because that P. Lentulus, Ap. Claudius, and M. Cicero, being proconsuls of Cilicia, had the administration of Cyprus also granted to them by the senate; hence afterwards the governors of Cyprus were called proconsuls, or deputies. This same Greek word here used, is adopted by the Jewish Rabbins into their language; hence we read of ajwpyjna ανψυπατος, "the deputy", or "proconsul" of Caesarea [f633]; which is explained by a governor, and a judge [f634] or a third from the king [f635]; and it is refined in the Syriac version: this deputy is said to be a "prudent man". The Arabic version seems to distinguish Paul the prudent man, from Sergius the deputy, or tribune, as it calls him; reading the words thus, "who was by Sergius the tribune, with Paul a prudent man"; but Sergius and Paulus undoubtedly design one and the same man, who was prudent: he is said to be "a prudent man", in the management of his affairs, as a governor; and might be very learned, ingenious, and an understanding man; a man of great sagacity and penetration, who very likely saw through the vain pretensions, and impostures of Bar-jesus, and was desirous to expose him in a public manner; or at least might conclude he would be discovered and exposed by those good men, who were come into the city; and what follows seems to be mentioned as an instance of his prudence:

who called for Barnabas and Saul; sent messengers to them, to desire them to come to him; Barnabas is mentioned first, though the inferior person, because he was a native of the country, and might be best known:

and desired to hear the word of God; whether this was at first from mere curiosity, or from any political view, or from a true desire of knowing the way of life and salvation, which might be wrought in his soul by the Spirit

of God, is not certain; though the latter seems most likely, since it issued in his conversion.

Ver. 8. *But Elymas the sorcerer, for so is his name by interpretation*, etc.] Not that Magus a sorcerer is by interpretation Elymas; as if Luke was interpreting the Persic word "Magus", which is sometimes used in a good sense, for a wise man, as in (<4002>Matthew 2:1) by an Arabic word "Elim", which signifies knowing; but "Elymas" is the interpretation of his name "Bar-jesus"; which as that signifies the son of salvation, or of healing, so this, as Deuteronomy Dieu observes, may be derived from µlj, "Chalam", which signifies "to heal", or to be sound and in health. Junius thinks the name comes from the Arabic word µala, which signifies "to mutter", as wizards and sorcerers, and such sort of men used to do; and though he rejects the opinion of Tremellius, taking it for an Hebrew name, and to be the same with Ψmyla "Elimaatz", which signifies "divine counsel"; yet this, or what is near to it, is embraced by a late learned man[f636] who observes, that Elymas is in Hebrew, Ψmla, "Elmahatz"; the interpretation of which is, God's counsel, or the counsel of God; the name of a man, Maaz, is read in (<1327>1 Chronicles 2:27) and that it is the same with Elymoteros, as Olympas is the same with Olympiodorus; and he further observes, that Barjeus, as Jerom or Origen say it was anciently read, and not Bar-jesus, is the same with Ψ[yrb, "Barjeutz", or Barjeus, the "son of counsel", and so agrees with Elymas: now he

withstood them: Saul and Barnabas, just as Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of Egypt, withstood Moses: he did all he could to prevent their coming into the governor's house, and them from preaching to him, and him from hearing of them; and especially from giving heed to, and embracing the doctrines preached by them; which he opposed and argued against, with all the cunning and sophistry he was master of:

seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith; the doctrine of faith, from hearing and receiving it; and when he had received it, he endeavoured to set him against it, and cause him to deny and reject it with abhorrence; the Ethiopic version calls him "the king", as in the former verse "the prince".

Ver. 9. *Then Saul (who also is called Paul)*, etc.] He was called by both these names; as he was a Jew by birth, his parents called him Saul, that was his Jewish name, and by which he went among the Jews; and as he was a citizen of a Roman city, Tarsus in Cilicia, he went among the Romans, or

Gentiles, by the name of Paul, a Roman name; and it was usual with the Jews to be called after this manner, that is, to have one name among themselves, and another among the Gentiles: it is a rule with them [f637], that

> "the Israelites out of the land, their names are as the names of the Gentiles;"

yea, their names differed in Judea and Galilee; a woman went by one name in Judea, and another in Galilee [f638]: and it is observable, that Luke calls the apostle by his Jewish name Saul, whilst he was among the Jews, and only preached among them; but now he is got among the Gentiles, and was about to appear openly to be their apostle, he all along hereafter calls him by his Gentile name Paul: though some think his name was changed upon his conversion, as it was usual with Jewish penitents to do; when a man repented of his sin, he changed his name (says Maimonides) [f639],

> "as if he should say, I am another, and not the man that did those (evil) works."

So when Maachah, Asa's mother, or rather grandmother, was converted, or became right, she changed her name into Michaihu, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah; that her former name might not be remembered, lest it should be a reproach unto her [f640]: though others think, that the apostle was so called, from Sergius Paulus the deputy, whose conversion he was the instrument of; and whose family might choose to call him so, because of the nearness in sound between the two names: others think he had his name Paul, or Paulus, from the smallness of his stature and voice, to which he seems to have some respect, in (2 Corinthians 10:10) and there is one Samuel the little, which the Jewish doctors often speak of, and who by some is taken to be the same with the Apostle Paul. This name is by Jerom, or Origen [f641], interpreted "wonderful", as if it came from the Hebrew word לפא "pala"; and others derive it from לפ, "paul", which signifies to work; and a laborious worker the apostle was, and a workman also which needed not to be ashamed; but since it is certain that Saul was his Hebrew name, it is most likely that this was a Gentile one, and not of Hebrew derivation: the first account of these names, and the reason of them, seems to be the best: now of him it is said,

that he was filled with the Holy Ghost; which does not design the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost in general, with which he was always filled, and thereby qualified for his work as an apostle; but in particular, that he had

by the Spirit, not only a discerning of the wickedness of this man, but of the will of God, to make him at this time a public example of divine wrath and vengeance, for his opposition to the Gospel: wherefore he

set his eyes on him; very earnestly, thereby expressing an abhorrence of him, and indignation against him, and as it were threatening him with some sore judgment to fall upon him.

Ver. 10. *And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief*, etc.] Which may have regard both to his general character as a sorcerer, and a false prophet; in acting up to which he used much deceit and cunning among the people, and did much mischief to them; to which there was a promptness and readiness in him, as the word used signifies; and also to the sophistry he used, and the mischief he endeavoured to do in seeking to turn the deputy from the faith. The minds of carnal men are vain and empty, and destitute of all that is good, and full of all that is evil: their character is,

filled with all unrighteousness, (<4801029>Romans 1:29). They have many of them a great deal of wit, but it is wicked wit, and they employ it in an evil and mischievous way, both to the hurt of themselves and others; they are like the old serpent, whose seed they are, who was more subtle than any beast of the field; they are wiser in their generation than the children of light; they are wise to do evil, though they have no knowledge of what is spiritually good; they are able to form very cunning and artful schemes, to commit sin, and do mischief; for all their craft and subtlety are used in such a way; nor can they sleep, or be easy in their minds, unless they are doing mischief.

Thou child of the devil; perhaps alluding to his name, that instead of Bar-Jesus, the son of a saviour, he should have been called Bar-Satan, the son of Satan, or Ben-Belial, a son of Belial. The phrase ˆjç rwkb, "the firstborn of Satan", is used by the Jews, sometimes in a good sense, for one that is acute, sharp, and subtle, and that abides by his doctrine, and does his work [f642]: but here a child of the devil is used in an ill sense, for being like him in wicked cunning and subtlety; in like sense as the other phrase was used by Polycarp, whom Marcion the heretic met, and said unto him, know us; to whom Polycarp replied, I know thee, the firstborn of Satan [f643]: thou enemy of all righteousness; a wicked man is an enemy to all righteousness in every branch of it, in whatsoever light it may be considered: he is an enemy, yea, enmity itself against God the righteous being, and who is the

fountain of all righteousness; he is an enemy to Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the Lord our righteousness; he is an enemy to that righteousness which he has wrought out; he is an enemy to all righteous persons, and hates their holy and righteous conversation; he is an enemy to the law, and cannot be subject to it, which is the rule of righteousness; and he is an enemy to the Gospel, which reveals the righteousness of God from faith to faith, and teaches men to live soberly, righteously, and godly; in short he is an enemy to all righteousness, moral and evangelical.

Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? the doctrines and ordinances of Christ, in which he has directed his people to walk; which this man, through his sophistry and wickedness, in which he was industrious and indefatigable, endeavoured to render intricate and obscure, when they were plain, and straight, and easy. "For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them", (²⁸⁴⁹Hosea 14:9) they are right, and it is becoming such to walk in them; they are plain to them that have a true knowledge of them, even wayfaring men, though fools shall not err in them; they are entirely consistent with the righteousness and holiness of God, and lead right on to eternal glory and happiness. Christ himself is the true way to eternal life, which is plainly pointed, and clearly directed to in the word of God, and by the ministers of the Gospel, who show unto men the way of salvation; the path of truth is fully described, and such things said of it as are very inviting to walk in it; and good men cannot but choose and delight to walk in it, when led into it by the Spirit of truth: Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths of peace; even all the paths of duty and worship, the ways of righteousness and holiness; but wicked men seek to pervert these ways, to give a false account of them, to set them in a wrong light, and represent them not only as rough and troublesome, but as dangerous, and leading to ruin; and do all they can to hinder persons from entering into them, and to cause those to stumble who are in them; nor will they cease acting this wicked part; they are continually at work to make the ways of Christ odious, to set people against them, to discourage from walking in them by their opposition to them, the false glosses they put upon them, and by their scoffs and jeers at those that walk in them, and by their violent persecutions of them, when it is in their power.

Ver. 11. *And now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee*, etc.] That is, the power of God was just ready to be exerted on him in a way of punishment, by striking him with blindness:

and thou shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a season: so blind as not to see the sun, when it shined ever so brightly: this punishment seems to be but for a time; and some say that Elymas repented, and had his sight restored to him; and after that he returned to his sorcery, and again greatly opposed Barnabas in the island of Cyprus:

and immediately there fell on him a mist and darkness; as soon as ever the apostle had said the above words, a dark mist fell upon his eyes, which began the blindness, and issued in a total one:

and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand; he groped about the room, if he could find, and lay hold on some person to lead him: for he was quickly stone blind, so that he could not guide himself, as the men of Sodom were, when smitten with blindness by the angel; wherefore, though they groped about for the door of the house till they were weary, they could not find it, (<01911>Genesis 19:11) of which the Jews say, as here, that it was µçh tam hkm, "a stroke from God" [f644]. Blind men need one to hold them by the hand, and lead them, as Samson, (<071626>Judges 16:26) and Saul, (<440908>Acts 9:8). The striking this man with blindness is an instance of the power the apostles were endued with, for the punishing of offenders: so Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead for telling a lie: and the incestuous person was delivered to Satan to undergo a corporeal punishment for his incest; as Hymenaeus and Alexander were for their blasphemy, (<440505>Acts 5:5,10 <461505>1 Corinthians 5:5 <540120>1 Timothy 1:20).

Ver. 12. *Then the deputy, when he saw what was done*, etc.] That Elymas was struck with blindness immediately, and that the hand of God was manifestly in it, and there was no juggle nor magic art in the case; it was a plain fact, which was certain and visible:

he believed; in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom the apostle preached:

being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord: both at what was contained in it: for there are many astonishing things in the doctrine of faith; as the birth of Christ of a virgin; the union of the two natures, divine and human, in his person; salvation through his crucifixion and death, and the resurrection of the dead, with others: and also at the miracles which attended this doctrine, and confirmed it; though the Alexandrian copy reads the words thus, "being astonished, he believed in the doctrine of the Lord"; which affords a very easy and natural sense, as that being filled with admiration at the striking of Elymas with blindness, he was induced to

believe the doctrine of Christ, preached by Paul and Barnabas, and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “he wondered, and believed in our Lord”: and Beza’s ancient copy, and others read, “he wondered and believed in God”. This deputy we hear no more of afterwards; there is no reason to believe that he quitted his government of this island; though some pretend to say that he did, and followed the Apostle Paul, and went with him into Spain; and that he was left by him at Narbonne in Languedoc in France, and became bishop of that place; which office he held till his death. And though we read of no more converted at this time in Paphos, yet it is highly probable there were others, and that a foundation of a Gospel church state was laid in this place, even though Heathenism still continued. The temple of Venus remained in this place in the “second” century; and in the “fourth” century Venus was worshipped here; yet in the beginning of the “fourth” century, in the council of Nice, Cyril, bishop of Paphos, was present; and in the “fifth” century, a bishop of this place was at the synod of Chalcedon: and in the “eighth” century, Michael, bishop of Taphos, was in the Nycene synod [f645]. Jerom [f646] makes mention of Hilarion, an eminent servant of Christ, who was for some time at Paphos, in the fourth century, and of the many miraculous cures he wrought here; but of the church here, or of any number of believers in Christ, he takes no notice, only of one Hesychius, a disciple; though it is certain there must be a church at this time, as before observed.

Ver. 13. *Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos*, etc.] Which was upon the sea coast: so Jerom [f647] says, that Paphos was “urbs maritima”, a city on the sea coast of the island of Cyprus; it was on the western part of the island, to the west of which lay the sea of Pamphylia, over which the apostle, and his company, sailed to the place next mentioned, which was in Pamphylia; and so Apollonius Tyaneus [f648], having got a ship at Seleucia, is said to sail to Paphos in Cyprus; and from hence the apostle, and those that were with him, set sail; and as the Syriac version renders it, “went by sea”, or “through the sea”; that is, of Pamphylia; of which mention is made in (<442705>Acts 27:5).

They came to Perga in Pamphylia which country was before called Mopsopia; (See Gill on “<442010>Acts 2:10”) which now, with Cilicia, is called Caramania; and among the cities and towns in it, both Pliny [f649] and Ptolomy [f650] make mention of Perga; where was a famous temple of Diana, whence she was sometimes called Pergea [f651]; and every year a great feast was kept here in honour of her: it was the birth place of Apollonius, a very

famous geometrician, who wrote eight books of conic sections, four of which are now extant [f652]; and who, from his native place, is called Apollonius Pergaeus [f653]. It was situated between two great rivers, Oestros and Catarctes [f654]; and since ג ר פ, "Parag", in the eastern languages, signifies "to delight", perhaps it might be so called from its delightful situation. Hilleras [f655] observes, Pargi (or rather Perage), as is the word in the Syriac version of (<402337>Matthew 23:37, <420224>Luke 2:24) with the Syrians signifies the young of birds, as of hens and doves; and so do Pargiia, Pargiot, and Perigin, with the Jewish Rabbins [f656]; which writer seems to suggest, that this place was so called from the multitude of fowls that were about it.

And John departing from them returned to Jerusalem; that is, John Mark, whom Paul and Barnabas took with them, and who was a minister to them: but what was the reason of his departure, whether for the sake of seeing his mother at Jerusalem; or because he did not like, but grew weary of the travels, labours, and fatigues of the apostle, and his company; or did not choose to go among the Gentiles, is not certain: however, his departure was resented by Paul; and it laid a foundation for a sharp contention between him and Barnabas, who was uncle to this John Mark, (<441538>Acts 15:38,39) from whence it appears that it was not at Paphos in Cyprus, but at Perga in Pamphilia, that he left them, by which the mistake of some interpreters on this text must be corrected.

Ver. 14. *But when they departed from Perga*, etc.] Where they seemed not to make any long stay; nor is there any account of what they did there; though it is certain here was a church of Christ in after times, and very likely planted by the apostles; for after this Paul and Barnabas preached the word in this place, (<441425>Acts 14:25) and no doubt with success. In the third century there were martyrs of this church at Perga, which suffered under the Emperor Decius; and in the, fourth century, we read of a famous church in this place, over which Jovinian was bishop or pastor; and in the "fifth" century there was a church here, whose bishop is mentioned in the catalogue of bishops who assisted in the first council at Ephesus; and, in the same century, the church of this place was the metropolitan church of Pamphilia; and, in the "sixth" century, one Epiphanius was bishop of Perga; and, in the "seventh" century, it is spoken of as the metropolitan of Pamphilia; and, in the "eighth" century, we read of Sisinnius as bishop of it [f657]; so far down can we trace Christianity in this city.

They came to Antioch in Pisidia; so called to distinguish it from Antioch of Syria, from whence they were sent, (Acts 13:1-3) and so this place is called Antioch of Pisidia by Ptolomy [f658]; and also from another Antioch in Mygdania, before called Nisibis, as Pliny [f659] observes, and which is the Antioch in the Apocrypha:

> "Afterward departed he in all haste, and returned unto Antiochia, where he found Philip to be master of the city: so he fought against him, and took the city by force." (1 Maccabees 6:63)

> "Heard that Philip, who was left over the affairs in Antioch, was desperately bent, confounded, intreated the Jews, submitted himself, and sware to all equal conditions, agreed with them, and offered sacrifice, honoured the temple, and dealt kindly with the place," (2 Maccabees 13:23)

concerning which Josephus [f660] has these words; Nisibis is the name of the country, and in it formerly the Macedonians built Antioch, which they called Mygdonia. Pisidia was a province of Asia; it had Pamphilia on the north, Lycaonia on the east, and Phrygia Pacatiana on the west; and it is mentioned together with Phrygia, Lycaonia, and Pamphilia by Pliny [f661]: and this Antioch in it, is, by the same writer, called Caesarea [f662]: his words are, the Pisidians have their seat upon the top (of the valley) formerly called Solymi, whose colony is Caesarea, the same with Antioch. This is the Antioch to which Paul and Barnabas came, when they went from Perga, where were many Jews, and who had a synagogue in it: we read before, in (Acts 2:9,10) of devout Jews that came to Jerusalem, whose native places were Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphilia, to which Pisidia was near: wherefore it follows, and

went into the synagogue on the sabbath day; for though the ceremonial law was abrogated by the death of Christ, it still was observed by the Jews, who had their synagogues open on that day for religious service; wherefore Paul and Barnabas took the opportunity of going in when they were assembled together, in order to preach Christ to them, not having a convenient time on other days:

and sat down: on one of the seats in the synagogue; either as hearers of the law and prophets, which were read every sabbath day in the synagogues; or else to teach the word, expound the Scriptures, and preach the Gospel of Christ, it being usual to sit when this was done; (See Gill on "Matthew

5:1") and both were true, for they heard a part of the law and prophets read, according to the custom of the Jews; see the following verse, and (<44152>Acts 15:21) and they also gave a word of exhortation to the people.

Ver. 15. *And after the reading of the law and the prophets*, etc.] Which was done every sabbath day, (<44152>Acts 15:21) The five books of Moses, which are meant by the law, were divided into sections: Genesis was divided into twelve, Exodus into eleven, Leviticus into ten, Numbers into ten, and Deuteronomy into ten, which in all make fifty three sections: and so by reading one on each sabbath, and two on one day, they read through the whole law in the course of a year, and which they finished at the close of the feast of tabernacles; and that day was called hrwt tjmç "the rejoicing of the law"; it was a day of rejoicing, that the law was read through. Some make fifty four sections, and then two of them must be read together, on two sabbath days, to finish the whole in the year. In some synagogues the section was divided into three parts, and so they finished the law in three years; but this custom was less common [f663]. The custom of reading the law, the Jews say, was one hundred and seventy years before the time of Jesus Christ; though some say the division of the law, into sections, was made by Ezra; and others refer it to Moses himself: it is certain it obtained in the times of Christ and his apostles, as did also the reading of the prophets, and which was introduced in this way, and upon this account. When Antiochus Epiphanes burnt the book of the law, and forbad the reading of it, the Jews in the room of it selected some passages out of the prophets, which they thought came nearest in words and sense to the sections of the law, and read them in their stead; and when the law was restored again, they still continued the reading of the prophetic sections; and the section for the day was called hrjph, "the dismission", because usually the people were dismissed upon it, unless anyone stood up, and preached or expounded the word of God unto the people: hence the following message and address to the apostles,

the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them; that is, those who were the principal men in the synagogue, the ruler of it, together with the elders; for there was but one ruler in a synagogue; (See Gill on "<40918>Matthew 9:18") though there were more elders; and so the Syriac version here renders it, "the elders of the synagogue"; but it may be asked, why should they send to the apostles? how did they know that they were teachers, being strangers? this they might conclude from their outward appearance, their

gravity and solidity; for as for habit or dress there was no distinction; or from their sitting down when they came into the synagogue, which was the custom of teachers; or they might have had some knowledge of them, and conversation with them, before they came into the synagogue; for it cannot be reasonably thought that they admitted anyone, whether they knew him or not, to teach in their synagogues:

saying, ye men and brethren: which was the common style of the Jews, they used in addresses, and especially to their own countrymen, as they might perceive Paul and Barnabas were; (see <4402>Acts 2:29, 7:2).

if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on; the sense is, if they were prepared to preach, or had anything upon their minds to say to the people; or if they had, as it is in the original text, "any word of exhortation or comfort" in them, as they had indeed a rich treasure in their earthen vessels, they had leave and liberty to speak it to the people. "A word of exhortation" designs any doctrine that might be for instruction and comfort, and this was agreeably to the practice of the Jews. For it is said [f664]

> "on the sabbath day, hçrd ˆyçrwd, "they preach a sermon", or expound to housekeepers (or masters of families), who are employed in business all the days of the week; and in the midst of the sermon they teach them the traditions, concerning what is forbidden, and what is lawful; and it is better for them to hear than to read in the Hagiographa;"

which books they did not read publicly, as is said in the same place, only the law and the prophets; with the latter of which they dismissed the people, unless a sermon was preached; and which, when done, was chiefly for the sake of the common people, men and women: and it is said [f665], that

> "the women, and the people of the earth (or the common people), come to hear the sermon, and the preachers ought to draw out their hearts;"

speak out their whole mind, and deliver all they know that may be instructive and profitable.

Ver. 16. *Then Paul stood up*, etc.] Not so much that he might be heard; or merely out of reverence and respect to the rulers, and the people; but to

show that he accepted the invitation; as also in order to take his proper place in the synagogue, and sit down and teach, as was their custom:

and beckoning with his hand; to the people to be silent, and attend to what he had to say:

said, men of Israel; by whom are meant the proper Jews, the natural descendants of Jacob, whose name was Israel; this was accounted a very honourable character, and was a common form of address; (see <44|02|22>Acts 2:22)

and ye that fear God; not as distinguishing some among the Israelites from the rest, as if there were some of them that did not fear God; for by these are meant, not Jews by birth, but proselytes, devout and religious men from among the Gentiles; who were proselyted to the Jewish religion, and attended with them in their synagogues on religious worship; and that there were such in this synagogue, is certain from (<44|13|43>Acts 13:43) and we find that sometimes the Jews distinguish the proselytes from the Israelites by this very character[f666]: it is said, (<19|01|28>Psalm 128:1)

> "blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways; he does not say blessed are the Israelites, blessed are the priests, blessed are the Levites, but blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord; µyrgh wla "these are the proselytes, for they fear the Lord" — of what proselyte is it "said blessed?" of the proselyte who is a proselyte of righteousness, and not of the Cuthites, of whom it is written, (<12|17|33>2 Kings 17:33) but of a proselyte who fears the Lord, and walks in his ways;"

so (<19|22|23>Psalm 22:23 115:11) are interpreted by many Jewish writers[f667]. Now to both these sort of persons, both to the proper Jews, and to the proselytes of righteousness, the apostle addresses himself, and desires they would give audience to what he had to say; which is as follows.

Ver. 17. *The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers*, etc.] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their seed after them, to be a peculiar people to himself; wherefore he is often, as here, styled their God, and whom he distinguished and blessed with many blessings, civil and religious, above all people upon the face of the earth. The apostle seems particularly to address himself to the Gentiles, the inhabitants of Antioch, and the proselytes of righteousness, now in the synagogue, (<44|13|42>Acts 13:42,43)

and, as it were, with his finger pointed to the native Jews present, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, a part of the people whose God the Lord was:

and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt as they did for many years, and as the Lord foretold to Abraham they should, (<0115>Genesis 15:13) This refers either to the great honour and dignity Joseph was advanced unto, and to the favours and privileges bestowed on Jacob and his family at the first of their sojourning in that land; or to the great increase of their posterity towards the close of it, even when they were the most oppressed and afflicted.

And with an high arm he brought them out of it out of the land of Egypt, and out of their oppression in it; which was owing to, and was a wonderful display of his mighty power and great strength here expressed by an "high arm" for nothing short of that could have wrought deliverance for them.

Ver. 18. *And about the time of forty years*, etc.] From their coming out of Egypt, to their entrance into the land of Canaan:

suffered he their manners in the wilderness; which were very perverse and provoking; as their murmuring for water, their rebellion against Moses and Aaron, their idolatry and the ill report brought on the good land by their spies; and yet the Lord fed them, and led them, and kept them as the apple of his eye: some think the true reading is ετροφοφορησεν, "he bore", or "fed them", as a nurse bears and feeds her children; and so the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it, "he nourished them"; rained manna, and gave them quails from heaven, and furnished a table for them in the wilderness: and indeed, though there were instances of God's patience and forbearance with them, yet certain it is, that as he was tempted and proved by them, so he was grieved with them during the forty years in the wilderness; and often let fall his vengeance upon them, by cutting off great numbers of them; and even the carcasses of all that generation that came out of Egypt fell in the wilderness; nor did any of them enter into the land of Cannan, but Joshua and Caleb.

Ver. 19. *And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan*, etc.] The Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites, and Girgashites; and the name of seven nations is what they are usually called by in Jewish writings; and though they were not utterly destroyed, or everyone of them put to death, or driven out, for some remained to be

thorns in the sides of the Israelites; yet they were so wasted and conquered, that they could never recover any more: he divided their land to them; every tribe had its portion of it assigned, by lot; (see <640>Joshua 14:1-3).

Ver. 20. *And after that he gave unto them judges*, etc.] As Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Abimelech, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson, and Eli:

about the space of four hundred and fifty years; not that from the division of the land of Canaan among the tribes, to Samuel the prophet, was such a space of years; for from the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt, to the year that Solomon began to build the temple, were but four hundred and fourscore years, (<1061>1 Kings 6:1) and out of these must be taken the forty years the children of Israel were in the wilderness, and seven years in subduing the land of Canaan, before the division of it, which reduce this number to four hundred and thirty and three; and from hence must be deducted the time of Samuel's judging Israel, the reigns of Saul and David, and three years of Solomon's, which reduced the years of the judges to less than four hundred years; and according to some, the years of the judges were three hundred and fifty seven; and according to others, three hundred and thirty nine, and both fall short of the space of years here assigned. The Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read this clause in connection with the preceding words, "he divided their land unto them, about the space of four hundred years, and after that he gave unto them judges"; agreeably hereunto the Ethiopic version renders it, "and after four hundred and fifty years, he set over them governors, &c". So that this account respects not the time of the judges, or how long they were, but refers to all that goes before, and measures out the space of time from God's choice of the Jewish fathers, to the division of the land of Canaan: and reckoning from the birth of Isaac, when the choice took place, and in whom Abraham's seed was called, there was much about such a number of years; for from the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob, were sixty years; from thence to his going down into Egypt, an hundred and thirty years; and from thence to the Israelites coming out of Egypt, two hundred and ten years; and from thence to their entrance into the land of Canaan, forty years; and from that time to the division of the land, seven years, which in all make four hundred and forty seven years: so that, according to this account, there were three years wanting of the sum in the text; hence the apostle might with great propriety say, that it was about the space of so many years. It follows,

until Samuel the prophet; the meaning of which, is not that there was such a space of time as before mentioned, from the distribution of the land of Canaan until the times of Samuel the prophet, during which space judges were given; but that after that term of time was expired, God gave them judges, or raised up one after another, until Samuel the prophet, who was the last of them: of his character as a prophet, (See Gill on "Acts 3:24") and which is a title frequently given him by Jewish writers [f668].

Ver. 21. *And afterward they desired a king*, etc.] (1 Samuel 8:5) which the Jews [f669] say, was in the tenth year of Samuel; that is, of his government over Israel, or of his judging them:

and God gave unto them Saul; whose name signifies one that is asked; he was

the son of Cis; so the Septuagint read and pronounce the word "Kish", the name of Saul's father, (1 Samuel 9:1) a man of the tribe of Benjamin; not of Judah, from whence the sceptre was not to depart till Shiloh came; the business of their asking a king being resented by God, he gives them their first king of another tribe:

by the space of forty years. The Jews are very much divided about the years of Saul's reign, some allow him but two years [f670], and others three, one year that he reigned with Samuel, and two by himself [f671], which they conclude from (1 Samuel 13:1) but others [f672] think this too short a time for the things done by him, the wars he fought with many nations, and his persecution of David from place to place; wherefore others [f673] allow him, some seventeen, and others twenty years; but our apostle ascribes forty years to him, which must be understood both of him and Samuel; with which Josephus [f674] agrees, who says that he reigned eighteen years, during Samuel's life, and twenty two years after his death, which make the space of forty years fixed by the apostle; though the clause, "by the space of forty years", may be read in construction with the latter end of the preceding verse, until Samuel the prophet; who, the Jews [f675] own, judged so many years: wherefore the apostle is not to be charged with an error, as he is by a Jewish [f676] objector; who observes, that from the beginning of Saul's kingdom, or from the time that he was anointed by Samuel the prophet, until the kingdom was renewed to him by all Israel, was one year, and then Saul chose three thousand men out of Israel after that he reigned two years by the consent of all Israel, until he sinned in the business of the Amalekites, and then he was accounted as a dead man, and the years of his

reign were not numbered; at which time David was anointed, who must be about twenty years of age, (⁰⁹¹⁶¹⁸1 Samuel 16:18) and yet when he came to the kingdom after the death of Saul, he was but thirty years of age, (¹⁰⁰⁵⁰⁴2 Samuel 5:4) from whence he thinks it follows that Saul reigned but ten years: in all which he is guilty of several mistakes, and advances things he cannot prove; it was not after Saul had reigned one year, but after he had reigned two years, that he chose three thousand men out of Israel, as is expressly said, (⁰⁹¹³⁰¹1 Samuel 13:1,2) and that he had reigned but two years when he sinned in the case of the Amalekites, wants proof; nor is it evident that David was twenty years of age when he was anointed, for it was after his unction that he is said to be a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, (⁰⁹¹⁶¹⁸1 Samuel 16:18) nor indeed can it be said in what year of Saul's reign he was anointed; so that nothing can be concluded from the age David was at when he began to reign, concerning the years of the reign of Saul his predecessor; and even according to this man's own reckoning, he must reign thirteen years, one before the consent of all Israel, two after, and before his sin about the Amalekites, and ten from the time of David's unction: but that Saul must reign more years than these, and even as many as the apostle assigns to him, may be concluded, not only from his wars with many nations, and his long persecution of David before observed; but from the number of high priests which were in his time, and who were no less than three, Ahiah, Abimelech, and Abiathar, (⁰⁹¹⁴⁰³1 Samuel 14:3 22:20 23:9) and from his being a young man when he began to reign, (⁰⁹⁰⁹⁰²1 Samuel 9:2) and yet at the end of his reign, or at his death, he had a son, Ishbosheth, that was forty years of age, (¹⁰⁰²¹⁰2 Samuel 2:10).

Ver. 22. *And when he had removed him*, etc.] Either by death, or rejected him from being king while he was living; (⁰⁹¹⁵²³1 Samuel 15:23 16:1)

he raised up unto them David to be their king; who was of the tribe of Judah, and who was raised from a very mean condition, from keeping of sheep, to sit upon the throne of Israel:

to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David; a type of the Messiah; he chose him to be king, sent Samuel to anoint him, and at length set him on the throne: the apostle adds, as a further account of him,

the son of Jesse; who lived at Bethlehem, where the Messiah was to be born, and who was a person of no great note and figure in Israel; and this is mentioned as an illustration of the distinguishing goodness of God to David. It follows,

a man after mine own heart; on whom the heart of God was set, and who had an interest in his heart's love, and to whom he was exceeding grateful and acceptable; God took great delight and pleasure in him, in the general course of his life, and in his principles, aims, and designs; he was as he would have him to be:

which shall fulfil all my will; in governing the people, subduing their enemies, settling the order of divine worship and service, and preparing things for the building of the temple; and who also had a regard to all the commandments of God, and walked in them, though he was not without his sins and infirmities: now these words are not to be found together in anyone passage, as they might be thought to be from the manner in which they are produced, they being cited as a testimony delivered by the Lord, saying these concerning David; but where? the first part of them, "I have found David", is expressed in (<19910>Psalm 89:20) and yet the passage there seems to have respect to David's antitype; and to be understood not literally of David, but mystically and typically of Christ, David's son, with whom the whole psalm agrees; rather therefore this is implied in (<09314>1 Samuel 13:14) where also the next words, "a man after mine own heart", are to be met with; where it is thus expressed, though not by the Lord, but by Samuel; "the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart"; and as he sought one, so he found one, which was his servant David; but then what follows, is not recorded there nor any where else, in express terms, concerning David, "which shall fulfil all my will"; what comes nearest to them, are the words of the Lord to Cyrus, (<234428>Isaiah 44:28) "and shall perform all my pleasure"; and Cocceius is of opinion, that the above words are taken from hence by the apostle, and applied to David, because of his concern in the building of the temple; his heart was set upon it, and he made great preparations for it according to the will of God, and did fulfil all it was the pleasure of God he should, respecting this affair; upon the whole, the apostle seems not to have any reference to anyone particular passage of Scripture, bearing a testimony to David's character, but to what is to be collected from them in general, as a divine testimony in favour of him.

Ver. 23. *Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise*, etc.] In (<100712>2 Samuel 7:12 <19132>Psalm 132:11,17 <242315>Jeremiah 23:5,6) raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus; even Jesus of Nazareth, whose name signifies a Saviour, who is the son of David, according to the flesh; the word "Jesus" is left out in some copies, and so it is in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions,

which only read, “salvation” or “redemption”; the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read, “he hath brought forth unto Israel”, etc. the sense is, that as God had promised that the Messiah should spring out of David’s loins, so in the fulness of time he had sent him, or caused him to come by the assumption of human nature, or by taking flesh of a virgin, who was of the house and lineage of David; and who was sent, and came first to the people of Israel, though they for the most part slighted and rejected him; however, he was raised up for the mystical Israel of God, all the elect, whether Jews or Gentiles; and that to be the Saviour of them, from sin, Satan, and the law, and every enemy, with a spiritual and eternal salvation, and that both of body and soul; and a very able, willing, and suitable Saviour he is, as well as a perfect and complete one. This Saviour, Jehovah, in his infinite wisdom, found, and in his purposes appointed him to be his salvation, and in his covenant provided and settled him as such; and in the prophecies of the Old Testament spoke of him as the Saviour and Redeemer of his people; and in the fulness of time sent him, and raised him up of David’s seed, according to his promise to him. The first promise of a Saviour was made to our first parents, under the character of the seed of the woman; he was next promised to Abraham, that he should be of his seed; and then to Judah, that he should be of his tribe; and after that to David, that he should be of his family; and all this has been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah, who is sometimes called David and David’s son. Now it was for the sake of this, that the apostle begins with the choice of the Jewish fathers, and relates so many favours bestowed upon the people of Israel; his view was to lead on to observe this special mercy promised them, and now fulfilled, on which he intended to enlarge in his discourse, as follows.

Ver. 24. *When John had first preached before his coming*, etc.] Or, “before the face of his entrance”; that is, on his public ministry; for John did not preach before the coming of Christ in the flesh, being born but half a year before him; but before he came forth and was manifest to Israel; before he entered upon his work and office, as a prophet and teacher of the people: and this points out the business of John the Baptist, who was the forerunner of Christ, and went before his face to prepare his way, who gave notice of his coming, and bore testimony to him; and whose testimony the apostle here produces, as being what the Jews could not well reject and deny, he being of so much probity and integrity, and so great a prophet, as

he was accounted by all the people; and whom he prepared for the reception of the Messiah, by first preaching;

the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel: he not only administered the ordinance of baptism, but he preached the doctrine of it, opened the nature and design of it, and required repentance and fruits meet for it, in those who came to have it administered to them: for which reason it is called the baptism of repentance; and this he did publicly before all the people, when the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, came unto him; (see <40104>Mark 1:4 <40302>Matthew 3:2,3,5,7,8).

Ver. 25. *And as John fulfilled his course*, etc.] Or race, the work of the ministry he was called to; as he was preaching and baptizing, which were the race set before him to run, and in which he ran well; he made full proof of his ministry. The life of every Christian is a race, and especially of a minister of the Gospel, and which requires strength, courage, agility, patience, and perseverance; this world is the place in which they run; and this is only the running time; in heaven they will sit down on the throne with Christ; the way in which they run, is the way of their duty, the way of God's commandments; the mark they have in view, which they keep their eye on, and to which they direct their course, is Christ; and glory is the incorruptible crown they run for, and which, when they have finished their course, will be given them by the chief shepherd and righteous judge; (see <550407>2 Timothy 4:7,8) and this is to be understood, not of the end of John's race, or ministry, but rather of the beginning of it; for it was then, he said,

whom think ye that I am? I am not he; that is the Messiah. The apostle seems to refer to (<430119>John 1:19,20) when the Jews asked him who he was, and he freely declared he was not the Christ; there the question is put by them to him, here by him to them; doubtless the questions were put by both; however the sense is the same, that he was not the Messiah, but he bore testimony to him that was:

but behold there cometh one after me; meaning Jesus, who was the Messiah, and who when John spoke these words, was coming after him from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized by him, and who in a little while after that came forth in the public ministry of the word: John was to come forth first, and then Jesus after him, because he was the harbinger of the Messiah, whose coming he was to proclaim and prepare men for, and whose person he was to point out; for though he is said to be after him, he

was not in any sense inferior to him: John was born into the world before Christ, as man, was born, yet he as the eternal Son of God was before John, was from the beginning, even from eternity; John entered on the office of his ministry before him, but Christ was not below him; as not in the dignity of his person, so neither in the nature and excellency of his office; and John takes care to secure the honour and glory of Christ, and to prevent any low opinion that might be entertained of him from what he had said, by adding,

whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose; suggesting hereby, that he was unworthy to be his servant, to perform the meanest part of service for him that could be thought of; so far was he from assuming any preference to him on account of his being before him, as his forerunner; (see <40311>Matthew 3:11 <43027>John 1:27). (See Gill on "<40311>Matthew 3:11"). (See Gill on "<43027>John 1:27").

Ver. 26. *Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham*, etc.] This address is made to them in the synagogue, who were Jews by birth, and in a form very grateful and pleasing; he calls them "men", perhaps not only from the common nature of mankind in them, but because they took this name peculiarly to themselves, and denied it to the nations of the world; and which they gather from (<263431>Ezekiel 34:31) and he styles them "brethren", because they were his countrymen; and "children of the stock of Abraham", with respect to their lineage and descent, and of which they gloried:

and whosoever among you feareth God; these were the proselytes among them; (See Gill on "<441316>Acts 13:16")

to you is the word of this salvation sent; meaning either the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the essential and eternal "Logos", or word of God, and whom the Syriac and Ethiopic versions here style, "the word of life", as in (<620101>1 John 1:1) who is the author of salvation, and who was in the first place sent unto the Jews; or rather the Gospel, which gives an account of the author of spiritual and eternal salvation, of his person, and of his manner of obtaining it, and of the nature of salvation, and who the persons are to whom it belongs. The Gospel is not a proposal of terms, by complying with which men may be saved, as faith, repentance, and good works, which are not terms of salvation, but either blessings, parts or fruits of it; but it is a declaration of salvation itself, as being a thing done by Christ; it declares him to be the alone able, willing, and all sufficient

Saviour, and the salvation he has wrought out to be a great one, complete, spiritual, and everlasting; and that those that believe in him shall be saved with it. It is the word preaching salvation by him, showing, that he has wrought out an everlasting righteousness for the justification of his people; hence it is sometimes called the word of righteousness; and that he has made peace and reconciliation by the blood of his cross, for which reason it is styled the word of reconciliation; and that eternal life is in him, and by him, and therefore it is called the word of life: for the salvation it publishes includes all the blessings of grace, and everlasting glory, and happiness; it is the means of applying the salvation it declares; the Spirit of God comes by it, who, whilst it is preaching, falls upon, and conveys himself into the hearts of men: regeneration is ascribed to the word of truth; faith comes by hearing; and sanctification is promoted and increased by it, as an instrument; and after men believe in it, they are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise; all which shows what a wonderful blessing the Gospel is: and this was now sent not to the Jews only, though to them in the first place, but to the Gentiles also; the Alexandrian copy, in the two last clauses, instead of “you”, reads “us”.

Ver. 27. *For they that dwelt at Jerusalem, and their rulers*, etc.] The inhabitants of that city, and the great sanhedrim which sat there: because they knew him not; that is, either Jesus the Saviour, whom God had raised of the seed of David, and to whom John bore witness; and which must be understood, not of all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and members of the sanhedrim; for though some were ignorant, yet there were others that knew that Jesus was the Messiah, and notwithstanding rejected him; but the apostle chooses to take no notice of these, because he would not irritate and provoke, but rather of others, that were really ignorant of Christ: or else this may be understood of the Gospel, the word of salvation, that the Jews knew not “that”; and so the Syriac version renders it; and to which agrees the Ethiopic version, which reads thus, “they knew not this word of the prophets”, joining the word of salvation, and what follows, together:

nor yet the voices of the prophets: “or the writings of the prophets”, as the Syriac version, and some copies read; their prophecies concerning the Messiah, particularly in (<19220>Psalm 22:1-31) (<23501>Isaiah 53:1-12 <27001>Daniel 9:1-27) which are read every sabbath day; (See Gill on “<44135>Acts 13:15”)

they have fulfilled them; the word, of the prophets:

in condemning him; Jesus Christ, for these prophets testified, in the places referred to, of the sufferings and death of Christ, to which he was condemned by them.

Ver. 28. *And though they found no cause of death in him*, etc.] That is, no crime that deserved death; they sought for such, but could find none; they suborned false witnesses, who brought charges against him, but could not support them; wherefore Pilate, his judge, several times declared his innocence, and would have discharged him:

yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain; they were urgent and importunate with him, that he would order him to be put to death; the power of life and death being then in the hands of the Romans; the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, “that they might slay him”; and the Arabic version, “that he might slay him”; and the Ethiopic version renders the whole quite contrary to the sense, “and they gave power to Pilate to hang him”; whereas the power of putting him to death was in Pilate, and not in them: and therefore they were pressing upon him, that he would order his execution, notwithstanding his innocence.

Ver. 29. *And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him*, etc.] When they had vilified and reproached him in the most opprobrious manner; buffeted and scourged him, and pierced his hands and his feet, by nailing him to the cross; when they had crucified him between two thieves, and parted his raiment and cast lots on his vesture; when they had pierced his side, and it was sufficiently evident that his life was taken from the earth; all which were written of him in the Psalms and Prophets:

they took him down from the tree; the cross, on which he was crucified: it may be rendered impersonally, “he was taken down from the tree”; for not the same persons that desired he might be slain, and fulfilled all that was written of him, took him down, but others; though they were some of the rulers, as Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus, yet such as did not consent to his death:

and laid him in a sepulchre; in a new one, in which never man lay; a sepulchre which Joseph had hewed out of a rock for himself, and which was both sealed and guarded.

Ver. 30. *But God raised him from the dead*.] Though his life was taken away by man, and it was a clear case that he was certainly dead, and he was taken down from the cross as such, and buried; yet he could not be

held with the cords of death, but God the Father raised him from the dead by his power. The Vulgate Latin version adds, “the third day”.

Ver. 31. *And he was seen many days*, etc.] Forty days, at certain times,

of them which came up with him from Galilee; which though true of several women who followed him from Galilee, and to whom he appeared after his resurrection, as Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome the mother of Zebedee’s children, and others; yet is chiefly to be understood of the apostles of Christ, who were Galilaeans, and came with Christ from that country to Jerusalem, when he came thither to suffer and die:

who are his witnesses unto the people; not only of his resurrection, though of that chiefly, but of all that he did and suffered in Galilee and Judea.

Ver. 32. *And we declare unto you glad tidings*, etc.] The whole of the Gospel, concerning the incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, and the benefits arising from thence, as peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation; all which are good news and glad tidings to sensible sinners; and which are declared and published by the ministers of the Gospel, according to the commission given them, as here by Paul and Barnabas:

how that the promise which was made unto the fathers; not barely and solely that which respects the resurrection of Christ, but the mission of him, the exhibition of him in human nature, his incarnation, his work and business he was to do, namely, to obtain salvation for his people; it chiefly regards the promise of his coming into the world to do the will of God, which promise was made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Judah, (<01221818>Genesis 22:18 26:4 28:14 49:10).

Ver. 33. *God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children*, etc.] The natural descendants of them, as Paul and Barnabas, and the Jews in the synagogue, were:

in that he hath raised up Jesus again; which may not be understood of his resurrection from the dead, since the promise made, and now fulfilled, has not a single respect to that; but of his being raised up, and sent forth into the world, to be a Saviour and Redeemer, and to sit upon the throne of David, as in (<44132300>Acts 2:30 3:26 13:23) of which raising of him up to regal dignity, mention is made in (<19020100>Psalm 2:1-12), (<19060100>Psalm 6:1-7:17) which

is produced as a testimony of it; and the rather this seems to be the sense, since the article of the resurrection of the dead is spoken of in the next verse, as distinct from this; and other passages of Scripture are produced, as speaking of it; though admitting that Christ's resurrection from the dead is here intended, as the Alexandrian copy reads, what follows is very applicable to it, without any detriment to the doctrine of Christ's eternal generation and sonship, as will be hereafter made to appear:

as it is written in the second psalm: Beza's most ancient copy, and other very ancient copies, read, "in the first psalm"; for the first and second psalms seem to have been reckoned by the ancient Jews but one psalm, or one section; for so they say [f677]

> ""blessed is the man", etc. and "why do the Heathen rage", etc. ayh hçrp adj, are one "parasha", or section: and they further observe [f678], that ``every section that was dear to David, he began it with "blessed", and ended it with "blessed"; he began with "blessed", as it is written, (<19001>Psalm 1:1) "blessed is the man", etc. and he ended it with "blessed", as it is written, (<19002>Psalm 2:12) "blessed are all they that put their "trust in him":" though it is elsewhere said [f679], "blessed is the man", etc. ((<19001>Psalm 1:1-6)) "and why do the heathen rage", etc. ((<19002>Psalm 2:1-12)) are two sections; and "to the chief musician on Muth Labben", ((<19009>Psalm 9:1-20)) and "why standest thou afar off", etc. ((<19010>Psalm 10:1-18)) are two sections."

And Kimchi calls [f680] this psalm, as the generality of copies here do, saying,

> "this psalm is ynçh rwmzmh, "the second psalm.""

And that this psalm belongs to the Messiah, is evident from the mention made of him in (<19002>Psalm 2:2) from the mad counsel, and vain attempts of the kings of the earth against him, (<19002>Psalm 2:1-3). God's decree and resolution to make and declare him King of Zion, notwithstanding all their efforts upon him, (<19002>Psalm 2:4-6) from his asking and having the Gentiles, and uttermost parts of the earth for his inheritance, which is true of no other, (<19002>Psalm 2:8,9) and especially from that reverence, worship, and adoration, which are to be given to him, and that trust and confidence to be placed in him, (<19002>Psalm 2:10-12) which can by no means agree with David, nor with any mere creature whatever; and as for (<19002>Psalm 2:7) which is here cited, what is said in that is inapplicable even to angels,

(³⁰⁰¹Hebrews 1:5) and much more to David, or any mere man. The whole psalm was, by the ancient Jews, interpreted of the Messiah, as is confessed by some of their later doctors. R. David Kimchi says [f681],

> “there are that interpret it of Gog and Magog, and the Messiah, he is the King Messiah; and so the Rabbins of blessed memory interpret it.”

And Jarchi confesses the same, and is somewhat more open in giving his reason for interpreting it otherwise.

> “Our Rabbins (says he) expound this affair concerning the King Messiah; but according to its literal sense, and for an answer to the heretics (or Christians), it is right to explain it concerning David himself.”

he clause, “and for an answer to the heretics”, is left out in later editions, but was in the more ancient ones; it being so open and barefaced, that the Jews did not choose to let it stand. Aben Ezra is in a doubt whether to interpret the psalm of David, or of the Messiah; though he thinks the former is best; and particularly this seventh verse is, by several of their ancient writers, applied to the Messiah; in one of their writings, esteemed very ancient, are these words [f682];

> “from thence shall come forth, in that day, the Messiah of David; and this is the mystery of, “I will declare the decree, the Lord said unto me, thou art my Son”, etc.”

And this is the sense of R. Ame [f683], a famous ancient doctor of theirs: upon mention of those words in (²⁴⁰²Jeremiah 31:22) “the Lord hath created a new thing”, etc.

> “says R. Hone, in the name of R. Ame, this is the King Messiah, as it is said, (¹⁹⁰⁷Psalm 2:7) “this day have I begotten thee”.”

And in like manner in the Talmud [f684], it is understood of the Messiah, where are these expressions;

> “the Rabbins teach, that Messiah, the son of David, who shall be revealed in haste in our days, the holy blessed God said unto him, ask anything of me, and I will give it thee, as it is said, (¹⁹⁰⁷Psalm 2:7) “I will declare the decree, etc. this day have I begotten thee”.”

And that this was the sense of the Jews in the times of the apostle, need not be doubted, since the apostle cites these words before a Jewish assembly, in one of their synagogues, and applies them to the Messiah, without any hesitation, or any further reasoning upon it, as being a thing generally agreed on, and out of doubt; wherefore the Jew [f685] has no reason to charge the apostle with an error in citing a passage in this psalm, and applying it to Christ, since their ancient doctors have allowed, that it belongs to him, and even the very passage which the apostle produces; which passage Maimonides [f686] himself applies to the Messiah. This objector would have it, that David spoke the whole psalm by the Holy Spirit concerning himself, and that he calls himself the Lord's anointed; and that being anointed by the will of the Lord, what was against his kingdom, was against the Lord himself; and that he is called the Son of God, because he attended to the worship of God; and that the begetting of him refers to the time of his unction by Samuel; and that it can by no means agree with Jesus of Nazareth, who never ruled in any place, but others ruled over him, when they condemned him to death as the meanest of the people; and who himself says, that he came not to be ministered unto, (Matthew 20:28) especially he thinks those words, "ask of me, and I will give the Heathen", etc. greatly militate against the application of the psalm to Jesus; for if he is God, what need has he to ask of another? But since the Jewish doctors themselves have applied this psalm to the Messiah, the apostle ought not to be blamed for making such an application; and there are many things which cannot be applied to David himself; for whatever may be said of his anointing, begetting, and sonship, the uttermost parts of the earth were never given for his possession; and much less can he be the son the kings of the earth are called upon to kiss and worship, or he be the object of trust and confidence; and though Jesus in the days of his humiliation was not ministered unto, but ministered to others, and ruled not over others, but submitted to the death of the cross; he has since been made and declared Lord of all, and his kingdom has taken place in the nations of the world, and ere long all the kingdoms of it will become his; and though he is God, it is no ways inconsistent with him, as man and Mediator, to ask anything of his Father, and especially what has been agreed between them shall be given: the words cited by the apostle are, "thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee"; in Beza's ancient copy, the verse following these words is added, "ask of me", etc. The words are to be understood of the eternal filiation of Christ, and are produced, to set forth the greatness and dignity of his person; whom God had raised and sent forth in human nature, to be

the Saviour and Redeemer of his people: though should they be applied to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, it will no ways prejudice the doctrine of Christ's proper and natural sonship, as being the only begotten of the Father; since the resurrection of Christ is not the cause of his sonship, or the reason why he is called the Son of God, but a manifestation of it; Christ was the Son of God, before his resurrection from the dead; he was declared to be so by a voice from heaven, was believed on by his disciples as such, and confessed by others, both men and devils: besides, if his resurrection was the cause of his sonship, he must beget himself, which is absurd, for he was himself concerned in his resurrection from the dead; more over, his sonship would not be proper, but figurative and metaphorical, whereas he is God's own, or proper son; besides, on this account he could not be called God's only begotten Son, because there are others that have been, and millions that will be raised from the dead besides him: but the reason why these words are applied to the resurrection of Christ, allowing them to be so, is not because he was then begotten as the Son of God, but because he was then manifested to be the eternally begotten Son of God; things are said to be, when they are only manifested to be; so Christ is said to be that day begotten, because he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead", (Romans 1:4) Hence these words are applicable to any time or thing wherein Christ is manifested to be the only begotten Son of God, and accordingly are applied to different times and things; (see Hebrews 1:3-5, 5:5).

Ver. 34. *And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead*, etc.] This, as it is differently expressed from the raising him up, spoken of in the preceding verse, so seems to be a distinct article from it, and is supported by other passages of Scripture: the apostle having shown that God had fulfilled his promise to the fathers, concerning the raising up, or sending the Messiah into the world, who is no other than the eternal Son of God, proceeds to prove his resurrection from the dead, as man, which was in such sort, as

now no more to return to corruption; so as not to die any more, and be laid in the grave, and there corrupted; as was the case of those who were raised from the dead by the prophets, under the Old Testament, or by Christ himself, before his death and resurrection; for these were raised to a mortal life, and died again, and were buried, and saw corruption; but Christ was raised up from the dead, never to die more, but to live forever, having in

his hands the keys of hell and death, and being the triumphant conqueror over death and the grave; in proof of which some passages are produced out of the Old Testament, as follow: “he said on this wise”; that is, God said so, or after this manner, (<235503>Isaiah 55:3) “I will give you the sure mercies of David”; that is, of the Messiah; by which are meant the blessings of the sure and well ordered covenant of grace, which the Messiah by his sufferings and death was to ratify and secure for all his people: now had he only died, and not been raised from the dead, these blessings had not been ratified and made sure unto them; therefore, when God promises his people, that he will give them the sure mercies of David, or the Messiah, he promises that the Messiah shall not only die to procure mercies and blessings for them, but that he shall rise again from the dead, to make them sure unto them; so that these words are pertinently produced in proof of Christ’s resurrection. David is a name frequently given to the Messiah, as in (<243009>Jeremiah 30:9 <263423>Ezekiel 34:23,24, 37:24,25, <280305>Hosea 3:5) David being an eminent type of Christ, and the Messiah being a son of his; and who must be meant here; and which is owned by several Jewish commentators [f687] of the best note; and which appears from his being called a witness to the people, a leader and a commander of them, in the next verse: the blessings of the covenant are fitly called “mercies”, because they spring from the grace and mercy of God, and wonderfully display it, and are in mercy to his people; and these are the mercies of David, or of Christ, because the covenant being made with him, these blessings were put into his hands for them, and come through his blood to them; and hence they are said to be “sure” ones; they are in safe hands; Christ, who is intrusted with them, faithfully distributes them: but then, as by his death he has made way for the communication of them, consistent with the justice of God; so he must rise again, and live for ever, to distribute them, or see that there is an application of them made to the persons for whom they are designed: besides, it is one of the sure mercies promised to David, to the Messiah himself, that though he died, and was laid in the grave, he should not continue there, but rise again, as the next testimony most clearly shows.

Ver. 35. *Wherefore he saith also in another psalm*, etc.] (<191610>Psalm 16:10) or “in another place”, as the Syriac version supplies; or “in another section”, as the Arabic version; or “elsewhere”, as Beza’s most ancient copy, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read:

thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption; which cannot be understood of David: the term “Holy One”, is not so applicable to him,

who was a man subject to infirmities; at least not in such sense as to Christ, who was holy in his nature, and without sin in his life and conversation; besides, David was laid in his grave, and saw corruption, as the apostle afterwards proves: the former part of this passage is not cited, “thou wilt not leave my soul in hell”; which was not absolutely necessary to be mentioned, it being clearly implied in what is produced; for if he should not be suffered to see corruption, then he could not be left in the grave: moreover, the apostle cites that which he intended to reason upon, as he afterwards does, and by it makes it manifestly appear that the words do not belong to David, but the Messiah, and are a clear and pertinent proof of his resurrection from the dead. The Jew [f688] objects to the apostle’s version of these words, rendering t j ç, by “corruption”, whereas he says it signifies a “pit”; but it ought to be observed, that the word in its first proper, and literal sense, signifies “corruption”; and a pit or grave is only called by this name, because dead bodies, or carcasses, are therein corrupted; and instances may be given, wherein the word cannot be understood in another sense than in that of corruption, as in (<032225>Leviticus 22:25 <195523>Psalm 55:23). (See Gill on “<440227>Acts 2:27”).

Ver. 36. *For David, after he had served his own generation*, etc.] Or the men of that age and generation in which he lived, the subjects of his kingdom; by governing them with wholesome laws, protecting them in their rights and properties, defending them against their enemies, and regulating and promoting the worship of God among them:

by the will of God; this clause may be read in connection with the preceding words, as it is in the Syriac version thus, “after he had in his own age served the will of God”; acted according to it, fulfilled it, and did what the Lord declared to him, or he knew to be the will of God; or with the following words, as in the Vulgate Latin version, “by the will of God fell on sleep”, or died; and then the sense is, that after he had done the work of his generation, which was appointed and cut out for him, he died by the decree and counsel of God, which has set bounds to man’s life, and has fixed the time of his death; no man dies before, or lives longer than the time it is the will of God he should. David lived according to the will of God’s command, and he died by the will of his decree. Death is expressed by falling asleep; a way of speaking very common with the eastern nations, and which represents it in an easy and familiar manner: it is not an annihilation of men; the dead are only fallen asleep, and will wake again in the resurrection; till which time the grave is their restingplace, and out of

which the saints will rise fresh and cheerful; and yet, as a time of sleep is a time of inactivity, so no work is done in the grave; and therefore whatever we find to do, should be done in life. It is a long sleep; David has been many hundred years, even thousands, in it; and there will be no awaking out of it till Christ comes again: but this is to be understood of the body only, which only is capable of sleeping the sleep of death, and not of the soul, which dies not with the body, nor continues with it in the grave in a state of insensibility and inactivity, but immediately returns to God; and being happy, is employed in the vision of God, and Christ, in the fellowship of saints and angels, and in the work of praise and thanksgiving: thus, though David is fallen asleep in his body, he is present in spirit with the Lord; and that sweet psalmist of Israel is singing the songs of God in a much better manner than when here on earth. Blessed are they that sleep in Jesus, for they not only sleep quietly and safely, but shall surely rise again, for God will bring them with him; Christ is the first fruits of them, and they shall awake in his likeness. It is further said of David, "and was laid unto his fathers", or was buried; his sepulchre is said to be in Mount Zion [f689], where the kings of the house of David were buried; and his sepulchre Peter says in (<44029>Acts 2:29) remained till his time.

And saw corruption; his body putrefied in the grave, became the repast of worms, and was reduced to rottenness and dust; and therefore the words could not be spoken of him cited from (<19610>Psalm 16:10).

Ver. 37. *But he whom God raised again*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version adds, "from the dead"; meaning the Lord Jesus Christ, who was raised from the dead by God the Father: and

saw no corruption; he did not lie so long in the grave as to corrupt and putrefy, but was raised from the dead the third day; wherefore the passage, before cited, is very applicable to him, and is a clear proof that the Messiah was to rise from the dead, as Jesus did.

Ver. 38. *Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren*, etc.] The apostle having discoursed concerning the incarnation of Christ, his death and resurrection, proceeds to take notice of some particular benefits and blessings of grace arising from thence, which are published and made known to the sons of men in the everlasting Gospel, as were now to the Jews by Paul and Barnabas; such as forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ, and justification by his righteousness; the former of them is mentioned in this verse, the latter in the next:

that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; forgiveness of sins, which is sometimes expressed by a non-imputation of them, a non-remembrance of them, a covering and putting them away, and a blotting them out, is an act of free grace and mercy, and yet is through the blood of Christ; through that believers have it; Christ is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to give it, having by his blood procured it; and this is a principal doctrine of the Gospel, which is published in his name, and which the light of nature and law of Moses know nothing of, and cannot ascertain; the prophets bear testimony to this truth, that everyone that believes in Christ shall receive the remission of sins, of all his sins. That there is a God is known by the light of nature, and that sin is an offence unto him; but by it is not known in what way offended Deity is appeased; nor does it, nor can it assure any that God will forgive sin on any account whatever; not on account of mercy in him, nor on account of good works, or of repentance in them; God, as the God of nature, does not forgive sin, but as the God of grace: and though the law of Moses declares what is good, and gives knowledge of evil, yet admits not of repentance as a satisfaction for sin committed; nor does it represent God as merciful, but as just, and so accuses, condemns, and kills: the doctrine of forgiveness is a pure doctrine of the Gospel; and when it is preached aright, it is preached through Christ, not through the works of the law, not through repentance, nor through faith, nor through the absolute mercy of God, but through Christ, through the blood of Christ, which was shed to obtain it in a way consistent with the justice of God; and through his hands it is given. When Christ is called a "man", it must not be thought that he is a mere man; he is God as well as man; had he been a mere man, forgiveness of sin could not have been by his blood, or through his name, or for his sake; it is because he is God, truly and properly God, that there is a virtue in his blood to take away sin, and cleanse from it; (see <6007>1 John 1:7) Besides, the word "man" is not in the original text, it is only "through this is preached to you"; that is, through this glorious and divine person, who, though he died as man, and was buried, yet saw no corruption, and is now raised from the dead, and is at the right hand of God. Some copies read διατουτο, because of this, or for this reason; seeing he is raised from the dead, therefore the doctrine of the remission of sins is preached; for if he had died, and had not risen again, there could have been no pardon by his blood, nor justification by his righteousness; (see <4525>Romans 4:25).

Ver. 39. *And by him all that believe are justified from all things*, etc.] Christ, as God, is not only the justifier of his people, who pronounces them righteous in the sight of God; but his righteousness imputed to them is the matter of their justification, or that by which they are justified; and not the works of the law, or obedience to the Gospel, or internal holiness, either in whole or in part, or the grace of faith, but the object of it, Christ, and his righteousness: and justification by this is complete and perfect; it is from all sin, original and actual, secret and open, greater or lesser sins; sins of presumption and ignorance, of omission or commission; from all things the law can charge with, as breaches of it; from all things which the justice of God can demand satisfaction for; and from all things that Satan, or a man's own conscience, can justly accuse him of. And those that believe in Christ with the heart unto righteousness, are openly and manifestly justified in their own consciences, and can claim their interest in it, and have the comfort of it, as well as they were before secretly justified in the mind of God, and in their head and representative Jesus Christ. And from all sin these are justified of God, as Beza's ancient copy reads, "for it is God that justifies", (Romans 8:33) against whom men have sinned, and whose law they have violated, and whose justice they have affronted, by reason of which they are liable to condemnation; but God justifies them, by imputing the righteousness of his Son to them, in which he views them as without fault, unblamable and irreprovable; and though all men are not justified, yet many are; even all the seed of Israel, all the elect of God, everyone that believes in Christ, as all do who are ordained to eternal life; Christ's righteousness is imputed and applied to all these, and therefore they shall never enter into condemnation, but shall be acquitted and discharged from all things,

from which, it is added,

ye could not be justified by the law of Moses; that is, by the works of the law, or by obedience to it, because such obedience is imperfect; and therefore the law cannot justify, discharge, and acquit upon it, but instead thereof, must curse and condemn; as it does everyone, that does not do all things commanded in the law, and in the manner that requires; besides, if righteousness was hereby, the grace of God in justification would be frustrated, the death of Christ would be rendered null and void, and boasting would not be excluded; all which are contrary to the scheme of the Gospel. It may be observed, that pardon of sin and justification are two distinct blessings, or the apostle must be guilty of a great tautology; since

having spoken of forgiveness of sin in the preceding verse, he speaks of justification in this, as another blessing enjoyed by and through Christ, and published in the Gospel, styled therefore the word and ministration of righteousness. And indeed they are distinct; in pardon the man is considered as a sinner, in justification as a righteous man; pardon takes away his sin, justification gives him a righteousness; pardon frees from punishment, but justification besides that gives him a title to eternal life; to pardon, the blood of Christ is sufficient; but to justification are required the holiness of Christ's nature, the perfect obedience of his life, as well as his suffering of death; moreover, justification passed on Christ as the head and representative of his people, but not pardon; he may be said to be justified, but not pardoned: these two blessings make a considerable figure in the ministry of the word.

Ver. 40. *Beware therefore*, etc.] Of rejecting the Gospel, and those excellent truths of it; since forgiveness of sin and a justifying righteousness are said to be had in no other way, but in and through Christ; take heed therefore,

lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the Prophets: some think that the apostle refers to two places in the Prophets, which he puts together, and therefore uses the plural number; the one in (<23B814>Isaiah 28:14) from whence the character of the persons is taken, "ye despisers", or scornful men, who are addressed; and the other in (<350105>Habakkuk 1:5) where is to be found what is said to them; but rather the latter place is what is only referred to, and is said to be, "in the Prophets", that is, in one of the prophets; (See Gill on "<430645>John 6:45") or in the book of the Prophets, the lesser prophets, which were together in one book, among which Habakkuk stands; the Ethiopic version reads in the singular number, "lest should come upon you the word of the prophet, saying", as follows.

Ver. 41. *Behold, ye despisers*, etc.] In (<350105>Habakkuk 1:5) from whence these words are taken: we render it with others, "behold ye among the Heathen"; as if the word µywgb, was compounded of b "in", and µywg, "nations" or "Heathens"; and so reads the Chaldee paraphrase, "look among the people"; but the Septuagint version renders it, "behold, ye despisers"; which the apostle is thought to follow; wherefore some have imagined a different reading, and that the Septuagint, instead of µywgb reads µydgwb, the singular of which is used in (<350105>Habakkuk 2:5) and there rendered a "despiser" in the same version: but it should be observed,

that the Septuagint is not the only version that so renders the word; for the Syriac version renders it, “behold, ye impudent”; and the Arabic version, “behold, ye negligent”; and Dr. Pocock [f690] has shown that this word comes from the root agb which though not to be found in the Bible, yet in the Arabic language, among other things, signifies to behave proudly, or insolently, and so is very properly rendered “despisers”, without supposing any different reading or corruption in the text: and as in Habakkuk the proud and haughty Jews are there spoke to, who neglected and despised the law; this is accommodated by the apostle to the Jews in his time, who were very much disposed to despise the Gospel, as they generally did. It follows, “and wonder, and perish”; or disappear, or change countenance, through shame for their sins, and amazement at the judgments of God upon them:

for I work a work in your days, which you shall in no wise believe though a man declare it unto you; which, in Habakkuk, refers to the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans; and here it is suggested, by the citation and application of it, that in a short time a like work would be done in their days; the city and temple of Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Romans, which when told to the Jews in foreign parts, as here in Pisidia, would not be believed by them, though it should be told them by men of probity and credit.

Ver. 42. *And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue*, etc.] The time of worship there being over; or being offended at the apostle’s discourse concerning Jesus: the words will bear to be rendered, “when they were gone out of the synagogue of the Jews”; and the sense be, when Paul and Barnabas were come out from thence, Paul having finished his discourse: the word “Jews”, and the phrase, “out of the synagogue”, are left out in Beza’s ancient copy, and in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions; and so may be interpreted either of the Jews, or of Paul and Barnabas; the Ethiopic version leaves out the whole clause: “the Gentiles besought that these words might be spoken unto them the next sabbath”; that is, the proselytes from among the Gentiles, who attended on the synagogue of the Jews, and who stayed behind when the Jews were gone out, being exceedingly delighted with the apostle’s doctrine, most earnestly entreated that the same subject might be insisted upon the next sabbath: or, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, the words may be rendered, “they besought the Gentiles”; that is, the apostles, when they saw the Jews go out, being offended, addressed the Gentiles, and entreated

them to come the next sabbath day, and patiently hear these doctrines: though in the above copies and versions there is no mention made of the Gentiles, any more than of the Jews; so that this may be understood either of the rulers of the synagogue, who first invited them to speak a word of exhortation to the people, or of the whole body, Jews and proselytes, who, when they were departing, entreated they might hear them again the next sabbath; about which "next sabbath", there is some difficulty; the words may be rendered, "between the sabbath", and so may regard what we call weekdays, or working days; and which the Jews call μyytnbç μymy, "the intermediate days", or the days between one sabbath and another [f691]; and on some one of these days it was desired that the apostles would give them another discourse on the same subject; and it may be particularly, that either Monday or Thursday, the second or fifth day of the week, might be pitched upon; since on these days the Jews met together in the synagogue, and read the law, according to the order of Ezra, that they might not be three days without the law [f692]; and these were the days on which they fasted, (<42>18<12>Luke 18:12). Others choose to render the words, "on the sabbath day after"; and so the Syriac version renders it, "on the other sabbath"; and the Ethiopic version, "the sabbath following"; and so the Vulgate Latin, with which ours, and others agree; and to this reading and sense, (<44>13<44>Acts 13:44) greatly inclines; though they might meet together on one of the days between, when being so delighted with what they heard, and of which they so much talked, that the next sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear: but what pleases me best, and which, I think, has never been observed by any, is, that there was one sabbath in the year which was called μytnb tbç; which may be rendered by το μεταξυ σαββατον, "the sabbath between", or the intermediate sabbath; and this sabbath was on one of the ten days before the day of atonement; and was so called, because it was between the first of Tisri, which answers to part of our September, and was the beginning of the year, and the tenth of the same month, which was the day of atonement; and was a sabbath very much taken notice of by the Jews [f693]: and now this might be the sabbath following, and so all agrees; and a reason may be given for the different phrases in this verse, and (<44>13<44>Acts 13:44) and if so, this also points out the time of the year that Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch in Pisidia, and when that remarkable period began, that the apostles turned from the Jews, and preached to the Gentiles.

Ver. 43. *Now when the congregation was broken up*, etc.] Or "the synagogue"; not the place, but the people that met in it; when they were "dismissed", as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it; either in a disorderly manner, through the offence the Jews took at Paul's preaching; or if in an orderly way, this was done by ^mgrwth, "the interpreter"; so it is said [f694], that

> "R. Hotzpith the interpreter dismissed the people."

Many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas; who were converted by this sermon, and believed in Christ, and cordially embraced the doctrines of the Gospel, that had been preached. Piscator thinks that the word "religious" does not belong to the text, but some way or other crept into it, since it supposes some proselytes not to be religious; whereas, though all religious persons were not proselytes, at least proselytes of righteousness, yet all proselytes were religious persons; but it is retained in all copies and versions:

who speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God; meaning, not that the Jews and proselytes spoke to Paul and Barnabas, and entreated and persuaded them to persevere in preaching the doctrine of the grace of God, notwithstanding the offence some might take at it, and the ill usage they might meet with on account of it; but that Paul and Barnabas took notice of them, and by their following them, and by the conversation they had with them, found that the word had reached their hearts, and that they had embraced the doctrine of the Gospel; wherefore they spoke a word of exhortation to them, beseeching them to continue in it, it springing from the grace of God, and being a declaration of it; and particularly in those special doctrines of grace, which had been insisted on, namely, remission of sins, and free justification by the blood of Christ; for it is more likely, and was more necessary, that these should be exhorted by the apostles, and not the apostles by them.

Ver. 44. *And the next sabbath day*, etc.] The same which is before called the "sabbath between", which was between the first and tenth of Tisri, or between the beginning of the year, and the day of atonement:

came almost the whole city together. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions leave out the word "almost", and read, the whole city came together; some out of curiosity, having heard much said of these men and their doctrines, others to cavil and quarrel, and others from a true affection to the Gospel,

and an earnest desire of knowing more of it, and of receiving more advantage from it: though the end in all was,

to hear the word of God; or "of the Lord", as the Alexandrian copy; that is, the doctrine of the Gospel, which comes from God, and, concerns the Lord Jesus Christ, his person, offices, grace, and righteousness.

Ver. 45. *But when the Jews saw the multitudes*, etc.] The vast number of people, the inhabitants of the city, the Gentiles, that were assembled together to hear the word. This must be understood of the unbelieving Jews, who came with no good design:

they were filled with envy; at the Gentiles, that they should have the word equally preached to them, as to themselves, to whom the oracles of God were committed; or at the popularity of the apostles, that such numbers should follow them; and they might fear many converts might be made by them, from among them:

and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul; concerning Jesus of Nazareth being the Messiah, which they denied; and concerning free justification by his righteousness, which they affirmed to be by the works of the law: and they went on

contradicting and blaspheming; publicly opposing him, and speaking evil of him, and of his doctrines; and not only so, but belching out their blasphemies against the Lord Jesus Christ. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word "contradicting", as redundant, it having been before said, that "they spoke against", or "contradicted" what Paul delivered; though it may not be superfluous, but express their continuance in their contradiction and opposition; and which was attended with, and issued in blasphemy: such a spirit of reproach and blasphemy is with the Jews a sign of the Messiah's coming;

> "says R. Jannai [f695], when you see generation after generation reproaching and blaspheming, look for the feet of the Messiah, according to (Psalm 89:51)."

This they have been doing one age after another, even for many ages; and therefore, according to one of their own signs, the Messiah must be come.

Ver. 46. *Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold*, etc.] They were not at all daunted at the opposition they met with, but rather grew more courageous, and used great liberty of speech, and spoke out freely, plainly, and openly: and said,

it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; as it was by Christ and his apostles, whilst he was on earth; and though, after his resurrection, the commission to his apostles ran, to preach the Gospel to all nations, yet they were ordered to begin at Jerusalem, and preach to the Jews first; and this they hitherto strictly observed:

but seeing ye put it from you; with loathing, indignation, and contempt:

and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life; no man is worthy of everlasting life, on account of anything done by him, for it is the free gift of God; and all who are sensible of themselves, and of the just demerit of sin, conclude themselves unworthy to inherit eternal life; but this was not the case of these Jews, nor is it the sense here: but the meaning is, that the Jews, by this act of theirs in rejecting the Gospel, did as it were pass sentence upon themselves, and determine against themselves that they ought not to be saved, since they despised the means of salvation; or that they were not worthy to have the Gospel preached to them any more, which may be called eternal life, because it is brought to light by it, and revealed in it; and because it points out the way unto it, as well as gives some account of it:

lo, we turn to the Gentiles; to preach the Gospel to them only, or chiefly; now the words of Christ began to be fulfilled, (<4021243>Matthew 21:43).

Ver. 47. *For so hath the Lord commanded us*, etc.] For though Christ in his first commission restrained his disciples from going into the Gentiles, and preaching to them, yet when he enlarged their commission after his resurrection, he bid them go into all nations, and preach the Gospel to every creature; and told them, that they should be his witnesses to the uttermost part of the earth; (see <4028119>Matthew 28:19 <4101615>Mark 16:15 <4400108>Acts 1:8) unless this should rather be thought to refer to what follows:

saying; or "as it is written", as the Syriac version supplies; or "because so saith the Scripture", as the Ethiopic version, namely in (<2304906>Isaiah 49:6).

I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles; to enlighten the Gentiles that sit in darkness, by the preaching of the Gospel to them, and the Spirit of

God attending it: this supposes the Gentiles to have been in darkness; as they were about divine things, before the times of the Gospel: they had no true knowledge of God himself; for though they knew there was a God, they did not know, at least but few of them, that there was but one God; and none of them knew anything of him as in Christ; they had not a revelation of his will, they were without the written law, and were strangers to the true manner of worshipping the divine Being; they knew nothing at all of the Messiah, and of his righteousness and salvation by him; nor of the Spirit of God, and the operations of his grace, nor of the resurrection of the dead, and were very ignorant of a future state: it was therefore an unspeakable mercy to them, that Christ was appointed to be a light to them; not in a way of nature, as he is that light which lightens every man that comes into the world; but in a way of grace, through the ministration of the Gospel, and by the special illuminations of the divine Spirit; whereby they see there is a righteous judge, and that there will be a righteous judgment; and that sin is exceeding sinful, and cannot be atoned for by them, and therefore they are in themselves miserable and undone; and they further see, that pardon and righteousness are only by Christ, and that salvation is alone in him. The words are spoken by God the Father to his Son, and express the eternal decree of God, and the designation of Christ to be the light of his people; the mission of him in time as the light of the world, and the exhibition of him in the Gospel, for the illumination of men by his Spirit and grace. In the Hebrew text it is, “I will give thee”, etc. for all this springs from the free grace of God; Christ in all respects is the gift of God, as he is the head of the church, and the Saviour of the body, so as he is the light of men; and it is necessary that he should be light, in order to be salvation, as follows; for though men may go to hell in the dark, yet not to heaven; the way of the wicked is darkness, but the path of just is shining light: those whom God rives, he enlightens with the light of life:

that thou shouldest be for salvation to the ends of the earth; impetratively as the author of it, and applicatively by means of the Gospel, which publishes salvation by Christ; and is the power of God unto salvation, to Gentiles as well as Jews, even to all that believe, in what part of the world soever they live: thus what was decreed and resolved on by God the Father, and was declared by him to his Son, is applied to his ministers and ambassadors, who represented him; so that what they did, he may be said to do; and who by them was to go, and did go to the Gentiles, and enlighten them with the light of the Gospel, and became salvation to them;

so that this prophecy is produced by the apostles, to vindicate their conduct, as well as to show the agreement between the command of Jesus Christ to his disciples, and the decree of God the Father; as also to illustrate and confirm the particular order, which the Apostle Paul had, to go to the Gentiles, and to which he may have a regard here; (see <4426717>Acts 26:17). In the Hebrew text it is, “my salvation”: provided, promised, and sent by God, the Saviour of his people.

Ver. 48. *And when the Gentiles heard this*, etc.] That it was the will of God, and the command of Christ, that the Gospel should be preached to them; by whom are to be understood the Pisidians, the inhabitants of Antioch, who had never been proselytes to the Jewish religion:

they were glad; not that the Jews were likely to have the Gospel taken away from them, and be utterly deprived of it, but that it was to be preached to them:

and glorified the word of the Lord; not the Lord Jesus Christ, the essential word of the Lord, whom they might not as yet have such a distinct knowledge of; but rather God himself, for his word, particularly his word of command, (<4413747>Acts 13:47) as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read; or the sense is, they spake well of the Gospel, and gave glory to God, or the Lord, who had sent it among them: Beza’s most ancient copy reads, they “received the word of the Lord”, which seems to be a more agreeable reading; to glorify the word of the Lord, is an unusual phrase:

and as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed; faith is not the cause, or condition of the decree of eternal life, but a means fixed in it, and is a fruit and effect of it, and what certainly follows upon it, as in these persons: some would have the words rendered, “as many as were disposed unto eternal life believed”; which is not countenanced by the ancient versions. The Arabic renders it as we do, and the Syriac thus, “as many as were put, or appointed unto eternal life”; and the Vulgate Latin version, “as many as were pre-ordained”. Moreover, the phrase of being “disposed unto”, or “for eternal life”, is a very unusual, if not a very improper, and an inaccurate one; men are said to be disposed to an habit, or to an act, as to vice or virtue, but not to reward or punishment, as to heaven or hell; nor does it appear that these Gentiles had any good dispositions to eternal life, antecedent to their believing; for though they are said, (<4413742>Acts 13:42) to entreat the apostles to preach the same things to them the next sabbath, yet the words as there observed, according to their natural order, may be

rendered “they”, i.e. the apostles, “besought the Gentiles”; and in some copies and versions, the “Gentiles” are not mentioned at all: and as for their being “glad”, and “glorifying the word of the Lord”, it is not evident that this was before their believing; and if it was, such things have been found in persons, who have had no true, real, and inward dispositions to spiritual things, as in many of our Lord’s hearers; besides, admitting that there are, in some, good dispositions to eternal life, previous to faith, and that desiring eternal life, and seeking after it, be accounted such, yet these may be where faith does not follow; as in the young rich ruler, that came to Christ with such an inquiry, and went away sorrowful: as many therefore as are so disposed, do not always believe, faith does not always follow such dispositions; and after all, one would have thought that the Jews themselves, who were externally religious, and were looking for the Messiah, and especially the devout and able women, were more disposed unto eternal life, than the ignorant and idolatrous Gentiles; and yet the latter believed, and the former did not: it follows then, that their faith did not arise from previous dispositions to eternal life, but was the fruit and effect of divine ordination unto it; and the word here used, in various places in this book, signifies determination and appointment, and not disposition of mind; (see <4410 15 2>Acts 15:2 22:10 28:23) The phrase is the same with that used by the Jews, µlw[yyjl wnqtad, “who are ordained to eternal life” [f696]; and yyjl bytkd lk aml[, “everyone that is written to eternal life”; [f697] i.e. in the book of life; and designs no other than predestination or election, which is God’s act, and is an eternal one; is sovereign, irrespective, and unconditional; relates to particular persons, and is sure and certain in its effect: it is an ordination, not to an office, nor to the means of grace, but to grace and glory itself; to a life of grace which is eternal, and to a life of glory which is for ever; and which is a pure gift of God, is in the hands of Christ, and to which his righteousness gives a title: and ordination to it shows it to be a blessing of an early date; and the great love of God to the persons ordained to it; and the certainty of enjoying it.

Ver. 49. *And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region*.] That is, of Pisidia, in which Antioch was; not by the Apostles Paul and Barnabas, who seem to go directly to Iconium, after they were expelled the city and suburbs of Antioch; but by some of those who were converted under their ministry, and had gifts bestowed on them, qualifying them to preach the Gospel to others, which they did with success. There were no doubt several churches planted in this country, and particularly

there was one at Antioch, of which these new converts were the beginning, and which continued: in the "fourth" century, this church was a patriarchate, for it is said, under Valentinian and Theodosius, Optimus obtained the patriarchate of Antioch in Pisidia; in the "fifth" century, it was the metropolitan of Pisidia; in this age, mention is made of several bishops of this place; Candidianus, bishop of Antioch in Pisidia, was present at two synods, one at Constantinople against Eutyches, and another at Ephesus; Dionysius, bishop of the same place, assisted in the synod at Chalcedon, and Pergamius at that which was at Constantinople, under the Emperor Theodosius, and at another at Chalcedon, under the Emperor Marcianus: there were also in this century, bishops of other churches in Pisidia; as Severus, bishop of Sozopolis in Pisidia, who was present in the council at Ephesus, against Nestorius; and Olympius, bishop of Mount Hem in Pisidia, who was at the Chalcedon council; and Paulinus bishop of Apamea, Eortius bishop of Nicopolis, and Alexander bishop of Seleucia, and Longinus bishop of Talbondana, all in Pisidia: in the "sixth" century, there were churches in Pisidia embracing the truth of Christ; Bacchus was bishop of Antioch, and John of another place, who both were in the fifth synod at Constantinople: in the "seventh" century, we read of the church at Antioch, as the metropolitan of Pisidia, and of a bishop of it in the sixth council at Constantinople: in the eighth "century", Gregory, bishop of this place, condemned in a synod the worship of images, but afterwards recanted; and in the same century, this city was taken by the Turks, and spoiled [f698]; and after this, we read no more of its church state.

Ver. 50. *But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women*, etc.] These seem not to be Jewish women; could they be thought to be such, they might easily be concluded to be of the sect of the Pharisees, which was the strictest and most devout sect among the Jews; for there were women Pharisees, as well as men; so we read of hçwrp hça, "a woman Pharisee" [f699]; but these were Gentile women, proselyted to the Jewish religion, and were in their way very religious and devout, and were also "honourable": the word used signifies, not only that they were of a comely form, of a decent habit, and of good manners, as it is by some interpreted; but that they were persons of figure and distinction, of good families; the Syriac version renders it "rich", whose husbands were the principal men of the city; wherefore the Jews applied to these women, and stirred up them to work upon their husbands, who seem to be those next mentioned:

and the chief men of the city; the magistrates and officers in it:

and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas; raised the mob, and set them upon them:

and expelled them out of their coasts; drove them out of their city and suburbs.

Ver. 51. *But they shook off the dust of their feet against them*, etc.] As Christ directed his apostles to do; (See Gill on "Matthew 10:14").

And came unto Iconium, a city in Lycaonia; here it is placed both by Ptolomy [f700] and Strabo [f701]; Pliny says [f702], that

> "there was a tetrarchy granted out of Lycaonia, on that part which borders on Galatia, consisting of fourteen cities, the most celebrated city being Iconium."

It was called by the Syrians anyqh, "Ik-ona", which signifies "the bosom of sheep"; the country round about it being famous for feeding great numbers of sheep; and here afterwards was a church of Christ, a bosom for his sheep; it is now in the hands of the Turks, and is called "Conia", or "Cogne".

Ver. 52. *And the disciples were filled with joy*, etc.] Meaning either the "apostles", as the Ethiopic version renders it, Paul and Barnabas; who rejoiced, both at the success they had met with, and because they were counted worthy to suffer reproach and persecution for the sake of Christ and his Gospel: or rather the disciples at Antioch, and other parts of Pisidia, the new converts; who were filled with joy at the Gospel being preached unto them, and at the constancy and courage of the apostles in suffering for it:

and with the Holy Ghost; which, with the former, designs the same thing as spiritual joy, or joy in the Holy Ghost; or else the gifts and graces of the Spirit, which they had both for their own comfort, and the advantage of others.

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 14

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in Iconium*, etc.] When the apostles were got thither, and as soon as they were there; at least the first opportunity they had:

that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews; which was in Iconium; hither Paul and Barnabas went together, in like manner as they had done at Antioch:

and so spoke; such words, and doctrines of grace, with so much power, authority, and demonstration of the Spirit, with so much plainness, clearness, and evidence, as well as with so much boldness and courage:

that a great multitude, both of the Jews, and also of the Greeks, believed: the doctrines they preached, and in Christ the sum and substance of them; and these were not a few, but a great multitude; and not of one sort, of the Jews only, who expected the Messiah, but of the Greeks, or Gentiles also, who never heard of any; for by Greeks here are meant, not Jews born in Greece, speaking the Greek tongue, and using the Greek Bible, for these were called Hellenists, and not Greeks, but Heathens. These converts laid the foundation of a Gospel church state in this place; for that there was a church here, is certain from (<44142>Acts 14:21-23) In the "first" century, Sosipater is said to be bishop, or pastor of this church, and also Tertius, who are both reckoned among the "seventy" disciples of Christ; (See Gill on "<42100>Luke 10:1"). In the "third" century, Celsus was bishop of this church; and in the same century, several synods were held here, about the error of Novatus; and in the same century, Nicomes bishop of this place, assisted at the council at Antioch, which condemned the heresy of Samosatenus [f703]: in the "fourth" century there was a church in this place, and Amphilochius was bishop of it, of whom Jerom [f704] makes mention; and who read to him a book, concerning the deity and worship of the holy Spirit: in the "fifth" century, it was the metropolitan church of Lycaonia, and Valerianus and Onesiphorus presided over it: in the "sixth" century, a bishop of this church was present at the fifth Roman council under

Symmachus: in the “seventh” century, it bore the character of metropolitan, and a bishop of it assisted at the sixth council at Constantinople, whose name was Paul: in the “eighth” century, Leo was bishop of it, who was present at the synod of Nice [f705]; and after this we hear no more of it, the place falling into the hands of the Turks, who are now possessed of it: here, according to the Roman martyrology, Tryphena and Tryphosa, mentioned in (<4516 62>Romans 16:12) heard the Apostle Paul preach; and here the famous virgin and martyr, Thecla, was converted.

Ver. 2. *But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles*, etc.] That part of the Jews, which continued in unbelief, and rejected the doctrine of the apostles, concerning Jesus of Nazareth being the Messiah; these stirred up the Gentiles, who had no knowledge of, nor faith in this matter:

and made their minds evil affected against the brethren; either in general against all those that embraced the Gospel of Christ; who being of the same faith and family, having the same God to be their Father, and equally related to, and interested in Christ Jesus, are called brethren; or in particular against the Apostles Paul and Barnabas, by representing them as seditious persons, and of bad designs.

Ver. 3. *Long time therefore abode they*, etc.] At Iconium, undaunted and not discouraged, at the treatment they met with: but continued,

speaking boldly in the Lord; using great freedom of speech, and showing great courage and intrepidity of mind; speaking out, without fear, the doctrines of the Gospel, in the name of the Lord, and depending upon strength, assistance, and support, from him:

which gave testimony unto the word of his grace; the Gospel, so called, because it is a publication of the grace and favour of God to the sons of men; in the choice of some of them to everlasting life, in the mission of his Son to redeem them, in the justification of them by his righteousness, and in the forgiveness of them through his blood, in the regeneration of them by his Spirit, in adopting them into his family, and making them heirs of eternal life; and because it is a means of implanting his grace in their souls; to this he bore witness, by giving it success, notwithstanding the opposition made against it, and by miracles wrought in confirmation of it, as follows:

and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands; such as healing the sick, curing the lame, casting out devils; and the like, whereby a testimony was given to the truth of the doctrine they preached: and it may

be observed, that these miraculous works were not wrought by the power of the apostles, but by the power of God; they were only instruments by whom they were done; it was owing to a grant from the Lord, and to his power, that they were performed.

Ver. 4. *But the multitude of the city was divided*, etc.] In their sentiments, about the apostles, their doctrines, and miracles; some approving them, others condemning their doctrines as false, and their miracles as delusions:

and part held with the Jews; that did not believe, but rejected the apostles, despised their doctrines, and disparaged their miracles:

and part with the apostles; these were the Jews and Greeks, that believed; which divisions in families, towns, and cities, though the common consequence of the preaching of the Gospel, are not owing to any fault in that, but to the depravity and corruption of human nature; and are what our Lord declared was, and foretold would be the case, (Luke 12:51).

Ver. 5. *And when there was an assault made*, etc.] Or a strong bias and inclination were in the minds,

both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews, with their rulers; who encouraged them in it:

to use them despitefully, and to stone them; not only to give them reproachful language, but to smite, buffet, and scourge them, and to stone them for blasphemy, which was a punishment among the Jews for such causes.

Ver. 6. *They were ware of it*, etc.] They understood it, were apprised of it, and well weighed it, and considered it in their minds, and what was best to be done at this juncture:

and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia; according to the orders and command of Christ, (Matthew 10:23) not so much to save their lives, as to spread the Gospel in other parts. Lycaonia was a province in the lesser Asia, near Phrygia, separated from it by the mountains; on the east it bordered on Galatia, and had on the west Pamphylia and Pisidia, and on the south Cilicia, unto Mount Taurus. Some say it had its name from Lycaon, the son of Pelasgus; others, seeing it was not a Greek colony, chose to fetch the name of the country from the Syrians, who used to call their neighbour’s country Leikonia, or in the Greek pronunciation

Lycaonia; that is, the country of Iconium, which city was the metropolis of Lycaonia [f706]: Lystra is by Ptolomy [f707] placed in Isauria, and so Derbe is said by Strabo [f708] to be upon the coast of Isauria; wherefore the words may be read thus, as they are in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, "and they fled to the cities of Lycaonia, and to Lystra, and to Derbe"; by which reading, they are not necessarily made the cities of Lycaoma: according to Jerom [f709], they were both cities of Lycaonia. Lystra is the same with hrtç[l, "Lehesthera"; which, in the Hebrew and Syriac languages, signifies "a flock of sheep", or "a city of flocks"; it being a place that abounded with sheep, as the country of Lycaonia in general did [f710]. Derbe was sometimes called "Delbia", which, in the language of the Lycaonians, signifies a "juniper tree"; and Delub, and Dulbe, with the Targumist [f711] and Talmudists [f712], signify a chesnut tree; and with the Arabians, "Dulb" is a plane tree, or poplar; it seems as if it had its name from one or other of those trees, which might grow in large quantities near it:

and unto the region that lieth round about; the said cities.

Ver. 7. *And there they preached the Gospel*.] They did not sit still, nor hide themselves in these places; but, as in others, they preached the Gospel, the good news and glad tidings of the incarnation of Christ, of redemption, peace, and pardon, through his blood, justification by his righteousness, and spiritual and eternal salvation through him: in Beza's most ancient copy, and in one of Stephens's, these words are added, and which Bede also says were in the Greek copies in his time, "and the whole multitude were moved at their doctrines, and Paul and Barnabas continued at Lystra"; which agrees with what follows. It is very likely that many were converted in each of these cities, and in the adjacent country, and that churches were raised in these places; this seems manifest, from (Acts 14:20-23 16:1,2) Artemas, of whom mention is made in (Titus 3:12) and is said to be one of the seventy disciples, is reported to be bishop of Lystra; (see Gill on "Luke 10:1"), though we meet with nothing in ecclesiastical history, concerning the churches in either of these places, until the "sixth" century; when in the fifth Roman synod under Symmachus, there were present the bishops of Lystra and Derbe, as also of Iconium and Larandas, which were likewise cities in Lycaonia [f713].

Ver. 8. *And there sat a certain man at Lystra*, etc.] Where the apostle was preaching; and perhaps he sat there to beg, where there was a great concourse of people, and which might be in the open street: this man was

impotent in his feet; so weak, as not to be able to walk, and even to stand on them, and therefore is said to sit:

being a cripple from his mother's womb; he was born lame, as was the man cured by Peter, (Acts 3:2)

who never had walked; these circumstances are mentioned, to show that his case was incurable by any human art, and to illustrate the following miracle.

Ver. 9. *The same heard Paul speak*, etc.] That is, preach the Gospel; he was one of his hearers, and faith came to hint by hearing; the Arabic version adds, "he cried unto him"; that is, to Paul, whom he heard:

who steadfastly beholding him; not the lame man beholding Paul, but Paul beholding the lame man, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions both express it, as also Beza's ancient copy and others; so Peter looked on the man he cured, (Acts 3:4).

And perceiving that he had faith to be healed; as he might by his looks, his gestures, his attention in hearing, and it may be by somewhat that he said, as well as by revelation, or a spirit of discerning, which he had.

Ver. 10. *Said with a loud voice*, etc.] Not only that the man, but that all might hear and attend to the miracle about to be wrought:

stand upright on thy feet; in five of Beza's manuscripts, and in other copies, and in the Complutensian edition, and in the Syriac version, this clause is introduced with these words, "I say unto thee, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ"; which is much such a form that Peter used, (Acts 3:6) whereby the virtue of the miracle is ascribed to Christ, and not assumed by the apostle:

and he leaped and walked; he sprung up directly from his seat, and leaped about for joy, and walked as well as any other man could.

Ver. 11. *And when the people saw what Paul had done*, etc.] In curing the lame man in so marvellous a manner, and concluding it to be a divine work, and what a mere creature could never perform:

they lift up their voices; not in indignation and wrath, but as persons astonished:

saying in the speech of Lycaonia; by which it should seem that Lystra was a city of Lycaonia, since the Lycaonian language was spoken in it; the Arabic version reads, “in their own tongue”; and the Syriac version, “in the dialect of the country”; very likely a dialect of the Greek tongue;

the gods are come down to us in the likeness of men; they had a notion of deity, though a very wrong one; they thought there were more gods than one, and they imagined heaven to be the habitation of the gods; and that they sometimes descended on earth in human shape, as they supposed they now did.

Ver. 12. *And they called Barnabas Jupiter*, etc.] The supreme God; it may be because that Barnabas was the oldest man, of the tallest stature, and largest bulk, and made the best figure; whereas Paul was younger, of a low stature, and mean appearance:

and Paul Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker; Mercury was the god of eloquence, and the messenger of the gods, and the interpreter of their will [f714]; Paul being chiefly concerned in preaching and speaking to the people, they called him by the name of this God: the Jews had a doctor in their schools, whom they called µyrbdmh çad, “the chief of the speakers” [f715].

Ver. 13. *Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city*, etc.] Not that the priest was before the city, but Jupiter; and the phrase denotes either his presidency over the city, and so the Arabic version renders it, “who was the chief god of their city”; or the place where his image stood, which was out of the city, and so may be said to be before it; accordingly the Syriac version renders it, “who was without the city”; he who officiated as priest to him:

brought oxen and garlands unto the gates; either “of the city”, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions add, where was the statue of Jupiter; or else, and which is most likely, he brought them to the gates of the house, where Paul and Barnabas were; and to this sense the Syriac version renders it, “to the door of the dwelling place where they abode”: what the oxen were brought for is easy to conceive, had it not been expressed; but for what should garlands or crowns be brought? These were used in sacrifices, for different purposes; sometimes they crowned the gods [f716], to whom they sacrificed, and these might be brought to be put upon the heads of Paul and Barnabas; and sometimes the priests wore them [f717], and which seems to be

in imitation of the mitre, wore by the high priest among the Jews; and sometimes even those who came to sacrifice, and implore the assistance of their deities, wore them [f718]; likewise the altars on which they offered sacrifice were crowned with these garlands [f719]; and the sacrifices themselves, and which last seems to be the case here: the garlands were brought to be put upon the oxen; and these were for the most part made of cypress; sometimes of the pine tree, and sometimes of other leaves and flowers, such as were peculiar to the gods [f720]: and there was something like this among the Jews, at the offerings of their first fruits, which were done in this manner [f721];

> "they that were nearest (to Jerusalem) brought green figs and grapes; and they that were more remote brought dried figs and raisins; and an ox went before them, whose horns were covered with gold, tyz lç trj[w, "and a crown of olives" on his head; a pipe sounded before them, till they came near to Jerusalem, and then they sent some before them, who "crowned" their first fruits."

And would have done sacrifice with the people; that is, the priest and the people with him, would have offered sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas, as to two deities; and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions add, "to them"; to both the apostles, with which agrees the Arabic version.

Ver. 14. *Which when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of*, etc.] As they quickly did, such a multitude being about the doors of the house, where they were: it may be observed, that Barnabas is here called an apostle, as in (<441404>Acts 14:4) and is placed before Paul, not as being greater than he, but because of the opinion these Heathens had of him: they rent their clothes; as the Jews did, and were obliged to do, when they heard any blasphemy; (See Gill on "<401665>Matthew 26:65").

And ran in among the people; in great haste, showing great concern of mind, and much indignation and resentment, at what they were about to do:

crying out; aloud, and with great vehemence, that all might hear, and to express the greater dislike of the action.

Ver. 15. *And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things*? etc.] That is, bring these oxen and garlands, and attempt to offer sacrifice; this they said, not as arguing with them calmly and mildly, but with a mixture of indignation,

heat, and zeal, as displeased with, and detesting and abhorring what they were about to do:

we also are men of like passions with you; men, and not gods; of the same human nature, and that as corrupted, alike sinful men, and need a sacrifice better than these; frail mortal men, subject to frailty, imperfection, afflictions, troubles, diseases, and death itself; and so very improper objects of worship:

and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities; from these deities, Jupiter and Mercury, and the rest of them; which were vain, useless, and unprofitable, and could do their votaries no manner of service; and from the worshipping of them, which were so many acts of vanity, folly, and weakness, yea, of sin and wickedness: the apostles were so far from being these gods, that their business was to show men the sin and folly of adhering to them; and to persuade them to relinquish the worship of them, and turn

to the living God; who has life in himself, and is the fountain of life to others; whereas these deities were dead men, and the lifeless images of them; who neither lived themselves, nor could give life to others, or do them any service of any kind: but the living God is he,

which hath made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein; which comprehends all created beings, the whole universe, and all that is in it, angels, men, beasts, fowls, fish, and whatever exists; and therefore is only deserving of religious worship.

Ver. 16. *Who in times past*, etc.] For many hundred years past; even ever since God chose and separated the people of Israel from the rest of the nations, to be a peculiar people to himself: from that time he

suffered all nations to walk in their own ways; of ignorance, superstition, and idolatry; which they devised, and chose, and delighted in: not that he gave them any licence to walk in these ways, without being chargeable with sin, or with impunity; but he left them to themselves, to the dim light and law of nature, and gave them no written law, nor any external revelation of his mind and will; nor did he send any prophets or ministers of his unto them, to show them the evil of their ways, and turn them from them, and direct them to the true God, and the right way of worshipping him; but left them to take their own methods, and pursue the imagination of their own hearts: but the apostle suggests, that the case was now

altered, and God had sent them and other ministers of his, among all nations of the world, to protest against their superstition and idolatry; and to reclaim them from their evil ways, and to direct them to the true and living God, and his worship, and to preach salvation by his Son Jesus Christ.

Ver. 17. *Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness*, etc.] Of his kindness and goodness to them, during this long interval and period of time; for they had not the written law, yet they were not destitute of the law of nature; and had, besides, many instances of providential goodness, by which they might have known God: and should have been thankful to him, and glorified him as God, and not have worshipped the idols of their own hands; the goodness of God should have led them to repentance, and not have been abused to so many wicked purposes as it had been:

in that he did good; in a providential way, to persons very undeserving of it, of which some particular instances follow:

and gave us rain from heaven, which none of the gods of the Gentiles could, do, (<2402>Jeremiah 14:22). So µymçg j t pm, "the key of rains", is by the Jews [f722] said to be one of the keys which God has in his own hands, and which he does not commit to any other: and a wonderful blessing is this to mankind, and which God gives to the just and to the unjust, and did give to the ignorant and idolatrous Gentiles. Beza's most ancient copy, and four other ancient copies of his, and some others, read "you", instead of "us"; which reading seems most agreeable:

and fruitful seasons; spring, summer, harvest, and autumn, at which several times, different fruits of the earth appear:

filling our hearts with food and gladness; giving a sufficiency of food, and even an abundance of it, and that for pleasure and delight, as well as for support and refreshment: the Syriac version reads, "their hearts"; some copies read, "your hearts".

Ver. 18. *And with these sayings*, etc.] Concerning themselves, and concerning the living God, his creation of all things, and his providential goodness:

scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them; so resolute were they upon it, that it was with great difficulty that

they persuaded them from it: in four of Beza's manuscripts, and in some other copies, it is added, "but everyone went to his own house", etc.

Ver. 19. *And there came thither certain Jews*, etc.] Either just at the same time, or however whilst the apostles were in this city: in four manuscripts of Beza's, and in some other copies, it is read, "as they abode there, and taught, there came", etc. These Jews were inveterate enemies of the apostles, and seemed to have followed them from place to place, on purpose to oppose them, and to stir up the people against them, and to hinder the success of their ministry all they could: for these came

from Antioch; not Antioch in Syria, but in Pisidia: where they had contradicted and blasphemed the word of God, and was the reason why the apostles turned to the Gentiles, (<44134>Acts 13:45,46).

And Iconium: where also the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles against the apostles, and both of them made an assault upon them, to use them ill, (<44142>Acts 14:2,5)

who persuaded the people; in the above manuscripts of Beza's, and in some other copies, are these words,

> "and they disputing confidently, persuaded the people to depart from them, saying, that they said nothing true, but in all things lied;"

which though they may not be considered as the text, are a good gloss upon it: they persuaded the people not to hearken to them, told them that they were deceivers and jugglers, and instead of having honours conferred upon them, they ought to be severely punished; and to these Jews they hearkened, as appears by what follows:

and having stoned Paul; even the same persons that just before were for sacrificing to him as a god; which shows the fickleness and inconstancy of the populace, and how little they are to be depended on; for they were the Gentiles that stoned Paul, at the instigation of the Jews; though the latter might probably join with them in it: a like instance we have in the conduct of the Jews towards Christ, who cried "Hosanna" to him one day, and on another, very quickly after, with great importunity say, Crucify him, Crucify him; of this stoning, the apostle makes mention, (<47125>2 Corinthians 11:25 <55311>2 Timothy 3:11) When they had stoned him,

they drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead; which is an addition to their barbarity and inhumanity; for they not only stoned him until he was dead, as they supposed, but they dragged his body through the streets of their city, in contempt of him, and indignation against him, and cast him out of it, where they left him as unworthy of a burial.

Ver. 20. *Howbeit as the disciples stood round about him*, etc.] Weeping over him, and lamenting for him, and it may be praying to God, that he would restore him to life: however, they got about him, in order to take care of him, and provide for his interment: these were the young converts at Lystra, who, under the ministry of the apostles, were now brought to the faith of Christ; unless it can be thought, that they were such who followed them from other places, and attended them in their travels; but the former seems most probable, and which shows their affection to their spiritual Father, and their constancy in the faith of Christ, notwithstanding this ill treatment of his servant:

he rose up and came into the city; which was no less than a miracle, and was no doubt the effect of the mighty power of God, put forth upon him; for though he was not really dead, yet he was left as such, and thought to be so by both friends and foes: and when it is considered what wounds and bruises he must receive by stoning, and his being dragged through the streets of the city, and left in such a miserable condition without it, that he should at once rise up in the midst of the disciples, and walk into the city as one in perfect health and strength, has something extraordinary and miraculous in it; and it shows great resolution, courage, and strength of mind, to go into the same city again, where he had been so ill used; though he did not choose to continue there, nor were the inhabitants worthy of such a favour:

and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe; where they had been before, and had preached the Gospel, and whither they fled from Iconium, when in great danger, (<4414 06>Acts 14:6,7).

Ver. 21. *And when they had preached the Gospel to that city*, etc.] To the inhabitants of it, as they did in every place where they came, even the pure Gospel of Christ, the good news, and glad tidings of life and salvation by him:

and had taught many; or made them disciples, their ministry being blessed to bring many to the faith of Christ:

they returned again to Lystra; where Paul had been stoned:

and to Iconium; where both Jews and Gentiles, and the magistrates of the city, had attempted to use them ill, and to stone them:

and Antioch; that is, in Pisidia, as before; where a persecution was raised against them, and from the coasts of which place they were expelled; so fearless were they of danger, and so zealous to promote the interest of Christ, and the good of souls.

Ver. 22. *Confirming the souls of the disciples*, etc.] Not wicked men in their wickedness, nor self-righteous persons in an opinion of their own righteousness, as sufficient for justification, both being contrary to the nature and tendency of the ministry of the word; the Gospel being a doctrine according to godliness, and a revelation of the righteousness of Christ; but the disciples and followers of Jesus, whom they had already made in those places, these they confirmed in the doctrines of the Gospel, and fortified them against the contradictions and blasphemies of the Jews, and the reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions they met with, by which they might be staggered: they did not confirm the bodies of these disciples, and the health of them, which is the business of the physician to confirm; nor their estates and civil property, to secure and defend which belongs to the civil magistrate; but their souls, their more noble and valuable part, their hearts, which are apt to be unstable; the frames of their hearts, which are precarious, and so as not to be too much depressed when disagreeable, or be too much elated when agreeable, placing too much trust and confidence in them; and also the graces of the Spirit in their hearts, as to act and exercise, as faith, hope, and love; and likewise their judgments and understandings in the truths of the Gospel, in what relates to the love of God; the covenant of grace, the person of Christ, and their interest in them:

and exhorting them to continue in the faith: in the exercise of the grace of faith, and in the doctrine of faith, and in the profession of both, whatever they might meet with on the account thereof, and which they were to expect:

and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God either into a Gospel church state, which is sometimes so called, there being much trouble often attending an entrance into it, both from within, from the corruption and unbelief of the heart, and from without, from the temptations of Satan, and from the revilings and insults of men, and even

from friends and relations; or into the heavenly glory, the way to that lying through many tribulations; and which, though a rough, is a right way: so it "must" be, there is a necessity of it, partly on account of the decrees of God, who has appointed afflictions for his people, and them to afflictions; and partly on account of the predictions of Christ, who foretold his disciples, that in the world they should have tribulation; as also, that there might be a conformity to him, that as he the head must, and did suffer many things, and enter into his glory, so must they his members: as well as likewise for the trial and exercise of the several graces of the Spirit, and to make the saints meet for heaven, and to make that the sweeter to them.

Ver. 23. *And when they had ordained them elders in every church*, etc.] As soon as ever any number of disciples were made, or souls were converted to Christ in any place, they were at once formed, by the apostles, into a church state; and as the gifts, as well as the grace of the Holy Ghost, attended the ministry of the word, so among those that were converted, there were some that were honoured with ministerial gifts, qualifying them to preach the Gospel, and take upon them the care of the churches: these the apostles directed the churches to look out from among themselves, as in the case of deacons, an inferior office, who by joint suffrages declared their choice of them by the stretching out, or lifting up of their hands, as the word here used signifies, and not the imposition of them; and the apostles presiding in this affair, they were installed into the office of bishops, elders, or pastors over them; which expresses the great regard the apostles had to the order, as well as to the doctrine of the Gospel, and the concern they had for the welfare of souls converted under their ministry, by making a provision for them when they were gone.

And had prayed with fasting; for the elders ordained, that they might have a larger measure of gifts, and might be kept faithful to the trust committed to them, and be succeeded in their ministry; and for the members of the church, that they might abide by the truths of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, and walk worthy of it in their conversations, and behave aright in their church state, both to their elders, and to one another, and that they might persevere to the end:

they commended them to the Lord; both the elders and the churches, to be blessed by him with fresh supplies of grace, to be kept by his power, and to be preserved by him safe to his kingdom and glory. The Lord Jesus Christ seems to be intended by "the Lord", to whom the apostles commended

them; and who is every way qualified, and fully able to answer such a commendation; (see <442032>Acts 20:32) on whom they believed; meaning Christ, whom they received by faith, in whom they trusted, and on whom they believed with the heart for righteousness, life, and salvation: this was true, both of the apostles, who commended the elders and churches to the Lord, and was the reason why they commended them to him, because they believed on him themselves; and of the churches and elders commended, who could be commended to none better than to him, on whom they had believed.

Ver. 24. *And after they had passed throughout Pisidia*, etc.] The country where Antioch, the last place mentioned, was; (see <441314>Acts 13:14) they came to Pamphylia; (See Gill on "<441313>Acts 13:13") (See Gill on "<440210>Acts 2:10")

Ver. 25. *And when they had preached the word in Perga*, etc.] A city in Pamphylia, (<441313>Acts 13:13). The Alexandrian copy, and others, and three manuscripts of Beza's, read, "the word of the Lord"; as do the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions: they went down into "Attalia"; not Italia or Italy, as some Latin copies, and as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; but a city in Pamphylia, bordering on the sea, as Ptolomy writes [f723]; as this place did, as appears by what follows. So Jerom says [f724], that Attalia is a city of Pamphylia, on the sea coast; it was formerly the metropolis of it: it is now in the hands of the Turks, and is called Sattalia; near it is a bay, called Golfo di Sattalia, where there is a considerable mart for the whole country: it is famous for tapestry, which is made in it: it had its name from Attalus, king of Pergamus, the first founder of it. Beza's ancient copy here adds, "preaching the Gospel to them"; to the inhabitants of Attalia, and doubtless with success, though no mention is made of it here, nor elsewhere, nor of any church in this place; nor do we read of any in ecclesiastical history until the "sixth" century, when Dionysius, bishop of Attalia, is said to be present in the fifth synod at Rome [f725]; unless Attalia, called a city of Lycia, can be thought to be the same with this, of which another Dionysius was bishop in the fifth century; and assisted at the council of Chalcedon [f726].

Ver. 26. *And thence sailed to Antioch*, etc.] In Syria,

from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God; by the prophets: from this place they first set out on their travels; here they were separated by the order of the Holy Ghost to the work of the ministry, and

by them they were sent forth, after they had in prayer commended them to God, and to his grace to assist them, and succeed them, as well as to fit them

for the work which they fulfilled; that is, for the work of the ministry, for the preaching of the Gospel in several places; and which they had now gone through, and finished with great integrity and faithfulness, and with much success, though through many afflictions and persecutions.

Ver. 27. *And when they were come*, etc.] To Antioch:

and had gathered the church together: which was in that place, and who came together at their request; for as they were sent out by them, they judged it proper to call them together; and give them an account of the issue of their work they were recommended by them to the grace of God to fulfil: and being come together at their usual place of meeting,

they rehearsed all that God had done with them; and by them, as instruments; what grace and strength he had given them to preach the Gospel; what numbers of souls were everywhere converted by it; what miracles were wrought by them for the confirmation of it; and what persecutions and sufferings they had endured for the sake of it; and what deliverances were vouchsafed unto them:

and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles; the phrase, "the door of faith", seems to be Jewish; it is to be met with in Jewish writings: it is said [f727],

> "there are two women found in the world, that express the praise of God, so as all the men of the world have not; and who are they? Deborah and Hannah: Hannah, according to (<091002>1 Samuel 2:2) "there is none holy as the Lord, for there is none beside thee" and all proclaim that she aml[l atwnmyhmd ajtp tjtp, "opens the door of faith to the world", as (<441408>Acts 14:8) "he raiseth up the poor out of the dusthill, lo, the door of faith; to set them among princes", lo, the faith that is above."

The sense here seems to be, that God had given an opportunity to the apostles to preach the doctrine of faith unto the Gentiles, and the Gentiles had had an opportunity of hearing and embracing it; God had opened the mouths of his ministers to preach to them, and he had opened their hearts

to attend unto it, and receive it; for it may be understood of his giving of them the grace of faith, by which they received Christ, and his Gospel, into their hearts: so a like phrase is used by the Targumist on (²⁴3316Jeremiah 33:6) who paraphrases the words thus;

> “behold, I will bring unto them healing and redemption, and I will heal them, and I will reveal, or “open to them”, abwyt [rt, “the door of repentance”;”

that is, I will give them repentance: so here, when God is said to open the door of faith to the Gentiles, the sense is, that he had given the grace of faith to them, which came by hearing the word of the Gospel, which he sent them; and gave them encouragement to believe in Christ; so the phrase a door of hope is used in (²⁸3215Hosea 2:15).

Ver. 28. *And there they abode long time with the disciples*.] That is, Paul and Barnabas continued a considerable time at Antioch with the believers there, before they set out on another journey; and what might detain them the longer, might be the disputes they had with some “judaizing” Christians, concerning the observation of the law; of which, and the issue of them, an account is given in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 15

Ver. 1. *And certain men which came down from Judea*, etc.] To Antioch; they were not sent by the apostles, they came down of "themselves"; who they were, is not certain; that they were "judaizing" Christians, and teachers among them, is plain from the following account: according to Epiphanius [f728] they were Cerinthus, and some of his followers: these

taught the brethren; the Gentile converts at Antioch, who are styled "brethren", though they were Gentiles, because they were regenerated by the grace of God, and were of the same faith with the believing Jews, and in the same church state with them at Antioch: and said,

except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses; or custom of Moses, which had been used from the time of Abraham, and was revived and reinforced by Moses; wherefore the Syriac version renders it, "the law of Moses"; (See Gill on "John 7:19")

ye cannot be saved; these men were not only for retaining circumcision, which was now abolished, but they made it necessary to salvation; which was carrying the matter further than even the unbelieving Jews themselves did, at least some of them: for though indeed it is a notion with them, that no circumcised persons go to hell, but are all saved; and some of them say, that God rejects uncircumcised persons, and brings them down to hell [f729]; yet others of them speak of the godly among the nations of the world, and of the proselytes of the gate, who keep the seven precepts of Noah, as persons that shall be saved; so Ananias the Jew, preceptor to King Izates, when he signified his great desire to be circumcised, in order to put him off of it, told him, that if he was determined to follow the customs of the Jews, he might worship God without circumcision, which was more peculiar to the Jews than to be circumcised [f730].

Ver. 2. *When therefore Paul and Barnabas*, etc.] Who were the ministers of the uncircumcision, and were just returned from preaching the Gospel among the Gentiles, with success, and were advocates for them, being

witnesses of the grace that was bestowed on them, and therefore opposed the sentiments of these men:

and had no small dissension and disputation with them; which was attended with much heat and sharpness, and continued some time, and occasioned much disturbance and uneasiness; nor could the affair be decided and issued: wherefore

they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them; that is, the members of the church at Antioch, taking this matter into consideration, and finding that the difference could not be composed, for the peace of the church, wisely came to a resolution, and made an order, that Paul and Barnabas, with others, as Titus, who went with Paul at this time, as appears from (<480201>Galatians 2:1) and some others of the brethren, and it may be also certain, on, the other side of the question; that these

should go up to Jerusalem, unto the apostles and elders, about this question; concerning circumcision, and the necessity of it to salvation, that they might have the sense of James, and Peter, and John, who particularly were at Jerusalem at this time, as appears from (<441507>Acts 15:7 <480209>Galatians 2:9) and other apostles that might be there; and also of other ministers of the word, who are called elders. And the church of Jerusalem being the most ancient church, and several of the apostles residing here, who had seen Christ in the flesh, and had received their mission and commission from him, and had been extraordinarily endowed with the Holy Ghost; and here being many other preachers of the Gospel, and there being in a multitude of counsellors safety, the church at Antioch judged it advisable to send to them for counsel and direction; and it becomes churches to assist each other in this way.

Ver. 3. *And being brought on their way by the church*, etc.] That is, either being accompanied by some of the brethren of the church some part of the way, out of respect unto them, or being provided by them with things necessary for their journey; (see <560313>Titus 3:13)

they passed through Phenice and Samaria; which both lay between Syria and Judea; in the former of which places those that were scattered upon the death of Stephen had preached, and a great number were converted and believed in Christ who were Jews, (<441119>Acts 11:19) and in the latter Philip the evangelist had preached with much success, (<440805>Acts 8:5,12) as

therefore their way to Jerusalem lay through these places, they called upon the brethren as they passed;

declaring the conversion of the Gentiles; in the several places where they had been, as in Syria, Pisidia, Pamphylia, and Lycaonia, how by their ministry they were turned from darkness to light, from Satan unto God, from their superstition and idolatry to the worship of the true God, and to faith in Christ Jesus:

and they caused great joy unto all the brethren; the believing Jews in those parts, who being truly believers in Christ, rejoiced at the spread of his Gospel, and the increase of his interest, even among the Gentiles; for if angels rejoice, much more should saints rejoice at the conversion of sinners, let them be who or where they will; and where there is true grace, there will be joy when this is the case. There were churches in each of these places, of which "the brethren" here mentioned were members, and which continued for many ages afterwards: the foundation of the churches in Phenice was first laid by the converts made by them, who were scattered abroad through the persecution at the death of Stephen, (<44 11 19>Acts 11:19). Quartus, mentioned in (<45 16 23>Romans 16:23) is said to be bishop of Berytus in this country. In the "second" century there were churches at Tyre and Ptolemais, two cities in Phoenicia; Cassius was bishop of the one, and Clarus of the other[f731]: in the "third" century several Phoenician bishops suffered martyrdom, as Tyrannio, bishop of the church of Tyre, Zenobius, presbyter of that at Sidon, and Sylvanus, bishop of Emisa[f732]: in the "fourth" century, at the beginning of it, there were present, at the council of Nice, the bishops of Ptolemais, Damascus, Tripolis, Paneas, and Emisa; as they were also at a synod held at Jerusalem in the same century, on account of the Arians, and at another at Antioch on the same account: in the fifth century there were churches in Phoenicia reformed by Chrysostom, by whose means also the temples of the idols were destroyed, and many were converted in these countries; and in this age lived several persons of note here, as Antiochus bishop of Ptolemais, Eustathius bishop of Berytus, Paulus bishop of Emisa, Pompeianus and Uranius of the same place, and Damianus bishop of Sidon, and other Phoenician bishops, who assisted at the council of Chalcedon; as Olympius bishop of Atrapolis, Theodorus bishop of Tripoils, Joseph bishop of Heliopolis, Valerius bishop of Laodicea, Thomas bishop of Euroma, and Theonas bishop of Enria or Enaria, all in Phoenicia: in the sixth century, mention is made of the bishops of Ptolemais, Tyre, Sidon, and Berytus, in the acts of the synod at

Rome and Constantinople; and though Phoenicia was seized upon, and wasted by the Arabians and Persians, in the seventh century; yet we read, in the eighth century, of Adeodatus, a bishop of Berytus, who baptized many converted Jews [f733]. As for Samaria, our Lord himself preached and converted many persons there; and after his resurrection he gave his apostles a commission and directions to go there; and here Philip preached with great success. Nicolaus, the deacon, is said to be the first bishop of Samaria; and though in after ages Heathenism very much prevailed in those parts; yet there were Christians and churches, more or less, for several centuries; even in the sixth century there was a bishop of Neapolis in Samaria, killed with the sword, and some presbyters who were taken and fried in a pan, with the remains of some martyrs, by the Samaritan Jews [f734].

Ver. 4. *And when they were come to Jerusalem*, etc.] Paul and Barnabas, and the rest that came from Antioch with them:

they were received of the church; that is, that was at Jerusalem, in a very kind and respectful manner; they were received into their houses, and accommodated with everything convenient for them:

and of the apostles; particularly James, and Cephas, and John, who gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, in token of their approbation of them, affection for them, and agreement with them:

and elders: the other ministers of the Gospel who preached in that place:

and they declared all things that God had done with them: just as they did to the church at Antioch, when they returned from their travels, (see Gill on "<4414 27>Acts 14:27"), the Arabic version here adds, as there, "and that God had opened to the Gentiles the door of faith."

Ver. 5. *But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees*, etc.] Which was the strictest sect of religion among the Jews:

which believed; that Jesus was the Messiah, and professed their faith in him, and were members of the church, though they still retained many of their pharisaical tenets, and are therefore said to be of that sect: these rose up in opposition to Paul and Barnabas, as they were relating their success among the Gentiles, and giving an account of the difference that had happened at Antioch, and their own sense of that matter:

saying, that it was needful to circumcise them: the Gentiles that believed:

and to command them to keep the law of Moses; both moral and ceremonial; the observance of which they reckoned was absolutely necessary to salvation. Some think these are not the words of Luke, relating what happened at Jerusalem, when Paul and Barnabas gave in their account of things to the apostles and elders; but that they are a continuation of their account, how that in the controversy raised at Antioch, certain Pharisees that came thither from Judea, rose up and asserted the necessity of the, Gentiles being circumcised, and of their keeping the law of Moses in order to their being saved; which is favoured by the Syriac version, especially by the Latin interpreter of it, who supplies the words thus, “but say they” (i.e. Paul and Barnabas) “there arose men”, etc.

Ver. 6. *And the apostles and elders came together*, etc.] And also the brethren, or private members of the church, even the whole church, as appears from (Acts 15:22,23). Whether all the apostles were here present, is not certain; Peter, James, and John were; but who else, cannot be said: these met together

for to consider of this matter; to hear what was to be said on both sides of the question, and then to judge what advice was proper to be given to the Gentiles.

Ver. 7. *And when there had been much disputing*, etc.] Pro and con upon this subject; many had spoken; and much had been said, and a great deal of time had been taken up about the thing in controversy:

Peter rose up; not only out of respect to this venerable assembly, but to signify that he had something to say; and he stood up that he might be the better heard. Beza’s ancient copy reads, “rose up in spirit”;

and said unto them, men and brethren: an usual form of address with the Jews; (Acts 7:2)

ye know how that a good while ago; or “from ancient days”; or “from the beginning”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; from the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel, after the ascension of Christ; quickly after the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost: it is thought, by some, to be ten or eleven, and, by others, to be twenty years ago, or thereabout:

God made choice among us; the apostles; the Alexandrian copy reads, “among you”; the sense is the same, for Peter must be supposed as directing his discourse chiefly to the apostles:

that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe; referring to the case of Cornelius, and his family: and his sense is, that some years ago it pleased God, in his providence, to single him out from the rest of the apostles, and in a very extraordinary manner to call him to go to Caesarea, and preach the gospel to Cornelius, and those that were in his house, that hearing they might believe in Christ.

Ver. 8. *And God which knoweth the hearts*, etc.] Of all men; he being omniscient, the searcher of the hearts, and the trier of the reins of the children of men, knew with what sincerity Cornelius sent for Peter; and with what vehement desire and longing expectation he and his family and friends waited for his coming; and with what earnestness, diligence, and affection they attended to what he said:

bore them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; God bore a testimony, and showed his well pleasedness in the whole of this affair, by bestowing upon them not only the regenerating and sanctifying grace of the Spirit; but his extraordinary gifts, such as speaking with divers tongues, even in like manner as these were bestowed on the apostles themselves, on the day of Pentecost, though they were uncircumcised persons; for the drift of Peter’s oration is to show, that circumcision was not necessary to salvation.

Ver. 9. *And put no difference between us and them*, etc.] Neither in the extraordinary gifts, nor special grace, of the Spirit; giving them the same graces of faith, hope, and love, admitting to the same privileges and immunities of the house of God, and giving them a right and title to the same inheritance of the saints in light, though the one were circumcised, and the other were not. God puts no difference as to matters of religion under the Gospel dispensation between Jews and Gentiles, neither on account of Abraham’s seed, or of circumcision, or of the ceremonial law, or of national adoption; nor would he have any made with respect to conversation, civil or religious; all which Peter knew full well: nor has he made any difference in his eternal choice of persons to eternal salvation, on any of the above accounts, having ordained Gentiles to eternal life as Jews, who in consequence of it believe in Christ; nor in redemption, Christ having redeemed by his blood men out of every kindred, tongue, people,

and nation; nor in the effectual calling, for they that were called in the first times of the Gospel, were not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, to whom the Gospel was alike sent, and made effectual to saving purposes: these shared in the same blessings of pardon, justification, and adoption; their sins were forgiven through the same blood, their persons were justified by the same righteousness, and they were taken into the same family, and were no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens of the saints, and of the household of God; having the same access to God, being built on the same foundation, enjoying the same privileges, and having the same hope of eternal glory.

Purifying their hearts by faith; which was done by implanting faith in them, and leading that faith to the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin, original and actual, with which men are defiled; for faith has not this efficacy in itself, but as it has to do with the blood of Jesus: and this spiritual purification being what answered to circumcision, made that unnecessary; for this is the circumcision of the heart, of which the other was only typical. The hearts of men are filthy, and need purifying; they are originally polluted with sin; this is the case of all men; and this defilement reaches to all the members of the body, and the faculties of the soul; and especially the heart is the seat of this impurity, which God only can cleanse: he promises to do it, and does do it; and he only can do it, men cannot; for though, they are exhorted to it, in order to make them sensible of their pollution, and their need of cleansing, that they may apply where it is to be had, yet it is not in their power to effect it; to make a clean heart is a creation work, which is peculiar to God: the heart cannot be purified, neither by ceremonial ablutions, nor by works of moral righteousness, nor by humiliations and tears, nor by submission to Gospel ordinances, as water baptism, but only by the grace of God, and the blood of Christ; which the Spirit of God sprinkles upon the heart, and which faith looks to and deals with, and so it is freed from an evil conscience; and this blessing the believing Gentiles enjoyed in common with the believing Jews.

Ver. 10. *Now therefore why tempt ye God*, etc.] By hesitating about this matter, by disputing upon this point, and by seeking for further proof and evidence of the will of God in this affair; when it is so plain a case, that it has been his will that the Gospel should be preached to Gentiles, without obliging them to circumcision; that he has given his Spirit both in his extraordinary gifts, and special grace, to uncircumcised persons; particularly he has bestowed faith in Christ upon them, whereby they have

been led to the blood of Christ, typified in circumcision, and are thereby purged from all their filth and pollution, and so are the true circumcision: wherefore it is no other than tempting God, a manifest opposition to him, and what must give him offence, to debate about a point so clear; and especially to attempt

to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear. It is common with the Jews to call the law a yoke; frequent mention is made of aydyqp ryn and twxm lw[, "the yoke of the commandments" [f735], and hrwth lw[, "the yoke of the law" [f736]: and by it here is meant, not circumcision only and barely, for that the Jewish fathers had been able to bear, and had bore it; nor the whole ceremonial law only, which consisted of a multitude of commands and ordinances very heavy and hard; but even the whole moral law, which circumcision obliged those who submitted to it to keep it perfectly; (see <480503>Galatians 5:3), which neither the apostles, nor their fathers, were ever able to do, nor any mere man whatever; and therefore this yoke was intolerable and insupportable, and not to be put upon the necks of the Gentile believers; who here are called disciples, being taught the doctrine of the Gospel, and the way of salvation; which was not by circumcision, nor by any works of the law, but by the grace of Christ, as in the following verse.

Ver. 11. *But we believe*, etc.] Who are circumcised; the Arabic version adds, "and are sure"; for what follows is a sure and certain article of faith:

that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ; not through circumcision, or by any works of the law, moral or ceremonial; but through the grace of Christ undertaking for them, assuming their nature, and dying in their room and stead; through his redeeming, justifying, and pardoning grace: salvation is by Christ; Jehovah the Father appointed him to be his salvation; he sent him, and he came to save sinners; and he has obtained salvation for them; and it is in him, and in no other: and this salvation is by "the grace" of Christ; it was grace moved him to engage in this work before the world began; it was good will to men that caused him to come down from heaven, and appear on earth in the form of a servant; it was pure love that influenced him to lay down his life for them; through the grace in his heart he did all this for them; and it is the fulness of grace in his hands, out of which they receive abundance, whereby they are entitled to, and are made meet for eternal glory:

we shall be saved, even as they; either as the disciples, the Gentile converts, who without circumcision, and the works of the law, were saved by the pure grace and love of Christ, in dying for them, and on which they alone depended for salvation; or else as the Jewish fathers were, for they were justified, pardoned, accepted, and saved in the same way, as the saints under the New Testament are: they could not keep the law perfectly, nor was there then, nor now, salvation by it, only by the grace of Christ; and in that way, and that only, Old and New Testament believers, Jews and Gentiles, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, are saved. The Gentiles were not saved by the light of nature, nor the Jews by the law of Moses; the one were not lost for want of circumcision, nor the other saved by it; the only way of salvation to both, and under all dispensations, is the Lord Jesus Christ; through whose sacrifice sin is atoned for, through whose blood it is pardoned, through whose righteousness men are justified before God, and are accepted with him; and through whom saints have communion with God; and by whom, and whose grace, and not by their own works, they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, from sin, law, death, hell, and damnation: and the salvation of one and of another, even of all that are saved, Jews or Gentiles, is by grace; no one is deserving of it; they have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God; have done that which is abominable, and they themselves are abominable in the sight of God; they have destroyed, and cannot help themselves; nor have they anyone good thing but what they have received from the Lord, and therefore ought to ascribe all to his grace; it is by that they are what they are, have what they have, and do what they do. Salvation, in all its parts and branches, is owing to grace; and so it is with respect to all persons that are saved; some are not saved by their works, and others by the grace of Christ, but they are all saved by grace; and none have any room to boast of themselves against others.

Ver. 12. *Then all the multitude kept silence*, etc.] Upon this oration of Peter's, there was a profound silence in the whole assembly, among all the brethren of the church, who were come together on this occasion; they were all satisfied with, and by their silence acquiesced in, what Peter said; and waited to hear what might be further said about this matter, by other persons in the assembly; and even those who were on the other side of the question, were confounded and nonplussed, and knew not what to say, and the more so, when they perceived that the rest of the apostles and elders were of the same mind; for Beza's most ancient copy introduces this clause

thus; “then the elders agreeing to the things that were said by Peter, the whole multitude was silent”: and this gave Paul and Barnabas an opportunity of being heard; who, perhaps, could not so well be heard before, for the clamour of the people against them, who might not have so good an opinion of them, and of their practices:

and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul; Barnabas is mentioned first, he being most known to the Jews, and of whom they might have the better opinion; and who probably gave the account of their proceedings and success among the Gentiles:

declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them; what wonders of grace were wrought in the conversion of multitudes of them, wherever they came; and what miracles in nature were wrought for the confirmation of the Gospel, such as the striking blind Elymas the sorcerer, at Paphos in Cyprus, and curing the cripple at Lystra; and which they ascribe not to themselves but to God, whose instruments they only were.

Ver. 13. *And after they had held their peace*, etc.] Meaning not the multitude, but Paul and Barnabas; when they had finished their account, and had done speaking:

James answered; or rose up, as the Syriac version reads, he stood up and began to speak. This was James the son of Alphaeus, one of the twelve apostles, sometimes called the brother of the Lord; for the other James, the son of Zebedee and brother of John, was dead, being killed by Herod, (Acts 12:2) but this was the brother of Jude, and the same that wrote the epistle that bears his name: whether he was now bishop or pastor of the church at Jerusalem, is not certain; nor whether he was president in this council; the speeches made in it do not appear to be directed to him: he began his oration thus,

saying, men and brethren, hearken to me; the titles he uses, and the manner of desiring audience, were what were common with the Jews; (see Acts 2:14,22,29, 7:2).

Ver. 14. *Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles*, etc.] James begins with taking notice of Peter’s speech, and agrees to it, and confirms it; for by Simeon is not meant, as some have thought, the Simeon that took Christ in his arms, (Luke 2:25) who had been dead long ago; but Simon Peter, who had spoken before. Simon and Simeon are

one and the same name; the former is only a contraction of the latter in the Syriac language; Simeon was his pure Hebrew name, and James speaking to an assembly of Hebrews, uses it; and observes, that he had given a very clear and distinct narrative, how God at the first preaching of the Gospel, quickly after the day of Pentecost, was pleased to look upon the Gentiles, and show favour to them, and visit them in a way of grace and mercy, by sending the Gospel to them, and his Spirit to make it effectual: this was a gracious visit; he came and looked upon them, quickened them, and spoke comfortably to them, and bestowed special favours upon them; the set time for such a visit being come: the Arabic version renders it, "how God first promised"; referring to the promises concerning the calling of the Gentiles, which James afterwards confirms by citing a passage out of the prophets to the same purpose: the Syriac version, "how God began to choose out of the Gentiles": that is, by calling them by his grace; and the Ethiopic version, "how God first had mercy on the Gentiles"; who before had not obtained mercy:

to take out of them a people for his name; for himself, for his own glory, to call upon his name, and to be called by his name, to bear his name, and support his Gospel, cause and interest: the distinguishing grace of God may be seen herein; it was grace to visit them, to look upon them, when for many hundreds of years he had overlooked them, he had taken no notice of them; and it was distinguishing grace to take some out of them, to be a special and peculiar people to himself; to separate them from the rest by his powerful and efficacious grace, and form them into a church state, that they might show forth his praise and glorify him.

Ver. 15. *And to this agree the words of the prophets*, etc.] In several of the prophecies of the Old Testament, which plainly speak of the calling of the Gentiles; though James thought it sufficient to produce only one instead of many:

as it is written; in (Amos 9:11,12) and this is agreeably to the Jewish way of citing Scriptures, as Surenhusius observes; so it is said [f737], in twenty four places the priests are called Levites, and this is one of them, (Ezekiel 44:15) where only one place is mentioned, instead of the twenty four.

Ver. 16. *After this I will return*, etc.] That is, after the Lord had destroyed the sinful kingdom from off the face of the earth, and had sifted the house of Israel among all nations, and the sinners of his people were slain with

the sword; after all this he promises to return and show favour to them: this is the sense of the prophet which James gives; for these words are not at length in Amos; there it is only said, “in that day”; upon which Jarchi’s note is,

> “after all these things shall have come upon them, that day shall come which is appointed for redemption;”

which well agrees with James here, and the manner in which he introduces this passage:

and will build again the tabernacle of David, that is fallen down: that is, as the Jewish [f738] writers themselves interpret it, the kingdom of the house of David, though in a temporal sense, which was now in a most ruinous condition; the sceptre was departed from Judah; all; power and authority were falling off apace from the Jews, into the hands of the Romans; David’s family were quite sunk, and almost gone, and had no share at all in the civil government; Jesus, who was descended from him, and was of the blood royal, and right heir to his throne, was born of a poor virgin; and his supposed father was a carpenter; and he himself the King of the Jews, was crucified by them; yet notwithstanding all this, David’s tabernacle was to be rebuilt, and his kingdom to be restored by the Messiah, but in a spiritual way; for the tabernacle of David designs the spiritual kingdom or church of Christ, who is here called David, as in (<26>Ezekiel 34:23,24, 37:24,25 <28>Hosea 3:5) and of whom David was an eminent type: and the church may be called a tabernacle, being in the present state of things, as to its place, uncertain and moveable, though ere long it will be a tabernacle that will not be taken down, (<23>Isaiah 33:20) and Christ’s tabernacle, being of his building, and where he dwells and keeps his court, as King of saints; (see <23>Isaiah 16:5) and which was in a fallen ruinous condition when he came on earth, through the corrupt principles of the Pharisees and Sadducees, the bigotry and superstition of the one, and the deism of the other; and through the great decay of spiritual worship and powerful godliness, and the bad lives of professors, and the small number of truly godly persons: the Jews [f739] themselves refer this prophecy to the times of the Messiah, yea, one of the names by which they call the Messiah is taken from hence [f740]: it is asked,

> “who is Bar Naphli? it is replied, the Messiah; the Messiah is called Bar Naphli (the son fallen, or of the fallen); is it not written, “in that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen down?””

one of their own commentators [f741] on this text, has this note,

> “if we interpret this of the Messiah, the matter is clear:”

but then this must be understood in a spiritual sense, for Christ’s kingdom is not a worldly one; the raising up and rebuilding of this tabernacle, must design the reviving of true religion, the doctrine and practice of it, the enlargement of the church of God, by the conversion both of Jews and Gentiles:

and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; which has been done by breaking down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, and letting in the latter into the Gospel church with the former, whereby it grows up to be an holy temple in the Lord; (see <2540>Isaiah 54:2,3 61:4,5 2:2) and to this sense the Jews themselves [f742] interpret it;

> “the holy blessed God will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, as it is said, (<3091>Amos 9:11) in that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David; for all the world shall be tja hdwga, “one bundle”; as it is said, (<3609>Zephaniah 3:9)”

Ver. 17. *That the residue of men might seek after the Lord*, etc.] The rebuilder and proprietor of this tabernacle, and who dwells in it; that is, attend his worship, pray unto him, and seek unto him for life and salvation: in Amos these are called, “the remnant of Edom”: and design the remnant according to the election of grace among the Gentiles; the Jews generally call all other nations, and especially the Roman empire, Edom:

and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called; for God is the God of the whole earth, of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews; and his Gospel was now spread among them, and many of them were converted and called Christians, and the children and people of God: the Jews [f743] understand this of the people of Israel, who are called by the name of the Lord, or on whom his name is called; and some think the words are to be transposed [f744] thus,

> “that Israel on whom my name is called might possess the remnant of Edom, and all the people;”

and is true of their possessing or enjoying them in a Gospel church state:

saith the Lord, who doth all these things; raises up the tabernacle of David, revives the interest of religion, resettles the church, and increases it, calls

and converts the Gentiles, causes them to seek after the Lord, and unites them in one church state with the Jews; the word “all” is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and is not in Amos.

Ver. 18. *Known unto God are all his works*, etc.] These are the words of James, and not of Amos; all the things which God does in the church and in the world, they were all foreknown and predetermined by him: from the beginning of the world; or from eternity; even all his works of creation, providence and grace: the Alexandrian copy, and Beza’s most ancient copy, and the Vulgate Latin version, read in the singular number, “his work”; the work of the conversion of the Gentiles; this was fixed and resolved on by God in eternity; he knew it would be, because he had determined it should be; and accordingly he foretold it, and spoke of it in various periods of time before it came to pass; and therefore it should not be looked upon as some new and strange thing, that was never known, spoken or heard of: and this holds true of every other work of God, and agrees with what the Jews sometimes say [f745], that ``every work which is renewed in the world, the holy blessed God has commanded (or ordered) it from the day the world was created.”

Ver. 19. *Wherefore my sentence is*, etc.] Opinion or judgment in this case, or what he reckoned most advisable to be done; for he did not impose his sense upon the whole body, but proposed it to them:

that we trouble not them; by obliging them to be circumcised, which would have been very afflicting and disturbing to them; not only because of the corporeal pain produced by circumcision, but because of the bondage their minds would be brought into, and they become subject to the whole law, and all its burdensome rites and ceremonies:

which from among the Gentiles are turned to God; the one true and living God, Father, Son, and Spirit, and from idols, and the worshipping of them.

Ver. 20. *But that we write unto them*, etc.] Or send an epistle to them, to this effect, concerning the following things:

that they abstain from pollutions of idols; that is, from eating things offered to idols; (see <441529>Acts 15:29) for not idolatry, or the worshipping of idols itself, is here spoken of; for that was no indifferent thing; and besides, these converted Gentiles were turned from that, and there was no danger of their returning to it; but eating things sacrificed to idols was an

indifferent thing; but yet inasmuch as it had a tendency to lead to idolatry, and gave offence to the Jewish believers in the churches, and was a stumbling block to weak minds, who by the example of stronger Christians, were led to eat them as sacrificed to an idol, and so their weak consciences were defiled, therefore it was very proper to abstain from them;

and from fornication; not spiritual fornication or idolatry, but fornication taken in a literal sense, for the carnal copulation of one single person with another, and which is commonly called simple fornication: the reason why this is put among, things indifferent is, not that it was so in itself, but because it was not thought to be criminal by the Gentiles, and was commonly used by them, and which must be offensive to the believing Jews, who were better acquainted with the will of God; this is omitted in the Ethiopic version:

and from things strangled; that is; from eating them, and design such as die of themselves, or are torn with beasts, or are not killed in a proper way, by letting out their blood; but their blood is stagnated or congealed in the veins: the Jews might not kill with a reaper's sickle, nor with a saw, nor with the teeth, or nail; because these ˆyqnwj , "strangled" [f746]: and what was not slain as it should be, was reckoned all one as what dies of itself; and whoever ate of either of these was to be beaten [f747]; the law respecting these things was of the ceremonial kind, and peculiar to the Jews, and was not binding upon the Gentiles; for that which died of itself might be given to a stranger, and he might eat it, or it might be sold to an alien, (<051421>Deuteronomy 14:21) this has been wanting in many copies, and it was not read by several of the ancient fathers:

and from blood: which is not to be understood of the blood of men and shedding of that, which is of a moral nature; but of the blood of beasts, and of eating of that. There were several laws about eating of blood, and which are different, and ought to be carefully distinguished. The first is in (<010904>Genesis 9:4) "but flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood there of, shall you not eat"; which forbids the eating of flesh with the blood; but not the eating of flesh separately, nor the eating of blood separately, provided they were properly prepared and dressed, but the eating of them together without any preparation. As this was the first hint to man that we know of, that he might eat flesh, it was proper that the manner in which he should eat it, should be suggested to him; that he should not take the creature alive and eat it, or tear off any of its members and eat it whilst

alive, or eat raw flesh; but should prepare it by roasting or boiling, or some way, in which it might become proper food: and it is the constant sense of the Jewish synagogue [f748], that this law is to be understood of the member of a living creature, torn from it, and eaten whilst alive; six commands, the Jews say, were given to the first man Adam, the first five forbid idolatry, blasphemy, shedding of blood, uncleanness, and theft, or robbery, and the sixth required judgment against offenders; to these were added, for the sons of Noah, a seventh, which forbid the eating of the member of a living creature, as it is said, (<010904>Genesis 9:4) [f749]. So that this law has nothing to do with eating of blood, simply considered, and no more forbids eating of it separately, than it does eating of flesh separately: in like manner is the law in (<051223>Deuteronomy 12:23) to be understood, and is so interpreted by the Jewish writers [f750]: another law is in (<031926>Leviticus 19:26) “ye shall not eat anything with the blood”; which according to our version, seems to be the same law with the former, but is not; for it is not said here, as before, b, “in”, or “with”, but l [, “upon”, “over”, or “by” the blood. This is differently understood: some think the sense is, that no one should eat of the sacrifices, before the sprinkling of the blood upon the altar [f751]; or until it stands or is congealed in the basons [f752]; others, that it is a caution to judges, that they do not eat until they have finished judgment; for whoever judges or passes sentence after he has eat and drank, is as if he was guilty of blood [f753]: another observes [f754], that next to this clause, it is said, “neither shall ye use enchantment”; meaning that they should not use enchantment by eating, in the way that murderers do, who eat bread over the slain, that the avengers of the slain may not take vengeance on them; this author smells something superstitious or diabolical in this matter; and indeed this is the case; the truth of the matter is, it refers to a practice among the Heathens, who fancied that blood was the food of the demons, to whom they sacrificed; and therefore when they sacrificed to them, they took the blood of the beast and put it into a vessel, and sat down by it, and round about it, and ate the flesh; imagining that whilst they ate the flesh, the demons eat the blood, and by this means friendship and familiarity were contracted between them; so that they hoped to receive some advantage from them, and be informed of things to come [f755]. Hence, this law is placed with others against enchantments and observing times, to which may be added, (<263325>Ezekiel 33:25) “ye eat with the blood”, or “over it”, or “by” it; “and lift up your eyes to your idols”: which is to be understood in the same light, and with these compare (<091432>1 Samuel 14:32 <031703>Leviticus 17:3-7). But besides these, there was a third law, which is frequently repeated,

(^{OBIB}Leviticus 3:17 7:26,27 17:10-12) which absolutely forbids the eating of blood, as well as fat; the Jews except the blood of fishes, and locusts, and creeping things, and the blood of men, and the blood that is in eggs, and that which is squeezed out of flesh, or drops from it, which a man may eat and not be guilty of the breach of this law [f756] the reason of this law was, because the blood, which is the life, was given in sacrifice for the life of men, to be an atonement for them; wherefore, to keep up a just reverence of the sacrifice, and to direct to the blood of the great sacrifice of the Messiah, blood was forbidden to be eaten, till that sacrifice was offered up; and then that blood itself was to be spiritually eaten by faith: and now if eating of blood in general was morally evil in itself, it would be a monstrous shocking thing in the Christian religion, that the blood of Christ is to be drank; though it be to be understood in a spiritual sense: the law against eating blood was very strictly enjoined the Jews, and severely punished; whoever ate of blood, but the quantity of an olive, if he ate it wilfully, was guilty of cutting off; if ignorantly, he was to bring a sin offering [f757]: James knew that the breach of this law would give great offence to the Jews, and therefore for the peace of the church he moves that the Gentiles might be wrote to, to abstain from blood; and which was agreed to and done: and this was attended to with much strictness by the primitive Christians, who seemed to have observed this advice in the form of a law, and thought it criminal to eat blood; but in process of time it was neglected; and in Austin's time abstinence from blood was derided, as a ridiculous notion; and it is at least now high time that this, and everything else of a ceremonial kind, was dropped by Christians; though where the peace of the brethren is in danger, this, and everything of an indifferent nature should be abstained from: Beza's ancient copy adds, "and whatsoever they would not have done to themselves, do not unto others"; and so two of Stephens's: the Ethiopic version is, "whatsoever they hate should be done to themselves, let them not do to their brethren".

Ver. 21. *For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him*, etc.] That is, for many years past, even from the times of Ezra, the law of Moses has been publicly expounded by them, whom the Jews call Derashim, preachers, or expounders, in every city where there was a synagogue; and every city belonging to the Jews, were obliged to build a synagogue, yea, they were obliged to do it where there were but ten Israelites [f758]: this is given by James as a reason why the Gentiles should be wrote unto concerning the above things; because that they hearing the law

read and expounded every week, would be ready to conclude that they were obliged to submit unto it, as to circumcision, and other things; unless they were told that they were free from it; only in order to maintain peace with their brethren the Jews, it would be necessary for them to abstain from the above things: and it may also carry in it a reason, why the Jews need not be wrote unto, and why they had no reason to complain for thus writing to the Gentiles; since they had the law read and explained to them every week, and there would be no attempt to make any alteration in that form of service:

being read in the synagogues every sabbath day; (See Gill on "Acts 13:15").

Ver. 22. *Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church*, etc.] The opinion, judgment, and advice of James, being approved of by the whole body of the apostles, ministers, and brethren of the church assembled together on this occasion; they unanimously agreed,

to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas; that is, they thought fit to choose some persons from among themselves, out of that assembly, or who were members of the church at Jerusalem; and send them to Antioch, where the difference began, along with Paul and Barnabas, to give an account of the sense of the apostles, elders, and brethren, about the affair in controversy, and what was their advice upon the whole: and the rather they took this step, to prevent all suspicion of Paul and Barnabas giving a partial account, or putting a wrong turn upon the sentiments of this assembly, they being parties concerned on one side, wherefore they thought fit to send some indifferent persons along with them, to confirm their narrative, and to compose differences among them, and to bring back an account of the state of the church:

namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas; (See Gill on "Acts 1:23")

and Silas, the same with Sylvanus:

chief men among the brethren, leading men among them, who went before them, were guides to them, in doctrine and discipline; for these were prophets or preachers, as appears from (Acts 15:32) and these they pitched upon, partly out of respect to Paul and Barnabas, as being suitable companions for them, and partly out of respect to the church at Antioch, and chiefly because of their ability, and capacity, for such service they were sent upon.

Ver. 23. *And wrote letters by them after this manner*, etc.] Not that they made use of them as their amanuenses, to write their letters for them; but being written they put them into their hands, and sent them by them, and they were written in the following form:

the apostles, and elders, and brethren; which belonged to, or were members of the church at Jerusalem; they are severally set in their proper place and order: the apostles, Peter, and James, and John, and it may be some others first; for these God had set in the first place in the church; then the elders, or preachers of the Gospel, such as were Judas and Silas: and then the brethren, or private members of the church; who are called so, because they are of one family, and have one Father, and are partakers of the same grace and privileges: these,

send greeting; or their Christian salutation, wishing all peace and prosperity, both for soul and body, temporal, spiritual and eternal:

unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria and Cilicia; the brethren or members of the several churches in these parts, who were Gentiles, are particularly sent to; and not the brethren who were Jews; because they were especially concerned, and to them is the advice directed: Antioch is first mentioned, that being the place where the controversy began; but there being other churches in Syria, besides Antioch, in which were many Gentiles, and also in Cilicia, and particularly at Tarsus, Paul's native place, and where he had preached, (<4409>Acts 9:30, <4802>Galatians 1:21) they are therefore mentioned, and being countries near to one another, it is very likely that the controversy had spread itself among them.

Ver. 24. *Forasmuch as we have heard*, etc.] By the report of Paul and Barnabas, who were sent by the church at Antioch to Jerusalem, to acquaint them with the state of their case:

that certain which went out from us; (<4401>Acts 15:1)

have troubled you with words, or doctrines:

subverting your souls; removing them from the doctrine of grace to another Gospel, and which deserved not the name of a Gospel; and was very destructive to their souls, at least to the peace and com fort of them: this shows what an opinion the apostles, and elders, and members of the church at Jerusalem had of these "judaizing" preachers, and their tenets;

they looked upon them as troublers of God's Israel, and upon their doctrines as subversive of spiritual joy and comfort.

Saying, ye must be circumcised and keep the law; the ceremonial law; the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out this clause; (see Gill on "Acts 15:1"), (see Gill on "Acts 15:5").

to whom we gave no such commandment: it looks as if these "judaizing preachers" not only pretended to be sent out by the apostles, to preach; but that they had particularly this in their instructions from them, that they should insist upon it, that the Gentiles that were received into the churches, should be circumcised, and be obliged to keep the other parts of the ceremonial law, when they had no such orders from them.

Ver. 25. *It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord*, etc.] Or together; in one place, as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it; (see Acts 2:1) though certain it is, that as they were in one place, so they were in one mind; and their unanimity was proper to be mentioned, in order to engage a regard to their advice:

to send men chosen unto you; men chosen for this purpose; namely, Judas and Silas:

with our beloved Barnabas and Paul; who are commended thus, partly to express their affection to them; and partly to observe the wisdom of the church at Antioch, in sending two such agreeable persons; and chiefly to testify their approbation of the doctrine and conduct of these two men.

Ver. 26. *Men that have hazarded their lives*, etc.] As at Antioch, in Pisidia, where a persecution was raised against them, and they were expelled out of the coasts of that place; and at Lystra, where Paul was stoned, and left for dead, (Acts 13:50, 14:19) and this they did, not for any sinister and selfish ends, for any worldly gain, or vain glory, and popular applause, but

for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; for the sake of his Gospel, and the enlargement of his interest, and kingdom in the world; and therefore were worthy of esteem, and ought to be regarded and attended to, and greatly to be preferred to false teachers; who only sought themselves, their worldly honour, and ease, and would sacrifice nothing, nor hazard anything, for the sake of Christ.

Ver. 27. *We have sent therefore Judas and Silas*, etc.] The chosen men before mentioned,

who shall also tell you the same things by mouth; as are written in these letters; which would both confirm and explain things unto them.

Ver. 28. *For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us*, etc.] By various things they had reason doubtless to conclude, that they were under the influence and direction of the Holy Ghost in this affair; as by the spirit of prayer that was among them; by that power and energy with which many of them spoke on this occasion, and that so agreeable to the word of God; and by that unanimity with which they came into the advice given. With respect to the form here used, compare (1 Chronicles 13:2) and the Targum on it, which renders the words thus;

> "if it be beautiful before you, and acceptable before the Lord, let us send, etc."

It follows here,

to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; not that they were necessary to salvation, but necessary to secure the peace of the churches, and at least were necessary, at that present time; and therefore since it appeared to be necessary to enjoin them for the present, they hoped they would not refuse to bear them; and especially, since, though they must own they were burdens, and a part of the yoke of bondage, yet they were not many, nor very heavy, and for the future they should lay no other, nor more upon them; and what they did, was to prevent any other or greater burden to be laid; and so the Syriac version renders it, "lest any more, or greater burden should be laid upon you."

Ver. 29. *That ye abstain from meats offered to idols*, etc.] Which explains what is meant by pollutions of idols, (Acts 15:20)

and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication (See Gill on "Acts 15:20")

In Beza's most ancient copy, and in three other manuscripts, and in the Complutensian edition, it follows, "and whatsoever ye would not have done to yourselves, that do ye not to another"; in like manner the Ethiopic version also reads, as in (Acts 15:20) "from which if ye keep yourselves ye shall do well"; it will be doing a good thing, and make for the peace of

the churches; in Beza's most ancient copy it is added, "born", or "moved by the Holy Ghost": being influenced and assisted by him in this, and every good work:

fare ye well; the Syriac version adds, "in our Lord".

Ver. 30. *So when they were dismissed*, etc.] That is, Paul and Barnabas, with Judas and Silas, by the apostles, elders, and church at Jerusalem:

they came to Antioch; or "came down to Antioch", as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions read, agreeably to (<44150>Acts 15:1)

and when they had gathered the multitude together; the whole church, which consisted of many members; the company, or congregation of the faithful, as the Arabic version renders it: and as Paul and Barnabas were sent by the church at Antioch; and as the letter, which they, with Judas and Silas, brought from Jerusalem, was directed and sent to the brethren at Antioch, it was highly reasonable, and necessary, that they should be called together, and an account of the business they were sent upon be given them, and the letter be delivered to them, as it accordingly was:

they delivered the epistle; sent by the apostles, elders, and brethren at Jerusalem to them; this they put into the hands of some one or other of the brethren of the church, in order to be read.

Ver. 31. *Which when they had read*, etc.] That is, when the brethren of the church at Antioch had read the letter delivered to them; for not Paul and Barnabas, or Judas and Silas, who were sent with it, read it, but the brethren to whom it was sent, as was proper.

They rejoiced for the consolation, or "exhortation", as the word may be rendered, which was given them in the letter, to abstain from the above things, without being burdened with any other; and they rejoiced that there was such an agreement among the apostles, elders, and brethren at Jerusalem; and that their sentiments, and those of Paul and Barnabas, and other faithful ministers and saints at Antioch, were alike, and were opposed to the judaizing preachers and professors; and above all, they rejoiced that they were freed from the burdensome yoke of the law, and that the controversy which had been raised among them, was likely to be ended, and to issue so well.

Ver. 32. *And Judas and Silas being also prophets themselves*, etc.] As well as Paul and Barnabas, and others, that were at Antioch; (see <44131>Acts 13:1) and by prophets are meant, not only such who had the gift of foretelling things to come; though such there were, and these might have that gift; but such who were able to explain the prophecies of the Old Testament, give the true sense of the Scriptures, and open them to the edification of others; wherefore having such gifts, they made use of them; Beza's ancient copy adds, "full of the Holy Ghost":

and exhorted the brethren with many words; which does not so much design the prolixity of their discourses, and the frequency of their ministrations, though they might preach both long and often; as the richness of the matter of them, as the Syriac version suggests, rendering it, "with a rich word"; with copiousness, fulness, and abundance of Gospel truths, with which they comforted the brethren, giving them many useful instructions and exhortations:

and confirmed them; in the doctrines of the Gospel, and particularly in their Christian liberty, and freedom from the law of Moses, in which the false teachers had endeavoured to stagger them.

Ver. 33. *And after they had tarried there a space*, etc.] How long is not certain; the Arabic version renders it "a year"; and it is probable enough, they might stay there so long, till things were thoroughly settled, which were thrown into great disorder and confusion, by the pleaders for circumcision:

they were let go in peace; that is, they were dismissed, and went away with the leave and consent of the church; who returned them thanks for the service and good offices they had done them, and wished them all peace, prosperity, and happiness, both in soul and body, and great success in their ministrations wherever they went: and as they were dismissed in peace, they left the church in perfect peace; an end being put to the controversy about circumcision, which was raised among them; and the members of the church being agreed in their sentiments, and heartily united in their affections to one another: and thus Judas and Silas were honourably dismissed

from the brethren, at Antioch,

to the Apostles, at Jerusalem; the Alexandrian copy, and Beza's ancient copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, read, "to them that sent

them"; and so include, with the apostles, the elders, and brethren at Jerusalem, who wrote the letter to the church at Antioch, and sent it by them; and it was proper that they should return to them, and give them an account of the success of it, how it was received, and what good it had done.

Ver. 34. *Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still*, etc.] Though he had leave to go, and was actually dismissed with Judas; and doubtless intended to have gone with him, but for some reason or another he changed his mind, and thought fit to continue at Antioch some time longer: and the design of Providence in it seems to have been this; that he might be a companion with the Apostle Paul in his travels among the Gentiles, as he afterwards was, and was very useful to him. This verse is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions; the Ethiopic version reads, "and Paul proposed", or "determined to abide", as he did some little time longer, as appears from the following verse: the Vulgate Latin version here adds, and "Judas went alone to Jerusalem"; and so it is read in one of Beza's copies, and in one of Stephens's.

Ver. 35. *Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch*, etc.] As well as Silas: teaching and preaching the word of the Lord; the Gospel of Christ; not the word of men, but the word of the Lord, of which he is both the author and subject: this they preached in season, and out of season, with power, purity, plainness, and faithfulness.

And many others also; who either came along with them from Jerusalem, when they brought the letter from thence, or were here before; who came hither upon the persecution raised at the death of Stephen, (<44119>Acts 11:19,20) or they were the prophets which afterwards came from Jerusalem thither, (<44127>Acts 11:27) such as Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, (<44130>Acts 13:1).

Ver. 36. *And some days after*, etc.] That Judas was gone to Jerusalem, and which they had spent in teaching and preaching the word of the Lord at Antioch:

Paul said to Barnabas, let us go again and visit our brethren in every city, where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do; by the "brethren in every city", the apostle means the believers in Syria, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia; where he and Barnabas had preached the Gospel with success; where churches were planted and elders were

ordained; of which an account is given in the two preceding chapters: and it may be observed, what an affection the apostle had for the young converts, and members of these churches; he calls them “brethren”, they being partakers of the same grace, and of the same faith and family with himself, though they were not in the same office, nor had the same gifts; as also what care he took of them, and of those new planted churches: and which shows, that such are to be visited and looked after, and their cases inspected into; and inquiries should be made of them, how they do, how they go on; whether they continue in the faith, and grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ; and whether they are lively in the exercise of the graces of faith, hope, love, humility, etc. and diligent and fervent in the discharge of duty; and this is a work becoming the ministers of the Gospel; and the example of the apostle is worthy of imitation.

Ver. 37. *And Barnabas determined*, etc.] Or consulted, and contrived in his own mind, and purposed within himself; the Alexandrian copy, and two of Beza’s, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, “he would”, or was willing; he had a mind, a very great desire,

to take with them John, whose surname was Mark; of whom (see <44>Acts 12:12) he being his sister’s son, (<51>Colossians 4:10) him they brought with them to Antioch, when they returned from Jerusalem thither, where they had been sent by the church at Antioch, with money for the relief of the poor saints; (see <44>Acts 11:29,30, 12:25) and who seems to have come with them from Jerusalem again; for thither he went, when he parted from them at Pamphylia, (<44>Acts 13:13).

Ver. 38. *But Paul thought not good to take him with them*, etc.] He did not think him worthy, or a fit and proper person to go with them, as the word used seems to signify, and therefore he refused to take him: the Syriac version renders it, “but Paul would not take him with them”; and, the Ethiopic version is very expressive, though it renders it in softer language, “Paul prayed, or entreated Barnabas that he would leave Mark”; that is, behind them at Antioch: his reasons were as follow:

who departed from them from Pamphylia, (See Gill on “<44>Acts 13:13”); either through the fatigue of the journey, or fear of danger, or weariness in his work, or affection to his mother; or be it what it will, it seems in the apostle’s opinion of the matter, he was very blameworthy, and on account of it very undeserving, at least at present, of being a companion of theirs in their travels:

and went not with them to the work; the Arabic version adds, “of preaching”; that is, the Gospel, in the several places whither they went, and to which the Holy Ghost had called them, and for which the church at Antioch had separated, and sent them forth; but in the midst of this John deserted them; and which the apostle resented, he having, as yet, not given any evidence of his sense of his evil, and of his repentance for it, to his satisfaction; though it seems as if he afterwards did, since in (Colossians 4:10,11) he speaks of him with great respect, as one of his fellow workers, and who had been a comfort to him.

Ver. 39. *And the contention was so sharp between them*, etc.] About this matter; Barnabas insisting on it, that John Mark should go with them, he being a relation of his; and in whose favour it might be urged, that his mother Mary was an excellent good woman, who had received the saints into her house, in a time of persecution; and that it should be considered, that this her son was but a young man, and could not be thought to have that courage, resolution, constancy, and solidity, as older professors and ministers; and that his crime was not very heinous, and should be overlooked. Paul, on the other hand, opposing his going with them, as a very unworthy person, because he had behaved so cowardly, and had shown such a coldness and indifference to the work of the ministry, and had so shamefully left them; and thus they disputed the point till there was a paroxysm between them, as is the word used: they were irritated and provoked by one another, and were so warmed and heated on both sides,

that they departed asunder one from another; thus as soon almost as peace was made in the church, a difference arises among the ministers of the word, who are men of like passions with others; and though it is not easy to say which was to blame most in this contention; perhaps there were faults on both sides, for the best men are not without their failings; yet this affair was overruled by the providence of God, for the spread of his Gospel, and the enlargement of his interest; for when these two great and good men parted from one another, they went to different places, preaching the word of God:

and so Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus; (See Gill on “Acts 13:4”).

Ver. 40. *And Paul chose Silas*, etc.] To be his companion and assistant; this being the design of the Holy Ghost in influencing his, mind to stay

longer at Antioch, after he, with Judas, was dismissed by the church to go to Jerusalem, (<44153>Acts 15:33,34)

and departed; that is, from Antioch:

being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God; (see Gill on "<44136>Acts 13:26"). The apostle having such a recommendation by the brethren of the church at Antioch, when he departed from them, and nothing of this kind being said with respect to Barnabas, have induced some to think, that the church took the part of the apostle against Barnabas, in the dispute between them; since the one went away saluted by them, and the other not.

Ver. 41. *And he went through Syria and Cilicia*, etc.] Antioch was the metropolis of the former, and Tarsus, the apostle's native place, was in the latter; and in both these countries he had been before, and had been the instrument of converting many souls, and of planting churches, which he now visited, as he proposed to Barnabas to do: for it follows,

confirming the churches; in the Gospel, and the truths and ordinances of it, he had before instructed them in: of the church at Antioch, (See Gill on "<44126>Acts 11:26"). And that there were also churches in Cilicia, is very manifest; and particularly there was one at Tarsus, the chief city in it. Herodian, of whom we read in (<45611>Romans 16:11) and Jason, in (<44705>Acts 17:5) who are reckoned among the seventy disciples, are said to be bishops or pastors of this church; (see Gill on "<42001>Luke 10:1"). In the "second" century there was a church in that city, to which Ignatius wrote an epistle, still extant [f759], in which he makes mention of Philo their deacon: in the "third" century Helenus presided over this church, and was present at a synod at Antioch, when Paulus Samosatenus was condemned for heresy [f760]: in the "fourth" century mention is made of several churches in Cilicia, and the bishops of them; there was a church at Apsis in Cilicia, Amphion was bishop of Epiphania, Theodorus of Mopsuestia, Cyriacus of Adanan, and Sylvanus of Tarsus, the metropolis; in which last place, in the beginning of this century, several martyrs suffered under Dioclesian, particularly Tharatus, Probus, and Andronicus: here the orthodox, in the times of Valens, would have convened a synod against the Arians, but were hindered by him; and in this century Diodorus, bishop of Tarsus, had the care of all the churches in Cilicia committed to him; in this age also we read of Antoninus, a presbyter of this church, afterwards made bishop of it: in the "fifth" century mention is made of the bishops of several churches in

Cilicia, as of Mopsuesta, Irenopolis, Epiphania, Tarsus, Anazarbus, Sebaste, and others who were present at several councils held at different places in this century; in the “sixth” century, out of the cities of Cilicia, Jotapa, Pisidia, Pompeiopolis, Tarsus, Coricus, Anemurius, bishops are said to come to the synod at Rome and Constantinople: in the seventh century, Tarsus was the metropolitan church of Cilicia; and mention is made of the bishops of that and of other cities in this country, who assisted at the sixth council at Constantinople: in the “eighth” century, notice is taken of a Church at Sida in Cilicia [f761]; so long the Christian name was in those parts. Beza’s ancient copy adds, “delivering the commandments of the elders”; and the Vulgate Latin version, “bidding” them to keep the commandments of the apostles and elders; (see <44164>Acts 16:4), namely; the decrees of the assembly at Jerusalem; which seems very agreeable, since the letters were directed and sent to the brethren of the Gentiles in Syria and Cilicia, as well as in Antioch; (see <44152>Acts 15:23).

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 16

Ver. 1. *Then came he to Derbe and Lystra*, etc.] Which were cities of Lycaonia, (<44>4406Acts 14:6) after Paul had gone through Syria and Cilicia; in the last of these places, he had been stoned, and yet goes thither again; none of these things moved him from the preaching of the Gospel, and from the care of the churches, such zeal, courage, and intrepidity was he possessed of:

and behold a certain disciple was there: a converted person, a believer in Christ, one that had learned to know and deny himself, and understood the way of salvation by Christ, and was a follower of him; whether the apostle was an instrument of his conversion, when he was before in these parts, is not certain, though probable, since he often calls him his son; nor is it so evident whether he was at Derbe or at Lystra, though the latter seems most likely, since a report was given of him by the brethren there, and at Iconium, when no mention is made of Derbe, in the following verse:

named Timotheus; or Timothy, the same person to whom afterwards the apostle wrote two epistles: it is a name much used among the Greeks, and his father was a Greek; one of this name, who was an historian among the Greeks, is frequently mentioned by Laertius [f762]; and there was another of this name, the son of Conon, an Athenian general [f763]; and another that was a captain or general of Antiochus,

> "Afterward he passed over to the children of Ammon, where he found a mighty power, and much people, with Timotheus their captain." (1 Maccabees 5:6)

> "Now Timotheus, whom the Jews had overcome before, when he had gathered a great multitude of foreign forces, and horses out of Asia not a few, came as though he would take Jewry by force of arms." (2 Maccabees 10:24)

the name signifies one that honoured God, or was honoured by God; both were true in this disciple of Christ:

the son of a certain woman which was a Jewess, and believed; his mother was a Jewish woman, but a believer in Christ, her name was Eunice, (2 Timothy 1:5)

but his father was a Greek; a Gentile, an uncircumcised one, and so he seems to have remained, by his sons not being circumcised.

Ver. 2. *Which was well reported of*, etc.] Not the father of Timothy, but Timothy himself; to whose piety, virtue, and good conversation witness was borne,

by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium; the members of the churches which were in these places, and which were not far from one another; and as it is necessary that ministers of the Gospel should have a good report of them that are without, so likewise of them that are within; and the testimony of the latter is preferable to that of the former.

Ver. 3. *Him would Paul have to go forth with him*, etc.] Perceiving that he was a young man, that not only had the grace of God, but very considerable gifts, and abilities for ministerial service; and having a good testimony of his agreeable life and conversation, the apostle was very desirous he should go along with him, and be his companion in his travels, and be an assistant to him in the work of the ministry; and accordingly he was, and is often spoken of in his epistles, as his fellowlabourer, and one that served with him in the Gospel of Christ, and who was very dear unto him:

and took and circumcised him; which may seem strange, when there had been so lately a controversy in the church at Antioch about circumcision, from whence the apostle was just come; and when this matter had been debated and determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, where he was present, and he was now carrying about their decrees: but it is to be observed, that the apostle used circumcision not as a duty of the law, as what that required, and in obedience to it, which he knew was abrogated; much less as necessary to salvation, which the judaizing preachers urged; but as an indifferent thing, and in order to gain a point, and secure some valuable end, as follows

because of the Jews which were in those quarters; not the believing ones, for he brought along with him the decrees of the apostles and elders to satisfy them, that circumcision was not necessary; but the unbelieving ones, who he knew would not suffer an uncircumcised person to teach in their

synagogues, nor would they hear him out of them; wherefore having a mind to take Timothy with him to be assisting to him in the preaching of the Gospel, in point of prudence he thought it proper to circumcise him, that he might be received by them, and be the more acceptable to them; who would otherwise have taken such an offence at him, as not to have heard him: thus the apostle to the Jews became a Jew, that he might gain and save some, (<460920>1 Corinthians 9:20) for they knew all that his father was a Greek; and that therefore he was not circumcised; for a woman might not circumcise, because she was not a fit subject of circumcision herself [f764]; though in case of necessity circumcision by women was allowed of [f765].

Ver. 4. *And as they went through the cities*, etc.] Of Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, and others in Lycaonia, and in Phrygia and Galatia; the Arabic version reads, "they both"; that is, Paul and Barnabas:

they delivered them the decrees for to keep; they gave the churches, in these cities, the sentiments, and determinations to be observed and followed by them:

that were ordained of the apostles which were at Jerusalem; concerning the abstinence of the Gentiles from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication, (<441520>Acts 15:20,29).

Ver. 5. *And so were the churches established in the faith*, etc.] Of Christ, both in the grace and doctrine of faith; and that both by the preaching of the Gospel by the apostle and his companions, and by the decrees of the elders delivered by him:

and increased in number daily; as well as in gifts and grace.

Ver. 6. *Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia*, etc.] (See Gill on "<440210>Acts 2:10") To which may be added, that this country had its name either from the river Phryx, as Pliny [f766] observes, or from the word Phrygios, which signifies "dry"; this being a very dry and sandy country: it was famous for marble stone; hence we read [f767] of Phrygian Stone or marble, of which pillars and statues were made: according to Josephus [f768], the original of the Phrygians was Togarmah the son of Gomer, and grandson of Japheth, (<011003>Genesis 10:3), whom he calls Thygrammes, and his people from him, Thygrammeans, and who, adds he, as it seems by the Greeks, are called Phrygians. Herodotus [f769] reports, that the Phrygians (as the Macedonians say) were called Briges or Brygians, so long as they were

Europeans, and dwelt with the Macedonians: but when they went into Asia, together with the country, they changed their names, into Phrygians: of one Philip a Phrygian, whom Antiochus left governor at Jerusalem, mention is made in:

> "And he left governors to vex the nation: at Jerusalem, Philip, for his country a Phrygian, and for manners more barbarous than he that set him there;" (2 Maccabees 5:22)

here dwelt Jews, as appears from (<44210>Acts 2:10) and here the apostle preached and made converts.

And the region of Galatia: in Asia Minor: it had Cappadocia on the east, Bithynia on the west, Pamphylia on the south, and the Euxine sea on the north. The inhabitants of this country were originally Gauls, who under Brennus their captain, came out of some parts of France, and invaded Italy, and came to Rome, and took it all but the capitol; from whence being sallied out upon by the Romans at an unawares, they were obliged to retire; and from thence they sailed into Greece, and went into Asia, into this part of it where they settled, which was first called after them Gallo Graecia, and in process of time Galatia; though some say the Grecians called them Galatians from Gala, which signifies "milk", because of their milky colour: of the Galatians, mention is made in,

> "And he told them of the battle that they had in Babylon with the Galatians, how they came but eight thousand in all to the business, with four thousand Macedonians, and that the Macedonians being perplexed, the eight thousand destroyed an hundred and twenty thousand because of the help that they had from heaven, and so received a great booty." (2 Maccabees 8:20)

here the Gospel was preached, and many believed; for we afterwards read of disciples both in this country and in Phrygia, (<44823>Acts 18:23) and here were churches formed, and to whom the apostles preached, and delivered the decrees of the apostles and elders.

And were forbidden of the Holy Ghost; not by an articulate voice, but by a secret and powerful impulse upon their minds;

to preach the word in Asia: that is, in that country which was properly called Asia, or pro-consular Asia, otherwise Phrygia, and Galatia, were provinces in Asia Minor. Beza's most ancient copy, and the Vulgate Latin

and Syriac versions read, “the word of God”: the reasons why it was prohibited to be preached here, at this time, cannot be said, and must be referred to the sovereign will of God; it seems, that at this instant, there were no chosen ones to be called by grace, and there was work for the apostle and his companions to do elsewhere, namely, in Macedonia.

Ver. 7. *After they were come to Mysia*, etc.] Another country in Asia Minor. It is divided by Ptolomy [f770] into two parts; superior Mysia is bounded by Dalmatia on the west, by Macedonia on the south, by part of Thrace on the east, and by part of the river Danube on the north; inferior Mysia is bounded on the west with part of the river Ciaber and the Danube, on the south with part of Thrace, on the north with the turn of the river Tyra, and on the east with the Euxine Pontus; but this was the European Mysia: the Mysia which seems here intended, was divided into the lesser Mysia by the Hellespont, and had Troas on the south; and into the greater Mysia by Olympus, which was bounded on the west with the lesser Mysia and Troas, on the east with Bithynia, and on the south with Asia, properly so called. By Pliny [f771] it is called Aeolis, and so Jerom says [f772], it was in his times; sometimes it is called Abretta and Abrettina, and of later years Thya, or Thyria: some suggest it has its name of Mysia from Mysus, the brother of Car [f773], the father of the Carions; but according to the Talmudists, it had its name from Meshech, the son of Japheth, (<0100>Genesis 10:2) for they say [f774] Meshech, ayswm wz, “this is Mysia”; Pliny observes [f775], that there are some authors who assert that the Mysians, Brygians, and Thynnians came out of Europe, from whom they are called Mysians, Phrygians, and Bithynians, in Asia. The inhabitants of Mysia were very despicable; hence the proverb, “ultimus Mysorum”, “the last of the Mysians” [f776], is used for a very mean and contemptible person. The apostle was willing to preach to the wise and unwise, and disdained not to carry the Gospel to the meanest part of mankind.

They assayed to go into Bithynia; another country in Asia Minor; it makes one province with Pontus, and has the same boundaries; Pontus being at the east, and Bithynia at the west: it was bounded on the north with the Euxine sea, on the east with Galatia, on the south with Asia properly so called, and on the west with the Propontis; according to Pliny [f777] it was called Cronia, afterwards Thessalis, then Maliande, (perhaps Mariandyne), and Strymonis; and Herodotus [f778] reports, that the Thracians going into Asia were called Bithynians, who were first called (as they say) Strymonians, inhabiting Strymon; according to Jerom [f779], it was formerly

called Bebrycia, then Mygdonia, and Phrygia Major, and by the river Iera, or, as Pliny calls it, Hieras, is divided from Galatia; to which agrees Solinus [f780] who says it was before Bebrycia, afterwards Migdonia, and now Bithynia, from Bithynus the king; the king; though others say, it was so called from Bithyne, a daughter of Jupiter;

but the Spirit suffered them not; the Alexandrian copy, and Beza's most ancient copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, "the Spirit of Jesus": so that it was not an evil spirit, or Satan, that hindered them, who sometimes did; but they were under the direction and guidance of the divine Spirit, called, in the preceding verse, the Holy Ghost; however, the Gospel was preached here afterwards, and churches formed; of which (See Gill on "1 Peter 1:1").

Ver. 8. *And they passed by Mysia*, etc.] Without stopping or staying there, though they came to it:

came down to Troas; either the country of Troas, as the Syriac version renders it; which, according to Solinus [f781], is bordered on the north part of Galatia, and was near to Lycaonia, Pisidia, and Mygdonia on the south, and to Lydia on the east, and to Mysia and Caria on the north: or rather the city of Troas, which Pliny says [f782], was formerly called Antigonia, now Alexandria, a colony of the Romans. Antigonus king of Asia called it Troas at first, because it was in the country, and near where Troy stood, but afterwards he called it, according to his own name, Antigonia; but Lysimachus king of Thrace having got this city into his hands, repaired it, and called it after the name of Alexander, Alexandria; and to distinguish it from Alexandria in Egypt, and other cities of the same name in other places, it was called Alexandria Troas.

Ver. 9. *And a vision appeared to Paul in the night*, etc.] Either in a dream, or, it may be, when he was awake:

there stood a man of Macedonia; an angel in the form of a man; the Syriac version reads, "as a man of Macedonia", and who might appear in a Macedonian habit, or speak in the Macedonian language; or the apostle might conclude him to be so, from his making mention of Macedonia, as the place where he requested him to come, and assist:

and prayed him, saying, come over into Macedonia; Macedonia was a very large country in Europe; which formerly consisted, as Pliny [f783] says, of a hundred and fifty people, or nations, and was called Emathia; it took

its name of Macedonia from Macedo, a son of Jupiter, and of Thyd, a daughter of Deucalion: according to Ptolomy [f784] it had on the north Dalmatia, superior Mysia and Thracia; on the west, the Ionian sea; on the south Epirus; and on the east, part of Thracia, and the gulfs of the Aegean sea. It had formerly other names besides Emathia and Macedonia, as Mygdonia and Edoma, and is now called Albania or Ronnelli. Troas, where the apostle now was, when he had this vision, was just by the Hellespont, over which he must go to Macedonia; and therefore the Macedonian prays him to "come over", adding,

and help us; by praying and preaching, to pull down the kingdom of Satan, to destroy superstition and idolatry, to enlighten the eyes of men, and turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, and save them from utter ruin and destruction. This shows what a miserable condition this country was in; and that God had some chosen people among them to gather in, whose time was now come; and of what use and service the angels, Christ's ministering spirits, are, who are helpful in weakening the kingdom of Satan, and advancing the interest of Christ, and in spreading his Gospel, and particularly in directing the ministers of it where to preach it; though it follows not from hence, that this angel presided over the whole country, and was their tutelar angel, as some think.

Ver. 10. *And after he had seen the vision*, etc.] And considered it, and related it to his companions: and when they had well weighed it, and the circumstances of it:

immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia; they determined upon it, and took all the proper methods, and made the necessary provisions for it. Here Luke, the writer of this history, first appears, saying, "we endeavoured"; whether he came with the apostle from Antioch, since he is commonly said to have been a physician of Antioch; or whether he met the apostle at Troas, since here is the first hint of him, is not certain:

assuredly gathering, that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them; they concluded from the vision with great certainty, that they had a manifest call from God to go into Macedonia, and preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of it, not doubting but that they should meet with success. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read "God", instead of "Lord".

Ver. 11. *Therefore loosing from Troas*, etc.] Or setting sail from thence, which, as before observed, was the Hellespont; which was a narrow sea that divided Asia from Europe, now called Stretto di Gallipoii, or Bracci di St. Georgio: and so Pliny [f785] speaking of Troas says, it lies near the Hellespont; and Jerom [f786] calls it a maritime city of Asia; and it further appears to be on the sea coast, by what is said in (<4406>Acts 20:6), for from Philippi hither, the apostle and his company sailed in five days, and from hence they sailed to Assos, (<4406>Acts 20:6,13)

we came with a straight course to Samothracia; which was an island in the Aegean sea, or Archipelago: it was formerly called Dardania [f787], from Dardanus the, son of Jupiter by Electra, who fled hither from Italy, upon killing his brother Jasius; it had its name of Samothracia, from Thracia, near to which it was, and from the Samians who inhabited it; and it was called Samothracia to distinguish it from the island Samos in the Ionian sea; it is now called Samandrachi: Jerom [f788] calls it an island in the gulf of Pagasa; of this island of Samothracia, Pliny says [f789], that it was free before Hebrus, was thirty two miles from Imbrus, twenty two and a half from Lemnus, thirty eight, from the shore of Thracia, and in circumference thirty two — and that it is fullest of good havens of any in those parts; and adds, that Callimachus calls it by its ancient name Dardania; it seems it was also called Leucosia, or Leucadia, because to spectators at a distance it looked white: according to [f790] Herodotus the Pelasgi first inhabited Samothracia, who with the Athenians dwelt there, and from them the Samothracians received their sacred rites and mysteries; for this island was famous for the worship of the Cabiri, or chief deities of the Gentiles, particularly Ceres, Proserpina, Pluto, Mercury, and the two brothers Castor and Pollux, Neptune, and all the sea gods; insomuch that it was called “the holy island” [f791], and persons of other nations, and even of the greatest figure, were initiated into the mysteries of the Samothracians, which Pliny [f792] calls the most holy; for speaking of Venus, Potho, and Phaeton, adds, who are worshipped with the most holy ceremonies of Samothracia. The apostle did not stay to preach the Gospel in this place, nor do we read of its being preached here by him at any other time, or by any other, nor of any church in this place in after ages in ecclesiastical history. The apostle and his companions are said to come hither, “with a straight course”; not only because they might have a fair gale, which brought them at once hither; but because when they were over the Hellespont, this island lay directly in their way, in a straight line to Macedonia:

and the next day to Neapolis; the Alexandrian copy reads, “the new city”, as the word signifies; hence the Ethiopic version by way of interpretation renders it, “the next day we came to the new city, the name of which is Neapolis”: according to Ptolomy, it was a sea port of Edonis, a part of Macedonia, and was upon the borders of Thrace; it is now called Christopoli; and was not Neapolis in Campania, nor Sychem in Samaria, which is so called, but was at a great distance from either of these. Pliny places it in Thracia, as he also does Edonis, and even Philippi [f793]. Jerom calls [f794] it a city of Caria, but wrongly: and though we have no account of the apostles preaching in this place, and of making converts, neither now nor at any other time; yet it appears even in after ages that here was a church in this place: in the “sixth” century the bishop of it was sent to the fifth Roman synod; and in the “seventh” century one Andreas was bishop of this place, who was in the sixth synod at Constantinople [f795].

Ver. 12. *And from thence to Philippi*, etc.] This place is by Appianus called Datos, which was its original name; and by Diodorus Siculus, Crenidae [f796], from the fountains of water, which were many and wholesome, that were about it; and it had its name Philippi, from Philip king of Macedon, father of Alexander the great, who rebuilt it [f797]: it is now vulgarly called Chrixopolis, that is, Chrysopolis, from the veins and mines of gold found about it; it was famous for a battle here fought between Augustus Caesar and Anthony on the one side, and Brutus and Cassius on the other, in which the latter were vanquished:

which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia; which is called Edonis, in which Ptolomy places it;

and a colony: that is, of the Romans; (see <4416>Acts 16:37,38) and which Pliny [f798] also calls a colony:

and we were in that city abiding many days; without doing anything, having no opportunity, or door opened to them to preach the Gospel; which must be a great trial of their faith, after Paul had seen such a vision, by which they were so strongly assured it was the will of God they should come and preach the Gospel here, and after they had travelled so far by sea and land; though some observe, that the word used signifies not only to abide, but to exercise themselves, by teaching and preaching the word, which it is supposed they did with success; and that the women they after met with by the river side, were such, at least some of them, who had been converted under their ministry; but the former seems to be the truest sense.

Ver. 13. *And on the sabbath*, etc.] That is, as the Syriac version renders it, “on the sabbath day”; the Jewish sabbath, the seventh day of the week; though the words may be rendered, “on a certain day of the week” agreeably to (<44207>Acts 20:7) where the first of the sabbath means the first day of the week; but be this as it will, on this day,

we went out of the city by a river side; perhaps the river Strymon, which was near; the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read,

without the gate; and the Syriac version, “without the gates of the city”; all to the same sense: it looks as if there was no synagogue of the Jews in this place, or otherwise the apostle and his companions would have gone into that, according to their custom; and this the rather seems to be the case, since it is so particularly remarked, that at Thessalonica, the next place they stayed at there was one, (<44701>Acts 17:1) and the reason might be, because that Philippi being a Roman colony, the Jews were not suffered to have one in it; wherefore Paul and his company, whether on the Jewish sabbath, or on any other day of the week, took a walk out of the city; either for the sake of a walk, or rather to converse together, and consider what was to be done, or to look out for an opportunity to preach the Gospel; and they came to a place,

where prayer was wont to be made; or as the words may be rendered, “where was thought to be a place of prayer”; a “proseucha”, an oratory, or a place built and made use of for prayer; that is, as they walked along, they saw a place, which in their opinion looked like a religious house, or a place for prayer, and so made up to it, where they found some persons assembled together on that account: this sense is confirmed by several versions; the Vulgate Latin version reads, “where there seemed to be prayer”, and so reads Beza’s most ancient copy; and the Syriac version is very express, “for there was seen” atwlx tyb, “an house of prayer”; to which agrees the Arabic version, “we went out to a certain place, which was thought to be a place of prayer”; to which may be added the Ethiopic version, “and we thought there was prayer there”; and that the Jews had their oratories, or prayer houses, is certain; (See Gill on “<42062>Luke 6:12”) and that these were without the cities, and in the fields, appears from a passage of Epiphanius [f799], who says,

> “there were anciently places of prayer, both among the Jews, “without the city”, and among the Samaritans, there was a place of prayer at Sichem, which is now called Neapolis, “without the city”, in the field, about two stones distance, in form of a theatre, open to the air, and without covering, built by the Samaritans, who in all things imitated the Jews:”

and if these were commonly built by fountains and rivers, and as some think, in imitation of Isaac, who went out into the field, “to meditate”; which the Chaldee paraphrase renders, “to pray”; and is also in the same place said to come, as the Jerusalem paraphrase renders it, `arabl` “to a well”, or “fountain”, (<0242>Genesis 24:62,63) then this clause may be rendered, “where it was usual for a prayer house to be”: and then the sense is, there being no synagogue in the city, the apostle and those with him went out of it, to the river side, to look out for a prayer house; where such places were wont to be built, and they accordingly found one:

and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither; who seem to have been Jewish women, who met here to attend public prayer, there being no religious worship of the true God in the city; and among these worshippers of God was Lydia, hereafter mentioned; and worship not being begun, the apostle and his companions sat down among them, and entered into some religious conversation with them, and took the opportunity of preaching the Gospel, which was what they wanted, and were seeking after.

Ver. 14. *And a certain woman, named Lydia*, etc.] Whether this woman was a Jewess or a Gentile, is not certain, her name will not determine; she might be called so from the country of Lydia, which was in Asia minor, and where was Thyatira, her native place; Horace makes frequent mention of one of this name [f800] and it might be a Jewish name; we read of R. Simeon ben Lydia [f801]; and as these seem to be Jewish women that met at this oratory, she might be one:

a seller of purple; either of purple silks, much wore in the eastern countries; or of the purple dye, which in,

> “Then Judas returned to spoil the tents, where they got much gold, and silver, and blue silk, and purple of the sea, and great riches.” (1 Maccabees 4:23)

is called “purple of the sea”, or “sea purple”; it being the blood or juice of a turbinated shell fish, which the Jews call ^WZ l j , “Chalson”: this they speak of as a shellfish; hence those words [f802],

> “go and learn of the Chalson, for all the while it grows, its shell grows with it:”

and that purple was dyed with the blood of it, appears from the following instances; “the best fruits in the land”, (<0431>Genesis 43:11) are interpreted [f803], the things that are the most famous in the world, as the Chalson, etc. with whose blood, as the gloss on the passage says, they dye purple: and the purple dyed with this was very valuable, and fetched a good price; the tribe of Zebulun is represented [f804], as complaining to God, that he had given to their brethren fields and vineyards, to them mountains and hills, to their brethren lands, and to them seas and rivers; to which it is replied, all will stand in need of thee, because of Chalson; as it is said, (<0533>Deuteronomy 33:19) “They shall suck of the abundance of the seas”; the gloss upon it, interpreting the word Chalson, is, it comes out of the sea to the mountains, and with its blood they dye purple, which is sold at a very dear price. The text in (<0533>Deuteronomy 33:19) is thus paraphrased by Jonathan the Targumist;

> “at the shore of the sea they dwell (i.e. they of the tribe of Zebulun), and they delight themselves with (the fish) Tuny, and take Chalson, and with its blood dye purple the threads of their garments.”

And so Maimonides says [f805], that they use this in dying the fringes on the borders of their garments; after they have scoured the wool, and the like, that it may take the dye, he says,

> “they take of the blood of Chalson, which is a fish whose colour is like the colour of purple, and its blood is black like ink, and it is found in the salt sea,”

particularly about Tyre; so the husbandmen in (<2452>Jeremiah 52:16) are interpreted [f806], they that catch Chalson from the ladder of Tyre to Chippah, or the shore; the gloss explains it, those that squeeze and press the Chalson, to fetch out its blood: and with all this agree the modern accounts given of purple, as follow;

> "purple was much esteemed among the ancients, especially the Tyrian purple; which underwent more dyes than the rest, and which was almost peculiar to emperors and kings, yet this purple did not exceed that now in use. — The ancient purple was tinged, or given with the blood or juice of a precious turbinated testaceous sea fish, called by the Greeks πορφυρα, and by the Latins "purpura". — In the seas of the Spanish West Indies, about Nicoya, is found a shell fish, which perfectly resembles the ancient "purpura", and in all probability is the very same — these are gathered very plentifully in the spring, and by rubbing one against another, yield a kind of saliva, or thick glair, resembling soft wax; but the purple dye is in the throat of the fish, and the finest part in a little white vein — the chief riches of Nicoya consist in this fish; cloth of Segovia dyed with it, is sold for twenty crowns the ell. — In the Philosoph. Transact., we have an account of a purple fish discovered in 1686, by Mr. W. Cole, on the coasts of Somersetshire, South Wales, &c, where it is found in great abundance. — The fish is a kind of "buccinum", a name given by the ancients to all fishes, whose shell bears any resemblance to a hunting horn; and it appears from Pliny, that part of the ancient purple was taken from this kind of shell fish. The Caribbee Islands have likewise their "purple" fish; it is called "burgan", being of the size of the end of the finger, and resembling our periwinkles; its shell is of a brownish azure, its flesh white, its intestines of a very bright red, the colour whereof appears through the body; and it is this that dyes that froth, which it casts when taken, and which is at first of a violet hue, bordering on blue; to oblige them to yield the greater quantity of froth, they lay them on a plate, and shake and beat them against one another, upon which the plate is immediately covered with the froth, which is received on a linen cloth, and becomes "purple", in proportion as it dries [f807]."

It may be further observed, that the fringes which the Jews wore upon their garments, had on them a ribband of blue or purple, (<0458>Numbers 15:38), for the word there used, is by the Septuagint rendered "purple", in (<0407>Numbers 4:7) and sometimes "hyacinth"; and the whole fringe was by the Jews called t l k t, "purple" :hence it is said [f808],

> "does not everyone that puts on the "purple" (i.e. the fringes on his garments) in Jerusalem, make men to wonder? and a little after, the

> former saints, or religious men, when they had wove in it (the garment) three parts, they put on it תלכת, "the purple"."

And there were persons who traded in these things, and were called תלכת יריכם, "sellers of purple" [f809], as here; that is, for the Tzitzith, or fringes for the borders of the garments, on which the ribband of blue or purple was put, as the gloss explains it: the Jews were very curious about the colour, and the dying of it; that it should be a colour that would hold and not change; and that the ribband be dyed on purpose for that use. Maimonides gives rules for the dying of it [f810], and they were no less careful of whom they bought it; for they say, that "the purple" was not to be bought, but of an approved person, or one that was authorized for that purpose [f811]; and a scruple is raised by one, whether he had done right or no, in buying it of the family of a doctor deceased [f812]: now since Lydia might be a Jewess, or at least, as appears by what follows, was a proselytess of the Jewish religion, this might be her business to sell the purple for their fringes, and it may be the fringes themselves; and if this was her employment, she was thoroughly a religious person in their way, since we find, that תלכת יריכם, "sellers of purple", were free from reading

> "hear O Israel", etc. (Deuteronomy 6:4) and "from prayer", and from the phylacteries, etc. for this reason, because he that is employed in the commandment (in any work for it) was free from the commandment [f813];"

and yet she attended at the place and time of prayer:

of the city of Thyatira; which was in Lydia, or as others say in Mysia, which was in Asia Minor; Pliny [f814] seems to place it in Ionia, by the river Lycus, and says it was formerly called Pelopia and Euhippa, and it was also called Semiramis; it had its name of Thyatira from Seleucus Nicanor, who being at war with Lysimachus near this place, and hearing he had a daughter born, called it Thygateira; though others say it was so called, because that when the Mysians were about to build a city, inquiring of the gods where they should build it, were told, that they should build it where a hart was struck, and appeared running; and δια το ψυειν, because of the sacrificing of the hart, they called it Thyateira. The Turks now call it "Ak hissar", the white camp. This was Lydia's native place, from which she was now at a great distance, being either wholly removed hither, or was

here upon business; for Thyatira was in Asia, and Philippi, where she now was, was in Europe:

which worshipped God; the true God, the God of Israel, and not the gods of the Gentiles, among whom she was; which shows, that she was either a Jewish woman, who had knowledge of the one true and living God, or at least a proselytess of the Jewish religion:

heard us; not alone, but with other women; and at first only externally, and not so as to understand and receive what she heard, until the efficacious grace of God was exerted upon her, signified in the following clause:

whose heart the Lord opened; which was before shut and barred, with the bars of ignorance, hardness, and unbelief. The heart of a sinner before conversion, is like a house shut up, and wholly in darkness; whatever degree of natural or moral light is in it, there is none in spiritual things; it is empty of the grace of God, of the fear of him, and love to him; it is without proper inhabitants, without God, Christ, and the Spirit; and is the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, who delight in dark and desolate places; it is bolted and barred with unbelief, and walled up, and even petrified and hardened with sin, and is guarded and garrisoned by Satan, and its goods are kept in peace by him: and this had been the case of Lydia; but now the Lord opened her understanding, and put light into it, which was before darkness itself; as to spiritual things; by which she saw her wretched, sinful, and miserable state by nature, the insufficiency of all ways and means, and works, to justify and save her, and the necessity, suitableness, and fulness of grace and salvation by Christ; which was done by the same divine power, that at first created light in darkness: moreover, the Lord wrought upon her affections, and engaged them to divine and spiritual things; creating love in her soul to Christ, to his people, truths and ordinances; which was done by his almighty hand, taking away the stony heart, and giving an heart of flesh: he also removed the bar of unbelief, entered in himself, dispossessed Satan, and worked faith in her, to look to him, lay hold on him, and receive him, as her Saviour and Redeemer; making her willing in the day of his power, to be saved by him, and to serve him: it is a petition the Jews frequently make[f815], in their prayers to God, `yabl jtptd`, "that thou wouldst open my heart", in thy law; or as sometimes, open our hearts in the doctrine of thy law: not Lydia herself, nor the Apostle Paul, but the Lord opened her heart; Jehovah the Father, who commanded light out of darkness; Jehovah the Son, who has the key

of the house of David; Jehovah the Spirit, who convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment:

that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul; concerning the person and offices of Christ, concerning his truths and ordinances, concerning free justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and everlasting salvation by him; these things she hearkened unto in another manner than she had done; before she heard, but did not attend to what she heard; but faith coming by hearing, now she hears with the hearing of faith, and understands what she hears, and cordially receives and embraces it, and put into practice what she heard, submitting to the ordinance of Christ, as follows.

Ver. 15. *And when she was baptized*, etc.] In water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the commission of Christ, by the apostle, or some one of his companions; by whom she was instructed into the nature and use of this ordinance; and very likely it was performed in that river, by the side of which the oratory stood, where they were assembled:

and her household; they were baptized also, being converted at the same time; these seem to be her menial servants, who came along with her from her native place upon business, and who attended on her; accordingly the Ethiopic version renders it, "and she was baptized with all her men"; and these were believers, and are called "the brethren", (Acts 16:40) hence this passage will by no means serve the cause of infant baptism: whether Lydia was a maid, a wife, or widow, cannot be said; it looks, however, as if she had no husband now, since she is mentioned as a trader herself; and whether she had any children or not, is not certain, nor can it be concluded from this clause, for there are many households that have no children; and if she had young children, it is not likely she should bring them with her to such a distant place, whither she was come upon trade and business: the pleaders for infant baptism must prove that she had children; that these were her household, or part of her household here spoken of; and that they were baptized; or this instance will be of no service to their cause:

she besought us, saying, if ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord; this she said, not as doubting whether they had so judged of her, but as supposing it, and taking it for granted, that they had; wherefore she reasons upon it, and argues from it; and the sense is this, that seeing the apostle and his company had judged her to be a believer in Christ, by admitting her to

the ordinance of baptism; and she had shown her faithfulness to him, by submitting to it, according to his will; therefore she earnestly entreated them to take up their residence at her house, whilst at Philippi: saying,

come into my house, and abide there; her faith soon worked by love; and by the fruits of righteousness which followed upon it, it appeared to be true and genuine: and she constrained us; Paul and Silas, and Timothy and Luke, and whoever else were in company; she not only invited them, but obliged them to go with her; she would take no denial, and by her arguments, entreaties, and importunity, as it were forced them, and prevailed upon them to go with her.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass as we went to prayer*, etc.] That is, to the house of prayer, or to the oratory, as they were in the way to it; for this is not to be understood of their just going to the act, or duty of prayer; for the damsel that now met them, is said to follow them, and to do so for many days, one after another; and it was by their going to the prayer house, that she knew what they were; and besides, the phrase of "going to prayer", as used by us, for the act or duty of prayer, is a mere Anglicism, and unknown to the eastern writers: now this their going to the oratory, was after they had been at Lydia's house, and had been entertained and refreshed there; whether this was on the same day that she was converted and baptized, is not certain: however, so it was, that

a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination, met us; in the Greek text it is, "the spirit of Python"; the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, "the spirit Python"; the same with Apollo, who was called Pythius, as was his oracle, from the people coming to him, πυνψανεσψαι, to inquire of him and consult with him, about difficult matters [f816]; or rather from the Hebrew word ˆ t p, which signifies a serpent; and so Apollo is said to have his name Pythius, from his killing the serpent Typhon, or Python [f817]; hence the city of Delphos, where was the oracle of Apollo, was called Pytho [f818]; the prophetess that sat upon the golden tripos, and delivered out the oracles, Pythia; and the feasts and plays instituted to the honour of Apollo, were called the Pythian feasts and plays, and the place of the oracle Pythium [f819]: and so this maid, or the spirit in her, pretended to divine and foretell things to come; and the Arabic renders it, "an unclean spirit, foretelling future things": the Jews [f820] make this spirit of Python, to be the same with Ob, which we render a familiar spirit, (<032027>Leviticus 20:27 <051811>Deuteronomy 18:11) and the Septuagint by

“Engastrimythos”, a ventriloquist, one that seemed to speak out of his belly, and pretended to predict future events; and most of the versions in the Polyglot Bible render it by “Python”, the word here used: so the Jews say [f821], that a master of Obidiah (as the woman of Endor is called the mistress of Ob), µwtyp hz, this is “Python”: and so Jarchi on (<5811>Deuteronomy 18:11) explains the word, and adds, that it is one that speaks out of his arm holes, as those sort of people did from several parts of their bodies, and even from their secret parts: the word signifies a bottle, and they were called masters or mistresses of the bottle; either because the place on which they sat, and from whence they gave forth their oracles, was in the form of one; or they made use of a bottle in their divinations; or as Schindler [f822] observes, being possessed, they swelled and were inflated like bottles; and being interrogated, they gave forth answers out of their bellies, concerning things past, present, and to come: and this speaking out of their bellies might be done, without the possession of a real spirit, and much less was it from God, as Plutarch [f823], an Heathen himself, observes;

> “it is foolish and childish, to think that God, as the ventriloquists formerly called Eurycleans, and now Pythonists, should hide himself in the bodies of the prophets, using their mouths and voices as instruments to speak with, for this was done by turning their voices down their throats.”

The first of this sort was one Eurycles, of whom Aristophanes [f824] makes mention; and the Scholiast upon him says, that he was a ventriloquist, and was said by the Athenians to prophesy by a “demon” that was in him, when it was only an artificial way of speaking; Tertullian affirms he had seen such women that were ventriloquists, from whose secret parts a small voice was heard, as they sat and gave answers to things asked: Caelius Rhodiginus writes, that he often saw a woman a ventriloquist, at Rhodes, and in a city of Italy his own country; from whose secrets, he had often heard a very slender voice of an unclean spirit, but very intelligible, tell strangely of things past or present, but of things to come, for the most part uncertain, and also often vain and lying; and Wierus relates of one Peter Brabantius, who as often as he would, could speak from the lower part of his body, his mouth being open, but his lips not moved, whereby he deceived many by this cunning; and there was a man at court in King James the First’s time here in England, who could act this imposture in a very lively manner [f825]: but now whether the spirit that was in this maid was a cheat, an imposture of this kind, is not so easy to say; it seems by the dispossession that

follows, that it was a real spirit that possessed her; though some think it was no other than a deluding, devilish, imposture:

which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: divining or prophesying; it seems she had many masters, who had a propriety in her, and shared the gain she brought; unless by them are meant her master and mistress: vast treasures were brought to the temple at Delphos, by persons that applied to the Pythian oracle there; and great quantities were got by particular persons, who pretended to such a spirit, by which they told fortunes, and what should befall people hereafter, or where their lost or stolen goods were, and such like things; and of such sort were the magical boys and servants Pignorius [f826] makes mention of, out of Apuleius, Porphyry, and others, who either for gain or pleasure, performed many strange things.

Ver. 17. *The same followed Paul and us*, etc.] Silas, Luke, and Timothy; the Arabic version reads, "the same followed Paul and Silas"; as they were going to the oratory:

and cried, saying, these men are the servants of the most high God; not of Python, or Apollo, as she and her masters were; or of any of the deities of the Gentiles; nor of sin, nor of Satan, nor of men, but of the one only true and living God, one of whose titles is ˆwyl[, "Elion", the "Most High", (<01422>Genesis 14:22 <19818>Psalm 83:18) and these men were his servants, not merely by right of creation, as all men are, or should be; nor only through the power of divine grace upon their souls, bringing them into a willing obedience to him, as all the saints are; but by office, being ministers of the word: wherefore it follows,

which show unto us the way of salvation; which is not by the works of men; for by them the justice of God cannot be satisfied, nor his law fulfilled; God has declared against this way of salvation; it would make void the death of Christ, and frustrate the design of God in it; which is to magnify his grace, and exclude boasting in man: to which may be added, that the best works of men being imperfect, and attended with much sin, would rather damn than save; wherefore it is sinful, dangerous, and vain, to attempt salvation in this way. The only way of salvation is by the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the law is fulfilled, satisfaction is made for sin, peace and pardon are procured, an everlasting righteousness is brought in, and through whom grace and glory are given: and this is a way of

salvation, agreeable to all the perfections of God; in which the vilest sinner made sensible of his sins, and of his need of this, has no reason to despair; it is exceeding suitable to his case, and is a way in which none ever perish, that are directed to it: and now this way of salvation is only shown in the Gospel, by the ministers of it; not by the light of nature, for to men who only have that, it is foolishness; nor by the law of Moses, for to such who are under that, it is a stumbling block; nor by the carnal reason of men, it is not of men, nor after men, but by divine revelation: and therefore the natural man receives it not, it is hid from such; and therefore they project various ways of salvation, which are pleasing in their own eyes, but the end of them are the ways of death; the way to life and immortality, is only brought to light in the Gospel: whether she said this of her own accord, or was obliged to it by divine impulse; and whether it was through fear of Paul, and in flattery to him, or was with a good or bad design, is not easy to determine: however, certain it is, what she said was truth; and sometimes the devil himself, the father of lies, is obliged to speak it.

Ver. 18. *And this she did many days*, etc.] As the apostle and his company passed to and from the oratory, being for that time at Lydia's house; she followed them, and repeated the above words. This she was suffered to do, time after time; not that the apostle and his friends wanted such a testimony, or that it was of any use to them; but that the expulsion of the evil spirit might be more manliest, and more taken notice of:

but Paul being grieved; at the unhappy condition the maid was in, being possessed with such a spirit: and that the people were so imposed upon and deluded by it; and that it should be thought that there was any combination and agreement between that and him:

turned; himself to her, who was behind him, she following him, as is said in the preceding verse; this is left out in the Syriac version:

and said to the spirit; or to that spirit, as the same version renders it; to the spirit of Python, or Apollo, or of divination, that was in the maid; the Ethiopic version reads, "and he said", "in", or "by the Holy Spirit"; being under a more than ordinary influence and impulse of his; but not the spirit by which he spake, but the spirit to which he spake, is here meant:

I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her, and he came out the same hour; this is an instance of that power which Christ

gave to his apostles to cast out devils in his name, (<40:10:1>Matthew 10:1, <41:16:17>Mark 16:17)

Ver. 19. *And when her masters saw*, etc.] As they might by her sedateness and composure; she not being wild and frantic, and not having such motions and agitations she had whilst under the possession of the evil spirit:

that the hope of their gains was gone; the Syriac version adds, "out of her"; namely, the evil spirit which was the ground and foundation of all their hope of gains, they expected to acquire for themselves; that being gone, they had no more work to do, nor tricks to play, nor profit to expect from the maid: wherefore

they caught Paul and Silas; they being the chief speakers, and principally concerned in the ejection of the evil spirit; they laid hold on them, took them by the collar, or held them by their clothes,

and drew them into the market place: or rather into the court of judicature, as the word also signifies; there to accuse them, and to have them tried, condemned, and punished:

unto the rulers; the judges of the court, it may be the Decuriones; for in a Roman colony as Philippi was, they chose out every tenth man, that was of capacity and ability, to make and establish a public council, and who therefore were called by this name.

Ver. 20. *And brought them to the magistrates*, etc.] The same as before; wherefore the Syriac version omits them there, and reads them both together here, calling them the magistrates and chief men of the city; though the word here used, properly signifies military captains, captains of the Roman militia: but that they were the same with the Decuriones, or ten men before mentioned, appears from what Harpocratian says [f827], that every year were chosen "ten στρατηγοι, magistrates", the word here used:

saying, these men being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city; they call Paul and Silas Jews, either because they knew them to be so, or because they attended at the Jewish oratory, or place of worship; and it was common with the Romans to call the Christians Jews; they were generally included in the same name; and this name of the Jews was become very odious with the Romans; a little after this, Claudius commanded them, the Jews, to depart from Rome, (<44:18:2>Acts 18:2) they were commonly looked

upon as a troublesome and seditious sort of people, and indeed this was the old charge that was fastened upon them, (<15045>Ezra 4:15, <17008>Esther 3:8). So that it was enough to say that Paul and Silas were Jews, to prove them to be disturbers of the public peace: and it is to be observed, that their accusers make no mention of the dispossessing of the maid, who was their private property, and which was a private affair; but pretend a concern for the public welfare, and bring a charge of public disturbance and detriment, to which their malice and revenge prompted them, hoping in this way the better to succeed: the Arabic version reads, “these two men trouble our city, and they are both Jews”.

Ver. 21. *And teach customs*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read in the singular number, “custom or law”; referring to the doctrine of salvation by Christ, in whose name the spirit of divination was cast out of the maid, and whom they took for a new deity; and so concluded that the apostle and his company were introducing a new religious law or custom, the worship of another God:

which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans; for the city of Philippi was a Roman colony, and so the inhabitants of it called themselves Romans; or these men might be strictly such, who were transplanted hither; and with the Romans, it was not lawful to receive, observe, and worship, a new or strange deity, without the decree of the senate [f828].

Ver. 22. *And the multitude rose up together against them*, etc.] The crowd of people that were gathered together in the court on this occasion; being no doubt spirited up by the proprietors of the maid, out of whom the spirit of divination was cast, and encouraged by the rulers, and being provoked at the hearing of unlawful customs being introduced among them;

and the magistrates rent off their clothes; not their own clothes, as did the high priest, (<41463>Mark 14:63) but the clothes of Paul and Silas; and so reads the Arabic version, “and the rulers rent the garments of both of them”; which removes the ambiguity in the words; for at the whipping or beating of malefactors, they did not pluck off their garments, but rent and tore them off, and so whipped or beat them naked: this was the custom with the Jews [f829]; it is asked,

> “how did they whip anyone? his hands are bound to a pillar here and there, and the minister of the synagogue (or the executioner)

takes hold of his clothes; and if they are rent, they are rent, and if they are ripped, they are ripped, (be it as it will,) until he has made his breast bare, etc."

And in like manner the Lectors, or executioners among the Romans, used to tear the garments of malefactors, when they beat them; this the magistrates themselves did here, unless they may be said to do it, because they ordered it to be done, as follows:

and commanded to beat them; that is, with rods: this was one of the three times the apostle was beat in this manner, (<470125>2 Corinthians 11:25) and of this shameful treatment at Philippi, he makes mention in (<520202>1 Thessalonians 2:2).

Ver. 23. *And when they had laid many stripes upon them*, etc.] Even above measure, as in (<471123>2 Corinthians 11:35).

They cast them into prison; designing doubtless to inflict some greater punishment upon them, after they had further examined into their affairs:

charging the jailer to keep them safely; suggesting, that he must be answerable for them, should they escape, either through his favour or his negligence; and they might rather give this strict charge, because they perceived that they were uncommon men, possessed of a strange power, which they had exerted in the casting out of the evil spirit, which might come to their knowledge by some means or other; they might look upon them to be a sort of magicians, and therefore were to be narrowly watched, that they did not make use of their art to deliver themselves; however, they judged it necessary to use all the precautions they could, to secure them: some have thought this jailer to be the same with Stephanas, (<461616>1 Corinthians 1:16) but this is not certain, nor very probable.

Ver. 24. *Who having received such a charge*, etc.] So strict an one from the magistrates, was doubly careful and diligent:

thrust them into the inner prison: the innermost part of it, the lowest or furthest part of the prison; so that there were the more doors, bolts, and bars, to break open, and pass through, should they attempt to make their escape:

and made their feet fast in the stocks; or "wood", a wooden machine, in which the feet of prisoners were put for security, and which we call "the

stocks”; some say it was such an one, in which the neck as well as the feet were put, and so might be the same with our “pillory”.

Ver. 25. *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed*, When others were asleep, and all things were still and quiet; (see Gill on “Psalm 119:62”), and they prayed doubtless for themselves, for their deliverance in God’s time and way, and for support under their present afflictions; and for supplies of grace, to enable them to bear with patience and cheerfulness, until an issue was put to them; and for their enemies, and, particularly it may be for the jailer, who had used them so ill; and for the churches of Christ, for all the saints, and for the spread and success of the Gospel:

and sang praises unto God; or “sang an hymn to God”, very likely one of David’s psalms, or hymns: for the book of Psalms is a book, of hymns, and several of the psalms are particularly called hymns; this showed not only that they were cheerful, notwithstanding the stripes that were laid upon them, and though their feet were made fast in the stocks, and they were in the innermost prison, in a most loathsome and uncomfortable condition; and though they might be in expectation of greater punishment, and of death itself; but also that they were thankful and glorified God, who had counted them worthy to suffer for his name’s sake:

and the prisoners heard them; for it seems there were other prisoners besides them, and who were in the outer prison: and from hence it appears, that their prayer was not merely mental; nor was their singing praises only a making melody in their hearts, but were both vocal; and it might be chiefly for the sake of the prisoners, that they both prayed and praised in this manner, that they might hear and be converted; or at least be convicted of the goodness of the cause, for which the apostles suffered.

Ver. 26. *And suddenly there was a great earthquake*, etc.] An extraordinary and unusual one; which did not arise from natural causes, from wind being pent up in the earth, but from the prayers and praises of the saints, going up to heaven; when God was pleased to testify his presence and power this way; and the effects which followed upon this earthquake, show it to be a supernatural one:

so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; not the roof and walls only, as is common in earthquakes, but the very foundation also; and yet the edifice was not thrown down, as is usual when the foundation is shaken:

and immediately all the doors were opened; both of the outer and inner prisons, which is another unusual effect of earthquakes:

and everyone's bands were loosed; not only the bands of Paul and Silas, but of the rest of the prisoners; though the Arabic version reads, "all the fetters and bands of both were loosed", referring it only to Paul and Silas; this circumstance shows also, that the earthquake was miraculous, for when was it ever known that such an effect ever followed one?

Ver. 27. *And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep*, etc.] Not so much by the loud voices of Paul and Silas, as by the uncommon motion of the earth, which so shook him, as thoroughly to awake him:

and seeing the prison doors open; which was the first thing in his fright he was looking after, and careful of, and which he might perceive, though it was midnight, and though as yet he had no light:

he drew out his sword; from its scabbard, which was girt about him; for it may be he had slept with his clothes on, and his sword girt to him; or if he had put on his clothes upon awaking, he had also girt himself with his sword:

and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled; especially Paul and Silas, concerning whom he had received such a strict charge from the magistrates; and he knew that according to law, he must suffer the same punishment that was designed for them; and therefore in fear of the magistrates, and what they would inflict upon him, he was just going to destroy himself.

Ver. 28. *But Paul cried with a loud voice*, etc.] Knowing by divine revelation, what the jailer was about to do; though being in the innermost prison, in a dark dungeon, he could not see him, unless it can be thought, that the opening of the doors had let in light sufficient; and it may be also, that he knew in the same way, what designs of grace God had towards this man and his family:

saying, do thyself no harm; which is an instance of great tenderness, humanity, and love, to one that had used him and his companion with so much severity and cruelty:

for we are all here; not only Paul and Silas, but the rest of the prisoners also; who either being so intent upon hearing the prayers and praises of the

apostles, or so terrified with the earthquake, that they took no notice of their bands being loosed, and so never thought or attempted to make their escape; and as for Paul and Silas, all this happened to them, not for their deliverance in this way, as in the case of Peter, but to show the power of God, what he could do, and his presence with his servants.

Ver. 29. *Then he called for a light*, etc.] Or "lights"; he ordered his servants to bring in some candles; the Syriac version renders it, "he lighted a light for himself"; and the Ethiopic version, "he brought a light": whilst he was under the influence of Satan, and going about a work of darkness, namely, to destroy himself, he was in no concern for a light; but when he was delivered from the temptation and snare, he calls for light:

and sprang in; leaped in at once, in all haste, into the inner prison:

and came trembling; not as before, because of the prisoners and their escape; nor merely or so much on account of the earthquake, though the terror of that might not be as yet over; but chiefly through the horror of his conscience, and the dreadful sense he had of himself as a sinner, and of his lost state and condition by nature; the law had entered into his conscience, and had worked wrath there; the Spirit of God had convinced him of his sin and misery, and there was a fearful looking for of fiery indignation in him:

and fell down before Paul and Silas; not in a way of religious adoration, for they would never have admitted that; but in token of civil respect unto them, and of his great veneration for them, as was the manner of the eastern people; the Syriac version renders it, "he fell down at their feet", and so in Velesius's readings; at those feet, which he had before made fast in the stocks: a strange change and sudden alteration this! what is it that almighty power and efficacious grace cannot do?

Ver. 30. *And brought them out*, etc.] Of the inner prison, to some part of the prison that was more free and open:

and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? he treats them with great reverence now, and addresses them under a title and character of honour and respect; whom but a few hours ago he despised and abhorred, and perhaps knew no name bad enough for them; he now saw himself lost and perishing, and wanted their instructions, advice, and assistance; and as most persons under first awakenings are, so he was, upon the foot of works; thinking he must do something to procure his salvation, and desires to know what it was he must do, that he might set about it directly; and it

may be he had heard what the damsel possessed with a spirit of divination had frequently said of Paul and Silas, that they were the servants of the most high God, and showed unto men the way of salvation, (⁴⁴Acts 16:17) and therefore he desires that they would acquaint him with it: his language shows, he was in earnest, and expresses great eagerness, importunity, and haste.

Ver. 31. *And they said, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ*, etc.] Not with a bare historical faith, as only to believe that he was the Son of God, and the Messiah, and that he was come in the flesh, and had suffered, and died, and rose again, and was now in heaven at the right hand of God, and would come again to judge both quick and dead, for there may be such a faith and no salvation; but so as to look unto him alone for life and salvation, to rely upon him, and trust in him; to commit himself, and the care of his immortal soul unto him, and to expect peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life from him; the answer is much the same our Lord returned to the Jews, when they asked, though not with the same affection and sincerity as this man, what they must do to work the works of God, (⁴³John 6:28,29).

And thou shalt be saved; from sin, and all its miserable effects and consequences; from the curses of the law, from the power of Satan, from the evil of the world, from the wrath of God, hell and damnation: this is to be understood of a spiritual and eternal salvation; for it is said, after that the jailer was inquiring about it, being terrified in his conscience with a sense of sin and wrath; and between believing in Christ, and being saved with an everlasting salvation, there is a strict and inseparable connection, (⁴¹Mark 16:16) though not faith, but Christ is the cause and author of salvation; faith spies salvation in Christ, goes to him for it, receives it from him, and believes unto it:

and thy house; or family, provided they believe in Christ also, as they did, (⁴⁴Acts 16:34) or otherwise there can be no salvation, for he that believeth not shall be damned.

Ver. 32. *And they spake unto him the word of the Lord*, etc.] That is, the Gospel; which comes from the Lord Jesus Christ, as the author of it; and is concerning him, as the subject matter of it, and is what was preached by himself when on earth; this is the word, which is called the word of salvation, the word of reconciliation and peace, the word of life, the word of righteousness, and the word of faith; because it publishes salvation by Christ, peace and reconciliation by his blood, life by his death, his

righteousness for justification, and proposes him as the object of faith, and encourages souls to believe in him; and faith comes by it, and it contains things to be believed: and this word Paul and Silas spake to the jailer, and opened and explained it to him for his comfort, and for the encouragement of his faith in Christ:

and to all that were in his house; his whole family, who were all alarmed by the earthquake, and were got together into the prison; for it seems as if, after this, the jailer had them into his dwelling house, (<4416 34>Acts 16:34). These appear to be adult persons, such as were capable of having the word of the Lord spoken to them, and of hearing it, so as to believe in it, and rejoice at it, for faith came to them by hearing.

Ver. 33. *And he took them the same hour of the night*, etc.] After they had done preaching to him, and to his family:

and washed their stripes; which were very many and heavy, and whereby they were covered with blood; and which by this time began to fester, and to produce corrupt matter; and all this in a pool, which Grotius supposes was within the bounds of the prison, he washed off from them: his faith worked by love, and showed itself in fruits of charity and righteousness, and in obedience to Christ, and submission to his ordinance, as follows:

and was baptized, he and all his, straightway; by immersion, that being the only way in which baptism was administered, or can be, so as to be called a baptism: and which might be administered, either in the pool, which Grotius supposes to have been in the prison; or in the river near the city, where the oratory was, (<4416 13>Acts 16:13) and it is no unreasonable thought to suppose, that they might go out of the prison thither, and administer the ordinance, and return to the prison again before morning unobserved by any; and after that, enter into the jailer's house and be refreshed, as in the following verse; and as this instance does not at all help the cause of sprinkling, so neither the baptism of infants; for as the jailer's family were baptized as well as he, so they had the word of the Lord spoken to them as well as he, and believed as well as he, and rejoiced as he did; all which cannot be said of infants; and besides, it must be proved that he had infants in his house, and that these were taken out of their beds in the middle of the night, and baptized by Paul, ere the instance can be thought to be of any service to infant baptism.

Ver. 34. *And when he had brought them into his house*, etc.] After he and his family had been baptized, either in the pool in the prison, or in the river near the city of Philippi:

he set meat before them; he spread a table for them, with provisions to refresh them after all their fatigue; partly by stripes and imprisonment, partly by the exercises of prayer and praise, and also by the ministration of the word, and the administration of the ordinance of baptism to the jailer and his family:

and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house; he and his rejoiced at the good news, of peace and pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation, which the Gospel brought unto them; they rejoiced in Christ Jesus, in his person, offices, grace and righteousness; believing in him who is truly and properly God, they were filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; with a joy that always attends true faith, and which a stranger intermeddles not with; and they rejoiced that they were admitted to the ordinance of Christ, and were among his baptized followers; so the eunuch, after baptism, went on his way rejoicing, (Acts 8:39).

Ver. 35. *And when it was day*, etc.] In one copy Beza says, these words are added,

> "the magistrates came together in one place in the court, and remembering the earthquake that was made, they were afraid, and sent the sergeants;"

but they seem to be no other than a gloss, which crept into the text; however, it seems reasonable to suppose, that in the morning the magistrates met together, to consider what was further to be done with Paul and Silas; when upon cooler thoughts, they judged it best to be content with what punishment they had inflicted on them, and dismiss them; and if they had felt anything of the earthquake, or had heard of it in the prison, and of the converts that had been made there, they might be the more induced to let them go:

the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, let these men go; the Arabic version reads, "these two men"; that is, Paul and Silas: who these sergeants were, is not very certain; they seem to be so called in the Greek language, from their carrying rods, or little staves in their hands, and were a sort of apparitors; by these the magistrates sent orders, either by word of mouth, or in writing, to the jailer, to let Paul and Silas out of prison, and set them

at liberty, to go where they would; the same power that shook the foundations of the prison, and loosed the bands of the prisoners, wrought upon the hearts of the magistrates, to let the apostles go free.

Ver. 36. *And the keeper of the prison told this, saying to Paul*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, “and to Silas”; this was the same person with the jailer, whom Paul had baptized; and indeed, the same word is here used, though a little differently rendered, who no doubt reported this message to Paul with great joy:

the magistrates have sent to let you go; they have sent an order to let you out of prison:

now therefore depart, and go in peace; which expresses the jailer’s pleasure of mind, and joy of heart, in executing his orders; and his sincere and hearty wishes for peace and prosperity to go along with them wherever they went, who had been instrumental of so much good to him and his family.

Ver. 37. *But Paul said unto them*, etc.] The sergeants, who were present when the jailer reported to Paul the message they came with from the magistrates; though the Syriac version reads in the singular number, “Paul said to him”, to the jailer:

they have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; what the magistrates ordered to be done to them, is reckoned all one as if they had done it themselves; and which was done “openly”, before all the people, in the most public manner; to their great reproach, being put to open shame, as if they had been the most notorious malefactors living; when they were “uncondemned”, had done nothing worthy of condemnation, being innocent and without fault, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render the word; nor was their cause heard, or they suffered to make any defence for themselves; and what was an aggravation of all this, that this was done in a Roman colony, and by Roman magistrates; and to persons that were Romans, at least one of them, Paul, who was of the city of Tarsus: for, according to the Porcian and Sempronian laws, a Roman citizen might neither be bound nor beaten [f830]; but these magistrates, not content to beat Paul and Silas, without knowing the truth of their case, had cast them into prison as malefactors, and for further punishment:

and now do they thrust us out privily? nay, verily; or so it shall not be: this shows, that the apostle was acquainted with the Roman laws, as well as with the rites and customs of the Jews; and acted the wise and prudent, as well as the honest and harmless part; and this he did, not so much for the honour of the Roman name, as for the honour of the Christian name; for he considered, that should he and his companion go out of the prison in such a private manner, it might be taken for granted, that they had been guilty of some notorious offence, and had justly suffered the punishment of the law for it, which would have been a reproach to Christianity, and a scandal to the Gospel: wherefore the apostle refuses to go out in this manner, adding,

but let them come themselves, and fetch us out; that by so doing, they might own the illegality of their proceedings, and declare the innocence of the apostles.

Ver. 38. *And the sergeants told these words unto the magistrates*, etc.] They returned to them, and acquainted them with what the prisoners said:

and they feared when they heard that they were Romans; they were not concerned for the injury they had done them; nor for the injustice and cruelty they had been guilty of; nor did they fear the wrath of God, and a future judgment; but they were put into a panic, when they found the men they had so ill used were Romans; lest they should be called to an account by the Roman senate, and be found guilty, and have their places taken away from them, and their persons punished.

Ver. 39. *And they came*, etc.] To the prison in person, as Paul had insisted on they should:

and besought them; that they would put up the injury that had been done them, and quietly depart out of prison:

and brought them out; that is, out of prison; took them by the arms, and led them out, as they had put them in, which was what the apostle required:

and desired them to depart out of the city; lest there should be any further disturbance about them: in Beza's most ancient copy, and in another manuscript copy, this verse is read thus, and which more clearly explains the passage;

> “and they came with many friends unto the prison, and desired them to go out, saying, we are not ignorant of your case, that you are righteous men; and bringing them out they besought them, saying, go out of this city, lest they (the people) should turn again upon you, crying against you;”

which looks as if they took along with them some persons, who were friends to the apostles as well as to them, to prevail upon them to depart quietly; and they excuse themselves by attributing what had passed to popular rage and fury, and pretend they consulted the safety of the apostles, by desiring them to go out of the city.

Ver. 40. *And they went out of the prison*, etc.] In a public manner, with great honour and reputation, at the request of the magistrates that put them there:

and entered into [the house] of Lydia; whom Paul had baptized, (⁴⁴Acts 16:14,15). The word “house” is rightly supplied, for the sense is not, that they went into the country of Lydia, as some have been tempted to think; but they went to the woman Lydia, whose heart the Lord had opened, and was become a disciple and follower of Christ; they went to her house it being in the city of Philippi, where she now abode,

and when they had seen the brethren: the men of Lydia’s house, her servants, who were converted, and had been baptized with her, and are therefore called brethren; and whomsoever else they might have been instrumental in the conversion of, who might meet them in Lydia’s house: in Beza’s above mentioned copy, it is here added, “they declared what the Lord had done for them”; they related the earthquake and the effects of it, and how they had been useful for the conversion of the jailer and his family, who had been baptized by them, and by what means they were released from prison; all which they ascribe to the Lord, who has all power, and the hearts of all in his hands: and thus,

they comforted them; with what God had done for them, or exhorted them: to cleave to the Lord, to continue in the faith, and abide by the truths and ordinances of the Gospel:

and departed; that is, out of the city of Philippi; this is wanting in the Syriac and Arabic versions here, but is placed in the beginning of the next chapter: and now these two families, Lydia’s and the jailer’s, laid the foundation of a Gospel church in this city of Philippi, and which continued

for ages after; Erastus, of whom mention is made in (<44>1922Acts 19:22) is said to be bishop of this church, and it may be also Epaphroditus, for there were more bishops than one in this church in the apostle's time, (<50>1011Philippians 1:1 2:25 4:18), in the "second" century there was a church, to which Ignatius and Polycarp are said to send epistles; and there are epistles to the Philippians which go under their names, that are still extant: in the "third" century, Tertullian[f831], among other churches, makes mention of the church at Philippi, as sound in the faith; and in the "fourth" and "fifth" centuries we read of a church in this place; in the "seventh" century, when it went by the name of Chrysopolis, there was a church in it, and a bishop of it, who was present at the sixth council in Constantinople; there were Christians dwelling here in the "ninth" century[f832].

CHAPTER 17

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 17

Ver. 1. *Now when they had passed through Amphipolls*, etc.] A city of Macedonia, where it is placed by Pliny [f833]; according to Ptolomy [f834], it was in that part of Macedonia, which is called Edonis, and was near Philippi, and lay in the way from thence to Thessalonica; Harpocratian [f835] says, it was a city of Thrace, formerly called "the Nine Ways"; it was upon the borders of Thrace, and had its name Amphipolis from the river Strymon running on both sides of it, making it a peninsula; it was also called Crademna, and Anadraemum; it is now in the hands of the Turks, and by them called Empoli; this city was originally built by Cimon the Athenian, into which he sent ten thousand Athenians for a colony, as the writer of his life reports [f836]. The apostle only passed through this place; it does not appear that he at all preached in it, or at any other time, nor do we read of it in ecclesiastical history, nor of the following place:

and Apollonia; this is also placed by Pliny [f837] in Macedonia, and is said by him to have been formerly a colony of the Corinthians, and about seven miles from the sea; and by Ptolomy [f838], in that part of Macedonia called Mygdonia, and with him its name is Apollonia of Mygdonia; it was situated by the river Echedorus, and was famous for Augustus Caesar's learning Greek here, and is now called Ceres: there was another of this name in the region of Pentapolis, and was one of the five [f839] cities in it; and another in Palestine mentioned by Pliny [f840], along with Caesarea; and by Josephus [f841], with Joppa, Jamnia, Azotus, etc. but this was near Thessalonica; it is said to be about twenty miles from it: here also the apostle did not stay to preach the Gospel, nor is there any mention made of it elsewhere in the Acts of the Apostles, and yet Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, is said to be bishop of Apollonia; (see Gill on "Luke 10:1"), but whether the same place with this, or whether fact, is not certain;

they came to Thessalonica; a free city of Macedonia [f842]; it was formerly called Halis [f843], and sometimes Therme; it had its name of Thessalonica from the victory which Philip king of Macedon obtained over the Thessalians; and not from his daughter Thessalonica, the wife of

Cassander, who also had her name from the same victory: in this place a sedition being raised, and some magistrates killed, Theodosius the Roman emperor suffered seven thousand men to be slain; and when he came to Milain, Ambrose bishop of that place having heard of it, would not suffer him to enter into the church and receive the Lord's supper, until he repented of his sin, and made public confession of it [f844]. Thessalonica has been since the head of a new kingdom erected by Boniface marquis of Montferrat; it was for some time in the hands of the Venetians, but was taken from them by Amurath emperor of the Turks [f845]. The Italians call it now Saloniki; it has been since inhabited by Christians, Turks, and Jews, and chiefly by the latter, their number, according to their own account, is fourteen thousand, and their synagogues fourscore. There always were many Jews in this place, and so there were when the apostle was here, for it follows;

where was a synagogue of the Jews; it seems as if there was none, neither in Philippi, nor in Amphipolis, nor in Apollonia: why these two last places should be passed through by the apostle, without making any stay at them, cannot be said; it is very likely he had, as in some other instances before, some particular directions from the Spirit of God, there being none of the chosen vessels of salvation to be called there, at least, at this time, when there were many at Thessalonica.

Ver. 2. *And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them*, etc.] To the Jews in their synagogue; for though the Jews had put away the Gospel from them, and the apostle had turned to the Gentiles; yet he still retained a great affection for his countrymen the Jews, and as often as he had opportunity, attended their synagogues, in order to preach the Gospel to them;

and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures: that is, out of the Old Testament, concerning the Messiah, the characters of him, the work that he was to do, and how he was to suffer and die for the sins of men; and this he did three weeks running, going to their synagogue every sabbath day, when and where the Jews met for worship; and made use of books, which they allowed of, and of arguments they could not disprove.

Ver. 3. *Opening*, etc.] That is, the Scriptures of the Old Testament, explaining and expounding them, giving the true sense of them; so this

word is frequently used in Jewish writings [f846], as that such a Rabbi ptj, "opened", such a Scripture:

and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; he set this matter in a clear light, and made it plain and manifest, from the writings of the Old Testament, that there was a necessity of the Messiah's suffering and rising from the dead; or otherwise these Scriptures would not have been fulfilled, which have said that so it must be; for these things were not only necessary on account of God's decrees, and the covenant transactions the Son of God entered into, and on the account of the salvation of his people; but because of the types, promises, and prophecies of the Old Testament: the Scriptures which the apostle opened and set before them, and reasoned upon, showing the necessity of these things, very likely were such as these, (<0103>Genesis 3:15, <1922>Psalm 22:1-31) (<2353>Isaiah 53:1-12, <2709>Daniel 9:1-27, <1916>Psalm 16:10, <2806>Hosea 6:2) with many others:

and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ; he showed that all the things which were spoken of Christ, or the Messiah, in those Scriptures, were fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, who was the subject matter, the sum and substance of his ministry; and therefore he must be the Messiah, and the only Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners.

Ver. 4. *And some of them believed*, etc.] That is, some of the Jews, power went along with the word, and faith came by it, and they believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah, and that what the apostle preached concerning him was the truth; and this they received in the love of it, and cordially embraced it, and made a profession of it:

and consorted with Paul and Silas; associated with them, and privately conversed with them, as well as publicly attended their ministry; for when souls are converted, they love to be in company with believers, and especially with the ministers of the Gospel, to hear their discourses, and learn from them the doctrines of grace:

and of the devout Greeks a great multitude; these were Gentiles who were proselytes to the Jewish religion; and these in greater numbers believed, and joined themselves to the apostles, and became followers of them, than there were of the Jews, who were the most averse to the Gospel, and were more hardened, and incredulous:

and of the chief women not a few; some of the wives of the principal men of the city were become proselytes to the Jews, and these attending synagogue worship, and hearing the discourses of Paul from time to time, were convinced and converted, and professed faith in Christ Jesus; and these converts laid the foundation of a Gospel church in Thessalonica, of which church Silvanus is said to be the first bishop; (see Gill on "Luke 10:1"). In the "second" century there were martyrs for Christ here; and to the inhabitants of this place, Antonintus Pius the emperor wrote in behalf of the Christians there, to give them no disturbance [f847]: in the "third" century there was a church here; Tertullian [f848] makes mention of it: in the "fourth" century [f849] Theodosius the emperor was baptized at Thessalonica, by Acholius bishop of that place; who first asked him what faith he professed, to which he replied, that he embraced and professed that faith which the churches in Illyricum, who were not yet infected with the Arian heresy, namely the same which was of old delivered by the apostles, and afterwards confirmed at the synod at Nice; in this century Ireminus, Paulinus, and Alexander, were bishops of Thessalonica: in the "fifth" century it was a metropolitan of Macedonia, and Anysius was bishop of it, and so were Rufus and Anastasius: and that there was a church here in the "sixth" century is manifest from hence, that their bishops, for fear of the emperor Anastasius, agreed with Timothy bishop of Constantinople, whom the council at Chalcedon had anathematized; and in this age Pope Gregory, among others, wrote to Eusebius bishop of Thessalonica, that he would not receive any of a military habit into monasteries within three years: in the "seventh" century a bishop of this place assisted at the sixth council at Constantinople; and in the same age it was the seat of an archbishop: in the "eighth" century there was one Thomas bishop of this place, and also Theophilus, who was present at the Nicene synod; in the ninth century a bishop of Thessalonica was beaten with two hundred stripes, for being against image worship.

Ver. 5. *But the Jews which believed not*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions leave out the words, "which believed not"; but whether this character is expressed or not, it is certain that the unbelieving Jews are here intended:

moved with envy; at the success of the apostles, many of their own people and of their proselytes, and some of the better sort being converted by them: or "with zeal"; for what they called the glory of God, but it was not according to knowledge; it was a blind and ignorant zeal, a zeal for the

rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses, and for the traditions of the elders:

took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort; or of the market folks, who sat and sold things in the market, and were generally of the meaner and vulgar sort, as the word may signify; or who stood idle in the market place, squandering away their time in an idle manner, not caring to work, and so were fit persons, and who could easily be gathered together, for such service as the unbelieving Jews employed them in; or they were a sort of officers and servants, that attended courts of judicature, and cited persons thither, and assisted in the business done there, and who were commonly men of profligate and abandoned lives:

and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar; they raised a mob, and made a clamour, which brought people out of their houses to inquire what was the matter, and so gave great disturbance and uneasiness to the inhabitants:

and assaulted the house of Jason: who by what follows appears to have been a disciple of Christ, a believer in him, and the host of the apostle and his companions, who being an inhabitant of Thessalonica, at least having a dwelling house there, received them into it. This Jason is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and afterwards bishop of Tarsus, but this is not certain; nor whether he was a Jew or a Greek, very probably the former: we read of Jason the brother of Onias the high priest, a Jew, ``But after the death of Seleucus, when Antiochus, called Epiphanes, took the kingdom, Jason the brother of Onias laboured underhand to be high priest,'' (2 Maccabees 4:7)

whose name was Jesus, the same with Joshua, but as Josephus [f850] says, he called himself Jason; and so this man's Hebrew name might be Jesus or Joshua, and his Greek name Jason; and very likely he was a believer in Christ before the apostle came to Thessalonica, and it may be is the same who is spoken of in ([5621]Romans 16:21). (See Gill on " [5621]Romans 16:21"). Some of the ancients [f851] make mention of a disputation between Jason, a Christian Hebrew, and Papiscus, an Alexandrian Jew, but there is no reason to believe that he is the Jason here spoken of:

and sought to bring them out to the people; they expected to have found Paul and Silas in Jason's house, where they lodged, and their intention was to have dragged them out and exposed them to popular fury, to be beaten

or stoned by the people; and so the Arabic version reads, “requiring those two apostles, that they might set them before the people”; or put them into the hands of the mob, which they had gathered, to do as they would with them.

Ver. 6. *And when they found them not*, etc.] In Jason’s house, as they expected:

they drew Jason, and certain brethren: the Syriac version adds, “who were there”: in Jason’s house, who either came along with the apostle, and lodged with him there; or they were some of the inhabitants of Thessalonica, who were lately converted, and were come thither in order to have some Christian conversation; these with Jason the rabble seized on, and in a rude and violent manner dragged them out of the house, and had them,

unto the rulers of the city: the civil magistrates, the judges in courts of judicature, to which some of these belonged;

crying in a very noisy and clamorous way;

these that have turned the world upside down: the Syriac version reads, “the whole earth”: the apostles, according to the cry of these men, had thrown the whole world into disorder, and had made disturbances in kingdoms and cities, wherever they came; and had made innovations in religion, and turned men from their old way of worship to another; these; say they,

are come hither also; to make the like disorders and disturbances, as elsewhere.

Ver. 7. *Whom Jason hath received*, etc.] Into his house in a private manner, and has entertained, contrary to law, which forbids men to receive and entertain persons of seditious principles, and practices, for this is mentioned as a charge against Jason:

and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar; both the apostle and those with him, and Jason, and the brethren, whom they now had set before the magistrates, who were all of the same sentiments and practices; and which were opposite to the decrees of the Roman emperor, and the Roman senate, who suffered none to be called a king but whom they pleased; whereas these men taught, saying,

that there is another king, one Jesus; but then though they said he was a king, yet not a temporal one, but one whose kingdom was spiritual, and not of this world; and therefore asserted nothing contrary to the decrees of Caesar, or what was in the least prejudicial to his worldly interest and glory.

Ver. 8. *And they troubled the people, and the rulers of the city*, etc.] Fearing some revolution would be made, and some new king, or rather tyrant, would start up, and usurp a power over them; or that they should come under some suspicion or charge with the Roman government, and should be called to an account, for admitting such men and tenets among them; with such fears were they possessed,

when they heard these things; alleged against the apostle and his company.

Ver. 9. *And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other*, etc.] That is, received satisfaction from them, by the defence which they made for themselves, and the apostles, by the account that they gave of them and of their doctrines; whereby it plainly appeared to the full satisfaction of the magistrates, that their principles had no tendency to move sedition, or to alter the form of their government, or to do anything detrimental to Caesar, as was suggested: the Syriac, and Arabic versions render it, “took sureties”; of them for their good behaviour, and that they would be forthcoming, whenever called for:

they let them go; about their business, to their own houses, and company, and did not inflict any punishment upon them, or commit them to prison.

Ver. 10. *And the brethren*, etc.] The believers in Thessalonica, the young converts there, who were full of love and affection to their spiritual fathers:

immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea; another city in Macedonia: and so it is placed by Pliny [f852] in the north part of it; and, according to Ptolomy [f853] it was, in that part of Macedonia called Emathia, and was not far from Pella, the native place of Alexander the great. It is now called Veria; some say it was called Berea from Beraea, daughter of Beres, son of Macedo, by whom it is said to have been built; others from Pheron; and some think it has some agreement with the Syriac word Barja and Baraitha; since what is called Berytus, is Beroe with others: there was besides this another Beraea, a city of Syria, which Josephus [f854] speaks of; and is mentioned by Pliny [f855] along with Hierapolis and Chalcis, and very likely is the same that is spoken of in:

> "But the King of kings moved Antiochus' mind against this wicked wretch, and Lysias informed the king that this man was the cause of all mischief, so that the king commanded to bring him unto Berea, and to put him to death, as the manner is in that place." (2 Maccabees 13:4)

Hither the brethren sent Paul and Silas, when it was night and dark, and they could pass unobserved, in order to preserve them from the fury of the mob.

Who coming thither; to Berea; that is, Paul and Silas:

went into the synagogue of the Jews; which was in that city; not being at all daunted or discouraged with what they had met with at Thessalonica.

Ver. 11. *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica*, etc.] That is, the Jews at Berea were more noble than the Jews in Thessalonica, as the Syriac version expresses it; for the comparison is not between the native inhabitants of Berea and Thessalonica, but between the Jews that dwelt in these places: and the one being "more noble" than the other, does not refer to their birth, lineage, and descent, as in (1 Corinthians 1:26) few such were called; and besides, both sorts were Jews, and of the same descent; and as for the proselytes in both places, there were some of the chief and honourable women converted in each: but to their minds, dispositions, and manners; the one were more candid, and ingenuous, and open to conviction and susceptive of the word, than the other; and used the apostles with better manners, with more mildness and gentleness, willing to hear what they had to say, without contradicting and blaspheming, and to examine with patience and candour what they delivered. Not that there is in any man, nor was there in those men naturally a disposition to attend to, and regard the Gospel of Christ; for there is a natural enmity in the minds of men to it, and with them it is folly and nonsense; nor are there any previous dispositions in the minds of men qualifying them for the grace of God; nor is anything of this kind a reason why some, and not others, are called by grace, for all are children of wrath, and none better than others; but this more noble disposition of mind and conduct was owing to the grace of God bestowed upon them; and which showed itself in the following instance:

in that they received the word with all readiness; or "who received", etc. which is a character, not of the Thessalonian Jews, as some think; though it

is true of them that they received the word with joy of the Holy Ghost, and not as the word of man, but as the word of God, it coming to them not in word only, but in power, (<52105>1 Thessalonians 1:5,6 2:13) but of the Beran Jews, who exceeded them, who showed at once a readiness and eager desire to attend the Gospel, and embrace it. This is to be understood not of the essential word Christ; though as it is true of him, that he is the word, and he is said to be received, and that readily and willingly, so these Bereans did receive him by faith, they believed in him, and made a profession of him; nor of the written word, for that is designed by the Scriptures, which they searched daily, and by which they examined, tried, and judged of the word they received; but of the word spoken by the apostle, the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation: this they received into their understandings, not merely notionally, so as to give their assent to it; but spiritually and experimentally, so as to feel the power, and enjoy the comfort of it, their understandings being opened by the Spirit of God for this purpose; otherwise the Gospel is unknown unto, and rejected by the natural man: they received the love of the truth, or the word of truth into their affections, not with a mere carnal flashy affection, arising from a principle of self-love; but with a spiritual affection of the Holy Ghost, with real solid gladness, it bringing the good news of salvation by Christ to them who saw themselves miserable, and undone: they received it into their hearts, so that it had a place there, and worked effectually in them: they believed it, not with a mere historical faith, but from the heart obeyed this form of doctrine delivered to them; and this they did with all readiness, as an hungry man receives his food, and greedily feeds upon it, or as a man ready to perish receives and lays hold on anything that offers for his safety.

And searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so: they did not dispute with, and cavil at the apostle, as the Thessalonian Jews first did, (<44702>Acts 17:2) nor did they receive the word, right or wrong, or with an implicit faith; but they immediately betook themselves to reading and searching the writings of the Old Testament, to see whether the things which the apostle preached, concerning the Messiah, his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead, were agreeable to them, or no; determining, if they were not, to reject them, but if they were, to embrace them, as they did; (see <43539>John 5:39) and this they did continually day after day. They were neither backward to hear and receive the word, nor slothful to examine it.

Ver. 12. *Therefore many of them believed*, etc.] What the apostle preached, and in Jesus of Nazareth, as the true Messiah, and professed their faith in him, upon finding, through reading and searching the Scriptures, that the characters of the Messiah agreed in him, and that what the apostle delivered were entirely consonant to those writings:

also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men not a few; besides the Jews, there were Gentiles also, both men and women; who were proselytes to the Jewish religion, and who were persons of figure and credit, especially the women, who were also converted and believed in Christ. These converts were the beginning of a Gospel church state in this place, which continued many ages after. Timon, one of the first seven deacons of the church at Jerusalem, is said to be bishop of Berea; though, according to others, Onesimus, the servant of Philemon, was the first bishop of this church: even in the fifth century mention is made of Lucas, bishop of Berea, who was present in the synods of Chalcedon and Ephesus; yea, in the ninth century, there were Christians dwelling in this place [f856].

Ver. 13. *But when the Jews of Thessalonica*, etc.] The unbelieving Jews there,

had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea; which they came at, either by persons that came from thence to Thessalonica, or by letters sent them:

they came thither also; as the Jews from Antioch and Iconium came to Lystra on a like account, (<44149>Acts 14:19)

and stirred up the people; the common people, the natives of the place, against the apostles; suggesting that they were wicked men, and enemies to all laws, human or divine, civil or religious.

Ver. 14. *And then immediately the brethren*, etc.] That were at Berea, the new converts there:

sent away Paul, whom they knew the Jews mostly sought after, and were offended with:

to go as it were to the sea; the Aegean sea, or Archipelago, near to which Berea was: this seems to have been done, in order to make the people conclude that he intended to take shipping, and go into some other parts of the world, when the design was to go to Athens by foot, and so be safe

from any lying in wait of his persecutors: the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and the Oriental versions read, “to go to the sea”; to the sea side, whither it seems he did go; and yet it looks as if he did not go by sea, but by land, to Athens:

but Silas and Timotheus abode there still; at Berea, to confirm and strengthen the young converts there made.

Ver. 15. *And they that conducted Paul*, etc.] From Berea to the sea side:

brought him unto Athens; a famous city in Attica, where both [f857] Pliny and Ptolomy [f858] place it, well known for the learning and wisdom of the ancient philosophers, who had their schools and universities in it; the former of these calls it a free city, and says, it needed no description nor commendation, its fame was so diffused everywhere. The account Jerom [f859] gives of it is,

> “Athens, a city in Achaia, dedicated to the studies of philosophy, which though but one, is always used to be called in the plural number; its haven, called the Piraeum, is described as fortified with seven walls.”

The city itself stood about two miles from the sea; it had its name either from the Greek word ηψονη, which signifies the mind of God, as boasting of its divine knowledge; or rather from the word ˆyta, “Athen”, which may be interpreted “strangers”, it being originally inhabited by the Pelasgi, who were a set of people that moved from place to place [f860]; or because of the great multitude of strangers which flocked from all parts hither for learning, of whom mention is made in (<441721>Acts 17:21). The inhabitants of it have been called by different names; when under the Pelasgi, as Herodotus [f861] observes, they were called Cranai; when under King Cecrops, they went by the name of Cecropidae; when Erechtheus had the government, they changed their name into Athenians; from Ion, the son of Xythus, their general, they were called Ionians. This city has gone through different fates: it was burnt by Xerxes, about 480 years before Christ; some years after that it was taken by Lysander; and after that restored to its ancient liberty by Demetrius; after this the Romans were possessed of it; and now it is in the hands of the Turks, and goes by the name of Setines. In Beza’s ancient copy it follows, “but he passed through Thessalia, for he was forbidden to preach the word to them”; for as he came from Berea to Athens, he must come through Thessalia; but he made

no stay here, but passed through, being forbid to preach the Gospel here, as he had been before to preach it in Asia and Bithynia, (<44 16 6>Acts 16:6,7) nor have we any account anywhere else of the Gospel being preached in Thessaly; and in the second century, we read of Heathenism prevailing there, and of many gross acts of idolatry, particularly at Pella in Thessaly, a man was sacrificed to the gods: though in the beginning of the fourth century there were bishops out of Thessalia at the synod of Nice; and so there were at the synod at Sardica, about the middle of the same century: in the sixth century, Dion, bishop of Thebes in Thessalia, was in the first synod at Ephesus; and Constantinus, bishop of Demetrias, and Vigilantius of Larissa, both cities in Thessalia, were in another at the same place [f862].

And receiving a commandment; or "a letter from him" as one copy and the Syriac version read; that is, the brethren from Paul:

unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed; to Athens, where he now was: they departed; from Paul at Athens, and came back to Berea.

Ver. 16. *Now while Paul waited for them at Athens*. etc.] That is, for Silas and Timotheus:

his spirit was stirred in him; not only his soul was troubled and his heart was grieved, but he was exasperated and provoked to the last degree: he was in a paroxysm; his heart was hot within him; he had a burning fire in his bones, and was weary with forbearing, and could not stay; his zeal wanted vent, and he gave it:

when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry; or "full of idols", as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it. So Cicero says [f863] that Athens was full of temples; and Xenophon [f864] observes that they had double the feasts of other people; and Pausanias [f865] affirms, that the Athenians far exceeded others in the worship of the gods, and care about religion; and he relates, that they had an altar for Mercy, another for Shame, another for Fame, and another for Desire, and expressed more religion to the gods than others did: they had an altar dedicated to twelve gods [f866]; and because they would be sure of all, they erected one to an unknown god; in short, they had so many of them, that one [f867] jestingly said to them, our country is so full of deities, that one may more easily find a god than a man: so that with all their learning and wisdom they knew not God, (<46 01 21>1 Corinthians 1:21).

Ver. 17. *Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews*, etc.] There being a synagogue of the Jews here, and there being many Jews settled in this place, hence we read in Jewish writings [f868] of men going from Jerusalem to Athens, and from Athens to Jerusalem; and hence it may be accounted for, how many of the Athenian philosophers came to be acquainted with the books and sentiments of the Jews, from whom they borrowed may things; since there were so many that dwelt among them, and doubtless had for years past, as well as by their travels into Egypt: and a Jewish synagogue being here, the apostle went into it, according to his usual manner, and began with them, as he was wont to do, preaching the Gospel to the Jews first, and then unto the Gentiles: with them he disputed, not about idolatry, or the worship of many gods, to which they were not addicted; nor about the one true and living God, whom they knew and professed; but about the Son of God, about the Messiah, contending and proving that Jesus of Nazareth was he:

and with the devout persons; that is, with the Gentiles, who were proselytes to the Jewish religion, and worshipped the God of Israel with the Jews, in their synagogues, but knew nothing of Jesus Christ, and the way of salvation by him:

and in the market daily with them that met him; where there was a concourse of people; and where, after the apostle had been once or twice, the people came purposely to meet with him, and to hear his discourses, and reason with him about points in religion: the Syriac version renders it, “in the street”; and then the sense seems to be, that as he met persons in the street, day by day, as he walked along, he would stop and talk with them, about religious things, and about their idolatry, vanity, and superstition.

Ver. 18. *Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans*, etc.] These were so called from Epicurus, the son of Neocles, who was born 342 years before Christ, and taught philosophy at Athens, in his garden; the principal tenets of which were, that the world was not made by any deity, or with any design, but came into its being and form, through a fortuitous concourse of atoms, of various sizes and magnitude, which met, and jumbled, and cemented together, and so formed the world; and that the world is not governed by the providence of God; for though he did not deny the being of God, yet he thought it below his notice, and beneath his majesty to concern himself with its affairs; and also, that the chief happiness of men

lies in pleasure. His followers were called “Epicureans”; of which there have been two sorts; the one were called the strict or rigid “Epicureans”, who placed all happiness in the pleasure of the mind, arising from the practice of moral virtue, and which is thought by some to be the true principle of “Epicureans”; the other were called the loose, or the remiss Epicureans, who understood their master in the gross sense, and placed all their happiness in the pleasure of the body, in brutal and sensual pleasure, in living a voluptuous life, in eating and drinking, etc. and this is the common notion imbibed of an Epicurean.

And of the Stoics: the author of this sect was Zeno, whose followers were so called from the Greek word “Stoa”, which signifies a portico, or piazza, under which Zeno used to walk, and teach his philosophy, and where great numbers of disciples attended him, who from hence were called “Stoics”: their chief tenets were, that there is but one God, and that the world was made by him, and is governed by fate; that happiness lies in virtue, and virtue has its own reward in itself; that all virtues are linked together, and all vices are equal; that a wise and good man is destitute of all passion, and uneasiness of mind, is always the same, and always joyful, and ever happy in the greatest torture, pain being no real evil; that the soul lives after the body, and that the world will be destroyed by fire. Now the philosophers of these two sects

encountered him; the Apostle Paul; they attacked him, and disputed with him upon some points, which were contrary to their philosophy:

and some said, what will this babbler say? this talking, prating fellow? though the word here used does not signify, as some have thought, a sower of words; as if they meant, that the apostle was a dealer is many words, a verbose man, and full of words, but not matter; but it properly signifies a gatherer of seeds; and the allusion is either to a set of idle people, that used to go to markets and fairs, and pick up seeds of corn, that were shook out of sacks, upon which they lived; and so the word came to be used for an idle good for nothing fellow, and for one that picked up tales and fables, and carried them about for a livelihood. So Demosthenes, in a way of reproach, called Aeschincs by this name; and such an one was the apostle reckoned: or the metaphor is taken from little birds, as the sparrow, etc. that pick up seeds, and live upon them, and are of no value and use. Harpocratian says [f869], there is a certain little bird, of the jay or jackdaw kind, which is called “Spermologos” (the word here used), from its picking

up of seeds, of which Aristophanes makes mention; and that from this a base and contemptible man, and one that lives by others, is called by this name: from whence we may learn in what a contemptuous manner the apostle was used in this polite city, by these men of learning.

Other some, he seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods; other than those worshipped in the city of Athens: this was the charge which Melitus brought against Socrates;

> "Socrates (says he [f870]) has acted an unrighteous part; the gods, whom the city reckons such, he does not, introducing other and new gods."

Aelianus [f871] represents him as censured by Aristophanes, as one that introduced ξενας δαιμονας, "strange gods", though he neither knew them, nor honoured them. The reason why they thought the apostle was for bringing in other gods, than which nothing was more foreign from him, was,

because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection: the Syriac version reads, "and his resurrection"; that is, the resurrection of Christ; the Arabic version renders it, "the resurrection from the dead"; the general resurrection; both doubtless were preached by him, (see <441732>Acts 17:32) Jesus they took for one strange and new God, they had never heard of before, and "Anastasis", or "the resurrection", for another; which need not be wondered at, when they had altars erected for Mercy, Fame, Shame, and Desire, (see Gill on "<441716>Acts 17:16").

Ver. 19. *And they took him*, etc.] Not that they laid hands on him, and carried him away by violence, as a derider of their gods, and an introducer of new ones, in order to punish him; but they invited him to go with them, and they took him along with them in a friendly manner, and had him to a more convenient place for preaching and disputation, and where were many learned men to hear and judge of his doctrine; and this appears from their desire to hear what his doctrine was, and from his quiet departure, after he had ended his discourse:

and brought him unto Areopagus. The Arabic version seems to understand this of a person, rendering it, "and brought him to the most skilful, and the judge of the doctors"; to be heard and examined before him, about the doctrine he preached, who was most capable of judging concerning it; and this might be Dionysius, who is called the Areopagite, and was converted

by the apostle, (<44>Acts 17:34). The Ethiopic version renders it, “they brought him to the house of their god”; to one of their idols’ temple, the temple of Mars, which is not much amiss; for we are told [f872], that Areopagus was a street in Athens, in which was the temple of Mars, from whence it had its name; but the Syriac version renders it best of all, “they brought him to the house of judgment, or “court of judicature”, which is called Areopagus”; and so it is called “Martium judicium”, or Mars’s “court of judicature”, by Apuleius [f873], and “Martis curia”, or the “court of Mars”, by Juvenal [f874], for it was a court where causes were tried, and the most ancient one with the Athenians, being instituted by Cerops, their first king; and is thought to be near as ancient, if not fully as ancient, yea, as more ancient than the sanhedrim, or the court of seventy elders, appointed by Moses among the Jews. It was called Areopagus, because Ares, or Mars, was the first that was judged there [f875]. The case was this, Alcippe, the daughter of Mars, being ravished by Habirrhothius, the son of Neptune, and caught by Mars in the very fact, was killed by him; upon which Neptune arraigned Mars for the murder, and tried him in this place, by a jury of twelve deities, by whom he was acquitted [f876]. Hither Paul was brought, not to be tried in a legal manner; for it does not appear that any charge was exhibited against him, or any legal process carried on, only an inquiry was made about his doctrine, and that only to gratify their curiosity:

saying, may we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? for they had never heard of Jesus, nor of salvation by him, nor of the resurrection of the dead; these were all new things to them, and therefore they were the more curious to ask after them, new things being what they were fond of: wherefore they call his doctrine new, not so much by way of reproach, as suggesting it to be a reason why they inquired after it, and why they desired him to give them some account of it; and that it should be a new doctrine with them, or if they reproached it with the charge of novelty, it need not be wondered at in them, when the Jews charged and reproached the doctrine of Christ in like manner, (<41>Mark 1:27).

Ver. 20. *For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears*, etc.] Strange doctrines and strange deities, such as they had never heard of before:

we would know therefore what these things mean; they desire he would explain these things to them, and let them know the rise, and ground, and nature, and end, and design of them.

Ver. 21. *For all the Athenians*, etc.] The natives of Athens, who were born and lived there, and were inhabitants of the city, and free of it:

and strangers which were there; who came there from several parts of the world, to get wisdom and knowledge, to learn the several arts and sciences, and to attend the several sects of philosophers they made choice of:

spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing; that is, they did so for the most part; and this was the complexion and taste of the generality of them; and with this agrees what Demosthenes himself says of them[f877],

> "we, says he (for the truth shall be said), sit here, ουδεν ποιουντες, "doing nothing" — — inquiring in the court, ει τι λεγεται νεωτερον, "whether any new thing is said.""

The character of such persons is given, and they are described in a very lively manner by Theophrastus[f878]. The Jewish doctors, at this time, were much of the same cast in their divinity schools; the usual question asked, when they met one another, was, çwdj hm, "what new thing" have you in the divinity school today[f879]?

Ver. 22. *Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill*, etc.] Or of Areopagus, as it is better rendered in (<44 17 19>Acts 17:19) for it is the same place, and it is the same word that is here used: Paul stood in the midst of that court of judicature, amidst the Areopagites, the judges of that court, and the wise and learned philosophers of the different sects that were assembled together:

and said, ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious; or "more religious", than any other persons, in other places, which has been observed before on (<44 17 16>Acts 17:16) they had more gods, and more altars, and more festivals, and were more diligent and studious in the worship of the gods, than others. And this manner of addressing them, both as citizens of Athens, and as very religious persons, and who, as such, greatly exceeded all others, must greatly tend to engage their attention to him.

Ver. 23. *For as I passed by*, etc.] Or "through"; that is, through the city of Athens:

and beheld your devotions; not so much their acts of worship and religion, as the gods which they worshipped; in which sense this word is used in (<scripture_ref type="bible">2Th 2:4</scripture_ref>) and the altars which were erected to them, and the temples in which they were worshipped; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, “the houses”, and “places of your worship”; and the Ethiopic version, “your images”, or “deities”,

I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Pausanias [f880] speaks in the plural number of altars of gods, that were named unknown, at Athens; and so says Apollonius Tyanaeus to Timasion [f881] it is wisest to speak well of all the gods, especially at Athens, where there are altars to unknown gods: it may be, there were altars that had the inscription in the plural number; and there was one which Paul took particular notice of, in the singular number; or the above writers may speak of altars to unknown gods, because there might be many altars with this inscription: the whole of the inscription, according to Theophylact, was this;

> “to the gods of Asia, Europe, and Lybia (or Africa), to the unknown and strange god;”

though Jerom [f882] makes this to be in the plural number: certain it is, that Lucian [f883] swears by the unknown god that was at Athens, and says, we finding the unknown god at Athens, and worshipping with hands stretched out towards heaven, gave thanks unto him: the reason why they erected an altar with such an inscription might be, for fear when they took in the gods of other nations, there might be some one which they knew not; wherefore, to omit none, they erect an altar to him; and which proves what the apostle says, that they were more religious and superstitious than others: or it may be they might have a regard to the God of the Jews, whose name Jehovah with them was not to be pronounced, and who, by the Gentiles, was called “Deus incertus” [f884]; and here, in the Syriac version, it is rendered, “the hidden God”, as the God of Israel is called, (<scripture_ref type="bible">Isa 45:15</scripture_ref>) and that he is here designed seems manifest from what follows,

whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you; which could not be said by him of any other deity. God is an unknown God to those who have only the light of nature to guide them; for though it may be known by it that there is a God, and that there is but one, and somewhat of him may be discerned thereby; yet the nature of his essence, and the perfections of his nature, and the unity of his being, are very little, and not

truly and commonly understood, and the persons in the Godhead not at all, and still less God in Christ, whom to know is life eternal: hence the Gentiles are described as such who know not God; wherefore, if he is worshipped by them at all, it must be ignorantly: and that they are ignorant worshippers of him, appears by worshipping others more than him, and besides him, or him in others, and these idols of gold, silver, brass, wood, and stone; and by their indecencies and inhumanity used in the performance of their worship: wherefore a revelation became necessary, by which men might be acquainted with the nature of the divine Being, and the true manner of worshipping him; in which a declaration is made of the nature and perfections of God, and of the persons in the Godhead, the object of worship; of the counsels, purposes, and decrees of God; of his covenant transactions with his Son respecting the salvation of his chosen people; of his love, grace, and mercy, displayed in the mission and gift of Christ to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them; of the glory of his attributes in their salvation; and of his whole mind and will, both with respect to doctrine and practice; and which every faithful minister of the Gospel, as the Apostle Paul, shuns not, according to his ability, truly and fully to declare.

Ver. 24. *God that made the world, and all things therein*, etc.] In this account of the divine Being, as the Creator of the world, and all things in it, as the apostle agrees with Moses, and the rest of the sacred Scriptures; so he condemns both the notion of the Epicurean philosophers, who denied that the world was made by God, but said that it owed its being to a fortuitous concourse of atoms; and the notion of the Peripatetics, or Aristotelians, who asserted the eternity of the world; and some of both sects were doubtless present.

Seeing that he is the Lord of heaven and earth; as appears by his being the Creator of both; hence he supports them in their being, and governs all creatures in them by his providence.

Dwelleth not in temples made with hands; such as were the idol temples at Athens; nor in any other edifices built by man, so as to be there fixed and limited; no, not in the temple at Jerusalem: but he dwells in temples that are not made with hands, as in the temple of Christ's human nature, in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, and in the hearts of his people, who are the temples of the Holy Ghost. This strikes at a notion of the Athenians, as if God was limited, and circumscribed, and included within the bounds of a shrine, or temple, though it is not at all contrary to his

promises, or the hopes of his own people, of his presence in places appointed for divine worship, but is expressive of the infinity and immensity of God.

Ver. 25. *Neither is worshipped with men's hands*, etc.] Or "served" with them; or "ministered unto" by them, as the Syriac version renders it: and the sense is, that men by worshipping God do not give anything to him, that can be of any use or service to him; he, being God all sufficient, stands in need of nothing; for external worship is not here intended by worshipping with men's hands, in distinction from, and opposition to, internal worship, or to the worship of God with the heart; but that whether it be with the one or with the other, or both, nothing is given to God, as adding any thing to his essential glory and happiness:

as though he needed anything; for he does not, he is "El Shaddai", God all sufficient; nor can anything be given to him, he has not; or otherwise all perfection would not be in him: but that he cannot be indigent of anything, appears from hence,

seeing he giveth to all life and breath; or "the breath of life", as the Ethiopic version renders it; this God breathed into man at first, and he became a living soul; and every animate creature, everyone that has life and breath, have them from God; he gives them to them, and continues them:

and all things; that are enjoyed by them, and are necessary for their subsistence, and for the comfort of life, and for both their use and profit, and for their delight and pleasure; wherefore he that gives them all things, cannot want anything himself, nor receive anything at their hands. This clause is left out in the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 26. *And hath made of one blood*, etc.] That is, of one man's blood; the Vulgate Latin version reads, "of one"; and the Arabic version of Deuteronomy Dieu reads, "of one man"; of Adam, the first parent of all mankind, and who had the blood of all men in his veins: hence the Jews [f885] say,

> "the first man was µlw[lç wmd, "the blood of the world";"

and this by propagation has been derived from him, and communicated to all mankind. They also say [f886], that

> “the reason why man was created alone (or there was but one man created) was, on account of families, that they might not be stirred up one against another;”

that is, strive and contend with one another about pre-eminence: and they add,

> “that the righteous might not say we are the sons of the righteous, and ye are the sons of the wicked.”

And it is a certain truth that follows upon this, that no man has any reason to vaunt over another, and boast of his blood and family; and as little reason have any to have any dependence upon their being the children of believers, or to distinguish themselves from others, and reject them as the children of unbelievers, when all belong to one family, and are of one man’s blood, whether Adam or Noah: of whom are

all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; for from Adam sprung a race of men, which multiplied on the face of the earth, and peopled the world before the flood; these being destroyed by the flood, and Noah and his family saved, his descendants were scattered all over the earth, and repeopled it: and this is the original of all the nations of men, and of all the inhabitants of the earth; and stands opposed to the fabulous accounts of the Heathens, which the apostle might have in his view, that men at first grew up out of the earth, or after the flood were formed of stones, which Deucalion and Prometheus threw over their heads; and particularly the Athenians boasted that they sprung out of the earth, which Diogenes ridiculed as common with mice and worms. But the apostle ascribes all to one blood:

and hath determined the times before appointed; how long the world he has made shall continue; and the several distinct periods, ages, and generations, in which such and such men should live, such and such nations should exist, and such monarchies should be in being, as the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, and how long they should subsist; as also the several seasons of the year, as seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night; and which are so bounded, and kept so distinct in their revolutions, as not to interfere with, and encroach upon each other; and likewise the several years, months, and days of every man’s life; (see Job 7:1 14:5) to which may be added, the times of the law and Gospel; the time of Christ’s birth and death; the time of the conversion of

particular persons; and all their times of desertion, temptation, affliction, and comfort; the times of the church's sufferings, both under Rome Pagan and Rome Papal; of the holy city being trodden under foot, of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, and of their being killed, and their bodies lying unburied, and of their resurrection and ascension to heaven, (<66210>Revelation 2:10 12:6 11:2,3,9,11) (<66112>Revelation 11:12) the time of antichrist's reign and ruin, (<66135>Revelation 13:5) and of Christ's personal coming, and the day of judgment, (<54665>1 Timothy 6:15 <44731>Acts 17:31) and of his reign on earth for a thousand years, (Rev 20:4-6). All these are appointed times, and determined by the Creator and Governor of the world:

and the bounds of their habitation; where men shall dwell, and how long they shall continue there the age or distinct period of time, in which every man was, or is to come into the world, is fixed and determined by God; nor can, nor does anyone come into the world sooner or later than that time; and also the particular country, city, town, and spot of ground where he shall dwell; and the term of time how long he shall dwell there, and then remove to another place, or be removed by death. And to this agrees the Ethiopic version, which renders the whole thus, "and hath appointed his times, and his years, how long they shall dwell"; (see <05208>Deuteronomy 32:8) to which the apostle seems to refer.

Ver. 27. *That they should seek the Lord*, etc.] Or "God", as the Alexandrian copy and others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read; their Creator, and kind Benefactor, and who has appointed their time of life, and their habitations for them; and this should engage them to seek to know him, who has done all this for them, and to fear and serve him, and to glorify his name:

if haply they might feel after him, and find him; which shows, that though it is possible for men, by a contemplation of the perfections of God, visible in the works of creation and providence, so to find God, as to know that there is one, and that there is but one God, who has made all things; and so as to be convinced of the vanity and falsehood of all other gods, and to see the folly, wickedness, and weakness of idolatrous worship; yet, at the same time, it very strongly intimates, how dim and obscure the light of nature is; since those, who have nothing else to direct them, are like persons in the dark, who "feel" and grope about after God, whom they cannot see; and

after all their search and groping, there is only an “haply”, a peradventure, a may be, that they find him:

though he be not far from everyone of us; not only by his omnipresence, and immensity, whereby he is everywhere; but by his power in supporting all in their being; and by his goodness in continually communicating the blessings of providence to them.

Ver. 28. *For in him we live, and move, and have our being*, etc.] The natural life which men live is from God; and they are supported in it by him; and from him they have all the comforts and blessings of life; and all motions, whether external or internal, of body or of mind, are of God, and none of them are without the concourse of his providence, and strength assistance from him; though the disorder and irregularity of these motions, whereby they become sinful, are of themselves, or of the devil; and their being, and the maintenance of it, and continuance in it, are all owing to the power and providence of God.

As certain also of your own poets have said; the Syriac version reads in the singular number, “as a certain one of your wise men has said”; but all others read in the plural; and some have thought, that the apostle refers to what goes before, that being an Iambic verse of some of the poets, as well as to what follows, which is a citation from Aratus [f887] and whom the apostle might have called his own, as he was his countryman; for Aratus was a native of Solis, a city of Cilicia, not far from Tarsus yea, some say [f888] he was of Tarsus, where the apostle was born: but Aratus being an Heathen, and the apostle speaking to Heathens, calls him one of them; and the rather, that what is cited might be the more regarded by them: though the expression is also [f889] said to be in an hymn to Jove, written by Cleanthes, who taught at Athens; and so the apostle addressing the Athenians, might, with greater propriety, say, “as certain of your own poets say”: it is also said to be in Aratus the astronomer, and in the poet Homer; so that the plural number may well be used. Which is,

for we are also his offspring; the offspring of Jove, says Aratus; which the apostle applies to the true Jehovah, the Creator of all men, by whom, and after whose image, they are made, and so are truly his offspring; upon which the apostle argues as follows.

Ver. 29. *Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God*, etc.] In the sense before given; for the apostle is not here speaking of himself, and other

saints, as being the children of God, by adoption, and by regenerating grace, and faith in Christ Jesus, but as men in common with others, and with these Athenians:

we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device; for men themselves, who are the offspring of God, and made after his image, are not to be compared to graven images of gold, silver, and stone, but are vastly preferable to them, they being formed by their art, and the device of their minds; and much less then should God, the Creator of men, and from whom they spring, be likened to, or represented by, any such thing; for so to think of God, is to think very unworthily of him; for if to think thus of ourselves, who are descended from him, would be a debasing of us, then much more to think so of God, the Father of spirits, must be a depreciating of him; and which by no means ought to be done, and argues great stupidity: if living rational creatures are not to be equalled to, and compared with, senseless statues, much less God, the former of men and angels.

Ver. 30. *And the times of this ignorance God winked at*, etc.] Not that he approved of, or encouraged such blindness and folly, as appeared among the Gentiles, when they worshipped idols of gold, silver, and stone, taking them for deities; but rather the sense is, he despised this, and them for it, and was displeased and angry with them; and as an evidence of such contempt and indignation, he overlooked them, and took no notice of them, and gave them no revelation to direct them, nor prophets to instruct them, and left them to their stupidity and ignorance:

but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent; that is, he hath given orders, that the doctrine of repentance, as well as remission of sins, should be preached to all nations, to Gentiles as well as Jews; and that it becomes them to repent of their idolatries, and turn from their idols, and worship the one, only, living and true God: and though for many hundreds of years God had neglected them, and sent no messengers, nor messages to them, to acquaint them with his will, and to show them their follies and mistakes; yet now he had sent his apostles unto them, to lay before them their sins, and call them to repentance; and to stir them up to this, the apostle informs them of the future judgment in the following verse. Repentance being represented as a command, does not suppose it to be in the power of men, or contradict evangelical repentance, being the free grace gift of God, but only shows the need men stand in of it, and how necessary and requisite it

is; and when it is said to be a command to all, this does not destroy its being a special blessing of the covenant of grace to some; but points out the sad condition that all men are in as sinners, and that without repentance they must perish: and indeed, all men are obliged to natural repentance for sin, though to all men the grace of evangelical repentance is not given: the Jews [f890] call repentance hbwçth twxm, "the command of repentance", though they do not think it obligatory on men, as the other commands of the law. The law gives no encouragement to repentance, and shows no mercy on account of it; it is a branch of the Gospel ministry, and goes along with the doctrine of the remission of sins; and though in the Gospel, strictly taken, there is no command, yet being largely taken for the whole ministry of the word, it includes this, and everything else which Christ has commanded, and was taught by him and his apostles; (<4820>Matthew 28:20).

Ver. 31. *Because he hath appointed a day*, etc.] The day of judgment is fixed by God in his eternal purposes, and is sure and certain, and will come, though it is not known by men or angels; and this is a reason why God will have the doctrine of repentance everywhere published, both to Jews and Gentiles, since all must come to judgment: and the day for it is appointed by him,

in the which he will judge the world in righteousness; the whole world will be judged, and every individual in it, good and bad, righteous and wicked; and this judgment will be a righteous one; it will proceed according to the strict rules of justice and equity, and upon the foot of the righteousness of Christ, as that has been received or rejected by men, or as men are clothed with, or are without that righteousness:

by that man whom he hath ordained; Beza's ancient copy reads, "the man Jesus": not that the apostle means that Christ is a mere man; for then he would not be fit to be a Judge of quick and dead, and to pass and execute the definitive sentence; which requires omniscience and omnipotence: but preaching to mere Heathens, he chose not at once to assert the deity of Christ, though he tacitly suggests it: but intended, by degrees, to open the glories of his nature and office to them, he being the person God had from all eternity ordained, and in time had signified, should have all judgment committed to him, and by whom the last judgment shall be managed and transacted:

whereof he hath given assurance to all men: or full proof, both of his being the Judge, and of his fitness to be one, and also of the righteousness, according to which he will judge:

in that he hath raised him from the dead; whereby he was declared to be the Son of God; and when all power in heaven and in earth was given to him; and which was done for the justification of all those for whose offences he was delivered: and this seems to be the reason why the apostle calls Christ the Judge a man, that he might have the opportunity of mentioning his resurrection from the dead.

Ver. 32. *When they heard of the resurrection of the dead*, etc.] Of a certain man that the apostle said God had raised from the dead, though they knew not who he was:

some mocked; at him, and at the doctrine he preached: these very likely were of the Epicurean sect, who disbelieved a future state; though, as Tertullian observes [f891], the doctrine of the resurrection was denied by every sect of the philosophers: it is a doctrine of pure revelation, and what the light of nature never taught men, and by which men being only guided, have declared against, and have treated it with the utmost ridicule and contempt. Pliny [f892] reckons it, among childish fancies, and calls it vanity, and downright madness to believe it; as does also Caecilius in Minutius Felix [f893], and who even calls it a lie, and places it among old wives' fables; and Celsus in Origen [f894] represents it as exceeding detestable, abominable, and impossible.

And others said, we will hear thee again of this matter; some think these were of the Stoic sect, who held a future state, and that the soul would live after the body, and had some notions which looked inclining to this doctrine: however, these thought there might be something in what the apostle said; they could not receive it readily, and yet could not deny it; they were willing to take time to consider of it; and were desirous of hearing him again upon that subject; in which they might be very open and upright; and this might not be a mere excuse to shift off any further hearing at that time, like that of Felix, in (<4401>Acts 24:1-25:27).

Ver. 33. *So Paul departed from among them*.] As it was high time, when they fell to deriding and scoffing at him; for hereby they judged themselves unworthy of the Gospel ministry: the Ethiopic version adds, "from Athens"; but it does not appear that the apostle went directly out of the

city; we read afterwards of his departing from Athens, (<44>1801<44>Acts 18:1) but the sense is, that he went out of the Areopagus, from that court of judicature; and from among the judges of it, and the philosophers of every sect, that stood around him in it; they having no more to say to him, nor he to them. And this shows, that he was not brought to be tried and judged, in order to be punished, but only to be heard concerning his doctrine; of which, when they had heard enough, he departed quietly, no one molesting him, unless with scoffs and jeers.

Ver. 34. *Howbeit, certain men clave unto him, and believed*, etc.] There were some who were ordained to eternal life, to whom the Gospel came in power, and they received the love of the truth, and their hearts and affections were knit unto the apostle; and they followed him, and kept to him, and privately conversed with him, and believed his doctrine, and in Jesus Christ, whom he preached unto them; to these the Gospel was the savour of life unto life, when to the scoffers and mockers it was the savour of death unto death: and this is the fruit and effect of the Gospel ministry, wherever it comes:

among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite; a judge in the court of Areopagus: how many judges that court consisted of, is not certain, nor whether there was one who was superior to the rest; if there was such an one, Dionysius seems to have been he, since he is called the Areopagite. The business of this court was not only to try causes of murder, which seems to have been the original business of it; but by these judges the rights of the city were preserved and defended, war was proclaimed, and all law suits adjusted and decided; and they made it their business to look after idle and slothful persons, and inquire how they lived [f895]: they always heard and judged causes in the night, in the dark, because they would only know facts, and not persons, lest they should be influenced by their afflictions, and be led wrong [f896]; they were very famous in other nations for their wisdom and skill, and for their gravity and strict justice. Dolabella, proconsul of Asia, having a woman brought before him for poisoning her husband and son, which she confessed, and gave reasons for doing it, referred the matter to a council, who refused to pass sentence; upon which he sent the case to Athens, to the Areopagites, as to judges "more grave" and "more experienced" [f897]: and hence these words of Julian the emperor [f898],

> “let an Areopagite be judge, and we will not be afraid of the judgment.”

This Dionysius the Areopagite is said, by another Dionysius, bishop of the Corinthians, a very ancient writer [f899], to be the first bishop of the Athenians, which is more likely than that he should be a bishop in France. It is reported of him, that being at Heliopolis in Egypt, along with Apollophanes, a philosopher, at the time of Christ’s sufferings, he should say concerning the unusual eclipse that then was, that “a God unknown, and clothed with flesh, suffered”, on whose account the whole world was darkened; or, as, others affirm, he said, “either the God of nature suffers, or the frame of the world will be dissolved”: it is also related of him that when he was converted by the apostle at Athens, he went to Clemens, bishop of Rome, and was sent by him with others into the west, to preach the Gospel; some of which went to Spain, and others to France, and that he steered his course to Paris, and there, with Rusticus and Eleutherius his “colleagues”, suffered martyrdom [f900]. The books ascribed unto him concerning the divine names, and ecclesiastical hierarchy, are spurious things, stuffed with foolish, absurd, and impious notions, and seem to have been written in the “fifth” century.

And a woman named Damaris; some of the ancients, and also some modern writers, take this woman to be the wife of Dionysius; but had she been his wife, she would have been doubtless called so; however, by the particular mention of her name, she seems to have been a person of some note and figure: the name is a diminutive from δαμαρ, Damar, which signifies a wife.

And others with them; with these two, as the Arabic version renders it; that is, with Dionysius and Damaris. These laid the foundation of a Gospel church at Athens. Dionysius, as before observed, was the first bishop, or pastor of it; it is also said that Narcissus, one of the seventy disciples, was bishop of this place; (see Gill on “<200>Luke 10:1”). In the “second” century Publius was bishop of the church at Athens, who suffered martyrdom for Christ in the time of Hadrian; and was succeeded by Quadratus [f901], who was famous for a writing he presented to the said emperor, in favour of the churches in common, and the success of it, about the year 128; at the same time, Aristides, a famous philosopher and Christian, flourished in the church at Athens, who wrote an apology for the Christian religion; and also Jovius, a presbyter and martyr, and a disciple of Dionysius; likewise

Athenagoras, a man of great learning and piety, who wrote also an apology for the Christians, and a treatise concerning the resurrection of the dead, which are still extant; the former was written to the emperors Antoninus and Commodus: in the “third” century mention is made of the church at Athens; and Origen [f902] speaks very honourably of it, as meek and quiet, and desirous of approving itself to God. In the “fourth” century it appears that there were Christians there, since Maximus the emperor stirred up wicked men to molest and distress them; and there was a Christian school there, in which Bazil and Gregory Nazianzen were brought up. In the “fifth” century there was a church in this place; and in the “sixth”, a Christian school, in which Boethius Patricius learned the liberal arts; and in the “seventh” century mention is made of a bishop of Athens, who was in the sixth council at Constantinople [f903]: thus far this church state is to be traced.

CHAPTER 18

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 18

Ver. 1. *After these things*, etc.] The Arabic version renders it, “after these words, or discourses”; after the apostle’s disputation with the philosophers, and his sermon in the Areopagus, the effects of which are before related:

Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; the metropolis of Achaia, or Peloponnesus. The city was formerly called Ephyra, from Ephyra [f904], the daughter of Oceanus, and had its name of Corinth from Corinthus, the son of Maratho, who repaired it when destroyed; or, as others say, from Corinthus the son of Pelops, others of Orestes, and others of Jupiter: though more probably it was so called from the multitudes of whores in this place, as if it was κοραι ενψα, “corai entha, here are girls, or whores”; for in the temple of Venus there were no less than a thousand whores provided, to be prostituted to all comers thither; (see Gill on “2 Corinthians 12:21”). It was situated between two great seas, the Aegean and Ionean; hence [f905] Horace calls it Bimaris: it had a very strong tower, built on a high mount, called Acrocorinthus, from whence these two seas might be seen, and where was the fountain Pirene, sacred to the Muses: the city was about sixty furlongs, or seven miles and a half, from the shore [f906]: it was a city that abounded in riches and luxury. Florus [f907] calls it the head of Achaia, and the glory of Greece; and Cicero [f908], the light of all Greece: it was in time so much enlarged, and became so famous, that it was little inferior to Rome itself, on which account it grew proud and haughty; and using the Roman ambassadors with some degree of insolence, who were sent into Greece, on some certain occasion, first Metellus, and then Mummius, were sent against it, which latter took it, and burnt it; and the city then abounding with images and statues of gold, silver, and brass, were melted down together in the fire, and made what was afterwards called the Corinthian brass, which became so famous, and is often spoken of in history [f909]: but Julius Caesar, moved with the commodious situation of the place, rebuilt it [f910], and it became a colony of the Romans, as Pliny [f911] and Mela [f912] both call it: and so it was at this time when the apostle was there. After this it came into the hands of the Venetians, from whom it was taken

by Mahomet, the second son of Amurath, in the year 1458 [f913]; but is now again in the hands of the Venetians; and that and the country about it are called the Morea. And as the Gospel was to be preached to the worst of sinners, among whom God's chosen ones lay, the apostle was directed to come hither; and it appears by the sequel, that God had much people here, even more than at Athens, among the wise and learned.

Ver. 2. *And found a certain Jew named Aquila*, etc.] This seems to have been his Roman name, which he had took, or was given him, while he was at Rome; very likely his Jewish name was dçn, "Nesher", which signifies an eagle, as "Aquila" does: unless it should rather be thought to be a Greek name; and as "Olympas" is from "Olympios", and "Nymphas" from Nymphios"; so "Akilas", as it in the Greek text, from Akylios", and this from ακυλος, "Akylos", which signifies an acorn. There was a Jewish proselyte of this name, who translated the Bible into Greek, who is called by the Jewish writers slyq[, "Akilas" [f914]; and Eusebius [f915] calls him ακυλας ο ποντικος, or "Akylas" or "Aquila" of Pontus, as here, but cannot be the same; for one was a Jew, the other a Gentile, then a Christian, and afterwards a Jewish proselyte, and lived after the destruction of Jerusalem many years, even in the times of Adrian: nor is it the same name with Onkelos, the famous Chaldee paraphrast, as some have thought, and much less the same person; for though their age better agrees, yet neither their name, nor their nation; for Onkelos was only a proselyte, not a Jew, as this man was; and the agreement the names of these proselytes may be thought to have with this, does but confirm it to be a Roman name; and in a decree of Claudius the Roman emperor, mention is made of Akylas, or Aquila, a Roman governor of Alexandria [f916]: and in the reign of Caius Caligula, there was a consul of Rome whose name was M. Aquila Julianus. This is said to be afterwards bishop of Heraclea; but that is not to be depended upon:

born in Pontus; a country in Asia; (see Gill on "Acts 2:9") where many Jews lived; though he was born in an Heathen country, his parents were Jews:

lately come from Italy; a famous and well known country in Europe: (see Gill on "Hebrews 13:24").

with his wife Priscilla; she and her husband are both highly spoken of in (
Romans 16:3,4 (see Gill on “ Romans 16:3”)), (see Gill on “
Romans 16:4”):

because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome; of which edict Suetonius [f917] makes mention, who says, that Claudius

> “expelled the Jews from Rome, who were continually making tumults, being moved thereunto by one Chrestus,”

who is generally understood to be Christ; and it is thought that the reason of this edict was, that the Jews in Rome continually opposing and disputing with the Christians, about Jesus being the Messiah, Claudius, who was of a timorous disposition, was afraid of a tumult, and that it might issue in his detriment, and therefore banished all the Jews, with whom the Christians were involved; for by the Heathens they were all called Jews, the first Christians being Jews: though others say the reason was, that the Jews had contracted an acquaintance with Agrippina, the wife of Claudius, and had drawn her into Judaism: but be it as it will, such an edict was made, on account of which Aquila and Priscilla were obliged to leave Rome, and come to Corinth. It must be something that was very provoking to him, otherwise before he had shown much favour to the Jews; for he not only granted to the Jews at Alexandria, that they should continue in the observance of their laws and customs, but permitted the same to them in all parts of the empire, by a special decree, which runs thus [f918];

> “Tiberius Claudius Caesar, etc. decrees, seeing the Kings Agrippa and Herod, my dearest friends, have entreated me that I would suffer the Jews in every government under the Romans, to observe their laws as in Alexandria; I most willingly grant it, not only for the sake of gratifying those who ask it, but judging that those are worthy, for whom it is asked, because of their faithfulness and friendship to the Romans; especially accounting it most just that no Grecian city should be deprived of these rights, seeing they were kept for them by the divine Augustus; wherefore it is right also that the Jews throughout all our empire should observe the customs of their country without any hinderance, whom I now command that in love to us they would behave more moderately, and not despise the religion of other nations, but keep their own laws; and I will that governors of cities, and colonies, and freedoms, both in Italy and without, have this my edict transcribed, and also kings and

princes by their ambassadors, and that it be put in such a place in less than thirty days, from whence it may be plainly read."

This Claudius was the "fifth" emperor of Rome; and this decree passed in the "ninth", or, as others, in the "eleventh" year of his reign, and about the year of Christ 51, or, as others, 54.

And came unto them: that is, the apostle, having found out Aquila and Priscilla, he came and visited them, and took up his lodging with them.

Ver. 3. *And because he was of the same craft*, Art, occupation, or trade:

he abode with them; in the same house in which they were:

and wrought; with his own hands, to support himself, for he was a stranger in this place; and as yet here was no church to minister to him; and when there was, he would take nothing of them, that the false teachers, who rose up among them, might not make any handle of it against him, and to the prejudice of the Gospel; though otherwise he thought it his just due to receive a maintenance from the churches; and insisted upon it as an ordination of Christ. He learned a trade whilst among the Jews, with whom it was common for their greatest doctors to be brought up to some trade or another; (see Gill on "<4668>Mark 6:3").

for by their occupation they were tent makers; either for the soldiers, and which were made of sack cloth of hair, or of leather, and of the skins of various animals [f919], sewed together; hence the phrase, "sub pellibus", "under the skins", is used for to lie in tents [f920]: or those tents they made, were canopies made of linen, and other things, which were erected in the summer season to shade and screen from the heat of the sun; though others take them for a sort of tapestry, or hangings, which they made for theatres, palaces, and stately rooms; and according to the Syriac version, they were horses' trappings which they made: perhaps they were of the same occupation with Menedemus the philosopher, who was σκηνορραφος, "a sewer of tents" [f921].

Ver. 4. *And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath*, etc.] In Corinth there was a synagogue of the Jews, in which they met together for worship on the seventh day of the week, which was their sabbath; and hither Paul went, and took the opportunity of reasoning with them out of the Scriptures, concerning Christ, his person, and offices, his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death, and about redemption and salvation by

him: we may observe the diligence, industry, and indefatigableness of the apostle; on the sabbath day he went to the synagogue, and preached Christ to those who there attended; and on the weekdays he laboured with his own hands. Beza's most ancient copy, and the Vulgate Latin version add here, "interposing the name of the Lord Jesus"; frequently making mention of his name, or calling upon it, and doing miracles in it.

And persuaded the Jews and the Greeks; this was the effect of his reasoning, and the success that attended it; some, both of the Jews, who were so by birth, as well as religion, and of the Greeks, or Gentiles, who were Jewish proselytes, and attended synagogue worship, were convinced by his arguments, and were induced to believe the truth of his doctrine, and to embrace it; or at least he endeavoured to persuade them that they were lost sinners, and that there was salvation for them in Christ, and in him only.

Ver. 5. *And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia*, etc.] Not from Berea in Macedonia, for from hence they came to the apostle while at Athens, and from whence he sent them, at least Timothy, to Thessalonica, to know the state of the saints there, as appears from (1 Thessalonians 3:1,2) and from hence they now came to the apostle at Corinth: when

Paul was pressed in Spirit; either by the Holy Spirit, by which he was moved and stirred up to preach the Gospel more frequently, and more powerfully; for he had not always the same measure of the Spirit, or was not always under the same influence; or else in his own spirit, and so the Arabic version renders it, "grief beset the spirit of Paul"; his soul was filled with trouble and sorrow, when he observed the nonrepenitence and unbelief, the contradiction and blasphemy of the greater part of the Jews; and being filled with zeal for their welfare, he continued preaching Christ unto them. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, instead of "in spirit", read "in speech", or "in word"; and the sense is, not that he was straitened in his speech, and knew not what to say to the Jews, or had not freedom of speech with them; but he was instant in preaching to them, and preached the word more frequently and fervently, upon the coming of Silas and Timothy to his assistance:

and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ; he continued to produce more testimonies out of the writings of Moses, and the prophets, to prove

that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, or Messiah, prophesied of in those writings, and promised to the Jews, and whom they expected.

Ver. 6. *And when they opposed themselves*, etc.] To the truth, and contradicted themselves in many instances, and their own prophecies; or those books which they themselves allowed to be the oracles of God, and blasphemed both Christ, and the apostle, and the doctrine which he taught; and railed at him, and spoke evil of him, and used him in a very contumelious and reproachful manner, as they were used from contradicting to go to blaspheming; (see <44136>Acts 13:45)

he shook his raiment; his outer garment, and the dust off from it, as a testimony against them; (see <40104>Matthew 10:14, <44136>Acts 13:51)

and said unto them, your blood be upon your heads; meaning, that they were the authors of their own ruin and destruction; that they could not impute it to any other, when it came upon them; and that they were left inexcusable, and must bear their own iniquities, and the punishment of them: this clause is wanting in the Syriac version.

I am clean; meaning from their blood; (see <44026>Acts 20:26). The apostle seems to allude to (<263304>Ezekiel 33:4-9) signifying, that he had discharged his duty as a preacher, and so had delivered his own soul from their blood being required at his hands; and that it rested entirely on themselves, and they were answerable for all their impenitence, unbelief, and blasphemy:

from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles; in that city, and preach the Gospel to them, and no more enter into their synagogue, as it is very likely he afterwards never did; for though Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, was afterwards converted, yet his conversion seems to have been not in the synagogue, but in the house of Justus, which was hard by it. Compare with this (<44136>Acts 13:46).

Ver. 7. *And he departed thence*, etc.]. Not from Corinth, but from the synagogue:

and entered into a certain man's house named Justus; he did not return to Aquila and Priscilla, because they were Jews, lest he should be thought not to abide by his words, that he would henceforth go to the Gentiles; wherefore as he came out of the synagogue, he turned into a house adjoining to it, which belonged to one Justus: in one copy of Beza's, and in some others, and in the Vulgate Latin version, he is called "Titus Justus";

and in the Arabic version, “Titus the son of Justus”; the Syriac version only reads “Titus”: whether this is not the same Titus, who afterwards was a companion of the apostle, and to whom he wrote an epistle, may be inquired.

One that worshipped God; a Gentile, but a religious man, such an one as Cornelius: he might be a proselyte either of the gate, or of righteousness; though if he was the same with Titus, he could not be the latter, because he was not circumcised, (Galatians 2:3) whose house joined hard to the synagogue; had this man been a Jew, his house might very well have been taken for the house which was `tsnkh tybl Æwms`, “near to the synagogue”, in which travellers were entertained, and ate, and drank, and lodged [f922]; and that he was the person appointed to take care of them, and so a very suitable house for Paul, a stranger, to take up his lodging in. The Ethiopic version adds, very wrongly, taking it from the beginning of the next verse, “because he was the ruler of the synagogue”; as if Justus was the ruler of the synagogue; and this the reason why his house was so near; whereas not he, but Crispus, was the ruler, as follows.

Ver. 8. *And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue*, etc.] This was a Jewish name; frequent mention is made of R. Crispa in the Jewish writings [f923] this person, either through hearing Paul before he departed from the synagogue, or when in Justus’s house, which was hard by the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house: he believed the doctrine the apostle preached, concerning Jesus, and that he was the Messiah; and he believed in him for life and salvation, and made a profession of his faith in him, and so did all his family, upon which he was baptized by the apostle; (see 1 Corinthians 1:14)

and many of the Corinthians hearing not “his faith”, as the Arabic version adds; as if hearing of the faith of Crispus induced them to believe also; for the ruler of the Jewish synagogue had no such influence on the Gentile Corinthians, as these were: but these hearing the Gospel preached by the apostle, very likely in the house of Justus, to which they came,

believed; faith came by hearing; they believed the Gospel, and they believed in Christ, the sum and substance of it; and not with a bare historical faith, but with a spiritual and saving one, or such as is unto salvation, with their heart, and with their mouth made confession of it:

and were baptized; not by the apostle, for he baptized at Corinth none but Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanas, but by some of his companions, as Silas, or Timothy, or both: this is a plain instance of believers' baptism; first they heard the word of God; then they believed, this word coming with power to them; and upon their believing, they are baptized. These laid the foundation of a famous church in this place, which continued for many ages after; Silas, who is reckoned among the seventy disciples, is said to be the first bishop or pastor of it; (see Gill on "Luke 10:1"); in the "second" century Primus was bishop of this church, with whom Egesippus as he went to Rome stayed some days, and was much refreshed with the orthodox faith of him, and the Corinthians; in the same century Dionysius presided over this church, who was not only very useful to the church under his care, but to many others [f924]; in the same age, under Severus lived Bacchylus bishop of Corinth, who wrote a book concerning Easter in the name of all the bishops in Achaia [f925]; in the third century Tertullian [f926] makes mention of a church at Corinth; in the fourth century Epictetus was bishop of the said church, and was contemporary and familiar with Athanasius, to whom a letter is extant in the works of Athanasius [f927]; in the "fifth" century there was a church at Corinth, and a bishop of it was in the synod at Chalcedon, and it was then a metropolitan church; in this age Peregrinus bishop of Corinth was in the first synod at Ephesus, held against Nestorius, and Erisistratus, a bishop also of the same church, was in another synod at the same place, and Peter bishop of Corinth was in the Chalcedon council; in the "sixth" century mention is made of a bishop of the Corinthians, in the fifth synod at Constantinople, and in the same century Gregory instructed John bishop of the Corinthians rightly to govern the Lord's flock, and exhorted all the Corinthian bishops to concord. In this age Adrianus also was bishop of Corinth, he flourished under Mauritius the emperor; as likewise did Anastasius archbishop of the Corinthians; and he being removed from his office, John succeeded him in it; in the "seventh" century there was a Corinthian bishop in the sixth council at Constantinople [f928]; thus far this ancient church is to be traced in history.

Ver. 9. *Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision*, etc.] On a certain night as he was asleep, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him in a dream, and spake after this manner to him:

be not afraid; it is very likely that after the baptism of Crispus and his family, and of many of the Corinthians, that both the Jews and the Gentiles

were exasperated against the apostle; and his life might seem to be in danger, and he might be thinking of removing from hence for his preservation and safety; and might be advised to it by his friends, or at least that he should be incognito, and not be seen publicly: wherefore the Lord appears to him, and bids him not indulge any fears, or conceal himself and be silent,

but speak, and hold not thy peace; preach freely and boldly the Gospel without fear of men; the fear of men should not stop the mouths of Christ's ministers.

Ver. 10. *For I am with thee*, etc.] According to his promise, (<4082>Matthew 28:20) not only to assist in the ministry of the word, to give light into it, and liberty to preach it, and success in it, but to keep and preserve him from being hurt by men:

and no man shall set on thee; attack thee, or lay hands on thee:

to hurt thee; to do any injury to thy person, to thy body, in any part of it: wicked men cannot strike a blow, or do the least damage to a servant of Christ without his permission; he can tie their hands, and restrain their rage.

For I have much people in this city; this wicked and luxurious city; there were many here who were yet in their sins, in a state of unregeneracy, whom God had chosen to be his people, and had taken into his covenant as such; were given to Christ as his peculiar people, and whom he had redeemed with his precious blood: they were his people both by gift and purchase, before they were called by grace; and because of this his interest in them, he will have his Gospel continued for the gathering them in to himself; for Christ will lose none of his, all shall come unto him: from all which it appears, that Christ has a people who are related to him, and he has an interest in, before they are effectually called by grace; for this refers not to the many Corinthians who had heard and believed, and were baptized, but to some that had not, and were yet to be called; not the Jews in this city, Christ's own nation, nor all the inhabitants of it who were in some sense Christ's people, being made and supported in their beings by him, are intended; but a special people among the Gentiles, the same with the other sheep Christ speaks of, (<4316>John 10:16) not yet of his fold; a people beloved of God, chosen in Christ, given to him, and with whom a covenant was made in him, for whom Christ undertook, in whose name he

acted, and for whom he received blessings and promises, as well as took the care and charge of their persons; for the sake of these he assumed human nature, and suffered and died; towards these his heart always is; his eye is upon them, and he knows them, and where they are; and therefore he will look them up and find them out, and they shall be brought to believe in him, and shall not perish, but have everlasting life: and it may be further observed, that Christ has "many" such, though they are but comparatively few, yet in themselves they are a great number; yea, he has sometimes many of these in the worst of places, and among the vilest of men; and for the sake of these, in order to select and separate them from the rest, is the Gospel preached and continued. The ministers of it are sent here and there, where such persons are, and there they are continued till they are gathered in; yea, on this account both the Gospel and its preachers are continued in the world; and even the world itself, for the sake of these, till they are brought in, and then it will be destroyed; and it may be also remarked, that for the encouragement of Gospel ministers, Christ promises his presence and protection, and which was fulfilled in the Apostle Paul at Corinth; who though he stayed there a year and six months, none were suffered to do him any injury; and when an insurrection was made within that time, yet the apostle escaped, and quietly departed elsewhere.

Ver. 11. *And he continued there*, etc.] At Corinth, as the Syriac version, and some copies, read; he was obedient to the heavenly vision: in the Greek text it is, "he sat" there, answerable to the Hebrew word בָּשַׁב, which signifies to sit, continue and abide: he stayed there in all a year and six months; which was a long time for the apostle to stay in one place, and longer than he did anywhere, unless at Ephesus, where he continued two years, (<441910>Acts 19:10) for as for his stay at Rome, that was by confinement: but here were many people to be called, and much work to do, a large church to be raised, and put in order; and this required time as well as care and labour:

teaching the word of God among them; he did not sit idle here, but preached the Gospel, which is the word of God, and not man, openly and publicly, among them all; and that frequently, in season and out of season, and with great boldness and faithfulness.

Ver. 12. *And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia*, etc.] This province, which was now become a Roman one, Pliny the younger [f929] calls true and mere Greece; it went by the name of Aegialus [f930], and now it is called

Livadia: it has on the north the country of Thessaly, and on the west the river Acheloo, or Aracheo, on the east the Aegean sea, and on the south Peloponnesus, or the Morea. Gallio, who was now deputy of it, was brother to L. Annaeus Seneca, the famous philosopher, who was preceptor to Nero; his name at first was M. Annaeus Novatus, but being adopted by L. Junius Gallio, he took the name of the family. According to his brother's account of him [f931], he was a very modest man, of a sweet disposition, and greatly beloved; and Statius [f932] calls him Dulcem Gallionem, "the sweet Gallio", mild and gentle in his speech, as Quintilian says. Seneca [f933] makes mention of him as being in Achaia; and whilst he was deputy there he had a fever, when as soon as it took him he went aboard a ship, crying, that it was not the disease of the body, but of the place.

The Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul; being provoked that so many of their people, as well as of the Gentiles, were converted by him to the Christian religion, and were baptized:

and brought him to the judgment seat; of Gallio, the deputy, to be tried and judged by him.

Ver. 13. *Saying, this fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law*.] Meaning either to the law of the Romans, which forbad the bringing in of any new gods, without the leave of the senate; (see Gill on "Acts 16:21"); or rather to the law of Moses: the Arabic version reads, "our law"; though this was false, for Moses in his law wrote of Christ, and ordered the children of Israel to hearken to him.

Ver. 14. *And when Paul was now about to open his mouth*, etc.] In his own defence, and plead his own cause, and answer to the charge exhibited against him:

Gallio said unto the Jews, if it was matter of wrong; of injury to any man's person or property, as murder, theft, etc.

or wicked lewdness; as fraud, forgery, perjury, treason, etc.

O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: his sense is, that it would be according to right reason, and agreeably to his office as a judge, to admit them and their cause, and try it, and hear them patiently, and what was to be said on both sides of the question, what the charges were, and the proof of them, and what the defendant had to say for himself. The Vulgate Latin version reads, "O men Jews"; and so Beza's ancient copy.

Ver. 15. *But if it be a question of words*, etc.] "Or of the word", what the Jews called the word of God, which Gallio did not pretend to understand: "and names"; as the names of God, of Jesus, and of Christ, whether he is God, and the Messiah:

and of your law; concerning circumcision, whether these Christians, and the proselytes they make, are obliged unto it:

look ye to it; suggesting that this was a matter that lay before them, and they were the proper judges of, and might determine for themselves, since they had the free exercise of their religion, and a right of judging of everything that respected that within themselves, and for which they were best furnished, as having a more competent knowledge of them; as the Arabic version renders it, "and ye are more learned in these things"; and most conversant with them:

for I will be no judge of such matters; and it would be well if every civil magistrate would act the same part, and not meddle with religious affairs, any further than to preserve the public peace.

Ver. 16. *And he drave them from the judgment seat*.] He would not hear, and try the cause; but dismissed them with threatening them, if ever they brought an affair of that kind to him any more.

Ver. 17. *Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes*, etc.] These were not the Greeks or Gentiles that were devout persons, or converted to Christianity, and were on the side of Paul, and fell foul on Sosthenes, as being his chief accuser; for this is not agreeably to the spirit and character of such persons, but the profane and unconverted Greeks, who observing that Gallio sent the Jews away, with some resentment and contempt, were encouraged to fall upon the principal of them, and use him in a very ill manner; it is very likely that this person was afterwards converted, and is the same that is mentioned in (<460101>1 Corinthians 1:1). The name is Greek, and there is one of this name mentioned among the executors of Plato's will [f934]. This man was now

chief ruler of the synagogue; chosen in, very likely, upon Crispus becoming a Christian, and being baptized:

and beat him before the judgment seat; of Gallio; before he and his friends could get out of court:

and Gallio cared for none of these things; which might not be owing to any sluggishness in him, but to an ill opinion he had of the Jews, as being a turbulent and uneasy people, and therefore he connived at some of the insolencies of the people towards them; though it did not become him, as a magistrate, to act such a part, whose business it was to keep the public peace, to quell disorders, to protect men's persons, and property, and prevent abuse and mischief, and to correct and punish for it. The Arabic version renders it, "and no man made any account of Gallio"; they did not fear his resentment, he having drove the Jews from the judgment seat.

Ver. 18. *And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while*, etc.] A year and a half, as in (<44B11>Acts 18:11) for this insurrection might follow immediately upon the vision the apostle had; and who by that was encouraged to continue in this city, notwithstanding the treatment he met with; he not doubting of the promise of God, and of his power and faithfulness to fulfil it, though this was a trial of his faith and constancy:

and then took his leave of the brethren; whom he had been instrumental in the conversion of, and had established and confirmed in the faith; and having now done his work in this place, at least for the time present, he takes his leave of them and departs:

and sailed thence into Syria; or towards Syria, for he took Ephesus by the way, which was in Asia, and stopped there a little while:

and with him Priscilla and Aquila; whom he had met with at Corinth, and with whom he had lodged and wrought at his trade, (<44B02>Acts 18:2,3)

Having shorn his head in Cenchrea; which some understand not of Paul, but of Aquila, who is the last person spoken of; and the Ethiopic version reads in the plural number, referring this to both Priscilla and Aquila, "and they had shaved their heads, for they had a vow"; and so it was read in a manuscript of Baronius, and Bede observes, that it was read in like manner in some copies in his time; but the more authentic reading is in the singular number, and is more generally understood of the Apostle Paul; who being about to go into Judea, to the Jew became a Jew, that he might gain some: Cenchrea, where this was done, was a sea port belonging to the Corinthians, on the east of the Isthmus, as Lechea was on the west; according to Pliny [f935], there were two gulfs, or bays, to the Isthmus, the one he calls the Corinthian bay, and others the Crissean and Alcyonian bay, and Golfo de Petras; the other the Saronic bay, now called Golfo de Engia;

Lechea was in the Corinthian bay, and Cenchrea in the Saronic bay; and both belonged to Corinth, and were the bounds of the Straights; the space between them was the Isthmus, which consisted of about five miles; and so Pausanias says [f936], the Isthmus of the Corinthians is washed on both sides by the sea; on one side at Cenchrea, and on the other at Lechea, and this makes the island a continent; and likewise Philo [f937] giving an account of a voyage of Flaccus says, that passing over the Ionian gulf, he came to the sea (or shore) of Corinth — — — - and going over the Isthmus from Lechea, to the opposite sea, he came down to Cenchrea, a seaport of the Corinthians; of which Apuleius [f938] gives this account:

> "this town is a most noble colony of the Corinthians, it is washed by the Aegean and Saronic sea, where there is a port, a most safe receptacle for ships, and very populous."

Hither the apostle came from Corinth to take shipping, and from hence he sailed to Syria, as before observed: it has its name either from millet, for "Cenchros" signifies "millet"; and "Cenchrias" is "bread made of millet"; or from the bird "Cenchris", which is a kind of hawk; (see Gill on "Romans 16:1").

For he had a vow; this, some think, could not be the vow of the Nazarites, for then he should have stayed till he came to Jerusalem, and have shaved his head at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and cast the hair into the fire, under the pot in which the peace offerings were boiled [f939]; though he that vowed in the country, was not obliged to this: others think it was such an one as the Jews in travelling used, that they would not shave till they came to such a place; and so the apostle had made a vow that he would shave at Cenchrea; and accordingly did; but this is not likely, that the apostle should make a vow upon so light an occasion: others that it refers to his going to Jerusalem, to keep the feast there, (Acts 18:21) and so these think the words are a reason, not of his shaving of his head, but of his sailing to Syria; the first is most probable, that it was a Nazarite's vow; (see Acts 21:24).

Ver. 19. *And he came to Ephesus*, etc.] The metropolis of Asia; according to Pliny [f940], it had been called by many names; at the time of the Trojan war, Alopes, then Ortygia and Morges, also Smyrna Trachea, Samornion and Prelea, and which he calls the work of the Amazons: some say [f941] it was called Ephesus, because Hercules permitted the Amazons to dwell in it, Ephesus in the Greek language signifying "permission"; Pausanias [f942]

denies, that the famous temple in it was built by them, but by Ephesus the son of Caystrus, and says that from him the city had its name; though others say it was built by Androclus, the son of Codrus, king of Athens, in the time of David king of Israel; and that having suffered by the sea, it was rebuilt by Lysimachus king of Thrace, who called it after his wife's name Arsinoe; but he being dead, it was called by its ancient name Ephesus: it is now a poor village in the hands of the Turks, and with them goes by the name of Aiasalik; though with others it still has the name of Epheso; the Syriac version reads, "they came"; not only Paul, but Aquila and Priscilla; and certain it is that they came with him thither, since it follows,

and left them there; unless this is to be understood of Cenchrea: this clause is not here read in the Syriac version, but is placed at the end of (<441821>Acts 18:21), where it reads much better; as that he should leave them at Ephesus, when he departed from thence, than when he first came thither; unless the sense is, that he left them in some part of the city, whilst he went to the Jewish synagogue; since it follows,

but he himself entered into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews; concerning Jesus being the Messiah, and the abrogation of the law; and the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, and not by the deeds of the law: which were the principal things in debate, between him and the Jews: Beza's ancient copy reads, "and the sabbath following he left them there".

Ver. 20. *When they desired him to tarry longer time with them*, etc.] Either Aquila and Priscilla, whom he left here, for here they were, as is certain from <441824>*Acts 18:24,26* or rather the Jews with whom he reasoned, who might be desirous of further conference with him, upon the subject they had disputed about; either in order to gain more knowledge, or in hopes of baffling and confounding him:

he consented not; for a reason afterwards given.

Ver. 21. *But bade them farewell, saying*, etc.] As follows:

I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem; which perhaps was the passover, since that often went by the name of the feast: the why he must by all means keep it, was not because it was obligatory upon him; nor did he always observe it, as appears from his long stay at Corinth, and other places; and besides, as a Christian, he had nothing to do with it; but either because of his vow, (<441818>Acts 18:18) or because he knew

he should have an opportunity of preaching the Gospel to great numbers; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions omit this clause:

but I will return again unto you, if God will; he promises to return to them, but not peremptorily as knowing that he was altogether subject to the will of God, who disposes and orders all things according to his sovereign pleasure; (see <59045>James 4:15) and he sailed from Ephesus; which was near the Aegean sea: such was the situation of Ephesus, according to Apollonius [f943]; who says, that it stood out to the sea, which encompassed the land on which it was built; so Pausanias [f944] relates, that Lysimachus passing into Asia by shipping, took the kingdom of Antigonus from him, and built the city the Ephesians now inhabit near the sea; so Josephus [f945] reports of Herod and Agrippa, that travelling by land to Phrygia Major, they came to Ephesus, and again, διεπλευσιν, "they sailed from Ephesus" to Samos.

Ver. 22. *And when he had landed at Caesarea*, etc.] This was Caesarea Stratonis, formerly called Strato's tower: it would have been nearest for the apostle to have landed at Joppa, in order to go to Jerusalem, but that haven was a dangerous one; this was the safest, and which therefore Herod had repaired at a vast expense, and in honour of Caesar had called it by this name: of the port at Caesarea, and what a convenient and commodious one, as it was made by Herod, Josephus [f946] gives a particular account, and who often calls this place Caesarea, παραλιος, "Caesarea by the sea" [f947]; and in other Jewish [f948] writings mention is made of this place as a sea port, and of ˆyrsyqd amyd atmwç, "the shore of the sea of Caesarea": Josephus [f949] sometimes calls it the port Sebastus, or Augustus, it being, as before observed, made by Herod, and so called in honour of Augustus Caesar; and in another place [f950], Sebastus the port of Caesarea: according to Jerom [f951], or a writer under his name, this was neither Caesarea Philippi, which indeed it could not be, that being an inland town; nor Caesarea formerly called Strato's tower, but a third Caesarea, the metropolis of Cappadocia: in which he must be mistaken, seeing that was no sea port, and the apostle could not be said to land there; nor did it lie in the way to Jerusalem from Ephesus; but this city was in Phenice, and lay between Joppa and Dora; which cities were maritime ones, but very disagreeable havens, because of the vehement strong winds from Africa: which rolling up the sand out of the sea upon the shore, would not admit of a quiet station [f952]; wherefore the apostle chose to land here, and not at either of the said ports;

and gone up; not to Caesarea, but to Jerusalem, from thence, which lay higher; and going to and from these places, is signified by a going up and down, (<44:9:30>Acts 9:30, 25:1). Moreover, the apostle had told the Ephesians, that he must go and keep the feast in Jerusalem, as he undoubtedly did: and yet if this does not refer to his going up thither, it will not be easy to observe that he went thither at all before his return to Ephesus; and besides, to suppose him to go from Caesarea to Antioch, was all one as to go back to Ephesus; and so to go, as one observes, by the same place to Jerusalem, into which he promised, in his return from Jerusalem, to come again, if God would:

and saluted the church; at Jerusalem, the mother church:

he went down to Antioch; in Syria, from whence he first set out.

Ver. 23. *And after he had spent some time there*, etc.] At Antioch:

he departed; from thence:

and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples; that were in those parts, confirming them in the faith of Christ, and fortifying their minds against the temptations of Satan, and encouraging them to bear the reproaches and persecutions of men; which shows the affection, diligence, and industry of the apostle: it seems there were disciples in these countries of Galatia and Phrygia, which very likely were made by the apostle, when he passed trough those places, (<44:16:6>Acts 16:6) and who were the beginning of Gospel churches in these places, which continued for ages after: certain it is, there were churches in Galatia in the apostle's time, of whom he makes mention, and to whom he wrote, (<46:16:1>1 Corinthians 16:1, <48:1:2>Galatians 1:2). According to the apostolical constitutions, Crescens, mentioned (<55:4:10>2 Timothy 4:10) was appointed by the apostles bishop of the churches of Galatia; and particularly it is said, that he was bishop of Chalcedon in Galatia; (see Gill on "<42:1:1>Luke 10:1") and in the "second" century, there was a church at Ancyra, which was disturbed by the heresy of Montanus, and was established by Apolinarius, who makes mention of the elders of this church [f953]: in the "third" century there were churches in Galatia, which Stephen bishop of Rome threatened with excommunication, because they rebaptized heretics: in the beginning of the "fourth" century, there were bishops from hence, which assisted at the council of Nice, against Arius, and at the synod of Sardica, in the same century; and at the beginning of it, Clemens

bishop of Ancyra, after he had taught twenty nine years, suffered much in the persecution of Dioclesian, first at Rome, then at Nicomedia, and at last was put to death by the sword; in this age also lived Basil, bishop of Ancyra, under Constantius; he first came to the bishopric of that place under Constantine, but being deprived of it for four years, was restored by Constantius in the council of Sardica; under the former he disputed against Photinus, as Epiphanius [f954] relates; who makes mention of Anysius his deacon, and Eutyches and Theodulus his notaries; and the same writer [f955] takes notice of several elders and officers of the same church in that age, as Photinus, Eustathius, another Photinus, and Sigerius, elders, Hyginus deacon, Heracides subdeacon, Elpidus reader, and Cyriacus president of the church: in the "fifth" century, there were many churches in Galatia, yea, they are said to be innumerable; Leontius was bishop of Ancyra in the times of Arcadius and Honorius; and was succeeded by Theodotus, who was in the first Ephesine synod against Nestorius, as was also Eusebius bishop of the same church, at another synod in the same place; Anastasius was bishop of the said church, lived under the emperor Leo the first, and was at the synod of Constantinople; Meliphthongus, bishop of Juliopolis in the same country, assisted at several synods; Eusebius, bishop of Aspona in Galatia, was present in the first synod at Ephesus, against Nestorius; likewise Peter bishop of Gangrae, and Theoctistus bishop of Pessinus, both lived in the time of the two synods, the infamous one at Ephesus, and the other at Chalcedon: in the "sixth" century, there were bishops of Ancyra, Juliopolis, and other cities in Galatia, who were present at the Roman and Constantipolitan synod; in this age, under Anastasius the emperor, lived Dorotheus bishop of Ancyra: in the "seventh" century were present, at the sixth council at Constantinople, several bishops of the churches of Galatia; as of Sinope, Pessinus, Aspona, and others: in the "eighth" century, mention is made of Basil, bishop of the church at Ancyra, Nicodemus bishop of Didymi, Gregory bishop of Sinope: and even in the ninth century a garrison of Christians was placed in Ancyra, against the incursions of the Saracens [f956]; so long the Christian name remained in those parts: and that there were also churches in Phrygia is as evident; Aristarchus, a companion of the apostle Paul, is said to be bishop of Apamea, which was a city in Phrygia; (see Gill on "<4100>Luke 10:1") the second century, Papias, a disciple of the Apostle John, was bishop of Hierapolis in this country [f957]; and in the same age there was a church at Philomelium in Phrygia, to which the church at Smyrna wrote a letter, still extant in Eusebius [f958], which gives an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp; likewise the church at Lyons, in

France, sent a letter to the churches in Asia and Phrygia, giving an account of their martyrs, which is to be seen in the same writer [f959]; in this century lived Apolinarius, bishop of Hierapolis, who opposed the Phrygian heresy of Montanus; and who makes mention of Zoticus, of the village of Comana, and Julianus of Apamea, both in Phrygia, as his fellow elders and bishops [f960]: Dionysius, of Alexandria, speaks of a church, and of the brethren at Synnada, which was in Phrygia, in a letter of his to Philemon, a presbyter at Rome [f961]; at Lampsacus in Phrygia, there were martyrs that suffered under Decius: in the third century, there was a church at Hierapolis, famous from the times of the apostles. Tertullian makes mention of the believers in Christ in Phrygia, in his time [f962]: in the beginning of the "fourth" century under Dioclesian, a whole city in Phrygia of Christians was set on fire and burnt, men, women, and children, calling upon Christ the God of all [f963]; and at the council of Nice, under Constantine, were present bishops of many churches in Phrygia; as Ilium, Synnada, Eucarpia, Hierapolis, and others; at Lampsacus, in this country, was held a memorable synod against Eudoxus and Acacius, the chief of the Arian faction: in the "fifth" century there were churches in Phrygia; Theodosius and Agapetus were bishops of Synnada in Phrygia Pacatiana; Marinianus, bishop of the same place, was present at the several synods in this century; Nunechius of Laodicea, Gennadius of Acmonii, Thomas and Olympius, both of Theodosiopolis, Lucianus of Ipsa, Albertus of Hierapolis, Eusebius of Doryleus, with many others, all in Phrygia, are made mention of in history: in the "sixth" century, several bishops of Phrygia, as of Philomelium, etc. were present at the synod held at Rome and Constantinople: in the "seventh" century, bishops of several churches in this country, as of Hierapolis, Synnada, etc. assisted at the sixth synod at Constantinople: in the eighth century were many churches here, whose bishops were present at the Nicene synod, as Basil, bishop of Pergamus, Nicetas of Ilium, John of Synnada, and others [f964].

Ver. 24. *And a certain Jew named Apollos*, etc.] Who by some is thought to be the same with Apelles, (Romans 16:10), his name is Greek, though he was a Jew, not only by religion, but by birth, being of a Jewish extract:

born at Alexandria; in Egypt, which was built by Alexander the great, from whence it had its name; it was the metropolis of Egypt, and the seat of the kings of it; great numbers of Jews were in this place; here lived Philo the famous Jew:

an eloquent man; in speech, as well as learned, wise, and “prudent”, as the Ethiopic version renders it:

and mighty in the Scriptures; of the Old Testament, particularly in the prophecies of them concerning the Messiah; he had thoroughly read them, and carefully examined them, and could readily cite them; as well as had great knowledge of them, and was capable of explaining them; he was “skilful in the Scriptures”, as the Syriac version renders it; or he “knew” them, as the Ethiopic; he had large acquaintance with them, and was well versed in them: it is a Jewish way of speaking; so Ahithophel is said to be hrwtb rwbg, “mighty in the law” [f965]; the same is said of the sons of Reuben [f966]: this man

came to Ephesus; after the departure of the Apostle Paul, and while Aquila and Priscilla were there; the reason of his coming hither was to preach the word, as he did.

Ver. 25. *This man was instructed in the way of the Lord*, etc.] Which John, whose baptism he only knew, came to prepare: the word here used signifies “catechised”; and suggests, that he was trained up by his parents in this way, who might have been the disciples of John, though afterwards removed from Judea to Alexandria; and that he only had been taught the rudiments of the Christian religion, or doctrine of the Gospel; here called the way of the Lord, or which directs and leads unto him, as the only Saviour, and is the path of faith and truth; or as some copies read, “the word of the Lord”; and which accounts for what is afterwards said of him:

and being fervent in the spirit; either in or by the Spirit of God, being made so by him, who is, compared to fire, and who, in the form of cloven tongues of fire, sat upon the disciples at the day of Pentecost, and upon others; among whom this Apollos is by some thought to be, though without any reason; however, he might be inspired with zeal by the Spirit of God: or “in his own spirit”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; his soul was inflamed with zeal for the glory of God, the honour of Christ, and the good of souls; his ministry was very affectionate, warm, and lively; (see <451211>Romans 12:11) He spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord; or “of Jesus”, as read the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; according to the measure of light and grace he had received, he spake out freely and fully, and taught the people with great

industry, and with all the exactness he could, the things he knew concerning the person, offices, and grace of the Lord Jesus:

knowing only the baptism of John; which must be understood, not of the ordinance of baptism singly, as administered by John, but of the whole ministry of John; as of that ordinance, so of his doctrine concerning repentance and remission of sins; and concerning Christ that was to come, and concerning his being come, and who he was, whom John pointed at, and taught the people to believe in: but perhaps he might know very little, if anything, of the miracles of Christ, or of his death and resurrection from the dead, and the benefits and effects thereof; and of the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, and the light and knowledge which were communicated thereby.

Ver. 26. *And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue*, etc.] Of the Jews at Ephesus; using great freedom of speech, and showing much intrepidity and greatness of soul, and presence of mind; not fearing the faces of men, nor the revilings and contradictions of the Jews:

whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard; they attending at the synagogue, and having observed what he delivered, that there was some deficiency in it, though they took no notice of it publicly; partly on their own account, it not being proper, especially for Priscilla, to speak in public, nor was it allowed in the Jewish synagogues for a woman to speak there; and partly on his account, that they might not put him to the blush, and discourage him; and chiefly on account of the Gospel, that they might not lay any stumblingblocks in the way of that, and of young converts, and give an occasion to the adversary to make advantages: wherefore

they took him unto them; they took him aside when he came out of the synagogue, and privately conversed with him; they had him “to their own house”; as the Syriac version renders it;

and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly; these two doubtless had received a considerable measure of evangelical light and knowledge from the Apostle Paul, during the time of their conversation with him; and as they freely received from him, they freely imparted it to Apollos, with a good design to spread the truth of the Gospel, and to promote it and the interest of Christ in the world: and as on the one hand it was a good office, and a kind part in them, to communicate knowledge to him, so it was an instance of a good spirit, and of condescension in him, to

be taught and instructed by them; especially since one of them was a woman, and both mechanics, and made but a mean figure: and from hence it may be observed, that women of grace, knowledge, and experience, though they are not allowed to teach in public, yet they may, and ought to communicate in private, what they know of divine things, for the use of others.

Ver. 27. *And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia*, etc. The chief city of which was Corinth, and whither Apollos went, as appears from (<4401901>Acts 19:1). What disposed him to go thither, after he had received a greater degree of light and knowledge, was no doubt that he might communicate it, to the good of others, to which he was moved by the Holy Ghost, who had work for him to do there: according to Beza's most ancient copy, there were Corinthians sojourning in Ephesus, who when they had heard him (Apollos), besought him that he would go with them into their country; to which he agreeing, the Ephesians wrote to the disciples at Corinth to receive him, as follows:

the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; that is, the brethren at Ephesus, among whom Aquila was a principal one, wrote letters of recommendation to the brethren of the churches in Achaia, particularly at Corinth, not only that they would receive him into their houses, and hospitably entertain him as a Christian man, but admit him, and behave towards him as a preacher of the Gospel:

who when he was come; into Achaia, and to Corinth:

helped them much which had believed through grace; the phrase "through grace", is omitted in the Vulgate Latin version, but is in all the Greek copies, and may be connected either with the word "helped"; as the Syriac version, "he helped through grace"; and then the sense is, that Apollos, through the gifts of grace bestowed on him, or by the assistance of the grace of God, or both, greatly helped and contributed much to the advantage of the believers in those parts; as to the encouragement of their faith, and the increase of the joy of it; for the quickening, and comforting, and establishing them in the truths and doctrines of the Gospel, by his affectionate, fervent, and nervous way of preaching: or it may be connected with the word "believed", as it is in the Arabic version and in ours; and the meaning is, that he greatly assisted such who were already believers; and who became so, not of themselves, but through the grace of God; for faith is not of nature, nor the produce of man's free will, but is the gift of God's

grace; it is a fruit of electing grace, an instance of distinguishing grace, it is owing to efficacious grace, and comes along with effectual calling grace, through the word preached, the means of grace; and is supported and maintained by the grace of God; the Ethiopic version renders it, “he preached much to them, who believed in the grace of God”; that is, in the Gospel, the doctrine of the grace of God, which they had received and professed; or in the love and favour of God, they were rooted and grounded in, and persuaded of.

Ver. 28. *For he mightily convinced the Jews*, etc.] His reasoning was so strong and nervous, his arguments so weighty and powerful, and the passages he produced out of the Old Testament so full and pertinent, that the Jews were not able to stand against him; they could not object to the texts of Scripture he urged, nor to the sense he gave of them, nor answer the arguments founded upon them; he was an overmatch for them; they were refuted by him over and over, and were confounded to the last degree:

and that publicly, in their synagogue, before all the people; which increased their shame and confusion; and was the means of spreading the Gospel, of bringing others to the faith of it, and of establishing them in it, who had already received it: showing by the Scriptures; of the Old Testament, which the Jews received and acknowledged as the word of God:

that Jesus was Christ; or that Christ, that Messiah, which these Scriptures spoke of, whom God had promised, and the church of God expected; and which was the main thing in controversy between the Jews and the Christians, as it still is.

CHAPTER 19

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 19

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth*, etc.] Whither he came after the Apostle Paul, and where he watered what the apostle had planted, and where he became very famous and eminent; insomuch that he was set up, though not with his will, at the head of a party, in opposition to the chief of the apostles, Peter and Paul; (see <460112>1 Corinthians 1:12 3:4-6, 4:6).

Paul having passed through the upper coasts; that is, of Phrygia, Galatia, Pontus, Bithynia, Lydia, Lycaonia, and Paphlagonia;

came to Ephesus; into Ionia, of which Ephesus was the chief city, and lay near the sea; wherefore the other countries are called the upper coasts; hither he came, according to his promise in (<442821>Acts 28:21)

And finding certain disciples; such as believed in Christ, made a profession of him, and had been baptized in his name, for such were commonly called disciples: these do not seem to be persons, who were either converted by Paul, when he was at Ephesus before, or by Apollos, who had been there since, and was gone; but rather some who came hither from other parts, since the apostle was at this place; though indeed his stay at Ephesus before was so short, that they might be here, and he not hear of them, or meet with them.

Ver. 2. *He said unto them, have ye received the Holy Ghost*, etc.] Meaning, not the special regenerating and sanctifying grace of the Holy Ghost, for that is supposed in their being disciples and believers, but the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, for it follows,

since ye believed? that is, in Christ; which is taking it for granted, that they had received the special grace of the Spirit of God; for this believing is to be understood of true, spiritual, special faith in Christ:

and they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost; by which they could not mean the person of the Holy

Ghost: for they must have known that there was such a divine person as the Holy Ghost, from the writings of the Old Testament, with which they were conversant: and from the ministry of John, into whose baptism they were baptized; who saw the Spirit of God descend on Jesus, and bore witness of it; and declared, that Christ who was to come after him, would baptize with the Holy Ghost: nor could they mean the special grace of the Spirit, which they themselves had received; but the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit of God, which they at present knew nothing of, and which were afterwards bestowed upon them: they knew that there were prophecies in the Old Testament, concerning the effusion of the Spirit in the last days, in the days of the Messiah; but they had not heard that these had had their accomplishment; they had heard nothing of the day of Pentecost, and of the pouring out of the Spirit upon the apostles then, nor of any instance of this kind since; they did not know that the Holy Ghost was yet, (⁴⁰⁷⁹John 7:39) they knew he was promised, but not that he was given; the Ethiopic version, to avoid the difficulty of the text, renders it, “we have only heard that there was an Holy Ghost”.

Ver. 3. *And he said unto them, unto what then were ye baptized*? etc.] The apostle takes it for granted that they were baptized, since they were not only believers, but disciples; such as not only believed with the heart, but had made a profession of their faith, and were followers of Christ; but asks unto what they were baptized; either in whose name they were baptized, since Christian baptism was administered in the name of the Spirit, as well as in the name of the Father and of the Son; or what attended or followed their baptism, seeing sometimes the Holy Ghost fell upon persons, either before baptism, or at it, or after it:

and they said, unto John’s baptism; some think they had never been baptized at all with water baptism, only had received the doctrine preached by John, concerning repentance and remission of sins, and so were baptized unto him, professing the same doctrine he did, just as the Israelites were baptized into Moses; others think they were baptized, but very wrongly, being baptized in the name of John, and not in the name of Jesus Christ; and so, as it was not Christian baptism they had submitted to, it was right to baptize them again: but neither of these are probable, for it is not likely that they should receive John’s doctrine, and not his baptism; that they should be his disciples and followers, and not attend to the more distinguishing branch of his ministry; and it is still more unlikely that they should be baptized in his name, who preached Jesus Christ to his followers,

and pointed out to them the Lamb of God, and declared him to be greater than he; it seems rather that they were baptized, and that they were baptized in the name of Christ, as John's disciples were, as the apostle affirms in the following words.

Ver. 4. *Then said Paul*, etc.] In reply to their answer, understanding them that they were baptized by John, he takes it up, and gives an account of John's baptism: showing how agreeable it was, and that it was the same baptism with the baptism of Christ, being administered in his name:

John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance; which required repentance antecedent to it, and was a fruit and effect, and so an evidence of it:

saying unto the people; the people of the Jews, the common people, the multitude that attended on his ministry:

that they should believe on him, which should come after him, that is, on Jesus Christ; so that he preached faith in Christ, as well as repentance towards God; and made the one as well as the other a necessary prerequisite unto baptism; which shows, that his baptism and Christian baptism are the same.

Ver. 5. *When they heard this*, etc.] That is, the people to whom John preached, his hearers; when they heard of the Messiah, and that Jesus was he, and that it became them to believe in him:

they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; not the disciples that Paul found at Ephesus, but the hearers of John; for these are the words of the Apostle Paul, giving an account of John's baptism, and of the success of his ministry, showing, that his baptism was administered in the name of the Lord Jesus; and not the words of Luke the Evangelist, recording what followed upon his account of John's baptism; for then he would have made mention of the apostle's name, as he does in the next verse; and have said, when they heard this account, they were baptized by Paul in the name of the Lord Jesus: the historian reports two things, first what Paul said, which lies in (<44194>Acts 19:4,5) then what he did, (<44196>Acts 19:6) where he repeats his name, as was necessary; as that he laid his hands upon them, which was all that was needful to their receiving the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, having been already baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus: which sense is the more confirmed by the particles μεν and δε, which answer to one another in verses 4 and 5, and show the words to be a continuation of

the apostle's speech, and not the words of the historian, which begin in the next verse. Beza's ancient copy adds, "for the remission of sins".

Ver. 6. *And when Paul had laid his hands upon them*, etc.] They having been before baptized, not by him, but by John, or one of his disciples, in the name of the Lord Jesus; just as Peter and John laid their hands upon the believing Samaritans, who had been before baptized by Philip, (<4814>Acts 8:14-17) and the same extraordinary effects followed:

the Holy Ghost came on them; in his extraordinary gifts, whose special grace they had before an experience of:

and they spake with tongues; with other tongues, or in other languages, which they had never learned, or had been used to, as the disciples did at the day of "Pentecost": and prophesied; preached, having an extraordinary gift at once, of explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, and also foretold things to come.

Ver. 7. *And all the men were about twelve*.] The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, have not the word "about"; but affirm, that the men were twelve; and indeed the number being so small, the historian might be at a certainty about it: these seem to be the first materials of a Gospel church at Ephesus, which afterwards was very large and flourishing, and very likely were some of the elders of it.

Ver. 8. *And he went into the synagogue*, etc.] Of the Jews at Ephesus, for it seems to have been a private house, where he had met with the twelve baptized disciples, and had laid his hands on them; and these being Jews, as it seems most likely, by their having been baptized into John's baptism, the apostle went along with them to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his usual custom; having a very great desire, and an affectionate concern, for the welfare of his countrymen the Jews:

and spake boldly for the space of three months; that is, he used great freedom of speech, and showed much courage and intrepidity of mind, in preaching the Gospel at the synagogue every sabbath day as it returned, during this space of time; some manuscripts read, "three days":

disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God; the kingdom of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation, the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, and the Gospel church state, often signified by the kingdom of God, and of heaven, in Scripture; and concerning the glory

of a future state, the way and right unto it, and meetness for it; and these things he reasoned upon in such a strong and nervous manner, and made use of such powerful arguments, in proof and demonstration of them, as were very persuasive, and engaged many to believe them, and give their assent unto them.

Ver. 9. *But when divers were hardened and believed not*, etc.] For though some were affected with and convinced by the arguments the apostle used, others were but the more hardened and remained incredulous: for the Gospel, while it is the savour of life unto life to some, it is the savour of death unto death, to others; as the sun melts the wax, and hardens the clay:

but spake evil of the way before the multitude; the Syriac version and Beza's ancient copy read, "before the multitude of the Gentiles": the unbelieving Jews not only contradicted the Gospel preached by the apostle, but blasphemed it, and said all the evil things of it they could, and loaded it with reproaches, and charged it with all the bad consequences they could think of; and that publicly, before all the people, in order to prejudice them against it; for by "the way", is meant the doctrine of the Gospel, which the Vulgate Latin here reads, "the way of the Lord"; and so some copies; and two of Stephens's copies read, "the way of God", as does also the Syriac version; and the Arabic version, "the way of faith"; and the Ethiopic version, "the doctrine"; the doctrine, which shows the way of God's salvation by Jesus Christ:

he departed from them; the hardened, unbelieving, and blaspheming Jews, as being unworthy of the means of grace; he went out of their synagogue, and no more entered there: and separated the disciples; from them, the twelve disciples he had laid his hands on, and others who in this space of time, the space of three months, had been converted under his ministry; these he formed into a separate Gospel church state, as well as engaged them to quit the company and conversation of these blasphemers, and no more attend with them in their synagogue, that so they might not be infected and corrupted by them; a separation from such who contradict and blaspheme the truths and ordinances of the Gospel, is justifiable:

disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus: which was either built by him, and so went by his name, or which one of this name possessed, and made use of; for it seems to be the proper name of a man, and so the Syriac version renders it, "whose name was Tyrannus"; though by others it is taken to be an appellative, and to design some great person, who

patronised the apostle, and in whose house he taught; the word “tyrant”, being formerly used for a king, a prince, or nobleman; and so the Arabic version renders it, “in the dwelling house of one of the great men”; the chief of Asia, that were his friends, (Acts 19:31) and so the Ethiopic version, “and he taught daily before the court and the governors”: some copies read “Tyrannius”; mention is made of a philosopher whose name was “Tyrannion”, who was so called, because he vexed and disturbed those that were brought up in the same school with him [f967]; this man it seems was a schoolmaster; there was one of his name a bishop of Tyre, a martyr under Dioclesian; and another whose name was Tyrannus, bishop of Antioch [f968]; Beza’s ancient copy, and one of Stephens’s, add, “from the fifth hour to the tenth”; as if he spent five hours in public teaching every day, and rest in his trade and devotion.

Ver. 10. *And this continued by the space of two years*, etc.] Reckoning from the end of the three months, which had been spent in teaching in the synagogue:

so that all they which dwelt in Asia; in the lesser Asia, called the proconsular Asia, of which Ephesus was the chief city:

heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks; these, as they came to Ephesus, whether on account of religion, the Asiatic Jews to their synagogue, and the Greeks or Gentiles to the famous temple of Diana, or on account of trade and business, or for the sake of seeing this place, had the opportunity of hearing the Apostle Paul preach, concerning the person, offices, and grace of Christ; and dispute and reason concerning the more abstruse and difficult points of the Christian religion, in the above school, for two years together; so that the word of the Lord went out from hence, and was spread in all the cities and towns in Asia.

Ver. 11. *And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul*.] For the confirmation of the doctrine which he preached, and of his mission, as an apostle; and these were not any sort of miracles, common and vulgar ones, and much less things of chance, and what were merely accidental, as the word may signify; but they were rare and uncommon ones, and in which there was a visible display of the power of God; to whom as the efficient cause they are ascribed, the apostle being only an instrument God made use of.

Ver. 12. *So that from his body were brought unto the sick*, etc.] The Ethiopic version renders it, “from the extremity”, or “border of his garment”; and the Syriac version, “from the garments which were upon his body”; were brought and put upon the sick; that is, of the clothes which the apostle wore, some of them were taken and carried to sick persons, and used by them: particularly “handkerchiefs” or “aprons”; the former were such as he might use to wipe his face with, and remove sweat, or any filth from the body; and the latter, what he might wear as a mechanic, when working at his trade:

and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them; who were afflicted and possessed with them; these were some of the special and uncommon miracles wrought by the hands of the apostle, and which were wrought in an uncommon way; and which most clearly showed that they were wrought by a divine power.

Ver. 13. *Then certain of the vagabond Jews*, etc.] Who strolled about from place to place, pretending to tell fortunes, cure diseases by charms, and dispossess devils by conjuration, and therefore are called as follows,

exorcists; such there were among the Jews, as Justin Martyr observes [f969], who adjured by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: these

took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus; they imitated the Apostle Paul, and attempted to do as he did, using the same: name; hoping to get money or applause, or both, in this way; and it may be observed, that there were some who really did cast out devils in the name of Christ, who did not belong to him, (<4007>Matthew 7:22, <4008>Mark 8:38)

Saying, we adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth; that is, to come out the bodies of those men which they had possessed: and the Jews made use of the name of Jesus for healing diseases; for it is said of one [f970], that

> “he swallowed something which almost choked him, and one came, and muttered to him in the name of Jesus ben Pandira, and he was well”

The Alexandrian copy, Beza’s ancient one, and others, the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read, “I adjure you”, etc.

Ver. 14. *And there were seven sons of one Sceva a Jew*, etc.] Who strolled about the country, and used exorcisms: and

chief of the priests; that were at Ephesus; not the high priest of the Jews, for he would have been at Jerusalem, and not at Ephesus; though indeed it does not necessarily follow from the words, that Sceva himself was there, only his seven sons: however, no such name appears in the catalogue of the Jewish high priests, nor is it reasonable to think, that seven sons of an high priest should follow such a vagabond course of life: Beza's ancient copy only calls him "a priest"; and the Alexandrian copy reads his name, Sceuta, and the Ethiopic version omits it; it is the same with hawks, and signifies a spectator, or observer; see the Targum on (<1034>2 Samuel 13:34, <2206>Isaiah 21:6).

which did so; adjured the devils in the name of Jesus, to come out; at least they did so in one case, as follows.

Ver. 15. *And the evil spirit answered and said*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, add, "to them"; to the seven sons of Sceva:

Jesus I know; to be the Son of God and Messiah, and own that he has power of dispossessing spirits, of which there were many instances in the days of his flesh:

and Paul I know; and own to be a servant of the most high God, by whom miracles of this kind have been wrought:

but who are ye? you are not the disciples of Jesus, nor the servants of God, but the children of the devil, and have no power over us, but on the other hand are subject to us.

Ver. 16. *And the man in whom the evil spirit was*, etc.] Being agitated by him:

leapt upon them; with great agility and force, and laid hold on them, and struggled with them, and beat and wounded them, and stripped them naked:

and overcame them, and prevailed against them; the Alexandrian copy, Beza's most ancient one, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, "and overcame both"; as if only two of these seven sons had made

this attempt, and were so used; though the Ethiopic version reads, “and overcame them all”; all the seven sons:

so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded; having their clothes tore off, and their bodies beat and bruised.

Ver. 17. *And this was known to all the Jews*, etc.] These men being Jews: and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus: for though it was done in a private house, yet there might be many spectators and witnesses, both Jews and Greeks, who spread this fact about the city, and who, were to be depended upon:

and fear fell on them all; on the enemies of Christ and his Gospel, so that others were deterred from making such an attempt for the future:

and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified; which had such power over evil spirits, and whose power they themselves acknowledged: this was done by them that believed in Christ, who thought and spake the more highly of him; and who more strongly believed in him, and so magnified him, and gave more glory to him; Christ is great in himself, and he is magnified and made great, when he is declared to be so, and is treated as such.

Ver. 18. *And many that believed*, etc.] In Jesus Christ, whose name was spoken of with great respect, and which spread fear in every person:

came; to the apostle:

and confessed; their sins; and acknowledged what a wicked life they had led:

and showed their deeds; their former evil deeds, which they had been guilty of; one copy reads, “their sins”; (see Matthew 3:6).

Ver. 19. *Many also of them which used curious arts*. etc.] Magic arts, soothsaying, necromancy, conjuration, and the like, being convinced of the folly and wickedness of them:

brought their books together; by which they had learned these arts; Ephesus was famous for this sort of learning; here Apollonius Tyaneus, in the beginning of Nero’s reign, opened a school and taught magic, and such like things: frequent mention is made of the Ephesian letters, which were

no other than enchantments; and even Diana, the goddess of the Ephesians, is said to be a magician [f971]:

and burned them before all men; to show their detestation of them, and the truth and genuineness of their repentance for their former sins; and that these books might not be a snare to them for the future, nor be made use of by others:

and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver; which is thought to answer to one thousand five hundred sixty two pounds and ten shillings of our money; reckoning a piece of silver, an Attic drachma; for such might be the silver pieces at Ephesus, a city of Greece, and which was of the value of our money seven pence halfpenny; but if Luke meant by pieces of silver, shekels, according to the Jewish way, (see Gill on "<4165>Matthew 26:15") then the sum is much larger, for a shekel was about two shillings and six pence of our money; so that fifty thousand pieces of silver, amount to six thousand two hundred and fifty pounds; a large sum indeed for magic books! some manuscripts read "gold" instead of "silver", which must greatly increase the value.

Ver. 20. *So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed*.] Over conjuring books, conjurers themselves, yea, even the devils; the power of God going along with it, many were converted; which is meant by the increase of it, and were delivered from the power of darkness, out of the hands of Satan, and translated into the kingdom of Christ. Beza's ancient copy reads, the "faith" of God; and the Syriac version, "faith in God".

Ver. 21. *After these things were ended*, etc.] After that the apostle had disputed with the Jews in their synagogue, for the space of three months, and in the school of Tyrannus about two years; and after many souls had been converted at Ephesus, and were formed into a church state, and were established in the faith:

when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia: in the former of which were the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, and in the latter, Corinth; where the apostle had already been, and preached the Gospel with success, and had laid the foundation of a Gospel church state in each place; but was willing to visit them again, both to confirm them in the doctrines of the Gospel, and, if it was the will of God, that he might be the instrument of converting others, and adding them to them, as well as to make some

collections among them, for the poor saints at Jerusalem: for through these places he intended

to go to Jerusalem; to visit the church there, and distribute to the poor what he had gathered, or should gather for them among the Gentile churches:

saying, after I have been there, I must also see Rome; the metropolis of the empire, and the glory of the whole world; and which to see was one of Austin's three wishes: but the apostle's desire was not so much to see the magnificence of the city, as the saints in it; and that he might impart some spiritual gift unto them, and have some fruit among them; and be a means of quickening and comforting them, and of gaining others to them; and it was the will of God that he should go there; and this he spake by a prophetic spirit, and as being under the impulse of the Spirit of God; (see <442311>Acts 23:11).

Ver. 22. *So he sent into Macedonia*, etc.] To Philippi, or Thessalonica, or Berea, or some of the places there, to let them know of his coming, and to prepare for him:

two of them that ministered unto him; that were his assistants in preaching the Gospel:

Timotheus and Erastus; the former of these was a disciple he found at Lystra, and took along with him, and to whom he afterwards wrote two epistles; and the latter seems to be the same with him, who was chamberlain of the city of Corinth, and is said to abide there, (<451623>Romans 16:23, <550420>2 Timothy 4:20) The Ethiopic version, instead of Erastus, wrongly reads Aristarchus; whereas it is certain, he was not sent into Macedonia, but was with the apostle at Ephesus in the tumult, (<441929>Acts 19:29).

But he himself stayed in Asia for a season; that is, at Ephesus, as the following narration shows.

Ver. 23. *And the same time there arose no small stir about that way*.] The Syriac version reads, "the way of God"; and the Vulgate Latin version, "the way of the Lord": that is, the Christian religion, and the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, which the saints were directed to walk in; and the Ethiopic version renders it, "about this doctrine"; which mightily grew and prevailed, and which such numbers embraced; and how great the stir

was about it, and from whence it arose, who began it, and what were the consequences of it, are hereafter related.

Ver. 24. *For a certain man, named Demetrius, a silversmith*, etc.] Who worked in silver, not in coining silver money, but in making silver vessels, in melting silver, and casting it into moulds, and forming it into different shapes; and particularly,

which made silver shrines for Diana; who Diana was, (see Gill on "Acts 19:27"), these were not coins or medals of silver, struck by Demetrius, with the figure of the temple of Diana on them, nor images of Diana, as the Ethiopic version reads; but they were chaplets, or little temples made of silver, in imitation of the temple of Diana at Ephesus, with her image included in it; the words may be rendered, "silver temples": in some manuscripts it is added, "like little chests": which being sold to the people,

brought no small gain to the craftsmen: who were of the same trade with him; masters of the same business, who employed others under them, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 25. *Whom he called together*, etc.] That is, the craftsmen; "all his co-artificers", as the Syriac version reads, all the chief of the trade, the masters of it, as he himself was:

with the workmen of like occupation; who were employed by him, and the rest of the masters in the several branches of the business; as founders, engravers, polishers, etc. some might make the images, and others the temples, or shrines; some do one part and some another, so that abundance of persons might be employed in this business:

and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth; the workmen not only had a comfortable and sufficient livelihood, but the masters of the trade grew rich: such a demand had they for their goods, and so profitable was this craft to them: this was a very strong and moving argument, to influence the masters and workmen; it so nearly touched them, and their worldly interest, than which nothing sticks closer to carnal men. Demetrius's way of address was very moving and persuasive, but his method manifestly betrayed what was his greatest concern, not religion, but his own secular interest; that which he should have mentioned last, if at all, he begins with: self is the leading and governing principle in a natural man.

Ver. 26. *Moreover, ye see and hear*, etc.] Demetrius appeals to their senses of seeing and hearing; they saw what was done in their own city, and they had heard how things were elsewhere; they might believe what they saw with their eyes, and they had reason to depend upon the report which was brought to their ears:

that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people; by "all Asia" is meant Ionia, that part of Asia, of which Ephesus was the metropolis; from whence great multitudes came to Ephesus, and heard Paul in the school of Tyrannus, (<44 19 10>Acts 19:10) so that not only many in the city of Ephesus, but even in almost every city and town of Asia, had heard and received the Gospel preached by Paul; of whom Demetrius speaks very contemptibly, as if he was a worthless vagabond fellow, who had the art of persuading and deluding people; he prevailed upon them to believe in Christ whom he preached, and turned away much people from the worshipping of idols, to the living God:

saying, that they be no gods which are made with hands; such as was their Diana, and the images of her, which these workmen made; and consequently if his doctrine prevailed, as it had much already, their trade would be worth nothing, and their livelihood be lost, which was the grand thing they had in view; for one would think they could never believe themselves, that the images they made were really gods; but whether they did or not, certain it is, that the apostle's doctrine was true, that such could not be gods, and which agrees both with reason and revelation.

Ver. 27. *So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought*, etc.] Or "to come into reproof", as the words may be literally rendered, and as they are in the Vulgate Latin version; that is, if this notion prevails, that they are not gods, which are made with hands, this art and business of making shrines and images for Diana will be brought into contempt, and come to nothing; who will buy them, when once they believe there is no divinity in them? they will despise them, and the makers of them; yea, the latter will be in danger of being taken up, and charged, convicted, reproved and punished as idolaters, and blasphemers of deity; to which sense the Ethiopic version inclines, which renders it, "and not only for this thing we shall be in danger"; of being called to an account for making these shrines; our business will be put down, and we shall be treated with disgrace, if not with severity:

but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised; here religion is pretended, and a concern shown for that; partly on purpose to cover, as much as could be, the selfish and avaricious principles from which Demetrius acted; and partly the more to stir up the meaner and more ignorant sort of people, and irritate and provoke them, and set them against Paul and his doctrine, who generally speaking are the most bigoted. Diana is said to be the daughter of Jupiter, by Latona; she is often called the goddess of hunting, and is said to preside at births; the moon was worshipped by the Heathens under her name; she is here called the "great" goddess, for the Gentiles had their greater and their lesser gods, and she is reckoned among the former, which were in number twelve; Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Neptune, Vulcan, and Apollo: the temple of Diana at Ephesus is reckoned among the seven wonders of the world; it was about seven furlongs distant from the city [f972], and was 425 feet long, and 220 feet broad, and had in it 127 pillars, 60 feet high; it was built on marshy ground, that it might not be affected with earthquakes; and yet that such a pile of building might not stand upon a slippery and unstable foundation, coals and fleeces of wool were laid in the foundation and trodden in it, according to Pliny [f973], from whom this account is taken; who says it was two hundred and twenty years in building, and elsewhere he says it was four hundred years; the architect who first began it, he makes to be one Chersiphron; but it is commonly ascribed to the Amazons, and particularly to the Amazon Otrira, the wife of Mars; though Pausanias [f974], as he observes that the temple of Diana of the Ephesians was built before the Ionians came into these parts, so he denies that it was built by the Amazons, but affirms that the builders of it were Cresus, and Ephesus, the son of Caystrus. Solinus [f975], who calls it a fabric of the Amazons, says it was

> "so magnificent, that Xerxes, when he burnt all the temples in Asia, spared this only; but (adds he) this clemency of Xerxes did not preserve the sacred temple from evil; for Herostratus set fire to this noble fabric with his own hands, for no other reason, as he confessed, than to get himself a name."

At which the Ephesians were so enraged, that they got an order published by the common council of Asia, throughout all the neighbouring kingdoms and nations, that his name should not be once mentioned [f976]; which however, though it might be regarded for a while, was not always; for his name has since been both spoken of, and transmitted in writing to

posterity. The above historian observes, that the temple at Ephesus was burnt, the same day in which Alexander was born at Pella; which occasioned Timaeus facetiously to say, as is related by Cicero [f977]

> “it is no wonder that the temple of Diana of the Ephesians should be burnt the same night that Alexander was born, seeing Diana, being desirous to be present at the delivery of Olympias, (the mother of Alexander,) was absent from her own house.”

However, the inhabitants of Ephesus being very rich, and also willing to communicate to the charge of rebuilding this edifice, the women even bringing their gold, silver, and other precious ornaments, the work was set about, and a fabric was raised much more beautiful than the former; the name of the architect by whom it was rebuilt was Dinocrates; and so it continued, to this time the apostle was at Ephesus, a very fine and grand building, and commanded great attention, veneration, and respect from men; and which Demetrius suggests would fall into contempt, through the doctrine of the apostle, should he be suffered to go on:

and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth; by “her magnificence” is meant, her deity; which must be denied her, as well as her temple despised, if Paul’s doctrine was true, and should obtain; so the Syriac version renders it, “the goddess herself”; and the Ethiopic version, “her divinity”: what Demetrius says of her, that she was worshipped by all Asia, and the world, was fact; not only all Asia was concerned in building her temple at Ephesus, as many writers affirm [f978]; but she was one of the highest class of deities, and received as such by the whole Gentile world; yea, Diana of the Ephesians, as distinguished from all other Dianas, was revered by all nations. There were temples of Diana of the Ephesians in other places, particularly at Corinth, as Pausanias relates; and who also affirms, that all the cities celebrate Diana of the Ephesians, and men in private honour her above other deities; the reasons are, the glory of the Amazons, from whom according to fame her image was, and because of the antiquity of the temple: three other things besides these, adds he, contribute to the glory of it; the magnificence of the temple, which exceeds whatever was done by man, and the splendour of the city of the Ephesians, and the renown of the deity in it [f979]: here the silversmith suggests the catholicism and universality of their religion, in favour of it.

Ver. 28. *And when they heard these sayings*, etc.] Both the masters and the workmen;

they were full of wrath; against Paul and his doctrine:

and cried out, saying, great is Diana of the Ephesians; this goddess is frequently called in Heathen writers, Diana of the Ephesians, or the Ephesian Diana, because of her famous temple at Ephesus; and to distinguish her from all other Dianas: Pausanias makes mention of sixty Dianas at least, and yet seems not to have taken notice of them all; all of them had different epithets, by which they were distinguished from one another; the images were in different shapes, and they were worshipped with different rites: what seems most of all to distinguish the Ephesian Diana from others, is her having many paps; hence she is called, "multi mammia"; so Minutius Felix observes [f980], that Diana is sometimes girt about on high as an huntress, and the Ephesian Diana is "mammis multis & uberibus extructa"; Just as the Isis of the Egyptians, which, Macrobius [f981] says, signifies the earth; hence the whole body of the deity is covered with paps, because the whole universe is nourished by it: the priest of Diana of the Ephesians was an eunuch, and was obliged to abstain from all company; neither bathed, nor ate, nor drank with others, nor might he enter into the house of a private person; there was a feast kept every year in honour of her, at which young men in the flower of their age, and virgins well dressed, used to go to the temple in great pomp, keep the feast, and marry with each other. The temple was a sort of an asylum, as Heathen temples commonly were; and it had this particular privilege, that those that fled to it were freed from servitude [f982]. This goddess is called "great", agreeably to her name, for, anyd, "Diana", signifies "great" and venerable; because of her birth, being the daughter of Jupiter; and because of her great service, she was supposed to be of in assisting at births; and because of her magnificent temple and worship; and because she was worshipped by great persons: and here greatness is ascribed unto her, and a loud cry made of it, to animate one another, to gather a mob together, and to incense them and stir them up against the apostle and his companion: in the Arabic version, instead of Diana, it is Venus, both here and elsewhere, but wrongly.

Ver. 29. *And the whole city was filled with confusion*, etc.] For the workmen that made the silver shrines very likely ran up and down in the city, crying out, great is Diana of the Ephesians, which brought the people out of their houses to inquire what was the matter; and the mob gathering and increasing, as they went along, threw the whole city into confusion and disorder:

and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia; the latter of these was of Thessalonica in Macedonia, as appears from (<44204>Acts 20:4) but of what place the former was, is not certain; however, being a Macedonian, he could not be the Gaius of Derbe, mentioned in the same place, nor the Gaius of Corinth, (<46114>1 Corinthians 1:14) but some third person. They are both Greek names; Aristarchus signifies the chief of princes, or the prince of chiefs; and Gaius is a name taken from the joy of parents, and is the same with the Roman name, Caius; they are both reckoned among the seventy disciples; the former is said to be bishop of Apamea in Phrygia, and the latter Bishop of Ephesus; (see Gill on "<42001>Luke 10:1")

Paul's companions in travel; whom he brought with him out of Macedonia, and who had been with him to Jerusalem and Antioch, and were now returned with him to Ephesus, where they had been with him for the space of two years, or more: it is very much that this mob had not seized on Paul himself: it may be Paul was within doors, and these were without in the streets, and so were laid hold upon and carried away in a most forcible and violent manner by them: who having got them,

they rushed with one accord into the theatre; where the public plays were acted in honour of the goddess Diana, and where, among other things, men were set to fight with wild beasts; and very likely the intention of the mob, in hurrying Paul's companions thither, was to throw them to the wild beasts. A theatre is a spectacle or show, so called, because in them fights were shown, plays were acted, games exercised, and battles fought between men and men, and between men and beasts, and between beasts and beasts; concerning which, take the following account [f983]:

> "Theatre, among the ancients, is a public edifice for the exhibiting of scenic spectacles, or shows to the people — under the word theatre was comprehended not only the eminence, whereon the actors appeared, and the action passed, but also the whole area, or extent of the place common to the actors and spectators: in this sense the theatre was a building encompassed with porticos, and furnished with seats of stone, disposed in semicircles, and ascending gradually over one another, which encompassed a space called the "orchestra"; in the front whereof was the "proscenium" or "pulpitum", whereon the actors performed the "scena", a large front adorned with orders of architecture; behind which was

> “postscenium”, or the place where the actors made themselves ready, retired, etc. so that the “scena”, in its full extent, comprehended all the part belonging to the actors. In the Greek theatres, the “orchestra” made a part of the “scena”; but in the Roman theatres, none of the actors ever descended into the “orchestra”, which was taken up by the seats of the senators.”

For the better understanding the terms used, and the several parts of the theatre, let it be observed, that the “scena”, according to others [f984] was the place from whence the actors first went out; and it reached from one corner of the theatre to the other, and was threefold; “tragical”, which was adorned in a royal manner with pillars and signs; “comical”, which represented private buildings; and “satirical”, which exhibited trees, caves, mountains, etc. Likewise, the “scena” was either “versile”, when on a sudden the whole scene was turned by some machines; or “ductile”, when by drawing away the boards the inward face of the scene appeared, or by drawing curtains. The “proscenium” was a place lower than the scene, in which the actors chiefly spoke and acted: the “postscenium” was a place in which these things were done, which could not be done fitly, and with decorum in the scenes: the “pulpitum” was a higher place in the “proscenium”, in which those that recited stood: the “orchestra” was the last place, in which they danced, and near which the senators sat. Tarquinius Priscus was the first who introduced plays among the Romans; and the temple of Bacchus at Athens was the first theatre in the world, the remains of which are still to be seen. Of this theatre at Ephesus I have not met with any account; whether it was in the temple, or without, is not certain; very likely it might be a part of it, or adjoin unto it.

Ver. 30. *And when Paul would have entered in unto the people*, etc.] In the theatre, in order to have preached to the people, and to have removed their prejudices against him, and the Gospel preached by him, and to have shown them the error and evil of their idolatrous ways and worship, and to have reconciled them to him, and his friends, and to have persuaded them to do them no hurt; which shows the apostle’s greatness of soul, his firmness, constancy, and intrepidity, and his great concern and affection for his companions, to risk his life in this manner: but

the disciples suffered him not; the believers, the members of the church at Ephesus would by no means agree to it, but dissuaded him from it; who hereby, on their part, showed great love to him, and what a value they had

for him, and how much they esteemed the life of so great an apostle, and faithful preacher of the Gospel. The Ethiopic version renders it, “the apostles prohibited him”; but there were none of that office with him.

Ver. 31. *And certain of the chief of Asia*, etc.] Or the Asiarchs; these were not princes of Asia, rulers or governors of provinces, or cities, or civil magistrates; but priests who presided over the games and diversions at the theatre, and had the management and command of things there. Such an one was Philip the Asiarch, the church of Smyrna makes mention of in their account of the sufferings and martyrdom of Polycarp [f985], whom the people entreated that he would send out the lion to Polycarp; that is, out of the theatre which he had the command of; but he replied he could not do it, because he had finished the theatrical exercises: from whence it appears that he was the governor of the theatre, and had his title of Asiarch from thence, as these men had, wherefore this word should not be rendered, the “princes of Asia”, as by the Vulgate Latin; nor the “chief of Asia”, as by the Syriac and Arabic versions, and by ours, but rather the “Asian priests”. The Ethiopic version not knowing who should be meant by them, only reads, “and some of Asia”.

Which were his friends; they had a good opinion of the apostle, and a good liking of his doctrines, and wished well to his person, and were concerned for his safety; though they might not have been really converted, and truly disciples, as those in the preceding verse; for otherwise one would think they would have relinquished their office and place. These

sent unto him, messengers or letters,

desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre; they observed to him the danger he would expose himself to, and entreated he would show a greater regard to his life than to risk it in such a manner, a life might be so useful to many; and though they were the governors at the theatre, yet such was the rage and fury of the mob, that it was not in their power to restrain them from doing mischief, till such time as they were appeased.

Ver. 32. *Some therefore cried one thing, and some another*, etc.] Not in the church at Ephesus among the disciples, and friends of the apostle, as if they were divided in their sentiments about his going into the theatre, some being for it, and others against it; but the people that were gathered

together in the theatre, these were not agreed about the reason of this tumult, some said it was on account of one thing, and some another:

for the assembly was confused; the multitude of people that were gathered together were made up of different persons, of different employments and sentiments, and were in no manner of form or order:

and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together; there was a noise and a hubbub in the city; but what was the reason and meaning of it, they were ignorant of; they were got together into the theatre in great numbers, but what was to be done there they knew not. And this is too often the case in religious assemblies, that the majority, at least many, can give no account of the reason, end, and design of their assembling together.

Ver. 33. *And they drew Alexander out of the multitude*, etc.] Or "some of the multitude brought forth Alexander"; into the theatre, in order to kill him, by casting him to the wild beasts. Some think this is the same with Alexander the coppersmith, who apostatized upon this danger he was exposed to, and became a blasphemer, and a great enemy of the apostle, and did him much evil, (<5012>1 Timothy 1:20, <5014>2 Timothy 4:14). This man, though his name was a Greek name, yet was a Jew, as is expressed in (<4134>Acts 19:34) and from the times of Alexander the great, who was at Jerusalem, this name became common among the Jews; (see Gill on "<4006>Acts 4:6").

The Jews putting him forward; being equally enemies to him, as being under a profession of Christianity, as the Heathens were; or as the Syriac version reads, "the people of the Jews", that were there, out of themselves, pitched upon him as a proper person to still the uproar; and they brought him out of the multitude, to a convenient place, where he might be heard; and they the rather were forward to this, that he might lay all the blame of this confusion and uproar upon Paul and his companions, whom the Jews had an aversion to, as well as the Gentiles:

and Alexander beckoned with the hand; for silence, that he might be heard:

and would have made his defence unto the people; which looks as if he was a Christian, or at least was charged with being one, and was in danger of his life on that account; and therefore was desirous of being heard, that he might make an apology for the Christians, or remove such an imputation from himself, if he was not.

Ver. 34. *But when they knew that he was a Jew*, etc.] And so equally an enemy to their idolatry, as Paul and his companions were, whether he was a Christian or not.

All with one voice about the space of two hours cried out; all that were in the theatre lift up their voices at once to prevent Alexander's apology, or at least its being heard; and which they continued about two hours, which was a long time to keep hallooing out,

great is Diana of the Ephesians; (see Gill on "Acts 19:28").

Ver. 35. *And when the town clerk had appeased the people*, etc.] Caused them to cease their loud outcry, so as that he could be heard. This person seems to have been more than a "town clerk", as we render it; or a common "scribe", as the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it; rather as the Syriac version, "a chief man of the city"; the Septuagint interpreters in (Exodus 5:6) use the word for the Egyptian officers that were over the Israelites; and the Babylonians used to call the priest of [f986] Isis by this name; and according to some learned men, this man's office was to register the conquerors' names, and their rewards in the theatre; and who was chosen into this office by the people, and was a man of some considerable authority, as it is very apparent by what follows that this man was:

he said, ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana? the word "Neocorus", translated "worshipper", signifies an officer in the temple, one that looked after it, beautified and adorned it; for "Neocorus" is from κορεω, which signifies to beautify [f987]; though some etymologists would have the word to signify to sweep and clean, as if this officer was a sexton; rather, he answered to a churchwarden, and to this agrees the Syriac version; though this office belonged not to a single person, but to a city. Now to be a worshipper of Diana, was not peculiar to the city of Ephesus, as appears from (Acts 19:27) but to be Neocorus, a sacrist to the goddess, was a favour granted to some cities, and accounted a great honour; some had it twice, some thrice, some four times:

and of the image which fell down from Jupiter; or "of Diopetes"; so the Palladium, or image of Pallas, was called, because it was supposed to fall down from heaven, which Diomedes and Ulysses are said to take away from Troy; and here it seems to be something distinct from the goddess

Diana, and her image, and may design another deity worshipped along with her, and by them, since they make mention of more gods, (Acts 19:26). The Vulgate Latin version takes it to be the same with Diana, reading the words in connection with the preceding, “and the offspring of Jupiter”; she being said to be his daughter by Latona, as before observed; and the Ethiopic version understands it of her image, rendering them thus, “and of that molten image which was sent from Jupiter the great god”; and more expressly the Syriac version, which reads, “and of her image which fell from heaven”; and so was not made with the hands of men, and could not be objected to on that account, or denied to be a deity; and this the people might be the rather induced to believe, since it had been in the temple before the memory of any man. The Arabic version, reading these words in connection with the beginning of the next verse, gives a very different sense, “but neither indeed they that fell from heaven contradict the faith of this thing”; as if it was to be understood of the fallen angels, of which it can hardly be thought Demetrius had any knowledge. This image, Pliny says [f988], it was doubted of what it was made; some said of the vine tree, others of ebony; but Athenagoras says, the old image of Diana of the Ephesians was made of olive [f989].

Ver. 36. *Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against*, etc.] This officer intimates, in order to quiet the mob, and make them easy, that these things were so certain, and well known, that nobody would pretend to contradict them, and therefore they must be mistaken in the men, whom they had hurried into the theatre; it was impossible that they, or any men, should be capable of saying any thing against the truth of these things: therefore

ye ought to be quiet and do nothing rashly; to these men, to their hurt, but sit down, and compose yourselves, and think again, and consider of this matter, and not go into any hasty measures, which may, in the issue, be prejudicial to yourselves.

Ver. 37. *For ye have brought hither these men*, etc.] The Arabic version reads, “these two men”; that is, Gaius and Aristarchus, whom they had brought by force into the theatre to fight with wild beasts:

which are neither robbers of churches; or “temples”; or, as the Arabic version renders it, “robbers of the vessels of the temple”, sacrilegious persons; they have not stolen anything out of the temple of Diana, nor any other:

nor yet blasphemers of your goddess; they have not made mention of her name, much less said anything against her, at least this officer did not know that they had; and if he had, he did not stick to tell an officious lie to screen them, as did the Egyptian midwives in favour of the Hebrew women.

Ver. 38. *Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him*, etc.] Who were the ringleaders and encouragers of this tumult:

have a matter against any man; any accusation, or charge, any crime to accuse him of, and charge him with:

the law is open; or court days are kept; there are certain times fixed for the hearing and trying of causes, where and when such an affair should be regularly brought; and not use such disorderly methods, and throw a city into confusion, and break the peace as these men had done: the Syriac version renders it, "they are artificers"; that is, Demetrius and the craftsmen with him; they are tradesmen, and it does not belong to them, nor should they take upon themselves to judge and determine what is right or wrong:

and there are deputies; or "proconsuls"; the proconsul and his deputy, to whom such matters appertain, and who are judges in such cases, and to whom application should be made, and before whom such cases should be brought, and heard, and tried: the Syriac version reads in the singular number, "and there is a proconsul in the city"; a Roman governor and judge, whose province it is to determine such matters:

let them implead one another; let the plaintiff bring his accusation, and charge, and let the others defend themselves, and let things proceed in a due course of law, and so issue.

Ver. 39. *But if ye inquire anything concerning other matters*, etc.] Than what belongs to the craft and business of Demetrius, and the artificers:

it shall be determined in a lawful assembly; that is, called together according to law, and who have a right to hear, try, and judge causes, which such a confused lawless assembly as this in the theatre had not.

Ver. 40. *For we are in danger of being called in question*, etc.] Or are liable to be called to an account, reproved, and punished by the Roman proconsul, appointed over this city, or by the Roman emperor, or the Roman senate: for this day's uproar; it being capable of being interpreted as a riot, tumult, and sedition:

there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse: or no reason can be assigned, why such a number of people should gather together; none can be given that will justify it, or that can be alleged in favour of it.

Ver. 41. *And when he had thus spoken*, etc.] Or delivered this oration, made use of the above arguments, reasonings, and expostulations:

he dismissed the assembly; he ordered them to break up, and every one to return home in peace, and go about his own business; and thus Paul, and his companions, were delivered from an imminent danger they were exposed to.

CHAPTER 20

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 20

Ver. 1. *And after the uproar was ceased*, etc.] Which Demetrius, and the craftsmen, had raised at Ephesus, and which was put an end to by the speech of the town clerk, or register keeper of the theatre:

Paul called unto him the disciples; the members of the church at Ephesus, whom he convened, either at his own lodgings, or at their usual place of meeting:

and embraced them; or "saluted them"; that is, with a kiss, which was sometimes done at parting, as well as at meeting; (see <44037>Acts 20:37) and so the Syriac version renders it, and "kissed" them, and so took his leave of them, and bid them farewell; the Alexandrian copy, and some other copies, and the Syriac and Vulgate Latin versions before this clause insert, "and exhorted, or comforted" them; that is, exhorted them to continue steadfast in the faith, and hold fast the profession of it without wavering, and comforted them under all their tribulations, and in a view of what afflictions and persecutions they must expect to endure for the sake of Christ, with the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel:

and departed to go into Macedonia; to visit the churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, and to establish them in the faith of the Gospel: he did not choose to leave Ephesus till the tumult was over, partly on his own account, that he might not bring upon himself an imputation of fear and cowardice; and partly on the account of the church at Ephesus, that he might not leave them in distress, and add to it; but now it was over, he judged it proper to take his leave of them, and visit other churches, the care of which equally lay upon him.

Ver. 2. *And when he had gone over those parts*, etc.] Of Macedonia, and the cities in it before mentioned;

and had given them much exhortation; to abide by the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, and to walk worthy of it in their lives and conversations; and this exhortation he was frequently giving, as often as he

had opportunity, improving his time much this way, and continued long at it: and, having pursued it to a sufficient length,

he came into Greece; or Hellas; which, according to Ptolomy [f990] and Solinus, [f991], is properly true Greece; the former makes it to be the same with Achaia, where Corinth was; and the latter says it was in his time called Attica, where Athens was; so Pliny [f992], who also says, that Thessaly was so called: this Hellas included Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly, Achaia, which is properly Greece, Peloponnesus, and the adjacent islands.

Ver. 3. *And there abode three months*, etc.] In Greece:

and when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria; from some part of Greece, in order to go to Jerusalem; which the Jews in the parts of Greece understanding, laid wait for him, either by sea or land, with an intention either to take the money from him, which he had collected in Macedonia, and in Greece, for the poor saints at Jerusalem, or to take away his life, or both; of which lying in wait for him, the apostle had some notice, either by divine revelation, or from somebody who was in the secret, or had got knowledge of it from such as were: upon which he

purposed to return through Macedonia; through which he came from Ephesus to Greece: this wicked design being made known to him, obliged him, in point of prudence, and both for his own safety, and the good of the churches, to alter his scheme, and steer his course another way, to the disappointment of his enemies; in which the wisdom of providence, the care of God over his ministers, and his concern for his churches manifestly appeared.

Ver. 4. *And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea*, etc.] This Sopater is thought to be the same with Sosipater in (<45:16:21> Romans 16:21) and in three of Beza's copies, and in as many of Stephens's, he is so called here; the Ethiopic version calls him Peter, a citizen of Berea; and the Arabic version Sopater of Aleppo. The Alexandrian copy, Beza's most ancient copy, and others, the Complutensian edition, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, Sopater of Pyrrhus, the Berean; that is, the son of Pyrrhus. He is reckoned among the seventy disciples, and is said to be bishop of Iconium; (see Gill on "<42:10:1> Luke 10:1"). This name was common among the Greeks; there was one of this name a native of Paphus, in the times of Alexander the great, a comical poet, and who also is sometimes called Sosipater, as this man was; there was another Sopater the sophist, who

wrote the affairs of Alexander; and there was another of this name, who, among other things, collected much concerning painters and statuaries. The name signifies “a father saved”. Pyrrhus is a Grecian name well known, being the name of a famous king of Greece who engaged in war with the Romans. This man went along with the apostle into Asia; and it seems, that of the persons here mentioned, he only accompanied him; for the verb is in the singular number, and the other six persons following did not go along with him, as Sopater did, but went before him to Troas, which was in Asia, and there waited for him; though the Syriac version reads in the plural number; but then it renders the words, “they went forth with him”, as they might do from Greece, and yet not accompany him into Asia: the phrase into Asia is left out in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions.

And of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; the former of these is before said to be a Macedonian, (<44192>Acts 19:29) and here he appears to be of Thessalonica, and his name is a Greek one; but Secundus is a Roman name, though he might be born at Thessalonica, or at least have lived there, and so be said to be of it. His name signifies “Second”; very likely was his father’s second son, and therefore so called; though the name was used among the Grecians. We read of Secundus an Athenian, the master of Herod the sophist, who flourished under the emperor Adrian, there are sentences under his name still extant; and another called Secundus the grammarian, a friend of Poleman, a philosopher at Athens, who corrected his writings; so that this man might be a Grecian, and a native of Thessalonica; mention is made of him nowhere else.

And Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; the former of these is so called to distinguish him from Gaius the Macedonian in (<44192>Acts 19:29) and the latter by being joined with him should be of the same place, as he might be; (see <44160>Acts 16:1) though the Syriac version reads, “and Timotheus of Lystra”; and so does the Arabic version used by Deuteronomy Dieu; and this is mentioned with Derbe in the above cited place.

And of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus: of the former (see <49062>Ephesians 6:21, <51047>Colossians 4:7, <55412>2 Timothy 4:12) and of the latter (see <55420>2 Timothy 4:20) (<44219>Acts 21:29) where he is called an Ephesian, as they both are here in Beza’s most ancient copy; Ephesus being the metropolis of Asia, strictly so called. These are both of them said to be among the seventy disciples: Trophimus, we are told, taught at Arles in France, and suffered martyrdom with the Apostle Paul; and that Tychicus was bishop of

Chalcedon in Bithynia; and that another of the same name was bishop of Colophon; (see Gill on "Luke 10:1"). Trophimus signifies "nourished", and is a name to be found in a funeral inscription of the Romans [f993], though Greek, and in the fragments of the poet Menander: and Tychicus signifies "fortunate"; whether the same with Fortunatus in (1 Corinthians 16:17) may be inquired.

Ver. 5. *These going before*, etc.] The apostle into Asia, all but Sopater, who accompanied him:

tarried for us at Troas; a city in Asia Minor; (see Acts 16:8) whither they went before hand a nearer way, to provide for the apostle, and where they waited for him, and for Sopater, and for Luke, the writer of this history, who appears from hence to be in company with the apostle, and for as many others as were along with him.

Ver. 6. *And we sailed away from Philippi*, etc.] Which was in Macedonia, from whence they came in a straight course by Samothracia, over the Hellespont, to Troas, where the above six persons were waiting for them: and they set sail

after the days of unleavened bread; or the passover; which is mentioned only to observe the time of year when this voyage was taken; and not to suggest to us that Paul and his company stayed at Philippi, and kept this feast there; for the passover was only kept at Jerusalem, and besides was now abolished, and not to be observed by Christians:

and came unto them to Troas in five days; not that they were five days sailing from Philippi to Troas; but either they were so long in all, from their first setting out into Asia, to their arrival at Troas; or rather, they came to Troas within five days after the above six persons had got thither; so that they waited at Troas but five days for the apostle, and those that accompanied him.

Where we abode seven days; by what follows they came into Troas on the Lord's day evening, or early on Monday morning, and stayed there till the next Lord's day, or first day of the week; for it follows,

Ver. 7. *And upon the first day of the week*, etc.] Or Lord's day, (Revelation 1:10) and which Justin Martyr calls Sunday; on which day, he says [f994], all, both in city and country, met in one place for religious worship; and on this day, it appears from hence, and from other places, that

the apostles and primitive churches did meet together for religious exercises; (see <4809>John 20:19,26 <4602>1 Corinthians 16:2) and so they did at Troas at this time, as follows:

when the disciples came together to break bread; not to eat a common meal, or to make a feast, or grand entertainment for the apostle and his company, before they departed; but, as the Syriac version renders it, "to break the eucharist", by which the Lord's supper was called in the primitive times; or as the Arabic version, "to distribute the body of Christ", which is symbolically and emblematically held forth in the bread at the Lord's table. Now on the first day of the week, the disciples, or the members of the church at Troas, met together on this occasion, and the apostle, and those that were with him, assembled with them for the same purpose; the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, "when we were come together"; Paul and his company, together with the church at Troas; for it is plain from hence that there was a church in this place, not only by disciples being here, but by the administration of the Lord's supper to them; and so there was in after ages. Who was the first pastor or bishop of this church, is not certain; perhaps Carpus, of whom mention is made in (<5043>2 Timothy 4:13) though he is said to be bishop of other places; (see Gill on "<5043>2 Timothy 4:13"). In the "second" century, in the times of Ignatius, there were brethren at Troas, from whence he wrote his epistles to the churches at Smyrna, and Philadelphia, and who are saluted in them by the brethren at Troas [f995]: in the third century, several martyrs suffered here, as Andreas, Paulus, Nicomachus, and Dionysia a virgin: in the "fifth" century, Pionius, bishop of Troas, was present at Constantinople at the condemnation of Eutyches, and afterwards he was in the council at Chalcedon; and even in the "eighth" century mention is made of Eustathius, bishop of Troas, in the Nicene council [f996].

Paul preached unto them; to the disciples that were gathered together, either before, or after, or at the time of breaking of bread; for this ordinance was not administered without some instructions about the nature, use, and design of it.

Ready to depart on the morrow; this seems to be mentioned as a reason for what follows,

continued his speech until midnight: since he was about to take his leave of them, and not knowing when he should see them again, or whether ever any more, he delivered a long discourse to them; which not only shows that

he was full of matter, but that his affection for these saints, and his desire of doing them good, were very great, by imparting as much spiritual light and knowledge as he could unto them; and also his great zeal for the glory of God, and the interest of Christ, though he was to set forth on a journey the next morning.

Ver. 8. *And there were many lights in the upper chamber*, etc.] Which were lighted up, both for necessary uses, to see by, to read the word, and to administer the ordinance of the supper, and for the comfort and pleasure of the whole company, both preacher and hearers; as well as to remove all ground of suspicion, or occasion of reproach, as if it was a midnight society met for wicked practices: but this no ways countenances the use of lamps and wax candies in the daytime at divine worship, since this was in the night; of the upper chamber, in which it was usual to meet for religious exercises, (see <4102>Mark 2:4, <4013>Acts 1:13), where they were gathered together; the Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, “where we were gathered together”.

Ver. 9. *And there sat in a window a certain young man*, etc.] In the upper room, where he placed himself, either for air and refreshment, the chamber being suffocating, through the number of people, and of lights; or for want of room, the place being full:

named Eutychus; a Greek name, which signifies one of good fortune:

being fallen into a deep sleep; which may be accounted for without aggravating the case; as from his youth, he was a young man, and so more subject to sleep, and more easily overcome with it, than persons in years, by reason of the humours of the body which incline to it; and also from the length of service, and the lateness of the season of the night, all which contributed to bring on this deep sleep: it can hardly be thought that he purposely composed himself to sleep, for had he, he would never have chose so dangerous a place to sit in as a window, and that at so great an height from the ground; but this sleep seemed to come upon him at an unawares; what hand soever Satan might have in it, with a view to the young man’s hurt, both as to soul and body, and to bring reproach and scandal upon the church, and the Gospel, it seems evident that the providence of God was in it, and which overruled it for a good end, even the greater confirmation of the Gospel, and very probably for the spiritual good of the young man.

And as Paul was long preaching he sunk down with sleep; being quite overcome, and bore down with it, not able to hold up his head, he either bowed down, or leaned backwards: and fell down from the third loft: or three story high, where the upper room was. It seems that he did not fall inward, for then he would have fallen no further than the floor of the upper room, but outward, out of the window into the street or yard; and this is the more evident from Paul's going down to him, mentioned in the next verse:

and was taken up dead; not only for dead, or as one dead, but he really was dead, as it is no wonder he should.

Ver. 10. *And Paul went down*, etc.] From the upper room, where they were assembled, into the court, yard, or street, where he fell; or into the lower room of the house, where he was brought when taken up. The apostle might see him fall, or he might be told of it, or he might have an intimation of it from the Spirit of God, by whom he might be impressed to go down, in order to work a miracle, for the confirmation of the Gospel he was preaching:

and fell on him, and embracing him; praying over him, as Elijah and Elisha did, (<1117 21>1 Kings 17:21, <1204 34>2 Kings 4:34) and the like effect followed:

said, trouble not yourselves; which speech perhaps was addressed to the friends and relations of the young man; or to the disciples present, who were concerned at this accident, both for the young man's sake, and lest it should be improved to the disadvantage of the Gospel by the enemies of it,

For his life, or "soul"

is in him; it being returned upon the apostle's falling on him, and praying over him; or he said this as being fully assured that it would return, in like manner as Christ said concerning Jairus's daughter, (<4052 52>Luke 8:52,55).

Ver. 11. *When he therefore was come up again*, etc.] Into the upper room, where he was before, and where the disciples were gathered together:

and had broken bread and eaten; administered the Lord's supper, and also eat for his bodily refreshment:

and talked a long while: about the ordinance and the doctrines of the Gospel, and spiritual experience, and such like divine things:

even till break of day; not knowing when to leave off:

so he departed; without taking any rest; though before he departed, what follows was done; it was at this time he left his cloak, books, and parchments here, (2 Timothy 4:13).

Ver. 12. *And they brought the young man alive*, etc.] Up into the upper room, and presented him alive to the disciples:

and were not a little comforted; that is, the disciples, at the sight of the young man, who was taken up dead, not only for his sake, but chiefly because by this miracle the Gospel, which the apostle preached, and who was about to depart from them, was greatly confirmed to them.

Ver. 13. *And we went before to ship*, etc.] That is, Luke, the writer of this history, and the rest of the apostle's company, went before him to a ship, which lay at Troas, and went aboard it:

and sailed unto Assos; a city of Aeolia, or Mysia; and is said by Pliny to be the same with Apollonia; and which he places on the sea shore, where it is evident this Assos was. His words are [f997],

> "on the shore Antandros, formerly called Edonis, then Cimmeris and Assos, the same with Apollonia."

And in another place [f998] he calls it Assos of Troas; and says of it, that about Assos of Troas a stone grows, by which all bodies are consumed, and is called "sarcophagus", (a flesh devourer,) of which he also makes mention elsewhere [f999], and observes, that in Assos of Troas the stone sarcophagus is cut in the pits, in which the bodies of the dead being put, are consumed within forty days, excepting their teeth: and with him Jerom [f1000] agrees, as to the name and situation of this place, who says that Assos is a maritime city of Asia, the same that is called Apollonia. It is represented by Strabo [f1001] as a place very much fortified by art, and very difficult of ascent on that part which lies to the sea; unless another Assos in Lycia is designed by him: if this was the situation of the Assos in the text, it seems to furnish us with a reason, from the nature of the place, why the apostle chose to go on foot thither. Pausanias [f1002] speaks of it as in Troas, and near Mount Ida. Sodamos of Assos in Troas, which lies near Ida, was the first of the Aeolians, who conquered in the Olympic race of the boys. In this place was born the famous philosopher Cleanthes, a disciple and successor of Zeno; hence he is called Cleanthes the Assian [f1003]. No

mention is made of the Gospel being preached here, or of any church until the eighth century, when John, bishop of Assos, is said to be in the Nicene council [f1004]. Some exemplars read Thassos, as the Syriac and Arabic versions seem to have done:

there intending to take in Paul; who stayed behind, willing to have a little more Christian conversation with the saints at Troas.

For so had he appointed; that these should go before hand to Assos, and meet him there, and take him in:

minding himself to go afoot; from Troas to Assos, which were not very far off from one another; hence Assos is, by Pliny, called Assos of Troas; and by Pausanias, Assos, which is in Troas; that is, in the country of Troas, as before observed: what was his reason for going by foot thither, is not very evident; whether that he might have the opportunity of conversing with the disciples of Troas, who might accompany him thither; or whether that he might be alone, and have leisure for private meditation, and free converse with God.

Ver. 14. *And when he met with us at Assos*, etc.] According to appointment:

we took him in; to the ship, and so sailed on:

and came to Mitylene; a city in Lesbos [f1005], an island in the Aegean sea, now Metelino: sometimes the island is so called, and is about seven miles and a half from the continent: of this city Vitruvius [f1006] says, that it was magnificently and elegantly built, but not prudently situated; for when the south wind blew, men were sick in it, and when the northwest wind blew they had coughs, and when the north wind blew, they were restored to health. Some say it had its name from Mitylene, the daughter of Macaria or Pelops; others from Myto, the son of Neptune and Mitylene; and others from Mityle, the builder of it. [f1007] Hillerus inquires, whether it may not be so called from the Chaldee word, אנלים, "Matlana", used in the Targum on (Job 40:13) which signifies "a bar", this city being as a bar to Lesbos, which shut it up. It was famous for being the native place of Pittacus, one of the seven wise men of Greece, a great philosopher and legislator, who, with others, conquered Melanchrus the tyrant of Lesbos, whom the inhabitants of Mitylene greatly honoured, and made him their governor; and a field, which they gave him, was called after his name

Pittacius [f1008]: of this place was Theophanes, a famous historian, who wrote the history of Pompey the great, and was familiar with him, and honoured by him, as Cicero [f1009] relates: other persons of note are said to be of this place, as Alcaeus a lyric poet, and Diophanes a rhetorician. It does not appear that the apostle stayed and preached the Gospel here, or that any Gospel church was here by him raised; no mention is made of it in ecclesiastical history until late: in the "second" century Heathenism prevailed in the island, the Lesbians sacrificed a man to Dionysius. In the "fifth" century we read of a bishop of this island in the Chalcedon council: in the "sixth" century there was a bishop of Mitylene, in the fifth Roman synod: in the seventh century, Gregory, bishop of Mitylene, assisted in the sixth council at Constantinople, and Theodorus of the same place: in the eighth century Damianus, bishop of the same place, was present in the Nicene council [f1010].

Ver. 15. *And we sailed thence*, etc.] From Mitylene:

and came the next day over against Chios; which, according to R. Benjamin Tudelensis [f1011], was three days' sail from Mitylene; according to Pliny [f1012] it was sixty five miles from it, and is an island in the Icarian or Aegean sea, and lies between Lesbos and Samos, next mentioned; and has its name from the nymph Chione, so called from the exceeding whiteness of her skin, as snow: it was famous for marble; from hence came the best mastic, and good figs, and the wine called malmsey wine [f1013]. And of this place Jerom says [f1014], Chios, an island before Bithynia, whose name in the Syriac language signifies "mastic", because that mastic grows there; some add, he called it "Chia" from Chione the nymph: the reason of its name, as Pausanias [f1015] relates, was this; Neptune coming into a desert island, had carnal knowledge of a nymph, and in the time of her travail, a snow fell from heaven on the ground; and from this Neptune called his son Chius, from whom the island has its name. Others [f1016] conjecture, that it was called from ayw j , "Chivja", which signifies a serpent; this island having been very much terrified, as Aelianus [f1017] says, by the hisses of a serpent of a monstrous size, until it was consumed by fire. It was common to sail from Mitylene hither, and "vice versa": so we read [f1018] of Herod seeking Agrippa, he came to Chios, and from thence to Mitylene. We read nothing of the apostle's stay and preaching here, nor of any Gospel church here, till ages after: in the "fourth" century, Heathenism prevailed to such a degree in it, that Dionysius Omadius was worshipped here with human sacrifice; and yet, in the fifth century, a bishop of Chios was present in the council of

Chalcedon; and in the “sixth” century another assisted in the fifth Roman synod; and in the “seventh” century there was a bishop of this place at the sixth synod at Constantinople; and in the “eighth” century, Leon, bishop of Chios, was in the Nicene [f1019] synod. It is now called Chio or Scio, by the Turks Saches, and is inhabited by Italian Genoese.

And the next day we arrived at Samos; another island in the Icarian sea, not a very fruitful one, unless for olives [f1020]; and for nothing more famous than for being the birth place of Pythagoras [f1021], hence called the Samian, and of Melissus. It was ninety three miles distant from Chios [f1022]; and, according to R. Benjamin, two days sail from it [f1023]; but Paul sailed hither in a day. Of this place Jerom [f1024] thus writes; Samos, an island in the Aegean sea, in which, it is reported, earthen vessels were first made. Herodotus [f1025] speaks of three things for which it was famous, a very high mountain in it, a bulwark about the haven in the sea, and a temple the largest of all he ever saw. Some say it has its name from the height of it, Samos signifying an high place. Pausanias [f1026], from Asius, a Samian, suggests, that it was so called from Samus, the son of Ancaeus and Samia; and observes, that the inhabitants of it affirm, that Juno was born here; and here was a famous temple, said to be dedicated to her by the Argonautes. One of the Sybils dwelt here, called from hence Samia, and Polycrates, a noted tyrant. Lycurgus, the famous lawgiver, died in this place, as did also Pherecydes, the Syrian [f1027]. It is now called Samo. The apostle stayed not here to preach the Gospel; nor do we read of its being preached here by any: idolatry greatly prevailed in this place in the “second” century; and so it did in the “fourth”: though in the same we also read of some Christians here that suffered persecution; and so low as the “eighth” century, Heraclius, bishop of this place, was in the Nicene synod [f1028].

And tarried at Trogyllium; which, according to Ptolomy [f1029], was a promontory in the Icarian sea: it was about forty furlongs distant from Samos, according to Strabo [f1030]. It was a promontory of Mycale; and Trogilias, called also Trogilia, is mentioned with Mycale and Samos by Pliny [f1031], as near to Miletus. It follows here, and the next day we came to Miletus; which was once the chief city of Ionia: it was famous for being the birth place of Thales, one of the seven wise men of Greece, and of Timotheus the musician, and of Anaximander, and Anaximenes, and the famous Democritus, philosophers [f1032], and of Cadmus, the first inventor of prose [f1033]. Pliny says [f1034], it was formerly called Lelegeis, Pityusa, and Anactoria; and it seems it had its name Miletus from Miletus, the son of

Apollo, who is said to build it [f1035]; and Apollo himself is sometimes called Apollo Milesius, and who had a famous temple in this place [f1036]. Though rather it was so called from atlym "Milata", or "Melote", which signifies pure, white, fine, soft wool, for which this place was famous; which was used for carpets, but chiefly for cloth, which being dyed purple, was sent into divers parts: "Melote" in Greek signifies the same; it is used in (<581137>Hebrews 11:37) and translated "sheepskin". Ptolomy [f1037] places this city in Caria, by the sea; and certain it is from this account, that it was a sea port: it is said to have four ports or havens, one of which would hold a fleet. Of it Jerom [f1038] says; Miletus, a maritime city in Asia, distant ten furlongs from the mouth of the river Maeander: by the apostle's sending from hence to Ephesus, for the elders of the church there to meet him at this place, as is afterwards related, and taking no notice of any brethren, elders, or church here, it looks as if there were none at this time: and in the "second" century, Gentilism was embraced at Miletus; and in the "fourth" century Licinius consulted the oracle of Apollo Didymaeus in this place, concerning the event of the war against Constantine; but in the "fifth" century we read of a church here, a bishop of this place being in the Chalcedon council; in the "seventh" century a bishop of this church assisted at the sixth council at Constantinople, whose name is said to be George; and in the "eighth" century Epiphanius, bishop of Miletus, was present in the Nicene council [f1039].

Ver. 16. *For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus*, etc.] That is, to sail by it, without calling at it, as he did, for it lay by the shore before he came to Miletus; but he chose not to stop there, fearing he should be detained by the brethren there:

because he would not spend the time in Asia; of which Ephesus was the metropolis:

for he hasted, if it were possible, for him to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost: which was near at hand; for it was but fifty days from the second day of the passover, which feast was over when he sailed from Philippi; and at Troas he stayed seven days, and he had been several days sailing already; (see <442006>Acts 20:6,13-15). And his great desire to be at the feast of Pentecost was not in order to keep that feast, according to the usage of the Jews; but that he might have an opportunity of preaching the Gospel to a great number of Jews, out of all countries, whom he knew would come to that feast.

Ver. 17. *And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus*, etc.] Which is said, by some, to be about four hundred furlongs from Miletus, and, by others, ten German miles.

And called the elders of the church; that is, at Ephesus; not the ancient members of the church, but the officers of it; the pastors, bishops, and overseers, as they are called, (<44>Acts 20:28) and are so styled from their office, and not their age. The twelve disciples the apostle found in this place, and the numerous converts made by him here, first composed this church, which doubtless was formed into Gospel order by himself; to which he afterwards wrote an epistle, when at a distance from them, called the Epistle to the Ephesians; and in the latter end of the first century, another epistle was sent from Jesus Christ himself, by the Apostle John, to this church, (<66>Revelation 2:1) and which had an angel, pastor, or bishop over it; but who he was, is not certain; Caius, who is reckoned among the seventy disciples, is said to be bishop of it; (see Gill on "<42>Luke 10:1"). Some say Timothy was the first bishop of this church, and after him Onesimus; but these accounts are uncertain, and not to be depended on: but certain it is, that the Apostle John dwelt here, and in the parts adjacent, unto his death, and was a superintendent and overseer in common of this church, and others near it; concerning whom Irenaeus [f1040], a very ancient writer near his time, says, the church at Ephesus was founded by Paul; but John remained with them to the times of Trajan. In the "second" century Ignatius [f1041] wrote an epistle to this church, in which he speaks highly of it, saying, there was no heresy in it; and makes mention of Onesimus as bishop of it: in the "third" century there was a church in this place, and a very memorable affair happened here in the times of Decius; he having obliged all to sacrifice to the idols in the temple, seven persons, by name Maximianus, Malchus, Martinianus, Dionysius, Johannes, Serapion, and Constantine, were accused of Christianity, which they owned; but being soldiers, they had space given them to repent until the return of the emperor, who was going elsewhere: whilst he was gone they fled and hid themselves in the caves of Mount Caelius; upon the emperor's return they were inquired after, and found to be there; who, being provoked, ordered the mouth of the caverns to be shut up with stones, that they might be famished; and it is said, that what through fear and grief they fell asleep, and slept to a great age; some pretend to say to the times of Theodosius, and then awaked; and these are they that are called the seven sleepers: in the beginning of the "fourth" century there was a bishop of this church at

the council of Nice: in the “fifth” century Ephesus was famous for a general synod, convened in it against Nestorius; and in this age we read of several bishops of this place: at the time of that synod, Memnon was bishop of it, and before him Antonius and Heraclides, and after him Basil, Bassianus, Stephen, and Paul: in the “sixth” century there was a bishop of this church present at the synod of Rome and Constantinople; and in the same age Ruffinus was bishop at Ephesus, who flourished under Mauritius the emperor: in the “seventh” century a bishop of this place assisted at the sixth council at Constantinople; in this century it was a metropolitan church, and Theodorus was archbishop of it: in the “eighth” century, one Theodosius presided over the church here; to which church the emperor Constantine gave a hundred pounds of gold [f1042]: so far down Christianity is to be traced in this place.

Ver. 18. *And when they were come to him*, etc.] That is, when the elders or pastors of the church at Ephesus were come to the apostle at Miletus:

he said unto them, ye know, from the first day I came into Asia; to Ephesus the chief city in it:

after what manner I have been with you at all seasons; what was his conduct, conversation, and constant manner of life; which the apostle takes notice of, not to commend himself, or to obtain applause of men; but either in vindication of himself, against those that were ready to charge and censure him; or to recommend the doctrine which he taught; and chiefly for the imitation of these elders, he had sent for, and convened in this place; and he appeals to themselves, as eyewitnesses of what he was going to say.

Ver. 19. *Serving the Lord with all humility of mind*, etc.] Meaning, in the ministration of the Gospel, being conscious to himself of his own weakness and insufficiency in himself for such service; no ways elated with those excellent and extraordinary gifts bestowed upon him; ascribing all his success to the power, grace, and Spirit of God; treating no man with contempt and disdain; nor lording it over God’s heritage, or claiming a dominion over the faith of men; nor seeking honour nor riches for himself, nor even what he had a just right unto, a maintenance from the people; but laboured with his own hands, and to his own and the necessities of others:

and with many tears; at the obstinacy and unbelief of some, and at the distresses and afflictions of others, both corporeal and spiritual; as well as on account of the unbecoming walk of some professors:

and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: who were hardened against his ministrations, and believed not the Gospel preached by him, but spoke evil of it, and lay in wait to take away his life; by reason of which, his afflictions, which he calls temptations, because they were trials of his faith and patience, were very great.

Ver. 20. *And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you*, etc.] The Syriac version supplies, "to your souls"; to lead them into a true knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel, and to confirm them in the same, and to preserve them from errors in principle, and immoralities in practice, and to encourage the exercise of every grace, and to instruct them in every branch of duty; nothing of this kind, or which had this tendency, did the apostle dissemble, conceal, or drop, either through sloth and indolence, or through fear of men, or for the sake of reputation, wealth, and friends. The things the apostle may have chiefly in view are the truths of the Gospel, which are very profitable to the souls of men; such as relate to the knowledge of God, his being, perfections, and persons; as that there are three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit, which is profitable to be known, in order to understand the economy of salvation, in which each person has his distinct concern; and that both the Son and Spirit are equally God with the Father, which accounts for the virtue and efficacy of the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and how safely he may be depended upon for salvation, and how equal the Holy Spirit is to his work and office; likewise such doctrines as relate to the sin of Adam and his posterity in him, to the imputation of the guilt of that sin unto them, and the derivation of a corrupt nature from him, and which respect the impurity and impotence of human nature; all which is profitable, since it accounts for the origin of moral evil, and many of the dispensations of providence in involving those that do not know the right hand from their left in public calamities; and since it shows the necessity of regenerating grace, tends to the humiliation of men, and makes for the magnifying the riches of God's grace: also such doctrines as express the grace of God in man's salvation as the doctrines of God's everlasting love, of election, redemption, justification, pardon, reconciliation, union to Christ, and final perseverance; all which are exceeding profitable, for the peace, comfort, and refreshment of the souls of God's people. Moreover, the ordinances of the Gospel, baptism, and the Lord's supper, which are the privileges of believers, and the means of their spiritual profit, may be included, together with all the duties of religion; which though not profitable by way of merit,

yet contribute to the peace and pleasure of the mind; and none of these things did the apostle withhold from the elders and church at Ephesus, as his epistle to that church does abundantly show, in which, doctrines, ordinances, and duties are taken notice of: now to keep back these, is either to keep them back wholly, to say nothing of any of them, but in the room of them to deliver out morality and legal righteousness; or in part, to mix the truths of the Gospel with the doctrines of men, and not give out the sincere milk of the word; or to draw and fetch back what has been delivered through the fear of men, and in order to gain reputation and applause: but so did not the apostle, nor should any minister of the Gospel; and that for the reason in the words, because they are profitable; as also because they are the counsel of God; and because it is the will of Christ that nothing should be hid, but everything should be published, which he has signified to his servants; and this is enforced by his own example, who whatever he heard of his Father, he made known to his disciples; and for the ministers of Christ to do otherwise, would argue unfaithfulness in them both to Christ and to the souls of men:

but have showed you; all the doctrines of the Gospel, and pointed to every path of duty, and declared, as he says hereafter, the whole counsel of God:

and have taught you publicly; first in the Jewish synagogue, then in the school of Tyrannus, (Acts 19:8-10) and in whatsoever place the church, when formed, might meet together for public worship; there the apostle taught them the truths of the Gospel openly, and without any reserve, before all the people, as Christ ordered his apostles to do, and as he himself did, (Matthew 10:27, John 18:20)

and from house to house: as he visited the saints at their own houses, to know their personal cases, and the state of their souls, he instructed them privately and personally one by one; he taught the same publicly as privately, and privately as publicly: and took every opportunity of instilling Gospel truths into them, and of enriching them with a larger knowledge of them; which shows his affection and zeal, his laboriousness, industry, and indefatigableness in the ministry.

Ver. 21. *Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks*, etc.] To the Jews first in their synagogue, and then to both Jews and Greeks, or Gentiles, in the school of Tyrannus; opening and explaining to both the nature and use, urging and insisting upon, and proving by undeniable testimonies the necessity,

of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ: the former of these is not a legal repentance, but an evangelical one; which flows from a sense of the love of God, and an application of pardoning grace and mercy, and is always attended with hope, at least of interest in it, and as here with faith in Christ Jesus: it lies in a true sight and sense of sin, as exceeding sinful, being contrary to the nature and law of God, and a deformation of the image of God in man, as well as followed with dreadful and pernicious consequences; and in a godly sorrow for it, as it is committed against a God of infinite purity and holiness, and of love, grace, and mercy; and it shows itself in shame for sin, and blushing at it, and in an ingenious confession of it, and forsaking it: and the latter of these is not an historical faith, or an assent of the mind to whatsoever is true concerning the person, office, and grace of Christ; but is a spiritual act of the soul upon him; it is a looking and going out to him, a laying hold and leaning on him, and trusting in him, for grace, righteousness, peace, pardon, life, and salvation. Now these two were the sum of the apostle's ministry; this is a breviary or compendium of it; a form of sound words held fast and published by him: and as these two go together as doctrines in the ministry of the word, they go together as graces in the experience of the saints; where the one is, there the other is; they are wrought in the soul at one and the same time, by one and the same hand; the one is not before the other in order of time, however it may be in order of working, or as to visible observation; repentance is mentioned before faith, not that it precedes it, though it may be discerned in its outward acts before it; yet faith as to its inward exercise on Christ is full as early, if not earlier; souls first look to Christ by faith, and then they mourn in tears of evangelical repentance, (<38120>Zechariah 12:10) though the order of the Gospel ministry is very fitly here expressed, which is first to lay before sinners the evil of sin, and their danger by it, in order to convince of it, and bring to repentance for it; and then to direct and encourage them to faith in Christ Jesus, as in the case of the jailer, (<441629>Acts 16:29,30) and this is, generally speaking, the order and method in which the Holy Spirit proceeds; he is first a spirit of conviction and illumination, he shows to souls the exceeding sinfulness of sin, causes them to loath it and themselves for it, and humbles them under a sense of it; and then he is a spirit of faith, he reveals Christ unto them as God's way or salvation, and works faith in them to believe in him. Moreover, these two, repentance and faith, were the two parts of Christ's ministry, (<401115>Mark 1:15) and are what, he would have published and insisted on, in the preaching of the word, (<422447>Luke 24:47, <411616>Mark 16:16) so that the

ministry of the apostle was very conformable to the mind and will of Christ.

Ver. 22. *And now behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem*, etc.] Not in his own spirit, though the Ethiopic version reads, "in my spirit"; as if he was pressed and straitened, and troubled within himself, at what afflictions and bonds he was to endure at Jerusalem; for this is not consistent with what he says in (<44 20 24>Acts 20:24) nor is the sense, that he was bound in conscience and duty to go to Jerusalem, to carry the collections of the churches made for the poor saints there, which the Gentile churches importuned him to take upon him, and which he undertook, and promised to perform, and so was under obligation to do it; but rather that he was resolved and determined in his own mind, within himself, or he purposed in his spirit, as in (<44 19 21>Acts 19:21) to go to Jerusalem: but it is best to understand it of the Spirit of God; as that either the apostle, by the revelation of the Spirit of God, knew that when he came to Jerusalem he should be laid in bonds, and under a deep impression of that upon his mind, he went thither, as though he was bound already; or rather that he was under such a strong impulse of the Spirit of God, by which he was moved to such a vehement desire to go thither, that the bonds and afflictions he saw waited for him there, could not deter him, and all the entreaties of his friends could not dissuade him from it:

not knowing the things that shall befall me there; that is, the particular things he should suffer there, nor how they would issue with respect to life or death; and if the latter, whether he should suffer death, there or elsewhere; these things were not as yet revealed to him; he only in general knew, that bonds and afflictions would be his lot and portion, and which therefore he excepts in the next verse: after this it was revealed to him by Agabus a prophet, in the name, and under the influence of the Holy Ghost, that he should be apprehended at Jerusalem, and should be bound and delivered to the Gentiles; which was signified by the prophet's taking his girdle and binding his hands and feet with it, but still he knew not whether he should die there or not, though he was ready for it, (<44 21 10>Acts 21:10,11,13) afterwards when he was come to Jerusalem, and had been bound, and was in prison, the Lord himself appeared to him, and told him that he must bear witness at Rome, as he had testified of him at Jerusalem, (<44 23 11>Acts 23:11) so that he was not to suffer death there, only bonds and imprisonment.

Ver. 23. *Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city*, etc.] As he passed along, where there was a church, or any number of saints: in the churches of those times there were prophets who foretold things to come, and by these the Holy Ghost testified to the apostle, as he travelled along, and called upon the churches in every city, what would befall him when he came to Jerusalem; this sense the natural order of the words requires, unless there should be a transposition of them, thus, "save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me, or wait for me in every city"; that is, this in general was only made known to him by the Spirit of God, that wherever he came, affliction and persecution would attend him, and he must expect bonds and imprisonment; these were ready for him, and be must prepare for them, as he did: and therefore, whenever they came, he was not surprised at them, they were no other than what he looked for; but the other sense seems best, for such a transposition is not very easy, and, besides, can by no means be admitted, if the sense is, as the words are read in Beza's ancient copy, and in others, and in the Vulgate Latin version, "that bonds and afflictions abide me at Jerusalem"; however, since the Holy Ghost testified before hand of the afflictions and bonds of the apostle, whether in every city or in Jerusalem, or both; it is no inconsiderable proof of the proper deity of the Spirit of God, and is an instance of his affectionate regard to the apostle, to give him previous notice of these things.

Ver. 24. *But none of these things move me*, etc.] From the hope of the Gospel, nor from the ministry of the word, nor from his journey to Jerusalem; they did not shake his faith, nor inject fear into him, nor cause him to alter his purpose and design:

neither count I my life dear unto myself: life is a very valuable thing, no outward or temporal enjoyment can be dearer to a man than life; all that he has he will give for his life: this therefore must not be understood in an absolute sense, as if the apostle despised his life, and esteemed of it meanly, when it was the gift of God, and had been not only so eminently preserved in providence, but had been so useful in a way of grace to so many valuable purposes; but it must be taken in a comparative sense, with respect to Christ and his Gospel, and when it should be called for to be laid down for him; and that, in such circumstances, and under such considerations, he made no account of it at all, but preferred Christ and his Gospel to it: this sense appears by what follows,

so that I might finish my course with joy; the course and race of his life, ending it by suffering cheerfully and joyfully for Christ; or his Christian course and race, which began at his conversion, ending that with a joyful prospect of being with Christ in an endless eternity; or else the course of his ministry, sealing that with his blood, and rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, and so he did finish his course, (<2 Timothy 4:7)

and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus; which seems to be explanative of the former, or of what is meant by his course, namely his ministry, the ministry of the Gospel: Beza's ancient copy, and the Vulgate Latin version read, "the ministry of the word"; this he had received from Christ, both the Gospel which he ministered, and gifts qualifying him for it, and a mission and commission to minister it; and which he was desirous of fulfilling in such a manner, as to give up his account with joy to him from whom he had received it, and to whom he was accountable; namely,

to testify the Gospel of the grace of God; to profess and preach it, to bear a constant and public testimony to it at death, as in life, and faithfully to declare it, and assert it to the last; which he calls not only the "Gospel", or good news of salvation by Christ; but the Gospel "of the grace" of God: which brings the account of the free grace, love, and mercy of God, displayed in the scheme of salvation of the grace of God the Father, in pitching his love upon any of the sons of men; not because they were better and more deserving of his favour, than others, but because of his sovereign will and pleasure, who will be gracious to whom he will be gracious; and in choosing them in Christ unto salvation, before they had done good or evil, and without any consideration or foresight of, or motive from good works hereafter done by them; in drawing the scheme and model of their salvation in Christ, appointing him to be the author of it; and in making a covenant of grace with him, stored with all the blessings and promises of grace; and in sending him, in the fulness of time, to suffer and die for them, not sparing him, but delivering him up for them all, and giving all things freely with him; and in accepting the sacrifice, satisfaction, and righteousness of his Son on their account, as if done by themselves. It also gives an account of the grace of Christ in undertaking the salvation of men; in assuming their nature, and becoming mean and low in it; in dying for their sins; in his intercession for them at the right hand of God; and in the care he takes of them in this world, until he has brought them safe home to himself. Likewise it gives an account of the grace of the Spirit in regeneration and

sanctification; in working faith in the hearts of men; in being a comforter to them, a witnesser of their adoption, the earnest of their inheritance, and the sealer of them unto the day of redemption. And the Gospel may be so called, because all the doctrines of it are doctrines of grace; it asserts election to be of grace, and not of works; and ascribes the justification of a sinner to the free grace of God, through the righteousness of Christ, imputed without works and received by faith, which faith is the gift of God, and it denies it to be of the deeds of the law; it represents the pardon of sin to be according to the riches of God's grace, though it is through the blood of Christ, and not owing to humiliation, repentance, confession, and new obedience, as causes of it; it attributes regeneration and conversion to the abundant mercy, the free favour of God, and to the efficacy of his grace, and not to the will of the flesh, or the will of man; and in a word, as the great doctrine of it is salvation, whence it is called the Gospel of salvation, it declares that the whole of salvation, from first to last, is all of grace. And it may also bear this name, because it is a means of conveying grace unto, and implanting it in the hearts of men; regenerating grace comes this way; God begets men by the word of truth, they are born again of incorruptible seed by it; the Spirit of God, as a spirit of sanctification, is received through it, and faith comes by hearing it; and both that and hope, and every other grace, are quickened, encouraged, and drawn forth into exercise by it; all which is, when it is attended with the Spirit of God and power: and this being the nature and use of the Gospel, made it so precious and valuable to the apostle, and made him so intent upon testifying it, and fulfilling the ministry of it, and to prefer it to life and everything in this world; and it cannot but be highly valued and greatly desired by all those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Beza's ancient copy, and some others, read, "to testify to Jews and Greeks the Gospel of the grace of God".

Ver. 25. *And now behold*, etc.] This is not only a note of asseveration, but of attention, stirring up to observe what is here asserted:

I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more; the sense is, that none of them should ever see him again, none of the churches of Asia, or the members of them; among whom he had been some years preaching the Gospel, the things concerning the Messiah, his kingdom and glory, and the meetness of the saints for, and their right unto the heavenly inheritance, prepared by God, and given by him to all that love him: Beza's ancient copy reads, "the

kingdom of Jesus": this the apostle knew by divine revelation, by the same spirit in which he was going bound to Jerusalem, though he knew not whether he should die there or elsewhere; however, he knew, and was persuaded, he should visit these parts no more.

Ver. 26. *Wherefore I take you to record this day*, etc.] This is a solemn appeal to the elders of the church at Ephesus, who knew his doctrine and manner of life for a considerable time among them:

that I am pure from the blood of all men: or "of you all", as some copies, and the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; which seems most natural, since they could only bear a testimony for him with respect to themselves, and the people at Ephesus, where he had so behaved both in the faithful discharge of his ministry, and in his exemplary life and conversation; as that the ruin and destruction of no one of them could be laid to his charge, or any one perish for want of knowledge, or through any negligence of his; (see <26306>Ezekiel 33:6).

Ver. 27. *For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God*.] By which is meant, not the purposes and decrees of God, latent in his own breast, these the apostle could not declare; but his revealed will in the Gospel, concerning the salvation of men by Jesus Christ, even the whole of the Gospel, every truth and doctrine of it, necessary to salvation, and to the peace, joy, and comfort of the saints; together with all the ordinances of it, and everything that had any tendency to promote the glory of God, and the good of souls; (see <40730>Luke 7:30) none of these things did the apostle withhold from the knowledge of the church at Ephesus, but freely imparted and communicated them to them; (see Gill on "<44020>Acts 20:20").

Ver. 28. *Take heed therefore unto yourselves*, etc.] Since the blood of men may be required of those, who are negligent or partial in their office, and shun to declare the whole counsel of God: this exhortation is given them not merely as men, to take care of their bodily health, the outward concerns of life, and provide for themselves and families; nor merely as Christians, but as ministers of the Gospel; that they would take heed to their gifts, to use and improve them, and not neglect them; to their time, that they spend it aright, and not squander it away; and to their spirit, temper, and passions, that they are not governed by them; and to their lives and conversations, that they be exemplary to those who are under their care; and to their doctrine, that it be according to the Scriptures; that it be

the doctrine of Christ, and the same with the apostles; that it be according to godliness, and that it tends to edification; that it be sound and incorrupt, pure and unmixed, and all of a piece and consistent with itself; and that they be not infected and carried away with errors and heresies:

and to all the flock; the church and all the members of it, which are compared to a flock of sheep, which are to be looked after and watched over by the ministers of the word, who are as shepherds to them, lest they should be infected, or any damage done them. The people of God are compared to sheep on many accounts; before conversion, for their going astray, when they are as lost sheep; after conversion, for their meek and inoffensive carriage and behaviour, and for their patience in bearing sufferings, to which they are exposed: and a church of Christ is compared to a flock of them, being in Gospel order, folded together and feeding in the same pasture, attending the word and ordinances, under the care of shepherds appointed by Christ the chief shepherd; whose business it is to take heed unto them, and care of them, to learn to know their state and condition, to watch over them, and to feed them with knowledge and with understanding, for which they are qualified by Christ; and they are to take heed unto everyone in the flock, the poor of the flock as well as others, the lambs as well as the sheep, and the sick and the diseased, the torn, and straying, and driven away, as well as the fat and the strong: and this flock, though a little flock, is a holy and beautiful one, a flock of men, and of the souls of men dear to God, to Christ and the blessed Spirit; and a special regard should be had unto them, and that for reasons following:

over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers; or "bishops"; this is said to the elders of the church, (<4401 7>Acts 20:17) which shows that the office of an elder and a bishop is one and the same office; and this contains in it more than one argument why they should take heed to the flock; as because they are the overseers of it, who have the care and oversight of the flock, that is under their inspection, and is their proper province, and office; and this they were put into by the Holy Ghost, who gave them gifts to qualify them for it, and called, and inclined them to undertake it, as well as moved the people to make choice of them for this purpose; and since, therefore, this was an affair in which the Holy Ghost was so much concerned, it became them very diligently to attend it:

to feed the church of God; with knowledge and understanding; and discharge the whole office of faithful shepherds to the flock, by feeding the

flock and not themselves, strengthening the diseased, healing the sick, binding up the broken, bringing again that which was driven away, and seeking up that which was lost: and here is another argument suggested, to stir up to a diligent performance of this work; and that is, that this flock is the church of God, a set of men whom God has chosen for himself, and called by his grace out of the world, and separated for his own use and glory, and among whom he dwells; and therefore to be fed with the faithful word, with the finest of the wheat, and not with the chaff of human schemes, and with the wind of false doctrine, nor with anything that is vain, trifling, and deceitful; but with the solid doctrines of the Gospel, with the words of faith and good doctrine, with the wholesome words of Christ Jesus, which have in them milk for babes and meat for strong men, and with and by the ordinances of the Gospel, which are the green pastures they are to be guided into, and abide in; and in all they are to be directed to Christ, the sum of the word and ordinances, who is the bread of life, and food of faith; and that the church should be thus fed, is the will of Christ, who has appointed and ordered his ministers to feed his lambs and sheep, and has furnished them with what is necessary for this work; this is the design of the ministry of the Gospel, and the administration of ordinances; and the churches of Christ are placed where food may be had, where the word is faithfully preached, and the ordinances truly administered: some copies read, “the church of the Lord”; and others, and so the Complutensian edition, “the church of the Lord and God”:

which he hath purchased with his own blood; which being the blood not only of a pure and innocent man, but of one that is truly and properly God as well as man, was a sufficient ransom price to redeem the church and people of God from sin, the law, its curse and condemnation: so that this is no inconsiderable proof of the true and proper deity of Christ; and contains a fresh argument, or reason, why the flock of God and “church of Christ”, as the Syriac version reads; or “the church of the Lord and God”, as in five of Beza’s exemplars: or “of the Lord God”, as the Arabic version, should be taken heed unto and fed; because it must needs be dear to God and Christ, and precious to them, since so great a price has been paid for it. The purchaser is God, Christ who is God over all, blessed for ever, not a creature; that could never have made such a purchase, it could not have purchased a single sheep or lamb in this flock, no man can redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him, much less the whole flock; but Christ being God, was able to make such a purchase, and he has actually

made it, and given a sufficient price for it; not to Satan, with whom these sheep were a prey, and from whom they are taken in virtue of the ransom given; but to God, from whom they strayed, against whom they sinned, and whose law they broke; and this price was not silver and gold, nor men, nor people: but Christ himself, his life and blood; and which were his "own", the human nature, the blood of which was shed, and its life given being in union with his divine person, and was in such sense his own, the property of the Son of God, as the life and blood of no mere man are theirs: and this purchase now being made in this way, and by such means, is a very proper one; it is not made without price, but with an invaluable one; and it is a legal purchase, a valuable consideration being given for it, perfectly equivalent to it; and therefore is a complete one, there is nothing wanting to make it more firm, it is a finished purchase; and it is a very peculiar one, it is a peculiar people that are purchased, called the purchased possession, (<40114>Ephesians 1:14) and a peculiar price which is paid for it; there is no other of the same kind, nor any thing like it, and it is made by a peculiar person, one that is God and man in one person.

Ver. 29. *For I know this*, etc.] By divine revelation:

that after my departing; either out of this world, or after his leaving them now, and proceeding on, his journey:

shall grievous wolves enter in among you; false teachers, comparable to wolves, for their craft and cunning, and for their greedy, covetous, and voracious dispositions; and who would be very grievous, troublesome, and even intolerable to them; these, he knew, would enter privily, at an unawares, into their churches, and set up themselves for preachers, without being called or sent:

not sparing the flock; fleecing it instead of feeding it, making merchandise of it, and like the Pharisees, under religious pretences, devour widows' houses, and drain the purses of men; and having as little compassion upon their souls, poisoning them with their errors and heresies, subverting their faith, and bringing them into swift ruin and destruction, as much as would in them lie.

Ver. 30. *Also of your own selves shall men arise*, etc.] Not only false teachers from abroad should come and enter among them, but some would spring up out of their own communities, such as had been admitted

members of them, and of whom they had hoped well; such were Hymenseus, Philetus, Alexander, Hertoogenes, and Phygellus;

speaking perverse things; concerning God, and Christ, and the Gospel; distorted things, wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction, and that of others; things that are disagreeable to the word of God, and pernicious to the souls of men:

to draw away disciples after them; to rend away members from the churches, make schisms and divisions, form parties, set themselves at the head of them, and establish new sects, called after their own names; (see <6029>1 John 2:19, <5459>1 Timothy 5:19).

Ver. 31. *Therefore watch*, etc.] Meaning both over themselves, and the flock; to prevent, if possible, false teachers entering in, and to nip the buds of heresy and schism, as soon as they appear, and to preserve themselves, and the church, from being carried away with the error of the wicked.

And remember that by the space of three years; reckoning from his first coming to Ephesus, unto this time, that he now called at Miletus; (see <4419>Acts 18:19,20 19:8,10,22, 20:3,6,17) and

I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears; that is, he was constantly and continually cautioning them against false teachers, and their doctrines, in the most tender and affectionate manner; shedding tears at the thoughts of what mischief would be done, and how many souls would be ruined by them; which gives a lively idea of the apostle, and his ministry, of his affection, zeal, and diligence, very worthy of the imitation of all the preachers of the Gospel. Several copies, and all the Oriental versions, read, “everyone of you”.

Ver. 32. *And now brethren*, etc.] So the apostle calls the elders of the church at Ephesus; though they had not the same gifts, and were not in the same high office as he was, yet he puts himself upon a level with them, as if he and they were fellow elders, as Peter calls himself, (<6001>1 Peter 5:1) which is an instance of the apostle’s humility and affection:

I commend you to God; to God the Father; to his grace, to supply all their need; to his wisdom, to direct them in all their affairs; and to his power, to keep them from the sins and corruptions of the times, and from the errors and heresies now broaching, or to be broached.

And to the word of his grace: either the Gospel, before called the Gospel of the grace of God, (Acts 20:24) This is sometimes called “the word”, the word of faith, of truth, of righteousness, of reconciliation and salvation; and is “his” word, the word of God, and not of man; it comes from him, is concerning him, and is succeeded by him; and it is the word of “his grace”, since it publishes his free grace and mercy in Christ Jesus, and declares salvation to, be wholly of the grace of God; to which this church is commended by the apostle as a rule of faith and practice, to attend unto, and abide by, and as a preservative from those errors and heresies which he had observed would spring up among them, and which would be for their instruction, comfort, and establishment: or else the Lord Jesus is intended, who is the eternal and essential word of God; who, as the word, inwardly conceived, is the image of the mind, equal to it, and yet distinct from it, so Christ is the image of the invisible God, equal to him, and yet a distinct person from him; and as the word expressed is the interpreter of the mind, so Christ the word, who was in the beginning with God, and lay in his bosom, has spoke all things from him, declared his mind, and explained his will: besides, he is the word who in the everlasting council and covenant spoke on the behalf of all his people, asked for every blessing for them, and engaged to be the surety of them; and is the word, who, in the beginning of time, spoke all things out of nothing; and now is the advocate, and speaks for the saints in heaven, as well as he has been the word spoken of by all the holy prophets from the beginning of the world: and he may be thought the rather to be designed, since the saints never commend themselves, or others, either in life, or in death, to any but to a divine person; nor is any but a divine person capable of taking the care and charge of the saints, and of making it good; nor will they trust any other; nor are the saints ever said to be committed or commended to the Gospel, but on the other hand, that is said to be committed to them: the written word is committed to the care and keeping of the saints, but not the saints to the care and keeping of that; nor does it appear so agreeable to put the written word upon a level with the divine Being; a commendation of the saints, equally to the written word, as to God himself, seems to be a lessening of the glory of the divine Being, and an ascribing too much to the word, but suits well with Christ the essential word: and who may be called the word of his grace, because the grace of God is greatly displayed in him; and because all fulness of grace dwells in him; and he is the author, donor, and object of all grace, and so a proper person to be commended to; and what follows is very applicable to him:

which is able to build you up: in faith and holiness, and on himself, the sure foundation; for though the Gospel is an instrument in the hands of the Spirit of God, in building up saints on their most holy faith, yet Christ is the master builder; it is he that builds the temple, the church, and every particular believer, and must bear the glory. The saints, though they are built on Christ the foundation, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, and so are safe; yet they stand in need of building up, or of edification; and a church may be said to be built up, or edified, when additions are made unto it of such as shall be saved; and particular members are built up, when additions are made to their grace, or they grow in the exercise of it; when their spiritual strength increases, when their understandings are more enlightened, their judgments better informed, and their memories filled with divine truths and Gospel doctrines; when they are more and more confirmed in the faith of Christ, both as a grace, and as a doctrine; and their wills are brought to a greater resignation to the will of God, as well as their afflictions are set upon things in heaven, and their souls are more seeking after them: and now this is what God is able to do, and does do; for except he builds, in vain do the builders build; he causes all grace to abound; and so does his word, his essential word; he is the author and finisher of faith, and gives both grace and glory, as it follows:

and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified: by the inheritance is meant the heavenly glory, which is a free grace gift and not obtained by the works of the law, or the industry of men. It is a distribution by lot, as the land of Canaan was, even by the lot of God's eternal purpose and decree: it is what belongs to children, to the children of God, and them only; and therefore bears this name, and comes unto them upon, and in consequence of the death of Christ the testator: it is his righteousness which entitles unto it; and it is the grace of God which makes meet for it; and the Spirit of God is the earnest of it: it is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens, and is an eternal one; it lies in light, and among the saints there. God is able to give it; it is a gift of his grace, of his sovereign will, which he gives to whom he pleases; it is an inheritance of his preparing and disposing, which he calls unto, makes meet for, and bestows: and Christ, the word of his grace, is able to give it; it is in his hands, not only the promise of it, but that itself; he is in possession of it, and it is in his power to give it; and he does give it to all that the Father has given him, and who are here described from their sanctification; for this is only enjoyed by such, who are set apart

by God the Father, whose sins are expiated by the blood of Christ, and to whom he is made sanctification, and who are sanctified by the blessed Spirit. Now though the Gospel, the written word, may be as a map, which shows where this inheritance lies, and which is the way to it; yet it is Christ, the living word, who gives the right unto it, the meetness for it, the earnest of it, and will put into the possession of it.

Ver. 33. *I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel*.] This the apostle says, not merely in vindication of himself, and his character, from all charge or suspicion of avarice; but chiefly for the instruction of these elders, and all others of the same office, not to indulge the sin of covetousness, which is very disagreeable, and ought not to be in a minister of the word; and it may be observed, that many things which the apostle says before of himself to those elders, is said not to commend himself, nor so much in his own vindication, as for their imitation; compare with this (<04165>Numbers 16:15, <09203>1 Samuel 12:3) and to point out the character of false teachers that would come in, or spring up among them, who would make merchandise of them. Beza's ancient copy, and others, read, "the silver, etc. of none of you"; and so the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 34. *Yea, you yourselves know*, etc.] So far was the apostle from desiring to have other men's money, or to wear their apparel, or to eat their bread, that he could appeal to these elders for the truth of it, they having been eyewitnesses of it:

that these hands have ministered unto my necessities; meaning, that he had wrought with his hands, which he then held up, or stretched out, at tent making, along with Aquila and Priscilla, at Ephesus, as he had done before at Corinth, (<44182>Acts 18:2,3,18,19) and therewith supplied himself with necessaries for food and clothing; for though he had a power, as a minister of the Gospel, to forbear working, and to insist upon a maintenance from the churches, yet in some cases, and in some places, he chose rather to forego that, lest he should either any ways hinder the progress of the Gospel at the first preaching of it, or be burdensome to the churches, or give the false teachers any handle against him; and he not only supported himself in this way, but assisted others also:

and to them that were with me; as Luke, Timothy, and others; (see <44204>Acts 20:4).

Ver. 35. *I have showed you all things*, etc.] Both as to doctrine and practice, and had set them an example how to behave in every point, and particularly in this:

how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak; the sense of which is, that they should labour with their hands as he did, and so support the weak; either such who were weak in body, and unable to work and help themselves, and therefore should be helped, assisted, relieved, and supported by the labours of others, that were able; or the weak in faith, and take nothing of them, lest they should think the preachers of the word sought only their own worldly advantage, and so they should be stumbled and fall from the truth:

and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus; which the apostle had either collected as the sense of some passages of his, such as (<4060>Luke 6:30,35,38, 14:13,14, <4054>Matthew 25:34,35), etc. or which though not recorded in any of the Gospels, the apostle might have received from one or other of the twelve disciples, as what were frequently used by Christ in the days of his flesh; and which the apostle had inculcated among the Ephesians, and now puts them in mind of them, they being worthy of remembrance: how he said,

it is more blessed to give than to receive: it is more comfortable, honourable, pleasant, and profitable: the giver is in a more comfortable situation, having an abundance, at least a sufficiency, and something to spare; whereas the receiver is often in want and distress, and so uncomfortable: it is an honour to give; an honour is reflected upon the giver, both by the receiver, and others; when to receive is an instance of meanness, and carries in it, among men, some degree of dishonour: it is a pleasure to a liberal man to distribute to the necessities of others; and it cannot be grateful to a man to be in such circumstances, as make it necessary for him to receive from others, and be dependent on them; and great are the advantages and profit which a cheerful giver reaps, both in this world, and that to come: wherefore the conclusion which the apostle would have drawn from hence is, that it is much more eligible for a man to work with his own hands, and support himself, and assist others, than to receive at the hands of others.

Ver. 36. *And when he had thus spoken*, etc.] And finished his speech to the elders: he kneeled down: upon the floor, which was a prayer gesture, used by Christ, and others; for, it seems, the disuse of kneeling in prayer,

between the passover and pentecost, which Tertullian [f1043], and other writers, speak of, had not yet obtained, which was in memory of Christ's resurrection from the dead, for this was now the time: (see <44206>Acts 20:6,16) and

prayed with them all: and no doubt for them all; the Syriac version renders it, "and he prayed, and all the men with him"; the apostle, and the elders, joined together in prayer.

Ver. 37. *And they all wept sore*, etc.] At the thoughts of parting with such a faithful and affectionate friend and servant of Christ; and no doubt but their affections were greatly moved by his prayers for them, as well as by his discourse to them. Christians are not Stoics, religion does not take away and destroy the natural affections, but regulates and governs them, and directs to a right use of them:

and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him; as Esau fell on Jacob's neck and kissed him, (<01334>Genesis 33:4) and Joseph on his brother Benjamin's, and his father Jacob's, (<01454>Genesis 45:14, 46:29). And it was usual with the eastern nations, particularly the Persians [f1044], for friends and relations to kiss at parting, as well as at meeting; (see <08109>Ruth 1:9,14).

Ver. 38. *Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake*, etc.] In (<44225>Acts 20:25) it filled them with sorrow to part with him; but this was increased, and made almost intolerable by what he said,

that they should see his face no more: could they have hoped to have seen him again, it would have made their parting with him more easy; but to be told they should never see him more in this world, it cut them to the heart; which shows what a share the apostle had in their hearts and affections, and not without good reason: however, that they might have a sight of him as long as they could, they went along with him to see him take shipping, and to see the last of him.

And they accompanied him unto the ship: which lay at Miletus waiting for him.

CHAPTER 21

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 21

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, that after we had gotten from them*, etc.] Which was with great difficulty, with many tears, and much wringing of hands: the word signifies that they were "plucked from" them; they clung about them, as husband and wife, and parents and children do; so strong were their affections; and their parting was like the parting of such near relations, or like the plucking of the flesh from the bones, or the drawing and separating one member from another; such is the cement of true Christian love:

and had launched; the vessel into the sea, from the port at Miletus:

we came with a straight course unto Coos; an island in the Aegean sea. Pomponius Mela [f1045] calls it Cos in Carlo; and so Pausanias [f1046] reckons it a city of the Carians and Lycians, mentioning it along with Rhodes. It was famous for being the birth place of Apelles the painter, and Hippocrates the physician. Pliny [f1047] places it in Caria, and calls it most noble, and says that it was fifteen miles distant from Halicarnassus, was a hundred miles in circumference, as many think, and was called Merope: and who elsewhere observes [f1048], that it is reported that the silk worms are bred in this island, and that a sort of raiment called "bombycine" was first made here by Pamphila, the daughter of Latoius. And so Solinus [f1049] from Varro, testifies, that this island first gave a fine sort of clothing for the ornament of women: hence because silks or bombycines, from the silk worms, were first wove here by women, some think the island had its name, for hwqm, which signifies something spun, in (<110128>1 Kings 10:28, <141616>2 Chronicles 1:16) it is by us translated "linen yarn"; but the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "from Coa". This island was taken by Hercules, and Eurypylus, the king of it, was slain by him [f1050]. It is now in the hands of the Turks, by whom it is called Stancora; but by others Lango. When, and by whom the Gospel was first preached here, is not certain; it does not appear that the Apostle Paul stayed to preach it now: however, in the beginning of the "fourth" century there was a church here, and a bishop of it was present at the council of

Nice; and in the “fifth” century, a bishop of the church here assisted in the council of Chalcedon; and in the “sixth” century, a bishop of the same place was in the fifth synod at Constantinople [f1051]. Hither Paul and his company came with a good wind, a prosperous gale, and nothing to hinder them; which perhaps is rather meant than a straight or direct line, in which they ran from Miletus to this place:

and the day following unto Rhodes, this is an island in Lycia, according to Mela [f1052], and had in it these three cities, Lindos, Camitos, and Jalysos: it is said of it [f1053], that the heavens are never so cloudy, but the sun is seen here in one part of the day, or another. R. Benjamin [f1054] makes this to be three days’ sail from Samos; and says, he found four hundred Jews in it, and almost three hundred at Samos. It is asserted by several writers [f1055], that this island was once covered with the sea, and in process of time appeared out of it, and became dry land. The account which Pliny [f1056] gives of it is, that

> “it is most beautiful and free, and was in circumference a hundred and thirty miles; or, if Isidorus is rather to be credited, a hundred and three: the cities in it were Lindus, Camirus, Jalysus, now Rhodes: it is distant from Alexandria in Egypt five hundred seventy eight miles, as Isidorus reports; but according to Eratosthenes, four hundred sixty nine; and according to Mutianus, five hundred; and from Cyprus it was a hundred and sixty six;”

a place after mentioned, which the apostle left on the left hand, having sailed from Petara to Phoenicia. The same writer proceeds and adds,

> “it was before called Ophiusa, Astria, Aethrea, Trinacria, Cotymbia, Paeessa, Atabyria, from the king of it, afterwards Macria and Oloessa.” Jerom [f1057] says of it, that

> “it is the most noble of the islands Cyclades, and the first from the east, formerly called Ophiussa; in which was a city of the same name, famous for the brazen colossus, which was seventy cubits high: it was distant from the port of Asia twenty miles.”

This statue, called the colossus of the sun, was one of the seven wonders of the world, according to Pliny [f1058], and was made by Chares, a disciple of Lysippus, at the expense of King Demetrius: it was twelve years in making, and cost three hundred talents: it was seventy cubits high (as Jerom before says): it fell by an earthquake, after it had stood fifty or sixty years (some

say 1360); and as it lay along it was a miracle, few men with their arms stretched out could embrace the thumb, and the fingers were bigger than most statues: and from this statue the Rhodians have been sometimes called Colossians; and some have fancied, that these are the persons the Apostle Paul wrote his epistle to under that name. This island, and the city in it, were called Rhodes, as some think, from roses, with which it might abound, or because of the beautifulness of the place; and others, that it had its name from dwry "Jarod", which, in the Chaldee and Syriac languages, signifies a serpent; and so it was called Ophiusa from the multitude of serpents in it [f1059]; though others say it took its name from Rhodia, a fair and beautiful maid beloved by Apollo. This island, in the "seventh" century, about the year 653, was taken by Mauvia, king of the Saracens, who sold the colossus, which lay on the ground ever since the earthquake, to a merchant, who is said to load nine hundred camels with the brass of it: it afterwards came into the hands of the Christians, and in the year 1522 was taken by Solyman the Turk, after a siege of six months, being betrayed by Andreas Meralius, a Portuguese knight [f1060]. When the Gospel was first preached here, and a church state formed, cannot be said; but in the beginning of the "fourth" century there was a bishop of this place in the council of Nice; and in the "fifth" century there was a church here, and it was a metropolitan; and in the "sixth" century a bishop of this place was in the fifth Roman synod under Symmachus; and in the "seventh" century a bishop of Rhodes assisted in the sixth council at Constantinople; and in the same century it was taken by the Saracenes, as before observed, when the church here was the metropolitan of the Cyclades: and yet in the "eighth" century, Leo, bishop of this place, was in the Nicene synod; and even though in the ninth century it was grievously harassed by the Saracens, yet its church state was not quite destroyed [f1061].

And from thence to Patara; Beza's ancient copy adds, "and Myra": (see <442105>Acts 27:5) a city of Lycia: hence it is called by Herodotus [f1062], and Pliny [f1063], Patara of Lycia, and mentioned with Rhodes: it was famous for the temple of Apollo, which was in it, in which answers were given six months in the year, and were on equal credit with the oracle at Delphos [f1064]; the Arabic version here calls it Sparta. According to Pliny [f1065] it was first called Sataros. Some say it had its name Patara from Paturus, the son of Apollo; Ptolomy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, having enlarged it, called it after his sister's name, Arsinoe. How long the apostle stayed in this place is not known, nor whether he preached here, nor if he did, what success he

had: in the “second” century, the statues of Jupiter and Apollo were in this, place: in the “fourth” century, there was a church here, and a bishop of it: and in the “sixth” century, a bishop of the church at Patara was in the fifth synod at Rome and Constantinople: and in the “eighth” century, Anastasius, bishop of this place, was in the Nicene synod [f1066].

Ver. 2. *And finding a ship sailing over unto Phoenicia*, etc.] For it seems that the ship they went aboard at Assos, (<44 20 13>Acts 20:13) went no further, at least in the way the apostle was going, than Patara; but lighting on another ship, which was bound for Phoenicia, for the city of Tyre, which bordered on the land of Israel, and indeed originally belonged to Canaan; (see <44 11 19>Acts 11:19).

we went aboard; the said ship:

and set forth; on the voyage.

Ver. 3. *Now when we had discovered Cyprus*, etc.] An island, as the Syriac version here calls it, which lay between Syria and Cilicia; (see Gill on “<44 04 36>Acts 4:36”); and was, according to R. Benjamin [f1067], four days sail from Rhodes, before mentioned:

we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria; that part of it called Phoenicia:

and landed at Tyre; the chief city of Phoenicia, famous for navigation and commerce: it stood about four furlongs distant from the shore, and was joined to the continent by Alexander the great [f1068]. The account Jerom [f1069] gives of it is this,

> “Tyre, the metropolis of Phoenicia, in the tribe of Nephthalim, is near twenty miles from Caesarea Philippi; this was formerly an island, but made continent land by Alexander: — its chief excellency lies in shell fish and purple.”

It was a very ancient city, though it seems not so ancient as Sidon, from whence it was distant about two hundred furlongs. Herodotus [f1070] says, that in his time it had been inhabited two thousand three hundred years; Hiram was king of it in Solomon’s time; yea, mention is made of it in Joshua’s time, if the text in (<06 19 29>Joshua 19:29) is rightly translated: some say it was built seventy six years before the destruction of Troy. It is to be distinguished into old Tyre, which was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and

the island of Tyre, which was conquered by Alexander, and new Tyre annexed, by him to the continent. In the Hebrew language it is called rwx, "Tzur", or "Tzor", which signifies a "rock", being built on one; though some think it has its name from rwhx, "Tzehor", which signifies "brightness"; it is now called Sur or Suri, and is quite desolate, being only a receptacle of thieves and robbers: though R. Benjamin says, in his time, new Tyre was a very good city, and had a port within it, into which ships go between two towers; and that there were in it four hundred Jews, and some of them skilful in the Talmud; — who further observes, that if anyone ascended the walls of new Tyre, he might see Tyre the crowning city, (<232308>Isaiah 23:8) which was a stone's cast from the new; but if a man would go in a boat on the sea, he might see towers, streets, and palaces in the bottom [f1071]:

for there the ship was to unlade her burden; which she had taken in, in the ports where she had been, but where is not certain; for that she had been at Ephesus, and took in her lading there, as Grotius thinks, does not appear; since this was not the ship the apostle and his company sailed in from Miletus, but which they went aboard at Patara, (<442101>Acts 21:1,2).

Ver. 4. *And finding disciples*, etc.] At Tyre, for the Gospel had been preached in Phoenicia by the ministers of the word, who were scattered by the persecution raised at the death of Stephen; and here were brethren, such as had believed in Christ, embraced and professed his Gospel, and were baptized in his name; (see <441119>Acts 11:19, 15:3) and who also had extraordinary gifts, as appears by what follows; and there was no doubt a Gospel church founded in this place, though who presided over it in the first century, we have no account; in the "second" century there was a church here, and Cassius was bishop of it [f1072]; in the "third" century there were some martyrs in this place, who suffered under Dioclesian, and bore innumerable stripes with great courage and constancy, and after that fought with beasts, as bears, leopards, boars, and bulls, and at the same time Tyrannio, bishop of this church, also suffered martyrdom [f1073]; in the "fourth" century there was a synod at Tyre under Constantine, to which he wrote a letter [f1074]. There was a bishop of this church present at the council of Nice, in the times of the said emperor; in this age Paulinus and Dorotheus were bishops of Tyre; in the "fifth" century Irenaeus was bishop of Tyre, and then it was the metropolitan of Phoenicia; and in the "sixth" century, there was a bishop of the same church present at the fifth council

of Rome and Constantinople [f1075]. Of the bishops of Tyre in the several centuries, the learned Reland [f1076] gives a more particular account; according to him, Cassius, bishop of this church, was in the synod held at Caesarea, about the year 198. Paulinus, another bishop of Tyre, was in another council held at the same place, in the year 318. Zeno subscribed in the council of Nice, in the year 325, the first among the bishops of Phoenicia; Vitalis was in the council at Sardica, in the year 347. Uranius subscribed in the council held at Seleucia by the Semiarians, in the year 359; another Zeno bishop of this church was present at the second council at Constantinople, in the year 381; and mention is made of Photius bishop of Tyre, in the acts of the Chalcedon council, held in the year 451, as is also Eusebius in the acts of the council at Constantinople, in the year 553:

we tarried there seven days; either waiting for a ship to proceed on further; or in choice, to enjoy the conversation of the disciples, which was very delightful, and to confirm them in the faith:

who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem; not that the Spirit of God in these persons contradicted his own impulse in the apostle, by which he was moved to go to Jerusalem, (see ‹4402›Acts 20:22). The sense is, that these disciples, by the spirit of prophecy, knew that if the apostle went to Jerusalem, many evil things would befall him; wherefore of their own spirit, and out of love to him, they advise him not to go.

Ver. 5. *And when we had accomplished those days*, etc.] The seven days before mentioned:

we departed and went our way; from their quarters where they lodged, or from some one house of the disciples, where they met, and had conversed together:

and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city; that is, the disciples, even all of them that dwelt in that city, with their whole families, their wives and children, accompanied the apostle and those that were with him, through the streets of the city of Tyre, till they came out of it to the shore, where lay the ship they were to go aboard; and which was a mark of their affection and respect to the apostle, as well as a token of their public spirit, that they were not ashamed of Christ and his ministers, nor of their profession of the Gospel:

and we kneeled down on the shore and prayed; which was agreeably to the custom of the Jews, who had, as Tertullian observes [f1077], their "orationes litterales", their prayers at the sea shore; (see Gill on "Acts 16:13").

Ver. 6. *And when we had taken our leave one of another*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy reads, "having prayed, we saluted one another"; with a kiss, as in (Acts 20:37) and so parted:

we took ship; or went aboard the ship,

and they returned home again; to their own houses, as the Syriac version renders it; for by "their own", as it is in the Greek text, cannot be meant their families, their wives, and children, for these were along with them, but their habitations; (see John 16:32, 19:27).

Ver. 7. *And when we had finished our course from Tyre*, etc.] Or sailed from thence,

we came to Ptolemais: the Syriac version calls it "Aco" or "Acu": and the Arabic version, "Aco"; and Ptolemais, according to Pliny [f1078] and Harpocratian [f1079], was called Ace. Frequent mention is made of Aco in the Jewish writings, and which according to them was a sea port, for they speak of wk[d hlmn, "the port of Aco" [f1080], and of wk[d ypyk, "the banks of Aco" [f1081], or its rocks: it was upon the borders of the land of Israel, and in the tribe of Asher to the north of it; part of it they say was without the land, and part of it within [f1082]: according to R. Benjamin, it was one day's sail from Tyre, and who also says, it was upon the borders of Asher, and had a very spacious port [f1083]; it is said to be about two and thirty miles from Tyre; between that and Tyre, the shore was full of heaps of sand, from whence the sand that glass is made of was fetched; it is mentioned with Tyre, Sidon, and Galilee, in:

> "And said, They of Ptolemais, and of Tyrus, and Sidon, and all Galilee of the Gentiles, are assembled together against us to consume us." (1 Maccabees 5:15)

it had the mountainous part of Galilee on the east, the ladder of Tyre on the north, and Mount Carmel on the south, and thus it is described by Josephus [f1084]:

> "Ptolemais is a city of Galilee on the sea coast, built in a large champaign country, but is surrounded with mountains, on the east

> with the mountains of Galilee, sixty furlongs off; on the south with Carmel, distant a hundred and twenty furlongs; on the north with a very high mountain called the Climax, or ladder of the Tyrians, which is a hundred furlongs from it; two miles from the city runs a very small river called Beleus, near which is the sepulchre of Memnon, taking up the space of an hundred cubits, and is worthy of admiration; it is round and hollow (i.e. the river), casting up glassy sand, which ships in great numbers come and take up, and the place is filled up again."

The account Jerom [f1085] gives of it is,

> "Ptolemais, a maritime city in Judea, near Mount Carmel, which was formerly called so from one Ptolomy;"

from Ptolomy king of Egypt: it was called Ace or Aco, from its being a city of merchandise; though some say it was so called from Hercules being healed of the bite of a serpent, by an herb which grew near the river Beleus. It is now called St. John de Acra or Acri:

and saluted the brethren; that were at Ptolemais or Aco; for the Gospel had been preached here with success; some had believed and professed it, and very likely were in a church state: for there was a church here in the "second" century, and Clarus was bishop of it; and in the beginning of the "fourth" century, there was a bishop present in the synod at Nice; and in the "fifth" century there was a church here; in the time of Arcadius, the Emperor Antiochus was bishop of Ptolemais, a very eloquent man, called therefore by some Chrysostom; in the "sixth" century there was a bishop of this church, who assisted at the synod held both at Rome and Constantinople [f1086]. The bishops of this church are reckoned up, as Reland [f1087] says, as he found them thus; Clarus, who was in the council at Caesarea, held in the year 198; Aeneas, who was in the council at Nice, in the year 325, and in another at Antioch, in the year 341; Nectabus, who subscribed in the first council at Constantinople, held in the year 381; Paulus, who was present in the Chalcedon council in the year 451: and Joannes, who was in the council at Jerusalem, in the year 536: and perhaps these brethren might be Jews, since those who first preached the Gospel in Phoenicia preached only to Jews; and certain it is that there were many in this place; we often read of Jewish doctors here, as R. Tanchum the son of R. Chaja a man of Caphar Aco [f1088], and R. Simeon ben Judah a man of Caphar Aco [f1089], and R. Aba of Aco [f1090], and R. Judah ben Gamdah [f1091];

and in R. Benjamin's time, there were about two hundred Jews in this place [f1092]: these brethren Paul and his company visited, and saluted them;

and abode with them one day; conferring together about spiritual things, and employing their time, no doubt, in religious exercises.

Ver. 8. *And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed*, etc.] From Ptolemais, as Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Timotheus, Tychicus, Trophimus, and Luke, the writer of this history; (see <44204>Acts 20:4)

and came unto Caesarea; not Caesarea Philippi, mentioned in (<40163>Matthew 16:13) but that Caesarea which was formerly called Strato's tower, and was a very good sea port; (see <44040>Acts 8:40, 9:30, 10:1, 18:22).

and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist; not a writer of a Gospel, but a preacher of the Gospel, and perhaps not an ordinary one, but was one of those spoken of in (<49411>Ephesians 4:11) which was an office inferior to an apostle, and yet above an ordinary pastor and teacher; this man, very likely, was the same that taught in Samaria, and baptized the eunuch, and who after that settled at Caesarea; (see <44040>Acts 8:40).

which was one of the seven; of the seven deacons of the church at Jerusalem, (<44605>Acts 6:5) and abode with him; so long as they continued at Caesarea.

Ver. 9. *And the same man had four daughters*, etc.] So that he was a married man, which may be observed against the Papists, who forbid marriage to ecclesiastics: and they were,

virgins: not under any vow of virginity, but they had not as yet changed their state of life, and were pure and incorrupt:

which did prophesy; not explain and interpret Scripture, or preach in public assemblies; for these were not allowed women, neither in the Jewish synagogues, nor in Christian assemblies; but they were endowed with a gift of foretelling future events, as was promised such should have in Gospel times, (<29228>Joel 2:28).

Ver. 10. *And as we tarried there many days*, etc.] How many days is not said, it could not be very many, if the apostle got to Jerusalem by Pentecost, as he desired, (<44006>Acts 20:6,15,16, 21:4,7)

there came down from Judea a certain prophet named Agabus; of whom mention is made in (<44 11 28>Acts 11:28) who is there said to come from Jerusalem, to Antioch, and here from Judea to Caesarea; he had been many years going about from place to place prophesying, for between that and this account must be a space of about sixteen or seventeen years.

Ver. 11. *And when he was come unto us*, etc.] In Philip's house:

he took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet; and so prophesied by types and symbols, and gestures, as the prophets of old did; as Isaiah in (<23 20 02>Isaiah 20:2,3) and Jeremiah in (<24 13 01>Jeremiah 13:1-9, 27:2,3), and Ezekiel in (<26 04 01>Ezekiel 4:1-13, 12:3,7) and Hosea in (<28 01 02>Hosea 1:2,3), some understand this of his binding Paul's hands and feet, but it seems rather to design his own:

and said, thus saith the Holy Ghost; who was in Agabus, and spoke by him, and foretold some things to come to pass; and which did come to pass, and is a proof of the foreknowledge, and so of the deity of the blessed Spirit:

so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle; meaning Paul, and who accordingly was bound in like manner, a very little time after this; (see <44 21 33>Acts 21:33)

and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles; the Romans, as they afterwards did.

Ver. 12. *And when we heard these things*, etc.] These prophecies, concerning the binding of the apostle by the Jews, and the delivery of him to the Romans, and saw the symbolical representations of these things:

both we; the companions of the apostle, Luke and the rest:

and they of that place; of Caesarea, Philip and his daughters, and the disciples that lived there:

besought him not to go up to Jerusalem; which was an instance of weakness in them, though an expression of their affection to the apostle; in the disciples of Caesarea it might arise from pure love to him, and a concern for his safety, and the continuance of his useful life; and in his companions it might be owing partly to their sincere love to him, and partly to the fear of danger which they themselves might conclude they should be

exposed to; and this request was made with tears, as is evident from what follows.

Ver. 13. *Then Paul answered, what mean ye to weep*, etc.] For they were crying about him, both his companions and the disciples of Caesarea; which affected him, and gave him great uneasiness, even more than the prophecies of Agabus did:

and to break my heart? for though he was resolved to go to Jerusalem, and nothing could move him from it, his heart was firm as a rock; there was no shaking him, or making impressions upon him that way; yet their tears and importunity greatly afflicted him, and the more because he could by no means comply with their request:

for I am ready not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus; for as yet, he knew not but he should die there; it was revealed to him that he should be bound there, but it was not yet suggested to him where he should suffer death, whether there or elsewhere; and since he knew not but it might be there, he was ready for it; bonds were so far from distressing his mind, and deterring him from his intended journey, that death itself could not do it; which showed great intrepidity, courage, and firmness of mind.

Ver. 14. *And when he would not be persuaded*, etc.] But was determined to go to Jerusalem at all events:

we ceased; both from tears and arguments:

saying, the will of the Lord be done; which was right, and to which they ought to have submitted, and acquiesced in at first, without using any arguments to have dissuaded the apostle from going to Jerusalem; since they might have concluded from Agabus's prophecy, that it was the will of the Lord he should go thither, and be bound; and the revelation was made to him, not to deter him from it, and to take methods for his own safety, which his friends would have put him upon, but to acquaint him with the will of God, and make him still more certain of it, and to prepare for it, and this effect it had upon him. This will of the Lord, is not the will of the Lord revealed in his word, either respecting the salvation, sanctification, and final perseverance of the saints, which is always accomplished; "for who hath resisted his will", or can resist it, so as to frustrate his designs, or hinder these things taking place? or the duty which is to be performed by them, the good, perfect, and acceptable will of God, which every gracious

soul desires may be perfectly done, even as it is done in heaven: but here the secret will of God relating to the events of providence is designed, and which is the rule of all the divine proceedings; and though it is unknown to men, until facts make it appear, it is ever fulfilled, and sometimes by persons who have no regard to the revealed will of God; and should be continually thought of; and everything that is determined, or attempted to be done, should be resolved upon, and undertaken in submission to it; and whilst it is performing should be patiently bore, even in things not so agreeable to the minds and wills of men: it becomes saints to be still and acquiesce in it, when things are not so well with them in spiritual affairs as to be wished for; and when their worldly circumstances are not so thriving and flourishing; yea, though they may be attended with much poverty and meanness, and be reduced to so low a condition as Job was; as also when they part with their near and dear friends and relations by death, and with the ministers of the Gospel, who have been their spiritual fathers, instructors, and comforters; and even when they are called to suffer in the severest manner, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel: not that they are to be indolent, unconcerned, and unaffected, with things of this nature; nor should they neglect the means of having things otherwise with them; but it becomes them to exercise patience, faith, and courage, under every dispensation of providence; as knowing that what is done by the Lord is done well and wisely, and is for the good of them; and when the people of God are helped, to act such a part, they are the most comfortable in themselves, and to all that are about them; such a spirit and disposition is very commendable, and what makes men like to Christ, who in the most disagreeable circumstances submitted his will to his Father's. Beza's ancient copy reads, "the will of God"; and so the Arabic and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 15. *And after those days we took up our carriages*, etc.] Or prepared themselves, both for their journey, and for whatever trials and exercises they were to meet with; they took up their bundles, which hitherto were brought by sea, and now put them upon beasts, going by land from Caesarea:

and went up to Jerusalem; which stood on higher ground, and was, as Josephus [f1093] says, six hundred furlongs, or seventy five miles distant.

Ver. 16. *There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea*, etc.] Members of the church at Caesarea; of the church here, (see Gill on

“Acts 10:48”). To which may be added the account of the pastors or bishops of this church, as given by Reland [f1094]; Theophilus, who was in the council held at Caesarea, in the year 198; Agricola, who subscribed in the council at Ancyra, in the year 314; though some, he says, do not acknowledge this Agricola, but give the order of them after Theophilus thus; Theoctistus, Domnus, Theotecnus, Agapius, Eusebius; which last was in the council at Palestine, in the year 318, and in the council at Nice, in the year 325. Acacius succeeded him, and was in a little council at Seleucia, in the year 359, and in another at Antioch, in the year 363. Thalassius subscribed in the council at Constantinople, in the year 381. Eulogius, or perhaps Euzoius, was in the council at Diospolis, in the year 415. Glyco, bishop of this church, subscribed by Zozimus in the Chalcedon council, held in the year 451. Mention is made of Irenaeus, who presided over it in the acts of the same council; and Elias, another bishop of it, subscribed in the council at Jerusalem, in the year 536; and there is an account of John bishop of this church, in the acts of the council at Constantinople, in the year 553.

And brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus; the name of Mnason is Greek; there was one of this name among the disciples of Aristotle, who was of Phocea, or Phocis, a place in Greece [f1095]; and another called Mnaseas, which seems to be the same whom Ammonius [f1096] makes mention of; and we frequently read of Mnaseas, the name of an author in Greek writers, and Menestheus, in:

> “Now when Apollonius the son of Menestheus was sent into Egypt for the coronation of king Ptolemeus Philometor, Antiochus, understanding him not to be well affected to his affairs, provided for his own safety: whereupon he came to Joppa, and from thence to Jerusalem:” (2 Maccabees 4:21)

all which are so called from remembrance, and signify one that has a memory, is mindful of, and remembers things; so Zachariah with the Jews, is a name that is taken from remembrance, as this: some copies read Jasson, for Mnason. This Mnason was an

old disciple; not of Aristotle, or of his sect of philosophers, or any other, but of Jesus Christ; probably he might have seen Christ in the flesh, and he is by some thought to be one of the seventy disciples; or at least he might be one of those who became disciples and followers of Christ; through the ministry of Paul and Barnabas in that island, (Acts 13:4) though that

seems scarcely long enough ago, being but fifteen years before this time, to denominate him an old disciple:

with whom we should lodge; when come to Jerusalem; for though he was of the island of Cyprus, as Barnabas was, (<4436>Acts 4:36), yet he dwelt at Jerusalem; and if he was one of the seventy disciples, it should seem that he had not sold his house at Jerusalem, when others did; nor did all that had houses and land, nor were they obliged to do it; or he might have bought or hired one since; however, he had one at Jerusalem, and here the apostle and his company were fixed to lodge, during their stay there; and there was the more reason to provide for a lodging at this time, because of the feast of Pentecost, when the city was full of people: unless this is to be understood of any place by the way, where they should lodge; since Beza's ancient copy adds, "and coming to a certain village, we were with one Mnason".

Ver. 17. *And when we were come to Jerusalem*, etc.] That is, Paul and his companions, attended with the disciples of Caesarea, and Mnason the old disciple with them:

the brethren received us gladly; readily, willingly, and cheerfully; they did not treat them with an air of coldness and indifference, or look shy on them, or show any resentment to them, notwithstanding the various reports which had been brought them, concerning the ministry of the apostle among the Gentiles.

Ver. 18. *And the day following*, etc.] After they were come into Jerusalem:

Paul went in with us to James; not the son of Zebedee and brother of John, for he was killed by Herod some years ago; but James the son of Alphaeus, and brother of our Lord, who presided over this church; it seems there were no other apostles now at Jerusalem, but they were all dispersed abroad that were living, preaching the Gospel in the several parts of the world: Paul took the first opportunity Of paying a visit to James, very likely at his own house, to give him an account of his success among the Gentiles, and to know the state of the church at Jerusalem, and confer with him about what might be most proper and serviceable to promote the interest of Christ; and he took with him those who had been companions with him in his travels, partly to show respect to James, and partly to be witnesses of what he should relate unto him:

and all the elders were present: by whom are meant, not the ancient private members of the church, but the ministers of the word in this church: who hearing of the coming of the apostle, and of his visit to James, assembled together to see him, and converse with him.

Ver. 19. *And when he had saluted them*, etc.] James and the elders with him; which was either done by a kiss, as the Arabic version adds; or by asking of their health, and wishing a continuance of it, and all prosperity to attend them: the Ethiopic version reads,

they saluted him; and no doubt the salutations were reciprocal:

he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry; it is very likely that this account begins where that ends, which he had delivered in the presence of James, and others, some years ago, (<44512>Acts 15:12) and takes in all his travels and ministry, and the success of it; not only in Syria, Cilicia, and Lycaonia, after he had set out from Antioch again, but in Macedonia, Achaia, and Asia; as at Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, and elsewhere: he declared, what multitudes of souls were converted, and what numbers of churches were planted; and this he ascribes not to himself, but to the power and grace of God, which had attended his ministry; he was only an instrument, God was the efficient, and ought to have the glory.

Ver. 20. *And when they heard it*, etc.] The narrative of the wonderful spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles, and the numerous conversions of them:

they glorified the Lord; or "God", as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions read; as Paul ascribed all to God, so they give the glory of it to him, and in this they were both agreed:

and said unto him; perhaps James in the name of them all, and as their mouth:

thou seest, brother; for so he was to James, both as a believer, and a minister of the word, and as an apostle:

how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; there were many thousands converted at Jerusalem upon the first preaching of the Gospel, after Christ's ascension; (see <44241>Acts 2:41,47, 4:4,14, 6:7) and the number might be much increased since; though it may be, that reference is had not

only to the number of the members of the church at Jerusalem, but to all the believing Jews in Judea, who were now come up to Jerusalem, to keep the feast of Pentecost; since it is in the Greek, “how many myriads there are”, and one myriad contains ten thousand:

and they are all zealous of the law; of the law of Moses, of the ceremonial law, as Paul might see by their being at Jerusalem, to keep this feast; for though they believed in Jesus of Nazareth as the true Messiah, yet they had not light enough to see, that he was the sum and substance of all the ceremonies of the law, and that they all ended in him; and therefore were zealous in the observance of them, and could not bear to hear of their abrogation.

Ver. 21. *And they are informed of thee*, etc.] By persons that came from the several parts of the Gentile world, where the apostle had been preaching; and by letters which came from the Jews in those parts, who were no friends to the apostle’s ministry:

that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses: or “apostatize from Moses”; that is, the law of Moses; that he taught the Gentiles not to regard the rituals of the law of Moses gave them no uneasiness; but that he should teach the Jews that were scattered among the Gentiles, and as many of them that believed in Christ, to disregard and drop the observance of them, who had been always brought up in them, this they could not bear; and that the apostle so taught, they had credible information: particularly,

saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children; though this does not appear; it is true the apostle taught that circumcision was abolished, and that it was nothing; yea, that to submit to it as necessary to salvation, was hurtful and pernicious; but as a thing indifferent, he allowed of it among weak brethren; and in condescension to their weakness, did administer it himself; in which he became a Jew to the Jew, that he might gain some:

neither to walk after the customs; either of the law of Moses, meaning other rites there enjoined, besides circumcision; or of their fathers, and their country, the traditions of the elders, which as yet they had not got clear of; the disuse of old customs is not easily brought about, or it is not easy to bring persons off of them.

Ver. 22. *What is it therefore*? etc.] Is it true or not? or what must be done in this case? what method must be taken to remove these objections, and reconcile the minds of the people? the multitude must needs come together; either the whole church at Jerusalem, or the great confluence of people, even of believing Jews, that were come from all parts thither; there is no hindering of their coming together, to see the apostle, and to hear what he has to say to the objections against him, and complaints of him;

for they will hear that thou art come: this can never be kept a secret, and as soon as they hear it, they will flock in great numbers; they will come open mouthed, and be loud in their complaints, and it will be difficult to pacify them; there is danger in the case, the consequence may be bad; and therefore something must be done, to remove the opinion they had formed of the apostle, and the prejudice they had entertained against him; and therefore what follows is advised to.

Ver. 23. *Do therefore this that we say to thee*, etc.] This is said not as commanding, but as advising; and not to what was a duty, and necessary to be done as such, but as a point of prudence:

we have four men which have a vow on them; that is, there were four men who were of the church at Jerusalem, believers in Christ, but weak ones, who were zealous of the law, and bigots to it, and who had voluntarily vowed a vow of the Nazarites; (see <0602>Numbers 6:2).

Ver. 24. *Them take, and purify, thyself with them*, etc.] That is, join thyself to them, make one of their number, and attend to the rules prescribed to a Nazarite, who is to be holy to the Lord; and in case of any ceremonial uncleanness, is to be cleansed, or purified in the manner directed, (<0605>Numbers 6:5,8,9).

And be at charges with them; join with them in the expense, for the offerings to be made at the end of the vows, or when the days of separation are fulfilled, (<0603>Numbers 6:13-15).

That they may shave their heads; according to the law in (<0618>Numbers 6:18). This was done in µyryznh tkçl, the chamber of the Nazarites [f1097]; for there the Nazarites boiled their peace offerings, and shaved their hair, and put it under the pot, in the fire that was under it: Maimonides says [f1098],

> “if he shaved in the city it was excusable; but whether he shaved in the city or in the sanctuary, under the pot his hair must be cast; and he did not shave until the door of the court was opened, as it is said, “at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation”, (<0618>Numbers 6:18) not that he shaved over against the door, for that would be a contempt of the sanctuary.”

Moreover, it may be observed, that a person who had not made a vow, or fulfilled a Nazariteship himself, which was the apostle’s case, yet he might join in bearing the expenses of others, at the time of their shaving and cleansing: for so run the Jewish canons [f1099];

> “he that says, upon me be the shaving of a Nazarite, he is bound to bring the offerings of shaving for purification, and he may offer them by the hand of what Nazarite he pleases; he that says, upon me be half the offerings of a Nazarite, or if he says, upon me be half the shaving of a Nazarite, he brings half the offerings by what Nazarite he will, and that Nazarite perfects his offerings out of that which is his.”

That all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee are nothing; that there is no truth in them; that they are mere lies and calumnies; as they will easily judge by this single instance, in complying with the law concerning a Nazarite’s vow:

but that thou thyself walkest orderly, and keepest the law; and therefore can never be thought to teach others to walk disorderly, or to neglect the law, the rites and customs of it.

Ver. 25. *As touching the Gentiles which believe*, etc.] This is said, to show that the Jews were not offended with Paul, for not insisting upon the circumcision of the believing Gentiles, and their conformity to the ceremonial law; and to remove an objection that Paul might make, that should he comply with this advice, and the believing Gentiles should hear of it, it might be a stumblingblock and a snare to them; who by his example, might think themselves obliged to regard the law: Beza’s ancient copy adds, “they have nothing to say to thee”; for as it follows,

we have written and concluded; some years ago, at a meeting of the apostles, elders, and brethren at Jerusalem, when Paul was present; and of which he reminds him, to prevent any objection of this kind; where it was unanimously agreed on and determined,

that they observe no such things; as circumcision, and other rites and customs of the law, and particularly the vow of the Nazarite, which Gentiles are free from: hence it is said [f1100], ``Gentiles have no Nazariteship;"

upon which one of the commentators says [f1101], if a Gentile vows Nazariteship, the law of the Nazarite does not fall upon him, he is not obliged to it:

save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, etc. (see <44159>Acts 15:19,20,28,29).

Ver. 26. *Then Paul took the men*, etc.] The four men that had the vow on them; he joined himself to them, and put himself in the same condition, and under a like vow: this he did, not as what he thought himself bound to do in obedience to the law, and much less as necessary to salvation; but to satisfy weak minds, and remove their prejudices, that he might gain them, and be useful to them; and in such a case he would very easily and readily condescend; but when such like things were insisted upon as points of duty, and especially when urged as necessary to salvation, no one more stiffly opposed them:

and the next day purifying himself with them; that is, not separating himself along with them, from what they were obliged by the vow of the Nazarite, as from drinking of wine and shaving, and from everything that was unclean by the law; for this was now done, but cleansing himself afterwards with them: he

entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of the purification: the sense is, that when the days of separation were fulfilled, which the four men had vowed, as everyone might vow what time he pleased, he went to the priests in the temple, to signify it to them, that the time of their purification was expiring:

until that an offering should be offered for everyone of them; as the law directs in (<04613>Numbers 6:13-20) when he proposed to pay the charges of it, or at least part of it.

Ver. 27. *And when the seven days were almost ended*, etc.] The Syriac version renders it, "when the seventh day was come"; from the time that Paul came to Jerusalem: some understand this of the seven weeks from the passover to Pentecost, and that it was when they were almost ended, and

the day of Pentecost was at hand, for which Paul came up to Jerusalem; but rather, the seven days of purification of the Nazarites are meant:

the Jews which were of Asia; and it may be chiefly of Ephesus, the metropolis of Asia; who knew Paul there, and were his implacable enemies; for this is to be understood of the unbelieving Jews, who were come up to the feast of Pentecost:

when they saw him in the temple; where he was come to bring his offering, on account of his vow:

stirred up all the people; against the apostle; incensed them with stories about him, how that he was an opposer of Moses and his laws, and was now defiling the temple, by bringing in Heathens into it:

and laid hands on him; in a violent manner, and dragged him out of the temple.

Ver. 28. *Crying out, men of Israel, help*, etc.] The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, "help us"; to hold Paul, on whom they had laid their hands, and to assist in beating him: but why such an outcry for help against a single man, and he but little of stature, and weak in body, and so easily held and overpowered? it may be they chose to engage others with them, to give the greater countenance to their actions, and for their own security and protection, should they be opposed or called to an account;

this is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people; the people of the Jews, saying that they were not the only people of God; that God was the God of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews; that God had chosen, and called, and saved some of the one, as well as of the other; that the Gentiles shared in the favour of God, and the blessings of the Messiah; that the Gospel was to be preached to them, and a people taken out of them for his glory; and that the people of the Jews would be rejected for their unbelief and impenitence, and in a little time utterly destroyed as a nation; which, and the like, these Asiatic Jews interpreted as speaking against them; whereas no man had a stronger natural affection for his countrymen, or a more eager and importunate desire for their spiritual and eternal welfare, than the apostle had;

and the law; the law of Moses, both moral and ceremonial; for they not only were displeased with him for asserting the abrogation of the latter, but traduced him as an enemy to the former; representing him as an

Antinomian, because he denied justification to be by the works of the law, and asserted Christ to be the end of the law for righteousness; whereas he was so far from making void the law hereby, that he established it, and secured the rights and honours of it; yea, they went further, and represented him as a libertine, saying, let us do evil that good may come; but this was all calumny:

and this place: meaning the temple, in which they then were; the Alexandrian copy reads, “this holy place”; as it is expressed in a following clause; the reason of this charge was, because that he had taught, that the sacrifices of God were the sacrifices of prayer and of praise, and that these were to be offered up in every place; and that divine service and religious worship were not tied to the temple at Jerusalem, but that, agreeably to the doctrine of Christ, men might worship the Father anywhere, and lift up holy hands in every place; and perhaps he might have asserted, that the temple of Jerusalem would be destroyed in a short time, as Christ had predicted:

and further, brought Greeks also unto the temple, and hath polluted this holy place; that part of the temple, which they supposed Paul had brought Greeks or Gentiles into, could not be the most holy place, for into that only the high priest went, once a year; nor that part of the holy place called the court of the priests, for into that only priests went, and other Israelites were not admitted, unless on some particular occasions; as to lay hands on the sacrifice, for the slaying of it, or waving some part of it [f1102]; but it must be either the court of the Israelites, or the court of the women, into which Paul, with the four men that had the vow, entered; and as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, it was the latter; for in, the south east of this court was the Nazarite’s chamber, in which they boiled their peace offerings, shaved their heads, and put the hair under the pot [f1103]: now though Gentiles might come into the mountain of the house, which was all the outmost circumambient space within the wall, which encompassed the whole area, yet they might not come into any of these courts, no, nor even into what they call the “Chel”; for they say, that the Chel is more holy than the mountain of the house, because no Gentile, or one defiled with the dead, enters there [f1104]; now the Chel was an enclosure before these courts, and at the entrance into it pillars were erected, and upon them were inscriptions in Greek and Latin, signifying that no strangers should enter into the holy place [f1105].

Ver. 29. *For they had seen before with him in the city*, etc.] Not of Ephesus, but of Jerusalem:

Trophimus an Ephesian; the same that is mentioned in (Acts 20:4) whom these Jews of Asia, and who very probably were inhabitants of Ephesus, knew very well to be a Gentile:

whom they supposed Paul had brought into the temple; for seeing him walk with the apostle very familiarly through the streets of Jerusalem, they concluded from thence, that he took him with him into the temple, which was a very rash and ill grounded conclusion; and which shows the malignity and virulence of their minds, and how ready they were to make use of any opportunity, and take up any occasion against him, even a bare surmise, and which had no show of probability in it; for it can never be thought, that while Paul was using methods to remove the prejudices of the Jews against him, he should take such a step as this, to introduce a Gentile into the holy place, which he knew was unlawful, and would greatly irritate and provoke them.

Ver. 30. *And all the city was moved, and the people ran together*, etc.] The outcry in the temple reached the ears of some that were without, and these alarmed others; so that the report of a disturbance in the temple soon went through the whole city; and brought people out of their houses, who ran together in great numbers, to see what was the matter:

and they took Paul and drew him out of the temple; as unworthy to be in that holy place; and that it might not be defiled with his blood; for their intention was nothing less than to take away his life:

and forthwith the doors were shut; not of themselves, as if there was something miraculous in it, as some have thought, but by the door keepers, the Levites; and which might be done, partly to prevent Paul's returning into it for refuge at the horns of the altar, and partly to keep out the Gentiles from coming in, they were alarmed with.

Ver. 31. *And as they went about to kill him*, etc.] In the manner as zealots did, without bringing him before any court of judicature, without any charge, trial, and condemnation:

tidings came unto the chief captain of the band; the Roman band of soldiers, who were placed near the temple, to keep the peace of the city, and persons in order; and who were more especially needful, at such a time

as the feast of Pentecost, when there was such a great concourse of people in the city, and indeed always were in arms at such times [f1106]; this chief captain was Claudius Lysias, as appears from (<4236>Acts 23:26) to him the report of the disturbance was brought; or as it is in the Greek text, the "fame ascended" to him; who very likely might be in the tower of Antonia, which joined to the temple:

that all Jerusalem was in an uproar; or in confusion, and therefore it became him, as a Roman officer, to take care to quell it, lest it should issue in sedition and rebellion.

Ver. 32. *Who immediately took soldiers and centurions*, etc.] A very large number of soldiers, for they are called an army, in (<4237>Acts 23:27) with a sufficient number of officers called centurions, who were each of them over an hundred men, to command them, and put them in order:

and ran down unto them: from the tower to the temple, the outer part of it; perhaps the mountain of the house, where they had dragged Paul, and were beating him; hither the captain, with his officers and soldiers, came in great haste; all which shows his vigilance, prudence, and quick dispatch; and in which there was a remarkable appearance of divine providence in favour of the apostle, who otherwise in all likelihood would have quickly lost his life:

and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers; coming down upon them in great haste, with sword in hand:

they left beating of Paul; this beating was what the Jews call tydrm twkm, "the rebels' beating"; or beating, on account of rebellion and obstinacy; and differed from whipping or scourging, which was done by the order of the sanhedrim, and in measure with forty stripes save one; but this beating was without any order from a court of judicature, and was without measure and mercy: this was inflicted upon various offenders, particularly on such who received not admonitions given them, or transgressed by doing what was forbidden by the words of the wise men [f1107]; or if any defiled person entered into the court of the women; and such the people would fall upon at once, and beat them unmercifully with their fists, or with clubs and staves, and which often issued in death; so, for instance, when a priest ministered in his uncleanness, his brethren the priests did not bring him to the sanhedrim, but the young priests brought him without the court, and dashed his brains out with clubs [f1108]

Ver. 33. *Then the chief captain came near*, etc.] To the place where the Jews were beating Paul:

and took him the Arabic version adds, “from them”; he rescued him out of their hands, as he himself says, (<442327>Acts 23:27).

And commanded him to be bound with two chains: partly to appease the people, and partly to secure Paul; who, he supposed, had been guilty of some misdemeanour, which had occasioned this tumult; these two chains were put, one on one arm, and the other on the other arm; and were fastened to two soldiers, who walked by him, having hold on those chains, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left; and thus Agabus’s prophecy in (<442111>Acts 21:11) was fulfilled:

and demanded who he was; or asked and inquired about him, who he was, of what nation he was, what was his character, business, and employment: this inquiry was made, either of the apostle himself, or of the people; and so the Arabic version renders it, “he inquired of them who he was”; also

and what he had done; what crime he had been guilty of, that they used him in such a manner.

Ver. 34. *And some cried one thing, and some another, among the multitude*, etc.] For though they agreed to beat him, and even to kill him, yet some of them knew not for what; being led by a blind zeal for Moses, the law and temple, or rather by fury and madness:

and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult; could not come at the truth of the matter, or any certain knowledge of it, not anything that could be depended upon, because of the noise of the people, and the different notes they were in:

he commanded him to be carried into the castle; of Antonio, formerly called Baris, of which Josephus [f1109] gives this account;

> “on the north side (of the wall) was built a four square tower, well fortified and strong; this the kings and priests of the Asmonaean race, who were before Herod, built, and called it Baris; that there the priestly robe might be laid up by them, which the high priest only wore, when he was concerned in divine service:”

this tower King Herod made more strong, for the security and preservation of the temple; and called it Antonia, for the sake of Antony his friend, and

the general of the Romans: the description of it, as given by Dr. Lightfoot [f1110], which is collected by him out of Josephus and other writers, is this;

> "upon the north side, and joining up to the western angle (but on the outside of the wall), stood the tower of Antonia, once the place where the high priests used to lay up their holy garments; but in after times a garrison of Roman soldiers, for the a wing of the temple: when it served for the former use, it was called Baris (it may be from רבד, "ad extra", because it was an outer building), but when for the latter, it bare the name of Antonia; Herod the great having sumptuously repaired and called it after the name of the Roman prince Antony: it stood upon the north west point of Moriah, and was a very strong and a very large pile; so spacious a building with all its appurtenances, that it took up to two furlongs' compass; the rock it stood upon was fifty cubits high, and steep, and the building itself was forty cubits above it; it was four square, encompassed with a wall of three cubits high, which enclosed its courts, and had a turret at every corner, like the white tower at London; but that it was more spacious, and that the turrets were not all of an height; for those at the north east and north west corners were fifty cubits high, but those on the south east and south west were seventy cubits high, that they might fully overlook the temple: it had cloisters or walks about it, and baths and lodgings, and large rooms in it; so that it was at once like a castle, and like a palace. There was a passage out of it, into the north and west cloisters of the mountain of the house, and by that the Roman garrison soldiers went down at every festival of the Jews, to take care against tumults and seditions, in those great concourses of the people."

And it was by this passage that the chief captain, with the centurions and soldiers, came down so quickly and suddenly upon the Jews, while they were beating Paul in the temple; and this castle being on such an eminence as described, hence he with the soldiers is said to run down, (<4213>Acts 21:32) And it was in this way that the apostle was led up to the castle.

Ver. 35. *And when he came upon the stairs*, etc.] Or steps, which led up to the castle; for it was built upon a very high place, as appears from the account of it in the preceding verse; to which agrees what Aristaeas [f1111] says of it in the following words;

> “in order to have knowledge of all things, we went up to a castle adjoining to the city, which is situated in a very high place, fortified with very high towers, built with large stones, as we supposed for the preservation of the places about the temple, if there should be any lying in wait, or tumult, or enemies should enter; so that none might be able to make way in at the walls about the temple; for in the towers of the castle lay very sharp darts and various instruments, and the place was upon a very great eminence.”

So it was that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people: the sense is, either that the crowd of the people was so great, and they so pressed upon Paul and the soldiers that conducted him, that he was even thrown upon them, and bore up by them; or else such was the rage of the people against him, that the soldiers were obliged to take him up in their arms, and carry him, in order to secure him from being tore in pieces by them.

Ver. 36. *For the multitude of the people followed after*, etc.] The captain and the soldiers, who had taken away Paul from them, and were carrying him to the castle:

crying, away with him; or “take him away”, that is, by death; or “lift him up”, upon the cross, crucify him, crucify him, as they said concerning Christ.

Ver. 37. *And as Paul was to be led into the castle*, etc.] Just as he was got up to the top of the steps, or stairs, that led up to the castle, and was about to go into the door of it:

he said unto the chief captain, may I speak unto thee? the apostle was one that had had a good education, and was a man of address, and this his modest and respectful way of speaking to the chief captain shows; and the question he put to him, was in the Greek language: hence it follows,

who said to him, canst thou speak Greek? or “dost thou know the Hellenistic language?” which the Jews who were born and lived in Greece spoke; hence such were called Hellenists; (see <440601>Acts 6:1) of this language we read in the Talmud [f1112]:

> “R. Levi bar Chajethah went to Caesarea, and heard them reading “Shema”, (hear O Israel), etc. (<051004>Deuteronomy 6:4) ˆytsynwla in the Hellenistic language; he sought to hinder them; R. Rose heard

of it, and was angry; and said, he that knows not to read in the Hebrew language, must he not read at all? yea, he may read in whatsoever language he understands."

The nearest to this language spoken by the Jews dispersed in Greece, must be the Greek language, in which Jews have written; as the books of the Old Testament translated by the "seventy" interpreters, who were Jews; and indeed it was this Bible which the Jews called Hellenists made use of; and the writings of Josephus, and Philo the Jew of Alexandria, and even the books of the New Testament, which are written by Jews; and Paul being a Jew of Tarsus, and so an Hellenist, could speak this language; as he did, when he disputed against the Hellenists, in (Acts 9:29). This the chief captain said, either as wondering to hear him speak Greek, when he thought he had been a Jerusalem Jew, or rather an Egyptian, as in the next verse; or it may be he put this question to him, as choosing rather that he should speak in Greek, it being the language he might best understand himself, and was the least known to the people, who he might not care should hear what he had to say; since if he took him for the Egyptian, the Greek tongue was what was chiefly spoken by such.

Ver. 38. *Art thou not that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar*, etc.] Josephus speaks [f1113] of one that came out of Egypt to Jerusalem, and gave out that he was a prophet, and deceived the people, whom he persuaded to follow him to the Mount of Olives, where they should see the walls of the city fall at his command, and so through the ruins of it they might enter into the city; but Felix the Roman governor fell upon them, killed four hundred, and took two hundred prisoners, and the Egyptian fled: the account which he elsewhere [f1114] gives of him, and Eusebius [f1115] from him, is this; a certain Egyptian false prophet did much more mischief to the Jews; for he being a magician, and having got himself to be believed as a prophet, came into the country (of Judea), and gathered together about thirty thousand persons, whom he had deceived: these he brought out of the wilderness to the Mount of Olives, from thence designing to take Jerusalem by force, and seize the Roman garrison, and take the government of the people but Felix prevented his design, meeting him with the Roman soldiers, assisted by all the people; so that when they engaged, the Egyptian fled with a few, and most of those that were with him were destroyed or taken: now it was some little time before this, that this affair happened; and by these accounts of Josephus, though the Egyptian was discomfited, yet he was not taken; he had made his escape,

so that he might be yet in being; and therefore the captain could not tell but Paul might be he, who had privately got into the city, and was upon some bad designs:

and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers? Josephus says, that he brought them out of the wilderness, or led them through it to the Mount of Olives, from thence to rush into Jerusalem, when the walls should fall down at his command; but he says, the number of men that he led out were about thirty thousand; it may be at first there were no more than four thousand, but afterwards were joined by others, and increased to thirty thousand; or among these thirty thousand, he had four thousand "murderers, or sicarii": so called from the little swords which they carried under their clothes, and with them killed men in the daytime, in the middle of the city, especially at the feasts, when they mingled themselves with the people [f1116].

Ver. 39. *But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus*, etc.] And not that Egyptian; he was not of that country, much less that man; but a Jew, both by birth and religion; he was born of Jewish parents, and brought up in the Jewish religion; though his native place was Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, where it is placed by Pliny [f1117], Ptolomy [f1118], and Mela [f1119]; and is by some thought to be the same with the Tarshish of the Old Testament:

a citizen of no mean city; Pliny [f1120] calls it a free city, and Solinus [f1121] says it is the mother, or chief of cities, and Curtius [f1122] speaks of it as a very opulent one; which when Alexander drew near to with his army, the inhabitants of it set fire to, that he might not possess their riches; which he understanding, sent Parmenio to prevent it: through this city, as the same historian, in agreement with Pliny and others, observes, ran the river Cydnus; and it being summer time when Alexander was here, and very hot weather, and being covered with dust and sweat, he put off his clothes, and cast himself into the river to wash himself; but as soon as he was in, he was seized with such a numbness of his nerves, that had he not been immediately taken out by his soldiers, and for the extraordinary care of his physician, he had at once expired. Josephus [f1123] calls this city the most famous of the cities in Gallicia; and derives it, and the whole country, from Tarshish, the grandson of Japheth, (<0104>Genesis 10:4) his words are,

> "Tharsus gave name to the Tharsians, for so Cilicia was formerly called, of which this is an evidence; for the most famous of the

cities with them, and which is the metropolis, is called Tarsus; Theta being changed into Tau for appellation sake."

Though some say it was built by Perseus, the son of Jupiter and Danae, and called Tharsus, of the hyacinth stone, which is said to be found about it: others think it was so called, παρα το τερσανψηναι, because the places of this country were first dried up after the flood: it was not only a city of stately buildings, as it was repaired by Sardanapalus, and increased after the times of Alexander; but there was a famous academy in it, which, for men of learning, exceeded Athens and Alexandria [f1124]; though these exceeded that in number of philosophers: here it is thought lived Aratus the poet, from whom the apostle cites a passage, in (<441728>Acts 17:28) and of this place was the famous Chrysippus, who is called ταρσευς, "a Tarsian" [f1125], as the apostle is here. Hermogenes, a very celebrated rhetorician, some of whose works are still extant, came from hence [f1126]. Jerom [f1127] reports it as a tradition, that the parents of the Apostle Paul were of Giscalis, a town in Judea; which with the whole province being destroyed by the Romans, they removed to Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, whither Paul when a young man followed them; but certain it is, that the apostle was born there, as he himself says, in (<442203>Acts 22:3). Ignatius, in [f1128] the "second" century, writing to the church at Tarsus, calls them citizens and disciples of Paul; citizens, because he was of this city; and disciples, because of the same faith with him; and very likely the first materials of the church in this place were converts of his; since it is evident that he went hither after he was a preacher; (see <441130>Acts 9:30, 11:25).

And I beseech thee suffer me to speak unto the people; first he desired to speak with the captain, and that was in order to obtain leave to speak to the people; and which he asks in a very handsome and submissive manner, and hopes to have his request granted him, since he was not the person he took him for, but was a Jew by birth, and a citizen of a very considerable Roman city; and was not a mean, sordid, vagabond creature, nor need he fear that he would sow any discord and sedition among the people.

Ver. 40. *And when he had given him licence*, etc.] To speak to the people, which he could not well deny him, after he had so freely declared who he was, and in so courteous a manner addressed him, and asked leave of him:

Paul stood on the stairs; on the steps of the ascent to the castle, on the top of them:

and beckoned with the hand unto the people; to desire silence, which he might be able to do, notwithstanding his chains; for his being bound with a chain to a soldier, did not hinder the moving and lifting up of his hand:

and when there was made a great silence; either through the authority of the captain, who might command it, or through the desire of the people, to hear what he could say for himself:

he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue; which the people he spoke to best understood, and was his own mother tongue; the Alexandrian copy reads, “in his own dialect”; this was not pure Hebrew that was spoke in common in those times, but the Syro-Chaldean language:

saying; as in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 22

Ver. 1. *Men, brethren, and fathers*, etc.] A common form of address used by the Jews; (see <4407 02>Acts 7:2) but that the apostle should introduce his speech to these people in this manner, after they had treated him so inhumanly, as to drag him out of the temple, and beat him so unmercifully, is remarkable, and worthy of observation, when they scarcely deserved the name of "men"; and yet he not only gives them this, but calls them "brethren", they being his countrymen and kinsmen according to the flesh; and fathers, there being some among them, who might be men in years, and even members of the sanhedrim, and elders of the people, that were now got among the crowd: this shows how ready the apostle was to put up with affronts, and to forgive injuries done him:

hear ye my defence, which I make now unto you; in opposition to the charges brought against him, of speaking ill of the people of the Jews, the law of Moses, and of the temple, and in order to clear himself of these imputations, and vindicate his character and conduct.

Ver. 2. *And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them*, etc.] (see Gill on "<4404 0>Acts 21:40").

they kept the more silence; it being their mother tongue, and which they best understood; and which the captain and the Roman soldiers might not so well under stand; and chiefly because the Hellenistic language was not so agreeable to them, nor the Hellenistic Jews, who spoke the Greek language, and used the Greek version of the Bible; and such an one they took Paul to be, besides his being a Christian; wherefore when they heard him speak in the Hebrew tongue, it conciliated their minds more to him, at least engaged their attention the more to what he was about to say:

and he saith; the Syriac and Ethiopic versions add, "to them", as follows.

Ver. 3. *I am verily a man which am a Jew*, etc.] By birth, a thorough genuine one; an Hebrew of the Hebrews, both by father and mother side,

both parents being Jews, and so a true descendant from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:

born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia; (see Gill on "<4409>Acts 21:39").

yet brought up in this city; the city of Jerusalem; though Tarsus was the place of his birth, he had his education at Jerusalem:

at the feet of Gamaliel; of whom (see <4034>Acts 5:34) it was the custom of scholars among the Jews, to sit at the feet of their masters, when instructed by them; (see <5303>Deuteronomy 33:3) hence that saying of Jose ben Joezer [f1129];

> "let thy house be an house of resort for the wise men, and be thou dusting thyself, µhylgr rp[b, "with the dust of their feet":"

which by one of their commentators [f1130] is interpreted two ways, either

> "as if it was said that thou shouldst walk after them; for he that walks raises the dust with his feet, and he that goes after him is filled with the dust which he raises with his feet; or else that thou shouldst sit at their feet upon the ground, for so it was usual, that the master sat upon a bench, and the scholars sat at his feet upon the floor."

This latter sense is commonly understood, and adapted to the passage here, as illustrating it; though it may be, that the sense may only be this, that the apostle boarded in Gamaliel's house, ate at his table, and familiarly conversed with him; which he modestly expresses by being brought up at his feet, who was a man that was had in great reverence with the Jews; and this sense seems the rather to be the sense of the passage, since his learning is expressed in the next clause; and since; till after Gamaliel's time, it was not usual for scholars to sit when they learned; for the tradition is [f1131], that

> "from the times of Moses to Rabban Gamaliel, they (the scholars) did not learn the law but standing; after Rabban Gamaliel died, sickness came into the world, and they learned the law sitting; and hence it is said, that after Rabban Gamaliel died, the glory of the law ceased."

It follows,

[and] taught according to the perfect law of the fathers; not the law which the Jewish fathers received from Moses, though Paul was instructed in this, but in the oral law, the "Misna", or traditions of the elders, in which he greatly profited, and exceeded others, (⁴⁸⁰¹⁴Galatians 1:14).

And was zealous towards God; or "a zealot of God"; one of those who were called "Kanaim", or zealots; who in their great zeal for the glory of God, took away the lives of men, when they found them guilty of what they judged a capital crime; (see ⁴⁰¹⁰⁴Matthew 10:4, ⁴³⁶⁰²John 16:2). The Vulgate Latin version reads, "zealous of the law"; both written and oral, the law of Moses, and the traditions of the fathers:

as ye all are this day; having a zeal for God, and the law, but not according to knowledge.

Ver. 4. *And I persecuted this way unto the death*, etc.] That is, the Christian religion, and the professors of it; whom the apostle breathed out threatenings and slaughter against, haled out of their houses, and committed to prison; consented to their death, as he did to Stephen's; and whenever it was put to the vote, whether they should die or not, he gave his voice against them; so that he was a most bitter enemy, and an implacable persecutor of them; which shows how very averse he was to this way, and how great his prejudices were against it; wherefore it must be a work of divine power, and there must be the singular hand of God in it, to reconcile him to it, and cause him to embrace and profess it:

binding and delivering into prisons, both men and women: (see ⁴⁴⁰⁰³Acts 8:3, 9:2).

Ver. 5. *As also the high priest doth bear me witness*, etc.] Either Annas, or Caiaphas, who was at that time high priest; and it should seem by this, that he was still in being; or else that the apostle had preserved his letter, written with his own hand, which he was able to produce at any time, as a testimony of the truth of what he had said, or was about to say; since he speaks of him (as now) bearing him witness, or as one that could:

and all the estate of the elders; the whole Jewish sanhedrim, for this character respects not men in years, but men in office, and such who were members of the high court of judicature in Jerusalem;

from whom also I received letters unto the brethren; some render it "against the brethren", as if the Christians were meant; whereas the apostle

intends the Jews of the synagogue at Damascus, whom the apostle calls brethren; because they were of the same nation, and his kinsmen according to the flesh; and, at that time, of the same religion and principles with him; and this is put out of doubt, by the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, which render it, “the brethren that were at Damascus”: and these letters were to recommend him to them, and to empower him to persecute the Christians, and to demand and require their assistance in it; the Ethiopic version calls them, “letters of power”; and it seems from hence, that these letters were received from the whole sanhedrim, as well as from the high priest, and were signed by both:

and went to Damascus to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished: with stripes, or with death, as they should be judged worthy; (see <4409>Acts 9:2).

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, that as I made my journey*, etc.] And had almost made an end of it:

and was come nigh unto Damascus; about a mile from it, as some say,

about noon; this circumstance is omitted in the account in (<4409>Acts 9:3) and is mentioned here, not so much to inform what time of day it was, that Saul came to Damascus, as to observe how extraordinary that light must be, which then appeared, as follows:

suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me; and not only about him, but those that were with him, (<4463>Acts 26:13). This must be a great light indeed, to be distinguished at noon, and to be above the brightness of the sun, and to have such effect upon the apostle and his company as it had; (<4409>Acts 9:3).

Ver. 7. *And I fell unto the ground*, etc.] And so did those that were with him, (<4464>Acts 26:14).

And heard a voice, saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? (See Gill on “<4409>Acts 9:4”).

Ver. 8. *And I answered, who art thou, Lord*? etc.] (See Gill on “<4409>Acts 9:5”).

Ver. 9. *And they that were with me saw indeed the light*, etc.] For it shone about them, as well as Saul:

and were afraid; the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions, have not this clause; but it stands in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; the suddenness, greatness, and extraordinariness of the light surprised them, for it was even miraculous:

but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me: they heard the voice of Saul, but not the voice of Christ; at least they did not hear it so as to understand it; (see Gill on "Acts 9:7").

Ver. 10. *And I said, what shall I do, Lord*? etc.] (See Gill on "Acts 9:6").

Ver. 11. *And when I could not see for the glory of that light*, etc.] Which was above the brightness of the sun, and so dazzled his eyes, that he could not see his way into the city, some of his company took him by the hand, and led him: and

being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came unto Damascus but not with the same view he set out with: he took his journey thither, and pursued it, in order to persecute the saints there; but now he enters into it, to be informed by one of them what he must do for Christ, whom he had persecuted.

Ver. 12. *And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and Vulgate Latin version, read only, "a man according to the law"; one whose walk, life, and conversation, were agreeable to it: a strict observer of the law of Moses, both moral and ceremonial: he not only lived a holy life and conversation, according to the moral law, but he religiously and devoutly attended to the rituals of the ceremonial law; and this part of his character the apostle chose to mention, as what would recommend him to the notice of the Jews he now addressed: for though he was a disciple, a believer in Christ, yet as many of the believing Jews did, so he strictly observed the rituals of the law. The Ethiopic version adds, "who was of the apostles"; one of that number, and in that office, which is nowhere said that he was; and had he, it would not have been agreeable to the apostle's design to have mentioned it; and he is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and bishop or pastor of the church at Damascus; (see Gill on "Luke 10:1"). Of this Ananias, his name and character, (see Gill on "Acts 9:10").

Having a good report of all the Jews that dwelt there: that is, at Damascus, as the Ethiopic version reads; and so do the Complutensian

edition, the Alexandrian copy, and several other copies; for though he was a Christian, yet being not only a man of an unblemished life and conversation, but zealous and devout in the observance of the ceremonial law, was very much interested in the affections and esteem of the Jews.

Ver. 13. *Came unto me*, etc.] Being at the house of Judas, in that street of Damascus called Straight, (<4409 11>Acts 9:11) and stood; at the side of him, or by him, putting his hands on him:

and said unto me, brother Saul; (see Gill on "<4409 17>Acts 9:17").

receive thy sight, "or look up",

and the same hour I looked up upon him; that is, immediately, directly: for so the phrase, "that same hour", is frequently used by the Jews: the words in (<0416 21>Numbers 16:21) "that I may consume them in a moment", are rendered by Onkelos, "that I may consume them in an hour"; for an hour is used for a moment with them.

Ver. 14. *And he said, the God of our fathers hath chosen thee*, etc.] From all eternity, in his everlasting purposes and decrees; or "he hath taken thee into his hand"; in order to form, and fit, and qualify him for his service; and may design both his call by grace, and to apostleship. The apostle represents Ananias as speaking of God, as the God of the Jewish fathers, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to show that the Christian doctrine was not contrary to the faith of the one God of Israel; nor did it introduce any other, or any new deity. The ends of this choice or separation were,

that thou shouldest know his will; his revealed will, concerning the salvation of men by Jesus Christ, which is no other than the Gospel, of which the apostle had been entirely ignorant; for though he knew the will of God, as revealed in the law, or his will of command, yet not spiritually; and he was altogether a stranger, till now, to God's will, way, and method of saving sinners by Christ, of justifying them by his righteousness, and of pardoning their sins through his blood, and of giving them eternal life by him; and the knowledge of this he came at by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in consequence of his being chosen and called:

and see that just One: Jesus Christ the righteous, who is both as he is God, and as he is man, and also as he is Mediator, having faithfully discharged his office, and performed his engagements; him the apostle saw, both with the eyes of his body, when he met him in the way, and called unto him, and

with the eyes of his understanding beholding his beauty, fulness, and suitableness as a Saviour; the former of these was what many kings, prophets, and righteous men desired: and the latter is what is inseparably connected with eternal life and salvation.

And shouldest hear the voice of his mouth; both his human voice in articulate sounds, when he spoke to him in the Hebrew tongue, as in (Acts 22:7) and the voice of his Gospel, of which he appeared to make him a minister; which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation, and is very powerful when accompanied by the Spirit, and is soul charming, alluring, and comforting.

Ver. 15. *For thou shalt be his witness unto all men*, etc.] Gentiles as well as Jews, an eye and an ear witness to them;

of what thou hast seen and heard; as that he saw him personally and alive, and so could witness to the truth of his resurrection; for after he had been seen by all the apostles, he was last of all seen of Paul; and also, that he heard him and received from him the Gospel, and a mission and commission to preach it; for what he preached he did not receive of man, nor was he taught it by any, but he had it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

Ver. 16. *And now why tarriest thou*? etc.] Though it might not be the apostle's case, yet it is often the case of many, to procrastinate and delay obedience to the commands of Christ, and particularly to the ordinance of baptism: the reasons of which delay are, the strength of their corruptions, and the weakness of their graces, which cause them to question whether they have any interest in Christ; as also fears of falling away, and so of dishonouring Christ, his Gospel, and ordinance: and in some the reproaches of men; and sometimes such a delay is made, waiting for more comfortable frames, or for a greater fitness; but no such delay, nor on such accounts, ought to be; for it is a command of Christ, and ought to be forthwith complied with, as soon as a man believes; and to obey it is a following of Christ, in which no time should be lost: and the consequences of a delay are very bad: it is a prevention of the glory of Christ, as well as shows ingratitude to him, and a bereaving of ourselves of that comfort, which might be hoped to be enjoyed; and it often induces a carelessness about the ordinance, and even a losing the sense of the duty:

arise, and be baptized; this shows that Ananias was a Christian, since he directs to an ordinance of Christ, and that he was a preacher of the word,

and had a right to administer baptism; for that it was administered by him, though not in express terms yet seems to be naturally concluded from (<4409 18>Acts 9:18) as also this passage shows, that baptism was not administered by sprinkling, since Saul might have sat still, and have had some water brought to him, and sprinkled on him; but by immersion, seeing he is called upon to arise, and go to some place proper and convenient for the administration of it, according to the usage of John, and the apostles of Christ. “And wash away thy sins”; or “be washed from thy sins”; not that it is in the power of man to cleanse himself from his sins; the Ethiopian may as soon change his skin, or the leopard his spots, as a creature do this; nor is there any such efficacy in baptism as to remove the filth of sin; persons may submit unto it, and yet be as Simon Magus was, in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity; but the ordinance of baptism, may be, and sometimes is, a means of leading the faith of God’s children to the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin;

calling on the name of the Lord; the name of the Lord is not only to be used by the administrator of baptism in the performance of it; but it should be called upon by the person who submits to it, both before and at the administration of it, for the presence of Christ in it; and this invocation of the name of the Lord in baptism, signifies an exercise of faith in Christ at this time, a profession of him, and obedience to him.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, that when I was come again to Jerusalem*, etc.] Which was three years after his conversion; for he did not immediately return to Jerusalem, but went into Arabia; and when he returned to Damascus, which was three years after he came to Jerusalem; (see <4801 17>Galatians 1:17,18)

even while I prayed in the temple; the temple was an house of prayer; hither persons resorted for that purpose; and as the apostle had been used to it, he continued this custom, and during the time of prayer he fell into an ecstasy:

I was in a trance: and knew not whether he was in the body, or out of the body: whether this was the time he refers to in (<4712 12>2 Corinthians 12:2) is not certain, though probable.

Ver. 18. *And I saw him saying unto me*, etc.] That is, the Lord Jesus Christ, that just One, whom he had seen in his way to Damascus, and

whose voice he had heard, and whose name he had called upon at his baptism:

make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: not because his life was in danger, but because Christ had work for him to do elsewhere, which required haste; and that he might not continue here useless and unprofitable, as he would have been, had he staid;

for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me; Christ the omniscient God, and the searcher of the hearts, knew the hardness and unbelief of the Jews; and that they would continue therein, notwithstanding the ministry of the apostle; and that they would give no credit to any testimony of his, that he saw him, as he went to Damascus, and heard words from his mouth. The Ethiopic version renders it without the negative, "for they will receive thee, my witness concerning me"; as if Christ sent the apostle away in all haste from Jerusalem, lest he preaching there, the Jews should believe and be healed; compare with this (<4013 14>Matthew 13:14,15). Very likely this interpreter might be induced to leave out the negative, as thinking that the apostle's reasoning in the following words required such a sense and reading.

Ver. 19. *And I said, Lord, they know, that I imprisoned*, etc.] Men and women, that made a profession of the Christian religion, (<4408 3>Acts 8:3)

and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee; in Jerusalem there were many synagogues, and in these scourging and beating of offenders were used; (see Gill on "<4010 17>Matthew 10:17").

Ver. 20. *And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed*, etc.] Stephen was a martyr for Christ, both by confession with his mouth, and by the effusion of his blood; he was the proto-martyr, or "the first martyr" that suffered for Christ; and there are copies, as one of Stephens's, and the Complutensian edition, which so read in this place; his blood was shed by stoning:

I also was standing by; to see the inhuman action performed; nor was he an idle and indifferent spectator:

and consenting unto his death; being pleased and delighted with it, and rejoicing at it; (see <4408 1>Acts 8:1).

and kept the raiment of them that slew him; the accusers of him, and witnesses against him, whose hands were first on him, and cast the first stones at him, and continued to stone him, until they killed him: these laid their garments at the feet of Saul, who looked after them, that nobody stole them, and run away with them, whilst they were stoning Stephen; which shows how disposed he was to that fact, and how much he approved of it: and these things he mentions to suggest that surely the Jews would receive his testimony, since they knew what a bitter enemy he had been to this way: and therefore might conclude, that he must have some very good and strong reasons, which had prevailed upon him to embrace this religion against all his prejudices, and so might be willing to hear them; and it also shows what an affection the apostle had for the Jews, and how much he desired their spiritual welfare, for which reason he chose to have stayed, and preached among them.

Ver. 21. *And he said unto me, depart*, etc.] At once from Jerusalem, and out of the land of Judea:

for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles; to the nations afar off, even as far as Illyricum, Pannonia, or Hungary, where the apostle went and preached, (<659>Romans 15:19) and so by a divine mission and commission he became the apostle of the Gentiles, and preached the Gospel among them with great success, to the conversion of many thousands of them, and to the planting of many churches in the midst of them.

Ver. 22. *And they gave him audience unto this word*. etc.] The Ethiopic version reads, “and I heard him so speaking unto me”; as if it was to be understood of the apostle hearing Christ speaking to him concerning his mission to the Gentiles; whereas the words refer to the Jews attending quietly to the apostle, till he came to that part of his oration. They heard him patiently, and did not offer to molest him, or hinder his speaking, and being heard, till he came to mention his mission to the Gentiles: all the rest they either did not understand, or looked upon it as an idle tale, as the effect of madness and enthusiasm, at least as containing things they had nothing to do with; but when he came to speak of the Gentiles, and to pretend to a divine mission to them, this they could not bear; for nothing was more offensive, irritating, and provoking to them, than to hear of the calling of the Gentiles, whom they were for depriving of all blessings, and for engrossing all to themselves; (see <600>Romans 10:20).

and then lift up their voices; in a very loud and clamorous manner, as one man:

and said, away with such a fellow from the earth; take away his life from the earth: this they said either to the chief captain, to do it, or as encouraging one another to do it:

for it is not fit that he should live; he does not deserve to live, he is unworthy of life; it is not agreeable to the rules of justice that he should be spared; it is not convenient, and it may be of bad consequence should he be continued any longer; he may do a deal of mischief, and poison the minds of the people with bad notions, and therefore it is not expedient that he should live.

Ver. 23. *And as they cried out*, etc.] In this furious manner:

and cast off their clothes; either like madmen, that knew not what they did, or in order to stone him; (see <4407>Acts 7:57,58).

and threw dust into the air either with their hands, or by striking the earth, and scraping it with their feet, through indignation and wrath, like persons possessed, or mad.

Ver. 24. *The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle*, etc.] Into the inside of it; for till now he was upon the top of the stairs, or steps, which led up to it; which might be done in order to save him from the rage of the people, and that he might privately examine him, and get the true state of his case, though he took a very wrong and unjustifiable method to do it in, as follows:

and bade that he should be examined by scourging; he gave a centurion, with some soldiers, orders to scourge and whip him, and to lay on stripes more and harder, until he should tell the whole truth of the matter, and confess the crime or crimes he was guilty of, which had so enraged the populace:

that he might know wherefore they cried so against him; for though he had rescued him out of their hands, when they would in all likelihood have beat him to death; and though he took him within the castle to secure him from their violence; yet he concluded he must be a bad man, and must have done something criminal; and therefore he takes this method to extort from him

a confession of his crime, for which the people exclaimed against him with so much virulence.

Ver. 25. *And as they bound him with thongs*, etc.] To a pillar, in order to be scourged, according to the Roman manner [f1132]. Nor was the Jewish form of scourging much unlike, and perhaps might be now used, which was this; when they scourge anyone they bind both his hands to a pillar, here and there — and they do not strike him standing nor sitting, but inclining [f1133]; for the pillar to which he was bound was fixed in the ground, and so high as for a man to lean upon [f1134]; and some say it was two cubits, and others a cubit and a half high [f1135]: and the word here used signifies an extension, or distension; perhaps the stretching out of the arms to the pillar, and a bending forward of the whole body, which fitly expresses the stooping inclining posture of the person scourged, and was a very proper one for such a punishment: now as they were thus fastening him with thongs to the pillar, and putting him in this position,

Paul said unto the centurion that stood by; to see the soldiers execute the orders received from the chief captain:

is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? Though the apostle puts this by way of question, yet he knew full well what the Roman laws were in such cases; he did not put this through ignorance, or for information, but to let them know who he was, and to put them in mind of these laws, and of their duty; for, according to the Porcian law, Roman citizens were not to be beaten [f1136]. Hence, says [f1137] Cicero,

> "it is a heinous sin to bind a Roman citizen, it is wickedness to beat him, it is next to parricide to kill him, and what shall I say to crucify him?"

And, according to the Valerian law, it was not lawful for magistrates to condemn a Roman without hearing the cause, and pleading in it; and such condemned persons might appeal to the populace [f1138].

Ver. 26. *When the centurion heard that*, etc.] The question put by Paul, which strongly suggested that he was a Roman:

he went and told the chief captain; what Paul had said: saying, take heed what thou dost; or "art about to do"; lest some bad consequences should follow; lest he should affront the Roman people and senate, and lose his place, if not incur some corporeal punishment:

for this man is a Roman; and it can never be answered to bind and beat a Roman.

Ver. 27. *Then the chief captain came, and said unto him*, etc.] To Paul:

tell me, art thou a Roman? he had told him before that he was a Jew of Tarsus, and which was true, and had said nothing of his being a Roman; wherefore the chief captain desires that he would tell him the whole truth of the matter, whether he was a Roman or not:

he said yea; that he was one.

Ver. 28. *And the chief captain answered, with a great sum obtained I this freedom*, etc.] For, it seems, he was not a Roman born, but very likely a Grecian, or Syrian, by his name Lysias; and as all things were now venal at Rome, the freedom of the city was to be bought with money, though a large sum was insisted on for it: this the chief captain said, as wondering that so mean a person, and who he understood was a Jew by birth, should be able to procure such a privilege, which cost him so much money:

and Paul said, but I was free born; being born at Tarsus; which, as Pliny says [f1139], was a free city, and which had its freedom given it by Mark Antony, and which was before the birth of Paul; and therefore his parents being of this city, and free, he was born so.

Ver. 29. *Then straightway they departed from him, which should have examined him*, etc.] By scourging; namely, the soldiers, who under the inspection of the centurion, and by the order of the chief captain, were binding him with thongs to scourge him, and thereby extort from him his crime, which was the cause of all this disturbance; but hearing that he was a Roman, either of their own accord, or rather at the order of their officers, either the centurion or chief captain, or both, left binding him, and went their way:

and the chief captain also was afraid after he knew that he was a Roman; lest he should be called to an account for his conduct, and his commission should be taken from him: chiefly,

and because he had bound him; not only had commanded him to be bound with thongs to a pillar, in order to be scourged, but he had bound him with two chains, when first seized him; and, as before observed, (see Gill on "Acts 22:25"); it was a heinous crime to bind a Roman.

Ver. 30. *On the morrow*, etc.] The next day; so that Paul was kept in the castle all night: because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews; which, as yet, he could not come at, some saying one thing, and some another; and which he ought to have known before he had bound him, and ordered him to be scourged:

he loosed him from his bands not from his being bound with thongs to the pillar, that he had been loosed from before, but from the two chains with which he was bound, and held by two soldiers; (see <442133>Acts 21:33,35).

and commanded the chief priests, and all the council to appear, the whole Jewish sanhedrim, which was now very much under the direction and influence of the Romans: and this he the rather did, because, though he could not come at the certainty of the charge and accusation, he perceived it was a matter of religion, and so belonged to them to examine and judge of:

and brought Paul down; from the Castle of Antonia, into the temple, and to the place where the sanhedrim sat, which formerly was in the chamber Gazith, but of late years it had removed from place to place, and indeed from Jerusalem itself, and was now at Jabneh; only this was the time of Pentecost, and so the chief priests and sanhedrim were at Jerusalem on that account:

and set him before them; or “among them”; in the midst of them, to answer to what charges should be brought against him.

CHAPTER 23

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 23

Ver. 1. *And Paul earnestly beholding the council*, etc.] Fastening his eyes upon them, looking wistly and intently at them, and thereby discovering a modest cheerfulness, and a becoming boldness, confidence, and intrepidity, as being not conscious of any guilt, and well assured of the goodness of his cause:

said, men and brethren; (see <442201>Acts 22:1).

I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day; not only from the time of his conversion, but throughout the whole of his life; for though, strictly speaking, there is no good conscience but what is awakened by the Spirit of God, and is unprincipled by his grace, and is purged from sin by the blood of Christ; in which sense he could only have a good conscience, since he believed in Christ; yet whereas in his state of unregeneracy, and even while he was a blasphemer, and persecutor, he did not act contrary to the dictates of his conscience, but according to them, in which his view was to the glory of God, and the honour of his law; he therefore says he lived before God, or unto God, in all good conscience, though an erroneous and mistaken one; he thought he ought to do what he did; and what he did, he did with a zeal for God though it was not according to knowledge: besides, the apostle has here respect to his outward moral conversation, which, before and after conversion, was very strict, and even blameless, at least unblemished before men; nobody could charge him with any notorious crime, though he did not live without sin in the sight of the omniscient God.

Ver. 2. *And the high priest Ananias*, etc.] This could not be the same with Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, but rather Ananus his son; though this is more generally thought to be Ananias the son of Nebedaeus, whom Josephus [f1140] speaks of. There is one R. Ananias, the sagan of the priests, often spoken of in the Jewish writings [f1141], who lived about these times, and was killed at the destruction of Jerusalem; and in the times of King Agrippa, there was one Chanina, or Ananias the priest, who was a

Sadducee [f1142]; and from the number of Sadducees in this sanhedrim, who very likely were the creatures of the high priest, one would be tempted to think he might be the same with this: who

commanded them that stood by him: that is, by Paul, who were nearest to him, some of the members of the sanhedrim; unless they should be thought to be some of the high priest's officers, or servants, as in (<431822>John 18:22) though if they were, one would think they would be so called: these he ordered

to smite him on the mouth: or give him a slap on the face, by way of contempt, and as if he had spoken what ought not to be said, and in order to silence him; the reason of which might be, either because Paul did not directly address him, and give him such flattering titles as he expected, or because he set out with such declarations of his innocence, and spotless behaviour, and with so much courage and boldness.

Ver. 3. *Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee*, etc.] Which may be considered either as a prophecy of what would be, that God would smite him with some judgment here, or with death quickly, or with eternal damnation hereafter; taking up his own words, and suggesting that a retaliation would be made, and that the measure he meted, would be measured to him again; or else as an imprecation upon him; for the words may be rendered, "may God smite thee"; the future tense being often used by the Jews for the imperative, and that in this very phrase; for certain it is, that this is the form of an imprecation with them: for it is said, if anyone should say, µwhla hkky, "may God smite", or "so may God smite"; this is hla, "a curse", written in the law [f1143]; though this instance of the apostle ought not to be drawn into example, any more than those of other saints, who might be under a direction of the Holy Ghost to deliver out such things, which would come to pass in righteous judgment: and if this was Ananias, the son of Nebedaeus, as is generally thought, it is remarkable, that five years after this, in the beginning of the wars of the Jews with the Romans, this Ananias, hiding himself under the ruins of a conduit, was discovered, and taken out, and killed [f1144]: and no doubt but he very fitly calls him

thou whited wall; or hypocrite, in like manner as Christ compares the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees to whited sepulchres, (<402327>Matthew 23:27).

for sittest thou to judge me after the law; the law of Moses, which was the rule of judgment in the sanhedrim, at least professed to be, and which was allowed of by the Romans, especially in matters relating to the Jewish religion:

and commandest me to be smitten contrary to law? which condemns no man before he is heard, and much less punishes him, (<4475>John 7:51) and which is contrary not only to the Jewish laws, but to the Roman laws, and all others founded upon the law of nature and reason.

Ver. 4. *And they that stood by*, etc.] The members of the sanhedrim that were next to the apostle; or the servants of the high priest, since they are said to stand, whereas those of that court sat: said,

revilest thou God's high priest? which seems to confirm that the apostle's words were not a bare prediction, but an imprecation, since they are charged with reproaching, reviling, and speaking evil of him; and the aggravation of which was not only that the person reviled was a priest, an high priest, but an high priest of God; though this could not have been proved, for there was now no high priest of God but Jesus Christ; the priesthood was changed and abrogated, and there were no more high priests among men of God's appointing and approving.

Ver. 5. *Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest*, etc.] Or I did not know that he was the high priest; and the sense is, that he did not really know him, either because he had been long absent from Jerusalem; and besides there were new high priests made, sometimes every year, and sometimes oftener, that it is no wonder he should not know him; or because he might not sit in his usual place; or chiefly because he was not, in his habit, an high priest; for the priests, both the high priest, and the common priests, only wore their priestly robes, when they ministered in their office, and at other times they wore other clothes, as laymen did, according to (<2641>Ezekiel 44:19) which the Targum paraphrases thus;

> "when they (the priests) shall go out of the holy court into the outer court, to be mixed with the people, they shall put off their garments in which they ministered, and lay them up in the holy chamber, and shall clothe themselves with other garments, that they may not be mingled with the people, ˆwhyçwbl b, "in their garments"."

For as soon as they had performed their office, there were servants that attended them, who stripped them of their robes, and laid them up in chests which were in the temple [f1145] till they came to service again, and put them on common garments; for they might not appear among the common people in their priestly garments; which when they were off of them, they were, as Maimonides says [f1146], µyrzk, "as strangers", or as laymen, like the rest of the people; for which reason Paul might not know Ananias to be the high priest: and this points to another sense of these words; for it was a rule with the Jews [f1147], that

> "at the time the priests' garments were upon them, their priesthood was upon them, but when their garments were not on them, ^hyl[µtnwhk ^ya, "there was no priesthood upon them"; for lo, they were as strangers."

And then the sense is, Ananias not being in the discharge of his office, nor in his habit, the apostle did not know, or own him as an high priest, or consider him as in such a station; or rather, since the priesthood was changed, and there was no other high priest of God but Jesus Christ, he did not own him as one; had he, he should not have spoke to him in the manner he did. Moreover, if this was Ananias, the son of Nebedaeus, as is the opinion of many, he had no right to the office of the priesthood when he was first made an high priest; after which he was sent a prisoner to Rome; during which time several succeeded in the priesthood; and at this time not he, though he had got the management of affairs in his hands, was high priest, but Jesus the son of Gamaliel; so that the apostle's sense might be, he did not own or acknowledge him high priest. Some take the apostle's words in an ironical sense; he an high priest, I should not have known him to be an high priest, he looks and acts more like a furioso, a madman, an unjust judge, and a tyrant, than an high priest, who ought to behave in another guise manner. But what follows shows rather that the apostle spoke seriously, unless the words can be thought to be a citation made by Luke,

for it is written, in (<2Ex 22:28>Exodus 22:28) "thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people"; which the Jewish writers generally understand of the head of the great sanhedrim, as Ananias might be, or of a king [f1148].

Ver. 6. *But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees*, etc.] That is, that one part of the sanhedrim consisted of Sadducees, which was

often the case; sometimes the high priest was of this sect, as Ananias probably was, and sometimes the greater part of the sanhedrim were Sadducees, and even sometimes the whole; (see Gill on "Acts 5:17"), but this sanhedrim were only part of them Sadducees:

and the other Pharisees; of both these sects, (see Gill on "Matthew 3:7").

he cried out in the council; with a loud voice, that he might be heard by all:

men and brethren, *I am a Pharisee*; he was not only brought up in that sect from his youth, and lived according to it before his conversion, but he was still a Pharisee; wherefore he does not say, I "was", but I "am" a Pharisee; for whatever distinguished the Pharisee from the Sadducee, whether in principle, or in practice, and manner of living, which agreed with Christianity, the apostle still retained; as the belief of the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the dead, and a future state, and strict holiness of life and conversation.

The son of a Pharisee; the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read in the plural number, "the son of Pharisees"; his father and his mother were both Pharisees; for there were women Pharisees [f1149], as well as men; so that he was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, as well as an Hebrew of the Hebrews; and this is said to show that he was by education of that sect.

Of the hope and resurrection of the dead, I am called in question; that is, either for the hope of the resurrection of the dead, (Acts 24:15) or for professing the hope of eternal life, and happiness in a future state, and the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, when the soul and body will be reunited, and enjoy endless felicity together: not that these were the particular things now charged upon him, and for which he was now trying and judging; but that these were the ground and foundation of the hatred and persecution of him, because he preached the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and the resurrection of men through him, and that there was hope of eternal life and salvation by him. And in this the apostle showed the prudence and wisdom of the serpent, along with the innocence of the dove, hereby to divide the assembly, and free himself from them; and it was but just and right; for since they would not hear him about to make a fair and open defence of his cause, but ordered him to be smitten on the mouth, it was but justice to throw them into confusion, and save himself.

Ver. 7. *And when he had so said*, etc.] He stopped and made a pause:

and there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; about the things which he had spoken of, particularly the resurrection of the dead; and this was what the apostle intended, so that his end was answered by the speech he made:

and the multitude was divided; that is, the members of the sanhedrim were divided, some being on one side of the question, and some on the other; for this multitude cannot design the multitude of the common people, who were not convened together on this occasion.

Ver. 8. *For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection*, etc.] Of the dead, being ignorant of the Scriptures, and the power of God; (see <4022 23>Matthew 22:23,29).

neither angel nor spirit; the Ethiopic version reads, "nor Holy Spirit": but the sense seems to be, that they did not believe any such species of beings as angels, nor indeed any spirits whatever, which were immaterial or immortal; for as for the spirit or soul of man, they took that to be only the temperament of the body, and that it died with it, and did not exist in any separate state after this life: for so Josephus [f1150] says, that they deny the permanence of the soul, and rewards and punishments in the invisible state. And, according to the Talmudic [f1151] writers, they denied that there was any other world than this:

but the Pharisees confess both; the resurrection of the dead, and that there are spirits, both angels and the souls of men, which are immortal. Josephus, in the place before referred to, says, that they hold that every soul is incorruptible or immortal; and that they held the resurrection of the dead, is manifest from the Talmud [f1152], and other writings of theirs; the Syriac version renders it, "the Pharisees confess all these things"; to which agree the Arabic and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 9. *And there arose a great cry*, etc.] Or noise, a loud clamour; they began to be very noisy, and to talk loud, and in high spirits, one against another:

and the Scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose; there were Scribes in the sanhedrim, and these were some of them on the side of the Sadducees, and some on the side of the Pharisees; though, generally speaking, they agreed with the latter, and are often in Scripture mentioned

with them, and for them: however, that part in this sanhedrim that were on their side rose up from their seats,

and strove; that is, contended, disputed, and litigated the point with the Sadducees:

saying, we find no evil in this man; why he should be hated, persecuted, and punished:

but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him; that is, if the Holy Spirit, as the Ethiopic version reads, has inspired him, or God by an angel has revealed anything to him, who has to say anything against it? This they said in agreement with their own principles, and more for the sake of establishing them, and in opposition to the Sadducees, than in favour of Paul:

let us not fight against God; as in (4459Acts 5:39). These words are not in the Alexandrian copy, nor in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 10. *And when there arose a great dissension*, etc.] When that was come to a very great height, hot words were spoken, and they were ready to come to blows, and there was like to be a riot and tumult among them:

the chief captain fearing lest Paul should be pulled in pieces of them; either of the Sadducees, whom he had greatly offended and provoked, or of both Sadducees and Pharisees, the one laying hold on him to preserve him from the fury of the other, and the other endeavouring to pluck him out of their hands; and the fears of the chief captain were not so much out of affection to Paul, but lest there should be an uproar, which might issue in sedition, and rebellion against the Roman government, of which the Roman officers were always jealous; and because that Paul was a Roman, and should he suffer him to be destroyed in an illegal manner, he must be accountable for it: wherefore he

commanded the soldiers to go down: either from the castle of Antonia, or from a superior part of the temple, where he with his guards were, to hear this cause before the sanhedrim, to that part where it sat, and Paul was: and

take him by force from among them; if they refused to deliver him up, to make use of their arms:

and bring him into the castle; of Antonia, where he was before.

Ver. 11. *And the night following*, etc.] The day in which Paul was brought before the sanhedrim, and pleaded his own cause before them, and had thrown them into confusion and division:

the Lord stood by him; the Lord Jesus Christ appeared in a vision to him, and stood very near him, by the side of him, by the bed or couch on which he might lie: and said,

be of good cheer, Paul; though he was now a prisoner in the castle; and though the high priest, and the Sadducees especially, were enraged against him; and though a plot was about to be formed to take away his life; for this exhortation seems to be designed to prepare him for further trials, and to prevent discouragement under them; which shows the great care of Christ over him, his concern for him, and love to him: the word Paul is not in the Alexandrian copy, nor in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; but the calling him by name seems to express not only singular knowledge of him, but greater familiarity and affection; it is in the Arabic version, and in other Greek copies:

for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem; not only in the Christian church, and before the Apostle James, and the elders, but in the Jewish sanhedrim, and before the high priest, Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees, where and before whom, though not particularly recorded, he bore a testimony for Jesus, that he was the true Messiah; and that though he died, he was risen from the dead, and was at the right hand of God, and was the only Saviour of men:

so must thou bear witness also at Rome; as he had bore a public and faithful witness to the person, office, and grace of Christ at Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea; so it was necessary, by the decree of God, and for the glory of Christ, that he should bear a like testimony at Rome, the chief city in the whole world; hereby signifying, that he should not die at Jerusalem, and giving him a hint that he should appeal to Caesar, which he afterwards did.

Ver. 12. *And when it was day*, etc.] As soon as it was light, very early in the morning:

certain of the Jews banded together; these very likely were of the sect of the Sadducees, who had been exceedingly irritated and provoked by what Paul had said the day before in the council; these therefore gathered

together, entered into a conspiracy to take away Paul's life, and trailed in it, as one man:

and bound themselves under a curse; or "anathematized themselves"; the Hebrew word µrj, which answers to "anathema", is sometimes used for an oath, h[wbç ayh µrj, "Cherem" or "anathema" is "an oath" [f1153], a vow made to be punished with an anathema if not kept; so these men swore to it, bound themselves with an oath, or wished they might be an anathema, accursed of God, and cut off from his people; they imprecated the most dreadful evils upon themselves:

saying, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul: it was a common form of a vow or oath with the Jews [f1154], lkwa alç, "that I will not eat"; sometimes they only vowed abstinence from particular things, and then others were lawful; as for instance, if one vowed that he would not eat boiled meat, he might eat roast, or that he would not eat flesh, he might eat broth, or that he would abstain from milk, then he might drink whey, [f1155]; but this oath and vow here were, that they would neither eat nor drink anything, till they had destroyed Paul: these were a set of zealots, who in imitation of Phinehas, and pretending the glory of God, took upon them to take away the lives of men, without any, judicial procedure, or the authority of the civil magistrate; of whom, (see Gill on "Matthew 10:4") it may be asked, what became of this vow? or how did they get clear of it, since they did not accomplish the fact? to which it may be answered, that it was a pretty easy thing to be freed from oaths and vows, among the Jews, whose doctors had a power to absolve men from them; and in such cases as this, and such a vow as this, might be loosed upon more accounts than one, as on account of keeping another law, the observing the sabbath and other festivals, when men were obliged to eat and drink: and thus it is said [f1156],

> "if a man swears that he will not drink wine, or that he will not eat flesh, for so many days, then they say to him, if thou hadst known at the time of the oath, that the sabbath or a feast day were within these days, in which thou art obliged to eat flesh and drink wine, as it is said, (Isaiah 58:13) "and call the sabbath a delight"; wouldst thou have swore at all? if he says no, they loose his oath:"

and likewise it might be loosed on account of life, which a man is bound to preserve: for so they likewise say [f1157], ``if a man vows that he will not eat

anything, woe be to him if he eats, and woe be to him if he does not eat; if he eats he breaks his vow, if he does not eat he sins against his own soul, or life; what must he do? let him go to the wise men, wrdn ta wl wrytyw,

> "and they will loose his vow for him", as it is written, (Proverbs 12:18) but the tongue of the wise is health;"

and no doubt but these men very easily got their vow loosed, since it was made on such a design.

Ver. 13. *And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy*.] Who met together, formed this resolution, entered into this scheme, and bound themselves with this oath; the word rendered "conspiracy", signifies an agreement by oath; such a number of them banded together, that they might have strength sufficient to take Paul out of the hands of the soldiers, as he was conducted by them from the castle to the temple.

Ver. 14. *And they came to the chief priests, and elders*, etc.] Who were members of the sanhedrim, to acquaint them with their designs:

and said, we have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul: these chief priests and elders, had they acted according to the character they bore, on such an information, would have taken up those men, and punished them, at least would have dissuaded them from so vile an action; but they knew the men to whom they applied, and very likely they were all of them of the sect of the Sadducees, whom Paul had so much offended the day before; and therefore were pleased with what they had done, approved of their scheme, and readily fell in with the following proposal.

Ver. 15. *Now therefore ye with the council*, etc.] The whole sanhedrim; their sense is, that they would have the sanhedrim convened by the chief priests and elders, and being met together, then to

signify to the chief captain; or let him know that they were assembled together, upon the affair of Paul, and that they here desirous he might be brought before them:

that he bring him down unto you tomorrow; from the castle of Antonia to the place where the sanhedrim met; the word "tomorrow" is not in the Alexandrian copy, nor in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; and then it should seem that they desired him to be brought down

forthwith, or otherwise they must propose to fast all that day, and so long on the morrow, till Paul was brought down; but that the common reading is right, appears from the chief captain's sending away Paul at the third hour of the night following, to prevent their designs on the morrow, (<4423>Acts 23:23). The pretence formed for his being brought down is,

as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him; what he had done, which had occasioned this uproar, what it was he was charged with, and whether he was guilty or not:

and we, or ever he come near: where the sanhedrim sat;

are ready to kill him; lying in wait in some private place between the castle and the temple, from whence they intended to rush out at once upon him, and murder him; far enough both from the temple and the council, that both the one might not be defiled, though they did not greatly stick at that in those times, and that the other might not be charged with having any hand in his death.

Ver. 16. *And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait*, etc.] Paul might have a sister living in Jerusalem; or this her son might be there on account of his studies; he might be a pupil to one of the doctors, by which means he might come at this secret, that such a number of men were in ambush, in order to take away his uncle's life: wherefore having got intelligence of it,

he went and entered into the castle; the Alexandrian copy reads, "the synagogue"; but Paul was not there, but in the castle of Antonia; the Ethiopic version renders it, "the prison"; though it is plain that he was not very closely confined, it was easy to have access to him; the reason might be, not only because he was a Roman, but because he was uncondemned, nor was any charge proved against him:

and told Paul; what he had heard, that such a number of men had entered into a conspiracy to take away his life, and lay in wait for him; and this was an instance both of duty and affection to his uncle, and worthy of imitation, whether it proceeded from natural relation, or from religion, or both.

Ver. 17. *Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him*, etc.] For under this chief captain there must have been ten of them, if the company of which he was captain consisted of a thousand men, as his title chief captain

or chiliarch imports; for a centurion was over an hundred men, as his title signifies; perhaps this might be the same, as in (⁴⁴2225Acts 22:25,26)

and said, bring this young man to the chief captain: which was a very prudential step, not to let the centurion into the secret, but to desire him to introduce the young man to the chief captain; for had he trusted the centurion with it, he might not have acquainted his officer with it, but have informed the liers in wait of it: now though the apostle was assured by Christ that he should not die at Jerusalem, but should bear witness of him at Rome, and though he did not distrust the truth of Christ's words, but most firmly believed them; yet he thought it his duty to make use of the means, which providence had put in his way, for his preservation and safety; the Ethiopic version reads, "bring this young man by night to the chief captain"; that so he might not be seen, and observed to have carried any intelligence to him:

for he hath a certain thing to tell him; which was of some moment and importance, and proper for him to know.

Ver. 18. *So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain*, etc.] Immediately, without any more to do, without curiously inquiring into the thing, or examining the young man about it; which showed him to be a man of a good disposition, and ready to do a kind office, even to a prisoner:

and said, Paul the prisoner called me to him; either vocally or by some gesture, beckoned him to him:

and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee; in which may be observed the apostle's manner of address to the centurion, on this occasion; it was by way of entreaty; he asked it as a favour of him, to introduce his nephew to the chief captain; and the honour and modesty of the centurion, he did not seek by any methods to get the secret out, either of Paul or the young man; but readily undertakes the affair, honourably performs it, acquaints the captain with the circumstances of it, tells him the young man had something to say to him, he could not tell what, and then departs.

Ver. 19. *Then the chief captain took him by the hand*, etc.] Some have thought that the reason of this was, that he expected that the young man had brought him a present in his hand, from Paul; but this is to represent him as a sordid mercenary man, which ought not to be said, without sufficient proof; rather this should be considered as an instance of civility

and humanity, and what showed him to be a man of breeding and good manners; and might be done partly out of respect to Paul, and partly to encourage the young man to use freedom in the account he was about to give him:

and went with him aside privately; concluding by his coming from Paul, and perceiving by the account of the centurion, that he had a secret to communicate to him; wherefore it was acting a wise and prudent part to take him into a private room, and hear what he had to say:

and asked him, what is that thou hast to tell me? thereby giving the young man an opportunity, and encouraging him to relate the secret to him.

Ver. 20. *And he said, the Jews have agreed to desire thee*, etc.] By the Jews are meant, the Jewish sanhedrim, for the young man had not only intelligence of the conspiracy, and lying in wait of the forty men or more; but also of the agreement which the sanhedrim at the motion of these men were come into, to make the following request to the chief captain; which seems to confirm the above conjecture, that this young man might be a student under the president of the council, or one of the doctors, whereby he came at the knowledge of these things:

that thou wouldst bring down Paul tomorrow into the council, etc. (See Gill on "Acts 23:15").

Ver. 21. *But do not thou yield unto them*, etc.] Or be persuaded by them, to bring Paul down from the castle to the sanhedrim; this must not be imputed to the young man's pride and vanity, in taking upon him to give advice to the chief captain; but to his great affection for his uncle, which moved him to entreat, rather than to direct him, for which he gives a good reason:

for there lie in wait for him more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him; (see Gill on "Acts 23:12"). (see Gill on "Acts 23:13").

and now are they ready; to execute their designs, being met together, and lying in ambush in some place, between the castle and the place where the sanhedrim met:

looking for a promise from thee; that when the sanhedrim should apply to him, he would promise them to bring Paul down according to their request;

and for the making and performing of this promise, these men were waiting.

Ver. 22. *So the chief captain then let the young man depart*, etc.] After he had had the account from him, and was master of the whole affair:

and charged him, see thou tell no man that thou hast showed these things to me; which was prudently said; it was a right and wise thing to conceal this matter, that the men might go on with their designs, and an opportunity be taken to convey Paul away, before the time came fixed by them to execute them; for otherwise, should it have been known that their plot was discovered, they would have entered upon new measures.

Ver. 23. *And he called to him two centurions*, etc.] Who had each of them an hundred soldiers under them:

saying, make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Caesarea; which was formerly called Strato's tower, a sea port town, where Felix the Roman governor now was; it was six hundred furlongs, or seventy five miles [f1158] from Jerusalem: these two hundred soldiers were foot soldiers, as appears by their being distinguished from horsemen in the next clause, and were just the number that the two centurions had the command of; the making of them ready, was their seeing to it, that they were properly clothed, and accoutred with arms and ammunition, and with sufficient provision for their journey:

and horsemen threescore and ten; the Ethiopic version reads, "a hundred"; but without support from any copy: "and spearmen two hundred"; who carried spears in their right hand; the word used signifies such who receive, lay hold on, or hold anything in their right hand: some think it designs such who were employed in the militia, to lay hold on guilty persons, and hold them; the Alexandrian copy reads, δεξιοβολους, "those that cast with the right hand"; and so reads the Syriac version, to which the Arabic agrees, which renders it "darters"; such as carried darts in their hands, and did not shoot out of a bow, but cast darts with their hands: now these being got ready, were ordered to march,

at the third hour of the night; at nine o'clock at night, that they might go out unobserved, and before the petition from the sanhedrim was presented to him.

Ver. 24. *And provide them beasts*, etc.] Horses or mules; the Syriac version reads in the singular number, “a beast”: and one being sufficient for Paul, here may be a change of number; the Arabic and Ethiopic versions leave out these words, but the following clause makes them necessary:

that they may set Paul on; on the beast, or on one of the beasts provided; if more than one were provided, they might be for his companions, to go along with him:

and bring him safe unto Felix the governor; this man, of a servant, was made a freed man by Claudius Caesar [f1159], and by him appointed in the room of Cumanus governor of Judea [f1160]; he was the brother of Pallas, who had the chief management of affairs under the emperor; and this Felix married three persons successively, that were of royal families; hence Suetonius [f1161] calls him the husband of three queens; one of these was Drusilla, afterwards mentioned in (~~Acts~~ Acts 24:24) who was sister to King Agrippa. Tacitus calls him Antonius Felix [f1162] which name he had from Antonia the mother of Claudius’, whose servant he was; Josephus [f1163] calls him Claudius Felix, which name he took from the Emperor Claudius, who from so low and mean condition raised him to such honour and dignity; his name Felix signifies “happy”: according to Tacitus [f1164], when Felix was first sent into Judea, the government was divided between him and Cumanus; Felix had Samaria, and Cumanus the other part, which was called the nation of the Galilaeans; but Josephus takes no notice of any such division, he says [f1165], that Cumanus was banished; and after that Felix was sent by Caesar, governor of Judea, of Galilee, Samaria, and Peraea; and so he seems to be governor of the whole country at this time; he was now at Caesarea, and it is plain that Judea was under his government, since Paul, a prisoner at Jerusalem, is sent down unto him; and in this his government he continued during the life of Claudius; and when Nero became emperor, and added four cities to the kingdom of Agrippa, he constituted Felix governor of the rest of Judea [f1166]; which character he bore till he thought fit to remove him, and put Festus in his room, of whom mention is made hereafter: after these words the following ones are added, in the Vulgate Latin version, “for he was afraid lest perhaps the Jews should take him by force and kill him, and afterwards he should bear the reproach, as if he had took money”; but they are not to be found in any Greek copies.

Ver. 25. *And he wrote a letter after this manner*.] The chief captain wrote a letter to Felix the governor, the form and sum of which were as follow; this letter he sent by one of the centurions to him.

Ver. 26. *Claudius Lysias, unto the most excellent Governor Felix*, etc.] This is the inscription of the letter, and by it we learn the name of the chief captain, so often spoken of in this and the two preceding chapters, which was Claudius Lysias; the first of these names is a Roman one, and which he might take from the Emperor Claudius, for he was not a Roman born; and the latter seems to be a Greek name, and was his proper name, and, he himself very likely was a Greek, since he purchased his freedom with money; one of this name was Archon of Athens [f1167]; and another is reckoned by Cicero [f1168], among the famous orators of Greece, and is often cited by Harpocratian [f1169]; one of Antiochus's noblemen, and who was of the blood royal, and acted as a general against the Jews, was of this name [f1170].

> "So he left Lysias, a nobleman, and one of the blood royal, to oversee the affairs of the king from the river Euphrates unto the borders of Egypt:" (1 Maccabees 3:32)

The chief captain calls Felix the governor

the most excellent, which was a title of honour that belonged to him as a governor; the same is given to Theophilus, (<4001>Luke 1:3) sendeth greeting; or wishes all health and prosperity.

Ver. 27. *This man was taken by the Jews*, etc.] Meaning Paul, who was presented by the centurions to the governor, and was in his presence when the letter was opened and read, and who was taken by the Jews in the temple, and from thence dragged out and beaten by them:

and should have been killed of them; and would have been killed, had it not been for the chief captain; he was very near being killed by them, he was nigh unto death:

then came I with an army and rescued him; he came with the Roman band, which he had the command of, perhaps a thousand soldiers; for such a number he should have under him by his title; with these he came upon the Jews on a sudden, as they were beating Paul, and took him out of their hands, and saved him:

having understood that he was a Roman; but this he did not know till afterwards, after he had bound him with two chains, and after he had ordered him to be bound with thongs, and examined by scourging; all which he covers and hides from the governor, and suggests that it was his great concern for the Roman name, and for a Roman citizen, which put him upon this enterprise.

Ver. 28. *And when I would have known the cause*, etc.] Or crime, he was guilty of:

wherefore they accused him: which they charged him with, and for which they beat him almost to death:

I brought him forth into their council; their court of judicature, the great sanhedrim.

Ver. 29. *Whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law*, etc.] As about the resurrection of the dead, and a future state, which some in the council denied, and some asserted, which with this heathen man were idle and foolish questions; or about the defiling of the temple, and speaking contemptibly of the law of Moses, the people of the Jews, and the holy place, which was the cry of the populace against him, and were things the captain knew little of:

but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death, or of bonds: by the laws of the Romans; and yet he himself had bound him with two chains at the first taking of him, and afterwards ordered him to be bound with thongs, and scourged, of which he says nothing, being convinced of his error, and willing to hide it; however, he bears a full testimony to the innocence of the apostle.

Ver. 30. *And when it was told me*, etc.] As it was by Paul's sister's son,

how that the Jews laid wait for the man; had formed a conspiracy to take away his life, and laid a scheme in order to it, and at least intended, if they were not actually in ambush, to seize him as he should be brought from the castle to the sanhedrim:

I sent straightway to thee; the prisoner Paul, under a guard of soldiers; this he did directly, as soon as ever he heard of the design of the Jews; and he sent him to Felix, as being governor, to whom the judgment of this affair properly belonged, and who was best qualified for it, at least in the chief

captain's account; and who doubtless consulted his own honour and safety, lest he should incur blame and disgrace, should a Roman have been slain through any neglect or want of care in him:

and gave commandment to his accusers also, to say before thee what they had against him; it is reasonable to conclude, that he said nothing of this to them, though he might have determined he would, till after Paul was sent away; otherwise the affair would have been discovered, which he desired might be concealed:

farewell; which is the conclusion of the epistle, and is a wish of health and happiness.

Ver. 31. *Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul*, etc.] Out of the castle, and put him upon a beast, as the chief captain had ordered the centurions, and they had directed the soldiers to do:

and brought him by night to Antipatris: they set out from Jerusalem at the third hour, or about nine o'clock at night, and travelled all night, and by break of day came to Antipatris; a city which lay in the road from Jerusalem to Caesarea: it was built by Herod the great, in the best soil of his kingdom, enriched with rivers and woods [f1171]; and was so called by him, in memory of his father Antipater; it before went by the name of Chabar Zaba [f1172], or Capharsaba; the Jewish writers place it in the utmost borders of the land of Judea [f1173]; hence that phrase so often used by them, from Gebath to Antipatris [f1174], in like sense as from Dan to Beersheba, these two places being the utmost borders of the land; here it was that Simon the just, with some of the principal inhabitants of Jerusalem, met Alexander the great, who travelled all night, as these soldiers with Paul did, and came to Antipatris at sun rising [f1175]. It was forty two miles from Jerusalem. It was in the road from Judea to Galilee, as appears from the following canon of the Jews, concerning divorces [f1176];

> "if a husband says to his wife, lo, this is thy divorce, if I do not come thirty days hence, and he goes from Judea to Galilee, and comes to Antipatris and returns, it becomes void:"

the way from Jerusalem to Caesarea lay through Nicopolis, Lydda, Antipatris, and Betthar; from Jerusalem to Nicopolis, according to the old Jerusalem Itinerary [f1177], were twenty two miles; from thence to Lydda, ten miles; and from Lydda to Antipatris ten more (which make forty two miles, as before observed); and from Antipatris to Betthar ten miles, and from

thence to Caesarea, sixteen more: so that when the apostle was at Antipatris, he had twenty six miles more to go to Caesarea; and hence it appears, that the length of the journey from Jerusalem to Caesarea was sixty eight miles; though Josephus [f1178] makes the distance to be six hundred furlongs, or seventy five miles: and that the way from the one to the other lay through the places before mentioned, may be illustrated from what the same writer says, of some persons travelling from Caesarea to Jerusalem; so he relates [f1179], concerning Quadratus governor of Syria, that from Tyre he came to Caesarea, from Caesarea to Lydda, and from Lydda to Jerusalem; and of Cestius the Roman general, he says [f1180], that from Caesarea he came to Antipatris, and from Antipatris to Lydda, and from Lydda to Jerusalem, which clearly seems to be the same road the apostle went; and so Jerom [f1181], in the account he gives of the journey of Paula, says, that she came to Caesarea, where she saw the house of Cornelius, the cottage of Philip, and the beds of the four virgin prophetesses; and from thence to Antipatris, a little town half pulled down, which Herod called after his father's name; and from thence to Lydda, now Diospolis, famous for the resurrection of Dorcas, and the healing of Aeneas. Antipatris is, by Ptolomy [f1182], placed at the west of Jordan, and is mentioned along with Gaza, Lydda, and Emmaus; some take it to be the same with Capharsalama, mentioned in:

> "Nicanor also, when he saw that his counsel was discovered, went out to fight against Judas beside Capharsalama:" (1 Maccabees 7:31)

and others say, it is the same that is since called Assur or Arsuf, a town on the sea coast, which is not likely, since it does not appear that Antipatris was a maritime city. The apostle could not now stay to preach the Gospel in this place, nor do we elsewhere read or hear of a Gospel church state in it, until the "fifth" century; when it appears [f1183] there was a church here, and Polychronius was bishop of it, who was present at the council of Chalcedon, held in the year 451; and in the "eighth" century there were many Christians dwelt here, for in the year 744 there were many of them killed by the Arabians.

Ver. 32. *On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him*, etc.] That is, the two hundred soldiers, and the two hundred spearmen, who were all on foot, left the seventy horsemen to conduct Paul to Caesarea; for being come to Antipatris, all danger from the Jews was over:

and returned to the castle; the castle Antonia in Jerusalem, from whence they set out.

Ver. 33. *Who, when they came to Caesarea*, etc.] The seventy horsemen:

and delivered the epistle to the governor; to Felix, governor of Judea, who was now at Caesarea; namely, the letter which Claudius Lysias, the chief captain, sent to him; the form and contents of which are before given:

these presented Paul also before him; concerning whom, and whose affairs, the letter was.

Ver. 34. *And when the governor, had read the letter*, etc.] Which he doubtless opened and read as soon as he had received it, not knowing what important business might be contained in it, or of what dangerous consequence a neglect of reading it might be; this showed care and diligence in him:

he asked of what province he was; since he perceived by the letter he was a Roman, and that he might know whether he was under his jurisdiction, and whether the hearing of his case belonged to him; and it should seem that it rather belonged to the governor of Syria; but that the crimes he was charged with were committed in Judea, particularly that of profaning the temple.

And when he understood that he was of Cilicia; which was a Roman province, in which Tarsus was, where Paul was born free; (Acts 21:39, 22:3).

Ver. 35. *I will hear thee, said he*, etc.] The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, “we will hear”, which is a grand courtly way of speaking:

when thine accusers are come; which Lysias, in his letter, informed him that he had ordered them to come; which shows the governor to have some sense of justice and integrity, being desirous to hear both sides before he judged of the affair, though there was so much said in the chief captain’s letter in favour of Paul’s innocence, and against his enemies.

And he commanded him to be kept in Herod’s judgment hall; or palace: this was a place built by Herod the great at Caesarea, of whose magnificent buildings here Josephus gives a large account. For besides the famous haven or port which he made here, he adorned the place with splendid palaces, he built a theatre, and an amphitheatre, and a “forum” [f1184], which

was either a market place, or a court of judicature; and if the latter, perhaps the same that is here meant, in a part of which, or in a place adjoining to it, the apostle was put. Here he was kept by a guard of soldiers, but not in close confinement; he had much liberty, and his friends and acquaintance had leave to come to him; (see Acts 24:23). We read [f1185] of ˆyr syq lç yjyd, which some interpret “the chamber of the judges of Caesarea”; or the place where they sat in judgment, and may be the same that is here meant; though others interpret it a prison; and so it seems was this judgment hall of Herod’s.

CHAPTER 24

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 24

Ver. 1. *And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders*, etc.] From Jerusalem to Caesarea: these five days are to be reckoned not from the seizing of Paul in the temple, but from his coming to Caesarea; the Alexandrian copy reads, “after some days”, leaving it undetermined how many: the high priest, with the elders, the members of the sanhedrim, with “some” of them, as the same copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, came down hither; not merely as accusers, by the order of the chief captain, but willingly, and of their own accord, to vindicate themselves and their people, lest they should fall under the displeasure of the Roman governor, for encouraging tumults and riots: the high priest must be conscious to himself that he had acted in an illegal manner, in ordering Paul to be smitten on the mouth, in the midst of the council, in the presence of the chief captain; and if it had not been for the soldiers, Paul had been pulled to pieces in the council: and the elders knew what a hand they had in the conspiracy against his life; and they were sensible that this plot was discovered, and Paul was secretly conveyed away; and what the captain had wrote to the governor, they could not tell, and therefore made the more haste down to him, to set themselves right, and get Paul condemned:

and with a certain orator named Tertullus: this man, by his name, seems to have been a Roman; and because he might know the Roman, or the Greek language, or both, which the Jews did not so well understand, and was very well acquainted with all the forms in the Roman courts of judicature, as well as was an eloquent orator; therefore they pitched upon him, and took him down with them to open and plead their cause. The name Tertullus is a diminutive from Tertius, as Marullus from Marius, Lucullus from Lucius, and Catullus from Catius. The father of the wife of Titus, before he was emperor, was of this name [f1186]; and some say her name was Tertulla; and the grandmother of Vespasian, by his father’s side, was of this name, under whom he was brought up [f1187]. This man’s title, in the Greek text, is ρητωρ, “Rhetor”, a rhetorician; but though with the Latins an

"orator" and a "rhetorician" are distinguished, an orator being one that pleads causes in courts, and a rhetorician a professor of rhetoric; yet, with the Greeks, the "Rhetor" is an orator; so Demosthenes was called; and so Cicero calls himself [f1188].

Who informed the governor against Paul; brought in a bill of information against him, setting forth his crimes, and declaring themselves his accusers; they appeared in open court against him, and accused him; for this is not to be restrained to Tertullus, but is said of the high priest, and elders with him; for, the word is in the plural number, though the Syriac version reads in the singular, and seems to refer it to the high priest.

Ver. 2. *And when he was called forth*, etc.] Not Tertullus the orator; for this is not to be understood of him, and of his being admitted to speak, as is thought by some, but the Apostle Paul; which is put out of doubt by the Vulgate Latin version, which reads, "and Paul being cited"; he was ordered to be brought out of custody into the court, to hear his indictment, and answer for himself:

Tertullus began to accuse him; to set forth his crimes, which he introduced with a flattering preface to Felix:

saying, seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence; very likely he might refer to his purging the country of robbers; he took Eleazar, the chief of them, who had infested the country for twenty years, and many others with him, whom he sent bound to Rome, and others of them he crucified; and whereas there arose up another set of men, under a pretence of religion, who led people into the wilderness, signifying, that God would show them some signs of liberty; these seemed, to Felix, to sow the seeds, and lay the foundation of division and defection, which showed his sagacity, and which Tertullus here calls "providence"; wherefore, foreseeing what would be the consequence of these things, if not timely prevented, he sent armed men, horse and foot, and destroyed great numbers of them; and particularly he put to flight the Egyptian false prophet, who had collected thirty thousand men together, and dispersed them [f1189]; and yet his government was attended with cruelty and avarice; witness the murder of Jonathan the high priest, by a sort of cut throats, who were connived at by him; particularly by the means of Dora his friend, whom he corrupted; and the pillaging of many of the inhabitants of Caesarea [f1190]: so that this was a piece of flattery,

used by Tertullus, to catch his ear, and gain attention, and insinuate himself into his affections.

Ver. 3. *We accept it always, and in all places*, etc.] The sense is, that the Jews observed with pleasure the provident care the governor took of their nation, and at all times spoke well of him; and wherever they came commended his conduct, and owned the favours they received from him, and the blessings they enjoyed under his government: and then giving him his title of honour,

most noble Felix; Tertullus adds, that this the Jews did

with all thankfulness; as sensible of the obligations they were under to him; but this was all a farce, mere artifice, and wretched flattery.

Ver. 4. *Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee*, etc.] Suggesting, that he could say a great deal more under this head, but, for brevity sake, should omit it; and because he would not tire his patience, and hinder business going forward:

I pray thee, that thou wouldst hear us of thy clemency a few words; he praises him for his humanity and good nature, and for his patience in hearing causes, and promises him great conciseness in the account he should give him; and entreats that, according to his wonted goodness, he would condescend to hear what he had to lay before him; all which was artfully said to engage attention to him.

Ver. 5. *For we have found this man a pestilent fellow*, etc.] Pointing to Paul, the prisoner at the bar; the word here used signifies the “pest” or “plague” itself; and it was usual with orators among the Romans, when they would represent a man as a very wicked man, as dangerous to the state, and unworthy to live in it, to call him the pest of the city, or of the country, or of the empire, as may be observed in several places in Cicero’s Orations.

And a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world: sedition was severely punished by the Romans, being what they carefully watched and guarded against, and was what the Jews were supposed to be very prone unto; and Tertullus would suggest, that the several riots, and tumults, and seditions, fomented by the Jews, in the several parts of the Roman empire, here called the world, were occasioned by the apostle: the crime charged upon him is greatly aggravated, as that not only he was

guilty of sedition, but that he was the mover of it, and that he stirred up all the Jews to it, and that in every part of the world, or empire, than which nothing was more false; the Jews often raised up a mob against him, but he never rioted them, and much less moved them against the Roman government: and to this charge he adds,

and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes; not Nazarites, as Calvin seems to understand the passage; for these were men of great repute among the Jews, and for Paul to be at the head of them would never be brought against him as a charge: but Nazarenes, that is, Christians, so called by way of contempt and reproach, from Jesus of Nazareth; which name and sect being contemptible among the Romans, as well as Jews, are here mentioned to make the apostle more odious.

Ver. 6. *Who also hath gone about to profane the temple*, etc.] By introducing a Greek into it; (see <4421B> Acts 21:28,29) which was only a supposition and conjecture of the Asiatic Jews, and was a false and groundless one:

whom we took; as they did in the temple, and dragged him out of it:

and would have judged according to our law; which was another untruth, for they had him not before any court of judicature; they brought no charge in form against him, nor did they examine his case, and inquire into the truth of things, or hear what he had to say, but fell upon him, and beat him; and if it had not been for the chief captain and his soldiers, would have destroyed him, so far were they from proceeding according to their law: it seems by Tertullus calling the law, “our law”, that he was a Jewish proselyte; or else he speaks after the manner of lawyers, who call what is their clients, theirs.

Ver. 7. *But the chief captain Lysias came upon us*, etc.] Suddenly, and at unawares, immediately, and with great haste, before they could execute their designs; which were not to judge Paul according to law, but to kill him, in the manner the zealots did:

and with great violence took him away out of our hands; for he came with an army, and rescued him, (<4423D> Acts 23:27) Some copies add, “and sent him to thee”; and so the Syriac version reads.

Ver. 8. *Commanding his accusers to come unto thee*, etc.] But this was not done till after Paul had set forth his case before the people, upon the

stairs leading to the castle: and after he had pleaded his own cause before the sanhedrim; and after the chief captain had had intelligence of the Jews lying in wait to kill him: Tertullus would insinuate that the captain was blameworthy, that he hindered a legal process against Paul; and that it was owing to him, that this trouble was given the governor, as well as the high priest and elders, who by his orders came down from Jerusalem to Caesarea; and that had it not been for him this affair might have been finished with more dispatch, and less trouble.

By examining of whom; not the accusers, but either the chief captain, as some think, or rather Paul:

thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things whereof we accuse him; so impudent was Tertullus, and of such effrontery and assurance, that he feared not to say, that the governor, by examining Paul himself, would easily come to the knowledge of the things he was accused of, and plainly see that he was guilty of them; so that there would be no need of their attestations, or of producing witnesses against him.

Ver. 9. *And the Jews also assented*, etc.] That is, Ananias the high priest, and the elders that were with him, agreed to what Tertullus said, and confirmed the same.

Saying, that these things were so; that Paul was such a person, and was guilty of the crimes he had set forth; and that the chief captain had taken the steps, and done the things he had related.

Ver. 10. *Then Paul, after the governor had beckoned unto him to speak*, etc.] Tertullus having finished his account, Paul was silent to his charge and calumnies, until the governor beckoned with his hand or head, or made some sign to him to speak for himself; which he might not do, until leave was given him; and then he

answered as follows:

forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation; some say he was in the thirteenth, others in the tenth year of his government; some copies read a “just judge”; but this does not so well agree with the character of Felix; (see Gill on “Acts 24:27”).

I do the more cheerfully answer for myself; since if he had been such a mover of sedition everywhere, he must in this course of years have known

or heard something of it; and seeing also he could be no stranger to the temper of the Jews, that they were given to envy, revenge, lying, and perjury, and therefore would not easily believe all they said, or rashly take their part, but rather would pity the apostle, who had fallen into such hands, and do him justice.

Ver. 11. *Because that thou mayest understand*, etc.] By what Paul now asserted, and by the witnesses which he could produce to certify the truth of it:

that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship; that is, from the time that he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem, to the present time, in which he stood before Felix, pleading his own cause; which may be reckoned, thus, he came in one day from Caesarea to Jerusalem, (<442116>Acts 21:16,17) the next day he visited James and the elders, (<442118>Acts 21:18) on the third day he purified himself in the temple, (<442126>Acts 21:26) where he was taken and used ill by the Jews; on the fourth day, he was brought before the sanhedrim, and defended himself, (<442230>Acts 22:30) on the fifth day forty Jews conspire to take away his life, (<442311>Acts 23:11), on the sixth day he came to Caesarea, being sent there by Lysias, (<442332>Acts 23:32) and five days after this, which make eleven, Ananias, and the elders, with Tertullus, came down to accuse him; and this day was the twelfth, on which his trial came on. And of these twelve days he was a prisoner nine, and therefore could not have done so much mischief, and stirred up so much sedition as was insinuated; and in opposition to the charge of profaning the temple, he observes that he came up to Jerusalem to "worship"; namely, at the feast of Pentecost.

Ver. 12. *And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man*, etc.] Either about civil or religious affairs: not that it was criminal to dispute in the temple; it was a common thing for the doctors to dispute about matters of religion, in the porches, and courts, and chambers of the temple, as it may be observed they often did with Christ; but the apostle mentions this to show, that he was so far from moving sedition among the people of the Jews, that he never so much as entered into any conversation with them, upon any subject whatever: true indeed, he was in the temple, and was found there, but not disputing with any, but purifying himself according to the law of Moses:

neither raising up the people; stirring them up to sedition, and tumult, to rebel against the Roman government:

neither in the synagogues; where there were the greatest concourse of people, and the best opportunity of sowing seditious principles, and of which there were many in the city of Jerusalem. The Jews say [f1191] there were four hundred and sixty synagogues in Jerusalem; some say [f1192] four hundred and eighty:

nor in the city; of Jerusalem, in any of the public streets or markets, where there were any number of people collected together; the apostle mentions the most noted and public places, where any thing of this kind might most reasonably be thought to be done.

Ver. 13. *Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me*.] As that he was a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, and a profaner of the temple these things they could not set forth in any clear light, and bring testimonies, or give demonstration of; they could not make them appear to be true, which it lay upon them to do, or otherwise in course he ought be acquitted: this was challenging and defying them to make good their assertions.

Ver. 14. *But this I confess unto thee*, etc.] What was truth he was not ashamed of, but ready to own, and bear his testimony for, whatever was the consequence of it:

that after the way which they call heresy; referring to the charge of his being a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, (<442405>Acts 24:5) and meaning by the way the Christian religion, or the doctrines of Christianity, which the Jews called heresy; and as early as this were the Christians, by them, called heretics: so we read [f1193] of µynymh tkrb, "a prayer against the heretics", which Samuel (the little) composed before, or in the presence of R. Gamaliel the elder, he approving of it; which R. Gamaliel was Paul's master; and some have thought, that Samuel the little, the composer of this prayer, was Saul himself; so that he knew very well that the Christian doctrine was called heresy, and the Christians heretics, for he had called them so himself in the time of his unregeneracy; but now he was not ashamed to profess that way, and walk in it, and according to it worship God, as follows:

so worship I the God of my fathers; even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, suggesting, that by embracing Christianity, he had not denied, and gone off from the worship of the one, only, living, and true God, the God of Israel; and that there was an entire agreement between the saints of the Old

Testament, and the Christians of the New, in the object of worship; the Vulgate Latin version reads, “so serve I the Father, and my God”; that is, God the Father, who is the Father of Christ, and the God and Father of believers in him:

believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets; which the Sadducees did not; and strictly adhering to these, and not to the traditions of the elders, as did the Scribes and Pharisees; so that since he believed whatever was contained in the sacred writings, he could not be charged justly with heresy; and as he believed, so he taught nothing but what was agreeably to the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

Ver. 15. *And have hope towards God*, etc.] Of an interest in him, and of enjoying eternal life and happiness with him in a future state:

which they themselves also allow; that is, some of the Jews, not the Sadducees, for they denied what is afterwards asserted; but the Pharisees, who believed the immortality of the soul, and its existence in a future state:

and that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; agreeably to the doctrine of Christ in (<430528>John 5:28,29). In this article the Pharisees of those times were sounder than the modern Jews; for though the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is one of their thirteen articles of faith, and is a fundamental one, which he that does not believe, cannot be said to be of the Jewish religion; yet they limit it entirely to the righteous [f1194], and will not allow that the wicked shall rise again: and this notion obtained also very early; for in their Talmud [f1195] it is reported, as the saying of R. Abhu, that

> “the day of rain is greater than the resurrection of the dead; the resurrection of the dead is µyqydxl, for the righteous, but the rain is both for the righteous, and the wicked.”

Though Abarbinel [f1196] says, that the sense of this expression is not, that they that are not just shall have no part in the resurrection, but that hereby is declared the benefit and reward to be enjoyed at the resurrection; that that is not like rain, from whence both just and unjust equally receive advantage; whereas only the reward is for the righteous, but not for the ungodly: moreover, he observes, that this saying was not received and approved of by all the wise men, particularly that R. Joseph dissented, and others agreed with him; and as for himself, he openly declares, that that

assertion, that the just among the Israelites only shall rise again, is foreign from truth, since the Scripture affirms, (<27D202>Daniel 12:2) "that many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake"; but if there should be no other than the righteous in the resurrection, they would without doubt be very few; besides it is said, "some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting contempt"; and Isaiah says, (<236624>Isaiah 66:24) "and they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me"; which shows, that the ungodly shall rise again, to receive their due punishment: and Manasseh ben Israel [f1197], in the last century, argued for the resurrection of both the godly and ungodly, from the same passages of Scripture; and yet he was not of opinion, that the resurrection would be general and common to all men, only that some of all sorts, good, and bad, and middling, would rise again, and which he supposed was the sense of the ancients. It is certain the Jews are divided in their sentiments about this matter; some of them utterly deny that any other shall rise but the just; yea, they affirm [f1198], that only the just among the Israelites, and not any of the nations of the world shall rise; others say that all shall rise at the resurrection of the dead, excepting the generation of the flood [f1199]; and others [f1200] think, that only they that have been very bad, or very good, shall rise, but not those that are between both; but certain it is, as the apostle affirms, that all shall rise, both just and unjust: the just are they who are made so by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and who being created anew unto righteousness and true holiness, live soberly, righteously, and godly; the unjust are they who are destitute of righteousness, and are filled with all unrighteousness; and these latter, as well as the former, will rise again from the dead; which is clear, not only from the words of Christ, and the writings of the apostles, but from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, particularly (<27D202>Daniel 12:2) and also from the justice of God, which requires that they who have sinned in the body, should be punished in the body; wherefore it is necessary on this account, that the bodies of the wicked should be raised, that they with their souls may receive the full and just recompense of reward; and likewise from the general judgment, which will include the righteous and the wicked, and who must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive for the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil; in order to which there must be a resurrection of them; to which add, the account the Scripture gives of the punishment of the wicked in hell, which supposes the resurrection of the body, and in which the body and soul will be both destroyed. Indeed there will be a difference between the resurrection of the

just and of the unjust, both in the time of their rising, the dead in Christ will rise first at the beginning of the thousand years, the wicked not until they are ended; and in the means and manner of their rising; they will be both raised by Christ, but the one by virtue of union to him, the other merely by his power; the just will rise in bodies not only immortal, and incorruptible, but powerful, spiritual, and glorious, even like to the glorious body of Christ; the wicked will rise with bodies immortal, but not free from sin, nor glorious: yea, their resurrection will differ in the end of it; the one will rise to everlasting life and glory, the other to everlasting shame and damnation.

Ver. 16. *And herein do I exercise myself*, etc.] Or because of this; on account of this doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which is a doctrine according to godliness, and promotes and engages to a holy life and conversation, as the contrary tends to encourage a dissolute and sinful manner of living; (see <4652>1 Corinthians 15:32) The apostle studied, and laboured, and bent himself, and employed his thought, care, and time,

to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man; that is, to discharge every duty which God requires, and to give to every man what is due to him; so as to please God, and not offend men, neither Jew nor Gentile, nor the church of God; and so as that conscience may be clear of guilt, and may not be defiled with sin, being purged and purified by the blood of Christ. By a “conscience void of offence”, is meant a good conversation; which as it respects God, lies in a carefulness not to offend him, but to do his will; and as it respects men, a shunning what may give offence, or be a stumbling to them; and though this cannot be perfectly attained to in each of its branches, yet there is in every good man a concern to have such a conscience; and the consideration of the resurrection of the dead, the general judgment, and a future state, induce him to it.

Ver. 17. *Now after many years*, etc.] Absence from Jerusalem; it was now about five and twenty years since his conversion, and most of this time he spent among the Gentiles; three years after it he went up to Jerusalem, and fourteen years after that, (<4801>Galatians 1:18, 2:1) but it had now been some years since he had been there:

I came to bring alms to my nation; the collections which were made among the Gentile churches, particularly in Macedonia, for the poor saints at Jerusalem, (<4625>Romans 15:25-27, <4701>2 Corinthians 8:1-4).

and offerings; either for the day of Pentecost, according to the usages of that feast, or the offerings on the account of the vow of the Nazarite, (⁴⁴2126Acts 21:26). The Vulgate Latin version adds, “and vows”; unless the spiritual and evangelical sacrifices of prayer and praise can be thought to be meant, since the ceremonial law was now abrogated; though it is manifest the apostle did at some times, and in some cases, comply with the Jews in the observance of it, in order to gain some.

Ver. 18. *Whereupon*, etc.] Or “among which”; while the apostle was busy about the offerings of the Nazarites:

certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple; and therefore could not be said to profane it; this he observes in answer to the charge of his attempting to profane it, and acquaints the governor how that was; as that having joined himself to four men that had a vow upon them, and being in the temple purifying himself with them, certain Jews that came from Ephesus, in Asia, who knew him there, and had a pique against him, found him here; not profaning the temple, as they pretended, but acting according to the worship and service of it; and that,

neither with a multitude; for there were but four men with him;

nor with tumult; making any noise and riot, or stirring up persons to sedition and rebellion.

Ver. 19. *Who ought to have been here before thee*, etc.] For they were the only persons who saw him in the temple, and what he was doing; and who by an hideous outcry raised a mob upon him, who took things upon hearsay from them:

and object, if they had ought against me; either with respect to sedition, or blasphemy, error or heresy, if they were capable of proving anything.

Ver. 20. *Or else let these same here say*, etc.] They that are present, the high priest and the elders, who were come down to accuse him:

if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council; or “Jewish sanhedrim”; when he was brought before them by the chief captain, (⁴⁴2230Acts 22:30, 23:1) meaning, if any evil was then done by him, or any iniquity proved upon him, let it be declared; for as for his imprecation, or prophecy, that God would smite the high priest, he excused himself on that head, as not knowing it was the high priest.

Ver. 21. *Except it be for this one voice*, etc.] Sentence or expression following, which declares his faith about the resurrection; not that he thought or owned that this was an evil in him, but that it was the only one, that any of them, the Jews, a part among them, namely, the Sadducees, could condemn, or judge to be evil in him:

that I cried, standing among them; whereby they were thrown into confusion and division among themselves: and it was this,

touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day; (see <4423 6>Acts 23:6).

Ver. 22. *And when Felix heard these things*, etc.] Which were said on both sides, both by plaintiff and defendant, the charges brought against Paul, and his answer to them, as a judge ought to do:

having more perfect knowledge of that way; the Christian religion, which the Jews called heresy, and Paul had embraced; the sense is, either that he had a more perfect knowledge of it than he had before; and by what Paul had said, he saw that it was not contrary to the law, nor had any tendency to promote sedition and tumult; or rather, when he should have more perfect knowledge of this new way, called the sect of the Nazarenes, he would determine this cause, and not before: wherefore

he deferred them; put them off to longer time, and would make no decision in favour of one side or the other:

and said, when Lysias the chief captain shall come from Jerusalem to Caesarea,

I will know the uttermost of your matters: as for the way, or religion of the Christians, he proposed doubtless to consult other persons; and as for the profanation of the temple, and especially about stirring up of sedition, he would inquire of Lysias about that; and when he had got full information of these particulars, then he promised them to bring things to an issue, and finish the cause.

Ver. 23. *And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul*, etc.] In custody, to watch and guard him, and look after him, that he went not away, since he was neither condemned nor acquitted; and therefore must be retained a prisoner, till one or other was done:

and to let him have liberty; not to go where he pleased, or out of the place of confinement, for then there would have been no need of the after direction, not to prohibit his friends from coming to him; but to free him from his bonds and close confinement; which was done, partly on account of his being a Roman, and partly because he took him to be an innocent man, and it may be because he hoped to receive money from him:

that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him; but that they should have free access to him, and the liberty of conversation with him; which layouts granted show that he was inclined to the side of Paul, both through the defence that he had made for himself, and through the letter which Lysias sent him, as well as through the knowledge he had gained by long observation and experience, of the temper and disposition of the Jews, their priests and elders.

Ver. 24. *And after certain days*, etc.] Some days after this trial:

when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess; to Caesarea, having been to fetch her from some other place, or to meet her: this woman was the daughter of Herod Agrippa, who was eaten by worms, (<441223>Acts 12:23) and sister to King Agrippa, mentioned in the next chapter; but though she was born of Jewish parents, and so a Jewess, as she is here called, yet her name was a Roman name, and is the diminutive of Drusus; the first of which name took it from killing Drausus, an enemy's general, and who was of the Livian family; and the name of the mother of Tiberius Caesar was Livia Drusilla; Caius Caligula, the Roman emperor, had also a sister whose name was Drusilla [f1201]; this name Herod took from the Romans, and gave to his daughter; though the masculine name is often to be met with in Jewish writings; we frequently read of yaswrd ybr, "Rabbi Drusai" [f1202]; Herod Agrippa [f1203] left three daughters, born to him of Cypris, Bernice, Mariamne, and Drusilla; and a son by the same, whose name was Agrippa; Agrippa when his father died was seventeen years of age, Bernice was sixteen, and was married to her uncle Herod; Mariamne and Drusilla were virgins, but were promised in marriage by their father; Mariamne to Julius Archelaus, son of Chelcias, and Drusilla to Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus, king of Comagene; but after Herod's death, he refused to marry her, being unwilling to embrace the Jewish religion and relinquish his own, though he had promised her father he would; wherefore her brother Agrippa married her to Azizus king of the Emesenes, who was willing to be circumcised; but this marriage was quickly dissolved; for Felix

coming to the government of Judea, seeing Drusilla, was enamoured with her beauty; and by the means of one of his friends, one Simon a Jew, and a native of Cyprus, who pretended to be a magician, he enticed her from her husband, and prevailed upon her to marry him:

he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ; which he did, chiefly on account of his wife, who being brought up in the Jewish religion, had some notion of the Messiah the Jews expected, and could better understand what Paul talked of than he did; who at this time doubtless showed, that Christ was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he; that he is truly God and man, that he died, and rose again from the dead on the third day, and that he has obtained salvation for sinners, and that whoever believes in him shall be saved; this was the faith in Christ Paul discoursed of, and Felix and his wife heard; but it does not appear that it was attended with the power of God, to the conversion of either of them; it seems to have been merely out of curiosity, and as a diversion to them, and to do his wife a pleasure, that he sent for Paul and heard him.

Ver. 25. *And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come*, etc.] The apostle not only discoursed concerning the doctrine of faith in Christ, but insisted upon the duties of religion: and particularly he reasoned upon righteousness; not justifying righteousness, that is only the righteousness of Christ, and which rather belongs to the doctrine of faith in Christ; but the exercise of justice, or the doing of righteousness between man and man; which was agreeably to the light of nature, to the law of God, and Gospel of Christ, and is a virtue highly necessary in a judge, and was greatly wanting in Felix; who, as the historian says [f1204], was guilty of much cruelty and injustice throughout this government and therefore very appropriately did the apostle fall on this subject: and he might also reason concerning the necessity of a righteousness, in order to justify before God, and to appear before him with acceptance, and to enter into heaven: he might show, that it was the loss of righteousness which was the reason of the first man being removed from his place and state of happiness, in which he was whilst innocent; and that to admit persons into heaven without a righteousness, is contrary to the pure and holy nature of God, who loves righteousness, and hates iniquity; and particularly would not be agreeable to his justice, which requires a perfect righteousness; yea, it would be uncomfortable to holy men themselves, to have ungodly and unrighteous persons with them in heaven: he might also reason upon the want of righteousness, which is in every man; how that the first man having lost his

righteousness, all his posterity are destitute of one; and that they are not able to work out one acceptable to God, and which will justify in his sight; that the thing is impracticable and impossible, and that that which men call a righteousness is not one, at least is not a justifying one: he might insist upon the unprofitableness of a man's own works of righteousness for such a purpose, by observing the imperfection of them; and that justification by them is contrary to God's declared way of justifying sinners, is derogatory to his free grace, would make null and void the death of Christ, and encourage boasting in men; and all this he might reason about, in order to convince him of the necessity and suitableness of the righteousness of faith in Christ, he had before been discoursing of: and very pertinently in the next place did he insist on "temperance"; or "continence", and chastity; since Felix had enticed away another man's wife, and now lived in adultery with her: and who was now with him, whilst hearing this discourse; which concluded with an account of "judgment to come"; how that Jesus Christ is appointed the Judge of quick and dead, and that all must appear before him, stand at his bar, and be accountable to him for all their actions, and be judged by him, which will be done in the most righteous manner: he might argue this, not only from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, of which Drusilla might have some knowledge, such as (<19613>Psalm 96:13, <21237>Ecclesiastes 3:17 11:9 12:14 #<27009>Daniel 7:9,10), but from reason, from the relation which men stand in to God, as his creatures, and therefore are accountable to him for their actions; and from the justice of God, which in many instances, in the present state of things, is not manifest: good men are afflicted and suffer much, and bad men flourish and enjoy great prosperity; wherefore there must be another state in which things will have another turn, and justice will take place: he might from hence conclude the certainty of a future judgment; and the universality of it, that it would reach to all men and things, and would proceed according to the strict rules of justice, and in the most awful manner; and that a true and just sentence would be pronounced and strictly executed: upon which account of things,

Felix trembled; his conscience was awakened, accused him of the injustice and incontinence he had been guilty of; and his mind was filled with horror, at the thought of the awful judgment he could not escape, which Paul had described unto him; nor could he bear him to discourse any longer on these subjects:

and answered, go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee; he signifying he was not at leisure now to hear him any

longer; when he had a spare hour he would send for him, and hear him out; but this was only an excuse to get rid of him now, and lull his conscience asleep, and make it quiet and easy; which he was afraid would be more and more disturbed, should he suffer Paul to go on preaching in this manner: it is a saying of R. Judah [f1205],

> "say not when I am at leisure I will learn, perhaps thou wilt never be at leisure."

Ver. 26. *He hoped also that money would have been given him of Paul*, etc.] For he observed from his own defence, that he came up to Jerusalem to bring alms and offerings; and he perceived by Tertullus's indictment, that he was at the head of a large body of men; that he was some considerable person, at least who was in great esteem among some sort of people, and whose life and liberty were valuable: and he might hope if Paul had not money of his own, yet his friends would supply him with a sufficiency to obtain his freedom; and it may be that it was with this view that he ordered that they should have free access to him and minister to him, that so he might have to give to him:

that he might loose him; from all confinement, and set him at entire liberty:

wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him; but not about religious matters, but about his civil affairs; suggesting he would release him for a sum of money, which the apostle did not listen to, being unwilling to encourage such evil practices, or to make use of unlawful means to free himself.

Ver. 27. *But after two years*, etc.] Not of Felix's government, for he had been judge many years in that nation, but of the apostle's confinement at Caesarea:

Porcius Festus came in Felix's room; was made governor of Judea by Nero in his stead; who having had many and loud complaints against him for malpractice, moved him: and so Josephus [f1206] says, that Festus succeeded Felix in the government of Judea, and calls him as here, Porcius Festus; in the Arabic version he is called Porcinius Festus, and in the Vulgate Latin version Portius Festus, but his name was not Portius, from "porta", a gate, but "Porcius", a porcis, from hogs; it was common with the Romans to take names from the brute creatures; so Suillius from swine, Caprarius and Caprilius from goats, Bubulcus from oxen, and Ovinius from sheep. The famous Cato was of the family of the Porcii; his name was M.

Porcius Cato, and came from Tusculum, a place about twelve miles from Rome, where there is a mountain which still retains the name of Porcius; we read also of Porcius Licinius, a Latin poet, whose fragments are still extant; whether this man was of the same family is not certain, it is very likely he might: his surname Festus signifies joyful and cheerful, as one keeping a feast; this was a name common with the Romans, as Rufus Festus, Pompeius Festus, and others:

and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound; he had done many injuries to their persons and properties, he had greatly abused them, and incensed them against him; and now he was sent for to Rome, to answer for his maladministration; wherefore, to gratify the Jews, and to oblige them, in hopes that they would not follow him with charges and accusations, at least would mitigate them, and not bear hard upon him, he leaves Paul bound at Caesarea, when it was in his power to have loosed him, and who he knew was an innocent person: but this piece of policy did him no service, for the persons he had wronged, the chief of the Jews at Caesarea, went to Rome, and accused him to Caesar; and he was sent by his successor thither, to appear before Nero, and answer to the charges exhibited against him; and had it not been for his brother Pallas, who was in great authority at court, he had been severely punished [f1207].

CHAPTER 25

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 25

Ver. 1. *Now when Festus was come into the province*, etc.] Of Judea, which was a Roman province, over which he was made governor by Nero, the Roman emperor, in the room of Felix; he now being landed in some part of the province, namely, at Caesarea, and so might be said to have entered upon the government of it, as the phrase will bear to be rendered;

after three days he ascended from Caesarea to Jerusalem; he very likely came by sea from Italy to Judea, and landed at Caesarea; for though Joppa was the nearest port to Jerusalem, yet Caesarea was the safest, and most commodious port, being made so by Herod; (see Gill on "Acts 18:22"), and besides, it seems to have been very much the residence of the kings and governors of Judea, (Acts 12:19, 23:23,33) here Festus stayed three days after his landing, to rest himself after the fatigue of the voyage, and then went up to Jerusalem, the metropolis of the province of Judea.

Ver. 2. *Then the high priest*, etc.] Ananias, as in (Acts 23:2, 24:1) the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin version, and all the Oriental versions, read, "the chief priests", the whole college of the priests:

and the chief of the Jews; their rulers and elders, the members of the Jewish sanhedrim;

informed him against Paul; they took the first opportunity of waiting upon him, when he was come to Jerusalem; hoping it might be a favourable one to them, since he was just entering upon his government, and might be willing to gratify the chief of the nation, and gain their affection and esteem, and since as yet he was not acquainted with their wicked dispositions and artifices; and brought a bill of information against Paul, and gave a large account of him, what a wicked man he was, and what evils he had committed; they laid many things to his charge, and very heavily accused him, and endeavoured to prepossess the governor, and prejudice him against him:

and besought him; that he would grant them the following request.

Ver. 3. *And desired favour against him*, etc.] Paul; they asked what would be a favour to them, and a prejudice to him: or "of him", that is, of Festus; they asked a favour of him, and desired it as such, as what would be gratefully accepted and acknowledged by them; which sense is confirmed by the Syriac version; the Arabic version renders it "to", or "upon them"; that is, they asked him to grant a favour to them, or bestow one on them, which is as follows:

that he would send for him to Jerusalem; that his case might be heard before him, and he might be tried and judged by him, as they pretended:

laying wait in the way to kill him; this was their design, though they concealed it, and pretended no other view than that justice might take place: their scheme was, that if they could have prevailed upon Festus to have sent for Paul to Jerusalem, from Caesarea, they would have provided men, perhaps the same forty and upwards as before, in (<4423 12>Acts 23:12,13) to have laid in wait for him in the way as he came, and to have killed him: the whole of this shows the malice of these men, the badness of their cause, the indefatigableness and diligence to attain their end, the danger the apostle was in, and the care of Providence over him.

Ver. 4. *But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Caesarea*, etc.] Or that he was kept there, and was in proper custody, under the care of a centurion, and should continue there; nor was there any reason why he should be removed, especially since he should return thither speedily, as he adds:

and that he himself would depart shortly thither; the answer was a very wise and prudent one, and the reasons given were just and strong; as that Paul had been sent to Caesarea, was left bound by his predecessor there; there he found him, and there he was under a proper guard, and there it was right for him to continue; and besides, he himself should make no stay in Jerusalem, but should depart for Caesarea in a few days, and therefore it was very improper to send for Paul thither.

Ver. 5. *Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able*, etc.] Who are at leisure, can spare time, and to whom it will be convenient, without interrupting other business, to take such a journey; and who are able to bear the expenses of it, without hurting their families, and whose health and age will admit of it; and above all, who are masters of this affair, and are

capable of forming charges, and of supporting them with proper proofs and evidences: let such

go down with me; from Jerusalem to Caesarea: and accuse this man: in proper form, according to the rules of law, of what he is guilty, and can be proved upon him:

if there is any wickedness in him; or committed by him, anything that is absurd and unreasonable, notoriously flagitious and criminal; that is, contrary to the rules of reason, the common sense of mankind, and the laws of God and men; and especially of the Roman empire, or that is blasphemous or seditious.

Ver. 6. *And when he had tarried among them more than ten days*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and three of Beza's copies, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, "no more than eight or ten days"; and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions leave out the phrase "no more", and read "when he had stayed there", as the former; that is, at Jerusalem; or "when he had remained among them", as the latter; the Jews, chief priests, and others, "eight or ten days"; the historian, not being certain to a day, expresses himself in this manner:

he went down to Caesarea; from whence he came, and where Paul was:

and the next day sitting in the judgment seat; the day after he was come to Caesarea, he sat upon the bench in the court of judicature, to try causes, and particularly the apostle's, which he was very desirous of knowing, for which reason he so soon took the bench: and

commanded Paul to be brought; from the place where he was kept a prisoner, to the judgment hall where Festus was.

Ver. 7. *And when he was come*, etc.] Into court:

the Jews which came down from Jerusalem; along with Festus, perhaps the high priest with the elders, and Tertullus the orator, as before:

stood round about; either the Apostle Paul, or the judgment seat; the witnesses and accusers were to stand, as well as the person accused; (see Gill on "Mark 14:57").

And laid many and grievous complaints against Paul; which they could not prove; for his moral conversation, both before and after conversion,

was very strict and conformable to the laws of God and man; and yet as pure and inoffensive as he was, he was not exempt from the calumnies of men; and these many and very grievous; but it was his happiness, and to his honour through the grace of God, that his enemies could not make good anyone thing against him.

Ver. 8. *While he answered for himself*, etc.] As he was allowed by the Roman laws to do, he pleaded his own cause, and showed the falsehood of the charges exhibited against him; by observing, that as the crimes alleged against him were reducible to three heads, neither of them were just and true:

neither against the law of the Jews; the law of Moses, whether moral, ceremonial, or judicial; not the moral law, that he was a strict observer of, both before and since his conversion; nor the ceremonial law, for though it was abolished, and he knew it was, yet for peace sake, and in condescension to the weakness of some, and in order to gain others, he submitted to it, and was performing a branch of it, when he was seized in the temple; nor the judicial law, which concerned the Jews as Jews, and their civil affairs: neither against the temple; at Jerusalem, the profanation of which he was charged with, by bringing a Gentile into it; which was a falsehood, at least a mistake:

nor yet against Caesar, have I offended at all; for he was charged with sedition, (Acts 24:5). Caesar was a common name to the Roman emperors, as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt; and which they took from Julius Caesar the first of them, who was succeeded by Augustus Caesar, under whom Christ was born; and he by Tiberius, under whom he suffered; the fourth was Caius Caligula; the fifth was Claudius, mentioned in (Acts 11:28, 18:2) and the present Caesar, to whom Paul now appealed, was Nero; and though succeeding emperors bore this name, it was also given to the second in the empire, or the presumptive heir to it: authors are divided about the original of Caesar, the surname of Julius; some say he had it from the colour of his eyes, which were “Caesii”, grey; others from “Caesaries”, his fine head of hair; others from his killing of an elephant, which, in the language of the Moors, is called “Caesar”: the more common opinion is, that he took his name from his mother’s womb, being “Caeso”, cut up at his birth, to make way for his passage into the world; in which manner also our King Edward the Sixth came into the world.

Ver. 9. *But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure*, etc.] As did his predecessor Felix, (<4407>Acts 24:27) he being just entered upon his new government, and having met with some caresses and civilities from the Jews at Jerusalem, by whom he had been much pressed and urged about the affair of the apostle:

answered Paul, and said, wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me? meaning by the Jewish sanhedrim, he Festus being present: this was what the Jews had requested of him when he was at Jerusalem, that he would send for Paul thither, and there let him be judged, and which request he had denied; but having been solicited and importuned by the Jews, perhaps as, they came down together, he was inclined to gratify them, and to admit of it that he should be tried at Jerusalem, before the sanhedrim, he being present; and yet he was unwilling to do this without the prisoner's consent, he being a freeman of a Roman city; fearing he should be charged with delivering up a Roman into the hands of the Jews, which might be resented by the emperor and the Roman senate, should it come to their knowledge.

Ver. 10. *Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment seat*, etc.] Not that here was a seat in the judgment hall built by Herod for Caesar himself to sit in, should he ever come there, as some have thought; but the seat on which Festus sat is called Caesar's judgment seat, because it was in a Raman court of judicature, and because Festus, who filled it, represented Caesar himself:

where I ought to be judged: being a Roman citizen, and not at Jerusalem by the sanhedrim of the Jews, who had nothing to do with him:

to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest; it may be by his predecessor Felix, who had informed him of this case; or by Lysias's letter, which might come to his hands; or by the apostle's answer and vindication of himself, which he now made.

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Ver. 11. *For if I be an offender*, etc.] Against the law of Moses, or the temple at Jerusalem, or Caesar the Roman emperor:

or have committed anything worthy of death; by the laws of the Romans, as sedition, murder, etc.

I refuse not to die; signifying that he did not decline going to Jerusalem, either through any consciousness of guilt, or fear of death; for if anything could be proved against him, that was of a capital nature, he did not desire to escape death; he was ready to die for it; this was no subterfuge, or shift, to evade or defer justice:

but if there be none of these things; to be found, or proved, and made to appear:

whereof these accuse me; pointing to the Jews, that came down to be his accusers, and had laid many and grievous charges against him:

no man may deliver me unto them; not justly, or according to the Roman laws; suggesting that Festus himself could not do it legally;

I appeal unto Caesar; to this the apostle was induced, partly by the conduct of the governor, who seemed inclined to favour the Jews; and partly by the knowledge he might have of their intention to lie in wait for him, should he go up to Jerusalem; and chiefly by the vision he had had, which assured him that he must bear witness of Christ at Rome, (<442311>Acts 23:11).

Ver. 12. *Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council*, etc.] Not with the Jewish sanhedrim, or any part of it that came down on this occasion; but with Roman counsellors, which he had to assist him in judgment, when any difficult matters were before him; the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, “with his counsellors”; and the Arabic reads in the singular number, “with his counsellor”; with these he advised, whether it was proper to admit of Paul’s appeal, or not; and having had their opinion,

he answered, hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go: the question is put, partly for the more certain knowledge of the thing, that there might be no mistake in it; and partly on account of the Jews, that they might see that though he was disposed to do them a favour, it was not in his power, because of this appeal; and it may be with some resentment in himself, since it carried in it a sort of reflection upon him, as if he was incapable of issuing this affair, or would not be just and faithful in it.

Ver. 13. *And after certain days*, etc.] Several days after the above appeal made by Paul:

King Agrippa and Bernice came unto Caesarea to salute Festus: this King Agrippa was the son of Herod Agrippa, who killed James the brother of John, and of whose death mention is made in (<442301>Acts 12:1,2) the Jewish chronologer [f1208] calls him Agrippa the Second, the son of Agrippa the First, the fifth king of the family of Herod: he was not king of Judea, this was reduced again into a province by Claudius; and upon the death of his uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, he was by the said emperor made king of that place, who afterwards removed him from thence to a greater kingdom, and gave him the tetrarchy, which was Philip's, his great uncle's; namely, Batanea, Trachonitis, and Gaulanitis, to which he added the kingdom of Lysanias; ((see <420301>Luke 3:1)) and the province which Varus had; and to these Nero added four cities, with what belonged to them; in Peraea, Abila and Julias, and in Galilee, Tarichea and Tiberias [f1209]. The Jewish writers often make mention of him, calling him, as here, King Agrippa; (see Gill on "<442603>Acts 26:3"), and so does Josephus [f1210]. According to the above chronologer [f1211] he was had to Rome by Vespasian, when he went to be made Caesar; and was put to death by him, three years and a half before the destruction of the temple; though others say he lived some years after it: and some of the Jewish writers affirm, that in his days the temple was destroyed [f1212]. Agrippa, though he was a Jew, his name was a Roman name; Augustus Caesar had a relation of this name [f1213], who had a son of the same name, and a daughter called Agrippina; and Herod the great being much obliged to the Romans, took the name from them, and gave it to one of his sons, the father of this king: the name originally was given to such persons, who at their birth came forth not with their heads first, as is the usual way of births, but with their feet first, and which is accounted a difficult birth; and "ab aegritudine", from the grief, trouble, and weariness of it, such are called Agrippas [f1214]. Bernice, who is said to be with King Agrippa, is not the name of a man, as some have supposed, because said to sit in the judgment hall with the king, but of a woman; so called, in the dialect of the Macedonians, for Pheronice, which signifies one that carries away the victory; and this same person is, in Suetonius [f1215], called Queen Beronice, for whom Titus the emperor is said to have a very great love, and was near upon marrying her: she was not wife of Agrippa, as the Arabic version reads, but his sister; his father left besides him, three daughters, Bernice, Mariamne, and Drusilla, which last was the wife of

Felix, (<4422>Acts 24:24). Bernice was first married to her uncle Herod, king of Chalcis [f1216], and after his death to Polemon, king of Cilicia, from whom she separated, and lived in too great familiarity with her brother Agrippa, as she had done before her second marriage, as was suspected [f1217], to which incest Juvenal refers [f1218]; and with whom she now was, who came together to pay a visit to Festus, upon his coming to his government, and to congratulate him upon it.

Ver. 14. *And when they had been there many days*, etc.] Indulging themselves in pleasure, and spending their time in conversing on various subjects; and in order to carry on the conversation, and pass away time,

Festus declared Paul's case unto the king; in the following manner:

saying, there is a certain man left in bonds by Felix; the former governor in Caesarea, meaning Paul.

Ver. 15. *About whom, when I was at Jerusalem*, etc.] Quickly after he came to his government:

the chief priests and elders of the Jews informed me; brought an accusation to him, exhibited to him charges against him, presented to him a bill of information, setting forth various crimes he had been guilty of:

desiring to have judgment against him; not barely to have his cause tried, but to have a sentence of condemnation passed upon him; some copies read "condemnation", as the Alexandrian copy, and two of Beza's; and that punishment is designed, and even death itself, is manifest from the following words.

Ver. 16. *To whom I answered*, etc.] As follows:

it is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die; or to give any man to destruction; to pass sentence of death upon him, without hearing his cause, and purely at the request of another, and merely to gratify him:

before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face; so as to speak to his face, or before him, what they have to charge him with:

and have licence to answer for himself, concerning the crime laid against him; and this was also according to the law of the Jews, (<4805>John 7:51) though Festus, from such an application to him by the chief priests and

elders, might conclude that their manner was different, he being ignorant of their laws and customs; but their prejudice to the apostle carried them to act such an illegal part, or at least to desire it might be acted: it is one of the Jewish canons, that it is unlawful for a judge to hear one of the contending parties, before the other is come in.

Ver. 17. *Therefore when they were come hither*, etc.] To Caesarea, namely the chief priests and elders of the Jews:

without any delay on the morrow, I sat on the judgment seat: that is, the next day after they came down, Festus went into the judgment hall, and took his place there, in order to hear this cause; which circumstance he mentions, to show how expeditious he was:

and I commanded the man to be brought forth: from his place of confinement, to the hall, to answer for himself.

Ver. 18. *Against whom when the accusers stood up*, etc.] As they were obliged to do, whilst they were exhibiting their charges, bearing their testimonies, and producing their proofs; (Acts 25:7).

They brought none accusation of such things as I supposed: for by his being left in bonds, and by the information of the chief priests and elders, and their violence against him, he imagined he must be chargeable with some notorious capital crime.

Ver. 19. *But had certain questions against him of their own superstition*, etc.] Or religion; as about their law, which they said Paul had spoke against; and about their temple, which they pretended he had polluted; and about the resurrection of the dead, which he asserted, and some denied:

and of one Jesus which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive; for it seems more was said on each side, than is recorded by Luke: the Jews objected to him among other things, his belief in Jesus of Nazareth, whom they traduced as an impostor and deceiver; Paul on the other hand argued, that he was the true Messiah; and in proof of it, affirmed that though they had put him to death, he was risen from the dead, and so was declared to be the Son of God with power: Festus, it is very likely, had never heard of Jesus before, and therefore speaks of him in this manner; or if he had, he had entertained a contemptible opinion of him, as well as of the Jewish religion; and which he expresses, even in the presence of the king, who had outwardly at least embraced it.

Ver. 20. *And because I doubted of such manner of questions*, etc.] Or was ignorant of them, and knew not what to make of them, or to say to them, and was at an entire loss what to do in this affair:

I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters; before the Jewish sanhedrim, who best understood them.

Ver. 21. *But when Paul had appealed to be reserved*, etc.] In custody at Caesarea:

unto the hearing of Augustus; to have his cause heard, tried, and judged of, by the Roman Emperor Nero, here called Augustus; for as it was usual for a Roman emperor to be called Caesar, from Julius Caesar, the first of them, so to be called Augustus, from Octavius Augustus, the second emperor: his original surname was Thurinus, but this being objected to him as a reproachful one, he afterwards took the name of Caesar, and then of Augustus; the one by the will of his great uncle, the other by the advice of Munatius Plancus; when some thought he ought to be called Romulus, as if he was the founder of the city, it prevailed that he should rather be called Augustus; not only this surname being new, but more grand, seeing religious places, and in which anything was consecrated by soothsaying, were called “Augusta, ab auctu, vel ab avium gestu, gustuve”, according to Ennius [f1219]: in the Greek text the name is Sebastos, which signifies venerable and worshipful.

I commanded him to be kept; in Caesarea, by a centurion, and not sent to Jerusalem:

till I might send him to Caesar: till he could have an opportunity of sending him to Rome, to take his trial before the emperor.

Ver. 22. *Then Agrippa said to Festus*, etc.] After he had given him the above account:

I would also hear the man myself; Agrippa being a Jew by profession, and knowing more of these things than Festus did, and very likely had heard much concerning Jesus Christ; and if not of the apostle, yet however of the Christian religion; and therefore he was very desirous, not only out of curiosity to see the man, but to hear him; and get some further information and knowledge about the things in dispute, between the Jews and Christians, in which Festus was very ready to gratify him:

tomorrow, said he, thou shall hear him: and sooner things could not well be prepared for an affair of this kind, and for so grand a meeting.

Ver. 23. *And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come*, etc.] Into the hall, or court of judicature:

and Bernice; his sister, along with him:

with great pomp: in rich dress, with the "regalia", or ensigns of royalty carried before them, and attended with a large train and retinue of servants:

and was entered into the place of hearing; the causes that were tried in court, that particular part of the hall, which was assigned for that purpose; for as there were the proper places for the judge and council, and for the plaintiffs and defendants, so for those that came to hear:

with the chief captains; or tribunes, who had the command of the Roman soldiers; and who had each of them a thousand men under them, as their title signifies:

and principal men of the city; that is, of Caesarea; the magistrates, and chief inhabitants of the place:

at Festus's commandment Paul was brought forth; and became a spectacle to a vast number of men, as he himself says; and which in part fulfilled what Christ had foretold to his disciples, that they should be brought before kings and governors for his sake; (see <4049>1 Corinthians 4:9 <4018>Matthew 10:18).

Ver. 24. *And Festus said, King Agrippa*, etc.] He addressed himself to him in the first place, as being the principal person, and of great dignity, as well as knowledge:

and all men which are here present with us; the chief captains, and principal inhabitants of the city:

ye see this man the prisoner at the bar, meaning Paul:

about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me: applied unto him, interceded with him, and very importunately pressed and desired him to give judgment against him:

both at Jerusalem and also here; at Caesarea, whither they came from Jerusalem to accuse him:

crying: in a very noisy and clamorous way:

that he ought not to live any longer; as they did before Lysias the chief captain, (<442222>Acts 22:22) and so in the hearing of Festus; for it was his death they sought, and nothing else would satisfy them.

Ver. 25. *But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death*, etc.] Which was a public testimony of the apostle's innocence, to the great mortification of his enemies, some of whom might be present; a like testimony was given of him by Lysias, (<442329>Acts 23:29).

And that he himself hath appealed unto Augustus; the Emperor Nero; (see <442521>Acts 25:21).

I have determined to send him; having had the opinion of his council upon it.

Ver. 26. *Of whom I have no certain thing*, etc.] No certain crime, charge, or accusation; nothing of any moment or consequence, no particular thing, nothing but a heap of confused notions, of I know not who or what:

to write unto my lord; meaning the Roman emperor, under whom he served as governor of Judea:

wherefore I have brought him before you; the whole company then present:

and especially before thee, O King Agrippa; as being not only a man of eminence, dignity, and authority, but of knowledge in such matters, which the Jews accused Paul of; (see <442602>Acts 26:2,3).

That after examination had; of Paul, and his case;

I might have somewhat to write; concerning him, and the charges exhibited against him to the emperor.

Ver. 27. *For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner*, etc.] A man bound as if he was a malefactor, and guilty of some heinous crimes, to Rome, to be tried before Caesar:

and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him; for which he is a prisoner, and for which he is sent to the emperor: it seemed to Festus an absurd thing, and what might be justly looked upon by his master, a foolish, silly, and stupid piece of conduct, and void of common sense and

reason, mere madness and folly; to send him a prisoner, and not signify in his letter to him, what was laid to his charge; and yet this was so dark and obscure, that he could not tell what to make of it, nor what to write to his lord about it; and hoped therefore, upon this re-examination of Paul before Agrippa, he should come to a more certain knowledge of this affair, and be better furnished to give Nero an account of it, to whom the apostle had appealed.

CHAPTER 26

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 26

Ver. 1. *Then Agrippa said unto Paul*, etc.] After Festus had made the above speech to him, and to all present, and had introduced the affair of Paul, who now stood before them:

thou art permitted to speak for thyself; which a prisoner might not do, until he had leave; and this leave was granted by Festus the Roman governor, who was properly the judge, and not Agrippa, though the permission might be by both; and so the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, “we have ordered”, or “permitted thee”, etc.

Then Paul stretched forth the hand; as orators used to do, when they were about to speak; or else to require silence; or it may be to show the freedom of his mind, and how ready he was to embrace the opportunity of pleading his own cause; being conscious to himself of his innocence, and relying on the ingenuity and integrity of his judge; and especially of the king, before whom he stood:

and answered for himself; or made an apology, or spoke in vindication of himself, in order to remove the charges brought against him.

Ver. 2. *I think myself happy, King Agrippa*, etc.] This was an handsome and artificial way of introducing his defense, and of gaining the affection and attention of the king, and yet was not a mere compliment; for it had been his unhappiness hitherto, that his case was not understood; neither Lysias the chief captain, nor the governors Felix and Festus, knew anything of the rites and customs of the Jews, and could not tell what to make of the questions of their law, of which Paul was accused: but it was otherwise with Agrippa, he was master of them, and this the apostle looked upon as a circumstance in his own favour:

because I shall answer for myself this day before thee; not before him as a judge, for Festus was judge, but in his presence; and he being versed in things of this kind, was capable of informing, counselling, directing, and assisting the judge, in what was proper to be done; wherefore it was an

advantage to the apostle to plead his own cause, and vindicate himself before such a person from the charges exhibited against him:

touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews; such as violation of the law, profanation of the temple, contempt of the people of the Jews and their customs, and of blasphemy, and sedition; all which he was able to clear himself from, and doubted not but he should do it to the entire satisfaction of the king.

Ver. 3. *Especially, because I know thee to be expert in all customs*, etc.] Rites and ceremonies of the Jews, whether enjoined by the law of Moses, or by the elders, fathers, and wise men:

and questions which are among the Jews; concerning angels, spirits, and the resurrection of the dead; which were moved and agitated between the Sadducees and Pharisees; and a multitude of others, which were disputed between the schools of Hillell and Shammai, of which their Misna and Talmud are full, and with these Agrippa was well acquainted; and to their rites and customs he conformed, of which we have some instances recorded in their writings: when they went with their firstfruits to Jerusalem [f1220],

> "a pipe sounded before them till they came to the mountain of the house, and when they came to the mountain of the house (the temple), even King Agrippa carried the basket upon his shoulder, and went in till he came to the court."

So concerning the reading of the law by a king, they give this following account [f1221]:

> "a king stands and takes (the book of the law), and reads sitting; King Agrippa stood and took it, and read standing, and the wise men praised him; and when he came to that passage, (<5675>Deuteronomy 17:15) "Thou mayest not set a stranger over thee", his eyes flowed with tears; they said unto him, fear not, Agrippa, thou art our brother."

Some of their writers say [f1222], this was a piece of flattery in them: they also elsewhere commend him for his modesty and humility [f1223];

> "according to the tradition of the doctors, when persons attending a funeral met a bride (with her retinue), the former gave way, and

both to a king of Israel, when they met him; but they say concerning King Agrippa, that he met a bride, and gave way, and they praised him."

And whereas it was forbidden to eat on the eve of the passover, before the Minchah, though ever so little, that they might eat the unleavened bread with appetite [f1224]; it is observed, that even King Agrippa, who was used to eat at the ninth hour, that day did not eat till it was dark [f1225]: so that from hence it appears, that King Agrippa was famous for his exact knowledge and observance of the customs and manners of the Jews, and which was well known, and was by the apostle:

wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently; since he was charged with a breach of the laws and customs of the Jews; and his defence would proceed upon things which Agrippa was not altogether ignorant of.

Ver. 4. *My manner of life, from my youth*, etc.] That is, his conduct and deportment, his behaviour among men, from the time that he was capable of performing religious exercises, and of knowing the difference between one sect and another, and of being observed and taken notice of by men:

which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem; for though he was born in Tarsus in Cilicia, he was very early brought, or sent by his parents to Jerusalem, where he had his education under Gamaliel; so that the first part of his life was spent in Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea, and among the Jews there; the more learned and knowing part of them, Gamaliel's pupils, and the wise men and their disciples: and his course of life must be well known to them, as he says,

this know all the Jews; that had any knowledge of him, and conversation with him.

Ver. 5. *Which knew me from the beginning*, etc.] From his youth, from his first coming to Jerusalem:

if they would testify; what they know, and speak out the truth of things, they must say,

that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee; there were three sects of religion among the Jews, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes; the first of these was the most exact, and came nearest to the truth of doctrine, and was the strictest as to outward holiness of life and

conversation, and of this sect the apostle was; and according to it he lived, and that in such a manner, as not to be charged with any notorious crime; and indeed in his own, and very likely in the opinion of others, he was then blameless. (See Gill on "Matthew 3:7").

(Essenes: A Jewish sect, who, according to the description of Josephus, combine the ascetic virtues of the Pythagoreans and the Stoics with a spiritual knowledge of the divine law. It seems probable that the same name signifies "seer", or "the silent, the mysterious". As a sect the Essenes were distinguished by an aspiration after the ideal purity rather than by any special code of doctrines. There were isolated communities of the Essenes, which were regulated by strict rules, and analogous to those of the monastic institutions of a later date. All things were held in common, without distinction of property; and special provision was made for the relief of the poor. Self-denial, temperance and labour — especially agricultural — were the marks of the outward life of the Essenes; purity and divine communication the objects of aspiration. Slavery, war and commerce were alike forbidden. Their best known settlements were on the north west shore of the Dead Sea. J.B. Smith one volume Bible Dictionary.)

Ver. 6. *And now I stand, and am judged*, etc.] Before the Roman governor, and in the presence of Agrippa:

for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; either for the hope of righteousness, life, and salvation, by the Messiah; who was promised to the Jewish fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and others; (see Genesis 22:18, 49:10) or for the hope of the resurrection of the dead, and eternal life; of which there are various testimonies in the writings of the Old Testament, committed to the people of the Jews. (Job 19:26,27, Isaiah 26:19, Daniel 12:2) and others; and both these senses may be very well joined together, for it was for asserting that the promised Messiah was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he; that he was risen from the dead, and that all the dead will be raised by him; and that life and righteousness, salvation, and everlasting glory and happiness, are only by him; for asserting these things, I say, the apostle was now a prisoner, and stood at the bar of a Roman judge, being accused by the Jews.

Ver. 7. *Unto which promise*, etc.] Of the Messiah, and salvation by him; and of the resurrection of the dead and eternal glory, as following upon it:

our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night hope to come; and enjoy the Messiah, and all blessings along with him; and the happy state of the resurrection and eternal life: the people of Israel were distinguished into twelve tribes, according to the names of the twelve patriarchs, the sons of Jacob; and though ten of the tribes had been carried captive, and had not returned as tribes, yet there were many of the several tribes, who either were left in the land, or returned along with the two tribes, and were mixed with them: and this way of speaking here used by Paul, and also by James, (<jas 1:1>James 1:1) is justified by Jewish writers: the Misnic doctors say [f1226],

> "the twelve tribes bring twelve heifers, and for idolatry they bring twelve heifers and twelve goats:"

compare with this (<ezr 6:17>Ezra 6:17, 8:35), yea, they say [f1227] ``"twelve tribes" are called, lhq, "a congregation", eleven tribes are not called a congregation."

This suggests a reason of the apostle's use of this phrase, for he here represents the Israelites as a worshipping assembly, serving God continually, night and day, as they were by their representatives, the priests and stationary men in the temple; and that with intenseness, ardour, and fervency, as the word rendered "instantly" signifies being in a longing and earnest expectation of the coming of the Messiah, and of his world to come, and of the resurrection of the dead, and a future state of happiness.

For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews: for preaching that the Messiah, the twelve tribes hope for, is already come and that there is salvation in him, and in no other, and that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both just and unjust; and that there is another world and state after this, in which men will be happy and miserable; and these were the charges and accusations, or the sum of what were exhibited against him.

Ver. 8. *Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you*, etc.] You Heathens and Sadducees; for the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was thought an incredible doctrine by the Heathens in general, and therefore was laughed at by the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers at Athens, when preached by the apostle there; and by a particular sect among the Jews, the Sadducees; and the apostle may be thought either to address himself to Festus, the Roman governor, and to the chief captains, who were present, and, being Heathens, disbelieved this doctrine; or else to

King Agrippa, who might be a Sadducee, and to such of the Sadducees as were in court, and expostulate with them, why it should be looked upon as a thing by no means to be credited,

that God should raise the dead; which may be understood both of the particular resurrection of Christ from the dead, which was not believed, neither by the Romans nor by the Jews, and neither by Pharisees nor Sadducees; or of the general resurrection of the dead, which was judged from the nature of things to be impracticable, and impossible by the latter, as well as by the Heathens: but since God is omniscient and omnipotent, and just and true, knows where every particle of a dead body lies, and can gather all together, and inspire with life; which he can as easily do, as to form all things out of nothing, as he did; and his justice and veracity seem to require, that the same bodies which have been partners with their souls in sinning, or in sufferings should share with them in woe or in happiness; it can neither be absurd, unreasonable, nor incredible, to suppose that God will raise them from the dead.

Ver. 9. *I verily thought with myself*, etc.] This seems to be a correction of himself, why he should wonder at their ignorance and unbelief, particularly with respect to Jesus being the Messiah, and his resurrection from the dead, and expostulate with them about it; when this was once his own case, it was the real sentiments of his mind, what in his conscience he believed to be right and just; namely,

that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth; to him himself, to his religion, to his Gospel, and ordinances, and people; by blaspheming his name, by denying him to be the Messiah, by condemning his religion as heresy, by disputing against his doctrines, and manner of worship, and by persecuting his followers.

Ver. 10. *Which thing I also did in Jerusalem*, etc.] The metropolis of Judea, where he had had his education, and was well known; here he consented to the death of Stephen, and held the clothes of the witnesses while they stoned him; and here he haled men and women out of their houses, and committed them to prison, and made havoc of the church of Christ, and destroyed the faith, and those that professed it, as much as in him lay.

And many of the saints I shut up in prison; at Jerusalem; (see Acts 8:3).

having received authority from the chief priests; to take them up, and imprison them.

And when they were put to death; for it seems there were more than Stephen put to death, though we have no account of them:

I gave my voice against them; not that he sat in council, or was a member of the Jewish sanhedrim, and voted for the execution of the Christians, but he was pleased with the sentence they passed, and approved of it; or he joined the zealots, who, without any form of law, seized on the Christians, and put them to death wherever they found them; and this he assented to, and encouraged: some render the words, "I carried the sentence"; as the Vulgate Latin version; that is, the sentence of condemnation, which the Jewish sanhedrim passed upon the disciples and followers of Christ: this Saul took, and carried, it may be, both to the Roman governor, to be signed by him, and to the officers to put it in execution; so industrious and forward was he in persecuting the saints.

Ver. 11. *And I punished them oft in every synagogue*, etc.] In Jerusalem, where there were many; (see Gill on "Acts 24:12"); by beating and scourging them there, as the manner was; (see Matthew 10:17).

and compelled them to blaspheme; the Lord Jesus Christ, both to deny him to be the Messiah, and to call him accursed; as the Jews and Heathens obliged some professors of Christianity to do, who were only nominal ones, and had not grace and strength to stand against their threatenings, and to endure their persecutions:

and being exceeding mad against them; full of malice, envy, and hatred:

I persecuted them even to strange cities; particularly Damascus; and of his journey thither, he gives an account in the following verse; or through the violence of his persecution he obliged them to fly to strange cities, where they were foreigners and strangers; though he himself might not follow them there, since we do not read of his going anywhere but to Damascus; whereas they that were scattered by the persecution, in which he was concerned, travelled as far as Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch, (Acts 9:19). The phrase may be rendered, "even to cities without"; i.e. without the land of Israel: frequent mention is made in Jewish writings of such and such cities being ˆwj hxwl, "without the land".

Ver. 12. *Whereupon as I went to Damascus*, etc.] Being intent, upon the above said things, to punish the saints, compel them to blaspheme, imprison them, and even put them to death on account of these things; upon this errand and business he went to Damascus, the chief city of Syria, where he knew there were many that believed in Christ, who had removed from Jerusalem thither, on account of the persecution, or were settled there before:

with authority and commission from the chief priests; the Jewish sanhedrim, to bring those of them at Damascus bound to Jerusalem, in order to be punished, as in (<44902>Acts 9:2, 22:5) and which the Ethiopic version adds here.

Ver. 13. *At midday, O king*, etc.] So in (<44206>Acts 12:6). This circumstance is omitted in (<44903>Acts 9:3). King Agrippa is called upon by the apostle, to excite his attention to what he was about to relate, it being very wonderful, and of great importance.

I saw in the way; that is, to Damascus, when near the city;

a light from heaven; which descended from thence:

above the brightness of the sun; it was a greater light than that, or otherwise it could not have been discerned at noon, or have had the effect it had upon Saul, and his company. This account of the greatness of the light, is not in the other places where this narrative is given:

shining round about me: so in (<44903>Acts 9:3, 12:6)

and them which journeyed with me; this is not mentioned in the other accounts.

Ver. 14. *And when we were all fallen to the earth*, etc.] Saul, and the men that were with him, for fear of the divine Majesty, who by this extraordinary light was thought to be present: the other narratives only relate Saul's falling to the earth; how this is to be reconciled to their standing speechless, in (<44907>Acts 9:7), (see Gill on "<44907>Acts 9:7").

I heard a voice speaking unto me, etc. (see Gill on "<44904>Acts 10:4"). (see Gill on "<44905>Acts 10:5").

Ver. 15. *And I said, who art thou, Lord? and he said*, etc.] Or "the Lord said", as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions read,

I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, "Jesus of Nazareth"; (see Gill on "⁴⁰⁹⁵Acts 9:5").

Ver. 16. *But rise and stand upon thy feet*, etc.] This, and what follows in this and the two next verses, are not in any of the former accounts; and these words are used not only because Saul was fallen to the earth, and are an encouragement to rise up, and stand corporeally, but to take heart, and be of good cheer; for though he had acted so vile and cruel a part by Christ, and his people, yet he had designs of grace, and good will to him; and this appearance was not for his destruction, but for his honour, comfort, and usefulness:

for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose; not to take vengeance for past offences, but for the ends hereafter mentioned: and this appearance of Christ was real, corporeal, and personal, and not imaginary, or merely visionary and intellectual; and it was to this sight of Christ he more than once refers, partly in proof of Christ's resurrection from the dead, and partly to demonstrate the truth of his apostleship, (⁴⁶⁰¹1 Corinthians 9:1, 15:8).

to make thee a minister and a witness, both of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; so that he was an apostle, not of men, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ, as he himself says, (⁴⁸⁰¹Galatians 1:1). He was a minister, not of man's making, but of Christ's; and they are the only true ministers of the Gospel, who are made by Christ, who have their mission and commission, their qualifications, gifts, and abilities, their doctrine, work, and wages from him: and the apostle's work, as a minister, was to be a witness; it was to testify what he had seen of Christ corporeally; and what knowledge of his person, office, and grace was now communicated to him by the spirit of wisdom and revelation; and what should hereafter be made known to him, either mediately by Ananias, or immediately by Christ and his Spirit; for the apostle had after appearances, visions, and revelations; (see ⁴⁴²²Acts 22:17,18, 23:11, ⁴⁷¹²2 Corinthians 12:1-4,7).

Ver. 17. *Delivering thee from the people*, etc.] That is, the people of the Jews, as they are distinguished from the Gentiles; and so the Syriac version, and two of Beza's copies, and two of Stephens's, read; for the Lord knew, that as soon as ever Saul was converted and professed his name, and preached his Gospel, the people of the Jews would immediately

become his implacable enemies, and seek to destroy him; wherefore he promises him before hand deliverance, and security from them:

and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee; to both Jews and Gentiles; to the Jews first, and then to the Gentiles; which method the apostle observed, and which course he steered, until the Jews put away the Gospel from them; and then he turned to the Gentiles, to whom he chiefly preached, as their apostle, and was saved from many dangers among them, as is here promised.

Ver. 18. *To open their eyes*, etc.] The eyes of their understanding, which were shut, and darkened, and blind: one copy reads, "the eyes of the blind"; and the Ethiopic version renders it, "the eyes of their heart"; and to have them opened, is to have them enlightened, to see their lost state and condition by nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the plague of their own hearts, the impurity of nature, the impotence of man to that which is spiritually good, the imperfection of obedience, and the insufficiency of a man's righteousness to justify him before God; and to see where help is laid, and where salvation is; to behold Christ as the only able, willing, complete, and suitable Saviour; to see that there is life and righteousness, peace, pardon, grace, and glory in him; and to have an insight into the doctrines of the Gospel, and a glimpse of the invisible things of another world. Now though this is all the work of the Spirit, by whom only the eyes of the understanding are enlightened; yet this is ascribed to the apostle, not as the efficient cause, but as the instrument and means through preaching of the Gospel, which the Spirit of God would, and did make use of:

and to turn them from darkness to light; or "that they might be turned", as the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions render it: by "darkness" is meant, the darkness of nature, the darkness of sin, of ignorance, and unbelief, in which all men by nature are; who are in the dark about, and are ignorant of God, and the perfections of his nature; and about sin, and the evil there is in it, and that comes by it; and the way of peace, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; and the work of the spirit in regeneration and sanctification upon the heart; and about the Scriptures of truth, and the doctrines of the Gospel, and what will be their state and portion in another world; they do not know where they are, what they are, nor where they are going: and in the effectual calling this darkness is in a great measure removed, and they are turned to light; to God, who is light itself, and to

Christ, the light of the world, and to the light of the word, and to a participation of the light of grace here, in which they see light, and behold the above things, and of the light of glory hereafter. This is a phrase used by the Jews, at the time of the passover, when they praise the Lord, and give thanks unto him for the wonders he wrought for their fathers and for them, as that he had brought them out of bondage to liberty, and from sorrow to joy, and lwdg rwal hlpam, "from darkness to a great light" [f1228]. Conversion is the end of the Gospel ministry, and illumination is necessary to it; yea, it lies in a turn from darkness to light, as is here expressed: and this conversion is not a mere external one, or a reformation of manners; this is indeed sometimes called a conversion, and is a man's turning from the evil of his ways, from a vicious life and conversation, to a sober way of living, and is often brought about through the ministry of the word; but then this may be where true conversion is not, and where there is no special illumination of the Spirit, nor any true spiritual light; and there may be a turning again to the former course of life; besides, this external conversion, when it is right and genuine, is the fruit and effect of inward conversion, or true grace, and is at most but the evidence of it: nor is it a conversion to a doctrine in a professional way; men may be converted in this sense, and remain wicked; they may have the form, but not the power of godliness; know the doctrine and profess it, and yet be strangers to the experience of it: nor does it design a restoration after backslidings; which sometimes goes by the name of conversion, such as was Peter's after his fall; but the first work of conversion is here meant, which is internal, and is a turn of the hearts of men; and is not the work of man, but of God, who has the hearts of all in his hands, and can turn them as he pleases; and is what man is passive in, he does not turn himself, but is turned by the Lord; though ministers may be, and are instruments in it. It follows,

and from the power of Satan unto God: this power of Satan regards not his power over the rest of the devils, whose prince and head he is; hence he is called the prince of devils, and the prince of the power of the air; but his power over the world of men, which he has by usurpation, and therefore is called the prince of the world; but not his power over the bodies of men, by possessing them, inflicting diseases, and death itself upon them, nor over their estates; all which is only by permission of God, whenever he exercises it; but over the souls of men, in whom he rules as in his own kingdom: he is the strong man armed, and the hearts of men are his palaces, which are guarded with devils and unclean lusts; when all the goods are kept in peace

by him, there is no concern about sin, no inquiry after salvation, no dread of the curses of the law, nor fear of hell and damnation, but all in the utmost security: and he not only dwells in the hearts of unregenerate persons, but he works effectually there; by stirring up their corruptions, putting ill things into their minds, and instigating them against true spiritual and powerful religion, and the professors of it: he has power over the minds of them that believe not, to blind them, by keeping them in blindness, and increasing it; which he does by diverting their minds from hearing the Gospel; and whilst hearing it, by filling them with enmity against it. Moreover, they are led by him as captives at his will; they are in his power, as the bird is in the snare of the fowler, and as a prisoner in the hands of a jailer; and are entirely at his beck and command, and do his lusts, and obey his will: and this also may have a particular respect to the power and authority which he exercised over the Heathens, before the Gospel came among them; Satan usurped a power over the Gentile world, and took upon him to be the god of it; and for many hundred of years was worshipped in their idols; and he held them fast bound unto him in the fetters of ignorance, superstition, and idolatry; but now the Gospel was sent among them to free them from this power and tyranny of his; and it was made effectual to the turning of multitudes of them from him, and subjection to him, which is done in the effectual calling of every person; not that Satan then has no more power over them to tempt and distress them, but not to rule over them, and lead them about at pleasure, and much less to devour and destroy them: and then also are they turned to God, to have true knowledge of him, and an hearty desire after him, which they had not before; and to a love of him, whose hearts before were enmity to him; and to believe in him, and trust in him as the God of providence, and of grace; and to have communion with him; and to be subject to his government, and yield a cheerful obedience to him, both externally and internally.

That they may receive forgiveness of sins: as an act of God’s free grace, through the blood of Christ, which was shed for it; and which free and full forgiveness of sins is published in the Gospel, that whoever believes in Christ, may by faith receive it. This is what every enlightened soul sees it needs, and is desirous of; it is the first thing it wants, and asks at the hands of God; and nothing can be more suitable to its case, and welcome to it; and this is the good news which is declared in the ministry of the Gospel: and it is had in a way of receiving; for it is not purchased with money, nor

procured by the merits of men; but is a gift of God, which is received by the hand of faith into the conscience of the enlightened sinner; the consequences of which are peace, joy, and comfort.

And inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in one: by the "inheritance" is meant, either something enjoyed now, as God himself, who is the portion of his people, and the lot of their inheritance; or a part and interest in Christ, who is that good part and portion, and which shall never be taken away; and the blessings of grace in him, which, besides forgiveness of sins, are peace with God, a justifying righteousness, and adopting grace: or rather eternal glory and happiness hereafter is here designed, which is called an "inheritance" or "lot", in allusion to the land of Canaan, which was distributed by lot; not that heaven is a casual thing; but it signifies that every Israelite indeed will have their share and portion in it. There are many things which show an agreement between heaven, and the land of Canaan; that was a goodly land, and ready prepared for the Israelites; and so heaven is the better country, and the city and kingdom God has prepared for his people from the foundation of the world: a wilderness was passed through first, and many battles fought before it was possessed; the people of God pass through the wilderness of this world, and fight the good fight of faith, and then enter into rest: the Israelites were introduced into it, not by Moses, but by Joshua; and saints get to heaven, not by the works of the law, but by Christ the Saviour, another Jesus or Joshua: and lastly, Canaan was a place of rest; and so is heaven. Moreover, it may be so called, in allusion to inheritances among men, though it vastly exceeds all earthly ones, being incorruptible, undefiled, which fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens; yet it bears some likeness to them; it is what is bequeathed to the children of God by their heavenly Father, and comes to them through the death of Christ the testator, and is for ever: it is neither purchased nor acquired, but is freely given; belongs only to the children of God, and is their Father's free gift unto them, and is only enjoyed by such who are "sanctified"; and it lies among them, and will be jointly and equally possessed by them. The heirs of salvation are said to be sanctified in different senses; they are sanctified by God the Father in eternal election, being separated from others, and chosen through sanctification to it; and they are sanctified "in" and "by" the Lord Jesus Christ: they are sanctified in him representatively, he being the covenant head of his people, has all grace, and so all holiness in him for them, which is perfect and complete; and this is the source of all that holiness that is in

them, and which they have communicated to them by virtue of their union to him; and also they are sanctified "in" him through the imputation of the holiness of his human nature to them, which is a branch of their justification before God; and they are sanctified by him meritoriously, or by his blood, through which their sins are expiated, and fully atoned for; and so in this sense they are sanctified by it: and they are sanctified internally by the Spirit of God, who in regeneration produces principles of grace and holiness in them, which were not there before; man was originally possessed of a perfect moral holiness, but through sin is become an unholy creature; and in the same state and condition are the children of God by nature, as others, and need the sanctifying influences of the divine Spirit to make them meet for the undefiled inheritance: and this inheritance these sanctified ones receive by faith now, as they do the forgiveness of their sins; that is, they now receive by faith the promise of the inheritance, and the earnest and pledge of it, and their right unto it, and claim upon it: for the phrase,

by faith that is in me, is not to be connected with the word "sanctified", but with the word "receive", in the preceding clause; and has respect to both benefits, which it receives from Christ, the object of it here expressed; for it is not any faith, but faith which is in Christ, by which these blessings of grace are received and enjoyed: and the whole of this shows the great ends and usefulness of the Gospel ministry.

Ver. 19. *Whereupon, O King Agrippa*, etc.] Having been favoured with this illustrious appearance of the Lord and with this declaration and commission from him:

I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision; to Christ himself, who appeared from heaven in so much light and glory, and spoke unto him, and appointed him what he should be, and do, and declared what use he should be of: he did not disbelieve what Christ said, nor was he disobedient to the orders he gave, but immediately set about the work he called him to, without consulting flesh and blood; (see <480116>Galatians 1:16).

Ver. 20. *But showed first unto them of Damascus*, etc.] The Jews at Damascus to whom the apostle first preached; (see <440920>Acts 9:20,22).

and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea; observing the order of his mission, (<442617>Acts 26:17) though it was not until after he had been in Arabia, and had returned to Damascus, that he went to Jerusalem,

and preached there; (see <4801>Galatians 1:17,18) compared with (<4401>Acts 9:28).

and [then] to the Gentiles; as at Antioch in Pisidia, at Iconium, Derbe, and Lystra in Lycaonia; and at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea in Macedonia; and in many places in Greece and Asia, as at Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, and others, as this history shows; and indeed he preached the Gospel from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum;

that they should repent; that is, that they should repent of their sins; of sin in general, as it is committed against God, is a transgression of his law, and as it is in itself exceeding sinful, and in its effects dreadful; and of particular sins, such as men have been more especially addicted to, and of which the Jews and Gentiles, the apostle was sent unto, and to whom he preached, had been guilty: as the former of their will worship, and following the commandments and traditions of men, thereby making void the law of God; of their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah; of their persecution of his apostles, ministers, and people; and of their trust in, and dependence upon, their own righteousness for justification: and the latter of their immoralities, superstition, and idolatry; and both not of the outward gross actions of life only, but of inward sins and lusts: and repentance of each of these lies in a different sentiment of them; in a detestation and abhorrence of them; in shame and confusion on account of them; in self-reflections upon them, and humiliation for them; in an ingenuous acknowledgment of them, and turning from them: and this is not a national repentance which the ministers of the Gospel are to show to men the necessity of; though this is not unworthy of them, when there is a call in Providence to it, and the state of things require it; much less a legal one, but an evangelical repentance; which has along with it faith in Christ Jesus, dealing with his blood and righteousness for the remission of their sins, and their justification before God; and which springs from, and is encouraged and heightened by, a sense of the love of God: and now this being a part of the Gospel ministry, does not suppose it to be in the power of men to repent of themselves, since no man, whilst he remains insensible of the evil nature of sin, and the hardness of his heart continues, which none but God can remove, can repent; and when he becomes truly sensible, he then prays to God to give him repentance, and to turn him: nor does it at all contradict its being a blessing of the covenant, a gift of Christ, and a grace of the Spirit of God; nor does it suggest, that the preaching of the word is sufficient of itself to produce it; the contrary of which the ministry of John

the Baptist, of Christ, and of his apostles, declares; but the design of its being insisted on in the Gospel ministry, is to show that men are sinners, and in such a state and condition, that they are in need of repentance, and that without it they must perish; and the rather this is to be quietly inculcated, since true repentance is unto life, is the beginning and evidence of spiritual life, and issues in eternal life; and since there is a close connection between that and salvation, and that without it there is no salvation. It follows,

and turn to God; this is to be understood, not of the first work of conversion, which is God's work, and not man's act, and in which man is passive, and which is before repentance, whereas this follows upon it; though the ministers of the word have a concern with this; to bring about this is the design and use of their ministrations; their business is to show the nature of conversion, what it is, and wherein it lies; to rectify mistakes about it, and to observe the necessity of it: but here is designed a turning to God, in consequence of the grace of first conversion; by an acknowledgment and confession of sin to God, by an application to him for pardoning grace and mercy, by a trust and dependence on him for righteousness, life, and salvation, and by obedience to his commands and ordinances. It intends a turning of the Jews from their evil principles and practices, from the traditions of their elders to the law of God, the Gospel of Christ, and the ordinances of it, and of the Gentiles, from their idols to the worship of the true and living God:

and do works meet for repentance the same with "fruits meet for repentance", (⁴⁰Matthew 3:8). And such as are particularly mentioned in (⁴⁷2 Corinthians 7:11) they are they which are the reverse of the evil actions they have been guilty of, and which are properly good works. And they are they which are done according to the will of God declared in his word, this is a requisite of a good work; what is not according to the word of God is not a good work, nor can it be any evidence of repentance; and they are also such as spring from love to God, for if they are done through fear of punishment, or for sinister and selfish ends, they show repentance to be a mere legal one: and they are such as are done in faith, in the name and strength of Christ, and to the glory of God by him. All external good works are designed, which show that the inward repentance professed, and that the outward change made in religion and worship, are genuine and sincere: the doctrines of internal repentance and outward worship, and all good

works, are parts of the Gospel ministry, and to be insisted on in their proper places.

Ver. 21. *For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple*, etc.] He means the Asiatic Jews, who finding him in the temple, laid hold on him, and dragged him out of it: and, as he says, went about to kill me; for no other reason, but for preaching to the Gentiles, and for preaching the above doctrines to them: what he refers to is in (<442127>Acts 21:27-31).

Ver. 22. *Having therefore obtained help of God*, etc.] Both to preach the Gospel, and escape danger; for he had delivered him many a time both from Jews and Gentiles, according to his promise, (<442617>Acts 26:17) and particularly from the Asiatic Jews, when they were about to kill him, by the means of Lysias the chief captain, who rescued him out of their hands; and also from the lying in wait of the Jews to take away his life, and the various methods they used both with Felix and Festus to get him into their power: but the Lord appeared for him, and saved him from all their pernicious designs against him; and therefore he could say as follows,

I continue unto this day: in the land of the living, though in bonds:

witnessing both to small and great; to kings and subjects, as now to Agrippa, Festus, the chief captains and principal inhabitants of Caesarea, and to the common people assembled; to high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, male and female, young and old; to persons of every state, age, and sex:

saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come. This he mentions in opposition to the charge against him, as that he spoke against the law of Moses, as well as against the temple, and the people of the Jews; whereas his doctrine was perfectly agreeable to the writings of Moses, and the prophets, concerning the Messiah, they speak of in many places, and the Jews expected. There is an entire harmony and agreement between the writings of Moses, and the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New, in all the doctrines of the Gospel revelation; in the doctrine of a trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence, and of the proper deity of each person; in the doctrines respecting the person, offices, and work of Christ; that he is the Son of God, God and man in one person, and the only Mediator between God and man; and that he is prophet, priest, and King; and that the great work he was appointed to, undertook, and came about, and has fulfilled, is the redemption of his

people; and in the several doctrines of grace concerning the choice of men to salvation, the covenant made with Christ on account of them, their redemption, justification, and pardon, their repentance and good works, the resurrection of the dead, and a future state: the particular things instanced in, the apostle preached, and Moses and the prophets said should be, and in which they agreed, are as follow.

Ver. 23. *That Christ should suffer*, etc.] Great afflictions in soul and body, and death itself; this is recorded by Moses, (<01B315>Genesis 3:15) and is the sense of many of the types, as of the passover, brazen serpent, etc. and of all the sacrifices which from God were appointed by him, and is the constant account of all the prophets from the beginning to the end; (see <19201>Psalm 22:1,2,6,7,11-21, <25302>Isaiah 53:2-12) (<27026>Daniel 9:26, <38909>Zechariah 9:9, 12:10, 13:6,7). The sufferer is Christ, or the Messiah, not the Father, nor the Spirit, but the Word, or Son of God, and not in his divine nature, which was incapable of suffering, but in his human nature; though sufferings may be ascribed to his whole person, both natures being united in him: and hence they became efficacious to answer the purposes for which they were endured; and which he endured, not for himself, nor for angels, but for chosen men, sinners, and ungodly persons; in order to make peace and reconciliation for them, procure the pardon of their sins, obtain eternal redemption for them, deliver them from all evil, and from all enemies, and bring them nigh to God: and what he suffered were no other than what had been foretold in the writings of the Old Testament, which all along represent the Messiah as a suffering one; and in particular that he should suffer in his character, be reproached, and accounted a worm, and no man, (<25303>Isaiah 53:3, <19206>Psalm 22:6, 59:9) and in his soul and body, and be put to death and buried, as the above prophecies referred to show; the several circumstances leading on to, or attending his sufferings and death, are distinctly expressed; as the betraying him by one of his disciples, selling him for thirty pieces of silver, his being forsaken by all his disciples, his crucifixion between two thieves, the parting of his garments, giving him gall and vinegar to drink, and the piercing his side with a spear, (<19409>Psalm 41:9, <38112>Zechariah 11:12,13) (<38807>Zechariah 13:7, <25312>Isaiah 53:12, <19218>Psalm 22:18, 69:21 <38210>Zechariah 12:10). And to this agreed the doctrine of the apostle, who taught that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ that was to come, and that he had suffered all that Moses and the prophets did say should come upon him: but these were not the present sentiments

of the Jews, who expected the Messiah to be a temporal Prince and Saviour, and to live in great outward prosperity, and for ever.

And that he should be the first that should rise from the dead: by his own power, and to an immortal life, as Jesus did; and so is the firstborn from the dead, and the first fruits of them that slept: a type of this, in the deliverance of Isaac, is recorded by Moses in (<01222>Genesis 22:12-14) compared with (<581119>Hebrews 11:19) and the thing itself is foretold by many of the prophets, (<19160>Psalm 16:10, <232619>Isaiah 26:19, <280602>Hosea 6:2).

and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles: in his own person to the people of the Jews, and by his apostles to the Gentiles. In the writings of Moses he is spoken of as the great prophet God would raise up in Israel, to whom they should hearken; and as the Shiloh to whom the gathering of the people should be, (<051715>Deuteronomy 17:15, <014910>Genesis 49:10) and that he should be a light to both Jews and Gentiles, through the ministration of the Gospel, is said by the prophets, (<230902>Isaiah 9:2, 42:6, 49:6) and these were the things which the apostle asserted in his ministry, in perfect agreement with those writings.

Ver. 24. *And as he thus spake for himself*, etc.] Asserting the integrity and innocence of his past life and conversation, in proof of which he appealed to the Jews themselves; setting forth the prejudices to the Christian religion he had been under; declaring the heavenly vision that had appeared to him, and the divine orders he had received; alleging, that in his ministry there was an entire harmony between him, and the writings of Moses, and the prophets, for which the Jews professed a veneration; as he was thus vindicating himself, ere he had well finished his apology,

Festus said with a loud voice; that all might hear, and being moved with resentment at what he had heard; and it may be, he was displeased with Paul that he took so much notice of Agrippa, and so often addressed him, and appealed to him, when he scarce ever turned to, or looked at him:

Paul, thou art beside thyself; not in thy senses, or right mind, to talk of such an appearance and vision, and especially of the resurrection of a person from the dead. This is no unusual thing for the ministers of the Gospel to be reckoned madmen, and the doctrines they preach madness and folly: our Lord himself was said to be beside himself, and to have a devil, and be mad; and so were his apostles, (<411021>Mark 3:21, <431020>John 10:20 <471513>2 Corinthians 5:13) and it is not to be wondered at that natural men

should entertain such an opinion of them, since what they deliver is quite out of their sphere and reach: Festus added,

much learning doth make thee mad; the apostle was a man of much learning, both Jewish, Greek, and Roman; and Festus perceived him to be of great reading by his making mention of Moses, and the prophets, writings which he knew nothing at all of. And as this sometimes is the case, that much reading, and hard study, do cause men to be beside themselves, he thought it was Paul's case: so the philosopher [f1229] suggests, that men of great wit and learning, and who are closely engaged in study, whether in philosophy, or politics, or poetry, or in technical affairs, are inclined to be melancholy, and phrenetic.

Ver. 25. *But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus*, etc.] That is, Paul said, as the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read: he replied to Festus, to whom he gives his title of honour, not out of fear, nor flattery, but according to custom; and though he used him in such a reproachful manner, as if he was not himself, which he denies; nor did what he had said show anything of that kind, but the reverse, to which he appeals;

but speak forth the words of truth and soberness; which are true in themselves, being perfectly agreeable to the Scriptures of truth; and are what Christ, who is truth itself, had spoken, and of which he is the subject; and which the spirit of truth leads into, and owns and blesses: the Gospel in general, and all the doctrines of it, are words of truth; they are true, in opposition to that which is false, there is nothing of falsehood in them, no lie is of the truth; and to that which is fictitious, as the counterfeit Gospel of false teachers, which looks like the Gospel, and has the appearance of truth, but in reality is not; and to that which is but shadow, the Gospel, and the truths of it, are solid and substantial ones; hence the law and truth are opposed to each other, (<43 1 17>John 1:17) and there are particular doctrines of the Gospel, and such as the apostle had been speaking of, or referred unto, which are called truth, words of truth, and faithful sayings; as that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; that he is God manifest in the flesh, or is God and man in one person; that he came into the world to save the chief of sinners; that he suffered, died, and rose again from the dead; that justification is by his righteousness; and that as he is the first that rose from the dead, others will rise also; or that there will be a resurrection of the dead by him; (see <61 2 21>1 John 2:21,22, <54 3 15>1 Timothy 3:15,16) (<54 1 15>1 Timothy 1:15 <46 5 01>1

Corinthians 15:1,3,4, <4801>Galatians 3:1 <5128>2 Timothy 2:18). And these are "words of soberness" also; they are words of the highest wisdom, which contain the wisdom of God in a mystery, even hidden wisdom, the deep things of God, and such as could never have been found out by the wisdom of men; they are the means of bringing a man to himself, to his right mind, who before was not himself; of causing a man to think soberly of himself, and not more highly than he ought to think, even to think of himself, that he is the chief of sinners, and the least of saints; and of speaking soberly, wisely, and prudently; and of living soberly, righteously, and godly: they are doctrines, as delivered by the faithful ministers of them, which come from a sound and sober mind, and have a tendency to make wise and sober; and therefore should be spoken "forth", openly and boldly, freely and faithfully, constantly and continually, as they were by the apostle, whatever reproaches, calumnies, and reflections may be cast upon them for so doing, even though they may be called fools and madmen.

Ver. 26. *For the king knoweth of these things*, etc.] Something of them, of the sufferings and resurrection of the Messiah, and of his showing light to Jews and Gentiles, as they are spoken of by Moses and the prophets, whose writings Agrippa was conversant with, and of these things as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth; at least he had heard the report of them, how that they were said to be accomplished in him.

Before whom also I speak freely; because of the knowledge he had of these things:

for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; as that Moses and the prophets have foretold then, and that they have had their fulfilment in Jesus;

for this thing was not done in a corner: the ministry of Jesus was, public, his miracles were done openly, his suffering the death of the cross under Pontius Pilate was generally known, and his resurrection from the dead was a well attested fact, and the ministration of his Gospel to Jews and Gentiles was notorious. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions refer this to Paul's words and actions, that what he had said and done were not private but public, and of which Agrippa had had, by one means or another, a full account; but the other sense is best.

Ver. 27. *King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets*? etc.] What they have said concerning the person, office, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, and that what they have said is fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth?

I know that thou believest; that what the prophets said were true, and are accomplished.

Ver. 28. *Then Agrippa said unto Paul*, etc.] Either seriously or ironically; rather the former, arising from the convictions of his mind, which he could not stifle nor conceal:

almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian; to profess faith in Jesus as the Messiah, to embrace his doctrine, and submit to his ordinances, which is to be a Christian, at least externally: and when he says "almost", or "in a little", his meaning is, that within a little, or very near, he was of being persuaded to embrace Christianity; or in a little matter, and in some respects; or rather in a few words, and in a small space of time, Paul had strangely wrought upon him to incline to the Christian religion; though the first sense, that he was almost, or within a little of being a Christian, seems to be the best, as appears by the apostle's reply to it: what it is to be a real Christian, (see Gill on "Acts 11:26"). An almost Christian is one that has much light and knowledge, but no grace; he may know something of himself and of sin, of its being a violation of the law of God, and of the bad consequences of it, but has not true repentance for it; he may know much of Christ in a speculative way, concerning his person and offices, as the devils themselves do, and of the good things which come by him, as peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation; but has no application of these things to himself; he may have a large notional knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel, but has no experience of the power, sweetness, and comfort of them in his own soul; all his knowledge is unsanctified, and without practice: he is one that has a taste of divine things, but has not the truth of them; he may taste of the heavenly gift, of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come; yet it is but a taste, a superficial one, which he has; he does not savour and relish these things, nor is he nourished by them: he has a great deal of faith in the historical way, and sometimes a bold confidence and assurance of everlasting happiness; but has not faith of the right kind, which is spiritual and special, which is the faith of God's elect, the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; by which the soul beholds the glory, fulness, and suitableness of Christ, under a sense of need, and goes forth to him, renouncing everything of self, and

lays hold upon him, and trusts in him for salvation; and which works by love to Christ and his people, and has with it the fruits of righteousness: he may express a great deal of flashy affectation to the word, and the ministers of it, for a while, but has nothing solid and substantial in him; he may partake of the Holy Ghost, of his gifts largely, but not of special and internal grace; and indeed he can only be an almost Christian, that becomes one merely through the persuasion of men: it is one part of the Gospel ministry to persuade men, but this of itself is ineffectual; a real Christian is made so by the power of divine grace. Agrippa was only persuaded, and but almost persuaded by the apostle to be a Christian, but not by the Lord, nor altogether, who persuades Japheth to dwell in the tents of Shem.

Ver. 29. *And Paul said, I would to God*, etc.] This prayer of the apostle's shows his affection for the souls of men, and his great desire for their conversion, and also his sense of the power and grace of God, as necessary to it:

that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am; that is, his wish was that not only Agrippa, but that all that were present, were not only within a little, or in some low degree, but entirely, in the highest and fullest sense, Christians, as he was; that they knew as much of Christ, and had as much faith in him, and love to him, as he had, and were as ready to serve and obey him: he does not wish that Agrippa and the rest that heard him were as he had been, a bigot for traditions and ceremonies, that trusted in his own righteousness, did many things contrary to the name of Jesus, was a blasphemer of him, a persecutor of his saints, and an injurious person; but as he now was, not meaning with respect to his civil circumstances, as a mean poor man, and a tent maker, or with respect to his single state of life, which he elsewhere advises to, (49151 Corinthians 9:5) or with respect to his ministerial capacity, as an apostle of Christ, and a preacher of the Gospel; but as a Christian, and in a private capacity: his sense is, he wished that they were as he, regenerated by the Spirit of God, new creatures in Christ, called by the grace of God with an holy calling, believers in Christ, lovers of him, pardoned by his blood, justified by his righteousness, sanctified by his grace, children of God, and heirs of eternal life: and all this he wishes for of God, saying, "would to God", etc. knowing that the whole of this is not of men, but of God; all grace, and every blessing of it, which make or show a man to be a Christian indeed, are from him. And this wish is expressive of true grace, which desires the good of others, and also of a spirit truly

generous, that is not selfish and monopolizing; and which is concerned for the glory of God, the interest of Christ, and the weakening of Satan's kingdom: and from the whole of this it appears, that a person may arrive to true satisfaction of his own state; and that it is an evidence of grace, when the heart is drawn out in desires, after the salvation of others; and that altogether Christians are the only desirable ones; and that to be made a real Christian is the work of God, and to be ascribed to him. This the apostle wished for, for Agrippa and all that heard him; as does every Gospel minister for their hearers, the hearing of the word being the ordinary means of believing; and the rather it is desired by them, because the condemnation of those that hear the word is otherwise thereby aggravated: the apostle adds,

except these bonds; which were both troublesome and reproachful: not but that he cheerfully endured them himself, and thought it the duty of Christians to bear them patiently, when called to it, but then they were not things to be desired and wished for; the exception is not only Christian like, but humane and genteel.

Ver. 30. *And when he had thus spoken*, etc.] These words are omitted in the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions:

the king rose up; from the judgment seat; that is, King Agrippa:

and the governor; the Roman governor, Festus:

and Bernice: the sister of King Agrippa:

and they that sat with them; either in council, or to hear; the chief captains, and principal inhabitants of Caesarea.

Ver. 31. *And when they were gone aside*, etc.] Into some apartment adjoining to the judgment hall:

they talked between themselves; that the common people might not hear their debates, and the result of them, and what were their sentiments concerning Paul and his case:

saying, this man doth nothing worthy of death, or of bonds; according to the Roman laws; for as yet there were no laws among the Romans against the Christians as such, or against their professing and preaching Christ.

Ver. 32. *Then said Agrippa unto Festus*, etc.] As declaring his sense, and by way of advice and counsel; but not as determining anything himself, for that lay in the breast of Festus, the Roman governor and judge:

this man might have been set at liberty; from his bonds and imprisonment; for ought that appears against him, or any law to the contrary:

if he had not appealed unto Caesar; wherefore an inferior judge could not release him; but so it was ordered in divine Providence, that he should appeal to Caesar, that he might go to Rome, and there bear a testimony for Christ; however, this declaration of Agrippa, and what he and the governor and the rest said among themselves, are a considerable proof of the innocence of the apostle.

CHAPTER 27

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 27

Ver. 1. *And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy*, etc.] The chief city of which was Rome, the metropolis of the empire, where Caesar had his palace, to whom the apostle had appealed; and his voyage thither was determined by Festus, with the advice of Agrippa and his council, pursuant to the apostle's appeal, and which was founded on the will of God; all which concurred in this affair: it was the decree and will of God that the apostle should go to Rome, which was made known to him; and it was his resolution upon that, to go thither, wherefore he appealed to Caesar; and it was the determination of the Roman governor, not only as to his going there, but as to the time of it, which was now fixed: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read "he", instead of "we"; and the Ethiopic version reads expressly "Paul"; but the Greek copies read we: by whom are meant the apostle, and his companions; as Luke the writer of this history, and Aristarchus the Macedonian mentioned in the next verse, and Trophimus the Ephesian, who was afterwards left at Miletus sick, (<500>2 Timothy 4:20) and who else cannot be said; these were to sail with him to Italy, not as prisoners, but as companions: this resolution being taken,

they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners; who very likely had also appealed to Caesar, or at least the governor thought fit to send them to Rome, to have their cases heard and determined there; and these by the order of Festus were delivered by the centurions, or jailers, in whose custody they had been,

unto one called Julius; in the Alexandrian copy of the third verse, he is called Julianus; he was either one of the Julian family, or rather was one that had been made free by some of that family, and so took the name:

a centurion of Augustus' band; of a Roman band of soldiers, which belonged to that legion which was called "Augusta"; for it seems there was a legion that bore that name, as Lipsius observes, and it may be from Augustus Caesar.

Ver. 2. *And entering into a ship of Adramyttium*, etc.] Which was in the port of Caesarea; for from thence they set sail to the place where this ship was bound, which very likely was the place here mentioned; there was a city of this name in Africa, and which was built upon the sea shore, and is sometimes called Hadrumentum [f1230], as this is called Adramantos, in the Syriac version; and in the Alexandrian copy, and in another manuscript, "a ship of Adramyntum"; it is mentioned with Carthage, a city in Africa, by Pliny [f1231] and Solinus [f1232]; the one calls it Adrumetum, and the other Adrymeto; and the latter says, that it, as well as Carthage, was built by the people of Tyre; and so Sallust [f1233] says, that the Phoenicians built Hippo, Adrumetum, Leptis, and other cities on the sea coast; and the name seems to be a Phoenician name, twmrdj "Hadarmuth", which signifies "the court of death"; perhaps it might be so called, either from the badness of the air in which it was, or the dangerousness of its haven: Jerom calls it Hadrumetus, and says [f1234] it is a city in Byzacium, a country in Africa; he seems to design another place, the metropolis of the Byzacian country, the most fruitful of all the parts of Africa, and which in the Phoenician language was twamrdh "Hadarmeoth"; which signifies "the court of a hundred"; that is, it was a place so fruitful that it brought forth an hundred fold; and agreeably to which is what Pliny says [f1235], they are called Libyphoenicians, who inhabit Byzacium, a country so named, in circuit two hundred and fifty miles, and of such great fruitfulness that the land returns to the husbandmen an hundred fold. The former of these is most likely to be the place here meant; and though we nowhere read of the apostle being here, nor of the Gospel being preached here in the early times of Christianity; yet in the "fourth" century there was a church in this place, and Philologus was bishop of it, who subscribed at a council held at Carthage in this century; and in the "fifth" century we read of several bishops of this place, as Aurelius, who was in the Chalcedon council, Flavianus in that at Ephesus, which was reckoned an infamous one, and Helladius, who was in the first Ephesine council, and Felix, who was banished by Gensericus [f1236]. There was another city of the same name in Aeolia, or Mysia [f1237], and which was formerly called Pedasus, and since Landermiti, and was a seaport, and bids fair to be the place here intended; though since there was an island of Lycia called Adramitis [f1238], now Audromety, and it was at Myra, a city of Lycia, where this ship stopped, (<4405>Acts 27:5) and where the passengers changed their ship, this seems most likely to be designed:

we launched; in the said ship from Caesarea:

meaning to sail by the coast of Asia; the lesser Asia, along by Ephesus and Miletus, as they did; for in this last place, as before observed, Trophimus was left sick; the Alexandrian copy reads, μελλοντι "that was about to sail"; that is, the ship of Adramyttium was about to sail, or just ready to sail by the coast of Asia, wherefore the company entered, and set forth in it on their voyage:

one Aristarchus a Macedonian, of Thessalonica, being with us; the same person that was with the apostle at Ephesus, and accompanied him into Asia, (<44 19 29>Acts 19:29, 20:4) the same went through with him to Rome, and became his fellowlabourer, and fellow prisoner there, (<57 0 24>Philemon 1:24) (<51 0 40>Colossians 4:10).

Ver. 3. *And the next day we touched at Sidon*, etc.] This was a famous city in Phoenicia, upon the northern border of the land of Israel; it was a maritime place, and noted for trade and navigation; Mela [f1239] calls it rich Sidon, and the chief of the maritime cities; Jerom [f1240] calls it the ancient city Sidon; and Curtius says [f1241] it was renowned for the antiquity and fame of its founders; it is thought to be built by Sidon, the firstborn of Canaan, (<0 10 15>Genesis 10:15) from whom it took its name; so Josephus [f1242] affirms, that Sidonius, as he calls him, built a city in Phoenicia after his own name, and it is called by the Greeks Sidon; some say it was built by Sidus the son of Aegyptus, and named after him: according to R. Benjamin [f1243] it was a day's journey from hence to Tyre; and with others [f1244], it was not more than two hundred furlongs, about twelve or thirteen miles, which was another city of Phoenicia, as this was: Jerom's [f1245] account of Sidon is this,

> "Sidon, a famous city of Phoenicia, formerly the border of the Canaanites, to the north, situated at the foot of Mount Libanus, and the artificer of glass:"

and so Pliny [f1246] calls it, it being famous for the making of glass; and Herodotus [f1247] speaks of it as a city of Phoenicia: Justin the historian says [f1248] it was built by the Tyrians, who called it by this name from the plenty of fish in it; for the Phoenicians call a fish "Sidon": and indeed Sidon or Tzidon seems to be derived from dwx, "Tzud", which signifies "to fish"; and the place is to this day called Said or Salt; and so R. Benjamin calls it Tzaida [f1249]: to this city they came from Caesarea, the day following that they set out on, and here they stopped awhile:

and Julius courteously treated Paul; the centurion into whose hands the apostle was delivered, used him with great humanity and civility; he found grace in his sight, as Joseph did in the sight of Potiphar, and as he himself had done before with Lysias, Felix, Festus and Agrippa:

and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself; for as there were disciples at Tyre, (<442103>Acts 21:3,4) so it seems there were at Sidon, both which cities were in Phoenicia, and are often mentioned together; and the apostle was allowed to go ashore, and visit his friends, and be refreshed by them, both in body and spirit, and be provided for by them with things convenient for his voyage. It is highly probable that there was here a Gospel church, but by whom planted cannot be said; our Lord himself was at the borders of this place, (<401521>Matthew 15:21) and the ministers of the word scattered at the death of Stephen, went as far as Phoenicia preaching the Gospel, (<441119>Acts 11:19) and that there were brethren there, appears from note on: (see Gill on "<441503>Acts 15:3"), in which country Sidon was: in the "third" century there was a church in this place, and Zenobius was presbyter of it, who suffered martyrdom under Dioclesian [f1250]; in the "fourth" century there was a bishop of the church here, at the synod held at Nice; in the "fifth" century the bishop of the Sidonians, in the council of Chalcedon, declared his opinion with others against Dioscorus, whose name was Damianus; in the "sixth" century, mention is made of a bishop of Sidon, in the acts of the council held at Rome and Constantinople, and in the same century a synod met at Sidon, in the 20th year of Anastasius the emperor [f1251]: the account of the bishops of Sidon, as given by Reland [f1252], is as follows; Theodorus bishop of Sidon subscribed in the first Nicene council, in the year 325; Paulus subscribed in the first council at Constantinople, in the year 381; Damianus was in the council held at Chalcedon, in the year 451; Megas is mentioned in the acts and epistles subjoined to the Chalcedon council; Andreas, bishop of this place, is taken notice of in a letter of John of Jerusalem.

Ver. 4. *And when we had launched from thence*, etc.] From Sidon:

we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary; that is, they sailed below the island of Cyprus; of which (see <440436>Acts 4:36, 13:4) whereas if the wind had been right for them, they would have sailed above the island; leaving it on the right hand, in a straight course to Myra; but now they were obliged to go below it, leaving it on the left hand, going in

part about it, through the seas of Cilicia and Pamphylia to Lycia, as follows.

Ver. 5. *And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia*, etc.] For these two seas joined, as Pliny says [f1253], "mare Pamphylium Cilicio jungitur", the Pamphylian sea is joined to the Cilician; and in another place [f1254] he observes, that in the Pamphylian sea were islands of no note, and in the Cilician sea of the five chiefest was Cyprus (an island mentioned in the preceding verse), and a little after, the sea of Cilicia is distant from Anemurius fifty miles:

we came to Myra a city of Lycia; not Limyra in Lycia, though that lay by the sea side; for according both to Pliny [f1255] and Ptolomy [f1256], Limyra and Myra were two distinct places in Lycia; which was a country, according to the latter, which had on the west and north Asia; (according to others, Caria on the west, and part of Lydia on the north;) on the east part of Pamphylia, and on the south the Lycian sea, or, as others, the Rhodian sea: much less was this the city of Smyrna, as some have said, which lay another way in Ionia, over against the Aegean sea; and still less Lystra, as the Alexandrian copy and Vulgate Latin version read, which was in Lycaonia, and in the continent many miles from the sea: Lycia was a country of the lesser Asia, and lay between Caria and Pamphylia, and so it is mentioned with Caria and Pamphylia, in:

> "And to all the countries and to Sampsames, and the Lacedemonians, and to Delus, and Myndus, and Sicyon, and Caria, and Samos, and Pamphylia, and Lycia, and Halicarnassus, and Rhodus, and Aradus, and Cos, and Side, and Aradus, and Gortyna, and Cnidus, and Cyprus, and Cyrene." (1 Maccabees 15:23)

and the Carians, Pamphylians, and Lycians, are frequently put together in history; and the Lycians are said [f1257] to be originally of Crete, and to have their name from Lycus the son of Pandion; though some think that Lycia took its name "a luce", from light, and of this country Myra was the metropolis: Ptolomy calls it Myrra, as if it had the signification of "myrrhe"; and so Jerom or Origen [f1258] reads it here, and interprets it "bitter"; but Pliny and others call it Myra, as here, and it signifies "ointment"; and here the apostle staying some time, though it cannot be said how long, no doubt opened the box of the precious ointment of the Gospel, and diffused the savour of it in this place; for in the beginning of the "fourth" century, in Constantine's time, we read of one Nicolaus, a

famous man, bishop of Myra in Lycia, who was present at the council of Nice, and there showed the scars and marks upon him, because of his constant confession of Christ under Maximinus; in the “fifth” century there was a bishop of this place, whose name was Romanus, and was in two synods, in the infamous one at Ephesus, where he favoured Eutyches, and in that at Chalcedon; in the “sixth” century mention is made of a bishop of this church in the acts of the synod at Rome and Constantinople; in the “seventh” century, Polyeuctus, bishop of Myra, was in the sixth synod at Constantinople, and in this century Myra was the metropolitan church of Lycia; in the “eighth” century, Theodorus, bishop of it, was in the Nicene synod; and in the ninth century this place was taken by the Saracens [f1259].

Ver. 6. *And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria*, etc.] Alexandria was the chief city in Egypt, built by Alexander the great, from whom it took its name; it was situated near the sea, and had a famous haven or port, which R. Benjamin [f1260] calls hayrdnskla lç lmnh, “the port of Alexandria”; from hence ships were sent into several parts for trade and commerce, and one of these Julius found at Myra: the top sail was a distinguishing sign of a ship of Alexandria, for none might spread their top sails but ships of Alexandria [f1261]; these were not obliged to strike sail when they came into a port: the Jewish writers make frequent mention of tyrdnskla hnyps, “a ship of Alexandria” [f1262]; by which they intend a ship of a large bulk, which had a cistern in it for fresh water for a long voyage; and by this they distinguish ships of bulk from those small ones, that were used about their coasts; a ship of Alexandria with them was a ship that went from the land of Israel to Alexandria; whereas here it seems to design one that belonged to Alexandria, and went from thence to other parts: and this ship was

sailing into Italy; and it was usual for ships to go from Alexandria to Puteoli in Italy, and from thence to Alexandria upon trade and business [f1263]

and he put us therein; the centurion removed Paul and his companions, and the rest of the prisoners, with whatsoever soldiers were under his care, out of the ship of Adramyttium, into the ship of Alexandria; that is, he ordered them to remove out of one into the other.

Ver. 7. *And when we had sailed slowly many days*, etc.] Because of contrary winds, as in (<442704>Acts 27:4) or else for want of wind, as some

think; the Syriac version renders it, “and because it sailed heavily”; that is, the ship being loaden with goods:

and scarce were come over against Cnidus; or “Gnidus”, as it is sometimes called; it was a city and promontory in Doris, in the Chersonese or peninsula of Caria, famous for the marble statue of Venus made by Praxiteles [f1264]; it was over against the island of Crete, and is now called Capo Chio; it was the birthplace of Eudoxus, a famous philosopher, astrologer, geometrician, physician and lawgiver [f1265]; it is made mention of in:

> “And to all the countries and to Sampsames, and the Lacedemonians, and to Delus, and Myndus, and Sicyon, and Caria, and Samos, and Pamphylia, and Lycia, and Halicarnassus, and Rhodus, and Aradus, and Cos, and Side, and Aradus, and Gortyna, and Cnidus, and Cyprus, and Cyrene.” (1 Maccabees 15:23)

Jerom [f1266] says, it was a famous island over against Asia, joining to the province of Caria; some think it has its name from the fish “Gnidus”, which is taken about this place, and which is of such an extraordinary nature, that when taken in the hand, it stings like a nettle; others [f1267] derive it from dg[“hanad”, or “gnad”, which, in the Phoenician language signifies “to join”; because, as both Pausanias [f1268] and Strabo [f1269] say, it was joined by a bridge or causeway to the continent: it had two ports in it, as the last mentioned writer says, but into neither of them did the ship put, in which the apostle was; nor do we read of the Gospel being preached here, or of a church in it until the “sixth” century, when mention is made of a bishop of Gnidus in the acts of the synod at Rome and Constantinople [f1270]:

the wind not suffering us; to go right forward, as the Syriac version adds:

we sailed under Crete; or below it, as in (<44 27 4>Acts 27:4) This is now called Candy; (see Gill on “<44 2 11>Acts 2:11”), over against Salmone; now called Capo Salamone: this, by Pliny [f1271], Ptolomy [f1272], and Mela [f1273], is called Samonium or Sammonium, and by them said to be a promontory in the island of Crete, on the east side of it, over against the island of Rhodes; Strabo calls it Salmonion, an eastern promontory of Crete; and Jerom a maritime city of the island of Crete.

Ver. 8. *And hardly passing it*, etc.] That is, Salmone, with great difficulty, because of the winds:

came unto a place which is called the Fair Havens; called by other writers Cale Acte, or the fair shore, and is placed by Ptolomy [f1274] in Eubaea, and by Herodotus [f1275] in Sicily; but by Stephanus [f1276] is said to be a city of the Cretians, and which agrees with this account;

nigh whereunto was the city of Lasae; there was a city in Crete called by Solinus [f1277] Lisson, and by Ptolomy [f1278] Lyssus, which he places on the south side of the island; and by Pliny [f1279] Lasos, which comes pretty near to this name, but then he places it in the midland part of Crete; who also makes mention of an island called Lasia over against Troezenium, and another that was one of the Cyclades; the Syriac version here read, "Lasia": Jerom [f1280] says, Lasea is a city on the shore of the island of Crete, near the place which is called the Fair Havens, as Luke himself explains it; for which some corruptly read "Thalassa"; as do the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; and the Alexandrian copy "Alassa": Beza conjectures that it is the same with Eloea, which Pliny makes mention of in the above cited place, as a city in Crete.

Ver. 9. *Now when much time was spent*, etc.] In sailing against the wind, or by staying at the Fair Havens; for so the Syriac version renders it, "where we stayed a long time"; and the Ethiopic version, "and there we remained many days": it follows,

and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past; the Syriac version reads, "the fast of the Jews"; this was the day of atonement, which was the grand fast of the Jews, on which day they afflicted their souls, (Leviticus 23:27) in memory of the worshipping of the golden calf; on that day they neither eat nor drink, nor do any work, neither do they wash, nor are they anointed, nor do they bind on their shoes, or make use of the marriage bed; nor do they read anything but sorrowful things, as the Lamentations of Jeremiah, until the setting of the sun, and the rising of the stars; and hence this day is called by them µwx µwy, "the day of fasting", and lwdgh µwx, "the great fast, and the day of the fast of atonement, and the fast of the atonement" [f1281]: now this day was on the 10th of the month Tisri, which answers to the latter part of our September, and the former part of October; so that it was now Michaelmas time, when winter was coming on, and sailing began to be dangerous; about this time of the year the Pleiades set, which brings on tempestuous weather, and unfit for sailing:

Paul admonished them, or gave them some advice to continue where they were.

Ver. 10. *And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive*, etc.] Not only by the tempestuous weather which they had met with, and still continued, and which they must expect to have, if they continued on their voyage; but by a spirit of prophecy, which he was endued with, by which he foresaw, and so foretold, as follows;

that this voyage will be with hurt, and with much damage not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives; or of our persons, or bodies, that is, of the health of them; for certain it is that it was revealed to the apostle, that not one life should be lost; but yet through the shipwreck, what with the fright of it, and being in the water, much damage must accrue to their persons, as well as the ship and all its freight be lost.

Ver. 11. *Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship*, etc.] Who were either one and the same person, or if two persons, the one was the owner, whose the ship was, and the other, he that was at the helm, and steered and directed it; or the one might be the captain, and the other the pilot. The κυβερνητης, or "governor", as he is here called with the ancients, was he who sat on an eminence in the stern of the ship, at the helm, and had the direction of it; he gave the orders, which others executed: what qualified him for his post chiefly lay in three things; in the knowledge of the constellations, and winds, of the former that he might direct the course of the ship according to them, and by them foresee future tempests, and of the latter, that he might be acquainted with the several points, from whence they blew; also in the knowledge of ports, and places to put into, and of rocks and sands, that they might be escaped; likewise in the knowledge of the use of the helm, and sails [f1282]; for one part of his business, as [f1283] Seneca observes, was to give orders after this manner; so and so move the helm, so and so let down the sails, etc. in every ship there was a governor, and in larger ones sometimes there were two; [f1284] Aelianus says, the Carthaginians had always two governors in a ship: the other word, ναυκληρος, is in the glossary rendered "navicularius", which signifies "the owner" of the ship; and so we render it; though perhaps he is the same with the "proreta", who governed the prow or head of the ship, and was the next in dignity to the governor, and a kind of a sub-governor; and his business was to observe tempests, to explore promontories, rocks and sands, and show them to the governor [f1285]; and so Isidore [f1286] says, the

owner of the ship is called Naucleros, because the ship is in his lot, “cleros” signifying lot: and as these best understood naval affairs, Julius gave more heed to what they said, and rather believed them,

than those things which were spoken by Paul; by a spirit of prophecy, which he had no notion of; for though he treated him civilly as a man, he had no regard to him as a Christian, or as one endued with the Spirit of God, which he knew nothing of.

Ver. 12. *And because the haven was not commodious to winter in*, etc.] Which was called the “Fair Havens”, (<4708>Acts 27:8) which name it might have by an antiphrasis, it being just the reverse; it might be a good summer haven, but not be fit for winter: perhaps it might be an open road or bay, and having nothing to shelter from the boisterous waves, was a place very improper for a ship to be in, in stormy weather; for in open places, as bays and roads, the sea tumbles in very violently in bad weather: this was a haven fit for fair weather only, and therefore might be so called:

the more part advised to depart thence also; the major part of the ship’s company were of the same opinion with the master and owner of it, and advised as well as they, to sail from the Fair Havens in quest of a better port; the Syriac version reads, “the most of ours”, of the apostle’s companions; so that they were against him, according to that version, which is not likely; however, the majority in the ship were for sailing:

if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter, which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west: this place is called in the Syriac version Phoenix; and Ptolomy [f1287] makes mention both of the city and haven of Phoenix, as on the south side of the island of Crete: and whereas it is here said to lie towards the south west and north west, this may be reconciled to that, as well as to itself; for the haven considered in general lay towards the south, but having its windings and turnings, with respect to them it lay towards both the south west and the north west, and so was a very commodious haven to winter in.

Ver. 13. *And when the south wind blew softly*, etc.] Or moderately, which was a good wind for them:

supposing that they, had obtained their purpose; that things would succeed according to their wish, and favour their design:

loosing thence; from the Fair Havens; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions render it, “loosing from Assos”; which could not be Assos of Troas, mentioned in (<44013>Acts 20:13) which was many miles from hence; rather Asum, a town in Crete, of which Pliny [f1288] makes mention, though, according to him, it seems to be an inland town; wherefore it is best to take the word ασσον, to be an adverb, and render it “thence”, as we do; or join it with the next word, and render it,

they came near, or they sailed close by Crete; along the shore, the wind favouring them, that they were in no danger of being dashed upon it, it being a soft gentle wind.

Ver. 14. *But not long after*, etc.] They had not been long at sea, but

there arose against it; the ship, or the island of Crete, or both:

a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon; in the Greek text it is a “Typhonic” wind, so called, not from the name of a country from whence it blew; rather from Typho, the same with Python, an Heathen deity, who is said to be drowned in the lake Serbonis, or in the river Orontes; about which places this sort of wind is observed to be frequent, and which may take its name from him, being supposed to be raised by him. This wind may very well be thought to be the same which is called Typhon, and is by writers [f1289] represented as a very tempestuous one, as a sort of whirlwind or hurricane, a violent storm, though without thunder and lightning; and Pliny [f1290] calls it the chief plague of sailors, it breaking their sails, and even their vessels to pieces: and this may still have its name from Typho, since the Egyptians used to call everything that is pernicious and hurtful by this name; moreover, this wind is also called “Euroclydon”. The Alexandrian copy reads, “Euracylon”, and so the Vulgate Latin version seems to have read, rendering it “Euro-aquilo, the north east wind”. The Ethiopic version renders it, the “north wind”; but according to Aristotle [f1291], and Pliny [f1292] the wind Typhon never blew in the northern parts; though some think that wind is not meant here, since the Typhon is a sudden storm of wind, and soon over; whereas this storm of wind was a settled and lasting one, it continued many days; and that it is only called Typhonic, because it bore some likeness to it, being very blustering and tempestuous: it seems by its name to be an easterly wind, which blew very violently, ploughed the sea, and lifted up its waves; hence the Arabic version renders it, “a mover” or “stirrer up of the waves”; which beat against the ship in a violent manner, and exposed it to great danger.

Ver. 15. *And when the ship was caught*, etc.] By the wind, snatched up by it, and forcibly carried away:

and could not bear up into the wind; and against it, or look it in the face, as the word signifies; could not ply to windward, the wind being so high and the sea so strong:

we let her drive; about the sea, at pleasure, it being in vain to attempt to get her forward against the wind, or to direct her course.

Ver. 16. *And running under a certain island*, etc.] Or below a certain island and hard by, it or under the sea shore of it, where the sea might be smoother, the wind not being there so strong:

which is called Clauda: by Ptolomy [f1293] it is called Claudus, and was near the island of Crete, and now called Gozo. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and some copies, read "Cauda"; and there was an island near to Crete, which was called Gaudos [f1294], and is thought to be the place here meant:

we had much work to come by the boat; which they had with them to go ashore in, or to betake themselves to in case of shipwreck; and which in this storm was in danger of being dashed to pieces against the ship, or lost; and it was with some difficulty that they came at it, and took it up into the ship.

Ver. 17. *Which when they had taken up*, etc.] When they had got the boat into the ship:

they used helps; the mariners made use of other persons, called in the assistance of the soldiers, and passengers, and prisoners; or for the help of the ship, they made use of cords, chains, and such like things:

undergirding the ship: with cords and ropes, which they drew under the keel of the ship, and so bound both sides of the ship, that it might not split and fall to pieces; which may be what is now called "frapping", and is done by putting large ropes under the keel, and over the gunwale; and is used when a ship by labouring hard in the sea breaks the bolts in her sides, and this keeps her from parting. Horace [f1295] refers to this use of ropes in tempests, when he says, "Nonne vides ut — sine funibus vix durare carinae possint imperiosius Aequor?" do not you see that without ropes the keels can scarcely endure the more imperious sea? Isidorus [f1296] makes mention

of several sorts of ropes made use of in storms; “spirae”, he says, are ropes that are used in tempests, which the mariners after their manner call “curcubae; tormentum” is a long rope in ships, according to the same writer, which reaches from head to stern, by which they are bound faster together:

and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands: which were on the African coast, here called “Syrtes”; either from the conflux of sand and slime, and such like things, which made them very dangerous for shipping, and being covered with water, could not be seen and guarded against, and especially in a storm; or from their drawing of vessels into them, which they retain, suck in, and swallow up; and such the mariners might know were not far off: there were two very remarkable ones on the coast of Africa, the one is called the greater “Syrtes”, the other the lesser [f1297]; the greater was more to the south than the lesser, and also more to the east, and the lesser was to the west: of these “Syrtes”, Jerom [f1298] says, they are sandy places in the great sea very terrible, and to be feared, because they use to draw all into them; they are near the Egyptian sea; the Lybian sea, which washes the African shore, is by Seneca called from them the “Syrtic sea” [f1299]: wherefore,

they strake sail; let down their sails; so read some manuscripts in New College, Oxford; in the Greek text it is, “they let down the vessel”; not the boat they had taken in, of which we read after; nor an anchor, or anchors, which would have been improper in a storm; nor the mast, it can hardly be thought that should be the first thing they should cut down, when they did not cast out the tackling till the third day; the storm was vehement on the first, more vehement on the second, when they lightened the ship, and most vehement on the third, when they cast out the tackling; and as Scheffer [f1300] observes, the mast is never cut down before the loss of other things; wherefore this is to be understood of letting down the sail yard, and contracting the sails; the Syriac version renders it, “we let down the main sail”; or, “the sail”, using the Greek word “Armenon”, which signifies “a sail”:

and so were driven; about in the sea, wheresoever the winds and waves carried them; or very likely the ship was driven before the wind under her bare poles.

Ver. 18. *And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest*, etc.] Sometimes being lifted up as it were to the heavens, and then presently sinking down,

as if they were going into the bottom of the sea; such a condition at sea is described to the life by the Psalmist, in (<19AZ25>Psalm 107:25-27).

the next day they lightened the ship; of its burden, its lading, the goods and merchandise that were in it; as the mariners did in the ship in which Jonah was, (Jon 1:5) the Ethiopic version renders it, “they cast the goods into the sea”; the Arabic version, the “merchandise”.

Ver. 19. *And the third day*, etc.] From the time this storm began, and this tempestuous weather held:

we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship; by which seems to be meant their naval stores and instruments, as sails, ropes, cables, anchors, etc. and yet we afterwards read of their anchors and main sail: it may be rendered, “the furniture of the ship”; and yet it cannot design the ship’s provisions, at least all were not cast away; for afterwards mention is made of casting out the wheat into the sea: many versions render it, “the armament of the ship”; and the Ethiopic version adds, “and arms”; the soldiers’ arms, and others which belonged to the ship, which were brought with them to defend themselves against an enemy: these, the historian says, “we cast out”; the Apostle Paul’s company, Luke and others; but not without the leave and order of the centurion and governor of the ship: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, “they cast out”: which seems most probable.

Ver. 20. *And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared*, etc.] The Syriac version adds, “nor moon”; which is an usual description of dark, cloudy, and tempestuous seasons; and which was not only uncomfortable to them, because they could not see these luminaries, and enjoy their beneficial light and influence; but because they had them not to guide and direct them; for the sun, moon, and stars, are useful to sailors, to steer their course by; especially they were to the ancients, before the invention and use of the loadstone; besides, by these they conjectured what weather it would be, as mariners still do; they observed the rising and setting of the sun, whether it shone with equal rays or not, and whether it was red and fiery, or pale; and the like observations they made upon the moon, both as to its colour and size; and especially the constellations and stars were of singular use unto them; and above all, the two Bears, the greater and the lesser; the Greeks observed the former, and the Phoenicians the latter; and who are said by Pliny to have first found out the use of the constellations in navigation; particularly this is ascribed to the famous philosopher Thales,

who is said to be a Phoenician; and from other constellations, as Arcturus, Orion, Hyades, etc. they foresaw rains, storms, and tempests: and now what made the case of the apostle and the ship's company the more distressing was, that it was not only dark and cloudy, but very tempestuous, as follows;

and no small tempest lay on us; and all this continued many days: so Virgil [f1301] represents Aeneas and his company in a like condition at sea, as not able by the heavens to distinguish day from night, nor to direct their course, neither sun nor stars appearing, and so wandered about in the sea three days without the sun, and as many nights without a star; and Homer [f1302] describes Ulysses in a violent storm at sea, and for the space of nine days tossed about, when on the tenth day he got to land; and Sosia, in Terence [f1303], is brought in saying, that he had been thirty days in a ship, expecting death every moment, so boisterous was the storm he was in; and so it was in this case, the winds blew hard upon them, and the rains fell with great violence, and everything was discouraging and distressing; insomuch that

all hope that we should be saved was then taken away; neither the master and owner of the ship, nor the mariners, nor the soldiers, nor prisoners, nor the apostle's companions, had any hope of being saved, but all expected to be lost. The apostle himself knew indeed, that though the ship would be lost, every man's life would be saved; and yet he could have no hope of this, as to the outward appearance of things, but on account of the revelation which the Lord had made to him, and he believed; otherwise, as to all human helps and means, there was no probability of an escape.

Ver. 21. *But after long abstinence*, etc.] From food, not for want of it, as appears from what follows, (<44>Acts 27:36-38) nor in a religious way, in order to obtain the favour of God; but either for want of appetite, and a nauseousness and loathing of food, through the tossing of the ship, fright at the storm, and fears of death; and chiefly for want of time, being employed for the security of themselves and the ship.

Paul stood forth in the midst of them; that all might hear him:

and said, sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me: it would have been better for them to have taken his advice, and stayed at the Fair Havens,

and not have loosed from Crete; or sailed from thence:

and to have gained this harm and loss; whereby they would have shunned the injuries of the weather, the storm and tempest which they had endured, to the prejudice of their health, and the terrifying of their minds, and have prevented the loss of the goods and merchandise of the ship, and its tackling, utensils, instruments, and arms; the former of these is expressed by "harm" or injury, and the latter by "loss". The apostle addresses them in a very courteous manner, and does not use sharp reproofs, severe language, or upbraid and insult them, only reminds them of the counsel he had given, which had it been taken, would have been to their advantage; and the rather he mentions this, that since what he had foretold was in part already come to pass, they might give the more heed to what he was about to say to them.

Ver. 22. *And now I exhort you to be of good cheer*, etc.] To take heart and courage, and not be cast down, though things had been thus with them, and they were now in a very melancholy plight and condition.

For there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship; the ship will be lost, but not one person in it: there will be a shipwreck, and so every man's life will be in danger, and yet not one will perish; and therefore there was reason to be of good cheer, since this was what they could not, and did not expect, all hope of being saved was gone: wherefore this, if they could but believe it, must be good news to all the company; and in order to engage them to believe it, the apostle adds,

Ver. 23. *For there stood by me this night the angel of God*, etc.] One of the ministering, spirits that stand before God, and who was sent by him to the apostle; and appeared to him, either in a vision by a dream, or rather when he was awake, and stood by him, as he was praying for deliverance from the storm; for it is most likely that the apostle should be engaged at such a time as this:

whose I am, and whom I serve: meaning not the angel, but God, whose the angel was; and his the apostle was, by electing, redeeming, and calling grace; God the Father had chosen him in his Son unto salvation; and Christ had redeemed him by his blood; and the Holy Spirit had called him by his grace; and he was not only the Lord's in common, as all other saints are, but he was his apostle and minister, and served him in the ministration of the Gospel of Christ, as well as from a principle of grace, obeyed the law of God, and was subject to the ordinances of Christ; in all which he served with great pleasure and cheerfulness, diligence, constancy, and faithfulness;

from right principles, and with right views, being constrained by love, and influenced by the consideration of the relation he stood in to God. And all this was not peculiar to the apostle, but common to all the saints, excepting that of his being an apostle and minister of the Gospel: and the consideration of their relation to God has the same influence upon them it had upon him; they are not their own, nor are they the servants of men, nor do they belong to Satan, nor even to the ministering angels, but they are the Lord's; not merely by creation, as all men are, but in a way of special grace: they are Jehovah the Father's, to whom he bears a peculiar love and favour, and whom he has chosen in his Son for his peculiar people; and which is made manifest and known by drawing them with loving kindness to himself in the effectual calling; by his Gospel coming in power to them; by the blessings of the covenant of grace being bestowed on them; and by the spirit of adoption witnessing to them, that they are the children of God: they are Jehovah the Son's, they are his people made willing in the day of his power; they are his portion assigned him by his Father; they are his spouse and bride, whom he has betrothed to himself; they are his children, to whom he stands in the relation of the everlasting Father; and they are his sheep the Father has given him, and he has laid down his life for; all which appears by their having his Spirit, as a Spirit of regeneration and sanctification, without which none are openly and manifestatively his: and they are Jehovah the Spirit's; they are his regenerated and sanctified ones; they are his workmanship, having his good work of grace begun and carrying on in their souls; they are his temples in which he dwells; he has the possession of them, and will not leave them till he has brought them safe to glory: and under all this evidence, and especially through the testimony of the Spirit of God unto them, they call themselves the Lord's, as the apostle here does, and this engages them to serve him. The natural man has no desire, but an aversion to the service of God; converted men are willing to serve him, and delight to do it; they serve God in the best manner they can, in righteousness and true holiness, in an acceptable manner, with reverence and godly fear, and heartily and willingly; as appears by the pleasure they take in being called the servants of God, by disclaiming all other lords, by running all risks to serve the Lord, and by lamenting it, that they serve him no better.

Ver. 24. *Saying, fear not, Paul*, etc.] For though the apostle knew and believed he should go to Rome, and appear before Caesar, to whom he had appealed, and where he should bear a testimony for Christ; and though he

had previous notice of this storm, and of the loss and damage which should be sustained, and which he expected; yet the flesh was weak, and he might be under some fears and misgivings of heart, for these sometimes attend the best of men.

Thou must be brought before Caesar; as has been declared, and therefore cannot be lost in this storm; it is the will and decree of God, which cannot be frustrated, it must be:

and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee; that is, God had determined to save the whole ship's company for his sake, and in answer to his prayers, which he had been putting up for them; the Lord had heard him, and granted his request, and would save them all on his account: so sometimes God saves a nation, a city, a body of men, even of ungodly men, for the sake of a few that fear his name, who are among them.

Ver. 25. *Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer*, etc.] Which he repeats with more fervency and earnestness, there being so much reason for it:

for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me: true faith lays hold and, settles upon the word and promises of God; and the true believer, knowing his power and faithfulness, firmly persuaded that there shall be a performance of what is said by him, with respect to matter, manner, and circumstances. Whatever God has told his people of, or has promised unto them, shall be performed, whether with respect to things temporal; that they shall not want any good thing; that all their afflictions shall be for their good; that they shall be supported under them, and at last brought out of them: or whether with respect to spiritual things; whatever he has said concerning himself, that he will be their God, will continue to love them, will not leave them, nor forsake them, will guide and protect them, will supply all their need, and give them grace here, and glory hereafter; and whatever he has said concerning his Son, that he is their Saviour and Redeemer, that they are justified by his righteousness, pardoned through his blood, and shall be saved in him with an everlasting salvation; and whatever he has said concerning his Spirit, that he shall enlighten them more and more, carry on his good work in them, and finish it, shall be their comforter and their guide, shall strengthen them in their inward man, and work them up for that selfsame thing, eternal glory: and likewise, whatever he has said concerning the prosperity and happiness of the churches in the latter day; even all those glorious things spoken of the city of God; and which relate both to the spiritual and personal reign of Christ. Faith takes

all this at his word, and firmly believes it shall be as he has said: and it has good grounds and reasons for acting in this manner; from the veracity, faithfulness, and power of God, who has promised; and from the nature of the promises themselves, which are unconditional, immutable, all in Christ, and yea and amen in him, and not one of them has ever failed: and such a believing frame of soul greatly encourages cheerfulness of spirit, and produces it: a believer is cheerful himself, as he has reason to be; he is filled with joy and peace in believing, yea, with a joy unspeakable, and full of glory; and he makes all about him cheerful; he comforts others with the same comforts he has been comforted of God; and however, he exhorts, after his own example, to believe, and be of good cheer; (see <4400>2 Chronicles 20:20).

Ver. 26. *Howbeit, we must be cast upon a certain island*.] This circumstance is foretold, that when the whole affair should come to pass, it might be manifest that it was not a casual thing, a fortuitous event, a business of chance, but was predetermined by God, made known to the apostle, and predicted by him. This island was Melita; and the fulfilment of this part of the prediction is related in (<4401>Acts 28:1).

Ver. 27. *But when the fourteenth night was come*, etc.] From their setting out from the Fair Havens in Crete, or from the beginning of the storm:

as they were driven up and down in Adria: or "in the Adriatic sea", as the Syriac version renders it: the Adriatic sea is now called by the Turks the gulf of Venice, and the straits of Venice, and sometimes the Venetian sea [f1304]; but formerly the Adriatic sea included more than the Venetian gulf; it took in the Ionian and Sicilian seas, and had its name from the city Adria, a colony of the Tuscans [f1305]. It is called by Ptolomy [f1306] Hadria, and reckoned a city of the Picenes. Pliny [f1307] places it near the river Padus, and calls it Atriae, a town of the Tuscans, which had a famous port, from whence the sea was before called Atriatic, which is now Adriatic. Adria, Justin [f1308] says, which is near to the Illyrian sea, and gave name to the Adriatic sea, is a Grecian city; and from this place the ancestors of Adrian, the Roman emperor, originally came; and all the sea between Illyricum and Italy is called the Adriatic; and from the beginning of it, which is at the city of Venice, unto Garganus, a mountain in Italy, and Dyrrachium, a city of Macedonia, it is 600 miles in length, and its largest breadth is 200, and the least 150, and the mouth of it 60. The other part of the sea, which washes Macedonia and Epirus, is called the Ionian sea. Moreover, this whole sea is

called the superior sea, with respect to the Tyrrhenian, which dashes the other shore of Italy, and is called the inferior [f1309]. In this same sea, Josephus [f1310], the historian, was shipwrecked as he was on a voyage to Rome: his account is this;

> "I came to Rome, having gone through many dangers by sea, for our ship being sunk in the middle of Adria, being in number about six hundred, we swam all night; and about break of day, by the providence of God, a ship of Cyrene appeared to us, in which I, and some others, in all eighty, getting before the rest, were received into it, and so got safe to Dicearchia, which the Italians call Puteoli;"

a place afterwards mentioned, where the apostle also arrived. And the sea itself is often, by the poets [f1311] called Adria, as here, and is represented as a very troublesome sea; and here Paul, and the ship's company, were driven to and fro by the storm,

when about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country: about the middle of the night the mariners thought, by some observations they made, that they were nigh land; or, as it is in the Greek text, "that some country drew near to them"; which well agrees with the language and sense of seafaring persons, to whose sight the land seems to draw near them, or depart from them, when they draw near, or depart from that: the Ethiopic version is, "they thought they should have seen a city"; they had a notion of some city near; and the Arabic version, "they thought to know in what country, or place" they were; and therefore did as follows.

Ver. 28. *And sounded*, etc.] Or let down their plummet, or sounding line; which was a line with a piece of lead at the end of it, which they let down into the water, and by that means found what depth it was, by which they could judge whether they were near land or not. The sounding line, with the ancients, was called by different names; sometimes bolis, and this is the name it has here, βολισαντες, "they let down the bolis": and the bolis is, by some, described thus; it is a brazen or leaden vessel, with a chain, which mariners fill with grease, and let down into the sea, to try whether the places are rocky where a ship may stand, or sandy where the ship is in danger of being lost: it is also called "catapirates", which is thus described by Isidore; "catapirates" is a line with a piece of lead, by which the depth of the sea is tried. Herodotus makes mention of it under this name, and observes, that when persons are within a day's voyage of Egypt, if they let

down the “catapirates”, or sounding line, they will bring up clay, even when in eleven fathom deep [f1312] According to modern accounts, there are two kinds of lines, occasionally used in sounding the sea, the sounding line, and the deep sea line: the sounding line is the thickest and shortest, as not exceeding 20 fathoms in length, and is marked at two, three, and four fathoms with a piece of black leather between the strands, and at five with a piece of white leather: the sounding line may be used when the ship is under sail, which the deep sea line cannot. — The plummet is usually in form of a nine pin, and weighs 18 pounds; the end is frequently greased, to try whether the ground be sandy or rocky, etc. [f1313]. The deep sea line is used in deep water, and both lead and line are larger than the other; at the end of it is a piece of lead, called deep sea lead, has a hole at the bottom, in which is put a piece of “tallow”, to bring up the colour of the sand at the bottom, to learn the differences of the ground, and know what coasts they are on.

And found it twenty fathoms; or “orgyas”; a fathom is a measure which contains six feet, and is the utmost extent of both arms, when stretched into a right line: the fathom, it seems, differs according to the different sorts of vessels; the fathom of a man of war is six feet, that of merchant ships five feet and a half, and that of fly boats and fishing vessels five feet: if the fathom here used was the first of these, the sounding was an hundred and twenty feet; the Ethiopic version renders it, “twenty statues of a man”.

And when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms; or ninety feet; by which they imagined that they were near the continent, or some island: in some places, as the coasts of Virginia, for instance, by the use of the deep sea line, it is known how far it is from land; for as many fathoms of water as are found, it is reckoned so many leagues from land.

Ver. 29. *Then fearing lest they should have fallen upon rocks*, etc.] Or rough places, as shelves, rocks, or sands, as they might well fear, when the water shallowed so fast, from 20 to 15 fathoms:

they cast four anchors out of the stern; or hinder part of the ship; the Ethiopic version calls it, “the head of the ship”: and adds, “where the governor sat”; that is, at the helm, to steer it. Perhaps the reason of this version is, because it is not usual in modern navigation, and so, when this version was made, to cast out anchors from the stern, but from the prow or head of the ship; but it seems this was done by the ancients. According to

Pliny, the Tyrrhenians first invented the anchor; though Pausanias ascribes the invention of it to Midas, the son of Gordius: the most ancient ones were made of stone, as was the anchor of the Argonautes; afterwards they were made of wood; and it is said, that the Japanese use wooden anchors now; and these were not pointed, but had great weights of lead, or baskets filled with stones at the head of them, to stop the ship with; last of all they were made of iron, but with a barb or tooth on one side only, not on both: the anchor with two teeth or barbs was found out by Eupalamius; or, as others say, by Anacharsis, the Scythian philosopher: it was usual to have more anchors than one in every ship, of which there was one which exceeded the rest, both in size and strength, and was called the “sacred” anchor; and which was only used in case of necessity [f1314]; and is what is now called “the sheet anchor”. The modern anchor is a large strong piece of iron, crooked at one end, and formed into two barbs, resembling a hook, fastened at the other end by a cable. The parts of an anchor are,

(1) the ring into which the cable is fastened;

(2) the beam, or shank, which is the longest part of the anchor;

(3) the arm, which is that which runs down into the ground; at the end of which is,

(4) the flouke or fluke, by some called the palm, being that broad and picked part with its barbs like an arrowhead, which fastens into the ground;

(5) the stock, a piece of wood, fastened to the beam near the ring, serving to guide the fluke, so that it may fall right, and fix in the ground.

There are three kinds of anchors commonly used, the kedger, the grapnel, and the stream anchor [f1315]; yea, I find that there are four kinds of anchors, the sheet anchor, best bower, small bower, and stream anchor: it seems the grapnel is chiefly for the long boat: here were four anchors, but very likely all of a sort, or, however, not diversified in the manner the modern ones are. These they cast out to stop the ship, and keep it steady, and that it might proceed no further, till they could learn whereabout they were:

and wished for the day; that by the light of it they might see whether they were near land, or in danger of rocks and shelves, as they imagined.

Ver. 30. *And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship*, etc.] To save their lives, concluding that it was in the utmost danger, and that it would quickly, notwithstanding the anchors cast out, break away, and fall upon the rocks, and split to pieces:

when they had let down the boat into the sea; which before they had taken up into the ship, (<44716>Acts 27:16,17) and now they let it down, in order to get into it, and make their escape:

under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship; the foremost part of the ship, the prow of it; their pretence in attempting to get out of the ship, and into the boat, was, that whereas there were anchors cast out of the stern, or hinder part of the ship, so they would cast out others, from the fore part of it; and "stretch" them "out", as the word signifies, or carry them further out into the sea, for the security of the ship; and to do which, it was necessary to use the boat.

Ver. 31. *Paul said to the centurion, and to the soldiers*, etc.] He did not direct his speech to the governor and owner of the ship, who very likely, being sensible of the danger, were in the scheme with the mariners, and at the head of them; but to Julius the centurion, and the soldiers under him, who having no knowledge of maritime affairs, were not apprised of the danger, nor aware of the design of the shipmen; and besides, had now great dependence upon the assurance the apostle had given, that no life should be lost: to these he said,

except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved; pointing to the mariners who were about to let down the boat, in order to make their escape: the apostle had before declared, that there should be no loss of any man's life, and yet now affirms, that unless the mariners continued in the ship, the rest of the company could not be saved: this does not show that the decree concerning the salvation of them was a conditional one, and that the condition was, that the mariners should stay in the ship; but that their stay in the ship, who had skill to guide and direct it, as also the company when shipwrecked, were a means absolutely fixed in the decree, and therefore was absolutely necessary: God had determined to save the whole ship's crew, and that in the same way and manner; they were all to be shipwrecked; some were not to leave the ship before hand, and save themselves in the boat, but they were all to be exposed to equal danger, and then be saved; and till that time came, the proper and prudent means were to be made use of, who were the shipmen, who best knew how to

manage the ship in this extremity: this teaches us that the end and means, in the decrees of God, are not to be separated; nor is any end to be expected without the use of means; and means are as peremptorily fixed, and are as absolutely necessary, and must as certainly be accomplished, as the end. Thus spiritual and eternal salvation is a certain thing; it is the appointment of God, which is absolute and unconditional, immutable and unfrustrable; there is a sure connection between the decree of God and salvation; it is a scheme drawn by Jehovah in the council of peace, who is God only wise, saw everything before hand that would come to pass, and has power to execute his scheme; it is an affair secured in the covenant of grace, which is sure and immovable; God is faithful who has made it with his Son; and Christ, the surety and Mediator of it, is equal to that part which he has in it; yea, salvation is a finished work, full satisfaction is made for sin, and pardon procured, an everlasting righteousness is brought in, all enemies are conquered and destroyed, and Christ's people are saved from them: and the interest which he has in them shows the certainty of their salvation; for they are given to him, and are in his hands; they are his portion, his treasure and his jewels; they are the purchase of his blood, and the travail of his soul; they are united to him, and are built upon him; they are interested in his preparations and prayers, and are in some sense saved already; and yet there are some things which God has fixed as means, and made absolutely necessary, and without which none can be saved: as for instance, none can be saved without regeneration; without this there is no meetness for heaven; nor does it appear without it that any have a right unto it; nor can an unregenerate man have any true hope of it; wherefore such as are chosen and redeemed, are regenerated by the Spirit of God: so likewise without holiness no man shall see the Lord; this is fixed in the decree of God, and is necessary to the enjoyment of him, and to fellowship with angels and glorified saints; wherefore the Lord sanctifies all he saves: particularly none without faith in Christ will ever be saved; nor is this inconsistent with salvation being by grace, seeing it is not considered as a cause of salvation, but is itself a gift of grace; it lies in receiving things at the hand of God, it admits of no glorying in men, and gives all the glory of salvation to God and Christ, and free grace; and this is necessary because God has appointed it, and therefore he bestows it on all he means to save: to which may be added, that without perseverance in faith and holiness, there is no salvation; wherefore the Lord puts his grace into the hearts of his people to cause them to persevere; he encompasses them with his

power, upholds them with the right hand of his righteousness, and preserves them from Satan, and from a final and total falling away.

Ver. 32. *Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat*, etc.] With which it had been fastened to the sides of the ship, and by which the mariners were letting it down, in order to get into it, and go off:

and let her fall off; from the sides of the ship into the sea, and so prevented the shipmen quitting the ship; for now they gave more credit to Paul than to them.

Ver. 33. *And while the day was coming on*, etc.] Between midnight and break of day: Paul besought them all to take meat; to sit down and eat a meal together:

saying, this day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried; or have been waiting for, or expecting; that is, as the Arabic version expresses it, a shipwreck; for fourteen days past, ever since the storm begun, they had expected nothing but shipwreck and death:

and continued fasting, having taken nothing: not that they had neither ate nor drank all that while, for without a miracle they could never have lived so long without eating something; but the meaning is, they had not eaten anyone regular meal all that while, had only caught up a bit now and then, and ate it, and that but very little.

Ver. 34. *Wherefore I pray you to take some meat*, etc.] To sit down composedly, and eat meat cheerfully and freely:

for this is for your health; the Alexandrian copy reads, “for our health”; it was for the health of them all, that they might be better able to bear the shock and fatigue of the shipwreck, and be in better spirits, and in a better capacity to help themselves, and one another:

for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you; a proverbial phrase, expressing the utmost safety of their lives, and therefore might cheerfully eat their food, and rest themselves, and be satisfied. To dream of shaving the hair, portended shipwreck to sailors; nor was it lawful for any to pare his nails, or cut off his hair, but in a storm; to which custom, some think, the apostle here alludes [f1316]; (see <091445>1 Samuel 14:45, <101411>2 Samuel 14:11).

Ver. 35. *And when he had thus spoken he took bread*, etc.] A piece of bread, of common bread, into his hands; for this could never be the eucharist, or Lord's supper, which the apostle now celebrated, as some have suggested, but such sort of bread that seafaring men commonly eat: mention is before made of "meat" or "food", which the apostle entreated them to take, which includes every sort of sea provisions they had with them; and which, with the ancients, were usually the following: it is certain they used to carry bread corn along with them, either crude, or ground, or baked; the former when they went long voyages, the last when shorter ones; and it is plain that they had wheat in this ship, which after they had eaten they cast out, (<442738>Acts 27:38) and corn ground, or meal, they had used to eat moistened with water, and sometimes with oil, and sometimes with oil and wine; and they had a sort of food they called "maza" which was made of meat and milk; likewise they used to carry onions and garlic, which the rowers usually ate, and were thought to be good against change of places and water; and they were wont to make a sort of soup of cheese, onions and eggs, which the Greeks call "muttootos", and the Latins "mosetum"; and they had also bread which was of a red colour, being hard baked and scorched in the oven, yea it was "biscoctus", twice baked [f1317]; as our modern sea biscuit is, and which has its name from hence, and which for long voyages is four times baked, and prepared six months before the voyage is entered on; and such sort of red bread or biscuit very probably was this, which the apostle now took into his hands, and did with it as follows:

and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all: and for them all, as Christ did at ordinary meals, (<401419>Matthew 14:19, 15:36).

and when he had broken it he began to eat: which was all agreeably to the custom and manner of the Jews, who first gave thanks, and then said "Amen", at giving of thanks; when he that gave thanks brake and ate first: for he that brake the bread might not break it until the "Amen" was finished by all that answered by it, at giving of thanks; and no one might eat anything until he that brake, first tasted and ate [f1318].

Ver. 36. *Then were they all of good cheer*, etc.] Encouraged by the apostle's words and example:

and they all took some meat; and made a comfortable meal, which they had not done for fourteen days past.

Ver. 37. *And we were in all in the ship*, etc.] Reckoning the master and owner of the ship, and the centurion and the soldiers, and the apostle and his company, with whatsoever passengers there might be:

two hundred and threescore and sixteen souls; the Alexandrian copy reads, "two hundred seventy and five"; and the Ethiopic version, "two hundred and six". This account of the number is given to show, that the historian, who was one of them, had an exact knowledge of all in the ship; and this being recorded before the account of the shipwreck, may serve to make the truth of the relation the more to be believed that none of them perished, since their number was so precisely known; and makes it the more marvellous, that such a number of men should be saved, and in a shipwreck; and shows, that there must be a wonderful interposition of divine power to bring them all safe to land.

Ver. 38. *And when they had eaten enough*, etc.]] Were satisfied, having eaten a full meal:

they lightened the ship; of its burden, that it might the better carry them to the shore, and that by the following method:

and cast out the wheat into the sea; which seems to have been part of the ship's provision; or one part of their lading, which they brought from Egypt, and were carrying to Italy: they had cast out some of the goods of the ship before, and also the tackling of the ship, and now, last of all, the wheat; for what was eatable they reserved till last, not knowing to what extremity they might be reduced.

Ver. 39. *And when it was day they knew not the land*, etc.] What place it was, or the name of it:

but they discovered a certain creek with a shore; a gulf or bay, with a shore near it; the Ethiopic version explains it,

an arm of the sea, where was a port, where they thought they could secure themselves, or get ashore:

into which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship; whither they had a mind, and consulted to run the ship, if it could be done by any means, believing it was the most likely method of saving themselves, and that; for notwithstanding the assurance they had that no

man's life should be lost, they made use of all proper means for their safety and security.

Ver. 40. *And when they had taken up the anchors*, etc.] The four anchors they cast out of the stern, (<4429>Acts 27:29) or "when they had cut the anchors", as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; that is, had cut the cables to which the anchors were fastened:

they committed themselves unto the sea; or left them, the anchors, in the sea; or committed the ship to the sea, and themselves in it, endeavouring to steer its course to the place they had in view:

and loosed the rudder bands; by which the rudder was fastened to the ship. — -The rudder, in navigation, is a piece of timber turning on hinges in the stern of a ship, and which opposing sometimes one side to the water, and sometimes another, turns or directs the vessel this way or that. The rudder of a ship is a piece of timber hung on the stern posts, by four or five iron hooks, called "pintles", serving as it were for the bridle of a ship, to turn her about at the pleasure of the steersman. — -The rudder being perpendicular, and without side the ship, another piece of timber is fitted into it at right angles, which comes into the ship, by which the rudder is managed and directed: this latter is properly called the "helm" or "tiller", and sometimes, though improperly, the rudder itself. — -A narrow rudder is best for a ship's sailing, provided she can feel it; that is, be guided and turned by it, for a broad rudder will hold much water when the helm is put over to any side; yet if a ship has a fat quarter, so that the water cannot come quick and strong to her rudder, she will require a broad rudder. — -The aftmost part of the rudder is called the "rake" of the rudder. This is the account of a rudder with the moderns [f1319]: with the ancients, the parts of the rudder were these, the "clavus" or "helm", by which the rudder was governed; the pole of it; the wings or the two breadths of it, which were as wings, and the handle: some ships had but one rudder, most had two, and some three, and some four; those that had but one, seemed to have it in the middle of the stern; and those that had two had them on the sides, not far from the middle; and there were some ships which had them not only in the stern, but also in the prow or head of the ship [f1320]: that the ancients had sometimes more rudders than one in a ship, has been abundantly proved by Bochartus and Scheherus; take only an instance or two. The Carthaginians, as [f1321] Aelianus reports, decreed two governors to every ship saying it was absurd that it should have δυο πηδαλια, "two rudders", and that he who

was most useful to the sailors, and had the government of the ship, should be alone, and without successor and companion; and so Apuleius [f1322] says, the ship in which we were carried was shook by various storms and tempests, “utroque regimine amisso”, and having lost both its rudders, sunk at the precipice. Some of the Indian ships have three rudders; that of Philopator’s had four rudders: how many this ship had, in which the apostle was, cannot be said: but this is certain, that it had more than one; for the words are, “and loosed the bands of the rudders”; and since it is a clear case, that the ships of the ancients had more rudders than one to each, there is no need to suppose a figure in the text, and that the plural number is used for the singular, as Beza thinks: and “the bands” of them were those by which they were fastened; and they were “loosed”, as Schefferus conjectures, because when the anchors were cast out, they fastened the rudders higher, that they might not be broken by the dashing of the waves, especially as they were in a storm; but now having taken up the anchors, they loosed these bands: and certain it is, that not only oars but rudders were fastened with cords or ropes to the ship [f1323]: according to the notion of modern navigation, the rudder band might be thought to be the rope which is turned round the tiller, and made fast to the ship’s side, and as the tiller is moved, “surges” round the end of the tiller; and very likely might be made fast, when the ship was at anchor, on one side, to keep the ship from breaking her sheer; but now being loosed, and the helm “a midship”, and the mainsail hoisted, the ship ran to the shore before the wind.

And hoised up the main sail to the wind: which they had before struck or let down, (<4427>Acts 27:17). The main sail is that which is upon the main mast. The Ethiopic version renders it, “the great sail”. The great sail was that which is called “acatius”, which is another word than is here used: so Isidore [f1324] says “acatius” is the greatest sail, and is placed in the middle of the ship; “epidromos” is the next in size, and is placed at the stern; and “dolon” is the least sail, and is fixed at the head: and both the Syriac and Arabic versions here render it, “the little sail”; and which sailors put up when they are afraid to use large sails, which would carry too much wind; but the word here used is “artemo”, which the above writer says is commended rather for the sake of directing the ship, than for swiftness. And this seems to be the use that was now made of it, namely, to guide the ship into the creek or bay.

And made toward the shore; which was in the creek, or to the haven in it.

Ver. 41. *And falling into a place where two seas met*, etc.] An “isthmus”, on each side of which the sea ran; and which the inhabitants of Malta, as Beza says, show to this day, and call it, “la Cala de San Paulo”, or the Descent of Saint Paul. The meeting of these two seas might occasion a great rippling in the sea like to a large eddy, or counter tide; and here might be a sand on which

they ran the ship aground; for this place where the two seas met, as the same annotator observes, could not be the shore itself; for otherwise, to what purpose should they cast themselves into the sea, as they afterwards did, if the head of the ship struck upon the shore, and stuck fast there? but must rather mean a shelf of sand, opposite, or near the entrance into the bay, and where the shipwreck was.

And the fore part stuck fast, and remained unmovable; so that there was no getting her off:

but the hinder part was broken by the violence of the waves; that is, the stern; by which means there were boards and broken pieces for the company to get ashore upon.

Ver. 42. *And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners*, etc.] Paul, and the rest: this they had not only an inclination to, but they declared it, and gave it as their opinion, and what they thought advisable to be done directly:

lest any of them should swim out and escape; and they should be accountable for them: but this was dreadful wickedness in them to seek to take away the lives of others, when they themselves were in so much danger; and monstrous ingratitude to the Apostle Paul, who had been so much concerned for their lives, and careful of them, and had been the means of saving them, and for whose sake they were saved: the devil must have had a great hand in this.

Ver. 43. *But the centurion, willing to save Paul*, etc.] Not only because he was a Roman citizen, but because he perceived he was some extraordinary person; and chiefly because he was moved there unto by a superior influence, that Satan might not have his end; and that the will of God might be fulfilled, that he should go to Rome, and there bear a testimony of Christ.

Kept them from their purpose; would not suffer them to execute their design, restrained them from it, and laid his commands upon them to the contrary.

And commanded that they which could swim, should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land; which some restrain to the Roman soldiers, as if the centurion's speech was only directed to them; though it seems rather to have respect to the whole company, the mariners, who generally can swim, and the soldiers, as many of them as could, and the rest of the prisoners or passengers; though it may be, he might chiefly regard the soldiers, who were usually learned to swim, that they might the more readily pass rivers, in their marches, where they could find no bridges, that so he might be the sooner rid of them, and break their purpose.

Ver. 44. *And the rest, some on boards*, etc.] Doors, tables, planks, or any such like things:

and some on broken pieces of the ship; or what came from it, as masts, beams, etc.

and so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land; not one was lost, as Paul had foretold. And so it will be with the saints after their afflicted state in this life, who are safe by being in Christ, and by abiding in him and in the use of means; and though by reason of the many difficulties in the way, through the corruptions of their own hearts, the temptations of Satan, the hidings of God's face, various afflictions, and sometimes violent persecutions, they are scarcely saved, yet at last they are certainly saved: so it comes to pass that they get safe on the shores of eternal bliss and happiness; because they are ordained unto it, are the care of Christ, and the purchase of his blood; and are partakers of the blessings of grace, and have the Spirit, as an earnest of the heavenly inheritance; and when landed they are safe; sin will be no more; Satan will be under their feet; there will be no more afflictions of any kind; and they will be with the Lord, and for ever with him. This voyage of the apostle, and the saints with him, was an emblem of the passage of the people of God in this world to heaven: their number was but few; who besides Luke, and Aristarchus the Macedonian, were with him, is not known, (Acts 27:2). And so the number of the children of God, in anyone period of time, is but small in comparison of the rest of the world: the apostle and his companions had but very indifferent company, as other prisoners, a band of soldiers, and the sailors; Christ's church is as a rose in a field, a lily among thorns, vexed with the

conversation of the wicked, being in a world which lies in wickedness; and which may very fitly be compared to the sea, for the waves of afflictions in it, and the restless and uneasy spirits of the men of it. Sailing at this time was dangerous, (<4427 09>Acts 27:9) as the saints' passage through this world always is, and especially now in these last and perilous days; partly through the aboundings of immorality on the one hand, and partly through the spread of error and heresy on the other. A great storm arose, (<4427 14>Acts 27:14) and there are many the Christian meets with in his voyage to heaven; and well it is for him that Christ is an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, and that he is built on such a foundation, which the most violent storms cannot move him from. There was no sight of sun or stars for many days, (<4427 20>Acts 27:20) and so it is sometimes with the people of God; the sun of righteousness is not seen by them, clouds interpose between him and them; and the stars, the ministers of the Gospel, are removed from them, and their eyes cannot behold their teachers, which make it a distressed time with them: yea, all hope of salvation was gone, (<4427 20>Acts 27:20) and such at times is the case of truly gracious souls; their hope, and their strength, they are ready to say, are perished from the Lord, and they are cut off from before his eyes: there was also a long abstinence from food, (<4427 21>Acts 27:21,33) which is sometimes the case in a spiritual sense, and is owing either to want of food, the word of the Lord being precious, there being a famine of hearing the word; or for want of appetite to it: and last of all, there was a design formed by the soldiers to kill Paul, and the prisoners, but were prevented by the centurion, (<4427 42>Acts 27:42). The sincere followers of Christ are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, and are killed all the day long in the intention of wicked men; who have always a good will to it, were they not restrained through the goodness of a civil government, and especially by the power and providence of God: however, at last, they get safe to their port and haven, where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.

CHAPTER 28

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 28

Ver. 1. *And when they were escaped*, etc.] From the danger they were exposed to by shipwreck, and were got safe to land; this is omitted in the Syriac version:

then they knew that the island was called Melita; an island toward the African shore, where it is placed both by Pliny [f1325], and Ptolomy [f1326]; in which, the latter says, was the city Melita: it lies between Sicily and Tripolis of Barbary, and is now called Malta: it was famous for the knights of Rhodes, which are now called the knights of Malta: it has its name from jlm, "to escape", it being formerly a refuge to the Phoenicians, especially in stormy weather, in their long voyage from Tyre to Gades; and was indeed a place of escape to the Apostle Paul, and those that were with him. And perhaps it might be so called from its being a refuge for pirates; for Cicero [f1327] says, here pirates used to winter almost every year, and yet did not spoil the temple of Juno, as Verres did: though some say it was so called from the great abundance of honey found in it; for it was a very pleasant and fruitful island, bringing forth great plenty of wheat, rye, flax, cummin, cotton, figs, wine, roses, thyme, lavender, and many other sweet and delightful herbs, from whence bees did gather great plenty of honey. It was, according to Pliny, distant from Camerina eighty four miles, and from Lilybaeum a hundred and thirteen; and it is said to be distant from the promontory of Sicily an hundred miles, though others say sixty; and that it was so far from Syracuse, which is the next place the apostle came to in this voyage, was from Africa an hundred and ninety miles. On the east side, a little from the chief city of it, now called Malta, was a famous temple of Juno, spoiled by Verres, as before observed; and on the south side another of Hercules, the ruins of both which are yet to be seen. The compass of the island is about sixty miles, the length twenty, and the breadth twelve, and has in it five ports, and about sixty villages.

Ver. 2. *And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness*, etc.] The inhabitants of this island are called barbarians, not from the country of

Barbary, near to which they were; nor so much on account of their manners, for, though Heathens, they were a civil and cultivated people, being, as appears from the name of the chief man of the island, under the Roman government; but because of their language, (see <6141>1 Corinthians 14:11), it being neither Hebrew, Greek, nor Latin; for as the inhabitants were originally a colony of the Phoenicians, they spoke their language; and now though it is inhabited by such as are called Christians, they speak the Saracen or Arabic language, and little different from the old Punic or Phoenician language: however, though the inhabitants could not understand their language, they understood their case, and were very civil and humane to them, and showed them extraordinary kindness:

for they kindled a fire; or set fire to a large pile of wood; for a large fire it must be to be of service to such a number of people, in such a condition as they were:

and received us everyone: though their number were two hundred threescore and sixteen;

because of the present rain, and because of the cold; for a violent rain fell on them, as is usual upon a storm, and much wetted them, so that a fire was very necessary; and it being winter or near it, it was cold weather; and especially they having been so long in a storm, and now shipwrecked; and some having thrown themselves into the sea, and swam to the island; and others having been obliged to put themselves on boards and planks, and get ashore, and were no doubt both wet and cold; so that nothing was more needful and more agreeable to them than a large fire.

Ver. 3. *And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks*, etc.] Had picked up some sticks, and put them in a bundle fit for the fire, as everyone was busy to assist in this extremity; nor did the apostle think such an action below him, who in all things was a man of great humility and condescension:

and laid them on the fire; to increase it:

there came a viper out of the heat: a viper is a kind of serpent, which brings forth its young living, to the number of twenty, only one in a day, which come forth wrapped up in thin skins, which break on the third day, and set them at liberty; and so is reckoned among viviparous animals, from whence it seems to have its name, whereas other serpents lay eggs and hatch them. It is said [f1328], that this remarkable reptile has the biggest and

flattest head of all the serpent kind; its usual length is about half an ell, and its thickness an inch; its snout is not unlike that of a hog; it has sixteen small immovable teeth in each jaw, besides two other large, sharp, hooked, hollow, transparent, canine teeth, situate at each side of the upper jaw, which are those that do the mischief: these are flexible in their articulation, and are ordinarily laid flat along the jaw, the animal never raising them but when it would bite The roots or bases of these teeth, or fangs, are encompassed with a vesicle or bladder, containing the quantity of a large drop of a yellow insipid salivous juice. — It has only one row of teeth, whereas all other serpents have two; its body is not at all fetid, whereas the inner parts of the bodies of other serpents are intolerable. — It creeps very slowly, and never leaps like other serpents, though it is nimble enough to bite when provoked. — Its body is of two colours, ash coloured or yellow, and the ground speckled with longish brown spots; the scales under its belly are of the colour of well polished steel. Its bite is exceeding venomous, and its poison the most dangerous. Now when this viper here is said to come out of the heat, the meaning is, that it came out from the sticks, which were laid upon the fire, being forced from thence by the heat of it: and so the Syriac version renders it, “there came out of them” (the sticks) “a viper, because of the heat of the fire”; it lay quiet among the sticks, among which, and such like things, this creature often lies; but when the fire began to heat it, it sprung out:

and fastened on his hand; or wrapped itself about his hand: the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, “bit his hand”; but that does not seem so likely, since he felt no harm by it; the Ethiopic version, “hung upon his hand”; which agrees with what follows; nor is it inconsistent with its wrapping itself about his hand, which is the more proper signification of the word used.

Ver. 4. *And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast*, etc.] The viper is called “Therion”, a beast, it being of the viviparous kind; and hence comes “Theriaca”, or “Venice treacle”, the foundation of which composition is vipers’ flesh; and it is called venomous, because it is of all serpents the most venomous: this when the country people saw

hang on his hand, having wrapped itself about it,

they said among themselves, no doubt this man is a murderer: they might see he was a prisoner by his chain, or might learn it from some of the company, and therefore took it for granted he had been guilty of some

crime; and by the viper's fastening on him, they concluded it was murder he was guilty of; for the same notion might obtain among them, as among the Jews, that a murderer that could not be legally convicted, was sometimes punished this way.

> "Says R. Simeon ben Shetach [f1329], may I never see the consolation, if I did not see one run after his friend into a desert place; and I ran after him, and I saw the sword in his hand, and the blood dropping, and he that was slain panting; and I said to him, O wicked man, who has slain this? either I or thou; but what shall I do? for thy blood is not delivered into my hand; "for the law says, by the mouth of two or three witnesses he shall surely die" ((5706 Deuteronomy 17:6)): may he that knows the thoughts take vengeance on that man that slew his friend; they say, they did not remove from thence, çjn abç d[, "till a serpent came", and bit him, and he died."

So the Jews observe, that when the execution of capital punishments was taken away from them, yet such who deserved them were punished by God in a way equivalent to them: so for instance, if a man committed a crime, for which he deserved to be burnt, either he fell into the fire, or wkçwn çjn, "a serpent bit him" [f1330]; or if he deserved to be strangled, either he was drowned in a river, or died of a quinsy. There is a kind of an asp which the Egyptians call "Thermuthis", which they reckon sacred, and worship: this they say will not hurt good men, but destroys the wicked; and if so, says the historian, then δικη, "vengeance", or justice has honoured this creature, to be so sharp sighted as to discern the good from the bad; and they say, Isis sends it to the most wicked [f1331]. Agreeably to which these men reason,

whom though he hath escaped the sea: has not been drowned there, when shipwrecked,

yet vengeance suffereth not to live. The Greek word "Dice" rendered "vengeance", is the name of a goddess among the Heathens, said to be the daughter of Jupiter and Themis [f1332]. She is represented as sitting by her father Jupiter; and when anyone does injury to another, informs him of it [f1333]. She is painted sorrowful, and with a contracted forehead, a grave countenance, and a rough aspect, to strike terror in unrighteous persons, and give confidence to righteous ones [f1334], agreeably to her name, which signifies "justice". This deity the barbarians supposed pursued Paul; and

though she let him escape the sea, she will not suffer him to live any longer; for they looked upon the viper's fastening on him, as to be sent by her, so to be immediate death to him.

Ver. 5. *And he shook off the beast into the fire*, etc.] Having held it a while, and as being master of it, and as not being afraid of it, though it was the ready way to provoke it to fasten on him again:

and felt no harm; it having not bit him, nor infected him with its poison; and hereby was fulfilled what our Lord promised to his disciples, (<41618>Mark 16:18);

Ver. 6. *Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen*, etc.] With the venomous bite of the viper; swelling is one of the symptoms following the bite of this creature; and if the bite does not issue in death, yet the swelling continues inflamed for some time. The symptoms following the bite of a viper are said to be [f1335] an acute pain in the place wounded; swelling, first red, afterwards livid, spreading by degrees; great faintness; a quick, low, and sometimes interrupted pulse; sickness at the stomach; bilious convulsions: vomiting; cold sweats; sometimes pains about the navel; and death itself, if the strength of the patient, or the slightness of the bite, do not overcome it: if he does overcome it, the swelling continues inflamed for some time; and the symptoms abating, from the wound runs a sanious liquor, little pustules are raised about it, and the colour of the skin is as if the patient were icterical or jaundice; or had the jaundice: the Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, "that he should burn", or "burnt"; that is, inflamed, for the bite of the viper causes an inflammation, a hot swelling, which rises up in pustules or blisters:

or fallen down dead suddenly; for immediate death is sometimes the effect of such poison. Pliny [f1336] relates, that the Scythians dip their arrows in the sanies or corrupt matter of vipers, and in human blood, which by the least touch causes immediate death; and Pausanias [f1337] reports from a certain Phoenician, that a man fleeing from a viper got up into a tree, where the viper could not reach him, but it blew, or breathed out its poison on the tree, and the man immediately died: though the force of this creature's poison does not always, and in all places, and in all persons operate alike; some die within a few hours, and others live some days, some to the third day, and some to the seventh [f1338]:

but after they had looked a great while; upon the apostle, to observe whether any inflammation or swelling arose, or death ensued, as they expected: when they had waited some time, perhaps an hour or two,

and saw no harm come to him; that he was neither inflamed, nor swelled, nor dead; that it had no manner of effect upon him, and no evil of punishment was inflicted on him hereby, from whence they could conclude that he was guilty of any notorious crime:

they changed their minds, and said that he was a god: before they took him to be a murderer, and now they even ascribe deity to him, as was usual with the Gentiles, when anything extraordinary was performed by men: so the Lystrians took Paul for Mercury, and Barnabas for Jupiter, upon the apostle's curing the cripple, (<44141>Acts 14:11,12); but what god the inhabitants of Melita thought him to be, is not certain; some think Hercules, who was worshipped in this island. The inhabitants of this island now believe that the apostle expelled all poison and venom out of it when he was there; and it is reported, that the children born in this place fear not any snakes, neither are hurt by anything that is venomous, insomuch that they will take scorpions, and eat them without danger; although, in all other parts of the world, those kind of creatures are most pernicious, and yet do no manner of hurt to men in this island; yea, it is affirmed, that there is a sort of earth found here, which kills serpents: as for the eating of them, the viper itself may be eaten; most authors agree [f1339], that there is no part, humour, or excrement, not even the gall itself, of a viper, but may be swallowed without much harm; accordingly the ancients, and, as several authors assure us, the Indians at this day, both of the east and west, eat them as we do eels — viper's flesh either roasted or boiled, physicians unanimously prescribe as an excellent restorative, particularly in the elephantiasis, incurable consumptions, leprosy, etc.

Ver. 7. *In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island*, etc.] Or "the first man of the island"; so the governor of Melita used to be called, as appears by an inscription mentioned by Bochart, wherein a Roman knight is called πρωτος μελιταιων, "the first of the Melitians"; for this island was under the Roman government, and the very name of this chief man shows it: it was first in the hands of the Africans, when Dido built Carthage, which was eight or nine hundred years before the time of Christ: Battus was king of this island, from whom it was taken by Hiarbas king of Lybia, or of the Getulians, and who also conquered

Carthage; and it continued under the power of the Carthaginians, until they were conquered by the Romans; and then it was taken by Titus Sempronius, above two hundred years before Christ, in whose hands it was when the apostle was here; since then it has been taken by the Saracenes, though they held it not, being taken from them by Roger earl of Sicily, in the year 1090; and so it remained in the hands of the Sicilians, until the knights of Rhodes were driven out of that island by the Turks, in 1522; and then this was given them by the Emperor Charles the Fifth seven years after, on condition they would oppose the Turks, and defend that part of Christendom, which they bravely did: in the year 1565, it was besieged by Pialis Bassa, but without success [f1340]; and it is said to be so well fortified, as that it is impossible it should be taken, unless through treachery or famine; it is now in the hands of the said knights: but whether this man was governor of the island or not, it may be reasonably thought that he was the richest man in the island, and in the greatest honour and dignity; and had near the shore, where the ship's company landed, many houses and much land, and farms and vineyards, and the like:

whose name was Publius; or Poplius, as some copies, and the Syriac version read. Publius was a name common with the Romans; it was with them a forename, by which such were called, who were "pupilli", or fatherless, for it is a contraction of "Popilius". There was one of this name who was bishop of Athens, said to succeed Dionysius the Areopagite there; who is thought by some to be the same here mentioned; who they say was first bishop in his own country, which through mistake they make to be Miletus, instead of Melita; and afterwards bishop of Athens, where he suffered martyrdom: but this is not likely, for even though he might be converted by the apostle, of which we have no account; and also became a preacher of the Gospel, of which there is no proof; it is not probable that he should leave his own country, and go to Athens, and take upon him the care of that church there: but whether he was afterwards converted or not, he was very kind to the apostle and the ship's company, as follows:

who received us, and lodged us three days courteously; this was a very considerable instance of humanity and hospitality, to receive so many strangers at once into his houses, as two hundred three score and sixteen; and give them food and lodging, for three days together, and that in such a kind, friendly, and cheerful manner: and thus, as Abraham and Lot, by receiving strangers, entertained angels at unawares, so Publius, though ignorant of it, entertained an apostle of Christ among those strangers; the

benefit of which he afterwards enjoyed, and which was a compensation for his liberality and beneficence.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass that the father of Publius*, etc.] So that Publius was not an old man, though of so much dignity and wealth: the Arabic version, contrary to all copies, and other versions, reads, “the son of Publius”:

lay sick of a fever; or fevers, of different sorts, a complication of them, which sometimes is the case; unless this was an intermitting fever, and the several fits of it are intended; or rather the plural number is put for the singular, to denote the vehemence of it, and which was attended with another disorder, and might be brought on by it:

and of a bloody flux; or dysentery, a pain of the bowels, as the Syriac version renders it; or an ulceration of the bowels, as the Arabic version; which occasioned a discharge of blood, so that his case was very threatening. This disease, according to modern writers [f1341], is attended with a fever. The word “dysentery” here used properly signifies that kind of flux of the belly, characterized by the frequency of stools, or dejections, mixed with blood, and accompanied with gripes: the fever, ulcer, etc. which attend it, are not essential to the disease; though many both of the ancients and moderns think the ulcer is. — There are three kinds of “dysenteries”; the “first” when a laudable blood is evacuated from a mere plethora, or plenitude, without any disorder of the intestines, as in the haemorrhoidal flux; the “second” when a thin watery blood is evacuated, called the “hepatic” flux, though really arising from haemorrhoidal vessels; the “third” kind, which is that that is properly called the dysentery, is when blood is cast out, mixed with a purulent matter in the excrements: this is either “benign”, i.e. without a fever, and not contagious; or “malignant”, which is attended with a pestilential fever, and frequently ravages whole cities and provinces, happening most commonly in armies; in the last stage, a sort of caruncles are frequently ejected along with the purulent matter, which are difficult to be accounted for, unless from an excoriation and ulceration of the intestines: sometimes the intestines are even gangrened: this seems to have been the case of the father of Publius, which makes the following cure the more remarkable:

to whom Paul entered in; into the room where he was, no doubt with the consent and leave, if not at the request of Publius; the Ethiopic version adds, “and he entreated him to put his hand upon him”; that is, either

Publius asked this favour of the apostle for his father, having heard of the affair of the viper, from whence he concluded there was something divine and extraordinary in him; or the father of Publius asked this for himself:

and prayed and laid his hands on him, and healed him; when Paul had entered the room, and found in what a bad condition the sick man was, he either kneeled down and prayed by him, or stood and prayed over him, and for him, that God would restore him to his health; and this he did, to let them know that he himself was not a god; and that the cure that would now be wrought would be from God, and not from himself, and therefore all the glory should be given to God; and he laid his hands on him, as a sign or symbol, or rite that was used in extraordinary cases, and agreeably to the direction and promise of Christ, (<41618>Mark 16:18); and upon this a cure followed; both the diseases left him at once, and he was restored to health.

Ver. 9. *So when this was done*, etc.] This miracle was wrought, and the fame of it spread over the island:

others also which had diseases in the island came: from all parts of it, to the apostle:

and were healed; of whatsoever diseases they were afflicted with.

Ver. 10. *Who also honoured us with many honours*, etc.] Not with divine honours, with religious adorations, as if they had been so many deities; for these they would not have received, nor have recorded them, to the commendation of the inhabitants; but civil honours, expressions of respect and gratitude; and particularly gifts and presents, large and valuable, in which sense the phrase is used by Jewish writers; so upon those words in (<071317>Judges 13:17). "What is thy name, that when the sayings come to pass, we may do thee honour?" they make this paraphrase [f1342],

> "Manoah said to him (the angel), tell me thy name, that I may inquire where to find thee, when thy prophecy is fulfilled, and give thee ˆrwd, "a gift", hjnm ala Æwndbkw ˆyaw, "for there is no honour but a present", or "offering"; or wherever this phrase is used, it signifies nothing else but a gift, as it is said, (<042217>Numbers 22:17). "For honouring I will honour thee":"

that is, with money and gifts, as Balaam's answer in the next verse shows, and so the Jewish commentators interpret it [f1343]; (see Gill on "<540517>1 Timothy 5:17");

And when we departed; from the island, which was not till three months from their first coming ashore:

they laded [us] with such things as were necessary; that is, for the voyage: they provided a proper supply of food for them, which they put into the strip, for their use in their voyage; by which they expressed their gratitude for the favours they received from Paul; for whose sake not only his company, but the whole ship's company fared the better: and very likely many of them were converted under the apostle's ministry; for it can hardly be thought that the apostle should be on this island three months, as he was, and not preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of it, in which he always met with success, more or less; and the great respect shown him at his departure seems to confirm this; though we meet with no account of any church, or churches, or preachers of the word in this place, in ecclesiastical history, until the "sixth" century, when mention is made of a bishop of the island of Melita [f1344]; indeed in the "fourth" century, Optatus Milevitanus is said by some, through mistake; to be bishop of Melita, when he was bishop of Milevis, a city in Africa upon the continent; and, through a like mistake, this island is said to be famous for a council held in it under Pope Innocent, against Pelagius, in the beginning of the "fifth" century; when the council was held at the above place Milevis, and not at Melita, from whence it was called the Milevitan council.

Ver. 11. *And after three months we departed*, etc.] From Melita; here they stayed the three winter months, which were unseasonable for navigation; but now the spring coming on, and the weather agreeable, they left the island, and sailed

in a ship of Alexandria; (see Gill on "Acts 27:6");

which had wintered in the isle; perhaps all the said three months, for the same reason:

whose sign was Castor and Pollux; or Dioscuri, that is, the sons of Jupiter; for Castor and Pollux were his sons, by Leda: these are placed among the constellations in the Zodiac, and go by the name of Gemini, or the twins; and these were supposed to have a power of saving men in danger at sea: wherefore such as were about to go to sea, first paid their devoirs, and made vows to them; which they performed when they returned, and were delivered from shipwreck; and when they were in danger at sea, they used to pray unto them: the fiery exhalations that sometimes appear at sea, they

took for them; and when only one appeared, it was looked on as a bad omen; but when both, it was reckoned to portend a prosperous voyage; hence they were considered as sea deities; and the Ethiopic version accordingly renders it here “Dioscoura”, and adds, “who is the god of the mariners”: now the images of these two brothers were sometimes set at the head, or forepart of the ship, as they were in this, from whence the ship took its name; as it is very common for the names of ships to be the same with the pictures or images that are placed at the head of them: whether the centurion chose this ship because of its sign, imagining there might be more safety in it, he having suffered shipwreck already; or whether this was the only one in the island, that was going for Italy, is not certain, nor very material: the Arabic version takes the word rendered Castor and Pollux, to be the name of a man, who was the owner of the ship; for it reads the words thus, “in a ship of Alexandria”, that belonged “to a man of Alexandria, called Dioscorides”.

Ver. 12. *And landing at Syracuse*, etc.] A famous city in the isle of Sicily, now called Saragossa: it is placed by Ptolomy [f1345] on the east side of the island, in the Adriatic sea; it was 180 furlongs, or two and twenty miles and a half in circuit, and formerly had a marble haven and triple wall, and as many towers; the founder of it was Archias, a Corinthian; Pliny says [f1346], that it is never so cloudy weather, but the sun is seen in it, at one time or another of the day: Cicero [f1347] calls it the greatest and most beautiful of all the cities of Greece; it is such a city, he says, that it may be said to consist of four large cities; “one” part of it is called “the island”, which has two ports to it; “another” was called Acradina, in which were a large market, beautiful porticos, etc. the “third”, Tiche, in which was the ancient temple of Fortune; and the “fourth”, which because it was last built, was called Neapolis: it is a very ancient city, being built more than seven hundred years before the birth of Christ; it was a colony of the Corinthians; here reigned two tyrants, whose names were Dionysius; it was attacked by the Carthaginians, but without success, being delivered from the siege by Pyrrhus king of Epirus [f1348]; it was again assaulted by the Athenians, who were repulsed, and entirely conquered, about the year before Christ 413: after that it was taken by Marcellus, the Roman consul, about the year of the city of Rome 542 [f1349], after a three years’ siege; during which time it was defended, and preserved by the means of the famous mathematician Archimedes; who by his invention of warlike machines, baffled all the attempts of the Romans; but was killed by a soldier, as he was intent upon

his studies, not knowing that the city was taken; and it continued in the hands of the Romans, until it was taken and plundered by the Saracens, in the year of Christ 675; and was retaken by Roger king of Apulia, about the year 1090, and is now under the government of Don Carlos, king of the two Sicilies;

we tarried there three days; on what account it is not said, whether on account of merchandise, or for the sake of the conversation of Christians here: it is certain there were churches in Sicily very early; we read of them in the "second" and "third" centuries; in the time of Constantine, at the beginning of the "fourth" century, there was a church at Syracuse, of which Chrestus was bishop, to whom the emperor wrote a letter himself, which is still extant in Eusebius [f1350]: in the "fifth" century, Hilarius, a teacher at Syracuse, wrote from thence to Augustine, concerning the Pelagian heresy, to whom he gave an answer: in the "sixth" century, Maximinianus, bishop of this church, had the inspection of all the churches in Sicily committed to him, by Gregory; who was wonderfully preserved in a shipwreck, as he was returning from Rome; in this same age lived John, bishop of Syracuse, and Trajanus a presbyter, and Felix a deacon of the same church: in the seventh century there was one George bishop of this place, to whom Pope Vitalian wrote a letter; and in the same century a bishop of this church was in the sixth council at Constantinople [f1351].

Ver. 13. *And from thence we fetched a compass*, etc.] About the isle of Sicily, from Syracuse to Pachinus, the promontory of the island:

and came to Rhegium; a city in Calabria, called by Ptolomy [f1352] Regium Julium; it was built, as Solinus [f1353] says, by the Chalcidensians, and was formerly a city of the Brutians [f1354]; it is now called Reggio: it is said [f1355] to have its name from its being broken off from the main continent, for it lies in the straits of Sicily; and formerly Sicily was joined to Italy, but was separated from it by the violence of the sea at this place:

and after one day the south wind blew; they stayed one day at Rhegium, and when they departed from thence, they had a south wind, which was favourable to them: whether the apostle preached here, or no, is not certain, since his stay was so short; some Popish writers tell some idle stories about the apostle's preaching; how that the fishes came to the shore to hear him; that the grasshoppers were commanded by him to be silent, and have never been seen in that place since; that a stone pillar was set on fire by the flame of a candle, by which miracle the inhabitants present were

converted and baptized; and one Stephen, that was in company, was made by him their first bishop: but in ecclesiastical history we meet with no account of any church in this place, until the fifth century; when the bishop of it, with others, subscribed a letter of Leo the First, sent into the east; and about the year 440, there was a synod of thirteen bishops convened in this place, on account of a certain ordination; and in the "seventh" century, a bishop of the church at Rhegium was present in the sixth council at Constantinople; in the "eighth", Constantine, bishop of Rhegium, was in the Nicene synod [f1356]:

and we came the next day to Puteoli; the Syriac version adds, "a city of Italy"; it was formerly called Dicearchia [f1357], from the strict justice used in the government of it: it had its name of Puteoli, either "a putore", from the rankness and ill smell of the waters of it, through the "sulphur" and "alum" in them; or "a puteis", from the wells about it, the waters of which, by Pausanias, are said [f1358] to be so hot, as in time to melt the leaden pipes through which they flow, who calls it a town of the Tyrrhenians; by Pliny [f1359] it is placed in Campania, and so Jerom [f1360] says, Puteoli a city, a colony of Campania, the same that is called Dicearchia. Josephus [f1361] also speaks of it as in the same country; for he says, that Herod and Herodias both came to Dicearchia, (or Puteoli), and found Caius (the emperor) at Baiai, which is a little town in Campania, about five furlongs from Dicearchia; and he also in another [f1362] place says, the Italians call Dicearchia, ποτιολους, "Potioli"; which is the same word the apostle here uses, and which is the Latin "Puteoli" corrupted; it is said to be first built by the Samians: frequent mention is made by writers [f1363], of "pulvis Puteolanus", the dust of Puteoli; which being touched by the sea water, hardens into a stone; and was therefore used to bank the sea, break the waves, and repel the force of them: that it was a place by the sea side, may be learned from the sea being called after its name, "mare Puteolanum" [f1364], the sea of Puteoli; so Apollonius Tyaneus is said [f1365] to sail from this place to Rome, whither he came in three days; to this port the ships of Alexandria particularly used to come, and hither persons were wont to go to take shipping for Alexandria [f1366]; it is now called by the Italians Pozzuolo, and lies about eight miles from Naples; and according to the following story of the Jews', must be an hundred and twenty miles from Rome; who tell us [f1367], that

> "Rabban Gamaliel, and R. Eleazar ben Azariah, and R. Joshua, and R. Akiba, went to Rome, and they heard the noise of the multitude at Rome, from Puteoli, an hundred and twenty miles:"

the story is a fable designed to signify the vast number of people at Rome, and the noise, hurry, and tumult there; but perhaps the distance between the two places may not be far from truth: and as fabulous is the account which R. Benjamin [f1368] gives of this place Puteoli, when he says it was called Surentum, a great city which Tzintzan Hadarezer built, when he fled for fear of David.

Ver. 14. *Where we found brethren*, etc.] Christians; which is not to be wondered at, since it was a port much frequented, and where many came and went, of different countries and nations; particularly there were many Jews here, to whom the Gospel was first preached, and to some of them it was the power of God unto salvation in many places, and doubtless was so here: Josephus [f1369] speaks of Jews in this place, who were deceived by a false Alexander, who pretended to be the son of Herod, a prince of their nation. Patrobulus, the same with Patrobas in (<45 16 14>Romans 16:14); who is reckoned one of the seventy disciples, is said to be bishop of this place; (see Gill on "<42 10 01>Luke 10:1"); though we have no account of its church state until the "fifth" century, when a bishop of the church at Puteoli is said to be in the council held at Ephesus against Eutyches, and sustained the place of Leo, pope of Rome: in the "sixth" century, a bishop of this church was in a council held at Rome, under Symmachus: in the seventh century, the bishop of Puteoli was in the sixth council at Constantinople [f1370]:

and were desired to tarry with them seven days; that is, the Christians at Puteoli desired the apostle, and those that were with him, to stay a week with them, that they might have the advantage of a day of public worship together, and might enjoy much of their Christian conversation; and accordingly they did stay that time, no doubt by the leave, and with the consent of Julius the centurion; and which shows, that he used the apostle with great civility and courteousness, and was very ready to grant him favours; if he was not in this voyage converted by him, which is not unlikely, considering the whole of his conduct:

and so we went toward Rome; after they had stayed seven days at Puteoli, they set forward on their journey to Rome; for from hence they went thither on foot, though they might have gone from hence to Rome by sea, as Apollonius Tyaneus did; (see Gill on "<44 28 13>Acts 28:13"); and so likewise

Titus the son of Vespasian, who went from Rhegium to Puteoli in a merchant ship, and from thence to Rome [f1371]; but it may be the ship unloaded here, and there was no other going for Rome at that time: Rome was the metropolis of Italy, the seat of the empire, and mistress of the whole world; it is so well known, as not to need describing: it was built on seven hills, and had its name either from Romulus the founder of it; or from the Greek word ρωμη, which signifies "strength" [f1372], from whence Romulus is supposed to have his name; with the Hebrews it has its name from its sublimity, height, and glory, from the word μωר, which signifies to be high and exalted: some say it had its name from Roma, a daughter of Italus, who first laid the foundation of it, though Romulus and Remus brought it into the form of a city; it was built seven hundred and fifty years, and upwards, before the birth of Christ. The Jews make it to be of an earlier date; they say [f1373], that at the time Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, Gabriel descended and fixed a reed in the sea, and brought up clay, and with it was built the great city, which is Rome; and in another place [f1374] it is said, in the day in which Jeroboam set up the two calves, one at Dan, and the other at Bethel, was built a certain cottage, which is Italy of Greece, that is, Rome; for it is elsewhere observed [f1375], Italy of Greece, this is the great city of Rome; and again [f1376], on the day in which Jeroboam set up the two calves, Remus and Romulus came and built two cottages in Rome.

Ver. 15. *And from thence*, etc.] That is, from Rome, whither they were going:

when the brethren heard of us; when the Christians at Rome heard that the apostle and his friends were landed at Puteoli, and were on their journey to Rome: these were the members of the church at Rome; for there was a church state here before this time. The apostle had before this written a letter to them, called the Epistle to the Romans, in which he treats them as a church. The Papists say that the Apostle Peter was the first bishop of it, and pretend an uninterrupted succession from him; though it is questionable whether he ever was at Rome; and if he was, it is not probable that he should take upon him the care of a single church, which was not consistent with his office as an apostle: in the "first" century, the bishops or pastors of this church were as follow; after the martyrdom of Paul and Peter, Eusebius [f1377] says, Linus was the first bishop of it, the same that is mentioned in (2 Timothy 4:21) and according to the same writer [f1378], Anencletus succeeded him, and then Clement, a fellow labourer of the

Apostle Paul's, (Philippians 4:3); who wrote two epistles to the Corinthians, which are still extant; though Eusebius [f1379], not consistent with himself, makes Clement in another place to succeed Linus; and some make Clement even to be before him; and some place one Cletus before Anencletus and him: such an uncertainty is there, and such a puzzle attends the first account of this uninterrupted succession; and which seems designed in Providence to bring it into contempt: in the "second" century, Euarestus succeeded Clement; and then followed him Alexander, Sixtus, or Xystus, Telesphorus, Hyginus, Pius, Anicetus, Soter, Eleutherius, and Victor: in the "third" century, Victor was succeeded by Zephyrinus; and after him were Calixtus, Urbanus, Pontianus, Anterus, Fabianus, Cornelius, Lucius, Stephanus, Sixtus, or Xystus II, Dionysius, Felix, Eutychianus, and Gaius: in the "fourth" century, Marcellinus succeeded Gaius; who was followed by Marcellus, Eusebius, Miltiades, Sylvester, Julius, Liberius, Felix II, Damasus, and Siricius [f1380]; and further than this age, it is not worth while to follow them; the man of sin began to grow apace, and in a century or two afterwards, proclaimed himself universal bishop:

they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and the Three Taverns; these were both of them towns that lay in the Appian way to Rome; the former of these Horace [f1381] makes mention of, in the account of his journey from Rome to Brundusium; first he says, he came to Aricia, or Rizza, which is about 160 furlongs, or 21 miles from Rome, and from thence to Appii Forum: that Appii Forum was further from Rome than the Three Taverns, appears from what Cicero says [f1382], who dates his letter to Atticus from Appii Forum, at four o'clock, and tells him, that be had sent him another a little before from "Tres Tabernae", or the Three Taverns; and indeed, Appii Forum was one and fifty miles from Rome, and the Three Taverns but three and thirty: so that the sense must be, that some of the brethren from Rome came as far as the Three Taverns, and others as far as Appii Forum; which, as before observed, were two towns upon the road: hence the former of these was not a statue of Appius, near the city of Rome, as some have [f1383] said; nor a market in the city itself, as says Jerom [f1384], or a writer under his name; whose words are, Appii Forum is the name of a market at Rome, from Appius, formerly a consul, and from whom the Appian way had its name: but this was a town at some distance; there were several towns in Italy of a like appellation; as Julii Forum, Cornelii Forum, now Imola, Livii Forum, now Forli: Pliny [f1385] makes mention of an Appii Forum; and there was a town in Calabria, called Taberna: and as the one

was not a mere market place, so the other does not design three houses for public entertainment; for the words should not be translated “three taverns”, nor indeed translated at all; nor are they by Luke, who retains the Latin name, as the name of a place; and here it was that Severus, the Roman emperor, was killed by Herculius Maximianus [f1386]; and this, in Constantine’s time, was the seat of a bishop; for among the bishops assembled on account of Donatus, mention is made of one “Felix a Tribus Tabernis” [f1387], or Felix bishop of Tres Tabernae, the same place we call “the Three Taverns”:

whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage; that is, when he saw the brethren that came to meet him, he gave thanks to God for the sight of them, which he had so much desired; and he took heart and courage, and went on cheerfully, and in high spirits, towards Rome; in hope of seeing the rest, and believing that God had some work for him to do there.

Ver. 16. *And when we came to Rome*, etc.] To the city itself:

the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; or general of the army; or, as some think, the governor of the “praetorian” band of soldiers, who attended the emperor as his guards: his name is thought to have been Burrhus Afranius; to him Julius the centurion delivered all the prisoners he brought from Caesarea, excepting Paul, to be disposed of by him, in the several prisons, or jails, to whom it belonged to take care of such persons: this clause is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions:

but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him: this was owing, either to the letter which Festus sent to Rome concerning him, and his case; by which it appeared, that he was no malefactor, and therefore to be used in a different manner from the rest of the prisoners; or rather to the intercession of the centurion, who had all along used him in a very civil and courteous manner; who requesting this favour had it granted, that Paul should not be put into the common prison with the rest, but should dwell in an apartment by himself; or, as the Ethiopic version renders it, “at his own will”; where he himself pleased, for he dwelt in his own hired house, (<4480>Acts 28:30); only he was under the care and custody of a soldier, who constantly attended him wherever he went; and which could not be otherwise, seeing he was chained, as in (<4480>Acts 28:20) and his chain was put on his right hand, and fastened to the left hand of the soldier,

that had him under his keeping; so that wherever he was or went, the soldier must be likewise: hence that passage in Seneca [f1388],

> “as the same chain joins together the prisoner and the soldier, so those things which are unlike go together; fear follows hope.”

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, that after three days*, etc.] From his first coming to Rome, when he had hired himself a house, or lodging, and was settled in it, and was rested from the fatigue of his voyage and journey:

Paul called the chief of the Jews together: he sent to the principal men among them; for though the Jews, were expelled from Rome in the reign of Claudius, they were now returned, and had their liberty of residing there; very likely by means of Poppea, Nero’s concubine, who favoured the Jews: but whether they had a synagogue, and these men were the chief and leading men in it, the doctors, rulers, and officers of it, are things not certain; however, these the apostle desired to come to him where he was, for whether he had the liberty of going about where he would, the soldier attending him, is not so clear a point:

and when they were come together; to his house, or lodging:

he said unto them, men and brethren: which was the usual form of address with the Jews; (see <4402>Acts 7:2).

Though I have committed nothing against the people and customs of our fathers; meaning he had said nothing disrespectfully of the people of the Jews; nor had done anything to the prejudice of their temporal, spiritual, and eternal good, but just the reverse; nor had he said or done anything contrary to the laws and customs enjoined the Jews by Moses, even those that were of a ceremonial nature; for though he had everywhere declared that the Gentiles were not obliged to an obedience to them, yet he did not dissuade the Jews from the use of them; and oftentimes complied with them himself, things he had been charged with:

yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans; he was first seized by the Jews in the temple of Jerusalem, and then fell into the hands of Lysias, the chief captain; who bound him, and by whom he was sent to Caesarea, where he was retained a prisoner both by Felix and Festus, Roman governors.

Ver. 18. *Who when they had examined me*, etc.] About the things laid to his charge, had heard what his accusers had to object to him, and the defence he made for himself:

would have let [me] go; released him from his bonds, and set him at liberty to go where he pleased:

because there was no cause of death in me; no crime proved upon him, which was worthy of death; and this was the sense of Lysias the chief captain, and of Felix and Festus the Roman governors, and of King Agrippa.

Ver. 19. *But when the Jews spake against it*, etc.] His being cleared and dismissed, and desired he might be sent back to Jerusalem, to be tried and judged there, to which Festus seemed inclined:

I was constrained to appeal to Caesar; to prevent the design of the Jews upon him, which was to way lay him and kill him, or by what ways they could, right or wrong, take away his life; and to provide for his own safety:

not that I had ought to accuse my nation of; meaning, that he had no ill design in this appeal against his country, to expose them, and bring them under reproach and censure, but to vindicate himself, defend his own innocence, and preserve his character and life; suggesting, that what he did was not of choice, but by constraint, and with reluctance; being no friend to Heathen tribunals, nor any enemy to the Jewish nation.

Ver. 20. *For this cause therefore have I called for you*, etc.] To let them know the true state of his case; that though he was a prisoner, it was not for any crime he had done, much less any of a capital nature; and that as he was no scandal to his country, so neither did he intend to raise any against it, or say or do anything which might bring it into contempt and danger: as well as

to see [you] and speak with [you]; and keep up and maintain a free and friendly conversation together:

because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain; which was then upon him, and he pointed to; the true reason of which was, because he had preached that the Messiah the tribes of Israel were hoping and waiting for, and who is the only solid foundation of the hope of eternal life and salvation, was already come; and that he had suffered and died, and rose

again from the dead, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he; (see <24408>Jeremiah 14:8 17:13). And this title well agrees with Jesus Christ, who in the New Testament is called “our hope”, and “the hope of glory”, (<54101>1 Timothy 1:1 <51027>Colossians 1:27), and he is the hope of every Israelite indeed, of every sensible sinner, of every regenerated person, whether Jew or Gentile; and such are encouraged to hope in him for grace here, and glory hereafter: and whereas they see themselves lost and undone, and that there is no salvation for them by their own works, and that there is salvation in Christ, they are directed and encouraged to hope in him for it; because it is a work finished by him, and is complete in him; it is of free grace and favour bestowed; it is wrought out for the chief of sinners; and such as they themselves are, are invited by himself to look to him for it; and the Gospel declaration is, that whoever believes in him shall be saved: they see themselves to be sinners, and that there is no hope of the forgiveness of their sins from an absolute God, or the absolute mercy of God out of Christ, but that the blood of Christ was shed for the remission of sins, and that God, for Christ’s sake, does forgive sins: wherefore they hope in him for it; to which they are encouraged by the proclamation of the grace of God, as a forgiving God in Christ; by the promises of forgiveness in the covenant of grace; by the Gospel declaration of it; by its being entirely of free grace, through the blood of Christ; and by the many instances of the worst of sinners who have been favoured with it: these Israelites, indeed, also see themselves unrighteous creatures, and that they cannot be justified before God by works of righteousness done by them; but that there is a righteousness wrought out by Christ, which is acceptable and well pleasing to God; is freely bestowed on men, and is imputed to all sorts of men, even to the ungodly; wherefore they hope in him for it, and lay hold on this object of hope set before them: in a word, they have hope of eternal life on his account, that being the gift of God through him; and it being the will of God, that whoever believes in him should have it; and it being in the power and right of Christ to bestow it; and they having also his Spirit as the earnest and pledge of it; as well as have his righteousness as their title to it, his grace as their meetness for it, and have a share both in his intercession and in his preparations of it: moreover, the apostle taught that there would be a general resurrection of the dead, upon which would succeed a state of everlasting happiness for the righteous; and which was the hope of the tribes of Israel in common, especially of every Israelite indeed: now these things had irritated the carnal Jews against him, who could not rest till they

had been the means of bringing him into the condition he now was; nor were they content with this, without having his life.

Ver. 21. *And they said unto him*, etc.] That is, the chief men of the Jews at Rome, whom Paul had called together, replied; either in a lying and dissembling way, or as expressing matter of fact; which last may be allowed:

we neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee: which was very much, that the high priest and sanhedrim had not wrote to the principal men of their religion at Rome; giving an account of the apostle, and his case unto them, in order to prejudice them against him, and to furnish them with charges and accusations; which if they could not prevail by them, so as to get him condemned by the emperor, yet might be a means of preventing any of their nation giving heed unto him, and embracing his sentiments and notions concerning Jesus of Nazareth:

neither any of the brethren that came [from] Jerusalem; or any part of Judea, to Rome; meaning not the Christian Jews, for these they would not call brethren; but those who were of the same religion as well as nation, whom it was usual with the Jews to call brethren:

shewed or spake any harm of thee; so that it looks as if they did make mention of him, but did not charge him with anything that was wicked and criminal: this they said, to show that they were not prejudiced against him by any person or means; and which carried in it a very considerable testimony of the apostle's innocence.

Ver. 22. *But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest*, etc.] What was his opinion and judgment, concerning the Messiah, whether he was come or not, and whether Jesus of Nazareth was he; and concerning other principles relating to him, embraced by the Christians; and what he had to say for the clearing up, proving, and confirming his sentiments about these things:

for as concerning this sect; or heresy, meaning the Christian religion: in saying so, they reproached it; for the Gospel, or Christian religion, is not an human device, the choice and option of man's free will, and what he pleases himself with, as an opinion and invention of his own, or of other men, as "heresy" signifies; but it is of God, and by revelation of Jesus Christ, and is a doctrine of the highest wisdom: nor does it deny or take away any fundamental article of true religion; either natural, as known by

the Gentiles, or as revealed, with which the Jews were made acquainted, under the former dispensation; but establishes every such article, as the unity of the divine Being; the worship of the one only and true God of Israel, in a spiritual manner; the doctrine of the Messiah, his person, office, and grace; the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment; and therefore could not be chargeable with heresy: nor was it set up for any worldly gain, or popular applause, which are the things that authors and abettors of heresy have in view; nor was it designed to divide and separate persons from the true church of God, but to bring them to it, and unite them together in it; (see <44244>Acts 24:14).

We know that everywhere it is spoken against; this they knew, both by letters they received, and by persons who came from different parts of the world; and which was fact, and was no other than what was foretold concerning Christ, that he should be a sign that should be spoken against, (<42234>Luke 2:34); and which the apostle found true of the Gospel preached by him, both among Jews and Greeks; it being to the one a stumblingblock, and to the other foolishness, (<46123>1 Corinthians 1:23), and especially it was contradicted and blasphemed everywhere by the Jews; these in all places opposed themselves to it, and spoke evil of it, and of its preachers and professors: Christ, the author, sum, and subject of the Christian religion, was spoken against in his person; his deity and divine sonship were denied, as they still are; and his offices, as prophet, priest, and King; yea, his actions, even his works of mercy to the bodies of men, by healing their diseases, his conversing with sinners for the good of their souls, the several miracles he wrought, and the whole series of his life and conversation, were blasphemed and evil spoken of: the doctrines of the Gospel in general were contradicted, as they now are by many, as absurd and irrational, and as tending to licentiousness; and in particular those which respect the Father of Christ, as being the Father of Christ, his everlasting love to the elect in him, and his distinguishing grace in the choice of them; and those which relate to Christ, as that he is truly God, and the Son of God, and to his sacrifice, satisfaction, and imputed righteousness; and also which concern the Spirit of God, as his deity and personality, and his operations on the souls of men; and such as relate to a future state, the resurrection of all the dead, and judgment to come: likewise the ordinances of the Christian religion, baptism and the Lord’s supper, were despised and spoken against, and the professors of it treated as fools and wicked men; the reasons of all this are, because the Christian religion, and the doctrines

of it, are not of men, are contrary to the lusts of men, and particularly to the pride of men; they subject them to reproach and persecution, and gather men out from among them.

Ver. 23. *And when they had appointed him a day*, etc.] When they should meet together, and when both sides might be better prepared to enter into a conversation on the subject of Christianity; and when there might be an opportunity for a more numerous assembly to hear:

there came many to him into his lodging; the same very likely with his own hired house, (<4428>Acts 28:30); hither a large number came at the time appointed, more than those whom Paul first sent for:

to whom he expounded; the Scriptures, the writings of Moses, and the prophets; and particularly such parts of them as concerned the Messiah; so our Lord expounded to his disciples in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself, (<4247>Luke 24:27).

And testified the kingdom of God; or the kingdom of the Messiah, which oftentimes signifies the Gospel, and the Gospel dispensation: he produced full and sufficient proofs and testimonies from prophecies, miracles, and facts, that the kingdom of the Messiah was come; which consisted not in outward pompous things, in temporal riches and honours, as they expected; but in the ministration of the Gospel, and in the administration of its ordinances; and in righteousness and holiness, which give the one a right unto, and the other a meetness for, the kingdom of heaven: and of this he testified, that it is the kingdom of God, of his preparing and of his giving, and is what he calls his people unto, and makes them meet for; and in which they shall reign with him, and enjoy him for ever: and the apostle could testify and make it evident, that there was such a kingdom, and such a future glorious state; from the promise of God, to which the twelve tribes of Israel hoped to come; from the prophecies of the Old Testament, which speak of everlasting life, and of the resurrection of the dead unto it; from the expectations of the saints of the former dispensation, who all died in the faith of it; and from the coming of the Messiah, his sufferings and death, and ascension to heaven, whereby he had brought life and immortality to the clearest light:

persuading them concerning Jesus; endeavouring to persuade them, that Jesus was the true Messiah; that he was truly God, and the Son of God, as well as man; that he was born of a virgin, and wrought miracles, and

yielded perfect obedience to the law; that he laid down his life as a sacrifice for sin, and to make reconciliation and atonement for it; that he brought in an everlasting righteousness; that he rose again from the dead for justification; that he was ascended up to heaven, and was set down at the right hand of God, where he ever lives to make intercession, and will come again a second time to judge both quick and dead: these are some of "the things concerning Jesus", as the words may be rendered, which the apostle endeavoured to persuade the Jews into a belief of; as also the blessings of grace which come by him, such as peace and pardon through his blood, reconciliation and atonement by his sacrifice, justification by his righteousness, and complete salvation in him: concerning these he persuaded the Jews, setting things in a clear light, using strong arguments to convince them, and giving full proof, as the nature of them would admit of; and which is no other than moral persuasion, and is of itself ineffectual; efficacious persuasion is only of God; it is he that opens the heart to attend to these things, and gives faith to receive and embrace them: however, it is the duty of Gospel ministers to make use of arguments, and by them to endeavour to persuade men of their need of Christ, and of salvation by him, as the apostle did; (see <470511>2 Corinthians 5:11).

Both out off the law of Moses: not the law of the ten commandments, given on Mount Sinai to Moses, who delivered it to the children of Israel, and is opposed to the doctrine of grace and truth, which came by Jesus Christ, (<430117>John 1:17); that accuses and convinces of sin, and pronounces guilty, and curses for it; but does not reveal Jesus Christ as a Saviour from it; no proof can be taken from thence of the things concerning Jesus; but the five books of Moses are here meant, in which he wrote of Christ, as our Lord himself says, (<430546>John 5:46,47) as he did particularly in (<010315>Genesis 3:15 49:10 <051815>Deuteronomy 18:15); also the types and sacrifices, recorded in his writings, might be made use of in proof of Jesus, and the things of him:

and out of the prophets: such as (<192215>Psalm 22:15,16 16:10 68:18 110:1) (<230714>Isaiah 7:14 53:1-12 <270924>Daniel 9:24, 26 <330512>Micah 5:2 <380909>Zechariah 9:9 13:7); with many others: and in this work he continued,

from morning till evening; not that we are to suppose, that he carried on one continued discourse upon these subjects, without any intermission; but that he was all the day employed, either in expounding: the Scriptures, proving that the kingdom of the Messiah was come, and using strong and

persuasive arguments, to show that Jesus was he; or in answering the cavils and objections of the Jews, to what he said.

Ver. 24. *And some believed the things which were spoken*, etc.] By him, concerning the kingdom of God and Jesus Christ; even as many as were ordained unto eternal life, and to whom it was given to believe; for faith is the gift of God, and which comes by hearing of the word, when it is attended with a divine power; and then it is not only notionally understood, and barely assented to as truth, but is cordially believed and embraced, and cheerfully professed, and steadily held fast: this was not a mere historical faith, or a bare assent to the truth of the things spoken, nor a mere profession of faith in them, but a believing in Christ with the heart, the sum and substance of them; as they heard these things, their understandings were enlightened, and they saw their need of Christ, and the things of Christ, which were held forth in the ministry of the word; and so approved of them, savoured, relished, and fed upon them; and until this is the case, none can, nor will believe aright:

and some believed not: notwithstanding the full proof, and clear evidence produced by the apostle: these were not of Christ's sheep, their eyes were blinded, and their hearts were hardened, as was prophesied of them, and therefore they could not believe; they were given up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, and were left under the power of obstinate and invincible unbelief: their disbelief of these things arose from the prejudices they had conceived about a worldly kingdom; from the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, they imagining the Messiah would not die, but abide for ever; from the carnal reasonings of their minds, about divine and spiritual things; and from the ignorance that was in them, because of the obduracy of their hearts. The kingdom the apostle testified of was not an Utopian kingdom, nor any of the real kingdoms of this world, but the kingdom of the Messiah they were expecting; but that which he described, being not such an one as they imagined, they believed him not: the things he said concerning Jesus were not trivial, speculative, and indifferent things; but of the greatest moment and importance, and of which there was full proof in their own writings; and though spoken by Paul, were no other than the word of God; and besides, were good news, and glad tidings, and yet they believed them not: this difference among them, some believing and some not believing, was not owing to the power and free will of man, as if some of themselves would, and did believe, and others would not, but to the distinguishing grace of God; for faith is not of man, it is the gift of God, it

is the fruit of electing grace, and is given in consequence of it: nor is this any unusual thing, under the same ministration of the word, for one to believe, and another not believe: this is a common case, and is the usual success the Gospel meets with; so it always has been, and so it is, and will be; so it was in the times of Noah, he was a preacher of righteousness to the old world, even of the righteousness of faith, many were disobedient, few believed; and so it fared with the evangelical prophet Isaiah, and with Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, and other prophets of the Old Testament; and with John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, and with Christ himself, as well as with our apostle; and this has been the case ever since his time, now is, and will be, as long as the Gospel is preached.

Ver. 25. *And when they agreed not among themselves*, etc.] One part believing what was said, and the other disbelieving; and such a division is the usual effect of the Gospel ministry; (see <42125>Luke 12:51,52). Or this may be understood of the unbelieving party, who though they agreed in the main that Jesus was not the Messiah, yet might have different sentiments of the apostle; of the manner of his reasoning, and the nature of his proofs and arguments; and of some things which he delivered, which some might assent to, and others deny; as the Pharisees and Sadducees in the sanhedrim at Jerusalem disagreed about the doctrine of the resurrection: and the rather this may be thought to be the sense, because they not only departed, when very likely those that believed might stay longer, but because at their departure the apostle says something very cutting and stinging, and which he would not say in common of them all, of the believers; and besides, they are afterwards said to reason among themselves, (<44829>Acts 28:29).

They departed; from the apostle's lodging to their own houses, or to some other place, where they could call over, and debate among themselves, the things they had heard:

after that Paul had spoken one word; a very remarkable one, and full to the purpose, and which he gave them just at parting with them:

well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers; the passage referred to is in (<23609>Isaiah 6:9,10), which the prophet Isaiah delivered under the influence and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, being moved by him, as all the holy men of God were; and which was very appropriate, not only to the Jewish fathers in the times of Isaiah, but to their posterity in succeeding ages, in the times of Christ and his apostles;

(see <40l310>Matthew 13:10-14 <43l1237>John 12:37-46); and were exceeding applicable to the present unbelieving Jews, who had been disputing with the apostle, and were now departing from him, in unbelief: and from hence it appears, that since it was the Holy Ghost that spake by Isaiah the prophet, and he that spoke to him and by him, was the Adon, Jehovah, and Lord of hosts, as is clear from (<23l601>Isaiah 6:1,5,8,9); it follows, that the Holy Ghost is a divine person, truly God, and equal with the Father and the Son.

Ver. 26. *Saying, go unto this people, and say*, etc.] A message sent in wrath and judgment to the people of Israel, rejected from being the people of God, a "lo ammi" being written upon them; and therefore God does not call them "his", but "this" people: and this message was sent by an evangelical prophet, who foretold, in the clearest manner, the Messiah's incarnation, and birth of a virgin, the work he was to do, the sufferings he should undergo, and the glory that should follow; and that after he had seen in a vision the glory of the King Messiah, the perfections of deity filling the temple of his human nature, him exalted on a throne, and attended and worshipped by angels; after he had had such a view of his beauty and excellency, that laid him low in his own sight, and humbled him under a sense of his own impurity and unworthiness; and after he had had a comfortable discovery and application of pardoning grace; and after he had expressed such a readiness and willingness to go on the Lord's errand: which one might have thought would have been of a different nature; and that he would have been sent, and have been made useful, to set forth the glories and excellencies of Christ's person, office, and grace, he had had such a view of; and to preach the comfortable doctrine of pardoning grace to men, which he had just now such a gracious experience of; but on the contrary, he is bid to say,

hearing ye shall hear; with bodily ears, the Gospel preached by the Messiah and his apostles:

and shall not understand, spiritually and experimentally, what they heard: to have an opportunity of hearing the Gospel, is a great blessing; seeing it is good news, glad tidings of good things, a joyful sound, and the voice of Christ himself; it is a distinguishing favour, and what all men at all times have not; when it is attended with a divine energy, the Spirit of God is received through it, regeneration, quickening and sanctifying grace are by it; faith comes by hearing it, and Christ is found under the ministration of it;

and, generally speaking, the understanding and knowledge of divine things, are by means of it: men are naturally without the understanding of spiritual things, and where the Gospel is not, they remain so; the ministers of the Gospel, and the word preached by them, are the means of leading men into a spiritual understanding of things, though only as, and when attended with the Spirit of God, who is a Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ: and a special mercy it is when persons, whilst hearing the word, understand what they hear, and can distinguish truth from error; and approve of the truth, receive the love of it, feel the power, and taste the sweetness of it; find it and eat it, believe, embrace, and profess it, and bring forth fruits worthy of it: but on the contrary, when it is heard and not understood, it is an awful dispensation; for hence either they content themselves with bare hearing, and depend upon it for salvation; or they despise and speak evil of what they do not understand; and so their hearing, instead of being a blessing, is an aggravation of their condemnation:

and seeing ye shall see: miracles wrought:

and not perceive; them to be proofs of the things, for which they are wrought: so Jarchi expounds those words,

> "ye shall see the wonders, or miracles I have done for you, and shall not set your hearts to know me"

from whence it appears that the Gospel preached in the clearest and most powerful manner, and even miracles wrought in confirmation of it, are insufficient for conversion; and nothing will effect it, but efficacious grace.

Ver. 27. *For the heart of this people is waxed gross*, etc.] Or fat; stupefied with notions of carnal and temporal things, and become hardened against, and unsusceptible of, divine and spiritual things:

and their ears are dull of hearing; the Gospel, and its joyful sound; to which they stop their cars, as the deaf adder to the voice of the charmer:

and their eyes have they closed; and wilfully shut, against all evidence from facts, miracles, prophecies, and preaching:

lest they should see with [their] eyes, and hear with [their] ears, and understand with [their] heart, and should be converted; that is, see the evidence of miracles, take in the truth of doctrine, understand the meaning

of prophecy, and so be turned from darkness, ignorance, and unbelief, to light, knowledge, and faith:

and I should heal them; or "have mercy on them", as the Ethiopic version renders it; that is, forgive their sins: hearing the Gospel preached, is the ordinary means of understanding spiritual things; and the understanding being enlightened through the ministry of the word, by the Spirit of God, whereby the sinner sees his lost state by nature, his impurity and impotency, the danger he is in, and the destruction that is imminent on him, and he is liable to, and also his need of Christ, and salvation by him; this issues in conversion, in the turning of a man from the evil of his ways, to believe in Christ, walk on in him, and worthy of him; when he is healed of the diseases of his soul, which are many, are natural, and hereditary, mortal and incurable, but by Christ the great physician; by whose stripes, wounds, and blood, there is healing, that is, pardon; for healing diseases, and pardoning iniquities, are one and the same; (see <19A303>Psalm 103:3); and at conversion, when a soul is enlightened, and made sensible of the evil of sin, and that there is no cure of this disease, by anything that he or any creature can do, or prescribe for him, but only by the blood of Christ; a discovery of pardoning grace is made unto him; and he is made whole, and cured of every disease that attended him; from whence spring joy, peace, and comfort to him:, but when through hearing the word, the understanding is not enlightened, and conversion does not follow upon it, there is no healing of the disease of sin, no pardon applied; and consequently such must be in a most deplorable and miserable condition, as all ignorant hearers and despisers of the Gospel are; (see Gill on "<401314>Matthew 13:14; see Gill on "<401315>Matthew 13:15;

Ver. 28. *Be it known therefore unto you,* etc.] Unbelievers and despisers, take this along with you at parting, and do not say you were never acquainted with it:

that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles; meaning the Gospel, which is a publication and declaration of that salvation, which God contrived from all eternity; made provision for, and secured in the covenant of grace; which he appointed, called, and sent Christ to effect, in the fulness of time; and which he has accomplished, by his obedience, sufferings, and death; even a full, complete, spiritual, and eternal salvation, from sin, Satan, the world, the curse of the law, and eternal death; that that Gospel which proclaims this, and is the power of God unto it, to them that

believe, is sent to the Gentile world, by God himself, who has ordered his ministers to turn to them, upon the rejection of it by the Jews:

and [that] they will hear it: and do understand it and obey it, believe it and profess it: this the apostle could assert upon his own knowledge, who had preached it in many nations of the world; and could testify how gladly they heard it, with what pleasure they received it, how readily they obeyed it, and how cheerfully they professed it, and how steadily they held it; though the Jews despised and put it away from them, judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life: this the apostle says, reproaching them with their folly, stupidity, and infidelity; when the Gentiles, which knew not God, received the Gospel and are saved.

Ver. 29. *And when he had said these words*, etc.] Cited the prophecy of Isaiah, and declared the mission of the Gospel to the Gentiles, and their calling by it; both which must greatly gravel and disturb the unbelieving part of his audience:

the Jews departed; much displeased and uneasy:

and had great reasoning among themselves; not only with them that believed, but with others, that seemed to incline towards the apostle, and who espoused and undertook to defend some principles of his, against the rest, as the doctrine of the resurrection; and particularly they might take into consideration the passage in Isaiah, the apostle had recited to them at parting, and which was so appropriate to them; as well as the account he gave them of the preaching of the Gospel, and the success of it among the Gentiles, things which must be very grating to them: this whole verse is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Syriac version.

Ver. 30. *And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house,* etc.] In a house which he hired with his own money; in which his friends Luke, Aristarchus, and others, dwelt with him; where he was guarded by a soldier: whether at the expiration of these two years he was set at liberty, and for ten years afterwards travelled into Italy, France, and Spain, preaching the Gospel, as some think; or whether he then suffered martyrdom, is not certain; the latter is most probable:

and received all that came in unto him; there, as the Syriac version reads, that is, into his lodging, as the Ethiopic version expresses it; which is not to be understood of his hospitality, for it cannot be thought that he should provide food and lodging for all that came unto him; but that be admitted

all that would to come and hear him, and freely preached the Gospel to them: it should seem by this, as well as by what is said (<4482>Acts 28:23); that many of the Jews came into his lodging, and heard him expound, that it was a large house he had hired and dwelt in; and such an one Jerom [f1389] thinks it was, like that he supposes he would have Philemon provide for him, which he desires in his epistle to him, (Philemon 22); namely, a house in the most noted place in the city, for the conveniency of those that came to him; large enough to hold many; free from noise and disturbance; and not situated in a scandalous neighbourhood, nor near to shows and plays; and that the lodging should rather be on the floor than in an upper room: and such a house, with all the conditions that Jerom mentions, the Papists pretend to show at Rome to this day; where, as their tradition is, Luke composed, or however finished this his history; which, as the above writer observes [f1390], reaches to the two years of Paul's stay at Rome; that is, until the fourth year of Nero; from whence, adds he, we learn that in the same city this book was composed: and it is certain, that Luke was with him, when the apostle wrote his second epistle to Timothy from Rome, and when the time of his martyrdom seemed to himself to be at hand, (<5407>2 Timothy 4:7,11).

Ver. 31. *Preaching the kingdom of God,* etc.] That is, the Gospel, as in (<4043>Luke 4:43 16:16); he preached up Jesus as the King Messiah, and declared that his kingdom was come, and opened the nature of it; that it consisted not in meats and drinks, but in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; which is the kingdom of grace here, and is within a man, in his heart, where grace reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life: and he gave them same account of the kingdom of glory, and the way unto it; and showed, that without regeneration and sanctification, no one could be meet for it; and without the justifying righteousness of Christ, no man could have a right unto it, or be possessed of it:

and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ: his person, as God and man; his office as Mediator, being prophet, priest, and King; his incarnation and birth; his life and miracles; his doctrine and obedience, sufferings and death; his resurrection, ascension, session at God's right hand; his intercession, and second coming to judgment; with all the truths of the Gospel, in which he has a concern; as redemption, peace, reconciliation and pardon, by his blood and sacrifice, and justification by his righteousness, and salvation and eternal life through him. These things had been the subject of the apostle's ministry, throughout the whole of it:

he began at Damascus with preaching Jesus as the Son of God and the true Messiah; and he ends at Rome, with teaching the things concerning him: at his first setting out in the work of the Lord, he determined to make known none but Christ, and him crucified; and in this resolution he continued through the whole course of his life, and abode by it to the end: and this he did

with all confidence; with all freedom and liberty in his soul, though he was bound in his body with a chain; with all plainness, openness, and faithfulness; and with all courage and boldness, though in the midst of adversaries:

no man forbidding him; not the Roman emperor, nor the Roman senate, nor any other magistrate; nor could the Jews hinder him, nor was his mouth to be stopped by any; nor could the open door of the Gospel be shut, or its course be impeded; for though the apostle was bound, the word of God was not, but ran and was glorified; and was made known, and even owned in Caesar's palace; some say Nero's cupbearer, and Poppea his concubine, were converted by him: and he not only continued preaching the Gospel during the two years of his imprisonment at Rome, but also wrote several epistles to churches, and particular persons; as the epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and the Hebrews, and to Philemon, and the "second") epistle to Timothy: some copies add here, "Amen"; and at the close of the Alexandrian copy, stand these words, "the Acts of the holy Apostles"; and at the Syriac version these, "the End of the Acts of the blessed Apostles, that is, of their Histories".

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Epiphan. Contr. Haeres. 50:1. Haeres. 30.

Ft2 -- Meor Enayim, p. 167.

Ft3 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 29.

Ft4 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

Ft5 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

Ft6 -- Gale Razeya apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. 50:8. c. 23.

Ft7 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 1.

Ft8 -- Cateches. 17. sect. 8. p. 247.

Ft9 -- Maimon. in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.

Ft10 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 54. 2. Vid. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 65. fol. 57. 4.

Ft11 -- Apud R. Sol. Jarchi in Genesis 2:2.

Ft12 -- Targum in Cant. 8:5.

Ft13 -- Prefat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 40. 4. Jarchi in 1 Kings 11:7.

Ft14 -- Misn. Parah, c. 3. sect. 6. Echa Rabbati, fol. 52. 4. Misn. Roshhashanah, c. 2. sect. 4.

Ft15 -- Targum in Cant. 8:5.

Ft16 -- Antiqu. 50:9. c. 10. sect. 4.

Ft17 -- Antiqu. 50:20. c. 7. sect. 6.

Ft18 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 75. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 27. & 28. & Origin. Philocal. p. 14.

Ft19 -- Misna Sota, c. 5. sect 3.

Ft20 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 42. 1. Maimon. Hilch, Sabbat, c. 27, sect. 4.

Ft21 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 27. 1. & 83. 2.

Ft22 -- Maimon. Hiichot Sabbat, c. 97. sect. 1, 2.

Ft23 -- Misna Erubin, c. 4. sect. 5, 7, 8.

Ft24 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 178. 4.

Ft25 -- De Bello Jud. 50:5. c. 2. sect. 3.

Ft26 -- Centra Haeres. 50:2. Haeres. 66.

Ft27 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft28 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 2.

Ft29 -- Ib. fol. 19. 1.

Ft30 -- Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 5.

Ft31 -- Ib. c. 5. sect. 2, 3.

Ft32 -- Juchasin, fol. 13. 2. Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1. Elias Levit. prefat. 3. ad Sepher Masoret.

Ft33 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 6. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in. ib. & T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 17. 2.

Ft34 -- Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 3, 4.

Ft35 -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 56. 2.

Ft36 -- Epist. ad. Scrapion, Vol. I. p. 523.

Ft37 -- Contra Haeres. 50:2. Haeres. 68.

Ft38 -- L. 1. c. 13.

Ft39 -- Comment. in Psal. 108. fol. 73. D. & de locis Hebraicis, fol. 89. C. & 95. H. & de Nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 105. H.

Ft40 -- De Locis Hebraicis, ib.

Ft41 -- Comment. in Josuam, p. 283.

Ft42 -- Kimchi & Sol. ben Melech in Psal. 69. 25. R. Nathan. Concordant.

Ft43 -- Biblos Katallages, p. 45, 46.

Ft44 -- T. Bab Roshhoshana, fol. 4. 2. Beracot, fol. 13. 1. Sabbat, fol. 20. 1. Maccot, fol. 13. 2. & 16. 1. Tanchuma, fol. 17. 1, 4. & 25. 1, 4.

Ft45 -- Aben Ezra, Kimchi, & Sol. ben Melech in loc.

Ft46 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 12. 3. & Trumot. fol. 48. 1. & Erubin, fol. 19. 3. & 23. 3. T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 99. 1. & Juchasin, fol. 95. 2. & 96. 1. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 17. 4.

Ft47 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 2.

Ft48 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:2. c. 23.

Ft49 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 104. 1.

Ft50 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 61. 2. & Juchasin, fol. 108. 1.

Ft51 -- Stromat, 50:4. p. 488.

Ft52 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 43. 2.

Ft53 -- Ib. fol. 127. 1.

Ft54 -- Vid. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 74. 3.

Ft55 -- Baal Hatturim in <0424>Numbers 24:25.

Ft56 -- Maimon. Hilchot Chobel, etc. c. 8. sect. 9.

Ft57 -- Maimon. Hilchot Yom Hacippurim, c. 3. sect. 1, 2, 3. Misn. Yoma, c. 4. 1. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft58 -- Jarchi in <0411126>Numbers 11:26. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 218. 3.

Ft59 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 65. 1. Gloss. in. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 100. fol. 88. 2.

Ft60 -- T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 10. 1.

Ft61 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 10. sect. 6.

Ft62 -- De Bello Jud. 50:2. c. 3. sect. 1.

Ft63 -- In <0230315>Leviticus 23:15.

Ft64 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 68. 2.

Ft65 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 34. 4. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 9. 4.

Ft66 -- Vid. Ludolph. not. in Claud. reg. Ethiop. Confess. p. 13.

Ft67 -- R. Menachem in Leviticus 8:apud Ainsworth in <011712>Genesis 17:12.

Ft68 -- T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 65. 3. Seder Tepillot, fol. 23. 2. Ed. Basil.

Ft69 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 79. 2.

Ft70 -- Opera, par. 1. Fragment. p. 557. & par. 2. Ep. 49. p. 203, 204.

Ft71 -- Arrian. Epictet. 50:4. c. 7.

Ft72 -- Prooem. ad Lib. de Bello Jud. sect. 2. & 50:2. c. 16.

Ft73 -- Nat. Hist. 50:6. c. 15, 25.

Ft74 -- Geograph. 50:6. c. 5.

Ft75 -- Polyhistor. c. 69.

Ft76 -- Geograph. 50:6. c. 2.

Ft77 -- Antiqu. 50:1. c. 6. sect. 4.

Ft78 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 115. 1.

Ft79 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 18. 1.

Ft80 -- P. 73.

Ft81 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 30. fol. 25. 1. & sect. 44. fol. 38. 3.

Ft82 -- Plin. 50:5. c. 12, 26. & 6. 26, 27. Ptolom. 50:5. c. 18.

Ft83 -- Solin. Polyhistor. c. 57.

Ft84 -- L. 1. c. 72.

Ft85 -- L. 6. c. 3.

Ft86 -- L. 5. c. 6.

Ft87 -- Nat. Hist. 50:6. c. 3.

Ft88 -- In Misn. Cetubot, c. 13. sect. 11. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft89 -- Misn. Cetubot, c. 13. sect. 11. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 110, 2.

Ft90 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 121. 1.

Ft91 -- L. 5. c. 1.

Ft92 -- Adv. Marcion. 50:1. c. 1.

Ft93 -- Solinus, ib. c. 53.

Ft94 -- Plin. 50:5. c. 32.

Ft95 -- Ib. c. 27.

Ft96 -- Ptolom. 50:5. c. 5.

Ft97 -- Plin. 50:5. c. 27. Ptolom, ib. &. Mela, 50:1. c. 14.

Ft98 -- Plin. 50:5. in principio.

Ft99 -- T. Hieros. Kilaim, fol. 31. 3. & Sabbat, fol. 7. 2.

Ft100 -- L. 5. c. 5.

Ft101 -- Mela, 50:2. c. 14. Vid. Solin. c. 16. & Plin. 50:4. c. 12.

Ft102 -- Laert. in. vit. Epimenidis.

Ft103 -- Ptolom. Geograph. 50:5. c. 17, & 19. & 50:6. c. 7.

Ft104 -- Maimon. Hilch, Tophilla, c. 6. sect. 4. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2.

Ft105 -- lb. c. 3. sect. 1. Vid. T. Beracot, fol. 26. 2.

Ft106 -- Targum in Eccl. 10:17.

Ft107 -- T. Bab. Betacot, fol. 44. 2.

Ft108 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 10. 1.

Ft109 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 83. 2.

Ft110 -- Jarchi in <2928>Joel 2:28. & R. Jeshuah in Aben Ezra in loc.

Ft111 -- R. David Kimchi in loc.

Ft112 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 219. 2.

Ft113 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 118. 4. & 128. 4.

Ft114 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 92. 1.

Ft115 -- Joseph. de Bello Jud. 50:6. c. 5. sect. 3.

Ft116 -- Vid. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 5.

Ft117 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2. Alkath Rocel, 50:1. p. 1. & passim.

Ft118 -- Massecheth Derech Eretz Zuta, c. 1. fol. 19. 1.

Ft119 -- Kimchi in Psal. 16:9.

Ft120 -- T. Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 78. 1.

Ft121 -- De Bello Jud. 50:1. c. 2. sect. 5. & Antiqu. 50:7. c. 15. sect. 3.

Ft122 -- Ib. 50:16. c. 7. sect. 1.

Ft123 -- Itinerar. p. 45, 46.

Ft124 -- Maimon. More Nevochim, par. 2. c. 45. Vid. Procop. Gazaeum in Reg. 50:2. c. 23. sect. 2.

Ft125 -- Kimchi Praefat. ad Psalm.

Ft126 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1.

Ft127 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 70. 3.

Ft128 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 16. 1. & 19. & Maimon. Beth. Habbechira, c. 5. sect. 11. 17.

Ft129 -- Disput. Gregantii, p. 131.

Ft130 -- Vid. Jarchi & Kimchi in <1107>1 Kings 7:38. & Ralbag in <1405>2 Chronicles 4:5.

Ft131 -- T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 40. 2. Misna Yoma, c. 3. sect. 3.

Ft132 -- R. David Kimchi.

Ft133 -- lb. Yoma, fol. 41. 1.

Ft134 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 1. sect. 1. Ib. c. 3. sect. 1, 2, 4. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 26. 2.

Ft135 -- Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 3.

Ft136 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. ib.

Ft137 -- Vid. Juchasin, fol. 65. 2.

Ft138 -- Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 4. Maimon. Hilchot Beth Habechirah, c. 6. sect. 5.

Ft139 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 15. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Taanith, c. 4. sect. 15.

Ft140 -- De Bello Jud. 50:5. c. 5. sect. 3.

Ft141 -- Abarbinel in loc.

Ft142 -- Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. Affirm. 162.

Ft143 -- T. Hieros. Cetubot, fol. 35. 1.

Ft144 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 14. 4. & Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 4.

Ft145 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 17.

Ft146 -- Jarchi in Deuteronomy 18:15.

Ft147 -- Aben Ezra in loc.

Ft148 -- R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 127. 4. & 143. 4. Baal Hatturim in Deuteronomy 18:15.

Ft149 -- Herban. disp. cum Gregeut. p. 13.

Ft150 -- Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 202. 2. Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 63. 2.

Ft151 -- T. Bab. Roshhasbana, fol. 11, 1. 2.

Ft152 -- R. Abraham ben R. Chija apud Wolfii Hebr. Bibliothec. p. 51,

Ft153 -- Yesod Hattora, c. 9. sect. 4.

Ft154 -- T Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 77. 1.

Ft155 -- Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 9. 1. Vid. Kimchi in Psal. xcix.

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Ft156 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 62. 1.

Ft157 -- Sepher Chasidim, sect. 961. apud Allix, Judgment of the Jewish Church, p 57.

Ft158 -- Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft159 -- Bartenora & Yom Tob in ib. sect. 2.

Ft160 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 6. fol. 186. 3.

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Ft163 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 26. 1.

Ft164 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 39. 2. & Hieros. Yoma, fol. 43. 3.

Ft165 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 29. 1.

Ft166 -- Joseph Antiqu. 50:20. c. 4. sect. 2.

Ft167 -- Juchasin, fol. 14. 1. & 159. 1. Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 18. 2.

Ft168 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 53. 2. Chagiga, fol. 5. 1. Megilla, fol. 17. 2. Nedarim, fol. 41. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 1. & passim.

Ft169 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 3. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft170 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 3.

Ft171 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 2.

Ft172 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 32. 11.

Ft173 -- Misn. Yebamot, c. 12. sect. 1.

Ft174 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. sect. 2. & Middot. c. 5. sect. 3.

Ft175 -- T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 31. 1.

Ft176 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2.

Ft177 -- Vid. T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol 3. 2.

Ft178 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 82. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 44. fol. 38. 4. & T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1.

Ft179 -- Maimon. in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1. Abarbinel Mashmiah, Jeshua, fol. 37. 4. & 38. 1.

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Ft182 -- Diog. Laert. in vit. Aristot. l, 5. 313.

Ft183 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 21. 3. & 162. 4.

Ft184 -- De Nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 105. I.

Ft185 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 31.

Ft186 -- Ib. 50:2. c. 88.

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Ft190 -- Misn. Eracin, c. 9. sect. 8.

Ft191 -- Bartenora in Misn. Eracin.

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Ft193 -- Hilchot Shemitta Veyobel, c. 13. sect. 4, 5, 7.

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Ft198 -- Shemitta Veyobel, c. 13. sect. 2.

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Ft205 -- Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 1, 2.

Ft206 -- Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 2.

Ft207 -- Aben Ezra, Vid. ib. in <27114>Daniel 11:14.

Ft208 -- Juchasin, fol. 16. 2.

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Ft214 -- Ganz. ut supra. (Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.)

Ft215 -- Ib.

Ft216 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 11. 1.

Ft217 -- Ganz. ib. col. 1.

Ft218 -- Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 1. 2.

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Ft221 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

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Ft232 -- Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 17.

Ft233 -- Hilchot Tephilla, c. 2. sect. 1.

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Ft237 -- Juchasin, fol. 139. 1.

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Ft305 -- Antiqu. 50:2. c. 9. sect. 6. Vid. Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 3.

Ft306 -- Hebrews Chronicon Mosis, fol. 3. 1. Jarchi in <02202>Exodus 2:2. Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 1.

Ft307 -- Ib. col. 2.

Ft308 -- Antiqu. 50:2. c. 9. sect. 5, 7. & l0, 12.

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Ft328 -- Shemot Rabba, ib.

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Ft332 -- Shalshalet, ib.

Ft333 -- Targum Jon. Jarchi, & Baal Hattuim in Exodus 2:13. Shemot Rabba, Shalshalet & Pirke Eliezer, ut supra.

Ft334 -- Shemot Rabba, ib. & Yade Mose & Mattanot Cehunah in ib.

Ft335 -- Shelsheleth, ib.

Ft336 -- Targum Jon. in Exodus 2:14. Debarim Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 237. 1.

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Ft355 -- In loc. supra citat.

Ft356 -- Patricides, p. 26. Elmacinus, p. 47. apud Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. 50:1. c. 8. p. 415.

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Ft358 -- Ut supra. (De vita Mosis, 50:1. p. 612, 613.)

Ft359 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 40. Vid. Shemot Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 92. 4.

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Ft366 -- Kimchi praefat. ad Hoseam.

Ft367 -- R. David Kimchi in <1210>2 Kings 23:10.

Ft368 -- Jarchi & Ben Melech in <0182>Leviticus 18:23. Kimchi in Sepher Shorash. rad. Ælm.

Ft369 -- In <3052>Amos 5:25.

Ft370 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 64. p. 451.

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Ft407 -- Ut supra. (De Expeditione Alexandri, 50:2.)

Ft408 -- De Bello Jud. 50:7. c. 5. sect. 3.

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Ft465 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 8. sect. 1. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft466 -- Misn. Eruvim, c. 10. sect. 9.

Ft467 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 7. 1. & 13. 2. & Targum in <170221>Esther 2:21.

Ft468 -- Polyhistor, c. 51.

Ft469 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 6. 1.

Ft470 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 18. 1. Vid. fol. 27. 2.

Ft471 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 35. 2.

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Ft473 -- Misn. Yadaim, c. 4. sect. 3.

Ft474 -- Magdeburg. Hist. Ecclesiastes cent. 4. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. & c. 7. p. 417. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 3. & c. 16. p. 514.

Ft475 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Zavim, c. 1. sect. 1.

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Ft494 -- Comment. in Isa 33:9Isaiah 33:9.

Ft495 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 10. sect. 9.

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Ft1380 -- Magdeburg. Eccl. Hist. cent. 2. c. 10. p. 165, etc. cent. 3. c. 10. 193, etc. cent. 4. c. 10. p. 736, etc.

Ft1381 -- Sermonum, 50:1. Satyr 5.

Ft1382 -- Ad Atticum, 50:2. ep. 11.

Ft1383 -- Isidor. Pelusiot. Ep. 50:1. ep. 337.

Ft1384 -- De Locis Hebraicis, fol. 95. K.

Ft1385 -- Nat. Hist. 50:14. c. 6.

Ft1386 -- Aurel. Victor. Epitome, p. 346.

Ft1387 -- Optat. de Schism Donat. 50:1. p. 26.

Ft1388 -- Epist. 5.

Ft1389 -- Comment in Philemon 5:22. Tom. 9. fol. 116. I.

Ft1390 -- Catalog. Script. Eccl. sect. 17. fol. 91. C.

ROMANS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Though this epistle is in order placed the first of the epistles, yet it was not first written: there were several epistles written before it, as the two epistles to the Thessalonians, the two to the Corinthians, the first epistle to Timothy, and that to Titus: the reason why this epistle stands first, is either the excellency of it, of which Chrysostom had so great an esteem that he caused it to be read over to him twice a week; or else the dignity of the place, where the persons lived to whom it is written, being Rome, the imperial city: so the books of the prophets are not placed in the same order in which they were written: Hosea prophesied as early as Isaiah, if not earlier; and before Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and yet stands after them. This epistle was written from Corinth, as the subscription of it testifies; and which may be confirmed from the apostle's commendation of Phoebe, by whom he sent it, who was of Cenchrea, a place near Corinth; by his calling Erastus, the chamberlain of the city, who abode at Corinth, (<55420>2 Timothy 4:20), and Gaius his host, who was a Corinthian, (<45623>Romans 16:23) (<46114>1 Corinthians 1:14), though at what time it was written from hence, is not so evident: some think it was written in the time of his three months' travel through Greece, (<44202>Acts 20:2,3), a little before the death of the Emperor Claudius, in the year of Christ 55; others, that it was written by him in the short stay he made at Corinth, when he came thither, as is supposed, from Philippi, in his way to Troas, where some of his company went before, and had been there five days before him: and this is placed in the second year of Nero, and in the year of Christ 56; however, it was not written by him during his long stay at Corinth, when he was first there, but afterwards, even after he had preached from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum: and when he was about to go to Jerusalem, with the contributions of the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, to the poor saints there, (<45519>Romans 15:19,25,26). The persons to whom this epistle was sent were Roman saints, both Jews and Gentiles, inhabiting the city of Rome; of which city and church; (see Gill on “<44814>Acts 28:14”); (see Gill on “<44815>Acts 28:15”); by whom the Gospel was first preached at Rome, and who were the means of forming the church there, is not very evident

Irenaeus, an ancient writer, says [f1], that Peter and Paul preached the Gospel at Rome, and founded the church; and Gaius, an ecclesiastical man, who lived in the time of Zephyrinus, bishop of Rome, asserts the same; and Dionysius; bishop of the Corinthians, calls the Romans the plantation of Peter and Paul [f2]: whether Peter was ever at Rome is not a clear point with many; and certain it is, that the Apostle Paul had not been at Rome when he wrote this epistle, at least it seems very probable he had not, by several expressions in (<450110>Romans 1:10-15); and yet here was a church to which he writes, and had been a considerable time; for their faith was spoken of throughout the world, (<450108>Romans 1:8); and when the apostle was on the road to this city, the brethren in it met him, (<442815>Acts 28:15). The chief design of this epistle is to set in a clear light the doctrine of justification: showing against the Gentiles, that it is not by the light of nature, and works done in obedience to that, and against the Jews, that it was not by the law of Moses, and the deeds of that; which he clearly evinces, by observing the sinful and wretched estate both of Jews and Gentiles: but that it is by the righteousness of Christ imputed through the grace of God, and received by faith; the effects of which are peace and joy in the soul, and holiness in the life and conversation: he gives an account of the justified ones, as that they are not without sin, which he illustrates by his own experience and case; and yet are possessed of various privileges, as freedom from condemnation, the blessing of adoption, and a right to the heavenly inheritance; he treats in it concerning predestination, the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews; and exhorts to the various duties incumbent on the saints, with respect to one another, and to the world, to duties of a moral and civil nature, and the use of things indifferent; and closes it with the salutations of divers persons.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 1

This chapter contains the inscription of the epistle, and salutation, the preface to it, and the grand proposition of justification by faith, so much enlarged on afterwards; and that this could not be by the law of nature, and the works of it among the Gentiles, is demonstrated by a detail of their horrible wickedness, impiety, and unrighteousness. In the inscription an account is given of the author of the epistle, who is described in (^{Romans 1:1}) by his name Paul: by his relation to Christ, a servant of his; and by his office, an apostle, whose business and concern were with the Gospel; to which he was separated. This Gospel is commended from the author of it, who is God himself; and from the antiquity of it, (^{Romans 1:2,3}), being as ancient as the writings of the prophets; and from the subject of it, being the Lord Jesus Christ; who is described by his relation to God, his Son, by his dominion over the saints, their Lord, by both his natures, human and divine; his human nature, as being of the seed of David, his divine nature, being the Son of God, (^{Romans 1:4}), which is declared by the power he is possessed of, by the Spirit of holiness that is in him, by his resurrection from the dead, and by the apostles receiving from him grace to fit them for their office, and by the office itself: the end of which was to make some among all nations obedient to him, (^{Romans 1:5}), among whom were the saints at Rome, who were called by him, and after his name, (^{Romans 1:6}), which introduces the account of the persons to whom this epistle is written, who are described, (^{Romans 1:7}), by the place of their abode, Rome; by their interest in the love of God; and by the effect, fruit, and evidence of it, their effectual calling; and then follows the apostle's usual salutation, as in all his epistles, in which he wishes grace and peace for them, from God the Father, and from Christ. The preface begins (^{Romans 1:8}), in which are a thanksgiving to God, through Christ, for all the saints at Rome, particularly on account of their faith, for which they were everywhere so famous; an appeal to God, (^{Romans 1:9}), for the truth of his incessant prayers for them, and particularly, (^{Romans 1:10}), that this was a request he made, that if it was the will of God, he might have a speedy and prosperous

journey to, them; an expression of strong affection to them, and of his great desire to see them, (<4601 11>Romans 1:11), his end in which was partly for their sakes, to communicate spiritual things to them for their establishment, and partly for his own comfort, and the increase of the mutual faith of both, (<4601 12>Romans 1:12), also a vindication of himself, (<4601 13>Romans 1:13), showing, that it was not any fault of his, or any neglect of them by him, that he had not been with them as yet, but some things hindered him, in the execution of his purpose to come to them; to which he was moved, partly by the hope of having fruit among them, as among others, and partly through the obligation that lay upon him by virtue of his office, to preach the Gospel to all sorts of men, (<4601 14>Romans 1:14), he expresses his willingness and readiness to preach the Gospel to them at Rome, as soon as an opportunity would offer, (<4601 15>Romans 1:15), which was his work and office, what he delighted in, was closely attached to, and by no means ashamed of, (<4601 16>Romans 1:16), partly because of the nature of it, it was the Gospel, good news and true: and partly because of the author and subject of it, Christ; as also because of the efficacy of it in the salvation of Jews and Gentiles; and likewise because of a principal doctrine revealed in it, (<4601 17>Romans 1:17), the doctrine of justification by faith, in the righteousness of Christ, confirmed and illustrated by a passage out of (<3502 04>Habakkuk 2:4), and which he particularly mentions, because he intended to dwell upon it in this epistle: and in order to show that the Gentiles could not be justified in the sight of God by their obedience to the law, and the light of nature, he observes, that they were the objects of the wrath of God, (<4601 18>Romans 1:18), and that very justly, because they sinned knowingly; they had some knowledge of the truth, but they would not profess it: and that they had such knowledge of it, he proves from the author of it, God, who showed it to them, (<4601 19>Romans 1:19), and from the means of it, by which they must, and did arrive to some degree of it, namely, the works of creation, (<4601 20>Romans 1:20). The apostle goes on to expose the ingratitude of them, the vanity of their minds, the pride and folly of their hearts, (<4601 21>Romans 1:21,22), the gross idolatry they were guilty of, (<4601 23>Romans 1:23), for which idolatry they were given up to their own hearts' lusts, to commit the foulest and most scandalous iniquities, even to commit sodomitical practices, and unnatural lusts, both men and women, (<4601 24>Romans 1:24-28). And so far were they from having a righteousness to justify them before God, that they were titled with all unrighteousness; and a large list of the vilest sins, being committed by them, is given; and a catalogue of the worst of sinners, as among them, (<4601 29>Romans 1:29-32).

All which are aggravated by their knowledge of the will of God, through the light of nature, that these things were contrary to it, and were deserving of death; and yet they both did them, and were delighted with those that committed them also: the inference which he leaves to be deduced from hence, and which may easily be deduced, is, that therefore there can be no justification of such persons in the sight of God by their own works.

Ver. 1. *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ*, etc..] The name of the author of this epistle is Paul, who formerly was called Saul. Some think his name was changed upon his own conversion; others, upon the conversion of the Roman deputy Sergius Paulus, (<44137>Acts 13:7,9); others, that he was so called from the littleness of his stature; but rather it should seem that he had two names, which was usual with the Jews; one by which they went among the Gentiles, and another by they were called in their own land; (see Gill on "<44139>Acts 13:9"). "A servant of Jesus Christ"; not a servant of sin, nor of Satan, nor of man, nor of Moses and his law, nor of the traditions of the elders, but of Jesus Christ; and not by creation only, but by redemption, and by powerful efficacious grace in conversion; which is no ways contrary to true liberty; nor a disgraceful, but a most honourable character; and which chiefly regards him as a minister of the Gospel:

called to be an apostle: an apostle was one that was immediately sent by Christ, and had his authority and doctrine directly from him, and had a power of working miracles from him, in confirmation of the truth of his mission, authority, and doctrine; all which were to be found in the author of this epistle, who did not thrust himself into this office, or take this honour to himself, of which he always judged himself unworthy, but was "called" to it according to the will, and by the grace of God:

separated unto the Gospel of God. This may regard either God's eternal purpose concerning him, his preordination of him from eternity to be a preacher of the Gospel, to which he was separated from his mother's womb, (<48015>Galatians 1:15); or the separation of him to that work made by the order of the Spirit of God, (<44132>Acts 13:2). The phrase used is either in allusion to the priests and Levites, who were separated from their brethren the children of Israel, to their sacred employments; or rather to the apostle's having been çwrp, "a Pharisee", which signifies "one separated", as he was now; only with this difference, before he was separated to the law, but now "to the Gospel", to preach and defend it, which he did with all faithfulness and integrity; the excellency of which Gospel is signified by

its being called “the Gospel of God”: he is the author of it; his grace is the subject of it; and he it is who commits it to men, qualifies them for the preaching of it, and succeeds them in it.

Ver. 2. *Which he had promised afore*, etc..] The Gospel is here further commended from the antiquity it: it was no novel doctrine, an upstart notion, but what God had conceived in his own breast from eternity. This mystery was hid in him from the beginning of the world, and was ordained before the world was; in time God was pleased to make it known to the sons of men; he “promised” it, he spoke of it, and declared it

by his prophets, Isaiah and others, “afore” the Apostle Paul was called forth to be a preacher of it; which promise, or promises of it, lie

in the Holy Scriptures; the books of the Old Testament, so called from the author, matter, and usefulness of them. The apostle speaks in the language of his nation, for the Jews frequently call the Bible, writings, Holy Ones; “for”, say they, çdq µybwtk lk, “all the Scriptures are holy” [f3], and style them, çdqh ybtk, “Scriptures of holiness”, or holy Scriptures [f4].

Ver. 3. *Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord*, etc..] These words are in connection with “the Gospel of God”, (<450101>Romans 1:1), and express the subject matter of it, the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord; for Christ, as the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners, the only Mediator between God and men, who is Lord both of the dead and living, is the sum and substance of the Gospel: he is here described by his relation to God, his Son, of the same nature with him, equal to him, and distinct from him; by his usual names, “Jesus Christ”, the one signifying a “Saviour”, the other “anointed”, and both, that he was anointed of God to be the Saviour of his people; and by his dominion over the saints our Lord, not merely by creation, but by redemption and grace, and happy is the person that can claim interest in him, as is here done; and by the distinction of natures in him:

which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; this respects Christ in his human nature, who was made flesh, and of a woman; and shows his existence before his incarnation, and the immediate power and hand of God in it; and which was done, not by transmutation of him into flesh, but by an assumption of human nature into union with his divine person: he is said to be made “of the seed of David”; this points out the family from whence he sprung; designs the posterity of David, particularly Mary; has regard to the promise made to David, which God fulfilled; and

shows the royal descent of Christ: it is added, “according to the flesh”; that is, according to his human nature; which phrase does not denote the corruption, but the truth of that nature; and supposes that he had another nature, otherwise there would have been no need of this limiting and restrictive clause.

Ver. 4. *And declared to be the Son of God*, etc..] Not made as he is said to be before, when his incarnation is spoken of; nor did he begin to be the Son of God, when he was made of the seed of David, but he, the Son of God, who existed as such, from everlasting, was manifested in the flesh, or human nature: and this his divine sonship, and proper deity, are declared and made evident,

with, or “by”

[his] power; which has appeared in the creation of all things out of nothing; in upholding all things in their beings; in the government of the world, and works of Providence; in the miracles he wrought; in his performing the great work of redemption; in the success of his Gospel, to the conversion of sinners; and in the preservation of his churches and people: here it seems chiefly to regard the power of Christ in raising the dead, since it follows, and which is to be connected with this clause,

by the resurrection from the dead; and designs either the resurrection of others, as of Lazarus, and some other persons, in his lifetime, and of some at his resurrection, and of all at the last day: or the resurrection of his own body, which dying he had power to raise up again, and did; and which declared him to be, or clearly made it appear that he was the Son of God, a divine person, truly and properly God: and this was done

according to the Spirit of holiness; which may be understood of the Holy Spirit, the third person in the Trinity, who is holy in himself, and the author of holiness in the saints; and who is the declarer of Christ's sonship, partly by bearing a testimony to it in the word, and in the hearts of believers, and chiefly by being concerned in the resurrection of the body of Christ from the dead; or else by the Spirit of holiness may be meant the divine nature of Christ, which, as it is holy, so by it Christ offered himself to God, and by it was quickened, or made alive, when he had been put to death in the flesh; and which must be a clear and strong proof of his being truly the Son of God.

Ver. 5. *By whom we have received grace and apostleship*, etc..] That is, either by the Holy Spirit, from whom all grace and gifts come, qualifying for the discharge of any office; or by the Lord Jesus Christ, who is full of grace and truth, has received gifts for, and gives them to men to fit them for whatsoever service he is pleased to call them to. By "grace and apostleship" may be meant, either one and the same thing, the favour and honour of being the apostles of Christ; or different things, and the one in order to the other. Grace may design special saving grace in calling, justification, pardon, and adoption, and sanctification, which was received in common with other saints, and is absolutely necessary to an apostle, and to any ordinary minister of the word; or the doctrine of grace, which they received from Christ, and dispensed to others; or rather the gifts of grace, and the various measures thereof, which they received from their ascended Lord and King, by which they were furnished for apostleship, that is, the work and office of apostles; to which they were called by Christ, and from whom they received a commission to execute it. The apostle takes in others sides himself, and says, "we have received"; partly for the sake of modesty, and partly to keep up his equal title with others to this office; and since this is had in a way of receiving, which supposes giving, and excludes boasting, it obliges to make use of all grace and gifts to the glory of Christ, by whom they are received. The end for which they received such an office, and grace to fit them for it, was, "for obedience to the faith"; that men might be brought by the ministry of the word to obey the faith, Christ the object of faith; to submit to his righteousness, and the way of salvation by him, and to be subject to his ordinances or to obey the doctrine of faith, which is not barely to hear it, and notionally receive it, but to embrace it heartily by faith, and retain it, in opposition to a disbelief and contempt of it; and which is the end and design of the Gospel ministration to bring persons to, Moreover, by

obedience to the faith, or "obedience of faith", as it may be rendered, may be meant the grace of faith, attended with evangelical obedience; for obedience, rightly performed, is only that which is by faith, and springs from it. Now grace and apostleship were received, in order to be exercised

among all nations; not in Judea only, to which the first commission of apostleship was limited, but in all the nations of the world, as the commission renewed by Christ after his resurrection ordered; and that some among all nations of the earth might, by the power of divine grace accompanying the word, be brought to faith and obedience: and all this, the

qualifications for the office, the due exercise of it in all the world, and the success that attended it, were

for his name; for the honour and glory of Christ, in whose name they went, and which they bore and carried among the Gentiles, out of whom he was pleased “to take a people for his name”, (<44 15 14>Acts 15:14).

Ver. 6. *Among whom are ye also*, etc..] The Romans, though they were the chief, were among the nations of the world to whom the apostles were sent; and since Paul was called to be an apostle, and had, as others, grace and apostleship, and particularly the apostleship of the uncircumcision, or was ordained a teacher of the Gentiles, more especially he was an apostle to them, and as such was to be regarded by them. This seems to point out what they were originally; they were among all nations which lay in darkness; and were without Christ and hope, and God in the world; but now,

the called of Jesus Christ. The calling here spoken of is not to an office, or a mere external one by the ministry of the word, but an internal special call by the grace of God; and which is irresistible, efficacious, and unchangeable, and is an high, holy, and heavenly one; by it persons are called out of darkness into light, out of bondage into liberty, out of the world, from the company of the men of it, and the sinful pleasures thereof, to fellowship with Christ and his saints, and off a dependence on themselves, and their own righteousness, to the grace and righteousness of Christ, and to eternal glory. The persons so called are the elect of God, who are secured in Christ, and redeemed by him, and who has a concern with the Father and Spirit in the calling of them: hence they are styled, “the called of Jesus Christ”; they are called by him, and after his name; he has an interest in them; as they were before his chosen and redeemed ones, they are now his called ones; as Jacob and Israel of old were named of God, yarqm, “my called”, (<23 48 12>Isaiah 48:12); so these were named Christ's called ones; and who by calling came to be partakers of him and of his grace.

Ver. 7. *To all that be in Rome*, etc..] These words contain both the inscription of the epistle, and the apostle's usual salutation, as in all his epistles, The inscription of it is not to the Roman emperor; nor to the Roman senate, nor to all the inhabitants in Rome; but to all the saints there,

whether rich or poor, bond or free, male or female, Jew or Gentile, without any distinction, being all one in Christ Jesus: and these are described as

beloved of God; not for any loveliness there was in them, nor because of any love in them to God, nor on account of their obedience and righteousness; but through the free favour and sovereign will and pleasure of God, who loved them before he called them, even from eternity, and will love them to eternity; which love of his is the source and spring of all the blessings of grace, and, among the rest, of the effectual calling: hence this character is set before the following one,

called [to be] saints; not born so, nor become so through their own power, but were so by calling grace, as a fruit of everlasting love; men are first beloved of the Lord, and then called to be his saints. The salutation follows; the things wished for in it are,

grace to you, and peace: by "grace" is not meant ministerial gifts, which are not common to all the saints; nor the Gospel, which was at Rome already; nor the love and favour of God, which these persons were sharers in, as appears from their above characters; nor the principle of grace, which was now formed there in their effectual calling; but an increase of grace, as to its degrees, acts, and exercise; every grace is imperfect in this respect, and those who have the most stand in need of more; there is such a thing as growing in grace, which is very desirable, and may be expected from God, who is able to make all grace to abound, and has promised to give more: by "peace" is meant, peace with God through Christ; peace in their own consciences, and with one another; all manner of prosperity inward and outward here, and eternal happiness hereafter. The persons from whom these are desired are,

God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; God the Father of Christ is spoken of as our Father, which is by adoption; partly to engage fear and reverence of him at his throne; and partly to encourage freedom and boldness there, and an expectation of receiving every blessing of grace from him: "the Lord Jesus Christ" is mentioned, as being the person through whom, and for whose sake, all the blessings of grace and peace are communicated to us; and being put upon a level with the Father in these petitions, shows him to be equal with him, and so truly and properly God. "Grace" may be thought to be particularly wished for from the Father, though not exclusive of Christ, since he is the God of all grace, who has treasured up a fulness of it in his Son. And "peace" may be considered as

desired to be had from Christ, though not exclusive of the Father; since the covenant of peace was made with him, the chastisement of peace was laid on him, and he has made peace by the blood of his cross, and is the giver of it to his people.

Ver. 8. *First, I thank my God, through Jesus Christ, for you all*, etc..] After the inscription and salutation, follows a thanksgiving, which begins the epistle: it is usual with the apostle in all his epistles to make requests for the churches, with thanksgivings for mercies; his view in it was, to glorify God, to testify his affection to the saints, and to show that all they had must be referred to the grace of God. The object of thanksgiving is God not merely as a creator and preserver, but as a Father, the Father of Christ, and our Father in Christ; as the one God, and our God, Father, Son, and Spirit. The apostle styles him, my God; which distinguishes him from all others, points out his particular interest in him, expresses his knowledge of him and faith in him, and demonstrates that what he did now, he did in faith. The person through whom thanks are given is Jesus Christ. There is no coming to God but through Christ, nor is any sacrifice either of prayer or praise acceptable without him, and since all we have come through him, it is but reasonable that thanks for them should be returned by and through him; the persons for whom this thanksgiving is made were all the Romans, all the saints at Rome, the members of the church there, of whatsoever rank and degree, and in whatsoever, state and condition; the thing for which the apostle was thankful for particularly was, not that their city was mistress of the whole world, and their fame for power, wealth, and grandeur, was spread abroad far and near; but, says he,

that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world; which shows that faith is a grace of great account: God has put an honour upon it, by making it the receiver of all his gifts, and that gives glory to God, and without it nothing is acceptable to him; it answers many excellent uses and purposes in experience; it is that by which saints live upon Christ in this world, and look to the glories of another. This also shows that the saints at Rome did not hide their faith in their breasts, but declared it to others; a public profession both of the grace and doctrine of faith is to be made, and constantly held; both are to be shown forth to others, by deeds as well as words; which greatly redounds to the honour of such churches, causes joy in other churches, and in all the ministers of the Gospel, and is the occasion of many thanksgivings to God.

Ver. 9. *For God is my witness, whom I serve*, etc..] These words are an appeal to God, and carry in them the nature and form of an oath; the reason of the apostle's using it was, because he was personally unknown to the Romans, and they to him, and so might doubt of his affectionate regard unto them; and therefore for the confirmation thereof he uses it: this was a case which was only known to God and himself, and hence he appeals to him for the truth of it. The object of his oath or appeal, or by which he speaks, is not himself, or anything that belonged to him, nor any creature in heaven or on earth, but God; who in a solemn oath is only to be appealed to and sworn by: he describes him as the God “whom [he] served”, to distinguish him from all false gods, and to show that he that takes an oath, should be one that fears and serves the Lord; what he served him in was not the law, but

the Gospel of his Son; Jesus Christ, who is the author, minister, and subject matter of it: he served him in it, by preaching, spreading, and defending it. This is a service, and a very laborious one, and makes for the honour and glory of God. The manner in which he served him was, as he says,

with my Spirit; either with the Spirit of God, which was given to him; or in a spiritual manner, in opposition to the carnal worship of the Jews; internally, in opposition to bodily exercise only, and voluntarily, with his whole heart, soul, and spirit. The matter or substance of his appeal or oath was,

that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; whence may be observed, that prayer to God ought to be constant; and that we should be concerned for others as well as for ourselves; all the saints should share therein.

Ver. 10. *Making request, if by any means now at length*, etc..] A principal thing, which be incessantly and importunately requested at the throne of grace, was, that he might have an opportunity of coming to them; that God in his providence would open a way for him; and that he might have a safe and comfortable journey in a very little time; all which he submits to the will of God, as a good man ought to do; and which he thus expresses,

I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God, to come unto you; (see James 4:13,14).

Ver. 11. *For I long to see you*, etc..] Not the city of Rome, which was one of Austin's three wishes to have seen in its glory; nor the emperor of it, nor

the senate in it, nor its populous inhabitants, fine buildings, riches and grandeur; but the poor saints there, which were the excellent men of the earth, of the whole Roman empire, and in whom was his delight: his desire to see them was not to gratify his curiosity, nor to spend his time in idle chat with them, nor with a view to enrich himself by them; but, says he,

that I may impart some spiritual gift: not any extraordinary gift of the Spirit; but spiritual light, knowledge, peace, and comfort, through the exercise of his ministerial gift: whence it may be observed, that that which qualities men for the preaching of the word to the profit of others, is a gift, a gift by grace; a spiritual one, which comes from the Spirit of God, and may be, and is to be imparted to others in the free use and exercise of it; and that,

to the end that saints may be established; for such who are called by grace, need establishing. They are indeed in a safe state and condition; they are encircled in the arms of everlasting love, they are fixed in the hands of Christ, secured in an everlasting covenant, established on the rock of ages, and settled in a state from whence they can never fall: yet, notwithstanding this, they are sometimes very unstable in their hearts, in their frames, in the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty, and in professing and adhering to the doctrines of the Gospel; wherefore they need establishing, as to a more firm persuasion of interest in the love of God, and in the covenant of grace, as to a more stable exercise of grace in Christ, and as to a more constant discharge of duty, and steady profession of adherence to the truths of the Gospel; to all which the ministration of the word has a tendency, with a divine blessing.

Ver. 12. *That is, that I may be comforted together with you*, etc..] This is a further explanation of his view, in being desirous of coming to them, and preaching: the Gospel among them; for what makes for establishment, makes for comfort; and what makes for comfort, makes for establishment; and when souls are established, ministers are comforted as well as they; and whilst ministers are imparting their spiritual gifts for the use of others, they themselves are sometimes comforted of God in their work, and particularly when they find there is an agreement between their doctrine, and the experience of the saints:

by the mutual faith both of you and me. The grace of faith is the same in all the saints, and so is the doctrine of it, as dispensed by Christ's faithful ministers, and experimentally received and embraced by his people; the

consideration of which has a very great influence on the comfort and establishment of each other; nor are any so perfect, but they may receive benefit from others, even though inferior to them.

Ver. 13. *Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren*, etc..] The apostle calls them brethren, because many of them were Jews, his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh, and all of them were his brethren in a spiritual relation; and this he does to express his affection to them, and engage their attention and credit to him, and particularly to this matter which he now acquaints them with, being unwilling they should be ignorant of it;

that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you: it was not a sudden start of mind, or a desire that lately arose up in him, but a settled resolution and determination, and which he had often made:

but was let hitherto; either by God, who had work for him to do in other places; or by Satan, who sometimes by divine permission has had such power and influence; (see 1 Thessalonians 2:18), or through the urgent necessities of other churches, which required his stay with them longer than he intended: his end in taking up at several times such a resolution of coming to them was, says he,

that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles: by fruit he means, not any reward of his labour, either temporal or eternal; but the conversion of sinners, the edification of saints, and the fruitfulness of believers in grace and works. The apostle seems to allude to the casting of seed into the earth: Christ's ministers' are husbandmen, who sow the seed of the word, which lies some time under the clods; wherefore patience is necessary to wait its springing up, first in the blade, and then in the ear, then in the full corn in the ear, when it brings forth fruit; all which depend on the blessing of God: and when he adds, “as among other Gentiles”, his design is not so much to let them know that they were as other Gentiles, upon a level with them, had no pre-eminence as citizens of Rome, over other saints, being all one in Christ Jesus; as to observe to them his success in other places, where he had been preaching the Gospel of the grace of God.

Ver. 14. *I am a debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians*, etc..] The meaning is, that he was obliged by the call he had from God, the injunction that was laid upon him by him, and the gifts with which he was

qualified, to preach the Gospel to all sorts of men; who are here distinguished into Greeks and Barbarians: sometimes by Greeks are meant the Gentiles in general, in opposition to the Jews; (see <4501 16>Romans 1:16); but here they design only a part of the Gentiles, the inhabitants of Greece, in opposition to all the world besides; for the Greeks used to call all others that were not of themselves Barbarians [f5]: or else by Greeks are meant the more cultivated nations of the world, and by Barbarians the ruder and more uncivil parts of it; to which agrees the next division of mankind,

both to the wise and to the unwise. The Gospel was to be preached “to the wise”; such who thought themselves to be so, and were so with respect to human wisdom and knowledge; though it should be despised by them, as it was, and though few of them were called by it, some were, and still are, though not many; and such wisdom there is in the Gospel, as the wisest of men may learn by it, will be entertaining to them, is far beyond their contempt, and what will serve to exercise their talents and abilities, to search into the knowledge of, and rightly to understand; and it must be preached “to the unwise”; for such God has chosen to confound the wise; these he calls by his grace, and reveals his Gospel to, whilst he hides it from the wise and prudent; and there is that in the Gospel which is plain and easy to the weakest mind, enlightened by the Spirit of God.

Ver. 15. *So, as much as in me is, I am ready*, etc..] This explains what he was a debtor to one and another for, namely,

to preach the Gospel; expresses the readiness of his mind to that work, whatever difficulties lay in his way; and declares what a willing mind he had to preach it also to the Romans, as elsewhere:

to you that are at Rome also; the metropolis of the Roman empire, a very public place, the seat of Satan, and where was the heat of persecution.

Ver. 16. *For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ*, etc..] The reason why he was so ready and willing to preach it, even where he ran the greatest risk of his character and life, was, because it was “the Gospel of Christ” he preached, and he was not ashamed of it. This supposes that some were, though the apostle was not, ashamed of the Gospel; as all such are who hide and conceal it, who have abilities to preach it, and do not: or who preach, but not the Gospel; or who preach the Gospel only in part, who own that in private, they will not preach in public, and use ambiguous words, of doubtful signification, to cover themselves; who blend the

Gospel with their own inventions, seek to please men, and live upon popular applause, regard their own interest, and not Christ's, and cannot bear the reproach of his Gospel. It expresses, that the apostle was not ashamed of it; that is, to preach it, which he did fully and faithfully, plainly and consistently, openly and publicly, and boldly, in the face of all opposition: and it designs more than is expressed, as that he had the utmost value for it, and esteemed it his highest honour that he was employed in preaching it: his reasons for this were, because it was “the Gospel of Christ”; which Christ himself preached, which he had learnt by revelation from him, and of which he was the sum and substance: and because

it is the power of God; not essentially, but declaratively; as the power of God is seen in making men ministers of it, in the doctrines held forth in it, in the manner in which it was spread in the world, in the opposition it met with, in the continuance and increase of it notwithstanding the power and cunning of men, and in the shortness of time, in which so much good was done by it in the several parts of the world: it is the power of God organically or instrumentally; as it is a means made use of by God in quickening dead sinners, enlightening blind eyes, unstopping deaf ears, softening hard hearts, and making of enemies friends; to which add, the manner in which all this is done, suddenly, secretly, effectually, and by love, and not force: the extent of this power is,

unto salvation; the Gospel is a declaration and revelation of salvation by Christ, and is a means of directing and encouraging souls to lay hold upon it. The persons to whom it is so, are in general,

everyone that believeth: this does not suppose that faith gives the Gospel its virtue and efficacy; but is only descriptive of the persons to whom the Gospel, attended with the power and grace of God, is eventually efficacious: and particularly it was so,

to the Jew first; who as they had formerly the advantage of the Gentiles, much every way, through the peculiar privileges which were conferred on them; so the Gospel was first preached to them by Christ and his disciples; and even when it was ordered to be carried into the Gentile world, it was to begin with them, and became effectual for the salvation of many of them:

and also to the Greek; to the Gentile; for after the Jews had rejected it, as many being called by it as Jehovah thought fit, at that time, it was preached

to the Gentiles with great success; which was the mystery hid from ages and generations past, but now made manifest.

Ver. 17. *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed*, etc..] By “the righteousness of God”, is not meant the essential righteousness of God, the rectitude of his nature, his righteousness in fulfilling his promises, and his punitive justice, which though revealed in the Gospel, yet not peculiar to it; nor the righteousness by which Christ himself is righteous, either as God, or as Mediator; but that righteousness which he wrought out by obeying the precepts, and bearing the penalty of the law in the room of his people, and by which they are justified in the sight of God: and this is called “the righteousness of God”, in opposition to the righteousness of men: and because it justifies men in the sight of God; and because of the concern which Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, have in it. Jehovah the Father sent his Son to work it out, and being wrought out, he approves and accepts of it, and imputes it to his elect: Jehovah the Son is the author of it by his obedience and death; and Jehovah the Spirit discovers it to sinners, works faith in them to lay hold upon it, and pronounces the sentence of justification by it in their consciences. Now this is said to be “revealed” in the Gospel, that is, it is taught in the Gospel; that is the word of righteousness, the ministration of it; it is manifested in and by the Gospel. This righteousness is not known by the light of nature, nor by the law of Moses; it was hid under the shadows of the ceremonial law, and is brought to light only by the Gospel; it is hid from every natural man, even from the most wise and prudent, and from God's elect themselves before conversion, and is only made known to believers, to whom it is revealed:

from faith to faith; that is, as say some, from the faith of God to the faith of men; from the faith of preachers to the faith of hearers; from the faith of the Old to the faith of the New Testament saints; or rather from one degree of faith to another; for faith, as it grows and increases, has clearer sights of this righteousness, as held forth in the Gospel. For the proof of this, a passage of Scripture is cited,

as it is written, (Habakkuk 2:4);

the just shall live by faith: “a just”, or righteous man is, not everyone who thinks himself, or is thought by others to be so; nor are any so by their obedience to the law of works; but he is one that is made righteous by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, which is before said to be revealed in the Gospel. The life which this man lives, and “shall live”, does not

design a natural or corporeal life, and a continuance of that, for such die a natural death, as other men; nor an eternal life, for though they shall so live, yet not by faith; but a spiritual life, a life of justification on Christ, of holiness from him, of communion with him, and of peace and joy; which spiritual life shall be continued, and never be lost. The manner in which the just lives, is “by faith”. In the prophet Habakkuk, the words are, “the just shall live” wtnwmab, “by his faith” ((הבקוק Habakkuk 2:4)); which the Septuagint render, “by my faith”: and the apostle only reads, “by faith”, omitting the affix, as well known, and easy to be supplied: for faith, when given by God, and exercised by the believer, is his own, and by it he lives; not upon it, but by it upon Christ the object of it; from whom, in a way of believing, he derives his spiritual life, and all the comforts of it.

Ver. 18. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven*, etc..] The apostle having hinted at the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; and which he designed more largely to insist upon in this epistle, and to prove that there can be no justification of a sinner in the sight of God by the deeds of the law, in order to set this matter in a clear light, from hence, to the end of the chapter, and in the following ones, represents the sad estate and condition of the Gentiles with the law of nature, and of the Jews with the law of Moses; by which it most clearly appears, that neither of them could be justified by their obedience to the respective laws under which they were, but that they both stood in need of the righteousness of God. By “the wrath of God” is meant the displicency and indignation of God at sin and sinners; his punitive justice, and awful vengeance; the judgments which he executes in this world; and that everlasting displeasure of his, and wrath to come in another world, which all through sin are deserving of, some are appointed to, God's elect are delivered from, through Christ's sustaining it, in their room and stead, and which comes and abides on all impenitent and unbelieving persons. This is said to be “revealed”, where? not in the Gospel, in which the righteousness of God is revealed; unless the Gospel be taken for the books of the four Evangelists, or for the Gospel dispensation, or for that part of the ministry of a Gospel preacher, which represents the wrath of God as the desert of sin, the dreadfulness of it, and the way to escape it; for the Gospel, strictly taken, is grace, good news, glad tidings, and not wrath and damnation; though indeed in Christ's sufferings for the sins of his people, which the Gospel gives us an account of, there is a great display of the wrath of God, and of his indignation against sin: but this wrath of God is revealed in the

law, it is known by the light of nature, and to be perceived in the law of Moses, and may be observed in the Scriptures, where are many instances and examples of divine wrath and displeasure; as in the total destruction of the old world by a world wide flood, the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, turning Lot's wife into a pillar of salt, the plagues of Egypt, and the several instances mentioned in this chapter. This wrath is said to be God's wrath "from heaven", by the awful blackness which covers the heavens, the storms and tempests raised in them, and by pouring down water or fire in a surprising manner, on the inhabitants of the world; or "from heaven", that is, openly, manifestly, in the sight of all; or from God who is in heaven, and not from second causes; and more especially it will be revealed from heaven, when Christ shall descend from thence at the day of judgment: the subject matter or object of it,

against, or "upon" which it is revealed, are,

all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men; that is, all ungodly and unrighteous men; or all men who are guilty of ungodliness, the breach of the first table of the law, which respects the worship of God, and of unrighteousness, the breach of the second table of the law, which regards our neighbours' good: and these persons are further described as such,

who hold the truth in unrighteousness: meaning either such who know the Gospel, which is "the truth", and do not profess it openly, but hold and imprison it in their minds, which is a great piece of unrighteousness; or if they do profess it, do not live up to it in their lives: or rather the Gentile philosophers are designed, who are spoken of in the following verse; (see Gill on " Romans 1:22"); who had some knowledge of the truth of the divine Being, and his perfections, and of the difference between moral good and evil; but did not like to retain it themselves, nor communicate all they knew to others, nor did they live according to that knowledge which they had.

Ver. 19. *Because that which may be known of God*, etc..] There are some things which could not be known of God by the light of nature; as a trinity of persons in the Godhead; the knowledge of God in Christ as Mediator; the God-man and Mediator Jesus Christ; his incarnation, sufferings, death, and resurrection; the will of God to save sinners by a crucified Jesus; the several peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, particularly the resurrection of the dead, and the manner of worshipping of God with acceptance: but then there are some things which may be known of God, without a revelation.

Adam had a perfect knowledge of him; and his sons, though fallen, even the very Heathens have some notion of him, as that there is a God; and by the light of nature it might be known that there is but one God, who is glorious, full of majesty, and possessed of all perfections, as that he is all powerful, wise, good and righteous: and this

is manifest in them, or "to them"; by the light that is given them: it is light by which that which may be known of God is manifest; and this is the light of nature, which every man has that comes into the world; and this is internal, it is in him, in his mind and conscience, and is communicated to him by God, and that by infusion or inspiration; (see Job 32:8);

for God hath showed [it] unto them; what may be known of him by that light; and which is assisted and may be improved by a consideration of the works of creation and Providence.

Ver. 20. *For the invisible things of him*, etc..] Not the angels, the invisible inhabitants of heaven: nor the unseen glories of another world; nor the decrees of God; nor the persons in the Godhead; but the perfections of God, or his "properties", as the Arabic version reads it; and which are explained by "his eternal power and Godhead": these,

from the creation of the world are clearly seen; this is no new discovery, but what men have had, and might, by the light of nature, have enjoyed ever since the world was created; these

being understood, in an intellectual way, by the discursive faculty of the understanding,

by the things that are made; the various works of creation; all which proclaim the being, unity, and perfections of God their Creator,

so that they are without excuse; the very Heathens, who have only the light of nature, and are destitute of a revelation, have no colour or pretext for their idolatrous practices, and vicious lives; nor have they, nor will they have anything to object to God's righteous judgment against them, or why they should not be condemned.

Ver. 21. *Because that when they knew God*, etc..] Though they had such a knowledge of the being and perfections of God, yet

they glorified him not as God. They neither thought nor spoke honourably of him; nor did they ascribe those perfections to him, which belonged to

him; they did not adhere to him as the one and only God, nor honour him as the Creator of all things out of nothing, and as the sole Governor of the universe; they did not glorify him by the internal exercise of fear of him, love to him, or trust in him, nor by any external worship suitable to his nature, and their own notions of him, Seneca is an instance of this, of whom Austin [f6] says,

> "that he worshipped what he found fault with, did what he reproved, and adored that which he blamed."

Neither were thankful; neither for the knowledge of things they had, which they ascribed to themselves; nor for their mercies, which they imputed to second causes:

but became vain in their imaginations; the vanity or their minds was the spring and source of their evil conduct; which may design the wickedness of their hearts, and the imaginations thereof, which were evil, and that continually; the pride of their natures the carnality and weakness of their reasonings, and the whole system of their vain philosophy; and hence they ran into polytheism, or the worshipping of many gods:

and their foolish heart was darkened; where they thought their great wisdom lay: darkness is natural to the hearts and understandings of all men, which is increased by personal iniquity; Satan is concerned in improving it, and God sometimes gives up the hearts of persons to judicial blindness, which was the case of these men.

Ver. 22. *Professing themselves to be wise*, etc..] The learned men among the Gentiles first called themselves σοφοι, "Sophi", wise men: and afterwards, to cover their wretched pride and vanity, φιλοσοφοι, "Philosophers", lovers of wisdom; but notwithstanding all their arrogance, their large pretensions to wisdom, and boast of it

they became fools; they appeared to be so; they showed themselves to be such in those very things they prided themselves with the knowledge of: as, for instance, Socrates, after he had asserted the unity of God, and is said to die a martyr for the truth; yet one of the last actions of his life was sacrificing a cock to Aesculapius, at least he desired his friend Crito to do it.

Ver. 23. *And changed the glory of the incorruptible God*, etc..] God is incorruptible and immortal in his nature, and so is opposed to all

corruptible creatures and things: he has a glory which is essential to him, and a manifestative one in the creatures, and which is relative, and of right belongs to him: his absolute essential glory cannot be changed, cannot be taken away from him, nor given to another; but his relative glory may be said to be changed, when another is worshipped in his stead, and called by his name. So Philo the Jew [f7] speaks of

> "some, who, leaving the true God, make to themselves false ones, and impose the name of the eternal and incorruptible upon created and corruptible beings."

Into an image made like to corruptible man; which was worshipped in different forms by the several nations of the world:

and to birds; as the dove by the Samaritans, the hawk, the ibis, and others by the Egyptians:

and fourfooted beasts; as the ox, and other creatures:

and creeping things; such as beetles, serpents, and others, by the same.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness*, etc..] Not by putting any into them, but by leaving them to the pollution of their nature; by withdrawing his providential restraints from them, and by giving them up to judicial hardness:

through the lusts of their own hearts. The heart of man is the source of all wickedness; the lusts that dwell there are many, and these tend to uncleanness of one sort or another: by it here is meant particularly bodily uncleanness, since it is said they were given up

to dishonour their own bodies between themselves; either alone, or with others; so that as they changed the glory of God, and dishonoured him, he left them to dishonour themselves by doing these things which were reproachful and scandalous to human nature.

Ver. 25. *Who changed the truth of God into a lie*, etc..] Not the truth of the Gospel, which they were unacquainted with; but that which might be known of God as true, and was known of them by the light of nature; or the true God himself, whom they "changed into a lie"; by ascribing to false deities, which were lying vanities, those things which were known of God; and by worshipping them instead of him: for they

worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator; or "above him" or "against him", in opposition to him, or "besides him", others along with him; or neglecting him, and not worshipping him at all; which is aggravated in that what they worshipped was a creature, either of their own, or of God's making, and whom they neglected was the Creator of them:

who is blessed for ever, Amen; is blessed in himself, and the fountain of all blessedness to his creatures; which is so glaring a truth, that everyone ought to say and set his "Amen" to it.

Ver. 26. *For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections*, etc..] Because of their idolatrous practices, God left them to very dishonourable actions, sodomitical ones, both among the men and women:

for even the women did change the natural use into that which is against nature; either by prostituting themselves to, and complying with the "sodomitical" embraces of men, in a way that is against nature [f8]; or by making use of such ways and methods with themselves, or other women, to gratify their lusts, which were never designed by nature for such an use: of these vicious women, and their practices, Seneca [f9] speaks, when he says,

> "libidine veto nec maribus quidem cedunt, pati natae; Dii illas Deoeque, male perdant; adeo perversum commentae, genus impudicitiae, viros ineunt:"

also Clemens Alexandrinus [f10] has respect to such, saying,

> "γυναικες ανδριζονται παρα φυσιν, γαμου μεν αι τε και γαμουσαι γυναικες"

and such there were among the Jews, whom they call wzb wz twllwsmj µyçn [f11], and whom the priests were forbidden to marry.

Ver. 27. *And likewise also the men leaving the natural use of the women*, etc..] The very sin of "sodomy" is here designed, so called from Sodom, the place where we first hear of it, (<0119>Genesis 19:5), the men of which place, because they

burned in their lust one towards another, as these Gentiles are said to do, God rained upon them fire and brimstone from heaven: an exceeding great

sin this is, contrary to nature, dishonourable to human nature, and scandalous to a people and nation among whom it prevails, as it did very much in the Gentile world, and among their greatest philosophers; even those that were most noted for moral virtue are charged with it, as Socrates, Plato, Zeno, and others [f12]: it is a sin which generally prevails where idolatry and infidelity do, as among the Pagans of old, and among the Papists and Mahometans now; and never was it so rife in this nation as since the schemes of deism and infidelity have found such a reception among us. Thus God, because men dishonour him with their evil principles and practices, leaves them to reproach their own nature, and dishonour their own bodies:

men with men working that which is unseemly; and of which nothing like it is to be observed in the brutal world:

receiving in themselves the recompence of their error, which was meet: God punishes sin with sin; for as the Jews say [f13], as

> "one commandment draws on another, so one transgression draws on another; for the reward of the commandment is the commandment, hryb[hryb[rkçw and the reward of transgression is transgression."

Ver. 28. *And even as they did not like*, etc..] This accounts for the justness of the divine procedure in leaving them to commit such scandalous iniquities; that since they had some knowledge of God by the light of nature, and yet did not care

to retain God in [their] knowledge; or to own and acknowledge him as God, to worship and glorify him as such; but took every method to erase this knowledge out of their minds, and keep it from others:

God gave them over to a reprobate mind; a vain empty mind, worthless, good for nothing devoid of all true knowledge and judgment; incapable of approving what is truly good, or of disapproving that which is evil; a mind that has lost all conscience of things, and is disapproved of by God, and all good men:

to do those things which are not convenient; which are neither agreeably to the light of nature, nor convenient to, or becoming the honour of human nature; things which the brutes themselves, who are destitute of reason, do not do.

Ver. 29. *Being filled with all unrighteousness*, etc..] From hence, to the end of the chapter, follows a large and black list and catalogue of the sad characters of the Gentiles, and of the best men they had among them; for the apostle is all along speaking, not of the common people, but of their wise professors, and moral instructors; than which there never was a more wicked set of men that ever lived upon the face of the earth; who under the guise of morality were guilty of the greatest pride and covetousness, and of the most filthy debaucheries imaginable: they were “filled with all unrighteousness”. This word includes in it all manner of sin and wickedness in general; fitly expresses the condition of fallen men, destitute of a righteousness; designs every violation of the law respecting our neighbour; and is opposed to that vain conceit of righteousness which these men had: particular branches of it follow; as,

fornication; which sometimes includes adultery and an unchastity; simple fornication was not reckoned a sin among the Gentiles:

wickedness; or mischief, which intends not so much the internal wickedness of the heart, as that particular vice, by which a man is inclined and studies to do hurt, to others, as Satan does:

covetousness; this may intend every insatiable lust, and particularly the sin which goes by this name, and is the root of all evil, and was a reigning sin among the Gentiles. Seneca, the famous moralist, was notoriously guilty of this vice, being one of the greatest usurers that ever lived:

maliciousness; the word denotes either the iniquity of nature in which men are conceived and born; or that desire of revenge in men, for which some are very notorious:

envy; at the superior knowledge and learning, wealth and riches, happiness, and outward prosperity of others:

murder: which sometimes arose from envy, wherefore they are put together. There is an elegant “paranomasia” in the Greek text:

debate; strife about words more than things, and more for vain glory, and a desire of victory, than for truth:

deceit; through their empty notions of philosophy; hence “philosophy and vain deceit” go together, (Colossians 2:8); making large pretences to morality, when they were the vilest of creatures:

malignity; moroseness; having no courteousness nor affability in them, guilty of very ill manners; as particularly they were who were of the sect of the Cynics. Now they are said to be “filled with”, and “full of”, these things; not filled by God, but by Satan and themselves; and it denotes the aboundings of wickedness in them, and which was insatiable. The apostle goes on to describe them, as

whisperers; who made mischief among friends, by privately suggesting, and secretly insinuating things into the mind of one to the prejudice of another.

Ver. 30. *Backbiters*, etc..] Who more publicly defamed the characters of their neighbours, and hurt their good name, credit and reputation, though behind their backs:

haters of God; some read it, “hated of God”; as all workers of iniquity are; but rather this expresses their sin, that they were deniers of the being and providence of God, and showed themselves to be enemies to him by their evil works:

despiteful; both by opprobrious words, and injurious actions:

proud; of their natural knowledge, learning, eloquence and vain philosophy:

boasters: of their parts, abilities, wisdom and works; all which they attributed to themselves, and to the sharpness of their wit, their sagacity and industry:

inventors of evil things; of evil schemes of morality and philosophy, and of evil practices, as well as principles:

disobedient to parents; which was acting contrary to the light of nature.

Ver. 31. *Without understanding*, etc..] Of God, of his nature and worship, of things divine and even moral, being given up to a reprobate mind:

covenant breakers; had no regard to private or public contracts:

without natural affection; to their parents, children, relations and friends:

implacable; when once offended there was no reconciling of them:

unmerciful; had no pity and compassion to persons in distress.

Ver. 32. *Who knowing the judgment of God*, etc..] Either of the law of God, the law and light of nature, by which they might in some measure know the difference between good and evil, and what was right and wrong; or the judiciary sentence of God against sin:

that they which commit such things are worthy of death; at least of corporeal death:

not only do the same, but have pleasure in those that do them; all which greatly aggravated their wickedness, since they sinned against light and knowledge, with approbation and good liking of their own sins, and took pleasure in the sins of others. The Jews have a saying [f14],

> "that no man is suspected of a thing but he has done it; and if he has not done the whole of it, he has done part of it, and if he has not done part of it, he has thought in his heart to do it, and if he has not thought in his heart to do it, jmçw wç[ç µyrja har, "he has seen others do it, and has rejoiced"."

And if such a man is a wicked man, how much more wicked are such who commit sin themselves, and delight in the sins of others? now from this whole account we see the insufficiency of the light of nature to guide persons in the way of salvation; what need there was of a divine revelation; and how impossible it is that such men should ever be justified before God, by any works of seeming righteousness done by them; which the apostle had in view, in giving this account of the depraved nature and conduct of the Gentiles, and of those among them who professed to be, and were the wisest and most knowing of them.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 2

This chapter contains, in general, a vindication of the justice and equity of the divine procedure against men, such as are described in the preceding chapter; and a refutation of the several pleas that might be made by the Gentiles, who had not the law, and by the Jews who had it; and concludes with exposing the wickedness of the latter, and with showing who they are that are properly Jews, and circumcised persons, in the account of God. It begins, in (Romans 2:1), with an inference deduced from what had been said in the latter part of the foregoing chapter; concluding that such, be they who they will, Jews or Gentiles, are inexcusable, who do the things they condemn others for: but though the judgment of such persons is wrong, the apostle observes, (Romans 2:2), that the judgment of God, in the condemnation of them, is right, of which he, and others, were fully assured; and which judgment is commended, by the rule of it, being according to truth; by the objects of it, criminals, who are left without excuse, and by the inevitableness of it, (Romans 2:3), being such as cannot possibly be escaped: and though some men might hope to escape it, because not immediately punished, but loaded with the blessings of Providence, and peculiar benefits of divine goodness; yet this was to be ascribed to the forbearance of God for the present; and that if these favours were despised, and they had not a good effect upon them to bring to repentance, but instead thereof were more and more hardened under them, as their guilt would be increased, so wrath would be secretly laying up for them, which will be revealed in the day of judgment, (Romans 2:4,5), at which time justice will be done to every man as his works will be found to be, (Romans 2:6), then follows a description of the several sorts of persons that will be judged, and of the different things that will be their portion: as that eternal life will be given to good men, (Romans 2:7), and the wrath of God poured down on bad men, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, (Romans 2:8,9). The happiness of good men is repeated again, and explained, and promised to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile, (Romans 2:10), and a reason given of this just and equal distribution, taken from the nature of God, who is no respecter of persons, (Romans

2:11), an instance of which is produced in both Jews and Gentiles, that sin; the one perishing with, the other without the law, (Romans 2:12), since it is not barely having and hearing the law, but acting up to it, which only can justify before God, (Romans 2:13), upon which the apostle proceeds to refute the plea that might be made by the Gentiles, in favour of themselves, why they should not be condemned, taken from their not having the written law; for though they had not the law written on tables of stone, as the Jews had, yet they had, as he observes, the law of nature written on their hearts, against which they sinned: this he proves by the effects of it, discernible in many of them by their outward lives and conversations, in conformity to the law; and by the inward testimony of their consciences, approving of good deeds, and reproaching for bad ones, (Romans 2:14,15), which two verses being put into a parenthesis, (Romans 2:16), is connected with (Romans 2:13), and points at the time when the doers of the law shall be justified, even at the day of judgment: which judgment is described by the author of it, God; by the subject of it, the secrets of men's hearts; by the person employed in the divine procedure, Jesus Christ; and by the evidence and certainty of it, the Gospel preached by the apostle, and then follow a description of the Jews, an account of their profession of religion, and an ironical concession of the several characters they assumed to themselves: they are described by their name, a Jew; by their religion, which lay in trusting in the law of Moses, and in boasting of their interest in God, as the God of Israel, (Romans 2:17), by their knowledge of the will of God, and approbation of the excellent things of his law, (Romans 2:18), and by the characters they took to themselves, (Romans 2:19,20), from which the apostle takes an occasion to expose the wickedness of some of their principal men, even their teachers, (Romans 2:21,22), by whose wicked lives and conversations God was dishonoured, and his name blasphemed among the Gentiles, (Romans 2:23,24), hence it appears, that their name, profession, and character, would not justify them before God; wherefore the apostle goes on, to remove their plea taken from circumcision, showing that could be of no use to them, but became void through their breach of the law, (Romans 2:25), and that, on the other hand, an uncircumcised Gentile, by keeping the law from right principles, and to a right end, appeared to be the true circumcision, (Romans 2:26), wherefore the circumcised Jew that broke the law, stood condemned by the uncircumcised Gentile that fulfilled it; so far was circumcision from being any part of his justification, or a plea in favour of it, (Romans 2:27).

Then the apostle concludes the chapter, by giving a definition of a real Jew, and of true circumcision; which he does first negatively, that it is not anything external that makes him a Jew, or anything in the flesh that is right circumcision; but secondly, positively, that it is an inward work of grace that denominates a man a Jew, in a spiritual sense, or an Israelite indeed; and that it is the circumcision of the heart, which is wrought by the Spirit of God, that is true and genuine: and such a Jew, and such a circumcision, are approved of by God, and commended by him, when the other have only praise of men, (<4028>Romans 2:28,29), and therefore, however such persons may be justified before men, they cannot be justified in the sight of God; which is the drift and design of the apostle in the whole.

Ver. 1. *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man*, etc..] Some think, from the connection of these words with the preceding chapter, that the Gentiles are here meant; and particularly those among them who seemed to be virtuous, and took upon them to be the reprovers of others, and yet did the same things themselves, as Socrates, Cato, Seneca, and others; and therefore must be inexcusable, because they knew better, and would be thought to have been so; wherefore such could never be justified before God by their works, but might be justly condemned by him, nor shall they escape his righteous judgment. Others think the Jews are meant, who despised and condemned the Gentiles, and thought themselves to be righteous persons, and justified in the sight of God; and who, though they were secretly guilty of many abominable iniquities, yet were very severe upon the sins of others, and therefore inexcusable: others think that magistrates are designed, whether among Jews or Gentiles, who reprove and punish sin in others, and therefore must be supposed to know the law, and the nature of sin, and so are inexcusable and self-condemned when they do the same things; wherefore though they may pass with impunity among men, they shall not escape the judgment of God. Rather the words respect every man, of whatsoever nation, office, or place; and may be particularly applied to hypocrites, and seem designed to correct censoriousness, and hasty judging, and to throw confusion on such who value themselves on being the censurers and reprovers of others:

whosoever thou art that judgest; whether a Jew or a Gentile, a public magistrate or a private person:

for wherein thou judgest another; that is, in what case or instance; the Complutensian edition and the Arabic version read, “in” “or with what judgment thou judgest another”; (see Gill on “Matthew 7:2”);

thou condemnest thyself; by judging them:

for thou that judgest dost the same things; art guilty of the same thing condemned in others, and therefore must be self-condemned.

Ver. 2. *But we are sure that the judgment of God*, etc..] By “the judgment of God”, is not meant what is exercised on and towards men in this life, but what will follow after death; which is called judgment to come, is represented as certain, will be universal as to persons and things, and is here called “the judgment of God”, in opposition to the judgment of men; and because it will be carried on by God only, who is omniscient and omnipotent, and will be definitive: this is and will be,

according to truth, against them which commit such things; in opposition to all hypocrisy and unrighteousness: and it may design the law and light of nature by which the Gentiles, the law of Moses by which the Jews, and the Gospel of Christ by which all have enjoyed the Gospel revelation, will be judged; or the truth of their own consciences in them all: now we may be sure of this judgment; and of its being according to truth, from reason, from Scripture, and from the being and perfections of God.

Ver. 3. *And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same*, etc..] Some men may be so vain as to imagine, that though they do the same things which they condemn in others, they

shall escape the judgment of God: but such will find themselves most sadly mistaken; there is no avoiding the general judgment; all men must come to it; there will be no eluding it through craftiness and deceit, through bribery and corruption; there will be no escaping condign punishment, through might in the criminal, or through the judge's ignorance of his crimes, or want of ability and power to punish.

Ver. 4. *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness*, etc..] The apostle anticipates an objection against what he had said, taken from the prosperity of these persons; who might conclude from thence, that they were not so wicked as he had represented them; and that they should escape the judgment of God, otherwise they would have been punished by God in this life, and not have prospered as they did; which objection is removed by

observing, that it was not their innocence, but “the riches of” divine “goodness, and longsuffering and forbearance”, which were the causes of their prosperity: by “the riches of God's goodness”, are not meant the riches of his special, spiritual, and eternal goodness, which his own people are only partakers of: but the general riches of his temporal and providential goodness, which the men of the world have commonly the greatest share of; they have it in great plenty, which is signified by “riches”: and by his “longsuffering and forbearance” are designed, not his forbearance of his chosen ones and his longsuffering to them, which issue in their salvation; but his forbearance of sinners, and longsuffering towards them, in not as yet pouring down his wrath and displeasure on them; all which are “despised” by them; the riches of his goodness, when he is not glorified for his providential mercies, and in them, and when these are abused to the lusts of men. The

forbearance of God is despised, when men on account of it harden themselves in sin; and his

longsuffering, when they deny his concern in Providence, or a future judgment, and promise themselves impunity. Moreover, the apostle obviates the above objection by asserting that God's end in his goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, was not to testify to their innocence, as they imagined, but to lead them to repentance, of which they were ignorant;

not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. This is to be understood not of a spiritual and evangelical repentance, which is a free grace gift, and which none but the Spirit of God can lead, or bring persons to; but of a natural and legal repentance, which lies in an external sorrow for sin, and in an outward cessation from it, and reformation of life and manners, which the goodness of God to the Jews should have led them to; who had a large share of the good things of life, a land flowing with milk and honey, and many outward privileges which other nations had not, as the giving of the law, the covenant and promises, the word and ordinances; and repentance here chiefly designs, as it may respect the Gentiles, a change of mind and practice in them relating to idolatry and superstition Now the providential goodness of God has a tendency to lead persons to repentance on this account; but of this end of divine goodness the Gentiles were ignorant; nor was this end answered thereby; which shows the wretched depravity of human nature; (see Acts 14:15-17).

Ver. 5. *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart*, etc..] The apostle goes on to show, that such persons who promise themselves impunity on the score of prosperity, shall not always go unobserved and unpunished; for there is a day of wrath and righteous judgment hastening on, and will take place after they have filled up the measure of their iniquity. There is a natural "hardness" of the heart in every son and daughter of Adam; and there is an acquired habitual hardness, which is increased by sinning; and a judicial one, which God, for sin, sometimes gives persons up unto. An "impenitent heart" is not only an heart which does not repent, but such an one as cannot repent, being harder than the nether millstone. Now men, by such hardness and impenitence,

treasure up unto [themselves] wrath: they are the authors of their own destruction; by which is meant the wrath of God, in opposition to the riches of his goodness, despised by them; and is in reserve for wicked men: and is laid up

against, and will be brought forth in

the day of wrath; which the Scriptures call "the evil day", (Amos 6:3) (Ephesians 6:13); the day fixed by God, when he will call men to an account for their sins, and stir up all his wrath against them:

and revelation; that is, the day of revelation, when Christ shall be revealed from heaven in flames of fire, the sins of men shall be revealed, and the wrath of God against them:

of the righteous judgment of God; so some copies read; that is, the day of the righteous judgment; so the Arabic version reads, "and of the appearance of God, and of his righteous judgment"; for the judgment will be at the appearance of Christ, who is God, and at his kingdom, (2 Timothy 4:1). The Alexandrian copy reads, "and of the retribution of the righteous judgment of God"; and so the Ethiopic version seems to have read, rendering the words, "if so", or "seeing thy retribution may come upon thee", and "if the judgment of God may befall thee"; for when the judgment of God shall come, as there will be a revelation of men's sins, and of the wrath of God against them, there will be a just retribution according to their works. Or "the revelation of the righteous judgment of God"; that is, when the judgment of God, which is now hid, shall appear; and which is said to be "righteous", because it will be carried on in a righteous manner,

and proceed upon, and be executed according to the strictest rules of justice and equity.

Ver. 6. *Who will render to every man according to his deeds*.] God will be the Judge, who is righteous, holy, just, and true; every man in particular will be judged; as the judgment will be general to all, it will be special to everyone, and will proceed according to their works; for God will render to wicked men according to the demerit of their sins, the just recompense of reward, eternal damnation; and to good men eternal life, not according to the merit of their good works, which have none in them, but according to the nature of them; such who believe in Christ, and perform good works from a principle of grace, shall receive the reward of the inheritance, which is a reward of grace, and not of debt. In other words, God will render to evil men according to the true desert of their evil deeds; and of his own free grace will render to good men, whom he has made so by his grace, what is suitable and agreeable to those good works, which, by the assistance of his grace, they have been enabled to perform.

Ver. 7. *To them who by patient continuance in well doing*, etc..] These words are descriptive of one sort of persons, to whom God will render according to their works; and must be understood not of the Gentiles, the best and most moralized among them; for they sought after worldly things, after human wisdom, and popular applause, and not after God, his honour and glory, nor after immortality, which is only brought to light by the Gospel; nor of the pharisaical Jews, who sought for righteousness by the works of the law, and honour and glory from men, and not from God; nor of any unregenerate persons, but only of such who have the true principles of grace implanted in them, whether Jews or Gentiles: now the things which these men seek after are

glory; not the glory of this world, nor any from the men of it; but the glory of God and Christ; to be glorious within and without, by the grace and righteousness of Christ here, and to enjoy eternal glory with him hereafter.

Honour; not that which Adam had in innocence, and did not abide in; but that which is, and abides with Christ, and which all the saints have, and shall have.

Immortality; not the immortality of the soul, which is common to all; but the incorruption of the body, or the glorious resurrection of it to everlasting life at the great day, or the incorruptible crown, and never

fading inheritance of the saints in light. The manner in which these things are sought is, “by patient continuance in well doing”; by doing good works, and by doing these good works well, from a principle of faith and love, and with a view to the glory of God; and by patiently enduring reproaches and sufferings for well doing, and by persevering therein: not that these things are to be had, or are expected by the saints to be had for the sake of patience and well doing; yet they may be sought for, and looked unto, as an encouragement to well doing, and continuance therein; and though not “for”, yet “in” well doing there is a reward. These words do not express that for the sake of which glory is had; but only describe the persons who seek, and the manner in which they seek for it, to whom God will render

eternal life, which he of his rich grace promised them before the world was, and of his free favour has put into the hands of Christ for them, and which, as a pure gift of grace, he bestows on them through him.

Ver. 8. *But unto them that are contentious*, etc..] This is a description of the other sort of persons to whom God will render according to their deeds, “who are of the contention”; who contend for victory, and not truth; strive about words to no profit; are quarrelsome, and sow discord among men, and in churches;

and do not obey the truth; neither attend to the light of nature, and to that which may be known of God by it; nor regard and submit to the Gospel revelation and so design both the Gentiles, which knew not God, and Jews, and others, who obey not the Gospel:

but obey unrighteousness; are servants of sin: to these God renders

indignation and wrath; wrathful or fiery indignation, the hottest of his fury.

Ver. 9. *Tribulation and anguish*, etc..] These, with the foregoing words, are expressive of the second death, the torments of hell, the worm that never dies, and the fire that is not quenched: which will fall

upon every soul of man that doth evil; whose course of life and conversation is evil; for “the soul that sins shall die”, (Ezekiel 18:4,20), unless satisfaction is made for his sins by the blood of Christ:

of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; regard being had to what nation they belong.

Ver. 10. *But glory, honour, and peace*, etc..] Which are so many words for the everlasting happiness of the saints; which is a “crown of glory that fadeth not away” ((1 Peter 5:4)); an honour exceeding that of the greatest potentates upon earth, since such that enjoy it will be kings and priests, and sit with Christ on his throne to all eternity; and is a peace that passes all understanding: all which will be rendered

to every man that doth good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; which none without Christ, and his grace, and by the strength of nature, does, or can do; not that good works are causes of salvation, but are testimonies of faith, and fruits of grace, with which salvation is connected, whether they be found in Jews or Gentiles; for neither grace nor salvation are peculiar to any nation, or set of people.

Ver. 11. *For there is no respect of persons with God*.] It will not come into consideration, at the day of judgment, of what nation men are; or from what parents they are descended; nor of what age and sex persons be; nor in what state and condition they have lived in this world; nor will it be asked to what sect they have belonged, and by what denomination they have been called; or whether they have conformed to such and such externals and rituals in religion; but only whether they are righteous men or sinners; and accordingly as they appear under these characters, judgment will proceed. Some object from hence, though without any reason, to the doctrine of particular election of certain persons to everlasting salvation. This passage respects matters of strict justice, and is a forensic expression relating to courts of judicature, where persons presiding are to have no regard to the faces of men, but do that which is strictly just between man and man; and does not respect matters of grace and free favour, such as giving alms, forgiving debts, etc.. A judge, as such, is to regard no man's person, but to proceed in matters before him, according to the rules of law and justice; should he do otherwise, he would be chargeable with being a respecter of persons; but then he may bestow alms on what objects he pleases; and forgive one man who is personally indebted to him, and not another, without any such imputation. This, applied to the case in hand, abundantly clears it; for though God, as a Judge, respects no man's person; yet in matters of grace he distinguishes one person from another, as it is plain he does by the bounties of his Providence. Besides, God is not bound to any person by any laws, but acts as a Sovereign; he is not moved by anything in the creature; as his choice is not confined to persons of any particular nation, family, sex, or condition, so neither does it proceed upon

anything, or a foresight of anything in them, or done by them; and as there is no worthiness in them that are chosen, and saved above others, so no injury is done to the rest: add to all this, that those that are saved by virtue of electing grace, are saved in a way of righteousness agreeably to the holy law, and strict justice of God; so that no complaint can be made against the distinguishing methods of grace, upon the foot of strict justice.

Ver. 12. *For as many as have sinned without law*, etc..] This is an instance of the strict justice of God, and proves him to be no respecter of persons; for the Gentiles, who were “without law”, the written law of Moses, not without the law of nature in their breasts, nor without some civil laws and statutes of their own; inasmuch as they “sinned” against the God of nature, and the law and light of nature, they

shall also perish without law: not that their condemnation and perdition will be illegal, or not in due course of law; but it will not proceed upon, or according to the law of Moses, they never had; and much less for not believing in Christ, of whom they never heard; but their perdition will be for their sins committed without the law of Moses, against the law of nature: their not having the written law of Moses will be no plea in their favour, or be a reason why they should not be condemned; their persons will not be regarded as with or without the law, but their sins committed by them, to which facts their consciences will bear witness:

and, so on the other hand,

as many as have sinned in the law; who have been in and under the law of Moses, and have sinned against it, meaning the Jews:

shall be judged by the law; and condemned by it, as they were in this world, and will be hereafter: their having this law will be no bar against their condemnation, but rather an aggravation of it; their hearing of it will be no plea in their favour; nor their doing of it neither, unless they could have done it to perfection; for perfect obedience it requires, as a justifying righteousness, otherwise it curses, condemns, and adjudges to death.

Ver. 13. *For not the hearers of the law are just before God*, etc..] The apostle here shows, that the Jews were justly condemned, notwithstanding their having and hearing of the law; since hearing without doing it, will never denominate persons righteous in the sight of God, however it might recommend them in the sight of men: regard seems to be had either to the first delivery of the law by Moses to the people of Israel, when he read it to

them, and they hearkened to it, and promised obedience; or rather to the reading and hearing it every sabbath day; and may include a speculative knowledge of it, without a practical obedience to it; and which therefore must fall greatly short of entitling them to a justifying righteousness; since not these,

but the doers of the law, shall be justified; by whom are meant, not such who merely literally and externally fulfil the law, as they imagine; for the law is spiritual, and regards the inward as well as the outward man, and requires internal holiness, as well as external obedience; and the apostle is speaking of justification before God, who sees the heart, and not before men, who judge according to outward appearance: nor are such designed who are imperfect doers of the law; for the law requires a perfect obedience, and what is not perfect is not properly righteousness; nor does it, nor can it consider an imperfect righteousness as a perfect one; for it accuses of, pronounces guilty, curses, and condemns for every transgression of it. But such only can be intended, who are doers of it spiritually, internally, as well as externally, and that perfectly. Adam, in his state of innocence, was a perfect doer of the law; he sinning, and all his posterity in him, none of them are righteous, but all pass under a sentence of condemnation. The best of men, even believers in Christ, are not without sin in themselves; and when any of the saints are said to be perfect, it must be understood in a comparative sense, or as they are considered in Christ. There never was but one since Adam, and that is Christ, who has fulfilled, or could perfectly fulfil the law; the thing is impossible and impracticable for fallen man: hence these words must be understood either hypothetically, thus, not the hearers of the law, but if there were any perfect doers of it, they would be justified before God; or else of such persons who are considered in Christ, by whom the whole perfect righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them, and who may be reckoned as perfect doers of it in him, their substitute, surety, and representative.

Ver. 14. *For when the Gentiles which have not the law*, etc..] The objection of the Gentiles against their condemnation, taken from their being without the law, is here obviated. The apostle owns that they had not the law, that is, the written law of Moses, and yet intimates that they had, and must have a law, against which they sinned, and so deserved punishment, and which they in part obeyed; for these men

do by nature the things contained in the law. The matter and substance of the moral law of Moses agrees with the law and light of nature; and the Gentiles in some measure, and in some sort, did these things by nature; not that men by the mere strength of nature without the grace of God, can fulfil the law, or do anything that is acceptable to God; and indeed, what these men did was merely natural and carnal, and so unacceptable to God. Some understand this of nature assisted by grace, in converted Gentiles, whether before or after the coming of Christ; others expound the phrase, by nature, freely, willingly, in opposition to the servile spirit of the Jews, in their obedience to the law; though it rather seems to design the dictates of natural reason, by which they acted: and so

these having not the law, the written law,

are a law to themselves; which they have by nature and use, and which natural reason dictates to them. So Plato distinguishes the law

> "into written and un written [f15]: the written law is that which was used in commonwealths; and that κατα εψη γινομενος, "which was according to custom or nature", was called unwritten, such as not to go to market naked, nor to be clothed with women's clothes; which things were not forbidden by any law, but these were not done because forbidden by the unwritten law;"

which he calls "unwritten", because not written on tables, or with ink; otherwise it was written in their minds, and which by nature and use they were accustomed to.

Ver. 15. *Which show the work of the law written in their hearts*, etc..] Though the Gentiles had not the law in form, written on tables, or in a book, yet they had "the work", the matter, the sum and substance of it in their minds; as appears by the practices of many of them, in their external conversation. The moral law, in its purity and perfection, was written on the heart of Adam in his first creation; was sadly obliterated by his sin and fall; upon several accounts, and to answer various purposes, a system of laws was written on tables of stone for the use of the Israelites; and in regeneration the law is reinscribed on the hearts of God's people; and even among the Gentiles, and in their hearts, there are some remains of the old law and light of nature, which as by their outward conduct appears, so by the inward motions of their minds,

their conscience also bearing witness; for, as the Jews say [f16] wb hdy[m µda lç wtmçn, “the soul of a man witnesses in him”; for, or against him:

and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another; and this the Heathens themselves acknowledge, when they [f17] speak of

> “ταμειον δικαστηριον και κριτηριον της συνειδησεως, “the conclave, tribunal and judgment of conscience”; and which they call δικαστην δικαιοτατον, “the most righteous judge”: whose judgment reason receives, and gives its suffrage to, whether worthy of approbation or reproof; when it reads in the memory as if written on a table the things that are done, and then beholding the law as an exemplar, pronounces itself either worthy of honour or dishonour.”

Ver. 16. *In the day when God shall judge*, etc..] These words are to be read in connection with (<45213>Romans 2:13), and express the time when both Jews and Gentiles will be judged, called a “day”, both because of the clearness and evidence of the judgment that will be made, and because a certain time is fixed, though not known, which will surely come; also the matter of the judgment, which will be,

the secrets of men: whether good or bad, which are only known to God and themselves, and which may have been done ignorantly by them; “for God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”, (<21214>Ecclesiastes 12:14), which is so interpreted by the Jews [f18],

> “when R. Jochanan came to that Scripture, he wept; “for God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing”;”

upon which the gloss says, yea, for those things which are hidden from him, which he has committed through ignorance, will he bring him into judgment; everything, even the least thing in a literal sense, but not for such silly trifling things they mention in the same place; doubtless the Holy Ghost means the secrets of men's hearts and actions, and the hidden things of darkness which are contrary to the holy law of God. The person by whom this awful judgment will be carried on is,

Jesus Christ; to whom all judgment is committed, who is ordained Judge of quick and dead, and is every way fit for that office, being God as well as man, and so both omniscient and omnipotent: and this the apostle says will be,

according to my Gospel; his meaning is not that the Gospel will be the, rule of judgment, because he speaking of the judgment of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews, who never heard of the Gospel; but that what he had said concerning a day of judgment, of Christ's being the Judge, and of God's judging by him the secrets of men, were as true and as certain as the Gospel which he preached was; and was “conformable”, or agreeable to it, as the Arabic version reads it, and might be learned and proved from it. This he calls, “my Gospel”; not because the author or subject of it; but because it was committed to his trust and was preached by him; and in opposition to, and to distinguish it from the Gospel of the false apostles. Eusebius says [f19], that the Apostle Paul had used to call the Gospel according to Luke his Gospel, and that it is said, that whenever he makes mention of his Gospel, he designs that.

Ver. 17. *Behold, thou art called a Jew*, etc..] From hence to the end of the chapter the Jews are particularly addressed; their several privileges and characters are commemorated, which by an ironical concession are allowed them; several charges are brought against them, even against their principal men; and the plea in favour of them, from their circumcision, is considered; and the apostle's view in the whole, is to show that they could not be justified before God by their obedience to the law of Moses: “behold”; take notice, observe it, this will be granted: “thou art called a Jew”; thou art one by name, by nation, and by religion; but no name, nor outward religion, nor a mere profession, will justify before God:

and restest in the law; which may be understood of their having the law and the knowledge of it, what is to be done and avoided easily, without any fatigue and labour; of their pleasing and applauding themselves with the bare having and hearing of it; of their trust and confidence in it; and of their inactivity and security in it, as persons asleep; and so of their coming short of the knowledge of the Gospel, and of Christ the end of the law for righteousness, their whole confidence being placed in that: so the Targumist in (Jeremiah 8:8) paraphrases the words,

> “we are wise, “and in the law of the Lord”, ˆwxyjr agjna, do we trust;”

and makest thy boast of God. There is a right boasting of God in opposition to boasting in the creature, when men ascribe all the blessings of nature and grace to the Lord alone, and praise him for all their enjoyments,

temporal and spiritual; and when they trust in, and glory, and make their boast of Christ as the Lord their righteousness, in whom alone they are, and can be justified. But the boasting here spoken of, was such that was not right; these men boasted of their bare external knowledge of the one God, when the Gentiles around them were ignorant of him; of their being the covenant people of God, when others were aliens and strangers; and of their having the word and worship of the true God, which other nations were unacquainted with; and, on these external things they depended, which was their fault.

Ver. 18. *And knowest his will*, etc..] Not the secret will or purpose of God; nor his revealed will in the Gospel, for of this they were ignorant; but his declared will in the law, showing what is to be done, and what is not to be done: to know which in express terms was a privilege, that other people had not; but then the bare knowledge of this will be of no avail: for persons may know their Lord's will, as the Jews did, and not do it, and so be worthy to be beaten with many stripes:

and approvest the things that are more excellent: or "triest the things that differ"; from one another, and from the will and law of God; or as the Syriac, "discernest" atylw, "things that are convenient"; agreeable, which are fit and ought to be done: and having tried and discerned them, they approved of them in their judgment as the things more excellent; but then they did not put these excellent things in practice which they approved of; and the knowledge and approbation they had of these things, arose from their

being instructed out of the law, and not the Gospel; for the excellent things of the Gospel, they had no discerning, knowledge and approbation of; (see <50110>Philippians 1:10).

Ver. 19. *And art confident that thou thyself*, etc..] Being vainly puffed up in, their fleshly minds, they were strongly persuaded that they were very fit persons to be

a guide to the blind: all men are by nature blind, as to the knowledge of divine and spiritual things; the meaner sort of the people among the Jews seem to be intended here; or else the ignorant Gentiles, whom the Jews were very fond of making proselytes to their religion and laws; but miserable guides were they, whether to their own people, or others; blind guides of the blind. Gospel ministers best deserve this title:

a light of them that are in darkness; so Christ, John the Baptist, the disciples of Christ, and all Gospel ministers are; but these men, who arrogated such characters to themselves, were dim lights, and dark lanterns. The apostle seems to have respect to those very high and exalted characters the Jews give of their doctors, as when they call one, arwhnd anyxwb, "the lamp of light" [f20]; another, açydq anyxwb, "the holy lamps" [f21]; and a third, larçy rn, "the lamp of Israel" [f22]; with many others of the same kind; (see Gill on "Matthew 5:14") and (see Gill on "John 5:35").

Ver. 20. *An instructor of the foolish*, etc..] All men in a state of unregeneracy are foolish, and need instruction; here the common people among the Jews, who knew not the law, are meant; it was very usual to call anyone of their doctors and masters hrwm, "an instructor": it follows,

a teacher of babes; either in age or in understanding; such who taught either of them were called by the Jews twqwnyt ydmlm, "teachers of babes". Thus they paraphrase the text in (Daniel 12:3):

> "they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament. This is the Judge who judges, the judgment of truth truly, and the collectors of alms: and they that turn, many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever; these are, twqwnt ydmlm, "the teachers of babes" [f23]."

Though these are said [f24] to be inferior to the wise men, or doctors:

which hast the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law: they had not a true knowledge of the law; only a draught and scheme, the outward form of the law, and a mere shadow and appearance of the knowledge of the truth of it. From hence the apostle would have it concluded, that though the Jews had the law, and in some sense knew it, yet inasmuch as they did not perform it, they could not be justified by it; and that even their teachers, their greatest masters and doctors, were very deficient, as appears from what follows; and since they could not be instilled by it, who taught others the knowledge of it, the hearers of it could not expect justification from it.

Ver. 21. *Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself*? etc..] Several charges are here brought against the Jews, even against their

teachers; for though they are put by way of question, they are to be considered as so many assertions and matters of fact; thus, though they taught others, they did not teach themselves; they were blind leaders of the blind; they were ignorant of the law, of the spirituality of it; they were desirous to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they said, nor whereof they affirmed: they were ignorant of the righteousness of God, of whom they boasted; and of the more excellent things of Moses, and the prophets, they pretended to explain; and of the Messiah, of whom their prophecies so much spoke: and besides, what they did understand and teach, they did not practise themselves; than which nothing is more shameful, or more betrays stupidity and ignorance; for as they themselves [f25] say,

> “he that teaches men, hç[y al awhç rbdb, “that which he himself does not do”, is like a blind man who has a lamp in his hand, and enlightens others, but he, himself walks in darkness.”

And such teachers they own were among them.

> “Beautiful (say they [f26]) are the words which come out of the mouths of them that do, them: Ben Assai was a beautiful preacher, but did not well observe;”

i.e., to do what he said.

Thou that preach at a man should not steal, dost thou steal? some understand this figuratively, of stealing, or taking away the true sense of the law, and putting a false one upon it; of which these men were notoriously guilty: but rather, it is to be understood literally, not only of the inward desires and motions of their minds after this sin, and of their consenting to, and conniving at theft and robbery, but of their doing it themselves; who, under pretence of long prayers, “devoured widows' houses”, (<40234>Matthew 23:14 <41240>Mark 12:40 <42047>Luke 20:47), plundered and robbed them of their substance: no wonder that these men preferred Barabbas, a thief and a robber, to Jesus Christ.

Ver. 22. *Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery*, etc..] Adultery here is to be taken not figuratively for adulterating the word of God, and mixing it with their own inventions; but literally for the sin of adultery, and that not in heart only, but in act:

dost thou commit adultery? an iniquity which greatly prevailed among the Jews at this time of day; hence Christ calls them “an adulterous generation”, (<4012>Matthew 12:39 16:4 <4108>Mark 8:38); and that to such a degree, that by the advice of their great Rabbi, R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, they left off the trial of the suspected woman, cases of this nature being so very numerous: and this sin prevailed not only among the common people, but among their principal doctors; as may be learnt from their own writings, and from that conviction of this iniquity which the Scribes and Pharisees were brought under by Christ, when the woman, taken in adultery, was had before him by them, (<4008>John 8:9).

Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? for though at this time they abhorred idolatry, to which their forefathers were so much inclined, and so often fell into, yet they were guilty of sacrilege; by violating the worship of God, and polluting it with their own inventions; by pillaging or withholding, or not offering the sacrifices they ought; and by plundering the temple, and converting the sacred things of it to their own use.

Ver. 23. *Thou that makest thy boast of the law*, etc..] Of their having it, which other nations had not; of their knowledge of it, which many of their own people were without, or had but a small share of; and of their keeping of it even to perfection:

through breaking of the law dishonourest thou God? sin sometimes is expressed by a word which signifies a “fall”; sometimes by another, which signifies missing of the mark, or straying from it; sometimes by another, which signifies a “contrariety to the law” of God; and here, by one which signifies a “passing over it”, and the bounds which it has set, as the rule of man's obedience; and hereby God, the lawgiver, is dishonoured: for as God is glorified by good works, when rightly performed, he is dishonoured by evil ones; for his authority, as a lawgiver, is trampled upon and despised. Now persons guilty of such iniquities as here mentioned, could not be justified before God, or accepted by him on account of any works of righteousness done by them.

Ver. 24. *For the name of God is blasphemed*, etc..] The being and perfections of God, such as his holiness, omniscience, and omnipotence, are denied, or evil spoken of; and also the law of God, and the forms of worship instituted by him:

among the Gentiles through you: through their iniquities, who when they observe them, conclude that the God of Israel is not omniscient, or he would know, and take notice of these things; and that he is not holy, or he could not bear them; nor omnipotent, or he would revenge them:

as it is written; the passage or passages referred to are not mentioned, but are perhaps (<2515>Isaiah 52:5 <3660>Ezekiel 36:20,23). In the former of these texts the words are, “they that rule over them make them to howl; saith the Lord, and my name continually every day is blasphemed”; which are spoken of the rulers of the people, either of their ecclesiastical or political rulers, or both; and so Aben Ezra interprets them of larçy ylwdg, “the great men of Israel”; and here by the apostle are applied to their doctors and wise men: and in the latter are these words, “thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for my holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the Heathen”; that is, by their unbecoming walk and conversation, and especially by the disagreeable conduct of their principal men: and the Jews own the same things, and complain of them in much the “same language the apostle here does, saying, “they disgrace the law before the people of the earth, (the common people, or else the Gentiles,) how? a wise man sits and expounds in the congregation, saying, thou shalt not lend upon usury, and he lends upon usury; he says, thou shalt not commit a robbery, and he commits a robbery; he says, bwngt al, “thou shalt not steal, and he steals”: says R. Berechiah, it happened to one man that his cloak was stolen from him, and he went before the judge about it, and he found it spread upon his bed or couch: and, says the same Rabbi, it happened to a certain man that his pot was stolen from him, and he went before the judge about it, and he found it upon his hearth: hence it is said, “as they were increased they sinned against me, therefore will I change their glory into shame”, (<2807>Hosea 4:7) [f27].

Ver. 25. *For circumcision verily profiteth*, etc..] The plea from circumcision in favour of the Jews, and their acceptance with God, and justification before him, is here, and in the following verses, considered. The apostle allows that circumcision was profitable; which must be understood whilst it was in force, before the abrogation of it, for since, it is not profitable but pernicious; and then it was only profitable, in case the law was kept:

if thou keepest the law; that is, perfectly; for circumcision obliged persons to keep the whole law. Now the circumcised Jews did not keep it in such

sense; wherefore circumcision was of no use to them, but, on the contrary, was an handwriting against them.

But if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision; that is, it is not accounted circumcision; it is of no avail; such a man was all one as an uncircumcised Gentile, and appeared to be uncircumcised in a spiritual sense: the apostle perhaps alludes to a practice among some of the Jews, to bring on and draw over the foreskin, after they had been circumcised; (see Gill on "1 Corinthians 7:18").

Ver. 26. *Therefore if the uncircumcision keep*, etc..] These words are spoken hypothetically; if any such persons could be found among the Gentiles who keep the whole law of God; and can only be absolutely understood of such, who from a principle of grace act in obedience to the law; as in the hands of Christ, and who look to Christ as the fulfilling end of it, for righteousness; in whom they keep

the righteousness of the law perfectly:

shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? by this question it is suggested, that an uncircumcised Gentile, who keeps the law as in the hands of Christ, and under the influences of his Spirit and grace, and keeps it in Christ, is reckoned a circumcised person in a spiritual sense, and must be preferable to a circumcised Jew that breaks it.

Ver. 27. *And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature*, etc..] That is, the Gentiles, who are by nature uncircumcised; for as circumcision was by the command of God, and performed by the art of men, uncircumcision is by nature, and what men naturally have. Now

if it, such persons,

fulfil the law in Christ, they will

judge thee, the circumcision: and condemn, as Noah condemned the old world, (Hebrews 11:7), and the men of Nineveh and the queen of the south will condemn the men of that generation, in which Christ lived, (Matthew 12:41,42 Luke 11:31,32).

Who by the letter and circumcision transgress the law; that is, either by the law, which is "the letter", and "by circumcision", or "by circumcision which is in the letter", (Romans 2:29), sin being increased by the prohibitions of the moral law, and the rituals of the ceremonial law, and the

more so by a dependence upon an obedience to either of them, or both, for justification.

Ver. 28. *For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly*, etc..] The apostle removes the plea in favour of the Jews, taken from their name and privilege, by distinguishing between a Jew and a Jew, and between circumcision and circumcision: “he is not a Jew which is one outwardly”; by mere name, nature, nation, religion, and profession:

neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; which takes away the flesh of the foreskin, but not the carnality of the heart; leaves a mark upon the flesh, but no impression on the mind. This is nothing, is not the true, solid, substantial, spiritual circumcision, which only avails in the sight of God.

Ver. 29. *But he is a Jew which is one inwardly*, etc..] Who has an internal work of grace upon his soul: who has not only an outward name, but an inward nature; not the law of God in the hand, but in the heart; not an external righteousness only, but internal holiness; and who is not a mere outward court worshipper, but a worshipper of God in Spirit and in truth. The Jews have a [f28] saying themselves,

> “that whosoever denies idolatry, ydwhy arqn, “is called a Jew”:”

so that, according to them, this is a name that is not confined to themselves, but belongs to all such who truly fear and worship God; and they say, in the same place, that Pharaoh's daughter was called tydwhy, “a Jewess”, because she denied idolatry, and went down to wash herself from the idols of her father's house. And elsewhere [f29],

> “that faith does not depend upon circumcision, but upon the heart: he that believes not as he should, circumcision does not make him a Jew; and he that believes as he ought, he indeed is a Jew, though he is not circumcised.”

And circumcision is that of the heart; which God requires, and he himself promises to give, (<05D06>Deuteronomy 10:16 30:6 <24004>Jeremiah 4:4), upon which last passage, a very noted Jew [f30] has this observation, blh tlm ayh taz, “this is the circumcision of the heart”; the very phrase the apostle here uses: circumcision of the flesh was typical of this, which lies in a godly sorrow for sin, in a putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, and

in renouncing a man's own righteousness in the business of justification. The ancient Jews had some notion of this typical use of circumcision. So Philo the Jew says [f31], that circumcision taught ηδονων και παψων παντων εκτομην, “the cutting off of all pleasures and affections”: and elsewhere he says [f32]: it is a symbol of two things particularly; the one is the cutting off of pleasures, as before; and the other is the removal of arrogancy, that grievous disease of the soul: and in another place [f33] he calls purity, or chastity, περιτομης περιτομην, “the circumcision of circumcision”. Now this our apostle says is

in the spirit; meaning either the spirit or soul of man, which is the seat and subject of it; or the Spirit of God, who is the author of it: the Ethiopic version reads it, “by the Holy Ghost”:

and not in the letter; or “by the letter” of the law; but the Holy Ghost produces this spiritual work instrumentally, by the preaching of the Gospel. To which the apostle adds,

whose praise is not of men, but of God; referring not to circumcision immediately spoken of before, but to the Jew who is one inwardly: and alludes to the name Judah, from whence the Jews are called, which comes from the word hdy, which signifies to “praise”; and intimates here, that such persons must not expect praise from men, who are only taken, with outward things, but from God, who searches and knows the heart.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 3

In this chapter are an answer to several objections which follow one upon another, relating to what the apostle had said concerning the equality of the Gentiles with the Jews; and various proofs out of the Psalms and Prophets, showing the general depravity and corruption of mankind, of the Jews as well as of the Gentiles; and the conclusion from all this, that there is no justification by the works of the law, but by the righteousness of God received by faith, of which a large and clear account is given. The first objection is in (Romans 3:1), and is taken from the unprofitableness of being a Jew and a circumcised person, if that is true which is asserted in the preceding chapter; to which an answer is given, (Romans 3:2), showing that though many things might be instanced in, in which the Jew had the advantage of the Gentile in external things; this might be mentioned as one for all, and taken sufficient answer, that the Jews had the oracles or word of God committed to their trust, by which they became acquainted with the will of God. The apostle foreseeing that another objection would arise upon this; what signifies their having the oracles of God, when these are not believed by them? prevents it by observing, (Romans 3:3), that though some did not believe, some did, and as for the unbelief of others, the truth and faithfulness of God in his word were not made void by it; however false and deceitful men are, God is always true to his word, (Romans 3:4), and which is confirmed by a passage of Scripture, cited out of (Psalm 51:4), hence arises another objection, that if the righteousness of God is commended and illustrated by the unrighteousness of man, then it would be unjust in God to take vengeance on men for their sins, (Romans 3:5), which is removed with abhorrence, and answered by observing, that if there was any truth in it, the world could not be judged by God, as it certainly will, (Romans 3:6), but still the objection is continued and strengthened, (Romans 3:7), that if God is glorified through the sins of men, not only men ought not to be punished for them, but they should not be reckoned sinners, or as doers of evil things, but of good things, and be indulged in them; to which is replied, that this was the common calumny cast upon the doctrine of the apostle, and persons of

such principles and practices are deserving of damnation, (Romans 3:8). Having removed these objections, the apostle reassumes his former assertion, and supports it, that a carnal circumcised Jew is no better than a carnal uncircumcised Gentile; it being already sufficiently made to appear, that they are both under the power and guilt of sin; and as a further evidence of it, he produces several passages out of the book of Psalms, and out of the prophecies of Isaiah, which fully express the sad corruption of human nature, and especially of the Jews; and this account begins in (Romans 3:10), and ends in (Romans 3:18), and which account he suggests, (Romans 3:19), carries in it such a full conviction of the truth of what he had said, that all men are under sin, that no one would be able to open his mouth in his own defence, but all must acknowledge themselves guilty before God: and then he proceeds to the conclusion he meant to draw from all this, that there is no justification of any before God by the deeds of the law; giving this as a reason for it, because the law discovered sin, but not a justifying righteousness, (Romans 3:20), that is revealed in another way, by the Gospel, and not the law, though both law and prophets bear a testimony to it, (Romans 3:21), which righteousness is described by the author of it, God; by the means through which it comes to the use and comfort of men, the faith of Christ; and by the subjects of it, them that believe; in the justification of which there is no difference, (Romans 3:22), of which a reason is given, (Romans 3:23), taken from the general state of men, as sinners, and bereaved of the image of God: the several causes, ways, means, and end of the justification of such persons are suggested; the moving cause is the free grace of God, the meritorious or procuring cause the redemption that is in Christ, (Romans 3:24), and his propitiatory sacrifice, (Romans 3:25), which is owing to the eternal purpose of God, whose end in it was to declare his purity, holiness, and justice; which end is repeated and enlarged on, in (Romans 3:26), upon which the apostle asks, (Romans 3:27), what is become of boasting in the creature? and answers himself by saying, it was excluded, not by the doctrine of works, but by the doctrine of faith, and particularly the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; wherefore the conclusion stands firm and just, from the premises, that justification is by faith without the works of the law, (Romans 3:28), and it is further confirmed, that Jews and Gentiles, with respect to their state and condition God-ward, are on a level; he is the God of the one, as well as of the other, (Romans 3:29), and this appears by his justifying both in one and the same way, through faith in the righteousness

of this Son, (Romans 3:30), and the chapter is concluded by obviating an objection that might be made, that through this doctrine of justification by faith the law is made void, and is of no use, (Romans 3:31), to which the apostle answers, that this is so far from being fact, that the law is established by it.

Ver 1. *What advantage then hath the Jew*? etc..] If he is not properly a Jew, who is born of Jewish parents, and brought up in the customs, rites, and religion of the Jewish nation, but anyone of whatsoever nation, that is born again of water, and of the Spirit; where is the superior excellency of the Jew to the Gentile? A man may as well be born and brought up a Heathen as a Jew; the one has no more advantages than the other by his birth and education: it may be rendered, "what hath the Jew more?" or "what has he superfluous" or "abundant?" the phrase answers to the Hebrew µdal ˆwrty hm in (Ecclesiastes 1:3), which is rendered, "what profit hath a man?" and in (Ecclesiastes 6:8), µkjl rtwy hm, "what hath a wise man more", etc.. and in (Romans 3:11), µdal rty hm, "what is a man better?" the first of these passages the Septuagint render by τις περισσεια, "what abundance?" and the last by τι περισσον, "what more", or "superfluous", or "abundant?" the phrase used by the apostle here:

or what profit is there of circumcision? since that which is outward in the flesh profits not unless the law is kept, otherwise circumcision is no circumcision; and if an uncircumcised Gentile keeps the law, he is a better man than a circumcised Jew; yea, he judges and condemns him; for the only true circumcision is internal, spiritual, and in the heart. To this the apostle answers in the (Romans 3:2).

Ver. 2. *Much every way*, etc..] The circumcised Jew has greatly the advantage of the uncircumcised Gentile, µynp lkm, "in all respects", dx lk l[, "on every side", as the Rabbins speak; phrases to which this in the text answers:

chiefly; more especially, particularly, and in the first place;

because that unto them were committed the oracles of God; by which are meant the law of Moses, and the writings of the prophets, the institutions of the ceremonial law, and the prophecies of the Messiah and the Gospel church state; and in a word, all the books of the Old Testament, and

whatsoever is contained in them; which are called so, because they are of divine inspiration, contain the mind and will of God, and are infallible and authoritative: and it was the privilege and profit of the Jews that they were intrusted with them, when other nations were not, and so had the advantage of them; they had them for their own use; for hereby they had a more clear and distinct knowledge of God than the Gentiles could have by the light of nature; and besides, became acquainted with the doctrines of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, of the sonship and deity of the Messiah, of the sacrifice, satisfaction, and righteousness of the Redeemer, and of salvation by him; and also with the manner of worshipping of God according to his will; all which the Gentiles were ignorant of. Moreover, they had the honour of being the keepers of these sacred books, these divine oracles, and of transmitting them to posterity, for the use of others.

Ver. 3. *For what if some did not believe*? etc..] It is suggested, that though the Jews enjoyed such a privilege, some of them did not believe; which is an aggravation of their sin, that they should have such means of light, knowledge, and faith, such clear and full evidences of things, and yet be incredulous: though it should be observed that this was the case only of some, not of all; and must be understood, not of their disbelief of the Scriptures being the word of God, for these were always received as such by them all, and were constantly read, heard, and attended to; but either of their disobedience to the commands of God required in the law, or of their disregard to the promises of God, and prophecies of the Messiah, and of their disbelief in the Messiah himself when he came; but now this was no objection to the advantage they had of the Gentiles, since this was not owing to want of evidence in the word of God, but to the darkness and unbelief of their minds: and,

shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? no, their unbelief could not, and did not make void the veracity and faithfulness of God in his promises concerning the Messiah, recorded in the oracles of God, which they had committed to them; for notwithstanding this, God raised up the Messiah from among them, which is another advantage the Jews had of, the Gentiles; inasmuch as “of” them, “as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is God over all, blessed for evermore”, (Romans 9:5), and he sent him to them, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, as a prophet and minister; he sent his Gospel to them first, and called out by it from among them his elect, nor did he take it from them until he had done this: and he took it away only; until “the fulness of the Gentiles”, (Romans 11:25),

is brought in; and then the Gospel shall come to them again with power, and "all Israel shall be saved" ((Romans 11:26)).

Ver. 4. *God forbid, yea, let God be true, but every man a liar*, etc..] Let no such thing ever enter into the minds of any, that the truth of God can be, or will be made of none effect by the want of faith in man; let it be always asserted and abode by; that God is true, faithful to his word, constant in his promises, and will always fulfil his purposes; though "every man is a liar", vain, fallacious, and inconstant: referring to (Psalm 116:11);

as it is written, (Psalm 51:4);

that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. This is a proof that God is true, and stands to his word, though men are fallacious, inconstant, and wicked. God made a promise to David, that of the fruit of his body he would set upon his throne; that the Messiah should spring from him; that he would of his seed raise up unto Israel a Saviour. Now David sinned greatly in the case of Bathsheba, (2 Samuel 11:3,4 Psalm 51:1) (title), but his sin did not make of no effect the truth and faithfulness of God: though David showed himself to be a weak sinful man, yet God appeared true and faithful to every word of promise which he had sworn in truth to him; and therefore when he was brought to a sense of his evil, and at the same time to observe the invariable truth and faithfulness of God, said, "I acknowledge my transgression, etc.. against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight", (Psalm 51:3,4), which confession of sin I make, "that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings"; or "when thou speakest", (Psalm 51:4), which is all one; that is, that thou mightest appear to be just, and faithful, and true in all thy promises, in every word that is gone out of thy mouth, which shall not be recalled and made void, on account of my sins; for though I have sinned, thou abidest faithful; and this also I declare with shame to myself, and with adoring views of thine unchangeable truth and goodness: "that thou mightest overcome"; that is, put to silence all such cavils and charges, as if the faith of God could be made void by the unfaithfulness of men: "when thou art judged"; when men will be so bold and daring to arraign thy truth and faithfulness, and contend with thee about them. This now is brought as a full proof, and is a full proof of this truth, that God is always true to his word, though men fail in theirs, and fall into sin. God kept his word with David concerning the stability of his

kingdom, his successor, and the Messiah that should spring from him, though he acted a bad part against God. There is some little difference between these words as they stand in the Hebrew text of (<19504>Psalm 51:4); and as they are cited and rendered by the apostle, in the last clause of them; in the former it is, “that thou mightest be clear”; in the latter, “that thou mightest overcome”. Now to vindicate the apostle's version, let it be observed, that the Hebrew word hkz signifies to “overcome”, as well as to “be clear”; of which instances may be given out of the Jewish writings. Says [f34] Rabba; concerning an argument used by R. Chanina, in a controversy with other Rabbins, by this R. Chanina ben Antigonus, whnkz, “hath overcome” them: and in another place [f35], whosoever ykzd, “overcomes” a king, they cast him into an empty ditch; where the gloss upon it is, jxwn, he that overcomes a king by words, that is, by disputing with him, which is a disgrace to a king. So the word is used in the Syriac language in (<43633>John 16:33 <42122>Luke 11:22 <45521>Romans 12:21 <58113>Hebrews 11:33 <62513>1 John 2:13, 14 4:4 5:4). Moreover, the sense is the same, be it rendered either way; for as a man, when he overcomes his adversary, and carries his point against him, is clear of his charges and cavils, so God, when he overcomes in judgment, is clear of the imputations of wicked men. Another difference in the citation is, that what in the psalm is rendered “when thou judgest”, is by the apostle, “when thou art judged”, (<19504>Psalm 51:4), the word, which is used by the Psalmist, Æjpçb, may be rendered either way; either “when thou judgest”, as a word of the same form is rendered, when “thou speakest”, in (<19504>Psalm 51:4); or “when anyone judges of thee”, or “when thou art judged”: a like instance is in (<19602>Psalm 46:2); and so it is rendered by the Septuagint, and followed by the apostle, though the word he uses may be considered in the middle voice, and may have an active signification in it; and the phrase, εν τω κρινεσψαι σε, may be rendered, “when thou judgest”, and then both agree.

Ver. 5. *But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God*, etc..] Hence it appears, that the unrighteousness of men commends the righteousness, or faithfulness of God; and yet all unrighteousness is sin; the wrath of God is revealed against it; and would exclude from heaven, were it not for pardon through the blood of Christ; and besides, the one is contrary to the other, and of itself, of its own nature, cannot influence and affect the other: wherefore this can only be understood of the manifestation and illustration of, the righteousness of God by it; which is covered and

commended, in punishing the unrighteousness of men; in setting forth Christ to be a propitiation for sin; and in fulfilling his promises, notwithstanding the failings of his people, of which the case of David is a pregnant proof; just as the love of God is illustrated and commended, by the consideration of the sins of men, for whom Christ died, and his grace and mercy in the conversion of them: but if this be true,

what shall we say? shall we allow the following question to be put? this answers to rmyml akya yam, "what is there to say", or "to be said?" a way of speaking, often used by the Talmudists [f36]:

is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance? if the premises are true, this is a just consequence of them; whereas God does take vengeance on men for their unrighteousness, both here and hereafter, it must be a piece of unrighteousness in him so to do; since that for which he takes vengeance on them commends his own righteousness; but that you may know as well by what follows, that this is not an inference of his own, but another's, he adds,

I speak as a man; µda ynb ˆwçlk, "according to the language of the children of men", a phrase often used by the Jewish doctors [f37]. The apostle did not speak the sentiments of his own mind, he represented another man, and spoke in the language of an adversary.

Ver. 6. *God forbid, for then how shall God judge the world*?] hlylj, "far be it"; such a notion is detestable and abominable, nor can it be fairly deduced from what is asserted; for it is the unrighteousness of his own people, on whom he takes no vengeance personally, and not the unrighteousness of others, on whom he does take vengeance, which commends his righteousness; and supposing it was that of others, God cannot be unrighteous in performing his threatenings, in a way of righteousness: moreover, unrighteousness is sin, and does not of itself but by accident, illustrate the righteousness of God; wherefore God is not unjust in punishing it; for how should God "judge the world?" whereas nothing is more certain than that he will do it, and that this will be done in righteousness; which could not be, was he unrighteous in taking vengeance; which will be one considerable part of that righteous judgment.

Ver. 7. *For if the truth of God*, etc..] The "truth of God" is the same with "the righteousness of God", (Romans 3:5), and means his faithfulness; of which it is hypothetically said, it

hath more abounded; or has been more illustrated,

through my lie to his glory: nothing is more opposite to truth than a lie; a lie of itself can never be of any advantage to truth, or to the God of truth; nothing is more contrary to the nature of God, and more abominable to him; a lie is of the devil, and punishable with eternal death; wherefore it may seem strange, that the truth of God should abound through it to his glory: now let it be observed, that the apostle is not speaking of himself, nor of his lie of unbelief, in his state of unregeneracy; but in the person of a sinful man, "for every man is a liar", (Romans 3:4), as he says, "I speak as a man", (Romans 3:5); representing a wicked man, who from what was before said, might collect this as the sense of it, that the truth of God is illustrated by the lies of men: and so much may be owned as the apostle's sense, that the truth of God is commended, illustrated, and made to abound, when it is asserted, that he is true and faithful, and every man is a liar, fallacious, and deceitful; "let God be true, and every man a liar", (Romans 3:4): moreover, the truth of God may be allowed to abound through the lies of men, in a comparative sense, the one being set against the other; and so as contraries do, illustrate each other: this may be assented to, as that sometimes a lie has been overruled by God, for the accomplishing of his purposes and promises, in which his truth and faithfulness have been displayed, as in the cases of Jacob and the Egyptian midwives; but then this does not arise from its nature and tendency, but from the overruling wisdom and providence of God, and therefore not to be excused hereby from sin; and consequently the inference from it is not just, that therefore "no man can, or ought to be, judged as a sinner"; since his sin turns to such account, as to make for the glory of God, which is intimated in the question:

why yet am I also judged as a sinner? if this be the case, I ought not to be reckoned a sinner, or to be treated as such here, or judged and condemned as one hereafter, which is a most wicked, as well as weak consequence; for though God is true and faithful to his promises, notwithstanding the sins of his people, which are as a foil, to set off the lustre of his truth the more, yet their sins are nevertheless sins, and are taken notice of by him as such, and they are corrected for them; and however God may overrule, in a providential way, the sins of others for his glory, this is no excuse for their sins, nor will it be an exemption of them from punishment. This is the sense of the passage; unless by "the truth of God" should be meant, the Gospel, the word of truth, which is of God; and which through the apostle's "lie",

as the Jews might call his ministration of it, “abounded to” the “glory” of God; being spread far and near, and made useful for the conversion of sinners, for turning men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; and for the planting of churches in the Gentile world, as well as in Judea; which much conduced to the honour of God, and the interest of true religion: and then the meaning of the last clause is, “why yet am I also judged as a sinner?” why am I accounted and condemned as an heretic? as an apostate from the faith? as he was by the Jews, and who are used to call heretics sinners: so “the sinner” in (<21>Ecclesiastes 7:26) is thus interpreted [f38], µynymh wla “these are the heretics”: and elsewhere it [f39] is observed, that concerning the heretics it is said, (<20>Proverbs 10:7), “the name of the wicked shall rot”: and I very much suspect this to be the sense of the word in (<43>John 9:24), “we know that this man is a sinner”; an heretic, a man of bad principles; and in (<43>John 9:31); “now we know that God heareth not sinners”; men of corrupt minds; since this character stands opposed to a worshipper of the God of Israel.

Ver. 8. *And not rather, as we be slanderously reported*, etc..] These are the apostle's own words, in answer to the objector he represented; and it is as if he should say, why do not you go on? why do you stop here? “and not rather” say, as we are evil spoken of, and our doctrine is blasphemed:

and as some affirm; ignorantly and audaciously enough:

that we say; and teach:

let us do evil that good may come; a slander cast upon the apostle's doctrine of unconditional election, free justification, and of God's overruling the sins of men for good; and is the same which is cast on ours now, and is no small proof of the likeness and sameness of doctrines:

whose damnation is just; whose judgment would have been right, and their censure of our doctrines just, had it been true that we held such a principle, taught such a doctrine, or encouraged such a practice: or their condemnation is just, for aspersing our principles and practices in so vile a manner; and all such persons are deserving of damnation, who teach such things, or practise after this sort.

Ver. 9. *What then? are we better than they*? etc..] The apostle returns to what he was treating of in the beginning of the chapter, and suggests, that though the Jew has the advantage of the Gentile, with respect to some

external privileges, yet not with regard to their state and condition Godward, and as in his sight; “are we [Jews] better than they [Gentiles]?”

no, in no wise; upon no consideration whatever, neither as men, nor as Jews; which is directly opposite to a notion that people have of themselves:

> “in mankind (they say [f40]) there are high degrees, one higher than another, and the Israelites µda ˆym lkm hl[ml, “are above all mankind”; they are the head, and the nations of the world are the tail, and are like to a serpent, for they come from the filth of the old serpent.”

Again, they say [f41],

> “worthy are the Israelites, for the holy blessed God hath given to them holy souls, from an holy place, “above all the rest of the people”, that they may do the commandments, and delight in the law.”

And elsewhere [f42] it is observed on those words, (Genesis 1:24), “the living creature”, or “the soul of the living creature”, by R. Aba:

> “these are the Israelites, for they are the children of the holy blessed God, and their holy souls come from him; the souls of the rest of the people, from what place are they? says R. Eleazar, from the side of the left hand, which is defiled; for they have polluted souls, and therefore they are all defiled, and defile whoever comes nigh them:”

but they are no better, especially with regard to their estate by nature:

for we have before proved; in the preceding chapters, by full instances to a demonstration; and if that cannot be thought sufficient, he goes on to give more proof in the following “verses”:

that both Jews and Gentiles are under sin; under the power and guilt of sin, and a sentence of condemnation for it; which is equally true of the Jews, who were no better than the Gentiles, for being Abraham's seed, for being circumcised, for having the ceremonial law, and other outward privileges; for they were equally born in sin, and by practice sinners, as the Gentiles: and this is true of God's elect in all nations, who are no better by nature, by birth, than others; as deserving of the wrath of God as the rest; no better in their tempers and, dispositions, or in the endowments of their

minds, or outward circumstances of life; nor better qualified to receive and improve the grace of God bestowed on them, than others.

Ver. 10. *As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one*.] The several passages cited here, and in some following verses, are taken out of the Psalms and Isaiah; and are brought to prove, not only that the Jews are no better than the Gentiles, being equally corrupt and depraved as they; but also to show the corrupt state and condition of mankind in general: and the words are not always literally expressed, but the sense is attended to, as in this passage; for in the original text of (<19401>Psalm 14:1), it is, "there is none that doth good"; from whence the apostle rightly infers, "there is none righteous"; for he that does not do good, is not righteous; and therefore if there is none on earth that does good and does not sin, there is none righteous upon earth, "no, not one" single person. The Jews allegorizing that passage in (<01938>Genesis 19:31), "there is not a man in the earth to come into us", remark [f43] on it thus,

> "Wab qydx çya ˆya, "there is not a righteous man in the earth"; and there is not a man that rules over his imagination."

There is none righteous as Adam was, in a state of innocence; for all have sinned, and are filled with unrighteousness, and are enemies to righteousness; none are righteous by their obedience to the law of works; nor are there any righteous in the sight of God, upon the foot of their own righteousness, however they may appear in their own eyes, and in the sight of others; nor are any inherently righteous, for there is none without sin, sanctification is imperfect; nor is it, either in whole or in part, a saint's justifying righteousness; indeed there is none righteous, no, not one, but those who are justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them.

Ver. 11. *There is none that understandeth*, etc..] This is rightly concluded, from what the Psalmist says, (<19402>Psalm 14:2), "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men", on all the children of men, Jews and Gentiles, "to see if there were any that did understand"; and it appears, upon this survey of them, there was not one understanding person among them: man thinks himself a very wise and understanding creature, though he is born a very ignorant one: true indeed, he has not lost by sin the natural faculty of the understanding, so as to become like the horse and mule, which are without any; and it must be allowed, that natural men have some understanding of things natural, civil, and moral; though there is none

that understands even these, as Adam did: but then they have no understanding of things spiritual; no spiritual knowledge of God; no true sense of themselves, their sin and misery; nor do they truly know the way of salvation by Christ; nor have they any experience of the work of the Spirit of God upon their souls; nor any experimental knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel: no man can understand these of himself, by the mere strength of reason, and light of nature; nor can even a spiritual man fully understand them in this life; in consequence of this account and character of men it follows, that

there is none that seeketh after God; that worships him in Spirit and in truth, or prays to him with the Spirit, and with the understanding; who seek him chiefly, and in the first place, with their whole hearts, earnestly, diligently, and constantly; who seek him in Christ, and under the assistance of the Spirit; who seek after the knowledge of God in Christ, communion with him through the Mediator, or his honour and glory.

Ver. 12. *They are all gone out of the way*, etc..] In (<19143>Psalm 14:3); it is said, "they are all gone aside"; as persons in debt: man had a considerable stock of righteousness, holiness, knowledge, etc.. but he has run through all, has contracted large and numerous debts, has been obliged to hide himself, has been used as a bankrupt, and turned out of house and home: Christ indeed has undertook to pay, and he has paid all the debts of his people; and has put them into a better state than ever Adam was in: in (<19503>Psalm 53:3), it is rendered, "everyone of them is gone back"; that is, from God; from his commands, and from their former state and condition: here the phrase is rendered by the apostle, "they are all gone out of the way": that is, out of the way of God and his precepts, out of the way of holiness and righteousness, of light and life; into their own ways, the ways of sin, Satan, and the world of darkness, and of death: so Aben Ezra explains it, "out of the right way"; Kimchi and Ben Melech paraphrase it, "out of the good way: and so"

they are together become unprofitable; the word wjlan, in (<19143>Psalm 14:3) and (<19503>Psalm 53:3); is translated, "they are become filthy"; which R. Aben Ezra interprets by wtjçn, "they are corrupt"; and R. Solomon Jarchi by lwqlql wkphn, "they are turned to corruption"; the metaphor is taken from stinking flesh, which is tainted and corrupted, and so good for nothing, hence here rendered "unprofitable"; for so men being corrupted by sin, are of no use, service, and advantage to God, to men, or to themselves;

but, on the contrary, nauseous to God, and to all that are good, and hurtful to themselves and others: for

there is none that does good, no, not one; and therefore must be unprofitable. There is none that can do good in a spiritual manner, without the grace of God, strength from Christ, and the assistance of the Spirit; and there is not even a spiritual man, that can do good perfectly, and without sin.

Ver. 13. *Their throat is an open sepulchre*, etc..] The several vices of the instruments of speech are here, and in the following verse, exposed: "the throat" is said to "be an open sepulchre", as in (Psalm 5:9), so called, for its voracity and insatiableness; both as an instrument of speech, for the words of the wicked are devouring ones; and as an instrument of swallowing, and so may denote the sinner's eager desire after sin, the delight and pleasure he takes in it, the abundance of it he takes in, and his insatiable greediness for it; likewise for its filthy stench, the communication of evil men being corrupt; and because, as by an open grave, persons may fall unawares to their hurt, so the evil communications of wicked men, as they corrupt good manners, are dangerous and hurtful: R. Aben Ezra explains it by dym ^wsa, "immediate destruction", or sudden death:

with their tongues they have used deceit; which may design the sin of flattery, for the words in (Psalm 5:9); the place referred to, are, "they flatter with their tongue"; either God or men, themselves or others, their princes or their neighbour; for there are flatterers in things sacred and civil, there are self-flatterers, court flatterers, and flattering preachers, and all abominable and mischievous; or the phrase may design the sin of lying, either politically, officiously, perniciously, and religiously; and in this latter way, either with respect to doctrine or practice:

the poison of asps is under their lips; or as in (Psalm 140:3), "adders' poison is under their lips". The asp is but a small creature, and so is the tongue, (James 3:5), but there is a world of mischief in it, signified by poison; which, as that, is latent and secret, is under it; and as that stupefies and kills insensibly, so an evil tongue does, and that in a deadly and incurable manner: oftentimes the Jews speak of the evil imagination, or corruption of nature entering into persons, and operating in them, sw[kb srak "as poison in an angry serpent" [f44].

Ver. 14. *Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness*.] These words are taken from (<19B107>Psalm 10:7), by cursing is meant, cursing of God, which is sometimes internal with the heart, and sometimes external with the mouth, as here; and of all good men, though without cause, and to no purpose with respect to the persons they curse, since God has blessed them, and they are blessed, and greatly to their own detriment, for, in the issue, their curses will be turned against themselves. There is also a cursing of superiors, as parents, masters, magistrates, kings, and governors; which is a sore evil, and attended with bad consequences; likewise of themselves, and their fellow creatures: and "the mouth [being] full [of it]", denotes the frequency of the sin; scarce anything else comes out of it but cursing; which discovers the sad corruption of the heart; "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh", (<401234>Matthew 12:34 <420645>Luke 6:45). By "bitterness" is meant, either sin in general, which is "an evil and bitter [thing]", (<24B219>Jeremiah 2:19), in its nature and effects; or sinful words, such as oaths, curses, imprecations, all wrathful and deceitful words.

Ver. 15. *Their feet are swift to shed blood*.] The sins of the heart and mouth are before described, and now the sins of action are taken notice of; for "the feet" are the instruments of motion and action: and when these are said to be "swift to shed blood", it denotes the readiness and eagerness of men, to murder innocent creatures; which shows the dreadful malice and hatred that is in them. The words are cited from (<23B907>Isaiah 59:7), and seem to point at the times of Manasseh, who shed so much innocent blood, as to fill Jerusalem with it from one end to the other.

Ver. 16. *Destruction and misery are in their ways*.] This passage also is to be found in (<23B907>Isaiah 59:7), and may be understood either actively thus: all the ways they take, and methods they pursue, are to make their fellow creatures miserable, to ruin and destroy them; or passively, that by their sinful ways and vicious course of life, they themselves are brought to destruction and misery: the way they are walking in is, "the broad way, that leadeth to destruction", (<400713>Matthew 7:13); the end of it, what it issues in, is eternal death, the destruction of the body and soul in hell, which will be attended with endless and inexpressible misery.

Ver. 17. *And the way of peace have they not known*.] This is a citation front (<23B908>Isaiah 59:8), and expresses the ignorance of mankind, with regard to true peace, and the way unto it: men are naturally ignorant of the way of peace with God; of the first step which God took towards it; of the

council and covenant of peace, in which the scheme of it was drawn, and the method fixed; of Christ the peacemaker, and of the way in which he has made it; and of the Gospel, which reveals and publishes it. They are ignorant of the true way of enjoying peace of conscience; they have no true peace of mind, their consciences are often tortured; and though they may have a stupid and secure peace, yet nothing that is true, real, and solid; for they are without the Spirit, whose fruit is peace; and without faith in Christ, by which true peace only is enjoyed; nor are they spiritually minded, which is life and peace; nor have they any knowledge of the way to have it; they are ready to think it must be had by doing something of their own, and not that it is to be had only in Christ, in his blood and righteousness. They are ignorant of the paths of wisdom, which are peace; peace is enjoyed in them, they lead unto it, and issue in it: they know not the way to eternal peace; they imagine something done by the creature is the way; and are ignorant that Christ is the only way of salvation, the true way to eternal life, everlasting peace and happiness: yea, they know not the way of peace among men, and one another; nor will they do that which is just and right, in order to support and maintain it, but are unjust, deceitful, and quarrelsome; they do not study peace, but rather contention, which they like and approve of. The Jews talk [f45] much of their good nature, affability, and condescension, and of their doing this and that, and the other thing, µwlç ykrd ynpm, "because of the ways of peace".

Ver. 18. *There is no fear of God before their eyes*.] The place referred to is (Psalm 36:1), by the "fear of God", is not meant a fear of God's wrath, of hell and damnation; nor a fearful distrust of his presence, power, providence, and grace; much less an hypocritical fear; but a reverential affection for God, and which is peculiar to the children of God, which springs from a sense of divine goodness, is attended with holiness of heart and life, is consistent with faith, even full assurance of it, and with spiritual joy in its highest degree; it stands opposed to pride and haughtiness, and is a blessing of the covenant of grace: now this is not to be found in unregenerate men, for this springs from grace, and not nature, and is only implanted in the heart in conversion; it appears from the whole life and conversation of unconverted men, that the fear of God is not in their hearts, nor before their eyes.

Ver. 19. *Now we know that what things soever the law saith*, etc..] By "the law" is meant, not the law of nature, nor the civil law of nations, nor the ceremonial law of the Jews, nor barely the five books of Moses, nor the

book of Psalms, of the Prophets, or the writings of the whole Old Testament; but the moral law, as it appears in the whole word of God, which every man is bound to observe, of which all are transgressors, by which is the knowledge of sin, which no man can be justified by, and which Christ was made under, and came to fulfil. This law is represented as a person speaking, and saying many things, some of which are here mentioned; so, hrwt hrma, "the law says" so and so, is an usual phrase with Jewish writers[f46]. The persons it speaks to, are

them that are under the law; the Jews were in a peculiar sense under it, as it was given to them by Moses; all mankind are under it, as to the matter of it; they are under obligation to obedience to it, and, through disobedience, come under its sentence of condemnation. The elect of God themselves were, and are in some sense under it; not indeed as a covenant of works, or as in the hands of Moses, nor as a yoke of bondage; nor are they obliged to seek for justification by it, and are entirely delivered from the curse and condemnation of it by Christ. They were under it, and that as a covenant of works, as in Adam, the federal head and representative of all mankind; and came under its sentence of condemnation and death, for his sin, and their own actual transgressions; which is consistent with the everlasting love of God to them in Christ, the covenant of grace made with them in him, as their head and surety, and their justification by him: and they are now under it, as in the hands of Christ; and look upon themselves as obliged, by the love of Christ, to yield a cheerful obedience to it: here it means such as are transgressors of the law, and so under obligation to punishment, without any regard to Jew or Gentile, or any distinction God has made in his own breast: and the things it says to such are, it charges them with sin, and convicts them of it, both of its pollution and guilt: so

that every mouth may be stopped; and have nothing to say of the purity of their nature, which appears to be so sadly stained; nor of their works of righteousness, which are so few, and so very imperfect. The law makes such a representation of things to them, that their mouths are stopped from glorying in themselves, and in their works, which are far from being adequate to the demands of the law; and from complaining against the righteous judgment of God, should he proceed against them in the most rigorous manner:

and all the world may become guilty before God; Jews and Gentiles; all the individuals of mankind are guilty before God, and will be found to be so,

sooner or later: some read it, “subject to God”, and understand it of a subjection to his grace, being brought to see their need of it, and of salvation by it; but this is not the case of all the world, rather υποδικος, signifies a subjection to that justice, vengeance, and wrath of God, to which all men are liable in their own persons; since they are all found guilty by the law, and will appear to be so, and therefore can never be justified by their obedience to it; which is what the apostle is aiming at in all he here says, as appears from what follows; all which “we know” to be true, and are fully assured of, who know the nature and spirituality of the law, and to whom it has come with light and power.

Ver. 20. *Therefore by the deeds of the law*, etc..] Hence it most clearly appears, that there can be no justification before God by the law, since it stops the mouths of men, and pronounces them guilty: by “the deeds of the law” are meant, works done in obedience to it, as performed by sinful men, which are very imperfect; not as performed by Adam in innocence or by Christ in our nature whose works were perfect; but as performed by sinful men and of themselves, and not as performed in and by Christ for them who is the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness to all believers: now by such works as these whether wrought before or after conversion, with or without the strength and grace of Christ,

there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: that is, no one person: “flesh” designs men, and men as corrupt and carnal, in opposition to God, who is a Spirit pure and holy; and may have respect to the vain opinion of Jews and Gentiles, who were vainly puffed up in their fleshly mind; the one on account of their wisdom and learning, the other on account of their righteousness; and includes all the individuals of human nature:, the word “justified”, does not signify being made righteous by the infusion of righteousness, for the infusion of a righteousness, or holiness, is sanctification, which is a work of the Spirit of God, is internal, and imperfect, and so not justifying; but it is a forensic word, or legal term, and stands opposed to a being condemned; and signifies to be acquitted, discharged, and made righteous in a legal sense, which can never be done by an imperfect obedience to the law: men may be justified hereby in their own sight, and in the sight of others, but not in “his sight”; in the sight of God, who is omniscient, and sees not as man seeth; who is pure, holy, and righteous, and whose judgment is according to truth: this is said in direct contradiction to the Jews [f47], who say,

> “a man is not justified for ever, but by the words of the law:”

but in his sight none can be justified, but by the perfect obedience and righteousness of Christ. The reason for it is,

for by the law is the knowledge of sin; it discovers to a man, by the light of the Spirit of God, and as under his influence, and attended with his power, the sins both of his heart and life; and so he is convinced by it as a transgressor and finds himself guilty, and liable to condemnation and death; wherefore he can never hope for and expect justification by it. The Jews ascribe such an use as this to the law, which they suppose it performs in a very gentle manner;

> “he that rises in the night (say they [f48]), and studies in the law, `hbwj hyl a[dwm aq atyrwa`, “the law makes known to him his sin”, but not in a way of judgment, but as a mother makes known to her son in tender language:”

but this is generally done in a rougher way, for the law works wrath.

Ver. 21. *But now the righteousness of God*, etc..] The apostle having proved that all men are unrighteous, and that no man can be justified in the sight of God by his obedience, either to the law of nature or of Moses, proceeds to give an account of that righteousness, which does justify before God; and so returns to his former subject, (<450117>Romans 1:17), concerning “the righteousness of God”, the revelation of which he makes to be peculiar to the Gospel, as he does here; since he says, that it

without the law is manifested: meaning, either that this righteousness is without the law, and the deeds of it, as performed by sinful men; or that the manifestation of it is without the law, either of nature or of Moses; for the law discovers sin, but not a righteousness which justifies from sin; it shows what righteousness is, but does not direct the sinner where there is one to be had, that will make him righteous in the sight of God: this is made known without the law, and only in the Gospel:

being witnessed by the law and the prophets; a testimony is borne to the justifying righteousness of Christ both “by the law”, particularly in the five books of Moses; which testify of Christ, of his obedience, sufferings, and death, by which he brought in life and righteousness; (see <010315>Genesis 3:15), compared with (<270924>Daniel 9:24); and (<011506>Genesis 15:6) with (<450409>Romans 4:9,10,22-25); and (<012218>Genesis 22:18) with (<480316>Galatians

3:8,9,14); and (<5011>Deuteronomy 30:11-14) with (<4510>Romans 10:5-10). And the prophets; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and others; (see <2342>Isaiah 42:21) (<2454>Isaiah 45:24,25 46:12,13 51:5,6,8 53:11 <2436>Jeremiah 23:6 <2724>Daniel 9:24).

Ver. 22. *Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ*, etc..] A further account is given of this righteousness: why it is called "the righteousness of God", and in what sense revealed and manifested, (see Gill on " <4017>Romans 1:17"); Here it is said to be "by faith of Jesus Christ"; not by that faith which Christ himself had as man, but by that faith, of which he the author and object: the Alexandrian copy reads, "by faith in Jesus Christ"; and not by that as the cause of justification; for faith is neither the efficient, nor the moving, nor meritorious cause of it; no, nor the instrumental cause of it on the part of God or Christ: nor is faith the matter of a justifying righteousness; for faith is a part of sanctification, is itself imperfect, is a man's own, as it is implanted in him, and exercised by him; is here and elsewhere distinguished from righteousness; something else, and not that, as the obedience and blood of Christ, are said to be what men are made righteous and justified by: but faith is a means of apprehending and receiving righteousness; it views the excellency of Christ's righteousness; it owns the sufficiency of it; the soul by it renounces its own righteousness, submits to Christ's, rejoices in it, and gives him the glory of it: now this is by, or through faith,

unto all, and upon all: not all men, for all have not faith, nor are all justified and saved: but

all that believe; which must be understood, not of believing any thing, nor of any sort of believing; but of such, who truly and with the heart believe in Christ for salvation; and who are here opposed to the wise philosophers among the Gentiles, had to all self-righteous persons among the Jews. Though this character does not design any cause or condition of justification, but is only descriptive of the persons, who are declaratively interested in a justifying righteousness, which is said to be "unto", and "upon them"; that is, it is appointed, provided, and wrought out for them, and directed and applied unto them, and put upon them as a garment, and that upon all of them:

for there is no difference; of nation, age, or sex, or of state and condition; no respect is had to persons or works; nor is there any difference with respect to weak or strong believers; the righteousness is equally applied to

one as to another, and one is as much justified by it in the sight of God as another.

Ver. 23. *For all have sinned*, etc..] This is the general character of all mankind; all have sinned in Adam, are guilty by his sin, polluted with it, and condemned for it; all are sinners in themselves, and by their own actual transgressions; this is the case of the whole world, and of all the men in it; not only of the Gentiles, but of the Jews, and the more righteous among them: hence there is no difference in the state and condition of men by nature; nor is there any reason from and in themselves, why God saves one and not another; nor any room to despair of the grace and righteousness of Christ, on account of persons being, in their own view, the worst of sinners:

and hence it is, that they are all

come short of the glory of God; either of glorifying of God; man was made for this purpose, and was capable of it, though now through sin incapable; and it is only by the grace of God that he is enabled to do it: or of glorying: before him; sin has made him infamous, and is his shame; by it he has forfeited all external favours, and has nothing of his own to glory in; his moral righteousness is no foundation for boasting, especially before God: or of having glory from God; the most pure and perfect creature does not of itself deserve any glory and praise from God; good men, in a way of grace, will have praise of God; but sinners can never expect any on their own account: or of the glorious grace of God, as sanctifying and pardoning grace, and particularly the grace of a justifying righteousness; man has no righteousness, nor can he work out one; nor will his own avail, he wants a better than that: or of eternal glory; which may be called the glory of God, because it is of his preparing, what he calls persons to by his grace, and which of his own free grace he bestows upon them, and will chiefly lie in the enjoyment of him; now this is represented sometimes as a prize, which is run for, and pressed after; but men, through sinning, come short of it, and must of themselves do so for ever: or rather of the image of God in man, who is called “the image and glory of God”, (4611071 Corinthians 11:7), which consisted externally in government over the creatures; internally, in righteousness and holiness, in wisdom and knowledge, in the bias of his mind to that which is good, and in power to perform it; of all which he is come short, or deprived by sinning.

Ver. 24. *Being justified freely by his grace*, etc..] The matter of justification is before expressed, and the persons that share in this blessing are described; here the several causes of it are mentioned. The moving cause of it is the free grace of God; for by "the grace of God" here, is not meant the Gospel, or what some men call the terms of the Gospel, and the constitution of it; nor the grace of God infused into the heart; but the free love and favour of God, as it is in his heart; which is wonderfully displayed in the business of a sinner's justification before him: it appears in his resolving upon the justification of his chosen ones in Christ; in fixing on the method of doing it; in setting forth and pre-ordaining Christ to be the ransom; in calling Christ to engage herein; in Christ's engaging as a surety for his people, and in the Father's sending him to bring in everlasting righteousness; in Christ's coming to do it, and in the gracious manner in which he wrought it out; in the Father's gracious acceptation, imputation, and donation of it; in the free gift of the grace of faith, to apprehend and receive it; and in the persons that partake of it, who are of themselves sinners and ungodly. The meritorious cause of justification is,

the redemption that is in Jesus Christ: redemption supposes a former state of captivity to sin, Satan, and the law, in which God's elect were by nature, and is a deliverance from it; it is of a spiritual nature, chiefly respects the soul, and is plenteous, complete, and eternal: this is in and by Christ; he was called unto it, was sent to effect it, had a right unto it, as being the near kinsman; and was every way fit for it, being both God and man; and has by his sufferings and death obtained it: now, as all the blessings of grace come through redemption by Christ, so does this of justification, and after this manner; Christ, as a Redeemer, had the sins of his people laid on him, and they were bore by him, and took away; the sentence of the law's condemnation was executed on him, as standing in their legal place and stead; and satisfaction was made by him for all offences committed by them, which was necessary, that God might appear to be just, in justifying all them that believe: nor is this any objection or contradiction to the free grace of God, in a sinner's justification; since it was grace in God to provide, send, and part with his Son as a Redeemer, and to work out righteousness; it was grace in Christ, to come and give himself a sacrifice, and obtain salvation and righteousness, not for angels, but for men, and for some of them, and not all; and whatever this righteousness, salvation, and redemption cost Christ, they are all free to men.

Ver. 25. *Whom God had set forth to be a propitiation*, etc..] Redemption by Christ is here further explained, by his being “a propitiation”: which word may design either Christ the propitiator, the author of peace and reconciliation; or the propitiatory sacrifice, by which he is so; and both in allusion to the mercy seat, which was a type of him as such. The apostle here uses the same word, which the Septuagint often render תרפכ “the mercy seat”, by; and Philo the Jew calls it by the same name, and says it was a symbol, της ιλεω του ψεου δυναμεως “of the propitious power of God” [f49]. Christ is the propitiation to God for sin; which must be understood of his making satisfaction to divine justice, for the sins of his people; these were imputed to him, and being found on him, the law and justice of God made demands on him for them; which he answered to satisfaction, by his obedience and sacrifice; and which, as it could not be done by any other, nor in any other way, is expressed by “reconciliation”, and “atonement”: whence God may be said to be pacified, or made propitious; not but that he always loved his people, and never hated them; nor is there, nor can there be any change in God, from hatred to love, any more than from love to hatred: Christ has not, by his sacrifice and death, procured the love and favour of God, but has removed the obstructions which lay in the way of love's appearing and breaking forth; there was, a law broken, and justice provoked, which were to be attended to, and Christ by his sacrifice has satisfied both; so that neither the wrath of God, nor any of the effects of it, can fall upon the persons Christ is the propitiation for, even according to justice itself; so that it is not love, but justice that is made propitious: for this is all owing to the grace and goodness of God, who “hath set him forth”, for this intent, in his eternal purposes and decrees; in the promises of the Old Testament, in the types, shadows, and sacrifices of the old law; by the exhibition of him in our nature, and in the ministration of the Gospel; and this is said to be

through faith in his blood. The “blood” of Christ is that, by which Christ is the propitiation; for without the shedding of that blood, there is no redemption, no peace, no reconciliation, or remission of sin; and “faith” in his blood is the means by which persons become partakers of the benefits of his propitiation; such as peace, pardon, atonement, justification, and adoption: and the end of Christ's being set forth as a propitiation, on the part of God's people, is,

for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God: by “sins that are past”, are meant, not sins before baptism, nor the sins of a

man's life only, but the sins of Old Testament saints, who lived before the incarnation of Christ, and the oblation of his sacrifice; and though this is not to be restrained to them only, for Christ's blood was shed for the remission of all his people's sins, past, present, and to come; yet the sins of the saints before the coming of Christ, seem to be particularly designed; which shows the insufficiency of legal sacrifices, sets forth the efficacy of Christ's blood and sacrifice, demonstrates him to be a perfect Saviour, and gives us reason under the present dispensation to hope for pardon, since reconciliation is completely made: “remission” of sin does not design that weakness which sin has brought upon, and left in human nature, whereby it is so enfeebled, that it cannot help itself, and therefore Christ was set forth, and sent forth, to be a propitiation; but rather God's passing by, or overlooking sin, and not punishing for it, under the former dispensation; or else the forgiveness of it now, and redemption from it by the blood of Christ, “through the forbearance of God”; in deferring the execution of justice, till he sent his Son, and in expecting satisfaction of his Son; which shows the grace and goodness of God to his people, and the trust and confidence he put in his Son: the other end on the part of God, in setting forth Christ to be a propitiation, was

to declare his righteousness (Psalm 22:31); meaning either the righteousness of Christ, which was before hid, but now manifested; or rather the righteousness of God the Father, his faithfulness in his promises relating to Christ, his grace and goodness in the mission of his Son, the holiness and purity of his nature, and his vindictive justice, in avenging sin in his own Son, as the surety of his people: the execution of this was threatened from the beginning; the types and sacrifices of the old law prefigured it; the prophecies of the Old Testament express it; and the sufferings and death of Christ openly declare it, since God spared not his own Son, but sheathed the sword of justice in him.

Ver. 26. *To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness*, etc..] This end is further explained, it being to declare the righteousness of God “at this time”, under the Gospel dispensation; in which there was such a display of the grace, mercy, and goodness of God:

that he might be just; that is, appear to be so: God is naturally and essentially just in himself; and he is evidentially so in all his works, particularly in redemption by Christ; and when and while he is

the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus: Jesus, the Saviour, is the object of faith, as he is the Lord our righteousness; the believer in Jesus is a real, and not a nominal one; God is the justifier of such in a declarative way, and God only, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit; and which sentence of justification is pronounced by him on the foot of a perfect righteousness, which neither law nor justice can find fault with, but entirely approve of; and so he appears just and righteous, even though he justifies the sinner and the ungodly.

Ver. 27. *Where is boasting then*? etc..] There is no room nor reason for it, either in Jews or Gentiles: not in the Jews, who were very apt to boast of their being Abraham's seed; of their circumcision; of their being Israelites; of their having and keeping the law; of God being their God; and of their knowledge of him: nor in the Gentiles, who were ready to boast of their philosophy, wisdom, and learning; of their self-sufficiency, freewill, and of the things they had in their own power.

It is excluded; it is shut out of doors; the key is turned upon it; it is not allowed of; it is entirely exploded:

by what law? of works? nay; for, that establishes boasting when men seek life, righteousness, and salvation by the works of it, and fancy they shall be able to attain them this way:

but by the law of faith: not by a law requiring faith; nor as if the Gospel was a law, a new law, a remedial law, a law of milder terms; but the word "law" here answers to the Hebrew word hrwt, which signifies any "doctrine" or "instruction", and oftentimes the doctrine of the Gospel, as in (Isaiah 2:3 42:4), and here particularly, the doctrine of a sinner's justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; according to which doctrine the most unlikely persons are justified, even ungodly persons, the worst and vilest of sinners; and that without any consideration of works, by faith only, which is freely given them; and by faith in Christ's righteousness only: so that there is not the least room for boasting in the creature, but all their boasting is in Christ, who is made unto them righteousness, and by whom they are justified.

Ver. 28. *Therefore we conclude*, etc..] This is the conclusion from the premises, the sum total of the whole account:

that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. The subject of justification is, “man”, not in opposition to angels; nor does it design the Jew against the Gentile, though some have so thought; but the apostle names neither Jew nor Gentile, but “man”, to show that Christ's righteousness is unto all, and every man, that believes, be he who he will; and is to be understood indefinitely, that every man that is justified is justified by faith. The means is “by faith”, not habitually or actually considered; that is, either as an habit and principle infused into us, or as an act performed by us; but either organically, as it is a means of receiving Christ's righteousness; or objectively, as it denotes Christ the object of it: and all this is done “without works”, of any sort; not by a faith which is without works, for such a faith is dead, and of no avail; but by faith without works joined to it, in the affair of justification; or by the righteousness of Christ imputed by God the Father, without any consideration of them, and received by faith, and relied upon by the believer, without any regard unto them.

Ver. 29. *Is he the God of the Jews only*? etc..] The Jews made their boast of him as such, and would not allow the Gentiles any interest in him: but

is he not also of the Gentiles? yes, of the Gentiles also: God is the God both of Jews and Gentiles; not only as the Creator, preserver, and Governor of them, or as he has a right to demand worship and service of them, but as he is their covenant God; not by virtue of the covenant of circumcision, or by the Sinai Covenant, but by the covenant of grace; as appears by his loving them in Christ, choosing them in him, putting them into his hands, providing blessings of grace for them in him, and sending his Son to redeem them; by calling them by his grace; by their sanctification, adoption, pardon, and justification; by taking out of them a people for his name with whom he dwells, and of whom he takes care; and will never leave nor forsake: all which may lead us to observe the distinguishing grace of God, the happiness of our state and condition, and what encouragement we have for faith and hope in God.

Ver. 30. *Seeing it is one God*, etc..] God is one in nature and essence, though there are three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; whence it appears, that he that is the God of the Jews, is also the God of the Gentiles, or there would be more gods than one; and that these are justified in one and the same manner, or God must be divided; for God,

as he is one in nature, so he is one in will, in his promises, and in the methods of his grace:

which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. The objects of justification are “the circumcision”, the circumcised Jews, and “the uncircumcision”, the uncircumcised Gentiles; the circumcision of the one does not forward, and the uncircumcision of the other does not hinder, nor neither of them effect the grace of justification: the justifier of them is one and the same, who is God; and the matter of their justification is the same, which is the righteousness of Christ; and the manner of it, or the means of their comfortable apprehension of it, is the same; for those phrases, “by faith”, and “through faith”, mean one and the same thing; (see ³⁰¹⁰Philippians 3:9).

Ver. 31. *Do we then make void the law through faith?* etc..] Which question is answered by way of detestatation,

God forbid! and by asserting the contrary,

yea, we establish the law. The law is not made void, neither by the grace nor doctrine of faith: not by the grace of faith; for that faith is not right which is not attended with works of righteousness; and those works are not right which do not flow from filth. Such a connection there is between faith and works; and so much do the one depend upon the other. Moreover, none but believers are capable of performing good works aright, and they do them, and they ought to do them: besides, faith, as a grace, looks to Christ, as the end of the law for righteousness, and therefore do not make it void. Nor is it made void by the doctrine of faith, and by the particular doctrine of a sinner's justification by faith in Christ's righteousness, which is here more especially intended; for though it is made void by it, as to any use of it for justification by the deeds thereof; yet its use in other respects is not set aside, such as to inform us of the mind and will of God, to discover and convince of sin, to show believers their deformity and imperfection, to render Christ and his righteousness more valuable, and to be a rule of walk and conversation to them; and it still remains a cursing and condemning law to Christless sinners, though justified ones are delivered from it as such: yea, the law is so far from being made void, that it is established by this doctrine; for by it the perpetuity of it is asserted, the spirituality of it is acknowledged, the perfect righteousness of it is secured: according to this doctrine all its demands are answered; whatever it requires it has, such as holiness of nature, perfect

obedience to its precepts, and its full penalty borne: it is placed in the best hands, where it will ever remain; and a regard to it is enforced under the best influence, by the best of motives, and from the best of principles. It is indeed abolished as a covenant of works, and in this sense is made void to believers; and it is done away as to the form of administration of it by Moses; and it is destroyed as a yoke of bondage; and the people of God are free from the malediction of it, and condemnation by it, and so from its terror; yet it remains unalterable and unchangeable in the hands of Christ; the matter of it is always the same, and ever obligatory on believers, who, though they are freed from the curse of it, are not exempted from obedience to it: wherefore the law is not made void, so as to be destroyed and abolished in every sense, or to be rendered idle, inactive, useless, and insignificant; but, on the contrary, is made to stand, is placed on a sure basis and firm foundation, as the words used signify.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 4

The apostle having, in the preceding chapters, proved that there is no justification before God by the works of the law, partly from the depraved state and condition that all men are in by nature, both Jews and Gentiles; and partly from the nature of the law itself, which discovers sin, arraigns men for it, and convicts of it, and pronounces guilty before God for it; as also by showing, that it is by another righteousness, which he describes, that men are justified in the sight of God; proceeds in this to confirm the same by an example; and that which he pitches upon is the most appropriate and pertinent he could have thought of, namely, that of Abraham, the father of the Jews, (Romans 4:1), for in whatsoever way he was justified, his sons surely could not imagine but it must be the right way, nor should they seek another: now that Abraham was not justified by works, he proves (Romans 4:2), from an absurdity following upon it, that he would have just reason to glory; whereas no man ought to glory before God, but only in the Lord: and by a passage of Scripture, (Romans 4:3), to which he appeals, he makes it clearly appear that he was justified by faith, for that says, his faith was counted for righteousness. This case of accounting anything to another for righteousness, is illustrated by two sorts of persons, who have different things accounted to them, and in a different manner; to the worker, the reward is reckoned of debt, and not of grace, (Romans 4:4), but to the believer that works not, his faith, as Abraham's was, is counted for righteousness; whence it follows, that not the worker is justified by his works, but the believer by the righteousness of faith; and this is confirmed by a testimony of David in (Psalm 32:1,2), by which the apostle proves the imputation of righteousness without works, in which the happiness of men consists, (Romans 4:6-8), and shows, that this happiness does not belong to circumcised persons only, but to the uncircumcised also; and therefore is not by circumcision, but by faith, (Romans 4:9), and which he proves by observing the time when faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness; not when he was circumcised, but before, (Romans 4:10), the use of which circumcision to him was to assure him, that he should be the father of uncircumcised

Gentiles that believed, to whom righteousness should be imputed, as to him when he was uncircumcised, (<4411>Romans 4:11), who are described by their imitation of his faith, which he had, and exercised before his circumcision, (<4412>Romans 4:12). And this leads on to a fresh argument, proving justification to be by faith, and not by the works of the law, since the promise made to Abraham, and his seed, was not through the law, but the righteousness of faith; and consequently both his and their justification were not by the one, but by the other, (<4413>Romans 4:13), or, if otherwise, both the faithfulness of God, and the faith of his people, would be void, and the promise of grace of no effect, (<4414>Romans 4:14). And this is still further argued from the effect of the law working wrath, which, if justification was by it, it would never do, (<4415>Romans 4:15). The wisdom and goodness of God in giving faith, and not works, a concern in justification, are observed, (<4416>Romans 4:16), whereby it appears to be of free grace, faith only being a recipient, and what gives all the glory to God; and also the promise of eternal life through justification by free grace becomes sure to all the spiritual seed; who are distributed into two sorts, the believing Jews under the legal dispensation, and the believing Gentiles, under the Gospel dispensation; of both which Abraham was father; which is confirmed by a testimony out of (<0170>Genesis 17:4,5), whose faith is described by the object of it, the omnipotent God that quickens the dead, and calls things that are not, as though they were, (<4417>Romans 4:17), and by the nature of it, (<4418>Romans 4:18), believing in hope against hope, resting on the promise of God; and by the strength of it, being not at all weakened by considering, either his own case, or that of his wife's, (<4419>Romans 4:19), and was so far from being staggered through unbelief at these things, that it was strong in exercise, thereby glorifying God, the object of it, (<4420>Romans 4:20), nay, it rose up to a plerophory, a full assurance, (<4421>Romans 4:21), being built upon the power of a promising God; hence, as before observed, his faith was reckoned to him for righteousness, (<4422>Romans 4:22), And now in the same way that he was justified, all his children, his spiritual seed, are justified, whether they be Jews or Gentiles; for what is said concerning the imputation of the righteousness of faith to him, does not concern him only, (<4423>Romans 4:23), but all true believers also; whose faith is described by the object of it, him that raised up Christ from the dead, that is, God the Father, (<4424>Romans 4:24), who is supposed hereby to have been dead, and is represented as the Lord and Saviour of his people; and of whom a further account is given, (<4425>Romans 4:25), as being delivered into the hands of

men, of justice, and of death, for the sins of his people, which he took upon him, and bore, and made satisfaction for, and as being raised again for their justification; so that this is a benefit owing not to the works of men, but to what Christ has done and suffered in the room and stead of his people; which is what the apostle meant to bring this point unto; the blessed effects and consequences of which he relates in the next chapter.

Ver. 1. *What shall we say then*, etc..] The apostle having proved that there is no justification by the works of the law; to make this appear more clear and evident to the Jews, he instances in the greatest person of their nation, and for whom they had the greatest value and esteem,

Abraham, our father; who was not a righteous and good man, but the head of the Jewish nation; and, as the Syriac version here styles him, athbad açyr, "the head", or "chief of the fathers"; and so the Alexandrian copy, "our forefather": and was the first of the circumcision, and is described here by his relation to the Jews, "our father"; that is,

as pertaining to the flesh; or according to carnal descent, or natural generation and relation; for in a spiritual sense, or with respect to faith and grace, he was the father of others, even of all that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles: now the question put concerning him is, "what he, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?" for the phrase, "as pertaining to the flesh", may be connected with the word

found; and to find anything is by seeking to obtain, and enjoy it: and the sense of the whole is, did he find out the way of life, righteousness, and salvation by the mere hint of carnal reason? and did he obtain these things by his own strength? or were these acquired by his circumcision in the flesh, or by any other fleshly privilege he enjoyed? or was he justified before God by any services and performances of his, of whatsoever kind? There is indeed no express answer returned; but it is evident from what follows, that the meaning of the apostle is, that it should be understood in the negative.

Ver. 2. *For if Abraham were justified by works*, etc..] That Abraham was not, and could not be justified by works, is clear from hence, that if this was his case,

he hath whereof to glory; which will be allowed him before men, on account of his pious life and conversation:

but not before God; who saw all the iniquity of his heart, and was privy to all his failings and infirmities: besides, glorying before God in a man's own works, is contrary to the scheme and method of God's grace; is excluded by the doctrine of faith; nor is there any place for glorying before God but in Christ, and his righteousness: if therefore Abraham had not that of which he could glory before God, he could not be justified by works in his sight: but does not the Apostle James say that he was justified by works, (59021James 2:21)? To this it may be replied, that the two apostles, Paul and James, are not speaking of the same thing: Paul speaks of justification before God, James of justification before men; Paul speaks of the justification of the person, James of the justification of a man's cause, as the truth of his faith, or the uprightness of his conduct; Paul speaks of works, as the causes of justification, James of them as the effects and evidences of faith; Paul had to do with the self-righteous, who trusted in their own works for justification, James with Gnostics, who slighted and neglected the performance of them. These things considered, they will be found to agree.

Ver. 3. *For what saith the Scripture*? etc..] This answers to bytkd yam, "what is that which is written" [f50]? or what does the Scripture say? which is a way of speaking used by the Jews, when anything is proposed, which seems contrary to Scripture, as here justification by works does. A testimony from Scripture is here produced, proving that Abraham was justified by faith, and not by works: the place referred to is (01506Genesis 15:6);

Abraham believed God; the object of his faith and trust were not his riches, nor his righteousness, but Jehovah, the Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, styled in (01501Genesis 15:1), "the Word of the Lord", the essential Word of God, and called his "shield", and "exceeding great reward"; characters which are very applicable to Christ: and this faith of his in the Lord was not a mere assent to the promise of God, but a fiducial act of faith in him; and was not merely concerned with temporal, but with spiritual things, and particularly about Christ the promised seed:

and it was counted to him for righteousness, the meaning of which is not, that Abraham imputed righteousness to God, or celebrated his righteousness and faithfulness, as some; or that the world reckoned Abraham a righteous person, as others; but that God reckoned him righteous, or imputed it to him for righteousness: and the question is, what

the it is which was counted to him for righteousness? and that this is to be understood, hnmah l[, “concerning faith”, as R. Solomon Jarchi says, is out of question; for this is expressly said by the apostle, (<scripture_ref type="bible_ref">Romans 4:9</scripture_ref>). The only one is, whether it means the grace of faith by which he believed; or the object of faith on which he believed, and with which his faith was conversant: not the former, for that is not righteousness, nor accounted so; but is distinguished from it, and is that by which a person receives and lays hold on righteousness; besides, whatever may be alleged in favour of the imputation of Abraham's faith to himself for righteousness, it can never be thought to be imputed to others on that account; whereas the very selfsame it is imputed to others also; (see <scripture_ref type="bible_ref">Romans 4:24</scripture_ref>); it remains then that it was the promised seed, the Messiah, and his righteousness, which Abraham, by faith, looked unto, and believed in, that was made unto him righteousness by imputation. Now since so great and good a man as Abraham was not justified by works, but by faith in the righteousness of the Messiah, it follows, that none of his sons, nor any other person whatever, ought to seek for, or expect to be justified in any other way.

Ver. 4. *Now to him that worketh*, etc..] The apostle illustrates the former case by two sorts of persons in this and the next verse, who have different things accounted to them, and in a different manner. The one is represented as working, the other not. By the worker is meant, not one that works from, and upon principles of grace. The regenerate man is disposed to work for God; the man that has the Spirit of God is capable of working; he that has the grace of Christ, and strength from him, can work well; he that believes in Christ, works in a right way; he that loves Christ, works freely, and from a right principle; and he that has Christ's glory in view, works to a right end: but the worker here, is one that works upon nature's principles, and with selfish views; one that works in the strength of nature, trusting to, and glorying in what he does; seeking righteousness by his work, and working for eternal life and salvation. Now let it be supposed, that such a worker not only thinks he does, but if it could be, really does all the works of the law, yields a perfect obedience to it; what

is the reward that is, and will be

reckoned to him? There is no reward due to the creature's work, though ever so perfect, arising front any desert or dignity in itself: there may be a reward by promise and compact; God may promise a reward to encourage to obedience, as he does in the law, which is not eternal life; for that is the

free gift of God, and is only brought to light in the Gospel; and though heaven is called a reward, yet not of man's obedience, but Christ's; but admitting heaven itself to be the reward promised to the worker, in what manner must that be reckoned to him?

not of grace: for grace and works can never agree together; for if the reward is reckoned for the man's works, then it is not of grace, “otherwise work is no more work”, (<4506>Romans 11:6); and if it is of grace, then not for his works, “otherwise grace is no more grace”, (<4506>Romans 11:6); it remains therefore, that if it is reckoned for his works, it must be

of debt: it must be his due, as wages are to an hireling. Now this was not Abraham's case, which must have been, had he been justified by works; he had a reward reckoned to him, and accounted his, which was God himself, “I am thy shield, and exceeding, great reward”, (<0150>Genesis 15:1); which must be reckoned to him, not of debt, but of grace; wherefore it follows, that he was justified, not by works, but by the grace of God imputed to him; that which his faith believed in for righteousness. The distinction of a reward of grace, and of debt, was known to the Jews; a the one they called srp, the other rkç: the former[f51] they say is lwmgh, “a benefit”, which is freely of grace bestowed on an undeserving person, or one he is not obliged to; the other is what is given, ^ydb, “of debt”, in strict justice.

Ver. 5. *But to him that worketh not*, etc..] Not that the believer does not work at all, but not from such principles, and with such views as the other; he does not work in order to obtain life and salvation; he does not seek for justification by his doings:

but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly: or that ungodly one: particular reference is had to Abraham, who in his state of unregeneracy was an ungodly person; as all God's elect are in a state of nature, and are such when God justifies them, being without a righteousness of their own; wherefore he imputes the righteousness of another, even that of his own Son, unto them: and though he justifies the ungodly, he does not justify their ungodliness, but them from it; nor will he, nor does he leave them to live and die in it; now to him that worketh not, that is perfect righteousness; or has no opportunity of working at all; or what he does, he does not do, that he might be justified by it; but exercises faith on God as justifying persons, who, like himself, are sinners, ungodly and destitute of a righteousness:

his faith is counted for righteousness; not the act, but the object of it; which was Abraham's case, and therefore was not justified by works. The Vulgate Latin version here adds, “according to the purpose of the grace of God”.

Ver. 6. *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man*, etc..] the apostle having instanced in Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, cites some passages from David, king of Israel, a person of great note and esteem among the Jews, in favour of the doctrine he is establishing; who in a very proper and lively manner describes the happiness of such persons:

unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. This righteousness cannot be the righteousness of the law, or man's obedience to it; for that is a righteousness with works, is a man's own, and not imputed; and indeed is not a righteousness in the sight of God: nor does man's blessedness lie in, or come by it; no man is, or can be instilled by it, nor saved by it, or attain to heaven and eternal happiness by the means of it; but the righteousness here spoken of is the righteousness of Christ, called the righteousness of God; and is better than that of angels or men; is complete and perfect; by which the law is honoured, and justice is satisfied. This is freely bestowed, and graciously “imputed” by God. Just in the same way his righteousness becomes ours, as Adam's sin did, which is by imputation; or in the same way that our sins became Christ's, his righteousness becomes ours; and as we have no righteousness of our own when God justifies us, this must be done by the righteousness of another; and that can be done no other way by the righteousness of another, than by imputing it to us: and which is done “without works”; not without the works of Christ, of which this righteousness consists; but without the works of the creature, or any consideration of them, which are utterly excluded from justification; for if these came into account, it would not be of grace, and boasting would not be removed. Now such who have this righteousness thus imputed to them, are happy persons; they are justified from all sin, and freed from all condemnation; their persons and services are acceptable to God; it will be always well with them; they are heirs of glory, and shall enjoy it.

Ver. 7. *Saying, blessed are they*, etc..] These words are cited from (¹⁹⁰¹Psalm 32:1), and contain the proof of the happiness of justified persons. In this citation the singular number is changed into the plural, to take in all sorts of men, Jews and Gentiles, and very agreeably to the sense

of the original; for the word ryçа may be rendered “blessed are they”, or, “O the blessednesses”; that is, of everyone of them,

whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered: such whom God justifies by imputing the righteousness of his Son to them, he removes their iniquities from them, which is meant by their being “forgiven”, and that “as far as the east is from the west”, (<19A312>Psalm 103:12); he casts them behind his back, (<233817>Isaiah 38:17), and into the depths of the sea, (<330719>Micah 7:19), so that they shall never be found more: such whom he clothes with the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, (<236110>Isaiah 61:10), “their sins are covered”; from the eye of divine justice, and shall never be seen more, or be brought against them to their condemnation, and therefore must be happy persons. The [f52] Jews tell us, that

> “on the day of atonement Satan comes to accuse Israel, and he particularizes their sins, and the holy blessed God he particularizes their good works, and takes a pair of balances, and puts their sins against their good works, and weighs the one against the other; and when the two scales of the balances are alike, Satan goes to bring in other sins to overweigh; what does the holy blessed God do? he takes the sins out of the scale, and hides them wlç yrypрwp tjt, “under his purple garment”; and when Satan comes and finds no iniquity there, as it is said “the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none”, (<245020>Jeremiah 50:20); and when Satan sees this, he says before him, Lord of the world, “thou hast taken away the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin”, (<198502>Psalm 85:2). Selah.”

The purple garment they explain by wlç µymjr lç çwblm, “his garment of mercy”; which is true of the mercy of God covering the sins of his people, through the purple blood of his Son; which is the purple covering of Christ, (<220310>Song of Solomon 3:10), under which the saints go safe to glory, and by which blood their crimson and scarlet sins are blotted out, so as never to be seen more.

Ver. 8. *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin*.] As he does not to those whom he justifies in Christ, and by his righteousness; for the sins of such he has imputed to his Son, as their surety; and he has bore them, took them away, having made full satisfaction for them; so that these

persons will never be charged with them: they now appear before the throne without fault, and are blameless and irreproveable in the sight of God, and therefore must be eternally happy; for he will never think of their sins any more to their hurt; he will remember them no more; he “will never reckon them to them”, but acquit them from them, justify and accept them; wherefore they must be secure from wrath and condemnation, enjoy much peace and comfort now, and be happy hereafter.

Ver. 9. *[Cometh] this blessedness then upon the circumcision [only]*? etc..] That is, upon the circumcised Jews; are they the only persons that partake of this happiness? the word “only” is rightly supplied, and is in the Claromontane exemplar used by Beza, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions:

or upon the uncircumcision also? upon the uncircumcised Gentiles; do not they likewise share in this blessedness?

for we say, that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. The design of these words with the following, is to prove that the blessing of justification belongs to Gentiles as well as Jews, and that it is by faith, and not by circumcision; which is done by observing the state and condition Abraham was in when justified.

Ver. 10. *How was it then reckoned*? etc..] The Arabic version adds, “and when”; and the Ethiopic version reads it, “when was Abraham justified?” expressing the sense, not the words of the original text, with which agree the following questions:

when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? that is, was he justified, or his faith reckoned to him for righteousness, when he was a circumcised, or an uncircumcised person?

not in circumcision; or when he was circumcised; for when it was said of him, that “he believed in the Lord”, and “he counted it to him for righteousness”, (<01506>Genesis 15:6), he was then uncircumcised, and remained so many years after: for this was before the birth of Ishmael, and Ishmael was “thirteen” years of age when he and his father Abraham were circumcised; so that it must be “fourteen” years, or thereabout, before his circumcision, that this declaration of his being a justified person was made; wherefore the apostle rightly adds,

but in uncircumcision; or whilst an uncircumcised person: hence it clearly appears that circumcision could not be the cause of his justification, since it followed it; and if Abraham when uncircumcised was a justified person, as it is certain he was, why may not uncircumcised Gentiles be justified also? and especially when it is observed, that the covenant made with Abraham when uncircumcised, included the Gentiles; (see <0128>Genesis 12:3 17:4-6).

Ver. 11. *And he received the sign of circumcision*, etc..] Or "the sign circumcision", as the Syriac version reads it, and so the Alexandrian copy, and two of Stephens's; that is, Abraham received at the hands of God, the commandment of circumcision, which was a "sign" or token of the covenant; not of grace, but of that peculiar covenant God made with Abraham and his natural seed, concerning their enjoyment of the land of Canaan; and which was a distinctive sign or badge, which distinguished the posterity of Abraham from other people, and was also a typical one; not of baptism, for circumcision was peculiar to Abraham's natural seed, whereas baptism is not, but was administered to Gentiles as well as Jews; circumcision was confined to males only, not so baptism; circumcision bears no likeness to, nor any resemblance with baptism, whereas there is always some likeness and agreement between the type and the antitype; besides, if this had been the case, circumcision would have ceased when baptism took place, whereas it is certain it did not, but continued in full force with the rest of the ceremonies until the death of Christ; and it is as certain, that "baptism" was administered and continued to be administered three or four years before that time; which fully demonstrates the falsehood of that assertion, that baptism succeeds or comes in the room of circumcision; whereas baptism was in full force before circumcision was out of date: but circumcision was a typical sign of Christ, as all the ceremonies of the law were, and of the shedding of his blood, to cleanse from all sin, original and actual, and also of the circumcision of the heart. And was, moreover,

a seal of the righteousness of faith; or which "sign" was "a seal"; and so it signifies the same as before; σημεια ουτω λεγουσι τας σφραγιδας, "signs, so they call seals", says Harpocratian [f53], and "to be signed", he says, is used, "instead of being sealed": or it may be expressive of something else, as that circumcision was a seal, not for secrecy, but for certainty; it being a confirmation, not merely of the sincerity of Abraham's faith, but of his justifying righteousness, which was not his faith, but that which his faith looked to; and

which he had, both faith and righteousness,

yet being uncircumcised: whence it follows, that he was not justified by his circumcision, but by a righteousness which he had before he was circumcised, or otherwise his circumcision could not have been a seal of it: though this clause, "which he had, yet being uncircumcised", may be rendered, "which should be in the uncircumcision", that is, in the uncircumcised Gentiles; and the sense be, that circumcision was a seal to Abraham, and gave assurance to him that he should be the father of many nations in a spiritual sense; and that the righteousness of faith which he had, should also come upon, and be imputed to the uncircumcised Gentiles; and accordingly it may be observed, that this seal was continued in full force on his natural seed, until this promise began to take place, and then it was abolished: this seal was broken off when the middle wall of partition was broken down, and the word of righteousness and faith, or the Gospel preaching justification by the righteousness of Christ, was ordered to be published to the Gentile world. It may be inquired whether circumcision being called a seal, will prove that baptism is a seal of the covenant? I answer, that circumcision was only a seal to Abraham of a peculiar covenant made with him, and of a particular promise made to him, and was it to be admitted a seal of the covenant of grace, it will not prove baptism to be such; since, as has been observed, baptism does not succeed it in place, in time, and use; and could this be allowed that it succeeds it, and is a seal of the righteousness of faith, as that was, it can only be a seal to them that have both faith and righteousness, and not to them that have neither; it would only at most be a seal to believers. But, alas! not ordinances, but other things more valuable than they, are the seals of the covenant, and of believers; the blood of Christ is the seal, and the only seal of the covenant of grace, by which its promises and blessings are ratified and confirmed; and the Holy Spirit is the only earnest, pledge, seal, and sealer of the saints, until the day of redemption. The apostle uses the word "seal" concerning circumcision, it being a word his countrymen made use of when they spoke of it, thus paraphrasing on (Song of Solomon 3:8); they say [f54],

> "everyone of them was sealed, hlym tmyt j, "with the seal of circumcision" upon their flesh, as Abraham was sealed in his flesh:"

that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that is, his circumcision was a seal unto him that he should be

so, which explains and confirms the sense of the former clause; not a father of the uncircumcised Gentiles by natural generation, for so he was only the father of the Jews, but of them as they were believers; and not so called because he was the author of their faith, but because they have the same sort of faith he had:

that righteousness might be imputed to them also; not Abraham's faith and righteousness, nor their own, but the righteousness of Christ received by faith, which is unto all, and upon all them that believe, without any difference of Jew or Gentile. Now when the apostle styles Abraham the father of "all" believers, even of uncircumcised ones, he says no other than what the Jews frequently own. Says one [f55] of them, speaking of the Ishmaelites;

> "they are the seed of Abraham, who was µynymamh çar, "the head of them that believe?""

and says [f56] another,

> "Hagar might bring the firstfruits, and read, as it is said to Abraham, "a father of, many nations have I made thee", (<011705>Genesis 17:5); for he is wlwk µlw[h lkl ba, "the father of the whole world", who enter under the wings of the Shekinah;"

and says the same writer elsewhere [f57], having mentioned the above passage,

> "they said in times past, thou wast the father of the Syrians, but now thou art "the father of the whole world"; wherefore every stranger may say this, "as thou hast sworn to our fathers", (<330720>Micah 7:20); for Abraham was "the father of the whole world"; seeing, hnwma dml, "he has taught the true faith"."

The apostle reasons on what they themselves allow, to prove that the blessedness of justification comes not only upon the Jews, but upon the Gentiles also.

Ver. 12. *And the father of circumcision*, etc..] So the Jews call Abraham µylwmynh çar [f58], "the head of those that are circumcised"; and µylwml çar [f59], "the head to them that are circumcised"; but the apostle here says, he is a father

to them who are not of the circumcision only; not to the Jews only, in a spiritual sense, and not to all of them, since some were “of Israel”, who were not Israel, not Israelites indeed, or true believers;

but [to such] also [who] walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised; that is, who have the same faith he had; imitate and follow him in the exercise of faith; walk by faith, as he did when he was uncircumcised, as they are; and so the Jews say [f60],

> “Abraham is the father of all, wtnwmab wyrja µyab, “that go after him in his faith”.”

Ver. 13. *For the promise that he should be heir of the world*, etc..] This promise is thought by some to refer to that of his being “the father of many nations”, (<01704>Genesis 17:4,5 <450417>Romans 4:17,18); by whom the Gentiles are particularly meant, who are sometimes called “the world”, and “the whole world”, or the elect of God, the believing part of the world; whether among Jews or Gentiles, who sometimes go by the name of “the world” in Scripture: but to this it may be objected, that the promise here spoken of is made to Abraham's seed, as well as to himself; by which is meant not the Messiah, who is indeed heir of the world, and all things in it, but all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles; as appears from (<450416>Romans 4:16); and therefore cannot be both heirs and inheritance too. Others think the land of Canaan is designed, and by a synecdoche, a part of the world is put for the whole world; but that land is never so called, and, besides, the promise of it belonged to those of the law, and to them only, contrary to what the apostle argues, (<450414>Romans 4:14,16). Others therefore consider Canaan as a type of heaven, which Abraham and his spiritual seed are heirs of by promise. But rather, by “the world” here, is meant, both this world and that which is to come; Abraham and all believers are the “heirs” of this world, and of all things in it; “all things” are theirs, and, among the rest, the world, Christ being theirs, and they being Christ's; he is heir of all things, and they are joint heirs with him; and how little soever they may enjoy of it now, the time is coming, when they, by virtue of their right, “shall inherit the earth”; (see <193709>Psalm 37:9,11); and now they have as much of it as is necessary, and with a blessing, and which the Jews call their “world”. It is a saying in their Talmud [f61], Æyyjb hart Æmlw[, “thou shall see thy world” in thy lifetime; which the gloss explains, “thou shalt find”, or enjoy

all thy necessities, or what is needful for thee; and of Abraham they say [f62], that

> “he was the foundation of the world, and that for his sake the world was created;”

and introduce God saying of him thus [f63]

> “as I am the only one in my world, so he is the only one, wml w[b, “in his world”.”

And as he and all the saints are heirs of this world, so of the world to come, the future salvation, the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, never fading, and reserved in the heavens; for they are heirs of God himself, and shall inherit all things: now this large and comprehensive promise, which takes in the things of time and eternity,

[was] not to Abraham, or to his seed through the law: not through the law of circumcision, or on the score of their obedience to that, for this promise was made before that was enjoined; (see <01212>Genesis 12:2,3); nor through the law of Moses, which was not as yet given; nor through the law of nature, nor by any righteousness of the law;

but through the righteousness of faith: by virtue of which they have “all things that pertain to life and godliness”, (<610103>2 Peter 1:3); and have “the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come”, (<540408>1 Timothy 4:8); enjoy with a blessing what they now have, and have a right and title to the heavenly glory.

Ver. 14. *For if they which are of the law be heirs*, etc..] That is, if the Jews who are under the law, and are seeking for righteousness and life by the works of it, should, on the account of their obedience to it, be heirs of the grace of life and of glory,

faith is made void; for if the right to the inheritance is by the works of the law, there is no room for faith; that can be of no use or service;

and the promise made of none effect: if salvation is by works, it is to no purpose for God to promise, or men to believe; for the thing promised depends not upon God's promise, but upon man's obedience to the law; and if that is not perfectly observed, as it cannot possibly be, then the promise of God stands for nothing, and is in course made void. The apostle here argues from the absurdities which follow upon the doctrine of justification

by works, as he does from the different effects of the law, in the following verse.

Ver. 15. *Because the law worketh wrath*, etc..] Not the wrath of man, though that is sometimes stirred up through the prohibitions of the law, to which the carnal mind of man is enmity, but the wrath of God the law is so far from justifying sinners, that it curses and condemns them; and when it comes into the heart and is let into the conscience of a sinner, it fills with terrible apprehensions of the wrath of God, and a fearful looking for of his judgment and fiery indignation:

for where no law is, there is no transgression; hryb[alw hwxm al wnyaç [f64]; a sort of a proverbial expression: had the law of Moses not been given, there was the law of nature which sin is a transgression of; but the law of Moses was added for the better discovery and detection of sin, which would not have been so manifest without it, and which may be the apostle's sense; that where there is no law, there is no knowledge of any transgression; and so the Ethiopic version reads the words, “if the law had not come, there would have been none who would have known sin”; but the law is come, and there is a law by which is the knowledge of sin, and therefore no man can be justified by it; since that convinces him of sin, and fills him with a sense of divine wrath on account of it.

Ver. 16. *Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace*, etc..] Meaning either the promise of being heir of the world, or the inheritance itself, or adoption which gives heirship, or remission of Sin, or the blessing of justification, either and all of these are of faith; not as the cause or condition of them, but as the means of God's fixing and appointing to be the recipient of all and each of them: which is done, “that it might be by grace”; appear to be of the free grace and favour of God, as each of these blessings are: forasmuch as every blessing is received by faith, it is manifest it must be by grace; since faith itself is a gift of God's grace, and lies purely in receiving favours at the hand of God, to whom it gives all the glory of them: and this is done with a further view,

to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. The promise of the above blessings, particularly of the inheritance which is made in the covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure, and which could not be disannulled by the law that came after it; this being by faith and of grace,

and not of works, nor at all depending upon them, becomes sure to all believers, to all Abraham's spiritual seed:

not to that only which is of the law; to the Jews, who are said to be of the law, in distinction to the Gentiles who were without it; and designs such of them as were believers in Christ, and to whom the Gospel was the power of God unto salvation; to these the promise was, and was sure, and not to them only:

but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; to the Gentiles, who though they are not by natural descent from Abraham, yet are of the same faith with him, and so are his seed in a spiritual sense:

who is the father of us all; whether Jews or Gentiles, who are Christ's, and so Abraham's spiritual seed, and heirs of eternal life, according to the free promise of grace.

Ver. 17. *As it is written I have made thee a father of many nations*, etc..] The passage referred to, is in (<01704>Genesis 17:4,5); which proves him to be a father not of the Jews only, since they cannot be called “many nations”, but of the Gentiles also; and which must be understood in a spiritual sense, for Abraham was the father of them,

before him whom he believed, [even] God; that is, he was so, either in the sight of God, who sees not as man sees; in his account, he was the father of many nations, long before he really in fact was; or “over against” or “like unto him”, as the word may signify: as God was the Father of many nations, so was Abraham, though not in such a sense as he is; and as God is the Father of us all that believe, so was Abraham; there is some little likeness and resemblance in this between them, though not sameness. The object of his faith is described as he,

who quickeneth the dead: meaning either the dead body of Abraham and Sarah's womb; or Isaac, who was given up for dead; or the Gentiles, who were dead in trespasses and sins; or rather the dead bodies of men at the last day, a work which none but the almighty God can effect; the consideration of which is sufficient to engage faith in the promises of God, and a dependence on him for the fulfilment or them: and who stands further described as he, who

calleth those things which be not, as though they were; so he called Abraham the father of many nations, when he was not in fact, as if he really

was; and the Gentiles his seed and offspring, before they were; and when he comes effectually to call them by his grace, they are represented as "things which are not", whom he called, "to bring to nought things that are", (40121 Corinthians 1:28); they were not his people, nor his children, and he called them so, and by his grace made them so, and made them appear to be so; for as in creation so in regeneration, God calls and brings that into being which before was not: and the phrase seems to be an allusion to the creation of all things out of nothing; and it is a Rabbinical one, for so the Jews speaking of the creation say [f65]

> "ˆya la arwq, "he calls to that which is not", and it is excluded; (i.e. all things are excluded out of it, as a chicken out of an egg;) and to that which is, and it is established, and to the world, and it is stretched out."

Ver. 18. *Who against hope believed in hope*, etc..] Abraham believed the promise of God,

that he might become the father of many nations, being assisted by a supernatural aid: "in hope"; of the fulfilment of it by the grace and power of God: "against hope": against all visible, rational grounds of hope; Sarah's womb and his own body being dead, but inasmuch as God had said it, he believed:

according to that which is spoken, so shall thy seed be; his faith rested upon the word of God, which showed the nature of it, and that it was of the right kind.

Ver. 19. *And being not weak in faith*, etc..] Abraham was not weak in the exercise of his faith, on the promise of God; nor was his faith weakened about the accomplishment of it, neither by the length of time after the promise was made, nor by the seeming insuperable difficulties of nature which attended it; for

he considered not his own body now dead. The Alexandrian copy reads without the negative, "he considered his own body now dead", and so the Syriac version: which makes his faith the greater, that though he did consider his case, yet his faith was not weakened: the phrase, "his body now dead", is an "euphemism" of the "merebrum virile", which by the Jews, when unfit for generation, is called tm rba, "merebrum emortuum" [f66]:

when he was about an hundred years old; not being quite an hundred years of age, wanting a year or thereabout:

neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; how unfit she was to conceive and bear children: now though he might consider these things in his mind, yet they did not dwell upon his mind, nor he upon them; at least he did not consider them, so as to distrust the divine promise.

Ver. 20. *He staggered not at the promise of God*, etc..] There is no reason to stagger at, or hesitate about any of the promises of God, since they are made by him that cannot lie; his faithfulness is engaged to perform them; with him all things are possible; every promise is in Christ, yea and amen, and never did any fail; and yet so it is, that some of God's children,

through unbelief, do stagger at the promises of God; thinking either that they are too great for them, or demur upon them through difficulties which attend them:

but so did not Abraham, he

was strong in faith; nothing moved him, no difficulties discouraged him, he made no demur upon the promise, nor had the least hesitation in his mind about the accomplishment of it; but was fully assured that so it would be, as God had said; and thus he was

giving glory to God; ascribing to him the glory of his veracity, faithfulness, power, grace, and goodness, as all such who are strong in faith do; such persons bring the most glory to God, and are the most comfortable in their own souls. This phrase, atwnmyhmb apqttal, "to be strong" or strengthened, or strengthen themselves "in faith", is to be met with in Jewish writings [f67], and is particularly used of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; all the tribes of Israel are not said to be µtnwmab µyqzj, "strong in their faith"; only the tribe of Levi, when Moses stood in the gate and said, "who is on the Lord's side, let him come unto me", (<022226>Exodus 32:26): whoever is wtnwmab qzj, "strong in his faith" [f68]; and there were none in all Israel but the tribe of Levi, who were "strong in their faith".

Ver. 21. *And being fully persuaded*, etc..] He had not only faith, a strong faith, but full assurance of faith:

that what he [God] had promised; though it was so long ago, and there were so many difficulties in the way;

he was able, being the Lord God Almighty,

to perform; so his faith rested upon the power of God, with whom nothing is impossible.

Ver. 22. *And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness*.] Not because his faith was strong, and he had a full assurance of it, but because it was right, resting on the promise of God, and relying upon his power and faithfulness to perform it; for though the righteousness of faith is not imputed to any sort of believers, not to mere nominal ones, yet to all such as have true faith, though it may be but weak; for faith, as to nature, kind, and object, though not as to degree, is the same in all true believers, and the same righteousness is imputed to one as to another.

Ver. 23. *Now it was not written for his sake alone*, etc..] This was not left on the sacred records, (<01506>Genesis 15:6),

that it was imputed to him; purely on his account, merely for his sake, as an encomium of his faith, and an honourable testimony to it, and for the encouragement of it; though this was doing him a very great honour, and was one design of it.

Ver. 24. *But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed*, etc..] What was written in the books of the Old Testament, was not written merely on account of them who are the subjects thereof, but for the use, learning, instruction and profit of saints under the New Testament dispensation; and particularly this concerning the pulsation of Abraham's faith for righteousness, or of the imputation of the righteousness of faith unto him for justification; which was not Abraham's faith, but that “righteousness” which his faith looked to, and laid hold on: (see <45412>Romans 4:12); for Abraham's faith itself could never be reckoned for righteousness to another, nor indeed was it to himself; but such as believe as Abraham did, they have the same righteousness imputed to them as he had; and truly of the same kind is the faith of Abraham, who believed in “God that quickeneth the dead”, (<45417>Romans 4:17); and that of ours:

if, or “seeing”

we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; which descriptive of the faith of New Testament believers, and of the object of it; (see <4510>Romans 10:9,10); and which object of faith is further described in (<4525>Romans 4:25).

Ver. 25. *Who was delivered for our offences*, etc..] Christ was delivered into the hands of men, and into the hands of justice, and unto death; and he was delivered by men, by Judas, to the chief priests, and by them to Pilate, and by Pilate to the Jews and Roman soldiers to be put to death; and he was also delivered up by his Father into the hands of justice and death, according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge; but not without his own free consent, who voluntarily laid down his life, and gave himself a ransom for his people: he was delivered to death, not for any offences of his own, for he committed none; nor for the offences of angels, for these were not spared; nor for the offences, of all men, since all will not be saved; but for the offences of all God's elect: he was delivered for these, as the causes of his death, and as the end for which he died; namely, to make reconciliation, atonement, and satisfaction for them; which shows the love of the Father in delivering him up, and the grace and condescension of the Son in being willing to be delivered up on such an account: the nature and end of Christ's death may be learnt from hence, that he died not merely as a martyr, or as an example; nor only for the good, but in the room and stead of his people: we may also learn from hence the nature of sin, the strictness of justice, the obligations we lie under to Christ, and how many favours and blessings we may expect from God through him: who also

was raised again for our justification; he was raised again from the dead by his Father, to whom this is often ascribed; and by himself, by his own power, which proves him to be the mighty God; and this was done not only that he might live an immortal and glorious life in our nature, having finished the work he undertook and came about, but for “our justification”. He died in the room and stead of his people, and by dying made satisfaction for their sins; he rose again as their head and representative, and was legally discharged, acquitted, and justified, and they in him. Christ's resurrection did not procure the justification of his people, that was done by his obedience and death; but was for the testification of it, that it might fully appear that sin was atoned for, and an everlasting righteousness was brought in; and for the application of it, or that Christ might live and see his righteousness imputed, and applied to all those for whom he had wrought it out.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 5

The Apostle having clearly stated, and fully proved the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of faith, proceeds to observe the comfortable fruits and effects of this great blessing, known and enjoyed by the believer; as also the source and spring of it, the love of God, which appears in the death of Christ, in the room and stead of his people, which is the foundation on which it stands; and likewise gives an illustration of this benefit, by comparing the two heads, Adam and Christ, together. The first fruit and effect of justification, as a benefit perceived and enjoyed by faith, is peace with God through Christ, (Romans 5:1). The next is access through the Mediator to the throne of grace, where justified ones stand with a holy boldness and confidence, and the third is a cheerful hope of eternal glory, (Romans 5:2), yea, such not only have joy in the hope of what is to come, but glory even in present afflictions; which prevents an objection that might be made to the above mentioned fruits and effects of justification, taken from the tribulations which saints are exercised with: and what occasions glorying even in these, is the sanctified use, or happy produce of afflictions, these being the means of exercising and increasing patience; by means of which a larger experience of divine things is gained; and through that, hope is confirmed, and all influenced by a plenteous discovery of the love of God to the soul, by the Spirit, (Romans 5:4,5), an instance of which love is given, (Romans 5:6), in Christ's dying for men; which love is enhanced by the character and condition of the persons for whom Christ died, being ungodly, and without strength; and by the time of it, being due time: then follows a further illustration of this love, by comparing it with what instances of love are to be found among men, (Romans 5:7), by which it appears to be unparalleled; since scarcely for a righteous man, peradventure for a good man, one would die, yet no man dies for the ungodly, as Christ did: hence as his, so his Father's love is highly commended, by giving him up to death for persons while in such a state and condition, and under such a character, (Romans 5:8), and justification now springing from this love, and being founded on the death of Christ, hence follow a security from wrath to come, (Romans 5:9), a

certainty of salvation, (Romans 5:10), which is strongly argued from the different characters those Christ died for bear, before and after reconciliation, and from the death to the life of Christ, (Romans 5:10), and also a rejoicing and glorying: in God through Christ, full expiation being made by his blood for sin, and this received by faith, (Romans 5:11), and then the apostle proceeds to compare the two heads, Adam and Christ, together; the design of which is to show the largeness and freeness of the love and grace of God; how righteousness for justification comes by Christ; and how the persons, before described as sinners and ungodly, came to be in such a condition; and that is through the sin of the first man, in whom they all were, and in whom they all sinned and died, (Romans 5:12), wherefore there must be a law before the law of Moses, or there could have been no sin, (Romans 5:13), but that sin was in being, and was reckoned and imputed to the posterity of Adam, is clear from this single instance, death's power even over infants, from the times of Adam to Moses, (Romans 5:14) who therefore must be a public head, representing all his posterity; so that they were involved in the guilt of his sin, which brought death upon them; and in this he was a type of Christ, as is asserted in the same verse; that so as Adam was but one, and by one sin of his conveyed death to all his seed; so Christ, the Mediator, is but one, and by his one obedience conveys righteousness and, life to all his seed: and yet in some things there is a dissimilitude; sin and death, through the first man, are conveyed in a natural way to his offspring, but righteousness and life from Christ in a way of grace, (Romans 5:15), It was one offence of Adam's, which brought condemnation and death upon all his posterity; but the righteousness of Christ is not only a justification of his seed from that one offence, but from all others, (Romans 5:16), the one is unto death, the other unto life; and greater is the efficacy in the one to quicken, than in the other to kill, (Romans 5:17), where a repetition is made of what is said in (Romans 5:15), with an explanation, and the similitude between the two heads is clearly expressed, (Romans 5:18), where condemnation on account of the sin of Adam, and justification through the righteousness of Christ, are opposed to each other; and both as extending to the whole of their several respective offspring, condemnation through Adam's offence to all his natural seed, and justification of life through Christ's righteousness to all his spiritual seed; which is still more fitly and clearly expressed in (Romans 5:19), where the way and manner in which the one become sinners, and the other righteous, is plainly directed to; that it is, by the imputation of Adam's disobedience to the one,

and by the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the other: in (Romans 5:20), an objection is obviated, which might be formed thus; if justification is by the grace of God, and through the obedience and righteousness of Christ, then the law is of no use; what purpose does that serve? what occasion was there for its entrance? The apostle replies, that though justification is not by it, yet a good end is answered by its entrance; for hereby sin is more known to be what it is, both original and actual; and the grace of God appears more abundant in justification from it, and in the pardon of it; and this grace is further illustrated in (Romans 5:21), by comparing sin and grace together, and the different effects of their empire over the sons of men; the one reigning unto death, the other reigning through righteousness to eternal life by Christ.

Ver. 1. *Therefore being justified by faith*, etc..] Not that faith is at the first of our justification; for that is a sentence which passed in the mind of God from all eternity, and which passed on Christ, and on all the elect considered in him, when he rose from the dead; (see Romans 4:25); nor is it the chief, or has it the chief place in justification; it is not the efficient cause of it, it is God that justifies, and not faith; it is not the moving cause of it, that is the free grace of God; it is not the matter of it, that is the righteousness of Christ: we are not justified by faith, either as God's work in us, for, as such, it is a part of sanctification; nor as our work or act, as exercised by us, for then we should be justified by works, by something of our own, and have whereof to glory; but we are justified by faith objectively and relatively, as that relates to the object Christ, and his righteousness; or as it is a means of our knowledge, and perception of our justification by Christ's righteousness, and of our enjoying the comfort of it; and so we come to

have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle having set the doctrine of justification in a clear light, and fully proved that it is not by the works of men, but by the righteousness of God; and having mentioned the several causes of it, proceeds to consider its effects, among which, peace with God stands in the first place; and is so called, to distinguish it from peace with men, which persons, though justified by faith in Christ's righteousness, may not have; but are sure, having a sense of this, to find peace with God, even with him against whom they have sinned, whose law they have transgressed, and whose justice they have affronted; reconciliation for sin being made, and a justifying righteousness brought in, and this imputed and applied to them, they have that “peace of God”, that

tranquillity and serenity of mind, the same with “peace with God” here, “which passes all understanding”, (Philippians 4:7); and is better experienced than expressed: and this is all through our Lord Jesus Christ; it springs from his atoning sacrifice, and precious blood, by which he has made peace; and is communicated through the imputation of his righteousness, and the application of his blood; and is only felt and enjoyed in a way of believing, by looking to him as the Lord our righteousness.

Ver. 2. *By whom also we have access by faith*, etc..] The access here spoken of is not to the blessing of justification; for though that is a grace which we have access to by Christ, and come at the knowledge of by faith, and enjoy the comfort of through it; and is a grace in which persons stand, and from which they shall never fall, and lays a solid foundation for rejoicing in hope of eternal glory; yet this sense would make the apostle guilty of a great tautology; and besides, he is not speaking of that blessing itself, but of its effects; and here of one distinct from “peace with God”, before mentioned, as the word also manifestly shows: nor does it design any other blessing of grace, as pardon, adoption, sanctification, etc.. and an access thereunto; not unto the free grace, favour, and good will of God, the source of all blessings; but to the throne of grace, which may be called

that grace, because of its name, for God, as the God of all grace, sits upon it; it is an high favour to be admitted to it; it is grace persons come thither for, and which they may expect to find there: and

in, or “at”

which we stand; which denotes boldness, courage, and intrepidity, and a freedom from a servile fear and bashful spirit, and a continued constant attendance at it; all which is consistent with reverence, humility, and submission to the will of God. Now access to the throne of grace, and standing at that, are “by” Christ. There is no access to God in our own name and righteousness, and upon the foot of our own works. Christ is the only way of access to God, and acceptance with him; he is the Mediator between God and us; he introduces into his Father's presence, gives audience at his throne, and renders both persons and services acceptable unto him: and this access is also “by faith”; and that both in God the Father, as our covenant God and Father; in faith of interest in his love and favour; believing his power and faithfulness, his fulness and sufficiency, and that he is a God hearing and answering prayer: and also in the Lord Jesus Christ; in his person for acceptance; in his righteousness for justification; in

his blood for pardon; and in his fulness for every supply: and such as have access to the throne of grace by faith in Christ, being comfortably persuaded of their justification before God, through his righteousness imputed to them, can and do

rejoice in hope of the glory of God; which is another effect of justification by faith: by the “glory of God”; which is another effect of justification by faith: by the “glory of God”, is not meant the essential glory of God; nor that which we ought to seek in all that we are concerned, and which we are to ascribe unto him on the account of his perfections and works; but that everlasting glory and happiness which he has prepared for his people, has promised to them, and has called them to by Christ, and will bestow upon them; of which he has given them a good hope through grace; and in the hope and believing views of which they can, and do rejoice, even amidst a variety of afflictions and tribulations in this world. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “in hope of the glory of the children of God”; eternal glory being proper to them.

Ver. 3. *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also*, etc..] The tribulations of the saints are many and various, through the hatred of the world, the temptations of Satan, their own corruptions; and are the will of their heavenly Father; what Christ has foretold, and they expect; and here particularly design such as are for Christ's sake, which being supported under, and carried through, they glory in: not that these are desirable in themselves, and to the flesh; but they glory in them as they are for Christ's sake, and in a good cause; as they are trials of grace, and of use for the exercise of it: and as they are in the exercise of grace, amidst these tribulations, and are comforted under them, and are helped to have regard to the heavenly glory. The ground of which glorying is, that these afflictions are the means of promoting patience, experience, and hope:

knowing this, that tribulation worketh patience; patience is a grace, of which God is the author; it is one of the fruits of the Spirit; the word of God is the means of its being first implanted; and afflictions are the means of promoting it, when they are sanctified; otherwise they produce impatience, murmurings, and repinings; there is great need of patience under them; and, by divine grace, they are the matter and occasion of exercising, and so of increasing it.

Ver. 4. *And patience experience*, etc..] As tribulations tend to exercise and increase patience, so patience being exercised and increased, enlarges the

saints' stock and fund of experience; of the love and grace of God communicated to them at such seasons; of his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises; of his power in supporting them; and of their own frailty and weakness; and so are taught humility, thankfulness, and resignation to the will of God:

and experience, hope; hope is a gift of God's grace, and is implanted in regeneration, but abounds, increases, and becomes more strong and lively by experience of the love, grace, mercy, power, and faithfulness of God.

Ver. 5. *And hope maketh not ashamed*, etc..] As a vain hope does, things not answering to expectation, it deceives, and is lost; but the grace of hope is of such a nature, as that it never fails deceives, or disappoints: it neither makes ashamed, nor have persons that have any reason to be ashamed of it; neither of the grace itself, which is a good one; nor of the ground and foundation of it, the person and righteousness of Christ; nor of the object of it, eternal glory:

because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. By “the love of God” is meant, not that love by which we love God, for hope does not depend upon, nor is it supported by our love and obedience to God; but the love of God to us, of which some instances are given in the following verses: us is said “to be shed abroad in our hearts”; which denotes the plenty and abundance of it, and the full and comfortable sensation which believers have of it: “by the Holy Spirit”: who leads into, and makes application of it: “and is given to us”: for that purpose, as the applier of all grace, the Comforter, and the earnest of heaven. Now the love which the Spirit sheds abroad in the heart, is the source and spring, both of justification itself, which is owing to the free grace of God, and of all the effects of it, as peace with God, access to the throne of grace, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, the usefulness of afflictions, and the stability of hope, and is here alleged as the reason of all.

Ver. 6. *For when we were yet without strength*, etc..] The apostle having mentioned the love of God proceeds to give an instance, and which is a full proof and demonstration of it, which is, that

in due time Christ died for the ungodly. That Christ died is certain; the death of Christ was foretold in prophecy, typified by the sacrifices of slain beasts, was spoken of by himself, both before and since his death; his enemies have never denied it; and this was the sum of the ministry of the

apostles, and is the great article of faith: and that the death of Christ is a singular instance of the love of God, is evident by considering the person that died, the Son of God in human nature, his own, his only begotten Son, his beloved Son; the concern which God had in it, by willing, ordering, and appointing it, awaking the sword of justice against him, not sparing him, but delivering him up for us all; also the nature, kind, and manner of his death, and particularly the persons for whom he died, here described: he "died for the ungodly"; not for himself, he had no sins of his own to die for, nor did he want any happiness to procure; nor for angels, but for men; and these not holy, just, and good men, but ungodly; and not as a mere martyr, or only by way of example to them, and so for their good; but as the Syriac version reads it, a[yçr Plj, "in the room", or "stead of the ungodly", as their surety to make satisfaction for their sins. The Jews have a notion of the Messiah's being a substitute, and standing in the place and stead of sinners; and they say [f69],

> "that Aaron filled up the place of the first Adam, and was brought near in the room of him;"

which is true of Christ, the antitype of Aaron. On those words, "I will give a man for thee", (<2304>Isaiah 43:4); the doctors [f70] say,

> "do not read Adam, but Edom; for when God removes the decree (or punishment) from a particular man, he provides for the attribute of justice in the room of the man that sinned, µwdam ab rja çya, "another man that comes from Edom";"

referring, as I think, to (<2301>Isaiah 63:1). And this their character of ungodly shows, that not goodness in man, but love in God, was the moving cause of Christ's dying for them; and that the end of his dying was to atone for their ungodliness: and to illustrate the love of God the more towards them in this instance, they are said to be "without strength" at that time; being so enfeebled by sin, that they were not capable of fulfilling the law, of atoning for the transgressions of it, of redeeming themselves from slavery, of beginning and carrying on a work of holiness their hearts, nor indeed of doing one good thing. Add to all this, that Christ died for these persons in due time; in the most fit, proper, and convenient season to illustrate the love and grace of God; when man appeared both weak and wicked; when the weakness of the legal dispensation had been sufficiently evinced, and the wickedness of man, both among Jews and Gentiles, was at

a very great height: or rather by “due time” is meant the “fulness of time”, (^{Galatians 4:4} ^{Ephesians 1:10}); the time appointed in council by God, agreed to by Christ, and fixed in prophecy; before the departure of the sceptre from Judah, the destruction of the second temple, and at the close of Daniel's weeks.

Ver. 7. *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die*, etc..] The design of this, and the following verse, is to show that Christ's dying for ungodly persons is an instance of kindness that is matchless and unparalleled. By “a righteous man”, is not meant a truly gracious, holy man; nor one that is made righteous by the obedience of Christ; but one that is so in his own eyes, and in the esteem of others, being outwardly moral and righteous before men; who keeps to the letter of the law, and does, as he imagines, what that externally requires: such were the Pharisees among the Jews, who, though they were had in much outward esteem and veneration among the people, yet were rather feared than loved; and it would have been a difficult thing to have found a person that would cheerfully venture, and lay down his life for any of that complexion and cast:

yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. By “a good man”, is not meant a man made so by the grace of God, and who is indeed truly and properly the only good man; but a liberal and beneficent man, who was very bountiful in his charitable distributions to the poor, and very liberal in contributing towards the charge of sacrifices, repairs of the temple, etc.. and did more this way than what the law obliged to. Now for such a man perhaps there might be some found so daring and hardy, as to venture and lay down their lives, when there was any danger of his, or any necessity for so doing; so great an interest such men had in the affections of the people. And so the Jews [f71] distinguish between qydx, “a righteous man”, and dysj, “a good man”. They say [f72],

> “there is a righteous man that is good, and there is a righteous man that is not good; but he that is good for heaven, and the creatures, i.e. for God and men, this is bwj qydx, “a righteous good man”; but he that is good to God, and evil to men, this is bwj wnyaç qydx, “a righteous man that is not good”.”

The whole body of the people of the Jews were divided into three sorts: take a short sentence out of their Talmud [f73], not to support the justness of the characters, but for the sake of this threefold division of the people:

> "three things are said concerning the paring of the nails, qydx, "a righteous man" buries them, dysj, "a good man" burns them, [çr, "a wicked man" casts them away."

Now to this division of the people the apostle alludes; and there is in the words a beautiful gradation, scarcely for one of the µyqydx, "righteous men", who does just what he is obliged to do by the law, and no more, will any die; perhaps it may be, that for one of µydysj, "the good men", who are very liberal to the poor, and towards defraying all the expenses of the temple service, in which they exceed the strict demands of the law, some may be found willing to die; but who will die for the µy[çr, "the wicked and ungodly", the profligate and abandoned part of the people? not one, but Christ died for the ungodly: wherefore if instances could be produced of men's dying either for righteous men, or good men, these would not come up to the instance of Christ's dying for men, who were neither righteous nor good.

Ver. 8. *But God commendeth his love towards us*, etc..] That is, he hath manifested it, which was before hid in his heart; he has given clear evidence of it, a full proof and demonstration of it; he has so confirmed it by this instance, that there is no room nor reason to doubt of it; he has illustrated and set it off with the greater lustre by this circumstance of it,

in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. God's elect were sinners in Adam, in whom they were naturally and federally, as all mankind were; hence polluted and guilty; and so they are in their own persons whilst unregenerate: they are dead in sin, and live in it, commit it, are slaves unto it, and are under the power and dominion of it; and many of them are the chief and vilest of sinners; and such they were considered when Christ died for them: but are not God's people sinners after conversion? yes; but sin has not the dominion over them; their life is not a course of sinning, as before; and besides, they are openly justified and pardoned, as well as renewed, and sanctified, and live in newness of life; so that their characters now are taken, not from their worse, but better part. And that before conversion is particularly mentioned here, to illustrate the love of God to them, notwithstanding this their character and condition; and to show that the love of God to them was very early; it anteceded their conversion; it was before the death of Christ for them; yea, it was from everlasting: and also to express the freeness of it, and to make it appear, that it did not arise

from any loveliness in them; or from any love in them to him; nor from any works of righteousness done by them, but from his own sovereign will and pleasure.

Ver. 9. *Much more then being now justified by his blood*, etc..] The apostle here argues from justification by Christ to salvation by him, there being a certain and inseparable connection between these two; whoever is justified shall be saved; and speaks of justification "as being now by his blood". Justification in God's mind from eternity proceeded upon the suretyship engagements of Christ to be performed in time; the Old Testament saints were justified of God with a view to the blood of the Lamb which was to be shed; this blood was "now" shed, and an application of justification by it was "now" made to the persons spoken of; which is the reason of this way of speaking. The blood of Christ intends his death, as appears from the context, and shows it to be a violent death; death by the effusion of blood. There is an emphasis upon it, "his blood"; not the blood of bulls and goats, nor of a mere innocent creature, but of Christ the Son of God; which is therefore efficacious to all the purposes for which it was shed, and particularly justification. This being ascribed to it, shows the concern Christ had in it, his blood is here put for the whole matter of justification; the shedding of that being the finishing part of it; and that our justification before God proceeds upon the foot of a satisfaction made to the law and justice of God: hence such as are interested in it,

shall be saved from wrath through him: not from wrath, as a corruption in their own hearts, which oftentimes breaks forth; nor as appearing among the people of God one towards another, which is sometimes very bitter; or as in their avowed enemies, the effects of which they often feel; nor from the wrath of devils, which is as the roaring of a lion; but from the wrath of God, from a sense and apprehension of it in their own consciences, which the law works; from which justification by the blood of Christ frees them; though under first awakenings they feel it, and sometimes, under afflictive dispensations of Providence, are ready to fear it: and also from the infliction of vindictive wrath or punishment for sin; for though they are as deserving of it as others, yet as they are not appointed to it, so they are entirely delivered from it, through Christ's sustaining it in their room and stead: wherefore they are secure from it both in this life, and in the world to come.

Ver. 10. *For if when we were enemies*, etc..] For the further illustration of the love of God expressed to sinners, by the death of his Son, the state and condition God's elect were in when Christ died for them is taken notice of; they “were enemies”; to God, to his being, perfections, purposes, and providences; to Christ, to his person, offices, grace, and righteousness; to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit, and his divine operations and influences; to the people of God, and to the Gospel and ordinances of Christ; which enmity is deeply rooted in their minds, is causeless, and undeserved, and is implacable, and irreconcileable without the power and grace of God; which grace of God is wonderfully displayed in the reconciliation of such persons,

by the death of his Son. Reconciliation implies a former state of friendship, a breach of that friendship, and a making of it up again; which no ways contradicts the everlasting and unchangeable love of God to his people; for this is not a reconciliation of God to them, but of them to God:

we were reconciled to God; not God to us; and this reconciliation is for their sins, an atonement for them, rather than of their persons; which being done, their persons are reconciled, not to the love, grace, and mercy of God, or to his affections, in which they always had a share, but to the justice of God injured and offended by their sins; and so both justice and holiness on one side, and love, grace, and mercy on the other, are reconciled together, in the business of their salvation; which is brought about by the sufferings and death of Christ: this expresses the wonderful love of God, since this reconciliation arises purely from himself; the scheme of it is of his own contriving; he, whose justice was affronted, and whose law was broken, took the first step towards it, and conducted the whole affair; and which was effected at the expense of the blood and life of his own Son, and that for persons who were enemies to them both. In consequence of this, another reconciliation of them is made by the Spirit of God in regenerations, of which notice is taken in this passage:

much more being reconciled: to God, as a sovereign God, in his decrees, in his providences, and in the method of salvation by his Son; to Christ, to the way of salvation by him, so as to submit both to his righteousness for justification, and to the sceptre of his kingdom, to be ruled and governed by it; to the Spirit, so as to be led by him, to walk after him, and to depend upon him for the carrying on, and finishing the good work of grace begun in them; to the people of God, so as to love them, and delight in their company; and to the Gospel and ordinances, so as highly to value them,

long after them, and take pleasure in them. Now from both these reconciliations is inferred the sure and certain salvation of persons so reconciled:

we shall be saved by his life; by the life of Christ, and which designs not so much his life as God; or his living in the hearts of his people by faith; though neither of them are to be excluded; but his life, as man, and that not either his private or public life, as man here on earth, though this has an influence upon, and a concern in the business of salvation; but more especially here is meant the interceding life of Christ in heaven, where he lives, and ever lives to make intercession for his people, and to see the salvation he has obtained by his death applied unto them, and they put into the possession of it.

Ver. 11. *And not only so, but we also joy in God*, etc..] Something seems here to be understood, and which is to be supplied thus; not only we are saved by his life, and from wrath through him; not only are we reconciled to God by his Son, and Spirit; not only Christ has died for us while sinners and ungodly; not only do we glory in tribulations, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God: “but we also joy in God”; himself, as our covenant God and Father in Christ, as the God of all grace, peace, and salvation; in his perfections, as engaged on our side, and as glorified in our salvation; in the purposes of God, and his covenant transactions with his Son, as they are made known in the everlasting Gospel; in all his providential dispensations, which are mercy and truth; and in our being of him in Christ, and Christ's being made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; in all the blessings of grace we receive from him, the glory of which is his due; and in his sight and presence, and in the enjoyment of him. The means by which saints come at this joying and glorying in God, is

through our Lord Jesus Christ; not the light of nature, nor the law of Moses, nor any works of righteousness done by men, nor through angels or saints, but Christ, and him only; for it is only in and through him that God is their covenant God and Father; by him only have they the agreeable view of his glorious perfections; in him only all his purposes and promises have their fulfilment; it is by his hands, and through his blood, that all the blessings of grace are conveyed to them; their access to God is only by him; and by him they give the praise and glory of every mercy to him. And the ground of this joy is the expiation of sin by Christ,

by whom we have now received the atonement; atonement is not made, but received by us; which denotes the application of the atoning blood and sacrifice of Christ to the conscience, the Spirit's witness of interest in it, and the office of faith, as a recipient of it: it is not faith, nor anything else of the creature's, that makes the atonement, only Christ; but faith receives it from him, and by him; which, as it is the ground of present joying in God, so it is the foundation of hope of future glory: the word “now” refers to the Gospel dispensation. The poor Jews are at the utmost loss about atonement: sometimes they tell [f74] us it is by confession, repentance, and good works; sometimes by beneficence and hospitality [f75]; sometimes they say their captivity is their atonement [f76]; and, at other times, that death expiates all their sins [f77]. Blessed be God for the atoning sacrifice of Christ!

Ver. 12. *Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world*, etc..] The design of these words, and of the following, is to show how men came to be in the condition before described, as “ungodly”, (<4506>Romans 5:6), “sinners”, (<4508>Romans 5:8), and “enemies”, (<4510>Romans 5:10); and to express the love of Christ in the redemption of them; and the largeness of God's grace to all sorts of men: the connection of them is with (<4511>Romans 5:11), by which it appears that the saints have not only an expiation of sin by the blood of Christ, but a perfect righteousness, by which they are justified in the sight of God; and the manner how they came at it, or this becomes theirs, together with the necessity of their having such an one, are here declared: by the “one man” is meant Adam the first man, and parent of mankind, who is mentioned by name in (<4514>Romans 5:14); sin which came by him designs a single sin, and not many, even the first sin of Adam, which goes by different names, as “sin” here, “transgression”, (<4514>Romans 5:14), the “offence” or “fall”, (<4515>Romans 5:15,17,18), “disobedience”, (<4519>Romans 5:19), and whatever was the first step or motive to it, which led to it, whether pride, unbelief, or concupiscence, it was finished by eating the forbidden fruit; and is called sin emphatically, because it contained all sin in it, was attended with aggravating circumstances, and followed with dismal consequences. Hence may be learnt the origin of moral evil among men, which comes not from God, but man; of this it is said, that it “entered into the world”; not the world above, there sin entered by the devil; but the world below, and it first entered into paradise, and then passed through the whole world; it entered into men by the snares of Satan, and by him it enters into all the inhabitants of the world; into all men that descend from him by ordinary generation, and that so powerfully that

there is no stopping of it. It has entered by him, not by imitation, for it has entered into such as never sinned after the similitude of his transgression, infants, or otherwise death could not have entered into them, and into such who never heard of it, as the Heathens; besides, sin entered as death did, which was not by imitation but imputation, for all men are reckoned dead in Adam, being accounted sinners in him; add to this, that in the same way Christ's righteousness comes upon us, which is by imputation, Adam's sin enters into us, or becomes ours; upon which death follows,

and death by sin; that is, death has entered into the world of men by sin, by the first sin of the first man; not only corporeal death, but a spiritual or moral one, man, in consequence of this, becoming "dead in sin", deprived of righteousness, and averse, and impotent to all that is good; and also an eternal death, to which he is liable; for "the wages of sin is death", (<4623>Romans 6:23); even eternal death: all mankind are in a legal sense dead, the sentence of condemnation and death immediately passed on Adam as soon as he had sinned, and upon all his posterity;

and so death passed upon all men; the reason of which was,

for that, or because "in him"

all have sinned: all men were naturally and seminally in him; as he was the common parent of mankind, he had all human nature in him, and was also the covenant head, and representative of all his posterity; so that they were in him both naturally and federally, and so "sinned in him"; and fell with him by his first transgression into condemnation and death. The ancient Jews, and some of the modern ones, have said many things agreeably to the apostle's doctrine of original sin; they own the imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to his posterity to condemnation and death;

> "through the sin of the first man (say they [f78]) tm hta, "thou art dead"; for he brought death into the world:"

nothing is more frequently said by them than that Adam and Eve, through the evil counsel of the serpent, aml[lklw^wl atwm wmyrg, "were the cause of death to themselves and to all the world" [f79]; and that through the eating of the fruit of the tree, a[ra yryyd lkatwm wbyyjta, "all the inhabitants of the earth became guilty of death" [f80]: and that this was not merely a corporeal death, they gather from the doubling of the word in the threatening, "in dying thou shalt die", (<0102>Genesis 2:17) (margin);

> “this doubled death, say they [f81], without doubt is the punishment of their body by itself, hmx[ynpb çpnlw, and also of the “soul by itself”.”

They speak of some righteous persons who died, not for any sin of their own, but purely on the account of Adam's sin; as Benjamin the son of Jacob, Amram the father of Moses, and Jesse the father of David, and Chileab the son of David [f82], to these may be added Joshua the son of Nun, and Zelophehad and Levi: the corruption and pollution of human nature through the sin of Adam is clearly expressed by them;

> “when Adam sinned, (say they [f83],) he “drew upon him a defiled power, aml[ynb lklw hyl byasw, “and defiled himself and all the people of the “world”.”

Again [f84],

> “this vitiosity which comes from the sin and infection of our first parents, has invaded both faculties of the rational soul, the understanding by which we apprehend, and the will by which we desire.”

This corruption of nature they call [rh rxy, “the evil imagination”, which, they say [f85], is planted in a man's heart at the time of his birth; and others say [f86] that it is in him before he is born: hence Philo the Jew says [f87], that συμφυες το αμαρτανον εστι, “to sin is connatural”, to every man that is born, even though a good man; and talks [f88] of συγγεγηνηνον κουκον, “evil that is born with us”, and of [f89] συγγενεις κηρες, “spots that are of necessity born with” every mortal man. And so his countrymen [f90] often speak of it as natural and inseparable to men; yea, they represent Adam as the root and head of mankind, in whom the whole world and all human nature sinned: descanting on those words, “as one that lieth upon the top of a mast”, (Proverbs 23:34);

> “this (say they [f91]) is the first man who was μda ynb lkl çar, “an head to all the children of men”: for by means of wine death was inflicted on him, and he was the cause of bringing the sorrows of death into the world.”

And in another place, speaking of Adam, they say [f92], that

> "he was µlw[lç hayrb rqy[, "the root of the creation", or "of the men of the world"; and death was inflicted upon him and on his seed, because he sinned one sin in eating of the tree."

And it is observed,

> "that h[ydyh ah, the "He" demonstrative is not prefixed in Scripture to proper names, which yet is to the word "Adam"; the reason is, (say they [f93],) because in Adam all his posterity are pointed at, and the whole human species designed."

Again, they observe [f94], that

> "the end of man is to die, of which this is the reason, because µdah ^ym, "mankind" has sinned; that is, the nature of which he is composed, or in other words, Adam and Eve have sinned."

Once more [f95]

> "when he (Adam) sinned, ajj wlk µlw[h lk, "all the whole world sinned", and his sin we bear;"

and [f96] that

> "the whole congregation of Israel have need of atonement for the sin of the first Adam, for he was hd[h lkk bwçj, reckoned as the whole congregation;"

which exactly tallies with the apostle's assertion in this text.

(When this commentary was written, it was generally accepted that all the fossils in the rocks were laid down by Noah's world wide flood and that the universe was about 6000 years old. Since that time, science has postualated that life evolved over billions of years and that the fossils are a result of this evolutionary process. If you accept the Bible as your authority you cannot accept the theory of evolution in any form. Firstly, the biblical chronology restricts the age of the universe to about 6000 years. Secondly, in order to get fossils, animals must die. This verse tells us that sin, not evolution, is the cause of death. Death and suffering did not exist until after Adam sinned. Hence before Adam sinned, no animal died and it would be impossible for any fossils to form. Before the fall, all animals ate plants, not other animals (<0100>Genesis 1:30). Paul tells us in (<4508>Romans 8:20,21) that

Adam's sin subjected all of creation to the curse, not just mankind. (See Gill on “ Romans 6:23”). *See Gill (Editor's note) on “ Exodus 20:11”*. Editor)

Ver. 13. *For until the law, sin was in the world*, etc..] This is a proof of sin's having entered into the world, by one man's transgression of the positive law of God, which forbid him the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; since it was in the world before the law of Moses was given: the sin of Adam and the guilt of that were in the world before, and came upon all men to condemnation; the general corruption of nature appeared before; and actual sins, and transgressions of all sorts were committed before; as by the immediate posterity of Adam, by the men of the old world, by the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, by the patriarchs and their posterity, by the Egyptians, Canaanites, and others. They were all guilty of sin, corrupted by it, and under the dominion of it, except such as were released from it by the grace of God: now when sin is said to be until this time, the meaning is not that it existed and continued until the law of Moses took place, and then ceased; for that law did not, and could not take away sin, it rather increased it, at least it became more known by it; but that it was in being before it, and had influence and power over the sons of men, so as to subject them to death:

but sin is not imputed when there is no law. This looks like an objection, that if there was no law before Moses's time, then there was no sin, nor could any action of man be known or accounted by them as sinful, or be imputed to them to condemnation; or rather it is a concession, allowing that where there is no law, sin is not imputed; but there was a law before that law of Moses, which law was transgressed, and the sin or transgression of it was imputed to men to condemnation and death, as appears from what follows.

Ver. 14. *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses*, etc..] Though the law of Moses was not yet given, death exerted itself, and extended its dominion over all the sons and daughters of Adam, during the interval between Adam and Moses; which clearly shows that sin was in the world, and that there must be a law in being, which that was a transgression of: death is represented as a king, as sin and Satan sometimes are; and indeed, death reigns by sin, and Satan both by sin and death; their empires rise, stand, and fall together. So Bildad calls death “the king of terrors”, (Job 18:14); and a very formidable and powerful king he is; his dominion is very

large, his power uncontrollable, and the dread of him very great, especially to Christless sinners. The Jews say [f97], that at the resurrection the world will be renewed, and will not be as at the first, when amlb atwm jylçd, "death reigned in the world"; referring to the same period of time the apostle here does. The subjects of his government were not only adult persons, who had been guilty of many actual transgressions, but he reigned

even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. This does not exclude the dominion of death over such who had sinned after the likeness of Adam, but rather confirms its power over them; nor does it intend adult Gentiles, who did not sin in the same manner, nor against the same law, as Adam did; but it designs infants, not yet guilty of actual sin; and therefore since death reigns over them, who only holds and exercises his dominion by virtue of sin, it follows, that they must have original sin in them; the guilt of Adam's transgression must be imputed to them, and the corruption of nature, from him, derived unto them, or it could not reign over them. A child of a year old, the Jewish doctors [f98] say, has not tasted the taste of sin, that is, has not committed actual sin; and observe [f99], that young children die on account of the sins of their parents: but the true reason of their dying is here suggested by the apostle; which is the transgression of Adam:

who is the figure of him that was to come; meaning, either his posterity that were to come out of his loins, whose figure, type, and representative he was; or rather Christ, who is sometimes called ο ερχομενος, "he that was to come"; and the Arabic version reads the words thus, "who was a type of Adam that was expected"; that is, of Christ the second Adam, that was expected to come, according to the promise and prophecy: of him the first Adam was a type, in his human nature, in the formation and quality of it; as the first Adam was made by God of the virgin earth, the second Adam was born of a virgin; as the first, so the second Adam was pure, holy, upright, and wise; in his office, as Lord of the world, head of the woman, priest in his house, and prophet to his posterity; in his marriage with Eve, a figure of the church; but in nothing more clearly than in his being a covenant head to all his offspring: and this is what the apostle chiefly designs, since he runs the parallel between them on this account in the following verses; showing, that as the one conveyed sin and death to all his seed, so the other communicates righteousness and life to all that belong to him. So the Jews say [f100], that by Adam is intimated the righteous

branch, the Messiah; and that jyçm dws awh µda dws, "the secret of Adam is the secret of the Messiah".

Ver. 15. *But not as the offence, so also is the free gift*, etc..] By "the offence", or "fall", as the word signifies, is meant the first sin of Adam; by which he offended God, and fell from that estate in which he was created, and all his posterity with him; and by the "free gift" is meant, the righteousness of Christ, which justifies from that, and all other offences: now, though there is a great likeness between Adam and Christ; both are men, the first Adam is called "the one man", and so is the second Adam Jesus Christ; partly for the sake of the comparison between him and the first, and also to express the truth of his human nature; and because the Redeemer ought to be a man, though not a mere man; both are sole authors of what they convey to their respective offspring, Adam of sin, Christ of righteousness; both convey single things, Adam only one sin, not more, for when he had committed one sin, he broke the covenant made with him and his posterity, and so ceased in after acts to be a representative of them; Christ conveys his righteousness, or obedience to the law, without any additional works of righteousness of ours to complete it; and both convey what they do, "to all" their respective offspring: yet there is a dissimilitude between them, as to the manner of conveyance and the effects thereof; the offence or sin of Adam is conveyed in a natural way, or by natural generation, to all who descend from him in that manner; the righteousness of Christ is conveyed in a way of grace, to his spiritual seed: hence it is called, not only the "free gift", but "the grace of God, and the gift by grace", which is "by one man, Jesus Christ"; because of the grace of the Father, in fixing and settling the method of justification, by the righteousness of his Son; in sending him to work out one, that would be satisfying to law and justice; and in his gracious acceptation of it, on the behalf of his people, and the imputation of it to them; and because of the grace of the Son in becoming man, in being made under the law, yea, made sin and a curse, in order to bring in an everlasting righteousness; and because of the grace of the Spirit, in revealing and applying it, and working faith to receive it; for as the righteousness itself is a free grace gift, bestowed upon unworthy persons, so is faith likewise, by which it is laid hold on and embraced: and as there is a disagreement in the manner of conveying these things, so likewise in the effects they have upon the persons to whom they are conveyed; and the apostle argues from the

influence and effect the one has, to the far greater and better influence and effect the other has:

for if through the offence of one many be dead; as all Adam's posterity are, not only subject to a corporeal death, but involved in a moral or spiritual, and liable to an eternal one, through the imputation of guilt, and the derivation of a corrupt nature from him: then

much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many; that is, the righteousness of Christ, in which the grace of God is so illustrious, is much more effectual to the giving of life to all his seed and offspring; not barely such a life as Adam had in innocence, and which he lost by the offence, but a spiritual and an eternal one; which sheds the exuberance of this grace, which secures and adjudges to a better life than what was lost by the fall.

Ver. 16. *And not as [it was] by one that sinned, [so is] the gift*, etc..] The apostle goes on with the dissimilitude between the effects of Adam's sin, and Christ's righteousness:

for the judgment was by one to condemnation; by "judgment" is meant, not the judgment of God, or the judiciary sentence pronounced by God on Adam and his posterity for sin; but the guilt of the one man's sin, which is imputed to all men to condemnation, on account of which the sentence of condemnation passed on all men; the law transgressed, became a ministration of condemnation to them:

but the free gift is of many offences unto justification; the righteousness of Christ, which stands opposed to the guilt of Adam's sin, being imputed to all his offspring, is to the justification of them; and that not only from the guilt of that particular offence, but from many other offences, even all their actual sins and transgressions, of every sort; which is another instance of the exuberance, or abounding of the grace of God, in the righteousness of Christ, not only over the sin of the one man, but also over the sins of many, even all the elect of God; for the last clause may be also thus rendered, "the free gift is of the offences of many, unto justification".

Ver. 17. *For if by one man's offence death reigned by one*, etc..] It may be rendered, "by one offence death reigned by one"; for it was the single sin of Adam, the first sin that was committed by him, which gave death its reigning power over the sons of men:

> “Adam, say [f101] the Jewish doctors, transgressed, atyyrwad dj adwqp l[, one commandment of the law,”

and was the cause of death to himself, and to all the world. These words are a repetition, with a further explanation, of (<4515>Romans 5:15); there it is said, “through the offence of one many be dead”; here “by one man's offence”, or “by one offence, death reigned by one”; in which death is represented as a mighty monarch, a powerful king; and designs not only corporeal death, which has mounted the throne by sin, and is supported in its dominion by an ordinance of heaven; but also a moral or spiritual death, which has seized on all mankind, and reigns in every power and faculty of the soul of man; and likewise an eternal one, which will have power over all those, who have no part in the first resurrection: in (<4515>Romans 5:15), “the grace of God, and the gift by grace”, are said to “abound unto many”; here they are said to

receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness: by abundance of grace is designed, either something distinct from the justifying righteousness of Christ; such as the abundant grace and mercy of God, in regeneration and conversion; the various graces of the Spirit then implanted; the many things then wrought in the heart; the large discoveries! of pardoning grace, and the abundance of the love of God shed abroad in the soul by the Spirit: or rather the same with “the gift of righteousness”, because of the large display of the grace of God in it; by which “righteousness” is meant, not righteousness or holiness infused into us; but the righteousness of Christ, which is a free grace gift, and is enjoyed in a way of receiving; which denotes the act of faith, and supposes giving; and hence there is no room for boasting, but great reason for thankfulness: now such persons who have received this abundant grace and free gift,

shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ; in corporeal life, they are not now subject to death as a penal evil, as other persons are, and though they die this death, they will triumph over it in the resurrection morn, they will rise again to everlasting life; they reign now in spiritual life over sin, Satan, and the world; and they will reign in eternal life, they will sit on thrones, wear crowns, and possess a kingdom of glory for ever and ever; and all by and through one, Jesus Christ, and not on account of any works, or merits of theirs.

Ver. 18. *Therefore as by the offence of one*, etc..] Or by one offence, as before, the guilt of which is imputed to, and

[judgment came] upon all men to condemnation; which word is used in a legal sense, and intends condemnation to eternal death, as appears from the antithesis in the text; for if "justification of life", means an adjudging to eternal life, as it certainly does, the judgment or guilt, which is unto condemnation, must design a condemnation to eternal death, the just wages of sin: and this sentence of condemnation comes upon all men, all the sons of Adam without exception, even upon the elect of God themselves; though it is not executed upon them, but on their surety, whereby they are delivered from it:

even so by the righteousness of one, [the free gift] came upon all men to justification of life; the righteousness of Christ being freely imputed without works, as it is to all the men that belong to the second Adam, to all his seed and offspring, is their justification of life, or what adjudges and entitles them to eternal life. The sentence of justification was conceived in the mind of God from eternity, when his elect were ordained unto eternal life, on the foot of his Son's righteousness; this passed on Christ at his resurrection from the dead, and on all his people as considered in him, when they, in consequence of it, were quickened together with him; and this passes upon the conscience of a sinner at believing, when he may, as he should, reckon himself alive unto God, and is what gives him a right and title to everlasting life and glory.

Ver. 19. *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners*, etc..] Agreeably to this the Jews say [f102], that

> "for the sin of the first man, all that are born of him, µy[çr wyhy, "become wicked"."

This is the sum of what is said in the foregoing verses, that as by Adam's sin all his posterity are made sinners, and so are brought under a sentence of condemnation; in like manner by the obedience of Christ, all his seed are made righteous, and come under a sentence of justification of life: the persons made sinners are said to be "many", in opposition to the "one man", by whose disobedience they became so, and because there is an exception of one, even Jesus Christ; and mean all the natural descendants of Adam, who are many, and are so called, to answer to the subjects of justification in the next clause: what they are made sinners by, is "the

disobedience of one man, Adam"; and by the first and single disobedience of his, in eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, by which they "were made sinners": the meaning of which is not, that they became sufferers for it, or subject to death on the account of it; the word used will not bear such a sense, but signifies men guilty of sin, and sometimes the worst and chief of sinners; besides, the apostle had expressed that before; add to this, that the sons of Adam could not be sufferers for his sin, or subject to death on account of it, if they were not made sinners by it, or involved in the guilt or it: and though the posterity of Adam are habitually sinners, that is, derive corrupt nature from Adam, yet this is not meant here; but that they are become guilty, through the imputation of his sin to them; for it is by the disobedience of another they are made sinners, which must be by the imputation of that disobedience to them; he sinned, and they sinned in him, when they had as yet no actual existence; which could be no other way, than by imputation, as he was reckoned and accounted their head and representative, and they reckoned and accounted in him, and so have sinned in him. This is also evident, from the sentence of condemnation and death passing upon all men for it; and even upon those, who had not actually sinned; to which may be added, that Adam's posterity are made sinners through his disobedience, in the same way as Christ's seed are made righteous by his obedience, which is by the imputation of it to them;

so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous; not by their own obedience; nor by their own obedience and Christ's together; but by his sole and single obedience to the law of God: and the persons made righteous by it are not all the posterity of Adam, and yet not a few of them; but "many", even all the elect of God, and seed of Christ; these are all made righteous in the sight of God, are justified from all their sins, and entitled to eternal life and happiness.

Ver. 20. *Moreover, the law entered*, etc..] By "the law" is meant, not the law of nature, much less the law of sin; rather the ceremonial law, which came in over and above the moral law; it entered but for a time; by which sin abounded, and appeared very sinful; and through it the grace of God much more abounded, in the sacrifice of Christ prefigured by it: but the moral law, as it came by Moses, is here intended; which entered with great pomp and solemnity on Mount Sinai; and intervened, or came between Adam's sin and Christ's sacrifice; and also came in besides, or over and above the promise of life by Christ; and may moreover be said to enter into

the conscience of a sinner, with the power and energy of the Spirit of God: and the end of its entrance is,

that the offence might abound; meaning either the sin of Adam, he had been speaking of under that name, that that itself, and the imputation of it to his posterity, and also the pollution of human nature by it, together with all the aggravating circumstances of it, might appear more manifest; or sin in general, any and all actual transgressions, which abound through the law's discovering the evil nature of them, and so taking away all excuse, or pretext of ignorance: by prohibiting them, whereby the corrupt nature of man becomes more eager after them; and by accusing, threatening, terrifying, and condemning, on account of them: one view of the apostle in this, doubtless, is to show, that there can be no justification by the law:

but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: sin has abounded in human nature, in all the individuals of it; and grace has superabounded in the same nature, being assumed by the Son of God, and united to him, who has appeared in it "full of grace and truth", (<4801 14>John 1:14): sin has abounded in all the powers and faculties of the soul, in the understanding, will, and affections, of an unregenerate man; but in regeneration, the grace of God much more abounds in the same powers and faculties, enlightening the understanding, subduing the will, and influencing the affections with love to divine things: sin abounded in the Gentile world, before the preaching of the Gospel in it; but afterwards grace did superabound in the conversion of multitudes in it from idols, to serve the living God; and where sin has abounded in particular persons to a very great height, grace has exceeded it, as in Manasseh, Mary Magdalene, Saul, and others.

Ver. 21. *That as sin hath reigned unto death*, etc..] This is another end of the law's entrance, or rather an illustration of the grace of God, by comparing the reigns of sin and grace together: sin has such a power over man in a state of nature, as amounts to a dominion; it has not only an enticing, ensnaring power, to draw into a compliance with it, and an obstructive power to hinder that which is good, and an operative one of that which is evil, and a captivating, enslaving one to the same; but it has a kingly, governing, and commanding power: its dominion is universal as to men, and with respect both to the members of the body, and faculties of the soul; it is supported by laws, which are its lusts; and has its voluntary subjects, to whom it gives wages; its reign is very cruel and tyrannical; it is "unto death" corporeal, moral, or spiritual, and eternal. The ancient Jews

often represent sin in the same light; they frequently speak [f103] of jlwç [rh rxy, “the corruption of nature reigning” over men; and say [f104]: that he is Ælm “a king” over the several members of the body, which answer to him at the word of command. “The old and foolish king” in (<21 04 13>Ecclesiastes 4:13), is commonly interpreted by them of sin; which they say [f105] is called “a king”, because he rules in the world, over the children of men, and because all hearken to him: it is a petition much used by them [f106],

> “let not the evil imagination or corruption of nature “rule” over me:”

and on the other hand, they represent grace, or a principle of goodness, as a king, reigning over the corruption of nature; thus interpreting these words, “my son, fear thou the Lord and the king”, they ask [f107],

> “who is the king? the king (say they) bwj rxy Ælmh, is “the good imagination”, or principle of goodness, who reigns over the evil imagination, which is called a king.”

And in another place [f108] they say of a good man, that he bwj rxy Æylmh, “caused the good imagination to reign” over the evil one; with which in some measure agrees what follows:

even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord; by grace is meant, either grace as it is in the heart of God; which reigns or bears sway in man's salvation in all the parts of it, “through righteousness”; consistent with the justice of God, in a way in which that is glorified, through the redemption of Christ: it reigns “unto eternal life”; grace has promised, prepared it, and makes meet for it, and will introduce into it, and freely give it: it reigns “by Jesus Christ”; grace reigns by him, righteousness, or justice, is glorified by him, and eternal life is in him, through him, and by him: or grace as it is in the hearts of converted persons, is meant where it reigns, has the dominion, is the governing principle, and that in a way of righteousness and true holiness; and will reign until it is perfected in glory, or is crowned with eternal life; all which are by Jesus Christ, namely, grace, righteousness, and life.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 6

The Apostle having finished his design concerning the doctrine of justification, refutes the charge brought against it as a licentious doctrine, and prevents any ill use that might be made of it by men of evil minds, justified persons by the strongest arguments, and with the best of motives to holiness of life and conversation: he saw, that whereas he had affirmed in the preceding chapter, that sin being made to abound by the law, in the condemnation of sinners, the grace of God the more abounded in their justification and pardon; that some would rise up and object, that this doctrine countenances men's continuance in sin, and opens a door to all manner of iniquity; and that others would abuse this doctrine, and encourage themselves in a vicious course of life, upon this mistaken notion, that the grace of God would be the more illustrious by it; all which is suggested in (Romans 6:1), to which an answer is returned in (Romans 6:2), with an abhorrence of everything of this kind; and by an argument, showing the absurdity and inconsistency of it, seeing persons dead to sin, as justified ones are, cannot live in it: and that they are dead to sin, and under obligation to live unto righteousness, he argues from their baptism into Christ's death, which represents their being dead with Christ, and buried with him, (Romans 6:3,4), and likewise the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and theirs by him, whereby they are both fitted and obliged to walk in newness of life; since they are, and should be like him, as in his death, so in his resurrection from the dead: and the rather, as they are implanted in him, as the branches in the vine, (Romans 6:4,5), and especially as it was the great end of his death, that by the crucifixion of sin with him, it might so be destroyed, that his people should be no more servants to it, (Romans 6:6), this being proved, that justified ones are dead to sin, the apostle argues upon it, that such are freed from sin, (Romans 6:7), and therefore ought not, and cannot live in it; for this must be given into as an article of faith, that such as are dead with Christ live, and shall live a life of communion with him, (Romans 6:8), which is inconsistent with living in sin: he further argues from the resurrection of Christ, which was not to die more, (Romans 6:9), and suggests, that in

like manner, those who have been dead and buried, and risen with him, which their baptism signifies, should not live in sin, which is no other than dying again; and to strengthen this, directs to the ends of Christ's death and resurrection, (<4610>Romans 6:10), the end of the one being unto sin, to finish, make an end of that, and be the death of it, and the end of the other, being living unto God; wherefore in like manner, such who profess to be Christ's, to be justified by his righteousness, to be baptized into his death, and to be risen with him, should account themselves dead unto sin, and so not live in it, and alive to God through the righteousness of Christ, and so live to his honour and glory, (<4611>Romans 6:11), and having thus answered the objection, and removed the calumny, and set this matter in a clear light, the apostle proceeds to dehort from sinning, and to exhort to holiness of life, (<4612>Romans 6:12,13), in which he compares sin to a tyrant, the lusts of it to the laws of such an one, and which therefore should not be obeyed; and the rather, as the wages of them are death, and have made the body already mortal; wherefore the members of it should not be employed in such service, but in the service of God: and whereas it might be objected, that sin is too strong and prevalent, and has got the mastery, and will keep its power, the apostle declares it as a promise of grace, that sin shall not have the dominion, (<4614>Romans 6:14), giving this as a reason, because such as are justified and sanctified, are not under the law, as a covenant of works, but under the covenant of grace, of which this promise is a part; and in order to prevent an ill use of this doctrine, and remove an objection that might be made, that if not under the law, men are under no restraints, but may go on in sin without control, he answers it with his usual detestation, (<4615>Romans 6:15), and argues the folly and absurdity of living in sin upon such an account, because it would make them servants of sin unto death, (<4616>Romans 6:16), and so they were before conversion, but now were otherwise, for, which they had reason to be thankful, (<4617>Romans 6:17), since through the grace of God they had yielded an hearty obedience to the Gospel; wherefore to obey sin would be to return to their former state of bondage; whereas being freed from the power and dominion of sin, they were now the servants of righteousness, and ought to act becoming such a character, (<4618>Romans 6:18), wherefore it was but acting the part of reasonable men, it was but their reasonable service, to yield themselves servants, not to sin and uncleanness, but to righteousness and holiness, (<4619>Romans 6:19), in order to engage to which, the apostle puts them in mind of their former state; how that when they were in subjection to sin, they had nothing to do with the exercise of righteousness,

(Romans 6:20), and therefore as there was an alteration made in them, they ought to be just the reverse in their conduct and conversation; for he appeals to them, that they had no pleasure nor profit in their former course of life; which had brought upon them shame and confusion, and must have ended in death, had it not been for the grace of God, (Romans 6:21), but now as they were delivered from the slavery and dominion of sin, they were under a better master, were servants to God; and the fruit of their service was holiness, and the issue of all would be everlasting life, (Romans 6:22), which is illustrated by the contrary, (Romans 6:23), the wages due from the service of sin, and which only could be expected from it, being death; whereas grace and holiness, the gift of God, issue in eternal life by Christ Jesus; in whose hands it is, and through whom it comes, and is enjoyed.

Ver. 1. *What shall we say then*? etc..] The apostle here obviates an objection he saw would be made against the doctrine he had advanced, concerning the aboundings of the grace of God in such persons and places, where sin had abounded; which if true, might some persons say, then it will be most fit and proper to continue in a sinful course of life, to give up ourselves to all manner of iniquity, since this is the way to make the grace of God abound yet more and more: now says the apostle, what shall we say to this? how shall we answer such an objection? shall we join with the objectors, and say as they do? and

shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? that is, shall we persist in a vicious way of living with this view, that the grace of God may be magnified hereby? is it right to commit sin on such an account? or is this a fair inference, a just consequence, drawn from the doctrine of grace? To be sure it was not, the objection is without any ground and foundation; sin is not “per se”, the cause of the glorifying God's grace, but “per accidens”: sin of itself is the cause of wrath, and not of grace; but God has been pleased to take an occasion of magnifying his grace, in the forgiveness of sin: for it is not by the commission of sin, but by the pardon of it, that the grace of God is glorified, or made to abound. Moreover, grace in conversion is glorified by putting a stop to the reign of sin, and not by increasing its power, which would be done by continuing in it; grace teaches men not to live in sin, but to abstain from it; add to this, that it is owing to the want of grace, and not to the aboundings of it, that men at any time abuse, or make an ill use of the doctrines of grace; wherefore the apostle's answer is,

Ver. 2. *God forbid*, etc..] By which he expresses his abhorrence of such a practice, and that this was a consequence which did not follow from the premises, and was far enough from his thoughts, and which he had in the greatest detestation: and he further argues against it by asking,

how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? There is a death for sin, a death in sin, and a death to sin; the latter is here mentioned, and persons may be said to be "dead to sin", both as justified and sanctified: justified persons are dead to sin, inasmuch as that is not imputed to them to condemnation and death; they are discharged from it; it cannot hurt them, or exert its damning power over them; it is crucified, abolished, and made an end of by Christ: sanctified persons are dead to sin; sin is not made their business, it is not their course of life; it is no longer a pleasure to them, but is loathsome and abominable; it is looked upon, not as a friend, but an enemy; it does not reign, it has not the dominion over them; it is subdued in them, and its power weakened; and as to the members of the flesh, and deeds of the body, it is mortified: to live in sin, is to live after the dictates of corrupt nature; and persons may be said to live in it, when they give up themselves to it, are bent upon it; when sin is their life, they delight in it, make it their work and business, and the whole course of their life is sinful: now those who are dead to sin, cannot thus live in it, though sin may live in them; they may fall into sin, and lie in it some time, yet they cannot live in it: living in sin, is not only unbecoming the grace of God revealed in the Gospel, but is contrary to it; it is detestable to gracious minds, yea, it seems impossible they should live in it; which is suggested by this question, "how shall we?" etc.. The thing is impracticable: for, for a gracious soul to live in sin, would be to die again, to become dead in sin, which cannot be; he that lives and believes in Christ shall never die, spiritually or eternally.

Ver. 3. *Know ye not that so many of us as*, etc.] You must know this, you cannot be ignorant of it, that whoever

were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death: and therefore must be dead to sin, and consequently ought not to live, nor can they live in sin. This does not suppose, that some of this church were baptized persons, and others not; but that some might be baptized in water who were not baptized into Christ: there is a difference between being baptized in water in the name of Christ, and being baptized into Christ, which believers in their baptism are; by which is meant, not a being brought by it into union with Christ, which is either secretly from eternity, or openly

at conversion, and both before the baptism of true believers; nor a being brought by it into the mystical body of Christ the church, for this also is before it; but rather it designs a being baptized, or a being brought by baptism into more communion with Christ, into a participation of his grace and benefits; or into the doctrine of Christ, and a more distinct knowledge of it: the power of which they feel upon their hearts, and so have really believed in Christ, heartily love him, and make a sincere profession of him; though rather the true meaning of the phrase "baptized into Christ", I take to be, is to be baptized purely for the sake of Christ, in imitation of him, who has set us an example, and because baptism is an ordinance of his; it is to submit to it with a view to his glory, to testify our affection for him, and subjection to him, without laying any stress or dependence on it for salvation; such who are thus baptized, are "baptized into his death"; they not only resemble Christ in his sufferings and death, by being immersed in water, but they declare their faith in the death of Christ, and also share in the benefits of his death; such as peace, pardon, righteousness, and atonement: now this proves, that such persons are dead to sin, who are so baptized; for by the death of Christ, into which they are baptized, they are justified from sin; by the death of Christ, their old man is crucified, and the body of sin destroyed; besides, believers in baptism profess themselves to be dead to sin and the world, and their baptism is an obligation upon them to live unto righteousness.

Ver. 4. *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death*, etc..] The nature and end of baptism are here expressed; the nature of it, it is a "burial"; and when the apostle so calls it, he manifestly refers to the ancient and only way of administering this ordinance, by immersion; when a person is covered, and as it were buried in water, as a corpse is when laid the earth, and covered with it: and it is a burial with Christ; it is a representation of the burial of Christ, and of our burial with him as our head and representative, and that "into death"; meaning either the death of Christ as before, that is, so as to partake of the benefits of his death; or the death of sin, of which baptism is also a token; for believers, whilst under water, are as persons buried, and so dead; which signifies not only their being dead with Christ, and their communion with him in his death, but also their being dead to sin by the grace of Christ, and therefore ought not to live in it: for the apostle is still pursuing his argument, and is showing, from the nature, use, and end of baptism, that believers are dead to sin, and

therefore cannot, and ought not, to live in it; as more fully appears from the end of baptism next mentioned;

that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, even so we also should walk in newness of life; for the end of baptism is not only to represent the death and burial, but also the resurrection of Christ from the dead, which is here said to be “by the glory of the Father”, some read the words, “unto the glory of the Father”; meaning either, that the Father might be glorified hereby; or that Christ, being raised from the dead, might enjoy glory with the Father, as he does in human nature; but rather the phrase expresses the means by which, and not the end to which, Christ was raised from the dead: and by the “glory of the Father” is meant, the glorious power of the Father, which was eminently displayed in raising Christ from the dead; and as baptism is designed to represent the resurrection of Christ, which is done by raising the person out of the water, so likewise to represent our resurrection from the death of sin, to a life of grace: whence it must be greatly incumbent on baptized believers, who are raised from the graves of sin by the power of Christ, to “walk in newness of life”; for since they are become new creatures, and have new hearts and new spirits given them, new principles of light, life, grace, and holiness implanted in them, and have entered into a new profession of religion, of which baptism is the badge and symbol, they ought to live a new life and conversation.

Ver. 5. *For if we have been planted together*, etc..] This is not to be understood of an implantation of Jews and Gentiles together in One body; nor of an implantation of believers together in a church state; but of an implantation of Christ and his people together; which is openly done at conversion, in consequence of a secret union with him before; when they are transplanted from a state of nature, and are ingrafted into Christ; have the graces of the Spirit of God implanted in them, and grow up under the dews of grace, and shinings of the sun of righteousness upon them, and bring forth much fruit; now as these persons, by virtue of their secret union with Christ from eternity, as their head and representative, with whom they were crucified, in whom they died representatively, share in his death, enjoy the benefits of it, and feel its efficacy, and through it become dead to the law, sin, and the world, which is meant by

the likeness of his death; so these same persons shall be also planted

in the likeness of his resurrection; that is, they shall share in the benefits, and feel and enjoy the effects of it; not only their bodies will be raised at the last day, as their souls are now regenerated by virtue of it, and in resemblance to it; but their are, and shall be so influenced by his Spirit and grace, which has raised them from death to life, that they shall walk in newness of life; of which baptism is a lively representation, and to which it is a constant obligation.

Ver. 6. *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him*, etc..] By the old man is meant the corruption of nature; called a man, because natural to men; it lives and dwells in them; it has spread itself over the whole man; it rules and governs in men; and consists of various parts and members, as a man does: it is called "old", because it is the poison of the old serpent, with which man was infected by him from the beginning; it is derived from the first man that ever was; it is as old as the man is, in whom it is, and is likewise called so, with respect to its duration and continuance; and in opposition to, and contradistinction from, the new man, or principle of grace: it is called "ours", because continual to us; it is in our nature, it cleaves to us, and abides in us. This name the apostle took from his countrymen the Jews, who were wont to call the vitiosity of nature hereby; so R. Aba on that passage, "the firstborn said to the younger, our father is old", (<010931>Genesis 19:31), asks, what is the meaning of this, "our father is old?" this, answers he, is the evil imagination, or corruption of nature, which is called ˆqz, "old", according to (<210413>Ecclesiastes 4:13); and is said to be old, µdah µ[dlwnç, "because it is born with the man" [f109]; or as the reason is elsewhere given [f110], because it is joined to him from his birth, to his old age: this, they say [f111], is with a man as soon as he is born, from the hour of his birth, as soon as ever he comes into the world. Now this is said to be "crucified with him"; that is, with Christ, when he was crucified: the Jews [f112] have a notion that the evil imagination, or corruption of nature, ljbtyal, will not be made to cease, or be abolished out of the world, till the King Messiah comes, and by him it is abolished: this is so crucified by the death, and at the cross of Christ, as that it cannot exert its damning power over believers; and is so crucified by the Spirit and grace of Christ in them, as that it cannot reign over them, or exercise its domineering power over them; wherefore they are dead unto it, and that to them, and therefore cannot live in it; which is done,

that the body of sin might be destroyed: by "the body of sin" is meant sin itself, which consists, as a body does, of various members; and also the power and strength of it, which the Jews [f113] call [rh rxyd alyj, "the power of the evil imagination"; this is crucified with Christ, and nailed to his cross by his sacrifice and satisfaction, that its damning power might be destroyed, abolished, and done away: and it is crucified by the Spirit and grace of Christ, that its governing power might be took away, and that itself be subdued, weakened, and laid under restraints, and its members and deeds mortified:

that henceforth we should not serve sin; not that it should not be in us, for as yet, neither by virtue of the sacrifice of Christ, nor by the power of his grace, is sin as to its being removed from the people of God: but that we should not serve it, make provision for it, indulge it and obey it, in the lusts thereof.

Ver. 7. *For he that is dead, is freed from sin*.] This is not to be understood of a natural or a corporeal death; for this is the effect of sin, and is inflicted by way of punishment for it, on Christless persons; so far is it from being an atonement for sin, as the Jews [f114] fancy; besides, there are many persons, who as they die in their sins, they will rise in them; though a natural death is alluded to, when persons are free from those laws and obligations to service and duty they are under whilst living: but here it is to be understood of a spiritual or mystical death, and of persons who are dead to the law, by the body of Christ; dead to sin by the sacrifice and grace of Christ; who are baptized into the death of Christ, and in imitation of him: such are "freed from sin"; not from the being of it; nor from the burden of it; nor from a continual war with it; nor from slips and falls into it; no, not even freed from it, in the most solemn services and acts of religion; but they are freed from the dominion of it, from servitude to it, and also from the guilt of it, and from obligation to punishment on account of it: they are, as it is in the Greek text, and as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, "justified from sin".

Ver. 8. *Now if we be dead with Christ*, etc..] This does not imply any doubt about it, but is rather a taking it for granted: seeing we are dead with Christ by union with him, as our head and representative, and by communion with him in the benefits of his death, and being planted together in the likeness of it; or being dead to the law, sin, and the world, through the virtue and efficacy of Christ's death:

we believe that we shall also live with him; not only a life of justification by faith in his righteousness; and a life of sanctification from him, and to his glory; the continuance of which, and a perseverance in it, are firmly believed; but a life of glory and happiness with him hereafter, both in the new Jerusalem, in the new heavens, and new earth, in the glorious state of the church on earth, and in heaven to all eternity; where they shall be personally and visibly with him, in soul and body, and shall live in the most intimate and uninterrupted communion with him, enjoying the highest pleasure, and the most consummate happiness; and are therefore under the greatest obligation, whilst here on earth, to live, not in sin, but to righteousness, and to his praise and glory; with whom they are now dead to sin, and with whom they not only hope, but believe they shall live throughout the endless ages of eternity.

Ver. 9. *Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead*, etc..] That Christ is risen from the dead, is a certain fact, well attested, thoroughly known, and firmly believed; the prophets prophesied of it, Christ himself foretold it, angels affirmed it, and the apostles were witnesses of it, as is also the Holy Ghost: and it is as certain, that he

dieth no more; he is raised to an immortal life, and will live for evermore; there is no need of his dying again, his death having been a full atonement and expiation of all the sins and transgressions of his people:

death hath no more dominion over him: it once had dominion over him; it held him under its power for a time, according to the divine determination, and by his own consent: but it was not possible he should be holden of it longer; both on account of the dignity of his person, as the Son of God, and the virtue and efficacy of his sacrifice, as the surety of his people, having put away sin for ever by it. He is the holy man the Jews [f115] speak of,

> "who is the mystery of the name Jehovah, and in him there is no sin, neither shall death have the dominion over him."

Ver. 10. *For in that he died*, etc..] The death of Christ was settled and agreed to in the covenant and council of peace; it was spoken of by the prophets, and typified by sacrifices; Christ came into the world in order to die, and actually did die the death of the cross; in which the great love of God and Christ is expressed to us; and which is a fundamental article of the Christian faith: and when he died,

he died unto sin once: he died to that, which we by nature are dead in, and could never make atonement for; which he himself never lived in, and which men naturally love to in; and which had he not died for, we must have died for to all eternity; and he died not for any sin of his own, or of angels, nor for the sins of every man, but for the sins of his people; it may be rendered, he died in sin: in the likeness of sinful flesh, in which he was sent; having as a surety sin laid on him, and bore by him, and for which he was wounded, bruised, and died: or rather to sin; that is, to make atonement for it, procure the pardon of it, take it away, and utterly abolish it: and this he did "once"; this is observed, in reference to the repeated sacrifices of the old law, which could never expiate or remove sin; and to show, that Christ's dying once was enough, his sacrifice was fully satisfactory to the law and justice of God:

but in that he liveth: which must be understood, not of his life as God, but as man; and that not on earth, but in heaven; where he lives with God, at the right hand of God, and by him, by the power of God: and

he liveth unto God; to his glory, and to make intercession for us.

Ver. 11. *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves*, etc..] Two things the apostle would have believers consider of themselves, and reckon themselves, to be, in consequence of their relation to Christ, who was dead, but is alive, and as agreeable thereunto: the one is, that they would look upon themselves

to be dead indeed unto sin: believe their discharge from it, and not fear condemnation and death on account of it; and that it shall not be imputed to them, or have any damning power over them, since Christ has died unto it, or for it; and therefore should have no fellowship with it, nothing to do with it, as being dead unto it, and that to them: the other is, that they would consider themselves

alive unto God, through, Jesus Christ our Lord; and that either in a legal sense, as justified persons; men in a state of nature, or of "Pharisaism", think themselves alive, when they are not; but when they come under a work of the Spirit of God, they see themselves otherwise, and are convinced both of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify from it; and when they have the righteousness of Christ revealed unto them, and faith is wrought in them to look unto it, and lay hold upon it, they are in themselves, and in their own apprehensions, alive, and that "unto God", in the sight of God; and their

life of faith on the righteousness of Christ, is unto the glory of God, and will be followed with an eternal life with God, to which the justifying righteousness of Christ gives them a title; and this is all through Christ, and his righteousness: or this is to be considered by them of themselves as sanctified persons, who are quickened by the Spirit of Christ, and can feel the burden of sin, see the corruption of their nature, hear the voice both of law and Gospel, breathe after spiritual things, speak the language of Canaan, walk by faith on Christ, and work and act for him; which life of faith and holiness is "unto God", to his glory and honour, and is "through Christ", and is maintained and supported by him: or they should consider themselves not only as being justified before God, and made alive by his Spirit, but as such who shall live to and with God, through Christ, for evermore; for as Christ died and rose again, and lives unto and with God for ever, so they being dead to sin through him, and being quickened together with him and by his Spirit, shall never die the second death, but shall have everlasting life.

Ver. 12. *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body*, etc..] Since grace reigns in you, sin should not: seeing ye are dead to sin, are baptized into the death of Christ, and are dead with him, and alive through him, sin therefore should not reign in you, and over you. This exhortation does not suppose a freewill power in man naturally, for this is spoken to persons, who had the Spirit and grace of Christ, and in whom God had wrought both to will and to do of his good pleasure; nor is this exhortation unnecessary to believers, though they are dead to sin, and though God has promised it shall not have the dominion over them, and though reigning sin, as divines say, cannot be in regenerate persons; for though they are entirely dead to sin as justified persons, yet not perfectly so as sanctified: they are indeed dead to sin, but sin is not dead in them; it struggles, it makes war, leads captive, and threatens absolute and universal dominion, wherefore such an exhortation is necessary; besides, though God has promised that sin shall not have the dominion, yet making use of means, such as prayer to God that it may not, striving against it, opposing it, in order to hinder its dominion, are no ways inconsistent with the promise of God, whose promises often have their accomplishment in the use of means: moreover, whereas some divines say, that reigning sin may be and others that it cannot be in regenerate persons, it should be observed, that if by reigning sin is meant, sinning against God out of malice and contempt, with the whole heart, without any struggle against it, or repentance for it, or so

as to lose the grace of God, and never rise more, then it must be said that it cannot be in a regenerate man; but if by it is meant, falling into sin against their consciences, knowingly and willingly, so as to distress their minds, lose their peace, and grieve the Spirit of God, so as to be held under it, and be led captive by it, such power sin may have in them, and over them; and therefore the exhortation is not needless; and when the apostle says, let it not reign "in your mortal body", by it is either meant the whole man, or rather the body only, which is the instrument of sinning, and is become mortal through sin; and being so, is a reason why it should not reign in it, since it has done so much mischief to it already: and this also denotes the time of sin's being in us, and of the danger of its reigning in us; it is only whilst we are in this mortal body; and the consideration of our mortality should quicken us to war against sin, and be careful not to

obey it in the lusts thereof; the lusts of the body, or flesh, which are therefore sometimes called fleshly lusts, are many, and have great power and influence; and may be said to be obeyed, when provision is made to fulfil them, when these are the business of a man's life, and the whole of his conversation is taken up in them, without struggle against them, or opposition to them; and heroin lies the reign of sin.

Ver. 13. *Neither yield ye your members*, etc..] The apostle more fully explains what he means by obeying sin in the lusts thereof; a presenting, or making use of the "members, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin": by their "members" he means the several powers and faculties of the soul, and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "your souls"; or the several parts of the body, or both; by "yielding", or presenting of them, is designed the employment of them in the service of sin,

as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: that is, as means of performing unrighteous actions, in obedience to sin, or the corruption of nature with its lusts: the word translated "instruments", signifies "arms" or "weapons": so the ancients [f116] formerly reckoned weapons the members of soldiers; and here the apostle calls the members weapons, which he would not have the saints use in favour of sin, an enemy and a tyrant; for that would be unrighteous in itself, and injurious to God and themselves: says he,

but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead: that is, present themselves soul and body to God, give up and devote themselves to him, and to his service, and yield a cheerful obedience to him; considering themselves as under great obligation so to do, inasmuch

as they are freed from condemnation and death, by the righteousness of Christ; and quickened, when dead in trespasses and sins, by his Spirit and grace; and therefore should yield

your members, their whole selves,

as instruments, or weapons

of righteousness unto God; by fighting against sin, revenging all disobedience, and fulfilling obedience to the commands of God: the same is here meant, as is by putting on "the armour of light" (<450112>Romans 13:12), and wearing and making use of "the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and the left", (<470607>2 Corinthians 6:7).

Ver. 14. *For sin shall not have dominion over you*, etc..] It has dominion over God's people in a state of unregeneracy: and after conversion it is still in them, and has great power oftentimes to hinder that which is good, and to effect that which is evil; it entices and ensnares, and brings into captivity, and seems as though it would regain its dominion, and reign again, but it shall not. This is not a precept, exhortation, or admonition, as before, though some read it as such, "let not sin have dominion over you"; nor does it express merely what ought not to be, but what cannot, and shall not be; it is an absolute promise, that sin shall not have the dominion over believers; and respects not acts of sin, but the principle of sin; and means not its damning power, though that is took away, but its tyrannical, governing power: "it shall not lord it over you", as the words may be rendered; for in regeneration, sin is dethroned; Christ enters as Lord, and continues to be so; saints are in another kingdom, the kingdom of Christ and grace; could sin reign again over them, they might be lost and perish, which they never can: now this is a noble argument why saints should use their members as weapons of righteousness for God and against sin; since they are sure of being conquerors, and are secure from the tyrannical government of sin over them. The Jewish doctors say [f117], there are three persons, [rh rxy^hb jlç al, "over whom the evil imagination", or "sin, had not the dominion"; and these are they, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; but these are not the only persons, for all Abraham's spiritual seed, all that are of the faith of Abraham, enjoy the same favour: the reason of this is,

for ye are not under the law; by which is meant, not the law of nature; nor the civil law of the Jews; nor their ceremonial law; but either the law of sin,

as a governing principle; or rather the moral law: this they were under, so as to obey it, but not in order to obtain righteousness by it; or as forced to obey it by its threats and terrors; they were not under its rigorous exaction; nor under its curse and condemnation; nor as irritating sin, and causing it to abound; or as a covenant of works:

but under grace; under the covenant of grace, and in the enjoyment of the blessings of it; under the Gospel, and the dispensation of it, which leads and teaches men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; under and in the possession of the grace of justification and pardon, which strongly influence to righteousness and holiness; and under regenerating and sanctifying grace as a reigning governing principle in the soul. The apostle's view in this is, to affect the saints with their present privilege, and to engage them in a cheerful conflict with sin, and to stir up in them an abhorrence of living in it.

Ver. 15. *What then? shall we sin*, etc..] Does it follow from hence, that therefore we may sin, and go on and continue in it,

because we are not under the law, but under grace? here the apostle meets with an objection of the adversary, saying, that if men are not under the law, and are free from all obligation to it, then they may live as they list; nor can they be chargeable with sin, or that be objected to them; since where there is no law, there is no transgression, and sin is not imputed where there is no law; and if they are under grace, or in the love and favour of God, from which there is no separation, then they cannot be damned, do what they will: but this objection proceeds upon a mistaken sense of the phrase, “under the law”; for believers, though they are not under the law as the ministry of Moses, yet they are under it, as it is in the hands of Christ; and though not under its curse, yet under obligation to obedience to it, from principles of love and grace; and a transgression of it is sin in them, as in others; and which is taken notice of by God, and visited with stripes in a: fatherly way, though his loving kindness is not removed: and to argue from the unchangeableness of God's grace, or the doctrines of it, as encouraging licentiousness, is greatly to abuse the grace of God, and manifestly betrays such persons to be ignorant of it and its influence; since nothing more powerfully engages to a love of holiness, and hatred of sin; wherefore the apostle, answers to this objection in his usual way,

God forbid; signifying his abhorrence of everything of this kind.

Ver. 16. *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves*, etc..] The apostle goes on with his answer to the above objection, by making use of an argument from the nature of servants and their obedience, a thing well known to everyone, and which none could be ignorant of; which he delivers by way of distribution, that such who yield themselves

servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or obedience unto righteousness: such who obey sin, are the servants of sin; they are at the beck and command of sin; they give up themselves to the service of it with delight and diligence, and are perfect drudges to it: this is a very unhappy situation; their service is very unreasonable; and they are rendered incapable of serving God, for no man can serve two masters; they are hereby brought into the drudgery of the devil; into a state of bondage, out of which nothing but grace can extricate them; into a very mean and contemptible condition, and even a deplorable one; for if grace prevent not, they will have the wages of sin paid them, which is death, for their obedience is "of sin unto death"; which will lie in an eternal separation from Father, Son, and Spirit, in a sense of divine wrath, and in the company of devils and damned spirits: now this is added, to show the malignant nature and just demerit of sin, and to deter and dissuade persons from the service of it: on the other hand, such as obey the Lord, are the servants "of obedience unto righteousness": but why is not this obedience, which is the obedience of faith to the Gospel, of Christ, and of the new man to God or Christ, said to be "unto life", as the antithesis seems to require? because though death is the fruit of sin, yet life is not the fruit of obedience, but the fruit of obedience is righteousness; by which is meant, nor a justifying one before God, but righteousness before men; or a course of living soberly and righteously, which is the effect of being under grace; and hence it appears, that true believers can make no such ill use of their privilege, as is suggested in the objection.

Ver. 17. *But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin*, etc..] Not that the apostle must be thought to give thanks to God for that these persons had been the servants of sin, than which nothing is more disagreeable to God, or caused more shame to themselves; but that inasmuch as they had been in the drudgery and service of sin, they were now freed from it. Just as if a person, that has been a slave for some time in Algiers, should bless God, or be thankful to the instrument of his deliverance, that whereas he had been in such slavery, he is now redeemed from it: wherefore it is added,

but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. By “the form of doctrine”, is meant the Gospel, which is the “doctrine” of the Scriptures, of Christ and his apostles, and is sound and according to godliness; and is a “form”, or contains a summary and compendium of truths, and is a pattern or exemplar, according to which ministers are to preach, and people to hear and receive. So the word spwj which is the same with τυπος here, is used by the Jewish [f118] writers for a form, copy, pattern, or exemplar of any sort of writings This form of doctrine is hlbq, “a Cabala”, but not like that of the Jews' oral law, or form of traditions [f119], handed down, as they say, from one man, and set of men, to another; but this is delivered from the Father to Christ, from Christ to his apostles, and by them to the saints; and “into which they were delivered”, as it may be rendered, as into a mould; and so received the impression of it, and were evangelized by it: so such are who have a spirit of Gospel liberty, in opposition to a spirit of bondage; who live by faith on Christ, and not by the works of the law; who derive their comfort from him, and not from anything done by them; whose repentance and obedience are influenced by the grace of God, and who are zealous of good works, without any dependence on them. This form of doctrine was “obeyed” by them; by which is meant, not a mere obedience to the ordinances of the Gospel; nor a bare hearing of the doctrines of it, and giving an assent unto them; but an embracing of them by faith for themselves, so as to lay hold on Christ in them, submit to his righteousness therein revealed, and be willing to be saved by him, and him alone, in his own way; and this is the obedience of faith: the reason why faith is expressed by obedience is, because faith receives truth upon the veracity of God, and not upon the dictates of carnal reason; and is always more or less attended with external obedience to the will of God; and that is rightly performed only by faith. And this obedience did not lie in words, or proceed on mercenary views, and in an hypocritical way; but was “from the heart”; and was real and sincere: and good reason there is why a hearty, cheerful, and voluntary obedience should be yielded to t he Gospel; since it is from God; Christ is the substance of it; it is truth, and the word of our salvation. The Alexandrian copy reads, “from a pure heart”; and the Arabic version, “from the sincerity of your heart”; and the Ethiopic version, “with your whole heart”.

Ver. 18. *Being then made free from sin*, etc..] Not from a sinful nature; nor from a corrupt heart; nor from vain thoughts; nor from sinful words;

nor from sinful actions altogether; but from the damning power of sin: sin brought all men under a sentence of condemnation; Christ has bore the execution of this sentence in himself for his people; hence, as considered in him, they are free from it; and such as are born again have passed from death to life, and shall never enter into condemnation: likewise, such persons are free from the guilt of sin; men are in a legal sense arraigned for sin, accused of it, and being convicted, are pronounced guilty before God; and awakened souls have a sense of it in themselves; but the blood of Christ sprinkled on their consciences frees them from it; though fresh sins committed bring fresh guilt, which requires the continual application of the blood of Jesus for pardon and cleansing: but what is chiefly designed here is freedom from the servitude of sin, as appears from the context. Now God's elect are not released voluntarily by their former masters; nor is their freedom obtained by their own power and will; but it is of God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and the Gospel is generally the means of it, and happy are those persons who are blessed with it! They are rid of a bad master; are freed from the worst of bondage; will be no more servants, as before; are delivered from the power, and out of the kingdom of darkness; are heirs of heaven, and shall enjoy the glorious liberty of the children of God: and for the time present are

become the servants of righteousness; servants to God, whose Gospel they obey; servants to Christ, whose righteousness they submit to; and servants to the law of righteousness, as held forth by Christ; they give up themselves to a course and life of righteousness, in which there are true honour, peace, and pleasure.

Ver. 19. *I speak after the manner of men*, etc..] This refers either to what the apostle had said already concerning service and liberty, things which were known among men, and easy to be understood; or to the following exhortation: what he was about to say, he delivered in a manner suited to their understandings, and was ανψρωπινον, “that which was human”; not angelic, or what required the power, purity, and perfection of angels; or what was unreasonable or impossible, but what was their reasonable service, as men; and might be done through the grace of God, in the strength of Christ, and by the assistance of the Spirit: and though he might have insisted upon it with good reason, that they ought to be more diligent and industrious in the service of God than they had been in the service of sin; yet

because of the infirmity of their flesh, considering that they had flesh, or corrupt nature, and were attended with weakness in knowledge, faith, and obedience; he only pressed this upon them, that in like manner as they had been servants to sin, they would be servants to righteousness:

for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity; what they yielded to the service of sin were their "members"; by which, as before, may be meant, either the powers and faculties of their souls, or the parts and members of their bodies, or both; and particularly the latter, as the eyes and ears, the tongue, the mouth, the hands, and feet, which are all employed by a natural man in the drudgery of sin: these are yielded to sin under the form and character of "servants"; and as such are governed, directed, and ordered to fulfil this and the other lust, which is done willingly and readily: these members are "yielded", presented, and given up cheerfully to this slavery; which is both scandalous and unrighteous: it is "to uncleanness"; which designs all sorts of pollution and filthiness, both of flesh and spirit: "and to iniquity"; everything that is contrary to the law, all unrighteousness and ungodliness; and it is added, "unto iniquity"; which may design all sorts of sin, a progress in it, adding continually to it; which shows them to have been thorough hearty servants of sin. Now what the apostle exhorts to, and requires of them, is, that

even so now they would yield their members servants to righteousness unto holiness; that is, let the same members that have been employed in the service of sin, be made use of in the service of righteousness: let your eyes be employed in looking and diligently searching into the Scriptures of truth; your ears in hearing the Gospel preached; your lips, mouth, and tongue, in expressing the praises of God, for what he has done for you; your hands in distributing to the interest of religion, and the necessities of the saints; and your feet in hastening to attend on public worship, and observe the testimonies of the Lord: let them be employed under the same form and character as servants, waiting upon the Lord, ready to fulfil his will; and in the same manner, freely, willingly, and cheerfully, and that constantly and universally, in all acts of righteousness and holiness.

Ver. 20. *For when ye were the servants of sin*, etc..] This is an argument used, or a reason given, why regenerate persons should be diligent in the service of righteousness; because when they were employed in the drudgery of sin, they

were free from righteousness; they had no righteousness, nor were they desirous of any; yea, averse to it, threw off the yoke of the law of righteousness, and lived in a very unrighteous manner: hence may be observed what is the free will of man in an unregenerate state; not free to, but "from" righteousness; free enough to evil, but from all that is good; and also what obligation lies upon believers, who are delivered from the bondage of corruption, and the servitude of sin, to a life and service of righteousness; inasmuch as they were before free from it, and unconcerned about it, but are now made by the grace of God free to it, they ought therefore cheerfully to pursue it, and neglect no opportunity of performing it.

Ver. 21. *What fruit had ye then in those things*? etc..] That is, what profit, pleasure, satisfaction, or comfort, had ye in the commission of sin? Sin yields no real profit to the servants of it. If a man, by sinful practices, could amass together the riches of the Indies, or gain the whole world, yet if his soul is lost thereby, what advantage would it be to him? he would be infinitely the loser by it; nor would all his wealth and riches profit him in the day of God's wrath and righteous judgment: nor is there any true pleasure in sin; persons may imagine within themselves they enjoy a real pleasure whilst they are serving divers lusts; but this is but imaginary, it is not real; and this imaginary pleasure is but for a season; it issues in bitterness and death: nor is there any satisfaction in it; when men have endeavoured to gratify their carnal lusts and sensual appetites in every way that can be devised, they still remain as they were; nor can they reflect with real satisfaction, and without some slinging remorse, upon the methods they have pursued to gain it: nor is there any true honour in sin, nothing but what is scandalous and disgraceful to human nature; shame, sooner or later, is the fruit of sin:

whereof ye are now ashamed; some men may be indeed for the present so hardened as not to blush and be ashamed at the commission of the vilest sins; such are they who have no sense of sin, have no fear of God, or regard to men; and so sin openly, and without any guise, glory in it, and make their boast of it: but when persons are wrought upon by the Spirit of God, they are ashamed of sin; which might be exemplified in the case of Adam and Eve, of Ephraim, of the prodigal son, and of the poor publican; the reason is, because light is struck into their hearts; and this makes manifest the odious and detestable nature of sin; sin is hereby seen in its own proper colours, as exceeding sinful, loathsome, and abominable:

besides, the grace and goodness of God are discovered in the forgiveness of it; and the glory of God's purity and holiness, and the beauty and loveliness of Christ, are discerned by such persons; all which have a tendency to make them ashamed of sin, out of love with it, and to abhor it: and a good thing it is to be brought to be ashamed of sin here; for such who are not ashamed of it here, shall be brought to everlasting shame and confusion hereafter. Nay, this is not all; not only shame will be the fruit of sin, but it will also issue in death:

for the, end of those things is death: the profit, the reward, and wages of them is death: sin not only brings a spiritual or moral death on persons, on all the powers and faculties of their souls, and is followed with a corporeal death; but if grace prevent not, it will end in an eternal one; for however right and good the ways of sin may seem to the carnal mind, “the end thereof are the ways of death” ((<20142>Proverbs 14:12 16:25)).

Ver. 22. *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God*, etc..] In what sense regenerate persons are free from sin, and are become the servants of God, has been observed already; the consequence of which is, that such have their

fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life: holiness is a fruit of freedom from the bondage of sin, and of serving God; holiness begun in regeneration, calling, and conversion, is a fruit of the Spirit; a course of living righteously is a fruit of holiness, as a principle implanted; a gradual increase in holiness is carried on by the Spirit of God in a course of righteousness; and a course of righteousness, from a principle of grace, issues in perfect holiness; “without which no man shall see the Lord” ((<581214>Hebrews 12:14)): here it seems to design, that holiness is fruit, or that which is gain and profit to persons, in opposition to sin, in which there is no profit: it is not indeed profitable to God in point of merit; yet holiness, as a principle of grace, is profitable to the saints in point of meetness for glory; and holiness, as it denotes an external course of life, is useful and profitable on many accounts; hereby God is glorified, the doctrine of Christ is adorned, religion is honoured and recommended, our own credit, reputation, and peace, are preserved, and our neighbour's good promoted.

And the end is everlasting life: as sin issues, if grace prevent not, in everlasting death; holiness issues in eternal life, not by way of merit, but of free gift.

Ver. 23. *For the wages of sin is death*, etc..] By sin, is meant every sin, original sin, actual sin, every kind of sin, lesser and greater: the "death" which sin deserves, is a corporeal death; which is not owing to the original nature and constitution of men; nor merely to the divine appointment; but to sin, and the decree of God, on account of it; which is inflicted on Christless sinners, as a punishment for sin, though not on believers as such, because Christ has took away the sting and curse of it: a death of diseases and afflictions also follows upon sin, as its proper demerit; which are properly punishments to wicked men, and are occasioned by sin in believers: there is a death of the soul, which comes by sin, which lies in an alienation from God, in a loss of the image of God, and in a servitude to sin; and there is an eternal death, the just wages of sin, which lies in a separation of soul and body from God, and in a sense of divine wrath to all eternity; and which is here meant, as is clear from its antithesis, "eternal life", in the next clause. Now this is "the wages" of sin; sin does in its own nature produce it, and excludes from life; it is the natural issue of it; sin is committed against an infinite God, and righteously deserves such a death; it is its just wages by law. The Greek word οθωνια, signifies soldiers' wages; (see <4034>Luke 3:14 <4607>1 Corinthians 9:7) and in

> "At which time Simon rose up, and fought for his nation, and spent much of his own substance, and armed the valiant men of his nation and gave them wages," (1 Maccabees 14:32)

Sin is represented as a king, a mighty monarch, a tyrannical prince; sinners are his subjects and vassals, his servants and soldiers, who fight under him, and for him, and all the wages they must expect from him is death. So the word is interpreted in the Glossary, μισψος στρατιωτικος, "soldiers' wages"; and so it is used by the Jewish writers, being adopted into their language; of a king, they say[f120], that he should not multiply to himself gold and silver more than to pay aynpsa, which they[f121] interpret by twlyyj rkç, "the hire of armies", or the wages of soldiers for a whole year, who go in and out with him all the year; so that it denotes wages due, and paid after a campaign is ended, and service is over; and, as here used, suggests, that when men have been all their days in the service of sin, and have fought under the banners of it, the wages they will earn, and the reward that will be given them, will be death: and it is frequently observed by the Jewish doctors[f122], that ajj alb htym ^ya, "there is no death without sin": sin is the cause of death, and death the fruit and effect of sin:

but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. These words, at first sight, look as if the sense of them was, that eternal life is the gift of God through Christ, which is a great and glorious truth of the Gospel; but their standing in opposition to the preceding words require another sense, namely, that God's gift of grace issues in eternal life, through Christ: wherefore by “the gift of God” is not meant eternal life, but either the gift of a justifying righteousness, or the grace of God in regeneration and sanctification, or both, which issue in eternal life; the one is the saints' right and title, the other their meetness for it: so that as death is the wages of sin, and is what that issues in, and brings unto, eternal life is the effect of grace, or what the grace of God in justifying and sanctifying his people issues in; even a life free from all sorrow and imperfection; a life of the utmost perfection and pleasure, and which will last for ever: and as the grace of God, which justifies and sanctifies them, is “through Christ”, so is the eternal life itself which it brings unto: this is in Christ, comes through his righteousness, sufferings, and death; is bestowed by him, and will greatly consist in the enjoyment of him. All grace is the gift of God, and is freely given, or otherwise it would not be grace; particularly the justifying righteousness of Christ is the gift of God; and the rather this may be meant here, since the apostle had been treating of it so largely before, and had so often, in the preceding chapter, called it the gift of righteousness, the free gift, and gift by grace, and justification by it, the justification of life, because it entitles to eternal life, as here: it may be said to issue in it; for between justification and glorification there is a sure and close connection; they that are justified by the righteousness of Christ, are certainly glorified, or enjoy eternal life; and though this may be principally intended here, yet is not to be understood to the exclusion of other gifts of grace, which have the same connection and issue: thus, for instance, faith is the gift of God, and not of a man's self, and he that has it, has eternal life, and shall, Or ever possess it; repentance is a free grace gift, it is a grant from the Lord, and it is unto life and salvation; and on whomsoever the grace of God is bestowed, so as to believe in Christ for righteousness, and truly repent of sin, these shall partake of eternal glory. It may be observed, that there is a just proportion between sin, and the wages of it, yet there is none between eternal life, and the obedience of men; and therefore though the apostle had been pressing so much obedience to God, and to righteousness, he does not make eternal life to be the fruit and effect of obedience, but of the gift of the grace of God.

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 7

The Apostle, in this chapter, discourses concerning the freedom of justified and regenerated persons from the law, and concerning the nature, use, and excellency of it; in which he removes several objections to it, and gives an account from his own experience of the struggle and combat there is between flesh and spirit in a regenerate person; and which shows, that though believers are justified from sin, yet still sin remains in them, and is the complaint of their souls. Whereas he had in (Romans 6:14), of the preceding chapter, asserted that believers are not under the law, but under grace: he knew that this would be matter of offence to the believing Jews, who still retained an high opinion of the law; wherefore he takes it up in the beginning of this chapter, and explains his meaning, and shows in what sense justified ones are delivered from it; and first observes a known maxim, which everyone, especially such as know anything of the nature of laws, must allow of; that the law has power over a man as long as he lives, and no longer, (Romans 7:1), and then particularly instances in the law of marriage, (Romans 7:2), which is in force as long as both parties live and no longer: during the husband's life the wife is bound, but when dead she is loosed, and which is further explained, (Romans 7:3), that should she marry another while her husband is alive, she would be an adulteress; but he being dead, should she marry, she is liable to no such imputation: this the apostle accommodates, (Romans 7:4), to the case of the law, and the saints' deliverance from it, in which he asserts that they are dead to the law, and that to them, as in (Romans 7:6), by the body of Christ; and therefore the law could have no dominion over them, as is the case of all laws when men are dead; and so they might be lawfully married to another, to bring forth fruit to God, according to the particular law of marriage. This is illustrated by the different state and condition of God's elect, before and after conversion; whilst in an unconverted state the law irritates indwelling sin, and the lusts of it, and by the members of the body operates to the bringing forth the deadly fruit of sin, (Romans 7:5), but when delivered from the irritating power of the law, that being dead in consequence of the sufferings and death of Christ, they are both in a

capacity, and under an obligation to serve the Lord, in a new and spiritual manner, (Romans 7:6), and whereas he had said that the motions of sin are stirred up by the law, (Romans 7:5), he saw that an objection might be raised against the law, as if that was sinful; this he removes by expressing his abhorrence of such a thought, by pointing out the law as that which makes known sin, and by the experience he himself had of it, making known indwelling sin to him, (Romans 7:7), when he goes on to give an account of the workings of corrupt nature in him, under the prohibition of the law; how it was with him before it entered into his conscience, and how it was with him afterwards; that before he thought himself alive, and in a fair way to eternal life; but afterwards, as sin appeared to him more vigorous than ever, he found himself a dead man, and dead to all hope of life by the law, being killed by it, or rather by sin which worked by it, (Romans 7:8-11), and therefore he vindicates the law as holy, just, and good, (Romans 7:12), and answers an objection that might be formed from what he had said concerning the effect the law had upon him, as if it was made death unto him; whereas the office it did was to show him the exceeding sinfulness of sin, which, and not the law, was the cause of death, (Romans 7:13), for to it with other saints he bears this testimony, that it is spiritual, though in comparison of it he was carnal and sold under sin, (Romans 7:14), and from henceforward to the end of the chapter, he gives an account of the force and power of indwelling sin in him, and the conflict there was in him between grace and corruption: he had knowledge of that which is good, approved of it, and yet did it not, hated sin and yet committed it, (Romans 7:15), but however, his desire after that which was good, and his approbation of it, showed that he agreed to this, that the law was good, (Romans 7:16), nor was his commission of sin to be imputed to his renewed self, but to indwelling corruption, (Romans 7:17), the fleshly part in him, in which was no good thing, (Romans 7:18), he found he had a will to that which is good, but not power to perform it; which was abundantly evident by his practice, seeing what he would he did not, and what he would not he did. (Romans 7:19), from whence he concludes again, (Romans 7:20), as in (Romans 7:17), that the evil he did was to be reckoned not to his spiritual, or renewed self, but to his corrupt nature; which he found, as a law that had power to command and to cause to obey, always at hand, close by him when he was desirous of doing good, (Romans 7:21), and yet amidst all these workings of sin in him, he found a real delight and pleasure in the holy law of God, as he was renewed in the spirit of his mind, (Romans 7:22),

upon the whole he perceived there were two contrary principles in him, which militated one against the other, and sometimes so it was, that through the strength of corrupt nature in him, he was made a captive to the law of sin and death, (Romans 7:23), which fetched from him a doleful lamentation and complaint, as if his case was desperate, and there was no deliverance for him, (Romans 7:24), and yet upon a view of his great Redeemer and Saviour, Jesus Christ, he takes heart, and thanks God that there was, and would be a deliverance for him through Christ, (Romans 7:25), and then closes the account which stood thus in his experience, and does in the experience of every regenerate man; that with his renewed mind he served the holy law of God from a principle of grace, and with his fleshly and carnal part the law of sin.

Ver. 1. *Know ye not, brethren*, etc..] The apostle having asserted, (Romans 6:14), that the believing Romans were “not under the law”; which he knew would be displeasing to many, and excepted to by them, especially the Jews that were among them, who though they believed in Christ, yet were zealous of the law, takes it up again, and explains and defends it. That they were the Jewish converts at Rome he here particularly addresses, appears partly from his calling them “brethren”, for they were so according to the flesh, as well as in a spiritual relation, and this he rather mentions to soften their resentments, and conciliate their minds to him; and partly from the words included in a parenthesis,

for I speak to them that know the law; not the law of nature, but the law of Moses, as the Jews did, being trained up in the knowledge of it; to these he appeals, saying, “know ye not”, for the truth of a principle or maxim he afterwards improves, which they could not be ignorant of,

how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he, or “it”,

liveth; for the word “liveth” may refer either to man or to the law. The law may be said to live, when it is in full force, and to be dead, when it is abrogated and disannulled; now whilst it lives, or is in force, it has dominion over a man; it can require and command obedience of him, and in case of disobedience can condemn him, and inflict punishment on him: and this power it has also as long as the man lives who is under it, but when he is dead it has no more dominion over him; then “the servant is free from his master”, (Job 3:19); that is, from the law of his master; and children are free from the law of their parents, the wife from the law of her husband,

and subjects from the law of their prince. This is so clear a point that none can doubt of it. The Jews have a saying [f123], that

> "when a man is dead, he becomes twxmh ^mw hrwt ^m yçpj, free from the law, and from the commands."

Ver. 2. *For the woman which hath an husband*, etc..] The former general rule is here illustrated by a particular instance and example in the law of marriage; a woman that is married to a man,

is bound by the law to her husband; to live with him, in subjection and obedience to him,

so long as he liveth; except in the cases of adultery, (<40 19 9>Matthew 19:9), and desertion, (<46 07 15>1 Corinthians 7:15), by which the bond of marriage is loosed, and for which a divorce or separation may be made, which are equal to death:

but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband; the bond of marriage is dissolved, the law of it is abolished, and she is at entire liberty to marry whom she will, (<46 07 39>1 Corinthians 7:39).

Ver. 3. *So then if while her husband liveth*, etc..] True indeed it is, that whilst her husband is alive, if

she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; she will be noted and accounted of as such everybody, except in the above mentioned cases:

but if her husband be dead; then there can be no exception to her marriage:

she is free from the law; of marriage, by which she was before bound:

so that she is no adulteress; nor will any reckon her such; she is clear from any such imputation:

though she be married to another man; hence it appears that second marriages are lawful.

Ver. 4. *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also*, etc..] Here the apostle accommodates the foregoing instance and example to the case in hand, showing, that the saints were not under the law, the power and dominion of it; since that, as when a man is dead, the woman is loosed from that law

by which she was bound whilst he lived, that she may lawfully marry another man, and bear children to him without the imputation of adultery; so believers being dead to the law, and the law dead to them, which is all one, they are loosed from it, and may be, and are lawfully married to Christ, that they may bring forth the genuine fruits of good works, not in order to obtain righteousness and life by them, but for the honour and glory of God; in which account may be observed, an assertion that the saints and children of God

are become dead to the law, and that to them, as in (<450706>Romans 7:6), and can have no more power over them than a law can have over dead persons, or a dead abrogated law can have over living ones. They are represented as "dead to sin", and "dead with Christ", (<450602>Romans 6:2,8); and here, "dead to the law", as in (<480219>Galatians 2:19), and consequently cannot be under it; are out of the reach of its power and government, since that only has dominion over a man as long as be lives the law is dead to them; it has no power over them, to threaten and terrify them into obedience to it; nor even rigorously to exact it, or command it in a compulsory way; nor is there any need of all this, since believers delight in it after the inward man, and serve it with their minds freely and willingly; the love of Christ, and not the terrors of the law, constrains them to yield a cheerful obedience to it; it has no power to charge and accuse them, curse or condemn them, or minister death unto them, no, not a corporeal one, as a penal evil, and much less an eternal one. And the way and means by which they become dead to the law, and that to them is,

by the body of Christ; not by Christ, as the body or substance of the ceremonial law; (see <510217>Colossians 2:17); since that is not singly designed, but the whole law of Moses; but by "the body of Christ", is either meant Christ himself, (<581010>Hebrews 10:10 9:14), or rather the human nature of Christ, (<581005>Hebrews 10:5), in which the law meets with every thing it can require and demand, as holiness of nature, which is the saints' sanctification in Christ; obedience of life, which is their righteousness; and sufferings of death, which is the penalty the law enjoins, whereby full expiation of sin is made, complete pardon is procured, and eternal redemption obtained; so that the law has nothing more to demand; its mouth is stopped, it is not in its power to curse and damn believers, they are dead to that, and that to them: the reason why the law is become so to them, and they to that, is,

that ye should be married to another; or “that ye should be to another”, or “be another's”; that is, that ye should appear to be so in a just and legal way; for they were another's, they were Christ's before by the Father's gift, and were secretly married to him in the everlasting covenant, before he assumed their nature, and in the body of his flesh bore their sins, satisfied law and justice, paid their debts, and so freed them from the power of the law, its curse and condemnation, or any obligation to punishment; all which was done in consequence of his interest in them, and their marriage relation to him; but here respect is had to their open marriage to him in time, the day of their espousals in conversion; to make way for which, the law, their former husband, must be dead, and they dead to that, that so their marriage to Christ might appear lawful and justifiable; who is very fitly described by him,

who is raised from the dead; and is a living husband, and will ever continue so, will never die more; and therefore as the saints can never be loosed from the marriage bond of union between Christ and them, so they can never be loosed from the law of this husband; wherefore though they are dead to the law as a covenant of works, and as ministered by Moses, and are free from any obligation to it, as so considered, yet they are “under the law to Christ”, (1 Corinthians 9:21); under obligation, by the ties of love, to obedience to it, and shall never be loosed from it. The end of being dead to the law, and of being married to Christ, is,

that we should bring forth fruit unto God. The allusion is to children being called “the fruit of the womb”, (Psalm 127:3 Luke 1:42), and here designs good works, the fruits of righteousness, which are brought forth by persons espoused to Christ, under the influence of the Spirit and grace of God; and they are “unto God”, that is, for the honour and glory of God; meaning either Christ the husband of believers, who is God over all blessed for ever; or God the Father, to whose praise and glory they are by Christ; and which is a reason and argument which strongly excites and encourages the saints to the performance of them: and let it be observed, that as children begotten and born in lawful marriage are only true and legitimate, and all before marriage are spurious and illegitimate; so such works only are the true and genuine fruits of righteousness, which are in consequence of a marriage relation to Christ; are done in faith, spring from love, and are directed to the glory of God; and all others, which are done before marriage to Christ, and without faith in him, are like spurious and illegitimate children.

Ver. 5. *For when we were in the flesh*, etc..] This respects not their being under the legal dispensation, the Mosaic economy; which lay greatly in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, such as regarded the flesh chiefly; so their meats and drinks concerned the body; their ablutions and washings sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; their circumcision was outward in the flesh; the several rituals of the law consisted in outward things, though typical of internal and spiritual ones; hence those that trusted in them trusted in the flesh: but to be "in the flesh" stands opposed, (Romans 7:8:9); to a being "in the spirit"; whereas there were many under that legal and carnal dispensation who were in the spirit, and had the Spirit of God, as David and others; besides, the apostle must be thought to use the phrase in such a sense, as to include all the persons he is speaking of and writing to, who were both Jews and Gentiles, for of such the church at Rome consisted; and the sense is this, "for when we", Jews and Gentiles, who are now believers in Christ, "were" formerly, before our conversion to, and faith in Christ, "in the flesh", that is, in a corrupt, carnal, and unregenerate state and condition; in which sense the word "flesh" is frequently used in the next chapter: now not all such who have flesh, sin, or corrupt nature in them, must be reckoned to be in the flesh, for there is a difference between flesh being in persons, from which none are free in this life, and their being in the flesh; nor all such who commit sin, or do carnal things at times, for there is not a just man that doth good and sinneth not; but such who are as they were born, without any alteration made in them by the Spirit and grace of God; who have nothing but flesh in them, no fear of God, nor love to and faith in Christ, nor any experience of the work of the Spirit of God upon their souls; no true sight and sense of sin, nor any spiritual knowledge of salvation by Christ; in whom flesh is the governing principle, whose minds and principles are carnal, and their conversation wholly so; yea, persons may be in the flesh, in an unregenerate state, who may abstain from the grosser immoralities of life, and even make a profession of religion: now such these had been the apostle is speaking of and to, and tells how it was with them when in this state;

the motions of sins which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death: by "the motions of sin" are meant, the evil passions and affections of the mind, the lusts of the heart, sinful desires, evil thoughts, the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart, the first motions of the mind to sin: these "were by the law"; not as the efficient

cause of them, that neither produces nor encourages them; it is holy, just, and good, requires truth in the inward parts, and not only forbids the outward acts of sin, but even covetous desires, and lustful thoughts: no, these inward motions of sin arise from a corrupt heart and nature; are encouraged and cherished by the old man that dwells there; and men are enticed by Satan to a compliance with them. Some think that the meaning of the phrase is, that these secret lusts of the heart are made known by the law, as in (Romans 7:7), so they are, but not whilst a man is in the flesh, or in an unregenerate state, but when he comes to be wrought upon powerfully by the Spirit of God, who makes use of the law to such a purpose: but the true sense of it is, that these motions of sin are irritated, provoked, and increased, through the law's prohibition of them; which is not to be charged as a fault on the law, but to be imputed to the depravity and corruption of man; who is like to one in a burning fever, very desirous of drink, who the more it is forbid, the more eager is he of it; or like a mighty torrent of water, which rises, rages, flows, and overflows, the more any methods are taken to stop its current; or like a filthy dunghill, which when the sun strikes powerfully on it, it exhales and draws out its filthy stench; which nauseous smell is not to be imputed to the pure rays of the sun, but to the filthiness of the dunghill: these motions of sin are said to "work in our members"; in the members of our bodies, which these sinful affections of the soul make use of to put them into action, and so they bring forth fruit; very evil fruit indeed, for nothing else can be expected from such an evil tree as the corrupt nature of man is: and this fruit is "unto death": deadly fruit, worthy of death, and would issue in eternal death, if grace did not prevent: the rise, beginning, motion, progress, and issue of sin, are most exactly and beautifully described, agreeably to this account here, by the Apostle James, (James 1:13-15).

Ver. 6. *But now we are delivered from the law*, etc..] From the ministration of it, by Moses; from it, as a covenant of works; from its rigorous exaction; from its curse and condemnation, all this by Christ; and from its being an irritating, provoking law to sin, through the corruption of nature, by the Spirit and grace of Christ; but not from obedience to it, as in the hands of Christ. The Vulgate Latin version, and some copies read, "from the law of death"; and the Ethiopic version renders it, "we are loosed from the law, and are delivered from the former doctrine"; the doctrine of the legal dispensation.

That being dead; not sin, but the law: in what sense believers are dead to the law, and that to them, (see Gill on " Romans 7:4").

Wherein we were held: as a woman is by the law to her husband, or as persons guilty, who are detained prisoners; so we were "kept under the law, shut up unto the faith", as in a prison, (Galatians 3:23); Now the saints deliverance from the law through the abrogation of it, that losing its former life, vigour, power, and dominion, is not that they may live a loose licentious life and conversation, but that they

should serve the Lord their God without slavish fear, and with a godly one, acceptably, in righteousness and holiness, all the days of their lives; and their Lord and Master Jesus Christ, who is King of saints, lawgiver in his church, and whose commandments are to be observed from a principle of love, in faith, and to his glory; yea, even the law itself, as held forth by him, as the apostle says in the close of this chapter, "with the mind I myself serve the law of God", (Romans 7:25): the manner in which this service is to be, and is performed, is,

in newness of Spirit; under the influences of the Spirit of God, the author of renovation, of the new creature, or new man created in us, in righteousness and true holiness; and from a new heart, and new Spirit, and new principles of life, light, love, and grace, formed in the soul; and by walking in "newness of life", (Romans 6:4), or by a new life, walk, and conversation:

and not in the oldness of the letter; not in the outward observance of the law of Moses, which is the "letter"; not indulging the old man, or walking after the dictates of corrupt nature; nor behaving according to the old former course of living: on the whole it may be observed, that a believer without the law, being delivered from it, that being dead to him, and he to that, lives a better life and conversation under the influence of the Spirit of God, than one that is under the law, and the works of it, destitute of the grace of God; the one brings forth "fruit unto death", (Romans 7:5), the other serves the Lord, "in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter".

Ver. 7. *What shall we say then? is the law sin*? etc..] The apostle having said, that "the motions of sins were by the law", (Romans 7:5), meets with an objection, or rather an ill natured cavil, "is the law sin?" if the motions sins are by it, then it instigates and prompts men to sin; it cherishes

it in them; it leads them and impels them to the commission of it, and therefore must be the cause of sin; and if the cause of sin, then it must be sin, or sinful itself: “what shall we say then?” how shall we remove this difficulty, answer this objection, and silence this cavil? To this it is replied by way of detestation and abhorrence,

God forbid! a way of speaking often made use of by the apostle, when any dreadful consequence was drawn from, or any shocking objection was made to his doctrine, and which was so monstrous as scarcely to deserve any other manner of refutation; (see <450303>Romans 3:3-5 6:1,2,15); and next by observing the use of the law to discover sin; which it does by forbidding it, and threatening it with death; by accusing for it, convincing of it, and representing it in its proper colours, it being as a glass in which it may be beheld just as it is, neither greater nor less; which must be understood as attended with a divine power and light, otherwise as a glass is of no use to a blind man, so neither is the law in this sense, to a man in a state of darkness, until the Spirit of God opens his eyes to behold in this glass what manner of man he is: now since the law is so useful to discover, and so to discountenance sin, that itself cannot be sin, or sinful. The apostle exemplifies this in his own case, and says,

nay, I had not known sin, but by the law; which he says not in the person of another, there is no room nor reason for such a fancy; but in his own person, and of himself: not of himself at that present time, as is evident from his way of speaking; nor of himself in his childhood, before he came to years of discretion to discern between good and evil; but as, and when he was a grown person, and whilst a Pharisee, (<500305>Philippians 3:5); he did not know sin during his being in that state till the law came, and entered into his conscience, and then, and by it, he knew sin, (<450707>Romans 7:7), the exceeding sinfulness of it, (<450713>Romans 7:13), and that he himself was the chief of sinners, (<540115>1 Timothy 1:15). Nay he goes on to observe, that by the law he came to know, not only the sinfulness of outward actions, but also of inward lusts; says he,

for I had not known lust, except the law had said, thou shall not covet: as it does in (<022017>Exodus 20:17). This is a way of speaking used by the Jews, when they produce any passage out of the law, thus [f124], hrma hrwth, “the law says”, if anyone comes to kill thee; referring either to (<092411>1 Samuel 24:11) or (<022201>Exodus 22:1); and a little after, “the law says”, namely, in (<020305>Exodus 3:5), “put off thy shoes from off thy feet”, etc.. By

"lust" is meant the inward motions of sin in the heart, any and every desire of the mind after it; not only studied and concerted schemes, how to bring about and compass an evil action; but every loose vagrant thought of sin, and inclination to it; yea, every imagination of the thought of the heart, before the imagination is well formed into a thought; and not only a dallying with sin in the mind, dwelling upon it with pleasure in thought, but even such sudden motions and starts of the mind to sin, to which we give no assent; such as are involuntary, yea, contrary to the will, being "the evil [we] would not", (<4879>Romans 7:19), and are displeasing and hateful to us; these are meant by lust, and which by the law of God are known to be sinful, and only by that. These were not known to be so by the Gentiles, who only had the law and light of nature; nor are they condemned, nor any provision made against them, nor can there be any made, by the laws of men: and though these inward lusts are condemned by the law of God, yet inasmuch as they were not punishable by men, and could be covered with the guise of an external righteousness, multitudes who were born under, and brought up in that law, were secure and indolent about them, did not look upon them as sins, or as at all affecting their righteousness; but imagined that, "touching the righteousness of the law", they were "blameless", (<5006>Philippians 3:6); which was the case of all the Pharisees, and of the apostle whilst such: but when the law came and entered his conscience with power and light attending it, then he saw, such innumerable swarms of lusts in his heart, and these to be sinful, which he never saw and knew before: just as in a sunbeam we behold those numerous little bits of dust, which otherwise are indiscernible by us. Now since the law is of such use, not only to discover the sinfulness of outward actions, but also of inward lusts and desires, that itself cannot be sinful.

Ver. 8. *But sin taking occasion by the commandment*, etc..] By "the commandment" is meant, either the whole moral law, or that particular commandment, "thou shalt not covet", (<2017>Exodus 20:17), which, the Jews say, comprehends all;

> "God, (say they[f125],) caused them (the Israelites) to hear the ten words, which he concluded with this word, "thou shalt not covet"; wb µywlt µlwkç, "for all of them depend on that": and to intimate, that whoever keeps this commandment, it is as if he kept the whole law, and whoever transgresses this, it is all one as if he transgressed the whole law;"

and no doubt but it does refer to any unlawful thought of, desire after, and inclination to anything forbidden in the other commandments. By “sin” is meant, not the devil, as some of the ancients thought; but the vitiosity and corruption of nature, indwelling sin, the law in the members that took “occasion” by the law of God; so that the law at most could only be an occasion, not the cause of sin, and besides, this was an occasion not given by the law, but taken by sin; so that it was sin, and not the law, which

wrought in [him] all manner of concupiscence. The law forbidding every unclean thought, and covetous desire of unlawful objects, sin took an occasion through these prohibitions to work in him, stir up and excite concupiscence, evil desire after all manner of things forbidden by the law; hence it is clear that not the law, but sin, is exceeding sinful:

for without the law sin was dead; not that, before the law of Moses was given, sin lay dead and unexerted, for during that interval between Adam and Moses sin was, and lived and reigned, and death by it, as much as at any other time; but when the apostle was without the law, that is, without the knowledge of the spirituality of it, before it came with power and light into his heart and conscience, sin lay as though it was dead; it was so in his apprehension, he fancied himself free from it, and that he was perfectly righteous.

Ver. 9. *For I was alive without the law once*, etc..] The apostle says this, not in the person of Adam, as some have thought; who lived indeed, in a state of innocence, a perfectly holy and righteous life, but not without the law, which was the rule of his actions, and the measure of his obedience; he had the law of nature written upon his heart, and a positive law respecting the forbidden fruit given him, as a trial of his obedience; and though when he transgressed he became mortal, yet sin could not be said to revive in him, which never lived before; nor does the apostle speak in the person of a Jew, or the whole body of the people of Israel before the law was given on Mount Sinai; before that time the sons of Abraham did not live without a law; for besides the law of nature, which they had in common with others, they were acquainted with other laws of God, as the laws of circumcision, sacrifices, and the several duties of religion; (see Genesis 18:19); and when the law did come from Mount Sinai, it had not such effects upon them as are here expressed: but the apostle is speaking of himself, and that not as in his state of infancy before he could discern between good and evil, but when grown up, and whilst a Pharisee; who, though he was born

under the law, was brought up and more perfectly instructed in it than the common people were, and was a strict observer of it, yet was without the knowledge of the spirituality of it; he, as the rest of the Pharisees, thought it only regarded the outward actions, and did not reach to the spirits or souls of men, the inward thoughts and affections of the mind; the law was as it were at a distance from him, it had not as yet entered into his heart and conscience; and whilst this was his case he was “alive”, he did not know that he “was dead in trespasses and sins”, (Ephesians 2:1), a truth he afterwards was acquainted with; nor that he was so much as disordered by sin; he thought himself healthful, sound, and whole, when he was diseased and full of wounds, bruises, and sores, from head to foot; he lived in the utmost peace and tranquillity, without the least ruffle and uneasiness, free from any terror or despondency, and in perfect security, being in sure and certain hope of eternal life; and concluded if ever any man went to heaven he certainly should, since, as he imagined, he lived a holy and righteous life, free of all blame, and even to perfection;

but when the commandment came; not to Adam in the garden of Eden; nor to the Israelites on Mount Sinai; but into the heart and conscience of the apostle, with power and light from above:

sin revived; it lift up its monstrous head, and appeared in its ugly shape, exceeding sinful indeed; it grew strong and exerted itself; its strugglings and opposition, its rebellion and corruption were seen and felt, which show that it was not dead before, only seemed to be so; it was in being, and it lived and acted before as now; the difference was not in that, but in the apostle's sense and apprehension of it, who upon sight of it died away:

and I died; he now saw himself a dead man, dead in sin, dead in law, under a sentence of death which he now had within himself; he saw he was deserving of eternal death, and all his hopes of eternal life by his obedience to the law of works died at once; he now experimentally learnt that doctrine he so much insisted afterwards in his ministry, and to the last maintained, that there can be no justification of a sinner by the deeds of the law, since by it is the knowledge of sin.

Ver. 10. *And the commandment which was ordained to life*, etc..] The law which promised a continuance of an immortal life to Adam, in case of perfect obedience to it; and which was appointed to the Israelites, that by the observation of it they might live in the land of Canaan, and in the quiet and full possession of their privileges and enjoyments; but was never

ordained to eternal life, or that men should obtain that by their obedience to it; since eternal life is the free gift of God, without respect to any works of men; (see <4821>Galatians 3:21); This same law, the apostle says,

I found to be unto death; as it was an occasion, through the vitiosity of nature, of stirring up sin in him, which brought forth fruit unto death; as it convinced him that he was a dead man and worthy of death; as it threatened him with it, and struck all his hopes of eternal life dead, and left him in this condition without giving him the least direction or assistance whereby to obtain life.

Ver. 11. *For sin taking occasion by the commandment*, etc..] As in (<4508>Romans 7:8),

deceived me; either by promising pleasure or impunity: the same effect is ascribed by the Jews to the evil imagination or corruption of nature, which they say is called an enticer, µda htpmç, "that deceives man" [f126]:

and by it slew me; mortally wounded me: not the law, but sin by the law, deceived and slew him; so that as before, the law is cleared from being the cause of sin, so here, from being the cause of death; for though the law is a killing letter, the ministration of condemnation and death, yet it is not the cause of it; but sin, which is a transgression of the law, is that which deceives or leads out of the way, as the word signifies, and then kills. The metaphor is taken from a thief or a robber, who leads a man out of the way into some bypath, and then murders him.

Ver. 12. *Therefore the law is holy*, etc..] This is a conclusion or inference drawn from the preceding discourse, in commendation of the law; that standing clear of any charge or imputation of sin, as being the cause of it. This epithet the apostle gives to the law is what the Jews frequently give it; worthy are the Israelites, say they [f127],

> "to whom is given açydq atyyrwa "the holy law"; in which they study day and night."

By "the law" is meant the whole body of the precepts of it in general; and by

the commandment, either the same, or everyone of the commandments in particular, and especially that which is cited, "thou shall not covet". Some have thought that the three properties of it design the threefold division of

the law; and suppose that by that which is “holy” is meant the ceremonial law, which sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; by that which is “just”, the judicial law, which pointed out to the Jewish commonwealth what was right and wrong; and by that which is “good”, the moral law in all its precepts: but nothing is more certain, than that the moral law is only spoken of in this context, which may be said to be

holy, because of its author, the holy God, from whom nothing can come but what is holy; and because of the matter of it, it is a transcript of the holy nature of God, a declaration of his holy will; it requires holiness both of heart and life; it forbids whatever is unholy, and commands nothing but what is holy; it teaches men to live holy, sober, righteous, and godly lives. It may be truly called

just, or righteous, as it demands perfect obedience to all its precepts, or it will not admit of it as a righteousness; as it pronounces guilty, curses and condemns for every disobedience of it; as it deals impartially with persons the transgressors of it; and as it acquits believers upon the foot of the righteousness of Christ, the fulfilling end of it. It is rightly called

good, from the author of it, God, from whom every good thing comes, and nothing else; from the matter of it, and from the use of it both to saints and sinners.

Ver. 13. *Was then that which is good, made death unto me*? etc..] An objection is started upon the last epithet in commendation of the law; and it is as if the objector should say, if the law is good, as you say, how comes it to pass that it is made death, or is the cause of death to you? can that be good, which is deadly, or the cause of death? or can that be the cause of death which is good? This objection taken out of the mouth of another person proceeds upon a mistake of the apostle's meaning; for though he had said that he died when the commandment came, and found by experience that it was unto death, yet does not give the least intimation that the law was the cause of his death; at most, that it was only an occasion, and that was not given by the law, but taken by sin, which, and not the law, deceived him and slew him. Nor is it any objection to the goodness of the law, that it is a ministration of condemnation and death to sinners; for “lex non damnans, non est lex”, a law without a sanction or penalty, which has no power to condemn and punish, is no law, or at least a law of no use and service; nor is the judge, or the sentence which he according to law pronounces upon a malefactor, the cause of his death, but

the crime which he is guilty of; and the case is the same here, wherefore the apostle answers to this objection with abhorrence and detestation of fixing any such charge upon the law, as being the cause of death to him, saying,

God forbid; a way of speaking used by him, as has been observed, when anything is greatly disliked by him, and is far from his thoughts. Moreover, he goes on to open the true end and reason of sin, by the law working death in his conscience;

but sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that is, the vitiosity and corruption of nature, which is designed by sin, took an occasion, "by that which is good", that is, the law, through its prohibition of lust, to work in me all maimer of concupiscence, which brought forth fruit unto death; wherefore, upon the law's entrance into my heart and conscience, I received the sentence of death in myself, that so sin by it, "working death in me, might appear sin" to me, which I never knew before. This end was to be, and is answered by it, yea,

that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful; that the corruption of nature might not only be seen and known to be sin, but exceeding sinful; as being not only contrary to the pure and holy nature of God, but as taking occasion by the pure and holy law of God to exert itself the more, and so appear to be as the words καψ' υπερβολην αμαρτωλος, may be rendered, "exceedingly a sinner", or "an exceeding great sinner"; that being the source and parent of all actual sins and transgressions; wherefore not the law, but sin, was the cause of death, which by the law is discovered to be so very sinful.

Ver. 14. *For we know that the law is spiritual*, etc..] We who have a spiritual understanding of the law, who have been led into the true nature of it by the Spirit of God, know by experience that that itself is "spiritual"; and therefore can never be the cause of sin or death: the law may be said to be "spiritual", because it comes from the Spirit of God; and reaches to the spirit of man; it requires truth in the inward parts; spiritual service and obedience; a serving of it with our minds; a worshipping of God in spirit and truth; a loving of him with all our hearts and souls, as well as a performance of all the outward acts of religion and duty; and because it cannot be truly obeyed and conformed to without the assistance of the Spirit of God. To this spirituality of the law the apostle opposes himself,

but I am carnal, sold under sin: from hence to the end of the chapter many are of opinion, that the apostle speaks in the person of an unregenerate man, or of himself as unregenerate; but nothing is more clear, than that he speaks all along of himself in the first person, “I am carnal”:, etc.. αυτος εγω, “I myself”, as in (<4725>Romans 7:25), and in the present tense of what he then was and found; whereas, when he speaks of his unregenerate state, and how it was with him under the first convictions of sin, he speaks of them as things past, (<4705>Romans 7:5-11); besides, several things which are said by the apostle can neither agree with him, nor any other, but as regenerate; such as to “hate evil”, “delight in the law of God”, and “serve it with the mind”, (<4715>Romans 7:15,22,25). Moreover, the distinctions between flesh and spirit, the inward and the outward man, and the struggle there is between them, are to be found in none but regenerate persons; and to say no more, the thanksgiving for deliverance from sin by Christ can only come from such; nor are any of the things said inapplicable to men that are born again, as will appear by the consideration of them as they follow: for when the apostle says, “I am carnal”; his meaning is, either that he was so by nature, and as he saw himself when sin through the law became exceeding sinful to him; or as he might be denominated from the flesh or corruption of nature which was still in him, and from the infirmities of the flesh he was attended with; just as the Corinthians, though sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, are said to be “carnal” on account of their envying, strife, and divisions, (<4601>1 Corinthians 3:1-4), or in comparison of the “spiritual” law of God, which was now before him, and in which he was beholding his face as in a glass, and with which when compared, the holiest man in the world must be reckoned carnal. He adds, “sold under sin”; he did not “sell himself” to work wickedness, as Ahab, (<1225>1 Kings 21:25), and others; he was passive and not active in it; and when at any time he with his flesh served the law of sin, he was not a voluntary, but an involuntary servant; besides, this may be understood of his other I, his carnal I, his unrenewed self, the old man which is always under sin, when the spiritual I, the new man, is never under the law of sin, but under the governing influence of the grace of God.

Ver. 15. *For that which I do, I allow not*, etc..] The apostle having cleared the law from the charge of being the cause either of sin or death, and taken the blame to himself, proceeds to give an account of the struggle and combat he found in himself between the flesh and spirit; “that which I do, I allow not”. That which he did was evil, since he allowed not of it; but this

is to be understood not of any notorious crime committed by him, and repeated again and again; nor of a sinful course of life, for before his conversion he was not a profane man, but externally moral; and after his conversion, had his conversation in the world by the grace of God in righteousness and holiness; a vicious course of life being contrary to the grace of God implanted in him, and the doctrines of grace professed by him; but of internal lusts, the workings of corruptions in his heart, and which are real actions of the mind, together with the various frailties and infirmities of life: when that apostle says that what he did, γινωσκω, "I know not": his meaning is, not that he was utterly ignorant of them, of their nature and operations; that he was insensible of their motions, and unconcerned about them; for his sense of them, and concern for them, are expressed by him in the strongest terms, "I know", "I find", "I see", "O wretched man", etc.. (<45 7 18>Romans 7:18,21,23,24); but either that the efforts and effects of sin in him were so sadden, and at an unawares, that he was sometimes overtaken and held captive, before he knew well where he was, or, what he was doing; or the sense is, that he had not a full knowledge of the evil of his heart, the corruptions of his nature, nor did he understand all his infirmities and the errors of his life; or else the meaning is, I own it not as right, but confess it to be wrong, I do not acknowledge these actions as the productions of the new man, they are alien to him, but as the deeds of the old man; or rather, "I do not approve" of them, I dislike, abhor, and detest them; I cannot excuse or palliate them, but must condemn them; so words of knowledge in the Hebrew language are expressive of love, liking, and approbation; (see <19 1 6>Psalm 1:6 <28 8 4>Hosea 8:4 <01 18 19>Genesis 18:19); on which last text, "I know him", says Jarchi, hbj ˆwçl, "it is the language of love", or a phrase expressive of strong affection; and so here, I know not, I do not like, love, and approve of these things, or I do not "allow" of them, and indulge myself in them, I loathe them and myself for them; and is this talking like an unregenerate man? can it be thought that the apostle speaks of himself as unregenerate, or represents such a man?

for what I would, that do I not; what he desired and willed was good, though he did it not; and so the Vulgate Latin version reads, "for not the good which I would, I do": and so the next clause, "but the evil which I hate, I do": and what was that? he would have had his thoughts always employed about the best things; he would have had his affections continually and alone set on God, Christ, and the things of another world; he would he was desirous to keep the whole law of God, and do the whole

will of God, and live without sin, and as the angels do in heaven: now such a will as this is never to be found in unregenerate persons; this is from God, and the power of his grace: when he says he did not what he willed, what he was desirous of, and bent upon, his sense is, not that he never did any good thing he willed; for he did many good things, as every good man does, but he did not always do the good he willed, and never perfectly, nor anything without grace and strength from Christ: he adds,

but what I hate, that do I; sin was what he hated; it being contrary to the pure and holy nature of God, to the good and righteous law of God, and was in itself, to his view, exceeding sinful: he hated vain thoughts, unclean desires, revengeful lusts, the secret motions of all sin in his heart, and the various evil actions of life; which can never be said of an unregenerate man; who loves sin, delights in iniquity, and takes pleasure in them that do it; and yet what the apostle hated he did; he wrought with his carnal I, his flesh, and through the power of it, and force of temptation, though not without reluctance, remorse, and repentance. The Karaite Jews, which were the better sort of them, say and hold some things, not much unlike to what is here delivered;

> "though a man (say they [f128]) should transgress some of the commandments, or the commandments in part, hwat trwbgtl hjh dx l[al, "through the strength of lust, and not on account of, or with pleasure not delight", he shall be one of those that shall enter into paradise."

Ver. 16. *If then I do that which I would not*, etc..] This is a corollary, or an inference from what he had related of his own experience; that since what he did, though it was contrary to the law of God, yet was what he did not will nor allow of, but hated, it must be a clear point, that he

consented to the law, that it was good; lovely and amiable; that it forbad those things which were hateful, and commanded those things which were desirable to a good man; and so is acknowledged to be a very beautiful rule of obedience, walk, and conversation.

Ver. 17. *Now then, it is no more I that do it*, etc..] This is another inference, deduced from what is before said, that since he did not approve, but hated what he did, and willed the contrary, it was not he as spiritual, as born again, as a new man, a new creature, that did it; (see 1 John 3:9). He says,

But sin that dwelleth in me; the old man, the carnal I, the evil present with him, the law in his members; which not only existed in him, and wrought in him, and that at times very strongly, but dwelt in him, had its abode in him, as it has in all regenerate persons, and will have, as long as they are in the body.

Ver. 18. *For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh*, etc..] The apostle goes on to give some further account of himself, what he knew, and was fully assured of by long experience; as that

dwelleth no good thing in him, that is, in his flesh, or carnal self; for otherwise there were many good things dwelt in him; there was the good work of grace, and the good word of God in him, and even Father, Son, and Spirit, dwelt in him; but his meaning is, that there was no good thing naturally in him; no good thing of his own putting there; nothing but what God had put there; no good thing, but what was owing to Christ, to the grace of God, and influence of the Spirit; or as he himself explains it, there was no good thing in his "flesh"; in the old man that was in him, which has nothing in his nature good; no good thing comes out of him, nor is any good thing done by him: and this explanative and limiting clause, "that is, in my flesh", clearly proves, that the apostle speaks of himself, and as regenerate; for had he spoke in the person of an unregenerate man, there would have been no room nor reason for such a restriction, seeing an unregenerate man is nothing else but flesh, and has nothing but flesh, or corrupt nature in him; and who does not know, that no good thing dwells in such persons? whereas the apostle intimates by this explication, that he had something else in him beside flesh, and which is opposed to it; and that is spirit, or the new man, which is of a spiritual nature, and is seated in the spirit, or soul, and comes from the Spirit of God; and in this spiritual man dwell good things, for "the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth"; so that though there was no good thing dwelling in his flesh, in the old than, yet there were good things dwelling in his spirit, in the new and spiritual man, the hidden man of the heart: and he adds,

to will is present with me; which must be understood, not of the power and faculty of the will, with respect to things natural and civil, which is common to all men; nor of a will to that which is evil, which is in wicked men; but of a will to that which was good, which he had not of himself, but from God, and is only to be found in regenerate persons; and denotes the

readiness of his mind and will to that which is spiritually good, like that which Christ observes of his disciples, when he says, “the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak”, (<4641>Matthew 26:41), which may serve much to illustrate the passage before us: since it follows,

but how to perform that which is good, I find not; he found he had no strength of himself to do what he willed; and that he could do nothing without Christ; and that what he did by the strength and grace of Christ, he did not do perfectly. To will to live without sin, not to have a lustful or a revengeful thought in his breast, was present with him, but how to perform, how to live in this manner, which was so desirable to him, being born again, he found not. It may be asked, how does this agree with what the apostle says, “it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure?” (<5013>Philippians 2:13). To this it may be replied, that when God does work in his people both to will and to do, he does not work both equally alike, or to the same degree, so that the work answers to the will; God never works in them so to do, as to will, for when they are wrought in, acted upon, and influenced to do the most, and that in the best manner, they never do all that they would; and sometimes God works in them to will, when he does not work in them to do; as in the case of the disciples of Christ, in whom he worked to will to watch with Christ an hour, but did not work in them to do, (<4640>Matthew 26:40); and whenever he works in the saints, whether to will or to do, or both, it is always of his own good pleasure.

Ver. 19. *For the good that I would, I do not*, etc..] The apostle here repeats what he had delivered in (<6715>Romans 7:15,16) to strengthen and confirm this part of his experience; that though he had a will to that which was good, yet he wanted power, and had none of himself to perform; and therefore often did what he would not, and what he would he did not.

Ver. 20. *Now if I do that I would not*, etc..] The same conclusion is formed here, as in (<6717>Romans 7:17), not with any view to excuse himself from blame in sinning, but to trace the lusts of his heart, and the sins of his life, to the source and fountain of them, the corruption of his nature; and to ascribe them to the proper cause of them, which was not the law of God, nor the new man, but sin that dwelt in him.

Ver. 21. *I find then a law*, etc..] This is to be understood either of the corruption of nature, which he found by experience to be in him; and which, because of its force, power, and prevalence it sometimes had in him,

he calls “a law”; it forcibly demanding compliance with its lusts; and is the same with what he calls “evil”, and which the Jews so frequently style [rh rxy “the evil imagination”, by which they mean the corruption of nature; and one of the seven names, and the first of them, by which it is called, they tell us [f129], is, [r, “evil”; the very name it goes by here, and which they say God calls it, (Genesis 6:5); and well may it be so called, since it is originally, naturally, and continually evil; it is evil in its nature and consequences; it is the source and spring of all evil:

that when I would do good; says the apostle, as soon as any good thought arises in me, any good resolution is entered into by me, or I am about to do anything that is good,

evil, the vitiosity of nature,

is present with me, and hinders me; it came into the world with me, and it has continued with me ever since; it cleaves close unto me, it lies very nigh me, and whenever there is any motion to that which is good, it starts up, which seemed to lie asleep before, and exerts itself, so that I cannot do the good I would. The Jews say [f130], there are twbbl ytç, “two hearts” in man, the good imagination, and the evil imagination. The apostle here speaks as of two wills in regenerate men, one to good, and another to evil: or this may be understood of the law of God, which he found agreed with his mind, willing that which is good, though sin lay so near to him; or he found that willing that which was good was the law of God, very agreeable to it; and that the law was on his side, favouring him, encouraging him to that which is good, though sin kept so close to him; to which sense agree the following words.

Ver. 22. *For I delight in the law of God*, etc..] This an unregenerate man cannot do; he does not like its commands, they are disagreeable to his corrupt nature; and as it is a threatening, cursing, damning law, it can never be delighted in by him: the moralist, the Pharisee, who obeys it externally, do not love it, nor delight in it; he obeys it not from love to its precepts, but from fear of its threatenings; from a desire of popular esteem, and from low, mercenary, selfish views, in order to gain the applause of men, and favour of God: only a regenerate man delights in the law of God; which he does, as it is fulfilled by Christ, who has answered all the demands of it: and as it is in the hands of Christ, held forth by him as a rule of holy walk and conversation; and as it is written upon his heart by the Spirit of God, to

which he yields a voluntary and cheerful obedience: he serves it with his mind, of a ready mind freely, and without any constraint but that of love; he delights together with the law, as the word here used signifies; the delight is mutual and reciprocal, the law delights in him, and he delights in the law; and they both delight in the selfsame things, and particularly in the perfect obedience which the Son of God has yielded to it. The apostle adds,

after the inward man; by which he means the renewed man, the new man, or new nature, formed in his soul; which had its seat in the inward part, is an internal principle, oil in the vessel of the heart, a seed under ground, the kingdom within us, the hidden man of the heart, which is not obvious to everyone's view, it being not anything that is external, though never so good: this in its nature is agreeable to the law of God, and according to this a regenerate man delights in it: but then this restrictive limiting clause supposes another man, the old man, the carnal I, according to which the apostle did not delight in the law of God; and proves, that he speaks of himself as regenerate, and not as unregenerate, or as representing an unregenerate man, because no such distinction is to be found in such a person; nor does such a person delight at all, in any sense, upon any consideration in the law of God, but is enmity against it, and not subjected to it; nor can he be otherwise, without the grace of God.

Ver. 23. *But I see another law in my members*, etc..] That is, he saw, he perceived it by experience; he felt the force and power of inbred corruption working in him, and as a law demanding obedience to it; and which he might well call “another law”, it being not only distinct from, but opposite to the law of God he delighted in; the one is good, the other evil; this other law is a transgression of the law of God, and which he observed to be “in [his] members”, i.e. in the members of his body; not that it had its seat only, or chiefly in his body, and the parts of it, but because it exerted itself by them, it made use of them to fulfil its lusts: the same phrase is used in the Targum on (Psalm 38:3); which renders the words there thus, there is no peace, `ybrbab`, “in my members” because of my sin: now this law was, says he,

warring against the law of my mind; by the “law of [his] mind” is meant, either the law of God written on his mind in conversion, and which he delighted in, and served with his mind, as renewed by the Spirit of God; or the new nature in him, the principle of grace wrought in his mind, called

"the law" of it, because it was the governing principle there; which reigns, and will reign in every regenerate person through righteousness, unto eternal life, though the law of sin opposes all its force and power against it; that is not only contrary to it, lusts against it, but wars, and commits acts of hostility against it: the state of regenerate persons is a warfare, they have many enemies to combat with, as Satan and the world; but those of their own household, within themselves, in their own hearts, are the worst of all; there is a civil war in them, as it were a company of two armies, flesh and spirit, sin and grace, combating together; and so it will be as long as this life lasts; so true is that saying of the Jews [f131], in which they agree with the apostle,

> "as long as the righteous live, ˆrxy µ[µymjln, "they are at war with the corruption of their nature"; when they die they are at rest:"

hence we read of [rh ˆxy tmjlm, "the war of the evil imagination" [f132]: but what is worst of all, this is sometimes

bringing [them] into captivity to the law of sin, which is in [their] members; that is, to itself; for the law in the members, and the law of sin in the members, must be the same: and it may be said to bring into captivity to itself, when it only endeavours to do it, though it does not effect it; for sometimes words which express an effect only design the endeavour to effect, but not that itself; (see <262413>Ezekiel 24:13 <013721>Genesis 37:21, 22 <021808>Exodus 8:18). But admitting that this phrase intends the real and actual effecting of it, it is to be understood of a captivity to sin, different from that an unregenerate man is in; who is a voluntary captive to sin and Satan, gives up himself to such slavery and bondage, and rather goes, than is brought or carried into it; whereas a regenerate man is, through the force of sin, and power of temptation, violently drawn and carried into captivity; in which he is held against his will, and to his great uneasiness: besides, this expression does not denote absolute dominion, which sin has not over a regenerate man; nor is it utterly inconsistent with his character as such; for as a subject of one nation may be taken a prisoner, and be carried captive into another nation, and yet remain a subject where he was, and does not become one of that country of which he is carried captive; so a regenerate man, being carried captive by sin, does not come under the absolute dominion of sin, or cease to be a subject of the kingdom of grace, or in other words, a regenerate person: moreover, the very phrase of "bringing into captivity" supposes that the person before was not a captive; whereas

every unregenerate man one, was always so, and never otherwise: add to all this, that this captivity was very distressing and uneasy to the person, and makes him cry out, “O wretched man”, etc.. whereas the captivity of an unregenerate person is very agreeable to him; he likes his prison, he loves his chains, and do not choose to be in any other state and condition; though, as the Jews [f133] say, there is no captivity hmçnh twlgk, “like the captivity of the soul”; and nothing so grieving and afflictive to a good man as that is. The apostle uses much such language as his countrymen do, who frequently represent man as having two principles in him, the one good, the other bad; the one they call [rh rxy, “the evil imagination”, or corruption of nature; the other they call bwjh rxy, “the good imagination”, or principle of grace and goodness; which they say [f134], are at continual war with each other, and the one is sometimes hbçn, “carried captive” by the other. The good imagination, they say [f135], is like to one that ˆyrwsaj tybb çwbj, “is bound in a prison”; as it is said, “out of prison he cometh to reign”; to which agrees what they say [f136],

> “how shall I serve my Creator whilst I am yrxy rysa, “a captive to my corruption”, and a servant to my lust?”

Ver. 24. *O wretched man that I am*, etc..] Not as considered in Christ, for as such he was a most happy man, being blessed with all spiritual blessings, and secure from all condemnation and wrath; nor with respect to his inward man, which was renewing day by day, and in which he enjoyed true spiritual peace and pleasure; nor with regard to his future state, of the happiness of which he had no doubt: he knew in whom he had believed; he was fully persuaded nothing could separate him from the love of God; and that when he had finished his course, he should have the crown of righteousness laid up for him: but this exclamation he made on account of the troubles he met with in his Christian race; and not so much on account of his reproaches, persecutions, and distresses for Christ's sake; though these were many and great, yet these did not move or much affect him, he rather took delight and pleasure in them; but on account of that continual combat between, the flesh and spirit in him; or by reason of that mass of corruption and body of sin he carried about with him; ranch such a complaint Isaiah makes, (Isaiah 6:5), which in the Septuagint is, ω ταλας εγω, “O miserable I”. This shows him to be, and to speak of himself as a regenerate man; since an unregenerate man feels no uneasiness upon that score, or makes any complaint of it, saying as here,

who shall deliver me from the body of this death? or "this body of death"; by which some understand, this mortal body, or the body of flesh subject to death for sin; and suppose the apostle expresses his desire to quit it, to depart out of it, that he might enjoy an immortal life, being weary of the burden of this mortal body he carried about with him: so Philo the Jew [f137] represents the body as a burden to the soul, which νεκροφορουσα, "it carries about as a dead carcass", and never lays down from his birth till his death: though it should be observed, that when the apostle elsewhere expresses an earnest longing after a state of immortality and glory, some sort of reluctance and unwillingness to leave the body is to be observed, which is not to be discerned here; and was this his sense, one should think he would rather have said, when shall I be delivered? or why am I not delivered? and not who shall deliver me? though admitting this to be his meaning, that he was weary of the present life, and wanted to be rid of his mortal body, this did not arise from the troubles and anxieties of life, with which he was pressed, which oftentimes make wicked men long to die; but from the load of sin, and burden of corruption, under which he groaned, and still bespeaks him a regenerate man; for not of outward calamities, but of indwelling sin is he all along speaking in the context: wherefore it is better by "this body of death" to understand what he in (Romans 6:6) calls "the body of sin"; that mass of corruption that lodged in him, which is called "a body", because of its fleshly carnal nature; because of its manner of operation, it exerts itself by the members of the body; and because it consists of various parts and members, as a body does; and "a body of death", because it makes men liable to death: it was that which the apostle says "slew" him, and which itself is to a regenerate man, as a dead carcass, stinking and loathsome; and is to him like that punishment Mezentius inflicted on criminals, by fastening a living body to a putrid carcass [f138]: and it is emphatically called the body of "this death", referring to the captivity of his mind, to the law of sin, which was as death unto him: and no wonder therefore he so earnestly desires deliverance, saying, "who shall deliver me?" which he speaks not as being ignorant of his deliverer, whom he mentions with thankfulness in (Romans 7:25); or as doubting and despairing of deliverance, for he was comfortably assured of it, and therefore gives thanks beforehand for it; but as expressing the inward pantings, and earnest breathings of his soul after it; and as declaring the difficulty of it, yea, the impossibility of its being obtained by himself, or by any other than he, whom he had in view: he knew he could not deliver

himself from sin; that the law could not deliver him; and that none but God could do it; and which he believed he would, through Jesus Christ his Lord.

Ver. 25. *I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*, etc..] There is a different reading of this passage; some copies read, and so the Vulgate Latin version, thus, “the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord”; which may be considered as an answer to the apostle's earnest request for deliverance, “who shall deliver me?” the grace of God shall deliver me. The grace of God the Father, which is communicated through Christ the Mediator by the Spirit, the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ, the principle of grace formed in the soul by the Spirit of God, which reigns in the believer as a governing principle, through righteousness unto eternal life, will in the issue deliver from indwelling sin, and all the effects of it: but the more general reading is, “thanks be to God”, or “I thank God”; the object of thanksgiving is God, as the Father of Christ, and the God of all grace: the medium of it is Christ as Mediator, through whom only we have access to God; without him we can neither pray to him, nor praise him aright; our sacrifices of praise are only acceptable to God, through Christ; and as all our mercies come to us through him, it is but right and fitting that our thanksgivings should pass the same way: the thing for which thanks is given is not expressed, but is implied, and is deliverance; either past, as from the power of Satan, the dominion of sin, the curse of the law, the evil of the world, and from the hands of all spiritual enemies, so as to endanger everlasting happiness; or rather, future deliverance, from the very being of sin: which shows, that at present, and whilst in this life, saints are not free from it; that it is God only that must, and will deliver from it; and that through Christ his Son, through whom we have victory over every enemy, sin, Satan, law, and death; and this shows the apostle's sure and certain faith and hope of this matter, who concludes his discourse on this head thus:

so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin; observe, he says, “I myself”, and not another; whence it is clear, he does not represent another man in this discourse of his; for this is a phrase used by him, when he cannot possibly be understood of any other but himself; (see ^[6]Romans 9:3 ^[7]2 Corinthians 10:1 12:13); he divides himself as it were into two parts, the mind, by which he means his inward man, his renewed self; and “the flesh”, by which he designs his carnal I, that was sold under sin: and hereby he accounts for his serving, at different times, two different laws; “the law of God”, written on his mind, and in the

service of which he delighted as a regenerate man; “and the law of sin”, to which he was sometimes carried captive: and it should be taken notice of, that he does not say “I have served”, as referring to his past state of unregeneracy, but “I serve”, as respecting his present state as a believer in Christ, made up of flesh and spirit; which as they are two different principles, regard two different laws: add to all this, that this last account the apostle gives of himself, and which agrees with all he had said before, and confirms the whole, was delivered by him, after he had with so much faith and fervency given thanks to God in a view of his future complete deliverance from sin; which is a clinching argument and proof that he speaks of himself, in this whole discourse concerning indwelling sin, as a regenerate person.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 8

As the former chapter shows that sanctified ones are not free from the being of sin in them, which is a ground of general complaint and uneasiness; this chapter shows, that justified ones are freed from the guilt of sin, and secure from punishment for it; and have the utmost reason to rejoice and be glad, and even to triumph in a plerophory and full assurance of faith, on account of the various privileges they enjoy, through the grace of the Father, of the Son, and of the Spirit; and which are distinctly, largely, and severally mentioned: it begins, (Romans 8:1), with taking notice of a particular privilege saints have in Christ, and, by virtue of union to him, security from all condemnation; and which is inferred from their sure and certain deliverance from sin by Christ, (Romans 8:25), the persons sharing in this privilege are described by their being in Christ, and by their walking after the Spirit of Christ, in consequence of it: a reason confirming this privilege is given, (Romans 8:2), taken either from the Gospel, declaring the saints' freedom from the law; or from the power and efficacy of the Spirit, delivering them from the tyranny and dominion of sin; or rather from the holiness of Christ's human nature, as a branch of their justification: this privilege is made more fully to appear, and the saints' interest in it by the mission of Christ, to bring in everlasting righteousness for them, which is the foundation of it, (Romans 8:3), the occasion of which was the weakness of the law, or rather the impotency of man, through the corruption of nature, to fulfil the law: the sender, or the efficient cause of this mission, is God the Father; the person sent, his own Son; the manner in which he was sent, in human nature, which had the appearance of being sinful; what God did in it, he condemned sin in it; which is a reason, why there is no condemnation to them, that are in him; and the end of all this, (Romans 8:4), was, that the law of righteousness might be perfectly fulfilled by Christ for them, or by them in him; who are described in part, as in (Romans 8:1), upon the repetition of which part of the description, the apostle proceeds to show the difference between unregenerate and regenerate persons, (Romans 8:5), partly by their characters; the one being carnal, or after the flesh, the other being spiritual,

or after the Spirit; and by their different affections, the one minding the things of the flesh, the other the things of the Spirit; the different issue and effect of which, namely, a carnal and a spiritual mind are observed, (<4806>Romans 8:6), death following upon the one, life and peace upon the other; the reasons of which, with respect to the former, are given, (<4807>Romans 8:7), taken from the enmity of the carnal mind to God, and the non-subjection of it to the law of God, and the impossibility of its being subject to it; and therefore nothing but death can be expected; from whence this conclusion is made, (<4808>Romans 8:8), that unregenerate men are not in a state, nor in a capacity to please God, or do what is acceptable to him, the above being the disposition and temper of their minds: and then in (<4809>Romans 8:9), the apostle returns to the argument from whence be had digressed, and suggests, that though he had said the above things of unregenerate men, he had other thoughts of those to whom he writes; they were not in the flesh, nor minded the things of the flesh, and so were not liable to condemnation and death; and which he proves by the inhabitation of the Spirit of God in them; for such who have him not, have no proof nor evidence of their being Christ's, and so consequently have no proof of their security from condemnation; and partly by Christ's being in them, and which is the evidence of their being in Christ, and so of the above privilege, (<4810>Romans 8:10), the consequence of which is, that though by reason of sin the body is mortal, and does die, yet the soul lives not only naturally, but spiritually, by faith in Christ now, and in glory hereafter, by virtue of Christ's righteousness imputed to it, and so is free from condemnation and death; besides, by virtue of the Spirit's dwelling in them, their mortal bodies will be quickened in the general resurrection, (<4811>Romans 8:11), and from all these blessings of divine goodness, both in soul and body, the apostle infers, that the saints are under obligation, not to live in a carnal, but in a spiritual manner, (<4812>Romans 8:12), and to which he exhorts, (<4813>Romans 8:13), and presses by motives, taken from the different consequences of those things; death following by living after the flesh, and life through the mortification of sin, by the Spirit of God: and whereas the walking after the Spirit, by which he had described those that are safe from condemnation, is owing to their being led by him; and their being led by him, being an evidence of their divine sonship, (<4814>Romans 8:14), from hence he passes to consider the privilege of adoption: and that these saints were interested in this privilege, he proves (<4815>Romans 8:15), partly by their not having the spirit of bondage which belongs to servants; and partly by their having the spirit of adoption, who had made known this grace unto them, and their

interest in it: and that they had received him as a spirit of adoption, was evident by their calling God their Father under his influence; and also by the witness he bore to their spirits, that they were the children of God, (Romans 8:16), of which they were conscious: and from this privilege of adoption, the apostle concludes heirship, (Romans 8:17), and which is of such a nature, that there is none like it; both with respect to the subject of it, God himself; with respect to him with whom they are heirs, Christ Jesus; and the way in which they come to share the glorious inheritance with him, is through suffering with him, and for him; and this they need not grudge to do, since there is no comparison between their sufferings, and the glory they shall enjoy, (Romans 8:18), which both Jews and Gentiles were in the expectation of; the latter of which are described in (Romans 8:19-22), by their name, the creature, the whole creation; and by their present condition, the Gospel being come among them to the conversion of many, which raised an expectation of many sons and daughters being born to God among them, (Romans 8:19), and by their former state and condition, (Romans 8:20), which is mentioned, to illustrate the grace of God in the present blessing bestowed upon them, in sending the Gospel to them; which state was a subjection to vanity, through the god of this world, who led them captive at his will, (Romans 8:21), and then by the deliverance of them, they were in hope and expectation of, from bondage to liberty, (Romans 8:21), and this groaning and travailing: in birth in a spiritual sense, for the bringing forth of many sons to God among the Gentiles, the apostle, and other ministers of the word, who had preached the Gospel among them, were witnesses of, (Romans 8:22), yea, not only the Gentiles, but the Jews also, who are described as having the first fruits of the Spirit, (Romans 8:23), were waiting for the manifestation of the children of God among the Gentiles, with them to complete at last the mystical body, who shall share together the glory before spoken of, which their sonship and heirship entitle them to; and for which there is encouragement to wait with patience and in hope, from the connection of salvation with the grace of hope; and from, the nature of the thing hoped for, which is unseen, but certain, (Romans 8:24,25). From hence the apostle proceeds to consider another privilege which the saints have, who are in the Spirit, and walk after the Spirit, the Spirit helps their infirmities; particularly in prayer, the matter of which, in some cases, they are at a loss about, (Romans 8:26), and this he does, by making intercession for them; the manner in which this is done in them, is with unutterable groans; and the rule according to which it is made, is

the will of God, the mind of the Spirit being known by the searcher of hearts, (Romans 8:27), in a word, such are the privileges of believers in Christ, that every thing in the whole world, in heaven, and in earth, in themselves and others, whether good or bad, prosperous or adverse, work together for their good, so that nothing can go wrong with them in the issue, (Romans 8:28), who are described by their love to God, and by their effectual calling, according to his purpose; which being mentioned, leads the apostle to the source and spring of all these and other privileges, the everlasting love of God; signified by his foreknowledge of his people, (Romans 8:29), which is the cause of their predestination to a conformity to the image of Christ, the firstborn among many brethren; with which predestination, calling, justification, and glorification, are inseparably connected, (Romans 8:30), from all which blessings of grace it may be concluded, that God is on the side of such persons, who are interested in these favours; and nothing is to be feared, but every good thing is to be expected by them, (Romans 8:31), which is confirmed by an argument from the greater to the lesser, that if God has given his Son for them, he will freely give all things to them, (Romans 8:32), in a view of which, the apostle rises up in a triumph of faith, and challenges all the enemies of the saints, and denies that any charge can be brought against them of any avail, since God is the justifier of them, (Romans 8:33), or that they shall ever enter into condemnation, being secured from it by the death of Christ; and which security is yet more strengthened by his resurrection, session at the right hand of God, and intercession for them, (Romans 8:34), and then asks, since Christ has shown such love to them, by these instances of it, what can separate from it, (Romans 8:35), and enumerates several things which befall the saints in this life, which, however mean and abject they may render them in the esteem of men, do not at all abate the love of Christ to them: that such is their case, that they are exposed to afflictions and sufferings, and even death itself, for the sake of Christ, is proved (Romans 8:36), by a testimony out of (Psalm 44:22), and then an answer is returned to the above question in the negative, that none of the things mentioned could separate them from the love of Christ; so far from it, that by virtue of Christ who had loved them, they were conquerors, and more than conquerors in all these things, and over all their enemies, (Romans 8:37), and the chapter is concluded in (Romans 8:38,39), with the full and firm persuasion of the apostle, that nothing in the whole universe, in the whole compass of created beings, be they what they will, good or bad, or which are or shall be, an enumeration

of many of which is made, should ever separate him, or any of the people of God from his love, which is in Christ Jesus: so that upon the whole, notwithstanding indwelling sin, notwithstanding the various afflictions which attend them in this world, yet in consideration of the many privileges they enjoy, and the glory they are heirs of, they have great reason to rejoice, and look upon themselves to be in the most safe and happy condition.

Ver. 1. *There is therefore now, no condemnation*, etc..] The apostle having discoursed largely in the preceding chapter, concerning the struggle and combat believers feel within themselves, and opened the true causes and reasons of the saints' grievances and complaints, and what gives them the greatest uneasiness in this life, proceeds in this to take notice of the solid ground and foundation they have of spiritual peace and joy; which arise from their justification and adoption, the purposes and decrees of God, and particularly the everlasting and unchangeable love of God in Christ, the source, spring, and security, of all the blessings of grace. The chapter begins with a most comfortable account of the safety of believers in Christ; the apostle does not say there is nothing condemnable in them, for sin is in them and is condemnable, and condemned by them; and is hurtful to their spiritual joy and comfort, though it cannot bring them into condemnation, because of their being in Christ Jesus: he says there is ουδεν κατακριμα, “not one condemnation” to them, or one sentence of condemnation against them; which must be understood not of illegal ones, for they are liable to many condemnations from their hearts, from the world and the devil; but of legal, justifiable ones, and there are none such, neither from God the Father, for he justifies; nor from the Son, for by his righteousness they are justified; nor from the Holy Spirit, who bears witness to their spirits, that they are in a state of justification: there is not one condemnation lies against them, with respect to their numerous sins, original and actual, though every sin deserves one; not one from the law of God, of which sin is a transgression, for though that is a condemning law, yet it is only so to them that are under it; not to them that are Christ's, whom he has redeemed from it: moreover, the apostle says, that there is no condemnation now to the saints; which “now” must not be considered, as if it supposes that there was formerly condemnation to them; it is true indeed they were under a sentence of condemnation, as considered in Adam, and under a covenant of works with him, and in their own apprehensions when convicted; but as considered in Christ, as the elect of God always were, and who was their

surety, and so their security from all eternity, they never were in a state of condemnation: nor does this suppose, that there may be condemnation to them hereafter, though not now; for sin, the cause of condemnation, is removed; Christ has bore the condemnation their sins deserved in himself; their justification is from all sin, past, present, and to come; their union to Christ is indissoluble, and neither the love of Christ, nor the justice of God, will admit of their condemnation; for this “now”, is not an “adverb” of time, but a “note of illation”; the apostle inferring this privilege, either from the grace of God, which issues in eternal life, (Romans 6:23); or from that certain deliverance believers shall have from sin, for which he gives thanks, (Romans 7:24,25); The privilege itself here mentioned is, “no condemnation”: condemnation is sometimes put for the cause of it, which is sin, original and actual; now though God's elect are sinners, both by nature and practice, and after conversion have sin in them, their sanctification being imperfect, yet there is none in them with respect to justification; all is transferred to Christ, and he has removed all away; he has procured the pardon of all by his blood, he has abolished all by his sacrifice, he justifies from all by his righteousness, and saves his people from all their sins: condemnation may also be considered with respect to guilt; all mankind are guilty of Adam's sin, and are guilty creatures, as they are actual transgressors of the law; and when convinced by the Spirit of God, acknowledge themselves to be so; and upon the repetition of sin, contract fresh guilt on their consciences; but an heart sprinkled with the blood of Christ, is clear of guilt; for all the guilt of sin is removed to Christ, and he has took it away; hence there is no obligation to punishment on them, for whom Christ died: again, condemnation may design the sentence of it: now though the law's sentence passed upon all in Adam, and so upon God's elect, as considered in him; yet as this sentence has been executed on Christ, as their surety, in their room and stead, there is none lies against them: once more, condemnation may mean actual damnation, or eternal death, the wages of sin, which those who are in Christ shall never die; they are ordained to eternal life, and are redeemed from this death; they are made alive by Christ, and have eternal life secured to them in him, and which they shall certainly enjoy: the persons interested in this privilege are described, as such

which are in Christ Jesus; not as mere professors are in Christ, who may be lost and damned: but this being in Christ, respects either that union and interest which the elect of God have in Christ, from everlasting: being

loved by him with an everlasting love; betrothed to him in a conjugal relation; chosen in him before the foundation of the world; united to him as members to an head; considered in him in the covenant of grace, when he engaged for them as their surety; and so they were preserved in him, notwithstanding their fall in Adam; in time he took upon him their nature, and represented them in it; they were reckoned in him when he hung upon the cross, was buried, rose again, and sat down in heavenly places; in consequence of which union to Christ, and being in him, they are secure from all condemnation: or this may respect an open and manifestative being in Christ at conversion, when they become new creatures, pass from death to life, and so shall never enter into condemnation: hence they stand further described, as such

who walk not after the flesh; by which is meant, not the ceremonial law, but the corruption of nature, or the corrupt nature of man, called “flesh”; because propagated by carnal generation, has for its object fleshly things, discovers itself mostly in the flesh, and makes persons carnal and fleshly; the apostle does not say, there is no condemnation to them that have no flesh in them, for this regenerate persons have; nor to them that are in the flesh, that is, the body; but who walk not after the flesh, that is, corrupt nature; and it denotes such, who do not follow the dictates of it, do not make it their guide, or go on and persist in a continued series of sinning:

but after the spirit, by which is meant, not spiritual worship, in opposition to carnal ordinances; but rather, either a principle of grace, in opposition to corrupt nature, called “Spirit”, from the author, subject, and nature of it; or the Holy Spirit of God, the efficient cause of all grace: to walk after him, is to make him our guide, to follow his dictates, influences, and directions; as such do, who walk by faith on Christ, and in imitation of him, in the ways of righteousness and holiness; and such persons walk pleasantly, cheerfully, and safely: now let it be observed, that this walk and conversation of the saints, is not the cause of there being no condemnation to them; but is descriptive of the persons interested in such a privilege; and is evidential of their right unto it, as well as of their being in Christ: and it may be further observed, that there must be union to Christ, or a being in him, before there can be walking after the Spirit. The phrase, “but after the Spirit”, is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions; and the whole description of the persons in some copies, and in the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 2. *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*, etc..] These words are of difficult interpretation. They may be understood of the Gospel revealing and declaring deliverance from the law of Moses; wherefore there can be “no condemnation”, (Romans 8:1), by it. The Gospel may be designed by “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus”; which may be called a law, not as succeeding the law of works, by which that is abrogated; nor as requiring conditions to be performed, or as enjoining duties to be observed, or as delivering out threatenings in case of disobedience; but as it is a doctrine, order, and chain of truths, as the Hebrew word hrwt signifies, and which is sometimes used for the Gospel, (Isaiah 2:3 42:4) as νομος is, (Romans 3:27). It may be called the law, or doctrine “of the Spirit”, because the Spirit is the author of it, and makes it powerful and effectual to the good of souls; by it the Spirit of God is conveyed into the heart; and the substance of it are spiritual things: and the “law of the Spirit of life”, because it discovers the way of life and salvation by Christ; is the means of quickening dead sinners; of working faith in them, by which they live on Christ, and of reviving drooping saints; and also it affords spiritual food, for the support of life: and this may be said to be “in Christ”, or by him, inasmuch as it comes from, and is concerning him; he is the sum, the substance, and subject matter of it:

the law of sin and death may intend the law of Moses, called “the law of sin”; not as if it was sinful, or commanded or encouraged sin, for it severely prohibits it; but because by it, through the corruption of man's nature, sin is irritated, and made to abound; it is the strength of sin, and by it is the knowledge of it: and it may be called “the law of death”, because it threatened with death, in case of disobedience; it sentences and adjudges transgressors to death; and when it is attended with power, it strikes dead all a man's hopes of life, by obedience to it; it leaves persons dead as it finds them, and gives no life, nor hopes of it; by it none can live, or be justified: now, though Christ is the author of deliverance from it, yet the Gospel is the means of revealing and declaring this deliverance; which designs not an exemption from obedience to it, but freedom from the curse and condemnation of it; and this sense well agrees with (Romans 8:1); likewise the words are capable of being understood of the power and efficacy of the Spirit of God, in delivering regenerate persons from the dominion and tyranny of sin; and which may be considered as a reason why they “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”, (Romans 8:1): “life” may well be ascribed to the Spirit of God, or be called the Spirit of life,

because he has life in himself as the Father and Son have; and is the author of life to others, of natural life to all men as creatures, and of spiritual life to the people of God in regeneration; and is a quickening spirit to them afterwards, as he will be to the dead bodies of the saints in the resurrection: by "the law" of the Spirit may be meant, the energy and power of the Spirit in conversion; which work requires power, and a man has no power of himself to effect it; but there is a power in the Spirit, which works irresistibly, though not by any force or compulsion to the will, but it moves upon it sweetly, powerfully, and effectually: and all this may be said to be "in Christ": the life which the Spirit is the author and giver of, is in Christ as the head of his people, the proper repository of all grace, and the fountain of life; the Spirit himself is in him, both as God and as man, and as Mediator, hence the saints receive him and his gifts and graces from him; and the law of the Spirit, or his power and efficacy in working, is "in" or "by" Christ, through his sufferings and death, and in consequence of his mediation: now this powerful and quickening efficacy of the Spirit delivers regenerate persons from the force and tyranny of sin, called here "the law of sin and death"; a "law of sin", because it has power and dominion over unregenerate persons, its throne is in the heart of man, and its laws are many and powerful; and "the law of death", because its reign is tyrannical, barbarous and cruel, it is unto death: and from its governing influence, and tyrannical power, does the Spirit of God free his people in regeneration; not from the being of sin; nor from the rage of it, and disturbance it gives; nor from such power of it, but that they may fall into sin; but so as that sin does not properly reign over them, nor legally, nor universally, or so as to bring a death on their graces, and their persons into condemnation. Once more, those words may be understood of the holiness of Christ's human nature, as a branch of our justification, and freedom from the guilt of sin, and condemnation by it: for as "the law of sin and death" may design inherent corruption, and the force and power of it in the saints; so the opposite to it, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ", may mean the purity and holiness of his human nature. That Christ's human nature is pure and holy is certain, from express texts of Scripture, from its union to the Son of God, from the ends and purposes of its assumption, from the inefficacy of Satan's temptations, and from the whole course of his life and conversation; for though he was in the likeness of sinful flesh, was reckoned a sinner by men, was attended with infirmities, the effects of sin, though not sinful, had all the sins of his people imputed to him, and endured afflictions, and at last death; yet his nature was pure and untainted:

for he did not descend from Adam by ordinary generation; and though made of a woman, yet the flesh he took of her was sanctified by the Holy Ghost; his body was prepared by God, and curiously wrought by the Spirit, from whom his whole human nature received a fulness of habitual holiness: and this may be called "the Spirit of life" in him, because he is a quickening Spirit in regeneration, justification, and the resurrection from the dead; "the law" of it, because the holiness of his nature lies in, arises from, and is conformable to a law that is within him, written on his heart; and because, together with his obedience and death, it has a force, power, and authority, to free from condemnation; for this is not a mere necessary qualification of him to be the Mediator, or what renders his obedience, sacrifice, and intercession, efficacious and valuable, or is merely exemplary to us, but is what is imputed to us, as a part of our justification. The law requires a holy nature of us, we have not one, Christ assumed one for us, and so is the end of the law, or answers the requirement of the law in this respect, as well as in all others: and hence, though sanctification begun in us, does not free us from the being of sin, and all its force and power, yet perfect sanctification in Christ frees from all condemnation by it.

Ver. 3. *For what the law could not do*, etc..] This is not to be understood of "the law of the mind", in opposition to "the law of sin", which indeed is very feeble and impotent; man had a power originally of obeying the divine commands, but through sin he has lost his strength and power; and even a renewed mind cannot perform what it would, which is owing to the flesh, or corrupt nature; it has strong desires after holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God; but these desires cannot be fulfilled by it, and indeed without Christ it can do no good thing: nor is the ceremonial law intended, though this is weak, and there are many things it could not do; it could not expiate and atone for sin; nor remove the guilt of it, nor cleanse from the filth of it: But the moral law is here designed; this, though it can, and does accuse of sin, can convince of it, can curse, condemn, and condemn to death for it; yet it could not condemn sin itself, which is only abolished by Christ; it cannot restrain from sin, nor change a sinful nature, nor sanctify an impure heart; nor free from the guilt of sin, nor comfort a distressed mind under a sense of it, it cannot subject persons, or bring them to before God, or give life, or save from death; the reason is,

in that, or because

it was weak through the flesh. The weakness of the law is total and universal, it has no strength at all; though not original and natural, but accidental; it is owing to the flesh, or the corrupt nature of man: or rather the weakness is in sinful men, and not in the law; and the sense is this, that human nature is so weakened by sin, that it is incapable of fulfilling the law; the weakness of the law is not from itself, but from man: to this agrees what the Jewish writers [f139] say,

> "there is not a word in the law "weak", or broken; wherefore when thou considerest and observest it, that thou dost not find it strong, as an hammer that breaks the rocks, awh Ænym açlj yaw, "but if weak, it is of thyself"."

To which may be added that usual saying of theirs, hrwt hla zw[ˆya, "there is no strength but the law" [f140]; unless the apostle can be thought to oppose this notion of theirs. Wherefore because of the weakness of the law, or of human nature to fulfil it,

God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. The person sending is God, who gave the law weakened by the flesh, against whom we have sinned: and who is righteous, pure, and holy: which considerations enhance his grace and goodness, in the mission of Christ. This must be understood of God the Father, who is here manifestly distinguished from the Son; and who is God, but not solely, or to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit; and who sent Christ, though not singly, for the "Lord God and his Spirit sent" him, (<23B816>Isaiah 48:16); though as it is most agreeable for a father to send his son, this is generally ascribed to him; and he being the first person in the Godhead, is the first in order of working, and so in redemption. The person sent is his own Son; not by creation, as angels and men are; nor by adoption, as saints are; nor is he called so, on account of his incarnation, resurrection, or mediatorship, for he was the Son of God antecedent to either of them; but his own proper Son, and not in any metaphorical sense; a Son of the same nature with him, begotten of him, and his Son in that nature in which he is God. The act of sending, does not suppose inequality of nature; for though he that is sent is not greater, yet as great as he that sends; two equals, by agreement, may send each other; a divine person may assume an office, and under that consideration be sent, without supposing inferiority of nature, as in the case of the Holy Spirit; and an inferiority as to office, is allowed in the case of the Son; God sent his Son under the

character of a servant, to do work: nor does this act imply change of place; there is indeed a “terminus a quo”, from whence he was sent, from heaven, from his Father there; and there is a “terminus ad quem”, to which he was sent into this world; but then this coming of his from heaven to earth, was not by local motion, but by assumption of nature; nor was it out of any disrespect to his Son, but out of love to us, that he sent him; nor was he sent against his will; he showed no reluctance at the proposal to him in the council of peace, but the utmost willingness; nor any at his coming into the world: nor at the work itself, which he entered upon, and went through with the greatest eagerness and cheerfulness: nor does it suppose him whilst sent, and here on earth, to be in a state of absence and separation from his Father; he was still in his bosom, yet in heaven, and his Father always with him: but it supposes that he existed before he was sent; that he was a person, and distinct from the Father, or he could not be sent by him; that he had authority from him, considered in his office capacity: in a word, this sending of the Son, designs the manifestation of him in human nature; as appears from the form and manner in which he was sent, “in the likeness of sinful flesh”; which expresses the reality of his incarnation, of his having a true real human nature; for flesh is not to be taken strictly for a part of the body, nor for the whole body only, but for the whole human nature, soul and body; which though it looked like a sinful nature, yet was not sinful: the likeness of it denotes the outward appearance of Christ in it; who was born of a sinful woman; was subject to the infirmities of human nature, which though not sinful, are the effects of sin; was reckoned among transgressors, was traduced as one himself by men, and treated as such by the justice of God; he having all the sins of his people on him, for which he was answerable: “and” hence God, “for sin, condemned sin in the flesh”; not the law, which was weak through the flesh; nor sinners, who broke the law; but sin itself, the transgression of the law, all kind of sin, and all that is in it the act of condemning it, does not design God's disapproving of it, and judging it to be evil; this he could not but do, as being contrary to his nature, an act of hostility against him, a breach of his law, and what brings ruin upon his creatures; and this he would have done, if Christ had never suffered in the flesh; and he has taken other methods, both among his own people and the world, to show his dislike of sin: nor does this act intend the destruction of the power and dominion of sin, in regeneration; this is the work of the Spirit, and is done in our flesh, and not in the flesh of Christ; but it is to be understood of the condemnation and punishment of sin, in the person of Christ: sin was laid on him by the Father, and he voluntarily

took it upon himself; justice finding it there, charges him with it, demands satisfaction, and condemns him for it; and hereby sin was expiated, the pardon of it procured, and it was, entirely done away: now this is said to be done “for sin”; some join the phrase with the former part of the text, either with the word “sending”, and take the sense to be, that God sent his Son for, or on the account of sin, to take it away, and save his people from it; or “with sinful flesh”, which was taken from a sinful person; but it stands best as it does in our version, and may be rendered “of sin”; for God condemned sin of sin in Christ, that is, by the vengeance he took of it, in the strictness of his justice, through the sufferings of his Son, he showed sin to be exceeding sinful indeed; or rather “by sin”; that is, by an offering for sin, so the word is used in (Hebrews 10:6,8); and answers to hajj, in (Psalm 40:6), by being made which, sin was condemned “in the flesh” of Christ, who was put to death in the flesh, “for” the sins of his people, and bore all the punishment due unto them: from hence we learn the evil of sin, the strictness of justice, and the grace of the Redeemer.

Ver. 4. *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us*, etc..] By the righteousness of the law, is not meant the righteousness of the ceremonial law, though that was fulfilled by Christ; but of the moral law, which requires holiness of nature, righteousness of life, and death in case of disobedience; active righteousness, or obedience to the precepts of the law, is designed here. This is what the law requires; obedience to the commands of it is properly righteousness; and by Christ's obedience to it we are made righteous, and this gives the title to eternal life: now this is said to be “fulfilled in us”; this is not fulfilled by us in our own persons, nor can it be; could it, where would be the weakness of the law? man might then be justified by it, and so the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ, must be set aside: there never was any mere man that could fulfil it; for obedience to it must not only be performed perfectly, but with intenseness of mind and spirit; a man must be sinless in thought, word, and deed; and this would be to put man upon a level with Adam in a state of innocence, and the angels in heaven: nor is this to be understood of any righteousness inherent in man; internal holiness is never called the righteousness of the law; and could it be thought to be righteousness, yet it can never be reckoned the whole righteousness of the law: and though it is a fruit of Christ's death, it is the work of the Spirit, and is neither the whole, nor any part of our justification: but this is to be understood of the righteousness of the law fulfilled by Christ, and imputed to us; Christ has fulfilled the whole

righteousness of the law, all the requirements of it; this he has done in the room and stead of his people; and is imputed to them, by virtue of a federal union between him and them, he being the head, and they his members; and the law being fulfilled by him, it is reckoned all one as it was fulfilled in, or if by them; and hence they are personally, perfectly, and legally justified; and this is the end of Christ's being sent, of sin being laid on him, and condemned in him. The descriptive character of the persons, who appear to be interested in this blessing, is the same with that in (Romans 8:1),

who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit: (see Gill on “ Romans 8:1”).

Ver. 5. *For they that are after the flesh*, etc..] By flesh is meant the corruption of nature; and they may be said to be “after” it, not all that have flesh in them, for the best of saints have it in them; regenerating grace does not remove it from them; there is a difference between being in and after the flesh, and flesh being in us; but such who are as they were born, who have nothing but flesh, or corrupt nature in them, in whom that is the governing principle, whose minds are carnal, and whose whole walk and conversation is, such, are here meant: and these persons

do mind the things of the flesh: not merely things corporeal, belonging to the welfare of the body; or things natural for the improvement of the mind; or things civil, as riches, etc.. which may be minded and sought after in a lawful way; but things sinful, the lusts, works, and sins of the flesh: which they may be said to “mind”, since they judge them to be good; the bent and application of their minds are to them; their affections are set upon them; they are solicitously careful to provide for them, and savour and relish them: nor is it to be wondered at, since these are natural to them; they are opposite to God and so agreeable to them; they have no mind, thought, affection, or relish, for anything else; and it is entirely owing to mighty grace, that any mind the things of the Spirit:

but they that are after the Spirit; not such who follow the dictates of their own spirits; or are outwardly reformed; nor all that have spiritual gifts; or profess themselves to have the grace and Spirit of God; but such who are born again, are renewed in the spirit of their minds, in whom grace is the governing principle: the work of the Spirit is begun in them, though not perfected: the Spirit himself dwells in them, and they walk after him; their minds and conversations are spiritual, though there may be a great deal of

carnality in their hearts, thoughts, words, and actions, which is matter of grief unto them: these mind

the things of the Spirit; the graces of the Spirit; spiritual blessings; the doctrines of the Gospel; spiritual sacrifices and services: these have some understanding of, can discern the difference between them and carnal things, judge and approve of them as right; have a great esteem and affection for them, and taste a sweetness in them. They have no mind naturally to these things; nor is the bias of their minds altered by themselves, nor could it; this is wholly the work of the Spirit of God; and these things are minded only because, and as they are agreeable to the spiritual part, the inward man.

Ver. 6. *For to be carnally minded is death*, etc..] The phrase the apostle here uses, includes the best part of corrupt man; the mind, the understanding, the judgment, the will, the affections, the thoughts, the reason, and reasonings of man; and may be rendered, “the wisdom”, or “prudence of the flesh”; so called, to distinguish it from that wisdom which is from above; from that natural and civil wisdom, which is laudable; and it shows that the wisest part of man is but carnal: all sorts of persons destitute of the grace of God are concerned herein; or this is applicable to them all, as the sensualist, the worldling, the proud Pharisee, and the wise disputer of this world. This wisdom of the flesh, or carnal mindedness, “is death”; not that it is conversant about death; or that such persons are thoughtful of it, endeavour to make it familiar to them; or are desirous of it, and esteem it as a privilege; this only spiritually minded men do: but the sense is, that this issues in death; death is not the object, but the end of carnal mindedness; carnal mindedness, so far as it prevails in the saints, brings a death upon them. It is true, indeed, they cannot die a spiritual, or an eternal death; yet sometimes they are very dead and lifeless in their frames, in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; which is frequently owing to their carnality: and the effect of this must needs be death in carnal men; since it alienates from God; it renders them transgressors of the law, and obnoxious to its curse; it sets the soul against, and diverts it from Christ the way of life; and if grace prevent not, must be the cause of, and issue in eternal death; because it is sin and sinful, it is enmity to God, it disqualifies for life, and makes persons fit companions for the heirs of wrath:

but to be spiritually minded, is life and peace; spiritually minded men are the only living persons in a spiritual sense, for all that are in and after the flesh are dead; and so far as carnal mindedness prevails in professors, there is a deadness in them as to all spiritual exercises; and oftentimes as to outward appearance, there is no difference between them and dead men: but spiritually minded men are evidently living persons; they have a spiritual discerning of spiritual things; they breathe after them, savour and relish them; they talk of spiritual things, and walk in a spiritual manner; they are not only alive, but lively in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; and are the means of enlivening others; and their end will be everlasting life; which is certain from the declared will and promise of God, and from the grace of life and Spirit of life which are in them. “Peace” also is another effect of spiritual mindedness; such enjoy peace of conscience: this is a fruit of the Spirit; a part of the kingdom of grace the are possessed of; and the things their minds are conversant with are productive of it; which is the gift of God, passes all understanding, and is of more worth than all the world: such men are also of peaceable dispositions in commonwealths, in neighbourhoods, in families, and churches; induced thereunto by the noblest arguments; and their end will be peace, which will be perfect and eternal.

Ver. 7. *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God*, etc..] These words contain a reason why the issue of carnal mindedness is death; because the carnal mind, the wisdom of the flesh, is not only an enemy, but enmity itself against God: against his being; it reasons against it; it wishes he was not; it forms unworthy notions of him; thinks him such an one as itself; and endeavours to bury him in forgetfulness, and erase out of its mind all memorials of him: it is at enmity against his perfections; either denying his omniscience; or arraigning his justice and faithfulness; or despising his goodness, and abusing his grace and mercy: it finds fault with, and abhors his decrees and purposes; quarrels with his providences; it is implacable against his word and Gospel; especially the particular doctrines of grace, the Father's grace in election, the Son's in redemption, and the Spirit's in regeneration; and has in the utmost contempt the ordinances and people of Christ. This enmity is universal, it is in all men in unregeneracy, either direct or indirect, hidden or more open; it is undeserved; it is natural and deeply rooted in the mind, and irreconcilable without the power and grace of God. It shows itself in an estrangedness from God; in holding friendship with the world, in harbouring the professed enemies of God, in

living under the government of sin and Satan; in hating what God loves, and in loving what God hates; in omitting what God commands, and committing what he forbids; it manifests itself in their language, and throughout the whole of their conversations.

For it is not subject to the law of God; carnal men are subject to the law's sentence of condemnation, but not to its precepts, by obedience to them; there may be an external, and which is a servile obedience to it, but not a free, voluntary, internal one, and still less a perfect one: the carnal mind is so far from an obedient subjection to the law, that it is far off from the law, and the law from that; it hates and despises it, thwarts and contradicts it in every instance, and, as much as in it lies, makes it void; which fully proves the enmity of the carnal mind against God; for hereby his being is tacitly denied, his sovereignty disputed, his image defaced, his government withdrawn from, and these persons are declared, and declare themselves enemies to him:

neither indeed can be; without regenerating grace, without the power and Spirit of God, unless it is written upon the heart by the finger of God; for carnal men are dead in sin, and so without strength to obey the law; and besides, the carnal mind, and the law of God, are directly contrary one to another. Where is man's power and free will? no wonder the carnal mind do not stoop to the Gospel of Christ, when it is not, and cannot be subject to the law of God. Hence we see the necessity of almighty power, and efficacious grace in conversion. It is Christ's work to subject men to the law, and which is done when he justifies by his righteousness: agreeably to which the Targum on (Isaiah 53:11); paraphrases it thus:

> “in his wisdom he shall justify the righteous, that atyrwal ˆyaygs adb[ç l, “he may subject many to the law”.”

And in (Isaiah 53:11), the transgressors he hath subjected to the law.

Ver. 8. *So then they that are in the flesh*, etc..] They that are in the flesh are the same who are said to be after it, (Romans 8:5), and are there described. Such

cannot please God; men, whilst unregenerate, and as such, cannot please God; for though the persons of God's elect are wellpleasing to him always, as considered in Christ, in whom they are loved with an everlasting love, and were chosen in him, and all provisions grace and glory made for them

in him; yet as considered in themselves, and whilst in the flesh, do not please him; for they are straying from him, are alienated from his life, are destitute of all grace, and particularly faith, without which it is impossible to please him; are filthy and unclean, and hence, whilst such have no enjoyment of him, or communion with him; wherefore he sends his Spirit to work in them that which is wellpleasing in his sight: but this is not to be understood so much of persons, and their non-acceptableness to God, as of the inability of unregenerate men to obtain the good will of God, or make their peace with him; which they have no inclination to, being enmity against him; and were they inclined to it, know not how to go about it; nor can they draw nigh to God to treat with him about terms of peace; nor can they do that which can procure peace; Christ is the only person that can, make peace, and has done it: or rather, of the impotency of natural men to do anything which pleasing in the sight of God. There are many things which are pleasing to him, such as prayer, praise, giving of alms, keeping his commandments, and walking in his ways; but these unregenerate men cannot do in any acceptable manner to God; for they are without the Spirit, without Christ, without faith; and in all they do have no view to the glory of God: they have neither grace, nor strength, nor right principles, nor right ends.

Ver. 9. *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit*, etc..] That is, ye are not carnal, but spiritual men; or ye are not in a state of unregeneracy, but in a state of grace: the reason proving this is,

if so be, or “seeing”

that the Spirit of God dwell in you; the inhabitation of the Spirit is a distinguishing character of a regenerate man; which is to be understood not of his omnipresence, nor of a participation of his gifts, whether ordinary or extraordinary: nor does the Spirit of God only dwell in his people by his graces, but in person as in office, and in a way of special favour; as a spirit of illumination, regeneration, sanctification, and faith, as a comforter, a spirit of adoption, an intercessor, and as a pledge and seal of happiness: which inhabitation is personal; is not peculiar to him to the exclusion of the Father and of the Son; is expressive of property and dominion; is not confined to the souls of men, for he also dwells in their bodies; it is operative, powerful, and perpetual; it is the security of the saints' perseverance, and the pledge of their resurrection and future glory. This is owing not to any goodness in them, or to any fitness and preparations of

theirs to receive him; but to a federal union to Christ and relation to him, to our Lord's ascension and intercession, and to the love and grace of the Father; and this proves a man to be a regenerate man, to be in the Spirit, and not in the flesh; for the Spirit of God is never in this sense in an unregenerate man, nor is he in any such sense without his grace; so that the indwelling of the Spirit is the grand evidence of relation to God, of an interest in Christ and union to him, and of a man's state and condition God-ward;

now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. By "the Spirit of Christ", is not meant the human soul of Christ; nor his divine nature; nor his Gospel, which is the Spirit that gives life; but the Holy Ghost, the third person in the Trinity, the same which is called the Spirit before; and proves Christ to be God, he proceeds from him as from the Father, is sent by him, and with which Christ's human nature was fitted and filled. The Jews[f141] often speak of `jyçmh jwr`, or `jyçmd ajwr` "the spirit of the Messiah". Now to have him is not barely to partake of his gifts, but of his graces; to be possessed of him as one's own; to have communion with him, and to have him dwelling in us. There are some who have him not, nor never will have him, being none of Christ's; and God's elect, whilst in an unregenerate state, are without him; and whilst such, though they are his chosen and adopted ones, they are his by his Father's gift and his own purchase, they are his pardoned ones through his blood, and his justified ones through his righteousness; yet they are not his regenerated, called, and sanctified ones; nor can they claim any interest in him; nor are they known to be his by themselves or others; nor have they any communion with him, or enjoyment of him.

Ver. 10. *And if Christ be in you*, etc..] Not as he is in the whole world, and in all his creatures, or circumscriptively, and to the exclusion of himself elsewhere; for his person is above in heaven, his blood is within the vail, his righteousness is upon his people, and his Spirit and grace are in them; and so he comes to be in them, he is formed in their hearts by the Spirit of God in regeneration, when the Father reveals him not only to them, but in them; and he himself enters and takes possession of them as his own, manifests himself to them, communicates his grace, and grants them communion with him. This being their case,

the body is dead because of sin: by which is meant, not the body of sin, though this is called a body, and a body of death, yet is not dead, much less

is it so by reason of sin; but this fleshly body, because liable to afflictions, which are called deaths, has the seeds of mortality in it, and shall in a little time die, notwithstanding the gift of it to Christ, though it is redeemed by his blood, and united to him; the reason of it is not merely the decree of God, nor does it arise from the original constitution of the body, but sin is the true reason of it, sin original and actual, indwelling sin, but not by way of punishment for it, for Christ has bore that, death is one of the saints' privileges, it is for their good, and therefore desired by them; but that they might be rid of it, and free from all those troubles which are the consequences of it:

but the spirit is life, because of righteousness; not the Spirit of God, who lives in himself, is the author of life to others, of natural and spiritual life, continues as a principle of life in the saints, is the pledge of everlasting life, and is so to them because of the righteousness of Christ nor grace, or the new creature, which is sometimes called Spirit, and may be said to be life, it lives unto righteousness, and is owing to and supported by the righteousness of the Son of God; but the soul of man is here meant, in opposition to the body, which is of a spiritual nature, immaterial and immortal; and this may be said in believers to be life or live, for it not only lives naturally, but spiritually; it lives a life of holiness from Christ, a life of faith upon him, and a life of justification by him, and will live eternally; first in a separate state from the body after death, till the resurrection morn, it does not die with the body, nor sleep with it in the grave, nor is it in any "limbus" or state of purgatory, but in paradise, in heaven, in the arms and presence of Christ, where it is not inactive, but employed in the best of service: and after the resurrection it will live with the body in glory for evermore; and this is owing to righteousness, not to the righteousness of man, but the imputed righteousness of Christ; for as it was sin, and loss of righteousness thereby which brought death on man, the righteousness of Christ is that on which believers live now, and is their right and title to eternal life hereafter.

Ver. 11. *But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead*, etc..] These words are not to be understood as they are by some, of the continued work of sanctification in the heart by the Spirit of God; for regeneration, and not sanctification, is signified by quickening, which quickening occurs when the Spirit of God first takes up his dwelling in the soul; besides, the apostle had spoke of the life of the spirit or soul before; and they are mortal bodies, and not its mortal souls, which are said to be

quickened, for these cannot mean the body of sin, or the remains of corruption, as they are said to be, and which are never quickened, nor never can be. To understand the words in such a sense, is not so agreeable to the resurrection of Christ here mentioned; whereas Christ's resurrection is often used as an argument of ours, which is designed here, where the apostle argues from the one to the other. The Spirit

dwells in the saints as his temples: the Spirit that dwells in them is, “the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead”; by whom is meant God the Father, to whom the resurrection of Christ from the dead is here and elsewhere ascribed. This “periphrasis” of him is used, to express the power, justice, and grace of God in the resurrection of his Son; to show that the Spirit of God was concerned in it; and the greatness of the person of the Spirit that dwells in the saints; and what reason they have to believe the sanctification of their souls, and the redemption of their bodies, since such a divine Spirit dwells in them; wherefore,

he that raised up Christ from the dead, which is the Father,

shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you; not the souls of the saints, for these die not: but their “bodies”, called “mortal”, because appointed to death, are under the sentence of it, and in which it already works; “your” bodies and not others; mortal ones, and not airy, celestial, immortal ones; the very same they carry about with them here, and in which the Spirit of God had dwelt. These shall be quickened. The Jews frequently express the resurrection by µytmh tyyjt, “the quickening of the dead” some distinguish[f142] between hmwqt “the resurrection” of the dead, which is common to the wicked, and tyyjt, “the quickening” of them, peculiar to the righteous: though, it is observed, this distinction does not always hold: however, this act of quickening seems here designed to express the peculiar blessing, of the saints; for though the wicked shall be raised from the dead, yet they will not rise with the saints, nor by virtue of union to Christ, nor to an eternal life of joy and happiness; in this sense the saints only will be quickened, “by the Spirit”; not as an instrument, but as a coefficient cause with the Father and Son: or “because of the Spirit that dwelleth in you”, the bodies of the saints are the temples of the Holy Ghost, they are sanctified by him, where he continues to dwell by virtue of union to Christ, and in consequence of it will quicken them at the last day; so the Jews say, that the Holy Ghost brings to the resurrection of the dead[f143].

Ver. 12. *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors*, etc..] The appellation, "brethren", is not used, because they were so by nation or by blood, though many in the church at Rome were Jews; nor merely in a free familiar way of speaking; but rather on account of church membership, and especially because they were in the same spiritual relation to God and Christ: and the use of it by the apostle, shows his great humility and condescension, and his love and affection for them, and is designed to engage their attention and regard to what he was about to say, to them and of them; as that they were "debtors"; which is to be understood of them not as sinners, who as such had been greatly in debt, and had nothing to pay, and were liable to the prison of hell; for no mere creature could ever have paid off their debts; but Christ has done it for them, and in this sense they were not debtors: but they were so as saints, as men freed from condemnation and death; which doctrine of Christian liberty is no licentious one; it does not exempt from obedience, but the more and greater the favours are which such men enjoy, the more obliged they are to be grateful and obey; they are debtors, or trader obligation,

not to the flesh, to corrupt nature,

to live after the flesh, the dictates of that; nor should they be, both on God's account, since that is enmity to him, and is not subject to his law; and on their own account, because it is an enemy to them, brings reproach on them, and exposes them to death; but though it is not expressed, it is understood, that they are debtors to God; to God the Father, both as the God of nature, and of grace, as their covenant God and Father in Christ, who has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in him; to Christ himself, who has redeemed them by his blood: and to the Spirit of God who is in them, and for what he has been, is, and will be to them.

Ver. 13. *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*, etc..] Such persons are dead, whilst they live, and shall die a second or an eternal death, if grace prevent not. It may be asked, whether one that has received the grace of God in truth, can live after the flesh; flesh, or corrupt nature, though still in such a person, has not the dominion over him: to live in sin, or in a continued course of sinning, is contrary to the grace of God; but flesh may prevail and greatly influence the life and conversation, for a while; how long this may be the case of a true believer, under backslidings, through the power of corruptions and temptations, cannot be known; but certain it is, that it shall not be always thus with him. It may be further inquired,

whether such an one may be so left to live after the flesh, as to die and perish eternally; Christ expressly says, such shall not die that live and believe in him; grace, which is implanted in their souls, is an incorruptible and never dying seed; grace and glory are inseparably connected together; but then such persons may die with respect to their frames, their comforts and the lively exercise of grace, which seems to be here intended; as appears from the next clause,

but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. This is not to be understood of the mortification of the body itself; nor does it design any maceration or afflicting of it by any severities of life; nor of the destruction of the body of sin by Christ: or of the being and principles of sin in the saints by the Spirit of Christ; which is contrary to Scripture, to the experience of the saints, who find it in them, alive in them, and to their expectations, whilst in this world: nor is this mortification to be considered as a part of regeneration, which by some divines is made to consist in a sense of sin, grief for it, and hatred of it, in avoiding it, and in an expulsion of vicious habits and inclinations; but it should be observed, that the apostle is writing to persons that were already regenerate; nor does he ever exhort persons to regenerate themselves, which he would do here, if this was the sense; regeneration is a work of the Spirit of God, in which men are passive, whereas in the mortification here spoken of the saints are active, under the influence of the Spirit of God; besides, regeneration is done at once, and does not admit of degrees; and in and by that, sin, as to its being and principle, is so far from being destroyed, that it seems rather to revive in the sense and apprehension of regenerated persons: but it is a mortification of the outward actings of sin in the conversation, called, "the deeds of the body": and in the Claromontane exemplar, and in the Vulgate Latin version, "the deeds of the flesh": or as the Syriac version renders it, ykpwh, "the conversations", or manners of it, and so the Ethiopic version; that is, its outward course of life: and it signifies a subduing and weakening the vigour and power of sin in the lives and conversations of the saints, to which the grace and assistance of the Spirit are absolutely necessary; and such who are enabled to do so, "shall live" comfortably; they shall have communion with Christ here, and shall live a life of glory with him hereafter. Such a way of speaking as this is used by the Jews; say they[f144],

> "what shall a man do that he may live? it is replied, wmx[tymy, "he shall mortify himself";"

which the gloss explains by “he shall humble himself”; walk humbly before God and men, in his life and conversation.

Ver. 14. *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God*, etc..] Not by the spirit of the world, or of the devil, or by their own spirits: the act of leading ascribed to the Spirit is either in allusion to the leading of blind persons, or such who are in the dark; or rather to the leading of children and teaching them to go; which supposes life in those that are led, and some degree of strength, though a good deal of weakness; and is a display of powerful and efficacious grace, and is always for their good: the Spirit of God leads them from sin, and from a dependence on their own righteousness, in paths they formerly knew not, and in which they should go, in the paths of faith and truth, of righteousness and holiness, and in a right, though sometimes a rough way; he leads them to the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, and to the fulness of grace in him; into the presence of God, to the house and ordinances of God; into the truths of the Gospel, from one degree of grace to another, and at last to glory; which he does gradually, by little and little he leads them to see the iniquity of their hearts and natures, to lay hold on Christ and salvation by him, into the doctrines of grace, and the love and favour of God, and proportionally to the strength he gives: now such persons,

they are the sons of God: not in so high a sense as Christ is; nor in so low a sense as Adam was, and angels are; much less in such sense as wicked magistrates be; nor merely as professors of religion in common; but by adoption, not national, such as that of the Jews, but special; and which has some agreement with civil adoption, it being of persons to an inheritance, which they have no legal right unto, and it is done freely: though there is a difference between the one and the other; for in divine adoption there is no need on the adopter's side; nor no worth on the side of the adopted; proper qualifications are conveyed to them for the enjoyment of the inheritance, and which is enjoyed, the father and firstborn being living, and is an inheritance which vastly exceeds all others: now this blessing of being the sons of God, is owing not to ourselves, nor to our earthly parents, but to God; to the Father, who predestinated to it, and fixed it in the covenant of grace; to Christ, it is by him, as the Son of God, it is through him, as the Mediator, and it is for him, it is for his glory; and also to the Spirit of God, who manifests it, works faith to receive it, witnesses to it, and seals up to the full enjoyment of it. This favour is an instance of surprising grace, exceeds other blessings, makes the saints honorourable, is attended with

many privileges, and lasts for ever: such who are in this relation to God, ought to ascribe it to his grace, to require him with thankfulness, and a becoming conversation, to be followers of him, and to love, honour, and obey him.

Ver. 15. *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear*, etc..] By "the spirit of bondage" is meant, not the Spirit of God: for this is just the reverse of his character, who is a "free Spirit", or hbydn jwr, "a Spirit of liberty"; and is contrary to his work and office, which is to show a soul its state of bondage by nature, and to deliver out of it; and though fear may arise from the convictions of sin, yet this he removes by discoveries of love; moreover, his work is to make application of grace and righteousness to sensible sinners, and to administer comfort to distressed minds, and make them meet for glory; and it is also contrary to the character of the persons in whom he dwells, who are the sons of God; besides, the Spirit of God, as a spirit of adoption, is in the text itself manifestly opposed to this spirit: but by it is intended a man's own spirit whilst in a state of unregeneracy, and particularly whilst under a work of the law; and it refers to that "pharisaical" spirit which prevailed among the Jews. Men in a state of nature are under a spirit of bondage to the lusts of the flesh; by these they are captivated and enslaved, and the consequence of it is a fearful apprehension, when convicted, of death, judgment, and wrath to come. They are in slavery to the god of this world, who leads them captive, and by injecting into them fears of death, are subject to bondage. The Jews in particular were in bondage to the law, ceremonial and moral; to the ceremonial law, as circumcision, observation of days, and multitudes of sacrifices. This law was an handwriting of ordinances against them; it obliged them to keep the whole moral law; the sacrifices of it could not take away sin; the breach of it, being punishable with death, must unavoidably induce a "spirit of bondage unto fear": they were in bondage to the moral law, which naturally genders to it, as it demands perfect obedience, but gives no strength to perform; as it shows a man his sin and misery, but not his remedy, as it accuses charges with sin, and curses and condemns for moreover, a spirit of bondage is brought upon persons through it, when they seek for justification and salvation by the works of it, for such obey it with mercenary views, not from love, but fear; and their comforts rise and fall according to their obedience: now these believers, though they had formerly been under such a spirit of bondage, were now delivered from it; nor should they return to it again:

but ye have received the spirit of adoption, by which is designed not a spirit of charity, or love, or inherent grace: adoption is not owing to inherent grace, or is any part of it: regeneration and adoption differ; adoption makes men the children of God, regeneration makes them appear to be so by giving them the nature of children; adoption is not a work of grace in us, but an act of grace without us, having its complete being in the mind of God; it is antecedent to a work of grace, inherent grace is a consequence of it, though no man knows, or has the comfort of his adoption, until he believes: rather a filial child like spirit, such a spirit as becomes the children of God is here meant; a spirit of freedom with God, of reverence of him, and of love of him, and of obedience to him; springing from filial affection and without mercenary views; a meek, harmless, and inoffensive spirit. Though it seems best of all to understand by it the Holy Spirit of God, who is distinguished from the spirit of believers, (<4816>Romans 8:16), and is called "the Spirit of his Son" in a parallel place, (<4806>Galatians 4:6), and stands opposed here to a spirit of bondage, and may be so called because as a spirit of grace he flows from adoption; and is the discoverer, applier, witness, and ratifier of the blessing of adoption; and is the pledge, earnest, or seal of the future adoption or eternal inheritance: now the Spirit is received as such from the Father and the Son into the hearts of believers, by the means of the Gospel, in order to make known their adoption to them, which is an instance of grace, and ought to be acknowledged; for

we cry Abba, Father: by the help of the spirit of adoption; we, the saints under the Gospel dispensation, in opposition to the legal one, under which they had not that freedom; "cry" which denotes an internal vehemency and affection of soul, and an outward calling upon God, as a Father, with confidence; "Abba, Father, Father" is the explanation of the word "Abba", and which is added for explanation sake, and to express the vehemency of the affection, and the freedom and liberty which belongs to children: the words in the original are, the one a Syriac word in use with the Jews, the other a Greek one, and denotes that there is but one Father of Jews and Gentiles. The word "Abba" signifies "my Father", and is expressive of interest and of faith in it; and read backwards is the same as forwards, God is the Father of his people in adversity as well as prosperity; it is the word used by Christ himself in prayer, and which he directs his people to; to say no more, it is a word which the Jews did not allow servants, only freemen to make use of, and to be called by;

> “it is a tradition; (say they[f145],) that servants and handmaids, they do not use to call tynwlp amyaw ynwlp aba, “father such-a-one, or mother such-a-one”;”

in allusion to which the apostle suggests, that only freemen, such as have the spirit of adoption, and not servants or bondsmen, can make use of this word “Abba”, or call God their Father.

Ver. 16. *The Spirit itself beareth witness*, etc..] The thing which the Spirit of God witnesses to is,

that we are the sons of God; which supposes the case in some sense doubtful and uncertain, at least that it is called in question; not by others, though it sometimes is, as by Satan, which need not seem strange, since he called in question the sonship of Christ himself, and by the world who know them not, and by good men, till better informed: but the testimony of the Spirit is not the satisfaction of others, but the saints themselves; who are ready to doubt of it at times, because of the greatness of the favour, and their own sinfulness and unworthiness; especially after backslidings; through the temptations of the devil, and because of their many trials and afflictions. Now this witness of the Spirit is to establish and confirm it; not to make the thing itself surer, for that stands on the sure foundation of predestination, on the unalterable covenant of grace, on union to Christ; redemption by him, the gift of Christ, and continuance of the Spirit; but to assure them of it, and of their interest in it; for the testimony is given “to our spirits”; so the words are read by the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and by the Vulgate Latin; which reading seems better than

with our spirits; for our own spirits are no witnesses to ourselves: the Father and Son are co-witnesses of the Spirit, but not our own spirits; the spirits of the saints are they which receive the witness of the Spirit of God, to which it is made; not to their ears, for it is not an audible testimony; but to their hearts, it is internal; to their renewed souls, where faith is wrought to receive it; to their understandings, that they may know and be assured of it; to their spirits, which are apt to faint and doubt about it. Now it is “the Spirit itself” that bears this witness, and not others, or by others, but he himself in person; who is a divine witness, whose testimony therefore must be greater than others, and a faithful one, who will never deceive; for he witnesses what he knows, and what is sure and certain: his very being and habitation in the saints are witnesses and proofs of their adoption; his

powerful operations and divine landings persuade to a belief of the truth of it; and by shedding abroad the Father's love in the heart, and by the application of Gospel promises, he causes and encourages them to “cry Abba”, Father; which is a wonderful instance of his condescension and grace.

Ver. 17. *And if children, then heirs*, etc..] Children, whether natural or adopted, are heirs to their parents, and according to the Roman laws, which some think the apostle here respects, whether male or female; but according to the Jewish laws [f146], females did not inherit only in case of want of male issue; for though Job's daughters inherited with his sons, this was a peculiar case; and the Jewish writers say [f147], it was ˆypwyw ˆt byç j Æw t m, “on account of their worth and beauty”; yet adopted children among them, whether male or female, were equal to natural children in possessing the inheritance; however, the apostle includes both here, who are all one in Christ Jesus, and are all the children of God by faith in him, and so

heirs of God: either efficiently, he makes them heirs; they are not so by nature, nor do they become such by the works of the law; but God his rich grace adopts them into his family, begets them again, and freely bestows the inheritance on them: or subjectively, they are heirs of himself; he not only makes them his heirs, but he himself is their inheritance and portion; they are heirs of all things which are his; they share in his love, grace, and mercy; and his wisdom, power, truth, and faithfulness, and indeed, every perfection of his are engaged on their side, and in their favour; all things are theirs who have God to be their God and Father; the Gospel and the ministers of it are theirs; the world and the things of it, life and death, things present and things to come; heaven and happiness, which go by the names of glory, riches of glory, kingdom, eternal life and salvation, are all represented as things to be inherited by the saints. The Jews speak of God's inheriting of man, as the highest pitch of greatness man can arrive unto; thus explaining and paraphrasing on the names of the places from which the Israelites journeyed, (Numbers 21:18,19), say [f148],

> “when a man makes himself as a wilderness, which is common to all, the law is given to him by gift, as it is said, “and from the wilderness to Mattanah”: and when it is given to him by gift, l a w l hn, “God inherits him”, as it is said, “and from Mattanah to

> Nahaliel"; the gloss upon it is, the law becomes to him hljn wmk, "as an inheritance"; and when la wljnç, "God inherits him", he ascends to his greatness, i.e. to the highest pitch of it, as it is said, from "Nahaliel to Bamot";"

for when a man is worthy of this, as one of their commentators[f149] on this place observes, he is called, "the inheritance of God", according to (<530>Deuteronomy 32:9); but our apostle speaks not of the saints as God's inheritance, which to be sure they are, but of God as theirs; and not of their inheriting the law, but God himself, which is certainly the highest pitch of honour and greatness that men can possibly enjoy. It is added,

and joint heirs with Christ: it is through him they are heirs of God and of glory; and with him will they partake of and enjoy the inheritance, which is secured to them by their being co-heirs with him: nor does this at all derogate from the honour of Christ, as heir of all things, since he is the firstborn among many brethren, and in this, as in all things, he has the pre-eminence. But before the saints enjoy the inheritance with Christ they must expect to suffer with him and for him; though in the issue they may be assured of this, that they shall be glorified together; their sufferings lie in the way to glory, and glory is and will be the end of their sufferings:

if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together: Christ and his people being one, he the head, and they the members, suffer together; when he suffered, they suffered with him and in him, as their head and representative; and they partake of the virtue and efficacy of his sufferings; and they also suffer afflictions, many of them at least of the same kind with Christ, only with these differences; his were penal evils, theirs not; his were attended with a vast sense of wrath and terror, theirs oftentimes with, joy and comfort; his were meritorious, not so theirs. Moreover, many of their sufferings are for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; on the other hand, by reason of that union which is between Christ and believers, he suffers with them, he reckons their afflictions his, and sympathizes with them; and the consideration of this greatly animates and encourages them in their sufferings, and especially when they observe that they shall be "glorified together"; not with his essential glory, nor with his mediatorial glory, but with that glory which his Father has given him for them. There is a glorification of the saints in Christ, and a glorification of them by Christ, and a glorification of them with Christ, which will consist in likeness to him, and in the everlasting vision and enjoyment of him.

Ver. 18. *For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time*, etc..] By "this present time" may be meant, the then present age, in which the apostle lived; which was an age in which the people of God suffered much, as was foretold by Christ, and which was necessary for the confirmation of the Gospel; for grace and strength answerable to their trials were given them; and the power of God was visibly to be seen in the supporting of them; though this was not the only suffering age: wherefore by the present time may be understood, the present time of life here on earth; which is a time of suffering, and which cannot well be otherwise, considering the world in which we are, and the nature of it, the state and condition of our souls, and the constitution of our bodies, and the many enemies we have about us; but then this present time of life is the only suffering time to the saints, for no sooner are they removed from hence, but they are in heaven, where neither wicked men nor devils can reach them, where their souls are freed from sin and unbelief, from doubts and fears, and everything that is distressing; and after the resurrection there will be no more diseases nor death in their bodies; and this present time is but a short time, a little while, and all sufferings will be at an end; wherefore they

are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. The future happiness of the saints is expressed by glory, of which the glory of this world is but a faint resemblance; a glory which is already given to Christ, and he is entered into the possession of; it is already, but as yet it is unseen, but will be "revealed" hereafter, when Christ himself shall appear in it; and it will not only be revealed to the saints, as the glory of Christ, as Mediator; and it will not only be visible upon them, upon their bodies, which will be made like to the glorious body of Christ; but it will be revealed in them, and greatly lie in the perfection of knowledge and holiness in their souls: now between the sufferings of the saints in the present state of things and their future happiness, is no comparison, either with respect to quality or quantity. Their afflictions are "light" in comparison of the due desert of sin, the sufferings of Christ, and the torments of the damaged in hell, and when under divine supports; but glory is heavy, it is a "weight of glory". The sufferings of the saints are but for a time, but their glory is eternal; nor is there any comparison to be made between them by way of merit, for there is no manner of proportion between the one and the other, nor can the one have any causal influence upon the other. This is the judgment of things the apostle made, "I reckon" or "I think" which is said, not as his bare opinion, or as in the least

doubting the truth of what he said; but having deliberately weighed things in his mind, and reasoned upon them, came to this conclusion, that so it must be. The allusion is either to logicians, who having settled the premises draw the conclusion; or to arithmeticians, who, having cast up the account, give the sum total. Though, after all, the "glory" here spoken of may mean the glorious Gospel of Christ, which was more and more to be revealed in the Gentile world, "in" or "by us" the apostles, in comparison of which all their sufferings were as nothing.

Ver. 19. *For the earnest expectation of the creature*, etc..] Some by the creature understand the universe, all created beings animate and inanimate, which having suffered much by the sin of man, are introduced by a rhetorical figure, as waiting for deliverance and a restoration to their paradisiacal estate; but some part of the world is manifestly distinguished from them, (<450823>Romans 8:23), others think that angels are here meant, who being obliged to minister to sinful men, are represented as groaning and longing for the time when all the children of God shall be brought in, that they may be dismissed from their service; but what is said of subjection to vanity, of the bondage of corruption, and of their groaning and travailing in pain, can never agree with such happy spirits: others suppose that men in general are designed, being by sin brought into a state of bondage and corruption, subjected to vanity, attended with troubles, and liable to death, and so groan under their present miseries for deliverance; but to desire anything of a spiritual nature cannot be ascribed to men in general; and besides, as before observed, some persons are distinguished from them, (<450823>Romans 8:23), others have been of opinion, that the new creature, or renewed persons, are here intended, who being burdened with indwelling sin, groan under it, long for deliverance from it, and are waiting for the heavenly glory; but these cannot be said to be in a state of bondage to corruption, for they are freed from the dominion of sin, and are become the servants of righteousness. It is best of all by "the creature" to understand the Gentile world. "The creature" here, and "the whole creation", (<450822>Romans 8:22), must be the same; now the phrase πασα κτισις, "the whole creation", or "every creature", as it may be rendered, signifies the nations of the world, in distinction to the Jews; (see <411615>Mark 16:15 <510123>Colossians 1:23); compared with (<402819>Matthew 28:19) and answers to twyrb, "the creatures"; by which name the Jews often in their writings call the Gentiles, to distinguish them from the Israelites. Take two or three instances, as follow,

“let your commerce (say they [f150]), etc.. be in a peaceable manner, twyrbh µ[, “with the creatures”; what do “the creatures” say concerning him? such an one, blessed be his father who taught him the law, blessed be his master who taught him the law; woe twyrbl µhl, “to the creatures”, because they learn not the law; such an one who hath learned the law, they observe how beautiful are his ways, and how well ordered his works; of him it is written, saying, “and said unto me, thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified”, (<2903>Isaiah 49:3);”

where the creatures and the Israelites are evidently distinguished from one another: again [f151],

> “woe twyrbl µhl, “to the creatures”, who know not, nor have they any regard for the service of their Creator; for it is a tradition, (says R. Isaac,) that “Bath Kol”, or a voice, goes out every day from Mount Horeb, and says, woe twyrbl µhl, “to the creatures”, because of the service of their Creator.”

And a little after,

> “if twyrbh, “the creatures”, knew the love with which the holy blessed God loves Israel, they would roar like young lions to follow after him.”

Once more [f152], ``all the prayer twyrbh lç, “of the creatures”, is only for the earth; Lord let the earth be fruitful, Lord let the earth prosper; all the prayer larçy lç, “of the Israelites”, is only for the house of the Lord, Lord let the house of the sanctuary be built.”

Now what “the creature”, the Gentile world, is represented as earnestly waiting, and wistly looking out for, is

the manifestation of the sons of God; which is made first at their conversion, and afterwards openly and more fully at the appearance of Christ in the resurrection morn. There is a manifestation of the sons of God, at conversion. They that are the sons of God, are his sons before by divine predestination, and through the covenant of grace; as such they were given to Christ; and under this character, and as standing in this relation, he assumed their nature, and died for them, in order to gather them together; and indeed, this previous relation is the ground and foundation of the Spirit of Christ being sent down into their hearts, to manifest their adoption to

them; for before conversion, it is not manifested, neither to themselves nor others, but then it is in some measure made known. This may in a particular manner be applied to the Gentiles, and God's elect among them. They were the sons of God before they were manifested as such; they are spoken of in prophecy as in that relation; (see <23511>Isaiah 45:11); and seemed to be designed chiefly, if not altogether, by "the children of God scattered abroad", in (<43115>John 11:51,52). These were not known, nor looked upon by the Jews, to be the children of God; but when the Gospel came in among them, as the power of God, it manifested them to be such: so that where it was formerly said, "ye are not my people", there it is said, "ye are the sons of the living God", (<28110>Hosea 1:10). But the full manifestation of the sons of God will be in their glorification at Christ's second coming; when they shall be openly taken into God's family, and shall be owned by Christ in this relation, before angels and men; they will appear in themselves otherwise than now they do; they will be put into the possession of the inheritance they are adopted to, and will have that honour and dignity which belong to their character actually conferred on them; so that they shall appear, not only to themselves, but to all the world, to be what they are: now this, in the whole compass of it, the Gentiles might be said to be in earnest expectation of, and waiting for. They may be said, in some sense, to expect and wait for the manifestation of the Son of God himself, the Messiah, who is called "the desire of all nations", (<37207>Haggai 2:7): for it was promised, that "to him should the gathering", (<01490>Genesis 49:10), or, as some read it, "the expectation of the people", or "nations be": they also waited for his law, his doctrine, the everlasting Gospel, (<23404>Isaiah 42:4), and when that was come among them, and became the power of God to the salvation of many of them, this raised in them an earnest expectation of many, of multitudes of the sons of God being manifested among them, according to several prophecies of the Old Testament, which largely speak of this matter; and they continue to wait for the bringing in of the fulness of them in the latter day, and for the ultimate glory, which all the sons of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, shall enjoy together.

Ver. 20. *For the creature was made subject to vanity*, etc..] This designs the vanity and emptiness of the minds of the Gentiles, who were without God and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, without the law and Gospel, and grace of God; also the vain conceits they had of themselves, of their wisdom, knowledge, learning, and eloquence; likewise their vain

philosophy, particularly their gross idolatry, their polytheism, or worshipping of many gods; together with their divers lusts and vices, to which they were addicted, to such a degree, that they might be truly said to be made subject thereunto, being under the government of these things, slaves unto them, and in such subjection, as that they could not deliver themselves from it; though it is said,

not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Though they were willingly vain, yet they were not willingly made subject to vanity; they willingly went into idolatrous and other evil practices, but the devil made them subject, or slaves unto them; he led them captive at his will, and powerfully worked in them, by divine permission, so that they became vassals to him, and to their lusts; for he seems to be designed, "by him who hath subjected the same", and not Adam, by whom sin entered into the world.

Ver. 21. *Because the creature itself also*, etc..] The phrase in hope, which stands in our version, at the end of the preceding verse, should be placed in the beginning of this, and be read in connection with (Romans 8:19,20) being a parenthesis, thus: "the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God, in hope that the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption"; and so it is placed in some copies, and in the Syriac version: that is, "the Gentiles" earnestly wait and expect a larger number of converts among them, in hopes that ere long the whole Gentile world will be freed from

the bondage of corruption, under which it at present groaned; by which is meant, the bondage they were in, not only to their sinful lusts, but to Satan the god of this world; and particularly to their idols, by which they corrupted themselves, and to which they were enslaved: they hope for a deliverance from hence,

into the glorious liberty of the children of God; which designs either the liberty of grace the children of God have here; and which consists in a freedom from the dominion of sin and Satan, from the law and bondage of it, in the free use of Gospel ordinances, in liberty of access to God, and a freedom from the fear of death, and a glorious liberty it is; or the liberty of glory the saints shall enjoy in the other world, which will lies in a freedom from the prison of the flesh, from the body of sin and death, from all sorrows and afflictions, from all reproaches and persecutions, from the

temptations of Satan, from doubts, fears, and unbelief, and in the full vision of God through Christ, and in a free conversation with angels and saints.

Ver. 22. *For we know that the whole creation groaneth*, etc..] As a woman with child, ready to bring forth: for it is added,

and travaileth in pain together until now; regeneration is owing to the grace of God, which is compared to "seed", of which men are born again; the means of conveying it is the Gospel, and ministers are the instruments of begetting souls to Christ, and who travail in birth till Christ be formed in them: now the Gospel being carried by the apostles into the Gentile world, and being succeeded there, it was like a woman big with child, ready to bring forth many sons to God; for as it was prophesied, so it came to pass, that "more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife", (<2540>Isaiah 54:1); and these births were attended with pain. The apostles preached the word with much contention, and the Gentiles received it in much affliction, though with the joy of the Holy Ghost; as a woman rejoices when a man child is brought forth, though the birth has been attended with pain and labour. This was an united groan, and travail of all the converted Gentiles in the several parts of the world, together with the ministers of the Gospel, earnestly desiring more instances of conversion among them; and this vehement desire had appeared "until now", from the first time of the preaching of the Gospel among the Gentiles, to the writing of this epistle; and supposes, that though there were many spiritual births, there were more to come; as there has been, and will be more abundantly, in the latter day: and moreover, this painful labour, and these united groans for spiritual births, the apostles were well acquainted with, and therefore could say, "we know", etc.. by their preaching among them, in whom they could easily observe, and do in their writings take notice, how eagerly desirous they were of having the Gospel preached unto them.

Ver. 23. *And not only they, but ourselves also*, etc..] Not only they Gentiles, but we Jews likewise:

which have the firstfruits of the Spirit: meaning either the apostles, who were all Jews, and who most of them received the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit on the day of "Pentecost", which was the day of the firstfruits, (<0426>Numbers 28:26); and to which there seems to be an allusion here; or else the Jewish converts in general: to the Jews the promises of the Messiah were made; to them he first came; the Gospel was first preached unto them, and some of them first believed in Christ; they had the grace of

God communicated to them in conversion, which they received as the firstfruits, with respect to an after increase; or in regard to glory, like the firstfruits, grace is of the same kind with glory, and is a pledge and earnest of it; saints judge by grace the firstfruits, what glory is, and therefore long after it; now of these persons thus described it is said,

even we ourselves groan within ourselves; their groans were inward from their hearts, not hypocritical or were among themselves, common to them all; and that not merely on their own account, the corruptions of their hearts, the sufferings they endured for the sake of the Gospel, and in a longing expectation for the heavenly glory, but also for the conversion of the Gentiles, for which they incessantly laboured, and prayed night and day;

waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Adoption is explained by the redemption of the body; and by the one may be known what the other means: by “the redemption of our body” is not meant the redemption of God's elect, body and soul, by the blood and death of Christ, which was already finished; and which the saints, who had received the firstfruits, were partakers of in themselves, and therefore could not be said to be waiting for it: but it designs either the redemption of the natural body, by the resurrection from the dead; when the bodies of the saints will be delivered from that mortality, corruption, weakness, and dishonour, under which they lie in the grave; when they will be refined and spiritualized, and freed from everything which makes them an incumbrance, and an uneasiness to their souls or spirits now; or else the redemption of the mystical body the church, of which the Gentiles make a considerable part, and is to be understood of a deliverance of the church, from the distresses and persecutions it then laboured under; or rather of a making up of the body, the church, by a redemption or deliverance of that part of it, which lay among the Gentiles, from that vanity and bondage of corruption, to which it was subject, into the manifestation and glorious liberty of the sons of God: and then by “adoption” is meant, the special grace of adoption, manifested to the Gentiles in their effectual calling; which the Jews who had received the firstfruits of the Spirit were waiting for, and had good reason to expect, from many prophecies in the writings of the Old Testament; and to which they were the more encouraged, by many appearances of the grace and power of God, attending the ministry of the Gospel among them; and which adoption will be more fully manifested in the resurrection morn; wherefore also the inheritance, which the whole

mystical body the church will then enter upon the possession of, may well be called “the adoption”, because the saints are adopted to it; adoption gives them the title to it, none but adopted ones will enjoy it; and their enjoyment of it will be the full manifestation and completion of the grace of adoption; this saints are waiting for, both for themselves and others, and it is worth waiting for; for it is “an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, which fades not away, reserved in the heavens”, (1 Peter 1:4): and there is good ground to wait for it; it is a bequest of their heavenly Father, who has adopted them; it is a gift of his free grace; it is already in the hands of Christ, with whom they are co-heirs; and they have already the Spirit, as the earnest of it.

Ver. 24. *For we are saved by hope*, etc..] We who have received the firstfruits, who were in a lost perishing condition, and by nature no better than others, than the Gentiles, are saved by sin and wrath to come by Christ, with a spiritual and everlasting salvation. They were already saved in the preparations and purposes of God; in the covenant of grace; in the arms and hands of Christ, through his purchase; and as considered in him; and with respect to the inchoation and application of salvation, in effectual calling, and their right unto it by the righteousness of Christ; and with regard to the certainty of it, in faith and hope: the manner in which they are said to be saved, is “by”, or “in hope”; not that hope is the cause of salvation, but the means by which souls are brought to the enjoyment of it; salvation, or glory, is the object of it:

but hope that is seen, is not hope; for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? in the former clause, “hope” signifies the grace itself, but here the object of it; which is represented as unseen, not yet fully enjoyed, something future, and to be hoped for; as the resurrection of the dead, which is the object of hope, and is unseen, and even incredible to carnal reason, and is to come, and good foundation there is in divine revelation, to hope for it; and the hope of it is of great use to the saints, whilst in this world of trouble: eternal glory and happiness is also the object of the hope of believers; it is said to be the hope of their calling, which they are called by grace to; the hope of righteousness, which the righteousness of Christ is the ground and foundation of; and that blessed hope, the sum of their happiness; and hope laid up for them in heaven, where it is safe and secure; all which is unseen, and yet to come; but good reason there is to hope for it, since the Scriptures of truth so clearly express it; and the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, lay such a solid foundation for hope of it: the

Alexandrian copy reads, “why doth he yet wait for?” and so the Ethiopic version, with which agrees the Syriac version, reading the whole, “for [if] we see it, why should we wait for it?”

Ver. 25. *But if we hope for that we see not*, etc..] Whether it be the hour of death, or the second coming of Christ, or the resurrection of the dead, and eternal glory; all which are unseen by us, and to be hoped for:

then do we with patience wait for it; as that which is certain and real, as something valuable, which will be satisfying, and be received with the utmost joy. This supposes, that the persons who wait for it believe it, and their interest in it, at least hope they have one; that they have a valuable esteem and affection for it; that they are not in a state of perfection and happiness; and that they sit loose by the things of this world, and are ready to part with the one, and grasp the other: the manner of their waiting is “with patience”; a grace, of which God is the efficient, Christ is the exemplar, and the word the means; and which is of great use under afflictions from the hand of God, under the reproaches and persecutions of men, under desertions and want of answers in prayer, under the temptations of Satan, and in the expectation of the heavenly glory.

Ver. 26. *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities*, etc..] The Spirit of God which dwells in us, by whom we are led, who is the spirit of adoption to us, who has witnessed to our spirits, that we are the children of God, whose firstfruits we have received, over and above, and besides what he has done for us, “also helpeth our infirmities”; whilst we are groaning within ourselves, both for ourselves and for others, and are waiting patiently for what we are hoping for. The people of God, all of them, more or less, have their infirmities in this life. They are not indeed weak and infirm, in such sense as unregenerate persons are, who have no spiritual strength, are ignorant of their weakness, do not go to Christ for strength, nor derive any from him, and hence can perform nothing that is spiritually good: nor are they all alike infirm; some are weaker in faith, knowledge, and experience, than others; some are of more weak and scrupulous consciences than others be: some are more easily drawn aside through corruption and temptation than others are; some have weaker gifts, particularly in prayer, than others have, yet all have their infirmities; not only bodily afflictions, persecutions of men, and temptations of Satan, but internal corruptions, and weakness to oppose them, and to discharge their duty to God and man; and also have their infirmities in the exercise of

grace, and in the performance of the work of prayer; though they are not left to sink under them, but are helped by “the Spirit”: by whom is meant, not any tutelar angel, or the human soul, or the gift of the Spirit in prayer, but the Holy Spirit of God himself; who, as the word here used signifies, “helps together”, with hope and patience, graces which he has implanted, and which he invigorates and draws forth into act and exercise; or with the saints labouring under their burdens; or with the Father and the Son, who also are helpers of the saints: and this helping of them implies, that their infirmities and burdens are such as they must sink under, unless they are helped; and which is done by the Spirit, by bringing to remembrance, and applying the precious promises of the Gospel, by shedding abroad the love of God in their hearts, by acting the part of a comforter to them, by putting strength into them, and by assisting them in prayer to God:

for we know not what we should pray for as we ought. The children of God are not ignorant of the object of prayer, that it is God, and not a creature, God, as the God of nature, providence, and grace, God in the persons of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Spirit, and with a view to his glorious perfections: nor of the way of coming to God in prayer, through Christ; nor of the manner of performing it in faith, with fervency, sincerity, reverence, humility, and submission; nor who they should pray for, for themselves, for all men, even enemies, particularly for the saints, and ministers of the Gospel; nor of many other things respecting prayer, as that it is both their duty and privilege; their own inability, and the need of the assistance of the Spirit in it; but what they are ignorant of is chiefly the matter of prayer: indeed the whole Bible is an instruction in general to this work, so is the prayer Christ taught his disciples, and the several prayers of saints recorded in the Scriptures; the promises of God, and their own wants and necessities, may, and do, greatly direct them; as for instance, when under a sense of sin, to pray for a discovery of pardoning grace; when under darkness and desertions, for the light of God's countenance; when under a sense of weakness of grace, and the strength of corruptions, for fresh supplies of grace and strength, for communion with God in ordinances, for more grace here, and glory hereafter; but what of all things they seem to be, at least at some times, at a loss about, is what to pray for with respect to things temporal, such as riches, honour, friends, etc.. to have present afflictions removed, or temptations cease; and too often it is, that they pray with greater importunity for lesser things, than for things of

more importance; and more from an intemperate zeal, and with a view to self, than for the glory of God:

but the Spirit itself maketh intercession, for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered; not the spirit of a man; or the gift of the Spirit in man; or a man endued with an extraordinary gift of the Spirit; but the Holy Ghost himself, who makes intercession for the saints: not in such sense as Christ does; for he intercedes not with the Father, but with them, with their spirits; not in heaven, but in their hearts; and not for sinners, but for saints: nor in the manner as Christ does, not by vocal prayer, as he when on earth; nor by being the medium, or way of access to God; nor by presenting the prayers of saints, and the blood and sacrifice of Christ to God, as Christ does in heaven; nor as the saints make intercession for one another, and for other persons: but he intercedes for them, by making them to intercede; he indites their prayers for them, not in a book, but in their hearts; he shows them their need, what their wants are; he stirs them up to prayer, he supplies them with arguments, puts words into their mouths, enlarges their hearts, gives strength of faith in prayer, and all the ardour and fervency of it; he enables them to come to God as their Father; and gives them liberty and boldness in his presence, which requires an heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, faith in the blood and righteousness of Christ, and a view of God, as a God of peace, grace, and mercy: and this intercession he makes, "with groanings which, cannot be uttered"; not that the Spirit of God groans, but he stirs up groans in the saints; which suppose a burden on them, and their sense of it: and these are said to be "unutterable"; saints, under his influence, praying silently, without a voice, as Moses and Hannah did, (<bible_ref type="scripture">1 Samuel 1:13</bible_ref>), and yet most ardently and fervently; or as not being able to express fully what they conceive in their minds, how great their burdens are, and their sense of their wants.

Ver. 27. *And he that searcheth the hearts*, etc..] This is peculiar to God, and a "periphrasis" of him; angels, neither good nor bad, can search into the hearts of men; one man cannot know the heart of another, nor any man fully know his own; this is the prerogative of God: and

he knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit; not the spirit of men, but of God: that affectionate desire and meaning of the Spirit of God, in the unalterable groans of the saints; he knows the wise meaning there is in them, for so φρονημα may signify, and is opposed to the carnal mind, or wisdom of the flesh, which desires foolish things. The searcher of hearts

knows this, not barely by his omniscience, but he regards it, approves of it, attends, and gives an answer to it; which is no small encouragement to pray, though it be but with sighs and groans unutterable; since the omniscient God understands, and respects such kind of prayer: and the reason is,

because he, the Spirit of God,

maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God; the persons for whom he intercedes are saints: to whom Christ is made sanctification; who are called to be saints; are sanctified by the Spirit of God, and walk after him: now such are the objects of God's delight, they are chosen by him, preserved in Christ, and have his righteousness imputed to them; to these he has made known his Gospel, has given his grace, and will at last the inheritance; so that intercession made for such will certainly be regarded: it may be rendered, “he maketh intercession for holy things according to God”; for spiritual blessings, divine favours, things that belong to God; or divine things, which are agreeably to his nature and will: and since it is the Holy Spirit that makes intercession, and the persons are holy for whom he makes it, and this is made for holy things, and all according to the will of God, which the Spirit of God must fully know, saints may be confident of the prevalence and success of such intercession.

Ver. 28. *And we know that all things work together for good*, etc..] There is a temporal good, and a spiritual good, and an eternal one. Temporal good is what the men of the world are seeking after, and generally have the greatest share of, and the saints the least; and yet they have as much as is needful for them, and what they have, they have with a blessing; and even sometimes afflictions work for the temporal good of God's children: spiritual good lies in a lively exercise of grace and a conformity of the soul to God; and is what the men of the world least regard, and the saints most; and sometimes afflictions issue in this sort of good, as they do also in eternal good, for they work for us an exceeding weight of glory: by “all things” may be meant, all beings good and bad: all good beings eternal or created: eternal, as Jehovah the Father, all his perfections, purposes, promises, provisions, and performances; Jehovah the Son, as the mighty God, and as Mediator, all that he is in himself, all that he has in himself, all that he has done, or is doing, all his titles, characters, and relations; Jehovah the Spirit, in his person, offices, and operations; these all have worked together in the council of peace, in the covenant of grace, and in

redemption; and they do work together in sanctification, and so they will in glorification, and that for the good of the saints: all created ones, as good angels, good magistrates, good ministers of the Gospel: all evil beings, as devils, persecuting magistrates, heretics, and false teachers: all things, good and bad: all good things, outward peace and prosperity, external gifts, the ministry of the word, the administration of ordinances, church censures, admonitions, and excommunications; all evil things, sin the evil of evils: original sin, or the fall of Adam, which contains all other sins in it, was attended with aggravating circumstances, and followed with dismal consequences, yet has been overruled for good; hereby a Saviour became necessary, who was sent, came, and wrought out salvation; has brought in a better righteousness than Adam lost; entitled his people to a better life than his was, and makes them partakers of the riches both of grace and glory: actual sin, inward or outward; indwelling sin; which is made use of, when discovered, to abate pride, to lead to an entire dependence on Christ, to teach saints to be less censorious, to depend on the power and grace of God to keep them, and to wean them from this world, and to make them desirous of another, where they shall be free from it; outward sins, of others, or their own; the sins of others, of wicked men, which observed, raise an indignation in the saints against sin, and a concern for God's glory, and to look into their own hearts and ways, and admire the grace of God to them, that this is not their case; of good men, which are recorded, and may be observed, not for example and encouragement in sin, but for admonition, and to encourage faith and hope under a sense of it; of their own, for humiliation, which issues in weakening the power of sin in themselves, and the strengthening of the graces of others: but from all this it does not follow, that God is the author of sin, only that he overrules it to wise and gracious purposes; nor should any take encouragement to sin, to do evil that good may come; nor is sin itself a real good; nor is it to be said that it does no hurt; for though it cannot hinder the everlasting salvation of God's people, it does a great deal of hurt to their peace and comfort; and that it is made to work in any form or shape for good, is not owing to its own nature and influence, which is malignant enough, but to the unbounded power and unsearchable wisdom of God: all evils or afflictions, spiritual and temporal, work together for good; all spiritual ones, such as the temptations of Satan, which are made useful for humiliation, for the trial of grace, to show us our weakness, our need of Christ, and to conform us to him, and also to excite to prayer and watchfulness; the hidings of God's face, which make his presence the more prized when enjoyed, and

the more desirable. Temporal afflictions, afflictions in body, name, or estate, nay even death itself, all work together for the good of God's people. The Jews tell us of one Nahum, the man Gamzu, who, they say, was [f153] so called, because of everything that happened to him he used to say, hbwj l wz µg, “Gam zu letobah”, “this is also for good”: and they give instances of several misfortunes which befell him, upon which account he used these words, and how they proved in the issue to his advantage: agreeably to this is the advice given by them,

> “for ever (say they [f154]) let a man be used to say, all that the Lord does, dyb[bj l, “he does for good”.”

Now that all things do work together for good, the saints “know”, and are firmly persuaded of; both from the word and promises of God, and from the instances of Jacob, Joseph, Job, and others, and also from their own experience: and it is to be observed, that it is not said that all things “have” worked together, and so they may again, or that they “shall” work together, but all things work together for good; they “now” work together, they are always working together, whether it can be observed or not: prosperity and adversity, whether in things temporal or spiritual, work “together”, and make an intricate woven work in providence and grace; which will be viewed with admiration another day: one copy reads, “God works together”, or “causes all things to work together for good”; and so the Ethiopic version, “we know that God helps them that love him, to every good thing”: and to this agrees the Syriac version, “we know that to them that love God, he in everything helps them to good”; and certain it is, that God is the efficient cause, that makes all things work together for his people's good. The persons to whom all things work together for good, are described as such

that love God; a character, which does not agree with all the sons and daughters of Adam: love to God is not naturally in men; it is wrought in the soul in regeneration, and is an evidence of it; it grows up with faith, which works by it; without it, a profession of religion is vain; and where it is once wrought, it lasts for ever; it ought to be superlative and universal, constant, warm and ardent, hearty and sincere: such who have it, show it by a desire to be like to God, and therefore imitate him, by making his glory the supreme end of their actions; by being careful not to offend him; by delighting in his presence, in his people, word, ordinances, ways, and worship; and by undervaluing the world, and all things in it, in comparison

of him; who is to be loved for the perfections of his being, the characters and relations he stands in and bears to his people, and on account of the love with which he has loved them, and which is indeed the spring and source of theirs. They are further described, as such

who are the called according to his purpose. The called of God and of Jesus Christ; not to any office, or by the external ministry of the word only, but by special grace; from darkness to light, from bondage to liberty, from the company of sinful men to fellowship with Christ, from a trust in their own righteousness to a dependence on his, to grace here, and glory hereafter; which is done according to the purpose of God: the persons called are fixed upon by God; none are called but whom God purposed to call; those who are called can assign no other reason of it than the will of God; and no other reason but that can be given why others are not called; the time when, the place where, the means whereby persons are called, are all settled and determined by the will, and according to the purpose of God.

Ver. 29. *For whom he did foreknow*, etc..] The foreknowledge of God here, does not intend his prescience of all things future; by which he foreknows and foretells things to come, and which distinguishes him from all other gods; and is so called, not with respect to himself, with whom all things are present, but with respect to us, and which is eternal, universal, certain, and infallible; for in this sense he foreknows all men, and if this was the meaning here, then all men would be predestinated, conformed to the image of Christ, called by grace, justified and glorified; whereas they are a special people, whom God has foreknown: nor is this foreknowledge to be understood of any provision or foresight of the good works, holiness, faith, and perseverance of men therein, upon which God predestinates them to happiness; since this would make something out of God, and not his good pleasure, the cause of predestination; which was done before, and without any consideration of good or evil, and is entirely owing to the free grace of God, and is the ground and foundation of good works, faith, holiness, and perseverance in them: but this regards the everlasting love of God to his own people, his delight in them, and approbation of them; in this sense he knew them, he foreknew them from everlasting, affectionately loved them, and took infinite delight and pleasure in them; and this is the foundation of their predestination and election, of their conformity to Christ, of their calling, justification, and glorification: for these

he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; having perfect, distinct, special knowledge of them, joined with love to them, he predetermined, or fore-appointed them in his eternal mind, in his everlasting and unchangeable purposes and decrees to this end, conformity to the image of Christ; which is not to be understood of the Spirit of Christ: God's elect indeed are chosen to be holy, and through sanctification of the Spirit, but are never said to be conformed, made like to the Spirit, nor is the Spirit ever called the image of Christ; but this designs either likeness to Christ as the Son of God, or conformity to him in his human nature. There is indeed a great disparity between the sonship of Christ, and of the saints; he is the eternal and natural Son of God, he is the one and only begotten Son, they are adopted ones, yet in some things there is a likeness; as he is the Son of God, so are they the sons of God, though not in the same sense; as he is a beloved Son, so are they; as he is the firstborn with respect them, they are the firstborn with respect to angels; as he has an inheritance, so have they; moreover, he has a very great concern in their sonship; the predestination of them to it is by him; the blessing itself is founded on union to him, on their conjugal relation to him, and his assumption of their nature; it comes to them through his redemption, and is actually bestowed on them by him; and this conformity to Christ as sons, will mere fully appear hereafter, when they shall be like him, and see him as he is: or this may be understood of the saints' conformity to Christ in his human nature, both here and hereafter: here in holiness; the image of God was in in his first creation, this is defaced by sin; and in regeneration, the image of Christ is stamped, his grace is wrought in them, his Spirit is put into them, to enable them to walk in him, and after him: this will be complete hereafter, and will consist in perfect holiness, being freed from the very being, as well as the power and guilt of sin; in perfect knowledge of everything that will tend to their happiness; and in glory like to Christ, both in soul and body:

that he might be the firstborn among many brethren; the persons among whom Christ is the firstborn are described by their relation, “brethren”; to one another, being related to the same Father, regenerated by the same grace, taken into the same family, and heirs of the same glory; and to Christ, which relation, as brethren to him, is not merely founded on his incarnation, but in their adoption; and which is evidenced by their regeneration, and doing the will of his Father; an which relation he owns, and is not ashamed of: they are also described by their number, “many”; for

though they are but few, when compared with the world; yet they are many, a large number, considered by themselves; and among these, Christ is the “firstborn”; he is the firstborn of God, the begotten of the Father, he is the first begotten, and as such he is the only begotten; he is the firstborn of Mary, she had none before him, and he is the only one that ever was born in the manner he was; he is the first begotten from the dead, his resurrection is called a begetting, and he was the first in time that rose from the dead by his own power, and to an immortal life, and the first in causality and dignity. Christ is the firstborn with respect to all creatures in general; he was begotten of the Father before all creatures were; he is the first cause of them all, the governor, basis, and support of them: and he is the firstborn with respect to the saints; who are of the same nature with him, are made partakers of the divine nature, are sons in the same family, though not in the same class of sonship: moreover, this character may regard not so much birth as privilege which belongs to Christ as Mediator; who, as the firstborn had, has the blessing, the government, the priesthood, and the inheritance; all which is owing to, and is one end of divine predestination. The Cabalistic [f155] writers among the Jews give the name of “firstborn” to the second Sephira, number, or person, “Wisdom”, which answers to the Son of God.

Ver. 30. *Moreover, whom he did predestinate*, etc..] Not to sufferings, which are not expressed nor designed, but to grace and glory after mentioned. This predestination is of particular persons, who, in consequence of it, are called, justified, and glorified; it is the effect of divine grace, and entirely owing to it; it is the source of all the other blessings of grace, and is therefore placed at the head of them, and secures them all:

them he also called; not to afflictions: many may be called to afflictions, and endure them, who are neither justified nor glorified; besides, the people of God, though they meet with many afflictions, between their call to eternal glory, and their enjoyment of it, yet they are not so much called to afflictions, as to patience under them: their call is of grace, by special grace, to peculiar blessings of grace, and to a kingdom and glory; and this their calling is secured by predestination, and connected with glorification: and whom he called,

them he also justified; the meaning of which is, not that he approved of them as sincere and faithful, on account of their faith and patience in

sufferings; for neither of their sufferings, nor of their faith and patience in them, is there the least mention in the passage; nor can any instance be produced of the use of the word “justified” in this epistle, or elsewhere in this sense: but the meaning is, that such persons whom God predestinates and calls, he makes them righteous by the imputation of the righteousness of his Son unto them; which is unto all, and upon all them that believe; by which they are justified before God, and in their own consciences, from all sin, and so secured from all wrath and condemnation; wherefore glorification stands inseparably connected with it:

and whom he justified, them he also glorified; which is not meant of being made glorious under sufferings; nor of being made glorious by the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; for the word is never used in this sense, nor is God ever said to glorify his people in this way; and the apostle is speaking of the saints in general, and not of particular ones: if this was the sense, none would be predestinated, called, and justified, but such who have the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; and none would have the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, but such persons; whereas many have had these, and yet no interest in the grace of God, and everlasting happiness: but eternal glory is here meant, which is what the apostle had been speaking of in the context; is what the elect are predestinated and called unto; and which their justification gives them a right and title to; and will consist in a likeness to Christ, in communion with him, in an everlasting vision of him, and in a freedom from all that is evil, and in an enjoyment of all that is good; and so the great end of predestinating grace will be answered in them mentioned in the foregoing verse: now this glorification may be said to be already done, with respect to that part of God's elect, who are in heaven, inheriting the promises; and is in some sense true also of that part of them which is on earth, who are called and justified; being made glorious within by the grace of Christ, and arrayed and adorned with the glorious robe of his righteousness; by the one they have a meetness, and by the other a right to eternal glory; of which this grace they have received is the beginning, pledge, and earnest: besides, they are already glorified in Christ, their head and representative, and in the view of God, and with respect to the certainty of it, it being prepared and made ready for them, is in the hands of Christ for them, and is insured to their faith and hope. It is an observation of a Jewish writer[f156],

> “that a thing twyhl rzgnç, “which is decreed to be”, is spoken of in the past tense:”

this is the Scripture style concerning things decreed, and such is the glorification of all God's elect.

Ver. 31. *What shall we then say to these things? etc.*, Either to these afflictions, shall we murmur and repine at them? no, since they work together for our good, and are not to be compared with our future glory, which is certain; for if we suffer with, and for Christ, we shall be glorified together: or to these blessings just now mentioned, as the foreknowledge of God, divine predestination, effectual calling, free justification, and eternal glorification, what can be said to these? nothing can be added to them, they are a complete set of blessings, wanting nothing; nor can the greatness of them be fully expressed, or the freeness of God's grace displayed in them, sufficiently declared: what remains for us to do, but to be thankful for them, and glory in them? or what can be said "against" them? nothing at all, they cannot be contradicted or gainsaid; they are true and faithful sayings; they can never be made void, and of no effect, by hell or earth; nor ought our unbelieving hearts to have anything to say against interest in them: or what is to be said, or inferred "from" them? why, the free, sovereign, unchangeable, and everlasting love of God, in providing and bestowing such benefits; and the certainty of salvation, which is infallibly secured hereby:

if God be for us; or, "seeing he is for us", has an affection for us, which appears from the gift of himself, Son, and Spirit, and all the blessings of grace and glory; and is on our side: as that he is on the side of his people, is evident from his preservation of them from the evils of the world and their own corruptions; from the supports he gives them under afflictions and temptations; from his carrying on the work of grace upon them, notwithstanding all the opposition made unto it; and from their safety and security they enjoy by him, notwithstanding the power of their enemies; he is so for them, and on their side, as that he will certainly save them. This he has determined to do, he has sent his Son to obtain salvation for them, his Spirit to apply it to them, and keeps them by his power to the full enjoyment of it: and since this is the case,

who can be against us? none can be against them. There are some that cannot possibly be against them; if Jehovah the Father is not against them, the Son cannot be against them, nor the Spirit; good angels cannot be against them, so far from it, that they rejoice at their good, minister to them, and are a guard about them; the law cannot be against them, because

it is fulfilled in them; nor justice, because it is satisfied, and all its demands answered: and though there may be some who may be against them, and oppose themselves to them, yet their opposition is to no purpose; they will never prevail over them to their ruin and destruction; as neither sin, nor Satan, nor the world, nor death itself.

Ver. 32. *He that spared not his own Son*, etc..] It is said that God spared not the angels that sinned, nor the old world, which was full of violence, nor Sodom and Gomorrah, whose wickedness was great, nor the Egyptians and their firstborn, refusing to let Israel go, nor the Israelites themselves, when they transgressed his laws, nor wicked men hardened in sin; all which is not to be wondered at; but that he should not spare "his own Son", his proper Son, of the same nature with him, and equal to him, the Son of his love, and who never sinned against him, is very amazing: he spares many of the sons of men in a providential way, and in a way of grace, but he did not spare his own Son, or abate him anything in any respect, what was agreed upon between them, with regard to the salvation of his people; as appears by his assuming human nature, with all its weaknesses and infirmities; by his having laid on him all the iniquities of his people, and all the punishment due unto them he inflicted on him, without the least abatement; and by his sufferings not being deferred at all, beyond the appointed time; when full satisfaction for all their sins were demanded, the whole payment of their debts to the uttermost farthing insisted on, and all done according to the utmost strictness of divine justice: and which was not out of any disaffection to him; nor because he himself deserved such treatment; but because of the counsel, purpose, and promise of God, that his law and justice might be fully satisfied, and his people completely saved: moreover, the sense of the phrase may be learnt from the use of it in the Septuagint version of (Genesis 22:12), "thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from me", which that renders ουκ εφεισο, "thou hast not spared thy beloved Son for me": so God did not spare his Son, because he did not withhold him:

but delivered him up for us all. That is, God the Father delivered him, according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, into the hands of wicked men; into the hands of justice, and to death itself; not for all men, for to all men he does not give Christ, and all things freely with him, nor are all delivered from condemnation and death by him; wherefore if he was delivered up for all men, he must be delivered up in vain for some; but for "us all", or "all us", whom he foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, and

glorified; and not merely as a martyr, or by way of example only, and for their good, but as their surety and substitute, in their room and stead: wherefore

how shall he not with him freely give us all things? Christ is God's free gift to his elect; he is given to be a covenant to them, an head over them, a Saviour of them, and as the bread of life for them to live upon: he is freely given; God could never have been compelled to have given him; Christ could never have been merited by them; nothing that they could give or do could have laid him under obligation to have bestowed him on them; yea, such were the persons, and such their characters, for whom he delivered him up, that he might have justly stirred up all his wrath against them; and yet such was his grace, that he has given his own Son unto them; and not him alone, but "all things" with him: all temporal good things, needful and convenient; all spiritual blessings, a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, sanctifying grace, adoption, and eternal life: and all "freely", in a sovereign way, according to his own good will and pleasure, without any obligation or compulsion; not grudgingly nor niggardly, but cheerfully and bountifully, absolutely, and without any conditions; for he is not moved thereunto by anything in them, or performed by them.

Ver. 33. *Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect*? etc..] The elect of God are a certain select number of persons, whom he has so loved, as of his sovereign good will and pleasure, to choose in Christ before the foundation of the world, unto eternal life and salvation, by certain ways and means of his own appointing, as sanctification and faith, so that they are peculiarly his: but are these persons chargeable with nothing criminal? yes, with Adam's sin; with a want of original righteousness; with multitudes of sins before conversion, some of them with very great ones; and all, even after conversion, with frequent infirmities and backslidings: and will none rise up and exhibit charges of this nature against them? yes, even now, they very often bring charges against themselves; they are very apt to charge one another; Satan, the accuser of the brethren, lays many things to their charge very frequently, and so do the men of the world; but all these charges avail nothing, since none of the divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, lay anything against them: not God the Father, for

it is God that justifieth; he against whom sin is committed, who is the lawgiver, and the righteous judge, justifies them from every charge; not by teaching them the way of justification, nor by infusing righteousness into

them, or on account of any works of righteousness done by them, but by pronouncing them righteous through the imputation of the righteousness of his Son unto them: observe, that “God's elect”, as such, are the objects of justification; which proves the eternity of it; the speciality of it as belonging to particular persons, and the everlasting security and continuance of it.

Ver. 34. *Who is he that condemneth*, etc..] That is, the elect of God: all mankind are deserving of condemnation, and are under the sentence of it, as in Adam; some are foreordained to condemnation; all in final impenitence and unbelief, are condemned already; and the whole world of the ungodly will be condemned at the last day; but none of God's elect are, or shall be condemned: for they are loved with an everlasting love; they are chosen unto salvation; they are in Christ, where there is no condemnation; they are brought to believe in him, and by him are justified from all sin, and so are secure from condemnation. They are indeed deserving of it as others, considered in themselves; and are under the sentence of it, as in Adam, with the rest of mankind; and in their own apprehensions, when convinced of sin, righteousness, and judgment. And are there none that will condemn them? yes, their own hearts often condemn them; they are very forward to condemn one another; the world condemns them, and so does the god of it: but neither Father, Son, nor Spirit, will condemn them; not the Father, for he justifies; nor the Son, for

it is Christ that died: that he died is certain; the death he died was the death of the cross; the persons he died for were God's elect; the reason of his dying for them was to make atonement for their sins; this came to pass through his substitution in their room and stead; this death of his was but once, yet of an eternal efficacy, and so a full security of them from all condemnation: for sin, the cause of condemnation, was removed by it; the condemnation itself was bore by Christ in their stead; the law and justice of God were satisfied by it; pardon of sin was procured by his blood; and complete justification obtained by his active and passive obedience; all which is confirmed by his resurrection, session at God's right hand, and intercession: wherefore it is added,

yea, rather that is risen again. As the death, so the resurrection of Christ, is the security of God's elect from condemnation; inasmuch as Christ rose again, as a conqueror over death, and over sin, the sting of death, and over Satan, who had the power of death; and also as a surety, having given satisfaction to law and justice: he engaged as a surety for his people; God

in justice, and according to his righteous law, dealt with him, and by him as such; he satisfied both, and therefore was set free by them; hence neither law nor justice can condemn; besides he rose again as a common person, head and representative of his people, and for their justification: he first stood charged with all their sins, which by his Father, and with his own consent, were imputed to him; he was condemned and suffered death for them; when he rose from the dead, he was justified and acquitted from them all; and all his people were justified in him, and with him: yea, the resurrection of Christ is rather a greater security from condemnation, than his death; Christ's death expiated sin, but his resurrection brought in the everlasting righteousness; notwithstanding Christ's death, had he not risen again, we should have been in our sins, and so liable to condemnation; Christ's dying showed that he was arrested and condemned, but his resurrection shows that he is discharged, and we in him:

who is even at the right hand of God. The ascension of Christ, his entrance into heaven, and session at the right hand of God, are also a very considerable security of God's elect from condemnation; for when he ascended from earth to heaven in human nature, accompanied by angels, of which they and his disciples were witnesses, he led captivity captive, or triumphed over those that led his people captive, as sin, Satan, the law, death, and every other enemy of theirs; he entered into heaven to prepare it for them, to take possession of it in their name, to appear in the presence of God for them, and as having obtained the eternal redemption of them, where he was received with a welcome, as the surety and head of the chosen ones, and then sat down at the right hand of God; which shows that he had done his work, and to satisfaction, is advanced above all, power is given to him, all things are put under him, and he is head over all things to the church: and since he is at the right hand of God, as an advocate and intercessor for his people, it will be to no purpose, and of no avail, that Satan, or any other enemy, is at their right hand to resist them:

who also maketh intercession for us; which is done, not by vocal prayer, as in the days of his flesh on earth; or as supplicating an angry judge; or as controverting: a point in the court of heaven; but by the appearance of his person for us, by the presentation of his sacrifice, by offering up the prayers and praises of his people, by declaring it as his will, that such and such blessings be bestowed upon them, and by seeing to it, that the benefits of his death are applied to those, for whom they were designed; which intercession of Christ proceeds upon the foot of a satisfaction made; it

always continues, and is ever prevalent, and so has a considerable influence to secure from condemnation. The apostle, in this verse, seems to have in view a passage in (Job 34:29); which the Septuagint render, “and he gives peace, and who is he that condemneth?”

Ver. 35. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ*? etc..] By “the love of Christ” is not meant the saints' love to Christ, but his love to them; he is indeed the object of their love, and so strong is their love to him, that it can never be destroyed; for though there may be an abatement in the fervour of it, it can never be lost; yet this is never called the love of Christ: besides, the apostle is speaking not of their love to Christ, but of the love of God and Christ to them, throughout the context; and his design is, to strengthen the faith of God's people, and comfort their souls, under their various afflictions: now nothing more effectually serves such purposes, than the love of Christ; and the things here instanced in are such, as are apt to inject doubts and fears, about interest in the love of Christ, and of the love of God in Christ, as it is interpreted in some following verses: moreover, the separation here interrogated is not of Christ from us, but of us from him; whereas was it our love to Christ, which is here meant, it should rather have been put, who shall separate him from us, and not us from the love of Christ? That Christ does love the elect of God, who are the persons here spoken of, is evident from his undertaking for them, espousing their persons, assuming their nature, dying in their room and stead, paying off their debts, and redeeming their persons, by going to prepare a place for them, by interceding for them, by supplying them with all grace, and using them in the most free and familiar manner; which love of his is wonderful, matchless, and inconceivable, special and peculiar, free and undeserved, exceeding affectionate, unchangeable, durable, and for ever. This is the bond of union to Christ; and the union which is made by it is exceeding near and close; it is real; perfect, and indissoluble, nothing can separate from it: not

tribulation; or “affliction”, which springs from his love, and is the fruit of it; and notwithstanding that, he rests in his love; this is not taken away, but is often sensibly enjoyed, in the midst of afflictions:

or distress; whether of body or mind; straitness in the affairs and circumstances of life, or straitness of mind, in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; for “though we believe not, yet he abides faithful”, (2 Timothy 2:13), to his covenant and promises:

or persecution: from the world; for this is rather an evidence that Christ has loved them chosen and called them, because the world hates them:

or famine: want of the necessaries of life, as food and drink; being exposed to great hunger and thirst, which has sometimes been the lot of the dear children of God:

or nakedness; want of proper clothing, or the use of common apparel; wandering about in sheep skins and goat skins, which has been the case of some, of whom the world was not worthy, and so no proof of separation from the love of Christ:

or peril; dangers from different quarters, by different persons and ways; such as the Apostle Paul had trial of, who was highly in the love of Christ, (<461126>1 Corinthians 11:26);

or sword; that is, death by the sword; which death James the brother of John died, (<441213>Acts 12:13): now, though this may separate the head from the body, and separate soul and body, yet cannot separate from the love of Christ.

Ver 36. *As it is written, for thy sake we are killed*, etc..] This passage is a citation out of (<19442>Psalm 44:22); and the meaning is, that for the sake of God, and his pure worship, Old Testament saints were frequently put to death, or exposed to the persecutions of men, which often issued in death; as New Testament saints have been, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, even

all the day long; that is, they were liable to death all the day long; or every day, one or other of them was put to death:

we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter; they were reckoned as fit for nothing else, and were continually exposed unto it; were used as sheep are, as if they were made for no other use and service, but to be slaughtered; hence they are called, “the flock of slaughter”, (<381107>Zechariah 11:7); and as this expresses the brutality of their persecutors, so their harmlessness, meekness, humility, and patience in sufferings, being under them like lambs or sheep. This testimony is produced, to show that suffering death has been the common lot of the saints in all ages: and is designed to animate the people of God under the Gospel dispensation, to suffer with cheerfulness; the allusion may be to the lambs and sheep daily slain for sacrifice; either to the lambs of the sacrifice slain morning and evening; or to others that were

slain in any part of the day from morning to night, for other sacrifices, in the court of the tabernacle and temple.

Ver. 37. *Nay, in all these things*, etc..] The former words being inserted in a parenthesis, these are an answer to the question in (Romans 8:35), "what shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation?" etc.. "nay", it shall not, nor any of the other things mentioned: "in all these things"; afflictions, distresses, persecutions, famine, nakedness, sword, or any other thing of the same kind:

we are more than conquerors; not only over sin and Satan, but the world, the reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions of it; which they cheerfully and courageously undergo, insomuch that they are not only conquerors, but "more than conquerors": they have above overcome, they have exceedingly the better of it; for they not only patiently bear afflictions and persecutions, but they glory in them; their experience, faith, and joy, are often increased by them; they have sometime solicited, and even wearied their persecutors; they have got the victory with ease, over Satan and his hellish emissaries, by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony: but this is not owing to themselves, or through their own strength, but

through him that loved us; meaning either God the Father, whose love is mentioned in the following verses, or rather the Lord Jesus Christ; and so some copies express it, "through Christ that loved us": "through him", who has got the victory over all his and his people's enemies, and makes them sharers in his conquests; "through him", who is able to help them, and has strength sufficient to carry them through, and brings them off more than conquerors; who has loved them, still loves them, and whose love engages his power to stand by them and protect them against all their enemies.

Ver. 38. *For I am persuaded*, etc..] These words with the following, express the strong persuasion, and full assurance of faith the apostle had, that nothing whatever could separate him and the rest of God's people, from his love towards them in Christ Jesus. This persuasion not only regards himself, but others; and is not conjectural, but certain; and which did not arise from any special and extraordinary revelation, but is founded upon the nature of the love of God itself, the security of it in Christ, and of the persons of God's elect in him; upon eternal predestination, and the unalterable purposes of God; upon the promise and oath of God; upon adoption, and the gracious witnessings, assistances, and inhabitation of the Spirit; and is greatly increased by the consideration of the death,

resurrection, and intercession of Christ. The things enumerated, which are not able to separate from the love of God, are as follow:

death; death separates men from the world, their worldly habitations and substance; it separates the soul from the body, and one friend from another; and in process of time, may take off all thoughts and affections for departed friends, but it is not able to separate from the love of God; it is so far from it, that it lets the soul into the fullest enjoyment of it: and as corporeal death, so no other kind of death can do it; for if the death of the body cannot, the death of afflictions never can; and as for a moral or spiritual death, and an eternal one, these shall never befall the children of God:

nor life; this natural and temporal life, which is frail and mortal; the love of God is better than this life, and this itself is the effect of divine favour; wherefore this can never separate from the love of God, nor anything in it: the life of believers is indeed filled up with troubles and exercises, and attended with much imperfection and sin; but nothing does, or can alienate the affections of God from his children; for though he exercises them with the trials of life, and chastises them for their sins, yet his loving kindness be does not take away from them:

nor angels; by whom are meant evil angels, the devils; for as for good angels, they never attempt to separate God and his people; they rejoice at their good, minister to them, are their guardians whilst here, at death they carry their souls to heaven, and at the last day will gather all the elect together; but evil angels do endeavour it, by temptations to sin, and accusations for it; by stirring up heresies and persecutions, in order to destroy them, but cannot succeed; for the saints are upon God's heart, are in Christ's hands, and on him the rock; and the Spirit of God is in them, who is greater than he that is in the world:

nor principalities: civil magistrates; who though they may separate them from their company, and cast them out as evil; may separate them in prisons one from another; and separate soul and body, by killing the latter, which is all they can do; yet they cannot separate neither soul nor body from the love of God: the Jews often say, that if all the nations of the world were gathered together, they could not extinguish [f157] or cause to cease [f158], or take away the love which is between God and his people Israel [f159]:

nor powers; either the same with the former; or false teachers who had the power of working miracles in confirmation of their doctrines, by which they deceived many; and if it had been possible, would have deceived the elect of God, but that was impossible:

nor things present; present evils, the afflictions of the present life; God does not cease to love when he afflicts his people; yea, afflictions spring from his love, and in them he afresh manifests his love to them; they are overruled for their good, and issue in eternal glory. Present temptations also may be meant. The best of saints have been exposed unto them; Christ himself was not exempted from them; these do not, nor cannot separate from the love of God; which is manifest from the regard which God and Christ have to tempted ones, by sympathizing with them, supporting and succouring of them, rebuking the tempter, and delivering from them. Present desertions, or the hidings of God's face, which often is the case of his dear children, can have no such effect; their relation to God still continues; they have great nearness unto him, are engraven on the palms of his hands, are set as a seal on his heart, and he bears a strong affection to them; though, for wise reasons, he is pleased for a moment to hide himself from them: yea, the present body of sin and death saints carry about with them in this life, cannot separate them; sin has separated the angels from God, who rebelled against him; it drove Adam out of the garden of Eden, and will exclude the wicked from the divine presence to all eternity; and it often separates between God and his own people, with respect to communion, but never with respect to union to him, or interest in him; for he knew what they would be when he set his love upon them; his love broke through all the corruptions of nature and sins of life in their conversion; and appears to continue the same from the strong expressions of his grace to them, notwithstanding all their backslidings; could sin separate in this sense, no one would remain the object of his love. Now this does not suppose that God loves sin, nor does it give any encouragement to it; for though it cannot separate from interest in God, yet it does from the enjoyment of him. Again, present good things may be designed, the good things of this life, temporal enjoyments; these are given in love; and though they may be but few, they are in mercy, and with a blessing; and the great mercy of all is, that these are not their all, nor do they take off their value and esteem for the love of God, which is better to them than all the things of life; and though “the prosperity of fools shall destroy them”, (Proverbs 1:32), the prosperity of the saints shall never be their ruin:

nor things to come; whether good or bad, prosperous or adverse; more afflictions, fresh difficulties with the body of sin; an hour of temptation, and time of distress that is to come upon all the earth; or the evil days of old age; God will never leave, nor forsake his people, or cause his loving kindness to depart from them, in whatsoever state or condition they may come into: the Vulgate Latin version adds, “nor fortitude”; and the Ethiopic version, “nor powers”; and one copy adds it in the beginning of (ⁿ⁰⁸⁹Romans 8:39), “nor power”.

Ver. 39. *Nor height, nor depth*, etc..] Neither heaven, earth, nor hell, nor any of the inhabitants of either, or anything in either; no high or low place, to be cast down from the one, or into the other; nor the height of honour and prosperity, or the depth of meanness and adversity; nor the height of power, or depth of policy in men or devils;

nor any other creature. This takes in the whole compass of created beings in heaven, earth, and sea; and most strongly expresses the inseparableness of the saints from the love of God, by anything or creature whatever; nothing in the whole universe

shall be able to separate us the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord: by “the love of God”, is not meant the saints' love to God; for though this is sometimes called the love of God, it is from him, as the author of it, and to him, as the object of it, and may be said to be in Christ, or by him, and can never be lost; yet the apostle would not have expressed such a strong confidence and full persuasion about this, and would rather have said, had this been his meaning, that nothing shall be able to separate our love from God, or God from our love, and not us from the love of God; besides, he is speaking of that love by which we are more than conquerors, and manifestly intends the love with which God loves his people, particularly the love of God the Father: and this is “in Christ Jesus our Lord”; he has expressed it in and through Christ, in choosing and blessing them in him, and in sending him to die for them; and it still continues in him, and is in him as their Lord, head, husband, and Redeemer; and is a reason why nothing can separate them from it: which is to be understood, not of the effects of love, and the application of it, which may be suspended for a time; nor of the manifestation and sense of it, which believers may be without for a while; nor of any sort of separation from God, for saints themselves may be separated from him, with respect to intimate sensible communion and fellowship; but the sense of this

passage is, that they can never be separated from the love of God, so as that that union which is made by it between God and them can ever be dissolved, or they cease to have any share or interest in his love. This the apostle was persuaded could never be.

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 9

The apostle having discoursed of justification and sanctification, and of the privileges of justified and sanctified ones, proceeds to treat of predestination, the source and spring of all the blessings of grace; and to observe how this distinguishing act of God's sovereign will has taken place, both among Jews and Gentiles; in treating of which, he knew he should go contrary to the sense of his countrymen the Jews, who have a notion that all Israel shall have a part in, or inherit the world to come [f160]: and that the Gentiles will be for ever miserable; and nothing was more disagreeable to them, than to talk of their rejection of God, and the calling of the Gentiles; wherefore that it might be manifest, that it was not out of pique and ill will to them, that the apostle said the things hereafter related; he expresses the most cordial affection to them imaginable, and which he introduces in (Romans 9:1), by way of appeal to Christ, who knew the truth of what he was about to say, and who could, together with the Spirit of God and his own conscience, testify for him that it was no lie: the thing he appeals for the truth of, is in (Romans 9:2), that the salvation of the Jews lay near his heart; that it was no pleasure to him to think or speak of their rejection, but was what gave him continual pain and uneasiness: and his great desire for their good is expressed in a very strong and uncommon manner, (Romans 9:3), the reasons of it are partly the relation they stood in to him, being his brethren and kinsmen; and partly the many privileges they had been favoured with of God; an enumeration of which is given, (Romans 9:4,5), and foreseeing an objection, he prevents it, which might be made, that if the Jews were cast off, the promise of God to that people that he would be their God, would become void, and the preaching the Gospel of Christ to them of no effect; to which he answers by distinguishing between Israel and Israel, or the elect of God among them, and those that were not; wherefore though the latter were rejected according to the purpose of God, the promise and preaching of the word had their effect in the former, (Romans 9:6), and that there was such a distinction, he proves from the two sons of Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael, who were both Abraham's seed; yet one was a child of promise, and the

other a child of the flesh, and were emblematical of the children of the promise, and the children of the flesh among that people; (<450907>Romans 9:7-10), and further confirms this by the instance of Jacob and Esau, who were born of the same parents, and were twins; and yet one was in the favour of God, and the other not; and that this was owing not to works, but to the sovereign will of God in election, he proves by observing that this was before good or evil were done by either of them, (<450911>Romans 9:11), and that this was notified to Rebekah before, (<450912>Romans 9:12), as appears from a passage in (<012523>Genesis 25:23), and by another passage in (<300102>Malachi 1:2,3), which is cited, (<450913>Romans 9:13), then an objection is started, (<450914>Romans 9:14), that if God loves one, and hates another, both being in equal circumstances, as Jacob and Esau were, he must be guilty of unrighteousness; which he answers and removes, first by a detestation of such a charge against God, and then by producing testimonies out of the books of Moses, proving both election and reprobation, as being not of the works of men, but of the will of God; the former of these he proves, (<450915>Romans 9:15), from (<023319>Exodus 33:19), by which it appears, that the choice of men to salvation is not according to the will of man, but according to the grace and love of God, (<450916>Romans 9:16), the latter he proves by the case of Pharaoh, (<450917>Romans 9:17), and the Scripture relating to that, (<020916>Exodus 9:16), and from both testimonies concludes, (<450918>Romans 9:18), that God's having mercy on one, and hardening another, are according to his sovereign will and pleasure; then another objection rises, up, if so, God has no reason to find fault with men that are hardened in sin, since they are according to his will, and in sinning do but fulfil it, and which no man resists; and this objection is formed in a very pert and sneering manner, and insinuates that God is cruel and acts unreasonably, (<450919>Romans 9:19), to which he answers, by putting the objector in mind that he was a man, a mere creature that started it, and that it was God against whom it was made; and by observing the folly and madness of replying against God, and the absurdity of such a procedure, taken from the consideration of the one being a creature, and the other the Creator, (<450920>Romans 9:20), and by instancing in the case of the potter, who has power over his clay, to form it in what shape, and for what use he pleases, (<450921>Romans 9:21), and accommodates this, both to the affair of election and reprobation, and to the business of the latter first, (<450922>Romans 9:22), where he observes the end of God in it to show forth his power and wrath, and describes the subjects of it, which clears him from injustice, and points at the patience of God towards them, which frees him from the

charge of cruelty, (Romans 9:22), and then proceeds to apply the metaphor before used, to the objects of election styled vessels of mercy, and the end of the Lord to manifest the riches of his glory in them, and the method he takes to bring them to eternal happiness, by preparing them for it by grace, (Romans 9:23), which is done in the effectual calling, the objects of which are both Jews and Gentiles, (Romans 9:24), That it is the will of God that the Gentiles should be called, he proves, (Romans 9:25,26), from some passages in Hosea, (Hosea 2:23 1:10), and that God had chosen, and so would call some among the Jews, he clearly makes appear, (Romans 9:27-29), from some prophecies of Isaiah, (Isaiah 10:22,23 1:10), and then he concludes the chapter by observing the free and distinguishing grace of God, in the calling of the Gentiles, and the justification of them by the righteousness of Christ; that such who were far off from it, and sought not after it, should enjoy it, (Romans 9:30), when the Israelites, who were diligent and zealous in seeking after a righteousness to justify them before God, yet did not arrive to one, (Romans 9:31), the reasons of which are given, (Romans 9:32), because it was not the righteousness of faith, or the righteousness of Christ received by faith they sought; but a legal one, and by works which can never be attained by sinful men: they sought after a wrong righteousness, and in a wrong way, because they stumbled at Christ, and rejected him and his righteousness; and this removes an objection which is suggested in the two preceding verses, that God is unrighteous in calling the Gentiles, who never sought after righteousness, and in rejecting the Jews that followed after one: and that they did stumble at Christ and his righteousness, is no other than what was foretold in (Isaiah 8:14), and that whoever believes in Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, shall be saved, he suggests is a doctrine agreeably to (Isaiah 28:16), which passages are referred to, (Romans 9:33).

Ver. 1. *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not*, etc..] The apostle being about to discourse concerning predestination, which he had mentioned in the preceding chapter, and to open the springs and causes of it, and also concerning the induration and rejection of the Jewish nation; he thought it necessary to preface his account of these things with some strong assurances of his great attachment to that people, and his affection for them, lest it should be thought he spoke out of prejudice to them; and well knowing in what situation he stood in with them, on account of his preaching up the abrogation of the ceremonial law, and how difficult it

might be for him to obtain their belief in what he should say, he introduces it with a solemn oath, “I say the truth in Christ, I lie not”: which refers not to what he had said in the foregoing chapter, but to what he was going to say; and is all one as if he had said, as I am in Christ, a converted person, one born again, and renewed in the spirit of my mind, what I am about to speak is truth, and no lie; or I swear by Christ the God of truth, who is truth itself, and I appeal to him as the true God, the searcher of hearts, that what I now deliver is truth, and nothing but truth, and has no falsehood in it. This both shows that the taking of an oath is lawful, and that Christ is truly God, by whom only persons ought to swear:

my conscience bearing me witness. The apostle, besides his appeal to Christ, calls his conscience to witness to the truth of his words; and this is as a thousand witnesses; there is in every man a conscience, which unless seared as with a red hot iron, will accuse or excuse, and bear a faithful testimony to words and actions; and especially a conscience enlightened, cleansed, and sanctified by the Spirit of God, as was the apostle's: hence he adds,

in the Holy Ghost; meaning either that his conscience was influenced and directed by the Holy Ghost in what he was about to say; or it bore witness in and with the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost with that; so that here are three witnesses called in, Christ, conscience, and the Holy Ghost; and by three such witnesses, his words must be thought to be well established.

Ver. 2. *That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart*.] This is the thing he appeals to Christ for the truth of, and calls in his conscience and the Holy Ghost to bear witness to. These two words, “heaviness” and “sorrow”, the one signifies grief, which had brought on heaviness on his spirits; and the other such pain as a woman in travail feels: and the trouble of his mind expressed by both, is described by its quantity, “great”, it was not a little, but much; by its quality it was internal, it was in his “heart”, it did not lie merely in outward show, in a few words or tears, but was in his heart, it was a heart sorrow; and by its duration, “continual”, it was not a sudden emotion or passion, but what had been long in him, and had deeply affected and greatly depressed him: and what was the reason of all this? it is not expressed, but may pretty easily be understood; it was because of the obstinacy of his countrymen the Jews, the hardness of their hearts, and their wilful rejection of the Messiah; their trusting to their own righteousness, to the neglect and contempt of the righteousness of Christ,

which he knew must unavoidably issue in their eternal destruction; also what greatly affected his mind was the utter rejection of them, as the people of God, and the judicial blindness, and hardness of heart, he full well knew was coming upon them, and which he was about to break unto them.

Ver. 3. *For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ*, etc..] Some consider this as the reason of the apostle's great heaviness, and continual sorrow of heart, because he had made such a wish as this, and read the words, “for I have wished”, or “did wish”; that is, in my unregenerate state, whilst I was a persecutor of Christ, and a blasphemer of his name, I wished to be for ever separated from him, and to have nothing to do with him; for then I thought I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus, and this I did out of respect to the Jewish nation, and because I would not relinquish the Jewish religion; but oh! what a trouble of mind is it to me? what uneasiness does it give me when I think of it, and reflect upon it? But this can never be the apostle's meaning, for he would never have appealed to Christ in so solemn a manner, and took an oath upon it, for the truth of his enmity to Christ, and alienation from him before conversion, which everybody knew; nor was it anything strange, that whilst he was an unbelieving Jew, he should wish himself separated from Jesus of Nazareth, and always to remain so; and his having done this before his embracing of Christianity could be no evidence of his present affection for the Jewish nation, especially since he repented of it, and was sorry for it. But this wish, whatever is meant by it, is mentioned as an instance of his great love to his countrymen the Jews. Many have thought that his meaning is, that he had so great a value for them, that he could even wish himself, and be content to be eternally separated from Christ, everlastingly banished from his presence, never to enjoy communion more with him, or in other words, to be eternally damned, that they might be saved. But this is what could never be, and which he knew, was impossible to be done, and was contrary to that strong persuasion he had just expressed in the close of the foregoing chapter. Nor is it consistent with his love to Christ, to wish any thing of this kind; it would make him to love the Jews much better than Christ; since, according to this sense, he must wish to be parted from him, that they might be saved, and consequently must love them more than Christ: nor is it consistent with, but even contrary both to the principles of nature and grace; it is contrary to the principles of nature, for a man to desire his own damnation upon any consideration whatever; and it is

contrary to the principle of grace, which always strongly inclines to be with Christ, and not separated from him; in a word, to be accursed from Christ in this sense, could be no proper means of the salvation of the Jews, and therefore it cannot be thought to be desirable, or wished for. Some things are said indeed for the qualifying of this sense of the words, as that the apostle said this inconsiderately, when he was scarcely himself, through an ecstasy of mind, and intemperate zeal, and an overflow of affection for his nation; but this is highly to reflect upon the apostle, and to represent him in a very unworthy manner, when it is certain he said this with the greatest deliberation and seriousness; he introduces it in the most solemn manner, with an appeal to Christ, the Holy Spirit, and his own conscience, and therefore it could never drop from him through incogitancy, and an overheated affection. Again, it is said, that this wish was made with a condition, if it was the will of God, but that he knew was not; or if it could be for the good of these people, this also he knew it could never be: the best qualification Of it is to say it is an hyperbolical expression; and so if it is, it must be with a witness, being such an hyperbole, as is not to be matched in sacred or profane writings. The words of Moses are thought to be a parallel one, “blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written”, (<2232>Exodus 32:32); but that is not to be understood of the book of eternal life; but either of the book of the law, as R. Sol. Jarchi expounds it, which God had ordered him to write, and his desire is, that his name might not stand there; or rather of the book of this temporal life, that he might die and not live. It remains then that these words must have another meaning. Now let it be observed, that the word αναψεμα, here translated “accursed”, answers to the Hebrew word µ r j , which, with the Jewish writers, is one sort of excommunication in use among them, and the greater sort; the forth of it, as given by them, is very horrible, and shocking [f161]; (see Gill on “<4922>John 9:22”); and so we may observe the word “anathema” here used is mentioned as a form of excommunication in (<4616>1 Corinthians 16:22 <4801>Galatians 1:8,9); of all such as love not Christ and his Gospel, and make it appear by their principles or practices, or both, that they do not, and so ought to be removed from the communion of churches. Now, taking the word in this sense, the apostle's meaning is, that he could wish to be excommunicated from Christ; that is, from the body of Christ, from the church of Christ, Christ mystical, as the word “Christ” is used, (<4612>1 Corinthians 12:12); to be deprived of the ordinance of Christ's house, to be degraded from his office in it, and not to be so much as a member in it. He saw that these branches, the people of the Jews, were going to be cut off,

and no longer to be of the church of God; and such was his affection to them, that he could have wished rather to be cut off himself, that they might be spared; and this was an instance of great love to them, since, next to Christ, the church and the ordinances of it were exceeding dear unto, and highly valued by the apostle. Again, it is worthy of observation, that the Hebrew word μrj, which the Septuagint render by αναψεμα, the word in the text, is used for any thing devoted to God, and which could not be alienated to any other use or service; and if it was a man, or any among men that was devoted, it was not to be redeemed, but was "surely to be put to death", (Leviticus 27:29). Some have thought that Jephthah's daughter was put to death upon this law; but be that as it will, the apostle here may reasonably be thought to allude unto it, and his sense be this, that he could wish himself αναψεμα ειναι απο του χριστου, "to be devoted unto death", not from Christ, but "by" Christ; and some copies read υπο, "by": I could wish that my dear Lord and Master, as if he should say, would appoint and order me to die, might this nation of mine but escape that ruin and destruction I see is coming upon them, as a nation and a church; I could be content to die the most accursed death, and be treated in the most ignominious manner, might they but be saved; a like expression is that of R. Ishmael [f162], ˆtrpk yna larçy ynb "may I be an expiatory sacrifice for the

children of Israel";

> "which (says one commentator [f163]) he said, ˆtbj Æwtm, "because of his love to them"; and it is as if he should say, all the punishment which is right to come upon them, I will take it on myself, in order to atone for them;"

and says another [f164],

> "the sense is, he took upon him their redemption, and this he said, wtbha bwrl, "because of the greatness of his love":"

now for a man to die for his country, that a whole nation perish not, was agreeably to the sentiments both of Jews and Gentiles, and was the highest instance of love among men; "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends", (John 15:13); and this is carrying the sense of the apostle's wish high enough, and not too far. The persons

on whose account he could have expressed this wish, are described by their natural relation to him,

my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh: he calls them his brethren, not in a spiritual sense, nor in a strict natural sense, but in a general way, as being of the same nation: it is a saying with the Jews [f165], µyja larçy lk, "all the Israelites are brethren"; for the same reason he calls them kinsmen; and these appellations he uses to remove that ill will and prejudice they had conceived in their minds against him, and to signify the ground of his affection for them: and he adds, "according to the flesh", to distinguish them from his spiritual brethren and relations; for though they were brethren in a national sense, they were not all so in a spiritual relation.

Ver. 4. *Who are Israelites*, etc..] Which were their national name, as descended from Jacob, whose name was Israel; and it was accounted a very honourable one; (see <50305>Philippians 3:5 <47122>2 Corinthians 11:22); and the very name they bore gave the apostle some concern that they should be cut off; and then he proceeds to enumerate the several distinguishing favours and privileges they had been partakers of:

to whom pertaineth the adoption; not that special adoption, which springs from eternal predestination, is a blessing of the covenant of grace, comes through the redemption of Christ, and is received and enjoyed only by believers in him; for all that were Israelites, were not in this sense the children of God; but national adoption is here meant, by which the whole body of the people, as nation, were the sons of God, his firstborn:

and the glory; either the ark of the covenant, which is so called in (<19602>Psalm 63:2), according to Kimchi; or the clouds in the tabernacle and temple, which were called the glory of the Lord, and were symbols of his presence, the same with the Shekinah; and so Aben Ezra interprets power, the ark, and glory, the Shekinah, (<19602>Psalm 63:2),

and the covenants; not the two Testaments, Old and New, but the covenant of circumcision, made with Abraham their father, and the covenant at Sinai they entered into with the Lord; some copies, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read, "the covenant":

and the giving, of the law: hrwt ˆtm, a way of speaking the [f166] Jews make use of when they take notice of this privilege; for it was peculiarly

given to them with great solemnity by God himself, through the disposition of angels into the hands of Moses the mediator, and by him to them; and on account of this, they reckoned themselves more beloved of God than the rest of mankind [f167]

and the service of God; or "the service", as in the Greek text. So the Jews [f168] are used to call it hdwb[, "the service"; and false worship is called by them hrz hdwb[, "strange service", which is the title of one of their Misnic tracts; and here it signifies the whole worship of God, in the whole compass of it, sacrifices, prayer, praise, etc.. daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly:

and the promises; both temporal and spiritual, especially such as related to the Messiah, and which now had their accomplishment.

Ver. 5. *Whose are the fathers*, etc..] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for, according to the [f169] Jewish writers,

> "they call none in Israel twba, "fathers", but three, and they are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and they call none "mothers" but four, and they are, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah:"

their descent from these fathers was a privilege, though they valued themselves too highly upon it; but what was the crown and glory of all, and which they took the least, though the apostle took the most notice of, is,

and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came; that is, either of the fathers, or of the Israelites, from whom Christ, according to his human nature, sprung; being a son of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of David, and the son of Mary; hence the Messiah is called larçyd ahyçm, "the Messiah or Christ of Israel" [f170]:

who is described as

over all, angels and men, being the creator, upholder, and governor of them; and as having another nature, a divine one, being

God, truly and properly God,

blessed for evermore; in himself, and to be blessed and praised by all creatures. The apostle alludes to that well known periphrastic name of God

so much used by the Jews, awh Ærb çwdqh, "the holy, blessed God"; to which, by way of assent and confirmation, the apostle puts his

Amen. Now all these particular privileges are mentioned by him, as what heightened his concern for these people; it filled him with heaviness and sorrow of heart, when he considered, that persons who had been partakers of such favours, and especially the last, that the Messiah should spring from them, be born of them, and among them, and yet that they should be given up to ruin and destruction.

Ver. 6. *Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect*, etc..] Or "it is not possible indeed that the word of God should fall"; (see 1 Samuel 3:10); This the apostle says, partly to relieve his own mind pressed with sorrow, and partly to obviate an objection some might make, or prevent any mistake any might be ready to go into; as though from what he suggested that what God had said concerning the people of the Jews, was made void and without effect: for whether by the "word of God" are meant, the Scriptures in general, the prophecies of the Old Testament, these were now about to have their accomplishment, in the rejection of the Jews, and in the conversion of the Gentiles; or whether by it is designed the Gospel, this, as preached both by Christ and his apostles, had had its effect upon God's chosen ones among that people; it was become the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew first: or rather by it may be intended, God's word of promise to Abraham, that he would be a God to him, and to his seed after him; and that he and they should be heir of the world, of this and of that which is to come; particularly the heavenly inheritance, which he gave to him by promise; this was not made void, or had taken none effect: for this was made only to Abraham and his spiritual seed; and therefore though his carnal seed believed not, and for their unbelief should be cut off, this did not make the faith, or faithfulness of God of none effect:

for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; that is, they which are the descendants of the patriarch Jacob, whose name was Israel; or who are of the Israelitish nation, of the stock of Israel, belonging to that people; they are not all larçy ta, "the Israel", by way of emphasis, as in (Psalm 25:22), or the "Israel of God", (Galatians 6:16), the Israel whom Jehovah the Father has chosen for a peculiar people; which Christ has redeemed from all their iniquities; which the Spirit of God calls with an holy calling, by special grace, to special privileges; the seed of Israel who are justified in Christ, whose iniquities are so pardoned and done away,

that when they are sought for they shall not be found, and who are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: or in other words, though they are "Israel after the flesh", (1 Corinthians 10:18), yet not after the Spirit; though they are by nation Israelites, they are not Israelites "indeed", as Nathanael was, (John 1:47); they are Jews outwardly, not inwardly; they have not all principles of grace, uprightness, and sincerity in them: now to these spiritual Israelites, or seed of Abraham, were the word of God, the promises of God concerning spiritual and eternal things made, and upon these they had their effect; and therefore it could not be said that the word of God had taken none effect; though the whole body of Israel after the flesh were cut off and rejected. Some copies, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, "who are Israelites"; and the Ethiopic version, "they are not all Israel who came out of Egypt".

Ver. 7. *Neither because they are the seed of Abraham*, etc..] The Jews highly valued themselves, upon being the natural seed of Abraham; and fancied, upon this account, that they were children, which the apostle here denies: neither

are they all children; as in the former verse, he explains in what sense they were Israelites, which he had mentioned among their high characters and privileges, as descending from Jacob, and in what sense they were not; so in this he shows in what manner the "adoption", (Romans 9:4), belonged to them, and it did not; being Abraham's seed, they were his natural children, and the children of God by national adoption; but, they were not all the spiritual children of Abraham, nor the children of God by the special grace of adoption; these characters only belonged to some of them, and which are equally true of Gentile believers; who being of the same faith with Abraham, are his children, his seed, and also the children of God: natural descent from Abraham avails nothing in this case, as is clear from the instance of Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael was the natural seed of Abraham, as well as Isaac; but he was not a son of Abraham in a spiritual sense, nor a child of God; he was not a child of promise, this was peculiar to Isaac:

but in Isaac shall thy seed be called; (see Genesis 21:12). The meaning of which is, either that the progeny of Abraham in the line of Isaac should only be called, accounted, and esteemed, in an eminent sense, the seed of Abraham, and not his posterity in the line of Ishmael: agreeably to which the Jews say[f171], that

“Ishmael is not µhrba lç w[rz llkb, “in the general account of the seed of Abraham”; for it is said, “in Isaac shall thy seed be called”, (<0212>Genesis 21:12); nor is Esau in the general account of the seed of Isaac; hence, says R. Joden bar Shalom, in Isaac, that is, in part of Isaac.”

So another [f172] of their writers, on mentioning this passage, observes,

> “that it is said in Isaac, qjxy lk alw, but “not all Isaac”;”

or all that sprung from him. Or this has respect to the most eminent and famous seed of Abraham, the Messiah, in whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed; who was to spring from him by Isaac, in the line of Jacob; and may likewise have a personal respect to Isaac himself, the son of the promise, a child of Abraham in a spiritual sense, when Ishmael was not; and to whom belonged the spiritual promises and blessings, and who was to be, and was effectually called by the grace of God; and may include also his whole seed and posterity, who, both natural and spiritual, were children of the typical promise, the land of Canaan, and the enjoyment of temporal good things; and the matter also children of the antitypical promise, or of those spiritual and eternal things, which God has promised to Abraham's spiritual seed, whether among Jews or Gentiles; and which always have their effect, and had, even when, and though Abraham's natural seed had a “lo ammi”, (<2801>Hosea 1:9), written upon them.

Ver. 8. *That is, they which are the children of the flesh*, etc..] This is an explanation of the foregoing verse, and shows, that by “the seed of” Abraham are meant, the natural seed of Abraham, who are born after the flesh, or descend from him by carnal generation:

these are not the children of God; that is, not all of them, nor any of them, on account of their being children of the flesh, or Abraham's natural seed; for adoption does not come this way; men do not commence children of God by their fleshly descent; they are not “born of blood”, but of God, who are the sons of God:

but the children of the promise are counted for the seed; tyrb ynb “children of the covenant”, is a common phrase with the Jews; who reckoned themselves as such, because they were the seed of Abraham: thus in their prayers they say [f173] to God,

> “we are thy people, Ætyrb ynb, “the children of thy covenant”, the children of Abraham thy friend.”

And so they were the children of the covenant, or promise, which God made with Abraham and his natural seed, respecting the land of Canaan, and their enjoyment of temporal good things in it; but they were not all of them the children of the promise, which God made to Abraham and his spiritual seed, whether Jews or Gentiles, respecting spiritual and eternal things; to whom alone the promises of God, being their God in a spiritual sense, of spiritual and eternal salvation by Christ, and of the grace of the Spirit of God, and of eternal life belong; and who are the seed which were promised to Abraham by God, saying, “thou shalt be a father of many nations”, (<01704>Genesis 17:4): for which reasons, because these spiritual promises belong to them, and because they themselves were promised to Abraham, as his children, therefore they are called “children of the promise”: or rather, because as Isaac was a child of promise, being born after the Spirit, by virtue of the promise of God, through his divine power and goodness, when there were no ground or foundation in nature, for Abraham and Sarah to hope for a son; so these are called “children of promise”, (<48428>Galatians 4:28), because they are born again, not through the power of nature, and strength of their own free will; they are not born of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, according to the will of God and his abundant mercy, by the word of truth, through his power, Spirit, and grace; and by faith receive the promises made unto them; and are counted and reckoned as “Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise”, (<48429>Galatians 3:29), whether they be Jews, or whether they be Gentiles: and since now the promises of God are all made good to these persons, the word of God is not without effect, or is not made void, by the casting off the children of the flesh, or the carnal seed of Abraham, who were not children of the promise in the sense now given.

Ver. 9. *For this is the word of promise*, etc..] The following passage is the Scripture, which contains the promise concerning the birth of Isaac; which was the produce, not of nature, but of divine grace and power; and was typical of the regeneration of God's elect, who “as Isaac was, are the children of promise”, (<48428>Galatians 4:28), for as Ishmael was a type of them that are born after the flesh, and are carnal men, so Isaac was a type of those, who are born after the Spirit, and are spiritual men: the promise is,

at this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son; the passage referred to is in (<01810>Genesis 18:10); which there stands thus, “I will certainly return unto thee, according to the time of life, and lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son”: some difference there is between the words as cited by the apostle, and as they stand in the original text; the word “lo”, is omitted by the apostle, nor was there any necessity to repeat it, since it was used only to excite Abraham's faith, attention, and wonder; also the phrase “thy wife”, is neglected, the reason is, because the words in Genesis are an address to Abraham, here the substance of the promise to him is produced; besides it was not only well known in the apostle's time, that Sarah was the wife of Abraham, but that as such she brought forth Isaac, wherefore it was not so very necessary it should be mentioned here; add to this, that it is not repeated in (<01814>Genesis 18:14), which will justify our apostle in the omission of it: but the greater seeming difference is, that what in Genesis is rendered, “according to the time of life”, is by the apostle, “at this time”: some think, that there may be an emendation of the present original text, and suppose a various reading, and that the apostle, instead of hyj, “life”, read hzj, “this”, but there is no occasion for such a supposition, or to make this amendment: for the phrase “the time of life”, signifies the present time, the “nunc stans”; so R. Levi ben Gerson [f174], understands this phrase, “according to the time of life”, ht[tdmw[w tmyyq ayhç tazh t[k, “according to this time which is now standing and abiding” and adds, rightly is this said, because neither time past nor to come are to be found, only the present time, the “nunc stans” and afterwards more than once explains it, of this present time, the next year: and so both R. Solomon Jarchi, and R. Aben Ezra [f175], expound it, tazh t[k, “according to this time”, the year following; that is, exactly according to this present time next year, or this time twelve month; besides, in (<01721>Genesis 17:21) it is said, “at this set time”, and in (<01814>Genesis 18:14), “at the appointed time”; all which support the apostle in his version.

Ver. 10. *And not only this*, etc..] This instance of Ishmael and Isaac, is not the only one, proving that Abraham's natural seed, the children of the flesh, are not all children, the children of God:

but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, “it was said unto her”, (<450912>Romans 9:12), being in a parenthesis, “the elder shall serve the younger”. The apostle was aware, that the Jews would be ready to say, that the instance of Ishmael and Isaac was not a pertinent

one; since Ishmael was not born of Sarah, the lawful wife of Abraham, but of a bondwoman, which was the reason his rejection, when Isaac was the son of promise, by the lawful wife, and that they were children of Abraham in the line of Isaac, and so children of the promise, as he was: wherefore he proceeds to mention the case of Jacob and Esau, which was not liable to any such exception; seeing they not only had the same father, but the same mother, Isaac's lawful wife; they were conceived by Rebecca at once, were in the same womb together, were twins, and if any had the preference and advantage, Esau had it, being born first; and yet a difference was made between these two by God himself, and which was notified by him to the mother of them, before either were born.

Ver. 11. *For [the children] being not yet born*, So says [f176] the Chaldee paraphrast,

> "the prophet said unto them, was it not said of Jacob, dylyta aldd[, "when he was not yet born", that he should be greater than his brother?"

the Syriac version supplies, "his children", that is, Isaac's; and the Arabic version, "his two children". This shows, that the apostle designs not the posterity, but the very persons of Jacob and Esau; since as he speaks of their conception in the verse preceding, so of their birth in this: and though in the words of God to Rebecca, and which are urged in favour of the other sense, it is said, "two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels, and the one people shall be stronger than the other people", (<01253>Genesis 25:23); yet this primarily respects the persons of Jacob and Esau, as the roots of their respective offspring; and only secondarily their posterity, as branches that should sprout from them; it properly regards their persons, and only in an improper, figurative, and metonymical sense, their seed; for in no other sense could two nations, or two manner of people be in Rebecca's womb, than as there were two persons there, who would be the authors of two nations and people; and whatever may be said for their respective posterity, taking their rise from one common father Isaac, or for their being chosen or rejected as nations, before they were in being as such, yet it cannot be said with any propriety, that "Rebecca conceived" their several offspring "by one, even by our father Isaac", (<450910>Romans 9:10): which sense well agrees with the scope of the apostle, which is to prove, that all were not Israel which were of Israel, and that all Abraham's natural seed were not

the children of God; which he could not better exemplify, than in the persons of Jacob and Esau; for to have instanced in the posterity of Esau, would have been foreign to his purpose, and not accord with the continuation of his discourse in the following verses, which entirely proceeds upon the subject of personal election and rejection, and with the scriptural account of the personal characters of Jacob and Esau; and from hence, as from many other passages, it may be concluded, that predestination, whether to life or death, is a personal thing, concerns particular persons, and not nations, or collective bodies of men:

neither having done any good or evil; Jacob and Esau were under all considerations upon an equal foot, were just in the same situation and condition, when the one was loved and the other hated; or in other words, when the one was chosen, and the other rejected; they were neither of them as yet born, and had they been born, their birth and parentage could have been no reason why one was chose and the other not, because in both the same; nor had the one performed a good action, or the other an evil one; so that Jacob was not loved for his good works, nor Esau hated for his evil ones; which confirms the truth of this doctrine, that the objects of predestination, whether to life or death, are alike, are in the same situation and condition: whether they are considered in the corrupt mass, or as fallen, they are all equally such, so that there could not be any reason in them, why some should be chosen and others left; or whether in the pure mass, antecedent to the fall, and without any consideration of it, which is clearly signified in this passage, there could be nothing in the one, which was not in the other, that could be the cause of such a difference made: so that it follows, that works neither good nor evil are the causes moving God to predestinate, whether to life or death; good works are not the cause of election to eternal life, for not only, this act of distinguishing grace, passed before any were done, but also these are fruits, effects, and consequence of it, and so cannot be the causes thereof; God does not proceed in order branches of salvation, as in calling, justification, etc.. according to them, and therefore it cannot be thought he should proceed upon this foot in the first step to it; and which is ascribed to his free grace, in opposition to works. Evil works are not the cause of the decree of rejection, for this also being as early as the decree of election, as it must unavoidably be, was before any evil works were done; sin is not the cause of God's decree, but of the thing decreed, eternal death; otherwise all the individuals in the world being equally in sin, must have been rejected: it remains then, that

not any works of men, good or bad, are the cause of predestination in either of its branches, but the sovereign will and secret counsel of God: that

the purpose of God according to election might stand: the decree of God, which is entirely free, and depends upon his own will and choice, stands firm and immutable, and is not to be disannulled by earth or hell, for it stands not on the precarious foot of works:

not of works: did it, it would not stand sure, for nothing is more variable and uncertain, than the actions of men:

but of him that calleth: who is the unchangeable Jehovah; it stands upon his invariable will and immutable grace, whose "gifts and calling are without repentance", (<451129>Romans 11:29).

Ver. 12. *It was said unto her*, etc..] To Rebecca, (<012523>Genesis 25:23),

the elder shall serve the younger, or "the greater shall serve the lesser", an Hebrew way of speaking; so Japheth is called lwdgh, "the great", or, as we render it, "the elder", (<011021>Genesis 10:21); and the evil imagination is said[f177] to be lwdg, "greater", that is, elder than the good, thirteen years; (see Gill on "<422226>Luke 22:26"); The sense is, Esau shall be a servant to Jacob; which is to be understood, not of temporal servitude; for in this sense he never was a servant to him; so far from it, that as soon as Jacob had got the birthright and blessing, he was obliged to flee from the face and fury of Esau; and upon his return after many years, he sent messengers to Esau in a very submissive manner, charging them after this manner, "thus shall ye shall say to my lord Esau, thy servant Jacob saith thus", etc.. (<013204>Genesis 32:4), and when he found that his brother was coming to meet him, which threw him into a panic fear, lest he should "smite [him], and the mother with the children", (<013211>Genesis 32:11), he prepares presents for him; and when he came to him, bowed himself seven times, and his wives and children bowed likewise; and the language in which he addressed his brother Esau, all the while they were together, was that of "my lord": now if this oracle was to be understood of outward temporal servitude, it is strange it should have no appearance, nor any shadow of an accomplishment in the persons of Jacob and Esau, supposing it was to have one in their posterity; and indeed the completion of it, in this sense, is not very evident in their offspring. It is certain, there was a long train of dukes and kings in Esau's family, before there was any king in Israel; the posterity

of Esau were in lordly grandeur and splendour, when the children of Israel were grievously oppressed with hard bondage in Egypt. The single instance usually referred to, when the Edomites became tributaries to David, was near a thousand years after the giving out of this oracle; and this show of servitude did not last long, for in Joram's time they revolted, and so continued; and it is evident, that at the time of the Babylonish captivity, the children of Edom were prosperous and triumphant, and said concerning Jerusalem, “Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof”, (<19>Psalm 137:7): this servitude therefore is to be understood in a spiritual sense, of Esau's exclusion from the favour of God, and blessings of grace, signified by his being rejected from inheriting the blessing, which was given to Jacob; and it appeared that he was not a son, but a servant, by his departure, and pitching his dwelling elsewhere; which showed he had no interest in spiritual adoption, no right to the covenant of grace, nor was he an heir of heaven, all which were peculiar to Jacob: Esau was a servant of sin, under the dominion of it, and in bondage to it; whilst Jacob was the Lord's freeman, and, as a prince, had power with God and with men, and prevailed: Esau was serviceable to Jacob, both in things temporal and spiritual; as reprobates are to the elect, for all things are for their sakes, and work together for their good; Jacob's being obliged to flee from his brother, was for his good; by this means he got him a suitable wife, and large substance: his brother's meeting him on his return, which gave him so much pain and uneasiness, issued in his spiritual good; this sent him to the throne of grace, to humble himself before God, acknowledge his mercies, and his dependence on him, to implore his help, and plead his promises; and thus the oracle was verified in the persons of Jacob and Esau.

Ver. 13. *As it is written*, etc..] In (<39>Malachi 1:2,3);

Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. These words are explanative of the former; they are of like import, and the one interpret the other; and show, that the former are to be understood in a spiritual, and not in a temporal sense, and of the persons, and not the posterity of Jacob and Esau; for though Malachi prophesied long after Jacob and Esau were personally dead, yet the Lord in that prophecy manifestly directs the murmuring Jews to the personal regard he had had to Jacob and Esau, and which had continued in numberless instances to their respective posterities, in order to stop their mouths, and reprove their ingratitude; and though he speaks of the nation of the Edomites, and to the posterity of Israel, yet it is evident, that he has a respect to the persons of Jacob and Esau, from

whence they sprung, when he says, “was not Esau Jacob's brother?” (³⁰⁰¹Malachi 1:2), now though an Edomite may be said to be brother to an Israelite, yet Esau is never said, nor can he with any propriety be said to be the brother of Jacob's posterity: it remains, that these words regard their persons, and express the true spring and source of the choice of the one, and the rejection of the other; and which holds true of all the instances of either kind: everlasting and unchangeable love is the true cause and spring of the choice of particular persons to eternal salvation; and hatred is the cause of rejection, by which is meant not positive hatred, which can only have for its object sin and sinners, or persons so considered; but negative hatred, which is God's will, not to give eternal life to some persons; and shows itself by a neglect of them, taking no notice of them, passing them by, when he chose others; so the word “hate” is used for neglect, taking no notice, where positive hatred cannot be thought to take place, in (⁴²⁰¹Luke 14:26).

Ver. 14. *What shall we say then*? etc..] A form of expression the apostle frequently uses, when he is about to introduce an objection, as is what follows:

is there unrighteousness with God? This is not an objection of his own, but of an adversary, which he takes up and returns an answer to; and which itself greatly serves to settle and confirm the true sense and meaning of the apostle in this place; as that it could not be, that election and rejection of men should proceed according to their merits; or that God chooses some for their good works, and rejects others for their wicked works, because no man could ever pretend to charge God with unrighteousness on this account; nor could it be that God chose and rejected men, upon a foresight of their good and evil works, for this also would not be liable to such an objection; nor that the Jews, having made the law of none effect by their traditions, despised the Gospel, crucified Christ, and persecuted his disciples, are therefore cast off, and the Gentiles, being obedient both in word and deed, are received into favour, for this likewise would not be chargeable with unrighteousness by men; but that two persons, as Jacob and Esau, and the same may be said of all mankind, being upon an equal foot, not being yet born, nor having done either good or evil, an inequality, a difference is made between them, by God himself; the one is chose, the other passed by: now in this is some show, some pretence at least, for such an objection; nor is it any wonder to meet with it from the carnal reason of men; wherefore we may be sure that the latter, and not either of the

former, is the true sense of the apostle; since only this, and not either of them, is liable to such an exception: let us attend to the apostle's answer, which is “first” in his usual manner, by way of detestation and abhorrence,

God forbid: God is not unrighteous in his nature; nor in any of his ways and works; nor in this, in choosing some and rejecting others. There is no unrighteousness with God in that part of predestination, commonly called election; for this is neither an act of justice, nor injustice; not of justice, but of grace and mercy; of undue and undeserved grace and mercy, of mere sovereign grace and mercy; and is what God was not obliged to do; wherefore to choose some and not others, is no act of injustice; for injustice is a violation of justice, which has no place in this affair: if it is an act of injustice, it must be either to them that are chosen, or to them that are not; not to them that are chosen, to them it is an act of favour and good will, they are chosen to grace and glory, to holiness here, and happiness hereafter; not to them that are passed by, because they had no right nor claim to the grace and glory, which by this act are denied them, and therefore no injustice is done them. Every prince may choose his own ministers and favourites, and who he will have of his privy council, without doing any injustice, to those he takes no notice of; every man may choose his own company who he will converse with, without doing any wrong to such he does not think fit to admit to an intimacy with him; and yet men are not willing to allow the Most High that liberty, which every man daily takes, and may lawfully make use of: nor is there any unrighteousness with God in the other branch of predestination, commonly called reprobation, which is either negative or positive; negative reprobation is the act of preterition, or God's passing by, leaving, taking no notice of some, while he chose others: now the objects of this act are to be considered either in the pure, or in the corrupt mass; if in the pure mass, i.e. of creatureship, which seems to be the apostle's meaning, as being not yet created, made, or born, and having done neither good nor evil; no injustice is done by this act, for as it found them, it left them; it put nothing into them, no evil in them, nor appointed them to any, of any kind; man after, and notwithstanding this act, came into the world an upright creature, and became sinful, not by virtue of this act, but by their own inventions: or if considered as in the corrupt mass, as fallen creatures, sunk into sin and misery, which is the case of all mankind; since God was not obliged to save any of the sinful race of men, whose destruction was of themselves, it could be no injustice to pass by some of them in this condition, when he chose others; for if it

would have been no injustice to have condemned all, as he did the angels that sinned, whom he spared not, it can be no act of injustice in him, to leave some of them in that condition, which sin had brought them into, whilst he has mercy on others; unless to have mercy on any, can be thought to be an act of injustice: what unrighteousness can there be in this procedure, any more than in drowning the world of the ungodly, whilst Noah and his family were saved in the ark? or in raining showers of fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities of the plain, whilst Lot, his wife, and two daughters, were delivered from the same? Positive reprobation is the decree, or appointment to damnation: now as God damns no man but for sin, so he has decreed to damn no man but for sin; and if it is no unrighteousness in him to damn men for sin, as to be sure it is not, so it can be no unrighteousness in him to decree to damn any for it: upon the whole it appears, that whatever show, upon first sight, there may be for a charge of unrighteousness against such a procedure of the Divine Being, there is no real foundation for it. The objection is to be treated with abhorrence and indignation.

Ver. 15. *For he saith to Moses*, etc..] That is, God said to Moses. The apostle goes on to answer to the above objections, by producing some testimonies out of the writings of Moses, in favour of both branches of predestination; showing, that the doctrine he had advanced, was no other than what God himself had delivered to Moses, whose name and writings were in great esteem with the Jews, whereby the apostle might hope to give full satisfaction in this point. The first passage he cites, is in (<2339>Exodus 33:19).

And will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. This is produced, in favour of special, particular, and personal election, and to clear it from any charge of unrighteousness; and by it, it appears, that God bestows his grace and mercy in time, on such persons he has willed and determined from all eternity to bestow it; this, is clear from hence, for since all this is dependent on his will, it must be as this was his will from eternity, seeing no new will can possibly arise in God, God wills nothing in time, but what he willed before time; that this grace and mercy are shown only to some persons, and that the only reason of this is his sovereign will and pleasure, and not the works and merits of men; wherefore since this grace and mercy rise out of his own free good will and pleasure, and are by no means the creature's due, it most clearly follows, that God in determining to bestow his grace and mercy, and in the

actual doing of it, whilst he determines to deny it, and does deny it to others, cannot possibly be chargeable with any unrighteousness.

Ver. 16. *So then it is not of him that willeth*, etc..] This is not a consequence drawn by an adversary, showing that if this be the case, it signifies nothing for men to will or do, they may even sit still and do nothing, but depend on the mercy of God; but this is a conclusion of the apostle's from the above cited testimony, inferring from thence, that election, which is what he is discoursing of, is “not of him that willeth”,

nor of him that runneth: that is, is not owing to the will or works of men, to the desires, inclinations, and affections of their minds, or to the actions of their lives; these are not the motives, conditions, or causes of this act:

but of God that sheweth mercy; in a free sovereign way and manner, which he is not obliged to by anything the creature wills or works; he is at full liberty, notwithstanding whatever they will or do, to give his grace and mercy, when, where, and to whom he pleases; and therefore to give it to some, and deny it to others, can never be accounted an act of injustice, since he is not bound to give it to any. Some make the it to be the blessing of Isaac, which was not of the will of any of the parties concerned; not of Isaac who willed it to Esau; nor of Esau who willed it to himself, but had it not; nor of the will of the persons who had their desires, not of the will of Rebecca, who was desirous of it for her son Jacob, nor of the will of Jacob, who desired it for himself, though he had it; nor of either of them that ran, not of Esau, who made haste to hunt for, and prepare venison for his father, nor of Jacob, who ran to the flock, for two kids of the goats; but of God that showed mercy to him, who, according to his sovereign will and pleasure, had signified before to Rebecca, that “the elder should serve the younger”, (<0125>Genesis 25:23 <4509>Romans 9:12): as the apostle had mentioned this so lately, it might still be in his thoughts, and he may allude to it; but election being what he is discoursing of in the context, that is the “it” here designed; and what is true of that, is true of salvation in all its parts, and therefore some understand it in the large sense of salvation; though by others so qualified and limited, as to spoil the glory of the text: some saying that the sense is, it is not of him that willeth and runneth wrong, but of the grace and mercy of God; but as no man would ever assert, that salvation is of him that wills and runs wrong, so the apostle had no occasion to deny it: others say, that it is not only of him that wills, and only of him that runs, but also of God that shows mercy; making man's will

and works joint causes with the mercy of God in man's salvation; and besides, as Austin [f178] long ago observes, according to this sense, the words might as well be read, it is not only of God that shows mercy, but of him that willeth, and of him that runneth, which no Christian would dare to say: the true sense is, that as election, which is the leading step to salvation, is not owing at all to the will of men, but to the good pleasure and will of God; and not at all to the works of men, that being done before them, and they being the fruits and effects of that, but to the free love, grace, and good will of God; so salvation in all its parts and branches, as redemption, justification, regeneration, calling, and conversion, faith, repentance, hope, love, etc.. and eternal life, is not to be ascribed at all to the will of men, nor at all to the works of men, but entirely and alone to the love, grace, and mercy of God through Christ.

Ver. 17. *For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh*, etc..] arq rma, "The Scripture saith", is a Talmudic [f179] way of speaking, used when any point is proved from Scripture; and is of the same signification with anmjr rma, "the merciful God says"; and so the sense of it here is, God said to Pharaoh; the testimony here cited, stands in (<2009>Exodus 9:16); where it is read thus, "for this cause have I raised thee up", Æytdm[h, or "made thee stand", "for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth"; and is produced by the apostle in proof of the other branch of predestination, called reprobation, and to vindicate it from the charge of unrighteousness: in which may be observed, that the act of raising up of Pharaoh is God's act,

even for this same purpose have I raised thee up; which may be understood in every sense that is put upon that phrase, unless that which some Jewish [f180] writers have annexed to it, namely, that God raised Pharaoh from the dead; otherwise, I say, all the rest may well enough be thought to be comprised in it; as that God ordained and appointed him from eternity, by certain means to this end; that he made him to exist in time, or brought him into being; that he raised him to the throne, promoted him to that high honour and dignity; that he preserved him, and did not cut him off as yet; that he strengthened and hardened his heart, irritated, provoked, and stirred him up against his people Israel; and suffered him to go all the lengths he did, in his obstinacy and rebellion: all which was done,

that I might shew my power in thee; his superior power to him, his almighty power in destroying him and his host in the Red sea, when the

Israelites were saved: and the ultimate end which God had in view in this was,

that my name might be declared throughout all the earth; that he himself might be glorified, and that the glory of his perfections, particularly of his wisdom, power, and justice, might be celebrated throughout the world. The sum of it is, that this man was raised up by God in every sense, for God to show his power in his destruction, that he might be glorified; from whence the apostle deduces the following conclusion.

Ver. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will*, etc..] These are the express words of the former testimony: it follows,

and whom he will he hardeneth; which is the just and natural consequence of what is contained in the latter; for if God could, or he did, without any injustice, raise up Pharaoh, and harden his heart against him and his people, that he might rise up against him and destroy him by his power for his own glory, then he may harden any other person, and even whom he will: now this hardening of men's hearts may be understood in perfect agreement with the justice and holiness of God: men first harden their own hearts by sinning, as Pharaoh did; what God does, is by leaving them to the hardness of their hearts, denying them that grace which only can soften them, and which he is not obliged to give, and therefore does them no injustice in withholding it from them; by sending them both mercies and judgments, which through the corruption of their hearts, are the means of the greater hardening of them; so judgments in the case of Pharaoh, and mercies in the case of others; (see <2060>Isaiah 6:10 <4510>Romans 11:8-10); by delivering them up into the hands of Satan, and to their own lusts, which they themselves approve of; and by giving them up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, as a just punishment for their impieties.

Ver. 19. *Thou wilt say then unto me*, etc..] That is, thou wilt object to me; for this is another objection of the adversary, against the doctrine the apostle was advancing: and it is an objection of a mere natural man, of one given up to a reprobate mind, of an insolent hardened sinner; it discovers the enmity of the carnal mind to God; if is one of the high things that exalts itself against the knowledge of him; it is with a witness a stretching out of the hand against God, and strengthening a man's self against the Almighty; it is a running upon him, even upon the thick bosses of his bucklers; it carries in it the marks of ill nature, surliness, and rudeness, to the last degree:

why doth he yet find fault? The objector does not think fit to name the name of “God”, or “the Lord”, but calls him “he”; and a considerable emphasis lies upon the word “yet”: what as if he should say, is he not content with the injustice he has already exercised, in passing by some, when he chose others; in leaving them to themselves, and hardening their hearts against him, and to go on in their own ways, which must unavoidably end in destruction; but after all this, is angry with them, finds fault with them, blames, accuses, and condemns them, for that which they cannot help; nay, for that which he himself wills? this is downright cruelty and tyranny. The objector seems to have a particular regard to the case of Pharaoh, the apostle had instanced in, when after God had declared that he had raised him up for this very purpose, to make known his power, and show forth his glory in all the world, still finds fault with him and says, “as yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?” ([2]Exodus 9:17); and yet he himself had hardened his heart, and continued to harden his heart, that he might not let them go as yet; and when he had let them go, hardened his heart again to pursue after them, when he drowned him and his host in the Red sea; all which in this objection, is represented as unparalleled cruelty and unmercifulness; though it is not restrained to this particular case, but is designed to be applied to all other hardened persons; and to expose the unreasonableness of the divine proceedings, in hardening men at his pleasure; and then blaming them for acting as hardened ones, when he himself has made them so, and wills they should act in this manner:

for who hath resisted his will? This is said in support of the former, and means not God's will of command, which is always resisted more or less, by wicked men and devils; but his will of purpose, his counsels and decrees, which stand firm and sure, and can never be resisted, so as to be frustrated and made void. This the objector takes up, and improves against God; that since he hardens whom he will, and there is no resisting his will, the fault then can never lie in them who are hardened, and who act as such, but in God; and therefore it must be unreasonable in him to be angry with, blame, accuse, and condemn persons for being and doing that, which he himself wills them to be and do. Let the disputers of this world, the reasoners of the present age, come and see their own faces, and read the whole strength of their objections, in this wicked man's; and from whence we may be assured, that since the objections are the same, the doctrine must be the same that is objected to: and this we gain however by it, that

the doctrines of particular and personal election and reprobation, were the doctrines of the apostle; since against no other, with any face, or under any pretence, could such an objection be formed: next follows the apostle's answer.

Ver. 20. *Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God*? etc..] Or "answerest again to God": some have been so weak and wicked as to suggest, that the apostle met with an objection he could not answer, or give a fair solution of, and therefore takes the method he does: but when the several things returned in answer by the apostle are considered, it will appear that he has taken the wisest method to silence such an audacious objector, and that he abundantly clears God from the charge of cruelty and unmercifulness. And he answers "first", by putting the insolent creature in mind of what he was; "nay, but O man, who art thou?" etc.. Thou art man, and not God; a creature, and not the Creator; and must not expect that he, thy Creator, will give an account of his matters to thee, or a reason why he does, this or the other thing. Thou art but a man, who in his best estate was vanity, being mutable; thou art a fallen sinful creature, and obnoxious to the wrath and displeasure of God for thy sins, and darest thou to open thy mouth against him? thou art a poor, foolish, and ignorant man, born like a wild ass's colt, without understanding, and wilt thou take upon thee to confront, direct, or counsel the Most High, or tell him what is fitting to be done, or not done? "next" the apostle answers, by pointing out his folly and madness, in replying to God. To speak to God in behalf of a man's self at the throne of grace, in the most submissive manner, for any mercy or favour wanted, is an high privilege, and it is a wonderful condescension in God to admit of; and when a man, a good man takes upon him to plead with God on the behalf of others, of a wicked people, a sinful nation, he ought to set before him the example and conduct of Abraham, who in a like case acknowledged himself to be but dust and ashes, and more than once entreated, that the Lord would not be angry at his importunity; but for a man to answer again to God, which a servant ought not to do to his master, to litigate a point with God, to dispute a matter with him, is the highest instance of arrogance and impudence: "woe unto him that striveth with his Maker, let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth", (Isaiah 45:9): with their equals, with men like themselves, but let no man dare to "contend with God"; if he should, "he cannot answer him one of a thousand", (Job 9:3); for "he is wise in heart", in forming all his counsels, purposes, and decrees; "and mighty in strength", to execute

them; “who hath hardened himself against him and hath prospered?” (<18904>Job 9:4). Another way the apostle takes in answering the objection is, by showing the absurdity of a creature's wrangling with God about his make, and the circumstances in which he is made:

shall the thing formed, say unto him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? reference is had to (<234509>Isaiah 45:9,10); Now as it would be a most absurd thing for the clay, was it capable of speaking, to say to the fashioner of it, why dost thou put me into such or such a shape and form? or for any piece of workmanship to say to the maker of it, he has no hands, no head, no judgment and skill; or for a child to say to its parents, what begettest thou, or what hast thou brought forth? so absurd and unreasonable is it, for any to say to God, why hast thou appointed me to such and such ends and purposes, and has brought me into being in such a manner, and under such circumstances? There is a story in the Talmud [f181], which may be pertinently produced here;

> “it happened to R. Eleazar ben Simeon, of Migdal Gedur, that he went from his master's house, and he was riding on an ass, and travelling by the sea side, and as he rejoiced exceedingly, and his heart was lifted up because he had learnt much of the law, there was joined to him a certain man that was very much deformed, and says to him, peace be upon thee Rabbi; but he did not return the salutation to him, but says to him “Raca”, how deformed is that man! perhaps all thy townsmen are as deformed as thee; he replied to him, I do not know, but go and say, ynaç[ç ˆmwal, “to the workman that made me”, how ugly is this vessel thou hast made, when he knew in himself that he has sinned; upon this the Rabbi dismounted his ass, and fell down before him, and said unto him, I entreat of thee forgive me; he said unto him, I cannot forgive thee, till thou goest “to the workman that made me”, and say, how ugly is this vessel which thou hast made.”

Ver. 21. *Hath not the potter power over the clay*, etc..] By the power the potter has over the clay, to shape it in what form he pleases, and out of it to make what vessels he pleases, and for what purposes he thinks fit, which will be most to his own advantage, the apostle expresses the sovereign and unlimited powder which God has over his creatures; the passages referred to, are (<236408>Isaiah 64:8 <241801>Jeremiah 18:1-6), in which God is represented as the potter, and men as clay in his hands; now if the potter has such power

over the clay which he did not make, only has made a purchase of, or has it in his possession, much more has God a power, who has created the clay, to appoint out of it persons to different uses and purposes, for his own glory, as he sees fit; even

of the same lump, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour. The apostle seems to design hereby, to point out to us the object of predestination to be man, as yet not made, but as lying in the mere mass of creatureship, signified by the unformed clay, before put into any shape; and is an allusion to the first creation of man, out of the clay, or dust of the earth, (Genesis 2:7); for such a consideration of man best agrees with the clay, lump, or mass, not yet formed, than as already made, and much less as fallen and corrupted: for if men, in predestination, were considered in the corrupt mass, or as fallen creatures, they could not be so well said to be made out of it, both to honour and dishonour; but rather since they were all dishonourable, that some were left in that dishonour, and others removed from it unto honour: besides, if this is not the case, God must create man without an end, which is contrary to the principle of reason and wisdom; the end is the cause, for which a thing is what it is; and it is a known rule, that what is first in intention, is last in execution, and "vice versa": the end is first fixed, and then the means; for God to create man, and then to fix the end of his creation, is to do what no wise potter would do, first make his pots, and then think of the end of making them, and the use they are to be put unto. To make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour, is for God to appoint creatures, which are to be made out of the same mass and lump, for his own glory; which end, his own glory, he determines to bring about by different means, as these following: with respect to the vessels of honour, whom he appoints for his glory, he determines to create them; to suffer them to fall into sin, whereby they become polluted and guilty; to raise and recover them, by the obedience, sufferings, and death of his Son; to regenerate, renew, and sanctify them, by his Spirit and grace, and to bring them to eternal happiness; and hereby compass the aforesaid end, his own glory, the glorifying of his grace and mercy, in a way consistent with justice and holiness: with respect to the vessels of dishonour, whom he also appoints for the glorifying of himself, he determines to create them out of the same lump; to suffer them to fall into sin; to leave them in their sins, in the pollution and guilt of them, and to condemn them for them; and hereby gain his ultimate end, his own glory, glorifying the perfections of his

power, justice, and holiness, without the least blemish to his goodness and mercy: now if a potter has power, for his own advantage and secular interest, to make out of the same clay what vessels he pleases; much more has God a power, out of the same mass and lump of creatureship, to appoint creatures he determines to make to his own glory; which he brings about by different methods, consistent with the perfections of his nature.

Ver. 22. *What if God, willing to show his wrath*, etc..] The apostle proceeds to clear God from any charge of cruelty and unmercifulness, by observing his conduct in time, both towards those he passes by, and towards those he chooses; for in this and the following verse, nothing is said relating to any act of God before time, everything of that kind being considered already. In this verse, the apostle considers the conduct of God towards the vessels of dishonour; and let it be observed, that these are called

vessels of wrath fitted for destruction; they are said to be vessels, and so no longer considered in the clay, in the mass and heap of creatureship, but as creatures formed and made, and brought into being; and so to be used as instruments in God's hands, to subserve his ends and purposes, and therefore called “vessels”; and not only so, but “vessels of wrath”, fallen sinful creatures, and so deserving of the wrath of God, and objects of his vindictive justice, in whom he may righteously display his wrath and vengeance: hence they may be so called, being as vessels filled with his wrath; as such who are the instruments and executioners of his wrath are called, in (<2305>Isaiah 13:5), wm[zylk, “vessels of his wrath”; and in (<2425>Jeremiah 50:25); where the Septuagint use the same phrase as here: and they are moreover said to be “fitted for destruction”, as Haman is said to be by the Jews [f182]; whom they affirm to be the same with Memucan, and ask why is his name called Memucan? and answer, twn[rwpl ^kwmç, “because he was fitted for punishment”: so these are said to be “fitted for destruction”, that is, eternal damnation; not by God, for this does not respect God's act of ordination to punishment; but by Satan, the god of this world, that blinds them, who works effectually in them, and leads them captive at his will; and by themselves, by their own wickedness, hardness of heart, and impenitence, do they treasure up to themselves wrath, against the day of wrath, so that their destruction is of themselves: a phrase somewhat like this is used in (<1912>Psalm 31:12), where the Psalmist, under some dismal apprehensions of himself, says, that he was like dbaylk, “a

perishing vessel", or "a vessel of perdition"; the Septuagint render it, σκευος απολωλος, "a lost vessel". Now what is the method of the divine conduct towards such persons? he

endures [them] with much longsuffering; as he did the old world, before he destroyed it; and as he did Pharaoh, before he cut him off: God not only supports such persons in their beings, amidst all their impieties and iniquities, but follows and fills them with his providential goodness, insomuch that many of them have more than heart can wish; nay, to many he affords the outward means of grace, which they slight and despise; externally calls them, but they refuse, loving darkness rather than light, and therefore are inexcusable: now if after all this patience, indulgence, and forbearance, when he could in justice have sent them to hell long ago, he is "willing to show his wrath"; his displicency at sin and sinners, his vindictive justice, his righteous vengeance:

and to make his power known; what it is he can do, by the utter destruction and damnation of such persons; what man in his senses can ever find fault with such a procedure, or charge it with tyranny, cruelty, and unmercifulness?

Ver. 23. *And that he might make known the riches of his glory*, etc..] That is, his glorious riches, the perfections of his nature, his love, grace, and mercy, his wisdom, power, faithfulness, justice, and holiness; all which are most evidently displayed in the salvation of his people, here called

vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory. They are said to be vessels, and so considered as creatures, made and brought into being; "vessels of mercy", and so fallen creatures, and by sin become miserable, for only such are objects of mercy: they are not called so, because deserving of mercy more than others, they are in no wise better than others, and are by nature children of wrath, even as others; but because God of his infinite goodness fills them with his mercy, displays it in them, in the redemption of them by his Son, in the regeneration of them by his Spirit, and in their eternal salvation: and these are by him "afore prepared unto glory"; to everlasting happiness, which he has chosen them to before time, and calls them to in time; to this glory he does not take them, until he has prepared them for it; which act of preparation does not regard the eternal predestination of them to eternal life, but an act of his grace towards them in time; and which lies in putting upon them the righteousness of his Son, and in putting his grace in them; or in other

words, in justifying them by the imputation and application of the righteousness of his Son unto them, and by the regeneration, renovation, and sanctification of their hearts, by his Spirit. Now what if God willing to make known his glorious perfections, by displaying his mercy to such sinners, and by preparing them for heaven in a way consistent with his holiness and justice, what can any man that has the exercise of his reason object to this? The whole of his conduct is free from blame and censure; the vessels of wrath he shows his wrath upon, are such as fit themselves for destruction, and whom he endures with much longsuffering and patience, and therefore he cannot be chargeable with cruelty; the vessels of mercy he brings to glory, none of them are taken thither, until they are prepared for it, in a way of righteousness and holiness, and therefore he cannot be charged with acting contrary to the perfections of his nature.

Ver. 24. *Even us whom he hath called*, etc..] From election the apostle proceeds to calling, the fruit and evidence of it, taking the same method he did in (Romans 8:30), with a view to treat of the call of the Gentiles, of which he afterwards gives proof from prophecy; whence it appears to be according to divine predestination, upon which prophecy is founded; for God foretells that such a thing will be, because he has foreordained it shall be. These words are explanative of the former, and show who the vessels of mercy are; they are such whom God calls by his grace. Election may be known by calling, as the cause by its effect, and that without an extraordinary revelation. This may as well be known, as man's adoption, justification, and the forgiveness of his sins; for as all the chosen are, and shall be called in time, so all that are truly called by the grace of God, are manifestly, and to a demonstration, the chosen vessels of salvation: if a man is satisfied of his calling, he ought to be equally so of his election, the one being demonstrable by the other; and for such an one to doubt of it, is his sin and crime. Moreover, the above phrase, “afore prepared for glory”, is here further explained; to be afore prepared for glory, is no other than to be called, sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God; for this is the saints' preparation for glory, before they come to it; and hereby the means are expressed, even sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, through which God appoints his people unto salvation: now this calling is to be understood, not of a call to any office, as of Aaron to the priesthood, of Saul to the kingdom, of the disciples of Christ to apostleship, or of ministers to the work of the ministry; for persons may be called to the highest office in church and state, as Judas to:

apostleship, and Pharaoh to the throne of Egypt, and yet have no share in electing grace: nor of a call by the external ministry of the word, which is often slighted, despised, and of none effect; in this sense many are called, who are not chosen: but of a call that is by the powerful, efficacious, and irresistible grace of God; a call that is internal, that reaches the heart, and not the ear only: a special one that is peculiar to God's elect, is by special grace, and is to special blessings, as both grace and glory; it is an high, heavenly, and holy calling, and is without repentance; between which and glorification, as between it and eternal election, there is a close and an inseparable connection. The objects of this grace follow,

not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles; not all the Jews, nor all the Gentiles, but some of each; as all are not chosen, all are not redeemed, only some out of every kindred, tongue, nation, and people; so not all, but some only are called by grace: and this is not peculiar to the Jews, it reaches to the Gentiles also; and under the present dispensation, to the far greater number of them.

Ver. 25. *As he also saith in Osee*, etc..] (<28223>Hosea 2:23), so “Hosea” is called “Osee”, as here, in the Septuagint in (<16102>Nehemiah 10:23 <28101>Hosea 1:1,2). That is, as God says in the prophecy of Hosea, which was given by divine inspiration; and speaks of the calling of the Gentiles, as the spiritual Israel, after God had wrote a “lo-ammi”, (<28209>Hosea 1:9), and a “loruhamah”, (<28206>Hosea 1:6), upon the people of the Jews; and shows, that he had appointed some from among the Gentiles, to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ; since he foretells their calling, long before they were in being; which could have no other foundation than his own eternal sovereign will and pleasure:

I will call them my people, which were not my people; his people they were before he called them, in some sense; inasmuch as he had chosen them for his people, had promised in covenant they should be, had given them to Christ as his people, and him to be a covenant to them: who, as such, made reconciliation for them, sanctified them by his blood, redeemed and saved them; but then they were not known to be the people of God, neither by themselves, who knew not God, and so could not know themselves to be his people; nor by others, by the Jews, by whom they were called the uncircumcision, sinners of the Gentiles; looking upon the character or the people of God, as only belonging to themselves: God had not as yet laid hold on them as his people, and claimed his right in them, and made known

himself to them as their covenant God; he had not avouched them to be his people, nor had they avouched him to be their God; as yet they were not his willing people, nor a holy people, not being formed for himself, by his mighty grace; nor a people near unto him, with respect to worship and fellowship, but afar off from him. His calling them his people, is his acquainting them with their relation to him, which he had taken them in to himself, of his own grace; for so it is in (²⁸²³Hosea 2:23): “And I will say unto them which were not my people, thou art my people”: in the effectual calling, the Spirit of God is sent down into the hearts of his people, to witness their relation to him, and to work faith in their souls, to receive the testimony; when they reply and say, “thou art my God”, (²⁸²³Hosea 2:23), and so they come to know themselves to be the people of God, of which they were before ignorant; and to be known others, by being made a willing people, in the day God's power upon them, willing to be saved by him in his own way, and willing to serve and worship him in his own ordinances, and according to his own appointment; and by being holy and righteous, having the characters, and enjoying the privileges of the people of God:

and her beloved, which was not beloved. In the text in (²⁸²³Hosea 2:23), it is, “I will have mercy on her that had not obtained mercy”: hence the Vulgate Latin has added this clause to the text, though unsupported by any copy, or other version. The apostle is to be justified in his version, by the Septuagint interpreters, who have rendered the passage in Hosea, “I will love her that was not beloved”; and by the true sense of the word µ j r there used, which signifies to love in the most kind, tender, and endearing manner; (see ¹⁹⁰¹Psalm 18:1); where the word is used and so rendered. The sense is not, that God's chosen ones among the Gentiles were not the objects of his love before calling; for their very calling is the fruit, effect, and so the evidence of love before. The love of God is from everlasting to everlasting, invariably and unchangeably the same; he had chosen them in his Son; he had made a covenant with them in Christ, had put them into his hands, and made them his care and charge; he had sent him to die for them, and obtain eternal redemption for them; and all this before he called them, which abundantly proves his love to them: but this love was not manifested to their souls; it had not been shed abroad in their hearts; they had no sensation of it in their breasts; the streams of that river of God had not as yet flowed into their souls; nor were they partakers of the effects of it in themselves; but being called by grace, they feel, they experience, and enjoy

that, and all the happy: fruits and effects of it; the loving kindness of God is let down into their hearts in the effectual calling, and with it he draws them to himself, as a fruit and evidence of his everlasting and unchangeable love to them.

Ver. 26. *And it shall come to pass that in the place*, etc..] This is another citation out of Hosea, and is to be seen in (Hosea 1:10), and the meaning is, that in those countries, as here in Great Britain, in the very selfsame place, or spot of ground,

where it was said unto them, ye are not my people; where were nothing but idolatry and idolatrous worshippers, and whose worship, works, and actions, declared them not to be the people of God:

there shall they be called the children of the living God; not only children of God, but of the living God; in opposition to their idol gods, their lifeless deities, and senseless statues of gold, silver, brass, wood, or stone, they fell down to and worshipped. The chosen of God among the Gentiles, were from all eternity predestinated to the adoption of children; this blessing was provided, laid up, and secured for them, in the covenant of grace; in this relation of children were they given to Christ, and under this consideration of them did he partake of the same flesh and blood with them, and died, to gather them together, who were scattered abroad in the several parts of the world; and because they were antecedently sons by adopting grace, therefore the Spirit of God in effectual calling is sent down into their hearts to bear witness to their spirits, that they are the children of the living God, and to work faith in their souls to believe it; by which grace they receive this blessing, as all others, even the right and privilege of being the children of God; by this they claim it, and enjoy the comfort of it; and so are manifestly, both to themselves and others, the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; though this will more clearly appear another day, than it does now.

Ver. 27. *Esaias crieth concerning Israel*, etc..] The apostle having produced proper testimonies in proof of the calling of the Gentiles, proceeds to mention others; showing, that some few of the Jews also were to be called, according to prophecy, founded upon divine predestination; which, though they are full proofs of the calling of some from among the Jews, yet at the same time suggest the casting off of the far greater number of them; and which is the apostle's view in citing them, as appears from what he says both here and in the two following chapters. The first

testimony is taken out of (<232210>Isaiah 10:22,23), and is prefaced or introduced with these words; which either express the great concern of mind and sorrow of heart, with which the prophet spoke them, even with strong crying and tears, seeing a remnant of them only was to be saved; or they show his heart's desire and prayer to God, “for Israel”, as the words may be rendered, how that he cried to the Lord for them, entreated him with earnestness and importunity, and wrestled with him on their behalf; or they declare the presence of mind, the freedom of expression, the boldness and intrepidity with which he delivered this message to the Jews, which he knew must be ungrateful to them; in doing which, he run the risk of losing his interest in their affections, if not his life; and inasmuch very probably they did not choose to hear it, but turned away from him, he cried aloud, he spared not, he lift up his voice like a trumpet, as he is bid to do elsewhere, resolving they should hear what he had to say, from the Lord of hosts. This is a form of speech used by the Jews, in citing Scripture; thus, jwx aybnh, “the prophet cries” [f183], namely, in (<232601>Isaiah 26:1-21), which is spoken of the same prophet as here; and again [f184] the Holy Spirit tjwx, “cries, and says”, in some certain passage of Scripture; and in another place [f185] the Holy Spirit “cried”, saying, as in (<280103>Joel 3:3): “they have cast lots for my people”.

Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea: this part of the testimony seems rather to be taken from (<280110>Hosea 1:10), which may easily be accounted for; since the apostle had just cited the words in Hosea, and so carrying them in his mind, transcribes this sentence from thence; it perfectly agreeing in sense with the passage in Isaiah he had in view, where it stands thus, “though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea”, (<232210>Isaiah 10:22); that is, though the number of them be such as to be compared thereunto; though they are many as the sand of the sea, as the Targum, Kimchi, and Aben Ezra explain it. This was promised unto Abraham, and had its accomplishment in the days of Solomon, and in after times; they were for quantity, for number, as the sand of the sea, even innumerable; and for quality, being barren and unfruitful, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers:

a remnant shall be saved; that is, a few persons only; raç arqy j[mh, “few are called a remnant”, as Kimchi on the place observes; these are the remnant among the Jews, according to the election of grace; the few that were chosen, though many were called by the external ministry of Christ

and his apostles; the little city, and few men in it, even the escaped of Israel, he that was left in Zion, and that remained in Jerusalem; the little flock among them, which were as sheep among wolves; the few that entered in at the strait gate, and found the way to eternal life; the few that shall be saved; and these shall certainly be saved, with a spiritual and eternal salvation. These, according to the prophecy, were to return to the mighty God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah; be converted to him, and so saved by him with an everlasting salvation: God had resolved upon it, whose counsel shall stand; he had promised it in covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure; he sent his Son to save these his people from their sins, who is become the author of eternal salvation to them; the grace of God is efficacious and powerful enough, to make them willing to be saved by Christ, and to bring them to him, to venture upon him, and commit their souls to him, to be saved by him; and almighty power is concerned, to keep them through faith unto salvation: so that this little remnant, through the Father's everlasting and unchangeable love, the Son's purchase, prayers, and preparations, and the spirits grace, which works them up for this selfsame thing, shall be certainly and completely saved; though with respect to the difficulties attending it, which could have been surmounted by none but Christ, and by reason of their discouragements arising from sin, temptations, and persecutions, they may be said to be scarcely saved.

Ver. 28. *For he will finish the work*, etc..] This passage has some difficulty in it: some, instead of “work”, read “account”, and suppose it is an allusion to the balancing of accounts, when the remainder is cut off, which commonly is but little; and so regards the small number of the Jews that shall be called and saved, as before: others read it “the word”, and differently explain it; some understanding it of the incarnate Word, of his being emptied, and made of no reputation, of his being cut off in a very short time, a few years after he had entered upon his public ministry, and of the few persons converted under it; others of the law, of the cutting off, or abolishing the ceremonial law, perfecting or completing the moral law, and abbreviating it, or reducing it into a short compendium; others of the Gospel, bringing in and revealing a perfect righteousness, for the justification of sinners, which the law could not do; all foreign to the apostle's purpose. Those who think God's work, his strange work is meant, his work of punitive justice he will finish,

and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth, when he cut off and destroyed the greater part of the people of the Jews, and saved a remnant, seem to come nearer the mind of the prophet and the apostle's design, in citing this passage. The words as in Isaiah, I would choose to render and explain thus; tWrj ^wylk, "the absolute", or "precise degree", so Aben Ezra, interprets it, µçhm rwzg, "that which is decreed by God", the decree concerning the salvation of the remnant, hqdx Pjwç, "he", i.e. God "shall cause to overflow in righteousness", (<230222>Isaiah 10:22), as an overflowing river; that is, he shall abundantly execute it, he shall completely fulfil it, to finish and cut it short in the most righteous manner, consistent with all his divine perfections; hxrjnw hlkyk, "for the decree and that determined", so Aben Ezra, trzgn hrzg, "the decree decreed" by God, "the Lord God of hosts", hç[, "shall execute", accomplish, make short and full work of it, "in the midst of all the land", (<230223>Isaiah 10:23), that is, of Judea: so that the words contain a most strong and invincible reason, why the remnant shall be saved; because God has made an absolute decree, concerning the salvation of it, which he will accomplish in the fullest manner, agreeably to his justice and holiness: the λογος, or "word", the apostle from the prophet speaks of, that should be finished, and cut short and accomplished in righteousness, is the sentence, counsel, or decree, conceived in the divine mind, concerning this matter: hence as the decree of election stands firm and sure, not upon the works of men, but upon the absolute, sovereign, and efficacious will of God; so the salvation of his chosen people is not precarious, but a most sure and certain thing.

Ver. 29. *And as Esaias said before*, etc..] In the beginning of his prophecy, in (<230109>Isaiah 1:9).

Except the Lord of sabaoth had left us a seed; the title and character the great God goes by here, is "Lord of sabaoth", that is, "of hosts", or "armies"; the Septuagint often leave the word untranslated, as here and elsewhere, as in (<091111>1 Samuel 1:11 17:45). He is Lord of the hosts of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, whom he brings forth by number, calls by their names, and them to praise him; of the angels, the multitude of the heavenly host, that do his pleasure, fight under him, and for him; and of the hosts of nations, of the several kingdoms of the world, who are all under his government, and among whom he acts according to his sovereign will and pleasure. Kimchi on the place says, he is called so,

> "because of "the hosts above", and because of "the hosts below", who are the Israelites, that are called "hosts"; wherefore he would not consume us all, as we deserved:"

no, according to the council of his own will, he left them "a seed"; or as it is in Isaiah, a very small remnant": and so the Syriac here, adyrs, a remnant"; both signify one and the same, namely, a few persons only: "a remnant" signifies a few, which remain out of a large number; and so does "seed", which is reserved for sowing again, after the whole stock is sold off, or consumed: and the leaving of this small number designs God's gracious acts of reserving in the election of a people for himself; the calling them by his grace in time, and preserving them from general corruption; which if he had not done among the Jews, as Jarchi on the text says,

> "of himself, and by his mercies, and not for our righteousnesses,"

we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha; the cities which God destroyed with fire and brimstone from heaven, for their iniquities: had it not been for electing grace, they would have been like the inhabitants of these cities for wickedness; and the case would have been the same with us and with the whole world, had it not been for God's act of election, choosing some to holiness here, and happiness hereafter. The decree of election is so far from being a door to licentiousness, that it is the true spring and source of all real holiness, that has been, or is in the world; and had it not been for this, there would have been no such thing as holiness in the world; and consequently not only Judea, but thee whole world, were it not for this, must have been long before now, like Sodom and Gomorrah, in their punishment.

Ver. 30. *What shall we say then*? etc..] To God's calling of a large number of the Gentiles, and only a very few of the Jews, according to his eternal purposes and decrees; what can be objected to it? is he chargeable with any unrighteousness? must it not be referred to his sovereign will and pleasure? is it not an instance of his grace and goodness, that he calls and saves some, when they were all so wicked, that he might in justice have destroyed every individual of them? or what is further to be said, concerning both Jews and Gentiles? or what can be objected to what may be further observed concerning them? as

that the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness; the very same persons among them, who are, called by grace, and are vessels of mercy,

before their calling were without a righteousness, stout hearted, and far from one; being without Christ, and destitute of his Spirit; they were ignorant of righteousness, of the righteousness of God, and of his law, and consequently of what true righteousness is; they were unconcerned about it, and did not labour after it, as the Jews did. They did not pursue and improve the light of nature, about God and things of a moral kind, as they might have done; but held the light and truth they had in unrighteousness, and indeed were filled with nothing else: and yet these persons

have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. The righteousness they attained unto, was not a righteousness of their own, not the righteousness of works, or a righteousness by the deeds of the law, to which the righteousness which is of faith is always opposed; nor faith itself, which is distinguished from it; but the righteousness of Christ, so called, not because that faith is the cause or condition of it, but because the discovery of it is made to faith; that receives it, lays hold on it, and exercises itself on it; by it the soul renounces its own righteousness, looks to, and depends on Christ's, and rejoices in it. These Gentiles being called by grace, “attained”, “comprehended”, or “apprehended” this righteousness; not by the light of nature, which makes no discovery, nor gives the least hint of it; but by the light of faith they apprehended it, as revealed in the Gospel; which faith they had not of themselves, but of God; so that the whole of this account is a wonderful instance of the grace of God, and abundantly confirms the observation made before by the apostle, that “it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that shows mercy”, (<4B916>Romans 9:16); since these persons had nothing in them, disposing and qualifying them for a justifying righteousness, and yet attained one; and the grace appears to be the more distinguishing, by what follows.

Ver. 31. *But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness*, etc..] The Israelites, the far greater part of the Jews, who were not called by the grace of God, were all very zealous of the law, called “the law of righteousness”; because the matter of it was righteous, it was so in its own nature; and because perfect obedience to it is righteousness; as also because they sought for righteousness by the deeds of it. They very violently and eagerly pursued after it, they tugged and toiled, and laboured with all their might, as persons in running a race, to get up to the law, and the righteousness of it; and yet Israel, with all the pains and labour taken,

hath not attained to the law of righteousness: some of them fancied they had, supposing an external conformity to it, to be all that it insisted upon; not knowing the spirituality of it, that it required truth and holiness in the inward parts; and that he that offended in one point of it, was guilty of all, and therefore could not be justified by it.

Ver. 32. *Wherefore? because they sought it not by faith*, etc..] The question is asked, why they did not attain to that, which with so much diligence they pressed after? the answer is, because, as they did not seek for righteousness in a right place, or object, they sought for it in the law, and the works of it, where it is never to be found by a sinful creature, and not in Christ, in whom only are righteousness and strength; so they did not seek for it in a right way, by faith in Christ, without which it is impossible to please God, and by which only true righteousness is discerned and received:

but as it were by the works of the law; not by works which looked like works of the law, and were not; but they sought it as if they expected their justification before God was to be by works of righteousness done by them; or as if it was partly by their own works, and partly by the goodness of God, accepting of them for a justifying righteousness. The Alexandrian Copy, and some others, read only, “as it were by works”; and so does the Vulgate Latin version: another reason, or else a reason of the former is,

for they stumbled at that stumbling stone; meaning the word of the Gospel, at which Peter says they stumbled, and particularly the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ; or rather Christ himself, who was “to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness”, (1 Corinthians 1:23).

Ver. 33. *As it is written*, etc..] In (Isaiah 8:14 28:16); for the beginning and end of this citation are out of the latter, and the middle of it out of the former. This is an instance of gldm, “skipping”, from place to place, concerning which the rules with the Jews were [f186], that the reader

> “might skip from text to text, but he might not skip from prophet to prophet, except only in the twelve prophets, only he might not skip from the end of the book to the beginning; also they might skip in the prophets, but not in the law;”

which rules are exactly complied with by the apostle. The beginning of this citation is out of (<scripRef passage="Isaiah 28:16" />Isaiah 28:16):

behold I lay in Zion. The "stone" said to be laid in Zion, is by the "Chaldee paraphrast" interpreted of a "king"; by R. David Kimchi, of King Hezekiah, and by Jarchi of the King Messiah; and is truly applied by the apostle to Jesus Christ: the layer of this stone is God the Father, who laid him as the foundation stone, in his eternal purposes and decrees, in his counsels and covenant, in promise and in prophecy, in the mission of him into this world, and in the preaching of the everlasting Gospel: the place where he is laid is Zion, meaning either literally Judea or Jerusalem, where the Messiah was to appear, whither he came, and from whence his Gospel went forth; or mystically the church, where he is laid as the foundation of it, and of the salvation of all the members thereof; though, through the sin and unbelief of others, he proves to be

a stumbling stone, and rock of offence; which phrases are to be seen in (<scripRef passage="Isaiah 8:14" />Isaiah 8:14), and are spoken of, and ascribed to a divine person, even to the Lord of hosts; and are by the Targumist thus paraphrased, "and if ye obey not", hyrmym, "his word shall be for revenge, and for a stone smiting, and a rock of offence", and in the Talmud [f187], it is said, that

> "the son of David (the Messiah) shall not come until the two houses of the fathers are destroyed out of Israel; and these are the head of the captivity which is in Babylon, and the prince in the land of Israel, as it is said, (<scripRef passage="Isaiah 8:14" />Isaiah 8:14)."

So that, according to the ancient Jews, this passage belongs to the Messiah, and is properly made use of for this purpose by the apostle, who had seen the accomplishment of it in the Jews; who stumbled at the outward meanness of Jesus of Nazareth, at his parentage, the manner of his birth, his education, the mean appearance of himself and followers; at his company and audience, his ministry, miracles, death, and the manner of it; and so believed not in him, for righteousness, life, and salvation; and thus it came about that they did not attain, or come up to the law of righteousness, or the righteousness of the law: but

whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed; that is, who believes in Christ unto righteousness, who builds his faith, and hope of eternal salvation on him, the foundation God has laid in Zion, and at which the unbelieving Jews stumbled and fell; he shall neither be ashamed here nor

hereafter: he shall not be ashamed of his faith and hope in Christ; nor of Christ, as the Lord his righteousness; nor shall he be ashamed or confounded at his appearing, but shall be justified before men and angels, and be received into his kingdom and glory. There is some difference between the passage as here cited, and as it stands in (<28816>Isaiah 28:16), where it is read, “he that believeth shall not make haste”: either to lay any other foundation, being fully satisfied with this, which is laid by God; or shall not make haste to flee away, through fear of any enemy, or of any danger, being safe as built on this foundation; and so shall never fall, be moved, or ashamed and confounded. Some have fancied a various reading, but without any reason. A very learned Oriental critic [f188] of our own nation has observed, that the Arabic words “Haush” “Hish” answer to the Hebrew word, çWj, the prophet uses, and which have three significations in them, “hasten”, to “fear”, and be “ashamed”; the first of these is retained here by the Jewish commentators and modern versions; the second by the “Chaldee paraphrast”, and Syriac translation; and the third by the Septuagint, and the apostle; and they may be all taken into sense, for he that is afraid runs about here and there, and at length is put to shame and confusion.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 10

In this chapter are contained an account of the two righteousnesses of faith and works, a summary of the Gospel of Christ, a description of the grace of faith, in the nature, use, and means of it, and several testimonies concerning the calling of the Gentiles; and whereas the apostle knew that this, as well as what he had said in the latter part of the preceding chapter, that the Jews had not attained to the law of righteousness, but stumbled at the stumbling stone, would be offensive to his countrymen the Jews; wherefore that it might appear that he said this not out of disaffection and ill will to them, he declares his sincere regard unto them, and the great respect he had for them, by calling them “brethren”, by expressing his good will to them, by praying for the salvation of them, (<45 10 01>Romans 10:1), by bearing testimony of their zeal for God, (<45 10 02>Romans 10:2), though he faithfully observes to them, that it was an ignorant zeal, of which ignorance he gives an instance, (<45 10 03>Romans 10:3), particularly in the attribute of God's righteousness; from which ignorance arose all their misconduct in religious things, especially in the article of justification; hence they sought to be justified by their own righteousness, and rejected the righteousness of Christ, and then points out to them the true end of the law, for righteousness which is Christ, (<45 10 04>Romans 10:4), which if they had known would have set them right, and which is another instance of their ignorant and misguided zeal: this leads him on to what he had in view, which was to give an account of the two righteousnesses he had suggested in the latter part of the former chapter, the righteousness of the law, which the Jews sought for and found not, and the righteousness of faith, which the Gentiles without seeking for enjoyed; and this account he gives in the words of Moses, for whom they had the greatest regard: the description of the former is given in his words, in (<45 10 05>Romans 10:5), which suggest the impossibility of keeping the law, and obtaining life by it, and therefore it is a vain thing to seek for righteousness by the works of it; the latter is described, (<45 10 06>Romans 10:6,7), by the certainty of it, being wrought out by Christ, who came down from heaven, fulfilled the law, and died, and rose again from the dead; and by the plainness and evidence of it, as revealed in

the Gospel, (<45108>Romans 10:8), the sum of which Gospel is, that whoever believes in Christ and confesses him shall be saved, (<45109>Romans 10:9), which faith and confession, when genuine, are with the heart and mouth agreeing together; the consequences of which are righteousness and salvation, comfortably apprehended and enjoyed, (<45110>Romans 10:10), and that the above is the sum of the Gospel, and that there is such a connection between faith and righteousness, and between confession and salvation, is confirmed, (<45111>Romans 10:11), by a testimony from the prophet, (<23816>Isaiah 28:16), which being expressed in such a general manner, as to extend to every believer, whether Jew or Gentile, reasons are given, (<45112>Romans 10:12), in support of such an explanation of that passage, taken from the equal condition of all, there being no difference between them naturally, from the universal dominion of God over them, and from his liberal communication of grace and goodness to all that call upon him; which last reason is confirmed, (<45113>Romans 10:13), by a passage of Scripture in (<29232>Joel 2:32), on occasion of which, the apostle proceeds to treat of the calling of the Gentiles, and of the means of it, the preaching of the Gospel, which was necessary to it, which is made out by a train of reasoning after this manner; that seeing salvation is only of such that call upon the name of the Lord, and there could be no calling upon him without believing in him, and no believing without hearing, and no hearing without preaching, and no preaching without mission, which is proved by a citation out of (<23507>Isaiah 52:7), and no success in preaching, when sent, without the exertions of efficacious grace, as appears from the case of the Jews, who had the ministration of the Gospel to them by Isaiah, and yet all did not believe it; as is evident from (<23501>Isaiah 53:1), and seeing the conclusion of which is, that faith comes by preaching, and preaching by the order and command of God, (<45114>Romans 10:14-17), it follows, that it was proper that ministers should be sent, and the Gospel preached to the Gentiles, and that attended with power, in order that they should believe in the Lord, and call upon his name and be saved; and which method God had taken, and which he had foretold he would take, in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and which were now fulfilling: that the Gospel was preached to them, and they heard it, were matters of fact, and were no other than what should be, or might be concluded, from (<19904>Psalm 19:4), cited, (<45118>Romans 10:18), and that the Jews could not be ignorant of the calling of the Gentiles is clear, first from the words of Moses, (<05221>Deuteronomy 32:21), which the apostle produces, (<45119>Romans 10:19), and from a passage in the prophecy of (<23601>Isaiah 65:1). So that this was no other than

what Moses and the prophets said should be, (Romans 10:20), and the chapter is closed, (Romans 10:21), with another passage out of the same prophet in the next verse, showing the rejection of Christ and his Gospel by the Jews, and which justifies their being cast off by him, of which the apostle treats largely in the next chapter.

Ver. 1. *Brethren, my heart's desire*, etc..] The apostle having suggested, that a few of the Jews only should be called and saved; that the far greater part should be rejected; that the Israelites who sought for righteousness did not attain it when the Gentiles did, but stumbled and fell at Christ, and would be ashamed and confounded; and knowing the prejudices of that people against him, therefore lest what he had said, or should say upon this subject, should be thought to arise from hatred and ill will to them, he judged it proper, as before, to express his trouble and sorrow on their account; so now his great love and affection to them, and which he signifies by calling them “brethren”: for not the Roman believers are here addressed, as if he was telling them how much he loved his own nation; but either the Jews in general, whom he looked upon and loved as his brethren, according to the flesh; and whatever they thought of him, he considered them in such a relation to him, which obliged him to a concern for their good and welfare; or rather the believing Jews, that were members of the church at Rome, whom, besides using the common style of the Jewish nation, who were wont to call all of their country brethren, he could speak to, as being such in a spiritual relation, being children of the same father, partakers of the same grace and privileges, and heirs of the same glory. Now he declares to these persons, that the “desire [of his] heart” was towards Israel, he bore a good will to them, his mind was well disposed and affected towards them, he had a cordial, sincere, and hearty respect for them; and so far was he from being their enemy, that he continually bore them upon his mind at the throne of grace: and his

prayer to God for Israel [was], that they might be saved; not only that they might be saved in a temporal sense, from these grievous calamities and sore judgments he saw were coming upon them, which he had reason to believe would issue in the destruction of them, as a nation and church; but that they might be spiritually converted, turned from their evil ways, and brought to believe in Christ, whom they had despised and rejected, and so be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: this he might desire not only from a natural affection for them, but as a minister of the Gospel, who cannot but wish that all that hear him might be converted and saved; and as

a believer in Christ he might pray for this in submission to the will of God; and especially as he knew there was a seed, a remnant according to the election of grace, at that present time among them, that should be saved, though the larger number of them were cast off. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read “for them”, instead of “for Israel”; not naming them, being easily understood; and so the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions.

Ver. 2. *For I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God*, etc..] A zeal for God; for the being and unity of God, against the polytheism and idolatry of the Gentiles; for the word of God, the writings of the Old Testament, of which they were zealous defenders and preservers, and which they diligently read and heard explained, and whereby they thought to obtain eternal life; for the law of God, moral and ceremonial, especially for the rituals of the Mosaic economy; for the service and worship of God, they spared no pains, but compassed sea and land to bring in proselytes to their religion; all which the apostle could testify from his own knowledge, and by his own experience, who had been as great a zealot as any of them all. But now whilst the apostle is expressing his strong affection for this people, he is careful to act the faithful part to them, and points out their mistakes, and shows them their faults; which he does in this and the following verse, by observing, that they had a zeal of God indeed,

but not according to knowledge: it was not well regulated, it proceeded on mistaken principles, and moved in a wrong way, in persecuting the church of God, in doing things contrary to the name of Christ, in putting to death his ministers and members, thinking that hereby they did God good service; which arose from their ignorance of their Father, and of the Son: though they had a zeal of God, they knew neither God nor Christ aright; they did not know God in Christ, nor Jesus to be the true Messiah; they understood neither law nor Gospel truly, and fancied the Gospel was contrary to the law, and an enemy to it; and therefore in their great zeal opposed it, and the professors of it; they were zealous of the law, and of doing the commands of it, but knew not the true nature, use, and end of the law; as appears by what follows.

Ver. 3. *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness*, etc..] Either of the righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel, which is no other than the righteousness of Christ, and which they knew nothing of, the whole Gospel being a sealed book, and wholly hidden from them; or of the righteousness of God required in the law, they imagining that only an external conformity

to the commands of the law, was all that was necessary to attain to a justifying righteousness by it, not knowing the spirituality of it, and that it required conformity of heart and nature, as well as life and conversation; or rather of the attribute of God's righteousness, the strictness of his justice, the purity and holiness of his nature: for though they knew that he was holy, just, and righteous, yet did not think he was so strict as to insist upon every punctilio, and to take notice of every little default and defect in obedience; and especially that he had any regard to the heart and the thoughts of it, and required perfect purity there or that he would accept of nothing less than an absolutely perfect and complete righteousness; nor justify any without full satisfaction to his justice: hence they were

going about to establish their own righteousness; which they would never have done, had they known the righteousness of God, in either of the above senses; the Alexandrian copy, and some others, omit the word "righteousness", and only read, "their own", leaving it to be understood, and which is easily done; and so reads the Vulgate Latin version: by "their own righteousness", as opposed to God's, is meant the righteousness of works, their obedience to the law, an outward conformity to it, an observance of the rituals of it, and a little negative holiness. This they endeavoured to "establish" or "make to stand" in the sight of God, as their justifying righteousness, which is all one as setting chaff and stubble, briers and thorns, to a consuming fire; as the attempt expresses madness in them, the phrase suggests weakness in their righteousness, which they would fain make to stand, but could not, it being like a spider's web before the besom, or like a dead carcass, which men would set upon its feet to stand alone, but it cannot; than which nothing can be a greater instance of egregious folly: their "going about" or "seeking" to do this, shows their ignorant zeal, and the toil, the pains, the labour they used to effect it, but all in vain, and to no purpose; as appears by their hearing, reading, fasting, praying, giving alms to the poor, and tithes of all they possessed; all which they were very careful and studious of, and especially to have them done in the sight of men: and so it was that they

have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God; that is, the righteousness of Christ, so called, because approved and accepted of by God, imputed by him to his people, and given them by him as a free gift, and which only justifies in his sight; and because it is wrought by Christ, who is truly and properly God, and revealed and applied by the Spirit of God. This the Jews submitted not to, because they had no true humble

sense of themselves as sinners, nor did they care to acknowledge themselves as such; which submission to Christ's righteousness requires and necessarily involves in it; no man will ever be subject to it, till he is made sensible of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and brought to an humble acknowledgment of it; the Spirit of God first convinces of sin and then of righteousness; and because they had an overweening opinion of their own righteousness, which they trusted to, and depended upon, imagining it to be blameless, and to contain all that the law required, and therefore they stood in no need of any other; and as for the righteousness of Christ they had it in contempt, their carnal minds being enmity to him, were not subject to his righteousness, nor could they, nor can any be, without the powerful efficacious grace of God, making them willing in the day of his power. This phrase denotes the rebellion of their wills, against Christ and his righteousness, they acting as rebellious subjects against their sovereign prince.

Ver. 4. *For Christ is the end of the law*, etc..] The apostle here observes that to them which had they known, would have regulated their zeal, removed their ignorance and set them right, in that which they stumbled at, and fell. By the “law” here, is not meant the ceremonial law, of which, indeed, they were all very zealous, and of which Christ also was the end in many respects; he was the final cause of it, or that for the sake of which it was; it had not been given had it not been for him; all its institutions, ordinances, and sacrifices, were on his account: they were all shadows of him, and he the body and substance of them; he was the end or mark and scope at which they all aimed; every type looked to him, and every offering directed the worshipper to him; he was the terminus of it, to whom it was to reach, and beyond whom it was not to go; it was a schoolmaster for instruction and direction until Christ came, and no longer. He was the fulfilling end of it, every thing in it had its accomplishment in him; and then lastly, he put an end to it, he disannulled it because of its after weakness and unprofitableness; he blotted out this hand writing of ordinances, and entirely abolished this law of commandments; but then Christ was not the end of this law for righteousness; Christ's obedience to it is no part of justifying righteousness, especially not to everyone that believes, not to the Gentiles who never were under any obligation to observe it: the moral law is here designed, and when Christ is said to be the end of it, the meaning is not that he was the end of its being given; for that was to be a rule of righteousness and life to men, and a ministration of death in case of

disobedience: or that he was the scope of this law, though the Syriac version renders it hks, “the scope” of the law is the Messiah, the mark at which it aimed, or which it directs persons to; for the law does not direct to Christ at all, in any way; it requires and insists upon a perfect righteousness, but gives not the least hint of the righteousness of Christ, nor does it in any form direct unto it; by it is the knowledge of sin, but no knowledge of a Saviour from sin; not the law, but the Gospel directs and encourages sensible sinners to believe in Christ and be saved; on the contrary, the law is a killing letter, and the ministration of condemnation and death; but Christ is either the consuming or consummating, the destroying or fulfilling end of the law. He is the destroying end of the law, not as to the nature, being, matter and substance of it, which is invariable and eternal, and is not, and cannot be made void by the doctrine of faith; nor as to the true use of it; but as a covenant of works, as to the ministry of it by Moses, and as to its curse and condemnation. Though I rather think the latter is here meant, namely, that Christ is the fulfilling end of the law, since it is added,

for righteousness: for the bringing in an everlasting righteousness; a righteousness justifying in the sight of God; a righteousness sinners wanted, and could not obtain of themselves, and could never be obtained but by a perfect fulfilling of the law: this Christ has done partly by the conformity of his nature, being exactly like that, and what it requires holy, just, and good; and partly by perfect obedience of his life to all its precepts; and also by suffering the penalty of it, death, in the room and stead of all his people; and so the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled by him, and he becomes the end of it, for a justifying righteousness before God,

to everyone that believes: not to him that works for life, and in order to obtain a righteousness of his own; nor to the Jew only, but also to the Gentile, even to everyone, be who he will, that has faith in Christ; not that faith is either the matter, cause, or condition of righteousness, but this righteousness is only revealed unto, and received by the believer, and can only be pleaded by him, as his justifying righteousness. Moreover, this phrase is descriptive of the persons to whom Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, and suggests that for whomsoever he has fulfilled the law, in order to bring in for them a justifying righteousness, faith in consequence is given to them, to receive and embrace it, and enjoy all the comfort and privileges of it.

Ver. 5. *For. Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law*, etc..] In this, and some following verses, an account is given of the two righteousnesses before mentioned, called their own and the righteousness of God; and that chiefly in the words of Moses, which is wisely done by the apostle, he and his writings being in great esteem among the Jews. The description he gives of the righteousness of the law, that is, righteousness which the law requires, and is done in obedience to its commands, is,

that the man which doth those things, shall live by them, or "in them"; and which is to be seen in (Leviticus 18:5): "ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, which if a man do, he shall live in them"; from whence it appears, that by "those things" a man is to do, are meant the statutes and judgments of God, not the ordinances of the ceremonial, but the precepts of the moral law; and that the righteousness of the law lies in "doing" and keeping those statutes, not merely externally, but internally, with all the heart, and soul, and strength; the law requires love to God, fear of him, and faith in him, and an inward disposition of the mind towards him, and a conformity of heart and nature to his law, as well as outward obedience; and all this is to be done perfectly and completely in every punctilio the law requires, otherwise no life is to be expected, nor any righteousness to be had by it. The Jewish writers understand the life promised by the law, to be eternal life. The two Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrase the words thus, "he shall live in them", amlʿ yyjb, "in eternal life"; in like manner Jarchi explains them, "he shall live", abh µlwlʿ, "in the world to come"; to which agrees the note of R. Aben Ezra, who interprets it of lie in both worlds; he says the statutes of the law are life to them that do them in both worlds, for if a man understands the secret of them, he shall live for ever, and shall never die. The life which the law promised to Adam in his state of perfection, who was the only mere man that ever was capable of perfectly fulfilling it, was the continuance of the happy life he enjoyed; the life it promised to the Israelites, at the renewing of it on Mount Sinai, was a long and prosperous life in the land of Canaan; as for the promise of eternal life, that was made before the world began, in the covenant of grace, and is a peculiar promise and blessing of that covenant, is an entire gift of God's grace, and never was designed to be enjoyed through men's obedience to the law of works, but through the righteousness and death of Christ, who is the fulfilling end of the law: hence it appears, that as the righteousness of the law is a righteousness of works done by men, it cannot be the righteousness God

imputes, for that is without works, and by which a man can be justified before God; and since the law requires internal and perfect obedience to it, it is certain that it cannot be yielded by fallen creatures; hence it follows, that there can be no life, and so no righteousness by it, the consequence of which, when observed by sinful men, horror, terror, and gloomy despair; the very reverse of which is the language of the righteousness of faith.

Ver. 6, 7. *But the righteousness which is of faith*, etc..] Or "with respect to the righteousness of faith"; the other righteousness before called the righteousness of God, because God is the author of it, here the righteousness of faith, because that receives it,

speaketh on this wise; the selfsame writer who describes the righteousness of the law in such a manner, that it gives no room to a fallen creature ever to expect life and salvation by it, gives such an account of the righteousness of faith, as forbids all doubting and despair:

say not in thine heart; let not such a thought enter into thy mind, much less express it with thy lips;

who shall ascend into heaven (that is, to bring Christ down from above, or who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). These words are not properly a citation of (<05D012>Deuteronomy 30:12,13); but the apostle makes use of some phrases which are there, with his own explications of them; though the difference between them, stripped, of these explications is not very material: in the first clause, "who shall ascend into heaven?" the apostle leaves out the phrase, "for us"; which as to the sense was not absolutely necessary to retain; the difficulty, indeed, seems greater in the latter clause, "who shall descend into the deep?" which in the text of Moses is, "who shall go over the sea for us?" but when it is considered that the sea is often called the deep, and that sailing on it and over it, is expressed by "going down to the sea in ships", (<19A723>Psalm 107:23); and moreover, when it is observed that the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases it thus,

> "the law is not in heaven that it should be said, oh that we had one of us, as Moses the prophet, who could go up to heaven and bring it to us! nor is it beyond the great sea, that it should be said, oh that we had one of us, as Jonah the prophet abr amy yqmw[l twjyyd, "who could descend into the depths of the great sea", and bring it to us;"

the apostle is to be justified in his expressions. His sense, indeed, may seem to be different from that of Moses, and of the common interpretations of the Jewish writers, as in the above paraphrase and in the following account of them from the Talmud, understanding them of the law [f189];

> "says Abdimo bar Chama bar Dousa, what is the meaning of that Scripture, "neither is it in heaven, nor is it beyond the sea?" it is not in heaven, for if it was in heaven you must needs go up after it, and if it was beyond the sea, you must needs go over after it; Rabba says, not in heaven is it, you will not find it in him that exalts his knowledge in himself as the heavens, nor will you find it in him that enlarges his knowledge in himself, as the sea; R. Jochanan says, not in heaven is it, you will not find it in those that are of a haughty spirit, nor beyond the sea is it, you will not find it among traders abroad, or merchants."

Though the apostle's sense may be brought pretty near to this, after this manner; who shall go up to heaven, or down to the deep, either to bring us the knowledge of the law, and yield an obedience to it which that requires of us, or to give us a full account of the Gospel of the grace of God? there is no room, nor reason, for men to say this in their hearts, or to make a doubt of them, as if they were not done already; to do so, is to deny that Christ is come in the flesh, and risen from the dead, who has given the true sense and knowledge of the law, and has perfectly fulfilled it, in the room and stead of his people, and by whom the doctrine of grace and truth is come, particularly the doctrine of a sinner's justification before God; this is brought nigh in the ministration of the word, so that there is no need of such inquiries as these. Moreover, for the illustration of these words, let it be observed, that these phrases are proverbial, and often used to express things impossible, of which take the following instances;

> "it is a tradition of the Rabbins [f190] if a man says to his wife, lo, this is thy divorce, on condition that "thou ascendest to the firmament", on condition that "thou descendest into the deep"; on condition that thou passest over the great sea on foot, this is no divorce;"

the reason is, rçpya yaç, "because it is impossible". Again [f191],

> "if a man says to a woman, if thou wilt "ascend into the firmament", or if thou wilt "descend into the deep", lo, thou art espoused to me by this penny; but if thou wilt not go up into the firmament, nor go

> down into the deep, thou shalt not be espoused; and after that he puts the penny into her hand, lo, the condition becomes void, and behold she is espoused immediately, for the thing is known רçpya yaç, “that it is impossible” for her to fulfil the condition.”

So here are forbidden all such thoughts, words, or expressions which carry such a sense as this; who will go down to the deep to fetch such a wretch as I am out of the lowest hell, to deliver me from the curses of the law, and the wrath of God, and bring me out of this wretched miserable condition in which I am? or go up to heaven and carry me there, and put me in the possession of the undefiled inheritance? all this is as impossible to be done, as for a man to ascend to heaven, or go down into the deep: now though the righteousness of the law encourages such despondency and black despair, the righteousness of faith, or the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness, forbids every thing of this kind; assuring the sinner, that Christ is come down from heaven in human nature, that he has fulfilled all the righteousness of the law by his obedience in life, and has bore the penalty of it in his sufferings and death, and is risen again for justification; so that such questions should not be put, nor such despairing thoughts encouraged: besides, to think and speak in this manner, is to set aside the whole scheme of the Gospel, and supposes the person to doubt whether Christ is come down from heaven; and therefore asks, who shall go up to bring him down? and that he is not risen from the dead; and therefore puts the question, who will go down to the deep to fetch him up? whereas he is already come, has obeyed, suffered, and died, and rose again, and is become the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes.

(See Gill on “ Romans 10:6”).

Ver. 8. *But what saith it*, etc..] The Scripture; so some copies, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic version read, “what saith the Scripture?” the Arabic version, “what dost thou say?” or “what saith he”, Moses? for what follow are manifestly his words, in (Deuteronomy 30:14),

the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; which is to be understood not of the law, for Moses himself is not speaking of the law only, but either of the whole word of God, both law and Gospel; or particularly of the Gospel, which holds forth those special blessings and promises of grace, pardon of sin, and circumcision of the heart, which are mentioned in the context, as what should be bestowed upon the people of

the Jews in the latter days; and so is rightly applied by the apostle to the then dispensation, and is to be understood of the Gospel; which was nigh both in the ministration of it, by the apostles, to Jews and Gentiles, and in the application and experience of it; it was not only “in the mouth” of the preachers, but also of the hearers of it, by a hearty and sincere confession; and “in [their] hearts”, being attended with the power of God, and received in the love of it, was truly believed in, and cordially embraced;

that is, the word of faith. This phrase, atwnmyhmd hlm, “the word of faith”, may be seen in the Jewish writings[f192]; and this shows what word is here meant, even the Gospel so called, because it contains doctrines which are to be believed upon the testimony of God, and particularly the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ received by faith; and because it proposes Christ as the object of faith, and encourages souls to believe in him for life and salvation; and is also the means of begetting and implanting faith in the heart, and without it the preaching of it is of no avail: and it is further described by the ministration of it,

which we preach; being sent, commissioned, qualified, and assisted by Christ thereunto; which shows the agreement between Moses and the apostles of Christ; for the word which he spoke of, they preached, and indeed said no other things than what the prophets and Moses said should come, that Christ should suffer in the stead of his people, and rise again for their justification; the sum of which is delivered in (<5109>Romans 10:9).

Ver. 9. *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus*, etc..] That is, if a man shall make a good, sincere, and hearty confession to God, before the church and people of God, and before the world, that Christ is his Lord and Saviour, whom he desires to serve, and to be saved by; and this as arising from a comfortable experience of the grace of God in his soul, and from a true faith in Christ in his heart, wherefore it follows,

and shall believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for this article of Christ's resurrection includes the several other articles of faith: it supposes his death, and that supposes his life, and the obedience of it; and his life implies his being here on earth, and that his coming down from heaven to do the will of his Father; and this is the rather mentioned, which is here ascribed to God the Father, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, because that Christ is risen again for our justification, with which true faith is principally concerned; for such a

faith is intended, not which lies in a mere assent to the truth of this, or any other article of the Christian religion; but which is concerned with Christ for righteousness, life, and glory; and with such a faith salvation is certainly and inseparably connected.

Ver. 10. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness*, etc..] The apostle here explains the nature and use both of faith and confession; as true faith does not lie in the bare assent of the mind to the Gospel, or any truth contained in it, respecting the person and office of Christ, so neither does it lie, as not in the brain, so not in the tongue, but in the heart; it is not a notional knowledge of things to be believed; nor is it saying that a man believes; but it is heart work, a believing with all the heart; such a faith in which all the powers of the soul, the understanding, will, and affections, are concerned, it is a seeing of the Son, a beholding of the glory, fulness, suitableness, ability, and willingness of Christ as a Saviour, with the eye of the understanding spiritually enlightened; it is a going out of the soul to Christ, in various acts, such as venturing into his presence, prostrating itself at his feet, resolving if it perishes it will perish there; a giving up itself unto him, determining it will have no other Saviour, leaning and relying on him, and living upon him; which faith works by love to Christ, moves the affections, stirs up the desires of the soul to his name, and endears him and all that belong to him to it. The use of this grace is, “unto righteousness”; it is not instead of one, for faith is not our righteousness; nor is it in order to work out one, for this grace puts a soul on renouncing its own righteousness; but its use is to receive one, even the righteousness of Christ, which when it spies, it admires, receives, lays hold on, and rejoices in looking on itself as righteous through this righteousness, and so has peace with God through Christ:

and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. This is to be understood not of confession of sin, though that is proper and requisite to be made, both with respect to the participation, and enjoyment of salvation, particularly pardoning grace and mercy, and to an admission to Gospel ordinances; but of confession of Christ, as appears from the preceding verse, which lies in a frank and open acknowledgment of what Christ is in himself, as that he is truly and properly God, the Son of God, the true Messiah, the Mediator between God and man, and the only Saviour of lost sinners, and of our faith in him, with respect to ourselves, to our pardon, justification, acceptance and salvation in him and through him; in ascribing the whole of our salvation to him, and giving him the glory of it; in

declaring to the churches of Christ what he has done for our souls, and in subjecting ourselves to his ordinances. This confession must be made both by words and facts, must be open, visible, and before men; and also real, hearty, and sincere, the words of the mouth agreeing with the experience of the heart; and such a good profession made before God, angels, and men, highly becomes all that believe with the heart. This was the practice of the primitive saints; yea, all nations own, acknowledge, and profess the God they worship; and should not we confess our God, Saviour and Redeemer? Christ himself confessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate, and is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. So to do, makes both for the glory of God, and for our own real good and advantage. Yea, it is "unto salvation"; not as a cause of it, for Christ alone is the author of eternal salvation; but a sincere and well made confession of Christ points out to all that know us where and from whom we expect to have salvation; it is what lies in the way, and is to be taken up by all that believe in Christ, and to be held fast without wavering until we receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls.

Ver. 11. *For the Scripture saith*, etc..] Of this form of expression, or mode of speaking, (see Gill on " Romans 9:17"). The passage referred to is (Isaiah 28:16), cited before in (Romans 9:33); the view with which it is produced is to prove the certain connection between faith and righteousness, and confession and salvation; or in other words, to observe that such who cordially believe in Christ, and make a sincere profession of their faith in him, shall be saved. There are some things somewhat different from, though agreeing in sense with, the words as they stand in the prophet; there it is indefinitely said, "he that believeth", here an universal is made use of,

whosoever, or "everyone"

that believeth: which phrases are equipollent, and a certain truth it is, that whosoever believes in Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, be he who he will, shall surely be saved: here the object believed in, is expressed

in him, which is there implied, and may easily be understood of the stone laid in Zion for a foundation, which is Christ; for other foundation can no man lay, and whoever by faith builds on this foundation is safe:

and shall not be ashamed; neither in this world, nor in that to come; in the Hebrew text it is, “shall not make haste”; how this may be reconciled, (see Gill on “ Romans 9:2”), (see Gill on “ Romans 9:3”).

Ver. 12. *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek*, etc..] Some reasons are here assigned, confirming the apostle's sense of the prophet's words, that everyone that believes in Christ shall be saved; for there is no distinction of nations, no superiority on account of carnal descent, or fleshly privileges, no preeminence on the score of the laws and ordinances of the former dispensation, all which are now abolished; nor is there any difference in their state God-ward, all being under sin, and without a righteousness, and all standing in need of the righteousness of Christ, and salvation by him; to which is added another reason,

for the same Lord over all, or “is over all”: by whom is meant, either God the Father, who is the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews, (Romans 3:29,30); or rather the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all; and is to be understood, not of his being so merely by creation, but redemption, he having bought with his blood all the elect of God, both among the Jews and among the Gentiles; so that he has the same equal propriety in one as another, and they the same claim to him, and the same encouragement to believe in him, for righteousness and life: and moreover, he

is rich unto all that call upon him; he is not only rich as God, being possessed of all divine perfections and glory, but as Mediator, having the riches of grace and glory in him; and is rich, beneficent, liberal and free in dispensing, pardoning, justifying, and sanctifying grace to all that come unto him, throw themselves at his feet, implore his grace and righteousness, and call upon him with faith and fervency. Such as these are here designed, and not all that make mention of his name, or are called by it; but who are the true worshippers of him in faith and fear; for the invocation of his name includes all worship of him, and exercise of grace upon him; hence this passage is no inconsiderable proof of his proper deity.

Ver. 13. *For whosoever shall call upon the name the Lord*, etc..] This testimony is taken out of (Joel 2:32) and is brought to prove the truth of what the apostle had just suggested, that all that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, will find him rich and plenteous in mercy, and ready to dispense his grace and salvation to them: such

shall be saved; be they who they will, whether Jews or Gentiles; not with a temporal salvation only, but with a spiritual and eternal one; for the words of the prophet refer to Gospel times, as the context shows, and is cited and applied thereunto by the Apostle Peter, (<44216>Acts 2:16-21); besides, the deliverance and salvation Joel speaks of, is of a "remnant whom the Lord shall call", (<29232>Joel 2:32); and designs the remnant according to the election of grace, whether among Jews or Gentiles, whom God calls by his efficacious grace; between which call and eternal glory, there is a certain and inseparable connection.

Ver. 14. *How then shall they call on him in whom they, have not believed*? etc..] The apostle having observed, that whoever, Jew or Gentile, believe in the Lord and call upon his name, shall be saved; and that the same Lord was ready and willing to dispense his grace, without any difference to them; suggests, that it was therefore absolutely necessary, that the Gospel should be preached to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jews; that it was the will of God it should be; that what he and others did, was by a divine commission; that they were sent by the Lord to preach the Gospel to them; that hearing they might believe, and so call upon the name of the Lord, and be saved; and therefore the Jews ought not to blame them for so doing, for there was a real necessity for it, since there can be no true calling upon God without faith, no faith without hearing, no hearing without preaching, and no preaching without a divine mission. The first of these is signified by this interrogation. Every man calls upon the God he believes in, and him only; this has been the practice of all men, in all nations; such as have not believed in God and Christ, do not call upon them; it is true indeed, there may be an external invocation of them, where there is no true faith; but then this is not calling upon them in truth and sincerity; as is their faith, so is their calling upon them; as the one is historical, the other is only external; there is no true invocation without faith, or any that is acceptable to God, or of any avail to men; for calling on the name of the Lord, as it ought to be practised in all religious worship, so it includes and every part of worship as done in faith:

and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? the meaning is, that there is no faith in Christ without hearing of him; as it is in human, so in divine faith, there may be believing without seeing, but not without hearing; so we believe that there were such men as Alexander and Julius Caesar, and other persons now in being, though we never saw them, having heard of them, or had a report made of them, which we have reason

to give credit to; so there may be, and is faith in Christ without seeing him with our bodily eyes, though not without hearing of him; for of an unheard of person, there can be no faith in him, because no exercise of thought about him. This is to be understood of outward hearing of the word, and of adult persons only; for that, infants may have the grace of regeneration, and so faith wrought in them by the Spirit of God, without hearing the word, is not to be denied; since as they are capable of the principles of corruption, why not of grace? and also of such persons as have the right and free exercise of the faculties of hearing and speaking, and not of such who never could hear, and speak; for as the Spirit works where, and how he pleases, so he can work faith in the hearts of such persons who never heard the word, and enable them to exercise it on the proper object, and cause them secretly to call upon the name of the Lord, with groans which cannot be uttered. Moreover, this is to be, understood of the ordinary way and means of believing; for though God can, and sometimes does work by other means, and even without any, yet his usual way and method is, to bring men to faith and repentance by the hearing of the word:

and how shall they hear without a preacher? or there is no hearing without, preaching; there may be reading without it, and this ought to be where there is preaching, to see that what is preached is agreeably to the Scriptures; but there is no hearing the word explained without preaching; explaining the word is preaching. There is no hearing of Christ, and salvation by him, without the preaching of the Gospel; the usual and ordinary way of hearing from God, and of Christ, is by the ministry of the word: this shows not only the necessity and usefulness of the Gospel ministry, but also points out the subject matter of it, which is Christ, and him crucified. They that preach ought to preach concerning the person of Christ, his offices, grace, righteousness, blood, sacrifice and satisfaction, otherwise men may hear the preacher, and not hear Christ.

Ver. 15. *And how shall they preach, except they be sent*, etc..] There is no proper, rightful, regular, and lawful preaching of the word without a mission, which is either extraordinary, or ordinary; extraordinary mission was such as the apostles themselves had; who, as they were called to extraordinary service, had extraordinary qualifications, and were sent forth in an extraordinary manner, with a power of doing miracles, and immediately by Christ himself. Ordinary mission is of men to be pastors and teachers, which includes qualifications for the ministerial work; for whom Christ sends forth into such service, he bestows gifts on them, fitting them

for it, some more, some less, but all have some; and it also includes a call unto it, which is either internal, and by the Spirit of God, and lies partly in the furniture he gives, and the inclination of the heart to this good work which he forms; and which arises not from a vanity of mind, and a desire of popular applause, and worldly views, and sinister ends; but from a real concern for the good of souls, and the glory of Christ, being willing to deny themselves, and forsake all for Christ, to suitor reproach for his name's sake, and to forego all worldly interest, and secular views: or is external, which is given by the churches of Christ, after due trial and examination of gifts, and a serious consideration of the matter, and that in the most solemn manner; and this is what may be properly called a preacher's mission, and none but such who are in this way sent out ought to preach the Gospel: and to such well agrees, and may be applied, that passage in (Isaiah 52:7), where

it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things; which words are not to be understood of the messengers that brought the tidings of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, but of the ministers of the Gospel. In (Isaiah 52:7) it is expressed in the singular number, “how beautiful are the feet of him”, etc.. and is by some understood of Christ, as it is also by many Jewish writers: thus interpreting the “turtle's voice” in (Song of Solomon 2:12);

> “this (say they [f193]) is the voice of the King Messiah, proclaiming and saying, “how beautiful on the mountains”, etc..”

And elsewhere [f194] it is observed, that the

> “Rabbins say, great is peace, for when the King Messiah comes, he does not open but with peace, as it is said, “how beautiful upon the mountains”, etc..”

And says [f195] another,

> “one verse says, “how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings”, jyçmh Ælmh çryp, “the explanation”, or meaning is, the King Messiah:”

and some of the more, modern ones [f196] of them, own these words are, jyçmh taybw hlwagh ^yn[m, “concerning the redemption, and the coming of the Messiah”: and so the worlds, however they may principally

regard the Messiah and his ministry, are property applied to the apostles of Christ; and may be rightly understood of any minister of the Gospel, whose business it is to “preach the Gospel of peace”: which is so called from the subject matter of it, peace made by the blood of Christ, which it proclaims; from the effect of it, producing, peace and tranquillity in distressed minds, and making men of peaceable dispositions; and from the use of it, which is to direct men to the way of peace, to guide their feet in it, lead them to eternal peace: their work is also to “bring glad tidings of good things”; such as reconciliation, righteousness, pardon, life, and eternal salvation, by a crucified Christ; and the preaching of such a Gospel, and bringing such news, make their “feet beautiful”: one should have thought rather their lips than their feet would be took notice of; the reason of this is, partly because of the agreeableness of their walk and conversation to the doctrine they preach; and partly because of their readiness to preach it everywhere, though they run the utmost risk in so doing; and also because of their swiftness, particularly of the apostles, in going through the cities of Israel, and running over the Gentile world with the Gospel of peace, in so short a time as they did; and more especially because of the acceptableness of their message, with which they were sent and ran; (see 2 Samuel 18:27). And so this passage is pertinently alleged to prove, that mission is necessary to preaching; since these words declare the character of Gospel ministers, as publishers of peace, and messengers of good tidings; and express the message itself, and the nature of it; both which suppose them to be sent by another, even the Lord, under whose authority, and by whose warrant they act; just as ambassadors, heralds, and messengers do, by virtue of a commission they receive from their prince.

Ver. 16. *But they have not all obeyed the Gospel*, etc..] Who hear it, and to whom it is preached; for though ministers may be regularly sent forth, and rightly preach the Gospel in the purity of it, yet there is no success without the power of God attending it: ministers may preach, and men may hear, and yet not obey the Gospel; that is, cordially embrace the doctrines, and sincerely submit to the ordinances of it:

for Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report; or “our hearing”, agreeably to the Hebrew word in (Isaiah 53:1), wnt[wmç, and which designs not the “hearing” with which the apostles heard Christ, though what they heard from him, they made known to men; but the hearing, or the word heard, which others had from them, namely, the report they made in their ministry, of the person and grace of Christ, which was disregarded,

when the arm and power of the Lord were not, revealed and exerted: this was the case of the Jews in Isaiah's time, and the same in the times of Christ and his apostles, and is always the case, when divine power does not attend the preaching of the Gospel.

Ver. 17. *So then faith comes by hearing*, etc..] That is, by preaching; for the word hearing is used in the same sense as in the preceding verse; and designs the report of the Gospel, or the preaching of the word, which is the means God makes use of, to convey faith into the hearts of his people; for preachers are ministers, or instruments, by whom others believe:

and hearing by the word of God; or "of Christ", as some copies read, and so do the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; and intends either the holy Scriptures, which have God for their author, and Christ for the subject of them; and which furnish the men of God, or ministers of the Gospel, with proper materials to preach; and so hearing or preaching is by them, or else the command of God or Christ, which ρημα more properly signifies; and the sense is, that men preach the Gospel in obedience to the commandment of the everlasting God, and according to the orders, mission, and commission, warrant and authority, of the Lord Jesus Christ: and so these words are the conclusion, and sum of the whole; that as invocation is owing to faith, so faith to hearing, hearing to preaching, preaching to a mission; whence it follows, that it is the original will of God, to send forth his apostles and ministers, to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jews; that they hearing might believe, and believing call upon the Lord, and so be saved by him: it is a saying of the Jews, ayl t rwbdb h[ymç, "hearing depends upon the word" [f197].

Ver. 18. *But I say, have they not heard*? etc..] rmwa ynaw, "but I say", is a phrase frequently used by the Jewish doctors in disputation, either in forming or answering objections. The Ethiopic version confines these words to Israel, and reads, "have not Israel heard?" whereas they are to be understood both of Jews and Gentiles; the question refers to each, and the answer is,

yes, verily: which the Arabic renders just the reverse, "no", or "not at all, notwithstanding their sound went into all the earth"; and so makes this an aggravation of their stupidity, and obstinate rejection of the Gospel, that they would not hear it, though its sound reached every place; but the answer is in the affirmative, they did hear. The Jews heard the Gospel in

the times of Isaiah, and other prophets, though they disbelieved the report of it; they heard it from John the Baptist, and were pleased with his ministry for a while; yea, they heard Christ himself preach it, who spake as never man did, with power and authority, as the Scribes did not, and wondered at his gracious words; they heard the apostles of Christ, who for some time were limited in their ministry to them only, and after their commission was enlarged, were ordered to preach first to them; so that they could not say they had not heard it, and they were left entirely inexcusable. The Gentiles also had heard it; the apostles were bid to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; and at a proper opportunity, they did as the Lord commanded them, and the Gentiles heard the Gospel with joy and pleasure; multitudes were converted everywhere, and churches raised through their ministry, according to the will of God; thus

their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world; the passage referred to is (<19904>Psalm 19:4), which some here, as there, understand literally of the works of nature, the heavens, the firmament, the sun, moon and stars, proclaiming every where the being of God, his perfections, especially his wisdom, power, and goodness; so that the Gentiles were not without hearing of God, even whilst they were destitute of a divine revelation; which was a sort of a prelude of the after extensive spread of the Gospel among them: a voice, or sound, is ascribed to the inanimate creatures; and which is so loud, that it reaches to the end of the earth. There are three voices, the Jews say [f198] which go "from one end of the world to the other"; and one of them is hmj lgl lwq, "the voice of the orb of the sun": others understand these words of the law, of which many "encomiums" are given in the psalm from whence this passage is taken; and though it was delivered peculiarly to the people of the Jews, yet the fame of it reached the nations of the world, as Moses suggests it would, (<50406>Deuteronomy 4:6); and the Jews say [f199]

> "that when the law was given to Israel, wpws d[w µlw[h Pwsm Ælwh wlwq, "its voice went from one end of the world to the other"."

Or as it is better expressed by Philo [f200], and almost in the words of this text,

> “the fame of the laws which Moses left, is gone throughout all the world, unto the ends of the earth.”

But certain it is, that the apostle is speaking neither of the light of nature, nor the law of Moses, but of the preaching of the Gospel; and what the Psalmist, literally understood, says of the heavens, that the apostle in an allegorical and mystical sense, or by an argument from the lesser to the greater, or by way of allusion, applies to the apostles and ministers of the Gospel, the luminaries of the world, and stars of heaven; whose ministry, by this time, had reached the then known parts of the habitable world; as it was to do, before the destruction of Jerusalem, according to Christ's prediction, (<4024 14>Matthew 24:14), and as the Apostle Paul testifies it had, (<5101 06>Colossians 1:6), and in which he himself had a very considerable share, having preached the Gospel from Jerusalem, round about unto Illyricum. There is some little difference between the passage in the Psalms, and as cited or referred to by the apostle, who instead of “their line”, reads “their sound”; which have made some suspect a corruption of the present Hebrew text, or a various reading; and that the Septuagint, followed by the apostle, used a copy which had not, µwq, “their line”, but µlwq, “their voice”, and which was the true reading; but then how came the Chaldee paraphrase to render it by, Ætm, “extension”, and Aquila by κανων, “a canon”, or “rule?” and besides, the Masora observes, that this word is no where else read, which is not true of µlwq, for that often occurs; to which may be added, had this been the reading, the Septuagint would have rendered it most probably, as they do elsewhere, by “voice”, and not “sound”: but for the reconciliation of this let it be observed, that the Hebrew word signifies a rule, or plummet, or such a line as builders use in their work, as a direction to them, hence Kimchi [f201] explains it by µnyynb, “their building”; and so it may signify any rule, or direction, whether given by writing, and so Aben Ezra [f202] interprets it by btkm, “writing”, or by word of mouth; besides, the carpenter's line, when stretched out, and remitted upon the timber, makes a sound, and hence the word might be used for one: all this agrees with the ministry of the apostles, who were builders; and as they worked by a line and rule themselves, so they gave out rules and directions to others, both by writing and preaching, both which reached far and near; this the apostle seems to allude to, in (<4701 3>2 Corinthians 10:13-16), where he speaks of the measure, line, and rule of their ministry, which reached to Corinth and further, without going into

another man's line: moreover, that great Oriental critic, and our countryman, Mr. Pocock [f203], has shown from the use of the word hwq, in the Arabic language, that the word in the Psalms may signify a loud cry, or noise, as well as a line, or rule; so that the psalmist and the apostle may be easily reconciled.

Ver. 19. *But I say, did not Israel know*? etc.] Some supply the word "God", did not Israel know God? verily, they did; they knew the being and perfections of God, the unity of God, and the trinity of persons in the divine essence; they knew the will of God, and the right way of worshipping him; for they were favoured with a divine revelation; to them were committed the oracles of God, and to them belonged the giving of the "Gospel", did not Israel know the Gospel? yes, they did; they not only heard it, but knew it; not spiritually and experimentally, but nationally and speculatively, and, against the light and conviction of their own minds, obstinately rejected it with contempt: but I rather think this question refers to the calling of the Gentiles, and their own rejection; and the sense is, did not Israel know, that the Gentiles were to be called by the grace of God, and that they themselves were to be cast off? they did know this, at least something of it, though not so clearly as it is now revealed to the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; but in some measure they could not but know it, since there were such strong hints of it in the writings of the Old Testament, some of which are hereafter produced:

first Moses saith; not "Moses the first", as if there was another, or a second Moses, but either Moses, who is the first of the inspired writers, and chief of the prophets; or rather this regards order of time, Moses in the first place says so and so, for other testimonies are after cited; the passage in Moses referred to, is (Deuteronomy 32:21).

I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. The Gentiles are here designed by "them that are no people": who before God, and in his sight, as all nations are, were as a drop of the bucket, as the small dust of the balance: nay, even as nothing, yea, less than nothing and vanity: likewise they were no people of any account, of any name; they were mean and contemptible, neglected and overlooked by God himself, and treated with contempt by the Jews, his professing people: and besides, they were not as yet openly and visibly the people of God; they neither called upon his name, nor were they called by his name; he had not as yet taken from among them a people for his name:

these are also meant by “the foolish nation”; Jarchi [f204] says, the Cuthites, or Samaritans, are intended; who were neighbours to the Jews, and greatly hated by them: but it may more rightly be applied to all the Gentiles in general, who notwithstanding their large pretensions to natural, civil, and moral wisdom, yet being without a true knowledge of God, Christ, and the Gospel, were a foolish people; and in nothing more did their folly appear, than in their idolatry and superstition. Now the Lord threatened by these people to provoke the Jews to jealousy, and to anger them; and this was but just, and by way of retaliation; for since they provoked him to jealousy and anger, by worshipping strange gods, which plainly declared their want of faith in him, affection for him, and their departure from him; it was a righteous thing in him to provoke them to jealousy of him, as if he had no affection for them, who had been so long, in some sense, an husband to them all; and as about to cast them off; and to anger them, by sending his Gospel among the Gentiles, and calling them by his grace, and making them partakers of his special favours; whereby this prophecy had its full accomplishment: for though the Jews rejected and despised the Gospel themselves, yet nothing more provoked them than that it should be carried among the Gentiles; (see <442221>Acts 22:21,22 <520116>1 Thessalonians 2:16). Now from these words of Moses, the Israelites must needs know, they could not but know that it was the will of God to call the Gentiles, and reject them.

Ver. 20. *But Esaias is very bold, and saith*, etc..] The apostle here produces another testimony in proof of this, that the Israelites must needs have some knowledge of this truth, the calling of the Gentiles; since a famous prophet of theirs, Isaiah, also spake out with great freedom; he did not mince the matter, or cover it with dark sayings, but with all plainness and perspicuity, and with great courage and intrepidity declared it; though he knew he run the risk, not only of his fame and credit among the Jews, but of his life also, for so doing: the citation is made from (<236501>Isaiah 65:1).

I was found of them that sought me not, I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me; here also the Gentiles are meant by “them that sought me not, and asked not after me”; the Messiah; and so R. Moses the priest says [f205], that these words are to be understood, µlw[h twmwa l[, “concerning the nations of the world”. The common people among them sought after the things of the world; their philosophers sought after the wisdom of it; and the more devout and religious among them sought the observance of superstitious rites and ceremonies, and, at best and most, a little morality and external righteousness; but none sought after Christ, for

they knew nothing of him, and therefore did not so much as ask after him; they did not ask counsel of him, nor ask concerning him, nor ask for him; not for his coming into the world, as the Jews did, nor for the preaching of the Gospel among them, for it came among them unasked for, unexpected, and undesired, as well as undeserved by them, nor for any blessing of his; and yet such was his grace and goodness, that he was "found" of these persons, in the preaching of the Gospel; which by his kind providence was brought among them, and they were brought under the hearing of it; and by the Spirit of God directed to him in it, in whom they found life, peace, pardon, righteousness, food, and rest, and every valuable blessing; a pearl of great price they found, a finding which can never be lost: he is also said to be "made manifest" unto them, not in the flesh, but in the ministry of the word; in which his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, are evidently set forth, and clearly manifested; and besides the outward manifestation of Christ to them by the Gospel, they had no internal revelation of him in their hearts by his Spirit, setting forth to them his grace and fulness, and showing them their interest therein: from this prophecy, also, the Jews could not but have some knowledge of this mystery of grace.

Ver. 21. *But to Israel he saith*, etc..] Or against Israel, or concerning Israel he saith in the same prophecy in (<2665>Isaiah 65:2).

All day long I have stretched forth my hands, unto a disobedient and gainsaying people: very rightly does the apostle apply these words to Israel, as he does the former to the Gentiles; and just in like manner does the above mentioned Jewish writer, R. Moses the priest, interpret them. The Lord's "stretching out [his] hands all the day long" to them, designs the ministry of the prophets one after another to them, the preaching of John the Baptist, of Christ and his apostles among them: but they were a stiffnecked and rebellious people, uncircumcised in heart and ears; would have none of his counsel, and despised his reproof; contradicted and blasphemed the word; rejected the Messiah and his Gospel; killed the Prince of life, and persecuted his apostles; so that it was just with God to write a "Lo-ammi", (<2809>Hosea 1:9), upon them, and cast them off; and, to pave the way for the account of the rejection of these people in the next chapter, is all this said, and these testimonies produced.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 11

The apostle having spoken of the calling of the Gentiles, and given a hint of the perverseness of the Jews in slighting the Gospel, proceeds in this chapter to treat of their rejection; in which he shows, that it was not universal, though of the greater part in his time; and which he confirms by some passages out of the Old Testament, and then points at the end and design of God in the casting them off; and exhorts the Gentiles not to insult them, but to learn to be humble and cautious by what was done to them; and foretells the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, which will be general, so that their rejection is not final; and resolves the whole dispensation of God, both with respect to Jews and Gentiles, into the unsearchable wisdom and sovereign will of God: he begins with an objection he saw would be made upon what he had said, concerning the calling of the Gentiles, and the unbelief of the Jews, that then God had wholly cast off his people, (<45 11 01>Romans 11:1), to which he answers with a "God forbid", by way of detestation; and by instancing in himself, who was of the people of the Jews, and yet was called; and by distinguishing between some and others among them: there were some who were foreknown, loved, and chosen of God from everlasting: these were not cast off, but others who were not foreknown, (<45 11 02>Romans 11:2), and then he illustrates the present case of the Jews by observing how it was with them in the times of Elias; who though he complained of their apostasy and cruelty, and imagined that there were none left but himself that worshipped the true God, yet there were then seven thousand, which were preserved from the idolatry of Baal, (<45 11 02>Romans 11:2-4), and so the apostle observes it was now, (<45 11 05>Romans 11:5), there was a small number whom God of his free grace had chosen, and reserved for himself, and so were not all cast away, as the objection suggested; and having called this choice an election of grace, he argues the contrariety and inconsistency of grace and works in this affair, (<45 11 06>Romans 11:6), and since it appeared that there were two sorts of people among them, one that were chosen and the other not, hence it was, that though Israel did not obtain the righteousness they sought for, yet they that were chosen obtained it, and so were not cast away, when the

rest were, (⁴⁶1107Romans 11:7), and that so it should be, or that this should be the case of the greater part of the Jews, that they should be given up to blindness and hardness of heart, the apostle proves by some testimonies of Isaiah and David, which he produces, (⁴⁶1108Romans 11:8-10), hence follows an objection, that if this be the case, then God had appointed them to stumble, that they might fall even all of them, and always continue fallen; to which the apostle answers with a “God forbid”, as usual, when anything is objected which is abhorred; and by observing the view, event, and order of things; showing, that the fall of the Jews issued in the salvation of the Gentiles; and the salvation of the Gentiles was to provoke the Jews to seek the same mercy, (⁴⁶1111Romans 11:11), and then follows an improvement and illustration of this end, or event of their fall, (⁴⁶1112Romans 11:12), that if the fall and lessening of the Jews were the means of enriching the Gentiles with the riches of Christ and his grace, what a glory must be brought to them, when they should all of them be converted and join them! and that the rejection of the Jews was neither total nor final, the apostle argues from his office, even as an apostle of the Gentiles, whom he addresses as such, (⁴⁶1113Romans 11:13), and from his view and end in executing that office, which was to provoke the Jews to emulate the Gentiles, and so save some of them, (⁴⁶1114Romans 11:14), and then he repeats in other words, (⁴⁶1115Romans 11:15), the argument he had used in (⁴⁶1112Romans 11:12), and proves the future conversion of the Jews, from the instances of conversion and sanctification, which had been, and were then among them; which were as the firstfruits to the lump, and the root to the branches; and were pledges and tokens of a general conversion and sanctification of them hereafter, (⁴⁶1116Romans 11:16), and by occasion of the metaphor of the root and branches before used, he expresses the rejection of the Jews, by the breaking off some of the branches, and the reception of the Gentiles by their ingrafting into a Gospel church state among the converted Jews, enjoying the same privileges with them, (⁴⁶1117Romans 11:17), and since they were originally of a wild olive tree, and merely of grace partook of the root and fatness of the good olive of the Gospel church state, as consisting first of the Jews, they ought not to be haughty and insolent, and boast and brag over the Jews, since they were beholden to them, and not the Jews to them, (⁴⁶1118Romans 11:18), and whereas an objection might be made, that the Jews were cast out, to make room for the Gentiles, (⁴⁶1119Romans 11:19), and therefore the one must be more deserving than the other; the apostle replies to it, (⁴⁶1120Romans 11:20) by granting, that the one were broken off, or rejected, that the other might be ingrafted, or taken in but then as it was

owing to unbelief in the Jews that they were cast off, in which the Gentiles were before conversion as well as they, so it was by faith they stood in their church relation, which was the gift of God, and owing to his grace; so that their ingrafting and continuance in a Gospel church state were not the effect of merit in them; wherefore he gives them this good advice, not to be proud and lifted up with their privileges, as though they were of their own deserving, but to fear the Lord and his goodness, from whence they sprung; and suggests, that they should be so far from making such an use of the rejection of the Jews, that it ought rather to engage them to caution, care, and fear; for they were the natural branches in the olive tree, and if these were not spared when behaving disagreeably, they must not expect to fare otherwise, who were originally of the wild olive tree, should they act unworthy of the privileges they enjoyed, (<45121>Romans 11:21), wherefore the apostle recommends to their serious consideration the severity of God in the casting off of the Jews, and his goodness in taking in them, the Gentiles; and threatens them with cutting off, should they slight, neglect, or misuse the goodness of God to them in his house and ordinances, (<45122>Romans 11:22), and on the other hand, an intimation is given, that the Jews, though broken off shall be grafted in again, should their unbelief discontinue, and faith in Christ be given them, which was not impossible with God; he is able both to remove their unbelief, give them faith, and reinstate them in a church relation, (<45123>Romans 11:23), and as it is without doubt he can do it, it looks very likely that he will; which may be argued from the ingrafting of the Gentiles, who were like the olive tree, wild by nature; were cut out from thence, and, contrary to nature, grafted into the good olive tree; wherefore by an argument from the lesser to the greater, much more may it be thought, that the Jews, the natural branches, will, in God's own time, be grafted in their former church state, some of their ancestors were in, (<45124>Romans 11:24), yea, the apostle argues the certainty of their conversion, and reinstatement into the Gospel church, from the design of Providence in suffering blindness in part to happen to them; which was not intended always to continue, only until all the elect of God are gathered in among the Gentiles; and this mystery of Providence and grace, he thought fit to acquaint the Gentiles with, lest they should be conceited of themselves, as if they only shared the favour of God, and were deserving of it, to the contempt of the Jews, (<45125>Romans 11:25), Moreover, the apostle affirms that all Israel shall be saved, (<45126>Romans 11:26), which is consequentially deduced from what he had said, and which he proves by a passage, out of (<23910>Isaiah 59:20), and by its being a

principal part of the covenant, which God has made with them, which he will not break, but shall be fulfilled; when he shall make them sensible of their sins, and take them away by the application of his pardoning grace, (^{[45]127}Romans 11:27), and whereas the implacable enmity of the Jews to Christ and his Gospel might be objected to such a gracious procedure of God towards them, the apostle removes the objection, by granting that they were enemies to the Gospel on account of the Gentiles, to whom it was preached; but then there was a chosen people among them, who were beloved of God; which would be made manifest, because of the oath and promise made unto their their fathers, (^{[45]128}Romans 11:28), wherefore as the purposes, promises, and covenant of God are immutable, so the gifts of his grace, and the calling of his people included in them, are things certain and irrevocable, (^{[45]129}Romans 11:29), and so the calling of the Jews, and the gifts of his grace designed for them, which is another proof of their calling and conversion; and which is further argued, and made both more probable and certain, by comparing the case of the Jews and Gentiles together; as for the Gentiles, they were formerly infidels and obtained mercy, through the unbelief of the Jews, (^{[45]130}Romans 11:30), wherefore arguing from the less probable to that which is more so, the Jews, though for the present unbelievers, yet it may be thought, that through the mercy the Gentiles had received, they would some time or other be provoked to seek for, and so obtain the same mercy, (^{[45]131}Romans 11:31), and the rather this may be given into and received, not only because they both have been in a state of unbelief, but the end and design of God in concluding them in it, were to have mercy on each of them, (^{[45]132}Romans 11:32), which dispensation of God both to one and to the other by turns, in different ways, was so amazing and unaccountable to the apostle, that he breaks out into admiration at the wisdom and knowledge of God: which were so abundant, that they could not be searched out, conceived of, and expressed, (^{[45]133}Romans 11:33), the reasons of which lay in his own breast, and are only known to himself no one having known his mind, or been his counsellor, (^{[45]134}Romans 11:34), nor is he obliged to give an account of his matters, and the reasons of his proceedings, to any of his creatures; he is not indebted to them for anything, nor does he any injustice to any of them, by whatsoever steps he takes in Providence and grace; let that appear, and recompense will be made, (^{[45]135}Romans 11:35), everything must be resolved into his sovereign will and pleasure, and so this of choosing some, and leaving others, of rejecting the Jews, and receiving the Gentiles, and also that of calling the Jews again; as it is reasonable everything should, since all

things are from him, through him, and to him, (Romans 11:36), and so all glory is due unto him, and here ends the doctrinal part of this epistle.

Ver. 1. *I say then, hath God cast away his people*? etc..] The Alexandrian, copy adds here, "whom he foreknew", as in (Romans 11:2): upon the citation of the above passages out of Moses and Isaiah, relating to the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, the apostle saw an objection would arise, which he here takes up from the mouth of an adversary, and proposes it; in which is suggested, that God has cast away all his people the Jews, according to this count; and if so, where is his covenant with Abraham? what is become of his promises? and how is his faithfulness to be accounted for? and what hope can any Israelite have of ever obtaining salvation? than which, nothing can be thought more injurious to God, and absurd in itself. This was an old prejudice of the Jewish nation, and still continues, that God never would, nor has he cast them away, even in their present condition; it is one of the articles of their creed, received by the Karaites [f206], a sect among them, that

> "the blessed God twlgh yçnal sam al, "hath not cast away the men of the captivity", though they are under the chastisements of God; but it is fit that they should every day obtain salvation by the hands of Messiah, the Son of David."

Now to this objection the apostle makes answer; "first", in his usual way,

God forbid, when anything was objected which was displeasing to him, abhorred by him, which was not agreeable to the perfections of God, to the truth of his word, and promises, and could by no means be admitted of; and next by observing his own case, which was a standing instance to the contrary; for God had chosen him unto eternal salvation, Christ had redeemed him by his blood, and he was effectually called by grace; and as to his eternal state, he had no doubt or scruple about it; and besides, the Lord had made him a minister of the Gospel, had greatly qualified him for that work, had raised him to the high office of an apostle, and had made him very useful to the souls of many, both Jews and Gentiles; and yet he was one of the nation of the Jews, and therefore God had not cast them all away, as the objection insinuates:

for I also am an Israelite; according to the flesh, by lineal descent from Jacob or Israel; (see 2 Corinthians 11:22 Philippians 3:5); as well as in a spiritual sense:

of the seed of Abraham; “the grandfather of Israel”; the head of the Jewish nation he was, both of his natural and of his spiritual seed, who is the father of us all:

of the tribe of Benjamin; a very little tribe, which in the time of the Judges was near being destroyed, and, upon the return from the captivity of Babylon, was very small, as it was at this time; and yet God had not cast away this, much less all the tribes of Israel.

Ver. 2. *God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew*, etc..] The apostle goes on with his answer to the objection, by distinguishing and explaining who he meant by the people God had not cast away, namely, which were “foreknown” by him; for all mankind are in a sense his people, being made, maintained, and supported in their beings by him, yet they are not all foreknown; for were they, they would be all predestinated, called, conformed to the image of Christ, justified and glorified; but some of them will be cast away, being bad and wicked, and will be sent into everlasting punishment: and though the people of the Jews in general were the people of God, being in a sense chose, known, and distinguished by him from the rest of the world, yet they were not all a “foreknown” people, in the sense the apostle uses the word; wherefore a great number of them were cast away, of which afterwards the apostle speaks largely in this chapter: but then there were a people among them, that were the people of God in a more special sense; they were chosen by him from everlasting to be his people; they were taken into the covenant of his grace as such; they were given to Christ as his people, and were redeemed and saved by him on that account; and were, or were to be called, with an holy calling, when they are openly declared to be the people of God, whom he foreknew: he not merely knew them before, by his general prescience and foreknowledge, which extends to all persons and things; or foresaw their faith, holiness, and good works, and so chose them for himself; for faith, holiness, and good works, are fruits and effects of electing grace; but he so knew them before, even from all eternity, as that he approved of them, liked them, loved them, and took delight and complacency in them: now these his people he never did, nor never will cast away. Their numbers may be but very small in some periods of time, yet none of them are cast away; God may not immediately arise to their help and assistance in time of distress, or so soon as they desire and expect; he may withdraw his presence, hide himself, and stand at a distance from them; he may afflict them in a fatherly way, when they may think he has cast them off, or cast them away;

whereas he never casts any of them away, nor out of his heart's love, nor out of his sight, nor out of the covenant of his grace, nor out of the hands of his Son, nor out of his family, or so as that any of them shall perish eternally; so far from it, that he takes the utmost delight in them, grants them the greatest nearness to himself, bears the strongest affection for them, and takes the most diligent care of them; whoever casts them out of their affection and company, he will not; the reasons are, because his love to them is unchangeable, his purpose concerning their salvation stands firm and sure, his word and oath are unalterable, his gifts and calling are without repentance; and they are his jewels, portion, and inheritance; they are as the apple of his eye, and continually held by his right hand. The apostle next replies to this objection, by putting them in mind of the case and state of the church of God, in the times of Elijah; and what judgment that prophet formed of it, and in which he appeared to be mistaken:

wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? do ye not know? ye cannot be ignorant who have, and read the Scripture, what it says of Elias, or "in Elias"; that is, as the Arabic version renders it, "in the history of Elias"; in the account it gives of his life and times:

how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying: that is, how he spoke to God in prayer concerning Israel; and instead of praying for them, as the prophets were wont to do, he was obliged to bring a complaint against them for their idolatry, contempt of the worship of God, and violent persecution of his true followers. The apostle chose to mention this instance because there was some likeness between his case and Elijah's; and the state of the people of Israel at the then present time, and as in the times of Elijah; for as the Jews in his time killed and persecuted the prophets of the Lord, so in the present time they had killed the Lord Jesus Christ, and persecuted his apostles; and as Elijah, though one of their own prophets, was obliged to make intercession against them, so the apostle, though one of their own countrymen, could not but speak against them, and of their just rejection by God: and this he observes, to soften their resentments against him, when so great a prophet had done so before him: and this the Jews themselves own [f207], for they say that Elijah larçy l[ayyrwgyjq rbdm, "brought an accusation against Israel": and it is observed by another [f208] that

> “coals are said of Isaiah and Elijah, because they delivered an accusation against Israel: one called them a people of unclean lips, and the other said, for they have forsaken thy covenant:”

which is the apostle's sense.

Ver. 3. *Lord, they have killed thy prophets*, etc..] By the order of Jezebel, wife of Ahab king of Israel, (<11804>1 Kings 18:4). This sin of slaying the prophets of the Lord is charged upon the Jews by Christ, (<40231>Matthew 23:31,37), and by the apostle, (<520215>1 Thessalonians 2:15). In the text in (<111914>1 Kings 19:14), it is added, “with the sword”: which expresses the manner of death they were put to; and this clause is there put after the following, according to a rule of transposition among the Jews; (see Gill on “<402710>Matthew 27:10”).

And digged down thine altars; either the altars which the patriarchs had formerly built, and were still in being; and though not used, yet were kept and had in great veneration; wherefore the pulling of them down was done in contempt of them, and of the worship of God, which had been formerly performed there; or else such altars, which the religious among the ten tribes built, since the times of Jeroboam, who forbad them to go up to Jerusalem, but ordered them to go to Dan or Bethel; which they not choosing to do erected altars in different places for divine service, and which the Jews [f209] say were allowed; for from that time, the prohibition of altars at other places than at Jerusalem ceased:

and I am left alone: meaning either as a prophet, not knowing that Obadiah had hid an hundred prophets by fifty in a cave, (<11804>1 Kings 18:4); or else as a worshipper of the true God, imagining that he was the only person in Israel, that had a true zeal for the Lord of hosts:

and they seek my life; lay in wait for it, Jezebel by her emissaries being in quest of him; it is added in (<111914>1 Kings 19:14), “to take it away”; for she had swore by her gods, that by the morrow about that time, his life should be as the life of one of the prophets of Baal he had slain; and in one copy it is added here.

Ver. 4. *But what saith the answer of God unto him*? etc..] The divine response, or oracle, the lwq tb, “Bath Kol”, or voice from heaven; the still small voice of the Lord, which Elijah heard, (<111912>1 Kings 19:12):

I have reserved to myself; for his worship and service, to be partakers of his grace, inheritors of his kingdom, to show forth his praise, and for his name's sake, for his honour and glory: these he reserved in eternal election, in the council and covenant of peace; separated them in time from others by his grace, and preserved them from the general defection and apostasy: even

seven thousand men: meaning either that precise and exact number, which was but small in comparison of the very large multitude of persons that were in the ten tribes, or else a certain number for an uncertain:

who have not bowed the knee; a sign of reverence and adoration:

to [the image] of Baal; Jezebel's god, the god of the Zidonians; a name common to many of the “deities” of the Gentiles, and signifies “lord”, or “master”; we read of “Baalim” in the plural number, for there were “lords many” of this name: in the Greek text the article is of the feminine gender, wherefore our translators have supplied the word image. This word has, in the Septuagint version, sometimes a feminine article as here; (see 2 Kings 21:3 Jeremiah 2:8,23,28 7:9 11:13) (Jeremiah 12:16 19:5 23:27 32:29,35 Hosea 2:8 13:1); but in (1 Kings 19:18), from whence this passage is taken, the article is masculine, as it is also in (Judges 2:11,13), and in other places. This deity being either of both sexes, or of no distinguished sex; or it may be, the reason it has so often a feminine article is, because it was a young heifer, or in the form of one; so in the history of Tobias 1:5, it is said, that “all the tribes which apostatized together sacrificed”, τη βααλ τη δαμαλει, “to Baal the heifer”. The apostle's view in mentioning this instance is to show, that when the church and cause of God are at the lowest, God has always some true worshippers of him; and that he never casts away his foreknown people, whose numbers are generally more than they are thought to be by the saints themselves; good men, as Elijah, may be mistaken in this matter; all which he accommodates to the then present state of God's people, in (Romans 11:5).

Ver. 5. *Even so then at this present time also*, etc..] In which the apostle lived, the time of preaching the Gospel, the accepted time, the day of salvation, which then was, and also now is; at that time when the Gospel was sent unto the Gentiles, and God took out of them a people for his name; when multitudes of them were converted, and embraced the faith of Christ; and when the Jews in general had rejected the Messiah, killed the

Lord Jesus, persecuted his apostles, and contradicted and blasphemed the Gospel; yet still God had made a reserve of some among them, for himself:

there is a remnant; alluding either to (<23 10 22>Isaiah 10:21,22), or to the oracle delivered to Elijah, saying, “I have reserved”, or “left”, etc.. (<11 19 18>1 Kings 19:18 <45 11 04>Romans 11:4), that as God had reserved for himself, in Elijah's time, a number of persons, who had not gone into the idolatrous worship of Baal, when the greater part of the Israelites did, so he had taken care to make a like reserve in the apostle's time, when the bulk of the Jewish nation had refused the Messiah, and despised his Gospel. This is a further proof, that God had not cast away all the people of the Jews; and that as Elijah was not the only worshipper of the true God in his time, so the apostle was not the only instance of grace among that people now; there was a number of them; the number of the disciples after our Lord's ascension, was an hundred and twenty; upon the first sermon preached by Peter, three thousand were converted, and added to them; after that, they are said to be about five thousand, and still multitudes were added, both of men and women, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith; so that before the dispersion of the church at Jerusalem by a persecution, there might be at least such a number called by grace, as God had reserved in Elijah's time; though these, when compared with the generality of the nation, which remained in unbelief, were but a few, and therefore called a “remnant”, or a “reserve”, as the word may be rendered; for these were a set of men, whom God had reserved and preserved in his Son, and in the covenant of his grace, from everlasting; and had kept a watchful eye over them in time, reserved them in his providence, and saved them to be called; and by calling them, had reserved them by his grace, and preserved them by his power, from the general unbelief, impenitence, blindness, and ignorance, which prevailed over the people of the Jews; which reserve was not owing to their superior goodness, they being in no wise, with respect to nature, birth, and privileges, better than those who were not reserved; nor to the disposition of their minds and wills, their minds and consciences being defiled, and their wills naturally as obstinate and perverse as others; nor to any good works done by them, since works before calling are not properly good, and those after are the fruits of that grace: but this reverse was made,

according to the election of grace; God's choice of these persons before the world was, which is the source and spring of all the blessings of grace, both in time eternity: hence these persons were put into the hands of

Christ, secured in an everlasting covenant, took special care of by divine Providence, were called by grace, justified, sanctified, and at last glorified: and this choice is owing to grace, for not men's choice of God's grace, but God's choice, owing to his, own grace, is here meant. The Pelagians would have it, that this election is the choice which man makes of the grace of God: whereas such is the enmity of mans nature, and will against God and his grace, that he would never make choice of that, if the grace of God did not first make choice of him, and lay hold upon him: grace here, does not design the object of the choice, but the cause, spring, and motive of it, which is not any habit or quality in men, as faith and holiness, for these are fruits and effects of electing grace, and so not causes, motives, or conditions of it, but the free love and favour of God in his own heart; and shows the sovereignty and freeness of election, which is no ways depending on the will and works of men, but upon the sovereign good will and pleasure of God.

Ver. 6. *And if by grace, then is it no more of works*, etc..] Upon election, being called “the election of grace”, the apostle forms an argument, showing the contrariety and inconsistency of grace, and works, in that affair; proving, that it must be by the one or the other: and if by the one, then not by the other; and that these two cannot be mixed and blended together in this matter. If election is “by grace”, as it certainly is; for no other reason can be given why God has chose one, and not another, but his own sovereign pleasure, or that free favour and unmerited love, with which he loves one and not another; and not because they are better, or had done or would do better things than others; “then it is no more”, or not at all, for it never was “of works”, was not influenced by them, does not arise from them, for it passed before ever any were done; and those that are done aright spring from it, and therefore could never be the rule and measure, causes, motives, and conditions of it;

otherwise grace is no more grace; for

> “grace (as Austin has long ago observed) is not grace, unless it is altogether freed;”

it will lose its nature, and ought to change its name, and be no more called or reckoned grace, but a due debt; and a choice of persons to salvation should be thought, not to be what God is free to make or not, but what he is obliged to, as a reward of debt to men's works:

but if it be of works, then it is no more grace; if election springs from, and depends upon the works of men, let no man ascribe it to the grace of God; for there is nothing of grace in it, if this be the case:

otherwise work is no more work; that will free gift: but these things are contrary to one another; and so unalienable and unalterable in their natures, that the one cannot pass into the other, or the one be joined with the other, in this or any other part of man's salvation; for what is here said of election, holds true of justification, pardon of sin, and the whole of salvation. The Ethiopic version applies it to justification.

Ver. 7. *What then*? etc..] What can be said to the point the apostle is upon? it is as clear as the sun, out of all question, that God has not cast away all the people of the Jews, nor any whom he foreknew, any age or period of time; neither in the time Elijah, nor in the apostle's, he always having a reserve of some for himself; which reserve is owing to a previous choice of them, and that previous choice to ascribed not to any works of theirs, but to his free grace and sovereign pleasure. Indeed

Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; that is, carnal Israel, the body and bulk of that people; who sought for life and righteousness by their obedience to the law, and which they in general were in quest of, and pursuit after, but did not obtain, though, some of them might imagine they did; for the thing was impracticable and impossible, no life nor righteousness are ever to be had by the law of works; they did not obtain life and righteousness, because they sought them in a wrong place and in a wrong way; they sought them not by faith in Christ Jesus, where they are only to be had, but by their own works, which fall abundantly short of procuring them for them:

but the election hath obtained it. The apostle divides Israel into two parts, “the election and the rest”: by “the election” he means, elect men, the remnant among them, whom God had reserved for himself; just as “circumcision” designs circumcised persons, and “uncircumcision” uncircumcised persons, and “calling” called ones, and “righteousness” righteous men and women; (see <45>Romans 3:30 <46>1 Corinthians 1:26) (<61>2 Peter 3:13). Now these chosen ones obtained mercy, grace, life, and righteousness in Christ, as the apostle himself did, who was one of them; and that by virtue, and in consequence of their election, for which reason the word is here used; hence mercy was shown them, grace was bestowed upon them, the righteousness of Christ was imputed to them, faith was

given them, holiness was wrought in them, and they entitled to, and made meet for eternal life: these among Israel then obtained such favours and blessings; and so God's elect, in all ages and nations, obtain the same things, and will obtain; for the purpose of God according to election stands sure, his word and oath are immutable, his covenant inviolable, his grace inalienable, and his power omnipotent:

and the rest were blinded: the non-elect, or those who were not chosen and reserved, to whom Christ was “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence”; and who “stumbled at the word” of the Gospel, “being disobedient” to the divine revelation, “whereunto they were appointed”, (<60208>1 Peter 2:8); hence they obtained no mercy, grace, faith, life, righteousness, and eternal salvation, but were “blinded”; left in that native blindness and ignorance, in which they were born and brought up; were blinded by themselves wilfully more and more; as they knew not the Messiah, so neither would they understand; they sinned wilfully against light knowledge; they shut their eyes against all that evidence and demonstration given, of Jesus of Nazareth being the Messiah, by his doctrines and miracles; and they were blinded by Satan, the god of this world, by whom they were led captive; who wrought effectually in them, and stirred up the malice and enmity of their minds against Christ and his Gospel; for they were of their father the devil, and his lusts they would do; and they were also blinded by God himself, so that they could not believe; for after all this, it was but just with God to give them up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart.

Ver. 8. *According as it is written*, etc..] In (<232910>Isaiah 29:10 6:10) which passages the apostle seems to refer to, though it is not exactly word for word as here, yet the sense is the same:

God hath given them the spirit of slumber; or of stupidity and insensibility, so that they were as persons in a deep sleep; their senses locked up, without any knowledge of, or concern about, the danger they were in; having no sense of sin, or of the need of a Saviour; or of their being upon the borders of eternal ruin and damnation, or of any ways and means to escape it; but careless and secure, as persons fast asleep in the midst of the sea, or upon the top of a mast, who, when stricken and beaten, feel it not; but if by jogging are awaked at all, immediately return to sleep again, and so sleep the sleep of eternal death:

eyes that they should not see; which being closed by the deep sleep and stupidity of mind they were judicially given up to, could see no beauty in Christ, wherefore they should desire him; none of the glories and excellencies of his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; noticing amiable and agreeable in his Gospel, and the truths of it; nor had they any light in the prophets of the Old Testament, which were so remarkably fulfilled in him; their minds were blinded, a vail was upon their hearts, and which remains to this day:

and ears that they should not hear; for persons in a sleep, as their eyes are closed that they cannot see, so their ears are stopped that they cannot hear: and thus it was with these Jews, the awful judgment being upon them; they were uncircumcised in heart and ears; they were like the deaf adder, stopping their ears to the charming voice of Christ in the Gospel; and being given up in a judicial way, could neither understand his speech, nor hear his word: and this spirit of stupidity and insensibility, as it appeared in the times of Isaiah, so it continued

unto this day; the then present time, in which the apostle lived; and has continued ever since, at least in part, and will until the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in. These passages, with some others following, are produced by the apostle out of their own prophets, to take off their resentment against him; and lest, he should be thought to be severe upon them, when he said no more of them, but what had been prophesied long before concerning them. So Jarchi on (<232910>Isaiah 29:10); says, that Isaiah prophesies larçyy[çwp l[, “concerning the transgressors of Israel”.

Ver. 9. *And David saith*, etc..] That is, Christ by the mouth of David, or David in the person of Christ; for the psalm out of which the following words are taken is a prophecy of the Messiah, as appears from some passages cited out of it in the New Testament, and applied to Christ; compare (<451104>Romans 11:4) with (<431525>John 15:25), and (<451109>Romans 11:9) with (<430217>John 2:17 <451503>Romans 15:3), and (<451121>Romans 11:21) with (<431928>John 19:28,29); and what are here cited are not so much imprecations, as predictions of what should befall the Jews, by way of recompense for their ill usage of the Messiah, in giving him gall for meat, and vinegar for drink, (<402734>Matthew 27:34):

let their table be made a snare, and a trap and a stumbling block. By their “table” may be meant, the altar; (see <390107>Malachi 1:7,12); and the sacrifices

offered up upon it, their meat offerings and drink offerings, and all others; likewise the laws concerning the difference of meats, and indeed the whole ceremonial law may be intended, which lay in meats and drinks, and such like things: now the Jews placing their justifying righteousness before God, in the observance of these rites and ceremonies, and imagining that by these sacrifices their sins were really expiated and atoned for, they neglected and submitted not to the righteousness of Christ, but went about to establish their own; so that that which should have led them to Christ, became an handwriting of ordinances against them, and rendered Christ of no effect to them: moreover, the sacred writings, which are full of spiritual food and divine refreshment, the prophecies of the Old Testament, which clearly pointed out Christ, not being understood, but misapplied by them, proved a trap, a snare, and a stumbling block to them; so that they rejected the true Messiah, which issued in their utter ruin and destruction: yea, the preaching of the Gospel, the salutary truths and wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, were a stumbling block to the Jews, nay, even the savour of death unto death. Though these words may be literally understood of their table mercies, the necessary provisions of life, their common food and drink, of which they had great scarcity in their last wars; so that they not only by wicked methods stole it from one another, but ate what was forbidden by their law, and what was abhorrent to nature, as one is said to eat her own child; nor is it to be overlooked what is suggested by some, that the passover may be meant by their “table”; which was their grand yearly feast, and which they were eating [f210] when they were surrounded and taken by the Roman army, like birds in a net, or beasts in a trap: and all this as

a recompense to them; a just judgment upon them, by way of retaliation for their ill treatment of Christ when on the cross, giving him gall and vinegar for his meat and drink.

Ver. 10. *Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see*, etc..] Which is to be understood not literally of their being struck with blindness, as the men of Sodom were by the angels, and as Elymas the sorcerer was by the Apostle Paul; but mystically, of the eyes of their understandings being darkened, as they were by themselves and by Satan, and judicially by God; so that they could not see into the true same of the prophecies and promises concerning Christ; and how all the characters of the Messiah met in Jesus of Nazareth; their eyes were so blinded, that they could see no beauty nor comeliness in him; no excellency in his person, nothing

wonderful in his works, nor amiable in his doctrine; nay, not only spiritual things, the things of the Gospel, were hid from the most wise and prudent among them, from their doctors and Rabbins, but also the things which regarded their temporal peace and happiness were hid from their eyes; their eyes were not only darkened with respect to things spiritual and evangelical, but even with regard to things natural and civil: never did a people act more imprudently for their temporal safety and welfare, or appear so infatuated in all their conduct, as they did, as the history of their wars does abundantly declare:

and bow down their back alway; which may denote their subjection and bondage to the Romans, when taken and carried captive by them; who laid very heavy burdens on them, which bowed down their backs indeed, multitudes of them being condemned to the mines; or this may design the general disposition of the minds of these people, which are bowed to the earth, for they mind nothing but earth and earthly things; the acquiring of which they are bent upon at any rate, and are infamous for their earthly mindedness, covetousness, extortion, usury, tricking, and over reaching: or this phrase may be expressive of that trembling, distress, horror, and despair, which shall seize them; especially when the son of man comes in the clouds of heaven, and they that have pierced him shall behold him, and wail because of trim; for in the Psalms the words are, “make their loins continually to shake”, (<19B923>Psalm 69:23).

Ver. 11. *I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall*? etc..] This is an objection, which the apostle takes from the mouth of an adversary; and the purport of it is, you say that the people of the Jews being blind, have stumbled at Christ and his Gospel, as was prophesied of them, and to which they were appointed; pray what were God's view and end in this? was it that they should fall and perish eternally? if it be so, is not this doing himself, what he forbids others, namely, “to put a stumblingblock before the blind?” (<031914>Leviticus 19:14), and can he be excused from cruelty, and rejoicing at the misery of others? or is their stumbling permitted, that they should “all” fall through unbelief, and be cast away? and so it is an objection of the same kind with (<451101>Romans 11:1); or since they have stumbled, and have thereby fell into a forlorn and miserable condition, are they always to continue in it, as the last clause in the above cited passage suggests? To which the apostle answers,

God forbid; neither of these are to be admitted of. The end which God had in view, in suffering the Jews to stumble and fall, was not their destruction, but rather the salvation of the Gentiles; and especially not the destruction of "all" of them, blindness had only happened "in part" to them; for there was a remnant among them according to the election of grace, which should be saved; a chosen number, which obtained life and righteousness by Christ; yea, a fulness of them, how small soever their number might be now, which should be brought in; and still less that they should always continue in this sad condition, their unbelief had brought them into; for the time would come, when there would be a receiving of them as life from the dead, when all Israel should be saved. And at present there appeared nothing ill in view,

but rather through their fall, salvation is come unto the Gentiles. That is, the Gospel; which is sometimes called salvation, the Gospel of our salvation, the word of "salvation"; because it is a declaration of salvation by Christ, and is the power of God unto it; or a means made effectual by the power of God to convince persons, both of their need, and of the worth of it, and also a means of the application of it to them, by the Spirit of God: now this came to the Gentiles by the ministry of the apostles, according to the orders and command of Christ; and that through the fall of the Jews, their unbelief and rejection of the Messiah; for the Gospel was first preached to them, but they contradicting and blaspheming it, the apostles turned to the Gentiles, and preached it to them, as the Lord had commanded them: and thus they came to be acquainted with the doctrine of salvation by a crucified Christ, and to have it powerfully applied to their souls by the Spirit of God; when salvation might be said to "come" to them, in such sense as our Lord says it did to Zacchaeus and his house, (<42 19 9>Luke 19:9): and another end is to be answered hereby; which is

for to provoke them to jealousy: that is, to provoke the Jews to jealousy; not in an ill sense, as in (<45 10 19>Romans 10:19), and as they were provoked upon the first sending of the Gospel to the Gentiles, and the calling of them, when they discovered a great deal of envy, wrath, and bitterness; but in a good sense, as will appear in the latter day, when being convinced of their sin in rejecting the Messiah, and observing the many advantages the Gentiles have received by embracing him, and they have lost by their contempt of him, will be provoked to an holy emulation of them, and be stirred up through their means to seek the Lord their God, and David their King; and thus things will wind about in Providence. The fall of the Jews

makes way for the Gospel among the Gentiles; and this having had its effects with them, will be a means of putting the Jews upon serious thoughts about, and a studious inquiry after, the true Messiah, and salvation by him; all which is a full answer to the question, and the objection contained in it.

Ver. 12. *Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world*, etc..] By "the world", as is clear from the next clause, is meant the Gentiles; who were frequently called so by the Jews, who reckoned themselves to be "the church", and all the nations round about them, "the world"; which observation may serve to illustrate other passages of Scripture; (see <430316>John 3:16 <470519>2 Corinthians 5:19 <620202>1 John 2:2); now the fall of the Jews, which was a lessening of them, was the riches of the Gentiles;

and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; the number of the true believers in Christ among them were very few, the generality of them received him not, but stumbled at him, and fell through unbelief; but the few that did believe were the means of carrying and spreading the Gospel, which is, "the unsearchable riches of Christ", (<490308>Ephesians 3:8), in the Gentile world: thus at first a persecution being raised against the church at Jerusalem, the ministers of the Gospel were scattered abroad, and went everywhere preaching the word; and afterwards the Jews behaving in a very indecent manner towards the apostles of Christ, they turned in a manner wholly to the Gentiles; and thus by the means of a few, a diminutive company, of which the Apostle Paul was one, the Gospel, the pearl of great price, treasure hid in a field, and put into earthen vessels, was carried into the Heathen world, and by it they were enriched. This handful of men that went out of Judea, were the means of converting vast numbers, large multitudes of souls among the Gentiles, which may be also designed by "riches": this word sometimes signifying plenty, see (<450204>Romans 2:4); and also of enriching them with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and of directing them to Christ, who has durable riches, treasures of wisdom and knowledge, riches of grace, and riches of glory. Now the apostle argues, that if such a small number of the Jews who embraced Christ, were of so much advantage to the Gentiles,

how much more their fulness? when converts to Christ among them will be as the sand of the sea, a nation of them shall be born again at once, and all Israel be saved. This will be a great accession to the Gentile church, bring much glory to it, contribute greatly to its welfare, and be a means of

establishing their faith, and of putting fresh life and vigour into them, and of inspiring them with more zeal for Christ, and for his honour and glory.

Ver. 13. *For I speak to you Gentiles*, etc..] The church at Rome, as the primitive churches for the most part did, consisted of Jews and Gentiles; hence the apostle sometimes addresses the one, as in (Romans 2:17,25 7:1), and sometimes the other, as here; and this he does to observe unto them the grace and goodness of God, in enriching them with the Gospel of salvation; and that they might not despise the Jews, from whom it first came out, and through whose fall it came to them, and was preached among them by some of that nation:

in as much as I am the apostle of the Gentiles. He was ordained and set apart by God, in his eternal purposes, to be a teacher of the Gentiles; he was sent immediately by Christ to bear his name among them, though not among them only, to the exclusion of the people of Israel; he chiefly preached the Gospel to them, though sometimes to the Jews also; and the success of his ministry was mostly among the uncircumcision, though he sought by all ways and means to gain both Jews and Gentiles: hence he addresses the Gentiles with greater freedom and boldness, because he was their apostle, and had been so useful among them; and is a reason why we Gentiles should have a special regard to his writings; for though every word of God is pure, and all Scripture is divinely inspired, and is profitable on one account or other; nor is any part of it to be slighted and neglected; yet as Paul's epistles are written chiefly to the Gentile churches, excepting that to the Hebrews, and which some question whether it is his, they ought especially to be attended to by us; though, alas, of all the inspired writings they are had in the least esteem:

I magnify mine office: not himself, for he was not of a self-exalting spirit, but humble and lowly minded, ready at all times to own himself to be less than the least of saints and the chief of sinners; but his office, which he had received from Christ, as an instance of his grace and favour. This was magnified partly by the miracles, signs, and wonders done by him, in proof, and for the confirmation of his apostleship; and partly by his constant, diligent, and faithful preaching of the Gospel: as also by the unwearied pains he took to spread it far and near; and likewise by the numbers of souls he was the means of bringing to the knowledge of Christ; and it was no small accession of glory to his office, as an apostle of the Gentiles, that he was an instrument of the conversion of many among the Jews.

Ver. 14. *If by any means I may provoke to emulation*, etc..] What he had in view, even in discharging his office among the Gentiles with so much labour, assiduity, and indefatigableness, was, that if possible he might stir up the Jews to emulate and imitate the Gentiles, in seeking after Christ; for these he means when he says,

them which are my flesh; they being his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh, for it was common with the eastern nations to call such persons their flesh; (see <01294>Genesis 29:14 37:27 <23807>Isaiah 58:7); and carries in it a reason why he was so solicitous for their welfare, because of the relation of them to him, and the natural affection he bore towards them; and his hope was, that they seeing the nations of the earth blessed in the promised seed, through his preaching the Gospel to them, great gatherings of the people to Shiloh, and the Gentiles seeking to the root of Jesse, set up for an ensign to the people, might be provoked to an emulation of them; and likewise seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and thereby have his end he so much wished for and desired:

and might save some of them; he says "some", not all, for he knew the bulk of the people was rejected, only a seed was left among them, a remnant according to the election of grace that should be saved, and which did obtain righteousness and life, while the rest were blinded. The ministers of the Gospel may be said to save souls, not efficiently, for the author or efficient cause of salvation is God only; the Father has chose unto it, the Son has effected it, and the Spirit applies it; but instrumentally, as the word preached by them is the means of regeneration, faith, and conversion, with which salvation is connected: and as they show unto men the way of salvation, and encourage souls to believe in Christ, in whom alone it is. Now the apostle argues from his office, and the usefulness of it, to some among the Jews, to saving purposes, to prove that their rejection was not total.

Ver. 15. *For if the casting away of them*, etc..] This argument, as before, in (<45112>Romans 11:12), is from the lesser to the greater, showing that as the Gentiles received present advantage through the rejection of the Jews, they would receive far greater at their future recovery, and which proves that their rejection is not final; for by "the casting away of them", is meant the rejection of the Jews, and refers to God's writing a "Lo-ammi", (<28109>Hosea 1:9), upon them, and his taking away the Gospel from them, and which were the occasion of

the reconciling of the world, the Gentiles; not of God's drawing the scheme of their reconciliation in his Son; nor of the actual reconciliation of them by his sufferings and death; but of the Gospel, the word of reconciliation being carried among them upon the Jews' disbelief and contempt of it, which was made effectual by the power of divine grace, to the reconciling of them to God, to the, way of salvation by Christ; to be willing to serve him, and be saved by him; to, lay down their arms, surrender to his victorious grace, and become obedient to him both by word and deed; and if this was the case then, as it was, he asks

what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? By the receiving of them is meant the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, when they will be received by Christ, on whom they will look with an eye of faith, and mourn in an evangelical manner for their sins against him; who casts out none that come unto him, but receives them into his arms in the most kind and tender manner; and when they will be also openly received into the house and family of God, into the visible church of Christ; and as the apostle afterwards says, “be grafted into their own olive tree”, (Romans 11:24); and this their restoration will be as “life from the dead”; which regards not so much the quickening of the Jews themselves, though their conversion will be, as the conversion of every sinner is, a resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace, and is so represented in (Ezekiel 37:1-14), but rather the reviving the work of God among the Gentile churches, who having lain long in a dead, lifeless, lukewarm, and indifferent frame of spirit, will be aroused and quickened, at this wonderful work of grace upon the Jews; and besides it will be as unexpected by them, and as surprising to them, as a person's being raised from the dead would be; yea as joyful, and as welcome to them, as if a man received his nearest relation and friend from the dead; add to this, and which some of the ancients make to be the sense of the place, quickly after the conversion of the Jews, the fulness of the Gentiles being brought in, and nothing more to be done in a way of grace, the first resurrection from the dead will follow, and happy is he that will have part in it.

Ver. 16. *For if the firstfruit be holy*, etc..] Some by “the firstfruit” and “root” understand Christ, who is sometimes called, “the firstfruits of them that slept”, (1 Corinthians 15:20), and “the root of Jesse and David”, (Isaiah 11:10 Romans 15:12 Revelation 5:5), and indeed of all the righteous; and certain it is, that since he is holy, has all the holiness of his people in him, and is sanctification unto them, they shall be holy

likewise; have it imparted to them in this life, and perfected in them in another: but this does not seem to agree with the apostle's argument. Others think that by them are meant the Jewish ancestors, and particularly Abraham, and dream of a holiness derived from him to his natural seed; but if no such holiness was derived from him to his immediate offspring, Ishmael, it can hardly be thought any should be communicated by him to his remote posterity; and to these here designed, at the distance of four or five thousand years from him: but by them are intended the first converts among the Jews, under the Gospel dispensation; it being usual with the apostle to call those persons, that were first converted in any place, the firstfruits of it; (see <450605>Romans 16:5 <461605>1 Corinthians 16:15); These were they who received the firstfruits of the Spirit in Judea, and who first among the Jews hoped and believed in Christ; these were but few in number, as the “firstfruit” is but small in comparison of “the lump”, and mean, abject, and despicable, as the “root” under, and in a dry ground is; but yet were pledges and presages of a larger number of souls among that people, to be converted in the latter day: now the apostle's argument is, “if the firstfruit be holy”,

the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy, so are the branches; that is, that whereas those persons who were converted among the Jews, however few in number, and despicable in appearance they might be, yet were truly sanctified by the Spirit of God; and as they were, so should the whole body of that people be in the last days, “when holiness [shall] be upon the horses' bells, [and] every pot in Judah and Jerusalem shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts”, (<381420>Zechariah 14:20,21), by which metaphorical expressions is meant, that holiness should be common to the whole nation, and all the inhabitants of it, of which the call of some few among them was a pledge and presage. The allusion in the former clause is to the holy offerings of firstfruits to the Lord, the two wave loaves, (<032314>Leviticus 23:14,17), whereby the whole lump was sanctified, for after use throughout the year following; and that in the latter clause, to the holiness of trees; that is, to trees devoted to sacred use or that were planted in a field appropriated thereunto: hence we read [f211], that the men of Jericho permitted, or as other exemplars read it, cut down çdqh lç twyzmg, “branches of holiness”, or “holy branches”; and eat fallen fruit on the sabbath day. [f212] Bartenora explains these branches, of such that grow upon a tree devoted to holy uses; and Maimonides [f213], observes, that they thought it lawful to eat what grew in a holy field.

Ver. 17. *And if some of the branches be broken*, etc..] This is to be understood, not of the exclusion of the Jews from their national church; for the persons designed by the "branches", were the principal members of it, as the civil and ecclesiastical rulers, the priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, and the far greater part of the people; and on the other hand, the apostles and followers of Christ were put out of their synagogues, and deemed by them heretics and apostates: nor of the destruction of the Jewish nation, city, and temple; for as yet they existed as a nation, their city of Jerusalem was in being, and their temple standing: but of their being left out of the Gospel church, gathered among them, they not believing in the Messiah, but rejected and crucified him; and though afterwards the Gospel was preached to them, they despise it, contradicted, and blasphemed it; so that it pleased God to take it wholly away from them, when they might be truly said to be, "as branches broken off"; which phrase seems to be borrowed from (Jeremiah 11:16); they were withered, lifeless, and hopeless, being cast off by God, and neglected by his ministers, the Gospel being removed from them, and they without the means of grace and salvation: and this was the case of the generality of the people; for though the apostle only says "some", making the best of it in their favour against the Gentiles, and speaking in the softest terms; yet they were only a few, a seed, a remnant, that were taken into the Gospel church, and the rest were blinded, hardened, rejected, and left out for their unbelief:

and thou being a wild olive tree: speaking to the Gentiles, to some, not to all of them; for not a whole tree, but a part of one, what is cut out of it, a scion from it is grafted into another; and so they were a certain number which God took out from among the Gentiles, to be a people for his name and glory, and who before conversion were comparable to a wild olive tree; for though they might have some show of morality, religion, and worship, yet lived in gross ignorance, superstition, idolatry, and profaneness were destitute of a divine revelation, of all spiritual light and knowledge, of true righteousness and the grace of God; were barren and unfruitful in good works, were without hope, God and Christ in the world. This metaphor rather regards their character, case, and manners, than their original; in respect of which they and the Jews were on a level, being by nature equally corrupt, and children of wrath; and yet though a wild olive tree, were

grafted amongst them; meaning either the broken branches, in whose stead they were grafted; the Syriac version favours this sense, reading it

ˆwhyt kwdb, “in their place”; as also in (<451119>Romans 11:19); and so the Ethiopic version: or rather the believing Jews, of whom the first Gospel church and churches consisted; for the Jews first trusted in Christ, received the firstfruits of the Spirit, and were first incorporated into a Gospel church state; and then the Gentiles which believed were received among them. The first coalition of Jews and Gentiles, or the ingrafting of the Gentiles in among the Jews that believed, was at Antioch, when dropping their distinctive names of Jews and Gentiles, they took the common name of Christians, (<441119>Acts 11:19-21,26). So that this is not to be understood of an ingrafting into Christ unless by a visible profession, but of being received into a Gospel church state; which is signified by the “olive tree” in the next clause:

and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; the Gospel church is so called for its excellency the olive tree being a choice tree, as they were a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; for its fruitfulness, bringing forth berries that are wholesome, delightful, and useful, so the saints are filled with the fruits of grace, and good works, which are by Christ to the praise and glory of God; for its beauty when laden with fruit, so a Gospel church is beautiful maintaining the purity of Gospel doctrine, discipline, worship and conversation; “his beauty shall be as the olive tree”, (<281406>Hosea 14:6); (see <241116>Jeremiah 11:16); and for its verdure and durableness, and growing on the mountains, all which may denote the continuance and firmness of the church of Christ. Now the Gentiles being grafted into a Gospel church state with the believing Jews, partook of the same root and fatness as they did, being built upon the same “foundation of the apostles prophets”, (<490220>Ephesians 2:20); rooted, grounded, and built up in the same church state they enjoyed the same privileges, had the doctrines of Christ and his apostles preached to them, communicated with them in the ordinances of the Gospel, and were satisfied with the goodness and fatness of the house of God; for they became “fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel”, (<490306>Ephesians 3:6), the apostle speaks according to the nature of the olive tree, which is unctuous, from whence an oil is taken, which makes the face of man to shine, the fruit of which fattens those that are lean; and hence it loses not its leaves, δια το ψερμον και λιπαρον, “because of its heat and fatness”, as Plutarch [f214] says.

Ver. 18. *Boast not against the branches*, etc..] Those that were broken off: the apostle would not have them vaunt it over them, despise them, and trample upon them; but pity them, and pray for and be abundantly thankful and humbled before God, under a sense of Ida sovereign and distinguishing grace, who had settled them in a Gospel church state, who were before comparable to a wild olive tree; and much less should they glory over the believing Jews, among whom they were, there being no difference between them, for they were all one in Christ Jesus:

but if thou boast; but if such a vain temper of mind should prevail, he suggests they would do well to sit down and consider what little reason they had on their side to glory; and if such glorying and boasting, one against another was lawful, the Jews had the greatest reason for it; for, adds the apostle,

thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. The Jews received no advantages from the Gentiles, but on the contrary the Gentiles from the Jews, to whom were committed the oracles of God, and by whom they were faithfully kept and transmitted to the Gentiles; the Gospel itself came out first from among them; the first preachers of it were Jews, who carried it into the Gentile world, where it was greatly succeeded to the conversion of many, who by this means were brought into a Gospel church state, and so enjoyed all the privileges they did: yea, Christ himself, according to the flesh, came of them, was sent unto them, was the minister of them, lived and died among them, and wrought out the great salvation for his people; hence "salvation" itself is said to be "of the Jews", (<40422>John 4:22), so that the root and foundation of all their enjoyments were from the Jews, and not those of the Jews from them; hence there was no room, nor reason, for boasting against them, and vaunting it over them.

Ver. 19. *Thou wilt say then*, etc..] This is an objection which the apostle foresaw the Gentiles would make against what he had said, and in favour of their boasting;

the branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. The sense of which is, that the Jews were rejected and left out of the Gospel church, on purpose to make way for the Gentiles, that they might be put in their room; and consequently the Jews must be more vile and unworthy, and the Gentiles more deserving of such favours and privileges, or God would never have taken such a step, to leave out one to make room for the other.

Ver. 20. *Well*, etc..] To this the apostle answers, by approving and granting in, part what was said, that the unbelieving Jews were broken off and rejected, and that the Gentiles that believed in Christ were grafted in among the Jews that professed his name; but then he tacitly denies that it was for their sakes, and their account, they were broken off, but for their own incredulity:

because of unbelief they were broken off; because of their unbelief and contempt of the Messiah, they were rejected of God, and died in their sins; that which excluded their forefathers from the land of Canaan, shut them out of the Gospel church state, and the kingdom of heaven:

and thou standest by faith; which is not of a man's self, but the gift of God; so that it was not by their merits, and better deservings, but by the grace of God that they were in the situation they were; they were blessed with faith in Christ, and having made a profession of it were admitted to Gospel ordinances, and into a Gospel church; and being helped hitherto to hold the profession of their faith in a becoming manner they stood their ground, and continued in their church relation; and therefore ought not to give way to a vain boasting spirit, but to be humble, modest, and dependent; wherefore he gives them this proper pertinent, and wholesome advice,

be not highminded, but fear. The apostle would have them not be elated with their gifts, privileges, and enjoyments, and look over others, or down upon them with contempt and disdain, considering that all they had and enjoyed were owing to the goodness of God, and not to any deserts of theirs; and therefore should fear the Lord and his goodness; for not a fear of hell and damnation, or a distrust of the grace of God, is here meant; but a fear of offending him, and that not from a dread of punishment, but from a sense of his grace and goodness; and also designs humility of soul, in opposition to pride, haughtiness, and elation of mind, a lowly carriage and behaviour to others, and an humble dependence on grace and strength from above, to enable to persevere and hold out to the end; for “let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall” into sin, (<4602>1 Corinthians 10:12); so as to dishonour God and Christ grieve the Holy Spirit, wound his own conscience, and bring himself under the censure of the church, and to be cut off from the good olive tree, the root and fatness of which he now partakes.

Ver. 21. *For if God spared not the natural branches*, etc..] That is, executed his righteous judgments, inflicted due punishment upon the Jews,

unchurched them, and stripped them of those privileges they enjoyed in a church state; who were the natural descendants of Abraham; were naturally, and as born into the world, in a national church state and in that national covenant God made with that people; to whom belonged a national adoption, in which sense they were the sons of God, his firstborn; they were chosen by him as a special and peculiar people, to very great favours and privileges; they were Christ's own, he came of them according to the flesh, and was particularly sent unto them, and ministered among them; wherefore, if, at last, God did not spare this people, though he had for a long time done it, but stirred up all his wrath against them, they disbelieving his Son, rejecting and despising the Messiah, and salvation by him, this should awaken the fear, care, and caution of the Gentiles in a church state, lest if they behave not well, he should deal in like manner with them:

take heed lest he also spare not thee; for whatever was done to the Jews in former or latter times, are written for the instruction and admonition of Gentiles; and the use they are to make thereof is, to be careful and cautious, lest by imbibing principles derogatory from the grace of God and glory of Christ, or by an unbecoming walk and conversation they provoke the Lord to unchurch them as he has done the Jews before them; and which they may the rather fear, since the Jews were the natural branches, and they formerly strangers and aliens.

Ver. 22. *Behold therefore the goodness, and severity of God*, etc..] The consideration of both the grace and kindness of God to some, and his severity or strict justice towards others, is recommended by the apostle as very proper to abate pride, vain glory, and haughtiness of spirit; and to engage to humility, fear, care, and caution;

on them which fell, severity: the Jews who stumbled at Christ and his Gospel, and fell by unbelief, God in strict justice and righteous judgment not only destroyed, as afterwards their nation, city, and temple, and scattered them abroad in the world to be a reproach, a proverb, a taunt, and a curse in all places; but cast them off as his people, broke his covenant with them, took away his Gospel from them, left them out of a Gospel church state, except a few, and gave up the generality of them to blindness and hardness of heart; so that wrath is come upon them to the uttermost, both with respect to things civil and religious, and they continue as living standing monuments of God's severity and justice, to be beheld by us

Gentiles with pity and concern, and to excite in us the fear of God, and caution as to our conduct and behaviour in the world, and in the church:

but towards thee, goodness; the Gentiles, who not only share in the goodness and grace of God, displayed in the election of many of them to eternal life, in their redemption by Christ, and the effectual calling of them by the grace of God; but in their church state, they being made fellow citizens with the saints, fellow heirs, and of the same body, and having a place and a name in God's house, better than that of sons and daughters; and therefore under great obligation to fear the Lord, and his goodness, and to walk worthy of the calling wherein they are called, in all humility and lowliness of mind:

if thou continue in his goodness; meaning not the love, grace, and free favour of God, or the grace of the Spirit, a continuance in which no "if" is to be put upon; for such who are interested in the love of God always continue in it, and nothing can separate them from it; and such as have the graces of the Spirit implanted in them, as faith, hope, and love, can never lose them; these always remain in them, and they in the possession of them, though not always in the exercise of them; but the goodness of God in a church state is here meant, as the means of grace and comfort, the ministration of the word and ordinances; and the sense is, if thou dost not despise the riches of divine goodness in a church relation, if thou dost not abuse it, or walk unworthy of it, if thou abidest by it, and retainest a value for it, thou wilt still share the advantages of it:

otherwise thou also shall be cut off; from the good olive tree, the Gospel church state, into which the Gentiles were taken; and which, with respect to particular persons, may intend the act of excommunication by the church, expressed in Scripture by purging the old leaven, putting away the wicked person, withdrawing from such that are disorderly, and rejecting heretics, that is, from the communion of the church; and with respect to whole bodies and societies, an entire unchurching of them by removing the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; which threatening has been awfully fulfilled in many Gentile churches, in Asia, Africa, and Europe; and therefore may serve to awaken our fear, care, and caution, lest we should be treated in like manner.

Ver. 23. *And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief*, etc..] The apostle suggests that the Jews also might be recovered and brought into a Gospel church state, provided they did not continue in infidelity; but inasmuch as

they seem to lie under invincible ignorance, obstinacy, and unbelief, and were such bitter enemies to the Gospel, and abhorrers of Gospel ordinances, and a Gospel church state; yea, that they must and will abide in unbelief, unless the Spirit of God convinces them of it, and it is given to them to believe in Christ, and they are powerfully drawn by the Father to come to the Son, there is no possibility or likelihood that they

shall be grafted in, or taken into a Gospel church state; to which the apostle answers, and argues for their ingrafting, and the possibility of it from the power of God:

for God is able to graft them in again; as many of them were in the times of the apostles, and some since, for nothing is impossible with God; he can remove their unbelief, knock off the shackles and fetters in which they are held, and bring, them out of the prison of infidelity, in which they are shut up; he is able to take away the blindness of their minds, and the hardness of their hearts, the veil that is over them, and turn them to the Lord; he can by his mighty power work faith in them, and cause them to look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn in an evangelical manner; he can bring them to Christ, and into his churches, and among his people, and fold them with the rest of his sheep; so that there one fold of Jew and Gentile, under one shepherd, Jesus Christ.

Ver. 24. *For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree*, etc..] As the apostle argues the possibility of bringing the Jews into a Gospel church state, from the power of God; so here the probability of it, or the easiness and likelihood of its being performed, from the ingrafting of the Gentiles; who were originally like an olive tree,

which is wild by nature, grows in the field, bears no fruit, and is useless and unprofitable; so they by nature were sinners of the Gentiles, children of wrath, full of unrighteousness, without any fruit of holiness; being not within the pale of the Jewish church and commonwealth; but in the wide field of the world, worthless, and of no account; and yet many were “cut out of” this wild olive tree; were, through the ministration of the Gospel, by the power of divine grace separated from the rest of the world; were effectually called and brought into a Gospel church state; God took out from among them a people for his name. This their being cut out of the wild olive, as it expresses the power and grace of God towards them, it might teach them humility, as it led them to observe their original state and condition:

and wert grafted, contrary to nature, into a good olive tree: for an olive tree being full of fatness, will not admit of ingrafting; nor was it ever usual to ingraft upon olive; hence the Jews say[f215] jbkrh ˆhb ˆya µytz, "there is no ingrafting on olives": besides, it is contrary to nature, use, and custom, to ingraft wild scions, or grafts of any sort into a good stock; but always good scions or grafts into a wild stock, for in wild hungry stocks, grafts grow best: but in the ingrafting of the Gentiles into a Gospel church state, just such a method was taken, as if a wild graft were let into a good stock; so that this ingrafting was not of nature, it was contrary to it; but of pure grace, and, sovereign good will and pleasure; and the apostle's argument is this, that if the Gentiles, who were originally as a wild olive tree; if some as grafts were taken out from among them, and, quite contrary to their own nature, and the nature of things, were, by the goodness and grace of God, grafted into a good olive, the Gospel church state;

how much more shall these which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? that there is a greater likelihood, and more easily may it be, according to all appearance of things, that the Jews, the natural branches or descendants of Abraham, should be brought into a Gospel church state, which first began among them, and which at first only consisted of some of their nation. The Gospel church is called "their own olive tree", in allusion to Israel, or the Jewish church, which is often so called in their writings.

> "Says[f216] R. Joshua ben Levi, to what are the Israelites like? tyzl, "to an olive tree"; to teach them that as the leaves of an olive tree do not fall, neither on sunshine days, nor on rainy days; so the Israelites will never cease, neither in this world, nor in the world to come; and says R. Jochanan, to what are the Israelites like? "to an olive"; to teach thee that as an olive does not send forth its oil, but by the means of pressing, so the Israelites do not return to do good, but by the means of chastisement:"

and says another[f217] of their writers,

> "as oil ascendeth above all liquids, and is not mixed with them; so the Israelites ascend above all nations, and are not mixed with them; and there is an intimation that they are even like tyzl, "to an olive", that is pressed or squeezed; for so the Israelites are bruised

and afflicted, and yet, notwithstanding all this, they ascend by virtue of the law, which is called “oil olive”.”

It is easy to see from whence this simile is borrowed.

Ver. 25. *For I would not, brethren*, etc..] The apostle in order to raise the attention of the Gentiles to what he was about to deliver to them, not only styles them “brethren”, expressing his affection for them, and their relation to him and other believing Jews, and to one another, being all one in Christ Jesus, partakers of the same grace, and heirs of the same glory; but also tells them, that what he had to acquaint them with was a “mystery”, a thing secret and hidden, which had not been heard of and known, at least not so fully and clearly as he was about to reveal it; and because of his great respect for them, he was unwilling, as he says,

that ye should be ignorant of this mystery; he was desirous that they should abound and improve in all spiritual knowledge and judgment, and, among the rest, be better informed of this particular article, the call of the Jews: and his view in apprizing them of it is expressed in the following clause,

lest ye should be wise in your own conceits: lest they should imagine that they were the only wise and knowing persons, and be elated in their minds with their knowledge and understanding, and look with contempt upon the poor, blind, ignorant Jews, as if they were always to remain in such a state of darkness and infidelity. The thing he had to inform them of is,

that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; by Israel is meant the Jews, the descendants of Jacob, whose name was Israel. Philo the Jew observes [f218], that this name signifies ορασιν ψεου, “the vision of God”; indeed, Jacob had it given him when he wrestled with the angel, and saw God face to face, though it does not seem to be for that reason; however, blindness had now befallen the Jews, who had been favoured with a divine revelation, with the knowledge of God, his will and worship; and none were more blind than those who were called the servants and messengers of the Lord of hosts, as the Scribes and Pharisees, the priests and princes of the Jewish world. This “blindness” designs their unbelief, the hardness of their hearts, and darkness of their understandings with respect to God himself, whom they knew not in Christ; not as the Father of Christ; nor even the perfections of his nature, particularly his righteousness; which was the reason of their setting up their

own righteousness, and of their non-submission to the righteousness of Christ: they were blind as to the Messiah; they knew him not, when he came; they saw no beauty and comeliness in him; could not discern the characters of him in Jesus, though they were so manifest; and rejected him notwithstanding the clear evidence of his ministry and miracles. They were in the dark about the sense of the prophecies of the Old Testament; a vail was upon their hearts when they read them, so that they understood them not, and could not see their accomplishment in Christ; they were even ignorant of the law, the spiritual nature, true use, and right end and scope of it; and it is no wonder that the Gospel should be hidden from them. This blindness "happened" to them not by chance, but befell them by the decree, and according to the will of God, who hardens whom he pleases; and according to various predictions in the Old Testament, cited in (<4013-14>Matthew 13:14,15 <4812-9>John 12:39,40 <4511-8>Romans 11:8-10); and in righteous judgment, for since they liked not to retain God and his Christ in their knowledge, it was but just in God to give them up to reprobate minds, to judicial blindness, and hardness of heart: but then this blindness only happened to them "in part"; not that it was only in some measure or some degree, for it was total, they were darkness itself, and had no spiritual and evangelic light at all on whom it fell; but that this blindness was not general with respect to persons, there were some few, a seed, a remnant, that were delivered from it, though the far greater part of the nation were involved in it, and continue in it to this day; and will do, "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in": that is, till the whole number of God's elect among them, be called and brought into the Gospel church state, which in the latter day will be very great; when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ; and the abundance of the sea shall be converted, and the forces of the Gentiles shall come to the church, and multitudes of them shall flock thither, as doves to their windows: and since the blindness of the Jews is not yet removed, it seems plain that the full number of God's chosen ones among the Gentiles is not yet completed in regeneration; for as soon as ever they are all called and brought in, the vail will be taken away from the Jews, and they will be turned unto the Lord.

Ver. 26. *And so all Israel shall be saved*, etc..] Meaning not the mystical spiritual Israel of God, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, who shall appear to be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, when all

God's elect among the latter are gathered in, which is the sense many give into; but the people of the Jews, the generality of them, the body of that nation, called “the fulness” of them, (<45 11 12>Romans 11:12), and relates to the latter day, when a nation of them shall be born again at once; when, their number being as the sand of the sea, they shall come up out of the lands where they are dispersed, and appoint them one head, Christ, and great shall be the day of Jezreel; when they as a body, even the far greater part of them that shall be in being, shall return and seek the Lord their God, and David their King; shall acknowledge Jesus to be the true Messiah, and shall look to him, believe on him, and be saved by him from wrath to come. There is a common saying among them [f219], abh µlw[l qlj µhl çy larçy lk, “all Israel shall have a part”, or “portion in the world to come”; and in support of this they usually produce the passage in (<23 60 21>Isaiah 60:21): “thy people also shall be all righteous”: yea, they even go so far as to say [f220],

> “that hell fire will have no power over the transgressors of Israel;”

fancying, that every individual person of their nation will be saved; though they sometimes except such who deny the resurrection of the dead, and that the law is from heaven, or is an epicure, and he that reads foreign books, or is an enchanter, or pronounces the ineffable name: but the apostle is not to be understood with such a latitude; he refers to the last times, and to a very general conversion of them to the Messiah:

as it is written, (<23 59 20>Isaiah 59:20):

there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer: the words of the prophet are, “and the Redeemer shall come to Zion”: by the Redeemer, or Deliverer, words of the same signification, is meant the Messiah, as the Jews [f221] themselves own, and apply this passage to him; who is the “Goel”, or near kinsman of his people, to whom the right of their redemption belongs as man; and who as God was able to effect it, and, as God-man and Mediator, was every way qualified for it, and has obtained it for them: and whereas, in the prophet Isaiah, he is said to “come to”, and by the apostle, “out of Zion”, this may be reconciled by observing, that the servile letter l sometimes signifies “from”, as well as to, when it is put in the room of m; of which instances may be given, as (<02 16 01>Exodus 16:1 19:1 <04 33 38>Numbers 33:38 <15 03 08>Ezra 3:8 <11 12 24>1 Kings 12:24) compared with (<14 11 04>2 Chronicles 11:4). Besides, the Messiah was to come out of Zion, as well as to come to

it, according to (<19147>Psalm 14:7); so that the apostle fitly expresses the faith and expectation of the old Jewish church in this citation:

and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; in the prophet it is, “and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob”, (<235920>Isaiah 59:20). The apostle follows the translation of the Septuagint, and which is favoured by the Chaldee paraphrase, which runs thus; “the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to turn the rebellious ones of the house of Jacob to the law”; so that the Jew [f222] has no reason to charge the apostle with a perversion of the prophet's words, when they are cited so agreeably to their own Targumist: and the sense of them relates not to what Christ did on the cross, when the iniquities of his people were laid on him, and he bore them, and removed them all in one day from them; but to what he will do to the Jews in the latter day, in consequence thereof; he will convince them of their ungodliness, give them repentance for it and remission of it.

Ver. 27. *For this is my covenant unto them*, etc..] This is what God has promised to them in covenant, and he will be as good as his word; his covenant will never be broken, it will always remain sure and inviolable; so that there is not only a possibility, and a probability, but even a certainty, of the call and conversion of the Jews; which promise and covenant will have their accomplishment,

when I, saith the Lord,

shall take away their sins: some think that the apostle alludes to (<243134>Jeremiah 31:34); others, that he takes this passage out of (<232709>Isaiah 27:9); where in the Septuagint version the selfsame phrase is used; though it may be no citation, or reference, but the apostle's own words, explaining what is meant by “turning away ungodliness from Jacob”, (<451126>Romans 11:26); and as before; regards not the taking away of their sins by the sacrifice of Christ, which is done already, and is what the blood of bulls and goats could not do; but of the removing of their sins from themselves, from their consciences, by the application of the blood of Christ, and the imputation of his righteousness.

Ver. 28. *As concerning the Gospel*, etc..] Whereas it might be objected to the call and conversion of the Jews, their implacable enmity to the Gospel, the apostle replies, by granting, that with respect to that,

they [were] enemies to God and Christ, to the Gospel, and the ministers of it, and particularly to the apostle:

for your sakes; the Gentiles, to whom it was preached, and by whom it was received, and which greatly irritated and provoked the Jews; or the sense is, that they were suffered to reject the Gospel, and treat it with hatred and virulence, that by this means it might be taken away from them, and carried to the Gentiles; so that the present enmity of the Jews to the Gospel, turned to the advantage of the Gentiles, and should not hinder the future conversion of God's elect among them in the latter day:

but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes; as many of them as belong to the election of grace, are beloved of God; and will appear to be so, when they are called by grace, as they will be, for the confirming of the promises concerning their future restoration made unto their fathers; not one of which shall ever fall to the ground, or they be deprived of any gifts and blessings of grace, which God has purposed for them, or promised to them, as is clear from what follows:

Ver. 29. *For the gifts and calling of God*, etc..] By “gifts” are meant, not the gifts of nature and providence, as life, health, strength, riches, and honour, which God sometimes gives, and repents of, and takes away; as he repented that he had made man upon earth, and Saul king of Israel; which must be understood by an “anthropopathy”, after the manner of men, and that not of a change of the counsel of his mind, but of the course of his providence: nor do gifts here design external gifts of grace, or such gifts of the Spirit, which qualify men for ministerial work, for public service in the church; for these may be taken away, as the “parable” of the “talents” shows, (<4025>Matthew 25:29); (see <4608>1 Corinthians 13:8); but the special and spiritual gifts of God's free grace, which relate to the spiritual and eternal welfare of the souls of men, even that, grace which was given to God's elect in Christ before the world was, and all those spiritual blessings wherewith they were then blessed in him: these

are without repentance; that is, they are immutable and unalterable; God never revokes them, or calls them in again, or takes them away from the persons to whom he has made such a previous donation: the reasons are, because that his love from whence they spring is always the same; it admits of no distinction, nor of any degrees, nor of any alteration; and electing grace, according to which these gifts are bestowed, stands sure and immovable; not upon the foot of works, but of the sovereign will of God, and always has its sure and certain effect; and the covenant of grace, in which they are secured, remains firm and inviolable; and indeed, these gifts

are no other than the promises of it, which are all yea and amen in Christ, and the blessings of it, which are the sure mercies of David. Whatever God purposes, or promises to give, or really does give to his people, whether into the hands of Christ for them, or into their own, he never repents of or reverses. Agreeably to these words of the apostle, the Jews say [f223]

> "that the holy blessed God, after hntmh ^tnç, "that he hath given a gift", lbqmh hnjqy al, "never takes it away from the receiver"; and this is the "Gemara", or doctrine of the Rabbins [f224] ylqç al lqçm ybhy bhymd, "that giving they give, but taking away they do not take away"; the gloss upon it is, ybhyd rtb, "after it is given":"

the meaning is, that what is once given to men from heaven, is never taken away from them up into heaven: and elsewhere [f225] they ask,

> "is there any servant to whom his master gives a gift, and returns and takes it away from him?"

Moreover, the apostle here says the same of the "calling of God", as of gifts; by which is meant, not a bare external call by the ministry of the word, which oftentimes is without effect, and may be where persons are neither chosen, nor converted, nor saved; but an internal effectual call, by special, powerful, and efficacious grace; and designs either actual calling, to which are inseparably annexed final perseverance in grace, and eternal glorification; or rather the purpose of God from eternity, to call his people in time, and which is never repented of, or changed. The apostle's argument here is this, that since there are a number of people among the Jews whom God has loved, and has chosen to everlasting salvation, and has in covenant promised to them, and secured and laid up gifts for them, and has determined to call them by his grace; and since all these are unchangeable and irreversible, the future call and conversion of these persons must be sure and certain.

Ver. 30. *For as ye in times past have not believed God*, etc..] The times referred to, are the times of ignorance, idolatry, and superstition; when God suffered the Gentiles, for many hundreds of years, to walk in their own ways; while the Jews were his favourite people, were chosen by him above all people, separated from them, and distinguished by his goodness; had his word and oracles, his judgments and his statutes to direct them, and

many other valuable blessings: the times before the coming of the Messiah are here meant, when these people sat in darkness, and in the region of the shadow of death; till Christ, who came to lighten the Gentiles, sent his Gospel among them, and which has been attended with great success; in these times they were in a state of incredulity: they either, as some of them, did not believe there was a God, or that there was but one God, at least but very few believed it; and these did not know who he was; nor did they glorify him as God, or perform any true spiritual worship to him: the far greater part believed there were more gods, and did service to them which by nature were no gods, and fell down to idols of gold, and silver, and wood, and stone:

and yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; that is, they were regenerated, effectually called and converted, through the rich and abundant mercy of God; repentance unto life was granted to them; and faith in our Lord Jesus, as a free grace gift, was bestowed upon them; and they had an application of pardoning grace and mercy, through the blood of Christ, made unto them; and all this through the unbelief of the Jews: not that their unbelief could be the cause of their obtaining mercy; but the Jews not believing in the Messiah, but rejecting him, and contradicting and blaspheming his Gospel, it was taken away from them, and carried to the Gentiles; which was the means of their believing in Christ, and obtaining mercy; so that the unbelief of the Jews was the occasion and means, in Providence, of bringing the Gospel to the Gentiles, whereby faith came; (see Romans 11:11). This mercy they are said to enjoy “now”; for the present time of the Gospel is the dispensation of mercy to the Gentiles.

Ver. 31. *Even so have these also now not believed*, etc..] Now is the time of the Jews' unbelief, blindness has happened to them, the vail is over their hearts; as the Gentiles formerly did not believe God, so the Jews do not now; though they believe there is a God, and that there is but one God, yet they do not believe God in Christ; nor that he is the Father of Christ; or that Christ is the Son of God, the true Messiah, and Saviour of the world: they do not believe, as some read the words, connecting them with the next clause, and so they stand in the original text, “in your mercy”; meaning either Christ, in whom the Gentiles obtained mercy; or the Gospel, the means of it; or the sense is, that they do not believe that mercy belongs to the Gentiles, having entertained a notion, treat the Messiah, and the blessings of mercy and goodness by him, are peculiar to Israel: but our

version after Beza, who follows Theophylact, connects the clause with the following,

that through your mercy they may obtain mercy; not through the mercy the Gentiles show to others, but which they have received of God; and principally intends faith, which springs from the mercy of God, and is a gift of his pure, free, rich grace; and stands opposed to the unbelief of the Jews, through which the Gentiles are said to obtain mercy; and the meaning: is, that in time to come, the Jews, observing the mercy obtained and enjoyed by the Gentiles, will be provoked to jealousy, and stirred up to an emulation of them, to seek for the same mercy at the same hands, and in the same way, they have had it; (see <45 11 11>Romans 11:11); The apostle's argument in favour of the call and conversion of the Jews, upon the whole is this, that since the unbelief of the Gentiles was no bar to their obtaining mercy, and that through the infidelity of the Jews; then it cannot be thought, that the present blindness, hardness of heart, enmity, and unbelief, which now attend the Jews, can be any obstacle to their obtaining mercy in the same way the Gentiles have; but as the one has been, the other also will be.

Ver. 32. *For God hath concluded them all in unbelief*, etc..] Both Jews and Gentiles, particularly God's elect among them: some think the metaphor is taken from the binding up of sheaves in bands; and that Jews and Gentiles are the sheaves, and unbelief the band, in which they are bound together; but the apostle is not speaking of their being together in unbelief, but as separate, first the Gentiles, and now the Jews: rather it seems to be taken from a prison, and Jews and Gentiles are represented as prisoners, and unbelief the prison, in which they are shut up by God: not that God is the author of unbelief, or of any other sin in men; he does not put it into them, or them into that, but finding them in unbelief, concludes them in it, or leaves them in such a state, and does not as yet however deliver out of it, or say to the prisoners, go forth: moreover, to be "concluded in unbelief", is the same as to be "concluded under sin", (<48 03 22>Galatians 3:22); that is, to be thoroughly convinced of it; and to be held and bound down by such a sense of it in the conscience, as to see no way to escape deserved punishment, or to obtain salvation, but by fleeing to the mercy of God in Christ:

that he might have mercy upon all: not upon all the individuals of Jews and Gentiles; for all are not concluded in, or convinced of the sin of unbelief,

but only such who are eventually believers, as appears from the parallel text, (Galatians 3:22); and designs all God's elect among the Jews, called “their fulness”, (Romans 11:12); and all God's elect among the Gentiles, called “the fulness of the Gentiles”, (Romans 11:25); for whom he has mercy in store, and will bestow it on them; and in order to bring them to a sense of their need of it, and that he may the more illustriously display the riches of it, he leaves them for a while in a state of unbelief, and then by his Spirit thoroughly convinces them of it, and gives them faith to look to, and believe in, the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life.

Ver. 33. *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God*, etc..] These words are the epilogue, or conclusion of the doctrinal part of this epistle, and relate to what is said throughout the whole of it hitherto; particularly to the doctrines of salvation by Christ, justification by his righteousness, predestination, the calling of the Gentiles, the rejection of the Jews, and their restoration in the latter day; upon the whole of which, the apostle breaks forth into this pathetic exclamation; the design of which is to show, how much of the wisdom and knowledge of God is displayed in these doctrines, and how small a part of it is known by the best of men, and therefore ought not to be cavilled at and objected to, because of some difficulties attending them, but to be received upon the testimony of divine revelation: and if there was a depth in these things unsearchable and past finding out by so great a man as the apostle, who had by revelation such knowledge in the mysteries of grace, and who had been caught up into the third heaven, and heard things unutterable, how much less is it to be fathomed by others, and therefore should be silent: by “the wisdom and knowledge of God”, one and the same thing is meant; and design not so much the perfections of the divine nature, which are infinite and unsearchable, the understanding of which is too high for creatures, and not be attained to by them; nor the display of them in the works of creation and providence, in which there are most glorious and amazing instances; but rather the effects of them, the counsels and decrees of God; which are so wisely formed and laid, as not to fail of their accomplishment, or to be frustrated of their end; and the doctrines of grace relating to them, in which are treasures, riches, that is, an abundance of wisdom and knowledge; and a depth, not to be reached to the bottom of, in this imperfect state, and in which the knowledge and wisdom of God are wonderfully displayed: thus in the doctrine of redemption and salvation by Christ, wherein God has

abounded in all wisdom and prudence; in the person fixed upon to be the Saviour, his own Son; who by the assumption of human nature, being God and man in one person, was very fit and proper to be a Mediator between God and man, to transact the affair of salvation; was every way qualified for it, and able to do it: so likewise in the manner in which it is accomplished, being done in a way which glorifies all the divine perfections; in which the rights of God's justice and the honour of his holiness are secured, as well as his love, grace, and mercy, displayed; in which Satan is most mortified, sin condemned, and the sinner saved; and also in the persons, the subjects of it, ungodly sinners, enemies, the chief of sinners, whereby the grace of God is the more illustrated, and all boasting in the creature excluded. The wisdom of God manifestly appears, in the doctrine of a sinner's justification; which though it proceeds from grace, yet upon the foot of redemption and satisfaction, in a way of strict justice; so that God is just, whilst he is the justifier; it is of persons ungodly, and without a righteousness in themselves, and yet by a perfect and complete righteousness, answerable to all the demands of law and justice; and the grace of faith is wisely made the recipient of this blessing, that it might appear to be of free grace, and not of works, and that the justified ones might have solid peace, joy, and comfort, from it. The doctrine of predestination is full of the wisdom and knowledge of God; his choice of some to everlasting life in his Son, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, for the glorifying of his grace and mercy, in a way of righteousness; and his passing by others, leaving them to themselves, and in their sins, justly to perish for them, for the glorifying of his justice, are acts of the highest wisdom, and done according to the counsel of his will. The account just given of the call of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, is an astonishing scheme of infinite wisdom; that, on the one hand salvation should come to the Gentiles, through the fall of the Jews, and they should obtain mercy through their unbelief; and on the other hand that the restoration of the Jews should be as life from the dead to the Gentiles; and the Jews, through their mercy, obtain mercy; and that both, in their turns, should be shut up in unbelief by God, that he might have mercy on them all, “O the depth”, etc.. To which is added,

how unsearchable are his judgments! which are not to be understood of his awful judgments on wicked men in particular, nor of the administrations of his providence in general; though these are a great deep, and in many instances are unsearchable, and cannot be counted for in the present state,

but will hereafter be made manifest; nor of the commands of God, sometimes called his judgments, which are all plain, and may be easily searched out in his word; but rather of the counsels and purposes of God, and the doctrines of grace relating thereunto; which are the deep things of God, and are only searched out by the Spirit of God, who reveals them to us:

and his ways past finding out! not the methods and course of his providence, though his way in this respect is often in the deep, his footsteps are not to be known, discerned, and traced, by finite creatures; but rather the goings forth and steps of his wisdom from everlasting, in his purposes and decrees, council and covenant, which are higher than the ways of men, even as the heavens are higher than the earth; and which are all mercy and truth to his chosen people, and strict justice to others, and not to be found out by any; particularly his ways and methods, and dealings, with both Jews and Gentiles; that he should for so many hundred years leave the Gentiles in blindness and unbelief; and now for as many years his favourite people the Jews in the same, and yet gather in his elect out of them both; these are things out of our reach and comprehension.

Ver. 34. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord*, etc..] The intentions of his mind, the thoughts of his heart, and the counsels of his will: these could never have been known, if he had not revealed them; nor can the doctrines relating to them, though externally revealed, be known by the natural man, or by the mere dint of nature, but only by the light of the Spirit of God; who searches them, and makes them known in a spiritual manner to spiritual men, who have a spiritual discerning of them; and yet even by these they are not known perfectly, only in part, and are seen through a glass darkly:

or who hath been his counsellor? or was of his council, when all things were fixed according to his sovereign will: when the scheme of man's salvation was consulted and agreed upon between the eternal Three, there was no creature, angel, or man there; no created angel, only the eternal One, “the Counsellor”, (Isaiah 9:6); or as the Septuagint there style him, αγγελος μεγαλης βουλης, “the angel of the great council”; none but Father, Son, and Spirit, were present, when the book of life was made, when the names of God's elect were put into it, and others left out; when all things relating to his chosen ones, both for time and eternity, whether among Jews or Gentiles, were determined, ordered, and settled; and as

there was no creature that assisted, or could give any advice about these matters, so there were none that were privy to the resolutions, determinations, and counsels of his will; which were purposed in himself and in his Son, and were known only to them and his Spirit, which is in him: from the whole it appears, that predestination is not according to men's works, or the foresight of them; for then these things would be plain and easy, they would not be unsearchable and past finding out; there would not be an unfathomable depth in them; the mind and counsels of God, and the springs of them, would be obvious; but it is according to his secret, sovereign, and unchangeable will.

Ver. 35. *Or who hath first given to him*, etc..] (see <1841111>Job 41:11 35:7); no man can give God anything, which he has not first given him, or which he has not a prior right to, or a claim upon him for; Adam, in innocence, was not able to give God anything, nor are the angels in heaven, much less sinful men on earth; their bodies and souls, and all their enjoyments, all that is good in them, or done by them, are from the Lord; men by all their good works, best duties and services, give nothing to God, nor lay him under any manner of obligation to them: hence no man can merit anything at the hands of God, if he could,

it shall be recompensed to him again; but it is impossible there should be merit in a creature, who has nothing but what he has from God, and does nothing but what he is obliged to do; and that not by his own strength, but by the grace and strength of God; and therefore there is no retribution made by God as of debt, but of grace: hence it follows, that God is indebted to, and obliged by none, and may do what he will with his own; love Jacob and hate Esau; choose one and not another; reject the Jews, and call the Gentiles; save and justify some, and not others; none can call him to account, or say unto him, what dost thou?

Ver. 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things*, etc..] Not only all things in nature and providence, he being the Maker and efficient cause of things, and the preserver and supporter of them their beings, and to whose glory they are all designed and directed; but all things in grace owe their original to him, as their first cause; they are produced by him, and make for his glory; they all spring from his sovereign will, are brought about by his almighty power, and tend to the glory of his grace; as does every thing in election, redemption, and regeneration: particularly the counsels and purposes of God respecting men may be here meant; which

all rise out of his own heart, without any motive or inducement to them in the creature; are accomplished by his divine power, notwithstanding all the opposition of men and devils; and all issue in his glory, even such of them as may seem to carry in them severity to some of his creatures: and since this is the case, the following doxology, or ascription of glory to God, is justly and pertinently made,

to whom be glory for ever; and which will be given to him by angels and men to all eternity, for the perfection of his being, the counsels of his will, and the works of his hands, both of nature and grace; to which the, apostle annexes his

amen, so be it, assenting to it, wishing for it, and believing of it.

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 12

The doctrines concerning predestination, justification, etc.. being established, the duties of religion are built upon them, and enforced by them in this and the following chapters. The apostle first exhorts all the members of the church in common to a regard to the worship of God, in opposition to the things of the world; and then the officers of the church particularly, to the discharge of their duty; and next all of them, both officers and members, to the performance of various duties respecting God, themselves, one another, and the men of the world. The duty of attending public worship is first mentioned, signified by a presentation of their bodies to the Lord, (Romans 12:1), to which they are moved, partly by the plenteous mercy and goodness of God to them; and partly by the acceptableness of it to God; as also by the reasonableness of the thing: then follows a dehortation from conformity to the world, the men and manners of it, in superstition and will worship, or in acts of immorality, (Romans 12:2), and also an exhortation to a different course of life, in seeking to please God; which is proposed upon a principle of grace in them, being renewed in the Spirit of their mind; and with this end and view, that they might the better prove, try, and discern, and come at, a greater knowledge of the mind and will of God: and whereas gifts are apt to swell men with pride and vanity, such as qualify men to bear any office in the church, the apostle cautions against this spirit and conduct, and exhorts to sobriety and humility; by observing, that what gifts they have, are such that God has given them, and which they have not of themselves; and what they have is only in part and in measure, some one and some another; and none have all gifts, (Romans 12:3), this he illustrates, (Romans 12:4), by an human body and the members of it, which being many, have not the same office, but some one and some another; which he accommodates to the body of Christ the church, (Romans 12:5), which though but one in Christ, has many members; and these are members one of another, and are designed mutually to serve and help each other, for which the gifts among them were bestowed: and then the apostle proceeds to take notice of the particular officers in the church, and exhorts them to the function of their

offices, according to their different gifts; as, first, the preacher to preach according to the rule of faith, and the measure of gifts bestowed, (⁴⁶1206Romans 12:6), and then the deacon, the other officer, to attend to his deaconship, (⁴⁶1207Romans 12:7), and inasmuch as these officers, according to their different gifts, may be distinguished, some having a talent for stating, explaining, and defending doctrines, and may be called doctors, or teachers, let them attend to the doctrinal part of the word; and others having a talent in the practical way of preaching, whether by way of exhortation or comfort, and may be called exhorters or comforters, let them attend to that branch of the ministry, (⁴⁶1208Romans 12:8), and as for the deacon, the performance of his office, whether it be by distributing to the poor, let him do it impartially and faithfully; or by assisting in the government of the church, let it be done with all diligence; or by showing mercy to the poor in distress, besides what they usually receive, let it be done with a cheerful countenance: next follow various duties which are mentioned, not in an exact order or method, but may be reduced to these heads; such as concern God, an unfeigned love of him, abhorrence of all evil, and a close attachment to whatsoever is good, (⁴⁶1209Romans 12:9), and also the worship of him, which is to be performed with diligence and fervency, (⁴⁶1211Romans 12:11), the exercise of the grace of hope with joy, patience in the midst of tribulations, and perseverance in prayer, (⁴⁶1212Romans 12:12), then such duties as concern one another, as Christians and brethren in a church relation; as to exercise an affectionate brotherly love to each other, and to honour one another; and even to give each other the preference, who may be equal or superior, both in spiritual gifts, and in temporal things, (⁴⁶1210Romans 12:10), and with respect to poor saints, to communicate cheerfully to their necessities; and with respect to strangers, to entertain them hospitably, (⁴⁶1213Romans 12:13), and as to every member, whether in prosperous or adverse circumstances, to bear a part with them, rejoicing with the one, weeping with the other, (⁴⁶1215Romans 12:15), and to behave with humility, modesty, and sobriety, towards all, (⁴⁶1216Romans 12:16), and next such duties as concern the men of the world, particularly to bless, and not curse persecutors, (⁴⁶1214Romans 12:14), not to retaliate evil for evil, but to do everything that is of good report in the sight of men, (⁴⁶1217Romans 12:17), to study, if possible, to live peaceably with all men, (⁴⁶1218Romans 12:18), to bridle passion and refrain from wrath, and not seek private revenge, but leave it with the Lord to take vengeance, (⁴⁶1219Romans 12:19), on the other hand, to he kind and beneficent to enemies, by giving them food and drink when hungry and thirsty, expressed in the words of

Solomon, (<20 25 21>Proverbs 25:21,22), the reasons for which are, because hereby an enemy may be wrought upon, and be brought either to shame or repentance, and become a friend, (<45 12 20>Romans 12:20), and because by doing otherwise, resenting and returning the evil, a man is conquered by it; whereas, by the other method, the enemy is conquered by good, (<45 12 21>Romans 12:21), and it is much more commendable and honourable to be a conqueror, than to be conquered.

Ver. 1. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God*, etc..] The apostle having finished the doctrinal part of this epistle, proceeds to that which is more practical; and enforces the several duties of religion, upon the principles he had before laid down, a method generally observed by him in all his epistles. The illative particle “therefore”, shows that the following exhortations are so many conclusions, consequences, and inferences, deduced from what had been said in the latter part of the preceding chapter; that since all things are of God, and by him and to him, then the saints ought to present their bodies to him, and to know, approve, and do his will; and since they have nothing but what they have received from him, they ought not to think too highly of, or glory in their attainments. The introduction to these exhortations, is in a very kind and affectionate manner; the saints are addressed as “brethren”, and very appropriately; since this expresses the relation they stood in to the apostle, for whom he had an hearty love and concern; and therefore what he pressed them to was out of a sincere regard to their good, as well as to the glory of God; also their relation to each other, and which several of the duties he urges had a connection with; likewise their relation to God, being of his family, having one and the same Father, and so under obligation to regard his will, honour and reverence him: moreover, these things are moved, not in an imperious way, in an authoritative manner, but by way of entreaty, “I beseech you”; as an ambassador of Christ, and as though in his stead: nor are they enforced by terrors, threats, and menaces, but “by the mercies of God”; that is, the abundant mercy of God, displayed in their election, regeneration, and calling; than which, nothing can have a greater influence on a believer, to engage him to holiness of life and conversation; and shows, that the doctrines of grace are no licentious ones, nor do they render useless precepts, exhortations, entreaties, cautions, and advice, particularly such as follow;

that ye present your bodies; not barely that part of them commonly so called, for this is not to be understood of a mere presentation of the body

in public worship: for though this ought to be, yet not without the heart engaged therein, otherwise bodily exercise will be of no avail; nor of a bare abstinence from grosser sins done in the body, and against it, and which defile and dishonour it; much less of a maceration, and keeping under the body, by watchings, fasting, etc.. and still less of an offering of the body at death in a way of martyrdom, though this ought to be cheerfully complied with when called for: but by their bodies are meant, themselves, their whole souls and bodies, all the powers and faculties of their souls, and members of their bodies; and the presenting of them, designs a devoting of them, with all readiness and willingness, to the service of God for his honour and glory, without putting any confidence in, or placing any dependence upon them; which would be sacrificing to their own net, and burning incense to their drag; it includes the whole of their service, conversation, and religion, internal and external. So the Jews [f226] say,

> "worthy is the portion of the righteous, who offer every day this offering before the Lord; and what is it? whyyçpnw whyymrg, "their bodies and their souls", which they offer before him."

The allusion is to the rite of sacrificing, to the bringing of the slain beast, and laying it on the altar, and there presenting and offering it to the Lord. Under the Gospel dispensation all believers are priests; and the sacrifices they bring are not the bodies of slain beasts, but their own bodies, their whole selves; and these

a living sacrifice, in opposition to the bodies of slain beasts offered under the legal dispensation, and to the dead works of such as are destitute of faith in Christ, and to the lifeless performances of the saints themselves at certain times; and designs such a presentation of themselves in the performance of religious duties, as springs from a principle of life under the quickening influences of the Spirit of God, with faith and fervency; though without any view to obtain life hereby, for that is only by the offering up of the body of Christ once for all. Another epithet of this sacrifice of our bodies to God is

holy, in allusion to the sacrifices under the law, which were separated from common use, and devoted to God, and were not to have the least spot and blemish in them; and regards men sanctified by the Spirit of God, and whose actions flow from a principle of holiness, and are performed under the influence of the Holy Spirit; and such sacrifices as are both living and holy, cannot but be

acceptable to God through the mediation of his Son, by whom, as the persons, the souls and bodies of his people, so their spiritual sacrifices, whether of prayer or praise, are only acceptable to him:

which is your reasonable service; it is agreeably to reason, and especially as sanctified, that men who have their beings from God, and are upheld in them by him, and are followed with the bounties of Providence; and especially who are made new creatures, and are blessed by him with all spiritual blessings in Christ, that they should give up themselves to him, and cheerfully serve him in their day and generation; such service is also agreeably to the Scriptures of truth, the standard of filth and practice, and contain and enforce nothing but what is highly reasonable to be complied with; it is such service as lies not in the slaying of irrational creatures, but in the presenting of men endued with rational powers unto God; and is of a spiritual nature, performed by spiritual men, under the influence of the Spirit of God: and is suitable to the nature and perfections of God, and stands opposed to the corporeal and carnal service of the Jews.

Ver. 2. *And be not conformed to this world*, etc..] By this world is meant, either the Mosaic dispensation, and Jewish church state, so called in opposition to abh µlw[, "the world to come", the Gospel dispensation; in which there were a worldly sanctuary, and the rites and ceremonies of which are styled the rudiments and elements of the world; to which believers in the present state are by no means to conform, there being sacrifices and ordinances of another nature, it is the will of God they should observe and attend unto: or else the men of the world are designed, carnal and unregenerate men, among whom they formerly had their conversation, from among whom they were chosen, called, and separated, and who lie and live in wickedness, and therefore should not be conformed unto them: which is to be understood, not in a civil sense of conformity to them in garb and apparel, provided that pride and luxury are guarded against, and decency and sobriety observed, and the different abilities of persons and stations in life are attended to; or to any other civil usages and customs which are not contrary to natural and revealed religion; but of a conformity in a moral sense to the evil manners of men, to walk vainly, as other Gentiles do, to go into the same excess of riot with them; for this is contrary both to the principle and doctrine of grace, which teach men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts: and of a compliance with the men of the world in a religious sense, by joining with them in acts of idolatry,

superstition, and will worship, and in anything that is contrary to the order, ordinances, and truths of the Gospel.

But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind; which regards not the first work of conversion and renovation; for in this sense these persons were transformed, metamorphosed, changed, and renewed already; but the after progress and carrying on the work of renovation, the renewing of them day by day in the spirit of their minds; (see <490423>Ephesians 4:23 <470416>2 Corinthians 4:16); which believers should be desirous of, and pray for, and make use of those means which the Spirit of God owns for this purpose, attending to the spiritual exercises of religion, as reading, meditation, prayer, conference, the ministration of the word and ordinances, which is the reverse of conformity to the world: and the end to be attained hereby is,

that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God; by which is meant not the secret will of God, which cannot be searched into, proved, and known, till time and facts discover it: but the revealed will of God, both in the law, as in the hands of Christ, which contains nothing but what is good; and which when done in faith, from a principle of love, and to the glory of God, is acceptable through Christ; and is perfect as a law of liberty, and rule of walk and conversation; and which is to be proved and approved of by all the saints, who delight in it after the inward man: and also that which is contained in the Gospel; as that all that the Father had given to Christ should be redeemed by him, that these should be sanctified, and persevere to the end, and be glorified; all which is the good will of God, an acceptable saying to sensible sinners, and such a scheme of salvation as is perfect and complete, and needs nothing to be added to it; and is, by such who are daily renewed in the spirit of their minds, more and more proved, tried, discerned, and approved of, even by all such who have their spiritual senses exercised to discern things that differ.

Ver. 3. *For I say, through the grace given unto me*, etc..] The Ethiopic version reads, the grace of God: and so two of Stephens's copies. By which the apostle intends, not that internal grace which was wrought in his soul; nor the Gospel of the grace of God, which he preached; nor the gifts of grace, which qualified him for that service; but the grace of apostleship, or that authoritative power, which he, as the apostle, received from Christ to

say, command, give orders and instructions to churches, and particular persons:

to every man that is among you: every member of the church, in whatsoever state or condition, whether in office or not; of whatsoever abilities or capacity, having gifts, whether more or less; the manifestation of the Spirit being given to everyone to profit with, for his own and the good of others:

not to think [of himself] more highly than he ought to think; that is, either not to arrogate to himself what does not belong to him, and detract from others, who may have equal, if not superior, abilities to him; or not to glory in what he has, as if he had not received it, and as if it was altogether owing to his own sagacity, penetration, diligence, and industry; or not to search into things too high for him that are out of his reach, and beyond his capacity; though this is not to be understood as discouraging a search into the Scriptures of truth, the more difficult parts of it, and the more knotty points of controversy; but as forbidding inquiry into things not lawful to be searched into, or, if lawful, as requiring such a scrutiny to be made with modesty, and an humble dependence on superior light and assistance, and a discovery of it with humility and lowliness of mind;

but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith: such ought to consider that what gifts, abilities, light, and knowledge they have, they have then, not of themselves, but from God; that they have not all faith, and all knowledge, or do not know the whole of the faith of the Gospel only a measure of it, which is dealt out, divided, and parted to every man, some having a greater degree of evangelical light than others; and that all have some, but none all. The Syriac version renders it, “faith in measure”; one of Stephens's copies reads, “the measure of grace”; (see <4007>Ephesians 4:7).

Ver. 4. *For as we have many members in one body*, etc..] The apostle illustrates what he said last concerning God's dealing to every man the measure of faith, by comparing the church of Christ to an human body, which is but one, and has many members in union with it, and one another; and which are placed in an exact symmetry and proportion, and in proper subserviency to each other, and for the good of the whole:

and all members have not the same office, or “action”; they do not exercise the same function, and perform the same operation, but each that

which is peculiar to itself: the eye only sees, but does not hear, nor taste, nor smell; the ear only hears, but neither sees, or does any of the aforesaid things; the palate tastes, the nose smells, the hand handles, the foot walks, and the same may be observed of the other members of the body, which have not the same, but their particular offices, and all and each of them their usefulness.

Ver. 5. *So we being many are one body in Christ*, etc..] This is the application of the above simile. The chosen of God, the redeemed of Christ, and those that are justified by his righteousness, and sanctified by his Spirit; though they are but few in comparison of the men of the world, but considered in themselves are many, and yet make up but one body, the church, of which Christ is the head: and though this general assembly; or church universal, may be distinguished into several congregational churches, and distinct communities, yet each community, consisting of divers persons, is but one body "in Christ", united and knit together by joints and bands, under him their head, Lord, and King; in him, and not in Caesar, or any earthly monarch, to distinguish this body from bodies politic, or any civil community among men:

and everyone members one of another; as in union with Christ their head, so to one another in love, walking in holy fellowship together, sympathizing with, and serving each other.

Ver. 6. *Having then gifts, differing*, etc..] As in a natural body, the various members of it have not the same office, and do not perform the same actions, thus they have not the same, but different faculties; one has one faculty, another another; the eye has the faculty of seeing, the ear of hearing, etc.. thus in the spiritual body the church, as there are different members, these members have not the same work and business assigned them; some are employed one way, and some another; also they have diversities of gifts for their different administrations and operations, and all from Christ their head, by the same Spirit, and for the service of the whole body,

according to the grace that is given unto us; for all these gifts are not the effects of nature, the fruits of human power, diligence, and industry, but flow from the grace of God, who dispenses them when, where, and to whom he pleases in a free and sovereign manner; and therefore to be acknowledged as such, and used to his glory, and for the good of his church and people. Wherefore

whether prophecy, [let us prophesy] according to the proportion of faith. The offices here, and hereafter mentioned, are not of an extraordinary, but ordinary kind, such as are lasting, and will continue in the church unto the end of time: and are divided into two parts, which are after subdivided into other branches. The division is into “prophesying” and “ministering”. By “prophesying” is meant, not foretelling things to come, thought this gift was bestowed upon some, as Agabus, and others in the Christian church; but this, as it is of an extraordinary nature, so it is not stinted and limited according to the proportion of faith; but preaching the Gospel is here designed, which is the sense of the word in many places of Scripture, particularly in (<461202>1 Corinthians 13:2,8,9 14:1,3-6,22) (<461424>1 Corinthians 14:24,29,31,32,37,39). Now such who have this gift of prophecy, or of opening and explaining the Scriptures, ought to make use of it, and constantly attend toil: “let us prophesy”; diligently prepare for it by prayer, reading and meditation, and continually exercise it as opportunity offers; nor should any difficulty and discouragement deter from it: or whereas this last clause is not in the original text, it may be supplied from (<451203>Romans 12:3); thus, “let us think soberly”, who have this gift, and not be elated with it, or carry it haughtily to those who attend on the exercise of it: but behave with sobriety, modesty, and humility, in the discharge thereof: “according to the proportion of faith”. There must be faith, or no prophesying; a man must believe, and therefore speak, or speak not at all; a Gospel minister ought not to be a sceptic, or in doubt about the main principles of religion; such as concern the three divine persons, the office, grace, and righteousness of Christ, and the way of salvation by him: he should be at a point in these things, should firmly believe, and with assurance assert them, nor fear to be called dogmatical on that account: he is to preach according to his faith, the proportion of it: which may be the same with the measure of it, (<451203>Romans 12:3). And so the Syriac version reads it, htwnmyhd atjwçm Æya, “according to the measure of his faith”; to which the Arabic version agrees; that is, according to the measure of the gift of Christ he has received; according to the abilities bestowed on him; according to that light, knowledge, faith, and experience he has; he ought to preach up unto it, and not in the least come short of it; or by “the proportion”, or “analogy of faith”, may be meant a scheme of Gospel truths, a form of sound words, a set of principles upon the plan of the Scriptures, deduced from them, and agreeably to them; and which are all of a piece, and consistent with themselves, from which the prophesier or preacher should never swerve: or the Scriptures themselves, the sure word

of prophecy, the rule and standard of faith and practice: the scope of the text is to be attended to, its connection with the preceding or following verses, or both; and it is to be compared with other passages of Scripture, and accordingly to be explained: and this is to follow the rule directed to.

Ver. 7. *Or ministry, [let us wait] on our ministry*, etc..] The word διακονια sometimes signifies the whole ecclesiastical ministry, even the office of apostleship, as well as the ordinary ministration of the Gospel; (see <4401 17>Acts 1:17 6:4); but here "deaconship", or the office of ministering to the poor saints, as in (<4406 01>Acts 6:1 <4616 5>1 Corinthians 16:15), being a distinct office from prophesying: or preaching the word, and should be used, exercised, and attended to with diligence, care, and constancy; for such who are appointed to this office, are chosen not only to a place of honour, but of service and business, in which they should behave with prudence, sobriety, and humility:

or he that teacheth, on teaching. The gift of prophesying or preaching is subdivided into "teaching" and "exhorting"; the one belongs to "teachers" or doctors, the other to "pastors"; as the distinction is in (<4904 11>Ephesians 4:11), not that different officers and offices are intended, but different branches of the same office; and one man's talent may lie more in the one, and another man's in the other; and accordingly each should in his preaching attend to the gift which is most peculiar to him: if his gift lies in teaching, let him constantly employ himself in that with all sobriety and "teaching" does not design an office in the school, but in the church; it is not teaching divinity as men teach logic, rhetoric, and other arts and sciences, in the schools; but an instructing of churches and the members thereof in the doctrines of the Gospel, in order to establish and build them up in their most holy faith; (see <4612 8>1 Corinthians 12:28 <4904 11>Ephesians 4:11,12); it chiefly lies in a doctrinal way of preaching, in opening, explaining, and defending the doctrines of Christ, as distinct from the practical part of the ministry of the word, and the administration of ordinances, in which the pastor is employed as well as in this.

Ver. 8. *Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation*, etc..] This is the other branch of prophesying or preaching, and which is more practical, and lies in giving a word of exhortation to the saints, as their particular cases call for; for as prophets were teachers, (<4413 01>Acts 13:1); so also exhorters, (<4415 32>Acts 15:32); and one considerable branch of the ministry, and which is more principally the pastor's work, as well as to teach, is to exhort all sorts of persons,

young and old, rich and poor, high and low, bond and free, under his care, with all longsuffering and doctrine. The words will bear to be read, “he that comforteth, on consolation”; and so the Syriac version renders them, haywbb wh anaybmd tyaw, “and another who is a comforter, in his consolation”. Though all the ministers of the Gospel are to speak comfortably to the saints, by preaching the doctrines of free justification by Christ's righteousness, and remission of sins by his blood, by bringing the good news of salvation by him, and by opening the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel; yet some have a greater talent this way than others; some are “Boanergeses”, sons of thunder, (<4003:17>Mark 3:17), and others “Barnabases”, sons of consolation, (<4004:36>Acts 4:36); and each should attend to that with all diligence and humility, he is best qualified for.

He that giveth, [let him do it] with simplicity. Here begins the subdivision of the deacon's office into its several branches, “giving”, “ruling”, and “showing mercy”: by “giving” is meant, not giving of his own, or performing: acts of charity, which is common to all the members of the church, who ought liberally to contribute to the relief of the poor; but imparting or distributing the church's money to proper objects, which is to be done “with simplicity”; with all faithfulness and integrity, without fraud or embezzling the church's stock, with impartiality, and without respect of persons, and liberally and bountifully, as the word here used signifies; (see <4708:2>2 Corinthians 8:2 9:13);

he that ruleth, with diligence; deacons are the “helps, governments”, mentioned in (<4612:28>1 Corinthians 12:28), who are assisting to the pastor in the government of the church; their business is, to observe the conversations of the members of the church, and to warn them that are unruly and walk disorderly, to compose differences, and prepare matters to lay before the church; a deacon is προισταμενος, “one that goes before”; and leads on others by way of example in his conduct and conversation; or as the Syriac renders it, açyrb µaqd, “that stands at the head” of affairs in the church; in the management of which he ought to use all study, thoughtfulness, care and diligence:

he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness; which is not to be understood of showing compassion to miserable objects in common, or of giving alms to necessitous persons, and which ought to be done according to the Jewish [f227] canons, twpy µynp rbsb, “with a cheerful countenance”; and is what is highly pleasing to God, who “loves a cheerful giver”: but of a branch of

the deacon's office, whose work, among other things, is to visit the sick and distressed, and communicate to them as their wants require; all which should be done, not in a morose and frowning manner, but with a pleasant look and cheerful countenance, which makes the visit and the gift more welcome, acceptable, and useful.

Ver. 9. *Let love be without dissimulation*, etc..] The apostle having given out suitable exhortations to the officers of this church, ministers and deacons, proceeds to stir up to the exercise of grace, and the discharge of such duties as were common to all the members of the church; and begins with "love", which is the cement of saints, and the bond of perfectness, without which all the gifts that men have, the profession they make, and works they do are of no avail, and they themselves nothing. Here it is to be taken, in the largest and most comprehensive sense, for love to God, Christ, the saints, and fellow creatures, and ought, with respect to each, to "be without dissimulation"; or "hypocrisy": love to God should be with all the heart, soul, and mind, otherwise the fear of him, and obedience to him, will be only outward, formal, customary, and hypocritical; love to Christ should be with sincerity, and so it is where it is right, hearty, and genuine; such can appeal to him as the searcher of hearts, that from the heart they love him; and love to one another should be not in word, and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth; yea, the love professed to fellow creatures, ought never to be through fear of men or mercenary views, but honest, upright, and sincere.

Abhor that which is evil; sin, both in its principle and in its actings; it being hateful to God, Father, Son, and Spirit, contrary to the nature, being, and perfections of God, a transgression of his righteous law, exceeding sinful in itself, and pernicious in its effects and consequences; for all which it is to be abhorred by the saints: the word αποστυγουντες, here used, designs the greatest aversation imaginable, a turning away from it, as what is the most loathsome, detestable, and abominable; and such an hatred of it with horror, as of the Stygian lake, or hell itself:

cleave to that which is good; to God, who is originally, infinitely, and immutably good; who is good in his nature, and works, and to all his creatures, and especially his chosen people, and therefore should be cleaved unto; to his will, his ways, and worship; and to Christ the good shepherd of the sheep, the Lamb that is to be followed and cleaved unto, whithersoever he goes; and to the good Spirit of God, after whom we

should walk, and not after the flesh; and to the good people of God, assembling with whom should not be forsaken; and to the good Gospel of Christ, and the truths of it, which should be held fast; and to the ordinances of the Gospel, which ought to be constantly attended on; and to every good work, to which we should be ready, careful to maintain, and ever follow, both among ourselves and all men: they should even be glued unto it, as the word here signifies.

Ver. 10. *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love*, etc..] This is one branch of that love, before advised to, which should be unfeigned, and without guile and deceit. The objects of this grace are "brethren", not in such sense as all the descendants of Adam are, or men of the same country be, or as such who are born of the same parents in a natural sense are; to each of whom love is due under their respective characters and relations: but such who are so in a spiritual sense, who are born of God, are of his household, belong to his family, are the brethren of Christ, and one another; and are either members of the same church, incorporated together in the same church state, or at least members of Christ, and of the church universal. Now love to these should be kind, tender, and affectionate, reciprocal and mutual; such should love one another; there should be no love wanting on either side; and it ought to be universal, and reach to all the saints, though of different gifts, light, knowledge and experience, or whether high or low, rich or poor; and should show itself by bearing one another's burdens, bearing with, and forbearing each other, forgiving one another, and by edifying one another in their most holy faith, and praying with, and for one another.

In honour preferring one another; saints should think honourably of one another, and entertain an honourable esteem of each other; yea, should esteem each other better thou themselves; and not indulge evil surmises, and groundless jealousies of one another, which is contrary to that love that thinks no evil. They should speak honourably of each other in Christian company, and discourage that evil practice of whisperings, backbitings, and innuendos; they should treat each other with honour and respect in their common conversation, and especially when met together as a church of Christ. They should go before each other in giving honour, and showing respect, as the word προηγουμενος, signifies: they should set each other an example; and which also may be taken into the sense of the word, should prevent one another, not waiting until respect is shown on one side to return it again. Nor does this rule at all break in upon that order

that should subsist, and be maintained in bodies civil and ecclesiastical, which requires superior honour to be given to persons according to their character, office, and station in which they are.

Ver. 11. *Not slothful in business*, etc..] Meaning not worldly business, or the affairs of life; though slothfulness in this respect is scandalous to human nature, and especially in persons under a profession of religion; men should diligently pursue their lawful callings for the support of themselves and families, and the interest of Christ: but spiritual business, the affairs of piety and religion, the service of God, private and public, to which we should not be backward, nor slothful in the performance of; such as preaching, hearing, reading, praying, and other ordinances of God; yea, we should be ready and forward to every good work, and particularly, and which may be here greatly designed, ministering to the poor saints in their necessity; in doing which we show that kind, tender, affectionate, brotherly love, and give that honour and respect, at least that part of it, which is relief, required in the foregoing verse; (see <58A610>Hebrews 6:10-12). Remarkable is that saying of R. Tarphon [f228],

> "The day is short, and the work great, µylx[µyl[wphw, "and workmen slothful", and the reward much, and the master of the house is urgent."

Fervent in spirit; in their own spirits, for the glory of God, the honour of Christ, and the cause of religion, in imitation of Christ himself, and as Phinehas and Elijah were; which fervency of spirit is opposed to that lukewarmness of soul, (<661916>Revelation 3:16), that coldness of affection, and leaving of the first love, (<661204>Revelation 2:4), so much complained of, and resented by Christ in his people: or else in the Spirit of God; for there may be fervency in men's spirits, which comes not from the Spirit of God, as in the Jews, and particularly Saul, before his conversion, who had "a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge", (<451002>Romans 10:2); but when "the love of God is shed abroad in the heart" by the Spirit of God, (<450505>Romans 5:5), this will make a man's spirit fervent in the service of God, for which the apostle would have these believers concerned. A disciple of the wise men among the Jews is [f229] said to be jtr, "fervent", because the law is as a boiling pot unto him; much more should a disciple of Christ be fervent, who has the Gospel of Christ, the love of God, and the grace of the Spirit to inflame his soul with true zeal and fervour.

Serving the Lord; some copies read, “serving time”: the likeness of the words, καιρος and κυριος, especially in an abbreviation, may have occasioned this different reading; which should it be followed, is not to be understood in an ill sense, of temporizing, or time serving, of men's accommodating themselves, their sentiments and conduct, according to the times in which they live, in order to escape reproach and persecution; but of redeeming the time, improving every season to do good, and taking every opportunity of serving God. But as the reading our version follows is confirmed by authentic copies, and by the Syriac, and other Oriental versions, it is best to adhere to it: by “the Lord” is here meant either God, Father, Son, and Spirit, who are the alone object of divine service and religious worship; or the Lord Jesus Christ, who most frequently goes by the name of Lord in the New Testament; and who is the one Lord, whose we are and whom we should continually serve, being under the greatest obligations to him, not only as our Creator, but as our head, husband, and Redeemer. Very rightly does the apostle premise fervency in spirit to serving the Lord; for without the Spirit of God there is no true worshipping and serving of him, and which ought to be done with fervency as well as with constancy. The Syriac version renders it, “serve our Lord”.

Ver. 12. *Rejoicing in hope*, etc..] Of the glory of God, than the hope of which nothing can make a believer more cheerful in this world; the saints' joy is therefore called the “rejoicing of the hope”, (Hebrews 3:6). This is placed between serving the Lord, and being patient in tribulation; for nothing tends more to animate the people of God to a cheerful serving of him, or to make them more patient under afflictions, than a hope of being for ever with the Lord:

patient in tribulation; whilst the saints are in this world they must expect tribulation; their way to heaven lies through it; and it becomes them to be patient under it, not murmuring against God, on the one hand, nor reviling of men, on the other.

Continuing instant in prayer: prayer is needful at all times, but especially in a time of tribulation and distress, whether inward or outward. This should be made without ceasing; saints should watch unto it with all perseverance; men should pray always, and not faint; never give out and over, or be discouraged. This advice is rightly given and placed here, to teach us that we are to go to the throne of grace continually for fresh supplies of grace,

and strength to enable us to exercise the grace, and perform the duties exhorted to both in preceding and following verses.

Ver. 13. *Distributing to the necessity of saints*, etc..] Or “communicating”, as many versions render the word; “distributing” more properly belongs to the officers of the church, the deacons, and communicating to the members of it in common. All men in general are to be relieved that are in want, even our very enemies, and particularly such as are our own flesh and blood, nearly related to us, aged parents, etc.. and especially they that are of the household of faith, here called “saints”; and indeed, such only come under the care and notice of a church: and they are such, whom God has set apart for himself, has chosen in his Son, that they should be holy; whom Christ has sanctified, or whose sins he has expiated by his blood; and to whom he is made sanctification; and in whose hearts a work of grace and holiness is wrought by the Spirit of God, which is the sanctification of the Spirit they are chosen through, as a mean to eternal salvation by Christ; and in consequence of this, they live soberly, righteously, and godly, and have their conversations as become the Gospel of Christ: and such as these, being in necessitous circumstances, are to be communicated to; for not all, or any of the saints, but only such as are in “necessity”, are here pointed at; it is not communicating to the saints, but to their necessity, which is recommended. It is the will and pleasure of God, that some of his dear children should be in strait circumstances of life, be reduced to want and distress, partly to try their own graces, their faith and trust in God, and dependence on him; and partly the graces of others, the charity, liberality, and beneficence of those who have of this world's goods: and who are the persons that are to “communicate”, not words only, saying, be warmed and filled, and give nothing; but their substance, they are to deal their bread to the hungry, clothe the naked, and give a portion to as many as are in need: and these acts of giving and receiving, are one way by which the saints have communication with each other, and which is suggested by the word “communicating” here used; for fellowship does not lie merely in private conversation, and in sitting down together at the Lord's table, but in “communicating to one another such things” as are needful, as for the soul, so for the body. Some copies read, “communicating to the memories of the saints”; not making images of them, and praying to them, but speaking well and honourably of them, and imitating them in what they did well; (see <2000>Proverbs 10:7).

Given to hospitality; or, as it may be rendered, “pursuing”, or “following after love to strangers”; which is properly hospitality: respect is to be shown not to such only who are members of the same community with us, but also to such of the people of God, that may be of another country, or of some distant parts of our own, not before known by us; who by persecution, and distress of some sort or another, or by some providence or another, are obliged to remove from their native place. These we are to love, and show our love to, not only by directing and advising, but, if need be, by giving them food and raiment, and lodging them: this is a duty incumbent on ministers of the Gospel, and on private members, and on all who are in any capacity to perform it; and which should be done cheerfully, and without grudging; and what persons should use, inure, and give themselves to, yea, should seek after, and call to objects of it; as Abraham and Lot did, who thereby entertained angels unawares, and is what the apostle here means by pursuing and following after it.

Ver. 14. *Bless them which persecute you*, etc..] It is the lot of God's, people in this world to be persecuted by the men of it, in some shape or another, either by words or deeds; either by reviling and reproaching them, and speaking all manner of evil of them; or by hindering them the free exercise of religious worship, by confiscation of their goods, imprisonment of their persons, by violently torturing their bodies, and taking away their lives; under all which circumstances they are taught to

bless them; that is, to pray for them, that God would show them their evil, give repentance to them, and the remission of their sins; which is the order Christ gave to his disciples, (<40544>Matthew 5:44); and encouraged to an observance of, by his own example, (<42334>Luke 23:34); and has been followed herein by his disciples and apostles, (<44760>Acts 7:60) (<46412>1 Corinthians 4:12,13). Moreover, by “blessing” may be meant, giving them good words, mild and soft answers, “not rendering evil for evil, railing for railing”, (<60309>1 Peter 3:9); but, on the contrary, blessing, in imitation of Christ, who, “when he was reviled, reviled not again”, (<60223>1 Peter 2:23): “bless”,

and curse not: to have a mouth full of cursing and bitterness, (<451314>Romans 3:14), is the character of an unregenerate man, and what by no means suits one who names the name of Christ; for blessing and cursing to proceed out of the same mouth, is as absurd and unnatural, as if it should be supposed that a fountain should send forth sweet water and bitter, or salt and fresh,

(⁵⁹James 3:10-12). The imprecations upon wicked men, used by David and other good men, are no contradictions to this rule; since they were made under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, and were predictions of God's vengeance, which in righteous judgment should fall on them, and are not to be drawn into an example by us.

Ver. 15. *Rejoice with them that do rejoice*, etc..] Not in anything sinful and criminal, in a thing of nought, in men's own boastings; all such rejoicing is evil, and not to be joined in; but in things good and laudable, as in outward prosperity; and to rejoice with such, is a very difficult task; for unless persons have a near concern in the prosperity of others, they are very apt to envy it, or to murmur and repine, that they are not in equal, or superior circumstances; and also in things spiritual, with such who rejoice in the discoveries of God's love to their souls, in the views of interest in Christ, and of peace, pardon, and righteousness by him, and in hope of the glory of God; when such souls make their boast in the Lord, the humble hearing thereof will be glad, and will, as they ought to do, join with them in magnifying the Lord, and will exalt his name together:

and weep with them that weep; so Christ, as he rejoiced with them that rejoiced, at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, wept with them that wept, with Mary at the grave of Lazarus. The design of these rules is to excite and encourage sympathy in the saints with each other, in all conditions inward and outward, and with respect to things temporal and spiritual; in imitation of Christ their great high priest, who cannot but be touched with the infirmities of his people; and as founded upon, and arising from, their relation to each other, as members of the same body; (see ⁴⁶1 Corinthians 12:26);

Ver. 16. *Be of the same mind one towards another*, etc..] Which is not to be understood of the sameness of their judgment, or of their agreement in sentiments, espousing the same doctrines, observing the same ordinances, and in the same manner, and attending to the same form of discipline; but of their having the same love, and being of the same accord and affection to one another, entertaining the same good opinion, or a better, of others than of themselves; and so the Syriac version renders the passage, “what ye think of yourselves, think also of your brethren”: think of one another, as equally interested in the love of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, blessed with the same spiritual blessings in him, and called in the same hope

of your calling; and do not think of one another, as being one richer or wiser than another, do not value yourselves upon that:

mind not high things; be not highminded, do not think too highly of yourselves, and despise others; meddle not with, nor grasp at things too high for you, that are out of your reach, and beyond your capacity; nor seek great things for yourselves, as riches, honours, etc.. nor covet great company:

but condescend to men of low estate; or "to low things"; be content with mean and low things in life, and disdain not to take notice of and converse with, men in a low condition, whether in things temporal or spiritual; who may be poor in this world, be very ignorant and illiterate, as to general knowledge and learning; be men of mean parts and abilities, of very small gifts, and be weak in faith and experience; condescend to their weaknesses, bear their infirmities, and become all things to them for their good, and God's glory: consider the apostle is writing to citizens of Rome, who might be tempted to look upon themselves above others, and to look disdainfully upon others, as citizens too often do on country people, as if they were below them, as persons of low life to them:

be not wise in your own conceits; (see <20307>Proverbs 3:7). This is attended with bad consequences, spoils a man's usefulness, prevents his improvement in knowledge, tempts him to reject all counsel and advice given him, and to treat his fellow creatures and Christians with haughtiness and insolence, and exposes him to the scorn and contempt of men: or "be not wise by or with yourselves"; imagining you have all the wisdom, and others have none; or keeping it to yourselves, what wisdom you have communicate it to others; the Ethiopic version reads, "say not, we are wise"; (see <18102>Job 12:2,3).

Ver. 17. *Recompence to no man evil for evil*, etc..] Neither evil words for evil words, railing for railing; nor evil deeds for evil deeds, one ill turn for another; nor the evil of punishment for the evil of fault, unless it be by persons, who under God have an authority to inflict it; as the civil magistrate, who "is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil", (<45104>Romans 13:4); but private revenge is what is here forbidden:

providing things honest in the sight of all men. The Vulgate Latin reads, "not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men"; and the

Alexandrian copy reads, “in the sight of God and in the sight of men”, which clause seems to have crept in here, out of (<470821>2 Corinthians 8:21). The words are not to be understood of a man's providing things honest, decent, and commendable, as suitable food and raiment for his family, in the sight of all men, to the honour of religion, and the credit of his profession, which is right to be done; but of a provident, thoughtful, and studious concern, to do everything that is laudable and of good report among men. The Syriac version renders the words alter this manner, atbj ˆwdb[td ˆwkl ljbtn ala, “but be careful to do well”, or exercise beneficence before all men; either restraining it to acts of beneficence, even to them that do us ill, in opposition to rendering evil to them; or applying it to all offices of humanity, and every good work, which are to be done in the sight of men; not merely to be seen of them, and in a vainglorious way, in order to obtain their esteem and applause, as did the Pharisees; but to avoid offence; to put, to silence, by well doing, the ignorance of wicked men; and to shame them that falsely accuse the good conversation of the saints; and to recommend the Gospel and true religion, and win men over to it thereby, and give an occasion to them of glorifying God.

Ver. 18. *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably*, etc..] Or be at peace, seek after peace, pursue it, and cultivate it:

with all men; with those that we are immediately concerned with, in a natural relation; so husbands should live peaceably with their wives, and wives with their husbands; parents with their children, and children with their parents; masters with their servants, and servants with their masters; and one brother, relation, and friend, with another: and so with all we are concerned with in a spiritual relation, as members of Christ, and in the same church state; such should be at peace among themselves, (<520513>1 Thessalonians 5:13); peace should rule in their hearts, (<510315>Colossians 3:15), and they should study to keep “the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace”, (<490403>Ephesians 4:3): yea, with all we are concerned in a civil sense; saints should live peaceably in the neighbourhood, towns, cities, and countries, where they dwell, and show themselves to be the quiet in the land; should pray for the peace of the place where they are; and do all that in them lies to promote it, by living themselves peaceably and quietly, in all godliness and honesty; yea, they should live peaceably with their very enemies, “if it be possible”; which is rightly put, for there are some persons of such tempers and dispositions, that it is impossible to live peaceably

with; for when others are for peace, they are for war; and in some cases it is not only impracticable, but would be unlawful; as when it cannot be done consistent with holiness of life and conversation, with the edification of others, the truths of the Gospel, the interest of religion, and the glory of God; these are things that are never to be sacrificed for the sake of peace with men: the apostle adds another limitation of this rule, “as much as lieth in you”; for more than this is not required of us; nothing should be wanting on our parts; every step should be taken to cultivate and maintain peace; the blame should lie wholly on the other side; it becomes the saints to live peaceably themselves, if others will not with them.

Ver. 19. *Dearly beloved*, etc..] This affectionate appellation the apostle makes use of, expressing his great love to them, the rather to work upon then, and move them to an attention to what he is about to say; which they might assure themselves was in great tenderness to them, for their good, as well as the glory of God: moreover, he may hereby suggest to them, not only that they were dear to him, but that they were greatly beloved of God, that they were high in his favour and affection; and this he might him unto them, in order to melt them into love to their fellow Christians and fellow creatures, and even to their enemies, and never think of private revenge:

avenge not yourselves; this is no ways contrary to that revenge, a believer has upon sin, and the actings of it, which follows on true evangelical repentance for it, (2 Corinthians 7:11), and lies in a displicency at it, and himself for it, and in abstaining from it, and fighting against it; nor to that revenge a church may take of the disobedience of impenitent and incorrigible offenders, by laying censures on them, withdrawing from them, and rejecting them from their communion; nor to that revenge which civil magistrates may execute upon them that do evil; but this only forbids and condemns private revenge in private persons, for private injuries done, and affronts given:

but rather give place to wrath; either to a man's own wrath, stirred up by the provocations given him; let him not rush upon revenge immediately; let him sit down and breathe upon it; let him “give” ἄρτα, “space”, unto it, as the Syriac, which may signify time as well as place; and by taking time his wrath will, subside, he will cool and come to himself, and think better on it: or to the wrath of the injurious person, by declining him, as Jacob did Esau, till his wrath was over; or by patiently hearing without resistance the evil done, according to the advice of Christ, (Matthew 5:39,40); or to

the wrath of God, leave all with him, and to the day of his wrath and righteous judgment, who will render to every man according to his works; commit yourselves to him that judgeth righteously, and never think of avenging your own wrongs; and this sense the following words incline to,

for it is written, (<5225>Deuteronomy 32:35);

vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord; vengeance belongs to God, and to him only; it is proper and peculiar to him, not to Heathen deities, one of which they call δικη, "vengeance"; (see <4804>Acts 28:4); nor to Satan, who is of a revengeful spirit, and is styled the enemy and the avenger; nor to men, unless to magistrates under God, who are revengers and executioners of his wrath on wicked men; otherwise it solely belongs to God the lawgiver, whose law is broken, and against whom sin is committed: and there is reason to believe he will "repay" it, from the holiness of his nature, the strictness of his justice, his power and faithfulness, his conduct towards his own people, even to his Son, as their surety; nor will he neglect, but in his own time will avenge his elect, which cry unto him day and night; and who therefore should never once think of avenging themselves, but leave it with their God, to whom it belongs.

Ver. 20. *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him*, etc..] These words are taken from (<2521>Proverbs 25:21,22), and to be understood, as a Jewish [f230] writer observes, w[mçmk, according to "their literal sense"; though some of the Rabbins explain them in an allegorical way, of the corruption of nature. The Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, reads "but if"; so far should the saints be from meditating revenge upon their enemies, that they should do good unto them, as Christ directs, (<4544>Matthew 5:44), by feeding them when hungry, and giving drink unto them when thirsty:

if he thirst give him drink; which includes all offices of humanity and beneficence to be performed unto them: the reason, or argument inducing hereunto is,

for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head; not to do him hurt, not to aggravate his condemnation, as if this would be a means of bringing down the wrath of God the more fiercely on him, which is a sense given by some; as if this would be an inducement to the saints to do such acts of kindness; which is just the reverse of the spirit and temper of mind the apostle is here cultivating; but rather the sense is, that by so doing, his

conscience would be stung with a sense of former injuries done to his benefactor, and he be filled with shame on account of them, and be brought to repentance for them, and to love the person he before hated, and be careful of doing him any wrong for the future; all which may be considered as a prevailing motive to God's people to act the generous part they are here moved to: in the passage referred to, (<20252>Proverbs 25:21,22), “bread” and “water” are mentioned as to be given, which include all the necessaries of life: and it is added for encouragement, “and the Lord shall reward thee”. The sense given of this passage by some of the Jewish commentators on it agrees with what has been observed in some measure; says one [f231] of them,

> “when he remembers the food and drink thou hast given him, thou shall burn him, as if thou puttest coals upon his head to burn him, [r Æl twç[m rwmçyw, and “he will take care of doing thee any ill”;”

that is, for the time to come: and another of them observes [f232] that

> “this matter will be hard unto him, as if thou heapest coals on his head to burn him, wtçb bwrm, “because of the greatness of his shame”, on account of the good that he shall receive from thee, for the evil which he hath rendered to thee.”

This advice of showing kindness to enemies, and against private revenge, is very contrary to the dictates of human nature, as corrupted by sin. The former of these Julian the emperor represents [f233] as a “paradox”, though he owns it to be lawful, and a good action, to give clothes and food to enemies in war; and the latter, to revenge an injury, he says [f234], is a law common to all men, Greeks and Barbarians; but the Gospel and the grace of God teach us another lesson.

Ver. 21. *Be not overcome of evil*, etc..] Neither of the evil one, Satan, who is very busy to stir up the corruption of nature to an hatred of enemies, and to seek revenge; but give no place nor heed unto him, resist him, and he will flee from you, (<590407>James 4:7); “put on the whole armour of God”, (<490611>Ephesians 6:11), whereby you may defend yourselves, that he cannot touch you: nor of the evil of sin that dwells in you; “for whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage”, (<610219>2 Peter 2:19); nor of the evil of the man that has done you an injury, as you will be, if you return

evil for evil, or take any steps and measures to avenge yourselves; for then not you, but he that has done you the wrong, will be the conqueror:

but overcome evil with good; overcome the evil man, and the evil he has done you, by doing good to him, by feeding him when hungry, by giving him drink when thirsty, by clothing him when naked, and by doing other offices of kindness and humanity to him; which is most likely to win upon him, and of an enemy to make him your friend: and if not, however it will show that you are conquerors, yea, “more than conquerors”, (Romans 8:37), through the grace and strength of him that has loved you, over Satan, over the corruptions of your own hearts, and over the malice and wickedness of your enemies.

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 13

The principal things contained in this chapter, enjoined the saints, are the duties of subjection to magistrates, love to one another, and to all men, and temperance and chastity in themselves: it begins with duties relating to the civil magistrates, requiring obedience of everyone unto them, (Romans 13:1), and that for these reasons, because the civil magistracy, or government, is by divine appointment; wherefore to obey them in things of a civil nature, is to obey God; and to resist them is to resist God; and also because of the pernicious consequence of such resistance, damnation to themselves, (Romans 13:2), for the magistrate not only causes terror by penal laws, but he inflicts punishment on delinquents, and is the executioner of God's wrath and vengeance on such, (Romans 13:3,4), and likewise because of the profit and advantage to obedient subjects; such not only have the good will and esteem of their rulers, and are commended by them, but are defended and protected in their persons and properties, (Romans 13:3,4), moreover, the apostle enforces the necessity of subjection to them, not only in order to avoid punishment, but to answer a good conscience; this duty being according to the light of nature, and the dictates of a natural conscience; which if awake, must be uneasy with a contrary behaviour, (Romans 13:5), and for the same reason he urges the payment of tribute to them, as well as on account of the reasonableness of it, taken from magistrates spending their time, and using their talents, in an attendance on the service of the public, (Romans 13:6), and which is further confirmed by the general rule of justice and equity, or of doing that which is just and right to everyone, of which particulars are given, (Romans 13:7), and then after a general exhortation to pay all sorts of debts owing to superiors, inferiors, or equals, the apostle passes to the debt of love owing to one another, and to all mankind; which is exhorted to on this consideration, that the performance of it is a fulfilling the law, (Romans 13:8), which is proved, by showing that the several precepts of the law, of which an enumeration is given, are reducible to, and are included in love to our neighbours as ourselves, (Romans 13:9), and since it is the nature of love not to work ill, but to do good to the

neighbour, the conclusion follows, that it must be as asserted, that love is the fulfilment of the law, and ought by all means to be attended to, as a principal duty of religion, (<45 13 10>Romans 13:10), next the apostle proceeds to exhort the saints to a watchful, chaste, sober, and temperate course of life; as being perfectly agreeable to the privileges they enjoyed, to the present condition they were in, and to that future state of happiness they were in expectation of: he exhorts to be watchful and sober, and not indulge sleep and slothfulness, in consideration of the time in which they were, and with which they were acquainted, it being not night, but day; at least the one was wearing off, and the other coming on; the time of life being short, and the day of salvation approaching nearer and nearer, (<45 13 11>Romans 13:11,12), wherefore such actions should be done, as are agreeable to the day, and not the night, to light, and not darkness; and particularly such works of darkness are dissuaded from, which are contrary to temperance and sobriety, as rioting, and drunkenness; and to chastity, as chambering: and wantonness; and to peace and concord, as strife and envying, which frequently follow upon the former: and the chapter is concluded with an exhortation to faith in Christ, and an imitation of him, expressed in a figurative way by a metaphor, taken from the putting on of garments; and with a dehortation from an immoderate provision for the flesh, so as to promote, excite, and cherish, the lusts of it, (<45 13 13>Romans 13:13).

Ver. 1. *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers*, etc..] The apostle having finished his exhortations to this church, in relation to the several duties incumbent upon both officers and private Christians, as members of a church, and with reference to each other, and their moral conduct in the world; proceeds to advise, direct, and exhort them to such duties as were relative to them as members of a civil society; the former chapter contains his Christian Ethics, and this his Christian Politics. There was the greater reason to insist upon the latter, as well as on the former, since the primitive saints greatly lay under the imputation of being seditious persons and enemies to the commonwealth; which might arise from a very great number of them being Jews, who scrupled subjection to the Heathen magistrates, because they were the seed of Abraham, and by a law were not to set one as king over them, that was a stranger, and not their own brother, and very unwillingly bore the Roman yoke, and paid tribute to Caesar: hence the Christians in common were suspected to be of the same principles; and of all the Jews none were more averse to the payment of taxes to the Roman magistrates than the Galilaeans; (see <44 05 37>Acts 5:37 <42 23 01>Luke 13:1). And this

being the name by which Christ and his followers were commonly called, might serve to strengthen the above suspicion of them, and charge against them. Moreover, some Christians might be tempted to think that they should not be subject to Heathen magistrates; since they were generally wicked men, and violent persecutors of them; and that it was one branch of their Christian liberty to be freed from subjection to them: and certain it is, that there were a set of loose and licentious persons, who bore the name of Christians, that despised dominion, and spoke evil of dignities; wherefore the apostle judged it advisable especially to exhort the church of Rome, and the members who dwelt there, where was the seat of power and civil government, so to behave towards their superiors, that they might set a good example to the Christians in the several parts of the empire, and wipe off the aspersion that was cast upon them, as if they were enemies to magistracy and civil power. By “the higher powers”, he means not angels, sometimes called principalities and powers; for unto these God hath not put in subjection his people under the Gospel dispensation; nor ecclesiastical officers, or those who are in church power and authority; for they do not bear the temporal sword, nor have any power to inflict corporeal punishment: but civil magistrates are intended, (see <56301>Titus 3:1); and these not only supreme magistrates, as emperors and kings, but all inferior and subordinate ones, acting in commission under them, as appears from (<60213>1 Peter 2:13,14), which are called “powers”, because they are invested with power and authority over others, and have a right to exercise it in a proper way, and in proper cases; and the “higher” or super eminent ones, because they are set in high places, and have superior dignity and authority to others. The persons that are to be subject to them are “every soul”; not that the souls of men, distinct from their bodies, are under subjection to civil magistrates; for of all things they have the least to do with them, their power and jurisdiction not reaching to the souls, the hearts, and consciences of men, especially in matters of religion, but chiefly to their bodies, and outward civil concerns of life: but the meaning is, that every man that has a soul, every rational creature, ought to be subject to civil government. This is but his reasonable service, and which he should from his heart, and with all his soul, cheerfully perform. In short, the sense is, that every man should be subject: this is an Hebraism, a common way of speaking among the Jews, who sometimes denominate men from one part, and sometimes from another; sometimes from the body or flesh, thus “all flesh is grass”, (<23406>Isaiah 40:6), that is, all men are frail; and sometimes front the soul, “all souls are mine”, (<26804>Ezekiel 18:4), all belong to me; as

here, “every soul”, that is, every man, all the individuals of mankind, of whatsoever sex, age, state, or condition, ecclesiastics not excepted: the pope, and his clergy, are not exempted from civil jurisdiction; nor any of the true ministers of the Gospel; the priests under the law were under the civil government; and so was Christ himself, and his apostles, who paid tribute to Caesar; yea, even Peter particularly, whose successor the pope of Rome pretends to be. “Subjection” to the civil magistrates designs and includes all duties relative to them; such as showing them respect, honour, and reverence suitable to their stations; speaking well of them, and their administration; using them with candour, not bearing hard upon them for little matters, and allowing for ignorance of the secret springs of many of their actions and conduct, which if known might greatly justify them; wishing well to them, and praying constantly, earnestly, and heartily for them; observing their laws and injunctions; obeying their lawful commands, which do not contradict the laws of God, nature, and right reason; and paying them their just dues and lawful tribute, to support them in their office and dignity:

for there is no power but of God; God is the fountain of all power and authority; the streams of power among creatures flow from him; the power that man has over all the creatures, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, and the fishes of the sea, is originally of God, and by a grant from him; the lesser powers, and the exercises of them, in the various relations men stand in to one another, are of God, as the power the husband has over the wife, parents over their children, and masters over their servants; and so the higher power that princes have over their subjects: for it is the God of heaven that sets up kings, as well as pulls them down; he is the King of kings, from whom they derive their power and authority, from whom they have the right of government, and all the qualifications for it; it is by him that kings reign, and princes decree justice.

The powers that be are ordained of God. The order of magistracy is of God; it is of his ordination and appointment, and of his ordering, disposing, and fixing in its proper bounds and limits. The several forms of government are of human will and pleasure; but government itself is an order of God. There may be men in power who assume it of themselves, and are of themselves, and not of God; and others that abuse the power that is lodged in them; who, though they are by divine permission, yet not of God's approbation and good will. And it is observable, that the apostle speaks of powers, and not persons, at least, not of persons, but under the name of

powers, to show that he means not this, or the other particular prince or magistrate, but the thing itself, the office and dignity of magistracy itself; for there may be some persons, who may of themselves usurp this office, or exercise it in a very illegal way, who are not of God, nor to be subject to by men. The apostle here both uses the language, and speaks the sentiments of his countrymen the Jews, who are wont to call magistrates, "powers"; hence those sayings were used among them; says Shemaiah [f235],

> "twçrl [dwtt la, "be not too familiar with the power"."

that is, with a magistrate, which oftentimes is dangerous. Again,

> "says [f236] Rabban Gamaliel, twçrb ^yryhz wyh, "take heed of the power" (i.e. of magistrates), for they do not suffer a man to come near them, but in necessity, and then they appear as friends for their own advantage, but will not stand by a man in the time of distress."

Moreover, after this manner they explain [f237] (Proverbs 5:8),

> ""remove thy way far from her", this is heresy; "and come not nigh the door of her house", twçrh wz, "this is the power". The gloss on it is, magistrates, because they set their eyes upon rich men to kill them, and take away their substance."

And a little after it is observed,

> ""the horse leech hath two daughters, crying, give, give", (Proverbs 30:15): it is asked, what is the meaning of give, give? Says Mar Ukba, there are two daughters which cry out of hell, and say in this world, give, give, and they are heresy, twçrhw, "and the civil power"."

The gloss on this place is,

> "Heresy cries, bring a sacrifice to the idol; "Civil Power" cries, bring money, and gifts, and revenues, and tribute to the king."

Nevertheless, they look upon civil government to be of divine appointment. They say [f238], that

> "no man is made a governor below, except they proclaim him above;"

i.e. unless he is ordained of God: yea, they allow [f239] the Roman empire to be of God, than which no government was more disagreeable to them.

> "When R. Jose ben Kisma was sick, R. Chanina ben Tradion went to visit him; he said unto him, Chanina, my brother, my brother, knowest thou not that this nation, (the Romans) hwkylmh µymçh ˆm, "have received their empire" from God? for it hath laid waste his house, and hath burnt his temple, and has slain his saints, and destroyed his good men, and yet it endures."

Nay, they frequently affirm [f240], that the meanest office of power among men was of divine appointment. This is the apostle's first argument for subjection to the civil magistrate.

Ver. 2. *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power*, etc..] The office of magistracy, and such as are lawfully placed in it, and rightly exercise it; who denies that there is, or ought to be any such order among men, despises it, and opposes it, and withdraws himself from it, and will not be subject to it in any form:

resisteth the ordinance of God, the will and appointment of God, whose pleasure it is that there should be such an office, and that men should be subject to it. This is not to be understood, as if magistrates were above the laws, and had a lawless power to do as they will without opposition; for they are under the law, and liable to the penalty of it, in case of disobedience, as others; and when they make their own will a law, or exercise a lawless tyrannical power, in defiance of the laws of God, and of the land, to the endangering of the lives, liberties, and properties of subjects, they may be resisted, as Saul was by the people of Israel, when he would have took away the life of Jonathan for the breach of an arbitrary law of his own, and that too without the knowledge of it, (1 Samuel 14:45); but the apostle is speaking of resisting magistrates in the right discharge of their office, and in the exercise of legal power and authority:

and they that resist them, in this sense,

shall receive to themselves damnation; that is, punishment; either temporal, and that either by the hand of the magistrate himself, who has it in his power to punish mutiny, sedition, and insurrection, and any opposition to him in the just discharge of his duty; or at the hand of God, in righteous judgment, for their disobedience to an ordinance of his; as in

the case of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who opposed themselves both to the civil and sacred government of the people of Israel, (Numbers 26:9); and were swallowed up alive in the earth, (Numbers 26:10): or eternal punishment, unless the grace of God prevents; for “the blackness of darkness is reserved for ever”, (Jude 1:13), for such persons, who, among other of their characters, are said to “despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities”, (Jude 1:8). This is another argument persuading to subjection to magistrates.

Ver. 3. *For rulers are not a terror to good works*, etc..] That is, to them that do good works in a civil sense; who behave well in the neighbourhoods, towns, cities, and countries where they dwell. The apostle seems to anticipate an objection made against governors, as if there was something very terrible and formidable in them; and which might be taken up from the last clause of the preceding verse; and which he removes by observing, that governors neither do, nor ought to inject terror into men that behave well, obey the laws, and keep a good decorum among their fellow subjects, not doing any injury to any man's person, property, and estate. The Jews [f241] have a saying,

> “that a governor that injects more fear into the people, than is for the honour of God, shall be punished, and shall not see his son a disciple of a wise man.”

But to the evil; to wicked men, who make no conscience of doing hurt to their fellow creatures, by abusing their persons, defrauding them of their substance, and by various illicit methods doing damage to them; to such, rulers are, and ought to be terrors; such are to be menaced, and threatened with inflicting upon them the penalty of the laws they break; and which ought to be inflicted on them by way of punishment to them, and for the terror of others. R. Chanina, the Sagan of the priests [f242], used to say,

> “pray for the peace of the kingdom, for if there was no harwm, “fear”, (i.e. a magistrate to inject fear,) one man would devour another alive.”

Wilt thou not then be afraid of the power? of the civil magistrate, in power and authority, to oppose him, to refuse subjection to him, to break the laws, which, according to his office, he is to put in execution.

Do that which is good: in a civil sense, between man and man, by complying with the laws of the land, which are not contrary to the laws of God; for of doing good in a spiritual and religious sense he is no judge:

and thou shalt have praise of the same; shall be commended as a good neighbour, a good citizen, and a good commonwealth's man; an honest, quiet, peaceable man, that does not disturb the peace of civil society, but strengthens and increases it.

Ver. 4. *For he is the minister of God to thee for good*, etc..] He is a minister of God's appointing and commissioning, that acts under him, and for him, is a kind of a vicegerent of his, and in some, sense represents him; and which is another reason why men ought to be subject to him; and especially since he is appointed for their “good”, natural, moral, civil, and spiritual, as Pareus observes: for natural good, for the protection of men's natural lives, which otherwise would be in continual danger from wicked men; for moral good, for the restraining of vice, and encouragement of virtue; profaneness abounds exceedingly, as the case is, but what would it do if there were no laws to forbid it, or civil magistrates to put them in execution? for civil good, for the preservation of men's properties, estates, rights, and liberties, which would be continually invaded, and made a prey of by others; and for spiritual and religious good, as many princes and magistrates have been; a sensible experience of which we have under the present government of these kingdoms, allowing us a liberty to worship God according to our consciences, none making us afraid, and is a reason why we should yield a cheerful subjection to it:

but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid: of the punishment of such evil threatened by law, and to be inflicted by the civil magistrate;

for he beareth not the sword in vain. The “sword” is an emblem of the power of life and death, the civil magistrate is invested with, and includes all sorts of punishment he has a right to inflict; and this power is not lodged in him in vain; he may and ought to make use of it at proper times, and upon proper persons:

for he is the minister of God; as is said before, he has his mission, commission, power and authority from him; and is

a revenge to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil; he is a defender of the laws, a vindicator of divine justice, an avenger of the wrongs of men;

and his business is to inflict proper punishment, which is meant by wrath, upon delinquents.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject*, etc..] To the higher powers, to the civil magistrates; there is a necessity of it, because magistracy is God's ordinance, it is for the good of men; and such that oppose it will severely smart for it: but subjection to it from Christians should be,

not only for wrath; through fear of punishment, and for the sake of escaping it; either the wrath of men or of God, in this or the other world:

but also for conscience sake: to keep conscience clear, to exercise a good one void of offence towards God and men; for natural reason, conscience itself, dictates that there ought to be such order among men, that civil government should take place, and ought to be submitted to.

Ver. 6. *For, for this cause pay you tribute also*, etc..] To show that we are subject to the higher powers, and as a proof and evidence of our subjection to them, we do and ought to pay tribute to them, to support them in their office and dignity; and this is done not for fear of trouble, of distress on goods and estate, or imprisonment of person, but for conscience sake: payment of taxes is not a mere matter of prudence, and done to avoid dangerous consequence, but is and ought to be a case of conscience; whatever is anyone's due, and of right belongs to him, conscience dictates it ought to be paid him; as therefore it tells a man, that whatever is God's should be rendered to him, so whatever is Caesar's, should be given him; and indeed to do otherwise, to refuse to pay tribute, or by any fraudulent means to deprive the civil magistrate of his due, is not only to do an injury to him, but to the whole body politic, which has a greater concern therein than he himself; and such a person forfeits all right and claim to his protection:

for they are God's ministers. This is another reason why tribute should be paid them, not only to testify subjection to them, and keep conscience clear, but because they are called unto, and put into this high office by God; for promotion to such honour and high places comes not from east, west, north, or south; but is by the providence of God, who puts down, and sets up at pleasure; they are his vicegerents, they act under him, are in his stead, and represent his majesty; and therefore, in some sort, what is done to them is done to him:

attending continually upon this very thing; not of laying, collecting, and receiving tribute, but of service and ministry under God, for the welfare of their subjects; for rightly to administer the office of magistracy requires great pains, care, diligence, and assiduity; and as great wisdom and thoughtfulness in making laws for the good of the body, so a diligent constant concern to put them in execution, to secure the lives of subjects from cut throats and murderers, and their properties and estates from thieves and robbers; and they are not only obliged diligently to attend to such service at home, but to keep a good lookout abroad, and penetrate into, and watch the designs of foreign enemies, to defend from their invasions, and fight for their country; that the inhabitants thereof may live peaceable and quiet lives, enjoying their respective rights and privileges; and since therefore civil government is a business of so much care, and since our rulers are so solicitous, and constantly concerned for our good, and which cannot be done without great expense, as well as diligence, we ought cheerfully to pay tribute to them.

Ver. 7. *Render therefore to all their dues*, etc..] To all princes, magistrates, and officers, that are placed over us, from the supreme governor to the lowest officer under him, should we render as a due debt, and not as a mere gift, whatever belongs to them, or is proper for them for the due discharge of their office, to encourage in it, and support the dignity of it, whether external or internal:

tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom. These two words include all sorts of levies, taxes, subsidies, etc.. and the former may particularly design what is laid on men's persons and estates, as poll money, land tax, etc.. and the latter, what arises from the exportation and importation of goods, to and from foreign parts:

fear to whom fear; not of punishment; for a good subject has no reason to fear the civil magistrate in this sense, only the man that does evil, the malefactor; as for the good neighbour, citizen, and subject, he loves the magistrate the more, the more diligent he is in putting the laws in execution against wicked men; but this is to be understood of a fear of offending, and especially of a reverence bore in the mind, and expressed by outward actions, and such as has going with it a cheerful obedience to all lawful commands:

honour to whom honour; there is an honour due to all men, according to their respective rank and station, and the relation they stand in to each

other; so servants are to honour their masters, children their parents, wives their husbands, and subjects their princes; all inferior magistrates are to be honoured in their place, and more especially the king as supreme, in thought, word, and gesture; (see 1 Peter 2:17).

Ver. 8. *Owe no man anything*, etc..] From the payment of dues to magistrates the apostle proceeds to a general exhortation to discharge all sorts of debts; as not to owe the civil magistrate any thing, but render to him his dues, so to owe nothing to any other man, but make good all obligations whatever, as of a civil, so of a natural kind. There are debts arising from the natural and civil relations subsisting among men, which should be discharged; as of the husband to the wife, the wife to the husband; parents to their children, children to their parents; masters to their servants, servants to their masters; one brother, friend, and neighbour, to another. Moreover, pecuniary debts may be here intended, such as are come into by borrowing, buying, commerce, and contracts; which though they cannot be avoided in carrying on worldly business, yet men ought to make conscience of paying them as soon as they are able: many an honest man may be in debt, and by one providence or another be disabled from payment, which is a grief of mind to him; but for men industriously to run into debt, and take no care to pay, but live upon the property and substance of others, is scandalous to them as men, and greatly unbecoming professors of religion, and brings great reproach upon the Gospel of Christ.

But to love one another. This is the only debt never to be wholly discharged; for though it should be always paying, yet ought always to be looked upon as owing. Saints ought to love one another as such; to this they are obliged by the new commandment of Christ, by the love of God, and Christ unto them, by the relations they stand in to one another, as the children of God, brethren, and members of the same body; and which is necessary to keep them and the churches of Christ together, it being the bond of perfectness by which they are knit to one another; and for their comfort and honour, as well as to show the truth and reality of their profession. This debt should be always paying; saints should be continually serving one another in love, praying for each other, bearing one another's burdens, forbearing each other, and doing all good offices in things temporal and spiritual that lie in their power, and yet always owing; the obligation to it always remains. Christ's commandment is a new one, always new, and will never be antiquated; his and his Father's love always continue, and the relations believers stand in to each other are ever the

same; and therefore love will be always paying, and always owing in heaven to all eternity. But what the apostle seems chiefly to respect, is love to one another as men, love to one another, to the neighbour, as the following verses show. Love is a debt we owe to every man, as a man, being all made of one blood, and in the image of God; so that not only such as are of the same family, live in the same neighbourhood, and belong to the same nation, but even all the individuals of mankind, yea, our very enemies are to share in our love; and as we have an opportunity and ability, are to show it by doing them good.

For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law; that is, not who loves some one particular person, but every other person besides himself, even his neighbour, in the largest sense of the word, including all mankind, and that as himself; such an one has fulfilled the law, the law of the decalogue; that part of it particularly which relates to the neighbour; the second table of the law, as the next verse shows: though since there is no true love of our neighbour without the love of God, nor no true love of God without the love of our neighbour; and since these two involve each other, and include the whole law, it may be understood of fulfilling every part of it, that is, of doing it; for fulfilling the law means doing it, or acting according to it; and so far as a man loves, so far he fulfils, that is, does it: but this is not, nor can it be done perfectly, which is evident, partly from the impotency of man, who is weak and without strength, yea, dead in sin, and unable to do any thing of himself; and partly from the extensiveness of the law, which reaches to the thoughts and desires of the heart, as well as to words and actions; as also from the imperfection of love, for neither love to God, nor love to one another, either as men or Christians, is perfect; and consequently the fulfilling of the law by it is not perfect: hence this passage yields nothing in favour of the doctrine of justification by works; since the best works are imperfect, even those that spring from love, for love itself is imperfect; and are not done as they are, in a man's own strength, and without the Spirit and grace of God. Christ only has fulfilled the law perfectly, both as to parts and degrees; and to him only should we look for a justifying righteousness.

Ver. 9. *For this, thou shalt not commit adultery*, etc..] The apostle here reckons up the several laws of the second table, with this view, that it might appear that so far as a man loves his neighbour, whether more near or distantly related, he fulfils the law, or acts according to it. He omits the first of these, the fifth commandment, either because he had urged this

before, so far as it may be thought to regard magistrates; or because, according to the division of the Jews, who reckon five commands to each table, this belonged to the first: and he puts the seventh before the sixth, which is of no great moment; the order of things being frequently changed in the Scripture, and which is often done by Jewish writers, in alleging and citing passages of Scripture; and with whom this is a maxim, hrwtb rjwamw µdqwm ^ya, "that there is no first nor last in the law" [f243]; that is, it is of no importance which stands first or last in it: it follows,

thou shall not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet; which are the sixth, eighth, ninth, and tenth commands of the decalogue, (<02Ex20:13,15-17>Exodus 20:13,15-17):

and if there be any other commandment; of God, respecting the neighbour, either in the decalogue, as there was the fifth, (<02Ex20:12>Exodus 20:12), or elsewhere, the apostle repeating this by memory:

it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself; (see <03Le19:18>Leviticus 19:18); this is the summary and epitome of them; so Christ reduces the laws of the first table to the head of love to God, and those of the second to the head of love to the neighbour, (<40Mt22:37-39>Matthew 22:37-39), as the apostle does here, and in (<48Ga5:14>Galatians 5:14), and the Apostle James, in (<59Ja2:8>James 2:8).

Ver. 10. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour*, etc..] That is, the man that truly loves his neighbour, will contrive no ill against him, nor do any to him; he will not injure his person, nor defile his bed, nor deprive or defraud him of his substance; or do hurt to his character, bear false testimony against him, or covet with an evil covetousness anything that is his; but, on the contrary, will do him all the good he is capable of:

therefore love is the fulfilling of the law: so far as a man loves his neighbour, he acts agreeably to the law, and the particular precepts of it above mentioned: what the apostle says of love to the neighbour, the Jews frequently say of love to God;

> "he that loveth God (they say [f244]) ^ryma rç[µyyqm, "hath fulfilled the decalogue", both above and below."

And again [f245],

> “there is no service like the love of God, R. Abba saith it is atyyrwad all k, “the sum of the law”; for the ten words of the law wlylkta akh, “are herein comprehended”, or “fulfilled”:”

and elsewhere [f246] they observe,

> “that hbhab hlwlk hrwth lk, “the whole law is comprehended”, or fulfilled “in love”.”

Ver. 11. *And that knowing the time*, etc..] That it is day and not night, the Gospel day, the day of salvation; in which the grace of God shines forth, like the sun in its meridian glory; life and immortality are brought to light, righteousness and salvation are revealed; and so a time not for sloth and sleep, but business; in which the saints should active in the exercise of grace, and discharge, of duty; owing no man anything but the debt of love; and that the dawn of grace, and day of spiritual light had broke in upon their souls, and dispelled the darkness of sin, ignorance and unbelief; that the darkness was past, and the true light shined, and the sun of righteousness was risen on them: all which they full well knew and were conscious of, and therefore should observe,

that now it is high time for us to awake out of sleep; since sleep is for the night, and not the day; the Alexandrian copy reads, “for you”. This is to be understood, not of the dead sleep of sin, in which unconverted persons are, to be awoke out of which is a work of divine power; but of the carnal security and drowsy frame of spirit which sometimes attend the churches and children of God, the wise as well as the foolish virgins; and lies in grace being dormant in, the soul; in a backwardness to duty, and a slothfulness in the performance of it; in resting in the outward duties of religion; in lukewarmness about the cause of Christ; in an unconcernedness about sins of omission and commission; and in a willingness to continue in such a sluggish frame: all which arise from a body of sin and death, and an over anxious care for the things of the world; from a weariness in spiritual exercises, and an abstinence from spiritual company and ordinances and from outward peace and liberty: such a frame of spirit, when, it prevails and becomes general is of bad consequence to the churches of Christ; the spirit of discerning, care and diligence in receiving members, are in a great measure lost, and so they are filled with hypocrites and heretics; Christ absents himself from them; leanness of soul is brought upon them; and they are in danger of being surprised with the midnight cry: the methods God

takes to awaken his people out of such a sleep are various; sometimes in a more gentle way, by the discoveries his love, which causes the lips of those that are asleep to speak; sometimes by severe reproofs in the ministry of the word; and sometimes by sharp persecutions in providence; and at last it will be done by the midnight cry: the argument, showing the reasonableness of awaking out of sleep, and that it was high time to do so, follows,

for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed; by which is meant, not temporal salvation, or a deliverance from the persecution the saints endured in Judea, from their own countrymen, by the departure of them from Jerusalem, a little before its destruction, by the destruction of that city, and the peaceful times of Vespasian; but a spiritual and eternal salvation: not Christ the author of it, who was come to effect it; nor that itself, as obtained, which was now done, finished, and completed; nor the application of it to their souls, which also had been made; but the consummate enjoyment of it in heaven, the salvation of their souls at death, and both of soul and body at the resurrection; consisting in a freedom from every evil, and in a full possession of all that is good and glorious: this is brought nearer to the saints, to their sight and view, as their faith grows and increases; and they are nearer the enjoyment of that than when they first believed; and which is a strong reason why a sluggish, slothful frame should not be indulged; what, sleep, and heaven so near at hand! just at their Father's house, ready to enter into the joy of their Lord, into his everlasting kingdom and glory, and yet asleep!

Ver. 12. *The night is far spent*, etc..] Not of Jewish darkness, which was gone, and was succeeded by the Gospel day; nor of former ignorance in Gentilism and unregeneracy, for that was past, and the true light shined; much less of security in the latter day, which was not yet come on; rather of persecution and distress for Christ's sake; but it is best of all to understand it of the present time of life; so it is called by the Jews[f247], hlyl hmwd hzh µlw[h, "this world is like to the night": and which, in the best of saints, is attended with imperfection and darkness, errors and mistakes, in principle and practice, in doctrine and conversation; however, it is far spent, and in a little time will be over:

the day is at hand; not the Gospel day, for that was already come; nor the day of grace, and spiritual light and comfort to their souls, for that also had taken place; nor the latter day glory, which then was at a distance; rather

the approaching day of deliverance from present persecutions; but it is much better to understand it of the everlasting day of glory, which to particular persons was then, and now is at hand; a little while, and the night of darkness, affliction, and disconsolation will be over, and the day of glory will succeed, when there will be no more night, no more darkness, no more doubts, fears, and unbelief; but one continued series of light, joy, and comfort, and an uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit; and which is another reason why the saints should not indulge themselves in sleep, but be active, since the halcyon days are at hand, as well as a reason why they should attend to the following exhortations:

let us therefore cast off the works of darkness; as the apostle had made use of the metaphors of night and day, and of sleep, and awaking out of sleep, and rising in the morning to business, so he continues the same; and here alludes to persons throwing off their bed clothes, and covering of the night, and putting on proper raiment for the day. By “works of darkness” are meant evil works, which are opposite to the light; to God, who is light itself; to Christ, the light of the world; to the word of God, both law and Gospel, which is a light to our paths; to both the light of nature, and the light of grace: and which spring from the darkness of the mind, and are encouraged to by the god of this world, and by his angels, the rulers of the darkness of it; and which are generally done in the dark, and are such as will not bear the light; and, if grace prevent not, will end in outer darkness, in blackness of darkness, reserved by the justice of God, as the punishment of them. “Casting [them] off” expresses a dislike of them, a displicency with them, and an abstinence from them. Some copies read, “the armour of darkness”, which agrees with what follows:

and let us put on the armour of light; the whole armour of God, the use of which lies in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; particularly good works are designed here, which though they are not the believer's clothing, his robe of justifying righteousness, they are both his ornament and his armour; by which he adorns the doctrine of Christ, and defends his own character and principles against the charges find calumnies of then: these being performed aright, spring from the light of grace in a regenerate man, and are such as will bear the light to be seen of men; and are the lights which are to shine before men, that they beholding them, may glorify God; so virtue was by Antisthenes [f248], called αναφαιρετον οπλον, “armour which cannot be taken away”: the allusion is thought to be to the bright

and glittering armour of the Romans; the Alexandrian copy reads, “the words of light”.

Ver. 13. *Let us walk honestly as in the day*, etc..] Being under the day of the Gospel dispensation, and the day of grace having dawned, and the daystar of spiritual light and knowledge being risen in our hearts, and we being exposed to the view of all men in broad daylight, ought not to lie down and sleep, but to arise and be active, and walk decently with the armour of light on us, as becomes the Gospel of Christ; not naked and unclothed, which would expose us and the Gospel to shame and contempt:

not in rioting; the Syriac and Arabic versions read, “in singing”, or “songs”; meaning lewd ones, sung at riotous feasts and banquets, made not for refreshment, but for pleasure and debauchery, what the Romans [f249] call “comessations”; feasts after supper in the night season, and design all sorts of nocturnal revels: “Comus”, the word here used, is with the Heathens the god of feasts, perhaps the same with “Chemosh”, the god of the Moabites, (<111133>1 Kings 11:33).

And drunkenness; which always attended such unseasonable and immoderate festivals:

not in chambering; in unlawful copulations, fornication, adultery, and all the defilements of the bed:

and wantonness; lasciviousness, unnatural lusts, as sodomy, etc..

not in strife and envying; contention and quarrels, which are usually the consequences of luxury and uncleanness.

Ver. 14. *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*, etc..] As a man puts on his clothes when he rises in the morning: the righteousness of Christ is compared to a garment, it is the best robe, it is fine linen, clean and white, and change of raiment; which being put on by the Father's gracious act of imputation, covers the sins and deformities of his people, defends them from divine justice, secures them from wrath to come, and renders them beautiful and acceptable in his sight: which righteousness being revealed from faith to faith, is received by faith, and made use of as a proper dress to appear in before God; and may be daily said to be put on by the believer, as often as he makes use of it, and pleads it with God as his justifying righteousness, which should be continually: moreover, to put on Christ, and which indeed seems to be the true sense of the phrase here, is not only

to exercise faith on him as the Lord our righteousness, and to make a profession of his name, but to imitate him in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; to walk as he walked, and as we have him for an example, in love, meekness, patience, humility, and holiness:

and make not provision for the flesh; the body: not but that due care is to be taken of it, both for food and clothing; and for its health, and the continuance and preservation of it by all lawful methods; but not so as

to fulfil the lusts thereof; to indulge and gratify them, by luxury and uncleanness: it is a saying of Hillell [f250], hmr hbrm rçb hbrm "he that increases flesh, increases worms"; the sense his commentators [f251] give of it is, that

> "he that increases by eating and drinking, until he becomes fat and fleshy, increases for himself worms in the grave:"

the design of the sentence is, that voluptuous men, who care for nothing else but the flesh, should consider, that ere long they will be a repast for worms: we should not provide, or be caterers for the flesh; and, by pampering it, stir up and satisfy its corrupt inclinations and desires.

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 14

The apostle, having finished his exhortations to duties of a moral and civil kind, proceeds to the consideration of things indifferent, about eating some sorts of meats, and keeping days; to which he might be led by the last clause of the preceding chapter, lest that should be interpreted as referring to those who used their Christian liberty in eating every sort of food; in the use of which it was requisite to exercise that love which is the fulfilling of the law, he had so much pressed and recommended in the foregoing chapters. The church at Rome consisted both of Jews and Gentiles: and the former, though they believed in Christ, were not clear about the abrogation of the ceremonial law, and thought they ought still to observe the distinction of meats and days, which were made in it; the latter looked upon themselves under no manner of obligation to regard them; and even among thee Jews, some might have greater light and knowledge in these things than others, and used their Christian liberty, when others could not; and this occasioned great animosities and contentions among them; and some on account of these things were called strong, and others weak: and the chief view of the apostle in this chapter, is to give advice to each party how to behave one towards another; how the strong should behave to the weak, and the weak to the strong: and he begins with the strong, and in general exhorts them to a kind, tender, and affectionate regard to their weaker brethren, and not to perplex their minds with disputations about things to little profit, (Romans 14:1), then a distribution of the members of this church into two parts is made, (Romans 14:2), showing the reason of the above exhortations; the one sort being strong believers, the others weak, the one eating all things, the other herbs; when some advice is given to each, that the strong should not despise the weak, nor the weak judge the strong; for which reasons are given: and the first is taken from the common interest they both have in the affection of God, and in divine adoption, (Romans 14:3), And another is taken from the relation which believers stand in to God, as servants; and therefore not to be judged and condemned, but to be left to their Lord and master, which is illustrated by a simile of such a relation among men, (Romans 14:4), and then another

instance of different sentiments about Jewish rites and ceremonies is given, (<45145>Romans 14:5), respecting the observation of days, in which also the members of the church were divided, some observing them, and some not; and the apostle's advice is, that every man should act as he was persuaded in his own mind, and not be uneasy with another: the reason for which he gives, (<45146>Romans 14:6), because the end proposed by the one, and the other, is the honour and glory of God, and which is the same in the man that eats, or does not eat meat, since both give thanks to God. And this is further confirmed from the general end of the Christian's life and death likewise, which is not to himself, but to the Lord, (<45147>Romans 14:7,8), from whence it is concluded, that they are the Lord's in life and death, and all their actions are devoted to him; who by dying, rising, and living again, appears to be the Lord of quick and dead, and will judge both, (<45149>Romans 14:9), and therefore to his judgment things should be left, and one should not condemn or despise another, since all must stand at his bar, (<45140>Romans 14:10), which is proved (<45141>Romans 14:11), from a passage in (<23523>Isaiah 45:23), from all which it is concluded, (<45142>Romans 14:12), that an account must be given by everyone to God, at the general judgment; wherefore it is right and best, not to judge and condemn one another, but to judge this to be the most reasonable and agreeable to Christian charity, that care be taken not to offend, or cause a brother to stumble, (<45143>Romans 14:13), and whereas it might be objected, that nothing was impure in itself, and therefore might be lawfully eaten, which the apostle allows, and as for himself, was fully persuaded of, yet it was impure to them who thought it so, (<45144>Romans 14:14), and therefore should not eat; nor should others, when it gave offence to such persons; and which is dissuaded from, because to eat to the grief of the brethren, is contrary to Christian charity; and because it destroys the peace of such persons, and they are such whom Christ has died for, (<45145>Romans 14:15), besides, hereby reproach might be brought upon them, the Gospel they professed, and the truth of Christian liberty they used, (<45146>Romans 14:16), and moreover, the kingdom of God did not lie in the use of these things, but in spiritual ones, (<45147>Romans 14:17), and which should be chiefly regarded, since the service of God in them, is what is grateful to him, and approved by all good men, (<45148>Romans 14:18), wherefore the things which make for peace and edification should be followed after, things much preferable to meats and drinks, (<45149>Romans 14:19), for the sake of which the peace of a brother, which is the work of God, should not be destroyed, (<45140>Romans 14:20), for though all things are pure in themselves, and

lawful to be eaten, yet it is an evil to eat them to the offence of another, and for another to eat them against his conscience, which he may be drawn into by the example of others; wherefore it is best to abstain from eating flesh or drinking wine, and everything else that is stumbling and offensive to a weak brother, (Romans 14:21), and whereas the strong brother might object and say, I have faith in this matter, I believe it is lawful for me to eat anything, and why should I not? the apostle answers, by granting that he had faith, but then he observes, he ought to keep it to himself, and not disturb his weak brother, by putting it into practice openly; but should keep it to himself, it being his happiness not to condemn himself by using his liberty with offence, (Romans 14:22), and then some advice is given to the weak brother, not to eat with a doubting conscience, (Romans 14:23), because in so doing, he would be self-condemned, and because it would not be of faith, and therefore sinful.

Ver. 1. *Him that is weak in the faith*, etc..] This address is made to the stronger and more knowing Christians among the Romans, how to behave towards those that were inferior in light and knowledge to them, with regard to things of a ritual and ceremonial kind: and by "him that is weak in the faith", is meant, either one that is weak in the exercise of the grace of faith, who has but a glimmering sight of Christ; who comes to him in a very feeble and trembling manner; who believes his ability to save him, but hesitates about his willingness; who casts himself with a peradventure on him; and who is attended with many misgivings of heart, faintings of spirit, and fluctuation of mind, about his interest in him: or one that is weak in the doctrine of faith; has but little light and knowledge in the truths of the Gospel; is a child in understanding; has more affection than judgment; very little able to distinguish truth from error; cannot digest the greater and more sublime doctrines of grace; stands in need of milk, and cannot bear strong meat; is very fluctuating and unsettled in his principles, and like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine: or rather one that is weak in his knowledge of that branch of the doctrine of faith, which concerns Christian liberty; and that part of it particularly, which respects freedom from the ceremonial law: it designs one, and chiefly a Jew, who though a believer in Christ, and an embracer of the other truths of the Gospel, yet had but very little knowledge of Gospel liberty; but though that believers were to observe all the rituals of the Mosaic dispensation, not knowing that they were abolished by Christ. The phrase is Jewish; it is [f252] said,

"what is the meaning of the phrase, in Rephidim, (<270102>Exodus 17:1) it signifies such as are of weak hands; as if it had been said, because the Israelites were µtnwmab µypr, "weak in their faith"."

The advice the apostle gives, in reference to such a person, is to

receive him; not only into their affections, and love him equally, being a believer in Christ, as one of the same sentiments with them, only in this matter, but also into church fellowship with them. The Syriac version reads it, adya hyl wbh, "give him the hand": in token of communion, a form used in admission of members. The Gentiles were apt to boast against, and look with some contempt upon the Jews, and were ready to object to their communion, because of their want of light and knowledge in these matters; but this was no bar of communion, nor ought a person to be rejected on account of his weakness, either in the grace, or in the doctrine of faith, when it appears he has the true grace of God; and much less on account of his weakness in that branch of it, concerning Christian liberty; for since Christ does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, nor despise the day of small things, churches should not: it may also intend a receiving of such into intimate conversation, at their private meetings and conferences; taking particular notice of them; giving them proper instructions; praying with them and for them; endeavouring to build them up in their most holy faith, and to bring them into the knowledge of those things they are weak in; bearing their weaknesses patiently, and bearing with them in great tenderness: thus such should be received,

but not to doubtful disputations; to vain jangling and perverse disputings, such as will rather perplex than inform them; and will leave their minds doubtful and in suspense, and do them more harm than good.

Ver. 2. *For one believeth that he may eat all things*, etc..] He is fully persuaded in his mind, that there is nothing in itself common, or unclean; that the difference between clean and unclean meats, commanded to be observed by the law of Moses, is taken away; and that he may now lawfully eat any sort of food; every creature of God being good, and none to be refused, because of the ceremonial law which is abrogated, provided it, be received with thanksgiving, and used to the glory of God:

another who is weak eateth herbs; meaning not one that is sickly and unhealthful, and of a weak constitution, and therefore eats herbs for health's sake; but one that is weak in the faith, and who thinks that the laws

concerning the observance of meats and drinks are still in force; and therefore, rather than break any of them, and that he may be sure he does not, will eat nothing but herbs, which are not any of them forbidden by the law: and this he did, either as choosing rather to live altogether on herbs, than to eat anything which the law forbids; or being of opinion with the Essenes among the Jews, and the Pythagoreans among the Gentiles, who thought they were to abstain from eating of all sorts of animals.

Ver. 3. *Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not*, etc..] Such who had a greater degree of Gospel light and knowledge, and made use of their Christian liberty in eating any sort of food, were not to despise as they were apt to do, such as abstained therefrom on account of the ceremonial law, as weak, ignorant; superstitious, and bigoted persons; or were not to set them at naught, or make nothing of them, as the word signifies, have no regard to their peace and comfort; but, on the other hand, were to consider them as brethren in Christ, though weak; and as having a work of God upon their souls, and therefore to be careful how they grieved them, destroyed their peace, or laid stumblingblocks in their way:

and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth: such who thought it not their duty to eat anything, but to forbear the use of some things directed to in the law, were not to censure and condemn, as they were apt to do, those who used their liberty in these things, as profane persons, and transgressors of the law of God; but leave them to the last and righteous judgment, when every one must be accountable to God for the various actions of life: the reason used to enforce this advice on both parties is,

for God hath received him: which respects both him that eateth, and him that eateth not, him that is despised, and him that is judged; and is a reason why one should not despise, nor the other judge, because God had received both the one and the other into his heart's love and affection, into the covenant of grace, and into his family by adoption: they were received by Christ, coming to him as perishing sinners, according to the will of God; whose will it likewise was, that they should be received into church fellowship, as being no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and God had also received them into his service, and they were made willing to serve him, as well as to be saved by him; and did serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear, in righteousness and holiness; and this is the rather to be taken into the sense of this passage, because of what follows.

Ver. 4. *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant*, etc..] This is another reason, dissuading from censoriousness and rash judgment, taken from civil things; one man has nothing to do with another man's servant; he has no power over him, nor any right to call him to an account for his actions; nor has he any business to censure or condemn him for them, or concern himself about them: so the believer supposed to be judged, does not belong to him that takes upon him to judge and condemn him; he is another's servant, he is the servant of God: he is chosen by God the Father for his service, as well as unto salvation; he is bought with the price of Christ's blood, and therefore not his own, nor another's, but Christ's, he is bought with his money; and he is also born in his house, the church; the Spirit of God in regeneration forms him for himself, for righteousness and holiness; under the influence of whose grace he voluntarily gives up himself to the service of God, and is assisted by him to keep his statutes and do them; and what has another to do with him? what power has he over him, or right to judge him?

to his own master he standeth or falleth, the meaning of which is, either if he “stands”, that is, if he serves his Lord and master, of which “standing” is expressive; and continues in the service of him, whose servant he professes to be; this is to his master's advantage and profit, and not to another's: and if he “falls”, that is, from his obedience to him, as such who profess to be the servants of God may; they may fall off from the doctrine of grace they have embraced; and that either totally and finally, as such do who never felt the power of it in their hearts; or partially, from some degree of steadfastness in the faith: and such also may fall from a lively exercise of the graces of faith, hope, and love, and into great sins, which is to their master's dishonour, and cause his ways and truths to be evil spoken of; and so it is to their own master they fail: or else the sense is, to their own master they are accountable, whether they stand or fall, serve or disobey him; and it is according to his judgment and not another's, that they “stand”, or are and will be justified and acquitted, and will hear, well done, good and faithful servant; and according to the same they will “fall”, or be condemned, and hear, take the slothful and unprofitable servant, and cast him into outer darkness: so the words “standing” and “failing” are used by the Jews in a forensic sense, for carrying or losing a cause, for justification or condemnation in a court of judicature, and particularly in the last judgment: and so they explain (Psalm 1:5), “the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment”: the Targum paraphrases it,

“the wicked shall not be justified in the great day;”

and Jarchi upon the place says, there shall be no lgr tmqh, “standing of the foot” of the wicked, in the day of judgment; (see <42136>Luke 21:36 <620228>1 John 2:28).

Yea, ye shall be holden up; which words seem to be a sort of correction of the apostle's, as if he should say, why do I talk of falling, one that is a true servant of the Lord's shall not fall, at least not totally and finally, nor in the last judgment; for he is holden by the right hand of God, by the right hand of his righteousness, and is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation:

for God is able to make him stand; and will make him stand: words of power oftentimes include willingness as well as ability; (see <070524>Judges 5:24). God will make such to persevere to the end, because he has loved them with an everlasting love, chosen them in Christ, made a covenant with them in him, and has put them into his hands, and made them his care and charge; Christ has redeemed them by his blood, now intercedes, and is making preparations for them in heaven; they are united to him, and are built on him, the sure foundation; and the Spirit of God has begun that good work, which shall be performed. God will make such to stand in judgment with intrepidity, and without shame, being clothed with the righteousness of his Son; and shall therefore have the crown of righteousness given them, and an abundant entrance administered into his kingdom and glory: hence they ought not to be judged by man's judgment, nor need they regard it. The Alexandrian copy reads, “the Lord is able”, etc..

Ver. 5. *One man esteemeth one day above another*, etc..] This is another instance of the difference of sentiments in this church, about the observation of rituals; and is not to be understood of days appointed by the Christian churches for fasting, or abstinence from certain meats, either once a year, as the “Quadragesima”, or Lent; or twice a week, as Wednesdays and Fridays; for these are things of much later observation, and which had never been introduced into the church of Rome in the apostle's time; nor were there any disputes about them: much less of days of Heathenish observation, as lucky or unlucky, or festivals in honour of their gods; for the apostle would never say, that a man who regarded such a day, regarded it to the Lord; nor would have advised to a coalition and

Christian conversation with such a man, but rather to exclude him from all society and communion: it remains, therefore, that it must be understood of Jewish days, or of such as were appointed to be observed by the Jews under the former dispensation, and which some thought were still to be regarded; wherefore they esteemed some days in the year above others, as the days of unleavened bread, or the passover; particularly the first night, which was a night to be observed throughout their generations; and in their service for it to this day, use these words, twlylh lkm hzh hlylh hntçn hm, "how different is this night from every other night" [f253]? and the feast of tabernacles, especially the last and great day of the feast, and the day of Pentecost; also one day in a month above others, the first day of the month, or new moon; and one day in a week, the seventh day sabbath: now there were some, who thought that the laws respecting these days were still in force, particularly the latter, and therefore esteemed it above another: but let it be observed, that the man that did so was one that was weak in faith; the same man that ate herbs, because he would not be guilty of violating those laws, which ordered a distinction of meats to be observed, the same weak man esteemed one day above another, imagining the laws concerning the distinction of days were still obligatory, not rightly understanding the doctrine of Christian liberty, or freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law:

another esteemeth every day alike; that is, one that is strong in faith, and has a greater degree of the knowledge of the Gospel, and of evangelical liberty, knows that the distinction of days, as well as of meats, is taken away, since the word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us, Christ the passover is sacrificed for us, the firstfruits of the Spirit have been received, and light by the church from the sun of righteousness, and Christ the true sabbath and rest is come; and therefore, being firmly persuaded there is no more holiness in days than there is in places, has the same regard for one day as another. The difference between these two lay here, the weak brother regarded a day for the sake of a day, as having by a positive law, he supposed to be in force, a superiority to another, and he regarded worship for the sake of this day; the stronger brother, though he also observed a day for divine worship, which is the Lord's day, since there must be some time for it as well as place, yet he observed the day for the sake of worship, and not worship for the sake of the day:

let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind; this is the advice the apostle gives to both parties; his sense is, that he would have each of them fully enjoy their own principle and practice undisturbed; he would have the weak brother, that esteemed one day above another, indulged in his way, since it arose from weakness, until he had better light, nor should he be despised for his weakness; he would have the stronger Christian also peaceably enjoy his sentiment, and pursue what he believed to be right; nor should he be judged, censured, and condemned, as a profane person, and a transgressor of the law: his counsel is, that they would sit down and carefully examine the word of God, and act according to the best light they should receive from thence; and take care especially, that they did not act contrary to their own consciences, with doubt and hesitation; they ought to be thoroughly satisfied in their own minds, and being so, should content themselves with their different sentiments and practices, without despising or censuring one another.

Ver. 6. *He that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord*, etc..] The apostle strengthens the above advice with this reason, because what is done both by one and the other, is done unto the Lord. The weak brother that esteems one day above another, and regards the passover, pentecost, and feast of tabernacles, a new moon, or a seventh day sabbath, does it in obedience to the commands of the Lord, which he thinks are still binding, not knowing that they are disannulled by Christ; and the worship performed by him on any of those days is done in the name and strength of the Lord, with a view to his glory, and as believing it was pleasing in his sight; and whether he is right or wrong, it is to the Lord he does it, and to his own master he stands or falls. The following clause is omitted in the Alexandrian copy and some others, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, but is in most Greek copies, and retained in the Syriac and Arabic versions.

And he that regardeth not the day, the Lord he doth not regard it; believing it is the will of the Lord, that all distinction of days should cease; and that the law of commandments contained in ordinances, respecting such Jewish days, is abolished by the Lord Jesus Christ; and that it is to the honour the Lord not to observe them: for to regard the days of the feast of tabernacles, is tacitly to say, that the Word has not tabernacled among us; and to observe he days of the passover, is virtually to deny that our passover is sacrificed for us; and to keep the day of Pentecost, is all one as to affirm, that the firstfruits of the Spirit have not been given; and to regard

a new moon, is in effect to say, that the church has not received evangelical light from Christ, the sun of righteousness; and to keep a seventh day sabbath, is a strong insinuation, as if Christ the true sabbath, in whom we have our spiritual and eternal rest, is not come; however, it is to the Lord that the stronger brother and more confirmed believer disregards any of those days; and it is to his own master he stands or falls, nor is he to be judged of man's judgment: and the same is the case of the eater, or non-eater of meats forbidden by the law:

he that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks. The man that is strong in faith, and is fully persuaded by the Lord Jesus that all distinction of meats, as of days, is ceased, eats any thing, and every sort of food, that comes in his way, without making any difference; and when he eats or drinks at any time, it is all to the glory of God; which is a clear case, by his giving God thanks, as becomes him, for the food he eats: he acknowledges that these are the creatures of God, and his gifts to him; he gives him thanks for the right he has given him to eat of them, and for taking away the distinction of meats, and giving him the free use of his creatures; and the more thankful he is when he considers how unworthy he is of the least of these mercies: and

he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth, or, and giveth God thanks. The man that is weak in faith, that eateth not food forbidden by the law, abstains from such food, purely on account of the Lord, in obedience to his will, and with a view to his glory, supposing such a law to be in full force; and is thankful to God for the herbs he allows him to eat, or for other food not forbidden by the law: and therefore since each party shows such a religious concern for the glory of the Lord, the apostle argues they ought to be easy one with another. The Alexandrian copy reads, “and giveth the Lord thanks”.

Ver. 7. *For none of us liveth to himself*, etc..] That is, none of us believers; others may, but these do not, at least they ought not, nor do they when under the influence of the grace of God: they do not live, neither to righteous, nor to sinful self; they do not live upon their duties and services; nor do they ascribe their life, righteousness, and salvation to them; nor do they live to their own lusts, or make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof, and much less to the lusts and wills of others:

and no man dieth to himself; every man dies, and must, or undergo a change equivalent to death; believers die as well as others, not eternally, or

the second death, but corporeally, or a temporal death, but not to themselves; as they do not seek their own will and pleasure, and profit in life, so neither in death; they do not die to their own advantage only; death is gain unto them, it frees thema from all their sorrows, toil, and labours, and introduces them into the presence of Christ, and the enjoyment of everlasting happiness; but this is not all their death issues in, but also in the glory of Christ: moreover, no man has the power over life or death; as his life is not from himself, he has no power to lengthen or shorten it, nor to hinder or hasten death; this belongs to another Lord and master, whom life and death are both to subserve. This is an illustration of the above reason, by which the apostle confirms his advice.

Ver. 8. *For whether we live, we live unto the Lord*, etc..] As natural, so spiritual life is derived from the Lord, and believers live by faith upon him, and according to his will revealed in the word; find to his honour and glory; at least they desire so to do:

and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; resigning up life unto him, whenever it is his pleasure; magnifying of him, as by life, so by death; dying to be with him, to be raised again by him, and live with him for evermore; in the faith and hope of this, the believer both lives and dies, and so glorifies Christ both in life and death: hence this conclusion follows,

whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's; by the gift of the Father to him, by his own purchase, and the power of his grace, making them willing to give up themselves to him: and hence it is, that under a sense of this, that they are his, and not their own, nor another's, they do all they do for his glory; whether they observe, or not observe a day, it is to the Lord; whether they eat, or not eat things formerly forbidden, it is to him; and whether they live or die, it is to the Lord, whose they are: and hence also it is, that they are not to be despised and set at nought, or to be judged and censured by one another, since they belong to another master, who is their Lord, and will be their Judge.

Ver. 9. *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived*, etc..] This last word “revived” is omitted by the Vulgate Latin, but very naturally placed by the Syriac, between Christ's dying and rising. The Alexandrian copy reads, “died and lived”: and the Ethiopic version, “died and revived”: the end of all which was,

that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living; that is, of believers, whether dead or alive; for though he is Lord of all, as God and Creator, yet his appearing to be Lord by his dying, rising, and living again, can only have respect to them, for whom dying he has abolished death, and destroyed Satan; whom he has redeemed from sin, and delivered from this present evil world; and so having freed them from those other lords which had the dominion over them, shows himself to be their one and only Lord: and by rising again from the dead, ascending to heaven, and sitting at the right hand of God, all creatures and things being subject to him, he is made or declared both Lord and Christ; and living again, and continuing to live for ever, he appears to have the keys of hell and death; and will open the graves, and raise from thence, and judge both quick and dead, those that will be found alive at his coming, and such as he will cause to rise from the dead then; till which time, the apostle suggests, the decision of these differences about meats and days was to be left; and in the mean time the saints were to cultivate peace and love among themselves.

Ver. 10. *But why dost thou judge thy brother*? etc..] These words are spoken to the man weak in faith, that scrupled eating of certain meats, and chose rather eat none, and live on herbs, and who esteemed one day above another; and was very apt to censure and condemn such as made use of their Christian liberty in these things, though they were brethren, not in a natural or civil, but in a spiritual relation:

or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? these words, on the other hand, are directed to the stronger believer, who believed he might eat all things, and esteemed every day alike; being fully persuaded, that the distinction of meats and of days was now ceased; and such were apt to be puffed up with their superior knowledge and faith, and were ready to treat with an air of contempt those that were weak; showing little or no regard to their peace and edification, though they stood in the same relation to each other. The emphasis lies upon the word “brother”, in both branches of the expostulation; and the force of the apostle's reasoning is that they should not judge or despise one another, because they were brethren, stood in the same relation to God and Christ, belonged to the same family, were partakers of the same grace, and had no pre-eminence one over another; they had but one master, and all they were brethren: and which he further enforces with the following reason or argument,

for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ; at the last day, when he shall sit on his throne of glory, and all nations shall be gathered before him, and he shall pronounce and execute the decisive sentence on each of them: there is a particular, and a general judgment; a particular judgment at death, when the soul is immediately consigned to bliss or woe; and a general one in the end of time; which may be proved both from reason, as from the relation creatures stand in to God, from the inequality of things in this life, and the conscious fears of men with respect to a future one; and from divine revelation, Christ will be the Judge, he is so appointed by his Father, and is every way fit for it, being God omniscient and omnipotent; and when he shall appear in his glory, he shall sit on his judgment seat, the dead will be raised, the books will be opened, and all shall be summoned to appear before him, of every age and sex, of every rank and degree, and of every character, good or bad: here the saints are particularly designed, "we shall all stand"; whether ministers or private Christians, weak or strong believers; they that are apt to judge, and others that are too ready to despise; they shall all stand before the tribunal of Christ, who is sole Judge, and shall render to every man according to his works, and from whom they shall all receive their sentence. The allusion is to human courts of judicature, in which the judge sits upon a bench, and they that are tried stand before him; (see <470510>2 Corinthians 5:10). The Alexandrian copy reads, "the judgment seat of God".

Ver. 11. *For it is written*, etc..] In (<234523>Isaiah 45:23); though Justin Martyr [f254] cites a like passage with what follows, as out of Ezekiel 37, but no such words appear there, either in the Hebrew text, or Septuagint version:

as I live, saith the Lord; the form of an oath used often by the Lord; who because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, by his own life; signifying, that what he was about to say, would as surely come to pass, as that he lived; and in the original text in Isaiah it is, "I have sworn by myself"; which being generally expressed, the apostle, perfectly agreeable to the meaning of it, gives the particular form of oath he swore, as in (<234918>Isaiah 49:18);

every knee shall bow to me; which is not to be understood literally of bowing of the knee at the name of Jesus, which has no foundation in this, nor in any other passage of Scripture, but figuratively, of the subjection of all creatures to Christ, both voluntary and involuntary. The Complutensian edition adds, "of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the

earth", as in (^{Philippians 2:10}), from whence these words seem to be taken:

and every tongue shall confess to God; that is, everyone that has a tongue, every man, be he who he will, a good or a bad man, shall own at the last day, that Christ is God and Lord of all; (see ^{Philippians 2:10,11}). It may be asked, how this passage appears to be a proof of what the apostle had asserted, for which purpose it seems to be cited, since here is nothing said of Christ, nor of his judgment seat, nor of all standing before it? to which may be returned, that it is clear from the context in the prophet, that the Messiah is the person speaking, who is said to be a just God and Saviour; and is represented as calling upon, and encouraging all sorts of persons to look to him for salvation; and as he in whom the church expected righteousness and strength, and in whom all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory; and which the Chaldee paraphrase all along interprets of yyd armym, "the Word of the Lord"; the essential Word of God, the true Messiah: moreover, the bowing of the knee, and swearing, or confessing, to him, relate to his lordship and dominion over all; and suppose him as sitting on his throne of glory, as Lord of all, or as a judge on his judgment seat, in a court of judicature, where such like actions as here mentioned are performed; and whereas every knee is to bow, and every tongue to confess to him, which include all mankind, it follows then, that all the saints shall stand before him, bow unto him, own him as their Lord, and be judged by him. Kimchi says [f255], that this shall be µymyh trjab, "in the last days": and which the apostle rightly refers to the day of the general judgment. This place affords a considerable proof of Christ's true and proper deity, being in the prophet styled "Jehovah", and by the apostle "God"; and such things being ascribed to him, as swearing by himself, which no creature may do, and the subjection and confession of all creatures to him, whether they will or not.

Ver. 12. *So then everyone of us*, etc..] this is the conclusion, drawn from the foregoing account of things, that there will be a general judgment, that Christ will be Judge, and all must appear at his bar; from whence it necessarily follows, that every man, and so every Christian, strong or weak, whatever may be his gifts, talents, and abilities,

shall give an account of himself to God; that is, to Christ, who is God; which is another proof of his deity, for he will be the Judge, the Father will judge no man; it is before his judgment seat all shall stand; and therefore

the account must be given to him by every one, of himself, and not another; of all his thoughts, words, and deeds, which will be all brought into judgment; and of his time and talents, how they have been spent and used; and of all his gifts of nature, providence, and grace, how they have been exercised for the glory of God, his own good, and the good of others: the formal manner in which this will be done is unknown unto us; however, this is certain, that the saints will have upon this reckoning, in what sort soever it may be, a full and open discharge, through the blood and righteousness of Christ. The Jews [f256], say, in much such language as the apostle does, that

> "when a man removes out of this world, then hyraml anbçwj byhy, "he gives an account to his Lord", of all that he has done in the world."

Ver. 13. *Let us not therefore judge one another more*, etc..] With respect to the observance or non-observance of the laws relating to meats and drinks, and days, and times; the apostle means, that they should not judge rashly, nor anything before the time; they should not censure and judge each other's characters and states, on account of these things, but leave all to the decisive day, to Christ the Judge, and to his bar, before which all must stand:

but judge this rather; or reckon this to be the most proper, fit, and advisable:

that no man put a stumblingblock or occasion to fall in his brother's way; as in the former part of the advice the apostle seems to have respect more especially to the weak brethren, who were ready to judge and condemn such as neglected the observance of the laws about meats and days, as transgressors, and as wicked persons, that ought not to be in the communion of the church; so in this he seems more principally to have regard to the stronger brethren; who, through their imprudent use of their Christian liberty, offended weaker minds, and were the occasion of their stumbling and falling, which it became them to be careful to prevent; and rather than be a means of anything of this nature, it was much better, as he afterwards observes, neither to eat flesh, nor drink wine, and entirely drop or forego the use of their liberty.

Ver. 14. *I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus*, etc..] As for the apostle's own sense and judgment about the distinction of meats, it was this,

that there is nothing unclean of itself; that every creature, as originally made by God, is good; that what is eatable, or fit for food, may be eaten, whatever the Mosaic laws, being now abrogated, say to the contrary; and that whatever physical or natural difference there may be between the creatures of God, one being naturally fit for food, and another not; yet there is no moral distinction between them, there is nothing in any of them that can morally defile a man by eating them; nor indeed is there now any ceremonial distinction between them, and so no ceremonial pollution by them. This was not a bare conjecture, nor a mere opinion, but a point of certain knowledge, a matter of faith, and of full assurance of faith; the apostle was thoroughly persuaded of the truth of it, and had not the least doubt nor difficulty in his mind about it; he was as fully assured of it, as he was of his salvation by Christ, and of his interest in the love of God, from which he could never be separated, and therefore expresses it in language equally as strong; and this he came to the knowledge and persuasion of, "by the Lord Jesus"; by his express words, (<40151>Matthew 15:11,17,18); or by a revelation from him, in which way he had the whole Gospel: he might be informed of this matter in like manner as Peter was, by a vision from heaven, (<44010>Acts 10:10), or he knew this through the abrogation of the whole ceremonial law by Christ, who abolished the law of commandments contained in ordinances, and so these laws relating to the difference of meats among the rest; and he knew, that all the creatures in their original creation were good, and though cursed, for man's sake yet Christ had removed the curse, and sanctified them for the use of his people, who, under the Gospel dispensation, might make use of them at pleasure, without distinction: and the Jews themselves own, that what before was unclean, shall in the days of the Messiah be clean: so they explain (<19607>Psalm 146:7); "the Lord looseth the prisoners", which they would render, "the Lord looseth that which was forbidden"; and give this as the sense [f257]

> "every beast which was unclean in this world (the Jewish state), awbl dyt[l htwa rhjm hb"h, "God will cleanse it in the time to come" (in the times of the Messiah), when they shall be clean as at the first, to the sons of Noah."

So they observe, that the Hebrew word for a hog, ryzj, comes from rzj, which signifies to return; because, say they [f258], hereafter God will cause it to return to the Israelites; and even now, as formerly, they allow of eating anything that is torn, or dies of itself, or hog's flesh to an army entering into a Gentile country, and subduing it, where they can find nothing else [f259]:

but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean; such a man that thinks the laws concerning clean and unclean meats are still in force, and binding upon him, ought to refrain from eating them; because he would act contrary to his conscience, and so violate and defile it; wherefore though the apostle was so fully satisfied in his own, mind, yet he would not have weak and scrupulous consciences do themselves any hurt through his faith; for if they ate doubtingly, and without faith, it was an evil. Capellus [f260] mentions a rule laid down by the Jews, but does not direct where it is to be found, nor have I yet met with it, very agreeable to this of the apostle's, which runs thus:

> “this is the grand general rule in the law, that every thing which thou dost not know, rwsa Æyl[rwsa wa rtwm awh µa, “whether it is lawful or unlawful, to thee it is unlawful”, until thou hast asked a wise men concerning who may teach thee that it is lawful.”

Ver. 15. *But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat*, etc..] The apostle proceeds to give reasons why, though he was so fully persuaded that nothing was unclean of itself, and so he, and any other of the same persuasion, might lawfully eat anything; yet they should forbear, and not make use of this liberty; because if a brother should be grieved by it, that is, either should be concerned and troubled at it inwardly, both because the person that eats is thought by him to have transgressed a command of God, and because he himself is not only despised as a weak brother, but as if he was a “judaizing” Christian, and walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel; or else should be emboldened thereby to eat, and so wound and defile his weak conscience; or be so galled and offended at it, as to stumble and fall off from his profession of Christianity, and withdraw his communion, as judging there is nothing in it, no regard being had to the law of God:

now walkest thou not charitably; this is a breach of the rule of charity or brotherly love; such an one is a brother, and though a weak one, yet he is

to be loved as a brother, and to be charitably walked with: true charity, or love, vaunts not itself over, nor is it puffed up against a weak brother; nor is it unconcerned for his peace, but bears with his weaknesses, and forbears the use of things grieving to him:

destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. This is to be understood, not of eternal destruction, that can never be thought to be either in the will or power of any man; such a degree of malice can never arise in the heart of any, to wish for, desire, or take any step towards the eternal damnation of another; and could any thing of this kind be among the men of the world, yet surely not among brethren of the same faith, and in the same church state; and were there any so wicked as to desire this, yet it is not in their power to compass it, for none can destroy eternally but God; (see <4010>Matthew 10:28); besides, it is not reasonable to suppose, that eternal damnation should follow upon eating things indifferent, or be caused by an offence either given or taken through them; moreover, though such as only think themselves, or profess themselves, or are only thought by others to be such, for whom Christ died, may be eternally destroyed, yet none of those can, for whom Christ really died; for they are his special people, his peculiar friends, his own sheep, his body the church, which can never perish; and he, by dying, has procured such blessings for them, such as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, peace with God, and eternal life, which will for ever secure them from destruction: besides, should anyone of them be destroyed, the death of Christ would be so far in vain, nor would it appear to be a sufficient security from condemnation, nor a full satisfaction to the justice of God; or God must be unjust, to punish twice for the same fault: but this is to be understood of the destruction of such a man's peace and comfort, which is signified by grieving, stumbling, offending, and making him weak; and the words are a fresh reason, why they that are strong in the faith of Christian liberty, should nevertheless forbear the use of it, to preserve the peace of a weak brother; which is a matter of importance, and the rather to be attended to, since it is the peace of one that belongs to Christ, whom he has so loved as to die for, and therefore should be the object of the regard and affections of such as believe in Christ and love him.

Ver. 16. *Let not then your good be evil spoken of*.] The Vulgate Latin reads it, “our good”, and so the Syriac version; the sense is the same, and to be understood either of the Gospel in general, which is good in its author, matter, effects, and consequences; is good tidings of good things,

and which might be blasphemed by the men of the world, on account of the divisions and contentions among the professors of it, about such little trivial things, as eating this or the other sort of food; and therefore care should be taken, that it be not evil spoken of through such conduct: or else the doctrine of Christian liberty in particular, which is a good thing; Christ has procured it, and bestows it upon his people; it is a valuable blessing in itself, and is attended and followed with many considerable privileges and immunities; but may be evil spoken of by those, who do not so well understand it, through an imprudent use of it by those who do; and who therefore should guard against any reproach that may be cast upon it; and rather than this should be the case, forego the use of it, in things of an indifferent nature; (see 1 Corinthians 10:30); so that this is another of the apostle's reasons, why though nothing is of itself unclean, yet it should be abstained from on account of others.

Ver. 17. *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink*, etc..] Neither the kingdom of glory, nor the ultimate glory and happiness of the saints in the other world, is attained to by any such things; for neither eating and drinking, nor not eating and drinking, can recommend to the divine favour, or give a meetness for heaven, or a right unto it; (see 1 Corinthians 8:8), nor does the kingdom of grace, the principle of grace, lie in such things, nor in anything that is external; nor does the Gospel, or Gospel church state, which frequently go under this name of the kingdom of God, consist of such things as the ceremonial and the legal dispensation did, but the Gospel and the dispensation of grace are opposed unto them; (see Hebrews 9:10 13:9).

But righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The kingdom of glory, which is the kingdom of God, because of his preparing, giving, calling to, and putting into the possession of, is attained unto by righteousness; not the righteousness of men, but the righteousness of Christ imputed by God, and received by faith; and through peace made by the blood of Christ, and rejoicing in him, without having any confidence in the flesh, which is a branch of the Spirit's grace in regeneration. The kingdom of grace, or the governing principle of grace in the soul, and which is of God's implanting there, lies in righteousness and true holiness, in which the new man is created; in truth and uprightness in the inward parts, where the laws of God are put and written; and in peace of conscience, arising from the blood and righteousness of Christ; and in that spiritual joy and comfort the Holy Ghost produces, by leading to a sight of

Christ, and an interest in him and his atonement. The Gospel, which gives an account both of the kingdom of grace and of glory, reveals the righteousness of Christ, and teaches men to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world: it is a publication of peace by the blood of Christ; it calls men to peace, to cultivate peace one among another, and to seek those things which make for it; and when it comes in power, is attended with joy in the Holy Ghost, and is the means of increasing it; and this is another reason, persuading to Christian forbearance, in the use of things indifferent.

Ver. 18. *For he that in these things serveth Christ*, etc..] That is, in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; he whose faith is an obedient one, and embraces these things, and from the heart obeys them; who seeks righteousness alone by Christ, and peace and pardon through his blood; who rejoices in Christ Jesus, and puts no trust in the flesh, in moral duties or ceremonial services; and who, from principles of grace, serves Christ in a way of righteousness, wherein he possesses true peace of conscience, and abundance of spiritual joy and comfort: the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, “in this thing”; as if it referred only to the right use of Christian liberty, about things indifferent: such an one

is acceptable to God; in Christ the beloved, in whom he believes, from whom he derives all his peace, joy, and comfort; and whom he serves in righteousness and holiness, and through whom also all his services are acceptable unto God:

and approved of men; of good men, of such that can discern things that differ, and approve those that are excellent; and even of bad men, for such who live honestly and uprightly, who cultivate peace and friendship among men, and carry themselves cheerfully and civilly to all men, cannot but be approved of by the generality of them, though they may dislike them on other accounts.

Ver. 19. *Let us therefore follow after the things*, Since the kingdom of God is in part peace, and the man that serves Christ in this, as in other things, is accepted with God, and grateful to men, the apostle very pertinently exhorts to seek after such things,

which make for peace: not with God, for, for a sinful creature to make peace with God is impracticable and impossible, nor is there any

exhortation to it in all the word of God; and if there was, it would be unnecessary here; since the persons here exhorted were such for whom peace with God was made by Christ, and who had a clear and comfortable sense of it in their own souls; and besides, for any to be put upon, or to attempt to make their peace with God, must highly reflect upon the methods of God's grace, in reconciling sinners to himself; and be injurious to the blood, sacrifice, and satisfaction of Christ, by which only peace is made: but the apostle means, either what makes for a man's own peace, or for the peace of others; the things which make for a man's own peace in his own conscience distressed with sin, are looking to, and dealing with the blood of Christ, which speaks peace and pardon; and the righteousness of Christ, which being apprehended by faith, a soul has peace with God through Christ; and also an embracing the Gospel, and the truths of it, which direct to Christ, which publish peace, and are the means of increasing and establishing a solid and well grounded peace, on the free grace of God and merits of Christ: attending on ordinances, and exercising a conscience void of offence towards God and men, are means of continuing and promoting a man's peace; he enjoys peace in them, though he do not derive it from them; yea, in the peace of others, is a man's own peace; and this is what is chiefly meant, a pursuing of things which make for the peace of others; of all men, and especially of saints; this is what should be eagerly followed after, closely pursued, and all ways and means should be made use of, to promote and secure it: this is the will of God; it is well pleasing to Christ, and a fruit of the Spirit; it is one part of the Gospel dispensation; church fellowship cannot be profitable and pleasant without it; it suits with the character of saints, who are sons of peace; and agrees with their privileges they enjoy, or have a right unto, as spiritual peace here, and eternal peace hereafter;

and things wherewith one may edify another. The church is often compared to a building, to a temple, a city, an house, and saints are the materials thereof; who are capable of being edified, or built up, yet more and more, both by words and by deeds; by words, by the ministry of the word, which is set up and continued among other things, for the edifying of the body of Christ; by praying with, and for each other; and by Christian conversation, about the experience of the grace of God, and doctrines of the Gospel, whereby saints may be useful in building up one another in their most holy faith; and so likewise by avoiding all filthy, frothy, and corrupt communication; all angry words and wrathful expressions, which

tend not to profit, and are not for the use of edifying, but the contrary: moreover, edification is promoted by deeds, by acts of charity, or love; for charity edifies not by bare words but by loving in deed and in truth, by serving one another in love; for the spiritual body of Christ his church, makes increase unto the edifying of itself in love; and also by laying aside the use of things indifferent, when disagreeable to any of the brethren; for though all things may be lawful to be done by us, yet all things do not edify the brethren; and things which make for the edification of the body, as well as our own, are diligently to be sought after. The Vulgate Latin version, and some copies, read, “let us keep”, or “observe those things wherewith one may edify another”.

Ver. 20. *For meat destroy not the work of God*, etc..] The Syriac reads it, “the works of God”; referring either to righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, of which the kingdom of God consists; or to the weak brother, who both as a creature, and as a new creature, is the workmanship of God; and to the good work of grace, the work of faith upon his soul, which is the work of God; or rather to his peace, and the peace of the church of Christ, which is both the will and work of God; peace is what he calls his people to, and what he himself is the author of; and may be destroyed, and sometimes is, by trifling things; whereas a true believer, though ever so weak, cannot be destroyed, nor the good work of God upon his soul be lost, nor any part of it; not the work of faith, which Christ prays for that it fail not, and is both the author and finisher of; but the work of peace and edification in particular persons, and in a church, may be destroyed, but it is pity it should, by so small a matter, so trivial a thing as meat, or the use of anything that is indifferent:

all things indeed are pure. The Ethiopic version adds, “to the pure”; to them that have pure consciences, sprinkled by the blood of Christ, and have no doubt or scruple about eating things indifferent; but this addition seems to be taken out of (Titus 1:15); though it may serve to explain the sense, which is, that all sorts of food, without any distinction, may be eaten; there is nothing common or unclean, every creature in itself is good, and every Christian may lawfully eat thereof, with moderation and thankfulness. This is a concession which stands thus corrected and restrained,

but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. The Arabic version adds, “of his neighbour”; which is a good interpretation of the passage; for

the apostle means not with offence to a man's own conscience, though so to eat is an evil too, but with offence to a fellow Christian; it is not an evil in itself to eat, but when this circumstance of offending another thereby attends it; it is evil, though not in itself, yet in its consequences; it offends a weak brother, displeases Christ, who would not have one of his little ones offended, and brings a woe upon the person by whom the offence comes. The Ethiopic version reads, “who eats inordinately”; which to be sure is sinful, but is not the meaning here.

Ver. 21. *It is good neither to eat flesh*, etc..] Any sort of flesh, even that which is not forbidden in the law, rather than offend a weak brother; and the apostle determines for himself, that he would not, where there was any danger of doing this, (1 Corinthians 8:13).

Nor to drink wine; not only the wine of libations to Heathen deities, but wine in common; which was not prohibited by the law of Moses, but in the case of a Nazarite, and of vows:

nor anything, be it what it will,

whereby thy brother stumbleth. The Syriac version reads, “our brother”; anyone that stands in such a spiritual relation to any of us; and for which reason care should be taken, that no stumblingblock, or occasion to fall, should be put in his way; particularly that Christian liberty in things indifferent be not unseasonably and imprudently used, and so become a means of stumbling and staggering to weak minds:

or is offended; to that degree, as to censure and judge him that eats, as an impious person, and a transgressor of the law; with whom he cannot keep his communion, but withdraws himself from it, and is even tempted to drop his profession of the Christian religion entirely, being ready to think it is not right, since contrary to the law of Moses:

or is made weak; more weak in the faith than he was before, and his love is weakened and grows very cold and indifferent to his Christian brethren, that can take and use a liberty which he cannot. These two last phrases are not in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, nor in the Alexandrian copy, though in others, and are used for the sake of explanation and amplification.

Ver. 22. *Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God*, etc..] Which is to be understood, not of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the doctrines of

the Gospel; for a man that has such faith given him, ought not to keep it in his own breast, but to declare it to others; he ought to make a public visible profession of it, before many witnesses; it becomes him to tell the church of God what great things the Lord has done for him; and as he believes with the heart, so he ought to make confession with the mouth unto salvation; but this faith only designs a full persuasion in a man's own mind, about the free and lawful use of things indifferent, the subject the apostle is upon; (see Romans 14:5,14); and his advice on this head is, to keep this faith and persuasion in a man's own breast, and not divulge it to others, where there is danger of scandal and offence: he does not advise such to alter their minds, change their sentiments, or cast away their faith, which was right and agreeable to his own, but to have it, hold and keep it, though, within themselves; he would not have them openly declare it, and publicly make use of it, since it might be grieving and distressing to weak minds; but in private, and where there was no danger of giving offence, they might both speak of it, and use it; and if they could not, should satisfy themselves that God, who sees in secret, knows they have this faith, and sees their use of it, though others do not, for from him they have it; so the Ethiopic version reads it, and "if thou hast faith with thyself, thou art secure before God, from whom thou hast obtained it"; and should be thankful to him for it, and use it in such a manner as makes most for his glory, and the peace of his church since to him they must give an account another day: some copies and versions read without an interrogation, thou hast faith; and others, "thou, the faith which thou hast, have it to thyself", etc.. so the Alexandrian copy and the Syriac version.

Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth; or "approves of"; that is, it is well for that man who observes no difference of meats, if either he does not act contrary to his own conscience, and so condemns himself in what he allows himself in; or exposes himself to the censure, judgment, and condemnation of others, in doing that which he approves of as lawful, and is so, but unlawful when done to the offence of others: some understand this as spoken to the weak believer, signifying that he is in the right, who, through example, and the force of the sensual appetite, is not prevailed upon to allow himself to eat, contrary to his own conscience, and whereby he would be self-condemned; but as the strong believer is addressed in the beginning of the verse, I choose to think he is intended in this part of it; and the rather, because the weak believer is taken notice of in the next verse, with a peculiar view to this very thing.

Ver. 23. *And he that doubteth*, etc..] Or makes a difference between meats and meats, or is in suspense whether any difference should be observed or not,

is damned; not with everlasting damnation, which is not the consequent of, nor connected with such an action, as eating of a thing indifferent, with a scrupulous conscience; but such an one is condemned in his own conscience; he is self-condemned, his conscience condemns him for what he himself does; and he is self-condemned in judging and censuring others, for the same things: so the Syriac renders it, hl byyjta, "he becomes guilty", or he contracts guilt to himself, or is self-condemned; and so the Arabic, "he is already condemned",

because [he eateth] not of faith: or of a full persuasion in his own mind that he is right in eating; he halts between two opinions, and is doubtful in his own mind what is best to do, and therefore, whilst this is his case, he ought to refrain:

for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. This is a general rule, or axiom, which is not only applicable to the present case, but to any other, whether of a natural, civil, moral, or evangelic kind: "whatsoever does not spring from faith", as the Arabic version renders it, cannot be excused of sin; whatever is not agreeable to the word and doctrine of faith, ought not to be done; whatever is done without faith, or not in the exercise of it, is culpable, for without faith nothing can be pleasing to God; and whatever is contrary to the persuasion of a man's own mind, is so far criminal, as it is a violation of his conscience; whatever men do, especially in a religious way, they ought to make faith of it, or to be fully persuaded of it in their own minds, or they act amiss: in the Arabic version, the Complutensian edition, the Alexandrian copy, and some others, (⁴⁶Romans 16:25-27), "now to him that is of power", etc.. are here added; which have induced some to think, that the apostle intended to have finished his epistle here; but having more time, and other things occurred to write of, he proceeded.

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 15

The apostle in this chapter pursues his exhortation to mutual affection and forbearance, notwithstanding their different sentiments about the use of meats, and observation of days; excuses his writing so freely to them, which they might bear with, in consideration of his being an apostle, especially an apostle of the Gentiles, and which office he magnified and fulfilled everywhere; gives them the reasons why he had not as yet been with them though he greatly desired it, encourages them to expect, a visit from him; and concludes with earnestly entreating them that he might have a share in their prayers: and first, as an inference from what he had said in the preceding chapter, he lays it down as a duty incumbent on himself, and all that were strong in the doctrine of Christian liberty, to bear with the infirmities of weak Christians, and not please themselves, but others, (Romans 15:1), which he enforces, from the usefulness of it, it being for the good and edification of others, (Romans 15:2), and from the example of Christ, who pleased not himself, (Romans 15:3), and which is proved from a passage of Scripture in (Psalm 69:9), the pertinency of which passage, and the citation and application of it to Christ and the present case, are vindicated from this consideration, that whatever was written in former times, was for the use of the saints under the Gospel dispensation, (Romans 15:4), and that the exhortation might have its effect upon them, be puts up a prayer to God for them, that such a temper of mind might be in them, which would be for the glory of God, (Romans 15:5,6), and then he repeats his exhortation, (Romans 15:7), that they would affectionately receive one another; which he urges by the example of Christ, who had received them to the glory of God; and that they might glorify him, and this was one way of doing it: and that this argument might have the greater weight with both parties, he observes, that Jesus Christ had a special regard to the Jews, and was their minister, sent unto them to fulfil the promises made unto their fathers, and had received them; and therefore though they were weak, they were not to be despised, grieved, and offended, (Romans 15:8), and as for the Gentiles, it was a clear case that God had had long ago a design of mercy

to them, and that they were to be, and were now received by Christ, and so under obligation to glorify God for his mercy; and therefore not to be judged and condemned, though they did not conform to the ceremonial law; and this he proves in (<45159>Romans 15:9-12), from several passages of Scripture in (<19849>Psalm 18:49 <05243>Deuteronomy 32:43 <19701>Psalm 117:1) (<23110>Isaiah 11:10), and closes this argument he had so long insisted on with a prayer to God for them, that they might be in the exercise of faith and hope; and, in the exercise of those graces, be filled with joy and peace, (<45153>Romans 15:13), and in order to prevent an objection that might be made to these prayers and exhortations of his, that they suggested that they were wicked and ignorant men, devoid of affection, and knew not how to behave to each other, nor to exhort one another, the apostle softens such a resentment, by calling them brethren, and by expressing his persuasion of their abundant goodness, knowledge, and abilities, (<45154>Romans 15:14), and excuses the freedom he took with them by observing, that he only acted the part of a monitor, (<45155>Romans 15:15), and the rather this freedom might be allowed him, on account of the great gifts bestowed upon him, qualifying him to be an apostle of Christ; and especially as he was an apostle of the Gentiles and so their apostle, (<45156>Romans 15:16), and on account of his office, gifts, and usefulness, he had reason to glory; though through Christ only, and in things relating to God, and not himself, (<45157>Romans 15:17), when he takes an occasion to enlarge on his ministry, and magnify his office; partly from the end and success of it, bringing the Gentiles to the obedience of Christ, (<45158>Romans 15:18), and partly from the means and causes of such success the preaching of the word, working miracles, and the power of the Holy Ghost; and from the extent of it, reaching from Jerusalem to Illyricum, (<45159>Romans 15:19), and from the difficulty which attended it, he preaching in places where the Gospel was never preached before, and which he chose to do, (<45150>Romans 15:20), and which was necessary to be done, according to a prophecy in (<23525>Isaiah 52:15), which he cites, (<45152>Romans 15:21), and observes, that it was his preaching in these many and distant parts that was the reason of his not having been with the saints at Rome, (<45152>Romans 15:22), but now gives them reason to expect his coming; partly because he had finished his travels in those countries, and partly because of the vehement desire he had to see them, (<45152>Romans 15:23), and besides, an opportunity seemed to be offering, he intending to take a journey to Spain, when it would lie in his way to come to Rome, and be for his advantage, (<45154>Romans 15:24), in the mean while he informs them what he was engaged in, to carry the

contribution of the Macedonian and Asian churches to Jerusalem, for the poor saints there, (Romans 15:25), on which contributions he enlarges, showing not only who made them, and for whom, but the source and spring of them, they arose from their good will and pleasure, (Romans 15:26), and yet they were debtors, and under obligation to do what they did; it was but a piece of justice and equity, since those churches had received of the spiritual things of the Jews, (Romans 15:27), and as for his coming to them, he acquaints them of the time that it would be, when he had finished the above service and labour of love, and when he should come into Spain, as he had before signified, (Romans 15:28), and of the manner in which he should come, of which he was fully persuaded, as that it would be with the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, (Romans 15:29), and then with great importunity desires them to pray for him, and that very earnestly, (Romans 15:30), particularly that he might be delivered from his enemies in Judea, and that the saints there would accept of what he brought them from the Gentiles, (Romans 15:31), and that, if it was the will of God, he might come to them and be refreshed with them, (Romans 15:32), and then closes the chapter with a salutation of them, or a wish that the God of peace might be with them, (Romans 15:33).

Ver. 1. *We then that are strong*, etc..] Meaning not only ministers of the Gospel, who are men of strong parts, great abilities, mighty in the Scriptures, valiant for the truth on earth, and pillars in God's house; for though the apostle includes himself, yet not merely as such, but as expressing it to be his duty in common with other Christians; and the rather he does this, to engage them to the practice of it: but the stronger and more knowing part of private Christians are here intended; the Apostle John's young men, who are strong, in distinction from little children, or new born babes, that are at present weaklings; and from fathers who are on the decline of life, and just going off the stage; (see 1 John 2:12-14); when these young men are in the bloom and flower of a profession, in the prime of their judgment, and exercise of grace; who are strong in Christ, and not in themselves, in the grace that is in him, out of which they continually receive; who are strong in the grace of faith, and are established and settled in the doctrine of it; and have a large and extensive knowledge of the several truths of the Gospel; and, among the rest, of that of Christian liberty:

ought to bear the infirmities of the weak; of them that are weak in faith and knowledge, particularly in the knowledge of their freedom from Mosaical observances: their "infirmities" are partly their ignorance, mistakes, and errors, about things indifferent; which they consider and insist on, and would impose upon others, as necessary and obliging; and partly the peevishness and moroseness which they show, the hard words they give, and the rash judgment and rigid censures they pass on their brethren, that differ from them: such persons and their infirmities are to be borne with; they are not to be despised for their weakness; and if in the church, are not to be excluded for their mistakes; and if not members, are not to be refused on account of them; since they arise from weakness, and are not subversive of the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel: they are not to be treated as wicked men, but as weak brethren; and their peevish tempers, morose dispositions and conduct, their hard speeches and censorious expressions, are patiently to be endured; they should be considered as from whence they arise, not from malice and ill will, from a malignant spirit, but from weakness and misguided zeal, for what they take to be in force, when it is abolished: moreover, they are to be complied with in cases not sinful, as the apostle did in circumcising Timothy, (Acts 16:3), and purifying himself according to the law, (Acts 21:26); and so to the weak he became weak, to gain some, (1 Corinthians 9:22), and therefore could urge this exhortation by his own example with greater force; and which he represents, not only as what would be honourable, and a point of good nature, and as doing a kind action, but as what "ought" to be; what the law of love obliges to, and what the grace of love, which "bears all things", (1 Corinthians 13:7), constrains unto; and which indeed if not done, they that are strong do not answer one end of their having that spiritual strength they have; and it is but complying with the golden rule of Christ, to do as we would be done by, (Matthew 7:12 Luke 6:31):

and not please ourselves: either entertain pleasing thoughts of, and make pleasing reflections on their stronger faith, greater degree of knowledge, superior light and understanding; which being indulged, are apt to excite and encourage spiritual pride and vanity, and generally issue in the contempt of weaker brethren; nor do those things, which are pleasing and grateful to themselves, to the offence and detriment of others; for instance, and which is what the apostle has reference to, to gratify their appetite, by eating such meat as is forbidden by the law of Moses, to the grieving of the weak brethren, wounding their consciences, and destroying their peace;

these things should not be done; stronger Christians should deny themselves the use of their Christian liberty in things indifferent, when they cannot make use of it without offence.

Ver. 2. *Let everyone of us please his neighbour*, etc..] Every man, particularly his Christian friend and brother, whom he should seek to please in all things, and by all means lawful; he should carry it affably and courteously, should make himself agreeable to him; should condescend and accommodate himself to his weakness, and bear his infirmities, and deny himself rather than displease him. The Vulgate Latin version and some copies read, "let everyone of you"; but the other reading is preferable, and best agrees with the context, (<650115>Romans 15:1,4).

For his good; or as the Syriac renders it, a t b j b, "in good things"; for he is not to be pleased, gratified, and indulged, in any thing that is evil: we are not to please any man in anything that is contrary to the Gospel of Christ, for then we should not be faithful servants of his; nor in anything repugnant to the commands of God, and ordinances of Christ, who are to be obeyed and pleased, rather than men; nor in anything that is of an immoral nature, we are not to comply with, though it may be to the displeasure of the dearest relation and friend; but in everything that is naturally, civilly, morally, or evangelically good, we should study to please them; and in whatsoever may be for their good, temporal, spiritual, or eternal: and

to edification: of our neighbour, brother, and Christian friend, for the establishment of his peace, the increase of his spiritual light, and the building of him up in his most holy faith; and also of the whole community, or church, to which each belong, whose peace and edification should be consulted, and everything done, which may promote and secure it; and among which this is one, every man to please his neighbour, in things lawful and laudable.

Ver. 3. *For even Christ pleased not himself*, etc..] He sought not his own ease, pleasure, profit, honour, and glory, but to do his Father's will and work, (<430434>John 4:34); and he always did the things which pleased him, in his obedience, sufferings, and death; and sought not his own, but his glory: moreover, what he did and suffered were not for himself, but for us; he became incarnate for us; he obeyed, suffered, and died for us; he came not to be ministered to, to be attended upon as an earthly prince, enjoying his own ease and pleasure, things grateful to nature, but to minister to others,

(<4020>Matthew 20:28); hence he appeared in the form of a servant, did the work of one in life, and at last became obedient to death, even the death of the cross, (<5007>Philippians 2:7,8): not but that he was well pleased in doing and suffering all this; it was his delight to do the will of God: it was his meat and drink to finish his work; yea, that part of it which was most disagreeable to flesh and blood, was most earnestly desired by him, even the baptism of his sufferings; and in the view of the salvation of his people, and of enjoying their company with him to all eternity, he endured the cross patiently, and despised the shame with pleasure, (<5802>Hebrews 12:2): but then he met with many things which were far from being grateful to human nature; such as the hardness and unbelief of the Jews, with which he was grieved, their scoffs and insults, reproaches and jeers; the ignorance, frowardness, and moroseness of his own disciples, whose infirmities he bore; and at last the sufferings of death, that bitter cup, which he as man desired might pass from him; but, however, he submitted to his Father's will, (<4039>Matthew 26:39); all which prove what the apostle here affirms. This instance of Christ, the man of God's right hand, the son of man, whom he has made strong for himself, the head of the church, the leader and commander of the people, bearing the infirmities of the weak, and not pleasing himself, is very pertinently produced, to enforce the above exhortations; who is an example to his people in the exercise of every grace, and the discharge of every duty; as in beneficence, forgiving of injuries, mutual love, meekness and humility, suffering of afflictions, and patience. The proof of it follows,

but as it is written, in (<1909>Psalm 69:9);

the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me; which are the words of Christ unto his Father, as the whole psalm is to be understood not of David, but of the Messiah, as is clear from the citations out of it, and references to it in the New Testament; (see <4017>John 2:17 15:25 19:28), compared with (<1909>Psalm 69:9,4,21), and the meaning of them is, either that the reproaches which were cast on the house, worship, and ordinances of God, affected Christ as much as if they had been cast upon himself; which stirred up his zeal to take the method he did, to show his resentment at such indignities; (see <4015>John 2:15-17), or that the same persons by whom the name of God was blasphemed, his sanctuary polluted, and his ordinances reproached, also reproached him; and he bore in his bosom the reproach of all the mighty people, which were in great plenty poured upon him; they reproached him with being a glutton, a winebibber, a friend of

publicans and sinners, (Matthew 11:19 Luke 7:34); they said he was a Samaritan, and had a devil, (John 8:48): charged him with blasphemy and sedition, (Matthew 26:65 Luke 23:2); and when on the cross, mocked, reviled, and wagged their heads at him, (Matthew 27:39-44); all which he bore patiently, and reviled not again: moreover, by "reproaches" may be meant the sins of his people, by which the name of God was blasphemed, his law trampled upon with contempt, and the perfections of his nature, as his justice and holiness, dishonoured; and which fell upon Christ, not by chance, but by the appointment of God, and according to his own voluntary agreement; and which he bore in his own body, and made satisfaction for; which though he did willingly, in order to obtain some valuable ends, the salvation of his people, and the glorifying of the divine perfections, the honouring of the law, and satisfying of justice, yet the bearing of them, in itself, could not be grateful to him as such; neither the charge of sin, nor the weight of punishment; and in this respect he pleased not himself, or did that which was grateful to his pure and holy nature.

Ver. 4. *For whatsoever things were written aforetime*, etc..] In the books of the Old Testament; the apostle says this, to vindicate the pertinency of the above citation, and to prevent any objection that might be made against it; since whatsoever was written in that psalm did not belong personally to David, but to Christ; and what is written concerning him, is designed for the use and instruction of his people; yea, whatever is written anywhere in the sacred Scriptures,

were written for our learning; to instruct in the knowledge of Christ, of his person, offices, grace, righteousness, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension; and of the great salvation and redemption he came to obtain, and has obtained; and to teach us the doctrines of grace, of pardon through the blood of Christ, atonement by his sacrifice, justification by his righteousness, acceptance in his person, and eternal life through him; as also to inform us of our duty, and how we ought to behave both towards God and men:

that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope; the Scriptures are not only written for our present instruction, but for the ingenerating, encouraging, and establishing, an hope of eternal Life in another world; which they are the means of, under the influence of divine grace; since they give us a clear account of eternal life; of the promise of it

in Christ; of its being procured by him, and secured in him; of the means of enjoying it, through his blood and righteousness; of the declarations of God's free grace and mercy to sinners, and of the various instances of persons who have been made partakers of it; all which encourage to hope in the Lord, and to rejoice in hope of the glory of God; believing we also may have and enjoy the thing hoped for, “through patience and comfort of the Scriptures”; both which are encouraged thereby: the “patience of the Scriptures” is not a stoical apathy, a stupid indolence; and is of a different kind from that patience the writings of the Heathen philosophers define and recommend: the Scripture gives an account of the true nature of patience, in bearing all sorts of evils for Christ's sake; of the excellency and usefulness of it; and do strongly exhort unto it upon the best principles, and with the best motives; and are full of promises to the exercise of it, and furnish out the best examples of suffering affliction, and patience: “the comfort of the Scriptures” is such as is not to be met with elsewhere. These writings abound with exceeding great and precious promises, and excellent doctrines, big with consolation to the saints; and both serve much to cherish, support, and maintain an hope of eternal happiness; all which prove the divine authority, excellency, and usefulness of the sacred writings, and recommend the reading of them by us, and the hearing of them explained by others.

Ver. 5. *Now the God of patience and consolation*, etc..] These titles and characters of God are manifestly used on account of what is before said concerning the Scriptures, and to show, that the efficacy and usefulness of them, in producing and promoting patience and comfort, entirely depend upon God the author of them: from exhorting, the apostle proceeds to petitioning; well knowing that all his exhortations would be of no avail without the power of divine grace accompanying them. The words are a prayer. The object addressed is described as “the God of patience”, because he is the author and giver of that grace: it is a fruit of his Spirit, produced by the means of his word, called the word of his patience. The Heathens themselves were so sensible that this is a divine blessing, that they call patience ψεων ευρημα, “the invention of the gods” [f261]. God is the great pattern and exemplar of patience; he is patient himself, and bears much and long with the children of men; with wicked men, whose patient forbearance and longsuffering being despised by them, will be an aggravation of their damnation; but his longsuffering towards his elect issues in their salvation: he waits to be gracious to them before conversion,

and after it bears with their infirmities, heals their backslidings, forgives their iniquities, patiently hears their cues, requests, and complaints, relieves and supports them, and carries them even to hoary hairs; and is in all a pattern to be imitated by his people. He is also the object of this grace; he it is on whom and for whom saints should and do patiently wait, until he is pleased to manifest himself, and communicate to them for the supply of their wants of every sort; and upon whose account and for whose sake they patiently suffer reproach and persecution; the exercise of patience is what he requires, and calls for, and is very grateful and well pleasing to him; to all which add, that he it is who strengthens to the exercise of it, and increases it; and which he does sometimes by tribulation; faith and other graces, being thereby tried, produce patience; and which at length, through divine grace, has its perfect work. Moreover, the object of prayer is described, as “the God of consolation”; all true, real, solid comfort springs from him, which he communicates by his son, the consolation of Israel; by his Spirit, the comforter; by his word, the doctrines and promises of which afford strong consolation to the heirs of promise, sensible sinners and afflicted souls; by the ordinances of the Gospel, which are breasts of consolation; and by the faithful ministers of Christ, who are “Barnabases”, sons of consolation, (<4036>Acts 4:36). The petition follows,

grant you to be like minded one towards another; which does not respect sameness of judgment in the doctrines of faith; though this is very necessary to an honourable and comfortable walking together in church fellowship; much less an agreement in things indifferent: the apostle's meaning is not, that they should all abstain from meats forbidden by the law of Moses, or that they should all eat every sort of food without distinction; nor that they should all observe any Jewish day, or that they should all observe none; rather, that everyone should enjoy his own sentiment, and practise as he believed: but this request regards a likeness of affection, the sameness of mutual love, that they be of one heart, and one soul; that notwithstanding their different sentiments about things of a ceremonious kind, yet that they should love one another, and cease either to despise or judge each other; but think as well and as highly of them that differ from them, as of themselves, and of those of their own sentiments, without preferring in affection one to another; but studying and devising to promote and maintain, as the Syriac here reads it, atwywç, “an equality” among them; showing the same equal affection and respect to one as to the other, and to one another; the Jew to the Gentile, and the Gentile to the

Jew; the strong to the weak, and the weak to the strong. This is what is greatly desirable. It is grateful to God; it is earnestly wished for by the ministers of the Gospel: and is pleasant and delightful to all good men; but it is God alone that can give and continue such a Spirit: this the apostle knew, and therefore prays that he would "grant" it: and for which request there is a foundation for faith and hope concerning it; since God has promised he will give his people one heart, and one way, as to fear him, so to love one another. The rule or pattern, according to which this is desired, is next expressed,

according to Christ Jesus; according to the doctrine of Christ, which teaches, directs, and engages, as to sameness of judgment and practice, so to mutual love and affection; and according to the new commandment of Christ, which obliges to love one another; and according to the example of Christ, who is the great pattern of patience and forbearance, of meekness and humility, of condescension and goodness, and of equal love and affection to all his members.

Ver. 6. *That ye may with one mind and one mouth*; etc..] This is the end for which the above request is made, and shows, that a cordial and sincere affection for one another is necessary to the worshipping of God with one consent, to a joining together in acts of religious service, both in praying to God, and in praising of him, which latter seems here chiefly designed; for how should there be an agreement of heart and voice, of mind and mouth, in praising God, unless there is a singleness of heart, and oneness of affection? This is necessary in order to

glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, God "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"; leaving out, the copulative, which we translate "even", but may as well be rendered "and"; and be read, as by some, "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ". God is the God of Christ, as Christ is man; who prepared the human nature for him, anointed it with the Holy Spirit, supported it in life, in sufferings and death, and glorified it at his own right hand; and in which nature Christ exercised every grace on him, as faith, hope, and love; discharged every duty to him, worshipped him, prayed unto him, and was in all things obedient to his will: and God is the Father of Christ, as Christ is God; for as man he had no father. Now he is "glorified" when the perfections of his nature are ascribed unto him; when notice is taken of the works of his hands, and the glory of his majesty, which appears in them;

when praise is offered up, and thanks given for all mercies, temporal and spiritual, he bestows on his people; when they join together in the solemn worship of him, presenting their bodies, and giving up their hearts unto him; when they unite in praying to him, and singing his praise; and when their lives and conversations are agreeable to their profession of him.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore receive ye one another*, etc..] Into your hearts and affections; embrace one another cordially, the Jew the Gentile, the Gentile the Jew, the strong brother the weak, the weak the strong:

as Christ also received us. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read “you”. Both Jews and Gentiles, as appears from the following verses. Christ received all the chosen ones into his heart's love and affection from eternity; he received them in the council of peace, and when the covenant of grace was made at his Father's hands, in the most tender manner, in order to take the care of them, preserve and save them; he assumed their nature, took upon him their sins, and sustained their persons in time, when he became incarnate, and suffered and died for them; and he receives them in the effectual calling on their coming to him, which he encourages by assuring them, that he will in no wise cast them out; so far is he from it, that he embraces them with open arms, and in the most affectionate manner receives them, though sinners, and eats with them; and notwithstanding all their unworthiness, sins, and transgressions:

to the glory of God: that is, either in order to bring them to the enjoyment of eternal life and happiness; which is sometimes so called, because of the glory that shall be beheld by the saints, be revealed in them, and put upon them, both in soul and body; and which is all of God's preparing and bestowing, and will lie in the vision and enjoyment of him: for this they were chosen in Christ, given to him, and received by him before the world began; and that they might enjoy it, Christ came into this world, took on him their persons, and died in their stead; and to this they are called by his grace with an holy calling; and when he has guided them with his counsel through this world, he will receive them to this glory: or else by “the glory of God” is meant the glorifying of God, the perfections of God, as his wisdom, power, faithfulness, truth, justice, holiness, love, grace, and mercy, and the like; which is done by Christ's becoming the surety, and Mediator of the new covenant, (Hebrews 7:22 8:6 9:15 12:24), by his assumption of human nature, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and by obtaining redemption for his people: and the force of the apostle's

exhortation and argument is, that as Christ has received his people both in eternity and time, in so tender a manner, though unworthy, whereby he has glorified God, which was the principal end in view, and next to that the glorifying of them; so it becomes them to be like minded to one another, (<45155>Romans 15:5), and affectionately receive and embrace each other, that so they may join together in glorifying the God and Father of Christ also, (<45156>Romans 15:6).

Ver. 8. *Now I say*, etc..] Or affirm that Christ has received both Jews and Gentiles: that he has received the Jews, and therefore they are not to be despised, though they are weak, appears from hence,

that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision; he is rightly called a minister, for this was the end of his coming into the world, and the whole of his work in it was not to be ministered unto, but to minister to others, (<40128>Matthew 20:28 <41045>Mark 10:45), both in life and at death. This character agrees with him in all his offices; as King he ministers judgment to the people; and as priest he is the minister of the true tabernacle of the human nature, (<580802>Hebrews 8:2), in which he offered himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people, and now in it makes intercession for them; but here it is expressive of his prophetic office, in which he is such a minister as never was before, or since, or ever will be; if we consider the dignity of his person, being the Son of God; the greatness of his qualifications, having the Spirit without measure; the nature of his doctrines, which were amazing words of grace and truth; and the manner of his delivery, which was with authority; and that all other ministers receive their mission, qualifications, doctrine and success from him: he is styled a minister of "the circumcision", not literally considered, as if he administered circumcision to any, which he did not; he was indeed subject to it as a son of Abraham, as a Jew by birth, as under the law, and in order to fulfil all righteousness, (<40315>Matthew 3:15), and to show that he was truly man, and that he had regard to the people and ordinances of the Old Testament, as he showed by baptism he had to those of the New, and to signify our cleansing and atonement by his blood; but circumcision is either to be understood in a spiritual sense of circumcision in the Spirit, and not in the flesh, with which the true circumcision, or believers in Christ, are circumcised in him, through his circumcision; or rather the word here is to be taken metonymically, for the uncircumcised Jews, as it often is in this epistle; (see <45226>Romans 2:26 3:30 4:9). So that the meaning is, that Christ was their minister and preacher, just as Peter is said to have the apostleship of the

circumcision, (Galatians 2:8), or to be the apostle of the Jews; as Paul was of the Gentiles, (Romans 11:13), and to have the Gospel of the circumcision committed to him, it being his province to preach it to them, (Galatians 2:7,8), Christ as a minister or preacher in the personal discharge of his prophetic office, was sent only to the Jews; among them he lived, and to them he only preached; nor did he allow his apostles to preach to any other till after his resurrection; and which is a manifest proof that he received the Jews, and took them under his care, and showed a particular regard unto them: the ends of his being a minister to them were,

for the truth of God; to preach the Gospel of salvation, the word of truth unto them, for which he was promised and sent; and in doing of which he declared the righteousness, faithfulness, loving kindness, and truth of God unto them:

and to confirm the promises made unto the fathers; the fathers of the world, Adam, Noah, etc.. or rather the Jewish fathers, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and others; concerning the Messiah's being the seed of the woman, and of Abraham, and of David; concerning the coming of Shiloh, the raising up of the great prophet among the Jews, etc.. all which promises are yea and amen in Christ, ratified and fulfilled in him.

Ver. 9. *And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy*, etc..] In choosing them in Christ as vessels of mercy, and in redeeming them by Christ as well as the Jews, and in regenerating and calling them by his abundant grace; and which as they clearly show that Christ has received them, and therefore are not to be censured and judged as irreligious persons, because of the use of their Christian liberty; so these things lay them under obligations to glorify God, to show forth his praise both by lip and life, since what they enjoy is not by promise, as the Jews, but of mere mercy; not but that promises arise from grace and mercy, though the accomplishment of them is owing to truth and faithfulness; but the Gentiles had no promises made to them, and yet obtained mercy, though there were many promises made concerning them, and many oracles and predictions in favour of them stood on divine record; some of which the apostle here produces to prove what he had asserted, that Christ had received them, and they were bound to glorify God on that account:

as it is written, in (Psalm 18:49);

for this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name; which words are not spoken unto God by David, literally, considered, but as representing the Messiah; for David when he penned this Psalm, was in the decline of life; the next account after this is of his last dying words, (<102301>2 Samuel 23:1); nor could he hope to praise God among the Gentiles, nor did he in person, but in his Son the Messiah. These words are the words of Christ unto his Father, who in the title of the psalm is called “the servant of God”, he being the Mediator eminently; he is represented as encompassed with the sorrows and snares of death and the grave, which agree with Jesus when in the garden, and on the cross. God is all along in it spoken as his helper and deliverer, as he was to Christ in his human nature, having promised to be so, and on which he depended; and the person, the subject of the psalm, is a victorious person, one that has got the conquest over all enemies, which is in the fullest sense true of the Messiah, who has overcome the world, made an end of sin, destroyed Satan, spoiled principalities and powers, and abolished death; and particularly is said to be the head of the Heathen, and they to be voluntary subjects to him, (<191843>Psalm 18:43,44), which is expressed in much the same language as the like things are in (<235504>Isaiah 55:4,5); which is so manifest a prophecy of the Messiah; add to all which, that the Lord's anointed, the King Messiah, and who is called David, is expressly mentioned in the words following these that are cited, and which are applied by the Jews [f262] themselves to the Messiah; as is (<191832>Psalm 18:32) paraphrased of him, by the Targumist upon it: what is here said by the Messiah to God, is that he would “confess to him among the Gentiles”; which is to be understood not of confession of sin, or of a confession of faith in him; but of praise and thanksgiving, a celebration of his perfections, particularly his, race, mercy, and goodness; ascribing honour and glory to him, either for the conversion of the Gentiles, as he did in the believing Jews, (<441118>Acts 11:18), or by the mouth of the Gentiles, for what God had done in bringing the Gospel to them, (<441348>Acts 13:48), or among them, by his apostles and ministers of the Gospel being made very successful among them, and made to triumph in Christ, whilst they diffused the savour of his knowledge in every place. The word “Lord” is omitted in this citation, though it appears in the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, and in the Complutensian edition, and two of Stephens's copies: “and sing unto thy name”; psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to the glory of his grace, as in all the churches of the Gentiles, to which they are directed by the Spirit of Christ, (<490519>Ephesians 5:19 <510316>Colossians 3:16).

Ver. 10. *And again he saith*, etc..] God or Christ, in (Deuteronomy 32:43);

rejoice ye Gentiles with his people; which from the Hebrew text are by some rendered, “rejoice his people O ye Gentiles”; to which agree the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, who render it, “praise O ye nations his people”; or as some copies of the former, “the judgment of his people”; and the latter adds, the house of Israel. The note of R. Sol. Jarchi on the text is,

> “at that time the nations shall praise Israel; see what is the praise of this people that cleave unto the Lord, etc..”

But the design of this song is to praise God, and not the people of Israel; who in it are severely reproved for their many iniquities, and especially their very great ingratitude to God, and are threatened with the heaviest judgments. This is seen by other Jewish writers, who interpret the words accordingly, as R. Aben Ezra does, whose note is

> “then shall they praise him, when God shall avenge their blood;”

and to this sense is the Jerusalem Targum,

> “praise before him O ye people, praise him O his people of the house of Israel;”

but the words may be better translated either thus, “rejoice O ye nations, his people”; that is, ye Gentiles who are his people, whom God has taken into his covenant, and whom he will declare as such in his own time, which time was now come, and therefore had reason to rejoice; (see 1 Peter 2:9,10); or thus, “rejoice ye Gentiles, and his people”; let both Jews and Gentiles rejoice; let them rejoice together when they come to be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the same promises and privileges; when they shall be together in one fold, under one shepherd; and especially when the fulness of each of them is brought in, and God has avenged himself of his and their enemies; and which agrees with the apostle's sense, and whose version is supported by the Septuagint interpreters; and his supplement is to be justified, there only wanting a copulative in the Hebrew text, which is often the case in that language, and which may easily be supplied by “and” or “with”; as it is with the latter by the apostle, in perfect agreement with the sense of the words.

Ver. 11. *And again*, etc..] It is written in (<19B701>Psalm 117:1),

praise the Lord all ye Gentiles, and laud him all ye people; that is, praise him both Jews and Gentiles, for his merciful kindness and truth, as in (<451512>Romans 15:2); the Gentiles for his mercy in choosing, redeeming, and calling them, as before; and the Jews for his truth and faithfulness in the fulfilment of his praises. R. David Kimchi on this psalm observes, that

> "it consists of two verses only, and that it belongs jyçmh twmyl, "to the days of the Messiah"; and intimates, by the composition of it in two verses only, that all people shall be divided into two parts, or be on two sides, Israel shall be in their law, and all the nations in seven precepts,"

i.e. of Noah.

Ver. 12. *And again Esaias saith*, etc..] In (<23B110>Isaiah 11:10);

there shall be a root of Jesse. This prophecy is applied to the Messiah by the Jews [f263], who say,

> "that when the King Messiah is revealed, there shall be gathered to him all the nations of the world, so that that Scripture shall be fulfilled which is written, "there shall be a root of Jesse", etc.."

This character, "the root of Jesse", may be understood of Christ with respect to his divine nature, who, as God, was before Jesse, and the author of his being, as of all creatures; just in such sense as he is called "the root and offspring of David", (<660505>Revelation 5:5 22:16); the root of David, as he is God, and the offspring of David, as he is man; unless both are to be interpreted of his human nature, as the phrase here also may be, and denote his descent from Jesse as man; and so the Jewish writers interpret it as well as some Christian ones. This is R. David Kimchi's comment;

> ""and there shall be a root of Jesse"; the meaning is, yçy çrçm axwyh, "which goes out from the root of Jesse", according to (<23B101>Isaiah 11:1), for "Jesse" is the root. And so the Targum of Jonathan, yçyd hyrb rb, "the son's son of Jesse";"

that is, David's son, the King Messiah, who sprung from Jesse's family, when that family was very low and mean, like to a tree cut down to, its roots, and to a root in a dry ground; out of which sprung the man the

branch, David's son and Lord. This character may be applied to Christ as Mediator, who as a root is unseen and unknown to carnal men, and mean, abject, and of no account in the eyes of the world; the root that not only bears Jesse, David, and other good men, but all the branches of God's elect, from whom they have their beings, both in a natural and spiritual sense; which communicates life and nourishment to them; in whom their life is hid, and is safe when scarcely to be discerned in them; and from whom they have all their fruitfulness, and to whom is owing their perseverance in faith and holiness.

And he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; or, as the Syriac version, "and he that shall rise shall be a prince unto the Gentiles"; or, as the Arabic, "and he that shall rise out of it", the root, "shall rule over the Gentiles". In the Hebrew text in Isaiah, this is said of the root, and to be read thus, "which shall stand for an ensign of the people", (<23110>Isaiah 11:10); because mention is made of a root, the apostle expresses the standing of it by rising out of it, which signifies both the incarnation and exaltation of Christ; and because an ensign is a token of power and government, therefore he has rendered it to "reign", agreeably enough to the sense; since upon Christ's exaltation, and setting up his ensign or standard, the Gospel, in the Gentile world, multitudes became voluntary subjects to him, and still do; over whom he rules by his grace and Spirit, and will more largely and manifestly in the latter day, when the kingdoms of this world shall be his. In like manner R. Aben. Ezra explains the words of the Messiah.

> "Says he, this may be understood, for all the whole world shall be wtwçr tjt, "under his power", or government."

And so the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases them, "and kingdoms shall obey him"; so that the Jew can have no reason to complain of the apostle's version.

In him shall the Gentiles trust, or "hope"; this in the Hebrew text is, "to him shall the Gentiles seek"; which cannot be truly done without faith and hope; (see <581106>Hebrews 11:6); for the hope and faith of enjoying what is sought for, put persons upon seeking: so that the apostle here gives us the true sense of the words, and most fully describes the affection of the Gentiles to Christ; who having some knowledge of him, seek unto him for life and salvation, prostrate themselves at his feet, venture upon him,

commit themselves to him, and hope and trust in him. This part of the prophecy is by the Jews understood of the Messiah.

> "All the Gentiles (says R. David Kimchi on the text) shall seek jyçmh la, "to the Messiah", and shall go after him to do what he commands; all of them shall obey him."

But why no mention made of the Israelites seeking to the Messiah? hear what they say, and which still confirms the sense of these words [f264].

> "The Israelites will have no need of the doctrine of the King Messiah in future time, as it is said, "to him shall the Gentiles seek", and not the Israelites."

True enough! The apostle dwells on the proof of this point, it not being so easy of belief with the Jews, but makes it clear from the law, psalms, and prophets, which is the threefold division of the writings of the Old Testament; (see <422444>Luke 24:44).

Ver. 13. *Now the God of hope*, etc..] This character is taken from the latter part of (<451512>Romans 15:12), and is occasioned by it, "in him shall the Gentiles trust", or "hope"; and is proper to God as he is the author and giver of this grace; for naturally men are without it; that which is a good hope is the gift of God, and through his grace, and is wrought in the heart in regeneration; for to this are the children of God begotten again. Moreover, God is the object of it; not wealth and riches, nor works of righteousness, but Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, particularly Christ, is called the believer's hope; that is, the object of it, in whom the Gentiles hope and trust. Likewise, it is God that encourages to the exercise of it by the proclamations of his grace, and mercy, and plenteous redemption; by the discoveries of his love, and views of interest in him; and by bringing to mind the past experiences of his goodness: he preserves and maintains this grace useful and lively, firm and steadfast, at least in being, which sometimes seems almost perished and gone; he increases it, and causes his people to abound in the exercise of it, and continues it even unto death. The Ethiopic version reads, "the God of our promises", which are what hope has respect unto, and builds upon:

fill you with all joy and peace in believing. This is a petition to the God of hope. The apostle has recourse again to prayer, knowing that all his exhortations would be useless, without the grace of God accompanying

them: and it is observable, that he prays for the same things mentioned in the above prophecies and promises, as joy, peace, and hope; for though God has promised ever so great things concerning his people, he will be inquired of by them to do them for them. One part of this petition is, that God would “fill them with all joy”; not with every kind of joy; not with worldly joy, or with the joy of hypocrites, who rejoice in sin, or in their own boastings, which is evil; but with spiritual joy, joy in God as a covenant God and Father; in Christ, in his person, righteousness, and salvation; and in the Holy Ghost, the author of it, whose fruit it is; and in the Gospel, doctrines, blessings, and promises of it; and in the view and hope of the heavenly glory, amidst various afflictions and tribulations: and it designs an abundance of it, even a fulness thereof; though the petition implies, that as yet it is not full; it is frequently interrupted and broke in upon by the corruption of nature, and falls into sin, by the temptations of Satan, through divine desertions, and various trials and exercises; yet it supposes it may be increased, as by the renewed discoveries of the love of God, of interest in Christ, and through the gracious influences of the Spirit; and even made full and complete, though not in this, yet in the other world: another branch of the petition is, that God would fill with “peace”, with a sense of their peace with him, made by the blood of Christ; with a conscience peace in their own breasts, arising from a view of their justification by the righteousness of Christ, and from the sprinklings of his blood upon them; and also with peace one among another, which was much wanting, and the apostle was very desirous of: and all this he asks, that it might come to them “in believing”; in the way of faith, and the exercise of that grace; for joy comes this way; faith and joy go together; where one is, the other is also; and as the one increases, so does the other; a believing view of interest in Christ is attended with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: and so peace comes in at the door of faith: there is no true peace till a soul is brought to believe in Christ; and that is promoted and increased by repeated acts of faith on Christ, or by a constant living by faith on him; (see <2610>Isaiah 26:3). The end for which this petition is made is,

that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. By hope is meant that grace which God is the author, object, and promoter of; and the Syriac version reads it, hrbsb, “in his hope”, or “the hope of him”; of enjoying him, of meeting with him, and having communion with him in his house and ordinances; of having fresh supplies of grace from him, and of being favoured with all the blessings of grace laid up in an everlasting

covenant, and at last with eternal life and glory: to “abound” herein, is to be in the free and frequent exercise of this grace, being encouraged by the grace of God, and an enlarged experience of it, and supported by faith, the substance of things hoped for: and this “through the power of the Holy Ghost”; not by might or power of man, but by that same divine power which first began the good work, and must fulfil it; which at first implanted the grace of hope, and must perform the work of that, as of faith. The same power is requisite to cause grace to abound, or saints to abound in the exercise of it, as was to the first production of it. The Vulgate Latin reads, “that ye may abound in hope, and in the power of the Holy Ghost”; but there is no copulative in the Greek text.

Ver. 14. *And I myself also am persuaded of you*, etc..] This is said by way of prevention to an objection that might he made to the apostle's prayers and exhortations by the Romans. What does the apostle mean by all this? what does he think of us, or take us to be? men that live in malice to one another, devoid of all humanity, and mutual respect? a parcel of fools and ignorant men, that know nothing of divine things? and though there may be some that are much to be blamed for their conduct and carriage to their fellow Christians, what, are there none among us fit to give advice and admonition? To which the apostle replies, that he was far from entertaining such thoughts of them; that though he had not seen them in person, yet he had had such an account of their faith and practice, which were famous throughout the world, that he was thoroughly persuaded of better things of them, though he thus spake; and therefore, to mollify them, and abate their resentment, he adds,

my brethren; testifying his affection to them, owning the spiritual relation they stood in to him, and declaring the great esteem he had for them, and the high opinion he had of them: saying,

that ye also are full of goodness; not naturally, for there is no good thing in men by nature, but what they had was from the Spirit of God, whose fruit is “goodness”: and by which may be meant, either the good gifts of the Spirit of God, or rather his graces, even the good work of grace in general, and which is goodness itself: it comes from a good cause, the good Spirit of God; is good in its own nature, not having the least mixture or tincture of evil in it; and good in its effects, since it makes and denominates a man a good man; now these saints might be said to be full of this, to denote the abundance, the superabundance of grace in this work: or

particularly beneficence, humanity, and sympathy to fellow Christians, may be intended. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “full of love”: but the copies and eastern versions read as we do.

Filled with all knowledge; not with every sort of knowledge, with the knowledge of all languages, or of all the arts and sciences, of all things, natural and political; but with all spiritual knowledge relating to God, his nature and perfections, his mind and will; to Christ and the work of redemption by him; to the Spirit, and the operations of his grace; to the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; to their duty to God, fellow creatures, and fellow Christians; in short, with all knowledge necessary to salvation, though as yet not perfect, and which will not be in this world, but in another:

able also to admonish one another; as they must be, since they were both good and knowing; goodness and knowledge are necessary to admonition, and qualify persons for it: if a man is not a good man himself, he is not fit to admonish another; and if he has not knowledge, he will not be able to do it as it should be; and without humanity and tenderness, he will not perform it aright, and with success; but all this being in these persons, they were able and fit for it. Some copies read it, “able also to admonish others”; so the Syriac version renders; which makes the expression still stronger, and enlarges their praise and commendation.

Ver. 15. *Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you*, etc..] Or freely, in taking notice of their party contentions and ill usage of each other, and in reproving, advising, and exhorting them; and which he excuses by observing, that it was,

in some sort, or “in part” only; meaning either that it was only in some part of the epistle he had took such a liberty, which is the sense of the Arabic version, which renders it, “in some parts of the oration”; or else that he had regard not to all of them, but to some only, to a part of the church who were most culpable; and did not design a charge against them all, and that what he said should be applied to the whole body; or rather that the boldness and freedom he had taken was bat in some sort, it was but in part: this he says to mitigate it, and that it might not be thought to be so large as it might appear at first; it was but “a little more boldly”, that he wrote unto them, as the Syriac renders it; for this clause is not to be read in connection with the word “written”, as if the apostle had only wrote of the doctrines

of grace in some sort, or in part, for he declared the whole counsel of God, and never kept back anything profitable to the churches: he adds,

as putting you in mind; which is also said to excuse his writing, and the manner of it; he did not take upon him to be their teacher and instructor, to inform them of things they knew nothing of; only to be their monitor, to put them in mind of and refresh their memories with what they had been well instructed and established in before; (see <6012>2 Peter 1:12,13);

because of the grace that is given to me of God; meaning not the doctrine of "grace, concerning" which, as the Ethiopic version renders it, he was putting them in mind; nor the internal grace of the Spirit, by which he was inclined and assisted to write unto them; but the grace of apostleship, or that high office, which, by the grace of God, and not because of any merits of his, he was called unto: this he mentions also to excuse the freedom of his writing; since what he did was in consequence of, pursuant and agreeably to, his office as an apostle; and therefore could not have answered it to God, or them, if he had not done it; wherefore he hoped it would be took well by them.

Ver. 16. *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ*, etc..] The office of apostleship is here amplified and enlarged on, and the ends shown for which that grace was given to him, that he should be a minister; not in holy things about the temple, as the priests and Levites were; or a teacher of the law, some were fond of; but a minister of Christ, one that was made so by him, was qualified and sent forth to minister in his name to men; and who was a preacher of him; Jesus Christ, and him crucified, was the grand subject of his ministrations; he adds,

to the Gentiles; for to them, though not to the exclusion of the Jews, was he appointed a minister by Christ, and sent by him to them; among them he chiefly ministered, and was particularly and eminently useful to them; and this is another reason why the Romans ought to bear with a little boldness and freedom in writing to them, since he was the apostle of the Gentiles:

ministering the Gospel of God; not the service of the temple, nor the traditions of the elders, nor the law of Moses, nor the morality of the Heathens; but the Gospel, of which God is the author, whose grace is the subject, and whose glory is the end; and is good news from him to the chief of sinners; to the preaching of which the apostle was separated by him:

that the offering up of the Gentiles; not the offering the Gentiles offered up, their prayers, praises, or good works, though these are acceptable to God through Christ; but the Gentiles themselves, by the offering up of whom is meant their conversion; which was the end of the apostle's ministering the Gospel among them, and in which he was the happy instrument. The allusion is to the priests slaying and offering up sacrifices under the law. The apostle was a priest in a figurative and improper sense; the sacrifices he offered up were not slain beasts, but men, the Gentiles, cut to the heart by the sword of the Spirit, the ministry of the Gospel; whose inside being laid open to them, and they brought to a sense of their lost condition, and need of Christ, were, through the power of divine grace attending the word, made willing to offer, or give up themselves to the Lord, to be saved by him, and him only: this the apostle, as an instrument, was concerned in; and all his view was, that it

might be acceptable; that is, to God, as nothing is more so to him than a broken and a contrite heart, or souls brought to a sense of themselves; and to believe in Christ, and submit to his righteousness; and then both ministers and converts are unto God, a sweet savour of Christ:

being sanctified by the Holy Ghost; this is said in allusion to the washing of the sacrifices under the law; and intimates, that the Gentiles, though unclean by nature and practice, yet being sanctified by the Spirit of God, whose proper work it is to sanctify, become an acceptable, being an holy sacrifice to an holy God.

Ver. 17. *I have therefore whereof I may glory*, etc..] Not in himself, for he that taught others not to glory in men, would not glory in himself; not in his carnal descent and fleshly privileges; nor in his knowledge of, and compliance with, the ceremonies of the law; nor in his legal, moral, and civil righteousness before God; nor in his gifts and attainments, as merited and procured by himself; nor in his labours in the ministry, and the success of it, as of himself: but

through Jesus Christ; or “in Jesus Christ”, as read the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; in what Christ was unto him, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: he could boast of what he had from him, and through him, even of all spiritual blessings in him; and of a large measure of grace he had received from him; and of great and eminent gifts Christ had bestowed on him; he gloried in his cross, and boasted of a crucified Jesus, whom others despised; and whom he made the

subject of his ministry, and took delight in preaching: and freely owned that all he did was through Christ strengthening him; and that all his success in his work was owing to him, and of this he had to glory: and which was

in those things which pertain to God; not "with God", as the Syriac reads it; for though in some cases it may be lawful to glory before men, yet not before God, or in his presence: nor is it anything a man may glory in, not in his own things, but in the things of God; in things relating to the Gospel of God, to the pure preaching of it, to the furtherance and spread of it, and the recommending of it to others; to the worship and ordinances of God, and a spiritual attendance on them; to the grace of God, and the magnifying of that in the business of salvation; and to the glory of God, which ought to be the chief end of all actions, natural, moral, and religious, and whether private or public. The apostle has chiefly reference to his ministerial function, and the things of God relating to that, in which he was employed; (see Hebrews 5:1).

Ver. 18. *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things*, etc..] He suggests that the false teachers did speak of things which were not done by them at all, and much less were what Christ had done by them; and signifies that he was a conscientious man, and could speak nothing but what was truth; his conscience would not suffer him, nor could he allow himself to make mention of anything, that was not done by him, as if it was; nor of anything that was done by himself, nor of anything that was done, as if it was done by himself, but as it was wrought by Christ; nor had he any need to speak of any other things which he had wrought himself, as he could not of what he had not wrought at all; or, as he says,

which Christ hath not wrought by me: signifying that what he had wrought, and which he could with good conscience speak of to the honour of Christ, and the glory of his grace, were not wrought by himself, but what Christ wrought by him; he was only the instrument, Christ was the efficient cause: as a Christian, it was not he that lived, but Christ lived in him; as a minister, it was not he that spoke, but Christ spoke in him; nor was it he that laboured, but the grace of Christ that was with him; much less was it he that converted souls, but Christ did it by him:

to make the Gentiles obedient; the nations of the world, who had been brought up in blindness and ignorance of God, in rebellion and disobedience to him. The Gospel was sent among them, and was blessed unto them, to make them, of disobedient, obedient ones; not to men, but to

God; not to magistrates and ministers, though they were taught to be so to both, but to Christ; to him as a priest, by being made willing to be saved by him, and him only, renouncing their own works, and disclaiming all other ways of salvation; and to submit to his righteousness for their justification before God, and acceptance with him; and to deal with his precious blood for pardon and cleansing; to rely on his sacrifice for the atonement of their sins, and to make use of him as the new and living way to the Father, as their one and only mediator, advocate, and intercessor; and to him as a prophet, to the faith of the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; not barely by hearing it, and notionally assenting to it, but by embracing it heartily, and professing it publicly and sincerely; and to him as a King, by owning him as such, and as theirs; and by subjecting to his ordinances, and obeying his commands in faith and fear, and from love to him: the means whereby these persons were brought to the obedience of Christ, and of faith, are

by word and deed; or “deeds”, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read: by the former is meant, the word of the Gospel and the preaching of it, being sent unto them, and coming with power, and not as the word of man, but as the word of God; and by the latter, either the labour of the apostle, the pains he took, the hardships he endured, in ministering: the Gospel to them; or his agreeable life and conversation, which were a means of recommending the word, and of engaging an attention to it; or rather the miraculous works and mighty deeds which were wrought by the apostle, in confirmation of the doctrine he preached, as it seems to be explained in (Romans 15:19).

Ver. 19. *Through mighty signs and wonders*, etc..] Or “in”, or “through the power of signs and wonders”, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions render the words. These carrying along with them evidence and conviction of the truth of what was delivered, wrought wonderfully and powerfully on the minds of the Gentiles to embrace the Gospel, and submit to the ordinances of it; though all would have been insufficient, had it not been for what follows,

by the power of the Spirit of God: the Alexandrian copy and one of Stephens's read, “by the power of the Holy Spirit”, and so does the Vulgate Latin version; meaning, either that the mighty signs and wonders in healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, raising the dead, etc.. were performed not by the efficacy and working of Satan, as the signs and lying wonders of antichristian men, but by the Spirit of God, by whom Christ

and all his apostles wrought the miracles they did; or that the ministration of the word in which the apostle laboured, was by the power of the Spirit of God; it was he that imparted all spiritual gifts to him, qualifying him for this service; it was he that assisted him in it, and enabled him to go through it; it was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power that he performed it; and that not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth: or else that the obedience of the Gentiles to the faith of Christ, through the preaching of the Gospel, and the wonderful works that attended it as means, were purely owing to the power of the Spirit of God, as the efficient cause; it was not by might, or power of the preacher; nor merely by the power of signs and wonders; but by the powerful and efficacious grace of the Spirit of God, who took away the stony, stubborn, and disobedient heart, and gave them an heart of flesh, a tender, flexible, and obedient one; and caused them to walk in and observe the commandments and ordinances of the Lord:

so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ; that which Christ, as God, is the author of; as man, was a preacher and minister of; and, as Mediator, is the subject matter of: this the apostle “preached fully” and completely, every part and branch of it, kept back nothing of it, but faithfully declared the whole; and so fulfilled it, as the word may be rendered, and his ministry; or he filled the Gospel, the net of the Gospel, which he spread in every place; or rather he diffused the knowledge of it everywhere; he filled all places with it wherever he came, even “from Jerusalem” round about unto Illyricum: not that he began to preach at Jerusalem, but at Damascus; from whence he went to Arabia, and after that to Jerusalem; but inasmuch as he was of Jerusalem, and had preached there, from whence the Gospel originally came, and this was the boundary of his ministry one way, he makes mention of it; as Illyricum was the boundary of it another way, which was on the extreme part of Macedonia: it is now called Sclavonia, and is an European nation; part of it is Dalmatia, mentioned (<5040>2 Timothy 4:10). Apollonia was in it, according to Mela [f265], where the apostle is said to pass through, (<4401>Acts 17:1), it has on the south the gulf of Venice, on the north the Danube, on the west Germany, and on the east Thracia and Macedonia: according to Ptolomy [f266], Illyris, or Illyricum, was bounded on the north with upper and lower Pannonia, now called Hungary and Austria; on the east with upper Mysia, now Servia; and on the south with part of Macedonia; it lies over against Italy, the Adriatic sea being between them;

its length, from the river Drinus to Arsa, is reckoned about 480 miles, and its breadth, from the mountains of Croatia to the sea, is computed to be about 120: it is by some divided into Slavonia, Dalmatia, and Albania; Slavonia is the western part, Albania the eastern, and Dalmatia between them; according to others, it includes Slavonia, Croatia, Bosnia, and Dalmatia; and had its name of Illyricum, from Illyrius, the son of Cadmus; or as others, from Illyrius, the son of Celta: here the Gospel was preached by the Apostle Paul, and no doubt with success; and churches were planted here, and which remained for several ages: in the "second" century there was a church in Illyricum, and Eleutherius was bishop, who is said to be a famous teacher; he was born at Rome, and his mother Anthia is reported to be converted by the Apostle Paul; in the same age lived one Quirinus, first a tribune, and then a bishop of Illyricum, who became a martyr under Trajan: in the "third" century there were churches in Illyricum, though devastations were made in it by the Goths; in the "fourth" century, frequent mention is made of the churches in Illyricum; and the bishops convened at Rome under Damascus in the times of Constantius wrote with great respect to the brethren in Illyricum; in Siscia, a city in this country, Quirinus a bishop suffered martyrdom; here a synod met against the Arians, and yet many in this country were infected with that heresy, by Valens and Ursatius; in this age Hilary, of Poictiers in France, spread the Gospel in this country; and he and Eusebius of Vercelli, in Piedmont, visited the churches, and corrected what was amiss: in the "fifth" century there was a church in Illyricum, and in Salo, a city of Dalmatia, Glycerius was bishop: in the "sixth" century there were also churches here, as appears from the letter of Symmachus to the bishops of them, and to their people; and in this age also Gregory wrote to all the bishops in Illyricum, to receive such bishops as were banished: in the "eighth" century, the bishops of Illyricum were in the Nycene synod, and Boniface gathered a church in Slavonia [f267]; thus far Christianity may be traced in this country: hither the apostle went, not in a direct line, but round about, and took many countries, cities, and towns in his way, as the history of his journeys and travels in the Acts of the Apostles shows, and as he here suggests.

Ver. 20. *Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel*, etc..] The sense is, not barely that he strove to preach the Gospel and not the law, the pure Gospel, and, not a mixed one; nor only that he endeavoured to preach it fully, and leave out nothing; but that he had an holy ambition to preach it,

not where Christ was named; as in Judea, where he had been for many ages spoken of and expected, and where he had lately appeared, lived, suffered, and died, and where his Gospel had been preached by all the apostles; as also in such parts of the Gentile world, where others of the apostles had been, and had made mention of his name, and published the glad tidings of salvation by him; but he chose rather to go to such Heathen nations, as were wholly without any knowledge of him; who had only the dim light of nature to guide them; had had no promises nor prophecies of the Messiah, nor so much as any hints, at least very distant ones, concerning him; and where as yet the sound of the Gospel bad not reached:

lest I should build on another man's foundation; meaning not the law of Moses, nor the doctrines of the false teachers, but the foundation of the true apostles, and which was no other than the foundation Christ, he himself laid; but he chose not to go where they had laid the foundation by preaching Christ and his Gospel, that he might not take another man's crown, or boast in another man's line, or of other men's labours; but rather to go where others had never been, that he might first lay the foundation himself, by preaching Christ, and him crucified, and so the more act up to his character as an apostle, and as the apostle to the Gentiles.

Ver. 21. *But as it is written*, etc..] In (Isaiah 52:15);

to whom he was not spoken of, they shall see, and they that have not heard shall understand; for the Messiah was not spoken of to the Gentiles; they were strangers to the covenants of promise; the oracles of God were committed to the Jews; God gave his word and statutes to them, and not to any other nation: and yet, according to this prophecy, the Gentiles were to see him whom they had no account of; not in the flesh with their bodily eyes, in which sense only, or at least chiefly, the Jews saw him; but with the eyes of their understanding, by faith, as exhibited and evidently set forth before them as crucified, in the Gospel and the ordinances of it: and though they had heard nothing of him, having for many hundreds of years been left in ignorance, and suffered to walk in their own ways, until the apostles were sent among them; whose sound went into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world; yet when this would be the case, according to these words, they would understand the mind and will of God, the mysteries of his grace, the nature of the person and offices of Christ, the design of his coming into the world, and the way of salvation by him; all which was greatly brought about and accomplished, in the ministry of the

Apostle Paul among them. The passage is very pertinently cited and applied by the apostle. The whole paragraph is to be understood of the Messiah, from whence it is taken, as it is owned, and accordingly interpreted by many Jewish writers, both ancient [f268] and modern [f269]; and these words particularly respect the kings and nations of the world, who are represented as struck with silence and wonder, when, upon the preaching and hearing of the Messiah, they should see him by faith, and spiritually understand what is declared concerning him. The difference between the apostle's version of these words, which is the same with the Septuagint, and the text in Isaiah, is very inconsiderable. The first clause of the Hebrew text may be literally rendered thus, “for him, who was not spoken of to them, they shall see”; and the apostle's Greek in this manner, to whom “it was not spoken of concerning him, they shall see”; the sense is the same, and person intended Christ: the latter clause, which we from the Hebrew text render, “and that which they had not heard, shall they consider”; and here, “they that have not heard, shall understand”, has nothing material in it, in which they differ; for in the former part of it both design the Messiah, and the things concerning him, the Gentiles had not heard of; and the latter is rendered and explained by the Targum, and by R. Sol Jarchi, as by the apostle, wlktsa, “they shall understand”; and which fitly expresses the sense of the Hebrew word used by the prophet.

Ver. 22. *For which cause also*, etc..] By reason of being employed for so many years, in preaching the Gospel from Jerusalem, round about to Illyricum; taking so large a compass to minister in, and striving to introduce, propagate, and spread the Gospel, where Christ was never named before:

I have been much hindered from coming to you; or he had been often, and by many ways, and upon many accounts, hindered from coming to them; the frequent calls to different and distant places, and the great work of preaching the Gospel in those dark parts of the world, and settling churches there, which was upon his hands, prevented his giving them a visit at Rome, which he much and often desired: as in the preceding verses the apostle excuses his freedom of writing to this church, so here his long delay of coming to them, assigning the reason of it.

Ver. 23. *But now having no more place in these parts*, etc..] Not because persecution was too hot for him, and therefore could not stay any longer, for this was what he expected everywhere; nor did it discourage him in his

work, for he took pleasure in enduring it for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; but because he had fully preached the Gospel from Jerusalem, in his circuit to Illyricum, had filled every town and city with it, had planted churches in every place, and ordained elders over them, to whom the care and charge of them were committed; that there were no more places for him to preach in, but either where he himself had been already, or some other of the apostles; not but that he could have stayed with usefulness to these new formed churches, for the edifying and confirming of them, for the furtherance of the joy of faith in them, and for the defence of the Gospel and its ordinances among them; but his proper work as an apostle being to preach the Gospel to all nations, and where Christ was not named, and to plant churches; and there being no more room in these climates, or regions, for such service, he begins to think of some other places, particularly Spain, where as yet very probably the Gospel was not preached: however, he found himself at leisure to visit other places, and hereby gives the church at Rome some hopes of seeing him from this consideration, as well as from what follows:

and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; he had not only a desire, but a very vehement desire to come to them; he longed to see them, as he elsewhere says; so that since now he had leisure, they might hope it would not be long ere they did see him; especially as the thing had been upon his mind and thoughts for many years past; which shows that the Gospel had been preached very early at Rome, that many had been converted by it, and a church had been formed there some years ago, and was known to the apostle; on which account, having heard much of their faith and obedience, he had a longing desire of a great while to see them.

Ver. 24. *Whensoever I take my journey into Spain*, etc..] Which he had now meditated and resolved upon, being a place, as before observed, where it is very likely the Gospel as yet had not been preached, which made him desirous of going thither; but whether he ever went thither, or not, is not certain; some think he never performed the intended journey; others affirm he did, some time between his two appearances before Nero. Sepharad, in (Obidiah 1:20), is taken by the Jewish writers for this country; and is by the Targum, Jarchi, and Aben Ezra on that place, called aympsa, “Aspamia”; a name not greatly different from Hispania, by which it usually goes among the Greeks and Latins; but Kimchi calls it aymps, “Spania”, the very word used in this place, and by us rendered “Spain”, as

it is usually called: it was called “Span” in the language of the Celtic, who first inhabited it, which signifies a companion; it was formerly called Iberia, from the river Iberus; afterwards Hesperia, from Hesperus, the brother of Atlas; and then Hispalia, from the city Hispalis, or Sevil; and from thence corruptly Hispania; there are some that derive it from σπανια, from the roughness of some places in it, barren, uncultivated, and uninhabited: it has on the east the Pyrenean mountains, by which it is divided from France, on the west the Atlantic ocean, on the north the Cantabrian, and on the south the Herculean sea, and the straits of Gades: now as the apostle intended a journey into this country; he mentions it, in order to raise their expectations of seeing him; since in his way thither, he would have a fair opportunity of coming to them; yea, he assures them, that whenever he went thither, he would come:

I will come to you: it was his real intention, a settled resolution and determination in his mind so to do; but whereas everything of this kind depends not upon the will of man, but upon the will and providence of God, and so many unforeseen things fall out which prevent the fulfilling of human purposes, therefore he adds,

for I trust, or “hope”

to see you in my journey: he could not be certain that he should see them, but he hoped he should, for nothing was more desirable to him; his wish was not to see their emperor, their senate, or their famous city, but them, the church of Christ there; and a beautiful and delightful sight it is, to see a church of Christ in Gospel order, walking together in the faith and fellowship, and ordinances of it, and in peace one with another:

and to be brought on my way thitherward by you; he not only hoped to see them, but that he should have the company of some of them along with him, in his way to Spain; from whose conversation he might expect much spiritual pleasure and refreshment; and by whom he might be directed in his way, as well as supplied with all necessaries for his journey; in which sense the phrase of bringing on in the way, is sometimes used; (see <3BBB>Titus 3:13 <6QQ6>3 John 1:6); though before he should depart from them, he hoped to have abundance of satisfaction in his conversation with them together as a church:

if first I be somewhat, or in part,

filled with your company; or with you, meaning that before he should set forward from them to Spain, that he should be greatly delighted with beholding their order, and the steadfastness of their faith, hearing their sweet experiences, and observing their holy life and conversation, and their peace and concord among themselves; not that he expected entire satisfaction, a satiety of pleasure, fulness of joy, which are only to be had in the presence of God, and communion with angels and glorified saints; though perhaps he might expect more than he had, for at his first answer before Nero, all these Romans forsook him and fled; saints are often disappointed in their raised expectations of what they shall enjoy in each other's company.

Ver. 25. *But now I go unto Jerusalem*, etc..] Whither he was bound in spirit, not knowing what should befall him there, from which he could not be dissuaded by his friends, and thither he did go:

to minister unto the saints; not to preach the Gospel, though doubtless he did that when he was there; but to distribute among the poor saints what had been raised for them by the Greek churches; who had entreated him to take upon him this service, even the fellowship of ministering to the saints; and though this might seem below his office as an apostle, and as what more became an inferior officer, a deacon in a church; yet the apostle's heart was so much in it, and he was so bent upon it, and so diligent to execute it, that he postponed his journey to Spain and visit to Rome for the sake of it, and assigns this as a reason why he could not come at present.

Ver. 26. *For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia*, etc..] That is, the churches of Macedonia, particularly Philippi and Thessalonica; and the churches of Achaia, especially the church at Corinth, which was the metropolis of Achaia:

to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem; of which contribution, of their great forwardness, readiness, and liberality, a large account is given in (2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15); from whence Origen and others have rightly concluded, that this epistle to the Romans was wrote after that; since in that the apostle exhorts and encourages them, by the example of the Macedonian churches, to finish the collection they had begun; which collection is here called a contribution, or “communion”, as the word signifies; it being one part of the communion of churches and of saints, to relieve their poor, by communicating to them, and to assist each other therein; and in which they have not only fellowship with one

another, but with Christ the head; who takes what is done to the least of his brethren as done to himself: the persons for whom the collection was made, are “the poor saints”, or “the poor of the saints”; for not all the saints, but the poor among them, were the objects of this generosity: they were saints such as are sanctified by God the Father in eternal election, and by the blood of Christ in redemption, and by the Spirit of Christ in the effectual calling, to these this goodness extended; for though good is to be done to all men, yet more especially to the household of faith: they were “poor”, which is the lot of many who are saints, whom God has chosen, to whom the Gospel is preached, and who are called by grace: these came to be so, either through the great dearth which was throughout the world in the times of Claudius Caesar, when the brethren at Jerusalem particularly suffered, and were relieved by the disciples at Antioch; but this collection was made some years after that, and therefore rather they became so, through the persecutions of their countrymen; by whom they suffered joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had a better and more enduring substance in heaven; or else through their having sold all their possessions, and thrown their money into one common stock and fund, for mutual subsistence, which was now exhausted: these poor saints lived at Jerusalem, which was at a great distance from Macedonia and Achaia; but though they were strangers, and unknown by face to them, and had only heard of them, and their distress; yet this was no objection to their cheerful contribution; they considered them as members of the same body, as belonging to the same family, and as standing in the same spiritual relation to God and Christ with themselves; and upon this foot they acted; and what they did is worthy the imitation of all the churches and people of God.

Ver. 27. *It hath pleased them [verily]*, etc..] This is repeated from the former verse, and is designed to point out the spring of this contribution, and the manner in which it was performed: it arose from themselves; it was the pure effect of their good will and pleasure; the first motion was from among themselves; it was their own thought, mind, and will; they were willing of themselves unto it, and begun it of themselves, unasked, and not moved unto it by any other: it was not done by constraint or necessity, but was entirely free; they did not make it for ostentation sake, or to gain the applause of men, but from a principle of love to the poor saints; and which showed itself to be sincere, hearty, and genuine, by deeds, and not bare words: they performed this service with great alacrity and cheerfulness;

they gave not sparingly, but largely; it was not a matter of covetousness, but of bounty; and they did it not grudgingly, but cheerfully; they took delight and pleasure in it; their hearts and souls were in it, and yet notwithstanding did but what they ought to do.

And their debtors they are; for being debtors to God for their temporal and spiritual mercies; and to Christ for what he has done for them in redemption, and for what he is to them; and to the Spirit for the influences and operations of his grace upon them, they are debtors to the saints; they are bound to love them; they owe the debt of love to them, as they are in the spiritual relation of the children of God, members of Christ, and brethren one of another; and their paying of this debt to them is, in some sense, reckoned a paying it to the divine persons. Moreover, it was not merely a debt of love which these Gentiles owed, and in this way paid to the believing Jews; but it was a debt of justice and equity; they had received what was of valuable consideration from them, and by their means: Christ himself was of the Jews; hence salvation is said to be of them, (⁴⁰42>John 4:22). The writings of the Old Testament were committed to them, and faithfully preserved by them; and from them transmitted to the Gentiles; the apostles were all Jews, under whose ministry they were enlightened, converted, and brought to the knowledge of Christ, and salvation by him; the Gospel of the grace of God came out from among them; it was first preached in Judea, and at Jerusalem; and from thence was carried and spread in the Gentile world; yea, it looks very likely, and is not at all unreasonable to suppose, that the charge of carrying and spreading the Gospel among the Gentiles was at first defrayed by the believing Jews, and out of that common stock and fund which was at Jerusalem; for it was not proper that the apostles, at their first setting out, should take anything of the Gentiles, lest they should be thought to be mercenary persons, who only sought their own worldly advantage: hence the apostle argues from the greater to the lesser,

for if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things: the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, which are spiritual things; contain and make known spiritual blessings; impart spiritual gifts; in which the Spirit of God is greatly concerned, he is the author of them; he leads men into them; qualifies them to preach them unto others; blesses and succeeds them to the conversion; comfort, and edification of souls; and by means of which he himself is received as a Spirit of illumination, sanctification, and faith: and which doctrines also relate to the spiritual and eternal welfare of the souls

and spirits of men; hereby they are enlightened, quickened, comforted, and nourished up unto eternal life: wherefore, since this is the case, and these the favours the Gentiles enjoyed through the Jews,

their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things; in outward and temporal things; in things pertaining to the flesh; or outward man, for the clothing and nourishment of the body. This he said to stir up the Romans, who were Gentiles also, and under the same obligations to make a contribution for them likewise.

Ver. 28. *When therefore I have performed this*, etc..] Meaning when he had dispatched that business, and finished that affair which the Macedonian and Achaian churches had entreated him to engage in, and which he had undertook; namely, to take their collection, and carry it to Jerusalem, and distribute it among the poor saints there; and which he expresses by another phrase,

and have sealed to them this fruit. The liberality of the Gentile churches is called fruit, as it may be on many accounts; as with respect to the apostle, it was the fruit of his ministry and laborious preaching of the Gospel among them; he had been sowing the seed of the word, and planting churches in these parts; and among other fruits brought forth hereby, as the conversion of sinners, and edification of saints, the exercise of grace, and performance of good works, this of liberality to the poor saints was one: with respect to the persons, the objects of this bounty, it was the fruit of their spiritual things, which the Gentiles, by their means, had been partakers of; and would be as fruit, useful and profitable to them, to relieve their wants, supply them with necessaries, and make their lives more comfortable: and also with respect to the contributors, it was the fruit of the Spirit of God, and his grace in them; it was the fruit of faith, which works by love; and it was the fruit of their love to Christ, and to his saints; and was profitable to them in things temporal, spiritual, and eternal; promises of each being made and performed to such that sow liberally and bountifully. Now the ministration of this to the poor saints at Jerusalem, and on the behalf of the Grecian churches, the apostle calls a “sealing” it to them; and it is thought to be an allusion to the delivery of money sealed up, that it may not be lost, nor made use of for any other purpose than that for which it was designed: whether the apostle carried this collection sealed or not, it matters not; his sense is, that he should deliver it whole and safe unto them, and in such manner as to leave no suspicion that he had converted any part of it to his

own use; though the word here used seems to answer to the Hebrew µtj, which, with the Jews, frequently signifies to conclude, “finish”, and make an end of anything, as well as to “seal”; the sealing up of letters being the last and finishing part of them. Innumerable instances might be given; take the following one as a proof[f270]:

> “we find in the former prophets, ˆymtwj wyhç, “that they sealed”, or ended their words with words of praise, or with words of consolation Says R. Eliezer, except Jeremiah, µtjç, “who sealed”, or finished with words of reproof.”

So the word is used in (<270924>Daniel 9:24), and then the apostle's plain meaning is, when I have made an end of this affair, have finished this business of ministering and distributing to the poor saints at Jerusalem,

I will come by you into Spain. The Ethiopic version reads it, “Lasitania”, designing, no doubt, Lusitania, which was formerly a part of Spain, now called Portugal. Whether the apostle ever was there is not certain nor very probable, since when he came to Jerusalem he was apprehended, and after sometime sent a prisoner to Rome, where he suffered; however, it was his intention to go to Spain, and to take Rome in his way thither.

Ver. 29. *And I am sure when I come to you*, etc..] He intended to go to Spain; he was not sure he should reach thither; but he was positive in it he should come to Rome. It had been much and long upon his mind; and under an impress of the Spirit of God upon him, he had signified some time before this, that after he had been at Jerusalem, he “must see, Rome also”, (<441921>Acts 19:21), and it was afterwards more expressly told him by the Lord, that as he had testified of him at Jerusalem, he should bear witness at Rome also, (<442311>Acts 23:11), and therefore he was fully assured he should come to Rome, and was as confident of the manner of his coming thither.

I shall come in, or “with”

the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ; with the Gospel, the good news of salvation by Christ; and which must make him a welcome person to every sensible soul wherever he came; to this he was chosen, separated, and called; for this he was abundantly qualified; this was committed to his trust, and which he carried with him wherever he went: and he was not ashamed of it, and was ready to preach it even at Rome also. With “the Gospel of Christ”; not his own, or another's, or any man's,

but Christ's, which he had by the revelation of Christ; of which Christ is the sum and substance, and which Christ himself preached; “with the blessing of the Gospel of Christ”. Some by “blessing” understand a liberal contribution, which he trusted he should make at Rome, for the poor saints at Jerusalem; believing that their hearts would be opened, under the preaching of the Gospel, to give freely to them, and that this would be a blessing that would attend it: but rather he means, either the blessed gifts he had, qualifying him for preaching the Gospel, with which he should come and deliver it among them, and which would attend it with success; such as boldness of spirit, freedom of speech, enlarged knowledge, mighty signs and wonders, and the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power: or the blessed effects it would have on them, in establishing them in the present truths; in further enlightening and instructing their minds; in edifying, quickening, and comforting them; and in nourishing up with the words of faith and sound doctrine, unto eternal life: or the blessings of grace exhibited and set forth in the Gospel; such as justification and forgiveness of sins, peace and reconciliation, salvation and eternal life. Nay, he believed he should come in, or with the “fulness” of all this; meaning, either that he believed he should find them full of the Gospel, and the fruits of it; or rather that he should come full fraught with it, and fully preach it to them, and keep back thing that would be profitable. There is a fulness in the Gospel; it is full of the deep things of God, which the Spirit searches and reveals, (<scripRef passage="1 Corinthians 2:10" />1 Corinthians 2:10); it is full of the doctrines of grace and truth, which Christ himself is said to be full of, (<scripRef passage="John 1:14" />John 1:14): it is full of exceeding great and precious promises transcribed from Christ, and out of the covenant of grace; and it is full of a variety of food, of milk for babes, (<scripRef passage="Hebrews 5:13" />Hebrews 5:13), and meat for strong persons, (<scripRef passage="Hebrews 5:14" />Hebrews 5:14). The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read only, “with the fulness of the blessing of Christ”; and so the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 30. *Now I beseech you, brethren*, etc..] Having declared his intention of coming to them, and his confidence of it, he entreats an interest in their prayers; and which he urges from the consideration of their mutual relation as “brethren”; and therefore should love one another, and show it, among other things, by praying for each other to their common parent, in whom they have a joint interest, saying, as directed by Christ, “our Father which art in heaven”, (<scripRef passage="Matthew 5:45" />Matthew 5:45); thereby signifying, that they prayed not for themselves only, but for all the brethren, all the children of God: and this the apostle further urges,

for Christ's sake; whose servant he was, and in whose cause he was engaged, whose Gospel he preached, and whose glory he sought; and therefore, if they had any regard for Christ, and the good of his interest, he beseeches them that they would pray for the continuance of his life and usefulness; since for him to live was for the good of the churches of Christ, though for him to die would be his own personal gain: and which he also stirs them up to,

for the love of the Spirit; meaning either the love of the Father, and of the Son, which was shed abroad in their hearts by the Spirit, which he had directed them into, and they had a comfortable sensation of; or that love to God, to Christ, and one another, which the Spirit of God had wrought in them in regeneration; or that love with which the Spirit of God equally loved them, as the Father, and the Son; and which he had shown in their conversion and sanctification, in applying all grace unto them, and indwelling in them as the Spirit of adoption, and as the earnest and pledge of the heavenly inheritance.

That ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me. The apostle prayed for himself, as he had been wont to do ever since he was a converted man; but knowing well the force of united social prayer, he desires the assistance of others. He represents prayer as an agony, an holy conflict, and striving with God, a wrestling with him, as Jacob did, who held him, and would not let him go without the blessing, and had power with him, and prevailed. The phrase denotes the fervency of prayer, the strength, labour, and energy of it; (see ⁵¹⁰⁴²Colossians 4:12); and also intimates, that the apostle foresaw he should have a combat with many enemies where he was going, and should be in great danger by them; and therefore desires they would join him in the use of their spiritual armour, and in that particular part of it, prayer, which has been often used to good purpose against the enemies of the Gospel: he does not desire these Romans to beg the assistance of their senate or emperor: but to pray to God for him, and join with him in their prayers to him, who is a God hearing prayer, and able to save. The petitions he would have them put up to him, are as follow:

Ver. 31. *That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea*, etc..] By whom some think are meant such, who, though they believed in Jesus as the Messiah, yet were violently set against the apostle for preaching down the ceremonial law; and from whom he foresaw he should

be in much danger when he came to Jerusalem, and therefore desires the church at Rome to pray for his deliverance from them; though rather such who did not believe in Jesus Christ at all are designed; and who were enemies to the Gospel, and to all Gospel ministers, but especially to the Apostle Paul, for preaching among the Gentiles, and such doctrines as he did, which struck at their peculiar notions; and, as he feared, he should be set upon by them, and his life be in great danger, so it was; (see Acts 21:27-31); though he was not disheartened and intimidated, and did not shun going up to Jerusalem, though entreated not to go; yet he thought proper to engage the churches of Christ in prayer for him, that he might be delivered out of the hands of such wicked and unreasonable men, who being destitute of faith in Christ, were filled with enmity against his ministers; (see 2 Thessalonians 3:1,2);

and that my service which I have for Jerusalem, may be accepted of the saints; that is, that the collection which was made by the Gentile churches for the poor saints at Jerusalem, the ministration of which unto them he had took upon him, might be cheerfully and gratefully received by them. One would think there were no fear of this, nor any need to pray for it; for if they were poor, and in necessitous circumstances, as they were, they would be glad of relief, and thankfully accept it: but the case was this, and the difficulties attending this service were, that this collection came from the Gentiles, to whom the Jews had an aversion, and was brought to them by one that they had entertained an ill opinion of, being informed that he had taught the Gentiles to forsake Moses, not to circumcise their children, or walk after the customs; wherefore he did not know whether, though in necessity, anything coming for their relief from such a quarter, and through his hands, would be received with any pleasure by them: besides, his desire was that it might be received as a token of the true and sincere love the Gentiles bore to them; and be a means of reconciling the believing Jews to them, to own them as sister churches of the same faith and order with themselves.

Ver. 32. *That I may come unto you with joy*, etc..] The end the apostle had, in desiring them to request the above things at the throne of grace for him, was, that he might come to them, which unless he was delivered from the unbelieving Jews, could not be; and therefore since they had an interest in this matter, he might hope they would be the more importunate in their supplications for him, the he might escape their hands; and seeing also, should the saints there use him in an ungrateful manner, and slight the

kindness of the Gentile churches, and his service should not have the desired effect, his coming to them would be with sorrow: wherefore he puts them upon praying for success in this affair, that so when he came among them he should have no uneasiness upon his mind, or, anything of this kind to distress him, and interrupt that pleasure and delight he promised himself in their company and conversation: he adds,

by the will of God: resigning himself, and submitting all things to the sovereign will of God, and the wise disposals of his providence: he knew his deliverance from his enemies must be by, and the success of his services owing to, and his coming to Rome entirely according to, the will of God, and as he should think fit and proper; so he acted himself, and so he taught these believers to have their regard to, and sit down contented with the will of God in all things; to which he subjoins,

and may with you be refreshed; with the presence of God among them, with the Gospel in the fulness and blessing of it with which he should come and with the mutual faith and comfortable experience of him and them, which they should communicate to each other; than all which nothing is more reviving, and refreshing to the spirits of God's people.

Ver. 33. *Now the God of peace be with you all, Amen*.] As God is in this chapter before styled the God of patience, (Romans 15:5), and the God of hope, (Romans 15:13), because of his concern in these graces; so he is here styled “the God of peace”, because of his concern in that peace which is made between him and his people, by the blood of Christ. This peace was first upon his thoughts, which are therefore called thoughts of peace; a council of peace was held between him and his Son upon this head; the scheme of reconciliation was drawn by him in it; he entered into a covenant of peace with Christ, which takes its name from this momentous article of it; he appointed Christ to be the peacemaker, and laid on him the chastisement of our peace; and it pleased him by him to reconcile all things to himself, (Colossians 1:20). Moreover, he is so called because he is the giver of all true solid conscience peace, the peace of God, which passeth all understanding of natural men; and which when he gives, none can give trouble; and is what he fills his people with in a way of believing, leading their faith to the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of his Son. He is also the author of happiness and prosperity, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, and likewise of all the peace and concord which is in his churches, and among his saints; so that when the apostle wishes that the God of

peace might be with them, he not only prays that the presence of God might be with them; but that they might have fresh views of their interest in peace, made by the blood of Christ; that they might enjoy peace in their own consciences, arising from thence; that they might be possessed of felicity of every kind, and that unity and harmony might subsist among them; that the peace of God might rule in their hearts, and they live in love and peace one with another, laying aside all their differences as Jews and Gentiles, about the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses; to which the apostle may have a particular respect in this concluding wish of his, and here indeed properly the epistle ends; the following chapter being as a sort of postscript, filled up with salutations and recommendations of particular persons; wherefore the word “Amen” is placed here, though it is wanting in the Alexandrian copy.

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 16

This chapter contains a recommendation of a single person, herein mentioned; a list of the chief of the saints at Rome, who are saluted by name, and some with singular encomiums; a caution to beware of false teachers; various salutations of persons that were with the apostle sent to the church at Rome; and the whole is concluded with a doxology, or an ascription of glory to God. First, a commendation is given of a woman, by whom this long letter was sent, who is described by her name, Phebe; by her spiritual relation, a sister in Christ; by her office or character, a servant of the church at Cenchrea, (<5601>Romans 16:1), who is recommended to the saints at Rome, to receive her into their communion, conversation, and affection, as became them, and to assist her in every thing she might need from them; which is enforced by this reason, because she had been a succourer of the apostle, and many others, (<5602>Romans 16:2), and next follows a catalogue of the principal saints at Rome, to whom the apostle sends his Christian salutations; and among these stand, in the first place, Aquila and Priscilla, and the church in their house, (<5603>Romans 16:3-5), who are described as greatly assisting to him in the cause of Christ, and as having a strong affection for him; which they showed by risking their lives on his account, for which he gives them thanks, as did all the churches: Secondly, Epaenetus is next saluted, as having a great interest in the apostle's affections, and as being one of the first converts in Achaia, (<5605>Romans 16:5). Thirdly, a woman named Mary, who did her utmost to serve the apostle, and those that were with him, (<5606>Romans 16:6). Fourthly, a couple of saints, Andronicus, and Junia, described by their relation to the apostle, his kinsmen; by their sufferings with him, fellow prisoners; by the fame and credit they were in among the Christians of the first rank, even the apostles; and by their early conversion, being converted before the apostle himself, (<5607>Romans 16:7). Fifthly, next in the list is Amplias, who is saluted as in the Lord, and as beloved in him, (<5608>Romans 16:8). Sixthly, two worthy men are joined together, Urban and Stachys; the one is saluted as an helper in Christ, and the other as beloved by the apostle, (<5609>Romans 16:9). Seventhly, Apelles is next named, and

commended as one approved in Christ. Eighthly, the family of Aristobulus is greeted, (⁴⁵¹⁶⁰Romans 16:10). Ninthly, a kinsman of the apostle's, by name Herodion: and, Tenthly, the household of Narcissus, said to be in the Lord, (⁴⁵¹⁶¹Romans 16:11). Eleventhly, two excellent women are greeted, who had been indefatigable in the service of Christ: and, Twelfthly, another woman, by name Persis, a person to be respected and loved, on account of her labour in the Lord, (⁴⁵¹⁶²Romans 16:12). Thirteenthly, Rufus is saluted as one chosen in Christ, and also his mother, and who was the mother of the apostle, (⁴⁵¹⁶³Romans 16:13). Fourteenthly, five of the saints are joined together, who are mentioned by name, and other brethren with them, whose names are not set down, (⁴⁵¹⁶⁴Romans 16:14), and, Lastly, five other saints, with all the brethren with them, are likewise saluted, (⁴⁵¹⁶⁵Romans 16:15), and these, and all the members of the church, are exhorted to salute one another in an affectionate and chaste manner, who are told that all the churches saluted them, (⁴⁵¹⁶⁶Romans 16:16), then follows the exhortation to take care of false teachers, to mark them, and avoid them; who are described as schismatics and heretics, making divisions in the church, and preaching contrary to the Gospel taught and learned, (⁴⁵¹⁶⁷Romans 16:17). The arguments or reasons made use of to enforce the exhortation, are taken partly from the characters of these teachers, being selfish men, who served not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies; and deceivers, who by smooth words and plausible doctrines imposed upon simple minds, (⁴⁵¹⁶⁸Romans 16:18), and partly from the characters of the saints at Rome, who were simple and credulous, and ready to give in to everything that carried an appearance of truth; and though they were to be commended for their ready obedience to the Gospel, yet it became them to mingle wisdom and prudence with their simplicity and readiness to receive what appeared to be truth, (⁴⁵¹⁶⁹Romans 16:19), and from a promise of victory over Satan and his emissaries in a short time; to which the apostle annexes his usual salutation, and “Amen”, as if he had concluded the epistle, (⁴⁵¹⁶⁰Romans 16:20), but adds various salutations of persons that were with him, who desired to be remembered to the brethren at Rome, as Timotheus a fellow worker, Lucius, Jason and Sosipater, his kinsmen, (⁴⁵¹⁶¹Romans 16:21), Tertius the writer of the epistle, (⁴⁵¹⁶²Romans 16:22), Gaius the host of the apostle, and of the whole church; Erastus, chamberlain of the city of Corinth, and Quartus a brother, (⁴⁵¹⁶³Romans 16:23), and then the apostle repeats the above salutation, (⁴⁵¹⁶⁴Romans 16:24), and yet still has not finished his epistle, but concludes with a doxology, (⁴⁵¹⁶⁵Romans 16:25-27), in which is celebrated the power of God, in establishing his people

according to the Gospel, commended by its being the preaching of Christ, and the revelation of the mystery hid from ages past; and the goodness of God is also taken notice of, in giving orders to make it manifest, and in making it manifest to the Gentiles, in order to bring them to the obedience of faith; and likewise the wisdom of God is observed, to whom wisdom alone belongs, and which is apparent in the Gospel before mentioned, and in all the methods of his grace, as well as providence; and glory to him, through Christ for ever, is wished and prayed for; and so ends this excellent and valuable epistle.

Ver. 1. *I commend unto you Phebe our sister*, etc..] This chapter chiefly consists of commendations and salutations of persons, and begins with the former. It was usual to give letters of commendation of a member of one church to those of another; (see <470301>2 Corinthians 3:1); The person who is here recommended was, as appears from the subscription of this epistle, if that may be depended on, the bearer of this letter, and is described by her name, Phebe; as she dwelt at Cenchrea, it is probable she was a Grecian, as is her name. Pausanias [f271] makes frequent mention of one of this name in Greece. With the Heathen poets, Pheobus was the sun, and Phoebe the moon. Though it is not unlikely that she might be a Jewess, since there were many of them in those parts; and this was a name in use among them. We often read [f272] of R. Ishmael ybap ^b, "ben Phoebi", which I take to be the same name with this. She is recommended as a sister, "our sister"; not in a natural, but spiritual relation; one that was a member of the church at Cenchrea, and in full communion with it; for as it was usual to call the men brethren, it was common to call the women sisters. Elderly men were called fathers, younger men brethren; elderly women were styled mothers, and younger women sisters, who were partakers of the grace of God, and enjoyed the fellowship of the saints:

which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea. This place was a seaport of the Corinthians, distant from Corinth about seventy furlongs, or eight or nine miles: it was on one side of the Isthmus, as Lechea was on the other [f273]; (see Gill on "<441818>Acts 18:18"). In the way to this place from the Isthmus, as Pausanias relates [f274], was the temple of Diana, and a very ancient sculpture; and in Cenchrea itself was the temple of Venus, and a wooden image; and near the flow of the sea was a Neptune of brass. But now, in this place, was a church of Jesus Christ; and since it was so near to Corinth, it shows that churches in those early times were not national, or provincial, but congregational. Of this church Phebe was a servant, or, as

the word signifies, a minister or deacon; not that she was a teacher of the word, or preacher of the Gospel, for that was not allowed of by the apostle in the church at Corinth, that a woman should teach; (see <1Co 14:34,35>1 Corinthians 14:34,35); and therefore would never be admitted at Cenchrea. Rather, as some think, she was a deaconess appointed by the church, to take care of the poor sisters of the church; though as they were usually poor, and ancient women; that were put into that service, and this woman, according to the account of her, being neither poor, nor very ancient; it seems rather, that being a rich and generous woman, she served or ministered to the church by relieving the poor; not out of the church's stock, as deaconesses did, but out of her own substance; and received the ministers of the Gospel, and all strangers, into her house, which was open to all Christians; and so was exceeding serviceable to that church, and to all the saints that came thither: though it is certain that among the ancient Christians there were women servants who were called ministers. Pliny, in an epistle of his to Trajan the emperor, says [f275], that he had examined two maids, “quae ministrae dicebantur”, “who were called ministers”, to know the truth of the Christian religion.

Ver. 2. *That ye receive her in the Lord*, etc..] This is one thing he recommends her to them for, that they would receive her in a kind and friendly manner into their houses, and into their hearts' love and affections; admit her to their private meetings, and into church fellowship with them, and that as one that was in the Lord, and belonged to him; and also in his name, and for his sake:

as becometh saints; that is, both that they would treat her with that humanity, courteousness, Christian affection, and respect, as became them who were saints by calling and profession; and that they would use her as being one of the saints, a godly, holy person, and as such an one ought to be used, by virtue of the communion of saints:

and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: what her business was at Rome is not known; whether it was only to visit the saints; or whether it was to have a cause tried in any court of judicature there; or whether she came upon worldly business, as Lydia of Thyatira was at Philippi to sell her purple, when the Apostle Paul was there, it matters not: whatever assistance they could give her, either by directing her where the saints lived; or by giving her proper counsel and advice; or helping her forward in her worldly affairs; or whatever she was concerned

in, this is desired; and is another thing for which the apostle recommends her to them, adding this reason,

for she hath been a succourer of many; or "a patroness of many" of the saints in necessity and distress. The word that is here used, προστατης, is, as Harpocratian says [f276] the name by which such were called by the Athenians, οι των μετοικων προεστηκυτες, "that were over the sojourners", who had the care and direction of them. And such was this woman to the poor saints in Cenchrea, and the strangers that came thither; not as being in such an office by the order and appointment of the church, but what she cheerfully and voluntarily took up herself and performed at her own expense, otherwise there would not be so much in the character as to deserve such peculiar notice, nor she be so worthy of praise and commendation: moreover, the apostle observes, that he also partook of her succour and assistance,

and of myself also; which would hardly have been the case had she been one that had only the care of the poor sisters of the church, which was the office of the deaconess: but she being a rich generous woman, and the apostle having shared in her bounty, gratefully acknowledges it; and he the rather mentions it, as knowing it would the more endear her to the saints at Rome, who would take more notice of her for the respect she had shown to him.

Ver. 3. *Greet Priscilla and Aquila*, etc..] The former of these, who was a woman, and the wife of the latter, is in some copies called Prisca; and so the Vulgate Latin here reads it, as she is also called in (2 Timothy 4:19). Her being named before her husband, is without design, for sometimes he is put before her, as in (Acts 18:2,26 1 Corinthians 16:19). And it is a rule with the Jews [f277], that there is neither first nor last in the Scriptures; that is, strict order is not always observed; it is sometimes inverted, find nothing depends upon it: hence the reasons assigned by some, that she was first converted, or had more zeal than her husband, are uncertain and impertinent. She is called Priscilla in the Ethiopic version, as he is in the Arabic, Achilles: he was a Jew of Pontus, and was with his wife drove out of Rome by Claudius Caesar, when with her he went to Corinth, where he met with the Apostle Paul; and they being of the same craft, abode and wrought together at their trade of tent making; and when the apostle removed from thence, they went with him, and were with him at Ephesus; where, meeting with Apollos, who, though an eloquent man, and mighty in

the Scriptures, yet being in some things deficient these two took him unto them, in a private way, and taught him the way of God's salvation more perfectly, (Acts 18:24-26): where they left the apostle is not certain; but either Claudius being dead, or the edict which ordered the Jews to depart from Rome being revoked, or not regarded, they returned thither again; and were here when the apostle wrote this epistle, and whom he salutes, calling them

my helpers in Christ Jesus; in spreading the Gospel, and promoting the kingdom, honour, and interest of Christ; for though they did not publicly preach, at least not Priscilla, yet they were very useful in their private conferences and instructions, both to ministers of the Gospel, as in the case of Apollos, and to young Christians: as the apostle, wherever he went, was instrument of the conversion of many souls; these were helpful privately in encouraging the young converts, comforting them with their own experiences and thereby helped them forward, instructed, strengthened, and established them; and so were greatly assistant to the apostle in the work of the Lord Jesus.

Ver. 4. *Who for my life laid down their necks*, etc..] That is, exposed themselves to great danger to save the apostle's life: the allusion is to the manner of executions by beheading, and to one person's laying down his head, and offering his neck to the executioner the room of another: this we are not to suppose was literally done; but the design of the expression is, that in some shape or another they risked their own lives for the apostle's; which might be done either at the insurrection in Corinth against Paul, when the Jews dragged him to the judgment seat of Gallio, and beat Sosthenes the ruler of the synagogue before him; or the uproar in Ephesus by Demetrius and the craftsmen, when Paul and his companions were in great danger; at both which times and places these two persons were, and being very zealous, were no doubt active to preserve the apostle, and which he acknowledges with thankfulness:

unto whom not only I give thanks, but all the churches of the Gentiles; both for the care they took of him, and the danger they exposed themselves to on his account; which the apostle expresses his sense of gratitude for, and which all the Gentile churches were under obligations to do likewise, since they had a common share in his labours and usefulness, he was the apostle of them all; and also for their help and assistance in carrying on the work of the Lord in all the churches of the Gentiles.

Ver. 5. *Likewise greet the church that is in their house*, etc..] Which was either their own family, which might be somewhat large, and consisting entirely or chiefly of religious persons; for when they were in other places they had a church in their house as well as Rome; (see 1 Corinthians 16:19); or the saints at Rome, who used to meet privately at their house, and pray and sing praises together, speak to one another of the things of God, and build up one another in their most faith; and from their gathering together in the name of Christ, and for the worship of him, and among whom his presence, according to his promise, was, they are called a church, or an assembly of Christians.

Salute my well beloved Epaenetus; for though all the saints were beloved by the apostle, yet there were some, as this good man, for whom he might have, on some account or another, a particular affection; as our Lord, as man, had for his disciple John, though he loved all his disciples. There is one of this name, said to be one of the seventy disciples, and bishop of Carthage; (see Gill on "Luke 10:1").

Who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ; that is, either he was one of the chief and principal for gifts and grace, or one of the first that was converted to Christ in those parts: the allusion is to the firstfruits under the law, which were offered unto the Lord, and were pledges of, and sanctified the rest. The Vulgate Latin, instead of Achaia, reads "Asia": and so it is read in the Alexandrian copy, and others: the reason of this different reading seems to be, because the house of Stephanas are said to be the firstfruits of Achaia, (1 Corinthians 16:15). But this hinders not but that Epaenetus might be so too, for he might be one of the family of Stephanas, who was now removed to Rome. If he was a Jew, his Jewish name might be Judah, the same with Epaenetus, in Greek.

Ver. 6. *Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us*.] Some copies read, "you"; and so do the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions: and indeed it seems most likely that the persons on whom this good woman bestowed so much labour, and to whom she was so very serviceable, were the saints at Rome, where she lived, rather than the apostle and his companions; not but that she might have been in some parts where she had met with him, and his friends, and had been very indefatigable in assisting and supplying them, in a very generous and liberal manner, with all the necessaries of life; and was exceeding useful in encouraging the ministers of the Gospel, and in promoting the interest of

Christ. Her name Mary is the same with Miriam in Hebrew; whether she was of Jewish extract is not certain, and who she was is not known: some have conjectured her to be the same that Ignatius wrote an epistle to; not Mary of Castabilis, but of Naples, who was at Rome in the time of Linus, the Latin version reads “Cletus”, and of Clement, on whom he bestows very great characters; calling her most faithful, worthy of God, and a bearer of Christ, and in all things wise [f278]: and in another letter [f279] of his he represents her as exceeding learned, an exemplar of godly women, and having a church in her house. But both these epistles are thought, by learned men, to be falsely ascribed to him, and so not to be depended on.

Ver. 7. *Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen*, etc..] According to the flesh, being perhaps not only of the same nation, Jews, but also of the same tribe, the tribe of Benjamin, and even of the same family, and might be nearly allied in blood. And though the apostle did not value himself upon his carnal descent, yet he had a very great value and affection for his relations after the flesh, even though they were only of the same nation; (see <450903>Romans 9:3); and especially for such as were partakers of the grace of God, as these his kinsmen were. These were their Gentile names, the one Greek, the other Latin; but both were Jews. Grotius thinks that their Jewish names were, the one Masinissa, and the other Naarah; and that the latter was the wife of the former, but they rather seem both to be men; Junia should be read Junias, a contraction of Junilius:

and my fellow prisoners; either at Philippi, or in some other place; for though we read only of the apostle's being in prison at that place, and at Rome, yet it is certain from his own account, (<471123>2 Corinthians 11:23); that he was frequently imprisoned; and Clement of Rome says, he was seven times in bonds [f280], at one of which times these were bound with him, but when and where is not known. This is a greater character of them, and a greater honour to them, than to be called his kinsmen after the flesh:

who are of note among the apostles; were well known by, and in great account with the twelve apostles, though not of their number; they might be converted by them, and be followers of them in Judea; they are thought by some to be of the number of the seventy disciples, whom Christ himself sent forth to preach: Andronicus particularly is mentioned among them, and said to be bishop of Pannonia, or rather of Spain; (see Gill on “<420001>Luke 10:1”); however, they might be preachers of the Gospel, and be persons of great fame and renown as such; for which reason they might be

called apostles, that being a name sometimes given to ordinary ministers of the word, and to such who were messengers of the churches, (⁴⁷⁰²³2 Corinthians 8:23), as these might be, and were famous for their prudent, faithful, and diligent discharge of their office and duty:

who also were in Christ before me; which is to be understood, not of their secret being in Christ, as being loved by him, chosen in him, given to him, and represented by him in the covenant of grace; for they had not a place in Christ's heart, or a share in his love before him; wherefore the Arabic version is not only a bad one, but carries a false sense in it; which renders the clause thus, “who were in the love of Christ before me”: nor were they chosen in Christ before him, for all the elect were chosen together in him before the foundation of the world; nor were they given to him, put into his hands, and made his care and charge before him; nor were they considered in Christ as their covenant head before him; Christ became their surety for them together, and received grace, blessings, and promises for them, and they in him before the world began; and was their common head and representative in time, in their nature; and they were all together crucified, buried, and raised with him, and set down with him in heavenly places together. But they were in the profession of faith, and in the church of Christ, and in the ministry of the word before him, being converted and brought to the faith of Christ before he was; which is the saints' open being in Christ, and is the effect and evidence of their being secretly in him from everlasting: this is to be created in Christ, or made new creatures in him; to be brought to believe in him, and even into him for righteousness, pardon, peace, acceptance, and eternal life, which are in him; and to live upon him, and in him, and derive all light and life, grace and strength, joy, peace, and comfort from him, as the branch derives its sap and nourishment from the vine, in which it is; and in this sense these men were in Christ before the apostle; they were converted persons, professors of religion, members of a church, and Gospel ministers before him: and though this is nothing in the business of salvation, who is called first or last; the one is equally as safe and as happy as the other; the thief that was called at the last hour, and the last man that will be called by grace in the world; yet it is a great blessing and mercy to be converted early; hereby a multitude of sins is prevented, and more, service done for Christ. And doubtless the apostle had this in view, and therefore gives these his kinsmen the preference to himself, that whilst he was a blasphemer of Christ, a persecutor of his people, and injurious to his interest, these made a profession of his name, preached his

Gospel, and served his cause: it shows also, that they were persevering Christians, were pillars in the house of God, and never went out; and on account of their constancy and long standing, were worthy of respect. The apostle rises gradually in the character of these persons; as it was more to be fellow prisoners with him than to be his kinsmen, so it was more to be of note among the apostles, or to be eminent preachers of the Gospel, than to be fellow prisoners with him; and it was more to be in Christ than them all, than to be Paul's kinsmen, fellow prisoners with him, or to be known and approved of by the apostles, to be messengers of churches, preachers of the word, or even to be apostles themselves, and the chiefest of them; for such are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, are complete and perfect in him, are safe and secure, and can never perish; and being once in Christ, are always in him, and will be found in him living and dying, and at judgment.

Ver. 8. *Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord*.] This was a Roman name; the Vulgate Latin reads "Ampliatus", and so do the Alexandrian copy, and the Ethiopic version: some call him "Amphias", and "Amphiatus", and say, but whether on good authority I will not affirm, that this man was bishop of Odyssus; but be he who he will, the apostle had a singular affection for him; and that not upon any external account, as natural relation, riches, honour, learning, etc.. but for the Lord's sake, and as he was in Christ, a member of him, and so in a spiritual relation to the apostle; a "brother" of his, as the Ethiopic version here calls him; and because he was honoured with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and for his usefulness in the Gospel of Christ Jesus.

Ver. 9. *Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ*, etc..] This also was a Roman name, and which many of the popes of Rome have since taken to themselves; he is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and to be a bishop in Macedonia; (see Gill on "<2100>Luke 10:1"); which is not very probable: others have conjectured him to be one of the pastors of the church of Rome, which is more likely; and if he was, but few of his successors have deserved the character given of him, an "helper in Christ"; in spreading the Gospel, and enlarging the kingdom and interest of Christ:

and Stachys my beloved; this is a Greek name, he is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and bishop of Byzantium; (see Gill on "<2100>Luke 10:1"). According to the Roman martyrology, he was ordained bishop of the Byzantine church, by Andrew the apostle, but this is not to be depended

on; he was, however, because of his faith in Christ, and love to him, or on such like spiritual accounts, very dear to the apostle.

Ver. 10. *Salute Apelles approved in Christ*, etc..] Origen was in doubt whether this was not the same person with Apollos the Alexandrian Jew, whom Aquila and Priscilla met with at Ephesus; but had he been intended, the apostle would doubtless have said more of him, he being so eminent and remarkable a preacher of the Gospel; though indeed the character here given is very considerable; besides, Apollos did not live at Rome, though it was not impossible he might be there at this time. The name seems to be a Greek one, there was a famous painter of this name in Greece; though it was also used among the Jews, and this person here might possibly, be a Jew; for Horace [f281] speaks of one of this name, when he says, "credat Judaeus Apella"; by whom he means, not, as many have thought, a circumcised Jew in general, but a particular person, a Jew of that name: but it is of no importance whether he was a Jew or a Gentile; some say he was one of the seventy disciples, and bishop of Smyrna; (see Gill on "<2100>Luke 10:1"). However, he was one that was approved in Christ; approved of God in Christ, who approves of none but in Christ; not of any on account of their own commendations, or those of others; for not he that commendeth himself is approved of God, nor whom others commend; and oftentimes what is highly esteemed of men, is abominable in the sight of God; nor does he approve of any on the score of their own works and duties, or as in themselves considered, whose righteousness in as filthy rags, and they themselves polluted and unclean; but as in Christ his well beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased, and with all in him; and so God's elect are, as this man was approved of in him the beloved, even in his own Son, in whom both persons and services are accepted: moreover he was approved of by Christ, and that from eternity, as presented to him in the glass of his Father's purposes and decrees; and in time, as adorned with his own grace, and clothed with his justifying righteousness, and as faithfully serving him in his day and generation: he was also proved to be in Christ; he had proved it to himself, to his own satisfaction, by observing, upon self-examination, that Christ was in him; and he had made it to appear to others, by his faith in Christ, love to him, zeal for him, and close attachment to his Gospel, against all errors and heresies, whereby they are approved are made manifest; and that in the face of all opposition and persecution: he was tried and proved, and so approved by a variety of tribulations and afflictions; his faith remained firm, and he abode by the

interest of a Redeemer; and so he was tried, or proved, as the Arabic version renders it, “in the religion of Christ”; in which he was sincere, upright, and faithful; his faith was unfeigned, his love without dissimulation, he was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile: if a preacher of the word, he did not corrupt it, but in sincerity, and as in the sight of God and Christ, spoke it; and if only a private believer, he was one that desired the sincere milk of the word, and was in all respects a sincere upright man in Christ; so the word here used may be understood, being the reverse of αδοκιμος, reprobate, rejected, spurious, adulterate and disapproved: in a word, this character shows, that he was not only approved of God and Christ, but of all good men, and particularly the apostle; and that on account of his being in Christ, united to him, and closely attached to his service and interest, and was an honour to it:

salute them which are of Aristobulus's household. This was also a Greek name, though in use among the Jews; there was one of this name master of Ptolomy, king of Egypt, who was of Jewish extract, and of the priests,

> “In the hundred fourscore and eighth year, the people that were at Jerusalem and in Judea, and the council, and Judas, sent greeting and health unto *Aristobulus*, king Ptolemeus' master, who was of the stock of the anointed priests, and to the Jews that were in Egypt:” (2 Maccabees 1:10)

One of the sons of Hyrcanus, the high priest of the Jews, was called by this name; Herod had a son of this name, and it was a name much in use in his family, and among his descendants: who this man was is not known, nor is he himself saluted by the apostle; either because he was now dead, or was absent from Rome at this time; for some say he was sent into Britain, our isle, to preach the Gospel, of which he is said to be bishop, and one of the seventy disciples; (see Gill on “Luke 10:1”); or perhaps he might not be a believer in Christ, only his household believers, and therefore they only are taken notice of.

Ver. 11. *Salute Herodion my kinsman*, etc..] According to the flesh, being of the same nation, a Jew; or of the same tribe, the tribe of Benjamin; or of the same family, and nearly allied in blood to him: though the name is of Attic, or Parthic original, and seems to be a derivative of Herod; this man is reckoned among the seventy disciples, and said to be bishop of Tarsus: (see Gill on “Luke 10:1”).

Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord; some have thought, that this Narcissus is the same man that Suetonius [f282] and other writers speak of [f283], who was secretary to Claudius Caesar; a very great favourite of his, who amassed a great deal of wealth under him, and was raised to great honour and dignity by him: he himself is not saluted, either because he was not at home, which might be the case, if, as Ambrose, or rather Hilary the deacon on the text says, he was a presbyter and abroad, performing his office in foreign parts; or because he was dead, or rather not a believer: if he was the same with Claudius's favourite, he was dead before this time, being miserably put to death by Agrippina [f284], the wife of Claudius; and seems to have died a wicked man, and justly punished for his being the cause of the destruction of others, through his calumnies: nor are all of his household saluted, not being all converted persons; it being frequently the method of divine grace to take some of a family, and not all, and bring them to Zion; only those that were "in the Lord", on his heart, and in his hands, secretly represented by him, and united to him, and who were openly in him, being called by his grace, and brought to believe in him, and live upon him.

Ver. 12. *Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord*, etc..] These two were women, and are said to be noble women of Iconium, whom the apostle converted there, and afterwards went to Rome the names are Greek [f285], though they might be Jewish women, since Tryphon is the name of a man among the Jews. Trypho, the famous Jew, with whom Justin Martyr had his dialogue, is well known, and perhaps is the same with R. Tarphon, or Tryphon, so often mentioned in the Misnic and Talmudic writings: however, as these were women, their labour cannot be understood of their labouring in the word of the Lord, or in the public ministry of it, since this was forbid by the apostle, and therefore would never commend them on account of it; but of their great usefulness and indefatigableness, in serving the interest of their dear Lord with their purses; in relieving the poor of the church, in entertaining and supplying the ministers of the Gospel, as well as by their private instructions, exhortations, and giving an account of their own experience, whereby they might greatly encourage, edify, and strengthen young converts, and other Christians, as Priscilla with her husband did; and were unwearied in doing everything that they were capable of, in promoting the Gospel and kingdom of Christ:

salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord; who being a woman also, and perhaps of Persic original, and might have her name from her country; her labour must be understood of the same kind with the former, only with this addition, that she abounded and exceeded in it; she is said by the Syriac scholiast to be the wife of Rufus, mentioned in (<45:16>Romans 16:13).

Ver. 13. *Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord*, etc..] This was a Roman name; frequent mention is made Jewish writings [f286] of one Turnus Rufus, a Roman officer, that destroyed the temple, and ploughed up the city of Jerusalem; the name was in use among the Cyrenians, for one of the sons of Simon of Cyrene, whom the Jews compelled to carry the cross of Christ, was so called, (<41:15>Mark 15:21); and some have thought that the same person is here meant, nor is it unlikely; he is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and to be bishop of Thebes; (see Gill on "<42:10>Luke 10:1"). The apostle knew him, and that as one "chosen in the Lord"; meaning either that he was a choice believer in Christ, an excellent Christian, one of the highest form; for though all true believers have like precious faith, yet some are strong, and others weak, in the exercise of it; this man was eminent for his faith in Christ: or he might be one that was chosen to some office in the church, as to that of a deacon, or pastor; though had this been the case, it is much the particular office was not mentioned: rather therefore this is to be understood of his being chosen in Christ to grace and glory and that from all eternity; for the phrase is only used in one place more, (<49:01>Ephesians 1:4); and there most manifestly designs the election of persons in Christ, before the foundation of the world; which election is made not "for" Christ, or the sake of his merits, his blood, righteousness and sacrifice, which have no causal influence on this act, and which purely arises from the love and grace of God; nor merely "by" him as God equal with the Father, though this is true; but "in" him, as the head and representative of the chosen ones: this instance, as others, shows that election is not of nations, nor churches, but of particular persons; and so expresses the distinguishing, free, and sovereign grace of God in it, that one and not another should be chosen; though these are on an equal foot, and so not owing to foreseen faith, holiness, and good works. The apostle knew this man to be a chosen vessel, not by immediate revelation, or divine inspiration, but by his faith in Christ, and love to him, and by the power of the Gospel on him; and so may anyone know himself, or another man hereby to be chosen, and ought in a judgment of charity so to think of him,

as long as his life is agreeably to his profession; (see <5001004>1 Thessalonians 1:4,5). The apostle not only salutes this man, but his mother also, who doubtless was a believer in Christ, and highly respected by him:

and his mother and mine; the mother of Rufus in nature, and his mother in affection; and who very probably had endeared herself to the apostle by some kind offices, which she, as a Christian, had performed towards him; for the apostle cannot mean his own natural mother, besides Rufus's, whom he salutes, and whom Anselm on the place suggests might be at Rome; since it can hardly be thought he would have passed the mention of her in so transient a manner.

Ver. 14. *Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes*, etc..] The two first of these names are Greek, and the persons called by them, with Herodion before mentioned, are taken notice of in the Roman martyrology, as disciples of the apostle; Asyncritus is said to be bishop of Hyrcania, and Phlegon of Marathon, and both of the seventy disciples; (see Gill on "<4201001>Luke 10:1"); Hermas is said to be bishop of Philippi, or Aquileia, and brother of Pope Pius the First, and to be the author of the book called Pastor, or the Shepherd, cited by many of the ancients; but all is doubtful and uncertain. Patrobas is a Roman name, Martial makes mention of it [f287]; it seems to be composed of the Greek word πατηρ, or the Latin "pater", and the Syriac ܐܒܐ, "Abba", and signifies the same as the other two. This man might be a Jew, whose name was Abba; we often read of R. Abba in the Jewish writings [f288], and as the Jews were wont to have two names, the one Gentile, the other Jewish, Pater might be this man's Gentile name, and Abba his Jewish one, and both being put together, by contraction be called "Patrobas"; he is said to be of the seventy disciples, and to be bishop of Puteoli; (see Gill on "<4201001>Luke 10:1"). The last of them, Hermes, is a Greek name, the same with Mercurius, which the Lystrians called Paul by, in (<441412>Acts 14:12), who he was is not known; he is also mentioned among the seventy disciples, and said to be bishop of Dalmatia:

and the brethren which are with them; these seem to have lived together, with others who were their brethren, not in a natural but spiritual relation, and whom the apostle owned and loved as such.

Ver. 15. *Salute Philologus, and Julia*, etc..] The first of these is a Greek name, and the name of a man, and signifies a lover of learning. This name

Atteius assumed to himself, which Eratosthenes had done before him, because of his great learning [f289]; this man is reckoned among the seventy disciples, and is said to be bishop of Sinope: (see Gill on "Luke 10:1"). Julia is a woman's name, and Roman, probably the wife of the former; one of Stephens's copies read, "Junia":

Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them; who all dwelt together also in one family; and were saints, by separation, imputation, and the effectual calling; were called to be saints, and lived as such, and had a place in the apostle's affections on that account: Nerio, or Neriene, according to Gellius [f290], was a name with the Sabines, signifying "strength", from whence came Nero; and Olympas is the same with Olympius, said to be of the seventy disciples, and a Roman martyr; (see Gill on "Luke 10:1"). It deserves some notice, that among all the persons here mentioned by name, known by the apostle to be at Rome, that he takes no notice of Peter; which surely he would have done, had he been, as the Papists say, bishop of Rome, and resided there.

Ver. 16. *Salute one another with an holy kiss*, etc..] Christian salutation is a wishing all temporal, spiritual, and eternal happiness, to one another; and which, as it should be mutual, should be also hearty and sincere, and this is meant by the "holy kiss"; the allusion is to a common custom in most nations, used by friends at meeting or parting, to kiss each other, in token of their hearty love, and sincere affection and friendship for each other; and is called "holy", to distinguish it from an unchaste and lascivious one; and from an hypocritical and deceitful one, such an one as Joab gave to Amasa, when, inquiring of his health, he took him by the beard to kiss him, and stabbed him under the fifth rib, (2 Samuel 20:9,10); and as Judas, who cried, hail master, to Christ, and kissed him, and betrayed him into the hands of his enemies, (Matthew 26:49). I say, it is an allusion to this custom, for it is only an allusion; the apostle did not mean that any outward action should be made use of, only that their Christian salutations should not be mere complaisance, or expressed by bare words, and outward gestures and actions, either of the hand or mouth; but that they should spring from real love and true friendship, and be without dissimulation, hearty and sincere:

the churches of Christ salute you. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "all the churches"; that is, in Greece, or in the neighbourhood where the apostle was, and who might know of his writing

to this church, and thereby send their Christian salutations to it; or if they did not know of his writing, yet as he knew their sincere affections, and hearty good will to this church, and the members of it, he in their names sent greetings to them: this shows the communion of churches, and how they ought to wish and sincerely desire each other's welfare.

Ver. 17. *Now I beseech you, brethren*, etc..] The apostle being about to finish his epistle, and recollecting that he had not given this church any instructions about the false teachers, who had been the cause of all their differences and uneasiness, inserts them here; or he purposely put them in this place, amidst his salutations, that they might be taken the more notice of; and very pertinently, since nothing could more express his great affection and tender concern for them; and these instructions he delivers to them, not in an authoritative way, as he might, and sometimes did, but by way of entreaty, beseeching them, and with the kind and loving appellation of brethren, the more to engage them to attend to what he was about to say to them:

mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned. The men he would have taken notice of were such who divided them in their religious sentiments, introducing heterodox notions, contrary to the doctrine of the Scriptures, of Christ and his apostles, and which they had learned from them; such as justification by the works of the law, the observance of Jewish days, and abstinence from meats, enjoined by the ceremonial law, and that as necessary to salvation; to which some gave heed, and others not, and so were divided; whereas the doctrine of faith is but one, the Gospel is one uniform thing, all of a piece; and those that profess it ought to be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment: hence their minds were alienated from each other, and they began to despise and judge one another, yea, to go into factions and parties, being unwilling to receive and admit each other to communion; and thus by these men they were divided in sentiments, affection, and worship; and which must needs cause offence to the church and the godly members of it, as well as cause many so to be offended, as to stumble and fall from the doctrine of faith, and profession of it, and greatly stagger and distress weak believers, and bring a scandal on religion, and the name and ways of Christ among the world, as nothing does more so than the jars and discords among Christians: wherefore the apostle advises to “mark” such persons, look out for, narrowly watch, strictly observe, and diligently examine them: the metaphor is taken from watchmen, who look

out from their watch tower, and observe who are coming, or pass by, and take up suspicious persons, and carefully inquire who they are, and what they are about, and whether friends or foes. So both ministers of the Gospel, and members of churches, should not be asleep, which is the opportunity false teachers take to sow the seeds of false doctrine, discord, and contention, but should watch, and be upon their guard, and look diligently, that none among them fail of, or fall from, the doctrine of grace, or any root of bitterness, error, or heresy as well as immorality, spring up, which may be troublesome, and defile others; they should observe, and take notice of such who are busy to spread false doctrine, should watch their motions, follow them closely, take them to an account, examine their principles according to the word of God; and if found to be contrary thereunto, note them as false teachers:

and avoid them; shun their ministry, drop attendance on it, depart far from them, have no private conversation with them, receive them not into their houses, nor bid them God speed; with such do not eat, have no communion with them at the Lord's table, withdraw from them as disorderly persons, who act contrary to the doctrine and order of the Gospel, and after proper admonition reject them from all fellowship with you.

Ver. 18. *For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ*, etc..] They do not preach him, but themselves; they do not seek the things of Christ, his honour and glory, the spread of his Gospel, and the enlargement of his kingdom and interest; they seek their own things, worldly honour and applause, riches, wealth, and grandeur; they seek to please men, and so are not the servants of Christ: they introduced the observance of meats and drinks in to the kingdom of Christ, which it do not consist of, and neglected the doctrines of righteousness and peace, from whence springs joy in the Holy Ghost, and so in these spiritual things did not serve Christ; and therefore, as they were not acceptable to God, were not to be approved of by Christian men, but to be marked and avoided:

but their own belly; which they made a god of, and devoted themselves to the service of all their views were to gratify and indulge their sensual appetite. The false teachers among the Jews were particularly addicted to this vice: hence the apostle sometimes calls them dogs, (Philippians 3:2), on account of their voraciousness, and who, in Isaiah's time, were greedy ones that could never have enough, (Isaiah 56:11); and in our Lord's time devoured widows' houses, under a pretence of long prayers for

them, (<40234>Matthew 23:14 <41240>Mark 12:40 <42047>Luke 20:47); and were like the Cretians, evil beasts, and slow bellies, (<56012>Titus 1:12), unwilling to labour, and lived upon the spoil of others:

and by good words, and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple: they were deceivers; they lay in wait to deceive, made use of the hidden things of dishonesty, walked in craftiness, and handled the word of God deceitfully; and therefore to be marked and avoided: they deceived "the simple", harmless, and innocent, that think no evil, nor are aware of any; who have little understanding of things; persons of weak minds, easy to be imposed upon; very credulous, ready to believe every word, so the simple man does, as Solomon says, (<20145>Proverbs 14:15); and such false teachers choose to tamper with, and make their attacks upon, being able to gain upon them the most easily, as their father the devil, the old serpent, did, when he first assailed human nature: the "hearts" of these they deceive; they work upon their affections, blind their understandings, impose on their judgments, and corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ: and this they do "by good words and fair speeches"; either by making use of the words of Scripture, and a show of arguments taken from thence; so Satan cited Scripture in his dispute with our Lord; and so heretics, in all ages, have pretended toil in favour of their principles, by which means they have gained on many to follow their pernicious ways; or by using words and phrases that faithful ministers of Christ use, such as the grace of God, the righteousness of Christ, the Spirit of Christ, but in a different sense; as some among us now frequently make mention of them, when they mean no more by them than the light of nature within them, and the dictates of a natural conscience; or by an elegant style, a set of fine words, a flow of rhetorical expressions, great swelling words of vanity, which such men generally affect, and so work themselves into the admiration of the common people; or by doctrines suited to the carnal minds and reasonings of men, which tickle human nature, and swell it with pride and vanity; as by preaching up the purity and power of it, asserting man's free will, and the strength of it to that which is good; the capacity of man to keep the law, and perform good works; justification by them before God, and acceptance with him, on account of them; atonement for sins committed, by repentance and reformation; that God does not regard trifling things, some sins are venial, and easily passed over; that concupiscence is no sin; God does not rigorously exact duty, he takes the will for the deed, and is merciful unto all, and if but sincere, there is no doubt of heaven; and such

men, generally speaking, instead of correcting vice, and reproving men for their sins, connive at them, indulge them in them, soothe and flatter, commend and defend them, whereby they attach them to their persons and interest.

Ver. 19. *For your obedience is come abroad unto all men*, etc..] That is, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, "the fame" and report of their obedience to the faith, to the doctrine of the Gospel, and the ministers of it, was spread everywhere, was well known to everyone, and spoken of with commendeth among all the churches in all nations: and this the apostle mentions as another reason why they should beware of false teachers, since it would be greatly to their reproach, should they, after all this, drop that form of doctrine which they had obeyed, desert the faithful ministers of the word, and follow these false teachers; should this be the case, they would be as notorious for their disobedience, as now for their obedience: and moreover, the apostle might hereby suggest, that whereas it was everywhere known how readily and at once they embraced the Gospel of Christ; this credulity and readiness to believe, which was their commendation, might have invited false teachers among them, who might hope and take encouragement from hence the more easily to gain upon them; and therefore they ought to be upon their watch and guard, and beware of them, and not believe every spirit:

I am glad therefore on your behalf; that they had so cheerfully and readily embraced the Gospel, and from the heart obeyed that form of doctrine delivered to them; and that their praise for this was in all the churches of Christ, and had everywhere a good report on this account:

but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil; which is just the reverse of natural and unregenerate men, who are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge; some reference seems to be had to the words of Christ in (<4010>Matthew 10:16); the apostle's meaning is, that though he rejoiced at the heartiness and simplicity of their obedience, and the credit they obtained abroad on account of it, yet was he not without his fears and jealousies concerning them; and could not but greatly wish them more wisdom to understand the doctrines of the Gospel, to discern things that differ, and approve that which is the most excellent, and hold fast that which is good; and with all their harmlessness, innocence, and simplicity, prudently guard against all

evil doctrines and principles, such as might unawares lead them into bad practices, dishonourable to religion, and uncomfortable to themselves.

Ver. 20. *And the God of peace*, etc..] (See Gill on “ <4533>Romans 15:33”);

shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Some read this by way of wish or prayer, “may the God of peace bruise”; so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and the Alexandrian copy; but others as ours, as a promise, or as expressive of the apostle's faith and hope in this matter; and which he mentions to encourage the members of this church to be upon their guard, and make head against these false teachers; since in a little time they might be assured of victory over Satan and these his emissaries: as it is before suggested, that the methods these men used to beguile weak minds were much like those that Satan used when he attacked our first parents, so here is a manifest allusion to what was said by way of threatening to him, “it”, the woman's seed, “shall bruise thy head”, (<0103>Genesis 3:15); and which has had its accomplishment in Christ, who has not only destroyed the works of the devil, but him himself, and spoiled his principalities and powers, and bruised him and them under his feet, when he led captivity captive; and though, for the trial of the graces of his people, Satan is permitted to attack them in various shapes, yet in a short time he will be bruised under their feet, as he is already under their Lord and master's. The apostle refers not so much to his coming among them in a short time, when he might hope and believe that he should be an instrument of crushing these men Satan made use of, of quelling the contentions they raised, and putting a stop to the divisions they made, and under the influence, and by the assistance of the God of peace, restore them to their former peace and tranquillity, though it is a sense not to be despised; much less does he refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, which was to be in a very short time, when the crucifiers of Christ and the persecutors of the saints would have the wrath of God come upon them to the uttermost, since these Romans had no great and immediate concern with them; nor does he regard the spread of the Gospel in the Gentile world, whereby Satan fell as lightning from heaven, and was cast out of the idol temples, for this was greatly fulfilled already: but rather he refers to the time of Constantine, when Satan's seat at Rome was overturned, when he was cast down from his throne and trampled under feet, who had deceived the whole world, the whole Roman empire, when the Gospel triumphed over its secret and open enemies, profane persecutors, and perfidious teachers, over idolatry and superstition on the one hand, and error and heresy on the other, though this did not last

long; wherefore some have thought the apostle refers to the latter day, when Satan shall be bound a thousand years, or to the last of all, when he shall be for ever under the feet of the saints, and never be able to give them any more trouble; and this the apostle might say would be shortly, since the second coming of Christ was expected to be quickly: yea, this may be applied to the case of every believer now, and be for his encouragement to be vigilant and on his guard against Satan, to resist him, repel his temptations, and oppose his emissaries; since he may assure himself he shall be more than a conqueror over him through Christ, that has loved him, and that in a very little time, when death comes, and he shall enter into the joy of his Lord, where he will be out of the reach of Satan, and unmolested by him.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, Amen: to enable you to abide by the truth; to mark and avoid the authors of sects, and causes of divisions, and offences; to oppose error and defend truth; to keep from falling, to stand against every assault of Satan, and to bear up under every temptation of his; to get the victory over him, and to preserve them safe to the kingdom and glory of Christ.

Ver. 21. *Timotheus my work fellow*, etc..] Now follow the salutations of the friends and companions of the apostle: we may imagine that when this epistle was just concluding, that these his friends being about him, one said, pray send my Christian salutation to our dear friends at Rome, so said a second, and likewise a third, and so on, and Timotheus he began. This is the same person with Timothy, a disciple the apostle met with at Derbe, whose father was a Greek, and his mother a Jewess, and a believer in Christ. This same man he circumcised because of the Jews, and took him along with him, and was his companion in his travels, and very assisting to him in the work of the ministry, in spreading the Gospel, and promoting the interest of Jesus Christ; and therefore he here calls him his “work fellow”; he wrote two epistles to him afterwards when at a distance front him, in which he often calls him his son, his dear and well beloved son, having a great affection for him, because as a son with a father he served with him in the Gospel of Christ:

and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater my kinsmen salute you. This Lucius was either Lucius of Cyrene, who was one of the prophets in the church at Antioch, (Acts 13:1), though indeed he is never said to travel with the apostle, or to be at Corinth, from whence this epistle was written; or

rather, therefore, as others think, Luke the evangelist, who was a constant companion of the apostle, and was at Corinth with him at this time, as appears from (<44205>Acts 20:5); Jason no doubt is he of Thessalonica, that received Paul and Silas into his house, and when an uproar was made concerning them, was brought before the rulers of the city, and gave security for them, (<44176>Acts 17:5,6,9). This is a Jewish name, and he himself was a Jew, as is clear from his being a kinsman of the apostle's; his name was [wçy, “Jeshua” or “Jesus”; so we read of one Jason, the brother of Onias the high priest of the Jews,

> “But after the death of Seleucus, when Antiochus, called Epiphanes, took the kingdom, *Jason* the brother of Onias laboured underhand to be high priest,” (2 Maccabees 4:7)

and whose name, as Josephus [f291] relates, was Jesus, but he chose to be called Jason, very likely because that was a name among the Greeks, whose fashions he was fond of. Sosipater was Sopater of Berea, who, with others, accompanied the apostle into Asia, (<44204>Acts 20:4); he also was a Jew, and his Jewish name, as Grotius conjectures, might be Abisha, or rather Abishua, the name of the son of Phinehas the high priest, (<130604>1 Chronicles 6:4). Mention is also made of one of this name, Sosipater, in

> “12. Howbeit Dositheus and *Sosipater*, who were of Maccabeus' captains, went forth, and slew those that Timotheus had left in the fortress, above ten thousand men. 24. Moreover Timotheus himself fell into the hands of Dositheus and *Sosipater*, whom he besought with much craft to let him go with his life, because he had many of the Jews' parents, and the brethren of some of them, who, if they put him to death, should not be regarded.” (2 Maccabees 12:12,24)

These three last were Paul's kinsmen after the flesh, as well as in the spirit; being of the same nation, and perhaps of the same tribe, and it may be of the same family; they are all three mentioned among the severity disciples: Lucius is said to be bishop of Laodicea in Syria, Jason of Tarsus, and Sosipater of Iconium; (see Gill on “<42001>Luke 10:1”).

Ver. 22. *I Tertius, who wrote this epistle*, etc..] This name is a Latin one, and perhaps the person might be a Roman, for the names Secundus, Tertius, Quartus, Quintus, etc.. were common with the Romans; unless it may be thought, as it is by some, that this man was the same with Silas, who was a constant companion of the apostle; and the Hebrew word çlç

is the same as Tertius; he also is numbered among the seventy disciples, and said to be bishop of Iconium; (see Gill on "^{Luke 10:1}"). Whosoever he was, it is certain he was an amanuensis of the apostle, who wrote this letter, either from the apostle's notes, or from his mouth.

Salute you in the Lord. Some connect this phrase, "in the Lord", with the other, "wrote this epistle", and make the sense to be that he wrote this epistle for the Lord's sake, for his honour and glory; which he might do, though he wrote it not by inspiration, being only scribe to the apostle; but it is better connected with the word "salute", and the sense is, that his salutation was not a mere form, nor only concerned their temporal good, but their spiritual welfare; that he wished them well in the Lord, that they might have much communion with him, and larger measures of grace from him.

Ver. 23. *Gaius mine host*, etc..] There was one Gaius a Macedonian, that was with the apostle at Ephesus, (^{Acts 19:29}); and another Gaius of Derbe, that accompanied him into Asia, (^{Acts 20:4}); whether either of these, as the latter seems more probable, was this person, is not certain. However, it seems very likely that it is the same Gaius the apostle baptized at Corinth, (^{1 Corinthians 1:14}); and some have thought him to be the same that the Apostle John wrote his third epistle to, and indeed the characters of hospitality and generosity there given him well agree with this, who was not only the apostle's host that entertained him in a kind and liberal manner, but of all the saints:

and of the whole church, saluteth you; that is, of the church at Corinth, to whom he was kind and hospitable, even to as many as stood in need of his assistance; or of the church of Christ in general, being beneficent and liberal to all Christian strangers that came that way, lodged them at his house, and provided every thing proper and convenient for them. Dr. Lightfoot thinks that there was a public hospital or receptacle for strangers at Corinth, in imitation of the Jews, who had a place adjoining to their synagogues to entertain travellers in; and that Gaius was the chief officer and overseer of this house, who, discharging his trust well, is deservedly commended. That the Jews had places near their synagogues for such a purpose is, certain. It is said [f292],

> "why do they sanctify (or consecrate the day?) that travellers may do their duty, who eat, and drink, and sleep in the synagogue."

The gloss on it is,

> “not the synagogue itself, but the chambers which were near the synagogue, are called the synagogue, and from thence they heard the consecration.”

And elsewhere [f293] it is said,

> “in the synagogues they neither eat nor drink — but there is a place near the synagogue where travellers used to sleep and eat;”

and then follows what is said before. And Maimonides [f294] observes,

> “there is no sanctification (of the sabbath) but in the place where the meal is eaten; so a man may not sanctify in one house, and eat in another; but if he sanctifies in this, he must eat in this; but why do they sanctify in the synagogue? because of travellers who eat and drink there.”

Upon which his commentator remarks [f295], that

> “they do not eat in the synagogue at all, but they eat, tsnkh tybl Æwmsh tybb, “in a house near the synagogue”, where they sit at the time of hearing the sanctification.”

But whether there was such an house at Corinth near the place of public worship, or any where else for this purpose, is not certain; and to make Gains only an overseer over such an house, though a faithful one, greatly sinks his character; since one would conclude from hence, that his entertainment of the apostle, and other saints, was at his own expense.

Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you; whom the apostle is said to leave at Corinth, (2 Timothy 4:20), and at another time to send along with Timotheus into Macedonia, if the same person is intended; for these do not seem so well to accord with his being in such an office, which must require attendance, and would not admit of going from place to place with the apostle, or of being sent by him. The city, of which he was chamberlain, was the city of Corinth, where the apostle and this Erastus were, when this epistle was wrote. The word translated “chamberlain”, is often used for a steward; and here it signifies such an officer as had the care of the city chest or coffer, and distributed the public money; and seems to answer to the “quaestor urbanus”, or city treasurer, among the Romans, whose business it was to receive the city accounts, and disburse at all occasions of

public expenses; so that this was a place of honour and trust; hence it appears, that though not many, yet some rich and honourable were called by grace, and embraced the Gospel. His name signifies beloved, and is the same with David in Hebrew. What nation he was of is not certain, whether a Roman, a Greek, or Jew; one of this name is reckoned among the seventy disciples, and it said to be bishop of Paneas, or of the Philippians; (see Gill on "<42001>Luke 10:1").

Quartus a brother; not of Tertius, nor of Erastus, nor of the apostle according to the flesh, as some have thought, but a brother in a spiritual relation. This man, as appears from his name, was a Roman; probably had before lived at Rome, and therefore sends his salutations to the Christians there: he is mentioned among the seventy disciples, and said to be bishop of Berytus; (see Gill on "<42001>Luke 10:1").

Ver. 24. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen*.] This verse is placed by the Syriac at the end of the chapter, and is wanting in the Ethiopic version, and in one ancient copy, being, excepting the word all, the same as at the end of (<451620>Romans 16:20); but inasmuch as it is in all other copies, it ought to be repeated and stand here: the reason of the repetition may either be, because the former might be written by his amanuensis, and this with his own hand, as was usual with him in all his epistles, by which they might be known to be his, (<530317>2 Thessalonians 3:17,18); or the apostle having so great an affection for this church, knew not how to take his leave of them, but repeats his valediction again and again, as here, and in (<451620>Romans 16:20 15:33). (<451625>Romans 16:25-27) are placed in some copies, at the end of (<451614>Romans 16:14), and omitted here, as they are by the Arabic version, which begins thus, "to the only most wise God, Jesus Christ": and so considers the following doxology as be, longing to Christ, and to him as God, and as the only most wise God.

Ver. 25. *Now to him that is of power to stablish you*, etc..] God is here described by his power, and the particular instance of it is the establishing of his people; that is, in the Gospel, as the Syriac version reads the next clause, and in the profession of it, with grace in their hearts, and in the exercise of it, and more lively and cheerful discharge of duty; (see Gill on "<450111>Romans 1:11");

according to my Gospel; this is the means by which God usually establishes his people in faith and holiness; it is, indeed, an act of divine power, and which there is reason to hope and believe will be exerted; for words which

express the power of God to do this, or the other thing, generally import willingness to do it, as the word does here; but then this is commonly done in the use of means: and that is the Gospel, than which nothing has a greater tendency to, and is better calculated for, and with a divine blessing always issues in the establishment of the saints. The apostle calls the Gospel his, not because he was the author of it, or the subject of it; but because he was the minister of it; it was that Gospel which he was sent and qualified to preach, and did preach fully and faithfully, and which he explains by the following clauses:

and the preaching of Jesus Christ: being that Gospel which Jesus Christ himself preached, for which he was anointed and sent, and which first began to be spoken by him in its power and purity, and in such a manner as it never was before or since: and of which he also is the subject; it treats of his person, offices, righteousness, blood, sacrifice, and salvation; and which when preached aright is done in his name, by his authority, through gifts, grace, and strength received from him, and with a view to his glory: it follows as a further explanation of it,

according to the revelation of the mystery; by which is meant, not, as some think, only the calling and conversion of the Gentiles through the preaching of the Gospel, though what is said of it well agrees with it; (see <4003>Ephesians 3:3-5); nor merely the mystery of Christ's incarnation and redemption by him; but the whole Gospel, and all the truths of it, which is often in Scripture called a “mystery”, because the reason of many of its important doctrines does not clearly appear to the carnal reason of men; and the “modus” of several of them will ever remain inexplicable by us, as the doctrine of the Trinity, the sonship of Christ, and his incarnation, the resurrection, etc.. though the things themselves are most clearly revealed, as here “revelation” is ascribed unto them; by which is meant not that internal revelation of them, by the Spirit of God to the souls of men, though absolutely necessary to the understanding of them in a spiritual manner; nor the revelation of them to the apostles by Christ, by which, and not by men, they were taught and received; but that revelation which they have made of them in the external ministry of the word:

which was kept secret since the world began, or “from eternal times”: from all the ages of the former dispensation, or that have run out from the beginning of the world; not that this mystery of the Gospel was entirely unknown, nor any hints given of it in those ages; for there certainly were,

as to our first parents after the fall, to Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, and others; but it was but obscurely revealed, only some dark intimations were given of it; it was exhibited in types, shadows, and sacrifices; and, in a comparative sense, was wrapped up in darkness and silence, in reference to the more clear discovery and open exhibition of it under the Gospel dispensation.

Ver. 26. *But now is made manifest*, etc..] In these last days, in which God has spoken by his Son, by whom the doctrines of grace are most clearly revealed, and fully dispensed; and by his apostles, who were blessed with a clear insight into them, and with extraordinary gifts to minister them;

and by the Scriptures of the prophets; or prophetic writings, in which these truths are hinted, and by which, being made manifest by Christ and his apostles, they are attested and confirmed;

according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith; that is, it is by the express order and command of that God who is from everlasting to everlasting, that the mystery of the Gospel is made manifest by the preaching of the apostles being witnessed to by the law and prophets in all its doctrines; particularly justification by Christ's righteousness, remission of sins through his blood, and salvation by his sufferings and death; that this should be made known not only in the land of Judea, but to all the nations of the world; for this end, that many souls may be brought to submit to the righteousness of faith, to embrace the doctrine of faith, make a profession of it, be subject to the ordinances of it, live by faith on Christ, and also soberly, righteously and godly in this world: if this commandment refers, as it seems to do, to the order of Christ to his apostles, to preach the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles, to the Jews first, and upon their rejection of it, to turn to the Gentiles; for so, says the apostle, has the Lord commanded us, (44136Acts 13:46,47); here is a clear proof that Christ is God, and that he is the everlasting God.

Ver. 27. *To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ*, etc..] This may be understood of God the Father, who is the only wise God, originally, essentially, and infinitely; though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit; and whose infinite wisdom appears in the works of creation and providence, in redemption and salvation by Christ, and in the whole scheme of the Gospel so largely commended in the foregoing verses: and the glory of all is displayed in, and to be given to him through Christ as Mediator; as

the glory of his power and wisdom, particularly mentioned, who is the wisdom of God and the power of God; and the glory of the Gospel, of which Christ is the sum and substance; and the glory of salvation by him, and indeed of all his perfections; which is most illustriously manifested in it, in the contrivance, impetration, and application of it; and this glory is to be ascribed to him

for ever, throughout the endless ages of eternity, as it will be by angels and men; to which the apostle sets his

Amen, as wishing that so it might be, and as firmly believing that so it will be: the subscription of the epistle runs thus, “written to the Romans from Corinthus”, and sent “by Phebe, servant of the church at Cenchrea”: which though it is not in every copy, nor are the subscriptions at the end of the epistles always to be depended upon; yet this seems to be a right and true one, both with respect to the place from whence, and the person by whom it was sent, as well as with respect to the persons to whom it is inscribed, of which there is no doubt.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Adv. Haeres. 50:3. c. 1. Vid. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:5. c. 8.

Ft2 -- Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:2. c. 25.

Ft3 -- Misn. Yadaim, c. 3. sect. 5.

Ft4 -- Misn. Parah, c. 10. sect. 3. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 116. 2.

Ft5 -- Cornel. Nepos, 50:1. c. 2, 7. & 2, 3. & 3. 6. & 4. 1. & passim. Quint. Curtius, 50:3. c. 4, 7. & 6. 5. & passim.

Ft6 -- De Civitate Dei, 50:6. c. 10.

Ft7 -- De vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 678, 679.

Ft8 -- Vid. R. Sol Jarchi in <01246>Genesis 24:16.

Ft9 -- Epist. 95.

Ft10 -- Paedagog. 50:3. p. 226.

Ft11 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 65. 2. Piske Tosaph. ib. artic. 266. Yevamot, fol. 76. 1. & Piske Tosaph. ib. art. 141. Maimonides in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 4. & Hilchot Issure Bia, c. 21. sect. 8, 9.

Ft12 -- A. Gellius Noct. Attic. 50:2. c. 18. Laert. Vit. Philosoph. 50:2. in Vit. Socrat. & 50:3. in Vit. Platon.

Ft13 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 2.

Ft14 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 18. 2.

Ft15 -- Laertii Vit. Philosoph. 50:3. in Vita Platon.

Ft16 -- T. Bab. Chagigah, fol. 16. 1. & Taanith, fol. 11. 1.

Ft17 -- Hierocles in Carmina Pythagor. p. 81, 206, 209, 213, 214.

Ft18 -- T. Bab. Chagigah, fol. 5. 1.

Ft19 -- Ecclesiastes Hist. 50:3. c. 4. p. 73.

Ft20 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 17. 1.

Ft21 -- Zohar passim.

Ft22 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2.

Ft23 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 2. & 21. 1, 2. Maimon. Hilchot

Talmud Tora, c. 2. sect. 1.

Ft24 -- Gloss in Sota, fol. 49. 1.

Ft25 -- Sepher Hamaalot, p. 87. Apud Buxtorf. Hebrews Florileg. p. 75.

Ft26 -- Bereshit Rabba, fol. 30. 3.

Ft27 -- Debarim Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 236. 2.

Ft28 -- T. Bab. Megilia, fol. 13. 1.

Ft29 -- Nizzachon ad Genesis 17:Apud Maji Theolog. Jud. p. 252.

Ft30 -- R. David Kimchi in <2404>Jeremiah 4:4.

Ft31 -- De Migrat. Abraham, p. 402.

Ft32 -- De Circumcisione, p. 811.

Ft33 -- De Somniis, p. 1111.

Ft34 -- T. Bab. Niddah, fol. 52. 2.

Ft35 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 10. 2. Sanhedrim, fol. 39. 1. & Becorot, fol. 8. 2.

Ft36 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1. & passim.

Ft37 -- T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 11. 1. & passim.

Ft38 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 77. 1.

Ft39 -- Juchasin, fol. 130. 2.

Ft40 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 103. 2. Vid. Nishmat Chayim, orat. 2. c. 7. fol. 61. 1.

Ft41 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol 28. 2.

Ft42 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 31. 1.

Ft43 -- Midrash Haneelam in Zohar in Genesis fol. 68. 1.

Ft44 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 62. 2. Yoma, fol. 9. 2.

Ft45 -- Misn. Gittin, c. 5. sect. 8, 9. T. Hieros. Demai, fol. 24. 1. Maimon. Obede Cochabim, c. 10. sect. 5.

Ft46 -- T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 16. 1. Taanith, fol. 21. 2.

Ft47 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 33. 3.

Ft48 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 10. 2.

Ft49 -- Philo de Vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 668.

Ft50 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 5. 1. & 15. 2. & passim.

Ft51 -- Maimon. Bartenora & Yom Tob in Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 3.

Ft52 -- Caphtor, fol. 59. 1, 2.

Ft53 -- Lexicon in Decem Rhetores, p. 266. Ed. Manssac.

Ft54 -- Targum in Cant. 3. 8.

Ft55 -- In Caphtor, fol. 121. 1.

Ft56 -- Maimon. Hilchot Biccurim, c. 4. sect. 3.

Ft57 -- Comment in Misn. Biccurim, c. 1. sect. 4. Vid. T. Hieros Biccurim, fol. 64. 1. & T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 13. 1. & Zohar in Genesis fol. 69. 3.

Ft58 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 18. 3.

Ft59 -- Juchasin, fol. 5. 2. Midrash Esther, fol. 85. 3.

Ft60 -- R. Sol. Hammelech Michlol. Jophi in 3025Malachi 2:15.

Ft61 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1.

Ft62 -- Caphtor, fol. 99. 2.

Ft63 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 118. 1.

Ft64 -- Caphtor, fol. 10. 1.

Ft65 -- R. Solomon ben Gabirol in Cether Malcuth apud L. Capell. in loc.

Ft66 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 55. 2. & Gloss. in ib. Sanhedrin, fol. 55. 1. & Gloss in ib. Shebuot, fol. 18. 1.

Ft67 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 83. 4.

Ft68 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 87. 4.

Ft69 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 96. 1. & 97. 4. & 98. 3.

Ft70 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 93. 4.

Ft71 -- Maimon in Misn Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 10, 13. Bartenora in Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 4. sect. 6. Juchasin, fol. 12. 2. Kimchi in Psal. 4:3.

Ft72 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 40. 1.

Ft73 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 18. 1. & Niddah, fol. 17. 1.

Ft74 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 85. 2. & 86. 1. Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect. 2. Zohar in Genesis fol. 107. 1.

Ft75 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 27. 1. & Roshhashana, fol. 18. 1, & Yebamot,

fol. 105. 1.

Ft76 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 16. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 37. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Teshuba, c. 2. sect. 4.

Ft77 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 1. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 38. 2. T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 28. 1. & Yoma, fol. 42. 1. Gloss in ib.

Ft78 -- Debarim Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 244. 2.

Ft79 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 27. 1, 2, 3, 4. & 36. 3. 4. & 37. 2. & 46. 4. & 54. 3. & 67. 3. & 86. 1. & 98. 1. in Exodus fol. 106. 1. & 127. 2. in Leviticus fol. 46. 2. 3. Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 225. 3. Caphtor, fol. 37. 2.

Ft80 -- Targum in <1042>Ruth 4:22. & in <2072>Ecclesiastes 7:29.

Ft81 -- R. Joseph Albo in Sepher lkkarim, 50:4. c. 41.

Ft82 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 55. 2. Bava Bathra, fol. 17. 1. Zohar in Genesis fol. 36. 4. & Imre Binah in ib. & 44. 4. & lmre Binah in ib. & Numbers fol. 83. 2.

Ft83 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 37. 1.

Ft84 -- Menasseh ben Israel Praefat. ad lib. de Fragilitate Humana.

Ft85 -- Aben Ezra in Psal. 51:5. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 14, 3. 4.

Ft86 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 30. 1.

Ft87 -- De vita Mosis, p. 675.

Ft88 -- De praemiis, p. 920.

Ft89 -- De Nomin. Mutat. p. 1051.

Ft90 -- Kimchi in Psal. 51:5. Menah ben Israel de Fragilitate, par. 1. p. 2.

Ft91 -- Bemidhar Rabba, fol. 198. 3.

Ft92 -- Caphtor, fol. 102. 1.

Ft93 -- Menasseh ben Israel de cermino Vitae, c. 3. sect. 8. p. 198.

Ft94 -- En Jaacob, par. 1. fol. 19. 4.

Ft95 -- Zohar in Lev fol. 46. 2. R. Menachem Rakanati apud Voisin. Obs. in Pugionem Fidei, p. 590.

Ft96 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 76. 3. & 36. 3.

Ft97 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 96. 1.

Ft98 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 22. 2.

Ft99 -- Massecheth Calah, fol. 17. 2.

Ft100 -- R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 2. 3. & 3. 1.

Ft101 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 52. 1. Vid. Caphtor, fol. 102. 1. supra citat.

Ft102 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 97. 1.

Ft103 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2.

Ft104 -- Abot. R. Nathan, c. 16. fol. 5. 2. Targum in Eccl. 9:14. Midrash Koheleth, fol. 80. 1.

Ft105 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 102. 1. Midrash Koheleth, fol. 70. 2. Caphtor, fol. 20. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 14. 4. Jarchi in Eccl. 4:13.

Ft106 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 1. Shaare Zion, fol. 73. 1. Seder Tephiltot, fol. 3. 1. Ed. Basil.

Ft107 -- Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 218. 1.

Ft108 -- Midrash Koheleth, fol. 78. 3.

Ft109 -- Midrash Haneelam in Zohar in Genesis fol. 68. 1. Vid. Caphtor, fol. 20. 1.

Ft110 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 70. 2.

Ft111 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 102. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 14. 4.

Ft112 -- Zohar in Exod fol. 94. 4.

Ft113 -- Ib.

Ft114 -- *See Gill " <4651> Romans 5:11"*.

Ft115 -- Tikkune Zohar, fol. 112. p. 1. apud Rittangel. de verit. Relig. Christ. p. 68.

Ft116 -- Alexander ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:1. c. 12. p. 18.

Ft117 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 17. 1.

Ft118 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 26. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 44. 2. R. Moses Kotzensis Mitzvot Tora, precept. Affirm. 50.

Ft119 -- Vid. Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft120 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 4.

Ft121 -- Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. Vid. Cohen de Lara, Ir. David, p. 17.

Ft122 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 55. 1. Vajikra Rabba, parash. 37. fol. 176. 3. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 70. 4. Zohar in Genesis fol. 44. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 115. 1.

Ft123 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 30. 1. Niddah, fol. 61. 2. & T. Hieros. Kilaim, fol. 32. 1.

Ft124 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 62. 2.

Ft125 -- Abkath Rochel, 50:1. par. 1. p. 3. Ed. Huls.

Ft126 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 141. 3. & 150. 1.

Ft127 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 48. 4.

Ft128 -- R. Eliahu in Addareth, c. 3. apud Triglaud de Sect. Karaeorum, c. 10. p. 176.

Ft129 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1. & Kiddushin, fol. 30. 2.

Ft130 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 135. 4.

Ft131 -- Bereshit Rabba, Parash. 9. fol. 7. 4.

Ft132 -- Tzeror Hammer, fol. 93. 3. & 113. 3. & 115. 2. & 144. 4. & 145. 1, 2.

Ft133 -- Caphtor, fol. 14. 2.

Ft134 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 56. 3.

Ft135 -- Pirke Abot R. Nathan, c. 16. fol. 5. 2.

Ft136 -- Machzor Jud. Hispan. apud L. Capell. in Romans 6:16.

Ft137 -- De Agricultura, p. 191.

Ft138 -- Alexander ab. Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:3. c. 5,

Ft139 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 3. 2.

Ft140 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 4. 4. & 9. 4.

Ft141 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 19. 3. & 107. 3. & 128. 3. Baal Hatturim in Genesis 1, 2. Caphtor, fol. 113. 2.

Ft142 -- Vid. Buxtorf. Lexic. Rabbinic. p. 745, 746.

Ft143 -- Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 15.

Ft144 -- T. Bab. Tamid, fol. 32. 1. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 63. 2. Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exodus fol. 65. 3.

Ft145 -- T. Hieros. Niddah, fol. 492. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2.

Massecheth Senachot, c. 1. sect. 13. Maimon. Hilch. Nechalot, c. 4. sect. 5.

Ft146 -- Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 8. sect. 2. T. Hieros. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 1.

Ft147 -- Jarchi in <18215>Job 42:15.

Ft148 -- T, Bab. Nedarim, fol. 55. 1.

Ft149 -- En Yaacob, fol. 22. 1.

Ft150 -- F. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86. 1.

Ft151 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 2. 3.

Ft152 -- Bareshit Rabba Parash. 13. fol. 11. 3.

Ft153 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 108. 2. Cosri, fol. 151. 1.

Ft154 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 2.

Ft155 -- Vid. Cabala Denudata, par. 1. p. 200. & par. 2. p. 7.

Ft156 -- Aben Ezra, in Jon. 2:2.

Ft157 -- Targum in Cant. 8:7.

Ft158 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 49. fol. 144. 1.

Ft159 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 179. 4.

Ft160 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.

Ft161 -- Vid. Buxtorf. Lexic. Rabbinic. p. 827, 828.

Ft162 -- Misn. Negaim, c. 2. sect. 1.

Ft163 -- Bartenora in ib.

Ft164 -- Maimon. in Misn. Negaim, c. 2. sect. 1.

Ft165 -- Caphtor, fol. 38. 1.

Ft166 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 116. 1. Zohar in Leviticus fol. 5. 2, 3.

Ft167 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 103. 2.

Ft168 -- Vid. Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 2.

Ft169 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

Ft170 -- Targum in <23601>Isaiah 16:1, 5. Mic. 4:8.

Ft171 -- T. Hieros. Nedarim, fol. 38. 1.

Ft172 -- Yom Tob in Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 7. sect. 1.

Ft173 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 3. 2. Ed. Basil. fol. 6. 1. Ed. Amstelod.

Ft174 -- Perush in Genesis fol. 26. 4. & 27. 2, 3. Vid. in 2 Reg. 4:16.

Ft175 -- In <0180>Genesis 18:10.

Ft176 -- Targum in <2808>Hosea 12:3.

Ft177 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 80. 1.

Ft178 -- Enchiridion, c. 32.

Ft179 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 82. 2. & 84. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 47. 1. Zebachim, fol. 4. 1, 2. & passim.

Ft180 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 42.

Ft181 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 2. Massechet Derech Eretz, c. 4. fol. 18. 1.

Ft182 -- T. Bab. Megilia, fol. 12. 2.

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Ft184 -- Mechilta, fol. 15. 1. Ib.

Ft185 -- Megillat Esther, fol. 93. 1.

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Ft187 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 38. 1.

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Ft192 -- Zohar. in Genesis fol. 45. 4.

Ft193 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.

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Ft195 -- Raziel, fol. 23. 2.

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Ft204 -- In (5322)Deuteronomy 32:21.

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Ft207 -- Laniado in (11914)1 Kings 19:14.

Ft208 -- Jarchi in (2606)Isaiah 6:6.

Ft209 -- Kimchi in (11830)1 Kings 18:30.

Ft210 -- Josephus de Bello Jud. 50:6. c. 9.

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Ft212 -- In Misn. Pesachim. c. 4. sect. 8.

Ft213 -- In ib.

Ft214 -- Sympos. 50:8. qu. 10.

Ft215 -- T. Hieros. Celaim, c. 1. fol. 27. 2.

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Ft219 -- Misn. Sanhedrin c. 11. sect. 1.

Ft220 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 19. 1. & Chagiga, fol. 27. 1.

Ft221 -- Aben Ezra in loc. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 1.

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Ft228 -- Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 15.

Ft229 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 4. 1.

Ft230 -- Jarchi in <4025:21>Proverbs 25:21.

Ft231 -- R. Aben Ezra in loc.

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Ft237 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 17. 1.

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Ft239 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 18. 1.

Ft240 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 51. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 91. 2. Jarchi in <1329:11>1 Chronicles 29:11.

Ft241 -- T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 17. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 25. sect. 1.

Ft242 -- Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 2.

Ft243 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 6. 2.

Ft244 -- Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 111. 3.

Ft245 -- Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 113. 1.

Ft246 -- Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, praecept. affirm. 3. prope finem.

Ft247 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 24. 4.

Ft248 -- Diogen. Laert. 50:6. in Vita Antisthen. & Hesychius de viris illustr. p. 17.

Ft249 -- Seutonius in Vita Vitell. c. 13.

Ft250 -- Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 7.

Ft251 -- Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 7. Vid. Fagium in ib.

Ft252 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 77. 1.

Ft253 -- Haggada Shel Pesach, p. 5.

Ft254 -- Apolog. 2. pro Christianis, p. 87.

Ft255 -- In (<2345 23>Isaiah 45:23).

Ft256 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 49. 3.

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Ft258 -- Abarbinel. Rosh Amana, c. 13. fol. 18. 2.

Ft259 -- Maimon. Hilch. Melacim, c. 8. sect. 1.

Ft260 -- In loc.

Ft261 -- Archilochus apud Philostrat. Vit. Apollon. 50:7. c. 12.

Ft262 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2. Midrash Tillim in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 47. 3.

Ft263 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 71. 1. Vid. R. Aben Ezra & R. David Kimchi in loc.

Ft264 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 98. fol. 85. 3. & Midrash Tillim apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. 50:3. c. 9.

Ft265 -- De Orbis situ, 50:2. c. 10.

Ft266 -- Geograph. 50:2. c. 17.

Ft267 -- Magdeburg. Eccl. Hist. cent. 2. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 158. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 4. 14. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 6. c. 3. p. 22. c. 5. p. 181, 182. c. 7. p. 311. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 7. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 7. c. 3. p. 33. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 7.

Ft268 -- Targum in <2352 13>Isaiah 52:13. Pesikta in Kettoreth hassammim in Numbers fol. 27. 2. Tanchuma apud Huls. Jud. Theolog. p. 321.

Ft269 -- Baal Hatturim in <0316 14>Leviticus 16:14. R. Moses Aishech in lsa. 52:13. Vid. R. Aben Ezra in ib.

Ft270 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 8. 4.

Ft271 -- Graec. Deseript. 50:2. p. 125. 50:3. p. 190. 50:4. p. 276.

Ft272 -- Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 15. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 9. 1. & 35. 2. Jucbasin, fol. 24. 2. & 54. 2.

Ft273 -- Plin. Natural Hist. 50:4. c. 4. Ptolem. 50:3. c. 16.

Ft274 -- in Corinthiacis, p. 88.

Ft275 -- Epist. 50:10. ep. 97.

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Ft277 -- T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 6. 3.

Ft278 -- Ignat. Epist. ad Mariam, p. 69, 70.

Ft279 -- lb. ad Heronem, p. 97. Ed. Voss.

Ft280 -- Epist. ad Corinth. p. 14.

Ft281 -- Serraon. 50:1. Satyr. 5. prope finem.

Ft282 -- In Vita Claud sect. 28.

Ft283 -- Tacitus, Dio, etc.

Ft284 -- Tacit. Hist. 50:13.

Ft285 -- Vid. Gutherleth. Animadv. Philolog. in Inscript. Smyrn. p. 115, etc.

Ft286 -- T. Hieros. Taanioth, fol. 69. 2. T. Bab. Nedar. fol. 50. 2. Avoda Zara, fol. 20. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 65. 2. Juchasin, fol. 36. 2.

Ft287 -- Epigr. 50:2. ep. 27.

Ft288 -- Juchasin, fol. 70. 1, etc.

Ft289 -- Suetonius de illustr. Gram. c. 10.

Ft290 -- Noct. Attic, 50:13. c. 22.

Ft291 -- Antiqu. 50:12. c. 5. sect. 1.

Ft292 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 101. 1.

Ft293 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 3. 2.

Ft294 -- Hilchot Sabbat, c. 29. sect. 8.

Ft295 -- Maggid. Misnah in ib.

1 CORINTHIANS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

This was not the first epistle that was written by the apostle to the Corinthians, for we read in this of his having written an epistle to them before, (⁴⁶⁰⁰1 Corinthians 5:9), but this is the first epistle of his unto them, that is now extant; and has been received by the churches, as of divine authority, being written by the inspiration of God, of which there has been no doubt in any age. The apostle himself was nearly two years at Corinth; where he preached with great success; and was the instrument of converting many persons, who by him were formed into a church state, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, as is clear from many passages in this epistle, and whom be left in good order, and in great peace and harmony; but quickly after his departure, false teachers got in among them, and bad principles were imbibed by many of them, and evil practices prevailed among them, and they fell into factions and parties, which occasioned the apostle to write this epistle to them, as well as their writing to him concerning certain things, they desired to have his judgment and opinion of, (⁴⁶⁰¹1 Corinthians 7:1), It is thought to be written about the year of Christ 55, and in the first year of Nero, though some place it in the year 59. It was written not from Philippi, as the subscription added to it affirms, but from Ephesus, as appears from (⁴⁶⁰⁸1 Corinthians 16:8), and, it may be, after the uproar raised there by Demetrius, as should seem from a passage in (⁴⁶³²1 Corinthians 15:32). The matter of it is various. The apostle first rebukes them for their schisms and divisions; suggests that their regard to the wisdom of men, and the philosophy of the Gentiles, had brought the simplicity of the Gospel into contempt with them; blames them for their conduct in the case of the incestuous person, and urges them to put him away from them; reproves them for going to law with one another before Heathen magistrates, and warmly inveighs against fornication; and then answers several questions, and resolves several cases concerning marriage; treats of things offered to idols, and of the maintenance of ministers; and

dissuades from idolatry, and all appearance of it; takes notice of the unbecoming conduct of the members of the church at the Lord’s supper;

commends charity above them; observes and corrects some irregularities in the use of their gifts; proves by various arguments the doctrine of the

collection for the poor saints, and to several other things, and concludes the epistle with the salutations of others, and of himself.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 1

This chapter contains the general inscription of the epistle, the usual salutation, and a special thanksgiving for blessings received; after which the apostle intimates the occasion of his writing, the divisions about their ministers, which gives him an opportunity of discoursing concerning the nature, end, use, and efficacy of the preaching of the Gospel. The inscription is in (<460101>1 Corinthians 1:1,2), in which an account is given of the persons concerned in this epistle; and first of Paul, the only inspired writer of it, who is described by his name, by which he went among the Gentiles; by his office, an apostle of Jesus Christ; and by the manner in which he came into it, being called to it not through any merit of his own, but through the sovereign will and pleasure of God: and next mention is made of Sosthenes, a brother minister of the Gospel, who was with the apostle, and joined in the salutation of the church, to whom the epistle is written; who are described, by their general character, a church of God; by the place of their abode, and seat of their church state, Corinth; and by their special characters, sanctified in Christ by election, and saints through the effectual calling; and with them are joined all other saints in Achaia, that belonged to them and the apostle, that called upon the name of the Lord; and then follows the salutation in (<460103>1 Corinthians 1:3), usual in all the epistles; after that a thanksgiving to God for the grace they had by Christ in general, (<460104>1 Corinthians 1:4), and particularly for their gifts of utterance and knowledge, which were plentifully bestowed upon them, (<460105>1 Corinthians 1:5), and were a confirmation to them of the Gospel of Christ, (<460106>1 Corinthians 1:6), and by which it appeared, that they were not behind other churches in these things; and are commended for their waiting for the coming of Christ, (<460107>1 Corinthians 1:7), by whom the apostle assures them, they would be so confirmed in the mean while, as to be presented blameless by him in that day, (<460108>1 Corinthians 1:8), of which they might be assured from the faithfulness of God, who had called them to communion with Christ, (<460109>1 Corinthians 1:9), upon which he exhorts them to unity of affection and judgment, for this end, that there might be no schisms among them; and this he does in a way of entreaty, and that by

the name of Christ, and from the consideration of their being brethren, (<46110>1 Corinthians 1:10), suggesting hereby, that there were divisions among them: and signifies, that he had good reason to believe it, having had an account of them from a family of repute among them, (<46111>1 Corinthians 1:11), and then expressly mentions what their differences were about, namely, their ministers, (<46112>1 Corinthians 1:12), and uses arguments to dissuade them from their dividing principles and practices; showing, that one was their Lord and master, Christ, who was crucified for them, and in whose name they were baptized, and not his ministers, (<46113>1 Corinthians 1:13), and since some among them made an ill use of their having been baptized by the apostle, he is thankful that he had baptized no more of them, and mentions by name those that he had baptized, (<46114>1 Corinthians 1:14-16), and gives a reason for it, taken from the principal end of his mission by Christ, which was to preach the Gospel, and not only or chiefly to baptize, (<46117>1 Corinthians 1:17). The manner in which he was sent to preach, and did preach it, is observed by him, not in the words of human wisdom; and that for this reason, lest either the Gospel should be of no use, or the effect of it should be ascribed to a wrong cause; and then be obviates an objection that might be made to this way of preaching, that hereby the Gospel would be brought into contempt; to which he answers, by granting that it would be, and was reckoned foolishness by them that were blinded and were lost; and by observing on the other hand, that it was effectual to saving purposes to others, (<46118>1 Corinthians 1:18), and though the former sort might be the wise and prudent of this world, this need seem no strange thing, since the infatuation of such persons is no other than what was foretold would be, as appears from a testimony out of (<232914>Isaiah 29:14), cited in (<46119>1 Corinthians 1:19), upon which some questions are put, and inquiries made, after men of wisdom and learning, whose wisdom God made foolish, (<46120>1 Corinthians 1:20), the reason of which was, because they did not make a right use of their natural wisdom in the knowledge of God, wherefore it was his pleasure to save men by means esteemed foolishness by them, (<46121>1 Corinthians 1:21), and these wise men, who accounted the preaching of the Gospel foolishness, are distinguished into two sorts, Jews and Gentiles; the one requiring miracles to confirm it, the other seeking wisdom in it, (<46122>1 Corinthians 1:22), but finding neither, though there were really both, the preaching of a crucified Christ was a stumbling to the one, and folly to the other, (<46123>1 Corinthians 1:23), though those that were called by grace from among them, whether Jews or Gentiles, had different sentiments of it, and of Christ preached in

(46024)1

wisdom and power in Christ and his Gospel, which the apostle, an ironical concession, calls the foolishness and weakness of God, to the wisdom and (46025)1 Corinthians 1:25), and instances in the effectual

the wise, the mighty, and noble, ((46026)
weak, and base; and the end of God, in the call of such, was to draw a veil over and bring to confusion the wisdom and power of men, (1 Corinthians 1:27,28), and also that no creature whatever should dare to (46029)1 Corinthians 1:29), but the true object of glorying in

grace being in him, and from him, is suggested, ((46030)
that whoever glories, should glory in him, ((46031)

Ver. 1. *Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ*, etc.] The author, or rather the writer of the following epistle; for the Holy Ghost was the author and dictator of it, and which was never doubted: he is described by his, name Paul, though his Jewish name was Saul; and very probably he being a Jew by birth, and yet born in a Roman city, might have two names, the one Jewish, the other Gentile; and by the one he went when among the Jews, and by the other when concerned with the Gentiles: and also by his office, "an apostle of Jesus Christ"; immediately called, and sent forth by him; had the Gospel from him by immediate revelation, and a commission to preach it; and which high office was confirmed by signs and wonders, and mighty deeds; by the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost conferred on him, and on others under his ministry; and by the eminent success which attended the preaching of the Gospel by him. This his character he the rather mentions, because some in this church, through the insinuations of the false apostles, demurred upon it; whereas this was not a mere name given him by men, and by which he was only commonly called by them, but was an office he was "called" to by Christ; he did not rush into it, or assume it of himself, but had a divine warrant for it; for he was invested with it,

through the will of God: both by the secret will and purpose of God, by which he was a chosen vessel, to bear the name of Christ among the Gentiles, ((44915)Acts 9:15); and by the revealed will of God, signified by the Spirit of God, who said, "separate me Saul and Barnabas, for the work whereunto I have called them", ((44302)Acts 13:2), and shows, that it was not

owing to any worth or merit in him, but purely to the free grace and sovereign will and pleasure of God, that he was made an apostle of Christ:

and Sosthenes our brother. This seems to be the same man, who was the chief ruler of the synagogue of the Jews at Corinth; and was converted to the Christian faith by the Apostle Paul whilst there, as appears from his favouring the cause of the apostle, for which the Jews beat him before the judgment seat, and yet Gallio the Roman deputy took no notice of it, (<44817>Acts 18:17): in the Syriac dictionary [f1] mention is made of one Sosthenes, governor of a city, one of the seventy disciples, who was educated at Pontus, and cast into the sea by the order of Nouna; and is also said to be bishop of Colophon in Ionia, (see Gill on "<42001>Luke 10:1"); but without any reason. This person the apostle joins with him, not as in equal office with him, but as a brother in Christ, and very probably a ministering brother, and a companion of his; and the rather, because he might be well known to the Corinthians, and respected by them; wherefore he chose to join him with him, to show their agreement in doctrine and discipline, and in advice to them, which might have the greater weight with them; (see <44817>Acts 18:17).

Ver. 2. *Unto the church of God which is at Corinth*, etc.] This epistle is inscribed to the saints at Corinth; who are described by their being "the church of God", a particular congregated church; a number of persons gathered out of the world, and joined together in holy fellowship, carrying on the worship of God together, and walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord; a very high character this, to be called the church of God, which is the pillar and ground of truth: and it may be observed, that this is here given to a people, among whom were many irregularities, errors, disorders, and divisions; which shows, that a church of God is not to be unchurched for everything that is amiss in them: they are further described by the place of their abode, Corinth, the "metropolis" of Achaia; a very large and opulent city, a place of great trade and commerce, and famous both for its wealth and wisdom; but not so famous for anything as this, that there was a church of Christ in it; of the city of Corinth, (see Gill on "<44801>Acts 18:1"); and of the church, (see Gill on "<44808>Acts 18:8"). The members of it in general, for it cannot be thought to hold good of every individual, are said to be

sanctified in Christ Jesus; not by baptism, for they were sanctified before that; but were set apart, or chosen in Christ from all eternity, to grace here,

which sense the word “sanctified” is sometimes used; and to whom Christ

they were sanctified by his Spirit in his name, out of that
and holiness which is in him: wherefore it follows,

; for though they were chosen to holiness in Christ, and

unholy; though Christ had given himself for them to sanctify and purify
uncalled were impure; they fell in Adam, and became both

unholy and unclean, and were so in their lives and conversations; nor are

their own free will, but were become such through the powerful grace of

principles of holiness were wrought in them; and by which they were called

And this epistle is not only inscribed to these saints at

with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord
as in Achaia, of which
Invocation of the name of Christ not only respects prayer to him, but

<61013>

being given to Christ, and perforated in his name, is a very considerable
Ethiopic version here styles him,

any but a divine person, one that is truly and properly God, without

phrase

, either, as some think, refers to “every place” and so
Syriac, and Arabic versions; and the sense is, that

whether in
was, or the Corinthians were, or any of the other saints in
signifying, that invocation of God is not confined to any particular place,

rather it refers to “our Lord”, and shows that Christ is the common Lord of

therefore ought to love one another.

Ver. 3. *Grace be unto you, and peace from God*, etc.] This is an usual salutation in all Paul's epistles; (see Gill on "Romans 1:7").

Ver. 4. *I thank my God always on your behalf*, etc.] Now follows a thanksgiving for various blessings bestowed upon this church, which is a proof of the apostle's great affection for it, and how much its welfare lay at his heart. The object of thanksgiving is God, for as he is the author of all mercies, the glory and praise of them ought to be given to him. The apostle styles him "my God", to distinguish him from others; and to express his faith of interest in him; and to observe to this church, that all the good things they enjoyed came from him, who was his God and their God, his Father and their Father; and for which reason he returned thanks to him for them, and by so doing set them an example: the persons on whose behalf he gave thanks were not at this time himself and Sosthenes, but the members of the church at Corinth; and the continuance of his thankfulness for them, is "always", as often as he went to the throne of grace, or at any other time thought of them: what he particularly gives thanks to God for in this verse is,

for the grace which is given you by Jesus Christ: and includes all sorts of grace, adopting, justifying, pardoning, regenerating, and sanctifying grace; every particular grace of the Spirit, as faith, repentance, hope, love, fear, humility, self-denial, etc. all are gifts of God, and entirely owing to his free grace, and not to man's free will and power, or to any merits of his; and all come through the hands of Christ, and are given forth by him, as the Mediator of the covenant, and in consequence of his blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and merit.

Ver. 5. *That in everything ye are enriched by him*, etc.] This is still a continuation of the thanksgiving for this church, that they were "enriched", or plentifully and abundantly provided for by Christ, with all grace, with all the riches of grace; with his own unsearchable riches, of which they were made partakers, and the riches of glory, to which they were entitled by him; and all which come to them through his poverty, which makes his grace in the donation of these riches the more illustrious: and particularly the apostle is thankful, that they were enriched by Christ

in all utterance, and in all knowledge; that not only they had the knowledge of the truths and doctrines of the Gospel, concerning the person, offices, grace, and righteousness of Christ in the theory of them, or a speculative notion of them; but for the most part had a spiritual

experimental knowledge of these things; and many of them had such large

to preach the Gospel to others; nay, even had the extraordinary gifts of the

utterance.

.] By “the

to his deity, his incarnation, his obedience, sufferings, and death, his

hand, and intercession for the saints; to redemption by his blood,

sacrifice, and complete salvation by his obedience and death. This, as it had

them, by the signs and miracles with which it was attended; by the

many of them; and by the internal power and energy of the Spirit,

Ver. 7. *So that ye come behind in no gift*
a detail of the gifts which were bestowed on them is made in (1

gifts to any of the churches:

; or “the revelation”

; who will appear a second time, come in great

cease and be of no more use, and when they must all be accounted for; and

improved to the interest and service of Christ; who will surely come again,

intrusted them with; and whose coming is to be believed, loved, looked,

Ver. 8. *Who shall also confirm you unto the end*
blessing of confirmation is not the Lord Jesus Christ, though he is

antecedent to the relative “who” in this, but is not, for this confirmation is

saints might be blameless in the day of Christ, and so must design some

other person distinct from him, which is God the Father, (<4604>1 Corinthians 1:4), to whom the apostle gives thanks, and continues to do so unto this verse; in which he assures the saints of confirmation in grace by God, the author and giver of all grace: and which may be understood of their confirmation in the love and favour of God, from which there can be no separation; and of their establishment in the person of Christ, and in the doctrines of grace; and of the permanency of the grace of the Spirit in them, and of their perseverance in faith and holiness unto the end: that is, of their days; even until the day of Christ, when the good work begun in them shall be performed and finished; that is, "for ever", as the Ethiopic version reads it; for the love of God to his people always continues; their interest in Christ can never be lost; grace in them is an immortal seed; nor shall they be ever finally and totally moved away from the hope of the Gospel:

that ye may be blameless; not in themselves, for no man is without his faults; none of God's children are without their failings and infirmities; they have whereof to blame themselves, and may be blamed by God too in a providential way; but they are so in Christ their head, being justified by his righteousness, and washed in his blood; and so in the sight of God, as considered in Christ; and will appear such

in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, when he shall descend from heaven, and take his saints to him, and present them to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Ver. 9. *God is faithful, by whom ye were called*, etc.] These words contain arguments, assuring the saints of their confirmation in grace, and of their being preserved blameless to the day of Christ, taken from the faithfulness of God, who is always true to his promises: whatever he has said, he will do it; he will never suffer his faithfulness to fail; and since he has made so many promises concerning the establishment of his people, and their perseverance to grace, they may assure themselves of them; and also from his having called them by his grace, for whom he effectually calls by his grace, he glorifies; and particularly from his having called them

unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; to partake of his grace, and to be heirs of glory with him; to enjoy communion with him in private and public exercises of religion, which is an evidence of being in him, and of union to him; for it is not merely into the fellowship of his saints or churches, but into the fellowship of his Son they are said to be

called; and such are members of Christ, of his body, of his flesh, and of his bone; and shall never be lost and perish, but shall be confirmed to the end; be preserved in him blameless, and presented to him faultless, and have everlasting life.

Ver. 10. *Now I beseech you, brethren*, etc.] The apostle having observed the many favours and blessings bestowed on this church, proceeds to take notice of the divisions and contentions which were fomented in it; and in the most kind and tender manner entreats them to take every proper step to prevent schisms among them: he does not use his apostolical power and authority, or lay his injunctions and commands upon them, which he might have done, but most affectionately beseeches them; styling them brethren, as they were in a spiritual relation, being children of the same Father, members of the same body, and partakers of the same grace, and is a reason why they should not fail out by the way: and this obsecration is made

by the name of the Lord Jesus; which he wisely judged must have its weight and influence on many of them, to whom that name must be dear and precious, and which they called upon and were called by; and shows, that he was not acting in his own name, and seeking his own profit; but was concerned in and for the name of Christ, and for his honour and interest, which lay at stake by their contentions. His earnest request to them is,

that ye speak the same thing; profess the same truths, and express them in the same words; which shows the lawfulness, yea, necessity and usefulness, of confessions and articles of faith, being made and agreed to by members of churches; and which should be drawn up in a form of sound words, and abode by; for the introducing of new words and phrases is often the means of bringing in new doctrines, and of raising great contentions and animosities; wherefore using the same words to express truth by is a very proper and prudent expedient to prevent them:

and that there be no divisions, or schisms

among you; which are generally made by innovations in doctrine, or worship; by forming new schemes of religion, new articles of faith, and modes of discipline: but

that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment; which regards not only the sameness of love and affection, to

one another, being, as the first Christians were, of one heart and of one soul; but their agreement in their judgments and sentiments, of both doctrine and discipline; and such an entire harmony and symmetry among them, as in the members of the body, where each member and bone being in their proper place, exactly answer to, and tally with each other; and which is the most effectual way to speak the same things, and so bar against all schisms and divisions; and such an agreement is absolutely necessary to the peace, comfort, and well being of a church; for how should "two", and much less more, "walk together", unless they are "agreed?" (Amos 3:3).

Ver. 11. *For it hath been declared unto me, of you, my brethren*, etc.] Lest the above advice of the apostle should be thought to be impertinent and needless, and to proceed upon groundless suspicions and jealousies of his, he signifies that he not only had some broad hints of their contentions and divisions, but the whole affair was laid open, and made manifest to him: the thing was a clear point to him; he had no reason at all to doubt of the truth of it; nor could they deny it, the proof was so strong, the evidence so full, being given

by them which are of the house of Chloe. Some take Chloe to be the name of a place; a city so called is said to have been in Cappadocia; but it seems rather to have been the name of a woman. Horace [f2] several times makes mention of a woman of this name, and so does Martial [f3]. Pausanias [f4] calls the goddess Ceres by it, the goddess of husbandry; the word signifying green grass of the field. The person the apostle speaks of was one that very probably lived at Corinth, and was a member of the church there, and at the head of a family of great worth and credit; who being grieved at the growing animosities, and disturbances there raised, wrote to the apostle, and gave him a distinct account of them, desiring him to use his interest to put a stop to them. He mentions this family by name, to show that he had not took up an idle tale, and received reports from anybody, nor from a single person only, but from a family of repute among them; and who could have no other views in the relation of it to him, than the good of the church, and the glory of God: and what they had made out clearly to him was,

that there are contentions among you; about their ministers, as appears afterward, as well as about opinions in doctrines, and ceremonies in

worship, which occasioned undue heats, and great indecencies, tending to make rents and schisms among them.

Ver. 12. *Now this I say that everyone of you saith*, etc.] This the apostle affirms not upon his own personal knowledge, but upon the credit of the report the house of Chloe had made unto him; and his meaning is not that every individual member of this church, but that many of them, and the far greater number of them, were in the following factions, some being for one minister, and some for another: one part of them said,

I am of Paul; he had been instrumental in their conversion: he had baptized some of them, and first laid the foundation of a Gospel church among them; was a solid, brave, and bold preacher of the Gospel, and was set for the defence of it; wherefore he was the minister for them, and they were desirous of being called and distinguished by his name: but there was another party that said,

and I of Apollos; in opposition to Paul, whom they despised, as a man whose aspect was mean; his bodily presence weak, made no figure in the pulpit; his speech low and contemptible; his discourses plain, not having that flow of words, and accuracy of expression, as Apollos had; who was an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, who coming to Corinth after the Apostle Paul, many were taken with his way of preaching; he was the preacher for them, and they chose to be called after him, and in distinction from others: whilst another company of them said,

and I of Cephas; or Peter, in opposition both to Paul and Apollos; who with them were new upstart ministers, in comparison of Peter, who was with Christ from the beginning, and saw his miracles, and heard his doctrines; and, besides, had the apostleship and Gospel of the circumcision, on which account they highly valued him; for these must be supposed to be the converted Jews among them, who still retained a regard to the ceremonies of the law; wherefore they fixed on Peter as their minister, and to be called by his name: but others said,

and I of Christ; which some take to be the words of the apostle, declaring who he was of, and for, and belonged unto; intimating that they, as he, should call no man father, or master, on earth, or be called by any other name than that of Christ. Others consider them as the words of the Corinthians, a small part of them who were very mean and contemptible, and therefore mentioned last, who chose to be known and called by no

other name than that of Christians; but I rather think that these design a faction and party, to be condemned as the others. These were for Christ, in opposition to Paul, Apollos, and Cephas, and any other ministers of the word. They were for Christ without his ministers; they were wiser than their teachers; they were above being under any ministrations and ordinances; as the others attributed too much to the ministers of the Gospel, these detracted too much from them, and denied them to be of any use and service. Some persons may be, in such sense, for Christ, as to be blame worthy; as when they use his name to deceive men, or divide his interest.

Ver. 13. *Is Christ divided*? etc.] Some read the words as an assertion, "Christ is divided"; that is, his body, the church, is divided by such factions and parties; though in some copies μη, the note of interrogation, is put before the clause, and so to be rendered, "is Christ divided?" no; his human body was not to be divided; a bone of him was not to be broken, (<43>John 19:36 <19>Psalm 34:20); the seamless garment he wore was not to be rent asunder, (<43>John 19:23,24); nor is his mystical body, the church, to be torn in pieces by schisms and divisions; nor is anyone part of his Gospel different from, or opposite to another part of it; his doctrine is the same as preached by one minister and another, and is all of a piece, uniform and harmonious. Christ is not divided from his Father, not in nature; though he is to be distinguished from him, yet not to be divided; he is one in nature with him, though he is a distinct person from him; nor is he, nor can he, or will be ever separated from him; nor is he to be divided from him in his works and actions, with whom he was jointly concerned in creation, providence, and grace; and such are to be blamed as dividers of Christ from the Father, who talk of Christ to the exclusion of the Father, or to the dropping and neglect of any of his acts of grace; as his everlasting love to his chosen ones, the eternal election of them in Christ, the covenant of grace made with him, and the instance of his grace in the gift and mission of his Son: nor is Christ divided from himself, not in his nature and person; the two natures, human and divine, are united in one person; they are to be distinguished, and not to be confounded, yet not to be separated as to wake two distinct persons: nor in his offices; a whole Christ is to be received; Christ in his kingly as well as in his priestly office; to claim him as a Saviour and disown him as a King, is dishonourable to him; it is to make one end of his death void, as much as in such lies, which is, that he may be Lord of dead and living; and argues a carnal selfish spirit, and that faith in

him is not right: such are to be blamed for being for Christ, and as dividers of him, who talk of being saved by him, and yet would not have him to rule over them. Nor is he divided from his Spirit, not from the person of the Spirit; he is to be distinguished from him as a person, but is one in nature with him; nor from his gifts and graces, which he has as man and Mediator without measure; nor from the work of the Spirit; for it is his grace the Spirit of God implants in the hearts of men: it comes from him, it centres in him, it makes men like him, and glorifies him; such who cry up Christ, and cry down the work of his Spirit upon the soul, are to be blamed for being for Christ, and to be reckoned dividers of them as much as in them lies: nor is Christ divided from his church and people; there is a close union between them, and he dwells in them, and among them; and they are to be blamed that talk of Christ, and never meet with his saints in public service and worship: nor is he divided from his ministers, word, and ordinances; Christ is the sum of the ministry of the word; the ordinances are instituted by him; he submitted to them himself, and is the substance of them, and has promised his presence in them to the end of the world: and what God has put together, let no man put asunder.

Was Paul crucified for you? no; he had taught them another doctrine; namely, that Christ was crucified for them, that he died for their sins, and had bought them with the price of his own blood; and therefore they were not to be the servants of men, or to call any man master, or to be called by his name, or any other man's, only by Christ's, who had redeemed them by his blood; so that they were not their own, nor any other's, but his, and ought to glorify him with their souls and bodies, which were his.

Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul; no; but in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The apostle did not pretend to be the author of a new revelation, or the propagator of a new religion, but was a preacher of the Gospel, and an administrator of the ordinances of Christ; wherefore he baptized not in his own name, but in the name of Christ: to whose worship and service such as are baptized are devoted, and not to the service of men, and therefore not to be called after their names.

Ver. 14. *I thank God that I baptized none of you*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy and the Syriac version read, "I thank my God"; not that the apostle disliked the ordinance of baptism, or the administration of it; and much less that he thought it criminal, or an evil in him to perform it; nor was he at any time displeased at the numbers of persons who desired it of him; but on

the contrary rejoiced where proper subjects of it were brought to a submission to it; but inasmuch as some persons in the church at Corinth made such an ill use of his having baptized them, he was greatly thankful that it was so ordered in providence, that the far greater part of them were baptized by other ministers, either by those who were with him, or came after him; and that he baptized none of them with his own hands,

but Crispus and Gaius. The former of these was the chief ruler of the Jewish synagogue at Corinth, who hearing the apostle, and believing in Christ, was baptized by him, (<44188>Acts 18:8) and the latter was a very liberal and hospitable man, and was the apostle's host, whilst he was at Corinth; (see <45623>Romans 16:23).

Ver. 15. *Lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name*.] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, "lest anyone should say that ye were baptized in my name"; and the Ethiopic version renders it, "that ye might not say we have been baptized in his name". This gives the true reason why the apostle was so thankful he had baptized no more of the members of this church, lest either some should reproach him, as having done it in his own name, and as seeking his own honour and interest; or lest others should affect, from their being baptized by him, to be called by his name, as if he was the author and patron of a new sect.

Ver. 16. *And I also baptized the household of Stephanas*, etc.] The same name with "Stephanios", or "Stephanio" in Pliny [f5]. Before he says he had baptized none but Crispus and Gaius; but recollecting things, he corrects himself, and observes, that he had also baptized the household of Stephanas, who by the Greek writers is thought to be the same with the jailer baptized by the apostle at Philippi, but was now removed from thence to Corinth, and was become a famous and useful man there. No argument can be formed from the baptism of his household in favour of infant baptism, since it must be first proved that he had any infants in his family, and that these were baptized; and if his household and the jailer's are the same, it is certain that his household were such who were capable of having the word of God spoke to them, and who actually did believe in God. And if they were not the same, yet it is clear that this household of Stephanas consisted of adult, converted, and very useful persons; they were the firstfruits of Achaia, and had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, (<46165>1 Corinthians 16:15).

Besides, that is, the above mentioned persons,

I know not whether I baptized any other; meaning at Corinth, for he might have baptized, and doubtless did baptize many more in other places, for anything that is here said to the contrary: of this he would not be positive; for though he might fully know, and well remember, on recollection, who, and how many, were baptized by him with his own hands there, yet he could not tell but that some persons might have removed thither, and become members of the church in that place, who had been baptized by him elsewhere.

Ver. 17. *For Christ sent me not to baptize*, etc.] Some think the apostle refers to his particular mission from Christ, (Acts 26:16) in which no mention is made of his administering the ordinance of baptism; but no doubt he had the same mission the rest of the apostles had, which was to baptize as well as preach; and indeed, if he had not been sent at all to baptize, it would have been unlawful for him to have administered baptism to any person whatever; but his sense is, that baptism was not the chief and principal business he was sent about; this was to be done mostly by those preachers of the word who travelled with him, or followed after him: he was not sent so much about this work,

but to preach the Gospel; for which he was most eminently qualified, had peculiar gifts for the discharge of it, and was greatly useful in it. This was what he was rather sent to do than the other, and this "not with wisdom of words". Scholastic divinity, or the art of disputation, is by the [f6] Karaites, a sect among the Jews, called µyrbdh tmkj, "wisdom of words": this the apostle seems to refer to, and signifies he was not sent with, or to preach, with words of man's wisdom, with human eloquence and oratory, with great swelling words of vanity, but in a plain, humble, modest manner; on which account the false teachers despised him, and endeavoured to bring his ministry into contempt with others: but this way and manner of preaching he chose for this reason,

lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect; that is, either lest men's ears and fancies should be so tickled and pleased with the eloquence of speech, the elegancy of diction, and accuracy of expression, the cadency of words, and beauty of the oration, with the manner, and not with the matter of preaching, and so the true use, end, and design of the doctrine of a crucified Christ be defeated; or lest the success of the ministry should be

attributed to the force of enticing words, and the strength and persuasion of oratory, and not to the energy of divine power attending the doctrine of the cross.

Ver. 18. *For the preaching of the cross*, etc.] Not of the Christian's cross, which he is to take up and bear for the sake of Christ; though this is a doctrine taught by Christ, and his apostles, and found to be true by the saints in all ages; and is what is had in great aversion and contempt, being very disagreeable to the natural man: but of the cross of Christ, the doctrine of salvation by a crucified Christ; or the doctrine of peace and reconciliation by the blood of his cross, and of righteousness, pardon, atonement, and satisfaction by the offering up of himself upon it as a sacrifice for sin, is here intended; and which

is foolishness in the esteem of many; and that because man's wisdom has no hand either in forming the scheme of it, or in the discovery of it to the sons of men; and besides, being revealed, it is very disagreeable to the carnal reason of man. This way of preaching is very impolite and unfashionable, and therefore despised; it is a doctrine which is not received by the wise and learned, but has been in all ages loaded with reproach, stigmatized either as a novel or licentious doctrine, and attended with persecution; though the only doctrine God owns for conversion, which administers comfort to distressed souls, and is food for the faith of believers; yea, it is a display of the highest wisdom; is what angels approve of, and desire to look into; is wiser than the wisdom of men; it has made foolish the wisdom of this world, and is what is only able to make a man wise unto salvation; and yet this doctrine is accounted foolish, yea foolishness itself; but to whom is it so?

to them that perish. All mankind are in a lost and perishing condition, by reason of sin, and want of righteousness. There are some who shall not perish; the Father has chose them unto salvation, the Son has redeemed them, and the Spirit sanctifies them; but there are others who do perish in their sins; wicked and ungodly men, Carried away with their own lusts and blinded by Satan, the god of this world: these are they that are lost, to whom the Gospel is hid, and who judge it foolishness; but their judgment of it is not to be regarded, being no more capable to judge of the glory and wisdom of the Gospel, than a blind man is of colours: but unto us which are saved; who are chosen in Christ unto salvation; whose persons and grace are secured in Christ, and in the everlasting covenant; for whom

Christ has wrought out salvation; and to whom it is applied by the Spirit of God; and who are kept unto the full enjoyment of it by divine grace: to these

it is the power of God; organically or instrumentally; it being the means of quickening them when dead in sin, of enlightening their dark minds, of unstopping their deaf ears, of softening their hard hearts, and of enemies making them friends to God, Christ, and his people: and it is likewise so declaratively, there being a wonderful display of the power of God in the ministration of it; as may be seen when observed who were the first preachers of it, men of no figure in life, of no education, illiterate mechanics, very mean and abject; into these earthen vessels were put the treasure of the Gospel, that the excellency of the power might appear to be of God, and not man; as also the doctrine they preached, a crucified Christ, disagreeable to the wisdom of men; the manner in which they spread it, not by force of arms, by carnal weapons, but spiritual ones; moreover, the opposition they met with from rabbins, philosophers, princes, kings, and emperors, and all the states and powers of the world; and yet in how short a time, maugre all opposition, did they carry the Gospel throughout the whole world, to the conversion of millions of souls, and the planting of churches everywhere; and which Gospel has continued and increased, notwithstanding the efforts of persecutors and false teachers, and all the power and artifice of men and devils; all which can be attributed to nothing else but the mighty power of God: add to this, that the Gospel is the power of God in the esteem of the saints, who know it to be so by inward experience; they have felt the power of it on their hearts; it has wrought effectually in them, and therefore they are the best judges, and are capable of giving the best account of it.

Ver. 19. *As it is written*, etc.] The passage referred to is in (<2914>Isaiah 29:14) where it is read, “the wisdom of their wise men shall perish; and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid”; and is rendered by the Septuagint, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will hide the understanding of the prudent”: which is much the same with the apostle’s version of it: and the sense of the prophecy is, that in the times of the Messiah, under the Gospel dispensation, the mysteries of grace should be hid from the wise rabbins among the Jews, the Scribes and Pharisees, who, with all their sagacity, parts, and learning, would not be able to comprehend the doctrines of the Gospel; by these their wisdom and understanding would be nonplussed, so that they would reject them as

foolishness, because their carnal reason could not reach them; which shows what an infatuation they were given up to: and if this should be the case, as it was with the wise and learned philosophers among the Gentiles, it need not be wondered at; it was what was foretold in prophecy concerning the Jews, who had the oracles of God, and the advantage of a divine revelation; and therefore it need not be stumbling to them that are saved, that the Gospel should meet with so much scorn and contempt among them that perish in the Gentile world. These words are very pertinently cited by the apostle, since they are acknowledged by the Jews themselves to signify the departure of wisdom from the wise men of Israel, in the times of the destruction of the temple, as Jarchi on the place observes.

Ver. 20. *Where is the wise? where is the Scribe?* etc.] These are the apostle's own words; though he may allude to (Isaiah 33:18) where there are some phrases much like these, but the meaning is very different. Though they are interpreted by the Talmudists [f7] in a sense pretty near the apostle's; for thus they remark upon them,

> "where is the Scribe? he that counts all the letters which are in the law; "where is the receiver, or weigher?" who weighs all the light and heavy things in the law; "where is he that counted the towers?" he who counts, or teaches the three hundred traditions:"

so that they understand these of their Scribes and Misnic doctors, and such that are curious searchers into the hidden senses of Scripture. The apostle also seems to allude to a distinction that obtained among the Jews, of wise men, Scribes, and mystical interpreters of the word. They had their ymkj, "wise men", which was a general name for men of learning and knowledge; and their yrps, "Scribes", who interpreted the law in the literal and grammatical sense; and their ynçrd, "preachers, or disputers", who diligently searched into the hidden meaning of the Scriptures, and sought for and delivered out the mystical and allegorical sense of them, and who used to dispute about them in their schools. These three are sometimes to be met with together, and as distinct from each other. They say [f8] that

> "God showed to the first man every generation, wyçrwdw, "and its expounders, or disputers"; and every generation, wymkjw, "and its wise men"; and every generation, wyrpwsw, "and its Scribes.""

And the apostle's sense is, "where is the wise?" the man that boasts of his superior wisdom and knowledge in the things of nature, whether among the Jews or Gentiles; "where is the Scribe?" the letter learned man, who takes upon him to give the literal sense of the law;

where is the disputer of this world? the Jewish world, who pretends to the knowledge of the more abstruse and secret senses of Scripture; where are these men? they are not to be found among those that God employs in the ministration of the Gospel; he has laid them aside, and chosen others, where are they? what use have they been of to men? are men under their instructions the better, either in principle or practice? where are the thousands that have been turned to God by their wisdom, as can be shown by the faithful ministers of the Gospel? where are they? let them come and produce their cause, and bring forth their strong reasons against the Gospel they account foolishness, and try if these will stand before its superior power and wisdom; where are they? are they not fools, with all their wisdom and learning? The words may be rendered, "where is the searcher, or inquirer of this world?" and may design the same sort of persons whom the Jews call rqjmh ymkj, "the wise men of search, or inquiry" [f9], and sometimes rqjmh yçna, "the men of search, or inquiry" [f10]; by whom they seem to intend such who search into the nature of things, who study natural philosophy.

Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? by bringing in the Gospel scheme, which the men of the world, the greatest wits in it, are not able to understand; by laying their wisdom aside as useless in the business of salvation; by showing it to be vain and empty, and of no service in things spiritual and divine; by detecting, through the ministration of the Gospel, the sophisms of men, and showing that the schemes both Jews and Gentiles give into abound with folly, with stupid notions, and are full of gross errors and fatal mistakes.

Ver. 21. *For after that in the wisdom of God*, etc.] These words contain a reason proving the infatuation of men, with respect to "the wisdom of God"; by which may be meant either Christ, who is the wisdom of God, was in the world, and yet the world of the Jews, and their chief Rabbins among them, with all their wisdom, neither knew him, nor God his Father; or the Gospel, which is also so called, and though this was come, both into the Jewish and Gentile world, yet neither of them, by their natural wisdom, knew the God of grace, so manifestly revealed in it; or rather the works of

creation, in which there is such a visible display of the wisdom of God: yet "the world by wisdom knew not God"; the author of them: the Gentiles knew him not in any spiritual and saving manner, as in Christ, or the God of all grace; yea, they knew him not as the God of nature to be the one, only, true God; they knew him not so as to glorify him as God, or to worship him in a right way and manner: wherefore,

it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe; it was his purpose and decree within himself; it was his sovereign good will and pleasure; it was what he, without any motion from, or merit in the creature, resolved of himself from all eternity that he would "save", not the wise man, the Scribe, the disputer of this world, the rationalist, the talker, nor the worker, but "them that believe" in his Son; that look unto him, venture on him, and commit the care and keeping of their souls to him, however weak, mean, and despicable they may otherwise be; or whether they believe with a weak, or a strong faith, so be it, it is but true: the Ethiopic version reads, "that believe in this foolish doctrine"; and this he determined to do, and did, "by the foolishness of preaching"; or by that sort of preaching, which both for the matter of it, Christ, that itself, and the manner of it, the world reckons foolishness; and which are the things of the Father's grace in election, of the Son's grace in redemption, and the Spirit's in regeneration: so the wise men of the world, with all their wisdom, are left ignorant of God, and perish in their sins, whilst the Gospel they despise is the power of God unto salvation to all that believe in Christ; this, through efficacious grace, becomes the means of regenerating and quickening men, showing them their need of salvation, and where it is, and of working faith in them to look to Christ for it.

Ver. 22. *For the Jews require a sign*, etc.] The Jews had always been used to miracles, in confirmation of the mission of the prophets sent unto them, and therefore insisted on a sign proving Jesus to be the true Messiah; except signs and wonders were wrought, they would not believe; and though miracles were wrought in great numbers, and such as never man did, they remained incredulous, and persisted in demanding a sign from heaven, and in their own way; and it was told them that no other sign should be given them, but that of the prophet Jonah, by which was signified the resurrection of Christ from the dead; this was given them, and yet they believed not, but went on to require a sign still; nothing but miracles would do with them, and they must be such as they themselves pleased: the

Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read "signs", in the plural number:

and the Greeks seek after wisdom; the wisdom of the world, natural wisdom, philosophy, the reason of things, the flowers of rhetoric, the ornaments of speech, the beauties of oratory, the justness of style and diction; as for doctrines they regarded none, but such as they could comprehend with, and account for by their carnal reason, everything else they despised and exploded. Hence we often read [f11] of tynwwy tmkj, "the Grecian wisdom", or wisdom of the Greeks; which, the Jews say [f12], lay in metaphors and dark sayings, which were not understood but by them that were used to it; the study of it was forbidden by them, though some of their Rabbins were conversant with it [f13].

Ver. 23. *But we preach Christ crucified*, etc.] Regardless of the sentiments and opinions of Jews and Gentiles, of what the one required and the other sought after; and in opposition to all their senseless and groundless cavils, the apostle and his fellow ministers continued preaching the doctrine of salvation by a crucified Christ, and him only; though it was

unto the Jews a stumblingblock; as was prophesied it should be, and as it came to pass; for they not only stumbled at the meanness of his birth, parentage, and education, at his ministry, miracles, company and audience; but especially at his sufferings and death: it was a stumbling to them that he should die at all, for they understood out of their law, that Christ should abide for ever; and it was more so that he should die the death of the cross, by which, according to their law, he appeared to be accursed; and most of all this was stumbling to them, because they expected a temporal kingdom to be set up by him:

and unto the Greeks foolishness; as that the Son of God should be crucified; that riches should come through his poverty, and men be brought to a kingdom and glory through one so mean and abject; that there should be life for men in his death, and salvation through his crucifixion, or the shameful death of the cross; that blessings should come through his being made a curse; and that his death should be an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of men; and that justification should be by one that was condemned; and peace and pardon should be by his blood; and that he should be raised again from the dead. These things were the subject of their ridicule and banter, and, in their opinion, deserved rather to be laughed at than credited.

The Alexandrian copy, and others, and the Vulgate and all the Oriental versions, read, “unto the Gentiles”.

Ver. 24. *But unto them which are called*, etc.] Effectually, by the grace of God, not merely externally, but internally; these have other sentiments of Christ, and the doctrine of salvation by him; for being called out of darkness, and savingly illuminated by the Spirit of God, they see wisdom, beauty, glory, excellency, and suitableness in Christ, and in his Gospel; and having felt the power of it upon their souls, with them,

both Jews and Greeks, of whatsoever nation they be, and whatsoever their prejudices have been, Christ, to them is,

the power of God, and the wisdom of God: he is “the power of God”; this is opposed to the Jews who stumbled at his weakness, his sufferings and death, even the death of the cross; and is to be understood of him, not as God, in which sense he is Mighty, yea, the Almighty, and which appears by his works of creation and providence; but as Mediator, and of him in his low and mean estate, and even when he was crucified through weakness; in respect to that very thing in which he was weakness, and so stumbling, to others, he is to them that are called the power of God; as is clear by his bearing all the sins of his people in his own body, on the tree, the cross whereon he was crucified, and all the punishment due thereunto; and yet he failed not, nor was he discouraged, nor did he give out, till he had satisfied law and justice perfectly, and made a full end of sin, and an entire reconciliation for iniquity; as also by destroying, by his death, the devil, who had the power of death, and spoiling all his principalities and powers, triumphing over them on his cross; by redeeming his people from all their sins, and the curse of the law, and from him that was stronger than they; by abolishing death, and at last raising himself from the dead; all which show him, even when and “though” crucified, to be the power of God, or to be possessed of Almighty power; for these are things which a mere creature could never have done: and he is “the wisdom of God”, also, in the account of these persons; and which likewise is to be understood, it being opposed to the opinions the Greeks had of him, not of him as the essential wisdom of God, as he is the wise Creator and Governor of the universe; but of him as Mediator, and in respect to that for which the Greeks accounted him foolishness: for in redemption and salvation by a crucified Christ, God hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence: there is in this article a high display of the wisdom of God; for hereby justice was satisfied in that

nature which sinned, and Satan destroyed in that nature which he himself had been the ruin of; hereby sin was condemned, and yet the sinner saved; pardon and justification came to be in a way of grace, and yet of strict justice; all the divine perfections harmonize, and are glorified, and God has hereby executed his wise designs and counsels of old; yea, even the wisdom of God is seen in Christ's dying the death of the cross, whereby he appeared to be made a curse for us, that he might redeem us from the curse of the law, and that the blessing of Abraham might come upon us.

Ver. 25. *Because the foolishness of God*, etc.] Not that there is any such thing as "foolishness" in God, nor the least degree of weakness in him; but the apostle means that which the men of the world esteem so, and therefore, by an ironical concession, calls it by those names; by which is intended either Christ, who, as crucified, is counted foolishness; yet he "is wiser than men": yea, even than Solomon, who was wiser than all men besides; Christ is greater than he in wisdom, having all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him; yea, in redemption by the blood of his cross, which is accounted such an egregious instance of folly, there is such a display of wisdom as surpasses all the wisdom of men and angels: and though he is, as crucified, esteemed as

the weakness of God, yet in this respect,

is stronger than men; stronger than the strong man armed; and has done that by his own arm, has brought salvation for his people, which neither men nor angels could ever have done: or all this may be understood of the Gospel of Christ, which is condemned as folly and weakness, and yet has infinitely more wisdom in it, than is to be found in the best concerted schemes of the wisest philosophers; and has had a greater influence on the minds and manners of men than theirs ever had; it is the manifold wisdom of God, and the power of God unto salvation. Moreover, these words may be applied to the saints, called in (<4627>1 Corinthians 1:27)

the foolish and weak things of the world; and yet even these, in the business of salvation, how foolish soever they may be in other respects, are wiser than the wisest of men destitute of the grace of God; and however weak they are in themselves, in their own esteem, and in the account of others, they are able to do and suffer such things, through the strength of Christ that no other men in the world are able to perform or endure. The phrases here used seem to be a sort of proverbial ones; and the sense of them is, that whatever, in things divine and spiritual, has the appearance of

folly and weakness, or is judged to be so by carnal men, is wiser and stronger not only than the wisdom and strength of men, but than men themselves with all their wisdom and strength. It is very likely, that proverbial expressions of this kind, with a little alteration, were used by the Jews. The advice the young men gave to Rehoboam is thus paraphrased by the Targumist [f14], abad hytrwbg ˆm apyqt ytwçlj, "my weakness is stronger than the strength of my father"; which is very near the same with the last clause of this verse.

Ver. 26. *For ye see your calling, brethren*, etc.] That is, those that were called by the grace of God among them; for as circumcision and uncircumcision stand for circumcised and uncircumcised persons, and election for elect persons, and righteousness for righteous persons, (<4B030>Romans 3:30, 11:7 <6B033>2 Peter 3:13) so here "calling" designs men called by grace; the manner of whose calling, and what sort of persons they were, the apostle signifies, they did or might, or ought, to see, observe, and consider; for respect is here had, not, as some have thought, to the first preachers of the Gospel, who were mechanics, fishermen, illiterate persons, very mean and despicable; but to the members of the church at Corinth, whether public preachers, or private members. The city of Corinth had in it many noble families, of high birth and quality, abounded with learned philosophers and rich merchants; and yet it was easy to be seen,

how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. The apostle does not say that there were none of the wise, the mighty, and noble called; for there were Crispus, and Sosthenes, rulers of the synagogue, and Gains a rich hospitable man, and Erastus the chamberlain of the city, and it may be some others of a like or better figure in life; but there were not many of them; instances of this kind are but few recorded in the Scripture; as Joseph of Arimathea a rich counsellor, Paulus Sergius a Roman deputy, Dionysius the Areopagite, and some in Caesar's palace; which show that nobility, riches, and learning, as they do not at all contribute towards a man's salvation, so neither can they hinder it where grace takes place; but, generally speaking, God has thought fit, for wise reasons, to choose and call persons of different characters.

Ver. 27. *But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world*, etc.] So the Jews, in distinction from their wise Rabbins and doctors, call others, aml[d ˆyçpj, "the fools of the world" [f15]; the persons whom God made choice of from all eternity, as appears by his calling them in time, are such

who with respect to the wisdom of the world are foolish; have not those natural parts and abilities, that sagacity and penetration in things natural and civil, that knowledge and learning which many others have; and are therefore esteemed foolish by the men of the world, in comparison of whom; who are the wise and prudent, they are but babes: and God's end in his choice of them, and calling them, is

to confound the wise; who sooner or later will be brought to shame and confusion, to see such idiots, as they took them to be, wiser than they in the business of salvation; having been directed and influenced by divine grace to choose that good part, which shall never be taken from them, when they will be stripped of their nobility, wealth, and wisdom; to see these men go into the kingdom of heaven, and they themselves shut out:

and God hath chosen the weak things of the world; who cannot boast of their birth and pedigree, of their ancient and illustrious families; have no titles of honour to aggrandize them, nor estates, possessions, and worldly substance to support themselves with; and this he has done,

to confound the things which are mighty; as Haman was by the advancement of Mordecai. It will be to the utter confusion of the rich and mighty, to see persons of the lowest class in life made kings and priests by Christ, set among princes, and upon the throne of glory; and they themselves fleeing, and calling to the mountains to fall upon them, and cover them from the sight of him that sits on the throne, and the Lamb.

Ver. 28. *And base things of the world*, etc.] Who are reckoned the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things; men of mean birth, education, and business of life:

and things that are despised; and set at nought, as poor persons generally are; yet God

hath chosen them; even the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom:

yea, and things which are not; some think the Gentiles are here intended, who by the Jews are called "things that are not": as in the apocryphal books:

> "O Lord, give not thy sceptre unto "them that be nothing", and let them not laugh at our fall; but turn their device upon themselves,

and make him an example, that hath begun this against us." (Esther 14:11)

"56 As for the other people, which also come of Adam, thou hast said that "they are nothing", but be like unto spittle: and hast likened the abundance of them unto a drop that falleth from a vessel. 57 And now, O Lord, behold, these heathen, which have ever been "reputed as nothing", have begun to be lords over us, and to devour us." (2 Esdras 6)

See Gill on "<4047>Romans 4:17" for note on non-entities, or such who are not in being, are meant; but who are not accounted of, or are reckoned as nothing; and these the Lord calls by his grace, as a fruit and evidence of electing love:

to bring to nought things that are; who, on the account of their noble birth, large possessions, and high attainments in knowledge and learning, thought themselves something; all which will one day be abolished, and will stand them in no stead with regard to future happiness and glory. The Jews [f16] have a saying quite contrary to all this, that

"the Shekinah, or presence of God, does not dwell on any but upon a wise man, a mighty man, and a rich man."

Ver. 29. *That no flesh should glory in his presence*.] That is, "in the presence of God", as some copies, and the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read; not in their blood, birth, families, lineage, and natural descent; nor in their might, power, and dominion; nor in their riches, wealth, and substance; nor in their wisdom, learning, and parts: for however these may be gloried in before men, yet not before God. These are of no account with him, nor will they be regarded by him, or men on account of them; and he has taken a method in choosing and calling the reverse of these, to stain the glory of all flesh, that no man may attribute his salvation to any thing of the creature, but wholly to the sovereign grace and good pleasure of God.

Ver. 30. *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus*, etc.] These words, as they direct to the proper object of glorying, Christ, so they show the high honour the called ones are brought to in and through Christ, and are opposed to their outward meanness, folly, weakness, poverty, and contempt. They are first of God the Father, of his own rich free grace and goodness, without any regard to any motive, merit, or desert of theirs, put into Christ by electing grace, in whom they are preserved and blessed; and

which is their original secret being in him; and is made manifest by regenerating grace, by their being made new creatures; which also is not owing to their blood, or to the will of the flesh, or to the will of man, but to God and his free favour in Christ: and in consequence of their being in Christ, as their head and representative, he becomes all to them, which is here expressed;

who of God is made unto us wisdom. Though they are foolish creatures in their own and the world's esteem, yet Christ is their wisdom; he is so "efficiently", the author and cause of all that spiritual wisdom and understanding in divine things they are possessed of; he is so "objectively", their highest wisdom lying in the knowledge of his person, blood, and righteousness, of interest in him, and salvation by him; with which knowledge eternal life is connected: and he is so "representatively"; he is their head, in whom all their wisdom lies; he acts for them as their wisdom to God, he is their Counsellor, their Advocate, who pleads and intercedes for them, and as their wisdom to men, and gives them a mouth and wisdom which their adversaries are not able to gainsay; and having the tongue of the learned, he speaks a word in season to themselves, when weary, distressed, and disconsolate, and for them in the court of heaven; he is their wisdom, to direct their paths, to guide them with his counsel, in the way they should go, safe to his kingdom and glory:

and righteousness. He is the "author" of righteousness; he has wrought out and brought in one for them, which is well pleasing to God, satisfying to his justice, by which his law is magnified and made honourable; which justifies from all sin, and discharges from all condemnation, is everlasting, and will answer for them in a time to come; this he has brought in by the holiness of his nature, the obedience of his life, and by his sufferings and death: and which is "subjectively" in him, not in themselves; nor does it lie in any thing wrought in them, or done by them; but in him as their head and representative, who by "imputation" is made righteousness to them; and they the same way are made the righteousness of God in him; or in other words, this righteousness, by an act of the Father's grace, is imputed, reckoned, and accounted to them as their justifying righteousness:

and sanctification; Christ is the sanctification of his people, through the constitution of God, the imputation of the holiness of his nature, the merits of his blood, and the efficacy of his grace, he is so "federally" and "representatively"; he is their covenant head, and has all covenant grace in

his hands for them, and so the whole stock and fund of holiness, which is communicated to them in all ages, until the perfection of it in every saint: this is sanctification in Christ, which differs from sanctification in them in these things; in him it is as the cause, in them as the effect; in him as its fountain, in them as the stream; in him it is complete, in them it is imperfect for the present: and they have it by virtue of union to him; sanctification in Christ can be of no avail to any, unless it is derived from him to them; so that this sanctification in Christ does not render the sanctification of the Spirit unnecessary, but includes it, and secures it: likewise Christ is the sanctification of his people "by imputation", as the holiness of his human nature is, together with his obedience and sufferings, imputed to them for their justification; Christ assumed an holy human nature, the holiness of it was not merely a qualification for his office as a Saviour, or what made his actions and sufferings in that nature significant and useful, or is exemplary to men; but is a branch of the saints justification before God: the law required an holy nature, theirs is not holy; Christ has assumed one not for, himself, but for them, and so is the end of the law in all respects: and this may be greatly designed in the whole of this passage; "wisdom" may stand in general for the wise scheme of justification, as it is laid in Christ; "sanctification" may intend the holiness of his nature; "righteousness" the obedience of his life; and "redemption" his sufferings and death, by which it is obtained: but then justification and sanctification are not to be confounded; they are two distinct things, and have their proper uses and effects; sanctification in the saints does not justify, or justification sanctify; the one respects the power and being of sin, the other the guilt of it. Moreover, Christ is the sanctification of his people "meritoriously"; through the shedding of his blood, whereby he has sanctified them, that is, expiated their sins, and made full atonement for them; (see <BIBLE>Hebrews 10:10,14 13:12). Once more, he is their sanctification "efficiently"; by his Spirit, as the author, and by his word, as the means; he is the source of all holiness, it all comes from him, and is wrought by his Spirit in the heart; which lies in filling the understanding with spiritual light and knowledge; the mind with a sense of sin, and a detestation of it; the heart with the fear of God; the affections with love to divine objects and things; the will with submission and resignation to the will of God in all respects; and is exercised in living a life of faith on Christ, and in living soberly, righteously, and godly, before God and man: and this, though imperfect now, will be perfected from and by Christ, without which it is impossible to see the Lord:

and redemption; which he is by the appointment of his Father, being foreordained to it before the foundation of the world; and this sense of the word made will agree with every clause in the text; and he is so efficiently, having obtained eternal redemption from sin, Satan, the law, and this present evil world, for his people; and "subjectively", it being in him, and every other blessing which is either a part of it, and comes through it, or is dependent on it, as justification, adoption, and remission of sins. Moreover, this may have respect not only to redemption past, which is obtained by Christ; but to that which draws near, the saints are waiting for, and to which they are sealed up by the Spirit of God; even their redemption and deliverance from very being of sin, from all sorrow and sufferings, from death and the grave, and everything that is afflicting and distressing.

Ver. 31. *That, according as it is written*, etc.] (2402Jeremiah 9:23,24).

He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord; not in his own wisdom, riches, and strength; but in Christ, as his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 2

The apostle, in this chapter, pursues the same argument as before, that the Gospel needed not the wisdom and art of men: this he illustrates by his own example; and then he extols the Gospel above all the wisdom of men; and observes how it comes to be made known to men, even by the Spirit of God: hence it follows, that it is to be taught in his words, and not in the words of men; and that it can be only known and judged of by the spiritual, and not by the natural man. He instances in himself, and in his own ministry, when at Corinth, where he preached the Gospel in a plain and simple manner, without using the ornaments of speech, and human wisdom, (<4601>1 Corinthians 2:1) his reason was, because he had determined with himself to preach not himself, but a crucified Christ, (<4602>1 Corinthians 2:2). His manner of behaviour is more largely declared, (<4603>1 Corinthians 2:3) that he was so far from being elated with his human literature, and priding himself with that, and making use of it in an ostentatious way, that he was attended with much weakness, fear, and trembling; and his discourses were not adorned with the flowers of rhetoric, but were delivered with the power, evidence, and demonstration of the Spirit, (<4604>1 Corinthians 2:4). And his end and view in this method of preaching were, that the faith of his hearers should not be ascribed to human wisdom, but to a divine power, (<4605>1 Corinthians 2:5) but lest the Gospel should be thought meanly and contemptibly of, because of the plain dress in which it appeared, the apostle affirms it to be the highest wisdom, as those who had the most perfect knowledge of it could attest; a wisdom superior to the wisdom of this world, or of its princes, since that comes to nothing, (<4606>1 Corinthians 2:6) the excellency of which he expresses by various epithets, as the wisdom of God, mysterious wisdom, hidden wisdom, ancient wisdom, ordained before the world began, for the glory of the saints, (<4607>1 Corinthians 2:7) a wisdom unknown to the princes of the world, who otherwise would not have been concerned in the crucifixion of Christ, (<4608>1 Corinthians 2:8) and that this far exceeds the capacity of men, and could never have been found out by them, he proves, (<4609>1 Corinthians 2:9) by a testimony out of (<2304>Isaiah 64:4) and then proceeds to show how

it comes to be known by any of the sons of men, that it is by the revelation of the Spirit of God, (<46 02 10>1 Corinthians 2:10) which is illustrated by the nature of the spirit of man within him, which only knows the things of a man; so in like manner only the Spirit of God knows the things of God, and can make them known to others, (<46 02 11>1 Corinthians 2:11). And in this way he observes, that he and others became acquainted with these things; namely, by receiving not the spirit of the world, which at most could only have taught them the wisdom of the world, but the Spirit of God, whereby they knew their interest in the blessings of free grace, published in the Gospel, (<46 02 12>1 Corinthians 2:12). And seeing the Gospel is made known by the Spirit of God, it should be delivered, not in the words of man's wisdom, but in the words of the Holy Spirit, as the apostle affirms he and other ministers did deliver it, returning to his former argument, (<46 02 13>1 Corinthians 2:13). And also it follows from hence, that the things of the Gospel, which the Spirit reveals, cannot be known and received by the natural man, who has no discerning of them, and so no value for them, (<46 02 14>1 Corinthians 2:14) and can only be discerned, judged, and approved of by spiritual men, (<46 02 15>1 Corinthians 2:15) and who are not to be judged by natural and carnal men, because they have not the mind of Christ, and so cannot instruct them; but spiritual men have it, such as the apostle and others, (<46 02 16>1 Corinthians 2:16).

Ver. 1. *And I, brethren, when I came to you*, etc.] This account the apostle gives of himself is occasioned, either by what he had said in the latter part of the preceding chapter, concerning the choice God has made of the foolish, weak, base, and despicable things of the world, and of his calling them by his grace both to fellowship with the saints in common, and therefore he accommodated his ministry unto them, and in particular to the ministry of the word, of which he himself was a like instance and an example; or else by what he had declared in (<46 01 17>1 Corinthians 1:17) of the same chapter, that he was sent to preach the Gospel,

not with wisdom of words; which he here reassumes, and affirms agreeably, that when he first came to Corinth, he

came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom; for though he was not only versed in Jewish learning, being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel; but had also a good share of Grecian literature, and was capable, upon proper occasions, to cite the Greek poets, as he does Aratus, (<44 17 28>Acts 17:28) and Menander, (<56 01 12>Titus 1:12,13) and so could, had he thought fit,

have adorned his discourses with pompous language, with the flowers of rhetoric, and the eloquence of the Grecians; yet he chose not such a high and florid style, and which savoured so much of human wisdom and art; for the subject he treated of required no such dress, nor any great swelling words of vanity, or a bombast style to set it off, and gain the applause and assent of men: for what he delivered were plain matters of fact, attested by God himself,

declaring unto you the testimony of God; that is, the Gospel, which bears a testimony to the love, grace, and mercy of God, his kindness and good will to the sons of men, in giving and sending his only begotten Son to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them; and in which God bears a testimony of his Son, of his sonship, deity, mediation, incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death, of his resurrection, ascension to heaven, session at his right hand, intercession for his people, and his second coming to judgment, and of eternal life and salvation by him. All which being matter of fact, and depending upon the witness of God, which is greater than that of men, needed no art nor oratory of men to recommend it: it was enough in plain words, and easy language, to declare it, with the evidence by which it was supported. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, “the mystery” of God: and so the Syriac version ahlad azr, “the mystery of God” one of Stephens’s copies reads, “the mystery of Christ”; and the Vulgate Latin version, “the testimony of Christ”.

Ver. 2. *For I determined not to know anything among you*, etc.] This was a resolution the apostle entered into before he came among them, that though he was well versed in human literature, and had a large compass of knowledge in the things of nature, yet would make known nothing else unto them, or make anything else the subject of his ministry,

save Christ, and him crucified: he had a spiritual and experimental knowledge of Christ himself, and which he valued above all things else; and this qualified him to make him known to others; and which knowledge he was very willing and ready to communicate by preaching the Gospel, which is the means of making known Christ as God’s salvation to the souls of men; and on this subject he chiefly insisted, and in which he took great delight and pleasure; he made known the things respecting the person of Christ, as that he was God, the Son of God, and truly man. God and man in one person; the things respecting his office, as that he was the Messiah, the mediator, prophet, priest, and King, the head, husband, Saviour, and

Redeemer of his church and people; and the things respecting his work as such, and the blessings of grace procured by him; as that justification is by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, peace, reconciliation, and atonement by his sacrifice, and salvation alone and entirely by him. His determination was to preach none but Christ; not himself, nor man; nor the power and purity of human nature, the free will and works of the creature, but to exclude all and everything from being partners with Christ in the business of salvation. This was the doctrine he chose in the first place, and principally, to insist upon, even salvation by Christ, and him, as

crucified: that which was the greatest offence to others was the most delightful to him, because salvation comes through and by the cross of Christ; and he dwelt upon this, and determined to do so; it being most for the glory of Christ, and what was owned for the conversion of sinners, the comfort of distressed minds, and is suitable food for faith, as he knew by his own experience.

Ver. 3. *And I was with you in weakness*, etc.] Meaning either the weakness of his bodily presence, the contemptibleness of his voice, and the mean figure he made as a preacher among them, both with respect to the matter and manner of his ministry in the eyes of many; or his lowly and humble deportment among them, not exerting the power and authority Christ had given him as an apostle; but choosing rather to work with his own hands, as he did at Corinth, to minister to his own necessities, and those of others; or the many persecutions which he endured there for the sake of preaching a crucified Christ; and which he sometimes calls “infirmities”; (see <470109>2 Corinthians 12:9,10) wherefore it is added,

and in fear, and in much trembling: not only on account of the greatness and awfulness of the work in which he was engaged, and lest the souls he ministered unto should be drawn aside from the truth, and into a sinful compliance; but because of the violence of men against him, threatening his life, and lying in wait for it: hence, the Lord, to encourage him, spake in a vision to him, and bid him not be afraid, but boldly preach his Gospel, and not be silent; assuring him of his presence, and that no man should set on him to hurt him, for he had many chosen vessels there to call by his grace through his ministry, (<441809>Acts 18:9,10) which no doubt greatly served to remove the fears and tremor that attended him.

Ver. 4. *And my speech, and my preaching*, etc.] As he determined, so he acted. As the subject matter of his ministry was not any of the liberal arts

and sciences, or the philosophy and dry morality of the Gentiles, but salvation by a crucified Christ; so his style, his diction, his language used in preaching,

was not with enticing words of man's wisdom; with technical words, words of art, contrived by human wisdom to captivate the affections; and with bare probable arguments only, a show of reason to persuade the mind to an assent, when nothing solid and substantial is advanced, only a run of words artfully put together, without any strength of argument in them; a method used by the false teachers, and which the apostle here strikes at, and tacitly condemns:

but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; partly by making use of solid proofs out of the writings of the Old Testament, indited by the Spirit of God, and which amounted to a demonstration of the truths he delivered; and partly by signs, and wonders, and miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, those extraordinary instances of divine power, which greatly confirmed the doctrines he preached: and besides all these, the Spirit of God wonderfully assisted him in his work, both as to words and matter; directing him, what to say, and in what form, in words, not which human wisdom taught, but which the Holy Ghost taught; and accompanying his ministry with his power, to the conversion, comfort, edification, and salvation of many.

Ver. 5. *That your faith should not stand*, etc.] "Or be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God". The Spirit of God directed him, and he under his influence chose, and by his assistance pursued this way of preaching, with this view, and for this reason, that faith in Christ, and in the doctrines of his Gospel, which comes by hearing, might not be attributed to the force of human eloquence and oratory; or stand upon so sandy a foundation, as that which might, if that was the case, be puffed away by a superior flow and force of words; but that it might be ascribed, as it ought to be, to almighty power, stand in it, be supported by it, and at last be finished and fulfilled with it.

Ver. 6. *Howbeit we speak wisdom*, etc.] Though the wise philosophers among the Gentiles accounted the Gospel foolishness; and though the apostle, by an ironical concession, had called the ministry of it the foolishness of preaching, and the foolishness of God, and had thought best, for wise reasons, to deliver it in a plain and simple manner, without the embellishments of human wisdom; yet he vindicates it from the charge of

folly: it was not folly, but wisdom, which he and his fellow ministers preached, and that of the highest kind, as appears from what follows. Though it was not esteemed so by all men, yet

among, or with

them that are perfect; adult, at age, opposed to babes and children; such who have their understandings enlightened by the spirit of wisdom and revelation; who have their senses exercised to discern between divine and human wisdom; and who are perfect in a comparative sense, having more spiritual knowledge and understanding than others; for none, in the present state of things, are absolutely perfect in knowledge; they that know most, know but in part: now to such the Gospel and the doctrines of it appear to be the highest wisdom; for the apostle's sense is not that he and other Gospel ministers preached the more sublime doctrines of it to a select set of persons that had more judgment and a better understanding of things than others: if this could be thought to be the apostle's meaning, he might be supposed to allude to a custom among the Jews, not to deliver the sublime things of the law, but to persons so and so qualified.

> "Says R. Ame[f17], they do not deliver the secrets of the law, but to him who has the five things or characters in (Isaiah 3:3)"

So they did not suffer the first chapter of Genesis and the visions of Ezekiel to be read until thirty years of age[f18]; and from them the Pythagoreans took their notion of not declaring their mysteries but to τελειοι, "perfect ones", the word here used[f19]; but the apostle's sense is, that to such that were perfect, and even to everyone that had the least degree of spiritual knowledge, the Gospel was wisdom. Some refer this clause not to persons, but things; and so the Arabic version reads it, "we speak wisdom concerning things that are perfect"; as the things of the Gospel are, such as a plenteous redemption, perfect righteousness, full pardon, plenary satisfaction, and complete salvation and happiness:

yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: meaning not the idolatry, superstition, curious and magic arts introduced by demons, which principalities and powers, with all their works, are spoiled and destroyed by Christ; but either the political wisdom and crafty schemes of the civil governors of the world, against Christ and his Gospel, who were by this time most, if not all of them, dead; or the vain philosophy of the wise and learned among the Gentiles, who every day

were less and less in vogue, through the quick and powerful spread of the Gospel; or rather the highest pitch of wisdom and knowledge in divine things, which the doctors and Rabbins among the Jews attained to in the age before the Messiah's coming; called "this world" in distinction from the times of the Messiah, which in Jewish language was, "the world to come", as Dr. Lightfoot observes; who with all their wisdom were confounded and brought to nought by the superior wisdom of the Gospel.

Ver. 7. *But we speak the wisdom of God*, etc.] Not of men, not of the wise politicians, the learned philosophers and Rabbins; that which human wisdom has no hand in forming, nor in revealing, nor in propagating, and which is disliked and disapproved of by it: the Gospel is the sole produce of divine wisdom, and in which there is a glorious display of it; even in those doctrines which are the most charged with folly, as salvation by a crucified Christ, justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, satisfaction by his sacrifice, etc.

in a mystery; it is mysterious wisdom. The Gospel is full of mysteries; there is the mystery of God, of a trinity of persons in the divine essence; the mystery of Christ, of his person, as God manifest in the flesh, of his divine sonship, and incarnation in the womb of a virgin; the mystery of the Spirit's grace in regeneration, of the saints' union to Christ, and communion with him, the resurrection of the same body, the change of living saints at Christ's coming, with many others:

even the hidden wisdom; the Gospel lay hid in God, in the thoughts of his heart, in the deep things of his mind, the counsels of his will, and purposes of his grace; it was hid in Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; it was hid under the types and shadows of the ceremonial law; and is hid in the Scriptures, which must be diligently searched for it, as for hidden treasures. It was hid from angels, and from Adam, until revealed; it was in some measure hid from the Jews under the former dispensation, to whom it was made known; and in some sense from believers, under the present dispensation, who as yet know it but in part; and is entirely hid from natural men, even from the most wise and prudent among them. This epithet expresses the preciousness, secrecy, and also security of the Gospel; hidden things being commonly of value, and being kept secret, are also safe; hidden and secret wisdom has been always esteemed, both by Greeks and Jews: hence that saying [f20] of the latter,

> "he that would be rich in learning of the law, ayhç hmkjhy "and that wisdom which is hidden", in a hidden and secret place, should hide and secrete himself from the children of men."

The apostle adds,

which God ordained before the world. The Egyptians and Grecians boasted much of the "earliness" of their wisdom, but neither of them are to be mentioned with the Gospel for the antiquity of it; it is the birth of God's counsels of old, the produce of his purposes, which he purposed in Christ before the world was; a scheme of things he drew in his eternal mind; it is a transcript of the council of peace and covenant of grace, which were from everlasting; what the Jews [f21] say of the law, is much more true of the Gospel,

> "that it was treasured up with God (they say two thousand years, and sometimes nine hundred and seventy four ages), before the world was created;"

and often speak of it as one of the seven things created before the world was [f22]. Moreover, this was to our glory; under the present dispensation, which by reason of the Gospel has a glory in it surpassing the former; it is to the glory both of the ministers of it, whose honour it is to be employed in preaching it, and in being by it the instruments of converting such who will be their glory another day, and to the glory of all believers who are by it called to the obtaining of the glory of Christ Jesus.

Ver. 8. *Which none of the princes of this world knew*, etc.] Meaning not the devils, as some have thought, who had they known what God designed to do by the death of Christ, would never have been concerned in bringing it about; nor so much the political governors of the Roman empire, particularly in Judea, as Herod and Pontius Pilate, who also were entirely ignorant of it; but rather the ecclesiastical rulers of the Jewish church state, called hzh µlw[, "this world", in distinction from abh µlw[, "the world to come", or times of the Messiah; (see <580205>Hebrews 2:5) such as the priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, the Rabbins and learned doctors. These knew nothing of the wisdom of the Gospel, or the wise counsels of God concerning salvation by Christ; they knew not the Messiah when he came, nor the prophecies concerning him; the Jews and their rulers did what they did through ignorance, and fulfilled those things they knew nothing of; (see <440317>Acts 3:17,18 13:27).

for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. They would have received him, believed in him, and not put him to death: a very great character is here given of Christ, “the Lord of glory”, or the glorious Jehovah; reference seems to be had to (<19A407>Psalm 24:7) where he is called, “the King of glory”, and is an argument of his true and proper deity: he is so called because possessed of all glorious perfections, and is the brightness of his Father’s glory; the same honour and glory are due to him as to the Father; and the same ascriptions of glory are made to him by angels and men. This is an instance of what the ancients call a communication of idioms or properties, whereby that which belongs to one nature in Christ, is predicated of his person, as denominated from the other: thus here the crucifixion of him, which properly belongs to his human nature, and that to his body only, is spoken of his person, and that as denominated from his divine nature, “the Lord of glory”; and he being so, this rendered his crucifixion, sufferings, and death, in human nature, efficacious to answer all the purposes for which they were endured.

Ver. 9. *But as it is written*, etc.] Not in an apocryphal book, called the Apocalypse of Elijah the prophet, as some have thought, but in (<236404>Isaiah 64:4) with some variation; and is brought to prove that the Gospel is mysterious and hidden wisdom, unknown to the princes of this world, and ordained before the world was, for the glory of the saints: for the following words are not to be understood of the glories and happiness of the future state; though they are indeed invisible, unheard of, and inconceivable as to the excellency and fulness of them, and are what God has prepared from all eternity, for all those on whom he bestows his grace here; but of the doctrines of grace, and mysteries of the Gospel, as the context and the reason of their citation abundantly show; and are what

eye hath not seen, nor ear heard: which could never have been seen to be read by the eye of man, nor the sound thereof ever heard by the ear of man, had not God been pleased to make a revelation of them; and though they are to be seen and read in the sacred writings, and to be heard either read or expounded, with the outward hearing of the ear; yet are neither to be seen nor heard intellectually, spiritually, and savingly, unless, God gives eyes to see, and ears to hear; the exterior senses of seeing and hearing are not sufficient to come at and discover the sense of them; flesh and blood, human nature cannot search them out, nor reveal them, no nor the internal senses, the intellectual capacity of men:

neither have entered into the heart of man; this clause is not in the original text; but is a phrase often used by the Jews, for that which never came into a man's mind, was never thought of by him, or he ever had any conceptions, or the least notion and idea of; so the elders of the city, at the beheading of the heifer, are represented not only as saying, "our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it"; but also neither wnybl l[htl[, "hath it entered into our hearts", that the sanhedrim hath shed blood [f23]; and elsewhere [f24] it is said, this matter is like to a king, wblb hl[ç, "into whose heart it entered", to plant in his garden, etc.

The things which God hath prepared for them that love him; in the original text it is, "for him that waiteth for him"; the sense is the same, for such as hope in the Lord and wait for him, are lovers of him; and the meaning is, that God has prepared and laid up in his own breast, in his counsels and covenant, in the types, shadows, and sacrifices of the old law, in the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, such doctrines and mysteries of grace as were not so seen, heard, known, and understood by the Old Testament prophets and saints; and has reserved for his people under the Gospel dispensation, the times of the Messiah, a more clear discovery of them: so the Jews themselves own that these words belong to the world to come [f25], which with them commonly signifies the days of the Messiah; though here they think fit to distinguish them, and interpret the phrase, "eye hath not seen", of the eye of the prophets: their words are these [f26];

> "all prophesied not, but of the days of the Messiah; but as to the world to come, eye hath not seen, O God, besides thee."

The gloss on it is,

> "the eye of the prophets hath not been able to see it."

Indeed, the mysteries of the Gospel are more clearly discerned now, than by the prophets formerly.

Ver. 10. *But God hath revealed them unto us*, etc.] Should it be said, that since this wisdom is so hidden and mysterious, the doctrines of the Gospel are so unknown, so much out of the sight and understanding of men, how come any to be acquainted with them? The answer is ready, God has made a revelation of them, not only in his word, which is common to men, nor only to his ministers, but to private Christians and believers,

by his Spirit; which designs not the external revelation made in the Scriptures, though that also is by the Spirit; but the internal revelation and application of the truths of the Gospel to the souls of men, which is sometimes ascribed to the Father of Christ. (<4001617>Matthew 16:17) sometimes to Christ himself, (<4801112>Galatians 1:12) and sometimes to the Spirit of Christ, (<4900117>Ephesians 1:17) and who guides into all truth, (<4801613>John 16:13), and here to the Father by the Spirit:

for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God; which does not suppose any ignorance of these things in the Spirit, antecedent to his searching of them; but his complete and perfect knowledge of them; even as God's searching of the hearts of men expresses his omniscience, and through knowledge of all that is in them: the "all things" the Spirit searches into, and has a perfect knowledge of, do not design in the utmost extent everything which comes within the compass of his infinite understanding; but every thing that is in, or belongs to the Gospel of Christ, even the more mysterious and sublime, as well as the more plain and easy doctrines: for the "deep things of God" intend not the perfections of his nature, which are past finding out unto perfection by men; nor the depths of his wise and righteous providence; but the mysterious doctrines of the Gospel, the fellowship of the mystery which was hid in God, his wise counsels of old concerning man's salvation, the scheme of things drawn in his eternal mind, and revealed in the word.

Ver. 11. *For what man knoweth the things of a man*, etc.] The thoughts of a man's heart, the conceptions of his mind, the schemes he is drawing there, his designs, purposes, and intentions; these can never be known by another man, no, nor by angels or devils; not by any creature; by none

save the spirit of a man which is in him? which is only conscious to, and can only make known the things that are in him:

even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God; and which, as it proves how secret, hidden, unknown, the mysteries of grace are, until revealed by the Spirit; so it gives full evidence to the deity of the Holy Ghost, and clearly shows he must be God, who is in him, knows the thoughts of his heart, the counsels of his mind, his purposes and decrees, and what is contained in them.

Ver. 12. *Now we have received not the spirit of the world*, etc.] Meaning either Satan, the god of the world, the spirit that is in it, and rules over it;

or the sinful carnal disposition of the men of the world, which is a spirit of covetousness, uncleanness, pride, malice, and error; or rather the carnal wisdom of the world, which is common to worldly men, lies in the knowledge of worldly things, and is pursued and exercised for worldly advantages:

but the Spirit which is of God; the Holy Ghost, which proceeds from the Father and the Son, is the gift of God to his people, and whom they receive through the doctrine of faith into their hearts, as a spirit of illumination, faith, comfort, adoption, truth, and as a seal and earnest of future glory:

that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God; who has given himself, his Son, and all things freely along with him, as a justifying righteousness, remission of sins, adoption, and eternal life; all which were provided for them in the council and covenant of peace, and made up that grace given unto them freely in Christ before the world began; for there was not only an eternal purpose to bestow these gifts, in the mind of God, and a promise of them in covenant, but a real donation of them to them, as considered in Christ so early: besides, God gave his Son, and Christ gave himself for them before they knew anything of the matter; and therefore must be unknown, until made known by the Spirit of God, who is sent unto them, and into their hearts, for this purpose, to make them known; which he does, by showing all this grace, and by opening and applying the truths of the everlasting Gospel: and this knowledge is not a mere notional one, but spiritual, experimental, and approbational, joined with affection and admiration; and is a knowledge of interest in these things, and which makes both humble and obedient.

Ver. 13. *Which things also we speak*, etc.] Namely, the things which have not been seen by the eye, heard by the ear, or understood by the heart of man; the things God has prepared for his people; the deep things of God; the things of God which are only known to the Spirit; the things that are freely given to them of God, and made known to them by the Spirit of God: these things are spoken out, preached, and declared to the sons of men,

not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth; which are learned in the schools of the philosophers, put together by human art, and "in the taught words of human wisdom", as the clause may be rendered; such as are taught and acquired by human learning, so artificially formed in their order

and structure as to work upon the affections of men, captivate the mind, and persuade to an assent.

But which the Holy Ghost teacheth; or "in the taught" words "of the Holy Ghost"; in the language of the Scriptures, edited by the Spirit of God; or such as the Holy Spirit taught them, suggested to them, directed them to the use of; for he not only supplied them with matter, but furnished them with words, with proper and spiritual oratory:

comparing spiritual things with spiritual; the things of the Spirit of God, the doctrines of the Gospel, with the spiritual writings of the Old Testament, whereby their truth and harmony are demonstrated; speaking as the oracles of God, and prophesying or preaching according to the analogy of faith; and adapting spiritual words to spiritual truths, clothing them with a language suitable and convenient to them, not foreign and flourishing, but pure, simple, and native; or accommodating and communicating spiritual things, as to matter and form, to spiritual men; which sense the Arabic version favours and confirms, such being only capable of them; and with these there is no need to use the eloquence, oratory, wisdom, and words of men.

Ver. 14. *But the natural man*, etc.] Not a babe in Christ, one that is newly born again, for though such have but little knowledge of spiritual things, yet they have a taste, and do relish and desire, and receive the sincere milk of the word, and grow thereby; but an unregenerate man, that has no knowledge at all of such things; not an unregenerate man only, who is openly and notoriously profane, abandoned to sensual lusts and pleasures; though such a man being sensual, and not having the Spirit, must be a natural man; but rather the wise philosopher, the Scribe, the disputer of this world; the rationalist, the man of the highest attainments in nature, in whom reason is wrought up to its highest pitch; the man of the greatest natural parts and abilities, yet without the Spirit and grace of God, mentioned (<4602>1 Corinthians 1:20) and who all along, both in that chapter and in this, quite down to this passage, is had in view: indeed, every man in a state of nature, who is as he was born, whatever may be the inward furniture of his mind, or his outward conduct of life, is but a natural man, and such an one

receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: not the things relating to the deity, personality, and perfections of the Holy Spirit, though these the natural man knows not, nor receives; nor the things done by him,

particularly the operations of his grace on the souls of men in regeneration, concerning which he says, as Nicodemus did, “how can these things be?” but the truths of the Gospel before spoken of; so called, because they are contained in the Scriptures edited by the Spirit of God, are the deep things of God, which he searches into and reveals; and because they are made known by him, who is given and received for that end and purpose, that the saints might know them; and because they are delivered by the preachers of the Gospel, in words which he teacheth; now these the natural man receives not in the love of them, so as to approve of and like them, truly to believe them, cordially embrace them, and heartily be subject to them, profess and obey them, but on the contrary abhors and rejects them:

for they are foolishness unto him; they are looked upon by him as absurd, and contrary to reason; they do not agree with his taste, he disrelishes and rejects them as things insipid and distasteful; he regards them as the effects of a crazy brain, and the reveries of a distempered head, and are with him the subject of banter and ridicule:

neither can he know them: as a natural man, and whilst he is such, nor by the help and mere light of nature only; his understanding, which is shut unto them, must be opened by a divine power, and a superior spiritual light must be thrown into it; at most he can only know the literal and grammatical sense of them, or only in the theory, notionally and speculatively, not experimentally, spiritually, and savingly:

because they are spiritually discerned; in a spiritual manner, by a spiritual light, and under the influence, and by the assistance of the Spirit of God. There must be a natural visive discerning faculty, suited to the object; as there must be a natural visive faculty to see and discern natural things, so there must be a spiritual one, to see, discern, judge, and approve of spiritual things; and which only a spiritual, and not a natural man has.

Ver. 15. *But he that is spiritual*, etc.] Meaning not any particular individual person, not the pope of Rome, as his adherents vainly imagine, whom they fancy to be a supreme and infallible judge in things spiritual, from whose judgment is no appeal, and who himself comes not under the judgment of any; for he is so far from being a spiritual man, or having judgment in spiritual things, that he stands described as the man of sin, the son of perdition, the wicked one, the beast, to whom a mouth is given, speaking great things and blasphemies; but a set of men are here meant, and not such who are only outwardly reformed in their lives and

conversations, who are at best but moral, and not spiritual men; nor all that have a form of godliness, an appearance of spirituality; there may be such who may have this, and yet deny the power of it, in which the principle and essence of spirituality lies; nor all such who have spiritual gifts, which may be where there is no spiritual grace; or that have a greater degree of spiritual knowledge than others, or that even have a greater degree of real grace than others; for though these are certainly spiritual men, (1 Corinthians 3:1,2 Galatians 6:1) yet they are not the only ones; others that have less knowledge and grace, are spiritual also, and are comprehended in this character; much less does it design such who have no flesh or sin in them, for there are none without sin in the present state; and if this was essential to a spiritual man, there would be no spiritual man in the world; such are only the saints in heaven, who are without fault before the throne: and after the resurrection will have spiritual bodies, as well as their spirits or souls are now made perfect: but here a spiritual man intends every man that is born of the Spirit; seeing what is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, or spiritual; from whence the regenerate man is denominated spiritual, he is such an one that is quickened by the Spirit of God, and lives spiritually by faith on Christ; he breathes after spiritual things, salvation by Christ, and an interest in him, communion with God, conformity to Christ, pardon of sin, a justifying righteousness, and eternal life: he has spiritual senses, and these in exercise; he has a spiritual sight of things, of himself, and his lost state by nature, and of the person, grace, and things of Christ; he has a spiritual hearing of the Gospel, by which faith comes; he hears so as to live, and he lives so as that he hears the joyful sound with understanding, approbation, and acceptance; he has a spiritual taste of things, of the grace of God, the fruit of Christ, and the truths of the Gospel; and he smells a sweet savour in them; he has a spiritual feeling, he feels the weight and burden of sin, the gracious influences and operations of the Spirit, and handles Christ, the word of life: he talks the spiritual language of Canaan, and his speech betrays him to be a spiritual man; and he walks spiritually by faith on Christ, and in the paths of holiness, righteousness, and truth: he is one that is renewed by the Holy Spirit, in the spirit of his mind; has a new heart, and a new spirit put within him; and is become a new creature in Christ: he has the good work of grace wrought in his soul; and in him grace is the reigning principle; in him the Spirit of God himself dwells, and he is led by him out of himself to Christ, and into all truth, and walks after him, and not after the flesh: his conversation is spiritual and heavenly; he is spiritually minded, he minds not the things of

the flesh, but the things of the Spirit; and though there is a great deal of carnality in him, in his thoughts, his words, and actions, yet this is matter of grief to him, and is his daily complaint: and such an one

judgeth all things; or "discerneth all things"; not all things in nature, or which fall within the compass of human knowledge; there are many things he may have no knowledge of, nor judgment in, being for the most part not the wise and prudent, but the foolish things of the world who are spiritual; but things divine and spiritual, the things of the Spirit of God, the doctrines of the Gospel before spoken of; and these not every difficult passage of Scripture, or knotty point of controversy, but the several articles of faith, necessary and essential to salvation; these are plain and easy to him, they stand before him in a clear light; as that salvation is alone by Christ, pardon by his blood, justification by his righteousness, etc. these he has seen and tasted of, and relishes, and can discern things that differ, and approve those which are more excellent; he can distinguish truth from error, and the voice of Christ from the voice of a stranger; and knows when the Gospel is preached, and when not, of which he judges by the word of God and his own experience: not that every spiritual man has a like degree of spiritual knowledge and judgment, but everyone discerns and judges according to the measure of the gift of Christ:

yet he himself is judged of no man; or "discerned of no man": that is, not of any natural man; who is not capable of discerning and judging who and what he is; only a spiritual man can discern and judge of his spiritual light, grace, and state; as the churches of Christ do, when persons are proposed to, them for communion; the other knows him not, but takes him to be a weak, or a wicked man, an hypocrite and a deceiver; and it is a small thing with him to be judged of man's judgment; he cares not what judgment the natural man passes upon him; nor does his faith in things spiritual, stand upon the authority and judgment of men; nor will he submit to it; nor can he be reproved, convinced, and refuted by such a person: for though a thousand sophistic arguments may be used with him which he cannot answer, he has a witness within himself to the truths of the Gospel, which opposes itself, and stands its ground against all objections; as with respect to the impurity of human nature, the impotency of man to anything that is spiritually good of himself, the insufficiency of his righteousness to justify him before God, the proper deity and real excellency of Christ, his blood and righteousness, and the internal work of the Spirit of God on the heart; sooner may a rock be removed out of its place, than a truly spiritual man

can be convicted by a natural man of the falsehood of these things, of which he has had an inward experience, as well as is instructed in them by the word of God; nor can he be better taught and instructed by the natural man.

Ver. 16. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord*, etc.] The deep counsels of his heart, the scheme of salvation by Jesus Christ, as drawn in his eternal mind, the sense of the Spirit of God in the writings of the Old Testament, the things of the Spirit of God, or the doctrines of grace more clearly revealed under the Gospel dispensation; not any natural man, by the light of truth and strength of reason, has known any of these things. The apostle either cites or alludes to (<2313>Isaiah 40:13)

that he may instruct him? not the Lord, who needs no instruction from any, nor can any teach and instruct him, nor would any be so bold and insolent as to attempt it nor does the knowledge of the mind of the Lord qualify any for such a work; since if he knows ever so much of it, he cannot know more than the Lord himself: but the spiritual man, whom a natural man, being ignorant of the mind of the Lord, cannot instruct; and so the words give a very proper and sufficient reason why the spiritual man is not discerned, judged, convinced, and instructed by the natural man:

but we have the mind of Christ; the same with "the mind of the Lord" which proves that Christ is the Lord, or Jehovah, and so truly and properly God; and which is to be understood, not only of the apostles and ministers of the Gospel, but of all true believers; and therefore want no instruction, as they can have none from the natural man; though chiefly of the former, whereby they were abundantly qualified for the further instruction even of spiritual men.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 3

In this chapter the apostle returns to the charge of schisms and contentions upon the Corinthians, which were the occasion of the epistle; and reproves them for their divisions, which were about their ministers; and gives them their just and due character, and who, though they were useful and commendable in their places, were not to be gloried in; and especially it was a great piece of weakness and folly, to set up one against another, when they had an equal interest in them all. Having, in the latter part of the preceding chapter, made mention of the spiritual man, the apostle tells the Corinthians, to whom he writes, that he could not address them as spiritual, but as carnal; and not as perfect men, among whom he spake the wisdom of God, but as babes in Christ, (1 Corinthians 3:1) and this rudeness and ignorance of theirs account for his conduct towards them, in delivering the plain and easy, and not the sublime doctrines of the Gospel to them, because they were not able to bear them; nor were they yet able, notwithstanding the length of time, the proficiency they had made, and the many teachers they had had among them, (1 Corinthians 3:2) and to prove that they were carnal, and not spiritual, he instances in their envy, strife, and contentions, which were carnal works, or works of the flesh, (1 Corinthians 3:3) and gives some particulars of their contentions about their ministers, which put it out of all doubt that they were carnal, (1 Corinthians 3:4) and reproves them for such contentions, and argues the folly and sinfulness of them; partly from the character of their preachers, as servants and ministers, who were the instruments of their faith and conversion, through the grace of God, and therefore not to be set up at the head of them as their lords and masters, (1 Corinthians 3:5) and partly from the unprofitableness of their ministry, without a divine blessing, (1 Corinthians 3:6,7) and also from the unity and equality of the ministers among themselves, though their labours and reward were different, (1 Corinthians 3:8) and therefore parties and factions were not to be made on their account; and besides, as they were labourers with God, and the church were his husbandry and building, in which they were employed, (1 Corinthians 3:9), though they might differ in some

superstructure points, yet they agreed in the foundation; and the apostle instances in himself under the character of a wise master builder, laying the foundation, and others building on it, (<46 03 10>1 Corinthians 3:10) and declares what this foundation was, which he and other Gospel ministers agreed in laying; nor was there any other that could be laid, to any good purpose besides, which is Jesus Christ, (<46 03 11>1 Corinthians 3:11) and then distinguishes between the different sorts of builders, the one laying on the foundation things of the greatest worth and value, and others things very trifling and useless, (<46 03 12>1 Corinthians 3:12) and intimates that there would be a time, when there would be a revelation and declaration of every man's work, of what sort it is, (<46 03 13>1 Corinthians 3:13) so that, according to their different structures, there will be a different reward, as is suggested, (<46 03 08>1 Corinthians 3:8) for though both sorts of preachers are upon the foundation, and so their persons will be safe, yet what they have built upon that foundation, according to the nature of it, shall either abide or be destroyed, (<46 03 14>1 Corinthians 3:14,15) wherefore inasmuch then as the church of Christ is a temple, a building laid on such a foundation as Christ, it ought not to be defiled by factions and divisions, by errors and heresies; especially since it is holy, and the Spirit of God dwells in it; and whoever does defile it shall surely be destroyed; and therefore the apostle dissuades from it, both from the turpitude of the action, and the danger of it, (<46 03 16>1 Corinthians 3:16,17) he cautions against the wisdom of this world, which was the cause of their divisions; as being self-deceiving, and contrary to true wisdom, (<46 03 18>1 Corinthians 3:18) and as being foolishness in the account of God, which he proves by some passages of scripture, (<46 03 19>1 Corinthians 3:19,23) and concludes, therefore, that no man ought to glory in men, in the best of men, not even in ministers, (<46 03 21>1 Corinthians 3:21) so as to separate and divide them, one from another, and set up one above another, since they, and all things else, were theirs, (<46 03 22>1 Corinthians 3:22) the ground and evidence of which their right and property in them are given, they being Christ's, and Christ's God's, (<46 03 23>1 Corinthians 3:23).

Ver. 1. *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you*, etc.] Though the apostle was a spiritual man himself, had spiritual gifts, even the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, could judge all things, had the mind of Christ, and was able to speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, yet could not speak it to them,

as unto spiritual; not but that they had the Spirit of God in them, and a work of grace upon them; for they were, as the apostle afterwards says, the

temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelt in them; they were washed, sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God; but had not that spiritual discerning, or judgment in spiritual things, which some believers had, at least when the apostle was first with them; and now they were under great spiritual declensions, and had not those spiritual frames, nor that spiritual experience and conversation, which some other Christians had:

but as unto carnal: not that they were in a carnal state, as unregenerate men are; but had carnal conceptions of things, were in carnal frames of soul, and walked in a carnal conversation with each other; though they were not in the flesh, in a state of nature, yet the flesh was in them, and not only lusted against the Spirit, but was very predominant in them, and carried them captive, so that they are denominated from it:

even as unto babes in Christ; they were in Christ, and so were new creatures; they were, as the Arabic version reads it, “in the faith of Christ”; though babes and weaklings in it, they were believers in Christ, converted persons, yet children in understanding, knowledge, and experience; had but little judgment in spiritual things, and were unskilful in the word of righteousness; at least this was the case of many of them, though others were enriched in all utterance and knowledge, and in no gift came behind members of other churches.

Ver. 2. *I have fed you with milk*, etc.] It is usual with the Jews to compare the law to milk, and they say [f27], that

> “as milk strengthens and nourishes an infant, so the law strengthens and nourishes the soul;”

but the apostle does not here mean hrwt lç blj, “the milk of the law”, as they [f28] call it, but the Gospel; comparable to milk, for its purity and wholesomeness, for the nourishing virtue there is in it, and because easy of digestion; for he designs by it, the more plain and easy doctrines of the Gospel, such as babes in Christ were capable of understanding and receiving: and not with meat; the more solid doctrines of the Gospel, and sublime mysteries of grace; the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom; such truths as were attended with difficulties, to which the carnal reason of men made many objections, and so were only fit to be brought before such who are of full age, young men, or rather fathers in Christ; who have had a large experience, and a long time of improvement in

spiritual knowledge, and have their senses exercised to distinguish between truth and error. The reason he gives for this his conduct is,

for hitherto ye were not able to bear it; they could not receive, relish, and digest it; it was too strong meat for them, they being weak in faith, and but babes in Christ; wherefore he prudently adapted things to their capacities, and that in perfect consistence with that faithfulness and integrity, for which he was so remarkable: for the Gospel he preached to them, which he calls "milk", was not another Gospel, or contrary to that which goes by the name of "meat": only the one consisted of truths more easily to be understood, and was delivered in a manner more suited to their capacities than the other: he adds,

neither yet now are ye able; which carries in it a charge of dulness and negligence, that they had been so long learning, and were improved no more in the knowledge of the truth; were as yet only in the alphabet of the Gospel, and needed to be afresh instructed in the first principles of the oracles of God; for anything beyond these was too high for them. The apostle seems to allude to the manner and custom of the Jews, in training up their children to learning; as to their age when they admit them scholars, their rule is this [f29],

> "they introduce children (into the school) to be taught when six or seven years of age, wpwg ^ynbw ^bh jk ypl, "according to the child's strength, and the make of his body, and less than six years of age they do not take any in.""

But sooner than this, a father is obliged to teach his child at home, concerning which they say [f30],

> "from what time is his father obliged to teach him the law? as soon as he begins to speak, he teaches him the law Moses commanded us, and "hear O Israel", and after that he instructs him, µyqwsp µyqwsp f[m f[m, "by little and little, here and there a verse", till he is six or seven years of age, and, wyrwb ypl lkh, "all this according to the clearness of his understanding";"

i.e. as he is able to take things in; and even till twelve years he was to be used with a great deal of tenderness:

"says R. Isaac [f31], at Usha they made an order, that a man should "use his son gently", until he is twelve years of age; the gloss upon it is, if his son refuses to learn, he shall use him µykw µyrbdbw tjnb, "with mildness and tender language.""

Ver. 3. *For ye are yet carnal*, etc.] The Syriac reads it, ^wtna rsbb, "ye are in the flesh": a phrase the apostle elsewhere uses of men in an unregenerate state; but this is not his meaning here, as before explained, but that carnality still prevailed among them, of which he gives proof and evidence:

for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? They envied each other's gifts and knowledge, strove about words to no profit, entered into warm debates and contentions about their ministers, and went into factions and parties, which were distinguished by the names they were most affected to; in all which they gave too clear evidence of their prevailing carnality, that they too much walked as other men, who make no profession of religion; that they were led by the judgment of men, and were carried away with human passions and inflections; and in their conduct could scarcely be distinguished from the rest of the world. The things that are here mentioned, and with which they are charged, are reckoned by the apostle among the works of the flesh, (<480519>Galatians 5:19,20) the phrase, "and divisions", is omitted in the Alexandrian copy, and in some others, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 4. *For while one saith, I am of Paul*, etc.] This shows what their envying and strife, and divisions were about, and from whence they sprung; and which serve, to strengthen the proof, and support the charge of carnality brought against them; for when one sort made a party for Paul, and set up him as their minister above all others; and said

another, I am of Apollos, preferring him for his eloquence above Paul, or any other preacher, as appears from (<461612>1 Corinthians 1:12) there was a third sort for Cephas, whom they cried up as superior to the other two, or any other man; and a fourth were for Christ, and despised all ministers whatever:

are ye not carnal? all this was a demonstration of it: they could never clear themselves from it, they must be convicted in their own consciences of it;

to which the apostle appeals: the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, “are ye not men?”

Ver. 5. *Who then is Paul? and who is Apollos?* etc.] The apostle’s name being used, and he a party concerned, could speak the more freely upon this head, and ask what they thought of himself, and other preachers, whether they were more than men? what authority and power they had, whether they looked upon them as the authors of a new religion, or the founders of a new sect, that were to go by their names? and directs them what light to consider them in, how that they were

but ministers by whom ye believed: they were servants to Christ and to his churches, and not lords; they did not assume any dominion over men, or pretend to lord it over God’s heritage; there is but one Lord and master, and that is Christ, whom they served, and taught others to obey; they were only instrumental in the hand of God, by whom souls were directed, encouraged, and brought to believe in Christ; as for faith itself, that is the gift of God, the operation of his power, and of which Christ is the author and finisher; they laid no claim to this as their work, or imagined they had any dominion over it; that they could either implant it, or increase it of themselves; but thought it honour enough done them, that it came by their ministry; and that that, and the joy of it, were helped and furthered by their means: the Vulgate Latin version reads, “his ministers whom ye believed”; that is, the ministers of Christ, whom they believed in; not in the ministers, but Christ; the Arabic version renders it, “but two ministers, by whom ye believed”; referring to Paul and Apollos, who are meant:

even as the Lord gave to every man; gifts to minister with, and success to his ministry; making him useful to this and the other man, to bring him to the faith of Christ; all which is owing to the free grace and sovereign good will and pleasure of God.

Ver. 6. *I have planted*, etc.] That is, ministerially; otherwise the planting of souls in Christ, and the implanting of grace in them, are things purely divine, and peculiar to God, and the power of his grace; but his meaning is, that he was at Corinth, as in other places, the first that preached the Gospel to them; and was an instrument of the conversion of many souls, and of laying the foundation, and of raising and forming a Gospel church state, and of planting them in it;

Apollos watered; he followed after, and his ministry was blessed for edification; he was a means of carrying on the superstructure, and of building up souls in faith and holiness, and of making them fruitful in every good word and work: each minister of the Gospel has his proper gifts, work, and usefulness; some are planters, others waterers; some are employed in hewing down the sturdy oaks, and others in squaring and fitting, and laying them in the building; some are "Boanergeses", sons of thunder, and are mostly useful in conviction and conversion; and others are "Barnabases", sons of consolation, who are chiefly made use of in comforting and edifying the saints: but God gave the increase: for as the gardener may put his plants into the earth, and water them when he has so done, but cannot cause them to grow, this is owing to a divine blessing; and as the husbandman tills his ground, casts the seed into it, and waits for the former and latter rain, but cannot cause it to spring up, or increase to perfection, this is done by a superior influence; so ministers of the Gospel plant and water, cast in the seed of the word, preach the Gospel, but all the success is from the Lord; God only causes it to spring up and grow; it is he that gives it its increasing, spreading, fructifying virtue and efficacy.

Ver. 7. *So then, neither is he that planteth anything*, etc.] Not that he is the happy instrument of beginning the good work:

neither he that watereth; who is the means of carrying of it on: not that they are simply and absolutely nothing, without any restriction and limitation; they are men, they are Christians, they are ministers, and useful ones, by whom others believe; they are labourers together with God, ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God, and so to be accounted of; but they are nothing in themselves, nor in their own account, or with respect to God: they are nothing of themselves as ministers; they have nothing but what they have received; all their gifts are from God, nor can they exercise them aright without the grace of God, not being able to think a good thought as of themselves; nor are they anything in making their planting and watering effectual; and so no glory belongs to them; nothing is to be ascribed to them, they have no part or lot in these things:

but God that giveth the increase; he gives them their abilities, assists them in the exercise of their gifts, makes their ministrations useful, and he has, as he ought to have, all the glory.

Ver. 8. *Now he that planteth, and he that watereth are one*, etc.] Not in every respect so; they were different as men, they were not the same

individual persons, nor in the same office; Paul was an apostle, Apollos only a preacher of the Gospel; nor had they the same measure of gifts, nor did they labour alike, or were of the same usefulness; but they had one and the same commission to preach the Gospel; and the Gospel they preached was the same; and so were their views, aims, and ends, which were the glory of God, and the good of immortal souls; and they had the same love and affection for one another; they were one in their work, judgment, and affection; and which carries in it a strong reason and argument why the members of this church should not contend and divide about them:

and every man shall receive his own reward; either from men, that double honour he is worthy of, maintenance and respect; or rather from God, not a reward of debt, for his labours are by no means meritorious of anything at the hands of God, from whom he has all the grace, strength, and abilities he labours with; but of grace, even the reward of the inheritance, because he serves the Lord Christ; which is by bequest, through the death of the testator, and common to all the children of God, and heirs of glory:

according to his own labour; and not another's; and not according to the success of it, but according to that itself; not that that is the measure of the reward, for the reward infinitely exceeds it; but is that to which God has graciously annexed the promise of the reward, as an encouragement to it.

Ver. 9. *For we are labourers together with God*, etc.] The ministers of the Gospel are labourers in the Lord's vineyard, and not loiterers; their work is a laborious work, both to body and mind; which lies in close study and meditation, in diligent reading and constant prayer, in frequent ministration of the word, and administration of ordinances; besides reproofs, admonitions, and exhortations, counsels, and instructions, which are often necessary: it is a work, which no man is sufficient for of himself; what requires diligence, industry, and faithfulness; is honourable, and, when rightly performed, deserves respect: nor do they labour alone, but with God; not as co-ordinate, but as subordinate workers; for though they labour in planting and watering, yet they bear no part with him in giving the increase; he is the husbandman, the chief master builder, they are labourers under him; however, he works with them; hence their labours are not in vain, and they have great encouragement to go on in their work; and they are God's labourers with one another, which is a sense of the phrase not to be overlooked. The apostle often, in his epistles, speaks of his fellow

workmen, and fellow labourers, who wrought together with him under God:

ye are God's husbandry; or tillage; he is the proprietor of the field, the occupier of it, the husbandman who breaks up the fallow ground of the hearts of his people; he casts in the seed of grace, he makes the ground good, and causes it to bring forth fruit; the churches of Christ are his property, land of his fertilizing, and all the fruit belongs unto him; they are gardens of his planting, and vineyards of his watering, and which he keeps night and day, lest any hurt:

ye are God's building; as the former metaphor is taken from agriculture, this is from architecture: believers in a church state are God's house, in which he dwells, and which he himself has built; he has laid the foundation, which is Jesus Christ; he makes his people lively stones, and lays them on it; he raises up the superstructure, and will complete the building, and ought to bear all the glory, and in all which he makes use of his ministers as instruments.

Ver. 10. *According to the grace of God which is given unto me*, etc.] Lest the apostle should be thought to be too much elated with the characters he had given of himself, and other ministers, or to assume too much to himself, in what he was about to say of himself, he ascribes all the gifts he had, and the usefulness he was of, as a labourer and builder in the church of God, to rich grace; by which he was called unto, and qualified for such work: as a wise master builder. This same phrase, σοφος αρχιτεκτων, "a wise master builder", is used by the Septuagint interpreters, in (<2003>Isaiah 3:3) by which they render μyç r j μk j, "the cunning artificer", or the wise man of the carpenters, or artificers. The architect of all is God the Father, Son, and Spirit; God the Father is the builder of all things; Christ builds his church on himself the rock; and the saints are built up an habitation for God, through the Spirit; ministers are builders under God, instruments he makes use of, and who would labour in vain, unless the Lord build the city: such an one was the apostle, though he calls himself a master builder with respect to inferior ministers; he being in the highest office in the church, as an apostle, and not a whit behind the chief of them; and was the chief apostle of the Gentiles, and was principally concerned in preaching the Gospel to them, and in raising churches among them. The allusion is to the Jews, who use to call the Rabbins and doctors, and the

disciples of the wise men, “builders”: they ask in a certain place [f32], ˆyanb yam,

> “who are the builders? says R. Joehanna, these are the disciples of the wise men, who employ themselves in the building of the world all their days [f33].”

That is, the law, as one [f34] of their writers explains this building; hence they are sometimes called builders of the law, and which was looked upon to be an high character: it is said [f35] of a certain person, that

> “R. Zeira praised him, and called him, atyyrwad hyynb, “a builder of the law.””

But the apostle was a Gospel builder, a builder of Gospel churches in Gospel truths, and in faith and holiness; these were foolish builders, but he a wise one; and his wisdom lay in the knowledge of Christ, in preaching him, and in winning souls unto him; and particularly in that he took care in his ministry, to lay a good foundation:

I have laid the foundation; meaning not only that as at other places, so at Corinth, he first preached the Gospel to them, and was the first instrument of their conversion, and laying the foundation of a Gospel church state; but that in his preaching he laid Christ as the one and only foundation, for men to build their faith and hope upon, for everlasting life and happiness, mentioned in the following verse:

and another buildeth thereupon; which designs not a private Christian, who was directed in the apostle’s ministry to build his soul upon the rock of ages, Christ the sure foundation laid in Zion; though there is a truth in this, the apostle laid Christ as a foundation, and encouraged others to build their faith and hope upon him, as to eternal salvation; and many were enabled to do so, which was the happy fruit of his ministry, and what gave him pleasure; and in this sense he also himself built upon this foundation, for this cannot be said of another, to the exclusion of himself; he would never lay a foundation, and direct others to build on it, and not build upon it himself; but another minister of the Gospel is meant, as Apollos, or any other who might follow him, and be a means of carrying on the building upon the foundation he had laid; and of edifying and establishing souls upon it; and of rearing up superstructure truths, upon the foundation one:

but let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon; that he builds by line, evenly, according to the analogy of faith; that he builds in proportion to the foundation; and lays such things upon it as are becoming it, and suitable to it.

Ver. 11. *For other foundation can no man lay*, etc.] Men may attempt to lay other foundations than Christ, and build upon them, but to no purpose; they will be of no avail; all besides him are sandy foundations; such as fleshly privileges, a carnal descent, a religious education, an external profession of religion, a man's own righteousness, and the absolute mercy of God; but men ought to lay no other, nor can they, that will be of any advantage to themselves or others:

than that which is laid; by Jehovah the Father, both in his eternal counsels and covenant, when he set forth and appointed Christ to be the Saviour and Redeemer of his people; and in the fulness of time, when he sent him forth under the same characters; and by the Spirit of God, when he reveals Christ to them, and forms him in them; and by the ministers of the Gospel, who jointly agree to lay him ministerially, as the foundation for souls to build their hope upon: hence he is called the "foundation of the apostles and prophets", as here,

which is Jesus Christ; he is the foundation personally considered, as God-man and Mediator, on which the church, and every believer is built; he is the foundation of the covenant of grace, and of eternal salvation; of the faith and hope, peace, joy, and comfort of all the saints; and of the building of God, that house not made with hands, that city which has foundations, eternal glory in the other world; and he is the foundation, doctrinally considered; or the doctrines of his proper, deity, of his divine and eternal sonship, of his incarnation, of his Messiahship, of his obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead, of justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice, etc. are fundamental ones: the Jews were wont to call the principal articles of their religion, ydwsy, "foundations": Maimondes has entitled one of his tracts, hrwth ydwsy "the foundations of the law"; but the doctrines respecting the person, offices, and grace of Christ, are the only foundation of the Gospel.

Ver. 12. *Now if any man build upon this foundation*, etc.] The different materials laid by one and the same man, on this foundation, or the different doctrines advanced upon it, are some of them comparable to

gold, silver, precious stones; for their intrinsic worth and value; for the purity and sincerity of them; for their weight, importance, solidity, and substantiality; for their durableness; for the great esteem they are had in by those, who know the worth of them; and for the great usefulness they are of unto them, being rich in themselves, and enriching to them; and these are the great, momentous, and valuable truths of the Gospel, which agree with and are suitable to the foundation they are built upon: so the Jews [f36] compare their oral and written law, the former to gold, and the latter to precious stones, but the metaphors much better suit the doctrines of the Gospel: others are like to

wood, hay, stubble; by which are meant, not heretical doctrines, damnable heresies, such as are diametrically opposite to, and overturn the foundation; for one and the same man builds the former, as these, and is himself saved at last; neither of which is true, of such that deliver doctrines of devils: but empty, trifling, useless things are meant; such as fables, endless genealogies, human traditions, Jewish rites and ceremonies; which through the prejudice of education, and through ignorance and inadvertency, without any bad design, might by some be introduced into their ministry, who had been brought up in the Jewish religion; as also the wisdom of the world, the philosophy of the Gentiles, oppositions of science falsely so called, curious speculations, vain and idle notions, which such who had their education among the Greeks might still retain, and be fond of; and through an itch of vain glory, mix with their evangelic ministrations; and in a word, everything that may now be advanced in the Gospel ministry, not so honourable to the grace of God, or so becoming the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, nor so consistent with the Spirit's work of grace, may be meant hereby; the same minister at different times, and sometimes at one and the same time in his ministry, lays the foundation, Christ, and builds on it for a while excellent valuable truths, raises a superstructure of gold, silver, and precious stones, and then covers the edifice with trifling, impertinent, and inconsistent things, with wood, hay, and stubble; and so at last, of this promising fine stately building, makes a thatched house,

Ver. 13. *Every man's work shall be made manifest*, etc.] The doctrine he preaches shall be sooner or later made manifest to himself, and to his hearers; who shall see the inconsistency, irregularity, and deformity of such a building; at first so well laid, then piled up with such excellent materials, and at last covered in with such trifling or incoherent stuff:

for the day shall declare it; meaning not the day of judgment, though that is often called the day, or that day, and will be attended with fire, and in it all secrets shall be made manifest; but the apostle intends a discovery that will be made of doctrines in this world, before that time comes: wherefore this day rather designs a day of tribulation; as of persecution, which tries men's principles, whether they are solid or not; and of error and heresy, when men are put upon a re-examination of their doctrines, whereby persons and truths that are approved are made manifest; or of some great calamity, such as the destruction of Jerusalem, whereby many wrong notions the Jews yet retained were discovered: but it is best of all to understand this day of the Gospel day, and of the progress of Gospel light, especially in some particular periods of it; as in the primitive times, at the reformation from popery, and the more remarkable Gospel daylight, which will be in the latter times, when the impertinence and inconsistency of many things which now obtain in the ministry will be seen; (see Ephesians 5:13).

Because it shall be revealed by fire: not that day, but the man's work, or doctrine:

and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is; by the fire is meant, not the general conflagration of the world, when that, and all that is therein, will be burnt up; much less the fire of purgatory, the "papists" dream of, for the punishment of evil actions; for the apostle is not speaking of the actions of men, good or bad, but of the doctrines of ministers; rather the fire of tribulation and affliction, which, as it is for the trial of the grace of faith, so of the doctrine of faith, whereby it becomes much more precious than of gold that perisheth; or of some fiery dispensation of God's vengeance, as on Jerusalem: though the word of God, which is as fire, seems to be intended; which in some certain times so blazes forth, and will more especially in the latter day, that by the light of it, both ministers and churches will be able to see clearly the bright shining lustre of the gold, silver, and precious stones; and with so much heat, as to burn up the wood, hay, and stubble; when the difference between these things will be most easily discerned.

Ver. 14. *If any man's work abide*, etc.] That is, if any minister's doctrine will bear the test of daylight, to be looked into, and abide the fire of the word; as gold, silver, and precious stones will, or such doctrines as are

comparable to them, which will shine the brighter for being tried by this fire:

which he hath built thereupon; upon the foundation Christ, in entire consistence with, and proportion to it, and highly becoming it:

he shall receive a reward; either from the churches of Christ here, who shall honour and respect him for his faithful labours in the ministry; or from Christ hereafter, who will say, well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

Ver. 15. *If any man's work shall be burnt*, etc.] If any minister's doctrine he has preached shall be destroyed and disappear, shall be disapproved of, and rejected by the churches, not being able, to bear the light and heat of the fire of God's word:

he shall suffer loss; of all his labour and pains he has been at, in collecting together such trifling, useless, and inconsistent things; and of all that glory and popular applause he might expect from men, on account of them, and which was the snare that drew him into such a way of preaching:

but he himself shall be saved; with an everlasting salvation; not by his ministerial labours, much less by his wood, hay, and stubble, which will be all burnt up; but through his being, notwithstanding all the imperfections of his ministry, upon the foundation Christ:

yet so as by fire; with much difficulty, and will be scarcely saved; (see 1 Peter 4:17,18 Zechariah 13:9) with great danger, loss, and shame; as a man that is burnt out of house and home, he escapes himself with his own life, but loses all about him: so the Syriac version reads it, arwn ˆmd Æya, "as out of the fire": (see Zechariah 3:2 Jude 1:23). Or the sense is, that he shall be tried by the fire of the word, and convinced by the light of it of the errors, irregularities, and inconsistencies of his ministry; either in his time of life and health, or on a death bed; and shall have all his wood, hay, and stubble burnt up, for nothing of this kind shall he carry with him in his judgment to heaven; only the gold, silver, and precious stones; and will find that the latter doctrines, and not the former, will only support him in the views of death and eternity.

Ver. 16. *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God*, etc.] The apostle having spoken of the saints as God's building, of himself as a wise master builder, of Christ as the only foundation, and of various doctrines as the

materials laid thereon, proceeds to observe to this church, and the members of it, that they being incorporated together in a Gospel church state, were the temple of God; and which was what they could not, or at least ought not, to be ignorant of: and they are so called, in allusion to Solomon's temple; which as it was a type of the natural, so of the mystical body of Christ. There is an agreement between that and the church of Christ, in its maker, matter, situation, magnificence, and holiness; and the church is said to be the temple of God, because it is of his building, and in which he dwells: what the apostle here says of the saints at Corinth, the Jewish doctors say of the Israelites [f37], µta hwhy lkyh, "the temple of the Lord are ye"; and which being usually said of them in the apostle's time, he may refer unto; and much better apply to the persons he does, of which the indwelling of the Spirit was the evidence:

and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you: in particular members, as a spirit of regeneration, sanctification, faith, and adoption, and as the earnest and pledge of their future glory; in their ministers to fit and qualify them for their work, and carry them through it; and in the whole church, to bless the word and ordinances, for their growth, comfort, and establishment. This furnishes out a considerable proof of the deity and distinct personality of the Spirit, since this is mentioned as an evidence of the saints being the temple of God, which would not be one, if the Spirit was not God, who dwells therein; and since a temple is sacred to deity, and therefore if he dwells here as in a temple, he must dwell here as God; and since he is mentioned as distinct from God, whose Spirit he is, and dwelling, a personal action is ascribed to him, he must be a distinct divine person.

Ver. 17. *If any man defile the temple of God*, etc.] By the wisdom of the world, through philosophy, and vain deceit; by bringing in false doctrines, errors, and heresies, and hereby corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ; and make rents, factions, and divisions among them:

him shall God destroy; body and soul in hell; for as their wicked principles and heretical notions are pernicious to others, they are damnable to themselves, and will bring upon them that judgment which lingereth not, and that damnation which slumbereth not. The false prophet, as well as the beast, and the devil, shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. God is not only an avenger of all immoralities committed against his righteous law, but of all false doctrine and false worship, and of everything that is

contrary to the Gospel, and to the order and ordinances of it. The reason of this is,

for the temple of God is holy; alluding to the holiness of Solomon's temple,

> "into which a man might not go with his staff, nor with his shoes on, nor with his purse, nor with dust upon his feet, nor might he make it a thoroughfare, and much less spit in it [f38]."

And yet, how was it polluted in our Lord's time by the Jews, who made it a den of thieves, instead of an house of prayer?

which temple ye are. This is added for further confirmation, and to assert their holiness in doctrine, worship, and conversation, and to deter the false teachers from making use of any means to corrupt them in either.

Ver. 18. *Let no man deceive himself*, etc.] With vain notions of serving God and religion, and of doing the churches good by his carnal and worldly wisdom, and with false hopes of escaping the vengeance of God for sowing the tares of error, heresy, and discord among his people.

If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world; either a member of them, or a preacher among them, who thought himself wise in worldly wisdom; or was desirous to be thought so by others; or would be a truly wise man in this world, whilst he lives in it, and before he goes out of it:

let him become a fool that he may be wise; not that, properly speaking, folly is the way to wisdom; but that that man that would be wise in a spiritual sense, must first learn to know himself; must be convinced of, and acknowledge his own folly, embrace the Gospel of Christ, which is esteemed foolishness by the world; submit to the ordinances of Christ, which are despised by men; and take up the cross of Christ, and follow him, bear reproach and persecution for his sake, than which nothing is more ridiculous with carnal men: he must deny his worldly wisdom, his carnal and righteous self, and wholly rest and rely on Christ, and his righteousness, for eternal life and happiness, and so will he become truly wise unto salvation. The Jews [f39] have a saying, "that everyone wmx[lbnmh, "that makes himself a fool", for the words of the law, at the end, shall be exalted."

Ver. 19. *For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God*, etc.] The wisdom of the Jewish, or Gentile world. It is had in no account with him; it is despised and neglected by him; he makes it foolish, destroys it, and brings it to nothing; he lays it aside as useless, to make men wise unto salvation, and by the foolishness of preaching saves them that believe; he passes by the wise and prudent, and hides the things of the Gospel from them; so, that, with all their learning and wisdom, they can neither apprehend nor comprehend the mysteries of grace, whilst he reveals them unto babes, and chooses the foolish things of this world to spread the knowledge of himself, his Son, his Gospel, and the truths of it, and whom he makes successful, to the confusion of the wise and learned.

"For it is written", bytkdk, an usual form of citing Scriptures with the Jews; it is in (<1865>Job 5:13) he taketh the wise in their own craftiness, or by it. What Eliphaz says of the wise politicians of the world, who are often disappointed of their crafty devices, and cannot perform the enterprises they have took in hand, but their schemes are broken, and the snares they laid for others they are taken in themselves, is applied by the apostle to the Jewish doctors, or the Gentile philosophers, or rather to the false teachers among the Christians; whose schemes they have formed to corrupt the churches, and demolish the Gospel, prove their own destruction; nor will they, with all their cunning, be able to get out of the hand of God, and escape his awful vengeance. The allusion is either to the taking of wild beasts and birds in snares and nets, or to the taking of men in flight, laying hold of them with the hand, and grasping them hard, that they cannot get loose. The Targum interprets the words of the wise men of Pharaoh, and of the Egyptian astrologers, schemes they have formed to corrupt the churches, and demolish the Gospel, prove their own destruction; nor will they, with all their cunning, be able to get out of the hand of God, and escape his awful vengeance. The allusion is either to the taking of wild beasts and birds in snares and nets, or to the taking of men in flight, laying hold of them with the hand, and grasping them hard, that they cannot get loose. The Targum interprets the words of the wise men of Pharaoh, and of the Egyptian astrologers.

Ver. 20. *And again*, etc.] Not in the same place, nor in the same book, but in the Psalms, in (<1911>Psalm 94:11). This form of citing Scriptures answers to dw[w and moreover, used by the Jewish doctors when the matter does not so clearly appear from the first proof, and therefore they produce

another [f40]: and so here the apostle, for the further confirmation and illustration of this point, that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, to the testimony of Eliphaz, adds this of David,

the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain; in the Psalms it is, "the Lord knoweth the thoughts of men, that they are vanity"; which the apostle not only cites, but explains and teaches; as that by men is meant men of wisdom and knowledge, of the greatest capacities, whose thoughts, reasonings, schemes, and devices, the omniscient God not only knows, but makes known, and discovers them, sooner or later, to be vain and fruitless, yea, vanity itself; and notwithstanding all their machinations and contrivances, his counsel shall stand, his Gospel shall be maintained, his truths shall prevail, and his ordinances shall be continued, and his work go on.

Ver. 21. *Therefore let no man glory in men*, etc.] The apostle means ministers, who are but men, even the best of them, and therefore not to be gloried in; and has chiefly respect to the false teachers, whose wisdom, learning, and eloquence, the Corinthians were greatly taken with, and boasted of; it was so ensnaring to them, that they even idolized them for it, called them their masters, pinned their faith on their sleeve, gave up themselves to them, and were greatly under their authority, influence, and direction, which is here condemned; and which was so far from being right, that they ought not to behave in such manner to the best of ministers, nor to glory in anyone above another; no, not in Paul, nor Apollos, nor Cephas;

for all things are yours; all the ministers, and all they are endowed with; these were all for their use and service, for their benefit and advantage; wherefore it was very wrong to set up one above, or against another, or for any party to engross anyone minister, when he belonged to them all; and great weakness to reject others, when they had a common right and property in them.

Ver. 22. *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas*, etc.] These are particularly named, because their disputes were chiefly about them; but what is said of them is true of all other, and all the ministers of Christ, that they are the church's. The gifts which Christ received for them, and has bestowed on them, are not their own, but the church's, and are given to them, not so much for their own use, as for the good and benefit of others. They are made able ministers of the New Testament, not by themselves, nor by man, but by God; who disposes of them as blessings to his churches, and gives

them to be pastors and teachers of them, to feed them with knowledge, and with understanding; they are qualified by the Spirit of God for the service of the saints, and are separated by him to it, and are constituted overseers of the flock by his direction; they are placed as stewards of the mysteries and manifold grace of God, to dispense them with wisdom and faithfulness to all in his family, and are the servants of the churches for Jesus' sake, and therefore not to be gloried in; though to be respected in their place and station:

or the world: this, with what follows, is an amplification of the account, and is as if the apostle should say, you should be so far from glorying in man, in a few poor weak instruments, and especially in that in them, which with God is foolishness and vanity, that not only all the ministers of the word are yours, but even the whole world is yours; though called out of it, esteemed the filth of it, and have so little a share of it. The world was made for the sake of the saints, and is continued on their account; when they are called by grace, it will soon be at an end. It is their Lord's, and so theirs, both as Creator and Mediator: the good things of the world are enjoyed by the saints in a peculiar way, as covenant mercies and blessings, so as they are not by others, The evil things of it, as the sins and lusts of it, are escaped by them; and the afflictions they meet with in it are made to work for their good; and as they are heirs of the world, as Abraham was, so they shall inherit it in a much better form than it now is: the present heavens will pass away, the earth and all therein will be burnt up, and new heavens and a new earth arise, in which will dwell none but righteous persons: the world, in its present state, is an inn, suited to the condition of the saints, as pilgrims and strangers; but then it will be as a palace, fit for the spouse and bride of Christ.

Or life; in every view of it: the life of Christ, which he lived here on earth, in obedience to his Father's will, and which he now lives in heaven, where he ever lives to make intercession for his people, and for their good; that fulness of life that is in him, and that eternal life which is through him, are all theirs. The lives of the ministers of the Gospel are for their profit and advantage; and they are spared and continued on their account; their own lives are theirs, though not to live to themselves, nor to the lusts of men, but by faith on Christ, and to the glory of God, and which is what they desire.

Or death: the death of Christ was for them, in their room and stead, for their sins, to make satisfaction to divine justice for them; and the benefits of it are enjoyed by them. The death of good men, ministers, martyrs, and confessors, is theirs, serves to confirm their faith, animate their zeal, and encourage them to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering. Their own death is a blessing to them; the sting is taken away by Christ; the curse is removed; it is no penal evil to them; it is a deliverance of them from all the sorrows and troubles of this life, and is their passage into endless glory and happiness.

Or things present; whether prosperous or adverse; and these, whether they be their own or others, all work together for their good.

Or things to come; future troubles and exercises; or future good things, either in this world, or in the world to come; the invisible glories of a future state:

all are yours; which is repeated for confirmation sake, and to observe, that if there was anything that was omitted, or could not be thought to be included in any of the above expressions, that also was theirs.

Ver. 23. *And ye are Christ's*, etc.] This is the ground and foundation of all things being theirs, and shows in what way they come by them, and what gives them their claim and property: they are Christ's, he has an interest in them, and they in him; they are his, not only by creation, as all men are, but by the Father's special gift of them to him, as his spouse and bride, his children, his sheep, his portion, and his jewels; they are his through the purchase of his own blood, and by a voluntary surrender of themselves unto him, under the influence of his Spirit and grace; they are his by their profession of him; they avouch themselves to be the Lord's and call themselves by his name; and they are his by his possession of them, and dwelling in their hearts by faith; and all they have are his. Their worst things are his; their sins are accounted to him, and laid on him by imputation, and have been bore and done away by him: their griefs and sorrows are his, their reproaches his, and their afflictions and sufferings his. Their best things are his; their temporal mercies come from him, and through him; and all their spiritual blessings, they are blessed with in him; and all the good things done by them are done in his strength, by the assistance of his Spirit, and in virtue of his grace.

And Christ is God's; he is his Son, his own, his only begotten and well beloved Son, as he is a divine person; and as man he is his creature, made by him, and inferior to him; he is the head of him, as the man is of the woman; and as Mediator, he is his righteous servant, whom he has chosen, called, brought forth, upheld, and in whom he is glorified: so that, upon the whole, the saints should not glory in men, though ever so great and good, but in God, and in Christ, as of God, made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 4

The chief heads of this chapter are the account that ought to be had of the ministers of the Gospel; cautions against censoriousness, rash judgment, pride, and self-conceit; the uncomfortable circumstances and situation of the ministers of the Gospel for the sake of preaching it; the apostle's fatherly affection to the Corinthians, and his authority over them; his resolution in submission to the will of God of coming to them, and the manner in which it might be expected he would come. The apostle exhorts to have in proper esteem the preachers of the Gospel, and that because they are Christ's ministers and stewards of his grace, and faithful in the discharge of their duty, (<4001>1 Corinthians 4:1,2). And as for himself, whom he includes in the number of the faithful dispensers of the word, he cared not what judgment was passed upon him; nor should he think fit to be set down by it, partly because it was human, and arose from an ill spirit; and partly because he judged himself; as also because his conscience testified that he faithfully discharged his office; and besides, the Lord was his judge, (<4003>1 Corinthians 4:3,4) who in his own time would judge him; and he, as every other faithful minister, shall have praise of God, and therefore before that time judgment was not to be passed by men, (<4005>1 Corinthians 4:5) and then gives a reason why he had mentioned his own name, and the name of Apollos, under such figurative expressions as he had done in the preceding chapter, that they might be examples of modesty and humility for others to follow, (<4006>1 Corinthians 4:6) and expostulates with those who were vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds; that seeing they were no better than others, and what gifts they had were not of themselves, but of God, they had no reason to glory and vaunt it over others, (<4007>1 Corinthians 4:7) and in an ironical way expresses the exalted and flourishing condition they were in, and which he rather wishes than asserts, and which carries in it a sort of a denial of it, (<4008>1 Corinthians 4:8) and goes on to represent the miserable condition that the faithful preachers and followers of Christ were in, and that in order to abate the pride and swelling vanity of these men, (<4009>1 Corinthians 4:9-13) showing, that it was far from being a reigning time in the churches of Christ; his end in mentioning which, as

well as the sharpness he had used in reproving, were not in order to expose them to shame, but for their admonition, (<4604>1 Corinthians 4:14) and that he did not take too much upon him in dealing thus freely and roundly with them, appears from the spiritual relation he stood in to them, as a father, (<4605>1 Corinthians 4:15) and therefore it became them as children to submit to him, and imitate him, (<4606>1 Corinthians 4:16) and an instance of his paternal care of them, and love to them, was his sending Timothy among them, whose character he gives, and whose work and usefulness he points out to them, (<4607>1 Corinthians 4:17), and closes the chapter with a promise of coming to them, if it was agreeable to the will of God; and the rather he was bent upon it, because some had given out he would not come, and rejoiced at it; wherefore, in order to try them, whether they were only verbal or powerful professors, he was desirous of coming to them, (<4608>1 Corinthians 4:18,19) since religion did not lie in talking, but in an inward powerful experience of things, (<4609>1 Corinthians 4:20) which he feared was wanting in some by their outward conversation; and therefore puts a question in what way they would chose he should come unto them, and hence should accordingly order their conversation and behaviour, (<4621>1 Corinthians 4:21).

Ver. 1. *Let a man so account of us*, etc.] Though the apostle had before said that he, and other ministers of the Gospel, were not any thing with respect to God, and, with regard to the churches, were theirs, for their use and advantage; yet they were not to be trampled upon, and treated with contempt, but to be known, esteemed, and honoured for their works' sake, and in their respective places, stations, and characters; and though they were but men, yet were not to be considered as private men, and in a private capacity, but as in public office, and as public preachers of the word; and though they were not to be regarded as lords and masters over God's heritage, but as servants, yet not as everyone's, or as any sort of servants, but

as the ministers, or servants, of Christ; as qualified, called, and sent forth by him to preach his Gospel; as ambassadors in his name, standing in his place and stead, and representing him, and therefore for his sake to be respected and esteemed; and as such who make him the subject of their ministry, preach him and him only, exalt him in his person, offices, blood, righteousness and sacrifice, and direct souls to him alone for life and salvation:

and stewards of the mysteries of God; though they are not to be looked upon as masters of the household, that have power to dispose of things in the family at their own pleasure; yet they are to be regarded as stewards, the highest officers in the house of God; to whose care are committed the secret and hidden things of God; whose business it is to dispense, and make known, the mysteries of divine grace; such as respect the doctrine of the Trinity, the incarnation of Christ, the union of the two natures, divine and human, in his person, the church's union to him, and communion with him, with many other things contained in the Gospel they are intrusted with.

Ver. 2. *Moreover, it is required in stewards*, etc.] Upon mentioning that part of the character of Gospel preachers, as stewards, the apostle is put in mind of, and so points out that which is principally necessary in such persons: as,

that a man be found faithful; to the trust reposed in him; to his Lord and master that has appointed him to this office; and to the souls that are under his care: and then may a minister be said to be so, and which is his greatest glory, when he preaches the pure Gospel of Christ without any human mixtures, the doctrines and inventions of men; and the whole Gospel, declaring all the counsel of God, keeping back nothing which may be profitable to souls; when he seeks not to please men, but God; and not his own glory, and the applause of men, but the honour of Christ, and the good of souls: and such a faithful steward was the apostle himself.

Ver. 3. *But with me it is a very small thing*, etc.] It stood for little or nothing, was of no account with him, what judgment and censures were passed on him by men with regard to his faithfulness in the ministry not even by the Corinthians themselves:

that I should be judged of you; not that the apostle declined, or despised the judgment of a church of Christ, rightly disposed, and met together in the fear of God, to try prove, and judge of his ministry, and his fidelity in it; but he made no account of theirs, and slighted it as being under bad influence, the influence of the false teachers, who had insinuated many things among them to the prejudice of the apostle's character; wherefore he set it at nought and rejected it, and rightly refused to submit to it, and, indeed, to any mere human judgment:

or of man's judgment: it is in the Greek text, "or of man's day": in distinction from the day of the Lord, or the day of judgment; and because

that men have their stated days for judgment, and because of the clearness of evidence, according to which judgment should proceed. This is not a Cilicism, as Jerom thought, but an Hebraism; so the Septuagint render çwna µwy, in (<241716>Jeremiah 17:16) ηµεραν ανψρωπου, "man's day"; and very frequently in the Talmud [f41] is the distinction of µymç ynyd, "the judgments of God" and µda ynyd, "the judgments of men"; the former the apostle was willing to be subject to, but not to the latter; he appealed from men to God; he cared not what any man thought or said, or judged of him; he not only was indifferent to the judgment of the Corinthians concerning him, whether they did or did not praise him, but of any other person; and so the Syriac version renders it, çna rb lk ˆm wa, "or of any man": he adds,

yea I judge not mine own self; for though as a spiritual man he judged all things, and so himself, his conduct, state, and condition; examined his own heart and ways, and was able to form a judgment of what he was and did; yet he chose not to stand and fall by his own judgment; and since he would not abide by his own judgment, who best knew himself, much less would he be subject to theirs, or any human judgment, who must be greater strangers to him; and this he said, not as conscious to himself of any unfaithfulness in his ministerial work.

Ver. 4. *For I know nothing by myself*, etc.] Which must be understood with a restriction to the subject he is upon, faithfulness in the ministry; otherwise he knew much by himself of indwelling sin, and the corruption of his nature, which he sometimes found very strong and prevalent in him, and of the daily infirmities of life; but as to his ministerial service, he was pure from the blood of all men; he honestly declared what he knew to be the mind of God, and concealed nothing that might be useful to men; in this he had a clear conscience, void of offence both towards God and men,

Yet am I not hereby justified; from all fault and blame, which might possibly escape his knowledge and observation; for in many things all offend, and no man can understand all his errors; and there might be some mistakes which the apostle was not privy to, or conscious of; and were he even free from all, he declares, that such an unstained integrity, in the discharge of his ministerial work, was not the matter of his justification before God, nor did he depend upon it:

but he that judgeth me is the Lord; either who adjudges me to eternal life, justifying me through the righteousness of his Son, in which alone I desire to be found, living and dying; or he that knows my heart, and all my ways, will be my judge at the last day; and to his judgment I appeal and submit, and sit easy in the mean while under all the censures and calumnies of men. The apostle did, as his Lord and Saviour had done before him, who, when he was reviled and reproached by men, conscious of his own innocence and integrity, committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.

Ver. 5. *Therefore judge nothing before the time*, etc.] This is said to prevent rash and precipitate judgment, and agrees with that well know Jewish maxim, ˆydb ˆynwtm wwh, "be slow in judgment" [f42]; not hasty to pass sentence; it is best to leave things to the great day of account, than to be free in censuring one another. There is a time "fixed" for the awful judgment, though of that day and hour knows no man: judge nothing

until the Lord come; who at the fixed time will certainly come to judgment, and that suddenly, at unawares, in an hour no man knows of:

who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness; meaning not so much vices, immoralities, wickedness of all sorts committed in the dark, and which it is a shame to speak of; but those hidden things of dishonesty, those secret arts and private methods which false teachers have made use of to conceal themselves, and carry on their base designs to the injury of truth, the souls of men, and the cause of Christ:

and will make manifest the counsels of the heart; what were the views and intentions, the aims and ends of these men in taking upon them to be preachers of the word; when it will appear that these were not the glory of God, and the good of the souls of men, but filthy lucre, popular applause, or some such mercenary view, and sinister end.

And then shall every man have praise of God. Every regenerated soul; everyone that is a Jew inwardly; everyone that has the circumcision of the Spirit; and particularly every faithful minister, who is more especially designed; to whom it will be said, "well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord". The apostle, in these words, has respect to the false teachers who sought the praise of men, and not the honour which comes from God; and which the true ministers of the word will have another day, however despised and criticised by men now.

Ver. 6. *And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred*, etc.] Not what he had said concerning the different factions at Corinth, one being for Paul, and another for Apollos, and another for Cephas, as if these several parties did not really go by those names, but by those of others, the false teachers; only the apostle, to decline everything that looked like reflection, put these, as the Syriac version renders it, "upon" his own "person", and Apollos's, the sooner and better to put an end to such divisions; for it is certain, from his way of arguing and reasoning, that these are not fictitious names, but they were really divided, and were quarrelling among themselves about himself, Apollos, and Cephas: but his meaning is, when he says,

I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos these things; that he had "brought these comparisons", as the Arabic version reads it, concerning himself and Apollos; namely, that one was a planter, and another a waterer; that they were both labourers and builders, ministers or servants, and stewards: and these similes, and such a figurative way of speaking he had made use of, as he says,

for your sakes; for the sake of the members of this church, that they might have right notions of them, and accordingly account of them, and behave towards them: or, as he adds,

that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written: meaning, either in the word of God in general; or in some particular passages of Scripture he might have respect to; or rather in the above places in this, and the foregoing chapter, where he gives the fore mentioned characters of ministers; where, in the apostles themselves, in their own words, from their own account, they might learn, on the one hand, not to ascribe too much to them, nor, on the other hand, to detract from their just character and usefulness: and also,

that no one of you be puffed up for one against the other; speak great swelling words of vanity, and envy, for one minister against another; when they are all one, bear the same character, are in the same office, and are jointly concerned in the same common cause of Christ and the good of immortal souls.

Ver. 7. *For who maketh thee to differ from another*, etc.] This question, and the following, are put to the members of this church, who were glorying in, and boasting of the ministers under whom they were

converted, and by whom they were baptized, to the neglect and contempt of others; when the apostle would have them consider, and whatever difference was made between them and others, was made, not by man, but God; that whatever good and benefit they had enjoyed under their respective ministers, were in a way of receiving, and from God; and therefore they ought not to glory in themselves, nor in their ministers, but in God, who had distinguished them by his favours: whatever difference is made among men, is of God; it is he that makes them to differ from the rest of the creation; from angels, to whom they are inferior; and from beasts, to whom they are superior; and from one another in their person, size, shape, and countenance, which is a physical, or natural difference. It is God that makes them to differ from one another in things of a civil nature; as kings and subjects, masters and servants, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, which may be called a political, or civil difference; and there is an ecclesiastical difference which God makes in his own people, who have gifts differing one from another; there are diversities of gifts, administrations, and operations among them, and all from the same spirit: but the grand distinction God has made among men, lies in his special, distinguishing, and everlasting love to some, and not others; in his choice of them in Christ unto everlasting salvation; in the gift of them to Christ in the eternal covenant; in the redemption of them by his blood; in his powerful and prevalent intercession for them; in God's effectual calling of them by his grace; in his resurrection of them from the dead to everlasting life, placing them at Christ's right hand, and their entrance into everlasting glory; when the distinction will be kept up, as in the above instances, throughout the endless ages of eternity; all which is owing, not to anything of man's, but to the free grace, sovereign will, and good pleasure of God.

And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? whatever mercies and blessings men enjoy, they have in a way of receiving, and from God the Father of all mercies: all natural and temporal mercies are received from him; even such as respect the body, the make, form, and shape of it, perfection of limbs, health, strength, food, raiment, preservation of life, continuance in being, with all the comforts of it: and such as relate to the soul, its formation, which is by the father of spirits, its powers and faculties, natural light, reason, and understanding, all its endowments, abilities, all natural parts, and sharpness of wit; so that no man ought to glory in his wisdom, as if it was owing to himself, when it is all of God. All supernatural and spiritual blessings are received from God; such as a

justifying righteousness, sanctifying grace, remission of sin, the new name of adoption, strength to perform good works, to bear and suffer reproach and persecution for Christ, and to persevere to the end, with a right and title to eternal glory.

Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? To glory in any mercy, favour, or blessing received from God, as if it was not received from him, but as owing to human power, care, and industry, betrays wretched vanity, stupid and more than brutish ignorance, horrid ingratitude, abominable pride and wickedness; and is contrary to the grace of God, which teaches men humility and thankfulness. To God alone should all the blessings of nature, providence, and grace be ascribed; he ought to have all the glory of them; and to him, and him only, praise is due for them. That proud Arminian, Grevinchovius [f43], in answer to this text, said,

> "I make myself to differ; since I could resist God, and divine predetermination, but have not resisted, why may not I glory in it as of my own?"

Ver. 8. *Now ye are full*, etc.] That is, in their own opinion: these words, and some following expressions, are an ironical concession. They were not full of God, and divine things; nor of Christ, and of grace out of his fulness; nor of the Holy Ghost, and of faith, as Stephen and Barnabas are said to be; nor of joy and peace in believing; nor of goodness and spiritual knowledge; but they were full of themselves, and were pulled up in their fleshly minds with an opinion of their abilities, learning, oratory, and eloquence, of their ministers, and of their own great improvements in knowledge under their ministrations. They fancied they had got to a perfection in knowledge and were brimful of it; and as the full stomach, from which the metaphor is taken, loathes the honeycomb, so these persons loathed the apostle's ministry, and the pure preaching of the Gospel; imagining that they had attained to something above it, and stood in no need of it; when, alas! they were but babes, children in understanding, and needed milk instead of strong meat; so far were they from being what they thought themselves to be.

Now ye are rich; not in faith; nor in good works; nor in spiritual gifts and knowledge, though some among them were; but that is not here intended: the meaning is, they were rich, and abounded in knowledge in their own

account. Like the Laodiceans, they conceited themselves to be rich, and increased with goods, when they were poor, and wretched, and miserable.

Ye have reigned as kings without us. The saints, in the best sense, are kings, made so by Christ; and have not only the name, and the ensigns of royalty, as crowns and thrones prepared for them, but kingdoms also: they have a kingdom of grace, which they enjoy now, and shall never be removed; in which they reign as kings under the influence of the Spirit of God, over the corruptions of their own hearts, which are laid under the restraints of mighty grace; and over the world, which they have under the feet; and over Satan, who is dethroned and cast out of them; and they shall inherit the kingdom of glory hereafter; but nothing of this kind is here intended. The sense of the words is, that these persons imagined that they had arrived to such a pitch of knowledge, as to be independent of the apostles; needed no instructions and directions from them, and were in great tranquillity and ease of mind, and attended with outward prosperity, so that they lived, as kings, the most happy life that could be desired; upon which the apostle expresses his hearty wish for them:

and I would to God ye did reign; not in carnal security, and in affluence of worldly enjoyments, which the apostle was not desirous of for himself, and other his fellow ministers; nor in a spiritual sense, merely as believers in common, and as he then did; but with Christ in his kingdom state here on earth:

that we also might reign with you; for all the saints will be together when Christ takes to himself his great power, and reigns; they will all reign with him on earth a thousand years; this is a faithful saying, nothing more true, or to be depended on, that those that suffer with him shall also reign with him; and not a part of his people only, but the whole body: hence the apostle wishes, that this reigning time for the church of Christ was come, then he and the rest of the apostles would reign also: but, alas! it was a plain case, from the condition they were in, of which the following words give a narrative, that this time was not yet.

Ver. 9. *For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last*, etc.] Meaning either in time, in respect to the prophets and patriarchs under the former dispensation; and to the apostles, who were sent forth by Christ when on earth; when he, and Barnabas, and others, had received their mission since his ascension; or in state and condition, who though they were set in the first place in the church, yet were the least in the esteem of

men; and were treated as the most mean, vile, and abject of creatures; were set or showed forth to public view, and made a gazing stock by reproaches and afflictions. And

as it were appointed to death; were continually exposed unto it; were in death oft, always carrying about with them the dying of the Lord Jesus; and were all the day long killed for his sake; all which the apostle not only thought, but believed, were not casual things, fortuitous events, but the determinations and appointments of God; and were brought about in his wise providence to answer some valuable ends, which made him the more easy under them, and reconciled unto them.

For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. The word translated "spectacle" signifies a "theatre"; and the allusion is to the Roman theatres, in which various exercises were performed, for the gratification of the numerous spectators, who were placed around in a proper distance to behold; and not so much to the gladiators who fought, in such places, for the diversion of the multitude, as to those unhappy persons who were cast to the wild beasts, let loose upon them to devour them; which horrid barbarities were beheld by the surrounding company with great pleasure and satisfaction; and such a spectacle were the apostles in their sufferings and persecutions to the "whole" world, distinguished into "angels" and "men". By "angels" may be meant the devils, who stirred up the princes of this world against the apostles, to persecute and afflict them; than which nothing was a greater pleasure to these envious and malicious spirits: though good angels may be also included, as witnesses of the faith, courage, and constancy of the saints, and as comforters of them in all their tribulations; but evil angels seem chiefly designed: and by "men" are meant wicked men, who are as much pleased to behold the barbarities and butcheries committed upon the people of God, as the Romans in their theatres were to see the tragical scenes that were acted there.

Ver. 10. *We are fools for Christ's sake*, etc.] They were so in the esteem of men, for their close attach merit to a crucified Christ; and for preaching the doctrine of salvation by him; and for enduring so much reproach, affliction, and persecution, for his sake and the Gospel's:

but ye are wise in Christ. This is ironically said; for his meaning is not that they were truly wise in Christ, in the knowledge and faith of him, in preaching his Gospel, or professing his name; but they were so in their own eyes, and made use of much worldly wisdom and carnal policy in their

profession of religion. Their ministers took care to preach, and they to profess Christ, in such a manner as to retain the favour of the world, and to escape reproach and persecution.

We are weak; in your account; our bodily presence is weak, and speech contemptible; we are men of mean capacities and abilities; nor are we able to express ourselves in that strong and masculine way, with those masterly strokes of eloquence and oratory your ministers do; or we are pressed down with infirmities, and afflictions, and persecutions.

But ye are strong; your ministers are men of great parts, strong voice, masculine language, and powerful oratory; and you abound in outward prosperity, and are free from persecution for the cross of Christ.

Ye are honourable; high in the favour and esteem of men for your wisdom and learning, your riches and wealth, power and grandeur.

But we are despised; are in dishonour and disgrace, for the mean appearance we make, the Gospel we preach, and the cross we bear.

Ver. 11. *Even unto this present hour*, etc.] What is about to be related was not what befell the apostles now and then, and a great while ago; but what for a considerable time, and unto the present time, was more or less the common constant series and course of life they were inured to:

we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked; wanted the common necessaries of life, food to eat, and raiment to put on, and gold and silver to purchase any with; which might be, when, as it was sometimes their case, they were in desert places, or on the seas; or when they fell among thieves; or had given all away, as they sometimes did, for the relief of others; or when they were not, as sometimes, taken notice of, and provided for, where they ministered, as they ought to have been.

And are buffeted; not only by Satan, as the apostle was, but by men; scourged, whipped, and beaten by them; scourged in the synagogues by the Jews with forty stripes save one; and beaten with rods by the Romans, and other Gentiles.

And have no certain dwelling place; were in an unsettled state, always moving from one place to another, and had no place they could call their own; like their Lord and master, who had not where to lay his head; and

like some of the Old Testament saints, who wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, in deserts, and in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

Ver. 12. *And labour, working with our own hands*, etc.] As the apostle did at Corinth, (<44B803>Acts 18:3) and elsewhere; partly to minister to his own necessities, and those of others; and partly that he might not be burdensome to the churches; and also to set an example of diligence and industry to others; though he had a right and power to claim a maintenance of those to whom he ministered.

Being reviled, we bless; as Christ commanded, (<40B544>Matthew 5:44) and the apostle himself directed and exhorted to, (<45B214>Romans 12:14)

being persecuted, we suffer it; that is, patiently; neither resisting our persecutors, nor murmuring and repining at our unhappy circumstances; but taking all in good part, as what is the will of God, and will make for his glory.

Ver. 13. *Being defamed, we entreat*, etc.] Being blasphemed, as the word signifies, being evil spoken of, our good name taken away, and characters hurt; we entreat or pray to God for them, that he would convince them of their evil, give them repentance unto life, and remission of their sins, according to Christ's direction, (<40B544>Matthew 5:44) and in imitation of his example, (<42B234>Luke 23:34) or we entreat them; so the Syriac version reads it, ˆwhnm ˆny[b, "we beseech them": not to blaspheme and speak evil of us, since it will be to their own hurt; we give them smooth words, and soft language, not rendering railing for railing, or reviling for reviling:

we are made as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things unto this day; referring, as some think, to (<250345>Lamentations 3:45) or to the lustrations and expiations among the Heathens, who when any calamity was upon them, particularly a plague among them, used to take one of the refuse of the people, and sacrifice him by way of expiation; or any living creature, as a sheep which with imprecations they cast into a river, or into the sea, fancying it carried away all the contagion along with it; hence, by way of reproach, such that were under disgrace, and were ejected, and exiled, were called καψαρματα, "purgations"; the refuse of the people, by which the rest were purged [f44] or the reference is to any dirt, or filth in common, swept out of houses, and trodden under foot; and so expresses the mean and abject condition of the apostles, and with what disdain and contempt they were treated in the world: all which shows that they were

far from reigning as kings; and whilst this was their case, who were at the head of the interest of Christ, it must be a vain conceit of the Corinthians, that they reigned as kings without them.

Ver. 14. *I write not these things to shame you*, etc.] Though they had a great deal of reason to be ashamed of the vain opinion they had of themselves, and that they suffered the faithful ministers of Christ to want the necessaries of life, when they abounded so much with the good things of it; and though the apostle's view in giving this narrative was to bring them under a sense of their faults, and to a conviction of them, and so to shame for them, in order to their future reformation and amendment; yet it was not merely to put them to the blush, but to admonish and instruct them, that he enlarged on these things:

but as my beloved sons I warn you; they being his children in a spiritual sense, for whom he had the strongest love and affection, as their spiritual Father; and as it was his place, and became him standing in such a relation to them, he warned, admonished, and put them in mind of their obligations and duty to him.

Ver. 15. *For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ*, etc.] Or "schoolmasters"; by whom he means the false teachers, whom, for argument sake, he admits to be instructors in Christ, or ministers of his, as in (<471123>2 Corinthians 11:23) and who were many, and of whose number the Corinthians boasted; though they were not so numerous as here supposed; for the expression is hyperbolical: perhaps some reference may be had to the multitude of schoolmasters, tutors, and governors, and who also were called twba, "fathers", which those that were Jews of this church at Corinth had before they believed in Christ; as the members of the great sanhedrim, the great number of doctors, wise men, Scribes and Pharisees, who pretended to instruct them: now though it should be allowed, that the present teachers among them were instrumental in instructing them further in the knowledge of Christ; or as the Arabic version reads it, "in the love of Christ"; yet they had no hand in their conversion; the apostle first preached the Gospel to them, and ministerially laid Christ the foundation among them, and directed them unto him, and was the minister by whom they believed; these teachers at most and best built on his foundation, and that only wood, hay, and stubble; and whereas they were only a sort of schoolmasters, and not fathers, they taught with mercenary views, and for lucre's sake, and with severity, as such men do; and not with such a single

eye to their good, and with that tenderness and affection a parent has, and in which relation he stood to them:

yet have ye not many fathers; as it is in nature, so it is in grace; how many masters and instructors soever a child may have, whether together or successively, he has but one father; and so how many after instructors, either nominally or really, believers may have to lead them on, or who pretend to lead them on to a further knowledge of Christ; yet have they but one spiritual father, who has been the happy instrument and means of their conversion, as the Apostle Paul was to the Corinthians;

for in Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the Gospel; which is to be understood of regeneration, a being born again, and from above; of being quickened when dead in trespasses and sins; of having Christ formed in the soul; of being made a partaker of the divine nature, and a new creature; which the apostle ascribes to himself, not as the efficient cause thereof, for regeneration is not of men but of God; not of the will of the flesh, of a man's own free will and power, nor of the will of any other man, or minister; but of the sovereign will, grace, and mercy of God, Father, Son, and Spirit. The Father of Christ beget us again according to his abundant mercy; and the Son quickens whom he will; and we are born again of water and of the Spirit, of the grace of the Spirit; hence the washing of regeneration, and renewing work are ascribed to him: but the apostle speaks this of himself, only as the instrument or means, which God made use of in doing this work upon the hearts of his people; and which the other phrases show: for he is said to do it "in Christ"; he preached Christ unto them, and salvation by him, and the necessity of faith in him; he directed them to him to believe in him, and was the means of bringing of them to the faith of Christ; and it was the power and grace of Christ accompanying his ministry, which made it an effectual means of their regeneration and conversion: and which were brought about "through the Gospel"; not through the preaching of the law; for though by that is the knowledge of sin, and convictions may be wrought by such means; yet these leave nothing but a sense of wrath and damnation; nor is the law any other than a killing letter: no regeneration, no quickening grace, no faith nor holiness come this way, but through the preaching of the Gospel; in and through which, as a vehicle, the Spirit of God conveys himself into the heart, as a spirit of regeneration and faith; and God of his own will and rich mercy, by the word of truth, by the Gospel of grace and truth, which came by Christ, so called in distinction from the law which came by Moses,

begets us again as his new creatures; which shows the usefulness of the Gospel ministry, and in what account Gospel ministers are to be had, who are spiritual fathers, or the instruments of the conversion of men.

Ver. 16. *Wherefore, I beseech you*, etc.] Though he might have used the power and authority of a father, yet he chose rather to entreat and beseech them; saying,

be ye followers of me; for who should children follow, but their parents? The Vulgate Latin, adds, "as I am of Christ"; so Chrysostom in his time read it; and Beza says he found it so written in one Greek exemplar; and so it is in one of Stephens's; it seems to have crept in from (<461101>1 Corinthians 11:1). However, though it might not be now expressed by the apostle, it is to be supposed; for he never desired any to follow him any more, or further than he followed Christ; particularly he was desirous that these his spiritual children would follow him, and abide by him in the doctrine of a crucified Christ, he had preached among them, and not the false apostles, who had represented his ministry as weak and foolish; and in his life and conversation, especially in his humble carriage and deportment among them, and in his tender love and affection for them; observing their growing pride, haughtiness, and vain opinion of themselves, and those unnatural divisions and animosities which were fomented among them; and also in bearing reproach and persecution cheerfully and patiently, for the Gospel of Christ; a detail of which he had given them in some preceding verses.

Ver. 17. *For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus*, etc.] This is an instance of his care of them, concern for them and respect unto them; that he not only writes unto them, giving his best advice and counsel, promising to come unto them; but in the mean while sends Timothy to them, whose character is here given as one dear to him, and in all things trusty and faithful:

who is my beloved son; so, in his epistles to him, he often styles him his son, his own son in the faith, his dearly beloved son; not that he was the instrument of his conversion, for he was a disciple of Christ before the apostle was acquainted with him; (see <441601>Acts 16:1) but either because of his age, he being younger than he; or because of his great affection for him; and chiefly because, as a son with a father, he served him in the Gospel, (<500222>Philippians 2:22) and since he was so familiar with him, and so much

loved by him, it might reasonably be thought he full well knew his ways and methods of doctrine and practice.

And faithful in the Lord; a faithful steward of the mysteries of grace; faithful in the Gospel of Christ, and to the souls of men; a faithful minister of the Lord's; one who had been tried, proved, and found faithful, and therefore might be trusted to, and depended upon:

who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways; his way of preaching, and the doctrines he taught; and what should be the manner of life and conversation agreeably thereunto, and to his own; and all those rules and orders he gave for the discipline and management of the affairs of churches; all which he had formerly delivered to them, though they, through length of time, and the ministry of the false teachers among them, had greatly forgotten them: wherefore Timothy is sent, not to teach them new ways, nor, indeed, to teach at all, whose youth they might be tempted to despise; but only to put them in mind of what the apostle had formerly taught them: and which are recommended by their being such ways,

which be in Christ; the doctrines he had preached among them, the sum and substance of them were Christ, and him crucified; the ordinances he had delivered to them were what he had received from Christ; and all the rules and methods he had proposed to them for the regulation of their conduct, and the management of their ecclesiastical affairs, were such as were agreeably to the mind of Christ, and tended to his glory; he took no step, nor proposed any to be taken, but in Christ, and for the good of his interest: and he adds,

as I teach everywhere, in every church; the faith he delivered everywhere was one and the same; the Son of God, preached by him, was not yea and nay; the trumpet he blew always gave a certain sound; the rules prescribed by him, and orders he laid down, for the conduct of life, and government of churches, were exactly alike in all places; he taught no doctrines at Corinth, nor enjoined the observance of any rule, but what all other churches were taught and directed to; his plan of doctrine and discipline was the same everywhere.

Ver. 18. *Now some are puffed up*, etc.] Some with their gifts, learning, and eloquence, and with the high station they were in, in the church; believing they should continue therein undisturbed, thinking them selves safe and

secure through the absence of the apostle, and which they flattered themselves would always be the case:

as though I would not come to you; and others that were for Apollos and Cephas against Paul, were puffed up against their fellow members on the same account; hoping they should never see him more, to put them in any other situation than what they were in, by demolishing their factions and parties; and others, as the incestuous person, and those that took encouragement to sin by his example, were also puffed up upon this score, and mourned not over, nor repented of their iniquities, but remained secure and hardened; believing the apostle would never more come among them, to call them to an account for their malpractices.

Ver. 19. *But I will come to you shortly*, etc.] This he said as threatening them, but not by way of prophecy; for it is not certain that he ever did come to them after this; but by way of promise, as it was then the real intention, inclination, and resolution of his mind, though with this condition,

if the Lord will; which is rightly put, and what the apostle had a continual regard unto, in all things he was concerned; (see Romans 1:10 Hebrews 6:3) and though it is not absolutely necessary that this should be expressed by us always in so many words; though should it, as the sentence is short and full, there would be no impropriety in it; yet this should always be the sense of our minds and conduct in all the affairs of life; (see James 4:13-15)

and will know not the speech of them that are puffed up, but the power; meaning chiefly the false teachers; and that his concern would be, not so much to observe their masterly language, the eloquence of their speech, the quaintness of their expressions, the cadency of their words, how nicely they were put together, and how fitly pronounced; but what life there was in their ministry, what power went forth with their words, and how effectual their preaching was to the, conversion of sinners, and the edifying of the church of God.

Ver. 20. *For the kingdom of God*, etc.] By "the kingdom of God" is not meant the kingdom of heaven, or the ultimate glory and happiness of the saints; though that is a kingdom prepared by God, which he gives to his children, calls them to by his grace, and will give them an abundant entrance into, when time shall be no more with them; and though that is

not attained to “in”, or “by word”, by mere talk and profession; not everyone that says Lord, Lord, shall enter into it; or that professes the name of Christ, and prophesies in it; but “in” or “by power”; through the power of God, beginning, carrying on, and finishing a work of grace upon the soul, and keeping it, through faith, unto salvation: nor the kingdom of grace, or that internal principle of grace in the soul, which reigns, and by which Christ reigns there, and by which the saints appear to be kings as well as priests unto God: though this also does not lie “in word”, in a profession of faith, in talking about love, and in making pretensions to the knowledge of divine things; nor merely in deeds, and outward actions, in bodily exercise, in a form of godliness, and a round of religion, and a show of righteousness;

but in power: in internal powerful godliness; for true godliness is a powerful thing; faith is powerful, and so is love; and so is prayer, and preaching; and so is all religion, internal and external, where there is the life and truth of grace, and that in exercise. But I rather think the Gospel is here meant, often in Scripture called the kingdom of God, and the doctrines of it, the mysteries of the kingdom; because it is a message from the King of kings; the means of setting up the kingdom or grace in the heart; its subjects are things concerning the kingdom of God; it is what has brought life and immortality, or an immortal life to light; and gives the best account of the invisible glories of the heavenly state, and points out the saints’ meetness for it, and title to it; declaring that except a man is born again, and has a better righteousness than his own, even that of Christ’s, he shall neither see nor enter into the kingdom of heaven. Now the Gospel is not in “word”; though it lies in the word of God, the Scriptures of truth: and treats of the essential word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ; and cannot be preached without words, even the words of men; yet is not to be preached with wisdom of words, with enticing words of man’s wisdom, or in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth; nor does the efficacy of it lie in, or depend upon the words of the preacher, or on mere moral persuasion: for whenever it is effectual, it comes not “in word only, but also in power”; (1 Thessalonians 1:5) and by “power” is meant, not a power of working miracles the first preachers of the Gospel had, and by which it was greatly confirmed; nor a godly life and conversation which that enforced upon, and engaged both ministers and people to; but the powerful efficacy of the Spirit, attending the preaching of the Gospel to the quickening of dead sinners, the enlightening of blind eyes, and unstopping

of deaf ears; the softening of hard hearts, the delivering of persons from the slavery of sin and Satan, the transforming and renewing of them both inwardly and outwardly; and to the comforting, enlivening, strengthening, and establishing of the saints; all which can never be ascribed to the persuasive language of men, but to the power of God; and which is the more apparent when it is observed what mean and despicable instruments in the eyes of men are made use of: what the doctrines are that are preached, not being of man, nor agreeably to his carnal reason, but esteemed foolishness by him; and the manner in which they are propagated, not in a carnal way, by outward force, but by the foolishness of preaching: and the opposition made to it both by the enmity of man's heart unto it, by the men of the world, and by Satan and his principalities and powers.

Ver. 21. *What will ye*? etc.] Or "how will ye, that I should come unto you?" as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read it: since the apostle had determined upon his coming to them: and had made mention of it, he puts it to them, in what manner they themselves would choose he should come unto them;

shall I come unto you with a rod; either as a schoolmaster, as were their false teachers, with a "ferula"; or as a father with a rod of correction and chastisement, assuming his paternal authority, putting on severe looks, and using roughness; or rather as an apostle with the apostolical rod; by which is meant not excommunication, which is what belongs to a whole community, and not any single person; but a power of inflicting punishment on the bodies of delinquents, by smiting with diseases, and even with death itself; for as the prophets of the Old Testament had a power from God of inflicting diseases and death upon offenders; so had the apostles of the New, as appears from the instances of Ananias, and Sapphira, and Elymas the sorcerer:

or in love, and in the spirit of meekness? with the affection of a father, with a pleasant countenance, and a meek spirit; in opposition to that roughness and sharpness, he had an authority, as an apostle of Christ, to use in proper cases; and therefore as the latter would be most eligible by them, his suggestion is, that they would behave accordingly, that there might be no occasion to come to them in the former manner, which was not desirable by him, There seems to be an allusion to a practice among the Jews, in the punishing of a drunkard or gluttonous person; the rule for which was this [f45],

> “they first correct him jbçb wa µyrbdb “with words”, or “with a rod”, as it is written, (<052118>Deuteronomy 21:18) and have chastened him; but if he adds and repeats (i.e. goes on in his sin), then they stone him.”

Or rather the allusion is to the judges in the sanhedrim, one of the instruments or ensigns of whose office was “a rod or staff” to smite with; it is said [f46] of R. Hona, when he went to the sanhedrim, he used to say, bring me the instruments of the Tabernae (the place where the sanhedrim sat); what are they? “the staff” (in Cocceius’s edition it is yr jwj, “the rods”, and the sandals, the trumpets, and the thongs); the gloss is, “the thong” for scourging, “the staff” (or rods) for beating the rebellious until they return, the “trumpets” for excommunication, and the “sandals” for plucking off the shoe; things in which the judges of the court were concerned, and here the apostle proposes to come as judge; (see <460503>1 Corinthians 5:3,12).

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 5

In this chapter the apostle blames the Corinthians for conniving at a sin committed by one of their members; declares what he was determined to do, and what should be done by them in this case; and in general advises to shun conversation with wicked men; in (1 Corinthians 5:1) mention is made of the sin committed by one among themselves, and which was publicly known, and commonly talked of; and which in general was fornication, and particularly incest, a man lying with his father's wife; and which is aggravated by its being what was not named, or could not be named among any virtuous persons among the Gentiles without offence: and yet the members of this church, at least the majority of them, were unconcerned at it, and were so far from mourning over it, and taking any step to remove the person from them that had done it, that they were swelled with pride, and gloried on account of their gifts, and perhaps on account of this man, who had committed the iniquity, (1 Corinthians 5:2). This affair being related to the apostle, though at a distance; and he well knowing all things concerning it, as though he was present, resolved what should be done in this case by himself, (1 Corinthians 5:3) and that was to deliver the man to Satan, in the name, and with the power and authority of Christ, when the members of this church were gathered together, and his Spirit with them; the end of which was for the destruction of the man's body, and the salvation of his soul, (1 Corinthians 5:4,5) and then the apostle returns to blame them for their glorying in men, and in external gifts, and pleading these as a reason why the man should be continued, and not removed from them; not considering the danger they were exposed to, and which he illustrates by the simile of leaven, a little of which affects the whole lump: suggesting thereby the danger they were in by continuing such a wicked person among them, (1 Corinthians 5:6) wherefore pursuing, the same metaphor, taken from the Jewish passover, he exhorts to remove from them the man that had sinned, as the Jews at the passover removed the leaven out of their houses; that so they might appear to be a church renewed, and purged, and clear of leaven, keeping the true and spiritual passover, which they were under obligation to do, since

Christ, the antitype of the passover, was sacrificed for them, (1 Corinthians 5:7) wherefore it became them to keep the feast of the Lord's supper; and indeed, to have the whole course of their conversation so ordered, as to avoid sin and sinners, and to behave in truth and uprightness, (1 Corinthians 5:8) when the apostle goes on to put them in mind of what he had formerly written unto them, as suitable to the present case, which was, that they should not keep company with wicked men, particularly with fornicators, such as this man, though in a more heinous manner, (1 Corinthians 5:9) and explains what was his meaning; not that they were to have no manner of conversation with persons of such a character, and of such like evil characters, in things of a civil nature, for then there would be no living in the world, (1 Corinthians 5:10). But his sense was, that they should keep no company with persons guilty of the sins mentioned, who bore the name of Christian brethren, and were members of the same church state with them, from whose communion they ought to be removed; and indeed, so much familiarity with them should not be indulged, as even to eat with them, (1 Corinthians 5:11). The reason of this difference, which he made between wicked men, who were not members of the church, and those that were, is because he had nothing to do, nor they neither, with them that were without the church, as it was their business only to take cognizance of them that were within, (1 Corinthians 5:12) but neither of them had anything to do, to judge and censure those that did not belong to the church, but should leave them to God, the righteous Judge; and then closes all, (1 Corinthians 5:13) with what he had chiefly in view throughout the whole chapter, and that is, that they would remove from their communion the wicked person who had been guilty of the sin first mentioned.

Ver. 1. *It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you*, etc.] The apostle having reproved the Corinthians for their schisms and divisions about their ministers, proceeds to charge them with immoralities committed among them, and which were connived at, and took no notice of by them; and particularly a very notorious one, which he here mentions with its aggravated circumstances. It was done among them; not only by one of their citizens, nor merely by one of their hearers, but by one of their members, and so was cognizable by them as a church; for though they had nothing to do with them that were without, yet they were concerned with them that were within: this was a public offence; it was known by everyone, and it was in everybody's mouth; it was heard in all companies;

it was “commonly”, ολως, “universally” talked of, and reported; it was generally known at Corinth, and in all Achaia, so that the church could not plead ignorance, nor could they be excused from blame in not as publicly declaring their abhorrence of the fact, as it was committed, which was fornication: fornication, ολως, “generally” taken, might be committed among them in all the branches of it, as that may include simple fornication, adultery, incest, and all acts of uncleanness; wherefore the apostle proceeds to describe that particular instance of fornication, that one of their members was guilty of:

and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife; not but that such unnatural copulations were practised, as among the Indians, Moors, Bactrians, Ethiopians, Medes, and Persians, as reported by sundry writers [f47]; and among the Arabians, before prohibited by Mahomet [f48]; but then such marriages and mixtures were not allowed of among the more civil and cultivated nations, as the Grecians and Romans, and never mentioned but with detestation and abhorrence: and if this man was a Jew, it was an aggravation of his sin, that he should be guilty of a crime decried by the Gentiles, as well as it was a violation of a known law of God given to the Jews, (Leviticus 18:7) and, according to the Jewish writers [f49], such a man was doubly guilty: their canon is,

> “ba tça l[abh he that lies with his father’s wife is guilty, on account of her being his father’s wife, and on account of her being another man’s wife, whether in his father’s life time, or after his death, and whether espoused or married;”

and such an one was to be stoned. Of this kind was this man’s crime; he had his father’s wife, not his own mother, but his stepmother; for there is a distinction between a mother and a father’s wife, as in the above canon.

> “These are to be stoned, he that lies with his mother, or with his father’s wife.”

Whether this man had married his father’s wife, or kept her as his concubine, continuing in an incestuous cohabitation with her, is not certain, and whether his father was dead or living; which latter seems to be the case from (2 Corinthians 7:12) his iniquity was abominable and intolerable, and by no means to be winked at in church of Christ.

Ver. 2. *And ye are puffed up*, etc.] Either with the gifts, learning, and eloquence of their preachers, and particularly of this man, who, by some, is thought to be one of their teachers; and though he was guilty of so foul a crime, yet they still applauded him, and cried him up for a wonderful preacher: or one party was puffed up against another; that which was opposite to the party this man belonged to, boasting over the other as free from the scandal that was exposed unto; or the other were puffed up with their lenity and forbearance, boasting of it as an act of humanity and good nature, and an instance of charity, showing that they were not severe upon one another, for mistakes in life: or else were puffed up and gloried in the thing itself, as an instance of Christian liberty, and their freedom from the law, through a sad mistake of it; and in which they might be strengthened by a notion of the Jews, that it was lawful for proselyted Gentiles to do such things, for so says Maimonides [f50].

> "The sentence of the law is, that it is free for a Gentile wma açyç, "to marry his mother", or his sister that are made proselytes; but the wise men forbid this thing, that they may not say we are come from a holiness that is heavy, to one that is light."

But this writer concludes that a proselyte might marry his father's brother's wife, and his father's wife; and so says his commentator [f51], and observes, that it was the opinion of R. Akiba, which Rabbi was contemporary with the Apostle Paul: so that this notion prevailed in his days, and does in some measure account for the commission of such a sin by a church member, and the church's negligence about it:

and have not rather mourned; not only personally, and separately, but as a body; they ought to have met together as a church, and humbled themselves before God for this scandalous iniquity done in the midst of them, and pray unto him,

that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you; not by excommunication, for that they could and ought to have done themselves; but by the immediate hand of God, inflicting some visible punishment, and taking him away by an untimely death, which the Jews call tyrk, "cutting off", by the hand of God; and such a punishment, they say, this crime deserved; according to them, there were six and thirty cuttings off in the law, or so many things which deserved death by the hand of God;

and the two first that are mentioned are these, he that lies with his mother or with his father's wife [f52].

Ver. 3. *For I verily, as absent in body*, etc.] As he really was, being now at Philippi, if any dependence is to be had upon the subscription of this epistle; or rather at Ephesus; however, wherever he was, it is certain he was not at Corinth:

but present in spirit; in his affection to them, care of them, and concern for their good, and the glory of God:

have judged already; he had considered of the matter, thought very deliberately about it, and was now come to a point, to a determination concerning it, what to do in it:

as though I were present; upon the spot, in person, to do what he had resolved upon:

to him that hath so done this deed; this infamous one, and in so scandalous a manner, and which was continued in: what that was which the apostle, upon mature deliberation and judgment, determined to do with this wicked man, is expressed in (1 Corinthians 5:5) which is to be connected with this, the whole fourth verse being to be read in a parenthesis, and that was to deliver him to Satan.

Ver. 4. *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, etc.] These words contain an account of the several things and circumstances, that should attend the awful act of the apostle, in delivering this man to Satan; it would be done "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"; by his command, power, and authority, and for his glory; in whose name all miraculous actions, as this was one, were performed:

when ye are gathered together; as a church, in a public manner, in one place; not to do this business, for this was purely apostolical; but to be witness of this wonderful operation, to acknowledge the justice of God in it, and that they might fear and take warning by it:

and my spirit; meaning that though he was absent in body, he should be present in spirit; and that the extraordinary gift of the Spirit of God bestowed on him would be visibly exercised upon this man before them all, as if he himself was in the midst of them; and this not by any power of his own, but

with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ; to which all such miraculous effects, as this hereafter related, are to be ascribed.

Ver. 5. *To deliver such an one unto Satan*, etc.] This, as before observed, is to be read in connection with (<460503>1 Corinthians 5:3) and is what the apostle there determined to do with this incestuous person; namely, to deliver him unto Satan; by which is meant, not the act of excommunication, or the removing of him from the communion of the church, which is an act of the whole church, and not of any single person; whereas this was what the church had nothing to do with; it was not what they were to do, or ought to do, but what the apostle had resolved to do; and which was an act of his own, and peculiar to him as an apostle, (see <540120>1 Timothy 1:20). Nor is this a form of excommunication; nor was this phrase ever used in excommunicating persons by the primitive churches; nor ought it ever to be used; it is what no man, or set of men, have power to do now, since the ceasing of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which the apostles were endowed with; who, as they had a power over Satan to dispossess him from the bodies of men, so to deliver up the bodies of men into his hands, as the apostle did this man's:

for the destruction of the flesh; that is, that his body might be shook, buffeted, afflicted, and tortured in a terrible manner; that by this means he might be brought to a sense of his sin, to repentance for it, and make an humble acknowledgment of it:

that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus; that he might be renewed in the spirit of his mind, be restored by repentance, and his soul be saved in the day of Christ; either at death, when soul and body would be separated, or at the day of the resurrection, when both should be reunited; for the flesh here means, not the corruption of nature, in opposition to the spirit, as a principle of grace, but the body, in distinction from the soul: nor was the soul of this man, only his body, delivered for a time unto Satan; the end of which was, that his soul might be saved, which could never be done by delivering it up to Satan: and very wrongfully is this applied to excommunication; when it is no part of excommunication, nor the end of it, to deliver souls to Satan, but rather to deliver them from him. The phrase seems to be Jewish, and to express that extraordinary power the apostles had in those days, as well in giving up the bodies to Satan, for a temporal chastisement, as in delivering them from him. The Jews say, that Solomon had such a power; of whom they tell the following story [f53]:

> “one day he saw the angel of death grieving; he said to him, why grievest thou? he replied, these two Cushites have desired of me to sit here, “he delivered them to the devil”; the gloss is, these seek of me to ascend, for their time to die was come; but he could not take away their souls, because it was decreed concerning them, that they should not die but in the gate of Luz, µyry[çl hmlç whnyrsm “Solomon delivered them to the devils”, for he was king over them, as it is written, (<13912>1 Chronicles 29:12) for he reigned over them, that are above, and them that are below.”

The phrase is much the same as here, and the power which they, without any foundation, ascribe to Solomon, the apostles had: this is their rod which they used, sometimes in striking persons dead, sometimes by inflicting diseases on them themselves; and at other times by delivering them up into the hands of Satan to be afflicted and terrified by him, which is the case here. And it may be observed, that the giving up of Job into the hands of Satan, by the Lord, is expressed in the Septuagint version by the same word as here; for where it is said, (<18106>Job 2:6) “behold, he is in thine hand”; that version renders it, “behold, παραδιδωμισοι αυτον, I deliver him to thee”, that is, to Satan; and which was done, that his body might be smote with sore boils by him, as it was; only his life was to be preserved, that he was not suffered to touch.

Ver. 6. *Your glorying is not good*, etc.] Their glorying in their outward flourishing condition, in their riches and wealth, and in their ministers, in their wisdom and parts when under such an humbling dispensation; and especially if their glorying was in the sin itself, and their connivance at it, it was far from being good, it was very criminal, as the consequence of it was dangerous:

know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? This, in nature, is what everybody knows; and the proverb, which is much used by the Jews[f54], was common in the mouths of all, and the meaning of it easy to be understood: thus, whether applied to the leaven of false doctrine, nothing is more manifest, than when this is let alone, and a stop is not put to it, it increases to more ungodliness; or to vice and immorality, as here; which if not taken notice of by a church, is not faithfully reproved and severely censured, as the case requires, will endanger the whole community; it may spread by example, and, under the connivance of the church, to the corrupting of good manners, and infecting of many.

Ver. 7. *Purge out therefore the old leaven*, etc.]] Meaning either the incestuous person, whose crime might well be compared to sour "leaven", and be called old because of his long continuance in it; whom the apostle would have removed from them; this is properly the act of excommunication, which that church was to perform, as a quite distinct thing from what the apostle himself determined to do. The allusion is to the strict search the Jews made [f55], just before their passover after leaven, to purge their houses of it, that none of it might remain when their feast began; which they made by the light of a lamp, on the night of the fourteenth of the month Nisan, in every secret place, hole, and corner of the house: or this may be an exhortation to the church in general with respect to themselves, as well as this man, to relinquish their old course of sinning, to "put off concerning the former conversation the old man", (<49 4:22>Ephesians 4:22) the same with the old leaven here; it being usual with the Jews [f56] to call the vitiosity and corruption of nature hsy[bç rwaç, "leaven in the lump"; of which say [f57],

> "the evil imagination of a man, as leaven the lump, enters into his bowels little, little, (very little at first,) but afterwards it increases in him, until his whole body is mixed with it."

That ye may be a new lump; that they might appear to be what they professed to be, new men, new creatures in Christ, by their walking in newness of life; and by removing that wicked person, they would be as the apostles were, when Judas was gone from them, all clean through the word of Christ:

as ye are unleavened; at least professed to be. They were without the leaven of sin; not without the being of sin in their hearts, nor without the commission of it, more or less, in their lives; but were justified from it by the righteousness of Christ, and had the new creature formed in their souls, or that which was born of God in them, that sinned not. The apostle compares the true believers of this church to the unleavened bread eaten at the passover, for the grace of their hearts, and the simplicity of their lives; as he does the incestuous man to the old leaven, that was to be searched for, and cast out at the feast:

for even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. This is observed, to show the pertinency of the similes of leaven and unleavened, the apostle had made use of; and to make some further improvement of them, for the use,

comfort, and instruction of this church; saying, that Christ is “our passover”, the Christians’ passover; the Jewish passover was a type of Christ; wherefore Moses kept it by faith, in the faith of the Messiah that was to come; (see <58B11 28>Hebrews 11:28) as it was instituted in commemoration of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, so likewise to prefigure Christ, and the redemption of his people by him. The Jews have a saying [f58],

> “that in the month Nisan they were redeemed, and in the month Nisan they will be redeemed;”

which was the month in which the passover was kept; and for the confirmation of which, they mention the following texts, (<33107 15>Micah 7:15 <23540 8>Isaiah 54:8 <02124 0>Exodus 12:40). There is an agreement between the passover, and Christ, in the sacrifice itself, and the qualities of it; it was a “lamb”, as Christ is the “Lamb” of God, of his appointing and providing, and fitly so called, for his innocence and harmlessness, his meekness, humility, and patience; it was a lamb “without blemish”, as Christ is, without spot and blemish, without the spot of original sin, or blemish of any actual transgression: it was a male, as Christ is the son or man, the head of the body, and the “firstborn” among many brethren; it was a male of the first year; in which it might prefigure Christ in the flower of his age, arrived at man’s estate, and having had experience of a variety of sorrows and afflictions. There is also some likeness between them in the separation and slaying of it. The passover lamb was to be “taken out from the sheep, or from the goats”; as Christ’s human nature was chosen out from among the people, and, in God’s eternal counsel and covenant, separated from the rest of the individuals of human nature, and taken into a federal union with the Son of God, and preordained before the foundation of the world, to be the Lamb slain; it was also wonderfully formed by the Holy Ghost in the virgin’s womb, and separated and preserved from the infection of sin; and in his life and conversation here on earth, he was separated from sinners, from being like them, and is now made higher than the heavens. This lamb was kept up from the “tenth” of the month, to the “fourteenth”, before it was killed; which might typify preservation of Christ, in his infancy, from the malice of Herod, and, in his riper years, from the designs of the Jews upon him, until his time was come; and it is to be observed, that there was much such a space of time between his entrance into Jerusalem, and his sufferings and death; (see <43121 1>John 12:11,12). The lamb was “slain”, so the Prince of life was killed; and “between the two evenings”, as Christ was in

the end of the world, in the last days, in the decline of time, of the age of the world, and even of the time of the day, about the “ninth” hour, or three o’clock in the afternoon, the time between the two evenings; the first evening beginning at noon as soon as the sun began to decline, the other upon the setting of it. There is likewise a comparison of these together to be observed, in the dressing and eating of it. The passover lamb was not to be eaten “raw nor sodden”; so Christ is to be eaten not in a carnal, but in a spiritual way, by faith; it was to be “roast with fire”, denoting the painful sufferings of Christ on the cross, and the fire of divine wrath that fell upon him; it was to be eaten “whole”, as a whole Christ is to be received by faith, in his person, and in all his offices, grace, and righteousness; not a “bone” of it was to be “broken”, which was fulfilled in Christ, (John 19:36) it was to be eaten “with unleavened bread”, which is spiritualized by the apostle in the next verse; and also with “bitter herbs”, expressive of the hard bondage and severe afflictions, with which the lives of the Israelites were made bitter in Egypt; and significative of the persecutions and trials that such must expect, who live godly and by faith in Christ Jesus: it was eaten only by Israelites, and such as became proselytes, as Christ, only by true believers; and if the household was too little, they were to join with their “neighbours”; which might typify the calling and bringing in of the Gentiles, when the middle wall of partition was broken down, Christ, his flesh and blood being common to both. The first passover was eaten in haste, with their loins girt, their shoes on, and staves in their hands, ready to depart from Egypt to Canaan’s land; denoting the readiness of believers to every good work; having their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; their loins girt about with truth, their lights burning, and they like men waiting for their Lord’s coming; hasting unto the day of the Lord, being earnestly, desirous of being absent from the body, that they might be present with him: in a word, the receiving of the blood of the passover lamb into a bason, sprinkling it on the lintel, and two side posts of the doors of the houses, in which they ate it, which the Lord seeing passed over those houses, when he passed through Egypt to destroy the firstborn, whence it has its name of the passover, were very significative of the blood of sprinkling, even the blood of Christ upon the hearts and consciences of believers; whereby they are secured from avenging justice, from the curse and condemnation of the law, and from wrath to come, and shall never be hurt of the second death. Thus Christ is our antitypical passover, who was sacrificed, whose body and soul were offered as an offering and sacrifice unto God for us, that he might be proper food for our faith; and also in our

room and stead, to make satisfaction to divine justice for all our sins and transgressions.

Ver. 8. *Therefore let us keep the feast*, etc.] Not the feast of the passover, which was now ceased, though this is said in allusion to it; when the master of the house used to say [f59],

> "everyone that is hungry, let him come and eat; he that hath need, let him come jspyw, "and paschatize", or keep the feast of the passover:"

but rather the feast of the Lord's supper is here meant, that feast of fat things Isaiah prophesied of; in which are the richest entertainments, even the flesh and blood of Christ; though it seems best to understand it of the whole course of a Christian's life, spent in the exercise of spiritual joy and faith in Christ; he that is of a merry heart, as the believer of all men in the world has reason to be of, "hath a continual feast", (Proverbs 15:15) of spiritual mirth and pleasure, rejoicing always in Christ, as he ought to do: which feast, or course of life, is to be kept "not with old leaven"; in the old, vain, sinful manner of conversation, as before:

neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; not in malice to any man, or one another, nor in any sort of wickedness, living in no known sin, and allowing of it:

but with the unleavened bread of sincerity; as opposed to malice, of sincere love to God and Christ, and to his people: and of truth; of Gospel doctrine, discipline, and conversation.

Ver. 9. *I wrote unto you in an epistle*, etc.]. Not in this same epistle, and in (1 Corinthians 5:2,7) as some think; for what is here observed is not written in either of those verses, but in some other epistle he had sent them before, as is clear from (1 Corinthians 5:11) which either came not to hand, or else was neglected by them; and so what he here says may be considered as a reproof to them, for taking no notice of his advice; but continuing to show respect to the incestuous person, though he in a former epistle had advised them to the contrary: no doubt the apostle wrote other epistles to the Corinthians, besides those that are in being; (see 2 Corinthians 10:10, 11) nor does such a supposition at all detract from the perfection of Scripture; for not all that were written by him were by divine inspiration; and as many as were so, and were necessary for the perfection

of the canon of Scripture, and to instruct us in the whole counsel of God, have been preserved; nor is this any contradiction to this epistle's being his first to this church; for though it might not be his first to them, yet it is the first to them extant with us, and therefore so called: what he had written to them in another epistle was not

to company with fornicators; which he had not so fully explained, neither what fornicators he meant, nor what by keeping company with them; he therefore in this distinguishes upon the former, and enlarges his sense of the latter; declaring that they were not so much as to eat with such persons; which shows, that this prohibition does not regard unclean copulation, or a joining with them in the sin of fornication, they had been used to in a state of unregeneracy, for some sort of companying with fornicators is allowed of in the next verse; whereas no degree of a sinful mixture with them would ever be tolerated: but that it is to be understood of a civil society and familiar conversation with them; which might bring a reproach upon religion, be a stumbling to weak Christians, and be of dangerous consequence to themselves and others; who hereby might be allured and drawn by their example into the commission of the same sinful practices. The apostle seems to allude to the customs and usages of the Jews, who abstained from all civil commerce and familiar acquaintance with unbelievers. They say,

> "that everyone that does not study in the law, ajrwab hym[Æhml ç" kw atrwjs hyb db[mlw hybgl brqml rysa, "it is forbidden to come near him, and to exercise merchandise with him, and much less to walk with him in the way", because there is no faith in him[f60]."

Ver. 10. *Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world*, etc.] By "the fornicators of this world" are meant, such as were guilty of this sin, who were the men of the world, mere worldly carnal men, who were never called out of it, or ever professed to be; in distinction from those that were in the church, that had committed this iniquity; and the apostle's sense is, that his former prohibition of keeping company with fornicators was not to be understood as referring to such persons as were, out of the church, as if no sort of civil conversation and commerce were to be had with men of such, and the like infamous characters; or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters: that is, of this world; for this clause is to be understood of each of these; so we read[f61] of aml[d ^y[xb, "the

covetous of the world”; by the covetous are meant, either such who are given up to inordinate lusts, who work all uncleanness with greediness, and can never be satisfied with their filthy enjoyments; or such who are greedily desirous of riches and wealth, and of increasing their worldly substance by any method, right or wrong; and who not only withhold that which is meet from others, but will not allow themselves what is proper and necessary: “extortioners” are either “ravishers”, as the word may be rendered: such who by force violate the chastity of others, youths or virgins; or robbers, who, by violence and rapine, take away that which is the fight and property of others; or such who oppress the poor, detain their wages by fraud, or lessen them, and extort that by unlawful gain, which is unreasonable: idolaters are those who worship the false deities of the Heathens, or any idol, graven image, or picture of God, or men, or any creature whatsoever, or any but the one Lord God. The apostle, under these characters, comprises all manner of sin against a man’s self, against his neighbour, and against God; against himself, as fornication; against his neighbour, as covetousness and extortion; and against God, as idolatry: and since the world abounded with men guilty of these several vices, all kind of civil correspondence with them could not be avoided,

for then must you needs go out of the world; meaning not out of Greece, or of any of the cities thereof, into other parts, but out of the world itself; they must even destroy themselves, or seek out for a new world: it is an hyperbolical way of speaking, showing that the thing is impracticable and impossible, since men of this sort are everywhere; and were all trade and conversation with them to be forbidden, the families of God’s people could never be supported, nor the interest of religion maintained; a stop would soon be put to worldly business, and saints would have little or nothing to do in the world; wherefore, as the Arabic version reads it, “business would compel you to go out of the world”.

Ver. 11. *But now have I written unto you*, etc.] Which shows, that what he had written before was at another time, and in another epistle; but not that what he was now writing was different from the former, only he explains the persons of whom, and the thing about which he has before written:

not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator; or if any man that is a brother is called, or named a fornicator; or covetous, or an idolater; or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one, no, not to eat. The apostle’s meaning is, that in his

prohibition of keeping company with men of the above character, he would be understood of such persons as were called brethren; who had been received into the church, and had been looked upon, and had professed themselves to be such; and who might be mentioned by name, as notoriously guilty of fornication, covetousness, idolatry, and extortion, mentioned in the former verse; to which are added two other sins any of them might be addicted to, as “railing” either at their fellow brethren and Christians, or others giving reproachful language to them, and fixing invidious characters on them: and “drunkenness”; living in the frequent commission of that sin, and others before spoken of; and that such persons remaining impenitent and incorrigible, still persisting, in such a vicious course of life, after due admonition given them, were not only to be removed from their religious society, from the communion of the church, and be debarred sitting down, and eating with them at the Lord’s table, or at their love feasts, but also were to be denied civil conversation and familiarity with them, and even not suffered to eat common food at the same table with them: which though lawful to be used with the men of the world, yet for some reasons were not advisable to be used with such; partly for vindicating the honour of religion, and preventing the stumbling of the weak; and partly to make such offenders ashamed, and bring them to repentance. The apostle alludes to the behaviour of the Jews, either to persons that were under any pollution, as a woman in the days of her separation, when her husband hm[lkay al, “might not eat with her” off of the same plate, nor at the same table, nor on the same cloth; nor might she drink with him, nor mix his cup for him; and the same was observed to persons that had issues on them [f62]: or rather to such as were under ywdn, “the sentence of excommunication”, and such an one was obliged to sit the distance of four cubits from others, and who might not eat nor drink with him; nor was he allowed to wash and shave himself, nor a sufficiency of food, nor any to sit with him within the space of four cubits, except those of his house [f63].

Ver. 12. *For what have I to do to judge*, etc.] To admonish, reprove, censure, and condemn:

them also that are without? without the church, who never were in it, or members of it; to whom ecclesiastical jurisdiction does not reach; and with whom the apostle had no more concern, than the magistrates of one city, or the heads of one family have with another:

do not ye judge them that are within? and them only? The apostle appeals to their own conduct, that they only reproved, censured, and punished with excommunication, such as were within the pale of the church, were members of it, and belonged unto it; nor did they pretend to exercise a power over others; and it would have been well if they had made use of the power they had over their own members, by admonishing and reproving such as had sinned; by censuring delinquents, and removing from their communion scandalous and impenitent offenders; and therefore they need not wonder that the apostle only meant fornicators, etc. among them, and not those that were in the world, by his forbidding to company with such: reference seems to be had to ways of speaking among the Jews, who used not only to call themselves the church, and the Gentiles the world, and so them that were without, both their land and church; but even those among themselves that were profane, in distinction from their wise and good men. They say [f64],

> "if a man puts his phylacteries on his forehead, or upon the palm of his hand, this is the way of heresy (or, as in the Talmud [f65], the way of the Karaites); if he covered them with gold, and put them upon his glove (or on his garments without, so Bartenora, or, as Maimonides interprets it, his arm, shoulder, or breast), lo, this is µynwxyjh Ærd, "the way of them that are without":"

on which the commentators [f66] say, "these are the children of men, who walk after their own judgment, and not the judgment of the wise men": and Maimonides [f67] says, they are such who deny the whole law, and neither believe anything, either of the written or the oral law.

Ver. 13. *But them that are without God judgeth*, etc.] Or "will judge", in the great day of judgment; wherefore though such persons did not fall under the censures and punishment of the apostle, nor of a church of Christ, yet they shall not go unpunished; God will call them to an account for their fornication, covetousness, idolatry, extortion, etc. and will judge, condemn, and punish them, according to their works; and therefore since they do not fall under the cognizance of the churches of Christ, they are to be left to the tribunal of God; and all that the saints have to do is to watch over one another, and reprove, rebuke, and censure, as cases require, and as the case of this church did.

Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person; not that wicked thing, as some read it, but that wicked one; meaning not the devil, who is sometimes so called; a sense of the words proposed by Calvin, not asserted; but that wicked man, that, incestuous person, whom the apostle would have removed from among them, by excommunication; which was what became them as a church to do, and which lay in their power to do, and could only be done by them, and was to be their own pure act and deed: reference seems to be had to those passages in (De 17:7 21:21 22:21 24:7) where the Septuagint render the phrase, εξαρεις τον πονερον εξ υμων αυτων, “thou shalt put away that wicked one among yourselves”.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 6

The principal view of this chapter is to dissuade Christians from going to law with one another before Heathens, and also from fornication: the apostle begins with the first of these, and argues against it, from its being a daring, dangerous, and scandalous practice; and from the different characters of the persons, before whom controversies about civil things among Christians should and should not be brought; the one being saints, and so conscientious persons, and would do the right thing; the other unjust, and so justice could not be expected to be done by them, (1 Corinthians 6:1), and that the former, and not the latter, should be appointed judges in such cases, is argued from the greater to the lesser; that seeing these will judge the world, much more then should they be employed in matters of less consequence, (1 Corinthians 6:2) and by the same sort of argument it is further urged, that even angels themselves shall be judged by the saints; then much more might affairs appertaining to this life, be brought before them, and be decided by them, (1 Corinthians 6:3) yea, even the things that were litigated by them, and which they had power of judging in, were such as might be determined by the men of the least capacity among them, and therefore had no need to bring them before Heathen magistrates, (1 Corinthians 6:4) besides, it could not be spoken of, but to their shame, that after all their boast of their gifts, learning, and eloquence, there was not one man of wisdom and ability among them, to judge in matters of civil property, (1 Corinthians 6:5) and this evil of commencing law suits in Heathen courts of judicature, is aggravated by its being done, not between Christians and heathens, but between one Christian brother and another, and that before men that were infidels, (1 Corinthians 6:6) and which to do, showed a great deficiency of love, wisdom, and care; and much better it was to take and suffer wrong, than to be guilty of such criminal conduct, (1 Corinthians 6:7) yea, those, that drew their brethren before such judgment seats, did them wrong, both by bringing them thither, and by getting their cause in an unjust manner, (1 Corinthians 6:8) wherefore, to deter from such unrighteous procedures, the apostles declares, that all injurious persons, and wicked men in any way,

and of any sort, should not inherit the kingdom of God, (⁴⁶⁶⁰1 Corinthians 6:9,10) and whereas some of those the apostle writes to had been such, but now through the grace of God were otherwise, this should be considered as an argument, why they should not contend with one another before persons destitute of the grace they were partakers of, (⁴⁶⁶¹1 Corinthians 6:11) and now the apostle having mentioned fornication as a sin which excluded from the kingdom of God, and this being reckoned by the Gentiles an indifferent thing; he first observes of indifferent things in general, that are really so, that though they are lawful to be used, it is not expedient to use them at all times, and under all circumstances; and especially care should be taken, that by the use of them, we do not become slaves unto them, (⁴⁶⁶²1 Corinthians 6:12) and then particularly instances in meats, which without distinction might be lawfully eaten, they being made for the belly, and the belly for them; which was answering the original design of them, though hereafter both will be destroyed; yet fornication must not be put upon a level with them, and reckoned indifferent as they are; since the body was not made to be abused and defiled, or for fornication: but to be redeemed and sanctified by the Lord, and to serve him, and who was appointed for the redemption and sanctification of that, (⁴⁶⁶³1 Corinthians 6:13) moreover, the sin of fornication is dissuaded from, by the consideration of the resurrection of the body as a glorious one, by the power of God, of which Christ's resurrection is a pledge; and therefore should not be defiled with this sin, (⁴⁶⁶⁴1 Corinthians 6:14) as also from the bodies of the saints being the members of Christ; and therefore should not be made the members of an harlot by fornication, these things being utterly absurd and inconsistent, (⁴⁶⁶⁵1 Corinthians 6:15). Which is illustrated by observing, that he that is joined in unlawful copulation with an harlot, becomes one flesh with her, (⁴⁶⁶⁶1 Corinthians 6:16) which is confirmed by a passage cited out of (⁰²²⁴Genesis 2:24) which regards carnal copulation in general; but one that is in union with Christ, and is become a member of him, is one spirit with him; and therefore since there is such a spiritual union between them, fornication, which joins, unites, and makes a man one with an harlot, should be carefully avoided, (⁴⁶⁶⁷1 Corinthians 6:17) and in order the more to deter from this sin, the apostle observes, that it is not like some other sins, which are without the body, but this is by it, and with it, and against it; it is dishonourable, and may be hurtful to it, (⁴⁶⁶⁸1 Corinthians 6:18) to which he adds, that the bodies of the saints are the temples of the Holy Ghost, where he dwells, and therefore should not be polluted with fornication, (⁴⁶⁶⁹1 Corinthians 6:19) and closes all with an

argument, taken from their bodies not being their own property, to use and abuse at pleasure, but the purchase of Christ's blood; and therefore it was incumbent upon them to glorify him with them, as well as with their spirits, and not defile them with fornication.

Ver. 1. *Dare any of you, having a matter against another*, etc.], Any thing in difference, an action, cause, or suit. The apostle having dispatched the affair of the incestuous person, and blamed this church for their conduct therein: and having given them instructions what they should do, proceeds to lay before them another evil among them he had to complain of; which was, when any difference arose among them about their worldly concerns, they would

go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints; a method of proceeding condemned by the Jews, who would not suffer any causes of theirs to be tried before Gentiles, only before Israelites; their canon runs thus [f68],

> "he that tries a cause before the judges of the Gentiles, and before their tribunals, although their judgments are as the judgments of the Israelites, lo, this is an ungodly man; and it is as if he blasphemed and reproached, and lift up his hand against the law of Moses our master, as it is said, (<022101>Exodus 21:1) now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them, µywg ynpl alw, "and not before the Gentiles"; twjwydh ynpl alw, "and not before idiots", private or illiterate men."

They looked upon such an action as bad as profaning the name of God; hence they say [f69],

> "we must not try a cause in the courts of the Gentiles, for they come from the strength of judgment; this is Esau an hairy man, for they have no concord nor mercy — and he that comes before thee y"çh lljm, "profanes the name of God", who is gracious and merciful, and honours the name of an idol — wherefore he that brings a cause before the Gentiles, is the occasion of spreading the property of judgment in the world — — therefore let a cause be tried before the Israelites, for they are the secret of mercy, and not before the Gentiles, nor before idiots:"

they affirm [f70] it to be a greater sin than murder, and that not only profanations of the name of God, but rapine and violence are comprehended in it; and that to give evidence in an Heathen court against an Israelite, deserves excommunication; for so it is said, [f71]

> "he that bears witness against an Israelite µywg lç twakr[b, "in the courts of the Gentiles", and by his testimony gets money from him, which is not according to the judgment of the Israelites, they excommunicate him until he repays it."

Again [f72]

> "it is forbidden to order causes in the courts of (the rest of the nations) idolaters, for they have no part in the side of our faith."

The apostle here dissuades from this practice, of going to law before Heathen magistrates, not only from its being an imprudent, but an impudent, "daring", rash and adventurous action; and seems surprised that any should attempt it, when it must unavoidably expose their weaknesses and faults to their enemies; nor could they expect justice to be done them by men of such a character, as "unjust", who neither feared God, nor regarded men; were not only destitute of righteousness, but filled with all unrighteousness, and had not so much as the principles of common justice and equity in them; when on the contrary, from the saints, men who have the principles of grace and holiness wrought in them, and live soberly, righteously, and godly, who have the fear of God before their eyes, and upon their hearts; they might reasonably conclude, were matters brought before them, they would be adjusted according to judgment and truth, without exposing the sin and weakness of any party to the world.

Ver. 2. *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world*, etc.] The apostle appeals to them concerning this matter, as a thing well known unto them, or might easily be known by them; for this was either a traditional notion among the Jews, many of whom were in this church, that good men should judge the world; as is said of the righteous in the apocryphal book:

> "They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign for ever." (Wisdom 3:8)

and so the Jews say [f73], that

> “the first day of the month is the beginning of judgment in the whole world, and Isaac sat on a throne, aml[^dyml, “to judge the world”:”

or this might be collected, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, out of (Daniel 7:18,27), but the difficulty is, in what sense the apostle means the saints shall judge the world; not merely in a comparative sense, for so even will the Heathens, the men of Nineveh, and the queen of Sheba, judge and condemn the Jews; nor as assessors on the throne with Christ, for though they shall sit on the same throne with him as reigning, yet not as judging with him, all judgment is solely committed to him: nor merely as approving that judiciary sentence, that will be pronounced by him on the world; for even wicked men themselves, and devils, will be obliged to own the justice of it; but his meaning is, that in a little time the saints, Christian men, men under a profession of Christianity at least, should be governors in the world, and bear the office of civil magistracy in it; which came to pass in a few centuries after the writing of this, and has been more or less the case ever since; and will be more so in the latter day, when kings shall be nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers to the church; and when the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High: upon which the apostle strongly argues,

and if the world shall be judged by you; if such men as you shall bear sway in it, fill up all civil offices in it, even the highest; shall sit upon the benches of judges, and on the thrones of kings, and at last have the government of the whole world; since such honour the saints shall have, and be abundantly capable of it,

are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? is it too high a post, and can you be thought to be unqualified for, and unfit to have such trivial things, of little or no moment and importance, things relating to the common affairs of life, brought before you, and be tried, and judged by you?

Ver. 3. *Know ye not that we shall judge angels*, etc.] Meaning not the ministers of the Gospel, and pastors of churches, called “angels”, (Revelation 1:20) whose doctrines are examined, tried, and judged by the saints, according to the word of God; nor the good angels, who, were it possible that they could, or should publish a Gospel contrary to what has

been preached by the apostle, would be contradicted, condemned, and accursed by him, (see <4801 08>Galatians 1:8,9) but the evil angels, the devil and his angels: and this is to be understood not of their future final judgment and condemnation at the last day, when saints will subscribe unto, and approve of the sentence pronounced upon them, and will triumph over them in their destruction; but of the judgment of them, and of their ejection out of the Gentile world, out of their oracles, idols, and idol temples, to which Christ refers, (<4812 31>John 12:31) and calls the judgment of this world, and the casting out of the prince of it by the ministry of his apostles; and which was now already begun, and ere long would be fully accomplished: accordingly the Syriac version renders it, "know ye not ˆnynyd akalmld, that we are about to judge angels?" and the Arabic, "know ye not that we judge angels?" from whence the apostle infers very justly,

how much more things that pertain to this life? this animal life; to the trade and business of life; to pecuniary matters, to estates and possessions in this world, about which differences may arise between one saint and another.

Ver. 4. *If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life*, etc.] Not judgements relating to life and death, for these were not in the power of a Jewish sanhedrim now, and much less of a Christian community, but were wholly in the power of the Roman magistrates; but judgments relating to the common affairs of life, or what the Jews call twnwmm ynyd, "pecuniary judgments" [f74], in distinction from twçpn ynyd, "judgments of souls", or capital ones. The Jews say [f75],

> "that forty years before the destruction of the temple, capital judgments were taken from Israel; and in the days of R. Simeon ben Jochai, pecuniary judgments were taken away from Israel."

Now this Rabbi lived many years after the times of the apostles, so that as yet the Jews had a power of exercising such judgments; and no doubt the Christian's also, who as yet were very little, if at all, distinguished from the Jews by the Romans: and therefore since such judgments were within the compass of their authority, the apostle advises

to set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church; meaning, not those of the lowest circumstances of life, and of the meanest abilities and capacities; for in the next verse he requires a wise man for such a business; but private persons, laymen, who were not in any office and authority in

the church, in distinction from pastors, elders, and rulers, that were in office, power, and high esteem, whom he would not have troubled with cases of this nature; but should rather choose out from among the laity persons of the best judgment and capacity, to be umpires and arbitrators in such worldly matters, which do not so properly come under the notice and cognizance of spiritual guides. The phrase, "to judge", is not in the original text, where it is only καψιζετε, "set", or "put in the chair"; but is added in the Vulgate Latin version; and to which agree both the Syriac and Arabic versions; the former reading the words, "they that are despised in the church, set for you in judgment"; and the latter, "make them to sit judges". The Jews, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, besides their great sanhedrim of seventy one persons, and that other of twenty three in their cities of note, and their triumvirate in every synagogue, had also two sorts of benches, who judged of lesser matters; the one was called ˆyjmwm lç ˆyd tyb, "the bench of authorized persons", experienced men, that were approved of, and had their authority from the sanhedrim; and the other was called twjwydh lç ˆyd tyb, "the bench of idiots" [f76], or private persons, or ˆyjmwm ˆyaç ˆyd tyb, "the bench of those who were not authorized" [f77], or had not their authority, from the higher courts; but being judged proper persons, were chosen by the people to arbitrate matters in difference between them; and these are the men the apostle means, at least alludes to, before whom he would have the causes brought.

Ver. 5. *I speak to your shame*, etc.] Not that they did set such persons to judge, but that they did not; and instead of so doing went to law with their brethren before the unjust:

is it so that there is not a wise man among you? this also the apostle speaks to their shame, who had so much gloried in their wisdom, and boasted of their parts and abilities to the contempt of others, and even of the apostle himself; and yet acted as if there was not a wise man among them capable of judging and determining trivial matters, but they must carry them before unconverted persons:

no not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? for though the above mentioned benches consisted of three persons, yet the contending parties might choose one man to be an arbitrator and judge between them. The rule with the Jews was this [f78];

> “pecuniary judgments are by three, but if he is authorised or approved by the majority, ydyjy wlypa ˆd, “he may judge alone”. Says R. Nachman, as I judge pecuniary judgments alone; and so says R. Chaijah, as I judge pecuniary punishments alone.”

Ver. 6. *But brother goeth to law with brother*, etc.] The relation meant is spiritual; it was usual for members of churches to be called brethren, they professing to be born again of the same Father, and belonging to the same family under Christ, the son, firstborn, and master of it: and a very wicked and shameful thing it was, that persons in such a relation, being of such a family, should go to law with one another at all:

and that before the unbelievers; which is an aggravation of their sin and folly. The apostle before calls them “unjust”, now “infidels”, such as had no faith in Christ, disbelieved the Messiah, and denied the whole Gospel, and therefore no faith or confidence should be put in them; for, generally speaking, such as have no faith, are not only wicked, but unreasonable men, men of no reason, conscience, justice, and equity; and therefore very improper persons for believers to bring their causes before.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you*, etc.] Or a “defect”: a want of brotherly love, or there would be no occasion to go to law at all; a want of wisdom and conduct, or proper persons would be pitched upon, and chosen out from among themselves to be arbitrators and judge between them; and a want of care among their leaders, who else would have pointed out to them such a method of accommodation, and not have suffered them to go the lengths they did:

because ye go to law one with another; which would never be, was there not a declension among you, a decay of your first love, and of the power of religion and true godliness:

why do ye not rather take wrong why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? than to go to law, especially before unjust persons and unbelievers, taking the advice of Christ, (40 5 40Matthew 5:40) It is more advisable to a believer to suffer wrong than to go to law with any man, and especially with a brother. It is a petition in the Jewish liturgy[f79],

> “let it please thee, O Lord God, and the God of my fathers, to deliver me this day, and every day — -from hard judgment, and a severe adversary, tyrb ˆb wnyaç ˆybw tyrb ˆb awhç ˆyb,

"whether he be a Son of the covenant, or whether he be not a son of the covenant"."

Ver. 8. *Nay, you do wrong and defraud*, etc.] So far were they from taking and acting up to the advice given, that instead of taking wrong, they did wrong; and instead of suffering themselves to be defrauded, they defrauded others:

and that your brethren; that were of the same faith, of the same religion, and in the same church and family: in short, neither party, not the plaintiff, nor the defendant, sought anything more or less than to wrong, trick, and defraud each other; such a sad corruption and degeneracy prevailed among them: hence the apostle thought to deal plainly and closely with them, as in the following verses.

Ver. 9. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God*? etc.] A way of speaking much like that in the Talmud, µyqydxl ala ywç[wnya abh µlw[hç [dwy ywh "know thou, that the world to come is not made but for the righteous?" [f80] Without a righteousness there will be no entrance into the world of bliss and happiness hereafter; and this must be a better righteousness than what a sinful creature is capable of working out, and no other than the righteousness of Christ. It was a loss and want of righteousness that cast the angels down from heaven, and turned Adam out of paradise; and whoever of his posterity: are destitute of one, will fall short of enjoying the glory of God; for it is not agreeable to the holy nature of God, to his infinite justice and righteous law, to admit any into heaven without a righteousness: hence a judgment seat is erected, before which all must stand; and those that will be found without a righteousness, will be for ever excluded the kingdom of heaven; and could any unrighteous persons be received there, it would spoil the pleasure and happiness of the saints. Now this is said, partly to dissuade the Corinthians from going to law with each other before unrighteous persons, who have no right to the kingdom of God, and living and dying as they are, will have no share in it; and therefore since they are not to be fellow heirs and companions with them in another world, they should not bring their causes before them in this; and partly to reprove them for their injurious and unrighteous actions among themselves, their tricking and defrauding of one another, with other sins they were guilty of; which, if not repented of, would show, that notwithstanding their profession, they were destitute of the grace of God, were unfit to be in the kingdom of God, in a Gospel

church state here below, and would be shut out of the kingdom of heaven hereafter.

Be not deceived imagining, that through your knowledge and profession you shall be saved, live as you will:

neither fornicators, such as are guilty of uncleanness with persons in a single state:

nor idolaters; who worship more gods than one, and not the true God; who do service to them that are not gods, and perform what the Jews call hrz hdwb["strange service": and not only fall down to stocks and stones, but serve divers lusts and pleasures, the idols of their own hearts:

nor adulterers: such as have criminal conversation with persons in a married state:

nor effeminate; or "soft", or, as the Syriac renders it, albjm, "corrupters"; that is, of themselves, by voluntary pollution, such as are guilty of the sin of Onan, (Genesis 38:8,9).

Nor abusers of themselves with mankind; sodomites.

Ver. 10. *Nor thieves*, etc.] Who take away another man's property, secret or openly, by fraud or force.

Nor covetous: insatiable, in the lust of uncleanness; or greedy of worldly gain, bent upon increasing their substance at any rate, by circumvention, fraud, and deceit; and do not use the things of this life as they should, for their own good, and that of others.

Nor drunkards who are strong to drink strong liquors; who give up themselves thereunto: who sit down on purpose to intoxicate themselves, and are frequent in the commission of this sin.

Nor revilers; who are free with other men's characters, load them with reproaches, and take away their good names; either openly or secretly, either by tale bearing, whispering, and backbiting, or by raising and spreading scandalous reports in a public manner.

Nor extortioners ravishers of virgins; or plunderers of men's substance in an open and forcible way; or who extort unlawful gain:

shall inherit the kingdom of God; not that these sins, any or all of them, are unpardonable; for such who have been guilty of them may, through the blood of Christ, receive the remission of them, and through the grace of the Spirit of God obtain repentance for them, and have both right and meetness for the kingdom of heaven, as the following words show.

Ver. 11. *And such were some of you*, etc.] Not all, but some of them; and of these everyone was not guilty of all these crimes; but some had been guilty of one, and others of another; so that they had been all committed by one or another of them. The Corinthians were a people very much given to uncleanness and luxury, without measure [f81], which was the ruin of their state: and among these wicked people God had some chosen vessels of salvation; who are put in mind of their former state, partly for their present humiliation, when they considered what they once were, no better than others, but children of wrath, even as others; and partly to observe to them, and the more to illustrate and magnify the grace of God in their conversion, pardon, justification, and salvation; as also to point out to them the obligations that lay upon them to live otherwise now than they formerly did.

But ye are washed; which is not to be understood of external washing, of corporeal ablution, or of their being baptized in water; so they might be, and yet not be cleansed from their filthiness, either by original or actual transgressions; nor of the washing of regeneration, which more properly comes under the next head; but of their being washed from their sins by the blood of Christ, through the application of it to them, for the remission of them; which supposes them to have been polluted, as they were originally, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; naturally, for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? and internally, in heart, mind, and conscience; also universally, both as to persons, and as to the powers and faculties of their souls, and members of their bodies; and that they could not wash and cleanse themselves by any ceremonial purifications, moral duties, or evangelical performances; but that this was a blessing of grace they enjoyed through the blood of Christ, by which they were washed from their sins, both in the sight of God, his justice being satisfied for them, they were all pardoned and done away, so as to be seen no more, and they appeared unblamable and irreprovable in his sight; and also in their own apprehensions, for being convinced of their pollution, and being directed to Christ for cleansing, the Spirit of God took his blood, and sprinkled it on

their consciences, to the appeasement of them, the removal of sin from thence, and a non-remembrance of it.

But ye are sanctified; which designs not their sanctification by God the Father, which is no other than the eternal separation of them from himself, or his everlasting choice of them to eternal happiness; nor the sanctification of them, or the expiation of their sins by the blood of Christ, this is meant in the former clause; nor their sanctification in Christ, or the imputation of his holiness with his obedience and death for their justification, which is intended in the following one; but the sanctification of the Spirit, which lies in a principle of spiritual life infused into the soul, in a spiritual light in the understanding, in a flexion of the will to the will of God, both in grace and providence, in a settlement of the affections on divine objects, and in an implantation of every grace; which is a gradual work, as yet not perfect, but will be fulfilled in all in whom it is begun.

But ye are justified; not by the works of the law, but by the righteousness of Christ. Justified they were from all eternity, as soon as Christ became a surety for them; and so they were when he rose from the dead, who were justified as their head and surety, and they in him; but here it is to be understood of their being justified in the court of conscience, under the witnessings of the Spirit of God; who having convinced them of the insufficiency of their own righteousness, and having brought near the righteousness of Christ unto them, and wrought faith in them to lay hold on it, pronounced them justified persons in their own consciences; whence followed joy, peace, and comfort.

In the name of the Lord Jesus; which may refer, as the following clause, to all that is said before: by "the name of the Lord Jesus" may be meant he himself; and the sense be, that they were washed by his blood, sanctified by his Spirit, and justified by his righteousness; or it may intend the merit and efficacy of Christ's blood, sacrifice, and righteousness; as that their sins were pardoned, and they cleansed from them through the merit of the blood of Christ shed for the remission of their sins; and that they were regenerated and sanctified through the efficacy of Christ's resurrection from the dead; and were instilled by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ: or else the name of Christ may design his Gospel, through which they received the knowledge of God's way of pardoning sinners, and justifying them, and the Spirit of God, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification:

and by the Spirit of our God; who sprinkled the blood of Christ upon them, to the cleansing of them; who sanctified their hearts, and revealed the righteousness of Christ unto them for their justification, and pronounced the sentence of it upon them. It is to be observed, that all the three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, are here mentioned, as being jointly concerned in those acts of grace.

Ver. 12. *All things are lawful unto me*, etc.] That is, which are of an indifferent nature; otherwise everything is not lawful to be done:

but all things are not expedient; when the doing of them destroys the peace, comfort, and edification of others; when it stumbles and grieves weak minds, and causes offence to them; (see 1 Corinthians 10:23)

all things are lawful for me; which is repeated for the sake of saying the following words:

but I will not be brought under the power of any; which would be very inexpedient, should any by the use of liberty in things indifferent, on the one hand, offend his brethren, and, on the other, bring himself into bondage to those very things he has the free use of; and therefore the apostle determines, that these shall not have the mastery over him, that he will use them, or not use them, at his pleasure. It is somewhat difficult to know what in particular he has respect unto, whether to what he had been treating of before, concerning going to law before unbelievers; and his sense be, that however lawful this might be in itself, yet it was not expedient, since it was exposing of themselves to ungodly persons, and a putting themselves under their power to judge and determine as they pleased; or whether to the use of meats forbidden under the law, or offered to idols; which though in themselves lawful to be eaten, every creature of God being good, and not to be refused and accounted common and unclean; yet it was not expedient to use this liberty, if a weak brother should be grieved, or a man himself become a slave to his appetite.

Ver. 13. *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats*, etc.] All sort of food is appointed and provided to satisfy the appetite and stomach, to fill the belly, and nourish the body; and the belly, and all the parts through which the food passes, are purposely formed by God for the reception and digestion of the food, for its secretion, chylification, and nutrition by it, and the ejection of the excrementitious parts.

But God shall destroy both it and them: at death, and in the grave, when the one shall be consumed, and the other be needless and useless; and though that part of the body, with the rest, will be raised at the last day, since the body will be raised perfect, consisting of all its parts; yet there will be no appetite, no desire in the stomach after meats, no need of them to fill the belly, and so no use of these parts for such purposes as they now are; for the children of the resurrection will be like the angels, and stand in no need of eating and drinking.

Now the body is not for fornication. Though meats are appointed for the belly, and the belly for them, and this and the other sort of meats are of an indifferent kind, which may or may not be used; yet this cannot be said of fornication, which the Corinthians, and other Gentiles, took to be equally indifferent as meats; but the apostle shows there is not the same reason for the one as the other. The body was not originally made and appointed for fornication; this is quite besides the will of God, who has provided marriage as a remedy against it:

but for the Lord; for Jesus Christ, for whom a body was prepared in God's council and covenant; and for the sake of which, and after the exemplar of it in God's eternal mind, the body of man was first formed; and which was also made, as after the image, so for the glory of Christ, to be a member of his, to be redeemed by him, and to serve him in, in righteousness and holiness, and at last to be raised by him, and made like to his glorious body at the great day.

And the Lord for the body; he was preordained in the council of God, and provided in the covenant of grace, and sent in the fulness of time to be a Redeemer and Saviour of the body, as well as the soul; to be a sanctifier of it, and the raiser of it up from the dead in the resurrection; all which are so many arguments to dissuade from the sin of fornication.

Ver. 14. *And God hath both raised up the Lord*, etc.] God the Father has raised up from the dead the Lord Jesus Christ, though not exclusive of the Son, who was equally concerned in the resurrection of himself, whereby he demonstrated himself to be the Son of God, truly and properly God.

And will also raise up us by his own power; for the resurrection of the dead, whether of Christ, or of his people, is an act of power, of God's own power, even of his almighty power, and is what the power of a mere creature could never effect. Now as Christ, the head, is raised, so shall all

his members by the same power; their bodies will be raised powerful, glorious, incorruptible; and spiritual; an argument that they were never made for fornication, nor to be defiled with such uncleanness.

Ver. 15. *Know ye not that your bodies are the members, of Christ*, etc.] The whole persons of God's elect were chosen in Christ, and given to him, and made one with him, their bodies as well as their souls; and both are redeemed by him, and, in union with him, are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones:

shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. Signifying, that it is a most absurd, indecent, abominable, and detestable thing, that the bodies of the saints, which are the members of Christ, should be joined in carnal copulation with an harlot.

Ver. 16. *What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot*, etc.] Not in marriage, but in carnal copulation, and unclean embraces, is one body with her

for two ("saith he", Adam, or Moses, or God, or the Scripture, or as R. Sol. Jarchi says, the Holy Spirit, (Genesis 2:24))

shall be one flesh; what is originally said of copulation in lawful marriage, in which man and wife, legally coupled together, become one flesh, is applied to the unlawful copulation of a man with an harlot, by which act they also become one body, one flesh; and which is made use of by the apostle, to deter the members of Christ from the commission of this sin, which makes a member of Christ one body and flesh with an harlot, than which nothing is more monstrous and detestable. The apostle here directs to the true sense of the phrase in Genesis, "and they shall be one flesh"; that is, man and wife shall only have carnal knowledge of, and copulation with each other. Some Jewish [f82] writers interpret this phrase, dlwh dxm "on account of the foetus", which is formed by the means of them both, and which becomes "their one flesh": others [f83], thus as if they were, or because they are, like as if they were one flesh; but others [f84], in more agreement with the apostle, think that this has respect rwbjh la, "to that conjunction", by which the fixing of the species is completed; and others [f85] expressly thus, "they two shall be one flesh", µhynçç µwqml dja rçb µyçw[, "that is, in the place where both of them make one flesh": which is

equally done by unlawful copulation with an harlot, as with a man's own wife.

Ver. 17. *He that is joined unto the Lord*, etc.] As every elect person is; his whole person, soul and body, is united to the Lord Jesus Christ, to his whole person, as God-man and Mediator; even as Adam and Eve, whose marriage was a representation of the marriage between Christ and his church, were personally united, and were called by the same name; and as the whole human nature of Christ, consisting of a true body and a reasonable soul, was united to the person of the Son of God; and as appears from the influence that union with Christ has upon the redemption, sanctification, and resurrection of the body. The ground, foundation, and bond of which union is, not the Spirit on Christ's part; for the Spirit being received as a spirit of regeneration, sanctification, etc. is a fruit of union to Christ, and an evidence of it; nor faith on our part, which as a grace is not ours, but the gift of God, and is a fruit of union; nor is it of an uniting nature, but is a grace of communion; and the foundation of all its acts, as seeing Christ, going to him, receiving of him, walking on in him; etc. is a previous union to Christ; but it is the everlasting and unchangeable love of Christ to them, shown in his choice of them, in his covenant with his Father on their behalf, in his engaging for them as a surety, in assuming their nature, and acting, both in time and eternity, as the representative of them, which is the bond and cement of their union, and from which there can be no separation. This union is first discovered in the effectual calling, and will be more manifest hereafter. Now he that is in this sense united to Christ,

is one spirit; for this union is a spiritual one; it is complete and perfect; near and indissoluble; by virtue and in consequence of it, God's chosen ones come to have and enjoy the same spirit in measure, which Christ their head and Mediator has without measure: hence they have the Spirit of God, as a spirit of illumination and conversion, of faith and holiness, of adoption, and as the earnest, pledge, and seal of their future glory. And since so it is, fornication, which makes them one flesh with an harlot, ought studiously to be abstained from.

Ver. 18. *Flee fornication*, etc.] As that which is hurtful, scandalous, and unbecoming Christians; avoid it, and all the occasions of it, that may lead unto it, and be incentives of it:

every sin that a man doth is without the body not but that other sins are committed by the body, and by the members of it as instruments; they are

generally committed by the abuse of other things that are without, and do not belong to the body; and so do not bring that hurt unto and reproach upon the body, as fornication does:

but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body; not meaning his wife, which is as his own body; but his proper natural body, which is not only the instrument by which this sin is committed, but the object against which it is committed; and which is defiled and dishonoured by it; and sometimes its strength and health are impaired, and it is filled with nauseous diseases hereby.

Ver. 19. *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost*, etc.] What is said in (<4616>1 Corinthians 3:16,17) of the saints in general, is here said of their bodies in particular. The Holy Spirit, in regeneration and sanctification, when he begins the good work of grace on a man, takes possession of his whole person, soul and body, and dwells therein as in his temple. So the Jews[f86] call the body of a righteous man ˆkçm, the "habitation" of the Holy Spirit. Now it is most abominably scandalous and shameful that that body, which is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, which is sacred to him as a temple, should be defiled by the sin of fornication: it is added,

which is in you, which ye have of God; meaning the Holy Spirit which was in them, as in his temple; which dwelt in their hearts, and influenced their bodies, lives, and conversations; and which they received of God as a wonderful instance of his grace and love to them; that he should be bestowed upon them, to regenerate, renew, and sanctify them, to implant every grace, to make them a fit habitation for God, and meet for the inheritance of the saints in light:

and ye are not your own: their own masters, at their own dispose, to live to their own lusts, or the lusts of men; men have not power over their bodies to abuse them at pleasure by fornication, or such like uncleanness, neither single nor married persons; (see <4704>1 Corinthians 7:4) and of all men, not the saints, who are neither their own nor other men's, nor Satan's, but God's; not only by creation, but by choice and covenant; and Christ's by gift, by purchase, and powerful grace, and in a conjugal relation to him; wherefore fornication ill becomes them.

Ver. 20. *For ye are bought with a price*, etc.] Not with gold and silver, but with the precious blood of Christ, as the whole church, and all the elect of

God are. This proves them to be the Lord's, not only his redeemed ones, being ransomed by a price from the bondage of the law, sin, Satan, and the world; but his espoused ones, and which is chiefly designed here; for one way of obtaining and espousing a wife among the Jews was by a price [f87];

> "a woman (they say) is obtained or espoused three ways; Pskb, "by silver", by a writing, and by lying with; by silver, the house of Shammai say, by a penny, and the value of a penny; the house of Hillel say, by a "pruta", and the value of a "pruta": how much is a "pruta?" the eighth part of an Italian farthing."

That is, be it ever so small a price, yet if given and taken on the account of espousals, it made them valid; and it was an ancient rite in marriage used among other nations [f88] for husband and wife to buy each other: Christ, indeed, did not purchase his church to be his spouse, but because she was so; but then his purchasing of her with his blood more clearly demonstrated and confirmed his right unto her, as his spouse; he betrothed her to himself in eternity, in the everlasting covenant of grace; but she, with the rest of the individuals of human nature, fell into sin, and so, under the sentence of the law, into the hands of Satan, and the captivity of the world; to redeem her from whence, and by so doing to own and declare her his spouse, and his great love to her, he gave himself a ransom price for her; which lays her under the greatest obligation to preserve an inviolable chastity to him, and to love and honour him.

Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's; by "God" is here meant more especially the Lord Jesus Christ, by the price of whose blood the bodies and souls of his people are bought, which lays the obligation on them to glorify him in and with both; and contains a very considerable proof of the deity of Christ; who is "glorified", when all the perfections of the divine nature are ascribed to him; when the whole of salvation is attributed to him, and he is looked unto, received, trusted in and depended on as a Saviour, and praise and thanks are given unto him on that account; and when his Gospel is embraced and professed, and walked worthy of, and his ordinances submitted to, and his commandments kept in love to him: and he is to be glorified both in body and spirit; "in body", by an outward attendance on his worship, and a becoming external conversation; by confessing and speaking well of him; by acting for him, laying out and using time, strength, and substance, for his honour and interest; and by patient suffering for his name's sake: "in spirit", which is

done when the heart or spirit is given up to him, and is engaged in his service, and when his glory lies near unto it; the reason enforcing all this, is because both are his; not only by creation, but by his Father's gift of both unto him; by his espousal of their whole persons to himself; and by his redemption of both soul and body from destruction: the Vulgate version reads, "bear" or "carry God in your body", and leaves out the next words, "and in your spirit", which are God's; and which also are left out in the Ethiopic and in the Alexandrian copy, and some others.

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 7

In this, chapter, various cases concerning marriage being proposed to the apostle, are answered by him; and he discourses of the nature, use, and end of marriage, and of the duties of married persons to one another; and gives advice to such as were unmarried, and points at the advantages of a single state, where it can be continued in without danger. Some of the Corinthians having written to him upon these heads, he returns for answer in general, that abstinence from marriage was most advisable; that is, at that time of persecution, and by those who had the gift of continence, and for reasons after mentioned, (1 Corinthians 7:1) though, in order to avoid fornication, it was absolutely necessary for truth who had not that gift to enter into it, and act agreeably thereunto, (1 Corinthians 7:2) and therefore advises both parties in such a state to yield due benevolence to each other, (1 Corinthians 7:3) giving this as a reason for it, that neither of them had power over their own bodies, but over each other's, (1 Corinthians 7:4) wherefore abstinence from the marriage bed ought not to be but with the following limitations; that it be by mutual agreement, and only for a time, and that only for the sake of devotion but that they come together again, lest Satan should take an advantage of their incontinency, and tempt them to evil, (1 Corinthians 7:5) though in all this the apostle would be understood to speak, not in an authoritative, but a permissive way, and rather by way of counsel than of command, (1 Corinthians 7:6) and expresses his hearty wish, that everyone was, and would continue, in a single state, as he himself; though he corrects himself by observing, that it was not the pleasure of God to bestow the gift of continency on everyone, and therefore suggests, that it was right for everyone to act according to the gift he had received, (1 Corinthians 7:7) and then addresses persons in a single state, whether they had ever been married or not, and advises them so to abide, partly by his own example, and partly by the profitableness of it, (1 Corinthians 7:8) but if they had not the gift of continency, his counsel is, that they enter into a marriage state, giving this reason for it, that it is better to enter into such a state than to be inflamed with lust, (1 Corinthians 7:9) and then he directs himself to married

persons; and these he commands, not in his own name, but in the name of the Lord, to live together; and particularly, that the wife should not leave her husband for any trivial matter, or on account of any difference that might arise between them, (<4610>1 Corinthians 7:10) and that if she so did, she ought to remain unmarried, or seek to be reconciled to her husband, and come to him again; and, on the other hand, the husband ought not to divorce his wife, unless in case of adultery and wilful obstinate desertion, (<4611>1 Corinthians 7:11). And as to another case of conscience which was moved unto him, whether a believer, having married an unbeliever, should live together; he answers, that if a Christian brother had married an unbelieving wife, and she thought fit to continue with him, he should not put her away, (<4612>1 Corinthians 7:12). And so a Christian woman that had married an unbelieving husband, if it was his pleasure to dwell with her, she ought not to forsake him, (<4613>1 Corinthians 7:13) giving this reason for it, because they were legally married to each other, or otherwise their children must be reckoned bastards; whereas by maintaining the validity of their marriage, and abiding by it, they would appear to be legitimate, (<4614>1 Corinthians 7:14) but if the unbeliever, whether man or woman, thinks fit to desert the believing wife or husband, so be it, the party deserted may make themselves easy, nor are they under obligation to remain unmarried: however, as they are called to peace they ought to seek it, and endeavour to live quietly together, (<4615>1 Corinthians 7:15) and that for this reason, because they may be the means of the conversion, and so of the salvation of the unbelieving party, (<4616>1 Corinthians 7:16) hence the apostle takes an occasion to exhort every man in general to walk and abide in the calling wherein he is called, this being an order he had given to all the churches, (<4617>1 Corinthians 7:17) and which he exemplifies by particular instances, as that those who are called in circumcision, or in uncircumcision, should abide so, (<4618>1 Corinthians 7:18) because these are nothing, or indifferent things, which may be, or may not be; but keeping the commandments is binding, and not to be dispensed with, (<4619>1 Corinthians 7:19) wherefore the general rule is repeated, that it might be the more regarded and observed, (<4620>1 Corinthians 7:20). And another instance given, illustrating it, as that if a man is called while a servant, he should make himself easy, and continue so; though if he can have his freedom it is most eligible, (<4621>1 Corinthians 7:21). The reason persuading him to be satisfied with his condition is, because he that is called by grace, though a servant in a civil sense, is the Lord’s freeman in a spiritual sense; and, on the other hand, he who is free in a civil sense when called, is in a spiritual sense a servant of

Christ, (⁴⁰⁷²1 Corinthians 7:22) as clearly appears by his being bought with the price of his blood; and therefore neither one nor the other should be servants of men in matters of religion, (⁴⁰⁷³1 Corinthians 7:23). Wherefore, as before, it becomes every man to abide in the station in which he is called, until it please God in his providence to change his situation, (⁴⁰⁷⁴1 Corinthians 7:24). After this the apostle returns to his former subject about marriage, and addresses the virgins particularly, concerning whom he declares he had no express commandment from the Lord, but however was willing to give his judgment and advice, with all sincerity and uprightness, as one that had the honour to be counted faithful by the Lord himself, (⁴⁰⁷⁵1 Corinthians 7:25) and his judgment was, that considering the present persecution of the churches of Christ, it was better for single persons, men or women, to remain so, (⁴⁰⁷⁶1 Corinthians 7:26) though he advises those that were married by no means to desert one another, or seek to dissolve the marriage bond; as, on the other hand, those that were free from it, he would not have them seek out for a wife, (⁴⁰⁷⁷1 Corinthians 7:27) though should they, it would not be criminal in them; and whether young men or maidens, it was not unlawful for them to marry, only it was not so convenient for the present; and such therefore must expect trouble in the world, (⁴⁰⁷⁸1 Corinthians 7:28). However, it was proper, since time was short, and every worldly enjoyment was fading and perishing, that care be taken that there be no abuse of any, in whatsoever state and condition, or circumstance men were in; neither to be too much depressed with afflictive providences, nor too much elated with prosperous ones; and by no means to indulge to lasciviousness and luxury, (⁴⁰⁷⁹1 Corinthians 7:29-31). And whereas the married life is a careful one, and the apostle was desirous the persons he writes to should be without any distressing care, he advised so strongly as he did to a single state; and in order to persuade to it, he puts the difference between an unmarried and a married man, who though they both had their cares, yet about different things; the former about divine and religious things, in order to please the Lord; the latter about worldly things, in order to please his wife, (⁴⁰⁸⁰1 Corinthians 7:32,33). And just the like difference he observes there is between a wife and a virgin; the virgin, she is concerned about and taken up in religious matters, that she may increase in holiness, both inward and outward; and the wife is engaged in worldly and domestic affairs, which engross her thoughts and time, in order to please her husband, (⁴⁰⁸¹1 Corinthians 7:34) wherefore the advice he had given to continue single, was manifestly for the profit and advantage of such persons in spiritual things; though he gave it with no design to

ensnare any, who had not the gift of continence, but advised to it, when it could be done, in a comely manner, and that they might attend upon the worship of God, without distraction by worldly cares for their families, (1 Corinthians 7:35) but in case, when a virgin is ripe for marriage, and there is a necessity for it, it is by no means advisable in parents to behave uncomely to her, and refuse to marry her, and so deprive her of the remedy against incontinence; when such is the case, she ought to marry, that being not sinful, yea, it would be sinful to do otherwise, (1 Corinthians 7:36) yet where there is no necessity, where persons have the gift of continency, are steadfastly determined not to marry, but, to keep their virginity, this is commendable as well as profitable, (1 Corinthians 7:37) whence this conclusion is drawn, that they that marry do well, rather than burn in lust, or commit sin, but they that do not marry, having the gift of continency, do better, both for themselves, and for the Lord, (1 Corinthians 7:38). And whereas whilst an husband is living, the wife is bound by law to continue with him; and when he is dead, she may marry whom she will, So be it she seeks the Lord, and has his glory in view, (1 Corinthians 7:39) yet in the judgment of the apostle she would be a much more happy person should she continue a widow; and this was not only his own private judgment, but he had reason to believe it was according to the mind of the Spirit of God, (1 Corinthians 7:40).

Ver. 1. *Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me*, etc.] Though the false apostles had greatly influenced the members of this church, yet there were many among them that had a very great respect for the apostle, and kept up a correspondence with him, though at a distance from him, by writing; in which way they informed him of their doubts and difficulties, that arose in their minds about certain things, and desired his judgment in them, to which they paid a very great deference. The things they wrote to him about, here referred to, may be collected from the contents of this chapter, and some others following; as whether a Christian man ought not to abstain from the use of women; whether a believer ought to live with an unbelieving yoke fellow; whether such as had been circumcised should not make use of some methods to draw on the foreskin of their flesh; whether apprentices, who were called by the grace of God, ought to serve out their time with their masters; and concerning celibacy or virginity, the eating of things offered to idols, and the maintenance of ministers: and he begins with the first; to which he answers,

it is good for a man not to touch a woman; which is to be understood, not of merely touching a woman, which can neither be criminal, nor in all cases inexpedient, or be attended with any ill, or dangerous consequences; nor of the matrimonial contract, which is lawful and honourable; but of the act of carnal copulation with a woman: in this sense the Jews use the phrase,

> "there are three (they say [f89]) that fled from transgression, and the blessed God joined his name with them; and they are these, Joseph, and Joel, and Phalti. Joseph, as appears from what is said, (<198105>Psalm 81:5) "a testimony in Joseph is his name"; what is the meaning of the phrase "in Joseph?" this testifies concerning him, rpyjwp tçab [gn alç, "that he did not touch Potiphar's wife" (i.e. he did not lie with her); Jael, as is clear from what is said, (<070418>Judges 4:18) "and Jael went forth to meet Sisera, and she covered him with a mantle"; what is the meaning of the phrase, hkymçb? (which is rendered, "with a mantle";) our Rabbins here (in Babylon) say with a linen cloth; but our Rabbins there (in the land of Israel) say with bed clothes; says Resh Lekish, if we run over the whole Scripture, we shall not find any household goods so called; wherefore what is it? it is all one as hk ymç, "my name is thus": and the meaning is, my name witnesses concerning her, [çr wtwa hb [gn alç, "that that wicked one (Sisera) did not touch her" [f90]; (i.e. had not carnal knowledge of her;) Phalti, as is evident from hence, one Scripture says, "and Saul gave Michal his daughter to Phalti", (<092544>1 Samuel 25:44) and another Scripture says Phaltiel; sometimes he is called Phalti, and sometimes he is called Phaltiel; who takes Phalti? and who gives Phaltiel? but I testify concerning him; dwd tçab [gn alç, "that he did not touch David's wife"; (i.e. did not lie with her;)"

(see <012016>Genesis 20:6). And in this sense also is the word "touch" used, both by Greek and Latin authors. The apostle's meaning is not that it is unlawful to marry, or that it is sinful to lie with a woman in lawful wedlock; but that it is much better, and more expedient on several accounts, to abstain from the use of women, when persons have the gift of continency.

Ver. 2. *Nevertheless, to avoid fornication*, etc.] Or "fornications"; meaning either the frequent commission of that sin; or all sorts of uncleanness and

pollution, which may be avoided by wedlock, and the proper use of the marriage bed, where the gift of continency is not bestowed: wherefore to prevent unlawful copulations, as of single persons with one another, or of a married person with a single one, the apostle advises, as being what is right and proper,

let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband; that is, let every man that has a wife enjoy her, and make use of her, and let every woman that has an husband, receive him into her embraces; for these words are not to be understood of unmarried persons entering into a marriage state, for the words suppose them in such a state, but of the proper use of the marriage bed; and teach us that marriage, and the use of it, are proper remedies against fornication; and that carnal copulation of a man with a woman ought only to be of husband and wife, or of persons in a married state; and that all other copulations are sinful; and that polygamy is unlawful; and that one man is to have but one wife, and to keep to her; and that one woman is to have but one husband, and to keep to him.

Ver. 3. *Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence*, etc.] The Syriac version renders it, byjttmd abwj, "due love"; and so the Arabic; and may include all the offices of love, tenderness, humanity, care, provision, and protection, which are to be performed by the husband to his wife; though it seems chiefly, if not solely, here to respect what is called, htn[, (<0210>Exodus 21:10) "her marriage duty", as distinct from food and raiment to be allowed her; and what is meant by it the Jewish doctors will tell us: one says [f91], it is hjmh çymçt, "the use of the marriage bed"; and, says another [f92], hyl[abl, "it is to lie with her", according to the way of all the earth. And so the phrase here, "due benevolence", is an euphemism, and designs the act of coition; which as it is an act of love and affection, a sign of mutual benevolence, so of justice; it is a due debt from divine ordination, and the matrimonial contract. The Jewish doctors have fixed and settled various canons [f93] concerning the performance, of this conjugal debt: and the apostle may not be altogether without some view to the rules and customs which obtained in his own nation.

And, likewise also the wife unto the husband; she is not to refuse the use of the bed when required, unless there is some just impediment, otherwise she

comes under the name of tdrwm, a "rebellious wife"; concerning whom, and her punishment, the Jews [f94] give the following rules:

> "a woman that restrains her husband from the use of the bed, is called rebellious; and when they ask her why she rebels, if she says, because it is loathsome to me, and I cannot lie with him; then they oblige him to put her away directly, without her dowry; and she may not take any thing of her husband's, not even her shoe strings, nor her hair lace; but what her husband did not give her she may take, and go away: and if she rebels against her husband, on purpose to afflict him, and she does to him so or so, and despises him, they send to her from the sanhedrim, and say to her, know thou, that if thou continuest in thy rebellion, thou shalt not prosper? and after that they publish her in the synagogues and schools four weeks, one after another, and say, such an one has rebelled against her husband; and after the publication, they send and say to her, if thou continuest in thy rebellion, thou wilt lose thy dowry; and they appoint her twelve months, and she has no sustenance from her husband all that time; and she goes out at the end of twelve months without her dowry, and returns everything that is her husband's."

This account, with a little variation, is also given by Maimonides [f95].

Ver. 4. *The wife hath not power of her own body*, etc.] To refrain the use of it from her husband; or to prostitute it to another man:

but the husband; he has the sole power over it, and may require when he pleases the use of it:

and likewise also the husband has not power over his own body: to withhold due benevolence, or the conjugal debt from his wife; or abuse it by self-pollution, fornication, adultery, sodomy, or any acts of uncleanness: but the wife; she only has a power over it, a right to it, and may claim the use of it: this power over each other's bodies is not such, as that they may, by consent, either the husband allow the wife, or the wife the husband, to lie with another.

Ver. 5. *Defraud ye not one the other*, etc.] By withholding due benevolence, denying the use of the marriage bed, refusing to pay the conjugal debt, and which is called a "diminishing of her marriage duty", (<2210>Exodus 21:10) where the Septuagint use the same word "defraud", as

the apostle does here; it is what both have a right to, and therefore, if either party is denied, it is a piece of injustice, it is properly a defrauding; though with proper conditions, such as follow, it may be lawful for married persons to lie apart, and abstain from the use of the bed, but then it should never be done,

except it be with consent: because they have a mutual power over each other's bodies, and therefore the abstinence must be voluntary on each side; otherwise injury is done to the person that does not consent, who is deprived against will of just right; but if there is agreement, then there is no defrauding, because each give up their right; and such a voluntary abstinence is commended by the Jews [f96];

> "everyone that lessens the use of the bed, lo, he, is praiseworthy; and he who does not make void, or, cause to cease the due benevolence, but wtça t[dm, "by consent of his wife";"

i.e. he also is praiseworthy: another condition of this abstinence is that it be only for a time; which shall be agreed unto, and fixed by both parties; not for ever which would be contrary to the will of God; the institution and end of marriage, and of dangerous consequence to either party. The Jews allow of a vow of continency for a while; and which they limit to different persons; thus [f97],

> "if a man by a vow excludes, wife from the use of the bed, the school of Shammai say it is for the space of two weeks, the school of Hillell say one week; scholars go out to learn the law, without leave of their wives, thirty days, workmen one week;"

which vow, for such a limited time, they seem to allow of, without mutual consent; and herein they disagree with the rule the apostle gives; and who further observes, the end to be had in view by such a voluntary separation for a time,

that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; not that this was necessary for the ordinary discharge of such service, as for private acts of devotion among themselves, and constant family prayer; but either when times of fasting and prayer on some emergent occasions were appointed by themselves, or by the church, or by the civil government on account of some extraordinary and momentous affairs; and this seems to be observed by the apostle, in agreement with the customs and rules of the Jewish

nation, which forbid the use of the bed, as on their great and annual fast, the day of atonement [f98], so on their fasts appointed by the sanhedrim for obtaining of rain [f99]: the word “fasting” is omitted in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and so it is in the Alexandrian copy, two of Stephens’s; and others: the apostle adds,

and come together again; to the same bed, and the use of it, and that for this reason,

that Satan tempt you not for your incontinence; for not having the gift of continency, should they pretend to keep apart long: Satan, who knows the temperament and disposition of men and women, may tempt them not only to hatred of, and quarrels with one another, but to impure lusts and desires, to fornication, adultery, and all uncleanness; a very good reason why, though abstinence from the marriage bed for a short time, by the consent of both parties, for religious purposes, may be lawful, yet ought not to be continued; since Satan may hereby get an advantage over them, and draw them into the commission of scandalous enormities. The Jews have a notion of Satan’s being a tempter, and of his tempting men to various sins, which they should guard against, as idolatry, etc. So say they [f100], “thou mayest not look after idolatry, according to (<053319>Deuteronomy 4:19) and again, thou must take heed lest this be a cause of it to thee, Ætwa tysy ˆjçw, “and Satan tempt thee” to look after them, and do as they do:” and again [f101], frequently should a man think

> “upon the unity of the blessed God, lest there should be anything above or below, before him or behind him, or by him, and so, wtysm ˆjçh, “Satan tempt him”, and he come into heresy.”

Ver. 6. *But I speak this by permission*, etc.] Referring either to what he had said before, though not to all; not to (<460702>1 Corinthians 7:2) that for the avoiding of fornication, every man should make use of his own wife, and every woman of her own husband; since this is not by permission, but by command, (<010224>Genesis 2:24) that carnal copulation should be between one man and one woman in a married state; nor to (<460703>1 Corinthians 7:3,4) for that married persons ought to render due benevolence to, and not defraud each other, having a power over each other’s bodies, is a precept, and not a permission, (<022110>Exodus 21:10) but to (<460705>1 Corinthians 7:5) their parting for a time, and coming together again: it is not an absolute command of God that they should separate for a time, on account of fasting and prayer,

but if they thought fit to do so by agreement, they might; nor was there any positive precept for their coming together again directly, after such service was over. The apostle said this,

not of commandment; but, consulting their good, gives this advice, lest Satan should be busy with them, and draw them into sin; but if they had the gift of continence, they might continue apart longer; there was no precise time fixed by God, nor did the apostle pretend to fix any: or it may refer to what follows after, that he would have all men be as he was; though he laid no injunction, but left them to their liberty; unless it can be thought to regard marriage in general, and to be said in opposition to a Jewish notion, which makes marriage hwxm, a "command";

> "a man, they say [f102], is bound to this command at seventeen years of age, and if he passes twenty and does not marry, he transgresses, and makes void an affirmative precept;"

but the apostle puts it as a matter of choice, and not of obligation.

Ver. 7. *For I would that all men were even as I myself*, etc.] The apostle speaks not of his state and condition, as married or unmarried, for it is not certain which he was; some think he had a wife, others not: it looks, however, as if he had not at this time, as appears from (1 Corinthians 7:8) but be it which it will, it can hardly be thought he should wish all men to be in either state, either all married, or all unmarried; but he speaks of the gift of continency, which he had, as the following words show; and this he desires for all men, that they might not be in any danger from Satan's temptations, and that they might be more fit for and intent upon the service of Christ. The Syriac version adds, atwykdb in "purity", or "chastity"; which may be preserved in a marriage state, as well as in single life:

but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that: all the gifts of nature and grace which men have, they have of God, and not of themselves; and every man has a gift proper to himself; no one man has all gifts, but some one, and some another; and with respect to the case in hand, one man has the gift of continency, another the gift of marriage; all cannot contain themselves, only to whom it is given: and all are not disposed to marriage; some are inclined to a single life, and some to a marriage state; and of those that are married, some can abstain from the use of the marriage bed longer than others, without being

in danger of being tempted by Satan for their incontinency; and such a disposition is desirable.

Ver. 8. *I say therefore to the unmarried and widows*, etc.] Not by way of command, but advice: by the "unmarried" he means, either such men who never were in a married state, or else such who had been married, but their wives were dead; which latter sense seems more agreeable, since they are joined with "widows", who had lost their husbands:

it is good for them if they abide; unmarried, and do not change their condition any more; not that it was sinful to marry again, for he allows of it in the next verse, in case they have not the gift of continence; and therefore "good" here, is not opposed to evil, only signifies that it would be better for them, more expedient and profitable for them; they would be more free from the cares of life, have less trouble, and be more at leisure to serve the Lord; and which he knew by experience, and therefore, proposes himself as an example:

even as I; that is, as he was then; for at that time it seems certain that he had no wife; though whether he had had one, and she was now dead, or whether he had never been married, may be matter of dispute; the former seems most agreeable, since he proposes himself as an example to widowers and widows; and having known what a married and single state both were, was better able to give his judgment of both, and proper advice to such persons which must come with more force and strength, and a better grace, from such an one.

Ver. 9. *But if they cannot contain*, etc. Or "if they do not contain", as the words may be rendered, and as almost all versions do render them; if they have not the gift of continency; if they are not willing, and do not think fit to contain, for none are to be compelled; if either therefore they want a will or power to contain, let them marry; it is not only lawful for them to marry, but it is right and best for them; hence it appears that second marriages are lawful, which were condemned by some of the ancients: for it is better to marry than to burn; or be burnt; not with material fire, as Judah ordered Tamar to be brought forth and burnt with, for whoredom; nor with hell fire, the just demerit of uncleanness; but with the fire of lust itself; and so the Syriac version reads it, "it is better to marry than to be burnt" atgrb, "with lust"; when persons not only find in them some lustful motions and desires, and a glowing heat of concupiscence; but are as it were all on fire

with the lusts of the flesh, and in great danger of being drawn into the commission of fornication, adultery, or other pollutions, and even unnatural lusts; it is much better to enter into a marriage state, though it may have its cares, inconveniences, and difficulties, than to be under temptations and inclinations to such defilements: so the Jews often express the lust of concupiscence by fire; they tell [f103] us a

> "story of R. Amram, that he redeemed all the captives, men and women; and the women and the virgins dwelt in a chamber in his house alone; one time, Satan kindled in him, hwath ça, "the fire of lust", and he set a ladder to go up to them, and when he came upon the steps of the ladder, he began to cry with a loud voice, µrm[yb arwn µrm[yb arwn, "fire in the house of Amram, fire in the house of Amram": and the men came to quench the fire, and found nothing burning; for it was only his intention to cause to cease from him the fire of lust; and his thought ceased and his mind grew cool; and they asked him, why he mocked them? he replied, for this is a greater "fire" than all the fires in the world, for it is the fire of hell:"

This story is also told in the Talmud [f104], with some little variation: so we read of one that is [r rxyb jyhlta, "inflamed" [f105], or all on fire "with the corruption of nature", who does not direct his heart to God: and such a man that finds his corruptions prevail over him, he ought to marry, they say [f106], as a proper remedy against it:

> "he whose mind is intent upon the law continually, and learns it as Ben Azzai, and cleaves to it all his days, and does not marry a wife, there is no iniquity in his hands, and that because his corruption does not prevail over him; but if his corruption prevails over him, hça açyl byyj, "he ought to marry a wife":"

and that for the very reason the apostle here gives. The Ethiopic version reads, "it is better to marry than to commit fornication"; that and adultery both are expressed by fire and burning, with the Jews, as they prove from (<2804>Hosea 7:4 <2806>Song of Solomon 8:6) [f107]

Ver. 10. *And unto the married I command*, etc.] To the unmarried and widows he spoke by permission, or only gave advice and counsel to remain unmarried, provided they could contain; but if not, it was advisable to

marry; but to persons already in a married state, what he has to say to them is by commandment, enjoining what they are under obligation to observe, not being at liberty to do as they will:

yet not I, but the Lord; not as if he took upon him the dominion over them, to make laws for them, and, in an imperious authoritative way, oblige them to obedience to them; no; what he was about to deliver, was not a law of his own enacting and obtruding, but what their Lord, their Creator, head, husband, and Redeemer, had ordered and enjoined; and this grave solemn way of speaking he makes use of, to excite their attention, command awe and reverence, make the greater impression upon their minds, and show the obligation they were under to regard what was said:

let not the wife depart from her husband; for the same law that obliges a man to cleave to his wife, obliges the wife to cleave to her husband, (<01024>Genesis 2:24) and those words of Christ, “what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder”, (<40196>Matthew 19:6) regard the one as well as the other; and the rules he has given, forbidding divorces only in case of adultery, (<40532>Matthew 5:32 19:9) are as binding upon the wife as upon the husband. The wife therefore should not depart from her husband upon every slight occasion; not on account of any quarrel, or disagreement that may arise between them; or for every instance of moroseness and inhumanity; or because of diseases and infirmities; nor even on the score of difference in religion which, by what follows, seems to be greatly the case in view. The apostle observes this, in opposition to some rules and customs which obtained among Jews and Gentiles, divorcing and separating from one another upon various accounts; not only husbands put away their wives, but wives also left their husbands: for women to put away, or leave their husbands, were not in former times allowed of among the Jews, but from other nations crept in among them; indeed if a man married one under age, and she did not like him for her husband, she might refuse him, and go away without a bill of divorce; the manner of refusal was, by saying before two witnesses, I do not like such an one for my husband, or I do not like the espousals, with which my mother or my brother espoused me, or in such like words; and sometimes a written form of refusal was given [f108]; but otherwise where marriage was consummated, such a departure of the wife was not allowed. Salome, the sister of Herod, is thought to be the first that introduced it, who sent a bill of divorce to Costobarus [f109] her husband; and in this she was followed by Herodias, the daughter of Aristobulus, who left her husband, and married Herod Antipas [f110]; and it seems certain, that this

practice prevailed in Christ's time, since not only such a case is supposed, (⁴⁰¹⁰²Mark 10:12) but a very flagrant instance is given in the woman of Samaria, (⁴⁰⁴¹⁸John 4:18) who had had five husbands, not in a lawful regular manner, one after another upon their respective deaths, but she had married them, and put them away one after another: and as for the Gentiles, the account the Jews [f111] give of them is, that though they had

> "no divorces in form, they put away one another; R. Jochanan says, wtçrgm wtça, "a man's wife might put him away", and give him the dowry:"

though, according to other accounts, they had divorces in form, which, when a man put away a woman, were called γραμματα αποπομπης, "letters of dismission"; and when a woman left her husband, απολειθεως γραμματα, "letters of dereliction", such as Hipparchia the wife of Alcibiades gave to him [f112]; and Justin Martyr [f113] gives us an instance of a Christian woman, who gave her husband what the Roman senate called a divorce.

Ver. 11. *But and if she depart*, etc.] This is said, not as allowing of such a departure, which only in case of fornication is lawful; but supposing it a fact, that a woman cannot be prevailed upon to stay with her husband, but actually forsakes him upon some difference arising between them,

let her remain unmarried: she ought not to marry another man; her departure does not make the marriage void; nor is it to be made void by any difference between them, either on religious or civil accounts, only in case of adultery; and therefore, if upon such separation she marries, she is guilty of adultery:

or be reconciled to her husband; which is rather to be chosen, than to remain separate, though unmarried; if she has given the offence, and is the cause of the separation, she ought to acknowledge it, and ask forgiveness of her husband, and return to him and live in peace with him; and if the fault is on his side, she ought to make use of all proper methods to convince him of it, bring him into good temper, forgive any injury done her, and live peaceably and comfortably together:

and let not the husband put away his wife; as the Jews were wont to do, upon every trifling occasion; See Gill on "⁴⁰⁵³¹Matthew 5:31" See Gill on "⁴⁰⁵³²Matthew 5:32"

Ver. 12. *But to the rest speak I, not the Lord*, etc.] He had spoken before to married persons in general, and had delivered not his own sentiments barely, but the commandment of the Lord, that such should never separate from, or put away each other; in which he has respect to such as were upon equal foot in matters of religion, who were both of them believers in Christ; but now he speaks to the rest, to such as were unequally yoked, the one a believer, the other an unbeliever; and what he delivers on this head, concerning their living together, there being no express determination of this matter by the Lord himself, he under divine inspiration gives his sense of it; as that such marriages were valid, and that such persons ought to live together, and not separate on account of difference in religion: or the sense is, that as "to the rest" of the things they had wrote to him about, besides what he had given answer to already, he should speak to under divine illumination; though he had not an express law of Christ to point unto them, as the rule of their conduct: and particularly, whereas they had desired his judgment and advice upon this head, whether one who before conversion had married an unbeliever, ought to live with such an one, or whether it would not be advisable to leave, or put such away, to it he answers,

if any brother hath a wife that believeth not; that is, if any man who is now a brother, one called by the grace of God, and is in church fellowship, has a wife to whom he was married whilst in a state of unregeneracy and infidelity; who is as she was when he married her, entirely destitute of faith in Christ; not one that is weak in the faith, or only makes an outward profession, but that has no faith at all in Christ, nor in his Gospel, not so much as an historical one; who disbelieves, denies, and rejects, the truths of the Gospel:

and she be pleased to dwell with him; loves her husband, chooses to continue with him, notwithstanding their different sentiments of religion:

let him not put her away; infidelity is no reason for a divorce. The Gospel revelation does not dissolve the natural obligations men and women are in to one another. The Jews had a law prohibiting marriages with Heathens and idolaters; and such marriages were dissolved, and such wives put away, (<02346>Exodus 34:16 <15003>Ezra 10:3) but this was a law peculiar to that people, and was not obligatory on other nations, and especially has no place under the Gospel dispensation.

Ver. 13. *And the woman which hath an husband that believeth*, etc.] The apostle puts the case both ways, there being the same reason for one as for another; that if she that was a sister, who was partaker of the grace of God, and a member of the church, had a husband to whom she was married before her conversion; who was an unbeliever, had no faith in Christ, nor any notion of the Gospel, but an infidel to both:

and if he be pleased to dwell with her; loves her, and is willing to continue with her; neither puts her away from him, nor departs from her on account of her Christianity:

let her not leave him; but continue, and cohabit with him as man and wife; this is the advice the apostle gives, as agreeably to the light of nature and reason; as becoming the Gospel of Christ, and as what might serve to recommend it, and spread the knowledge of it.

Ver. 14. *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife*, etc.] That is, "by the believing wife"; as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, and so it is read in some copies; and likewise in the next clause the same is read,

by the believing husband; this is a reason given by the apostle why they should live together. This cannot be understood of internal sanctification, which is never the case; an unbeliever cannot be sanctified by a believer in this sense, for such a sanctification is only by the Spirit of God; nor external sanctification, or an outward reformation, which though the unbelieving yoke fellow may sometimes be a means of, yet not always; and besides, the usefulness of one to another in such a relation, in a spiritual sense, urged as a reason for living together, in (<4076>1 Corinthians 7:16) nor merely of the holiness of marriage, as it is an institution of God, which is equally the same in unbelievers as believers, or between a believer and an unbeliever, as between two believers; but of the very act of marriage, which, in the language of the Jews, is expressed by being "sanctified"; instances almost without number might be given of the use of the word çdq, in this sense, out of the Misnic, Talmudic, and Rabbinic writings; take the following one instead of a thousand that might be produced[f114].

> "The man çdqm, "sanctifies", or espouses a wife by himself, or by his messenger; the woman çdqtm, "is sanctified", or espoused by herself, or by her messenger. The man çdqm, "sanctifies", or

> espouses his daughter, when she is a young woman, by himself or by his messenger; if anyone says to a woman, yçdqth, “be thou sanctified”, or espoused to me by this date (the fruit of the palm tree,) yçdqth, “be thou sanctified”, or espoused to me by this (any other thing); if there is anyone of these things the value of a farthing, tçdwqm, “she is sanctified”, or espoused, and if not she is not tçdwqm, “sanctified”, or “espoused”; if he says, by this, and by this, and by this, if there is the value of a farthing in them all, tçdwqm, “she is sanctified”, or espoused; but if not, she is not tçdwqm, “sanctified”, or espoused; if she eats one after another, she is not tçdwqm, “sanctified”, or espoused, unless there is one of them the value of a farthing;”

in which short passage, the word which is used to “sanctify”, or be “sanctified”, in the Hebrew language, is used to espouse, or be espoused no less than “ten” times. So the Jews [f115] interpret the word “sanctified”, in (<18105>Job 1:5) he espoused to them wives; in the Misna, the oral law of the Jews, there is a whole treatise of ˆyçwdyq “sanctifications” [f116], or espousals; and in the Gemara or Talmud [f117] is another, full of the disputes of the doctors on this subject. Maimonides has also written a treatise of women and wives [f118], out of which might be produced almost innumerable instances in proof of the observation; and such as can read, and have leisure to read the said tracts, may satisfy themselves to their heart’s content. Let it be further observed; that the preposition εν, which is in most versions rendered “by”, should be rendered “in” or “to” or “unto”, as it is in the next verse, and in many other places; (see <40172>Matthew 17:12 <41013>Mark 9:13) (<51023>Colossians 1:23 <52407>1 Thessalonians 4:7 <61005>2 Peter 1:5-7) if it be rendered in the former way, “in”, it denotes the near union which by marriage the man and woman are brought into; if in the latter, it designs the object to which the man or woman is espoused, and the true sense and even the right rendering of the passage is this: “for the unbelieving husband is espoused to the wife, and the unbelieving wife is espoused to the husband”; they are duly, rightly, and legally espoused to each other; and therefore ought not, notwithstanding their different sentiments of religion, to separate from one another; otherwise, if this is not the case, if they are not truly married to one another, this consequence must necessarily follow; that the children born in such a state of cohabitation, where the marriage is

not valid, must be spurious, and not legitimate, and which is the sense of the following words:

else were your children unclean, but now are they holy; that is, if the marriage contracted between them in their state of infidelity was not valid, and, since the conversion of one of them, can never be thought to be good; then the children begotten and born, either when both were infidels, or since one of them was converted, must be unlawfully begotten, be base born, and not a genuine legitimate offspring; and departure upon such a foot would be declaring to all the world that their children were illegitimate; which would have been a sad case indeed, and contains in it another reason why they ought to keep together; whereas, as the apostle has put it, the children are holy in the same sense as their parents are; that as they are sanctified, or lawfully espoused together, so the children born of them were in a civil and legal sense holy, that is, legitimate; wherefore to support the validity of their marriage, and for the credit of their children, it was absolutely necessary they should abide with one another. The learned Dr. Lightfoot says, that the words "unclean" and "holy" denote not children unlawfully begotten, and lawfully begotten; but Heathenism and Christianism; and thinks the apostle alludes to the distinction often made by the Jews, of the children of proselytes being born in "holiness", or out of it, that is, either before they became proselytes or after; but it should be observed, that though the word "holiness" is used for Judaism, yet not for Christianity; and besides, the marriages of Heathens were not looked upon as marriages by the Jews, and particularly such mixed ones as of a Jew and Gentile, they were not to be reckoned marriages; for so they say [f119],

> "he that espouses a Gentile woman, or a servant, ˆyçwdyq ˆnya, "they are not espousals"; but lo, he is after the espousals as he was before the espousals; and so a Gentile, or a servant, that espouses a daughter of Israel, ˆyçwdyq ˆhyçwdyq ˆya, "those espousals are no espousals";"

nor do they allow children begotten of such persons to be legitimate. This learned writer himself owns such a tradition, and which he cites [f120],

> "that a son begotten in uncleanness is a son in all respects, and in general is reckoned as an Israelite, though he is a bastard, wnb wnya hywgh ˆm ˆbh, "but a son begotten on a Gentile woman is not his son";"

all which are just the reverse of what the apostle is here observing; and who, it must be remarked, is speaking of the same sort of holiness of children as of parents, which cannot be understood of Christianity, because one of the parents in each is supposed to be an Heathen. The sense I have given of this passage, is agreeable to the mind of several interpreters, ancient and modern, as Jerom, Ambrose, Erasmus, Camerarius, Musculus, etc. which last writer makes this ingenuous confession; formerly, says he, I have abused this place against the Anabaptists, thinking the meaning was, that the children were holy for the parents' faith; which though true, the present place makes nothing for the purpose: and I hope, that, upon reading this, everyone that has abused it to such a purpose will make the like acknowledgment; I am sure they ought.

Ver. 15. *But if the unbelieving depart*, etc.] If the unbelieving party, man or woman, separate themselves from the believing party on account of religion, and in hatred to it, and will not live with the believer unless Christ is denied, his Gospel abjured, and his ordinances and worship relinquished:

let him depart; he or she, though not without making use of all proper means to retain them; but if, after all, they will go, unless such things are complied with as are unreasonable and sinful, they are not to be held, but let go; and the deserted person may sit down contented, being not to be blamed, the fault entirely lying upon the deserter:

a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. The Ethiopic version reads it, "to such an one"; one that is called by grace a church member, and so a brother or sister in Christ, is not to be subject to an unbeliever in matters of conscience, in things appertaining to the worship of God, and the service and glory of Christ; nor, being in such circumstances, that either Christ must be forsaken, or the unbeliever will depart, are they obliged to yield to such an one, but rather suffer a departure; nor are they bound to remain unmarried, but are free to marry another person, after all proper methods have been tried for a reconciliation, and that appears to be impracticable; desertion in such a case, and attended with such circumstances, is a breach of the marriage contract, and a dissolution of the bond, and the deserted person may lawfully marry again; otherwise a brother, or a sister in such a case, would be in subjection and bondage to such a person:

but God hath called us to peace; which ought to be sought after and maintained, so far as it can be consistent with truth, the glory of God, the

honour of Christ, and interest of religion. The believing party being threatened with a desertion, ought as much as possible to seek for peace and reconciliation, and do all that can be to prevent a departure; for saints are called by the grace of God, to follow after and cultivate peace, not only with one another in their Christian communion as saints, but with all men, even their enemies, and especially with such as are so nearly allied; wherefore the departure should not be easily admitted, or a new marriage be suddenly entered into, reconciliation, if it can be obtained, being most eligible and becoming a Christian.

Ver. 16. *For what knowest thou, O wife*, etc.] These words may be understood, as containing a reason either why the believing party should be easy at the departure of the unbeliever, after all proper methods have been used in vain to retain him or her; taken from the uncertainty and improbability of being of any use to them, to bring them to the knowledge of Christ, and salvation by him; “for what knowest thou, O wife”; thou dost not know, thou canst not know, thou canst not be sure,

whether thou shall save thy husband? be the means of bringing of him under the means of grace, and so of his conversion and salvation; there is no likelihood of it, since he is such an implacable enemy to Christ, and so bitterly averse to the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; and therefore since he is determined to separate, even let him go: or else, as rendering a reason why the believer should seek for peace and reconciliation, and by all means, if possible, continue to dwell with the unbeliever; taken from hopes of being serviceable under a divine influence and blessing, for their spiritual and eternal good, the wife for the good of the husband; by whose conversation he may be won over, and prevailed upon to entertain a better opinion of the Christian religion; to take a liking to the Gospel, and to attend upon the ministry of the word, which may be made the power of God unto salvation to him:

or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shall save thy wife; this may possibly be done, in the same manner as now suggested: persons in such a relation have often great influence upon one another, and are by divine Providence often great blessings to each other, in things spiritual as well as temporal. This puts me in mind of a case related by the Jewish doctors [f121]:

> “it happened to a holy man that he married a holy woman, and they had no children; say they, we are of no manner of profit to the blessed God; they stood up and divorced one another; he went and

married a wicked woman, and she made him wicked; she went and married a wicked man, qydx wtwa htç[w "and she made him righteous";"

or, to use the apostle's phrase, "saved him".

Ver. 17. *But as God hath distributed to every man*, etc.] This text is so placed, and the words of it so expressed, as that it may have regard both to what goes before, and follows after; it may have respect to every man's proper gift, whether of continence, or of disposition to marriage, which every man has of God, (<470701>1 Corinthians 7:7), and accordingly ought to live in a single, or in a married state; or it may refer to the last verse,

what knowest thou, etc. and ει μη, which we render "but", be translated either "unless"; and then the sense is, thou knowest not, O man or woman, whether thou shalt save thy wife or husband, nor any other, unless God, who distributes his, grace to everyone as he pleases; or else it may be rendered if "not", and the sense be, if thou shouldst not save thy husband, or thou, man, shouldst not save thy wife; yet "as God hath distributed to every man" his own proper gift, both as to nature and grace; his proper sphere of usefulness, and the station in which he would have him be, and the place he would have him fill up, and the business he must do in life; so let him act, and

as the Lord hath called everyone; which is to be understood of that particular station of life, and those circumstances of it, in which men are providentially placed by God, or are found in when he calls them by his grace; as whether married or unmarried; whether joined to a believer or an unbeliever; whether circumcised or uncircumcised; whether bond or free; a servant or a master; and so may refer to what follows, as well as to what goes before:

so let him walk; contented with his station and kind of life, agreeably to the profession he makes of the Gospel, doing all the good he can to those he is concerned with:

and so ordain I in all churches; the decisions and determinations he had made, in the cases proposed to him about marriage, the rules and orders he had prescribed, what he had given out by way of precept or permission, by command or counsel, or what he was about to deliver, were no other than what he in common enjoined other churches; and therefore they ought not

to think that they were used with more strictness and severity than others; and might be induced hereby to attend to what was advised or enjoined, since it was what was common to all the churches.

Ver. 18. *Is any man called being circumcised*? etc.] That is, if any man that is a Jew, who has been circumcised in his infancy, is called by the grace of God, as there were many in those days, and many of them in the church at Corinth:

let him not become uncircumcised; or "draw on" the foreskin; as some did in the times of Antiochus, for fear of him, and to curry favour with him, who, it is said, 1 Maccab. 1:15, "made themselves uncircumcised", and forsook the holy covenant; and so did Menelaus, and the sons of Tobias, as Josephus reports [f122]; and there were many, in the days of Ben Cozba, who became uncircumcised by force, ˆykwçm, they had their foreskins drawn on by the Gentiles against their wills, and when he came to reign were circumcised again [f123]; for, according to the Jews, circumcision must be repeated, and not only four or five times [f124], but a hundred times, if a man becomes so often uncircumcised [f125] They make mention of several particular persons who voluntarily became uncircumcised, or, to use their phrase, and which exactly answers to the word used by the apostle, wtlr[b Æçwm "that drew over his foreskin"; as Jehoiachin [f126], Achan [f127], yea even the first Adam [f128]; one guilty of this, they say, makes void the covenant [f129]; it was accounted a very great sin, so great that he that committed it was reckoned [f130] among them that shall have no part in the world to come, but shall be cut off and perish; physicians say, this may be done by the use of an instrument they call spaster, which has its name from the word used in the text. The apostle's sense is, that such as had been circumcised, and had now embraced the faith of Christ, had no reason to be uneasy, or take any methods to remove this mark from their flesh, because it was abolished by Christ, and now of no significance; since as it did them no good, it did them no hurt:

is any called in uncircumcision? let him not become circumcised?; that is, if a Gentile who was never circumcised is called by grace, let him not submit to circumcision, which is now abrogated, and is altogether unnecessary and unprofitable in the business of salvation; yea, hurtful and pernicious if done on that account, since it makes men debtors to do the whole law, and Christ of none effect unto them.

Ver. 19. *Circumcision is nothing*, etc.] In the affair of justification before God, and acceptance with him; it cannot make any man righteous in the sight of God, nor recommend him to the divine favour; it is no evidence of a man's calling, or of his having the truth or grace of God in him; nor is it of any avail in the business of salvation. It was something formerly; it was a command and an ordinance of God, to Abraham and his natural seed; it pointed at the corruption and pollution of nature; was typical of the effusion of the blood of Christ, for pardon, and cleansing, and of the internal circumcision of the heart; it was a sign and seal to Abraham, that he should be the father of many nations, and that the righteousness of faith should come upon the uncircumcised Gentiles; and was a distinguishing character of the people of the Jews, until the Messiah came: but now it is nothing, nor has it any of these uses, being with the rest of the ceremonies abolished by Christ; it gives no preference to the Jew above the Gentile; he that has this mark in his flesh, is not a whir the better for it, and he that is without it, is not at all the worse; and is a reason why both the one and the other should be easy, and not attempt any alteration in themselves with regard to this, or think the better or worse of themselves on account of it. This is said in direct opposition to the sentiments of the Jews, who extol circumcision to the skies. The apostle says it is nothing, and they say it is everything, and everything is nothing without it; they say, it is the hinge of their whole law [f131], and that it is equal to all the precepts in the law [f132]; their extravagant commendations of it take in the following passage [f133];

> "says R. Eliezar ben Azariah, uncircumcision is rejected, because by it the wicked are defiled, as it is said, "for all the Gentiles are uncircumcised"; says R. Ishmael, hlym hlwdg, "great is circumcision"; for on account of it, thirteen covenants were made; says R. Jose, "great is circumcision", for it drives away the sabbath, the weighty (command in the law, that is, it is obliged to give way to it); R. Joshua ben Korcha says, "great is circumcision", for it was not suspended to Moses the righteous one full hour; R. Nehemiah says, "great is circumcision", for it drives away plagues; says Rabba, "great is circumcision", for notwithstanding all the commands which Abraham our father did, he was not called perfect until he was circumcised; as it is said, "walk before me, and be thou perfect"; says another, "great is circumcision", for had it not been for that, the holy blessed God would not have created his world; as it is said, "thus saith the Lord, if my covenant be not with day and

night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth","

More of this kind might be produced, but enough of this.

And uncircumcision is nothing; it does not hinder any having an interest in, and partaking of the blessings of grace; nor their enjoyment of the Gospel and Gospel ordinances; nor their communion and fellowship with the churches of Christ, much less their everlasting salvation, as say [f134] the Jews;

"the holy blessed God (say they) rejects the uncircumcised, and brings them down to hell; as it is said, (Ezekiel 32:18) "son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt, and cast them down"; and so says Isaiah, (Isaiah 5:14) "therefore hell hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth", qj ylbl; that is, to him that hath not the law of circumcision; as it is said, (Psalm 105:10) "and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant"; for no circumcised persons go down to hell:"

but the keeping of the commandments of God; that is something; not that the commands of God, and the observance of them, are of any avail to procure the pardon of sin, acceptance with God, justification in his sight, and eternal salvation; yet they are of moment, as they are the commands and ordinances of God; and ought to be kept in faith and fear, as they were delivered from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God; and though for keeping of them there is no reward of debt, yet in keeping of them there is a reward of grace; peace of mind is had, and the presence of God enjoyed; obedience to them, upon Gospel principles and motives, is a fruit of grace, an evidence of faith, and of the new creature; it is the ornament of a Christian profession, and is profitable to men.

Ver. 20. *Let every man abide in the same calling*, etc.] Civil calling, station, and business of life,

wherein he was called; that is, in which he was when he was called by the grace of God; and is to be understood of such a calling, station, and business of life, as is lawful, honest, and of good report; otherwise he ought not to abide in it, but betake himself to another, as Matthew and Zacchaeus, when called by grace, left the scandalous employment of a

publican: nor is it the apostle's sense, that a man that is in an honest way of living, may not change that for another that is equally so, as if a man was bound down to that sort of business he is in when first called; for no doubt it may be lawful, and there may be just reason for it in Providence, why a man should change his calling and station in life; though this ought not to be done rashly and unadvisedly, and without wise and good reasons; but the chief view of the apostle is to teach contentment in every condition, and station of life, and that persons should not be uneasy and restless in it, and seek for an alteration when there is no just occasion; and particularly he seems to have reference, either to the different state of married and unmarried persons, he had before been speaking of; (see 1 Corinthians 7:27) or to the different circumstances of Jew and Gentile, as circumcised or uncircumcised, as in the foregoing verse; or to the different condition of bond and free, servant and master, in the following verse; and persuades them to remain easy and satisfied, for that the Christian religion does not necessarily require a change in a man's civil circumstances of life.

Ver. 21. *Art thou called being a servant*? etc.] That is, called by grace whilst in the condition of a servant,

care not for it; do not be troubled at it, and uneasy with it; be not anxiously solicitous to be otherwise; bear the yoke patiently, go through thy servitude cheerfully, and serve thy master faithfully; do not look upon it as any objection to thy calling, any contradiction to thy Christian liberty, or as unworthy of, and a reproach upon thy profession of Christ:

but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. The Syriac renders the last clause, jwlptd Æl ybg, "choose for thyself to serve"; perfectly agreeable to the sense given of the words, by several great critics and excellent interpreters, who take the apostle's meaning to be, that should a Christian servant have an opportunity of making his escape from his master, or could he by any art, trick, and fraudulent method, obtain his liberty, it would be much more advisable to continue a servant, than to become free by any such means: yea, some seem to carry the sense so far, that even if servants could be made free in a lawful way, yet servitude was most eligible, both for their own and their master's good: for their own to keep them humble and exercise their patience; for their master's not only temporal, but spiritual good; since by their good behaviour they might be a means of recommending the Gospel to them, and of gaining them to Christ; but one should rather think the more obvious sense is, that when a

Christian servant has his freedom offered him by his master, or he can come at it in a lawful and honourable way, this being preferable to servitude, he ought rather to make use of it; since he would be in a better situation, and more at leisure to serve Christ, and the interest of religion: however, certain it is, that the apostle's design is, to make men easy in every station of life, and to teach them how to behave therein; he would not have the freeman abuse his liberty, or be elated with it, nor the servant be uneasy under his servitude, nor be depressed by it, for the reasons following.

Ver. 22. *For he that is called in the Lord*, etc.] Which is to be understood, not of any civil calling, or of calling to an office; or of the outward call by the ministry of the word only; but of an internal, special, powerful, evangelical, and saving call by the grace of God; which is of persons out of darkness into light, out of bondage into liberty, from their sinful companions to the company and society of Christ and his people, from off themselves and their own righteousness, to the grace and righteousness of Christ, and out of the world unto a kingdom and glory. And this may be said to be, in the Lord; either because it is by him, he is the efficient cause of it, his grace the moving cause, and his glory the end; or because it is in consequence of being in him, united to him, persons are first in the Lord, and then called by him; or because they are called into fellowship and communion with him; the whole is true, and make up the sense of the text; for he that is effectually called by grace, is called by the Lord, and by virtue of being chosen in him, and in union to him, and to partake of all the blessings of grace and glory that are with him. And such an one,

being a servant; in a natural and civil sense when called, in a spiritual sense

is the Lord's freeman; he is free from sin, not from the being, but from the servitude, guilt, and damning power of it: he is free from Satan, not from his temptations and insults, but from his dominion and captivity; he is ransomed from him, by the redemption of Christ, and is turned from his power in conversion; he has not that influence over him he before had; and he is so safe and secure from him, that he can never be destroyed by him, and in a short time Satan will be bruised under his feet: he is free from the law, the observance of the ceremonial law, and all its numerous burdensome rites; and from the moral law, not from obedience to it, as in the hands of Christ, but from the bondage, curse, and condemnation of it, as ministered by Moses: he is free of the company of saints, of the church

of God below, and of heaven, the city God has built and prepared for his; he is free to the use of all things indifferent, provided it is done in faith, the peace of weak brethren secured, and the glory of God preserved; he is free to all the privileges and immunities of the house of God, and to the throne of grace, come when he will; and therefore though a servant, in another sense he is a very happy man; he is free indeed, and can never be disenfranchanised, or arrested, or cast into prison; the various privileges he is free unto and enjoys, show him to be a happy man; and the effects following on his freedom prove it, as peace with God, the presence of Christ, joy in the Holy Ghost, fellowship with saints, and a well grounded hope of glory; he is not only called to the liberty of grace, which he enjoys, but will be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God; and therefore has no reason to be uneasy with his civil servitude: on the other hand,

likewise he that is called being free; he that is called by the grace of God, with an holy and effectual calling, being a freeman, his own master, and it may be the master of others in a civil sense, he, in a spiritual one,

is Christ's servant: he is bought by Christ with his money, with the price of his blood; and therefore he has a right unto him, and a claim to his service; and he becomes a voluntary servant to him, through the power of his grace upon him; and though he serves his Lord Christ without mercenary views, freely, readily, and cheerfully, from a principle of love and gratitude, he shall not fail of a reward of grace; he shall be honoured of God, approved of men, and shall receive the reward of the inheritance: Christian liberty, and the service of Christ, are not at all inconsistent; nor should we entertain any other notions of liberty, but what are consistent with serving the Lord; whatever liberty contradicts, that is no true liberty; though it may have the face of it, it is no other than bondage.

Ver. 23. *Ye are bought with a price*, etc.] Some read these words interrogatively, as (<4707>1 Corinthians 7:18,21), "are ye bought with a price?" and suppose them directed to such who had bought out their time of servitude with a sum of money, and ought not to return to their former condition; but they are rather to be read affirmatively, and to be understood of all, whether freemen or servants, that are bought with the inestimable price of Christ's blood, as in (<4620>1 Corinthians 6:20) and contain in them a reason why such as are called by the grace of God, whilst in a state of civil servitude, are Christ's freemen, because they are redeemed by him from

sin, Satan, the law, and from among men; and also why such as are called by the grace of God, being in a state of civil liberty, are Christ's servants, because he has purchased them with his blood, and therefore has a right unto them, both to their persons and service:

be not ye the servants of men: not that the apostle dissuades such as are redeemed by Christ, and are believers in him, from being the servants of men in a civil sense; for this would be to contradict himself, who here and elsewhere exhorts servants to continue in the service of their masters, and to perform it heartily and cheerfully, and with great sincerity and integrity; but his meaning is, that since they were redeemed from a vain conversation by the blood of Christ, they should not be servants to the lusts of men, nor obey them in things sinful and wicked, which were contrary to law and Gospel, and which were made unlawful by the word of God, and were a breach of the command of their Lord and master Christ; nor should they in matters of religion and the worship of God submit to the authority of any set of men whatever, or be subject to the doctrines and commandments of men; whether these relate to Jewish ceremonies, or Gentile superstitions, or be a mixture of both: they were to call no man master upon earth; nor suffer any to lord it over them, as the false teachers very much did in this church; but to acknowledge Christ, who had bought them to be their only Lord and master. The allusion seems to he to a tradition of the Jews, that the Israelites being redeemed out of Egypt were the servants of God, and not of men [f135];

> "R. Jochanan ben Zaccai was explaining this Scripture, (Exodus 21:6) how different the ear is from all the members of the body; says the holy blessed God, the ear that heard my voice on Mount Sinai, at the time I said, the children of Israel are my servants, µydb[l µydb[alw, and "not servants to servants"; and this goes and gets itself a master, let it be bored: R. Simeon ben Ribbi was explaining the same Scripture, how different the door and the door post were from all the parts of the house; says the holy blessed God, the door and the door post, which were witnesses in Egypt, at the time that I passed by the threshold, and by the two door posts, and I said, the children of Israel are my servants, and not servants to servants, and I brought them out of bondage to liberty; and this goes and gets itself a master, let it be bored before them."

Ver. 24. *Brethren, let every man wherein he is called*, The apostle repeats the advice given in (⁴⁶07²⁰1 Corinthians 7:20) and prefaces it with that tender and affectionate appellation, “brethren”, the more to engage them to attend to it; showing also that whatever difference there was in their civil state and condition, there was none in their religious one; they were all brethren, one of another, they were his brethren, yea, even the brethren of Christ:

therein abide with God; that is, abide in his civil calling and station of life, be it what it will, as knowing he is in that state it is the will of God he should be in; and as in the sight of God, who knows all men, and what is best for them, and who sees and observes all their actions and conduct of life; and with whom there is no respect of persons, of bond or free, of masters or servants; they are admitted equally to enjoy the same favours and privileges in the house of God; have the same access to the throne of grace, and enjoy the same communion with God; and therefore should be content in their present situation, discharging the several duties of their station aright, and exercise a good conscience both towards God and man.

Ver. 25. *Now concerning virgins*, etc.] Whether they should continue in the same state or not, whether they should marry or not, was one of the cases put to the apostle, and which the Corinthians wrote to him about, and to which he returns this answer:

I have no commandment of the Lord: neither in the Old Testament, in the law of Moses, or writings of the prophets; nothing is therein enjoined concerning celibacy, or commanding persons to live a single life; but on the contrary there are many things directing and exciting to a marriage state; nor had the apostle any command from the Lord Jesus Christ, under the Gospel dispensation, obliging to virginity; nor any special orders, or peculiar revelation from the Spirit of God, fixing and settling this point:

yet I give my judgment, what will be most advisable, convenient, and prudent to be done, considering persons, times, and circumstances. The apostle does not make use of his power and authority, as such, to make decrees, and prescribe rules, binding on the consciences of men; only humbly and modestly gives his opinion, which if thought well of, might be followed by them: and the more to engage them to take his advice, he adds,

as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful; the meaning of which is, not that he, through the goodness and mercy of the Lord, had

with great integrity preserved his virginity, and so proposes himself, as an instance and example of retaining it; for it is not certain, that though the apostle was now single, that he had never been married; it seems rather that he had, and therefore this cannot be his sense; nor does he refer to his faithfulness, to the Gospel committed to his trust, and the faithful discharge of his whole ministerial service, and which was owing to divine grace and mercy; but to that plainness, honesty, and integrity, which appeared in the whole course and conduct of his life, and in all his conversation with men; and particularly in giving advice about any matter, or declaring his sentiments on any subject: and when a man is free and faithful, and openly and honestly tells his mind, it greatly recommends him, and commands attention and regard to what he says; and faithfulness, it may be observed, considered in this sense, is not of nature, but of grace; it is obtained not by a man's own power and strength, but by the grace and mercy of God; to which it is here ascribed.

Ver. 26. *I suppose, therefore, that this is good*, etc.] The opinion of the apostle, the sentiment of his mind, his judgment in this case were, that it was better, more advisable and eligible, for persons that were single to continue so; his reason for it follows,

for the present necessity; by which is meant not the shortness of life, and the necessity of dying, when husband and wife must part, upon which trouble ensues; nor the various sorrows, cares, encumbrances, trials, and exercises that attend a conjugal state, as bearing and bringing forth, and bringing up children, provision for the family, etc. which are common to all, and at all times more or less; but the present time of persecution, under which the churches of Christ were; agreeably the Syriac version reads it, anbzd aq[a ljm, "because of the necessity of the time", or season: using the very Greek word in text; as the Targumists [f136] also have frequently adopted it into their language, and use the phrase yq[a t[ç, "an hour, or time of necessity", for a time of great affliction and distress, just as the apostle does here; because this was the present case of the Christians, he thought it most prudent for such as were single to remain so; since as they were often obliged to move from place to place, to fly from one city to another, this would be very incommodious for married persons, who might have young children to take care of, and provide for; (see <401924>Matthew 24:19 <422329>Luke 23:29) upon a like account, the Jewish doctors advise to the same the apostle here does [f137];

> “from the day that the empire is extended, which decrees hard decrees upon us, and causes the law and the commandments to cease from us, and does not suffer us to circumcise children; it is right that we agree among ourselves, hça açyl alç, not to marry, and beget children:”

I say it is good for a man so to be; to remain unmarried, to live a single life, to be a virgin; for the word “virgin”, as here used, relates to men as well as maidens, and denotes the single state of either. The apostle does not add, “even as I”; as he does in (<470708>1 Corinthians 7:8) which seems to confirm the conjecture already made, that he was not a bachelor, but a widower; otherwise he would doubtless have enforced this advice by his own example, as before.

Ver. 27. *Art thou bound unto a wife*? etc.] Or to a woman; either by promise, or by espousal, or by consummate marriage; either of which is a tic, or obligation, a bond, and especially the latter; marriage is such a bond as cannot be dissolved, but by the death of one of the parties; (see <450702>Romans 7:2) unless in case of adultery, or of wilful desertion: and it is a bond which mutually obliges; as the husband is bound by the law of marriage to live chastely and lovingly with his wife, and to take care of her, and provide for her; so the wife is bound by the same law to live in like manner with her husband, and to submit unto him, and obey him:

seek not to be loosed; do not depart from her, nor seek to be divorced, nor even desire to be loosed by death:

art thou loosed from a wife? being either never married, or else if having been married the wife is dead, or legally divorced for a just cause:

seek not a wife, or woman; make no inquiry after one; be content to live without one; enter not into a marriage state, nor take any step towards it; it is best to continue loosed, for the reason above given, that is, provided the person has the gift of continence, otherwise not; (see <470705>1 Corinthians 7:5).

Ver. 28. *But and if thou marry, thou sinnest not*, etc.] If a man that has never been married, or one that has, if legally loosed from his wife, thinks fit to marry, he commits no sin, he breaks no law of God, far from it; marriage is honourable in all. The apostle would be understood, that in the advice he before gives, he is not dissuading from marriage, as a thing sinful

and criminal; only that it was more advisable to such as could to abstain from it, under the present circumstances of things; and what he says of a man holds equally true of a virgin:

and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned; the one may as lawfully marry as another; there is no law forbidding virgins to marry, any more than young men; and if they think fit to enter into such a state, they break no law of God, and consequently sin not:

nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh; that is, such young men and virgins, who choose to marry, and who generally promise themselves a great deal of pleasure, shall meet with a great deal of trouble; and that even where they expected the most satisfaction and delight, “in the flesh”; the body, the outward man, and external circumstances of life. This “trouble” is the same with the present necessity before mentioned, the persecutions and tribulations the saints should suffer in the flesh, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; not that married persons should be the only ones that should have trouble in this way, but that such persons would be less able to bear it, or to escape from it. Moreover, this may be extended to all the sorrows, troubles, and distresses which attend a married state:

but I spare you; the sense of which is, either that the apostle, out of his great tenderness to such who were inclined to marry, and could not contain, just gave this hint, that such should have trouble in the flesh; but did not dwell upon it or enter into particulars, lest they should be discouraged from it, and fall into temptation, sin, and a snare; or because of the great respect he had to the Corinthians, he gave the above advice to keep themselves single, that they might the better bear afflictions and persecutions, for the sake of their profession, and escape many troubles which others endure.

Ver. 29. *But this I say, brethren, the time is short*, etc.] This is another reason, with which the apostle supports his advice to virgins, and unmarried persons, to remain so; since the time of life is so very short, and it is even but a little while to the end of the world, and second coming of Christ; and therefore seeing the marriage state is so full of care and trouble, and it affords still less time for the service of Christ and religion, he thought it most advisable for them to, continue in a single life, that they might be more at leisure to make use of that little time they had for their spiritual good and welfare, the edification of others, and the glory of Christ: unless it should be rather thought that the apostle is still enlarging

upon the former argument, taken from the present time, being a time of distress and persecution; and so the phrase, “the time is short”, or “contracted”, and full of anguish and affliction, is the same with the present necessity, and trouble in the flesh; and since this was the case, he suggests again, that an unmarried state was most preferable:

it remaineth that both they that have wives, be as though they had none: and as for the rest, they that were married, his advice to them was, that they should so behave as if they were not married; not that he would have them put away their wives, or fancy with themselves that they had none, or make no use of the marriage bed; but suggests a moderate use of it; he would not have them give up themselves to lasciviousness and carnal lusts and pleasures, even with their own wives, and spend their time altogether in their company and embraces: but since the time of life was short, and that full of troubles, they should spend it in the service and worship of God, private and public, as much as possible; and not in the indulging and satisfying of the flesh.

Ver. 30. *And they that weep, as though they wept not*, etc.] They that weep for troubles and crosses, things adverse and afflicting in a marriage state, for the loss of wives or children, should express their sorrow in such a manner and degree, as if they wept not; not that the apostle here introduces and establishes a stoical apathy, and would have persons show no manner of concern for these things; but he directs to a moderate use of sorrow, to such a degree as not to hinder and divert from the exercises of piety and religion:

and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; such who are blessed with great prosperity, and with whom everything goes well; they have married wives, and have children, and thrive in the world; let them rejoice on the account of these things, in such a still, silent way, as if they rejoiced not, their hearts not being set upon their outward felicity, nor elated with it; but rejoicing rather that their names were written in heaven, that they had an interest in Christ and his grace, and a right and title to the glories of another world, and at the same time be thankful to God for what they enjoy in this:

and they that buy as though they possessed not; meaning, not any sort of buyers, everyone is a buyer in some sense; but such as purchase estates, buy houses and lands, and become proprietors of large tracts. These the apostle would not have hold their substance for themselves, but hold it as if

they did not hold it, parting with it for the use of others; and as persons that are only stewards, and not properly owners, and in a little time must quit it all, and be accountable for their use and disposition of it.

Ver. 31. *And they that use this world, as not abusing it*, etc.] Such as have a large affluence of the things of this world, should use them in a moderate and temperate manner; should not squander them away extravagantly, or spend them on their lusts, and use them intemperately, which is to abuse them:

for the fashion of this world passeth away; not the nature, matter, and substance, but the figure and form of it; for after this world is burnt up, a new one, as to form and fashion, will arise, in much more beauty and glory; all that looks glorious and beautiful in the present world, as riches, honour, etc. are all mere show and appearance, having nothing solid and substantial in them; and are all fluid and transitory, are passing away; there is nothing firm and permanent; in a little time, all will be at an end, the world itself, as to its present form, and all that is in it; when there will be no more marrying, nor giving in marriage, no more buying and selling, no more of the present changes and vicissitudes of prosperity and adversity, of joy and sorrow; these scenes will be all removed, and quite a new face of things appear: wherefore what the apostle exhorts unto, with respect to present conduct and behaviour, must be right and good.

Ver. 32. *But I would have you without carefulness*, etc.] This is another reason, by which the apostle confirms the advice he gives to virgins to remain such, because the married state is full of cares, whereas the single life is no more free from them; and therefore he wishes them to continue in such a state, that they might be without anxious and distracting cares of temporal things, things relating to the good decorum and sustenance of a family, and so be more free and at leisure for the service of God; which he illustrates, by showing the different cares that married and unmarried persons are involved in:

he that is unmarried, careth for the things that belong to the Lord; such as hearing the word, reading it, meditating upon it, praying to God and attending upon all ordinances, taking every opportunity to glorify God, and do good to others; but this is not to be understood as matter of fact, that unmarried persons are so studiously concerned for these things, or that this is the case of all of them; there are many unmarried persons think nothing about them; and are not at all concerned with them; but the meaning is,

that such persons are more at leisure, and can more conveniently attend to these things, and ought so to do; and they that have the grace of God will be more or less solicitous to observe them:

how he may please the Lord; for when these things are attended to in faith and fear, from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God, the good of their own souls and others, they are well pleasing to the Lord; and though they are not meritorious of eternal life, yet they are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, and will be taken notice of with approbation, and followed with a reward of grace another day.

Ver. 33. *But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world*, etc.] Attending diligently to the business and calling of life, he is engaged in, that he may provide food and clothing, and other necessaries for the support and sustenance of his family:

how he may please his wife: and make her and his children easy and comfortable. This also is not to be understood of every individual person in a married state as matter of fact; for, on the one hand, there are some who take no care to please their wives and provide for their families, and are worse than infidels; and, on the other hand, there are others who take a proper care to make a suitable provision for their wives and children, to the satisfaction of both; and yet this is not their only care, they also care for the things of the Lord, and concern themselves much for his honour and glory: but the sense is, that, generally speaking, persons in such a state are greatly involved in worldly cares, and have not that leisure, and those opportunities, that single persons have to attend religious exercises; wherefore the single state, on this account, is, in the apostle's opinion, the more preferable.

Ver. 34. *There is difference also between a wife and a virgin*, etc.] The word μεμερισται, translated "there is difference", stands in some copies at the end of the last verse, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, by which it is rendered, "and is divided"; referring to the married man, whose thoughts are distracted with the cares of the world, and his mind divided between the Lord and his wife, between the things that please the one, and those that please the other; so that he cannot attend upon the Lord without distraction, as the unmarried person may; (see 1 Corinthians 7:35). But the more generally received reading is what we follow; in which words the apostle shows, that there is just the same difference between a married and an unmarried woman, as there is between

a married and an unmarried man. There is no difference in their nature, nor sex, but in their state and condition, and in the cares which involve the one and the other.

The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord; not everyone that is unmarried, but one that has the grace of God, being in a single state; as such an one is more at leisure, and can more conveniently attend on the service of the Lord, so she ought, and generally speaking does: and her end in so doing is,

that she may be holy both in body and in spirit; not in body only, but in spirit also; for outward chastity, without internal holiness, will be of little avail: but as a close adherence to the Lord, and to his worship and service, may be a means of preserving from external pollutions of the body, so likewise of carrying on the internal work of grace upon the soul; not that it is to be thought that unmarried persons are the only ones that are holy in body and spirit; there are some that are so in neither; and there are many married persons that are chaste in their bodies, and possess their vessels in sanctification and honour, and are blessed with inward spiritual purity.

But she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband; not by beautifying and adorning herself with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; though this is all that some care for; but with good works, taking care of her household and family affairs, bringing up her children in an orderly manner, honouring and obeying her husband, doing everything to oblige him, and to engage his love and affection to her, as becomes her; nor is this said of her by way of criticism, only that such is her state and situation in life, that she has not the opportunities and advantages the unmarried person has of serving the Lord; on which account the single life is represented as most advisable to abide in.

Ver. 35. *And this I speak for your own profit*, etc.] The apostle suggests, that in giving the advice he did to unmarried persons to abide single, he had nothing else in view than their temporal and spiritual advantage; that they might be better able to meet and grapple with persecution for the sake of the Gospel; that they might be more free from the cares and encumbrances of life, and more at liberty to serve the Lord; whereby not only his glory, but their spiritual good, might be promoted; not that he thought that marriage was unlawful, or that the single life was a more honest, and a more chaste way of living, or that it was absolutely necessary, and an

incumbent duty upon them to remain single, nor would he be so understood: all that he had said was by way of advice; he had very faithfully laid before them the advantages and disadvantages of both states, and now leaves them to their full liberty to do as they pleased to take his advice, or not:

not that I may cast a snare on you; as fowlers on birds: had he enjoined virginity as necessary, and insisted upon it, that it was absolutely their duty to live a single life; this would have been laying an obligation upon them, and an ensnaring and entangling of them: hereby some might have engaged in a single life, who had not the gift of continence, and so might have been drawn into the sin of fornication, or into unnatural lust, and such impurities as would be very scandalous unto, and highly reflect upon, the Gospel of Christ. But the apostle delivered himself on the subject with no such view, and in such a manner as is plain he meant not to ensnare any:

but for that which is comely, and that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction: all he aimed at, by advising them to a single life, was that they might more orderly and constantly, and without distraction of mind, through the cares of the world, wait upon the Lord, and serve him; which, in his opinion, was choosing the good part with Mary; whilst others, like Martha, were troubled, divided, and distracted with many things.

Ver. 36. *But if any man think*, etc.] This some understand of a man that is engaged, or betrothed to a virgin, and protracts marriage, who may use his prudence in consummating it, if he pleases, for any thing the apostle has said to the contrary: but it is better to understand it of a parent, or one that has the care and guardianship of virgins; if such an one is of opinion,

that he behaveth himself uncomely towards his virgin: by exposing her to contempt and reproach, in retaining her at home, and not giving her in marriage when at proper age for such a state; it being reckoned reproachful to be at, or past the age of marriage, or to be in years, and not married; or by so doing lay her under temptation to do that which is uncomely, to commit fornication, which would be uncomely, both to him, and to her; and such a tendency has living in a single state, contrary to inclination. The apostle may have respect to a Jewish tradition founded upon the supposed sense of (Leviticus 19:29) “do not prostitute thy daughter to cause her to be a whore” [f138].

> “Says R. Eliezer, this is he who marries his daughter to an old man. Says R. Akiba, (who was contemporary with the apostle,) this is he who detains his daughter at home when she is marriageable.”

If she pass the flower of her age; that is, one that is arrived to years of maturity, is ripe for marriage, and is what the Jewish doctors call trgb; who, according to them, was one of twelve years and a half old [f139], at which age virgins were judged fit to marry: hence that saying of theirs [f140]

> “if thy daughter, hrgb, “is ripe”, or come to the flower of her age, make thy servant free and give her to him.”

Moreover, according to their canons, such an one was no longer under her father’s power; for so runs the canon [f141],

> “hrgbç ˆwyk “when she is at the flower of her age”, she is no more under her father’s power:”

her father cannot make void her vows, though a husband can [f142]:

and need so require: that she be given in marriage to a man; if she has not the gift of continence; if she is in danger of falling into the sin of fornication, and the father or guardian are sensible of this:

let him do what he will, he sinneth not; he is under no obligation by what the apostle had said to detain her in a single life; he may give her in marriage if he pleases: he may

do what she will, as it may be rendered; comply with her inclination and desire in marrying her to some person; in doing which, neither he nor she will break any law of God, and so not sin therein:

let them marry; let parents marry their children when this is the case; let the young men and young women marry who are so disposed; there is no reason why they should not; there is nothing contrary to it in the word of God, nor in the advice of the apostle; nay, according to him, it was much better to marry than to burn, or to be exposed to any snare and temptation.

Ver. 37. *Nevertheless, he that standeth steadfast in his heart*, etc.] The apostle returns to confirm his former advice, where it can be attended to with safety; and observes, that notwithstanding what he had allowed might lawfully be done, and was proper to be done; yet a man that had deliberated upon, and had well weighed the matter of virginity, the case of

a single life, and was at a point about in, having no hesitation nor fluctuation of mind concerning it: and also “having no necessity”; of acting otherwise, either through the meanness of his circumstances, or rather through the weakness of his virgin, she not having the gift of continency:

but hath power over his own will; his daughter’s will being the same with his, and she entirely consenting to live a single life; otherwise he would have no power of acting as he pleased in such a case:

and hath so decreed in his heart: it is a fixed point on mature deliberation, in which he himself is hearty and determined, and his child perfectly assents to it, so that on all hands it is an agreed matter:

that he will keep his virgin; at home with him, unmarried, and not give her to any man in marriage:

doth well: or that which is for both temporal and spiritual profit and advantage, as before observed. Some understand all this of a man’s keeping his own virginity, and determining to continue unmarried.

Ver. 38. *So then he that giveth [her] in marriage doth well*, etc.] Does that which is in its own nature good; that which is agreeable to the will of God, is of his institution and appointment, and therefore must be good, and answer many good ends and purposes. Such an one that marries his daughter, he seeing a necessity for it, and a propriety in it, does a very good thing; secures her chastity, and his own credit; prevents fornication, and other evils that might follow; consults the good of mankind, and the honour of religion.

But he that giveth [her] not in marriage doth better; not a better action in itself, simply considered; but more profitable and advantageous under such and such circumstances, with such and such conditions and consequences; since hereby a single person is more fit to encounter with and endure persecutions, is freer from the cares of life, and more at liberty to wait upon the Lord, and give up himself to his service.

Ver. 39. *The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth*, etc.] That is, she is bound to her husband, by the law of marriage, during his life; nor can the bond of marriage between them be dissolved but by the death of one of them, except in the cases of adultery, and wilful desertion, (see 4102Romans 7:2,3).

But if her husband be dead; or “asleep”, for so the word may be rendered; though it designs death: death is often expressed by sleeping in Scripture; for the dead will not always remain in such a state, but be raised from thence at the last day, just as persons are awaked out of sleep. The Alexandrian copy reads αποψανη, “dead”; and so seems the Ethiopic version to have read.

She is at liberty to marry whom she will: so that second marriages are lawful, though condemned by many of the ancients: the liberty of a widow is greater than that of a virgin, because a virgin is under the power, and at the dispose of her parents; but a widow is at her own dispose; and death having dissolved her former obligation, she is at entire liberty to marry, or not marry, and to marry whom she pleases, that is not forbidden by the laws of God:

only in the Lord; not that it is absolutely necessary that her husband should be in the Lord, a converted person, a believer in Christ; though such an one should be most desirable and eligible: but either that she should continue in the possession of her faith in Christ, and not relinquish it for the sake of an husband; or that she enter into this state in the fear of the Lord, calling upon him, and consulting him in such an important affair; and take care that whom she marries is not within the line prohibited by the Lord.

Ver. 40. *But she is happier if she so abide*, etc.] That is, a widow, in an unmarried state; which is to be understood not of the happiness of another world, but of this: the apostle’s meaning is, that she would be more free from cares, and less liable to trouble, would live with more peace and quietness, and be more at leisure to serve the Lord, second marriages oftentimes proving more disagreeable than the first; but in this the apostle only gives his opinion, enjoins nothing by way of command, or in an authoritative manner: and therefore adds,

after my judgment: according to his sense of things, and agreeably to the advice he had before given to unmarried persons, whether virgins or widows, such a person was likely to have most peace, and least trouble, remaining a widow, than if married, and so consequently more happy: and in order to engage such to regard his counsel, he further says,

and I think also that I have the Spirit of God; that though he had no express command, nor did he pretend to any, nor did he lay any injunction on any, but left them to their liberty; yet he could not but think, nay, he

was assured, though he thus modestly expresses himself, that he was directed to give this advice by the Spirit of God.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 8

In this chapter the apostle proceeds to consider the case of eating things offered to idols, which, though an indifferent thing, was abused by many in the Corinthian church, to the scandal and hurt of weak Christians; wherefore the apostle dissuades from the use of it, and refutes the arguments which were used by them in defence of their practice. And the general foundation on which they proceeded being their knowledge of Christian liberty, he begins with that; and makes answer to it, by granting, that he, and they, and all had knowledge in general; and by distinguishing between knowledge and charity, the one puffing up, and the other edifying: wherefore to argue from the one, to the disuse of the other, was wrong, (<4601>1 Corinthians 8:1) seeing that kind of knowledge, which was not accompanied with love, was no true knowledge, (<4602>1 Corinthians 8:2) but that was right which had annexed to it love to God, and our neighbour, (<4603>1 Corinthians 8:3) and then applies this observation to the case of things offered to idols; and explains the knowledge which some had, and boasted of, that an idol was nothing, and that there was but one God, (<4604>1 Corinthians 8:4) which latter he proves and confirms, partly by allowing that there were many nominal gods and lords, both in heaven and earth; but then they were only so by name, not by nature, (<4605>1 Corinthians 8:5) and partly by observing the common faith of Christians, that there is but one God, and one Lord Jesus, who are both described by their names and properties, (<4606>1 Corinthians 8:6) But now, though there was such knowledge concerning an idol, as nothing, and things offered to it, as indifferent, in some, this was not the case of all; who, as their knowledge was small, their consciences were weak, and were defiled by eating such things through the example of others, (<4607>1 Corinthians 8:7) wherefore it became such who had greater knowledge to abstain from eating them; partly from the unprofitableness of such eating to them with respect to divine acceptance, it making them neither better nor worse, (<4608>1 Corinthians 8:8) and partly from the harmfulness of it to others, it being a stumblingblock to the weak, which ought not to be laid in their way, (<4609>1 Corinthians 8:9) and emboldening to do so likewise to the injury of their

weak consciences, (<46 8:10>1 Corinthians 8:10) and so was to the loss and ruin of their peace and comfort, which is aggravated by their being brethren, and such for whom Christ died, (<46 8:11>1 Corinthians 8:11). Thus by wounding their weak consciences, they that drew them into this practice, by their example, sinned both against their brethren, and Christ himself, (<46 8:12>1 Corinthians 8:12). From all which the apostle concludes, that rather than offend a weak brother, it was right never to eat any flesh at all; and this he strengthens by his own example and resolution, (<46 8:13>1 Corinthians 8:13).

Ver. 1. *Now as touching things offered unto idols*, etc.] This was another of the things the Corinthians wrote to the apostle about, desiring to have his judgment in; it was a controversy that had been before moved, whether it was lawful to eat things that had been sacrificed to idols. This was considered in the council at Jerusalem, (<44 15:28,29>Acts 15:28,29) and it was agreed to, for the peace of the churches, that the Gentiles, among other things, be advised to abstain from them; which, it seems, the church at Corinth knew nothing of, for the controversy was now moved among them: some that were weak in the faith, and had not, at least, clear notions of Gospel liberty, thought it very criminal and sinful to eat them; others that had, or boasted they had, more knowledge, would not only eat them privately at home, having bought them of the Heathen priests, or in the common meat markets, where they were exposed to sale, and at public feasts, to which they were invited by their friends; but would even go into an idol's temple, and sit and eat them there, to the great grief and prejudice of weak Christians; and what they had to plead in their own defence was their knowledge, to which the apostle here replies:

we know that we all have knowledge; said either affirmatively and seriously; and the meaning is, that the apostles and other Christians knew, and were conscious to themselves of their light and knowledge, and were assured, and might affirm with confidence, that they all, or the most part, only some few excepted, (see <46 8:7>1 Corinthians 8:7) had the same knowledge of Christian liberty as they had; knew that an idol was nothing, and that eating meats offered to them could not defile, or do them any hurt; for they were very sensible there was nothing common or unclean of itself, and yet did not think fit to make use of their knowledge to the grieving and wounding of their fellow Christians: or else this is said ironically, we are wise folks; you particularly are men of knowledge, and wisdom will die with you; you know that you know; you are very knowing in your own

conceits, and very positive as to your knowledge. It was the saying of Socrates, that that this one thing he knew, that he knew nothing; but men wise in their own opinions know everything:

knowledge puffeth up; not true knowledge; not that which comes from above, which is gentle and easy to be entreated; not sanctified knowledge, or that which has the grace of God going along with it; that makes men humble, and will not suffer them to be puffed up one against another; but a mere show of knowledge, knowledge in conceit, mere notional and speculative knowledge, that which is destitute of charity or love:

but charity edifieth; that is, a man that has knowledge, joined with love to God, and his fellow Christians, will seek for that which makes for the edification of others; and without this all his knowledge will be of no avail, and he himself be nothing.

Ver. 2. *And if any man think that he knows anything*, etc.] Whoever has an opinion of himself, or is conceited with his own knowledge, and fancies that he knows more than he does; which is always the case of those that are elated with their knowledge, and treat others with contempt, and have no regard to their peace and edification:

he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know; if he did, he would know this, that he ought to consult the peace, comfort, and edification of his brother; and therefore whatever knowledge he may fancy he has attained to, or whatever he may be capable of, and hereafter obtain, for the present he must be put down for a man that knows nothing as he should do; for he knows neither his duty to God nor man; if he knew the former, he would know the latter.

Ver. 3. *But if any man love God*, etc.] As they do, and show it, who love their brethren, and are careful not to grieve them; and make use of their superior knowledge, not for their destruction, but edification:

the same is known of him; is taught by him, made to know more by him; such an one increases in spiritual knowledge, or he is highly approved of, esteemed, and beloved by God: he takes a special and particular notice of him, manifests his love to him, and will own and acknowledge him another day, when proud, haughty, overbearing, and hard hearted professors, will be rejected by him.

Ver. 4. *As concerning therefore the eating of those things*, etc.] The apostle having enlarged on the head of knowledge, which those who made an ill use of their Christian liberty urged in favour of their conduct; he returns to the subject in question, in relation to meats,

that are offered in sacrifice unto idols. The determinations of the Jewish schools concerning this affair are as follow, which admit of no manner of profit by them in any shape:

> "a beast, the whole of which they offer to idols, is forbidden of profit, even its dung, and its bones, and its horns, and its hoofs, and its skin, all is forbid to be of any profit" [f143].

Again [f144],

> "flesh or wine, or fruits, which are brought in to be offered up to idols, are not forbidden to profit with, although they are brought into the idol's temple, until they offer them up before it; hynp l µwbyrqh "but when offered up before it"; they become an offering; and though they may return them, and bring them out, lo, these are forbidden for ever; and all that is found in an idol's temple, even water and salt, are forbidden of profit by the law, l k wnmm l kwaw, "and he that eats anything thereof" is to be beaten."

Once more [f145],

> "an Israelite that lifts up a cheese to worship it, but does not worship it, but a Gentile worships it, it is forbidden of profit, became the lifting of it up is an action; and so if he lifts up an egg, and a Gentile comes and worships it, it is forbidden; he that cuts a gourd, or any such thing, and worships it, it is forbidden, etc."

But by these decrees we Christians are not bound;

we know that an idol is nothing in the world; among the things created by God in the world; for though the matter of it may be of God, the form is of men; nor has it any share in the government of the world: and though that of which it may be made, as gold, silver, brass, etc. is something; yet as it is a form and representation of God, it is nothing, because there can be no representation of the invisible God; it is nothing, that is, it has no divinity in it, it is no God. Though it may have an existence, as the sun, moon, and

stars, yet not divinity; and in that sense nothing. The apostle here speaks the language of the Jewish doctors, who say [f146],

> "why dost thou envy an idol? çmm hb ^yaç, "since it is nothing, or there is nothing it.""

And again [f147],

> "the Rabbins say, since çmm z" [b ^yaw, "there is nothing in an idol", why do they call them deities;"

Very likely the apostle may have reference to µylyla, the Hebrew word for idols, which signifies things of nought, that are good for nothing, are of no value, and are as nothing, (<232020>Isaiah 2:20).

And that there is none other God but one. This clause may be considered either as a reason of the former, why an idol is nothing, is no deity, is no God, "for there is none other God but one", as it may be rendered; or as a part of what believers know; for as they know an idol is nothing, so they know, both from reason and revelation, from the books of the Old and New Testament, that there is but one God, and consequently that idols are nothing, and that they cannot defile them, nor anything that is offered to them.

Ver. 5. *For though there be that are called gods*, etc.] That are so by name, though not by nature; who are called so in Scripture, as angels and magistrates, or by men, who give them such names, and account them so:

whether in heaven; as the sun, moon, and stars:

or in earth; as men who formerly lived on earth; or various creatures on earth, who have been accounted deities; or stocks and stones graven by man's device:

as there be gods many: almost without number, as were among the Egyptians, Grecians, Romans, and others; yea, even among the Jews, who falling into idolatry, their gods were according to the number of their cities, (<243228>Jeremiah 2:28)

and lords many; referring to the Baalim, or the several idols that went by the name of Baal, or lord, as Baal Peor, (<042503>Numbers 25:3) Baal Zephon, (<021402>Exodus 14:2) Baal Zebub, (<120102>2 Kings 1:2) Baal Berith, (<070833>Judges 8:33).

Ver. 6. *But to us there is but one God, the Father*, etc.] In this Christians and Jews agree with the best and wisest philosophers of the Gentiles, that there is but one God; which is clear from the perfections of God, as necessary existence, eternity, infinity, omnipotence, all-sufficiency, goodness, and perfection; from one first cause of all things; from the government of the world; and from the writings of the Old and New Testament: so that to us believers this point is out of all doubt; but who this one God is the Gentiles knew not, and the Jews are very ignorant of; but we Christians know him to be "the Father"; by whom meant either God essentially considered, the one God, Father, Son, and Spirit, called the Father, not in relation to any person in the Godhead, but in relation to the creatures: so this one God, Father, Son, and Spirit, is the Father of spirits, the creator of angels, and the souls of men, the God of all flesh, the Father of all the individuals of human nature, the Father or author of all the mercies and blessings the children of men enjoy. Or else personally considered, and so designs the first person in the Godhead, who is called so in relation to his Son, who is styled the only begotten of the Father: and when he is said to be the one God, it must be understood, not as exclusive of the Son and Spirit; for if the Son stands excluded in this clause from being the one God with the Father, by the same rule of interpretation, the Father, in the next clause must stand excluded from being the one Lord with Christ; but as dominion or lordship belongs to the Father, so deity to the Son, and also to the Spirit.

Of whom are all things; all created beings and things; angels are of him, are created by him, serve and worship him; devils are of him, and under him, and at his control, though they have rebelled against him; all mankind are of him, and are his offspring; the whole universe, the heavens, the earth, and seas, and all that in them are, are of him; all things in nature, providence, grace, and glory, come of him: he is the author of every mercy, temporal and spiritual.

And we in him: or "for him": as creatures we are not only made by him, but live in him, and are supported in him, and by him, and are created for his glory: though this seems rather to respect what believers are, as new creatures; they are in God; they are interested in him as their covenant God, and in his everlasting and immutable love; they are engraven on his hands, and set as a seal on his heart; they are "into him", as it may be rendered; they are brought into nearness to him, and communion with him;

and are “for him”, are chosen, redeemed, regenerated, and called for the glorifying of his grace, and to show forth his praise.

And one Lord Jesus Christ; so called, not to the exclusion of the Father and Spirit, but in opposition to the lords many before mentioned, and with respect to all his people. Christ is the one Lord of all, as he is God over all, the Creator and Former of all things; and he is so likewise as Mediator, having all power, dominion, and government put into his hands: he is, in a special sense, the one Lord of his people, and that by right of marriage to them; by right of redemption of them; through his being an head unto them, and King of them; and by a voluntary surrender of themselves to him, rejecting all other lords, as sin, Satan, and the world, who have formerly had dominion over them, they acknowledge him to be their one and only Lord:

by whom are all things; in nature; all the created beings of this, or the other world, whether visible or invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, are by him; no creature was made without him, and all by him; and all things in grace, our election, redemption, reconciliation, pardon, justification, and everlasting glory and happiness,

And we by him; we are redeemed by him from sin, Satan, the law, death, and hell; we are by him what we are, as Christians, as believers in him; by him, and from him, we have all the grace and the supplies of it we have; by him we have access to the Father, and fellowship with him; by him we are governed, influenced, protected, and preserved to his kingdom and glory; and by him we are, and shall be, saved with an everlasting salvation.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit, there is not in every man that knowledge*, etc.] The apostle is not speaking of Heathens, in whom there was no knowledge of the one true God, the author of all things, and of the one Lord Jesus, the only saviour and Redeemer; but of Christians, in whom there was the knowledge of these things, but not in all of them; the knowledge of this, that an idol was nothing; for though they knew that an idol was not God, and had no true deity in it, nor was it any true representation of God, yet fancied that it had an influence upon food that was offered to it, to defile it, and render it unclean, so that it ought not to be eaten; and since there were such persons that were so ignorant and weak, it became those who had more knowledge to be careful how they laid stumblingblocks in the way of such, to the prejudice of their consciences: that there were such, the apostle affirms,

for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour, eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; that is, there were some persons even at that very time, though they had been so long converted from Heathenism to Christianity, yet had such an opinion of an idol, that they really thought in their own consciences, that there were something in an idol, they could not well tell what, that defiled meats offered to it, and made them unlawful to be eaten; and yet, through the influence of the example of others, were prevailed upon to eat of them, having at the same time a notion of such food, as if it was not common food, but had received some virtue from the idol; and not without some regret, and uneasiness of mind, as being polluted with it. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, συνηψεια "through custom of the idol"; and so the Ethiopic version seems to have read: and the sense is, that some having been formerly accustomed to worship idols, and to eat things offered to them, as having received some virtue from them, still retained an opinion, that there was some difference between such meats and others.

And their conscience being weak is defiled; because such act against the dictates of their own conscience; which, though weak, is binding, and sinned against, defiles, according to the rules given by the apostle, (⁴⁵14:14,23).

Ver. 8. *But meat commendeth us not to God*, etc.] These words are said by the apostle, either as expressing the argument of such as had knowledge in favour of themselves, that what they did was a thing indifferent, by which they were made neither better nor worse; nor did they look upon it as meritorious, or expect any favour from God on account of it, and therefore were not to be blamed for using their liberty in the manner they did: or else they are spoken by him as his own sense: and the meaning is, that eating of meat, any sort of meat, and so that which is offered to idols, or abstinence from it, neither one nor the other recommends any to the love and favour of God; abrqm al, "does not bring near", or give access to God, as the Syriac version renders the phrase; does not ingratiate any into his affectionate regards, or make them acceptable unto him:

for neither if we eat are we the better; or "abound", not in earthly but spiritual things, in the graces of the Spirit, and particularly in the esteem and good will of God, upon which such an action can have no influence:

neither if we eat not are we the worse; or are deficient; meaning not in temporal things, but, as before, in spiritual; true grace and piety are not a whit the less; nor are such persons less in the love and favour of God, which is not to be known and judged of by any such action, or the omission of it.

Ver. 9. *But take heed lest by any means*, etc.] This is either a reply to the instance of such as argued in favour of eating things offered to idols; or a limitation and explanation of the apostle's own concession, that it made a man, with respect to the favour of God, neither better nor worse: yet care should be taken, lest

this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak; he owns they had a liberty, or a right, or power, as the word may be rendered, of eating, or not eating, as they pleased; but then they ought to be cautious, lest they should be the means of offending, or causing to offend, such who were weak in the faith, and had not that knowledge of Christian liberty they had: not the use of their power and liberty is here denied, but the abuse of it is guarded against; for though the action itself was indifferent, yet as it might be used, it might be sinful, being attended with very bad consequences, such as hereafter mentioned.

Ver. 10. *For if any man see thee which hast knowledge*, etc.] That is, not any person whatever; not one that has equal knowledge, and can with a good conscience take the same liberty; but one that is weak in the faith, that has not such a clear sight of the doctrine of Christian liberty: if such an one should observe one that is famous for his superior abilities, learning, and knowledge,

sit at meat in the idol's temple; or at table, or at a feast, where, it seem, after the sacrifice was over, a feast was made of what was left, and friends were invited to partake of it; and some such there were in this church, who to show their Christian liberty, and their knowledge of it, would go and sit down at these feasts publicly, looking upon such meats as having nothing different from common food, or what they bought in the markets, or brought up as their own:

shall not the conscience of him that is weak; in knowledge, who is not clearly instructed in the doctrine of Christian liberty, but has some doubts upon his mind whether it is lawful to eat such meats, imagining them to be polluted by the idol: "be emboldened"; Greek for "edified"; that is, induced

by such an example, and confirmed by such an instance with boldness, and without fear, to eat those things which are offered to idols, contrary to his light, and knowledge, and conscience; and so upon a reflection on what he has done, wound his weak conscience, destroy his peace, and distress his soul. This the apostle proposes to the consideration of these men of knowledge and liberty, as what might be the case, and which they could not well deny, to dissuade them from the use of their liberty, in all places and times, and under all circumstances; all which ought to be seriously weighed and attended to in this business.

Ver. 11. *And through thy knowledge*, etc.] These words contain an aggravation of the sin such persons are guilty of, who are the means, by their example, of ensnaring weak minds, and causing them to stumble and fall, even in some sense so as to perish:

shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? every word almost carries in it an exaggeration of this matter; it is not some slight injury that is done to the person, but even causing him to "perish"; and this is not said of any person, but a "brother", to whom the strongest affection, and strictest regard, should be shown; and a "weak" brother, of whom the greater care should be taken; and therefore it is an instance of cruelty to do damage to such an one, and that not ignorantly, which cannot be pretended, but "through thy knowledge"; not through the true use, but abuse of it: those that have knowledge should know better, and improve it to the edification, and not the destruction of fellow Christians; and all this done in a case of indifference, that might as well be let alone, of which there was no necessity for the doing of it: but what aggravates most of all is, that this affects a person for "whom Christ died"; that he had such a value for as to purchase and redeem with the price of his own blood; and yet these men made so little account of, as by so trifling a thing to risk their good and welfare. Some would from hence conclude the doctrine of universal redemption, that Christ died for all men, even for them that perish; but it should be observed, that the words are put by way of interrogation, and prove no matter of fact, even supposing they could be understood of eternal ruin and destruction; and at most only imply the danger and possibility thereof through offences given, were they not preserved by the power and grace of God through Christ, who died for them, and so will not suffer them to perish; though this is no thanks to them who lay stumblingblocks in their way, and, as much as in them lies, cause them to perish, in this sense: besides, the "perishing" of this weak brother is to be

understood of his peace and comfort, and is explained by “defiling” his conscience, (1 Corinthians 8:7) by wounding it, (1 Corinthians 8:12) and making him to offend, (1 Corinthians 8:13) through an imprudent use of Christian liberty in those who had the greater knowledge, and by a participation of things offered unto idols, in an idol’s temple, and not of his eternal damnation in hell; which could never enter into the apostle’s thought, as to be brought about hereby, as appears from (1 Corinthians 8:8) and so is no proof of Christ’s dying for such as perish eternally: for those for whom Christ has died, he has by his death procured such blessings for them, as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, peace with God, reconciliation unto him, and eternal salvation, which will for ever secure them from perishing in such sense.

Ver. 12. *But when ye sin so against the brethren*, etc.] Through sitting at meat in an idol’s temple, and thereby violating the new commandment of love; by which saints are obliged to love one another as brethren, and take care to do nothing that may hurt and prejudice one another’s peace and comfort, it being an incumbent duty upon them by love to serve one another: and

wound their weak conscience: as before observed: it is contrary to the law of love to wound a brother; it is an aggravation of the sin to wound a weak one; what greater cruelty than to strike or beat, as the word here used signifies, a sick and infirm man? and greater still to strike and wound his conscience than any part of his body; for a wounded spirit is insupportable without divine aid and influence; and what serves most to enhance the crime and guilt is,

ye sin against Christ, who has so loved this weak brother as to die for him; and between whom there is so close an union, as between head and members; and from whence such a sympathy arises, that what is done to or against such a person, Christ takes as done to himself. The Syriac version emphatically adds, wh, “himself”.

Ver. 13. *Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend*, etc.] This is the conclusion of the whole, which the apostle makes with respect to himself, and proposes for the imitation of others; that since an imprudent use of Christian liberty, in this article of eating things offered to idols, might be attended with such bad consequences, as to lay a stumblingblock in the way of weak Christians, and be a means of emboldening them to do things

contrary to their consciences, and so break the peace of their minds, wound their spirits, grieve and afflict their souls, and not only so, but so to do would be to sin against Christ himself; rather than do any of these things, or be accessary to them, he determines, in the strength of divine grace, that

he will eat no flesh while the world standeth; or "for ever": not only he resolves he will not eat flesh offered to idols, but no other flesh, if this was an offence to a weak brother; and he not only concludes to abstain a few days, or months, or years, but as long as he should live in the world: he chose rather to live on herbs, or any other food but this,

lest, says he,

I make my brother to offend: this is truly Christian charity, a proof of brotherly love, and it shows a concern for the peace and welfare of others, when a person foregoes his own right, and drops the use of his liberty, rather than grieve, wound, and offend a brother in Christ.

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 9

The principal things in this chapter are the proof of the apostle's office and authority; arguments for his own maintenance, and the maintenance of Gospel ministers; reasons why he did not make use of his right and privilege in this respect: and the whole is concluded with an exhortation to diligence and perseverance in the Christian course of life, of which he himself was an example. He begins with his office, as an apostle, and proves it; partly by his independency on men, not having his call and mission from them; and partly by his corporeal sight of Christ, and the authority which he in person received from him; and also by the success of his ministry among the Corinthians, (<4601>1 Corinthians 9:1), wherefore, whatever might be objected to him by other persons, they had no reason to object to his apostleship, seeing they, being converted under his ministry, were so many seals of it, (<4602>1 Corinthians 9:2), and since his call to the ministry was firm and valid, he had a right, as other ministers, to a maintenance of himself and family, should he have any, from the churches, without labouring with his own hands, (<4603>1 Corinthians 9:3-6), which he proves from the law of nature and nations, exemplified in the cases of soldiers, planters of vineyards, and keepers of flocks, who by virtue of their calling and service have a right to a livelihood, between whom, and ministers of the Gospel, there is some resemblance, (<4607>1 Corinthians 9:7), and also from the law of Moses, particularly the law respecting the ox, which was not to be muzzled when it tread out the corn; and which he observes is to be understood, not only and barely in the letter of oxen, but of ministers of the word, who are as husbandmen that plough and thresh in hope, and therefore should be partakers of their hope, (<4608>1 Corinthians 9:8-10). Moreover, the apostle argues the right of the maintenance of the ministers of the Gospel, from the justice and equity of the thing, that seeing they minister spiritual things, it is but reasonable that they should receive temporal ones, (<4611>1 Corinthians 9:11), and which the apostle argues for himself, and Barnabas, as from the instances of other apostles, (<4605>1 Corinthians 9:5,6), so from the examples of those that succeeded him in Corinth, who were maintained by that church; though he did not think fit,

when among them, to claim his right, and make use of his power, lest any check should be put to the progress of the Gospel, (46912 1 Corinthians 9:12). And he goes on to make this point clear and manifest from the case of, the priests and Levites under the former dispensation, who ministering in holy things, had a provision made for them, (46913 1 Corinthians 9:13). And lastly, from the constitution and appointment of Christ himself, who has ordained it as a law of his, that the preachers of the Gospel should live of it, (46914 1 Corinthians 9:14), though the apostle himself did not make use of this his privilege; nor would he ever make use of it, especially at Corinth, for which he gives his reasons; and his principal one was, that his glorying might not be made void, (46915 1 Corinthians 9:15) which did not lie in preaching the Gospel, for that he was obliged to do, (46916 1 Corinthians 9:16), for if he had engaged in it of his own accord, he would have had his reward; but since it was through necessity, he could not claim any, (46917 1 Corinthians 9:17), or if any, it could be no other than to preach the Gospel "gratis", and without charge, which was the thing he gloried in, (46918 1 Corinthians 9:18), and thus, though he lived independent of men, both with respect to his office and his maintenance, yet in order to gain souls to Christ, and be the instrument of their salvation, he became a servant to all, (46919 1 Corinthians 9:19), who are distributed into three sorts, the Jews that were under the law, (46920 1 Corinthians 9:20), the Gentiles that were without the law, (46921 1 Corinthians 9:21), and weak Christians, (46922 1 Corinthians 9:22), all which he did, not with any lucrative view to himself, but for the sake of the Gospel, that he might partake of that, and of the glory he was called unto by it, (46923 1 Corinthians 9:23) which, and not temporal things, he was looking unto, and pressing after; and which he illustrates by a metaphor taken from the Grecian games, well known to the Corinthians, particularly that of running races, in which all ran, but one only had the prize: wherefore he exhorts the Corinthians to run in like manner, that they may obtain the prize which he mentions, and describes as an incorruptible crown, in opposition to a corruptible one, which others strove for, (46924 1 Corinthians 9:24,25), and to this he animates by his own example and conduct, which he expresses in terms borrowed from racers and wrestlers, expressive of his humility, sobriety, and temperance; which things he exercised, that whilst he was a preacher to others, he might not be worthy of reproof and disapprobation himself, (46926 1 Corinthians 9:26,27).

Ver. 1. *Amos I not an apostle? am I not free*? etc.] The Syriac, Ethiopic, and Vulgate Latin versions, put the last clause first; so the Alexandrian

copy, and some other copies; and many interpreters are of opinion that it is the best order of the words; the apostle proceeding by a gradation from the less to the greater, having respect either to his freedom in the use of things indifferent, as eating of meats, etc. for though he did not think fit to use his liberty, to the wounding of weak consciences, it did not follow therefore that he was not free, as some might suggest from what he had said in the latter part of the foregoing chapter: or he may have respect to his freedom from the ceremonial law in general; for though, for the sake of gaining souls to Christ, he became all things to all men; to the Jews he became a Jew, that he might gain them; yet in such a manner as to preserve his liberty in Christ, without entangling himself with the yoke of bondage. Some have thought he intends, by his liberty, his right to insist upon a maintenance, and that he was no more obliged to work with his hands than other persons, of which he treats at large hereafter; but to me it rather seems that the words stand in their right order; and that, whereas there were some persons that either denied him to be an apostle, or at least insinuated that he was not one, nor was he to be treated as such, he goes upon the proof of it; and the first thing he mentions is his freedom, that is, from men; no man had any authority over him; he was not taught, nor sent forth, nor ordained by men as a minister, but immediately by Jesus Christ, as apostles were; they were set in the first place in the church, and had power to instruct, send forth, and ordain others; but none had power over them; and this being the apostle's case, proved him to be one; he was an apostle, because he was free:

have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? He had a spiritual sight of him by faith, but that did not show him to be an apostle; this is what he had in common with other believers: whether he saw him in the flesh, before his crucifixion and death, is not certain; it is very probable he might; yet this was no more than what Herod and Pontius Pilate did; but he saw him after his resurrection from the dead, to which he refers, (<46 15 8>1 Corinthians 15:8) and designs here, as a proof of his apostleship, this being what the apostles were chosen to be eyewitnesses of, (<44 10 41>Acts 10:41) and publish to the world: now our apostle saw him several times; first at the time of his conversion, next when in a trance at Jerusalem, and again in the castle where the chief captain put him for security, and very probably also when he was caught up into the third heaven:

are not you my work in the Lord? as they were regenerated, converted persons, and were become new creatures; not efficiently, but

instrumentally; they were God's workmanship, as he was the efficient cause of their conversion and faith; his only, as an instrument by whom they believed; and therefore he adds, "in the Lord"; ascribing the whole to his power and grace: however, as he had been the happy instrument of first preaching the Gospel to them, and of begetting them again through it; of founding and raising such a large flourishing church as they were; it was no inconsiderable proof of his apostleship.

Ver. 2. *If I be not an apostle unto others*, etc.] This is said by way of supposition, not concession; for he was an apostle to many others; he was an apostle of the Gentiles in general; as the apostleship of the circumcision belonged to Peter, that of the uncircumcision fell to his share: but however, as if he should say, be that as it will,

yet doubtless I am to you; all the signs of apostleship were wrought among them; not only the grace of God was implanted in them under his ministry, but the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were received by them through it; and many signs, wonders, and mighty deeds, were done in the midst of them by him: (see 2 Corinthians 12:12) which were sufficient to put the matter quite out of doubt with them:

for the seal of mine apostleship, are ye in the Lord; alluding to the sealing of deeds and writings, which render them authentic; or to the sealing of letters, confirming the truth of what is therein expressed; and the sense is, that their being converted persons, and so openly in the Lord, in union with him; or being made new creatures by the power of his grace, through his preaching, was an authentic proof of his apostleship, and served him instead of a letter testimonial and recommendatory; (see 2 Corinthians 3:1-3). Some copies read, "the seal of my epistle", and so the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 3. *Mine answer to them that do examine me is this*.] These words are referred by some to the following, as if the apostle's answer lay in putting the questions he does in the next verses; but they rather seem to belong to the preceding, and the meaning to be this, that when any persons called in question his apostleship, and examined him upon that head, what he thought fit to say in answer to them, and in defence of himself, was by referring them to the famous church at Corinth, who were as particular persons, and as a church, his work in the Lord, and everyone of them as so many seals of his apostleship; he being the first preacher of the Gospel to

them, the founder of them as a church, and the instrument of their conversion.

Ver. 4. *Have we not power to eat and to drink*?] Having proved his apostleship, he proceeds to establish his right to a maintenance as a Gospel minister; which he expresses by various phrases, and confirms by divers arguments: by a “power to eat and drink”, he does not mean the common power and right of mankind to perform such actions, which everyone has, provided he acts temperately, and to the glory of God; nor a liberty of eating and drinking things indifferent, or which were prohibited under the ceremonial law; but a comfortable livelihood at the public charge, or at the expense of the persons to whom he ministered; and he seems to have in view the words of Christ, (<2007>Luke 10:7,8).

Ver. 5. *Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife*, etc.] The phrase “a sister, a wife”, is an Hebraism, and answers to hlkytja, “my sister, spouse”, (<2009>Song of Solomon 4:9,10,12 5:1). The Jews called their wives, sisters, not on account of religion, which also is not the meaning here; but because of the common relation that men and women, all mankind, stand in to one another, antecedent to any nearer relation, as that of man and wife. The sense the Papists put on these words, to secure them from being a proof of the lawfulness of the marriage of the ministers of the Gospel, can by no means be the true one; which is, that they are to be understood of a rich woman, or women, the apostles had a power to carry about with them, to minister of their substance to them, and provide for them; for such a sense is directly contrary to the subject and argument the apostle is upon; which is to show the right that he and others had, of casting themselves entirely upon the churches for a maintenance; whereas this is contriving a way for relieving the churches of such a charge; besides, the act of “leading”, or carrying “about”, is expressive of such a power over them, as cannot be thought to agree with persons of such substance; and whose voluntary act this must be, to go along with them and supply them; add to this, that for the apostles to lead about with them wherever they went women, whether rich or poor, that were not their wives, would be of no good report, and must tend to hurt their character and reputation: moreover, though these words clearly imply the lawfulness of a minister’s marriage, and suppose it, yet they do not express the act itself, or the lawfulness of entering into such a state, but rather what follows after it; and the sense is this, that the apostle and others, supposing them to have wives, and it may be added also, and children, they had a right to take these

with them wherever they went, and insist upon the maintenance of them, as well as of their own, at the public expense:

as well as other apostles; who it seems did so, that had wives and families, as Philip the Evangelist had four daughters, (Acts 21:8,9).

And as the brethren of the Lord: who it seems were married persons, and took such a method; by whom are meant James, Joses, Judas, and Simon; who were the near kinsmen of Christ, it being usual with the Jews to call such brethren:

and Cephas; that is, Peter, who it is certain had a wife; (see Matthew 8:14) and therefore it is with a very ill grace that the pope, who pretends to be Peter's successor, should forbid the marriage of ecclesiastical persons.

Ver. 6. *Or I only and Barnabas*, etc.] Who were for a great while companions and fellow travellers; are we alone? are we exempted from those rights and privileges, common to others?

have not we power to forbear working? that is, with their hands, at their trades and occupations, to get their living by: Paul worked at his trade, and so it seems Barnabas did likewise: Paul wrought with his hands at Corinth, in company with Aquila and Priscilla, they being tentmakers as he, (Acts 18:3) and so he did in other places; he appeals for the truth of this to the elders of the church at Ephesus, (Acts 20:34) and to the church of the Thessalonians, (1 Thessalonians 2:9 2 Thessalonians 3:8) not but that he had a right and power to leave off business, to forbear working, and require a maintenance from those to whom he ministered; but for some reasons he chose not to make use of this his power and liberty, because he would not be chargeable to them; and lest that upon his first preaching the Gospel to them, they should think he had worldly selfish ends in view, and not the good of souls, and glory of Christ; however, he hereby lets them know, that though Barnabas and he continued to get their bread by their own hand labour, they had a right to quit their trades, and throw themselves upon them for a maintenance. The apostle seems, in this, to imitate the ancient, wise, and holy men of his nation, who taught the law freely, and took nothing for it; not that they thought it was unlawful, or that they had no right to a maintenance on account of it, but for the honour of religion, and that piety they professed; and lest the law should be thought to be made a trade of, they chose not to insist upon it [f148].

Ver. 7. *Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges*? etc.] Some people have done so, as did the Habessines [f149], and the ancient Romans [f150]; though before the apostle wrote this, the senate had made an act, that the soldiers should have a stipend from the public; and this being now so common, and universally obtaining everywhere, the apostle puts the question he does; and his meaning is, that since ministers of the Gospel are the good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and are engaged in a warfare state, in fighting the good fight of faith, against his enemies, and those of his church, it is but reasonable that their charges should be bore, and they maintained at the public expense:

who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? The church of Christ is a vineyard, it is often so called in Scripture; ministers are planters, vinedressers, and labourers in it; and as the mystical Solomon, the owner of the vineyard, ought to have his thousand, the cultivators of it, the keepers of the fruit, should have their two hundred, (Song of Solomon 8:12)

Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? The churches of Christ are compared to flocks of sheep; the ministers of the word are pastors, or shepherds, who have the care and oversight of them, and feed them with knowledge and understanding; and it is but right and just that they enjoy the fruit of their labours, and have a proper and suitable maintenance, as it is that he who feeds a flock should eat of the milk which that produces.

Ver. 8. *Say I these things as a man*? etc.] After the manner of men, reasoning from things common among men, and obvious to everyone's observation:

or saith not the law the same also? As the subject the apostle is upon was capable of being illustrated and confirmed by instances common unto, and easy of observation among men; so it might be supported by divine authority; it was not only a clear point from the reason of things, but was certain by the law of God.

Ver. 9. *For it is written in the law of Moses*, etc.] (Deuteronomy 25:4)

Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. The manner of threshing, or beating out the corn among the Jews, was not the same with ours; it was not done by the flail, at least not always, but by the means of oxen; and by these not only treading upon it to and fro, but drawing a wooden instrument after them, the bottom of which was stuck

with iron teeth, and the top of it filled with stones, to press it down close by the weight thereof; the sheaves put in proper form, the oxen were led to and fro upon them, drawing this threshing instrument after them, by which means the grain was separated from the husk and ear [f151]; (see <23A415>Isaiah 41:15) The learned Beckius [f152] has given us a figure of this instrument, and the manner of using it: now according to this law, whilst the ox was thus employed, its mouth was not to be muzzled, but it might freely eat of the corn it trod upon, excepting, the Jews say [f153], what was dedicated to sacred uses. They give many rules relating to this law, and particularly observe, that it is to be extended to all sorts of creatures, as well as the ox, and to all sorts of business [f154]; and that what is said of the ox, is much more to be observed with respect to men [f155]; and which agrees with the apostle's reasoning here:

doth God take care for oxen? yes, he does, and for creatures of less importance than they, even the fowls of the air, and the most worthless of them, sparrows, two of which are sold for a farthing; but not for them only, nor principally, but chiefly for men.

Ver. 10. *Or saith he it altogether for our sakes*, etc.] That is, God says this, or delivers out this law, forbidding the muzzling the ox, while it treads out the corn; not merely for the sake of the ox, but chiefly for the sake of men; and so Jarchi upon the place says, that the ox is mentioned, µda ta ayxwhl, "to express man"; and so another of the Jewish writers [f156] interprets the law in (<5D2206>Deuteronomy 22:6). "Thou shalt not take the dam with the young";

> "the intention of the command is, not to have mercy on birds, "but for the sake of men", he (God) says this, whom he would accustom to meekness and compassion:"

and particularly this is here said, for the sake of ministers of the Gospel, who for their spiritual strength, and labours in their work, may be compared to oxen; (see <26A110>Ezekiel 1:10). This law is elsewhere produced by the apostle, and urged in favour of the maintenance of ministers, as here, (<540517>1 Timothy 5:17,18) and therefore

for our sakes no doubt it is written; to teach men, that as any workmen are not to be deprived of proper sustenance, so neither they that labour in the word and doctrine:

that he that ploweth should plow in hope; of enjoying the fruit of his labours:

and that he that thresheth in hope, should be partaker of his hope; of having a supply out of that he is threshing.

Ver. 11. *If we have sown unto you spiritual things*, etc.] The preachers of the Gospel are compared to sowers of seed; the seed they sow is the word of God, which is like to seed, for its smallness and despicableness in the eyes of carnal men; and yet as the seed is the choicest which is laid by for sowing, the Gospel is most choice and excellent to true believers; like seed, it has a generative virtue through divine influence; and whereas unless sown into the earth, it brings forth no fruit, so neither does the word, unless it has a place in the heart, where, as seed in the ground, its operation is secret, its increase gradual, and its fruitfulness different. The ground they sow upon is, very various; some of their hearers are like the wayside, careless, ignorant, and on whom no impression is made; others are like the stony ground, who though for a while they express some affection and liking, yet not having the root of grace in them, whenever persecution arises, forsake the hearing of it; others are like the thorny ground, which are at first very promising, and greatly reformed, but inwardly full of the cares and lusts of the world, which choke the word, and make it unfruitful; and others are like the good ground, who are made good by the grace of God, understand the word, receive it, hold it fast, and in whom it is fruitful: sowing requires skill and art, and so preaching the Gospel does, and that more than human; and is constantly in its returning season to be attended to, notwithstanding the winds and clouds, and so the ministry of the word, notwithstanding all reproaches, persecutions, and afflictions; and as the same sort of seed, without mixture, and in plenty, is to be cast into the earth, so the same pure and unmixed Gospel of Christ is to be preached, and that without keeping back any thing that is profitable: and once more, as the sower, when he has cast his seed into the earth, waits long and with patience for its springing up and increase, so do the faithful dispensers of the Gospel: and what they sow or minister is of a spiritual nature; it comes from the Spirit of God, he is the dictator of it; he by his gifts qualifies men to preach it, and by his power makes it effectual to the souls of men; and through it conveys himself to them, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification: the matter of the Gospel is spiritual; it contains spiritual doctrines, such as justification, pardon of sin, adoption, regeneration, etc.

and are what concern the souls and spirits of men, and their spiritual and eternal welfare:

is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? meaning temporal ones, what concern the flesh, the body, the outward man, and the support thereof. The argument is from the greater to the less, and much the same with that in (<4527>Romans 15:27). The difference between carnal and spiritual things is very great; the one has a vastly superior excellency to the other; and therefore if for carnal things men receive spiritual ones, they can be no losers thereby, but must be gainers; nor should it be thought any hardship or burden upon them, or any great and wonderful thing done by them, to support and maintain such who are so useful to their souls, and the spiritual welfare of them.

Ver. 12. *If others are partakers of this power over you*, etc.] Meaning not any tyrannical power and jurisdiction over them, with respect either to faith or practice; but the right of a maintenance, which either the false apostles, or the true ordinary ministers of the word there, justly claimed, and did enjoy:

are not we rather? he and Barnabas, especially himself, who was more than an ordinary minister, an apostle, and the first preacher of the Gospel to them:

nevertheless, we have not used this power; though others had, and they had a right to it, but did not choose to insist upon it; and, rather than do so, worked with their own hands; their not making use of this power was not because they stood in no need of it, and enjoyed an affluence of temporal things, for the reverse of this was their case:

but suffer all things: famine, thirst, nakedness, hard labour, and many other hardships:

lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ; some might suggest, that they preached the Gospel only for gain, and not for the good of souls, and glory of Christ; and other mean spirited persons might be backward of embracing and professing the Gospel, lest it should become chargeable to them; wherefore that the Gospel might not be retarded in its course by the calumny of some, and the sordidness of others, the apostle thought fit to drop his claim to a maintenance from them; though at the same time he would have them know it was a just due, and therefore goes on to defend it by other arguments.

Ver. 13. *Do ye not know, that they which minister about holy things*, etc.] Not the priests in the temples of the Heathen deities, as the Ethiopic version suggests; but the priests in the temple at Jerusalem, who were employed in slaying the sacrifices, taking off their skins, cutting them into pieces, laying them in order with the wood upon the altar, and burning them, with other services they there performed, which were well known to the Corinthians, many of this church being Jews:

live of the things of the temple; the tithes and firstfruits, and other oblations, and presents in money or goods, thither brought; nor had they any other way of living and supporting their families; for the priests and Levites had no inheritance among the children of Israel, and therefore provision was made for them in this way:

and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar; some read it, "who sit at the altar"; but none might sit in the temple but a king of the house of David [f157]; the priests and Levites always stood in their ministry, some doing one thing, and some another; some slew the sacrifice, others sprinkled the blood; some took away the ashes, others laid the wood, others brought up the parts of the sacrifice when slain, skinned, and cut asunder, and laid them on the altar [f158], and these partook with the altar; some parts the altar devoured, being consumed by fire upon it; but then there were other pieces which by law were reserved for the priests, and upon which they and their families lived: hence the distinction of jbzm tlyka, the food of the altar, and µda tlyka, "the food of man" [f159]; and therefore as it was but just and equitable that persons so employed should be maintained out of the revenues of the temple and altar, it is but right that Gospel ministers should be provided for with a suitable maintenance.

Ver. 14. *Even so hath the Lord ordained*, etc.] That is, the Lord Jesus Christ, in (<401010>Matthew 10:10 <421007>Luke 10:7,8) it is an order and appointment of his that his ministering servants, who labour in preaching his Gospel, should be sufficiently taken care of, as to a comfortable livelihood; he has not indeed fixed it in the same way as the priests and Levites had theirs under the law; but as the one was just and right, that they should be maintained out of the things belonging to the temple and altar, and live on them, so it is his will and pleasure,

that they which preach the Gospel; that continue to do so, that labour, and not loiter in the word and doctrine, who do the work of the ministry fully and faithfully, and not bear the name only of Gospel preachers: should live of the Gospel; not the Gospel itself, which is spiritual, and not corporeal food; but the sense is, that in consideration and because of their preaching the Gospel, they should be supplied with the proper necessaries of life: the learned Mr. Mede has proved, by various instances, that the word ευαγγελιον, here rendered "Gospel", and which signifies good news and glad tidings, is in other writers used for a reward, given to such that bring good tidings; and has rightly observed, that the Hebrew word hrçb, which signifies the same, is used in a like sense in (2 Samuel 4:10) and accordingly the sense here will be, that it is the ordination of Christ, that such who faithfully bring the news and glad tidings of salvation to sinners, should, as a reward for such good news, be provided for with a comfortable maintenance, on which they should live.

Ver. 15. *But I have used none of these things*, etc.] Either none of these arguments or reasons, for a minister's maintenance, taken from the reason of things, the law of Moses, the examples of the priests and Levites, and the order and appointment of Christ, in favour of himself, and that he might be provided for by them accordingly; or none of the things he had a right to do as other apostles, as to eat and drink at the public expense, to lead about with him a sister, a wife, had he any, and to forbear working with his own hands:

neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me; it was not on his own account that he gave these strong reasons, urged these instances, and so undeniably proved this point, that ministers should be maintained by the people; and this he says to prevent what some might be ready enough to suggest, that though the apostle had as yet took nothing of the church at Corinth, it was plain, that for the time to come, he meant to do it; and therefore had written these things with such a view, to make way for his after supply from them. This he denies, and gives his reason for it,

for it were better for me to die; through want, with famine, could he be supplied no other way, than to take the least farthing of them:

or than that any man should make my glorying void; meaning not so much his inward pleasure, joy, and satisfaction in preaching the Gospel freely, it

being more blessed to give than to receive; but his boasting or glorying, not before God, but against the false apostles; that he had never taken anything of the church at Corinth for preaching, nor never would, when they had insinuated he preached for gain, and by artful methods had got their money, and drained their purses.

Ver. 16. *For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of*, etc.] The sense is not, that if he preached the Gospel in order for a livelihood, and to serve his private advantage, he should have no room for glorying; since, if this was the case, he should be obliged to do it, or perish for want: but his meaning is, that though he preached the Gospel ever so well, or ever so freely, and might glory before men, and against the false teachers, who insulted him in his character and office; yet not before God, from whom he received all his gifts, abilities, and qualifications, to preach the Gospel; all his light and knowledge in it; all his enlargements in meditation, and liberty in expression; all his faithfulness and integrity, courage and intrepidity, in the discharge and performance of his work, were by divine grace and assistance; and his success in it owing to the power and Spirit of God, so that he had nothing to glory of on any of these accounts: hence these words are a correction, or rather an explanation of the preceding:

for necessity is laid upon me; not of getting a livelihood by preaching, for he could have got, and did get this another way, even by labouring with his hands; nor of force and compulsion, for no one more readily engaged in it, or more cheerfully performed it; but of obligation from the divine call to this work, and from his own conscience, in which he knew it to be an heavenly one, and from the nature of the trust committed to him, and because of the good of immortal souls, and the honour of Christ; all which lay with weight upon him, and obliged him in duty, love, and gratitude, to attend to it:

yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel; which is to be understood, not of any temporal affliction, as reproach, persecution, famine, nakedness, sword, etc. for such sort of woes frequently attend those that do preach the Gospel; but of the wounding of his conscience, and exposing himself, through the neglect of his calling, and contempt of the divine will, to the wrath and curse of God for ever; not that the apostle feared this would be his case, or that it possibly could be; but he thus speaks, to show what he or any other minister of the Gospel would deserve, at the hand of God, who having abilities to preach, should not make use of them; or should

preach, but not the Gospel; or only a part of it, and not the whole; or should entirely desist from it, through self-interest, or the fear of man, or through being ashamed of Christ and his Gospel, or as not able to bear the reproach and persecution attending it.

Ver. 17. *For if I do this thing willingly*, etc.] That is, not freely and without receiving anything for preaching, without seeking any temporal profits and advantages; nor in pure love to Christ, and the good of souls, without any fear of punishment, or hope of reward; but the apostle supposes a case which was not, and his sense is, that supposing no necessity had been laid upon him, or any injunction or command given him to preach the Gospel, but he had entered on it without any obligation upon him, then, says he,

I have a reward; or should have one, or might expect one; so the Jews [f160] say, that a reward is given to him, who does anything unbidden:

but if against my will, or unwillingly,

a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me; which was his case; the Gospel was committed to his trust, as anything is to the trust and charge of a steward by his lord, who is obliged to take care of it, and is accountable for it, and of whom faithfulness is required; he did not undertake this economy, or dispensation of the Gospel of himself, of his own mind and will, but it was enjoined him by one that had the command over him, and could and did oblige him to take the charge of it; though he made him willing, as well as able to do it: and therefore since this was the case, that it was not at his own option whether he would preach the Gospel or not, but he was obliged to it by one, that had a superior power and influence over him; hence, though he performed it ever so well, and with never so much faithfulness and integrity, he asks in the following verse,

Ver. 18. *What is my reward then*? etc.] None at all, I have none to expect, hope for, or claim, in a way of debt; I am a servant intrusted by my Lord with the Gospel, and an unprofitable one I am; I do, at most and best, but what is my duty, and for that I can claim no reward: all the reward that remains is only this,

verily, that when I preach the Gospel, which I am obliged to do,

I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge; to them that hear it, as he did to the Corinthians, which was his glorying in (<460915>1 Corinthians 9:15)

and is the same with his reward here; for this means not any reward from God, but his glorying among men, and against the false teachers; that when he preached the word at Corinth, he was not chargeable to any, nor would he ever be: his reason for it is,

that I abuse not my power in the Gospel; his right of having a maintenance, whilst he was preaching the Gospel; to have made use of which would have been an abuse of it, since it would have given occasion to the false apostles to reproach and calumniate, and might have been an hinderance to the Gospel of Christ, and a stumbling to some weak minds.

Ver. 19. *For though I be free from all men*, etc.] As an apostle, being in the highest office in the church, he had none superior to him, that could exercise any power and authority over him, and was also independent of men for his maintenance, which he got by his own hand labour: though it may be observed, that the word “men” is not in the original text, and the word “all” may as well have respect to things as men; and the sense be, that he was free, as from the curse of the moral law, so from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and all the rituals of it, and might, if he would, make use of his Christian liberty; the following verses seem to incline to this sense, as the preceding ones do to the former:

yet have I made myself servant unto all; in faithfully and indefatigably preaching the Gospel to them; undergoing all manner of affliction and persecution for the sake of that and them; behaving towards them with all meekness and humility; condescending to their weakness, and accommodating himself to their capacities and customs:

that I might gain the more; than other apostles have done, or than it could be reasonably thought he should, had he behaved in a more lordly and domineering manner: his end was not to amass wealth, to gain riches and treasures of good things to himself, but many souls to Christ, who otherwise must have been lost; but being brought to the knowledge of Christ, and salvation by him through his ministry, it was profit to them, and gain to Christ: the metaphor is taken from merchants, who spare no pains, but take every method to acquire gain and profit; the ministers of the word are spiritual merchants, their traffic lies in the souls of men, whom they are studiously and anxiously careful to bring to Christ.

Ver. 20. *And unto the Jews I became as a Jew*, etc.] That is, in religion; or with respect to some religious observances peculiar to the Jews, for he

himself was really a Jew by nature; who became as one unto them in this sense, when he for their sakes circumcised Timothy at Derbe, or Lystra, purified himself at Jerusalem, shaved his head at Cenchrea, observed their sabbath, and abstained from some sorts of food forbidden in the law; and his end in so doing was, not to confirm them in such usages, but that he might hereby have the greater influence over them, and by little and little bring them off of these things, or, as he says,

that I might gain the Jews; bring them over to Christ, and off of a dependence on their own righteousness, for justification before God:

to them that are under the law, as under the law; the Vulgate Latin version adds, “when I was not under the law”, and so the Alexandrian copy and some others; by whom seem to be meant the same persons as before; though some have thought that the Samaritans are intended, and others the Sadducees: but if any as distinct from the former are designed, they should rather seem to be the converted Jews; who though they believed in Christ, looked upon themselves to be still under the law, and therefore observed it; with whom the apostle on certain occasions complied, as if he was under it too, that he might have the greater share in their affections and credit; hoping in time that by such means he might be able to prevail upon them to relinquish these things, and wholly attend to the Gospel and ordinances of Christ, or, as he says,

that I might gain them that are under the law; meaning the Jews, who were observers of the law of Moses.

Ver. 21. *To them that are without law, as without law*, etc.] Meaning the Gentiles, who, though they were not without the law of nature, nor without many good civil laws, by which the more cultivated and civilized nations among them were governed, yet they were without the written law of Moses; a description of the Gentiles, usual with the Jews; (see ⁴Romans 2:12,14). And to these the apostle accommodated himself, as if he was without the law; by conversing with them without any difference; by eating any sort of food with them; by not circumcising Titus, when the Jews would have had it done; and by resisting Peter, when he, by his example, would have influenced the Gentiles to have lived as did the Jews:

being not without law to God; or “the law of God”, the moral law; for though he was delivered from the curse and condemnation of it, and as a covenant of works, and the ministry of it by Moses, yet not from the matter

of it, and obedience to it, as a rule of walk and conversation: and therefore his compliance with the Gentiles was not in anything that was contrary to the moral law; nor did he act as one that had nothing to do with that law, “but” as one that was

under the law to Christ, or “under the law of Christ”; that is, the law of love, which obliged him to take every lawful and proper method for the good of such souls:

that I might gain them that were without law; to believe in Christ for life and salvation, and to serve the law of God as in the hands of Christ, the only Lawgiver and King in his church; in testimony of their gratitude to him, for the blessings of grace received by him, without having any dependence on their obedience to it, for acceptance with God.

Ver. 22. *To the weak became I as weak*, etc.] That is, to weak Christians, who were weak in faith, and had not such clear knowledge of Gospel liberty, and therefore scrupled the eating of some sorts of meat, and particularly meats offered to idols; and the apostle so far consulted the peace and edification of these weak brethren, and so far complied with them, and became as one of them, that, rather than offend them, he determined to eat no meat while the world stood:

that I might gain the weak; promote their edification and welfare, who otherwise might be stumbled, be in danger of falling from, and laid under a temptation to desert the faith of the Gospel:

I am made all things to all men; which is to be understood, as in all the other instances of his being so, not in cases and things criminal and sinful, contrary to the moral law, and the dictates of his own conscience, subversive of the Gospel of Christ, and of the order and discipline of it, but in cases and things of an indifferent nature:

that I might by all means save some; that is, that he might be the means of saving some of Jews and Gentiles, and of all sorts of men; by preaching the Gospel of salvation to them, and by directing them to Christ, the only Saviour of lost sinners; thus he explains what he means by so often saying that he might gain them.

Ver. 23. *And this I do for the Gospel’s sake*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy and some others read, “all things I do”, etc. and so the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; that is, he became all things to all men, and so and so to

different persons; not for his own sake, for his own temporal advantage, or to curry favour with men; not for the sake of gaining wealth, or honour and applause to himself, but for the spread of the Gospel, and its greater usefulness among men: to which he adds,

that I might be partaker thereof with you; meaning either the fruit of the Gospel, the conversion and salvation of sinners, which would be matter of joy both to him and them; or the blessings of grace and eternal life, which the Gospel reveals and promises, which he desired to enjoy in common with others, not only with the Corinthians, for the word "you" is not in the original text, but with Jews and Gentiles; with men of all sorts, who may be gained over to Christ, and saved by him, through the ministry of the word.

Ver. 24. *Know ye not that they which run in a race*, etc.] The allusion in this and the following verses is to the Grecian games, which consisted, among other things, of running of races, and of wrestling, combating, and fighting; and which are in this and the context particularly mentioned: and the apostle the rather makes use of these terms, and refers to these things, because they were well known to the Corinthians, and refers to them as well known; for the Isthmian games were performed in their neighbourhood, and doubtless had been seen by many of them, for the Corinthians were presidents of them. The race, or stadium in which they ran, was the space or interval between the place they set out from, and that which they ran unto, and consisted of 125 paces, or 625 feet; it was the space of a furlong, and about the eighth part of a mile: in this they

run all; as many as would, that came around from all parts, striving who should be foremost and get the crown;

but one receives the prize; which was held by the president of the game, or judge of the race, and received by the winner, who was judged to be so by him; and was no other in the Isthmian games, which are most likely to be referred to here, than a crown made of pine tree branches, or leaves, and sometimes of dried parsley [f161]:

so run that ye may obtain. The apostle accommodates or applies the above account to the Christian's course of life, and exhorts to run in it in like manner as racers do in a race. The "stadium", or "race" plot in the which the believer runs, is this world, or this present life; he is only a runner now and here, for no sooner is the time of his departure come, but his course or race is finished; and, as his forerunner Christ, sits down in full rest from all

his labours as at a table, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and on a throne with Christ: the course he runs includes the exercise of every grace, particularly faith, which is expressed not only by going to Christ, walking in him, but by fleeing and running to him; and the discharge of every duty, signified by a running in the way of God's commandments; and, in a word, the whole of a Christian profession, and the holding of it fast, and holding on in it unto the end. The act of "running" is a motion forward, a following on to know the Lord, a going from strength to strength, from one degree of grace to another, a pressing forward toward the mark for the prize; and requires spiritual strength from Christ, and a daily renewal of it; is to be performed with readiness, swiftness, and cheerfulness, in opposition to a slowness of heart to believe, and a slothfulness and sluggishness in the business and service of Christ. The manner of running, "so", that is, as the Grecians ran in their races; they ran "all", so should all believers run, ministers and churches, churches and the several members thereof, old and young professors; so the church determines for herself, her members, and the daughters of Jerusalem, "we will run after thee", (Song of Solomon 1:4) and they have this encouragement which the others had not, for only one received the prize with the Grecians, but here all, that run well, obtain: again, they ran and strove to be foremost, who should get to the goal first and receive the prize, so should believers be emulous to outdo each other, to go before one another, in faith and holiness; striving in the strength of Christ, who should do most service for him, and bring most glory to him: moreover, as they ran in the way that was marked out for them, not turning to the right hand or the left, so should believers run in the way of salvation, which is Christ; in the way of holiness, faith, and truth; and in the path of duty and ordinances, which are all clearly pointed out unto them: once more, as they while running kept their eye upon the mark, so should believers, while running the race set before them, be continually looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of faith: to say no more, as they kept running till they came to the end of their race, so should the saints; there is no time for stopping or looking back; remember Lot's wife. The end of running is to obtain the prize, the incorruptible crown of eternal life; not that this is to be procured in a way of merit by running; for the best services of the saints have no merit in them, they are previously due to God, nor can they be profitable to him; and besides, are done by the assistance of his own grace and strength; nor is there any proportion between the best works of men, and this crown of glory, life, and righteousness; yea, salvation, or eternal life, is expressly denied to be of him that willeth, or of him that runneth,

and is always represented as this crown is, to be a free gift: the meaning of the expression is, that believers are to run on in their Christian race, that they may, and when they are come to the end of it they shall, as he that came foremost in the race did, stretch forth their hand, lay hold on, and receive the crown which the righteous Judge will give them; and is the true import of the word made use of here, and the sense the same with (<5462>1 Timothy 6:12). “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life”, and denotes that the persevering saint shall enjoy the crown.

Ver. 25. *And every man that striveth for the mastery*, etc.] Either in running a race, or in wrestling; for the word here used agrees with both, and both are in the context referred to, nor has the apostle as yet done with his allusion to running in a race;

is temperate in all things; contains himself from venery, abstains from certain sorts of food, which tend to hinder the agility, or weaken the strength of the body; and indulges not himself in sloth and idleness, but exercises himself in various manners, that he may be prepared for running or wrestling: the apostle’s view in this, seems to be to strengthen some exhortations he had already given, to abstain from fornication, and the immoderate use of venery; to forbear eating things offered to idols, and not give themselves up to luxury and intemperance; for should they be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, they would be very unfit for their Christian race, or for wrestling with principalities and powers, and the discharging of the business of a Christian profession:

now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; they confine themselves to a certain diet and course of living, and abstain from things otherwise desirable to nature; and this they do for the sake of a fading crown, a crown of leaves, made of the boughs and leaves of olives, laurels, pine, etc. or of parsley, green or dried, as before observed [f162]:

but we an incorruptible; even eternal life; compared to a crown, for the riches, glory, and lustre of it; and as suitable to the character and dignity of saints, who are kings as well as priests unto God: it is called “incorruptible”, because it is so in its own nature; nor can it be corrupted by other things, as crowns even of gold may; nor shall any corrupt person wear it; the corruption of nature must be removed from the saints, yea, that frailty and mortality of human nature, which sometimes goes by the name of corruption, must be taken away, ere they can inherit this crown and

kingdom; nor will it ever fade away, as the corruptible crowns of the conquerors in these games did, and that in a very short time; but this will last for ever, and always continue in the same glory and lustre.

Ver. 26. *I therefore so run*, etc.] The apostle animates the Corinthians by his own example, telling them that he ran so as he exhorted them; he ran with cheerfulness and swiftness in the way marked out for him, looking to Jesus; continuing steadfast in the profession of his faith, and discharge of his duty as a Christian, and in preaching the Gospel as a minister; and nothing had he more at heart, than to finish his course with joy:

not as uncertainly; as one that knew not, or was in doubt about the way in which he should run, and so ran in and out, sometimes in the way, sometimes out of it; since it was clearly pointed out to him in the word of God: the allusion is to the white line which was drawn from the place the runners set out at to the goal; so that they did not run uncertainly, nor could they be at a loss to steer their course: nor did the apostle run, for what, as the Syriac version renders it, [wdy am, "is unknown": he knew what he ran for, for the incorruptible crown of glory, he knew the nature of it; nor was he uncertain as to the event and issue of his running; he knew that this crown was laid up safe and secure, that it would be given him, and he should wear it; he had no doubt at all about it; and with this certain knowledge both of the way and prize, and full assurance of faith and hope, he ran:

so fight I, not as one that beateth the air. The allusion is here to fighting with the fist, when, before the combat was entered on, the person used to swagger about, and beat about with his fists, striking the air with them, having no adversary before him; only showing what he could do if he had one, or when he should encounter: so did not the apostle, he did not fight with his own shadow, or a man of straw, or beat the empty air; but gave home blows to real adversaries, Satan, the world, and the flesh; the latter of which is particularly mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 27. *But I keep under my body*, etc.] The allusion is still to fighters, who, by cuffing and boxing, give their antagonists black and blue eyes, which is the proper signification of the word here used: so it is said [f163] of Menedemus, that in questions or scholastic exercises, he was so vehement and pugnacious, that he never departed without υπωπια φερων, "carrying away black and blue eyes". This is not to be understood by the apostle of

his natural body, and of his keeping it under by immoderate watchings, fastings, and labours, or by whipping and scourging, and lying upon the bare ground, and other such practices; but of the body of sin, the corruption of nature, and of that being laid under some restraints; of the mortifying the deeds of the body through the Spirit, of crucifying the affections with the lusts, of putting off the old man with his deeds, as concerning the former conversation, and of making no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof: it seems to be the same with what the Jews call [f164], wrxy çbwk, "a subduing of a man's evil concupiscence": who is a strong man? they say [f165], wrxy ta çbwkh, "he that subdues his corruption", according to (<20162>Proverbs 16:32) and again [f166]

> "the sons of Ulam were mighty and powerful men, ˆwhyrxy ˆyçbk, "subduing their corruptions", as man that draws a bow with wisdom."

And bring it into subjection; so as not to serve and obey it in the lusts thereof; but to have the ascendant of it, and government over it, that it does not, and cannot reign as it formerly did: the allusion is still to the combatant, who gets and keeps his antagonist under him, and has the command of him, and throws him on the ground, or drags him about at pleasure:

lest that by any means when I have preached to others; the Gospel of the grace of God, for their souls' profit and advantage, to gain and save them; and have called upon them so to run, that they might receive and enjoy the incorruptible crown:

I myself should be a castaway, or rejected, or disapproved of; that is, by men: the apostle's concern is, lest he should do anything that might bring a reproach on the Gospel; lest some corruption of his nature or other should break out, and thereby his ministry be justly blamed, and be brought under contempt; and so he be rejected and disapproved of by men, and become useless as a preacher: not that he feared he should become a reprobate, as the word is opposed to an elect person; or that he should be a castaway eternally, or be everlastingly damned; for he knew in whom he had believed, and was persuaded of his interest in the love of God, and that he was a chosen vessel of salvation, that could not be eternally lost: though supposing that this is his sense, and these his fears and concern, it follows not as neither that he was, so neither that he could be a lost and damned

person: the fears of the saints, their godly jealousies of themselves, and pious care that they be not lost, are not at all inconsistent with the firmness of their election, their security in Christ, and the impossibility of their final and total falling away; but on the contrary are overruled, and made use of by the Spirit of God, for their final perseverance in grace and holiness.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 10

In this chapter the apostle cautions the Corinthians against security on account of their gifts, knowledge, and profession, since men of great characters, and enjoying high privileges, have fallen into sin, and have been severely punished; and he particularly cautions against idolatry, and all appearances of it, on which account he again introduces the case of eating things offered to idols, and dissuades from it, when it tended to idolatry, and had the appearance of it; though in some cases he allows of eating them, but directs that all should be done to the glory of God, and without offence to any, as they had him for an example. And now, whereas in the latter part of the preceding chapter he had signified his jealousy of himself, lest he should be a castaway, he pursues the thought, and improves it to the use of the Corinthians, that they, on account of their high attainments, should not think themselves secure of all danger; and for this purpose sets before them the instances and examples of the Jewish fathers, of which he would not have them ignorant, who were persons that enjoyed great privileges, and were partakers of things which bore some resemblance to Gospel ordinances; as their passing under the cloud through the sea was a figure of baptism, and their eating manna, and drinking water out of the rock, which was a type of Christ, had some likeness to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, which are meat and drink indeed in a spiritual sense, (<4610 01>1 Corinthians 10:1-4) and yet all these persons that enjoyed these privileges were not acceptable to God; nor did they enter into the land of Canaan, but fell in the wilderness, (<4610 05>1 Corinthians 10:5) in which they were examples to men under the Gospel dispensation, that they may shun the evils which were the cause of their fall and overthrow, (<4610 06>1 Corinthians 10:6) particularly idolatry, of which their making and worshipping the golden calf is an instance, (<4610 07>1 Corinthians 10:7) also fornication, on account of which three and twenty thousand fell in one day, (<4610 08>1 Corinthians 10:8) likewise tempting Christ, which brought upon them destruction by the fiery serpents, (<4610 09>1 Corinthians 10:9) moreover, murmuring against God, and his servants, for which reason the destroyer was sent among them, and destroyed them, (<4610 10>1

Corinthians 10:10). All which happened, and are recorded for the use, instruction, and admonition of professors of religion in these last times, (<46101>1 Corinthians 10:11) from all which the apostle infers, by way of caution to the saints, that they should not be secure of standing, but take heed lest they fall, since so many and such great persons had before fallen, (<46102>1 Corinthians 10:12). But for their comfort, under afflictions, he observes, that as they were common to men, so the faithfulness of God was concerned to support them under them, and deliver them out of them, that they might not utterly fail of the grace of God, and perish by them, (<46103>1 Corinthians 10:13). And in order to their standing, he particularly dehorts them from idolatry, (<46104>1 Corinthians 10:14) and every appearance of it, as eating things offered to idols, in an idol's temple, which is what he has chiefly in view, as appears by the following verses: and whereas they were men of wisdom and judgment whom he addressed, he was the more encouraged to use the following arguments with them, the force of which they would understand, (<46105>1 Corinthians 10:15). And his first argument is taken from the Lord's supper, and the communion of his body and blood, which believers have with him in eating the bread, and drinking the wine; suggesting, that in like manner such who eat things offered to idols, as such, had communion with them, and so were guilty of idolatry, and therefore should be abstained from, (<46106>1 Corinthians 10:16). His next argument is taken from the union and communion which saints have one with another at the Lord's table, whereby they appear to be one body and one bread; and so such that associate themselves with idolaters in their temples, and eat with them things offered to idols, are one with them in a like sense, and chargeable with idolatry, (<46107>1 Corinthians 10:17). To which is added a third, taken from the priests of the Israelitish nation, who eating of the sacrifices, were partakers of the altar, worshipped the God of Israel, and had communion with him; and so in like manner eating of the sacrifices offered to idols, and especially in one of their temples, might be very well interpreted a partaking of their altars, a worshipping of them, and so idolatry, (<46108>1 Corinthians 10:18) not that he thought that an idol was to be considered as a deity, or that things offered to it were upon an equal foot with the Lord's supper, or Jewish sacrifices, (<46109>1 Corinthians 10:19) but as there was a communion in the one, so in the other; for as for the sacrifices of the Gentiles, they were offered to devils, and not to God; and which he mentions to deter them from having the most distant regard to such sacrifices, (<46110>1 Corinthians 10:20) it being the most inconsistent, as well as shocking thing in the world, to partake of both cups and tables,

those of the Lord, and those of devils, (461021 Corinthians 10:21) wherefore the apostle dissuades from such idolatrous practice, from the pernicious and dangerous consequences of them, stirring up the Lord to jealousy, fighting against him, and being destroyed of him, (461022 Corinthians 10:22). But inasmuch as things offered to idols were in themselves indifferent, the apostle directs to a proper use of them; and observes, that though they might be lawfully eaten, yet the expediency of time and place, and the edification of others, ought to be considered, (461023 Corinthians 10:23) for we are not to seek our own pleasure, but the welfare of others, (461024 Corinthians 10:24). If indeed such meat is sold in the butchers' meat markets in common with others, it may be bought and eat, when no questions are asked about it, what it is, (461025 Corinthians 10:25) and that for this reason, because the earth, and all that is in it, are the Lord's, and his people have a right to all through him, and therefore may make use of every creature in it, (461026 Corinthians 10:26). So if an idolater invites a believer to dine with him, and he accepts the invitation, he may very lawfully eat whatever is before him, even though it be meat offered to idols, provided he asks no questions about it, (461027 Corinthians 10:27). But should anyone present point at certain meat, and say that was offered to idols, then it was advisable not to eat of it; partly for the sake of the unbeliever that pointed at it, who would be hardened in his idolatry by it; and partly for the sake of the conscience of a weak believer present, who might be offended at it; and the reason given to enforce such a conduct is, because there is plenty of other food without it, (461028 Corinthians 10:28). And then the apostle explains whose conscience he meant; not the conscience of him that is invited, but either of the unbeliever, or the weak brother; and suggests a reason why he should not make use of his liberty in their presence, and under such circumstances, lest it should be censured and condemned, (461029 Corinthians 10:29) or he be reproached for what he had, through good will, and had reason to be thankful for, (461030 Corinthians 10:30) wherefore, upon the whole, the apostle advises in this affair, and in all others, to have the glory of God in view in the first place, (461031 Corinthians 10:31) and next to that to be careful not to offend any sort of persons whatever, (461032 Corinthians 10:32) and proposes himself as an example in these things to be followed; who sought not his own advantage, but the pleasure and profit of others, and to promote, as much as in him lay, their salvation, and not hinder it, (461033 Corinthians 10:33).

Ver. 1. *Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant*, etc.] The apostle having suggested his own fears and jealousies, lest, notwithstanding all his gifts and grace, he should be left to do anything that might be a means of laying him aside, and rendering him useless in his ministerial work; and which he hints for the use of these Corinthians, who boasted of their knowledge, and made an imprudent use of their Christian liberty, to the hurt of weak minds; he proceeds to lay before them the case of the Jewish fathers, who, notwithstanding the many favours and privileges they were blessed with, yet falling into lust, fornication, intemperance, and idolatry, their carcasses fell in the wilderness, and entered not into the land of rest; wherefore the apostle would not have them be ignorant, or unmindful, or take no notice of these things, since they were for ensamples to them, and written for their admonition, and were warnings to them to take care lest they should also fall: particularly the apostle's view is to dissuade from the eating of things offered to idols, though a thing indifferent, and from their imprudent use of their Christian liberty with respect unto it; since it was not only doing an injury to weak believers, but it likewise exposed themselves to danger, who, by using such freedom as to sit in an idol's temple, and there publicly eat, might be drawn into idolatry itself; nor should they depend upon their knowledge, and gifts, and attainments, since it is clear, from these instances, that the highest external privileges, favours, and enjoyments, cannot secure men from falling: for which purpose it was proper to call to mind,

how that all our fathers were under the cloud; which was a symbol of the divine presence with the Israelites, as it was on Mount Sinai, and in the tabernacle and temple; was a protection of them, being in the daytime as a pillar of cloud to screen them from the scorching heat of the sun, and in the night time as a pillar of fire to preserve them from beasts of prey, as well as in both to guide and direct them in the way; and was a type of Christ, who is a covert from the heat, as well as the wind and storm; a protection of his people from the vindictive justice and wrath of God, and from the rage and fury of men and devils. This also might express the state and condition of the former dispensation, which was dark and obscure in comparison of the present one, in which saints, with open face, behold the glory of the Lord; and likewise the state of the people of God in this world, even under the present dispensation, who, in comparison of the heavenly glory, and the beatific vision the saints enjoy there see but through a glass darkly. This cloud, which is sometimes represented as a pillar, was not an erect solid

body, which was at some distance before the Israelites, and merely as a guide, but was all around them; it was before them, and behind them, and on each side, and was over them; (see <04144>Numbers 14:14) so that the apostle rightly says they were under it. And to distant beholders in the daytime it looked like a pillar of cloud; and in the nighttime, the sun being down, it looked like a pillar of fire; for one and the same thing is meant by both and so the Jews say [f167], that

> "the pillar of cloud, wbbws encompassed the camp of Israel, as a wall encompasses a city, nor could the enemy come at them."

Hence those allusions to it in (<23405>Isaiah 4:5 <38205>Zechariah 2:5). The Jews indeed speak of several clouds of glory; nor are they agreed about the number of them:

> "when the people of Israel were travelling in the wilderness, they say [f168], they had clouds of glory, ˆrjsm, "that surrounded them", four at the four winds of the world, that the evil eye might not rule over them, ˆwhywl[ˆm djw "and one above them", that the heat and sun, as also the hail and rain, might not have power over them; and one below them, which carried them as a nurse carrieth her sucking child in her bosom; and another ran before them at the distance of three days' journey, to level the mountains, and elevate the plains, and it slew all the fiery serpents and scorpions in the wilderness."

And elsewhere [f169] it is said,

> "how many were the clouds of glory, ˆypyqm, "that encompassed Israel" in the wilderness? R. Hoshea and R. Josiah are divided. R. Josiah says five, four at the four winds, and one went before them. R. Hoshea says seven, four at the four winds of the heavens, and one ˆl[mlm, "above them", and one below them, and one ran before them;"

to which he ascribes the above effects: but the Scripture speaks but of one cloud, which departed at the death of Moses:

and all passed through the sea; the Red sea, in a very miraculous manner; Moses by a divine order lift up his rod, and stretched out his hand over it, and the Lord by a strong east wind caused it to go back, and made it dry

land; the waters were divided, and rose up as a wall, on the right hand, and on the left, so that the children of Israel passed through it on dry ground, and all came safe to shore, and not one perished; and yet but two of these entered into the land of Canaan. Origen [f170] says,

> "he had heard it as a tradition from the ancients, that in the passage through the sea, to every tribe of Israel were made separate divisions of water, and that every tribe had its own way open in the sea."

And indeed this is a tradition of the Jews, whom he means by the ancients, or at least such who had received it from them; by which it appears to be a very ancient one.

> "R. Eliezer says [f171], that in the day in which the waters flowed, and were congealed together, there were twelve paths made, according to the twelve tribes, and the waters became a wall."

The same is related, by others [f172]: Mahomet has it in his Alcoran [f173], in which he was assisted by a Jew, and from whom he doubtless had it. He observes, it was said to Moses,

> "smite the sea with thy rod, and when he had smitten it, it became divided into twelve parts, between which were as many paths, and every part was like a vast mountain."

But be this as it will, it is certain that they all passed through it, and came safe to shore.

Ver. 2. *And were all baptized unto Moses*, etc.] "In or by Moses"; and so the Syriac version renders it, ʿçwm dyb, "by the hand of Moses"; by his means and direction, he going before, they followed after him into the sea, and passed through on dry land, and came out on the shore, which carried in it a resemblance of baptism; when they believed the Lord, and his servant Moses, (<0243>Exodus 14:31) and gave up themselves to him as their leader and commander through the wilderness: and this their baptism was

in the cloud, and in the sea; which may be considered either as together or separately; if together, the agreement between them and baptism lay in this; the Israelites, when they passed through the Red sea, hid the waters on each side of them, which stood up as a wall higher than they, and the cloud over them, so that they were as persons immersed in and covered with

water; and very fitly represented the ordinance of baptism as performed by immersion; and which is the way it was administered in the apostles' time, to which he refers; and is the only way it ought to be administered in; and in which only the Israelites' passage through the sea, and under the cloud, could be a figure of it: or this may be considered separately, they were baptized in the cloud; which was either, as Gataker [f174] thinks, when the cloud went from before the face of the Israelites, and stood behind them, and was between the two camps, to keep off the Egyptians from them, which as it passed over them let down a plentiful rain upon them, whereby they were in such a condition as if they had been all over dipped in water; or their being all under the cloud, and all over covered with it, was a representation of the ordinance of baptism, in which a person is all over covered with water; and then they were baptized in the sea, as they passed through it, the waters standing up above their heads, they seemed as if they were immersed in it. Very great is the resemblance between that passage of theirs, and baptism. For instance, their following Moses into the sea, which is meant by their being "baptized into him", was an acknowledgment of their regard unto him, as their guide and governor, as baptism is a following of Christ, who has left us an example that we should tread in his steps; and is an owning him to be our prophet to teach us, and lead us the way; and it is a profession of our faith in him, as our surety and Saviour, and a subjection to him as our King and Governor. This their baptism in the sea was after their coming out of Egypt, and at their first entrance on their journey to Canaan's land, as our baptism is, or should be, after a person is brought out of worse than Egyptian bondage and darkness, and has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and at the beginning of his profession of him, and entrance on his Christian race. The descent of the Israelites into the sea, when they seemed as buried in the waters, and their ascent out of it again on the shore, has a very great agreement with baptism, as administered by immersion, in which the person baptized goes down into the water, is buried with Christ therein, and comes up out of it as out of a grave, or as the children of Israel out of the Red sea; and as they, when they came out of it, could rejoice and sing in the view of their salvation and safety, and of the destruction of all their enemies, so the believer can, and does rejoice in this ordinance, in the view of his salvation by Christ, and safety in him, and of all his sins being buried and drowned in the sea of his blood; witness the instances of the eunuch and jailer. But though the Israelites were all in this sense baptized, yet they did not all inherit the land of Canaan.

Ver. 3. *And did all eat the same spiritual meat*.] Meaning the manna; and which the Jews also call [f175] ynjwr lkam, "spiritual food", as also their sacrifices, [f176] ynjwr µjl, "spiritual bread": not that the manna was so in own nature; it was corporeal food, and served for the nourishment of the body; but either because it was prepared by angels, who are ministering spirits, at the command of God, and hence called angels' food, (Psalm 78:25) or rather because it had a mystical and spiritual meaning in it; it was not the true bread, but was typical of Christ, who is so: it resembled Christ in its original; it was prepared of God, as Christ is, as his salvation prepared before the face of all his people; it was the free gift of God, as Christ is to the mystical Israel; it came down from heaven, as Christ, the true bread of life did: it answered to him in its nature; it was in form round, expressive of his being from everlasting to everlasting, and of the perfection both of his divine and human natures; it was in colour white, signifying his purity of nature, and holiness of life and conversation; it was in quantity small, setting forth his outward meanness and despicableness in the eyes of men; and in quality it was sweet in taste, as Christ, and all the blessings and fruits of his grace are to believers. The usefulness of the manna was very great, a vast number, even all the Israelites, were supplied with it, and supported by it for forty years together, as all the elect of God, and the whole family of Christ are by the fulness of grace which is in him; and as in order that it might be proper and suitable food, it was ground in mills, or beaten in a mortar, and baked in pans; so Christ was bruised, and wounded, and endured great sufferings, and death itself, that he might be agreeable food for our faith: and as the Israelites had all an equal quantity of this food, none had more or less than others, so all the saints have an equal share and interest in Christ, in his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; as they have the same like precious faith, they have the same object of it. To say no more, as the manna was the food of the wilderness, or of the people of Israel, whilst travelling in it, so Christ, and the fulness of grace that is in him, are the food and supply of the spiritual Israel, and church of God, whilst they are passing through this world to the heavenly glory. Now, though all the Israelites did not eat of Christ, the true bread, which was typified by the manna; yet they all ate the same food, which had a spiritual meaning in it, and a respect to Christ, but did not all enter into the land flowing with milk and honey.

Ver. 4. *And did all drink the same spiritual drink*, etc.] By which is meant the water out of the rock, which was typical of the blood of Christ, which

is drink indeed, and not figurative, as this was, for which reason it is called spiritual; or of the grace of Christ, often signified by water, both in the Old and New Testament; and is what Moses and the law could not give; for righteousness and life, grace and salvation, could never be had by the works of the law: and very unpromising it was, and is to carnal men, that these should come by a crucified Christ, as it was to the Israelites, that water, in such plenty, should gush out of the rock in Horeb; but as those waters did not flow from thence without the rock being stricken by the rod of Moses, so the communication of the blessings of grace from Christ is through his being smitten by divine justice with the rod of the law; through his being, stricken for the transgressions of his people, and and being made sin, and a curse of the law in their room and stead. And as those waters continued through the wilderness as a constant supply for them, so the grace of Christ is always sufficient for his people; a continual supply is afforded them; goodness and mercy follow them all the days of their lives:

for they drank, of that spiritual rock that followed them; by which the apostle means not Christ himself, for he went before them as the angel of God's presence, but the rock that typified him; not that the rock itself removed out of its place, and went after them, but the waters out of the rock ran like rivers, and followed them in the wilderness wherever they went, for the space of eight and thirty years, or thereabout, and then were stopped, to make trial of their faith once more; this was at Kadesh when the rock was struck again, and gave forth its waters, which, as the continual raining of the manna, was a constant miracle wrought for them. And this sense of the apostle is entirely agreeable to the sentiments of the Jews, who say, that the Israelites had the well of water all the forty years [f177]. The Jerusalem Targum [f178] says of the

> "well given at Mattanah, that it again became unto them violent overflowing brooks, and again ascended to the tops of the mountains, and descended with them into the ancient valleys."

And to the same purpose the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel [f179],

> "that it again ascended with them to the highest mountains, and from the highest mountains it descended with them to the hills, and encompassed the whole camp of Israel, and gave drink to everyone at the gate of his own dwelling place; and from the high mountains it descended with them into the deep valleys."

Yea, they speak of the rock in much the same language the apostle does, and seem to understand it of the rock itself, as if that really went along with the Israelites in the wilderness. Thus one of their writers [f180] on those words, “must we fetch you water out of this rock?” makes this remark:

> “for they knew it not, [lsh Ælhç ypl, “for that rock went”, and remained among the rocks.”

And in another place it is said [f181],

> “that the rock became in the form of a beehive; (elsewhere [f182] it is said to be round as a sieve;) and rolled along, µhm[tabw, “and came with them”, in their journeys; and when the standard bearers encamped, and the tabernacle stood still, the rock came, and remained in the court of the tent of the congregation; and the princes came and stood upon the top of it, and said, ascend, O well, and it ascended.”

Now, though in this account there is a mixture of fable, yet there appears something of the old true tradition received in the Jewish church, which the apostle has here respect to.

And the rock was Christ: that is, it signified Christ, it was a type of him. So the Jews [f183] say, that the Shekinah is called çwdq [ls, “the holy rock”; and Philo the Jew says [f184] of this rock, that the broken rock is η σοφια του ψεου, “the wisdom of God”. Christ may be compared to the rock for his outward meanness in his parentage and education, in his ministry and audience, in his life and death; and for his height also, being made higher than the kings of the earth, than the angels in heaven, and than the heavens themselves; and for shelter and safety from the wrath of God, and from the rage of men; and for firmness, solidity, and strength, which are seen in his upholding all things by his power, in bearing the sins of his people, and the punishment due unto them, in the support of his church, and bearing up his people under all afflictions and temptations, and in preserving them from a total and final falling away: and a rock he appears to be, as he is the foundation of his church and every believer, against which hell and earth can never prevail; and to it he may be likened for duration, his love being immovable, his righteousness everlasting, his salvation eternal, and he, as the foundation of his church, abiding for ever.

Ver. 5. *But with many of them God was not well pleased*, etc.] As he is with none but those that are in Christ; and with none of the services of men, but what are done in faith, which become acceptable to him through Jesus Christ; for in him only persons and services are accepted with God; and this was the way of acceptance in the Old, as in the New Testament dispensation: how many of the Jewish fathers God was not well pleased with, or took no delight in, but hated and abhorred, which is the sense of the phrase here, whether they were the greatest part or not, is not certain; however, they were not all, excepting Joshua and Caleb, as some interpreters understand it; for not all that died in the wilderness were out of the special grace and favour of God, witness Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and, it is to be supposed and hoped, hundreds and thousands more; but the apostle has respect to such who were the instances of God's direful vengeance and displeasure, as appears from the reason given;

for they were overthrown in the wilderness: he does not say merely that they died there, for many with whom God was well pleased died there; but these, their carcasses fell in the wilderness, being stricken, thrown down, and overthrown by the immediate hand of God; they did not die a common death, according to the ordinary course of nature; but by the plague, or by the sword, or by fire from heaven, or by fiery serpents, or by a destroying angel, or by one judgment or another, as hereafter mentioned.

Ver. 6. *Now these things were our examples*, etc.] Or "types"; that is, these punishments which were inflicted on these persons for their sins, were designed as instructions for others to avoid the like sins, that they may escape the same punishment; just as the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, being condemned with an overthrow, as these men were, were made ensamples to all that should hereafter live such vicious lives and conversations; and in a very lively manner, as in a type or print, these exhibited the displeasure of God against sin, what such must expect who commit it; so men are called out of Babylon, lest, partaking of her sins, they also receive of her plagues. The Jews have a common saying [f185] µynbl ˆmys twbal [ryaç "that what happened to the fathers is a sign unto the children"; to which the apostle may have respect:

to the intent that we should not lust after evil things. The apostle proceeds to enter into particular instances, in which these things were examples, teaching us to avoid sin, and so punishment; and begins with lust, which is the root and foundation of all sin; all the evil in the world arises from it,

and the world itself is full of it, and is in God's account the same as action: and here he particularly strikes at those Corinthians, that lusted after the feasts in the idols' temples; and hints that that arose rather from a carnal sensual appetite, which ought not to be indulged, than from any other principle:

as they also lusted; that is, after evil things, the fish, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, onions, and garlic of Egypt, (<04 11 04>Numbers 11:4-6) which though they were not evil in themselves, yet the Israelites sinned in lusting after them, in not being content with the manna, the food which God had prepared for them; and besides, their desire after these things did not arise from want, but from a sensual appetite, and was attended with murmuring against the Lord and his servants, and was highly resented; for though the Lord gave them flesh according to their desire, yet while it was between their teeth, he sent a plague among them, by which multitudes were taken off, and the name of the place was called hwath twrbq, "Kibroth Hataavah, the graves of lusts"; the people that lusted being buried there, (<04 11 34>Numbers 11:34).

Ver. 7. *Neither be ye idolaters*, etc.] To which they seemed inclined to be, at least there was great danger that such they would be, by carrying their liberty to such a pitch, as to sit in an idol's temple, and there eat things sacrificed unto them; and which the apostle cautions against, and uses arguments to dissuade them from in the following part of this chapter:

as were some of them, as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play: referring to (<02 32 06>Exodus 32:6) when the Israelites, whilst Moses was in the mount, made a molten calf, and worshipped it, built an altar before it, and instituted a feast and a play; and which was performed by dancing about the calf, and singing to the honour of it, (<02 32 18>Exodus 32:18,19) for their sitting down to eat and drink is not to be understood of an ordinary meal, but of a feast kept in honour of the golden calf, and which they covered by calling it a feast to the Lord; and their playing also was on the same account, in imitation of the Heathens, who made feasts, and appointed plays to the honour of their deities: some indeed interpret [f186] this last action of uncleanness, which they committed after their feast was over, and which also was sometimes done in the Heathen temples, the word being sometimes used in this sense; (see <01 39 14>Genesis 39:14,17) but others understand it of the act of idolatry; so two of the Chaldee paraphrases interpret the words in Exodus [f187]; "they rose up

to play", harkwn anjlwpb, in strange service, i.e. idolatry; and though the apostle does not mention their punishment, yet it was a very great one, three thousand persons fell the sword on that account, (Exodus 32:28).

Ver. 8. *Neither let us commit fornication*, etc.] To which the Corinthians were much addicted: hence the apostle elsewhere, in this epistle, makes use of arguments, to dissuade from it, as he does here, they judging it to be no evil:

as some of them committed; i.e. fornication; as they did at Shittim, with the daughters of Moab, (Numbers 25:1) which was a stratagem of Balaam's, and the advice he gave to Balak king of Moab, to draw them into that sin, which made way for their commission of idolatry, which they committed by eating the sacrifices of their gods, and bowing down unto them; particularly they joined themselves to Baal Peor, the same with Priapus, one part of whose religious rites lay in acts of uncleanness, and this brought the divine displeasure on them:

and fell in one day three and twenty thousand; in (Numbers 25:9) the number said to be "twenty and four thousand": and so say all the three Targums on the place [f188], and both the Talmuds [f189] and others [f190]; on the other hand, all the Greek copies of this epistle, and the Oriental versions, agree in the number of twenty and three thousand; so that it does not appear to be any mistake of copies, in either Testament. To reconcile this matter, or at least to abate the difficulties of it, let the following things be observed; as that the apostle does not write as an historian, and so not with that exactness as Moses did; besides, he does not say that there fell "only" three and twenty thousand, and this beings lesser number than is contained in his, and so a certain truth; moreover, Moses and the apostle use different words in their account; Moses says there died so many, including the heads of the people that were hanged up against the sun, and all that perished by the sword; the apostle says, that there fell such a number, referring only to the latter, who only could be properly said to fall, and not those that were hanged up: now the heads of the people that suffered the first kind of death, might, as is very probable, be a thousand; and they that died in the other way, three and twenty thousand, which make the sums to agree, and both are expressed by Moses, under the general name of a plague or stroke; to all this, that the apostle uses a limiting clause, which Moses does not, and says that these three and twenty thousand fell in one day. So that it is very likely that the heads of the people, supposed to be a thousand,

were hanged up in one day; and the three and twenty thousand that fell by the sword died the next, which the apostle only takes notice of. Hence the Jew [f191] has no reason to charge the apostle with an error.

Ver. 9. *Neither let us tempt Christ*, etc.] As all such persons do, who, presuming on the power and grace of Christ to keep them, or upon what they have received from him, unnecessarily expose themselves to snares and temptations, and so to danger; and as many of the Corinthians did, who are here chiefly respected, who trusting to their gifts and attainments, their knowledge and Christian liberty, would go into an idol's temple, sit down at meat there, and exposed themselves great and imminent danger; which was a tempting Christ, whether he would preserve them or not:

as some of them also tempted; that is, as some of the Israelites tempted, which they did more than once; but what is referred to here, is the time they spake against God and Moses, in (Numbers 21:5,6) as appears from the punishment annexed, their being destroyed by serpents. The Arabic version adds "him", meaning Christ, which is a right interpretation of the text; otherwise there would be no force in the apostle's reasoning; for Christ was the angel that went before the Israelites in the wilderness, the angel of God's presence, that bore, and carried, and saved them; he is the Jehovah they tempted at Massah and Meribah, and elsewhere, and God they spake against at this place referred to; hence it is clear that our Lord existed before his incarnation, and that he is truly and properly God; the Alexandrian copy reads, "neither let us tempt God", and so the Ethiopic version: "and were destroyed of serpents"; fiery ones, which were sent among them by the Lord Christ, they tempted and spoke against, which bit them, and of these bites many of them died. This might lead to the consideration, of the original cause of man's sin and fall, and the ruin of human nature, by the means of a serpent; and may be an emblem of the future destruction of the wicked, which will be everlasting fire, prepared for the devil, the old serpent, and his angels.

Ver. 10. *Neither murmur ye*, etc.] Against the true apostles of Christ, and faithful ministers of the word; nor against the laws and ordinances of Christ, or providences of God; so some of the members of this church did, or were inclined to do:

as some of them also murmured: as against the Lord, so against Moses and Aaron. The people of Israel were very prone unto, and often guilty of this sin; but what the apostle here has respect unto, is either their murmuring

upon the report the spies made of the good land, in (Numbers 14:1-5), or that of Korah and his company against Moses and Aaron, as principal officers, who were for setting all upon a level; and of all the people against them, for the death of these men, (Numbers 16:1-35),

and were destroyed of the destroyer; meaning either some judgment of God upon them, as the earth's opening and swallowing up Korah and all that belonged unto him; and the fire that came down from heaven, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense; and the plague which swept away fourteen thousand and seven hundred of those that murmured against Moses and Aaron, on the account of the death of the said persons; and any other judgment by which the carcasses of those fell in the wilderness, that murmured upon the report of the spies; or else since angels were usually employed by God, in inflicting such judgments, by the destroyer may be meant an angel, such an one as smote the firstborn in Egypt, and bears the same name, (Hebrews 11:28) and as smote Israel with a pestilence upon David's numbering the people, and was about to have destroyed Jerusalem, had he not been restrained, (2 Samuel 24:15,16) and as, smote an hundred fourscore and five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians, in one night, (2 Kings 19:35). So that though an angel may be intended, it is not necessary, on account of the character given him, to understand an evil angel; it is true indeed, that Satan is by the Jews [f192] called tyjçmh, "the destroyer"; and Samuel, the same with Satan, is called "the angel of death"; to which the allusion is in (Hebrews 2:14) and evil angels are frequently styled hlbj ykalm, "destroying angels" [f193]; as distinct from ministering ones, and to which some think the apostle here refers.

Ver. 11. *Now all these things happened unto them*, etc.] All these punishments came upon them in various ways, not by chance, but by the will of God, and as their sins deserved:

and were for ensamples; to others, to their future posterity, and to the churches of God in all ages:

and they are written for our admonition; that men in a church state particularly may take warning, by these instances of their sin and punishment, to avoid the one and escape the other, and not presume upon their external privileges and favours:

upon whom the ends of the world are come; “or in whom the ends of ages are met”; for the apostle does not mean this material visible world, the universe and all things in it, which has continued, since the writing of this, about two thousand years: but the Jewish ages, or times of the Mosaic economy, which begun when these instances of sin and punishment were, and which now in the times of the apostles were at an end; everything in those periods that were figurative and emblematical, having their fulfilling end and accomplishment, and also were now abrogated: likewise the ages or times of Gentile darkness and ignorance may be intended, which now were come to an end, through the light of the Gospel, and the power of God attending the ministration of it; and hence the ends both of the Jewish and Gentile ages may be said to come upon, or meet in the apostles and their times, who had the advantage of looking back on former ones, and of receiving instruction from thence.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth*, etc.] Since the Jewish fathers, who enjoyed such peculiar favours and eminent privileges, had such various judgments inflicted on them; since they stood not, but many of them were visible instances of God’s displeasure; they were overthrown and cast down, their carcasses fell in the wilderness, and entered not into the land of rest; therefore all such persons who think themselves safe and sure, trusting to themselves, or depending upon the knowledge and gifts they have, the favours and privileges they enjoy; everyone of these should

take heed lest he fall. This advice was exceeding proper, whether it be considered as spoken to true believers, or formal professors; for true believers may fall into temptation, into sin, from a degree of steadfastness in the Gospel, and from a lively and comfortable exercise of grace; but not finally, totally, and irrecoverably; since they are enclosed in the arms of everlasting love, secured in the hands of Christ, built on a foundation that will never fail, and are kept by an almighty power which can never be overcome; but yet, since they may fall to the dishonour of God, the reproach of the Gospel of Christ, the grieving of the Spirit of God, the wounding of their own souls, the stumbling of weak believers, and the strengthening of the hands of the wicked; such an exhortation is not superfluous, even to such; and many and strong are the reasons and arguments why they should take heed lest they fall; nor are admonitions needless to that which God’s decree and promise secure: since these are often the means in and by which God executes his decree, and makes good

his promise; (see <4407 22>Acts 27:22,24,31). Moreover, if this exhortation be considered as given to formal professors, it is very pertinent; for such as these may fall, as they often do, from that which they seemed to have, from the truths of the Gospel, and a profession of them, and into scandalous sins, and at last into condemnation; and the rather since the apostasy of such persons is injurious to the honour and interest of true religion; hereby the ways of God are evil spoken of, the name of Christ blasphemed, profane sinners hardened, and weak believers stumbled, as by the falls of real Christians: besides, it must be worse for themselves, who hereby bring upon themselves a severe punishment; (see <6102 21>2 Peter 2:21) and indeed these seem to be the persons the apostle chiefly respects; not such who truly: thought they stood, and did really stand; for such stand in the true grace and love of God, in Christ, in whom they are chosen, and by whom they are redeemed and saved, and by that faith which he is the author and finisher of; and so shall never finally and totally fall away; but such "that thinketh", ο δοκων, "who seemeth", to himself and others, "that he standeth"; and manifestly designs such who were swelled with a vain opinion of themselves, their gifts and knowledge; who tempted God, and "trusted" to themselves, as the Ethiopic version reads it, and despised weak believers; but lest real believers should be hereby discouraged, the apostle adds,

Ver. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you*, etc.] Some, indeed, understand these words by way of reproof, that whereas their trials and exercises which had attended them were very light ones, and comparatively trivial; and yet they had given way to these temptations, and had sunk under them, and fallen by them, for which they were greatly to be blamed; or as threatening them with something more severe than anything as yet had befallen them, signifying that though they had as yet stood, and thought they still should; yet they ought not to presume on their own strength, or depend on outward things; since the temptations that as yet had come upon them were such as men might easily bear; there was no great trial or experiment of their grace and strength by them; they had not yet resisted unto blood; there were heavier and severer trials they might expect; and therefore should not be too secure in themselves, but take heed lest when these things should come upon them, in such a time of great temptation, they should fall away: but I rather think the words are spoken by way of comfort to the saints; intimating that as no temptation or affliction had befallen them, so none should, but what either came from

men, or was common to men, or which men by divine assistance, and under divine influence, might bear; and therefore should not distress themselves with the apprehensions of it, as if it was some strange or unusual thing, and as if they must unavoidably perish and be destroyed by it:

but such as is common to man: “or is humane”. There are divine temptations, or such as come from God; God may be said to tempt his people, as he did Abraham, by enjoining them things very hard and disagreeable to nature; and by afflicting them either in body or estate; and by withdrawing his presence, and withholding the communications of his grace, to try their faith, show them their weakness and need of himself. There are also diabolical temptations, or such as come from Satan; who tempts by soliciting to sin, by suggesting blasphemous thoughts, and filling with doubts and fears; and by dissuading from the use of means, as attending at the throne of grace, and on the word and ordinances: but the apostle here speaks of human temptations, such as come from men; meaning reproaches and persecutions, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; and which are temptations or trials of grace, as of faith and patience, and under which there is great danger of falling away: now when the apostle says that none but such temptations had befallen them, he does not mean that they had been, or were, or would be entirely free from other temptations; but that those which they mostly dreaded, and were in danger by, were but human, such as came from men, and were, as our version suggests, common to Christian men, their brethren, who were in the flesh as they, and might be endured by men, strengthened by the grace of God; wherefore they had nothing to fear from hence, especially when they considered the faithfulness, care, and power of God next observed:

but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: no man can be tempted, afflicted, or persecuted by men, but by a divine permission, and that voluntary; nor more than, or above that measure which God hath determined; who proportions the affliction to the strength he determines and promises to give, and does give, and the strength of his people to the temptation or affliction he suffers to befall them; for which his faithfulness is engaged, having promised that as their day is, their strength shall be; that he will never leave them nor forsake them, and that he will bear, and carry, and save them unto the uttermost, and that they shall hold on and out unto the end:

but will with the temptation make a way to escape; for as he by his permission makes way for the temptation or affliction, which otherwise could not come; and as he knows how, in what manner, and at the best time, to deliver his people out of temptations; so he does and will, in his providence, open a way that they may escape out of them, at least so as not to be overpressed and destroyed by them:

that ye may be able to bear it; for God does not always think fit to remove at once an affliction or temptation, though at the earnest request of his people, as in the case of Paul, (2 Corinthians 12:7,8) yet he gives them grace sufficient to endure and stand up under it, yea, to get the victory of it, to be more that conquerors, and triumph over it.

Ver. 14. *Wherefore, my dearly beloved*, etc.] Some copies add, "brethren"; as do the Complutensian edition, and Ethiopic version; all which endearing epithets are used to persuade to attend to the exhortation enforced upon the foregoing considerations; since the Jewish fathers, who were idolaters, fell so much under the divine displeasure; and since such who thought they stood were so liable to fall, and the temptation to which they exposed themselves was of such a dangerous consequence; therefore,

flee from idolatry; as what is most dishonourable, pernicious, and abominable: the apostle's meaning is, not only that they would not worship idols, or commit plain downright acts of idolatry; but that they would stand at the greatest distance from idols, not so much as go into an idol's temple, and there sit down and eat; which if not a real act of idolatry, had at least the show of one; and his sense is, that they would abstain from all appearance of idolatry, from every occasion of it, and whatsoever led unto it; particularly he means, that they would not eat of things sacrificed to idols as such, and in an idol's temple; which he considers as a species of idolatrous worship, and by a similar instance he after proves it to be so, even a partaking of the table of devils.

Ver. 15. *I speak as to wise men*, etc.] That is, what he was now going to say concerning the Lord's supper, and the communion which believers have with Christ in it, which they as Christians must have knowledge of; and concerning the participation of the altar the Israelites had, who ate of the sacrifices of it, which many of them, being Jews, as such must know; and therefore being fully persuaded of the propriety and pertinency of the instances he was about to produce, and of the justness of his reasoning

upon them, he appeals to the Corinthians, as men of wisdom and understanding in these things, and makes them themselves judges thereof:

judge what I say; consider and weigh the matter well, and you will discern and judge that what I say is proper and pertinent, just and right.

Ver. 16. *The cup of blessing, which we bless*, etc.] Meaning the cup of wine used in the Lord's supper, which being set apart for that service, is taken up, and the name of the Lord called upon over it; and he is blessed and praised for his wondrous love and grace, in the gift and mission of his Son, to shed his precious blood for us, for the remission of our sins; the whole church joining with the administrator, both in the act of blessing and praise over the cup, and in the participation of it. This cup is so called in allusion to the cup of wine used at common meals, or at the passover among the Jews, which they used to take and bless God with, and give him thanks for their mercies, and was commonly called hkrb lç swk, "the cup of blessing" [f194].

> "Three things (says R. Judah [f195]) shorten a man's days and years; when they give him the book of the law to read, and he does not read, Ærbl hkrb lç swk, "the cup of blessing to bless with", and he does not bless, and when he accustoms himself to government."

Again, so they comment on (Genesis 21:8) [f196]

> "what is the meaning "of the day that Isaac was weaned?" the holy blessed God will make a feast for the righteous, in the day that he weans the people of the seed of Isaac, and after they eat and drink, they give to Abraham Ærbl hkrb lç swk, "the cup of blessing to bless with"; he says to them, I will not bless, because Ishmael sprung from me; they give it to Isaac, he says to them, I am not fit to bless, for Esau came from me; they give it to Jacob, he says unto them I will not bless, for I married two sisters in their lifetime, which the law forbids me; they say to Moses, take it and bless, he says to them I will not bless, for I was not worthy to enter into the land of Israel, neither in life nor in death; they say to Joshua, take it and bless, he says I cannot bless, for I am not worthy of a son, as it is written, Nun his son, Joshua his son; they say to David, take thou it and bless, he saith unto them I will bless, and it is comely for me

> to bless; as it is said, “I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord”.”

Once more they ask[f197],

> “what is a beautiful cup? hkrb lç swk, “the cup of blessing”;”

and which, they[f198] observe, ought to hold the fourth part of a log of wine. These instances clearly show from whence the apostle borrowed this expression, and which he chooses to make use of because well known to the Jews, and as being very appropriate to the cup in the Lord’s supper, he is speaking of:

is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? it is; that is, it is a sign, symbol, and token of fellowship with Christ in his death; it is a means of having communion with him, and of enjoying the blessings of grace which come through his blood; such as righteousness, peace, pardon, and atonement; all which true believers are made partakers of; and this part of the Lord’s supper, the cup being drank of, is a testimony and an indication of the same: “the bread which we break”; which is the other part of the ordinance, which, though performed first, is mentioned last, because of the argument the apostle pursues upon it. The act of breaking the bread does not only design the distribution and eating of it, but the manner also in which it is prepared for distribution and eating, namely by breaking it into pieces; and which is aptly expressive of the body of Christ, which was wounded, bruised, and broken for us:

is it not the communion of the body of Christ? it is; for not only believers by this act have communion with his mystical body, the church, but with his natural body, which was broken for them they in a spiritual sense and by faith eat his flesh, as well as drink his blood, and partake of him, of his sufferings and death, endured in his body, and of all the blessings of grace consequent thereon. The apostle’s view in this instance, and his argument upon it, is this, that if believers, by eating the bread and drinking the wine in the Lord’s supper, spiritually partake of Christ, of his body and of his blood, and have communion with him; then such who eat of things sacrificed unto idols, have in so doing communion with them, and partake of the table of devils, and so are guilty of idolatry, which he would have them avoid.

Ver. 17. *For we being many, are one bread and one body*, etc.] The several members of the church of Christ; particular believers are indeed many, considered in themselves, in their own persons; yet by virtue of their union to Christ, which is manifested by their communion with him, they are one bread with him, the bread of life, and one body with his, signified by the bread; they are of one and the same mass and lump, they are incorporated together, they are flesh of his flesh, and one spirit with him: or they are one bread and body among themselves; as bread consists of many grains of corn which have been ground and kneaded together, and make up one loaf; and as the members of an human body are many, and make up one body; so believers, though they are many, yet are one body, of which Christ is the head; one in union with him and one another, and one in their communion together at the Lord's table; and so the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "as therefore the bread is one, so we all are one body"; having communion with Christ and one another:

for we are all partakers of that one bread; in the supper, which is all of the same nature and kind, and is a symbol of the body of Christ, and our fellowship with him and each other. The application designed is this, that as believers, by partaking of the same bread, appear to be the same body, and of the same mass and lump with one another; so such as eat things sacrificed unto idols, appear to be of the same mass and lump with Heathen idolaters: Dr. Lightfoot has very pertinently produced some passages out of Maimonides, concerning mixing, associating, or communion of neighbours in courts on sabbath eves, that so they may enter into each other's houses on the sabbath day, for the illustration of this passage; of which mixing the Jews have a whole treatise in their Misna and Talmud, which they call Erubin; and of which they say [f199]

> "but how is this mixture or association? it is thus, they mix together, djа lkamb, "in one food", which they prepare on the eve of the sabbath; and it is as if they should say, for we are all mixed together, and have all one food; nor does anyone of us divide the right from his neighbour — they do not mix in courts, but hmylç tpb "with a whole loaf" only; though the mass or lump baked may be the quantity of a "seah", yet if it is broken, they do not associate with it; but if it is whole, though it be but the value of a farthing, they mix with it — how do they mix or associate together in the courts? they collect hmylç tjа hlh, "one whole

> cake", out of every house, and put all in one vessel, in one of the houses of the court — and the whole association being gathered together, blesses the Lord — and eats:"

upon which the above learned writer observes, that if it were customary among the Israelites, to join together in one political or economical body, by the eating of many loaves collected from this, and that, and the other man; we are much more associated together into one body, by eating one and the same bread, appointed us by our Saviour.

Ver. 18. *Behold Israel after the flesh*, etc.] So the apostle calls them, to distinguish them from the Israel of God, the spiritual Israel, whether Jews or Gentiles; who are born again, believe in the true Messiah, worship God in a spiritual manner, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in fleshly things; but these were the descendants of Jacob or Israel by carnal generation, were carnal men, in the flesh, in a state of unregeneracy, and were employed in a carnal worship, in the observance of carnal commandments and ordinances; these the apostle directs to, to see, consider, and take notice of what they were doing; from whence some instruction might be taken, for the further clearing of the present point:

are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? yes, they are. The priests and Levites who waited at the altar, and ministered about holy things there, who brought the sacrifices and laid them upon the altar of the burnt offerings, where the altar consumed and devoured one part by fire, and that which was left they ate among themselves; and so as they had communion with one another in eating, they partook of the altar, of the things, or sacrifices of the altar, and showed themselves to be of the Jewish religion, and professed and declared that they worshipped the God of Israel, and would be thought to have communion with him in so doing; in like manner, such who eat of things sacrificed to idols, declared themselves to be idolaters, to be of the Pagan religion, to be worshippers of idols, and to have fellowship with them.

Ver. 19. *What say I then*? etc.] Or may be objected to, or inferred from, what I say;

that an idol is anything, or that which is sacrificed to idols is anything? to which must be answered, as the Syriac version reads, ܠܐ, "no", by no means; by running the parallel between Christians having communion with the body and blood of Christ, in the Lord's supper, through eating the

bread and drinking the wine, the Israelites partaking of the altar, by eating of the sacrifices of it, and men's joining with idols and idolaters, by eating things sacrificed to idols; it follows not that an idol has anything of deity in it, and is to be set upon a level with God, when, as he had said before, an idol was nothing, and what he now said did not at all contradict that; or that things offered to idols are to be had in the same account, or to be equalled to, or be thought to have any thing in them, as the elements of the bread and wine in the Lord's supper, or the sacrifices that were offered by the Israelites on the altar, according to the divine command; he meant no such thing, but only argued from the greater to the lesser, and his sense is more fully declared in the next words.

Ver. 20. *But I say*, etc.] This is my sense and meaning,

that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils, and not to God; reference is had to (<527>Deuteronomy 32:17) for what the Gentiles sacrificed, though they did not sacrifice intentionally to the idols of gold, silver, wood, and stone, but to God in them, as they pretended; yet inasmuch as in such worship and sacrifices they were directed, instigated, influenced, and assisted by devils, who took up their residence in these idols, and gave forth their oracles from them, they sacrificed to them; and which some have done, as in India and China, professedly and openly, and all other idolaters, eventually, virtually, and covertly:

and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils; as all wicked men have, in the commission of any lust, sin, or immorality; and as all idolaters have in their superstitious practices, and idolatrous worship; and if grace prevent not, will have to all eternity in everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; wherefore the apostle would have the Corinthians flee from idolatry, and all appearance of it, and abstain from eating things offered to idols, of which they could not eat without having fellowship with devils; this he says, to deter them from such practices, which must be very horrible and shocking, and bespeaks in him great care of them, and affection for them.

Ver. 21. *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils*, etc.] Not only they ought not, but they could not rightly, truly, and really drink the cup of wine in the Lord's supper, in the true faith of Christ's bloodshed, and his sacrifice offered up for them, in remembrance of his love, and to the honour of his name; and also the cup of wine of libations, poured out and drank to the honour of the Heathen deities; these things are

utterly inconsistent; no man can serve two masters, God and mammon, or God and Baal; nor is there any concord between Christ and Belial, or agreement between the temple of God and idols:

ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils; no man can spiritually, however he may externally partake of the entertainment provided, on the table of the Lord, at his supper instituted and kept in commemoration of him; and also with gust and pleasure, and without any concern for the peace of weak minds, and the honour of God, eat things set upon a table in an idol's temple, and before the idol, and as sacrificed unto it.

Ver. 22. *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy*? etc.] As they do who are guilty of idolatry in any shape: nothing is more highly resented by God, or stirs him up more to wrath and fury, and to inflict punishment; he cannot bear, nor will he admit of a rival in religious worship; he is a God jealous of his own honour; nor will he give, or suffer to be given by others, his praise and glory to graven images:

are we stronger than he? to give into idolatrous practices, is to proclaim and enter into a war against God; and what madness must this be? who can be so sottish and stupid as to think of succeeding? when God is omnipotent, and man a poor feeble impotent creature, a worm, and but dust and ashes: thus the apostle dissuades from idolatry, and every species and branch of it; partly from its ill effect, in bringing men into fellowship with devils; and partly from the impossibility of practising it, in consistence with a true and real participation of the cup and table of the Lord; and from the absurdity and stupidity of it, and its dangerous consequence, in exposing men to the vengeance of an almighty incensed Being.

Ver. 23. *All things are lawful for me*, etc.] All sorts of food are lawful to be eaten, every creature of God is good, there is nothing common or unclean in itself, polluted or polluting; and so things offered to idols may be lawfully eaten, but not as such, or in an idol's temple, or before a weak brother; to do which is contrary to the honour of God, and the edification of the saints: and therefore

all things are not expedient; to be done always, and in all places, and before all persons. The apostle suggests, that though they might be lawful to him, and he might make use of his liberty in eating them; yet they might not be expedient, or of service, but on the contrary hurtful to others; and

which therefore ought to be judged a sufficient reason for the omission of them:

all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not; though things of an indifferent nature may be lawfully used, yet they do not always tend to the edification of others, which should be consulted; and when this is the case, they ought to be disused. This is observed in answer to an objection taken from the doctrine of Christian liberty, allowing the free use of all the creatures, and disengaging men from an observance of the distinction of meats and drinks which the apostle grants; and yet argues from his own example, and the edification of the saints, that this is not always to be closely pursued; but believers should forego what they have a right to use, when the peace and welfare of their fellow Christians require it.

Ver. 24. *Let no man seek his own*, etc.] His carnal pleasure and private advantage in eating things sacrificed to "idols", to the hurt and disadvantage of his brethren; otherwise it is lawful for a man to seek his own good, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, to seek for the necessaries of life, his spiritual peace and comfort, and his everlasting welfare and happiness; but then he should not only seek his own,

but every man another's wealth, or "that which is another's"; for the word "wealth" is not in the original text. The apostle's meaning is, that a man, in the use of things indifferent, should not seek the gratifying of his sensual appetite or other passions, what may be pleasing or profitable to himself; but should consult the profit and edification of others.

Ver. 25. *Whatsoever is sold in the shambles*, etc.] the word μακελλον, rendered "shambles", here used, is a Latin word, and is made use of by Latin writers in the same sense as here, for a place where food was sold [f200]. The original of the name is said [f201] to be this; one Macellus, a very wicked and profane man, being for his robberies and filthy life condemned to die, a place was built in his house by Aemylius and Fulvius, censors, for selling of provisions, and which from his name was called "Macellum". The Syriac version retains the word here, and so do the Talmudists, and Rabbins [f202] frequently; who say [f203],

> "^yIwqm, the "shambles", and the butchers of Israel, though flesh of them is found in the hand of a stranger, it is free:"

into these places the priests sent to be sold what was offered to their idols, which they could not dispense with themselves, or thought not lawful to make use of; for the Egyptians, as Herodotus says [f204], used to cut off the heads of their beasts that were sacrificed, and carry them into the market and sell them to the Greeks, and if there were no buyers they cast them into the river. Now the apostle allows, that such meat that was sold in the shambles might be bought and eat of, but not in an idol's temple; there was a difference between an idol's temple, and eating things sacrificed to idols there, and buying them in shambles or meat market, and eating them at home:

that eat; buy, carry home, dress and eat, in your own houses:

asking no question; whether it was sacrificed to idols, or not:

for conscience sake; either a man's own, which may be hurt, wounded, and defiled, by eating contrary to it, should he know that what he eats had been offered to an idol; whereas if he asks no questions, and knows nothing of the matter, his conscience will not be afflicted: or else another man's that may stand by whilst the meat is bought, and sold; and who hearing questions asked and answered, and yet observes the meat, though sacrificed to idols, dressed and ate by the buyer, his conscience being weak, may be offended and grieved.

Ver. 26. *For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*, etc.] Which words are taken out of (<19A401>Psalm 24:1) and to be understood of Christ, who by creation and preservation is Lord of the whole earth, and as Mediator has all in his possession; and having broken down the middle wall of partition, gives his people the free use of all creatures, of the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea, and the trees, fruits, and plants of the earth, which are the fulness thereof; and therefore as the saints have a full right from Christ, to make use of all the creatures in a moderate way, and with thankfulness, they need not fear being defiled by any of them; provided they do not act contrary to the honour of God, and in favour of an idol, or against their own conscience, and the peace of weak believers.

Ver. 27. *If any of them that believe not*, etc.] In Christ, and make no profession of faith in him; but are infidels to his person, office, grace, righteousness, Gospel, and ordinances, as there were many such at

Corinth: “bid you” to a feast; invite you to dine or sup with them in their own houses:

and ye be disposed to go; the apostle does not lay any commands upon them to go, or not go, but leaves them to their own will, inclination, and discretion; for as circumstances might be, it might be either proper or improper to listen to an invitation from such a quarter; but if they were inclined, and did think fit to go, which they might without sin; for as it is lawful to trade, so to eat and drink with unbelievers; then his advice is,

whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no questions for conscience sake; that is, as before, as whether it is offered to idols or not; lest either their own, or another’s conscience should be hurt thereby.

Ver. 28. *But if any man say unto you*, etc.] Either a weak believer, to prevent the doing of what he thought to be sinful; or the unbeliever, that invites to try the integrity of his Christian guest, and to draw him into a snare:

this is offered in sacrifice unto idols; the meat that is in that dish, or that portion of food which stands in such a part of the table, came out of an idol’s temple, and was sacrificed to idols; which with the Jews were forbidden [f205]: for

> “everything that came out of an idol’s temple was forbidden, and was reckoned as the sacrifices of the dead; for it was not thought possible it could be there, and not offered to idols:”

now when any at the feast, either believer or unbeliever, should thus point at any particular dish, and affirm this of it; then the apostle’s advice is,

eat not for his sake that showed it: who, if a weak believer, will be grieved and wounded; and if an infidel, will be hardened in his impiety, and be furnished with an opportunity of reproaching the Christians, as variable, insincere, and unfaithful in their religion:

and for conscience sake; which is explained in the following verse:

the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; which words are neither in the Syriac version, nor in the Vulgate Latin, nor in the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and are thought by some to be added, from (1 Corinthians 10:26) though the repetition of them is far from being impertinent; since they contain a very good reason why such a man should

abstain from things sacrificed to idols, seeing there is such a plenty and variety of creatures for his use, which he has a right to eat of; and therefore is under no necessity to eat of such sacrifices, nor is it any hardship upon him to forbear the use of them.

Ver. 29. *Conscience I say, not thine own*, etc.] Which is well informed about these things, and is fully persuaded that an idol is nothing, and that things sacrificed to idols are nothing; and as they cannot profit a man, or help forward his comfort, peace, and happiness, so they cannot hinder them:

but of the others; either the weak brother, or the unbelieving master of the feast; it is for the sake of their consciences such food must not be eaten, lest either the one should be grieved, or the other reproach:

for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience? this is not an objection of the Corinthians, setting forth the unreasonableness of being condemned, for the use of their Christian liberty by another's conscience, be he who he will, believer or unbeliever, when they had an undoubted right to such an use, and their own consciences did not condemn them: but they are the words of the apostle, expressing his own sense, that it was not right and fitting that he should make use of his liberty, and eat under such a circumstance as here pointed out, and so his liberty should be condemned as sinful by another man's conscience; since the weak believer would be apt to censure, judge, and condemn him as a libertine, and the unbeliever as an atheist, or one that had no regard to any religion at all; and therefore he reasons, that it was best to abstain from eating, rather than expose his liberty to such a censure and condemnation.

Ver. 30. *For if I by grace be a partaker*, etc.] Either of Christian liberty, through the grace of God; or of the creatures God has given men to eat of through his goodness, and which are enjoyed by the saints with thankfulness:

why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? that is, why should I expose myself to evil tongues, the blasphemies and reproaches of men, by eating things of this kind, under this circumstance, when there are so many creatures I can use without offence, and be thankful for? or why should my liberty be reproached through an imprudent use of it, for which I have the utmost reason to be thankful? wherefore upon the whole it is best

to deny one's self in such a case, rather than risk one's character, the glory of God, and the honour of religion.

Ver. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink*, etc.] Which may principally refer to eating things sacrificed to idols, and drinking the libations of wine offered to them, since this is the subject of the apostle's discourse; in doing of which he directs them to have the glory of God in view, and so to conduct, that that end may be answered: and it may also be applied to common eating and drinking, or to ordinary meals upon food, about which there is no dispute; and which common actions of life are done to the glory of God, when every mercy is considered and owned as coming from him; and when we confess ourselves unworthy of any; and when we ascribe all we have to the free and unmerited goodness of God; and enjoy every mercy of this kind, as a fruit of our Father's love to us, as a blessing of the covenant, and as coming to us through the blood of Christ; when we are contented and satisfied with what we have, and act faith continually on God for future fresh supplies, and give thanks for all we receive: and if this, then much more eating and drinking in an ordinance way should be directed to the glory of God and Christ, as eating the bread, and drinking the wine in the Lord's supper; and which is so done, when it is done in a decent and reverend manner, in the exercise of faith, discerning the Lord's body, eating his flesh, and drinking his blood in a spiritual manner, without dependence on the actions done, and in remembrance of the love of God and Christ.

Or whatsoever ye do; in a natural, civil, or religious respect, in preaching, hearing, praying, fasting, giving of alms, etc. whatever in the closet, in the family, in the church, or in the world, in private, or in public:

do all to the glory of God; God's glory is the end of all his works and actions; in creation, providence, and grace; in election, in the covenant, in the blessings and promises of it, in redemption, in the effectual calling, and in bringing many sons to glory. The same is the end of all Christ's actions, as man and Mediator, of his doctrines and miracles, of his obedience, sufferings, and death in this world, and of his interceding life in the other; who, as he lives to make intercession for us, lives unto God, to the glory of God; and therefore the glory of God should be the end of all our actions: besides, without this no action can be truly called a good one; if a man seeks himself, his own glory, and popular applause, or has any sinister and selfish end in view in what he does, it cannot be said, nor will it be

accounted by God to be a good action. The Jews have a saying much like this, µymç µçl wyhy Æyç[m lk "let all thy works be done to the glory of God" [f206]; which one of their commentators [f207] explains thus:

> "even when thou art employed in eating and drinking, and in the business of life, thou shalt not design thy bodily profit, but that thou mayest be strong to do the will of thy Creator."

Ver. 32. *Give none offence*, etc.] Avoid everything that may be the occasion of offence, of the stumbling and falling of others; whether things indifferent, when they are offensive to weak minds, and grieve, and wound, and stumble them; especially things sinful, which as they offend God, and are therefore called "offences", so they are offensive to the churches of Christ, and are cognizable by them; they are staggering and stumbling to weak believers, when committed by professors of religion; are the means of inducing others to sin, and of hardening profane sinners in their iniquities, and give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme: but things that are good, and are made our incumbent duty, are not to be avoided, though persons may be offended thereat; such as the pure preaching of the Gospel, the profession of it, and submission to the ordinances thereof; for an offence is either taken or given; to give offence is one thing, which we should carefully avoid; and to take it, when there is no just reason for it, is another, and not to be regarded:

neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God; which may be considered as having a peculiar respect to the people of God: the two first of these, namely, Jews and Gentiles, being what constituted the first churches, and this at Corinth, so that they may be thought to be the parts, and the church the whole; and the apostle first mentions the one, and then the other, signifying, that they were not to give offence neither to single persons, nor to the whole church; and particularly in the case of eating things offered to idols, care was to be taken that neither Jews nor Gentiles were offended, being both members of the church. Or these may be considered as including all sorts of persons; for Jews and Gentiles include the whole world, and may here mean all that are without, that have no true faith in Christ, nor any spiritual knowledge of him; and "the church", all such as know him, believe in him, and profess his name: so that the apostle's sense is, that care should be taken that no offence be given to any sort of men, neither to the men of the world, of whatsoever character, nor to professors of religion, and more especially the latter; since offending

one of the least of them that believe in Christ, is displeasing to him; and since he was so careful to guard against the offence of them, and will, by his angels, at the last day, gather out of his kingdom all such as offend; and has ordered his churches to mark them which cause offences and divisions; and since it is so hard a thing to reconcile an offended brother, who is harder to be won than a strong castle; though that is not his excellency, yet as it makes the case so difficult, it should be guarded against.

Ver. 33. *Even as I please all men in all things*, etc.] The apostle sets himself as an example, though he was far from being a man pleaser, in the bad sense of that phrase; nor must these all things, in which he is said to please all men, be taken in the largest sense; but are to be understood of things indifferent, which might be done or avoided, without breaking the law of or contradicting the Gospel of Christ, or any of its rules and ordinances, to all which the apostle was inviolably attached; nor did he in these things seek to please men, but in all to act the part of a faithful servant of Christ, and steward of the mysteries of grace; (see 1 Corinthians 9:19-22). Moreover, it is not to bc thought that in fact he pleased all men; it is certain he did not; but he studied to please them; he did all that in him lay; he took the most proper methods to do it, though they were sometimes ineffectual.

Not seeking my own profit; worldly profit and advantage, riches, wealth, the emoluments of life, ease, rest, and pleasure; and chiefly he means the use of liberty in things indifferent; he was willing to forego all for the good of others:

but the profit of many, that they may be saved; he neglected his own private advantage, and the gratifying of himself in anything which was otherwise lawful, when he saw that would be an offence to others, be an hinderance of the Gospel, and deter any from embracing the Christian doctrine; that so he might be the, means of promoting the spiritual profit and edification of many souls, that they might be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; He does not say all, but many, knowing that all will not be saved, only the elect of God; and whereas he knew not who these were, nor where they lay, he behaved in this manner to all men, that he might be the instrument of the spiritual good and salvation of the chosen ones among them, by preaching the Gospel to them without offence.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 11

In this chapter the apostle blames both men and women for their indecent appearance in public worship, and admonishes them how they should behave with the reasons of it; and also corrects some abuses and irregularities among them, at, or before, the Lord's supper; which leads him to give a particular account of that ordinance, of the nature, use, and design of it, and some directions about the performance of it, and attendance on it. He begins with an exhortation suitable to what he had said in the latter part of the preceding chapter, to follow him, as he followed Christ, (46101 1 Corinthians 11:1) and praises them for their remembrance of him, and for the keeping the ordinances as they were delivered to them; that is, as many of them, and as far as they did so, (46102 1 Corinthians 11:2). And in order to make way for what he had on his mind to reprove them for, and admonish them about, he observes, that as God is the head of Christ, and Christ the head of every man, so the man is the head of the woman, (46103 1 Corinthians 11:3) wherefore for him to appear, and join in public worship, with his head covered, is to dishonour his head, (46104 1 Corinthians 11:4) as, on the other hand, for a woman to have her head uncovered in divine service, is to dishonour her head, it being all one as if her head was shaved, (46105 1 Corinthians 11:5) wherefore it is concluded, that if it is a shame for her to be shaved or shorn, she ought to be covered when attending the worship of God, (46106 1 Corinthians 11:6). The reason why a man should be uncovered at such a time is, because he is the image and glory of God; and the reason why the woman should be covered is, because she is the glory of the man, is made for his glory, and to be in subjection to him, of which the covering is a token, (46107 1 Corinthians 11:7) and that she is so, is argued from the order of the creation, man being not of the woman, but the woman of the man, (46108 1 Corinthians 11:8) and from the end of the creation, man being not for the woman, but the woman for the man, (46109 1 Corinthians 11:9). Another reason why the woman should be covered at the time of public worship is, because of the angels then present, (46110 1 Corinthians 11:10) but lest on this account the woman should be treated with contempt by the man, the

apostle observes, that they are not, and cannot be without one another; and that they are from each other in different senses, and both from the Lord, (<46111>1 Corinthians 11:11,12), and then proceeds to other arguments, showing that women should not appear uncovered in the house of God: one is taken from the uncomeliness of it, which must be so judged by everyone, (<46113>1 Corinthians 11:13) and another is taken from nature and custom, and the contrary in men, which is disagreeable and shameful; for, if, the dictates of nature, it is shameful in men to wear long hair, it must be comely and decent in women, and what is for their glory, to wear such hair, since it is their covering, (<46114>1 Corinthians 11:14,15). But if, after all the apostle had said on this subject, there should be any contentious persons disposed to wrangle about it, he observes, that they were not proper persons to be continued in the church, (<46116>1 Corinthians 11:16) and then proceeds to take notice of some ill conduct of many in the Corinthian church, at, or before, the eating of the Lord's supper; partly through schisms and factions, they meeting in parties for that purpose; which he had heard of, and had reason to believe, and could not praise them for; their coming together in such a manner, being for the worse, and not the better, (<46118>1 Corinthians 11:18,19) and the rather he gave credit to this report, since there were heresies among them, which issue in schisms and divisions, and which must be expected, that hereby Christ's faithful ones might be distinguished from others, (<46119>1 Corinthians 11:19) when he goes on to show how they abused the ordinance of the supper, not only by meeting together in parties, but by indulging their sensual appetites in eating and drinking, which was the principal end in coming together, and not the Lord's supper, (<46120>1 Corinthians 11:20) for they stayed not one for another, but one took his supper before the other, and so the one was full, and the other hungry, (<46121>1 Corinthians 11:21) the evil of which the apostle exposes by observing the indecency of such a conduct, when they had houses of their own to feast in; the contempt which they cast upon the church of God, and the shame they exposed the poor and hungry unto, all which was far from being praiseworthy, (<46122>1 Corinthians 11:22) upon which he gives a particular account of the Lord's supper, as he had it from Christ himself, the time when, the manner in which it was instituted and celebrated by him, the significance of its several parts, its use, and end, and the continuance of it until the second coming of Christ, (<46123>1 Corinthians 11:23-26) and then he proceeds to show the evil of an unworthy partaking of this ordinance, how that such are guilty of, and vilify and reproach the body and blood of Christ, (<46127>1 Corinthians 11:27) wherefore previous to

a participation of it a man should examine himself as to his repentance towards God, and faith in Christ, (<46128>1 Corinthians 11:28) seeing such that are unworthy communicants bring condemnation on themselves, not having spiritual judgment to discern the Lord's body in the ordinance, (<46129>1 Corinthians 11:29) and so become liable to diseases and death itself, which was the case of several in the Corinthian church, (<46130>1 Corinthians 11:30) whereas, if persons would but examine and judge of themselves before hand, they would not be exposed to such judgments, (<46131>1 Corinthians 11:31) though the people of God, when they are afflicted, should look upon their afflictions, not as punishments, but as chastisements inflicted on them, for this end, that they might not be condemned with the world of the ungodly hereafter, (<46132>1 Corinthians 11:32). Wherefore the apostle's advice is, that when they came to the Lord's table they would not form themselves into factions and parties, and one part of them eat before, and separate from the rest, but that they would tarry till they all come together, and then join as one body and one bread, (<46133>1 Corinthians 11:33) and that if any man was an hungry, he should eat at home, and not have an ante-supper in the house of God, indulging his appetite there to his condemnation, and those that joined with him, (<46134>1 Corinthians 11:34) and the chapter is concluded with an intimation, that besides these irregularities, there were others in this church which the apostle signifies he would correct, when he should be in person with them.

Ver. 1. *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* etc.] These words more properly close the preceding chapter, than begin a new one, and refer to the rules therein laid down, and which the apostle would have the Corinthians follow him in, as he did Christ: that as he sought, both in private and public, and more especially in his ministerial service, to do all things to the glory of God, and not for his own popular applause, in which he imitated Christ, who sought not his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him; so he would have them do all they did in the name of Christ, and to the glory of God by him: and that as he studied to exercise a conscience void of offence to God and man, in doing which he was a follower of Christ, who was holy in his nature, and harmless and inoffensive in his conversation; so he was desirous that they should likewise be blameless, harmless, and without offence until the day of Christ: and that whereas he endeavoured to please men in all things lawful and indifferent, wherein he copied after Christ, who by his affable and courteous behaviour, and humble deportment, sought to please and gratify all with whom he

conversed; so he would have them not to mind high things, but condescend to men of low estates, and become all things to all, that they might gain some as he did: and once more, that as he sought not his own pleasure and advantage, but the salvation of others, in imitation of Christ, who pleased not himself, but took upon him, and bore cheerfully, the reproaches of men, that he might procure good for them; so the apostle suggests, that it would be right in them not to seek to have their own wills in every thing, but rather to please their neighbour for good to edification.

Ver. 2. *Now I praise you, brethren*, etc.] The apostle prefaces what he had to say by way of commendation of them; though some think that this is said in an ironical way, because there are many things both in this chapter, and in the following part of this epistle, delivered in a way of reproof; but whoever considers the change of style in (46117 1 Corinthians 11:17) will easily see, that this must be spoken seriously here, and is designed to raise the attention to what he was about to say, and to prepare their minds to receive, and take in good part, what he should say by way of rebuke; who could not well be angry when he praised them for what was praiseworthy in them, and reproved them for that which was blamable. The things he commends them for are as follow,

that ye remember me in all things; that is, either that they were mindful of him, though at a distance from them, and had such a veneration for him, and paid such respect to him, and to his judgment, as to write to him to have his sense about any point of doctrine, or case of conscience which had any difficulty in them; or that they bore in memory the doctrines of the Gospel which he had delivered among them; (see 46502 1 Corinthians 15:2) The Arabic version reads, “that ye remember my sayings and deeds”; the doctrines he preached among them, and the examples he set them:

and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you; meaning, among the rest, if not principally, baptism and the Lord’s supper, which he received from Christ, and delivered unto them; (see 46123 1 Corinthians 11:23) and which they, at least many of them, kept and observed in the faith of Christ, from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory, and that as to the form and manner in which they were delivered to them by the apostle, agreeably to the mind of Christ; but was the apostle alive now, would, or could he praise the generality of those that are called Christians on this account? no; neither of these ordinances in common are kept as they were delivered: as to baptism, it is not attended to either as to subject or mode,

both are altered, and are different from the original institution; and the Lord's supper is prostituted to the vilest of men; and, what is "monstrum horrendum", is made a test and qualification for employment in civil and military offices under the government.

Ver. 3. *But I would have you to know*, etc.] Though they were mindful of him, and retained in memory many things he had declared among them, and kept the ordinances as delivered to them; yet there were some things in which they were either ignorant, or at least did not so well advert to, and needed to be put in mind of, and better informed about: and as the apostle was very communicative of his knowledge in every point, he fails not to acquaint them with whatsoever might be instructive to their faith, and a direction to their practice:

that the head of every man is Christ; Christ is the head of every individual human nature, as he is the Creator and Preserver of all men, and the donor of all the gifts of nature to them; of the light of nature, of reason, and of all the rational powers and faculties; he is the head of nature to all men, as he is of grace to his own people: and so he is as the Governor of all the nations of the earth, who whether they will or no are subject to him; and one day every knee shall bow to him, and every tongue confess that he is the Lord of all. Moreover, Christ is the head of every believing man; he is generally said to be the head of the church, and so of every man that is a member of it: he is a common public head, a representative one to all his elect; so he was in election, and in the covenant of grace; so he was in time, in his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension to, and entrance into heaven; and so he is now as an advocate and intercessor there: he is the political head of his people, or an head in such sense, as a king is the head of his nation: he is also an economical head, or in such sense an head as an husband is the head of his wife, and as a parent is the head of his family, and as a master is the head of his servants; for all these relations Christ sustains: yea, he is a natural head, or is that to his church, as an human head is to an human body: he is a true and proper head, is of the same nature with his body, is in union to it, communicates life to it, is superior to it, and more excellent than it. He is a perfect head, nothing is wanting in him; he knows all his people, and is sensible of their wants, and does supply them; his eye of love is always on them; his ears are open to their cries; he has a tongue to speak to them, and for them, which he uses; and he smells a sweet savour in them, in their graces and garments, though they are all his own, and perfumed by himself: there are no vicious humours in

this head, flowing from thence to the body to its detriment, as from Adam to his posterity, whose head he was; but in Christ is no sin, nothing but grace, righteousness, and holiness, spring from him. There's no deformity nor deficiency in him; all fulness of grace dwells in him to supply the members of his body; he is an one, and only head, and an ever living and everlasting one.

And the head of the woman is the man, The man is first in order in being, was first formed, and the woman out of him, who was made for him, and not he for the woman, and therefore must be head and chief; as he is also with respect to his superior gifts and excellencies, as strength of body, and endowments of mind, whence the woman is called the weaker vessel; likewise with regard to pre-eminence or government, the man is the head; and as Christ is the head of the church, and the church is subject to him, so the husband is the head of the wife, and she is to be subject to him in everything natural, civil, and religious. Moreover, the man is the head of the woman to provide and care for her, to nourish and cherish her, and to protect and defend her against all insults and injuries.

And the head of Christ is God; that is, the Father, not as to his divine nature, for in respect to that they are one: Christ, as God, is equal to his Father, and is possessed of the same divine perfections with him; nor is his Father the head of him, in that sense; but as to his human nature, which he formed, prepared, anointed, upheld, and glorified; and in which nature Christ exercised grace on him, he hoped in him, he believed and trusted in him, and loved him, and yielded obedience to him; he always did the things that pleased him in life; he prayed to him; he was obedient to him, even unto death, and committed his soul or spirit into his hands: and all this he did as to his superior, considered in the human nature, and also in his office capacity as Mediator, who as such was his servant; and whose service he diligently and faithfully performed, and had the character from him of a righteous one; so that God is the head of Christ, as he is man and Mediator, and as such only.

Ver. 4. *Every man praying or prophesying*, etc.] This is to be understood of praying and prophesying in public, and not in private; and not to be restrained to the person that is the mouth of the congregation to God in prayer, or who preaches to the people in the name of God; but to be applied to every individual person that attends public worship, that joins in prayer with the minister, and hears the word preached by him, which is

meant by prophesying; for not foretelling future events is here meant, but explaining the word of God, the prophecies of the Old Testament, or any part of Scripture, unless singing of psalms should rather be designed, since that is sometimes expressed by prophesying: so in (⁰⁹1 Samuel 10:5) "thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp before them, and they shall prophesy". The Targum renders it thus, ^yjbçm ^wnaw, "and they shall sing praise"; upon which Kimchi observes, that it is as if it was said, their prophecy shall be twryç, "songs" and praises to God, spoken by the Holy Ghost. So in (⁰⁹1 Samuel 19:23,24) it is said of Saul, that he "went on and prophesied". The Targum is, he went on, jbçmw, "and praised". And again, "he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied". Targum, jbçw, "and praised", or sung praise. Once more, in (¹³1 Chronicles 25:1-3) it is said of Asaph, and others, that they "should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals"; which Kimchi explains of Asaph's singing vocally, and of his sons playing upon musical instruments.

Having his head covered; which, it seems, was the custom of some of them so to do in attendance on public worship: this they either did in imitation of the Heathens [f208], who worshipped their deities with their heads covered, excepting Saturn and Hercules, whose solemnities were celebrated with heads unveiled, contrary to the prevailing customs and usages in the worship of others; or rather in imitation of the Jews, who used to veil themselves in public worship, through a spirit of bondage unto fear, under which they were, and do to this day; and with whom it is a rule [f209], that

> "a man might not stand and pray, neither with his girdle on, hlwgm çarb alw, nor with his head uncovered; nor with his feet uncovered."

Accordingly it is said [f210] of Nicodemus ben Gorion,

> "that he went into the school grieved, and Pj[tn, "veiled himself", and stood in prayer;"

and a little after that

> "that he went into the sanctuary and "veiled" himself, and stood and prayed;"

though the Targum on (⁰⁷Judges 5:2) suggests,

> "that the wise men sit in the synagogues, ylg çyrb, "with the head uncovered", to teach the people the words of the law;"

and on (Judges 5:9) has these words,

> "Deborah in prophecy said, I am sent to praise the Scribes of Israel, who when they were in tribulation did not cease from expounding the law; and so it was beautiful for them to sit in the synagogues, "with the head uncovered", and teach the people the words of the law, and bless and confess before the Lord;"

but it seems that a different custom had now prevailed; now from this Gentile or judaizing practice, the apostle would dissuade them by observing, that such an one that uses it, "dishonoureth his head"; meaning either in a figurative, spiritual, and mystical sense, his head Christ, in token of the liberty received from him, and because he is above in heaven, and clear of all sin, the head must be uncovered in public worship; or otherwise the reverse is suggested of him, which is highly to dishonour him, and is the sense many interpreters give into: rather the reason should be, because Christ, the believer's head, appears for him in heaven, opens a way of access for him, gives him audience and acceptance in his person, and through his blood and righteousness; and therefore should appear with open face and head uncovered, as a token of freedom and boldness; otherwise he dishonours his head as if his blood and sacrifice were not effectual, and his intercession not prevalent: but the natural head, taken in a literal sense, is rather meant; and the sense is, that by covering it, it looks as if he was guilty and ashamed, and in subjection; whereas to appear uncovered expresses freedom, boldness, and superiority, like himself, who is the head of the woman; whereas to be covered, as with a woman's veil or hood, is effeminate, unmanly, and dishonourable.

Ver. 5. *But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth*, etc.] Not that a woman was allowed to pray publicly in the congregation, and much less to preach or explain the word, for these things were not permitted them: (see 1 Corinthians 14:34,35 1 Timothy 2:12) but it designs any woman that joins in public worship with the minister in prayer, and attends on the hearing of the word preached, or sings the praises of God with the congregation, as we have seen, the word prophesying signifies,

with her head uncovered. It may seem strange from whom the Corinthian women should take up this custom, since the Jewish women were not

allowed to go into the streets, or into any open and public place, unveiled [f211]. It was a Jewish law, that they should go out no where bare headed [f212]: yea, it was reckoned scandalous and ignominious to do so. Hence it is said, [f213] µhl yang çarh ywlgç, "that uncovering of the head is a reproach" to the daughters of Israel: and concerning the adulterous woman, it is represented as said by the priest [f214],

> "thou hast separated from the way of the daughters of Israel; for the way or custom of the daughters of Israel is ^hyçar twswkm twyhl, "to have their heads covered"; but thou hast gone "in the ways of the Gentiles", who walk with head bare."

So that their it should seem that these Corinthians followed the examples of the Heathens: but then, though it might be the custom of some nations for women to go abroad bare headed; yet at their solemnities, where and when they were admitted, for they were not everywhere and always, they used to attend with their heads veiled and covered [f215]. Mr. Mede takes notice indeed of some Heathen priestesses, who used to perform their religious rites and sacrifices with open face, and their hair hanging down, and locks spreading, in imitation of whom these women at Corinth are thought to act. However, whoever behaved in this uncomely manner, whose example soever she followed, the apostle says,

dishonoureth her head; not her husband, who is her head in a figurative sense, and is dishonoured by her not being covered; as if she was not subject to him, or because more beautiful than he, and therefore shows herself; but her natural head, as appears from the reason given:

for that is even all one as if she were shaven; to be without a veil, or some sort of covering on her head, according to the custom of the country, is the same thing as if her head was shaved; and everyone knows how dishonourable and scandalous it is for a woman to have her head shaved; and if this is the same, then it is dishonourable and scandalous to her to be without covering in public worship. And this shows, that the natural head of the man is meant in the preceding verse, since the natural head of the woman is meant in this.

Ver. 6. *For if the woman be not covered*, etc.] That is, if her head is not covered with some sort of covering, as is the custom of the place where she lives,

let her also be shorn; let her hair be cut short; let her wear it as men do theirs; and let her see how she will look, and how she will like that, and how she will be looked upon, and liked by others; everybody will laugh at her, and she will be ashamed of herself:

but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven: as it is accounted in all civilized nations: the very Heathens [f216] speak of it as a thing abominable, and of which there should not be one single dreadful example: then let her be covered; with a veil, or any sort of covering in common use.

Ver. 7. *For a man indeed ought not to cover his head*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, "whilst he prays"; which is a proper interpretation of the words, though a wrong version; for the apostle's meaning is not, that a man should not have his head covered at any time, but whilst he is in public worship, praying, prophesying, or singing of psalms: the reason is,

forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God. The apostle speaks of man here as in his first creation, in his state of innocence before his fall; but now he has sinned and defaced this image, and come short of this glory; which lay partly in his body being made after the exemplar of the body of Christ, the idea of which God had in his eternal mind, and according to which he shaped the body of Adam: and partly in his soul, in that righteousness and holiness, wisdom and knowledge, and all other excellent gifts in which it was formed. So the Jews [f217] say, the understanding is µçh dwbk "the glory of God". And it chiefly lay in the power and dominion he had over all the creatures, and even over the woman when made; at least this is principally respected here, in which there is such a shine and representation of the glory and majesty, power and dominion of God; and therefore man ought to worship him with his head uncovered, where this image and glory of God is most illustriously displayed: not but that the woman, is the image and glory of God also, and was made as man, after his image and likeness, with respect to internal qualities, as righteousness, holiness, knowledge, etc. and with regard to her power over the other creatures, though in subjection to man; but yet man was first originally and immediately the image and glory of God, the woman only secondarily and mediately through man. The man is more perfectly and conspicuously the image and glory of God, on account of his more extensive dominion and authority:

but the woman is the glory of the man; being made out of him, and for his help and assistance, and to be a crown of honour and glory to him. The

apostle speaks the sense, and in the language of the Jews. The words in (<2Ki 3:13>Isaiah 44:13). “After the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man”, are by the Targum rendered, “after the likeness of a man, after the glory of a woman”; and the note of a famous [f218] interpreter of theirs upon the last clause is, “this is the woman”, hl[b trapt ayhç “who is the glory of her husband”; but why is she to be covered for this reason, when the man is to be uncovered? it is to be observed, that it is in the presence and worship of God that the one is to be uncovered, and the other covered; the one being the glory of God, and therefore to be uncovered before him; and the other the glory of man, and therefore to be covered before God; and especially, since being first in the transgression, she who is man’s glory has been the means of his shame and disgrace. The Jews seem to make this the reason of the difference; they ask [f219],

> “why does a man go out with his head uncovered, and a woman with her head covered? it is answered, it is like to one that has committed a sin, and he is ashamed of the children of men, therefore she goes hswkm hçarw, “with her head covered”.”

Ver. 8. *For the man is not of the woman*, etc.] In the present state of things, and according to the ordinary course of generation and propagation of mankind, man is of the woman, though not without the means of man; he is conceived in her, bore by her, and born of her; but the apostle respects the original formation of man, as he was immediately made by God out of the dust of the earth, before the woman was in being, and so not of her:

but the woman of the man; she was made out of his rib, and took both her name and nature from him; God was the author, and man the matter of her being; her original under God, is owing to him; and therefore as he was first in being, he must be superior to her: this serves to prove all that has been as yet said; as that man is the head of the woman, the woman is the glory of man, what he may glory in as being from him; and therefore there should be this difference in their appearance at public worship.

Ver. 9. *Neither was the man created for the woman*, etc.] To be subservient to her; for she was not in being when he was created; and though it is the proper business of man to provide for, take care of, and defend the woman, as the weaker vessel, yet these were not the original ends of his creation; he was made for God, for his service and glory:

but the woman for the man; to be an help meet for him, who was already created; to be a companion and associate of his, both in religious worship and in civil life; and for the procreation and education of children.

Ver. 10. *For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head*, etc.] The generality of interpreters, by power, understand the veil, or covering on the woman's head, as a sign of the man's power over her, and her subjection to him; which Dr. Hammond endeavours to confirm, by observing that the Hebrew word dydr, which signifies a woman's veil, or hood, comes from a root which signifies power and dominion; but in that he is mistaken, for the word is derived not from hdr, to rule, govern, or exercise power and authority, but from ddr, to expand, stretch out, or draw over, as a woman's veil is drawn over her head and face. The Greek word εξουσια more properly signifies the power she had of putting on and off her covering as she pleased, according as times, places, and persons; made it necessary:

because of the angels; various are the senses given of these words, some taking them in a proper, others in a figurative sense: some in a proper sense of angels, and these either good or bad. Tertullian [f220] understands them of evil angels, and that a woman should cover her head in time of worship, lest they should lust after her; though much rather the reason should be, lest they should irritate and provoke lust in others: but it is better to understand them of good angels, who attend the assemblies of the saints, and observe the air and behaviour of the worshippers; wherefore women should cover their heads with respect to them, and not give offence to those pure spirits, by an indecent appearance: it is agreeable to the notions of the Jews, that angels attend public prayers, and at the expounding of the word; they often speak [f221] of an angel, twlpth l[hnwmmh "that is appointed over prayers"; hence [f222] Tertullian seems to have took his notion of an angel of prayer: and of angels being present at expounding of the Scriptures, take the following story [f223];

> "it happened to Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai, that he was riding upon an ass, and as he was journeying, R. Eleazar ben Arach was leading an ass after him; he said to him, Rabbi, teach me one chapter in the work of Mercavah (Ezekiel's vision); he replied to him, not so have I taught you, nor in the Mercavah a single man, unless he was a wise man by his own industry; he answered him,

> Rabbi, give me leave to say one thing before thee, which thou hast taught me; immediately Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai alighted from his ass and “veiled himself”, and sat upon a stone under an olive tree; he said to him, Rabbi, why dost thou alight off from the ass? he replied, is it possible that thou shouldst expound in the work of Mercavah, and the Shekinah be with us, wntwa ˆywlm trçh ykalmw, “and the ministering angels join us”, and I ride upon an ass?”

And a little after,

> “R. Joshua and R. Jose the priest were walking on the road, they said, yea, let us expound in the work of Mercavah; R. Joshua opened and expounded, and that day was the solstice of Tammuz, and the heavens were thickened with clouds, and there appeared the form of a bow in the cloud, “and the ministering angels gathered together”, [wmçl ˆyabw, “and came to hear”: as the children of men gather together, and come to see the rejoicings of the bridegroom and bride.”

Moreover, this veiling of the woman in public worship because of angels, may be an imitation of the good angels, who when they sung the praises of God, and adored and glorified his perfections, covered their faces and their feet with their wings, (<2001>Isaiah 6:1-3). Many understanding these words in a figurative sense, and in this also they are not agreed; some by angels think young men are meant, who, for their gracefulness and comeliness, are compared to angels; others good men in general, that attend religious worship; others ministers of the word, called angels often in the book of the Revelations; which last seems to be most agreeable of any of these senses; and the women were to cover their heads, that they might not offend either of these, or stir up any impure desires in them; see (<2106>Ecclesiastes 5:6) but as these words follow the account given of the creation of the woman from the man, and for his sake; this may have no reference to her conduct in public worship, but to the power she had of using her covering, or taking it off, or putting it on, at the time of her espousals to a man; which was sometimes done by proxy, or messengers, whom the Jews call µyjwlç, “angels” [f224]; their canon is,

> "a man may espouse (a wife) by himself, wjwlçbw, "or by his angel", or messenger; and a woman may be espoused by herself, or by her angel, or messenger:"

wherefore because of these angels, or messengers, that came to espouse her to such, she had power over her head to take off her veil, and show herself, if she thought fit; or to keep it on, as expressing her modesty; or just as she pleased, when she by them was espoused to a man, for whose sake she was made; which sense, after Dr. Lightfoot, many learned men have given into, and seems probable.

Ver. 11. *Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman*, etc.] This is said, partly to repress the pride and insolence of man, that he might not be too much elated with himself, and his superiority over the woman, and look with any degree of disdain and contempt upon her, and treat her with indifference and neglect; and partly to comfort the woman, that she might not be dejected with the condition and circumstances in which she was, since the one is not without the other; nor can they be so truly comfortable and happy, as not the man without the woman, who was made for an help meet for him,

so neither the woman without the man in the Lord. The phrase "in the Lord" is added, to show that it is the will of God, and according to his ordination and appointment, that the one should not be without the other; or it may design that lawful conjunction and copulation, of one man and one woman together, according to the will of the Lord, which distinguishes it from all other impure mixtures and copulations. The Arabic version reads it, "in the religion of the Lord"; and the sense is, that the one is not without the other in religious worship, and in the enjoyment of religious privileges; that though the woman may not pray publicly and expound the Scriptures, yet she may join in prayer, and hear the word preached, sing the praises of God, and enjoy all ordinances; for in Christ no distinction of sex is regarded, men and women are all one in him, and equally regenerated, justified, and pardoned, and will be glorified together.

Ver. 12. *For as the woman is of the man*, etc.] Originally; so Eve was of Adam, made out of one of his ribs:

even so is the man also by the woman; now man is born of a woman, he is conceived of one, and brought into the world by one. This is the way in which mankind is propagated, the species preserved, continued, and

increased; and therefore there is no reason why the woman should be despised, or the man should be lifted up with himself above her, since they are so dependent upon, and so useful to each other:

but all things of God. The Arabic version reads it, “all creatures are of God”; which is true, but not the truth of these words, which are to be restrained to the subject of the discourse; as that both the man and the woman are of God; they are made by him, and after his image and likeness; that the man is the glory of God, and the woman the glory of the man; the authority of the man over the woman, and the subjection of the woman to the man, are of God, and according to his constitution and appointment; as also that the woman should be of the man, and for his sake, and that the man should be by the woman, and neither should be without the other: these are not things of human constitution, but are settled by the wise counsel of God, and therefore to be cheerfully submitted to, as the best order of things.

Ver. 13. *Judge in yourselves*, etc.] The apostle having gone through a variety of reasoning and arguments, showing the superiority of the man to the woman, by which he would prove, that the one should be covered, and the other uncovered, returns to his subject again, and appeals to the common sense and understanding of the Corinthians, and makes them themselves judges of the matter; suggesting that the thing was so clear, and he so certain of what he had advanced being right, that he leaves it with them, not doubting but that they would, upon a little reflection within themselves, join with him in this point:

is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? in you judgment you can never think so, however pleasing and gratifying such a sight may be, to the lust of the flesh, and to the lust of the eye; he does not mention prophesying, only instances in praying; but it is to be understood of one, as of another; and his meaning is, that it is an uncomely thing in a woman to appear in public service with her head uncovered, whether it be in joining in the public prayers, or in singing of psalms, or in hearing the word expounded; and though the apostle does not put the case of the man’s praying to God, or prophesying in his name with his head covered, yet his sense is the same of that, as of the woman’s.

Ver. 14. *Doth not even nature itself teach you*, etc.] By nature is either meant, the law and light of nature, reason in man, common sense, or rather custom, which is second nature; and which, in this case, must be restrained

to the Greeks and Jews; for though among the Grecians the men cut their hair, and did not suffer it to grow long, as also did the Jews, yet there were many nations [f225] who did not, even at that time, observe such a rule or custom; but as the Jews and Greeks were the persons chiefly, if not solely, known to the Corinthians, the apostle signifies, that the usages of these people might direct and inform them in this matter:

that if a man have long hair it is a shame unto him; he looks unmanly and womanish, and exposes himself to ridicule and contempt.

Ver. 15. *But if a woman have long hair*, etc.] And wears it, without cutting it, as men do:

it is a glory to her; it is comely and beautiful; it is agreeable to her sex, she looks like herself; it becomes and adorns her:

for her hair is given her for a covering; not instead of a covering for her head, or any other part of her body, so that she needs no other: we read indeed of the daughter of Nicodemus ben Gorion, that she was obliged to make use of her hair for a covering in such a sense [f226];

> "it happened to R. Jochanan ben Zaccai that he rode upon an ass, and went out of Jerusalem, and his disciples went after him; he saw a young woman gathering barley corns out of the dung of the Arabian cattle; when she saw him, hr[çb hpj[tn, "she covered herself with her hair", and stood before him:"

but this covering was made use of, not of choice, but by force, through her poverty, she having no other; this was not the custom of the nation, nor was the hair given to women for a covering in this sense, nor used by them as such, unless by Eve before the fall; but is rather an indication that they want another covering for their head, it not being so decent that their long hair should be seen. The Jewish women used to esteem it an immodest thing for their hair to be seen, and therefore they took care, as much as possible, to hide it under another covering;

> "one woman, whose name was Kimchith, had seven sons, and they all ministered in the high priesthood; the wise men said unto her, what hast thou done, that thou art so worthy? she replied to them, all my days the beams of my house never saw yr[çy[lq, "the plaits of my hair" [f227];"

that is, they were never seen by any person, even within her house.

Ver. 16. *But if any man seem to be contentious*, etc.] That is, if anyone will not be satisfied with reasons given, for men's praying and prophesying with their heads uncovered, and women's praying and prophesying with their heads covered; but will go on to raise objections, and continue carping and cavilling, showing that they contend not for truth, but victory, can they but obtain it any way; for my part, as if the apostle should say, I shall not think it worth my while to continue the dispute any longer; enough has been said to satisfy any wise and good man, anyone that is serious, thoughtful, and modest; and shall only add,

we have no such custom, nor the churches of God; meaning, either that men should appear covered, and women uncovered in public service, and which should have some weight with all those that have any regard to churches and their examples; or that men should be indulged in a captious and contentious spirit; a man that is always contending for contention sake, and is continually cavilling and carping at everything that is said and done in churches, and is always quarrelling with one person or another, or on account of one thing or another, and is constantly giving uneasiness, is not fit to be a church member; nor ought he to be suffered to continue in the communion of the church, to the disturbance of the peace of it. This puts me in mind of a passage in the Talmud [f228].

> "The Rabbans teach, that after the departure of R. Meir, R. Judah said to his disciples, do not let the disciples of R. Meir enter here, ^h ^ynrtnqç ynpm, "because they are contentious"."

Ver. 17. *Now in this that I declare unto you*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, "this is what I command"; which some refer to what he had been discoursing of, adding to his arguments, and the examples of the church, his own orders and command, that men should worship God publicly, uncovered, and women covered; though it seems rather to respect what follows, what the apostle was about to declare unto them; concerning which he says,

I praise you not; as he did in (<461102>1 Corinthians 11:2) that they were mindful of him, remembered his doctrines, and kept the ordinances in the manner he had delivered them to them: and it should seem by this, that the greater part of them were not to be blamed, though some few were, for their irregular and indecent appearance in public worship, men with a

covering on their heads, and women without one; but in what he was about to say, he could not praise them at all:

that you come together; to the house of God, to pray unto him, to sing his praises, to hear his word, and attend his ordinances, particularly the Lord's supper:

not for the better; for edification and instruction, for the quickening and comforting of your souls; that you may grow in grace and knowledge, become more holy, zealous, fruitful, and useful:

but for the worse; to indulge luxury and intemperance, to encourage heresies, schisms, and divisions, and so grow more carnal, scandalous, and useless.

Ver. 18. *For first of all, when ye come together in the church*, etc.] The place where the church met together to perform divine service, called "one place". (<4611120>1 Corinthians 11:20) and is distinguished from their own "houses", (<4611122>1 Corinthians 11:22) and the first thing he took notice of as worthy of dispraise and reproof, in their religious assemblies, were their animosities and factions:

I hear that there be divisions among you: schisms and parties, either about their ministers, one being for Paul, another for Apollos, and another for Cephas; or in the celebration of the Lord's supper, and that which went before it, they going into separate bodies, and partook by themselves, and each took his own supper before another, one ate, and another did not. This the apostle had heard from the house of Chloe:

and I partly believe it; meaning, either that this was the practice of a part of the church to do so, though not of them all; or that part of the report that had been made to him was true; though he hoped in that charity which hopeth all things, that it was not quite so bad as was feared or represented, since things are generally heightened and increased by fame; but yet he had it from such good hands, that he could not but believe there was something in it. So the Syriac version renders it, µdm µdmw, "and something, something I believe".

Ver. 19. *For there must be also heresies among you* etc.] This is a reason why he was ready to believe there might be something of truth in the report he had received of the divisions among them; for if there were heresies, false doctrines, and bad principles, among them, such as were subversive of

the fundamentals of Christianity, as the denial of the resurrection of the dead, etc. it was no wonder that there were schisms and factions among them, since heresies generally issue in them. These, the apostle says, “must be”; because God has decreed they shall, whose counsel is immutable, and his purpose unalterable; and since this always was the case, that there were false prophets under the former dispensation, it must be expected that false teachers will arise in the churches now, bringing in damnable heresies; and since Satan is always busy to sow the tares of false doctrine; and human nature, being both weak and wicked, is so susceptible thereof, and so easily imposed upon and deceived, it cannot be thought that it should be otherwise; which, by the goodness and wisdom of God, are overruled to a very good purpose:

that they which are approved: who sincerely believe in Christ, are sound in the faith, and have a well grounded experience of it; who have themselves tried things that differ, and approve of them that are excellent, and have been tried by others, and found to be sincere, upright, and faithful, and are approved of God and good men:

may be made manifest among you; by their steadfastness in the faith, their zealous attachment to it, earnest contention for it, and warm and honest vindication of it; and by the departure of those from them who oppose it, and go on the side of error and heresy; by which means it is known who are the sincere followers of the Lamb, in doctrine, discipline, and conversation, and who not.

Ver. 20. *When ye come together therefore into one place*, etc.] Though επι το αυτο does not signify so much the unity of the place, as of the persons meeting together, and their conjunction; so the phrase is used by the Septuagint, in (<052511>Deuteronomy 25:11 <060605>Joshua 11:5), yet it supposes a place where the church were wont to assemble for divine worship;

this is not to eat the Lord’s supper: their view in coming together was not so much to celebrate the supper of the Lord, as to partake of their own supper, which was either the paschal supper, or something like it; which many of them “judaizing” observed before the Lord’s supper, in imitation of Christ, as they pretended, who first ate the passover, and then instituted the supper. Now there being a great deal of good eating and drinking in this ante-supper, many of them came together for no other end but to partake of that, at least this was their chief view, and not the Lord’s supper; or when they did meet together on this account, it was in such an

irregular and disorderly manner, and they confounded these suppers together, and behaved so ill at them, and ate the Lord's supper so unworthily, that it could not be rightly called eating of it; or when they had eaten their ante-supper in such an indecent way, neither staying for one another, nor keeping within the bounds of temperance and sobriety; at least having indulged their carnal appetites to such a degree, and raised themselves to such a pitch of gaiety and cheerfulness; it was not fit for them to eat the Lord's supper, to go from such a full meal to the table of the Lord. This was called the Lord's supper, because he was the author of it; and he is the subject of it; and for him, the remembrance of him, it is appointed, kept up, and continued. The Syriac version understands it of the Lord's day, and reads it thus, "when therefore ye meet together, not as is fit for", or becomes, ˆrmd hmwyl, "the day of our Lord, do ye eat and drink".

Ver. 21. *For in eating*, etc.] Not at the Lord's table, but at tables spread for them in the place of divine worship, where everyone brought his own food, under a pretence that others, particularly the poor, should eat with him; but instead of that, he sat down and ate it himself, and would not stay till the rest came, to eat together:

but everyone taketh before other his own supper; that is, without tarrying till all came together, in order to eat a friendly meal with each other, to encourage and increase brotherly love, one would sit down and fill himself before another came; so that some went without, whilst others had too much; and thus the designed end was not answered, and the whole was a piece of confusion and disorder:

and one is hungry, and another drunken; he that came late had nothing to eat, and so was hungry; when he that was first either eat and drank to excess, or at least very plentifully, so that he was very cheerful, and more disposed to carnal mirth, than in a serious and solemn manner to partake of the Lord's supper; and who is thought to be the rich man, who brought his own provisions, and ate them himself when he had done; as the poor may be meant by the hungry, who having no food to bring with them, and none being communicated to them by the rich, were in want, and starving; so that here were many abuses justly chargeable on them. Dr. Lightfoot is of opinion, that by him that was "drunken" meant the Jew that ate the paschal supper, of which he ate and drank freely; and by him that was "hungry", the Gentile, who was so not out of poverty and necessity, but because he

refused and avoided eating of the ante-supper, as savouring of Judaism; and so here was a schism and division among them.

Ver. 22. *What? have ye not houses to eat and drink in*? etc.] This shows that one taking his supper before another, was not in their own houses, before they came to the place of divine worship, but in the house of God; and the apostle suggests, that if they must have their ante-suppers, and were disposed to eat and drink freely, before they partook of the Lord's supper, it was more decent and orderly, and less reflected upon the honour of religion and the ordinances of Christ, to eat and drink in their own houses; in which they were not only more private and retired, but which they had for such purposes; whereas the house of God was not for any such use, nor should they meet together there on such an account; at least, such disorderly, unequal, and intemperate feasts there, were very scandalous and reproachful: and it was contrary to a Jewish canon to eat and drink in the synagogues, which runs thus [f229],

> "in the synagogues they do not use a light behaviour, nor do they eat and drink in them;"

though they sometimes speak of travellers eating and drinking and lodging in the synagogues [f230], yet they interpret these of places adjoining to them:

or despise ye the church of God; that is, expose it to contempt and scorn; meaning either the community, the people of God gathered together in a Gospel church state; or the place where they met for public worship, which the Ethiopic version calls, "the house of God"; which was rendered very contemptible by such disorderly practices;

and shame them that have not; no houses to eat in, or supper to eat, or any of this world's goods, or money to purchase food for themselves; who must be confounded and put to shame, when, coming in expectation of being fed, the provisions were eaten up by the rich before they came, or, however, were not allowed to partake when they did come; this was such a respecting of persons, as was justly culpable in them by the apostle.

Ver. 23. *For I have received of the Lord*, etc.] The apostle observes unto them the rule, use, and end of the Lord's supper; his view in it is, to correct the disorders among them, and to bring them to a strict regard to the rule which had such a divine authority stamped upon it; and to observe to them, that in that supper all equally ate and drank; and that the end of it was not a paschal commemoration, but a remembrance of Christ, and a declaration of

his sufferings and death. The divine authority of the Lord's supper is here expressed; it was not only instituted by him as Lord, having all power and authority in and over his churches, to appoint what ordinances he pleases; but the plan and form of administration of it were received from him by the apostle. This was not a device of his, nor an invention of any man's, nor did he receive the account from men, no not from the apostles; but he had it by revelation from Christ, either when he appeared to him at his first conversion, and made him a minister of the Gospel; or when he was caught up into the third heaven, and heard things unspeakable and unutterable:

that which also I delivered unto you; for whatever he received from Christ, whether a doctrine or an ordinance, he faithfully delivered to the churches, from whom he kept back nothing that was profitable, but declared the whole counsel of God unto them: now this he refers the Corinthians to, as a sure rule to go by, and from which they should never swerve; and whatever stands on divine record as received from Christ, and delivered by his apostles, should be the rule of our faith and practice, and such only;

that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed; or delivered; as he was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God the Father, and as he was by himself, who voluntarily gave himself up into the hands of men, justice and death, for our offences; and so the Arabic version reads it here, "in the night in which he delivered up himself"; as he did in the garden to Judas and his company: it was in the night when he came in search of him with officers, and a band of soldiers, and when he betrayed him and delivered him into their hands; and that same night, a little before, our Lord instituted and celebrated the ordinance of the supper with his disciples. The time is mentioned partly with regard to the passover it followed, which was killed in the evening and ate the same night in commemoration of God's sparing the firstborn of Israel, when at midnight he destroyed all the firstborn of Egypt, and so was a night to be observed in all generations; and because this feast was to be a supper, and therefore it is best to observe it in the evening, or decline of the day. The circumstance of Judas's betraying him is mentioned, not only because it was in the night, and a work of darkness; but being in the same night he instituted the supper, shows the knowledge he had of his death by the means of the betrayer, and his great love to his disciples, his church and people, in appointing such an ordinance in remembrance of him, and his death, when he was just about to leave them:

took bread; from off the table, out of the dish, or from the hands of the master of the house; an emblem of his body, and of his assumption of human nature; of his taking upon him the nature of the seed of Abraham, of that body which his Father prepared for him, in order to its being broken; or that he might in it endure sufferings and death for his people.

Ver. 24. *And when he had given thanks*, etc.] So (<42219>Luke 22:19), but (<40265>Matthew 26:26) and (<41422>Mark 14:22) say "he blessed"; not the bread, but his Father; for to bless and give thanks is one and the same thing with the Jews; so we often read of their blessing for the fruits of the earth, for wine and bread; concerning which they have these rules [f231],

> "he that blesseth for the wine, before food, frees the wine that is after food; he that blesseth for the dessert before food, frees the dessert after food; tph l[Ærb, "he that blesseth for the bread", frees the dessert, for the dessert does not free the bread;"

or excuse from a blessing for that again;

> "if they sit at eating, everyone blesses for himself; if they lie (upon couches) µlkl Ærbm dja, "one blesses for them all"; when wine is brought to them whilst they are eating, everyone blesses for himself: if after food, "one blesses for them all";"

our Lord conformed to these rules, he blessed and gave thanks for the bread separately, and he afterwards blessed, or gave thanks for the wine; and as he and his disciples lay at table, he blessed and gave thanks for them all; for this is not to be understood of any consecration of the bread by a certain form of words, changing its nature and property, and converting it into the body of Christ; but either of asking a blessing of his Father upon it, that whilst his disciples were caring of it, their faith might be led to him, the bread of life, and to his broken body, and spiritually feed and live on him, and receive spiritual nourishment from him; or else of giving thanks to his Father for what was signified by it, for the true bread he gave unto his people, meaning himself; and for that great love he showed in the gift and mission of him; and for the great work of redemption, and all the benefits of it he had sent him to procure, and which were just on finishing; and for all the might, strength, and assistance, he gave to him as man and Mediator, in completing the business of salvation for his people; which was the joy set before him, and which filled his heart with pleasure and thankfulness; both these senses may be joined together, and may direct us

as to the matter of blessing and giving thanks at the supper; for no form of words is pointed out to us; what were the express words our Lord used we know not:

he brake it; as a symbol of his body being wounded, bruised, and broken, through buffetings, scourgings, platting of a crown of thorns, which was put upon his head, and piercing his hands and feet with nails, and his side with a spear; for which reason the right of breaking the bread in this ordinance ought literally and strictly to be observed: Christ himself took the bread and brake it, denoting his willingness to lay down his life, to suffer and die in the room of his people; and this action of breaking the bread was used in order to be distributed, and that everyone might partake, as all the Israelites did at the passover, and not as these Corinthians at their ante-suppers, when one was full and another hungry; but Christ broke the bread, that everyone might have a part, as every believer may and ought, who may eat of this bread, and drink of the wine, and feed by faith on Christ, and take every blessing procured by him to themselves:

and said, take, eat; that is, to his disciples, to whom he gave the bread, when he had took and given thanks and brake it, bidding them take it; receive it into their hands, as an emblem of their receiving him, and the blessings of his grace in a spiritual sense, by the hand of faith; and eat the bread put into their hands, as a symbol of their eating and living by faith on Christ as crucified, as having loved them, and given himself for them;

this is my body; in opposition to, and distinction from, jsp lç wpwg, "the body of the passover", as the lamb was called [f232]; meaning not his mystical body the church, of which he is head, though this is one bread, and one body, (<461017>1 Corinthians 10:17) but his natural body, and that not properly, as if the bread was really changed into it; for the bread in the supper, after the blessing over it, and thanks given for it, retains its same nature, properties, form, and figure, only is set apart for the use of commemorating the broken body of Christ; and therefore this phrase is to be understood in a figurative sense, that it was a sign and seal of his body; it being broken into pieces represented his wounds, bruises, sufferings, and death; just in such sense as the rock is said to be Christ, in (<461004>1 Corinthians 10:4) not that that was really Christ, but was a type and sign of him: which is

broken for you; for though a bone of him was not broken, but inasmuch as his skin and flesh were torn and broken by blows with rods and fists, by

whippings and scourgings, by thorns, nails, and spear; and body and soul were torn asunder, or divided from each other by death; and death in Scripture is expressed by rbç, "breaking"; (see <24911>Jeremiah 19:11) his body might be truly said to be broken, and that for his people; not merely to confirm his doctrine, or set an example of patience, or only for their good; but in their room and stead, as their surety and substitute:

this do in remembrance of me; signifying that it was not a passover commemoration, or a remembrance of the Israelites going out of Egypt; which because done in the night, as that was, and following upon the passover, the judaizing Christians among the Corinthians took it to be in remembrance of that; having imbibed that notion which the Jews then had, and still retain, that their deliverance from Egypt will be remembered in the days of the Messiah [f233];

> "^yrykzm, "they commemorate" the going out of Egypt in the nights; says R. Eleazer ben Azariah, lo, I am about seventy years of age, and I never was worthy to say, that the going out of Egypt was recited in nights, till Ben Zoma expounded what is said, (<051603>Deuteronomy 16:3) "that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt; all the days of thy life; days of thy life", mean days; "all the days of thy life", nights; but the wise men say, "the days of thy life"; mean this world, and "all the days of thy life" include the days of the Messiah:"

now the apostle mentions these words of our Lord, to show that the design of the institution of this ordinance of the supper was not in commemoration of the deliverance of the Jews out of Egypt; but it was in remembrance of himself, of what he did and suffered on the behalf of his people: particularly the eating of the bread was intended to bring to remembrance how the body of Christ was wounded, bruised, and broken for them; how he bore their sins in his own body on the tree, and suffered, and made satisfaction for them; and which was spiritual food for their faith when they reflected on it, and could not fail of bringing to their remembrance the love of Christ in all, when this was the case.

Ver. 25. *After the same manner also he took the cup*, etc.] That is, off from the table, or out of the hands of the master of the house, and blessed or gave thanks, as he did before when he took the bread; (see <402627>Matthew 26:27 <411423>Mark 14:23), "when he had supped"; the Syriac, Arabic, and

Ethiopic versions, read, “when they had supped”; which give a true sense, though not a literal translation; for both Christ and his disciples had supped, having both eaten the passover supper, and the bread, the principal part in the Lord’s supper, when he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them:

saying, this cup is the New Testament, or covenant,

in my blood; alluding to the old covenant, which was ratified and confirmed by the blood of bulls, and which was called “the blood of the covenant”, (<2408>Exodus 24:8) but the new covenant was established with Christ’s own blood, of which the wine in the cup was a sign and symbol; for neither the cup, nor the wine in it, can be thought to be the covenant or testament itself, by which is meant the covenant of grace, as administered under the Gospel dispensation; called new, not because newly made, for it was made from everlasting; or lately revealed, for it was made known to our first parents immediately after the fall, and to other saints in succeeding ages, though more clearly exhibited by Christ under the present dispensation; but it is so called in distinction from the old covenant, or former mode of administration of it, under the Mosaic economy; and it is always new, and will be succeeded by no other; and it provides for and promises new things, and which are famous and excellent, and preferable to all others. Now this is said to be “in the blood” of Christ; that is, it is ratified, and all its blessings and promises are confirmed by his blood: hence his blood is called “the blood of the everlasting covenant”, (<581320>Hebrews 13:20), pardon and righteousness, peace and reconciliation, and entrance into the holiest of all, all come through this blood, and are secured by the same; and to which the faith of the saints is directed in this ordinance, to observe, receive, and enjoy for themselves:

this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me; of his soul’s being poured out unto death; of his blood being shed for the remission of sins; and of his great love in giving himself an atoning sacrifice to divine justice, and laying such a foundation for solid peace and joy in the hearts of his people.

Ver. 26. *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup*, etc.] Not any bread, or any cup: but what is ate and drank in an ordinance way, and according to the institution and appointment of Christ, and with a view to the end proposed by him; and though there is no set fixed time for the administration of this ordinance, yet this phrase seems to suggest that it

should be often: and very plainly signifies, that the bread and wine, after the blessing or thanksgiving, remain such, and are not converted into the real body and blood of Christ; but are only outward elements representing these to faith;

ye do show the Lord's death till he come; or rather, as it may be rendered in the imperative mood, as an exhortation, direction or command, "show ye the Lord's death till he come"; since everyone that eats and drinks at the Lord's table does not show forth his death, which is the great end to be answered by it; for the design of the institution of it is to declare that Christ died for the sins of his people: to represent him as crucified; to set forth the manner of his sufferings and death, by having his body wounded, bruised, and broken, and his blood shed; to express the blessings and benefits which come by his death, and his people's faith of interest in them; and to show their sense of gratitude, and declare their thankfulness for them; and all this, "till he come"; which shows the continuance of this ordinance, which is to last till Christ's second coming, where the carnal ordinances of the former dispensation were shaken and removed; and also the continuance of Gospel ministers to the end of the world, to administer it, and of churches to whom it is to be administered: this assures of the certainty of Christ's second coming; as it leads back to his coming in the flesh, suffering and dying in our stead, and thereby obtaining redemption for us; it leads forward to expect and believe he will come again, to put us into the full possession of the salvation he is the author of; when there will be no more occasion for this ordinance, nor any other, but all will cease, and God will be all in all. The apostle here refers to a custom used by the Jews in the night of the passover, to show forth the reason of their practice, and that institution to their children; when either [f234]

> "the son asked the father, or if the son had not understanding (enough to ask), then the father taught him, saying, how different is this night from all other nights? for in all other nights we eat leavened and unleavened bread, but in this night only unleavened; in all other nights we eat the rest of herbs, but in this night bitter herbs; in all other nights we eat flesh roasted, broiled, and boiled, in this night only roasted; in all other nights we wash once, in this night twice; and as elsewhere [f235] it is added, in all other nights we eat sitting or lying, in this night all of us lie; and according to the capacity of the child, the father teaches him,"

particularly he was to inform him what these several things showed forth, or declared [f236]; as that

> "the passover dygm, "declared", or "showed forth", that the Lord passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt; the bitter herbs "showed forth", that the Egyptians made the lives of our fathers bitter in Egypt; and the unleavened bread "declared" that they were redeemed; and all these things are called hdgh, "the declaration", or showing forth:"

and there is a treatise called jsp lç hdgh, "the showing forth of the passover"; in which, besides the things mentioned, and many others, it is observed [f237], that it was commanded the Jews rpsl, "to declare" the going out of Egypt, and that everyone that diligently declares the going out of Egypt, is praiseworthy: now the apostle observes this end of the Lord's supper, to show forth his death, in opposition to the notion of the "judaizing" Christians at Corinth, who thought of nothing else but the showing forth of the passover, and the declaration of that deliverance and redemption wrought for the people of Israel; whereas the true and only intent of it was to show forth the death of Christ, redemption by him, and the greatness of his love expressed therein, and which is to be continued till his second coming; whereas the time was come when it should "be no more said, the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt", (<24164>Jeremiah 16:14).

Ver. 27. *Wherefore*, etc.] Since this is the plain institution of the Lord's supper, the form and manner of administering of it; and since the bread and wine in it are representations of the body and blood of Christ, and the design of the whole is to remember Christ, and show forth his death; it follows, that

whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. The bread and cup are called the bread and cup of the Lord; because ate and drank in remembrance of him, being symbols of his body and of his blood, though not they themselves; these may be eaten and drank "unworthily", when they are eaten and drank by unworthy persons, in an unworthy manner, and to unworthy ends and purposes. The Lord's supper may be taken unworthily, when it is partook of by unworthy persons. This sense is confirmed by the Syriac version, which renders it hl awç alw, "and is not

fit for it", or is unworthy of it, and so the Ethiopic version; now such are all unregenerate persons, for they have no spiritual life in them, and therefore cannot eat and drink in a spiritual sense; they have no spiritual light, and therefore cannot discern the Lord's body; they have no spiritual taste and relish, no spiritual hungerings and thirstings, nor any spiritual appetite, and can receive no spiritual nourishment, or have any spiritual communion with Christ: and so are all such persons, who, though they may profess to be penitent ones, and believers in Christ, and to have knowledge of him, and love to him; and yet they have not true repentance, neither do they bring forth fruits meet for it, and so as they are improper subjects of baptism, they are unworthy of the Lord's table; nor have they faith in Christ, at least only an historical one, and so cannot by faith eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of God, nor perform the ordinance in a way well pleasing to God; nor have they any spiritual knowledge of Christ, only what is speculative and notional, and so cannot discern the Lord's body; nor any real love to him, and therefore very improper persons to feed on a feast of love; nor can they affectionately remember Christ, or do what they do from a principle of love to him, and therefore must be unworthy receivers: as likewise are all such professors, whose lives and conversations are not as become the Gospel of Christ; such crucify Christ afresh, and put him to open shame, and are therefore unfit to show forth his crucifixion and death; they bring a reproach on the Gospel and ordinances of Christ, and cause his name, and ways, and truths to be blasphemed, and grieve the members of the churches of Christ, and therefore ought not to be admitted to the table of the Lord: indeed, no man is in himself worthy of such an ordinance, none but those whom Christ has made so by the implantation of his grace, and the imputation of his righteousness; and whom he, though unworthy in themselves, invites and encourages to come to this ordinance, and to eat and drink abundantly. Moreover, this ordinance may be attended upon in an unworthy manner; as when it is partook of ignorantly, persons not knowing the nature, use, and design of it; or irreverently, as it was by many of the Corinthians, and it is to be feared by many others, who have not that reverence of the majesty of Christ, in whose presence they are, and who is both the author and subject of the ordinance; or without faith, and the exercise of it on Christ, the bread of life, and water of life; or unthankfully, when there is no grateful sense of the love of God in the gift of his Son, nor of the love of Christ, in giving himself an offering and sacrifice for sin; or when this feast is kept with the leaven of malice and wickedness, and with want of brotherly love, bearing an ill will to, or

hatred of, any of the members of the church, To all which may be added, that this bread and cup are ate and drank unworthily, when they are partook of to unworthy ends and purposes; as to qualify for any secular employment, and to gain any worldly advantage; or to be seen of men, and to be thought to be devotional and religious persons; or to commemorate anything besides Christ; as the "judaizing" Corinthians did the "paschal" lamb; or to procure eternal life and happiness thereby, fancying that the participation of this ordinance gives a meetness for, and a right to glory: now such unworthy eaters and drinkers are "guilty of the body and blood" of the Lord; not in such sense as Judas, Pontius Pilate, and the people of the Jews were, who were concerned in the crucifixion of his body, and shedding of his blood, the guilt of which lies upon them, and they must answer for another day; nor in such sense as apostates from the faith, who, after they have received the knowledge of the truth, deny it, and Christ, the Saviour; and so crucify him afresh, and put him to open shame, count the blood of the covenant a common or unholy thing, and tread under foot the Son of God; at least, not every unworthy receiver of the Lord's supper is guilty in this sense; though there might be some among the Corinthians, and is the reason of this awful expression, who looked upon the body and blood of Christ as common things, and made no more account of them than of the body and blood of the passover lamb; but in a lower sense, every unworthy communicant, or that eats and drinks unworthily, may be said to be guilty of the body and blood of Christ, inasmuch as he sins against, and treats in an injurious manner, an ordinance which is a symbol and representation of these things; for what reflects dishonour upon that, reflects dishonour on the body and blood of Christ, signified therein.

Ver. 28. *But let a man examine himself*, etc.] Whether he has a true sense of sin, sorrow and repentance for it; otherwise he will see no need of a Saviour, nor will he look to Christ for salvation, or be thankful to him for redemption by him; all which are necessary in a due observance of this ordinance; also, whether he is in the faith, whether he is a partaker of the true grace of faith, which is attended with good works, and shows itself by love to Christ, and to the saints; whereby a man goes out of himself to Christ for spiritual food and strength, peace and comfort, righteousness, life, and salvation; and by which he receives all from Christ, and gives him all the glory: this is absolutely necessary to his right and comfortable partaking of the Lord's supper, since without faith he cannot discern the Lord's body, nor, in a spiritual sense, eat his flesh, and drink his blood, nor

attend on the ordinance in a manner acceptable unto God. Let him also examine and try whether he is sound in the doctrine of faith; or let him prove himself to be so, or show that he is one that is approved thereby; to whom the word of faith has come with power, and who has received it in the love of it, and firmly believes it; since an heretic is to be rejected from the communion of the church, and to be debarred the ordinances of it: let him examine himself, whether Christ is in him, whether he is revealed to him, and in him, as God's way of salvation, and the hope of glory; whether he is formed in his soul, his Spirit put, and his grace implanted there; since if Christ is not within, it will be of no avail to partake of the outward symbols of his body and blood. But if a man, upon reflection, under the influence and testimony of the Spirit, can come to a satisfaction in these things, however mean and unworthy he may seem in his own sight, let him come to the table of the Lord, and welcome.

And so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup; none should discourage or hinder him; nor should he deprive himself of such a privilege, to which he has an undoubted right. There seems to be an allusion in these words to what the master of the family used at the passover, when he said [f238]:

> "everyone that is hungry, lwkyw yty, "let him come and eat", and everyone that hath need or ought, let him keep the passover."

Ver. 29. *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily*, etc.] As before explained, (<461127>1 Corinthians 11:27) "eateth and drinketh damnation to himself"; or guilt, or judgment, or condemnation; for by either may the word be rendered; nor is eternal damnation here meant; but with respect to the Lord's own people, who may through unbelief, the weakness of grace, and strength of corruption, behave unworthily at this supper, temporal chastisement, which is distinguished from condemnation with the world, and is inflicted in order to prevent it, (<461132>1 Corinthians 11:32) and with respect to others it intends temporal punishment, as afflictions and diseases of body, or corporeal death, as it is explained in (<461130>1 Corinthians 11:30). This they may be said to eat and drink, because their unworthy eating and drinking are the cause and means of it. Just as Adam and Eve might be said to eat condemnation to themselves and posterity, because their eating of the forbidden fruit was the cause of it. So the phrase, "does not eat condemnation", is used in the Persic version of (<430318>John 3:18) for "is not condemned". And let it be observed, that such an one is said to eat and

drink this judgment or condemnation to himself, and not another; he is injurious to nobody but himself: this may serve to make the minds of such easy, who are not so entirely satisfied with some persons who sit down with them at the Lord's table, when they consider that it is to their own injury, and not to the hurt of others they eat and drink:

not discerning the Lord's body. This is an instance of their eating and drinking unworthily, and a reason why they eat and drink condemnation to themselves, or contract guilt, or expose themselves either to chastisement or punishment; because they distinguish not the Lord's supper from an ordinary and common meal, but confound them together, as did many of the Corinthians, who also did not distinguish the body of Christ in it from the body of the paschal lamb; or discern not the body of Christ, and distinguish it from the bread, the sign or symbol of it; or discern not the dignity, excellency, and usefulness of Christ's body, as broken and offered for us, in which he bore our sins on the tree, and made satisfaction for them; a commemoration of which is made in this ordinance.

Ver. 30. *For this cause many are weak and sickly*, etc.] Because of their unworthy participation of the Lord's supper, many in the Corinthian church were attended with bodily infirmities and diseases; either by way of fatherly chastisement and correction in such who were truly the Lord's people, though they had behaved unworthily; or by way of punishment to such who were not, and had sinned very grossly:

and many sleep; that is, die a corporeal death, which is often in Scripture signified by sleep, and frequently used of the saints, and their death, and may intend and include some of them here; for though the Lord might resent so far their unworthy conduct and behaviour at his table, as to remove them out of this world by death, yet their souls may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Ver. 31. *For if we would judge ourselves*, etc.] Examine, try, and prove ourselves as above directed, before we eat and drink; or condemn ourselves, by confessing, acknowledging, and mourning over sin, and by repentance for it; or separate ourselves from the company of profane sinners, come out from among them, and touch not their unclean things; or join with them in their unfruitful works of darkness:

we should not be judged; by the Lord; he would not inflict these diseases, sicknesses, and death.

Ver. 32. *But when we are judged*, etc.] This is said by way of consolation to the saints, that when the hand of the Lord is upon them, and he is afflicting them, they should consider these things, not as the effects of his vindictive wrath and justice, as proper punishments for their sins, but as fatherly chastisements for their good:

we are chastened of the Lord; as children by a father, in love and kindness, in order to bring to a sense of sin, repentance for it, and acknowledgment of it, and behave the better for the future:

that we should not be condemned with the world; the world of ungodly men, the men of the world, carnal, worldly, and Christless sinners. There is a world, a multitude of them that will be condemned. So far has Christ been from dying for the redemption and salvation of every individual person in the world, that there is a world of men that will be righteously condemned at the last day. Now the present afflictions and chastisements of the saints are laid upon them, and blessed to them for their spiritual good, that they may not be condemned to the second death, to everlasting fire, to endless damnation, or be punished with everlasting destruction along with them.

Ver. 33. *Wherefore, my brethren*, etc.] Though he had said some very awful and awakening things to bring them to themselves, to reclaim them, and rectify disorders among them; yet he hoped well of them in general, and softens the severe things he had said, by calling them “brethren”; and hereby prepares them to attend to, and receive the more kindly, what he had further to say:

when ye come together to eat; that is, when ye come to the place of public worship at the usual stated time, in order to eat the Lord’s supper, tarry one for another; do not begin to celebrate the ordinance until the church is met together in general, or at least till as many are got together as may be expected will come; for a church is not obliged to tarry for every individual person; nor can it be thought that every member can attend, there being various providences which may detain them: the apostle’s view is to promote unity, Christian respect, and brotherly love in the ordinance; that they would sit down and join together, according to the rule of Christ, without respect to persons, or going into parties, factious, and divisions.

Ver. 34. *And if any man hunger let him eat at home*, etc.] Whereby the apostle shows his dislike of their ante-suppers in the place of public

worship, at which they behaved in so indecent a manner, neglecting the poor, and too freely indulging themselves; and therefore if anyone was hungry, and could not wait till the Lord’s supper was over, let him eat at home before he come to the place of worship, and satisfy his appetite, that he might with more ease and decency attend the table of the Lord:

that ye come not together unto condemnation or judgment; that is, that you may so behave when ye come together, that you may not bring upon you the judgment of the Lord, either by way of punishment or chastisement; that is to say, bodily diseases or death.

And the rest will I set in order when I come: meaning, not doctrines of faith, but things respecting ecclesiastical order and polity, which were amiss among them.

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 12

In this chapter the apostle discourses concerning spiritual gifts, showing the author, nature, use, and excellency of them; compares the church to an human body, and in a beautiful manner sets forth the symmetry and subserviency of the members of it to one another, being set in different places, and having different gifts; and enumerates the several offices and gifts in the church, and yet suggests there is something more excellent than them. He intimates, that spiritual gifts are valuable things, and should be taken notice of; nor would he have the saints ignorant of them, and therefore gives the following account, (<461201>1 Corinthians 12:1) and yet he would not have those that have them be proud of them, and lifted up with them; for which reason he puts them in mind of their former state in Heathenism, to make and keep them humble, (<461202>1 Corinthians 12:2) and points out such who have the Spirit of God, the author of all gifts and grace; not such who call Jesus accursed, but they that call him Lord, (<461203>1 Corinthians 12:3) which Holy Ghost, who is called Spirit, Lord, and God, is the author of the different gifts bestowed upon men, (<461204>1 Corinthians 12:4-6) the end of bestowing which gifts is the profit of others, (<461207>1 Corinthians 12:7) of which gifts there is an enumeration in nine particulars, (<461208>1 Corinthians 12:8-10) of each of which the Spirit of God is the worker and giver, according to his sovereign will and pleasure, (<461211>1 Corinthians 12:11) and which are all for the good of the whole community; which is illustrated by the simile of an human body, which as it consists of many members, and is but one, so Christ mystical, or the church, though it consists of divers persons, yet they are all one in Christ, and all their gifts are for the service of each other, (<461212>1 Corinthians 12:12) which unity is proved and confirmed by the saints being baptized by one Spirit into one body, the church, and by drinking of him, or partaking of the same grace, (<461213>1 Corinthians 12:13) and in order to show the usefulness and profit of every spiritual gift, even the meanest, to the churches of Christ, and that none might be despised, he enlarges upon the metaphor of the human body he had compared the church to, and by it illustrates the unity of the church, and the members of it, (<461214>1 Corinthians 12:14) and shows that the inferior

members should not envy the superior ones, or be dejected because they have not the same gifts: and conclude from hence, that they are not, or deserve not, to be of the same body, (46015 1 Corinthians 12:15,16) seeing it is convenient and absolutely necessary that there should be many members, and these set in different places, and have different gifts and usefulness; and particularly what should make them easy is, that God has placed them according to his will and pleasure, (46017 1 Corinthians 12:17-20). And, on the other hand, he shows, that the more noble, and excellent, and useful members, ought not to despise the lower, meaner, and more ignoble ones, partly because of the usefulness and necessity of them, they cannot do without them, (46021 1 Corinthians 12:21,20) and partly because of the honour put upon them, (46023 1 Corinthians 12:23,24), and all this is so ordered, that there be no schism, but that there should be a mutual care of one member for another, and that they should sympathize with each other, (46025 1 Corinthians 12:25,26). This simile the apostle more plainly and particularly accommodates and applies to the church, the body of Christ, and the members of it, and of one another, (46027 1 Corinthians 12:27) and gives an enumeration of the several officers and offices in the church, set there by God himself; and there are no less than eight of them, some greater than others, most of them proper and peculiar to the primitive church, though some perpetual, and which still continue, (46028 1 Corinthians 12:28) but in the times in which they were all of them in being and use, every member of the church was not possessed of them, only some, though all had more or less the advantage of them, (46029 1 Corinthians 12:29,30). Wherefore, he concludes with an exhortation to the saints to covet the best of those gifts; and yet observes that there was something more excellent than them, and preferable to them, which he was about to show them, (46031 1 Corinthians 12:31) and hereby he makes an easy transition to the next chapter, in which he recommends charity, and prefers it to gifts.

Ver. 1. *Now concerning spiritual gifts*, etc.] Though the word “gifts” is not in the original text, it is rightly supplied by our translators, as it is in the Arabic version: for the apostle does not mean spiritual graces, nor spiritual words, or doctrines, nor spiritual meats and drinks, nor spiritual men, each of which are mentioned before in this epistle; though the latter is thought by some to be here intended, and that the apostle’s view is to show the difference between those that are spiritual, and those that are not; but as spiritual gifts are the subject of the apostle’s discourse throughout this chapter, and the two following, they seem very manifestly to be designed

here. The apostle having gone through various heads of discourse, which he either of himself, or at the request of others, wrote upon, proceeds to a new subject, that of spiritual gifts, which he seems to have been desired to give his thoughts upon, and advice about; since there were some in this church who were discouraged, because they had not the gifts which some had; and others that had them were elated and puffed up with them, and treated those below them with neglect and contempt; and with a view to both these the apostle writes as follows,

brethren, I would not have you ignorant; neither of the author of these gifts, who is the Spirit of God, who dispenses them according to his sovereign will and pleasure, and not according to the deserts of men, and are not acquired by the industry, or through the merit of any, but are his free grace gifts; nor of the nature of them, for there are differences and diversities of them, some have one, and some another, but no man all; nor of the design and use of them, which is the edification of the whole body; and every gift, though ever so mean, is of service; and therefore as, on the one hand, none ought to be discouraged, so, on the other hand, none should be lifted up with pride, or give way to a boasting spirit.

Ver. 2. *Ye know that ye were Gentiles*, etc.] That is, by religion; hence the Syriac version renders it apnj, "profane" persons, given up to wickedness, bigotry, and superstition; for by nation they were Gentiles still; and which must be understood of one part of this church only; for some of them were Jews, as is clear from many passages in the epistle to this church, and practices referred to. This the apostle observes to humble them, by putting them in mind of what they had been formerly; they were born and brought up in the Heathen religion, when they knew not the true God, much less had any knowledge of Christ, and still less of the Spirit of God; and therefore if they were favoured with any of his gifts, these must be owing to his grace, and not to their deserts, and therefore they ought not to glory: he adds, with the same view,

carried away unto these dumb idols; to idols that were nothing in the world, had no divinity in them, as he had before asserted; to dumb ones, that had mouths, but could not speak, the oracles that were delivered from them, being spoken not by them, but were either satanical delusions, or the jugglings of a priest; to these they were carried by the power of Satan, the influence of their priests, and the orders of their magistrates, to consult them as oracles, to pay their devotions to them, and do them service:

even as ye were led; that is, to these dumb idols; the Syriac adds, ˆçrwp ald, "without any difference", not being able to distinguish between these and the true God; and to whom they were led as brute beasts were, that were sacrificed unto them, or as blind men are led by the blind, as they were by their blind and ignorant priests; and therefore, if they had now received the Spirit, and his gifts, they ought to ascribe the whole to the free grace of God, and be humble under a sense of their unworthiness.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore I give you to understand*, etc.] Or "I make known unto you"; what I am about to say are certain truths, and to be depended on,

that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; or "anathema", as did the unconverted Gentiles, who knew nothing of Jesus but by report; which report they had from the Jews, his enemies; and by that report he appeared to them to be a very wicked and detestable person, who was put to death by the means of his own countrymen, was hanged upon a tree, and so to be counted and called accursed: the apostle seems to have reference to the sense these Corinthians had of Jesus, and what they called him before their conversion; whence it appeared that they spoke not by, nor were they possessed of the Spirit of God then, and therefore their having of him now was an instance of pure grace; or else respect is had to the Jews, who not only, whilst Jesus was living, blasphemed him, but continued to call him accursed after his death, whilst they were in their own land; and after the destruction of their city and temple, they continued, as Justin Martyr observes [f239] to Trypho the Jew, to "curse" Christ, and them that believed in him; and to this day privately call him by such names as will hardly bear to be mentioned, were it not for the explanation of such a passage: thus they [f240] call him tw[wçy, "Jesus the perverse", or he that perverteth the law of God; and "Jesu", the name they commonly give him, they say is the abbreviation of wrkzw wmç jmy, "let his name and memory be blotted out"; and which they sometimes explain by hb[wtw rqç "Jesu is a lie, and an abomination: they call him a strange God, and vanity" [f241], and often by the name of ywlt [f242], "one that was hanged", and so with them accursed; and which seems to be the name the Jews, in the apostle's time, gave him, and to which he here refers. Now, as in the former verse he may have regard to the Gentiles, so in this to the Jews in this church, who, before conversion, had so called Christ, when it was plain they had not the Spirit of God then, or they could not have so called him; and therefore if they were partakers of him now, they ought to admire divine grace, and

not glory in themselves, and over others. Dr. Lightfoot thinks, that Jewish exorcists who strolled about, and pretended to do miracles by the Holy Ghost, and yet called Jesus “anathema”, are meant, of whom the Corinthians might assure themselves that they did not speak, nor act, nor were acted by the Spirit of God. The words may be applied to all such as detest and deny the doctrines of Christ, respecting his person and office; as that he is come in the flesh, is the true Messiah, the Son of God, truly and properly God; that his death is a proper sacrifice, and full satisfaction for sin; and that justification is by his imputed righteousness: without any breach of charity it may be said, such persons do in effect call Jesus accursed, nullifying his person, sufferings, and death, as to the dignity and efficacy of them; and cannot be thought to have, and speak by, the Spirit of God, who if they had him, would teach them otherwise. Moreover, as the word “anathema” here used answers to µrj, “Cherem”, a form of excommunication among the Jews; it may be truly said that such call Jesus accursed, or “anathema”, who, if I may be allowed the expression, excommunicate him out of their sermons and faith; these crucify him afresh, trample him under foot, count his blood as a common thing, and do malice to his Spirit; and therefore cannot be thought to have him, and speak by him.

And that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost; or Jehovah; which, with the Jews, was a name ineffable, to which the apostle might have respect. Christ is Lord of all, of angels, good and bad; of men, righteous and wicked; of the chief among men, the kings, princes, and lords of the earth; as he is God by right of nature, and as Creator of them by virtue of that; and because of his providential power and influence in the government of the universe; he is Lord of his church and people, by the Father’s gift of them to him; by his espousal of them to himself; by the purchase of his blood; and by the conquests of his grace; and as appears by the various relations he stands in to them, as father, husband, head, King, and master. Now, though a man may historically say all this, as the devils may, and hypocritically, as formal professors and foolish virgins do now, and will at the last day; and as all men then will by force, whether they will or not, confess that Jesus is Lord, who have not the Spirit of God; yet no man can call him his Lord, can appropriate him to himself truly and really, as his Lord, Saviour, and Redeemer, as David, Thomas, the Apostle Paul, and others have done; but by the Spirit; since such an appropriation includes spiritual knowledge of Christ, strong affection to him; faith of

interest in him, an hearty profession of him, and sincere subjection to him; all which cannot be without the Spirit of God: for he is the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; and true love to Christ is a genuine fruit of his; faith in Christ, is entirely of his operation; and a subjection to the righteousness of Christ, and to his ordinances, is through the influence of his grace; and it is owing to his witnessings that any can truly, and in faith, claim their interest in him. Upon the whole, the apostle's sense is, let a man pretend to what he will, if he does not love Jesus Christ, and believe in him, he is destitute of his Spirit; and whoever loves Christ, and believes in him, and can call him his Lord in faith and fear, however mean otherwise his gifts may be, he is a partaker of the Spirit of God.

Ver. 4. *Now there are diversities of gifts*, etc.] Of spiritual ones, as in (462011 Corinthians 12:1) which spring from the free grace, and good will and pleasure of God, and are not owing to the merits of men; and therefore such who have the largest share of them should not boast of them as acquired by themselves, or be puffed up on account of them; and those who have the smallest measure should be content and thankful; for though the gifts are different, some have greater, and others lesser, none have all, but all have some, yet not alike:

but the same Spirit; is the author and giver of all as he pleases; the lesser gifts, and the smallest degree of them, come from the Spirit of God, as well as the greater. Gifts here seem to be the general name for all that follow; and

administrations and

operations are the two species of them; and of these a particular account is afterwards given.

Ver. 5. *And there are differences of administrations*, etc.] Or ministries; offices in the church, ministered in by different persons, as apostles, prophets, pastors, or teachers and deacons; who were employed in planting and forming of churches, ordaining elders, preaching the word, administering ordinances, and taking care of the poor; for which different gifts were bestowed on them, they not all having the same office.

But the same Lord; meaning either Jesus Christ, whom the believer, by the Holy Ghost, says is Lord; who, as the ascended King of saints, and Lord and head of the church, appoints different offices and officers in it; and having received, gives gifts unto them, qualifying them for the same; all

which comes through the same hand, and not another's; or rather the Lord, the Spirit, who calls men to these several ministrations, separates and fits them for them, and constitutes and installs them into them, and assists them in the discharge of them; since he only, and all along, is spoken of in the context as the efficient of these several things.

Ver. 6. *And there are diversities of operations*, There are some that are ordinary, as the good work of grace, and the several parts of it, the work of faith, the labour of love, and patience of hope, which the Spirit of God begins, carries on, and finishes in all the elect of God, and members of Christ; and there are others which are extraordinary, and are here meant, and hereafter specified.

But it is the same God which worketh all in all. Interpreters in general understand by God here, God the Father; as by the Lord in the preceding verse, the Lord Jesus Christ, as distinct from the Spirit in (1 Corinthians 12:4) and apprehend that this furnishes out a considerable proof of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, which I will not deny; but I rather think that the Holy Ghost is designed in each verse, by Spirit, Lord, and God; since the various gifts, administrations, and operations, are particularly and peculiarly ascribed to him in the following verses; and the distribution of them is said to be the effect of his sovereign will; and so we have a most illustrious testimony of his proper deity and personality; who is the only true "Jehovah" with the Father and Son, to which the word "Lord" in the New Testament generally answers, and who is the omnipotent God, "which worketh all in all"; all the works of nature throughout the universe, and all the, works of grace in the hearts of all his people, and all the extraordinary operations effected by any of them.

Ver. 7. *But the manifestation of the Spirit*, etc.] Not that which the Spirit manifests, as the grace and love of God, an interest in Christ, the doctrines of the Gospel, and the things of another world; for he is a spirit of revelation, more or less, in the knowledge of these things; but that which manifests that a man has the Spirit of God; or rather the gifts of the Spirit, as the fruits and graces of the Spirit, the least measure of which, as being able to say that Jesus is Lord, shows that a man has the Spirit of God; or rather the gifts of the Spirit, ordinary or extraordinary, which are such as manifestly declare their author:

is given to every man; not that the special grace of the Spirit is given to every individual man in the world, nor to every member of a visible church,

for some are sensual, not having the Spirit; but as the same graces of the Spirit are given to every regenerate man, for all receive the same spirit of faith, so the gifts of the Spirit, more or less, either ordinary or extraordinary, are given to all such persons;

to profit withal; not to make gain of, as Simon Magus intended, could he have been possessed of them; nor to encourage pride or envy, or to form and foment divisions and parties; but for profit and advantage, and that not merely private, or a man's own, but public, the good of the whole community or church, to which the least grace or gift, rightly used, may contribute.

Ver. 8. *For to one is given by the Spirit*, etc.] Now follows a distinct and particular enumeration of the operations of the Spirit, though not all of them, yet as many as the apostle thought necessary; and which are called the manifestation of him, and which most clearly show him to be the author of them to different persons;

the word of wisdom: by which is meant "the manifold wisdom of God"; the wonderful scheme of salvation through the incarnation, sufferings, and death of Christ, in which God has "abounded in all wisdom and prudence"; together with all other deep, mysterious, and sublime doctrines of the Gospel, the knowledge of which were peculiarly given to the apostles in the first place, who have the first office or ministry in the church, by "the spirit of wisdom"; and which they had a faculty, a gift of declaring, opening, and explaining unto others.

To another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; meaning either knowledge of future events; or an universal knowledge of the Scriptures of truth, and the doctrines contained in them, of the whole mind and will of God therein, which is a distinct thing from saving grace: (see <460312>1 Corinthians 13:2,8,9) and is what was given to the prophets, the second office in the church, by him who is the spirit of prophecy, and by whom the prophetical writings were dictated; and therefore he is the best interpreter of them, and who only can lead into the true knowledge thereof.

Ver. 9. *To another faith by the same Spirit*, etc.] Not the grace of faith, which is common to all believers, though given by the same Spirit: but rather the doctrine of faith, and ability to preach it, and boldness and intrepidity of spirit to assert and defend it in the face of all opposition; all which are from the Spirit of God, and are more or less given to pastors and

teachers, the third office in the church. Though generally this is understood of a faith of working miracles, as in (<460302>1 Corinthians 13:2) but the working of miracles is mentioned afterwards as distinct, unless it can be thought that this is the general name for miracles, and the rest that follow the particulars of them.

To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; of healing all manner of sicknesses and diseases: this power Christ gave his disciples, when he first sent them out to preach the Gospel, and which he repeated when he renewed and enlarged their commission after his resurrection; and which was exercised with effect, sometimes only by overshadowing the sick with their shadows, as by Peter, (<440515>Acts 5:15,16) sometimes by, laying hands on them, as the father of Publius, and others, were healed by Paul, (<442808>Acts 28:8,9) and sometimes by anointing with oil, (<590514>James 5:14). Now these gifts were bestowed in common, by the Spirit, on apostles, prophets, and pastors, or elders of the church, in those early times: the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, “by one Spirit”.

Ver. 10. *To another the working of miracles*, etc.] Or “powers”: mighty deeds, wonderful works, such as are apparently above, and out of the reach of nature, and beyond the compass of human power and skill; such as raising the dead, causing the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, and the like; of which, see some instances in (<440306>Acts 3:6 9:41 14:8-10 20:9,10). Though others understand by these the extraordinary powers the apostles had of punishing offenders; of which the striking Ananias and Sapphira dead, by Peter, the smiting Elymas the sorcerer with blindness, by Paul, and the delivering the incestuous person, and Hymenaeus, and Alexander, to Satan, by the same apostle, are instances.

To another prophecy: either foretelling of future events, as was given to Agabus, and the four daughters of Philip, and others, (<441127>Acts 11:27,28 21:9,10) or a gift of understanding the prophecies of the Old Testament, and of preaching the Gospel, which is in this epistle frequently called “prophesying”, particularly in the two following chapters; and those endowed with it are called prophets, (<441301>Acts 13:1 <490411>Ephesians 4:11 <461429>1 Corinthians 14:29,32,37).

To another discerning of spirits; by which gift such that were possessed of it could, in some measure, discern the hearts of men, their thoughts, purposes, and designs, their secret dissimulation and hypocrisy; as Peter,

by this gift, discerned the dissimulation and lying of Ananias and Sapphira; and by it they could also tell whether a man that made a profession of religion had the truth of grace in him, or not; so Peter knew hereby that Simon Magus was in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, notwithstanding his specious pretences to faith and holiness, whereby he imposed upon Philip the evangelist, who might not have this gift of discerning spirits; by which also they could distinguish the Spirit of God from the lying spirits in men; of which there is an instance, (<44157>Acts 15:17,18).

To another divers kinds of tongues; whereby such could speak all manner of languages, which they had never learned, understood, and been used to: this Christ promised his disciples, when he sent them into all the world to preach the Gospel, (<41616>Mark 16:16,17) and so anticipates an objection they otherwise might have made, how they should be able to preach it to all, so as to be understood, when they were not acquainted with the languages of all nations; an instance of which we have in the apostles on the day of Pentecost, (<44104>Acts 2:4) and which continued many years after with them, and other persons in the churches; (see <46302>1 Corinthians 13:2 14:5,22).

To another the interpretation of tongues; one that had this gift, when a discourse was delivered in an unknown tongue, used to stand up and interpret it to the people, without which it could be of no use to them; and sometimes a person was gifted to speak in an unknown tongue, and yet was not capable of interpreting his discourse truly and distinctly in that the people understood: (see <46413>1 Corinthians 14:13). The rules to be observed in such cases, and by such persons, see in (<46427>1 Corinthians 14:27,28).

Ver. 11. *But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit*, etc.] Though these gifts, ministrations, and operations, are so different in themselves, and are bestowed upon different persons, yet they are all wrought by one and the same Spirit of God, who is the true Jehovah, and properly God, as these his works declare; for who, but the most high God, could ever communicate such gifts to men?

Dividing to every man severally as he will; giving one man this gift, and another that; imparting such a measure to one, and such a portion to another, just as seems good in his sight. For as his special grace in regeneration is dispensed when and where, and to whom he pleases, signified by the blowing of the wind where it listeth, (<43008>John 3:8) so his

gifts, ordinary and extraordinary, are severally distributed, according to his sovereign will and pleasure. This is a clear and full proof of the personality of the Spirit, who is not only distinguished from his gifts, and the distribution of them, which is a personal act described to him; but this is said to be done according to his will, which supposes him an intelligent agent, capable of choosing and willing; and whose will agrees with the Father's, and with the Son's.

Ver. 12. *For as the body is one*, etc.] That is, an human body; for of this the apostle speaks, and takes a simile, and forms a comparison from, showing the union among saints, and their mutual participation of the various gifts of the Spirit; for an human body is but one body, and not more.

And hath many members; as eyes, ears, hands, feet, etc.].

And all the members of that one body being many are one body; as numerous as they may be, they all belong to, and make up but one body; performing different offices, for which they are naturally fitted for the good of the whole:

so also to Christ; not personal, but mystical; not the head alone, or the members by themselves, but head and members as constituting one body, the church. The church, in union with Christ, the head, is but one general assembly, and church of the firstborn written in heaven, though consisting of the various persons of God's elect, who are closely united one to another, and their head Christ; and therefore are denominated from him, and called by his name; (see <450903>Romans 9:3 <243316>Jeremiah 33:16).

Ver. 13. *For by one Spirit are we all baptized*, etc.] This is to be understood not of water baptism; for the apostle says not in one, and the same water, but "by", or "in" one Spirit, are we all baptized; the baptism of water, and of the Spirit, are two different things; (see <400311>Matthew 3:11). Besides, all that are baptized in water, are not baptized in or by the Spirit, as the case of Simon Magus, and that of others, show; nor does water baptism incorporate persons into the church of Christ; neither into the invisible church, which is the body of Christ, and here meant; nor into a visible Gospel church state; they being indeed true believers, and baptized, are proper persons to be received into a church; but baptism itself does not put them into it, or make them members of it: persons may be baptized in water, and yet may never be joined to a church. There is indeed an allusion

made to water baptism, but it is the grace of the Spirit in regeneration and sanctification which is here intended; which grace, both in the Old and in the New Testament, is frequently signified by water, and called a baptism, or a being baptized, because of the plenty, abundance, and superabundance of it, then bestowed; and is expressed by floods and rivers, and a well of living water; and is what qualifies and fits persons for the ordinance of water baptism. Now this is wrought by the Spirit of God, and is owing to his divine power and energy; not to water baptism, which has no regenerating virtue in it; nor to carnal regeneration, or a being born of blood, or of the best of men; nor to the will of any man; nor to the will of the flesh, or the power of man's freewill; but to God, to the Spirit, who is Lord and God, and the only sanctifier of the sons of men; by which spiritual baptism, or by whose grace in regeneration and conversion they are brought into one body: the mystical body of Christ, the universal and invisible church; that is, openly and manifestatively; for otherwise it is the grace of God in election, and in the everlasting covenant, choosing them in Christ, as members in their head, and constituting them such, that puts them among that number; but spiritual baptism, or the sanctifying grace of the Spirit, makes them appear to belong to that body, and makes them meet for, and gives them a right unto, a particular Gospel church, and the privileges of it, which the Spirit of God directs and brings them to. Whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; it matters not of what nation, or of what state and condition of life persons be; if they are regenerated and sanctified, they appear equally to belong to Christ, to be of his body, and have an equal propriety in all immunities and blessings belonging to his people; (see <51301>Colossians 3:11 <48328>Galatians 3:28)

and have been all made to drink into one Spirit; are all partakers of the same graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, love, etc. and daily receive under his guidance, direction, and influence, out of the same fulness of grace in Christ, from whence they draw and drink this water with joy; and all drink the same spiritual drink, the blood of Christ, whose blood is drink indeed: and there may be in this clause an allusion to the ordinance of the supper, as in the former to the ordinance of baptism. Moreover, all new born babes, as they desire the sincere milk of the word, so they drink of it, and are refreshed with it, and are nourished by the words of faith, and sound doctrine, under the application, of the Spirit; and being trees of righteousness, and the planting of the Lord, the Spirit, they are watered by his grace, under the ministrations of the Gospel; and as they become one

body under Christ, the head, so they are made to drink into one Spirit, or to become of one heart and soul with one another, being knit together in love, the bond of perfectness.

Ver. 14. *For the body is not one member*, etc.] Not only one; nor is anyone member the body, though ever so eminent, as the head or eye: thus the church of Christ is not one person only, or does not consist of one sort of persons; as only of Jews, or only of Gentiles, or only of rich and freemen, or only of men of extraordinary gifts and abilities, or greatly eminent for grace and spiritual knowledge:

but many; members, as the Arabic version adds; as eyes, ears, hands, feet, etc. so in the mystical body of Christ, the church, there are many members, some in a higher station, others in a lower; some of greater gifts, grace, and usefulness, others of lesser; some Jews, other Gentiles; some bond, others free; yet all one in Christ the head, and all related to each other.

Ver. 15. *If the foot shall say*, etc.] The lowest member of the body, which is nearest the earth, treads upon it, sustains the whole weight of the body, and performs the more drudging and fatiguing exercises of standing and walking; and may represent one that is in the lowest station in the church, a doorkeeper in the house of God; one that is really the least of saints, as well as thinks himself so; and has the smallest degree of heavenly affection, and knowledge of spiritual light and understanding;

because I am not the hand; the instrument of communication and of action; and may signify such an one, that liberally imparts to the necessities of others, who has it both in his hand and heart, and is ready to communicate; one that is full of good works, of charity towards men, and piety towards God; who does all things, Christ strengthening him, natural, civil, moral, and evangelical; yea, even miracles and mighty deeds are done by his hand:

I am not of the body; have no part in it, am no member of it, do not belong to it:

is it therefore not of the body? or “it is not therefore not of the body”, as the Syriac version renders it; that is, it is not “for this word”, as the Arabic, or so saying, as the Ethiopic, not of the body; it nevertheless belongs to it, and is a member of it, nor can it be otherwise: thus the meanest person in the mystical body, the church, though he should say, that because he is not so handy and useful as another, cannot give so largely, nor do so much as another, therefore he is no proper member of the church; it does not follow

that so it is, for Christ, the head of the church, regards such as members; he admires the “beauty” of his church’s “feet”, and has provided for the covering, ornament, and security of them, being himself clothed with “a garment down to the feet”, which equally covers and adorns that part of the body as the rest; he does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, or despise the day of small things; he regards their prayers, and takes notice and accepts of their meanest services; and they are, and should be considered as members of the body, by the rest and by themselves, the mystical body, the church, though he should say, that because he is not so handy and useful as another, cannot give so largely, nor do so much as another, therefore he is no proper member of the church; it does not follow that so it is, for Christ, the head of the church, regards such as members; he admires the “beauty” of his church’s “feet”, and has provided for the covering, ornament, and security of them, being himself clothed with “a garment down to the feet”, which equally covers and adorns that part of the body as the rest; he does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, or despise the day of small things; he regards their prayers, and takes notice and accepts of their meanest services; and they are, and should be considered as members of the body, by the rest and by themselves.

Ver. 16. *And if the ear shall say*, etc.] The organ that receives sounds, and can distinguish them, and in which member is placed the sense of hearing; and may design such as are hearers of the word of God, not merely externally, but internally; who hear so as to love, savour, and relish it; so as to understand and believe it, and to act in compliance with it; and distinguish it for themselves, though they may not be able to give a distinct account of it to others, or instruct others in it:

because I am not the eye: the organ of seeing, in which is seated the visive faculty, and which receives light, and uses it for the good of the body, whose superintendent it is; and may be expressive of the ministers of the Gospel, who are that to the church, as eyes are to the body; they are the light of the world, have a clear insight into the doctrines of the Gospel, and communicate their light to others; they are set in the highest place in the church, and as watchmen and overseers there, to instruct; guide, and direct the members of it:

I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? it certainly is; and so such as are only hearers of the Gospel, being affectionate, believing,

understanding and fruitful hearers; though they have not such large knowledge and clear light, so as to be capable of overseeing and instructing others, yet are true and useful members of the church, are highly respected by Christ the head, and to be had in esteem by their fellow members, who may be superior to them.

Ver. 17. *If the whole body were an eye*, etc.] And nothing else,

where were the hearing? there would be no ear, and so no sense of hearing: and if the whole were hearing: or only consisted of a member capable of the sense of hearing,

where were the smelling? there would be no nose, the organ of smelling, and that sense would be wanting: thus if the church only consisted of ministers of the Gospel, of men of eminent light and knowledge, qualified for the preaching of the word to others, there would be no hearers; and on the other hand, if it only consisted of hearers, of such who only could hear the word to their own advantage, there would be none of a quick understanding, or of a quick smell to discern perverse things, to distinguish truth from error, to discern spirits, and direct the rest of the members to wholesome and savoury food, and preserve them from what would be hurtful and pernicious to them.

Ver. 18. *But now hath God set the members*, etc.] The members of a natural body, as they are all made and fashioned by God in the form they be, so they are each of them set by him in the place they are:

everyone of them in the body as it hath pleased him; according to his sovereign will, without consulting any; and each stands in the best situation and position they could be put, and for the greatest service and usefulness to the whole: so God, and not man, hath set every member in the mystical body, the church, in such a place and part of it, as he himself thought fit; some in a higher, others in a lower station, but all for the good of the body; and therefore each member ought to be content with his place, gift, and usefulness, be they what they will; since it is the wise counsel and sovereign pleasure of God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, that so it should be.

Ver. 19. *And if they were all one member*, etc.] As all eye, or all ear, or all hand, or all foot:

where were the body? where would be the body? it would not be a body consisting of such proper and suitable members, as now it is: so if the community of the saints were either all ministers, or all hearers, etc. there would be no body, consisting of different persons, to receive any benefit or usefulness from either; the church of Christ would not be that uniform, useful, and consistent community it is.

Ver. 20. *But now are they many members*, etc.] Of different make and shape, in different parts and places, and of different use and service:

yet but one body; all are united together, and make up one complete body, and which without each of them would not be perfect: so there are many members in the body of Christ, the church; some are teachers, others are hearers; some give, and others receive; but all make up but one church, of which Christ is the head; nor can anyone of them be spared; was anyone wanting, even the meanest, there would be a deficiency, and the church would not be the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Ver. 21. *And the eye cannot say unto the hand*, etc.] Every member of the natural body is useful and necessary. The eye, the seat of the sense of seeing, cannot say to the communicating and working hand,

I have no need of thee: I can do without thee: so the seers and overseers of the church, the ministers of the Gospel, cannot say to the liberal and munificent hands, we have no need of you; for as the one stand in need of the light, instruction, comfort, advice, and direction of the other, so the other stand in need of communication from them; and as God has made it a duty, that he that is taught in the word should communicate to him that teacheth in all good things; and as it is his ordinance that they which preach the Gospel should live of it; so he has generally ordered it in his providence, that they that teach should need such assistance:

nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. The head, which is the seat of the senses, and is superior to, and has the command and government of all the members of the body, cannot say to the lowest and most distant parts of it, the feet, you are needless and useless; so those that are set in the first place in the church, are over others in the Lord, and have the rule over them, cannot say to those that are under them, and submit unto them, even the lowest and meanest of them, that they are of no use and service to them; they can no more be without them, than the head can

be without the feet, or than princes can do without subjects, or magistrates without citizens, or generals without soldiers.

Ver. 22. *Nay, much more those members of the body*, etc.] The apostle, in a beautiful gradation, proceeds to take notice of such parts of the body as are more weak, dishonourable, and uncomely, showing the necessity and usefulness of them:

which seem to be more feeble; than others, do not consist of a strong bony substance, and are not fenced with sinews, as the belly and its intestines: yet these

are necessary; nor could the body be sustained, nourished, and refreshed, without them; so the more weak and feeble saints, whose hearts and hands are to be strengthened, whose infirmities are to be bore, have their usefulness; and the effectual working in the measure of every part, even of the feeble and tender, maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of itself in love: and these God has seen fit, as necessary to call by his grace, and place in the body, that his strength may be made perfect in their weakness, and to confound the mighty; and out of the mouths even of babes and sucklings to ordain strength and praise.

Ver. 23. *And those members of the body*, etc.] As the back parts of it:

which we think to be less honourable; though greatly useful,

upon these we bestow more abundant honour; by clothing them, for a man's garments are his honour and glory; (see Gill on "Matthew 6:29"), so the poor members of Christ's church, who are thought to be, though they really are not, the less honourable, have the more abundant honour conferred on them by God and Christ: God has chosen the poor of this world; Christ has sent his Gospel to them; these the Spirit calls and sanctifies, and makes them all glorious within; these Christ has given his churches a particular charge to take care of now, and will own them as his brethren at the great day, before angels and men; as he now greatly honours them with his presence, a large experience of his grace, and the supply of his Spirit:

and our uncomely parts; which distinguish sexes, and are appointed for generation;

have more abundant comeliness; by an external covering and ornament, to preserve decency and modesty. I do not know who should be designed by these, unless backsliding believers, who have been suffered to fall into great sins; these are the uncomely parts of the church, who, when made sensible of their evils, are restored again, and received into the church; and a mantle of love is cast over all their failings; and all possible care taken that their faults may not be exposed to the world, that so the name of God, and ways of Christ, may not be blasphemed and evil spoken of.

Ver. 24. *For our comely parts have no need*, etc.] As the face, eyes, nose, lips, cheeks, etc. which stand in no need of an external covering, of any outward ornament: so such as are blessed with the bounties of nature and providence, with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and are eminent for grace and holiness, and are enabled to walk worthy of their calling, and to have their conversations as become the Gospel of Christ, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, these have no need of such a covering, as the former have, to hide and conceal them from the world:

but God hath tempered the body together; he hath composed it in such a forth, constituted it in such an order, mixed and united all its parts in such a manner, as that they are all beneficial to each other; and such is the harmonious contexture of the whole, that it is a most beautiful structure:

having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked; or, as the Syriac version renders it, "which is the least"; and such is the temperament and constitution of the church, having mixed rich and poor persons, of greater and lesser gifts, together, for mutual good.

Ver. 25. *That there should be no schism in the body*. etc.] No complaint of one member against another, as useless and unnecessary; no murmuring on that account; no tumults and rioting; no rebellion and insurrection of one against another; no dissension, no division. The use Menenius [f243] Agrippa made of this simile, applying it to the body politic, as the apostle here does to the spiritual body, for the appeasing of a sedition among the people; is well known, and usually mentioned by interpreters on this place:

but that the members should have the same care one for another; that is, they are so tempered and mixed together, are in such close union with, and have such a dependence on each other, that they are necessarily obliged to take care of each other's good and welfare, because they cannot do one without another; and so God has ordered it in the church, that persons

should be so placed in it, and gifts disposed of among them in such a manner, that every man is obliged, not only to look on, and be concerned for his own things, that he takes care of himself, and performs his office, but that he looks every man on the things of others, his good and safety being involved in theirs.

Ver. 26. *And whether one member suffer*, etc.] Pain; even the meanest, lowest, and most distant, as the foot or hand, toe or finger:

all the members suffer with it; are more or less affected therewith, and bear part of the distress; as is easily discerned, by their different forms and motions on such an occasion: so when anyone member of the mystical body is in affliction, whether inward or outward, of body or mind, the rest are, or should be, affected with it, condole, sympathize, help, and assist; and remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, as if they themselves were in bonds, and them that suffer adversity, whether spiritual or temporal, as being in the body, not only in the flesh, but as being part of the body, the church; and therefore should weep with them that weep, and bear a part with them in their sorrows. The Jews have a saying [f244], that

> "if one brother dies, all the brethren grieve; and if one of a society dies, hlwk hrwbhh lk gadt, "the whole society grieves";"

and also another [f245],

> "that everyone that afflicts himself, rwbyxh µ[, "with the congregations", is worthy to see or enjoy the comfort of the congregation or church;"

or one member be honoured; by being set in the highest place, and employed to the greatest usefulness, or by being most richly and beautifully clothed and adorned:

all the members rejoice with it; as sharing in the honour, Or benefit of it: so if one member of the church of Christ is honoured with an high office, with great gifts, with a large measure of grace, spiritual light, knowledge, and experience, with great discoveries of the love of God, with the presence of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, or with the good things of this life, and an heart to make use of them for the interest of religion, the other members rejoice at it; for so it becomes the saints to rejoice with them that rejoice, and be glad, both at the temporal and spiritual prosperity of each other: and upon the whole it is clear, that the

meanest have no reason to be discouraged, nor the highest and greatest to be proud and elated.

Ver. 27. *Now ye are the body of Christ*, etc.] Not his natural body, which his Father prepared for him, in which he bore our sins on the tree, and which was offered up once for all; nor his sacramental body, or the bread in the supper, which is a representation of his body; but his body mystical, the church; not that the Corinthians were the whole of the body, only a part of it, as every single congregational church is of the church universal. This is an accommodation of the simile the apostle had to so much advantage enlarged upon:

and members in particular; or in part: meaning either that they as single members were part of the general body: or that only a part of them were so, there being some among them, as in all particular and visible churches, who had not the true grace of God; and so are neither members of Christ, nor of the general assembly and church of the firstborn: or the sense is, that they were not only members of Christ, and of his body, but were particularly members one of another, in strict union and close communion, and of mutual use and service to each other.

Ver. 28. *And God hath set some in the church*, etc.] As before the apostle gives an account of the various different gifts of the Spirit, qualifying men for service in the church of Christ, here he enumerates the several offices and officers:

first apostles; as were the twelve disciples, and Paul the apostle; men that were immediately sent by Christ himself, and had their commission and doctrine directly from him; and a power of working miracles, to confirm the truth of their mission and ministry; they were sent into all the world to preach the Gospel, to plant churches everywhere, and to ordain officers in them; they were not confined to any particular church, but had power and authority in all the churches, to preach the word, administer ordinances, advise, counsel, direct, reprove, and censure:

secondarily, prophets; who either had the gift of foretelling things to come, as Agabus and others; or who had a peculiar gift, by divine revelation, of explaining the prophecies of the sacred writings, and of preaching the Gospel:

thirdly, teachers; the same with pastors, elders, and overseers; the ordinary ministers of the word, who have a gift of expounding the Scriptures; not by

extraordinary revelation, but by the ordinary gift of the Spirit, in the use of means, as reading, meditation, and prayer; and whose work is to preach the word, administer ordinances, feed and govern particular churches, over whom they are set: after that miracles; which is to be understood, not of some persons, as distinct from apostles, prophets, and teachers, who also had the power of working miracles; but from persons and officers in the church, the principal of which the apostle had mentioned, he passes to things, which belonged at least to some of them; unless it can be thought that there were in those times private Christians, who were neither apostles nor prophets, nor teachers, and yet had a power of doing miracles:

then gifts of healing; the sick, by anointing them with oil, which was only one species of doing miracles; and which was sometimes performed, not only by apostles, and such like extraordinary persons, but by the common elders and ordinary officers of the church:

helps: meaning either the ministers of the word in common, who are helpers of the faith and joy of the saints, and are means of increasing their knowledge and spiritual experience, and of establishing them in the truth; (see <441827>Acts 18:27 <470124>2 Corinthians 1:24) or else such evangelists and ministers of the word as were assistants to the apostles, such as Mark, and Timothy, and Titus; or rather the deacons of churches, whose business it is to take care of tables; the Lord's table, the minister's, and the poor's, and all the secular affairs of the church; and so are helps to the minister, relieve him, and free him from all worldly concerns, that he may the better attend to prayer, and the ministry of the word. These, whether one or the other, are so called, in allusion to the priests and Levites, who were hyd[sm, "helps", or assistants to the high priest, in the burning of the red heifer, and in other things [f246]:

governments; some by these understand the same with pastors and elders, who have the rule and government of the church; others lay elders, a sort of ruling elders in the church, as distinct from pastors. Dr. Lightfoot thinks such are intended, who had the gift of discerning spirits. I rather think with Deuteronomy Dieu, that the word designs counsellors; see the Septuagint in (<201114>Proverbs 11:14 24:6) and here intends such as are men of wisdom and prudence, who are very proper persons to be consulted and advised with, by the pastor, elder, or overseer, in matters of moment and importance in the church:

diversities of tongues; such as have the gift of speaking with divers tongues; or of interpreting them, or both. The Vulgate Latin version and some copies add, “interpretations of tongues”.

Ver. 29. *Are all apostles*? etc.] No some are prophets, as distinct from apostles; and some are teachers, as distinct from them both, and some are neither:

are all prophets? no; some are apostles, above them, and some are teachers, inferior to them; and but very few there were who had that peculiar character and gift:

are all teachers? no; the far greater part of the members of churches are hearers, or persons that are taught in the word; are neither in the office of teaching, nor have they the qualifications for it.

Are all workers of miracles? no; in those early times, when the gift of doing miracles was bestowed, it was not given to all, only to some; and now there are none that are possessed of it.

Ver. 30. *Have all the gifts of healing*? etc.] No; when these gifts were in being, all had them not. When anointing with oil, in order to heal the sick, was in use, it was only performed by the elders of the church, not by the common members of it, who were to be sent for by the sick on this occasion:

do all speak with tongues? no; it was not true in fact, as they well knew; though this was greatly coveted after, as a following chapter of this epistle shows;

do all interpret? that is, unknown tongues, strange languages; or can they? no. This also was a peculiar gift bestowed on some persons only.

Ver. 31. *But covet earnestly the best gifts*, etc.] Which may be rendered either indicatively as an assertion, “ye do covet earnestly the best gifts”: of prophesying and teaching, of doing miracles, healing diseases, speaking with, and interpreting, different tongues and languages; but I can, and do show you something that is better, and more excellent than these: or, by way of interrogation, “do ye covet earnestly the best gifts?” do you zealously affect them, fervently desire them, and emulate one another in your endeavours after them? I have something to observe to you which exceeds them all, and which you would do well to follow after, and eagerly

pursue; or imperatively, as an exhortation, as it is rendered by our translators: and by the best gifts may be meant, the best of these external gifts before mentioned; and not those of the highest class, and the more extraordinary, but which are the most useful and beneficial to the church, as preaching or prophesying was: the Corinthians seemed most covetous and desirous of speaking with different tongues; but the apostle shows, in (<4601>1 Corinthians 14:1-40), by divers reasons, that prophesying was preferable, being more serviceable and useful to the church, and so more eligible and to be desired by them, to which he may have regard here: or else by them are meant the internal graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, and love, which are all of them gifts of God's grace; all useful and valuable, and better than all external extraordinary gifts whatever, which a man might have, and be nothing, be lost and damned; whereas he that believes in Christ, has a good hope through grace, and love in his soul to God, Christ, and his people, though he is destitute of the other gifts, shall certainly be saved; wherefore these are the gifts which men should be solicitous for and covet after, and be greatly concerned to know that they have them, and to be content without the other:

and yet show I unto you a more excellent way: if by the best gifts are designed the above graces of the Spirit, then by "the more excellent way", Christ must be meant, the author and object of these graces; who is the way to the covenant, and to a participation of all the blessings of it, as justification, pardon, adoption, and eternal life; the way into a Gospel church, and to all the ordinances of the Gospel dispensation, as baptism, and the Lord's supper; for faith in him is the prerequisite, and proper qualification for the enjoyment of each of these: Christ is the way of salvation, and the way to the Father, and to heaven and eternal happiness; and an excellent one he is, the more, yea, the most excellent; he is the only way to each of these; he is the new and living way, a plain and pleasant one; and so a safe and secure one, in which all that walk shall certainly be saved: now this way the apostle showed, declared, pointed out in the ministry of the word; it was his chief and principal business, the sum of his doctrine, to make known Christ, and him crucified, as the way, the truth, and the life; to direct souls to him, and to show them the way of salvation by him: but if by the best gifts are meant the more useful ones of those before mentioned, as prophesying, or preaching, then the more excellent way designs grace, special and internal grace; and that either grace in general, regenerating, sanctifying grace, including all sorts of grace; which

is the way of a soul's passing from the death of sin to a life of faith and holiness; and is the way to eternal glory, and which gives a meetness for it, and is inseparably connected with it. This is a more excellent way than gifts; for gifts, be they ever so great, may be lost or taken away, through disuse or misimprovement; but grace always remains, can never be lost, nor will ever be taken away, but will issue in everlasting life: men may have the greatest gifts, and yet not be saved, as Judas and others; but he that has the least degree of faith in Christ, hope in him, and love to him, shall be saved by him with an everlasting salvation: or particularly the grace of charity, or love to the saints, may be intended by the more excellent way; which is the evidence of a man's passing from death and life; the new commandment of Christ, and the fulfilling of the law; without which, a man, though he has never such great gifts, he is nothing as a Christian, nor in the business of salvation; and is the greatest of all the graces of the Spirit; and is of such a nature, that when prophecies, tongues, knowledge, and all external gifts shall fail, and even the internal graces of faith and hope shall cease, the one being changed for vision, and the other swallowed up in enjoyment, this will continue; and the rather this grace may be thought to be meant, since the apostle immediately passes to treat it in the next chapter, and prefers it to all gifts, and even graces.

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 13

This chapter is taken up in the commendation of the grace of charity, or love, which is preferred to all gifts whatsoever; is described by its properties and effects, and particularly its duration; on which account it is represented as more excellent than other principal graces. The apostle prefers it to gifts, by which it appears to be the more excellent way, he speaks of in the latter part of the preceding chapter: he begins with the gift of tongues, which without charity makes a man noisy, but not spiritual, (<4601>1 Corinthians 13:1) he next mentions the gifts of knowledge of the mysteries of the Gospel, and of preaching them; and also the gift of working miracles, on the account of which a man thinks himself something, and yet with all these, not having the grace of love, he is nothing, (<4602>1 Corinthians 13:2) to which he adds alms deeds and martyrdom, and observes, that a man may do the one in the most extensive manner, and suffer the other in the most dreadful shape; and yet if love be wanting, from whence, as a principle, all actions and sufferings should flow, these will be of no avail, (<4603>1 Corinthians 13:3) and then the apostle proceeds to describe and commend this grace, by its effects and properties, and that in sixteen particulars; by which it appears to be exceeding useful, and what adorns and recommends the person possessed of it, (<4604>1 Corinthians 13:4-8) and enlarges upon the last, namely, the duration and perpetuity of it; showing that the gifts of knowledge, speaking with tongues, and preaching, shall fail, but this will not, (<4608>1 Corinthians 13:8) the failure of these gifts he proves from the imperfection of them, which therefore must be removed in a perfect state of things, (<4609>1 Corinthians 13:9,10) this he illustrates, by comparing the present imperfect state to childhood, and the future one to manhood, which he exemplifies in himself, (<4611>1 Corinthians 13:11) the imperfect knowledge of the one he compares to looking at objects through a glass, and to an enigma, riddle, or dark saying; and the perfect knowledge of the other, to seeing face to face, without any artificial help, (<4612>1 Corinthians 13:12) and he concludes this excellent commendation of charity by observing, that it is not only preferable to gifts, but even to graces, and these the more eminent, and which are

abiding graces too, as faith and hope; and yet charity exceeds these, both as to its duration and use, (<4613>1 Corinthians 13:13).

Ver. 1. *Though I speak with the tongues of men*, etc.] That is, of all men, all languages that men anywhere speak, or have been spoken by them. The number of these is by some said [f247] to be "seventy five"; but the general opinion of the Jews is, that at the confusion of languages at Babel, they were seventy; for they say [f248], that then

> "the holy blessed God descended, and "seventy angels" surrounding the throne of his glory, and confounded the languages of seventy people, and every nation of the seventy had their own language and writing, and an angel set over each nation;"

whether this may be the reason, why the tongues of angels are mentioned here with those of men, let it be considered. Mordecai, they say [f249], was skilled in all these seventy languages, so that when he heard Bigthan and Teresh, who were Tarsians, talking together in the Tarsian language, he understood them. The same is said [f250] of R. Akiba, R. Joshua, and R. Eliezer; yet, they say [f251], that this was one of the qualifications of the sanhedrim, or of such that sat in that great council, that they should understand these seventy languages, because they were not to hear causes from the mouth of an interpreter. It is affirmed [f252] of Mithridates, king of Pontus and Bithynia, that he had "twenty five" nations under his government, and that he so well understood, and could speak the language of each nation, as to converse with men of any of them, without an interpreter. Apollonius Tyaneus [f253] pretended to understand, and speak with the tongues of all men; such a case the apostle supposes here, whether attained to by learning, industry, and close application, or by an extraordinary gift of the Spirit, which latter seems to be what he intends; and the rather he mentions this, and begins with it, because many of the Corinthians were greatly desirous of it; some that had it not, were dejected on that account; wherefore to comfort them, the apostle suggests, that the grace of love which they were possessed of, was abundantly preferable to it; and others that had it were lifted up with it, and used it either for ostentation or gain, or to make parties, and not to the edification of their brethren; which showed want of love, and so were no better than what the apostle hereafter asserts: what he says here and in the following verses, is in an hypothetical way, supposing such a case, and in his own person, that it might be the better taken, and envy and ill will be removed: he adds,

and of angels; not that angels have tongues in a proper sense, or speak any vocal language, in an audible voice, with articulate sounds; for they are spirits immaterial and incorporeal; though they have an intellectual speech, by which they celebrate the perfections and praises of God, and can discourse with one another, and communicate their minds to each other; (see <2003>Isaiah 6:3, <2703>Daniel 8:13) and which is what the Jews [f254] call,

> "blh rwbyd, "the speech of the heart"; and is the speech (they say) µyrbdm µykalmhç, "which the angels speak" in their heart; and is the "pure language", and more excellent than other tongues; is pleasant discourse, the secret of the holy seraphim — and is µykalmh jyç, "the talk of angels"; who do the will of their Creator in their hearts, and in their thoughts:"

this is not what the apostle refers to; but rather the speech of angels, when they have assumed human bodies, and have in them spoke with an audible voice, in articulate sounds; of which we have many instances, both in the Old Testament and the New, wherein they have conversed with divers persons, as Hagar, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Manoah and his wife, the Virgin Mary, Zechariah, and others; unless by the tongues of angels should be meant the most eloquent speech, and most excellent of languages; or if there can be thought to be any tongue that exceeds that of men, which, if angels spoke, they would make use of. Just as the face of angels is used, to express the greatest glory and beauty of the face, or countenance, (<4006>Acts 6:15) and angels' bread is used for the most excellent food, (<1925>Psalm 78:25). Dr. Lightfoot thinks, and that not without reason, that the apostle speaks according to the sense and conceptions of the Jews, who attribute speech and language to angels. They tell us [f255] that R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, who was contemporary with the apostle, and lived to the destruction of Jerusalem, among other things, he was well versed in, understood trç ykalm tjyçw µydç tjyç, "the speech of demons", and "the speech of the ministering angels": and which they take to be the holy tongue, or the Hebrew language; they observe [f256], that

> "the children of men (by whom I suppose they mean the Israelites) are in three things like to the ministering angels; they have knowledge as the ministering angels, and they walk in an erect stature as the ministering angels, trçh ykalmk çdqh ^wçlb

> µyrpsmw, “and they speak in the holy tongue, as the ministering angels”.”

They pretend that the angels do not understand the Syriac language; hence they [f257] advise a man,

> “never to ask for what he wants in the Syriac language; for (says R. Jochanan) whoever asks for what he wants in the Syriac language, the ministering angels do not join with him, for they do not know the Syriac language;”

and yet, in the same page, they say that Gabriel came and taught one the seventy languages: but let the tongues of angels be what they will, and a man be able to speak with them ever so well,

and have not charity; by which is meant not giving of alms to the poor, for in (<460803>1 Corinthians 13:3) this is supposed in the highest degree it can be performed, and yet a man be destitute of charity; nor a charitable opinion of men as good men, let their principles and practices be what they will; for this is not true charity, but rather uncharitableness, and acting the most unkind part to their souls, to consider and caress them as such, when destruction and ruin are in all their ways; but the grace of love is here meant, even love to God, and love to Christ, and love to the saints, which is a grace implanted in regeneration by the Spirit of God; and which, if a person is destitute of, as he may, who has never so great a share of learning, or knowledge of the languages, or even the extraordinary gift of speaking with divers tongues; all his learning is but an empty sound, his eloquence, his diversity of speech, is but like the man’s nightingale, “vox & praeterea nihil”, a voice and nothing else; or as the apostle here says, supposing it was his own case,

I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal; or rather, “the loud”, or “high sounding cymbal”, as in (<190505>Psalm 150:5) which the Septuagint there render by κυμβαλοις αλαλαγμου, a phrase of the same signification with this: for not that little tinkling instrument used by the Heathens is here meant; though what is here said of the cymbal agrees with that; which made a tinkling noise when shaken, or struck with anything, or with one against another; and was an hollow vessel of brass, in form of the herb called “navel wort” [f258]; but rather that musical instrument which bore this name, used in the Jewish worship under the Old Testament; and which, the Jews [f259] say, was an instrument that gave a very great sound; and that

the sound of it was heard as far as Jericho [f260], which was some miles from Jerusalem; they say [f261], that the cymbals were two brazen instruments or pieces of brass, which they struck one against another, and so made a sound. The cymbal was also used in the worship of Heathen deities, and the allusion here in both the things mentioned, is either to the tinkling of brass, and the sounding of cymbals in the worship of idols [f262]; which were mere empty sounds, and of no avail, as is a man's speaking with divers tongues, destitute of the grace of love; or to the confused clamours and noises made upon going to battle, just upon the onset, by drums and cymbals, and ηχειοις χαλκοις, hollow sounding pieces of brass; as appears from Polytenus, Plutarch, Appianus and others [f263]; to which confused noises the apostle compares the most eloquent speech without love. The Greeks had a play they used at feasts, I will not say the allusion is to it here, but leave it to be though of, which they call "Cottabisis"; when, the liquor that was left, they cast into cups of brass, and such whose liquor made the greatest sound in the cup, fancied himself to be loved again, by the person he loved [f264]: sounding brass and tinkling cymbals are inanimate things, things without life, as all such persons are destitute of spiritual life, who are devoid of the grace of love; and though they, by an extraordinary gift, and under a divine impulse, speak with divers tongues, they are but like hollow vessels of brass, and sounding cymbals, which only make a noise when they are stricken, and what they give is a mere empty sound, which is of no profit to themselves; they cannot hear, nor be delighted with it, but are rather hurt, being worn out thereby; nor of no great advantage to others, unless they give a musical sound, and that only delights the ear, but neither feeds nor clothes the body; of such little use and profit are men, speaking with tongues destitute of the grace of love, either to themselves or others.

Ver. 2. *And though I have the gift of prophecy*, etc.] Either of foretelling future events, as Balaam, who foretold many things concerning the Messiah and the people of Israel, and yet had no true love for either; and Caiaphas, who was high priest the year Christ suffered, and prophesied of his death, and was himself concerned in it, being a bitter enemy to him; or of explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, by virtue of an extraordinary gift which some persons had; or of the ordinary preaching of the word, which is sometimes expressed by prophesying, which gift some have had, and yet not the grace of God; (see <501115>Philippians 1:15,16 <400722>Matthew 7:22)

and understand all mysteries; either the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, the mysterious doctrines of the Gospel; such as the trinity of persons in the Godhead, the incarnation of Christ, the unity of the two natures, human and divine, in him, eternal predestination, the doctrines of regeneration, justification, satisfaction, and the resurrection of the dead; all which a man may have a speculative understanding of, and be without love to God or Christ, or to his people: or else the mystical sense of the types, figures, and shadows of the old law; as the meaning of the passover, brazen serpent, and the rock in the wilderness, the tabernacle, temple, sacrifices, and all things appertaining thereunto. The Jews give us an instance [f265] of one who was no lover of Christ, and lived in the times of the apostle; R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, of whom they boast, and who they say was the least of the disciples of Hillell, and yet

> "perfectly understood the Scripture, the Misna, the Gemara, the traditions, the allegorical interpretations, the niceties of the law, and the subtleties of the Scribes, the lighter and weightier matters of the law (or the arguments from the greater to the lesser, and "vice versa"), the arguments taken from a parity of reason, the revolution of the sun and moon, rules of interpretation by gematry, parables, etc."

The apostle proceeds,

and all knowledge; of things natural, as Solomon had; of the heavens, and the stars thereof, of the earth and sea, and all things therein, and appertaining thereunto; of all languages, arts, and sciences; of things divine, as a speculative knowledge of God, and the perfections of his nature, of Christ, his person and offices, of the Gospel, and the doctrines of it:

and though I have all faith; not true, special, saving faith, or that faith in Christ, which has salvation connected with it; for a man cannot have that, and be nothing; such an one shall be certainly saved; and besides, this cannot be without love, and therefore not to be supposed: but all historical faith, an assent to everything that is true, to all that is contained in the Scriptures, whether natural, civil, moral, or evangelical; to all that is contained in the law, or in the Gospel; that faith which believes everything: so the Jews [f266] say, what is faith? that in which is found atwnmyhm lk, "all faith"; or rather the faith of miracles is meant, both of believing and doing all sorts of miracles, one of which is mentioned;

so that I could remove mountains; meaning either literally, a power of removing mountains from one place to another, referring to (<4017>Matthew 17:20) so Gregory of Neocaesarea, called “Thaumaturgus”, the wonder worker, from the miracles done by him, is said [f267] to remove a mountain, to make more room for building a church; but whether fact, is a question; or this may be understood figuratively, (see <6008>Revelation 8:8) for doing things very difficult and wonderful, and almost incredible. The Jews used to call their learned and profound doctors, such as could solve difficulties, and do wondrous things, by the name of mountains, or removers of mountains; thus [f268]

> “they called Rab Joseph, “Sinai”, because he was very expert in the Talmudic doctrines, and Rabbah bar Nachmani, µyrh rqw[, “a rooter up of mountains”; because he was exceeding acute in subtle disputations.”

Says Rabba [f269] to his disciples,

> “lo, I am ready to return an answer smartly to everyone that shall ask me, as Ben Azzai, who expounded in the streets of Tiberias; and there was not in his days such a µyrh rqw[, “rooter up of mountains”, as he.”

Again [f270],

> “Ula saw Resh Lekish in the school, as if µyrh rqw[, “he was rooting up the mountains”, and grinding them together; says Rabenu, does not everybody see R. Meir in the school, as if he was “rooting up the mountains of mountains”, and grinding them together?”

They [f271] elsewhere dispute which is the most honourable to be called, “Sinai” or a remover of mountains;

> “one says “Sinai” is the more excellent name; another says “the rooter up of mountains” is the more excellent; Rab Joseph is Sinai, and Rabbah the remover of mountains;”

the gloss says the former is so called,

> “because the Misnic laws and their explications were ordered by him, as if they had been given on Mount Sinai,”

though he was not so acute as Rabbah; and the latter was called the rooter up of mountains, because

> “he was sharp and subtle in the law;”

once more on those words relating to Issachar, (<01415>Genesis 49:15) “and bowed his shoulder to bear”, it is observed [f272]; that

> “this intimates that he was wise in wisdom, µyrh qrpm, “a breaker of the mountains”, a shatterer in pieces of the rocks of dissensions and division various ways; as it is said, (<240229>Jeremiah 23:29) “is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?” So a wise man, by the sharpness of his wit, breaks the mountains of difficulties, and divides them by the words of his mouth: hence they used to call the wise men by the names of Sinai, and a rooter of mountains; because they beat and brake the rocks in pieces, the traditions that are difficult and deep.”

The phrase is also used of removing difficulties in a civil and political sense, as well as in a theological one [f273]: but let a man be able to do ever such great things, yet if he has not “charity”, love to God, to Christ and to his people, he is nothing at all; as the apostle says of himself, supposing it was his own case,

I am nothing; not nothing as a man, nor nothing as a gifted man, still he would be a man, and a man of gifts; nor does the apostle say, that his gifts were nothing, that the gift of prophecy was nothing, or the gift of understanding mysteries nothing, or the gift of knowledge nothing, or the gift of doing miracles nothing, for these are all something, and very great things too, and yet a man in whom the grace of love is wanting, is nothing himself with all these; he is nothing in the account of God, of no esteem with him; he is nothing as a believer in Christ, nor nothing as a Christian. This is also a Jewish way of speaking; for they say [f274],

> “as a bride that is to be adorned with four and twenty ornaments, if she wants anyone of them, µwlk hnya, “she is nothing”; so a disciple of a wise man ought to be used to the twenty four books (of the Scripture), and if he is wanting in one of them, µwlk wnya, “he is nothing”.”

Ver. 3. *And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor*, etc.] Of which the Jews give us instances; they say [f275], that R. Ishcab stood, µyyn[l wyskn lk qyljhw, "and distributed all his goods to the poor"; and a little after they say the same of King Monbaz, that he stood and gave away, or dispersed, "all his goods to the poor"; and elsewhere [f276] they say of R. Eliezer ben Judah, that the collectors of alms ran away from him, because he would have given them wl çyç hm lk, "all that he had"; and of another, they say [f277], that he took all that he had in his house, and went out to divide it among the poor; but of what avail was all this, when what these men did, they did not from a principle of love to God, nor to Christ, nor even to the poor, to whom they gave their substance; but to have honour and applause from men, and have and obtain eternal life hereafter? for they thought by so doing, that they deserved to behold the face of God, enjoy his favour, and be partakers of the happiness of the world to come [f278]:

and though I give my body to be burned; which may be done by a man that has no principle of grace in him; the very Heathens have done it; as the Indian queens upon the decease and funeral of their husbands; and Calenus, an Indian philosopher, who followed Alexander the great, and erected a funeral pile, and went into it of his own accord; and Peregrinus, another philosopher, did the like in the times of Trajan. The apostle here respects martyrdom, and by a prophetic spirit has respect to future times, when burning men's bodies for religion would be in use, which then was not; and suggests that there might be some, as according to ecclesiastical history there seems to have been some, who, from a forward and misguided zeal, and to get themselves a name, and leave one behind them, have exposed themselves to the flames, and yet "have not" had "charity", true love to God, a real affection for Christ, or to his saints: wherefore the apostle hypothetically says, supposing himself to be the person that had done all this, it profiteth me nothing: such things may profit others, but not a man's self; giving all his goods to the poor may be of advantage to them, and giving his body to be burned in the cause of religion may be of service to others, to confirm their faith, and encourage them to like sufferings when called to them; but can be of no avail to themselves in the business of salvation; which is not procured by works of righteousness, even the best, and much less by such which proceed from wrong principles, and are directed to wrong ends; the grace of God being wanting, and particularly that of love.

Ver. 4. *Charity suffereth long*, etc.] The apostle, in this and some following verses, enumerates the several properties and characters of the grace of love; and all along represents it as if it was a person, and no doubt designs one who is possessed of it, and in whose heart it is implanted and reigns; such an one is said to “suffer long”, or be “patient”, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read; not only under afflictions by the hand of God, which such an one considers as arising from love; but under the reproaches and persecutions of men, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, and in imitation of him; such a person is slow to anger when abused, not quick of resentment, nor hasty to revenge when affronted; but exercises forbearance, suffers long, and bears much, and is ready to forgive:

and is kind; liberal, and bountiful, does good to all men, even to enemies, and especially to the household of faith; he is gentle to all men, affable and courteous to his brethren, and not morose, churlish, and ill natured; he is easy and yielding to the tempers and humours of men; accommodates himself to their infirmities, capacities, manners, and circumstances, in everything he can, that is not contrary to the glory of God, the interest of Christ, the honour of religion, his own con science, and the good of men;

charity envieth not; or he that has the grace of love to God, Christ, and the saints, does not envy the temporal happiness of others, though it is what he has not, or is greater than he enjoys; as Rachel envied her sister, because she had children when she herself had none; as Joseph’s brethren envied him because he had a greater share in his father’s affections than they had; or as good men may be tempted to envy the prosperity of the wicked, when they themselves are in adversity; but this grace, when in exercise, will not suffer a person to do: nor will such an one envy the superior measures of grace, the more excellent spiritual gifts, or the greater degree of usefulness, and of success in any spiritual undertaking, and so of greater honour and respect, in any of the saints and servants of Christ to themselves, of which Moses and John the Baptist are remarkable instances, (Numbers 11:28,29 John 3:27-31),

charity vaunteth not itself, is not ostentatious, a proud boaster; either of what he has, the things of nature, as wisdom, riches, honour, strength, etc. or spiritual gifts; or of what he does, since what such an one does, he does from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God, and not to be seen of men, or to gain their esteem and applause: or is not rash, and precipitant; does not run headlong into measures, to promote his own

honour and interest, without considering what will be the consequence of things; nor is he rash with his mouth, or hasty with his lips, to utter anything unbecoming before God or men. The Arabic version renders it, “does not speak deceitfully”; or hypocritically, for nothing is more contrary to true genuine love than this; the Syriac version renders it, “is not tumultuous”; noisy and seditious: such an one is not troublesome in a commonwealth, nor does he go into parties and factions in churches, but is all the reverse:

is not puffed up swelled with pride, and elated with a vain conceit of himself, of his parts and abilities, of his learning, eloquence, wisdom, and knowledge, as the false teachers in this church were; knowledge without grace, unsanctified knowledge, mere notional speculative knowledge, puffeth up; but charity, or the grace of love, does not; that edifies and preserves persons from being puffed up with themselves, or one against another.

Ver. 5. *Doth not behave itself unseemly*, etc.] By using either unbecoming words, or doing indecent actions; for a man unprincipled with this grace will be careful that no filthy and corrupt communication proceed out of his mouth, which may offend pious ears; and that he uses no ridiculous and ludicrous gestures, which may expose himself and grieve the saints; accordingly the Syriac version renders it, “neither does it commit that which is shameful”: such an one will not do a little mean despicable action, in reproaching one, or flattering another, in order to gain a point, to procure some worldly advantage, or an interest in the friendship and affection of another. Some understand it in this sense, that one endued with this grace thinks nothing unseemly and unbecoming him, however mean it may appear, in which he can be serviceable to men, and promote the honour of religion and interest of Christ; though it be by making coats and garments for the poor, as Dorcas did; or by washing the feet of the saints, in imitation of his Lord and master: or “is not ambitious”, as the Vulgate Latin version reads; of honour and applause, and of being in the highest form, but is lowly, meek and humble:

seeketh not her own things: even those which are “lawful”, as the Arabic version renders it; but seeks the things of God, and what will make most for his honour and glory; and the things of Christ, and what relate to the spread of his Gospel, and the enlargement of his kingdom; and also the things of other men, the temporal and spiritual welfare of the saints: such

look not only on their own things, and are concerned for them, but also upon the things of others, which they likewise care for:

is not easily provoked: to wrath, but gives place to it: such an one is provoked at sin, at immorality and idolatry, as Paul's spirit was stirred up or provoked, when he saw the superstition of the city of Athens; and is easily provoked to love and good works, which are entirely agreeable to the nature of charity:

thinketh no evil; not but that evil thoughts are in such a man's heart, for none are without them; though they are hateful, abominable, and grieving to such as are partakers of the grace of God, who long to be delivered from them: but the meaning is, either that one possessed of this grace of love does not think of the evil that is done him by another; he forgives, as God has forgiven him, so as to forget the injury done him, and remembers it no more; and so the Arabic version reads it, "and remembers not evil"; having once forgiven it, he thinks of it no more; or he does not meditate revenge, or devise mischief, and contrive evil against man that has done evil to him, as Esau did against his brother Jacob; so the Ethiopic version, by way of explanation, adds, "neither thinks evil, nor consults evil"; or as the word here used will bear to be rendered, "does not impute evil"; reckon or place it to the account of him that has committed it against him, but freely and fully forgives, as God, when he forgives sin, is said not to impute it; or such an one is not suspicious of evil in others, he does not indulge evil surmises, and groundless jealousies; which to do is very contrary to this grace of love.

Ver. 6. *Rejoiceth not in iniquity*, etc.] Neither in his own, nor in others; but on the contrary is grieved for it; he mourns over his own iniquities, the corruption of his heart, the infirmities of his life, his secret sins, which none know but God and his own soul; he is greatly troubled at the profaneness and immorality of the men of the world, and the sins of professors cut him to the heart: nor does he rejoice in injustice, as the word used here may be rendered, in any unjust action or injury, that may be done to any, yea, even to an enemy; even as Christ, when Peter, in great zeal for him, drew his sword and cut off the ear of one of the high priest's servants, who was more busy than the rest in apprehending Christ, and showed more malignancy than others, was so far from rejoicing at it, that he was displeased with Peter for doing it, and was moved with so much compassion to that man, though his enemy, as to heal him: but rejoiceth in

the truth; in the truth of the Gospel, and the success of it; such an one can do nothing against it, but for it, will buy it at any rate, but sell it upon no account whatever; and he rejoices greatly when he sees any walking in it, and agreeably to it; for truth, as it stands opposed to iniquity or unrighteousness, may signify an upright, holy, and righteous conversation, a conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ, which that teaches, and by which it is adorned; now a gracious soul desires this in itself, and delights to see it in others.

Ver. 7. *Beareth all things*, etc.] The burdens of fellow Christians, and so fulfils the law of Christ, which is the law of love; the infirmities of weak believers, and the reproaches and persecutions of the world: or "covers all things", as it may be rendered, even a multitude of sins, as charity is said to do, (1 Peter 4:8) not by conniving at them, or suffering them to be upon a brother; but having privately and faithfully reproved for them, and the offender being brought to a sense and acknowledgment of them, he freely forgives them as trespasses against him, covers them with the mantle of love, and industriously hides and conceals them from others;

believeth all things; that are to be believed, all that God says in his word, all his truths, and all his promises; and even sometimes in hope against hope, as Abraham did, relying upon the power, faithfulness, and other perfections of God; though such a man will not believe every spirit, every preacher and teacher, nor any but such as agree with the Scriptures of truth, the standard of faith and practice; nor will he believe every word of man, which is the character of a weak and foolish man; indeed, a man of charity or love is willing to believe all the good things reported of men; he is very credulous of such things, and is unwilling to believe ill reports of persons, or any ill of men; unless it is open and glaring, and is well supported, and there is full evidence of it; he is very incredulous in this respect:

hopes all things; that are to be hoped for; hopes for the accomplishment of all the promises of God; hopes for the enjoyment of him in his house and ordinances; hopes for things that are not seen, that are future, difficult, though possible to be enjoyed: hopes for heaven and eternal happiness, for more grace here and glory hereafter; hopes the best of all men, of all professors of religion, even of wicked men, that they may be better and brought to repentance, and of fallen professors, who declare their

repentance, and make their acknowledgments; he hopes well of them, that they are sincere, and all is right and will appear so:

endureth all things; that are disagreeable to the flesh; all afflictions, tribulations, temptations, persecutions, and death itself, for the elect's sake, for the sake of the Gospel, and especially for the sake of Christ Jesus.

Ver. 8. *Charity never faileth*, etc.] It may fail as to the exercise of it, as other graces do; it may be left, but not lost; the fervour of it may be remitted and abated; it may wax cold through the prevalence of sin; it may be greatly damped by the growth of error and heresy, which eat as do a canker; and may be much obstructed by an anxious and immoderate care and concern for worldly things; which are very pernicious to all the branches of vital religion and powerful godliness, and particularly love to God, Christ, and the brethren: but this grace never fails as to its principle; it is an immortal and an incorruptible seed; it lives throughout the most violent temptations, as in Peter; and under the greatest desertions and sorest afflictions, still there is an affection for God; Christ is he whom such a soul loves; and the saints are the excellent in the earth, in whom is all his delight: and it also continues as to its use, and will do so, when faith and hope will loose theirs, even in the other world; for faith will be changed into vision, and hope into enjoyment; but love will be the same, only act in a higher sphere, and to a greater degree, and in a perfect manner:

but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; by which are meant, either the predictions of future events, not that they shall fail in their accomplishment, but they shall be no more, because they will all be accomplished; or else the gifts of explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, and of preaching the doctrines of the Gospel, will be no more, because there will be no need of them in a state of perfection:

whether there be tongues they shall cease; not but that, in the resurrection, that member of the body, the tongue, will be restored as the rest, and be everlastingly employed in celebrating the perfections of God, in singing the hallelujahs of the Lamb, and in joining with angels and other saints in songs of praise to the eternal Three; but the gift of speaking with divers tongues will cease, indeed it has already; nor will there be any use for such an extraordinary gift in the other world; when probably, and as it is thought by some, there will be but one language, and that the Hebrew language; as the whole earth was of one language and speech before the confusion at Babel:

whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away; that is, the word of knowledge, peculiarly given by the spirit to some persons only; or that peculiar gift of knowledge of divine things, by which some are qualified to be instructors of others; the present means both of communicating, and of obtaining and increasing knowledge by the preaching and hearing of the word, will be no more used: and besides, imperfect knowledge of every sort will disappear, it will become perfect; that knowledge which is in part will be done away, when perfect knowledge takes place; for so we are taught to explain it by the following words.

Ver. 9. *For we know in part*, etc.] Not that the Scriptures, the rule and measure of knowledge, and from whence spiritual knowledge is derived, are imperfect; so that there is need of unwritten traditions, and of enthusiastic revelations and inspirations, to inform of things otherwise unknown; for though they were at sundry times, and in divers manners delivered, yet now they contain a complete system of divine truths, to which nothing is to be added, and from which nothing is to be taken away; or that only a part of the saints know the things of God; for though there is a difference between them, some have more knowledge than others, yet all have some, all are taught of God, and know him, and have that anointing which teacheth all things; wherefore the sense also is not, that only a part of truth, and not the whole, is known; for the Spirit of God leads into all truth; the whole counsel of God is made known in the Scriptures, and by the ministers of the word; though, to this sense the Arabic version inclines, rendering it, “some part of doctrine we know”; and so in (⁴⁶1 Corinthians 13:12) “some part of knowledge I know”; as also the Syriac version, which renders it lylq ygs ^m, “a little from much we know”; but the true meaning is, that though the rule of knowledge is perfect, and all the saints have knowledge, and every truth of the Gospel is known; yet by those that know most, it is known but imperfectly: the truth itself may be most clearly discerned, as it is revealed in the word; yet the manner of it, how it is, may not be known; and many difficulties may attend it, and objections be raised to it, which are not easily solved; as in the doctrines of the Trinity, predestination, the union of the two natures in Christ, the resurrection of the dead, etc.

and we prophesy in part; the word of prophecy, as it sure, it is also perfect, to which we do well to take heed; and though all do not prophesy, yet all that do, and that prophesy aright, that is, explain the word of God aright, these preach the Gospel fully, declare the whole counsel of God, and keep

back nothing profit able to the saints; yet still their prophesying or explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, or the mysteries of the Gospel, is but imperfect at best in the present state of things.

Ver. 10. *But when that which is perfect is come*, etc.] When perfect knowledge of God, of Christ, and of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven shall take place; which will not in this life, but in that which is to come. So the Jews say [f279] that at the resurrection, upon the reunion of the soul and body,

> "the children of men shall attain to hmylç h[d, "perfect knowledge";"

which is what the apostle refers to here:

and then that which is in part, shall be done away: the imperfection of knowledge shall be removed; the imperfect manner of communicating knowledge, and of receiving and acquiring it, will cease: thus the apostle explains what he means by the cessation and failing of knowledge, and prophecy; not that knowledge itself will be no more, and a state of ignorance and darkness succeed; but imperfect knowledge will vanish away, or rather will be perfected, or be swallowed up in perfect knowledge; the imperfection of it will disappear; and it will be no more taught and received in part; the whole of truth will be clearly known.

Ver. 11. *When I was a child I spake as a child*, etc.] That cannot speak plain, aims at words rather than expresses them, delivers them in a lisping or stammering manner: hereby the apostle illustrates the then present gift of speaking with divers tongues, which was an extraordinary gift of the Spirit, was peculiar to some persons, and what many were very fond of; and yet this, in its highest degree and exercise, was but like the lisping of a child, in comparison of what will be known and expressed by saints, when they come to be perfect men in heaven:

I understood as a child; and so does he that understands all mysteries, in comparison of the enlightened and enlarged understandings of glorified saints; the people of God, who are in the highest form and class of understanding, in the present state of things, are but children in understanding; it is in the other world, when they are arrived to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that they will in understanding be men:

I thought, or “reasoned”,

as a child; whose thoughts are low and mean, and reasonings very weak; and so are the thoughts and reasonings of such as have all knowledge here below, in comparison of that perfect knowledge, those clear ideas, and strong reasonings of the spirits of just men above:

but when I became a man, I put away childish things; childish talk, childish affections, and childish thoughts and reasonings; so when the saints shall be grown to the full age of Christ, and are become perfect men in him, tongues shall cease, prophecies shall fail, and knowledge vanish away; and in the room thereof, such conversation, understanding, and knowledge take place, as will be entirely suited to the manly state in glory.

Ver. 12. *For now we see through a glass*, etc.] In this present life, they that are enlightened by the Spirit of God, see God, the perfections and glory of his nature, the riches of his grace and goodness, as displayed in Christ; they behold the glory of Christ, as full of grace and truth, and are filled with love to him; the desires of their souls are after him, and they are changed into the same image by his Spirit; they discern the things of the Spirit of God; the veil being removed from them, they behold wondrous things, out of the law of God and Gospel of Christ, even such things as are unseen unto, and unknown by the natural man: but then it is all “through a glass”; not of the creatures; for though the invisible things of God may in some sort be seen and understood by the things that are made; and God, as the God of nature, may be seen in the works of creation and providence, yet not as the God of grace; it is only in his Son, and through the glass of the Gospel, he is to be beheld in this light: and so it is through the glass of the word and ordinances, that the glory of the person of Christ, of his offices, fulness of grace and righteousness, is only to be seen; in these he is evidently set forth to the eye of faith, as the surety, Saviour, and Redeemer of his people, and through these the knowledge of divine truths is communicated: and through all these but

darkly: “in an enigma”, or “riddle”, or “dark saying”, as the word here used may be rendered; that is, in this present state, in comparison of the future one; for though the sight of things under the Gospel dispensation is clear, and with open face, in comparison of the legal one, yet even this is very obscure, and attended with great darkness and imperfection, when compared with the beatific vision in heaven, which will have no manner of interruption and obscurity in it:

but then face to face: there will be no intervening mediums of vision; not the glass of the word and ordinances; there will be no need of them, God and Christ will be seen as they are; the judgments of God, his providential dispensations, will be all made manifest, and will be legible without the help of a glass; the doctrines of grace and truth will lie open and clear, free of all dark speeches, obscure hints, or enigmatical expressions: and as there will be nothing to intervene by way of assistance, there being no need of any, there will be nothing to intercept the sight; the objects will be nigh, even face to face; the view will be full and clear, the sight will be perfect, as well as the converse with the objects will be familiar; and which, without the least obstruction, will always so continue: there seems to be here a double reference, partly to what the Lord says of Moses, in (Numbers 12:8) "with him will I speak, mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches"; and partly to what the Jews say of him, with a view to the same passage:

> "all the prophets (say they [f280]) looked through a glass, which did not give light; (or, as they sometimes say, which was spotted, and was not clear;) Moses our master looked hryamh ayrlqpsyab, "through a glass that gave light";"

or, as elsewhere, was bright and clear, and without any spot. Again, they say [f281],

> "all the prophets prophesied by the means of an angel; hence they saw what they saw hdyjw lçmb, "by way of parable and riddle", or dark saying; Moses our master did not prophesy by the means of an angel; as it is said, "with him will I speak mouth to mouth"; and it is said, "the Lord spake to Moses, face to face"; and it is also said, "the similitude of the Lord shall he behold"; as if it was said, that there should be no parable; but he should see the thing clearly without a parable; of which likewise the law testifies, saying, "apparently, and not in dark speeches"; for he did not prophesy hdyjb, "by way of riddle"; (in an enigmatical way, darkly;) but apparently, for he saw the matter clearly."

The two glasses, clear and not clear, the Cabalistic doctors call "tiphereth" and "malchuth" [f282].

> ""Tiphereth" (they say) is a clear and well polished glass, by which Moses prophesied and had visions, "and saw all things most

exactly", in a very singular manner; "malchuth" is the glass that is not clear; so that he that prophesies by that, prophesies "by riddle", and parable."

Now the apostle suggests, that as there was such a difference between Moses and the rest of the prophets, the one saw clearly, the other through a glass darkly; a like, yea, a much greater difference there is between the clearest views saints have of divine things now, and those they shall be blessed with hereafter, and which he exemplifies in himself:

now I know in part; though not a whit behind the chief of the apostles; though his knowledge in the mystery of Christ was such, as had not been given to any in ages and generations past; and though he had been caught up into the third heaven and had heard words not lawful to be uttered, yet owns his knowledge in the present state to be but imperfect; which may be instructive to such, who are apt to entertain an high opinion of themselves, and dream of perfection in this life:

but then shall I know, even as I am known; in the other world and state, he signifies that he should know God, Christ, angels, and glorified saints, and all truths in a perfect manner, even as he was known of God and Christ perfectly, allowing for the difference between the Creator and the creature; his sense is, that he should have as full and complete a knowledge of persons and things as he was capable of; it would be like, though not equal to, the knowledge which God had of him; and which would be attended with the strongest love and affection to the objects known, even as he was known and loved of God.

Ver. 13. *And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three*, etc.] Which are the principal graces of the Spirit of God: faith is to be understood, not of a faith of miracles, for that does not abide; nor of an historical one, or mere assent to truth; persons may have this faith, and believe but for a while; but of that faith, which is peculiar to God's elect; is a fruit and effect of electing grace, and for that reason abides; is the gift of God, and one of those which are without repentance; is the work of God, and the operation of his Spirit, and therefore will be performed with power; it is the grace by which a soul sees Christ, goes unto him, lays hold on him, receives him, relies on him, and lives upon him: "hope" is also a gift of God's grace, implanted in regeneration; has God and Christ, and not any worldly thing, or outward performance, for its object, ground, and foundation, to build upon; it is of things unseen, future, difficult, yet possible to be enjoyed; it is

supported by the love of God, is encouraged by promises, and is sure, being fixed on Christ and his righteousness; it is that grace by which saints wait for things promised, and rejoice in the believing views of glory and happiness: charity designs love to God, Christ, and the saints, as has been explained, and a large account is given of it in this chapter: these are the three chief and leading graces in God's people, and they abide and continue with them; they may fail sometimes, as to their lively exercise, but never as to their being and principle; faith may droop and hang its wing, hope may not be lively, and love may wax cold, but neither of them can be lost; Christ prays that faith fail not, hope on him is an anchor sure and steadfast, and nothing can separate from the love of Christ; as not from the love of Christ to his people, so not from theirs to him: these graces abide now, during the present life: he that has true faith in Christ, shall die in it; and he that has a good hope through grace, shall have it in his death; and love will outlive death, and be in its height and glory in the other world: for which reason it is added,

but the greatest of these is charity; and is said to be so, not that it is on every account the greatest; faith in many things exceeds that, as what is ascribed to it in Scripture shows; but because of the peculiar properties and effects of it before mentioned, it including faith and hope, as in (<4607>1 Corinthians 13:7) and besides many other things, and because, without this, faith and hope are nothing: and besides, its usefulness is more extensive than either of the other two; a man's faith is only for himself; a just man lives by his own faith, and not another's; one man's faith will be of no service to another, and the same is true of hope; but by love saints serve one another, both in things temporal and spiritual, and chiefly it is said to be the greatest, because most durable; in the other world, faith will be changed for vision, and hope for enjoyment, but love will abide, and be in its full perfection and constant exercise, to all eternity. The Jews [f283] say much the same of humility the apostle does here of charity;

> "wisdom, fear, humility, they are alike, ˆlwkm hlwdg hwn[Æa,
> "but humility is greater than them all"."

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 14

In this chapter the apostle discourses concerning the use of spiritual gifts, and prefers prophesying, or preaching, to every other gift; and directs to the order and manner of using it, and also points at the persons who should exercise it; and whereas there was much confusion and disorder in this church, in the management of the affairs of it, the chapter is concluded with a general exhortation to do everything in a decent and orderly manner. The apostle begins with an exhortation to follow after charity, which he had commended in the preceding chapter, and had preferred to gifts, and yet he would not have gifts slighted, but represents them as desirable; particularly prophesying or preaching, which he prefers above all, (<4601>1 Corinthians 14:1) and especially above the gift of tongues, and for which he gives his reasons; he that speaks with tongues, speaks to God and not to men; at least not to their understanding, though he may by his gift deliver the most excellent truths, (<4602>1 Corinthians 14:2) whereas he that preaches speaks to men, to their edification, exhortation, and comfort, (<4603>1 Corinthians 14:3) the one edifies himself, and the other the church, (<4604>1 Corinthians 14:4) wherefore since he had a sincere affection for this church, though he could wish they all had the gift of speaking with tongues, yet he rather desired they might have the gift of preaching, because that was most for edification, (<4605>1 Corinthians 14:5) and exemplifies this in himself, that should he come to them speaking with divers tongues, this would be of no use to them, unless he came revealing, making known, and preaching the doctrines of the Gospel to them, (<4606>1 Corinthians 14:6) and illustrates this by a simile taken from musical instruments, in which unless there is a distinction of sounds, the music will not be understood, and there can be nothing grateful and pleasant: and such is speaking with divers tongues, without an interpretation, (<4607>1 Corinthians 14:7) and particularly by a simile taken from the trumpet, as used in war; which if it gives a sound that is unknown, it will be no direction to prepare for the battle, (<4608>1 Corinthians 14:8) which similes are accommodated to the case in hand; showing that words easy to be understood by the hearer should be made use of by the speaker, or speaking is in vain, (<4609>1 Corinthians 14:9) each

word in every language indeed has its signification, some idea or another annexed to it; but if this is not understood by the hearer as well as the speaker, they become barbarians to one another, (<461410>1 Corinthians 14:10,11) wherefore such as were eagerly desirous of spiritual gifts, should covet those that were most for edification; and if speaking with tongues were what they were most set upon, they should pray for the gift of interpretation also, (<461412>1 Corinthians 14:12,13) because, for instance, if prayer is made in an unknown tongue, the extraordinary gift indeed may be exercised, but not to the understanding, and so not to the profit of others, (<461414>1 Corinthians 14:14) hence the apostle determines for himself, that though he should make use of his spiritual gifts, both in praying and singing, it should be in such a manner as to be understood by others, as well as himself, (<461415>1 Corinthians 14:15) and it was right for everyone to do so likewise, otherwise persons not knowing what is prayed for, or thanks given for, would be so far from being able to join in the exercise, that they could not so much as say Amen at the conclusion of it, (<461416>1 Corinthians 14:16) and though thanks might be returned for a mercy received in ever so agreeable a manner, yet it could be no ways edifying to a man that did not understand the language in which it was expressed, (<461417>1 Corinthians 14:17) not that the apostle said all this, because he had not such a gift himself, for he had it to a greater degree than any in this church had arrived to, (<461418>1 Corinthians 14:18) yet after all it was more eligible to him to speak live words in a public manner, so as to be understood, than ten thousand in a language the people were ignorant of, (<461419>1 Corinthians 14:19) wherefore he exhorts the Corinthians not to act the childish part, to covet speaking with tongues, but rather the more manly one, to prophesy, or preach, to the understanding of others, (<461420>1 Corinthians 14:20) moreover, the apostle deters them from seeking to speak with divers tongues, by citing a passage out of (<233811>Isaiah 28:11) by which it appears, that speaking with divers tongues and strange languages was sometimes threatened as a punishment, and not given as a blessing, (<461421>1 Corinthians 14:21) besides, speaking with tongues was a sign of unbelief, and used for the conviction of unbelievers; whereas prophesying, or preaching, was a sign of faith, and was for the profit of believers, and therefore the most desirable, (<461422>1 Corinthians 14:22) to which he adds another reason, dissuading from the use of speaking with divers tongues in public, where they are not understood, taken from the opinion that ignorant and unbelieving persons coming into their assemblies would entertain of them, as though they were madmen, (<461423>1 Corinthians 14:23)

whereas should they preach in a language understood, on the contrary it might be of use for the conviction of such persons, who having the secrets of their hearts laid open to them, will fall down and worship God, whose word they hear; and when they depart, report that the divine presence is with such a people, (<46144>1 Corinthians 14:24,25) hence the apostle proceeds to direct to the proper and orderly manner of using gifts; that whereas there were different ones among them, one had one gift, and another had another, they might all be used, provided they were used in such a manner as to tend to edification, (<46146>1 Corinthians 14:26) so for instance, if speaking in an unknown tongue was used, it should be only by two or three at most, one after another; and there should be an interpreter to make known the meaning of what was said to the people, (<46147>1 Corinthians 14:27) but if there were none that had the gift of interpreting, then it was most advisable for the speaker to be silent in public, and only in private speak to God and himself, (<46148>1 Corinthians 14:28) and then as for those that had the gift of prophesying, or preaching, these should exercise their gift two or three at a time, one after another, and the rest should sit and judge what they delivered, whether agreeable to the word of God or not, (<46149>1 Corinthians 14:29) and should anything be more clearly revealed to one that sat and heard, the speaker should be silent, and give way to him, that he might have the opportunity of declaring it to the edification of the church, (<46140>1 Corinthians 14:30) for all that had the gift of preaching might use it one after another, by turns, for general instruction and comfort, (<46141>1 Corinthians 14:31) seeing spiritual gifts are subject to and at the dispose of those that are possessed of them: or the doctrines preached by the one are subject to the examination and judgment of the other, (<46142>1 Corinthians 14:32) for God, the donor of all gifts, is the author of order and peace, and not of confusion in all the churches, (<46143>1 Corinthians 14:33) and whereas the apostle had suggested, that all might prophecy, or preach, that is, that had gifts qualifying for it, he would be understood only of men, and not women, who were not permitted to speak in the church in a way of preaching; no, not even to ask questions there about what they heard, but if they wanted to be informed of any thing they did not rightly understand, they were to ask their husbands at home; this the apostle argues, partly from the law, which commands them to be in obedience to men, and partly from the indecency of such a practice, (<46134>1 Corinthians 14:34,35) and seeing as it should seem such a practice did obtain in the church at Corinth, the apostle warmly reproves them for it, it being what was not to be observed in other churches, by intimating to

them, that the Gospel neither came out from them, nor did it come to them only, (<46146>1 Corinthians 14:36) and whoever had a gift of preaching, or a spiritual understanding of things, must allow, that what the apostle said were not the commandments of men, but of God, (<46147>1 Corinthians 14:37) but as for ignorant persons, who were affectedly and wilfully such, they must so remain, there was no help for it, (<46148>1 Corinthians 14:38) upon which the apostle repeats his exhortation he set out with, to desire in the first place the gift of prophesying, or preaching, though he would not have speaking with tongues forbidden, provided the above rules were attended to, (<46149>1 Corinthians 14:39) and concludes with a general exhortation to do all the above things, and everything relating to the doctrine and discipline of the church, in a becoming and orderly manner, (<46140>1 Corinthians 14:40).

Ver. 1. *Follow after charity*, etc.] The apostle having so highly commended charity, or love, in the preceding chapter, presses here to an eager pursuit after it; that is, to an exercise of it, and after those things which make for it, and will serve to maintain and increase it: and everything he has said in praise of it before serves as an argument, or reason, to follow hard after it, with an eagerness used in hunting, and with such violence as persecutors express in pursuing and laying hold on those they seek after, to which there is an allusion in the word here used:

and desire spiritual gifts: for though he had given charity the preference to them, he did not mean that they should despise and neglect them, or treat them with indifference, and be unconcerned about them; but, on the other hand, that they should be very zealous for them, ambitious of them, and earnestly covet them; since being rightly used and kept in their proper place, they were greatly beneficial and profitable to the churches of Christ, and the glory of God:

but rather that ye may prophesy: of all the gifts of the Spirit, the apostle prefers prophesying, and recommends this to the Corinthians, as what they should be chiefly desirous of, and more desirous of than of speaking with tongues, which many among them were so very fond of: by which he means, not so much the gift of foretelling future events, though there was such a gift bestowed on some persons in those times, and, in certain cases, was very profitable to the churches; but a gift of preaching the word, or explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, and of praying and singing of psalms, all which, as appears from some following parts of this chapter,

were included in it; and that not in an ordinary, but in an extraordinary way; a person possessed of this gift could at once, without the use of means, or help of study, preach the word, and open the more difficult parts of Scripture; he had an extraordinary gift of prayer, which he could make use of when he pleased, and at once compose and deliver out a psalm, or hymn, in the public congregation.

Ver. 2. *For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue*, etc.] Or with tongues, as some copies and the Ethiopic version read: Dr. Lightfoot thinks, that the Hebrew tongue, which was become a dead language, and understood but by few, is here meant, and that not without reason; seeing the public prayers, preaching, and singing of psalms among the Jews, were in this languages [f284]; in imitation of whom, such ministers, who had the gift of speaking this language, read the Scriptures, preached, prayed, and sung psalms in it, which were no ways to the edification of the people, who understood it not; upon which account the apostle recommends prophesying, praying, and singing, in a language that was understood: otherwise he

speaketh not unto men; to the understanding, profit, and edification of men: but unto God: to his praise and glory, and he only knowing, who knows all languages, and every word in the tongue what is said; excepting himself, unless there should be any present capable of interpreting:

for no man understandeth him: or “heareth him”: that is, hears him, so as to understand him; he may hear a sound, but he cannot tell the meaning of it, and so it is of no use and advantage to him:

howbeit in the Spirit he speaketh mysteries; though under the influence and by the extraordinary gift of the Spirit he has, and to his own Spirit and understanding, and with great affection and devotion within himself, he speaks of the deep things of God, and the mysteries of his grace, the most glorious truths of the Gospel, yet the meaning of his voice and words not being known, he is a barbarian to them that hear him; and though what he delivers are truths of the greatest importance, they are a mere jargon to others, being unintelligible.

Ver. 3. *But he that prophesieth*, etc.] Preaches, prays, or sings, in a language understood by the common people:

speaketh unto men to edification; to the building of them up in Christ, and on their most holy faith, so that they grow up as an holy temple to the

Lord: and exhortation; to the more vigorous exercise of grace, and the more cheerful and fervent discharge of duty:

and comfort; of distressed minds, either through the temptations of Satan, or divine desertions, or inward corruptions, or outward afflictions; for all which ends and purposes the Scriptures are written, and gifts are bestowed on men to explain them; and which ends are answered when God gives a blessing to the word; but can never be expected, if delivered in a language not understood. This bears hard upon the Papists performing any part of divine worship in a language unintelligible to the common people.

Ver. 4. *He that speaketh its an unknown tongue*, etc.] Be it the Hebrew language, or any other; some copies, and the Ethiopic version, read, "with tongues":

edifieth himself; his heart may be warmed, his affections raised, his devotion kept up, and he be in a very spiritual and comfortable frame, knowing and understanding what he himself says:

but he that prophesieth, edifieth the church: which is the great end of the Gospel ministry, which is for the edifying the body of the church: wherefore that which tends to the edification of more, even the whole church, must be preferable to that, which at most can only edify one, and that the speaker himself.

Ver. 5. *I would that ye all spake with tongues*, etc.] This the apostle says, to prevent being misunderstood; for his view was not to bring the gift of tongues into contempt, or to represent it as at all times, and on all occasions, useless and insignificant; nor would he be thought to envy them this gift, or beat them off of desiring it; for, for his own part, he could wish they all had it, was it the will of God; though he must needs say, that prophesying was most desirable by him, as being most profitable;

but rather that ye prophesied; he wished them all prophets, as Moses did all the Lord's people; he was not against their speaking with tongues, but this was the most eligible, for which he gives this reason:

for greater is he that prophesieth, than he that speaketh with tongues; that is, he is more useful and profitable to men, and so consequently more honourable, in higher esteem, and more valued, and in greater dignity, being in a more serviceable post and office, and which is more beneficial and advantageous to mankind:

except he interpret; what he said; and then he might stand upon an equal foot, and be equally useful with him that prophesieth; but this everyone could not do that spake with tongues; for speaking with tongues, and the interpretation of tongues, were two distinct gifts; (see <461210>1 Corinthians 12:10,30) and though a man that had the gift of tongues might understand what he himself said to his own edification, yet not be able to interpret it to the understanding and edification of others; and if he could not do this, his speaking was to no purpose: hence the apostle advises such an one to pray that he might interpret, have the gift of interpretation also, in (<461413>1 Corinthians 14:13).

That the church may receive edifying: which otherwise cannot be thought it should, or be expected, and then an opportunity and ordinance would be wholly lost.

Ver. 6. *Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues*, etc.] The apostle exemplifies this matter in himself, and supposes it his own case, that should he who was the apostle of the Gentiles, and to be received by them as such, when he came to them, come with this gift of tongues, which he was capable of, as much, or more than any, (see <461418>1 Corinthians 14:18) and only make use of that,

what shall I profit you? of what use would my ministry be to you? what instruction, comfort, and edification, could you receive by it?

except I shall speak to you, either by revelation; by the revelation of Jesus Christ, whereby he received the Gospel he preached; or by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and the mysteries of his grace, by which they were made known unto him at first, or by a fresh immediate revelation from heaven:

or by knowledge; the word of knowledge, one of the peculiar gifts of the Spirit, (<461208>1 Corinthians 12:8).

Or by prophesying; the gift of prophecy, another of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, mentioned in the same chapter, (<461210>1 Corinthians 12:10) and already explained:

or by doctrine? the same with the word of wisdom, another gift of the same Spirit, in (<461208>1 Corinthians 12:8). The apostle intimates, that by the use and exercise of these gifts, he might be profitable to them, to lead them into a clearer view of the doctrines of the Gospel, and for the further

improvement of their knowledge in the Scriptures of truth, which could never be done by bare speaking with tongues, and with tongues they understood not.

Ver. 7. *And even things without life giving sound*, etc.] He instances in things inanimate, that have neither reason, sense, nor life, in musical instruments, and these of various sorts:

whether pipe or harp; wind music, or hand music; either that which is blown with the breath, or pressed or stricken with the hand:

except they give a distinction in the sounds; or "tunes", so as one may be discerned from another; as that this is such a musical note, and that is another:

how shall it be known what is piped or harped? what tune is played; such an use of instruments would be a mere jargon, and not music, and so yield no pleasure to the ear, or mind; and just the like must speaking in an unknown tongue be, to one that understands it not.

Ver. 8. *For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound*, etc.] That is not plain and manifest, so as that it cannot be known on what account it is given:

who shall prepare himself to the battle? the allusion is to the custom of many nations, Jews and others, who, when about to engage in war, made use of musical instruments, particularly the trumpet, to gather the soldiers together, prepare them for the battle, give them notice of it, and animate them to it [f285]; the sound of the trumpet was the alarm of war; (see <2405>Jeremiah 4:5,19,21 <1825>Job 39:25). And particularly the allusion may be to the two silver trumpets, ordered by God to Moses for the Jews, which were to be made of a whole piece, and to be used for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps, and to blow an alarm with when they went to war against the enemy, (<0401>Numbers 10:1,2,9) and were a lively emblem of the Gospel, whose use is to gather souls to Christ, to direct saints in their journeying, and to prepare and animate them for battle, with their spiritual enemies; and of which use it is, when it gives a certain and even sound, as it does when clearly and rightly blown; and that is, the sound of love, grace, and mercy, to the sons of men, through a bleeding Saviour; salvation alone by a crucified Jesus, peace and pardon by his blood, justification by his righteousness, and atonement by his sacrifice; when it is blown aright, it blows a blast on all the goodliness of man, it magnifies the grace of God, exalts the person of Christ, debases the

creature, shows its impurity, imperfection, and inability; and expresses the nature, use, and necessity of efficacious grace; and puts believers on doing good works for necessary uses, but not for life, righteousness, and salvation; and so its sound is equal, even, and certain: and when it is so, it is a means of gathering souls to Christ, the standard bearer and ensign of the people; and of engaging them to enlist themselves as volunteers in his service; and of animating them to fight under his banner the battles of the Lord of hosts: but if this trumpet gives an uncertain sound, as it does when grace and works are blended together in the business of salvation; and faith or works put in the room of, or joined with the righteousness of Christ in justification; when particular election and general redemption, or the salvability of all men, are put together; the covenant of grace represented as conditional, and preparations for grace, and offers of grace, and days of grace talked of, that may be past and lost; then who can prepare himself for the battle? persons must be thrown into, and left in the utmost uncertainty and confusion: when this is the case, they know not what side to take on, but halt between two opinions; they know not what that faith is they are to fight and earnestly contend for; they are not able to discern an enemy from a friend; they have no heart to fight and endure hardness, as good soldiers of Christ; nor can they promise themselves, or be assured of victory, which the certain sound of the Gospel gives them.

Ver. 9. *So likewise you, unless ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood*, etc.] This is an accommodation of the foregoing similes to the case in hand: for as unless there is a distinction of notes and tunes, it cannot be music, nor it cannot be known what is piped or harped; and unless the trumpet gives a certain sound, none can know when to prepare himself for the battle; so unless in the public ministry and service a language is spoken, and words made use of, which are understood without difficulty:

how shall it be known what is spoken? the subject matter of the discourse, prayer, or psalm, will be all lost, and therefore cannot be for edification, exhortation, or comfort:

for ye shall speak into the air; into which such words are resolved, and the use and benefit of them, as to others, cease with the breath, by which they are delivered: any part of divine service performed in such a way is all in vain, and to no purpose; it is all lost labour, it is beating the air, and talking to the wind. This condemns the practice of the Papists, performing divine

service in a language not understood by the common people; and exposes the folly of those, who are fond of a florid style, of bombast words, great swelling words of vanity in their public discourses: this is only speaking into the air, with regard to the vulgar, whose edification should be consulted: and as the end of the Gospel ministry is public usefulness and edification, plainness of speech, words easy to be understood, should be used; such as are apt and fit to convey the true idea of things to people in common; these are the acceptable words, which the wise preacher, who is desirous of doing good to the souls of men, will seek out, and studiously make use of.

Ver. 10. *There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices*, etc.] anç l, "tongues", or "languages", as the Syriac version renders it; that is, as many as there are nations in the world; there may be seventy of them, as the Jews say there were at the confusion of languages at Babel; there may be more or less:

and none of them is without signification: every language, and every word in a language, has a meaning in it, an idea annexed to it, which it conveys to him that understands it, and that cannot be done without a voice ordinarily speaking.

Ver. 11. *Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice*, etc.] The force and power of a language, the signification of it, the ideas its words convey, but only hear the sound of it:

I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me: like one of those rude and uncultivated people that inhabit deserts and wild places, who can neither understand the language of others, nor be understood by others; and indeed may be meant of any sort of people, that do not understand one another's language: the word r b, "bar", and a r b, "bara", in the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic languages, not only signifies a field, a wood, or desert place, but also without, or any thing extraneous; and being doubled, signifies one that lives without, in another land; a stranger, and that speaks a strange language; so all other nations of the world were barbarians to the Hebrews, and particularly the Egyptians; see the Targum on (<19B401>Psalm 114:1) and so were all other nations to the Greeks, (see <450114>Romans 1:14) and also to the Romans: and the sense is, that where the signification of a language and the sense of words are not known, the speaker is like a man that lives in a strange country to him that

hears him; and the hearer is like to one that lives in a strange country to him that speaks, since they cannot understand one another. The word sometimes is used for men, αφωνοι η ανκοοι, [f286], "that can neither speak nor hear", men dumb and deaf; and when words cannot be understood, the case is all one as with such persons.

Ver. 12. *Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts*, etc.] Gr. "of spirits"; that is, "of the gifts of the Spirit", as the Syriac version renders it; and we rightly, "spiritual gifts"; the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, for which the apostle does not blame them; these being what he had before exhorted them to covet earnestly, and zealously affect and desire: but then he further advises,

seek that ye may excel, to the edifying of the church: above all, be desirous of such gifts, and of excelling in them, and abounding in the exercise of them, which may be most profitable and edifying to the members of the church; and what these were, and in what manner to be used, he had before signified: the Alexandrian copy reads, seek that ye may prophesy.

Ver. 13. *Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue*, etc.] The Hebrew, or any other, the gift of speaking with which is bestowed upon him:

pray that he may interpret; that he may have also the gift of interpretation of tongues; for as has been before hinted, these two gifts were distinct; and a man might have the one, and not the other; a man might speak in an unknown tongue, so as to understand himself, what he said, and be edified, and yet not be capable of translating it at once into the common language of the people; and if he could not do this, he would not excel in his gift to the edification of the church; whereas if he could interpret he would, and therefore, above all things, he should pray to the Father of lights, the giver of every good and perfect gift, that he might be furnished with this also.

Ver. 14. *For if I pray in an unknown tongue*, etc.] In the Hebrew tongue, which the greatest part of the Jewish doctors insisted [f287] upon should be only used in prayer; which notion might be borrowed from them, and now greatly prevailed in the church at Corinth; and the custom was used by such as had the gift of speaking that language, even though the body and bulk of the people understood it not:

my spirit prayeth; I pray with my breath vocally; or else with affection and devotion, understanding what I say myself, and so am edified; or rather with the gift of the Spirit bestowed on me:

but my understanding is unfruitful; that is, what I say with understanding to myself is unprofitable to others, not being understood by them.

Ver. 15. *What is it then*? etc.] A Talmudic way of speaking, and answers to whm, often used when a difficulty arises in any case, then the question is, "what is it then?" what is to be done? what is most prudent, advisable, and eligible? what is proper to be determined and resolved on in such a case? the same with τι ουν λεκτεον, "what then is to be said?" used by Philo the Jew [f288]: as here, shall I not pray with the Spirit at all, because my understanding, or that which I understand, is of no use to others, being not understood by them? shall I entirely neglect, lay aside, and make no use of the extraordinary gift of the Spirit, bestowed upon me on this account? no:

I will pray with the Spirit; meaning not with the human breath, or spirit only, vocally, with an articulate voice, and distinct sounds, so as to he understood; nor with his own spirit, or in a spiritual way, with a spirit of devotion and fervency, with his whole heart and soul engaged in such service, though this is necessary to it; nor with the common and ordinary assistance of the Spirit of God, though without this prayer cannot be performed aright, with faith and fervency, freedom and boldness; but with the extraordinary gift of the Spirit, so as to pray in an extraordinary manner, with divers tongues, in an unknown language; this, as the apostle was capable of, he determined to use at proper times, and on proper occasions: but then he also resolves,

and I will pray with the understanding also; not merely so as to understand himself, or with an understanding enlightened by the Spirit of God; with a spiritual experimental understanding of things, so as to know the object of prayer, the way of access to him, the need of the Spirit's influence, his own wants and necessities, and that he shall have the petitions he asks in faith, according to the will of God, all which is very requisite in prayer; but so as to be understood by others: his sense is, that though on some occasions he might choose to make use of his extraordinary gift, yet he would also pray in a language, in which he might be understood by the people; that so they might be able to join with him, and receive some fruit and advantage thereby; and that their souls might be refreshed, as well as his:

I will sing with the Spirit; meaning also not with the spirit, or breath, singing vocally only; nor with his own Spirit, with his heart engaged in the work, with grace in it, in the lively exercise of faith, hope, and love, with much spiritual light, knowledge, experience, and judgment, which are very necessary to the due discharge of this duty; nor merely with the ordinary aid of the Spirit of God, which yet is greatly needful to excite attention, assist meditation, enlighten the understanding, raise the affections, strengthen faith, and make a comfortable application of what is sung; but as before, with the extraordinary gift of the Spirit, by which the apostle was capable of delivering out a psalm, or hymn, extempore, and that in an unknown tongue: but then he also determines,

I will sing with the understanding also; not to his own understanding, or by or with the understanding of what is sung, though that is absolutely needful; but to the understanding of others, and in a language also which may be understood by others, and in which they could join with him in that service: perhaps the apostle may have some respect to the title of some of David's psalms, lykçm, "Maschil", which signifies "causing to understand".

Ver. 16. *Else when thou shall bless with the spirit*, etc.] Which must be understood of giving thanks to God, not in a private way, in the family and at meals, but in a public manner before the whole congregation, for mercies temporal and spiritual, especially the latter; and that not with the breath, or voice only; nor with the affections of the heart, with the soul, and all that is within it, though that is what should be; nor with the common assistance of the Spirit, and under the influence of his grace, which excites to true gratitude; but with the extraordinary gift of the Spirit, pronouncing the blessing, or expressing the thanksgiving with divers tongues, or in an unknown language: when this part of divine service, which by the way is distinct from singing, is performed in this manner,

how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned; ιδιωτου, "idiot". The word jwydh, "idiot", is often used by the Jewish writers, and signifies a plebeian, one of the common people; and is sometimes indeed distinguished from a wise man, or a learned man; but frequently signifies a private person, whether learned or unlearned, that is not in so high a post as others; hence we read [f289] twjwydh µynyyd, "of private judges", which were not of the great sanhedrim, and of private men, as distinguished from kings [f290];

> “there are three kings, and four twjwydh, “private men”, (the Jews say,) that have no part in the world to come; the three kings are Jeroboam, Ahab, and Manasseh; the four private persons are Balsam, Doeg, Ahithophel, and Gehazi:”

here a private man is distinguished from the public minister that blesses, or gives thanks in the name of the people; and not to be understood of a single person, whose place and office it was to say “Amen”, at the minister’s giving of thanks, and who stood in some particular place for that purpose; but of the whole body of the people, who, in distinction from the minister, were in the condition of private men, and all joined, as will be seen hereafter, in saying “Amen”; now the apostle’s question is, that if thou who art a public minister, givest blessing and praise, or returnest thanks to God in an unknown tongue, how shall the common people, or anyone that is in a private capacity,

say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? It was usual to say “Amen” at blessing, or giving of thanks privately at meals, by those that were present, concerning which are the following rules [f291];

> “he that breaks the bread, might not break it until the “Amen” was finished out of the mouth of those that answered; Rab Chasdai says out of the mouth of the major part of those that answer:”

and elsewhere [f292] it is said,

> “they answer “Amen” after an Israelite has blessed, but they do not answer “Amen” after a Cuthite (a Samaritan, or any Gentile, or Christian) hath blessed, unless the whole blessing is heard:”

but of this kind of blessing the apostle speaks not, but of blessing in public: upon which all the people, and not a single person only, as with one united voice, said Amen; (see 1 Chronicles 16:36 Nehemiah 8:6) to this practice the apostle refers; concerning which the rule [f293] is;

> “that the congregation may not answer “Amen”, until the blessing is finished out of the mouth of the priests; and the priests may not begin the other blessing, until the “Amen” is finished out of the mouth of the congregation.”

There were different sorts of “Amen”, or rather different pronunciations of it; of which the Jews say [f294],

> “they may not answer with a fatherless “Amen”; nor with a sudden or violent “Amen”; (pronounced quick and in haste;) nor with an “Amen” cut off, or asunder (the last letter of it not pronounced): says Ben Azzai, whoever answers with a fatherless “Amen”, his children shall be fatherless; with a quick “Amen”, his days will be short; with an “Amen” cut off, his days shall be cut off; and whoever prolongs “Amen”, his days and years shall be prolonged.”

Now, hmwty ^ma, “a fatherless Amen”, was when a person answered, and he did not know what he answered [f295] to; and such an “Amen”, in the case here, must a private man answer with, at the giving of thanks in an unknown tongue; and to answer “Amen” to what was said in a language not understood, was not allowed of; so the woman suspected of adultery was to be sworn and examined by the priest in a language she understood; and was to say “Amen, Amen”, to what was said, in a language known to her [f296]; for if she did not understand it, how could she say “Amen?” which is the apostle’s reasoning here: but was this an affair of such importance, to be instanced in and argued upon in this manner? with the Jews it was, who say [f297],

> “that greater is he that answers “Amen”, than he that blesses:”

and indeed they bestow very extravagant encomiums on those who say it in a proper manner;

> “there is nothing greater (they say [f298]) in the sight of the blessed God, than the “Amen” the Israelite answers with; says R. Joden, whoever answers “Amen” in this world, is worthy to answer “Amen” in the world to come;”

again [f299],

> “says R. Joshua ben Levi, whoever answers “Amen”, his hame shall be great and blessed for ever and ever; says R. Simeon ben Lakish, whoever answers “Amen” with all his strength, the gates of paradise will be opened for him, according to (<23602>Isaiah 26:2).”

Moreover, it was a practice of the primitive Christians at the Lord's supper, at the close of it, to say with a loud voice "Amen"; the account Justin Martyr gives of it is this [f300]; that

> "when the minister had finished the prayers, and the thanksgiving, all the people present, with a joyful acclamation, said "Amen"; which word, he observes, in the Hebrew tongue, signifies "so be it":"

and this custom might obtain in the Corinthian church at this time, to which the apostle is thought by some learned men to refer.

Ver. 17. *For thou verily givest thanks well*, etc.] In very proper words, and pertinent expressions, with great affection and devotion, suitable to the service;

but the other is not edified; the rest of the people, who do not understand the language in which thanks are given; "thy friend", as the Syriac version reads it; or thy next neighbour, he that stands by thee, receives no manner of profit by it, because he does not understand what is said.

Ver. 18. *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all*.] This the apostle says, to observe to them that he did not despise speaking with tongues: nor did he endeavour to beat them off, and dissuade them from desiring them, or envied their having them, because he was destitute of them himself; for he had this gift in a very eminent manner, and oftentimes made use of it, and was frequently under a necessity of so doing; he could speak with more tongues than any of those that had them, and spoke them oftener than they did; having occasion for them through his travelling into different countries, and preaching the Gospel to people of divers languages; and this he mentions also not in a boasting manner, but in great humility, giving thanks to God, and acknowledging him to be the author of this gift.

Ver. 19. *Yet in the church I had rather speak five words*, etc.] Referring not to the five books of Moses, as Jerom suggests, and much less, as the Papists say, to the five words, "for this is my body"; by the muttering of which they suppose the bread in the Lord's supper to be transubtantiated into the body of Christ; but meaning a very few words, which he chose to speak in the church before the congregation, when and where saints were met together for public worship, for their edification and comfort, and the glory of God; for though at other times, and to other people, he might

think fit to make use of his gift in speaking with divers tongues, yet at such a time and place he thought it much more eligible to say ever so few words

with understanding: so as to be understood by others, as well as himself:

that by my voice I might teach others also; the doctrines of the Gospel, the mysteries of grace, the duty of men towards God and men, and one another:

than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue; than to deliver ever so long an oration in a language not understood by them, which could be of no use unto them; for though they might hear his voice, the sound of his words, yet thereby he could not teach and instruct them to their profit, unless they understood the language which he spoke; and therefore five words understood were more likely to be of use than ten thousand spoken in a strange language.

Ver. 20. *Brethren, be not children in understanding*, etc.] There are some things in children in which it is reproachful for believers to be like them; as nonproficiency in knowledge, want of capacity to receive, bear, and digest strong meat; levity, fickleness, and inconstancy, unskilfulness in the word, deficiency of knowledge, want of understanding, not of things natural, but spiritual and evangelical; which is the more aggravated, since their understandings were opened and enlightened; an understanding was given them; the Spirit of God, as a spirit of understanding, was bestowed on them; they had the Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation, and the man of God perfect; and also the ministers of the Gospel to explain divine truths to them; and many had been a long time in the school of Christ, and might have been teachers of others; and yet; after all, were children in understanding, and needed to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God. The apostle here has chiefly reference to the gift of speaking with tongues, these Corinthians were so desirous of; which when they had it, was only to talk like children; and for them to prefer it to other gifts, which were more useful and beneficial, discovered their judgment to be but the judgment of children; and if they desired this, and made use of it for ostentation, it showed a childish vanity, from which the apostle here dissuades:

howbeit in malice be ye children: in other things it is commendable to imitate children, and be like them; as in innocence and harmlessness of conversation; to be meek, modest, and humble, free from pride and vain

glory; to be without guile and hypocrisy, without rancour and bitterness, envying and malice, but tender hearted, and ready to forgive. This the apostle recommends:

but in understanding be men; or "perfect", of ripe and full age, who have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil, rbg "a man", says Aben Ezra [f301], in our language, signifies t[dalm, "one full of knowledge", as in (<020811>Exodus 10:11). It is not perfection of justification that is here meant, for babes in Christ are as perfect in this sense as grown men; nor a perfection of sanctification, for there is no such thing as this in any in this life; there is a perfection of sanctification in Christ, and of parts in everyone that is a new creature; and as that denotes sincerity and uprightness, it is in all that have known the grace of God in truth; but then these are each of them as true of new born babes, young converts, as of older Christians, and strong men: but of knowledge and understanding in divine things; which though it is imperfect in the best, yet in some it is in greater perfection than in others; who may, in a comparative sense, be said to be perfect, or men of full age, who are arrived to a considerable ripeness and maturity of spiritual knowledge; and this is what believers should be pressing after, and desirous of, and make use of all proper methods, such as reading, hearing, and praying, to attain unto.

Ver. 21. *In the law it is written*, etc.] In (<230811>Isaiah 28:11) for the word law is not be confined to the five books of Moses, but includes all the writings of the Old Testament; and this entirely agrees with the sense of the Jews. Says R. Azarias [f302]

> "is it not to be found with our wise men, of blessed memory, in many places, that the word hrwt, "law", comprehends the prophets, and the holy writings?"

And he gives an instance out of the Talmud, and which indeed is very pertinent to the purpose, and is rightly produced, and will support the apostle in calling the prophecy of Isaiah the law, since it is so called in the following passage [f303]. R. Chijah bar Aba says, that

> "R. Jochanan said, from whence is the resurrection of the dead to be proved, hrwth ^m, "out of the law?" from what is said in (<235208>Isaiah 52:8) "thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing". It is not said "they sing", but "they

shall sing": from hence the resurrection of the dead is to be proved out of the law."

And out of the same book the apostle cites the following words;

with [men of] other tongues, and other lips, will I speak unto this people, and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord: the words, "men of", are a supplement of our translators, and which does not seem very necessary: nor is any made in other versions. The words, as they are in our translation of the prophet, are read thus, "with stammering lips, and another tongue, will he speak to this people". Some difference there is between the two passages, which are of no great moment; the words "lips" and "tongue" are inverted by the apostle; nor was it at all material to observe the strict order of them in the citation: and he has also rendered "stammering lips" by "other tongues", and that very rightly; for the word gl, used by Isaiah, does not signify stammering, but derision or mocking; so persons that are spoken to in a language they understand not, look upon themselves to be mocked and derided: and the apostle is to be justified by the Chaldee paraphrase, which renders the words, llmm ywnçb, "with change of speech": that is, with another and different language. Moreover, it is to be observed, that the prophet delivers the passage in the third person, and the apostle cites it in the first: the reason of this is, because he adds these words to it, "saith the Lord": partly for the sake of the authority of the words, and partly to engage the attention of the Corinthians to them; and certain it is, that Isaiah's meaning is, that the Lord would speak in such a manner to the Jews: the other phrase, "for all that will they not hear me", are taken out of (<2812>Isaiah 28:12). Some think that this prophecy refers to God's speaking, by the apostles on the day of Pentecost, with divers tongues, to the Jews; when, though there were three thousand converted at that time, yet these were but comparatively few; the body of the people remained incredulous, and hearkened not to the apostles, though their ministry was attended with such signs and wonders: but rather the sense seems to be this, that whereas the Lord had spoken in the plainest manner to the people of the Jews, by the prophets, as he would afterwards by the apostles, and had repeated his words so often, that even a child might be thought to be capable of receiving them; yet such was their stupidity and obstinacy, that they slighted and disregarded them; wherefore he threatens them he would take another method with them, and speak to them in his providences, by people of different and strange languages, as by the

Chaldeans, Medes, and Persians, in the seventy years' captivity, and by the Romans, and other nations since, among whom they now are; and yet all this has had no effect upon them to listen to the doctrine of the prophets and apostles. Hence the Corinthians had no reason to be so desirous of speaking with divers tongues, since these have been threatened and used by God in a way of punishment to a people, and not a blessing.

Ver. 22. *Wherefore tongues are for a sign*, etc.] Of wrath and punishment inflicted on a rebellious and unbelieving people, and not of grace and kindness, as prophesying, or speaking to them by the prophets, was; and so this is an inference from what is said in the preceding verse, and shows, that there was no reason why believers should be so very desirous of them. But if these words refer to all that is said before on this subject, the word "sign" may be taken for a miracle; and so a new argument is formed against an over fondness for divers tongues, and the use of them in public worship, showing the preferableness of prophecy to them; for speaking with divers tongues was used in a miraculous way,

not to them that believe; who have no need of miracles to raise their attention to what is said, and that it may gain credit with them, or to confirm their faith in it:

but to them that believe not; to prepare them to listen to what might be suggested to them, when they see the persons speaking were endued with miraculous powers, and to engage their assent to it, and belief of it; and so with such persons, and for such purposes, was the gift of speaking with divers tongues used by the apostles, (<4402 04>Acts 2:4-11) but inasmuch as the Corinthian church consisted of believers, there was no need of such a sign or miracle among them; wherefore, if they desired such gifts, and to make use of them, they should choose to do it, not in the church, but among unbelievers:

but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not; that is, not for them only; for prophesying or explaining the prophetic writings, or preaching the word, may be, and often is, the means of converting unbelievers; yet this is not the only use, nor does it serve for, or administer comfort to unbelievers as such; but is profitable to, and serves

for them which believe: it is for their edification, exhortation, and comfort, (<4601 04>1 Corinthians 14:4) it is the means of building them up on their most holy faith; of quickening and stirring them up to the exercise of grace, and

performance of duty; of comforting them under various distresses, inward and outward; and of establishing, strengthening, and settling them, and therefore much more eligible to be used in a church of Christ, than speaking with tongues.

Ver. 23. *If therefore the whole church*, etc.] The whole congregation of believers incorporated together in a Gospel church state, consisting of its officers and private members; the church at Corinth is particularly designed:

be come together in one place; to worship God, to pray unto him, sing his praise, preach and hear the word, as were usually done. Hence may be observed the custom of the primitive churches to meet together, in some certain place, for divine worship; nor did the members of them in common forsake the assembling of themselves together on that account, though it was the evil practice of some of them; the whole church, all the members of it, met together: and it may be seen from hence, that the church, and the place where it met, are two different things:

and all speak with tongues; divers tongues, languages not understood; meaning, not that all that came together spoke with tongues; but that as many as did speak, should they speak with such, and without an interpreter.

And there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers; either private Christians, who, though they have learned Christ, and understand the doctrines of the Gospel, yet are ignorant of languages; or rather the same persons with unbelievers, Heathens that have no knowledge of Christ, nor faith in him, and who also understood no other language but the Greek: if any such persons should come into the place where the church was met together, and should hear him or them that spoke, speak in a language they understood not, and which they were very well assured was equally unknown to the whole congregation, and so could be of no service to them:

will they not say ye are mad? act like men in a frenzy, that have not the use of their reason; since speaking in a strange language to a congregation that know not one word of what is said, is speaking to the air, and to no profit at all to them that hear; and who but a madman would do this? The apostle here argues from the scandal and contempt that would be poured upon them by such a practice; and the rather he mentions this, because it seems

as if their governing view was the glory and applause of men, in which, he suggests, they would be sadly disappointed.

Ver. 24. *But if all prophecy*, etc.] That is, all that speak publicly in the church, not together, but in their order, one after another, as is hereafter directed:

and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned; an unbeliever that has only the knowledge of his mother tongue, in which prophesying or preaching is used:

he is convinced of all, he is judged of all; of all the prophets or preachers; they all reprove him, and detect his secret, as the Arabic version renders the words; and to the same purport the Ethiopic. This must be understood of such persons whom the Spirit of God, under, and by the ministry of the word, powerfully works upon; whose hearts he opens to receive the word, and to whom he effectually applies it; whom he convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment, shows the evil of their hearts and ways, reproves their errors, convicts them of their mistakes, and informs their judgments, and condemns all their principles and practices which are not agreeably to the word of God.

Ver. 25. *And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest*, etc.] Not to the prophets, or preachers, or to the rest of the congregation, but to himself; the word preached being in the hands, and trader the influence, direction, and application of the Spirit of God, a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; showing the plague and naughtiness of it, discovering the lusts that are in it, detecting the errors of the mind, and filling the conscience with a sense of guilt, and a consciousness of deserved punishment; so that the person looks upon himself as particularly spoken to, and as if the person speaking had knowledge of all that was within him, and adapted his discourse on purpose to him, and delivered it for his sake alone; concluding, that there is, and must be, something more than human in it:

and so falling down on his face: either publicly before the whole congregation; or when retired, as one ashamed of his sins and errors, and not able to look either God, or good men, in the face; and being in an adoration posture; or however, being truly humbled before God under a sense of his iniquities,

he will worship God; pray unto him, and earnestly entreat he would be merciful to him a sinner, and blot out all his transgressions, and forgive him all his sins; and will ever after acknowledge him to be the true God, embrace his Gospel, submit to his ordinances, and attend his service:

and report: or "declare", freely and openly to the church, to all men, to the world, and to his company from whence he came, and to whom he belonged,

that God is in you of a truth: that the Spirit of God, who is truly God, and searches the deep things of God, and reveals them, and the deep things of men, and makes them manifest, is in the prophets and preachers, otherwise they would never be able to make manifest the secrets of the heart as they do; and that the presence of God is in the church, and the power of God goes along with the ministration of the word: hereby, now many valuable ends are answered, a sinner is converted, God is worshipped and glorified, credit is brought to religion, the church of Christ is spoken well of, and prophets or preachers are honoured; wherefore prophesying, seeing it is both for the edification of believers, and conversion of sinners, ought to be desired, and made use of before speaking with tongues.

Ver. 26. *How is it then, brethren*? etc.] Or "what is it brethren?" The Arabic renders it, "what is the sense of my words?" The meaning of what he had said, the drift of his whole discourse; or rather the sense is, what is to be done in the case he was about to propose?

when ye come together; as a church into one place, to worship God;

everyone of you hath a psalm; not that everyone had this, or any other gift here mentioned, but that there were some among them that had one or other of these several gifts: some of them had a gift of composing and singing a psalm extempore; they delighted in psalmody, and were forward to promote it, and fond of spending the time wholly in it.

Hath a doctrine; others of them had a gift of deducing doctrines out of the word of God, which is profitable for that purpose, in an extraordinary manner, without study, and were capable of teaching them, and instructing men in them in a very edifying way:

hath a tongue others had the gift of speaking with divers tongues; or had knowledge and skill in the Hebrew tongue, could not only pray and sing in that language, and read the sacred text, but could deliver a sermon in it.

Hath a revelation; others had a peculiar insight into the types and figures of the Mosaic dispensation, a clear view of the prophetic writings, and a large discovery of the mysteries of the Gospel, by the Spirit, as a spirit of wisdom and revelation.

Hath an interpretation; others had a gift of interpreting languages, particularly the Hebrew language, when anything was delivered therein by another. Now the apostle answers to the question, what is to be done in such a case, where there is such a variety of gifts, and everyone is desirous of exercising his peculiar gift?

let all things be done to edifying; intimating, that each of these things might be done; every gift might be made use of: he that had a psalm might sing it; and he that had a doctrine might deliver it; he that had a tongue might speak with it; and he that had a revelation might declare it; and he that had an interpretation might make use of it; provided that care was taken that each was done in such a manner, as might be for the edifying of the church that was met together; otherwise, if it was only for ostentation sake to make a show of their gifts and talents, and to nourish their own pride and vanity, no good end would be answered; it had better be let alone: but if edification could be promoted, each gift might be employed; for which the apostle gives the following directions.

Ver. 27. *If any man speak in an unknown tongue*, etc.] He begins with the gift of tongues, with speaking in an unknown tongue, as the Hebrew language, because this they were desirous of: and the rule for this he would have observed is,

let it be by two, or at most by three, and that by course. The Arabic version reads it, “let him speak to two, or at most three, and separately”; as if it respected the number of persons he was to speak to at a time, and that in a separate and private manner: but the apostle’s sense is, that two such persons as had the gift of speaking in an unknown tongue, or three at most, should be only employed at one opportunity, lest too much time should be taken up this way, and prevent a more useful and edifying exercise; and that these should speak not together, which would be a mere jargon and confusion, and make them took like madmen, and render them entirely useless indeed; but in course, one after another, that so an interpreter might be able to take their sense, and render what they said, and express it in a language the people understood: for it follows,

let one interpret what the two or three had said. This practice seems to be borrowed from the Jews, who had such an officer in the synagogue as a "Methurgeman", or "an interpreter". The rise of which office, and the rules to be observed in the performance of it, are as follow, delivered by Maimonides [f304]:

> "from the times of Ezra it has been customary that an interpreter should interpret to the people what the reader reads in the law, so that they may understand the nature of things; and the reader reads one verse only, and is silent until the interpreter has interpreted it; then he returns and reads a second verse: a reader may not raise his voice above the interpreter, nor the interpreter raise his voice above the reader. The interpreter may not interpret until the verse is finished out of the mouth of the reader, and the reader may not read a verse until the interpretation is finished out of the mouth of the interpreter; and the interpreter might not lean neither upon a pillar, nor a beam, but must stand in trembling, and in fear; and he may not interpret by writing, but by mouth: and the reader may not help the interpreter; and they may not say the interpretation written in the law; and a little one may interpret by the means of a grown person, but it is no honour to a grown person to interpret by the means of a little one; and two may not interpret as one, but one reads µgrtm djaw, "and one interprets" [f305]."

An interpreter might not interpret according to his own sense, nor according to the form of the words, or its literal sense; nor might he add of his own, but was obliged to go according to the Targum of Onkelos [f306], which they say was the same that was delivered on Mount Sinai. The place they stood in was just before the reader; for so it is said [f307],

> "the interpreters stand before the wise man on the sabbath days, and hear from his mouth, and cause the multitude to hear."

And elsewhere it is said [f308],

> "the interpreter stands before the wise man, the preacher, and the wise man (or doctor) whispers to him in the Hebrew language, and he interprets to the multitude in a language they hear,"

or understand. And sometimes these sat at his side, and only reported what the doctor whispered privately. So

> "it is said [f309], that when the son of R. Judah bar Ilai died, he went into the house of Midrash, or the school, and R. Chaniah ben Akabia went in and sat by his side, and he whispered to him, and he to the interpreter, and the interpreter caused the multitude to hear."

And they never put any man into this office until he was fifty years of age [f310]. Several of the Jewish Rabbins were interpreters, as R. Chananiah before mentioned, and R. Chutzphit, and others [f311].

Ver. 28. *But if there be no interpreter*, etc.] None that has the gift of interpretation of divers tongues, and he that speaks with them has not that, which was sometimes the case:

let him keep silence in the church; let him not make use of his gift publicly before the whole congregation, since without an interpreter it will be entirely useless:

and let him speak to himself, and to God; he may make use of his gift to his own edification, and to the glory of God, by speaking with a low voice, or in his heart, which he himself may be conscious of, and God the searcher of hearts, and that knows all languages, fully understands; and so may be edified himself, and God may be glorified by him; whereas, if he was to use it openly and publicly, it would not only be unprofitable, but an hinderance to others: or he might retire to his own house, and there exercise it by himself, and in the presence of God, when it might be of some use and advantage to himself, but would be highly improper to bring it into the church, or public congregation; for instead of assisting, it would but dampen their devotion, and therefore it was very reasonable he should be silent there.

Ver. 29. *Let the prophets speak, two or three*, etc.] The apostle having finished the rules for streaking with an unknown tongue, proceeds to lay down some for the gift of prophesying; and observes, that where there are a number of prophets, as very likely there were in the church at Corinth, two or three of them might prophesy, or explain the prophecies of the Old Testament, or preach the Gospel at one opportunity or meeting: he does not use that restrictive clause, "at most", as before, because if there was any necessity or occasion for it, more might be employed, so that care was taken not to burden the people, and send them away loathing; and this they were to do, as before, in course, one after another, otherwise it would be all confusion, nor could they be heard to edification. Though some have

thought that they might speak together at one and the same time, in different parts of the church:

and let the other judge: the other prophets that sit and hear, and all such as have a spirit of discerning, whether what the prophets say comes from their own spirits, or from a lying spirit, from the spirit of antichrist, or whether from the Spirit of God; and even the body of the people, private members of the church, and hearers, might judge of the doctrine for themselves, according to the word of God, the standard of faith and practice; and were not to believe every spirit, but try them, whether they were of God, and their doctrines by his word, whether they were true or false; for the spiritual man is in a measure capable of judging all things of a spiritual kind, through that spiritual experience he has of the word of God, and divine things, and by the assistance of the Spirit of God.

Ver. 30. *If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by*, etc.] To another prophet that sits, and hears, and tries, and judges what he hears; if he has a clearer revelation made to him of what the other is speaking of, and has a more distinct knowledge of it, and is capable of removing any difficulty that attends it, and of expressing it more plainly, and of proving it more largely, and of setting it in an easier light to the understandings of men:

let the first hold his peace; be that was speaking, upon such an intimation being made to him, let him stop, and give way to him that has the revelation, that the church may receive the benefit of it: hence it may be observed, that the custom of the primitive churches was to hear the word sitting, and the prophet or preacher stood, or sat, as he thought fit; (see Gill on "Matthew 5:1"), and that sometimes a revelation was made, and light conveyed to these prophets in a very sudden and extraordinary manner, when it was proper that it should be at once communicated for the good of the whole society: but this is to be understood only of those prophets or preachers, not of the common people; for it must not be thought that any that rose up, and pretended to a revelation, might be indulged to deliver it, and the speaker give way to him, which might be attended with much confusion, and many bad consequences; but only such who were known to have gifts, and who at certain times had peculiar revelations made unto them.

Ver. 31. *For ye may all prophesy one by one*, etc.] Not every member of the church, but everyone that had the gift of prophecy; so that they were

not confined to two or three prophets at a meeting, but as many as would, or as had anything to deliver, and as time would allow; only care must be taken that confusion be avoided, and order preserved by exercising in turns one after another. This was agreeably to the custom of the Jewish synagogue, in which more might read and speak, though but one at a time; for

> "it is forbidden to read in the book of the law, except one only, that all may hearken, and be silent, that so they may hear the words from his mouth, as if they had heard them that very moment from Mount Sinai."

So here,

that all may learn; more of the doctrine of Christ, and of the mind and will of God, and attain to a greater knowledge in the mysteries of the Gospel, and in the duties of religion, even prophets and teachers as well as private members and common hearers; for there are none who know ever so much, but are capable of being further taught and instructed, and that sometimes by such whose gifts are interior to them:

and all may be comforted; or exhorted, or receive exhortation. The word used signifies both; and prophecy is useful both for exhortation and comfort, and that both to preachers and people.

Ver. 32. *And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.*] Meaning either that the doctrines which the prophets deliver, the explanations they give of passages of Scriptures, the revelations they declare, are subject to the examination, judgment, and censure of other prophets; who have a right to try and judge them, either according to a more clear revelation they may have, or rather according to the sure word of prophecy, the Scriptures of truth; and indeed they are subject to the trial and judgment of the whole church, and therefore ought not to be stiff in their own sentiments, and obstinately persist in them, but cheerfully and readily submit them to be examined, and approved or disapproved by others; and particularly when one that sits by signifies he has something revealed to him, which will better explain, or give further light into what the speaker is upon, he ought to submit and give way to him; and thereby truth may be made manifest and established, instruction, edification, and comfort promoted, and peace and order preserved: or else the sense is, that the spiritual gifts of the prophets, and the inspirations and instincts by

which they are acted, and the affections which are excited in them, are subject to themselves, so that they can use, or not use those gifts; though they have the word of the Lord they can forbear speaking, as Jeremy did, for a while, and as the case of Jonah shows; or they can refrain themselves and be silent, and wait till they have proper opportunity of speaking, being not like the prophets of false gods, who are acted by an evil spirit, and observe no order or decorum, but with a sort of fury and madness deliver involuntarily what is suggested to them: but such is not the case of true prophets that are influenced and directed by the Spirit of God, who will give way to one another; one will be silent while the other speaks, and by turns prophesy one after another; and where there is not such a subjection, it is a sign that the Spirit of God is not in them, for the reason that follows.

Ver. 33. *For God is not the author of confusion*, etc.] Or disorder, or "tumult", as the Syriac renders it; wherefore he does not inspire and excite his prophets to deliver themselves in a disorderly and tumultuous manner, so as to break in one upon another; but when one speaks, the other is silent, or when one has anything revealed to him, and he signifies it in a proper manner, the other stops and gives way to him, and when he has done another succeeds, and so the rest in order, till the whole opportunity is filled up in an orderly and edifying manner; and whatever is contrary to, or breaks in upon such a method, God is not the author of: for he is the author

of peace, harmony, unity, and concord among his prophets and teachers, and so of order, for the former cannot be without the latter; where there is no order in the ministry, there can be no peace among the ministers, nor comfort in the churches; but God is the God of peace, he calls for, requires, disposes, and approves of peace and order among all his people:

as in all churches of the saints. The Vulgate Latin reads, "as I teach in all", etc. and so read some copies, and may refer to all that is said before; and the sense be, that all the rules he had prescribed concerning speaking with tongues, and prophesying, were not new ones, but such as he had directed to be observed in all churches he was concerned with, and which consisted of holy and good men; or God is the author, not of confusion, but of peace in all the churches; he orders and disposes peace among them, and they attend to it: peace and order, and not confusion and tumult, prevail in all churches that deserve to be called churches of the saints, and therefore were in this to be imitated by the church at Corinth.

Ver. 34. *Let your women keep silence in the churches*, etc.] This is a restriction of, and an exception to one of the above rules, that all might prophesy; in which he would be understood of men only, and not of women; and is directed against a practice which seems to have prevailed in this church at Corinth, allowing women to preach and teach in it; and this being a disorderly practice, and what was not used in other churches, the apostle forbids and condemns, and not without reason:

for it is not permitted unto them to speak; that is, in public assemblies, in the church of God, they might not speak with tongues, nor prophesy, or preach, or teach the word. All speaking is not prohibited; they might speak their experiences to the church, or give an account of the work of God upon their souls; they might speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; or speak as an evidence in any case at a church meeting; but not in such sort, as carried in it direction, instruction, government, and authority. It was not allowed by God that they should speak in any authoritative manner in the church; nor was it suffered in the churches of Christ; nor was it admitted of in the Jewish synagogue; there, we are told [f312], the men came to teach, and the women [wmçl, "to hear": and one of their canons runs thus [f313];

> "a woman may not read (that is, in the law), rwbxb, "in the congregation", or church, because of the honour of the congregation;"

for they thought it a dishonourable thing to a public assembly for a woman to read, though they even allowed a child to do it that was capable of it.

But they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. In (<0103>Genesis 3:16), "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee". By this the apostle would signify, that the reason why women are not to speak in the church, or to preach and teach publicly, or be concerned in the ministerial function, is, because this is an act of power, and authority; of rule and government, and so contrary to that subjection which God in his law requires of women unto men. The extraordinary instances of Deborah, Huldah, and Anna, must not be drawn into a rule or example in such cases.

Ver. 35. *And if they will learn anything*, etc.] If they are desirous of learning anything in relation to doctrine, duty, or discipline, and of improving their knowledge of divine things, which is very commendable in

them; if any difficulty arises in their minds whilst hearing the word, which they want to have removed, or any question to ask for information sake,

let them ask their husbands at home; privately, when retired from the public assembly; for though men might ask one another concerning this, and the other point, in the church, as was usual in the synagogue worship, to which this church at Corinth in many things conformed; yet women were not allowed this freedom, and even in things which belonged to women to do; as for instance, making the cake of the first of their dough, which was to be an heave offering to the Lord, the men were to teach the women at home how, and when to separate it from the rest [f314]. So the apostle directs women, when they wanted to be informed about any point, to apply to their husbands at their own houses, if they were such as were capable of instructing them; if not, they might apply to other men that were Christian men, and men of knowledge, especially to the prophets, pastors, and teachers of the church, at their habitations:

for it is a shame for women to speak in the church; it is a shame to themselves, as being contrary to the natural modesty and bashfulness of the sex, and a shame to the church, to the non-members of it, and especially to the elders, and more experienced part of it, to be taught and directed by a woman; it is a disgrace to herself and sex, as betraying uncommon pride and vanity, and an unnatural boldness and confidence; and a disgrace to the church to be under such a ministry and conduct.

Ver. 36. *What? came the word of God out from you*? etc.] That you must give laws to other churches, and introduce new customs and practices never known or used before? No; the word of the Lord came out of Zion, and the law or doctrine of the Lord, the word of the Gospel, the doctrine of the grace of God, came out of Jerusalem. The apostles that first preached it were Jews, and they preached it first in their own land, and planted churches there, before it came to the Gentiles; and therefore the apostle suggests it would be right to consider what was the practice of the churches in Judea, the first Gospel churches, concerning women's speaking in the church, and to conform thereunto; when they would be able to observe, that these first churches from whence the word of God came to them, disallowed of any such practice, but in this point agreed with the old synagogue:

or came it unto you only? no, it came to many other nations, and people, and towns, and cities besides them; and many churches were formed

among the Gentiles, who had no such custom, did not permit their women to speak in the church; and therefore why should they be singular and different from all others? other churches had the word of God, had gifts, and prophesying as well as they, and yet had introduced no such custom; and therefore it became them to pay a deference to the judgment and practice of others, especially since these were under, and acted according to the direction of the apostle, which they ought to have been subject to.

Ver. 37. *If any man think himself to be a prophet*, etc.] Or "seems to be a prophet", and is really one; for the apostle does not so much design to strike at the pride, vanity, and appearances of false prophets, as to observe, that those that are really prophets, have the gift of prophesy, either of foretelling future events, or a peculiar gift of preaching the Gospel, and explaining the Scriptures, will allow what he had said to be right:

or spiritual; not merely one that has the Spirit of God, is regenerated and sanctified by him, in opposition to a natural and carnal man; or one that has a larger knowledge of spiritual things, in distinction from a babe in Christ; but one that is endued with spiritual gifts, with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, with a discerning of spirits; as there were such among them no doubt, as well as prophets, and who were distinct from them, having the word of wisdom and knowledge:

let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord; if he is a true prophet, and really a spiritual man, he will clearly see, and therefore ought to own, that the rules here prescribed concerning speaking with tongues and prophesying, and concerning the intolerableness, unlawfulness, and indecency of women's speaking in public assemblies, are perfectly agreeable to the commands of Christ, and are to be esteemed as such, being delivered under the influence and direction of his Spirit; and which the prophet and spiritual man must discern and allow, if they have the Spirit of God; for whatever was commanded by the apostles under divine inspiration, was all one as if immediately commanded by Christ himself.

Ver. 38. *But if any man be ignorant*, etc.] Of "these" words, as the Arabic version adds, and does not know and own them to be the commandments of Christ; though he may profess himself to be a prophet, or a spiritual man, he is a very ignorant one, and has not the Spirit of God he pretends to: and if he will not be convinced, but goes on to doubt, and call in question the truth of these things, and obstinately persist in his ignorance,

let him be ignorant: let him be treated and despised as an ignorant man; and let his ignorance be no hinderance to any in receiving these rules and directions as the commandments of Christ; for no regard is to be had, or pity shown, to a man of affected ignorance, and wilful obstinacy; such a man is not to be known and owned, but shunned and rejected.

Ver. 39. *Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy*, etc.] The apostle now draws to a conclusion, and reassumes the exhortation he gave in the beginning of the chapter, pressing the members of this church to desire the gift of prophecy, that being the most eligible and preferable to others, particularly to speaking with tongues, since it was the most useful and edifying, as he abundantly proves:

and forbid not to speak with tongues; such as have that gift, and are desirous of exercising it, provided they observe the rules prescribed, and have an interpreter; this he adds to promote love, and prevent dissension and discord.

Ver. 40. *Let all things be done decently and in order*.] Which may refer not only to what is said in this chapter, but in the foregoing part of the epistle; go not to law before the unbelievers; let not a believing yokefellow depart from an unbelieving one; let not him that has knowledge sit in an idol's temple, and eat meat there; let not a man pray with his head covered, and a woman with hers uncovered; come not to the house of God to eat and drink intemperately, thereby reflecting dishonour and scandal on the ordinance of the Lord's supper; let not any speak in an unknown tongue in the church, without an interpreter, as if he was a madman, nor suffer women to teach in public; all which are very unbecoming, and contrary to the rules of decency: do not encourage animosities, factions, and parties; despise not the faithful ministers of the word, but honour and obey them in the Lord; neglect not the discipline of the church, lay on censures, and pass the sentence of excommunication on such as deserve them; keep the ordinances as they have been delivered, particularly that of the Lord's supper; observe the rules prescribed for prophesying and speaking with tongues, and so all these things will be done according to the order of the Gospel: and the words may be considered as a general rule for the decent and orderly management of all things relating to the worship of God, and discipline of his house; that in all things a good decorum, and strict order, be observed, that nothing be done contrary to the rules of decency, and the laws and commandments of Christ.

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 15

The apostle, in this chapter, recommends the Gospel, and gives a summary of it, proves the resurrection of Christ, and by various arguments establishes the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and answers objections made unto it. He also sets forth the glory there will be upon the bodies of risen saints, and the change that will be made on living ones; and concludes with an exhortation to perseverance in faith and holiness. As his chief view is the doctrine of the resurrection, he introduces this by recommending the Gospel in general, or by observing that this is a principal doctrine which should be remembered and retained, because it was the Gospel which he had preached, and they had received, and had hitherto persevered in, (<4601>1 Corinthians 15:1) and besides was essential to salvation, and the means of it, by which they would be saved, if they retained it, except their faith in it was in vain, as it would be should they drop it, (<4602>1 Corinthians 15:2). And moreover, the apostle had received it by divine revelation, and had faithfully delivered it to them, and therefore it became them to hold it fast; the sum of which were the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, agreeably to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, (<4603>1 Corinthians 15:3,4) and then he reckons up the eyewitnesses of the latter, as first Peter, then the twelve disciples, then five hundred brethren at one time; next James, and all the apostles; and last of all himself, (<4605>1 Corinthians 15:5-8) of whom he speaks in a very diminishing style, describing himself as an abortive, affirming himself to be the least of the apostles, and unworthy to be in that office, or bear that name, giving this as a reason for it, because he had been a persecutor of the church of Christ, (<4609>1 Corinthians 15:9) wherefore he ascribes the dignity he was raised to entirely to the free grace of God; and yet he magnifies his office, and observes, that the gifts of grace bestowed upon him were not in vain, and that he was a more abundant labourer than the rest of the apostles, and had more success; but then he freely declares that all he had, and all he did, were by the grace of God, (<4610>1 Corinthians 15:10). But however, not to insist upon the difference between him and other apostles; he observes, that the subject matter of their ministry was the same, namely, a suffering and

risen Saviour, and who was also the object of the faith of the believing Corinthians, (<46151>1 Corinthians 15:11) wherefore the apostle proceeds to blame some among them for denying the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, seeing it was a principal part of the ministry of the Gospel, that Christ was risen from the dead, (<46152>1 Corinthians 15:12) whereas that would not be true, if there is no resurrection of the dead, (<46153>1 Corinthians 15:13) but that Christ is risen, is not only evident from the testimonies of eyewitnesses before produced, but from the absurdities that follow upon a denial of it, as that the preaching of the Gospel was a vain thing, and faith in it also, (<46154>1 Corinthians 15:14) yea, the apostles would be no other than false witnesses of God, testifying that he raised up Christ, when he is not risen, if the dead rise not, (<46155>1 Corinthians 15:15) which argument is repeated, (<46156>1 Corinthians 15:16) and other absurdities following such an hypothesis are added; as besides what was before mentioned, that faith becomes hereby a vain thing, such as have believed in him must be in an unregenerate state, and both under the power and guilt of sin, (<46157>1 Corinthians 15:17) nay, not only so, but such who are dead in Christ, or for his sake are lost and perished, (<46158>1 Corinthians 15:18) and even those of the saints who are alive must be the most unhappy and miserable of all mortals, (<46159>1 Corinthians 15:19). But inasmuch as it is a certain point that Christ is risen, it is as clear a case that the saints will rise, which is argued from Christ being the firstfruits of those that are fallen asleep in him, which secures their resurrection to them, (<46150>1 Corinthians 15:20) and from his being their covenant head, as Adam was to his posterity; so that as all his offspring died in him, all the saints will be quickened by Christ, death coming by the one, and the resurrection by the other, (<46152>1 Corinthians 15:21,22). And whereas it might be objected, if this is the case, why did not the saints, who were dead before the resurrection of Christ, rise from the dead when he did, or quickly after? To which it is answered, there is an order observed agreeable to the firstfruits and lump: Christ, the firstfruits, is first, and then they that believe in him, (<46152>1 Corinthians 15:23) and this will not be until the second coming of Christ, and the end of all things, when all the elect of God shall be gathered in; and then they will be raised and presented to the Father complete in soul and body, and all rule and authority among men will cease, (<46154>1 Corinthians 15:24). But in the mean while Christ must reign until all enemies are subject to him, and the last of all that will be destroyed by him is death; which is another argument proving the resurrection of the dead; for if death is destroyed, the dead must rise, and never die more, (<46155>1 Corinthians 15:25,26) That all things

will be put under the feet of Christ, every enemy, and so death, is proved from a testimony out of (<19806>Psalm 8:6). But to prevent a cavil, and secure the honour of God the Father, he is excepted from being subject to him, (<46527>1 Corinthians 15:27) so far is he from being so, that the Son shall be subject to him, and appear to be so as Mediator, by giving up the account of things to him; the end of which is, that God, Father, Son, and Spirit, may be all in all, (<46528>1 Corinthians 15:28). The resurrection of the dead is further argued from the sufferings of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, for the sake of him and his Gospel, and particularly this doctrine of it, which are first figuratively expressed under the notion of a baptism, (<46529>1 Corinthians 15:29) and then more literally and clearly signified by being in jeopardy, and exposed to danger of life continually, (<46530>1 Corinthians 15:30) and which is exemplified in the case of the apostle himself, who was liable to death daily, (<46531>1 Corinthians 15:31) of which he gives a particular instance in his fighting with beasts at Ephesus. Moreover, another absurdity would follow upon this, should this doctrine not be true; and that is, that a loose and licentious life, such an one as the Epicureans live, would be encouraged hereby, (<46532>1 Corinthians 15:32) from which the apostle dissuades; partly from the pernicious effect of it, which he shows by a passage cited out of one of the Heathens, (<46533>1 Corinthians 15:33) and partly from its being contrary to a righteous conversation, and from the stupidity, sinfulness, and ignorance, which such a course of life, upon such principles, declares, (<46534>1 Corinthians 15:34). And then the apostle proceeds to answer questions, and remove objections relating to the resurrection of the dead; which questions and objections are put, (<46535>1 Corinthians 15:35) which suppose the thing to be impossible and absurd, and to which answers are returned, first by observing, that grain which is sown in the earth first dies before it is quickened, and that it does not rise up bare grain as it was sown, but in a different form and shape, with additional circumstances greatly to its advantage; and has a body given by the power, and according to the pleasure of God, and suitable to the nature of the seed; by which is suggested, that in like manner the body first dies, and then is raised;, and though the same body, yet it is raised in a different form with different qualities, by the power, and according to the will of God; and therefore seeing there are every year such innumerable instances in nature, of dead and putrefied grain being revived, it need not be thought incredible, impracticable, and absurd, that God should raise the dead, (<46536>1 Corinthians 15:36-38) and that the body, though the same shall rise different from what it was when laid in the grave, is illustrated by the

difference of flesh in men, beasts, fishes, and birds; which, though all of it flesh, differs from each other; and so will the flesh of the body, in the resurrection, differ from the flesh it is now clothed with, (<4659>1 Corinthians 15:39). And the same is further illustrated by the difference there is in the heavenly and earthly bodies, in the sun, and moon, and stars, and in one star from another; all which have respect to the same, showing not any difference there will be in risen bodies among themselves, but in risen bodies from what they now are, (<4660>1 Corinthians 15:40,41) as appears by the accommodation of these similes to the resurrection of the dead; and which differences are clearly expressed, the present bodies being corrupt, dishonourable, weak, and natural, the risen ones being incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual, (<4662>1 Corinthians 15:42-44). And that the risen bodies will be spiritual, the apostle proves, by comparing Adam and Christ together; the one had a natural body, the other had a spiritual body after his resurrection, (<4665>1 Corinthians 15:45) the order of which is given, the natural body of Adam was before the spiritual body of Christ, (<4666>1 Corinthians 15:46). Their original is also taken notice of, the one being of the earth, the other front heaven, (<4667>1 Corinthians 15:47) and so accordingly the offspring of the one, and of the other, are different; the offspring of the first Adam are earthly like him, and have a natural body, as he had; the offspring of the second Adam are heavenly, as he was, and will have a body like to his; for as they bear the image of the first man, from whom they naturally descend, by having a natural body like to his, so they must bear the image of the second man, the Lord from heaven, by having a spiritual body fashioned like to his glorious body, (<4668>1 Corinthians 15:48,49). And there is an absolute necessity for this, seeing bodies, in their present state, and case, as natural, mortal, and sinful, cannot be admitted into the possession of the kingdom and glory of the Lord, (<4670>1 Corinthians 15:50) but inasmuch as all will not die, and so be raised again, but some will be alive at the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead, a difficulty arises how the living saints will come by spiritual bodies, in order to inherit the kingdom of God, without which they cannot inherit it: this difficulty the apostle removes, by making known a secret never divulged before, that at the same time the dead will be raised, which will be at the sounding of a trumpet; in a moment, at once the living saints will be changed, and become immortal and incorruptible, as the raised ones, (<4671>1 Corinthians 15:51,52) for so it must be that these corruptible and mortal bodies be clothed with incorruption and immortality, either by the resurrection of them, or a change upon them, when either way they will

become spiritual, (46153 1 Corinthians 15:53). And hereby some prophecies in Isaiah and Hoses will have their accomplishment, (46154 1 Corinthians 15:54,55) on the mention of which, some things in them are explained, as that sin is the sting of death, and the law is the strength of sin, which regard the prophecy in Hosea, (46156 1 Corinthians 15:56) and the victory obtained over death, which is mentioned in the prophecy of Isaiah, is ascribed to God, who gives it through Christ, to whom thanks are returned for it, (46157 1 Corinthians 15:57). And the chapter is concluded with an exhortation steadfastly to abide by the cause of Christ, and in his service; to which the saints are encouraged from this consideration, that they will find their account in it, (46158 1 Corinthians 15:58).

Ver. 1. *Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel*, etc.] The apostle here passes on, and proceeds to a new subject, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which some in this church denied; and which he undertakes to prove, establish, and defend; and in order to lead on to it, observes, that what he was about to declare, make known, or put them in mind of, was no other than the Gospel he had formerly preached to them, they had received, professed to stand in, and were saved by, unless their faith was in vain. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead he calls “the Gospel”, that being a most important doctrine, and a fundamental article of it. The resurrection of Christ from the dead made a considerable part in the ministry of the apostles, to the grief of the Sadducees among the Jews, to the scorn of the Gentile philosophers, and to the faith, hope, and comfort of Christians: this is the sum and substance of the word of faith, or doctrine of the Gospel, upon which the whole depends; (see 45108 Romans 10:8,9) and the resurrection of the saints is connected with it, and assured by it. This indeed is the Gospel, good news, glad tidings that the bodies of the saints shall be raised again, and made like to the glorious body of Christ; and being reunited to their souls, shall live with him to all eternity; and were this out of the Gospel, it would not be Gospel, or good news; it would be an idle story, faith would be a vain thing, and hoping and believing Christians of all the most miserable. Moreover, says the apostle, the Gospel I declare, is

which I preached unto you; meaning, when he first came among them, and which had been so very useful to them for conversion and consolation; and therefore if he himself, or an angel from heaven, was to preach any other doctrine, it was to be rejected; and hence, much less should the false teachers be regarded: yea, adds he, it is the doctrine

which also you have received; when first enlightened and converted, with all gladness and joyfulness, with all readiness and cheerfulness, in the love of it, and by a full assent to it; and therefore having had such an experience of it, should not now depart from it: nay, he further says,

and wherein ye stand; as he hoped they did, at least it was what they ought to have done, and doubtless was the case of the majority of them, and whose example it became the rest to follow.

Ver. 2. *By which also ye are saved*, etc.] It was the means of their salvation, and had been made the power of God unto salvation to them. Salvation is inseparably connected with true faith in Christ as a Saviour, and with a hearty belief of his resurrection from the dead, which is the earnest and pledge of the resurrection of the saints; and because of the certainty of it in the promise of God, through the obedience and death of Christ, and in the faith and hope of believers, which are sure and certain things, they are said to be saved already. To which the apostle puts in the following provisos and exceptions; the one is,

if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you; or rather, "if ye hold fast, or retain"; that is, by faith, the doctrine preached to you, and received by you, particularly the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; for the salvation that is connected with it does not depend upon the strength of the memory, but upon the truth and steadfastness of faith: it is the man that perseveres in the faith and doctrine of Christ that shall be saved; and everyone that has truly believed in Christ, and cordially embraced his Gospel, shall hold on, and out to the end; though the faith of nominal believers may be overthrown by such men, as Hymenaeus and Philetus, who asserted, that the resurrection was past already; but so shall not the faith of real believers, because the foundation on which they are built stands sure, and the Lord has perfect knowledge of them, and will keep and save them. The other exception is,

unless ye have believed in vain: not that true faith can be in vain; for that is the faith of God's elect, the gift of his grace, the operation of his Spirit; Christ is the author and finisher of it, and will never suffer it to fail; it will certainly issue in everlasting salvation: but then as the word may be heard in vain, as it is by such who are compared to the wayside, and to the thorny and rocky ground; and as the Gospel of the grace of God may be received in vain; so a mere historical faith may be in vain; this a man may have, and not the grace of God, and so be nothing; with this he may believe for a

while, and then drop it: and since each of these might possibly be the case of some in this church, the apostle puts in these exceptions, in order to awaken the attention of them all to this important doctrine he was reminding them of.

Ver. 3. *For I delivered unto you first of all*, etc.] Not only in the first place as to order; but among the chief and principal things, as the words will bear to be rendered, this was insisted on in his ministry; this was one he after relates, even a crucified Christ, or the doctrine of his dying for the sins of his people; and which he mentions to lead on to his resurrection; which he meant to improve, and does improve, in a very strong manner, in favour of the resurrection of the saints. This doctrine of a crucified Saviour, which he at first determined only to make known among them, and did make known, was what he fully and faithfully delivered to them, as he had received it:

that which also I received; not from men, but from Christ; for from him he had the doctrines of the Gospel, as well as the ordinances of it; and he delivered nothing to be believed and practised, but what he had received, and which ought to be the practice and conduct of every Gospel minister; whatever they have received they should deliver, and nothing else: and especially the following important doctrine,

how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; that is, of the Old Testament, the writings of Moses, and the prophets, according to Scripture promises, Scripture types, and Scripture prophecies; particularly (Genesis 3:15 Psalm 22:1-31 Isaiah 53:1-12) (Daniel 9:24-27) which declare that his heel was to be bruised, that he should be brought to the dust of death, should pour out his soul unto death, and be stricken and cut off in a judicial way, and that for sins; not his own, but for the sins of his people, in order to atone for them, procure the pardon of them, take them away, make an end of them, and abolish them; all which he has done, as the Gospel declares, and the apostle affirms; and thereby was accomplished what Moses and the prophets did say should come to pass. Every promise, type, and prophecy recorded in the law, in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning his sufferings and death, had their fulfilment in him; nothing was more clearly prefigured and foretold, and nothing more punctually and fully answered.

Ver. 4. *And that he was buried*, etc.] That is, according to the Scriptures; for as he died and rose again according to the Scriptures, he was buried according to them; which speak of his being in hell, in “sheol”, in the grave,

and of his making his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, (<19610>Psalm 16:10 <23509>Isaiah 53:9) and which had their accomplishment through Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, who begged the body of Jesus, wrapped in linen, and laid it in his own new tomb. And besides these Scripture prophecies of his burial, Jonah's being three days and three nights in the whale's belly was a type of it, and according to which our Lord himself foretold it, (<401240>Matthew 12:40). Now since this was prophesied of, and typified, and had its actual accomplishment, it was very proper for the apostle to take notice of it, both to confirm the certainty of Christ's death, and the truth of his resurrection, which his death and burial are mentioned, in order to lead on to, and next follows:

and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: that he should rise again from the dead was very plainly hinted or expressed in several prophecies which speak of the rising of his dead body, of its not being left in the grave so long as to see corruption; and which therefore could not be in it more than three days; and of his lifting up his head after he had drank of the brook by the way; of his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, which suppose his resurrection, (<232619>Isaiah 26:19 <19610>Psalm 16:10) (<196818>Psalm 68:18 110:1,7). And that he should rise again the third day, is not only suggested in (<280602>Hosea 6:2) but was prefigured by the deliverance of Isaac on the third day after Abraham had given him up for dead, from whence he received him, in a figure of Christ's resurrection; and by Jonah's deliverance out of the whale's belly, after he had been in it three days. The Jews take a particular notice of the third day as remarkable for many things they observe [f315], as

> "of the third day Abraham lift up his eyes, (<012204>Genesis 22:4) of the third day of the tribes, (<014218>Genesis 42:18) of the third day of the spies, (<060216>Joshua 2:16) of the third day of the giving of the law, (<021916>Exodus 19:16) of the third day of Jonah, (Jonah 1:17) of the third day of them that came out of the captivity, (<150815>Ezra 8:15) of the third day of the resurrection of the dead, as it is written, (<280602>Hosea 6:2) "after two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight"."

From which passage, it is clear, that they under stood the prophecy in Hosea of the resurrection of the dead; and it is observable, that among the remarkable third days they take notice of, are the two instances of Isaac's and Jonah's deliverances, which were Scripture types of Christ's

resurrection. From which observations they establish this as a maxim [f316], that

> “God does not leave the righteous in distress more than three days.”

That Christ did rise again from the dead, in pursuance of those prophecies and types, the apostle afterwards proves by an induction of particular instances of persons who were eyewitnesses of it.

Ver. 5. *And that he was seen of Cephas*, etc.] Or Simon Peter; for Cephas was a name given him by Christ, (<430142>John 1:42). This was not another Cephas, one of the seventy disciples, as Clemens suggests [f317], but the Apostle Peter himself, to whom it is certain the Lord appeared. Not that he was the first person by whom Christ was seen after his resurrection, for he first appeared to Mary Magdalene, (<411609>Mark 16:9) but the testimony of the women the apostle omits, and it seems as if Peter was the first of the men that saw Christ when risen, (see <422434>Luke 24:34). Whether he was one of the disciples that went to Emmaus, to whom Christ joined himself, and entered into discourse with, is not certain; it should rather seem, that the appearance here referred to was when he was alone;

then of the twelve; though there were then but eleven of them, Judas being gone from them, and having destroyed himself; and at the first appearance of Christ to them, there were but ten present, Thomas being absent; and yet because their original number, when first chosen and called, were twelve, they still went by the same name; (see <432024>John 20:24 <011213>Genesis 42:13). The appearance or appearances here referred to are those in (<432019>John 20:19,26). The Vulgate Latin reads the “eleven”; and so the Claromontane exemplar.

Ver. 6. *After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once*, etc.] Not at, or near Jerusalem, for the number of the disciples that were together there, made but about an hundred and twenty, (<440115>Acts 1:15) but in Galilee, where Christ, in the days of his flesh, had most chiefly conversed, most frequently preached and wrought his miracles, and where the number of his disciples and followers were very large: here he promised his disciples to go before them, and show himself to them after his resurrection, as he accordingly did, (<401632>Matthew 26:32 2:7,16,17). And this being signified by the apostles to the brethren there, it is no wonder that there was such a number of them gathered on that occasion:

of whom the greater part remain unto this present; and so might be personally applied unto for the truth of this, was it necessary; it being but about five or six and twenty years ago at the writing of this epistle:

and some were fallen asleep; were dead, as it might be reasonably thought there were among so many, and in such a length of time; though doubtless these had surviving friends, relations, and acquaintance, to whom they had communicated this important case, and who were ready to attest what they had heard them in the most solemn manner declare.

Ver. 7. *After that he was seen of James*, etc.] Not James the son of Zebedee, and brother of John, though he was seen by him with other disciples, (<43 20 19>John 20:19 21:1,2) who was now dead when the apostle wrote this, having been killed by Herod many years ago, (<44 12 02>Acts 12:2) and so not quite so proper a witness to be mentioned; but James the son of Alphaeus, and brother of our Lord, a man of great fame and credit with the Jews, and still living, and therefore a proper and pertinent evidence. This appearance was made unto him when alone; and though the Scripture elsewhere makes no mention of it, there is no room to doubt it, since the apostle here affirms it. As for the account of the appearance of Christ to this James, immediately, after his resurrection, recorded by Jerom as he found it in the Gospel according to the Hebrews, it seems to be fabulous. His account is this [f318];

> “the Gospel written according to the Hebrews, which was lately translated by me into the Greek and Latin tongues, and which Origen often uses, relates, after the resurrection of the Saviour, that when the Lord had given the linen cloth to the priest’s servant, he went to James, and appeared to him: for James had swore that he would not taste any bread from the time he had drank the cup of the Lord, until he saw him rising from the dead. Again, a little after, bring me, says the Lord, the table and the bread; and it is immediately added, he took the bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave it to James the just, and said unto him, my brother, eat thy bread, for the son of man is risen from the dead.”

Then of all the apostles; at the Mount of Olives, when he led them out of Jerusalem, as far as Bethany, blessed them, and was parted from them, and ascended to heaven out of their sight, (<42 24 50>Luke 24:50,51) so that this was the last appearance of him on earth after his resurrection.

Ver. 8. *And last of all he was seen of me also*, etc.] Either when the apostle was caught up into the third heaven; or when he was in a trance in the temple at Jerusalem; or rather at the time of his conversion, when he not only heard the voice of Christ, but saw him in the human nature; for he expressly says, that he appeared unto him, and he calls it the heavenly vision, (4026Acts 26:16,19). This was a sight of Christ in heaven, not on earth, such an one as Stephen had, and was a corporeal one; otherwise it would have been impertinent to have mentioned it, with the rest of the ocular testimonies of Christ's resurrection. Not that this was the last time that Christ was seen, or to be seen, for he was seen after this by the Apostle John in a visionary way, and will be corporeally seen by all the saints at the last day; but Paul was the last of the apostles and brethren before named, and he had his vision of Christ after them all; and perhaps it might be a more clear, full, and distinct one than any of the rest, as the last things are sometimes the most excellent. The apostle adds, as of

one born out of due time: or "as an abortive"; not that he was really one, but like one: several learned interpreters think the apostle refers to a proverbial way of speaking among the common people at Rome, who used to call such supernumerary senators in the times of Augustus Caesar, who got into the senate house by favour or bribery, "abortives" [f319], they being generally very unworthy persons; and therefore calls himself by this name, as being in his own opinion a supernumerary apostle, and very unworthy of that office: though others rather think that he refers to a "posthumous" birth, to one that is born after the death of his father; because that the rest of the apostles were all chosen, and called, and sent forth, whilst Christ, their everlasting Father, was living on earth, but he not till after his death, resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven: but it seems best to understand him of an abortion, a miscarriage, or birth before its time; and may respect either the manner of his conversion, which was done both suddenly, immediately, and at once, by a sudden light from heaven, when he little thought of it, and had no expectation of it, which is commonly the case of abortions; and also powerfully and irresistibly, being effected by mighty and efficacious grace, as births before the full time are often occasioned by blows or outward force, and are violent extrusions of the foetus; or else the state and condition in which he was when Christ was first seen by him: as to his bodily state, as soon as ever he saw the light about him, and the object by it, he was struck blind, and continued so some days, like an hidden untimely birth, and like an infant that never saw light,

(¹⁸Job 3:16). And as to his spiritual estate, his soul was like an unshapen foetus, Christ being not yet formed in him, his image stamped on him, and his grace implanted in him; yea, it may be applied to the present apprehensions he had of himself, and which he expresses without a figure in the next verse, though in a beautiful manner, with a view to what he here says, when he observes that he was "the least of the apostles, and not meet to be called" one; as an abortive, or one born before its time, is imperfect in one respect or another, is not come to its proper size and shape, and scarcely is to be reckoned in the class and number of men.

Ver. 9. *For I am the least of the apostles*, etc.] Referring not to the littleness of his stature, but to the figure before used, and as expressing not the opinion of others concerning him, but the true and real sense he had of himself, for which he himself gives the strongest reason that can be given; and by "apostles" he means not only the twelve, but all other ministers of the Gospel that were sent forth by Christ to preach it: nor need this be wondered at, when he says, that he was less than the least of all saints, (⁴⁰Ephesians 3:8) though when his person and doctrines were traduced by false teachers, and attempts were made to disgrace his ministry, and render it useless, in vindication of himself, and without vanity, he does not stick to assert, that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles, (⁴⁷2 Corinthians 11:5 12:11) and yet here adds,

that am not meet to be called an apostle; not only to be one, but to bear the name of one. No man was meet or fit for such an office of himself; none of the apostles were any more than himself; but his meaning is, that though he was chosen, and called, and qualified by the gifts and grace of God for this office, yet he was unworthy to be called by the name of an apostle of Christ, for the reason following,

because I persecuted the church of God: he not only consented to the death of Stephen, the first martyr, and held the clothes of them that stoned him; but he made havoc of the church, haling men and women to prison, and continued to breathe out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord; and had letters of commission from the high priest in his pocket, to seize any of this way at Damascus, and bring them bound to Jerusalem, when Christ met him in the way, and was seen by him: according to his own account, he shut up many of the saints in prison, gave his voice against them when they were put to death, punished them oft in every synagogue, compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceeding mad

against them, persecuted them to strange cities; (see Acts 7:1-9:43 26:1-32). This he mentions both for his own abasement and humiliation, and to magnify the grace of God, to which he ascribes all he was, had, and did, as in the next verse.

Ver. 10. *But by the grace of God I am what I am*, etc.] As he was what he was by the grace of God in a private capacity, upon a level with other Christians, being a chosen vessel of salvation, not by works, nor on account of faith, or any holiness of his, but by grace; being regenerated, called, sanctified, justified, pardoned, and adopted by it; being a believer in Christ through faith, as a gift of God's grace, and having a good hope of eternal glory the same way; so he was what he was, as a minister of the Gospel, as an apostle, as in that high office purely by the grace of God: he was not made one by men, nor by his education, learning, and industry, nor through any merits of his own, but by the free favour and sovereign will of God, bestowing on him gifts and grace, by which he was qualified for apostleship, and to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ:

and his grace which was bestowed on me was not in vain; by "grace", in the former clause, is meant the good will and free favour of God, from whence all the blessings of goodness arise; here the gifts of grace, particularly such as qualify for the ministry. For what qualifies men for the preaching of the Gospel is not human learning, nor natural parts, nor internal grace, neither separately nor altogether: but peculiar gifts, which lie in an understanding of the Scriptures, and the doctrines of the Gospel, and in an aptitude to explain and teach them to the edification of others: and these gifts are not of nature, nor acquired by art and industry, but are of grace; are gifts freely bestowed by God, and are not in vain, at least should not be; they are not to be wrapped up in a napkin, and hid in the earth; they are not to be neglected, but to be stirred up and improved by prayer, meditation, reading, constant study, and frequent use, as they were by the apostle; and by a divine blessing were not without their use, to the good of souls, and the glory of God. Hence as what he was, so what he had, was by the grace of God, and likewise what he did, as follows:

but I laboured more abundantly than they all; meaning, not the false apostles, who were loiterers, and not labourers, but the true apostles of Christ; not than them all put together, but than anyone of them singly considered; he laboured in the Lord's vineyard, in the word and doctrine, preaching in season and out of season; he travelled over a greater part of

the world, preached oftener, and wrote more than any of the rest; was the instrument of converting more souls, and he planted more churches, endured more hardships and sufferings than any of the other apostles;

Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me; he attributes all to the grace of God, and nothing to himself; it was the grace of God that made him an apostle of Christ, and preacher of the Gospel; it was that which being bestowed on him qualified him for it; it was that which enabled him to labour and toil, to do and suffer all he did, and which gave success to all his ministrations. He is exceedingly careful to magnify the free favour of God, and the gifts of his grace; and means not the grace that was in him, but the grace that was without him, though with him.

Ver. 11. *Therefore whether it were I or they*, etc.] By whom Christ was seen first or last, we were all eyewitnesses of him; or whether I am the least, and others the chief of the apostles; or whether I have laboured more abundantly than they all, this matters not:

so we preach; we agree in our ministry to preach Christ, and him only, and with one heart and mouth assert, that he died, was buried, and rose again the third day:

and so ye believed; these several truths relating to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Thus the apostle, after he had made a digression upon his own character, as one of the witnesses of Christ's resurrection, returns to the subject he set out upon in the beginning of the chapter, in order to lead on to the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which he proves by the resurrection of Christ, in the following verses. One of Stephen's copies read, "so we believed"; and so the Ethiopic version seems to have read; (see <470413>2 Corinthians 4:13).

Ver. 12. *Now if Christ be preached that he arose from the dead*, etc.] As he was by the Apostle Paul, when at Corinth, and by all the rest of the apostles elsewhere.

How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? Who these were is not certain, whether Hymenaeus and Philetus, whose notion this was, were come hither, or any of their disciples; or whether they were some of the followers of Simon Magus and Cerinthus, who denied the resurrection; or rather, whether they were not Jews, and of the sect of the Sadducees, who though they believed in Christ, retained their old principle, that there is no resurrection of the dead, cannot be affirmed: however, it is

certain that they were such as were then at Corinth, and went under the Christian name; and it is highly probable were members of the church there; and who not only held this notion privately, but broached it publicly, saying, declaring, affirming, and that openly, before the whole church, what were their opinions and sentiments: it was indeed but some of them, not all that were chargeable with this bad principle, which the apostle asks how, and with what face they could assert, then it had been preached, and so fully proved to them, that Christ was risen from the dead; and if so, then it is out of question that there is a resurrection of the dead; for their notion, as it is here expressed, was not only that there would be no resurrection of the dead, but that there was none, nor had been any: though the apostle's view is also to prove the future resurrection of the dead, and which is done by proving the resurrection of Christ, for his resurrection involves that of his people; for not only the saints rose in, and with Christ, as their head representatively, and which is the sense of the prophecy in (Hosea 6:2) but because he is their head, and they are members of him, therefore as sure as he the head is risen, so sure shall the members rise likewise; nor will Christ's resurrection, in a sense, be perfect, until all the members of his body are risen: for though the resurrection of Christ, personally considered, is perfect, yet not as mystically considered; nor will it till all the saints are raised, of whose resurrection Christ's is the exemplar and the pledge: their bodies will be raised and fashioned like unto Christ's, and by virtue of union to him, and as sure as he is risen, for he is the firstfruits of them that slept. Besides, as he became incarnate, obeyed, suffered, not for himself, but for his people, so he rose again on their account, and that they dying might rise also; which if they should not, one end at least of Christ's resurrection would not be answered: add to this, that the same power that raised Christ from the dead, can raise others, even all the saints; so that if it is allowed that Christ is raised, it need not be thought incredible that all the dead shall be raised; and particularly when it is observed, that Christ is the efficient, procuring, and meritorious cause of the resurrection from the dead, as well as the pattern and earnest of it.

Ver. 13. *But if there be no resurrection of the dead*, etc.] If there is no such thing as a resurrection of any, if the thing is not possible, if it never has been, is, or will be true in fact:

then is Christ not risen. The apostle argues from a general, to a particular; from the general resurrection of the dead, to the particular resurrection of Christ; and from a negation of the one, to a negation of the other; for what

does not agree with the whole, does not agree with the part; and what is true of the whole, is true of the part; but if the resurrection of Christ is not true, many are the absurdities that must follow upon it, and which the apostle next enumerates.

Ver. 14. *And if Christ be not risen*, etc.] If this is a truth, and must be taken as granted, as it must be, if there is no resurrection at all:

then is our preaching vain; false, empty, delusory, unprofitable, and useless; not only that part of it which more especially concerns the resurrection of Christ, but even the whole of it; preaching Christ as the Son of God, which was the subject of the apostle's ministry, and which he set out with, is to no purpose, if he is not risen; for one considerable proof of his sonship depends upon his resurrection, which is the declaration of it; for who can believe him to be the Son of God, if he is detained under the power of the grave? one reason why he could not be held of death, and the pains and cords of it, any longer than was necessary, and was his pleasure, was because he was the Son of God, as well as surety of his people, who had paid the whole debt: so the preaching of his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death, is of no use and avail, if he has not abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, first in himself, and then for his people:

and your faith is also vain; either the grace of faith, by which they believed on Christ, or the doctrine of faith; or since this is repeated, (1 Corinthians 15:17) the one may be meant here, and the other there. The doctrine of faith they had given their assent to, not only respecting the resurrection of Christ, but any other truth relating to his person and office, must be vain and empty, and without any foundation; even that faith which is one, uniform, harmonious, and consistent, which was once delivered to the saints; which they are to stand fast in, to strive, contend, and fight for, and not part with at any rate, upon any account whatever; and yet this, and the preaching and belief of it, are useless and insignificant things, if Christ is not risen; such wretched absurdities must follow upon the denial of that truth.

Ver. 15. *Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God*, etc.] The apostles were chosen to be witnesses of the resurrection of Christ; he appeared to them, and was seen by them for this purpose; and they were sent into all the world, to bear their testimony to this truth, which they accordingly did: now if Christ is not risen, they have bore a false testimony; and what

greater scandal, or a more odious character can be fixed upon a man, than to be a false witness? but God forbid that such an imputation should be fastened upon the holy apostles of Christ, who cannot be thought to have any sinister end in publishing such a falsehood; who were sure on account of declaring it, and abiding by it, to meet with nothing but hatred, reproach, persecution, poverty, and death; but this is not all, nor the worst; for if they are false witnesses, they are false witnesses of God; they are of his suborning; he selected them as witnesses; he must put this lie into their mouths, and send them into the world under his authority to publish it; than which to say nothing can be thought of more blasphemous and execrable; and yet this must follow, upon a denial of the resurrection of Christ:

because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up, if so be the dead rise not; it may be read, “we have testified against God”, as the Vulgate Latin does; for as it must be bringing a false testimony from God, so it must be bearing a false testimony against him, to say that he raised Christ from the dead, when he is not risen; which must be the case, if there is no resurrection of the dead.

Ver. 16. *For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised*.] This is a repetition of the argument in (<4653>1 Corinthians 15:13) made partly to show the importance of it, and partly to observe other absurdities, following upon the conclusion of it.

Ver. 17. *And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain*, etc.] As before in (<4654>1 Corinthians 15:14) not only the doctrine of faith, but the grace of faith in Christ; even that faith, which is the faith of God’s elect; the pure gift of his grace, and the operation of his power; which Christ is the object, author, and finisher of; and which he prays for, that it may not fail; and to which salvation is so often promised in the sacred Scriptures; and yet is vain, than which nothing can be more absurd: it follows,

ye are yet in your sins: in a state of nature and unregeneracy, under the power and dominion of sin, being neither regenerated nor sanctified; for regeneration is owing to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and is a branch of the power, virtue, and efficacy of it: but if Christ is not risen, there never was, is, or will be any such thing as regeneration and sanctification; things, if ever wrought by the Spirit, are done by him in virtue, and in imitation of the resurrection, as well as the death of Christ: moreover, if Christ is not risen, his people are under the guilt of their sins; there is no expiation nor remission of them, nor justification from them; for

though he was delivered as a sacrifice to atone for their offences, and his blood was shed to obtain the forgiveness of their sins, yet he must be raised again for their justification, and be exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, as to give repentance, so remission of sins, or they will never enjoy these blessings; for notwithstanding his sufferings and death, if he lies under the power of the grave, they must remain under the power and guilt of sin, and be liable to everlasting punishment for it.

Ver. 18. *Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ*, etc.] That is, who are dead, and have died in Christ: death is often represented by a sleep, and that more than once in this chapter; and doubtless with a view to the resurrection, which will be an awaking out of it, since it will not be perpetual: some understand this of such only who were fallen asleep, or died martyrs for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; as Stephen, James the brother of John, and others; but rather it designs all such as die in Christ, in union with him, whether in the lively exercise of faith, or not; of whom it must be said, if Christ is not risen, that they

are perished: soul and body; for if there is no reason to believe the resurrection of the dead, there is no reason to believe the immortality of the soul, or a future state, but rather that the soul perishes with the body, and that there is no existence after death: though should it be insisted on that the soul survives, and shall live without the body to all eternity, it must be in a state of misery, if Christ is not risen, because it must be in its sins; and neither sanctified nor justified, and consequently cannot be glorified, so that the whole may be said to be perished; the body perishes in the grave, the soul in hell; but God forbid that this should be said of those, who have either died for Christ, or in him: can it be that any that are in Christ, that are united to him, one body and spirit with him, should ever perish? or those that are asleep in him be lost? no, those that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him at the last day, who shall be for ever with him, and for ever happy.

Ver. 19. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ*, etc.] The object of a believer's hope is not any creature, man, or angel; nor any creature enjoyment, as gold and silver; nor any creature righteousness, moral, legal, and civil; nor any external privilege, or profession of religion; but Christ alone as a surety, Saviour, and Redeemer; his person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and fulness: and what they hope for in him are, all grace, and the supplies of it; the forgiveness of their sins, the justification of their persons,

eternal life and salvation; grace here, and glory hereafter; for all which they have great reason and encouragement to hope in him; but if their hope in him was only in this life, or whilst this life lasts; if they had not hope in death, that they should live again, and after death for the resurrection of their bodies; or if they hoped in Christ only for the things of this life, or as the Arabic version renders it, "if we from Christ, and by him, expect happiness in this world only"; if our hope in him is bounded with this life, and confined to the things of it, and does not reach to the things of another life, the things of eternity, the invisible glories of another world, to be enjoyed in soul and body;

we are of all men the most miserable; which may have respect not only to the apostles, though eminently true of them, who had little of the comforts of this life, being continually exposed to hardships and persecution for the sake of Christ; were set forth as a spectacle to angels and men; were accounted the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things; and suffered many indignities, and great reproach and affliction, and that for asserting the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; but is also true of all others that hope in Christ, and believe in him; for these not only deny themselves the pleasures, honours, and profits of this world, but are exposed continually to the hatred, reproach, and persecution of it; they are chastised by God as other men are, that they may not be condemned with the world, and yet they must be condemned, if Christ is not risen; they are harassed and distressed by Satan, who follows them with his temptations and suggestions, which are so many fiery darts, which give them great pain and uneasiness, when others are unmolested by him; they groan under a body of sin they carry about with them, and desire and long to be unclothed, that they might be clothed upon with glory and immortality; and yet these very desires and earnest longings after a blessed eternity do but add to their misery, if there is no foundation for them, and they will at last be frustrated: these are the sad conclusions, and wretched absurdities that must follow, upon the denial of the resurrection of the dead, and of Christ.

Ver. 20. *But now is Christ risen from the dead*, etc.] As was before proved by ocular testimonies, and before preached and asserted; and now reassumed and concluded, from the glaring contradictions, and dreadful absurdities that follow the denial of it:

and became the firstfruits of them that slept; who were already fallen asleep; respecting chiefly the saints that died before the resurrection of

Christ; and if Christ was the firstfruit of them, there is no difficulty of conceiving how he is the firstfruits of those that die since. The allusion is to the firstfruits of the earth, which were offered to the Lord: and especially to the sheaf of the firstfruits, which was waved by the priest before him, (<5602>Deuteronomy 26:2, <0230>Leviticus 23:10,11) and to which Christ, in his resurrection from the dead, is here compared. The firstfruits were what first sprung out of the earth, were soonest ripe, and were first reaped and gathered in, and then offered unto the Lord; so Christ first rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, and presented himself to God; as the representative of his people; for though there were others that were raised before him, as the widow of Sarepta's son by Elijah, the Shunammite's son by Elisha, and the man that touched the prophet's bones when put into his grave, and Jairus's daughter, the widow of Naam's son, and Lazarus by Christ; yet as these did not rise by their own power, so only to a mortal life: but Christ, as he raised himself by his own power, so he rose again to an immortal life, and was the first that ever did so; he was the first to whom God showed, and who first trod this path of life. The firstfruits were the best, what was then ripest, and so most valuable; Christ is the first, and rose the first in dignity, as well as in time; he rose as the head of the body, as the firstborn, the beginning, that in all things he might have, and appear to have, as he ought to have, the pre-eminence. The firstfruits sanctified the rest of the harvest, represented the whole, gave right to the ingathering of it, and ensured it; Christ by lying in the grave, and rising out of it, sanctified it for his people, and in his resurrection represented them; they rose with him, and in him; and their resurrection is secured by his; because he lives, they shall live also. The firstfruits were only such, and all this to the fruits of the earth, that were of the same kind with them, not to tares and chaff, to briers and thorns; so Christ, in rising from the dead, is only the firstfruits of the saints; of such as are the fruits of his death and of his grace, who have the fruits of his Spirit in them, and are filled with the fruits of righteousness by him; just as he is the firstborn from the dead, with respect to the many brethren, whom he stands in the relation of a firstborn: once more, as the allusion is particularly to the sheaf of the firstfruits, it is to be observed, that that was waved before the Lord, the morrow after the sabbath, (<0231>Leviticus 23:11) which, as the Jews [f320] interpret, was the morrow after the first good day, or festival of the passover; the passover was on the fourteenth day of the month; the festival, or Chagiga, on the fifteenth, and which, in the year that Christ suffered, was a sabbath day also; and the morrow after that, the sheaf of the firstfruits was waved; now

Christ suffered on the passover, rested in the grave on the seventh day sabbath, and on the morrow after that, rose from the dead, the very day that the first fruits were offered to the Lord: so that the allusion and phrase are very appropriately used by the apostle.

Ver. 21. *For since by man came death*, etc.] The first man, by sin, was the cause of death; of its coming into the world, and upon all men, by which corporeal death is here meant; though the first man also by sin brought a moral death, or a death in sin on all his posterity; and rendered them liable to an eternal death, which is the just wages of sin; but since the apostle is treating of the resurrection of the body, a bodily death seems only intended:

by man came also the resurrection of the dead; so God, in his great goodness and infinite wisdom has thought fit, and he has so ordered it, that it should be, that as the first man was the cause of, and brought death into the world, the second man should be the cause of the resurrection of life. Christ is the meritorious and procuring cause of the resurrection of his people; he by dying has abolished death; and by rising from the dead has opened the graves of the saints, and procured their resurrection for them, obtained for them a right unto it, and made way for it: and he is the pattern and exemplar, according to which they will be raised; their vile bodies will be fashioned, and made like to his glorious body; and whereas both in life and in death they bear the image of the first and earthly man, in the resurrection they will bear the image of the second and heavenly one: he also will be the efficient cause of the resurrection; all the dead will be raised by his power, and at the hearing of his voice; though the saints only will be raised by him, in virtue of their union to him, and interest in him, being members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Ver. 22. *For as in Adam all die*, etc.] The apostle here shows who he meant in the former verse, by the one man the cause of death, and by the other the author of the resurrection of the dead, and that he intended Adam and Christ; all men were in Adam seminally, as the common parent of human nature, in such sense as Levi was in the loins of Abraham when Melchizedek met him, and in him paid tithes unto him; and they were all in him representatively, he being the federal head of all his posterity, and so a type and figure of Christ that was to come; and being in him, they all sinned in him, and so died in him, the sentence of death passed on them in him; they became subject to a corporeal death, which has ever since

reigned over mankind, even over infants, such who have not sinned after the similitude of his transgression; this was the doctrine of the Jewish church; (see Gill on " <4512>Romans 5:12"), to which may be added one testimony more; says [f321] one of their writers,

> "by the means of the first Adam lkl htym hsnqn, "death was inflicted by way of punishment on all":"

even so in Christ shall all be made alive: not made spiritually alive, for Christ quickens whom he will; not all in this sense, some die in their sins; nor are all entitled to an eternal life; for though Christ has a power to give it, yet only to those whom the Father has given to him; it is true indeed, that all that are in Christ, chosen in him and united to him, are made alive by him, and have the gift of eternal life through him; but the apostle is not speaking of such a life, but of a corporeal one: to be quickened or made alive, is with the Jews, and other eastern nations, a phrase of the same signification with being raised from the dead, and as the context here shows; and not to be understood of the resurrection of all men, for though there will be a resurrection of the just and unjust, yet the one will be the resurrection of life, and the other the resurrection of damnation; now it is of the former the apostle here speaks, and expresses by being made alive: and the sense is, that as all that were in Adam, all that belonged to him, all his natural seed and posterity, all to whom he was a federal head, died in him, became mortal, and subject to death through him; so all that are in Christ, that belong to him, who are his spiritual seed and offspring, to whom he is a covenant head, and representative, shall be raised to an immortal life by him; or as all the elect of God died in Adam, so shall they all be quickened, or raised to life in and by Christ.

Ver. 23. *But every man in his own order*, etc.] Not of time, as if the saints that lived in the first age of the world should rise first, and then those of the next, and so on to the end of the world; nor of dignity, as that martyrs should rise first in the order of martyrs, and preachers of the word in the order of preachers, and private Christians in the order and rank of private Christians; or of age, as the elder first, and then the younger; or of state and condition, as married persons in the order of married persons, and virgins in the order of virgins; these are all foreign from the sense of the words; the order regarded is that of head and members, the firstfruits and the harvest. There seems to be an allusion to the ranging and marshalling of the Israelites, everyone by his "own standard"; which both the Targums of

Onkelos and Jonathan render hysqj l[, “by or according to his own order”: and so the Septuagint κατα ταγμα, the word here used; and the sense is, that every man shall be raised from the dead, according to the head under which he is ranged and marshalled. Christ the head is risen first; next all those that are under him, as an head, will rise from the dead; the dead in Christ will rise first; and then a thousand years after that, those who are only in their natural head, by whom death came to them, and have lived and died in a natural estate, will rise last; but as the apostle is only upon the resurrection of the saints, he carries the account and observes the order no further than as it concerns Christ and his people:

Christ the firstfruits; he rose first in order of time, dignity, causality and influence; (see Gill on “⁴⁶50>1 Corinthians 15:20”).

afterwards they that are Christ’s; not immediately after; for now almost two thousand years are elapsed since the resurrection of Christ, and yet the saints are not raised; and how many more years are to run out before that, is not to be known; but as there was an interval between the firstfruits, and the ingathering of the harvest; so there is a considerable space of time between the resurrection of Christ as the firstfruits, and the resurrection of his people, which will be the harvest; and that will be at the end of the world, according to (⁴⁰13>Matthew 13:39) the persons who shall rise first and next after Christ, are they that are his; who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and were given to him by his Father as his spouse, his children, his sheep, his portion, and his jewels; who were purchased and redeemed by his blood, are called by his grace and regenerated by his Spirit, and who give up themselves to him, and are possessed by him: and the interest that Christ has in them here expressed, carries in it a strong argument of their resurrection; which may be concluded from their election in Christ, which can never be made void; from the gift of their whole persons to Christ by his Father, with this declaration of his will, that he should lose nothing of them, but raise it up at the last day; from his redemption of their bodies as well as their souls; from the union of both unto him; and from the sanctification of both, and his Spirit dwelling in their mortal bodies as well as in their souls: the time when they will be raised by Christ is,

at his coming; at his second and personal coming at the last day; then the dead in Christ will rise first, and immediately; and he will judge the quick and dead, those that will be found alive, and those that will be then raised

from the dead: when this will be no man knows; yet nothing is more certain, than that Christ will come a second time; and his coming will be speedy and sudden; it will be glorious and illustrious, and to the joy and salvation of his people; since their bodies will then be raised and reunited to their souls, when they, soul and body, shall be for ever with the Lord. The Vulgate Latin reads the words thus, “they that are Christ’s, who have believed in his coming”; both in his first and second coming; but there is nothing in the Greek text to encourage and support such a version and sense.

Ver. 24. *Then cometh the end*, etc.] Or “after that the end”, the end of all things; either at the close of the thousand years, when the wicked dead will be raised last, and the final state of all men will openly take place; the end of the righteous will be peace and everlasting joy, and an uninterrupted communion with Christ, and enjoyment of life eternal, of the ultimate glory, and consummate happiness in soul and body; and the end of the wicked will be destruction and death, everlasting punishment in hell, where will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth for evermore: or at the beginning of the thousand years; immediately upon Christ’s second and personal coming, will be the end of the world; the heavens shall pass away, the elements shall melt, and the earth and all its works be burnt up; though these shall not be annihilated or destroyed, as to their being and substance, but only as to their present form and qualities; they shall be renewed, out of them shall arise new heavens, and a new earth, whereon righteous persons, and only righteous persons, will dwell, even all the righteous that will be raised at Christ’s coming, or shall then be bound alive, where they shall reign with him during the thousand years; and then there wilt be an end of preaching the Gospel, and of administering ordinances, there being no more elect souls to be gathered in; nor will saints stand in need of edification and comfort from such means; then will also be the end, the accomplishment of all the purposes, promises, and prophecies of God, relating to the state and condition of his church and people in all the periods of time, and to their complete glory and happiness; the number of God’s elect in regeneration, sanctification, and glorification will now be complete, the saints will be all perfected, and the church be as a bride prepared and adorned for her husband; and their salvation in soul and body consummate, there wilt be nothing wanting; then that which is perfect will be come, their bodies being raised and reunited to their souls, and both with the Lord: so the word “end” denotes the accomplishment, completion,

and perfection of things; (see <42>22:37) (<45>10:4). Moreover, there will now be an end of all sin and sorrow of the saints; of all troubles and afflictions, inward or outward, and of death itself; and also of the kingdom of Christ, in its present form and manner of administration: the kingdom or church of Christ will not consist then of nominal and real Christians, of foolish and wise virgins, hypocrites and saints, but only of the latter; nor will it be governed by such laws and ordinances as now; nor will these be in the hands of such officers, as pastors and teachers, as at present, who are appointed to explain, enforce, and execute them: and this end of all things at the coming of Christ, will be

when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; not the kingdom of nature, which he has as the Son of God, as God equal with the Father, in right of nature, and upon the foot of creation, all being made by him; and which kingdom reaches to all creatures, angels, and men; this he did not receive from his Father, nor is he in it subordinate to him, but rules and works conjunctly with him in it; nor is he accountable to him in the administration of it; nor will he ever deliver it up to him: nor the kingdom of glory, which was prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world, is freely given to them by their Father, which they are called unto, and have a meetness for it, and a right unto it; this Christ has in his hands for them, and will not deliver it up to his Father, but introduce the heirs of it into it, quickly upon his coming; but the mediatorial kingdom is here meant, the kingdom of saints, over which Christ is appointed and set as King; even the whole church and general assembly of the firstborn, written in heaven. These were all given to Christ, put into his hands, and made his care and charge by his Father; and he undertook to preserve, protect, and save them; and had, as Mediator, all power in heaven and in earth, and everything subservient to support his kingdom and interest as such, given him; and he has been from the beginning of the world ruling in the midst of his enemies, subduing the people under him, and causing his people in the day of his power to be willing to serve him; writing his laws in their hearts, putting his Spirit within them, to cause them to walk in his statutes and keep his judgments; saving them out of the hands of their enemies, protecting and keeping them in safety, and providing every good thing for them; and continually delivering one or another of them from the power of darkness, and translating them into his own kingdom; and now having completed the number of them, in whose hearts he has reigned by his Spirit and grace, he will deliver them up to the Father from whom he

received them; even everyone of them; all the children he gave unto him, and all of them; their bodies as well as their souls being now raised from the dead, as it was his Father's declared will they should be, when he gave them to him; and they will be delivered up and presented by him to his Father, perfectly holy, entirely faultless, and without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: and now this does not suppose that he will then cease to reign over his church and people; for, as the Father is the everlasting King, and reigned in and over the church, whilst this kingdom was in the hands of Christ, so Christ will continue to reign over it, when he shall have delivered it to the Father; he will no more cease to reign then, than the Father does, during the present administration of the government of the church; Christ will then be so far from ceasing to reign, that he will reign more visibly and gloriously than ever, though in a different manner to what he does now; now he rules over his people in the midst of his enemies, but then he will rule in the midst of his saints; now he reigns in their hearts by his Spirit, and through the use of the word and ordinances, but then he will reign in person among them, displaying the glory of his majesty, without the use of such means, signs, and symbols. Nor does this imply any inferiority in Christ, as God, to the Father; since this is to be understood of him as Mediator, who as such is the Father's servant, and a righteous and faithful one he is, who will give a good account of the persons committed to his care and government, and of his administration; and in which sense it will be allowed the Father is greater than he; but this no way militates against his proper deity, and equality with the Father. The Ethiopic version, contrary to all copies and other versions, reads, "when God the Father shall have delivered up his own kingdom". The Jews [f322] speak of

> "ten kings that have ruled, from one end of the world to another; the first King is the holy and blessed God, the second Nimrod, the third Joseph, the fourth Solomon, the fifth Ahab, the sixth Nebuchadnezzar, the seventh Cyrus, the eighth Alexander the Macedonian, the ninth will be the King Messiah, according to (<270235>Daniel 2:35) and of the tenth King they say, "then shall the kingdom return to its author"; or to him that was the first King, and he shall be the last; as is said, (<234406>Isaiah 44:6, <381409>Zechariah 14:9)."

and this will be,

when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power; which since it is expressed in such universal terms, may very well be thought to

reach to, and include all sort of rule, authority, and power whatever; when this time and state of things take place, all civil rule, authority, and power, will cease; even that which is now of God, and to which we are to be subject for the Lord's sake, and for conscience sake; and which is now encouraged and supported by Christ, by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice; this will be pulled down and utterly destroyed by him, the stone cast out of the mountain without hands; when the kingdom and the greatness of it will be given to him and to his saints; when the kings and princes of the earth will be no more, have no more rule and authority among men, but be upon a level with the meanest peasants, and shall be brought to the tribunal of Christ, and be judged by him: then also will all ecclesiastical rule, authority, and power be laid aside; there will be no more apostles, prophets, evangelists, nor bishops, elders, pastors, and teachers; who are now set over the churches in the Lord, to rule them according to the laws of Christ, by ministering the word faithfully, and administering the ordinances truly; and to whom when they rule well, subjection and honour are due; but all this will be no more, when the end comes, and the kingdom is delivered to the Father: nor will there be any more domestic, or family rule and government, as of the husband over the wife, the parent over the child, or the master over the servant; all will be upon an equal foot: nor any angelical authority and power, which angels may now exercise under God, over kingdoms, provinces, states, or particular persons: and especially all diabolical rule, authority, and power will be abolished, which Satan has usurped, or has been given him by men, as the god of this world; he, the prince of the world, was cast out through Christ's death, and by the preaching of the Gospel in the Gentile world; his principalities and powers were then spoiled and triumphed over; though he has still retained some sort and show of government, but then there will not be the least appearance of any; during the thousand years he will be cast into and shut up in the bottomless pit, and not suffered to go out and deceive the nations any more; and at the end thereof, though he will make one and his last onset, on the city of the saints, it will be fruitless, and he and all his shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and there lie in torment for ever and ever: not the persons of these several powers shall be destroyed, but they shall be divested of the power and authority which they now have, either by right or usurpation.

Ver. 25. *For he must reign*, etc.] That is, Christ must reign; he is set as King over God's holy hill of Zion; he is King of saints; he is made and

declared to be both Lord and Christ; he is exalted at the right hand of God as a Prince, where he sits and rules and reigns; and his sitting at God's right hand is here explained by his reigning, for reference is had to (¹⁹⁹⁰¹Psalm 110:1) he must reign because it is the unalterable will, and unchangeable decree and purpose of God, that he should reign; and because he has promised it, and prophesied of it; and because the state and condition of his people require it, who otherwise could not be saved, nor dwell safely: and so he must and will,

till he hath put all enemies under his feet; and made them his footstool; meaning either all the elect of God, who in a state of nature are enemies in their minds, by wicked works, to himself and to his Father; whom he conquers by his grace, subdues their rebellious wills, of enemies makes them friends, brings them to his feet, and to a subjection to his sceptre, to his Gospel and ordinances; and he must reign till he has brought every elect soul into such an obedience to himself: or rather antichrist and his followers, and all wicked and ungodly men, with Satan and his angels; who will be destroyed with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming; and will be cast down by him into hell, and there be ever objects of his wrath and vengeance: and till all this is done he must reign; not that he shall cease to reign afterwards, but that he shall reign notwithstanding these enemies of his and his people, who would not have him to reign over them; and will reign until they are subdued or destroyed; and when they are entirely vanquished and overcome, who can doubt of his reigning then? or what, or who will there be to hinder it? The Alexandrian copy, and others, read, "his enemies"; and so do the Syriac and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 26. *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death*.] Not eternal death; for though that is abolished by Christ with respect to his own people, who shall never be hurt by it, and over whom it shall have no power; yet the wicked will always be subject to it, and under the dominion of it: but a corporeal one is here meant; which is an enemy, the fruit, effect, and wages of sin; the penalty and curse of the law; is contrary to human nature, and destructive of the work of God's hands: it is, indeed, through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, become the friend of his people; it is disarmed of its sting, and ceases to be a penal evil; it is the saints' passage to glory, what frees them from the troubles of this world, and is their way to the joys of another; but yet in itself is formidable to nature, and disagreeable to it: and it is the last enemy; it is so both in its rise and duration; it appeared as an enemy last; Satan was the first enemy

of mankind, who attacked, tempted, and ruined the first parents of human nature, and all their posterity in them; and by this means, sin, the next enemy, came into the world of men; and, last of all, death, with its numerous train of calamities, either going before, attending, or following of it: and as it was the last enemy that came into the world, it is the last that will go out of it; for when the saints are rid of Satan, and clear of sin, they will remain in the grave under the power of a corporeal death till the resurrection, and then that will be "destroyed": for the saints will be raised to an immortal life, never to die more, and to an enjoyment of everlasting life, in the utmost glory and happiness; and though the wicked when they rise, they will rise to damnation, to shame and contempt, yet their worm will never die, nor their fire be quenched; they will always live, though in torment, there will be no more corporeal death, neither among the righteous nor the wicked; it will be utterly abolished: and thus the apostle, though he seems to digress from his subject awhile, by relating the several things which will either immediately or quickly follow the second coming of Christ; yet at the same time has it in view, and proves the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which must needs be, or death cannot be said to be destroyed, and by degrees returns to his subject again.

Ver. 27. *For he hath put all things under his feet*, etc.] This is a reason proving that all enemies, and death itself, shall be put under the feet of Christ, and is taken out of (Psalm 8:6) which is spoken of one that is styled man, and the son of man; and is to be understood not of Adam in a state of innocence; for the word there used signifies a frail mortal man, which he then was not, nor could he be called the son of man; and though the earth was subdued and subject to him, and he had dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and every living thing that moveth on the earth, yet all creatures were not subject to him in this large sense, in which it is here and elsewhere explained by the apostle; and much less of man in his fallen state, who instead of having all things under his feet, is become like the beasts that perish; many of them: are unsubdued to him, and he is even in fear of them, and he himself is subject to corruption and vanity: but of the man Christ Jesus, who took and bore all the sinless infirmities of human nature; is often called the son of man; of whom God was mindful, and whom lie visited in his state of humiliation, at the time of his death, resurrection, and exaltation; who was made through sufferings of death a little lower, or a little while lower than the angels, but now crowned with glory and honour; in whose days God ordained strength and

praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, to the confusion of his enemies; and has put all things under his feet, which may elude all things animate and inanimate, the whole creation and universe of things, the world and its fulness, the earth and all that is therein, the beasts of the forest, and the cattle of a thousand hills; he is heir of the world, and has a right to it, and to dispose of it, not merely as the Creator, but as Mediator; it is put in subjection to him to make use of, and what is in it to subserve his mediatorial kingdom and his glory; when his ends are answered by it, the earth and all that is therein shall be burnt up, and a new earth arise out of it, in which Christ and his people will dwell: the air and all that is therein are under him; the fowls of it are at his dispose; he it was that rained feathered fowls as the sand of the sea, about the camp of the Israelites in the wilderness, and commanded the ravens to feed Elijah in distress; and who holds the winds in his fist, lets them loose, calls them in, and commands them at pleasure; as he also does the sea, and the boisterous waves of it, and has dominion over the fishes in it; one of those supplied him with money, to pay his tribute; and multitudes of them, more than once, were gathered together, and taken up by his order and direction; and at the last day, the sea at his command will give up the dead that are in it; yea, this may extend to all rational creatures, angels and men, friends or foes: good angels, principalities and powers, are subject to him, as appears by their attendance on him: at his incarnation, ascension, and second coming; by their ministration to him in the wilderness, and in the garden; by their employment under him, for the good of the heirs of salvation; by their dependence on him, as their Creator and head, and by their adoration of him as their Lord and God. Evil angels, the devils, are also put under his feet, as is evident from his overcoming Satan, and baffling all his temptations; by his dispossessing the devils out of the bodies of men, and giving his disciples also power over them; by his spoiling them at death, and triumphing over them in his ascension; by delivering his people out of their hands, and power, in conversion; and by his binding of Satan during the thousand years, and by casting him and his angels into everlasting fire prepared for them. Elect men are made subject to him, by the power of his grace upon them; and yet their subjection to him, to his Gospel ordinances, and the sceptre of his kingdom; is voluntary and from their hearts; it proceeds from a principle of love to him; and is universal, being a regard unto, and a compliance with all his precepts; and evil men are also under his dominion and control; he rules them with a rod of iron; he disappoints their counsels, restrains their wrath, overrules their evil designs and actions

against his people for good; and will one day gather them all before him, pass the righteous sentence on them, and send them into everlasting punishment. Moreover, this may reach to everything that is for the glory of Christ as Mediator, and for the good of his church, and to every enemy of his or theirs, as the world, sin, Satan, and the last enemy, death; to prove the subjection of all which to Christ, this testimony is produced: and respects Christ as Mediator, and the Father's delivering all things into his hands, and giving him all power in heaven and in earth, and rule over all creatures and things;

but when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him; that is, when David, or the Holy Spirit by him, said the above words, in (Psalm 8:6) nothing is more clear and evident, than that God the Father, who made all things subject to Christ as Mediator, is himself not subjected to him; since his power as such must be greater than his: this exception is made to secure the government, power, and honour of the Father; for though he has made his firstborn higher than the kings of the earth, yet not higher than himself; and though he has set him his King over his holy hill of Zion, yet not over himself; and though it is his will that all men should honour the Son, as they honour the Father, yet not above him, or more than he; nor has he quitted the government, either in the world or in the church, by subjecting all things to Christ: and this exception is also made to confirm the universal power and empire of Christ, for an exception to a general rule does but the more establish it; and since the Father is only excepted, it is a clear case, that he has left nothing that is not put under him; (see Hebrews 2:8) but it must be observed, that though the Holy Spirit is not mentioned, yet he is equally excepted; since he is the one God with the Father, and was jointly concerned in the mission, unction, and installation of Christ, as Mediator; nor can he be reckoned among the all things put in subjection to Christ, for they regard only creatures, and many of these enemies, with neither of which the Spirit of God can be numbered; and though the gifts and graces of the Spirit are put into Christ's hands, and are at his dispose, yet the person of the Spirit can never be thought to be put under his feet.

Ver. 28. *And when all things shall be subdued unto him*, etc.] For all things as yet are not put under him in fact; though in right God the Father has given to him an authoritative power over all things, and a right to dispose of them at his pleasure; but all things are not actually and in their

full extent subject to him, yet they will be when the last enemy is destroyed: and

then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him; which must be interpreted and understood with great care and caution; not in the Sabellian sense, of refunding of the characters of the Son, and so of the Father unto God; when they suppose these characters, which they imagine to be merely nominal, bare names, will be no more, and God shall be all; but as the Father will always remain a father, so the Son will remain a son; for, as the Son of the Highest, he will reign over his people for ever, and he the Son, as a priest, is consecrated for ever, more: nor in the Eutychian sense, of the change of the human mature into the divine, in which they fancy it will be swallowed up, and God will be all; but Christ will always continue as a man; he went up to heaven as such, and he will return as a man, and be visible to all in the human nature, and in that be the object of the wonderful vision of the saints to all eternity: nor in the Arian sense, according to the divine nature, as if he was in that inferior to the Father, when he is equal with him, has all the perfections he has, and the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him; it is much better and safer to understand it as it commonly is of him, as man; though in this sense, he was always subject to his Father, ever since he was incarnate, whereas this seems to respect something peculiar at this time. Others therefore think, that the church, the mystical body of Christ, is here meant, which in all its members, and these both in soul and body, will be presented and delivered up to God; but the words are spoken of him under whom all things are put, which is not true of the church; and though that is sometimes called Christ, yet never the Son; and besides, the church has been always subject to God, though indeed, it will not be in all its members, and in every respect subject until this time: it is best, therefore to understand it of the Son's giving up the account of his mediatorial kingdom and concerns to his Father; when it will appear that he has in the whole of his conduct and administration been subject to him; that he has in all things acted in his name, done all by his power, and to his honour and glory; and now having accomplished all he undertook and was intrusted with, gives in his account, delivers up his charge, and resigns his office; all which will be plain proofs of his subjection: when I say he will resign or lay aside his office as Mediator, my meaning is not that he will cease to be God-man and Mediator; but that he will cease to administer that office as under God, in the manner he now does: he will be the prophet of the church, but he

will not teach by his Spirit, and word, and ordinances as now, but will himself be the immediate light of the saints, he will be a priest for ever, the virtue of his sacrifice and intercession will always remain, but he will not plead and intercede as he now does; he will also reign for ever over and among his saints, but his kingdom will not be a vicarious one, or administered as it now is; nor be only in his hands as Mediator, but with God, Father, Son, and Spirit:

that God may be all in all; for by God is not meant the Father personally, but God essentially considered, Father, Son, and Spirit, who are the one true and living God; to whom all the saints will have immediate access, in whose presence they will be, and with whom they shall have uninterrupted fellowship, without the use of such mediums as they now enjoy; all the three divine Persons will have equal power and government in and over all the saints; they will sit upon one and the same throne; there will be no more acting by a delegated power, or a derived authority: God will be all things to all his saints, immediately without the use of means; he will be that to their bodies as meat and clothes are, without the use of them; and all light, glory, and happiness to their souls, without the use of ordinances, or any means; he will then be all perfection and bliss, to all the elect, and in them all, which he now is not; some are dead in trespasses and sins, and under the power of Satan; the number of them in conversion is not yet completed; and, of those that are called many are in a state of imperfection, and have flesh as well as spirit in them; and of those who are fallen asleep in Christ, though their separate spirits are happy with him, yet their bodies lie in the grave, and under the power of corruption and death; but then all being called by grace, and all being raised, and glorified in soul and body, God will be all in all: this phrase expresses both the perfect government of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, over the saints to all eternity, and their perfect happiness in soul and body, the glory of all which will be ascribed to God; and it will be then seen that all that the Father has done in election, in the council and covenant of peace, were all to the glory of his grace; and that all that the Son has done in the salvation of his people, is all to the glory of the divine perfections: and that all that the Spirit of God has wrought in the saints, and all that they have done under his grace and influence, are all to the praise and glory of God, which will in the most perfect manner be given to the eternal Three in One. The Jews have some expressions somewhat like this, as when they say [f323] of God,

> “things future, and things that are past, are together with thee; what is from everlasting and to everlasting, or from the beginning of the world to the end of it, these are “all” of them in thee, and thou art “in” them “all”.”

So lk, “all”, is with the Cabalistic doctors [f324], the name of the Lord. And he is so called because all things are in him; “Jovis omnia plena”.

Ver. 29. *Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead*, etc.] The apostle here returns to his subject, and makes use of new arguments to prove the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and reasons for it from the baptism of some persons; but what is his sense, is not easy to be understood, or what rite and custom, or thing, or action he refers to; which must, be either Jewish baptism, or Christian baptism literally taken, or baptism in a figurative and metaphorical sense. Some think that he refers to some one or other of the divers baptisms of the Jews; (see <580910>Hebrews 9:10) and particularly to the purification of such who had touched a dead body, which was done both by the ashes of the red heifer burnt, and by bathing himself in water; and which, the Jews say [f325], intimated µytmh tyyjtl, “the resurrection of the dead”: wherefore such a right was needless, if there is no resurrection; to strengthen this sense, a passage in Ecclesiasticus 34:25 is produced, βαπτιζομενος απο νεκρου, “he that washeth himself after the touching of a dead body, if he touch it again, what availeth his washing?” but the phrase there used is different; it is not said, he that baptizeth or washeth himself for the dead, but from the dead, to cleanse himself from pollution received by the touch of a dead body: it is also observed, that the Jews, as well as other nations, have used various rites and ceremonies about their dead, and among the rest, the washing of dead bodies before interment; (see <440937>Acts 9:37) and this by some is thought to be what is here referred to; and the reasoning is, if there is no resurrection of the dead, why all this care of a dead body? why this washing of it? it may as well be put into the earth as it is, since it will rise no more; but how this can be called a baptism for the dead, I see not: rather therefore Christian baptism, or the ordinance of water baptism is here respected; and with regard to this, interpreters go different ways: some think the apostle has in view a custom of some, who when their friends died without baptism, used to be baptized in their room; this is said to be practised by the Marcionites in Tertullian’s time, and by the Corinthians in the times of the Apostle John; but it does not appear to have

been in use in the times of the Apostle Paul; and besides, if it had been, as it was a vain and superstitious one, he would never have mentioned it without a censure, and much less have argued from it; nor would his argument be of any weight, since it might be retorted, that whereas such persons were mistaken in using such a practice, they might be also in the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead: others are of opinion that such persons are intended, called Clinics, who deferred their baptism till they came upon their death beds, and then had it administered to them; but as this practice was not in being in the apostle's time, and was far from being a laudable one; and though the persons to whom it was administered were upon the point of death, and nearer the dead than the living, and were as good as dead, and might be intended by them, for their advantage, when dead and not living; yet it must be a great force and strain on words and things, to reckon this a being baptized for the dead: others would have the words rendered, "over the dead"; and suppose that reference is had to the Christians that had their "baptisteries" in their places of burial, and by being baptized here, testified their faith and hope of the resurrection of the dead; but this was rather a being baptized among the dead, than over them, or for them; and moreover it is not certain, that they did make use of such places to baptize in; to which may be added, that the primitive Christians had not so early burying grounds of their own: others would have the meaning to be, that they were baptized for their dead works, their sins, to wash them away; but this baptism does not of itself, and no otherwise than by leading the faith of persons to the blood of Christ, which alone cleanses from sin, original and actual; nor is this appropriate to the apostle's argument. Others imagine, that he intends such as were baptized, and added to the church, and so filled up the places of them that were dead; but the reason from hence proving the resurrection of the dead is not very obvious: those seem to be nearer the truth of the matter, who suppose that the apostle has respect to the original practice of making a confession of faith before baptism, and among the rest of the articles of it, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, upon the belief of which being baptized, they might be said to be baptized for the dead; that is, for, or upon, or in the faith and profession of the resurrection of the dead, and therefore must either hold this doctrine, or renounce their baptism administered upon it; to which may be added another sense of the words, which is, that baptism performed by immersion, as it was universally in those early times, was a lively emblem and representation of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and also both of the spiritual and corporeal resurrection of the saints.

Now if there is no resurrection, why is such a symbol used? it is useless and insignificant; I see nothing of moment to be objected to these two last senses, which may be easily put together, but this; that the apostle seems to point out something that was done or endured by some Christians only; whereas baptism, upon a profession of faith in Christ, and the resurrection from the dead, and performed by immersion, as an emblem of it, was common to all; and therefore he would rather have said, what shall we do, or we all do, who are baptized for the dead? I am therefore rather inclined to think that baptism is used here in a figurative and metaphorical sense, for afflictions, sufferings, and martyrdom, as in (40 20:22,23 Matthew 20:22,23) and it was for the belief, profession, and preaching of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, both of Christ and of the saints, that the apostles and followers of Christ endured so much as they did; the first instance of persecution after our Lord's ascension was on this account. The Apostles Peter and John, were laid hold on and put in prison for preaching this doctrine; the reproach and insult the Apostle Paul met with at Athens were by reason of it; and it was for this that he was called in question and accused of the Jews; nor was there anyone doctrine of Christianity more hateful and contemptible among the Heathens than this was. Now the apostle's argument stands thus, what is, or will become of those persons who have been as it were baptized or overwhelmed in afflictions and sufferings, who have endured so many and such great injuries and indignities, and have even lost their lives for asserting this doctrine,

if the dead rise not at all? how sadly mistaken must such have been!

why are they then baptized for the dead? how imprudently have they acted! and what a weak and foolish part do they also act, who continue to follow them! in what a silly manner do they expose themselves to danger, and throw away their lives, if this doctrine is not true! which sense is confirmed by what follows: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, "for them", and so the Vulgate Latin version; and the Ethiopic in both clauses reads, "why do they baptize?"

Ver. 30. *And why stand we in jeopardy every hour*?] Not only they that have suffered martyrdom for the faith of Christ, and for this article of it, have acted very injudiciously and indiscreetly; but we, also, who are on the spot, whether ministers or private Christians, must be highly blameworthy, who continually expose ourselves to dangers, and are for Christ's sake killed all the day long, are every moment liable to innumerable injuries,

tortures and death; who in his senses would act such a part, if there is no resurrection of the dead? such, as they must be of all men the most miserable, so of all men the most stupid.

Ver. 31. *I protest by your rejoicing*, etc.] Some copies read, "our rejoicing"; and so the Ethiopic version, which seems most natural and easy; since it follows,

which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord; who in him could rejoice and glory in afflictions and sufferings, which he endured as a preacher of the Gospel for his sake; and which being certain and evident, and what might be depended upon, he makes a protestation by it, saying,

I die daily; which is to be understood, not in a spiritual sense of dying unto sin; he was dead unto sin, as to its damning power, through the death of Christ, and as to its governing power, through the Spirit and grace of Christ, but still it was living and dwelling in him; but in a corporeal sense: he instances in himself in particular, who was one that was in jeopardy or danger of his life every hour; he always bore in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and was continually delivered to death for Jesus' sake; death was always working in him, he expected it every day, and was ready for it; he did not count his life dear unto himself, but was very willing to lay it down for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; which he would never have done, if he had not good reason to believe the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

Ver. 32. *If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus*, etc.] This is one of the particulars of the jeopardy and danger of life he had been in: some understand this in a figurative sense, and think that by "beasts" are meant Satan, the roaring lion, and his principalities and powers; or men of savage dispositions, persecuting principles, and cruel practices; as Herod is called a fox, by Christ, and Nero a lion, by the apostle; and suppose his fighting with them at Ephesus designs his disputations with the hardened and unbelieving Jews, his concern with exorcists, the seven sons of Sceva, and the troubles he met with through Demetrius the silversmith, and others of the same craft; the reason of such an interpretation is, because Luke makes no mention of anything of this kind, that befell the apostle in his history of the Acts of the Apostles: but to this it may be replied, that Luke does not relate everything that befell him and the rest; and his omission of this is no sufficient argument against it; besides, a literal sense not to be departed from, unless there is a necessity

for it; and especially when it is suitable to the context, and to the thread and reasoning of the discourse, as it is certainly here; the literal sense best agrees with the apostle's argument. There were two sorts of usages among the Romans in their theatres; sometimes they cast men naked to the wild beasts, to be devoured by them, as wicked servants, deadly enemies, and the vilest of men [f326]; and so the Syriac version renders the words here, "if as among men, atwyjl tydtça, "I am cast to the beasts": and seems to represent it as a supposed case, and not as matter of fact, in which the difficulty about Luke's omission is removed, and the argument in a literal sense is just and strong: sometimes they put men armed into the theatre to fight with beasts [f327], and if they could conquer them and save themselves it was well, if not, they fell a prey to them; it is this last custom that is here referred to: and if regard is had to what befell thee apostle at Ephesus, when Demetrius and his craftsmen made the uproar mentioned in (<441921>Acts 19:21-41) this could not be in reality, but only in the purpose and design of men; and certain it is, that though he was not then had to the theatre, yet Demetrius and his men intended to have hurried him there, as they did Gaius and Aristarchus his companions; and he himself was desirous of going thither, had he not been prevented by the disciples, and by the Asiarchs his friends, who had the command of the theatre where these practices were used; and then the sense is this, if after the manner of men, or in the intention and design of men, and as much as in them lay, "I have fought with beasts at Ephesus"; though if this epistle was written, as it is said to be, before that commotion by Demetrius, no respect can be had to that; but rather to something in fact before, at the same place, when the apostle did actually fight with beasts, and was wonderfully and providentially preserved; and may he what he refers to, in (<470108>2 Corinthians 1:8-10) when he despaired of life, had the sentence of death in himself, and yet was delivered; and then his sense is, if "after the manner of brutish men", the Romans, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus": which I was obliged to do, or deny the Gospel preached;

what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? instead of its being a glorious action, it was a fool hardy one; and if he had died in it, what profit could he have had by it, if he rose not again; or if there is no resurrection of the dead? instead of incurring such dangers, and running such risks, it would be more eligible to sit down and say with the Epicureans,

let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die; which words seem to be taken out of (<232213>Isaiah 22:13) and are used in favour of the doctrine of the

resurrection, showing that the denial of it opens a door to all manner of licentiousness; and are not spoken as allowing or approving of such a conduct; nor as his own words, but as representing a libertine, and pointing out what such an one would say, and might justly infer from such a tenet, that there is no resurrection of the dead.

Ver. 33. *Be not deceived*, etc.] By such as deny the doctrine of the resurrection, and by their reasonings about it; or by such libertines who go into the denial of it, and argue from thence in favour of their licentious course of life:

evil communications corrupt good manners. This is a sentence taken out of Menander, an Heathen poet, showing how dangerous is the conversation of evil men, and what an influence bad principles communicated and imbibed, have on the lives and practices of men. This the apostle cites not out of ostentation, or to show his reading, learning, and acquaintance with such sort of writers; but partly to observe, that this was a truth obvious by the light of nature, and partly because such a testimony might be more regarded by the Corinthians, who might be fond of such authors, and what was said by them; just as when he was at Athens among the philosophers there, he cites a passage out of Aratus, (<44 17 28>Acts 17:28) as he does another out of Epimenides concerning the Cretians, (<56 1 12>Titus 1:12).

Ver. 34. *Awake to righteousness, and sin not*, etc.] The apostle represents the Corinthians as inebriated with bad principles and notions, and as fallen asleep, and as greatly remiss, and declined in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; and therefore calls upon them to awake out of sleep, to watch and be sober, and attend to “righteousness”; to the justice of God, which requires the resurrection of the dead, and makes it necessary that men may receive the things done in the body, whether good or evil; for as it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that sin against him, and trouble his people; so it is but just, that those bodies which Christ has purchased with his blood, who have served him, and suffered for his sake, should be raised again, that, together with their souls, they may enjoy the happiness provided for them; and to the righteousness of Christ, to look unto it, lay hold on it, exercise faith upon it, desiring to be found in it living and dying; and to works of righteousness, to a holy life and conversation, a living soberly, righteously and godly; and not spend their time, and give up themselves to vain speculations and notions; which

were so far from being edifying, that they were very detrimental to themselves and others. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “awake, ye righteous”: for righteous persons, good men, the wise as well as foolish virgins, sometimes fall asleep, and need awaking out of it; which is done by one providence or another, or by the ministry of the word, and whenever to purpose, by the powerful and efficacious grace of God: the words may be rendered, “awake righteously”; or as the Syriac version reads, “awake your hearts righteously”; and as the Arabic, “with a due awaking”; that is, as it becomes you, and as it is just, right, and proper you should: “and sin not”; not that they could be, or that it could be thought they might be without sin in them, or without sin being done by them; but that they ought not to live a sinful course of life, which the denial of the resurrection led unto, or indulged in; or not sin by denying that doctrine, and giving themselves up to a vicious life in consequence of it:

for some have not the knowledge of God; are like the Gentiles that are without God, and know him not; they know not, or, at least, do not own the truth of God in his word, declaring and testifying the doctrine of the resurrection; they err in that point, not knowing the Scriptures, the sense of them, and this truth contained in them; nor the power or God in raising the dead, nor the justice of God, which makes it necessary that the dead should be raised:

I speak this to your shame; that there should be such ignorant persons in their community; that there were any of such bad principles as to deny the resurrection of the dead, and of such dissolute lives as to give up themselves to sensual lusts and pleasures: that such were continued in the church, kept company with, indulged and caressed; and that there was so great a corruption in doctrine, discipline, and conversation, among them.

Ver. 35. *But some man will say*, etc.] Or “some one of you”, as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; for there were some among them members of this church, that denied the resurrection of the dead, (46521 Corinthians 15:12) a weak believer indeed may be designed, one of the babes in Christ in this church, that could not digest such strong meat, but had some doubt and difficulties in his mind about this point, though he did not absolutely deny it: but by the manner in which the objections and queries are put, and the sharpness in which the apostle answers them, it looks rather that an infidel as to this doctrine is intended, one of those Epicureans, who said, (46521 Corinthians 15:32) “let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die”; or

some Heathen philosopher, a mere natural man, that rejected this doctrine because not agreeable to his carnal reason, and laughed at it as monstrous and ridiculous:

how are the dead raised up? This query is put, not as though the person merely hesitated, and was in some suspense about this matter, or with a desire to be informed; but as denying the thing, and as objecting to it as a thing impossible, and impracticable; suggesting it could not be, it was a thing incredible that those dead bodies which have been laid in the earth for so many hundred, and some, thousands of years, and have been long ago reduced to dust, and this dust has undergone a thousand forms; that such whose bodies have been burnt to ashes, or destroyed by wild beasts, and digested by them, should ever be raised again. Such a doctrine must be past all belief:

and with what body do they come? out of their graves, as you say, and appear on the earth at the last day: will they come forth with the same bodies, or with other? with earthly or heavenly ones? mortal or immortal? with bodies different from one another, and from what they now are?

Ver. 36. *Thou fool*, etc.] Not transgressing the law of Christ, which makes him that calls his brother a fool in danger of hell fire; for the apostle said not this in anger, and from a malevolent disposition, as that rule supposes, but out of zeal for truth, and to reprove the stupidity and folly of such a bold objector; in opposing the veracity and power of God, in setting up his reason above divine revelation, and in not attending even to natural philosophy itself; in which professing to be wise he might be justly called a fool, and therefore sends him to the husbandman to learn of him how to answer his own queries:

that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and which is more especially true of a grain of wheat: our Lord observes the same, (see Gill on "John 12:24"), and designs by the simile his own death, and resurrection, and the fruit following thereon. This seed being cast into the earth corrupts, rots, and dies, and then is quickened, and rises up in stalk, blade, and ear. Which shows that the dissolution and corruption of the body by death is so far from being an objection to its resurrection, that it is necessary to it, even as the dying and putrifying of the seed, or grain of wheat, is necessary to its quickening and rising up again; and that if God is able to quicken a seed or grain that is rotten and entirely dead, and cause it to rise up in verdure and with much fruit, as he does every year in millions

of instances, why should it be thought incredible that God should quicken dead bodies, when the one is as much an instance of his power as the other? The Claromontane exemplar reads, “except it die first”; and so the Vulgate Latin version.

Ver. 37. *And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be*, etc.] The sower, for instance, does not take a stalk of wheat in its blade, and ear, and full corn in the ear, encompassed with the husk, and sow it in the earth, which is the body or form in which it appears when it rises up again, and is come to its full growth:

but bare grain (or naked grain) it may chance of wheat, or some other grain; wheat, or any other grain, is cast into the earth naked, beat out of the husk; and that selfsame grain rises up again, clothed with additional verdure, beauty, and fruitfulness; and so the body which comes out of its mother’s womb naked, and returns naked again, (<18121>Job 1:21) to which the apostle seems to allude, will rise again the same body, though with additional glories and excellencies; so that if it should be asked, how is it possible that a dead body can be raised up again? the possibility of it may be seen, in the quickening and raising up of a grain of wheat, that first rots and dies; and if it be inquired with what body the dead will be raised, it may in some measure be observed in this instance, that though it will be the same body, yet with different and excelling qualities: this simile seems to have been much in use among the Jews, to illustrate this doctrine, and we have some traces of it still in their writings [f328]:

> “Cleopatra the queen asked R. Meir, saying, I know that the dead shall live, for it is written, “they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth”, (<19716>Psalm 72:16) but when they rise, shall they rise naked, or shall they rise in their clothes? to which he replied, much more than wheat: for as wheat is buried, hmwr[, “naked”, it comes forth, (or springs up,) with many clothings; and how much more the righteous, who are buried in their clothes?”

and again [f329],

> “says R. Eliezer, all the dead shall stand in the resurrection of the dead, and shall rise with their garments on; from whence do you learn this? from the seed of the earth, especially from wheat; for as wheat is buried “naked”, and comes forth with many clothings, much more the righteous, who are buried in their clothes.”

Ver. 38. *But God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased him*, etc.] It is not the husbandman, nor the sun, nor the rain, that give the grain of wheat, or any other, its verdure and beauty, the form in which it springs up, its stalk, blade, and ear, but God by his own power, and of his sovereign will and pleasure; and he does not create this new form, but gives it; and does not barely give it, but gives the body to it: to the selfsame grain, and not another: so the resurrection of the dead is God's work; it is an instance of his power, and of his sovereign will; and is to his people a branch of that eternal life, which is his pure gift through Jesus Christ; all that glory in which the body will arise springs from his free grace, and is bestowed upon the selfsame body, which was carried about here, and laid in the grave: and to every

seed its own body; which is suitable and natural to it, according to its kind; (see <01011>Genesis 1:11) as cummin to cummin, anise to anise, wheat to wheat, barley to barley, and not on the contrary; showing, that it is the same body that is raised that dies, though it is in a more glorious, and with more excellent qualities; which is manifest from express passages of Scripture; (see <18926>Job 19:26,27 <46542>1 Corinthians 15:42-44,53,54) from the signification of the word resurrection, which is a raising up of that which is fallen and if the same body that falls by death is not raised, but another is given, it will not be a resurrection, but a creation: and also from the figurative phrases by which it is expressed, as here by the quickening of seed cast into the earth, and elsewhere by awaking out of sleep; now as it is the same seed that is sown that springs up again, and the same body that sleeps that awaked out of it, so it is the same body that is interred in the earth, and falls asleep by death, that will be quickened and awaked at the resurrection: and it is clear from the places from whence the dead will be raised, the repositories of them, as death and hell, or the grave, and the sea; for none but the same bodies that are laid in the grave, or cast into the sea, can be said to come forth out of them, or be delivered up; by them: and from the subject of the resurrection, the bodies of men, their vile and mortal bodies, which can be no other than their present ones; and from the end of the resurrection, which is that some may come to life, and others to damnation; and from the justice of God, which requires that the same bodies Christ has purchased, find who have served and suffered for him, should be glorified; and the same that have done evil against him, and abused themselves and his people, be punished: this might be argued from the translations of Enoch and Elijah in their bodies to heaven, in which they

were on earth; and from the resurrection of the bodies of the saints at Christ's resurrection, and the change that will be on the bodies of living saints at the coming of Christ; for it is not reasonable to suppose, that some of the saints shall have their own bodies, and others none at all, or not the same they lived in here: this may be further confirmed, from the resurrection of Christ's body, which was the same he had before; it was not changed into a spirit, but consisted of flesh and bones, as it had done; and had on it the very print of the nails, and spear in his hands, feet, and side; and to this the bodies of the saints are to be fashioned: add to all this, if it is not a resurrection of the same body, but new ones are created, to which the soul will be united, it will not be a resurrection, but a transmigration of souls into other bodies; but as every seed has its own body, so will every soul have its own body, though greatly different as to its qualities, and much improved for the better, as in seed sown: and this is the sense of the ancient Jews [f330],

> "says R. Chijah, µwqy hwhd apwg awhhd, "that that selfsame body that was shall rise", is clear from what is written, thy dead men shall live, (Isaiah 26:19) and it is not written, shall be created; from whence it is evident that they shall not be created, but shall be quickened:"

and again [f331],

> "in the time to come, the holy blessed God will quicken the dead, and raise them µrp[m, "out of their own dust", that they may not be a building of dust, as they were at first, when they were created out of dust itself, a thing which is not stable, according to (Genesis 2:7) and at that time they shall be raised out of the dust, out of that building, and shall stand in a stable building, that they may have stability, or duration."

So on those words, "I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal", (Deuteronomy 32:39) they observe [f332], that

> "as wounding and healing are djab, "in one", (and the same body,) so death and life are djab, "in one and" the same."

Ver. 39. *All flesh is not the same flesh*, etc.] Or "equal", as the Syriac version renders it; though all flesh is flesh, as to the nature and substance of it; agrees in its original, being by generation; and is supported by food, and

is alike frail and mortal; all flesh is grass, rises out of it, or is maintained by it, or withers like that, yet not of equal worth, value, and excellency: “but” there is “one” kind “of flesh of men”; which is superior to, and more excellent than any other; being animated by a rational soul, and is set in the first place; so we read of çya rçb, “the flesh of man”, for mankind, (<18210>Job 12:10) (see <02232>Exodus 30:32).

Another flesh of beasts; as sheep and oxen, and other beasts of the field;

another of fishes: which may be observed against the Papists, who distinguish between flesh and fish, as if there was no flesh of fishes; and on their fast days prohibit flesh, but allow the eating of fish; thus flesh is attributed to fishes, as here, in (<03111>Leviticus 11:11) upon which text Aben Ezra observes, lo, fish is called flesh; but as our doctors say, according to the custom of those times; and so it is by the Jews, who say [f333],

> “all flesh is forbidden to boil in milk, µygd rçbm, “except the flesh of fishes”, and locusts; and it is forbidden to set it on a table along with cheese, except “the flesh of fishes”, and locusts:”

and another of birds; the fowls of the air. This is another similitude, illustrating the resurrection of the dead; and is not designed to point out the difference between the raised bodies of the righteous, and the wicked; as if the former were signified by the flesh of men, and the other by the flesh of beasts, fishes, and birds; nor among the wicked themselves, with whom there will be degrees of punishment; nor among the saints, as if the flesh of one should differ from that of another. The intent of this simile is only to show, that the resurrection of the dead will be in real flesh, in their own flesh, in the selfsame flesh, as to substance, with which they were clothed when on earth; but that it will, as to its qualities, be different from it, as one sort of flesh is now from another; and that if God can, as he does, make different sorts of flesh, and yet all for kind are flesh, there is no difficulty in conceiving, that God is able to raise the dead in their own flesh, and yet different from what it now is; being free from all weakness, frailty, corruption, and mortality.

Ver. 40. *There are also celestial bodies*, etc.] Or bodies in the heavens, as the sun, moon, and stars:

and bodies terrestrial; or bodies on earth, animate and inanimate, men, beasts, trees, minerals, etc.

But the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another: though both sorts are bodies, yet their qualities differ, and there is a greater glory in the one than in the other. This is another similitude, serving to help our ideas of this doctrine of the resurrection of the body; that though it is the same in substance, yet different in qualities; and does not design any difference between the bodies of good men and bad men, elect and reprobate; as if the one were intended by the celestial bodies, and the other by the terrestrial; and much less degrees of glory in the saints themselves, who, imagine them in as low a form as can be, can never be compared to terrestrial ones; but it shows the difference there will be between the raised bodies and the present ones; which will be as great as that which now is between celestial and terrestrial bodies.

Ver. 41. *There is one glory of the sun*, etc.] Which is the greater light, the fountain of light, and whose glory exceeds that of the other heavenly bodies:

and another glory of the moon; which is the lesser light, and receives its light from the sun, and consequently its glory is inferior:

and another glory of the stars; which though very bright and sparkling, and are innumerable, have a lesser glory, at least to our appearance, than the sun and moon: the Jews have a notion [f334], that

> "all the stars and the orbs are endued with a soul, and with knowledge, and understanding; and that they live, and stand, and know him that said, and the world was; and everyone of them, "according to his greatness", wtl[myplw, "and according to his dignity", praise and glorify their Creator, as the angels; and as they know God, so they know themselves, and the angels that are above them; for the knowledge of the stars and the orbs is lesser than the knowledge of angels, and greater than the knowledge of men:"

for one star differeth from another star in glory; all which is to be understood, not as if the glory of the sun meant the glory of Christ, the sun of righteousness, who excels in glory, even in his human nature; and the glory of the moon, the glory of the church, who receives her's from Christ; and the glory of the stars; the glory of particular saints; and as if there will be, in the resurrection state, degrees of glory among them: for what peculiar glory can be thought to be upon the body of one, that is not upon another, when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of

their Father? and admitting there was any truth in this, it is not the truth of this text; the only design of which, as the above, is to show, that as not only celestial and terrestrial bodies differ from each other, but even heavenly ones, so at the resurrection, the bodies of the saints then will differ in glory from their present ones; though these are now the members of Christ, are presented to God an holy sacrifice, and are washed with pure water.

Ver. 42. *So also is the resurrection of the dead*, etc.] This will be the case and condition of risen bodies, they will be as different from what they now are, though they will be the same in substance, as a stalk of wheat in its blade and ear, and full corn in the ear, is from the naked grain, when cast into the earth; or as the flesh of men is from the flesh of beasts, fishes, and birds; or as celestial bodies from terrestrial ones; or as the glory of the sun differs from the glory of the moon and stars; or as one star differs from another star in glory; that this is the apostle's sense is clear from the induction of particulars following, by which he explains in clear terms what he before signified by similitudes:

it is sown in corruption; it should be observed, that the word sown, in this and the following verses, does not merely relate to the interment of the body, but also to its generation; and includes its state, condition, and character, during life; as well as points out what it is at death, and its sepulture in the earth: it is from first to last a corruptible body; it is born frail and mortal, and liable to corruption and death; it is corrupted with sin, and so a vile body; there is a world of iniquity in one of its members, the tongue, and what then must there be in all its parts? but besides this moral corruption, in which it is during the present state, it is liable to a natural one; from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, it may be covered with wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores; a right arm may be dried up and withered away, and a leg may corrupt and mortify, and so any other part; the whole is supported by corruptible things, by meat that perisheth; and which if it did not corrupt and perish, would not be nourishing; and as meats are for the belly, and the belly for meats, in a short time God will destroy both it and them; the whole frame and texture of the body will be dissolved by death, and be brought to worms, corruption, and dust; and in this case will lie in the grave till the resurrection morn:

it is raised in incorruption: the very same body that was sown, generated, lived, and died, shall be raised again, but different from what it was; it will

be incorruptible; its parts will be no more subject to corruption; it will not be supported by corruptible things; it will be immortal, and never die more, and will be clear of all its moral corruption; it will no more be a vile body, but fashioned like to the holy and glorious body of Christ.

Ver. 43. *It is sown in dishonour*, etc.] Its original is dishonourable, it comes, as the Jews often say [f335], hhwrs hpjm, "from a filthy drop"; its generated brought forth in a manner we are ashamed of; it is conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; it is unclean, and born of the flesh: and when born, is in such a condition, as is to the loathing of it; some of its members are less honourable; and so uncomely as always to need a covering; it is subject to various blemishes, defects, and imperfections, and few bodies are without one or another; and liable to many injuries and affronts, as the body of our Lord himself was, who gave his back to the smiters, his cheek to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame and spitting; and in death, it is nauseous, filthy, and very dishonourable, so that the nearest relation and friend cannot take pleasure in it, but desires to bury it out of sight; and amidst the greatest funereal pomp and splendour, it is laid in the grave in dishonour, to be the companion of corruption and worms: but in the resurrection,

it is raised in glory; in perfect beauty and comeliness, without the least blemish, defect, or imperfection; nor will there be any part of it that will occasion shame; it will be metamorphosed, and fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; it will shine as the sun, and be as the brightness of the firmament: and so the Jews understand the passage in (Daniel 12:3) they say [f336] that

> "God will beautify the bodies of the righteous in time to come, as the body of the first man when he entered into the garden of Eden; and that the soul, whilst it is in its dignity, is sustained by the superior light, and is clothed with it; and when it enters into the body in time to come, it enters with the light; and then will the body shine as the brightness of the firmament, according to (Daniel 12:3)."

It is sown in weakness; it comes into the world in great weakness; what is weaker than the body of a new born babe? it cannot move, nor help itself in any respect; and how weak and defenceless is the body of man, when adult; as he is subject to various diseases and disorders, which weaken his

strength in the way, and is surrounded with natural infirmities, arising from hunger, thirst, nakedness, labour, etc. so he is not armed, as many other creatures are, for defence and offence; nor can he resist and overcome many things which do him hurt, much less can he resist death, or retain his spirit then; and through weakness at last dies, and is devoid of all strength, and as such is laid in the grave, where there is no work that he can do: but

it is raised in power; it is raised by the power of God, and with great power in itself; being able to subsist without food, and of moving itself from place to place, with great agility; and capable of the highest services before God and the Lamb, without weariness; nor will it be ever more liable to weakness or death; death shall have no more power over it; nor shall it be encompassed or attended with any infirmity whatever.

Ver. 44. *It is sown a natural body*, etc.] Or an animal one, being generated as animals are, and supported with food as they be, and die at last as they do: (see <21Ec 3:19>Ecclesiastes 3:19-21).

It is raised a spiritual body; not as to substance, but as to its quality; it will not be changed into a spirit; our Lord's risen body, to which ours will be conformed, was not a spirit, but, as before, consisted of flesh and bones: but the body will then be subject to the spirit and soul of man; it will be employed in spiritual service, for which it will be abundantly fitted and assisted by the Spirit of God; and it will be delighted with spiritual objects; it will be like the angels, those excellent spirits; it will live as spirits do, without natural helps and means, as meat, drink, clothes, sleep, and, as they, will never die:

there is a natural; or "animal body", such as the first man's was, and those are that descend from him by ordinary generation; and

there is a spiritual body; such as the body of Christ now is, and as will be the bodies of the risen saints; the phrase is Jewish, ynjwrh Pwgh, "the spiritual body" [f337] and the flesh of the righteous, being µynjwr µrçb, "spiritual flesh" [f338], are to be met with in their writings.

Ver. 45. *And so it is written*, etc.] In (<01Ge 2:7>Genesis 2:7)

the first man Adam was made a living soul: in the Hebrew text it is, man, or Adam, became, or was made a living soul; that is, as the apostle says, "the first man Adam": he calls him, as the Jews [f339] frequently do, ˆwçarh

µda, “the first man”; he was the first man that was made, and the first parent of mankind, and the head and representative of all his posterity, and so the first in time, causality and dignity; whose name was Adam, so called by God in the day he was created, because he was formed hmdah ˆm, “from the ground, or earth”; when God breathed life into the earthly mass, or lump; and being animated with a rational soul, it became an animal body, or a living creature; and so the apostle proves, from the first man that was upon earth, that there is a natural, or animal body; a body animated by a soul, and which was supported by eating and drinking, by sleep and rest; and was capable of dying, and should die, in case of sin; and which was the state of it in its first creation, whilst in innocence, and before the fall; and this is all he meant to prove by this Scripture; for what follows is not mentioned as therein written, or elsewhere, but as the apostle’s own assertion:

the last Adam was made a quickening spirit: by “the last Adam” is meant Jesus Christ, called Adam, because he is really and truly a man, a partaker of the same flesh and blood as the rest of mankind; and because he is the antitype of the first man Adam, who was a figure of him that was to come; and therefore called Adam, for the same reason as he is called David and Solomon: he is said to be “the last”, in distinction from the first Adam, with respect to him he stood, ˆwrja, last upon the earth, as in (¹⁸Job 19:25) to which passage some think the apostle here alludes; and because he appeared in the last days in the end of the world, and is the last that shall rise up as a common head and representative of the whole, or any part of mankind: now he is made “a quickening spirit”; which some understand of the Holy Spirit, which filled the human nature of Christ, raised him from the dead, and will quicken our mortal bodies at the last day; others of the divine nature of Christ, to which his flesh, or human nature, was united; and which gave life, rigour, and virtue, to all his actions and sufferings, as man; and by which he was quickened, when put to death in the flesh, and by which he will quicken others another day: though rather I think it is to be understood of his spiritual body, of his body, not as it was made of the virgin, for that was a natural, or an animal one; it was conceived and bred, and born as animal bodies are; it grew and increased, and was nourished with meat and drink, and sleep and rest; and was subject to infirmities, and to death itself, as our bodies be; but it is to be understood of it as raised from the dead, when it was made a spiritual body, for which reason it is called a “spirit”: not that it was changed into a spirit, for it still remained

flesh and blood; but because it was no more supported in an animal way; nor subject to those weaknesses that animal bodies are, but lives as spirits, or angels do; and a quickening one, not only because it has life itself, but because by virtue of the saints' union to it, as it subsists in the divine person of the Son of God, their bodies will be quickened at the last day, and made like unto it, spiritual bodies; also because he lives in his body as a spiritual one, they shall live in theirs as spiritual ones: and so the apostle shows, that there is a spiritual, as well as an animal body; that as the first man's body, even before the fall, was an animal or natural one; the last Adam's body upon his resurrection is a spiritual and life giving one, as the Syriac version renders it; so the Cabalistic writers [f340] speak of

> "Adam; who is the holy and supreme, who rules over all, and gives spirit and life to all."

Ver. 46. *Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual*, etc.] As the apostle before proves the distinction of a natural and spiritual body, and gives instances of both in the two principal men in the world, the first and the last; and points out the difference between them, the one being animated, and having life given unto it, the other animating, and giving life to others; proceeds to observe the order of these, how that one was before the other; the spiritual body, though the more perfect and most excellent, yet was not first in being:

but that which is natural; Adam's animal body was before Christ's spiritual body:

and afterwards that which is spiritual; yea, even Christ's animal, or natural body, was before his spiritual one; his body taken from the virgin, and formed in her womb, and in which he lived here on earth, was an animal body, as before observed; and upon his resurrection, it commenced a spiritual one; being the same in substance as the former, only different in qualities; and just so it is, and will be, with the bodies of the saints'; which is the apostle's design and view, in observing this order; the natural body is first, and then the spiritual; it is first a natural body, as generated and nourished, as weak and dying, and it is afterwards a spiritual one, when raised from the dead.

Ver. 47. *The first man is of the earth, earthy*, etc.] He was formed out of the earth, (Genesis 2:7) and the word there used signifies red earth. Josephus [f341] observes, that the first man was called Adam, which in the

Hebrew tongue signifies red, because he was made out of red earth; for such, adds he, is the true and virgin earth: Pausanias [f342] makes mention of a clay, which is not the colour of earth, but like the sand of brooks and rivers; and gives a smell very near to that of the skin, or body of men; and which is said to be the remains of that clay, out of which all mankind was made: but be that as it will, Adam was certainly made out of the earth, and had his habitation and abode assigned him in the garden of Eden, and was made to cultivate and till it; his lordship and dominion, at most and best, only extended to the terraqueous globe, and the creatures in it; and having sinned, he was not only thrust out of the garden to till the ground out of which he was taken, but doomed to return to the dust from whence he came; and whose sin and fall had such an influence on him and his posterity, as to make their souls sensual and earthly, to mind, affect, and cleave unto earthly things:

the second man is the Lord from heaven; as Adam was the first man, Christ is the second man; and these two are spoken of, as it they were the only two men in the world; because as the former was the head and representative of all his natural posterity, so the latter is the head and representative of all his spiritual offspring: and he is “the Lord from heaven”; in distinction from the first man, who was of the earth, and whose lordship reached only to the earth; whereas Christ is Lord of all, not only Lord of lords below, but Lord of angels and saints above; the whole family in heaven and in earth is named of him; and he has all power in heaven and in earth, and a name above every name in this world, and that to come, and is indeed higher than the heavens: this is not to be understood of his human nature, or of his human body, as if that came down from heaven, and passed through the virgin, as some heretics of old said, as water through a pipe; for though it was conceived and formed in a miraculous manner, under the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost from on high, yet was formed out of the matter and substance of the virgin, and so was of the earth; and was indeed an earthly body, supported by earthly means, and at last returned to the earth, and was interred in it: but it is to be understood either of Christ as a divine person, as the Son of God, as Lord of all, coming down from heaven at his incarnation; not by local motion, or change of place, but by assumption of the human nature into union with him, the Lord from heaven; or rather of him as he shall descend from heaven, as the Lord and Judge of all at the last day, when he will come in his glorious, spiritual, and heavenly body; and raise the righteous dead, and

fashion their bodies like his own; when what follows will have its full accomplishment. The Cabalistic doctors among the Jews often speak [f343] of ˆwyl[µda, “the superior man”, and ˆwtjt µdaw, “the inferior man”; and in their Cabalistic table [f344], in the sixth “sephirah”, or number, they place the man from above, the heavenly Adam; and, in one of their writings [f345], have these remarkable words,

> “anynt µdaw hal[µda ˆam, “who is the supreme man and the second man”, but of whom it is said, (<203004>Proverbs 30:4) “what is his name, and what is his son’s name?” what is his name? this is the supreme man; what is his son’s name? this is the inferior man; and both of them are intimated in that Scripture, (<020313>Exodus 3:13) “and they shall say unto me, what is his name? what shall I say?””

Some copies, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; leave out the word “Lord”, and add the word “heavenly”, reading the clause thus, “the second man from heaven, heavenly”.

Ver. 48. *As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy*, etc.] As was Adam’s body, so are the bodies of those that descend from him; they are houses of clay, earthly houses of this tabernacle, which rise out of the earth, are maintained by the things of it, and return to it again:

and as is the heavenly, such are, or will be

they also that are heavenly; as is the glorious and spiritual body of Christ, the Lord from heaven, as that now is in heaven, and will be when he descends from thence; so will be the bodies of them that are heavenly, that are heaven born souls now, are partakers of the heavenly calling, and whose conversation is in heaven; and who, in the resurrection morn, will have heavenly, spiritual, and glorious bodies, like unto Christ’s: so Philo [f346] the Jew on those words, “and man became a living soul”, has this note;

> “there are two kinds of men, for the one is “the heavenly man”, and the other is “earthy”; the heavenly man is he, who is made after the image of God, incorruptible, and wholly devoid of earthy substance; the earthy is made of seminal matter, which is called the ground.”

Ver. 49. *And as we have borne the image of the earthy*, etc.] Which regards not so much the sinful image of the first man upon the soul, or the depravity of the powers and faculties of it, as his image of frailty and

mortality on the body, having like him a body subject to infirmities and death:

we shall also bear the image of the heavenly; which likewise regards not so much the spiritual image of Christ stamped on the soul in regeneration, when Christ is formed in the heart, and the new man is created after his likeness, and which more and more appears, through every transforming view of him, and will be complete in glory, as the image and likeness of Christ upon the bodies of the saints in the resurrection, when they shall be fashioned like unto his: some copies, as the Alexandrian and others, read the words as an exhortation, let us bear the image, etc. as if the words were an improvement of the apostle's reasoning on this subject, engaging saints to be more concerned for, and seeking after a greater likeness to Christ in righteousness and true holiness; but the other reading and sense are best.

Ver. 50. *Now this I say, brethren*, etc.] Upon the whole, I assert this, and observe it to you, out of a truly Christian respect for you, as brethren in the Lord, that

flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God: this shows the necessity there is of a difference between the body that now is, and that which shall be, which the apostle has so largely insisted on, and so clearly proved and explained, in the preceding verses; because the body, as it now is, is not capable of possessing the heavenly glory; was it to be introduced into heaven, in the condition it is now, it would break in pieces, and crumble into dust; it would not be able to bear the glory of that state and place: by flesh and blood is meant, not human nature as to the substance of it, or as consisting of flesh and blood, for that can and does inherit the kingdom of God; witness the human nature, or body of Christ, the bodies of the saints that rose after his resurrection, and those of Enoch and Elijah, who were translated body and soul to heaven; so that this passage makes nothing for those that deny the resurrection of the same body, and plead for a new and an aerial one: but the human nature, or body, so and so qualified, is here meant; either as corrupted with sin, for without holiness and righteousness no man shall see the Lord, or enter into and possess the kingdom of heaven; or flesh and blood, or an human body, as it is now supported in this animal life, with meat and drink, etc. and as it is frail and mortal, and subject to death, in which sense the phrase is used in Scripture; (see <40167>Matthew 16:17, <48116>Galatians 1:16, <49062>Ephesians 6:12) and often by the Jews; so Abraham is represented by them as saying[f347],

> “I am µdw rçb, “flesh and blood”, tomorrow I shall depart out of the world, or die:”

it would be endless to give the many instances that might be produced of this use of the phrase with them, and in which sense it is to be taken here: and the meaning is, that saints in their frail mortal bodies, such as they now are, are not capable of enjoying the heavenly glory; which is called “the kingdom”, because of its riches, glory, grandeur, and magnificence; and the kingdom “of God”, because it is of his preparing and giving; and what he calls his people to, and makes them meet for, and in which they will reign with him for evermore: heirs of it they may be, and are now whilst in this frail and mortal state; but inherit, possess, and enjoy it, they cannot, as not without holiness of soul, so not without immortality of body; and therefore it is necessary that the body should rise different in qualities from, though the same in substance with, the present body; that it should rise incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual; that it may be fitted for, and be able to bear the exceeding weight of glory in the other world:

neither doth corruption inherit incorruption: by corruption is not so much meant sin, or the corruption of nature, or man as corrupted by sin, though it is true of such an one, that he does not, and cannot inherit incorruption; the incorruptible crown, the crown of glory that fadeth not away, the incorruptible inheritance, reserved in the heavens, those riches which moth and rust corrupt not; but the body, as it is generated in corruption, is supported by corruptible things, and is subject to corruption and worms; in such a situation it is unfit for, and incapable of inheriting eternal glory; it must be different from what it is; it must put on immortality, and be clothed with incorruption: the word inherit in both clauses shows, that the heavenly glory is an inheritance, and belongs to children only; is their heavenly Father’s bequest unto them; is not bought or acquired by anything of theirs; and is what they enter into and upon, in virtue and consequence of the death of the testator, Christ.

Ver. 51. *Behold, I show you a mystery*, etc.] Or a secret, which could never have been discovered by reason, or the light of nature, and what is of pure revelation; and which perhaps the apostle became acquainted with, when he was caught up into the third heaven; and is what is never made mention of by any prophet, or apostle, but himself: he prefaces the account of it in this manner, partly to show the great respect he had for these

Corinthians, that he treated them as his bosom friends, to whom he communicated his secrets; and partly to excite their curiosity and attention:

we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; some copies read, “we shall all rise again, but we shall not all be changed”, and so the Vulgate Latin version; according to which the sense is, all will rise again, both just and unjust, but all will not be changed into a state of glory; but the apostle is only speaking of the saints, of whom it is true, not only that they shall rise again, but shall be changed from corruption to incorruption; wherefore this cannot be a true reading: others read the words thus, “we shall all die, but we shall not all be changed”; and so the Ethiopic version and the Alexandrian copy seem to have read; which is just the reverse of the text, and arises from a wrong sense of (Hebrews 9:27) where it is not said, it is “appointed unto all men”, but “unto men once to die”; from which rule there has been some exceptions, as the instances of Enoch and Elijah show; and there will be more at the time of Christ’s coming, for all will not sleep in their graves, or die, for death is meant by sleeping; they will not die as men ordinarily do, and continue under the power of death, but they will be changed at once from corruption to incorruption, from dishonour to glory, from weakness to power, from being natural to be spiritual bodies; this change all the saints will undergo, whether dead or alive, at Christ’s coming; the dead by a resurrection from the dead, and the living by a secret and sudden power, which will at once render their bodies, without separating them from their souls, immortal and glorious: and this reading and sense are confirmed by the Syriac and Arabic versions.

Ver. 52. *In a moment*, etc.] Or point of time, which is very short indeed; what a moment is, according to the Jewish doctors, (see Gill on “Matthew 4:8”).

In the twinkling of an eye; these two the Jews not only put together as here, but make one to be as the other; so they say [f348], ˆy[Prhk [grh, “a moment is as the twinkling of an eye”. This phrase, as the twinkling of an eye, is frequently used in Jewish writings [f349], to signify how speedily ard suddenly anything is done, and which is the design of it here; and the apostle’s meaning is, that the change upon the bodies of living saints will be so quick, that it will be done in a trice, before a man can shut his eyes and open them again; so that it will be as it were imperceptible, and without the least sensation of pain; this may also be referred to the resurrection, which will be quick, and done at once; though it seems rather,

and chiefly, to respect the change of the living; what follows, indeed, favours the other sense also; for all will be quick and sudden, the coming of Christ, the raising of the dead, and the change of the living:

at the last trumpet, for the trumpet shall sound; or "by the last trumpet", as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; that is, by means of it, through the sounding of that:

and the dead shall be raised incorruptible; free from all frailty, mortality, and corruption, when the trumpet shall sound:

and at the same time also,

we shall be changed; the saints that will be found alive; the apostle speaks in the first person, because of the uncertainty of Christ's coming, and of the blowing of the last trumpet, he not knowing but it might be in his time; what this last trumpet will be, is not easy to say; it can hardly be thought to be a material one: the Jews [f350] have a notion, that a trumpet will be blown at the time of the resurrection of the dead, as at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; which will quicken the dead, as they say it then did; and that this will be blown by Michael the archangel [f351]: it seems very likely to be the same with the shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God, (<5046>1 Thessalonians 4:16) all which may be no other than the voice of Christ; at the hearing of which, the dead will rise; but whether this will be an articulate one, as at the raising of Lazarus, or is only expressive of his power, which will then be put forth, is not material, nor a point to be determined: and what if by all this should be meant some violent claps of thunder, as at Mount Sinai, which will shake the whole earth; and when almighty power will be put forth to raise the dead: since such are by the Jews [f352] called the voices of the son of David, and are expected by them, a little before his coming? This is called the "last" trumpet, not so much with respect to those that go before, much less to the seven trumpets in the Revelations, of which as yet there was no revelation made, but because there will be none after it; see:

> "And the trumpet shall give a sound, which when every man heareth, they shall be suddenly afraid." (2 Esdras 6:23)

Ver. 53. *For this corruptible must put on incorruption*, etc.] The apostle returns to what he had before asserted, concerning the necessity of an alteration in the qualities of bodies, in order to the enjoyment of the heavenly state; showing, that the selfsame body the saints now have, for he

seems to point with his finger to his own, and which are incorruptible ones, shall and must be clothed with incorruption:

and this mortal must put on immortality; the body that now is mortal, must become immortal; it must put off its rags of mortality, and be clothed with the shining robes of immortality; and which must be done, either by first dying, and then rising from the dead; or by undergoing alive a quick and sudden change, which will at once remove all corruption and mortality; see:

> "He answered and said unto me, These be they that have put off the mortal clothing, and put on the immortal, and have confessed the name of God: now are they crowned, and receive palms." (2 Esdras 2:45)

Ver. 54. *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption*, etc.] As at the coming of Christ, both the bodies of living saints, and of dead ones being raised, will: and this

mortal shall have put on immortality; which will be the case, in the resurrection morn:

then shall be brought to pass that saying that is written; then that passage will have its full accomplishment, which stands in (Isaiah 25:8) where it is read,

he will swallow up death in victory, or "for ever". That is, the Messiah shall by his death, and resurrection from the dead, obtain such an entire victory over death, not only for himself, but for all his people, that in the resurrection morn, when they will be all raised from the dead, death will be so swallowed up, that it will be no more: the Jews acknowledge that this prophecy belongs to the times of the Messiah; so they say [f353], that

> "the Messiah shall descend from Pharez, and in his day the holy blessed God will cause death to be swallowed up, as it is said, (Isaiah 25:8) "he shall swallow up death in victory":"

and again [f354],

> "when the King Messiah comes, the holy blessed God will raise up those that sleep in the dust, as it is written, he shall swallow up death in victory:"

they also say [f355], that this passage refers to future time, and to the world to come. The prophet expresses it actively, it being a prediction of what was to be done by the Messiah; the apostle cites it passively, as being accomplished by him after the resurrection, and considered as a part of the song sung by the risen saints; to which is added,

Ver. 55. *O death, where is thy sting*? etc.] These words, with the following clause, are taken out of (<2B1314>Hosea 13:14) and that they belong to the times of the Messiah, the ancient Jews acknowledge; and the Chaldee paraphrase interprets them of the Logos, or Word of God, rendering them thus,

"my Word shall be among them to kill, and my Word to destroy;"

wherefore the apostle is not to be charged with a misapplication of them, nor with a perversion of them, as he is by the Jew [f356]: in the prophet they are thus read, "O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave, I will be thy destruction"; between which, and the apostle's citation of them, there is some difference; the word yha, which we render in both clauses, "I will be", the apostle translates "where", and that very rightly, and so it should be rendered there; and so it is by the Septuagint interpreters, who render the whole as he, with a little variation, "where is thy revenge, O death? where is thy sting, O grave?" and so the Arabic version of Hosea still nearer the apostle, "where is now thy victory, O death?" or "where is thy sting, O grave?" and even the Chaldee paraphrase on (<2B1314>Hosea 13:14) renders the same word "where"; for instead of, "I will be thy king", the Targum reads, ˆa Æklm, "where is thy king?" and Aben Ezra, a Jewish writer of great note, on (<2B1314>Hosea 13:14) observes, that there are some that say the word is to be inverted as if it was jya, "where", and he adds, and it is right; a like observation he makes on those words in (<461514>1 Corinthians 15:14) and that that is the true sense of the word in both verses, is attested by Ebn Jannahius Tanchuma [f357]; so that the apostle is thus far to be justified, in his citation of this passage: it is further to be observed, that instead of "thy plagues", he reads, "thy sting"; and I doubt not, but that among the many things which rbd signifies, as it must be owned it does signify the plague, or pestilence, (see <199106>Psalm 90:6) and which perhaps is so called, from the venomous nature of it, and the poisonous sting that is in it, so likewise a sting, though there is no instance of it; certain it is, that bees are called µyrbd, and as Cocceius [f358] observes, from their sting; and so in the Chaldee and Arabic languages, a

bee, or a wasp, is called arbd; and it is to such sort of creatures, that the allusion is here made; who having lost their stings, can do no hurt; and which will be the case of death in the resurrection morn, when risen saints will insult over it in this triumphant manner; having nothing more to fear from it, any more than a man has to be afraid of any animal whatever, that has lost its sting: and in the following clause,

O grave, where is thy victory? instead of "destruction", as it must be allowed the word bjq signifies, (see <19006>Psalm 90:6) the apostle reads victory; but then there is no difference in the sense; for the grave gets its victory over its thousands, and ten thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousands, and millions of millions, by the destruction of them, which now it glories in, and boasts of; but in the resurrection morn, when its destruction will be at an end, the triumphant saints may reasonably ask, where is its boasted victory, since it can destroy no longer.

Ver. 56. *The sting of death is sin*, etc.] Death has a sting, and which was originally in it, and that is sin; sin is the cause of death, it is what has given rise and being to it; it entered into the world by it, and is supported in its empire through it; it gives it its resistless power, which reaches to all sorts of persons, young and old, rich and poor, high and low, bond and free; it gives it all its bitterness, agonies, and miseries; and it is by that it does all the hurt and mischief it does; and it may fitly be compared to a sting, for its poisonous and venomous nature:

and the strength of sin is the law; not that the law of God is sinful, or encourages sin: it forbids it under the severest penalty; but was there no law there would be no sin, nor imputation of it; sin is a transgression of the law: moreover, the strength of sin, its evil nature, and all the dreadful aggravations of it, and sad consequences upon it, are discovered and made known by the law; and also the strength of it is drawn out by it, through the corruption of human nature; which is irritated and provoked the more to sin, through the law's prohibition of it; and this is not the fault of the law, but is owing to the vitiosity of nature; which the more it is forbidden anything, the more desirous it is of it; to which may be added, that sin is the more exceeding sinful, being committed against a known law, and that of the great lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; whose legislative power and authority are slighted and trampled upon by it, which makes the transgression the more heinous; it is the law which binds sin upon a man's

conscience, accuses him of it, pronounces him guilty, curses, condemns, and adjudges him to death for it.

Ver. 57. *But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory*, etc.] Over sin the sting of death, over the law the strength of sin, and over death and the grave; and which will be the ground and foundation of the above triumphant song in the resurrection morn, as it is now at this present time of praise and thankfulness to God: and it is all

through our Lord Jesus; he has got the victory over sin; he has put it away by the sacrifice of himself; he has finished and made an end of it; for though it reigns over his people before conversion, and dwells in them after it, yet in consequence of his atonement for it, it loses its governing power through the Spirit and grace of God in regeneration, and entirely its damning power over them, and in the resurrection morn will not be so much as in being in them; the view of which now fills them with joy, thanksgiving, and triumph. Christ has obtained a victory over the law; he has stopped its mouth, and answered all its demands; he has been made under, and subject to it; he has obeyed its precepts, and bore its penalty, and has delivered his from the curse and condemnation of it, so that they have nothing to fear from it; it is dead to them, and they to that: he has also abolished death by dying and rising again, so as that it shall have no more dominion over him; and he has abolished it as a penal evil to his saints; and though they die, they shall not always remain under the power of death, they shall live again, and with him for ever: he has conquered the grave by rising out of it himself, and living for evermore, having the keys of the grave in his hands; and will at the last day oblige it to give up its dead, when his victory over this, with respect to his people, will be abundantly manifest: now this victory, in all its branches, is given by God to believers; they are made to share in all the victories of Christ their head, and are more than conquerors through him; but this is not by merit, but by gift, the gift of God the Father, who gives his Son, and all things with him that are his; and this gift is a distinguishing one; it is given to us, and not to others; and which therefore calls aloud for praise and thankfulness. The title of the "ninth" psalm may be rendered, "to the conqueror over death", or "that is the author of victory over death, even to the Son, a psalm of David", (<19009>Psalm 9:1).

Ver. 58. *Therefore my beloved brethren*, etc.] This is the conclusion of the whole, and contains the use the apostle makes of the above doctrine,

addressing the saints at Corinth in the most tender and affectionate manner; owning the spiritual relation they stood in to him, and expressing the great love he had for them, which filled him with a concern for them, that they might be both sound in principle, and right in practice, and continue so:

be ye steadfast, unmoveable; in all the doctrines of the Gospel, and particularly in this of the resurrection of the dead, which he had been labouring throughout the whole chapter:

always abounding in the work of the Lord; going on in it, being more and more in the practice of it; either in the work of the ministry, which some of them were in, to which the Lord had called them, and for which he had fitted and qualified them, and in which his glory was greatly concerned, and therefore called his work; or any other work, even all good works, which the Lord commands, requires, calls his people to, and strengthens them to perform: which when they do they may be said to abound, and to be fruitful in every good work: and for their encouragement it is added,

forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord; the labour of such who were in the ministry was not in vain, but was by the Lord made useful for the conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints, who would be their joy, and crown of rejoicing another day; and which must be no small encouragement to labour; and labour in any kind of good work has here its usefulness: it is profitable unto men, and though not meritorious of eternal life, yet the good works of the saints will follow them; Christ will not forget their work and labour of love which they have shown to his name and people, but will take notice of them as fruits of his own grace, and bestow his rewards upon them, though not in a way of debt, but of grace; which the doctrine of the resurrection assures of, and encourages to hope for; and so must he a friend to the practice of good works, as the contrary doctrine must be an obstruction to them.

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 16

This chapter concludes the epistle, with some directions to the Corinthians concerning a collection for the poor saints; with some intimations of himself, Timothy, and Apollos coming to them, and giving them a visit; with exhortations to watchfulness, constancy, courage, and charity; with recommendations of some persons to them mentioned by name; with divers salutations of them by himself and others; and with his good wishes for them. He urges them to make a collection for the poor saints, from the example of the churches of Galatia, according to his order, (46101 Corinthians 16:1). He points out the time when he would have it made, on the first day of the week; and the persons that should contribute to it, every member of the church; and the act of distribution, by laying up in store; and the manner, measure, and rule of doing it, according as they were blessed in Providence with temporal things; and the end of it, that there might be no collections to make when the apostle should come among them, (46102 Corinthians 16:2) and this, when made, and being ready at his coming, he proposes to send to Jerusalem, by persons approved of and recommended by them, (46103 Corinthians 16:3) and that he would also go along with them, should it be thought fit and proper, (46104 Corinthians 16:4). He signifies his resolution of coming and paying them a visit, when he should pass through Macedonia, (46105 Corinthians 16:5) when he had some thoughts of tarrying with them for a while, at least throughout the winter season, (46106 Corinthians 16:6) in all which he submits to the will of God, (46107 Corinthians 16:7). The reason why he could not come as yet was, because he had determined to stay at Ephesus till Pentecost, where he now was, (46108 Corinthians 16:8) and what prevailed upon him to stay there was, because there was an opportunity of preaching the Gospel with a prospect of success; and there were many enemies to hinder it all they could, and therefore the apostle's presence seemed necessary, (46109 Corinthians 16:9). He intimates, that Timothy would come to them shortly, and exhorts them to take care of him, and carry it respectfully to him; giving this as a reason, because he was engaged in the same work of the Lord he himself was, (46110 Corinthians 16:10). He enjoins them, that

whilst he should continue with them they would not despise him on account of his youth; and when he should depart from them, to conduct him in peace to him who was in expectation of him, along with other brethren, (<46161>1 Corinthians 16:11) and then he excuses Apollos not coming to them at present; and observes, that it was not for want of entreaty in him, but for want of will in Apollos, who notwithstanding would come when a convenient time should offer, (<46162>1 Corinthians 16:12). Next follow several exhortations to be upon their watch and guard, to be steadfast in the doctrine, grace, and profession of faith, and to behave themselves like men of a truly Christian spirit and courage, and to do everything in their church state in the exercise of the grace of love, (<46163>1 Corinthians 16:13,14) and then he recommends unto them the family of Stephanas, and exhorts them to have them in respect and reverence, and be subject to such, and particularly that family; partly because they were the firstfruits of his ministry, in those parts; and partly because they had given up themselves to the ministry of the saints, (<46165>1 Corinthians 16:15,16) as also because the coming of Stephanas to him, together with two other persons, named Fortunatus and Achaicus, had made him glad; supplied what was lacking in them; had refreshed his spirit and theirs; and therefore should be took notice of, and respectfully used, (<46167>1 Corinthians 16:17,18). And then follow various salutations, first of the churches of Asia in general, then of Aquila and Priscilla, and the church in their house, (<46169>1 Corinthians 16:19). Next of all the brethren at Ephesus, or that were with the apostle, (<46160>1 Corinthians 16:20) and last of all of the apostle himself, (<46162>1 Corinthians 16:21). And the chapter is closed with several wishes of different sorts, and which respect different persons; those that love not Christ, and live and die so, he wishes they may be accursed at the coming of the Lord, as they will be; and which is mentioned to deter professors of religion from everything that looked like want of love to Christ, whom they professed, (<46162>1 Corinthians 16:22) as for others, even as many as loved Christ, and which he hoped of them all, he wishes the grace of Christ might be with them, (<46162>1 Corinthians 16:23) and gives his love to them all, without any distinction; and which is to be understood not of a natural, but spiritual affection, it being in Christ, and for his sake, (<46162>1 Corinthians 16:24).

Ver. 1. *Now concerning the collection for the saints*, etc.] Not at Corinth, but at Jerusalem, as appears from (<46163>1 Corinthians 16:3) for the poor saints there, who were reduced to poverty, either through the spoiling of

their goods by their persecuting countrymen; or through the selling of their possessions, and putting their substance into one common stock, which was now exhausted, partly by their living upon it, and partly by the expending of it for the enlargement of the interest of Christ, and the spread of his Gospel among the Gentiles; so that it was but fit and reasonable that they should assist them in their necessitous circumstances: wherefore the apostle, after he had gone through the various subjects he thought fit to write upon, relating both to doctrine and practice, proceeds to give some orders, directions, and instructions, concerning this matter.

As I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. The churches of Galatia were those he wrote an epistle to, which bears their name, and in which he takes notice of the request of the apostles at Jerusalem to him, that he would remember the poor as he travelled through the Gentile countries, and which, no doubt, he mentions, as a hint unto them to collect for them. (<480210>Galatians 2:10) though the order he here speaks of was doubtless given them when he passed through the region of Galatia, (<441606>Acts 16:6 18:23). This he observes by way of example to the church at Corinth, and to show them, that what he ordered them was no other than what he enjoined other churches, and which they were ready to come into, as these in Galatia, and also in Macedonia; and designs this as a spur unto them, that if the Galatians, who were a more rude and uncultivated people, being now called by grace, were ready to such a good work, they who were a more polite people, and used to civility, humanity, and tenderness, would not be backward to it.

Ver. 2. *Upon the first day of the week*, etc.] In an ancient copy of Beza's, and in some others, it is added, "the Lord's day". Upon some one first day of the week, or more, if there was a necessity for it, until the collection was finished; though the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, "every first day": but this is not the apostle's intention, that a collection should be made every first day, but only on some one day, or as long as it was necessary: for at the close of the verse he gives this reason for it, "that there be no gatherings when I come": whereas, if this collection was to have been every first day, and to have been always continued, it must have been when he was present, as well as when absent; but this was only designed for a certain time, and on a certain account: the reason of his fixing upon the first day of the week was, because on this day the disciples of Christ, and the primitive churches, met together for divine worship, to hear the word, and observe the ordinances of Christ; (see <432019>John 20:19,26 <442007>Acts 20:7)

and was a very fit reason for such a work, when their hearts were warmed with the presence of God and Christ, with the grace of the Spirit, and the doctrines of the Gospel, and their affections were knit to one another, and to all the saints: and so we find from the accounts of Justin Martyr [f359], and of Tertullian [f360], that it was usual for the primitive churches in the age following that of the apostles, after the worship of God was over, to collect money for widows and orphans, and for saints in distress, such as were banished into distant parts, or condemned to the mines; and this practice was very agreeable to the customs of the apostle's countrymen, the Jews, from whence he might take this, who used to collect for, and distribute to the poor on their sabbath [f361].

> "The alms dish was every day, but the alms chest from evening of the sabbath to the evening of the sabbath,"

It was collected and distributed then, as their commentators say [f362].

Let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him. The persons who are to contribute are everyone, of every sex, age, state, and condition, male and female, young and old, servants and masters, the meaner as well as the richer sort; the poor widow threw in her mite into the treasury as well as the rich men: the act of communication or distribution is signified by laying by him in store; for this is not to be understood of separating a part of his substance from the rest, and laying it up htybb, "in his own house", as the Syriac version renders it, or the putting it in his pocket in order to give it; though both these acts may be necessary, as preparatory to the work: but it intends the very act itself: for communicating to the poor is laying up in store a good foundation for the time to come; it is a laying up treasure in heaven, and riches there, which will never corrupt: the manner in which this is to be done, and the measure of it, "as God hath prospered him"; according to the success he has in his worldly business, and the increase of his worldly substance, and which is the way to have it enlarged. The Jews have a saying [f363],

> "if a man observes his provisions to be straitened, let him do alms of them, how much more if they are large."

The Vulgate Latin version renders, it, "laying up what pleases him well"; and the Arabic version, "what through liberality he pleases, and shall be convenient for him"; for this ought to be a freewill offering, as a matter of bounty and generosity, and not of covetousness, or of force and necessity,

but as a man, of himself has purposed in his own heart, and which he does with cheerfulness and freedom.

That there be no gatherings when I come; who had other work, and greater service to do among them; besides, he was desirous of having this collection over and ready when he came, that he might directly send it away to Jerusalem, knowing the pressing necessities of the saints there.

Ver. 3. *And when I come*, etc.] To Corinth, as he intended very quickly:

whomsoever you shall approve by your letters; that is, such persons as this church should approve, and choose, and fix upon as proper persons to go with their collection; which approbation and choice they would signify by letters to the church, and principal men of it in Jerusalem, giving them a character as men of probity and faithfulness:

them will I send. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions join the phrase, "by letters", to this clause; according to which reading the sense is, such as the church should choose for this service, the apostle would send with letters of commendation from him, to the elders and church at Jerusalem, recommending them as brethren in the Lord, and to be had in respect, and treated in a Christian manner by them; to which their being messengers from such a church, and having letters from so great an apostle; besides, the business they should come about would entitle them to, which was

to bring your liberality, or "grace",

unto Jerusalem; meaning the money collected for the poor saints there; which he calls grace, because it was owing to the goodness of God, that they were in a capacity to contribute to others, and to the grace of God that they had a heart to do it; and because it was in a free and gracious manner, and in the exercise of grace, of faith in Christ, and love to the saints, that they did it, and with a view to the glory of the grace of God, of which this was a fruit and evidence.

Ver. 4. *And if it be meet that I go also*, etc.] If it should be convenient for me to go, or it should be thought proper and expedient that I should go; or, as the Syriac version renders it, "if this work should be worthy that I should go"; and the Arabic version, "if the thing should be worthy to go with me"; that is, their beneficence; if so large a collection should be made, that it will be worthy of an apostle to go along with it, hereby artfully pressing them to a good collection:

they shall go with me; that is, those brethren whom the church shall approve and send; for he would not go alone, nor propose it, to remove all suspicion of converting any money to his own use.

Ver. 5. *Now I will come unto you*, etc.] Which he again assures them of, as being his real intention and design; though some had given out that he would not come to them any more, and hoped they should never see him any more; (see <460418>1 Corinthians 4:18,19).

When I shall pass through Macedonia; hereby fixing the time when he intended to visit them after he had gone through that country, and had received their collections for the saints at Jerusalem, which the churches there so generously made, and pressed him to the ministering of, of which he speaks in his next epistle.

For I do pass through Macedonia; not that he was then passing through Macedonia, or was in it, and so at Philippi, from whence this epistle is said to be written, as the subscription at the end of it expresses, for he was now at Ephesus; (see <461608>1 Corinthians 16:8) and from thence was this epistle written; he was not in Macedonia till some time after, (see <470212>2 Corinthians 2:12,13) but the sense is, that he should take his tour through Macedonia; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “for I shall pass through Macedonia”; and so coming into Greece, he intended to come to Corinth, and stay some time with them.

Ver. 6. *And it may be that I will abide*, etc.] He could not be certain what calls in Providence he might have to some other places, where his presence would be necessary:

yea, and winter with you; stay all winter with them, for the space of three months, as we read he did in Greece, (<442001>Acts 20:1-3).

That ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go; both by accompanying him in person themselves, in token of honour and respect, and by providing things necessary for his journey; (see <441503>Acts 15:3 21:5).

Ver. 7. *For I will not see you now by the way*, etc.] Just to look upon them, and be gone, be like a wayfaring man that tarries but for a night:

but I trust to tarry a while with you; the whole winter season:

if the Lord permit; submitting all to the will of God, at whose sovereign disposal he always was, and at whose beck and command he desired to be,

and to do nothing, or be any where, but what was agreeable to the will of God.

Ver. 8. *But I will tarry at Ephesus till Pentecost*.] The feast of weeks, or of harvest, which was fifty days from the passover; (see Gill on "Acts 2:1") which though abrogated at the death of Christ, was observed by the Jews, and is mentioned by the apostle, not as a festival that the Christians were obliged to regard, or did regard, but as pointing out the time he intended to stay at Ephesus: and we elsewhere read, that he was greatly desirous of being at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, (Acts 20:16) not to keep it, but because there would then be abundance of people from all parts there, to whom he should have an opportunity of preaching the Gospel.

Ver. 9. *For a great door*, etc.] Meaning an opportunity of ministering the word at Ephesus, a very populous city, and where he might have hope great good would be done. Some think that by this fair opportunity, or hopeful prospect, he means the populousness of the city; others, the conversion of some great men in it, which had made way for the introduction of Gospel there: but it seems rather to intend the desire that there appeared in many persons here to have the Gospel preached unto them; they flocked unto it; their hearts were opened to attend to it, and great numbers believed; and the apostle found a door of utterance in himself, and a door of entrance in them, which were reasons with him to tarry here.

And effectual is opened to me; not by him, but to him: this door was opened by him who has the key of David, that opens, and no man shuts; and the door of faith being opened by him, it was effectual to the quickening of sinners dead in trespasses and sins, to the enlightening of blind eyes, unstopping of deaf ears, and softening hard hearts; to the turning of souls from the power of Satan to God, to the quickening, comforting, and establishing of saints, and indeed to salvation to all that believe; which is the case when the word comes, not in word only, but in power; then it works effectually in them that believe; and since there was an opportunity of preaching the Gospel with such good effect, the apostle was desirous of making use of it:

and there are many adversaries; as there always are where the Gospel is preached, and especially with success, when sinners are converted, and saints are edified and comforted. The adversary Satan roars, and the posse

of devils under him are employed one way or another to obstruct the Gospel if possible; false teachers are raised up to oppose it, and profane men are instigated by him to persecute the preachers and professors of it: so it was at Ephesus, the Jews disputed against it, and spoke evil of it; Demetrius the silversmith, and those of his craft, rose up in a tumultuous manner, crying, great is Diana of the Ephesians, stirring up the people against the apostle, and his companions; all which he had some foreviews of, and found to be true by experience, as may be seen in (<4419 21>Acts 19:21-41) and which, though to another man would have been a reason to have departed, was a reason with him to stay; to bear his testimony to the Gospel, to appear in the defence of it, against the disputers of this world, and to strengthen and establish the minds of weak believers in it, who might have been in some danger through so many adversaries; wherefore he saw and judged that his presence was necessary, and that it was proper for him to stay the time he mentions.

Ver. 10. *Now if Timotheus come*, etc.] The apostle had sent him already, as appears from (<4617>1 Corinthians 4:17) and he was now gone from him; but whether he might not be prevented by unforeseen incidents in his journey, he could not say; and therefore speaks cautiously of his coming; from whence it is evident, that this epistle was not sent by Timothy, as the subscription to it suggests.

See that he may be with you without fear; should he come to them, the apostle desires they would take care of him, that he might be safe and secure from enemies of every sort, of which there were many at Corinth; who, as they were of a malignant disposition to him, would use a disciple of his ill: and these were not only, or so much, infidels and profane sinners, but false teachers, and the factions under them, and especially they of the circumcision.

For he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do; which is a reason why they should be careful of him, that nobody molest him, and put him into fear; since though he was not in so high an office as the apostle, yet he was called to the same work of the ministry, was engaged in the same service of Christ, and was zealous in promoting the same common cause, interest, and kingdom of the Redeemer, and faithfully preached the same Gospel as the apostle did; and therefore would doubtless meet with the same enemies, and be in the same danger.

Ver. 11. *Let no man therefore despise him*, etc.] On account of his youth; (see <5412>1 Timothy 4:12), or neglect to take care of him, which would be to despise him, since he was employed in such an honourable work, equally as the apostle himself: hence it is manifest, that as the lives of Gospel ministers ought to be defended and secured by those to whom they minister, their persons ought to be treated with esteem and respect.

But conduct him forth in peace; when he takes his leave, wish him all happiness and prosperity, accompany him some part of the way in his journey, and provide things necessary for him; all which used to be done to such who laboured in the word and doctrine, and were counted worthy of double honour; and such an one Timothy was judged by the apostle to be:

that he may come unto me; at Ephesus, where he now was, in peace and safety, and relate to him the state and condition of the church; their steadfastness in the faith, their care of him, and the respect they had shown him; all which would be grateful to the apostle:

for I look for him with the brethren; that is, either the brethren that were with the apostle were in earnest expectation of him, together with himself; and so the Ethiopic version reads, "for our brethren with me have expected him"; or else that he looked for him along with the brethren, that either went with him, or should come with him from Corinth, being sent by the church.

Ver. 12. *As touching our brother Apollos*, etc.] Who was a senior man to Timothy, an eloquent preacher, one who had been at Corinth, and was well known to the saints there, and greatly approved by many of them; wherefore the apostle excuses it, that he should send the one, and not the other, and shows that it was no fault of his: for, says he,

I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren; who seem to be Timotheus and Erastus, (see <4419>Acts 19:22). He greatly importuned him to go along with them, knowing how acceptable he would be among them, and hoping he might be of great use to them in composing their differences, and rectifying their disorders.

But his will was not at all to come at this time; or "it was not the will"; that is, of God, as some supply it, for him to come now; or he had no mind himself, nor could he be persuaded; he had reasons to himself why he judged it not proper to come at present: however, for their encouragement it is added,

but he will come when he shall have convenient time; he is not averse to coming, but some things at present hinder him; when he has a suitable opportunity he will make use of it.

Ver. 13. *Watch ye*, etc.] The apostle in the mean while, before he closes his epistle, thinks fit to give some proper and pertinent exhortations, which might be of general use to this church; and first exhorts them to watchfulness, not for the coming of Apollos, and a convenient season for that; but over themselves, over their hearts, thoughts, affections, words, actions, and their whole conversations; and over one another, that they go not into bad principles, and evil practices; and also against sin in general, every appearance, and the first motions of it, and particularly unbelief; and against Satan, and his temptations, who is an indefatigable enemy, and whose wiles, devices, and stratagems are many and cunning; and against the world, its charms and snares; and likewise against false teachers, who lie in wait to deceive, and therefore to be guarded against; many of which were among these Corinthians, and made this exhortation very necessary. It became them likewise to watch daily at wisdom's gates, to wait constantly upon God in the word and ordinances, and especially to watch unto prayer, and in it, and after it; to all which it is necessary that they should be awake, and not asleep, to which the wise as well as foolish virgins are subject; that they should be sober, and not be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life; and that they be in their proper station, on their watchtower, keeping a good lookout, and being ready armed, to attack an enemy when descried. Many are the reasons why the saints should be upon their watch and guard; as because they have many eyes upon them; the eyes of the omniscient God are upon them, who sees and takes notice of all their actions; the eyes of angels are upon them, and even in their solemn assemblies; the eyes of saints are upon them, though watching for their good; and the eyes of evil men for their halting; and the eyes of devils are upon them, waiting an opportunity to do them hurt and mischief, if possible. Moreover, unwatchfulness exposes to many evils, temptations, and snares; to which may be added, as an inducement to watchfulness, the uncertainty of Christ's coming either at death, or to judgment.

Stand fast in the faith: which is proper to those that are watchful; for men asleep cannot well stand. This exhortation may respect either standing in the grace of faith, in opposition to doubting and unbelief, and design a continuance in the exercise of it, notwithstanding all the corruptions of

nature, and the various sins and infirmities of life, the frequent temptations of Satan, and the many afflictions and trials in the world, which may occasion diffidence and distrust; for standing in this grace, and in such a constant exercise of it, greatly glorifies God, is what is wellpleasing in his sight; and in this way saints have communion with God, peace and comfort in their souls, and much spiritual joy and pleasure: it is the grace by which they stand, and therefore should stand in it, and by which they overcome the world. Or else it may intend standing in the doctrine of faith, in opposition to a departure from it, or a giving up any part of it, or wavering about it; it becomes saints to be steadfast in it, and abide by it, whoever is against it; let them be ever so many, or ever so wise and learned, and whatever may be said against it, as that it is a novel one, a licentious one, and a set of irrational principles, and whatever is the opposition that is made against it, though bonds and afflictions, reproach and persecution in every shape attend it, yet none of these things should move them from it. Perhaps that particular doctrine of faith, the resurrection of the dead, may be greatly regarded. Moreover, standing in the profession of faith, both of the grace and doctrine of faith, may be intended; for as this is to be made, it is to be held fast, and stood fast in, without wavering, by all true believers, who have great encouragement so to do from the person and grace of Christ, and from the love and faithfulness of God, and the many gracious promises he has made. Wherefore,

quit yourselves like men, be strong; a like phrase is often used by the Septuagint interpreters, as in (<05106>Deuteronomy 31:6,23 <06006>Joshua 1:6,7,9,18 10:25) (<10002>2 Samuel 10:12 <13213>1 Chronicles 22:13 28:20 <14307>2 Chronicles 32:7 <27019>Daniel 10:19), from whence the apostle seems to have taken it. It answers to the Hebrew word wççath, in (<23808>Isaiah 46:8).

Quit you like men; like men of wisdom and understanding; be not like children for non-proficiency, instability, and weakness; (see <46420>1 Corinthians 14:20); act the part of men; believe not every spirit; be not carried and tossed about with every wind of doctrine; search the Scriptures, and try every doctrine by them; and having found what is truth abide by it, and be proficients in it, instructing and establishing yourselves and others. In which sense the Jews use this phrase, saying [f364],

> “in a place where there are no men, çya twyhl ldtçh, “study to be a man”, or to show thyself a man;”

which one of their commentators [f365] explains thus;

> “use and accustom thyself to obtain excellent things, and afterwards when there are no wise men to teach, then do thou teach thyself.”

And another [f366] after this manner;

> ““in the place where there is no man” to sit at the head and teach doctrines,”

do thou. Or play the man, as in (<100102>2 Samuel 10:12); act like men of valour and courage, stand fast, keep your ground, and contend earnestly for the faith; be valiant for the truth on earth; fight the good fight of faith: it is a good cause believers are engaged in; they have a good Captain and Commander at the head of them; they are provided with good weapons, may be sure of victory, and of having the crown of righteousness, life, and glory: wherefore

be strong; that is, for the faith: so the Targumist on (<240903>Jeremiah 9:3) renders the phrase, “they are not valiant for the truth, wpyqt atwnmyhl al, they are not strong for the faith: be strong”; not in themselves, but in the Lord, and in the power of his might; in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; believe in him, look to him for strength as well as righteousness; trust in his power, whose arm is not shortened; depend on his grace, which is always sufficient; take heart, be of good courage, and fear no enemy; (see <060106>Joshua 1:6), which seems to be particularly referred to here.

Ver. 14. *Let all your things be done with charity*.] Signifying, that the whole of their obedience to Christ, their observation of, and subjection to all his ordinances and commands, should spring from, and be done in love to him; and that the whole of their conduct and behaviour towards one another ought to be with charity, which bears all things, and covers a multitude of sins; and that all their church affairs, their business at church meetings, should be transacted, not with strife and vain glory, but in peace, and with mutual affection, with a concern for the good of each other, and of the whole body, and for the glory of God; for without charity or love, and the exercise of this grace, it signifies little what men either have or do; and such an exhortation was the more necessary to this church, since it was so full of factions, contentions, and divisions.

Ver. 15. *I beseech you, brethren*, etc.] Entreat or exhort you as brethren in the Lord; this entreaty or exhortation is to submission to fellow helpers and

labourers of the ministry, more particularly expressed in the following verse, after the apostle has given a character of the household of Stephanas, who are principally intended, and which contains reasons and arguments why they should be submitted to; and which account stands in the following parenthesis,

ye know the house of Stephanas; a person of note at Corinth, whom the apostle had baptized, together with his family, (<46 01 16>1 Corinthians 1:16). The Vulgate Latin version, and some copies, add, “and of Fortunatus and Achaicus”, persons mentioned along with Stephanas, in (<46 01 17>1 Corinthians 1:17);

that it is the firstfruits of Achaia: this family was one of the first in the regions of Achaia, of which Corinth was the metropolis, that believed in Christ; these were some of the first instances of conversion, and who received the firstfruits of the Spirit in these parts, and by the grace of God had been enabled to persevere hitherto, and were worthy of respect: the same he says of Epaenetus, in (<45 16 05>Romans 16:5);

and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints; that is, either to minister to the wants of poor saints, whether out of their own substance, or the churches’ stock, being deacons, or to minister to the saints by preaching the Gospel; which good work they desired, willingly gave up themselves to, and cheerfully engaged in, and took the oversight and care of the flock, not by constraint, but willingly; not that they thrust themselves into an office, or came into it in an irregular way, but being called into it in an orderly manner by the church, and invested with it, they applied to the execution of it with great heartiness, diligence, and zeal, and so were very deserving of due respect, as next mentioned.

Ver. 16. *That ye submit yourselves to such*, etc.] To persons of such a character, and in such an office; if in ministering to poor saints, by assisting them, and by putting into their hands; and putting it in their power to discharge their work fully, in which they were so heartily concerned; and if in the work of the ministry of the word, by attending their ministrations, receiving the truths delivered by them with faith and love, so far as they appeared to be agreeably to the word of God; hearkening to their admonitions, counsels and advice, regarding their censures and reproofs by the authority of the church, and in their name, and by subjection to the laws of Christ’s house, as put in execution by them, (see <58 13 17>Hebrews 13:17),

and to everyone that helpeth with us; in any form, whether by relieving the poor, or by preaching the Gospel:

and laboureth; in the Lord's vineyard, in the word and doctrine, for the good of souls, and the glory of Christ: for such are worthy of double honour, and ought to be valued and esteemed for their works' sake, and submitted to in everything that is according to the rules of the Gospel.

Ver. 17. *I am glad of the coming of Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus*, etc.] Who very probably were those of the household of Chloe, mentioned in (<460111>1 Corinthians 1:11), who came either of their own accord, or were sent as messengers from the church at Corinth to the apostle; who was glad to see them, one of them being baptized by him, and perhaps all of them converted under his ministry: however, they were believers in Christ, if not ministers of the Gospel, which seems very probable.

For that which was lacking on your part they have supplied; which is not to be understood of their supplying him with money, in which the Corinthians had been deficient; for as he had never taken anything of them, he was determined he never would; (see <471107>2 Corinthians 11:7-10 12:13,14); but either of their presence which supplied the want of theirs, the apostle had been for some time greatly desirous of; or whereas they had been greatly wanting in sending him an account of the state of the church, and how things stood with them, these brethren greatly supplied that defect, by giving him a very particular account of their church affairs.

Ver. 18. *For they have refreshed my spirit*, etc.] By their coming and presence; the very sight of them gave him joy and pleasure, and more so their Christian discourse and conversation, and especially the account they brought of this church; for though there were many things in it which were very disagreeable, and were the occasion of this epistle, yet there were others related, which were exceedingly pleasing to the apostle, and revived his spirit, which had been greatly depressed by what he might have heard of them from another quarter, and through fear that it was worse with them than it really was; for by these brethren he understood, that there were many in the church that had great grace, and large gifts bestowed on them, so that they came behind none in these things; and were steadfast in the faith of the Gospel, and with rigour opposed the false teachers; and in all things sought the welfare of the church, and the interest of Christ; and this

was good news to the apostle, and which exhilarated his spirit: and he adds,

and yours; his spirit and theirs, in divine things, being the same; they were of one heart and soul; they had the same love, and were of one accord, and of one mind; so that what was grateful to the one, was so to the other: or his sense is, that when these brethren should return, and acquaint the church how the spirit of the apostle was revived, and refreshed with the narrative they gave him of the affairs of the church, their spirits would be also refreshed too. Dr. Hammond thinks that this phrase is taken out of the Greek translation of (<3008>Zechariah 6:8), "have quieted my spirit", which the Septuagint interpret by ανεπαυσαν τον ψυμον μου, "they stilled", or "caused my wrath to cease"; and in the same way Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi explain the words; but the apostle's phrase is nearer to the original itself of that text, yjwr ta wjynh, "they have stilled", or "caused my spirit to rest"; and is the very same phrase the Syriac version uses here; and which the Chaldee paraphrase renders thus, ytw[r ty wdyb[, "they have done my will"; that which was agreeable and well pleasing to God; and so these brethren by their coming and company, and news they brought, did that which was grateful and satisfactory to the apostle: and the phrase of the spirit of man having rest from another, is often used in the Rabbinical writings, for having satisfaction in them, and approving of them; so they say, [f367],

> "wnmyh hjwn twyrbh jwrç, that everyone "from whom the spirit of men have rest", the Spirit of God has rest; and everyone from whom the spirit of man has no rest, the Spirit of God has no rest:"

and which their commentators [f368] explain thus,

> "whoever is beloved below, it is manifest that he is beloved above:"

therefore acknowledge ye them that are such; as these men; know them, have an affection for them, show respect to them, highly esteem of them for their works' sake; (see <5213>1 Thessalonians 5:12,13).

Ver. 19. *The churches of Asia salute you*, etc.] The Syriac version renders it, "all" the churches. This shows, that this epistle was not written from Philippi, as the subscription to it attests, for then he would rather have said; the churches of Macedonia salute you, but at Ephesus, where he now was; (see <4619>1 Corinthians 16:8); and this is the more confirmed, by the

following salutation of Aquila and Priscilla, who it is plain from (<44>Acts 18:18,19,26), were with the apostle at Ephesus:

Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord; Aquila was a Jew of Pontus, and Priscilla was his wife, who came from Italy, all Jews being obliged to depart from Rome, by the order of Claudius Caesar. These came to Corinth, where they met with the apostle; and being of the same occupation, stayed and wrought with him; and when he went from thence to Ephesus, accompanied him thither; (see <44>Acts 18:3,18,19); wherefore having personal knowledge of the members of this church, through their stay with the apostle there, for the space of a year and a half, send their Christian salutations to them, with great affection and respect:

with the church that is in their house: their family consisting of believers, and being kept in such good decorum, and employed daily in singing, praying, expounding, and conferring together about divine things, looked like a little church; and it may be that at certain times the principal members of the church at Ephesus met in their house for religious worship, and to consider and debate about the affairs of the church; and very likely as they were of the same occupation with the apostle, he himself dwelt here; and which might be the more an occasion of the church assembling here at times; and the Vulgate Latin version adds, “with whom also I lodge”.

Ver. 20. *All the brethren greet you*, etc.] Either the brethren, the members of the church at Ephesus; or the apostle’s brethren in the ministry, that were along with him, as Sosthenes and others; or the brethren that were come to him from Corinth, namely Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus:

greet ye one another with an holy kiss; (see Gill on “ <45>Romans 16:16”).

Ver. 21. *The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand*.] The apostle had an “amanuensis”, that wrote the epistle for him; but to prevent counterfeits, and that the church to whom he wrote might be assured of the genuineness of the epistle, that it was truly his own, he wrote with his own hand his common salutation; (see <53>2 Thessalonians 3:17,18), and which is not in the following words, but what is expressed in (<46>1 Corinthians 16:23).

Ver. 22. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, read “our Lord”. The apostle here does not so much mean profane and unregenerate sinners, who are destitute of love to Christ, from ignorance of him; nor such who, from the

same principle, might persecute him in his members, for such are to be even prayed for, and wished well unto; and oftentimes such are called by grace, and become true and sincere lovers of Christ; and the apostle himself was an instance of it: some think the Jews are intended, who were the mortal enemies of Christ; hated his name and person, his Gospel and interest, and maliciously persecuted the same; they called Jesus accursed, and therefore deserved an anathema to be pronounced on them; it was prophesied of them, that their name should be left for a curse; and it was threatened to them, in case of non-repentance, upon the coming of John the Baptist, in the spirit of Elijah, that the Lord would come and smite their land with a curse; which had its accomplishment in the destruction of Jerusalem; (see <236515>Isaiah 65:15 <390406>Malachi 4:6); others think the Gnostics are intended, one of whose tenets was, that it was lawful not to confess Christ in a time of persecution, in order to save themselves; and such might be truly said not to love our Lord Jesus, and on whom such an anathema as after mentioned might rightly be denounced: though it should seem rather, that some persons in this church, or that infested it, are referred to as the false teachers, and those who sided with them, who made factions and divisions in the church of Christ; allowed themselves in the commission of fornication and incest, and such like impurities; had no regard to the peace of the consciences of weak brethren, but laid stumblingblocks in their way; behaved in a very irreverent manner at the Lord's table, and gave in to very pernicious errors and heresies, particularly denying the resurrection of the dead; and by their many bad principles and practices plainly showed that they did not in deed and in truth love our Lord Jesus: wherefore of every such an one the apostle says,

let him be anathema. The word anathema, answers to the Hebrew µrj, and is rendered by it here in the Syriac version; and signifies anything separated and devoted to holy uses; and so it is used by the Septuagint, in (<032728>Leviticus 27:28), and in the New Testament, (<422105>Luke 21:5), and which, if alienated to any other purposes, entailed a curse on persons; hence it is often translated "accursed", as (<450903>Romans 9:3) (<461203>1 Corinthians 12:3 <480108>Galatians 1:8,9), and here it signifies, that such persons that love not the Lord Jesus, should be rejected by the saints, and separated from their communion; and so the Arabic version renders it, "let him be separated"; that is, from the church; let him be cast out of it, and cut off from it; as, so living and dying without love to Christ, he will be accursed by him at the last day, and will have that awful sentence

denounced on him, “go ye cursed”. The apostle adds another word, about which there is some difficulty,

maranatha; some make this to be the same with “anathema”; the one being the Syriac, the other the Greek word, as “Abba, Father”; and think that “maranatha” is put for atmrjm, “maharamatha”; others think that it is the same with atanwrjm, “maharonatha”, which signifies “from wrath to come”; and being joined with the other word, intends an anathematizing or devoting persons to wrath to come: others take it to be the last, and worse sort of excommunication among the Jews; and observe, that the first sort was called ywdn, “Niddui”, which was a separation from company and conversation, to which reference may be had in (<4062>Luke 6:22); the second sort was called µrj Cherem, to which “anathema” answers, and was a separation, attended with curses and imprecations; and a third sort was called atmç, “Shammatha”, and is thought to answer to “maranatha”, giving the etymology of it, as if it was, ata µç, “the name”, i.e. “God cometh”, as “maranatha” read as two words, signify “our Lord cometh”: but this is not the etymology the Jews give of “Shammatha” [f369]; they ask,

> “what is “Shammatha?” says Rab, htym µç, “there is death”; and Samuel says, hyhy hmmç, “desolations shall be”;”

but of the other etymology there is no mention made among them; nor is ever the word “maranatha” used by them for excommunication; the sense of which certainly is, “our Lord cometh”; and the Ethiopic version, joining it with the former word, renders the whole thus, “let him be anathema in the coming of our Lord”, which seems to be pretty much the sense of the apostle: it is best to consider this word, or rather these two words, “maran atha”, “our Lord cometh”, as added by the apostle, to put persons in mind of the coming of Christ; either at the destruction of Jerusalem, to take vengeance on the Jews, who did not love, but hated him, and maliciously persecuted him, and his; or of the second coming of Christ to judgment, when all the wicked of the earth shall be accursed by him, and all such that love him not will be bid to depart from him.

Ver. 23. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*] This is the apostle’s salutation in all his epistles, and is a token of the truth and genuineness of them; (see Gill on “ <4516>Romans 16:20”); and is a wish for a supply of all grace from Christ, and an increase of it in the saints; that they

may have the communications of it to them, to quicken, invigorate, and draw forth into exercise the grace they have received, and to enable and assist them in the discharge of every duty.

Ver. 24. *My love be with you all*, etc.] Meaning either that he desired that he might be loved by them, as they were by him, and might always have a place in their hearts and affections, as they had in his; or that his love, which extended to all of them without exception, to rich and poor, greater or lesser believers, might be always acceptable to them; and which he now commended to them, and saluted them with, from his very heart: and that it might not be thought to be a carnal affection, or on account of any outward things, he adds,

in Christ Jesus; he loved them for Christ's sake, because they were his, had his grace bestowed on them, his image stamped upon them, and his Spirit put within them; and concludes as usual, with an

Amen; both by way of request, and for the sake of confirmation; desiring that so it might be, and believing that so it would be. The following subscription is added, not by the apostle, but by some other hand since. "The first" epistle "to the Corinthians was written from Philippi, by Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and Timotheus"; but, as has been already observed, this epistle was not written from Philippi, but from Ephesus, where the apostle now was, as appears from (<460608>1 Corinthians 16:8); nor was it sent by Timotheus, for he was sent out before the writing of this epistle, (see <460417>1 Corinthians 4:17), and the apostle puts an if upon his coming to them, in (<461610>1 Corinthians 16:10), which he would scarcely have done, if he had sent this letter by him; though very probably it was sent by the other three, who came from Corinth, at their return thither.

FOOTNOTES

ft1 --Bar Bahluli apud Castel. Lex. Polyglott. col. 2444. Vid. Euseb, Eccl. Hist. 50:1. c. 12.

ft2 --Carrain. 50:3. Ode 7, 9, 19.

ft3 --4. Epigr. 22. & 50:9. Epigr. 13.

ft4 --1. sive Attica, p. 38.

ft5 --Nat. Hist. 50:7. c. 48.

ft6 --Sepher Cosri Orat. 5. Sign. 15, 16. fol. 277. 2. 278. 1.

ft7 --Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 2. & Chagiga, fol. 15. 2.

ft8 --Bereshit Rabba Parash. 24. fol. 21. 1. Vid. T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 5. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 38. 2.

ft9 --Kimchi in Sopher Shorashim, rad. hhb, & in Psal. cii. 26.

ft10 --Aben Ezra in Psal. civ. 29.

ft11 --Bab Menachot, fol 99. 2. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 2.

ft12 --Maimon & Bartenora in Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 14.

ft13 --Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 25. 1. Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 3. fol. 31. 2.

ft14 --In <14|10|10>2 Chronicles 10:10.

ft15 --Zohar in Numbers fol. 63. 3. & 65. 4.

ft16 --Bab. Sabbat, fol. 92. 1.

ft17 --Bab. Chagiga, fol. 13. 1.

ft18 --Hieron. prefat. in Ezekiel & ad Paulin. Tom. III. fol. 3. 2.

ft19 --Hierocles in Pythag. Carmin. p. 302.

ft20 --Caphtor, fol. 81.

ft21 --Bab. Zebacbim, fol. 116. 1. Zohar. in Exodus fol. 20. 4. & 35. 1, 2. & 66. 3. & in Numbers fol. 66. 3.

ft22 --Bab. Pesachim. fol. 54. 1. Nedarim, fol. 39. 2. Zohar. in Leviticus fol. 14. 4. Targum Jon. ben Uzziel in <01024>Genesis 3:24.

ft23 --Bab. Sota, fol. 46. 2.

ft24 --Sepher Bahir in Zohar in Genesis fol. 31. 1.

ft25 --Zohar in Exodus fol. 64. 4. & 67. 2.

ft26 --Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. Sabbat, fol, 63. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 1. Maimon. in Misn. Sanhed. c. 11. sect. 1. & Hilch. Teshuva, c. 8. sect. 7. & Jarchi in <23604>Isaiah 64:4.

ft27 --Kimchi in <23501>Isaiah 55:1. Abarbinel, Mashamia Jeshua, fol. 26. 1.

ft28 --Jarchi in Cant. 5:12.

ft29 --Maimom. Talmud Tora, c. 2. sect. 2.

ft30 --Ib. c. 1. sect. 6.

ft31 --Bab. Cetubot, fol. 50. 1.

ft32 --Bab. Sabbat, fol. 114. 1.

ft33 --Jarchi, Maimon. Sampson, & Bartenora in Misn. Mikvaot, c. 9. sect. 6.

ft34 --Juchasin, fol. 81. 1.

ft35 --Hieros. Gittin, fol. 48. 4.

ft36 --Koheleth Jaacob in Caphtor, fol. 109. 2.

ft37 --Alshech in Hag. 2:5.

ft38 --Misn. Beracot, c. 9. sect. 5.

ft39 --Raya Mehimua in Zohar in Numbers fol. 104. 2.

ft40 --Vid. Surenhusii Biblos Katallages, p. 11, 531.

ft41 --Bab Bava Koma, fol. 22. 2. 29. 1. 47. 2. 55. 2. 56. 1. 91. 1. 98. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 82. 2.

ft42 --Bab Sanhed, fol. 7. 2. & Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft43 --Contr. Ames. p. 253.

ft44 --Vid. Turnebi Adversaria, 50:19. c. 22. & 26. 7. & 27. 16.

ft45 --Elias in Adderet apud Trigland. de sect. Karaeor. c. 10. p. 161.

ft46 --Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 7. 2.

ft47 --Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:1. c. 24. Curtius, 50:8. c. 2. Philo, de special. leg. p. 77. 8. Tertul. Apolog. c. 9. Min. Foelix, p. 34. Clement. Alex. Paedagog. p. 109. Origen. contr. Cels. 50:6. p. 331. Hieron. adv. Jovin. 50:2. fol. 26.

ft48 --Koran, c. 4. Vid. Pocock. spec, Arab. Hist p. 337, 338.

ft49 --Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 4.

ft50 --Hilchot lssure Bia, c. 14. sect. 12, 13.

ft51 --Auctor Ceseph Misna in ib.

ft52 --Misn. Ceritot, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft53 --Bab. Succa, fol. 53. 1.

ft54 --Neve Shalom apud Caphtor, fol. 41. 1.

ft55 --Misn Pesachim, c. 1. sect. 1. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 2. sect. 3, 4.

ft56 --Hieros. Beracot, fol. 7. 4. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 29. 4. Caphtor, fol. 38. 2. & 41. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 73. 2. 84. 4. 86. 1. 87. 3. 95. 3, 4. & 119. 4. Baal Hattarim in Leviticus 2:11.

ft57 --Zohar in Exodus fol. 71. 3.

ft58 --Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 11. 1, 2. Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exodus fol. 49. 3.

ft59 --Haggada Shel Pesach, p. 4. Ed. Rittangel.

ft60 --Zohar in Leviticus fol. 33. 2.

ft61 --Zohar in Exodus fol. 31. 2.

ft62 --Maimon. Hilch. Issure Bia, c. 11. sect. 17, 18, 19. & Tumaot Okelim, c. 16. sect. 11. & R. Abraham in ib.

ft63 --Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1. & Piske Tosaph. in ib. art. 67, 68.

ft64 --Misn. Megilla, c. 4. sect. 8.

ft65 --Bab. Megilla, fol. 24. 2.

ft66 --Jarchi, Bartenora, & Yom Tob, in Misn. Megilla, c. 4. sect. 8.

ft67 --In. ib.

ft68 --Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 26. sect. 7. Vid. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 38. 2.

ft69 --Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 80. 4.

ft70 --Bechai in Kad Hakkemach, fol. 21. 4. apud Buxtorf, Lex. Talm. col. 1666.

ft71 --Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 6. sect. 14.

ft72 --Zohar in Exodus fol. 103. 3.

ft73 --Ibid. in Leviticus fol. 13. 4.

ft74 --Misn Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 1.

ft75 --Hieros. Sanhedrin. fol. 24. 2.

ft76 --Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 32. 1.

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ft78 --Bab. Sanhed. fol. 5. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhed. c. 5. sect. 8.

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ft87 --Misn. Kiddushin, c. 1. sect. 1.

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ft91 --Mosis Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, praecept. neg. 81. Sol. Jarchi in <02110>Exodus 21:10.

ft92 --Maimon. Hilch. Isbot, c. 12. sect. 2. Vid. Aben Ezra in <02110>Exodus 21:10.

ft93 --Vid. Misn. Cetubot, c. 5. sect. 6. & Mikvaot, c. 8. sect. 3.

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ft95 --Hilch. Ishot, c. 14. sect. 8, 9, 10. Vid. Misn. Cetubot, c. 5. sect. 7. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

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ft100 --Mosis Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 14.

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ft119 --Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 4. sect. 15.

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ft121 --Bereshit Rabba, sect. 17. fol. 14. 4.

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ft123 --Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 9. 1. & Sabbat, fol. 17. 1. T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 72. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

ft124 --Bereshit Rabba, sect. 46. fol. 41. 4.

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ft128 --Ib. fol. 38. 2. Zohar in Genesis fol. 27. 1. & 40. 4.

ft129 --Hieros, Peah, fol. 16. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 27. 3. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 41. 4.

ft130 --Maimon. Hilch. Teshuba, c. 3. sect. 6. & Milah, c. 3. sect. 8.

ft131 --Shebet Judah, p. 94. Ed. Gent.

ft132 --Zohar in Leviticus fol. 6. 1. T. Bab. Nedarim, fol 32. 1. Caphtor, fol. 9. 2.

ft133 --Misn. Nedarim, c. 3. sect. 11. Maimon. Hilch. Milah, c. 3. sect. 8, 9.

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ft135 --Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 22. 2.

ft136 --Targum Jon. & Hieros. in <01224>Genesis 22:14. & 38:25. & Targum Sheni in Esth. 5:1.

ft137 --Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 60. 2.

ft138 --Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 76. 1.

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ft140 --Bab. Pesach. fol. 113. 1.

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ft142 --Misn. Nedarim, c. 10. sect. 2. T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 70. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Nedarim, c. 11, sect. 7.

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ft148 --Maimon. & Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 5.

ft149 --Ludolph. Hist. Ethiop. 50:2. c. 14.

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ft151 --Ben Melec. in <10123>2 Samuel 12:31. & Jarchi in <23410>Isaiah 41:1, 5.

ft152 --Not. in Targum in <1301>1 Chronicles 20:3. p. 210. Vid. Surenhusii Biblos Kattallages, p. 535.

ft153 --Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Meilah, c. sect. 6. & Trumot, c. 9. sect. 3.

ft154 --Jarchi in loc. Maimon. Hilch. Shecirot, c. 13. sect. 1, 2, 3. Moses Kotsensis Mitzot Tora, pr. neg. 184. & affirm. 91.

ft155 --Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 88. 2.

ft156 --Menuachcm apud Ainsworth on <0522>Deuteronomy 22:7. & Drusium in loc.

ft157 --Bartenora in Misn. Yoma, c. 8. sect. 1.

ft158 --Misn. Yoma, c. 2. sect. 3. Tamid. c. 3. sect. 1.

ft159 --Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in Menachot, c. 3. sect 1.

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ft345 --Zohar in Genesis fol. 39. 2.

ft346 --Leg. Allegor. 50:1. p. 46.

ft347 --Bemibdar Rabba, sect. 11. fol. 202. 3.

ft348 --Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2. 4. Eeha Rabbati, fol. 54. 4.

ft349 --Bab. Beracot, fol. 2. 2. Sabbat, fol. 34. 2. Zohar in Gen, fol. 38. 4. & 39. 1. & 65. 4. Caphtor, fol. 75. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 77. fol. 67. 4.

ft350 --Targum. Jon. in <0220> Exodus 20:18. & Kettoreth Hassammim in ib. Abarbinel. Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 11. 4.

ft351 --Abkath Rochel, p. 138.

ft352 --Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 97. 1. & Gloss. in ib. Vid. Megilla, fol. 17. 2.

ft353 --Shemot Rabba, sect. 20. fol. 131. 4.

ft354 --Zohar in Genesis fol. 73. 1.

ft355 --Zohar in, Exodus fol. 108. 1, 2, 4. Misn. Moed Katon. c. 3. sect. 9. Zohar iu Leviticus fol. 46. 3. Yade Mose in Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 20. 1. Echa Rabbati, fol. 48. 2.

ft356 --lsaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 87. p. 463.

ft357 --Apud Pocock. Not. Miscellan. ad Port. Mosis, p. 69, 70.

ft358 --Lex. Hebrews in rad. rbd.

ft359 --Apolog. 2. p. 98, 99.

ft360 --Apolog. c. 39.

ft361 --Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 2. Maimon, Hilch. Mattanot Anayim, c. 9. sect. 6.

ft362 --Maimon. R. Samson & Bartenora in Misn. Peah, c. 8. sect. 7.

ft363 --Bab. Gittim, fol. 7. 1.

ft364 --Misn. Pirke Abot, c. sect. 5. Vid. T. Bab Beracot, fol. 63. 1.

ft365 --Maimon. in Misn. ib.

ft366 --Bartenora in Misn. Beracot, fol. 63. 1.

ft367 --Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 10.

ft368 --Jarchi & Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 10.

ft369 --Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 17. 1.

2 CORINTHIANS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 2 CORINTHIANS

This epistle, according to the subscription at the end of it, was written from Philippi of Macedonia; and though the subscriptions annexed to the epistles are not always to be depended on, yet it seems very likely that this was written from thence; for the apostle not finding Titus at Troas, as he expected, went into Macedonia, where he met with him, and had an account from him of the success of his first epistle; of the state and condition of the church, and of the temper and disposition of mind in which the members of it were, and which gave him great satisfaction; upon which he immediately wrote this second epistle, and sent it by the same person to them; (see 2 Corinthians 2:12,13) (2 Corinthians 7:5-7 8:6,16-18). It is very probable it might be written the year after the former; and so it is placed by Dr. Lightfoot in the year 56, as the former is in the year 55; though some place this in the year 60, and the other in 59. The occasion of this epistle was partly to excuse his not coming to them according to promise, and to vindicate himself from the charge of unfaithfulness, levity, and inconstancy on that account; and partly, since what he had wrote about the incestuous person, had had a good effect both upon him and them, to direct them to take off the censure that had been laid upon him, and restore him to their communion, and comfort him; likewise to stir them up to finish the collection for the poor saints they had begun; as also to defend himself against the calumnies of the false teachers, who were very industrious to sink his character and credit in this church; which he does by observing the doctrines of the Gospel he preached, which were far more glorious than, and abundantly preferable to, the ministration of the law of Moses, which those men desired to be teachers of; as likewise the success of his ministry in every place; the many sufferings he had underwent for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel; the high favours and privileges he had received of the Lord, as well as the signs, wonders, and miracles done by him in proof of his apostleship; and in which are interspersed many things useful and instructive.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 1

This chapter contains the inscription of the epistle, the salutation of the persons to whom it is written, the preface to it, and the first part of it, in which is the apostle's defence of himself from the charge of fickleness and inconstancy. The inscription is in (<470101>2 Corinthians 1:1), in which an account is given of the person, the writer of this epistle, by his name Paul, and by his office, an apostle of Jesus Christ, which is ascribed to the will of God as the spring and cause of it; and with himself he joins Timothy, whom he calls a brother: also an account is given of the persons to whom the epistle is inscribed, who are both the church at Corinth, and all the saints throughout the region of Achaia, of which Corinth was the chief city: the salutation, and which is common to all the epistles of the Apostle Paul, is in (<470102>2 Corinthians 1:2), and the preface begins (<470103>2 Corinthians 1:3), with a thanksgiving to God, who is described by the relation he stands in to Christ, as his Father, by the manifold mercies and blessings he is the author and donor of, and by the consolation he administers; an instance of which is given, (<470104>2 Corinthians 1:4), in the apostle and his companions, who had been comforted by him; the end of which was, that they might be instruments of comforting others in like troubles with the same consolations; the great goodness of God in which is illustrated by proportioning their consolation by Christ to their sufferings for him, (<470105>2 Corinthians 1:5), and the end both of their afflictions and their comforts is repeated and explained; and by a dilemma it is shown, that both were for the good of the saints at Corinth, (<470106>2 Corinthians 1:6), and a strong assurance is given, that as they shared in sufferings for Christ, they would partake of consolation by him as they had done, (<470107>2 Corinthians 1:7). Next the apostle, in proof of what he had said, gives an instance of the trouble he had been in, and of the comfort and deliverance he had received, which he would not have the Corinthians ignorant of: he mentions the place where it was, in Asia, and gives an account of the nature of the affliction, how great it was; it was out of measure, above the strength of man, and induced despair of life, (<470108>2 Corinthians 1:8), so that the apostle, and those that were with him in it, expected nothing but death, and

were under the sentence of it in their own apprehensions; the end of God in suffering which, was to take them off of all self-confidence, and to engage their trust in God, to which the consideration of his power in raising the dead is a strong argument, (<47:1:9>2 Corinthians 1:9). And indeed this deliverance, which God wrought, for the apostle, and his friends, was a deliverance as it were from death, and a very great one; and which had this effect upon them, the designed and desired end, trust and confidence in God for future deliverance, having had an experience of past and present, (<47:1:10>2 Corinthians 1:10), which deliverance the apostle acknowledges, was owing to the prayers of the Corinthians, as a means or helping cause of it; and which favour was bestowed thereby for this end, that as it came by the means of many, thanks might be returned by many for it, (<47:1:11>2 Corinthians 1:11). And the reason why the apostle, and his fellow ministers, had such an interest in the prayers of the Corinthians, was their agreeable conversation in the world, and particularly at Corinth, which their consciences bore witness to, and they could reflect upon with pleasure; it being through the grace of God with great simplicity and sincerity, and not with carnal craft and subtlety: or this is mentioned by the apostle to remove the charge of levity, and to vindicate himself and others from it, (<47:1:12>2 Corinthians 1:12), which he next enters upon, premising that the constant course of their lives was such as before described, and which there was no reason to doubt would always continue such; for the truth of which he appeals to what they had seen, and owned to be in them, (<47:1:13>2 Corinthians 1:13), and that it was acknowledged, at least in part, that the apostles were their rejoicing, or of whom they boasted as to their conduct and conversation, even as they were persuaded they would be matter of rejoicing in the day of Christ to them, (<47:1:14>2 Corinthians 1:14). And then the apostle acknowledges his intention and promise of coming to them, which was in confidence of their value for him, and of their being real Christians and persevering ones; and for this end, that he might establish them in the grace which they had received, (<47:1:15>2 Corinthians 1:15), and also, after he had passed by them into Macedonia, and was returned from thence to them again, that he might be helped on by them in his journey to Jerusalem, with the collection for the poor saints there, (<47:1:16>2 Corinthians 1:16). But then he denies that he used levity, or carnal policy and purposes, or was guilty of any contradiction; all which expresses by certain interrogations, (<47:1:17>2 Corinthians 1:17), which confirms by the ministration of the Gospel among them, which was all of apiece, without contradiction for the truth of which he calls God to witness; and so argues from the

uniformity of his ministry, to the constancy of his word of promise, (<470118>2 Corinthians 1:18). Which argument he amplifies and enlarges on, by observing the subject matter of the Gospel ministry, which is Jesus Christ the Son of God; and which, though preached by different ministers, himself, Silvanus, and Timothy, yet was the same, had no contrariety in it, as preached by the one, and by the other, (<470119>2 Corinthians 1:19), and therefore there was no reason to conclude that he was fickle and inconstant in his promise to them, when he was so invariable in his ministry among them: besides, as all the promises of God are sure and certain, being made by the God of truth, and being in Christ, and the performance of them being for the glory of God by the saints; so the promises of every good man, in imitation of God and Christ, are firmly and constantly observed, as much as can be by frail and finite creatures, (<470120>2 Corinthians 1:20); and that the apostle, and his fellow ministers, were not so fickle and changeable as they were represented, neither in their principles, nor in their practices, the apostle takes notice of some blessings of grace, which they enjoyed in common with other saints, and with the Corinthians; such as stability in Christ, the unction of divine grace, the seal and earnest of the Spirit in their hearts; all which they had from God, and which kept them close to God, and preserved them in his grace, and from a fickle variable temper of mind, and from changeableness either in doctrine or conduct, (<470121>2 Corinthians 1:21,22). And then the apostle proceeds to give the true reason why he had not as yet come to Corinth, according to his promise, which was on their account, and not his own, that they might not come under that severe discipline and correction, which their faults required; and for the truth of this he calls God to witness, (<470123>2 Corinthians 1:23). But lest it should be objected that this was assuming a dominion over them, a lording it over God's heritage, he observes, that he and his fellow ministers did not pretend to have dominion over their faith, only to be helpers of their joy, (<470124>2 Corinthians 1:24).

Ver. 1. *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God*, etc..] The inscription of this epistle is pretty much the same with that of the former; only whereas here he styles himself an apostle of Jesus Christ, there he says he was “called” to be one: for he did not assume that character and office without the call of Christ, and will of God; and which he chooses to mention, in opposition to the false apostles, who had neither. Likewise, in the inscription of the former epistle Sosthenes is joined with him; in this Timothy, whom he calls

our brother, not so much on account of his being a partaker of the same grace, as for his being a minister of the same Gospel: and he the rather mentions him, because he had sent him to them, to know their state, and was now returned to him with an account of it, and who joined and agreed with him in the substance of this epistle. Moreover, the former epistle is directed as “unto the church of God which is at Corinth”; so to all that call upon the name of Christ in every place; and this is directed also to the same church, together

with all the saints which are in all Achaia; which was a very considerable part of Greece, and of which Corinth was the metropolis: and the apostle's intention in directing it in this form was, that copies of this letter might be sent to them, who equally, with this church, stood in need of the reproofs, exhortations, and instructions which are in it.

Ver. 2. *Grace be to you*, etc..] This salutation is the same with that in the former epistle, and is common to all his epistles; (see Gill on “ <4801>Romans 1:7”).

Ver. 3. *Blessed be God*, etc..] This is an ascription of praise and glory to God, for he can only be blessed of men, by their praising and glorifying him, or by ascribing honour and blessing to him: and in this form of blessing him he is described, first by his relation to Christ,

even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: whose Son Christ is, not by creation, as angels and men, nor by adoption, as saints, but in such a way of filiation, as no creatures are, or possibly can be: he is his only begotten Son, his own proper Son, his natural and eternal Son, is of the same nature with him, and equal to him in perfections, power, and glory. This is rightly prefaced by the apostle to the other following characters, since there is no mercy nor comfort administered to the sons of men but through the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and Saviour of sinners. And next he is described by his attribute of mercy, and the effects of it, or by his merciful disposition to his creatures,

the Father of mercies. The Jews frequently address God in their prayers[f1] under the title or character of, µymjrh ba, “Father of mercies”. The plural number is used, partly to show that God is exceeding merciful; he delights in showing mercy to poor miserable creatures, and is rich and plenteous in the exercise of it: nothing is more common in the Talmudic writings, than to call him anmjr, “the merciful”, and this is partly to

express the multitude of his tender mercies, of which he is the “Father”, author, and giver, both in a temporal, and spiritual sense; for there are not only innumerable providential mercies which the people of God share in, and partake of, but also a multitude of spiritual mercies. Such as redemption by Christ, pardon of sin through his blood, regeneration by his Spirit, supplies of grace out of his fulness, and the word and ordinances; all which are owing to the mercy of God, which they have abundant reason to be thankful to him, and bless him for, being altogether unworthy and undeserving of them. God is also described by his work of comforting the saints,

and the God of all comfort; most rightly is this character given him, for there is no solid comfort but what comes from him; there is none to be had in, and from the creatures; and whatever is had through them it is from him: and all spiritual comfort is of him; whatever consolation the saints enjoy they have it from God, the Father of Christ, and who is their covenant God and Father in Christ; and the consolation they have from him through Christ in a covenant way is not small, and for which they have great reason to bless the Lord, as the apostle here does; for it is from him that Christ, the consolation of Israel, and the Spirit, the Comforter, come, and whatever is enjoyed by the Gospel.

Ver. 4. *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation*, etc..] The apostle in this verse gives a reason of the former thanksgiving, and at the same time confirms the above character of God, as “the God of all comfort”, by his own experience, and that of his fellow ministers; who, though they had been in great tribulation and affliction for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel, yet were not left destitute of divine help and support under their trials; but had much consolation and sweet refreshment administered to them by the presence of God with them, the application of his promises to them, the shedding abroad of his love in them, and the fellowship and communion they enjoyed with Father, Son, and Spirit. The end of this, or why God was pleased to comfort them in such a manner, was not so much on their own account; though it showed that they were loved, and not hated and rejected of God, but for the good of others:

that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God; many are the troubles and afflictions of the saints in this life, but it is the will of God that they should be comforted: and the persons he employs and makes use of in

this way are his ministering servants, whose principal work and business it is to speak comfortably to the people of God; (see <23A001>Isaiah 40:1,2), and that they may be able to do so, that they may be fitted and furnished for so good a work, they are blessed with a rich experience of divine consolation in themselves, under the various troubles and exercises they are attended with in the course of their ministry; and such persons are, of all others, the fittest, and indeed the only proper persons to speak a word in season to weary souls.

Ver. 5. *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us*, etc..] By "the sufferings of Christ" are not meant those which he suffered in his own person for the sake, and in the room and stead of his people, the fruits and effects of which abound to them, and in them; but those which he suffers in his members, or which they suffer for his sake; and which are said to "abound in" them, because of the variety and greatness of them; though not as if they were more or greater than what Christ suffered in his soul and body, when he was made sin and a curse for his people: yet notwithstanding the abundance of them, such is the goodness and grace of God, that he proportions comforts to them; as their afflictions increase, so do their comforts; as their sufferings for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel, are more and greater,

so, says he, *our consolation aboundeth by Christ*: meaning, either that consolation which they felt and enjoyed in their own souls, under all their tribulations, which abundantly answered to them, and which they ascribe to Christ, from and by whom it comes to them; or else that consolation, which, by preaching Christ, abounded to the relief of others who were in distress and trouble.

Ver. 6. *And whether we be afflicted it is for your consolation*, etc..] The apostle repeats and explains the end of both his comforts and his troubles, and shows, by a dilemma, a strong way of arguing, that the afflictions and consolations, the adversity and prosperity of him, and the other ministers of the Gospel, were for the good of the saints: and it is as if he should say, when you see us continue to preach the Gospel with so much boldness and cheerfulness, amidst so many reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions, you must be the more established in the faith, and confirmed in the truth of the Gospel; and this cannot fail of ministering much peace, satisfaction, and comfort to your minds. This animates you to hold fast the rejoicing of your hope, and the profession of your faith firm unto the end; and with the

greater cheerfulness and pleasure meet with, and endure afflictions yourselves for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel: nay, he says, that the afflictions of Christ's ministers were not only for their consolation, but also for their

salvation, which is effectual, or is effectually wrought

in, or by

the enduring, patient bearing,

of the same sufferings which we also suffer. Not that the afflictions of the saints, or of others, and their patient enduring of them, are the cause of their salvation; for Christ is only the efficient cause, he is the sole author of spiritual and eternal salvation; but these are means the Spirit of God makes use of, as he does of the word and ordinances, to bring the saints to a satisfaction as to their interest in it, and are the ordinary way in which they are brought to the possession of it.

Or whether we be comforted it is for your consolation and salvation: for whatsoever comfort God is pleased to communicate to us, it is not kept in our breasts, and for our own use, but we immediately and readily impart it to you, that you may share with us the advantage of it, and be comforted together with us; that your faith in the doctrine of salvation may be established, your hope of it increased, and that you may be more comfortably assured you are in the way to it, and shall enjoy it.

Ver. 7. *For our hope of you is steadfast*, etc..] We have long ago entertained hopes of you, that the work of God is begun upon your souls, and will be carried on, and that you will hold on in the profession of your faith unto the end, and not be moved by the afflictions you see in us, or endure in yourselves; and so will pass on cheerfully in your Christian race, in the midst of all your troubles, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, you may expect to be possessed of; and this hope, for or concerning you, continues with us firm and immovable.

Knowing, which may refer either to the Corinthians; so the Arabic version, “be ye knowing”, or “know ye”; you may, or should know; this you may assure yourselves of: or to the apostle and other ministers; so the Syriac version, ˆnyldy, “we know”, we are persuaded of the truth of this,

that as you are partakers of the sufferings; that is, of Christ, and the same which we also suffer for him:

so shall ye be; or rather, “so you are also of the consolation”; for the apostle seems to respect not future happiness and glory, in which, as there will be no afflictions and troubles, so no comfort under them, but present consolation, which the saints enjoy here as a pledge and earnest of that fulness of joy which they shall have with Christ for evermore.

Ver. 8. *For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble*, etc..] The apostle was very desirous that the Corinthians might be thoroughly acquainted with the trouble that had lately befallen them; partly because it would clearly appear from hence what reason he had to give thanks to God as he had done; and partly, that they might be encouraged to trust in God, when in the utmost extremity; but chiefly in order to remove a charge brought against him by the false apostles; who, because he had promised to come to Corinth, and as yet had not come, accused him of lightness and inconstancy, in as much as he had not kept his promise. Now to show that it was not owing to any such temper and disposition of mind in him, he would have them know, that though he sincerely intended a journey to them, yet was hindered from pursuing it, by a very great affliction which befell him: the place where this sore trouble came upon him, is expressed to be in Asia: some have thought it refers to all the troubles he met with in Asia, for the space of three years, whereby he was detained longer than he expected; but it seems as though some single affliction is here particularly designed: many interpreters have been of opinion, that the tumult raised by Demetrius at Ephesus is here meant, when Paul and his companions were in great danger of their lives, (Acts 19:21-41), but this uproar being but for a day, could not be a reason why, as yet, he had not come to Corinth: it seems rather to be some other very sore affliction, and which lasted longer, that is not recorded in the Acts of the Apostles: the greatness of this trouble is set forth in very strong expressions,

as that we were pressed out of measure. The affliction was as an heavy burden upon them, too heavy to bear; it was exceeding heavy, καψ' υπερβολην, even to an “hyperbole”, beyond expression; and

above strength, that is, above human strength, the strength of nature; and so the Syriac renders it, ˆlyj ˆm, “above our strength”; but not above the

strength of grace, or that spiritual strength communicated to them, by which they were supported under it: the apostle adds,

insomuch that we despaired even of life; they were at the utmost loss, and in the greatest perplexity how to escape the danger of life; they greatly doubted of it; they saw no probability nor possibility, humanly speaking, of preserving it.

Ver. 9. *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves*, etc..] By the sentence of death is meant, not any decree of heaven, or appointment of God that they should die; nor any sentence of condemnation and death passed on them by the civil magistrate; but an opinion or persuasion in their own breasts, that they should die; so far were they from any hopes of life, that they looked upon themselves as dead men, as the Egyptians did, when their firstborn were slain, and said, "we be all dead men", (<2Exodus 12:33), and to this extremity they were suffered to be brought by the wise counsel of God, for the following purposes, to learn to lay aside all self-trust and confidence:

that we should not trust in ourselves; in our strength, wisdom, and policy, to make our escape, and preserve our lives; and also to teach and encourage them to trust in God alone, and depend on his arm, on his almighty power:

but in God which raiseth the dead; who will raise the dead at the last day, and so is able to deliver persons when they are in the most distressed condition, and in their own opinion as dead men.

Ver. 10. *Who delivered us from so great a death*, etc..] Accordingly, being enabled to trust in God, when all human hope and helps failed, to believe in hope against hope, then the Lord appeared for them, and delivered them from this heavy affliction; which, because by reason of it they were not only in danger of death, and threatened with, but were even under the sentence of it, is therefore called a death, and so great an one, (see <2 Corinthians 11:23). The apostle expresses the continuance of the mercy,

and doth deliver; which shows that they were still exposed to deaths and dangers, but were wonderfully preserved by the power of God, which gave great encouragement to them to hope and believe that God would still preserve them for further usefulness. The Alexandrian copy leaves out this clause, and so does the Syriac version.

In whom we trust that he will yet deliver us; all the three tenses, past, present, and future, are mentioned, which shows that an abiding sense of past and present deliverances serves greatly to animate faith in expectation of future ones.

Ver. 11. *You also helping together by prayer for us*, etc..] Though the apostle ascribes their deliverance solely to God, as the author and efficient cause of it; yet he takes notice of the prayers of the saints for them, as helping causes or means of their obtaining it. It was a very laudable practice in the churches, and worthy of imitation, to pray for the ministers of the Gospel, and especially when under affliction and persecution; (see <44 12 5>Acts 12:5), and the prayers of those righteous ones were heard by God, and often effectual for the deliverance of them, as they were in the present case: for

by the means of many persons, who wrestled together in prayer with God,

the gift of deliverance from so great a death, which the apostle looked upon as a wonderful mercy, χαρισμα, “a free grace gift”, was “bestowed upon” them, which was granted for this end,

that thanks may be given by many on our behalf; which is but reasonable, and ought to be observed; for since many were concerned in asking for, and obtaining the mercy, they ought to join in thanksgiving for it: and the apostle's view in this is to stir them up to a joint acknowledgment of the deliverance with them, which better became them than to side with the false apostles in their charge against him.

Ver. 12. *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience*, etc..] This rejoicing or glorying of the apostle's in the testimony of their consciences, to the goodness of their hearts, actions, conduct, and behaviour, was not before God, and in his sight, but before men, who were ready to accuse their good conversation in Christ: nor are these words to be considered as they generally are by interpreters, as if it was the testimony of a good conscience, which was the ground of their faith and confidence, that God would deliver them, and was an helping cause, together with the prayers of the saints, of their present deliverance. They refer to the charge exhibited against the apostle, that he had falsified his word in not coming to Corinth according to his promise; under which charge he could sit easy, having a witness within him, which was better than a thousand others, that

we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards; the Corinthians, of which they themselves must be conscious:

in simplicity; in opposition to double mindedness; they did not say one thing, and mean another, and act contrary to both; their heart and mouth went together, and their conduct agreed with both; what they promised they meant to perform; and where there was a want of performance, it was owing to intervening providences, which hindered, and not to any deceitfulness in them: the conscience of the apostle bore him witness, that he behaved in the simplicity and singleness of his heart; and also in

godly sincerity, or "in the sincerity of God"; that is, such as God requires, gives, and approves of, and which will stand in his sight, will bear his examination, and to which he gives his testimony; and that his conduct was

not influenced *with fleshly wisdom*: he used no artful sophistical methods to impose upon, and delude persons, for any sinister ends, or worldly advantage:

but by the grace of God; which was bestowed upon him, implanted in him, and which taught him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world.

Ver. 13. *For we write none other things to you*, etc..] The things we write unto you concerning our conduct; and behaviour, are no other

than what you read; not in our letters to you, but in our lives and conversations, when we were among you, and which you must own and acknowledge to be just and right; we can appeal to you, that what we say, and are obliged to say of ourselves, in our own defence, is what, upon a recollection, you will easily remember to have seen and observed:

and I trust; or "hope", through the grace of God, we shall be enabled so to walk, as that

you shall acknowledge even to the end; that our conversations are as become the Gospel of Christ, and are clear of that hypocrisy and deceit our adversaries would insinuate concerning us.

Ver. 14. *As also you have acknowledged us in part*, etc..] This may refer either to the thing known and acknowledged, namely, the integrity of the apostle's conversation, and others; which though they did not know thoroughly and perfectly, yet did in part, and that so far as that they might

acquit them from the charge brought against them; or to the persons who knew this, as that there were some in the church of Corinth, a part of them, though not all, who knew and had acknowledged them to be upright and sincere ministers of the word, and had declared that they had reason to rejoice and bless God that ever they heard them: and

that we are your rejoicing: or "glorying in", or "unto the day of the Lord Jesus": when he shall come to judge the world in righteousness, then they should before him, angels and men, rejoice and glory in this, that they had been blessed with such sincere and faithful ministers, who sought not any worldly advantage, but the glory of Christ, and the salvation of souls:

even as, adds the apostle,

ye also are ours; we do now, and so we shall then, rejoice and glory in this, that our labour among you was not in vain, but was blessed for your conversion and edification.

Ver. 15. *And in this confidence I was minded*, etc..] Being fully persuaded of your affection for me, as having been instrumental in the conversion of many of you, and of your esteem of me as a faithful and upright minister of the word, and of your being my rejoicing in the day of Christ, I was desirous, and had determined, and so promised,

to come to you before; when I sent my first epistle to you, or before now, or before I went into Macedonia; and what I now say was the sincere intention of my mind; I thought really to have done what I had such an inclination to: and my view in it was,

that you might have a second benefit; the meaning of which according to some is, first by his letter to them, and then by his presence with them; or as others, one benefit when he should pass by them to Macedonia, and a second, when he should return to them from thence, according to the following verse; or rather, as the first benefit which they received from him, and under his ministry, was their conversion, so this second benefit may design their edification, and establishment in the faith, their growth in grace, and improvement in spiritual knowledge.

Ver. 16. *And to pass by you into Macedonia*, etc..] It was his first intention and determination to have come first to Corinth, and then to Macedonia, to have took this city in his way thither; which was an

argument of his love to them, and his great desire to see them; since he might have gone, as he did, a nearer way to Macedonia, than by Corinth:

and to come again out of Macedonia to you; when he had gone through that, and done his business there unto the Corinthians; and after some stay with them,

of you to be brought on my way towards Judea; where he intended to go, with the collections he had made for the poor saints at Jerusalem, in the several churches in Asia; but though this was his first resolution, which he had signified either by letter, or messengers, yet he afterwards changed his mind, for some reasons within himself; it may be, having heard some things disagreeable of them, which he thought more convenient to acquaint them with in an epistle first, and to try what effect that would have upon them, before he came in person: that he changed his mind, appears from the former epistle, (<460105>1 Corinthians 16:5), where he says, "I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia"; and upon this account it is he excuses and vindicates himself in the following verse.

Ver. 17. *When I was therefore thus minded, did I use lightness*? etc..] When I had thus determined to come to you, and had signified the same by writing, or messengers, did I use lightness in my resolutions and promises? did I act rashly, unadvisedly, and without consideration? did I promise certainly that I would come, without annexing any condition to it? did I not say, I would come to you shortly, if the Lord will? (see <460419>1 Corinthians 4:19).

Or the things that I purpose, do l purpose according to the flesh? do I consult myself? my own interest and advantage? do I seek the gratification of any carnal affection, as covetousness, ambition, or vain glory? etc.. what sinister end could have been obtained, if I had come as I purposed, or is answered by my not coming? or when I have purposed anything, have I resolved upon it in my own strength? have I thought it lay in my own power to effect it?

that with me there should be yea, yea, and nay, nay? as if I could make my "yea" continue "yea", and my "nay, nay?" when all actions are weighed by God, and all events are at his dispose; man appoints, and God disappoints; and who can help these things? or thus, has there appeared such contradictions in my words, and such inconstancy in my conduct, that my "yeas" are "nays", and my "nays yeas?" that I say one thing at one time,

and another at another time, or both in the same breath? that I should say one thing, and mean another, on purpose to deceive, and change my mind and conduct without any reason?

Ver. 18. *But as God is true*, etc..] It seems that the false apostles had insinuated, that as the apostle had not kept his word in coming to them as he had promised, that he was not to be depended upon in his ministry; that he might as well contradict himself, and deceive others in the one, as well as in the other: wherefore he appeals to God in a very solemn manner, calls him to witness to the truth of his doctrine; for these words may be considered as the form of an oath; or he argues from, the truth and faithfulness of God, to the certainty and invariableness of the word preached, who is so true and faithful as that he will never suffer his word to be yea and nay: for when the apostle says, that

our word towards you was not yea and nay, he does not mean his word of promise to come to Corinth; but the word of his preaching, the doctrine of the Gospel, which was not uncertain, changeable, sometimes one thing, and sometimes another, and contradictory to itself. And by this the apostle would intimate, that since he was faithful and upright, uniform, consistent, and all of a piece in preaching the Gospel to them; so they ought to believe, that he was sincere in his resolutions and promises to come and see them, though as yet he had been hindered, and had not been able to perform them.

Ver. 19. *For the Son of God, Jesus Christ*, etc..] The apostle having asserted that the Gospel preached by them was not yea and nay, variable and different, or what was affirmed at one time was denied at another, proceeds to point out the subject of the Gospel ministry,

the Son of God, Jesus Christ; that Christ is “the Son of God”: this article he began his ministry with, (Acts 9:20), and all the apostles affirmed the same thing; and which is of the greatest moment and importance, and ought to be abode by, insisted on, and frequently inculcated; as that he is the eternal Son of God, existed as such from everlasting, is of the same nature, and has the same perfections with his Father; and therefore is able to destroy the works of the devil, for which he was manifested in the flesh, and every way equal to the business of redemption, which he has finished; and having passed into the heavens under this character, is a powerful advocate with the Father; and which renders him a sure foundation for the church, and a proper object of faith: that the Son of God is Christ, anointed

to bear and execute the office of a mediator in the several parts and branches of it; a prophet to teach his people, a priest to make atonement and intercession for them, and a King to govern and protect them: and that the Son, who is become the Lord's Christ, is Jesus, a Saviour; and that salvation is alone by him, to which he was appointed from eternity, and was sent in the fulness of time to effect it; and by his obedience, sufferings, and death, is become the author of it, and is the only able, willing, and suitable Saviour for poor sinners. This is the principal subject and strain of the Gospel ministry; and which makes it good news, and glad tidings to lost perishing sinners. The agreement between the faithful ministers of the Gospel is here plainly hinted,

who was preached among you by us, even by me, and Silvanus and Timotheus. These ministers being mentioned by the apostle with himself, shows his humility in putting them on a level with himself; and his modesty and candour in not monopolizing the Gospel to himself, but allowing others to be preachers of it as well as he: and his design herein seems to be for the confirmation of the Gospel, and to show that he was not singular and alone, and could not be blamed by them, without blaming others; and chiefly to express the harmony and unanimity of Gospel preachers. The prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New, agreed in all the doctrines and truths of the Gospel; so did the apostles themselves; and so all faithful dispensers of the word have in all different times and places agreed, and still do agree; which serves greatly to corroborate the truth of the Gospel. The Gospel being faithfully preached by these persons,

was not yea and nay; it had no contradiction in it; each part agreed together, was entirely harmonious, and consistent. Their doctrine was, that Christ is the Son of God, truly and properly God; that he took upon him the office of a Mediator, and executes it; that he is the only Saviour of sinners; that God has chosen a certain number of men in Christ before the foundation of the world, has made a covenant with them in Christ, and blessed them in him; that Christ has redeemed them by his blood; that these are regenerated by the Spirit and grace of Christ, are justified by his righteousness, and shall finally persevere, and be partakers of eternal life; which is all of a piece, and in it no yea and nay. Yea and nay doctrines are particular election, the possibility of the salvation of the non-elect, the salvability of all men, and universal redemption; justification by faith, and, as it were, by the works of the law; conversion, partly by grace, and partly by the will of man; preparatory works, offers, and days of grace; and final

perseverance made a doubt of: but such is not the true ministry of Christ and his apostles,

but in him was yea; the Gospel, as in Christ, and as it comes from him, and has been preached by his apostles, and faithful ministers, is all of a piece; its constant and invariable strain, and by which it may be known and distinguished, is, to display the free, rich, and sovereign grace of God, to magnify and exalt the person and offices of Christ, to debase the creature, and to engage persons to the performance of good works, on Gospel principles, and by Gospel motives, and for right ends. The apostle using those words, "yea and nay", conforms to the language of the Jews, his countrymen, who to magnify their doctors and Rabbins, and to raise their credit, say such things of them;

> ""yea, yea", are the words of the house or school of Shammai; ˆh ˆh, "yea, yea", are the words of the school of Hillell [f2]."

And in another place [f3];

> "the receiving and giving, or the dealings of a disciple of a wise man, are in truth and faithfulness. He says, ˆh ˆh l[w wal wal l[, "concerning nay, nay, and concerning yea, yea"."

But what is here said better agrees with the principles and practices of the disciples and followers of Christ.

Ver. 20. *For all the promises of God in him* [are] *yea*, etc..] This is a reason or argument proving what is before said, that "in" Christ "was yea", since "all the promises of God in him are yea"; and shows, that God has made many promises to his people: mention is here made of "promises", and of "all" the promises; or, as the words may be rendered, "as many promises of God". There are some which concern the temporal good of the saints; as that they shall not want any good thing; and though they shall be attended with afflictions, these shall work for their good, and they shall be supported under them. Others concern their spiritual good; some of which relate to God himself, that he will be their God, which includes his everlasting love, his gracious presence, and divine protection. Others relate to Christ as their surety and Saviour, by whom they are, and shall be justified and pardoned, in whom they are adopted, and by whom they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation: and others relate to the Spirit of God, as a spirit of illumination, faith, comfort, strength, and assistance, and

to supplies of grace by him from Christ: and others concern everlasting life and happiness, and are all of them very ancient, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; are exceeding great and precious, suited to the various cases of God's people; are free and unconditional, immutable and irrevocable, and will all of them have their certain accomplishment. These promises are all “in” Christ; with and in whom could they be but in him, since he only existed when they were made, which was from everlasting? with and in whom should they be of right, but in him with whom the covenant, which contains these promises, were made, and who undertook the accomplishment of them? where could they be safe and secure but in him, in whose hands are the persons, grace, and glory of his people? not in Adam, nor in angels, nor in themselves, only in him. Moreover, these promises are “in him yea”,

and in him amen; they are like the Gospel which exhibits them, consistent, and all of a piece; like the covenant which contains them, and is ordered in all things, and sure; and like the author of them, whose faithfulness and lovingkindness to his in Christ shall never fail; and like Christ himself, in whom they are, who is “the amen, the true and faithful witness, the same today, yesterday, and for ever”; by whose blood, the covenant, and all the promises of it, are ratified and confirmed, and in whom, who is the truth of them, they are all fulfilled. And these are

unto the glory of God by us; these serve to illustrate and advance the glory of God, when they are preached by us, and held forth by us in the Gospel, just as they are in Christ, free, absolute, and unconditional; and when they are received “by us” as believers in Christ; for the stronger we are in the faith of the promises, the more glory we give to God; faith by laying hold on, and embracing the promises, glorifies the veracity, faithfulness, power, and grace of God. The Syriac version puts the “Amen” into this last clause, and reads it thus, “therefore by him we give Amen to the glory of God”.

Ver. 21. *Now he which stablisheth us with you*, etc..] Two things are in this verse ascribed to God. First, the establishing of the saints in Christ; in which may be observed, that the people of God are in a firm, settled, established state and condition; they are encircled in the arms of everlasting love; they are secure of the favour of God; they are engraven on his hands, and set as a seal on his heart, from whence they can never be removed; they are taken into his family by adopting grace; and will never be turned out; they are in a state of justification, and shall never enter into

condemnation; they are regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God, and shall never finally and totally fall from that grace they have received. This their establishment is “in” Christ, and in no other. They had no stability in Adam, nor have they any in themselves; their standing is alone in him; the unchangeable love and favour of God, which is their grand security, is in Christ; the covenant of grace, in which is all their salvation, is made and stands fast with him; their persons, with all their grace and glory, are put into his hands, and made his care and charge, and there they are safe. They are espoused unto him, made one with him, incorporated into him, and are built upon him the rock of ages, where they are so established, that hell and earth cannot shake them, so as to remove and unsettle them from this foundation: one and all of them, and all together, are established in him,

us with you; all the elect of God are alike, and together in Christ, and have the same place and standing in his love, power, and care; they make up one body, of which Christ is the head, and not one of them shall be lost, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, ministers or private believers; for so this phrase may be interpreted, “us” Jews “with you” Gentiles, or “us” ministers “with you” believers. This work of establishing the saints in Christ is wholly the Lord's act; he

is God that does it; which does not contradict the word and ordinances being means of establishment; nor does it hinder or discourage persons making use of means for their stability; for the apostle here is not speaking so much of the stability of hearts, frames, and exercise of grace, as of state; though a firm, steady, and stable assurance of interest in Christ, is what God gives by his Spirit. The apostle's view seems to be this, that whatever steadfastness and stability the saints have, whether ministers or people, they ought to ascribe it entirely to God, Father, Son, and Spirit. “Secondly”, the anointing of them:

he hath anointed us; which is to be understood either of the unction of ministers, with the gifts of the Spirit for ministerial service; or rather of the anointing of private Christians with the grace of the Spirit, compared to oil or ointment, in allusion to the anointing oil under the law, by which the tabernacle, and its vessels, Aaron, and his sons, were anointed, who were typical of the saints and priests of God under the Gospel; or to the lamp oil in the candlestick, which was pure, and for light; or to oil in common, for its sweet smell, refreshing nature, and for its usefulness for ornament and

healing. This also is the Lord's work, and not man's; this unction comes from the God of all grace, through Christ, by the Spirit.

Ver. 22. *Who hath also sealed us*, etc..] "Two" things more are here attributed to God; "first", the sealing of his people. The use of seals is various, as to denote property in things, to distinguish one thing from another, to show esteem and affection for persons or things, and for security and protection, and to hide and conceal; all which might be applied to sealing, as expressive of the grace of God to his people, in claiming a property in them, distinguishing them from the rest of the world, setting his affections on them, securing and protecting their persons, and hiding them under the shadow of his wings: but sometimes a seal is used to certify, make sure, or assure the truth of a thing; (see <430333>John 3:33 <460903>1 Corinthians 9:3 <243210>Jeremiah 33:10) in which sense the word "sealing" is used here, and intends that assurance which God gives his people of their interest in his love, and the covenant of grace; of their election of God, and redemption by Christ; of their interest in Christ, and union with him; of their justification by him, and adoption through him; of the truth of grace in their hearts, their perseverance in it, and sure and certain enjoyment of eternal glory. The persons thus sealed are not carnal and unconverted persons, only believers in Christ, and these, after they commence such; the seal by which they are sealed, is not any of the ordinances, as circumcision under the Old Testament, or baptism, or the Lord's supper under the New; for these are no seals, nor are they ever so called; but the Spirit of God himself, as the Holy Spirit of promise; for the same who, in the next clause, is called the earnest, is the seal; (see <490113>Ephesians 1:13). "Secondly", the giving of the earnest of the Spirit:

and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts: by "the Spirit" is meant, not the gifts and graces of the Spirit merely, but the Spirit of God and Christ himself; who was concerned in the creation of the world, in inditing the Scriptures, in forming and filling the human nature of Christ, and in his resurrection from the dead; he himself is given as an "earnest": the word αρραβων, here used, and in (<470505>2 Corinthians 5:5 <490114>Ephesians 1:14) is the Hebrew word ˆwbr[, and comes from br[, which signifies "to become a surety, to give a pledge"; and is used for a pledge in covenants and bargains, both in Scripture, (see <013817>Genesis 38:17,18,20), and in Jewish writings [f4]; which is given as an earnest, and in part of what it is a pledge of, and is never returned: the Spirit of God is an earnest or pledge of the heavenly inheritance, which is not only prepared for us, and

promised to us, and Christ is in the possession of in our nature, in our room and stead, and as our representative; but the Spirit of God also is sent down “into our hearts” as a pledge of it; where he dwells as in his temple, supplies us with all grace, witnesses to us our sonship, and assures us of the heavenly glory: and as such he is “given”; and an unmerited free grace gift he is; for him to be given in this manner, and for such a purpose, is a wonderful display of the love of the Father, and of the Son, and is a surprising instance of his grace and condescension of the Spirit, and for which we should be abundantly thankful.

Ver. 23. *Moreover, I call God for a record upon my soul*, etc..] The apostle having asserted his stability, both as a minister and a Christian, which, with others, he had from God, appeals to him in the most solemn manner, in full form of an oath, for the truth of what he was about to say; and is all one as if he had said, I swear by the living God, the searcher of all hearts; I call upon him to attest what I say, and bear witness to my soul, that it is true,

that to spare you, I came not as yet unto Corinth; however fickle, unstable, and inconstant, it may be insinuated to you I am, or you may take me to be, I do assure you in the name and presence of God, that the true reason of my not coming to you hitherto, since I gave you reason to expect me, was, that I might not be burdensome or chargeable to you; or I have delayed coming to you, hoping for a reformation among you, that when I do come, I may not come with a rod, and severely chastise you for the many disorders among you; that I might not use sharpness according to the power God has given me, in an extraordinary way, as an apostle, to punish for offences committed. Hence we learn, that an oath is a solemn appeal to God, and may be lawfully made in cases of moment and importance, as this of the apostle's was; whose character was traduced, and with which was connected the usefulness of his ministry; and it being an affair that could not be determined in any other way, and an oath being for confirmation, and to put an end to strife, he makes one in this serious and awful manner.

Ver. 24. *Not for that we have dominion*, etc..] Since he had spoke of “sparing” of them, lest it should be thought that he and his fellow ministers assumed to themselves any tyrannical power over the churches, or lorded it over God's heritage, these words are subjoined: in which there is something denied of the ministers of the Gospel, as that they

have not dominion over your faith: by which may be meant both the grace and doctrine of faith: they cannot give or produce in the heart the grace of faith; that is the gift of God; of which Christ is not only the object, but the author; it is of the operation of the Spirit, and the effect of almighty power; it flows entirely from the free grace of God; all that ministers can do is to propose the object of faith, and, by arguments taken from the word of God, encourage souls to believe in the object proposed, and so are, through a divine blessing on their ministrations, instruments by which some believe; but they themselves cannot command faith in any; nor can they increase or add unto it where it is; this also is the Lord's work: nor have they any dominion over the doctrine of faith; they are to deliver nothing to the people but what is contained in the Scriptures, and the people are obliged to believe no more than what they find there; no alteration is to be made in the rule and doctrine of faith; ministers have no power to make and impose new articles of faith, though they may require and insist upon an assent to those truths which they deliver, according to the word of God. Likewise, something is asserted of them,

but are helpers of your joy. “Joy” is a grace wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God, of which Christ is the object; it goes along with faith, and as that improves, so does this; it is often interrupted by the corruptions of the heart, the temptations of Satan, and divine desertions, and so is in this life imperfect; though it may be increased, as it sometimes is, and that by the ministration of the Gospel; for as the ministers of it are the means and instruments of that joy which is first felt in conversion, so likewise of increasing it by their comfortable doctrines and instructions; for their ministry is, and is often blessed, for the furtherance and joy of faith. A reason of which is given,

for by faith ye stand; and so are not subject to men, nor to any tyrannical government of ours; nor have we anything to charge you with concerning your faith: which may design the grace of faith, and express its use in the perseverance of the saints, who stand not upon their faith, but “by it”; and by it, not as a cause but as a means of their perseverance; by which they rely on the power and faithfulness of God, lean upon Christ, and walk on in him, live upon him, continually receive from him, and in his strength stand against the temptations of Satan, and snares of the world: and it may also denote the strength and continuance of faith; a man may be said to stand by it, when he strongly believes his interest in God, in his love, and the covenant of his grace, his interest in Christ, and salvation by him; is

satisfied about the truth of grace on his soul, makes no demur upon the promises, nor hesitates about the doctrines of grace, or his future happiness, but rejoices in hope of the glory of God; as also, when he continues in the exercise of faith, notwithstanding the corruptions of his nature, the temptations of Satan, the hidings of God's face, and the many afflictions and trials he meets with in the world. Moreover, this passage may be applied to the doctrine of faith, in and by which the saints may be said to stand, in opposition to any wavering or hesitation about it, to a cowardly spirit in giving way in the least to the adversaries of it, or to a departing from it; which by no means should be done, though a greater number is on the other side, and they be the rich and learned; though the doctrines of it are disagreeable to the carnal reason of man, are loaded with reproach, and followed with the rage, malice, and persecutions of men: or these words may relate to a profession of faith: care should be used in taking up a profession of faith; where the true grace of God is, it ought to be done; when it is made, it ought to be stood in, and abode by; and it is the honour of saints to stand in it, and to it, and hold it fast.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 2

The apostle, in this chapter, goes on to give reasons of his not coming, as yet, to Corinth; and removes the charge of severity, which some might think him guilty of, in what he had written in his former epistle concerning the incestuous person, who having repented of his sin, he would now have comforted, and the censure laid on him by the church taken off; after which he gives an account of the success of the Gospel in several parts, of its power and purity, and of the faithful dispensation of it by himself and others: in (<470201>2 Corinthians 2:1), he assigns this as a reason why he had determined with himself not to come to Corinth as yet, and why he deferred his coming, that when he came he might not be sorrowful himself, nor make others sorrowful, which necessarily involve each other; for if he made others sorrowful by his sharp rebukes, which as things had been he could not but in faithfulness give, he must be in sorrow himself, since there would be none to make him cheerful, but such whom he made sorrowful, (<470202>2 Corinthians 2:2), wherefore to meet together under such circumstances must be uncomfortable; and hence he chose to put off his coming until things took another turn; and this was the reason of his writing with so much seeming severity concerning the incestuous person, in the former epistle, to bring him and them to repentance, and so prevent that sorrow which he otherwise must have had, had he in person come to them whilst they were unconcerned about that affair; and that he might have that joy, which he was confident of everyone was desirous he should have, (<470203>2 Corinthians 2:3), and he was so far from being of a cruel and uncompassionate disposition, that it was with an aching heart, and with flowing eyes, that he wrote that letter to them; nor was it written with that view merely to grieve them, but to let them know the tender and affectionate concern he had for their welfare, (<470204>2 Corinthians 2:4). Besides, this affair of the incestuous person was not only matter of grief to the apostle, but to them all; or he was not the only person he was grieved with, but with them all, and therefore it was necessary to use greater severity and roughness, (<470205>2 Corinthians 2:5). However, inasmuch as the end he had in view was answered, the humbling of the delinquent, and

bringing him to repentance, nothing more was to be done, the punishment of excommunication was sufficient, (⁴⁷⁰⁰⁶2 Corinthians 2:6), and that ought now to be removed, and the man forgiven, and comforted, lest he should be overwhelmed with sorrow, and be reduced to despair, (⁴⁷⁰⁰⁷2 Corinthians 2:7). Wherefore the apostle entreats them to give some fresh assurances of their love to the repenting brother, and signify it by their hearty reception of him into communion again, (⁴⁷⁰⁰⁸2 Corinthians 2:8), in doing which they would give proof of their obedience to him the apostle, which was an end he had in writing to them before, concerning the excommunication of the same person, (⁴⁷⁰⁰⁹2 Corinthians 2:9), and which he urges them to from his own example, who was ready to join with them in forgiving him, out of love to them, and in the name of Christ, (⁴⁷⁰¹⁰2 Corinthians 2:10), and the rather it became them to do so, lest Satan should get an advantage of them, and establish a bad principle and practice among them, that such as fall into sin, though they repent, should not be restored to the communion of the church, of whose devices in different forms and shapes, to do mischief to the churches of Christ, and particular believers, the apostle and others were not ignorant, (⁴⁷⁰¹¹2 Corinthians 2:11). Moreover, what had took up his time, and had prevented him from coming to Corinth as yet, was his being called to, and employed in the preaching of the Gospel elsewhere, particularly at Troas, where he was the rather inclined to stay, and there was a necessity of it, because there was a door opened for it, (⁴⁷⁰¹²2 Corinthians 2:12), and yet not finding Titus, there, as he expected, he was uneasy, and departed thence into Macedonia, in quest of him, (⁴⁷⁰¹³2 Corinthians 2:13), where, as in other places, he preached the Gospel with success, which he ascribes to God, and gives him thanks for it, (⁴⁷⁰¹⁴2 Corinthians 2:14), which success he illustrates by dividing the persons to whom he preached the Gospel, into two classes, they that are saved, and they that perish, (⁴⁷⁰¹⁵2 Corinthians 2:15), on whom it had different effects, diffusing death, and adding death to death in the one, and communicating life, and adding life to life in the other: and lest he should be thought to arrogate too much to himself, and other ministers of the word, of whom he speaks, he acknowledges his and their insufficiency to preach the Gospel, and make it effectual; and that all fitness for it, and all the virtue and efficacy of it, were from the Lord, (⁴⁷⁰¹⁶2 Corinthians 2:16), and then gives the reason why he, and the rest of the faithful ministers of the Gospel, were a sweet savour to Christ, as he had asserted, because they did not, as others, corrupt this box of ointment, but faithfully and sincerely poured it out, without mixing and adulterating it; and this they did as being in the

view of the omniscient God, to whom they could appeal for their integrity and honesty, (2 Corinthians 2:17).

Ver. 1. *But I determined with myself*, etc..] The apostle having removed the charge of levity and inconstancy brought against him, goes on to excuse his delay in coming to them, and to soften the severity, which some thought too much, he had used in his former epistle: he determined with himself, he took up a resolution within his own breast some time ago, says he,

that I would not come again to you in heaviness; that he would not come with sorrow and heaviness, bewailing their sins not repented of, and by sharp reproofs and censures, which in such a case would be necessary, be the cause of grief and trouble to them; wherefore he determined to wait their repentance and amendment before he came again. The word “again”, may be connected with the phrase “in heaviness”; and the sense be, that in his former epistle, which was a sort of coming to them, he made them heavy and sorry, by sharply rebuking them for some disorders that were among them; and since it has been a settled point with him, that he would not come in heaviness again: or with the word “come”; and then the meaning is, as his first coming among them was to the joy of their souls, so it was a determined case with him, that his second coming should not be with grief, either to them or himself, or both; and this is the true reason why he had deferred it so long.

Ver. 2. *For if I make you sorry*, etc..] That is, should he come among them, and be the means of fresh grief and sorrow:

who is he then that maketh me glad? such was his love and affection for them, and sympathy with them, that should they be grieved, he should grieve also; they were the only persons he could take any delight in at Corinth; wherefore should they be in heaviness, he would be so too, and then what pleasure would he have in being among them? since not a man of them would be in a condition and capacity to make him cheerful:

but the same which is made sorry by me. The Ethiopic version without any authority reads this clause, “except he whom I have made glad”; but the apostle is to be understood either of some particular man, the incestuous person, who had been made sorry, by that awful punishment of being delivered up to Satan, inflicted on him; or else the singular number being put for the plural collectively, is to be understood of all the members of the

church at Corinth, who had been greatly grieved by the sharp reproofs he had given them; and therefore unless this trouble was removed, he could not expect to have much comfort and pleasure with them.

Ver. 3. *And I wrote this same unto you*, etc..] Not what he had written in the preceding verse, or in (2 Corinthians 1:23), where he says, that his not coming to them as yet was to spare them; but what he had written to them in his former epistle, concerning the excommunication of the incestuous man, which had so much grieved both him and them; and this the apostle chose rather to order by writing, than in person; hoping to hear of their repentance and amendment, before he came among them:

lest, says he,

when I came, or should come,

I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; some copies and the Complutensian edition read, “sorrow upon sorrow”; and so does the Vulgate Latin version, which seems to be transcribed from (Philippians 2:27), that is, he took this method of sending a reproving letter, in order to bring them to a sense and acknowledgment of sin; lest should he come in person, some would have been a grief and trouble to him, having fallen into sin not repented of; who ought to have been matter of rejoicing to him, as being the seals of his apostleship, and his work in the Lord: and this step he was the more encouraged to take, through the confidence he had of them,

having confidence in you all; being fully persuaded of their affection for him, and opinion of him:

that my joy is the joy of you all; that their joy and grief were mutual and common; that what he rejoiced in, they did likewise; and what was displeasing to him was displeasing to them; and therefore upon the first hint given, he took care to remove the occasion of such displeasure, that their mutual comfort might take place; assuring them, and of which they might be assured, that it was no joy to him to grieve them; he could have none when theirs was gone; his ultimate view in writing to them in the manner he had, was not to grieve, but to bring them to repentance and reformation, which issued in the mutual joy of him and them.

Ver. 4. *For out of much affliction and anguish of heart*, etc..] Being greatly pressed in his spirit, and grieved at his heart, for the abominable

iniquities among them, which they seemed to take no notice of, and to be unconcerned about, yea, rather to be puffed up with:

I wrote to you with many tears; as signs and expressions of, and by which were vented, the inward anguish and distress of his soul; and the letter he sent to them in some measure bore witness to it: which was written,

not that you should be grieved; that is, not merely for the sake of grieving of them, in which he took no pleasure; not but that the apostle designed and desired to affect their minds with a holy grief and godly sorrow for sin, and hereby their amendment; but his chief view was, next to their spiritual good, and God's glory, to express the greatness of his love to them: as he says,

that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you; as his love was very vehement towards them, he was desirous they should know it, and how exceeding abundant it was; and that it was even greater towards them, than to others; and he thought he could not give a greater proof and evidence of it, than by reproving them faithfully, and that sharply too, as the necessity of the case required.

Ver. 5. *But if any have caused grief*, etc..] The incestuous person is here manifestly designed, though he is not named, who had been the cause and occasion of much grief and sorrow, both to himself and others; for the apostle is not to be understood, as though he doubted whether he had caused grief or not, but rather takes it for granted, as a certain point; “if”, seeing, or although he has caused grief:

he hath not grieved me but in part; or in some measure; as it has reflected dishonour on God and his ways, truths and ordinances; and has brought trouble upon himself, and the church of which he is a member; for the apostle now rejoiced, that he was truly humbled for his sin, and sincerely, and in an evangelical manner, repented of it; his grief was over, and it was as if it was not; and the offence he took was now wholly removed: besides, though this man did grieve him, it was but in part; he was not the sole cause of his grief: they also greatly added to it by their unconcernedness of him, and negligence in reproving him, though he takes notice only of this single man:

that I may not overcharge you all; bear hard upon them, aggravate their sin, and increase their trouble: or thus, that man has not grieved me only, but in some measure all of you; for the phrase “all you”, may be

considered, not in connection with the word “overcharge”, but with the word “grieved”; and the reading and sense of the whole be this, “he hath not grieved me, but in part, or in some measure”; or as the Syriac reads it, ˆwklkl lylq ryxb, “almost all of you”: but this, as if he should say, I do but just mention, would not dwell upon it, “that I may not overcharge” him, or be thought to be overbearing, or should aggravate his sin and sorrow: for,

Ver. 6. *Sufficient to such a man is this punishment*, etc..] By this punishment is meant, the excommunication of the incestuous person, or the censure that was laid upon him by the church: for this

was inflicted by many; not by the pastor only, or by the elders or more eminent persons in the church, but by the multitude, by the whole congregation, at least υπο των πλειονων, “by the more”; the greater, or major part; and not by one, or a few only: in inflicting this punishment, or laying on this censure in the public manner they did, they were certainly right, and to be commended; but inasmuch as there appeared signs of true repentance, it was sufficient, it had answered the purpose for which it was inflicted, and therefore it was high time to remove it: from whence we learn, that in case of gross enormities, there ought to be a public excommunication; and that this is to be done by the vote, and with the consent of the whole church, or the major part of it; and that in process of time, when the person thus dealt with has given the church satisfaction as to the truth and genuineness of his repentance, the censure ought to be taken off and he be cordially received into the communion of the church again. This “punishment”, or “rebuke”, επιτιμια, “by many”, is the same which the Jews call[f5] µybrb hjkwth, “a reproof by many”; which is given by many, or in the presence of many.

Ver. 7. *So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him*, etc..] On the other hand, so far the apostle suggests they should be from inflicting any other punishment on him, or by any means adding to, and increasing what was inflicted, that they ought to forgive him his offence, by taking off the censure from him, which had been sufficient for the purpose, and had continued on him a sufficient time:

and comfort him; by restoring him to the communion of the church, and to an enjoyment of all the privileges and ordinances of the house of God: and this was necessary to be done,

lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up with over much sorrow: be overwhelmed with trouble, engulfed in despair, and so become unfit for the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; to prevent therefore such dangerous and pernicious consequences, it is incumbent on the churches of Christ, as soon as ever they observe that censures have answered the end in bringing persons to a sense and acknowledgment of sin and amendment of life, to remove them, and restore such to fellowship.

Ver. 8. *Wherefore I beseech you*, etc..] Or exhort you:

that ye would confirm your love towards him: express your love to him in the most kind and tender manner, show the same, and as strong love to him as you did before, and as if he had never offended; receive him as a brother in the most affectionate manner, and embrace him with the most endearing expressions of respect and friendship; and let your reception of him in this kind and friendly way be with the full consent, and by the joint vote and suffrage of the whole church, for so the word translated "confirm" signifies; for as the ejection of a person out of a church must be done by the decree and vote of the church, or it is not authentic, so the reception of a person into it must be in like manner; and since this was to be done by the suffrage of the church, the apostle beseeches and exhorts them to do it.

Ver. 9. *For to this end also did I write*, etc..] Or "I have written", both in this and in his former epistle to them, and in both with this view,

that I might know the proof of you; that he might try, prove, and know them:

whether ye be obedient in all things; he wrote unto them in his former epistle, to put away that wicked man from them; which he did not do, merely to reproach the man, and fix a brand of infamy on him; nor merely to grieve and afflict their minds; nor only to show his own power and authority, which he as an apostle had received from Christ, but to make trial of their obedience; and he had had a proof of it in their rejection of him; and now he writes unto them, that since this man was truly humbled for his sin, and had repentance unto life not to be repented of, that they would as cheerfully receive him, and restore him to his place; that as the apostle had a proof of their obedience in the one, he might also have in the other, and so in all things: hence it appears, that though it belongs to the whole church, and that only, to reject or receive members, yet as ministers of the Gospel are set over the churches, to govern, guide, direct, and go

before in matters of discipline; so whatever they propose, according to the rule of God's word, ought to be carefully attended to and obeyed.

Ver. 10. *To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also*, etc..] This may extend to the forgiveness of any person, in any case; either in time past, or at the present time, or in time to come; though it has a particular respect to the forgiveness of the incestuous man, which the apostle had determined in his own mind, and was very ready to come into, and very desirous to join with the church in, as they had joined with him in the excommunication of him; and in order to engage them in such a temper and disposition, he tells them it was on their account he did it:

for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it; which is as if he should say, whenever I have forgiven any offender, as I now do forgive this man, I always do it for your sake; either at your request, or in confidence of this, that you yourselves have forgiven; or for your good, peace, and welfare: and besides, what I do of this kind, I do it

in the person of Christ; in his sight and presence, who knows that what I do this way, I do it sincerely, and with my whole heart and soul; or rather I do it in his name, and by his authority; and since I forgive this man for your sakes, and in the name of Christ, you ought to do so likewise.

Ver. 11. *Lest Satan should get an advantage of us*, etc..] Or make gain of us, or we should be circumvented by him; a metaphor taken from covetous persons, who take every occasion, and make use of every advantage to circumvent and deceive persons in trading with them: Satan gets an advantage of the churches, when church discipline is brought into neglect and contempt, or turned into tyranny; or when he can draw off any person from a church, or keep him out of it: wherefore the apostle's argument is, that since the incestuous person had true repentance for his sin, he ought to be forgiven, comforted, and received into the church; lest by too great severity, and a too long continuance of the censure on him, he should be either plunged into despair, or be drawn into a denial of the faith, or into an open scandalous course of wickedness; and so the church entirely lose a member, that might, by the proper use of discipline, have been an useful one, and Satan gain one:

for we are not ignorant of his devices; and cunning stratagems; some of his crafty contrivances and designs are known, though not all of them; and this particularly, that he sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light,

and under pretence of showing a just indignation against sin, and keeping up a strict and righteous discipline, destroys souls, ruins churches, and brings religion into contempt. This was one of his devices in former times, that persons who fell into any gross sin after baptism, and a profession of religion, were never to be restored and received into the communion of the church again, let their repentance be ever so sincere. This cruel and inexorable spirit, under the show of strict religion and discipline, is what the apostle here would caution against, as one of the wiles of Satan.

Ver. 12. *Furthermore, when I came to Troas*, etc..] The apostle proceeds, in this latter part of the chapter, to take notice of and remove the charge of ostentation and insincerity in preaching the Gospel, and hints at other reasons of his not coming to Corinth; particularly that he took a journey to Troas, expecting to meet with Titus there, who was to give him an account of the affairs of the church at Corinth, which he was desirous of knowing before he went thither; but missing of Titus, is uneasy, and goes for Macedonia; though he was first detained awhile at Troas, having a good opportunity of preaching the Gospel there, with a prospect of success. Troas was a city of the lesser Asia near the Hellespont, formerly called Troy; of Paul's being at this place more than once, (see 2 Timothy 4:13 Acts 16:7,8 20:6), and of this place (see Gill on "Acts 16:8"), and of the church there, (see Gill on "Acts 20:7"). Hither he came,

to preach Christ's Gospel; that Gospel, of which Christ is both the author and subject; and is no other than the good news and glad tidings of peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation, by a crucified Jesus; this was his work and business; his heart was in it, he took delight in this service, and it was what he pursued in every place wherever he came; and in this place he had much encouragement; for he adds,

and a door was opened unto me of the Lord; such an one as was opened to him at Ephesus, (1 Corinthians 16:9); he had a good opportunity of preaching the Gospel to many souls, many were inclined to attend his ministry, from whence he conceived great hopes of doing good; a door of utterance was given to him to preach the Gospel boldly and freely, and a door of entrance for the Gospel to pass into their hearts: all which was not of men, "but of the Lord"; who has the key of David, who opens and no man shuts, shuts and no man opens.

Ver. 13. *I had no rest in my spirit*, etc..] Though there was such a door opened to preach the Gospel, and such an opportunity of doing good, yet

he was greatly distressed in his mind; very restless and uneasy in his spirit, and could not be satisfied to stay; which shows, that though he was so great a man, he was but a man, and of like passions with others: and the occasion of this dissatisfaction and uneasiness was,

because, says he,

I found not Titus my brother; whom he so styles, not merely because he was a fellow Christian, but because he was a fellow labourer in the Gospel; and by calling him so, puts an honour upon him, and expresses his affliction for him: now not finding him as he expected, he grew uneasy: not that he wanted him as an interpreter for him, or his assistance in preaching the Gospel at Troas, where so many were inclined to hear the word; but because he was exceedingly desirous of knowing from him the state of affairs in the church at Corinth; so that this whole account is given, to show his affectionate concern for, and care of that church: which he goes on with, saying,

but taking my leave of them; the disciples at Troas, and ordering and prescribing, as the word here used signifies, how things should be managed for the best after his departure; for as there was a door opened for the ministry of the word, it cannot be thought he would leave it thus, without fixing proper persons to go on with the work, and proper directions how to conduct themselves; and very likely he ordained Carpus to be their elder, bishop, or overseer: and having done this, he

went into Macedonia; in quest of Titus, whom he so earnestly desired to see, and by whose coming to him he was greatly refreshed and comforted; (see 2 Corinthians 7:5-7).

Ver. 14. *Now thanks be unto God*, etc..] The apostle having mentioned the door that was opened for him at Troas, to preach the Gospel with success, calls to mind the great and manifold appearances of God for him and his fellow ministers, in blessing their labours to the conversion of many souls; which causes him to break forth into thanksgiving to God, on this account: what he takes notice of, and is thankful to God for is, that he

always causeth us to triumph in Christ; not only had done so, but continued to do so: some versions ascribe this act of triumph to God, as his act, reading the passage thus, “now thanks be unto God, who triumphs over us”, or “by us in Christ”; who has conquered us by his grace, and made use of us as instruments for the conversion of sinners; and so first

triumphed over us, having subdued us to himself, and then over others by us, in whose hearts the arrows of his word have been sharp and powerful: so the word is used for the person's own act of triumph spoken of, (Co 2:15), but here it signifies, as words do in the Hebrew conjugation “Hiphil”, which most commonly denotes an effect upon another, or which is caused and produced in another, and is rightly rendered, “which causeth us to triumph”; and refers not to the triumph of faith, common with the apostles to other believers; though this is in Christ, in his righteousness, death, resurrection, ascension, session at God's right hand, and intercession; and is what God causes, and to whom thanks is to be given for it: but this is a triumph peculiar to ministers of the Gospel, who are made to triumph over men and devils, over the world, the reproaches, persecutions, smiles, and flatteries of it; over wicked men, by silencing them, stopping the mouths of gainsayers, refuting false teachers, and preserving the Gospel pure, in spite of all opposition; and by being made useful to the turning of many souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God: and this is

in Christ: it is owing to the victory he has got; it is by his strength, it is in his name, for his sake, and because of his glory herein concerned: and

always; wherever the ministers of Christ are called to labour, and wherever the Gospel is purely and powerfully preached by them, some good is done; and they are made to triumph over hell and earth, over sin, Satan, and the world; and for all this, thanks is due to God; for he it is that causes them to triumph, or they never could; as will easily appear, if we consider what poor weak instruments they themselves are; what opposition is made against them; what wonderful things are done by them; by what means they triumph, by the preaching of the cross, and that in the midst of the greatest pressures and afflictions. Thanks are also given to God, that he

maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place; by “his knowledge” is meant, either the knowledge of God, who causes the ministers of the Gospel to triumph; or the knowledge of Christ, in whom they triumph; or rather of both, of the knowledge of God in Christ; and designs the Gospel, which is the means thereof: and which is said to have a “savour” in it, and denotes the acceptableness of it to sensible souls; and the good name, fame, and credit, which Christ has by the faithful ministration of it; and is an allusion to (Song of Solomon 1:3). Now this, God is said to make manifest; it was hid before, hid in himself, and to

the sons of men; it was like a box of ointment shut, but now opened by the preaching of the word, which diffuses a fragrant smell; and therefore he is said to make it manifest “by us”: the ministers of the Gospel, who openly, boldly, and faithfully preach it; and “by manifestation of the truth”; spread the savour of it, and that “in every place”, where they come; their commission being at large, to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

Ver. 15. *For we are unto God a sweet savour*, etc..] Here a reason is given, why the savour of the knowledge of God in Christ is made manifest by the ministers of the Gospel, because they themselves are a sweet savour; not that they are so in themselves, for they have the same corrupt hearts and natures, and complain of them as other men; but as having the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, comparable to fragrant and sweet smelling ointments, (<2203>Song of Solomon 1:3 4:10), by which they are enabled to preach the savoury doctrines of the Gospel, and to adorn and recommend them by their exemplary lives and conversations: the allusion is to Aaron and the priests under the law, who were anointed with the anointing oil, which was poured upon their heads, ran down upon their beards, and descended to the skirts of their garments, so that they were all over a perfume, a sweet smell and savour; and so are the ministers of the word, being anointed with that, which the other was typical of. They are said to be a sweet savour

of Christ, because they have their gifts, grace, and Gospel from him, and he is the subject of their ministry; so that this sweet savour of theirs, is not properly theirs, but his, whose person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, grace, and the fulness of it, as held forth in the Gospel ministry, are sweet and savoury to believers. Moreover, it is “unto God” they are such a savour, not unto men, mere carnal men, for with them they are the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things; but they are grateful and well pleasing to the Lord, as their ministrations make for, and show forth his honour and glory: and this they are

in them that are saved, who are chosen by God unto salvation, for whom Christ has wrought it out, to whom it is applied by the Spirit of God, who are heirs of it, and are kept unto it, and for it, by the power of God, and shall certainly enjoy it: yea, they are a sweet savour

in them that perish, all mankind are, through sin, in a perishing condition: some of them shall never perish; but are, and shall be saved with an

everlasting salvation: others will perish in their sins, to which they are abandoned; and what sense the ministers of the Gospel are a savour in these is shown in the following verse.

Ver. 16. *To the one we are the savour of death unto death*, etc..] Who are for death, or appointed to it; (see <2431>Jeremiah 43:11). What the apostle says of the Gospel, and Gospel ministers, the Jews his countrymen used frequently to say of the law, and to which he seems to refer;

> “saith Rabba[f6], to them that go on the right hand of it, (the law,) it is yyjd ams, “the savour of life”; but to them that go on the left hand of it, it is atwmd ams, “the savour of death”.”

Again[f7],

> “everyone that studies in the law for the sake of it, to him it becomes µyyj µs, “the savour of life”, according to (<2018>Proverbs 3:18 8:35), but everyone that studies in the law, not for the sake of it, to him it becomes twmh µs, “the savour of death”;”

once more[f8],

> “if a man is worthy or righteous, to him the law becomes µyyj µs, “the savour of life”; but if he is not righteous, it becomes to him htym µs, “the savour of death”:”

and this they not only say of the written law, but also of their oral law[f9], and are not contented with those general descriptions of persons to whom the law is so, but particularly mention the Gentiles;

> “the words of the law (say they[f10]) are µyyj µs, “the savour of life”, to the Israelites; and twmh µs, “the savour of death”, to the nations of the world:”

that the law should be the savour of death, since it is the ministration of it, and cannot give life, (see <4021>Galatians 3:21), is no wonder; but that the Gospel and the ministers of that, should be the savour of death unto death, may seem strange, but so it is. These preach up salvation by the death of Christ, and so are the sweet savour of the death of Christ; but this being despised and rejected by the sons of men, is “unto the death”, and issues in the eternal death of the despisers and rejecters of it; likewise this doctrine

preached by them, strikes with death all a man's wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, and declares that life and salvation are only by Christ and his righteousness; and besides, is attended with persecution and death, and therefore is foolishness to them that perish; and so becomes “the savour of death unto death”; a savour, but not a sweet savour, nor the sweet savour of Christ; a sweet savour indeed to God, whose justice, holiness, power, and wisdom, are displayed in the death and righteous destruction of sinners, but not to them:

to the other, the savour of life unto life; those who are ordained to eternal life. The Gospel preached by Christ's faithful ministers is the means of quickening souls, and giving them “spiritual life”; and of supporting and maintaining that life, and of nourishing them up unto “eternal life”; and so becomes “the savour of life” spiritual, “unto life” eternal. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and so the Ethiopic version, read both clauses, “from death to death, and from life to life”; with which compare (<4501>Romans 1:17 <4703>2 Corinthians 3:18), and then the meaning may be, either as Grotius observes, that the ill report of the Gospel from men dead in sin, brings death to those who give credit to it; and the good report of it from God, the author of life, to which may be added from ministers, who are alive in a spiritual sense, is the means of life to others: or they are the means of adding death to death, death eternal, to death spiritual, or moral; death for sin, to death in sin, the Gospel being despised; and of increasing spiritual life, the comforts of it; and of adding eternal life to spiritual life: upon the whole of which, the apostle makes this exclamation,

and who is sufficient for these things; the meaning of which is either, who is able to search and find out the reason of this different influence of the Gospel ministry upon the souls of men? no man can do it; it must be ascribed to the sovereign will and pleasure of God, who hides the Gospel from some, and reveals it to others; or who is sufficient for the preaching of the Gospel? no man is sufficient of himself, very insufficient in the best sense, and none so but by the grace of God, and gifts of his Spirit; or who is sufficient to give success to the Gospel when preached? none can do this; Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God alone that gives the increase.

Ver. 17. *For we are not as many*, etc..] The apostle here removes from himself, and other ministers of the Gospel, a character which belonged not to them, but to the false apostles; who are described by their number many;

there were great swarms of false teachers in the early times of Christianity; (see 1 John 2:18 4:1); some copies read, “as the rest”: and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; and also by their quality,

which corrupt the word of God; by “the word of God”, may be meant the Scriptures in general, which are from God, contain his will, and which he uses for the good of men, and his own glory, and may be corrupted by false glosses, and human mixtures, and by adding to them, or taking from them; or the Gospel in particular, which is the word of truth, of faith, righteousness, reconciliation, and salvation, and which was corrupted by these false teachers, by making merchandise of it; they huckstered the word of God, made gain of it, sought merely their own worldly interest and advantage in it, and so mixed it with their own vain philosophy, to please the carnal ears and hearts of men; they blended law and Gospel, grace and works, in the business of salvation; they did, as peddling merchants do, mix good and bad commodities together, and then vend them for sound ware; or as vintners, who mix their wine with water, and sell it for neat wine. The Septuagint interpreters on (Isaiah 1:22), translate the last clause of that verse thus, οι καπηλοι σου μισγουσι τον οινον υδατι, “thy vintners mix wine with water”; which may be understood in a moral or spiritual sense; so did these men mix, and hereby corrupt the Gospel, the word of God; and so the Syriac version reads the words ˆygzmmd, “who mix the word of God”: now the apostle says, they did not do so; they delivered out the word pure and unmixed, without any corruption or adulteration:

but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, says he, *speak we in Christ*; they spoke “in Christ”, in the name of Christ, of or concerning him, and him only, and freely, fully, and plainly, as God's free gift, and the only way of salvation without the works of men: and they spoke, “as of sincerity”; what they delivered was the sincere milk of the word; the manner in which they did it was sincere, with all integrity and faithfulness; and so were their views, which were not their own profit and applause, but the glory of God and the good of souls; they spoke in Christ, and with all sincerity, “as of God”; by whom they were called and sent forth to speak in his name, and from whom they received the Gospel, and gifts, and abilities to preach it; and all this they did, in the sight of God, as the searcher of hearts, and to whom they knew they must give an account of their ministry another day.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 3

In this chapter the apostle clears himself from the charge of arrogance and self-commendation, and ascribes both the virtue and efficacy of his ministry, and his qualifications for it, to the Lord; and forms a comparison between the ministration of the Gospel, and the ministration of the law, showing the preferableness of the one to the other; and consequently how much more happy and comfortable the state and condition of the saints under the Gospel dispensation is, than under the legal one: on account of what the apostle had said in the latter part of the preceding chapter, concerning the excellency, usefulness, and success of the Gospel ministry, he foresaw an objection would arise; that he and his fellow ministers were proud and arrogant, and commended themselves, which was unseemly, and not agreeably to the character they bore; which objection he obviates, (2 Corinthians 3:1), by putting some questions, signifying that they were not guilty of vain boasting; nor did they need any commendations of their own, or others, nor any letters to recommend them, either from Corinth to other places, or thither: a practice which, he suggests, the false teachers made use of; and in (2 Corinthians 3:2) he gives the reason why they did not stand in need of such letters, because the members of the church at Corinth were their epistle or letter, declaring to all men the efficacy and success of their ministry among men; but lest he should be charged with arrogating to himself and others, he declares, (2 Corinthians 3:3) that though the Corinthians were their epistle, yet not so much theirs as Christ's; Christ was the author and subject, they only were instruments; the writing was not human, but the writing of the Spirit of God; and that not upon outward tables, such as the law was written upon, but upon the tables of men's hearts, which only God can reach; however, that they had been useful, successful, and instrumental in the conversion of souls, through the ministry of the word, that he was confident of, (2 Corinthians 3:4) though the sufficiency and ability to think, study, and preach, were not of themselves, and still less to make the word effectual for conversion and comfort, but of God, (2 Corinthians 3:5) wherefore he ascribes all fitness, worthiness, and ability to preach the Gospel, to the

grace and power of God, by which they were made ministers of it; and hence he takes occasion to commend the excellency of the Gospel ministry above that of the law, which he does by observing their different names and effects; the Gospel is the New Testament or covenant, or an exhibition of the covenant of grace in a new form; the law is the Old Testament, or covenant, which is vanished away; which, though not expressed here, is in (<470314>2 Corinthians 3:14) the Gospel is spirit, the law the letter; the one gives life, and the other kills, (<470306>2 Corinthians 3:6) wherefore the apostle argues from the one to the other, that if there was a glory in the one which was only a ministration of death, as the law was, (<470307>2 Corinthians 3:7) then the Gospel, which was a ministration of spiritual things, and of the Spirit of God himself, must be more glorious, (<470308>2 Corinthians 3:8) and if that was glorious which was a ministration of condemnation, as the law was to guilty sinners; much more glorious must be the Gospel, which is a ministration of the righteousness of Christ, for the justification of them, (<470309>2 Corinthians 3:9) yea, such is the surpassing glory of the Gospel to the law, that even the glory of the law is quite lost in that of the Gospel, and appears to have none in comparison of that, (<470310>2 Corinthians 3:10) to which he adds another argument, taken from the abolition of the one, and the continuance of the other; that if there was a glory in that which is abolished, there must be a greater in that which continues, (<470311>2 Corinthians 3:11) and from hence the apostle proceeds to take notice of another difference between the law and the Gospel, the clearness of the one, and the obscurity of the other; the former is signified by the plainness of speech used by the preachers of it, (<470312>2 Corinthians 3:12) and the latter by the veil which was over Moses's face, when he delivered the law to the children of Israel; the end of which they could not look to, and which is a further proof of the obscurity of it, (<470313>2 Corinthians 3:13) as well as of the darkness of their minds; which still continues with the Jews in reading the law, and will do until it is taken away by Christ, (<470314>2 Corinthians 3:14) and that there is such a veil of darkness upon the hearts of the Jews, when reading the law of Moses; and that this continues to this day, is again asserted, (<470315>2 Corinthians 3:15) and an intimation given that there will be a conversion of them to the Lord, and then it will be removed from them, (<470316>2 Corinthians 3:16) and who that Lord is to whom they shall be turned, and by whom they shall have freedom from darkness and bondage, is declared, (<470317>2 Corinthians 3:17) and the happy condition of the saints under the Gospel dispensation, through the bright and clear light of it, is observed, (<470318>2 Corinthians 3:18) in which the Gospel is compared to a

glass; the saints are represented as without a veil looking into it; through which an object is beheld, the glory of the Lord; the effect of which is a transformation of them into the same image by degrees; the author of which grace is the Spirit of the Lord.

Ver. 1. *Do we begin again to commend ourselves*? etc..] The apostle having asserted that he and his fellow ministers always triumphed in Christ, and made manifest the savour of his knowledge in every place; were a sweet savour of Christ to God, did not corrupt the word of God, as some did, but sincerely and faithfully preached Christ; some might insinuate from hence, that he was guilty of arrogance and vain glory; wherefore to remove such a charge, or prevent its being brought, he asks, "do we begin again to commend ourselves?" we do not; what we say, we say honestly, sincerely, in the simplicity of our hearts, without any view to our own glory and applause among men, or for any worldly profit and advantage, or to ingratiate ourselves into your affections; we have no such views: some read these words without an interrogation, "we do begin again to commend ourselves"; as we have done already, in this and the former epistles; and as it is but just and right that we should vindicate our characters, support our good name and reputation, and secure and maintain our credit, which some would maliciously deprive us of:

though we have no need, as some others, of epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you; our persons, characters, and usefulness are too well known, to require commendatory letters front others to you, or from you to others. The false apostles are here struck at, whose practice it was to get letters of commendation from place to place; which they carried about and made use of for their temporal advantage, having nothing truly good and excellent in them to recommend them to others. The apostle does not hereby condemn letters of recommendation, which in proper cases may be very lawfully given, and a good use be made of them; only that he and other Gospel ministers were so well known, as to stand in no need of them.

Ver. 2. *Ye are our epistle*, etc..] Here a reason is given why they stood in no need of letters of commendation, to or from the church at Corinth, because that church was their living epistle, and which was much preferable to any written one. The apostle calls them their epistle in the same sense, as they are said to be his "work in the Lord, and the seal of his apostleship", (<460901>1 Corinthians 9:1,2) they were so as persons regenerated by the Spirit

and grace of God, in whose conversion he was an instrument; now it was the work of conversion in them, which was the epistle said to be

written in our hearts; some think it should be read, “in your hearts”; and so the Ethiopic version reads it; and it looks as if it should be so read, from the following verse, and from the nature of the thing itself; for the conversion of the Corinthians was not written in the heart of the apostle, but in their own; and this was so very notorious and remarkable, that it was

known and read of all men; everyone could read, and was obliged to acknowledge the handwriting; it was so clear a case, what hand the apostle, as an instrument, had in the turning of these persons from idols to serve the living God; and which was so full a proof of the divinity, efficacy, truth, and sincerity of his doctrine, that he needed no letters from any to recommend him.

Ver. 3. *Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared*, etc..] But lest it should be thought that the apostle attributed too much to himself, by saying that the Corinthians were our epistle; here he says, they were “manifestly declared”

to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us; so that the apostles and ministers of the word were only amanuenses, Christ was the author and dictator; yea, he himself is the very matter, sum, substance, and subject of the epistle; he is formed in the hearts of his people in conversion, his image is stamped, his grace is implanted, his word, his Gospel dwells richly, his laws and ordinances are written here; he also is the exemplar, believers are but copies of him, in grace and duty, in sufferings, in the likeness of his death and resurrection: and they are “manifestly declared” to be so, by the impresses of Christ's grace upon them; by the fairness of the copy; by the style and language of the epistle; by their likeness to Christ; by their having not the form only, but the power of godliness; and by their lives and conversations: now in writing these epistles, the ministers of the Gospel are only instruments, “ministered by us”. They are made use of to show the sinner the black characters which are written upon him, and that what is written in him, and to be read by him, by the light of nature is not sufficient for salvation; they are employed as instruments in drawing the rough draught of grace in conversion, and in writing the copy over again, fairer and fairer; being the happy means blessed by God, for the building up of souls in faith and holiness, in spiritual knowledge and comfort. These epistles are

not written with ink; of nature's power, or of rhetorical eloquence and moral persuasion;

but with the Spirit of the living God: every grace that is implanted in the soul is wrought there by the Spirit of God; or he it is that draws every line, and writes every word and letter; he begins, he carries on and finishes the work of grace on the soul; and that as "the Spirit of the living God": hence saints become the living epistles of Christ; and every letter and stroke of his making, is a living disposition of the soul in likeness to him; and such are written among the living in Jerusalem, and shall live and abide for ever as the epistles of Christ: again, the subjects of these epistles, or that on which they are written, are

not tables of stone; such as the law was written upon, on Mount Sinai: of these tables there were the first and second; the first were the work of God himself, the latter were hewed by Moses, at the command of God, (<2232>Exodus 32:16 34:1) the former being broken when he came down from the mount, which by the Jewish writers are said to be miraculously made, and not by the means and artifice of men [f11]; yea, that they were made before the creation of the world [f12], and which, they commonly say, were made of sapphire; (see Gill on "<4703>2 Corinthians 3:7") these, as the latter, were two stones, which, Jarchi says [f13], were of an equal size; and were, as Abarbinel says [f14], in the form of small tables, such as children are taught to write upon, and therefore are so called: some pretend to give the dimensions of them, and say [f15], that they were six hands long, and as many broad, and three thick; nay, even the weight of them, which is said [f16] to be the weight of forty "seahs", and look upon it as a miracle that Moses should be able to carry them; on these stones were written the ten commands; and the common opinion of the Jewish writers is, that five were written on one table, and five on the other; this is the opinion of Josephus [f17], Philo [f18], and the Talmudic writers [f19]; and the tables are said to be written on both sides, (<2232>Exodus 32:15). Some think that the engraving of the letters perforated and went through the tables, so that, in a miraculous manner, the letters were legible on both sides; others think, only the right and left hand of the tables are meant, on which the laws were written, five on a side, and which folded up like the tables or pages of a book; though others are of opinion, that they were written upon, both behind and before, and that the law was written twice, both upon the fore part and back part of the tables, yea, others say four times; and some think the phrase only intends the literal and mystical, the external and internal sense of the law:

however, certain it is, as the apostle here suggests, that the law was written on tables of stone, which may denote the firmness and stability of the law; not as in the hands of Moses, from whence the tables fell and were broken, but as in the hands of Christ, by whom they are fulfilled; or else the hardness of man's heart, his stupidity, ignorance of, and not subject to the law of God:

but fleshly tables of the heart: alluding to (<2636>Ezekiel 36:26) and designs not carnal hearts, but such as are made soft and tender by the Spirit of God. The table of the heart is a phrase to be met with in the books of the Old Testament; (see <2003>Proverbs 3:3 7:3 <2401>Jeremiah 17:1) and very frequently in the writings of the Jews [f20].

Ver. 4. *And such trust have we*, etc..] This refers to what he had said in the latter end of the foregoing chapter, and the beginning of this; as that they made manifest the savoury knowledge of God and Christ everywhere, and were the sweet savour of Christ to many souls; were sufficient in some measure, through the grace of Christ, to preach the Gospel sincerely and faithfully, and were attended with success, had many seals of their ministry, and particularly the Corinthians were so many living epistles of commendations of the power and efficacy of their ministry; such confidence and firm persuasion of the truth of grace on your souls, and of our being the happy instruments of it, we have

through Christ, the grace of Christ,

to God-ward: who is the object of our confidence and hope, and the ground thereof.

Ver. 5. *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves*, etc..] Though we are sufficient for this work to which God has called us, and have such trust and confidence that he has blessed and owned us, and done such great things by us; yet we do not ascribe anything to ourselves, to any power of ours, to any self-sufficiency in us: for “we are not sufficient of ourselves” neither for the work of the ministry, nor for the conversion of sinners, nor for faith and hope in God, nor for any spiritual work whatever; not even to think anything as of ourselves; any good thing, either for our own use and benefit, or for the advantage of others; we are not able of ourselves to meditate with judgment and affection upon the word of God, to study the Scriptures, to collect from them things fit for the ministry; and much less with freedom and boldness to speak of them to edification; and still less

able to impress them upon the heart: for though you who are the epistle of Christ are ministered by us, yet not by any power and self-sufficiency of ours;

but our sufficiency is of God; to think, to speak, and to act for his glory.

Ver. 6. *Who also hath made us able ministers*, etc..] This is an answer to the question in (2 Corinthians 2:16) who is sufficient for these things? no man is of himself; we are indeed sufficient for them, but not of ourselves; our sufficiency is of God, he hath made us able, or sufficient ministers: such ministers as are not of men's, but God's making, are sufficient ones; and none are sufficient but whom God makes so; and those he makes able and sufficient, by giving them spiritual gifts, fitting them for the ministry: and these are ministers

of the New Testament, or "covenant"; the covenant of grace, of which Christ is the Mediator and surety; called "new", not because newly made, for it was made with Christ from everlasting; nor newly revealed, for it was made known to Adam after his fall, and to all the Old Testament patriarchs, and was exhibited under the legal dispensation, though but darkly, in types, shadows, sacrifices, etc.. which therefore waxing old is vanished away; and the covenant of grace is now more clearly revealed under the Gospel dispensation, free from all the obscurity it before laboured under; and therefore is called "new", as well as because it will always continue so, and never give way to another covenant: now the Gospel, and the ministry of it, is nothing else but an exhibition of the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises; and the work and business of those who are ministers of it is not to insist upon the covenant of works, the terms, conditions, obligations, promises, and threatenings of that covenant; but to open and explain the nature, promises, and blessings of the covenant of grace: for such who are fit and proper ministers, are ministers

not of the letter, but of the spirit; which is to be understood, not of any difference between the books of the Old and the New Testament, for a faithful minister of the word may and will bring forth things new and old, out of the one as well as the other; nor of the literal and allegorical, or mystical sense of the Scriptures, as if the latter and not the former was only to be attended to; nor of the difference of communicating the Gospel by letters, and preaching it by word of mouth; since both methods may be used for the spread of it, as were by the apostles themselves; but of the difference there is between the law and the Gospel. The law is "the letter",

not merely because written in letters, for so likewise is the Gospel; but because it is a mere letter, hereby showing what is to be done or avoided, without any efficacy in it, or communicating any to enable persons to obey its commands, to give life to its observers, or either to sanctify or justify any who are under it, or of the works of it; it is a mere letter, as observed by an unregenerate man, who only regards the externals of it, being unacquainted with its spirituality. The Gospel is "the spirit"; (see <4163>John 6:63) it contains spiritual things, and not things merely natural, moral, and civil, as does the law, but spiritual blessings and promises; it penetrates into the spirit and soul of man, and comes from, and is attended with the Spirit of God. The law is

the letter that

killeth, by irritating and provoking to sin, the cause of death, which though not the design and natural tendency of the law, and therefore not to be blamed, yet so it is, through the corruption of human nature; and by convincing of sin when the sinner is killed, and it dead in his own apprehension; and by not only threatening with death, but by cursing, condemning, and punishing with it:

but the Gospel is

the spirit, which

giveth life; it is a means in the hand of the Spirit of God, of quickening dead sinners, of healing the deadly wounds of sin, of showing the way of life by Christ, and of working faith in the soul, to look to him, and live upon him; it affords food for the support of the spiritual life, and revives souls under the most drooping circumstances. The apostle may allude to a distinction among the Jews, between the body and sou] of the law; the words, they say, are hrwt apwg, "the body of the law"; and the book of the law is the clothing; and besides these, there is atyrwad atmçn, "the soul of the law"; which wise men look into [f21].

Ver. 7. *But if the ministration of death*, etc..] The apostle having observed the difference between the law and the Gospel, the one being a killing letter, the other a quickening spirit, enlarges upon it, and more, fully explains it; and proceeds to take notice of other things in which they differ; and to show the superior glory and excellency of the one to the other; for

that by “the ministration of death”, he means the law, as delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai, is clear from its being said to be

written and engraven in stones; as that was by the finger of God himself: rightly does the apostle say, that it was both “written” and “engraven”; for the two tables of the law are expressly said to be written with the finger of God, (<02318>Exodus 31:18) meaning either the Spirit of God, who is sometimes so called, (<42110>Luke 11:20) compared with (<40128>Matthew 12:28) or the power of God, which at once caused this writing to exist; and it is in so many words affirmed, that “the writing” was “the writing of God”; and not of man, nor of any creature, no not of an angel, (<02316>Exodus 32:16) yea, even the two tables which were hewn out by Moses, after the first were broken, were written upon by the Lord himself, and not Moses, (<02301>Exodus 34:1). So that as the work of the tables was the work of God, and wonderfully made, the form of the letters, as Abarbinel [f22] observes, were miraculously made by him; for this law was, εν γραμμασι, “in letters”, as the apostle here says; and as it was written in the Hebrew language, very likely it was in the same form of letters now in use with the Jews; though some have thought that the Samaritan letters are the original ones: moreover, the law was not only written, but “engraved”; for so it is said, that the writing was graven upon the tables, (<02316>Exodus 32:16) and though the word so rendered is no where else used but there, it is rightly rendered graven, as appears by the apostle in this place; and which may lie confirmed by the Targumist on that, who renders it by qyqj, “engraven”; and by the Septuagint κεκολαμμενη, which signifies the same; and so in the book of Zohar [f23], the letters are said to be wpylgta, “engraven” on the tables: and that the tables were tables of stone, it is certain; they are often so called, (<02412>Exodus 24:12 31:18 34:1 <05909>Deuteronomy 9:9,10 10:1) wherefore the apostle very properly says, that the law was engraven “in stones”; but what stones these tables were made of cannot be said; the Jews, who affect to know everything, will have them to be precious stones, but what they were they are not agreed in; for though they generally say [f24] they were made of the sapphire stone, and sometimes say [f25] they were hewed out of the sapphire of the glorious throne of God; yet at other times they call them marble tables [f26]; and Aben Ezra [f27] was of opinion, that the tables which Moses hewed were not of any precious stone, for he asks where should a precious stone of such size be found? though others pretend to say [f28], that Moses in a miraculous manner was shown a sapphire quarry in the midst of his tent, out of which he cut and hewed the stones;

but very likely they were common ones; however, certain it is, that the tables of stone, as written and engraven by the Lord himself, were made, as the apostle here says, “in glory”, εγενηψε εν δοξη; and so Jarchi on (Exodus 32:16) “and the tables were the work of God”, says, this is to be understood literally wdwbkbw, “and in” or “for his glory”; or by his glorious power he made them: now this law, though thus written and engraven, and glorious, it was “the ministration of death”; and is so called, because it threatened and punished the transgressors of it with a corporeal death; they that sinned against it died without mercy upon proper evidence and witnesses; every precept of it had this penalty annexed to it, in ease of disobedience; as the having any other goals but one, making of graven images, taking the name of God in vain, the violation of the sabbath, dishonouring of parents, murder, adultery, theft, and covetousness; instances there are of each of these being punishable by this law with a bodily death: and besides, it is the ministration of eternal death, the wages of sin the transgression of the law; which is that wrath of God, a sense of which it is said to work; the curse it threatens with and the second death or lake of fire it casts into: and may be said to be the “ministration” of it; as it shows persons they are deserving of it, pronounces the sentence of it on them, and will execute it upon them, if grace prevent not; now though it was the ministration of death, yet it

was glorious. There were many things which made it so; but what the apostle here particularly takes notice of is the glory that was upon the face of Moses, when he received it and brought it from the Lord, which was very great;

so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away. The history of this may be read in (Exodus 34:29,30,35) it was a real visible glory that was upon the skin of his face, so that it shone again; it is said, “the skin of his face shone”; and this shining of his face the apostle very properly calls “the glory of his countenance”: agreeably to the Septuagint version, which renders it, “the appearance of the skin, or colour of his face, was glorified”; and still nearer to the paraphrase of Onkelos, which is, “the splendour of the glory of his countenance was great”; and to the Targum of Jonathan, which also assigns the reason of it, and which seems to be the true one, “the splendour of the form of his countenance was glorious, because of the splendour of the glory of the majesty of God, at the time he talked with him”. The Vulgate Latin version has led many

wrong, to paint Moses with two horns, rendering it, “his face was horned”, the Hebrew word having the signification of an horn in its derivative; because glory darted from him like horns, as rays of light do from the sun; see (Habakkuk 3:4 *marg) and this brightness and glory were so very great, and so dazzling, that Aaron and the people of Israel were afraid to come nigh; which Jarchi, a Jewish writer, imputed to their sin, and shame, and fear, having worshipped the calf; but our apostle ascribes it to the lustre of his countenance, which was such that they could not steadfastly look upon it; they saw it indeed, as it is said in (Exodus 34:35) yet they could not look wistly at it, nor bear the splendour of it; though this was only a glory, which was to continue but a while; according to the opinion of Ambrose [f29], this glory continued on Moses's countenance as long as he lived; but be it so, it at last was done away: now this glory was put there to bear a testimony to the divine authority of the law, that it came from God, and was to be received at the hands of Moses, with awful reverence as from God, and to make them afraid of violating a law which came with such majesty and glory; and also to command awe and respect from the Israelites to Moses, whom they were inclined at every turn to treat with contempt, and to let them see that he had communion with God, which this was the effect of: now this was a circumstance which rendered the law glorious, and was expressive of a real glory in it; which, though as this on Moses's face, “was to be done away”; wherefore the apostle argues;

Ver. 8. *How shall not the ministration of the Spirit*, etc..] By “the ministration of the Spirit”, is meant the Gospel; so called not only because it ministers spiritual things, as peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation, spiritual joy and comfort, and even spiritual life; but because it ministers the Spirit of God himself, by whom it is not only dictated, and by him at first confirmed, and who qualities persons for the preaching of it; but by it he conveys himself into the hearts of men, and makes it powerful for illumination, consolation, edification, and an increase of every grace; and therefore must be rather glorious, or much more glorious than the law, the ministration of death.

Ver. 9. *For if the ministration of condemnation be glory*, etc..] So the Jews call the law, for they say, hrwt ala dwbk ˆya, “there is no glory but the law” [f30]; this is another head of opposition or difference between the law and the Gospel, from whence the superior glory of the one to the other is argued. The law is “the ministration of condemnation”; as sin is a transgression of the law, it accuses for it, convinces of it, pronounces

guilty, and adjudges to death on account of it; which is the condemnation it ministers; and this it does to all Adam's posterity, and for his sin too; and to all the actual transgressors of it, to all unbelievers, to all that are under it; even to God's elect themselves, as considered in Adam, and in themselves as transgressors; and this it ministers to their consciences when convicted, though it is never executed on them, because of the suretyship engagement and performances of Christ. The Gospel is

the ministration of righteousness; not of a legal one, or a man's own, but of the righteousness of Christ, by which the law is honoured, justice is satisfied, and God's elect justified from all sin and condemnation; this being perfect, pure, and spotless, and for ever: the Gospel is “the ministration” of it, as it is a means of stripping a man of his own righteousness, of revealing Christ's to him, and of working faith in him, and encouraging him to lay hold upon it for himself; and thus it is not to righteous persons, but sinners, to all believers, to all the second Adam's posterity; now as

much more as righteousness exceeds condemnation, and a justified state a condemned one, so “much more” does the Gospel

exceed the law

in glory.

Ver. 10. *For even that which was made glorious*, etc..] The apostle grants that there was a glory in the law: it “was made glorious”; it was glorious in the author of it, who is God; it was of his appointing and ordaining, agreeable to his nature, and a declaration of his will; his authority was stamped upon it, and it was written by himself, which cannot be said of any other law whatever; it was glorious in its promulgation, God himself appeared in great glory at the giving of it; Christ was then present; it was ordained by angels, and by them delivered into the hands of Moses, on whose face such a glory was left as could not be steadfastly looked upon; and it was attended with thunderings, lightnings, the sound of a trumpet, etc.. it was glorious in the matter of it, it contained great and excellent things; the substance of it is love to God, and to our neighbour; and it was glorious in its properties, being, in its nature and substance, holy, just, good, spiritual, perfect, immutable, and eternal; but yet

had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. There is such an excelling glory in the Gospel, that the other is swallowed up and lost in it; it excels it in those things in which it was so glorious: in the

author of it, which, though the same, yet with this difference; the law was given by God as a judge, the Gospel by him as a Father, as the Father of Christ, and of his people in him; the law is the birth of his holiness and righteousness, the Gospel of his wisdom, grace, and love; the law declares his will with respect to duty, the Gospel with respect to salvation; the authority of God is stamped on the law, but the Gospel is the image of Christ; the law was written by the finger of God, but the Gospel was hid in his heart, and came from thence: in the promulgation of it, through the long train of patriarchs and prophets, that went before it to usher it in; it was published by Christ, the Son of God himself, confirmed by the gifts and miracles of the Holy Ghost, and in it is a greater display of the glory of God; it was attended with angels too, and a voice from heaven delightful and not terrible; and there was a glory on Christ's countenance, far exceeding that of Moses's: in the matter of it; which is the love, grace, and mercy of God; the Lord Jesus Christ, in all the glories and fulness of his person and offices; salvation by him, spiritual blessings, exceeding great and precious promises; neither of which are to be observed in the law: the ordinances of it vastly exceed the legal ones; and it has greatly the advantage of it in its effects on the souls of men, when accompanied by the Spirit of God.

Ver. 11. *For if that which is done away*, etc..] Here another difference is pointed out, which subsists between the law and the Gospel, and proves that the one is more excellent and glorious than the other. The law is “that which is done away”; not merely the ceremonial law, or the judicial law, but the whole ministry of Moses, and particularly the law of the Decalogue: for the better understanding of this, distinguish between the matter and ministry of it; the ministry of it by Moses is done away, the matter of it so far as of a moral nature abides: distinguish between the law, as in the hands of Moses and of Christ; as in the hands of Moses it is broken to pieces and abolished, as in the hands of Christ, as King in his church, it remains: distinguish between precepts and precepts; some are mixed, being partly moral, and partly ceremonial, as the fourth and fifth commands, and others are not; what is ceremonial, or purely related to the Jews whilst in their civil policy, and in the land of Canaan, is done away; but what is purely moral, is, as to the matter of it, still obliging: distinguish between the law as a covenant of works, and as a rule of walk and conversation; as a covenant of works it is done away, as a rule of walk and conversation it still continues: distinguish between persons and persons; to

them that are redeemed from it, it is done away; to them that are under it, it remains; and lastly, distinguish between a right and a wrong use of it; as to any use of it to justify us before God, by our obedience to it, it is done away; but as it may be of use to convince sinners of sin, and to direct saints in a course of righteousness, so it abides. The Gospel is “that which remaineth”; which denotes the continued efficacy, the incorruptibleness, the inexpugnableness, and duration of it; notwithstanding all the opposition of men and devils to it, still its blessings, promises, doctrines, ordinances, and effects continue; it remains in the Scriptures, in the church, in the hearts of believers, and in the world too, until all the elect of God are gathered in: now as things that remain are much more glorious than those which are done away, so the Gospel must be much more glorious than the law.

Ver. 12. *Seeing then that we have such hope*, etc..] Having this confidence, and being fully persuaded that God has made us able and sufficient ministers of the Gospel, has called and qualified us for such service; and since we have such a ministry committed to us, which so much exceeds in glory the ministry of Moses, a ministry not of death and condemnation, but of the Spirit and of righteousness; not which is abolished and done away, but which does and will remain, in spite of all the opposition of hell and earth:

we use great plainness of speech; plain and intelligible words, not ambiguous ones: or “boldness”; we are not afraid of men nor devils; we are not terrified by menaces, stripes, imprisonment, and death itself: or “freedom of speech”; we speak out all our mind, which is the mind of Christ; we declare the whole counsel of God, hide and conceal nothing that may be profitable to the churches; we are not to be awed by the terror, or drawn by the flatteries of men to cover the truth; we speak it out plainly, clearly, with all evidence and perspicuity. The apostle from hence passes on to observe another difference between the law and the Gospel, namely, the obscurity of the one, and the clearness of the other.

Ver. 13. *And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face*, etc..] This he did, because there was such a glory upon his face when he came down from the mount, that the Israelites could not bear to look upon him; and also to take off that dread of him which was upon them, for they were afraid to come nigh him; and that so they might be able to hearken and attend to the words of the law, he delivered to them: the account of

Moses's putting on this veil is in (<2Co 3:13>Exodus 34:33) where Onkelos renders it by ypa tyb, “the house of the face”, or a “mask”: and Jarchi on the place says it was a “garment”, which he put before his face; and both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call it ardws, “a linen cloth”: now this veil upon his face had a mystery in it; it was an emblem of the Gospel being veiled under the law, and of the darkness and obscurity of the law in the business of life and salvation; and also of the future blindness of the Jews, when the glory of the Gospel should break forth in the times of Christ and his apostles; and which was such,

that the children of Israel, the Jews, as in the times of Moses, so in the times of Christ and his apostles,

could not steadfastly look to; not upon the face of Moses, whose face was veiled; not that they might not look, but because they could not bear to look upon him; but they could not look

to the end of that which is abolished; that is, to Christ, who is the end of the law, which is abrogated by him: to him they could not look, nor could they see him to be the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness; which being fulfilled, is done away by him; and this because of the blindness of their hearts, of which blindness the veil on Moses' face was typical: though the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, “to the face of him which is abolished”.

Ver. 14. *But their minds were blinded*, etc..] This confirms the sense given of the foregoing verse, and shows, that not the Israelites only in Moses's time, but the Jews in the times of the Gospel, had their minds so blinded, that they could not behold the glory of the Gospel, nor Christ the end of the law; (see <Rom 11:7,8,25>Romans 11:7,8,25).

For until this day, to this very time,

remaineth the same veil untaken away; not the selfsame veil that was on Moses's face, but the veil of blindness, darkness, and ignorance, upon the hearts of the Jews:

in the reading of the Old Testament; the books of the Old Testament, which were used to be read in their synagogues every sabbath day; the true spiritual meaning of which, as they respect Christ and the Gospel dispensation, they understood not; of which darkness, the veil on the face of Moses was a type and emblem:

which veil is done away in Christ; can only be removed by Christ, by his Spirit and grace, and through the light of the Gospel of Christ, shining into the heart; and so dispel that blindness and ignorance which is in the understanding; whereby the books of the Old Testament are understood, and appear to agree exactly with the Gospel of Christ, in the books of the New Testament.

Ver. 15. *But even unto this day, when Moses is read*, etc..] These words are an explanation of the former, and show that by the Old Testament is designed, more especially, Moses, or the writings of Moses; which were frequently read, and preached upon in the Jewish synagogues; (see <44 13 15>Acts 13:15 15:21) and that by "the veil untaken away", is meant,

the veil upon their heart; that is, the veil of blindness, ignorance of Christ, and the Gospel; of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and even of the law itself, its nature, use, and end; preferring the traditions of their fathers, before the written law of Moses.

Ver. 16. *Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord*, etc..] The heart, upon which the veil now is; or the body of the Jewish nation, as in the latter day; when they "shall turn", or "be turned", by the Spirit, power, and grace of God, to the Lord Jesus Christ, and look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn, and embrace him as the true Messiah and only Saviour:

the veil shall be taken away; the veil of blindness and ignorance, respecting themselves, case, state, and condition, and the way of salvation by Christ; the veil of unbelief, with regard to his person, offices, and grace, and of error in points of the greatest moment and importance; then all the darkness and obscurity that is upon the books of Moses and the prophets, and which is now upon their hearts in reading them, will be gone. The prophecies of the Old Testament will be seen in their proper light, and to be evidently fulfilled in Christ; the true nature, use, and end of the law, will be discovered; and both they and that will be freed from all darkness that now attends them. The Jews themselves acknowledge, that though the law is light, yet there is an obscurity in it, by reason of the several ways of interpreting it; and therefore,

> "he that studies in it, has need to remove, hwsm rja hwsm, "veil after veil", which is upon the face of it, in order to come at the light of it [f31]:"

and intimate, that the veil on Moses's face was an emblem of this obscurity, which agrees with what the apostle hints in this context; and also own, that there is now upon them a veil of ignorance; and, say they [f32], God has promised to remove, wnlkç l[m twlksh Æsm, perhaps it should be hwsm, "the veil of folly off of our understanding", referring, as is thought, to (<232507>Isaiah 25:7).

Ver. 17. *Now the Lord is that Spirit*, etc..] "The Lord", to whom the heart is turned, when the veil is removed, is Jesus Christ; and he is "that Spirit", or "the Spirit": he, as God, is of a spiritual nature and essence; he is a spirit, as God is said to be, (<430424>John 4:24) he is the giver of the Spirit of God, and the very life and spirit of the law, without whom as the end of it, it is a mere dead letter: or rather as by Moses in (<470315>2 Corinthians 3:15) is meant, the law of Moses, so by the "Lord" here may be meant the Gospel of Christ: and this is that Spirit, of which the apostles were made ministers, and is said to give life, (<470306>2 Corinthians 3:6).

And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; which may be understood of the third person in the Godhead; where he is as a spirit of illumination, there is freedom from former blindness and darkness; where he is as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, there is freedom from the bondage of sin, and captivity of Satan; where he is as a comforter, there is freedom from the fear of hell, wrath, and damnation: where he is as a spirit of adoption, there is the freedom of children with a father; where he is as a spirit of prayer and supplication, there is liberty of access to God with boldness, Though rather the Gospel as attended with the Spirit of God, in opposition to the law, is here designed; and which points out another difference between the law and the Gospel; where the law is, there is bondage, it genders to it; it has a natural tendency to it: quite contrary is this to what the Jews [f33] say, who call the law, twryj, "liberty": and say,

> "that he that studies in the law, hath alkm wryj, "freedom from everything":"

whereas it gives freedom in nothing, but leads into, and brings on persons a spirit of bondage; it exacts rigorous obedience, where there is no strength to perform; it holds men guilty, curses and condemns for non-obedience; so that such as are under it, and of the works of it, are always under a spirit of bondage; they obey not from love, but fear, as servants or slaves for wages, and derive all their peace and comfort from their obedience: but

where the Gospel takes place under the influence of the Spirit of God, there is liberty; not to sin, which is contrary to the Gospel, to the Spirit of God in believers, and to the principle of grace wrought in their souls; but a liberty from the bondage and servitude of it: a liberty from the law's rigorous exaction, curse, and condemnation, and from the veil of former blindness and ignorance.

Ver. 18. *But we all with open face*, etc..] We are not like Moses, who had a veil on his face; nor like the Jews, who have one on their hearts: “but we all”; not ministers and preachers of the Gospel only, but all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, greater or lesser believers, who are enlightened by the Spirit of God, and are converted to Christ: “with open face”; which may regard the object beheld, the glory of Christ unveiled, that has no veil on it, as Moses had on his face, when he delivered the law; or the persons beholding, who are rid of Jewish darkness; the veil of the ceremonial law, and of natural darkness and blindness of mind; and so clearly and fully, comparatively speaking,

beholding as in a glass; not of the law, but of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; not with the eyes of their bodies, but with the eyes of their understandings, with the eye of faith; which sight is spiritual, delightful, and very endearing; throws a veil over all other objects, and makes souls long to be with Christ: the object beheld is

the glory of the Lord; Jesus Christ: not the glory of his human nature, which lies in its union to the Son of God, and in its names which it has by virtue of it; and in its being the curious workmanship of the Spirit of God, and so is pure and holy, and free from all sin; and was outwardly beautiful and glorious, and is so at the right hand of God, where we see him by faith, crowned with glory and honour; and shall behold him with the eyes of our bodies, and which will be fashioned like to his glorious body; but this sight and change are not yet: rather the glory of his divine nature is meant, which is essential and underived, the same with his Father's; is ineffable, and incomprehensible; it appears in the perfections he is possessed of, and in the worship given to him; it was manifested in the doctrines taught, and in the miracles wrought by him; there were some breakings forth of this glory in his state of humiliation, and were beheld by the apostles, and other believers, who saw his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father. Though the glory of Christ as Mediator, being full of grace and truth, seems to be chiefly designed; this he has from God, and had it from

everlasting; this he gives to his people, and is what makes him so glorious, lovely, and desirable in their eye: and whilst this delightful object is beheld by them, they are

changed into the same image; there was a divine image in man, in his first creation; this image was defaced by sin, and a different one took place; now in regeneration another distinct from them both is stamped, and this is the image of Christ; he himself is formed in the soul, his grace is wrought there; so that it is no wonder there is a likeness between them; which lies in righteousness and holiness, and shows itself in acts of grace, and a discharge of duty. The gradual motion of the change into this image is expressed by this phrase,

from glory to glory: not from the glory of the law to the glory of the Gospel; or from the glory of Moses to the glory of Christ; rather from the glory that is in Christ, to a glory derived in believers from him; or which seems most agreeable, from one degree of grace to another, grace here being signified by glory; or from glory begun here to glory perfect hereafter; when this image will be completed, both in soul and body; and the saints will be as perfectly like to Christ, as they are capable of, and see him as he is: now the efficient cause of all this, "is the Spirit of the Lord". It is he that takes off the veil from the heart, that we may, with open face unveiled, behold all this glory; it is he that regenerates, stamps the image of Christ, and conforms the soul to his likeness; it is he that gradually carries on the work of grace upon the soul, increases faith, enlarges the views of the glory of Christ, and the spiritual light, knowledge, and experience of the saints, and will perfect all that which concerns them; will quicken their mortal bodies, and make them like to Christ; and will for ever rest as a spirit of glory on them, both in soul and body: some read these words,

by the Lord of the Spirit, and understand them of Christ, others read them, "by the Lord the Spirit", as they very well may be rendered; and so are a proof of the true and proper deity of the Holy Spirit, who is the one Jehovah with the Father and the Son. The ancient Jews owned this;

> "the Spirit of the living God, (say [f34] they,) arwbh wnyyh, this is the Creator himself, from him all spirits are produced; blessed be he, and blessed be his name, because his name is he himself, for his name is Jehovah."

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 4

In this chapter, the apostle declares the constancy, sincerity, and integrity of him, and his fellow ministers, in preaching the Gospel; asserts the clearness and perspicuity of it; removes the charge of pride and arrogance from them; takes notice of the afflictions he and others endured, for the sake of the Gospel; what supports they had under them, and what comforts they enjoyed: in (4001 2 Corinthians 4:1) he observes, that seeing they were employed in such a ministry, as before described in the preceding chapter, though they met with troubles in it, they did not sink under them; the reason of which was, partly the excellency of the ministry, and partly the grace and mercy of God; and they were no less sincere than they were diligent; and were the reverse of the false teachers, who used dishonest methods, craftiness and deceit; these they disclaimed, and delivered out naked truth, with all simplicity and evidence, and as in the sight of God, in confirmation of which they could appeal to the consciences of all that heard them, (4002 2 Corinthians 4:2) and whereas the apostle had affirmed the plainness and clearness of the Gospel ministry, both in the preceding chapter, and in the foregoing verse, he foresaw that an objection would be raised against it, which he anticipates, (4003 2 Corinthians 4:3,4) showing, that though the Gospel was not spiritually discerned and savingly understood by some persons, yet this was not to be charged upon the Gospel, as if it was attended with darkness and obscurity; but it was owing to the unbelief of men, and the power of Satan over them, in blinding their minds; otherwise the Gospel in itself was light and glorious, in which Christ, the image of God, in a most resplendent manner appears; and those on whom Satan thus wrought were such as did not belong to God's elect, but were of the number of them that perish: moreover the integrity of the apostle and other ministers appeared in their preaching Christ, and not themselves; and in serving the churches in that way, for the sake of Christ; so that they were far from being chargeable with pride, vanity, and arrogance, (4005 2 Corinthians 4:5) and they readily acknowledged, that all the Gospel light they had was from that God, who spoke light out of darkness in the first creation, whereby they were qualified to communicate

light to others, in the name of Christ, (<47046>2 Corinthians 4:6) and though they had a treasure committed to their trust, and which they had within them, yet they freely owned they were but earthen vessels; and the reason why such treasure was put there was, that the power seen in the conversion of sinners by their ministry might appear to be not of themselves, but of the Lord, (<47047>2 Corinthians 4:7) and then the apostle proceeds to give an account of the afflictions endured by them, and of the divine supports they had, by which they were preserved from being overwhelmed with them, (<47048>2 Corinthians 4:8,9) one end of which afflictions, and which are signified by bearing the dying of Jesus in their bodies, and by being exposed to death for his sake, was, that his life might be manifest in them, or his power in the upholding of them, (<47049>2 Corinthians 4:10,11) and herein lay the difference between them and the Corinthians; the one were in deaths oft, and in very great distresses, and the other in prosperous circumstances, (<47042>2 Corinthians 4:12) but however, they had much consolation amidst their sorrows and troubles, and which they had partly through the Spirit of faith, and in a way of believing; and who after the example of David, and having the same Spirit as he had, believed and spake, (<47043>2 Corinthians 4:13) and partly through the hope of the resurrection of the dead, to which they were encouraged by the resurrection of Christ, (<47044>2 Corinthians 4:14) as also by considering what valuable ends were answered by their bearing afflictions for the sake of Christ, and preaching the Gospel, namely the good of the churches of Christ, and the glory of God, (<47045>2 Corinthians 4:15) and besides, they had an experience of the daily renovation of the inward man, or of the carrying on of the work of grace upon their souls; and of an increase of grace, right, and joy in them; and this kept them from fainting, though their outward circumstances and outward man were but in a poor condition, (<47046>2 Corinthians 4:16) but more especially what raised their spirits, and kept them from sinking under their afflictions, was the view they had of eternal glory and happiness, to which they had respect; and the comparison they were led to make between their present afflictions, and glory, which their afflictions were working for as, that their afflictions were light, glory heavy; their afflictions were but for a moment, their weight of glory was for ever; their afflictions were seen and temporal, their glory unseen and eternal; or the things of this world, which they often needed, and yet did not regard, were visible and temporary things; but the things of another world they had their eye upon were invisible, only visible to faith, and would endure for ever.

Ver. 1. *Therefore seeing we have this ministry*, etc..] The apostle having largely insisted on the difference between the law and the Gospel, the ministration of the one and of the other, proceeds to give an account of his own conduct, and that of his fellow apostles and ministers: “we”, says he, “faint not”; under all the reproaches cast upon us, persecutions raised against us, and tribulations that attend us; we do not sink in our spirits, or give out from the ministry; we go on cheerfully in our work, in the thee of all opposition, encouraged by the consideration of the excellency of the ministry, which they had from the Lord, were put into, and continued in; which was so valuable in itself, and so useful in its effects; being the ministration of the Spirit and of righteousness, having in it such an excelling glory to the law, and attended with so much light and liberty: to which he adds the consideration of the mercy of God they were partakers of,

as we have received mercy; which may refer either to the grace and mercy of God, which they had received in conversion; a sense of which abiding upon them, so influenced their minds, to hold forth the riches of abounding grace and mercy to poor sinners in the Gospel, that nothing could deter them from it; or to the grace, favour, and good will of God, in making, supporting, and continuing them as ministers of the word; all which, they were sensible, was owing not to men, but God; not to their merit, but to his mercy; not to their worthiness, parts, learning, etc.. but to his free gift, favour, and grace, by which only they were what they were, as preachers of the Gospel.

Ver. 2. *But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty*, etc..] Or “shame”; this is a further account of the conduct of the first ministers of the Gospel, and very worthy of our imitation, and in which the apostle strikes at the different manner of behaviour in the false apostles: this may respect both doctrine and practice; they abhorred and rejected everything that was scandalous and reproachful to the Gospel of Christ; in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, they had their conversation in the world; they were open and above board, both in principle and practice; the same men in public, as in private; they used no art to cover their doctrines, or hide their conversations; everything of this kind was detestable to them; whereas the false teachers took a great deal of pains to colour over both their sentiments and their lives; and “a shame it was to speak of the things that were done of them in secret”, (⁴⁰⁵²Ephesians 5:12). Moreover, they were

not walking in craftiness; they used no sly and artful methods to please men, to gain applause from them, or make merchandise of them; they did not lie in wait to deceive, watching an opportunity to work upon credulous and incautious minds; they did not, by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple; nor put on different forms, or make different appearances, in order to suit themselves to the different tempers and tastes of men, as did the false apostles:

not handling the word of God deceitfully. They did not corrupt it with human doctrines, or mix and blend it with philosophy, and vain deceit; they did not wrest the Scriptures to serve any carnal or worldly purpose; nor did they accommodate them to the lusts and passions of men; or conceal any part of truth, or keep back any thing which might be profitable to the churches:

but by the manifestation of the truth, commending themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God; that is, they with all plainness and evidence clearly preached the truth as it is in Jesus, presenting it to, and pressing it upon the consciences of men; where they left it, and to which they could appeal; and all this they did, in the sight and presence of the omniscient God, to whom they knew they must give an account of themselves and their ministry.

Ver. 3. *But if our Gospel be hid*, etc..] When the Gospel is called ours, the meaning is, not that ministers are the authors or subject of it; but it is so styled, because they are intrusted with it; it is preached by them; and is in opposition to another Gospel, the Gospel of the false apostles. Here an objection is obviated, which the apostle saw would be made against the clearness and perspicuity of the Gospel, asserted by him in the foregoing chapter; taken from some persons, who though they sat under the ministry of the word, were not enlightened by it, saw no glory nor excellency in it, nor were their minds in the least affected with it: to which he replies, saying, “if our Gospel be hid”,

it is hid to them that are lost. But why should the apostle put an if upon its being hid? is it not hid? is it not “the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom?” To which may be answered, that it was hid in God from the beginning of the world; and in Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and in the ceremonial law, which contained types and shadows of many things in it; and was hid from whole nations, and for whole ages formerly: but now God has made known the mystery of

his will; Christ is manifest in the flesh; the ceremonial law is done away, and the Gospel is preached to Jews and Gentiles; so that it is hid to none, as to the outward ministration of it: and if the internal, spiritual, and saving knowledge and experience of it is hid from any, eventually and finally, it is "to them that are lost": all mankind are in a lost and perishing condition through sin; though some will not be lost eternally, whom God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and who by the Spirit are brought savingly to believe in Christ; but there are others, that will be lost for ever; and to these the Gospel is hid; and they are such, who are left to the native blindness of their minds, and are given up to a reprobate mind, to judicial darkness, and are suffered to be under the influence of the prince of darkness, as in the following verse; now such instances are no more an objection to the clearness and perspicuity of the Gospel, and the ministration of it, than men born blind, who never could, nor never will see light, are to the bright and clear shining of the sun noon day.

Ver. 4. *In whom the god of this world hath blinded*, etc..] The description of the persons to whom the Gospel is hid, is here further carried on; in which the character of Satan is given, who is here styled "the god of this world"; just as he is by Christ, "the prince of this world", (John 12:31 14:30) not because he had any hand in the making of it, or has any concern in the government of it, or in the disposal of men or things in it; but because of his influence over the worst, and greatest part of the world; which lies in wickedness, under the power of this wicked one, being led captive by him at his will; who have voluntarily given themselves up to him, and whose lusts they will do; and so declare themselves to be his children, and him their Father, yea, their god: the influence he has over them is, he

hath blinded the minds of them that believe not. The apostle here seems to refer to one of the devils, which the Jews[f35] frequently speak of lams, "Samael"; who they say is the head of all the devils; a very malignant spirit, and who deceived our first parents; the word is compounded of la, "god", and ams, "to blind"; him they call the angel of death, and say[f36], that he hath aml[ynp Æyçja, "brought darkness upon the face of the world", or the creatures, the Gentiles: agreeably to which the apostle calls the devil, "the god that hath blinded"; what he blinds in men, is "their mind": the more excellent and knowing part of man; not the eyes of their bodies, but of their understandings; which shows the near access Satan has to the souls

of men; he penetrates into their very hearts and minds, and has an influence there: the persons whose minds he blinds, are those “who believe not”; which distinguishes them from others that perish, who never enjoyed the Gospel, and therefore he says, “in”, or “among whom”; and from true believers, on whom Satan can have no such influence; and is a reason of these men's perishing, and of Satan's influence over them; and must be understood of reprobates, and final unbelievers: the influence he has over them is expressed by “blinding” them; which he does, by diverting them from hearing the Gospel, and by stirring up the enmity of their minds against it, and by increasing their natural darkness and blindness with respect to it. The end which Satan has in doing this is,

lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them; here many things are hinted, in commendation of the Gospel, as that it is the Gospel of Christ; because he was not only the greatest and best preacher of it that ever was, but also is the author and subject of it; Christ is the sum and substance of the Gospel, the principal thing in it, or person that is spoken of therein; and then Christ who is the grand subject of the Gospel is described, in order to recommend it the more, as “the image of God”. The Jews[f37] call the Messiah, la µlx, “the image of God”; some copies, and the Complutension edition, and the Arabic version, read, “the image of the invisible God”, as in (<510115>Colossians 1:15). So Christ is as the Son of God, being the natural, substantial, essential, eternal, not created, and perfect image of his Father; and so he is as man and Mediator: further, the Gospel is said to be the “glorious” Gospel of Christ, as it must needs be, since it so clearly and illustriously sets forth the glory of Christ; contains such glorious doctrines and promises in it, and is attended with such glorious effects, where it comes with power: add to all this, that “light” is attributed to it; the Jews[f38] speak of the “light of the law”, and the law is called light; and say, that hrwt ala rwa ^ya, “there is no light but the law”; but this may be more truly said of the Gospel, by which not only persons may be notionally enlightened, who never were made really partakers of the grace of God, but is the means of spiritual and saving illumination to thousands, when it is attended with the demonstration of the Spirit: now all these excellent characters of the Gospel serve to enhance the spite and malice of Satan, in endeavouring all he can to kinder the bright shining of this glorious Gospel, to and upon any of the sons of men; and his reason for so doing is, because

he knows, that should the Gospel shine unto them, the interest and glory of Christ would be advanced, and his own would decline.

Ver. 5. *For we preach not ourselves*, etc..] These words contain a reason why the apostles behaved themselves in the manner described, (2 Corinthians 4:2) and serve to explain in what sense this inspired writer is to be understood, when he calls the Gospel our Gospel, (2 Corinthians 4:3) and most clearly proves the Gospel to be a glorious one, which he had asserted, (2 Corinthians 4:4) since Christ, and not themselves, is the subject of it, “for we preach not ourselves”. They did not preach any doctrine of their own devising; they did not set up themselves as lords over the faith and consciences of men; nor was their view in preaching to set forth their learning, parts, and eloquence, or to amass wealth and riches to themselves; nor did they assert the purity of human nature, or the power of man to do anything of himself that is spiritually good; or that justification and salvation are by works of righteousness done by men. To do any, or each, or all of these, as did the false apostles, is to preach a man's self: but so did not these faithful dispensers of the word, but they

preached Christ Jesus the Lord; that is, the doctrines respecting the person, office, and grace of Christ; as that he is truly and properly God, the eternal and only begotten Son of God, God and man in one person, the only Mediator between God and man, and the Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners; that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the true Messiah; and that this Christ is Jesus, a Saviour, the only able and willing one; and that this Jesus Christ is “Lord” of all, especially of the saints; not only as Creator, but as their head, husband, and Redeemer; that peace and reconciliation, pardon and righteousness, life and salvation, are only by him: and they also declared themselves the servants of the churches,

and ourselves your servants. The apostle does not say they were the servants of Christ, though they were, and esteemed it their greatest honour to be so; for he had no need to observe this, since this is included in their preaching him as “Lord”: nor does he say they were the servants of men, or menpleasers, for then they would not be the servants of Christ; but he asserts them to be the servants of the churches: and which must be understood, not with respect to things temporal, with which they had no concern; but with regard to things spiritual, particularly to the ministration of the word, and administration of ordinances: and this they professed to be,

for Jesus' sake; either for the sake of preaching Christ unto them; or because they were chosen and called by him to this service, and in which they were willing to continue, for the sake of his honour and interest.

Ver. 6. *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness*, etc..] The causal particle for, shows these words to be also a reason of the foregoing; either why they so clearly beheld the glory of the Lord, (<470418>2 Corinthians 4:18) or why they renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, (<470402>2 Corinthians 4:2) or why their Gospel could not be hid, (<470403>2 Corinthians 4:3) or why they did not preach themselves, but Christ, (<470405>2 Corinthians 4:5) because God had

shined in their hearts; and in this light, they saw the glory of Christ; could not bear any secret, hidden, scandalous practices; and held forth the word of light and life to others; and seeing so much of their own weakness, sinfulness, and unworthiness, dared not to preach themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; in which may be observed the character of the true God, as opposed to Satan, the god of this world, who is said to blind the minds of men, (<470406>2 Corinthians 4:6) whereas the true God is represented as the author of “light”, and as producing it by a word of “command”, and that “out” of mere “darkness”; respect is here had to the creation of all things at the beginning, when “darkness was upon the face of the deep — and God said, let there be light and there was light”, (<010102>Genesis 1:2,3). Now this character of God, as creating light in this wonderful manner, is prefaced to his giving spiritual light unto his people; because of the agreement there is between light corporeal and spiritual, in their nature and production; for as there was darkness upon the earth before there was light, so there is a natural darkness in the minds of men, before any spiritual light is infused into them; and as light was the first production out of the dark and unformed chaos, so light is the first thing that is struck into the soul in conversion; moreover, as light was the effect of almighty power, so is the spiritual illumination, or the opening of the eyes of the understandings of men, who are naturally born blind; and as light was a creation of that which was not before, so the work of grace on the soul is not an increase of, or an addition to, or an improvement of the light of nature, but it is a new light, created in the understanding; add to all this, that both corporeal and spiritual light are good, and both called “day”; the influence that God has over the hearts of men, and the effect he produces there are, he

hath shined in our hearts. The hearts of men are like this dark terraqueous globe, having no light in them; God is as the sun, the fountain of light, which shines upon them and in them; so as to give them a true sight and sense of sin, and of their lost state and condition; so as to cause them to see the fulness and suitableness of Christ as a Saviour; so as to warm their affections, and draw out their desires after Christ, his ways, truths, ordinances, and people; and so as to give them light into the mysteries of the Gospel; particularly he so shines into the hearts of some, whom be makes ministers of the Gospel, as to give more light and knowledge into Gospel truths, than he does to others; and his end in doing this, is

to give: that is, that his ministering servants may give

the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; men must be first made light in, and by the Lord, or they will never be fit and proper persons to hold forth the word of light, or to communicate light to others; God first shines into their hearts, and then they give light to others: by "the glory of God" is not meant the essential glory of God, or the perfections of his nature, though these are to be seen in the face, or person of Christ; but rather the glorious counsels of God, and scheme of salvation by Jesus Christ; or in other words, the glorious Gospel of God: and by "the knowledge" of it is designed, not a mere notional speculative knowledge of the Gospel, but an experimental one; a spiritual knowledge of the Gospel, of Christ in it, of God in Christ, and of an interest in God's salvation by Christ: now when the ministers of the word are said to give the light of this to men, or to enlighten them with this knowledge, it cannot be thought that they are the efficient causes, for such are only Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit; but only that they are instrumental, and are means in the hands of God, of bringing persons to see the fellowship of this mystery: all which is done, "in the face of Jesus Christ"; this denotes the clearness and perspicuity of their ministry, and of that knowledge which is communicated by it; (see <470312>2 Corinthians 3:12) and also the authority by which they act; it is in the name and person of Christ, in which sense the phrase is used, (<470210>2 Corinthians 2:10).

Ver. 7. *But we have, this treasure in earthen vessels*, etc..] This is a further commendation of the Gospel; and by which the apostle removes an objection against it, taken from the cross and persecutions that attend it, and the outward meanness of the ministers of it. The Gospel is called a "treasure", for not grace, nor Christ, but the Gospel is here meant; which is

so styled, because it contains rich truths, and an abundance of them; comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones, for the price of them, their antiquity, distance of place from whence they come, and their duration; because it has in it rich blessings, spiritual ones, the blessings of the new covenant, solid, substantial, and irreversible ones, and a fulness of them; and because it consists of exceeding great and precious promises, of more worth than thousands of gold and silver; free, absolute, and unconditional ones, which are yea and amen in Christ, and relate both to this, and the other world; and also because it exhibits and shows forth to us the riches of God and of Christ, of grace and of glory; which are unsearchable, substantial, satisfying, and durable: the repository, or cabinet, in which this treasure is, are "earthen vessels"; by which are meant, ministers of the word, who are so in themselves, in their own esteem, and in the esteem of others; probably the apostle might have in view (Lamentations 3:2). The doctors and scholars among the Jews are compared hereunto;

> "says R. Eleazar [f39], to what is a disciple of a wise man like, in the esteem of a man of the world? at first he is like to a golden cup; when he has conversed with him, he is like to a silver cup; and when he has received any profit by him, he is like çrh lç ˆwtyql, "to an earthen cup", which, when broken, cannot be repaired again: the law (say they) is not confirmed but by him, who makes himself srj ylkk, "as an earthen vessel" [f40]: R. Joshua [f41] was a great man in the king's palace, and he was deformed; wherefore Caesar's daughter said, wisdom is beautiful r[wkm ylkb, "in an ugly vessel"; and he brought her a simile in proof of it from wine, which is not kept in a silver vessel."

The allusion is either to the earth itself, in which treasure lies, or is hid, and out of which it is dug; or to pots and vessels made of earth, into which treasure has been used to be put; or to earthen pitchers, in which lights or lamps were formerly carried; (see Judges 7:16) where Gideon's three hundred men, are said to have empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers; they carried lamps with them to give them light, it being night when they went into the camp of Midian; and those they put into pitchers, that the Midianites might not perceive them afar off, as a Jewish commentator well observes [f42]; in like manner the Gospel put into earthen vessels is a glorious light to some, whilst it is hidden to others: yea, even lamps themselves were no other than earthen vessels, in which light was

put; for so says Maimonides [f43], a lamp, a burning light, is çrj ylk, "an earthen vessel", like a reed; and on the top of it is a little ear, which joins to it; and when it is made, a piece of old cloth is put upon the burning oil, and it continues in it; also an earthen vessel is made, in which there is a hollow place for to set the light in, and in it is gathered all that flows from the oil out of the light; and it is strengthened about the head of the candlestick, that the brass might not be hurt by the oil; and this vessel is called the house in which the light subsides, or the receptacle of the light; and which receptacle, another of the Misnic commentators says [f44], is an earthen vessel, made to put the light in; and the lamp, he also says, is like an earthen platter, sharp pointed below, etc.. and this allusion well agrees with the context, in which the Gospel is represented as a glorious light, shining in darkness, (2 Corinthians 4:4,6). The Greek word οστρακινοις, the apostle uses, signifies also "shells of fishes"; and in like manner does Philo the Jew [f45] compare the human body;

> "I am (says he) very little concerned for this mortal body which is about me, and cleaves to me οστρεου δικην, "like the shell of a fish"; though it is hurt by everyone."

And the reference may be to pearls, which are said to have been found in such shells, particularly in oysters; and is designed to express, either the frail mortal bodies of the ministers of the Gospel, comparable to brittle shells; or baked earth; or rather the outward mean despicable condition of the apostles, and preachers of the word; being men of no figure in the world, for birth, learning, or outward grandeur; and being attended with sinful infirmities also, as other men; and more especially as they were labouring under reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions, for the sake of the Gospel; (see Jeremiah 32:14). The reason why it pleased God to put such a rich and valuable treasure into the hands of persons so mean and contemptible was,

that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us: that is, that it might appear that the making of such persons ministers of the word was not of themselves, was not owing to their natural abilities, or to any diligence and industry, and acquirements of their own, or to any instructions they had received from others, but to the grace of God, and the effectual working of his power; and that the success which attended their ministrations in the conversion of sinners, and building up of saints, could only be ascribed to the exceeding greatness of divine power; and that

the supporting of them in their work, under all the persecutions raised against them, and opposition made unto them, could be attributed to nothing else; of which power, instances are given in the following verses.

Ver. 8. *We are troubled on every side*, etc..] Or afflicted; εν παντι, either "in every place", wherever we are, into whatsoever country, city, or town we enter, we are sure to meet with trouble, of one sort or another; for wherever we be, we are in the world, in which we must expect tribulation: or "always", every day and hour we live, as in (<470410>2 Corinthians 4:10,11) we are never free from one trial or another: or "by everyone"; by all sorts of persons, good and bad, professors and profane, open persecutors and false brethren; yea, some of the dear children of God, weak believers, give us trouble: or "with every sort" of trouble, inward and outward; trouble from the world, the flesh and the devil:

yet not distressed; so as to have no hope, or see no way of escape; so as to have no manner of comfort, or manifestations of the love of God; or so as to be straitened in our own souls; for notwithstanding all our troubles, we have freedom at the throne of grace, and in our ministry; we can go with liberty to God, and preach the Gospel boldly to you:

we are perplexed; and sometimes know not what to do, which way to take, what course to steer, or how we shall be relieved and supplied; we are sometimes at the utmost loss about things temporal, how we shall be provided for with food and raiment; nor are we without our perplexing thoughts, doubts, and fears, about spiritual affairs:

but not in despair; of the Lord's appearing and working salvation, both in a temporal and spiritual sense.

Ver. 9. *Persecuted, but not forsaken*, etc..] Pursued from place to place, and followed with menaces, curses, and reproaches; laid hold on, proscribed, imprisoned, and threatened with the severest tortures, and death itself; but our God never leaves us nor forsakes us; though we are followed close by evil men, and left by our friends, we are not forsaken of God:

cast down we sometimes are, as an earthen vessel; (<470407>2 Corinthians 4:7), which may be cast out of a man's hands, in order to be dashed to pieces; or as a man in wrestling, (see <490612>Ephesians 6:12) may be thrown to the ground by his antagonist, so we are sometimes foiled by sin, Satan, and the world:

but not destroyed; we are still safe in the hands of Christ, and are kept by the power of God; and, indeed, to what else can all this be ascribed? it is surprising that earthen vessels should bear and suffer so much, and not fall, or be dashed to pieces.

Ver. 10. *Always bearing about in the body*, etc..] The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, “in our body”; and the Syriac version, in this and the next clause, reads, “in our bodies”, and some copies in this read, “bodies”; continually carrying about with us, in these mortal bodies of ours, wherever we go,

the dying of the Lord Jesus; by which is meant, not the doctrine of the sufferings and death of Christ, and of salvation by a crucified Saviour, which they bore and carried about with them in a ministerial way, wherever they came and preached, but the sufferings they themselves underwent: so called, because of the likeness there is between the sufferings of Christ, and theirs; as he was traduced as a wicked man, a deceiver, and a stirrer up of sedition, so were they; as he was persecuted, so were they; as he was liable to death, and at last was delivered up to it, so were they: and also because of the union and sympathy which were between them; Christ and they were one body and one Spirit; so that what was endured by the members, the head had a fellow feeling of, and sympathy with; and reckoned what was done to them, as done to himself: and besides, the sufferings they underwent, and death they were exposed unto, were for his sake, as it is explained in the next verse:

for we which live; who are still in the land of the living, though it is almost a miracle we are, considering the circumstances we are in:

are always delivered; that is, continually exposed

to death for Jesus' sake: and the end of all these sufferings, which is expressed alike in both verses is,

that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body, or “mortal flesh”; the meaning of which is, that it might appear that Jesus, though he died, is risen again from the dead, and lives at the Father's right hand, and ever lives to make intercession for us; of which there is a full proof, inasmuch as we are supported by him under all the trials and sufferings we endure for his sake; for because he lives, we live also, amidst so many dangers and deaths, which attend us.

Ver. 11. (See Gill on "2 Corinthians 4:10").

Ver. 12. *So then death worketh in us*, etc..] This is the conclusion of the foregoing account, or the inference deduced from it; either the death, or dying of Christ, that is, the sufferings of his body, the church, for his sake, ενεργειται, "is wrought in us"; fulfilled and perfected in us; (see Colossians 1:24) or rather a corporeal death has seized upon us; the seeds of death are in us; our flesh, our bodies are mortal, dying off apace; death has already attacked us, is working on our constitutions gradually, and unpinning our tabernacles, which in a short time will be wholly took down and laid in the dust:

but life in you. Some understand these words as spoken ironically, like those in (1 Corinthians 4:8,9) but the apostle seems not to be speaking in such a strain, but in the most serious manner, and about things solemn and awful; and his meaning is, ours is the sorrow, the trouble, the affliction, and death itself, yours is the gain, the joy, the pleasure, and life; what we get by preaching the Gospel are reproach, persecution, and death; but this Gospel we preach at such expense is the savour of life unto life to you, and is the means of maintaining spiritual life in your souls, and of nourishing you up unto eternal life; and which is no small encouragement to us to go on in our work with boldness and cheerfulness: or these words regard the different state and condition of the apostle, and other ministers, and of the Corinthians; the one were in adversity, and the other in prosperity.

Ver. 13. *We having the same Spirit of faith*, etc..] By faith here is meant, not the doctrine, but the grace of faith; a believing in the doctrines of the Gospel, and in the person of Christ; an exercise of that grace upon the death and resurrection of Christ; and particularly a looking by faith in full expectation of the saints' resurrection from the dead, and eternal glory, together with a reliance on the power, faithfulness, and promises of God to support under the afflictions of this life. Now of this faith the Spirit of God is the author; this is not of ourselves, of our own power, it is the free gift of God, and a valuable gift it is; it is of the operation of God, and the produce of his almighty power; and of this the Spirit of God, in conversion, is the powerful operator: hence he is here called the "Spirit of faith". So the "third" number in the Cabalistic tree of the Jews, the intelligence sanctifying, which answers to the third person in our doctrine of the Trinity, is called [f46],

"^mwa hnwma and hnwmah ba, "the artificer of faith", and "the author or parent of faith", because from its power faith flows."

Which is the "same" in all saints; the Spirit is the same in one as in another, and so is the faith which he is the author of; (see <610101>2 Peter 1:1). Faith is the same in all the saints that have been from the beginning of the world, under the Old and New Testament dispensations; it was the same in all the churches in the apostle's time, in Rome as at Ephesus, in Ephesus as at Rome, and in Thessalonica as at Rome and Ephesus, and so in all the other churches; though it may be, the apostle may chiefly design the sameness of faith, and of the Spirit, in him and his fellow ministers, and in these Corinthians, though death was working in the one, and life in the other; which appeared in their free and bold ministration of the word, notwithstanding all they met with on account of it, in imitation and encouraged by the example of David,

according as it is written, (<191610>Psalm 116:10).

I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak: where there is true faith, and the true Spirit of faith, there will be a speaking of, for, and in the name of Christ, as there ought to be: for as "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, so with the mouth confession is made unto salvation". This is true of believers in common, sooner or later, at one time or another; but more especially of the ministers of the word, who have a firm and well grounded belief in the doctrines of the Gospel, and person of Christ; and therefore speak freely, and without any doubt and hesitation about these things, boldly, and without the fear of men, and sincerely and faithfully, as in the sight of God: hence they make Christ the main subject of their ministry, because they believe in him, and nothing can stop their mouths from speaking of him; faith, and a spirit of faith, fit for public work and service, and give freedom and boldness in the ministration of the Gospel, and are a great support under persecution for the sake of it.

Ver. 14. *Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus*, etc..] Besides having the same spirit of faith, mentioned in the preceding verse as a support under tribulation, the apostle proceeds in this, and some following verses, to take notice of other things which gave them relief under their pressures; such as the resurrection from the dead, all their afflictions being for the good of the churches and glory of God, the inward and comfortable

experiences of the love and grace of God in the midst of them, and the end and issue of them, eternal glory. The former of these is observed here; “knowing”, being firmly persuaded, and fully assured, that he “which raised up the Lord Jesus”; by whom God the Father is more especially designed, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, who were jointly concerned in raising the dead body of our Lord: shall raise us up also by Jesus; which may regard the resurrection of all the saints by Christ, not as a mere instrument, but as a co-efficient cause with the Father and Spirit: this the apostle concludes from the power of God in raising up Christ from the dead; he that is able to do the one, is certainly of power to effect the other; and also from that union there is between Christ and his people; he is the head, they are his members; and because the head is raised, the members shall be likewise. Christ's resurrection is not only the pattern, but the pledge of the resurrection of the saints. Now this doctrine, as it was fully known, and firmly believed by the apostles, was of great use to bear them up under their outward troubles; for though they were so afflicted and persecuted, death was visibly working in them, and they might expect in a short time to be laid in the grave; yet this was their consolation, that they should be raised again immortal and glorious by Christ; some copies read, “with Jesus”, and so the Vulgate Latin version: “he shall present us with you”; that is, he will present us ministers, together with you the saints, and the rest of the elect of God; first, hytwl, “to himself”, as the Syriac version adds, and then to his Father, in their full number, completely righteous and holy. These words indeed may be understood of a deliverance from temporal affliction, from that death they were labouring under, and exposed unto, and the sense be this; we firmly believe that he that raised up Christ from the dead, will deliver us from the present death of affliction, which will be a sort of resurrection from the dead, and will make us to stand by you, or in your presence; or, in other words, being thus delivered, we shall have an opportunity of visiting you, we have so long desired, and you have expected, which will be to your edification and comfort.

Ver. 15. *For all things are for your sakes*; etc..] This is a very large and comprehensive expression, and reaches to all the things of Christ, as well as of his ministers. The incarnation, obedience, death, and resurrection of Christ, are all for the sake of God's elect; and so the ministry of his apostles and servants, their gifts, graces, comforts, and experiences; and so likewise all their reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions; (see <470106>2 Corinthians

1:6). These were endured for their sakes, and tended to their establishment in the faith; were for the furtherance of the Gospel, and of the faith and joy of saints; and this gave no small pleasure and relief to them under their sufferings, that they were of such use to others. Moreover, all their deliverances, when in any imminent danger; were for the sake of the churches:

that the abundant grace; held forth in their ministrations, manifestly to be seen in supporting them under their troubles, and delivering them out of them:

might through the thanksgiving of many; for such appearances of divine goodness, (see <470111>2 Corinthians 1:11)

redound to the glory of God; which is another thing that yielded them a pleasing satisfaction, in all their distresses for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel.

Ver. 16. *For which cause we faint not*, etc..] Since our afflictions are overruled for the good of others, and the glory of God, we are not discouraged by them; our spirits do not sink under the weight of them; we do not give out from the work of the ministry because of them, but go on cheerfully therein: and the more so, since

though our outward man perish; our outward circumstances of life are very mean and despicable; we are oftentimes in a very distressed condition through hunger, thirst, nakedness, and want of the common necessaries of life; our bodies are almost worn out with fatigue, labour, and sorrow; our earthly tabernacles are tottering, and just ready to fall in pieces:

yet the inward man is renewed day by day; that is, continually; it answers to µwy µwyw, an Hebraism; (see <170211>Esther 2:11 3:4) the internal hidden man of the heart, the new man is in a prosperous condition; our souls are in good health; the work of God is comfortably carried on in us; we have sweet and repeated experiences of the love of God; we are growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ; and, like the palm tree, the more weight is hung upon it, the more it thrives; and, like the children of Israel in Egypt, the more they were afflicted the more they grew.

Ver. 17. *For our light affliction*, etc..] The difference between the present and future state of the saints is here expressed, the disparity between them shown, and the influence the one has upon the other. The present state is a

state of “affliction”. Affliction is the common lot of the children of men, but more especially of the children of God, and is here designed by “our” affliction; for these, besides their soul trouble, meet with such in the world, and from the men of it, others do not. Afflictions are appointed for them by their heavenly Father; provision is made for them, and support under them, in the covenant of grace; they are Christ's legacy to them, and by which they are conformed to him; they are always for their good, spiritual and eternal; and lie in their way to heaven, through which they must pass into the kingdom: now these their outward afflictions which are here meant, lie chiefly in the meanness of their outward circumstances; in poverty and distress, in disgrace, reproaches, and persecutions for their profession of Christ, and his truths: and in opposition to this their mean and despicable condition in the eyes of the world, their future state is signified by “glory”, as it often is in the word of God; and is of such a nature, that all the glories of this world, such as kingdoms, crowns, inheritances, possessions, riches, honour, and substance of every kind and degree, by all which the heavenly state is expressed, are but faint resemblances of it: it is the same glory Christ has entered into, is possessed of for, and will give to all his people; it will chiefly lie in communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, with angels, and one another; there will be a visible glory upon the bodies of the saints, which will be fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; and their souls will be blessed with perfect knowledge and holiness. Their affliction is represented as “light” which though it is not in itself, but often very grievous and heavy to be borne, especially when any soul trouble is added to it; yet is light, when the saint is supported by the arm of the Lord, indulged with his presence, and favoured with the discoveries of his love. The afflictions of God's people are light, when compared with their deserts, with the sufferings of Christ, the torments of the damned in hell, and the joys of heaven, which are here, by way of opposition thereunto, styled a “weight of glory”. The apostle has respect to the Hebrew word dwbk, which signifies both “weight” and “glory”, and is often used for riches, honour, and whatsoever is excellent, solid, and substantial: and here the phrase designs the weighty riches of glory, that massy crown of glory which fadeth not away, that bulky and more enduring substance, which Christ will cause them that love him to inherit. Again, the afflictions of the children of God are said to be

for a moment; they are but for a while, and that a little while; at most they are but for the present time of life, and that is but as a vapour which

appears for a little while, and then vanishes away; it is but as a moment, a point of time, in comparison of eternity: but the glory the saints are chosen and called unto, that weight of it which shall be put upon them is “eternal”, it will last for ever; it will know no end: hence it is called an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, an everlasting kingdom, everlasting habitations, an incorruptible inheritance, and a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Now the present affliction of the people of God has a considerable influence upon this; it is said here, that it

worketh for us this glory. The Jews [f47] introduce God speaking words much like these.

> “Saith the holy blessed God, I have sent them chastisements in this world, abh µlw[l µtw[wrz qzjl, “to strengthen their arms for”, or that their arms may lay hold upon the world to come.”

Now afflictions may be said to work eternal glory for the saints, not by way of merit, for they are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed; there is no proportion between them; besides, the heavenly kingdom and glory was prepared from the foundation of the world, and is a free grace gift of their heavenly Father; but they work as means of enjoying it, as the word and ordinances do; the Spirit of God makes use of them, as of the other, to work up the saints for that selfsame thing, glory: these are means of trying, exercising, and improving their graces, of weaning their hearts from this world, and drawing out their desires, hope, and expectation of another; they are the way in which believers walk to glory, and which it last issue and terminate in it; glory follows upon them, though it is not for them.

Ver. 18. *While we look not at the things which are seen*, etc..] These are the things of this world, such as riches, honours, pleasures, profits, etc.. which are visible to, and strike the senses of a natural man, and are temporal, endure but for a time, are transitory, fleeting, and quickly gone. To “look” at these things is to desire them, set the affections on them, and to make the enjoyment of them a man's chief scope and aim; and when this is the case, afflictions cannot be said to work for such, or to work them for an eternal weight of glory; but when believers have their eyes and hearts taken off of these things, they either look not at them, or with contempt upon them; “while”, and when they are in such frames of soul, afflictions are operating for their future good. Or by these things that are seen may be

meant afflictions themselves, the cross, with all that belongs to it; which also are discernible by the outward senses, and are but for a time. Now a believer is not to stand looking and poring upon his afflictions; for while he does so, they work impatience, murmurings, repinings, unbelief, etc.. but when and while he looks off of these to Christ, and to what he has done and suffered, and to the glories of another world, and to the recompense of reward, he not only finds himself supported under his present afflictions, which he does not so overlook as to despise; but he also finds his heart seeking after, and his affections set upon, and his faith, hope, and expectation raised in the views of things above, where Christ is: and so he is kept looking

at the things which are not seen; by the corporeal eye, nor by the eye of carnal sense and reason; only by the eye of faith, which is “the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen”: and these things, the joys and glories of heaven, “are eternal”; will last for ever, will never end; all which is great encouragement to faith and patience under the present afflictive dispensations of Providence.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 5

The apostle, in this chapter, enlarges upon the saints' comfortable assurance, expectation, and desire of the heavenly glory; discourses of the diligence and industry of himself and other Gospel ministers in preaching the word, with the reasons that induced them to it; and closes it with a commendation of the Gospel ministry from the important subject, sum, and substance of it. Having mentioned in the latter part of the, preceding chapter, the eternal weight of glory, the afflictions of the saints are working for, and the invisible realities of that state they are looking to, here expresses the assurance that he and others had of their interest therein; and which he signifies by an edifice, and illustrates it by its opposition to the body, which he compares to an house and tabernacle; the one is man's, the other of God, and not made with hands; the one is earthly, the other in heaven; the one is to be, and will be dissolved, the other is eternal, (2 Corinthians 5:1) and therefore it is no wonder that it should be so earnestly desired, as it is said to be in (2 Corinthians 5:2) where the desire of it is signified by groaning, which supposes something distressing, and which makes uneasy; and by an earnest longing after deliverance and happiness, and which is explained by a desire to be clothed upon with the house from heaven; where the heavenly glory is not only, as before, compared to an house, but also to a garment, which all those that are clothed with the righteousness of Christ may justly expect to be arrayed with; for these will not be found naked nor remain so, (2 Corinthians 5:3) which earnest desire after immortality and glory is more fully explained, (2 Corinthians 5:4) in which not only the body, in its present state, is again compared to a tabernacle, and the saints represented as being distressed, and so groaning whilst in it; but the cause of this groaning is suggested, which is a burden they labour under, both of sin and affliction; and yet such is the natural inclination of man to remain in the body, and his unwillingness to part from it, that he does not desire to be stripped of that, but to have the robe of immortality put upon it, that so the present mortality that attends it might be wholly swallowed up in it: and that the saints had reason to believe there was such an happiness to be enjoyed, and that they had such an interest in

it is clear; because as God had prepared that for them, he had also wrought and prepared them for that; and besides, had given them his Spirit as the earnest and pledge of it, (<470505>2 Corinthians 5:5) wherefore, as they were confidently assured of it, and considering that they were but sojourners and strangers whilst in the body, and in the present state of things, and not at home in their Father's house, and absent from Christ, (<470506>2 Corinthians 5:6) as is evident from their walking by faith in the comfortable assurance, lively hope, and earnest expectation of things future and unseen, and not in the beatific vision of them, (<470507>2 Corinthians 5:7). Hence they were very desirous, and chose rather to quit their present dwelling, the tabernacle of the body, that they might be at home, and enjoy the presence of the Lord, (<470508>2 Corinthians 5:8). And this confidence and hope of eternal things wrought in the apostle, and other faithful ministers of the word, great carefulness and diligence to serve the Lord acceptably, and discharge with faithfulness the trust reposed in them, (<470509>2 Corinthians 5:9) the reason of which concern also, or what likewise animated them to a diligent performance of their duty, was their certain appearance before the judgment seat of Christ; which appearance will be universal, and when there will be a distribution of rewards and punishments to everyone according to his works, (<470510>2 Corinthians 5:10). And besides, it was not only their own personal concern in this awful affair that engaged them to such a conduct, but the regard they had to the good of immortal souls, to whom the day of judgment must be terrible, unless they are brought to believe in Christ; and for the truth of this they could appeal both to God, and to the consciences of men, particularly the Corinthians, (<470511>2 Corinthians 5:11). And lest this should be imputed to pride and arrogance, the apostle suggests the reason why he made mention of all this, that they might have wherewith to answer the false teachers, and vindicate the faithful ministers of the Gospel, (<470512>2 Corinthians 5:12). However, let it be construed which way it will, as the effect of madness or sobriety, this he could with the greatest confidence affirm, that his view was the glory of God, and the good of souls, (<470513>2 Corinthians 5:13) and to this diligence and faithfulness in preaching the Gospel, he and others were not only moved by their desire and expectation of happiness, by the future judgment in which they must appear, and by their concern for immortal souls, that they might escape the vengeance of that day; but they were constrained thereunto by the love of Christ in dying for them, and in whom they died, (<470514>2 Corinthians 5:14) the end of which was, that they might live not to themselves, but to him that died and rose again, (<470515>2 Corinthians 5:15).

And as a further instance of their integrity and faithfulness, the apostle observes, that they had no regard to men on account of their carnal descent, and outward privileges, as the Jews; nor even did they consider Christ himself in a carnal view, or esteem of him as a temporal king, as they once did, (2 Corinthians 5:16) their sole aims and views being the spiritual good of men, and the advancement of the spiritual interest and kingdom of Christ; and the conclusion from hence is, that whoever is truly in Christ, and in his kingdom, is a new creature, and is in a new world, in a new dispensation, in which both the old things of the law, and of Heathenism, and of his former conversation are gone, and all things in doctrine, worship, and conversation are become new, (2 Corinthians 5:17). And from hence the apostle proceeds to a commendation of the Gospel dispensation, and the ministry of it, from its author God, and from the subject matter of it, reconciliation of men to God by Christ, (2 Corinthians 5:18) which is more fully explained and enlarged on, both with respect to the efficient cause of reconciliation, the objects of it, and the means and manner in which it is brought about, and also the publication of it in the Gospel by the ministers of it, (2 Corinthians 5:19) and who are described as the ambassadors of Christ, acting in the name of God, and as in the stead of Christ, for the good of men, (2 Corinthians 5:20). And closes the chapter with an account of the great propitiation, Christ, by whom reconciliation is made; as that he was in himself without sin, and yet was by imputation made sin for sinners, that they, in the same way, might be made righteous in the sight of God through him, (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Ver. 1. *For we know, that if our earthly house*, etc..] By this house is meant the body, so called from its being like a well built house, a curious piece of architecture; as an house consists of a variety of parts fitly framed and put together in just symmetry and proportion, and with an entire usefulness in all, so is the body of man; which shows the power and wisdom of God the architect: likewise, because it is the dwelling place of the soul, which makes it appear, that the soul is more excellent than the body, is independent of it, and capable of a separate existence from it: it is said to be an “earthly” house, because it is from the earth; is supported by earthly things; has its present abode on the earth, and will quickly return to it: and the earthly house of this tabernacle, in allusion to the tabernacles the patriarchs and Israelites of old dwelt in; or to the tents and tabernacles of soldiers, shepherds, travellers, and such like persons, which are soon put

up and taken down, and removed from place to place; and denotes the frailty and short continuance of our mortal bodies. So Plato [f48] calls the body γηινον σκηνος, “an earthly tabernacle”; so the Jews were wont to call the body an house, and a “tabernacle”:

> “every man (they say [f49]) has two houses, Pwgh tyb, “the house of the body”, and the house of the soul; the one is the outward, the other the inward house.”

So Abarbinel [f50] paraphrases those words, (<2Pe 1:14>Isaiah 18:4).

> ““I will consider in my dwelling place; I will return”, or again consider in my dwelling place, which is the body, for that is çpnh ˆkçm, “the tabernacle of the soul”.”

Now this tabernacle may, and will be, “dissolved”, unpinned, and taken down; which does not design an annihilation of it, but a dissolution of its union with the soul, and its separation from it: and when the apostle puts an “if” upon it, it is not to be understood as though it is uncertain whether it would be dissolved or not, unless it be said with a view to the change that will be on living saints at Christ's second coming; but it is rather a concession of the matter, and may be rendered, “though the earthly house”, etc.. or it points out the time when the saints' future happiness shall begin, “when the earthly house”, etc.. and signifies that being in the body, in some sense, retards the enjoyment of it. Now it is the saints' comfort whilst they are in it, and in a view of the dissolution of it, that they

have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens? which some understand of the glorified body upon its resurrection, as opposed to its frail, mortal, earthly frame in its present situation; though rather all this designs the happiness of the saints, which will be begun, and they shall immediately enter into, at the dissolution of their bodies, and will be consummated at the resurrection; which is all of God's building and preparing; not made by the hands of the creature; or obtained by works of righteousness done by men; and it lies in the heavens, and will continue for ever. So the [f51] Jews speak of açydq tyb, “the holy house”, in the world to come, and which they suppose is intended in (<2Pe 1:15>Isaiah 56:5 <2Pe 1:13>Proverbs 24:3). In this the saints have a present interest; they have it already built and prepared for them; they have an indubitate right and title to it through the righteousness of Christ; they have it secured

to them in Christ, their feoffee in trust, their head and representative; and they have the earnest of it, the Spirit of God in their hearts; of all which they have sure and certain knowledge: “for we know”; they are well assured of the truth of this from the promise of God, who cannot lie, from the declaration of the Gospel, the testimony of the Spirit, and the close and inseparable connection there is between the grace they have already received, and the glory that shall be hereafter.

Ver. 2. *For in this we groan earnestly*, etc..] Meaning either for this happiness we groan, or rather in this tabernacle we groan. These words are a reason of the former, proving that the saints have a building of God; and they know they have it, because they groan after it here; for the groanings of the saints are under the influence and direction of the Spirit of God, who makes intercession for them, as for grace, so for glory, according to the will of God: and this groaning is further explained by

desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven; by which is meant not the glorified body in the resurrection morn; for though the bodies of the saints will be glorious, incorruptible, powerful, and spiritual, they are not said to be celestial, nor will they be from heaven, but be raised out of the earth: besides, the apostle is speaking of an habitation the soul will go into, and is desirous of going into as soon as it removes out of the earthly house of the body, and of a clothing it desires to be clothed with as soon as it is stripped of the garment of the flesh: wherefore, by the house from heaven must be meant the heavenly glory, which departed souls immediately enter into, and are arrayed with, even the white and shining robes of purity, perfection, and glory they shall be clothed with, as soon as ever their tabernacles are unpinned and dissolved. The Jews indeed speak of a celestial body which the soul shall be clothed with immediately upon its separation from the earthly body, and much in such figurative terms as the apostle does in this, and the following verse;

> “when a man's time is come, say they [f52], to go out of this world, he does not depart until the angel of death has stripped him of the clothing of body, ((see <470504>2 Corinthians 5:4)) and when the soul is stripped of the body, by the angel of death, it goes arja apwg awhhb açblt mw, “and is clothed with that other body”, which is in paradise, of which it was stripped when it came into this world; for the soul has no pleasure but in the body, which is from thence, and it rejoices because it is stripped of the body of this world,

µylç arja açwblb çbltaw “and is clothed with another perfect clothing”.”

And a little after,

> “the holy blessed God deals well with men, for he does not strip men of their clothes until he has provided for them other clothes, more precious and better than these, except the wicked of the world, who return not to their Lord by perfect repentance; for naked they came into this world, and naked ((see 2 Corinthians 5:3)) they shall return hence.”

And in another place [f53],

> “the soul does not go up to appear before the Holy King, until it is worthy to be clothed aly[ld açwblb, “with the clothing which is above”.”

Ver. 3. *If so be that being clothed*, etc..] This supposition is made with respect to the saints who shall be alive at Christ's second coming, who will not be stripped of their bodies, and so will “not be found naked”, or disembodied, and shall have a glory at once put upon them, both soul and body; or these words are an inference from the saints' present clothing, to their future clothing, thus; “seeing we are clothed”, have not only put on the new man, and are clothed and adorned with the graces of the Spirit, but are arrayed with the best robe, the wedding garment, the robe of Christ's righteousness,

we shall not be found naked; but shall be clothed upon with the heavenly glory, as soon as we are dismissed from hence. Some read these words as a wish, “O that we were clothed, that we might not be found naked!” and so is expressive of one of the sighs, and groans, and earnest desires of the saints in their present situation after the glories of another world.

Ver. 4. *For we that are in this tabernacle do groan*, etc..] There are some of the saints who are not in the tabernacle, the body. They were in it, but now are not; their bodies are in the grave, the house appointed for all living; and their souls are in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, in everlasting habitations, in the mansions prepared in Christ's Father's house; and they have done groaning, being delivered from every oppressor, sin, Satan, and the world; are at rest from all their labours, and ate free from every burden; only the saints who are in the tabernacle of the

body, in an unsettled state, groan, being in the midst of tribulation, and not yet in the enjoyment of that happiness they are wishing for. The reason of their groaning is, because they are

burdened with the body itself, which is a clog and incumbrance to the soul in its spiritual exercises; and oftentimes by reason of its disorders and diseases a man becomes a burden to himself; but what the saints are mostly burdened with in this life, and which makes them groan the most, is the body of sin and death they carry about with them; the filth of it is nauseous, grievous, and intolerable; the guilt of it oftentimes lies very heavy on the conscience; the weight of it presses hard, and is a great hinderance to them in running their Christian race; nor have they any relief under this burden, but by looking to a sin bearing and sin atoning Saviour, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. They are also frequently burdened with Satan's temptations, with blasphemous thoughts, solicitations to sin, the fears of death, the pangs of it, and what will follow upon it; though God is faithful, who will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able to bear; however, these temptations are great burdens, and occasion many a groan: to which may be added the various afflictions of life, which though comparatively “light”, are in themselves heavy, grievous burdens, and hard to be bore; the nature, number, and continuance of them often make them so; and especially they are such, when God is pleased to hide his face, and withhold the discoveries of his love and mercy. The apostle goes on to explain what he means by desiring to be clothed,

not for that we would be unclothed; that is, of our bodies; and this he says, not through any love and liking he had to this animal life, or to the sensual methods of living here, which make natural men in love with life, and desirous of always living here; but from a principle of nature, which recoils at death, does not like a dissolution, chooses any other way of removing out of this world than by death; a translation of soul and body together to heaven, like that of Enoch and Elijah's, is more eligible even to a good man; or such a change as will be upon the living saints at the coming of Christ, which the apostle seems to have in view, who will be not unclothed of their bodies, as men are at death,

but clothed upon; as is here desired, with incorruption and immortality:

that mortality might be swallowed up of life; not that the mortal body, or the substance of the body, which is mortal, might be consumed and destroyed, but that mortality, that quality to which it is subject by sin,

might be no more: and he does not say, that “death may be swallowed up of life”, which will be done in the resurrection morn; but mortality, which being swallowed up by a translation, or such a change as will be at the last day, will prevent death: and the phrase, swallowed up, denotes the suddenness of the change, in an instant, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and that without any pain, or such agonies as usually attend death; and also the utter, final, and total abolition of mortality; so that there will never be more any appearance of it; his desire is, that it may be swallowed up “of the life”, which is properly and emphatically life, as this life is not; and means the glorious, immortal, and everlasting life, which saints enter into as soon as they are rid of their mortal bodies, and the mortality of them.

Ver. 5. *Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing*, etc..] By “the selfsame thing” is meant, either the cross, the burden of sorrows and afflictions, under which the saints groan whilst here, which God has appointed them unto, and therefore to be bore patiently by them; or that glory and immortality, which they, as vessels of mercy, were prepared by him for from everlasting; for which their bodies and souls are formed by him in creation, and for which they are made meet in regeneration, by the curious workmanship of his Spirit and grace upon them: and seeing he “is God”, and not man, who hath wrought them for this, either by his secret purposes and preparations of grace in eternity, or by his open works of creation and regeneration in time; there is no doubt but they shall certainly enjoy it, since his counsels are immutable, and he is a rock, and his work is perfect; whatever he begins he finishes, nor is he ever frustrated of his end: one of Stephens's copies adds, “and hath anointed us”, which seems to have been transcribed from (4Ø12Ø12 Corinthians 1:21).

Who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit; and therefore may be assured of possessing the inheritance, of which he is the earnest; (see 4Ø12Ø22 Corinthians 1:22).

Ver. 6. *Therefore we are always confident*, etc..] Because God has formed us for immortality and glory, and given us his Spirit as the earnest of it, we take heart, are of good courage, do not sink under our burdens, or despair of happiness, but are fully assured of enjoying what we are desirous of:

knowing that whilst we are at home in the body; or whilst we are inmates or sojourners in the body; for the body is not properly the saints' home; whilst they are in it, they are but pilgrims and strangers; the time of their abode in it is the time of their sojourning: during which time they

are absent from the Lord; not with respect to his general presence, which is everywhere, and attends all creatures, an absence from which is impossible; nor with respect to his spiritual presence, which though not always sensibly enjoyed, yet frequently; nor are the children of God ever deprived of it totally and finally; but with respect to his glorious presence, and the full enjoyment of that. Now the knowledge and consideration of this, that the present state and situation of the saints, whilst in the body, is a state of pilgrimage, and so of absence from the Lord Christ, and from their Father's house, serves to increase their confidence and assurance, that they shall not long continue so, but in a little time shall be at home, and for ever with the Lord.

Ver. 7. *For we walk by faith, and not by sight*.] Faith is a grace which answers many useful purposes; it is the eye of the soul, by which it looks to Christ for righteousness, peace, pardon, life, and salvation; the hand by which it receives him, and the foot by which it goes to him, and walks in him as it has received him; which denotes not a single act of faith, but a continued course of believing; and is expressive, not of a weak, but of a strong steady faith of glory and happiness, and of interest in it: and it is opposed to “sight”: by which is meant, not sensible communion, but the celestial vision: there is something of sight in faith; that is a seeing of the Son; and it is an evidence of things not seen, of the invisible glories of the other world; faith looks at, and has a glimpse of things not seen, which are eternal; but it is but seeing as through a glass darkly; it is not that full sight, face to face, which will be had hereafter, when faith is turned into vision.

Ver. 8. *We are confident, I say, and willing rather*, etc..] We are cheerful in our present state, being assured of future happiness; though we choose rather

to be absent from the body; that is, to die, to depart out of this world. The interval between death, and the resurrection, is a state of absence from the body, during which time the soul is disembodied, and exists in a separate state; not in a state of inactivity and sleep, for that would not be desirable, but of happiness and glory, enjoying the presence of God, and praising of him, believing and waiting for the resurrection of the body, when both will be united together again; and after that there will be no more absence, neither from the body, nor from the Lord:

and to be present with the Lord. This was promised to Christ in the everlasting covenant, that all his spiritual seed and offspring should be with

him. This he expected; it was the joy of this which was set before him, that carried him through his sufferings and death with so much cheerfulness; this is the sum of his prayers and intercession, and what all his preparations in heaven are on the account of. It is this which supports and comforts the saints under all their sorrows here, and which makes them meet death with pleasure, which otherwise is formidable and disagreeable to nature; and even desirous of parting with life, to be with Christ, which is far better.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent*, etc..] This may be understood either of the ministers of the Gospel in particular, who labour in the word and doctrine, are ambitious, as the word here used signifies, and strive to preach the Gospel, not to please men, but their Lord and master; or of saints in general, who are intent upon this, and whose highest ambition is, that whether living or dying they

may be accepted of him; both persons and services: such who are born again, who are believers in Christ, and truly love him, are earnestly desirous of doing those things which are pleasing to him; and do in the strength of Christ endeavour to perform them. Faith is a diligent, industrious, and operative grace, and makes persons like itself. As none ought to be, so none are more careful to perform good works, or more ambitious to excel others in them, and thereby please their Lord, than believers. And these are the only persons that can please him, for without faith it is impossible to please him; for these act from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory; and may they be but accepted of him, living and dying, both in this and the other world, they have the highest favour they can wish for and desire.

Ver. 10. *For we must all appear*, etc..] This is a reason why the saints are so diligent and laborious, so earnest and intent upon it, to be accepted of the Lord, because they must stand

before the judgment seat of Christ; who is appointed Judge of the whole earth, who is every way qualified for it, being God omnipotent and omniscient; and when he comes a second time will sit upon his great white throne, a symbol of purity and integrity, and will enter on this work, and finish it with the strictest justice and equity: and before him “we must all appear”; all the saints as well as others, ministers and people, persons of all ranks and conditions, of every nation, age, and sex; there will be no avoiding this judgment, all “must appear”, or “be made manifest”; they will

be set in open view, before angels and men; their persons, characters, and actions, even the most secret will be:

that everyone may receive the things done in his body; which he has performed by the members of the body as instruments thereof, or whatsoever he has done whilst in the body; and so this not only reaches to words and actions, but includes all the secret thoughts of the mind, and counsels of the heart, which will be made manifest: and when it is said, that "everyone shall receive" these; the meaning is, that he shall receive the reward of them,

according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad; the reward of good works will be of grace, and not of merit: good works will be considered at the last judgment, not as causes of eternal life and happiness, to which the saints will be adjudged; but will be produced in open court as fruits of grace, and as evidences of the truth of faith, which will justify the Judge in proceeding according to what he himself, as a Saviour, has said,

he that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned. The reward of bad works will be in strict and just proportion, according to the nature and demerit of them. The Jews say [f54], that

> "all the works which a man does in this world, apwgb, "in the body", and spirit, he must give an account of in body and spirit before he goes out of the world."

And again [f55], all the works of men are written in a book, çyb ˆh bwj ˆh, "whether good or evil", and for them all they must give account.

Ver. 11. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord*, etc..] Or the fear of the Lord; by which is meant either the grace of the fear of the Lord, implanted in the hearts of the apostles, and in which they acted in their ministry, faithfully dispensing to men the mysteries of grace; from which they could by no means be moved, because the fear of God was before their eyes, and upon their hearts; or rather the terror of the Lord in the last judgment, which will be very great, considering the awfulness of the summons, arise ye dead, and come to judgment; the appearance of the Judge, which will be sudden, surprising, and glorious; the placing of the thrones, the opening of the books, the position of the wicked, the dreadful sentence pronounced on them, and the immediate execution of it; all which the ministers of the word know from the Scriptures of truth; they know the Judge, that there will be

a general judgment, and that the day is fixed for it, though they know not the exact time: and therefore

persuade men; not that their state is good because of a little outside morality, nor to make their peace with God, or get an interest in Christ, or to convert themselves, neither of which are in the power of men to do; but they endeavour to persuade them by the best arguments they are masters of, taken from the word of God, and their own experience, that they are in a dangerous state and condition, walking in a way that leads to destruction; that they are liable to the curses of the law, the wrath of God, and everlasting ruin; that present duties of religion will not make amends for past sins, nor can their tears atone for their crimes, or any works of righteousness done by them justify them before God; and that salvation is only by Christ, who is both able and willing to save the chief of sinners: and they endeavour to persuade and encourage poor sensible sinners to venture on Christ, and believe in him to the saving of their souls. So the Arabic version reads it, “we persuade men to believe”; though when they have done all they can, these persuasions of theirs are ineffectual, without the powerful and efficacious grace of the Spirit of God; however, in so doing they discharge a good conscience, and act the faithful part to God and men:

but we are made manifest unto God; who searches the heart, and tries the reins, who knows all actions, and the secret springs of them; to him the sincerity of our hearts, and the integrity of our conduct, are fully manifest; we can appeal to him that it is his glory, and the good of souls, we have in view in all our ministrations:

and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences; that you also can bear witness to our faithfulness and honesty, to the unwearied pains we have taken, and the hearty concern we have shown for the welfare of the souls of men. One of Stephens's copies reads, “and we trust”; which agrees with the apostle's speaking in the first person plural in this, and the preceding verses.

Ver. 12. *For we commend not ourselves again to you*, etc..] We have no need to do so, being well known to you; nor do we intend it when we thus speak of ourselves, and of our ministrations:

but give you occasion to glory on our behalf; suggest some things to you which you may make use of in our favour, for the vindicating of our characters and conduct:

that you may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart; by whom are meant the false apostles who gloried in an outward show, in their learning, eloquence, and popular applause they had acquired, and not in the sincerity of their hearts, and the testimony of a good conscience, things which the true apostles of Christ were most ambitious of.

Ver. 13. *For whether we be besides ourselves*, etc..] As some took them to be, and as Festus thought the Apostle Paul was, because of the doctrines they preached, and the self-commendation they were obliged to enter into through the calumnies of their adversaries; in which they did not so much seek their own reputation, as the honour and glory of God, which was struck at through them:

it is to God; it is for his glory, and not our own, that we act this part, for which we are condemned as madmen.

Or whether we be sober; think and speak meanly of ourselves, and behave with all modesty and lowliness of mind: it is for your cause; for your instruction and imitation. The glory of God, and the good of his churches, were what concerned them in every part of life. Some refer this to the apostle's being, or not being, in an ecstasy or rapture. Others to his speaking, either of the more sublime doctrines of the Gospel, on account of which he was reckoned mad, though in the delivering of them he had nothing else but the glory of God in view; or of the lower and easier truths of it, which were more accommodated to meaner capacities; in doing which he sought their edification and advantage.

Ver. 14. *For the love of Christ constraineth us*, etc..] Or “containeth us”; holds and keeps us in our station and duty, as soldiers are held and kept together under a banner, or ensign displayed; to which the church refers, when she says, “his banner over me was love”, (Song of Solomon 2:4). Nothing more effectually keeps ministers, or other believers, in the work and service of their Lord, or more strongly obliges and constrains them to a cheerful discharge of their duty to him, and one another, than his love displayed in his covenant engagements, in his assumption of human nature,

and particularly in his dying for them, which is the instance given in the text:

because we thus judge; having well weighed, and maturely considered the affair,

that if one died for all, then were all dead; or “seeing one died for all”; for it is rather an assertion than a supposition, upon which the apostle reasons. The person designed, who died for all, is Jesus Christ, though not mentioned, and is to be supplied from the former clause. The doctrine of Christ's dying for men was well known, so that there was no need to mention his name; he is called “one”, in distinction to the “all” he died for, and as exclusive of all others, he being sufficient of himself to answer the ends of his death; and therefore is to be looked unto, and believed on, alone for salvation, and to have all the glory of it. The manner of his dying is for, or in the room and stead of all; so that he died not merely as a martyr, or by way of example, or only for their good, but as their substitute, in their room and stead, having all the sins of his people upon him, for which he made satisfaction; and this the nature of his death shows, which was a sacrifice, a ransom, a propitiation and atonement. The persons for whom Christ died are all; not every individual of mankind, but all his people, all his sheep, all the members of his church, or all the sons he, as the great Captain of salvation, brings to glory. Wherefore this text does not make for the doctrine of general redemption; for it should be observed, that it does not say that Christ died for “all men”, but for “all”; and so, agreeably to the Scriptures, may be understood of all the persons mentioned. Moreover, in the latter part of the text it is said, that those for whom Christ died, for them he rose again; he died for no more, nor for others, than those for whom he rose again: now those for whom he rose again, he rose for their justification; wherefore, if Christ rose for the justification of all men, all would be justified, or the end of Christ's resurrection would not be answered; but all men are not, nor will they be justified, some will be condemned; hence it follows, that Christ did not rise from the dead for all men, and consequently did not die for all men: besides, the “all” for whom Christ died, died with him, and through his death are dead both to the law and sin; and he died for them, that they might live, not to themselves, but to him; neither of which are true of all the individuals of mankind: to which may be added, that the context explains the all of such who are in Christ, are new creatures, are reconciled to God, whose trespasses are not imputed to them, for whom Christ was

made sin, and who are made the righteousness of God in him; which cannot be said of all men. The conclusion from hence is,

then were all dead; meaning, either that those for whom Christ died, were dead in Adam, dead in law, dead in trespasses and sins, which made it necessary for him to die for them; otherwise, there would have been no occasion for his death; yet it does not follow from hence, that Christ died for all that are in such a condition; only that those for whom Christ died were dead in this sense, admitting this to be the sense of the passage; though death in sin seems not to be intended, since that all men are dead in sin, would have been a truth, if Christ had died for none; and much less is this an effect, or what follows upon the death of Christ; nor does it capacitate, but renders men incapable of living to Christ: wherefore a mystical death in, and with Christ, seems rather to he meant; and so the Ethiopic version reads it, "in whom everyone is dead". Christ died as the head and representative of his people, and they all died in him, were crucified with him, and through his death became dead to the law, as to its curse and condemnation; and to sin, as to its damning power, being acquitted, discharged, and justified from it; the consequence of which is a deliverance from the dominion of it, whereby they become capable of living to the glory of Christ. The sense of the passage is not, that Christ died for all that were dead, but that all were dead for whom he died; which is true of them, whether in the former, or in the latter sense: the article οι, is anaphorical or relative, as Beza and Piscator observe; and the meaning is, that if Christ died for all, then all "those" were dead for whom he died.

Ver. 15. *And that he died for all, that they which live*, etc..] The end of Christ's dying for men was that they might live; live, in a legal sense, live a life of justification; and that they which live in such a sense,

should not henceforth live unto themselves: to their own lusts, and after their own wills, to either sinful self, or righteous self:

but unto him which died for them, and rose again; that is, for them, for their justification; for all those for whom Christ died, for them he rose again; and who were justified, acquitted, and discharged when he was; which cannot be said of all mankind; and which is an obligation on such persons to live to Christ, to ascribe the whole of their salvation to him, and to make his glory the end of all their actions. Some copies read, "which died for them all".

Ver. 16. *Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh*. etc..] Since the death and resurrection of Christ, which has broken down the middle wall of partition, and has took away all distinction of men, we know, we esteem, we value no man on account of his carnal descent, and fleshy privileges, as being of the Jewish nation, a descendant of Abraham, and circumcised as he was; or on account of their outward state and condition, as being rich and honourable among men, or on account of their natural parts and acquirements, their learning, wisdom, and eloquence; nor do we own any man to be a Christian, that lives after the flesh, to himself, and not to Christ; nor do we make account of the saints themselves as in this mortal state, but as they will be in the resurrection, in consequence of Christ's having died for them, and rose again.

Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh: some of them had seen him in the flesh; others valued him on account of his being of the Jewish nation, and of his relation to them according to the flesh; and all of them had formerly entertained carnal apprehensions of him, and his kingdom, as though it would be a temporal one:

yet now henceforth know we him more; no more in this mortal state, being risen from the dead; nor do we value ourselves upon having seen him in the flesh; for though such a sight and knowledge of him was desirable, yet a spiritual knowledge is much more preferable; and many there were who knew him in the flesh, who neither enjoy his spiritual presence here, nor will they be favoured with his glorious presence hereafter. Moreover, we do not judge of him as we did before we had a spiritual knowledge of him, and as our countrymen did, by his outward circumstances, by his parentage and education, his poverty and afflictions, his company and conversation, that he could not be the Messiah, the Son of God, and therefore was worthy of death; we have quite other thoughts and apprehensions of him now, believing him to be the Christ of God, a spiritual Saviour and Redeemer, whose kingdom is not of this world; we have relinquished all our national prejudices, and former notions, concerning the Messiah, his kingdom, and people. Some copies add, “after the flesh”; and the Arabic version, “yet now know we him no more in that”.

Ver. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Christ*, etc..] There's a secret being in Christ from everlasting; so all that are loved by him, espoused unto him, chosen and preserved in him, to whom he was a covenant head, surety, and representative, are in him, united to him, and one with him; not in such

sense as the Father is in him, and the human nature is in him, but as husband and wife, and head and members are one: and there is an open being in Christ at conversion, when a man believes in Christ, and gives up himself to him; faith does not put a man into Christ, but makes him appear to be in him: and such an one "is a new creature"; or, as some read it, "let him be a new creature": who understand being in Christ to be by profession, and the sense this, whoever is in the kingdom or church of Christ, who professes himself to be a Christian, ought to be a new creature: the Arabic version reads it, "he that is in the faith of Christ is a new creature". All such who are secretly in Christ from everlasting, though as yet some of them may not be new creatures, yet they shall be sooner or later; and those who are openly in him, or are converted persons, are actually so; they are a new "creation", as the words may be rendered: hçdj hyyrb, "a new creation", is a phrase often used by the Jewish [f56] doctors, and is applied by the apostle to converted persons; and designs not an outward reformation of life and manners, but an inward principle of grace, which is a creature, a creation work, and so not man's, but God's; and in which man is purely passive, as he was in his first creation; and this is a new creature, or a new man, in opposition to, and distinction from the old man, the corruption of nature; and because it is something anew implanted in the soul, which never was there before; it is not a working upon, and an improvement of the old principles of nature, but an implantation of new principles of grace and holiness; here is a new heart, and a new spirit, and in them new light and life, new affections and desires, new delights and joys; here are new eyes to see with, new ears to hear with, new feet to walk, and new hands to work and act with:

old things are passed away: the old course of living, the old way of serving God, whether among Jews or Gentiles; the old legal righteousness, old companions and acquaintance are dropped; and all external things, as riches, honours, learning, knowledge, former sentiments of religion, are relinquished:

behold, all things are become new; there is a new course of life, both of faith and holiness; a new way of serving God through Christ by the Spirit, and from principles of grace; a new, another, and better righteousness is received and embraced; new companions are sought after, and delighted in; new riches, honours, glory, a new Jerusalem, yea, new heavens, and a new earth, are expected by new creatures: or the sense of the whole may be this, if any man is entered into the kingdom of God, into the Gospel

dispensation, into a Gospel church state, which seems to be the sense of the phrase “in Christ”, in (<4828>Galatians 3:28 5:6 6:15) he is become a new creature, or is got into a new creation, as it were into a new world, whether he be a Jew or a Gentile; for with respect to the former state of either, “old things are passed away”; if a Jew, the whole Mosaic economy is abolished; the former covenant is waxen old, and vanished away; the old ordinances of circumcision and the passover are no more; the daily sacrifice is ceased, and all the other sacrifices are at an end, Christ, the great sacrifice, being offered up; the priesthood of Aaron is antiquated, there is a change of it, and of the whole law; the observance of holy, days, new moons and sabbaths, is over; the whole ceremonial law is at end; all the shadows of it are fled and gone, the things they were shadows of being come by Christ, the sum and substance of them; and there is no more a serving God in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit: and if a Gentile, all the former idols he worshipped he turns from, and his language is, “what have I to do any more with idols? or what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” all former sacrifices, superstitious rites and ceremonies, with which he worshipped them, are relinquished by him; with all other Heathenish customs, rules, and methods of conduct he had been used to: “behold, all things are become new”; to the one, and to the other; the Gospel dispensation is a new state of things; a new form of church state is erected, not national, as among the Jews, but congregational, consisting of persons gathered out of the world, and anew embodied together; new ordinances are appointed, which were never in use before, as baptism and the Lord's supper; a new and living way is opened by the blood of Christ into the holiest of all, not by the means of slain beasts, as among the Jews, nor by petty deities as with the Gentiles; a new commandment of love is enjoined all the followers of the Lamb; and another name is given them, a new name, which the mouth of the Lord their God has named, not of Jews nor Gentiles, but of Christians; and new songs are put into their mouths, even praise to God: in short, the Gospel church state seems to be, as it were, a new creation, and perhaps is meant by the new heavens and new earth, (<2365>Isaiah 65:15,17) as well as those who are the proper members of it, are new creatures in the sense before given.

Ver. 18. *And all things are of God*, etc..] A man's being brought into a Gospel church state is of God; the causing all old things to pass away, whether in the Jewish or Gentile world, is of God; the shaking of the

heavens and the earth, and the removing of those things that are shaken, the abrogation of the ceremonial law, the putting an end to all the Mosaic rites and sacrifices, the ejection of Satan out of the Heathen temples, and the abolition of Gentilism, with every thing else that comes under the names of old, and new, are of God: it is he that causes old things to pass away, and makes all things new, (see <6201>Revelation 21:1,5). Moreover, as all things in the old creation are from him, all creatures owe their beings to him, are supported in them by him, and all are made for his pleasure, and his glory so all things in the new creation are of him; the work of renovation itself is his; all the grace that is implanted in regeneration comes front him: nothing is of the creature, or to be ascribed to it. All things in redemption are of him; he drew the plan of it, called his Son to be the Redeemer, appointed and sent him as such; and particularly that branch of it, reconciliation, is of him:

who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. The work of reconciliation, or making atonement for sin, is ascribed to the Father; not that he is the author of it, for it is properly Christ's work; but because he took the first step towards it: he formed the scheme of it; he set forth his Son in his purposes and decrees to be the propitiary sacrifice; he assigned him this work in council and covenant, in promise and in prophecy, and sent him to effect it; therefore he is said to do it “by” him; that is, by his blood and sacrifice, by his sufferings and death, to which, and to which alone, the Scriptures ascribe our peace and reconciliation: and this is made to “himself”: as being the party offended, whose law was broken, against whom sin was committed, and whose justice required and demanded satisfaction:

and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; which is the Gospel of peace, the word which preaches, publishes and declares, peace made by the blood of Christ; which is a gift to ministers, and a blessing to the people. The free grace of God greatly appears in this matter; God the Father sets this work of reconciliation on foot, Christ has brought it about, and the ministers of the Gospel publish it.

Ver. 19. *To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*, etc..] This expresses and explains the subject matter of the ministration of the Gospel, especially that part of it which concerns our reconciliation with God; and declares the scheme, the author, the subjects, the way, and means, and consequence of it. The phrase, “in Christ”, may be

either joined with the word “God”, as in our version, “God was in Christ reconciling”; that is, he was in Christ drawing the scheme, fixing the method of reconciliation; his thoughts were employed about it, which were thoughts of peace; he called a council of peace, and entered into a covenant of peace with Christ, who was appointed and agreed to, to be the peacemaker. Or with the word “reconciling”, thus, God “was reconciling in Christ”; that is, by Christ; and so it denotes, as before, actual reconciliation by Christ. God, in pursuance of his purposes, council, and covenant, sent his Son to make peace; and laid our sins, and the chastisement of our peace upon him; this is the punishment of sin, whereby satisfaction was made for it, and so peace with God: or with the word “world”, thus, “God was reconciling the world in Christ”; by whom are meant, not all the individuals of mankind, for these are not all in Christ, nor all reconciled to God, multitudes dying in enmity to him, nor all interested in the blessing of non-imputation of sin; whereas each of these is said of the world: but the elect of God, who are chosen in Christ, whose peace Christ is, whose sins are not imputed to them, and against whom no charge of any avail can be laid; and particularly the people of God among the Gentiles are here designed, who are frequently called “the world” in Scripture; being the world which God loved, for whose sins Christ is the propitiation, and of the reconciling of which mention is particularly made, (<4003016>John 3:16 <6002002>1 John 2:2 <4511215>Romans 11:12,15). And this sense well agrees with the context, which signifies, that no man is regarded for his natural descent; it is no matter whether he is a Jew or a Gentile, provided he is but a new creature: for Gospel reconciliation, and the ministry of it, concern one as well as another. Moreover, this reconciliation must be considered, either as intentional, or actual, or as a publication of it in the ministry of the word; and taken either way it cannot be thought to extend to every individual person in the world: if it is to be understood intentionally, that God intended the reconciliation of the world to himself by Christ, and drew the scheme of it in him, his intentions cannot be frustrated; his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure; a scheme so wisely laid by him in his Son, cannot come to nothing, or only in part be executed; and yet this must be the case, if it was his design to reconcile every individual of mankind to himself, since a large number of them are not reconciled to him: and if the words are to be understood of an actual reconciliation of the world unto God by Christ, which sense agrees with the preceding verse, then it is out of all question, that the word “world” cannot be taken in so large a sense as to take in every man and woman in the world; since it is certain that

there are many who are not reconciled to God, who die in their sins, whose peace is not made with him, nor are they reconciled to the way of salvation by Christ: and should it be admitted that the ministry of reconciliation is here designed, which is not an offer of reconciliation to the world, but a proclamation or declaration of peace and reconciliation made by the death of Christ; this is not sent to all men; multitudes were dead before the word of reconciliation was committed to the apostles; and since, there have been great numbers who have never so much as heard of it; and even in the times of the apostles it did not reach to everyone then living: besides, the text does not speak of what God did by the ministry of his apostles, but of what he himself had been doing in his Son, and which was antecedent, and gave rise unto and was the foundation of their ministry. There was a scheme of reconciliation drawn in the counsels of God before the world began, and an actual reconciliation by the death of Christ, which is published in the Gospel, which these words contain the sum and substance of: and this reconciliation, as before, is said to be “unto himself”; to his offended justice, and for the glory of his perfections, and the reconciling of them together in the affair of salvation:

not imputing their trespasses. This was what he resolved upon from all eternity, that inasmuch as Christ was become the surety and substitute of his people, he would not impute their sins to them, or look for satisfaction for them from them; but would reckon and place them to the account of their surety, and expect satisfaction from him; and accordingly he did, and accordingly he had it. And this will, not to impute sin to his people, or not to punish for it, which existed in God from everlasting, is no other than a justification of them; for to whom the Lord does not impute sin, he imputes righteousness, and such are properly justified.

And hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation; or put it in us, as a rich and valuable treasure; for such the doctrine of peace and reconciliation, by the blood of Christ, is; a sacred deposition, committed to the trust of faithful men, to be dispensed and disposed of for the use and purpose for which it is given them.

Ver. 20. *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ*, etc..] Since God has made reconciliation by Christ, and the ministry of it is committed to us, we are ambassadors for him; we come with full powers from him, not to propose terms of peace, to treat with men about it, to offer it to them, but

to publish and proclaim it as made by him: we represent him, and God who made it by him,

as though God did beseech you by us; to regard this embassy and message of peace, which we bring from him; to consider from whence it takes its rise, what methods have been used to effect it, and how it is accomplished; which should oblige to say and sing with the angels, “glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will towards men”; and to behave in peaceable manner to all men, and one another:

we pray you in Christ's stead; representing him as if he was present before you:

be ye reconciled to God; you, who are new creatures, for whom Christ has died, and peace is made; you, the members of the church at Corinth, who upon a profession of faith have been taken into such a relation; be ye reconciled to all the dispensations of divine Providence towards you; let your wills bow, and be resigned to his, since he is the God of peace to you; and as you are reconciled by Christ as a priest, be reconciled to him as your King, and your God; to all his ordinances and appointments; to all the orders and laws of his house; conform in all things to his will and pleasure, which we, as his ambassadors, in his name and stead, have made known unto you. You ought to be all obedience to him, and never dispute anything he says or orders.

Ver. 21. *For he hath made him to be sin for us*, etc..] Christ was made of a woman, took flesh of a sinful woman; though the flesh he took of her was not sinful, being sanctified by the Spirit of God, the former of Christ's human nature: however, he appeared “in the likeness of sinful flesh”; being attended with infirmities, the effects of sin, though sinless; and he was traduced by men as a sinner, and treated as such. Moreover, he was made a sacrifice for sin, in order to make expiation and atonement for it; so the Hebrew word hajj signifies both sin and a sin offering; (see <19406>Psalm 40:6) and so αμαρτια, (<45803>Romans 8:3 <58006>Hebrews 10:6). But besides all this, he was made sin itself by imputation; the sins of all his people were transferred unto him, laid upon him, and placed to his account; he sustained their persons, and bore their sins; and having them upon him, and being chargeable with, and answerable for them, he was treated by the justice of God as if he had been not only a sinner, but a mass of sin; for to be made sin, is a stronger expression than to be made a sinner: but now that this

may appear to be only by imputation, and that none may conclude from hence that he was really and actually a sinner, or in himself so, it is said he was “made sin”; he did not become sin, or a sinner, through any sinful act of his own, but through his Father's act of imputation, to which he agreed; for it was “he” that made him sin: it is not said that men made him sin; not but that they traduced him as a sinner, pretended they knew he was one, and arraigned him at Pilate's bar as such; nor is he said to make himself so, though he readily engaged to be the surety of his people, and voluntarily took upon him their sins, and gave himself an offering for them; but he, his Father, is said to make him sin; it was he that “laid”, or “made to meet” on him, the iniquity of us all; it was he that made his soul an offering for sin, and delivered him up into the hands of justice, and to death, and that “for us”, in “our” room and stead, to bear the punishment of sin, and make satisfaction and atonement for it; of which he was capable, and for which he was greatly qualified: for he

knew no sin; which cannot be understood or pure absolute ignorance of sin; for this cannot agree with him, neither as God, nor as Mediator; he full well knew the nature of sin, as it is a transgression of God's law; he knows the origin of sin, the corrupt heart of man, and the desperate wickedness of that; he knows the demerit, and the sad consequences of it; he knows, and he takes notice of too, the sins of his own people; and he knows the sins of all wicked men, and will bring them all into judgment, convince of them, and condemn for them: but he knew no sin so as to approve of it, and like it; he hates, abhors, and detests it; he never was conscious of any sin to himself; he never knew anything of this kind by, and in himself; nor did he ever commit any, nor was any ever found in him, by men or devils, though diligently sought for. This is mentioned, partly that we may better understand in what sense he was made sin, or a sinner, which could be only by the imputation of the sins of others, since he had no sin of his own; and partly to show that he was a very fit person to bear and take away the sins of men, to become a sacrifice for them, seeing he was the Lamb of God, without spot and blemish, typified in this, as in other respects, by the sacrifices of the legal dispensation; also to make it appear that he died, and was cut off in a judicial way, not for himself, his own sins, but for the transgressions of his people; and to express the strictness of divine justice in not sparing the Son of God himself, though holy and harmless, when he had the sins of others upon him, and had made himself responsible for them. The end of his being made sin, though he himself had none, was,

that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; not the essential righteousness of God, which can neither be imparted nor imputed; nor any righteousness of God wrought in us; for it is a righteousness “in him”, in Christ, and not in ourselves, and therefore must mean the righteousness of Christ; so called, because it is wrought by Christ, who is God over all, the true God, and eternal life; and because it is approved of by God the Father, accepted of by him, for, and on the behalf of his elect, as a justifying one; it is what he bestows on them, and imputes unto them for their justification; it is a righteousness, and it is the only one which justifies in the sight of God. Now to be made the righteousness of God, is to be made righteous in the sight of God, by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. Just as Christ is made sin, or a sinner, by the imputation of the sins of others to him; so they are made righteousness, or righteous persons, through the imputation of his righteousness to them; and in no other way can the one be made sin, or the other righteousness. And this is said to be “in him”, in Christ; which shows, that though Christ's righteousness is unto all, and upon all them that believe, it is imputed to them, and put upon them; it is not anything wrought in them; it is not inherent in them. “Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength”, says the church, (Isaiah 45:24) and also, that the way in which we come by this righteousness is by being in Christ; none have it reckoned to them, but who are in him, we are first “of” God “in” Christ, and then he is made unto us righteousness. Secret being in Christ, or union to him from everlasting, is the ground and foundation of our justification, by his righteousness, as open being in Christ at conversion is the evidence of it.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 6

The apostle having given a commendation of the Gospel in the latter part of the preceding chapter, does in this address the ministers of it that were at Corinth, under the character of fellow labourers, and by way of entreaty, that they would be careful to make it appear that they had not received neither the Gospel of the grace of God, nor gifts to minister it, in vain, (4001:2 Corinthians 6:1) and in proof of the Gospel being a ministry of reconciliation, and a doctrine of free grace and salvation, which carry in them so many arguments why it should not be received in vain, the apostle in (4002:2 Corinthians 6:2) cites a passage out of (2908:Isaiah 49:8) by which it appears, that the Gospel dispensation is a time of acceptance, and of salvation; and which he accommodates to the then present time in which he lived; and is true of the whole intermediate time between the sufferings and death of Christ, which was the time in which he was helped and succoured, and his second coming, when all the elect will have been gathered in: after which he proceeds to give directions how to conduct without offence, that so no blame and reproach might fall upon the ministration of the Gospel, (4003:2 Corinthians 6:3) and proposes himself, and other faithful ministers, as examples to them, who had approved themselves as the ministers of God by their patient bearing all kind of afflictions for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel, of which a particular enumeration is given in (4004:2 Corinthians 6:4,5) and by the exercise of various other graces, virtues, and gifts bestowed upon them, and which were illustrious in them, of which there is a particular detail in (4006:2 Corinthians 6:6,7) though by reason of the different lights in which they were viewed by men, as well as the different appearances they made, and the different things that might be said of them, either through misrepresentation or ignorance, or as under different considerations, many very strange and enigmatical things are predicated of them, (4008:2 Corinthians 6:8-10) which can only be unriddled by their being possessors of the Gospel of Christ, and being partakers of the grace of God. And next the apostle addresses the members of the church at Corinth; and to make way for the exhortations he had to deliver to them, and that they might be taken in good part by them, he expresses his great regard to

them; how free he was to communicate anything that might be profitable to them, and how much his heart was enlarged with love to them, (2 Corinthians 6:11) that there was no straitness of Spirit in him towards them, though there was so much in them towards him, (2 Corinthians 6:12). Wherefore he entreats them, as his children, that as he had shown paternal love to them, they would also express filial affection and obedience to him, (2 Corinthians 6:13) and then he enters upon his exhortation to have no communion with ungodly persons; and which he confirms by five arguments taken from the disagreement of righteousness and unrighteousness, of light and darkness, of Christ and Belial, of a believer and an unbeliever, and of the temple of God and of idols, (2 Corinthians 6:14-16) by which he suggests, that as the proper characters of wicked men are unrighteousness, darkness, Belial, unbelievers, and idols, or idolaters; so the names of saints were righteousness, light, Christ, believers, and the temple of God; and in proof of the latter, he produces some passages out of (Leviticus 26:11,12 Ezekiel 36:26,27) and in the words of the prophet (Isaiah 52:11) he calls upon the Corinthians to quit the company of sinful and unclean men, to separate from them, and have nothing to do with them in things criminal and sinful; and for their encouragement to regard such an exhortation, the promises of God are mentioned; as that he will receive such persons into his protection, and will behave as a father towards them, and treat them as his sons and daughters, (2 Corinthians 6:17,18).

Ver. 1. *We then, as workers together with him*, etc..] The ministers of the Gospel are workers or labourers; their ministry is a work, and a very laborious one, which none have strength equal to, and are sufficient for; of themselves: it is a work that requires faithfulness and diligence, is honourable; and those who perform it aright deserve respect. These do not work alone: according to our version, they are “workers together with him”; meaning either God or Christ, not as co-ordinate with him, but as subordinate to him: he is the chief shepherd, they under ones; he is the chief master builder, they under workers; but inasmuch as he is with them, and they with him, he is over them, and stands by them, great honour is done them; they have encouragement to work; and hence it is that their work is successful. Though the phrase, “with him”, is not in the original text, where only one word, συνεργουντες, is used, and may be rendered “fellow workers”, or “fellow labourers”, meaning with one another: and since therefore reconciliation was made by Christ, and the ministry of it

was committed to them, and they were appointed ambassadors for him, and were in his stead, therefore, say they,

we beseech you also; you ministers also; as we have entreated the members of the church, to be reconciled to the order of the Gospel, and the laws of Christ in his house, so as fellow labourers with you, and jointly concerned in the same embassy of peace, we beseech you the ministers of the word in this church,

that ye receive not the grace of God in vain: by "the grace of God", is not meant the grace of God in regeneration, and effectual calling, which can never be received in vain; for the grace of God never fails of producing a thorough work of conversion; nor is it ever lost, but is strictly connected with eternal, glory: but by it is meant either the doctrine of grace, the Gospel of Christ, so called, because it is a declaration of the love and grace of God to sinners, ascribes salvation in part, and in whole, to the free grace of God, and is a means of implanting and increasing grace in the hearts of men. Now this may be received in vain by ministers and people, when it is but notionally received, or received in word only: when it is abused and perverted to vile purposes, and when men drop, deny it, and fall off from it; or else by the grace of God may be designed gifts of grace, qualifying for ministerial service; and the sense of the exhortation be, that they be careful that the gifts bestowed on them might not be neglected by them, but be used and improved to the advantage of the church, and the glory of Christ; by giving up themselves to study, meditation, and prayer, by labouring constantly in the word and doctrine, and by having a strict regard to their lives and conversations, "that the ministry be not blamed"; which exhortation he pursues in, and by his own example and others, in some following verses, the next being included in a "parenthesis".

Ver. 2. *For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted*, etc..] These words are a citation from (<2408>Isaiah 49:8) and are spoken by the Father to Christ, declaring he had heard him, as he always did. He heard him when he put up that prayer to him, recorded (<4801>John 17:1-26) for the glorification of himself, by strengthening him as man in his work, by raising him from the dead, setting him at his own right hand, and giving him the glory he had with him before the world was; for the good of his people, the preservation of those that were called, the conversion of them that are called, and the glorification of all the Father had given him: he heard him in the garden, and answered him; the will of God was done according to his

desire, and his will was conformed to the will of his Father, and he was delivered from the fear of death; his ends in his prayer there were answered, which were to show the greatness of his sufferings, the impossibility of man's salvation in any other way, and that there could be no alteration made in the methods of obtaining it. He heard him on the cross with respect to the deliverance of him from man, with regard to his being forsaken by God, and for the forgiveness of his enemies. Now this period of time in which he was heard on account of these several things, is called a time accepted; or, as in the Hebrew text, ˆwxr t[, "a time of good will, or acceptance"; a season in which God expressed good will to the sons of men, by sending his own Son to work out salvation for them; this was good will to men, and not to angels, to such as were ungodly, enemies, sinners, and the worst of sinners: it was a time very grateful to him; it was "the accepted year of the Lord"; the sufferings, sacrifice, satisfaction, and righteousness of his Son were well pleasing to him; because his purposes, promises, and covenant transactions had their accomplishment, his perfections were glorified, and his people saved. And it was a time of acceptance, or an acceptable time to men, since it was the day of their salvation, and therefore must be exceedingly agreeable to all such who see their need of it, know the worth of it, and are sensible that there is no other way of salvation than by him.

And in the day of salvation have I succoured thee. These words are still spoken to Christ, who whilst he was in human nature, working out the salvation of his people, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, was succoured, or helped by his Father. This help was promised to him as man, and he expected it, and exercised faith on God for it, and which was actually and punctually given him; and which is no instance of weakness in Christ, who is the mighty God, and was mighty to save; but an indication of the Father's regard to the human nature of Christ, and of his concern for the salvation of men; and also shows what power and strength were necessary to accomplish it.

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. These are the words of the apostle, applying the former to the present Gospel dispensation; which he introduces with prefixing a "behold" to each sentence, in order to raise both attention to, and admiration at what is delivered:

now is the accepted time; not that the Gospel dispensation is a milder dispensation of things, in which God will accept of an imperfect sincere obedience to his law, in the room of a perfect one; or in which Christ is now offered to sinners, and it is left to them whether they will accept of him or not: but it is so called, because God and Christ now testify their good will to the sons of men, and are ready to accept of, and embrace poor sensible sinners coming to them; and because the Gospel publishes salvation by Christ, which, as it is worthy of their acceptation, cannot but be acceptable to them: now is the day of salvation: now is salvation preached, as being done, already obtained by Christ for sinners, the chief of sinners; it is now brought home to their souls by the ministration of the Gospel under the influence of the Spirit of God; now sinners are convinced of their need of it, and that it cannot be had elsewhere; now they are made to submit to Christ, to be saved by him, and him alone, are encouraged to believe in him, and are by him actually possessed of it. “Now” is, and not yesterday was, the day of salvation; and “now”, and that for ever, that is, as long as the Gospel dispensation continues; for it will be always now till all the elect of God are gathered in. This day of grace and salvation will never be over till that time comes; it is still “now is the day of salvation”: though men may have long withstood the ministration of the Gospel, and notwithstanding their manifold sins and transgressions. There is no withstanding the “now” of grace when it comes with the power of the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 3. *Giving no offence in anything*, etc..] These words are in connection with (2 Corinthians 6:1) and to be considered either as a continuation of the exhortation to others, that they would take care to give no offence to any; or rather as an account the apostle gives of himself, and other ministers, by way of example; and is as if he had said, I Paul, Timotheus, Silvanus, and other ministers of the word, take all possible care to lay no stumblingblock in the way of the hearers of the Gospel; to give no offence to them that are without, or to them that are within, to Jew or Gentile, or to the church of God, neither by word nor writing, by doctrine or conversation, or in any way whatever: that the ministry be not blamed; the ministry of the word of reconciliation, which they had received of the Lord Jesus. The apostle knew there were persons enow who were waiting all opportunities, and taking all advantages to vilify and reproach the ministry of the Gospel, and so hinder its progress and spread; and that if that was once brought into contempt by the disagreeable conduct of the

preachers of it, there would be but little hope of success from it. Some copies read, “our ministry”; and so the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; the Ethiopic version reads, “your ministry”.

Ver. 4. *But in all things approving ourselves*, etc..] It is not sufficient for a minister of the Gospel to avoid everything that might bring any blot or scandal on his ministry; but he should in all things, and by all ways and means, proper, lawful, and laudable, approve, prove, and show himself to be a true and faithful dispenser of the word. All in such an office ought to make it appear, that they are such by behaving and conducting

as the ministers of God; as becomes such, whom he has chosen, called, and fitted for that service; and particularly in, or

by much patience; by a large, constant, and continued exercise of that grace; and by bearing patiently many things for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel, without murmuring at the hand of God, or being angry with men, and without fainting and sinking in their own spirits:

in afflictions; that is, in patiently bearing, them. This word may be considered as a general word, including all sorts of afflictions whatever, of which the following are particular species:

in necessities; want of food, drink, and raiment, being hungry, thirsty, and naked, as the apostles sometimes were: in distresses; both of bad mind; being in such straits and difficulties they know not where to look, what course to steer, or which way to turn themselves.

Ver. 5. *In stripes*, etc..] As the Apostle Paul particularly was, who was thrice beaten with rods, and five times scourged by the Jews with the scourge of forty stripes save one.

In imprisonments; under which are included bonds, in which they often were for the Gospel of Christ:

in tumults; and uproars of the people, when their lives were frequently in imminent danger: or “in tossings to and fro”; being drove from place to place through the fury of their enemies;

in labours; in a laborious ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances; or by labouring with their own hands to supply their necessities:

in watchings; being obliged to work night and day at their hand labour, and in preaching, praying, and singing psalms; which exercises they were often employed in at midnight:

in fastings; by which are meant not voluntary, but involuntary ones, through want of food to eat.

Ver. 6. *By pureness*, etc..] The apostle having observed how he, and other ministers of God, showed themselves to be such by patiently bearing everything that was afflictive and distressing to the outward man, proceeds to show how they approved themselves in other respects; and which more chiefly regard the inward man, the exercise of grace, and a spiritual behaviour: "by pureness"; of doctrine and conversation, chastity of body and mind, sincerity of heart, and integrity of life:

by knowledge; of the Scriptures of truth, the mysteries of grace; or by a prudent conduct, a walking in wisdom with caution and circumspection:

by longsuffering: not easily provoked to wrath, but bearing with patience every indignity and affront:

by kindness; gentleness, sweetness of temper and manners, affability and courteousness:

by the Holy Ghost; influencing and assisting in the exercise of every grace, and the discharge of every duty, or by the gifts of the Holy Ghost, ordinary and extraordinary:

by love unfeigned; without dissimulation, being not in word only, but in deed and in truth towards the brethren, and to all men.

Ver. 7. *By the word of truth*, etc..] By preaching the Gospel, truly, sincerely, without any adulteration of it, which comes from the God of truth, has for its subject matter Christ, who is the truth, and into which ministers are guided by the Spirit of truth, and every doctrine of which is truth:

by the power of God; accompanying the word to the conversion and salvation of multitudes of souls; or by the signs, wonders, and miracles which were wrought for the confirmation of it:

by the armour of righteousness, on the right hand, and on the left: meaning, either the whole armour of God, with which a Christian is all over

clothed from head to foot, and in the strength of Christ may engage any adversary without fear; or else particularly the sword of the Spirit in the right hand, and the shield of faith in the left, whereby both the offensive and defensive part may be acted; or, as others think, uprightness of conscience, and holiness of life and conversation; with which being blessed, though on the one hand he meets with prosperity, and on the other hand with adversity, he is not lifted up with the one, nor cast down with the other; he is moved by neither, but passes on unconcerned.

Ver. 8. *By honour and dishonour*, etc..] Some persons think and speak honourably of us, and behave in a reverent manner towards us; they wish us well, bid us God speed, receive us into their houses, and treat us with respect: others think meanly of us, speak of us with the utmost contempt, and use us as if we were the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things; so we pass through the world; this is the treatment we meet with on the right hand and on the left; nor are we much affected with it:

by evil report and good report; as it fares with our persons, so with our doctrine: some speak well of it, receive and embrace it; others blaspheme it, and have it in the utmost abhorrence; we are charged with the vilest of crimes, and our doctrines loaded with the most absurd and wicked consequences, and both branded in the most infamous manner by one set of men; and by others both our persons and principles are cleared and vindicated from all such aspersions, and are highly commended and applauded.

As deceivers; for so they were accounted, as Christ was before them, by the unbelieving Jews, and by the false apostles, as if they were the authors, or abettors, and spreaders of errors, and the instruments of leading people aside.

And yet true; true and faithful ministers of the word; true to their Lord and master; true to the trust committed to them; true to the Gospel of Christ, and to the souls of men.

Ver. 9. *As unknown, and yet well known*, etc..] Not unknown to Father, Son, and Spirit, or to one another, but to the world; and that not with respect to their outward estate, but their spiritual and eternal state; as that they were the chosen of God, the children of God, and born again; they knew not what a life they lived, or what they lived upon; and as they were unacquainted with their inward troubles, they were strangers to their

spiritual joys here, and to what they shall partake of hereafter. Moreover, something more may be intended in this word “unknown”; as that they were not owned, esteemed, and approved of by them, but slighted, despised, hated, and persecuted:

and yet well known; to God the Father, who loved them with an everlasting love, chose them in Christ, gave them to him, made a covenant with him on their account, and sent his Son to redeem them, which knowledge of them is special, eternal, affectionate, approbative, and attended with care of them; well known to Jesus Christ, who knows all that are his, specially, distinctly, perfectly, and that from everlasting, bears a strong affection for them, takes great care of them, indulges them with intimate communion with him, and openly owns and acknowledges them as his own; well known to the Spirit of God, who enlightened and quickened them, regenerated and sanctified them, wrought faith and every other grace in them, witnessed their adoption to them, led them into all truth, filled and furnished them with his gifts, and dwelt in them, and abode with them, as the seal and earnest of their future glory; and were well known to the saints, and one another: they loved each other, delighted in each other's company; they knew each other's experiences, joys, and sorrows, and, in some measure, their hearts, and even their spiritual and eternal estate.

As dying, and behold we live. They were as dying men, having the seeds of mortality in them, being subject to diseases, which bring on death; and especially as they carried about with them the dying of the Lord Jesus, were continually exposed to death, and in danger of it, lived in the views of it, had the sentence of it in themselves, and were appointed to it. And “behold”, to admiration “we live”; a natural life, which we have from God, depends upon hint, and is preserved by him amidst a thousand dangers and enemies to which it is exposed; and we live a spiritual life, a life of grace from Christ, a life of faith on him, and communion with him.

As chastened and not killed; “chastened” by men, and chastened by God; not in a way of vindictive wrath, but in a fatherly manner; but “not killed”, or put to a corporeal death by our persecutors, who have sought to take away our lives, but have not yet been suffered to do it: or by the Lord, by the means of afflictions, the messengers of death; these sometimes bring very near it, and God chastens by them, but does not as yet give over to death, because our time is not yet come, and our work not yet done.

Ver. 10. *As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing*, etc..] As to their outward appearance they are

sorrowful, and oftentimes really so on account of sin, their own and others, by reason of afflictions, temporal and spiritual; and as to the state and condition of the church of Christ, and the interest of religion: and

yet always rejoicing; not in themselves, or in any creature, but in the Lord, in the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, and salvation by him. As poor, yet making many rich. It is, generally speaking, the lot of Christ's ministers to be poor in this world; and there are some reasons for it, why it is, and should be so; as that they might be maintained by the people, which is the ordinance of God; that it might appear that Christ's kingdom is not of this world; that the faith of men might not stand in the riches of the world, but in the power of God; that ministers might not be above their work, nor neglect it, nor drop it; and that they might not be ensnared and encumbered with the things of life.

And yet making many rich: are instruments in making many souls rich in things spiritual; by showing them their spiritual poverty, stripping them of what they trusted in, and valued themselves upon; directing them where true riches are, and furnishing them with spiritual knowledge, with the knowledge of things more worth than thousands of gold and silver.

As having nothing, and yet possessing all things; for the apostles left all for Christ, were sent out bare by him; what they had they gave away, and were very destitute of worldly enjoyments: “and possessing all things”; they had food and raiment, with which they were content, what was sufficient for them, and which they had in mercy, and with a blessing; and then they enjoyed all spiritual good things; they had not only a right unto them, but were possessed of them; they had all things pertaining to life and godliness; they had Christ, and all things with him, and therefore could say as Jacob did, that they had enough, yea, that they had all things.

Ver. 11. *O ye Corinthians*, etc..] The apostle having exhorted the ministers of the church at Corinth to take care of their ministry, that they fulfil it, and that it might appear that the Gospel, and gifts fitting them to preach it, were not received in vain by them; all which he strengthens and encourages by his own example; and that of others, addresses the members of the church in a very pathetic manner, saying,

our mouth is open to you; to speak our minds freely to you; we shall hide and conceal nothing from you, we shall deal with you with all plainness and faithfulness. This seems to refer unto, and pave the way for what he afterwards says about their unequal fellowship with unbelievers:

our heart is enlarged: with love to you, and eager desires after your good; and it is from the abundance of our hearts, and hearty affection for you, that our mouth is open so freely to communicate to you.

Ver. 12. *Ye are not straitened in us*, etc..] The meaning of which is, either you are not brought into straits and difficulties by us; we do not afflict and distress you, or fill you with anguish and trouble;

but ye are straitened in your own bowels; you are distressed by some among yourselves, who ought not to be with you, with whom you should have no fellowship and communion: or thus, you have room enough in our hearts, our hearts are so enlarged with love to you, that they are large enough to hold you all; an expression, setting forth the exceeding great love, and strong affection the apostle bore to the Corinthians; when, on the other hand, they had but very little love to him comparatively; he had a heart to hold them all without being straitened for room; and among all them they could scarce find room enough in their hearts and affections for him.

Ver. 13. *Now for a recompence in the same*, etc..] That your love to me may answer mine to you; that as you have my heart, I may have yours, and the same room in your heart, as you have in mine. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “having the same recompence”; and the Arabic version renders it, “grant to me the same recompence”; and the Syriac version, “recompense to me my usuries that are with you”; that is, repay me with affection, let love be returned for love.

I speak as unto my children; which relation subsisting between us requires mutual affection; for as a father should love his children, so children should love their father:

be ye also enlarged; in your love to me, as I am to you; and then, as if he should say, you will bear with, and take in good part the following exhortation and advice.

Ver. 14. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers*, etc..] This seems to be an allusion to the law in (Deuteronomy 22:10) and to be a

mystical explanation of it; and is to be understood not as forbidding civil society and converse with unbelievers; for this is impracticable, then must believers needs go out of the world; this the many natural and civil relations subsisting among men make absolutely necessary; and in many cases is both lawful and laudable, especially when there is any opportunity or likelihood of doing them any service in a spiritual way: not is it to be understood as dehorting from entering into marriage contracts with such persons; for such marriages the apostle, in his former epistle, had allowed to be lawful, and what ought to be abode by; though believers would do well carefully to avoid such an unequal yoke, since oftentimes they are hereby exposed to many snares, temptations, distresses, and sorrows, which generally more or less follow hereon: but there is nothing in the text or context that lead to such an interpretation; rather, if any particular thing is referred to, it is to joining with unbelievers in acts of idolatry; since one of the apostle's arguments to dissuade from being unequally yoked with unbelievers is, “what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” and from the foregoing epistle it looks as if some in this church had joined with them in such practices; (see <6104>1 Corinthians 10:14,20-22). But I rather think that these words are a dissuasive in general, from having any fellowship with unbelievers in anything sinful and criminal, whether in worship or in conversation:

for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? This, with what is said in the following verse, and in the beginning of the next to that, contain reasons or arguments engaging believers to attend to the exhortation given not to keep company with unbelievers. By “righteousness” is meant righteous persons, who are made the righteousness of God in Christ, to whom Christ is made righteousness, or to whom the righteousness of Christ is imputed for justification; and who also have principles of grace and holiness in their hearts, or have the kingdom of God in them, which consists of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and who being made free from the dominion of sin, are become servants of righteousness: and by unrighteousness is designed unrighteous persons, who are destitute of a justifying righteousness, are filled with all unrighteousness, and are, as it were, a mass and lump of iniquity; now, what fellowship can there be between persons of such distant characters?

And what communion hath light with darkness? regenerate men are made light in the Lord; they are enlightened into their state and condition by

nature, to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, to behold the glory, beauty, fulness, and suitableness of Christ, so as to be sensible of their need of him, and to be able to look unto him for life and salvation; they are enlightened more or less into the doctrines of the Gospel, and the duties of religion; and their path is a shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day. Unregenerate persons are "darkness" itself; they are dark and ignorant of God in Christ, of the way of salvation by Christ, of the work of the Spirit of God upon the heart, and of the mysteries of grace; they know not themselves, nor the sad estate they are in; they are born, and brought up in darkness worse than Egyptian darkness; they go on in it, and if grace prevent not, will be cast into utter and eternal darkness. Now, what "communion" can there be between persons so different one from another? for what is more so than light and darkness? these the God of nature has divided from each other; and they are in nature irreconcilable to one another, and so they are in grace.

Ver. 15. *And what concord hath Christ with Belial*? etc..] The word "Belial" is an Hebrew word, and is only used in this place in the New Testament, but often in the Old; this word is differently read and pronounced, some copies read it "Beliar", and accordingly in the Ethiopic version it is "Belhor", and by Jerom read[f57] Belvir"; but he observes, that it is more rightly called Belial": in some copies it is "Belias", and so Tertullian[f58] read it; and Jerom[f59] says, that most corruptly read it "Belias", for "Belial": some derive it from ylb, "Beli", and hl[, "Alah", and signifies "without ascent"; one in a very low condition, of low life, that never rises up, and comes to any thing; to which Kimchi's etymology of the word seems to agree, who says[f60], that Belial is a wicked man, jylxy lbw hl[y lb, "who does not succeed, and does not prosper": others say it signifies[f61] one that is lw[ylb, "Beli Ol, without a yoke", without the yoke of the law; so Jarchi explains children of Belial, in (<5133>Deuteronomy 13:13) without yoke, who break off the yoke of God; and so say[f62] the Talmudists,

> "children of Belial, are children that break off µymç lw[, "the yoke of heaven" (i.e. the law) from their necks;"

lawless persons, who are under no subjection to God or man: others[f63] derive it from l[y, "Jaal", and ylb, "Beli", and so it signifies one that is unprofitable, does no good, and is good for nothing; and it is applied in

Scripture to any wicked person, or thing; it is commonly rendered by the Chaldee paraphrast, a “wicked man”; and by Aquila and Suidas it is interpreted, “an apostate”, and so it is rendered here in the Arabic version; sometimes the corruption of nature is called “Belial” by the Jews [f64], than which nothing can be more contrary to Christ; it is also a name of the devil; by Hesychius, “Beliar” is interpreted “a dragon”, by which name the devil is sometimes called; and here the Syriac version is, “what concord hath Christ with Satan?” most interpreters by Belial understand the devil, who has cast off the yoke of obedience to God, and is unprofitable, yea, noxious and hurtful to men; between whom and Christ there is no concord, but a perpetual enmity; and as there is no concord between Christ personal, and Belial the devil, so what can there be between Christ mystical the church, which goes by the name of Christ, (<461212>1 Corinthians 12:12) and wicked men, the sons of Belial; who have cast away the law of the Lord, are not subject to the law of God, nor can they be, and are become unprofitable to themselves, and others?

or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? such have no part, and shall have no part or portion in one and the same thing; the believer's part and portion are God, Christ, and an eternal inheritance; the unbeliever's part and portion will be in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; and therefore what part, society, or communion, can they have with one another?

Ver. 16. *And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols*? etc..] That is, what association, confederation, or covenant agreement can the saints, who are the temple of God, have with idols, or their worshippers? no more than the ark of the Lord had with Dagon, or Dagon with the ark; which when brought into his temple, and set by him, the idol fell down, and part of him was broke to pieces:

for ye are the temple of the living God; some copies read “we are”, and so the Ethiopic version. The Corinthians, not only as particular believers, were the temples of God, both with respect to their souls and bodies, but they, as a church of Christ incorporated together, were the temple of God; wherefore the apostle does not say, ye are the “temples”, but “the temple” of the living God, in allusion to the temple built by Solomon; and that in respect to him the builder of it, who was a type of Christ, the son of David, the Prince of peace, the beloved of the Lord, who was to build the temple, the Gospel church, and to bear the glory; and as Solomon's temple was

built on an eminence, on Mount Moriah, so the church is built upon a rock, higher than men, than angels, than the heavens, and out of the reach of men and devils, so as to hurt and destroy it. The matter of the temple at Jerusalem were timber of cedar, and costly stones, hewed, squared, and fitted for the building, before they were brought thither; so the proper materials of a Gospel church are such as are born of incorruptible seed, and therefore comparable to cedars; and are lively stones, hewed, fitted, and squared by the Spirit and grace of God, and put and jointed in among the saints: Solomon's temple was a very stately magnificent building; it was overlaid within with pure gold, expressing the internal glory of Christ's church, which is all glorious within, having the Lord himself to be the Glory in the midst of her: the church of Christ may be compared to the temple also, for the firmness of its foundations and pillars; Christ is the foundation of his church, and that itself is the pillar and ground of truth: that temple was holy, being set apart for the worship and service of God, as the church of Christ is sanctified by the Spirit of God, and is built up a spiritual house, to offer the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise to God: it is called the “temple of God”, because it is of his building, and where he dwells; “of the living God”, because he has life in himself, and gives both spiritual and eternal life to his people; and in opposition to the idols of the Gentiles, who have no life in them; are representations of dead men, cannot give life, nor any of the comforts of life to their votaries; and who, by worshipping them, expose themselves to eternal death. The evidence of the saints, or church of Christ being the temple of the living God, is as follows,

as God hath said, (3Le 26:11,12 2Ez 37:26,27). I will dwell in them; not by his omnipresence, so he dwells everywhere; nor by his omnipotence, so he dwells in, and with all his creatures, supporting them by the word of his power; but by his Spirit and grace, or by his spiritual and gracious presence, which he favours his people with, in the use of ordinances, and where according to his promises they may expect it:

and walk in them. This denotes the communion God is pleased to afford his church and people, and that gracious presence of his with them, whilst they are sojourners here, and passing on to the heavenly glory; as God is said to “walk in a tent and tabernacle” with the “Israelites”, whilst they were travelling through the wilderness to Canaan; so he walks in his temple, and with his church and people, whilst they are travelling home to the heavenly Canaan; he walks in them, as in his court and palace, or as in his garden, where he takes much pleasure and delight, and great notice and

care of them. R. Solomon Jarchi explains the phrase in (<3Le 26:12>Leviticus 26:12) “I will walk among you”, thus; I will walk with you in the garden of Eden, or paradise, as one of you, and ye shall not be afraid of me: but the passage regards the presence of God with his people here, and not hereafter:

and I will be their God; not as the God of nature and providence only, but as the God of all grace; as their covenant God and Father in Christ; which is the greatest happiness that can be enjoyed:

and they shall be my people: his special people, loved by him with a peculiar love, on whom he bestows peculiar blessings; and who are made a willing people, willing to be his people by powerful grace, and are formed for himself, his service, and glory: hence it follows,

Ver. 17. *Wherefore come out from among them*, etc..] Since they were the temple of the living God, built up an habitation for the Most High; since he resided among them, took his walks in the midst of them, was their God, and they were his people. These words are taken out of (<23Is 52:11>Isaiah 52:11) where the several phrases here used may be observed. They seem to be directed to the Israelites, and particularly to the priests and Levites, who bore the vessels of the Lord; and are fitly applied to believers under the Gospel dispensation, who are by Christ made priests unto God. They are usually interpreted by the Jewish writers, as a call to the Jews to come out of captivity, to quit Babylon and Persia, and the several cities and countries where they were; and are applied in (<66Re 18:4>Revelation 18:4) to mystical Babylon, the church of Rome, as a call to God's people, to leave the superstitions and idolatries of that church, lest they be partakers of her plagues; and here, by the apostle, as an exhortation to believers in general, to forsake the company and conversation of the men of the world: who may be said to come out from among them at first conversion, when they are called to forsake their own people, and their Father's house, to leave their native country, and seek an heavenly one; and when, in consequence of effectual calling grace, their conversations are different from what they were before, and from other Gentiles; when they dislike their former companions, abhor their sinful conversation, abstain from it, keep out of it, as being infectious, hurtful, and detrimental to them; when they have no fellowship with the workers of iniquity, but reprove them both by words and deeds, which is their incumbent duty: the phrase in Isaiah is, “go ye out from the midst of her”; which Kimchi interprets, “out of the midst of every

city in which thou art"; that is, in which idolaters lived; and well agrees with εκ μεσου αυτων here, "out of the midst of them":

and be ye separate, saith the Lord; this phrase is not to be met with expressly in our version of the above text in Isaiah, but is signified by several expressions in it; the words rendered "depart ye, depart ye", are by the Targum, or Chaldee paraphrase on the place, expressed by wçrpta wçrpta, "be ye separate, be ye separate", which are the very words of the apostle here; and the phrase, "touch no unclean thing", is explained by R. Aben Ezra, µlw[h twmwam wldbyç, "that they might be separate from the nations of the world" and another word, wrbh, "be ye clean", signifies such a purgation as is made by separation, by removing the clean from the unclean, by separating the wheat from the chaff. The people of God are a separate people in election, redemption, and the effectual calling, and ought to be so in their conduct and conversation; they ought to separate themselves from all superstition and will worship in religious matters, and from the evil customs and manners of the world, though they are sure to become a prey, and to expose themselves to the contempt and rage of it:

and touch not the unclean thing. The allusion is to several laws under the former dispensation, which forbid touching many things which were accounted unclean, whereby pollution was contracted, and the persons were obliged to a ceremonial cleansing; (see <03Le05 02>Leviticus 5:2,3) (<04Nu19 11>Numbers 19:11,16). It has no regard to touching, tasting, and eating any sort of food, which was forbid as unclean by the ceremonial law; for the difference between meats clean and unclean was now removed; but if anything is particularly designed by the unclean thing, it seems to be idolatry, and to be a prohibition of joining with worshippers of idols in their idolatrous practices, whereby a moral pollution is contracted; since in the beginning of the former verse it is said, "what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" though it is rather intended in general, to forbid all communion and fellowship with unclean persons and things, not to touch them, to come nigh them, or have anything to do with them:

and I will receive you; this, and what follows in the next verse, are said to encourage believers to keep at a distance from wicked and immoral persons, whose company and conversation are dishonourable, ensnaring, and defiling. These persons had been already received into the love of God, his best and strongest affections, from which there can be no separation;

and in the covenant of grace, which as it cannot be removed, so neither could they be removed out of that; they were received into the church of Christ, and had a place and a name in it, better than that of sons and daughters; and as they had been received by Christ, when they came to him as poor perishing sinners without him, so they were still received graciously, notwithstanding their many backslidings: neither of these therefore is the sense of this passage: but, that whereas by quitting society with carnal men, they would expose themselves to their resentments; the Lord here promises, that he would take them under the wings of his protection; he would take care of them and preserve them, keep them as the apple of his eye, and be a wall of fire round about them, whilst in this world; and when he had guided them by his counsel here, would "receive" them "to glory": this clause seems to be taken from the latter part of (<2352:12>Isaiah 52:12) which may be rendered, "the God of Israel will gather you"; i.e. to himself, and protect them.

Ver. 18. *And will be a father unto you*, etc..] The same is promised to Solomon, (<1071:14>2 Samuel 7:14) and said of Israel, (<2431:09>Jeremiah 31:9) which is thought to be referred unto. This is not to be understood of the first commencement of this relation, as though God now began to be their Father; nor indeed of the first manifestation of it, which had been already made to their souls by the Spirit of adoption, witnessing to their spirits that God was their Father, and they were his children; but of his acting, and continuing to act the part of a father to them; which he does, by pitying his children, sympathizing with them, and supporting them under all their trials and afflictions; by taking care of them, that they have food and raiment convenient for them; by laying up for them, as he has done in his covenant, in his Son, and in heaven; by communicating unto them, by passing by their offences and miscarriages to him, and by correcting them for their good, and at last giving them the heavenly inheritance, and putting them into the possession of it:

and ye shall be my sons and daughters. This also does not relate to the first act of adoption, when these persons first became the sons and daughters of God; for so they were by adopting grace, in the mind, counsel, and covenant of God, from eternity; as such they were considered when given to Christ, when he assumed their nature, and died to gather them together in one; and as antecedent to faith and the work of the Spirit upon their souls: nor even of the first discovery of this grace unto them; but the meaning is, that whereas they were the sons and daughters of God,

they should be treated as such; whenever he spoke to them, or dealt with them in providence, he would speak to them and deal with them as children; or it may refer to the more full and open manifestation of their sonship, before angels and men, at the appearance of Christ: to all which is added,

saith the Lord Almighty; for confirmation sake, and to encourage the faith of the saints; since he who said all this is the Lord God Almighty, and so able to perform it; and of which, and his willingness, no question is to be made, since he has said it.

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 7

This chapter begins with an inference deduced, from what is said in the latter part of the foregoing chapter, engaging to holiness of heart and life, in opposition to filthiness of flesh and spirit, (2 Corinthians 7:1) and the apostle, in order to prevail upon the Corinthians kindly to receive his exhortations, observes his own conduct, and that of his fellow ministers towards them; as that they had done them no injury by the advice they had given them, nor had they corrupted them by unsound doctrine, or had coveted their worldly substance, (2 Corinthians 7:2) not that by so saying he would insinuate as if they had been guilty of injury, corruption, and covetousness; it was far from his thoughts to suggest anything of that kind concerning them, for whom he had so great an affection, as never to separate from them, but living and dying to continue the same regards unto them, (2 Corinthians 7:3) and which he expresses, and had shown everywhere, by the freedom of speech he had used concerning them, and his boasting of them, and the joy and comfort he had in the midst of his troubles, by the good news he had received of them, (2 Corinthians 7:4), which he had in the following manner; for though when in Macedonia he had no rest, partly through outward troubles, and partly through inward fears, (2 Corinthians 7:5) yet meeting with Titus, who had been with them, and had brought an account of their state, it was a means God made use of for the comfort of him, (2 Corinthians 7:6) and it was not merely the sight of Titus that yielded him this consolation, but the comfortable reception he had met with at Corinth; and also the good effect the apostle's letter written to them had upon them, as related by Titus; what a desire they had to see him, what grief that they should sin, and by it distress him, and what a fervent affection they had for him (2 Corinthians 7:7) for which reason he did not repent of the letter he sent them, though it did produce sorrow in them, since that was of the right kind, and was but for a time, (2 Corinthians 7:8) yea, he was so far from it, that he was glad, not merely on account of their sorrow, but because their sorrow was a godly one, and issued in repentance; and so they were no losers, but gainers by the epistle, it producing such good effects, (2 Corinthians

7:9) which leads him to distinguish between a true right godly sorrow, and a worldly one, and that by their consequences; repentance and salvation following upon the one, and death upon the other, (⁴⁰⁷⁰2 Corinthians 7:10) the fruits and evidences of which godly and true repentance he makes mention of in seven particulars, by which it appeared that their sorrow and repentance were sincere and genuine, (⁴⁰⁷¹2 Corinthians 7:11) when the apostle proceeds to observe to them the end he had in view in writing to them, upon the account of the incestuous person, in which he had used great plainness and faithfulness; and this was not merely on account of him that offended, nor only on account of the person injured by him, but chiefly to testify his care of, and concern for their welfare, as a church of Christ, (⁴⁰⁷²2 Corinthians 7:12) and inasmuch as though they had been grieved, yet were now comforted, it added to the consolation of the apostle and his companions, and the more delighted they were, when they understood what a reception Titus had among them, what reverence he was had in, what respect was shown him, and care was taken of him, (⁴⁰⁷³2 Corinthians 7:13) and the rather, seeing the apostle had boasted of the liberality, generosity, and affectionate regard of the Corinthians to the ministers of the Gospel, Titus found it to be all true what he had said; so that he had no reason to be ashamed, as he must have been, had they behaved otherwise, (⁴⁰⁷⁴2 Corinthians 7:14) and still it gave him further pleasure, that by their behaviour to Titus, they had gained his heart, and increased his affection towards them; which he could not but express, whenever he called to mind, or made mention of the great respect, veneration, and obedience, they yielded to him, (⁴⁰⁷⁵2 Corinthians 7:15) and indeed it was not only in this instance, but in all others, the apostle had confidence concerning them, which heightened his joy and pleasure in them, (⁴⁰⁷⁶2 Corinthians 7:16).

Ver. 1. *Having therefore these promises*, etc..] That God will walk in his temple, and dwell in his churches, be their God, and they his people, that he will receive them, and be their Father, and they his sons and daughters; which promises they had not in hope, as Old Testament saints had the promises of the Messiah and his kingdom, and as New Testament saints have of the resurrection, the new heavens and new earth, and of appearing with Christ in glory; but in hand, in actual possession; for God was really become their God and Father, and they were his people and children; they had had communion with him, and were received, protected, and preserved by him; which promises and blessings of grace, and which are absolute and unconditional, the apostle makes use of to engage them to purity and

holiness; and is a clear proof, that the doctrine of an absolute and unconditional covenant of grace has no tendency to licentiousness, but the contrary: and that his following exhortation might be attended to, and cheerfully received, he uses a very affectionate appellation,

dearly beloved; so they were of God, being his people, his sons and daughters, adopted, justified, called, and chosen by him; and so they were by the apostle and his fellow ministers, who, as he says in a following verse, were in their hearts to die and live with them; some copies read brethren, and so the Ethiopic version. The exhortation he urges them to, and, that it might be the better received, joins himself with them in it, is,

let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit: by "the filthiness of the flesh" is meant external pollution, defilement by outward actions, actions committed in the body, whereby the man is defiled; such as all impure words, filthiness, and foolish talking, all rotten and corrupt communication, which defile a man's own body; as the tongue, a little member, when so used does, and corrupts the good manners of others; all filthy actions, as idolatry, adultery, fornication, incest, sodomy, murder, drunkenness, revellings, etc.. and everything that makes up a filthy conversation, which is to be hated, abhorred, and abstained from by the saints: by "filthiness of the spirit" is meant internal pollution, defilement by the internal acts of the mind, such as evil thoughts, lusts, pride, malice, envy, covetousness, and the like: such a distinction of Pwgh tamwj, "the filthiness of the body", and çpnh tamwj, "the filthiness of the soul", is to be met with among the Jews; who say [f65], that when a man has taken care to avoid the former, it is fit he should take care of the latter; they also call the evil imagination, or corruption of nature, "the filth of the body" [f66]. Now when the apostle says, "let us cleanse ourselves", this does not suppose that men have a power to cleanse themselves from the pollution of their nature, or the defilement of their actions; for this is God's work alone, as appears from his promises to cleanse his people from their sins; from the end of Christ's shedding his blood, and the efficacy of it; from the sanctifying influences of the Spirit; and from the prayers of the saints to God, to create in them clean hearts, to wash them thoroughly from their iniquity, and cleanse them from their sin: besides, the apostle is not here speaking either of the justification of these persons, in which sense they were already cleansed, and that thoroughly, from all their sins and iniquities; nor of the inward work of sanctification, in respect of which they

were sprinkled with clean water, and were washed in the layer of regeneration; but what the apostle respects is the exercise of both internal and external religion, which lies in purity of heart and conversation, the one not being acceptable to God without the other; he is speaking of, and exhorting to the same thing, as in the latter part of the preceding chapter; and suggests, that it becomes those who have received such gracious promises to be separate from sin and sinners, to abstain from all appearance of sin, and to have no fellowship with sinners; to lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of haughtiness, and, under a sense of either external or internal pollution, to have recourse to the fountain opened; to deal by faith with the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin, of heart, lip, and life; and which is the only effectual method a believer can make use of, to cleanse himself from sin; namely, by washing his garments, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb:

perfecting holiness in the fear of God; by "holiness" is not meant the work of sanctification upon the heart, for that is wholly the work of the Spirit of God, and not of man; he begins it, carries it on, and perfects it of himself; but holiness of life and conversation is here designed, which in conversion the people of God are called unto, and which highly becomes them: and this they are to be "perfecting"; not that a believer is able to live a life of holiness, without sin being in him, or committed by him; this is in, possible and impracticable in the present life; but the sense of the word επιτελουντες is, that he is to be carrying on a course of righteousness and holiness to the end; to the end of his life, he is to persevere as in faith, so in holiness; as he is to go on believing in Christ, so he is to go on to live soberly, righteously, and godly, to the end of his days; which requires divine power to preserve him from sin, and keep him from falling; and the grace of God, the strength of Christ, and the assistance of the Spirit, to enable him to perform acts of holiness, and the several duties of religion, and to continue in well doing: all which is to be done, "in the fear of God"; not in a servile slavish fear, a fear of hell and damnation, but in a filial fear, a reverential affection for God, an humble trust in him, and dependence on him, for grace and strength; it is that fear which has God for its author, is a blessing of the new covenant, is implanted in regeneration, and is increased by discoveries of pardoning grace; and it has God for its object, not his wrath and vindictive justice, but his goodness, grace, and mercy. This shows from what principle, and upon what views believers act in a course of righteousness and holiness; not from the fear of hell, nor from the fear of

men, or with a view to gain their applause, but as in the sight of God, from a reverential affection to him, a child like fear of him, and with a view to his glory.

Ver. 2. *Receive us*, etc..] Into your affections, let us have a place in your hearts, as you have in ours: Gospel ministers ought to be received with love and respect, both into the hearts and houses of the saints; for "he that receiveth you", says Christ, "receiveth me", (<40:10:40>Matthew 10:40). Their doctrines are to be received in the love of them, and with faith and meekness; and this may be another part of the apostle's meaning here; receive the word and ministry of reconciliation, which we as the ambassadors of Christ bring, and the several exhortations we give in his name, particularly the last mentioned: next follow reasons, or arguments, engaging, them to comply with this request,

we have wronged no man; we have done no man any injury in his person, estate, or name. There is one among you that has done wrong, and another among you that has suffered wrong, (<47:07:12>2 Corinthians 7:12) and we have given very faithful advice to the church how to behave in this affair; but, in so doing, we have neither wronged him nor you; and as not in this, so neither in any other case: if I or my fellow apostles have wronged you in anything, it is in not being "burdensome" to you for our maintenance, "forgive me this wrong", (<47:12:13>2 Corinthians 12:13) for in no other respect have we done you any: some understand this of any lordly power, or tyrannical domination they had exercised over them, denied by the apostle; we have not behaved in an insolent manner towards you, we have not lorded it over God's heritage, or claimed any dominion over your faith, or required any unreasonable obedience and submission from you:

we have corrupted no man; neither by our doctrines and principles, which are perfectly agreeable to the word of God, make for the good of souls, and tend to the glory of Christ; nor by our example, but have been careful to lead such lives and conversations as are becoming the Gospel of Christ, adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, and are patterns to them that believe; nor have we corrupted by flatteries, or with bribes, any of the leading men among you, in order to gain their good will, and thereby respect and credit among others:

we have defrauded no man, or "coveted no man"; no man's silver, gold, or apparel; we have not sought yours, but you; not to amass wealth to ourselves, but that we might be useful to your souls, for your spiritual

good, and serviceable to the glory of Christ; we have not through covetousness made merchandise of you, with feigned words, as the false apostles have done, therefore receive us.

Ver. 3. *I speak not this to condemn you*, etc..] Referring either to the exhortations before given, to have no sinful conversation with unbelievers, and to cleanse themselves from all impurity, external and internal; and to go on in a course of holiness, in the fear of God, to the end of life; or to the account just given of himself and fellow ministers; and his sense is this, the exhortations I have given must not be so understood, as though I charged and accused you with keeping company with unbelievers, or as though you were not concerned for purity of life and conversation; or when I remove the above mentioned things from myself and others, I mean not to lay them upon you, as if I thought that you had wronged, corrupted, or defrauded any; when I clear myself and others, I do not design to accuse or condemn you; my view is only to the false apostles, who have done these things, when we have not, and therefore we have the best claim to your affections:

for I have said before, you are in our hearts; you are inscribed on our hearts, engraven there, "ye are our epistle written in our hearts", (2 Corinthians 3:2) ye are not straitened in us, (2 Corinthians 6:12) you have a place and room enough in our affections, which are strong towards you, insomuch that it is our desire and resolution

to die and live with you; or together: neither death nor life shall separate our love, or destroy our friendship; there is nothing we more desire than to live with you; and should there be any occasion for it, could freely die with you, and for you.

Ver. 4. *Great is my boldness of speech towards you*, etc..] Or "liberty of speaking", which I use with you; I very freely, and without any disguise, open my mind to you; I faithfully tell you your faults; I am free in my exhortations and counsels to you, as in the case of the incestuous person, and in other instances, which is a sign of true friendship; for had I any suspicion of you, or not cordial affection for you, I should have been more reserved, more upon my guard, and have spoke and wrote with more caution: besides,

great is my glorying, or "boasting of you"; of your faith in Christ, your love to the people of God, respect to the ministers of the Gospel, obedience to us, and very great liberality to the poor saints, of which the

apostle frequently boasts in this epistle: now as speaking freely to them when present with them, or in writing to them, so glorying in them, and speaking well of them when absent, clearly showed what an opinion he had of them, and what true hearty respect he had for them:

I am filled with comfort, says he; not only with divine and spiritual consolations from God, but with the news Titus brought of the state of this church, of the good effect the apostle's reproof and advice had both upon them, and the offender among them, and of their tender and affectionate regard to him: this filled him brimful of comfort, yea, adds he,

I am exceeding joyful; I abound, I over abound in joy; such is the joy that possesses my soul, at the tidings brought me, that it superabounds all the sorrow and anguish of spirit, out of which I wrote unto you, occasioned by the unhappy affair among you: yea, it makes me inexpressibly joyful in all our tribulation; which is not small we meet with, wherever we go, in preaching the Gospel of Christ.

Ver. 5. *For when we were come into Macedonia*, etc..] Whither Paul went in quest of Titus, not finding him at Troas, (2 Corinthians 2:12,13) and where he met with him, and had the agreeable account from him of the state of this church; but here, as elsewhere, they had their troubles:

our flesh had no rest; that is, their outward man, their bodies; they were continually fatigued with preaching, disputing, fighting; what with false teachers, and violent persecutors, they had no rest in their bodies; though, in their souls, they had divine support and spiritual consolation; and it was no small addition to their joy to hear of the flourishing condition of this church:

but were troubled on every side; from every quarter, by all sorts of enemies; (see 2 Corinthians 4:8).

Without were fightings, within were fears; there seems to be an allusion to (Deuteronomy 32:25). They had continual combats with false teachers, and furious persecutors, without the church, or in the world, or in their bodies; and within the church, or in themselves, in their own minds, had many fears, lest any should be discouraged by the violence of persecutions, or be drawn aside by the doctrines of the false apostles: and as it was with the apostles in these respects, so it is with private believers: without are fightings; their outward conversation in this life is a warfare; partly with false teachers, with whom they fight the “good fight of faith”, contend for

the doctrine of faith, using the spiritual weapons of the Scriptures of truth; and partly with the men of the world, to whose rage and contempt they are exposed, and among whom they endure a great fight of afflictions, with patience, and in the exercise of faith, whereby they gain the victory over the world and partly with Satan, their avowed adversary, and implacable enemy, against whom they wrestle in the strength of Christ, making use of the whole armour God provided for them, by the help of which, through divine grace, they come off more than conquerors; and partly with the lusts and corruptions, or open prevailing iniquities which are in the world, to which they oppose themselves, and, by the power of God keeping them, are preserved from: not that their only fightings are thus without; for there is, as it were, a company of two armies within them, sin and grace, flesh and spirit, opposing each other: and hence, as well as from other causes, are "fears within"; about their interest in everlasting love, electing grace, and the covenant of grace; about the presence of God with them, and the truth of grace in them; about their interest in Christ, their sonship, their final perseverance, and enjoyment of the heavenly glory: and though these fears are not their excellencies, but their infirmities, yet this will be more or less their case, till that state takes place, when there will be no more fightings, no more fears.

Ver. 6. *Nevertheless, God that comforteth those that are cast down*, etc..] Or "humble ones": such as are humbled under the afflicting hand of God, and have low and mean apprehensions of themselves; these God looks unto, dwells with, revives their hearts, cheers their drooping spirits, and fills them with comforts; he has been used to do so with such persons; he has raised comfort to them; they may expect it, and the apostle experienced it; and which he refers to God as the author of it, as he had done in the beginning of this epistle, calling him "the God of all comfort"; he was the efficient cause, the means by which it was effected was the coming of Titus:

comforted us by the coming of Titus; to whom the apostle bore a very great affection, he being his son in a spiritual sense, a companion with him in his travels, and of great usefulness and service in the ministration of the Gospel; so that the very sight of him gave him pleasure; and the more, inasmuch as he had for some time longed to see him, that he might have some account from him of the affairs of this church.

Ver. 7. *And not by his coming only*, etc..] It was not barely by his coming, that he and his fellow ministers were so much comforted:

but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you. The church at Corinth received Titus with all respect and reverence; treated him in the most kind and tender manner; satisfied him in the affair of the incestuous person; greatly refreshed his spirits with an account of their faith in Christ, experience of the grace of God, and their regard and close attachment to the honour of religion, and the interest of the Redeemer; many comfortable opportunities had he with them, in preaching among them, and conversing with them; and the account of this added to the apostle's consolation; for the joys and comforts of one believer yield a considerable pleasure, and are matter of joy and comfort, to another:

when he told us your earnest desire; that is, of seeing the apostle, of satisfying him in the thing he had complained of, and of reformation in their conduct, and the discipline of Christ's house for the future:

your mourning; for the evil that had been committed among them; the dishonour it had brought upon the doctrine and ways of Christ; their remissness, carelessness, and neglect in discharging their duty; and the grief and sorrow occasioned hereby to the apostle:

your fervent mind toward me; in vindicating him, his character, doctrine, and conduct, against the false apostles, and others:

so that I rejoiced the more: his joy on this narrative of things abundantly exceeded his troubles and afflictions, which surrounded him on every side, and overcame and extinguished that sorrow, which had possessed him on their account; and greatly added to the joy he felt by the coming of Titus, and the consolation that he had met with at Corinth.

Ver. 8. *For though I made you sorry with a letter*, etc..] His former epistle, relating to the incestuous person:

I do not repent, though I did repent; not of writing the letter, which was wrote by divine inspiration; but of the sorrow occasioned by it, though now he did not repent of that:

for I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though it were but for a season; inasmuch as the sorrow was true, hearty, and genuine, though it

was but for a time, the apostle was entirely satisfied, and the more pleased, because of its brevity, since it was sincere.

Ver. 9. *Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry*, etc..] Their grief and sorrow, as a natural passion, was no matter or cause of joy to him; nor was this what he sought after, being what he could take no real pleasure in; for so far as that was a pain to them, it was a pain to him:

but that ye sorrowed to repentance; their sorrow issued in true evangelical repentance, and this was the ground of his rejoicing; for as there is joy in heaven among the angels, at the repentance of a sinner, so there is joy in the church below, among the saints and ministers of the Gospel, when either sinners are brought in, or backsliders returned by repentance:

for ye were made sorry after a godly sort; what gave him so much joy and satisfaction was, that their sorrow was of the right sort; it was a godly sorrow, they sorrowed after; or according to God, according to the will of God, and for sin, as it was committed against him; it was a sorrow that God wrought in them:

that ye might receive damage by us in nothing; what added to his pleasure was, that his writing to them, and the effect it produced, had not been in the least detrimental to them; things had worked so kindly, and this sorrow had wrought in such a manner, that they were not hurt in their souls, but profited; nor in their church state, they had not lost one member by it; nay, the offender himself, which was the occasion of all this trouble, was recovered and restored by these means.

Ver. 10. *For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation*, etc..] These words contain a reason, proving that they had received no damage, but profit by the sorrow that had possessed them, from the nature of it, a "godly" sorrow; a sorrow which had God for its author; it did not arise from the power of free will, nor from the dictates of a natural conscience, nor from a work of the law on their hearts, or from a fear of hell and damnation, but it sprung from the free grace of God; it was a gift of his grace, the work of his Spirit, and the produce of his almighty power; being such, which no means, as judgments, mercies, or the most powerful ministry of themselves could effect; it was owing to divine instructions; it was heightened and increased with a discovery of the love of God, and views of pardoning grace and mercy being attended with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ: it had God also for its object, as well as its author; it was a

sorrow, ahla ljmd, “which is for God”, as the Syriac version reads the words, and also the Ethiopic; on the account of God, his honour, interest, and glory; it was a sorrow for sin, because it was committed against a God of infinite holiness, justice, and truth, goodness, grace, and mercy; and it was a sorrow, κατα ψεον, “according to God”, according to the mind and will of God; it was, as it is rendered by the Arabic version, “grateful to God”; what he took notice of, observed, and approved of; and was also such a sorrow as bore some resemblance to what in God goes by the name of grieving and repenting, as that he had made man, because of sin; there being in it a displicency with sin, an hatred of it, and a repentance that ever it was committed: moreover, this sorrow is further described, from its salutary operation, it “worketh repentance”; it is the beginning of it, a part of it, an essential part of it, without which there is no true repentance; this produces it, issues in it, even in an ingenuous confession of sin, a forsaking of it, and in bringing forth fruits meet for repentance, in the life and conversation: and this repentance is unto salvation; not the cause or author of it, for that is Christ alone; nor the condition of it, but is itself a blessing of salvation, a part of it, the initial part of it, by which, and faith we enter upon the possession of salvation; it is an evidence of interest in it, and issues in the full enjoyment of it: and this, or repentance, is such as is

not to be repented of; or that is stable and immovable, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; which “never returns”, or goes back, as the Syriac version, but remains the same not repented of; for to either of them may it be applied: salvation is not to be repented of; it is not repented of by God, who repents not, neither of the thing itself, nor of the way and manner in which it is effected, nor of the persons saved by it, and his choice of them to it; nor is it repented of by them, who believe in Christ to the saving of their souls: nor is true repentance, which is connected with it, to be repented of; God does not repent of giving it, for “his gifts and calling are without repentance”; nor does the repenting sinner repent of it; nor has he any occasion, since it is unto life, even “unto eternal life”, as the Ethiopic version here renders it; and as it is called “repentance unto life”, in (<441118>Acts 11:18). This sorrow is likewise illustrated by its contrary,

but the sorrow of the world worketh death; a worldly sorrow is such, as is common to men of the world, as Cain, Pharaoh, Judas, and others; it springs from worldly selfish principles, and proceeds on worldly views; it is often nothing more than a concern for the loss of worldly things, as riches, honours, etc.. or for a disappointment in the gratification of worldly lusts

and pleasures: and this worketh death; temporal and eternal death; it sometimes brings diseases and disorders on the body, which issue in death; and sometimes puts men upon destroying themselves, as it did Ahithophel and Judas; it works in the minds of men a fearful apprehension of eternal death, and, if grace prevent not, issues in it.

Ver. 11. *For behold, this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort*, etc..] The apostle proceeds to describe godly sorrow by its effects, which are so many evidences of the sincerity and genuineness of it; some of the things mentioned are peculiar to the case of the Corinthians, and others common to evangelical repentance in any:

what carefulness it wrought in you; to remove the incestuous person from communion with them, which they were very negligent of before; to sin no more after this sort; to keep up, for the future, a more strict and regular discipline in the church; to perform good works in general, and not to offend God:

yea, what clearing of yourselves; not by denying the fact, or lessening, or defending it; but by acknowledging their neglect, praying it might be overlooked, declaring that they were not partakers of the sin; nor did they approve of it, but disliked and abhorred it, and were highly pleased with the method the apostle advised to:

yea, what indignation; not against the person of the offender, but against his sin; and not his only but their own too, in not appearing against him, and taking notice of him sooner; and particularly that they should act in such a manner, as to deserve the just rebuke of the apostle:

yea, what fear; not of hell and damnation, as in wicked men and devils, who repent not; but of God, and of grieving his ministers; and lest the corruption should spread in the church, as the apostle had suggested, “a little leaven leavens the whole lump”;

yea, what vehement desire; of seeing the apostle; of giving him full satisfaction; of behaving in quite another manner for the time to come; and to be kept from evil, and to honour God by a becoming conversation:

yea, what zeal; for God and his glory; for restoring the discipline of the church: for the doctrines of the Gospel; for the ordinances of Christ's house; for the supporting the character of the apostle, and other ministers of the word, against the false apostles:

yea, what revenge; not of persons in a private way, vengeance belongs to God; but of all disobedience, particularly that of the unhappy criminal among them, which has shown in the punishment inflicted on him by many:

in all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter; of the incestuous person: it appeared plainly that they did not consent to, and approve of his sin; and though at first they were unconcerned about it, did not mourn over it as they ought, nor make such haste to deal with the offender as they should, yet having discovered true repentance for their sloth, negligence, and indulgence, they are acquitted, and stand, in the apostle's view of them, as if they had not offended.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore, though l wrote unto you*, etc..] Meaning in his former epistle, with so much sharpness and severity, and as may have been thought too much:

I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong; not for the sake of the incestuous person only and chiefly, not merely for his correction and restoration; though these things were intended, and earnestly desired by the apostle:

nor for his cause that suffered wrong: that is, the father of the incestuous person, who had been injured by this wicked action; it was not only or merely out of favour and respect to him, and that some compensation should be made to him in a church way, by detesting the crime, casting out the offender, and declaring themselves on the side of the injured person, and against him that had done the injury:

but that our care for you, in the sight of God, might appear unto you: some copies, and the Complutensian edition, and the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, “that your care for us”, etc.. and then the sense is, that you might have an opportunity of showing your affection for us, your regard to us, how readily you obey us in all things; but the other reading is to be preferred, the meaning of which is, that the apostle in writing did not so much consult and regard the private good of any particular person, either the injurer or the injured, though these were not out of his view; but he wrote in the manner he did, chiefly that it might be manifest what a concern he had for the good and welfare of the whole church; lest that should be corrupted, and receive any damage from such a notorious delinquent being tolerated or connived at among them; and that it was such

a care and concern as was real, hearty, and sincere, was well known to God, and for the truth of which he could appeal to him.

Ver. 13. *Therefore we were comforted in your comfort*, etc..] In the comfortable situation the church was in; not in their grief and sorrow, as a natural passion, but in the effects of it as a godly sorrow; by which it appeared that their repentance was genuine, and that they were clear in the matter that had given so much trouble; and that things had so well succeeded for the welfare and more comfortable estate of the church for the future. The comfortable estate, flourishing condition, and well being of churches, yield great pleasure and consolation to the ministers of the Gospel: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, "our comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we, for the joy of Titus"; not only the repentance of the Corinthians, and the blessed effects of that, occasioned joy in the apostle; but what added to it, and increased it the more abundantly, was the joy of Titus, which he had been a partaker of during his stay with them:

because his spirit was refreshed by you all; not by one only, or a few, but by all the members of the church; he was received by them with great respect, provided for in a liberal manner, treated with all humanity and courteousness; and, above all, his mind was eased and filled with an unexpected pleasure, to find them in such an agreeable frame of mind; so sensible of their neglect of duty, so ready to reform, so united in themselves, so affected to the apostle, and so determined to abide by the order, ordinances, and truths of the Gospel, against all false teachers.

Ver. 14. *For if I have boasted anything to him of you*, etc..] As of their faith in Christ, of their liberality to the saints, their affection for him, and obedience to him as children to a father:

I am not ashamed; since these all appeared to be true; as he must have been had they been otherwise:

but as we spake all things to you in truth; that is, our preaching among you was true; all the doctrines we delivered to you were truth; our word was not yea and nay, but uniform, and all of a piece:

even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth; some understand this of the boasting which the apostle made concerning Titus, in his epistle to them, highly commending him, and which they found to be in

all things exactly true; but the words rather design his boasting of the Corinthians unto Titus, which was found to be true by him.

Ver. 15. *And his inward affection is more abundant toward you*, etc..] Or "his bowels"; denoting the tenderness of his heart, the strength of his affections, which inwardly and to a very great degree moved towards them; especially

whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all; to him, and to me by him; to the advice and orders given, which were so readily, cheerfully, and universally complied with; and

how with fear and trembling you received him; that is, with great humility and respect, with much deference to him: considering his character as a minister of the Gospel, and as one sent by the apostle to them, they embraced him with great marks of honour and esteem; for this is not to be understood of any inward slavish fear or dread of mind, or trembling of body at the sight of him, and because he came to know their estate, and with reproofs from the apostle to them.

Ver. 16. *I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things*.] That I can speak freely and boldly to you, reprove, admonish, and advise you, since you take it all in good part, as I design it; that I can confidently speak in your favour, boast of your love and obedience, which is found upon trial and by experience to be truth; and that I can promise myself every good thing from you, that is proper to ask of you, and lies in your power to perform; which he says partly to commend them for their past conduct, and partly to pave the way for what he had to say to them, concerning making a collection for the poor saints.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 8

In this chapter the apostle stirs up the Corinthians, to make a collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem, by a variety of arguments, and gives a commendation of Titus and some other brethren, who were appointed messengers to them on that account. He first sets before them the example of the Macedonian churches, who had made a liberal collection for the above persons; which the apostle calls the grace of God, and says it was bestowed on them; and it was not the generosity of one church only, but of many, and so worthy of imitation, (2 Corinthians 8:1) which generosity of theirs he illustrates by the circumstances and condition they were in, they were not only in great affliction, but in deep poverty; and yet contributed with abundance of joy, and in great liberality, (2 Corinthians 8:2) yea, this they did not only to the utmost of their power, and according to the best of their abilities; but their will was beyond their power, they had hearts to do more than they were able; and what they did, they did of themselves without being asked and urged to it, (2 Corinthians 8:3) nay, they even entreated the apostle and his fellow ministers to take the money they had collected, and either send or carry it to the poor saints at Jerusalem, and minister it to them themselves, (2 Corinthians 8:4) and which was beyond the expectation of the apostle, who knew their case; and yet it was but acting like themselves, who at first gave themselves to the Lord and to the apostles by the will of God, (2 Corinthians 8:5) and this forwardness and readiness of the Macedonian churches, or the churches themselves put the apostle upon desiring Titus to go to Corinth, and finish the collection he had begun; and which carries in it more arguments than one to excite them to this service; as that this was not only at the request of the apostle, but of the Macedonian churches, that Titus should be desired to go on this business; and besides the thing had been begun, and it would be scandalous not to finish it, (2 Corinthians 8:6) and next the apostle argues from their abounding in the exercise of other graces, which he enumerates, that they would also in this, (2 Corinthians 8:7) for to excel in one grace, and not in another, was not to their praise and honour; however, he did not urge them to this in an imperious way, and to show

and exercise his authority; but was moved unto it through the generous example of others, and that there might be a proof of their sincere love and affection to the Lord, and to his people, (<470808>2 Corinthians 8:8) but as what he wisely judged would have the greatest weight with them; he proposes to them the example of Christ, and instances in his great love to them; who though was rich became poor for them, that they might be enriched through his poverty, (<470809>2 Corinthians 8:9) and therefore should freely contribute to his poor saints. Moreover, inasmuch as the apostle did not take upon him to command, only give advice, he should be regarded; and that the rather because what he advised to was expedient for them, would be for their good, and be profitable to them; as well as prevent reproach and scandal, which would follow should they not finish what they had begun so long ago, (<470810>2 Corinthians 8:10) wherefore he exhorts them cheerfully to perform what they had shown a readiness to; and points out unto them the rule and measure of it, that it should be out of their own, what they were possessed of, and according to their ability; which be it more or less would be acceptable to God, (<470811>2 Corinthians 8:11,12) for his meaning was not that some should be eased and others burdened; but that all should communicate according to what they had, (<470813>2 Corinthians 8:13) to which he stimulates them from the hope of the recompence of reward, whenever it should be otherwise with them than it was, and things should change both with them who communicated, and with them to whom they communicated; or this was the end proposed by the apostle, that in the issue there might be an equality between them, (<470814>2 Corinthians 8:14) which he confirms and illustrates by the distribution of the manna to the Israelites, who had an equal measure, (<470815>2 Corinthians 8:15) as appears from what is said, (<021618>Exodus 16:18) next the apostle enters upon a commendation of the messengers, that were appointed and ordered to be sent to them upon this errand, and begins with Titus; and gives thanks to God, that had put it into his heart to be so solicitous about this matter, (<470816>2 Corinthians 8:16) and praises him for his forwardness in undertaking it of his own accord, and in performing it without being urged to it, (<470817>2 Corinthians 8:17) and next he commends another person, whose name is not mentioned, who was sent along with him; a person of note and fame in all the churches, (<470818>2 Corinthians 8:18) and who had the honour to be chosen by the churches for this service, (<470819>2 Corinthians 8:19) and the reason why more persons than one were sent, was to prevent any suspicion of converting the collections to wrong purposes; and to preserve and secure a good character, a character of honesty before God and men, (<470820>2

Corinthians 8:20,21). To these two a third was added, whose name also is not mentioned, and who had been proved to be a diligent man, and appeared more so in this matter upon the apostle's confidence in the Corinthians, that they would readily attend to the service these were sent to promote, (<470822>2 Corinthians 8:22) and thus having separately given the characters of these men, they are all of them commended again; Titus, as the apostle's partner and fellow helper; and the other brethren as the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ, (<470823>2 Corinthians 8:23) and the chapter is concluded with an exhortation to the members of the church at Corinth, to give these messengers a proof of their love to the poor saints before all the churches, and make it appear that he had not boasted of them in vain, (<470824>2 Corinthians 8:24).

Ver. 1. *Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God*, etc..] The apostle having said everything that was proper to conciliate the minds and affections of the Corinthians to him, and the matter in difference being adjusted to the satisfaction of all parties concerned; he proposes what he had wisely postponed till all was over, the making a collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem; which he enforces by the example of the Macedonian churches, the churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, etc.. He addresses them in a kind and tender manner, under the endearing appellation of “brethren”, being so in a spiritual relation; and takes the liberty to inform them of the goodness of God to some of their sister churches; “we do you to wit”, or “we make known unto you”. The phrase “to wit” is an old English one, and almost obsolete, and signifies to acquaint with, inform of, make known, or give knowledge of anything. The thing informed of here, “is the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia”; by which is meant, not any of the blessings of grace common to all the saints, such as regeneration, justification, adoption, forgiveness of sin, and the like; but beneficence, liberality, or a liberal disposition to do good to others, called “the grace of God”; because it sprung from thence, as all good works do when performed aright; they were assisted in it by the grace of God; and it was the love and favour of God in Christ, which was the engaging motive, the leading view, which drew them on to it. This was

bestowed upon them, not merited, it was grace and free grace; God may give persons ever so much of this world's goods, yet if he does not give them a spirit of generosity, a liberal disposition, they will make no use of it for the good of others: and this was bestowed

on the churches of Macedonia; not on a few leading men among them, but upon all the members of these churches in general; and not upon one church, but upon many; a spirit of liberality was in general diffused among them, and this is proposed for imitation. Examples have great influence, and the examples of many the greater; too many follow a multitude to do evil; here the example of many, even of many churches, is proposed in order to be followed to do good, to exercise acts of beneficence and goodness, in a free generous way to saints in distress; which as it is here called, "the grace of God", so in some following verses, "the gift, the same grace, and this grace", (2 Corinthians 8:4,6,7) agreeably to the Hebrew word dsj, which signifies "grace" and "free bounty"; and is used for doing good, or for beneficence, which the Jews call µydsj twlymg "a performance of kind and bountiful actions": which are done freely, and for which a person expects no return from the person to whom he does them: and this they distinguish from jqdx, "alms", after this manner[f67];

> "an alms (they say) is exercised towards the living, beneficence towards the living and the dead; alms is used to the poor, beneficence both to the rich and poor; alms is performed by a man's substance, beneficence both by body and substance."

Ver. 2. *How that in a great trial of affliction*, etc..] The apostle proceeds to show the condition these churches were in when, and the manner in which, they contributed to the relief of others. They were in affliction: they received the Gospel at first in much affliction, as did the church at Thessalonica, which was one of them; and afterwards suffered much from their countrymen for the profession of it, by reproaches, persecutions, imprisonments, confiscation of goods, etc.. They were under trying afflictions, which tried their faith and patience, and in many of them. Now for persons in prosperity, when all things go well with them, to be liberal is no such great matter; but for persons in adversity, under trying dispensations of Providence, amidst many afflictive ones to communicate generously to the relief of others, is something very remarkable, and worthy of notice and imitation, which was the case of these churches: for notwithstanding this,

the abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty, abounded unto the riches of their liberality; so that it appears likewise that they were not only in great afflictions, but in deep poverty; had but an handful of meal in the barrel, and a little oil in the cruse, their purses almost empty, and their

coffers almost exhausted; they had gotten to the bottom of their substance, had but very little left; and yet freely gave, with joy, even with an abundance of it. The allusion seems to be to the words of David, in (1 Chronicles 22:14) now behold, yyn [b which the Septuagint render by κατα πτωχειαν μου, "according to my poverty, I have prepared for the house of the Lord an hundred thousand talents of gold", etc.. for by "the abundance of their joy", is not so much meant the joy they felt in the midst of their afflictions, so that they could glory in them, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, as the cheerfulness of their spirits in contributing to the necessities of others; glad at heart they were that they had hearts to do good, and an opportunity of doing it; which they gladly laid hold on, observing the divine rule, "he that sheweth mercy", let him do it "with cheerfulness": and this they did, considering the small pittance they were possessed of, very largely; for though their poverty was deep, and their purses low, their hearts were large and full, and their hands ready to communicate; so that their poverty "abounded to the riches of their liberality": though their poverty was great, their liberality was rich and large; though it might be but little they gave in quantity, it was much in quality, much in liberality; like the poor widow, who, of her want and penury, cast in more than all the rich besides, not in quantity, but in liberality; they only giving some, and a disproportionate part, she her all.

Ver. 3. *For to [their] power, I bear record*, etc..] They gave according to their ability, to the utmost of it, which is the most that can be desired, or be given; for no man can give more than he has, nor is he required to do more than he is able:

yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; not that they did or could do beyond their power; but they were "willing" beyond their power; their hearts were larger than their purses; they would gladly have done more than they had ability to do; and to this the apostle bears testimony to give it credit, which otherwise might have been called in question: and it is to be observed, that these churches communicated in this cheerful manner and large way, considering their circumstances, to the utmost of their ability, "of themselves"; unasked, not having been put upon, pressed, and urged to such a service; for persons to give when they are asked, especially when they do it readily, at once, without demurring upon it, and with cheerfulness, is much; but to give unasked discovers a very generous and beneficent disposition: this is reckoned by the Jews as one of the excellencies in giving of alms [f68],

> “when a man gives into the hands of another laçyç µdwq, “before he asks”; and the next degree to this is, when he gives to him after he asks; and the next to this, who gives less than is proper, but with a cheerful countenance.”

Ver. 4. *Praying us with much entreaty*, etc..] They not only gave freely, being unasked by the apostles; but they sought to them, and earnestly entreated them,

that they would receive the gift; the beneficence, what they had so freely and generously collected: and

the fellowship of the ministering to the saints; what they had communicated for the service of the poor saints at Jerusalem, in which they testified their having and holding fellowship with the churches of Christ; and that they would receive it at their hands, and take it upon them, and carry it to Jerusalem, and distribute to the poor saints there, as should seem to them most proper and convenient; which they accordingly agreed to; (see Romans 15:25,26).

Ver. 5. *And this they did not as we hoped*, etc..] All this was unexpected by the apostles, who knew their great affliction and deep poverty, and therefore could not have hoped for such a collection from them; or that they would have desired the apostle to have ministered it for them:

but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God; the sense of which is not barely, or only, that they committed themselves to the care of Providence in all their afflictions and poverty, trusting in God that he would provide for them for time to come, and therefore even in their strait circumstances gave liberally; and were so much under the direction of the apostles, God so disposing their minds, that they were willing to do or give anything that they should say was proper; yea, were very willing that some of their number should leave their habitations and families to accompany them, in forwarding this good work elsewhere: but the apostle seems to have respect to what these persons did at first conversion, when they gave themselves to Christ, to be saved by him, and him alone; and to serve him to the uttermost, in everything, he should signify to be his will; and when they joined themselves to the churches of Christ, and put themselves under the care, government, and direction of the apostles, who were over the churches in the Lord: and therefore though what the members of these churches collected, was very wonderful and

beyond expectation; yet when it is considered that these persons had long ago given their whole selves, their all to Christ, had committed all into his hands, and devoted themselves entirely to his service; and had declared their subjection to his ministers as servants under him, and to his word and ordinances as ministered by them; it need not be so much wondered at, that they should be so liberal in giving away their worldly substance for the relief of Christ's poor members, when they had given their precious souls, their immortal all, and had committed the salvation of them entirely to him. Giving themselves to Christ, in this sense, supposes that they had a true sight and apprehension of their state and condition by nature, how sinful they were, and lost and undone in themselves; that they were destitute of a righteousness, and unable to obtain one by the works of the law; that they were in hopeless and helpless circumstances, as considered in themselves; that they were diseased from head to foot, and could not cure themselves; that they were dead in law, and liable to the curse and condemnation of it; for till men see themselves in such a case they will never give themselves to Christ, or betake themselves to him to be saved by him. Moreover, this supposes some knowledge of him as God's ordinance for salvation, as the Saviour of the Father's appointing and sending; of him, as having effected it by his obedience and death; of his being the only Saviour, a suitable one, both able and willing to save to the uttermost, even the chief of sinners that come to God by him. It is expressive of faith in Christ; of seeing the Son and the fulness of grace and salvation in him, and of going to him for it; of staying, resting, leaning, and relying upon him, venturing on him, committing all into his hands, and trusting him with all and for all. It denotes subjection to him, as their husband, to whom they give themselves as his spouse and bride, and consent to be the Lord's in a conjugal relation; and submission to him in all his offices, as a prophet to be taught and instructed by him, as a priest to be washed in his blood, and justified by his righteousness, to which they heartily submit, and as their Lord and King to the sceptre of his kingdom, the laws of his house, and ordinances of his Gospel; for they are made a willing people, not only to be saved by him, but to serve him in body and soul, and with all they have; as it is but right they should, since he has given himself, his all, for them. Giving themselves up to the apostles, signifies not a surrender of themselves to them as lords over God's heritage, to be governed and ruled over in a tyrannical and arbitrary way; but a submitting of themselves to them, as Christ's servants set over them in the Lord, whilst they minister the word and administer the ordinances, according to the will of Christ; owning them as their fathers, or

instructors, and guides, and as watchmen and overseers placed in and over the churches, for their spiritual welfare: all which is,

by the will of God: as that poor sensible sinners should give up themselves to Christ, to be saved by him, and serve him; and that they should join themselves to the churches, and be subject to the care, teachings, and government of his servants in his house.

Ver. 6. *Insomuch that we desired Titus*, etc..] Observing the very great readiness, cheerfulness, and liberality of the poor Macedonians in this matter, the apostles could do no other than desire Titus to forward, hasten, and accomplish a like liberal contribution among the Corinthians; or the sense is, that the Macedonians not only prayed with much entreaty, as in (<470804>2 Corinthians 8:4) that the apostle would be pleased to take their collection, and send or carry it to Jerusalem; but also that they would entreat Titus,

that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also; that is, that as he had already moved this affair to the Corinthians while he was with them, and had made some progress in it, though what, through one thing or another, it had been retarded, and lay in some measure neglected; that he might be desired to go again, on purpose to complete so good a work, so acceptable to God, and so useful to the poor saints; which carries in it a new and strong argument to stir up the Corinthians to this service; since they had not only the example of the Macedonian churches, but it was even at their request that Titus was desired to go upon this errand; and to this sense read the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions.

Ver. 7. *Therefore as ye abound in everything*, etc..] In all gifts and every grace, in the use and exercise of them, insomuch that they were enriched in everything, and wanted nothing; (see <460105>1 Corinthians 1:5-7), that is here expressed in general, is explained by particulars following:

in faith: both in the doctrine of faith, which they had received and professed, held fast to, and abode by; yea, they abounded in the knowledge of it, zeal for it, and thankfulness to God on account of it; and in the grace of faith, not an historical one, nor the faith of miracles, but that which is peculiar to God's elect, is the gift of his grace and the work of his Spirit, which has Christ for its object, and works by love; in this they abounded,

inasmuch as they had a large measure of it, grew in it, were full of it, and were much in the exercise thereof:

in utterance, or “speech”: meaning either the gift of speaking with tongues, which many in this church had; or the gift; of understanding and explaining the word of God with much freedom; or a liberty of mind and speech to declare their faith in Christ, and make an ingenuous confession of it to others:

in knowledge; of God and of Christ, and of the truths of the Gospel:

and in all diligence: their ministers were diligent in preaching the Gospel, the people in hearing the word, and attending on ordinances, and both studiously careful to keep up the discipline of the church; and very industrious to discharge the several duties of religion, and to assist one another, both in things temporal and spiritual:

and in your love to us: the apostles and ministers of the word, whom they loved, esteemed, and honoured for their works' sake: and since they were so eminent for these graces, and the exercise of them, the apostle exhorts them to liberality to the poor saints;

see that ye abound in this grace also; for as faith, utterance, knowledge, diligence, and love to Christ's ministers are graces; so also is kindness shown to Christ's poor members, it is a gift of God's grace, cannot be rightly exercised without the assistance of his grace, has for its objects men who have received the grace of God, and will be rewarded with a reward of grace; persons eminent for the several graces of the Spirit of God, and the exercise of them, it may be not only desired, but expected from them, that they should abound in the exercise of beneficence to the poor. This is another argument exciting to that good work.

Ver. 8. *I speak not by commandment*, etc..] Either of God, who has not fixed the certain times when, or certain sums which persons are to give, and other circumstances, which are left to discretion; but in general has signified it as his will, that those in necessity are to be relieved by such who are in ability to do it: or as an apostle, he did not speak in an imperious manner, extorting from them a collection, or laying his apostolical injunctions upon them to make one; he did not go about to force or oblige them to it, for men in such cases must act willingly, and what they do, must do of their own accord with cheerfulness, and not through constraint or grudgingly:

but by occasion of the forwardness of others; or “through carefulness for others”; what moved the apostle to propose this matter to the Corinthians, and exhort them to it, were either the forwardness of the Macedonians, cheerfully contributing in the midst of their poverty, and their urgent solicitations that the same good work might go on elsewhere, or else the very great care and concern that he himself had for the poor saints at Jerusalem: it was not therefore to show his apostolical authority, that he sent Titus to them to finish this service; but he was stirred up hereunto, partly by the bounty and solicitations of others, and partly by bowels of compassion within himself, and concern in his own mind for the poor saints; and also, as he adds,

to prove the sincerity of your love; to God, to Christ, to his ministers, and to the saints, particularly the poor; that their love might appear to be true, genuine, hearty, and real to others, to all men as well as to them the apostles.

Ver. 9. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus*, etc..] This is a new argument, and a very forcible one to engage to liberality, taken from the wonderful grace and love of Christ, displayed in his state of humiliation towards his people; which is well known to all them that have truly believed in Christ; of this they are not and cannot be ignorant, his love, good will, and favour are so manifest; there are such glaring proofs of it in his incarnation, sufferings, and death, that leave no room for any to doubt of it:

that though he was rich; in the perfections of his divine nature, having the fulness of the Godhead in him, all that the Father has, and so equal to him; such as eternity, immutability, infinity and immensity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, etc.. in the works of his hands, which reach to everything that is made, the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that in them are, things visible and invisible; in his universal empire and dominion over all creature; and in those large revenues of glory, which are due to him from them all; which riches of his are underived from another, incommunicable to another, and cannot be lost:

yet for your sakes he became poor; by assuming human nature, with all its weaknesses and imperfections excepting sin; he appeared in it not as a lord, but in the form of a servant; he endured in it a great deal of reproach and shame, and at last death itself; not that by becoming man he ceased to be God, or lost his divine perfections, thought these were much hid and

covered from the view of man; and in his human nature he became the reverse of what he is in his divine nature, namely, finite and circumscriptible, weak and infirm, ignorant of some things, and mortal; in which nature also he was exposed to much meanness and outward poverty; he was born of poor parents, had no liberal education, was brought up to a trade, had not where to lay his head, was ministered to by others of their substance, and had nothing to bequeath his mother at his death, but commits her to the care of one of his disciples; all which fulfilled the prophecies of him, that he should be ldand ynf, "poor" and "low", (<19401>Psalm 41:1, <38909>Zechariah 9:9). The persons for whom he became so, were not the angels, but elect men; who were sinners and ungodly persons, and were thereby become bankrupts and beggars: the end for which he became poor for them was,

that they through his poverty might be rich; not in temporals, but in spirituals; and by his obedience, sufferings, and death in his low estate, he has paid all their debts, wrought out a robe of righteousness, rich and adorned with jewels, with which he clothes them, and through his blood and sacrifice has made them kings and priests unto God. They are enriched by him with the graces of his Spirit; with the truths of the Gospel, comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones; with himself and all that he has; with the riches of grace here, and of glory hereafter. These are communicable from him, though unsearchable, and are solid and substantial, satisfying, lasting, and for ever. Now if this grace of Christ will not engage to liberality with cheerfulness, nothing will.

Ver. 10. *And herein I give my advice*, etc..] As Daniel did to Nebuchadnezzar, (<27047>Daniel 4:27). The apostle did not choose to make use of his apostolical authority, or give orders, as he sometimes did in such cases; he did not think fit to speak by way of commandment, obliging them to what they ought to do willingly; looking upon this the most prudential step, and wisest method he could take in order to succeed, only to give his judgment in this matter, as what would be best for them, and most conducive to their real good:

for this is expedient for you; most versions read it, "profitable"; doing acts of beneficence is profitable to persons, as to things temporal, God usually blessing such with a greater affluence of the things of life, and which indeed is often promised; and is also profitable with respect to things spiritual, for if God does not make it up to them in temporal enjoyments,

yet with his presence, the discoveries of his love, the joys of his salvation, and an increase of every grace; so Gaius, that hospitable man to the apostle, and all Christian strangers, was in much spiritual health, and a prosperous condition in his soul, when but in an ill state with respect to his body: yea, such a conduct is profitable in relation to things eternal; for as it springs from the grace of God, and men are assisted therein by it, and is exercised towards persons that have received it, it will be rewarded with a reward of grace; though it may be, the apostle here does not so much argue from the utility, as the decency of it in the Corinthians;

who, says he,

have began before, a year ago, not only to do, but also to be forward, or "willing": it is hard to say whether the apostle designs to commend or reprove them; and indeed, it seems as if there was a mixture of praise and dispraise in this passage; it was in their favour that they had begun before, even a year ago, and were willing and forward of themselves to this good work; yea, were the first that set it on foot, and so were an example to the Macedonian churches, and others; but then this was against them, that the other churches, which began later than they, had finished before them; whether this their charity was obstructed, as some have thought, through some affliction and persecution that befell them, which if it appeared would much excuse them; or rather it was neglected through lukewarmness and indolence; wherefore the apostle gives his sentiments, that to save their own credit, it was expedient for them to finish what they had begun; for otherwise, as their boasting of them would be in vain, so they would expose themselves to contempt and incur disgrace; and it was not only proper that they should do this, but do it willingly, and with much cheerfulness, for that is meant by being "forward" or "willing"; that they not only do it, but do it with a good will, which they at first discovered.

Ver. 11. *Now therefore perform the doing of it*, etc..] This is a conclusion from the former advice, to finish what was readily willed; for as it is not enough to do a thing, unless it is done cheerfully and willingly, so it is not sufficient to express a good will to such service as is here called to, without doing it; both should go together:

that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also; in some cases there is neither power nor will to do good; in others there is will, when there is not a power; but in this case of beneficence to the poor saints, as there was a willingness declared, there was an ability in the

Corinthians to perform; they had it in the power of their hands, more or less, to act: and the apostle in the last clause of this verse points out the rule and measure of their liberality,

out of that which you have; according to your abilities, and as God has prospered you; and with which he shuts up the mouths of all objectors, rich and poor: should the rich say, would you have us give away all we have? the answer is, no; but "out of that which you have", something of it, according as you are able; should the poorer sort say, we are in mean circumstances, we have families to provide for, and can spare little, and what we can do is so trifling, that it is not worth giving or accepting; the reply is, give "out of that which you have", be it less or more; it follows,

Ver. 12. *For if there be first a willing mind*, etc..] If what is done springs from a truly noble, generous spirit, a spirit of bountifulness and liberality; and is given cheerfully and freely, and according to a man's ability; the quantity matters not, whether it be more or less:

it is accepted; both of God and man:

according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. The widow's mite was as acceptable, and more so, than all the rich men cast into the treasury; a cup of cold water given to a prophet, in the name of a prophet, is taken notice of by God, and shall have its reward. The present sent by the Philippians to the Apostle Paul, and which perhaps was not very large, was "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God", (<5048>Philippians 4:18).

Ver. 13. *For I mean not that other men be eased and you burdened*.] Referring either to the givers; and that either to the richer and meaner sort in this church; the apostle's sense being, not to put the whole burden of the collection upon some only, whilst others were excused doing little or nothing; but that everyone should give according to his ability; or to other churches in poorer circumstances; and the apostle's meaning was, not that these churches by reason of their meanness should be entirely free from this service, as it was plain they were not, by the instance of the Macedonians; and that the whole be devolved upon the Corinthian church, and others that were rich; but that all should contribute according to their circumstances: or this may refer to the persons given to, and for whom this beneficence was asked; for the words may be rendered, "for not that there may be ease", or relaxation "to others, and to you affliction" or straitness; that is,

his meaning was, not that there should be such a contribution raised for these poor saints at Jerusalem, that they should live in ease and great abundance; whilst their benefactors, through an over abundant generosity to them, were straitened, and their families reduced to great difficulties; this was what was far from his intentions.

Ver. 14. *But by an equality*, etc..] All that he meant was, that there might be an equality both in givers and receivers, proportioned to their several circumstances and stations of life:

that now at this time; which was a very necessitous time at Jerusalem, there being a famine there, and their common stock exhausted:

your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want; which respects either the different abilities of givers at different times; and that whereas now the church at Corinth was rich, and wealthy, and had great abundance of the things of this world, they in this general collection were able to make up the deficiencies of other churches; and so should it ever be their case, as it might be, that they should be reduced, and these other churches increased, and enjoy a large abundance, they might hereafter in their turn supply what would be wanting in them: or else the persons given to; and the sense is, that should they ever change circumstances, as it was not impossible that they that were now rich should become poor, and they that were poor become rich; then as their abundance had been a supply to the wants of others, the abundance of others in their turn would be a supply to their wants; so that the argument is taken from the hope of retribution, in case of such vicissitudes; (see <4168>Luke 6:38) his view was,

that there may be equality; either that in time to come an equal return may be made, should it be necessary; or that at present some sort of equality might be observed between the rich and poor; that the rich should so distribute as not to leave themselves without a proper support, according to their station of life; and yet so freely communicate, that the poor may not be without food and raiment, suitable to their lower sphere of life.

Ver. 15. *As it is written*, etc..] In (<021618>Exodus 16:18)

he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; respect is had to the history of the manna, a sort of food God prepared for the Israelites in the wilderness; and which were gathered by them every morning, by some more, by others less; and yet when it came to

be measured, every man had his “omer” and no more, one had nothing over, and the other not at all deficient; each man had his proper and equal quantity; and which, by the Jews [f69], is looked upon as a miracle that was wrought: many useful instructions may be learned from this history, as that as there was a general provision made by God for the Israelites, good and bad, and the mixed multitude that came from Egypt with them; so there is an universal providence of God which reaches to all creatures, even to the vegetable, to the birds of the air, and beasts of the field, to all the individuals of human nature, and to the bad among them as well as the good; though to the latter it is more special, who of all men have the least reason to be distrustful and uneasy: and as that provision was daily, so is that providential supply which all creatures have from God; he is to be trusted to, and depended on daily; application is to be made to him every day for daily bread; nor should there be any anxious concern for the morrow. Moreover, as the Israelites, though the manna was prepared for them, were to rise in the morning and gather it before the sun waxed hot; so notwithstanding the providence of God, and the daily care he takes of men, yet diligence, industry, and the use of means are highly commendable. And as some gathered more and others less, yet upon measuring it with the “omer”, there was an entire equality, one had not more nor less than another; so upon the winding up of things in Providence, such as have gathered much riches in the morning of life, in the evening of death will have nothing over, nor anything to show more than others; and they that have gathered little will appear to have had no lack; both will have had food and raiment, and no more, only with this difference, some will have enjoyed a richer diet and clothing, and others a meaner, and both suitable to their circumstances in life; which may instruct us to depend upon divine Providence, daily to be content with such things as we have, and to make a proper use of what is gathered, whether more or less, and not only for ourselves, but for the good of others. This discovers the egregious folly of such, who are anxiously concerned for the gathering and amassing much worldly riches together; which when they have done, they lay it up for themselves, and do not make use of it for common good, neither for the good of civil society, nor the interest of religion. Let it be observed, that those Israelites who from a selfish covetous disposition, and distrust of divine Providence, left of their manna till the morning, “it bred worms and stank”: which was by the just judgment of God inflicted as a punishment; for otherwise it was capable of being kept longer. So when covetous mortals lay up for themselves for time to come, and do not communicate to

the necessities of others, such a practice breeds and produces worms, moth, and rottenness in their estates, which gradually decrease, or are suddenly taken from them, or they from them: such an evil disposition is the root and cause of many immoralities in life; it greatly prejudices professors of religion in things spiritual; and it tends to their everlasting ruin, to breed that worm of an evil conscience that will never die, and to render their persons stinking and abominable, both in the sight of God and men.

Ver. 16. *But thanks be to God*, etc..] The apostle proceeds to give an account of the persons and their characters, who were employed in making this collection at Corinth for the poor saints, and begins with Titus; and the rather because he had been already concerned in setting afoot that good work among them; and gives thanks to God,

which, says he,

put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you, by "earnest care" is meant that very great carefulness, solicitude, and diligence, Titus had shown in stirring them up to a liberal contribution; and which was the same that he had expressed in the arguments just now used by him, to engage them in the same service; and this care, as it was a very earnest and hearty one, so he suggests that it was more for them, than for the sake of the poor; the performance of acts of beneficence and liberality tending more to the advantage and account of the giver than of the receiver: and he further intimates, that these good motions in the heart of Titus were not merely natural, or the effects of human power and free will, but were of God, as every good thing is; they were wrought in him by the Spirit of God, and sprung from the grace of God, and therefore the apostle returns thanks to God for the same; and the mention of this could not fail of carrying weight with it, and of having some influence on the minds of the Corinthians.

Ver. 17. *For indeed, he accepted the exhortation*, etc..] The Macedonians besought the apostle with much entreaty to give unto him, (2 Corinthians 8:4,6) or which being moved by their example, they gave unto him, namely, that he would go and finish what he had already begun; and accordingly he did not refuse, but readily accepted the exhortation: yea, not only so,

but being more forward; than was known or could have been expected; which shows that this was put into his heart by God, before it was moved

unto him; so that if he had never been asked, or exhorted hereunto, he would have gone of himself:

of his own accord he went unto you; so great is his care of you; so great his love unto you so willing was he to come again and pay another visit: and especially on this account, where he had before been treated with so much respect and kindness. Titus having been at Corinth already, and being well known there, the apostle forbears saying anything more in his commendation.

Ver. 18. *And we have sent with him the brother*, etc..] The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, “our brother”; and one of Stephens's copies, “your brother”: who this brother was, is not certain; some think it was Luke the evangelist, the companion of the apostle in his travels:

whose praise is in the Gospel, throughout all the churches; being known and highly commended by all the churches, for the Gospel he wrote; but it is not certain that Luke as yet had wrote his Gospel; and much less that it was so much known at present among the churches; and besides, this brother's praise seems to be on account of his preaching the Gospel, and not writing one: others think Barnabas is intended, who was chosen and sent out by the churches along with the apostle; but these in a short time separated from each other, nor do we read of their coming together again: others are of opinion, that Apollos is designed, who was a very eloquent preacher, and of whom the apostle had given the Corinthians an intimation in his former epistle, that he would come to them at a convenient time; but to him is objected, that he never was chosen of the churches, to travel with the apostle on such an account as here mentioned: others would have it that Silas or Silvanus is meant, who was a very constant companion of the apostle, and of whom he makes mention in most of his epistles; and others have made no doubt of it, but John Mark is here meant, who not only wrote a Gospel, but was an excellent preacher of it, and was chosen by the churches to go along with Paul and Barnabas; and though there was some distaste taken to him by Paul, he was afterwards reconciled to him, and for his profitableness in the ministry was greatly desired by him; but after all, it is difficult to determine who it was, nor is it of any great moment: a “brother” he was; being not only a regenerate person, but a preacher of the Gospel; a brother in the ministry, and “one whose praise was in the Gospel”; greatly admired, and much commended, for his excellent talent in

preaching the Gospel; and for this he was famous “throughout all the churches”; a very great commendation indeed; but this is not all, it follows,

Ver. 19. *And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches*, etc..] Not only famous for preaching the Gospel, but he was also appointed by the joint suffrages of the churches, which were made by the lifting up or stretching out of the hand, as the word here used signifies; this brother was not chosen to this service by a few private persons, or by a single church only, but by several churches; which does not refer to the churches at Jerusalem and Antioch, as if the apostles were appointed, and others were appointed by these churches to travel with them, in order to collect money for the poor saints at Jerusalem; of which no mention is any where made, only of their being sent out by them to preach the Gospel. James, Cephas, and John indeed, when they gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that they might go to the Heathen, desired them to “remember the poor”; (Galatians 2:9,10) but these were not the churches. The church at Antioch did collect for the brethren in Judea, at the time of the famine among them, and sent their bounty by the hands of Barnabas and Saul, which seems to be the case here. This brother was chosen by the churches who collected, and not by the churches in Judea, for whom the collections were made; for it was usual, and what was right and proper, that the churches chose whom they thought fit to carry their liberality to Jerusalem; (see 1 Corinthians 16:3,4). Now this brother had the honour to be chosen by these churches,

to travel, says the apostle,

with us, with this grace; bounty or beneficence of the churches, what they had freely and liberally contributed for the supply of the poor, from a principle of grace, and by the assistance of it;

which is administered by us; not given by the apostles, but collected by them; or what was procured by their means, in the several churches to whom they had moved it, and by proper arguments had excited them to it, with which they cheerfully complied: and this was done on a two fold account, both

to the glory of the same Lord: Jesus Christ, who is the one Lord over all; the same Lord of the apostles, and the church at Corinth; the same Lord of the Corinthians, and the Macedonian and other churches; and the same

Lord of the poor saints at Jerusalem, and the rich members of the several churches that contributed to them: and also to

the declaration of your ready mind; or to stir up their ready mind to increase it and promote it in them, as well to make it manifest, and that it might appear to others, how readily and freely they came into this service; so that the apostle's concern in this administration was not from any sinister and selfish ends; no, nor so much for the relief of the poor, though this was greatly designed, as for the glory of Christ, and the honour of his churches.

Ver. 20. *Avoiding this, that no man should blame us*, etc..] There is an allusion in these words to mariners, who, when sensible of danger, steer their course another way, in order to shun a rock and secure themselves. So the apostles being aware of the censorious spirits of some persons, and to prevent all suspicion of their converting any part of what they had collected to their own private use, sent Titus with it, a man of known probity and integrity; and he not by himself only, but another brother with him, one who had obtained a good report as a minister of the Gospel in all the churches: and, besides, was appointed not by the apostles, but by the churches themselves, to this service. This shows the good conduct, and great prudence of the apostle, and his care and solicitude that the ministry be not blamed; he knew he had many enemies, and how subject such are to suspicion and jealousy, when persons are intrusted with much, which was the case here; for it is added,

in this abundance which is administered by us: which designs the very large contributions which were made by the churches, through the means of the apostle's moving, exciting, and encouraging them thereunto; and which were committed to their care and trust, and at their entreaty they had accepted of.

Ver. 21. *Providing for honest things*, etc..] Or premeditating, forecasting, or considering before hand in the mind, things that are good, that are of good report among men, as well as accounted good by God; for it becomes professors of religion, and especially ministers of the Gospel, to be careful not only to exercise a good conscience towards God; but so to behave, that they may obtain and preserve the good opinion of men; for when they have once lost their credit and reputation among men, their ministry becomes in a great, measure useless; wherefore the apostle adds,

not only in the sight of the Lord: the same Lord as before, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is a diligent searcher of the hearts, and discerner of the thoughts, and observer of the ways and actions of all his people;

but also in the sight of men; not that the apostle affected a mere outside show, popular applause, and the praise of men; but was concerned lest any weak persons, by their conduct, should be stumbled and fall, the edification of any should be hindered, and their ministry become unprofitable.

Ver. 22. *And we have sent with him our brother*, etc..] This is a third person sent about this business. The apostle, in this, conformed to the customs of his nation; at least if he did not purposely do it, it agrees with the Jewish canons, which require three persons for the distribution of alms.

> "The alms dish, (they say [f70]) is by three; nor do they appoint hçlçm twjp ˆysnrp "overseers" of it "less than three"."

Again, they say [f71],

> "the poor's chest is collected by two, hçlçb tqljtmw "but distributed by three"; it is collected by two, because they do not appoint governors over a congregation less than two, and it is distributed by three, even as pecuniary judgments; but the alms dish is collected by three, and distributed by three; for the collection and distribution are alike:"

who this brother was, sent by the apostle with Titus and the other person, is as uncertain as the former. Some think it was Luke, others Apollos, others Timothy, others Sosthenes, others Epaenetus, others Silas, others Zenas the lawyer; a brother he was, and a very considerable character is given of him:

whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things; he was a very diligent and industrious man, and so fit for this service; he had been tried and proved, and was found to be so, not only once or twice, but oftentimes; and that not in a few instances, but in many; and in nothing did he ever show more diligence than in this matter:

but now much more diligent; than ever he had been in anything before:

upon the great confidence which I have in you; what doubled and increased this brother's diligence, and made him so eager for, and forward to this work, was, his observing the great confidence the apostle expressed

of the very great readiness and liberality of the Corinthians; and which tacitly carries in it an argument exciting them thereunto: or this last clause may be read, “which he hath in you”; and so regards the confidence this brother had in them, which made him so ready to engage with, and join the other messengers.

Ver. 23. *Whether any do inquire of Titus*, etc..] The apostle here sums up the characters of each of the above persons; as for Titus, he says,

he is my partner; he had been his companion in his travels, a partner with him in preaching the Gospel, as well as in the troubles and persecutions he had met with; and was one with whom he had had sweet communion and fellowship:

and fellow helper; or worker,

concerning you; he had been a joint instrument with him, either in their conversion, or consolation, and correction; or for their edification and instruction, and setting things right, which had been out of order among them:

or our brethren be inquired of; if their characters are asked after, as well as Titus's; by whom are meant not his fellow apostles, but the two brethren who were sent along with Titus; what may be truly said of them is,

they are the messengers of the churches; they were chosen and sent forth by the churches, not only to preach the Gospel, but particularly to take care of the ministration to the poor saints. They were messengers appointed by the churches for this service, and were also appointed to the service of the churches; respect seems to be had to the public minister in the synagogues, who was called rwbx jylç, “the messenger of the congregation”, or “church” [f72]; whose business was to take care about the reading of the law and the prophets, to pray in public, and also to preach if there was no other; so we read [f73] also of ˆyd tyb yjwlç, “the messengers of the sanhedrim”; who were sent at the proper time to reap the sheaf of the first fruits, and of others who swore the high priest before the day of atonement [f74]; and of hwxm yjwlç, “the messengers of the commandment” [f75]; who went to hear the exposition (of the traditions) and visit the head of the captivity:

and the glory of Christ: meaning either that the churches were the glory of Christ, in whom he is glorified, where his glory is seen, and his presence enjoyed; or rather the messengers of them, on whom the image of Christ was stamped, who faithfully performed the work of Christ, in all things sought his glory and not their own; and in and by whom his glory was displayed, and held forth to others.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore show ye to them, and before the churches*, etc..] This is the conclusion of the apostle, upon summing up the characters of these messengers; and his exhortation is, that since they were persons of so much note and worth, as they ought to be received with great marks of respect and affection, so they would take care evidently to make it appear to them who were sent by the churches, and before the churches, or before them who represented the churches; or so as that it might be known by the churches from whence they came, when they returned with their report; or be evident to the churches in Judea, when their liberality should be brought to them:

the proof of your love; to Christ and his poor members, how hearty and sincere it was:

and of our boasting on your behalf; how willing and forward they were to this good work, and how liberal they would be.

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 9

The apostle proceeds in this chapter upon the same subject, the making a collection for the poor saints; gives the reason why he sent the brethren to them on this account; directs to the manner in which this service should be performed, and subjoins some fresh arguments to encourage them to it. As for the ministration itself, he suggests, it might seem needless to say any more about it, since he had said so much already in the preceding chapter, (<4701>2 Corinthians 9:1) and especially seeing they were so forward to it, and were even prepared for it a year ago; of which the apostle had boasted to the Macedonian churches, (<4702>2 Corinthians 9:2) and whereas it might be objected, that since there was such an inclination in them to this good work, why did he send these brethren to them? the reason of this he gives, (<4703>2 Corinthians 9:3,4) that they might get their collection ready against the time he came, lest should any of the Macedonians come along with him, and this collection not be made, his glorying of them would be in vain, and both he and they would be ashamed; wherefore he sent them before hand to prevent everything of this kind, and that their collection might appear to be not done in a covetous niggardly way, but bountifully and cheerfully, (<4705>2 Corinthians 9:5) which manner he directs unto, and encourages from the advantages of it, under the metaphorical phrases of sowing and reaping, intimating, that as a man sows, so he reaps; or in proportion to his giving, is he blessed, (<4706>2 Corinthians 9:6) wherefore he advises to give heartily, freely, and cheerfully, and that from this consideration, because cheerful giving is acceptable to God, being like himself, (<4707>2 Corinthians 9:7) who, as he loves, so he rewards the cheerful giver; and as he is able to give him abundance, so he does, whereby he is more qualified and fitted for such liberal service, (<4708>2 Corinthians 9:8). And this is confirmed by a passage of Scripture cited out of (<1910>Psalm 112:9) showing, that he that gives bountifully to the poor is ever regarded by the Lord, (<4709>2 Corinthians 9:9) and which is further proved from the general course of Providence, which so multiplies and increases the seed sown in the earth, that it usually ministers seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; to which the apostle had alluded in the use

of these metaphorical expressions; or he puts up a prayer that there might, or delivers out a promise that there would be a like increase in giving liberally, as in sowing plentifully, (<470910>2 Corinthians 9:10). And then he makes use of a new argument, stirring up to bountifulness, taken from the glory which is brought to God through thanksgiving to him, from the poor and needy, supplied by the liberality of those whose hearts he had opened, (<470911>2 Corinthians 9:11). On which argument he enlarges, showing, that not only by this bounty the wants of the poor are supplied, and thanksgivings offered up to God on that account; but also the poor saints are led to glorify God for sending his Gospel to these their benefactors, and giving them his grace to submit unto it, which had had such an influence upon them as to cause them to communicate to their necessities in such a generous manner, (<470912>2 Corinthians 9:12,13). To which he adds another argument, taken from the prayers of the poor saints, for those who liberally contributed to them, that they might prosper in body and soul, in things temporal and spiritual, (<470914>2 Corinthians 9:14). And the chapter is concluded with a thanksgiving to God for the grace bestowed upon all the churches, and particularly for the gift of Christ to the sons of men; which contains in it another argument for beneficence and liberality, (<470915>2 Corinthians 9:15).

Ver. 1. *For as touching the ministering to the saints*, etc..] It looks at first sight as if the apostle was entering upon a new subject, though by what follows it appears to be the same; for by “ministering to the saints”, he does not mean the ministry of the Gospel to them; nor that mutual assistance members of churches are to give each other; but either the fellowship of ministering to the saints, which the churches had entreated him, and his fellow ministers, to take upon them, namely, to take the charge of their collections, and distribute them to the poor saints at Jerusalem; or rather these collections themselves, and their liberality in them: with respect to which he says,

it is superfluous for me to write to you; that is, he thought it unnecessary to say any more upon that head, because he had used so many arguments already to engage them in it, in the foregoing chapter; and because he had sent three brethren to them, who well understood the nature of this service, and were very capable of speaking to it, and of enforcing the reasonings already used; and more especially he judged it needless to dwell on this subject, for the reasons following.

Ver. 2. *For I know the forwardness of your mind*, etc..] How that they were willing of themselves to engage in this good work; how readily they came into it; what a cheerful disposition of mind they showed towards it; and how forward they were to begin the collection:

for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia; he had one it before, which had put them upon the like service, and he still continued to boast of them,

that Achaia was ready a year ago: not that their collection was ready made so long ago; but they had shown a readiness of mind, as to every good work, so to this of communicating to the saints a year ago, when they made a beginning, though as yet had not finished. By Achaia is meant, the inhabitants of Achaia. The Arabic version renders it, the citizens of Achaia; of this country, (See Gill on "<4418 12>Acts 18:12"). It is sometimes taken in a large sense, and designs Greece, and includes the countries of Doris, Hellas, Aetolia, Locri, Phocis, Boeotia, Attica, and Megaris; and had its name, as some say, from the frequent inundation of waters; and others, from one of the three generals of the Pelasgi, who were of this name; and sometimes it is taken strictly and properly for the country of the Peloponnesus, or the Morea. And so Drusius, out of Hesychius, has observed, that the Achaeans were Greeks; but properly they were they that inhabited that part of Peloponnesus, called Achaia; and these seem to be intended here. The Gospel was preached in these parts with success; Epaenetus, whom the Apostle Paul salutes, (<4516 05>Romans 16:5) and the house of Stephanas he mentions, (<4616 05>1 Corinthians 16:15) were the firstfruits of it; and in process of time several churches were here gathered, and which continued for several ages. In the "second" century there was a synod in Achaia, concerning the time of keeping Easter, in which Bacchylus, bishop of Corinth, presided; in the beginning of the "fourth" century, the bishops of Achaia were present at the council of Nice, and in the same century bishops out of this country assisted at the synod in Sardica; in the "fifth" century there were many churches in Achaia, and the bishops of them were present in the Chalcedon synod; out of this country went several bishops, in the "seventh" century, to Constantinople, and were in the sixth synod there; and in the "eighth" century there were bishops of Achaia in the Nicene synod[f76]: here by Achaia are designed the churches of Christ, which were in that part of Greece in which Corinth stood, and of which that was the metropolis; so that when the apostle says Achaia was ready, his meaning is more particularly, that the Corinthians were ready:

and, adds he,

your zeal hath provoked very many: or “the zeal which is of you”; which sprung from, and was occasioned by them; for not the zeal of the Corinthians is here intended, as seems at first view, but that emulation which was stirred up in some of the leading persons among the Macedonians, upon hearing how ready they at Corinth were to minister to the necessitous brethren; and the zeal which appeared in these principal men, which was very warm, and yet prudent and seasonable, wrought very much on the minds of others, who, led by their example, contributed in a very generous and unexpected manner. In the Greek text it is, “the zeal out of you”; or, as the Arabic version renders it, “the zeal that arose from you”, which was occasioned by them.

Ver. 3. *Yet have I sent the brethren*, etc..] Titus, and the other two mentioned in the foregoing chapter: one manuscript reads, “we have sent”; and the Ethiopic version, “they have sent”, that is, the Macedonians; but the common reading is best. It might be objected, that since the apostle knew the forwardness of their minds, how ready they were a year ago, and had boasted so much of their liberality, that it must be unnecessary to send the brethren to them, to stir them up to this work; which objection is prevented by observing the reason of his sending them:

lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf: or, “in this part”, in this particular thing, `atwbx adh l[`, “concerning this business”, or affair of beneficence to the poor, as the Syriac version renders it. He had boasted of them with respect to other things besides this; but he was chiefly concerned, knowing the frailty and changeableness of human nature, and how possible it was that their forwardness might abate, and they grow cold and indifferent to such service, lest his glorying of them should be in vain in this particular instance; wherefore he sent the brethren to put them on, that as they had begun they would finish:

that as I said ye may be ready, That as he had said to the Macedonians, that they were ready in mind, it might appear to be so; or as he had ordered them in his former epistle, they might be actually ready; have their collection ready made, so that there might be no gathering when he came.

Ver. 4. *Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me*, etc..] The apostle had determined to come himself, though he was afterwards prevented by Providence, but could not be certain of the coming of the Macedonian

brethren with him; however, as it was probable that some of them would come, whose hearts were so much in this work, therefore he judged it fit and proper to send the brethren before hand, in case they should come:

and find you unprepared; not so ready for this service as had been boasted of, and the collection not finished, which had been begun a year ago.

We (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting; or "in this same substance", or "subsistence of boasting": a boasting, which, he thought, they had the most solid and substantial ground and foundation to proceed upon; which, should it come to nothing, must cause shame both in the apostles, who had so largely, and with so much assurance, boasted of them; and in the Corinthians, who must be put to the blush, when it should be told them how much they had been boasted of with respect to their readiness, and yet were unprepared: so tljwt, "hope", expectation, confidence, is rendered by the Septuagint καυχημα, "boasting", (2107Proverbs 11:7) and in (1906Psalm 39:5) υποστασις, the word here used. And some copies, and also the Vulgate Latin version, only read, "in this substance", or glorying, and leave out boasting as superfluous.

Ver. 5. *Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren*, etc..] Titus, and the other two, on whom he did not lay his commands, or apostolical injunctions, according to the authority and dignity of his office; only exhorted or besought them, and which was judged by him very needful and proper at this time:

that they would go before hand unto you; before him, and the Macedonian brethren that might probably come with him:

and make up before hand your bounty; or blessing; for any present sent, or delivered, by one person to another, as a token of their friendship, favour, and good will, whether in a necessitous case or not, was by the Jews called hkrb, "a blessing"; (see 0131Genesis 33:11) (0127 1 Samuel 25:27) and especially what is contributed for the relief of the poor may be so called, because it is not only a part of the bounty of Providence, and blessings of life, with which men are favoured; but is also one way of blessing God for the mercies he has blessed them with, and likewise of blessing, or doing good to fellow creatures and Christians. Moreover, because for this the poor bless their benefactors; and it is a blessing itself to do good to others.

Now the apostle judged it expedient to send the brethren before hand to complete and finish this good work begun.

Whereof, says he,

ye had notice before: in his former epistle, (<461601>1 Corinthians 16:1,2) or which was promised before by them; or had been spoken of so much before by him to other churches:

that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, or blessing,

not as of covetousness; that is, that the collection being ready made, largely and liberally, it might appear to be a free generous action, and show what a noble bountiful disposition they were of; and not performed as covetous men usually do what they do, sparingly, tenaciously, keeping their money as long as they can, being loath to part with it.

Ver. 6. *But this I say*, etc..] This the apostle would have the Corinthians take notice of, and well consider, it being what he could aver for truth, by observation and experience; that as in things natural, so in things of a moral and spiritual kind,

he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully, or with blessings,

shall reap also bountifully; or with blessings; as a man sows, so shall he reap; the one is in proportion to the other. Sowing and reaping are here used in a metaphorical sense. The former signifies doing acts of beneficence and liberality. So it is used in the Old Testament, and in Jewish writings; (see <210906>Ecclesiastes 9:6, <233220>Isaiah 32:20). The interpretation of the latter text, give me leave to produce out of the Talmud [f77] as follows, and which will serve to illustrate this of the apostle's.

> “Says. R. Jochanan, in the name of R. Benaah, what is that which is written, “blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox, and the ass?” blessed are the Israelites, for when they are employed in the law, µydsj twlymgbw, “and in acts of beneficence”, their evil concupiscence is delivered into their hand, and they are not delivered into the hand of their evil concupiscence: or, as it is elsewhere [f78] said, such are worthy of the inheritance of two tribes, Joseph and Issachar; as it is said, “blessed are ye that sow beside all waters”, hqdx ala h[yrz ˆyaw, “and

there is no sowing but alms"; or, by the word "sowing", nothing else is meant but doing of alms, as it is said, (^[28]Hosea 10:12) and there is no water but the law, or nothing else is meant by water but the law, as it is said, (^[23]Isaiah 55:1). And as to these words, "that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass", it is a tradition of the house of Elias, for ever let a man place himself by the words of the law, as an ox to the yoke, and an ass to the burden."

There is a good deal of likeness between sowing the seed in the earth, and doing of alms, or acts of beneficence. The seed that is sown is what is selected and reserved out of the stock expended or sold off, which if not done, there would be no provision for futurity; so that which a man gives for the relief of the necessitous, is what he lays by him in store of what God has prospered him with; in doing which he may hope for a fruitful harvest, whereas otherwise he could expect none: as seed is cast from, and scattered about by the sower all over the field; so what is given to the poor, it is parted with unto them, and spread among them, everyone has a portion; and it looks like a diminution of a man's substance, and as if it would never return with any advantage; though it does, as in a natural, so in a metaphorical sense. The sower casts and scatters his seed with an open hand; was he to gripe it in his fist, or only let go a grain of corn or wheat here and there, he would have but a poor harvest; so the cheerful giver opens his hand wide, and bountifully supplies the wants of the needy; who, as the sower casts his seed on the empty field, so he bestows his bounty on indigent persons, on all men in want, especially the household of faith: and, as when he has done, he harrows the ground, and covers the seed under the earth, where it lies hid, and is very unpromising for a while, and yet be exercises faith, hope, and patience, with respect to an harvest; so the generous benefactor does what he does in as private a manner as may be; and though for a time his good deeds may seem to be attended with little prospect of reward, yet in the end they certainly shall; for as a man sows, so shall he reap: if he sows, that is, gives nothing, he shall reap nothing; if he sows but little, he shall reap little; and if he sows much, he shall reap much; and that of the selfsame kind which he sows; as he is liberal in things temporal, so shall he prosper and succeed in the same; (see ^[20]Proverbs 3:9,10, 11:24,25, ^[23]Isaiah 32:8, ^[48]Galatians 6:7-10).

Ver. 7. *Every man according as he purposeth in his heart*, etc..] Which is not to be understood of the quantity, or any set sum he has fixed upon in

his mind to give; but of the quality or nature of giving; or of the manner in which he is to give:

so let him give; of his own will and free choice, from his very heart; not as directed and forced by others, but according to his own counsel and determination:

not grudgingly; or not of grief; with pain and uneasiness of mind, grieving at parting with what is given, reflecting on the persons that move him to it, or on the objects moved for. The Jews [f79] reckon this the lowest degree of all in giving alms; "when a man gives to anyone" bx[b, "with grief", to which the apostle seems to refer: who adds,

or of necessity; of force, by coaction, being obliged to it by the influence, example, or commands of superiors; or through the powerful motives, or prevailing entreaties of others; for without these, men, according to their abilities, should give of themselves freely and liberally:

for God loveth a cheerful giver; or one that gives twpy µynp rbsb, "with a cheerful countenance", as the Jews [f80] say; or as elsewhere [f81], "with a cheerful heart": their rule is this,

> "he that doth the commandment, i.e. alms, let him do it jmç blb, "with a cheerful heart"."

Who looks pleasantly on the person or persons that move him to it, or on the object to whom he gives; who parts with his money willingly, and takes delight in doing good to others; such givers God loves: not that their cheerful beneficence is the cause of his special peculiar love to them in his own heart, which arises from nothing in man, or done by him; but the meaning is, that God does well to such persons; shows his love to them; he lets them know how kindly he takes such acts of theirs, by prospering and succeeding them in their worldly affairs. In the Septuagint in (<2Co 9:7>Proverbs 22:8) are these words, "God blesses a cheerful man, and a giver", which the apostle refers to.

Ver. 8. *And God is able to make all grace abound towards you*, etc..] By "all grace" is meant, not the love and favour of God, the source of all blessings enjoyed in time and eternity; nor the blessings of grace, the fruits of it; nor the Gospel which reveals them; nor the various graces of the Spirit implanted in regeneration; nor gifts of grace, fitting men for

ministerial service; all which God is able to make to abound, and does, when he gives enlarged discoveries of his love, makes fresh applications of covenant grace, leads more fully into the knowledge of his Gospel, carries on the work of his grace in the soul, and calls forth grace into act and exercise, and increases gifts bestowed; nor even merely temporal blessings of every sort, which men are unworthy of, are all the gifts of his goodness, and are given to his people in a covenant way; and which he can, and often does increase: but by it is meant all that goodness, beneficence, and liberality exercised towards the poor members of Christ; God is able, and he will, and it ought to be believed that he will, cause to return with an increase, all that which is expended in relieving the necessities of the saints; that is not thrown away and lost, which is communicated to them, but shall be repaid with use and interest, be restored with abundance, any more than the seed which the husbandman casts into the earth; for as God is able, and has promised, and will, and does cause that to spring up again, and bring forth an abundant increase, so will he multiply the seed of beneficence, and increase the fruits of righteousness. This now contains a new argument to move to liberality, and an antidote against the fears of want, which persons are sometimes pressed with, and tend to prevent their bountiful acts of charity:

that ye always having all sufficiency in all things: that is, God is able to increase, and will so increase your worldly substance, that you shall have a sufficiency, a perfect and entire sufficiency; enough for yourselves and families, for the entertainment of your friends, and the relief of the poor; which shall give you satisfaction and contentment, and that at all times, and with respect to everything necessary for you, as to food and raiment, that so ye may abound to every good work; as to all good works, so to this of beneficence in particular, and to every branch of it, as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and the like.

Ver. 9. *As it is written*, etc..] In (Psalm 112:9) where it is said of the good and righteous man,

he hath dispersed hynwmm, “his riches”, his substance, as the Chaldee paraphrase adds by way of explanation; not in a profuse extravagant manner, but with wisdom and prudence, and yet largely and liberally, according to his ability. Just as the sower scatters his seed here, and there, and in every place, with an open and wide hand, to the good man distributes to all in necessity, and makes them all partakers of his bounty;

he gives not only to one, but to many, and not to all without distinction he meets with, whether necessitous or not:

he hath given to the poor. This explains the former phrase, and points out the persons, the objects of the good man's bounty and compassion:

his righteousness remaineth for ever. This is not to be understood of his justifying righteousness, as if that consisted of, and was established upon his works of bounty and charity to the poor; nor of his fame among men on account of his liberality; nor of any reward in another world; but of his beneficence itself, it being common with the Jews to call alms `hqdx`, "righteousness": (See Gill on "Matthew 6:1") and the sense is, that what such a man bestows in charity on the poor shall not be lost, but shall be like the seed cast into the earth, shall spring up again, and bring forth fruit with increase, according to what follows.

Ver. 10. *Now he that ministereth seed to the sower, and bread for your food*, etc..] For so the words ought to be pointed and read, as is clear from (Isaiah 55:10) to which they refer; and are a "periphrasis" of God, who so blesses the seed that is cast into the earth, that it brings forth such an increase, as that there is a sufficiency of bread for food to the eater for the present year, and a sufficiency of seed to sow with again the next year; and that God, that does this every year, is able "to minister to", or supply your present necessities;

and to multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness; though some consider these as a wish or prayer of the apostle's, that God would do all this for them. Some copies, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read all in the future tense, "he will minister" to you, or "supply" you, "and will multiply your seed sown",

and will increase the fruits of your righteousness; and so contain a promise of a divine blessing, encouraging to liberality with cheerfulness, by strengthening their faith in the providence of God; who as he multiplies, not the seed expended in the family, or sold at market, or as in the barn, or laid up for a better price, but the seed sown in the field, so he will multiply the substance of men; not what they lay out on themselves and families, or lay up in their coffers, but what they give away, or bestow on Christ's poor: and all effects which follow acts of liberality, and which are here designed by "fruits of righteousness", such as a good name among men,

blessing, praise, thanksgiving, and prosperity in things temporal and spiritual, these God will abundantly increase; some of which are mentioned in the following verses. So alms with the Jews is not only called hqdx, "righteousness", but "seed sown". Thus Jarchi interprets (<19B726>Psalm 37:26) "and his seed is blessed", he that [rwz, "sows" righteousness or alms, its end shall be for a blessing, or in the end he shall be blessed; and the phrase, "rain righteousness", in (<280102>Hosea 10:12) is by the Septuagint rendered, γεννηματα δικαιοσυνης, "fruits of righteousness", the same as here, from whence it seems to be taken.

Ver. 11. *Being enriched in everything to all bountifulness*, etc..] These words may be connected with (<470908>2 Corinthians 9:8-10) being included in a parenthesis; and the sense is, that God was not only able to give them a sufficiency, and would give them a sufficiency of temporal things, as food and raiment to their satisfaction, and contentment for themselves, but a fulness, an exuberancy, an overplus also; not for luxury and intemperance, but that having such an affluence in all the good things of life, they might at all times, and upon every occasion, exercise a bountiful disposition in relieving the poor:

which causeth through us thanksgiving to God; not their riches and fulness, but their liberal distribution of them to the poor saints, to which they were stirred up by the apostles; who were thankful to God who had so well succeeded their exhortations and advice, and which was the cause of thanksgivings in others: and since therefore such beneficence tended to the glory of God, as giving of thanks makes for his glory, this then ought to be attended to, and diligently performed; and so it furnishes out a new argument to this good work, which is enlarged upon in the following verses.

Ver. 12. *For the administration of this service*, etc..] Not only by the Corinthians, and others, in giving and collecting, but by the apostles in ministering and distributing their contributions to the poor saints, produced these two very good effects: for it

not only supplieth the wants of the saints; makes up their deficiencies, relieves their necessities, and furnishes them with what is comfortable and refreshing to them under their many sorrowful circumstances, which is answering a very valuable end:

but is abundant also by many thanks givings to God; it has over and above this excellency in it, or its excellent use is enhanced, and abundantly appears by this consideration; that many precious souls are sent hereby to the throne of grace to give thanks to God, who put it into the hearts of the apostles to move the churches on their behalf, and who wrought upon them so cheerfully and largely to contribute to their necessities.

Ver. 13. *Whiles by the experiment of this ministration*, etc..] That is, the poor saints at Jerusalem having a specimen, a proof, an experience of the liberality of the Gentile churches ministered to them by the apostles, first,

they glorify God; by giving thanks unto him, acknowledging him to be the author of all the grace and goodness which they, and others, were partakers of; particularly

for your professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel of Christ is the doctrine of grace, life, and salvation by Christ, of which he is the author, as God, the subject matter, as Mediator, and the preacher, as man: subjection to it lies in a hearty receiving of the doctrines of it, and a cheerful submission to his ordinances; and this subjection was professed, declared, and made known to the churches in Judea, by their sending so largely to their relief, which they would never have done, if they had not cordially embraced the Gospel of Christ; for true faith in the doctrine of grace, and a sincere obedience to it, are best declared and known by love to the saints; for faith works by love, both to Christ, and to his people: next they glorified God by giving thanks to him,

for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men; which shows, that though they were truly grateful, and heartily thankful for the favours they themselves received, yet not for these only, but for what other poor saints, in other places, were also partakers of; yea, that in the first place they were more sensibly affected with, and more especially thankful for the grace of God bestowed on the Gentiles, in sending the Gospel among them, and bringing them to a subjection to it, than for the temporal good they received from them.

Ver. 14. *And by their prayer for you*, etc..] The sense is, they glorify God on your behalf, making mention of you in all their prayers at the throne of grace, giving thanks to God for your liberality to them, and imploring all the blessings both of the upper and nether springs upon you; and this contains another argument engaging the Corinthians to liberality, taken

from the prayers of the saints for them: or the words may be connected with (2 Corinthians 9:12) the thirteenth verse being in a parenthesis; and show not only that this ministering to the poor saints relieved their wants, and caused thanksgivings to God, but abounded in this fruit also; it put them upon daily and importunate supplications to God for their welfare both in soul and body.

Which long after you; or "earnestly desire you"; that is, "to see you", as the Ethiopic version adds; or exceedingly love you: their affections are wonderfully drawn out to you; not so much, or barely for your kindness to them, as

for the exceeding grace of God in you; for that large measure of it which was bestowed upon them in regeneration, as their unfeigned faith, lively hope, and sincere love; and for all that grace which was displayed in their justification, adoption, sanctification, and whole salvation.

Ver. 15. *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift*.] Meaning either the goodness of God, both to the giver and receiver; for that the one gave so liberally, and the other received so largely, was from the grace of God, who so powerfully inclines the hearts of his children to do good, and offer so willingly of what he has given them, and who so wonderfully provides for the supply of the poor and needy; or else that exceeding grace of God which was so eminently, largely, and freely bestowed on the Corinthians in their effectual calling; or, as some think, Christ himself, who is to be sure "the unspeakable gift" of God; who, though his Son, his own Son, his only begotten Son, the Son of his love, his Son and heir, yet he gave him to be a covenant to the people, the head of his church, the Saviour of sinners, and to be a sacrifice in their room and stead: none can tell how great this gift is, which is so suitable and seasonable, so large and comprehensive, nor declare the love both of the Father and the Son, expressed in it. Thankful we should be for it; and our thankfulness should be shown by highly prizing and valuing this gift; by laying the whole stress of our salvation on Christ; by ascribing all the glory of it to him; by giving up ourselves to him, and to his interest; by walking worthy of him in all well pleasing, and by communicating to the support of his cause, and the supply of his poor ministers and members. And thus the apostle tacitly suggests one of the strongest arguments that can be used, to stir up the saints to generosity and liberality, taken from the wonderful grace of God in the gift of his Son; for if he of his free grace, and unmerited love, has given his Son to, and for his

people, and with him all things freely, both the riches of grace and glory, then they ought freely and bountifully to communicate temporal good things to the poor members of Christ, for whom God and Christ have an equal love, as for themselves.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 10

In this chapter the apostle has chiefly to do with the false teachers, and it is taken up in refuting their calumnies of him, and in exposing their boasting of themselves; and as he goes along, he takes notice of the efficacy of the Gospel, and of the success and extent of it, as it was preached by him, and other Gospel ministers, and points at the proper manner and ground of glorying. And whereas the false teachers had represented him as a mean spirited man, as well as his outward aspect was contemptible, and that he had not that authority and courage he boasted of, he describes himself by those characters they had reproached him with: by his name Paul, which signified little, they suggesting that he was little in soul, as well as in body; by his modesty and humility, when he was with the Corinthians, and by his boldness, now absent from them: and he entreats them by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, which he imitated, and they ought also, that they would not join in those sneers, nor reproach him for these things, (2 Corinthians 10:1) and that they would so behave, that, when he came among them, he might have no occasion of using that power and authority, which the false teachers called bluster and boldness; and which he had thought and determined in his own mind to exercise on some who traduced him and his fellow ministers as carnal selfish persons, (2 Corinthians 10:2) which calumny he removes by owning, that they walked in the flesh, in the body, and were subject to imperfections, as men; but denies that their ministerial warfare or service was managed in a carnal and worldly, or in a weak way and manner, (2 Corinthians 10:3) assigning this reason for it, because the weapons they made use of, in the warfare of their ministry, to defend truth, and annoy the enemy, to enlarge Christ's kingdom, and weaken Satan's, were not carnal, weak, and worldly, but spiritual and efficacious, through the power of God that accompanied them; and which appeared by the use they were of to the demolishing the strong holds of the flesh, and bringing down the haughty and lofty imaginations of the fleshly mind, which were opposed to the knowledge of God, and the refuting all the sophisms of fleshly wisdom, and carnal reasonings against the Gospel of Christ. This was the influence it had on some through the power of

divine grace, whereby they became obedient to Christ, and subject to his word and ordinances, (47104 2 Corinthians 10:4,5) whilst on others, as on Elymas the sorcerer, who sought to pervert the right ways of God, the apostolical power was exercised in a way of just punishment and awful vengeance, (47106 2 Corinthians 10:6). The apostle moreover suggests to the Corinthians, that they judged of him, and the false teachers, according to the outward appearance of things, which was wrong: however, let these men make ever so great a show in the flesh, or what pretensions soever to Christianity, to being the members and ministers of Christ, the apostle would have them observe, that he, and those with him, were, and were to be looked upon as equally the same, (47107 2 Corinthians 10:7) nay, should he exalt himself above them, and affirm he had an authority superior to theirs, which he describes by the efficient cause of it, the Lord, and by its end, edification, and not destruction, he should have no reason to be ashamed, since he was capable of giving proof of it, (47108 2 Corinthians 10:8) however, he would say no more of this for the present, lest he should strengthen the calumny cast upon him, that it was his way to terrify by his letters, with blustering menaces of his power and authority, (47109 2 Corinthians 10:9) and which calumny is more fully expressed in the words of the false teachers, who said, that his letters were bold and blustering, and by which he would be thought to be a man of power and authority; though, alas! a man of no speech nor presence, when in person among men, and so not to be regarded, (47110 2 Corinthians 10:10). In answer to which the apostle returns, that he would have such a reviler know, that as he was in word by letters when absent, such would he be found to be in deed when present, (47111 2 Corinthians 10:11) and then proceeds to expose the vain glorying of the false teachers, and to observe those things which he, and other faithful ministers of the word, might glory of; though they could not give themselves the liberties they did, and chose to glory in the Lord; they could not commend themselves in that bold and insolent manner, to the contempt of others, when there was no necessity for it, as the false teachers did, (47112 2 Corinthians 10:12) nor could they boast of things they never did; of conversions they never were instruments of; of the planting of churches they had no concern in; and of spreading the Gospel where they had never been, which was the case of these men: whereas, whenever they gloried, it was when there was an absolute necessity for it, and always with modesty, acknowledging the grace and goodness of God unto them, and ever with truth; and of their own labours, and not of others; and particularly with respect to Corinth, it was with the strictest regard to

truth that they affirmed they were the first that preached the Gospel there, converted souls, and planted a Gospel church, and hoped they should be the means of spreading it further still, (<470103>2 Corinthians 10:13-16). However, they did not desire to glory in themselves, but in the Lord, from whom they had all their gifts, success, and usefulness; and so they directed others to do, (<470107>2 Corinthians 10:17) and because, for this reason, that he that commends himself is not approved of God, but he that is commended by the Lord, (<470108>2 Corinthians 10:18).

Ver. 1. *Now I Paul myself beseech you*, etc..] The apostle having said what was necessary and proper to stir up the Corinthians to a liberal contribution for the poor saints at Jerusalem, returns to the vindication of himself against the false apostles; and earnestly entreats the members of this church,

by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, not to regard their reproaches, and join with them in them; for did they but consider the meek and gentle deportment of Christ, so worthy of his and their imitation, they would see there was no reason to reflect on him for that part of his conduct, in which he followed his Lord and master; whose meekness was to be seen in the assumption of human nature, in the whole of his life and conversation, and in his sufferings and death; and his "gentleness" of Spirit to be observed in his coming into this world, not to judge and condemn it, but that the world might be saved; in bearing all indignities and insults, without being provoked to wrath and revenge; in rebuking his disciples for the severity of their spirits, declaring he came to save, and not take away the lives of men; in praying for his enemies, and in his silence under all the ill treatment he met with from the worst of men. As the apostle had this excellent example before him, which served both to regulate his conduct, and support him under the hard measures he met with, so he was desirous to direct others to the observance of it, which might be a check upon the ill usage of him. He here speaks of himself in the language of his adversaries, who meant by these characters to expose him to scorn and contempt: "I Paul myself"; whose name the false teachers played upon, it signifying "little"; and he being of little stature, they reproached him for it, and would insinuate, that as his name was "little", and his person mean, his bodily presence weak, and his speech contemptible, that he had a little soul, was a man of small knowledge, mean parts, and a very insignificant minister. Now it is as if the apostle should say, I am not ashamed of my name, nor of my person, and I am willing to own myself the least of the apostles, yea, less than the least of

all saints; but I beg of you by the mild and gentle Spirit of my Lord and master, whom I am not ashamed to imitate, that you would not join in those sneers. I am Paul, αυτος, the "same" in my principles and practice, in my doctrine and life, when present and absent; though my enemies say the contrary, as that I am such an one,

who in presence am base, or "humble among you": they suggested, that when he was at Corinth he was humble and modest in his conversation, mild and gentle in all his expressions and deportment; and which they interpreted of a meanness and baseness of spirit, as though he crept and cringed to curry favour with men, to avoid offence, and gain and keep an interest among them:

but being absent, am bold toward you; wrote blustering, hectoring, terrifying letters, threatening to come with his apostolic rod and deliver them up to Satan, to fright them into a compliance with him.

Ver. 2. *But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present*, etc..] That is, he entreated them that they would so behave for the future, that he might have no occasion, when he came among them, to use that power and authority they called boldness, which he had received from Christ for edification, and not destruction; as for that asperity and roughness with which he wrote, and which was thought to be too severe, it was in order to reclaim them, and so prevent that sharpness he was empowered by Christ to use: for though he had said in his former epistle, (<460421>1 Corinthians 4:21) "shall I come unto you with a rod or in love? and in the spirit of meekness?" he chose to come in the latter, rather than with the former; namely, not

with that confidence wherewith, says he,

I think to be bold: by "confidence" he means the faith of miracles he was possessed of, and particularly the power he, and other apostles had, of striking dead or blind incorrigible offenders, or of delivering them to Satan to undergo some corporeal punishment; which he had been thinking of, and reasoning about in his own mind, and was almost come to a conclusion concerning it, to inflict it upon, and with it to be bold,

against some which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh; who not barely thought so within themselves, but reasoned the matter with others, and would fain persuade them to believe that they did walk in a carnal manner; not that they had the face to say, that they walked after the

dictates of corrupt nature, or lived in open vice and profaneness; but that they walked in craftiness, had their conversation in the world with fleshly wisdom, seeking their own worldly interest and secular advantage; which is denied by the apostle, (<4012>2 Corinthians 1:12) and was the real case, and true picture of the false teachers themselves.

Ver. 3. *For though we walk in the flesh*, etc..] The apostle removes the calumny of walking after the flesh, by owning that they were in the flesh, in the body, in a state of imperfection, attended with many weaknesses and infirmities, and surrounded with a variety of afflictions and sorrows; in this sense they were, and lived and walked in the flesh; but then he denies the charge exhibited against them,

we do not war after the flesh: every Christian's life is a warfare with Satan, and his principalities and powers, with the world, the men and lusts of it, and with the corruptions of their own hearts; and much more is the life of a minister of the Gospel, who is called forth to meet the adversary in the gate; to stand in the hottest place of the battle, and sustain the whole fire and artillery of the enemy; to fight the good fight of faith, endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ, and with the weapons he is furnished with to war a good warfare: which is not done “after the flesh”; in such a manner as the men of the world wage war with one another; or upon carnal principles; or with carnal selfish views; or in a weak way and manner; but in a spiritual way, with all simplicity and disinterested views, with great courage and intrepidity of mind.

Ver. 4. *For the weapons of our warfare*, etc..] By “warfare” is here meant, not that which is common to all believers, who are enlisted as volunteers under the captain of their salvation, and fight his battles, and are more than conquerors through him; but what is peculiar to the ministers of the Gospel; and designs the ministerial function, or office, and the discharge of it. So the Levitical function, or the ministerial service of the Levites, is called hdb[h abx, “the warfare of the service”, (<0425>Numbers 8:25 * marg). The ministry of the word is so styled, because that as war is waged in defence of men's rights, properties, and liberties, and for the weakening of an enemy's power and possessions, and for the enlargement of kingdoms and dominions; so this is in defence of the truths and liberty of the Gospel, that they may continue and abide; for the weakening of Satan's kingdom, by delivering the lawful captives, taking the prey from the mighty, turning souls from the power of Satan to God, and translating them from the

kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Christ Jesus; and so for the enlargement of his kingdom, by spreading the Gospel far and near. The "weapons" with which this warfare is managed are the Scriptures of truth, the sword of the Spirit, the word of God; and which indeed are an armoury, out of which may be taken weapons of all sorts, both offensive and defensive; such as serve both to establish and secure the doctrines of the Gospel, and to refute the errors of the wicked: to which may be added all those gifts which Christ has received for, and gives to men, qualifying them for the work of the ministry, and for the understanding of the sacred writings; together with all those means made use of by them for their improvement in spiritual knowledge; such as diligent reading the word of God, and the labours of his faithful servants, frequent meditation thereon, and earnest prayer to God for more light and experience. Also the various graces of the Spirit, with which they are endued, may be taken into the account; such as the breast plate of faith in Christ, and love to himself, his people, word, ordinances, cause, and interest; the helmet of salvation, hope, the girdle of truth and faithfulness, and the excellent grace of patience to endure all hardships, reproaches, insults, afflictions, and persecutions, cheerfully; and finally, all the acts of their ministration, such as preaching, prayer, the administration of ordinances, and laying on of censures, with the consent of the church. Now these weapons

are not carnal; such as the men of the world fight with, not the temporal sword; for Christ sent forth his apostles without that, naked and unarmed amidst their enemies, his kingdom not being of this world, and so not to be defended and propagated in such a way; or as the weapons the false apostles used, such as natural eloquence, fleshly wisdom, carnal reason, cunning craftiness, the hidden things of dishonesty, and great swelling words of vanity; or they were not weak and impotent, which is sometimes the signification of "flesh"; (see <0106B3>Genesis 6:3, <2303B3>Isaiah 31:3)

but mighty through God: powerful and effectual through the blessing of God, and the influences of his grace and Spirit for the conversion of sinners, the edification of saints, the defence of truth, the confutation of error, the destruction of Satan's kingdom, and the enlargement of Christ's: for these weapons are not powerful of themselves; they are passive instruments, which are only efficacious when used by a superior hand; when the Gospel ministration is attended with "the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power"; and then they are serviceable

to the pulling down of strong holds. The allusion seems to be to the falling of the walls of Jericho, at the sound of ram's horns, which must be ascribed not to those instruments, which were in themselves weak and despicable, but to the power of God that went along with the sound of them. By strong holds are meant, the strong holds of sin and Satan; such as unbelief, pride, hardness of heart, etc.. with which the heart of man is walled (so bl twryq, "the walls of the heart", (<2049>Jeremiah 4:19 * marg)) against God and Christ, and the Gospel of the grace of God, and by which Satan fortifies himself, and keeps the palace and goods in peace, until the everlasting doors are thrown open, which were bolted and barred; and these walls of defence are pulled down by the King of glory, who enters in, which is usually done by the power of God, in the ministry of the Gospel: so sins are called strong holds, fortresses, and bulwarks, by the Talmudists [f82], who give this as the sense of (<2094>Ecclesiastes 9:14)

> "a little city, this is the body; "and few men in it", these are the members; "and there came a great king against it, and besieged it", this is the evil imagination, lust, or concupiscence; and built against it µydwxm, "great bulwarks", or fortresses, twnw[hla, "these are iniquities"."

And so Philo the Jew [f83] speaks of τα βεβαιατης κακιας ερεισματα, "the firm munitions of vice" being broken down. Or else by them may be meant the fortresses of a man's own righteousness, holiness, good works, and moral duties, in which he entrenches, and thinks himself safe: which the Spirit of God, in the ministry of the word, blows a blast upon, and which are cast down by it, that revealing a better righteousness, even the righteousness of Christ; or else the fleshly wisdom, rhetorical eloquence, and sophisms of false teachers, with which they endeavoured to fortify themselves against the doctrines of the Gospel, but in vain.

Ver. 5. *Casting down imaginations*, etc..] Or "reasonings"; the carnal reasonings of the minds of natural men against God, his providences and purposes, against Christ, and the methods of salvation, and every truth of the Gospel; which are all disproved, silenced, and confounded, by the preaching of the word, which though reckoned the foolishness and weakness of God, appears to be wiser and stronger than men; and whereby the wisdom of the wise is destroyed, and the understanding of the prudent brought to nothing:

and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; every proud thought of the heart, every great swelling word of vanity, every big look, even all the lofty looks and haughtiness of men, with every airy flight, and high towering imagination, reasoning, and argument advanced against the Gospel of Christ; which is here meant by the knowledge of God, and so called, because it is the means of leading souls into the knowledge of God, even into a better knowledge of him than can be attained to, either by the light of nature, or law of Moses; to a knowledge of him, and acquaintance with him in Christ the Mediator, in whom the light of the knowledge of the glory of God is given; and with which knowledge of God eternal life is connected, yea, in this it consists; it is the beginning of it, and will issue in it.

And bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; or "carrying captive the whole understanding"; that is, so illustrating it with divine light, that it clearly sees Christ to be the alone, able, willing, full, and suitable Saviour, and so becomes obedient to him, both as a Saviour and a King; such an enlightened soul looks to him alone for life and salvation, ventures on him, and relies upon him, and is desirous and willing to be saved by him in his own way; he receives and embraces all his truths and doctrines with faith and love, and obeys them from the heart, and cheerfully and willingly submits to all his commands and ordinances; for though he is taken by the grace of God, and all his strong holds, reasonings, and high thoughts are demolished by the power of God in the Gospel, and he himself is carried captive, yet not against, but with his will, to be a voluntary subject of Christ, and cheerfully to submit to the sceptre of his kingdom.

Ver. 6. *And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience*, etc..] Not with the temporal sword, as the civil magistrate, but with the spiritual one; meaning either censures and excommunication, which a faithful minister of the Gospel, with the suffrage of the church, has at hand, and a power to make use of, for the reclaiming of disobedient persons; or rather that extraordinary power which was peculiar to the apostles, of inflicting punishments on delinquents, such as what was exercised by Peter upon Ananias and Sapphira, by the Apostle Paul on Elymas the sorcerer, the incestuous person, and Hymenaeus and Philetus, and which still continued with him; it was ready at hand, he could exercise it whenever he pleased, he only waited a proper time:

when your obedience is fulfilled: till they were thoroughly reformed from the several abuses, both in doctrine and practice, they had fallen into, and were brought into a better order and decorum, and appeared to have been in all things obedient to the directions he had given; being unwilling, as yet, to use the awful authority he had from Christ, lest any of the dear children of God, who were capable of being restored by gentler methods, should suffer with the refractory and incorrigible.

Ver. 7. *Do ye look on things after the outward appearance*, etc..] Or "look upon things", ironically said; or "ye do look on things", a reproof for making judgment of persons and things, by the outward appearance of them; so many judged of Paul by the meanness of his person, the weakness of his body, the lowness of his voice, his outward circumstances of life, his poverty, afflictions, and persecutions; and despised him; whilst they looked upon the riches, eloquence, haughty airs, noisiness, and personable mien, of the false apostles, and admired them:

if a man trusts to himself that he is Christ's: is fully assured that he has an interest in his love and favour, is redeemed by his blood, is a partaker of his grace, and a believer in him; or rather, that he is a minister of the Gospel, and an apostle of Christ, one that is qualified and sent forth by him to preach the word:

let him, of himself, think this again, that as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's; that is, he may, and ought of himself, without another's observing it to him, of his own accord, willingly reason and conclude, by the selfsame marks and evidences he would be thought to be a minister of Christ, that we are also. The sense is, that let a man be ever so confident of his being a true minister of the Gospel, he will not be able to point out one criterion or proof of his being so, but what he might discern in the Apostle Paul, and the rest of his fellow ministers, and therefore ought to conclude the same of them as of himself. In which may be observed the great modesty of the apostle, who does not go about to disprove others being Christ's, who so confidently boasted of it; nor bid them look to it to see if they were or not, since all that say so are not; only as if granting that they were, he would have them look upon him, and his fellow apostles as such also, who had at least equal pretensions to this character.

Ver. 8. *For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority*, etc..] Than as yet he had done, or used to do; or rather the sense is, should he boast of a greater authority than the false apostles, or even than the true

ministers of the Gospel in common had, he should not exceed the bounds of truth and modesty; for as an apostle he not only had an authority from Christ to preach the Gospel, and administer ordinances, but also had an extraordinary power of punishing offenders, as before observed:

which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for destruction; a power which no mere man, no creature, though ever so exalted, could have given; none but Christ, who is Lord of heaven and earth, and who has all power in his hands, could clothe with such authority as this; and which is given by him, though for the destruction of the flesh, or punishment of the body, yet for the salvation and good of the soul or spirit, as in the case of the incestuous person; and though sometimes for the destruction of the individual person or persons punished by it, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, yet for the edification, spiritual instruction, and welfare of the whole community or church, of which these were a part. So this authority was exercised on Hymenaeus and Philetus, that either they themselves might not learn to blaspheme, or cease to blaspheme Christ, or his apostles, or the truths of the Gospel; or that others might be deterred from such a practice; and so was for the edification of the one, or the other, and the preservation of the whole.

I should not be ashamed; as one that has told an untruth, or as a vain glorious man, who has made his boast of what he has not. The apostle signifies, that he should be able to make good such an assertion, should he think fit to mention it.

Ver. 9. *That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters*.] Here seems to be something wanting, which is to be supplied, The sense is, though I might lawfully boast of the superior authority which we apostles have above other persons, in using sharpness with men insolent and hardened in sin; yet I will not, I forbear every thing of that kind, I drop it, I do not choose to insist upon it; ana amjm, "I overlook", or "neglect" it, "I do not care" to do it, as the Syriac version supplies it; and this he thought most prudent and advisable, lest he should give any occasion to the above calumny that he was bold, and blustering, and terrifying by his letters when absent, and only threatened that he had no power to perform.

Ver. 10. *For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful*, etc..] These words contain the reason why he did not choose to say any more of his authority as an apostle to punish offenders, that he might give no occasion

for such a calumny, some among them, or the false apostles, had cast upon him; that his epistles, referring particularly to his former epistle, and that part of it which respected the incestuous person, and his delivery to Satan, were blustering and thundering; were laden with sharp reproofs and severe menaces; were heavy with charges, were filled with great swelling words, with boasts of power and authority, and with threatenings what he would do, when he came among them; whereas when present, as at his first coming to them, he was mild and gentle, even to a degree of meanness and baseness, as they suggested; and so they concluded he would be, should he come again; and therefore his letters were not to be regarded:

but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible: he made a mean figure, being of a low stature, and having an infirm body: the account the historian [f84] gives of him is this, that

> "he had a small and contracted body, somewhat crooked and bowed, a pale face, looked old, and had a little head; he had a sharp eye; his eyebrows hung downwards; his nose was beautifully bent, somewhat long; his beard thick and pretty long; and that, as the hair of his head, had a sprinkling of gray hairs:"

hence one in Lucian [f85] scoffingly says of him,

> "when the bald headed Galilean met me, with his hook nose, who went through the air to the third heaven:"

though the words of this text rather regard his mind and mien than the make of his body; and suggest that he was not a man of that greatness of soul, and largeness of mind, not possessed of those abilities and gifts, and of that freedom of speech, and flow of words, his letters promised; but instead of that, was a man of a mean spirit, very abject and servile, and to be despised; his conduct weak, and carrying no majesty and authority with his presence, his words without weight, his language vulgar, and style neglected; and, upon all accounts, a person worthy of no notice, and not at all to be either feared or regarded.

Ver. 11. *Let such an one think this*, etc..] The apostle seems to have in view some one particular person, though he does not choose to name him, who had more especially reproached him after this manner; and who was either one of the members of this church, or rather one of the false apostles: and so in the foregoing verse, instead of "say they", in which way both the Syriac and Vulgate Latin read, and is followed in our version, it is

in the original text φησι, “says he”, or “he says”; and so a certain particular person seems designed in (<471104>2 Corinthians 11:4) whom the apostle would have to know and conclude with himself, and of which he might fully assure himself, that such as we are in word by letters, when we are absent, such will be also in deed, when we are present: he threatens the calumniator, that he should find him, to his sorrow, the same man present as absent; that what he sent by letters, should be found to be fact, when he came again; whose coming would not be with all that tenderness and gentleness, as when he first preached the Gospel to them, for which there was then a reason; since he and others had swerved from the truths of the Gospel, and the right ways of God, which would require the severity he threatened them with, and the execution of which might be depended upon.

Ver. 12. *For we dare not make ourselves of the number*, etc..] Some understand this as spoken ironically, as if the apostle jeeringly should say, he would not pretend to join, or put himself upon a level, who was a poor, little, mean, despicable person, with such great men as the false apostles were, men of such large gifts, and of such great learning and eloquence; though they may be understood without an irony, that the modesty of the apostle and his fellow ministers would not suffer them to mingle with such persons, and act the vainglorious part they did: or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; they were not so vain and foolish, as to give high encomiums of themselves, therefore would not boast even of the authority they had, and much less say that in letters, which they could not make good in fact:

but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise, or “understand not”; how foolish they are, how ridiculous they make themselves; they do not understand what they say, nor whereof they affirm; they do not understand themselves, what they really are; for to form a right judgment of themselves, they should have considered the gifts and abilities, the learning and knowledge of others, and thereby might have taken an estimate of their own; but instead of this, they only consulted themselves, and measured and compared themselves with themselves; which was acting just such a foolish part, as if a dwarf was to measure himself not with any kind of measure, or with another person, but with himself; only surveys himself, and his own dimensions, and fancies himself a giant. Just the reverse is this, to what is said in Philo the Jew [f86],

"την γαρ ουψενειαν την εμαυτου μετρειν εμαψον, "I have learned to measure the nothingness of myself", and to contemplate thy exceeding great bounties; and moreover, perceive myself to be dust and ashes, or if there is any thing more abject."

Ver. 13. *But we will not boast of things without our measure*, etc..] Or things unmeasurable; meaning not doctrines, the knowledge of which they had not attained to, and which were not to be measured by reason or revelation, such as the Gnostics boasted of; but the sense is, that they would not glory in, and boast of actions, that were never done by them, within the compass of their ministration, as the false apostles did; who pretended that they had been everywhere, and had preached the Gospel, and had made converts in all parts of the world; but the apostle and his fellow labourer, desired only to speak of those things which were done of them, and of their successful labours:

according to the measure of the rule; not the measure of the gift of Christ, or of faith bestowed upon them; nor the measuring rule and canon of the Scriptures, though both are truths; but the places or parts of the world, which God in his secret purpose had fixed, and in his providence directed them to preach in: or as he says,

which God hath distributed to us; parted and divided to them; assigning such and such places to some, and such and such to others, as he himself pleased, to discharge their ministerial office in; drawing as it were a line, or setting a bound, by which and how far each should go, and no further:

a measure to reach even unto you; the line of their ministration was drawn, or the bounds of their preaching were carried from Judea, and through all the intermediate places to Corinth, so that the Corinthians were properly under the jurisdiction of the apostles, and in their district; wherefore the false apostles had really no right nor claim to be among them; nay, their measure reached to the ends of the world, according to (Psalm 19:4) "their line" μωq, "is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world".

Ver. 14. *For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure*, etc..] They did not go beyond the bounds set them by the purpose and providence of God, by going to Corinth; nor did they boast of things without their measure, when they spoke of their labours, and of the success of their ministrations among them; nor did they assume and arrogate to themselves what did not

belong to them, when they claimed an authority over them, and a right of exercising their apostolical office among them:

as though we reached not unto you; by right, or according to the will of God, and the measuring line and bounds he drew and fixed for them:

for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the Gospel of Christ. The case is clear, it is a plain matter of fact, that they were not only come to other places, where they had preached the Gospel, and planted churches, but as far as to Corinth also, where they came "in, by, or with the Gospel of Christ": not their own, or what was of their own invention, but Christ's; of which he is the author, minister, and subject; they did not come without something with them; they came with the good news and glad tidings of salvation by Christ; they came preaching the Gospel, which was owned for the conversion of many souls, and for the raising a very considerable church; all which was a full proof that they were of right, and not by usurpation, come to them; that they had not thrusted themselves in, where they had no business, and consequently still retained a power over them.

Ver. 15. *Not boasting of things without our measure*, etc..] The apostle here asserts what he had done before, (<47 10 13>2 Corinthians 10:13) with a view to explain it, as he does, saying,

that is of other men's labours; when they boasted of the Corinthians as their converts and children, whom they had begotten through the Gospel of Christ, they did not boast of other men's labours, as did the false apostles; who when they came to Corinth, found a church already planted by the apostle, and a multitude of believers, of whose conversion and faith he had been an instrument; and yet these men claimed them as their own, and an authority over them, when they were the fruit of the apostle's labours:

but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly; the sense is, that the apostle hoped, for he could not be sure, this lying in the secret will of God, that when the faith of the Corinthians was grown stronger, and more settled and established, and so would not stand in so much need of their care and instruction, they should be enlarged through their means; and that they should not stop here, but that the line, measure, or rule of their ministry, should be drawn to a greater length, and the bounds of it extended and carried abundantly further. The apostle intimates, that the weakness of their faith, and the disorders and divisions that were among them, were a

hinderance to the spread of the Gospel; and that if their church state were in a better and a more settled condition, as it would give the apostles more leisure to preach the Gospel elsewhere, so it would serve to recommend it to other places beyond them; which would be an enlargement of the bounds of their ministry, and a means of magnifying of Christ and his Gospel, and of them also.

Ver. 16. *To preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you*, etc..] Here the apostle clearly expresses what he hoped for, and explains what he meant by being enlarged according to rule; namely, that he should be at liberty to preach the Gospel elsewhere; and hoped he should be directed by the providence of God, to carry it into the more remote and distant parts of the world, where as yet Christ had not been named:

and not to boast in another man's line: or enter into another man's province, glory in other men's labours, as did the false apostles: and boast

of things made ready to our hand; that is, of places cultivated and improved, by the preaching of the Gospel, so as to bring forth fruit to the honour and glory of God; where many souls were already converted, and churches were planted and put into good order, and were in a flourishing condition; (see Romans 15:18-21).

Ver. 17. *But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord*.] Not in himself, nor in his outward circumstances of life, or inward endowments of mind; not in his natural or acquired parts; not in his wisdom, knowledge, learning, and eloquence; nor in his own righteousness, labours, and services, much less in other men's labours; nor in his own sense of himself; nor in the opinion and popular applause of others; but in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the author and donor of all gifts, natural and spiritual; in his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and in his judgment and approbation of men and things, which sense the following words direct unto.

Ver. 18. *For not he that commendeth himself is approved*, etc..] Such may be said to commend themselves, who ascribe that to themselves, which do not belong to them; as that they are the ministers of Christ, and sent forth by him, when they are not; who boast that they have large ministerial gifts, when they have none; and of their great service and usefulness, when it is all the produce of other men's labours; and what they have and do, they wholly impute to their own power and industry, and not to the grace and

power of God: now such persons are neither approved by God, nor good men; for their own self-commendation stands for nothing, and is so far from being acceptable to God or men, that it must be nauseous and disagreeable; (see Proverbs 27:2).

But whom the Lord commendeth: they are approved by God and men, and they are such whom he highly honours, as he did Paul, by counting them faithful; and putting them into the ministry, by qualifying them for his service, by assisting them in it, and making them abundantly useful for the good of souls, and the glory of his name: by all which he bears a testimony to them, and shows his approbation of them, and at last will say, well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 11

In this chapter, the apostle continues his discourse concerning the false teachers; blames the Corinthians for their connivance at them, and subjection to them; gives a true and ample description of them; compares himself with them, and by various instances shows, that he was greatly superior to them: and whereas self commendation was necessary, and could not be avoided in this argument, and this might look like folly, and by some be deemed such, he entreats the Corinthians that they would bear with him in it, as well as in his reproofs and admonitions to them, (<471101>2 Corinthians 11:1) and assigns his godly jealousy over them, as the reason why he entered into this subject, and proceeded in such a way of reasoning on it; and the rather this might be bore with in him, since he had such a concern in espousing them to Christ; his end in which was, to present them a chaste virgin to him, (<471102>2 Corinthians 11:2) and what this jealousy was he explains, lest their minds should be corrupted by the false teachers, and they should forsake the pure and simple Gospel of Christ; which he exemplifies in the instance of Eve being deceived by the serpent, (<471103>2 Corinthians 11:3) and proceeds to blame them for preferring these false teachers to the faithful ministers of the word; seeing, put them in the best light they could, it was but the same Jesus they preached, and not another and a better Saviour; and it was but the same spirit of faith they received through their ministry, and not another and a better; and the same Gospel they brought, and did not come with better news, or more joyful tidings; had this been the case, there would have been some reason for extolling one above another, (<471104>2 Corinthians 11:4) for which there was not the least foundation, especially with respect to the Apostle Paul, who was not inferior to the chief of the true apostles of Christ, and therefore could not be at all behind these men, (<471105>2 Corinthians 11:5) and seeing it might be objected to him that he was rude in speech, when these were men of great eloquence, he allows it; but then affirms he was not so in knowledge, in which he exceeded them; for the truth of which, lie appeals to the Corinthians themselves, (<471106>2 Corinthians 11:6) and he suggests, that it was very ungrateful in them, that inasmuch as he humbled himself when

among them, by working with his own hands, that they might be exalted, that they should despise him on that account, and prefer these avaricious men before him, (<471107>2 Corinthians 11:7) when that he might be able to preach the Gospel freely, he took of other churches, (<471108>2 Corinthians 11:8) and particularly was supplied by the Macedonian brethren, and so was not at all chargeable and burdensome to them, and he was determined ever to remain so, (<471109>2 Corinthians 11:9) and which he confirms by an oath, that no man should ever be able to prevail upon him to take anything of the churches in the region of Achaia, in which Corinth was, (<471110>2 Corinthians 11:10) and whereas it might be insinuated that such a resolution showed that he had no true affection for them, this he denies, and appeals to the omniscient God for the truth of his love to them, (<471111>2 Corinthians 11:11) but the true reason why he had so determined, was to prevent the false teachers having any opportunity to reproach him, and exalt themselves, (<471112>2 Corinthians 11:12) and this leads him on to a description of them, by their ambition and arrogance, in assuming a title that did not belong to them; by their crafty, cunning, and deceitful manner of working, and by their hypocrisy in mimicking the apostles of Christ, (<471113>2 Corinthians 11:13) nor need this seem strange to any, when Satan himself has been transformed into an angel of light, (<471114>2 Corinthians 11:14) and whom, the apostle suggests, these men imitated; whose ministers they were, though they looked like ministers of righteousness, and on whom the apostle denounces severe punishment, (<471115>2 Corinthians 11:15) and as he saw himself under a necessity of boasting, in order to stop the mouths of these men, to vindicate himself, and prevent mischief being done by them, he renews his entreaty in (<471101>2 Corinthians 11:1) that the Corinthians would not reckon him as a fool; or if they did, that they would bear with his folly, and suffer him to boast of himself a little, (<471116>2 Corinthians 11:16) and that the Christian religion, and the Gospel of Christ, might not come under any reproach and blame, for his conduct in this particular, he observes, that what he was about to say on this head of boasting, was not by any order or direction from the Lord, but of himself, and might have the appearance of folly in it, (<471117>2 Corinthians 11:17) and the rather he might be indulged in it, seeing many, even the false teachers, had gloried in a carnal way, and of outward things, and which made it necessary that he should glory also, (<471118>2 Corinthians 11:18) and which foolish boasting in them, even many of the Corinthians had bore with, and that with a great deal of pleasure; and therefore might suffer him, a single man, to boast a little of himself unto them, whom he ironically calls wise,

(<471119>2 Corinthians 11:19) of which he gives instances, by being brought into bondage, devoured, pillaged, insulted, and abused, by the false teachers, (<471120>2 Corinthians 11:20) nor had they abused and reproached them only, but the apostle also, as weak and contemptible; but then he would not bear it, but would boldly engage and enter the lists with them, though this might be by some reckoned foolish boasting, (<471121>2 Corinthians 11:21) and then follows the comparison between him and them, by which it appears that he was upon an equal foot with them, on account of nation, descent, and parentage, (<471122>2 Corinthians 11:22) that he was superior to them as a minister of the Gospel, as was manifest by his more abundant labours in it, and by his sufferings for it, the dangers he was exposed unto on account of it, and the many hardships he endured in the ministration of it, of which he gives a variety of particulars, (<471123>2 Corinthians 11:23-27) to which he adds, besides these things, and all other outward ones, that the daily care of all the churches of Christ was upon him, (<471128>2 Corinthians 11:28) and such was his sympathy with all sorts of Christians, even the weak and offended brethren, that he was affected with them, bore their infirmities, and sought to reconcile and make them easy, which greatly increased the weight of business that was upon him, (<471129>2 Corinthians 11:29) and seeing there was a necessity of glorying, he chose to glory in his infirmities and sufferings, and on which he had mostly enlarged, (<471130>2 Corinthians 11:30) and for the glory of divine Providence, and to express his thankfulness for the mercy, he relates a particular instance of deliverance from imminent danger; for the truth of which he appeals to the God and Father of Christ, the eternally blessed One, (<471131>2 Corinthians 11:31) the danger he escaped, the manner and means of the escape, and the place where, are particularly mentioned, (<471132>2 Corinthians 11:32,33).

Ver. 1. *Would to God you could bear with me a little*, etc..] The false apostles boasted so much of their gifts, abilities, and usefulness, that the apostle found himself under a necessity of saying some things in his own defence, for the honour of God, and the good of this church; which otherwise his modesty would not have permitted him, and which he saw would be accounted and censured as folly in him by others; and therefore he entreats their patience a little while, and that they would suffer him to say a few things in vindication of his character, and not be offended; though it would be in commendation of himself, which, were he not forced to, would look vain and foolish: and therefore says,

bear with me a little in my folly, and which he presses with importunity,

and indeed bear with me; he insists upon it, he urges it as what he must not be denied in; for could he have avoided it, he would not have done it; but such was the case, that if he did not do it, he must greatly suffer in his character and usefulness; the members of this church would be in great danger from these false apostles, and the honour and glory of Christ lay greatly at stake; which when considered, he hoped his request would be granted: the last clause may be rendered, but also ye do bear with me; signifying that they had done so already, and continued to do so, and therefore he could not but encourage himself, that they still would bear with him a little longer, and in a few things more.

Ver. 2. *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy*, etc..] He lets them know it was not so much on his own account, or at all with any selfish views, or for any secular interest of his own, that he was so concerned, but it was "a godly jealousy", or a "zeal of God"; which he was inspired with by God, and which was for the honour and glory of God, even Jesus Christ, who is God overall; and for their real good and spiritual welfare, as a church of Christ, that possessed him, which put him upon saying what he was about to do; and what affected him the more was, when he considered himself as a friend of the bridegroom, who had been concerned in the betrothing of them to Christ:

for I have espoused you to one husband; by whom is meant Christ, as the following clause explains it: Christ stands in the relation of an husband to the church catholic and universal; to the whole general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven; even to all the elect of God, that ever were, are, or shall be; and so he does to particular congregated churches, as he did to this church at Corinth, and so he does to every individual believer: which character he responds to, by loving them with a love prior to theirs, a love of complacency and delight, which is single, special, and peculiar, strong and affectionate, wonderful and inconceivable, constant, and what will last for ever; by sympathizing with them under all their afflictions, temptations, desertions, and exercises of every kind; by nourishing and cherishing them, which phrases are expressive of the spiritual food and clothing he provides for them, of that intimate communion he admits them to, and of that whole care he takes of them; by paying all their debts, supplying all their wants, supporting them with his right hand, protecting them against all their enemies, giving them grace here, and glory hereafter; and, last of all, by interesting them in his person, and all that he has, in all the blessings and promises of the covenant

in his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The act of espousing, the apostle here, with respect to this church, takes to himself, though in another sense, and which is the principal one, it is ascribed to Christ himself, who betroths all his to himself in righteousness, in judgment, in lovingkindness, and tender mercies; he saw them in his Father's purposes and decrees, in all the glory they were designed to be brought unto, when he loved them as his Father did, and desired them for his spouse and bride, which was granted to him; and then secretly in covenant betrothed them to himself, and ever after looked upon them as in a conjugal relation to him; wherefore though they fell in Adam, and became guilty and filthy, he gave himself for them as his church and bride, to sanctify and cleanse them, that he might present them to himself, just such a glorious church he had seen them before. In consequence of this, the Spirit of God attends the ministration of the Gospel, to the conversion of each of these souls, when they become willing to be the Lord's, and give their free and full consent to have him for their husband; and this is the day of their open espousal to him, and in this the apostle had, and other ministers of the Gospel have a concern; he was a means, in the hands of the Spirit, of their regeneration, a minister by whom they believed, an instrument in directing their souls to Christ, by setting forth his unsearchable riches, the glory of his person, and fulness of his grace: as Abraham's servant set forth the greatness of his master, and the large possessions his son was heir to, and brought out his bracelets and ear rings, his jewels of gold and silver, and thereby gained his point, a wife for Isaac; so the Spirit of God going along with the ministration of the apostle so wrought upon these Corinthians, as to give up themselves to the Lord, and take him for their head and husband, Saviour and Redeemer. This was the concern the apostle had herein, and his view, desire, and hope were, to set them before Christ their husband, pure and incorrupt:

that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ; that is, single in their love to, him, strictly adhering to him, and him only, as standing in such a relation to them; pure in the principles of faith, sincere and upright in their worship, and holy in their lives and conversations; nothing was more desirable to him than this, that he might thus present them to Christ at the great day; whereby it would appear, that his labour was not in vain in the Lord: now having been concerned in this affair of espousing them to Christ, and they not yet presented to him, or took home by him, he could not, as things were circumstanced, but entertain a godly jealousy over them

in his own breast, lest the false apostles should draw them aside in any degree from their love to Christ, and faith in him.

Ver. 3. *But I fear lest by any means*, etc..] Jealousy is always attended with fear, care, and solicitude, whether in things natural or spiritual. The apostle, as things were in this church, could not but express his fears, lest

as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety; that is, the old serpent the devil, who made use of a serpent, the most subtle creature of all the beasts of the field, and seduced Eve from her obedience to God, to transgress his command, by eating the forbidden fruit. The apostle here speaks the language and sense of the Jews, who say [f87], that, µhl djaµç çjnw ˆjç "Satan and the serpent have one name", i.e. are the same; and that it was the old serpent (the devil), hwjl ytpd, "that beguiled Eve" [f88], and who is said to be corrupted by him;

> "the serpent (they say [f89]) was corrupted first, after that, hwj hlqlqtn, "Eve was corrupted", and after that Adam was corrupted."

So the apostle was jealous and fearful, knowing that the false apostles were ministers of Satan, artful and cunning men, lest, through their craftiness and sophistry,

your minds, says he,

should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ; that is, lest their judgments should be misled, their minds be vitiated with corrupt principles, and be carried away in any degree with the error of the wicked, from off the pure and simple doctrine of the Gospel, which respects the person and grace of Christ; and chiefly lies in this one plain, easy, and important truth, salvation alone by him. The Vulgate Latin version reads, "your minds should be corrupted, and should fall from the simplicity that is in Christ".

Ver. 4. *For if he that cometh*, etc..] Meaning either some particular man, the apostle might have had some information of, who came from Judea to Corinth, under the character of a true apostle; or anyone of the false apostles whatever, who came of their own accord, and was never sent by Christ, or by any of his churches:

preacheth another Jesus whom we have not preached; that is, if he proposes and recommends in his ministry, a better Saviour and Redeemer than had been preached by the apostles; one that was better qualified, and more fit for the purposes of salvation; one that they could more safely venture their souls upon, and believe in, as the alone able and all sufficient Saviour, a thing impossible to be: or the sense is, if this other apostle taught the doctrine of salvation by Christ, in another and better method and in a clearer manner, more to the honour of the Redeemer, the glory of God, and the good of their souls, they would have some reason then to pay a greater regard to him:

or if ye receive another spirit which ye have not received; a better spirit than the Spirit of God, which the had received through the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles; either for graces, for they had received him as a spirit of regeneration and conversion, of sanctification and faith, of adoption and liberty, of peace and joy, and comfort; or for gifts, both ordinary and extraordinary, which could not possibly be; the spirit which the contrary ministers brought with it, and tended to not generate in them, must be the reverse of this, even a spirit of bondage again to fear:

or another Gospel which ye have not accepted, or “embraced”; a better Gospel than had been preached by the apostles, and received by them; which contained more wholesome doctrines, more comfortable truths, more excellent promises, better tidings of good things, than those of peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation, by a crucified Jesus; proposed a better scheme of things, more for the honour of the divine perfections, and for the comfort and safety of believers; and which laid a better foundation for faith and hope, and tended more to encourage true religion and powerful godliness:

ye might well bear with him; receive his doctrine, submit to his authority, and prefer him to the apostles: but since another and a better Saviour than Jesus of Nazareth could not be proposed, or the doctrine of salvation by him be preached in another and better manner than it was; nor had they received, nor could they receive, another and a better spirit, than the spirit of grace and truth, which was communicated to them, through the apostle's ministry; nor was a better and a more excellent Gospel preached to them, than what they had heard; therefore they ought not to connive at, indulge and tolerate, such a false apostle among them, which it seems they did; and was the reason of the apostle's fears and jealousies, before expressed: and

besides, supposing that this man that was among them, and caressed by many of them, did preach the same Jesus, and the same doctrine of salvation by him, and the same Spirit and power went along with his ministry, it being the same Gospel that was preached by Paul and others, there was no reason why he should be set up above them, who had been the instruments of conveying the Gospel, and the Spirit of it, to them, long before he was known by them.

Ver. 5. *For I suppose I was not a whit behind*, etc..] This is very modestly expressed by the apostle; for he does not assert, and in a haughty and confident way affirm, but only supposes, or thinks that this might be admitted, that he was not inferior to, or did not come short of, in gifts, grace, and usefulness,

the very chiefest of the apostles: such as Peter, James, and John; who seemed to be pillars, were eminent apostles, of great note among them, and such as Christ, in the days of his flesh, took particular notice of. This he says, not to exalt himself, but to show, how weakly and injudiciously the Corinthians acted in setting up the false apostle above him; or else these words are spoken ironically, and design the false teachers, who vaunted so much of their gifts, learning, eloquence, and usefulness; and extolled themselves at such a rate, as if they were υπερ λιαν αποστολων, "greatly above the apostles"; and therefore he jeeringly calls them

the very chiefest of them; and yet thinks fit to put himself at least, upon an equality with them: one manuscript reads, "the chiefest of the apostles among you"; and the Ethiopic version seems to have read you.

Ver. 6. *But though I be rude in speech*, etc..] Which might be objected to him, setting himself upon a level with men so famous for their diction, and elegance of style; and to this he answers, not by owning he was so, but granting it to be so; for the Apostle Paul was not an unlearned man, an idiot in speech, unskilful in language, his writings testify the contrary; he did not indeed, in his public ministry, dress his sermons with the flowers of rhetoric, or adorn his discourses with the words of human wisdom, with bombast, and great swelling words of vanity; he chose a plainer and easier style, more accommodated to the vulgar, to the capacities of the people he was concerned with; for he had not to do with philosophers and senators, but with the common people chiefly; with persons of every sex, age, and condition of life: in this sense indeed he acted as an idiot, a plebeian, a private person; he used a popular style, or, as the Jews say of several of

their Rabbins [f90], he jwydh ^wçl çrwd, “preached”, or explained “in the common language” of people; which the common people used, and not the learned, and to which reference may be had here: but though he wisely pursued this method, as being most likely to be useful,

yet he was

not rude

in knowledge, or unskilful in the mysteries of the Gospel; he was well learned in the knowledge of Christ, and in the doctrines of grace, as all his discourses, sermons, and letters testified; and however negligent he might be thought to be of his style, and take no pains or care about the elegance of his language, but rather studied a plain and popular diction, yet he was always careful to convey profitable and useful knowledge to the souls of men; and thought his discourses might not be fraught with all the beauties of oratory, and enticing words of man's wisdom, they were full of spiritual knowledge, and showed him to have a large understanding of divine things, for the truth of which he appeals to the Corinthians:

but we have been thoroughly manifest among you in all things; his faith and doctrine, as well as manner of life, were well known unto them; he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God unto them: his knowledge in the mystery of Christ's person and grace, and in all the parts of the everlasting Gospel, was no secret to them; he had used no artful methods to hide himself, or conceal the truth; but by manifestation of it, had commended himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God; and by observing this, as he had witnesses now among them of the truth of it, so he strikes at the hypocrisy and deceitful methods the false teachers took to cover themselves, their practices, and principles.

Ver. 7. *Have I committed an offence in abasing myself*, etc..] Either by behaving among them, when he was first with them, in a very modest and humble manner, in much fear and trembling, without pride and haughtiness, or affectation of power and authority over them; or by using a popular style, suited to the capacity of the common people; or by labouring with his own hands, exercising his trade of tent making among them, that he might provide food for himself, and not be chargeable to them; and which he suggests was so far from being criminal in him, that he ought rather to be commended for it; since it could not be thought to be with any view to himself, and his own advantage, but purely for their good:

that you might be exalted; that nothing might lie in their way of receiving the Gospel of Christ, or prejudice them against it; that they might the more easily be brought to listen to it, come to the knowledge of it, and embrace it, and so be exalted, as they were, to a participation of the grace of Christ; to fellowship with him; to the honour and dignity of being a church of Christ; to an enjoyment of the privileges of God's house; to have a name better than that of sons and daughters, and to have a right and title to the heavenly glory: “because”, or is it

because I have preached to you the Gospel of God freely? The Gospel he preached was not his own, but God's; of which he was the author; his grace was the subject of it, and his glory the end of its ministration; which he had given to the apostle to preach; to which he had separated him, for which he had abundantly qualified him, and in which he was greatly succeeded by him. This he preached “freely” to the Corinthians at his first coming among them, without putting them to any expense, or receiving anything from them; which though he might lawfully have done, yet he judged it most advisable, at that time, to minister to his own necessities, by working with his hands, lest he should be burdensome to them; and this be an objection to the Gospel he preached, that he sought rather theirs than them; and for so doing he was not to be blamed, but to be praised: and yet such was the weakness of many at least in this church, that they highly valued the false apostles, who made merchandise of them, and treated with contempt this excellent servant of Christ, who had freely imparted the Gospel to them.

Ver. 8. *I robbed other churches*, etc..] Meaning the churches of Macedonia; not that what he had of them was by force and rapine, or by plundering of them, and spoiling of their substance, and living upon them against their wills, as soldiers use a conquered people, though the allusion is to such a custom; for what he had of theirs was freely communicated to him; as appears from the following verse: but because these churches from whom he received were poor, and the Corinthians whom he served were rich, he calls it a robbing of the former, though there was no injury in the case, for it was voluntary, because it was expended for the service of the latter:

taking wages of them to do you service; or “for your ministry”; either to supply their poor, or rather to support the ministry of the Gospel among them. The apostle continues the metaphor, taken from soldiers, to whom wages are due for their warfare; as are also to the ministers of the Gospel,

the good soldiers of Jesus Christ; since no man goes a warfare at his own charges and expense but is for by those in whose service he is: and therefore, though the apostle did not think it advisable to ask for, and insist upon wages from them at that time, for his service among them, yet he took it of others in lieu of it; and this he mentions, partly to show that wages were due to him for his ministry, and partly to observe to them who they were beholden to for the support of the Gospel at first among them; as also to stir them up to be serviceable to other churches, as others had been to them.

Ver. 9. *And when I was present with you, and wanted*, etc..] Whilst he was among them, preaching the Gospel to them, he wanted the common necessaries of life: and yet, says he,

I was chargeable to no man, or "benumbed no man"; a metaphor, as some think, taken from the torpedo, or cramp fish; which is of such a cold and benumbing nature, as that, when even at the hook, it will strike the fisherman with its cold, and so benumb him as to take away his feeling, and the use of his limbs: now the apostle's meaning is, that he did not chill and benumb any man's charity, by asking relief from him, for he importuned no man on this account; nor was he benumbed himself, to the detriment of any man; for though he was reduced to great straits, he was not slothful and sluggish in preaching the Gospel, but pursued it with as much diligence and industry as if he had been supported by it in the most handsome manner; nor did he act the part of an idle drone, sit still and starve, but laboured with his own hands, to the relief of himself and others; and whereas it could not be thought he should be able to provide this way thoroughly, both for himself and these that were with him, it was made up by other hands:

for that which was lacking to me; which he could not make up by his own hand labour and industry:

the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied; meaning either Silas and Timotheus, who came to him from Macedonia, whilst he was at Corinth, working at his trade with Aquila and Priscilla, (Acts 18:5) who might bring him a supply out of these parts; or else some that belonged to the churches of Macedonia, particularly the Philippians, who frequently communicated to him, and sent him presents by some or other of the brethren, as by Epaphroditus, (Philippians 4:15,16,18).

And in all things, adds he,

I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you; he worked hard, lived sparingly, and received from others; that as in respect to his maintenance, so in everything else he might live without being a dead weight upon them, or any ways troublesome to them: not that a minister's maintenance is, or ought to be reckoned a burden upon a people; it is but a due debt, and what is their just right; but because it is accounted so by carnal men, and such as are disaffected to the Gospel, and the ministry of it, therefore the apostle uses such language:

and so will I keep myself; time is, for the future; he having taken up a resolution in himself not to be chargeable and troublesome to them, but to provide for himself some other way. This he adds, lest they should think that he had said what lie did to stir them up to a discharge of their duty, in contributing towards his support for time to come.

Ver. 10. *As the truth of Christ is in me*, etc..] To show the firmness of his resolution, and how determined he was to abide by it, he joins an oath to it; for these words are the form of an oath; and it is as if he should say, as sure as Christ is truth, who is in me; or as that the truth of grace, or the truth of the Gospel of Christ is in my heart and mouth, so sure will I constantly persevere in this determination; or let the truth of Christ never be thought to be in me, if I do not:

no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia; or this boasting shall not be stopped in me; of preaching the Gospel freely at Corinth, and that he had not been chargeable and burdensome to them; nor would he be for time to come, neither there, nor in any part of Achaia, of which Corinth was the metropolis; (See Gill on "2Co 9:2"). No man should stop his mouth from boasting of this, by putting anything into his hands, for he was determined not to receive anything from any person in these climates; not but that he reserved a liberty in himself to receive from other persons and churches, for his comfortable subsistence, and so much the limitation of his resolution to these parts implies; for if he had not intended to have received a supply from any persons whatever, the restriction to the regions of Achaia would have been unnecessary; and he should rather have said, that no man should stop him of this boasting in any part of the world. The Vulgate Latin version reads, "this boasting shall not be broken"; and to the same sense the Syriac version, "this boasting shall not be abolished".

Ver. 11. *Wherefore? because I love you not*? etc..] Why did the apostle do this? why did he take nothing, and resolve to take nothing of the Corinthians, for preaching the Gospel to them? why did he determine, that no man should prevent his glorying of this, in all the country of Achaia? was it because he did not love the Corinthians? some might insinuate this was the reason of it, that he had no true affection for them, and therefore would take none of their gifts, but despised both them and theirs, and loved the Macedonian and other churches better than they. To which he answers by saying,

God knoweth; which is another form of an oath, and is a solemn appeal to God, the searcher of hearts, who knows all things, that he knew he heartily loved them; that it was not want of love to them, which was the reason of his entering into such a resolution, never to take anything of them; but it was something else, quite another thing, which induced him to it, and is mentioned in the following verse.

Ver. 12. *But what I do, that I will do*, etc..] As he preached the Gospel freely at Corinth and in Achaia, so he was determined to do it for the future, for this reason only, or chiefly:

that, says he,

I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion: meaning the false apostles, who sought for, and were desirous of every occasion and opportunity of exalting themselves, and reproaching him: that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we; the sense of which according to some interpreters is, that whereas some of the false apostles, at least who were rich men, took nothing for preaching, but gave their labours freely, were very desirous that the apostle would receive of the churches in these parts, that they might have an occasion against him, and an opportunity of showing themselves, as in learning and eloquence, so in this respect, to be superior to him, in that they preached freely, and he for gain; wherefore to cut off such an occasion, the apostle determines he would take nothing; that in this very thing which they boasted of, that they preached the Gospel freely, they might appear to be at most to be but upon a par with the apostle, and not to exceed him. This sense would seem very appropriate, was it a clear point that the false apostles received nothing for preaching; but the contrary is most evident; wherefore the apostle's meaning is, that these men were desirous that he would take wages, because they did; that in this respect he might not excel them, and that they might be able to plead

his example and authority, and so get an occasion of extorting more money from the Corinthians: wherefore to cut off all such occasion from them, the apostle resolves to take nothing himself; that whereas they boasted they were equal to, or superior to the apostles, they might be found, would they follow their example, even as they, not taking any money at all of them, and poor, and working with their own hands.

Ver. 13. *For such are false apostles*, etc..] Such as those he had in view, who sought an occasion to depress him, and exalt themselves, and to get money from the Corinthians; these were “false apostles”, or apostles falsely so called; they had the name, but not the thing; they were not called and sent forth by Christ; they had not the grace of apostleship, or gifts qualifying them for that high office; the power and authority they exercised was usurped by them; they could not prove their mission by true and real miracles; nor had they any seals of their apostleship, as those who were sent by Christ had:

deceitful workers; they went by the name of labourers in Christ's vineyard, when they were loiterers in it; they pretended to work, but did not; and to work for Christ, when they only served themselves, and their own bellies; they took upon them to interpret the Scriptures, but in a very fallacious manner; they walked in craftiness, and handled the word of God deceitfully, and lay in wait to deceive men; and were masters of so much art and cunning, that, if it was possible, they would have deceived the very elect:

transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ: not so much by putting on a like garb or dress, but by pretending to be of the same principles, and to follow their practices, and to pursue the same good ends in their ministrations.

Ver. 14. *And no marvel*, etc..] This need not be wondered at, nor is it any new or strange thing; nor should it be thought to be incredible that there are such persons in being:

for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light; a good angel, one that has his abode in the regions of light; and is possessed of divine and spiritual light and understanding; who is clothed and arrayed with light, this is his form and essence. The apostle speaks agreeably to the notion, of the Jews, who say [f91],

"rwa µh µlk µykalmhç, "that all the angels are light", the clothing of God himself;"

and they have a distinction between µwyd ^ykalm, "angels of the day", and angels of the night [f92]: now Satan, the enemy of mankind, sometimes appears in the form of one of these; as he did to Eve in the garden, and to Christ in the wilderness; and by such appearances he often imposes on mankind; pretends the greatest friendship, when he designs nothing but ruin; and under a notion of good, either honest, or pleasant, or profitable, draws on into the commission of the greatest evils; and, under a show of truth, introduces the most notorious falsehoods and errors; and, under a pretence of religion, all sorts of idolatry, superstition, and impiety; it is in this way he has succeeded in his enterprises and temptations; these are his wiles, stratagems, and cunning devices.

Ver. 15. *Therefore it is no great thing*, etc..] It is no strange and wonderful thing; it may easily be given into; no man need to make any doubt of it, or hesitate concerning it, since the devil himself, who is an angel of darkness, is transformed into an angel of light:

if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; not that they really are transformed into such ministers, but they appear and look like such; they are not really, but "as the ministers of righteousness"; they put on the form and air of faithful upright ministers of the word, and would be thought to be such; they mimic Gospel preachers, who assert the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, though they most miserably corrupt it, and blend it with something of their own; and which they endeavour to palliate, and cover from the sight of men; and especially they set up themselves as such, by pretending to be great friends to holiness and good works, which they press with much vehemence, and oppose to the doctrines of grace, with all their might and main; in doing which, they greatly serve their master, whose ministers they are; and who well knows that the doctrine of works may do much prejudice to the Gospel interest, and churches of Christ, but will never convert nor save one soul: a dreadful character these men have, for though they would pass for ministers of righteousness, friends to holiness, and men zealous of good works, they are no other than ministers of Satan, doing his work, serving his interest, and propagating his kingdom, which is a kingdom of darkness:

whose end shall be according to their works; for either God will make public examples of them in this world, or if they are not made manifest here, though they may deceive themselves and others, they cannot deceive God; he will take off the mask, their hypocrisy shall be detected, their evil works will be laid open, and they will be judged according to them, and condemned for them to everlasting punishment.

Ver. 16. *I say again, let no man think me a fool*, etc..] For praising himself, or speaking in his own commendation; which he was obliged to do, in vindication of his own character, against the false apostles, for the sake of the Gospel he preached, and for the advantage and welfare of the Corinthians; that they might not be imposed upon and carried away with the insinuations of these deceitful men; wherefore he desires them once more, that if he must be accounted a fool for speaking in his own behalf;

if otherwise, says he, if they could not be persuaded that he acted a wise part, but must be looked upon as a fool, for what he said of himself,

yet as a fool receive me; or "suffer me", or bear with my folly: he desires that he might have, and use the liberty which fools have usually granted to them, to speak out the truth, and all they know, which is not always allowed to wise men:

that I may boast myself a little; in a few instances, and for a small space of time; he suggests, that the false apostles boasted much of themselves, and they bore with them, and had done so for a great while; and therefore it was no unreasonable request he made, that they would also suffer him to boast of himself a little, especially since there was such an absolute necessity for it.

Ver. 17. *That which I speak*, etc..] Meaning in vindication and commendation of himself, on this subject of glorying; or, as here expressed,

in this confidence of boasting; for which he thought he had good ground and foundation to go upon, and therefore might express himself with the greatest assurance, (see 2 Corinthians 9:4) this he declares he spoke not as from the Lord, but of himself:

I speak it not after the Lord; or "Christ", as some copies read; or "our Lord", as the Syriac version; his sense is, that he did not then speak as an apostle, or one sent by Christ; he put off this character for the present, and took that of a fool upon him, that he might speak the more freely to the

Corinthians, and the more severely against the false apostles; he did not pretend to any express command from Christ for so doing, or that he acted in imitation of him, who was meek and lowly; or that what he said came from the Spirit of the Lord; or, indeed, that it was agreeably to his own Spirit, and the principles of grace formed in him; but was obliged to it, through the boasts of the false apostles; which though it was not criminal and unlawful, but necessary, right, and proper, considering the reasons of it, the end for which, and the intention and view with which it was done; yet viewing the form and manner of this boasting, without attending to the circumstances of it, it had the appearance of folly: wherefore the apostle says, he spoke not as according to the commandment, or example of his Lord; or according to the Spirit of the Lord, or his own Spirit, as renewed by his grace:

but as it were foolishly; he does not say that what he said was foolishness, but it looked like it, and would be deemed so by such who were strangers to the true springs of it.

Ver. 18. *Seeing that many glory after the flesh*, etc..] Or with respect to things external, such as their high birth and parentage, carnal descent, circumcision, learned education, and the like; of which the false apostles, being Jews, boasted, who it seems were many; and though a multitude is not to be followed to do evil, yet the apostle thought, that since there were so many who were indulged by this church in this way, he might be allowed to boast also of such like things, so far as he could with truth and a good conscience, and in order to secure some valuable ends:

I will glory also; for he was of the seed of Abraham as well as they, of the stock of Israel, and tribe of Benjamin, circumcised the eighth day, and brought up at the feet of Gamaliel; but these are not all the things he could, and would, and did glory of; he gloried of these, and of others besides them, which the false apostles could not, and thereby proved himself to be superior to them, even in external things, of which they bragged so much.

Ver. 19. *For ye suffer fools gladly*, etc..] They bore with the false apostles, who were fools; were continually proclaiming their folly, boasting of themselves, ascribing that to themselves which did not belong to them, and were puffed up by their fleshly minds; they indulged these men in their folly, and that with pleasure and delight; they not only winked at it, and overlooked it, but were pleased with it: seeing ye yourselves are wise; acting like men who count themselves wise, and keep fools for their

pleasure, diversion, and sport. These words may be considered either as spoken seriously by the apostle, and as wondering that they should suffer such fools to go on in their vain boasts, and especially with pleasure; since they were men of wisdom, who were otherwise taught of God, and by the word; they had been made wise unto salvation, and were enriched in all utterance, and in all knowledge; they had been instructed by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and in the mysteries of his Gospel; and therefore it was surprising that they could bear with such vain and foolish men, and especially with delight; for though it is the part of a wise man to bear with fools, yet not with pleasure; so that this carries in it a tacit reproof to them: or else the last clause may be considered as spoken ironically, and as a severe jibe upon their folly for tolerating such a parcel of fools among them; as if he should say, you show yourselves to be men of wisdom, as you would be thought to be; you act the wise part, do not you, in suffering such empty headed men to converse with you, and delight in their vain talk and conversation? however, the whole furnishes out an argument for the apostle, and which he means to improve; that if they could suffer and bear with such fools, and so many of them, and that gladly, then they might and ought to bear a little with him in his folly, which is what he entreats of them.

Ver. 20. *For ye suffer if a man bring you into bondage*, etc..] They not only suffered and tolerated the foolish boasting of these men with pleasure, but patiently and stupidly bore their oppressions, injuries, and insults, things that were intolerable, which no man of any sense and wisdom would ever suffer; and yet they took all quietly from them, made no objection, but patiently submitted to them, and therefore might well bear a little with him; they were voluntarily led captive, and brought into bondage by them, to the yoke of the ceremonial law, to the observance of circumcision, meats and drinks, days, months, times and years; and to the yoke of human doctrines, traditions, tenets, laws, and rules: if a man devour or eat; though they devoured their houses, as the Pharisees did; ate up their substance, were insatiable in their covetousness; were greedy dogs that could never have enough, could not satisfy their voracious appetites, without devouring and consuming all they had, yet they took it patiently:

if a man take of you; not food and raiment, or a proper stipend, or wages which might be voluntarily raised, and cheerfully given; but they took away their goods from them by force, as the Arabic version reads it, whether they would or not, to which they quietly submitted:

if a man exalt himself; as these men did, extolling their nation, their descent and lineage, their parentage and education, and fleshly privileges; in suiting the Corinthians as persons of a mean and base extraction, as having been Heathens and sinners of the Gentiles, yet not a word was returned in answer thereunto:

if a man smite you on the face; though they gave them very opprobrious language, vilifying and reproaching them as uncircumcised persons, upbraiding and hitting them on the teeth with their former idolatries and manners of life; yet all was taken in good part, so much were they under the government and influence of these men.

Ver. 21. *I speak as concerning reproach*, etc..] These words may be considered either as explanative of the latter part of the former verse, “if a man smite you on the face”; that is not to be understood strictly and literally, of one man's striking another on the face, but of reproach and contumelious language, used by the false apostles to the Corinthians; or they may have reference to the apostle's design in the whole, which was partly to reproach, the Corinthians for acting such a stupid part, in patiently bearing so many and such indignities from these men; and partly to expose the scandalous and reproachful usage of them by the false apostles, that if possible their eyes might be opened to see through them, and discard them: or else these words may be regarded in connection with what follows,

as though we had been weak; and then the apostle's meaning is, that as to the business of scandal and reproach he was speaking of, this was not confined to the Corinthians only, but they the true apostles had their share of it; for the false apostles reproached them, as poor, weak, fearful, and pusillanimous men; because they did not use that authority, and exercise that domination over them, they did not bring them into bondage, devour their substance, take away their goods from them by force, insult over them, and treat them in an ignominious and contemptuous manner; and intimated that they were upon all accounts inferior to them, and not worthy to be mentioned with them; which moved the apostle to exert himself, and boldly rise up in his own defence, saying,

howbeit, wherein soever any is bold; to boast of his pedigree, character, office, and usefulness,

I speak foolishly; as it might seem, and be so interpreted by some,

I am bold also; to enter the lists with him, to compare notes, and see on which side the superiority lies; and which is done in the following verses, to the full confutation of all the pride, vanity, blind boasting of the false apostles.

Ver. 22. *Are they Hebrews? so am I*, etc..] The nation of the Jews were called Hebrews, not from Abraham, as some have [f93] thought, through ignorance of the Hebrew language, which will by no means admit of such a derivation and etymology of the name; wherefore the Jewish writers never make mention of this opinion as among any of them; had they took their name from Abram or Abraham, they would rather have been called Abramires or Abrahamites, and not Hebrews; besides, Abraham himself is called an Hebrew, (<0114>Genesis 14:13) and to be so called from himself, and not denominated from some other person or thing, can never be imagined, it would be most absurd and ridiculous; to which may be added, that the apostle in this verse makes mention of being the seed of Abraham, as a distinct character from that of Hebrews: others have been of opinion that the name is derived from rb[, "Habar", which signifies, "to pass over"; and was occasioned by one or other of the following events; either from Abraham's passing over the river Euphrates, when he came out of Mesopotamia into the land of Canaan, and so was called Abram, yrb[h "Hahibri, the passer over", or the Hebrew [f94], and so his posterity were called after him; or from the posterity of Canaan, who, after the confusion at Babel, settled in that part of Asia which lies between the river Jordan and the Mediterranean sea, and from them called the land of Canaan; and who were called by the Chaldeans, from whom they separated, and by the neighbouring nations, Hebrews, or passers over, because they passed over the river Jordan; and so Abraham passing over the river Euphrates to them, and learning their language, and continuing there, he was called an Hebrew also, and his posterity after him [f95]; or from Arphaxad, or Heber, passing over the river Tigris or Euphrates, and settling in the land of Canaan [f96]; but it is not likely that a nation should take its name from such an event: others think it a more probable opinion that Abraham was so called, and hence his posterity after him, from the name which the Canaanites gave to Mesopotamia, from whence he came; calling it Heber Hannahar, or the country beyond the river: just as we call foreigners Transmarines, or people beyond sea; and of this opinion were some of the Jewish writers [f97]; but not Mesopotamia, but Canaan, is called the land of the Hebrews, (<0140>Genesis 40:15). The more commonly received opinion with the [f98] Jews is, and

which is most likely, that they are so called from Heber, the father of Peleg, in whose days the confusion of languages was made, and what is now called the Hebrew language being the first and original one, was retained in him and in his family; hence Shem is said to be the father of all the children of Heber, (<010021>Genesis 10:21) that is, the Hebrews, as the same people are called the children of Israel from Israel, and the children of Judah from Judah, and sometimes they go by the name of Heber, as in (<042424>Numbers 24:24) when as the Assyrians are called Ashur, from whom they have their name, so the Hebrews are called Heber, from whom they take their denomination: and it should be observed, that this is not only a national but a religious name, and those people were called so, because they were of the faith as well as the descendants of Heber; so Shem was the father of others, but in a peculiar manner the father of the children of Heber, because the religion he professed was continued with them; and so Abraham is particularly called the Hebrew, not only because he descended from Heber, but was of the same, religion; and so his posterity, not in the line of Ishmael, but of Isaac, are so called; and not as descending from Isaac in the line of Esau, but of Jacob; and hence it was not lawful for the Egyptians to eat bread with the Hebrews, not because they were of another nation, but because of another religion, (<014332>Genesis 43:32). It seems that these false apostles were Jews, since it is not denied by the apostle, but granted; they were some such like false brethren as those who came from Judea to Antioch, and disturbed the church there, (<441501>Acts 15:1) and whereas they boasted of their being Hebrews, the descendants of the ancient patriarch Heber in the line of Abraham; the apostle was able to match them in this, and asserts himself to be an Hebrew too, which he could do with the strictest truth, for he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews, he was an Hebrew by father and mother's side:

are they Israelites? so am I. The Jews were called Israelites from Israel, a name which was given to Jacob their ancestor, upon his wrestling with an angel, and prevailing over him; and was accounted an honourable one, or title of honour; for the people of Israel were they whom God chose for a peculiar people to himself above all others, brought them out of Egypt, fed them in the wilderness, and led them through it, and settled them in the land of Canaan, and bestowed upon them special and peculiar privileges; (see <450904>Romans 9:4,5). The Jews are very extravagant in the praise of Israelites; they not only make them the favourites of God, beloved of him, because called children, and had the law given them [f99], and extol them

above all mankind; (See Gill on “ <4509>Romans 3:9”) but they even make them equal to the ministering angels, and say they are pure from sin as they, especially on the day of atonement [f100], yea, more excellent than they [f101]: in this also the apostle could answer them, for he was of the stock of Israel, and of the tribe of Benjamin, a son of Jacob, or Israel; and was an Israelite indeed, as Nathanael, for all are not Israel that are of Israel:

are they the seed of Abraham? so am I: of this the Jews mightily boasted; (see <4033>John 8:33) they reckon themselves, even the poorest among them, as the nobles and princes of the earth [f102]; and even other people have been fond of being reckoned of the stock of Abraham, as particularly the Lacedemonians,

> “Areus king of the Lacedemonians to Onias the high priest, greeting: It is found in writing, that the Lacedemonians and Jews are brethren, and that they are of the stock of Abraham:” (1 Maccabees 12:20,21)

The Jews make a merciful disposition to men to be a sign and evidence of being of the seed of Abraham [f103]; but in a spiritual sense, an interest in Christ, and faith in him, denominate men to be truly Abraham's seed, and heirs of the promise: this is to be understood here in a natural sense, and of being of Abraham's seed in the line of Jacob, for otherwise the Ishmaelites and Idumeans were of the seed of Abraham; but they were his seed in that line in which the promised seed, the Messiah, was to come; though this was of no avail, without having the same faith Abraham had, and believing truly in Christ, as his spiritual seed do, whether they be Jews or Gentiles; however, the apostle was equal to them in this respect; he was of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, and above them in another, in that he was of Abraham's spiritual seed by faith in Christ Jesus.

Ver. 23. *Are they ministers of Christ*? etc..] The apostle could have answered to this question that they were not, being neither sent by Christ, nor preachers of him, and who sought their own things and not his, being false apostles, and deceitful workers; but he chose not to litigate this point with them, and by a rhetorical concession allows it; and replies,

I speak as a fool; that is, he might be thought to speak as such an one, for what he afterwards says; and if he was, he must be content, he could not help it, there was a necessity for it, to stop the mouths of these vain boasters:

I am more; that is, more a minister of Christ than they, more manifestly so than they were; yea, he was more than an ordinary minister of Christ, he was an apostle, the apostle of the Gentiles, and laboured and suffered more than even the rest of the true apostles of Christ, and therefore must be greatly superior to the false ones:

in labours more abundant; in taking fatiguing journeys, preaching the Gospel constantly, administering ordinances, working with his own hands, etc..

in stripes above measure; which were cruelly and unmercifully inflicted on him by his enemies, and which he afterwards mentions:

in prisons more frequent; as at Philippi, and so after this at Jerusalem, and Rome, and perhaps in other places, though not recorded; Clemens Romanus says [f104], that he was seven times in bonds:

in deaths oft; that is, frequently in danger of death, in such afflictions and evils as threatened with death, and therefore are so called; (see 2 Corinthians 1:8-10).

Ver. 24. *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one*.] We have no account in the Acts of the Apostles, or elsewhere, of any one of these five scourgings, which the apostle underwent from the Jews; but there is no doubt to be made of them. The number of stripes he received at each time agrees with the traditions and customs of the Jews. The original law for scourging a delinquent is in (Deuteronomy 25:2,3) where it is said, "forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed"; according to the nature of the case, forty stripes and no more might be inflicted, but fewer might suffice in some cases; the apostle's having but thirty nine at a time was not because the Jews thought his crime did not require full forty; or that they out of tenderness and compassion to him abated him one; but they proceeded with him to the utmost rigour of this law, according to their interpretation of it; for so runs their tradition [f105],

> "with how many stripes do they beat him? (a criminal,) it is answered, tja rsj µy[bra, "with forty save one"; as it is said, "with the number forty"; that is, which is next to forty; R. Judah says, with full forty is he to be beaten;"

but the decision is not according to R. Judah, as the commentators say [f106]; and this is the general sense of their [f107] interpreters of that law, and what

they take to be the genuine meaning of it; so that the apostle was punished according to the extremity of it, in their account. This is a settled rule and point with them, tja rsj µy[bra hrwt twqlm[f108], "that scourging according to the law is with forty stripes save one"; Maimonides[f109] observes, that

> "they did not add to forty, if a man was as strong and robust as Samson, but they lessen the number to a man that is weak; for if a weak man should be beaten with many stripes, he may die; wherefore the wise men say, that if he be never so robust, they scourge him but with "thirty nine";"

so that no mercy shown to Paul, or any regard had to his weak constitution, for it was the utmost they ever inflicted; besides, according to their manner of scourging, (see Gill on "<40>Matthew 10:17"), they could not have given him another stroke, without giving him three stripes more, which would have made it forty two, and so have exceeded, which the law forbids; for they whipped with a scourge of three cords, and every stroke went for three; so that by thirteen strokes, thirty nine stripes were given, and if a fourteenth had been added, there would have been forty two stripes; agreeably to which they say[f110],

> "when they condemn a delinquent to how many stripes he is able to receive, they do not count but by stripes that are fit to be trebled; if they reckon he is able to bear twenty, they do not say he is to be beaten with twenty one, so that they may be able to treble, but he is to be beaten with eighteen; they condemn to receive forty, and after he begins to be beaten, they see he is weak, and they say he cannot receive more than these nine or "twelve" with which he is beaten, lo, this is free; they condemn him to receive twelve, and after he is scourged they see he is strong and able to receive more, lo, he is free, and is not to be beaten any more upon the estimation:"

so that you see that, according to their own canons, they could if they would have mitigated this punishment of the apostle's; but such was their cruelty and malice, that they carried it to the utmost height they could.

Ver. 25. *Thrice was I beaten with rods*, etc..] Or "wands", by the Romans; for this was a Roman punishment, distinct from scourging with cords used by the Jews. There is mention made but of one time only that he was so beaten, elsewhere, and that is in (<441622>Acts 16:22,23) which was at Philippi;

but that he was so many times beaten in this way, there is no room to doubt:

once was I stoned. This was at Lystra, at the instigation of the Jews that came from Antioch and Iconium, (<44419>Acts 14:19) by whom he was left for dead:

thrice I suffered shipwreck; neither of which are mentioned by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles; for the shipwreck he suffered as when he went to Rome was some time after the writing of this epistle, and therefore cannot be one of these here referred to

a night and a day I have been in the deep; some understand this of a well, called “Bythos”, or “the deep”, which was near Lystra, where the apostle was hid for such a space of time after his deliverance there; but this, were it so, he would scarcely reckon among his very great hardships and sufferings: others of a prison at Cyzicum in Asia, which, because of its very great height, was called “the depth of the sea”, in which the apostle was imprisoned for such a time; but, we nowhere read that he ever was at that place, or preached there, and much less was imprisoned there; and had he, it is not likely that he should particularly point out such a short imprisonment, but would have let it pass in the general account of being in prisons before mentioned: but rather this is to be understood of the sea, often called the “deep” in Scripture, where by some accident he was cast, and was in it, as the Syriac version has it, atnyps ald, “where was no ship”, or without one, being shipwrecked; or being cast, or having fallen into the sea, he was swimming in it, or was preserved by a broken piece of the ship, or by some other means, or by the wonderful providence of God for so long a time; though as sailing in those times was chiefly by coasting, this phrase may only signify that the ship in which he was was drove from the coast into the sea, and lost sight of the land for the space of a day and night, and lay floating about in the deep, which was reckoned very dangerous. The word νυχθημερον, “a night day”, signifies a whole natural day, consisting of a night and a day; and is an Hebraism, and answers to rqbw br[, “the evening and the morning”, which make a full day; (see <10105>Genesis 1:5,8,13,19,23) (<27814>Daniel 8:14 * marg).

Ver. 26. *In journeying often*, etc..] Through several countries and kingdoms to preach the Gospel, as he did from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum:

in perils of waters; by the floods being out, which made it very troublesome and dangerous travelling, especially to persons on foot, as was the case of our apostle:

in perils of robbers; for though he had seldom much to lose, yet was in danger of being ill used, and of his life being taken away by such ruffians:

in perils by my own countrymen; the Jews, who bore an implacable hatred to him, because of the doctrines of grace he preached, in opposition to the works of the law of Moses, whether moral or ceremonial; and who generally were concerned in stirring up the Gentiles against him wherever he came:

in perils by the Heathen; the Gentiles, who were incensed against him for inveighing against their idols and idolatrous worship, and other wicked and enormous practices they were addicted to; particularly at Ephesus, by the means of Demetrius the shrine maker, (<44>Acts 19:23-41),

in perils in the city; in any and every city he came into; for bonds and affliction abode him everywhere, as at Jerusalem, Damascus, Antioch, Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, etc..

in perils in the wilderness; by robbers and wild beasts, through hunger and thirst, and by the sands in hurricanes and tempests; though this may be understood not strictly of desert places, but of the country in distinction from the city; (See Gill on "<40>Matthew 3:1") where travelling is difficult and dangerous, and the people more rustic and uncivil: the phrase, twrbdmh tnksb, "in perils of the wildernesses", is a Rabbinical one [f111]; as is also µyb hnksh, "peril in the sea" [f112], next mentioned:

in perils in the sea; not only by shipwreck, but through pirates, and the ill usage of mariners, want of provisions, etc..

in perils among false brethren; who pretended to be Christians, but "judaized", teaching the necessity of observing circumcision, and other ceremonies of the law, in order to salvation; these, as the apostle always warmly opposed, so they were sworn enemies to him, and ever sought to do him what mischief they could.

Ver. 27. *In weariness and painfulness*, etc..] Through long journeys and frequent preaching; or "in labour and trouble"; or in troublesome labour, for all labour is not so; as hunting, hawking, etc.. though laborious, yet

delightful; but the labours of the apostle were painful and troublesome to the flesh, though he had much inward spiritual delight and pleasure in them:

in watchings often; being sometimes engaged at midnight, either in preaching, or praying, or staging psalms, and sometimes obliged to work early and late with his own hands to supply his necessities:

in hunger and thirst; as when at sea, or in wilderness places, or where no notice was taken of him for preaching the Gospel; he doing that freely without asking the assistance of any, which in some places would have been prejudicial to his designs, and the spread of the Gospel:

in fastings often; voluntary ones, which he engaged in, not as meritorious works, but to keep under his body, and as proper to attend the work of prayer at certain times:

in cold and nakedness; when travelling in the winter season, and but poorly clothed to keep him from the inclemencies of the weather; and having no certain dwelling place to retire unto and abide in, during any severe season there might be, and wanting the comforts of life to support him under such inconveniences.

Ver. 28. *Besides those things that are without*, etc..] Or are omitted, which he had passed by, and had not mentioned in the account and enumeration of things he had given; for otherwise the things he had taken notice of and instanced in, were things external; but besides them and many other things which would be too tedious to relate,

that which cometh upon me daily, is not to be forgotten; meaning the prodigious deal of business which was every day upon his hands, through the continual coming of brethren to him, either for advice, or comfort, or instruction; and through the multiplicity of letters from divers parts, which he was obliged to give answers to; and the several duties of the day, as prayer, meditation, reading, praising, preaching, etc.. and to sum up the whole, and which is explanative of the phrase,

the care of all the churches; not of ten, or twenty, or some only; but of all of them, he being the apostle of the Gentiles, and was concerned in planting, and raising them, and preaching the Gospel to most of them; and who continually stood in need of his watch and care over them, to provide ministers for some, to prevent schisms and heat divisions in others; to

preserve others from errors and heresies, and warn them of the dangers to which they were exposed by false teachers; and to animate, strengthen, and support others under violent persecutions, lest their faith should fail, and they be tempted to desert the Gospel, and drop their profession of religion.

Ver. 29. *Who is weak, and I am not weak*? etc..] What church is so? or what particular believer is so? for he had not only the care of all the churches, but of all believers upon him; whoever was weak in the faith he was concerned for them, to instruct, establish, and strengthen them; and suited his discourses, reasonings, and language, to their capacity, that they might understand him, and take in right notions of things: or whoever was of a weak and scrupulous conscience about things indifferent, and fearful of using them lest they should sin in so doing, he was cautious of offending them, or doing anything by which their consciences should be defiled, and their peace be broken: or whoever was afflicted, either in body or mind, he sympathized and bore a part with them: "who is offended, and I burn not?" whoever was stumbled and made to fall by anything he said or did, or by the words and actions of others, it gave him sensible pain, it made him very uneasy; he was as one in a flame, all on fire, full of grief and trouble till the cause of the offence was removed, and the person offended made easy and restored; the word here used answers to the Hebrew word µg[, used in (Job 30:25) where it is said, "was not my soul grieved for the poor?" which Mr. Broughton renders, "did not my soul burn for the poor?" Now by all this which the apostle did and suffered, by all actions and sufferings, care and sympathy, he fully appeared to be a true and faithful minister of Christ, and abundantly more than the false apostles, who could produce none of these things as testimonies in their favour.

Ver. 30. *If I must needs glory*, etc..] The apostle signifies that glorying was not agreeable to him; he was not fond of it, it was a subject he did not delight to dwell upon; what he had done was by force, and through necessity; he was compelled to it by the boasts of the false apostles: and since he must needs glory in order to stop their mouths;

I will glory, says he, of things which concern mine infirmities; meaning not his sins, for these cause shame; but his afflictions and sufferings for Christ, under which he was supported, and from which he was delivered by the power of Christ; and that was the reason he chose to glory of them; for though they rendered him mean and despicable in the eyes of the world, yet his bearing them with so much patience, courage, and pleasure, and his

many singular deliverances out of them, served greatly to illustrate the power and grace of Christ, and at the same time proved him to be a true and faithful minister of the Gospel; to whom so much honour was vouchsafed, as to suffer shame for the name of Christ, and to be so singularly marked out by him, as the object of his favour, love, and care.

Ver. 31. *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, etc..] These words are in the form of an oath, and are a solemn appeal to God, that knows all things, for the truth of the whole that he had declared in the foregoing verses, and of the remarkable deliverance related in the following. "God", says he, who is the searcher of hearts, and an omniscient being, to whom all things are open and manifest,

knoweth that I lie not; in anyone single instance he had mentioned, nor in what he was about to declare; which because it was a fact done by a stratagem, and a good while ago, and which was not known to the Corinthians, and of which perhaps at that time he could not produce any witnesses; therefore calls God to testify the truth of it, whom he describes as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"; God is his "God" as Mediator, and head of the elect, to whom as to them he is a covenant God; and as man, being his Creator, supporter, and the object of his faith, hope, love, and worship; and his "Father" as God, and the Son of God, by supernatural generation, being the only begotten of him, in a way ineffable and inexpressible: "and who is blessed for evermore"; in himself, and Son, and Spirit, and is the source of all happiness to his creatures.

Ver. 32. *In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king*, etc..] Aretas or Al-Hareth was a king of Arabia, of the family of the Gassanii; among whom were many of this name [f113]; and who for some hundreds of years ruled over Syria, of which Damascus was the metropolis. The fourth king of that family was of this name, and perhaps is the person here meant; and after him there were four more of the same family so called; it was a name of Arabian kings in other families. The fifteenth king of the Yamanensians was of this name, and so was the "seventeenth" of the Hirensians [f114], and the "third" of the kings of Cenda; in the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, there was an Aretas king of the Arabians, mentioned in the Apocrypha [f115].

> "In the end therefore he had an unhappy return, being accused before Aretas the king of the Arabians, fleeing from city to city, pursued of all men, hated as a forsaker of the laws, and being had in

abomination as an open enemy of his country and countrymen, he was cast out into Egypt." (2 Maccabees 5:8)

Josephus [f116] also makes mention of Aretas king of the Arabians, who seems to have been king of Arabia Petraea, since his royal seat was at Petra, to whom Hyrcanus fled by the advice of Antipater, the father of Herod the great; and there was also one of this name in the times of Herod himself, who succeeded Obodas [f117]; yea, there was an Aretas king of Petraea, in the times of Herod the tetrarch, whose daughter Herod married, and put her away when he took Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, which occasioned a quarrel between him and Aretas, which issued in a battle, in which Herod was beaten [f118]; and who is thought to be the same king which is here spoken of: the name Aretas or Al-Hareth, as Hillerus [f119], observes, signifies the lion; and a lion with the eastern nations was a symbol of royalty and dominion; hence such names were given to persons of illustrious birth and power; so Ali, the son-in-law of Mahomet, was called by the Arabs and Persians the lion of God: now Syria, where Damascus was, and which is called by Pliny [f120] Damascus of Syria, had been of long time in the hands of the kings of Arabia; and [f121] Josephus makes mention of Aretas, king of Coele Syria, who was called to the government by those who had Damascus in their hands; very probably by Milesius, who was governor of the tower of Damascus, and commanded των δαμασκηνων την πολιν, "the city of the Damascenes", as Josephus calls Damascus, just as it is here in the next clause; in which country of Coele Syria, Ptolomy [f122] also places Damascus; and Grotius has proved from Justin Martyr [f123] and Terlullian [f124], that Damascus formerly belonged to Arabia, though in their times it was reckoned to Syro Phoenicia: here the apostle preached to the confounding of the Jews that dwelt there, which provoked them to enter into a consultation to take away his life; and that he might not escape their hands, they moved to the then governor who was under the king, that the gates might be watched day and night; (see <442323>Acts 9:23-25) to which he agreed; and as the apostle here says,

kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, or set a guard about it; or as the Arabic version reads it, "he shut up the city"; and placed a watch at the gates of it night and day, or allowed the Jews to do so:

desirous to apprehend me; in order to deliver him into their hands, who were now his sworn enemies for the Gospel's sake; willing to do them this

favour to ingratiate himself into their affections; or perhaps it might be insinuated to him, that he was a seditious person.

Ver. 33. *And through a window in a basket was I let down*, etc..] The house in which he was, like Rahab's, was built upon the wall of the city, and as she let down the spies by a cord through the window, and as David was by Michal; so the apostle was let down by the brethren with cords, as Jeremiah was, (<2406>Jeremiah 38:6) where the Septuagint use the same word as here, through a window; "which", as the Arabic version reads it, "was in the wall"; or he was let down by the wall side, "in a basket or net"; so σαργανη, and atgyrs, the word which the Syriac version here uses, signify and design a basket made of withs, wrought together in the form of network; frequent mention is made in the Jewish writings[f125] of twnwljh twgyrs, "the networks and lattices of windows"; whether these were not taken off the window and put into a form like a basket, and in it the apostle let down by the brethren with the help of cords, may be inquired into: however, he

escaped his hands; the governor's, and the Jews too who lay in wait for him. This deliverance he mentions with thankfulness to God, and as an instance of divine Providence in the preservation of him, for much usefulness to the church of Christ; the Vulgate Latin version reads, and "thus he escaped his hands".

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 12

The apostle in this chapter proceeds upon the same subject, in vindicating himself against the false teachers, and giving proof of his apostleship; he takes notice of a very remarkable and unusual vision he was favoured with; makes mention of an uncommon temptation of Satan, how he was delivered from it, and the use it was of to him; excuses his boasting to the Corinthians; lays the blame of it upon them who obliged him to do it, though they had such undeniable proofs of his apostleship among them; signifies he intended to come and see them, and expresses his strong affection for them, and good will towards them; removes the calumnies of covetousness, guile, and craftiness; reproves them for their sins, and threatens them in case of impenitence. Though in some respects glorying was not so convenient, and quite disagreeable to the apostle himself, yet such were his circumstances, that it was become necessary for him to do it, and therefore goes on with it; and to his character, qualifications, labours, sufferings, and deliverances, adds the visions and revelations of the Lord he had been honoured with, (471212 Corinthians 12:1) and singles out a very particular one, which he describes by the time when, about fourteen years ago; by the person who saw it, himself, whom he speaks of in the third person, that there might be as little appearance of boasting as possible; by the place where it was seen, the third heaven, into which he was caught; by the form or manner of the vision, or the circumstance and condition in which he was when he saw it, of which he could give no account; as whether in or out of the body, (471222 Corinthians 12:2), which last circumstance is repeated to denote the certainty of it, and his ignorance as to this part of it; for the truth of which he appeals to God, (471232 Corinthians 12:3), and affirms again, that such an one as he had described was caught up to paradise; by which he explains what he meant by the third heaven, and further declares, that being there he heard words unutterable, (471242 Corinthians 12:4). Now though this vision was matter of glorying, yet since he was the person that was so highly honoured with it, he would not dwell any longer on it, but rather speak of his infirmities, as he afterwards does, (471252 Corinthians 12:5), yet if he had shown a design of

boasting, it would not have been acting a foolish part; however, he thought it best to forbear, lest it should lead any into too high an opinion of him, (<47:12:6>2 Corinthians 12:6), and indeed, these high enjoyments were apt to fill himself with pride and vanity, wherefore God, in his infinite wisdom, thought fit to take some methods to humble him; which leads him to give an account of a sore temptation that befell him, which was grievous to him, and in which he was buffeted by Satan; the end of which was to keep down his pride, and hide it from him, (<47:12:7>2 Corinthians 12:7). The use this was of to him, and how he behaved under it, and the request he made to the Lord to be freed from it, are declared in (<47:12:8>2 Corinthians 12:8), to which he received an answer, which was full and satisfactory, gave him pleasure, and determined him to glory in his infirmities, (<47:12:9>2 Corinthians 12:9), which he does in (<47:12:10>2 Corinthians 12:10), and gives an enumeration of them, and his reason for glorying in them: and whereas he knew he should be chargeable with folly, in glorying in other things as he had done, he blames the Corinthians for it, who had obliged him to it; for had they engaged as they should have done in the vindication and commendation of him, there would have been no need of his own; and they were furnished with matter and arguments enough for such a purpose, since it must have been a plain case to them that he was not inferior to the chief of the apostles, (<47:12:11>2 Corinthians 12:11), of which they had a full demonstration, partly by the signs, wonders, and mighty deeds which were done in the midst of them by him, (<47:12:12>2 Corinthians 12:12), and partly by the gifts of grace bestowed on them through his ministry, on account of which they did not come short of any other churches; unless it was in this, that they had the Gospel preached without charge unto them, (<47:12:13>2 Corinthians 12:13), the apostle goes on to acquaint them that he had a third time intended to come and see them, when he would be no more burdensome and chargeable to them than he had been before; have no regard to theirs but to them, acting the part of a father that lays up for his children, but takes nothing from them, (<47:12:14>2 Corinthians 12:14), and expresses his strong affection for them, even though they should show but little to him, and his earnest desire to be serviceable to them, and the pleasure he should take therein, (<47:12:15>2 Corinthians 12:15), and whereas it was suggested by the false teachers, that though he did not take money of them in person, he had used some underhand crafty methods by the means of others to drain them of it, (<47:12:16>2 Corinthians 12:16), he replies and vindicates his innocence, by putting the question to them in general; whether he had made any gain by any persons he had sent to them, (<47:12:17>2 Corinthians 12:17), and particularly

inasmuch as he had sent Titus and another brother, whether he had made any gain of them, and whether the apostle and he were not of the same spirit; and whether they did not take the same steps, (<47 12 18>2 Corinthians 12:18), and then observes, that all the pains that he took in the vindication of himself, was not so much on his own account as theirs, even for their edification, that that might not be hindered, for whom he had the most endeared affection: and for the truth of all this he appeals to God, (<47 12 19>2 Corinthians 12:19), and closes this chapter with observing the many evils which were among them, which he feared he should find among them, when he came, unrepented of; and which would be matter of grief and humiliation to him, and oblige him to use that severity among them which would not be agreeable to them, (<47 12 20>2 Corinthians 12:20).

Ver. 1. *It is not expedient doubtless for me to glory*, etc..] Though it was lawful for him to glory, and was necessary in the present circumstances of things, in vindication of himself, and to preserve the Corinthians from being carried away with the insinuations of the false apostles; and so for the honour and interest of Christ and the Gospel; yet it was not expedient on some other accounts, or profitable and serviceable to himself; he might find that it tended to stir up pride, vanity, and elation of mind in him, and might be interpreted by others as proud boasting and vain glorying; wherefore he chose to drop it, and pass on to another subject; or rather though it was not expedient to proceed, yet, before he entirely quitted it, he thought it proper to say something of the extraordinary appearances of God unto him. Some copies, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, “if there was need of glorying, it is not indeed expedient”; the Syriac version, “there is need of glorying, but it is not expedient”; and the Arabic version, “neither have I need to glory, nor is it expedient for me: I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord”; such as the Lord had made to him, and not man; and which were not the fruit of his own fancy, or the delusions of Satan; but were from the Lord Jesus Christ, and his glory. The apostle might very well speak of “visions” or heavenly appearances, since he was favoured with many; his conversion was owing to a vision or appearance of Christ to him, whom he saw with his bodily eyes, and heard him speaking to him, and which he calls “the heavenly vision”; at another time when at Troas, a vision appeared to him in the night, and a man of Macedonia stood and prayed him to come over and help them; and when at Corinth the Lord spoke to him by a vision, and bid him not be afraid, but go on preaching the Gospel, because he had much people there to be brought in through his

ministry: and as for revelations, besides what are ordinary and common to all believers, he had extraordinary ones; the Gospel and the scheme of it, the knowledge of the several particular doctrines of it, were not attained to by him in the common way, but he had them by the revelation of Jesus Christ; the several mysterious parts of it, particularly that of the calling of the Gentiles, to which might be added, the change that will be upon the living saints at Christ's second coming, were made known to him by revelation; and sometimes in this extraordinary way he was directed to go to such or such a place, as at a certain time he went up to Jerusalem by "revelation", where he was to do or suffer many things for the sake of Christ: though he had no revelation of anything that was different from, and much less contrary to the Gospel, and as it was preached by the other apostles; for there was an entire agreement between him and them in their ministry; (see Galatians 2:2,7-8), and these visions and revelations were for his instruction, direction, and encouragement in the ministration of the Gospel; and being of an extraordinary nature, were suitable to those extraordinary times, and not to be expected in an ordinary way, nor is there any need of them now; besides, these were visions and revelations of the Lord, and not the effects of enthusiasm, and a warm imagination, nor diabolical delusions, or the pretensions and cheats of designing men; and were for the confirmation and establishment of the Gospel, and not to countenance a new scheme, or introduce a new dispensation; wherefore all visions and revelations men pretend to, which are for such a purpose, are to be despised and rejected.

Ver. 2. *I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago*, etc..] Which is to be understood of himself, as appears from (2 Corinthians 12:7), where he speaks in the first person; and the reason why he here speaks in the third, is to show his modesty and humility, and how much he declined vain glory and popular applause; and whilst he is speaking of himself, studies as it were to conceal himself from being the person designed, and to draw off the mind of the reader from him to another person; though another cannot be intended, for it would not have been to his purpose, yea, quite beside it, when he proposes to come to visions and revelations he had of the Lord, to have instanced in the rapture of another. Moreover, the full and certain knowledge he had of this man, of the place he was caught up to, and of the things he there heard, best agrees with him; as also his attesting, in such a solemn way, his ignorance of the manner of this rapture, whether in the body or out of the body, and which he repeats and refers to the knowledge

of God, clearly shows he must mean himself; besides, it would otherwise have been no instance of any vision of his, nor would the rapture of another have at all affected his character, commendation, and praise, or given him any occasion of glorying as this did: though he did not choose to take it, as is clear by his saying that if he gloried of it he should not be a fool, yet forbore, lest others should entertain too high an opinion of him; and after all, he was in some danger of being elated with this vision along with others, that the following sore temptation was permitted, to prevent his being exalted with it above measure: and when he calls this person, meaning himself, a "man", it is not to distinguish him from an angel, whose habitation is in the third heaven, and so no wonderful thing to be found there; or from any other creature; nor perhaps only to express his sex, a man, and not a woman, though the Syriac version uses the word arbg, peculiar to the masculine sex; but merely to design a person, and it is all one as if it had been said, I knew a person, or I knew one in Christ: and the phrase "in Christ", is not to be connected with the word "know", as if the sense was, that he called Christ to witness the truth of what he was about to say, and that what he should say was not with a view to his own glory, but to the glory and honour of Christ only; but it is to be connected with the word "man", and denotes his being in Christ, and that either, as Dr. Hammond thinks, in a singular and extraordinary manner; as John is said to be "in the spirit", (Revelation 1:10), that is, in an ecstasy; and so here this man was in the Spirit of Christ, and transported by him to see visions, and have revelations; or rather it intends a spiritual being in Christ, union to him, the effect of which is communion with him. The date of

fourteen years ago, may refer either to the time when the apostle first had the knowledge of his being in Christ, which was at his conversion; he was in Christ from all eternity, being given to him, chosen in him, loved by him; set as a seal upon his heart, as well as engraven on the palms of his hands, and represented by him, and in him, in the everlasting covenant; and so in time, at his crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God; in consequence of all which, when the set time was come, he became a new creature, was converted and believed in Christ, and then he knew himself to be in him; he was in him secretly before, now openly; and this was about fourteen years before the writing of this epistle; the exact time of his conversion might well be known and remembered by him, it being in such an extraordinary manner: or also this date may refer to the time of his rapture, which some have thought was some time within the

three days after his conversion, when he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank; some have thought it to be eight years after his conversion; but the most probable opinion is, that it was not at Damascus, but when he was come again to Jerusalem, and was praying in the temple, and was in a trance or ecstasy, (<442217>Acts 22:17), though the difference there is among chronologers, and the uncertainty of their conjectures, both as to the time of the apostle's conversion, and the writing of this epistle, makes it very difficult to determine this point. They that make this rapture to be at the time of his conversion, seem to be furthest off of the truth of things; for whether his conversion be placed in the 34th year of Christ, as some, or in the 35th, as others, or in the 36th; and this epistle be thought to be written either in the 56th, or 58th, or 60th, the date of fourteen years will agree with neither: they indeed make things to agree together best, who place his conversion in the year 36, make this rapture to be eight years after, in the year 44, and this epistle to be written in the year 58. Dr. Lightfoot puts the conversion of the apostle in the year 34, the rapture of him into the third heaven, in the year 43, at the time of the famine in the reign of Claudius, (<441128>Acts 11:28), when he was in a trance at Jerusalem, (<442217>Acts 22:17), and the writing of this epistle in the year 57. That great chronologer, Bishop Usher, places Paul's conversion in the year 35, his rapture in the year 46, and the writing of this epistle in the year 60. So that upon the whole it is hard to say when this rapture was; and it may be, it was at neither of the visions recorded in the Scripture, which the apostle had, but at some other time nowhere else made mention of: when, as he here says,

such an one was caught up to the third heaven, the seat of the divine Majesty, and the residence of the holy angels; where the souls of departed saints go immediately upon their dissolution; and the bodies and souls of those who have been translated, caught up, and raised already, are; and where the glorified body of Christ is and will be, until his second coming. This is called the “third” heaven, in respect to the airy and starry heavens. The apostle refers to a distinction among the Jews of ˜yat aymçw ya[xym aymçw yaly[aymç, “the supreme heaven, the middle heaven, and the lower heaven” [f126]; and who also make a like division of worlds, and which they call lpçh µlw[hwy[xmah µlw[w ˆwyl[µlw[, “the supreme world, and the middle world, and the lower world” [f127]; and sometimes [f128] the world of angels, the world of the orbs, and the world of them below; and accordingly the Cabalistic doctors talk of three worlds; hatylt aml[, “the third world”, they say [f129], is the supreme world,

hidden, treasured, and shut up, which none can know; as it is written, “eye hath not seen”, etc.. and is the same with the apostle's “third heaven”. The state and condition in which he was during this rapture is expressed by the following words, put into a parenthesis,

whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth: whether his soul remained in his body, and he was caught up soul and body into heaven, as Elijah was carried thither soul and body in a chariot with horses of fire; or whether his soul was out of his body, and he was disembodied for a time, as Philo the Jew [f130] says that Moses was ασωματον, “without the body”, during his stay of forty days and as many nights in the mount; or whether this was not all in a visionary way, as John was “in the Spirit” on the Lord's day, and Ezekiel was taken by a lock of his head, and lifted up by the Spirit between earth and heaven, and brought “in the visions of God to Jerusalem”, cannot be said. The apostle did not know himself, and much less can any other be able to say how it was; it is best with him to refer and leave it to the omniscient God; one of the four persons the Jews say entered into paradise, who are hereafter mentioned in (see Gill on “2 Corinthians 12:4”), is said to have his mind snatched away in a divine rapture [f131]; that is, he was not himself, he knew not where he was, or whether in the body or out, as says the apostle.

Ver. 3. *And I knew such a man*, etc..] The same man, namely himself, is here designed, and the same rapture spoken of, and the condition he was in expressed in the same words: which repetition is made for the more strong affirmation of what he delivered, and to signify the marvellousness of this vision, and how surprising and unaccountable it was.

Ver. 4. *How that he was caught up into paradise*, etc..] Not the earthly paradise in which our first parents were; this was destroyed by the flood, and the place where it was not now to be known; and to what purpose the apostle should be carried thither cannot be guessed at; though some have thought that this is here meant: but not this, nor any place distinct from the “third” heaven, or place of the blessed, is meant; which is the sense of many of the ancients, who suppose the third heaven and paradise to be two distinct places, and that the apostle had two separate raptures. Clemens Alexandrinus [f132], reads the words thus, “I knew a man in Christ caught up to the third heaven, κακειψεν εις τον παραδεισον, from thence to paradise”; and so Theophilact upon the place says, “from the third heaven he was immediately called up into paradise”; and so Oecumenius, “he was

caught up unto the third heaven, and so again from thence into paradise"; and some modern writers have been inclined to think there were two raptures, and the rather inasmuch as the apostle is said to be caught "up to" the one, and caught "up into" the other, and makes use of the words "caught up" twice; or otherwise he would be guilty of a tautology, both in that and in repeating his ignorance of the manner of the rapture; to which is added, that he proposed to speak of "visions" and "revelations" in the plural number, (<471201>2 Corinthians 12:1), and afterwards calls this vision an "abundance of revelations", (<471207>2 Corinthians 12:7), but as it was at the same time that he was caught up to the third heaven, and into paradise, there being one and the same date of fourteen years ago to both; and as, in the account of the one and the other, he was equally ignorant of the manner how he was caught up, whether in the body, or out of the body; and seeing that there is no account of what he saw and heard in the third heaven, but only what he heard in paradise, which is referred to be told in the after account of this vision; and as the third heaven and paradise are one and the same place, it seems most reasonable to conclude, that not two raptures and two visions are here designed, but only one; and without any show of a vain repetition, the apostle having begun the account of this vision, might reassume what he had said, in order to give a more plain and clear account of it; and especially as there were some things he had not yet mentioned, and the whole was not easy to be understood and taken in, and the manner of it even unknown to himself; and this he might do to raise the attention the more unto it, as being something wonderful and extraordinary; besides, if his design had been to have given an account of two raptures, he would have distinguished them in a numerical way; and would have told us that he was twice caught up, as well as he afterwards says that he besought the Lord "thrice", at another time; and this would have been necessary to have prevented a mistake, of taking the one and the other for the same rapture, as is generally done; heaven is called paradise, because as the garden of Eden, which bears that name, was of God's planting, so is this made and prepared by him; as that was a delightful place, so is this; also because of Christ the tree of life, which is in the midst of it, besides an innumerable company of angels, and spirits of just men made perfect, the pure and undefiled inhabitants of it; and because of the river of divine love, of endless pleasures, the saints there are made to drink of. It was usual with the Jews to call heaven ˆd[ˆg, "the garden of Eden", or paradise; and which they [f133] sometimes speak of as upper and lower; the lower they suppose the souls of men are introduced into, immediately upon

their dissolution; where they stay a while, and then go up to the upper paradise, the world of souls, where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are. The Jews ought not to object to the apostle's being had into paradise before his death, for they tell us of several that entered there whilst alive;

> “nine (they say [f134]). ˆd[ˆgb µhyyjb wsnkn, “entered in their life time into the garden of Eden”, or paradise; and these are they, Enoch the son of Jared, and Elijah, and the Messiah, and Eliezer the servant of Abraham, and Hiram king of Tyre, and Ebed Melec the Ethiopian, and Jabez the son of Rabbi Judah the prince, and Bethiah the daughter of Pharaoh, and Sarah the daughter of Asher; and there are some that say also [f135] Rabbi Joshua ben Levi”; and in another place [f136],

> “four sdrpb wsnkn, entered into paradise; and these are they, Ben Azzai, and Ben Zoma, another, and R. Akiba;”

upon which is [f137] added,

> “they entered into paradise as it were by the hands of God, and they did not ascend up above really, but it seemed to them as if they ascended;”

how far this may serve to explain and illustrate the apostle's case, I leave, with this observation more concerning another use of the word paradise with them; which sometimes signifies a considerable share of knowledge of mysterious things, relating to the nature of God, angels, etc.. of which Maimonides having spoken, says [f138],

> “these things the former wise men called sdrp, “paradise”, as they say, “four entered into paradise”: and although they were the greatest men of Israel, and exceeding wise men, yet they had not all of them power to know and comprehend all these things clearly; and I say, that he is not fit to walk sdrpb, “in paradise”, but he whose belly is filled with flesh and bread, and it is bread and flesh to know what is forbidden, and what is lawful, and the other precepts of a like nature;”

and again [f139],

> “a man that is filled with all these virtues (meaning with wisdom, and understanding, and government of the passions and appetites)

> is perfect in his body, as he that enters into paradise, and inclines himself to these things which are great and afar off:" once more [f140],
>
> "the words of the tradition are comprehended in the written law, and the exposition of them in the oral law; and the things which are called sdrp, paradise, are contained in the Talmud;"

this they [f141] call hmkjh sdrp, "the paradise of wisdom"; whether this sense and use of the word may be applied to the passage before us, and so be expressive of that large share of divine knowledge which was communicated in an extraordinary way to the apostle, may deserve some consideration: however, this is certain, that when he was caught up into paradise, he

heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter; to instance in particular things, which be then either saw or heard, as some have done, is bold and daring; as that he saw the divine Being with the eyes of his understanding, the several angelic forms, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, and the glory and beauty of the souls of departed saints; and heard the harmonious music of each of these happy creatures; had a view of the book of life, and was shown the order and method of divine predestination; was let into the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles, and the change that will be on living saints, and heard the whole account of the dispensation of things, in the church of Christ to the end of the world: the things were unspeakable, never yet related, and so not to be known: they were such things which the apostle himself, when out of the rapture, might have but very inadequate ideas of, and such as he was not able to put into proper words and language to be understood by others; and which as he heard them not from a mere man, but from the Lord, so no mere man was able to utter them, none but he of whom he had heard them: and besides, whatever conceptions the apostle might have of them himself, and how capable soever he was of expressing them; yet they were not fit and proper to be told in the present state of things, being no part of the counsel of God relating to man's salvation, the whole of which he faithfully declares; and yet were necessary to be heard by him, in order to establish his faith in the Gospel, to animate him in his ministry, and fortify his mind against all the afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions, he was to meet with for the sake of Christ. The phrase seems to be the same with wrmal rçpa ya, "it is impossible to say it" [f142]; and of such like secret things in paradise, or the world of souls, the Jews say [f143] that

"they are hidden, and which hbytkb twl[l µywar µnya, "are not fit to produce in writing";"

and so these were such as were not lawful to speak out, γλωσσαις ανψρωπιναις, "with human tongues", as Justin Martyr says [f144]; they were not in such sense "unspeakable", as not to be expressed by any; for they were expressed either by Christ himself, who was glorified in human nature, whom the apostle might now see and hear, or by some angel or angels, or they could not have been heard by the apostle as they were; but they were such as before never been spoken to any mortal man, and so could never have been spoken by any; and though they had been spoken to a mortal man, yet they could not be spoke by him to others; for though when he heard them, his human soul, for that present time, might conceive and take in much of the nature and meaning of them, yet they were such as he could not express by words, and represent to others by speech after the vision was over, and especially at this distance: not that it was sinful to have done it, if he could have done it; or that the things themselves were of such a nature, that it would have been criminal to have rehearsed them; but rather that it was impossible to do it, at least fully, since they might greatly regard the glory of the divine Being, and the worship paid him by the heavenly inhabitants: or could it be done in any tolerable manner, it might not be altogether convenient and proper in the present state of things; since the worship of the upper world lying in praise without prayer, might not be so fit to be related, lest it should be imitated by saints on earth: and seeing what the apostle heard was ineffable, and not to be spoken by himself; no credit is to be given to those spurious things called the Revelation and Ascension of Saint Paul, in which the author or authors of them pretend to tell us what these things were.

Ver. 5. *Of such an one will I glory*, etc..] The apostle in great modesty seems to speak of some other person, and not himself, as caught up into the third heaven, when he yet means himself; and does as it were distinguish himself from himself; himself in paradise from himself on earth; his sense is, that though he might lawfully glory of such a person so highly exalted and favoured, yet since this was his own case, he chose to forbear, and say no more of it:

yet of myself I will not glory; though he could, and might, and did glory in the Lord, who had done such great things for him; as that he was in Christ, and knew himself to be so, had been rapt up into heaven, and heard things

unutterable; yet he would not glory of these things as from himself, as owing to any merit or worthiness of his, but as instances of mere favour, grace, and goodness; if he gloried of anything of himself in his present state and condition, it should be of his weaknesses:

but in mine infirmities; not his sinful ones, for these he mourned over, and was humbled before God and man under a sense of; but his many pressing difficulties of life, heavy reproaches, very great afflictions, and violent persecutions he endured for Christ's sake; (see <471210>2 Corinthians 12:10).

Ver. 6. *For though I would desire to glory*, etc..]. Had a mind to it, chose it, and was fond of it, thought fit to proceed in this way concerning this vision, or this with many others:

I shall not be a fool; in reality; though he might seem and be thought to be so by others; he does indeed before call his glorying “folly”, and “speaking foolishly”; but he means only as it might be interpreted by others, for in fact it was not: the reason is,

for I will say the truth; he said nothing but what was strictly true, in the account of himself in the preceding chapter, and appeals to God as his witness; nor anything in the relation of this vision, but what was entirely agreeable to truth; and to speak truth, though it be of a man's self, when he is called to it, cannot be deemed folly;

but now I forbear; he did not choose to go on, or say any more upon this head at this time; though he had many visions, and an abundance of revelations, yet he did not judge it proper to give a particular account of them:

lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me; should take him to be more than human, as before this the Lycaonians at Lystra did; who supposed that he and Barnabas were gods come down in the likeness of men, and brought out their oxen and garlands to do sacrifice to them; and as, after this, the inhabitants of Melita, seeing the viper drop from his hand without any hurt to him, said he was a god; to prevent such extravagant notions of him, he forbore to say any more of his extraordinary visions and revelations; but chose rather that men should form their judgments of him by what they saw in him and heard from him, as a minister of the Gospel.

Ver. 7. *And lest I should be exalted above measure*, etc..] Over much elated in his mind, and swelled with a vain conceit of himself:

through the abundance of the revelations; for he had not only one or two, or a few, but an abundance of them; and which, as everything does but grace, tended to lift up his mind, to stir up the pride of his heart, and to entertain too high and exalted thoughts of himself. Pride is naturally in every man's heart; converted persons are not without it; knowledge, gifts, and revelations are apt to puff up with spiritual pride, unless counterbalanced and over poised by the grace of God. This great apostle was not out of danger by them, for he was not already perfect; wherefore to prevent an excess of pride and vanity in him on account of them, he says,

there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me; many have been the thoughts and conjectures of men about what is here meant by the apostle. This ought to be allowed and taken for granted, that the thorn in the flesh, and the messenger of Satan, design one and the same thing; the former is a figurative expression, the latter a literal one, and explanative of the former. Some have thought that corporeal afflictions are here designed, which may be compared to thorns: (see <280206>Hosea 2:6), and which are not joyous, but grievous to the flesh, and come not by chance, but are by divine appointment, and are designed and made use of, to hide pride from men; and sometimes, by divine permission, Satan has an hand in inflicting them, as in the case of Job: whilst such a general sense is kept to, it is not to be despised, without entering into the particular bodily disorder with which the apostle was afflicted, as some do; some saying it was the choleic, others the gout, others a pain in the ear, and others the headache; which latter it is said he was much troubled with; but these are mere conjectures: others think that the corruptions of nature are intended which in regenerate persons are left, as the Canaanites were in the land, to be "thorns" in the eyes and sides of the Israelites, (<062313>Joshua 23:13 <070203>Judges 2:3). These, to be sure, were felt by the apostle, and were very grievous and humbling to him, and were no doubt sometimes stirred up by Satan, which made him complain bitterly, and groan earnestly; and it may be observed, to strengthen this sense, that it was usual with the Jews to call concupiscence, or the vitiosity of nature, Satan; for so they[f145] often say, [rh rxy awh ^jçh, "Satan, he is the evil imagination", or corruption of nature; and particularly they call the lust of uncleanness by this name; and it is said[f146] of a young man of Israel, being tempted by a young woman of

Midian, through the counsel of Balaam, that ˆjçh wb r[wb, "Satan burned in him", and he turned aside after her; and that the evil imagination is the old serpent; yea, they call this "the messenger of hell", a phrase very much like what is here used.

> "R. Hona [f147], as he was preaching to the children of men to take warning, said unto them, children, beware µnhyg lç ajyl çm, "of the messenger of hell"; but who is this? the evil imagination, or concupiscence, is that which is "the messenger of hell";"

and this sense is agreeable, provided the particular corruption the apostle was harassed with is not pretended to, as is by some, who pitch upon the lust of uncleanness, and spare not to mention the person by name, one Tecla, who, they say, travelled with him, and was a snare to him; but this is to do injury to the character of so holy an apostle, and to represent him as exposing himself to the false apostles, against whom he was guarding: others think that a variety of afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions, for Christ's sake and the Gospel, are here meant, which were as pricking briers and grieving thorns to him; (see <2624>Ezekiel 28:24), and which were given and ordered by divine appointment for his good; this sense, (<4709>2 Corinthians 12:9-10), lead unto, and seem to confirm: others are of opinion that the temptations of Satan are designed, which, as they are called "fiery darts", which the archers of Satan, and his principalities and powers, shoot thick and fast at the saints, to their great annoyance; so may be here called, especially some very particular, eminent, and sore temptation, a "thorn in the flesh", very pungent, and giving a great deal of pain and uneasiness; others suppose that some particular emissary of Satan, either some one of the false apostles and teachers, who greatly opposed him, as Alexander the coppersmith, who did him much harm; or such an one as Hymenaeus or Philetus, that blasphemed and spoke evil of him; or some violent persecutor of him is intended. But, after all, I see not but that the devil himself may be meant; for, as before observed, the phrase "a thorn in the flesh" is metaphorical, and the other, a "messenger of Satan", is literal, and explains it; and the whole may be read thus, "there was given to me a thorn in the flesh", namely, αγγελος σατανα, "the angel Satan to buffet me"; so that Satan, who was once an angel of light, now of darkness, is the "thorn in the flesh"; and might be suffered to appear visibly to him from time to time, in a very terrible manner, and which was very grievous to be borne; he might by permission have great power over his body, as he had over

Job's, to use it ill, to beat and buffet it; for this also may be taken literally: and he might likewise in other ways greatly distress him by stirring up the corruptions of his heart; by following him with his satanical injections, suggestions, and temptations; by raising violent persecutions, and instigating many of his emissaries against him; and this sense is the rather to be chosen, because it includes all others that have any show of truth. The Jews [f148] sometimes make mention of the angel or messenger of Satan mocking at the righteous, and buffeting them; so God is by them said [f149] to deliver Nebuchadnezzar ˆjçh Æalml, "to a messenger of Satan". This sore exercise befell the apostle for his good, to keep down the pride of his nature;

lest, adds he again, *I should be exalted above measure*; for such ends and purposes does the Lord, in his infinite wisdom, deal with his people. The [f150] Jews have a notion that this was one reason of God's tempting or trying Abraham with the sacrifice of his Son, to depress that pride that was likely to arise in him because of his greatness.

> "This temptation (they say) was necessary at that time, because above, the grandeur of Abraham is declared how great it was before his enemies made peace with him; and Abimelech, king of the Philistines, and Phichol, the chief captain of his host, were obliged to enter into a covenant with him, and asked him to show favour to them, and to the land in which he sojourned; and perhaps hereby wbl hbg, "his heart was lifted up", in the ways of God; wyny[wmrw, "and his eyes were lofty"; when he saw himself blessed with riches, and with children, and with grandeur and glory, as the glory of kings; wherefore God was "willing to try him": with a wall of iron, (this great difficulty) to see if there was any dross left in him."

Ver. 8. *For this thing I besought the Lord thrice*, etc..] With respect to the thorn in the flesh, the messenger Satan, who gave him so much continual disturbance. This sent him to the throne of grace, to request of the Lord,

that it, or rather, "he might"

depart from me: this request greatly confirms the above sense, for it can hardly be thought the apostle would be so importunate about the removal of a common bodily affliction; and he knew that the corruption of his nature would remain with him as long as he was in the body; and as for

afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions for the Gospel's sake, he was well apprized they would abide him wherever he went; but that so troublesome an adversary might depart, as it must be greatly desirable, so it was a very proper request: and it is made to a very proper person, to the “Lord” Jesus Christ; who in the days of his flesh had such power over the devils, as to dispossess them from the bodies of men by a word speaking, and held them in subjection, and in a panic fear of him; and when upon the cross, he spoiled principalities and powers, and in the latter day will bind Satan with a chain, and shut him up in the bottomless pit for a thousand years. This request was made thrice, not with any view to the three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit; nor to the three usual times of prayer in a day, morning, noon, and night; nor is any exact number of times intended; but the sense is, that he frequently besought the Lord on this account.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto me*, etc..] Either by what the Jews call lwq tb, “Bath Kol”, a voice from heaven, an articulate audible one; or by some extraordinary revelation of the Spirit of God; or by a divine impression upon his mind; whereby he was assured of what follows,

my grace is sufficient for thee; the Lord always hears and answers his people sooner or later, in one form or another, though not always in the way and manner they desire; but yet in such a way as is most for his glory and their good: the apostle had not his request granted, that Satan might immediately depart from him, only he is assured of a sufficiency of grace to support him under the exercise, so long as it should last. There seems to be an allusion to the word ydç, “Shaddai”, an appellation of God, (<0117>Genesis 17:1), and signifies, “which is sufficient”: for God is all sufficient, and is a name that belongs to the Messiah. The angel whom God promised to the Israelites, to go before them in the wilderness, (<0223>Exodus 23:23), the Jews say [f151] is “Metatron” (which is a corruption of the word “mediator”), whose name is as the name of his master. “Metatron” by gematry is “Shaddai, one that is sufficient”: however, certain it is, that the grace of Christ is alone sufficient for all his people, to all saving purposes, in all their times of need. It is alone sufficient, not to the exclusion of the grace of the Father or the Spirit; but in opposition and distinction to anything else, that may be rightly or wrongly called grace; what men generally call common or sufficient grace, which, they say, is given to all men, is a mere chimera; no grace is sufficient but what is effectual, and that

is only the grace of Christ: the light of nature is insufficient to any saving purpose; the Gospel, which is called grace, and is the means of grace, is insufficient of itself to salvation, without the powerful and efficacious grace of Christ going along with it; and so are gifts, whether ordinary or extraordinary: nothing short of the grace of Christ is sufficient grace; and this is sufficient for all the elect of God, Jews and Gentiles, Old and New Testament saints, the family in heaven and in earth, the people of God that are already called, and are to be called, and for the worst and vilest of sinners; and it is sufficient to all saving purposes, to the acceptance of their persons before God, to their justification in his sight, to their pardon and cleansing, to their regeneration and sanctification, to the supply of all their wants, and to their perseverance in grace unto glory; and it is sufficient in all their times of need, in times of bodily affliction, of violent persecution, soul desertion, Satan's temptations, and at the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. The reason given to support this answer, and to strengthen the apostle's faith in it, is,

for my strength is made perfect in weakness; by the “strength” of Christ is meant, not his strength as the mighty God, but that communicative strength which he has, and is in him as Mediator, and which saints look to him for, and receive from him; this is “made perfect in” their “weakness”; not that their weakness can add perfection to his strength, for his strength is perfect in itself, not to say anything of the contradiction such a sense carries in it; but the meaning is, that the strength of Christ is made to appear, is illustrated and shines forth in its perfection and glory, in supplying, supporting, and strengthening his people under all their weakness; and if they were not left to some weaknesses in themselves, his strength would not be so manifest; (see Jam 2:22James 2:22). The answer to the apostle's request, supported with this reason, was wonderfully satisfactory to him; wherefore he concludes,

most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities; in the weaknesses which attended either his body or soul, through the buffetings of the angel Satan, rather than in his visions and revelations; or rather than insist upon his departure from him, he is content things should be as they were, since he had such a promise of a sufficiency of grace to bear him up, under and through whatever was the pleasure of God concerning him; and since the strength of Christ was made illustrious through his weakness, so that Satan was not able to make any advantage over him, he is willing to remain in the same posture and condition:

that the power of Christ, says he,

may rest upon me, or "tabernacle over me"; he considered himself as a poor weak feeble creature, and the power of Christ as a tabernacle over him, as the power of God is represented as a garrison about the believer, (<60105>1 Peter 1:5), sheltering, preserving, and protecting him from the insults of Satan, in every form and shape; (see <23406>Isaiah 4:6), where Christ is said to be a tabernacle, for a place of refuge, and for a covert.

Ver. 10. *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities*, etc..] Not in them simply considered, but as they were made use of to his advantage, for the exercise of his grace, and for his more abundant consolation; and especially as they tended to the glory of Christ, and made his grace, power, and strength the more conspicuous: by infirmities are meant all outward troubles, everything that is mean and abject, distressing and afflicting, whether from Satan or the world; it seems to be a general term, which includes and is explained by the following particulars:

in reproaches; of Satan, the accuser of the brethren, who sometimes reproachfully insinuates that they are hypocrites, and serve God and Christ with mercenary views and selfish ends; and of the men of the world, who traduce them as deceivers, treat them with opprobrious language, and lead them with revilings and contumelies, endeavour to take away their characters, credit, and reputation; the faithful servants of Christ must go through bad report, and suffer shame for the name of Christ; but these reproaches with Moses are esteemed by them greater riches than the treasures of Egypt:

in necessities; not of the soul, the better part, there being a sufficiency of grace in Christ to relieve all its wants; but of the body, the apostle was sometimes reduced to very necessitous circumstances, wanting the common necessaries of life, being hungry, thirsty, and naked, and yet cheerful:

in persecutions; from place to place by the enemies of the Gospel, by whom he was severely handled by beating, scourging, and imprisonment; but his stripes were the marks of the Lord Jesus; his chains were his crown, and his prison a palace to him:

in distresses, or "straits"; both as to body and mind, encompassed with such difficulties that he knew not what way to take, or course to steer: and all

for Christ's sake; not for any real crime done by him, but for a profession of Christ, preaching his Gospel, and for the glory of his name; and which made all these afflictions so delightful to him, having in the midst of them the love of God to comfort him, the power and strength of Christ to support him, and the grace of the Spirit to assist him, and the presence of all the three Persons with him; this he suggests to be the ground and reason of his delight and pleasure, in such otherwise disagreeable circumstances:

for when I am weak, then am I strong; when he was attended with all the above mentioned infirmities, when laden with reproaches, surrounded with necessities, followed with persecutions, and brought into the utmost straits and difficulties, and was most sensible of his weakness in himself to bear and go through all these things; then was he upheld by the divine arm, and strengthened by the power of Christ; so that he was not only able to sustain the conflict, but became more than a conqueror, and even to triumph in the midst of these adversities; he could and did readily take the advice in (<2Co 12:10>Joel 3:10), and express himself in the same language there directed to, and to which he seems to refer, "let the weak say I am strong"; for he that is weak in himself, and sees himself to be so, is strong in Christ, and has a comfortable experience of renewed strength from him, as his day is. The Jews have a saying [f152] somewhat like this,

> "the righteous even µyqzjtm µyçlj ^hçk, "when they are weak strengthen themselves"; as it is said, (<1Co 14:12>Genesis 48:2), and the wicked, though in their strength, fall, according to (<1Co 17:08>Esther 7:8)."

Ver. 11. *I am become a fool in glorying*, etc..] This is either to be understood conditionally, if he had acted as a fool in commending himself, or was to be reckoned and called so by others, for glorying of himself, his visions and revelations; or as an ironical concession, allowing himself to be a fool for so doing, as he knew he should be traduced by his enemies; which concession he makes with a view to remove the blame from himself, and cast it upon the Corinthians: ye have compelled me: they were not only the occasion of his glorying, but they had forced him to it by their conduct; for he was obliged either to take this method for the vindication of his character, and preserve his future usefulness, or else to suffer the false apostles to triumph over him, to the great detriment of the Gospel, and of this church at Corinth particularly; whereas both might have been prevented, had they acted the part that became them:

for I ought to have been commended of you; when the false apostles reproached him, and insinuated things among them to his disadvantage, they ought not only to have turned a deaf ear to them, and to have checked and reproved them, and so have put a stop to their calumnies; but they should have spoke in commendation of him, and have declared how faithfully he had preached the Gospel to them; how useful he had been to their souls, for conviction, conversion, edification, and comfort; how laborious and indefatigable he had been in his ministry; what success attended him, and what wonderful things were done by him in proof of his divine mission; all which they were conscious of, and could with the utmost safety have affirmed of him:

for in nothing, says he,

am I behind the very chiefest apostles; meaning either the false apostles, who set themselves upon an equality with the true ones, and above him; or rather the real apostles of Christ, and those that were of the greatest note among them, as Peter, James, and John; for though he was behind them in time, yet not in gifts, labour, and usefulness: but lest this should be thought to savour of vain boasting, he adds,

though I be nothing; which may be considered either as a declaration of his own thoughts of himself, and an humble acknowledgment of his own nothingness; that he was nothing as a man, as an Hebrew, a Pharisee, with respect to his external privileges and righteousness, not more and better than others; and nothing as an apostle and a Christian of himself, but was wholly and entirely what he was by the grace of God; or as the judgment and opinion of the false apostles concerning him, who spoke of him, and treated him as a worthless man, of no account, and not to be regarded.

Ver. 12. *Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you*, etc..] Not only the doctrine which he preached, the power that attended it, and the success it met with among them, were clear signs and evident proofs of his being sent by Christ; not only they themselves, who were converted under his ministry, were testimonials and seals of his apostleship, but also the many other wonderful works done by him confirmed the same, and showed him to be an apostle, and that he was not a whit behind, but equal to the chiefest of them: nor does he refer them to signs that were wrought by him, among others, and in other places, which were many; but to those which they themselves were witnesses of, and therefore might and ought to have

spoken of them in defence of him; and in order to stop the mouths of the false apostles, a particular enumeration of these signs follows:

in all patience; it is one sign, and what is here mentioned in the first place of an apostle and minister of Christ, that he patiently bears all injuries and indignities, reproaches, persecutions, and all manner of afflictions, for Christ's sake and the Gospel's; and this the apostle did; and had he not been sent by Christ, it is not reasonable to imagine that he would have exposed himself to so many evils and dangers; or would have bore with so much patience the ill usage of men, and particularly the unkindness and ingratitude he met with at Corinth; but he took all patiently, having their good and the glory of Christ at heart:

in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds; meaning preternatural and miraculous performances; such as raising the dead, healing the sick, cleansing lepers, casting out devils, speaking with divers tongues, and the like, which were confirming evidences of apostleship; so ^yrwbgw ^ysn, "wonders and powers", or "mighty deeds", are mentioned together by the Jews [f153], as the same things.

Ver. 13. *For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches*, etc..] The apostle here suggests, and appeals to themselves for the truth of it, that in nothing they came short of other churches; that as he was not behind the very chiefest of the apostles, and so they had no reason to be ashamed of him and despise him; neither were they inferior in gifts, grace, and knowledge, to other churches, all which were through his ministry; wherefore they ought to have spoken well of him, and not to have taken the part of the false apostles against him; since all the honour and credit they were in as a church were owing to him as an instrument. The Gospel was first preached to them by an apostle; they were converted under the ministry of an apostle; they were planted and settled as a church by the means of an apostle; and in which respects no church could go beyond them, or boast of more; they had the same Gospel preached to them, and with as much power and purity as other churches; they had received the same Spirit, the same graces, and the same gifts of the Spirit, both ordinary and extraordinary; so that they came behind others in no gift whatever; (see <460107>1 Corinthians 1:7), and had the same miraculous works done among them, as were in other places, for the confirmation of the Gospel. There was not one thing the apostle could think of, in which they differed from others, and which he mentions;

except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? because he freely preached the Gospel to them, took no wages of them, but chose rather to work with his own hands, and supply his necessities, than to be troublesome to them; in this, indeed, they differed from other churches, who liberally contributed to their ministers, and honourably maintained them:

forgive me this wrong; not that the apostle seriously desired this, or thought that he had done them any real injury, and so acknowledges it; for if any wrong was done hereby, it was to himself, and not them; but it is an ironical way of speaking, and was a sharp rebuke to them, for their ignorance, ingratitude, and negligence.

Ver. 14. *Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you*, etc..] Not that he had been twice at Corinth, and was now about to come a third time; for as yet he had been but once there, when he first preached to them, was the means of their conversion, and settled them in a church state; he had promised them to come a second time, but as yet was prevented; (see <461605>1 Corinthians 16:5, <470115>2 Corinthians 1:15), and now a third time he had purposed it in his mind, and had prepared for it, and was just ready to come unto them; when he assures them he had not altered his mind, nor should he change his conduct, but steer the same course he had:

and I will not be burdensome to you; he signifies he would preach the Gospel freely to them, and take nothing of them; and this he says lest they should think with themselves, that though he took no stipend of them before, yet when he came again he would:

for I seek not yours; their money and substance, as did the false apostles:

but you; they themselves, their spiritual good and welfare, the comfort, edification, instruction, and salvation of their immortal souls; like a good and faithful shepherd, who sought not the fleece, but the good of the flock; or rather like a loving tender father, that was affectionately concerned for the good of his children:

for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children; not but that children ought to take care of, and provide for their aged and indigent parents, and churches ought to maintain their faithful ministers; but the apostle argues from a common fact which nature and affection direct unto, and have formed into a sort of a law, that parents not only care for their children, bring them up, and provide for them food and

raiment; but as they are blessed by Providence, lay up treasures for them for tithe to come, and not children for their parents; this is neither usual nor necessary, for however, as the case may be, children may be obliged to maintain their parents when grown old and in want, yet not to lay up substance for them for futurity; and by it the apostle suggests, that he was a spiritual father to these Corinthians, and they were his children; for whose spiritual welfare he had the highest concern, and whatever he did was out of no disrespect to them, but from the strongest affection for them.

Ver. 15. *And I will gladly spend*, etc..] Meaning all his time, talents, and strength, which God had bestowed upon him for their spiritual profit and advantage; yea, all that small pittance of worldly goods that he enjoyed: he not only determined to take nothing from them, but was willing to communicate his little substance to them, or spend it in their service; and not only so, but be spent for them:

and be spent for you, or "for your souls": for the good of them; his sense is, either that he was willing to have his whole substance expended, if it would be of any use to them; or his whole strength exhausted, in laborious preaching to them; or even his life to be laid down for them, was it necessary; which sense is favoured by the Syriac and Arabic versions; all which expressed his tender affection as a spiritual father for them: adding,

though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved; though he loved them more than he did other churches, or than the false apostles loved them, and yet were loved by them less than he was by other churches; or by them, than the false apostles were; or rather the meaning is, that though he increased in his love, and in the expressions of it to them, and they grew colder and more indifferent to him, yet this should not hinder his warmest desires and most earnest endeavours after their spiritual and eternal welfare. This way of speaking strongly expresses his love to them, and tacitly implies the lukewarmness of theirs to him; and yet that it should be no discouragement to him to proceed in doing them all the service he was capable of.

Ver. 16. *But be it so, I did not burden you*, etc..] These words are not spoken by the apostle in his own person of himself, but in the person of his adversaries, and contain a concession and an objection of theirs, but be it so; they granted that he had not burdened the Corinthians, that he had took nothing of them himself for preaching the Gospel; they owned that he had preached it freely; this was so clear a point, and so flagrant a case, that they

could not deny it; yet they insinuated to the Corinthians, and objected to the apostle, that though he did not receive anything from them with his own hands, yet he craftily and cunningly made use of others to drain their purses, and receive it for him; and which is suggested in the next clause:

nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile; so say the false apostles of me; for these are not the words of the apostle in his own person; nor to be understood of any spiritual craft, or lawful cunning and prudent artifices used by him, to allure and draw the Corinthians into a good liking and opinion of the Gospel and of his ministry, and so caught them, and was the happy means of their conversion; but they are spoken in the person of the false apostles, charging him with a wicked and criminal craftiness, by making use of other persons in a sly underhanded way, to get this church's money, when he pretended to preach the Gospel freely; to which he answers in the next verse.

Ver. 17. *Did I make a gain of you*, etc..] He appeals to the Corinthians against such calumnies and false insinuations, whether ever he had circumvented them in such a manner, or had ever used such artful methods to pillage them; or whether ever he had discovered any covetous disposition towards anything of theirs; or had employed any persons to draw out their substance from them, and get it for himself: he owns he had sent some persons to them on different errands, and asks if he had dealt fraudulently with them,

by any of them whom, says he,

I have sent to you: he desires them to name one single person of the many who came to them from him, that had received any money from them for him; or that they had any reason to believe he had employed for such purposes; and if they could not pitch on a single instance, they ought therefore to look upon this as a downright slander and calumny.

Ver. 18. *I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother*, etc..] The apostle proceeds to mention one or two persons that he had sent unto them, and desires to know whether they could charge them with any such practices. He had desired, exhorted, and encouraged Titus to go unto them, and collect money from them; but not for either of themselves, but for the poor saints at Jerusalem; and he sent another brother along with him, who is by some supposed to be Luke, to be a companion of him, and an assistant to

him; and who was a witness of what he did, and for what purpose he was sent, and how he behaved:

did Titus make a gain of you? did he greedily desire your substance? did he show an avaricious temper, or a covetous inclination after your money? did he by any methods extort it from you? say if Titus, or the brother with him, received anything from you, either on their own, or my account?

walked we not in the same Spirit? in the same Spirit of God, being directed and influenced by him; or in the same disposition of mind, being agreed and determined to preach the Gospel freely, and receive nothing for it:

walked we not in the same steps? took the same methods, lived the same course of life, working with their own hands to supply their wants, rather than be burdensome to others: the apostle suggests, that where are the same Spirit, temper, disposition, and principles, there will be the same works and actions; and as for covetousness, it is neither agreeable to the Spirit of God, nor to the spirit of a Christian.

Ver. 19. *Again, think you that we excuse ourselves to you?* etc..] The apostle would not have the Corinthians imagine, that by what he had said once and again in this epistle, he meant to excuse himself from coming to them, for he really and sincerely intended it; or that by this long defence of himself against the false apostles, he designed so much an apology for himself, or that he used any feigned words, or artful methods, to exculpate himself from any charge against him, particularly that of covetousness just mentioned; for he had no view to cover himself by studied apologies, and set orations, and evade anything exhibited against him, and make himself look innocent when guilty; it was not with any such intention he had dwelt so long on this subject:

we speak before God in Christ; in all sincerity and uprightness of soul, without colour, guile, or deceit, calling God and Christ to witness the truth of what was said; the apostle spoke all he did, as in the presence of the omniscient God; and as one in Christ, and a preacher of his Gospel, that would not deliver an untruth knowingly, for the whole world:

but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edification; it was not for himself so much, for his own credit, reputation, and glory, he did what he did; had this been the case, he would not have said the half part of what he had; but it was for their sake, out of love to them, that they might be built

up and established in the faith of the Gospel, and not be carried away with the error of the wicked.

Ver. 20. *For I fear lest when I come*, etc..] This fear arose from his fatherly affection for them, and care of them:

I shall not find you such as I would; truly penitent for former sins, thoroughly reformed in life and manners, zealous for God, Christ, and the Gospel, and hearty lovers of one another:

and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not; sharp in his reproofs and admonitions, severe in his corrections and censures, and lawfully using the authority he had from Christ, to punish incorrigible offenders:

lest there be debates; or “strifes”, or contentions among them, about words to no profit, or about their ministers, as before; one being for Paul, and another for Apollos, and another for Cephas:

envyings: at each other's gifts, or “jealousies” of one another, and evil surmisings:

wraths; breaking out into words and actions, which discover hatred of mind, a malignant spirit, quite contrary to that of the Gospel:

strifes: law suits before heathen magistrates; contentions in the church who shall be greatest; or about lesser matters of religion, or things indifferent, vain, and trifling, and kept up merely for the sake of victory:

backbitings; speaking evil of one another, detracting from, hurting, or taking away each other's character and good name:

whisperings; secretly sowing discords among friends, and privately suggesting evil things of each other:

swellings; with pride and conceit of themselves, because of their riches, learning, and eloquence, and looking with disdain upon others:

tumults; at church meetings, interrupting one another, going into parties, and making rents and schisms.

Ver. 21. *And lest when I come again*, etc..] Another thing which he feared would be the case when he came again to them, that he himself should be afflicted and distressed, seeing them in a disorderly and dissolute course of

life, be obliged to punish them, which would be an humiliation and matter of grief to him:

my God will humble me; instead of rejoicing in the fruit of his labours, that they were not in vain, he signifies that he should have great sorrow of heart; and whereas he had promised himself much pleasure and comfort in visiting them, it would be the reverse; and inasmuch as he had boasted of them to others, he should be ashamed:

and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, or "before"; not before conversion, but before the writing of this or the former epistle; for nothing was more grieving, and occasioned more sorrow and humiliation to the apostle, than the unbecoming walk of professors; and nothing more sensibly affects a faithful minister of the Gospel:

and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication, and lasciviousness, which they have committed. The city of Corinth was famous, or rather infamous, for unclean practices; as fornication, adultery, lasciviousness in words and deeds, and other unnatural lusts; "Corinthian whores" was a common proverb; nor was it proper for persons to go to Corinth, there were so many snares for lust and uncleanness; there were said to be above a thousand prostitutes in the temple of Venus there [f154]; hence the very great impurities and wickedness, which many of the members of this church were guilty of, may be accounted for; some of them had repented, others not, which was the great concern of the apostle: and from hence we may learn, that gracious souls may be suffered to fall into great sins; and that when they are truly brought to repentance, they ought to be restored to communion with the church; but impenitent ones are to be cut off, and remain so, till brought to a due sense of their evils.

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND CORINTHIANS 13

In this chapter the apostle continues his resolution to come to the Corinthians, and to threaten with severity the incorrigible among them, giving the reasons of it; prays to God that they might so behave, that there might be no occasion for the exercise of it; and concludes the epistle with very useful exhortations, and hearty wishes of good things to them. He intimates to them again, that he intended this third time to come unto them, when he would not spare them, as they might expect he would not; partly because they had such repeated warnings, reproofs, and admonitions from him, (2 Corinthians 13:1) and partly because many of them had sinned before, and were stubborn and obstinate, and had not repented, (2 Corinthians 13:2) as also because they had tempted him, and demanded a proof of his power and authority, and of Christ speaking in him, (2 Corinthians 13:3) and whereas this sprung from the outward appearance of the apostle, whose bodily presence was weak, he observes to them the instance of Christ himself in human nature, who was crucified through weakness, and yet lives by the power of God; and so he and his fellow ministers were weak like Christ, and for his sake, and yet lived, and should live by the power of God; so that their outward appearance was no proof of their want of the power of Christ in them, (2 Corinthians 13:4) besides, he directs them to themselves for a proof of it; who upon examination would find, that they were in the faith, and Christ was in them; which was owing to the ministry of the apostle, as a means and instrument; and so they had a proof in themselves of Christ's speaking in the apostle, and being mighty in, and towards them, or else they must be reprobate, injudicious, and disapproved persons, (2 Corinthians 13:5) but whether they were such persons or not, he was confident that he would not be found such; but would appear to be in the faith, to have Christ in him, and to have power and authority from him, (2 Corinthians 13:6) however, the apostle's hearty prayer for them was, that they might be kept from evil; and that they might do that which is good, and so be approved of God and men; and there be no occasion to use any severity with them, when he should come among them, (2 Corinthians 13:7) otherwise he could do

nothing against the truth, could not connive at error and sin, but must use the power and authority he had to crush everything of that kind, and defend truth, (<471308>2 Corinthians 13:8) and so far was he from glorying in his power, and priding himself with it, that it was a pleasure to him to have no occasion to make use of it, by which it might seem as if he was without it; and it rejoiced him, when they stood fast in the faith, and walked as became the Gospel, and so needed not the rod of reproof and correction; nay, he could even wish, that they were wholly perfect, and free from all blame, and every kind of charge, (<471309>2 Corinthians 13:9) and the end he had in the writing in the manner he did, being absent from them, was, lest when he should come among them, he should be obliged to make use of his power he had from Christ for edification, and not destruction; to prevent which, he wrote and admonished them, in order to bring them to repentance, that so he might have no occasion to use severity and sharpness, (<471310>2 Corinthians 13:10) and then he takes his farewell of them, by giving them some exhortations to harmony, unity, peace, and love among themselves, (<471311>2 Corinthians 13:11,12) gives the salutations of all the saints unto them, (<471313>2 Corinthians 13:13) and then his own, with which he concludes the epistle, which is a wish of all the blessings of grace from all the three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, (<471314>2 Corinthians 13:14).

Ver. 1. *This is the third time I am coming to you*, etc..] Or “am ready to come to you”, as the Alexandrian copy reads, as in (<471214>2 Corinthians 12:14). Though he had been as yet but once at Corinth, and is to be reckoned and accounted for, either after this manner; he had been “once” with them when he first preached the Gospel to them, and was the means of their conversion, and laid, the foundation of their church state, of which there is some account in (<441801>Acts 18:1,17) he came to them a “second” time, by writing his first epistle, when he desired to be considered by them, as though he was present with them, (<460503>1 Corinthians 5:3) and now a “third” time by this second epistle, in which he also speaks as if he was among them, see the following verse; or else in this way, he had been actually in person with them one time, and had been about to come in purpose and preparation a “second” time, but was prevented, and now was just ready a “third” time to set forward in his journey to them; (see <471214>2 Corinthians 12:14) and so the Syriac version reads it here, “this is the third time that I am ready to come to you”, and which our version also favours. The Alexandrian copy and some others, the Complutension edition, the

Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read, “behold, this third time”, etc.. in order to raise and fix their attention to what he was saying, or about to say:

in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established; referring to (<051915>Deuteronomy 19:15) which he applies much in the same manner Christ does in (<401816>Matthew 18:16) and which it is probable he had in view; signifying hereby, that he proceeded in a judicial way, according to due form of law, and in such a manner as Christ had directed; and that they were to look upon his several comings in the sense now explained, to be as so many witnesses, whereby the several charges exhibited against them were fully attested and confirmed, so that things were now ripe for judgment, and for a final sentence to pass upon them.

Ver. 2. *I told you before, and foretell you as if I were present a second time*, etc..] He means, that he had in his former epistle faithfully told them of their evils, and admonished them for them; and now he sends to them a second time before his coming, and again admonishes them, as if he was upon the spot with them; so that they had, as before, three witnesses, also a first and second admonition; which, should they be without success, he must proceed further:

and being absent now, I write to them which heretofore have sinned; before he wrote his first epistle, of which he had information, and had faithfully reproved and admonished them; (see <471221>2 Corinthians 12:21).

And to all other; that might since be drawn into a compliance with sinful practices, through their example; or as the Arabic version renders it, “to the rest of the congregation”; who would be witnesses for him, and against them, that he had admonished them a first, and a second time: and by his present writing declares,

that if I come again; for, not knowing what might fall out to prevent him, though he was bent upon coming, and ready for it, nor what was the will of God about it, he does not choose to be positive in the matter; and therefore writes conditionally, and with a guard, and no doubt with a submission to the divine will:

I will not spare; this was the reason why as yet he had not been at Corinth, because he was willing to spare them; (see <471123>2 Corinthians 1:23) being loath to come to severities, if gentler methods would take effect; but now having used all proper means, he is at a point, aud determined not to spare, but to use his apostolical rod, or that power which the Lord had given him

in an extraordinary way, as an extraordinary officer, to punish incorrigible offenders, in such manner as the incestuous person, and Hymenaeus and Philetus had been used by him.

Ver. 3. *Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me*, etc..] This is the reason why he was determined, that should he come among them, he would not spare them, because they called in question his apostleship, and demanded a proof of it; which, of all men, they had the least reason to do; for they themselves were the seals of his apostleship, and the signs of an apostle had been done among them; they queried whether he was an ambassador of Christ, and was sent by him, and in his name; whether the message he came with was from him, and whether the Gospel he preached was his voice; and particularly whether he had such a power to punish delinquents, as he threatened them with the exercise of; a strange infatuation of the false apostles this, since Christ, who sent him, was with him, and spoke in him, and by him:

which to you-ward, says he,

is not weak, but is mighty in you; the Gospel of Christ, at the first preaching of it to them by him, was the power of God unto salvation to them; and was attended with divers signs and wonders, and gifts of the Holy Ghost; and besides, they had instances of the power of Christ towards them in an awful way, in punishing sinners; as in the delivery of the incestuous person to Satan, which was done by his Spirit being with them when assembled; and by smiting many of them with sickness, diseases, and infirmities, and with death itself, who had sinned, (1 Corinthians 5:4,5 11:30). Wherefore, seeing after all these instances of the voice and power of Christ in him, they yet questioned his apostolical authority, and sought proof of it; and especially since this was not so much a tempting of him, as a tempting of Christ in him, he was resolved not to spare them.

Ver. 4. *For though he was crucified through weakness*, etc..] Of the human nature; for the nature which Christ assumed was in all things like to ours, excepting sin; it was subject to all sinless infirmities; it was mortal, passible, liable to sufferings, and death, and so he came to be crucified; though not against his will, or without his previous assent; as God, he was able to have prevented his crucifixion if he would; he gave an instance of his power over men, at the time of his apprehension, by striking them down to the ground; and told Pilate his judge at his trial, that he could have no power to crucify him, if it was not given him from above; and he showed

his superiority over devils when upon the cross, by spoiling principalities and powers; so that his crucifixion was not owing to want of power as God, but he became capable of it through his weakness as man:

but yet he lives by the power of God; he was raised from the dead by a divine power; by his own power as God, as well as by his Father's, and so was declared to be the Son of God with power; and he lives at the right hand of God as man and Mediator, vested with all power in heaven and in earth; though, in the days of his flesh, he appeared so weak, mean, and despicable: now the apostle mentions this case of our Lord's, to deter the Corinthians from despising him, on account of his outward weakness and meanness; and from hence buoying themselves up, and in which they were encouraged by the false apostles, that he had not, and could not exercise the power he talked of; they had observed what mean figure he made when he was among them; and whatever weight there might be in his letters, yet his bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible; wherefore he sets before them the instance of Christ, who though he appeared very weak in his state of humiliation, yet he now lives in power, to assist and strengthen his ministers, in every branch of their work; and suggests, that as it was with Christ, it was, and would be in some measure with him, and his fellow ministers:

for we also are weak in him: like him, and for his sake, they were subject to infirmities, reproaches, persecutions, and distresses; carried about daily the dying of the Lord Jesus; bore a very great resemblance to him in his state of humiliation; were very much as he was in this world, and bore much for his name's sake; the Alexandrian copy and the Syriac version read, “with him”; being crucified with him, and dead with him:

but we shall live with him by the power of God towards you; which is not to be understood of being raised by Christ to an immortal life, and of living with him in glory; though this is a certain truth, that such who suffer with Christ, shall live and reign, and be glorified together with him; but of the life, power, and efficacy of the ministers of Christ, and of Christ in and with them, displayed in the lively ministration of the word and ordinances, in the vigorous discharge of all the branches of their office; not only in preaching, but in rebuking, admonishing, laying on of censures, and punishing criminals; and especially regards the powerful exertion and use of the apostolic rod; for this life is not only with Christ, or through Christ being in them, notwithstanding all their outward weakness, and by the

power of God, which supports them under all, and enables them to perform their work, but is “towards you”; the Corinthians, to be exercised towards them, to be seen among them, and felt by them.

Ver. 5. *Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith*, etc..] These words are to be considered in connection with (2 Corinthians 13:3) for seeing they sought and demanded a proof the voice and power of Christ in the apostle, he directs them to self examination, to look within themselves, to try, prove, and recognise their own souls; where if things were right, they would find a proof of Christ's speaking in him, to them: he advises them to examine the state of their own souls, and see whether they were in the faith; either in the doctrine of faith, having a spiritual and experimental knowledge of it, true love and affection for it, an hearty belief of it, having felt the power of it upon their souls, and abode in it; whether, as the Syriac version reads it, ˆymyq atwnmyhb, “ye stand in the faith”, firm and stable; or in the grace of faith, either of miracles, or that which is connected with salvation; and which if they were in it, and had it, is attended with good works; operates by love to Christ and to his people; by which souls go out of themselves to Christ, live upon him, receive from him, and give him all the glory of salvation: and if this was their case, he desires to know how they came by their faith; and suggests, that their light in the doctrine of the Gospel, and their faith in Christ Jesus, as well as the miraculous gifts many of them were possessed of, were through his ministry as the means; and this was a full proof of Christ's speaking in him:

prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you; by which he means, that if they took a survey of things in their own souls, it would appear that Christ was in them; not as he is in all the world, filling heaven and earth with his presence; or as he is in every rational creature, as the Creator and author of the light of nature; but in a special and spiritual manner, by his Spirit and grace; the Father reveals him in his people, as the foundation of their hope of glory; he himself enters and takes possession of their hearts in conversion, communicates his grace, and manifests himself, and is formed there by his Spirit; his graces are implanted, his image is stamped, his Spirit is put within them, and he himself dwells by faith: and this upon inquiry would be found to be the case of the Corinthians,

except, says the apostle,

ye are reprobates; meaning not that they were so, as such may stand opposed to the elect of God; for persons may as yet neither be in the faith, nor Christ in them, and yet both be hereafter, and so not be left of God, or consigned to destruction; but that if they were not in the doctrine of, faith, then they were reprobate concerning it, or void of judgment in it; and if they had not the grace of faith, and Christ was not in them, then they were not genuine, but nominal professors, like “reprobate silver”, counterfeit coin; which when detected, would be “disapproved”, not only by God, but man, as this word also signifies, and so stands opposed to them that are “approved”, (2 Corinthians 13:7) or if they did not make such an examination, probation, and recognition of themselves, they would be without probation: or as the Arabic version, without experiment. The apostle hereby brings them into this dilemma, either that if upon examination they were found to be in the faith, and Christ in them, which blessings they enjoyed through his ministry, then they did not want a proof of Christ speaking in him; but if these things did not appear in them, then they were persons of no judgment in spiritual things, were not real Christians, but insignificant and useless persons.

Ver. 6. *But I trust that ye shall know*, etc..] Whether they were reprobates or not, the apostle would not pretend to say; that he left to themselves, and of which they were capable of making judgment for themselves: however, he hoped and believed, that he and his fellow apostles would give such proof of themselves, as that they should know certainly

that we, says he,

are not reprobates; men void of judgment in the doctrines of the Gospel, but have light, knowledge, and understanding in them; or useless and unprofitable in the ministry, but were the savour of life unto life to many; were ministers by whom others believed; were successful labourers in the Lord's vineyard, and builders in his house; and were made very useful for the conversion, comfort, and edification of many souls: or that they were not men disapproved either by God, or his people; since as they faithfully served Christ in the ministration of the Gospel, they were acceptable to God, and approved of men: or were not men without a proof of Christ speaking in them; they might assure themselves they would have too soon, for some of them, an evidence of that power and authority which Christ had lodged in them, to punish such as repented not of their evils.

Ver. 7. *Now I pray to God*, etc..] A strong mark of the apostle's affection for them. For though they used him so ill, he took every way and method to do them good; he not only wrote to them, sent the brethren to them, but put up his supplications at the throne of grace for them: The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, read, “we pray”, etc.. And one of his petitions for them was,

that ye do no evil; which, though impracticable and impossible, considering the situation of the people of God in this world, yet is desirable by every good man, both for himself and others; and was desired by the apostle, partly that their consciences might not be wounded, their souls grieved, their peace broke in upon, and their comforts lost; and partly that the name of God, and his cause and truths, might not be blasphemed; and chiefly that he might have no opportunity of exercising his apostolical rod for their correction:

not that we should appear approved. This was a clear case that he sought their good, and not his own credit, and the exercise of power; if they committed evil, his faithfulness would be seen in reproving, rebuking, and exhorting them; and if they continued impenitent, his apostolical authority would be manifest in their punishment, so that he would appear approved, or with a proof of the power of Christ in him; but this he did not desire, but most earnestly wished there might be no occasion for any such evidence:

but that they should do that which is honest; or “good”, both in the sight of God and men, that which is according to the will of God, springs from love, is done in faith, and with a view to the glory of God; and the apostle's praying, both that they might be kept from evil, and do that which is good, shows the impotence of man's free will, the necessity of the grace of God to abstain from sin, and perform good works; and this the apostle earnestly desired,

though, says be,

we be as reprobates; weak and infirm persons, incapable of giving any proof of the power of Christ, and appear as such, who have no marks of apostolical authority. The apostle chose rather to be looked upon as a poor, mean, and insignificant person, than that they should sin, and require the exercise of his chastising rod, whereby he would be seen to be what they called in question.

Ver. 8. *For we can do nothing against the truth*, etc..] The apostles had no power, nor could they, nor did they desire to exercise any against such who received the truth of the Gospel in the love of it; who continued in it, walked in it, and held it fast; who worshipped God in Spirit and in truth, and who walked uprightly, and as became the truth; for as the law is not made for such persons, but the reverse, so the authority the apostles had received from Christ was not to be exercised upon such:

but for the truth: for the sake of defending the truth against those that dropped, denied, and opposed it; and for the honour of it, by chastising, correcting, reproving, censuring, and punishing such, who either contradicted it, or caused it to be blasphemed and spoken evil of.

Ver. 9. *For we are glad when we are weak*, etc..] Appear to be so, look like persons disarmed of all power and authority; the apostles rejoiced when they had no occasion of exerting themselves, and of exercising that high office, and extraordinary commission they had received of Christ Jesus:

and ye are strong; stand fast in the doctrine of faith, and are lively and active in the exercise of the grace of faith; are strong in Christ, and in his grace, and in the power of his might, to withstand every temptation of Satan, every corruption of their own hearts, and to perform every duty aright.

And this also we wish, even your perfection; or restoration, or jointing in again; a metaphor taken from the setting of bones that are dislocated and out of joint; for the church at Corinth was like a disjointed body, and the apostle's wish was, that their animosities might cease, their divisions be healed, their disorders rectified, and each member be in its proper place, behaving as became the Gospel of Christ; (see <460110>1 Corinthians 1:10).

Ver. 10. *Therefore I write these things being absent*, etc..] Assuring them of his power and authority, expressing his concern for their welfare, earnestly desiring that they might be kept from evil, and perform good works; and that they might be in a more honourable, orderly, and comfortable situation, whilst he was absent from them, and before he came among them:

lest, being present, I should use sharpness; meaning severe reproofs and censures, or rather the exercise of the apostolic rod:

according to the power the Lord haft given me, to edification, and not to destruction; by striking persons dead, as Ananias and Sapphira were by Peter; or by delivering them up to Satan to have corporeal punishment inflicted on them, as were Hymenaeus and Philetus, and the incestuous person by the Apostle Paul; which, though it was for the destruction of the flesh, yet for the salvation of their souls, and for the good, use, and edification of the rest of the society, that they might take warning thereby, and shun the evils which were the occasion of such severity.

Ver. 11. *Finally, brethren, farewell*, etc..] Or “rejoice”, with spiritual joy in Christ, their Saviour and Redeemer; in his person, in whom they were accepted; in his righteousness, by which they were justified; in his blood, by which they were washed and cleansed; and in his fulness, from which they were supplied; and particularly, that they had such a faithful monitor, such an hearty well wisher of their souls' welfare, and who was so naturally and affectionately concerned for their good:

be perfect; seek after perfection in knowledge, grace, and holiness, and in the performance of good works: or “be restored”; or jointed and knit together, as before; (see 2 Corinthians 13:9) let every difference subside, all breaches be made up, every member take and fill up his place, and all things be done decently and in order:

be of good comfort; or “exhort” one another to the diligent discharge of duty, to love and good works; or comfort one another in all distresses, inward and outward, both by words and deeds, according to the ability God has given; or take comfort, be of good heart, do not refuse to be comforted either by God or men.

Be of one mind; in religious sentiments, in the doctrines and principles of grace, and ordinances of the Gospel; for as there is but “one Lord” to be believed in, so there is, and ought to be, but “one” system of “faith” to be received, and “one baptism” to be administered in one and the same way, to one and the same sort of persons; which sameness of judgment, in faith and worship, is very necessary to church communion, and the comfort of it; for how can two, and much less more, walk comfortably together, unless they are agreed in these things?

Live in peace both with them that are without, and them that are within, with all men, and with the members of the church; which to do, is to the

credit of religion, the comfort of church members, and the joy of Christ's ministers:

and the God of love and peace shall be with you; he who is love itself, and has loved his people with an everlasting love, and who is the author and donor of spiritual and eternal peace, and who has called his people to peace, and expects and requires it among themselves, and all men, will grant to such his gracious presence; than which nothing can be more grateful and desirable.

Ver. 12. *Greet one another with an holy kiss*.] (See Gill on " <4666>Romans 16:16").

Ver. 13. *All the saints salute you*.] Being all interested in the same divine favour, redeemed by the same blood, and sanctified by the same grace, they have a common concern for each other's welfare; (See Gill on " <4666>Romans 16:16").

Ver. 14. *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ* etc..] Meaning either the love of Christ; (see <4089>2 Corinthians 8:9) which is the same with that of his Father's, is as early, and of the same nature, being a love of complacency and delight; and which, as it is without beginning, will be without end. This is the ground and foundation of all he has done and underwent for his people; of his becoming their surety; of his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death in their room and stead; an interest in which, though they always have, yet they have not always an abiding sense of it with them, which is what the apostle here prays for: or else by the grace of Christ is meant the fulness of grace that is in him as Mediator; which is desired to be with the saints as the object of their trust and dependence; to be strong in, draw living water with joy out of, receive and derive daily from; not forsake it, and hew out broken cisterns, but continually apply to, and make use of it, as the fountain of gardens, the well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon; to be with them as a supply to their wants, to furnish them with every thing they stand in need of, and to enable them to do his will and work: or else the redeeming grace of Christ is particularly designed, and the intent of the petition is, that they might see their interest in it, and in all the branches of it; as that they were redeemed by his blood from sin, law, and wrath, had all their sins expiated and forgiven through his sacrifice, and were justified from all things by his righteousness.

And the love of God; the Father, as the Arabic version adds very justly, as to the sense, though it is not in the text; meaning the love of God to his people, which is eternal, from everlasting to everlasting, free and undeserved, special and peculiar, is dispensed in a sovereign way, is unchangeable, abides for ever, is the source and spring of all the blessings both of grace and glory. Now when this is entreated to be with all the saints, it does not suppose that it is ever from them, or that it can be taken away from them, but whereas they may be without a comfortable sense of it, and a view of interest in it, the apostle prays, that in this respect it might be with them; that they might be directed into it, have it shed abroad in their hearts, and they be rooted and grounded in it, and comprehend for themselves the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of it.

And the communion of the Holy Ghost; either a larger communication of the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, called "the supply of the Spirit", (Philippians 1:19) necessary to carry on the good work of grace, and perform it to the end; or else that communion and fellowship which the Spirit of God leads the saints into with the Father, by shedding abroad his love in their hearts, and with the Son, by taking of the things of Christ, and showing them to them; and also that nearness which the spirits of believers have with the Spirit of God, when he witnesses to their spirits that they are the children of God, becomes the earnest of the inheritance in their hearts, and seals them up unto the day of redemption: all which is requested by the apostle, to

be, says he,

with you all; or "with your company", or "congregations", as the Arabic version reads it, with all the saints; for their interest in the love of the Father, in the grace of the Son, and in the favour of the Spirit, is the same, whatever different sense and apprehensions they may have thereof. This passage contains no inconsiderable proof of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, to whom distinct things are here ascribed, and of them asked, equal objects of prayer and worship. "Amen" is by way of assent and confirmation, and as expressive of faith in the petitions, and of earnest desire to have them fulfilled. According to the subscription at the end of this epistle, it was written by the apostle when he was at Philippi, a city of Macedonia, and transcribed by Titus and Lucas, and by them sent or carried to the Corinthians; which seems to be agreeable to what is suggested in the epistle itself, though these subscriptions are not to he

depended upon. The Syriac version only mentions Luke; and some copies read, by Titus, Barnabas, and Luke.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 55. 8. Ed. Basil. fol. 77. 1. & passim, Ed. Amstelod. Sapher Shaare Zion, fol. 54. 1. Vid. Kabbala Denudata, par. 1. p. 7.

Ft2 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 20. 1.

Ft3 -- Maimon. Hilch. Dayot, c. 5. sect. 13.

Ft4 -- Midrash Megillath Esther, fol. 94. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Mechira, c. 7. sect. 1. & c. 11. sect. 4.

Ft5 -- R. Eliahu in Adderet, c. 3. apud Trigland. de Sect. Karaeorum, p. 166.

Ft6 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 88. 2.

Ft7 -- Taanith, fol. 7. 1.

Ft8 -- Yoma, fol 72. 2.

Ft9 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 19. 3.

Ft10 -- Vajikra Rabba, fol. 147. 1. Debarim Rabba, fol. 233. 3. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 9. 4.

Ft11 -- R. Levi ben Gersom in Pentateuch, fol. 113. 2.

Ft12 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 35. 1.

Ft13 -- Perush in <02318>Exodus 31:18.

Ft14 -- In Pentateuch, fol. 209. 2. & 211. 3.

Ft15 -- T. Hieres Shekalim, fol. 49. 4. Shemot Rabba, c. 47. fol. 143. 2. Bartenora in Misn. Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 6.

Ft16 -- Targum Jon. in <02318>Exodus 31:18. & in <05412>Deuteronomy 34:12.

Ft17 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 5. sect. 8.

Ft18 -- De Decalogo, p. 761, 768.

Ft19 -- T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 49. 4. Shemot Rabba, sect. 47. fol. 143. 2. Zohar in Exodus fol. 35. 1.

Ft20 -- Vid. Targum Jon. in Dent. 6:5, & in Cant. 4:9.

Ft21 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 63. 2.

Ft22 -- In loc.

Ft23 -- In Exodus fol. 35. 1.

Ft24 -- Zohar ib. Targum Jon. in Dent. 34:12.

Ft25 -- Targum in Cant. 1. 11. Targum Jon. in <02318>Exodus 31:18.

Ft26 -- Targum Jon. in <05999>Deuteronomy 9:9, 10.

Ft27 -- In <02315>Exodus 32:15.

Ft28 -- Jarchi in <02401>Exodus 34:1. Pirke Eliezer, c. 46.

Ft29 -- Comment. in Psal. cxix. 135.

Ft30 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Leviticus fol. 33. 4.

Ft31 -- R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 90. 2.

Ft32 -- Chobat Halebabot, par. 1. c. 3. apud L. Capell. in loc.

Ft33 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 90. 1. & in Exodus fol. 72. 1. & in Numbers fol. 73. 3.

Ft34 -- R. Moses Botril in Sepher Jetzirah, p. 40. Ed. Rittangel.

Ft35 -- Targum Jon. ben Uzziel in <01036>Genesis 3:6. Zohar in Genesis fol. 37. 2. Vajikra Rabba, fol. 162. 3. Debarim Rabba, fol. 245. 3. Tzeror Hammor in Genesis fol. 6. 2. & 7. 3. Vid. Irenaeum. adv. Haeres. 50:1. p. 136.

Ft36 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 31. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 93. 3.

Ft37 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 31. 1.

Ft38 -- Targum in <18316>Job 3:16. T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 7. 2. Tzreor Hammor, fol. 89. 4.

Ft39 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 52. 2.

Ft40 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 4. 2.

Ft41 -- Juchasin, fol. 33. 2.

Ft42 -- Laniado in Judges vii, 16.

Ft43 -- In Misn. Celim, c. 2. sect. 8.

Ft44 -- Bartenora in ib.

Ft45 -- Deuteronomy Joseph. p. 536.

Ft46 -- Sepher Jetzirah, Semit 3. p. 6.

Ft47 -- R. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Torah, praecept. affirm. 17.

Ft48 -- In Clement. Alexandr. Stromat. 50:5. p. 593.

Ft49 -- Sepher Caphtor, fol. 38. 2.

Ft50 -- Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 11. 4.

Ft51 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 34. 3. & 35. 3.

Ft52 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 62. 1, 2.

Ft53 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 92. 2. Vid. fol. 84. 3. & in Genesis fol. 49. 3. & Caphtor, fol. 18. 2. & 78. 2.

Ft54 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 57. 3.

Ft55 -- Midrash Hanneelim in Zohar in Genesis fol. 75. 4.

Ft56 -- T. Hieros. Roshhashana, fol. 59. 3. Vajikra Rabba, fol. 170. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, fol, 202. 3. Cosri, fol. 62. 2. & R. Levi ben Gersom in Exod, fol. 108. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 121. 2.

Ft57 -- De Nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 106. K.

Ft58 -- De Corona, c. 10.

Ft59 -- Comment. in Ephes. 4:27.

Ft60 -- Sepher Shorashim, rad. l b.

Ft61 -- Hieronym Quaestasive Trad. Hebrews in Lib. Reg. fol. 74. I. Tom. 3. & in Ephes. 4:27. R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 141. 4. & 142. 2.

Ft62 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 111. 2.

Ft63 -- Philip Aquinas, Schindler, Cocceius, etc.

Ft64 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 148. 3. & 149. 2.

Ft65 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 111. 2.

Ft66 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 43. 2.

Ft67 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 3.

Ft68 -- Maimon. Hileh. Mattanot Anayim, c. 10. sect. 11, 12, 13.

Ft69 -- Jarchi & Aben Ezra in <12618>Exodus 16:18. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 76. 3.

Ft70 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 21. 1.

Ft71 -- Misn. Peah, c. 8. sect. 7. & Jarchi, Maimonides & Bartenora, in ib. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 2. Maimon. Mattanot Anayim, c. 9. sect. 5.

Ft72 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 37. 2. Tosephot Beracot, fol. 34. 1. Misn. Beracot, c. 5. sect. 5.

Ft73 -- Misn. Menachot, c. 10. 3.

Ft74 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 1. 5.

Ft75 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 26. 1.

Ft76 -- Hist. Ecclesiastes Magdeburg. cent. 2. c. 9. p. 125. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 5. c. 9. p. 425. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 7. c. 10. p. 258. cent. 9. c. 2. p. 7.

Ft77 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 5. 2. Zohar in Exodus fol. 2. 4.

Ft78 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 17. 1.

Ft79 -- Maimon. Mattanot Anayim, c. 10. sect. 14.

Ft80 -- Maimon. Mattanot Anayim, c. 10. sect. 13.

Ft81 -- Vajikra Rabba, fol. 174. 1. Parash. 34.

Ft82 -- T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 32. 2.

Ft83 -- De Confusione Linguarum, p. 335.

Ft84 -- Nicephorus, 50:2. c. 37.

Ft85 -- In Philopatr.

Ft86 -- Quis rer. divin. Haeres, p. 485.

Ft87 -- Caphtor, fol. 93. 1.

Ft88 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exodus fol. 50. 1.

Ft89 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 15. 2.

Ft90 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 104. 1.

Ft91 -- R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 18. 4.

Ft92 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 91. 1. & 93. 3.

Ft93 -- Artapanus apud Euseb. praepar. 50:9. c. 18. p. 420. Ambrosius sive Hilarius in <1015>Philippians 3:5. & alii.

Ft94 -- Hicronymus in Ezekiel c. 7. fol. 183. B. Theodoret. in Genesis Qu. 60.

Ft95 -- Erpeuius.

Ft96 -- Ar. Montan. Canaan, c. 9. Vid. Sigonium de Repub. Hebrews 50:1. c. 1. p. 16.

Ft97 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 42. fol. 37. 3. Vid. Jarchium in <01102>Genesis 10:21. & 14:13. & Aben Ezram in <02102>Exodus 21:2.

Ft98 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:1. c. 6. sect. 4. Targ. Jon. in <01102>Genesis 10:21. Sepher Cosri, par. 1. sect. 49. fol. 24. 2. R. Nehemiah in Bereshit Rabba, ut supra, Aben Ezra in <01102>Genesis 10:21. & 39:14. & in <02116>Exodus 1:16. Kimchi in rad. rb[.

Ft99 -- Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 14.

Ft100 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 48.

Ft101 -- Ib. c. 47.

Ft102 -- Misn. Bava Kama, c. 8. sect. 6.

Ft103 -- T. Bab. Betza, fol. 32. 2.

Ft104 -- In Epist. ad Corinth, 1:p. 14. Ed. Oxon. 1669.

Ft105 -- Misn. Maccot. c. 3. sect. 10.

Ft106 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft107 -- Targum Jon. & Jarchi in <05503>Deuteronomy 25:3. Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 119. 3. Joseph Antiqu. 50:4. c. 8. sect. 23. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. Affirm. 105.

Ft108 -- T. Hieros. Nazir, fol. 53. 1.

Ft109 -- Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 17. 1.

Ft110 -- Ib. sect. 2. Misn. Maccot, c. 3. sect. 11.

Ft111 -- Sepher Cosri, fol. 296. 2.

Ft112 -- Sepher Cosri, fol. 297. 2.

Ft113 -- Pocock. Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 76, 77, 78.

Ft114 -- Pocock. ib. p. 58, 70, 79.

Ft115 -- Vid. Joseph. Antiqu. 50:13. c. 13. sect. 3.

Ft116 -- Antiqu. 50:14. c. 1. sect. 4. de Bello Jud. 50:1. c. 6. sect. 2.

Ft117 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:16. c. 9. sect. 4. & c. 10. sect. 8, 9.

Ft118 -- Ib. Antiqu. 50:18. c. 6. sect. 1.

Ft119 -- Onomasticum Sacrum, p. 116, 748.

Ft120 -- Nat. Hist. 50:36. c. 8.

Ft121 -- Antiqu. 50:13. c. 15. sect. 1, 2.

Ft122 -- Geograph. 50:5. c. 15.

Ft123 -- Dialog. cum Tryphone Jud. p. 305.

Ft124 -- Adv. Marcion. 50:3. c. 13.

Ft125 -- Misn. Oholot, c. 8. sect. 4. & Negaim, c. 13. sect. 3. T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 125. 2.

Ft126 -- Targum in <14618>2 Chronicles 6:18.

Ft127 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 4. & 3. 2, 3.

Ft128 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 83. 2.

Ft129 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 66. 3.

Ft130 -- De Somniis, p. 570.

Ft131 -- Cosri, p. 3. sect. 65. fol. 190. 1. 2.

Ft132 -- Strom. 50:5. p. 586.

Ft133 -- Nishma Chayim, par. 1. c. 10. fol. 25. 2. etc.

Ft134 -- Derech Eretz, fol. 19. 1. Zohar in Exod, fol. 102. 3.

Ft135 -- Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 31. 1, 2.

Ft136 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 14. 2.

Ft137 -- Tosephot, ib.

Ft138 -- Jesode Tora, c. 5, sect. 19, 20.

Ft139 -- Jesode Tora, c. 7. sect. 2.

Ft140 -- Ib. Talmud Tora, c. 1. sect. 12.

Ft141 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 96. 4.

Ft142 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol, 21. 1.

Ft143 -- Nishmat Chayim, fol. 28. 1.

Ft144 -- Expositio fidei, p. 379.

Ft145 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 2. 3. s. 3. 10. 4. 13. 3. 20. 2. 50. 3. 58. 3. 72. 4. 73. 2. 86. 1. 87. 2. 93. 1. 96. 1. 99. 4. 100. 4. 101. 42. 113. 1. & 133. 2. & 141. 3. &; 149. 2. & 152. 3.

Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Leviticus fol. 7. 2.

Ft146 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 20. fol. 229. 1.

Ft147 -- Midrash Hannelam in Zohar in Genesis fol. 67. 4.

Ft148 -- R. Eliezer Katon de Scientia Animae, 50:10. apud Gaffarell. Cod. Cabal. Misc. pic. Mirandal. Index p. 23. ad calcem Wolf. Hebrews Bibliothec.

Ft149 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 20. fol. 105. 4.

Ft150 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 22. 1.

Ft151 -- Jarchi in (02223)Exodus 23:23. Sepher Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Numbers fol. 87. 1.

Ft152 -- Baal Hatturim in (01402)Genesis 48:2.

Ft153 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 96. 2. & 97. 1.

Ft154 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial Dier. 50:4. c. 13. & 5. 15. & 6. 26.

GALATIANS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

The persons to whom this epistle is written were not such who made up a single church only, in some certain town or city, but were such of which several churches consisted, in a region or country called Galatia, as is evident from (<4801 02>Galatians 1:2) and the members of these churches seem to be chiefly, if not altogether Jews, since the apostle includes them with himself; as having been under the law, under tutors and governors, and in bondage under the elements of the world, and to whom the law had been a schoolmaster, though now they were no longer under it as such, (<4801 23>Galatians 3:23-25 4:1-3) or however, though some of them might have been originally Gentiles, yet, previous to their conversion, had become proselytes to the Jews, and now were returning to Judaism again, as appears from (<4801 08>Galatians 4:8-10). When and from whence this epistle was written, is not very clear and manifest: some have thought, that it was written about the time of the writing of the epistle to the Romans, and upon a like occasion; but if it was written about that time, it could not he written from Rome, as the subscription to this epistle attests, since it is certain, that when the apostle wrote his epistle to the Romans, he had never, as yet, been at Rome. Beza is of opinion, that it was written from Antioch, between the return of Paul and Barnabas thither from their first journey, and the troubles which broke out in that church, (<4401 428>Acts 14:28). But to this it is reasonably objected, that it is questionable whether there were so early any churches in Galatia at all; and if there were, it does not seem that the defection from the faith, complained of in this epistle, as yet had took place in any of the churches; for it was after this date that the troubles upon this head arose at Antioch, which seems to have been the first place, and the church there the first church the judaizing teachers practised at and upon. Some Latin exemplars testify that it was written from Ephesus; of which opinion was Erasmus; but as Dr. Lightfoot observes, the same reason is against this as the former, seeing the corruption that was got into this church was then but beginning, when the apostle was at Ephesus: it seems therefore most likely, that it was written from Rome, as the subscription in the Greek copies affirms; and which is

strengthened by the Syriac and Arabic versions, seeing it seems to have been written after the apostle had made the collections, in several places, for the poor saints at Jerusalem, (<480210>Galatians 2:10) and when the apostasy from the faith had got to a great pitch; nor is it any objection that there is no express mention made of his bonds in it, as there is in those epistles of his, which were written from Rome; since, when he wrote this, he might have been delivered from them, as some have thought he was after his first defence; and besides, he does take notice of the marks of the Lord Jesus he bore in his body, (<480617>Galatians 6:17). Dr. Lightfoot places the writing of this epistle in the year and in the “fifth” of Nero; some place it in 55, and others in 58. That there were churches in Galatia very early, is certain from (<441823>Acts 18:23, <461601>1 Corinthians 16:1) but by whom they were planted is not so evident; very likely by the apostle, since, it is certain, both from this epistle, that he was personally in this country, and preached the Gospel here, (<480413>Galatians 4:13-15) and from (<441606>Acts 16:6) and if he was not the instrument of the conversion of the first of them, which laid the foundation of a Gospel church state, yet it is certain, that he was useful in strengthening the disciples and brethren throughout this country, (<441823>Acts 18:23). But after his departure from them, the false teachers got among them, and insinuated, that he was no apostle, at least that he was inferior to Peter, James, and John, the ministers of the circumcision; and these seduced many of the members of the churches in this place, drawing them off from the evangelical doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, persuading them that the observation of the ceremonial law, particularly circumcision, was necessary to their acceptance with God, and justification in his sight: wherefore the occasion and design of this epistle were to vindicate the character of the apostle as such; to establish the true doctrine of justification by faith, in opposition to the works of the law; to recover those who were carried away with the other doctrines; to exhort the saints to stand fast in the liberty of Christ, and to various other duties of religion; and to give a true description of the false teachers, and their views, that so they might beware of them, and of their principles.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS 1

This chapter contains the inscription of the epistle, the apostle's usual salutation of the persons he writes to, and the charge he brought against them for their fickleness and inconstancy, in showing any manner of disposition towards a removal from the Gospel; the truth, certainty, and authority of the Gospel, and an account of himself, who was a preacher of it; of his life before conversion; of the nature and manner of his conversion; of his travels, labors, and usefulness afterwards. The inscription is in (⁴⁸01:01Galatians 1:1,2) in which the writer of the epistle is described by his name Paul, and by his office, an apostle; which office he had not of men, but of God, of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, and of God the Father, who is described by his power in raising Christ from the dead. The persons to whom the epistle is inscribed are the churches of Galatia, and those that joined the apostle in the salutation of them were the brethren that were with him. The salutation follows, (⁴⁸01:03Galatians 1:3) in which mention being made of Christ, there is a declaration of a singular benefit by him, which contains the sum of the Gospel, as that he gave himself for the sins of his people, to deliver them from the present evil world, according to the will of God, (⁴⁸01:04Galatians 1:4) upon which a doxology, or an ascription of glory is made, either to Christ, who gave himself, or to the Father, according to whose will he did, or to both, (⁴⁸01:05Galatians 1:5). After which the apostle proceeds to exhibit a charge of levity against the Galatians; and which he expresses in a way of admiration, that they should so soon be carried away from the doctrine of grace, to another doctrine the reverse of it, (⁴⁸01:06Galatians 1:6) though he somewhat mitigates this reproof by laying the blame on the false teachers, who were troublers of them, and perverters of the Gospel of Christ; and corrects himself for calling their false doctrine by the name of another Gospel, (⁴⁸01:07Galatians 1:7) and delivers out, and pronounces an anathema on all such, whether angels or men, that should preach any other Gospel than he had preached, and they had received, (⁴⁸01:08Galatians 1:8,9). The excellency of which Gospel is set forth, by the matter of it, being not human but divine, and by the manner of preaching it, with all simplicity and honesty, not seeking to please men, (⁴⁸01:10Galatians

1:10) and from the efficient cause of it, it being denied to be after man, or received from, or taught by man, but is ascribed to the revelation of Christ Jesus, (<4811>Galatians 1:11,12). And that the apostle had it not from men, he proves by the account of himself, and his conversation before conversion, as how that he had been a persecutor of the church of God, of those that professed the Christian religion and doctrine; wherefore he could not have the Gospel, as not from nature and education, so not from the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, who encouraged him to persecute, (<4813>Galatians 1:13). And this he further makes to appear by his great proficiency in the religion of the Jews, and his abundant zeal for the traditions of the fathers, which set him at the greatest distance from, and opposition to, the Gospel of Christ, (<4814>Galatians 1:14). And, on the other hand, that he received it of God, and by the revelation of Christ, he proves by the account he gives of his effectual calling and conversion; the source and spring of which was the sovereign will of God in divine predestination, and the moving cause of it, the free grace of God, (<4815>Galatians 1:15). The manner in which this was done was by a revelation of Christ in him; and the end of it was, that he might preach Christ to the Gentiles, which he immediately did, without consulting flesh and blood, (<4816>Galatians 1:16). And as it was a clear point that he could never receive the Gospel from the Jews before his conversion, he and they being enemies to it, and persecutors of it; so it was evident that he did not receive it, after his conversion, even from Christian men, seeing he did not, upon his conversion, go directly to Jerusalem, and confer with the apostles there, who were the most likely persons to have taught him the Gospel; but instead of this he went into Arabia preaching the Gospel, and then came back to Damascus, where he was converted, (<4817>Galatians 1:17). And it was three years after his conversion, that he went to Jerusalem to visit Peter; and his stay with him was very short, no longer than fifteen days; and he was the only apostle he saw there, excepting James, the brother of Christ, (<4818>Galatians 1:18,19) for the truth of all which he appeals to God the searcher of hearts, (<4820>Galatians 1:20). And then goes on with the account of himself, and his travels; how that when he departed from Jerusalem, he did not go into any other parts of Judea, and visit the churches there, but went into the countries of Syria and Cilicia; and was not so much as known by thee, or personally, by any of the churches, or members of the churches in Judea, (<4821>Galatians 1:20,21) so that as it could not be thought by his short stay at Jerusalem, and the few apostles he saw there, that he received the Gospel he preached from them, so neither from any other ministers, or body of Christians in the land of

Judea; for all they knew of him was by hearsay only, as that he who was formerly a persecutor of them, was now become a preacher of the Gospel he had sought to destroy, (Galatians 1:22,23) wherefore it was a clear case he had not received the Gospel from them. Besides, as they had heard that he preached the Gospel of Christ, they glorified God for it, who had revealed it to him, and bestowed gifts upon him, fitting him for such service, (Galatians 1:24).

Ver. 1. *Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man*, etc..] The writer of this epistle, Paul, puts his name to it, as to all his epistles, excepting that to the Hebrews, if that be his, being neither afraid nor ashamed to own what is herein contained. He asserts himself to be "an apostle", which was the highest office in the church, to which he was immediately called by Christ, and confirmed in it by signs and wonders. This he chose to mention, because of the false teachers, who had insinuated he was no apostle, and not to be regarded; whereas he had received grace and apostleship from Christ, and was an apostle, "not of men", as were the apostles or messengers of the sanhedrim [f1]; (See Gill on "2 Corinthians 8:23") and as were the false apostles, who were sent out by men, who had no authority to send them forth: the apostle, as he did not take this honour to himself, did not thrust himself into this office, or run before he was sent; so he was not sent by men; he did not act upon human authority, or by an human commission: this is said in opposition to the false apostles, and to an unlawful investiture with the office of apostleship, and an usurpation of it, as well as to distinguish himself from the messengers and ambassadors of princes, who are sent with credentials by them to negotiate civil affairs for them in foreign courts, he being an ambassador of Christ; and from the messengers of churches, who were sometimes sent with assistance or advice to other churches; and he moreover says, "nor by man"; by a mere man, but by one that was more than a man; nor by a mortal man, but by Christ, as raised from the dead, immortal and glorious at God's right hand: or rather the sense is, he was not chosen into the office of apostleship by the suffrages of men, as Matthias was; or he was not ordained an apostle in the manner the ordinary ministers of the Gospel and pastors are, by the churches of Christ; so that as the former clause is opposed to an unlawful call of men, this is opposed to a lawful one; and shows him to be not an ordinary minister, but an extraordinary one, who was called to this office, not mediately by men, by any of the churches as common ministers are:

but by Jesus Christ; immediately, without the intervention of men, as appears from (<44 26 16>Acts 26:16-18). For what Ananias did upon his conversion was only putting his hands on him to recover his sight, and baptizing him; it was Christ that appeared to him personally, and made him a minister; and his separation with Barnabas, by the church, under the direction of the Holy Ghost, (<44 13 02>Acts 13:2,4) was to some particular work and service to be done by them, and not to apostleship, and which was long after Paul was made an apostle by Christ. Jesus Christ being here opposed to man, does not suggest that he was not a man, really and truly, for he certainly was; he partook of the same flesh and blood with us, and was in all things made like unto us, sin excepted; but that he was not a mere man, he was truly God as well as man; for as the raising him from the dead, in the next clause, shows him to be a man, or he could not have died; so his being opposed to man, and set in equality with God the Father, in this verse, and grace and peace being prayed for from him, as from the Father, (<48 01 04>Galatians 1:4) and the same glory ascribed to him as to the Father, (<48 01 05>Galatians 1:5) prove him to be truly and properly God. The apostle adds,

and God the Father; Christ and his Father being of the same nature and essence, power and authority, as they are jointly concerned and work together in the affairs or nature and Providence, so in those of grace; and particularly in constituting and ordaining apostles, and setting them in the church. This serves the more to confirm the divine authority under which Paul acted as an apostle, being not only made so by Christ, but also by God the Father, who is described as he,

who raised him from the dead; which is observed, not so much to express the divine power of the Father, or the glory of Christ, as raised from the dead, but to strengthen the validity of the apostle's character and commission as such; to whom it might have been objected, that he had not seen Christ in the flesh, nor familiarly conversed with him, as the rest of the apostles did: to which he was able to reply, that he was not called to be an apostle by Christ in his low and mean estate of humiliation, but by him after he was raised from the dead, and was set down at the right hand of God; who personally appeared to him in his glory, and was seen by him, and who made and appointed him his apostle, to bear his name before Gentiles, and kings, and the people of Israel; so that his call to apostleship was rather more grand and illustrious than that of any of the other apostles.

Ver. 2. *And all the brethren which are with me*, etc..] Meaning either the brethren of the church where he was when he wrote this epistle, who were children of the same Father, regenerated by the same grace, belonged to the same family and household of God, and were heirs together of the grace of life; or else his fellow ministers, who were assisting to him in his work, and were companions with him in his travels, and whom he sometimes mentions by name and joins with him in his epistles, as Sosthenes, Silvanus, and Timothy; and the rather he takes notice of the brethren here, whoever are meant, to show that they agreed with him in the doctrines of grace he defends, and in the charges he brought against this church, and in the reproofs and advice he gave them; which he might suppose, and hope, would have the greater weight and influence upon them;

unto the churches of Galatia; Galatia was a country in the lesser Asia, inhabited by the Gauls, who coming thither out of Europe, mixed with the Grecians; whence it was first called Gallo Graecia, and afterwards Galatia; (See Gill on "Acts 16:6"). The metropolis of it, as Pliny[f2] says, was formerly Gordium, and the chief towns or cities, according to him, were Ancyra, Tavium, and Pessinus; and in some, or all of these places, it is very probable, were the churches here mentioned; (See Gill on "Acts 18:23"). It seems there were more than one in this country; for the primitive churches were not national nor provincial, but congregational, consisting of persons called out of the world, and joined together in holy fellowship and who walked in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord: and though these churches had many among them that were disorderly, and were swerving from the faith of the Gospel, yet were not unchurched, but honoured still with the name of churches, there being no perfection to be expected in this state of things; as not in particular persons, so not in congregated bodies and societies; though it is observed by some, that they are barely called churches, without any additional epithets, as churches of God, beloved of God, called to be saints, faithful and sanctified in Christ, which are bestowed on other churches; whereby the apostle is thought to show his indignation and resentment at their principles and practices. For quickly after the Gospel was preached unto them, false teachers crept in among them, endeavouring to subvert it, by mixing it with the law, and joining Moses and Christ; and in which they very much succeeded; and is the reason of the apostle's writing this epistle.

Ver. 3. *Grace to be you*, etc..] After the inscription above, in which the writer of the epistle, and the persons joined to him, are described, and the churches to whom it is written, follows the salutation in these words, and which is common to all the epistles of this apostle; of the sense of which, (see Gill on " <4107>Romans 1:7"). The Alexandrian copy reads, "from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ"; and the Ethiopic version reads, "our Father".

Ver. 4. *Who gave himself for our sins*, etc..] The antecedent to the relative "who, is our Lord Jesus Christ", (<4103>Galatians 1:3) and the words are an illustration of the good will of God the Father, and of the grace and love of Christ, in the gift of himself, for the sins of his people: he did not merely give, "sua, his own things", what were his properly, but, "se, himself"; not the world, and the fulness of it, gold, silver, and such like corruptible things; no, nor men for them, and people for their lives; nor angels, his creatures, and ministering spirits; but his own self, his life, his flesh, his blood, his body, and soul, his whole human nature, and this as in union with himself, a divine person, the eternal Son of God. He gave himself freely, cheerfully, voluntarily, into the hands of men, justice, and death itself, as a sacrifice for sin, to expiate it, make reconciliation and atonement for it, which could not be done by the sacrifices of the legal dispensation; to procure the remission of it, which could not be had without shedding or blood; and utterly to take it away, finish it, and make an end of it, and abolish it, so as that it might never rise any more to the condemnation of his people: and this reached to "sins" of all sorts, not only original, but actual, and these of thought, word, and deed; and this oblation of himself upon the cross, was not for any sin of his own, who had none, nor for the sins of angels, of whom he was no Redeemer aud Saviour, but "for our sins"; not the sins of the apostles, or of the Jews only, nor yet of all mankind, but of God's elect, called the friends of Christ, his sheep and church, for whom he gave himself; and his end in so doing was,

that he might deliver us from this present evil world; by which is meant, either the Jewish world, or church state, in which were a worldly sanctuary, and which were subject to ceremonies and traditions, called the elements and rudiments of the world; and who were possessed of worldly notions, and in expectation of a worldly kingdom to be set up by the Messiah; and both in principle and in practice were sadly degenerated, and were become very evil and wicked: or the present age and generation of men, whether of Jews or Gentiles, which was so corrupt, as the like was

never known; or in general the present world, and the men of it, in distinction either from the world before the flood, as in (2 Peter 3:5-7) or rather from the new heavens and earth, which will be after the present ones, and wherein will dwell righteousness; or, in a word, from the world which is to come, as they are frequently opposed in Scripture: and which is said to be “evil”, not with respect to the matter, that being all very good, as created by God; but with respect to the men of it, who lie in wickedness, under the power of the wicked one, and of their own sins; and to the things which are in it, all which are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Now Christ gave himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people, that as in consequence of this they might be delivered and saved from the damning power, so from the governing power and influence of all that is evil in this present world; as from Satan, the god of it, who has usurped a power over it; from the lusts that are predominant in it; from the vain conversation of the men of it; from the general conflagration of it at the last day, and from the perdition of ungodly men, and their eternal destruction in hell: and all this is

according to the will of God, and our Father, It was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that Christ was delivered up into the hands of wicked men, and put to death by them; it was his will of purpose and decree, to deliver him up into the hands of justice and death, and that he should give himself sacrifice for sin; yea, it was his will of command, that he should lay down his life for his sheep, to which he was obedient; it was his pleasure, it was what was agreeable to him, was to his good liking, that he should die for the sins of his people; it was owing to the love of God, who is our Father in Christ, and by adopting grace, and not to any worth or desert of ours, that Christ gave himself for us; as his own love, so his Father's will, were what solely moved him to it.

Ver. 5. *To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*] That is, either to Christ, who gave himself to expiate the sins of his people, on the account of which all honour and glory are due to him from them; or to God the Father, according to whose will of purpose and command Christ gave himself, for which glory ought to be ascribed unto him; and it may well be thought, that both are taken into this doxology: the Father is to be glorified, who of his everlasting love, and free favour, did in his eternal purposes and decrees in his counsel and covenant, so wisely frame and order things, that his own Son should be given to be an offering for sin; and Christ is to be glorified, that he, of his free rich grace and love, agreed

to give himself, and did give himself to be a ransom for his people, which has been testified in due time. This ascription of glory to both shows the greatness of the blessing, and the grateful sense which all interested in it ought to bear upon their minds continually, “for ever and ever”; or “to the ages of ages”, a Jewish phrase, the same with ˆymlˆ [ymlˆ [l [f3]. To which the apostle adds his “Amen”, as joining with all the saints, above or below, in ascribing salvation, and the glory of it, to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

Ver. 6. *I marvel that ye are so soon removed*, etc..] The apostle now enters on the subject matter of this epistle, and opens the occasion and design of it, which were to reprove the Galatians for their instability in the Gospel; and, if possible, to reclaim them, who were removed, or removing from the simplicity of it; and which was very surprising to the apostle, who had entertained a good opinion of them, looked upon them as persons called by the grace of God, well established in the doctrines of the Gospel, and in no danger of being carried away with the error of the wicked the person from whom he says they were removed is,

from him that called you into the grace of Christ; by whom is meant, not the apostle himself, who had been an instrument in the calling of them to the knowledge of Christ, and the participation of his grace, and from whose Gospel, or the Gospel as preached by him, in its clearness and purity, they were now departing; but either Christ, and so the Syriac and Arabic versions read the words, “from Christ who called you by own grace”; or rather God the Father, and some copies read, “into”, or “by the grace of God”: to whom calling is most commonly ascribed in the sacred writings: and which is to be understood, not of a ministerial call, or a call to preach the Gospel of Christ; though there might be some in these churches who were called both internally and externally to that sacred office; nor a mere outward call by the ministry: for though doubtless there might be some among them who were only so called, yet as much as they were under profession of Christ, and nothing appearing to the contrary, they were all in a judgment of charity looked upon as effectually called by the grace of God; which calling is here meant: for they were called “into the grace of Christ”; some read it, “in”, or “by the grace of Christ”: referring it either to the moving cause of calling, which is not the works and merits of men, but the free grace and favour of God in Christ; or to the efficient cause of it, which is not the power and will of man, but the efficacious grace of Christ, through the powerful operations of his Spirit:

but the words are well rendered, “into the grace of Christ”; that is, to the enjoyment of the fulness of grace which is in Christ; of all the blessings of grace he has in his hands; such as justification, peace, pardon, atonement, wisdom, strength, joy, comfort, and every supply of grace; and particularly fellowship with him, into which the saints are called, and than which nothing is more desirable: but the difficulty is, how such persons can be said to be removed from God, who has thus called them to partake of grace in Christ. They are not, nor can they be removed from the everlasting and unchangeable love of God to them in Christ, of which their calling is a fruit, effect, and evidence; nor from their covenant interest in him, which is immovable and inviolable; nor from a state of justification, in which they openly are, who in the effectual calling have passed from death to life, and so shall never enter into condemnation; nor from the family and household of God, in which they are; no, nor from the grace of calling with which they are called by God, and which has eternal salvation inseparably connected with it; but this must be understood doctrinally of their removal from the Gospel of Christ, though not of a total and final one. It is observed by some, that the word used is in the present tense, and shows that they were not gone off from the Gospel, but were upon going, so that the apostle had some hopes, yea, confidence of their being restored, (Galatians 5:10). And besides, though such as are truly called by grace cannot be finally and totally deceived by false prophets and false teachers, yet they may be greatly unhinged by them, and may fall from some degree of steadfastness in the doctrine of faith, which was the case of these Galatians: but what increased the apostle's surprise, and aggravated their sin and weakness, was, that they were “so soon” removed from the simplicity of the Gospel; he having been with them but a few years before, and preached the Gospel to them, which the means of their conversion, and of planting churches among them; at least he had lately paid them a visit, when he afresh strengthened them in the faith of the Gospel, (Acts 18:23). Or this may regard that easiness of mind which appeared in them, who upon the first attack of them by the false teachers, were weakly and cowardly giving up their faith, and at once giving into the notions of these men, as soon as they were proposed unto them. That which they are said to be removed

unto is

another Gospel, different from that, and very unlike to what had been preached to them, and they had received; which had nothing of the grace of

Christ, of the doctrines and blessings of grace that had, by which they were called; very different from the Gospel of Christ, and his apostles, insomuch that it did not deserve the name of a Gospel; and the apostle calls it so, not that he thought it to be one, but because it was in the opinion of others, and was so styled by the false apostles; wherefore, by way of concession, he so calls it, though he immediately corrects it.

Ver. 7. *Which is not another*, etc..] It is no Gospel, no joyful sound, no good news, and glad tidings; the doctrine which attributes justification to the works of the law, or mixes grace and works in the business of salvation, which was the doctrine of these false teachers, is no Gospel; not truly so, however it may be called; nor does it bring any solid peace and joy to distressed minds. There is but one pure Gospel of the grace of God, and Christ, and his apostles; there is not one and another; there is but one faith, one doctrine and scheme of faith; the Gospel is single and uniform, all of a piece, has no yea and nay, or contradiction in it; this trumpet gives no uncertain sound, nor any dreadful, but a joyful one:

but there be some that trouble you; meaning the false apostles, whose names he does not think fit to mention, as being unworthy to be named, and to have their names transmitted to posterity. These troubled the churches with their doctrines and principles, by raising disputes and controversies among them, injecting doubts and scruples into their minds, which puzzled and confounded them, and made them uneasy, and which broke in upon that peace of soul which the Gospel brings and establishes; for no true solid peace is attained to, and enjoyed, but by the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice, which the doctrine of justification by works, etc.. tends to destroy.

And would pervert the Gospel of Christ; which has Christ for its author, subject, and preacher; and particularly the doctrine of justification by his righteousness, which they sought to change, to throw into a different shape and form, to adulterate by mixing it with the works of the law, and so, if possible, destroy it: to this they showed a good will, but were not able to effect, for the Gospel is an everlasting one; it is immovable, and so is that particular doctrine of it; it remains, and will remain in spite of opposition to it. Thus the apostle prudently lays the blame of the Galatians removing from the Gospel to another upon the false teachers, hoping he should be able to reclaim them by solid arguments, and gentle methods.

Ver. 8. *But though we, or an angel from heaven*, etc..] The apostle, in order to assert the more strongly the truth, purity, and perfection of the Gospel, as preached by him; and to deter persons from preaching another Gospel, and others from receiving it, supposes a case impossible; and, in such a case, denounces his anathemas. It was not possible, that he, or any of his fellow apostles, who had been so clearly led and so fully established in the Gospel of Christ, and of which they had had such a powerful and comfortable experience in their souls, could ever preach one different from it; nor was it possible that a good angel, one that is in heaven, that always beholds the face of God there, is ever ready to do his will, as he never could be employed by God in publishing another, so he never would; and yet, was it possible or such a thing to be done by such men, or such an angel, he or they would deserve the curse of God and men; their having the highest names, or being of the highest character, and in the highest office and class of beings, would not screen them; and therefore how should the false apostles, and those who followed them, ever think to escape, since even these would not, should they

preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you; that is, not only anyone that is contrary to it, but any one besides it; for such was the perfection of the Gospel, as preached by the apostle, who declared the whole counsel of God, and kept back nothing that was profitable to the churches, that no addition could, or might be made unto it:

let him be accursed, or "anathema"; (see <4616 22>1 Corinthians 16:22) which may respect his excommunication out of the church, and his sentence of condemnation by Christ at the last day; and the sense be this, let him be ejected from the ministry of the word, degraded from his office, and cast out of the church; let him be no more a minister, nor a member of it; and let him be abhorred of men, and accursed of Christ; let him hear the awful sentence, "go ye accursed", etc..

Ver. 9. *As we have said before, so say I now again*, etc..] Either when he first preached the Gospel among them; or rather referring to what he had just now said, which he repeats with some little alteration; as if any, men, or angels, be they of what name, figure, rank, or office whatever,

preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye have received; and as the apostle thought, readily, willingly, sincerely, and heartily, in the love of it; assenting to the truth, feeling the power of it, and openly professing it:

let him be accursed; which he repeats, for the more solemn asseveration and confirmation of it; and to show that this did not drop from his lips hastily and inadvertently; nor did it proceed from any irregular passions, or was spoken by him in heat, and in an angry mood, his mind being ruffled, disturbed, and discomposed; but was said by him in the most serious and solemn manner, upon the most thoughtful and mature consideration of the affair.

Ver. 10. *For do I now persuade men, or God*? etc..] To "persuade", is to teach; (see <44180>Acts 18:4, <47611>2 Corinthians 5:11) the sense of which, with respect to men, is easy, but, with regard to God, difficult; and indeed cannot be applied to him, consistent with his divine perfections; and therefore something must be understood, and which may be supplied either thus, "do I now persuade", you or others, that "men or God" are to be hearkened to? not men, but God; the apostle did not teach them to hearken either to himself, or any of the other apostles, Peter, James, and John, any further than as he and they preached the pure Gospel of Christ; but should they do otherwise, they were not to be attended to, but God, who spake by his Son; or Christ, who is God as well as man; who is the great prophet in the church, a son in his own house, whose voice is to be hearkened to in all matters of doctrine, worship, and duty: or thus, "do I now persuade" you, to obey "men or God"; not men, but God; he did not teach them to regard the traditions of the elders, or to obey the commandments of men, but, on the contrary, the ordinances of Christ, who is the one Lord, and only master, whose orders are to be observed: or thus, "do I now persuade", to trust in "men or God?" to believe in the one or the other; not in men, in the wisdom, strength, riches, and righteousness of men, but in the living God; in the grace of God, and in the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ: or thus, "do I persuade" for the sake of "men, or God?" not for the sake of gaining honour, glory, and applause from men, as the Pharisees and false apostles did, but for the glory of God, the hour of Christ, and the good of immortal souls: or else not persons, but things are meant, by men and God: and the sense is, that the apostle taught and persuaded men to believe, not things human, but divine; he did not preach himself, or seek to set up his own power and authority over men; or set forth his eloquence, learning, parts, and abilities; or to gain either applause or riches to himself; he did not teach human wisdom, the vain philosophy of the Gentiles, and opposition of science, falsely so called; nor the traditions of the elders, nor the commandments of men; nor the power and purity human nature, or the

righteousness of man: but delivered things divine; he persuaded to things concerning God, and the kingdom of God; (see <4419 08>Acts 19:8) he taught, that without the regenerating grace of the Spirit of God, no man should see, and without the justifying righteousness of Christ, no man should enter into the kingdom of heaven, as his Lord had done before him; he preached the things concerning the grace and love of God, the person and offices of Christ, and the Spirit's work of regeneration and sanctification: the word “now”, refers to all the time since his conversion, to the present: before his call by grace, he persuaded persons to hearken to men, to obey the traditions of the elders, to trust in their own righteousness for justification before God; but now he saw otherwise, and taught them to lay aside everything that was human, and to believe in God, trust in and depend on his justifying righteousness; and this he did, without any regard to the favour and affection of men, as appears from what follows:

or do I seek to please men? no, he neither pleased, nor sought to please them; neither in the matter of his ministry, which was the grace of God, salvation by a crucified Christ, and the things of the Spirit of God; for these were very distasteful to, and accounted foolishness by the men of the world; nor in the manner of it, which was not with excellency of speech, or the enticing words of man's wisdom, with the flowers of rhetoric, but in a plain and simple style. There is indeed a pleasing of men, which is right, and which the apostle elsewhere recommends, and was in the practice of himself; (see <4515 02>Romans 15:2, <4610 33>1 Corinthians 10:33). This proceeds from right principles, by proper ways and means, and to right ends, the glory of God, the good, profit, edification, and salvation of men; and there is a pleasing of men that is wrong, which is done by dropping, concealing, or corrupting the doctrines of the Gospel, to gain the affection and applause of men, and amass wealth to themselves, as the false apostles did, and who are here tacitly struck at; a practice the apostle could by no means come into, and assigns this reason for it:

for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ: formerly he had studied to please men, when he held the clothes of those that stoned Stephen, made havoc of the church, hating men and women to prison; and went to the high priest, and asked letters of him to go to Damascus, and persecute the followers of Christ, thereby currying favour with him; but now it was otherwise, and he suggests, that was this his present temper and conduct he should have continued a Pharisee still, and have never entered into the service of Christ; for to please men, and be a servant of Christ, are

things inconsistent, incompatible, and impracticable; no man pleaser can be a true faithful servant of Christ, or deserve the name of one: the apostle here refers to his office as an apostle of Christ, and minister of the Gospel, and not to his character as a private believer, in which sense every Christian is a servant of Christ; though to men is even contrary to this; for no man can serve two masters, God and the world, Christ and men. The Septuagint version of (Psalm 53:5) is, "for God hath scattered the bones", ανψρωπαρεσκων, "of men pleasers", to which agree the Syriac and Arabic versions.

Ver. 11. *But I certify you, brethren*, etc..] Though the Galatians had gone such lengths with their false teachers, yet the apostle still calls them "brethren"; as hoping well of them, that they were born of God, did belong to his family, and were heirs of the grace of life; and this he the rather makes use of, to show his affection to them, and to engage their attention to the assurance he gives, of the divine original and authority of the Gospel preached by him; which though they formerly knew and believed, yet through the insinuations of the false apostles, were drawn into some doubts about it: wherefore he declares in the most solemn and affectionate manner,

that the Gospel which was preached of me, is not after man. Their guides that were leading them wrong, did not presume to say, that the Gospel was after man, for they themselves pretended to preach the Gospel; but that the Gospel preached by the apostle had no other authority than human, or than his own to support it: wherefore he denies that it was "after man"; after the wisdom of man, an human invention and contrivance, a device and fiction of man's brain; nor was it after the mind of man, or agreeably to his carnal reason, it was disapproved of by him, and beyond his capacity to reach it; nor was it of his revealing, a discovery of his; flesh and blood, human nature, could never have revealed it; nor is it in the power of one man to make another a minister of the Gospel, or to give him or himself success in the ministration of it, but the whole is of God.

Ver. 12. *For I neither received it of man*, etc..] Not from Gamaliel, at whose feet he was brought up; he received the law from him, and knowledge in the Jews' religion, and in the traditions of the elders, but not a whit of the Gospel; on the contrary, he received prejudices against it from him, or was strengthened in them by him; no, nor from the apostles of Christ neither, whom he saw not, had no conversation with for some years,

after he was a preacher of the Gospel, and therefore did not receive it at their hands; no, nor from Ananias, nor any other man:

neither was I taught it: that is, by man; he did not learn it of men, as men learn law, physics, logic, rhetoric, natural philosophy, and other things at school:

but by the revelation of Jesus Christ; meaning, not through Christ being revealed to him by the Father, as in (⁴⁸⁰¹Galatians 1:16) though it is a sense not to be overlooked; but by Christ, the revealer of it to him; and regards either the time of his rapture into the third heaven, when he heard words not to be uttered; or rather since that is not so certain when it was, the time of his conversion, when Christ personally appeared unto him, and made him a minister of his Gospel; and immediately from himself, without the interposition, or use of any man, or means, gave him such light into it, and such a furniture of mind for the preaching of it, that he directly, as soon as ever he was baptized, set about the ministration of it, to the admiration of the saints, and confusion of the enemies of Christ. These words furnish out another proof of the deity of Christ; for if the Gospel is not after man, nor received of, or taught by man, but by Christ, then Christ cannot be a mere man, or else being by him, it would be by man; and which also confirms the authority and validity of the Gospel, and carries in it a strong reason for the apostle's anathematizing all such as preach any other.

Ver. 13. *For ye have heard of my conversation in time past*, etc..] His manner and course of life, in his state of unregeneracy, how diametrically opposite his education and behaviour, his principles and practices, were to the Gospel; which show that he had not received it, nor was he taught it of men. This they might have heard of, either from himself, when he first preached among them, who was very free to acknowledge his former sins and errors; or from the Jews, who were scattered abroad in the several countries; and it may be, from them, who were forced to fly to strange cities, and perhaps to some in Galatia, on account of his persecution: now his life and conversation, before his conversion, were spent

in the Jews' religion; or “in Judaism”. He was born of Jewish parents, had a Jewish education, was brought up under a Jewish doctor, in all the peculiarities of the Jewish religion, and so could have received no hints, not in a notional way, of the truths of the Gospel; which he might have done, had he been born of Christian parents, and had had a Christian education: besides, he was brought up in the religion of the Jews, not as it was

founded and established by God, but as it was corrupted by them; who had lost the true sense of the oracles of God committed to them, the true use of sacrifices, and the end of the law; had added to it a load of human traditions; placed all religion in bare doing, and taught that justification and salvation lay in the observance of the law of Moses, and the traditions of the elders: add to this, that he was brought up in the sect of the Jewish religion, Pharisaism, which was the straitest sect of it, and the most averse to Christ and his Gospel; so that he could never receive it, or have any disposition to it from hence; so far from it, that he appeals to the Galatians, as what they must have heard,

how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God; which he now knew, and believed to be the church of God; though then he did not, but rather a synagogue of Satan; and this he mentions, as an aggravation of his sin, under a sense of which he was humbled all his days: when he is said to persecute it “beyond measure”, the meaning is not, as if there were any lawful measure, or due bounds of persecution, but that he persecuted the saints in a most violent and outrageous manner, beyond all others that were concerned with him: the church of God at Jerusalem is particularly designed, and the members of it, the disciples of Christ; whom he hated, and committed to prison, and breathed out threatenings and slaughter against, and destroyed: wherefore it follows, and wasted it; or destroyed it; as much as in him lay, he sought to do it, though he was not able to effect it entirely; he made havoc of it, dispersed its members, caused them to flee to strange cities, persecuted them to death, gave his voice against them to have them punished and put to death: such an aversion had he to the followers of Christ, and the Christian doctrine.

Ver. 14. *And profited in the Jews' religion*, etc..] Or “in Judaism”; and the more he did so, or was versed in, and wedded to their principles, the more violent a persecutor he was. He was under a very considerable master, Gamaliel, a Rabbi of great note among the Jews; and he himself a youth of uncommon natural abilities, so that his proficiency in Jewish learning was very great; even, as he says,

above many my equals in mine own nation: not proselytes in other nations, but such as were natives of his own country: or were “in his own kindred”, his near relations, who were his contemporaries, of the same age with him; and very modestly he says “many”, not “all”:

being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers: he had a zeal, but, not according to knowledge; and a greater degree of it than the rest of his countrymen; and that not so much for the written law delivered to his fathers, as for the oral law, the traditions and customs of his ancestors; which had been handed down, as they pretended, from one to another, and were now swelled to an almost infinite bulk; and mean the traditions of the elders, condemned by Christ, as making void the commandments of God: now his close attachment to, and eager zeal for these traditions, put him upon using more violent measures in persecuting the saints, and further off from the Gospel of Christ: and now from this account of himself it is a clear point, that during this period of his life he could never have received the Gospel from men, which is his view in giving it.

Ver. 15. *But when it pleased God*, etc..] Here begins his account of his conversion, and call to the ministry; all which he ascribes entirely to the sovereign good pleasure, and free grace of God:

who separated me from my mother's womb. By his “mother” is meant, not in an improper and figurative sense, the Jewish church, or the old synagogue, the mother of all its members; the Jerusalem which then was, and was in bondage with her children; from which bondage, blindness, ignorance, superstition and bigotry, he was delivered, when called by grace: nor the church at Antioch, which is never called a mother church; and though he was by that church, with Barnabas, separated for the work of the ministry, yet not from it: but by his “mother”, without a figure is meant, his real natural mother, whose name is said to be Theocrita; and this separation from her womb is to be understood either of that distinction made of him in Providence, as soon as born; which not only took him, and safely brought him out of his mother's womb, but ever since took special care of him, and saved and preserved him to be called; for all the chosen vessels of salvation are distinguished from others, in a providential way; they are more under the special care of Providence than others are, even whilst in a state of unregeneracy; God's eye of Providence is upon them, his heart is towards them, he waits upon them to be gracious to them, and many are the remarkable appearances of Providence for them; (see <19220>Psalm 22:9,10). Or rather this designs divine predestination, which is a separation, a setting apart of persons, for such and such purposes, as here of the apostle; and the eternity of it, it being very early done, from his mother's womb; whilst he was in it, before he was born, and had done

either good or evil; from the beginning of time, from the foundation of the world, and before it, even from eternity: all which phrases express the same thing, and intend either his predestination to grace and glory, to holiness and happiness, to sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, and to the obtaining the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; or his predestination to apostleship, to the work of the ministry, to the Gospel of Christ, to which he was separated in eternity, and in time; reference seems to be had to (<2405>Jeremiah 1:5) or indeed both, and his separation or predestination to both was owing to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God, as was also his after call:

and called me by his grace; which follows upon separation, as it does on predestination, in (<4530>Romans 8:30) and is to be interpreted either of his call at conversion, by powerful and efficacious grace; when he was called out of Jewish darkness, blindness, and ignorance, into Gospel light and knowledge; out of the bondage of sin, Satan, the law, and traditions of the fathers, into the liberty of Christ; from conversation with the men of the world, among whom before he had it, into the fellowship of Father, Son, and Spirit, angels and saints; out of himself, and off of a dependence on his own righteousness, to trust in Christ: in a word, he was called into the grace of Christ here, into a participation of all the blessings of grace, and to eternal glory by him hereafter; which call was not of men, but of God, as the efficient cause of it; and by his grace, as the moving and procuring cause of it, and without the use of means, the word, which is the ordinary way in which God calls his people; so that it is plain his first light into the Gospel, was not of man, nor so much as by the means of man: or this call may respect his call to the ministry, which was at the same time he was effectually called by grace; and which also was not of man, nor of himself; he did not thrust himself into this work, but God called him; and that of his mere grace and good will, without any respect to any merits, deserts, or qualifications in him.

Ver. 16. *To reveal his Son in me*, etc..] This clause stands in connection with that in the preceding verse, “but when it pleased God”; the revelation of Christ in the apostle being the mere fruit and effect of God's will and pleasure: some versions read it “by me”, making the apostle to be the instrument and means, by whom God revealed his Son Jesus Christ to others, which is a certain truth, but this is rather contained in the following clause: others read it “to me”, and which also is true; for Christ was revealed to him in the glory of his person, the fulness of his grace, the

necessity, suitableness, and completeness of his salvation; not objectively in the Gospel, or merely notionally, speculatively in the theory of things, but spiritually, experimentally, and savingly; and which is better expressed, and nearer the original, by “in him”; for he had an internal discovery of him as God's salvation, and of his interest in him as such; Christ was formed in him, his Spirit was put within him, his grace was implanted in him; he lived and dwelt in his heart by faith, as the Son in his own house; he was known unto him, as Christ in him the hope of glory: now the end of all this, of his separation from mother's womb, of his call by the grace of God, of the large revelation of Christ to him, and in him was,

that, says he,

I might preach him among the Heathen; as he did: Christ was the subject of his ministry; the things respecting his person, as that he was very God, the Son of God, God and man in one person the things respecting his office, as that he is the only Mediator between God and man, the prophet of the church, the high priest over the house of God, and King of saints; the doctrines of his grace, and which concern his obedience, sufferings, and death; as that peace and pardon are by his blood, justification by his righteousness, reconciliation and satisfaction by his sacrifice, and eternal life and complete salvation alone by him; all which is evangelizing, or preaching good news and glad tidings to sensible sinners: the persons to whom he was to preach these things, and did, were “the Heathen”, or Gentiles; he was a chosen vessel for this purpose; Christ, when he called him, sent him to them; the work he was to do, and did, lay chiefly among them; hence he is called an apostle, and teacher of them:

immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; which some understand of carnal reason, and that he did not stand reasoning and debating the matter with himself, whether it would be for his credit and reputation, for his worldly interest and advantage, to enter upon the ministry of the word; whether it would be advisable to expose himself, by so doing, to reproach and persecution; but immediately, as soon as he was called by grace, and Christ was revealed in him, he set about it: others, by “flesh and blood”, understand carnal men; and others his countrymen the Jews, and those of them that were his relations, his own flesh; but rather men in general are intended, any whatever, and especially the apostles; whom, he afterwards says, he had no conversation with, upon his first setting out in the ministry. It is usual with the Jews to call men, in distinction and opposition to God,

µdw rçb, “flesh and blood”. Infinite almost are the examples that might be given thereof out of their writings. (See Gill on “<40167>Matthew 16:17”). (See Gill on “<49612>Ephesians 6:12”).

Ver. 17. *Neither went I up to Jerusalem*, etc..] That is, immediately, as soon as he was converted, not till three years after, as follows; though by the account which Luke gives of him, (<40923>Acts 9:23,26) and by that which the apostle gives of himself, (<42217>Acts 22:17,18) it looks as if he went to Jerusalem some little time after his conversion, and before the date here given: and therefore some have thought that he did go up to Jerusalem pretty quickly, when, praying in the temple, he fell into a trance, and was ordered to make haste from thence, and go far hence unto the Gentiles and accordingly he made no stay, did not go to any of the apostles, and neither saw nor conversed with any of them, which is what he here says,

to them which were apostles before me. The twelve, who were called, ordained, and sent forth as apostles before he was; for last of all Christ appeared to him, and was seen by him as one born out of due time: his meaning is, not that he was a successor of the apostle's, but that they were instated in the office of apostleship before him; and this he mentions to show that he did not receive the Gospel from men, no not from the apostles themselves; since, upon his conversion, he did not go up to Jerusalem to see any of them, and talk with them; nor did he stand in need of any instructions from them, being immediately furnished sufficiently by Christ himself; nor did his work lie at Jerusalem, nor so much among the Jews as among the Gentiles, and therefore to them he went:

but I went into Arabia. This journey of the apostle is wholly omitted by Luke, nor should we have known anything of it, had it not been for this account: how long he stayed there, what he did, and what success he met with among the Arabs are no where related; no doubt but he preached the Gospel to them, and as his ministry everywhere was owned and blessed by God, it may be very reasonably thought it was here at his first setting out in it. The Arabic version reads it, “I went to Balcam”, which was a city in Syria; but without any foundation for it; for it was not Syria, but Arabia to which he went. There are three countries which bear the name of Arabia, and which are called to distinguish them from one another, Arabia Petraea, Arabia Deserta, and Arabia Felix; of which (See Gill on “<40211>Acts 2:11”). It is very likely it was the former of these which the apostle went to, as being nearest to Syria, since from Damascus, the metropolis of Syria, he went

thither; and Damascus itself was at this time under the government of an Arabian king, (see 2 Corinthians 11:32). So Pliny frequently speaks of Arabia as near to Syria, Palestine, and Judea: in one place he says [f4], Arabia divides Judea from Egypt; and elsewhere [f5] observes, that Syria is distinguished by many names; for it is called Palestina, where it touches the Arabians, and Judea, and Coele, and Phenice; and Peraea, or the country beyond Jordan, he says, is next to Arabia and Egypt; and on the east of the lake of Asphaltites he places Arabia, that belongs to the Nomades; so likewise Josephus [f6] places Arabia at the east of Peraea, or the country beyond Jordan; and says [f7] in another place, that Arabia borders on Judea, the metropolis of which was Petra, where Aretas the king had his royal palace: Jerom [f8] likewise observes, that the river Jordan divides Judea and Arabia; so that this country into which the apostle went was not a great way off of Syria and Judea, whither he returned again after some time; which seems to be about the space of three years, by what follows in the next verse, and when he had done the work and will of God in those parts; where doubtless he was the instrument of converting souls, and planting churches, and here it is certain were churches in ages following: in the "third" century were churches in Arabia, mentioned along with the churches in Syria, by Eusebius [f9]; in which age lived two famous Arabian bishops, Beryllus and Maximus; and the same historian [f10] reports, that in the times of Dioclesian there were some wonderful martyrs in Arabia, who suffered the most cruel tortures and death, for the sake of Christ: and in the "fourth" century there were Arabian bishops in the Nicene council, and in other synods, as at Jerusalem and Sardica; and in the same century there were bishops of Arabia Petraea, at the synod in Antioch, whose names were Nicomachus and Cyrion: and also in the "fifth" century there were churches and bishops in the same country [f11], not to trace them any further:

and returned again unto Damascus; and then it was, that being increased in spiritual strength and knowledge, he proved that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah, to the confusion of the Jews there; which drew upon him their resentment and indignation, so that they took counsel and lay in wait to kill him; but the disciples let him down through a window, by the wall of the city in a basket, and so he escaped them.

Ver. 18. *Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem*, etc..] Not three years after his return to Damascus, but after his conversion; and now it was that he moved to become a member of the church at Jerusalem; but they did not care to admit him, fearing that he was not a disciple, till such time

that Barnabas took him, and brought him to the Apostles Peter and James, and related his conversion and his boldness in preaching the Gospel at Damascus: his view in going up to Jerusalem at this time was partly his own safety, being obliged to fly from Damascus, but chiefly

to see Peter. The Alexandrian copy, and another, read “Cephas”, and so does the Ethiopic version, the same with Peter: not to see what sort of a man he was, but to pay him a Christian visit; to converse with him about spiritual things; to know how the work of God went on under him, as the minister of the circumcision; and to relate to him, what success he had met with as the minister of the uncircumcision; but not to receive the Gospel from him, or to be ordained a preacher of it by him; for he had been three years already in the work of the ministry, before he made him this visit; and besides, his stay with him was very short, nor could he have received much from him, in so short a time, in an ordinary way:

and abode with him fifteen days; and even all this time was not wholly spent in conversation with him; for he was, during this time, coming in and going out at Jerusalem, where he preached boldly in the name of Christ, and disputed against the Grecians.

Ver. 19. *But other of the apostles saw I none*, etc..] This is observed to show, that as he did not receive the Gospel from Peter, so neither from any of the other apostles, whom he did not so much as see, much less converse with;

save James the Lord's brother; not James the son of Zebedee, the brother of John, whom Herod slew with the sword; but James the son of Alphaeus, he who made the speech in the synod at Jerusalem, (<44153>Acts 15:13) was the writer of the epistle which bears his name, and was the brother of Joses, Simon, and Judas, who are called the brethren of Christ, (<40135>Matthew 13:55) and that because they were the kinsmen and relations of Christ according to the flesh, it being usual with the Jews to call such brethren. The relation came in and stood thus; this James was James the less, the son of Mary the wife of Cleophas, (<41540>Mark 15:40,47) which Cleophas was the brother of Joseph, the husband of Mary the mother of our Lord, as Eusebius, from Hegesippus, relates; and so our Lord and this James were brothers' children, as was supposed: or else the wife of Cleophas the mother of James, was sister to Mary the mother of Christ, as she is called, (<43925>John 19:25) and so they were sisters' children, or own cousins; and thus Jerom [f12], after much discourse on this subject, concludes

that Mary the mother of James the less was the wife of Alphaeus, (or Cleophas, which is the same,) and the sister of Mary the mother of the Lord, whom the Evangelist John surnames Mary of Cleophas; and persons in such a relation, and even uncles and nephews, were called brethren by the Jews; (see <0125>Genesis 12:5) (<0138>Genesis 13:8 29:12,15 <0304>Leviticus 10:4) nor is James one of our Lord's disciples being called his brother, any contradiction to (<4005>John 7:5) as the Jew [f13] affirms, where it is said, “neither did his brethren believe in him”; since they might not believe in him then, and yet believe in him afterwards: besides, Christ had brethren or relations according to the flesh, distinct from his disciples and apostles, and his brethren among them; (see <4001>Matthew 10:1 12:46,49) such as were James, Judas, and Simon; nor does the Evangelist John say, that none of Christ's brethren believed in him, only that they that came to him and bid him go into Judea did not. Some have been of opinion that a third James, distinct from James the son of Zebedee and James the son of Alphaeus, is here meant; who was not of the twelve apostles, and was surnamed James the just, and called the brother of Christ because of his faith, wisdom, and becoming conversation; but certain it is, that this James was of the number of the apostles, as appears from the exceptive clause, “other of the apostles saw I none, save James”, etc.. and from his being put with Cephas and John, who were pillars and the chief among the apostles; and besides it was James the son of Alphaeus, who was surnamed the “just”, and Oblias [f14], and presided over the church at Jerusalem, and was a man of great esteem among the Jews; and is by [f15] Josephus, as here, called the brother of Jesus.

Ver. 20. *Now the things which I write unto you*, etc..] Concerning his education, his religion, his principles and practices before conversion; concerning his call by the grace of God, the revelation of Christ in him, and his preaching of him among the Heathen; concerning his travels to several places for this purpose, and especially concerning his not receiving the Gospel from men, not from any of the apostles; and how that upon his conversion he did not go up to Jerusalem to any of them, to be taught and sent forth by them; and that it was not till three years after that he wept thither to see Peter, with whom he stayed but fifteen days, and saw no other apostle, but James the Lord's brother. Now this being a matter of moment, and what he had been charged with by the false teachers, that the Gospel he preached he had received from men, in order to disqualify him and bring him into contempt as an apostle, and which they had insinuated to the Galatians; he therefore not only wrote these things, but for the

confirmation of them solemnly appeals to God the searcher of hearts for the truth of them;

behold, before God I lie not; which is not only a strong asseveration, but a formal oath; it is swearing by the God of truth, calling him to be witness of the things that he had written; whence it is manifest that an oath upon proper occasions, where there is a necessity for it, and a good end to be answered by it, may be lawfully made.

Ver. 21. *Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia*.] For having disputed against the Grecians at Jerusalem, and being too hard for them, it so irritated them, that they were going to murder him; which being known to the brethren there, they got him out of the way, and had him down to Caesarea, and so to Tarsus, a city in Cilicia; where he was born; in which places and in the countries about he preached the Gospel of Christ; to Tarsus, Barnabas went for him seeking him, and finding him brought him to Antioch in Syria; and both in Syria and Cilicia he preached, no doubt with success, since we read of believing Gentiles and churches in those parts he afterwards visited; being sent along with others, with the letter and decrees of the synod at Jerusalem to them, and whom he confirmed; (see Gill on "Acts 15:23"), (see Gill on "Acts 15:41"): in the Greek text these countries are called "climates"; a climate in geography is said [f16] to be a part of the surface of the earth, bounded by two circles parallel to the equator, and of such a breadth as that the longest day in the parallel nearer the pole, exceeds the longest day in that next the equator, by some certain space, viz. half an hour — . The beginning of the climate is the parallel circle wherein the day is the shortest, the end of the climate is that wherein the day is the longest; — each climate only differs from its contiguous ones, in that the longest day in summer is longer or shorter by half an hour in the one place than in the other: — vulgarly the term climate is bestowed on any country or region differing from another, either in respect of the seasons, the quality of the soil, or even the manners of the inhabitants, without any regard to the length of the longest day; in which sense it seems to be used here, as also in (Romans 15:23 2 Corinthians 11:10). Of the country of Syria, (see Gill on "Matthew 4:24"). Cilicia is a country of Asia Minor, now called Caramania; it had its name of Cilicia, as Herodotus says [f17], from Cilix, the son of Agenor, a Phoenician: though Bochart [f18] derives it from Challekim or Challukim, which signifies stones, it being a stony country; and so Herodotus [f19] calls it "mountainous" Cilicia; it is said to have Pamphilia on the west, the tops of

Mount Taurus on the north, Mount Amanus on the east, and the Cilician sea on the south; Jerom says [f20], Cilicia is a province of Asia, which the river Cydnus cuts in the middle, and Mount Amanus, of which Solomon makes mention, separates it from Syria-Coele.

Ver. 22. *And was unknown by face*, etc..] Or "in person". This is said to prevent what might be objected, that though the apostle had not received the Gospel he preached from any of the apostles at Jerusalem; yet he might have had it from the churches that were in the land of Judea, and from some of the principal men in them; but this was so far from being truth, that he was not so much as known unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ; for there was not only a famous church of believers in Christ at Jerusalem, the metropolis of the land, but there were several congregated churches in the several parts of that country: by Judea we are to understand that part of the land of Israel so called, which was distinct not only from Samaria; but from Galilee and Perea, or the country beyond Jordan; for according to the Jews [f21], the land of Israel was divided into three parts, Judea, Perea, and Galilee. Judea again was divided into three parts, the hill country, the plain, and the valley; and the plain of Lydda is as the plain of the south, and its mountainous part as the king's mountain; from Bethhoron to the sea is one province: and elsewhere [f22] it is said, that the hill country of Judea is the king's mountain, the plain of it is the plain of the south, and the valley is from Engedi to Jericho — from Bethhoron to Emmaus is mountainous, from Emmaus to Lydda is a plain, and from Lydda to the sea a valley; from which may be collected where this country lay, and where were these churches here spoken of; the foundation of which might be laid in the conversion of some in those parts, through the ministry of the disciples of Christ, who were appointed witnesses of him not only in Jerusalem, but in all Judea and Samaria, (<40108>Acts 1:8) and about the time of the Apostle Paul's conversion, and his being at Jerusalem, there were churches gathered in Judea, as distinct from Galilee and Samaria, (<40931>Acts 9:31) particularly at Caesarea, Lydda, Saron, and Joppa. It is very likely that all the apostles, when they first set out to preach the Gospel after the ascension of Christ and the effusion of the Spirit, began in Judea; though some might make a very short stay, and others a longer. The Apostle and Evangelist Matthew is generally thought to have exercised his ministry chiefly in Judea, and to have continued there long; here he wrote his Gospel for the sake of the Jews that believed [f23]; and that, as a very ancient writer says [f24], when Peter and Paul preached at Rome, and founded

the church there. Judas Thaddaeus is also said [f25] to go through Judea, Galilee, Samaria, Arabia, Syria, and Mesopotamia; and certain it is, that Philip, after he had baptized the eunuch, preached in all the cities from Azotus to Caesarea, where he seems to have stayed awhile and preached, (<4840>Acts 8:40) and where afterwards was a Gospel church state, of which (see Gill on "<4408>Acts 10:48") and at Lydda and Saron, which were both in Judea, there were saints who were visited by the Apostle Peter, and others converted by him, about the time that our apostle here refers to; of the church at Lydda; (see Gill on "<4402>Acts 9:32") at Joppa also, which was in the tribe of Dan, there were disciples at the same time, and very likely a church there; (see Gill on "<4038>Acts 9:38") and it may be observed that the Apostle Peter was the minister of the circumcision, he had the Gospel of the circumcision committed to him, and he continued with and preached much to the circumcised Jews; and so in all likelihood was the instrument of planting the churches in Judea here spoken of. These are said to be

in Christ, as the church at Thessalonica, and that at Corinth are elsewhere said to be; because they professed to believe in Christ, were called by his name, and called upon his name; and though every individual member of them might not be in Christ, really united to him, and have communion with him; yet since they were all under a profession of him, they are considered as in him. The Arabic version reads it, "the churches of Judea which believe in Christ"; which though not a literal translation, gives the true sense of the passage, and distinguishes those churches from the synagogues or assemblies of the Jews which did not believe in Christ.

Ver. 23. *But they had heard only*, etc..] What they knew of the apostle was only by hearsay; they had never seen him, nor heard him preach, nor conversed with him, only had it reported to them;

that he which persecuted us in times past; some few years ago, and not them personally, but such as were of the same faith with them, the church at Jerusalem and the members of it; which he made havoc of, committing men and women to prison, and causing others to flee to strange cities;

now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed; all as in him lay he endeavoured to destroy it, though he could not entirely root it up; he destroyed many of the disciples that held it, and did all he could to discourage others from embracing and professing it; he made use of the strongest arguments he was master of to confute it, and of the secular arm to crush and extirpate it, but now was become a preacher of it: by "faith" is

meant not so much the grace of faith, though to show the nature, necessity, and usefulness of faith in Christ, and to direct and encourage sensible sinners, as he did the jailer, to believe in him, was a principal part of his ministry; but rather the doctrine of faith, which is always designed, when it is said, as here, to be preached or to be obeyed, stood fast in and contended for, or to be departed and erred from, to be made shipwreck of and denied. The Gospel is called the word of faith, the mystery of faith, the faith of the Gospel, common faith, most holy faith, the faith once delivered to the saints; it contains things to be believed; it proposes and directs to the great object of faith; and is the means of implanting and increasing that grace, and without which the ministry of it is of no use: it takes in all articles of faith, respecting the divine Being, the unity of God, the trinity of persons in the Godhead, the equal and proper deity of each person, their personal distinctions from each other, the attribution of all divine works, worship and honour to them; it relates to everything concerning man, in his original creation, in his state of innocence and integrity; concerning the fall of Adam, the imputation of his sin to all his posterity, the corruption of human nature, and the impotence of man to all that is spiritually good: it regards all the acts of grace of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in and towards any of the sons of men: it includes all the doctrines of it, as of the free, sovereign, everlasting, and unchangeable love of God; of eternal, personal, and irrespective election of some to grace and glory, by which both are secured; of the everlasting, absolute, unconditional, and sure covenant of grace; of particular redemption by Christ, proceeding on a full satisfaction to divine justice; of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ; of reconciliation and pardon by his blood; of regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit; of the perseverance of the saints in faith and holiness, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal glory: now this faith, in the several momentous branches of it, the apostle preached, published, declared, spoke out openly and publicly; fully and completely, without dropping, concealing, or keeping back anything; clearly and plainly, without using ambiguous phrases, or words of double meaning, with all faithfulness and integrity, boldness and constancy.

Ver. 24. *And they glorified God in me*.] Or “for me”; on his account; for the wonderful grace bestowed on him and wrought in him; for the surprising change that was made in him, that of a persecutor he should become a preacher, which they ascribed, as he himself did, to the abundant grace of God; they were greatly thankful and blessed God, who had given

him such large gifts, and made him so greatly useful in the cause, and among the churches of Christ. And by observing this, how much the churches in Judea were affected with the grace of God vouchsafed to him, though they had never seen him nor heard him, he tacitly strikes at and rebukes the false teachers, and the Galatians that adhered to them, for their different treatment of him; to whom he was not only known by face, but had preach among them so fully, clearly, and powerfully, the Gospel of the grace of God.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS 2

In this chapter the apostle proceeds with the narrative of himself, and gives an account of another journey of his to Jerusalem, where he had a conversation with the chief of the apostles; in which they approved of his ministry, allowed of his commission, and took him into fellowship with them, but gave him no new instructions, nor added to his spiritual light and knowledge; from whence it appeared that the Gospel he preached was not after men, or received from men, as he had asserted in the preceding chapter; and he also gives an account of his meeting with Peter at Antioch, and how he reproved him for some judaizing practices; which leads him to assert the doctrine of justification by faith, in opposition to the works of the law; which is the grand point he had in view to establish in this epistle, and which he vindicates from the charge of licentiousness. He begins with an account of another journey of his to Jerusalem, the circumstances of which he relates, as the time when, fourteen years ago; the persons he took with him as his companions, Barnabas and Titus, (Galatians 2:1) what moved him to it, a revelation from God; and the business he did when come thither, he communicated the Gospel, and that not to any but to such that were of reputation, and not publicly but privately; his end was, that it might appear how successful he had been in his ministry, and had not laboured in vain, (Galatians 2:2) then follows a narrative of a particular event relating to Titus, who is described as one of his companions, and by his nation, a Greek; and who though an uncircumcised person, yet the apostles and elders at Jerusalem did not oblige him to be circumcised, which showed that they were of the same mind with the apostle in this point, (Galatians 2:3) and the reason of it was because of the false teachers, that they might not give them any handle; who are described by their character, false brethren, by their private manner of getting in among the saints, and by their ends and views, which were to spy out their Christian liberty and bring them into bondage, (Galatians 2:4) to whom the apostle opposed himself, and would not give way for the least space of time; for this end, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with the Gentiles, (Galatians 2:5) and as for the apostles, though they were men

of great character and reputation, nor would the apostle detract from it; yet they added nothing to him, he received nothing from them, (^{Galatians 2:6}) but, on the other hand, partly because they saw that as the Gospel to be preached to the Jews was committed to Peter, so the same Gospel to be preached to the Gentiles was committed to Paul; and partly because of the same efficacy and success in the ministry of the one as in the ministry of the other; as also because they perceived what gifts of grace were bestowed on the apostle; they gave to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, as a token of their mutual agreement, and as being of the same society, (^{Galatians 2:7-9}) nor did they give him and Barnabas anything in charge, but only to remember the poor, to which he was forward enough of himself, (^{Galatians 2:10}) after which follows an account of an opposition made by the apostle to Peter, which was done at Antioch, and to his face, and not without reason, (^{Galatians 2:11}) for whereas some time before he ate with the Gentiles, which was commendable in him, he afterwards declined conversation with them, moved to it by fear of the converted Jews, (^{Galatians 2:12}) and such was the force of his example, that other Jews, who before did not scruple eating with the Gentiles, separated likewise, and even Barnabas himself, Paul's companion, (^{Galatians 2:13}) wherefore seeing this was not walking according to the Gospel of Christ, and with that integrity and uprightness which became such persons, the apostle publicly reproved Peter, and expostulated with him; partly on account of his former conversation with the Gentiles, though he himself was a Jew, and therefore it was absurd and contradictory in him to oblige the Gentiles to live as the Jews did, (^{Galatians 2:14}) and partly on account of the ledge which he and Peter and others who were Jews, and not sinners of the Gentiles, had of the doctrine of justification; that it was not by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ; for to this end they had believed in Christ that they might be justified, not by the one, but by the other; which doctrine is confirmed by a passage referred to in (^{Psalm 149:2} ^{Galatians 2:5,16}) and whereas it might be objected that this doctrine of free justification opened a door to licentiousness, the apostle answers to it by an abhorrence of it, (^{Galatians 2:17}) and by observing that this would build up what he had destroyed, (^{Galatians 2:18}) besides, he argues the contrary from his being dead to the law, that he might live unto God, (^{Galatians 2:19}) and from his crucifixion with Christ, and of the old man with his deeds; and from Christ's living in him, and his living by faith upon him, (^{Galatians 2:20}) and for the further confirmation of the doctrine of justification being by faith, and not by

works, he suggests, were it otherwise, both the grace of God would be frustrated and made void, and the death of Christ be in vain, (⁴⁸⁰²Galatians 2:21).

Ver. 1. *Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem*, etc..] That is, either after it pleased God to call him by his grace, and reveal his Son in him; or rather after he had been at Jerusalem to see Peter, with whom he stayed fifteen days, and then went into Syria and Cilicia; so that it was seventeen years after his conversion that he took this journey to Jerusalem he here speaks of; and he seems to refer to the time when he and Barnabas went from the church at Antioch to the apostles and elders about the question, whether circumcision was necessary to salvation, (⁴⁴⁰¹Acts 15:1,2) which entirely agrees with the account the apostle here gives of this journey, and which he went not alone, but

with Barnabas: and took Titus with me also; Barnabas is mentioned in Luke's account as going with him at this time, but Titus is not; who, though he was not sent by the church, yet the apostle might judge it proper and prudent to take him with him, who was converted by him, was a minister of the Gospel, and continued uncircumcised; and the rather he might choose to have him along with him, partly that he might be confirmed in the faith the apostle had taught him; and partly that he might be a living testimony of the agreement between the apostle's principles and practice; and that having him and Barnabas, he might have a competent number of witnesses to testify to the doctrines he preached, the miracles he wrought, and the success that attended him among the Gentiles; and to relate, upon their return, what passed between him and the elders at Jerusalem; for by the mouth of two or three witnesses everything is established.

Ver. 2. *And I went up by revelation*, etc..] He was not sent for by the apostles at Jerusalem, nor did he go of himself, nor only by the vote of the church at Antioch, but by a divine revelation; not a revelation made to the church, or by the prophets there, but by God himself to him; he had a secret impulse from the Spirit of God, and a private intimation given him, that it was the will of God he should go up at this time; which is no ways inconsistent with his being sent by the church, but served as a confirmation to him, that what they determined was right, and according to the mind of God:

and communicated unto them that Gospel, which I preach among the Gentiles; that self-same Gospel, which he had preached, and still continued to preach to the Gentiles; relating to free and full remission of sin by the blood of Christ, justification by his righteousness without the works of the law, and freedom from all the rituals and bondage of the Mosaic dispensation: for as the Gospel he preached was all of a piece, uniform and consistent, so he did not preach one sort of doctrine to the Gentiles, and another to the Jews; but the very self-same truths which were the subject of his ministry in the Gentile world, which were a crucified Christ, and salvation alone by him, these he communicated, laid before, and exposed unto the consideration of the elders and apostles at Jerusalem; not with a view either to give or receive instructions, but to compare their sentiments and principles together; that so it might appear that there, was an entire harmony and agreement between them; and this he did not publicly, to the whole church, at least at first, and especially the article of Christian liberty, which respects the freedom of the believing Jews, from the yoke of the law; for as yet they were not able to bear this doctrine; they could pretty readily agree that the Gentiles were not obliged to it, but could not think themselves free from it; wherefore the apostle, in great prudence, did not avouch this in the public audience:

but privately to them which were of reputation; or "who seemed to be", i.e. somewhat, very considerable persons; not in their own opinion, or appearance only, but in reality, they seemed to be, and were pillars in the house of God; particularly he means James, Cephas, and John, then in great esteem with the saints, and deservedly honoured and respected by them, they being faithful labourers in the word and doctrine; so the Jewish doctors [f26] call men of great esteem, µybwçj , who "seem to be", or "are accounted of", a word to which the phrase here used answers: these were spiritual men, capable of judging of all spiritual things; men of full age, whose senses were exercised to discern between truth and error; and were very proper persons for the apostle to lay the scheme of his ministry before, and the various truths he insisted on in it: these he met "privately", or "separately", and "singly", as it may be rendered; he either conversed with the apostles alone, and all together, in some private house; or separately, one by one, in their own houses, and there freely and familiarly discoursed with them about the several doctrines of the Gospel; and particularly this, of freedom from the law: his end in it was, as he says,

lest by any means I should run, or had run in vain: which is said, not with regard to himself, as if he had entertained any doubt of the doctrines he had preached, and needed any confirmation in them from them; for he was fully assured of the truth of them, and assured others of the same; or that he questioned the agreement of the apostles with him; or that his faith at all depended on their authority; but with regard to others, and his usefulness among them. The false teachers had insinuated that his doctrine was different from that of the apostles in Jerusalem, and so endeavoured to pervert the Gospel he preached, and overthrow the faith of those that heard him; and could this have been made to appear, it would in all likelihood have rendered, in a great measure, his past labours in vain, and have prevented his future usefulness: some read these words as an interrogation, "do I in any manner run, or have I run in vain?" no; from the account he laid before the church, the elders, and apostles, both in private and in public, (<44150>Acts 15:4,12) it clearly appeared what success attended his ministry, how many seals he had of it, what numbers of souls were converted under it, and how many churches were planted by his means; for by "running" here is not meant the Christian course he ran, in common with other believers, which lies in the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty; but the course of his ministry, which he performed with great activity, application, diligence, and constancy, until he had finished it.

Ver. 3. *But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek*, etc..] There was such an agreement between the apostle, and his fellow apostles at Jerusalem, even about this article of the necessity of circumcision, and other rituals of the law of Moses, to salvation; that Titus, whom he brought along with him, an intimate companion of his in his travels, a fellow labourer with him in the ministry, and now upon the spot, though he was a Gentile, an uncircumcised person, yet even not he

was compelled to be circumcised: the elders did not urge it, or insist upon it, as proper and necessary; they looked upon it as a thing indifferent, left him to his liberty, and made use of no forcible methods to oblige him to it; yea, were of opinion, as Peter and James in the synod declared, that such a yoke ought not to be put upon the necks of the disciples, and that those who turned to God from among the Gentiles, should not be troubled with these things.

Ver. 4. *And that because of false brethren*, etc..] This is the reason why the elders did not insist upon the circumcision of Titus, why he did not

submit to it, and why the apostle would not admit of it: had it been left as a thing indifferent, or had it been moved for in order to satisfy some weak minds, it might have been complied with, as in the case of Timothy; but these men insisted upon it as necessary to salvation; they were sly, artful, designing men; could they have gained their point in such an instance; could they have got such a precedent at such a time, when this matter was canvassing, they would have made great use of it in the Gentile churches, for which reason it was by no means judged proper and expedient. These men are described as "false brethren": they had the name, but not the grace, which entitles to the character of "brethren"; they called themselves Christians, but were in reality Jews: at the head of these, Cerinthus, that arch-heretic, is said [f27] to be. They are further described as such,

who were unawares brought in, who came in privily; into the churches, and into the ministry, into private houses, where the apostles were; or rather into the public synod, where they were convened together about this article of the necessity of circumcision to salvation. Their views, aims, and ends were,

to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus; by which is meant, not a liberty to sin, which is no Christian liberty, is contrary to Christ, to the Spirit of Christ, to the principle of grace in believers, and to the doctrines of the Gospel; but a liberty from sin; not the being of it, but the dominion and damning power of it: that branch of Christian liberty the apostle here chiefly designs is a freedom from the law, both the moral law, as in the hands of Moses, and as a covenant of works, though not from obedience to it as in the hands of Christ, and as a rule of walk and conversation; but from obeying it, in order to obtain life, righteousness, and salvation by it, and from the curse and condemnation of it; and chiefly the ceremonial law, circumcision, and all the other rituals of it, and the free use of all things indifferent, provided the glory of God, and the peace of weak believers, are secured. This liberty is said to be had "in Christ", because Christ is the author of it; it is that with which Christ makes his people free; and such as are made free by him, are free indeed; and is what they come to enjoy by being in him; for by having union to him, they come to partake of all the blessings of grace which come by him, and this among the rest. Now the design of these false teachers getting in privily among the apostles, elders, and brethren, was to make their remarks upon this liberty, to object to it, and, if possible, to break in upon it, and destroy it, and so gain another point, which follows:

that they might bring us into bondage; to the moral law, by directing souls to seek for justification and salvation by the works of it, which necessarily induces a spirit of bondage, genders to a state of bondage and involves in it; and to the ceremonial law, by engaging to an observance of circumcision, that yoke of bondage, and of day, months, times, and years, and other beggarly elements, which naturally lead on to such a state.

Ver. 5. *To whom we gave place by subjection*, etc..] Meaning not the apostles, elders, and brethren at Jerusalem, who did not insist upon the observance of the rituals of the law as necessary, but were one and all of opinion that the Gentiles should be free from them; but the false teachers with whom they combated, and would not yield in the least unto, so as to be brought into subjection to their impositions, nor suffer others to yield unto them:

no, not for an hour; for the least space of time, knowing what advantages and improvements would be made of it, should they allow of the use of these things as necessary for any short time, though it should be agreed then to drop them. This is a way of speaking used by the Jews, when they would express their steady adherence to any principle or practice; of which take the following instance from Gamaliel[f28]:

> "it happened to Rabban Gamaliel, that he read the first night he was married; his disciples said to him, master, hast thou not taught us, that the bridegroom is free from reading the Shema, i.e. "hear, O Israel", etc.. the first night? he replied to them, I will not hearken to you to cause to cease from me the yoke of the kingdom of heaven, tjah[çwlypa, "even one hour"."

The reason why the apostle, and others with him, were so resolute and pertinacious in this matter was,

that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you; with the Galatians in particular, and with all the Gentiles in general, which otherwise would have been in danger of being entirely removed from them, at least of being adulterated and mixed with the Mosaic rites, and the inventions of men; whereas the apostle's desire was, that, the Gospel might be continued with them genuine, sincere, and unmixed, in opposition to the shadows of the law, and the false doctrines of men.

Ver. 6. *But of these, who seemed to be somewhat*, etc..] Not the false brethren, but the Apostles James, Cephas, and John, who were µybwçj, "men of great esteem": high in the opinion of all good men; not that they were looked upon to be more than human, as Simon Magus gave out that he was "some great one", and his followers thought him to be "the great power of God"; for such an extravagant conceit of these men was never entertained; nor were they thought to be something when they were nothing, for they really were somewhat; they were ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of grace; they were the Lord's ambassadors, and the apostles of the Lamb. However, says the apostle,

whatsoever they were; ποτε, "formerly", some time ago, which our version does not so fully express,

it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no man's person. This is said, not by way of slight or contempt, but in vindication of himself, whom the false teachers endeavoured to lessen, by giving high encomiums of the apostles at Jerusalem. It looks as if they had upbraided the apostle with being a persecutor of the church before his conversion, when nothing of such a nature could be laid to the charge of these men, and therefore he was not to be set upon a level with them: to which he may be thought to reply in such manner as this, that as for himself, it is true, he had been an injurious person to the saints; and he was ready to own it, for his own humiliation, and to illustrate the grace of God in his conversion; and as these excellent men, what they were before their conversion, it was no concern of his; though, perhaps, was he disposed to inquire into their characters then, some blemishes might be found therein, as well as in his; but it is not what he and they had been, but what they now were: he could have observed, that they were persons formerly of a very low figure in life, of mean occupations, fishermen by employment, and very illiterate persons, when he was bred a scholar at the feet of Gamaliel; but he chose not to make such observations, he knew that God was no respecter of persons, nor was he influenced by any such external circumstances, but chose whom he pleased to such an high office; and that he, who of fishermen made them apostles, of a persecutor had made him one also. Or these false teachers perhaps had objected to him, that these valuable men had been with Christ from the beginning, were eyewitnesses of his majesty, heard the doctrines of the Gospel from his lips, and saw his miracles, had had a similar conversation with him, when he was a preacher of much later date, and could not pretend to such advantages, and therefore ought not to be

equalled to them: his answer is, that whatever privileges of this kind they had enjoyed, as could not be denied but they were considerable, yet this mattered not, nor did it make any great difference between him and them; he had seen Christ too, though as one born out of due time; had received an immediate commission from him to preach his Gospel, and was appointed an apostle by him as they were, without any respect of persons: and whereas it might have been urged, that these men had entertained different sentiments from him formerly, concerning the observance of the law, he signifies he had nothing to do with that, to their own master they stood, to whom they must give an account, who, without respect of persons, will render to every man according to his works: and, adds he,

for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me; whatever opinions they formerly gave into, in their conversation with him, when he communicated the Gospel he preached to them, they found no fault with it; they did not go about to correct it; nor did they make any addition to it; the scheme of truths he laid before them, which had been the subject of his ministry, was so complete and perfect, containing the whole counsel of God, that they had nothing to add unto it; which shows the agreement between them, that he did not receive his Gospel from them, the perfection of his ministry, and that he was not a whit behind them in knowledge and gifts.

Ver. 7. *But contrariwise, when they saw that the Gospel*, etc..] James, Cephas, and John, were so far from blaming or correcting anything in the apostle's ministry, or adding anything to it, that they highly approved of it; and as a token of their agreement with him and Barnabas, gave them the right hand of fellowship: the reasons of their so doing are inserted here, and in the following verse, and in the next to that: the reason here given is, because

they saw that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the Gospel of the circumcision was to Peter; by “the uncircumcision and circumcision” are meant the Gentiles and Jews; (see Rom 2:26,27 3:30) by the Gospel of the one, and the Gospel of the other, two Gospels are not designed, for there is but one Gospel, and not another. Paul did not preach one Gospel unto the uncircumcised Gentiles, and Peter another to the circumcised Jews; but the same Gospel was preached by both, and is so called with respect to the different persons to whom it was preached by these apostles. The Apostle Paul was ordained a minister of the Gentiles,

and he chiefly preached among them, though not to them only. Peter was principally employed among the Jews, though also as he had opportunity he sometimes preached to the Gentiles: however, the subject of both their ministrations was the Gospel, which is said to be “committed” to them, as a trust deposited in their hands, not by man, but by God; the management of which required both prudence and faithfulness, and which were eminently seen in these good stewards of the mysteries of God. This being observed by the apostles at Jerusalem, they came into an agreement that one part should discharge their ministry among the Gentiles, and the other among the Jews.

Ver. 8. *For he that wrought effectually in Peter*, etc..] The Syriac version renders it, “he who exhorted Peter to”; the Arabic version is, “he who strengthened Peter in”; the Spirit of God is meant, who filled Peter with such eminent gifts, and inspired him with so much zeal and resolution

to the apostleship of circumcision, to discharge his office as an apostle among the Jews; and who wrought by him such wonderful works for the confirmation of it, as curing the man that was lame from his birth, striking Ananias and Sapphira dead for telling lies, and raising Dorcas from the dead, and communicating miraculous gifts by the imposition of his hands; and which same Spirit also made his ministrations effectual to the conversion of a large number of souls, as of three thousand by one sermon.

The same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles. The Spirit of God wrought as effectually in, and by him, as in Peter; filled him with extraordinary gifts for the discharge of his work among the Gentiles, and inspired him with equal zeal, constancy, and intrepidity of mind; wrought as many miracles by him to confirm his mission; such as striking blind Elymas the sorcerer, healing the cripple at Lystra, raising Eutychus from the dead, with many other signs and wonders wrought by him among the Gentiles, through the power of the Spirit of God, whereby they became obedient by word and deed. The same Spirit also accompanied the Gospel preached by him, to the conversion of multitudes, by which means many famous churches were founded and raised among the Gentiles; and this is another reason which induced the apostles at Jerusalem to take Paul and Barnabas into an association with them.

Ver. 9. *And when James, Cephas, and John*, etc..] These are the persons all along designed, though not till now named. James was the brother of our Lord, the son of Alphaeus, who wrote the epistle that goes by his

name, made that famous speech in the synod at Jerusalem, (<44153>Acts 15:13), presided in that church, was a man of great holiness, and much esteemed of by the saints, and had a good report of them that were without. Cephas is Simon Peter. This name was given him by Christ, (<43142>John 1:42) and in the Syriac language signifies a “stone”, as Peter does in the Greek, to which our Lord alludes, (<40168>Matthew 16:18). John was the evangelist, and the same that wrote the epistles, was the beloved disciple, and who outlived all the rest:

who seemed to be pillars; not as the Arabic version, “who thought themselves such”, but were esteemed so by others, and very rightly. They were pillars among the apostles of the highest note and greatest eminence among them; they were the very chief of the apostles; for though they were all in the same office, and had the same commission, and were employed in the same work, yet there were some who made a greater figure than others, as these did, and are therefore called pillars; they were more conspicuous, and to be observed, and taken notice of, than the rest; they were pillars in the church, set in the highest place there, and the ornaments of it; (see <201901>Proverbs 9:1 <660312>Revelation 3:12). They are called so for their constancy and stability in preaching the Gospel, and suffering for the sake of Christ; they were steadfast and immoveable in his work, nor could they be shaken or deterred from it by the menaces, reproaches, and persecutions of men; and they were the means of supporting others that were feeble minded, and of defending and maintaining the truths of the Gospel; and were set, as Jeremiah was, as a defenced city, an iron pillar, and brazen walls against all the enemies of Christ, and his Gospel; and were, as the church is said to be, “the pillar and ground of truth”. The apostle may have respect to the titles of this kind which were bestowed on the Jewish doctors. It is said [f29],

> “when R. Jochanan ben Zaccai was sick, his disciples went in to visit him; and when he saw them, he began to weep; his disciples said to him, lamp of Israel, ynymyh dwm[, “the right hand pillar”, etc.. why dost thou weep?”

So another of their Rabbins is said [f30] to be

> “one of the walls, ydwm[w, “and pillars” of the school.”

The character better agrees with these eminent apostles, who when they

perceived the grace that was given unto me; meaning not so much the grace of the Spirit of God that was wrought in him, or the good work of grace upon his soul, with which the church at Jerusalem, and the apostles there, had been made acquainted some years before; but the grace and high favour of apostleship, which was conferred upon him, and all those extraordinary gifts of grace, whereby he was qualified for the discharge of it; and particularly the efficacy and success of his ministry through the grace of God which went along with it, and was so visible in it:

they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; as a token of a covenant or agreement between them; they took them, as it were, into partnership with them, admitted them as apostles into their society, and gave their full consent, particularly to this article,

that we, Paul and Barnabas,

should go unto the Heathen, preach among the Gentiles;

and they, Peter, and those that were with him,

unto the circumcision, and discharge their office among the Jews; and, to show their joint agreement, used the above rite; and which ceremony was used as among other nations [f31], so with the Jews, when covenants were made, or partnership was entered into; (see Leviticus 6:2) where the phrase, [y tmwçtb, "in putting of the hand", and which we render in fellowship, is, both by Onkelos, and Jonathan ben Uzziel, rendered aky twptwçb, "in fellowship of the hand", or "by the right hand of fellowship"; that being given in token of their agreement and consent to be partners together, to which the allusion seems to be here; or to the making of proselytes, to whom they "stretch out the hand" to bring them under the wings of the Shekinah [f32], or in token of their being proselytes.

Ver. 10. *Only they would that we should remember the poor*, etc..] Not in a spiritual sense, as some have thought, though these the apostle was greatly mindful of; but properly and literally the poor as to the things of this world; and may design the poor in general, everywhere, in the several churches where they should be called to minister, and particularly the poor saints at Jerusalem; who were become such, either through the frequent calamities of the nation, and a dearth or scarcity of provisions among them, and which affected the whole country; or rather through the persecutions of their countrymen, who plundered them of their goods for professing the

name of Christ; or it may be through their having given up all their substance into one common stock and fund, as they did at first, and which was now exhausted, and that in a great measure by assisting out of it the preachers who first spread the Gospel among the Gentiles; so that it was but just that they should make some return unto them, and especially for the spiritual favours they received from them, as the Gospel, and the ministers of it, which first went out of Jerusalem: the "remembering" of them not only intends giving them actual assistance according to their abilities, which was very small, but mentioning their case to the several Gentile churches, and stirring them up to a liberal contribution:

the same which I also was forward to do; as abundantly appears from his epistles to the churches, and especially from his two epistles to the Corinthians. Now since the apostles at Jerusalem desired nothing else but this, and said not a word concerning the observance of the rites and ceremonies of the law, and neither found fault with, nor added to the Gospel the apostle communicated to them, it was a clear case that there was an entire agreement between them, in principle and practice, and that he did not receive his Gospel from them.

Ver. 11. *But when Peter was come to Antioch*, etc..] The Alexandrian copy, and others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, instead of "Peter", read "Cephas", who, by some ancient writers, is said to be not Peter the Apostle, named Cephas by Christ, but one of the seventy disciples. So Clemens [f33] says, that Cephas, of whom Paul speaks, that when he came to Antioch he withstood him to his face, was one of the seventy disciples who had the same name with Peter the Apostle: and Jerom says [f34] that there were some who were of opinion, that Cephas, of whom Paul writes that he withstood him to his face, was not the Apostle Peter, but one of the seventy disciples called by that name: but without any manner of foundation; for the series of the discourse, and the connection of the words, most clearly show, that that same Cephas, or Peter, one of the twelve disciples mentioned, (<480209>Galatians 2:9), with James and John, as pillars, is here meant. Our apostle first takes notice of a visit he made him, three years after his conversion, (<480118>Galatians 1:18), when his stay with him was but fifteen days, and, for what appears, there was then an entire harmony between them; fourteen years after he went up to Jerusalem again, and communicated his Gospel to Peter, and the rest, when they also were perfectly agreed; but now at Antioch there was a dissension between them, which is here related. However, the Papists greedily catch at this, to

secure the infallibility of the bishops of Rome, who pretend to be the successors of Peter, lest, should the apostle appear blameworthy, and to be reproved and opposed, they could not, with any grace, assume a superior character to his: but that Peter the Apostle is here designed is so manifest, that some of their best writers are obliged to own it, and give up the other as a mere conceit. When Peter came to Antioch is not certain; some have thought it was before the council at Jerusalem concerning the necessity of circumcision to salvation, because it is thought that after the decree of that council Peter would never have behaved in such a manner as there related; though it should be observed, that that decree did not concern the Jews, and their freedom from the observance of the law, only the Gentiles; so that Peter and other Jews might, as it is certain they did, notwithstanding that, retain the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses; and according to the series of things, and the order of the account, it seems to be after that council, when Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, and with others continued there for some time, during which time Peter came thither; (see <44150>Acts 15:30,35) and the following contention happened,

I withstood him to the face: not in show, and outward appearance only, as some of the ancients have thought, as if this was an artifice of the apostle's, that the Jews, having an opportunity of hearing what might be said in favour of eating with the Gentiles, might be convinced of the propriety of it, and not be offended with it: but this is to make the apostle guilty of the evil he charges Peter with, namely, dissimulation; no, the opposition was real, and in all faithfulness and integrity; he did not go about as a tale bearer, whisperer, and backbiter, but reproved him to his face, freely spoke his mind to him, boldly resisted him, honestly endeavoured to convince him of his mistake, and to put a stop to his conduct; though he did not withstand him as an enemy, or use him with rudeness and ill manners; or as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and false teachers resist the truth; but as a friend and an apostle, and in an amicable manner, and yet with all uprightness: his reason for it was,

because he was to be blamed; some read it, “was blamed”, or “condemned”, either by others, by the Jews, for his going into Cornelius's house formerly; but what has this to do with the present case? or by those who lately came from James to Antioch, for his eating with the Gentiles there; yet this could be no reason for the apostle's withstanding him, but rather a reason why he should stand by him; or he was condemned by himself, self-condemned, acting contrary to the sentiments of his mind, and

what he had declared in the council at Jerusalem; though it is best to render the word, to be blamed, which shows that the apostle did not oppose him for opposition sake, rashly, and without any foundation; there was a just reason for it, he had done that which was culpable, and for which he was blameworthy; and what that was is mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 12. *For before that certain came from James*, etc..] The Lord's brother, mentioned before with Cephas and John, who resided at Jerusalem, from whence these persons came; and who are said to come from James, because they came from the place and church where he was, though, it may be, not sent by him, nor with his knowledge. They were such as professed faith in Christ; they were "judaizing" Christians believing in Christ, but were zealous of the law. Now before the coming of these persons to Antioch,

he, Peter,

did eat with the Gentiles; which is to be understood, not of eating at the Lord's table with them, but at their own tables: he knew that the distinction of meats was now laid aside, and that nothing was common and unclean of itself, and that every creature of God was good, and not to be refused if received with thankfulness; wherefore he made use of his Christian liberty, and ate such food dressed in such manner as the Gentiles did, without any regard to the laws and ceremonies of the Jews; and in this he did well, for hereby he declared his sense of things, that the ceremonial law was abolished, that not only the Gentiles are not obliged to it, but even the Jews were freed from it, and that the observance of it was far from being necessary to salvation: all which agreed with the preaching and practice of the Apostle Paul, and served greatly to confirm the same, and for this he was to be commended: nor is this mentioned by way of blame, but for the sake of what follows, which was blameworthy:

but when they were come he withdrew and separated himself; not from the church, and the communion of it, for then he had been guilty of schism, but from private conversation with the Gentiles: he did not visit them in their own houses, and sit down at table and eat with them, as he was wont to do; which argued great inconstancy and instability, very unbecoming one that seemed to be, and was a pillar in the church of God, as well as much dissimulation, for he knew better than he acted; his conduct did not agree with the true sentiments of his mind, which he covered and dissembled; and which must be very staggering to the believing Gentiles, to see so great a

man behave in such a manner towards them, as if they were persons not fit to converse with, and as if the observance of Jewish rites and ceremonies was necessary to salvation. What induced him to take such a step was, his

fearing them which were of the circumcision: that is, the circumcised Jews, who professed faith in Christ, and were just now come from Jerusalem; not that he feared any danger from them; that they would abuse his person, or take away his life; but he might either fear he should come under their censure and reproofs, as he formerly had for going to Cornelius, and eating with him and his; or lest that they should be offended with him, and carry back an ill report of him, as not acting up to his character as an apostle of the circumcision. This led him into such a conduct; so true is that of the wise man, that "the fear of man bringeth a snare", (Proverbs 29:25).

Ver. 13. *And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him*, etc..] Not the men that came from James, for they never acted otherwise, and therefore could not be said to dissemble; but the Jews that were members of this church at Antioch from the beginning; or who came along with Paul and Barnabas, and stayed with them there; (see Acts 15:35) and who before had ate with the Gentiles, as Peter; but being under the same fear he was, and influenced by his example, concealed their true sentiments, and acted the very reverse of them, and of their former conduct:

insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation; so good a man as he was, full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost; who had been a companion of the Apostle Paul's in his travels among the Gentiles, had greatly assisted him in preaching the Gospel to them, was a messenger with him at the council in Jerusalem, heard the debates of that assembly, and the issue of them, returned with him to Antioch, and was one with him both in principle and practice; and yet so forcible was the example of Peter, and the other Jews, that, as with a mighty torrent, he was carried away with it, and not able to withstand it; such is the force of example in men who are had in great veneration and esteem: wherefore it becomes all persons, particularly magistrates, masters of families, and ministers of the Gospel, to be careful what examples they set, since men both of grace and sense are much influenced by them.

Ver. 14. *But when I saw that they walked not uprightly*, etc..] Or "did not foot it aright"; or "walked not with a right foot": they halted, as the Jews of old did, between two opinions, being partly for God, and partly for Baal; so these seemed, according to their conduct, to be partly for grace, and

partly for the works of the law; they seemed to be for joining Christ and Moses, and the grace of the Gospel, and the ceremonies of the law together; they did not walk evenly, were in and out, did not make straight paths for their feet, but crooked ones, whereby the lame were turned out of the way; they did not walk in that sincerity, with that uprightness and integrity of soul, they ought to have done:

nor according to the truth of the Gospel; though their moral conversations were as became the Gospel of Christ, yet their Christian conduct was not according to the true, genuine, unmixed Gospel of Christ; which as it excludes all the works of the law, moral or ceremonial, from the business of justification and salvation, so it declares an entire freedom from the yoke of it, both to Jews and Gentiles. Now when, and as soon as this was observed, the apostle, without any delay, lest some bad consequences should follow, thought fit to make head against it, and directly oppose it:

I said unto Peter before them all. The Alexandrian copy, and others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read "Cephas", as before. The reproof was given personally and principally to Peter, though Barnabas and others were concerned with him, because he was the first in it, the chief aggressor, who by his example led on the rest; and this was given publicly before Barnabas, and the other Jews that dissembled with him, and for their sakes as well as his; before the Jews that came from James for their instruction and conviction, and before all the members of the church at Antioch, for the confirmation of such who might be staggered at such conduct; nor was this any breach of the rule of Christ, (⁴⁰Matthew 28:15) for this was a public offence done before all, and in which all were concerned, and therefore to be rebuked in a public manner: and which was done in this expostulatory way,

if thou being a Jew; as Peter was, born of Jewish parents, brought up in the Jews' religion, and was obliged to observe the laws that were given to that people:

livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews; that is, he had done so, he had ate with the Gentiles, and as the Gentiles did, without regarding the laws and ceremonies of the Jews relating to meats and drinks; being better informed by the Spirit of God, that these things were not now obligatory upon him, even though he was a Jew, to whom these laws were formerly made:

why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? he asks him, with what conscience, honour, and integrity, with what consistency with his own principles and former practice, he could compel, not by force, nor, it may be, even by persuasions and exhortations, but by his example, which was very strong and powerful, the Gentiles, to whom these laws were never given, and to observe which they never were obliged; how he could, I say, make use of any means whatever to engage these to comply with Jewish rites and ceremonies. The argument is very strong and nervous; for if he, who was a Jew, thought himself free from this yoke, and had acted accordingly, then a Gentile, upon whom it was never posed, ought not to be entangled with it: and in what he had done, either he had acted right or wrong; if he had acted wrong in eating with the Gentiles, he ought to acknowledge his fault, and return to Judaism; but if right, he ought to proceed, and not by such uneven conduct ensnare the minds of weak believers.

Ver. 15. *We who are Jews by nature*, etc..] I Paul, and you Peter and Barnabas, and the rest of the Jews at Antioch. Some are Jews by grace, in a spiritual sense, as all are that are Christ's, that are true believers in him, that are born again, and have internal principles of grace formed in their souls, of whatsoever nation they be; (see Romans 2:28,29 Revelation 2:9). Others become Jews by being proselytes to the Jewish religion: such were the Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven, that were dwelling at Jerusalem, when the Spirit was poured down on the apostles on the day of Pentecost, (Acts 2:5), but these here spoken of were such as were Jews by birth; they were born so, were descended of Jewish parents, and from their infancy were brought up in the Jewish religion, and under the law of Moses, and in the observance of it:

and not sinners of the Gentiles: µl[h twmwa y[çr, "the wicked of the nations of the world", as the [f35] Jews call them. Not but that the Jews also were sinners both by nature and practice, were involved in the guilt of sin, under the power of it, and defiled with it, as the apostle elsewhere most fully proves: nor is this said with regard to the vain opinion the Jews had of themselves, as very holy and righteous persons, who in their own apprehension needed neither repentance nor remission; and who looked upon the Gentiles as very unholy and unfit for conversation with them: but this more particularly respects that part of the character of the Heathens, that they were without the law, and were under no restraints, but lived in all manner of wickedness, without hope and God in the world, and so were

notorious sinners, filled with all unrighteousness, profligate and abandoned to every evil work, and are therefore called emphatically “sinful men”, (<2407>Luke 24:7). And indeed the word εψνος, Gentiles, among themselves is sometimes used for μερος τι ποςηροτατον, “a certain most wicked part” of Gentiles in a city [f36], and so may here design such who lived the most dissolute lives and conversations, to which the Jews are opposed, who had a written law, and were under a better regulation and discipline. The reason of this description, both in the positive and negative branch of it, is to observe, that since they, the apostles, and others, who were born Jews, and so under the law of Moses, and, until Christ came, were under obligation to observe it, but had now relinquished it, and wholly and alone believed in Christ for righteousness and life; then it was the most unreasonable thing in the world, by any means whatever, to lead the Gentiles, who never were under the law, to an observance of it.

Ver. 16. *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law*, etc..] That is, Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and other believing Jews knew this, and that from the law itself, which requires perfect and sinless obedience, and accuses, holds guilty, and adjudges to condemnation and death for the least failure, both as to matter or manner of duty; and from the prophets, which declare that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God, and who bear witness to the doctrines of remission of sin, and justification by the righteousness of Christ; and from the Gospel, in which this truth is most clearly revealed; and from the illumination of the blessed Spirit, who led them into all truth; and from the revelation of Jesus Christ they were favoured with; and from their own experience, being fully convinced of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the insufficiency of their own righteousness, and of the necessity, suitableness, and fulness of the righteousness of Christ. By “the works of the law” are meant, not only obedience to the ceremonial law, though this is included, but also to the moral law; for it can hardly be thought, that the men the apostle opposes could ever dream of justification by their compliance with the rituals of the ceremonial law if they believed there could be no justification by their obedience to the moral law; for if there is no justification by the latter, there can be none by the former: the words are therefore to be taken in the largest sense, as rejecting all works of the law, of whatsoever kind, from justification in the sight of God; and such works are designed, as are performed by sinful men in and of themselves, otherwise men are justified by the works of the law as performed by Christ in their room and stead, but

not by any as performed by themselves, for at best they are very imperfect, and so cannot justify; they are opposed to the grace of God, to which the justification of a sinner is always ascribed, and therefore cannot be by works; such a scheme would disannul the death of Christ, and promote boasting in men, and indeed is impracticable and impossible:

but by the faith of Jesus Christ; not by that faith, which Christ, as man, had in God, who promised him help, succour, and assistance, and for which he, as man, trusted in him, and exercised faith upon him; but that faith of which he is the object, author, and finisher; and not by that as a cause, for faith has no causal influence on the justification of a sinner; it is not the efficient cause, for it is God that justifies; nor the moving cause, or which induces God to justify any, for that is his own free grace and good will; nor the meritorious or procuring cause, for that is the obedience and bloodshed of Christ; nor is faith the matter of justification; it is not a justifying righteousness; it is a part of sanctification; it is imperfect; as an act it is a man's own, and will not continue for ever in its present form, nature, and use; and is always distinguished from the righteousness of God, by which we are justified, which is perfect, is another's, and will last for ever. Men are not justified by faith, either as an habit, or an act; not by it as an habit or principle, this would be to confound justification and sanctification; nor as an act, for as such it is a man's own, and then justification would be by a man's works, contrary to the Scripture: but faith is to be taken either objectively, as it relates to Christ, the object of it, and his justifying righteousness; or as it is a means of receiving and apprehending Christ's righteousness; the discovery of it is made to faith; that grace discerns the excellency and suitableness of it, approves of it, rejects a man's own, lays hold on this, and rejoices in it:

even we have believed in Jesus Christ; we who are Jews by nature, being fully apprized that there is no justification by the works of the law, but by the righteousness of Christ, received by faith, have quited all confidence in our own works, and are come to Christ, and believe in him, not only as the Messiah, but as the Lord our righteousness:

that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; not that faith, as before observed, has any causal influence on justification. These Jews did not believe in Christ, in order by their believing to procure their justification before God, and acceptance with him, but that they might receive, by faith, this blessing from the Lord in

their own conscience, and enjoy the comfort of it, and all that spiritual peace which results from it, and which they could not find in the works of the law:

for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified; reference seems to be had to (Psalm 143:2) and contains a reason why these believing Jews relinquished Moses in his law, in whom they formerly trusted, and looked to, and depended on for their justification, because that by obedience to the law of works no sinful mortal man can be justified in the sight of God,

Ver. 17. *But if while we seek to be justified by Christ*, etc..] As they did, and not only sought for, but obtained what they sought for, because they sought for it at the hands of Christ, and not as it were by works, but by faith, even a justifying righteousness in him.

We ourselves also are found sinners; that is, either we should be so, were we not to rest here, but seek to join our own works with Christ's righteousness for our justification, and so make Christ the minister of sin, of an imperfect righteousness, which cannot justify, which God forbid should ever be done by us; or we are reckoned sinners by you, judaizing Christians, for leaving the law, and going to Christ for righteousness; and if so, Christ must be the minister of sin, for he has directed and taught us so to do; but God forbid that any such thing should be said of him: or if we are still sinners, and unjustified persons, notwithstanding we seek to Christ to be justified by him, but need the law, and the works of it to justify us, then Christ, instead of being a minister of righteousness, is a minister of the law, the strength of sin, which accuses for it, and is the ministration of condemnation and death on account of it, which God forbid should ever be: or this is an objection of the adversary to the doctrine of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, as if it made void the law, discouraged the performance of good works, opened a door to licentiousness that men might continue sinners, and live as they wish, being under no restraints of the law, or under obligation to obedience it, and by such doctrine make

Christ the minister of sin; who hereby teaches men to live in sin, and in the neglect of duty; to which the apostle answers,

God forbid; as holding such consequences in the utmost abhorrence and detestation; (see Romans 6:1,2,15 7:7).

Ver. 18. *For if I build again the things which I destroyed*, etc..] Which must be understood not of good things, for formerly he destroyed the faith of the Gospel, at least as much as in him lay, and now he built it up, established, and defended it; in doing which he did no evil, or made himself a transgressor, but the reverse; he showed himself a faithful minister of Christ: but of things not lawful, such as the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses, which were now abrogated, and he had declared to be so all over the Gentile world; and therefore should he go about to establish these things as necessary to salvation, or teach men to join the observance of them with Christ's righteousness for justification, then, says he,

I make myself a transgressor: for he could not be otherwise, be the case how it would with respect to the abrogation, or non-abrogation of the law; for if the law was not abolished, then he made himself a transgressor of it; by neglecting it himself, and teaching others to do so; and if it was abolished, then it must be criminal in him to enforce the observance of it as necessary to a sinner's justification before God. Now though the apostle transfers this to himself, and spoke in his own person to decline all invidious reflections and characters; yet he tacitly regards Peter, and his conduct, who had been taught by the vision the abrogation of the ceremonial law, and acted accordingly by conversing and eating with the Gentiles, and had declared that law to be an insupportable yoke of bondage, which the Gentiles were not obliged to come under; and yet now, by his practice and example, built up and established those very things he had before destroyed, and therefore could not exculpate himself, from being a transgressor: or these things may regard sins and immoralities in life and conversation; and the apostle's sense be, that should he, or any other, take encouragement to sin from the doctrine of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, as if he was the author and minister of sin, and allowed persons in it; this would be to establish sin, which the righteousness of Christ justifies from, and engage in a living in sin, to which, by Christ's righteousness, they are dead unto; than which, nothing can be, a greater contradiction, and which must unavoidably make them not only transgressors of the law, by sinning against it, but apostates, as the word παραβατης here used signifies, from the Gospel; such must act quite contrary to the nature, use, and design of the Gospel in general, and this doctrine in particular, which teaches men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and that being dead to sin, they should live unto righteousness.

Ver. 19. *For I through the law am dead to the law*, etc..] The apostle further replies to the objection against the doctrine of justification, being a licentious one, from the end of his, and other believers, being dead to the law: he owns he was dead unto it, not in such sense as not to regard it as a rule of walk and conversation, but so as not to seek for life and righteousness by it, nor to fear its accusations, charges, menaces, curses, and condemnation: he was dead to the moral law as in the hands of Moses, but not as in the hands of Christ; and he was dead to it as a covenant of works, though not as a rule of action, and to the ceremonial law, even as to the observance of it, and much more as necessary to justification and salvation: and so he became "through the law"; that is, either through the law or doctrine of Christ; for the Hebrew word hrwt, to which νομος answers, signifies properly doctrine, and sometimes evangelical doctrine, the Gospel of Christ; (see <230203>Isaiah 2:3 42:4 <450327>Romans 3:27) and then the sense is, that the apostle by the doctrine of grace was taught not to seek for pardon, righteousness, acceptance, life, and salvation, by the works of the law, but in Christ; by the doctrine of the Gospel, which says, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved; he became dead to the law, which says, do this and live: or through the books of the law, and the prophets, the writings of the Old Testament, which are sometimes called the law, he learnt that righteousness and forgiveness of sins were only to be expected from Christ, and not the works of the law; things, though manifested without the law, yet are witnessed to by the law and prophets: or through the law of his mind, the principle of grace formed in his soul, he became dead to the power and influence of the law of works, he being no longer under the bondage of that, but under grace, as a governing principle in his soul: or the word law, here twice used, may signify one and the same law of works; and the meaning be, either that through Christ's fulfilling the law in his room and stead, assuming an holy human nature the law required, and yielding perfect obedience to it, and submitting to the penalty of it, he became dead to it; that is, through the body of Christ, (see <450704>Romans 7:4) and through what he did and suffered in his body to fulfil it; or through the use, experience, and knowledge of the law, when being convinced of sin by it, and seeing the spirituality of it, all his hopes of life were struck dead, and he entirely despaired of ever being justified by it. Now the end of his being dead unto it, delivered from it, and being directed to Christ for righteousness, was, says he,

that I might live unto God; not in sin, in the violation of the law, in neglect and defiance of it, or to himself, or to the lusts of men, but to the will of God revealed in his word, and to his honour and glory; whence it most clearly follows, that though believers are dead to the law, and seek to be justified by Christ alone, yet they do not continue, nor do they desire to continue in sin, or indulge themselves in a vicious course of living, but look upon themselves as under the greater obligation to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

Ver. 20. *I am crucified with Christ*, etc..] Not literally, for so only the two thieves were crucified with him, but mystically; Christ was crucified for him in his room and stead, and so he was crucified with him, and in him, as his head and representative. Christ sustained the persons of all his people, and what he did and suffered was in their name, and on their account, and so they were crucified and suffered with him, as they are said to be buried with him, and to be risen with him, and to sit together in heavenly places in him. Moreover, their old man was crucified with him; when he was crucified, all their sins, the whole body of them, were laid upon him, and he bore them, and bore them away, destroyed and made an end of them; they received their mortal wound by his crucifixion and death, so as never to be able to have any damning power over them; and in consequence of this the affections and lusts are crucified, and the deeds of the body of sin mortified by the Spirit and grace of God, in regeneration and sanctification, so as not to have the dominion over them; the world is crucified to them, and they to the world; and this is another reason proving that justification by Christ is no licentious doctrine. This clause is, in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, put at the end of the preceding verse.

Nevertheless I live; which is to be understood, not of his natural, but of his spiritual life; the life of justification he lived, by faith, on the righteousness of Christ; and the life of sanctification which he had from Christ, by the quickening influences of his Spirit, by virtue of which he walked in newness of life. The believer is a mere paradox, he is dead to the law, and "yet lives" to God; he is crucified with Christ, and yet lives by him; yea, a crucified Christ lives in him.

Yet not I; not the same I as before, but quite another man, a new creature: he did not now live as in his state of unregeneracy, and whilst in Judaism; he was not now Saul the blasphemer, the persecutor, and injurious person; nor did he now live Saul the Pharisee: or the life he had was not of his own

obtaining and procuring; his life of righteousness was not of himself, but Christ; his being quickened, or having principles of life and holiness implanted in him, was not by himself, but by the Spirit; and the holy life and conversation he lived was not owing to himself, to his power and strength, but to the grace of God; or it was not properly himself, or so much he that lived,

but Christ liveth in me: who was not only the author and maintainer of his spiritual life, but the life itself; he was formed in his soul, dwelt in his heart, was united to him, was one with him, whence all vital principles and vital actions sprung, and all the communion and comforts of a spiritual life flowed.

And the life which I now live in the flesh; in the body, whilst in this mortal state, whereby he distinguishes that spiritual life he had from Christ, and through Christ's living in him, both from the natural life of his body, and from that eternal life he expected to live in another world; and which, he says,

I live by the faith of the Son of God; meaning, not that faith which Christ, as man, had, but that of which he is the author and object, by which the just man lives; not upon it, for the believer does not live upon any of his graces, no, not upon faith, but by faith on Christ, the object; looking to him for pardon, righteousness, peace, joy, comfort, every supply of grace, and eternal salvation: which object is described as “the Son of God”; who is truly God, equal with his Father; so that he did not live upon a creature, or forsake the fountain of living waters, but upon the only begotten Son of God, who is full of grace and truth: of whom he further says,

who loved me; before the foundation of the world, from everlasting, prior to his love to him; and freely, without any regard to worth or merit, and though he was a blasphemer and a persecutor; and him personally, and particularly, in a distinguishing manner, of which he had a special knowledge and application by the Spirit of God; and was a reason and argument constraining him, and prevailing on him to live to him who loved him, and died for him, or, as he adds,

and gave himself for me; his whole self, his soul and body, as in union with his divine person, into the hands of justice, and unto death, in his room and stead, as an offering and sacrifice for sin, and which he did freely and voluntarily; and is a strong and full proof of his love to him. Now though

Christ gave his life a ransom for many, and himself for his whole church, and all the members of his mystical body, yet the apostle speaks of this matter as singularly respecting himself, as if almost he was the only person Christ loved and died for; which shows that faith deals with Christ not in a general way, as the Saviour of the world, but with a special regard to a man's self: this is the life of faith; and these considerations of the person, love, and grace of Christ, animate and encourage faith in its exercises on him.

Ver. 21. *I do not frustrate the grace of God*, etc..] Or “cast it away”, as the Vulgate Latin version reads it; or “deny it”, as the Syriac and Arabic; or “despise, reject, and make it void”, as other versions; meaning either the grace of the Son of God in giving himself for him, just mentioned by him; or the particular doctrine of grace, justification, he is speaking of, as proceeding from the grace of God, upon the foot of the righteousness of Christ; or the whole Gospel, all and each of which would be denied, despised, rejected, made null and void, be in vain, fallen and departed from, should justification be sought for by the works of the law: but this the apostle did not do, and therefore did not frustrate the grace of God: which to do would be to act the most ungenerous and ungrateful part to God, and Christ, and to that love and grace which are so largely displayed in the free justification of a sinner.

For if righteousness come by the law; if a justifying righteousness is to be attained unto by the works of the law, or men can be justified by their obedience to it,

then Christ is dead in vain; there was no necessity for his dying: he died without any true reason, or just cause; he died to bring in a righteousness which might have been brought in without his death, and so his blood and life might have been spared, his sufferings and death being entirely unnecessary; which to say is to cast contempt upon the wisdom, love, and grace of God in this matter, and to offer the greatest indignity to the person, character, sufferings, and death of Christ. Wherefore it may be strongly concluded, that there is no righteousness by the law of works, nor to be attained that way, otherwise Christ had never died; and that justification is solely and alone by his righteousness.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS 3

In this chapter the apostle reproves the Galatians for their disobedience to the Gospel, and departure from it; confirms the doctrine of justification by faith, by various arguments; shows the use of the law, and the abrogation of it, and makes mention of several privileges which belong to believers in Christ. He begins with a sharp reproof of the Galatians, and represents them as foolish and bewitched, and charges them with disobedience to the truth of the Gospel, which is aggravated by the clearness of the Gospel ministry, in which a crucified Christ, and justification by him, had been so evidently set before them, (Galatians 3:1), and by the fruit and effect of it, they having received the Spirit by it, and not by the preaching of the law of works, (Galatians 3:2) and it still increased their folly, that whereas they had begun with the Spirit of God, and set out in a dependence on him and his grace, they seemed now as if they would end in a carnal and legal way, (Galatians 3:3). To which is added, the consideration of their having suffered many things for the sake of the Gospel, which must be suffered in vain should they relinquish the Gospel, though the apostle hoped otherwise of them, (Galatians 3:4), nay, they had not only received through the preaching of the Gospel the Spirit, and his graces, but even extraordinary gifts attended it, for the confirmation of it, (Galatians 3:5), so that this case of theirs was a very aggravated one, and they were guilty of great folly and madness: from hence the apostle passes to the main thing in dispute, the great truth of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, which these persons were departing from, and which he establishes by several arguments; and first from the instance and example of Abraham, who was justified by faith, as appears from that which he believed, being imputed to him as his justifying righteousness, (Galatians 3:6), and as many as are believers in Christ are his spiritual children, and so undoubtedly are justified the same way their father was, (Galatians 3:7), and particularly that the Gentiles are justified by faith is clear from the preaching of the Gospel to Abraham, and the promise made unto him, that in his seed all nations should be blessed; that is, with the blessing of justification, (Galatians 3:8). The conclusion of which

instance and example is, that as faithful Abraham was blessed with a justifying righteousness through faith, so all that believe are blessed along with him with the same blessing, (Galatians 3:9), and that no man can be justified by the works of the law is certain, since the law is so far from justifying any on account of obedience to it, that it pronounces a curse upon all that do not perfectly and constantly fulfil it, (Galatians 3:10). And this is still further evident from a passage in the prophecy of (Habakkuk 2:4) which declares, that the just live by faith, or that those who are truly righteous are such who are justified by it, (Galatians 3:11). And this is illustrated by the law and faith being contrary; for if a just man lives by faith, then not by the law, for the law does not direct a man to believe, but to work, and to live by his works, (Galatians 3:12). And the apostle having spoken of the law as a cursing law, takes the opportunity of showing how believers are delivered from the curse of it, which is done by Christ's being made a curse for them; and that he was, appears from his being crucified and hanged on a tree; the ends of which were, that the same blessing of justification Abraham had, might come upon the Gentiles through Christ, and that they might by faith receive the promise of the Spirit, (Galatians 3:13,14) so that it is clear from hence, that the blessing of justification is through Christ's being made a curse, and is received by faith, and is not by the works of the law. The apostle next argues from the inheritance being by covenant, testament, or promise, and therefore not by the law: he observes, that a man's covenant or testament, when confirmed, can neither be disannulled, nor have anything added to it, and much less can the covenant or testament of God, confirmed of him in Christ, be disannulled by the law, or the promise in it be made of none effect by that which was several hundred years after a declaration of it to Abraham, to whom, and to whose seed, the promises were made; so that it unavoidably follows, that since the inheritance or blessing of life is by promise, as is clear from its being given to Abraham by promise, then it is not of the law, (Galatians 3:15-18). And whereas an objection might arise, if this be the case, of what use and service can the law be? to what purpose, or for what end, was that given? The apostle answers, that it was added because of transgressions; and that it was to endure until Christ should come, to whom the promise was made; and accordingly it was published in a very grand and solemn manner by angels, and was put into the hands of a mediator, Moses, who stood between God as one party, and the people of Israel as another, (Galatians 3:19,20). Moreover, as it might be further objected, that, according to this way of reasoning, the law

is against the promises; the apostle replies in a way of detestation and abhorrence of any such thing, and by an argument from the insufficiency of the law to justify, since it cannot give life, (<4021>Galatians 3:21). And then proceeds to point out another use of the law, which is to conclude men under sin, or convince men of it, that they, seeing their need of righteousness and life by Christ might receive the promise of it through faith in him (<4022>Galatians 3:22), and so far were men from being justified by the law under the former dispensation, that they were kept under it as in a garrison, and shut up in it as in a prison, until Christ, the object of faith, was revealed, and released them, (<4023>Galatians 3:23), and was moreover as a rigid and severe schoolmaster; and so it continued until the times of Christ; and these therefore being the uses of the law, it is a clear case that justification is by faith, and not by that, (<4024>Galatians 3:24). Besides, Christ being now come, the Jews themselves are no more under this law as a schoolmaster; it is now abolished, and therefore there is no justification by it, (<4025>Galatians 3:25). And that this is the case of true believers in Christ is evident, because such are the children of God, and are taught and led by the Spirit of God, and are free, and not under the law as a schoolmaster, (<4026>Galatians 3:26). Besides, as they are baptized into Christ, they have put him on, as the Lord their righteousness, and so profess to be justified by him, and him only, (<4027>Galatians 3:27), and these, let them be of what nation, sex, state, and condition soever, are all one in Christ, and are all justified in one and the same way; and being Christ's they are Abraham's spiritual seed, and so heirs of the same promise of righteousness and life as he, (<4028>Galatians 3:28,29).

Ver. 1. *O foolish Galatians*, etc..] Referring not to any national character, as some have thought, by which they were distinguished from others for their rudeness in knowledge, their ignorance and folly, as the Cretians for their lying, etc.. nor to their former state in unregeneracy, it being common to all men, to God's elect themselves, before conversion, to be foolish in a moral and spiritual sense; but to their present stupidity about the article of justification, it being an instance of most egregious folly to leave Christ for Moses, the Gospel for the law, and the doctrine of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, which brings so much solid peace and comfort with it, for the doctrine of justification, by the works of the law, which naturally leads to bondage. Now this was said, not rashly, nor in anger, or on purpose to reproach and provoke, and so not at all contrary to (<4052>Matthew 5:22) but in like manner as Christ said to his disciples, “O

fools, and slow of heart to believe", etc.. (Luke 24:25). So the apostle here, as pitying the Galatians, grieved for them, and as one surprised and astonished that ever people of such light, that had had the Gospel so clearly preached to them, should ever give into such a notion.

Who hath bewitched you? some false teacher or another had, or it cannot be conceived how their heads should ever have been turned this way; which must be understood, not in a literal and proper sense, as Simon Magus bewitched the people of Samaria with his sorceries, but in a figurative and improper one; that as sorcerers and enchanters cast a mist before people's eyes, or, by some evil arts or juggling tricks, deceive their sight, and make objects seem to appear which do not, or in a different form than they really do, so these deceitful workers, who had transformed themselves into the apostles of Christ, as Satan sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light, had set this doctrine in a false light before them, thereby to corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ. Though the apostle reproves the Galatians for their folly and weakness in giving in so easily to such deceptions, yet he imputes the chief fault unto, and lays the greatest blame on the false teachers; whom he represents as sorcerers and enchanters, and their doctrine, particularly that of justification by works, as witchcraft; it being pleasing to men, a gratifying of carnal reason, and operating as a charm upon the pride of human nature. What Samuel said to Saul, (1 Samuel 15:22,23) may be applied to the present case, "to obey" the truth "is better than sacrifice", than all the rituals of the ceremonial law: "and to hearken" to the Gospel of Christ, "than the fat of rams", or any of the legal institutions; "for rebellion" against, and opposition to any of the doctrines of the Gospel, and especially to this of justification by the righteousness of Christ, "is as the sin of witchcraft". The Greek word, βασκανω, signifies "to envy", and hence, "to bewitch"; because the mischief, by witchcrafts, generally proceeds from envy; and so the Syriac version, which the Arabic follows, renders it, ˆwkb µsj wnm, "who hath envied you", which suggests this sense, that the false apostles envying their light and knowledge in the Gospel, their faith, peace, comfort, and happiness, had endeavoured to introduce another doctrine among them, subversive of all this.

That ye should not obey the truth. This clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in some others, and in the Syriac version. By "the truth" is meant, either the whole Gospel, often so called, in opposition to the law, and the types and shadows of it; and because it is contained in the

Scriptures of truth, and comes from the God of truth; the substance of it is Christ, who is the truth, and is what the Spirit of truth leads into; or else particularly the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, which is the truth the apostle is establishing, and these Galatians seemed to be going off from, through the artful insinuations of the false teachers. Formerly these people had not only heard this truth, but embraced it: they received the love of it, were strongly affected to it, and firmly believed but now they began to hesitate and doubt about it; they were not so fully persuaded of it as heretofore; they seemed ready to let it go, at least did not hold it fast, and the profession of it, without wavering as before; they were fallen from some degree of the steadfastness of their faith in, and of the obedience of it to this truth, which is what was the design of the false apostles, and is here charged upon the Galatians. The aggravations of which follow in this, and in some subsequent verses,

before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth; meaning in the ministry of the Gospel, in the clear preaching of it by the apostle; Jesus Christ was the sum and substance of his ministry, in which he was set forth and described, and, as it were, painted to the life by him; the glories and excellencies of his divine person, the nature of his office, as Mediator, the suitableness of him as a Saviour, the fulness of his grace, the efficacy of his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness, were so fully, and in such a lively manner expressed, that it was as if Christ was personally and visibly present with them; yea, he was so described in his sufferings and death, as hanging, bleeding, dying on the accursed tree, that he seemed to be as it were, as the apostle adds,

crucified among you: for this cannot be understood literally, for he was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem; nor does it respect the sin of the Galatians in departing from the Gospel, as if that was a crucifying of him again, and a putting him to open shame; nor their sufferings for the sake of Christ, as if he, in that sense, was crucified in them, and with them: but it intends the clear Gospel revelation of a crucified Christ, in the preaching of him by the apostle, which was such that no picture, no image, no crucifix would come up to, and which, where such preaching is, are altogether vain and needless; and the clear view these saints had, by faith, in the glass of the Gospel of Christ, and him crucified, which so realized the object, as if it was present and before the natural eye. Now this was an aggravation of their weakness and folly, that after such clear preaching, and clear sight,

they had of the Gospel, and of Christ in it, that they should in the least degree depart from it.

Ver. 2. *This one thing would I learn of you*, etc..] Though there were many things he could have put to them, yet he would only ask this one question, which, if rightly attended to, and honestly answered, must expose their folly, and put an end to the controversy upon this head:

received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? This question supposes they had received the Spirit; that is, the Spirit of God, as a spirit of wisdom and knowledge in the revelation of Christ; as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification; as a spirit of faith and adoption; and as the earnest, seal, and pledge of their future glory. Now the apostle asks, whether they received this Spirit "by the works of the law"; meaning, either whether they could imagine, that they by their obedience to the law had merited and procured the Spirit of God; or whether they thought that the Spirit came to them, and into their hearts, through the doctrine or preaching of the law: the former could not be true, for if they could not obtain righteousness and life by the works of the law, then not the Spirit; besides, works done without the Spirit of God, are not properly good works: not the latter, for though by the law is the knowledge of sin, yet this leaves nothing but a sense of wrath and damnation in the conscience; it is the killing letter, and a ministration of condemnation and death, and not of the Spirit, and of life; this belongs to the Gospel, "or the hearing of faith"; for by "faith", is meant the Gospel, and particularly the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness; and by "the hearing" of it, the preaching of it, the report of it, (Isaiah 53:1) which, in the Hebrew text, is wnt[mç, "our hearing", that by which the Gospel is heard and understood. Now in this way the Spirit of God is received; while the Gospel is preaching he falls on them that hear it, conveys himself into their hearts, and begets them again by the word of truth: and in this way the Galatians came by the Spirit, and which is another aggravation of their folly, that they should enjoy so great an advantage by the Gospel, and yet be so easily removed from it.

Ver. 3. *Are ye so foolish*? etc..] Is it possible you should be so stupid? and do you, or can you continue so?

having begun in the Spirit; that is, either in the Spirit of God, whom they had received through the preaching of the Gospel. They set out in a

profession of religion in the light, under the influence, and by the assistance of the Spirit; they began to worship the Lord in spirit, and in truth, without any confidence in the flesh; they entered upon the service of God, and a newness of life, a different conversation than before, a spiritual way of living in a dependence on the grace and help of the divine Spirit: or in the Gospel, which is the Spirit that gives life, is the ministration of the Spirit of God, and contains spiritual doctrines, and gives an account of spiritual blessings, and is attended with the Holy Ghost, and with power. This was first preached unto them, and they embraced it; this they begun and set out with in their Christian profession, and yet it looked as if they sought to end with something else:

are you now made perfect by the flesh? or "in" it; not in carnality, in the lusts of the flesh, as if they now walked and lived after the flesh, in a carnal, dissolute, wicked course of life; for the apostle is not charging them with immoralities, but complaining of their principles: wherefore, by "the flesh" is meant, either the strength of mere nature, in opposition to the Spirit of God, by which they endeavoured to perform obedience to the law; or else the law itself, in distinction from the Gospel; and particularly the ceremonial law, the law of a carnal commandment, and which consisted of carnal ordinances, and only sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; and also their obedience to it; yea, even all their own righteousness, the best of it, which is but flesh, merely external, weak, and insufficient to justify before God. This is a third aggravation of their folly, that whereas they begun their Christian race depending upon the Spirit and grace of God, now they seemed to be taking a step as if they thought to finish it in the mere strength of nature; and whereas they set out with the clear Gospel of Christ, and sought for justification only by his righteousness, they were now verging to the law, and seeking to make their justifying righteousness perfect, by joining the works of the law unto it, which needed them not, but was perfect without them.

Ver. 4. *Have ye suffered so many things in vain*? etc..] These Galatians had suffered great reproach, many afflictions and persecutions for the sake of the Gospel, as all that embrace it must expect to do; and which to them that persevere in the faith of the Gospel will not be in vain, they will be followed with eternal life and glory; not that these things are meritorious of such happiness, or deserve such a reward; the reward of them is not of debt, but of grace. But, if such who have made a profession, and have suffered for it, should after all relinquish it, their sufferings for it are in

vain; they will come short of that glory which is promised to them that suffer for righteousness sake: and this is another aggravation of the folly of these persons, that they should suffer so much persecution for the Gospel, which, if not true, they must have suffered in vain, and might as well have avoided it; and, if true, by relinquishing it not only sustain a great loss, but bring great hurt and damage to themselves:

if it be yet in vain; by which words the apostle does, as it were, correct himself, and expresses his hope of them, that they would see their mistake, revoke their error, and abide by the truth of the Gospel.

Ver. 5. *He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit*, etc..] By whom he means not himself, nor any other minister of the Gospel, in whose power it does not lie to minister the Spirit, either the ordinary or the extraordinary gifts of it unto men; but either God or Christ who had ministered, and still continued to minister the grace of the Spirit through the preaching of the Gospel; or rather the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which were manifested at the first preaching of the Gospel to them for the confirmation of it, and which they were still supplied with, as the following words show:

and worketh miracles among you; so that this is a distinct argument from that in (Galatians 3:2) and a further proof and aggravation of the folly and stupidity of the members of this church, who had not only received through the Gospel the Spirit, as a spirit of regeneration, at least many of them, but had seen the Gospel confirmed by the extraordinary gifts, signs, and wonders of the Holy Ghost, and which were still among them; and yet they were departing from this Gospel, through which all this was done: for it is asked,

doth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? and the apostle's meaning is, that these extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and these miracles done among them, did not attend the preaching of the law, or the doctrine of justification by works, taught by the false apostles, but the doctrine of faith, of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, delivered by him and others, for the truth of which he appeals to themselves; and therefore they must be guilty of the most egregious folly, once to think of, or take anyone step towards a departure from that doctrine. The Alexandrian copy reads here, as in (Galatians 3:2), “received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?”

Ver. 6. *Even as Abraham believed God*, etc..] The apostle having observed, that the special grace and extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were received not through the preaching of the law, but through the doctrine of faith; by an easy transition, passes on to a further confirmation of the doctrine of justification by faith, by producing the instance of Abraham, what the Scripture says of him, and the promise made unto him; which is very appropriate to his purpose, since Abraham was certainly a righteous man, the first of the circumcision, and the head of the Jewish nation; and whom the false teachers much gloried in, and boasted of their being his seed, and of being circumcised as he was; and would fain have persuaded the Gentiles to the same practice, in imitation of him, and as necessary to their justification before God; whereas the apostle here shows, referring to (<01506>Genesis 15:6) that Abraham was justified by faith, and not by any works whatever, much less by circumcision; for what he here refers to, was many years before his circumcision; and since therefore he was a justified person, declared to be so, before it and without it, it was not necessary to his justification, nor is it to any other person's: he

believed God. The object of faith is God, Father, Son, and Spirit; here Jehovah the Son seems principally intended, who in (<01501>Genesis 15:1) is called the “Word of the Lord”; the essential Word, who was with God from everlasting, and was God, and in the fulness of time was made flesh and dwelt among men; and “Abraham's shield”, the same the apostle in (<49616>Ephesians 6:16) calls “the shield of faith”; meaning not the grace of faith, but Christ the object of faith; which faith lays hold on, and makes use of as a shield against the temptations of Satan: and also his “exceeding great reward”; his all in all, being made to him, as to all believers, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: him he believed, not only that he was God, but he believed his word of promise, and in his power and faithfulness to fulfil it; which regarded not only his natural offspring, and a numerous race, the enjoyment of the land of Canaan, and many temporal good things in it, but the Messiah, and spiritual blessings in him: he “believed in the Lord”, (<01506>Genesis 15:6) in Jehovah the Word, in him as his shield, and exceeding great reward, in him as the Lord his righteousness:

and it was accounted to him for righteousness; that is, by God, whom he believed; for the sense is, not that Abraham ascribed righteousness to God, and celebrated his justice and faithfulness, as some; nor, as others, that Abraham was accounted a righteous man by the world; but that something

was accounted by God to Abraham as his righteousness, which could not be the act of his faith; for faith is not a man's righteousness, neither in whole nor in part; faith and righteousness are two distinct things, and are often distinguished one from another in Scripture: besides, that which was accounted to Abraham for righteousness, is imputed to others also; (see <4023>Romans 4:23,24) which can never be true of the act of his faith; but is of the object of it, the word of the Lord, his shield and exceeding great reward, the Lord his righteousness and strength, who is made or accounted, as to him, so to others, righteousness. The righteousness of Christ, whom he believed in, was accounted to him as his justifying righteousness now for faith to be accounted for righteousness, is all one as to be justified by faith; that is, by Christ, or by his righteousness imputed and received by faith; and if Abraham was justified this way, as he was, the apostle has his argument against the false teachers.

Ver. 7. *Know ye therefore*, etc..] Or “ye know”; this is a thing known by you, at least may, or should be; it ought not to be contradicted or disputed, it is so plain a case, and so clear a point:

that they which are of faith; of the faith of Abraham, as in (<4016>Romans 4:16) have the same faith as he had, for nature and kind; though it may not be to the same degree, yet exercised on the same object, Jehovah the Word, the Lord our righteousness, and wrought by the same Spirit; or who are of the faith of Christ, believers in him with all their hearts, and for themselves; who look to him for righteousness and life, who seek for justification by his righteousness, and trust in him alone for it, and not in the works of the law:

the same are the children of Abraham; his spiritual seed, though they may not be his natural offspring; for he is the father of all that believe, whether of the circumcision or the uncircumcision, and of none else in a spiritual sense: in this the apostle strikes at the false teachers, who boasted of their being the seed of Abraham, his natural descendants, which they might be, and yet not his spiritual children; for none are such, but they that are of faith, or seek for righteousness by faith; not they that are of the law, or seek for justification by the works of it, and so not heirs of the blessing; were they, faith would be made void, and the promise of none effect, (<4514>Romans 5:14) and his view herein is to prove, that the Gentiles, who believe, are the true seed of Abraham, the children of the promise, those in many nations, he was promised to be the father of; and his further view is

to observe, that as the father of the faithful was justified, so are all his children; and that as he was justified by faith, so are they.

Ver. 8. *And the Scripture foreseeing*, etc..] This seems to agree with the Jewish forms or citing passages of Scripture, bwtkh har hm, "what does the Scripture foresee?" and hrwt htar hm, [f37] "what does the law foresee?" The Scripture here, by a "prosopopeia", is represented as foreseeing an event that would come to pass, and accordingly spoke of it before hand, and designs God the author of the Scripture; and so the Syriac version renders it, "for seeing" ahla [dy µdqd, "that God" foreknew, etc.. and means either the Holy Spirit, who searches the deep things of God, is privy to all his counsels and decrees, and to this of the justification of the Gentiles; or God the Father, who justifies the uncircumcision through faith, according to his own provision and predetermination of it, before the world was; for he was in Christ, reconciling the world, his elect among the Gentiles, from all eternity; when he resolved not to impute their sins to them, but to his Son, who engaged to be their surety: or rather the Son of God, since he was the preacher of this to Abraham; who lay in the bosom of the Father, and was not only acquainted with all his purposes and determinations, but entered into a covenant with him, for, and on the behalf of the people, the chosen ones, among the Gentiles as well as Jews; and undertook to bring in a righteousness for them, by which, being received by faith, they should evidentially, manifestly, in the court of their own consciences, be justified: wherefore the wisdom of God, the eternal Logos, having such a certain foresight, both as God and as Mediator, concerned in the covenant of grace for his people,

that God would justify the Heathen through faith: that is, that whereas a righteousness would be wrought out, and brought in, for the justification of all God's elect, and the doctrine of it be preached among the Gentiles, to whom faith would be given to lay hold on, and receive this righteousness, God would hereby, and hereupon pronounce the sentence of justification in the court of conscience; from whence follow peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; the Scripture, the author, and substance of it, God the Word,

preached before, the Gospel unto Abraham; for not to the Father or the Spirit, as to the Son, can preaching be so well ascribed: Christ was the first preacher of the Gospel that ever was; he first preached it to Adam and Eve in the garden, and afterwards to Abraham: it was Gospel, it was good news to him, that the Messiah should spring from him, and all nations be blessed

in him; he rejoiced at it, and by faith saw Christ's day and was glad and particularly that part of the Gospel, and which is a principal part of it, justification by faith; and that, as it concerned the Gentiles, was preached unto him; and before his circumcision, of which that was a sign and seal, namely, that the righteousness of faith should be upon the uncircumcised Gentiles; and before the law of works was given on Mount Sinai, and long before the doctrine of justification by faith was preached unto the Gentiles, and they enjoyed the comfort of it; which shows this to be the Gospel, and to be no new doctrine, nor different from what was so early taught; the sum and substance of which lies in these words, "in thee shall all nations be blessed"; the passage referred to, is in (<01203>Genesis 12:3) and is repeated (<01818>Genesis 18:18) and in <01228>*Genesis 22:18* is thus expressed,

in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; which shows, that this is not to be understood of Abraham personally, but of his seed; and which cannot intend Isaac, the immediate seed of Abraham, in whom it was never verified; and besides, is carried down to his seed, (<01204>Genesis 26:4) as not terminating in him; and for the same reason it cannot design Jacob, the immediate seed of Isaac; (see <01814>Genesis 28:14) nor the whole body of the Jews, the posterity of Jacob, in whom it never had its completion; for when and how have the nations of the earth been blessed in them? either whilst in their own land, when they would have no conversation with them, neither on a civil or sacred account, unless they conformed to their rites; or since their dispersion, so far from it, that their name is used by way of reproach, and as a proverb, a taunt, and a curse everywhere; but it is to be understood of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the son of Abraham, took upon him the seed of Abraham, and to whom it is applied, (<480316>Galatians 3:16) as by the Apostle Peter, (<440325>Acts 3:25,26). The phrase being "blessed in" him, does not signify a blessing of themselves or others, or a proverbial expression that should be used among the Gentiles, "God bless thee as Abraham, or the God of Abraham bless thee, or God bless you as he did the Israelites, or seed of Abraham"; for no one instance can be produced of the nations of the world ever using such a form of blessing; no history, sacred or profane, makes mention that these, or any other Jewish forms of blessing, were ever used among the Gentiles: but here it designs blessings in Christ, and not temporal, but spiritual ones, even all spiritual blessings; as redemption, reconciliation, peace, pardon, adoption, sanctification, and eternal life, and particularly justification; this is the blessedness more especially intended, which comes not upon the

circumcision only, but the uncircumcision also; and they that partake of this are blessed indeed; for they are justified from all sin, are free from condemnation, secure from the wrath of God, have a title to eternal life, and shall certainly be glorified: and when it is said that “all nations” shall be thus blessed, the meaning is, not that every individual of all nations shall enjoy this happiness, for all are not in Christ, nor have his righteousness imputed to them, nor have faith in him, there are many that will be condemned with the world; but some of all nations, that God will have saved, and Christ has redeemed by his blood; and these are the many he justifies, even all the elect of God, in the various nations of the world.

Ver. 9. *So then they which be of faith*, etc..] This is the apostle's conclusion upon the whole, from the instance of Abraham, and, the promise made to him; and is an explanation of the preceding clause, and shows that it must be taken in a limited sense, and understood not of every individual; only of those who are of the same faith with Abraham, are believers in Christ, and seek for justification by faith in him, and not by the works of the law:

these are blessed with faithful Abraham; in his seed Christ; they are blessed with a justifying righteousness in Christ as he was, and will be blessed with eternal life as he is; they shall sit with him, and with Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. The character of “faithful” given to him, respects not his uprightness and integrity among men, but his faith in God; and does not suppose that he was blessed for his faith, but that it was through faith that he received the blessing of justification, and not by the works of the law; and that in the same way, all that believe enjoy the same favour, for to them it is limited and restrained: nor can the Jews of all men find fault with this interpretation of the apostle's, since they themselves interpret the above clause of some particular persons of the nations of the world, and say in so many words, that

> “the meaning is, not that all the men of the world should be blessed, but that every family that is in the world, wtnwmaw wt[mçml brqttç, “that comes to the obedience and faith of him” (God,) to it shall adhere the blessing and providence. [f38]”

Ver. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law*, etc..] The apostle does not say, “as many as were of the law”, to whom it belonged, who were born and brought up in it, and to whom it was given, the Jews; for

there were some of them who believed in Christ, were blessed with Abraham, and not under the curse of the law; nor does he say, “as many as do the works of the law”: for the works of the law are to be done, though not in order to obtain righteousness and life by them; yet it is not the doing of them, but the not doing of them, that entails the curse on men: his meaning is, that as many as seek for justification by the works of the law, and trust in their own righteousness for acceptance with God, these are so far from being blessed or justified hereby, that they

are under the curse, that is, of the law; they are under its sentence of condemnation and death, they are deserving of, and liable to the second death, eternal death, the wrath of God, here meant by the curse; to which they are exposed, and which will light upon them, for aught their righteousness can do for them; for trusting in their works, they are trusting in the flesh, and so bring down upon themselves the curse threatened to the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm; not only that trusts in a man of flesh and blood, but in the works of man; his own, or any other mere creature's: besides, by so doing, he rejects Christ and his righteousness, whereby only is deliverance from the curse of the law; nor is it possible by his present obedience to the law, be it ever so good, that he can remove the guilt of former transgressions, and free himself from obligation to punishment for them: nor is it practicable for fallen man to fulfil the law of works, and if he fails but in one point, he is guilty of all, and is so pronounced by the law; and he stands before God convicted, his mouth stopped, and he condemned and cursed by that law he seeks for righteousness by the deeds of:

for it is written, (Deuteronomy 27:26)

cursed is everyone that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. The law requires doing; it is not content with mere theory without practice; it is not enough to know it, or hear it, it must be done. The Jews boasted of their knowledge, and trusted much to the hearing of it read every sabbath day; but not those who had a form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law, or were hearers of it, were just before God, but the doers of it are justified; and it requires perfect obedience, an observance of all things contained in it, which can never be performed by fallen man. The Jews pretend [f39], that Abraham their Father hlwk hrwth lk µyyq, “fulfilled all the whole law”; and the same they say [f40] of the Israelites in common, than which nothing is more untrue; for

in many things all men offend: moreover, the law requires constant perfect obedience; not only that a man should do all things commanded in it, but that he should continue to do them from his infancy, to the day of his death; and in failure hereof, it pronounces every man cursed, without any respect to persons, or any regard to pleas, taken from the infirmity of human nature, the sincerity of the heart, or repentance for transgressions. It should be observed, that the word “all” is not in the Hebrew text, in (Deuteronomy 27:26), but is manifestly implied, an indefinite proposition being equal to an universal one; and agreeably to the true sense of the words, it is inserted by the apostle here, as it is in the Septuagint and Samaritan versions there; and perfectly accords with the sense of the best interpreters among the Jews; one of them has this gloss upon the words [f41], hlwk hrwth lk ta llkˆak, “here he (Moses) comprehends all the whole law”; and another [f42] says the same thing, almost in the same words; this

> “(says he) includes all the commandments which are in the law: and the note of a third is [f43], there are some that say, this is to be understood hrwth lk l[“of the whole law”; and there are others that say, it is to be understood of those things that are mentioned (above), but they say nothing, for it is written “to do them”; and it is right in my eyes, that he curses for the negative commands mentioned, and he curses him who does not keep even secretly the affirmative precepts, wherefore he says “to do them”:”

to which may be added, the observation of another of them [f44] that these words intimate, that a man ought to honour the law, hç[mbw rwbydbw hbçhmb, “in thought, and word, and in deed”: nor should this be thought to be too severe, that the law of God curses men for nonperformance of the whole. The Athenians [f45] formerly condemned persons as guilty, though they had not broke the whole law, yet if they had transgressed but one syllable of it: upon the whole it is a clear point, that there can be no justification by the works of the law, since it curses in case of want of perfect and constant obedience to it.

Ver. 11. *But that no man is justified*, etc..] There are some that are justified, as all God's elect are, in his own mind and will from eternity; which will of his to justify them, upon the righteousness of his Son, undertook by him to bring in, is their justification in the court of heaven;

and all that believe in Christ are openly and manifestly justified in the court of conscience, under the testimony of the Spirit of God: but no one is justified

by the law; it is in the Greek text, “in the law”; there were many justified before the law was given, as Noah, Job, Abraham, and all the Ante-Mosaic believers; and there were many justified “in”, or under the legal dispensation; but none of them were justified by their obedience to the law, but by the righteousness they believed they had in the Lord: especially no man is justified

in the sight of God; who sees the heart, knows the spring of actions, and whose judgment is according to truth; that is, by the law and the deeds of it, however they may before men:

it is evident; it is a clear case, out of all dispute, as appears from (Habakkuk 2:4)

for the just shall live by faith; which may be read either, “the just by faith, shall live”: that is, the man who is just by faith, or justified by faith, not by it as a principle or act, or as the cause or matter of his justification, but by the object of his faith, Christ and his righteousness apprehended by faith, and so not just or justified by works; he shall live a life of justification, through that righteousness his faith receives; he shall live comfortably, with much peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, as the result of his being justified by faith; and shall live eternally, and never die the second death: or the “just shall live by faith”; he that is righteous, not by his own works, but by the obedience of Christ, shall live not upon faith, but by it on Christ, and his righteousness, which is revealed from faith to faith; and this makes it a clear point, that he is not justified by the law, for if he was, he would not live by faith on Christ, but in and by the deeds of the law.

Ver. 12. *And the law is not of faith*, etc..] The Arabic version adds, “but of man”; which as it is an addition to the text, so it contains false doctrine; for though the law is not of faith, yet not of man, but of God; the law does not consist of faith in Christ, nor does it require it, and that a man should live by it upon his righteousness; it is the Gospel that reveals the righteousness of Christ, and directs and encourages men to believe in him and be saved; nor does the law take any notice of a man's faith; nor has it anything to do with a man as a believer, but as a doer, in the point of justification:

but the man that doth them shall live in them; the passage referred to, is in (<3305>Leviticus 18:5), the word “them”, relates to the statutes and judgments, not of the ceremonial, but of the moral law, which are equally obligatory on Gentiles as on Jews. The Jewish doctors [f46] observe on those words, that

> “it is not said, priests, Levites, and Israelites, but µdah, “the man”; lo, you learn from hence, that even a Gentile that studies in the law, is as an high priest:”

so that whatever man does the things contained in the law, that is, internally as well as externally, for the law is spiritual, reaches the inward part of man, and requires truth there, a conformity of heart and thought unto it, and that does them perfectly and constantly, without the least failure in matter or manner of obedience, such shall live in them and by them; the language of the law is, do this and live; so life, and the continuation of that happy natural life which Adam had in innocence, was promised to him, in case of his persisting in his obedience to the law; and so a long and prosperous life was promised to the Israelites in the land of Canaan, provided they observed the laws and statutes which were commanded them: but since eternal life is a promise made before the world began, is provided for in an everlasting covenant, is revealed in the Gospel, and is the pure gift of God's grace through Christ, it seems that it never was the will of God that it should be obtained by the works of the law; and which is a further proof that there can be no justification in the sight of God by them, (see <4821>Galatians 3:21).

Ver. 13. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law*, etc..] The Redeemer is Christ, the Son of God; who was appointed and called to this work by his Father, and which he himself agreed to; he was spoken of in prophecy under this character; he came as such, and has obtained eternal redemption, for which he was abundantly qualified; as man, he was a near kinsman, to whom the right of redemption belonged; and as God, he was able to accomplish it. The persons redeemed are “us”, God's elect, both of Jews and Gentiles; a peculiar people, the people of Christ, whom the Father gave unto him; some out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation: the blessing obtained for them is redemption; a buying of them again, as the word signifies; they were his before by the Father's gift, and now he purchases them with the price of his own blood, and so delivers them “from the curse of the law”; its sentence of condemnation and death,

and the execution of it; so that they shall never be hurt by it, he having delivered them from wrath to come, and redeemed from the second death, the lake which burns with fire and brimstone. The manner in which this was done was by being

made a curse for us; the sense of which is, not only that he was like an accursed person, looked upon as such by the men of that wicked generation, who hid and turned away their faces from as an abominable execrable person, calling him a sinner, a Samaritan, and a devil; but was even accursed by the law; becoming the surety of his people, he was made under the law, stood in their legal place and stead and having the sins of them all imputed to him, and answerable for them, the law finding them on him, charges him with them, and curses him for them; yea, he was treated as such by the justice of God, even by his Father, who spared him not, awoke the sword of justice against him, and gave him up into his hands; delivered him up to death, even the accursed death of the cross, whereby it appeared that he was made a curse: “made”, by the will, counsel, and determination of God, and not without his own will and free consent; for he freely laid down his life, and gave himself, and made his soul an offering for sin:

for it is written. (Deuteronomy 21:23),

cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree: it is in the Hebrew text, ywlt, “he that is hanged”: which is the very name the Jews[f47] commonly call Christ by way of reproach; that is, “everyone that hangeth”, as the apostle rightly renders it; which is always the sense of an indefinite phrase, unless a restriction is put: adding out of the same verse, “on the tree”, by way of explanation; for which he cannot upon any account be found fault with, since it is manifest one hanged on a tree is meant, “who is accursed of God”, or “the curse of God”; the curse of God, in vindicating his righteous law, was visibly on such a person; as it was on Christ, when he hung on the cross, in the room and stead of his people; for he was made a curse, not for himself, or for any sins of his own, but for us; in our room and stead, for our sins, and to make atonement for them: upon the whole, the Jew[f48] has no reason to find fault as he does, either with the apostle's sense, or citation of this passage; for whether it be rendered “hangeth”, or is “hanged”, the sense is the same; and though the apostle leaves out the word “God”, it is clear from what he says, that his meaning is, that the curse of God lighted upon Christ as the surety of his people, standing in

their legal place and stead, in order to redeem them from the law and its curse; since he says, he was “made a curse” for them, which must be done by the Lord himself: and whereas the Jew objects, that it is impossible that anyone, even an Israelite, should be delivered from the curses of the law, but by the observance of it, this shows his ignorance of the law, which, in case of sin, requires a penalty, and which is its curse; and it is not future observance of the law will free from that: and as for the Gentiles, he says, to whom the law was not given, and who were never under it, they are free from the curses of it, without a redemption; but as this is to be, understood not of the ceremonial, but of the moral law, it is a mistake; the Gentiles are under the moral law, and being guilty of the violation of it, are liable to its curse; and cannot be delivered from it, but through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; by virtue of which, they have a part and portion in the blessings promised as follows.

Ver. 14. *That the blessing of Abraham*, etc..] The same blessing Abraham enjoyed, even justification by the righteousness of Christ; and what was promised to Abraham, that in him, his seed, that is Christ, the Gentiles should be blessed, or justified; for though this blessing may in general comprise every spiritual blessing, yet it chiefly regards that of justification; or a deliverance from the curse of the law, and which is the end of Christ's being made a curse, that this blessedness

might come on the Gentiles; the uncircumcision, as well as the circumcision; (see Romans 4:9) that is, upon as many of them as were ordained unto eternal life, and in consequence of that believe in Christ; quite contrary to a Jewish notion, that

> “no blessing dwells but upon an Israelite [f49]:”

now though this blessing, as all other spiritual ones, were laid up in the covenant of grace, put into the hands of Christ, and God's elect blessed therewith, as considered in him, yet the curse of the law for their transgressions stood in the way of their personal enjoyment of it, to their peace and comfort in their own souls; wherefore Christ is made a curse for them, to make way for the blessing to take place upon them; which is by an act of God's grace imputed to them, and is received by faith:

through Jesus Christ; or “in Jesus Christ”, as the words may be read; meaning either, that this blessing comes upon the Gentiles that were in Christ, chosen in him, in union with him, and represented by him, both in

the covenant and on the cross; or else that Christ is the Mediator, as from whom, so through whom, this, as every blessing of grace, comes to the children of God:

that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith; Beza puts the copulative and to this clause, reading it, “and that we”, etc.. as does the Ethiopic version; thereby more clearly pointing out this to be another end of Christ's being made a curse for us: by “the promise of the Spirit” may be meant, either by an “hypallage”, the Spirit of promise, who opens and applies the promises; or the Spirit promised, not as a spirit of regeneration, conversion, and faith; for, as such, he cannot be received by faith; Since, antecedent to his being so, there can be no faith; but rather as a spirit of adoption, in respect to which he is said to be received, (Romans 8:15) and this blessing of adoption, as in consequence of redemption from under the law, its curse and condemnation, (Galatians 4:4-6). Or else a spiritual promise, in distinction from the temporal promise of the land of Canaan, made to Abraham and his natural seed, and means the promise of eternal life and happiness in the world to come; which promise is now received by faith, and that in consequence of the sufferings and death of Christ the testator; (see Hebrews 9:15).

Ver. 15. *Brethren*, etc..] Whereas in (Galatians 3:1), he calls them “foolish Galatians”, which might seem too harsh and severe, therefore, to mitigate and soften their resentments, he styles them brethren; hoping still well of them, and that they were not so far gone, but that they might be recovered; and imputing the blame and fault rather to their leaders and teachers, than to them:

I speak after the manner of men; agreeably to a Talmudic form of speech in use among the Jews, µda ymb ˆyçlk hrwt hrbd, “the law speaks according to the language of the children of men”, or “after the manner of men” [f50], when they argue from any Scripture, in which a word is repeated, and the latter word seems to point out something peculiar: but the apostle's meaning is, that the thing he was about to speak of was taken from among men, in common use with them, and what was obvious to the common sense and understanding of men, and might easily be applied and argued from, as it is by him:

though it be but a man's covenant, or testament, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto; if a covenant made between men, or a

man's will and testament, be confirmed, signed, sealed, and witnessed, in a proper manner, no other man can make them void, or take anything from them, or add anything to them, only the parties concerned by their own will and consent; and if this be the case among men, much less can the covenant of God, confirmed by two immutable things, his word and oath, or his will and testament, or any branch of it, be ever disannulled, or be capable of receiving any addition thereunto. The apostle seems to have a particular respect to that branch of the covenant and will of God, which regards the justification of men in his sight by the righteousness of Christ, to which the false teachers were for adding the works of the law.

Ver. 16. *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made*, etc..] The promises design the promises of the covenant of grace mentioned in the next verse, which are exceeding great and precious, better than those of any other covenant; and which are all yea and amen in Christ, and are chiefly of a spiritual nature; though all the temporal blessings of God's people come to them in a covenant way, and by virtue of the promise; for godliness has the promise of this life, that God will verily feed them, withhold no good thing from them proper for them, sanctify all their afflictions, support under them, and never leave nor forsake them: but the promises here intended principally are such as these, that God will be their God, and they shall be his people, the promise of Christ as a Saviour and Redeemer of them; of the Spirit as their sanctifier, and the applier of all grace unto them; of justification by Christ's righteousness, and pardon by his blood; of adoption through free rich grace; of perseverance in grace, and of the eternal inheritance: now these promises were made, ερρηψησαν, “were said unto”, or spoken of, to Abraham and his seed; that is, they were discovered, made manifest, and applied to Abraham, the father of many nations; and were declared to belong to him and his spiritual seed, even all that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles; for the apostle is not speaking of the original make and constitution of the covenant of grace and its promises, which were made from all eternity; the grand promise of life was made before the world began, and Christ was set up as Mediator from everlasting, before ever the earth was, which suppose a covenant in which this promise was granted, and of which Christ was the Mediator as early; it was made long before Abraham, or any of his spiritual seed, were in being; nor was it made with any single person, any mere creature, Abraham, or any other, but with Christ, as the head and representative of the whole election of grace: but what is here treated of is, the declaration and

manifestation of the covenant, and its promises to Abraham; which was frequently done, as upon the call of him out of the land of Chaldea, upon his parting with Lot, when he was grown old, and when Eliezer his servant was like to be his heir, and just before the giving of him the covenant of circumcision, and again upon the offering up of his son Isaac:

he saith not unto seeds, as of many; in the plural number, as if Jews and Gentiles were in a different manner his spiritual seed:

but as of one; using the singular number:

and to thy seed, which is Christ; meaning not Christ personal, though he was of the seed of Abraham, a son of his, as was promised; but the covenant and the promises were not now made with, and to Christ, as personally considered, this was done in eternity; but Christ mystical, the church, which is the body of Christ, of which he is the head, and is called by his name, (<461212>1 Corinthians 12:12) and designs all Abraham's spiritual seed, both Jews and Gentiles; who are all one in Christ, and so Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise; hence there is no room for the objection of the Jew to the apostle's application of this passage to Christ [f51], that the Scripture speaks not of any particular person, but of seed in a general and collective sense, of a large and numerous offspring; since the apostle designs such a seed by Christ, as numerous as the stars of the sky, and the sand on the sea shore, even all believers in all nations, Abraham is the father of; though did the apostle mean Christ particularly, and personally considered, there are instances to be given, where the word "seed" is used, not in a collective sense, but of a single person, as in (<010425>Genesis 4:25 15:3 21:13). Nor has the Jew [f52] any reason to charge him with a mistake, in observing that the word is not in the plural, but in the singular number, when it is the manner of the Hebrew language to speak of seed only in the singular number; but this is false, the word is used in the plural number, and so might have been here, had it been necessary, as in (<091815>1 Samuel 8:15) concerning seed sown in the earth, from whence the metaphor is here taken. The first tract in the Jews' Misna, or oral law, is called, µy[rz, "seeds"; and the word, even as spoken of the posterity of men, is used in the plural number in their Talmud [f53]; where they say,

> "pecuniary judgments are not as capital ones; in pecuniary judgments, a man gives his money, and it atones for him; in capital judgments, his blood, and the blood wytw[rz, "of his seeds", or

posterity, hang on him to the end of the world; for we so find in Cain, who slew his brother; as it is said, “the bloods of thy brother crieth”; it is not said, the blood of thy brother, but the bloods of thy brother, his blood, and the blood wytw[rz, “of his seeds”.”

Ver. 17. *And this I say*, etc..] Assert and affirm as a certain truth, that is not to be gainsaid;

that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul; by “the covenant” is meant, not the covenant made with Adam, as the federal head of all his posterity; for this was made two thousand years before the law was given; nor that which was made with the Israelites at Mount Sinai, for that itself is the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after this covenant; nor the covenant of circumcision given to Abraham, for that was not so long by some years, before the giving of the law, as the date here fixed: but “a covenant confirmed of God in Christ”; a covenant in which Christ is concerned; a covenant made with him, of which he is the sum and substance, the Mediator, surety, and messenger; and such is what the Scriptures call the covenant of life and peace, and what we commonly style the covenant of grace and redemption; because the articles of redemption and reconciliation, of eternal life and salvation, by the free grace of God, are the principal things in it. This is said to be “in Christ”, εις χριστον, “with respect to Christ”; though the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out this clause, nor is it in the Alexandrian copy, and some others; meaning either that this covenant has respect to Christ personal, he having that concern in it, as just now mentioned, and as it was made manifest and confirmed to Abraham, was promised in it to spring from him; or rather that it has respect to Christ mystical, as before, to all Abraham's spiritual seed, both Jews and Gentiles: and this is said to be “confirmed of God”, with respect thereunto; which must be understood, not of the first establishment of the covenant, in and with Christ, for that was done in eternity; nor of the confirmation of it by his blood, which was at his death; nor of the confirmation of it in common to the saints by the Spirit of God, who is the seal of the covenant, as he is the Spirit of promise; but of a peculiar confirmation of it to Abraham, either by a frequent repetition thereof, or by annexing an oath unto it; or rather by those rites and usages, and even wonderful appearances, recorded in (<01509>Genesis 15:9,10) (<01512>Genesis 15:12,13,17,18) and which was “four hundred and thirty years before” the law was given, which are thus computed by the learned Pareus;

from the confirmation of the covenant, and taking Hagar for his wife, to the birth of Isaac, 15 years; from the birth of Isaac, to the birth of Jacob, 60 years, (<01256>Genesis 25:26), from the birth of Jacob, to his going down into Egypt, 130 years, (<01409>Genesis 47:9), from his going down to Egypt, to his death, 17 years, (<01428>Genesis 47:28) from the death of Jacob, to the death of Joseph in Egypt, 53 years, (<01516>Genesis 50:26) from the death of Joseph, to the birth of Moses, 75 years; from the birth of Moses, to the going out of the children of Israel from Egypt, and the giving of the law, 80 years, in all 430 years. The Jews reckoned the four hundred years spoken of to Abraham, (<01513>Genesis 15:13) and mentioned by Stephen, (<44706>Acts 7:6) from the birth of Isaac; but they reckon the four hundred and thirty years, the number given by Moses, (<02240>Exodus 12:40) and by the apostle here, to begin from the confirming the covenant between the pieces, though somewhat differently counted; says one of their chronologers [f54], we reckon the 430 years from the 70th year of Abraham, from whence to the birth of Isaac were 30 years, and from thence to the going out of Egypt, 400 years; and another [f55] of them says,

> “they are to be reckoned from the time that the bondage was decreed, in the standing between the pieces; and there were 210 years of them from thence to the going down to Egypt, and these are the particulars; the 105 years which remained to Abraham, and the 105 years Isaac lived after the death of Abraham, and there were 10 years from the death of Isaac, to the going down to Egypt, and it remains that there were 210 years they stayed in Egypt:”

another [f56] of their writers says,

> “that from the time that the decree of the captivity of Egypt was fixed between the pieces, to the birth of Isaac, were 30 years; and from the birth of Isaac to the going down of the children of Israel into Egypt, 400 years; take out from them the 60 years of Isaac, and the 130 years that Jacob had lived when he went into Egypt, and there remain 210.”

Josephus reckons [f57] these years from Abraham's coming into the land of Canaan, to the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and makes them 430, agreeably to (<02240>Exodus 12:40) and to the apostle here, and to the Talmud; (See Gill on “<44706>Acts 7:6”). However, be these computations as they will, it is certain, that the law, which was so long after the confirming of the covenant to Abraham, could not make it null and void: or

that it should make the promise of none effect; the particular promise of the covenant, respecting the justification of Abraham and his spiritual seed, by faith in the righteousness of Christ.

Ver. 18. *For if the inheritance be of the law*, etc..] By the inheritance is meant, either the eternal inheritance, everlasting life and happiness in heaven, which is the gift of God through Christ, and not attained to and enforced by the works of the law; or particularly the blessing of justification, promised in the covenant to Abraham, and his spiritual seed; even to the Gentiles, and inherited by them; which is not obtained through obedience to the law of works, nor does it belong to those who seek for it by the deeds of the law, for these are not heirs of it; (see <4014>Romans 4:14). For was this the case,

it is no more of promise; it cannot be by merit and by promise, by works and grace too; these can never be reconciled, and consist together; if it is by promise, then not of the law; and if it is of the law, it is not by promise: "but" nothing is more certain than this, that

God gave it, freely, without any consideration of the works of the law,

to Abraham by promise; wherefore justification is not by works, but by the free grace of God, through faith in the righteousness of Christ; and in this way men become heirs according to the hope of eternal life: all which is directly opposite to the notion of the Jews, who say, that, ˆd[ˆg wçry twxm rkçb,

> "for the reward of the commandments, men shall inherit paradise [f58]."

Ver. 19. *Wherefore why then serveth the law*? etc..] If this be the case, might an objector say, why was the law given? what ends and purposes are to be served by it? of what use can it be? there had as good been no law at all, if the inheritance is not of it, and there is no justification by it. To which it is answered,

it was added because of transgressions; four hundred and thirty years after the covenant made with Abraham; it did not succeed it, nor take the place of it, and so make it null and void; but was over and above added unto it, for the sake of restraining transgressions; which had there been no law, men would not have been accountable for them; and they would have gone into them without fear, and with impunity; but the law was given, to lay a

restraint on men, by forbidding such and such things, on pain of death; and also for the detecting, discovering, and making known transgressions, what they are, their nature and consequences; these the law charges men with, sets them before them, in their true light and proper colours; and convicts them of them, stops their mouths, and pronounces them guilty before God: moreover, this law entered in, over and above any other revelation God was pleased to make, "that the offence might abound", (Romans 5:20) either that particular offence, the sin of Adam, the apostle is there speaking of; the heinous nature of which, its aggravated circumstances, and the justness of its imputation to his posterity, were more clearly discerned by this law; and so the Syriac version here renders it in the singular number, atwnyjsm ljm, "because of transgression"; or all other offences and transgressions, which are increased through the multiplicity of precepts, and attended with more aggravating circumstances, than if no law was given, and more eagerly pursued after, through the prohibition of them; such being the corrupt nature of man, that the more anything is forbidden, the more desirous it is of it: add to all this, that the law was given for the punishing of transgressions, for which it curses, and threatens with death, and inflicts it on Christless sinners: hence it is clear there can be no justification by it, and yet it is not useless and insignificant:

till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made; either Christ the seed of the woman, and of Abraham, who was to come in the flesh, and is come; and to whom the grand promise of life, and all the promises of the covenant were made; not for himself, but for those he represented, and in whom they are all secure: until whose coming to finish transgression, and bring in everlasting righteousness, the law was to continue in the form in which, and the use for which it was added, and then to cease as the ministration of Moses; for through the coming of Christ it received its full accomplishment, and came to an end; the ceremonial law was utterly abolished, and the moral law ceased to be a covenant of works, though it continues a rule of walk and conversation; and the whole Mosaic economy was no more: or else the seed here intends the spiritual seed of Abraham; particularly among the Gentiles, to whom the promise of blessedness, of justification, and eternal life was made; and the sense be, that till such time that a generation of faithful men, of believers in Christ, should arise among the Gentiles, the law was to continue with the Jews; but when they should spring up, the middle wall of partition should be broken down, and Abraham's spiritual seed among Jews and Gentiles make up one body, one

people, and be fellow heirs and partakers of the promise of God in Christ, through the Gospel:

and it was ordained by angels; not Moses and Aaron, and Joshua, as some say; for though Moses was concerned in the giving of the law, yet not Aaron nor Joshua, nor are any of them ever called angels; but the holy elect angels are here meant, the ten thousands of saints, or holy ones, God came to Mount Sinai with, and the Lord was among, in the holy place; (see <05332>Deuteronomy 33:2 <19817>Psalm 68:17) and so the Jews say [f59] that the Lord appeared on Mount Sinai gloriously, aykalmd hytyk µ[, "with companies", or "troops of angels", to give the law to his people: and this may be said to be "ordained" by them, inasmuch as it might be written and spoken by them, as the instruments and ministers God made use of; for though the tables are said to be the work of God, and the writing the writing of God, and to be written with the finger of God, and he is said to speak all the words of it, yet this hinders not, but that all this might be done by the means of angels; who might be employed in disposing and fitting the stones in the form they were, and in writing the law upon them; hence it is said to be given by the disposition of angels, (<44753>Acts 7:53) and certain it is, that it was spoken by them, (<58202>Hebrews 2:2) they forming in the air those articulate and audible sounds, when the law was delivered; who were also concerned in the thunderings and lightnings, and in the blowing of the trumpet, that waxed louder and louder at that time:

in the hand of a mediator; not Christ, as many interpreters, ancient and modern, have thought; for though he was present at the giving of the law, as appears from (<44738>Acts 7:38 <19817>Psalm 68:17,18) and is the Mediator between God and man, and had the law in his hand, out of which it went forth as the lawgiver; and as the surety of his people has fulfilled it, and by so doing put an end to it, and delivered them from the curse and condemnation of it; yet he is the Mediator of the new and better covenant, not the ministration of death, but of life; and so Moses and Christ, the law and Gospel, the old and the new covenant, are continually opposed to each other; besides, the mediator here seems to be represented as inferior to the angels, and as receiving the law into his hands from them, by whom it was ordained; which to conceive of Christ, is very much to the demeaning and lessening of him. Moses is the mediator here meant, who stood between God and the people of Israel; not to make peace between them, but to show the word of God from him to them, and this at their own request; (see <05505>Deuteronomy 5:5,23-27), and in his hand the tables of the law

were, when he came down from the mount, and was a typical mediator of Christ. So the Jews say of him, that

> “he was y[xma, “a mediator” between them and God [f60].”

Ver. 20. *Now a mediator is not a mediator of one*, etc..] A mediator supposes two parties he stands between, and these at a distance from, or disagreeing with each other; where there is but one party, there can be no need of, nor any reason for, a mediator; so Christ is the Mediator between God and men, the daysman, (<18B>Job 9:33), that lays his hands upon them both; and Moses, he was the mediator between God and the Israelites:

but God is one; not in person, for there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one, in nature and essence; so that though there are three persons, there is but one God, and who is the God both of Jews and Gentiles; who is of one mind concerning them, and has taken them into one and the same covenant, and makes use of one and the same method in the justification of them: but the true sense of the phrase here is, that whereas a mediator supposes two parties at variance, “God is one of the two”; as the Ethiopic version reads the words; he is a party offended, that stands off, and at a distance, which the law given by angels in the hand of a mediator shows; so that that is rather a sign of disagreement and alienation, and consequently that justification is not to be expected by it.

Ver. 21. *Is the law then against the promises of God*? etc..] If the law was added because of transgressions, and curses for them, and if the inheritance is not of it, but by promise, were it, it would not be by promise, then, says an objector, it is against the promises: these are contrary to one another, and God, in giving the one and the other, must contradict himself: to which it is replied,

God forbid; a way of speaking the apostle uses, when he would express his abhorrence and detestation of anything, as here; for though the law and promises are distinct things, and have their separate uses, yet they are not contradictory to each other; the law has its use, and so have the promises; the promises do not set aside the law as useless on all accounts, nor does the law disannul the promises, but is subservient to them:

for if there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; but the law cannot give life,

spiritual life to a dead sinner; God only can do this, Father, Son, and Spirit; so far is the law from giving it efficiently, that it is not so much as the means of it; it is not made use of this way; God makes use of the law to kill, but not to make alive; he makes use of the law to strike dead all a man's hopes of happiness, by the deeds of it; but it is the Gospel he uses to quicken and comfort; that is the Spirit that giveth life. The law requires as much of a dead sinner, as it did of Adam in innocence, but gives him no life, activity, and strength to perform; could it quicken him, and enable him to do all its demands perfectly, then there would be righteousness, and so justification by it, as by the promise; whence it appears that there is no contrariety in the law to the promises: the reason why there is no righteousness is, because it cannot give life, spiritual life and strength; and if so, then not eternal life; which is the free gift of God, and not the merit of men's works: this is directly contrary to a notion of the Jews, who cry up the law as a life giving law; say they [f61],

> "great is the law, hyçw[l µyyj tntwn ayhç, "for it giveth life to them that do it", in this world, and in the world to come:"

and elsewhere [f62],

> "the law is a tree of life to all that study in it, yyj ˆwl bhyml, "to give unto them life" in this world, and "to give unto them life" in the world to come."

Ver. 22. *But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin*, etc..] By the "Scripture" is meant, either the writing of the law in particular, the killing letter, or the whole Scripture, or God in it; and who by and in it has shown, declared, and proved, that all the individuals of human nature, Jews and Gentiles, and all that is in them, and done by them, are under the power and dominion of sin, defiled by it, and involved in the guilt of it; for it is not παντας, "all persons", but παντα, "all things", belonging to all persons; all the members of their bodies, and faculties of their souls; all their thoughts, inclinations, and intentions; all their works and services, even their best righteousness, which is as filthy rags; all are declared to be sinful and polluted, and men on account of them to be guilty before God, and liable to punishment; from whence there can be no escape by the law of works; for they are like men concluded, or shut up in a prison, from which there is no apparent likelihood of deliverance: now the Spirit of God, discovering to men this their wretched and desperate condition, under the law and sin,

reveals Christ and his righteousness to them, and enables and encourages them to believe in him, by whom only they can be justified from all things, they cannot by the law of Moses, in which they see themselves shut up, as in a prison:

that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe; by the "promise" is intended, the promise of life and salvation, and particularly of a justifying righteousness; which is given, not merited; righteousness is a gift, a gift of grace, a free gift, and so is eternal life; salvation in all its parts is of free grace; Christ is a free gift, and so are all things along with him; yea, faith itself, by which they are received, it is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; Christ is the author and finisher, as well as the object of it; and therefore here called "the faith of Jesus Christ": and such that have it, to them the promise, or the things promised, righteousness and life are given, which the law could not give; not to them that work, but to them that believe: thus the law is so far from being against the promises of God, that it is subservient to them; for though the law has no tendency in itself to bring persons to Christ, and to believe in him for righteousness, yet this concluding men under sin, showing them their desperate, and hopeless, and helpless condition, the Spirit of God takes occasion from hence to reveal Christ unto them, and to enable them as perishing creatures to venture on him, and lay hold on the hope set before them in the Gospel; and so they come to enjoy the grand promise of it, even life and salvation by Christ.

Ver. 23. *But before faith came*, etc..] This is to be understood, not of the grace of faith, which was under the former dispensation, as now; the Old Testament saints had the same Spirit of faith, and the same grace of faith, as for its nature, object, and use, as New Testament saints have; Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, etc.. believed in Christ, and were justified by faith in his righteousness, as we are. It is much better to understand it of the doctrine of faith, which though preached to Adam, and by Noah, and to Abraham, and by Isaiah, and others, yet not so clearly, largely, and fully, as by Jesus Christ and his apostles; so that the times of the Gospel may be called the times of faith, in comparison of the times of the law, and which some think is here meant; but it is best to interpret it of Christ, the object of faith, who was to come, and is come in the flesh, to fulfil the law; and, by so doing, has put an end to it; and to redeem his people from under it, and to save them with an everlasting salvation; for before this his coming in the

flesh, the people of the Jews, of whom the apostle was one, were under the law:

we were kept under the law; as persons in a garrison, as the word signifies; they were kept distinct and separate from the rest of the nations of the world, and had neither civil nor religious conversation with them; and so were preserved in some measure both from their impieties and idolatries, which otherwise they were naturally prone to; and as a distinct people, unto the coming of the Messiah, who was to arise from among them; so that their being kept under the law in this sense, was both for their honour and their safety: though the meaning may also be, that they were kept under it as persons under a military guard, as the word likewise imports; and signifies, that the law kept a strict guard and a watchful eye over them, as the Roman soldier had over Paul, that kept him, and held fast the chain in his hand, with which he was bound, that he might not get loose and escape from him; (see <4428 16>Acts 28:16,20) to which the apostle seems here to allude; the law kept them close to the discharge of their duty, and held them fast as prisoners; and which is more fully expressed in the next clause,

shut up. The Syriac version reads this in connection with the former, thus, ˆnyçybj dkˆl awh rjn aswmn "the law kept us shut up", as in a prison; and the same way reads the Arabic version; which shows the state and condition the Jews were in under the law, and how they were treated by it; not as good and righteous persons, but as persons in debt, as criminals and malefactors; a prison is made, and so the law, for such sort of persons; the law considered and used them as sinners, as criminals convicted and condemned; it did itself accuse, convict, and pronounce them guilty, and condemned them to punishment; and detained them as prisoners in its dark dungeon, where they had little light and comfort; and were as in a pit, wherein is no water; though they lay here as prisoners of hope, in expectation of the Messiah's coming; who was to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, and to say to the prisoners, Come forth, and to them that sit in darkness, Show yourselves. Also the allusion may be to the custom of the eastern nations, in the usage of their slaves and captives; who in the daytime used to grind at a mill in a prison house, and in the night time were put down into a pit and shut up, and a mill stone put to the mouth of the pit [f63]; and so describes the state of bondage and slavery the Jews were in under the law, who differed nothing from servants, to whom the saints under the Gospel

dispensation are opposed, (Galatians 3:26) as being the children of God by faith in Christ. And in this uncomfortable condition they continued,

unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed; that is, until Christ the object of faith came, who was to be revealed, or made manifest in the flesh; who, before his incarnation, not only lay in the bosom of the Father, but was in a great measure hid under the types and prophecies of the Old Testament; which though they gave some hints of him, yet but obscure ones, in comparison of the revelation made of him by his appearance in human nature; by the testimonies of his Father by a voice from heaven of angels, of John the Baptist, and others; and by his own doctrines and miracles, and by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ*, etc..] So the words should be read, as they are by the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; for the words “to bring us” are a supplement of our translators, and have nothing to answer to them in the original; and the sense of the passage is, that the law performed this office of a schoolmaster until the coming of Christ; which shows that till that time the church was in its minority, that the Jews were but children in knowledge and understanding, and therefore stood in need, and were under the care of a schoolmaster, the law, by which the whole Mosaic administration is designed. They were taught by the moral law, the letter, the writing on the two tables, with other statutes and judgments, their duty to God and men, what is to be done and to be avoided, what is righteousness and what is not, the nature of sin, its demerit and consequences; but these gave them no instructions about a Saviour, and life and righteousness by him. The ceremonial law gave them some hints of the Gospel scheme, and the way of salvation by Christ, but in a manner suited to their estate of childhood; by sights and shows, by types and figures, by rites and ceremonies, by shadows and sacrifices; it taught them by divers washings the pollution of their nature, their need of the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin; by circumcision, the necessity of regeneration, and the internal circumcision of the heart; by the passover, the daily sacrifice and other offerings, the doctrines of redemption, satisfaction, and atonement; and by the brazen serpent, the necessity of looking to Christ for life and salvation, and by various other things in that branch of the legal economy: but besides the instruction the law gave, it made use of discipline as a schoolmaster does; it kept a strict eye and hand over them, and them close to the performance of their duty; and restrained

them from many things their inclinations led them to, threatening them with death in case of disobedience, and inflicting its penalties on delinquents; hence they that were under its discipline, were through fear of death it threatened them with, all their time subject to bondage: even the ceremonial law had something awful and tremendous in it; every beast that was slain in sacrifice was not only an instruction to them that they deserved to die as that creature did; but carried in it a tacit acknowledgment and confession of their own guilt; and the whole was an handwriting of ordinances against them. Moreover, the law being called a schoolmaster, shows that the use of it was but temporary, and its duration but for a time; children are not always to be under, nor designed to be always under a schoolmaster, no longer than till they are come to a proper age for greater business and higher exercises of life; so the law was to continue, and did continue, to be of this use and service to the Jewish church during its minority, until Christ came, the substance of all it taught and directed to: both the Jerusalem Targum and that of Jonathan ben Uzziel, on (<04112>Numbers 11:12) use the very Greek word the apostle does here, concerning Moses, rendering the words, as a “pedagogue” or “schoolmaster” bears a sucking child into the land, etc..

That we might be justified by faith; by Christ the object of faith, by his righteousness, which faith looks unto and receives, and not by the law and the works of it; the people of the Jews were in such a state under the law, and the law of that use unto them before the coming of Christ, as above represented, that it might be made manifest, be a clear point, and out of all dispute, that there is no such thing as justification by the law; for how could ever such a blessing be expected from it, when men were kept under it as under a military guard; when they were shut up in it as in a prison, and were treated by it as malefactors, convicted and condemned; and when they were under the discipline of it, as a rigid and severe schoolmaster? this being their case till Christ came, when it ceased to be all this to them, he being the end of it for righteousness, it became a thing self-evident, that justification is only by him and his righteousness, and so the end here mentioned was answered.

Ver. 25. *But after that faith is come*, etc..] That is, since Christ the object of faith is come in the flesh, and has fulfilled the law, and redeemed them that were under it from its bondage, curse, and condemnation:

we are no longer under a schoolmaster; under the law as such; as no longer under it as a military guard, nor in it as a prison, so neither under it as a schoolmaster; not needing its instructions, or its discipline; since Christ is come as a prophet to teach and instruct, as a priest to atone for sin, and make intercession for transgressors, and as a King to rule and govern; in whose hands, and not in the hands of Moses, the law now is, as a rule of walk and conversation.

Ver. 26. *For ye are all the children of God*, etc..] Not by nature, as Christ is the Son of God, for he is the only begotten of the Father, and in such sense as neither angels nor men are the sons of God; nor by creation, as Adam and all mankind, and the angels are; but by divine adoption by an act of God's rich and sovereign grace, putting them among the children in saying this the apostle directs himself to the Gentiles for their comfort, and says this of them all in a judgment of charity, they being under a profession of faith; lest they should think, because they were not Abraham's seed according to the flesh, nor were ever trained up under the law as a schoolmaster, that they were not the children of God: whereas they were such not by the law, as none indeed are,

but by faith in Christ Jesus; not that faith makes any the children of God, or puts them into such a relation; no, that is God's own act and deed; of his free rich grace and goodness, God the Father has predestinated his chosen ones to the adoption of children, and has secured and laid up this blessing for them in the covenant of grace; Christ by redemption has made way for their reception and enjoyment of it; the Spirit of God, in consequence of their sonship, as a spirit of adoption bears strong reason and argument, proving that they are not under the law as a schoolmaster, in which light it is here set by the apostle; since they are sons and not servants, and so free from the bondage of the law; they are sons grown up into the faith of Christ, and are led and taught by the Spirit of God, as they are that are the children of God by faith; and as is promised to the saints under the Gospel, that they shall be “all taught of God”; and therefore stood in no need of the law as a schoolmaster, which only was concerned with the Jews, whilst they were children under age; and has nothing to do with such, whether Jews or Gentiles, who believe in Christ, and are growing up into him their head, till they come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of him.

Ver. 27. *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ*, etc..] Not that it is to be imagined that these churches of Galatia, or any of the

primitive churches, consisted of baptized and unbaptized persons; for this would be acting contrary to the commission of Christ and the order of the Gospel: but this way of speaking supposes that there might be some of them, who though baptized in water, yet not into Christ; and that those who are truly and rightly baptized, who are proper subjects of it, and to whom it is administered in a proper manner, are baptized into Christ: not that by baptism they are brought into union with Christ, but into communion with him; for they are not merely baptized in his name, and by his authority, and according to his command, and into his doctrine, and a profession of him; but into a participation of the blessings of grace which are in him, and come through his sufferings and death; for they that are baptized into Christ are baptized into his death and resurrection from the dead; they are led by faith to behold the cleansing of their souls, and the remission of their sins by his blood, and their justification by his righteousness; how he was delivered for their offences, died for their sins, was buried in the grave, and their iniquities with him, and rose again for their justification; of all which, baptism, performed by immersion, is a lively emblem; and this is to be baptized into Christ, namely, being baptized believing in him, and calling on his name: and such

have put on Christ; both before and at baptism: before it they put him on as the Lord their righteousness; his righteousness is compared to a garment, is called the best robe, the wedding garment, fine linen, clean and white, the robe of righteousness, a garment down to the feet; this is imputed to the elect of God by the Father, through a gracious act of his, and what they are clothed and covered with by the Son, and is put upon them and applied unto them by the Spirit; and which faith receiving puts off its own rags of righteousness, and makes use of this as its proper dress to appear in before the most High; and such through divine grace are enabled to put off the old man and put on the new; that is, walk in their outward lives and conversation, not according to the dictates of corrupt nature, but according to the principles of grace, of the new man formed in the soul, for righteousness and holiness, and in imitation of Christ; having him for an example, and desiring to walk as he walked; which is another sense of putting on Christ, namely, a following of him in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; (see ⁴⁵Romans 13:14) and such persons, as they are the proper subjects of baptism, who have believed in Christ for righteousness, and walk worthy of him; so in baptism they may also be said to put him on as they thereby and therein make a public profession of him, by deeds as

well as words, declaring him to be their Lord and King; and afresh exercise faith upon him, as their Saviour and Redeemer, and imitate and follow him in it, as their pattern; who himself submitted to it, leaving them an example that they should tread in his steps; which when they do, they may be said to put him on. The allusion is either to the putting off and putting on of clothes at baptism, which being performed by immersion, required such actions, which no other mode does; or, to the priests putting off their common clothes, and then bathing or dipping themselves in water, and, putting on the garments of the priesthood before they entered on their service; concerning which take the following rules prescribed by the Misnic doctors [f64];

> "no man may enter the court for service, though clean, lwbjyç d[, "until he dips himself" five times, and washes his hands and feet ten times;"

for every time he immersed himself, he washed his hands and feet before and after: again,

> "there is a vail of fine linen between him (the high priest) and the people; he puts off his clothes, hl[lbjwdry, "he goes down and dips himself, he comes up", and wipes himself; then they bring him the golden garments, and "he puts them on", and washes his hands and his feet; then they bring him the daily sacrifice, etc.."

and a little after,

> "they bring him (the high priest on the day of atonement) to the house of Paryah, and in the holy place there was a vail of fine linen between him and the people; he washes his hands and his feet, and puts off his garments: R. Meir says, he puts off his garments, and then washes his hands and his feet; "he goes down and dips himself, he comes up again", and wipes himself; then they bring him the white garments, and he puts them on, and washes his hands and his feet:"

all which may serve to illustrate this passage, and point out to us what the apostle alludes unto, as well as to observe to us the distinction the Jews made between the immersion of the whole body, and a washing of a part of it.

Ver. 28. *There is neither Jew nor Greek*, etc..] Not but that there were such in being; and in the churches of Christ, for the primitive churches consisted of both; but the meaning is, that there is no difference between them, the middle wall of partition being broken down, and that, in the business of justification and salvation, it signified nothing whether a man was a Jew or a Greek; he was never the better for being a circumcised Jew, nor never the worse for being an uncircumcised Gentile; both by nature are equally sinners, and stand in need of the justifying righteousness of Christ, and the regenerating grace of the Spirit. The Gospel was equally preached to both, and was made useful to some of the one and of the other; and who, believing in Christ, had a right to the same ordinances and privileges of the Gospel, and shared in the same blessings of grace.

There is neither bond nor free. There were such persons in the world then, and in the churches too; nor does the Gospel dissolve the civil and natural relations and obligations men are in and under to one another, it confirms and secures them; but the sense is, that God, in calling, justifying, and saving men, is no respecter of persons, as being high and low, rich and poor, bond or free, servants or masters: he calls, justifies, and saves men of every station and condition of life; and bond slaves and servants called by grace are Christ's free men, and have an equal right as those that are free to all the immunities of the Gospel: in some Heathen nations bond slaves and servants were not admitted, only freemen, to be present at the sacred service, and worship of their deities [f65]; but the Gospel makes no such distinction of men in its doctrine, worship, and ordinances, which lie open to all ranks and orders of men:

there is neither male nor female; among the Heathens [f66] also females were not admitted to some of their sacred rites and ceremonies; and among the Jews the males only were concerned in many things both of a civil and religious nature; no female might be heir to an inheritance with a male [f67]; females had no share in the civil government, nor in the priesthood; males were to appear three times a year before the Lord, and, according to their oral law, women and servants were exempted [f68]; the mark of circumcision, the sign of the covenant made with Abraham and his natural seed, was only upon the males; but now under the Gospel dispensation there is no distinction made between male and female as to divine things; as they are alike called by the grace of God, they have the same right to Gospel ordinances, baptism and the Lord's supper, and to every spiritual privilege. The apostle's design is to show the common right of believers, of every

nation, condition, and sex, and to encourage the Gentiles, and demolish the pride, vanity, and boasting of the Jews, their men especially, who valued themselves upon these “three” very things which the apostle here makes no account of; as that they were Israelites and not Gentiles, freemen and not servants, men and not women; and in their public prayers they give thanks to God in this form,

> “blessed be the Lord our God, the King of the world, that he hath made me an Israelite; blessed be the Lord, etc.. who hath not made me a Gentile; blessed be the Lord, etc.. who hath not made me a “servant”; blessed be the Lord, etc.. who hath not made me a “woman”;”

instead of which last the woman say,

> “blessed be the Lord, etc.. who hath made me as he pleased [f69]:”

for ye are all one in Christ Jesus; being alike chosen in him, united to him, redeemed by his blood, justified by his righteousness, regenerated by his Spirit, the children of God by faith in him, and heirs of the same grace and glory, they make, both Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, male and female, as it were but one new man in him; one body, of which he is the head, one spiritual seed of Abraham and of Christ.

Ver. 29. *For if ye be Christ's*, etc..] Or seeing ye are his, not by creation only, but by the Father's gift to him, by the purchase of his own blood, by the power of his grace, making them willing to give up themselves to him; not only his by profession, saying they are the Lord's, calling themselves by his name; but by possession, Christ dwelling in their hearts by faith, and they having his Spirit as a spirit of regeneration and adoption:

then are ye Abraham's seed; not his natural but his spiritual seed, the seed that should come, and to whom the promises were made, (Galatians 3:16,19) and so were upon an equal foot even with the Jews that believed:

and heirs according to the promise; being the children of God, they are heirs of God; and being the spiritual children of Abraham, the children of the promise, which are counted for the seed, they are, according to the promise made to Abraham and his spiritual seed, heirs of the blessings of the grace of life, and of the eternal inheritance; of the blessing of justification of life, and of everlasting salvation; of this world and of the world to come; of all the spiritual blessings of the covenant of grace, and of

the incorruptible and undefiled inheritance of the saints in light; to which they are begotten through the abundant mercy of God, for which they are made meet by the grace of Christ; and to which they have a right by his justifying righteousness.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS 4

In this chapter the apostle discourses concerning the abrogation of the ceremonial law, under which the Old Testament saints were, being as children under tutors; blames the Galatians for returning to it when they were freed from it; puts them in mind of their former affection to him and to his ministry; describes the false apostles, who had been the occasion of their departure from the truth, and by a beautiful allegory sets forth the difference between the legal and Gospel dispensations. And whereas in the latter part of the preceding chapter he had compared the law to a schoolmaster, under which the Jews were till Christ came; he here makes use of another simile to express the same thing by, which is that of an heir while under age being under tutors and governors, until the time fixed by the parent's will, (<4001>Galatians 4:1,2) an accommodation of which simile is in (<4003>Galatians 4:3), by which the Jews under the former dispensation are represented as children, and as in a state of bondage to the ceremonial law, from which there is a deliverance by Christ at the appointed time of the Father, by whom he was sent for that purpose; the act of sending is ascribed to God the Father; the person sent is described as the Son of God; the time when is called the fulness of time; and the circumstances under which he was sent were, that he was made of a woman, and made under the law, (<4004>Galatians 4:4), the ends of his being sent were to redeem his people from it, who were under it; and that they might receive the adoption of children, the privilege and spirit of it, (<4005>Galatians 4:5). Hence because they were the sons of God, and as a fruit and effect of the redemption of them by Christ, the Spirit of God is sent down into their hearts, to make known and witness their adoption, (<4006>Galatians 4:6), and the benefits arising from hence are, that such are or should be no longer the servants of the law, but are children and free from it, and are heirs of God, (<4007>Galatians 4:7), and that the grace of God might appear the more illustrious in this privilege of sonship, and the folly of the Galatians be more manifest in returning to the ceremonial law, notice is taken of what they were and did before conversion, and what they were inclined to now; that whereas whilst they were ignorant of God, they served nominal fictitious

deities, such as were not by nature gods; and yet now, though they knew God, and were known of him, seemed desirous of being in a state of servitude and bondage to the weak and beggarly elements of the ceremonial law, (<4408>Galatians 4:8,9), of which instances are given in their observing days, months, times and years, (<4410>Galatians 4:10), which gave the apostle a great deal of concern, fearing his labour among them was in vain, and to no purpose, (<4411>Galatians 4:11), wherefore he entreats them as his brethren to imitate him, who being a Jew, yet had relinquished the observation of the ceremonial law, (<4412>Galatians 4:12), and then he reminds them of their former regard unto him; how that though he preached the Gospel to them through much weakness, yet they did not despise him and reject him on account of his infirmities, but received him with all the tokens of respect imaginable, as if he had been an angel; yea, as if he had been Christ himself, (<4413>Galatians 4:13,14), who then reckoned themselves happy persons on account of the Gospel he preached to them, and then had such an affection for him, that if it had been needful they would have given their eyes unto him; and yet now he was become their enemy for preaching the same truths he did then, justification by faith in Christ's righteousness and the abrogation of the law, (<4415>Galatians 4:15,16), next he gives an account of the false apostles, who pretended a zealous affection for the Galatians; which was not a good one, nor with right views, (<4417>Galatians 4:17), though zeal in a good cause, and which continues, is very commendable, (<4418>Galatians 4:18), and such a constant and hearty attachment had the apostle to them; wherefore he calls them his little children, says he travailed in birth on their account, it being his earnest desire that Christ might appear to be formed in them, (<4419>Galatians 4:19), wherefore since he was in doubt and distress about them, he was very desirous of being with them, and to alter his way of arguing with them; and from the law, and not the Gospel, show them their mistake and folly, (<4420>Galatians 4:20,21), which he does in the following allegorical way, by observing that Abraham had two sons, the one by a servant maid, the other by his lawful wife; the one was after the flesh, the other by promise; which allegorically signified the two covenants of Sinai and of Sion, (<4422>Galatians 4:22-24). Agar the bondmaid represented the covenant made at Mount Sinai in Arabia, under which the carnal Jews and their posterity were in a state of bondage; and Sarah the free woman, the covenant of grace under the Gospel dispensation and the Gospel church state, which is from above, free, fertile, and numerous, (<4425>Galatians 4:25,26), which is confirmed, (<4427>Galatians 4:27), by a passage out of (<2401>Isaiah 44:1) and as these two

women were typical of the two covenants, so their respective offspring represented the two sorts of professors, legalists and evangelical Christians. True believers in Christ are like Isaac, the children of the promise; legalists are like Ishmael, men after the flesh, and of the same persecuting spirit with him: wherefore as it was then, that carnal Ishmael persecuted spiritual Isaac, so at this time the carnal Jews persecuted the real Christians, (<4028>Galatians 4:28,29) nevertheless for the comfort of the latter, it is observed out of the Scripture that the former shall be cast out, and not be heir with them, (<4030>Galatians 4:30), and the conclusion of the whole is, that the saints under the Gospel dispensation are not in bondage to the law, but are made free by Christ; to which freedom they are called, and in which they should stand, (<4031>Galatians 4:31).

Ver. 1. *Now I say*, etc..] To illustrate what he had said of the law's being a schoolmaster to the Jews until the coming of Christ, and then ceasing as such, he proposes the case of an heir during his minority, till he come to the proper time of enjoying his estate.

that the heir, as long as he is a child; anyone that is an heir to his father's estate, or another's, whilst under age, being reckoned as a child, as he is from his infancy to his manhood,

differeth nothing from a servant: he is not his own man, nor at his own dispose; he cannot do as he pleases; he is under restraint; he is kept to school or to business, and is liable to correction and chastisement according as he behaves; nor can he have the free use of his father's estate,

though he be Lord of all, of all the servants, according to the Arabic version; or of the whole estate his father left him, of which he is Lord in right, but not in possession; he is right heir to it, though as yet it is not in his hands, nor can he do with it as he will.

Ver. 2. *But is under tutors and governors*, etc..] The word rendered "tutors", is adopted by the Jewish Targumists and Rabbins into their language; and by the former is used [f70] for any ruler and governor, civil or domestic; and by the latter, for such as are guardians of infants, fatherless children, and such as are under age, as it is here used; and who were either appointed by the will of the deceased, or by the sanhedrim, of whom they say [f71], ˆnymqwm al ynnqydl apwrjwpa, "we do not appoint a tutor or guardian for a bearded person"; that is, an adult person, one that is grown up to man's estate; but aqwnyl apwrjwpa hyl ˆnymqwm, "we appoint a

guardian for an infant"; and they had not used to appoint women or servants, or such as were minors themselves, or any of the common people; but men of substance, integrity, and wisdom [f72]; a fatherless child had two tutors [f73]; the power that guardians so appointed had, is at large described by Maimonides [f74]. Governors were such as acted under the tutors or guardians, and were employed by them for the improvement of their estates and minds, as stewards, schoolmasters, etc.. until the time appointed of the father; by his last will and testament, which might be sooner or later, as he pleased; but if he died intestate, the time of minority, and so the duration of tutors and guardians, were according to the laws of the nation; which with the Romans was until a man was twenty five years of age; and with the Jews, for a male, was until he was thirteen years of age and one day; and for a female, until she was twelve years of age and one day, if the signs of ripeness of age appeared; but if they did not, the time was protracted until they were twenty, and even sometimes till they were thirty five years of age, before the matter was determined [f75].

Ver. 3. *Even so we*, etc..] Jews, for of such the apostle is only speaking, and to whom he applies the above case of heirs in minority; it was to the Jews he had spoken of the law, as being a military guard, a prison, and a schoolmaster to them; and then having addressed the Gentiles, as being the children of God, baptized into Christ, one in him, interested in him, the spiritual seed of Abraham, and heirs of all the blessings of grace and glory; he returns to the Jews, and represents their estate and condition under the law by the above simile, which he here makes an application of:

when we were children; not in age, but in knowledge of divine, spiritual, and evangelical things; which must be understood not of every individual person among them, for there were some grown men, men of great faith, light, knowledge, and experience; but of the bulk and generality of the people of the Jews, and that also in comparison of the clear understanding of the saints under the Gospel dispensation. The Jews were like children, peevish, froward, and perverse, and often stood in need of correction and chastisement; and as children are pleased with pictures, shows, sights, and gaudy amusements, so they were taken with an external pompous form of worship, and which they had, and was suited to their infant state; and which infant state of the Jewish church commenced from the time of their coming up out of Egypt, and lasted until the times of the Messiah; (see <2Hos 11:1> Hosea 11:1,3).

Were in bondage under the elements of the world; by which are meant, not the four elements of fire, water, earth, and air; nor the angels, who by some are thought to preside over them; nor the sun and moon, according to whose revolutions the festivals of the Jews were regulated; but the several institutions of the Mosaic economy, which were to the Jews what an A B C, or an alphabet of letters, is to one that is beginning to learn; or what an accidence and grammar be to such who are learning any language, and which contain the rudiments of it; as the physical elements are the first principles of nature, and the general rules of speech and language are the rudiments thereof, so the Mosaic institutions were the elements, rudiments, or first principles of the Jewish religion, taught them by the law, as their schoolmaster, and by which they were used as children: these are called "elements", in allusion to the first principles of nature and learning; and the elements "of the world", because they lay in outward worldly and earthly things, as meats, drinks, divers washings, etc.. and because that hereby God instructed the world, at least a part of it, the world of the Jews: or as the word κοσμος may be rendered "beauty", or "elegancy", these were elegant elements, which in a most beautiful manner taught the people of the Jews the first principles of the doctrine of Christ: but nevertheless, whilst they were under the instructions and discipline of the law as a schoolmaster, "they were in bondage"; referring not to their bondage in Egypt, nor in the several captivities into which they were carried by their neighbours; nor to the bondage of sin and Satan, common to all men in a state of nature; but to the bondage which the law naturally gendered, led them to, induced upon them, and kept them in, through its sanctions and penalties; for, through fear of death, they were under a servile disposition, and were all their lifetime subject to bondage; they carried a yoke of bondage upon their necks, and were under a spirit of bondage unto fear; they were like children closely kept to school to learn their letters, say their lessons, and perform their tasks; and, if not, receive due correction, which kept them in continual fear and bondage.

Ver. 4. *But when the fulness of time was come*, etc..] The time agreed and fixed upon between God and his Son from all eternity, in the council and covenant of peace, when the Son of God should assume human nature; which time was diligently searched into by the prophets, was revealed unto them, and predicted by them; as more generally that it should be before the civil government ceased from Judah, and before the destruction of the second temple; and more particularly by Daniel in his prophecy of the

“seventy weeks”, towards and about the close of which there was a general expectation among the Jews of the Messiah's coming; and was the fulness of time here referred to, and what is sometimes called the dispensation of the fulness of time, the end of the Mosaic dispensation and Jewish church state, the last days of that state, and the end of the Jewish world, as to their ecclesiastical and civil polity. The Jews themselves own that the time of the Messiah's coming is fixed, and that at that time he shall come, whether they are worthy or not, for so it is asserted in their Talmud [f76];

> “says R. Jochanan, the son of David does not come, but in an age which is all worthy, or all wicked; in a generation which is all worthy, as it is written, (<23>Isaiah 60:21) in a generation that is all wicked, as it is written, (<23>Isaiah 66:5) and it is written, “for my name's sake will I do it”; says R. Alexander, R. Joshua ben Levi objects what is written, (<23>Isaiah 60:22) “in its time”; and it is written, “I will hasten it”; if they are worthy I will hasten it, if they are not worthy it shall be ht[b, “in its time”.”

And accordingly a more modern writer of theirs says [f77],

> “our redemption upon all accounts shall be, hnmzb, “in its time”, whether worthy or, wicked; but if worthy its time will be hastened;”

it must be owned they do not always say so: this phrase, “the fulness of time”, is an Hebraism, and is the same with ymy talm, in (<26>Ezekiel 5:2) which the Septuagint render την πληρωσιν των ημερων, “the fulness of days”, and we, “when the days were fulfilled”, when the time was up; and the same sense it has here, and it is also the same with d[wm, “the appointed time”, (<35>Habakkuk 2:3) and answers to προψεσμια του πατρος, “the time appointed of the Father”, (<48>Galatians 4:2).

God sent forth his Son; God not absolutely and essentially, but personally and relatively considered, is here meant, namely, God the Father, as appears from the relation the person sent stands in to him, “his Son”; not by creation, as angels, Adam, and all men are the sons of God; nor by adoption, as saints are; or by office, as magistrates be; or on account of his incarnation or resurrection from the dead, for he was the Son of God before either; but by divine generation, being the only begotten of the Father, of his divine nature and essence, equal to him, and one with him: and who was “sent” by him, not out of disrespect to him, but love to us;

nor without his consent or against his will, he readily and heartily agreeing to it; nor does it imply any local motion or change of place, but only designs the assumption of human nature; nor does it suppose any superiority and inferiority, for though Christ, as man, and in his office capacity, as Mediator, is inferior to the Father, yet not as to his divine nature, or as the Son of God; but it suggests, that he existed before he was sent, and that as a person, and as a distinct person from the Father, otherwise he could not with any propriety be said to be sent by him; and also that there was an entire harmony and agreement between them in this matter, the Father agreed to send his Son, and the Son agreed to be sent; and that as to his taking upon him the office of Mediator, and his assumption of human nature in order to obtain eternal redemption: all this was not of himself, but done in concert with his Father, from whom as Mediator he had his mission and commission;

made of a woman; "made", not created as Adam was; nor begotten by man, as men in common are; nor is he said to be born, though he truly was, but "made"; which word the Holy Ghost chooses, to express the mighty power of God, in his mysterious incarnation, wonderful conception, and birth; though some copies read, "born of a woman"; and so the Arabic and Ethiopic version: "of a woman"; whose seed he was from the beginning said to be; of a woman, without a man; of a woman, a virgin, as was foretold; and not only made and formed in her, but of her, of her flesh and blood, of which he took part; and which denotes the low estate and great humiliation of Christ, and shows that as sin came into the world by the woman, the Saviour from sin came also the same way:

made under the law; under the civil and judicial law as a Jew, to which he was subject, paying tribute to the collectors of it; and which was necessary; that it might appear he sprung from that nation, to whom he was promised; and that he came before the civil government of that people was at an end; and to teach us subjection to the civil magistrate: and as a son of Abraham he was made under the ceremonial law, was circumcised the eighth day, kept the several feasts of tabernacles, passover, etc.. and which was proper, since he was the principal end of it, in whom it centres, and for whose sake it was made; and that he might completely fulfil it, and by so doing put a period to it: and he was made under the moral law, both as a man and the surety of his people, and was subject to all the precepts of it, and bore the penalty of it, death, in their room and stead, and thereby fulfilled it, and delivered them from its curse and condemnation. So the

Targumist [f78], joins the incarnation of the Messiah and his subjection to the law together, as the apostle here does;

> “the prophet saith to the house of David, because a child is born unto us, and a son is given to us, hrjml yhwl[atyrwa lybqw, “and he hath took upon him the law to keep it, and his name shall be called”, etc..”

Ver. 5. *To redeem them that were under the law*, etc..] By whom are meant chiefly the Jews, who are elsewhere represented as in and under the law, in distinction from the Gentiles who were without it; (see <450212>Romans 2:12 <461001>1 Corinthians 9:20,21) the Gentiles indeed, though they were not under the law of Moses, yet were not without law to God, they were under the law of nature. The law was given to Adam as a covenant of works, and not to him as a single person, but as a federal head to all his posterity; hence he sinning, and they in him, they all came under its sentence of condemnation and death, God's elect not excepted, and who are the persons said to be redeemed; for Christ was not sent to redeem all that were under the law; for as all mankind were included in it as a covenant of works made with Adam, and all are transgressors of it, the whole world is pronounced guilty before God by it, and liable to the curse of it; but not all mankind, only some out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, are redeemed by Christ, even all the elect, whether among Jews or Gentiles. The chosen among the Jews seem to be here principally designed; the redemption of them, which is the end of Christ's being sent, intends not only a deliverance of them from sin and Satan, and the world, to whom they were in bondage, but from the law under which they were; from the bondage of the ceremonial, and from the curse and condemnation of the moral law:

that we might receive the adoption of children; by which may be meant, both the grace, blessing, and privilege of adoption, and the inheritance adopted to; both are received, and that in consequence of redemption by Christ; and such as receive the one will also receive the other. Adoption, as a blessing of grace, exists before it is received; nor does the reception of it add anything to the thing itself; it was in God's designation from all eternity, who predestinated his chosen ones unto it by Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will; it was provided, laid up, and secured for them in the everlasting covenant; and is part of that grace given them in Christ before the world began; but sin intervening, whereby the law was broken,

obstacles were thrown in the way of God's elect receiving and enjoying this privilege in their own persons; wherefore Christ was sent to redeem them from sin and the law, and by so doing remove these obstructions, that so they might receive this privilege in a way consistent with the righteousness and holiness of God, as well as with his grace and goodness: receiving of it shows it to be a gift, a free grace gift, and not owing to any merit of the creature; faith is the hand which receives it, as it does all other blessings, as Christ himself, grace out of his fulness, righteousness, pardon, etc.. and has no more causal influence on this than on any of these; faith does not make any the sons of God, or put them among the children; but receives the power, the authority, the privilege from God through Christ, under the witnessings of the spirit of adoption; whereby they become such, and have a right to the heavenly inheritance, which they shall hereafter enjoy.

Ver. 6. *And because ye are sons*, etc..] That is of God, so some copies read; and the Ethiopic version, “inasmuch as ye are his sons”; not in so high a sense as Christ is the Son of God; nor in so low a sense as all men are his offspring; nor in such sense as magistrates are the children of the most High; nor merely on account of a profession of religion, as the “sons of God” was a phrase very early used of the worshippers of the true God; but by virtue of adoption, and which is not owing to the merits of men, who are by nature children of wrath, but to the free rich sovereign grace of God. It is a privilege and blessing of grace in which all the three persons are concerned. The Father has predestinated to it, and in the covenant has provided and laid it up; he set up his Son as the pattern to which these sons should be conformed, and proposed the glory of his own grace, as the end; by virtue of which act of grace they were considered as the children of God, as early as the gift of them to Christ; and so by him when he partook of their flesh and blood, and died to gather them together who were scattered abroad; (see <58213>Hebrews 2:13,14 <43152>John 11:52). The Son of God has also an hand in this affair; for through his espousing their persons, they become the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty; and through his assumption of their nature they become his brethren, and so to be in the relation of sons to God; through his redemption they receive the adoption of children, and at his hands the privilege, the power itself, to become such. The Spirit of God not only regenerates them, which is an evidence of their sonship, but as a spirit of adoption manifests it to them, works faith in them to receive it, and frequently witnesses to the truth of it; all which show how any come and are known to be the sons of God. This

is a privilege that exceeds all others; it is more to be a son than to be a saint; angels are saints, but not sons, they are servants; it is more to be a child of God, than to be redeemed, pardoned, and justified; it is great grace to redeem from slavery, to pardon criminals, and justify the ungodly; but it is another and an higher act of grace to make them sons; and which makes them infinitely more honourable, than to be the sons and daughters of the greatest potentate upon earth; yea, gives them an honour which Adam had not in innocence, nor the angels in heaven, who though sons by creation, yet not by adoption. The consequence, and so the evidence of it, follows,

God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, “our Father”; all the three divine persons here appear, as having a concern in this business, as before observed; here are God and his Son, and the Spirit of his Son, said to be sent; by whom is designed not any work of his upon the heart, nor any of his gifts and graces; but he himself in person, even the same Spirit of God that moved upon the face of the waters at the creation of the world, and moved holy men of God to write the Scriptures; who formed and filled the human nature of Christ, and descended on him as a dove; and by whom Christ and his apostles wrought their miracles; and who is called the Spirit of his Son; as he is frequently by the Jews[f79], jyçm Ælm lç wjwr, “the Spirit of the King Messiah”; and sometimes[f80] hyrmym jwr, “the Spirit of his word”, the essential word of God; because he proceeds from him as from the Father, and because he dwells in him, in an eminent manner, as Mediator, and is sent by virtue of his mediation and intercession; and he is the rather mentioned under this character, because adoption proceeds upon the natural sonship of Christ, and is what is the peculiar office of the Spirit to testify. When he is said to be “sent”, it does not suppose any local motion or change of place in him, who is a spirit infinite, immense, and omnipresent; nor any inferiority to the Father that sends him, or to the Son whose Spirit he is; for he is one God with the Father and Son, and with the Father is the sender of Christ, (<23A816>Isaiah 48:16), but it regards his peculiar office in this affair of adoption, by agreement of all the three persons; the Father predestinated to it, the Son redeems, that it might be received, and the Spirit is sent to discover, apply, and bear witness to it; which is a wondrous instance of the grace of God. The place where he is sent is “into” the “heart”: where he is as a principle of spiritual life, and which he furnishes and supplies with all grace; where he dwells as in his temple, and is the evidence of God's dwelling there, and also of interest in Christ; is

there as a pledge and an earnest of future glory; and the whole is a surprising instance of condescending grace. The work he does there is various, and consists of divers parts; as convincing of sin, and righteousness, working faith, and acting the part of a comforter; but what is here referred to, is the discharge of his office as a spirit of adoption, "crying Abba, Father". The word Abba is an Hebrew, or rather a Syriac or Chaldee word, signifying "father"; and which is added for explanation sake; and its repetition may denote the vehemency of filial affection, the strength of faith and confidence as to interest in the relation; and being expressed both in Hebrew and Greek, may show that God is the Father both of Jews and Gentiles, and that there is but one Father of all; and if it might not be thought too curious an observation, it may be remarked that the word "Abba", read backwards or forwards, is the same pronunciation, and may teach us that God is the Father of his people in adversity as well as in prosperity. The act of "crying", though it is here ascribed to the Spirit, yet is not properly his, but the believers; and is attributed to him because he excites, encourages, and assists them as a spirit of adoption to call God their Father; and may be understood both of the secret internal crying of the soul, or exercise of faith on God as its Father, and of an open outward invocation of him as such, with much confidence, freedom, and boldness.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore thou art no more a servant*, etc..] This is a benefit resulting from adoption, and the manifestation of it to the children of God, and supposes them to have been formerly servants; as whilst in a natural state they were the servants of sin, the vassals of Satan, slaves to the world, and the lusts of it, and in bondage to the law; but now being declared to be the sons of God under the witnessings of the Spirit, they are freed from the servitude of sin, from the captivity of Satan, from the slavery of the world, and particularly from the law, and that spirit of bondage which it brought upon them, which is chiefly designed; and from which they are delivered by the spirit of adoption, enabling and encouraging them to cry "Abba", Father; so that they are now no more under the former servile spirit, the spirit of a servant,

but a son; whose spirit, state, and case, are vastly different from those of a servant: the servant has not that interest in his master's affections as the son has; nor that liberty of access to him; nor is he fed and clothed as he is, or shares in the same privileges he does; nor is his obedience performed in the same free generous manner, from a principle of love and gratitude, but in a servile and mercenary way; and though he may expect his wages, he cannot

hope for the inheritance; nor does he always abide in the house as the son does. He that is once a son, is always so, and no more a servant: predestination to sonship is immutable; it is God's act to put any among the children, and none can put them out; the covenant of grace, in which this blessing is secured, is unalterable; union with Christ, the Son of God, on which it is founded, is indissoluble; the spirit of adoption, wherever he witnesses, abides as such. They that are the sons of God may be corrected and chastised, as they often are, in a fatherly way; but these corrections are proofs for, and not against their sonship; they may indeed judge themselves unworthy to be called the sons of God, and may be in such frames of soul as to conclude, at least fear, they are not; but still the relation abides, and ever will. They will never more be servants, but always sons. The very learned Mr. Selden [f81] thinks the apostle alludes to a custom among the Jews, who allowed only freemen, and not servants and handmaids, to call any Abba, Father such an one, or “Imma”, Mother such an one: but this seems to proceed upon a mistaken sense, and rendering of a passage in the Talmud [f82], which is as follows, tynwlp amaw ynwlp aba µtwa ˆyrwq ˆya twjpçw µydb[; which he thus renders, “neither servants nor handmaids use this kind of appellation, Abba”, or “Father such an one”, and “Imma”, or “Mother such an one”; whereas it should be rendered, “servants and handmaids, they do not call them Abba, Father such an one”, and “Imma, Mother such an one”; this is clear from what follows. “The Family of “R. Gamaliel” used to call them Father such an one, and Mother such an one”; which in the other Talmud [f83] is, “the family of” R. Gamaliel “used to call their servants and their handmaids Father Tabi, and Mother Tabitha”; which were the names of the servant and handmaid of Gamaliel. Rather therefore reference is had to a tradition [f84] of theirs, that

> “a servant, who is carried captive, when others redeemed him, if under the notion of a servant, or in order to be one, he becomes a servant; but if under the notion of a freeman, db[tçy al, “he is no more a servant”.”

Or to the general expectation of that people, that when they are redeemed by the Messiah, they shall be servants no more; for so they say [f85],

> “your fathers, though they were redeemed, became servants again, but you, when ye are redeemed, ˆydb[tçm µta ˆya dw[, “shall be no more servants”;”

which in a spiritual sense is true of all that are redeemed by Christ, and through that redemption receive the adoption of children, and is what the apostle here means.

And if a son, then an heir of God through Christ; which is another benefit arising from adoption. Such as are the children of God, they are heirs of God himself; he is their portion and exceeding great reward; his perfections are on their side, and engaged for their good; all his purposes run the same way, and all his promises belong to them; they are heirs of all the blessings of grace and glory, of righteousness, of life, of salvation, and a kingdom and glory; and shall inherit all things, and all "through Christ": he is the grand heir of all things; they are joint heirs with him; their sonship is through him, and so is their heirship and inheritance; their inheritance is in his possession, it is reserved safe in him; and by him, and with him they shall enjoy it. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, only read, "an heir through God", and so the Vulgate Latin version; and the Ethiopic version only, "an heir of God".

Ver. 8. *Howbeit then, when ye know not God*, etc..] Whilst in Gentilism, and in a state of unregeneracy, they had no true knowledge of God; though they might know by the light of nature, and works of creation, that there was a God, yet they did not know who he was, but called either mortal men, or some one or other of the creatures, or stocks, and stones, and images of men's device, by this name; they knew not the God of Israel; they did not know God in Christ, and are therefore said to be without him; and a common description of them it is, that they knew not God: and whilst this was their case, what follows was true of them,

ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods; only by name, and in the opinion of men, but have no divinity in them, are only called gods, mere nominal, fictitious deities, who have nothing of the nature and essence of God in them; for there is but one God by nature and essence, the Father, Son, and Spirit; all others have only the name and appearance, but not the truth of deity; and these the Gentiles in their times of ignorance did "service" to, which is what the Jews call hrz hdwb[, "strange service"; that is, idolatry, concerning which there is a whole treatise in the Talmud, and which bears that name[f86]. This service lay in paying homage to them, worshipping of them, and performing various rites and ceremonies in a way of adoration, and which they reckoned religious service; and which, comparatively speaking, whilst in this state of blindness, was

excusable in them; though it is a wonderful instance of grace that such idolaters should be the sons of God.

Ver. 9. *But now, after that ye have known God*, etc.,] God in Christ, as their covenant God and Father, through the preaching of the Gospel, and in the light of divine grace; God having caused light to shine in their dark hearts; and having given them the light of the knowledge of himself in the face of Christ, and having sent down into their hearts the Spirit of his Son, crying "Abba", Father.

Or rather are known of God; for it is but little that the best of these, that have the greatest share of knowledge, know of him; and what knowledge they have, they have it first, originally, and wholly from him: that knowledge which he has of them is particular, distinct, and complete; and is to be understood, not of his omniscience in general, so all men are known by him; but of his special knowledge, joined with affection, approbation, and care: and the meaning is, that they were loved by him with an everlasting love, which had been manifested in their conversion, in the drawing of them to himself, and to his Son; that he approved of them, delighted in them, had an exact knowledge, and took special care of them: but, oh, folly and ingratitude!

how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto you desire again to be in bondage? meaning the ordinances of the ceremonial law, he before calls "the elements of the world", and here "weak", because they could not give life, righteousness, peace, joy, comfort, and salvation; and, since the coming of Christ, were become impotent to all the uses they before served; and beggarly, because they lay in the observation of mean things, as meats, drinks, etc.. and which were only shadows of those good things, the riches of grace and glory, which come by Christ. The Galatians are said to turn again to these; not that they were before in the observation of them, except the Jews, but because there was some likeness between these, and the ceremonies with which they carried on the service of their idols; and by showing an inclination to them, they discovered a good will to come into a like state of bondage they were in before; than which nothing could be more stupid and ungrateful in a people that had been blessed with so much grace, and with such clear Gospel light and knowledge.

Ver. 10. *Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years*.] Lest the apostle should be thought to suggest, without foundation, the inclination of

these people to be in bondage to the ceremonies of the law, he gives this as an instance of it; which is to be understood, not of a civil observation of times, divided into days, months, and years, for which the luminaries of the heavens were made, and into summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, which is not only lawful, but absolutely necessary; but of a religious observation of days, etc.. not of the lucky and unlucky days, or of any of the festivals of the Gentiles, but of Jewish ones. By "days" are meant their seventh day sabbaths; for since they are distinguished from months and years, they must mean such days as returned weekly; and what else can they be but their weekly sabbaths? These were peculiar to the Israelites, and not binding on others; and being typical of Christ, the true rest of his people, and he being come, are now ceased. By "months" are designed their new moons, or the beginning of their months upon the appearance of a new moon, which were kept by blowing trumpets, offering sacrifices, hearing the word of God, abstaining from work, and holding religious feasts; and were typical of that light, knowledge, and grace, the church receives from Christ, the sun of righteousness; and he, the substance, being come, these shadows disappeared. By "times" are intended the three times in the year, when the Jewish males appeared before the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the three feasts of tabernacles, passover, and pentecost, for the observance of which there was now no reason; not of the feast of tabernacles, since the word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us; nor of the passover, since Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us; nor of pentecost, or the feast of weeks, or of the first fruits of the harvest, since the Spirit of God was poured down in a plenteous manner on that day upon the apostles; and when the firstfruits of a glorious harvest were brought in to the Lord, in the conversion of three thousand souls. And by "years" are to be understood their sabbatical years; every seventh year the land had a rest, and remained untilled; there were no ploughing and sowing, and there was a general release of debtors; and every fiftieth year was a jubilee to the Lord, when liberty to servants, debtors, etc.. was proclaimed throughout the land: all which were typical of rest, payment of debts, and spiritual liberty by Christ; and which having their accomplishment in him, were no longer to be observed; wherefore these Galatians are blamed for so doing; and the more, because they were taught to observe them, in order to obtain eternal life and salvation by them.

Ver. 11. *I am afraid of you*, etc..] Which shows the danger he apprehended they were in, by taking such large steps from Christianity to

Judaism, and expresses the godly jealousy of the apostle over them; intimates he had some hope of them, and in the whole declares his great love and affection for them; for love is a thing full of care and fear:

lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain; in preaching the Gospel among them with so much diligence and constancy, though so many afflictions and pressures lay upon him. Faithful ministers of the word are laborious ones; and such an one was the apostle; and who indeed laboured more abundantly than the rest in all places wherever he came; and such will be concerned, as he was, lest their labours should be in vain, not to themselves, but to the souls of others, whose everlasting good and welfare they are seeking. But how is it that the apostle should fear that his labour in preaching the Gospel would be in vain, and become of no effect through their observance of days, months, times, and years? because that hereby the pure spiritual and evangelic worship of God was corrupted, they bringing into it that which God had removed, and so became guilty of will worship; their Christian liberty was infringed, and they brought into bondage, a deliverance from which the Gospel proclaims; the doctrine of free grace in pardon, justification, and salvation, was made void, they observing these things in order to procure them thereby; and it was virtually and tacitly saying, that Christ was not come in the flesh, which is the main article of the Gospel; for since these things had respect to him, and were to continue no longer than till his coming, to keep on the observation of them, was declaring that he was not come; which is in effect to set aside the whole Gospel, and the ministration of it; so that the apostle might justly fear, that by such a proceeding all his labour, and the pains he had took to preach the Gospel, and salvation by Christ unto them, would be in vain.

Ver. 12. *Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am*, etc..] Though they had gone so far backwards, yet still hoping well of them that they would he reclaimed, he styles them “brethren”: not in a carnal but spiritual relation, as being born of God, and belonging to his family; and out of his sincere and hearty love for them as his brethren in Christ, he exhorts them to be as he was; which some understand of affection, as desiring them to show the same love to him as to themselves, that he might be to them as another I, as a part of themselves; so true friendship makes, and true friends look upon each other to be, as Jonathan and David, and the first Christians were, of one heart and soul. But this phrase rather seems to have regard to likeness and imitation; and the sense is, that he would have them to be as he was, and do as he did; to be as free from the law, and the servitude and

bondage of it, as he was; to reckon themselves dead unto it, as he did; and to relinquish the observance of days, and months, and times, and years, and any and every part of the ceremonial law, and to account all these things, as he had done, loss and dung for Christ; and this he presses, not in an authoritative way, laying his commands as an apostle upon them, but in a kind and gentle manner entreating them: and which he backs with the following reason or argument,

for I am as ye are; as your very selves; I have the same love for you, you have for yourselves; I love you as I do myself; this way go such interpreters that understand the exhortation to regard love and affection: but rather the meaning is, be as I am, and do as I do, "because I was as you are"; so the Syriac and Arabic versions read the words. Some think that the apostle particularly addresses the Jews in these churches; and that his sense is, that he was born a Jew, as they were, was brought up in the Jewish religion, and in the observance of these things, as they had been, and yet he had relinquished them, therefore would have them do so likewise: or rather his intention is, that he had been as zealous for the observation of the ceremonial law, and all the rituals of it, as they now were; and though he was a Jew by birth, and had had a Jewish education, and so had been prejudiced in favour of these things, yet he had renounced them all; and therefore they who were Gentiles, and were never under obligation to them, should never think of coming into bondage by them; and since he had accommodated himself to them, and had become all things to all, that he might gain some, whether Jews or Gentiles, so he hoped they would condescend to him, and follow his example: or this may have respect, not to his former but present state, according to our version; and the sense be, I am as you are, and you are as I am with respect to things spiritual; we are both alike in Christ, chosen in him, and redeemed by him; are equally regenerated by his Spirit, and are all the children of God by faith in him, and no more servants; are all equally Christ's free men, and have a right to the same privileges and immunities; and therefore be as I am, as free from observing the ceremonies of the law, and so from the bondage of it, since we are upon an equal foot, and upon the same foundation in Christ.

Ye have not injured me at all; what injury they had done was to God, whose will it was that these things should be abolished; and to Christ, who had broken down the middle wall of partition; and to the Gospel, which proclaimed liberty to the captives; and to their own souls, by entangling themselves with the yoke of bondage; but no personal private injury was

done to the apostle by their compliance with the law. This he says, lest they should think that he spoke out of anger and resentment, and on account of any personal affront offered to him; which leads him to take notice of their former kindness and respect to him, and which he designs as a reason why they should pay the same deference to him now as then.

Ver. 13. *Ye know how, through infirmity of the flesh*, etc..] Meaning either their infirmity, to which the apostle accommodated himself in preaching the Gospel to them, delivering it in such a manner as suited with their capacities, feeding them with milk, and not with strong meat; or his own infirmity, respecting either some particular bodily infirmity and disorder, as the headache, with which he is said to be greatly troubled; or the weakness of his bodily presence, the mean outward appearance he made, the contemptibleness of his voice, and the great humility with which he behaved; or rather the many reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions which attended him, when, says he,

I preached the Gospel unto you at the first; not the law, but the Gospel; and this he did at his first entrance among them, and was the first that preached it to them, and was the means of their conversion; and therefore, being their spiritual Father, they ought to be as he was, and follow him as they had him for an example.

Ver. 14. *And my temptation which was in my flesh*, etc..] The same with the infirmity of his flesh, and which was a trial of his faith and patience, and every other grace, as the afflictions of the saints be. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, “your temptation in my flesh”; that which was a trial of them, whether they would receive him or not. This

ye despised not; nor the apostle on the account of it, nor his ministry; they thought never the worse of him, nor of the Gospel he preached, because of this:

nor rejected; him, nor the counsel of God declared by him,

but received me; as they did, into their cities and places of worship, into their houses, and into their hearts and affections: and that

as an angel of God; with all that reverence and respect, that high esteem, veneration, and affection, as if one of the celestial inhabitants had been sent down from heaven to bring them the good tidings of the Gospel: or “as a

messenger of God", as the phrase may be rendered: as one that had his mission and commission from God, which was not at all disputed by them: but they looked upon him under that character, and regarded him as such,

even as Christ Jesus; as his ambassador, as representing him, as being in his stead; yea, if he had been personally present as man among them, they could not have shown greater respect to him as such, than they did to the apostle; for as for any religious worship and adoration, that they did not offer to him; and had they, he would have addressed them in like manner he did the inhabitants of Lystra, (Acts 14:14,15). Now since they showed him so much respect, notwithstanding all his infirmities, temptations, and afflictions, when he first preached the Gospel; what should hinder that they should not pay the same regard to him now, by abiding in his doctrine and following his example, since he was the same man in his principles and practices now as then?

Ver. 15. *Where is then the blessedness you spake of*? etc..] Or, as some copies read, "what was then your blessedness?" what, and how great was it? meaning, when the Gospel was first preached to them by him; when Christ was revealed to them as God's salvation; when the doctrines of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, and full pardon by his atonement and satisfaction by his sacrifice, were published among them; when the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts, and the Spirit of Christ was sent thither, crying "Abba", Father: but, alas! where was this blessedness now, since they were turning to the weak and beggarly elements of the ceremonial law, and were inclined to observe its ordinances, and bring themselves hereby into a state of bondage? They were happy persons while under the ministry of the apostle; as a Gospel ministry is a great happiness to any that enjoy it; for this is the way to find eternal life, to have spiritual peace and pleasure, joy and comfort, light and liberty, whereas a contrary doctrine leads to all the reverse. The apostle hereby puts them in mind how they were looked upon as happy persons by himself at that time, whom they received with so much respect and reverence, and his ministry with so much readiness and cheerfulness, and to so much profit and advantage; and also by other churches who were sensible of the high favour they enjoyed, by having so great a preacher of the Gospel among them; and even at that time they thought themselves the happiest persons in the world, and that they could not have been more so, unless they had had Christ himself in person among them; so beautiful were the feet of this bringer of glad tidings to them:

for I bear you record, that if it had been possible ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me; so fully persuaded was the apostle of their strong and sincere affection for him at that time, that he was ready to attest the truth of this in any form to any persons; that were it a possible thing for them, and could it have been of any advantage to him, they would even have plucked out their eyes, than which nothing is dearer, or more useful to a man, and have parted with them to him, and for his sake; and doubtless persons so affected would cheerfully have laid down their lives for him; but things had taken another turn since.

Ver. 16. *Amos I therefore become your enemy*, etc..] Not that he was an enemy to them, he had the same cordial affection for them as ever; he had their true interest at heart, and was diligently pursuing it; but they, through the insinuations of the false teachers, had entertained an ill opinion of him, and an aversion to him, and treated him as if he had been an enemy to them, and as if they had a real hatred of him: and that for no other reason, as he observes, but

because I tell you the truth; the Gospel so called, because it comes from the God of truth, is concerned with Christ, who is truth itself, and is dictated, revealed, and blessed by the Spirit of truth; and is opposed unto, and is distinct from the law, which is only an image and shadow, and not truth itself: it chiefly respects the great truths of salvation alone by Christ, and justification by his righteousness; and may also regard what he had said concerning the abrogation of the law, blaming them for the observance of it, and calling its institutions weak and beggarly elements; all which he told or spoke publicly, plainly, honestly, fully, and faithfully, boldly, constantly, and with all assurance, consistently, and in pure love to their souls; and yet it brought on him their anger and resentment. Telling the truth in such a manner often brings many enemies to the ministers of Christ; not only the men of the world, profane sinners, but professors of religion, and sometimes such who once loved and admired them.

Ver. 17. *They zealously affect you*, etc..] Or “are jealous of you”; meaning the false apostles, whose names, in contempt, he mentions not, being unworthy to be taken notice of, and their names to be transmitted to posterity. These were jealous of them, not with a godly jealousy, as the apostle was, lest their minds should be corrupted from the simplicity of the Gospel; but they were jealous, lest they should love the apostle more than

they, and therefore represented him in a very bad light, and expressed great love and kindness for them themselves:

but not well; their zeal and affection were not hearty, and sincere, and without dissimulation, but were all feigned, were only in word and in tongue, not in deed, and in truth: this zealous affection neither proceeded from right principles, nor with right views; they sought themselves, and their own carnal worldly interest, their own pleasure and profit, and not the good and welfare of the souls of these Galatians:

yea, they would exclude you; that is, either from the apostle, from bearing any love unto, and having any respect for him. What they were wishing and seeking for was to draw off the minds and affections of these persons from him; or they were desirous of removing them from the Gospel of Christ unto another Gospel, and did all they could to hinder them from obeying the truth; and particularly were for shutting them out of their Christian liberty, and bringing them under the bondage of the law; yea, were for separating them from the churches, that they might set up themselves at the head of them. Some copies read “us”, instead of “you”; and then the meaning is, that they were desirous of excluding the apostle from their company, and from having any share in their affections, which makes little alteration in the sense: and others, instead of “exclude”, read “include”; and which is confirmed by the Syriac version, which renders the word ˆwkçbjml, “but they would include you”; that is, either they would include, or imprison you under the law, and the bondage of it; or they would monopolize you, and engross all your love to themselves; and which is also the sense of the Arabic version:

that you might affect them; love them, show respect to them, be on their side, follow their directions, imbibe their doctrines, and give up yourselves wholly to their care, and be at their call and command.

Ver. 18. *But it is good to be zealously affected*, etc..] A zealous affection when right is very commendable, as the instances of Phinehas, Elijah, John the Baptist, and our Lord Jesus Christ show, and a contrary spirit is very disagreeable. But then it must be expressed

in a good thing; in a good cause, for God, and the things of Christ; for the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, and for the discipline of God's house, and against immorality and profaneness, errors and heresies: and it should be “always”; not at certain times, and upon some particular accounts, but it

should be constant, and always continue; it should be ever the same towards God, Christ, and his ministers:

and not only when I am present with you; by which the apostle suggests, that while he was with them they were zealously attached to him and truth; but no sooner was he gone from them, but their zealous affection abated, and was fixed on others, which discovered their weakness, fickleness, and inconstancy; whereas he was always the same to them, and bore the same love to them, as the following words show.

Ver. 19. *My little children*, etc..] A soft and tender way of speaking, used by Christ to his disciples, and frequently by that affectionate and beloved disciple, John. It is expressive of the apostle's strong love and affection for them, and points out their tenderness in the faith, and that small degree of spiritual light and knowledge they had, as well as signifies that he had been, as he hoped, and in a judgment of charity believed, an instrument of their conversion, and was their spiritual parent: hence it follows,

of whom I travail in birth again; he compares himself to a woman with child, as the church in bringing forth souls to Christ sometimes is; and all his pains and labours in the ministry of the word to the sorrows of a woman during the time of childbearing, and at the birth. When he first came among them, he laboured exceedingly; he preached the Gospel in season, and out of season; he followed his indefatigable endeavours with importunate prayers; and his ministry among them was attended with much weakness of body, and with many reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions, comparable to the birth throes of a woman in travail: however, as he hoped he was the means of their being born again, of the turning of them from Heathenism to Christianity, and from serving idols to serve the living God, and believe in his Son Jesus Christ; but the false apostles coming among them had so strangely wrought upon them, and they were so much gone back and degenerated, that they seemed to be like so many abortions, or as an unformed foetus; wherefore he laboured again with all his might and main, by writing to them, using arguments with them, sometimes giving them good words, at other times rough ones, and fervently praying for them, if possible, to recover them from Judaism, to which they were inclined, to the pure Gospel of Christ.

Until Christ be formed in you; which is the same as to be created in Christ, to be made new creatures, or new men in him; or, in other words, to have the principle of grace wrought in the soul, which goes by the name of

Christ formed in the heart; because it is from him, he is the author of it, and it bears a resemblance to him, and is that by which he lives, dwells, and reigns in the souls of his people. Now though, as he hoped, this new man, new creature, or Christ, was formed in them before, when he first preached the Gospel to them; yet it was not a perfect man; particularly their knowledge of Christ, of his Gospel, and Gospel liberty, was far from being so, in which they went backwards instead of forwards; and therefore he was greatly concerned, laboured exceedingly, and vehemently endeavoured, which he calls travailing in birth again, to bring them to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. It is also the same as to be conformed to the image of Christ, which in regeneration is stamped upon the saints, and is gradually increased, and will be perfected in heaven; and that this might more manifestly appear, over which a veil was drawn, by their departure in any degree from the truths of the Gospel, was what he earnestly sought after: once more, it is the same as to have the form of Christ; that is, of the Gospel of Christ upon them, or to be cast into the form of doctrine, and mould of the Gospel, and to receive a Gospel impression and spirit from it; which is to have a spirit of liberty, in opposition to legal bondage; to live by faith on Christ, and not on the works of the law; to derive comfort alone from him, and not from any services and duties whatever; to have repentance, and the whole course of obedience, influenced by the grace of God, and love of Christ; and to be zealous of good works, and yet have no dependence on them for justification and salvation. This is what the apostle so earnestly desired, when, instead of it, these Galatians seemed to have the form of Moses, and of the law.

Ver. 20. *I desire to be present with you now*, etc..] His meaning is, either that be wished he was personally present among them; that he had but an opportunity of seeing them face to face, and telling them all his mind, and in such a manner as he could not in a single epistle; or that they would consider him, when they read this epistle, as if he was really among them; and as if they saw the concern of his mind, the agonies of his soul, the looks of his countenance, and heard the different tone of his voice:

and to change my voice; when present with them, either by a different way of preaching; that whereas before he preached the Gospel of the grace of God unto them, and his voice was charming to them like that of an angel, and even of Jesus Christ himself; but they having turned their backs upon

it, and slighted it, he would now thunder out the law to them they seemed to be so fond of; even that voice of words, which when, the Israelites on Mount Sinai heard, entreated they might hear no more; as these Galatians also must when they heard the true voice of it, which is no other than a declaration of wrath, curse, and damnation; or by using a different way of speaking to them, as necessity might require, either softly or roughly, beseeching or chiding them, which might more move and affect them than an epistle could:

for I stand in doubt of you, The Vulgate Latin reads it, "I am confounded in you"; and the Syriac, hymtd, "I am stupefied"; and to the same sense the Arabic. He was ashamed of them for their apostasy and degeneracy; he was amazed and astonished at their conduct; or, as the word may be rendered, be was "perplexed" on their account; he did not know what to think of them, and their state; sometimes he hoped well of them, at other times he was ready to despair; nor did he well know what course to take with them, whether to use them roughly or smoothly, and what arguments might be most proper and pertinent, in order to reclaim them.

Ver. 21. *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law*, etc..] Not merely to obey it, as holy, just, and good, from a principle of love, and to testify subjection and gratitude to God; so all believers desire to bc under the law: but these men sought for justification and salvation by their obedience to it: they desired to be under it as a covenant of works, which was downright madness and folly to the last degree, since this was the way to come under the curse of it; they wanted to be under the yoke of the law, which is a yoke of bondage, an insupportable one, which the Jewish fathers could not bear; and therefore it was egregious weakness in them to desire to come under it: wherefore the apostle desires them to answer this question,

do ye not hear the law? meaning either the language and voice of the law of Moses, what it says to transgressors, and so to them; what it accused them of, and charged them with; how it declared them guilty before God, pronounced them accursed, and, ministered sententially condemnation and death unto them; and could they desire to be under such a law? or rather the books of the Old Testament, particularly the five books of Moses, and what is said therein; referring them, as Christ did the Jews, to the Scriptures, to the writings of Moses, and to read, hear, and observe what is in them, since they professed so great a regard to the law; from whence they might learn, that they ought not to be under the bondage and servitude

of it. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “have ye not read the law?” and so one of Stephens's copies; that is, the books of the law; if you have, as you should, you might observe what follows.

Ver. 22. *For it is written*, etc..] In (<01615>Genesis 16:15 21:9)

that Abraham had two sons, not two sons only; for besides the two referred to, he had six more, (<01252>Genesis 25:2) but it being only pertinent to the apostle's purpose to take notice of these two, he mentions no more, though he does not deny that he had any more. These two sons were Ishmael and Isaac:

the one by a bondmaid. Ishmael was by Hagar, Sarah's servant, who represented the covenant the Jewish nation was under the bondage of.

The other by a free woman. Isaac was by Sarah, Abraham's proper and lawful wife, who was mistress of the family, and represented in figure the covenant, and Gospel church state, and all believers, Gentiles as well as Jews, as under the liberty thereof.

Ver. 23. *But he who was of the bondwoman*, etc..] Ishmael, who was begotten and born of Hagar,

was born after the flesh; after the common order and course of nature, through the copulation of two persons, the one able to procreate, and the other fit for the conception of children; and was typical of the Jews, the natural descendants of Abraham, who, as such, and upon that account, were not the children of God, nor heirs of the eternal inheritance:

but he of the free woman was by promise; by a previous promise made by God to Abraham, that he should have a son in his old age, when his body was now dead, and when Sarah his wife, who had always been barren, was now grown old, and past the time of bearing children; so that Isaac was born out of the common order and course of nature; his conception and birth were owing to the promise and power of God, and to his free grace and favour to Abraham. This son of promise was a type of the spiritual seed of Abraham, whether Jews or Gentiles, the children of the promise that are counted for the seed; who are born again of the will, power, and grace of God, and are heirs, according to the promise, both of grace and glory, when they that are of the law, and the works of it, are not. All which is further illustrated in the following verses.

Ver. 24. *Which things are an allegory*, etc..] Or “are allegorized”: so Sarah and Hagar were allegorized by Philo the Jew [f87], before they were by the apostle. Sarah he makes to signify virtue, and Hagar the whole circle of arts and sciences, which are, or should be, an handmaid to virtue; but these things respecting Hagar and Sarah, the bondwoman and the free, and their several offspring, are much better allegorized by the apostle here. An allegory is a way of speaking in which one thing is expressed by another, and is a continued metaphor; and the apostle's meaning is, that these things point at some other things; have another meaning in them, a mystical and spiritual one, besides the literal; and which the Jews call çrdm, “Midrash”, a name they give to the mystical and allegorical sense of Scripture, in which they greatly indulge themselves. An allegory is properly a fictitious way of speaking; but here it designs an accommodation of a real history, and matter of fact, to other cases and things, and seems to intend a type or figure; and the sense to be, that these things which were literally true of Hagar and Sarah, of Ishmael and Isaac, were types and figures of things to come; just as what befell the Israelites were types and figures of things that would be under the Gospel dispensation, (<460101>1 Corinthians 10:11)

for these are the two covenants, or “testaments”; that is, these women, Hagar and Sarah, signify, and are figures of the two covenants; not the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace. Hagar was no figure of the covenant of works, that was made and broke before she was born; besides, the covenant she was a figure of was made at Mount Sinai, whereas the covenant of works was made in paradise: moreover, the covenant of works was made with Adam, and all his posterity, but the covenant which Hagar signified was only made with the children of Israel; she represented Jerusalem, that then was with her children. Nor was Sarah a figure of the covenant of grace, for this was made long before she had a being, even from everlasting; but they were figures of the two administrations of one and the same covenant, which were to take place in the world successively; and which following one the other, are by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews called the first and the second, the old and the new covenants. Now these are the covenants or testaments, the old and the new, and the respective people under them, which were prefigured by these two women, and their offspring.

The one from the Mount Sinai; that is, one of these covenants, or one of the administrations of the covenant, one dispensation of it, which is the first, and now called old, because abolished, took its rise from Mount

Sinai, was delivered there by God to Moses, in order to be communicated to the people of Israel, who were to be under that form of administration until the coming of the Messiah. And because the whole Mosaic economy was given to Moses on Mount Sinai, it is said to be from thence: hence, in Jewish writings, we read, times without number, of ynysm hçml hklh, a rite, custom, constitution, or appointment given to Moses "from Mount Sinai", the same phrase as here. Sinai signifies "bushes", and has its name from the bushes which grew upon if, [f88]; in one of which the Lord appeared to Moses; for Horeb and Sinai are one and the same mount; one signifies waste and desolate, the other bushy; as one part of the mountain was barren and desert, and the other covered with bushes and brambles; and may fitly represent the condition of such that are under the law.

Which gendereth to bondage; begets and brings persons into a state of bondage, induces on them a spirit of bondage to fear, and causes them to be all their lifetime subject to it; as even such were that were under the first covenant, or under the Old Testament dispensation:

which is Agar; or this is the covenant, the administration of it, which Hagar, the bondwoman, Sarah's servant, represented.

Ver. 25. *For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia*, etc..] The Arabic version, instead of Arabia, reads "Balca". The Syriac version makes Hagar to be a mountain, reading the words thus, "for Mount Hagar is Sinai, which is in Arabia": and some have been of opinion that Sinai was called Hagar by the Arabians. It is certain, that rgj, which may be pronounced Hagar, does signify in the Arabic language a stone or rock; and that one part of Arabia is called Arabia Petraea, from the rockiness of it; the metropolis of which was trgj, or "Agara", and the inhabitants Agarenes; and Hagar was the name of the chief city of Bahrein, a province of Arabia [f89]: and it may be observed, that when Hagar, with her son, was cast out, they dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, (<012121>Genesis 21:21) which was near to Sinai, as appears from (<041012>Numbers 10:12 <053302>Deuteronomy 33:2) so that it is possible that this mount might be so called from her, though there is no certainty of it; and near to it, as Grotius observes, was a town called Agra, mentioned by Pliny [f90] as in Arabia. However, it is clear, that Sinai was in Arabia, out of the land of promise, where the law was given, and seems to be mentioned by the apostle with this view, that it might be observed, and teach us that the inheritance is not of the law. It is placed by Jerom [f91] in the land of Midian; and it is certain it must be near it, if not in it, as is clear

from (Exodus 3:1). And according to Philo the Jew [f92], the Midianites, as formerly called, were a very populous nation of the Arabians: and Madian, or Midian, is by [f93] Mahomet spoken of as in Arabia; and it may be observed, that they that are called Midianites in (Genesis 37:36) are said to be Ishmaelites, (Genesis 39:1) the name by which the Arabians are commonly called by the Jews. The apostle therefore properly places this mountain in Arabia. But after all, by Agar, I rather think the woman is meant: and that the sense is, that this same Agar signifies Mount Sinai, or is a figure of the law given on that mount.

And answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children; that is, agrees with and resembles the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of all the cities and towns in Judea; and she, being a bondwoman, represented that state of bondage the Jews were in, when the apostle wrote this, who were in a state of civil, moral, and legal bondage; in civil bondage to the Romans, being tributaries to the empire of Rome, and under the jurisdiction of Caesar; in moral bondage to sin, to Satan, to the world and the lusts of it, whose servants they in general were; and in legal bondage to the ceremonial law, which was a yoke of bondage: they were in bondage under the elements or institutions of it, such as circumcision, a yoke which neither they, nor their forefathers could bear, because it bound them over to keep the whole law; the observance of various days, months, times, and years, and the multitude of sacrifices they were obliged to offer, which yet could not take away sin, nor free their consciences from the load of guilt, but were as an handwriting of ordinances against them; every sacrifice they brought declaring their sin and guilt, and that they deserved to die as the creature did that was sacrificed for them; and besides, this law of commandments, in various instances, the breach of it was punishable with death, through fear of which they were all their life long subject to bondage: they were also in bondage to the moral law, which required perfect obedience of them, but gave them no strength to perform; showed them their sin and misery, but not their remedy; demanded a complete righteousness, but did not point out where it was to be had; it spoke not one word of peace and comfort, but all the reverse; it admitted of no repentance; it accused of sin, pronounced guilty on account of it, cursed, condemned, and threatened with death for it, all which kept them in continual bondage: and whereas the far greater part of that people at that time, the Jerusalem that then was, the Scribes, Pharisees, and generality of the nation, were seeking for justification by the works of the law, this

added to their bondage; they obeyed it with mercenary views, and not from love but fear; and their comforts and peace rose and fell according to their obedience; and persons in such a way must needs be under a spiritual bondage.

Ver. 26. *But Jerusalem which is above*, etc..] This Sarah was a type and figure of; she answered to, and agreed with this; which is to be understood, not of the church triumphant in heaven, but of the Gospel church state under the administration of the new covenant; and that, not as in the latter day glory, when the new Jerusalem shall descend from God out of heaven, but as it then was in the apostle's time, and has been since. Particular respect may be had to the first Gospel church at Jerusalem, which consisted of persons born from above, was blessed with a Gospel spirit, which is a spirit of liberty, out of which the Gospel went into all the world, and from among whom the apostles and first preachers of the word went forth everywhere, and were the means of the conversion of multitudes, both among Jews and Gentiles, and so might be truly said to be the mother of us all. The church in general, under the Gospel, may be, as it often is, called Jerusalem, because of its name, the vision of peace; being under the government of the Prince of peace; the members of it are sons of peace, who are called to peace, and enjoy it; the Gospel is the Gospel of peace, and the ordinances of it are paths of peace; and the new covenant, under the administration of which the saints are, is a covenant of peace. Jerusalem was the object of God's choice, the palace of the great King, the place of divine worship, was compact together, and well fortified: the Gospel church state consists of persons, who, in general, are the elect of God, among whom the Lord dwells, as in his temple. Here his worship is observed, his word is preached, and his ordinances administered; saints laid on the foundation, Christ, and being fitly framed together, grow up unto an holy temple in him, and are surrounded by him, as Jerusalem was with mountains, and are kept by his power unto salvation. This is said to be above, to distinguish it from the earthly Jerusalem, the inhabitants of which were chiefly men of the world, carnal men; but this heavenly Jerusalem, or Gospel church state, chiefly consists of persons born from above, called with an heavenly calling, and who bear the image of the heavenly one, whose conversation is in heaven, who are seeking things above, and in a little time will be there themselves; its constitution and form of government are from above, and so are its doctrines, and its ordinances. The Jews often Speak of aly[ld µlçwry, or hal[, or hl[m lç, “Jerusalem above”

[f94], as distinguished from Jerusalem below: and to this distinction the apostle seems to have respect here, who further says concerning this Jerusalem, that she

is free; from the servitude of sin, Satan, and the world, from the yoke of the law, and from a spirit of bondage; having the Spirit of God, the spirit of adoption, who is a free spirit, and makes such free that enjoy him; and where he is, there is true liberty. He adds,

which is the mother of us all; that are born again, whether Jews or Gentiles, as particularly the church at Jerusalem was, and the Gospel church state in general may be said to be; since here souls are born and brought forth to Christ, are nursed up at her side, and nourished with her breasts of consolation, the word and ordinances. This form of speech is also Jewish: thus it is said [f95] that

> "Zion, larçyd ^ma, "the mother of Israel", shall bring forth her sons, and Jerusalem shall receive the children of the captivity."

Again, explaining (<20>1224Proverbs 28:24) it is observed [f96], that there is no father but the ever blessed God, wma ^yaw, "and no mother" but the congregation of Israel. Some copies leave out the word "all"; and so do the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and only read, "the mother of us", or "our mother".

Ver. 27. *For it is written*, etc..] (<23>4401Isaiah 44:1), which is cited to prove, that the heavenly Jerusalem, or Gospel church state, is the mother of us all, and has brought forth, and still will bring forth, many souls to Christ, even many more than were under the legal dispensation by the Jewish church, though the Lord was an husband to them, (<24>3132Jeremiah 31:32). The words are,

rejoice thou barren that bearest not, break forth and cry thou that travailest not, for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband; by her that was "barren", and "bore" not, and "travailed" not, and was "desolate", is not meant the Gentile world, which before the coming of Christ was barren and destitute of the knowledge of him, and from among whom very few were called by grace; but the Gospel church in the first beginnings of it, in Christ's time, and especially about the time of his death, and before the pouring forth of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, when the number of its members were few; for the names of the

disciples together were but 120, when it seemed to be barren, and desolate, and deprived of its husband Christ, but was quickly to have a large accession to, it, both of Jews and Gentiles; and therefore is called upon to "rejoice, break forth", and "cry"; that is, to break forth into songs of praise, and express her spiritual joy, by singing aloud, and setting forth in hymns and spiritual songs the glory of powerful and efficacious grace, in the conversion of such large numbers of souls, the like of which had never been known under the former administration. Three thousand were converted under one sermon, and added to this first Gospel church; and the number of its members still increased, and the number of the men that afterwards believed was about five thousand; and after this we hear of more believers being added to the Lord, both men and women; and also that a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith; and when out of this church, the apostles, and other preachers of the Gospel went everywhere into the Gentile world, thousands of souls were converted, and a large number of churches formed, and a spiritual seed has been preserved ever since; and in the latter day Zion will travail in birth, and bring forth a numerous offspring; a nation shall be born at once, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in. Agreeably to this sense the Jewish writers, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Aben Ezra, understand this passage of Jerusalem; as does also the Chaldee paraphrase, which renders it thus:

> "Praise, O Jerusalem, which was as a barren woman that bringeth not forth; rejoice in praise, and be glad, who was as a woman which conceives not, for more are the children of Jerusalem forsaken than the children of the habitable city, saith the Lord."

Ver. 28. *Now we, brethren, as Isaac was*, etc..] The Ethiopic version reads, "you, brethren"; and so one of Stephens's copies. As the two women, Hagar and Sarah, might be, and are allegorized; so likewise their respective offspring. Isaac signified, and was a type and figure of Abraham's spiritual seed, whether Jews or Gentiles, under the Gospel dispensation: and as he was, so they are,

the children of promise; as Isaac was promised unto Abraham, so were this spiritual seed, when it was said unto him, that he should be the father of many nations, as he is the father of us all, even of all them that believe, be they of what nation soever; and as Isaac was born by virtue, and in consequence of a promise made to Abraham of God's free good will and pleasure, and his generation and conception were beyond the strength and

course of nature, were the effects of a divine power, and were something supernatural; so this spiritual seed are born again, by virtue, and in consequence of a promise, not only made to Abraham, but to the Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the covenant, that he should see his seed, enjoy a numerous offspring, and which should endure for ever; and also to the church, of whom it is said, that this and that man should be born in her; and particularly in consequence of the promise cited in the foregoing verse, from whence these words are an inference, deduction, or illustration: and these children of the promise, so called from hence, are born again, above and beyond the strength of nature; not through the power and free will of man, but through the abundant mercy and sovereign will of God, by his powerful and efficacious grace, and by the word of promise, the Gospel, as a means. Moreover, to these children, or spiritual seed of Abraham, signified by Isaac, do all the promises belong, as that of God, as a covenant God gave unto them; of Christ, as a Saviour and Redeemer; of the Holy Spirit, as a sanctifier and comforter; and of all good things, of temporal mercies, so far as are for their real good; and of all spiritual blessings, as righteousness, peace, pardon, comfort, all supplies of grace, and eternal life: and these likewise receive these promises; the Holy Spirit, as a spirit of promise, opens and applies them to them, puts them into the hand of faith, and enables them to plead them with God, and to believe the performance of them; so that this character in all respects agrees with them.

Ver. 29. *But as then*, etc..] In the times of Abraham, when Hagar and Sarah, the types of the two dispensations of the covenant, and Ishmael and Isaac, the figures of the two different seeds, the natural and spiritual seed of Abraham, legalists and true believers, were living:

he that was born after the flesh; which was Ishmael, who was a type, or an allegorical representation of such who were under the Sinai covenant, and were seeking for righteousness by the works of the law; as he was born after the flesh, according to the ordinary course of nature, and was, as he was born, a carnal man; so are self-justiciaries, notwithstanding all their pretensions to religion and righteousness, just as they were born; there is nothing but flesh in them; they are without God, and Christ, and the Spirit, and have neither true faith, nor hope, nor love, not any other grace; they have no internal principle of goodness in them; flesh, or corrupt, nature, has the government of them, is the reigning principle in them; their minds are fleshly, and so are their tenets; and such is their conversation, they trust in the flesh, in outward performances, in their own righteousness, and so

come under the curse; for as many as trust in an arm of flesh, or are of the works of the law, are under the curse of it:

persecuted him that was born after the Spirit: by whom is meant Isaac, who, though he was not conceived under the overshadowings of the Holy Spirit, without the help of man, as Christ was; yet because of the divine power which was so eminently displayed in his conception and generation, under all the difficulties, and disadvantages, and seeming impossibilities of nature, he is said to be born after the Spirit: and besides, he was also regenerated by the Spirit of God, was a good man, and one that feared the Lord, as the whole account of him shows; and in this also fitly pointed out the spiritual seed, true believers, under the Gospel dispensation, who are born again of water, and of the Spirit, and are renewed in the spirit of their minds; in whom the work of the Spirit is begun, and grace is the governing principle; in whom the Spirit of God dwells and operates; and whose conversation is spiritual, and who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The persecution of Isaac by Ishmael was by "mocking" him, (<0121009>Genesis 21:9) the Hebrew word there made use of is in allusion to Isaac's name, which signifies "laughter": and Ishmael laughed at him, jeered and derided him. The Jewish doctors are divided about the sense of this: some say that the word rendered "mocking" is expressive of idolatry, according to (<0232306>Exodus 32:6) and that Ishmael would have taught Isaac, and drawn him into it; others that it signifies uncleanness, according to (<0013917>Genesis 39:17) and that he talked to him in a lascivious and indecent manner, in order to corrupt his mind: others that it designs murder according to (<1002144>2 Samuel 2:14) and that he intended to kill him, and attempted it [f97]; it is pretty much received by them, that either he finding him alone, or they going out to the field together, he took his bow and drew it, and shot an arrow at him, with an intention to kill him [f98], though he pretended it was but in play: and one of their writers on the text says [f99], that the word used, by gematry, that is, by the arithmetic of the letters, signifies gwrhl, "to slay"; so that this persecution was not by words only, but by deeds: but others [f100] of them more rightly think, that it meant a contention about the inheritance, which Sarah's words to Abraham seem to confirm; and that Ishmael claimed the birthright, and despised Isaac as the younger son; insisted upon the right to the inheritance, and mocked at the promise of God, with respect to Isaac; and might threaten what he would do to him, should he claim it thereupon: mocking has been always reckoned a species of persecution; so the Old Testament saints, among

other instances of persecution, had trial of “cruel mockings”; thus our Lord was persecuted, and also his apostles

and even so it is now. The carnal Jews, who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, persecuted the spiritual seed that believed in Christ, both by words and deeds; they confiscated their goods, imprisoned their persons, and even put them to death; and the false teachers, though they did not, and could not go such lengths, yet as persons fitly represented by Ishmael, they derided the apostles, and mocked at the doctrines of grace preached by them, and despised those that embraced them; and pleaded that the inheritance belonged to them, upon the foot of the works of the law: and so it is at this day; though there is no persecution of men's persons and estates, yet there never was a greater persecution of the doctrines of grace, and of the righteousness of Christ, and the saints more mocked at and derided for maintaining them; and that by persons just of the same complexion as those in the apostle's time, signified by Ishmael, carnal professors, and self-righteous persons.

Ver. 30. *Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture*? etc..] This is a Talmudic form of citing Scriptures, and answers to harq yam, “what says the Scriptures [f101]?” the passage referred to is (<012110>Genesis 21:10) and which are the words of Sarah to Abraham; but inasmuch as she spake them under divine inspiration, and they were approved of and confirmed by God, as appears from (<012112>Genesis 21:12) they are ascribed to God speaking in the Scripture:

cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. There is very little difference in the citation from the original. The apostle omits the word “this” in both clauses, which though very proper to be expressed by Sarah, to point out the person she meant, and as being in a vehement passion, was not absolutely necessary to be retained by the apostle, since by the context there is no difficulty of knowing who is meant by her; though the Alexandrian copy has the word in it: and instead of “with my son, with Isaac”, the apostle says, “with the son of the free woman, Sarah”; there speaking of herself, whose character the apostle gives, in opposition to the bondwoman: in like manner a Jewish writer [f102] reads and interprets it,

> “for the son of this woman shall not be heir hrybgh ˆb µ[, “with the son of the mistress”.”

The casting of Hagar and Ishmael out of Abraham's family was a type and emblem of the rejection of the carnal and self-righteous Jews from the Gospel church state; nor ought any carnal persons, any that are after the flesh, unregenerate ones, or that trust to their own righteousness, to be in a Gospel church; as they will also be excluded and thrust out of the kingdom of heaven, into which no unregenerate and unrighteous, or self-righteous persons shall enter. The Jews make this ejection of Hagar and her son to be both out of this world and that which is to come[f103]. The reason given why the one should not be heir with the other perfectly agrees with the Jewish canons; which was not because he was the son of a concubine, for the sons of concubines might inherit, if they were Israelites, and free, but because he was the son of a bondwoman, for thus they run[f104];

> "all that are near of kin, though by iniquity, are heirs, as they that are legitimate; how? thus for instance, if a man has a son that is spurious, or a brother that is spurious, lo, these are as the other sons, and the other brethren for inheritance; but if, hjpç ^m wnb, "his son is by an handmaid", or by a strange woman, he is no son in any of these matters, llk çrwy wnyaw, "and no heir at all":"

and again[f105],

> "an Israelite that hath a son by an handmaid, or by a Gentile, seeing he is not called his son, he that he has after him by an Israelitish woman, hkjnl rwkb, "is the firstborn for inheritance", and takes the double portion."

The reason assigned for non-inheritance in the text implies that the children of the free woman, the spiritual seed of Abraham, shall inherit the privileges of God's house, the blessings of grace, and eternal glory; they are children of the promise, and heirs according to it; when the children of the bondwoman, self-righteous ones, shall not; for the inheritance is not of the law, neither are they heirs who are of the works of it; nor is it to be enjoyed by mixing the law and Gospel, grace and works, in the business of salvation.

Ver. 31. *So then, brethren*, etc..] This is the conclusion of the whole allegory, or the mystical interpretation of Agar and Sarah, and their sons:

we are not children of the bondwoman; the figure of the first covenant, which gendered to bondage, and typified the Jews in a state, and under a

spirit of bondage to the law; New Testament saints are not under it, are delivered from it, and are dead unto it:

but of the free; of Sarah, that was a type of the new and second covenant; and answered to the Gospel church, which is free from the yoke of the law; and whose children believers in Christ are, by whom they are made free from all thraldom and slavery; so the children of the mistress and of the maidservant are opposed to each other by the Jews [f106]. The Vulgate Latin version adds to this verse from the beginning of the next chapter, “with the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free”; and the Ethiopic version, “because Christ hath made us free”; and begin the next chapter thus, “therefore stand, and be not entangled”, etc.. and so the Alexandrian copy, and three of Stephens's.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS 5

In this chapter the apostle exhorts to stand fast in Christian liberty, and warns against the abuse of it; and directs to shun various vices, and encourages, to the exercise of several graces, and the observance of several duties; and concludes with a caution against vain glory, provocation to wrath, and envy: and whereas, in the latter part of the preceding chapter, he had made it appear that the believers under the Gospel dispensation were free from the bondage of the law, he begins this with an exhortation to continue steadfastly in the liberty of the Gospel; and the rather, since it was what Christ obtained for them, and bestowed on them; and to take care, that they were not again brought under the bondage of the ceremonial law, particularly the yoke of Circumcision, (Galatians 5:1), and dissuades from submitting to it, by observing, that it tended to make Christ unprofitable to them, (Galatians 5:2), and that it laid them under an obligation to keep the whole law, (Galatians 5:3), and that it made Christ wholly useless to them; and that such who sought for justification by obedience to the ceremonial law were apostates from the Gospel of the grace of God, (Galatians 5:4), as also by showing, that it was contrary to the general faith and expectation of the saints, who were looking for and expecting eternal glory and happiness, not by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, (Galatians 5:5), nor were circumcision or uncircumcision of any avail, but the true faith in Christ, which shows itself by love to him and to his people, (Galatians 5:6), and likewise by reminding them how well they set out at their first conversion, and proceeded; nor had they any to hinder them from obeying the truth, and therefore it was shameful in them to go back to the beggarly elements they had first relinquished, (Galatians 5:7), nor was the present opinion they had imbibed, of God that called them, or what they received when first effectually called by grace, but what had been since taken up, (Galatians 5:8), and whereas it might be objected, that it was only in a single article concerning the ceremonial law, and which was, embraced only by a few persons, and therefore not to be regarded, the apostle puts them in mind of a proverb, that a little leaven leavens the

whole lump, and therefore not to be connived at, (Galatians 5:9), however, a little to mitigate the sharpness of his reproof, he expresses his good opinion and confidence of them, that upon a mature consideration of things, they would not be otherwise minded than they formerly had been, or he now was; and lays the blame of all upon the false teacher, or teachers, that troubled them, and who should bear their own judgment or condemnation, (Galatians 5:10), and whereas it was insinuated, that the apostle himself had preached up circumcision as necessary to salvation, he removes this calumny by observing, that were it true, he would not suffer persecution as he did, nor would the Jews be offended at his preaching as they were, (Galatians 5:11), and then out of zeal for the glory of God, and hearty affection to the Galatians, he wishes those false teachers that troubled them with their pernicious doctrines were cut off either by the Lord, or from the church, (Galatians 5:12), and next he directs to the right use of Christian liberty, to which they were called; and cautions against the abuse of it; that they should not use it as an occasion to the flesh, but, on the contrary, serve one another in love, (Galatians 5:13) giving this as a reason, because love is the fulfilling of the law, (Galatians 5:14), whereas a contrary spirit and conduct are attended with pernicious consequences, even the destruction of each other, (Galatians 5:15), and therefore advises them to walk in the Spirit, whose fruit is love, and then they would not fulfil the lust of the flesh, (Galatians 5:16), for these two, flesh and Spirit, are contrary the one to the other, and the Spirit hinders the performance of the lusts of the flesh, (Galatians 5:17), besides, such who give up themselves to the conduct of the Spirit, and are led thereby, are not under the law, the bondage of it, nor liable to its curse, (Galatians 5:18), and having made mention both of flesh and Spirit, he takes notice of the works and fruits of the one, and of the other, by which they are known; and as for the works of the flesh he observes, that they are manifest, and gives an enumeration of them in “seventeen” particulars; and to deter from them declares, that whoever lives in the commission of them, shall not inherit the kingdom of God, (Galatians 5:19-21), and as for the fruits of the Spirit, these are also well known by spiritual men, “nine” of which are particularly mentioned, and against which there is no law, (Galatians 5:22,23), and from the whole concludes, that such as are true believers in Christ, and are led by his Spirit, and have the fruits of it, have the flesh with its affections and lusts crucified, (Galatians 5:24), and ends the chapter with some exhortations

to walk in the Spirit, and not be ambitious of worldly honour, nor provoke one another to wrath, nor envy each other's happiness, (Galatians 5:25).

Ver. 1. *Stand fast therefore in the liberty*, etc..] There is the liberty of grace, and the liberty of glory; the former of these is here meant, and lies in a freedom from sin; not from the indwelling of it, but from the dominion, guilt, and damning power of it; from the captivity and tyranny of Satan, though not from his temptations and insults; from the law, the ceremonial law, as an handwriting of ordinances, a rigid severe schoolmaster, and a middle wall of partition, and from all its burdensome rites and institutions; from the moral law as a covenant of works, and as administered by Moses; and from the curse and condemnation of it, its bondage and rigorous exaction, and from all expectation of life and righteousness by the deeds of it; but not from obedience to it, as held forth by Christ, and as a rule of walk and conversation; and from the judicial law, or those laws which concerned the Jews as Jews: moreover, this liberty lies in the free use of things indifferent, as eating any sort of food without distinction, so that it be done in faith, with thankfulness to God, in moderation, and with temperance, and so as that the peace and edification of fellow Christians are not hurt; also in the free use of Gospel ordinances, which they that are fellow citizens with the saints have a right unto, but not to lay aside or neglect at pleasure; which is not to use, but to abuse their liberty: again, another branch of it is access to God, with freedom and boldness at the throne of grace, through the Mediator, under the influences of the divine Spirit; to which may be added, a deliverance from the fears of death corporeal, who is a king of terrors to Christless sinners, and which kept Old Testament saints, all their lifetime subject to bondage and eternal, or the second death, by which Christ's freemen are assured they shall not be hurt: now, in this liberty, the children of the free woman, believers under the Gospel dispensation, are very pertinently exhorted to stand fast, in consequence and consideration of their character; that is, they should highly prize and esteem it, as men do their civil liberty; and maintain it and defend it, at all hazards; abide by the doctrine of it without wavering, and with intrepidity; not giving up anyone part of it, however, and by whomsoever, it may be opposed, maligned, and reproached; and keep up the practice of it, by obeying from the heart the doctrine of it, by becoming the servants of righteousness, by frequent attendance at the throne of grace, and continual observance of the ordinances of Christ; and then should take heed of everything that tends to break in upon it, as any

doctrine or commandment of men; particularly the doctrine of justification by works, and all sorts of superstition and will worship: and the rather, because of the concern Christ has in this liberty, it is that

wherewith Christ hath made us free; we are not free born, but on the contrary homeborn slaves, as Ephraim was; nor could this liberty in any of its branches be obtained by us, by any merit, righteousness, act, or acts of ours, but is wholly of Christ's procuring for us, both by price and power; whereby he has ransomed and delivered us out of the hands of all our spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, the law, and death; and it is of his proclaiming in the Gospel, and of his applying by his Spirit, whom he sends down into our hearts as a free Spirit, to acquaint us with it, and lead us into it, who works faith in us to lay hold upon, and receive this blessing of grace as others:

and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. The metaphor is taken from oxen put under a yoke, and implicated with it, from which they cannot disengage themselves: some of the members of this church had been Jews, who had formerly been under the yoke of the law, and seemed desirous to return to their former state of bondage, from which the apostle dissuades, and therefore uses the word again: or else he may refer to the bondage of corruption and idolatry, which they as Gentiles were in, before their conversion; and intimates, that to give into the observance of; Jewish rites and ceremonies would be involving themselves in a state of bondage again; for by "the yoke of bandage" he means the law, which the Jews frequently call twxm lw["the yoke of the commandments" [f107]; particularly the ceremonial law, as circumcision; which Peter, (<441510>Acts 15:10) represents as a yoke intolerable; the observation of days, months, times, and years; the multitude of sacrifices, and which could not take away sin; but proclaimed their guilt and obligation to punishment, and were an handwriting of ordinances against them, and thereby they were held and kept in bondage, and such a yoke is the moral law as delivered by Moses, requiring perfect obedience, but giving no strength to perform, nor pointing where any is to be had; showing a man his sin and misery, and so working wrath in his conscience, but giving not the least intimation of a Saviour, or of life and righteousness by another; accusing, pronouncing guilty, cursing, and condemning; hence such as seek for righteousness by it are in a miserable subjection to it, and are sadly implicated and entangled with the yoke of it: every doctrine and ordinance of men is a yoke of bondage which should not be submitted to; nay, any action whatever,

performed in a religious way and in order for a man's acceptance with God, and to obtain his favour, and according to his observance of which he judges of his state, and speaks peace and comfort to himself, or the reverse, is a yoke of bondage: as, for instance prayer at such and so many times a day, reading such a number of chapters in the Bible every day, fasting so many times in the week, and the like; so that what are branches of Christian liberty, such as frequent prayer to God, reading the sacred writings for instruction and comfort, and the free use of the creatures, are turned into a yoke of bondage, which should be guarded against.

Ver. 2. *Behold, I Paul say unto you*, etc..] The apostle proceeds to give some reasons and arguments to enforce the above exhortation and dissuasion: the first of which is introduced with a note of attention, "behold"; what he was about to say being matter of great moment and importance; and also mentions himself by name, as the assertor of it; and that, either because his name was well known to them, and the rather because of his apostolical authority; and to show his full assurance of this matter, and his intrepidity, and that he was no ways ashamed of it, they might, if they pleased, say it to whomsoever they would, that Paul the apostle affirmed,

that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing: he speaks of circumcision, not as when it was an ordinance of God, but as it was now abolished by Christ; and that got as singly performed on some certain accounts for he himself circumcised Timothy for the sake of the Jews; but as done in order to salvation, or as necessary unto it; which was the doctrine the false apostles taught and these Galatians were ready to give into: now circumcision submitted to on this consideration, and with this view rendered Christ unprofitable, made his death to be in vain, his sacrifice of no effect, and his righteousness useless: besides, Christ is a whole Saviour, or none at all; to join anything with him and his righteousness, in the business of justification and salvation, is interpreted by him as a contempt and neglect of him, as laying him aside, and to such persons he is of no profit; and if he is not, what they have, and whatsoever they do, will be of no advantage; wealth and riches, yea, the whole world could it be gained, their works and righteousness, whatever show they make before men, God has declared shall not profit them; and trusting to these renders Christ unprofitable to them. This is directly contrary to the notions of the Jews, who think they shall be saved for their circumcision, and that that will secure them from hell; they say [f108] no circumcised person

goes down to hell, and that whoever is circumcised shall inherit the land; but there is none shall inherit the land, save a righteous person; but everyone that is circumcised is called a righteous man [f109]; so that circumcision is their righteousness, on account of which they expect heaven and happiness.

Ver. 3. *For I testify again to every man*, etc..] This is the form of an oath, a calling God to witness, swearing by the living God, and declaring as in his presence to every man, whether Jew or Gentile, whoever he be:

that is circumcised; in order to obtain salvation, and as necessary to it:

that he is a debtor to do the whole law; and this it is that made circumcision an insupportable yoke, for that itself might be bore, and was bore by children of eight days old; but the fulfilling of the whole law cannot be done by any man; and yet everyone that is circumcised, in order to procure righteousness and life, is bound to keep the whole law; because the law is only his righteousness, when he observes all that is required in it, and as the Lord has commanded; if he does not, he is pronounced accursed: and this proves what was before said, that Christ is of no profit to such persons; because they reject him and his righteousness, and, as much as in them lie, make void his obedience, sufferings, and death: hence the same thing is repeated, though not in the same words, in the next verse.

Ver. 4. *Christ is become of no effect unto you*, etc..] Or "ye are abolished from Christ"; or as others by an "hypallage" read the words, "Christ is abolished unto you"; for by their seeking for justification by their own works, it was all one to them as if there was no Christ, and no righteousness in him, and no salvation by him; they had nothing to do with him, nor he with them:

whosoever of you are justified by the law; that is, who sought to be justified by their obedience to the law, or who thought they were, and trusted in themselves that they were righteous; for otherwise, by the deeds of the law, no flesh living can be justified:

ye are fallen from grace; that is, either from that grace which they professed to have; for there might be some in these churches, as in others, who were only nominal Christians, and formal professors; who had declared they saw themselves lost and undone sinners, destitute of a righteousness, and professed to believe in Christ alone for righteousness and strength, but now trusted in themselves, and in the works of the law:

or from the scheme of grace in the whole of man's salvation, which will admit of no mixture of works; either it is one or the other, it cannot be both; wherefore by their taking on the side of works, they showed that they had entirely dropped the scheme of grace: or else from the Gospel of the grace of God, from whence they were removed, through the influence of false teachers; particularly the doctrine of free justification by the grace of God, through the righteousness of Christ; which was entirely set aside by their seeking to be instilled by the works of the law; and from this they might be said to be fallen, who were on such a bottom.

Ver. 5. *For we through the Spirit wait*, etc..] Who have believed in Christ, Christians in general, and the apostle and the brethren with him in particular; who also were Jews born, and brought up as such; and yet they did not look for, and expect heaven and happiness through circumcision, or any of the works of the law, but through the righteousness of Christ received by faith, under the influence and testimony of the Spirit of God, and therefore much less should Gentiles:

for the hope of righteousness by faith; by which is meant, not the believer's justifying righteousness, as if it was something future he is waiting for; for this is already wrought out, and brought in by Christ, the end of the law for righteousness; is revealed in the Gospel from faith to faith; is discovered and applied to the saints by the Spirit of God; is put upon them, and imputed to them by the Father; and is what they now have, not in hope, but in hand; their faith having received it, as their justifying righteousness; in which they will ever be found, living and dying: but eternal glory and felicity is here intended, called “hope”; because it is the object of hope, or is what is hoped for; it is unseen, as what is hoped for is: it is future, and what is to be enjoyed hereafter, and therefore hoped for; it is certain, possible to be enjoyed, though with difficulty; which gives room for hope, and exercises and tries that grace; the foundation and encouragement of hope in it are the person, blood, sacrifice, and righteousness of Christ, who is our hope: and hence it is styled “the hope of righteousness”, because none but righteous persons shall enjoy it: and that by virtue, and in consequence of their being justified by the righteousness of Christ, which gives them their title to it; and hence they look for it, and shall enjoy it, on the foot of justice, as well as of grace and goodness: “waiting” for it supposes it to be certain, real, solid, substantial, valuable, and worth waiting for; which, when possessed, will be with the utmost pleasure, and be abundantly satisfying; and that the persons that wait for it have

knowledge, and at least hope of interest in it; and do highly value and esteem it, having their hearts set on it, and looking with contempt on the things of time and sense, in comparison of it: the manner in which they wait is, “through the Spirit”, and “by faith”; the Syriac version reads, “through the Spirit, which is of faith”; that is, by the Spirit received through faith; (see Galatians 3:14) but it is best to consider them apart; believers look and wait for heaven, under the influence and encouragement of the Spirit of God; who is the author of the faith by which they look for it, and of the hope which is concerned with it; and who is the revealer and applier of the righteousness of Christ, the foundation of it; and which gives some glimpses of the heavenly glory to the saints, shows them their interest in it, witnesses to their sonship, and so to their heirship; and is the pledge and earnest of their inheritance; all which gives great strength and encouragement to faith, by which they also expect it; believing not only the reality of it, but their own interest in it; and so walk by faith in the believing views thereof, until they receive the end of it.

Ver. 6. *For in Christ Jesus*, etc..] The Arabic version reads, “in the religion of Christ”; in the religion of Moses, or of the Jews under the former dispensation, the things after mentioned were of some moment and consideration; but are of no account in the Christian religion, and under the Gospel dispensation: circumcision and uncircumcision make no difference in the church of Christ, or are any bar to communion with it; nor do they make any alteration in the love and favour of Christ, who is all in all to his people, whether Jews or Gentiles; nor have they any influence at all on salvation, Christ being a common Saviour to the circumcised and uncircumcised; nor are they any evidence for or against a person's being in Christ, or having an interest in him:

neither circumcision availeth anything; not now as a command and ordinance of God, being abolished by Christ; nor as a type, having its accomplishment in him, and his people; nor as a privilege, giving any preference in any respect to the Jew above the Gentile; nor is it of any weight or consequence, or has any concern in the business of salvation:

nor uncircumcision; it is no hinderance to the enjoyment of the Gospel, to entrance into a Gospel church state, or to admission to the ordinances of it; nor to the participation of the blessings of grace, as justification, pardon, adoption, and eternal life:

but faith which works by love; faith has a concern in justification and salvation, not by way of causal influence, but as it is that grace which receives the righteousness of Christ, through which we are saved, and kept by the power of God unto salvation; yet not any sort of faith, but that which is operative, is attended with good works; and which works itself by love to God, to Christ, to his people, ways, worship, truths, and ordinances. The Syriac version renders it, ‏zrmgtmd‏ "which is perfected by love"; that is, is showed to be right, true, and genuine thereby; (see ⁵⁹James 2:22).

Ver. 7. *Ye did run well*, etc..] In the Christian race; when they first set out in a profession of religion, they embraced and held fast, and were zealously attached to the truths of the Gospel; they were in the lively exercise of grace on its proper object, and very diligent in the discharge of duty; they made great proficiency in the knowledge of divine things, and ran with cheerfulness and without weariness in the ways of Christ, and in the paths of truth and holiness. The metaphor is taken from runners in a race; (see ⁴⁶1 Corinthians 9:24) so far this is said to their commendation, but this should have been persisted in:

who did hinder you; not the apostle, or any of his brethren; no, they encouraged them to go on, and gave them all the assistance they could, to help them forward; but it was the false apostles that hindered them, who did all they could to remove them to another Gospel, and turn them aside out of the right way:

that ye should not obey the truth? of the Gospel, particularly the truth of justification by the righteousness of Christ; which they did not so cheerfully embrace, and show such a respect unto, as they had formerly done; (see ⁴⁸Galatians 3:1), and which he says not by way of inquiry, but of complaint and concern; and with some indignation against the persons who had been the means of hindering their Christian progress, and with a view to reclaim the Galatians if possible.

Ver. 8. *This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you*.] That is, the opinion they were persuaded to believe; and which the Syriac version renders, ‏ˆwksyp‏, "your persuasion"; this is not of God, who had called them into the grace of Christ; nor of Christ, who had called them to the knowledge of himself, and communion with him; nor of the Spirit of Christ, who had called them with an holy calling, and who still continued to call

them to repentance; nor of any faithful minister of the Gospel, who had been concerned as an instrument in their effectual calling; meaning the notion they were persuaded to give into, that circumcision and the works of the law were necessary to salvation, and that these were to be joined with the righteousness of Christ for justification; such a conceit as this could never be of God, nor any evangelical minister, but must be of Satan or his emissaries, the false apostles.

Ver. 9. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*.] A proverbial expression pretty much in use with the Jews; (see 1 Corinthians 5:6), respecting either persons or things; and is in answer to, or prevents an objection that might be made, or something that might be said, in favour of these churches; that their case was not so bad, or the danger they were in so great, as was represented by the apostle; since they were only a few persons that propagated this notion, and but few that received it, at least thoroughly gave into it; and that, if it was an error, it was but a small one, and only regarded a single ritual, or a few rituals of the law; to which the apostle replies, by supposing, but not granting this to be the case, since they were pretty generally declined, and the error was not a slight one, that as a little sour leaven influences and ferments a large mass, or lump of dough, and makes it of the same nature with it, so a small error in doctrine, as it may be thought to be, increases to more ungodliness, and eats as doth a canker; and though a few hands may be first concerned in propagating it, and but few be infected with it, yet these may soon spread the contagion through the whole society: wherefore errors and false teachers should be nipped in the bud, and stopped in their beginnings, how inconsiderable soever they and their tenets may be judged to be.

Ver. 10. *I have confidence in you through the Lord*, etc..] Though the apostle had said many things which carried in them the appearance of roughness and severity, yet he still entertained hopes of them that they were not so far gone, but that they might be brought back again; and he here expresses his confidence of it. This confidence in them is not of faith, for no trust is to be put in men; no, not in the best; but of charity, or love, which hopes all things, and believes all things; and which proceeded upon a thorough persuasion he had, that there was some good thing in them; and therefore was confident, that he that had begun the good work would perform it, and not suffer them to be carried away finally and totally with the error of the wicked: and this confidence he had “through the Lord”; either through the Spirit of the Lord, whose office it is to lead into all truth,

as it is in Jesus; and who had suggested this to the apostle, and possessed him of this confidence; so that it was not a conjecture and fancy of his, but an intimation from the Spirit of the Lord: or through the Lord Jesus Christ, or "in the Lord", Christ, as the phrase may be rendered; that is, on account of their being in Christ, which the apostle hoped and believed; where they were safe and secure from a final and total seduction; he was confident, that whatever they might seem to be now, things would take a different turn in time:

that you will be none otherwise minded; than he was, and they formerly were, when the Gospel was first preached to them, and embraced by them; and particularly in the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ which was the doctrine then called in question, and in debate:

but he that troubleth you; he seems to have respect to some particular person, who was the principal of the false teachers, and most famous for his learning, knowledge, gifts, and abilities; and who had done, and was likely to do, the most mischief among them; and was a troubler of God's Israel, and of the pure waters of the sanctuary; he unsettled their minds, and caused them to halt between two, Moses and Christ, law and Gospel, and the doctrines of justification by works, and by the righteousness of Christ; the one being what gave true solid peace and comfort, the other introduced confusion, distress, and fears: the apostle threatens him, and declares that he

shall bear his judgment; or condemnation, or damnation, his punishment in this, or the other world; for the judgment, or condemnation, of such that bring in damnable harasses, and pernicious errors, lingereth not, will not be long delayed; and their damnation slumbereth not, but in a little time will seize upon them; when as they have rejected Christ as a sin bearing and atoning Saviour, and his righteousness as the justifying one, they will, agreeably to their own doctrine, be left to bear their punishment themselves, which will be intolerable, and to all eternity; nor shall any escape it,

whosoever he be; though ever so knowing and learned, and let his parts and abilities be what they will; or he be ever so famous among men, and cried up as a most excellent preacher.

Ver. 11. *And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision*, etc..] The apostle was traduced by the false teachers, as a preacher of circumcision himself in

some places; and this they did partly to show him to be a variable and inconsistent man, who preached one doctrine in one place, and another in another place, and so not to be attended to; and partly with others, to draw them into their scheme upon his authority: what might give them the handle, or at least what they improved to this purpose, might be his circumcising of Timothy; but though he did this as a thing indifferent, and for the sake of the Jews, to make them easy; yet he never preached it after his conversion, and much less as necessary to justification and salvation, as these men did. This calumny he refutes by putting the following question or questions;

why do I yet suffer persecution? as is clear he did, for being against it, and preaching it down; great part of the persecutions the apostle endured was from the Jews, and that on account of his teaching them everywhere, that were among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses, and that they should not circumcise their children, and walk after the customs of their nation; a clear point this, that he did not preach it; had he, persecution from this quarter would not have followed him; and he could have done it with a good conscience, he must act a very weak part in suffering persecution on that account. The Arabic version gives the words a very different turn, and yet furnishes an answer to the calumny; “why do I persecute him that uses it?” that is, if I am a preacher of it, why am I so warm and violent an opposer of those that submit to it? these things are so opposite that there is no reconciling them; to the same purpose is the Ethiopic version: “then is the offence of the cross ceased”. The last mentioned version reads it, “the cross of Christ”; and so the Alexandrian copy; meaning not the cross of affliction, reproach, and persecution, which Christ has enjoined every follower of his to take up and bear for his sake, and is offensive to the carnal man; nor the cross on which he suffered, or the sufferings of the cross; but the doctrine of salvation by a crucified Christ, which was an offence and a stumblingblock to the Jews; now if the apostle had preached circumcision as necessary to salvation, the other doctrine must have been dropped, and consequently the offence taken at it must have ceased, whereas it was not. The Syriac version reads by way of question, “is the offence of the cross ceased?” no it is not, a plain case then is, that the apostle did not preach circumcision, but only a crucified Christ, as necessary to salvation. Moreover, the Jews that believed would not have been so offended as they were at his preaching, had he preached the one as well the other; their offence was not that he preached Christ crucified, but

that he preached, that, by the cross of Christ, circumcision and the other rituals of the ceremonial law were now abolished.

Ver. 12. *I would they were even cut off which trouble you*.] These words are a solemn wish of the apostle's with respect to the false teachers, or an imprecation of the judgment of God upon them; that they might be cut off out of the land of the living by the immediate hand of God, that they might do no more mischief to the churches of Christ: this he said not out of hatred to their persons, but from a concern for the glory of God, and the good of his people. The word here used answers to the Hebrew word jpq, and which is often made use of by the Jews in solemn imprecations; we read [f110] of a righteous man, wynb ta jpqm, "that cut off his children": the gloss upon it is,

> "he used to say, when he made any imprecation, ynb ta jpqa, "may I cut off my children";"

that is, may they die, may they be cut off by the hand of God, and I bury them;

> "says R. Tarphon [f111], may my children be "cut off", if these books of heretics come into my hands, that I will burn them;"

and says the same Rabbi [f112] may I "cut off" my children, or may my children be cut off, if this sentence or constitution is cut off, or should perish. There is another use of this word, which may have a place here, for it sometimes signifies to confute a person, or refute his notion [f113].

> "It is a tradition of the Rabbius, that after the departure of R. Meir, R. Judah said to his disciples, let not the disciples of R. Meir come in hither, for they are contentious; and not to learn the law do they come, but twklhb ynjpql, "to cut me off"; (i.e. as the gloss says, to show how sharp they are that none can stand against them;) to confute and overcome me, by their sentences, or constitutions."

So the apostle here might wish that the mouths of these false teachers were stopped, their notions refuted, that they might give them no more trouble; to which agrees the Arabic version; "they that trouble you I wish they were dumb"; or that their mouths were stopped, as such vain talkers should be; (see <56110>Titus 1:10,11) or the sense of the apostle is, that it was his will and

desire that these men should be cut off from the communion of the church; with which views he mentions the proverbial expression in (Galatians 5:9) with which compare (1 Corinthians 5:6,7) or that they would cut themselves off, by withdrawing from them, going out from among them, and leaving them as these men sometimes did.

Ver. 13. *For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty*, etc..] He calls them "brethren", to testify his affection to them, and to put them in mind of their relation to one another, which required mutual love, a thing he is about to press them to; he asserts that they were "called" not merely externally, but internally, by the effectual grace of God, out of bondage to sin, Satan, and the law, unto the liberty of the Gospel and of the grace of God; that liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, (Galatians 5:1) this he said in a judgment of charity, hoping well of them:

only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh; corrupt nature, which in unregenerate men takes encouragement from, and makes an ill use of the best of things, as the mercy and patience of God; and not only takes an occasion by the law, forbidding sin to work and stir up all manner of concupiscence; but also by the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, such as eternal election, free justification, etc.. which though the source and fountain, the barrier and security, of all true and real holiness, are improved and abused by wicked minds, under the influence and instigation of Satan, to vile purposes; and though regenerate persons are not in the flesh, and do not live after it, yet that is in them, and there is a proneness in them to sin; and Satan is watching all opportunities and advantages against them; so that there is need for such a caution as this, that they do not misuse their Christian liberty by indulging the flesh and the lusts of it, which is apt to take an occasion to cherish its lusts, and especially when given: Christ's free men should not do so, for that is to disgrace the doctrine of Christian liberty, to enthral themselves in, bondage instead of using their liberty aright, and to give the enemy occasion to blaspheme: the doctrine of Christian liberty may bc abused, or used as an occasion to the flesh, and to fulfil the lusts of it; when under a pretence thereof men think themselves exempt from obedience to the civil magistrate, which is using this liberty as a cloak of maliciousness; or that they are free from obedience to the law of God, as a rule of walk and conversation; or from subjection to the ordinances of the Gospel; or when they use the creatures God has given them the free use of without thankfulness, and in an immoderate manner; and when they make things indifferent which are not, or use indifferent

things to the prejudice of others; and their liberty becomes a stumblingblock to weak Christians, which the apostle seems greatly to regard here; since he adds,

but by love serve one another: the Vulgate Latin version reads, “by the love of the Spirit”: and so some copies; Gospel liberty and the service of the saints are not at all inconsistent; as it becomes them to love one another, as the new command of Christ, their profession of religion, and their relation to each other, require, so they should show their love by their service; as by praying one with and for another, by bearing each other's burdens, sympathizing with and communicating to each other in things temporal and spiritual; in forbearing with and forgiving one another; by admonishing each other when there is occasion for it, in a meek, tender, and brotherly way; by instructing and building up one another on their most holy faith, and by stirring up one another to all the duties of religion, private and public.

Ver. 14. *For all the law is fulfilled in one word*, etc..] Not the ceremonial law, to which acts of mercy, kindness, and love are opposed, and from which they are distinguished; but the law of the decalogue given to Moses on Mount Sinai, and by him to the people of the Jews; and intends either only the second table of it, since only love to the neighbour is mentioned; or else the whole of it, both tables, since it is said, “all the law”; which by Christ is reduced to two heads, love to God, and love to the neighbour; and though the former is not here expressed, it is implied as a cause in the effect, for the love of God is the cause, and so the evidence of love to the neighbour; nor can there be the one without the other. The two tables of the law consist of µyrbdh trç[, “ten words”; as the [f114] Jews commonly call them, and we the decalogue, and yet they are fulfilled in one; that is, they are to be brought into such a compendium, reduced to such an head; or as the apostle in a parallel place says, they may briefly be comprehended in this saying, (<450913>Romans 13:9). The Jews make the commandments of the law to be a very large number indeed, but at last reduce them to one, as the apostle here does,

> “six hundred and thirteen commandments (they say [f115]) were given to Moses — David came and reduced them to eleven, Psalm xv, Isaiah came and reduced them to six, (<233315>Isaiah 33:15) Micah came and reduced them to three, (<330608>Micah 6:8) Isaiah came and reduced them to two, (<235601>Isaiah 56:1), Amos came and reduced them to

one, (Amos 5:4) but this being objected to, it is observed that Habakkuk came, tja l[^dym[jw, "and reduced them to one", (Habakkuk 2:4) that is faith, as here the apostle reduces them to love:"

even in this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: these words are taken out of (Leviticus 19:18) and which R. Akiba says [f116], agreeably with the apostle, whose contemporary he was, is hrwtb lwdg llk, "the grand general rule in the law"; or the grand comprehensive of the law: the object of love, the "neighbour", signifies not only, as there the Jews explain it, those of their own people, or proselytes to their religion; but all sorts of men, whether in a natural, civil, or spiritual relation; and whether those that do us good or do us ill, friends or enemies: the measure or rule of love is, "as thyself"; and designs not an equality of affection, but a likeness of effects; that is, to do the same kind acts of love to others, one would choose to have done to ourselves: and this is the fulfilling of the law; that is, so far as a man loves aright, so far he fulfils the law; not that he does it perfectly, for man in his fallen state is unable to do that, for the law is exceeding broad, and reaches to thoughts, desires, and inclinations, as well as to words and deeds; and besides, love said to be the fulfilling of it, is imperfect; hence then there can be no justification by works of charity, nor by any services of men, which at best are imperfect; nor are they done in their own strength, and without the grace of God; nor is there any that can be said to have fulfilled the law perfectly but Christ, and to him must we look for a justifying righteousness. These words contain a reason engaging to love one another, and to do all kind of offices of love to each other; since it is a main and principal thing contained in the law, and to which that may be reduced.

Ver. 15. *But if ye bite and devour one another*, etc..] Another reason inducing to love is taken from the pernicious consequences of a contrary spirit and conduct. The allusion is to beasts of prey falling upon and devouring one another: for wolves or dogs to worry sheep is not strange; but for sheep to distress one another is unnatural. The apostle does not say, if grievous wolves should enter in among you and not spare the flock; but suggests if they themselves should act the part of wolves to one another; having reference to their controversies about the law and circumcision, and the necessity thereof to justification and salvation; which were managed with great heat and bitterness, occasioned great contentions, and

threatened them with divisions, parties, and factions; and were attended with envy and malice, with reproachful words, biting sarcasms, scandalous invectives, and injurious actions, which must be of bad consequence: hence he adds,

take heed that ye be not consumed one of another; that is, either beware lest each other's particular peace and comfort be destroyed, which is oftentimes done this way, though a person's state and condition God-ward may be safe; or lest their church state should be destroyed and come to nothing, since love is the cement of it, which being loosened, threatens a dissolution; for as no civil community, either public or private, divided against itself, can stand long, so no religious one; and for want of love the Lord threatens to remove, and sometimes does remove, the candlestick out of its place.

Ver. 16. *This I say then, walk in the Spirit*, etc..] The advice the apostle thinks fit to give, and which he would have observed, is, to "walk in the Spirit", that is, either after the Spirit of God; making the word inspired by him the rule of behaviour, which as it is the standard of faith, so of practice, and is the lamp unto our feet, and the light unto our path; taking him himself for a guide, who not only guides into all truth, but in the way of holiness and righteousness unto the land of uprightness; and depending upon his grace and strength for assistance throughout the whole of our walk and conversation: or in the exercise of the graces of the Spirit of God; as in the exercise of faith upon the person and grace of Christ, of which the Spirit is the author; and in love to God, Christ, and one another, which is a fruit of the Spirit; and in humility, lowliness of mind, meekness and condescension; all which is to walk in the Spirit, or spiritually, and strengthens the argument for love the apostle is upon: and this he encourages to by observing,

and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh; he does not say there shall be no flesh, nor any lust of the flesh in them if they walk spiritually; or that the flesh should not act and operate in them; or that they should do no sinful action; all which is only true of Christ; and the contrary is to be found and observed in all true Christians, though ever so spiritual; but that they should not fulfil or perfect the lust of the flesh; should not give up themselves entirely to the power and dictates of the flesh, so as to be under it and at its command, and be obedient servants and slaves unto it; for, in

this sense only, such that are spiritual do not, commit sin, they do not make a trade of it, it is not their constant employ or course of conversation.

Ver. 17. *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit*, etc..] By “flesh” is meant, not the carnal or literal sense of the Scripture, which is Origen's gloss, as militating against the spiritual sense of it; nor the sensual part of man rebelling against his rational powers; but the corruption of nature, which still is in regenerate persons: and is so called because it is propagated by carnal generation; has for its object carnal things; its lusts and works are fleshly; and though it has its seat in the heart, it shows itself in the flesh or members of the body, which are yielded as instruments of unrighteousness; and it makes and denominates men carnal, even believers themselves so far as it prevails: by “the Spirit” is meant the internal principle of grace in a regenerate man, and is so called from the author of it, the Spirit of God, whose name it bears, because it is his workmanship; and from the seat and subject of it, the soul or spirit of man; and from the nature of it, it is spiritual, a new heart and a new Spirit; its objects are spiritual, and it minds, savours, and delights in spiritual things: and the meaning of the lusting of the one against the other, for it is reciprocal, hence it follows,

and the Spirit against the flesh, is that the one wills, chooses, desires, and affects what is contrary to the other; so the flesh, or the old man, the carnal I, in regenerate persons, wills, chooses, desires, and loves carnal things, which are contrary to the Spirit or principle of grace in the soul; and on the other hand, the Spirit or the new man, the spiritual I, wills, chooses, desire, approves, and loves spiritual things, such as are contrary to corrupt nature; and this sense is strengthened by the Oriental versions. The Syriac version reads, “for the flesh desires that” akmd, “which hurts”, or is contrary to “the Spirit”; and “the Spirit desires that which hurts”, or is contrary to the “flesh”; and much in the same way the Arabic version renders it, “for the flesh desires that which militates against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires that which militates against the flesh”; to which the Ethiopic version agrees, reading it thus, “for the flesh desires what the Spirit would not, and the Spirit desires what the flesh would not”; the reason whereof is suggested in the next clause:

and these are contrary the one to the other; as light and darkness, fire and water, or any two opposites can be thought to be; they are contrary in their nature, actings, and effects; there is not only a repugnancy to each other, but a continued war, conflict, and combat, is maintained between them; the

flesh is the law in the members or force of sin, which wars against the spirit, the law in the mind, or the force and power of the principle of grace; these are the company of two armies, to be seen in the Shulamite, fighting one against the other. So the Jews say [f117] of the good imagination, and of the evil one, by which they mean the same as here, that they are like Abraham and Lot; and that

> "though they are brethren, joined in one body, hzl hz µybywa µh, "they are enemies to one another";"

hence it follows,

so that ye cannot do the good that ye would which may be understood both of evil things and of good things. The former seems to be chiefly the apostle's sense; since the whole of this text is a reason given why those who walk spiritually shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, because they have a powerful governing principle in them, the Spirit, or grace; which though the flesh lusts against, and opposes itself unto, yet that also rises up against the flesh, and often hinders it from doing the works and lusts of it. There is in regenerate men a propensity and inclination to sin, a carnal I, that wills and desires sin, and wishes for an opportunity to do it, which when it offers, the flesh strongly solicits to it; but the Spirit, or the internal principle of grace, opposes the motion; and like another Joseph says, how can I commit this great wickedness and sin against a God of so much love and grace? it is a voice behind and even in a believer, which, when he is tempted to turn to the right hand or the left, says, this is the way, walk in it, and will not suffer him to go into crooked paths with the workers of iniquity; and so sin cannot have the dominion over him, because he is under grace as a reigning principle; and the old man cannot do the evil things he would, being under the restraints of mighty grace. This is the apostle's principal sense, and best suits with his reasoning in the context; but inasmuch as the lusting and opposition of these two principles are mutual and reciprocal, the other sense may also be taken in; as that oftentimes, by reason of the prevalence of corrupt nature, and power of indwelling sin, a regenerate man does the evil he would not, and cannot do the good he would; for he would always do good and nothing else, and even as the angels do it in heaven; but he cannot, because of this opposite principle, the flesh.

Ver. 18. *But if ye be led by the Spirit*, etc..] That is, of God, who is the guide and leader of his people. It is a metaphor taken from the leading of persons that are blind; as such are before conversion, and whom the Spirit of God leads in ways they knew not, and in paths they had not known: or from the leading of children, and teaching them to go; so the Spirit leads regenerate persons, and teaches them to walk by faith in Christ. This act of leading supposes life in the persons led, for dead men cannot be led; the Spirit is first a Spirit of life from Christ before he is a leader; and also it supposes some strength, though a good deal of weakness; were there no spiritual strength derived from Christ, they could not be led; and if there was no weakness, there would be no need of leading; it is an instance of powerful and efficacious grace upon them, yet not contrary to their wills, though they are led, they are not forced; they go freely, being led, as there is good reason for it; for the Spirit of God always leads for their profit and advantage, and for the spiritual delight, pleasure, and comfort of their souls; he leads out of the ways of sin, and so of ruin and destruction, and from Mount Sinai, and all dependence on a legal and moral righteousness; he leads to Christ, to his person, for shelter, safety, and salvation, to his blood, for pardon and cleansing, to his righteousness, for justification, and to his fulness, for every supply of grace; he leads into the presence of God, and to his house and ordinances; he leads into the covenant of grace, to the blessings, promises, and Mediator of it; he leads into all truth as it is in Jesus, in the ways of faith and truth, and in the paths of righteousness and holiness, and always in a right way, though sometimes in a rough one, to the city of their habitation; he leads from one degree of grace to another, and at last to glory: all which he does gradually; he leads by little and little into a man's sinfulness, and to see his interest in Christ, and by degrees into the doctrines of the Gospel, and the everlasting love of the three Persons; and proportionally to the strength he gives, and as they are able to bear: now such persons as these have nothing to fear from the law of God:

ye are not under the law; such are not only delivered from the law in fact, but in their own apprehensions; they have the comfortable knowledge and experience of it; the law is no terrifying law to them; it works no wrath in them; they are delivered from the spirit of bondage to fear, by the Spirit of God, by whom they are led; nor are they under it, nor do they need it as a pressing forcing law to duty; they delight in it, and cheerfully serve it, being constrained by love, and not awed by fear; nor are its accusations and charges regarded, or to be regarded, by such who are led by the Spirit to

Christ, the end of the law for righteousness; and they are entirely freed from its curse and condemnation, though they are under it, and desire to be under it, as held forth by Christ the King of saints; and, under the Spirit's influence and guidance, yield a cheerful and evangelical obedience to it.

Ver. 19. *Now the works of the flesh are manifest*, etc..] By “flesh” is meant corrupt nature, as before, and by the works of it, not only external acts of sin, but inward lusts; for such are here mentioned among its works, as “hatred”, “wrath”, “envyings”, etc.. and both external and internal acts are so called, because they spring from the flesh, or corrupt nature, and are what that urges and solicits to, and are wrought thereby, and are what denominate and show men to be carnal: these are said to be “manifest”; not that they are all, and always publicly done, and are open to the sight of men; for they are works of darkness, and often done in secret, though they are always manifest to God the searcher of hearts, and will be brought to light in the day of judgment; but they are known to be sins in some measure by the light of nature, and especially by the law of God; and a clear case it is, that they are contrary to the Spirit, both to the Spirit of God, and to the principle of grace he forms in the heart; and that such who live in the commission of them are not led by him, nor are under the influence of his grace:

which are these; though all are not mentioned, only some of the chief, by which judgment may be made of the rest:

adultery; this is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and in the Alexandrian copy; it is a defilement of the marriage bed, and is the sin of uncleanness committed by two persons, one of which at least is in a married state, is condemned by the law of God and light of nature:

fornication; which though by many of the Gentiles was reckoned no sin, or a very small one, stands here among the works of the flesh, that are manifest and to be avoided; it is the sin of uncleanness committed by persons in a single state;

uncleanness, it is a general name for all unchastity, in thought, word, or action; and may here design more especially all unnatural lusts, as

sodomy, self-pollution, etc..

lasciviousness; or wantonness, all lustful dalliance, everything that leads on to acts of uncleanness, or attends them, as impure words, filthy gestures, and the like.

Ver. 20. *Idolatry*, etc..] Which some understand of covetousness, which is so called; but rather it means the worshipping of other gods, or of graven images:

witchcraft; any real or pretended league and association with the devil, seeking to converse with familiar spirits, to gain unlawful knowledge, or to do hurt to fellow creatures; which, as it is doing honour to Satan, detracts from the glory of God, and rightly follows idolatry; conjuration, soothsaying, necromancy, and all kind of magic are included and condemned hereby:

hatred: internal hatred of any man's person, even of our very enemies, is forbidden; in the original text it is “enmities”: as the carnal mind is nothing else but enmity against God and Christ, against law and Gospel, and all good men, and everything that is good:

variance, or “contentions”; fighting and quarrelling, by words scandalous and reproachful, what we commonly call scolding:

emulations or “zeals”; not good, but bad: a boiling and rising up of the spirits and passions, at the honour and happiness of another:

wrath or “wraths” violent emotions of the mind, moving to revenge, and seeking the hurt and mischief of others:

strife or “strifes”; perpetual contradictions and cavilings, either expressed by words, or working in the mind; for this strife may be in a man's heart, according to (James 3:14,16)

seditions or “divisions”: schisms and factions, dissensions in things domestic, civil, and religious:

heresies; bad principles and tenets, relating to doctrine, which are subversive of the fundamentals of the Gospel and the Christian religion; and are the produce of a man's own invention, and the matter of his choice, without any foundation in the word of God; and these are works of the flesh, for they spring from a corrupt and carnal mind, and are propagated with carnal views, as popular applause, worldly advantage, and indulging the lusts of the flesh.

Ver. 21. *Envyings*. etc..] Uneasy distressing tortures of the mind, grieving at the good of others, that any should be in an equal, or in a better condition than themselves:

murders, destroying of men's lives, which is often the consequence of the above evils:

drunkenness; excess in drinking of wine or strong drink, whereby the stomach is overcharged, the mind is intoxicated, and the body enfeebled and unable to perform its office; this is often the source of many, or all of the works of the flesh before mentioned:

revellings; excess in feed, nocturnal riotings in eating, drinking, dancing, singing, chambering and wantonness. The Syriac version renders it, ארמז, "lascivious singing"; and the Arabic version, "songs" which are a part of the nightly revels: and such like which are of the same nature and kind; so the apostle shuts up the account, it being too tedious to give an enumeration of all the works of the flesh; nor was it necessary, judgment may be made of the rest by these; nor might it be so proper, since the carnal heart is but the more pleased with, and irritated by, the mention of evil things:

of the which I tell you before: before the judge comes and the awful judgment proceeds, when these will all be made manifest, and every man will be judged according to his works: this the apostle did, as putting them in mind of the evil nature of these things, and assuring them of the bad consequences that would follow, if grace prevented not:

as I have also told you in time past; when he first preached among them, and warned them to flee from the wrath to come; he then laid before them the evil nature of these things, the dreadful effects of them, and showed that there was no salvation from them, but by Christ:

and that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God; by which is meant the heavenly glory, called a "kingdom", because of the grandeur and magnificence of that state; and "of God", because it is of his preparing and giving, what he calls his own to by his grace, and puts them into the possession of and where he reigns and will reign for ever, and show forth the glory of his majesty: this is possessed in way of inheritance, which shows it to be a bequest of our heavenly Father's, a free grace gift of his, and not to be obtained by the works of the law, or merits of men; but

what belongs, and is peculiar to the children of God, who are so by adopting grace: now they that do such works of the flesh as before enumerated; that is, that live in the commission of these things, whose whole lives are employed in such work, living and dying in such a state, without repentance towards God and faith in Christ, shall never enjoy eternal life and happiness; though such who have done these things, being brought to a sense of them, and to the blood and righteousness of Christ for pardon and justification, for life and salvation; such, notwithstanding the works of the flesh done by them, shall, through the free grace of God, and the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, inherit the kingdom and glory of God.

Ver. 22. *But the fruit of the Spirit*, etc..] Not of nature or man's free will, as corrupted by sin, for no good fruit springs from thence; but either of the internal principle of grace, called the Spirit, ([457]Galatians 5:17) or rather of the Holy Spirit, as the Ethiopic version reads it; the graces of which are called “fruit”, and not “works”, as the actions of the flesh are; because they are owing to divine influence efficacy, and bounty, as the fruits of the earth are, to which the allusion is; and not to a man's self, to the power and principles of nature; and because they arise from a seed, either the incorruptible seed of internal grace, which seminally contains all graces in it, or the blessed Spirit, who is the seed that remains in believers; and because they are in the exercise of them acceptable unto God through Christ, and are grateful and delightful to Christ himself, being “his pleasant fruits”; which as they come from him, as the author of them, they are exercised on him as the object of them, under the influence of the Spirit; and because they are profitable to them that are possessed of them, seeing the promise of this life and that which is to come is annexed to them; and the good works which are done in consequence of them are profitable to men: once more, as the works of the flesh are the unfruitful works of darkness, and make men so, and therefore cannot be called fruit properly; these, as they are fruits, and are rightly and properly so called, so they make men fruitful, and to abound in divine things, and are as follow:

Love. This the apostle begins with, it being the fulfilling of the law, the bond of perfectness, and without which a profession of religion is insignificant; it may be understood of love to God, of which every man's heart is destitute, being enmity against God, until regenerated by the Spirit of God; when he sheds abroad the love of God in the heart, and which is the ground and reason of any man's truly loving God: and also of love to

Christ, which the natural man feels nothing of till the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ, opens his eyes to see the loveliness of his person, the suitableness of his grace, righteousness, and fulness, and the necessity of looking to him for life and salvation; and likewise of love to the saints, which a carnal man is a stranger to, until he is renewed by the Holy Ghost, who in regenerating him teaches him to love the brethren; and which is the evidence of his having passed from death to life, through the mighty power of his grace. Moreover, love to the house and worship of God, to the truths and ordinances of the Gospel, all which men have naturally an aversion to, may be included in this first fruit of the Spirit: the next follows, which is

joy, even that which is in the Holy Ghost, and has him for its author. The object of it is God, not as an absolute God, but as a covenant God and Father in Christ; as the God of salvation, as clothing with the robe of his Son's righteousness, and as pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin, full atonement being made by the sacrifice of Christ; who also is the object of this joy in his person, fulness, righteousness, offices, relations, and when beheld, embraced, and enjoyed in a way of communion. This joy, likewise, which is the produce of the Spirit, lies in spiritual things, and arises from an apprehension or good hope of interest in them, as justification, pardon, peace, adoption, and eternal glory; and is peculiar to such who have the Spirit, for a stranger intermeddles not with this joy, nor can he form any judgment of it, and is even unspeakable by the believer himself. Moreover, joy in the good of others, of fellow creatures and fellow Christians, in their outward and inward prosperity, in their temporal, spiritual, and eternal good, which, as it is a grace of the Spirit, may well enough be thought to be at least part of the sense of the word here; since it follows upon, and is joined with love, and stands between that and

peace, which is another fruit of the Spirit: and designs peace with God in a man's own conscience, produced there by the Spirit of God, in consequence of peace being made by the blood of Christ; and that through the application of the blood of Christ for pardon, and of his righteousness for justification to the soul of a sensible sinner by the blessed Spirit, the effect of which is peace, quietness, and tranquillity of mind; also peace with men, with the saints, and with all others; for such who are under a work of the Spirit of God, and are influenced and led by him, seek after the things which make for peace and edification among the brethren, and are desirous

if possible to live peaceably with all men: hence appears another grace in them,

longsuffering; which intends not so much a patient waiting for good things to come, for more grace, and for glory, through the Spirit; but a patient bearing and enduring of present evils with joyfulness, being strengthened by the Spirit with all might, according to his glorious power; being slow to anger, ready to forgive injuries, put up with affronts, and bear with, and forbear one another: and which is usually accompanied with gentleness, humanity, affability, courteousness, shown both in words, gestures, and actions; in imitation of the gentleness of Christ, and agreeably to that wisdom, that heavenly doctrine of the Gospel, which, among other things, is said to be gentle, and easy to be entreated. To which is added

goodness; and what else can come from the good Spirit of God, the author of the good work of grace upon the soul? and which disposes it to acts of goodness unto men, in a natural, civil, moral, spiritual, and evangelic way, for the benefit both of soul and body; and which must here be understood, and which is well pleasing to God when done in the exercise of the following grace,

faith; for though fidelity, both in words and actions, which is very ornamental to the Gospel, and a profession of religion may be meant; yet faith in Christ is not to be excluded, as it is generally by interpreters; for this is not of a man's self, nor have all men it: it is a gift of God, the operation of his power, and the work of his Spirit, whence he is styled the spirit of faith; and which therefore must have a place among his fruits; and which lies and shows itself in believing in Christ for salvation, in embracing the doctrines of the Gospel, and making a profession of them, which is called the profession of faith; all which, when right, comes from the Spirit of God.

Ver. 23. *Meekness*, etc..] Humility and lowliness of mind, of which Christ is an eminent example and pattern; and which the Holy Spirit from him transcribes into the heart of a regenerate person; and lies in having mean thoughts of himself, in walking humbly with God, acknowledging every favour, being thankful for every blessing, and depending on his grace, and in behaving with modesty and humility among men. The last of the fruits of the Spirit mentioned is

temperance, or “continence”; and designs both chastity and sobriety, and particularly moderation in eating and drinking. It may be observed, that these fruits of the Spirit are opposed to the works of the flesh. So love is opposed to hatred; joy to emulations and envying; peace to variance, strife, and seditions; longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, and meekness, to wrath and murders; faith to idolatry, witchcraft, and heresies; and temperance to adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, drunkenness, and revellings.

Against such there is no law; meaning, against such fruits, graces, and good things; these being perfectly agreeable to the law of God, which is holy, just, and good, and spiritual; and are so far from being forbidden by it, that they are highly esteemed and approved of by it: or against persons that are possessed of such fruits; for these appear to be in the spirit, and to be led by the Spirit; and therefore are not under the law, and have nothing to fear from it, as a terrifying, accusing, cursing, and condemning law. The works of the flesh, and they that are of the flesh, are such that come under the notice and lash of the law; and not the fruits of the Spirit, and they that are after the Spirit, as such are who partake of his fruit.

Ver. 24. *And they that are Christ's*, etc..] Not all as yet that are secretly so, who are chosen in him, and by him, are given by the Father to him in covenant, and whom he has purchased by his blood, and considers as his people, his sheep, and his children, though as yet they are not called by his grace; of these, as yet, what follows cannot be said, and therefore must mean such as are openly Christ's, whom he has laid hold on as his own in the effectual calling, who have his Spirit as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, who have truly believed in Christ, and have given up themselves unto him.

Have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts: by the flesh is meant, not the natural body to be macerated and afflicted with fastings, watchings, etc.. but the corruption of nature, the old man and carnal heart. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “their own flesh”; and so do the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; their concern lying with their own, and not with the corruptions, affections, and lusts of others. By “the affections and lusts” are intended, not the natural affections and passions of the soul, and the desires of it; but its vile and inordinate affections, its corrupt inclinations, evil desires, and deceitful lusts; all which are “crucified” first “with Christ”, as the Arabic version reads; (see Romans 6:6) and which are so

abolished, done away, and destroyed, by the sacrifice of Christ, that the damning power of them over his people is entirely gone. And in consequence of this crucifixion of the body of sin, with Christ upon the cross, when he finished and made an end of it, sin, with its passions and lusts, is crucified by the Spirit of God in regeneration and sanctification; so that it loses its governing power, and has not the dominion it had before: not but that the flesh, or corrupt nature, with its evil affections, and carnal lusts, are still in being, and are alive; as a person fastened to a cross may be alive, though he cannot act and move as before, being under restraints, so the old man, though crucified, and under the restraints of mighty grace, and cannot reign and govern as before, yet is alive, and acts, and operates, and oftentimes has great sway and influence; but whereas he is deprived of his reigning power, he is said to be crucified: and though this act is ascribed to them that are Christ's, yet not as done by them in their own strength, who are not able to grapple with one corruption, but as under the influence of the grace of Christ, and through the power of his Spirit; (see Romans 8:13).

Ver. 25. *If we live in the Spirit*, etc..] Or “by the Spirit”, as all do that are spiritually alive. Sin has not only brought on men a corporeal death, and made them liable to an eternal one, but has also induced upon them a spiritual or moral death; they are dead in trespasses and sin, nor can they quicken themselves, nor can any creature give them life; not the ministers of the word, nor the angels in heaven, only the blessed Spirit is the spirit of life from Christ; who entering into them, frees them from the law of sin and death, and implants a principle of spiritual life in them, whereby they live a life of faith on Christ, of holiness from him, and communion with him: and this the apostle makes use of, as an argument with believers to walk after the Spirit,

let us also walk in the Spirit: or “by the Spirit”; by his help and assistance, according to the rule of his word, and under his influence and direction as a guide, to which he had before advised in (Galatians 5:18).

Ver. 26. *Let us not be desirous of vain glory*, etc..] Ambitious of being thought wiser, and richer, and more valuable than others; of having the preeminence in the management of all affairs, and of having honour, esteem, and popular applause from men: this may well be called vain glory, since it is only in outward things, as wisdom, riches, strength, and honour, and not in God the giver of them, and who can easily take them away; and

therefore is but for a time, and is quickly gone, and lies only in the opinion and breath of men.

Provoking one another; not to good works, which would be right, but to anger and wrath, which is contrary to Christian charity, or true love; which, as it is not easily provoked, so neither will it provoke others to evil things. The Syriac version renders it by ˆylqm, “slighting”, or “despising one another”; and the Arabic version, “insulting one another”; vices to which men, and even Christian brethren in the same communion, are too prone.

Envying one another; their gifts and abilities, natural and spiritual; their rank and station in the world, or in the church. These were sins the Galatians very probably were subject to; and where they prevail, there is confusion, and every evil work, and are therefore to be watched and guarded against.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS 6

In this chapter the apostle exhorts to the exercise of various things, which greatly become professors of religion, such as meekness towards backsliders, love to the saints, modesty in themselves, and beneficence to others; exposes the hypocrisy and ambition of the false teachers, in order that the Galatians might beware of them, and not be ensnared by them; and gives an account of his own disposition, conduct, and sufferings, as a rule and example to them, and by which they might judge of the difference between him and the false apostles; and concludes the epistle with his apostolical salutation and benediction. Having mentioned the fruits of the spirit in the preceding chapter, he singles out some of them, and a little enlarges upon them; and begins with meekness, as that should be used by spiritual men to fallen believers, which he persuades to, not only because they are brethren, and but men, and have been overtaken in sin unawares; but because, though they themselves are spiritual, yet should consider they are liable to be tempted, (Galatians 6:1). And next he advises to show their love to one another, by bearing each other's burdens, which he enforces by this argument, it being a fulfilling the law of Christ, (Galatians 6:2). And whereas pride and haughtiness lie in the way of such a deportment, he dissuades from a vain opinion of a man's self, that being no other than self-deception, (Galatians 6:3), and observes, that a man will have the best view of himself and see what occasion he has for glorying, when he considers himself simply and nakedly, and not in comparison with others, (Galatians 6:4), and there is good reason why he should do so, seeing every man must give an account of his own actions, be judged according to them, and receive his reward or punishment, (Galatians 6:5). Hence the apostle passes to liberality and beneficence, and first to teachers of the word, to whom such as are taught by them should communicate, and that in good things, and in all good things, (Galatians 6:6). The arguments used to enforce this exhortation are, that to do otherwise is a deception of themselves, and is a mocking of God; and besides, they shall be treated according to their actions, the use or abuse of what God has given them, signified by a proverbial expression,

what a man sows, that shall he reap, (<4807>Galatians 6:7), which is enlarged upon and illustrated, by observing, that he that spends his substance merely on himself, and on carnal pleasures, and to indulge the flesh, the issue of things to him will be ruin, temporal and eternal; but he that lays out his substance on spiritual things, and for spiritual purposes, the issue will be life everlasting, (<4808>Galatians 6:8). Wherefore the apostle renews the exhortation to be bountiful without weariness, seeing there is a reaping time coming, (<4809>Galatians 6:9), and then points out the persons in general to whom good is to be done as opportunity offers, even all men, but especially such as are believers in Christ, are of his family, and particularly stewards there, as ministers of the Gospel are, (<4810>Galatians 6:10). And thus the apostle, having finished what he chiefly intended in this epistle, observes to the Galatians the great regard he had to them, shown in writing to them so long a letter, and that with his own hand, (<4811>Galatians 6:11). And as his chief view was to detect the false apostles, he cannot conclude without taking some further notice of them, which he does by exposing their hypocrisy and ambition; they only made a show of religion outwardly, and obliged others to do that, which they did not choose themselves, namely, to be circumcised; and their ends in all this were, that they might be free from persecution, and have matter of glorying in the proselytes they made, (<4812>Galatians 6:12,13), but the apostle was of a quite different temper and disposition; so far was he from glorying in his own flesh, or others, that his determination was to glory only in Christ, and in his cross, and that for this reason, because the world thereby was crucified to him, and he unto the world, (<4814>Galatians 6:14), as also, because circumcision, which the false teachers obliged to, and gloried in, and likewise uncircumcision, were of no avail in religious, spiritual, and eternal affairs, but a new creature, (<4815>Galatians 6:15), and this is what everyone ought to attend unto as the rule of his walk and conduct, since upon such shall be mercy and peace, as upon the Israel of God, (<4816>Galatians 6:16). And whereas the false apostles boasted of the flesh, and circumcision in it, the apostle opposes thereunto the marks of his sufferings for Christ, which he bore in his body; and therefore with great gravity and authority charges, that no man should give him any further trouble about what had been the subject matter of this epistle, (<4817>Galatians 6:17), and closes it with his usual salutation, expressing his affection for the Galatians, as his brethren, wishing the best of blessings for them, the grace of Christ, and that this might be in their hearts, and with their spirits, (<4818>Galatians 6:18).

Ver. 1. *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault*, etc..] Or "be taken before" in one; not, as Grotius thinks, before this epistle should come to them, which is a very jejune and empty sense of the words; nor before the conversion of the man, because sins before conversion do not come under the notice and cognizance of a church, or are liable to its reproofs and censures; but before the man is aware, through negligence and imprudence, for want of caution and circumspection, and so is carried away, either through the treachery of his own heart, and the power of corruption; or through the temptations of Satan, who goes about, and comes on the back of them, lays snares for them, and attacks them unawares, and takes all advantages of them; or by the ill examples of others, whereby they are drawn aside, and into sin. The apostle has no particular respect by a "fault" to schisms in the church, or to any errors or heresies in doctrine, though the restoration of such in meekness should be endeavoured; but rather to immorality in life and conversation, and indeed to any of the works of the flesh mentioned in the preceding chapter; and especially he means any "fall" of professors, as the word used signifies, into sin, through inadvertency and want of care and watchfulness, in distinction from a wilful, obstinate, and continued course of sinning; and intends not any man in the world, for those that are without, churches and members of churches have nothing to do with in a church way; but any man that is a brother, a church member, that stands in such a relation to them, when he falls into sin, is to be taken notice of by them. And so the Syriac version reads, "any one of you"; as does one of Stephens's copies.

Ye that are spiritual; meaning not such who had greater spiritual gifts than others, their ministers, pastors, and ecclesiastical governors, though these may be so called; and to them it belongs to reprove and rebuke, recover and restore backsliders, which they should do in gentleness and meekness; but the apostle here addresses the brethren in general, the several members of the church, even all but those that were fallen: nor does he mean such as have more spiritual knowledge than others, in opposition to babes; nor regenerate persons, and such as had the Spirit of God, in distinction from carnal men; but such as live and walk in the Spirit, and are strong, and stand by the power and grace of the Spirit of God, as opposed to the weak, and who were fallen through the prevalency of the flesh, and force of temptation; whose duty it is, and on whom it lies, to

restore such an one, that is overtaken and fallen. The allusion is to the setting of bones that are broken, or out of joint, which is done with great

care and tenderness. Professors fallen into sin are like broken and dislocated bones; they are out of their place, and lose both their comfort and usefulness, and are to be restored by gently telling them of their faults, and mildly reproving them for them; and when sensible of them, and troubled for them, by speaking comfortably to them, and by bringing them again, and resettling them in their former place in the church, and restoring them to their former usefulness and good conduct: and which is to be done

in the spirit of meekness: in the exercise of that grace which is a gift and fruit of the Spirit of God; or with a meek and humble spirit, not bearing hard upon them, and treating them in a supercilious and haughty manner, upbraiding them with their faults, aggravating them, and using them roughly, and with sharpness, which in some cases is necessary, but not in this:

considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted: a spiritual man should consider himself as in the body, and as carrying about with him a body of sin, a corrupt and treacherous heart, that is full of deceitful lusts, by which he may be tempted also, and drawn away and enticed; and as being liable to the temptations of Satan, and of being overcome by; them, against which he should watch and pray; and should think with himself what he would choose, and should desire to be done to him in such a case, and do the like to others that are in it. This is a reason enforcing the exhortation; and indeed almost every word in the text carries an argument engaging to it. The relation the saints stand in to one another, as “brethren”, should excite them to seek each other's welfare, and to restore any that are fallen, and to abstain from all roughness and severity. The persons addressed are “spiritual”, and therefore should behave as such as have the fruits of the Spirit, and, among the rest that of meekness; and, since they are strong, should help the weak, and raise up the fallen: the persons recommended to them, as the objects of their pity, care, and concern, are not such who have given up themselves to sin, but are circumvented by it, and “overtaken” in it, suddenly, and at unawares. And besides, are men, frail sinful men, liable to sin, encompassed with infirmities, and exposed to snares and temptations, which are common to human nature, and therefore should be used gently and tenderly: The apostle having given an enumeration in the foregoing chapter, of the works of the flesh, and fruits of the Spirit, directs such as are in the exercise of the latter, how to behave towards those that fall into the commission of any of the former, which may be expected, since there is flesh as well as spirit in the best.

Ver. 2. *Bear ye one another's burdens*, etc..] Which may be understood either of sins, which are heavy burdens to sensible sinners, to all that are partakers of the grace of God; Christ is only able to bear these burdens, so as to remove them and take them away, which he has done by his blood, sacrifice, and satisfaction; saints bear one another's, not by making satisfaction for them, which they are not able to do, nor by conniving at them, and suffering them upon them, which they should not do, but by gently reproving them, by comforting them when overpressed with guilt, by sympathizing with them in their sorrow, by praying to God for to manifest his pardoning grace to them, and by forgiving them themselves, so far as they are faults committed against them: or else the frailties and infirmities of weak saints, which are troublesome, and apt to make uneasy, are meant; and which are to be bore by the strong, by making themselves easy with them, and by accommodating themselves to their weakness, and by abridging themselves of some liberties, which otherwise might be lawfully taken by them; or afflictions may be designed, which are grievous to the flesh, and are bore by others, when they administer help and relief under them, whether in a temporal or spiritual way; and when they condole them, and sympathize with them, bear a part with them, and make others' griefs and sorrows their own:

and so fulfil the law of Christ; which is the law of love to one another, (ver 34John 13:34,35) in opposition to the law of Moses, the judaizing Galatians were so fond of, and by which Christ's disciples may be distinguished from those of Moses, or any others. This is a law or doctrine which Christ has clearly taught, and recovered from the false glosses of the Pharisees; it is his new commandment, which he has strengthened and enforced by his own example in dying for his people, and which he, by his Spirit, inscribes upon their hearts. The Jews speak of the law of the Messiah as preferable to any other.

> “The law (they say [f118]) which a man learns in this world is vanity, in comparison of jyçm lç wtrwt “the law of the Messiah”, or Christ;”

by “fulfilling”, it is meant, doing it, acting in obedience to it, and not a perfect fulfilling it, which cannot be done by sinful creatures.

Ver. 3. *For if a man think himself to be something*, etc..] Of himself; to have anything of himself, to do anything of himself, and of himself to attain to life and salvation:

when he is nothing: of himself; not even as a creature, but owes his being and preservation, and all the mercies of life, to another, even to God; has no grace nor gifts of himself, but what he has received, and can do no good thing, not think a good thought, or perform a good action, of himself, and much less of himself procure eternal life and salvation:

he deceiveth himself: and will find himself sadly mistaken, and wretchedly disappointed another day; or whoever thinks himself to be some famous and excellent person, to be something more, and better than others, of a more excellent nature, and of greater abilities, that he is free from sin, or at least holier than others, and not liable to fall as others, whom he looks upon with disdain and contempt, wanting that charity which the law, and new commandment of Christ, requires, when he is nothing but sin and vanity, he is destitute of the grace of God, he deceives himself and the truth is not in him. This the apostle says to depress pride, and a swelling conceit of themselves, and all uncharitable, rough, and severe usages of others. A saying like this the Jews have [f119];

> "whoever he is that is something, or thinks in himself that he is μwlk, "something", it would be better for him if he had never been created."

Ver. 4. *But let every man prove his own work*, etc..] Not concern himself about the actions and works of others; let him review his own heart and actions; let him examine, try, and prove his whole conduct in life by the rule of God's word, when he will find enough at home, without bearing hard upon, and censuring others:

and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another; which is either ironically said, he will then see what reason he has to rejoice and glory in his own works, and vaunt over others, and to boast of his performances, and despise others; so far from it, that he will have reason to be ashamed of himself, and to own and acknowledge his unworthiness and unprofitableness: or if, upon such a review, examination, and probation of his works, it shall appear that he has had his conversation in the world, by the grace of God, in simplicity and godly sincerity, this testimony of his conscience will be his rejoicing; (see <470112>2 Corinthians 1:12). He may

rejoice “in himself”, in his own works, as the fruits of grace, but not as the effects of his own power and strength; and may glory and boast of them before men, in vindication of his cause and character, and as evidences of the truth of grace, but not before God, as if they were the matter of his justification and acceptance:

and not in another; that is fallen into sin; making use of his sins and faults to set off himself, and to increase his own praise and condemnation; rejoicing in this, that he is better than others, and is not, as the Pharisee said, as other men are, as wicked as they, or has not fallen into such sins as others have done. He will have occasion to take such a method as this, if his conversation will bear the test; he will have rejoicing in the testimony of his own conscience, and will have no need to compare himself with others; his glorying will be on account of his own actions, and not through a comparison of other men's. This no ways contradicts a man's glorying in God, and rejoicing in Christ Jesus alone, in the business of salvation. It only regards a man's glorying before men, in a modest and humble manner, of what he is enabled to do, by the grace of God, without fetching in the characters of other men that are wicked, or have fallen, to illustrate his own.

Ver. 5. *For every man shall bear his own burden*.] That is, either do his own work, which God has allotted him to do, whether in a more public or private station of life; which, because it is generally troublesome to the flesh, is called a “burden”, and “his own”, being peculiar to himself, and in which no other is concerned; and which he should patiently bear, cheerfully attend to, and constantly and faithfully perform while in this world: or he shall give an account of his own actions, and not another's, to God, in the other world; he shall be judged according to his own works, what they are in themselves, and not by a comparison of other men's, who have been more wicked than he; which will be no rule of judgment with God, nor of any advantage to man. Every wicked man will bear his own burden; that is, the punishment of his own sins, and not another's; so the judgments of God, inflicted on men in this world, are often called אָשָׂם, “a burden”; (see <2300>Isaiah 13:1 15:1 17:1 19:1 21:1,11) and so may the punishment of the wicked in another world, which will be grievous and intolerable. The saints will be exempt from bearing this burden, because Christ has bore it for them, even all their sins, and all the punishment due unto them; but another burden, if it may be so called, even an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, shall be bore by them; and every man shall receive his own reward,

and not another's; and that according to his own works and labour, and not another's; not indeed for his works, but according to them, the nature of them, according to the grace of God, from whence his works spring, and by which they are performed. This the apostle says to take off men from dwelling upon, and censuring the actions of others, and from making use of them to set off their own, and buoy themselves up with vain hopes, because they are better than others; and also to engage them to attend strictly to their own actions, and consider them simply and absolutely as in themselves, and not as compared with other men's, since they will be accountable for their own actions, and not other men's; and will be judged according to their own works, and not in a comparative view to others.

Ver. 6. *Let him that is taught in the word*, etc..] Instructed in the knowledge of the word, either of the essential Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, of his person, office, and grace; or rather of the written word, particularly the Gospel, which is sometimes called the word, without any additional epithet, which distinguishes it, and directs to the sense of it; and sometimes with such, as the words of truth, the word of faith, the word of righteousness, the word of reconciliation, and the word of this salvation, so called from the nature, use, and subject matter of it. He that is taught in this, is, according to the original word used here, a “catechumen”; and which designs not one that is just beginning to learn the first principles of the oracles of God, but anyone that is instructed in it, as this word is rendered in (<4D218>Romans 2:18) whether more or less, or whether internally or externally: one that is internally taught in and by the word, is one that has been taught to know himself, and his lost state by nature; to know Christ, and salvation by him; to know the truths of the Gospel, and to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly. It may include everyone that is only outwardly taught, that is but an external hearer; and so the Syriac version renders the clause, atlm [mçd, “he that hears the word”: of which there are many sorts, and on whom it is an incumbent duty to

communicate to him that teacheth; who is commissioned, and qualified and sent forth by Christ, and whose office in the church is to teach the word, to preach the Gospel, to instruct men in the truths of it, and teach them their duty also to God and men, such are to be communicated to; that is, such as are under their instructions ought to impart of their worldly substance to them, for their honourable and comfortable support and maintenance; for

since they spend their time, and make use of their talents, gifts, and abilities, for their instruction in spiritual things, it is but reasonable, and no such great matter, that they partake of their carnal things; and especially since it is the will and ordinance of Christ, that they that preach the Gospel should live of it. The apostle adds,

in all good things; which may be either connected with the word "teacheth", and so be descriptive of the teacher, as the Arabic version reads, "him that teacheth all his good things"; good doctrines, excellent truths, the wholesome words of Christ, which he is intrusted with, has a knowledge and experience of; and who freely and faithfully imparts them, and conceals and keeps back nothing, but declares the whole counsel of God, all that he knows, and that is good and profitable; and carries in it a very strong argument why he should be communicated to: or else with the word "communicate"; and the sense either be, let him be a partaker of, and join with him in everything he says or does that is good, but not in anything that is evil, which is a sense some give into; or rather let him impart of his temporal good things unto him: temporal things are good as they are of God, and in themselves, and when rightly used answer good purposes; all a man's good things are not to be communicated, only a part, according to his ability, and in proportion to others; and yet the communication should be large and liberal, sufficient to support the teacher in an honourable manner, and to supply him with all the necessaries of life, that his mind may be free from secular cares, and he be at leisure to attend to the instructing of others.

Ver. 7. *Be not deceived*, etc..] By false teachers, who, in order to engross all to themselves, dissuaded the Galatians from communicating to their honourable pastors, and faithful ministers of the word; or by themselves, who being of a tenacious and covetous disposition, devised various things to excuse them from performing this their duty to the preachers of the Gospel; as that they had families of their own to maintain, that their circumstances were such that they could give little or nothing this way, and the others, who were of better abilities in life, ought to bear this charge; and with such like things endeavoured to satisfy their consciences in the neglect of their duty: but this was all self-deception, for

God is not mocked; nor will he be; men may deceive themselves, and others, with such excuses and false appearances, yet they cannot deceive God, who knows their hearts as well as their worldly substance, and that

the omission of their duty arises not from want of ability, but from a covetous temper; and who looks upon withholding from his ministers that which is due unto them as mocking of him, and which he will not suffer with impunity:

for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; as to kind, quality, and quantity, generally speaking; if he sows wheat he reaps wheat, if he sows barley he reaps barley; no man can expect to reap another sort than what he sows; and if it is good seed he may hope for a good crop; and if he sows bountifully, he shall reap bountifully; but if he sows sparingly, he shall reap sparingly; and if he sows nothing, he can never reap anything. This is a proverbial expression, and may be applied to all actions, good and bad, and the reward and punishment of them, and particularly to acts of beneficence, and the enjoying of the fruits thereof; (See Gill on "40162 Corinthians 9:6").

Ver. 8. *For he that soweth to his flesh*, etc..] Not that taking due care of a man's body, seeking the preservation of its health, providing proper food and raiment for himself, and all necessaries for the good and support of his family, is to be called sowing to his flesh, nor is he to be called a carnal sower; but he is such an one that pampers his flesh, gratifies and indulges the lusts of it, who minds the things of the flesh, lives after it, and does the works of it, who spends his substance in a luxurious way upon himself and family; or whose whole bent, and study, and employment, is to increase his worldly riches, to aggrandize himself and posterity, to the neglect of his own soul, the interest of religion, the poor of the church, and ministers of the Gospel:

shall of the flesh reap corruption; shall by such carnal methods procure for himself, in this world, nothing but what is corruptible, as silver and gold be, and such treasure as moth and rust corrupt; such substance as will not endure, but is perishing, and may be by one providence or another taken from him; so that all his care in sowing comes to nothing, and is of no advantage to himself, nor to his posterity; (see 3004Haggai 1:4-6), and shall fall into the pit of corruption, and be punished with everlasting destruction, and die the second death in the world to come.

But he that soweth to the Spirit; not his own, but the Spirit of God; or that soweth spiritual things, that minds and savours the things of the Spirit, lives in the Spirit, and walks in the Spirit; that lays out his worldly substance in promoting spiritual things, in encouraging the spiritual ministers of the word, in supporting the interest of spiritual religion, in

relieving the poor of Christ's churches, in contributing to the spread of the Gospel, and the administration of the word and ordinances in other places, as well as where he is more immediately concerned:

shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting; in the use of such spiritual means, though not as meritorious, or as causes, he shall attain to, and enjoy eternal happiness in the other world; or of, and by the Spirit of God, by whose grace and strength he sows, and does all the good things he does, by and of him sanctifying him, and making him meet for it, and not of himself, or any works of righteousness done by him, shall he inherit eternal life; which is the pure gift of God through Jesus Christ, and bestowed as a reward of his own grace.

Ver. 9. *And let us not be weary in well doing*, etc..] This may be understood of well doing, or doing good works in general, of every sort; which are such as are done according to the will of God, from a principle of love to him, in faith, and in the name and strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God: or else acts of beneficence to Christ's ministers and poor in particular; which are agreeable to the mind of God, and wellpleasing in his sight: and in doing which men should not be weary; nor are they, when their spiritual strength is renewed, and grace is in exercise, though they may meet with many things which tend to discourage and make them weary; such as change in their own circumstances, losses in the world, the multitude of objects, the ungratefulness of some, and unworthiness of others:

for in due time we shall reap; either in this world, sooner or later; in proper time, in God's own time, by enjoying an increase of the fruits of righteousness; for the seed sown shall spring up again; the bread that is cast on the waters will be found after many days; and such as honour the Lord with their substance shall be blessed with plenty of temporal good things, either they or theirs: or else in the other world, or at the end of this; which will be the harvest time, the reaping time, the time of enjoying eternal life:

if we faint not; but continue to the end, persevere constantly in doing acts of beneficence, and patiently wait, as the husbandman does, for the precious fruits of the earth; for there must be a distance of time between sowing and reaping; men must not expect to reap as soon as they sow; and therefore should not be weary of sowing, nor impatient in waiting, though

they do not see as yet the appearance of the fruits thereof; for in their season they will be seen and enjoyed.

Ver. 10. *As we have therefore opportunity*, etc..] Or “ability”, so the phrase is sometimes used [f120]; as occasion requires, objects offer, as there is ability of well doing, and that continues; while the time of life lasts, which is the time for sowing, or doing good works:

let us do good unto all men; not only to our relations, friends, and acquaintance, but to all men; to them that are strangers to us, of whatsoever nation, Jew or Gentile; and of whatsoever religion or sect, yea, even to our very enemies:

especially unto them who are of the household of faith: the children of God, that belong to his family, are true believers in Christ, hold the doctrine of faith, make a profession of it, and keep it fast; these are more especially to be the objects of Christian beneficence and liberality. The apostle may have sense reference to a practice among the Jews, who took a particular care of the children of good men that were poor;

> “there were two chambers in the temple, the one was called the chamber of secrets, and the other the chamber of vessels: into the chamber of secrets, religious men used to put privately, whereby were privately maintained the poor µybwj ynb, “of the children of good men” [f121].”

The Targumist on (<2415>Jeremiah 5:3) has a phrase much like to this applied to God, paraphrasing the passage thus; is it not, O Lord, revealed before thee, atwnmyh ydb[l abjwal, “to do good to the servants of faith?”

Ver. 11. *Ye see how large a letter*, etc..] Whether it be read as imperative, “see ye”, observe, take notice; or as indicative, “ye see”, ye do see, or you may see with your own eyes, it is of no great consequence: “how large a letter”, or “with what letters”; which some understand of the largeness of the characters he wrote in; others of the deformity of them, he not writing a good hand, being an Hebrew, and not used to writing Greek; others of the grand and sublime matter which it contained; though neither of these seem to be the apostle's meaning; but he intends the length of the epistle, the prolixity of his writing; and which he mentions, as an instance and expression of his love to then, care of them, and concern for them: inasmuch as he took so much pains to write so long a letter to them, in

order to set things right in their view, and recover them from error: not but that he had sent as long, or longer letters to other churches, as to the Romans, the Corinthians, and Hebrews: but then it is to be observed what follows,

I have written unto you with my own hand. The epistle to the Romans was written by Tertius, though dictated by the apostle, (Romans 16:22) as very likely the others were by Timothy, or some other amanuensis. The apostle only put his name, and wrote his salutation, which was his token, in all his epistles, of the truth and genuineness of them; (2 Thessalonians 3:17), but this was not only dictated by him, but wrote with his hand, which very probably the Galatians knew; and since it was not usual for him to do so, it was the greater proof of his affection for them; that amidst so much work, and such labours as he was employed in, he should sit down and write so long an epistle to them with his own hand, in order to expose the errors of the false teachers, and reclaim them.

Ver. 12. *As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh*, etc..] By whom are meant the false apostles, who are here described, and their views, aims, and ends, opened and exposed. These were very desirous to carry a good face of things outwardly, of appearing outwardly righteous before men, and to be accounted so by them; and therefore did all they to be seen of them, and gain applause from them. They were such, as the Syriac version renders the words, as desired ˆwrhbtçnd, “to glory in the flesh”; their carnal descent and privileges, in their being Hebrews, the seed of Abraham, of the stock of Israel; and in the circumcision of their flesh; or in their external gifts, their natural parts, acquired abilities, learning, eloquence, and the like: moreover, as the Vulgate Latin version reads, “they were willing to please in the flesh”: to please carnal men, Israel after the flesh, in carnal and fleshly things; they sought not to please God or Christ, but men, and so were not the servants of either. They were desirous, as the Arabic version renders the words, “that honour should be done them in” “the flesh”; they sought external glory from men, and to be outwardly and publicly honoured by them; and all their religion was a mere outward show, a piece of pageantry; which lay in the observation of carnal ordinances, such as respected meats and drinks, circumcision in the flesh, and other carnal commandments:

they constrain you to be circumcised; not by using any outward force and violence; but either by their example, which had great influence, as that has

both with respect to the embracing of evil principles, and giving in to bad practices: or by their doctrine; the arguments they made use of to persuade them to it, being formed and managed with great art and subtlety, wrought strongly upon them: or rather by overawing them, with threatenings of hell and damnation; affirming, that unless they were circumcised, they could not be saved: and their end was,

only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ, or "by the cross of Christ"; meaning either the manner in which persecution might be suffered, as by being reproached, ill used, and suffering death as Christ did; or by bearing the cross of affliction and tribulation Christ has appointed for, and calls his followers to; or else the object for which it is endured, the preaching of the cross, or the Gospel of salvation by a crucified Christ; for this doctrine, and the preaching and professing of it, and living a life answerable to it, always bring persecution with them: and that persecution, which is more especially here regarded, was what came from the Jews, who in general were greatly offended at the preaching of a crucified Christ; and particularly from the professing part among them, who though they believed in Christ, and were not displeased at preaching in his name; yet were greatly affronted at, and highly resented, and as much as in them lay, by reproaches and hard censures, and the like, persecuted those who opposed circumcision, and the ceremonies of the law; and to avoid the ill will, contempt, and persecution of these, the false teachers preached up circumcision, and obliged their people to submit to it.

Ver. 13. *But neither they themselves that are circumcised*, etc..] That is, the pleaders for, and preachers of circumcision, whether they themselves were actually circumcised, or not; it means those that were of the circumcision, on that side of the question, whether heartily or not:

keep the law; of circumcision, as persons may preach up that, which they themselves do not practise; as did the Pharisees, the predecessors of these men; or if they did keep the law, and submit to it, yet this might be done, not out of regard unto it, and zeal for it, but for some other end; as Simon Magus submitted to baptism, and others preached Christ of envy and contention, and not of good will; or if they did do it in obedience to the law, yet this was not keeping the whole law, which circumcision obliged to; and which, unless they did so keep it, would signify nothing; and this no man is capable of keeping perfectly, and consequently no righteousness, life, and salvation, can be had hereby: besides, though these men were so

zealous for the lighter matters of the law, the rites and ceremonies of it, as circumcision, etc.. they disregarded the weightier and more material parts of it, as judgment, mercy, and faith; these they kept not, nor attended to: and many of them lived very dissolute lives and conversations, at least secretly, if not openly; which abundantly proved that they were far from keeping the law; and that their pleading for it, and submitting to some of the rituals of it, were not out of pure love and strict regard to it, but for some other end:

but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh; that is, in the circumcision of it; or, as the Ethiopic version, "in your bodies". Their view in bringing persons to submit to circumcision was, that they might have occasion to glory among the Jews, and boast to them of the numbers of proselytes they brought, and of the service they did to Judaism, and so increase their fame and glory among them.

Ver. 14. *But God forbid that I should glory*, etc..] The apostle, on the contrary, expresses his aversion to glorying in anything these men did; not in his outward carnal privileges, as a Jew; nor in his moral, civil, and legal righteousness; nor in his gifts and attainments; nor in his labours and success, as of himself; nor in the flesh of others, or in any outward corporeal subjection to any ordinance, legal or evangelical; his glorying and rejoicing were rather in the spirituality, the faith, hope, love, patience, order, and steadfastness of the saints, than in anything in the flesh, either his own or others: and indeed he chose not to glory in any thing,

save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; meaning either the infirmities, reproaches, tribulations, and persecutions, which he endured for the sake of Christ, and the preaching of his Gospel; or the Gospel, the doctrine of the cross of Christ, and salvation by it: or rather a crucified Christ himself, whom he preached; though counted foolishness by some, and was a stumbling to others: he gloried in him, and determined to know, and make known, none but him, in the business of salvation; he gloried in him as crucified, and in his cross; not in the wood of the cross, but in the effects of his crucifixion; in the peace, pardon, righteousness, life, salvation, and eternal glory, which come through the death of the cross; he gloried in Christ as his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption:

by whom the world is crucified to me: so that he feared not the worst men, and things in it, any more than he would one that was fastened to a cross, or dead; since Christ, by his crucifixion and death, had overcome the

world, the prince of it, the men and malice of it, the sin that was in it, and had made him more than a conqueror also; his faith in a crucified Christ overcame the world likewise; so that he looked upon it as the Israelites saw the Egyptians, dead on the sea shore; nor did he affect and love, but trampled upon and despised, as crucified persons generally are, those things in it which are the most alluring to the flesh, the lusts of it; the doctrine of grace, of a crucified Christ, taught him to deny the riches, honours, pleasures, profits, and applause of the world; which were to him as dross, in comparison of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord: the ceremonial law also, the elements of the world, were dead unto him, being nailed to the cross of Christ, to be of no further use and service unto men:

and I unto the world; that is, am crucified to the world, as the Syriac and Arabic versions express it; that is, he was despised by the world for the sake of a crucified Christ, as the world was by him, in comparison of him; the world had no affection for him, as he had none for the world; and as the ceremonial law was dead to him, so he was dead to that, through the body of Christ, and had nothing to do with these beggarly elements, nor they with him, which sense is confirmed by the following words.

Ver. 15. *For in Christ Jesus*, etc..] These words are omitted in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; (see Gill on "Galatians 5:6"), (see Gill on "1 Corinthians 7:19"), they contain a reason why the apostle gloried in a crucified Christ, and looked upon the world as dead to him, and he to that, in every state of it; particularly as it may design "the worldly sanctuary" of the Jews, and all the rites and ceremonies appertaining to it; and among the rest

circumcision, which availeth not anything; neither as a command, type, or privilege; or in the business of salvation, being abolished by Christ:

nor uncircumcision; being now no bar to the Gospel, Gospel ordinances, or a Gospel church state; or to any of the blessings of the everlasting covenant, which come upon the uncircumcision, as well as the circumcision. But to apply these words to baptism and non-baptism is a wretched perversion, and making a very ill use of them, whereby the minds of men are worked up to an indifference to a Christian institution; for though baptism is of no avail in the business of salvation, yet it cannot be said of it, as of circumcision, that it avails not anything as a command; for it is a standing ordinance of Christ; or as an emblem and sign, for it is significative of the death and burial, and resurrection of Christ; or as a

privilege, for it is of use to lead the faith of God's people to his blood and righteousness for pardon and justification; for he that believes, and is baptized, shall be saved; and it is necessary to church communion: and, on the other hand, it cannot be said that non-baptism avails not; it is a bar to church fellowship; and a neglect of baptism in those who are the proper subjects of it, is resented by Christ, and is a rejecting of the counsel of God against themselves; which was the case of the Pharisees, in the time of John the Baptist:

but a new creature. The phrase is Rabbinical; (See Gill on "2 Corinthians 5:17") by which is meant, not a new creation of a man, as a man, of the members of his body, or of the faculties of his soul; nor of an external reformation, or a walking in newness of life, which is the fruit and effect of this new creation work; but an internal principle of grace, a good work of God begun in the soul, called the hidden man of the heart, the new man, Christ formed in us, of which faith that works by love is a part: this is called a "creature", and so not of man, but God; for none can create but himself; and in which work man is purely passive, as the heavens and the earth were in their creation: it is "but" a creature, and therefore needs divine support, fresh strength from God, and frequent supplies of grace to maintain and preserve it; nor is it to be trusted in, but the grace which is in Christ, from whence it comes, and by which it is secured. This is a "new" creature, in opposition to the old man; and because it is a principle in man, which never was there before; it consists of a new heart and spirit, of new eyes, ears, hands, and feet, expressive of new principles and actions, of new light, life, love, desires, joys, comforts, and duties: now this is of avail; it is a branch of the new covenant of grace, which God has therein promised to bestow on his people; it is an evidence of interest in Christ, the new and living way to the Father, and eternal life; such are newborn babes, regenerated persons, and have a right and meetness for the kingdom of God; shall possess the new Jerusalem, shall dwell in the new heavens and new earth; they are called by the Lord's new name, the adopted children of God; and have a new song put into their mouths, which none but redeemed and newborn souls can sing; and shall drink the new wine of endless joys and everlasting pleasures with Christ, in his Father's kingdom. These words are said to be taken out of the Apocalypse of Moses, a spurious book, but without any foundation.

Ver. 16. *And as many as walk according to this rule*, etc..] Or canon; meaning not the canon of the Scriptures in general, which is the perfect

rule, and only standard of faith and practice; according to which we are to walk, believe, and act; but either the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, the subject of this epistle, the truth the apostle had been explaining, vindicating, and confirming; and which to depart from, is going out of the way of truth; and an abiding by it, is walking in it; and is a good rule and standard, by which to distinguish between truth and error; for whatever is contrary to that article of faith cannot be true: or else the rule delivered in the preceding verse, declaring circumcision and uncircumcision to be of no avail in salvation, but a new creature; and to walk according to this rule, is to renounce all trust in, and dependence upon any outward things; to believe alone in Christ, for righteousness and life; to live by faith upon him, and to walk in newness of life, under the influences of his Spirit and grace:

peace be on them, and mercy. This is the apostle's godly wish, unfeigned desire, and hearty prayer for all such persons, be they who they will; Jews or Gentiles, circumcised or uncircumcised: by peace he means, a view of their peace with God, made by the blood of Christ; peace in their own consciences, which passes all understanding, and arises from a comfortable sense of justification by the righteousness of Christ, of pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice; and which is enjoyed in a way of believing; and also peace with one another, among themselves as brethren, which is a very desirable blessing: in short, it includes all prosperity and happiness, inward and outward, temporal, spiritual, and eternal: and by “mercy”, he designs the love and grace of God, to sinful miserable creatures in themselves, which is the spring and fountain of all peace and prosperity; and which is displayed in the covenant of grace, and all the blessings of it; in the mission and incarnation of Christ, and redemption by him; in regeneration, forgiveness of sin, and complete salvation; and intends a fresh discovery, manifestation, and application of the mercy of God to his children; who often stand in need thereof, being distressed with the guilt of sin, or are under desertions or afflictive providences, at which time to have mercy showed them, is exceeding suitable and agreeable: when the apostle wishes these to be “on” them, it signifies that these blessings come from above, as every good gift does; that they descend as a cloud, and rest upon them, and abide with them, refreshing, comforting, and protecting them: he adds,

and upon the Israel of God; which is a further description of the persons, for whom he prays for these blessings; and is not to be understood by way

of distinction from them, but as an amplification of their character; and as pointing out the Israel, by way of emphasis, the Israel, or Israelites indeed, the spiritual Israel, as distinct from Israel according to the flesh; (see <460118>1 Corinthians 10:18). The “Israel of God”, or as the Arabic version reads it, “Israel the propriety of God”; which he has a right unto, and a claim upon; who are chosen by him, Israel his elect; who are redeemed by him, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; who are called by his grace, and are styled Israel his called; who are justified in his Son, and by his righteousness; and for whose sake he is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to give them repentance and remission of sin; and who are, or will be saved by him, with an everlasting salvation; and is a name that includes all God's elect, whether Jews or Gentiles: though it may have a particular respect to such of the Israelites, or Jews, God had foreknown and reserved for himself; and who believed in Christ, and walked as new creatures, without confidence in the flesh. The Jews themselves own, that strangers, or proselytes, shall be called by the name of Israel; so they [f122] explain (<234405>Isaiah 44:5), latter part.

Ver. 17. *From henceforth let no man trouble me*, etc..] Having so clearly stated and explained the doctrine of justification, and so largely proved that it is not by works, but by faith, and that circumcision and other rituals of the ceremonial law were not necessary to it, he desires, nay, in an authoritative way he requires, that they give him no further trouble on that head; signifying, that he expected they would be satisfied with what he had wrote, and abide by the truth and obey it, as they had formerly done; that he should hear no more objections from them, or complaints of them: nor need they further inquire his sense of these things; by this they would fully know his faith and practice; as indeed they might also by his suffering persecutions on the account of his faith, and his preaching the Gospel of Christ, and particularly this part of it:

for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus; by which he means, not the marks in Christ's hands, feet, and side; but the reproachful characters the apostle was stigmatized with; or the real scars in his body, made by beating, scourging, and stoning of him; or his sufferings and persecutions in general, which he endured for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; (see <471123>2 Corinthians 11:23-28). The allusion is either to servants and soldiers, who, when taken into service, used to have some particular mark put upon them, that they might be known to be such an one's servant, or soldier [f123]; as the Hebrew servant, who was willing to serve his master, had his ear bored

through with an awl, (Exodus 21:6) so the apostle was known to be a firm and faithful servant, and a good soldier of Christ, by the reproaches and afflictions which he underwent for his sake; or else to those marks which, by way of reproach and punishment, were made upon fugitive servants, or soldiers, that deserted; as the sufferings of the apostle were designed as reproaches to him, and punishments of him, for preaching the Gospel of Christ; but these he gloried in, and bore and carried as trophies and marks of honour. Just as veteran soldiers show the scars and wounds they have received in battle, as tokens of their valour and courage, in facing and fighting the enemy in greatest danger: these he is said to bear "in his body"; not in the bodies of others, he gloried not in their flesh, as the false apostles did; nor in the circumcision of his own flesh, the scar that left there the mark of Moses and of a Jew; but in those things which were marks of his being a disciple of Christ, and not of Moses, and which he bore for his sake; and since therefore it was so easy to discern on which side of the question he was, from his suffering persecution for the cross of Christ; and since he had so many and such great trials and exercises, he, with apostolical gravity and authority, commands them to give him no more trouble, from the time of their reception of the epistle, henceforward.

Ver. 18. *Brethren*, etc..] So he calls them, to testify his affection for them, notwithstanding their infirmity and instability, and the roughness with which he had treated them; and to show his great humility and condescension in owning the relation, and putting them on a level with himself, which the pride of the false teachers would not suffer them to do.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit: which is his concluding benediction and usual salutation and token in all his epistles: he wishes that more gifts of grace might be bestowed upon them; that the Gospel of the grace of God might be continued with them; that the love of Christ might be shed abroad in their hearts; that they might receive out of his fulness grace for grace; that there might be an increase of grace in their souls; that it might abound in them, and they grow in the exercise of it: he does not pray that the law of Moses, or the righteousness of works, but that the grace of Christ might be with them; not in the mere notion of it, but in the spiritual experience of it; that it might be in their hearts, and with their spirits, quickening, comforting, and strengthening them; making them more spiritual and evangelical in their frames and duties, and freeing them from a carnal and legal spirit: to all which he sets his

Amen; signifying his desire that so it might be, and his faith that so it would be. The subscription of the letter follows,

unto the Galatians, written from Rome; where perhaps he was then a prisoner; the Arabic version adds, “by Titus and Luke”: who might be sent with it, but the subscriptions of the epistles are not to be depended on.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Misn. Menachot, c. 10. sect. 3. & Yoma, c. 1. sect. 5.

Ft2 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 32.

Ft3 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 72. 3.

Ft4 -- Nat. Hist. 50:12. c. 21.

Ft5 -- lb. 50:5. c. 12, 14, 16.

Ft6 -- De Bello Jud. 50:3. c. 3. sect. 3.

Ft7 -- Antiqu. 50:14. c. 1. sect. 4. & 50:4. c. 4. sect. 7.

Ft8 -- De Locis Hebraicis, fol. 92. G.

Ft9 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:7. c. 5.

Ft10 -- lb. 50:8. c. 12.

Ft11 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburgh. cent. 4. c. 9. p. 350, 390, 405, 425. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 2. c. 10. p. 552.

Ft12 -- Advers. Helvidium, Tom. II. fol. 4. M.

Ft13 -- R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 8. p. 469.

Ft14 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:2. c. 23. Hieron. Catalog. Script. Eccl. sect. 3. fol. 89.

Ft15 -- Antiqu. 50:20. c. 8. sect. 1.

Ft16 -- Chambers's Cyclopaedia in the word “Climate”.

Ft17 -- L. 7. Polymnia, c. 91. Solinus, c. 51.

Ft18 -- Canaan, p. 376.

Ft19 -- L. 2. Euterpe, c. 34.

Ft20 -- De Locis Hebraicis, fol. 95. M.

Ft21 -- Misn. Sheviith, c. 9. sect. 2.

Ft22 -- T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 38. 4.

Ft23 -- Hieron. Catalog. Script. Ecclesiast. sect. 4. fol. 90. A.

Ft24 -- Irenaeus adv. Haeres. 50:3. c. 1.

Ft25 -- Hist. Ecclesiastes Magdeburg. cent. 1. 50:2. c. 10. p. 449.

Ft26 -- Vid. Sol. Ben Melech in Psal. xl 17.

Ft27 -- Epiphan. contr. Haeres. 50:1. Tom. 2. Haeres. 28.

Ft28 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 2. sect. 5.

Ft29 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2.

Ft30 -- Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 46. 1.

Ft31 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:2. c. 19. Cormel. Nepos, 50:2. c. 8. Gale's Court of the Gentiles, part 2. book 2, c. 6. sect. 9. & c. 9. sect. 3.

Ft32 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 147. 4.

Ft33 -- Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:1. c. 12.

Ft34 -- In loc.

Ft35 -- Mattanot Cehunah in Vajikra Rabba, fol. 164. 3.

Ft36 -- Harpocratian. Lex. p. 93.

Ft37 -- Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 10. fol. 201. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 122. 1.

Ft38 -- Abarbinel in Pentateuch, fol. 54. 1, 2. Vid. R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 1. c. 13. p. 135.

Ft39 -- Misn. Kiddushin, c 4. sect 14. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 28. 2.

Ft40 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 1.

Ft41 -- Jarchi in loc.

Ft42 -- Bechai in loc.

Ft43 -- Aben Ezra in loc.

Ft44 -- R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 152. 3,

Ft45 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:3. c. 5.

Ft46 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 1.

Ft47 -- Vid. Buxtorf. Lexic. Talmudie. col. 2596.

Ft48 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 89. p. 469.

Ft49 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 51. 3.

Ft50 -- T. Bab Ceritot, fol. 11. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 94. 2. Sanhedrin, fol. 90. 2. Maccot, fol. 12. 1. Vid Halicot Olam, tract 4. c. 3. p. 199.

Ft51 -- Chizzuk Emuna, par. 1. c. 13. p. 134.

Ft52 -- Ib. par. 2. c. 90. p. 468.

Ft53 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 37. 1.

Ft54 -- Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 7. 1.

Ft55 -- Juchasln, fol. 156. 2.

Ft56 -- Jarchi in T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 9. 1.

Ft57 -- Antiqu. 50:2. c. 15. sect. 2.

Ft58 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 152. 3.

Ft59 -- Targum in <1329 11>1 Chronicles 29:11.

Ft60 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 136. 1, 2.

Ft61 -- Pirke Abot, c. 6. sect. 6.

Ft62 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 70. 3. & in Numbers fol. 62. 1.

Ft63 -- Schindler Lex. Pentaglott. in voce jwr, col. 1712.

Ft64 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 3, 4, 6. Vid. Misn. Tamid, c. 1. sect. 1, 2.

Ft65 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dierum, 50:2. c. 14. Aurel. Victor. de orig. Gent. Romans c. 8. Aristophanis Thesmophor, & Bourdin in ib. p. 782.

Ft66 -- Alex. ab Alex. ib. Aurel. Victor, c. 6.

Ft67 -- Maimon. Nechalot, c. 1. sect. 1, 2.

Ft68 -- Misn. Chagiga, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft69 -- Sedor Tephillot, fol. 2. 2. Ed. Basil. fol. 4. 1. Ed. Amst. T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 13. 2.

Ft70 -- Targum Jon. ben Uzziel in <0139 04>Genesis 39:4. & xli 34, 35. & xliii 15. Targum in <1701 03>Esther 1:8. & 2. 3.

Ft71 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 39. 1, 2.

Ft72 -- Maimon. Hilch. Necabot, c. 10. sect. 6.

Ft73 -- Bartenora in Misn. Pesachim, c. 8. sect. 1.

Ft74 -- Hilch. Nechalot, c. 11.

Ft75 -- Ib. Hilch. Ishot, c. 2. sect. 1, 2.

Ft76 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 1. Vid. Jarchi & Kinachi in <2302 2>Isaiah 60:22.

Ft77 -- Kimchi in Psal. cviii. 4.

Ft78 -- In <2906>Isaiah 9:6.

Ft79 -- Bereshit Rabba, fol. 2. 4. & 6. 3. Vajikra Rabba, fol. 156. 4. (See Gill on " <4609>Romans 8:9").

Ft80 -- Targum in <1406>2 Chronicles 2:6.

Ft81 -- De Successionibus ad Leg. Ebr. c. 4. p. 33.

Ft82 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Nechalot, c. 4. sect. 5.

Ft83 -- T. Hieros. Niddah, fol. 49. 2. Vid. Massech. Semachet, c. 1. sect. 13.

Ft84 -- Misn. Gittin, c. 4. sect. 4.

Ft85 -- T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 37. 2.

Ft86 -- Aveda Zara.

Ft87 -- De Cherubim, p. 108, 109.

Ft88 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 41.

Ft89 -- Castel. Lex. Polyglot. col. 804.

Ft90 -- Nat. Hist. 50:6. c. 28.

Ft91 -- De Locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. H.

Ft92 -- De Fortitudine, p. 741.

Ft93 -- Koran, c. 7. p. 126.

Ft94 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 13. 2. & 16. 2. & 75. 4. & 77. 1. & 78. 2. & 114. 3. & 121. 1. & in Exodus fol. 6. 1. & 92. 2. T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 5. 1. Gloss. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 2. Caphtor, fol. 14. 2. & 25. 2. & 65. 1. & 68. 2. & 71. 2. & 118. 2. Raziel, fol. 13. 1. & 27. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 61. 3. & 150. 3. Nishmat Chayim, fol. 26. 2. Kimchi in <2810>Hosea 11:19.

Ft95 -- Targum in Cant. 8. 5.

Ft96 -- Sithre Tora in Zohar in Genesis fol. 55. 2. & Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Leviticus fol. 34. 1.

Ft97 -- Jarchi in <0210>Genesis 21:9. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 53. fol. 47. 4.

Ft98 -- Jarchi & Bereshit Rabba, sect. 53, fol. 47. 4. Pirke Eliezer. c. 30.

Ft99 -- Baal Hattrim, in loc.

Ft100 -- Jarchi & Bereshit Rabba, ut supra. (sect. 53, fol. 47. 4.)

Ft101 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 9. 2.

Ft102 -- R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror, fol. 21. 3.

Ft103 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 30.

Ft104 -- Maimon. Hilch. Nechalot, c. 1. sect. 7.

Ft105 -- Ib c. 2. sect. 12.

Ft106 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 152. 1.

Ft107 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 2. sect. 2. T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 4. 2.

Ft108 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 104. 4.

Ft109 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 10. 2.

Ft110 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 1.

Ft111 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol, 116. 1.

Ft112 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 17. 1. Misn. Oholot, c. 16. sect. 1. & Maimon, in Bartenora in ib.

Ft113 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 52. 2. Nazir, fol. 49. 2.

Ft114 -- (02348)Exodus 34:28. Vid. Targum Onk. & Jon. in ib.

Ft115 -- T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 23. 2. & 24. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 151. 1.

Ft116 -- In Jarchi in (03918)Leviticus 19:18.

Ft117 -- Tzeror, Hammor, fol. 15. 3.

Ft118 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 83. 1.

Ft119 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 79. 1.

Ft120 -- See Hammond on. (51040)Philippians 4:10.

Ft121 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 6.

Ft122 -- Jarchi & Abarbinel in (23445)Isaiah 44:5.

Ft123 -- Vid. Lydium de re militare, 50:1. c. 6.

EPHESIANS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

The city of Ephesus is, by Pliny[f1], called the other light of Asia; Miletus was one, and Ephesus the other: it was the metropolis of the lesser Asia, and one of the twelve cities of Ionia, and the first and chief of them: it is said to be built by the Amazons[f2]: it was famous for the magnificent temple of Diana; and the inhabitants of it were very much given to superstition and idolatry, and even to devilish arts, (<44>Acts 19:19). It abounded with orators and philosophers, and men of great wisdom and learning[f3]; and was formerly a very rich, trading, flourishing city, but now a village, and a poor desolate place; it retains the name of Efeso, though the Turks call it Aia Salik. Hither the Apostle Paul first went after he had been at Corinth, though he then made but a short stay; when he came thither again, he found twelve disciples, and was the instrument of making a great many more: here he continued two or three years and formed a Gospel church, very large and flourishing, to whom he writes this epistle; and which was written by him when he was a prisoner at Rome, as appears by several passages in it, (<49>Ephesians 3:1 4:1 6:20), and seems to have been written much about the same time as were the epistles to the Philippians, and to the Colossians, and to Philemon. Dr. Hammond thinks it was written about the year 58, and Dr. Lightfoot places it in 59, and the fifth year of Nero. The occasion of it was the foresight the apostle had of false teachers that would spring up in this church, after his death, and spread their pernicious doctrines, and draw away disciples after them, and do great mischief in the church; wherefore the design of this epistle is to establish the saints in the doctrines of the Gospel, that so they might not be carried away with the errors of the wicked: the subject matter of it is most excellent; it treats of the most sublime doctrines of grace, of divine predestination, and eternal election, of redemption by Christ, and of peace and pardon by his blood, of conversion by the power of efficacious grace, and of salvation by the free grace of God, in opposition to works: it also very largely treats of the nature and usefulness of the Gospel ministry, and of gifts qualifying for it, and of the several duties of religion incumbent on Christians; and the method which is used is exceeding apt and beautiful, for the apostle first

begins with the doctrines of the Gospel, which he distinctly handles and explains, and then proceeds to enforce the duties belonging to men, both as men and Christians.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS 1

In this chapter are contained the inscription of the epistle, the salutation of the persons to whom it is written, the apostle's thanksgiving for blessings received by him, and them; in which the efficient, moving, procuring, and final causes of salvation are taken notice of, and the several parts and branches of it observed; and the whole is concluded with prayers for the Ephesians; in which mention is made of various things to the comfort of the saints, and to the glory of Christ. The inscription is in (<4001>Ephesians 1:1), in which the author of the epistle puts his name, declares his office, and how he came into it; and describes the persons to whom he wrote it, by their religious characters, and the place of their abode. The salutation is in (<4002>Ephesians 1:2), which is common to all his epistles: and in (<4003>Ephesians 1:3), is the thanksgiving to God, as the God and Father of Christ, for spiritual blessings in Christ in general; and then he proceeds to particulars, and begins with election, which is represented as an act of God the Father, as of particular persons, as done in Christ, and from the foundation of the world, the end of which is perfect holiness and love, (<4004>Ephesians 1:4), and which is further illustrated under the name of predestination; the blessing which that is an appointment to, is the adoption of children; the moving cause of it, is the good pleasure of the divine will; the instrumental cause, or means, is Christ Jesus; the end with God is for himself, (<4005>Ephesians 1:5), and which, in the next verse, is explained of the glory of his grace; to which grace, acceptance with him in Christ is owing; and which is another spiritual blessing, or a branch of election and predestination, (<4006>Ephesians 1:6). To which is added another, and that is redemption; the author of which is Christ; the price, or procuring and meritorious cause of it is his blood; a branch of which is forgiveness of sins; and the whole is according to the plenteous and free grace of God, (<4007>Ephesians 1:7), the entire plan and scheme of which is the produce of abundant wisdom and prudence, (<4008>Ephesians 1:8), and is no other than the mystery of the will of God revealed in the Gospel, according to his sovereign will and purpose, (<4009>Ephesians 1:9), which lay hid within himself until the fulness of times, or the Gospel dispensation, in which

Christ being sent, has gathered all together in himself, (Ephesians 1:10), through whom the saints enjoy the inheritance they are adopted to in predestination, which is the effect of an unfrustrable purpose, and a wise counsel and will, (Ephesians 1:11). The end of which is, that those predestinated, redeemed, and adopted ones, should be to the praise and glory of God, (Ephesians 1:12), and who are described as such, who first trusted in Christ upon hearing the Gospel; and after they had believed in him, were sealed by the Holy Spirit, said to be the Spirit of promise, (Ephesians 1:13), and who is also spoken of as the earnest and pledge of the saints' inheritance, and who will continue so until all the people of God are redeemed from the grave in the resurrection morn, which will also issue in the praise and glory of God, (Ephesians 1:14), and now on account of all these blessings of predestination, adoption, redemption, calling, and the sealing of the Spirit; as also, because of their faith in Christ, and love to the saints, these believers were possessed of, the apostle gave thanks, and continued to give thanks to God in his prayers to him, (Ephesians 1:15,16). The object of his prayers is described as the God of Christ, and Father of glory; the petitions to him are for an increase of knowledge of Christ from the Spirit, as a spirit of wisdom and revelation, (Ephesians 1:17), and that they might have a clearer view of the nature of that glory they were called unto, and were hoping for, (Ephesians 1:18), and observe the wonderful display of the power of God in their conversion and faith; which is illustrated by comparing it with that power which was shown in raising Christ from the dead, (Ephesians 1:20), which leads the apostle to take notice of the exaltation of Christ at the right hand of God in heaven, consequent on his resurrection; where he is advanced above angels and men, and has all things in subjection to him for the good of his church, of which he is the head, and which is his body and fulness, (Ephesians 1:21-23).

Ver. 1. *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God*, &c.] (See Gill on “ Romans 1:1”). (See Gill on “1 Corinthians 1:1”). (See Gill on “2 Corinthians 1:1”). (See Gill on “Galatians 1:1”).

To the saints which are at Ephesus; of this place, see the note above upon the title of the epistle, and (See Gill on “Acts 18:19”). The persons residing there, to whom the epistle is written, are described by their character, as “saints”; being separated by the grace of God the Father in eternal election; whose sins were expiated by the blood and sacrifice of Christ; and to whom he himself was made sanctification; and who were

internally sanctified by the Spirit of God, and lived holy lives and conversations. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, “to all the saints”; whether officers of the church, or private members, whether rich or poor, bond or free, strong or weak believers, of greater or lesser abilities.

And to the faithful in Christ Jesus: who were in Christ, not only by electing grace, but were openly and manifestly in him, through converting grace; and abode in him as branches in the vine; continued constant, and persevered in faith and holiness; and were faithful to the cause and interest of Christ, and to his Gospel and ordinances; and were hearty and sincere in the profession of their faith in Christ, and love to him and his: or, as the Arabic version renders it, “and to them that believe in Jesus Christ”; with all their hearts, to the saving of their souls; who look unto him, venture on him, rely upon him, and trust in him for life and salvation, and who shall certainly be saved; of such the church at Ephesus consisted, to whom this epistle was written: of the church there, (see Gill on “<4407>Acts 20:17”).

Ver. 2. *Grace be to you, and peace from God*, &c.] (See Gill on “<4501>Romans 1:7”).

Ver. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, &c.] God, the first person in the Trinity, is the God of Christ, as Christ is man and Mediator; he chose and appointed him to be the Mediator, and made a covenant with him as such; he formed and prepared an human nature for him, and anointed it with the Holy Ghost above measure, and supported it under all his trials and sufferings, and at last glorified it: and Christ, as man, prayed to him as his God, believed, hoped, and trusted in him as such, and loved him as in such a relation to him, and cheerfully obeyed his commands. And the same is the Father of Christ, as Christ is God; as such he is the Son of God; not by creation, as angels and Adam, nor by adoption, as saints, but by natural generation; he being the only begotten of the Father, his own proper Son, of the same nature and perfections with him, and equal to him. Now to “bless” God is neither to invoke nor confer a blessing on him; for there is none greater than he to be called upon; nor does he need anything, nor can he receive anything from his creature; but it is either to congratulate his greatness and goodness, to ascribe blessing, glory, and honour to him, or to give thanks unto him, both for temporal and spiritual mercies. And the reasons why he is blessed, or praised by the saints as the God and Father of Christ, are; because these are his New

Testament titles, under which he is more clearly made known, and in which he delights; and because he is their God and Father in Christ; nor can they come to him in any other way, but through him; and because it is through him that all their blessings come to them, and therefore all their praises must go this way, as follows:

who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: God is the author and giver of all blessings; and he blesses his people with them, as he is the God and Father of Christ, and as he is their covenant God and Father in Christ; and he only can bless; if he blesses not, none can; and if he blesses, they are blessed indeed: the "us" that are blessed, are such who deserve, according to the tenor of the law, to be cursed; and are not all men, but some distinct from others; and who are before described as saints, and faithful in Christ Jesus; and include both Jews and Gentiles, who belong to the election of grace. And the blessings such are blessed with are spiritual, so called to distinguish them from temporal blessings. The Jews have the like distinction of twynmz twbwj, "temporal blessings", and twynjwr twbwj, "spiritual blessings" [f4]; which latter are solid, substantial, and lasting blessings; and which concern the good of the soul or spirit of man; and are agreeable to, and desired by a spiritual man; and are applied by the Holy Spirit of God; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "with every blessing of the Holy Spirit": and which are very comprehensive, and take in all the fulness of grace in Christ; all the blessings and sure mercies of the everlasting covenant; all things pertaining to life and godliness, such as justification, peace, pardon, adoption, sanctification, and eternal life: and with these the saints are blessed "in heavenly" places; God that blesses them is in heaven, and so is Christ, in whom they are blessed; and the completion of their blessedness will be in heaven, where their hope is laid up, and their inheritance is reserved: and this phrase may denote the safety of them, being out of the reach of any enemy, sin, Satan, or the world, to deprive them of them, as well as the nature of them; for it may be read, "in heavenly things", and so distinguishes these blessings from such as are of an earthly kind; and points at the original of them, being such as descend from above, come down from heaven; and also the tendency of them, which is to heaven; and being what give a right unto, and a meetness for the kingdom of heaven: and these they are blessed with "in Christ"; as he is their head and representative, and as they are members in him, and partakers of him; through whom, and for whose sake, they are conveyed unto them, and who

himself is the sum and substance of them. Agreeably to this way of speaking, the Targumist, Jonathan ben Uzziel, on (<4067>Numbers 6:27) paraphrases the last clause thus, “I will bless them”, ymrmymb, “in my word”. The date of these blessings, “hath blessed us”, may respect either first conversion, when the discovery and application of the blessings of grace are made to God's people; or the making of the covenant with Christ, their head, to whom all grace was then given, and to them in him, and their election was in Christ, as follows.

Ver. 4. *According as he hath chosen us in him*, &c.] This choice cannot be understood of a national one, as Israel of old were chosen by the Lord; for the persons the apostle writes to were not a nation; nor does he address all the inhabitants of Ephesus, only the saints and faithful in Christ that resided there; nor are they all intended here, if any of them. However, not they only, since the apostle includes himself, and perhaps some others, who did not belong to that place, nor were of that country: nor does this choice regard them as a church; for though the saints at Ephesus were in a church state, yet the apostle does not write to them under that formal consideration, but as saints and faithful; nor are these persons said to be chosen to church privileges, but to grace and glory, to be holy and blameless: besides, from (<4901>Ephesians 1:3-12), the apostle seems to speak of himself, and some others, who first trusted in Christ, as distinct from the believers at Ephesus, (<4901>Ephesians 1:13), nor is this choice of persons to an office, for all that are here intended were not apostles, or pastors, or deacons: nor can it design the effectual calling, or the call of persons in time by efficacious grace; because this was before the foundation of the world, as follows: but it intends an eternal election of particular persons to everlasting life and salvation; and which is the first blessing of grace, and the foundation one, upon which all the rest proceed, and

according to which they are dispensed; for according to predestination are calling, justification, and glorification. The author of this choice is God, God the Father, who is distinguished from Christ, in whom this act is made; and it is according to his foreknowledge, and is an act of his grace, and is entirely sovereign: the objects of it, us, are not angels, but men, considered as unfallen with respect to the end, and as fallen with respect to the means; and these not all mankind: to choose, implies the contrary; and they that are chosen are distinguished from others, and are represented as few; nor do all men partake either of the means or end appointed in the decree of election; and yet some of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, are

included in it; though none for any previous qualifications in them, as not for their good works, faith, holiness, or perseverance therein; for these are fruits and effects of election, and therefore cannot be causes or conditions of it: and this choice is made in Christ; and the persons chosen are chosen in him, and by being chosen they come to be in him; for this refers not to their openly being in him at conversion, as believers, but to their secretly being in him before time. Christ, as Mediator, is the object of election himself; and all the elect were chosen in him as their head, in whose hands their persons, grace, and glory are, and so are safe and secure in him: the Arabic version renders it, “by him”; not as the meritorious cause, for Christ's merits are not the cause of election, though they are of redemption and salvation; but as the means, in order to the end: the Ethiopic version renders it, “to him”; to salvation by him, and to the obtaining of his glory; as if he and his benefits, being the end of this choice, were intended; which was made

before the foundation of the world: and that it was so early, is certain, from the love of God to his people, which this is the effect of, and which is an everlasting love; and from the covenant which was made with Christ from everlasting, on account of these chosen ones, when Christ was set up as the head and representative of them; and from the provision of all spiritual blessings for them in it, which proceeds according to this choice; and from the preparation of a kingdom for them from the foundation of the world; and from the nature of God's decrees, which are eternal; for no new will, or act of will, can arise in God, or any decree be made by him, which was not from eternity: God's foreknowledge is eternal, and so is his decree, and is no other than himself decreeing. The end of this choice follows,

that we should be holy, and without blame, before him in love; the objects of it are not chosen because they were holy, but that they might partake of the sanctification of the Spirit; that they might be sanctified by him here, and be perfectly holy hereafter; and be without fault and blame, both in this life, as instilled by the righteousness of Christ, and as washed in his blood; and in the life to come, being entirely freed from all sin, and without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; and appear so in the sight of Christ, who will present them to himself, and in the sight of his Father, to whom they will also be presented by him, even in the sight of divine justice: and this will be all “in love”, or “through love”, as the Syriac version renders it; or “through his love”, as the Arabic version; for the love of God is the source and spring of election itself, and of holiness and happiness, the end of it;

and which is shed abroad in the hearts of God's people now, and will be more fully comprehended and enjoyed in the other world; and which causes love again in them to him. A phrase somewhat like this is used by the Targumist on (<21106>Ecclesiastes 11:6) where, speaking of a man's children, he says;

> “it is not known unto thee which of them bj ywhml rjbta, “is chosen to be good”, this, or that, or both of them, to be alike good.”

Some copies put the stop at before him; and read the phrase, “in love”; in connection with the words following, thus, “in love”, or “by love hath predestinated us”; so the Syriac version.

Ver. 5. *Having predestinated us*, &c.] Predestination, taken in a large sense, includes both election and reprobation, and even reaches to all affairs and occurrences in the world; to the persons, lives, and circumstances of men; to all mercies, temporal or spiritual; and to all afflictions, whether in love or in wrath: and indeed providence, or the dispensations of providence, are no other than the execution of divine predestination; but here it is the same with election, and is concerned with the same persons, and has regard to a special blessing, the elect are appointed to, as follows;

unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself; by which is meant, either the grace of adoption, which is an act of the Father's love, a blessing provided and secured in the covenant of grace; and is of persons to an inheritance, to which they have no legal right; and is entirely free, there being no need on the adopter's part, and no worth on the part of the adopted: or rather the inheritance they are adopted to; which exceeds all others, is incorruptible, undefiled, and fades not away; and lies among the saints in light, and belongs to all the children of God: and this they are predestinated unto by God the Father, who takes them into his family, puts them among the children, and gives them a goodly heritage: and that “by Jesus Christ”; or through him; for both the grace of adoption, and the kingdom and glory they are adopted to, come by and through him as Mediator; through his espousing their persons, assuming their nature, and redeeming them from under the law and its curses; through his giving them a power and privilege openly to be the sons of God; and through faith in him, whereby they are manifestly such: the phrase “unto himself”, either

refers to God the Father, who has chosen, set apart, formed and reserved his people and children for himself, for his peculiar treasure, and for his own glory; or to Jesus Christ, that he might have some brethren, and they be conformed to him, and he be the firstborn among them, and in all things have the pre-eminence; and that they might be with him, and behold his glory, and he be glorified in them: and this act of divine predestination was

according to the good pleasure of his will: the will of God is the rule of all his actions, and of all his acts of grace and goodness; and the good pleasure of it appears in the predestination of men to grace and glory: and from hence it is manifest, that foreseen faith, holiness, and good works, are excluded from being the moving cases of predestinating grace; and that it is wholly to be resolved into the good will and pleasure of God; the view in it being entirely as follows,

Ver. 6. *To the praise of the glory of his grace*, &c.] The grace of God manifestly appears in the predestination of men to adoption; in that God had no need of sons, he having a dear and well beloved one; in whom he is well pleased; and in that those he adopts are so unworthy of the relation; and in that men, and not angels, should be taken by him into his family; and that some, and not others of the same race; and that this should be before the world was; and in providing Christ as a Redeemer, to open the way for the reception of this grace and happiness; and in appointing the grace of faith to be the receiver of it: and the glory of the grace of God appears herein; the glory of God is the supreme end of all he does; and the glory of his grace, and not his power, or other perfections of his, and the manifestative glory of that is here intended; yea, the “praise” of that glory: and this end is answered, when the children of God ascribe their adoption to the free grace of God; and when they admire it, and are thankful for it, and walk worthy of the relation they are brought into:

wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, “his own beloved Son”, and so the Claromontane exemplar; the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the beloved of God the Father; and was so from everlasting, and will be so to everlasting; which has appeared by his nearness to him, lying in his bosom; by his being privy to all his counsels, purposes, and designs; in putting all things into his hands, and in showing him all that he does; and by his giving him honour and glory, as man and Mediator: and he is the beloved of the saints, for the transcendent excellencies that are in him, and for his love to them, and for what he has

done for them, and is unto them; and in him is their acceptance: which is to be understood of the acceptance of their persons, as founded in the blood and righteousness of Christ, and so of their services in him; of God's act of delight and complacency in them, as considered in Christ; who looks upon them, and is well pleased with them, and rests in his love towards them; which is an amazing instance of grace: it was grace that gave them a being in Christ, and which has provided in predestination everything to make them grateful to God; and the very act of acceptance is of mere grace; for internal grace, or grace infused, is not here meant, but the free favour of God: some read not "in which", but "which" εχαριτωσεν, "he freely gave us in the beloved"; so the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Syriac and Arabic versions.

Ver. 7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood*, &c.] Redemption supposes captivity and slavery, and is a deliverance out of it; God's elect by nature are in bondage to sin, Satan, and the law; through the grace of Christ, they are redeemed from all iniquity; ransomed out of the hands of him that is stronger than they; and are freed from the law, its bondage, curse, and condemnation, and from every other enemy: and this benefit Christ is the author of; he was called to be the Redeemer of his people from all eternity; and he was sent in the fulness of time, to procure the redemption of them; to which he had a right, being their near kinsman; and for which he was every way fit, being God as well as man; and which he has obtained by his obedience, sufferings, and death: and in whom it resides, as in its proper subject and author; who, by imputation, is made redemption to all the chosen ones; for not angels, but men, share in this redemption; and not all men, but elect men; such as are chosen in Christ, predestinated to the adoption of children by him, and who are accepted in the beloved: and this comes to them through the blood of Christ, which was freely shed on the cross to procure it; and was a sufficient ransom, or redemption price; it being not only the same blood with those who are redeemed, but the blood of an innocent person; and not of a mere man, but of one who is truly and properly God, as well as man; see more of this (See Gill on "Colossians 1:14"). A branch of this redemption follows, or a blessing that comes by it, and along with it,

the forgiveness of sins; of all sins, original and actual, past, present, and to come; and this is through the blood of Christ, which was shed for the same: and yet is

according to the riches of his grace; for God of his rich grace found the ransom price, and gave his Son, as well as he gave himself, his life, a ransom for many; and how much soever it cost Christ to procure redemption and pardon, they are free to his people; who are redeemed without money and price of theirs, and whose sins are forgiven freely for Christ's sake.

Ver. 8. *Wherein he hath abounded toward us*, &c.] That is, in the grace which is so abundantly displayed in redemption and forgiveness of sin, through the blood of Christ:

in all wisdom and prudence; this may be understood, either of the aboundings of grace in the Gospel; which may be called all wisdom and prudence, because it is the wisdom of God; it is the product of his wisdom, and a display of it; the doctrines it contains are full of wisdom, and are the means of communicating it to men, and of making them wise unto salvation; and it may be so called, to set forth the excellency and perfection of it, as greatly transcending all human wisdom; and in this the grace of God has much abounded, for the Gospel is a declaration of the free grace of God, in the salvation of sinners by Christ; in the free justification of them by his righteousness; and in the full pardon of their sins through his blood; and is a kind invitation and free promise of grace to all sensible sinners: or else of the aboundings of grace in conversion; all men by nature are foolish and unwise; in conversion God makes men to know wisdom in the hidden part, which he puts there; and for which purpose the Spirit is given as a spirit of wisdom; and some part of the work of sanctification lies in spiritual light, knowledge, and understanding; and the Syriac version reads the last clause, “and in all spiritual understanding”; and faith particularly may be intended, which is sometimes expressed by knowledge; and now the grace of God is exceeding abundant with faith and love, in regeneration, sanctification, and conversion; or rather this may be understood of the display of divine wisdom, in the work of redemption and salvation by Christ; and which is to be seen, in pitching upon a proper person to be the Mediator, to become a sacrifice, and make intercession, who is the Son of God, truly God and man, and so every way able to perform the business of salvation; and in the manner of its being effected, in a way wherein grace and mercy are highly exalted, and yet in no wise reproachful to the holiness of God, or injurious to his justice, but to the honour of them, in which Satan is greatly mortified, and sin is condemned, and yet the sinner saved; and in the several parts of it, in the justification of

the ungodly without works, by the righteousness of another, in pardoning their sins in a way of justice and faithfulness, and yet according to the riches of grace, and in the security of the persons of God's elect, and of their grace and glory in Christ; and in the subjects of this salvation, who are the foolish things of this world, ungodly sinners, the chief of sinners; and lastly, in making faith the receiver of all the blessings of salvation, that so it might appear to be all of grace.

Ver. 9. *Having made known unto us the mystery of his will*, &c.] The Gospel, which is a mystery, a hidden mystery, the mystery of God and of Christ, and the mystery of the Gospel; the several doctrines of it are called the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; such as are concerning the trinity of persons in the Godhead, the union of the two natures in Christ, his sonship and incarnation, the saints' union and communion with him, the work of the Spirit of God upon the soul, the calling of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Jews, the resurrection of the dead, and the change of living saints: and the Gospel is the mystery of the will of God; of his will in saving sinners by Christ; and it declares that he does all things in salvation, according to his sovereign will and pleasure; chooses, redeems, justifies, pardons, and calls whom he pleases; and this is made known by the ministry of the word, and by the Spirit, as a spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ and his Gospel: the discovery of which is,

according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; both with respect to the persons to whom it is made known, and with respect to the time when he makes it known; both these are as he pleases, and as he has purposed in his own breast; the Gospel is sent when and where he has determined within himself it shall go; and persons are called by it according to his purpose and grace.

Ver. 10. *That in the dispensation of the fulness of times*, &c.] Or "according to the dispensation", &c. as the Alexandrian copy reads; the fulness of time appointed by God, and fixed in the prophets; after many times and seasons were elapsed, from the creation of the world; at the most suitable and convenient time, when a new economy or dispensation began, within which all this was to be effected, hereafter mentioned:

he might gather together in one all things in Christ; this supposes, that all things were once united together in one; angels and men were united to God by the ties of creation, and were under the same law of nature, and

there were peace and friendship between them; and this union was in Christ, as the beginning of the creation of God, in whom all things consist: and it supposes a disunion and scattering of them; as of men from God, and from good angels, which was done by sin; and of Jews and Gentiles from one another; and of one man from another, everyone turning to his own way; and then a gathering of them together again: the word here used signifies to restore, renew, and reduce to a former state; and so the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions render it; and according to this sense, it may seem to have respect to the times of the restitution of all things, the restoration and renovation of the universe; when there will be new heavens and a new earth, and new inhabitants in them: the word is also used to recapitulate, or sum up the heads of a discourse; and according to this sense, it may intend the meeting together, and summing up of all things in Christ, that had been before; as of all the promises and blessings of the covenant; of all the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament; of all the types and shadows, and sacrifices of the former dispensation; yea, all the sins of Old Testament saints, and all the curses of the law, met on him: the word is likewise used for the collection of numbers into one sum total; and Christ is the sum total of elect angels and men; or the whole number of them is in him; God has chosen a certain number of persons unto salvation; these he has put into the hands of Christ, who has a particular and personal knowledge of them; and the exact number of them will be gathered and given by him: once more, it signifies to reduce, or bring under one head; and Christ is an head of eminence and of influence, both to angels and men: and there is a collection of these together in one, in Christ; by virtue of redemption by Christ, and grace from him, there is an entire friendship between elect angels and elect men; they are social worshippers now, and shall share in the same happiness of the vision of God and of Christ hereafter: hence it follows,

both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even

in him; by things in heaven are not meant the souls of saints in heaven; though it is true that the souls of departed saints are in heaven; and that the saints in heaven and on earth were gathered together in Christ, and represented by him, when he hung upon the cross; and that they all make up one body, of which Christ is the head; and that they will be all collected together one day; and that their souls which are in heaven, and their bodies which are in the earth, will come together and be reunited, and dwell with Christ for ever; but rather the angels are meant, whose origin is heaven;

where they have their residence, and from whence they never fell; and whose employment is in heaven, and of an heavenly nature: and by things on earth, are not intended every creature on earth, animate and inanimate; nor all men, but all elect men, whether Jews or Gentiles, and some of all sorts, ranks, and degrees; whose origin is of the earth, and who are the inhabitants of it: all these angels in heaven, and elect men on earth, are brought together under one head, even in him, in Christ Jesus, and by him; and none but he was able to do it, and none so fit, who is the Creator of all, and is above all; and was typified by Jacob's ladder, which reached heaven and earth, and joined them together, and on which the angels of God ascended and descended.

Ver. 11. *In whom also we have obtained an inheritance*, &c.] Or a part and lot; that is, have obtained one in Christ, in his person, and in his fulness of grace, in the blessings and promises which are in him; or have obtained to be the Lord's clergy, or heritage, to be his portion and inheritance; or rather to have an inheritance in him by lot, meaning the incorruptible and eternal inheritance of glory and happiness in heaven; to which elect men are chosen in Christ, and are begotten to a lively hope of through his resurrection from the dead; and which his righteousness gives a right unto, and his grace a meetness for; and which is now in his hands, and will be given to them through him: and this is said to be obtained by lot, as the word signifies, in allusion to the land of Canaan, which was divided by lot to the children of Israel; and to show that it is not by works of righteousness done by men, but by the sovereign disposal of God; and that everyone shall have his share, and that certainly; for this is not designed to represent it as a casual, or contingent thing. The Alexandrian copy reads, “in whom also we are called”; and so the Vulgate Latin version, “in whom also we are called by lot”; and the Syriac version, “in him”, or “by him we are chosen”, which agrees with the next clause:

being predestinated according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: predestination is not only to sonship, but to an inheritance; it not only secures the grace of adoption, but prepares and provides an heavenly portion: and this act of predestination proceeds according to a purpose; according to a purpose of God, which can never be frustrated; and according to the purpose of “that God”, as one of Stephens's copies reads, that is the author of all things but sin; of the works of creation and of providence, and of grace and salvation; and who works all these according to his will, just as he pleases, and according to

the counsel of it, in a wise and prudent manner, in the best way that can be devised; for he is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working; wherefore his counsel always stands, and he does all his pleasure: and hence the inheritance which the saints obtain in Christ, and are predestinated to, is sure and certain.

Ver. 12. *That we should be to the praise of his glory*, &c.] This is the end of predestination to the inheritance; and the sense is, either that the praise of the glory of God, in his grace and goodness, might be discovered and made known unto the saints, as it is displayed in election, redemption, justification, pardon, adoption, regeneration, and eternal salvation; or that they should praise and glorify him on account of these things, by ascribing all to his grace, and nothing to themselves; by giving him thanks for all his benefits; by ordering their conversations aright as become the Gospel; and by doing all things with a view to his glory:

who first trusted in Christ; the Jews, the apostle, and others of the Jewish nation;

who before hoped in Christ, as the words may be rendered; who hoped in Christ before the Gentiles did; and indeed the people of Israel hoped for Christ before he came; the promises of the Messiah were made to them, and he was the peculiar hope and expectation of that people; and to them he first came, and to them the Gospel was first preached; and some of them first believed in Christ, and trusted in him, and not in their own righteousness, strength, wisdom, and riches, nor in their own hearts, nor in any mere creature, nor in their carnal privileges; all which they renounced confidence in, and dependence on, when they came to the knowledge of Christ; in whose person they trusted for acceptance, and in his righteousness for justification, and in his blood for pardon, and in his fulness for supply, and in his power for protection and perseverance: this supposes knowledge of him, and a sense of the frailty and vanity of all other objects; and was a betaking themselves to him, a leaning and staying on him, a committing all unto him, and an expectation of all good things from him.

Ver. 13. *In whom ye also trusted*, &c.] The Gentile believers, the Ephesians, whom the apostle now particularly addresses; and who participated of the same grace and privileges with the believing Jews; the promise belonged to all that God called, whether afar off or nigh; and the same common salvation was sent to one as to another; and the same faith

was wrought in one as in the other; and they were interested in the same Christ, and were heirs of the same inheritance; the Alexandrian copy reads "we":

after that ye heard the word of truth; the Gospel; and which is so called, on account of its divine original, coming from the God of truth, who cannot lie; and because of the concern which Christ has in it, who is truth itself, and was the author, subject, and preacher of it, and who confirmed it by his miracles, and his death; and on account of the Spirit of God, the dictator of it, and who leads into all truths, and owns and blesses them for conversion and comfort; and because it contains nothing but truth, and particularly that eminent one, salvation alone by Christ, for the chief of sinners; and in contradistinction from the law, which was typical and shadowy; jwçqd hlm, "the word of truth", is a phrase used by the Jews [f5], for sublime and heavenly doctrine: now, by the hearing of this, faith came; and this the Ephesians heard, not only externally, but internally; so as to understand, approve, and believe it, and to put it in practice: and which is also called

the Gospel of your salvation: because it is a declaration and publication of salvation by Christ; and gives an account of the author of salvation, of his ability and willingness to save, and of the nature of this salvation, and describes the persons who shall be saved; and because it is the means of salvation, when attended with the Spirit and power of God; and the instrument, in God's hand, of showing to souls their special and particular interest in salvation:

in whom also after that ye believed; which may refer either to the Gospel of salvation, in which they believed upon hearing it; or rather to Christ, the Saviour revealed, in whom they believed to the saving of their souls: and this shows, that the sealing work of the Spirit after mentioned, and with which this stands in connection, is a distinct thing from faith, or indeed any other work of the Spirit; as illumination, regeneration, sanctification, &c. it is what follows believing, and is a work that passes upon the soul after it; and so is something over and above, and more than faith, at least than first believing: and from hence it also appears, that there may be true faith, where this is not as yet; and that none but believers in Christ enjoy the following privilege:

ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. This cannot have respect to the Father's sealing his people in election, with the seal of his

foreknowledge, (2 Timothy 2:19) for that is before faith, and is within himself, and not on them, and is distinct from the Spirit's work; and for the same reasons it cannot design the Son's affection to them, setting them as a seal on his arm and heart, (Song of Solomon 8:6), or his asserting his property in them, and the security and protection of them, (Song of Solomon 4:12 Revelation 7:3), nor the Spirit's finishing and completing his own work of grace upon the soul, in which sense the word is used, (Romans 15:28) for this as yet was not done upon these believing Ephesians; nor the confirming the Gospel, and the saints in it, by the extraordinary effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, or by his extraordinary works which attended the ministry of the word, to the establishing of it, and the faith of men in it; since these were not common to believers, nor did they continue; whereas the believing Ephesians, in common, were sealed; and the Spirit of God continues still as a sealer of his people, and as an earnest and pledge of their inheritance until the day of redemption; but it is to be understood of the confirming, certifying, and assuring the saints, as to their interest in the favour of God, and in the blessings of grace, of every kind, and their right and title to the heavenly glory; (see Gill on “2 Corinthians 1:22”), and the seal of these things is not circumcision, nor baptism, nor the Lord's supper, nor even the graces of the Spirit; but the Spirit himself, who witnesses to the spirits of believers the truth of these things, and that as a “spirit of promise”: so called, both because he is the Spirit promised, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, whom the Father and Christ had promised, and who was sent by them; and because he usually seals, or certifies believers of the truth of the above things, by opening and applying a word of promise to them: and which he does also, as the “Holy” Spirit; for this sealing work of his leaves a greater impress of holiness upon the soul, and engages more to acts of holiness; wherefore the doctrine of assurance is no licentious doctrine; no persons are so holy as those who are truly possessed of that grace; and as for such who pretend unto it, and live in sin, it is a certain thing that they in reality know nothing of it.

Ver. 14. *Which is the earnest of our inheritance*, &c.] The incorruptible and never fading one in heaven, or the heavenly kingdom; this is the Father's gift, his bequest, and belongs only to children; it comes to them through the death of the testator, Christ, and is for ever; and of this the Spirit of God is the pledge and earnest: an earnest, is what confirms an agreement, and assures the right to the thing agreed to, and is a part of it,

and lesser than it, and is never returned; so the Spirit of God certifies the right to the heavenly inheritance, as well as gives a meetness for it; he is the firstfruits of eternal glory and happiness, and of the same kind with it; and as he is enjoyed in measure by the saints now, is lesser than the communion which they shall have with him, and with the Father, and the Son, hereafter, for the best things are reserved till last; and being once given into the heart as an earnest, he always continues, he never removes more, or is ever taken away:

until the redemption of the purchased possession, or "of the peculiar people"; (see 1 Peter 2:9), for this is not to be understood of heaven, which is never said to be purchased, nor can it with any propriety be said to be redeemed; but of saints, of the church of God, who are bought with a price, and are purchased with his blood; and who, as they were redeemed from sin, Satan, and the law, when they were purchased, so will be redeemed again in the resurrection morn, which is called the day of redemption, (Ephesians 4:30 Luke 21:28), and which will be a redemption of them from the weakness, corruption, and mortality of the body; from their present state of absence and pilgrimage; from the body of sin and death; from all sorrows and afflictions, both inward and outward; from the reproaches and persecutions of men; from a tempting devil, and an unbelieving heart; from all doubts and fears; and from death and the grave; and so the Syriac version very justly renders it, "until the redemption of them that are saved". Now till such time, the Spirit of God abides as an earnest, even until the whole felicity is enjoyed both in soul and body; and this shows the perpetuity of the Spirit's inhabitation, and grace, the final perseverance of the saints, and the security of the inheritance to them.

Unto the praise of his glory; as to the glory of the Father, by whom the saints are chosen and predestinated, (Ephesians 1:6) and to the glory of the Son, by whom they are redeemed, in whom they obtain the inheritance, and in whom they trust, (Ephesians 1:12), so to the glory of the Holy Spirit, by whom they are sealed, and who is their earnest; for he must have his share of glory in the salvation of the elect, as well as the other two persons.

Ver. 15. *Wherefore I also*, &c.] As well as others:

after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus; who is the immediate object of faith, and a very proper and suitable one; having every thing in him that is agreeable to the case and circumstances of those that trust in him. And

the grace of faith, which terminates on him, is a seeing him, a beholding the glory of his person, and the fulness of his grace; a going to him, and venturing on him; a laying hold upon him, and embracing of him; a committing all unto him, and a leaning and depending on him, and a living upon him, and a walking on in him.

And love unto all the saints: whether Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, greater or lesser believers, of meaner gifts, or larger abilities; and which love was unfeigned, fervent, active, and laborious; and which is the evidence of regeneration, and without which a profession is in vain. These two graces, faith and love, are inseparable; they always go together, and are to be found in the same persons; and where they are, they cannot be hid, as they were not in these Ephesians; their faith was professed by them, and was made public, and their love showed itself in deeds, as well as in words, to the saints: hence the apostle came to hear of them both, upon the certain relation of others; for these things were come abroad, and were talked of; (See Gill on "<5103>Colossians 1:3"). (See Gill on "<5104>Colossians 1:4"). (See Gill on "<5704>Philemon 1:4-5").

Ver. 16. *Cease not to give thanks for you*, &c.] On account of their faith and love; which were gifts of grace bestowed upon them, and not the produce of their own free will and power; and therefore thanks are given to God for them:

making mention of you in my prayers; which shows the apostle to be a praying person, and that he was constant at the throne of grace, where he prayed for others as well as for himself; and it points out the time and way, when, and in which he gave thanks to God for them; and is mentioned, not only to testify his great affection for them, but also to excite them, by his example, to the practice of those duties themselves.

Ver. 17. *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ*, &c.] In what sense God the Father is the God of Christ, (See Gill on "<4003>Ephesians 1:3")

The Father of glory; or the glorious Father; who is glorious in himself, in the perfections of his nature, and in the works of his hands; and as a father, he is a glorious father to Christ, and is a father to him, as he is to none else; and has been honoured and glorified by Christ, and from whom Christ as man has received much honour and glory: and he is a glorious father to the saints, to whom he has shown inexpressible love, by adopting them into his family; and pities them, as a father does his children; takes care of them,

and protects them, and makes a glorious provision for them; not only of good things now, but of an eternal inheritance hereafter: and he may be so called, because he is the author and giver of eternal glory and happiness; and because all glory is due unto him: the Arabic version reads, “God, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory”, making all these epithets to belong to Christ:

may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him; this was one part of the apostle's prayers for the saints at Ephesus, that they might increase in divine knowledge; either in the knowledge of God, as the God of Christ, and the Father of glory, and as their God and Father in Christ; or of God, as considered in Christ the Mediator; or else of Christ himself: and designs not a notional and speculative knowledge of Christ, but what is practical and experimental; and which is joined with love of him, faith in him, and obedience to him; and which is not only approbative, but fiducial and appropriating; and though it is but imperfect, yet is progressive; and for the progression of it, the apostle prays; for it is certain, that these saints had a knowledge of Christ, but this was not perfect; and a larger measure of it was desirable: and in order to this, he prays for the Spirit, as a “spirit of wisdom”; who implants spiritual wisdom in the hearts of men, and instructs them in the Gospel, the hidden wisdom of God, leads them into all truths, and opens to them the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which are hid in Christ, the wisdom of God; and as a spirit of “revelation”; who reveals Christ and the things of Christ, at first conversion; and afterwards reveals him and his righteousness, and other benefits of his more largely, even from faith to faith; and gives a clearer view of interest in them: hence it appears, that the Spirit is the gift of God; and that all spiritual light and knowledge, and the increase of it, are owing to him.

Ver. 18. *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened*, &c.] By the Spirit of God already, to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin; the insufficiency of their own righteousness; the beauty, glory, fulness, and suitableness of Christ, as a Saviour; the excellency, truth, and usefulness of the doctrines of the Gospel; in which their understandings were before dark, but now had light into them: wherefore these words are not to be considered as part of the apostle's petitions, but rather as what was taken for granted by him; and are to be put into a parenthesis, and the following words to be joined in connection with the preceding verse; unless it should be thought, that the apostle prays for greater illuminations, and for more

spiritual light, and that the eyes of their understandings might be more and more enlightened; the phrase, lkçh ˆy[, ομμα της διανοιας, "the eye of the understanding", is Rabbinical, and often to be met with in Jewish writings [f6]; the Alexandrian copy, and several others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, "the eyes of your heart"; and to, twbblh yny[, "the eyes of the hearts, or minds", is a phrase used by the Jewish writers [f7]:

that ye may know what is the hope of his calling; by which is meant, the effectual calling of the saints; which is not a call to an office, or a call merely by the external ministry of the word; but which is internal, special, powerful, high, and heavenly: and this is the calling of God, of which he is the author; who calls with an holy calling, unto eternal glory by Christ Jesus; and which is without repentance: and the hope of this calling, is either eternal happiness, which is the thing hoped for; or Christ, who is the ground and foundation of it; or the grace of hope, which is exercised on both; or all three: for hope of eternal glory, as it is founded on Christ, may be said to be the hope of the calling of God, because it is wrought in the soul at the time of the effectual calling, and what saints are then called to the exercise of; and calling grace, is an encouragement to hope for eternal life; since whom God calls, he justifies and glorifies: and now the apostle prays, that these saints who were called by the grace of God, might know more of Christ, the foundation of their hope; and what that is they are hoping for, and more and more what it is to hope for the same, upon the view of Christ's person, blood, and righteousness:

and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints; the saints themselves are the Lord's portion, and the lot of his inheritance, in whom he is, and will be abundantly glorified; but here it rather seems to design the heavenly inheritance before spoken of, of which the Spirit is the earnest; and this is the Lord's, it is of his preparing, and it is his gift, and a very rich and glorious inheritance it is: hence it is not only signified by mansions, and everlasting habitations, by an house, and by a city, but by a kingdom; the riches of grace are preparatory to it, and the riches of glory are comprised in it; and this is in, or among the saints, who only have a right unto it, and a meetness for it; and what this inheritance is, with the riches and glory of it, will not be fully known in this life; and indeed but little of it is known; so that such a petition as this is always proper and pertinent.

Ver. 19. *And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe*, &c.] The objects of the divine power here intended, are believers in Christ; which distinguishes this power from that which was put forth in creation, and from that which will be displayed in the resurrection of the dead, and from the power of divine wrath, which will appear in the damnation of sinners; and shows, that this power is that which is exerted in the implantation of faith, and in the continuance of it, and in the finishing of that work; and that this is a great power, an exceeding great one, a super eminent one; which is attended with energy and efficacy, and is irresistible and insuperable: the greatness of this power as displayed in the work of conversion and faith appears, if it be considered what the work itself is called, a creation, a resurrection from the dead, a regeneration, and a transformation of the man into another man, which must needs require almighty power; as well as what is then done, some things are removed, Satan is dispossessed, the stony heart is taken away, the enmity is slain, the old man is put down from his throne, and put off with his deeds; and there are some things wrought, Christ is formed in the soul, his grace is implanted, his image is stamped on, a new heart is given, and principles of light and life, of grace and holiness are put; the understanding is enlightened, the will is subdued, the affections are set on other objects, and the mind and conscience are cleansed and purified; and the means of this are the ministers, and ministry of the word, which are weak, foolish, and contemptible, in the eyes of men; to which may be added, the opposition made both from within and from without, from a sinful heart, a tempting devil, and an ensnaring, reproaching, and persecuting world: so that this work of faith cannot be ascribed to anything short of the exceeding greatness of divine power; and which is seen in supporting faith when it is wrought, under great discouragements; in delivering believers out of divers temptations; in assisting them to discharge their duty, and in their final perseverance: and to increase the idea of this power it is added,

according to the working of his mighty power, or “according to the energy of the might of his power”: the strength of his power, in all the mighty energy of it, is exerted towards and upon believers; and which they should know, own, and acknowledge, to the glory of the grace of God: and this is in proportion, and agreeably to that power.

Ver. 20. *Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead*, &c.] There are many articles of faith contained in this passage; as that Christ died, that he is raised from the dead, that he was raised from the

dead by God the Father, and that his resurrection was by the power of God: the resurrection of any person is an instance of great power, but Christ's resurrection from the dead was an instance of peculiar and special power; for he was raised from the dead as a public person, representing all his people, for whom he became a surety; and he was raised again for their justification, and to great glory in himself, after he had been brought into a very low estate indeed: moreover, this passage in connection with the preceding verse suggests, that there is some proportion between the power put forth on Christ in raising him from the dead, and that which is exerted in the work of conversion and faith: there is some likeness between the things themselves, as well as in the display of power in them; Christ's resurrection is called a begetting, and he is styled the first begotten from the dead, and the regeneration of men is signified by a resurrection from the dead; as Christ's body was really dead, lifeless, and without motion, antecedent to his resurrection, so men, previous to conversion, are dead in trespasses and sins, and are destitute of spiritual life and motion; and as Christ's human nature could not help itself, could not raise itself, so neither can dead sinners convert themselves, or bring themselves out of that state and condition, in which they are by nature; and as the resurrection of Christ was the pure work of God, and a display of his almighty power, so the work of faith, of grace and conversion, is the entire work of God, which is begun, carried on, and finished wholly by his power; and as Christ's resurrection was in order to his glorification, so is the regeneration and conversion of men, in order to their enjoyment of the heavenly inheritance, as it follows:

and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly [places]; which is expressive of the great honour conferred upon the human nature of Christ, such as never was given to any of the angels, and of the glory it is exalted to; and shows that he has done his work on earth with acceptance, which he came about; and therefore is set down at his Father's right hand, where he enjoys rest and ease from his labours, and is out of the reach of every enemy; will never die again, but live for ever, to intercede for his people, to assist and protect them, and bring them where he is; and in whom, as their head and representative, they are already set down in the same heavenly places.

Ver. 21. *Far above all principality and power*, &c.] Good angels and bad angels, and civil magistrates, who also may be intended by the following words:

and might and dominion; good angels may be so called, because of their employment under God in the affairs of Providence, and the government of this world; and Christ is not only above them, as he is God, being their Creator, who has made them, and on whom they depend, and is the Lord whom they serve, and is the object of their worship and adoration, and as he is Mediator, to whom they minister, and so is above them in nature, name, and office; but also as he is man, in union with the Son of God; and chiefly he here is said to be above them on account of place, being at the right hand of God, where they are not, (⁵⁸Hebrews 1:13). And evil angels may be so called, because of the government which subsists among themselves, and the power and influence they have over mankind; Christ was above them when here on earth, as appears by his resisting the temptations of Satan, and defeating him in them; by his dispossessing devils from the bodies of men; by his spoiling and destroying them and their works at his death; and by his leading them captive, and triumphing over them at his ascension; and by delivering souls out of his hands at conversion, through his power attending the ministration of his Gospel; and his being above them will still be more manifest, in the binding of Satan a thousand years, and in the final condemnation of him, and of all his angels under him: civil magistrates are sometimes called by these names, and Christ is above them; they receive their governments from him, they rule by him, and are accountable to him, and are set up and put down at his pleasure; all these senses may be taken in; but the first seems chiefly designed: it is added,

and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; persons of authority and dignity, of fame and renown, whether in earth or heaven; as emperors, kings, princes, nobles, generals of armies &c. in this world, and cherubim, seraphim, &c. in the other world: this phrase denotes both the extensiveness of Christ's kingdom, and the eternity of it; as reaching to both worlds, and being over everything in them, and as lasting to the end of this, and unto that which is to come.

Ver. 22. *And hath put all things under his feet*, &c.] These words are taken out of (¹⁹Psalm 8:6). (See Gill on "⁴⁶1 Corinthians 15:27").

And gave him to be the head over all things to the church; the Vulgate Latin version reads, "and gave him to be the head over every church", or "all the church"; the Ethiopic version, "the whole church"; which intends not barely professors of religion, or a family of faithful persons, or a

particular congregation, in which sense the word is sometimes used; but the whole body of God's elect, the church, which is built on Christ the rock, for which he gave himself, and which is the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven: Christ is an head to this church; in what sense he is so, (See Gill on "1Co 11:3"). And this headship of Christ is the gift of God; and it is an honourable gift to him, as Mediator; it is a glorifying of him, and a giving him in all things the pre-eminence; and it is a free grace gift to the church, and a very special, valuable, and excellent one, and of infinite benefit and advantage to it; and which is expressed in his being head "over all things" to it; to overrule all things for its good; to communicate all good things to it; and to perform all the good offices of an head for it: the Syriac version reads, "and him who is above all things, he gave to be the head to the church" even him who is God over all, blessed for evermore.

Ver. 23. *Which is his body*, &c.] That is, which church is the body of Christ; as an human body is but one, consisting of various members, united to each other, and set in an exact proportion and symmetry, and in a proper subservience to one another, and which must be neither more nor fewer than they are; so the church of Christ is but one general assembly, which consists of many persons, of different gifts and usefulness, and are all united together under one head, Christ, whose name they bear, and are made to drink of the same Spirit; and these are placed in such order, as throw a glory and comeliness on each other, and to be useful to one another, so that it cannot be said of the meanest member, that there is no need of it; and the number of them can neither be increased nor diminished; and this is Christ's body, his mystical body, which becomes his by the Father's gift to him, and by his own purchase; to which he is united, and of which he is the only head; and which he loves as his own body, and supplies, directs, and defends:

the fulness of him that filleth all in all; besides the personal fulness which Christ has as God, and his fulness of ability and fitness for his work as Mediator, and his dispensatory fulness, which dwells in him for the use of his people, the church is his relative fulness, which fills him, and makes up Christ mystical; and which is filled by him, and is complete in him: and then will the church appear to be Christ's fulness, when all the elect, both Jews and Gentiles, shall be gathered in; and when these are all filled with the grace designed for them; and when they are all grown up to their full proportion, or are arrived to the measure of the stature of the fulness of

Christ; which will be a glorious sight to see, and very desirable: and this shows the certainty of the saints' perseverance and salvation: for if anyone member, even the meanest, could be lost, the church would not be the fulness of Christ: and this may be further concluded, from its being his fulness, who

filleth all in all; which may be understood either more extensively; for he fills both worlds with inhabitants; he fills all places with his omnipresence, and all creatures with proper food and sustenance: or with a limitation to the church and people of God; he fills all his churches and ordinances with his gracious presence; and he fills the various societies of his saints with members and with officers; and these with the gifts and graces of his Spirit, suitable to their place and station; he fills all and every of the saints, all the vessels of mercy, whether greater or lesser, all sorts of them, of larger or meaner capacities; he fills all the powers and faculties of their souls, their hearts with joy, their minds with knowledge, their consciences with peace, their wills with spiritual desires, submission and resignation, and their affections with love to himself and people: in short, he fills them with all grace and goodness, and the fruits of righteousness; and so makes them meet for usefulness here, and for happiness hereafter; the fulness of the earth in (<19401>Psalm 24:1) is by the Jews interpreted of the souls of the righteous, and of the congregation of Israel [f8].

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS 2

The design of the apostle in this chapter, is to magnify the riches of divine grace, in the effectual calling and salvation of sinners, by Christ Jesus; in order to which, he describes the sad estate they are in by nature, and before conversion, even God's elect among the Jews, and especially among the Gentiles; and then observes how peace is made for and between them both, by Christ the peacemaker; and the various privileges and blessings which both enjoy, in consequence of it: he begins with the Ephesians, and expresses the former state they were in by a death, which is ascribed to trespasses and sins, (Ephesians 2:1), and represents their walk and conversation to have been according to the world, and after Satan; who is described by his dominion over other devils that dwell in the air, and by his influence upon disobedient men, (Ephesians 2:2), and that it might not be thought that the case of these Gentile Ephesians was worse than others, the apostle observes of himself, and other saints among the Jews, that their conversation before conversion was among the men of the world, and so according to the course of it, as the Gentiles; and that it was a very carnal conversation they had spent, in fulfilling the desires and lusts of the flesh; and that they were as deserving of, and as liable to the wrath of God in themselves, as other persons, (Ephesians 2:3), to which former state he opposes their present one; they were not now dead in sin, but were quickened; which is ascribed to God as the efficient cause, and to his rich mercy and great love as the moving cause; and to Christ as the meritorious and procuring cause, by whose grace they were saved, and in whom they were not only quickened, but raised, and made to sit together in heavenly places; and the final cause and end of all this was, to show forth the abundant grace and kindness of God, through Christ, (Ephesians 2:4-7). The doctrine of salvation by grace, the apostle takes up again from (Ephesians 2:5), and to the moving cause of salvation, the grace of God, he adds the means, or instrument by which it is received and enjoyed, which is faith; and that is denied to be owing to the power of men, but is said to be a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8), and the end in view, in putting salvation upon the foot of grace and not works, is to prevent boasting in

the creature, (<49209>Ephesians 2:9), and that works cannot be the causes of salvation, either efficient, moving, or procuring, is evident; since though they are to be performed as being agreeable to the purposing, as well as commanding will of God, yet they are effects, both of the work of grace upon the soul in time, called a creation, and of the decrees of God from eternity, (<49210>Ephesians 2:10), when the apostle goes on to put the Ephesians in mind of their former state in unregeneracy, with the same view as before, to magnify the grace of God, but in a different manner; not as common to them with the Jews, but as peculiar to them as Gentiles; as that they were had in contempt by the Jews, and were in a state of alienation, not only from them, but from God and Christ, and the enjoyment of various privileges, (<49211>Ephesians 2:11,12), wherefore the grace of God was the more conspicuous in their present state of nearness both to God and his people, brought about by the blood of Christ, (<49213>Ephesians 2:13), who, as the peacemaker, not only made peace by the blood of his cross between God and them, but between them and the true Israel of God among the Jews; which was done, partly by abolishing the ceremonial law, which occasioned enmity, and kept up a division among them, (<49214>Ephesians 2:14-16), and partly by sending, and preaching the Gospel of peace to them both, (<49217>Ephesians 2:17), and by opening a way of access for them both unto the Father through himself, under the direction and influence of the Spirit, (<49218>Ephesians 2:18), from all which it appeared, that they were not in a state of distance and alienation as before, but all belonged to the same city and family, and were built on the same foundation, and were united together in the same corner stone, Jesus Christ, (<49219>Ephesians 2:19,20), and as the apostle compares Christ to a foundation, and a corner stone, so the church of Christ, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, to a temple; which being fitly put together, becomes, an Holy One in the lord, and a suitable habitation for God through the Spirit, (<49221>Ephesians 2:21,22).

Ver. 1. *And you hath he quickened*, &c.] The design of the apostle in this and some following verses, is to show the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and to set forth the sad estate and condition of man by nature, and to magnify the riches of the grace of God, and represent the exceeding greatness of his power in conversion: the phrase

hath he quickened, is not in the original text, but is supplied from (<49205>Ephesians 2:5), where it will be met with and explained: here those

who are quickened with Christ, and by the power and grace of God, are described in their natural and unregenerate estate,

who were dead in trespasses and sins; not only dead in Adam, in whom they sinned, being their federal head and representative; and in a legal sense, the sentence of condemnation and death having passed upon them; but in a moral sense, through original sin, and their own actual transgressions: which death lies in a separation from God, Father, Son, and Spirit, such are without God, and are alienated from the life of God, and they are without Christ, who is the author and giver of life, and they are sensual, not having the Spirit, who is the spirit of life; and in a deformation of the image of God, such are dead as to their understandings, wills, and affections, with respect to spiritual things, and as to their capacity to do any thing that is spiritually good; and in a loss of original righteousness; and in a privation of the sense of sin and misery; and in a servitude to sin, Satan, and the world: hence it appears, that man must be in himself unacceptable to God, infectious and hurtful to his fellow creatures, and incapable of helping himself: so it was usual with the Jews to call a wicked and ignorant man, a dead man; they say [f9],

> “there is no death like that of those that transgress the words of the law, who are called, µytm, “dead men”, and therefore the Scripture says, “turn and live”.”

And again [f10],

> “no man is called a living man, but he who is in the way of truth in this world. — — And a wicked man who does not go in the way of truth, is called, tm, “a dead man”.”

And once more [f11] ``whoever is without wisdom, lo, he is tmk, “as a dead man”;”

(See Gill on “<5016>1 Timothy 5:6”). The Alexandrian and Claromontane copies, and one of Stephens's, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, “dead in your trespasses and sins”; and the Syriac version, “dead in your sins and in your trespasses”; and the Ethiopic version only, “dead in your sins”.

Ver. 2. *Wherein in time past ye walked*, &c.] Sins and transgressions are a road or path, in which all unconverted sinners walk; and this path is a dark, crooked, and broad one, which leads to destruction and death, and yet is

their own way, which they choose, approve of, and delight to walk in; and walking in it denotes a continued series of sinning, an obstinate persisting in it, a progress in iniquity, and pleasure therein: and the time of walking in this path, being said to be in time past, shows that the elect of. God before conversion, walk in the same road that others do; and that conversion is a turning out of this way; and that when persons are converted, the course of their walking is altered, which before was

according to the course of this world meaning this world, in distinction from the world to come, or the present age, in which the apostle lived, and designs the men of it; and the course of it is their custom, manner, and way of life; to which God's elect, during their state of unregeneracy, conform, both with respect to conversation and religious worship: great is the force that prevailing customs have over men; it is one branch of redemption by Christ, to deliver men from this present evil world, and to free them from a vain conversation in it; and it is only the grace of God that effectually teaches to deny the lusts of it; and it is only owing to the prevalent intercession and power of Christ, that even converted persons are kept from the evil of it:

according to the prince of the power of the air: which is not to be understood of any supposed power the devil has over the air, by divine permission, to raise winds, but of a posse, or body of devils, who have their residence in the air; for it was not only the notion of the Jews [f12], that there are noxious and accusing spirits, who fly about rywab, “in the air”, and that there is no space between the earth and the firmament free, and that the whole is full of a multitude of them; but also it was the opinion of the Chaldeans [f13], and of Pythagoras [f14], and Plato [f15], that the air is full of demons: now there is a prince who is at the head of these, called Beelzebub, the prince of devils, or the lord of a fly, for the devils under him are as so many flies in the air, (Matthew 12:24) and by the Jews called [f16], ayjwrd ˆwhbr, “the prince of spirits”; and is here styled, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; by which spirit is meant, not the lesser devils that are under the prince, nor the spirit of the world which comes from him, and is not of God; but Satan himself, who is a spirit, and an evil, and an unclean one; and who operates powerfully in unbelievers, for they are meant by children of disobedience, or unbelief; just as atwnmyhm ynb, “children of faith” [f17], in the Jewish dialect, designs believers; and over these Satan has great influence, especially the reprobate

part of them; whose minds he blinds, and whose hearts he fills, and puts it into them to do the worst of crimes; and indeed, he has great power over the elect themselves, while in unbelief, and leads them captive at his will; and these may be said in their unregeneracy to walk after him, when they imitate him, and do his lusts, and comply with what he suggests, dictates to them, or tempts them to.

Ver. 3. *Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past*, &c.] What the apostle says of the Gentile Ephesians before conversion, he says of himself and other Jews; and this he does, partly to show that it was not from ill will, or with a design to upbraid the Gentiles, that he said what he did; and partly to beat down the pride of the Jews, who thought themselves better than the sinners of the Gentiles; as well as to magnify the grace of God in the conversion of them both: the sense is, that the apostle and other Jews in the time of their unregeneracy, had their conversation according to the customs of the world, and to the prince of the air, and among unbelievers, as well as the Gentiles; and that they were equally sinners, and lived a like sinful course of life:

in the lusts of our flesh; by "flesh" is meant, the corruption of nature; so called, because it is propagated by natural generation; and is opposed to the Spirit, or principle of grace; and has for its object fleshly things; and discovers itself mostly in the body, the flesh; and it makes persons carnal or fleshly: and this is called "our", because it belongs to human nature, and is inherent in it, and inseparable from it in this life: and the "lusts" of it, are the inward motions of it, in a contrariety to the law and will of God; and are various, and are sometimes called fleshly and worldly lusts, and the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life: and persons may be said to have their conversations in these, when these are the ground of their conversation, when they are solicitous about them, and make provision for the fulfilling of them, and constantly employ themselves in obedience to them, as follows:

fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind: or the wills of them; what they incline to, will, and crave after: various are the degrees of sin, and its several motions; and universal is the corruption of human nature; not only the body, and the several members of it, are defiled with sin, and disposed to it, but all the powers and faculties of the soul; even the more noble and governing ones, the mind, understanding, and will, as well as the affections; and great is the power and influence which lust has over them:

and were by nature children of wrath, even as others: by which is meant, not only that they were wrathful persons, living in malice, hateful, and hating one another; but that they were deserving of the wrath of God, which comes upon the children of disobedience, among whom they had their conversation; and which is revealed from heaven against such sins as they were guilty of, though they were not appointed to it: and they were such "by nature"; really, and not in opinion, and by and from their first birth: so a Jewish commentator[f18] on these words, "thy first father hath sinned", (<23A427>Isaiah 43:27) has this note;

> "how canst thou say thou hast not sinned? and behold thy first father hath sinned, and he is the first man, for man ajjb [bjwm, "is naturally in sin";"

or by nature a sinner, or sin is naturally impressed in him; and hence being by nature a sinner, he is by nature deserving of the wrath of God, as were the persons spoken of:

even as others; as the rest of the world, Jews as well as Gentiles; and Gentiles are especially designed, in distinction from the Jews, the apostle is speaking of; and who are particularly called in the Jewish dialect µyrja, "others"; (See Gill on "<421811>Luke 18:11").

Ver. 4. *But God, who is rich in mercy*, &c.] Mercy is a perfection of the divine nature, and is essential to God; and may be considered with respect to the objects of it, either as general, extending to all men in a providential way; or as special, reaching only to some in a way of grace; for though mercy is his nature, yet the display and exertion of it towards any object, is the act of his will; and special mercy, with all the blessings and benefits of it, is only exhibited in Christ Jesus: and God is said to be "rich" in it, because he is free and liberal in dispensing it, and the effects of it; and that to a large number of persons, in great abundance and variety, by various ways, and in divers instances; as in the covenant of grace, in the mission of Christ, in redemption by him, in regeneration, in pardon of sin, and in eternal salvation; and yet it is inexhaustible and perpetual; and this sets forth the excellency and glory of it:

for his great love wherewith he loved us; the love of God to his chosen people is very great, if it be considered who it is that has loved them, God and not man; who is an infinite, unchangeable, and sovereign Being; and his love is like himself, for God is love; it has heights and depths, and

lengths and breadths immeasurable; it admits of no variation nor alteration; and is altogether free, arising from himself, and not from any motives and conditions in men: and if the persons themselves are considered, who are the objects of it, men, sinful men, unworthy of the divine notice and regard; and that these are loved personally, particularly, and distinctly, and not others; nakedly, and not theirs, or for any thing in them, or done by them, and that notwithstanding their manifold sins and transgressions: to which may be added, that this love is represented as a past act; and indeed it is from everlasting, and is antecedent to their being quickened, and was when they were dead in trespasses and sins; and is the source and spring of the blessing next mentioned: so the divine love is often called in the Cabalistic writings of the Jews [f19], hbr hbha, "great love".

Ver. 5. *Even when we were dead in sins*, &c.] (See Gill on "Ephesians 2:1").

Hath quickened us together with Christ: which may be understood either of regeneration, when a soul that is dead in a moral or spiritual sense, is quickened and made alive; a principle of life is infused, and acts of life are put forth; such have their spiritual senses, and these in exercise; they can feel the load and weight of sin; see their lost state and condition, the odiousness of sin, and the beauty of a Saviour, the insufficiency of their own righteousness, and the fulness and suitableness of Christ's; breathe after divine and spiritual things; speak in prayer to God, and the language of Canaan to fellow Christians; move towards Christ, exercise grace on him, act for him, and walk on in him: and this life they have not from themselves, for previous to it they are dead, and in this quickening work are entirely passive; nor can regenerate persons quicken themselves, when in dead and lifeless frames, and much less unregenerate sinners; but this is God's act, the act of God the Father; though not exclusive of the Son, who quickens whom he will; nor of the Spirit, who is the Spirit of life from Christ; and it is an instance of the exceeding greatness, both of his power and love; and this may be said to be done with Christ, because he is the procuring and meritorious cause of it, by his death and resurrection from the dead; and is the author and efficient cause of it; and he is the matter of it, it is not so much the quickened persons that live, as Christ that lives in them, and it is the same life he himself lives; and because he lives, they shall live also; it is in him as in the fountain, and in them as in the stream: or else this may be understood of justification; men are dead in a legal sense, and on account of sin, are under the sentence of death; though they naturally

think themselves alive, and in a good state; but when the Spirit of God comes, he strikes dead all their hopes of life by a covenant of works; not merely by letting in the terrors of the law upon the conscience, but by showing the spirituality of it, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin; and how incapable they are of satisfying the law, for the transgressions of it; and then he works faith in them, whereby they revive and live; they see pardon and righteousness in Christ, and pray for the one, and plead the other; and also lay hold and live upon the righteousness of Christ, when the Spirit seals up the pardon of their sins to them, and passes the sentence of justification on them, and so they reckon themselves alive unto God; and this is the justification of life, the Scripture speaks of; and this is in consequence of their being quickened with Christ, at the time of his resurrection; for when he rose from the dead, they rose with him; when he was justified, they were justified in him; and in this sense when he was quickened, they were quickened with him:

by grace ye are saved: the Claromontane copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, “by whose grace”; and the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, “by his grace”; either by the grace of him that quickens, or by the grace of Christ with whom they were quickened; the Syriac version renders it, “by his grace he hath redeemed us”; which seems to refer to the redeeming grace of Christ; and so the Ethiopic version, “and hath delivered us by his grace”; and there is a change of the person into “us”, which seems more agreeable to what goes before, and follows after; (see Gill on “Ephesians 2:8”).

Ver. 6. *And hath raised us up together*, &c.] Which refers either to a spiritual resurrection, to a resurrection from a death in sin, to a spiritual life; and which is the effect of almighty power, and of rich grace and mercy; and in which Christ is concerned: he is the efficient cause of it, he raises the dead in this sense, and quickens whom he will; and his resurrection is the virtual cause of it; and also the exemplar, between which there is a great likeness; both bear the same name; both are a declaration of sonship; and both the first step to glory in Christ and in his people; and both are instances of the exceeding greatness of God's power: or it may refer to a corporeal resurrection, said to be already, because it is in faith and hope, and because of the certainty of it; and to be together with Christ, because of the conformity of it to his resurrection, and to the influence of which it is owing; and chiefly because that when Christ rose from the dead, all his people rose in him, and with him, as their head and representative, he

being the firstfruits of them that slept; so called, in allusion to the firstfruits of the harvest under the law, which represented and sanctified the whole:

and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: Christ is entered into heaven as the forerunner, to take possession of it for his people, in their name; and to prepare mansions of glory for them, and in these they sit; which imports honour, pleasure, rest from labour and weariness, and safety and security: and what adds to the happiness of this is, that it is together with all the saints, and with Christ himself; and in these they are made to sit already; which is so said, because of the certainty of it, for the same glory Christ has, they shall have; and because of their right to such a blessing; and chiefly because Christ their head is set down therein, who sustains their persons, bears their names on his heart, and represents them.

Ver. 7. *That in the ages to come*, &c.] This is the end of God's permitting sin, in which men are morally dead; and of his suffering them to go on in sin, in a state of unregeneracy; and of his quickening them with Christ, and raising them up, and causing them to sit together with him: namely, that

he might show the exceeding riches of his grace: riches being added to grace, denote the valuableness of it, as well as its plenty and abundance; and also the freeness and liberality of God in giving it; and likewise the enriching nature of it: and these riches are exceeding; they exceed the riches of this world, in the immenseness of them, being unsearchable; and in the inexhaustibleness of them, for though such large treasures have been expended upon such numbers of persons, yet there is still the same quantity; and in the duration of them, they last forever; and in the profit and satisfaction they yield, when other riches fade away, are not profitable nor satisfying; and they exceed the conception, knowledge, and comprehension of men; and intend the utmost stretch of the grace of God: and which are evidently and remarkably displayed,

in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus; in providing him as a Saviour for his people; in the mission of him into this world; in not sparing, but giving him up as a sacrifice to justice for their sins; and blessing them with all spiritual blessings in him: all which God designed to show forth, in the ages to come; meaning either the ages following to the end of time, in distinction from the ages that were past: hence it appears, that the world was not expected to be immediately at an end; and that the writings of the New Testament were to be continued, and the Gospel preached unto the

end of time, in which the riches of divine grace are held forth to view; and that these ages to come, are seasons and days of grace; for a day of grace will never be over, as long as the Gospel of grace is preached; and that the instances of grace through Christ, and in the times of the apostles, are encouraging to men in ages succeeding; and that the same grace that was displayed then, is shown forth in these: or else the world to come is meant, which will take place at the end of this; and may lead us to observe, that there will be ages in the other world; and that God has not only prepared a great deal of grace and glory for his people, but he has appointed ages enough for them to enjoy it in; and that their riches lie in another world, and are in some measure hid; and that these are the produce of the grace of God; and that the exceeding riches of that will be then manifested, when it will also appear that God's giving grace to men, is not only with a view to his own glory, but is an act of kindness to them; and that eternal happiness will be heartily and freely bestowed upon them, and that through Jesus Christ their Lord: the Syriac version renders it, “that unto ages to come he might show”, &c. that is, to men in ages to come; the sense is much the same.

Ver. 8. *For by grace are ye saved*, &c.] This is to be understood, not of temporal salvation, nor of preservation in Christ, nor of providential salvation in order to calling, and much less of being put in a way of salvation, or only in a salvable state; but of spiritual salvation, and that actual; for salvation was not only resolved upon, contrived and secured in the covenant of grace, for the persons here spoken to, but it was actually obtained and wrought out for them by Christ, and was actually applied unto them by the Spirit; and even as to the full enjoyment of it, they had it in faith and hope; and because of the certainty of it, they are said to be already saved; and besides, were representatively possessed of it in Christ their head: those interested in this salvation, are not all mankind, but particular persons; and such who were by nature children of wrath, and sinners of the Gentiles; and it is a salvation from sin, Satan, the law, its curse and condemnation, and from eternal death, and wrath to come; and includes all the blessings of grace and glory; and is entirely owing to free grace: for by grace is not meant the Gospel, nor gifts of grace, nor grace infused; but the free favour of God, to which salvation in all its branches is ascribed; as election, redemption, justification, pardon, adoption, regeneration, and eternal glory: the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “by his grace”, and so some copies; and it may refer to the grace of

all the three Persons; for men are saved by the grace of the Father, who drew the plan of salvation, appointed men to it, made a covenant with his Son, in which it is provided and secured, and sent him into the world to obtain it; and by the grace of the Son, who engaged as a surety to effect it, assumed human nature, obeyed and suffered in it for that purpose, and has procured it; and by the grace of the Spirit, who makes men sensible of their need of it, brings it near, sets it before them, and applies it to them, and gives them faith and hope in it: hence it follows,

through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; salvation is through faith, not as a cause or condition of salvation, or as what adds anything to the blessing itself; but it is the way, or means, or instrument, which God has appointed, for the receiving and enjoying it, that so it might appear to be all of grace; and this faith is not the produce of man's free will and power, but it is the free gift of God; and therefore salvation through it is consistent with salvation by grace; since that itself is of grace, lies entirely in receiving grace and gives all the glory to the grace of God: the sense of this last clause may be, that salvation is not of ourselves; it is not of our desiring nor of our deserving, nor of our performing, but is of the free grace of God: though faith is elsewhere represented as the gift of God, (⁴⁰⁶⁵John 6:65 ⁵⁰²⁹Philippians 1:29) and it is called the special gift of faith, in the Apocrypha:

> “And blessed is the eunuch, which with his hands hath wrought no iniquity, nor imagined wicked things against God: for unto him shall be given the “special gift of faith”, and an inheritance in the temple of the Lord more acceptable to his mind.” (Wisdom 3:14)

— — - (I asked the following question from a Greek and Hebrew professor:

> “In this verse, to what does the word “that” refer to? Adam Clarke, Wesley & company say that it is neuter plural and “Faith” is feminine hence it cannot refer to faith, (Such an admission would destroy their theological system.) However “Grace” is also feminine as is “Salvation”.”

His reply was:

> “Here you ask a wonderful theological/exegetical question to which I can only give an opinion, and not a definitive answer. The problem is that there is NO precise referent. Grace is feminine.

> Faith is feminine. And even Salvation (as a noun) is feminine. Yet it must be one of these three at least, and maybe more than one, or all three in conjunction. Since all three come from God and not from man, the latter might seem the more likely. However, it is a tautology to say salvation and grace are “nor of yourselves,” and in that case it certainly looks more like the passage is really pointing out that man cannot even take credit for his own act of faith, but that faith was itself created by God and implanted in us that we might believe (i.e. the normal Calvinistic position). In which regard the whole theological issue of “regeneration preceding faith” comes into play. So, that is basically my opinion, though others obviously disagree strenuously, but from an exegetical standpoint, the other positions have to explain away the matter of the tautology.”

Whether you accept the reply or not, it is sufficient to show that the Greek is not as definitive in this verse as some scholars would have you believe. Editor)

Ver. 9. *Not of works*, &c.] Of any kind, moral or ceremonial, before or after conversion, done without faith or in it, nor of these in any sense; works are neither the moving causes, nor the procuring causes, nor the helping causes, nor “causa sine qua non”, or conditions of salvation; the best works that are done by men, are not done of themselves, but by the grace of God, and therefore can never merit at his hand: and salvation is put upon such a foot,

lest any man should boast; of his works before God, and unto men; wherefore he has denied works any place in justification and salvation, in order to exclude all boasting in man; and has fixed it in a way of grace, and has chosen and called poor sinful worthless creatures to enjoy it, that whoever glories, may glory in the Lord.

Ver. 10. *For we are his workmanship*, &c.] Not as men only, but as Christians; not as creatures merely, but as new creatures; the work of grace upon the soul seems chiefly designed, which like a poem, as the word may be rendered, is a very curious work; the king's daughter is all glorious within, for this is an internal work, and is a good and excellent one; it is not indeed perfected at once, but is gradually carried on, till the finishing stroke is given to it by that hand which begun it; the author of it is God, it is not man's work; nor is it the work of ministers, no, nor of angels, but it is God's work: sometimes it is ascribed to the Spirit, who regenerates and

sanctifies; and sometimes to the Son of God, who quickens whom he will; and sometimes to the Father, who reveals his Son, and draws men to him, and who seems to be meant here: the subjects of this divine operation, are the persons described in (Ephesians 2:1-3) and include both Jews and Gentiles; and express the distinguishing grace of God, that they and not others, and who were by nature children of wrath as others, should be his workmanship: and this is mentioned to show, that salvation can not be by any works of men, since all their works are either wrought for them, or in them, by God; salvation is a work wrought for them without them; and sanctification is a work wrought in them by God, of his good pleasure; and all their good works are fruits of his grace, as follows:

created in Christ Jesus unto good works; the work of grace is a creation, or a creature, a new creature; not a new vamp of old Adam's principles, but; an infusion of new ones, and is a work of almighty power; and such who have it wrought in them, are said to be created in Christ; because as soon as a man becomes a new creature, he is openly and visibly in Christ; and by these new principles of grace which are created in him, he is fit and ready, and in a capacity to perform good works; the new man formed in him, is formed for righteousness and true holiness; the internal principle of grace both excites unto, and qualifies for, the performance of righteous and holy actions:

which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them, or has "before prepared"; for the preparation of good works to be performed by saints, and the preparation of them for the performance of them; are both from the Lord; God has appointed good works to be done by his people and in his word he has declared what they are he would have done; and it is his will not only that they should do them, but continue to do them; not only that they should do a single act or more, but walk in them; their conversation and course of life should be one continued series of good works; but the intention is not that they should be saved by them, but that they should walk in them; and this being the pre-ordination of God, as it shows that predestination is not according to good works, since good works are the fruits and effects of it, so likewise that it is no licentious doctrine; seeing it provides for the performance of good works, as well as secures grace and glory.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore remember, that ye be in time past Gentiles in the flesh*, &c.] This, with what follows in the next verse, the apostle puts the

converted Ephesians in mind of, in order to magnify the grace of God in their conversion; and to humble them in a view of their former state and condition; and to teach them that they could never be saved by any works of theirs: particularly he would have them call to mind, that they were in "time past Gentiles"; which does not so much regard the nation and country they were of, for in that sense they were Gentiles still; but their state and condition; they had been very blind and ignorant, were Gentiles that knew not God; they had been very wicked and profligate sinners of the Gentiles; and they had been "Gentiles in the flesh": not according to the flesh, or by birth, for so they were then; but in the time of their unregeneracy they were carnal, and minded the things of the flesh, walked after it, and fulfilled the lusts, and did the works of it; particular respect seems to be had to their uncircumcision in the flesh, to which circumcision in the flesh is opposed in the next clause:

who are called uncircumcision by that which is called circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that is, they were by way of reproach and contempt called uncircumcised persons; than whom none were more abominable to the Jews, and hated by them, who were called circumcised persons from that circumcision which is outward, in the flesh, in a particular part of the body; and which is done by the hands of a man, who was called lhwm, "the circumciser"; which any one might be, except a Gentile [f20]; an Israelite adult and skilful was preferred; yet these were not circumcised persons with that circumcision that is inward, and is of the heart, in the Spirit, and is made without the hands of men, and by the Spirit and power of God.

Ver. 12. *That at that time ye were without Christ*, &c.] Or separate from him: they were chosen in him and were preserved in him, and were redeemed by him before; but they were without any knowledge of him, faith in him, love to him, communion with him, or subjection to him, his Gospel, government, laws, and ordinances; and particularly they were without any promises of him, or prophecies concerning him, which were peculiar to the Jews; hence the Messiah is called larçyd ajyçm, "the Christ of Israel" [f21], and who as he was promised, so he was sent only to the lost sheep of the house, of Israel: hence it follows,

being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; both from their civil and church state; the Gentiles might not dwell among them, nor have any dealings with them in things civil, unless they conformed to certain laws; nor might the Jews go into any, nor eat or converse with any, that were

uncircumcised; so great an alienation and distance were there between these two people; and much less might they eat the passover and join with them in religious worship; the word for “commonwealth” here used, Harpocratian says [f22], is commonly used by Greek writers for a “democracy” though the original constitution of the Israelites was properly a “theocracy”:

strangers to the covenants of promise; to the covenant of circumcision given to Abraham; and to the covenant at Mount Sinai, made with Israel; and to the dispensation of the covenant of grace to that people, sometimes called the first covenant and the old covenant, and which peculiarly belonged to them, ([illegible] Romans 9:4) one copy reads, “strangers to the promises of the covenant”; which is natural enough; the Vulgate Latin version joins the word “promise” to the next clause, and reads,

having no hope of the promise of the promised Messiah: “having no hope”; of the Messiah and salvation by him, of the resurrection of the dead, of a future state, and of eternal life; none that is sure and steadfast, that is purifying, and makes not ashamed; or which is a good hope through grace, is the gift of God, the fruit of his love, and the effect of his power; and this is to be in a miserable condition: Philo, the Jew [f23], observes, that

> “the Chaldeans call a man Enos, as if he only was truly a man that expects good things, and supports himself with good hopes; and adds, hence it is manifest that one without hope is not reckoned a man, but a beast in an human form; since he is destitute of hope, which is the property of the human soul;”

and without God in the world; without the knowledge of God in Christ; without the image of God, which was defaced by sin; without the grace and fear of God; and without communion with him, and the worship of him; and while they were so they were in the world, among the men of it, and were a part of it, not being yet called out of it: the word signifies “atheists”: so some of the Gentiles were in “theory”, as they all were in practice; and they were by the Jews reckoned no other than “atheists”; it is a common saying with them [f24] that

> “he that dwells without the land (of Israel) is like one hwla wl ˆyaç, “who has no God”:”

Ver. 13. *But now in Christ Jesus*, &c.] Being openly and visibly in Christ, created in him, and become believers in him; as they were before secretly in him, as chosen and blessed in him before the foundation of the world:

ye who sometimes were far off; who in their state of unregeneracy were afar off from God, and from his law, and from any spiritual knowledge of him and fellowship with him; and from Jesus Christ, and from the knowledge of his righteousness, and the way of salvation by him; and from the Spirit, and any acquaintance with the things of the Spirit, and from minding them, and from walking after him; and from the saints and people of God, and from any love to them, and communion with them; and from any solid hopes of happiness, or real peace and comfort; which distance was owing both to Adam's sin and to their own transgressions: it is an observation of a Jewish writer[f25] on (<01003>Genesis 3:9) "where art thou?" he (God) knew where he was, but he said so to show him that he was pjwrm, "afar off from" God by his sin: (see <23902>Isaiah 59:2), and yet

are made nigh by the blood of Christ: so as to have nearness of access to and communion with God, Father, Son, and Spirit, and the saints, in virtue of the blood of Christ; which gives boldness and speaks peace; by which their persons are justified, the pardon of their sins is procured, reconciliation is made, and their garments are washed, and made white; and so they draw nigh with confidence by the faith of him.

Ver. 14. *For he is our peace*, &c.] The author of peace between Jew and Gentile: there was a great enmity of the Jew against the Gentile, and of the Gentile against the Jew; and chiefly on account of circumcision, the one being without it, and the other insisting on it, and branding one another with nicknames on account of it; but Christ has made peace between them by abrogating the ceremonial law, which was the occasion of the difference, and by sending the Gospel of peace to them both, by converting some of each, and by granting the like privileges to them all, as may be observed in the following verses: and Christ is the author of peace between God and his people; there is naturally in man an enmity to God; sin has separated chief friends; nor can man make his peace with God; what he does, or can do, will not do it; and what will, he cannot do; Christ is the only fit and proper person for this work, being a middle person between both, and is only able to effect it, being God as well as man; and so could draw nigh to God, and treat with him about terms of peace, and agree to them, and perform them; and which he has brought about by his blood, his

sufferings and death; and which is made on honourable terms, by a full satisfaction to the law and justice of God; and so is a lasting one, and attended with a train of blessings: moreover, Christ is the donor of peace, of external peace in his churches, and of internal peace of conscience, and of eternal peace in heaven: this is one of the names of the Messiah with the Jews [f26];

> "says R. Jose the Galilean, even the name of the Messiah is called µwlç, "peace"; as it is said, (<2316>Isaiah 9:6) "the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace";"

(see <3305>Micah 5:5) where it is said, "and this man shall be the peace"; which the Jewish [f27] writers understand of the Messiah:

who hath made both one; Jews and Gentiles, one people, one body, one church; he united them together, and caused them to agree in one, and made them to be of one mind and judgment by the above methods; as well as he gathered them together in one, in one head, himself, who represented them all:

and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; the ceremonial law, which was made up of many hard and intolerable commands, and distinguished, and divided, and kept up a division between Jews and Gentiles: so the Jews call the law a wall, "if she be a wall", (<2809>Song of Solomon 8:9) hrwt wz, "this is the law", say they [f28]: and hence we read of hrwth tmwj, "the wall of the law" [f29]; and sometimes the phrase, a "partition wall", is used for a division or disagreement; so R. Benjamin says [f30], that between the Karaites and Rabbanites, who were the disciples of the wise men, there was hxyjm, "a middle wall of partition"; a great difference and distance; and such there was between the Jew and Gentile, by reason of the ceremonial law; but Christ removed it, and made up the difference: the allusion seems to be to the wall which divided the court of Israel from the court of the Gentiles, in the temple, and which kept them at a distance in worship.

Ver. 15. *Having abolished in his flesh the enmity*, &c.] The ceremonial law, as appears by what follows,

even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; which consisted of many precepts, and carnal ordinances; and is so called because it was an indication of God's hatred of sin, by requiring sacrifice for it; and because it

was an occasion of stirring up the enmity of the natural man, it being a burden and a weariness to the flesh, by reason of its many and troublesome rites; and because it was the cause of enmity between Jew and Gentile: the Jews say [f31], that Sinai, the mount on which the law was given, signifies "hatred"; and that it is so called because from it descended hanç, "hatred" or "enmity" to the nations of the world: now this Christ abolished, "in his flesh", or by it; not by his incarnation, but by the sacrifice of his flesh, or human nature, and that as in union with his divine nature; but not until he had fulfilled it in himself, which was one end of his coming into the world; and then he abolished it, so as that it ought not to be, and so as that it is not, and of no use and service; and that because it was faulty and deficient, weak and unprofitable, as well as intolerable; and because there was a change in the priesthood; and because it was contrary to a spirit of liberty, the great blessing of the Gospel; and that there might be a reconciliation and a coalition between Jew and Gentile, as follows:

for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; which explains what is meant before by making both one; and expresses the strictness of the union between Jew and Gentile, they became as one man; and points at the manner in which they became so strictly united; and that is by being made new men, or new creatures, by having a work of grace upon their souls, and so baptized into one body, and made to drink of one and the same Spirit; the foundation of which union is in himself; for Jew and Gentile, male and female, bond and free, are all one in Christ Jesus; he is the cornerstone in which they all meet, and the head to which the whole body is joined.

Ver. 16. *And that he might reconcile both unto God*, &c.] This is another end of the abrogation of the ceremonial law: the Jews had run up a long score against the ceremonial law, as well as against the moral law; and Christ by fulfilling it for them, and thereby abrogating it, reconciled them; and the Gentiles could not be reconciled together with them, without the abrogation of it: and this reconciliation of them is made to God, who was the person offended; and who yet first set on foot a reconciliation, in which his glory is greatly concerned; and reconciliation with others depends upon reconciliation with him: and this is made

in one body by the cross; by which "body" is meant, the human body of Christ, which the Father prepared for him, and he assumed, and that in order to make reconciliation for his people; and is said to be "one" body,

because it was in one and the same body, which he reconciled both Jews and Gentiles unto God, and in or by one sacrifice of that body; reconciliation being so effectually made by it that there is no need of a reiteration: or the sense is, he reconciled them into “one body”; into one mystical body, the church, of which he is head; and this he did “by the cross”, that is, by his blood shed on the cross, or by his suffering the death of the cross; which shows that reconciliation is made in a way of satisfaction to the law and justice of God, by Christ's bearing the penalty of the law, and suffering the strokes of justice on the cross; and expresses the efficacy of his blood and sacrifice, and the greatness of his condescension and love:

having slain the enmity thereby; the ceremonial law, as before; and the slaying it is the same with abolishing it; unless the enmity between God and man is meant, which was slain by removing the cause of it, sin; and which laid a foundation for the slaying of it in the hearts of his people in regeneration, when sin is made odious to them, and they are reconciled to God's way of salvation; hence being slain in both senses, peace with God can never be broken.

Ver. 17. *And came and preached peace to you which were afar off*, &c.] Which is to be understood not of Christ's coming in the flesh; for when he came in the flesh, he came only to the Jews that were nigh, and preached the Gospel in his own personal ministry to them, and not to the Gentiles, who are the persons afar off; (Ephesians 2:12,13) but of his coming by his Spirit in the ministry of his apostles, to whom he gave a commission after he had made peace and reconciliation by the blood of his cross, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles in the furthest parts of the earth; and on whom he bestowed gifts, qualifying them for such service, and succeeded them in it by his power and grace: and the subject of their ministry was peace, Christ who is our peace, and peace made by his blood, and the Gospel of peace, which declares both these; and it is the means of making persons of peaceable dispositions; its doctrines and promises, when powerfully applied, give peace to distressed minds, and quiet to doubting saints; and it shows the way to eternal peace:

and to them that were nigh; to the Jews, to whom the Gospel of peace was preached in the first place, not only by Christ and his apostles, before his death; but by his apostles after his resurrection, and after the commission was given to preach it to the Gentiles; though they are mentioned last,

because the apostle was speaking to Gentiles; and this also verifies what Christ says, the first shall be last, and the last first: the Alexandrian copy, some others, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read “peace”, in this clause, as in the former; the apostle seems to have respect to (Isaiah 57:19) a like description and distinction of Jews and Gentiles may be observed in the writings of the Jews[f32]; so they say,

> “the Israelites are near unto the holy King, and the rest of the nations are far from him.”

Ver. 18. *For through him we both have an access*, That is, both Jews and Gentiles; the Arabic version reads, “we both factions”: being made one, and reconciled unto God, and having the Gospel of peace preached to both, they have through Christ freedom of access and boldness in it:

by one Spirit unto the Father: they may come to God as the Father of spirits, and of mercies, who has made their souls or spirits, and bestowed his mercies on them in great abundance; and as the Father of Christ, and as their God and Father in Christ: and the rather they should consider him in this relation to them, in order to command in them a reverence and fear of him; to secure a freedom and liberty in their approach to him; and to encourage an holy boldness, and a fiducial confidence in him; and to teach them submission to his will: and their access to him is “through” Christ, who has made peace for them, and atonement for their sins; who has satisfied law and justice, and brought in an everlasting righteousness for them; so that there is nothing lies in their way to hinder them; and besides, he takes them as it were by the hand, and leads them into the presence of his Father, and presents their petitions for them, on whose account they have both audience and acceptance with God: and this access is also “by one Spirit”; the “Holy Spirit”, as the Ethiopic version reads; and who is necessary in access to God, as a spirit of adoption, to enable and encourage souls to go to God as a father; and as a spirit of supplication, to teach both how to pray, and for what, as they should; and as a free spirit to give them liberty to speak their minds freely, and pour out their souls to God; and as a spirit of faith to engage them to pray in faith, and with holy boldness, confidence, and importunity; and he is said to be “one”, both with respect to the persons to and by whom access is had, the Father and Christ, for he is the one and the same Spirit of the Father and of the Son; and with respect to the persons who have this access, Jews and Gentiles, who as they make up one body, are actuated and directed by, and drink into one

and the same Spirit: hence this access to God is of a spiritual kind; it is a drawing nigh to God with the heart, and a worshipping him in spirit; and is by faith, and may be with freedom, and should be, with reverence, and ought to be frequent; and is a peculiar privilege that belongs to the children of God; and who have great honour bestowed upon them, to have access to God at any time, as their Father, through Christ the Mediator, and under the influence, and by the direction and assistance of the Holy Spirit: this is a considerable proof of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, of their deity and distinct personality.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore ye are no more strangers*. &c.] Alluding to the name yrkn, "a stranger", by which the Jews called the Gentiles; meaning that they were not now strangers to God, to the grace of God, the love of God, and communion with him, nor to the throne of his grace; nor to Christ, to his person, his work and office, to his righteousness, to his voice, and to believing in him; nor to the Holy Spirit, as an enlightener, a comforter, the spirit of adoption, and as a seal and earnest of future glory; nor to their own hearts, the corruption and deceitfulness of them; nor to the devices of Satan; nor to the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises:

and foreigners: in the commonwealth of Israel, in the church of God;

but fellow citizens with the saints: the city they belong to is either the church below, which is the city of God, of his building, and where he dwells, of which Christ is the foundation, which is strongly fortified with the walls and bulwarks of salvation, is delightfully situated by the river of divine love, and is endowed with various privileges; or heaven above, which is a city of God's preparing and building also, and where he has his residence, and which is the habitation of angels and saints; of this city in either sense saints are citizens; such who are saints by separation, who are set apart by the Father's grace, and by imputation, or through Christ's being made sanctification to them, and by the regenerating grace of the blessed Spirit; and these, as they have a right to a name and a place in the church on earth, have also their citizenship in heaven; and which they have not by birth, nor by purchase, but by the free grace of God, which gives them both a right and a meetness; and believing Gentiles are upon equal foot of grace and privilege with believing Jews:

and of the household of God: and which is sometimes called the household of faith, the church of God consisting of believers, the family in heaven and in earth named of Christ; in which family or household God is the Father, Christ is the firstborn, ministers are stewards; and here are saints of various growth and size, some fathers, some young men, some children: and to this family all believers belong, whether Gentiles or Jews; and which they come into, not by birth, nor by merit, but by adopting grace; and happy are they that belong to this city and house! they are freed from all servitude and bondage; they can never be arrested, or come into condemnation; they have liberty of access to God, and share in the fulness of grace in Christ; they are well taken care of; they are richly clothed, and have plenty of provisions; and will never be turned out, and are heirs of a never fading inheritance.

Ver. 20. *And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets*, &c.] The prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New, who agree in laying ministerially the one and only foundation, Jesus Christ; for not the persons of the apostles and prophets, nor their doctrines merely, are here meant; but Christ who is contained in them, and who is the foundation on which the church, and all true believers are built: he is the foundation of the covenant of grace, of all the blessings and promises of it, of faith and hope, of peace, joy, and comfort, of salvation and eternal happiness; on this foundation the saints are built by Father, Son, and Spirit, as the efficient causes, and by the ministers of the Gospel as instruments: these lie in the same common quarry with the rest of mankind, and are singled out from thence by efficacious grace; they are broken and hewn by the word and ministers of it, as means; and are ministerially laid on Christ the foundation, and are built up thereon in faith and holiness; yea, private Christians are useful this way to build up one another:

Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; which cements and knits together angels and men, Jews and Gentiles, Old and New Testament saints, saints above, and saints below, saints on earth, in all ages and places, and of every denomination; and which is the beauty and glory, as well as the strength of the building, which keeps all together; and Christ is the chief, the headstone of the corner, and who is superior to angels and men. This phrase is used by the Jews to denote excellency in a person; so a wise scholar is called `hnyp ^ba`, "a cornerstone"; [f33] (see <19B822>Psalm 118:22 <23B816>Isaiah 28:16) (<38B004>Zechariah 10:4). It may be rendered, "the chief cornering-stone"; it being such an one that is a foundation stone, as well as

a cornerstone; and reached unto, and lay at the bottom of, and supported the four corners of the building; for the foundation and corner stone in this spiritual building, is one and the same stone, Christ: it is said of the temple of Latona, at Buto, in Egypt, that it was made, εξ ενος λιψου, "of one stone", as Herodotus [f34] an eyewitness of it, attests.

Ver. 21. *In whom all the building fitly framed together*, &c.] This building is to be understood of all the saints, and people of God; of the whole universal church, which is God's building; and is a building of a spiritual nature, and will abide for ever: and this is fitly framed together; it consists of various parts, as a building does; some saints are comparable to beams, some to rafters, others to pillars, &c. and these are joined and united to one another, and are set in an exact symmetry and proportion, and in a proper subserviency to each other; and so as to make for the good, the strength, and beauty of the whole. And it all centres in Christ; he has a great concern in this building; he is the master builder, and the foundation and cornerstone; and it being knit together in him,

groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: it grows by an accession of new stones, or of souls called by grace, and added to it; for this building is not yet openly and visibly completed, as it will be; in order to which the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances are continued; and this will be in the latter day, when the number of God's elect, among Jews and Gentiles, shall be gathered in: and this growth may be understood also of an increase of those, who are openly laid in the building; of their spiritual growth into their head, Christ; and of an, increase of grace in them; which the word and ordinances are means of, under a divine blessing: and this building grows unto an "holy temple", the Gospel church state, called a "temple", in allusion to the temple at Jerusalem; whose materials were stones made ready and hewn, before they were brought thither; and whose magnificence, beauty, and glory, were very great; and it was the place of public worship, and of the divine abode, and was a very significant emblem of the church of God; (see 4Gal 6:16 2 Corinthians 6:16), which is an "holy" one, set apart for holy uses, and internally sanctified by the Spirit of God; and which is discovered by external holiness of life, and conversation in the members of it: and this is said to be "in the Lord"; which phrase may refer to the word "groweth", and denotes that growth and increase, both of persons and grace, the church has in, and from the Lord Jesus Christ; or to the word "holy", and intimates, that the holiness of

the church, and every member of it, is also in and from the Lord; or to the word “temple”, which is built for him to dwell in.

Ver. 22. *In whom you also are builded together*, &c.] As the church universal, so every particular church is a building that is compact together, in and upon Christ, as the church at Ephesus was: God is the builder of it; Christ is the foundation; true believers are the proper materials; the door, or entrance into it, is Christ, and faith in him; the ministers of the Gospel are pillars in it; the ordinances are its windows; its furniture is of various sorts, there are vessels of small, and of great quantity; and its provisions are large and entertaining. A church is a building compact together; it consists of many parts; and these are joined together, by agreement, and are knit and cemented in love; and being thus joined together, they are designed for social worship, and their great concern should be to edify one another. The phrase, “in whom”, may either refer to the holy temple before spoken of, the church universal, of which a particular church is a part; or to Christ, who is the master builder, by whom they are built together, and the foundation on whom they are built, and the cornerstone in whom they meet and are united. And the end of their being thus built together is, for an habitation of God through the Spirit; which may be understood of God the Father, since he is distinguished from Christ, in whom, and from the Holy Spirit, through whom, they are built for this purpose, though not to the exclusion of either of them; for a particular church is an habitation of Father, Son, and Spirit: and it being the habitation of God, shows his great grace and condescension, and the great value and regard he has for it; and this makes it a desirable, delightful, and pleasant habitation to the saints; and hence it is a safe and a quiet one, and they are happy that dwell in it; and hither should souls come for the enjoyment of the divine presence: and whereas it is said to be such through the Spirit; hence it appears, that the Spirit is concerned with the other two persons in the building of it; and that hereby it becomes a spiritual house; and is, through his grace, a fit habitation for the holy God to dwell in; and that God dwells in his churches by his Spirit.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS 3

In this chapter the apostle hints at his state and condition as a prisoner, and at the afflictions he endured for the sake of the Gospel; and whereas he knew these would be objected to his ministry, and be discouraging to the saints, he chiefly insists on these two things; namely, to assert his office of apostleship, and observe the knowledge of divine mysteries, and gifts of grace bestowed on him, which he does with all modesty and humility; and also to exhort the saints to constancy and perseverance, notwithstanding his tribulations; for which purpose he puts up several petitions for them; and the whole is concluded with a doxology, or an ascription of glory to God. In (Ephesians 3:1), he declares himself a prisoner of Christ, for the sake of the Ephesians; and which was no objection to his being an ambassador of Christ, and an apostle of his, seeing he had a commission from him to dispense the word of his grace, (Ephesians 3:2), of which, his knowledge in the mystery of Christ, he had by revelation, was an evident proof, (Ephesians 3:3), which might easily be understood by what he had written in the former part of his epistle, (Ephesians 3:4), and was such as had not been given to the saints in former times, as it was to him, and others, now, (Ephesians 3:5), particularly the knowledge of the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles by the Gospel, (Ephesians 3:6), of which Gospel to the Gentiles he was made a minister, through the gift of grace, and the energy of divine power, (Ephesians 3:7), of which high honour he was unworthy, being, in his own esteem, the meanest of all the people of God; and the grace and favour was the greater, inasmuch as it was the unsearchable riches of Christ he was sent to publish, and that among the Gentiles, (Ephesians 3:8), and to give men light into a mysterious affair, which from eternity had been hid, and kept a secret in the heart of God, the Creator of all things, (Ephesians 3:9), but was now committed to him with this view, not only to be made known to the church, but by that to the heavenly principalities and powers, even that wise scheme of things which displays the manifold wisdom of God, and was formed according to an eternal purpose in Christ, (Ephesians 3:10,11), through whom a way of access is opened to God, with boldness,

faith, and confidence, as the Gospel declares, (⁴⁰Ephesians 3:12). Wherefore, though he endured much tribulation for the sake of preaching this Gospel, this should not at all sink their spirits, or move them away from the hope of it; but they should rather glory that they had such a faithful preacher and defender of it, (⁴⁰Ephesians 3:13). And as he desired their perseverance, so he prays for it, and for several things in order to it; the posture in which he prayed was by bowing the knee; the person to whom he prayed is described by his relation to Christ, as his Father, of whom, or of Christ, the whole family of God in heaven and earth are named, (⁴⁰Ephesians 3:14,15). The petitions made by him are for internal strength from the Spirit of God, that so they might be enabled to persevere, (⁴⁰Ephesians 3:16), and also, that Christ might continue to dwell in their hearts by faith, which would keep them from falling; and likewise, that they might have a lively sense, and a full persuasion of their interest in the love of God; even so as to comprehend with others its breadth, length, depth, and height, which would engage them to press forward, and to hold on, and out, and not faint at tribulations, (⁴⁰Ephesians 3:17,18), And particularly he prays; that they might know more of the love of Christ, which is not fully to be known, and which would constrain them to follow him, and cleave to him with full purpose of heart; and that they might have a full supply of all grace to support, influence, and assist them, (⁴⁰Ephesians 3:19), and for his own, and their encouragement, with respect to having the petitions made, the apostle ascribes glory to God by Christ, as it should be done in the church throughout all ages of time, under this consideration, as being able to do for his people abundantly more than they are able to ask of him, or can think of asking of him, or receiving from him, (⁴⁰Ephesians 3:20,21).

Ver. 1. *For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ*, &c.] Not actively, whom Christ had apprehended by his grace, and made a prisoner of hope; but passively, who was made a prisoner for Christ, on account of preaching Christ, and his Gospel: he was not a prisoner for any capital crime, as theft, murder, &c. and therefore be was not ashamed of his bonds, but rather glories in them; and a prison has often been the portion of the best of men in this world: from hence we learn, that this epistle was written when the apostle was a prisoner at Rome; and the consideration of this his condition serves much to confirm the truths he had before delivered, seeing they were such as he could, and did suffer for; and which

must engage the attention of the Ephesians to them, and especially since his sufferings were on their account:

for you Gentiles: because he preached the Gospel to the Gentiles, which the Jews forbid, that they might not be saved; and because he taught them, that circumcision and the rest of the ceremonies of the law were not binding upon them; which gave great offence to the Jews, who were the means of bringing of him into these circumstances, and particularly the Asiatic Jews, the Jews of Ephesus; who having seen and heard him there, knew him again when in the temple at Jerusalem, and raised a mob upon him, having bore a grudge against him for his ministry at Ephesus, by which means he became a prisoner; so that he might truly say, he was a prisoner for the sake of them; (see <442127>Acts 21:27-33). One of Stevens's copies adds, “am an ambassador”, as in (<490620>Ephesians 6:20) and another of them, “glory”, or “rejoice”; (see <500216>Philippians 2:16,17).

Ver. 2. *If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God*, &c.] Not the free love and favour of God in his heart towards his people; nor internal grace wrought in the heart of the apostle; but either the gift of grace, as in (<490307>Ephesians 3:7) qualifying him for the work of the ministry; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “if ye have heard the gift of the grace of God”; or rather the doctrine of grace, the Gospel, the subject matter of which is the grace of God; it is a declaration of the free grace of God in the salvation of men; and it is the means of conveying the grace of God into their hearts. Now the apostle had a dispensation to preach this Gospel committed to him; he acted by authority, and as a steward of the mysteries of God; and which he faithfully dispensed to the family of Christ, who appointed him to this service: this the Ephesians had heard of, from the relations of the apostle, and others, and knew it themselves, having often heard him preach, for he was with them for the space of three years; wherefore this is not said as if he questioned, whether they had heard or not, but as taking it for granted that they had: “if”, or “seeing ye have heard”, &c.

which is given me to you-ward; it was not for his own private use, that the Gospel was committed to him, or gifts were given him to qualify him for the dispensation of it, but for the sake of others, especially the Gentiles, and particularly the Ephesians.

Ver. 3. *How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery*, &c.] Or “is made known unto me”: so the Alexandrian copy, and some others,

and the Vulgate Latin version. The Gospel, which is sometimes called a mystery, the mystery of the Gospel, the mystery of godliness, and the mystery of faith: the several doctrines of the Gospel are the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; such as a trinity of persons in the Godhead, the union of the two natures in Christ, the saints' union to Christ, and communion with him, the resurrection of the dead, and the change of living saints, and the whole doctrine of salvation by Christ, of justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice; and this was made known to the apostle, not in a mere notional and speculative way, but in a spiritual and saving manner; not by men, for he was not taught by men, nor did he receive it from them, but had it by the revelation of Jesus Christ, and by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

as I wrote afore in few words: in the two first chapters of this epistle, which are a compendium of the mystery of the Gospel, in its several parts; as predestination, election, redemption, regeneration, and salvation by free grace.

Ver. 4. *Whereby when ye read*, &c.] The above chapters, and seriously consider what is contained in them:

ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ of his person, office, and grace; and which knowledge was very large indeed.

Ver. 5. *Which in other ages was not made known unto, the sons of men*, &c.] That is, which mystery of Christ, and of the Gospel, was not made known to men in general, nor so clearly as under the Gospel dispensation. Some hints were given of it to Adam, immediately after his fall; and the Gospel was before preached to Abraham, Moses, and David, and others knew something of it; and it was still more fully dispensed in the times of the prophet Isaiah, and other following prophets: but then the knowledge of it was not so extensive, nor so clear as now; it lay hid in types and shadows, in obscure prophecies and short hints. Moreover, this may have respect particularly to the calling of the Gentiles, as appears from the following words; this was, in some measure, made known, as that in Christ all the nations of the earth should be blessed; that when Shiloh came, to him should the gathering of the people be; that the Messiah should be an ensign of the people, and to him should the Gentiles seek; that he should be the covenant of the people, and a leader and a commander of them; and that there should be great flockings to him; but then this was not known to

many, and the time, mode, and circumstances of it were but little understood, and comparatively speaking, it was not known: however, it was not so known,

as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit. The apostles and prophets were the superior officers in the Gospel dispensation; the former design the twelve apostles of Christ, and the latter such who had the gift of interpreting the prophecies of the Old Testament, and of foretelling things to come, having received gifts from Christ to fit them for such offices, some apostles, some prophets; and to these a revelation was made of the mystery of the Gospel in general, and of the calling of the Gentiles in particular, by the Spirit, who searches the deep things of God, and reveals them, and leads into all truth; and who, by falling upon the Gentiles, as upon Cornelius and his family, and by the success which he gave to the Gospel in the Gentile world, made their calling clear and manifest. The Complutensian edition reads, “by the Holy Spirit”; and so the Arabic and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 6. *That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs*, &c.] With the Jews, of all the blessings of grace, of lasting salvation, and of the eternal, incorruptible, and never fading inheritance in heaven; that they should be heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ Jesus, and inherit all things: and heirs they are by being Christ's, and on account of their special adoption through him, and their justification by his righteousness; and which appears by their regeneration to a lively hope of the inheritance reserved for them in heaven:

and of the same body: coalesce in one and the same church state, with the believing Jews, under one and the same head, Christ Jesus, and participate of the same grace from him, being all baptized into one body, and made to drink of the same Spirit, and enjoy the same privileges and immunities.

And partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel; as of God, being their covenant God, which is the great promise of the covenant; or of the Spirit, his gifts and graces, called the promise of the Spirit; or of eternal life and happiness, as the gift of grace through Christ. Now all these promises, and all others, are in Christ, yea and amen, safe and secure; and it is through being in Christ that any come to partake of them; and that by the means of the Gospel, as these Gentiles were to do, and did: the Gospel is a declaration of what God has promised in covenant to his people; this was

carried among the Gentiles, and was made effectual to their participation of the things contained in it.

Ver. 7. *Whereof I was made a minister*, &c.] That is, of the Gospel, not by men, but by God: and he is a true minister of the Gospel who is called of God to the work of the ministry, and is qualified by him with grace and gifts for it; and who faithfully discharges it according to the ability God has given; and such an one was the apostle:

according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me; not according to his natural capacity, his liberal education, or acquired learning; but according to a gift, a ministerial gift bestowed upon him, for such service: for this gift of grace does not design the grace of God wrought in his soul; nor the doctrines of grace, the subject of the Gospel ministry; nor the efficacious grace of God, which makes that successful and useful to the souls of men; but a gift of interpreting the Scriptures, and of explaining the truths of the Gospel to the edification of men; and which is a distinct thing from natural abilities, human learning, or internal grace; for there may be all these, and yet a man not fit to be a minister of the Gospel; what qualifies men for that is the above gift, which God, of his sovereign good will and pleasure, gives to some of the sons of men:

by the effectual working of his power; the power of God is seen in working grace in the hearts of men, thereby making them believers in Christ; and it is also displayed in the gifts of the Spirit bestowed on men, which is called a being endued with a power from on high; thereby making men, and not angels, and these oftentimes the meanest and weakest, ministers of Christ; and likewise in assisting them in their work, and in carrying them through it, and in making them successful in it, to the conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints.

Ver. 8. *Unto me who am less than the least of all saints*, &c.] This is an instance of the great humility of the apostle, and indeed the greatest saints are generally speaking, the most humble souls, as Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, and others; these have the meanest thoughts of themselves, and the best of others; they rejoice in the grace of God manifested to others; they are willing to receive instruction, nay admonition, from the meanest believer; they have the least opinion of their own works, and are the greatest admirers of the grace of God; and do most contentedly submit to the sovereign will of God: the reasons of their great humility are, because they have the largest discoveries of the love and grace of God and Christ,

which are of a soul humbling nature; they are the most sensible of their own sinfulness, vileness, and unworthiness, which keeps them low in their own sight; they are commonly the most afflicted with Satan's temptations, which are suffered to attend them, lest they should be exalted above measure; they are the most fruitful souls, and boughs laden with fruit hang lowest; and they are the most conformable to Christ, who is meek and lowly. The phrase seems to be Jewish: there was one R. Jose "the little", who was so called, it is said, because he was µydysj ^jq, "the least of saints" [f35]: but the apostle uses a still more diminutive word, and calls himself less than the least of them; and adds,

is this grace given; that is, the gift of grace, as before, the ministerial gift:

that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; the riches of Christ, as God, lie in the perfections of his nature, in the works of his hands, in his empire and dominion over all, and in the revenues of glory, which result from thence; and these riches are underived and incommunicable, and are ineffable, yea inconceivable: his riches, as Mediator, lie in the persons of the elect, in the grace that is laid up in him for them, called the riches of grace, and in the inheritance he is possessed of for them, called the riches of glory; and these rich things are communicable, as well as solid, satisfying, and lasting; and they are unsearchable to the natural man, and cannot be fully investigated by believers themselves; they will be telling over to all eternity: and they will appear unsearchable, when it is considered what they have procured, and what blessings have been dispensed according to them; what a large family Christ has maintained by them, and how richly and fully he has provided for them, and to what honour and grandeur he raises them all. Now it was great grace to intrust the apostle with such a ministry, to put such treasure into an earthen vessel; it was great grace that qualified him for it; and it was great grace in particular to the Gentiles, that he should be appointed to publish these among them; and so the apostle esteemed it, and himself unworthy of such honour.

Ver. 9. *And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery*, &c.] Or "the dispensation of the mystery" as the Complutensian, and several copies, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read. The mystery is the Gospel; the fellowship of it is the communication of grace by it, a participation of the truths and doctrines of it, communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, which the Gospel calls and leads unto, and that equal

concern and interest which both Jews and Gentiles have in the privileges of it. Now men are naturally in the dark about these things, and the ministry of the word is the means of enlightening them, and is indeed the grand design of it; and the ministers of the Gospel do instrumentally enlighten persons, though it is God only that does it efficiently; and for this, gifts of grace were bestowed upon the apostle, even for the enlightening of all men, not every individual person in the world, but some of all sorts, particularly Gentiles, as well as Jews. The word παντας, rendered "all men", is left out in the Alexandrian copy.

Which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God; in the heart of God, in his counsel and covenant; which shows the original and source of the Gospel, and expresses the richness and valuableness of it, as well as its safety and secrecy: here it was hid in some measure from the elect angels, and from Old Testament saints, and altogether from natural men, and especially from the Gentiles, whose times of ignorance God winked at, or overlooked: and this was kept so from ages past, from the beginning of time, till now, and was laid up in the breast of God from all eternity; for it was ordained before the world for the glory, of his people. What the apostle says of the Gospel, the Jews say of the law, that it was hid and treasured up two thousand years before the world was created [f36]; yea, they say [f37], that many ages before the creation of the world it was written and left, hbqh lç wqyjb, "in the bosom of God": and he is here described, as he

who created all things by Jesus Christ; not as an instrument, but as a co-efficient cause: and this is to be understood, not of the new creation, but of the old, and of all things in it; for without Christ, was not anything made that is made. The phrase, "by Jesus Christ", is left out in the Alexandrian and Claromontane copies, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 10. *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places*, &c.] By whom are meant, not civil magistrates, much less evil angels, but the good angels, the angels in heaven; (See Gill on "<4012>Ephesians 1:21").

might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God; not the perfection of wisdom, nor Jesus Christ the wisdom of God, nor the holy Scriptures; but the Gospel, which is the pure produce of the wisdom of

God; which is gloriously displayed in the several doctrines of it; as in election, in choosing men in Christ for the security of their persons, in founding it not upon their works, but his own grace, for the security of his purpose, and in pitching on such persons as he has, for the magnifying of his grace: and in redemption, which is seen in the person of the Redeemer, who is both God and man; and in the manner in which it is effected, being both for the glory of God's grace and mercy, and for the honour of his justice and holiness; and wherein Satan is mortified, sin is condemned, and the sinner saved: and in justification, whereby sinful men become just with God: God is just, and yet the justifier of him that believes; the ungodly is justified, and yet not justified in his ungodliness, but from it: and in the pardon of sin, in which iniquity is forgiven, and yet vengeance is taken on men's inventions; it is an act of mercy, and yet of justice; it is by price, and yet of free grace; and the like may be observed of all other doctrines of the Gospel. And it may be called “manifold”, because of its various doctrines and promises and because of the various instances of wisdom in them, and the various persons to whom it is made known, and the various times in which it is displayed: and now under the Gospel this is more clearly known, or made known to the angels by the church of God, through the ministry of the word in it, on which angels attend, being desirous to look more diligently into the mysteries of it; and by the displays of the wisdom and grace of God unto his church and people.

Ver. 11. *According to the eternal purpose*, &c.] The whole of salvation, in which is displayed the great wisdom of God, is according to a purpose of his; the scheme of it is fixed in the council of peace; the thing itself is effected in pursuance of it; Christ, the Redeemer, was set forth in it; his incarnation, the time of his coming into the world, his sufferings and death, with all their circumstances, were decreed by God; and the persons for whom Christ became incarnate, suffered, and died, were appointed unto salvation by him; and the application of it to them is according to his purpose; the time when, the place where, and the means whereby souls are converted, are all settled in the decrees of God; the Gospel itself, the preaching of it by such and such persons, its use to make men see the mysteries of grace, and the fellowship of them, and to make known these things to the angels of heaven, are all according to a divine purpose: and this purpose is eternal, or was in the mind of God from all eternity; for no new will can arise in him; no purpose, resolution, or decree can be made by him in time, which was not in his breast from everlasting; and his purpose

concerning the salvation of men must be eternal, since a council of peace was held, a covenant of peace was made, a promise of life was given, persons were fixed upon to be saved, a Saviour was appointed for them, and grace, and the blessings of it were put into his hands before the world began.

Which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord; the constitution of it was in him; God was in Christ contriving the scheme of salvation; eye was upon him, his thoughts centred in him, in him are all his promises, and blessings of grace designed and provided for his people; and the execution of this purpose is by him; though some refer this clause to the church in (⁴⁹Ephesians 3:10) which he has made in Christ, or by Christ, has built upon him, and united to him; and others, to the manifold wisdom of God displayed in Christ, who is the wisdom of God, and in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid.

Ver. 12. *In whom we have boldness and access*, &c.] Into the holy of holies, to the throne of grace there, and to God the Father, as seated on it: Christ is the way of access; union to him gives right of access; through his mediation his people have audience of God, and acceptance with him, both of person and service: and this access is with boldness; which denotes liberty of coming, granted by God, and a liberty in their own souls to speak out their minds plainly and freely; and an holy courage and intrepidity of soul, being free from servile fear, or a spirit of bondage; which is owing to the heart being sprinkled from an evil conscience, to an act of faith, on the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, and to a view of God, as a God of peace, grace and mercy: and this access may be had

with confidence by the faith of him; with confidence of interest in the everlasting love of God; of relation to him, as a covenant God and Father; of his power, faithfulness, and willingness to fulfil his promises; of his hearing and answering prayer; of the fulness of Christ, the prevalence of his mediation, and of the acceptance of persons and performances through him; and of the work of grace being carried on till the day of Christ; and of entrance at last into the heavenly glory: and this access is not local but spiritual; it is by faith, and so is peculiar to believers; and the confidence with which it may be had, arises from its being by the faith of Christ; not that faith which Christ himself had, and exercised as man, but that of which he is both the object and author; or that by which souls believe in him for

acceptance, for righteousness, for pardon, for every supply of grace, and for eternal life and happiness.

Ver. 13. *Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you*, &c.] The apostle was a man attended with many tribulations, and great afflictions, which he did not suffer as an evildoer, either from God or men; wherefore he was not ashamed of them, but gloried in them; yea, he took pleasure in them, having much of the presence of God in them; they did not come to him unawares, he always expected them, and was helped to look to the glory which should follow them, the view of which greatly supported him under them; and these tribulations were endured for the sake of the elect, for Christ's body's sake; the church, and among others, for the Ephesians, for the sake of preaching the Gospel among them, and for the confirmation of their faith in it; and yet they were a stumbling to them, they were ready to faint at them; but he desires they would not, since they were on account of the Gospel, which he had such a distinct knowledge of, and so clear a call to; and since they were for their sakes, and since he and they had such nearness of access to God by the faith of Christ, with so much boldness and confidence; and seeing also they turned to their account: which is your glory; meaning either that it was matter of glorying to them, and what they might boast of, that the apostle's afflictions were not for any crime that was found in him, but for preaching the Gospel to them, and that it was an honour to suffer in such a cause; or that their perseverance and constancy in the doctrines of the Gospel, notwithstanding the scandal of the cross, would be an honour to them.

Ver. 14. *For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father*, &c.] That is, pray unto him for the perseverance of the saints; for nothing is more desirable to the ministers of Christ than that; which is the pure gift of God, and is what he has promised, and therefore should be prayed to for it; for what God has designed and promised to his people, he will be sought to; and the apostle's view might be also to stir up these saints to pray for themselves: the gesture he used in prayer was bowing the knees; a man is not tied to any particular gesture or posture in prayer, the main thing is the heart; mere postures and gestures are insignificant things with God; though where the mind is affected, the body will be moved; and this gesture may be expressive of reverence, humility, and submission in prayer: the object he prayed unto is the Father; that is, as follows,

of our Lord Jesus; though these words are wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and Ethiopic version, yet are rightly retained in others; for God is the Father of Christ, not by creation, nor adoption, but by generation, being the only begotten of the Father; and as such he is rightly prayed to, since not only Christ prayed to him as such; but he is the Father of his people in and through Christ; and there is no other way of coming to him but by Christ; and all spiritual blessings come though Christ, and from God, as the Father of Christ.

Ver. 15. *Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named*.] This may refer either to God, the Father of Christ; who is the Father of the whole family in heaven and in earth; not only the Father of Christ, but the Father of spirits, of angelic spirits, as well as of the souls of men; and the Father of all the saints by adopting grace, whether above or below; they are all the household of God: or else to Jesus Christ, who is the everlasting Father, the Son over his own house, and the firstborn among many brethren: and this family consists either of elect angels and elect men, who are both under one head, Christ, and are in one family, only with this difference, the one are servants, the other sons; or else only of elect men, of saints in heaven and in earth, who all make up but one family; and that part of it, which is on earth, consists of persons of various sizes and growth, as fathers, young men, and children, though they are all the children of God, and partake of the same privileges: and this family is named of Christ; they are called Christians from him, and he is the master and governor of them; they have their laws, directions, and instructions from him; and he is the great provider for them, and the support of them; they have their food and clothing from him, as well as are called by his name. Frequent mention is made in the Jewish writings [f38] of the family of the holy angels, and of the family above, and the family below, to which here may be some reference.

Ver. 16. *That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory*, &c.] Or according to, and out of that rich, plenteous, and glorious fulness of grace and strength in Christ Jesus.

To be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; this is the petition which the apostle puts up on his bended knees to the Father of Christ, that he would strengthen these saints, that so they might not faint at the tribulations which either he or they endured. Believers in Christ need fresh supplies of strength to enable them to exercise grace, to perform

duties, to resist Satan and his temptations, to oppose their corruptions, and to bear the cross, and undergo afflictions cheerfully, and to hold on and out to the end: this is a blessing that comes from God, and is a gift of his free grace; a "grant" from him who is the strength of the lives of his people, of their salvation, of their hearts, and of the work of grace in their hearts: the means whereby the saints are strengthened by God, is "his Spirit"; who strengthens them by leading them to the fulness of grace and strength in Christ, by shedding abroad the love of God in their hearts, by applying the promises of the Gospel to them, and by making the Gospel itself, and the ordinances of it, useful to them, causing them to go from strength to strength in them: the subject of this blessing is the "inner man", or the Spirit, or soul of man, which is the seat of grace; and this shows that this was spiritual strength which is here desired, which may be where there is much bodily weakness, and for which there should be the greatest concern; and that this strength is not naturally there, it must be given, or put into it. This last phrase,

in the inner man, is joined to the beginning of the next verse in the Arabic, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, "in the inner man Christ may dwell", &c.

Ver. 17. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith*, &c.] This is another petition put up by the apostle for the Ephesians, which is for the inhabitation of Christ in them: the inhabitant Christ is he who dwells in the highest heavens, who dwells in the Father, and the Father in him, in whom all fulness dwells, the fulness of the Godhead, and the fulness of grace; so that those in whose hearts he dwells cannot want any good thing, must be in the greatest safety, and enjoy the greatest comfort and pleasure; and this inhabitation of Christ prayed for is not to be understood in such sense, as he dwells everywhere, being the omnipresent God; or as he dwells in the human nature; nor of his dwelling merely by his Spirit, but of a personal indwelling of his; and which is an instance of his special grace: he dwells in his people, as a king in his palace, to rule and protect them, and as a master in his family to provide for them, and as their life to quicken them; it is in consequence of their union to him, and is expressive of their communion with him, and is perpetual; where he once takes up his residence, he never totally and finally departs: the place where he dwells is not their heads, nor their tongues, but their hearts; and this is where no good thing dwells but himself and his grace; and where sin dwells, and where he is often slighted, opposed, and rebelled against: the means by which he dwells is faith; which is not the bond of union to Christ, nor the cause of his being and dwelling

in the hearts of his people; but is the instrument or means by which they receive him, and retain him, and by which they have communion with him:

that ye being rooted and grounded in love; either in love to God, and one another; for faith and love go together; and love is sometimes weak, and needs establishing; and what serves to root and ground persons in it, are the discoveries of God's love, views of Christ's loveliness, the consideration of blessings received, and the communion they have with God, and Christ, and one another, and a larger insight into the doctrines of the Gospel: or rather in the love of God to them; which is the root and foundation of salvation; this is in itself immovable and immutable; but saints have not always the manifestations of it, and sometimes call it in question, and have need to be rooted and grounded in it; which is to have a lively sense of it, and to be persuaded of interest in it, and that nothing shall be able to separate from it.

Ver. 18. *May be able to comprehend with all saints*, &c.] This is the end of their being rooted and grounded in love, that they, together with the rest of the saints interested in it, might have a larger and more comprehensive view of

what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; not of God himself, who is incomprehensible by finite minds, and is not to be found out to perfection; (see <18107>Job 11:7-9) but either of the great mystery of salvation, particularly the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles mentioned in the beginning of the chapter; or of the spiritual building, the church, the dimensions of which are given, (<66215>Revelation 21:15,16) or rather of the love of God, which in its length reaches from one eternity to another; in its breadth to all the elect, in all ages, places, and nations; and in its depth to saints in the lowest state of life; and in its height to bring them to an exalted state in glory.

Ver. 19. *And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge*, &c.] The love of Christ to his own, to his church and people, is special and peculiar; free and Sovereign; as early as his Father's love, and is durable and unchangeable; the greatest love that ever was heard of; it is matchless and unparalleled; it is exceeding strong and affectionate, and is wonderful and surprising: the instances of it are, his engaging as a surety for them; his espousing both their persons and their cause; his assumption of their nature; his dying in their room and stead; his payment of their debts, atoning for their sins, and bringing in for them an everlasting righteousness;

his going to prepare a place for them in heaven; his intercession for them there; his constant supply of all their wants, and the freedom and familiarity he uses them with. The saints have some knowledge of this love, some tastes of it; their knowledge is a feeling and experimental one, fiducial and appropriating, and what influences their faith, and love, and cheerful obedience, but it is but imperfect; though the knowledge they have of it is supereminent, it exceeds all other knowledge, yet this love passes knowledge; not only the knowledge of natural men, who know nothing of it, but the perfect knowledge of saints themselves, in the present life, and of angels also, who desire to look into it, and the mysteries of it; and especially it is so as to some instances of it, such as the incarnation of Christ, his becoming poor who was Lord of all, being made sin, and a curse, and suffering, the just for the unjust. Now the apostle prays, that these saints might know more of this love; that their knowledge, which was imperfect, might be progressive.

That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God; this is the last petition, and is to be understood, not of a full comprehension of the divine Being, nor of a communication of his divine perfections, nor of having in them the fulness of grace, which it has pleased God should dwell in Christ; but either of that fulness of good things, which they may receive from God in this life; as to be filled with a sense of the love and grace of God; with satisfying views of interest in the righteousness of Christ; with the Spirit, and the gifts and graces thereof; with full provisions of food for their souls; with spiritual peace, joy, and comfort; with knowledge of divine things, of God in Christ, of Christ, of the Gospel, and of the will of God; and with all the fruits or righteousness, or good works springing from grace; or else of that fulness which they shall receive hereafter, even complete holiness, perfection of knowledge, fulness of joy and peace, entire conformity to God and Christ, and everlasting communion with them.

Ver. 20. *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly*, &c.] This is the conclusion of the apostle's prayer, in which the power of God is celebrated, a perfection which is essential unto God, and is very large and extensive; it reaches to all things, to every thing that he wills, which is his actual or ordinative power; and to more things than he has willed, which is his absolute power; and to all things that have been, are, or shall be, and to things impossible with men; though there are some things which God cannot do, such as are contrary to his nature, inconsistent with his will, his

decrees and purposes, which imply a contradiction, and are foreign to truth, which to do would be to deny himself: but then he can do

above all that we ask or think; he can do more than men ask for, as he did for Solomon: God knows what we want before we ask, and he has made provisions for his people before they ask for them; some of which things we never could, and others we never should have asked for, if he had not provided them; and without the Spirit of God we know not what to ask for, nor how to ask aright; this affords great encouragement to go to God, and ask such things of him as we want, and he has provided; and who also can do more than we can think, imagine, or conceive in our minds.

According to the power that worketh in us: either in believers in common, meaning the Spirit of God, who is the finger and power of God, who begins, and carries on, and will finish the work of grace in them, and which is an evidence of the exceeding greatness of the power of God; or in the apostles in particular, in fitting and furnishing them for their work, and succeeding them in it; which is another proof and demonstration of the abundant power of God, and shows what he can do if he pleases.

Ver. 21. *Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus*, &c.] This is a doxology, or an ascription of glory to God, with which the apostle concludes his prayer; glory is to be given to God on account of his perfections, which are to be celebrated; and on account of the works of creation and Providence, which are to be commended and acquiesced in; and on account of temporal mercies, for which thanks should be given; and especially for spiritual mercies, and above all for Jesus Christ: the glory of salvation, from first to last, is to be ascribed to his free grace; and his worship is to be regarded and constantly attended on; faith is to be exercised on him, as a promising and covenant keeping God; and our lives and conversations are to be ordered aright according to his word; and we are cheerfully and patiently to suffer for his cause and interest, in all which instances he is glorified: and the place where this glory is to be given, is the “church”; for the church, and true believers, only know the blessings and mysteries of divine grace; and they only know how to glorify God aright; and besides, glory must be given to God by believers, not only separately and apart, but conjunctly and together, in a church state; because there the Lord appears glorious, grants his presence, and displays his mighty grace: and this is to be done by “Christ Jesus”, or “in” him; and may refer either to the church, which is in Christ; or to him as the medium by whom praise

and glory are to be given to God; for all blessings are in Christ, and come to us through him, and he is the only way of access to God; nor can our praises and thanksgivings be acceptable unto God, but through him: and this glory is to be given

throughout all ages, world without end, Amen; for the church will abide for ever, in which it is to be given; the blessings of grace will be for ever dispensing, for which it is to be given; and Jesus Christ, the Mediator, will continue for evermore, by whom it is given: to all which is added the word “Amen”, signifying his wish, that so it might be, and his faith, that so it would be.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS 4

The apostle having in the three former chapters treated of the doctrines of grace, and explained and established them, proceeds in the three following to exhort to the duties of religion; and in this advises to a becoming conversation in general, and to brotherly concord and unity in particular; and dehorts from several vices, and encourages to the contrary virtues. And inasmuch as these Ephesians were called with an holy calling, he entreats them, if they had any regard for him as a prisoner of Christ, that they would walk worthy of it, (<4001>Ephesians 4:1), and directs to the manner in which they should act becoming it, with all humility, patience, forbearance, and love; seeking to preserve a spiritual harmony, unity, and peace, one among another, (<4002>Ephesians 4:2,3), for the encouragement of which, he makes use of various arguments, taken from the unity of the body, of which they were members; from their being quickened and influenced by one and the same Spirit; from having the same hope of eternal happiness, to which they were called; from their having one Lord over them, who is Christ; from their having the same like precious faith in him; from their being baptized with the same baptism in him; and from their having one, and the same God and Father, (<4004>Ephesians 4:4-6), and from all of them having gifts, though different, for mutual usefulness; which gifts are described by the author and donor of them, Christ, (<4007>Ephesians 4:7), which is proved (<4008>Ephesians 4:8), out of a passage in (<1968>Psalm 68:18), which is explained of the humiliation and exaltation of Christ, of his descent from heaven, and ascension thither; the end of which latter was to fill all things, or persons, with gifts, (<4009>Ephesians 4:9,10), of which a particular enumeration is given, (<4011>Ephesians 4:11), the design of which is, to fit men for the work of the ministry, and by them to convert sinners, and edify saints, (<4012>Ephesians 4:12), which ministry is to be continued, until all the saints arrive to a perfection of spiritual knowledge, and make up one perfect man, or body of men in Christ, (<4013>Ephesians 4:13), for the use and end of the Gospel ministry is not, that such who are converted by it should continue children, be in suspense about truth, and under the deceptions of men, (<4014>Ephesians 4:14), but that through speaking the

truth in love, they should grow up into Christ their head; from whom supplies of grace are communicated, for the increase and edification of every member of the body, (Ephesians 4:15,16), and seeing these Ephesians to whom the apostle writes were separated in the effectual calling from the rest of the Gentiles, they ought not to walk as the others did; whose minds were vain, their understandings darkened, and their hearts blinded, hardened, and ignorant; and had no sense of things, but were given up to all manner of wickedness, (Ephesians 4:17-19), whereas they had learned Christ, and through hearing had been taught the truth of the Gospel, as it was in him, (Ephesians 4:20,21), wherefore it became them in their conversation, not to follow the dictates of corrupt nature, called the old man, that being full of lusts, corrupt, and deceitful, but to act becoming the renewing work of the Spirit upon their souls, and agreeably to the new principles of the grace of God created in them, in order to righteousness and holiness, (Ephesians 4:22-24), and in particular it became them to avoid lying, and on the contrary to speak truth to one another; and that for this reason, because they were members of the same body, and of one another, (Ephesians 4:25), and likewise to abstain from sinful anger, and not continue a wrathful disposition, (Ephesians 4:26), nor was it advisable to yield to the suggestions, solicitations, and temptations of Satan, (Ephesians 4:27), nor to commit theft, but on the other hand give themselves to manual labour at some commendable calling, that they might have for their own use, and others too, (Ephesians 4:28), and it was also right to be careful not to suffer corrupt and unchaste words to come out of their mouths, but such as would be grateful and useful to others, (Ephesians 4:29), and the rather this, and all the rest of the things mentioned, and likewise what follows, should be attended to; since by such evil lusts, words, and actions, the Holy Spirit of God is grieved, who should not, since he is the sealer of the saints unto the day of redemption, (Ephesians 4:30). And the chapter is concluded with a dehortation from several vices of the mind and tongue, respecting wrath and revenge; and an exhortation to the contrary virtues, kindness, tenderness, and forgiveness; to which encouragement is given, by the example of God, who forgives for Christ's sake, (Ephesians 4:31,32).

Ver. 1. *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you*, &c.] Or “in the Lord”; that is, for the Lord's sake; (See Gill on “Ephesians 3:1”). Some connect this phrase, “in the Lord”, with the following word, “beseech”: as

if the sense was, that the apostle entreated the believing Ephesians, in the name of the Lord, and for his sake, to take heed to their walk and conversation, that it be as became the calling by grace, and to glory, with which they were called: and this exhortation he enforces from the consideration of the state and condition in which he was, a prisoner, not for any wickedness he had been guilty of, but for the Lord's sake, which seems to be the true sense of the word; and that, if they would not add afflictions to his bonds, as some professors by their walk did, he beseeches them, as an ambassador in bonds, that they would attend to what he was about to say; and the rather, since such doctrines of grace had been made known to them, which have a tendency to promote powerful godliness; and since they were made partakers of such privileges as laid them under the greatest obligation to duty, which were made mention of in the preceding chapters.

That ye walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye are called; by which is meant, not that private and peculiar state and condition of life, that the saints are called to, and in: but that calling, by the grace of God, which is common to them all; and is not a mere outward call by the ministry of the word, with which men may be called, and not be chosen, sanctified, and saved; but that which is internal, and is of special grace, and by the Spirit of God; by whom they are called out of darkness into light, out of bondage into liberty, out of the world, and from the company and conversation of the men of it, into the fellowship of Christ, and his people, to the participation of the grace of Christ here, and to his kingdom and glory hereafter; and which call is powerful, efficacious, yea, irresistible; and being once made is unchangeable, and without repentance, and is holy, high, and heavenly. Now to walk worthy of it, or suitable to it, is to walk as children of the light; to walk in the liberty wherewith Christ and his Spirit make them free; to walk by faith on Christ; and to walk in the ways of God, with Christ, the mark, in their view, and with the staff of promises in their hands; and to walk on constantly, to go forwards and hold out unto the end: for this walking, though it refers to a holy life and conversation, a series of good works, yet it does not suppose that these merit calling; rather the contrary, since these follow upon it; and that is used as an argument to excite unto them: but the phrase is expressive of a fitness, suitableness, and agreeableness of a walk and conversation to such rich grace, and so high an honour conferred on saints.

Ver. 2. *With all lowliness and meekness*, &c.]. In the exercise of humility, which shows itself in believers, in entertaining and expressing the meanest

thoughts of themselves, and the best of others; in not envying the gifts and graces of others, but rejoicing at them, and at every increase of them; in a willingness to receive instruction from the meanest saints; in submission to the will of God in all adverse dispensations of Providence; and in ascribing all they have, and are, to the grace of God: and so to behave, is to walk agreeably to their calling of God; and what the consideration of that may engage them to, when they serve the low estate and condition out of which they are called, in which they were before calling: and that in effectual calling they have nothing but what they have received; and that others are called with the same calling that they are: and to walk humbly before God and man, is to walk according to the will of God that calls; and it is walking as Christ walked, who is meek, and lowly; and is agreeable to the blessed Spirit, one of whose fruits is meekness; and is what is very ornamental to the saints, and is well pleasing in the sight of God.

With longsuffering; bearing much and long with the infirmities of each other; without being easily provoked to anger by any ill usage; and not immediately meditating and seeking revenge for every affront given, or injury done; and so to walk, is to walk worthy of the grace of calling, or agreeable to it, to God that calls by his grace, who is longsuffering both with wicked men, and with his own people.

Forbearing one another in love; overlooking the infirmities of one another, forgiving injuries done, sympathizing with, and assisting each other in distressed circumstances, the spring of all which should be love; by that saints should be moved, influenced, and engaged to such a conduct, and which should be so far attended to, as is consistent with love; for so to forbear one another, as to suffer sin to be on each other, without proper, gentle, and faithful rebukes for it, is not to act in love.

Ver. 3. *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit*, &c.] That is, a spiritual union: there is an union between God and his people, and between Christ and his members, and between saints and saints, and the bond of each union is love; and that it is which knits and cements them together; and it is the last of these which is here intended: the saints are united under one head, and are members of one and the same body, and should be of the same mind and judgment, and of one accord, heart, and affection: and this may be called “the unity of the Spirit”; because it is an union of spirits, of the spirits or souls of men; and that in spiritual affairs, in the spiritual exercises of religion; and it is effected by the Spirit of God, by whom they

are baptized into one body. Now to endeavour or study to keep and preserve this, supposes that this union does already exist; that it is very valuable, as making much for the glory of God, the mutual comfort and delight of saints, and is worth taking some pains about; and that it is very difficult to secure, there being so many things which frequently arise, and break in upon it, through the devices of Satan, and the corruptions of men's hearts: but though it is difficult, and may sometimes seem to be impossible, yet it becomes the saints to be diligent in the use of means to keep it up, and continue it; and which they may be said to endeavour after, when they abide with one another, and do not forsake each other upon every occasion; when they perform all offices of love to one another, and stir up each other to the like: and the way and manner in which this is to be kept, is

in the bond of peace: the Arabic version reads, “by the bond of love and peace”: by maintaining peace among themselves, and seeking those things which tend to, and make for peace, and spiritual edification; and which is called a bond, in allusion to the Greek word used, which comes from one that signifies to knit, join, and bind together, and because it is of a knitting and uniting nature. Now so to act is to walk worthy of calling grace, or agreeably to it: peace is what the saints are called unto in the effectual calling: and what is suitable to God, who is the God of peace; and to Christ, who is the Prince of peace; and to the Holy Spirit, whose fruit is peace; and to the Gospel, which is the Gospel of peace; and to the character which the saints bear, which is that of sons of peace.

Ver. 4. *There is one body*, &c.] The church; in what sense that is a body, and compared to one, (See Gill on “Ephesians 1:23”). It is called “one” with relation to Jews and Gentiles, who are of the same body, and are reconciled in one body by Christ, and are baptized into it by the Spirit; and with respect to saints above and saints below, who make up one general assembly; and with regard to separate societies; for though there are several particular congregations, yet there is but one church of the firstboro, whose names are written in heaven; and saints of different ages, places, states, and conditions, are all one in Christ Jesus, who is the one, and only head of this body: and this is an argument to excite the saints to unity of Spirit; since they are, as one natural body is, members one of another, and therefore should not bite and devour one another; they are one political body, one kingdom, over which Christ is sole King and lawgiver, and a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand; they are one

economical body, one family, they are all brethren, and should not fall out by the way.

And one Spirit; the Holy Spirit of God, who animates, quickens, and actuates the body: there is but one Spirit, who convinces of sin, enlightens, regenerates, and makes alive; who incorporates into the body, the church; who comforts the saints; helps them in their access to God through Christ; makes known the things of Christ to them, is a spirit of adoption, and the seal and earnest of the heavenly glory; and the consideration of this should engage to unity, because a contrary conduct must be grieving to the Spirit of God, unsuitable to his genuine fruits, and very unlike the true spirit of a Christian: and by one spirit may be meant the spirit of themselves, who, as the first Christians were, should be of one heart, and of one soul, of the same mind, and having the same affections for one another; which sense is favoured by the Syriac and Arabic versions; the former rendering the words, “that ye may be one body and one spirit”, making this to be the issue and effect of their endeavours after union and peace; and the latter reads them as an exhortation, “be ye one body and one spirit”; that is, be ye cordially and heartily united in your affections to one another:

even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; that is, the glory hoped for, and which is laid up in heaven, and will be enjoyed there, to which the saints are called in the effectual calling, is one and the same: there are no degrees in it; it will be equally possessed by them all; for they are all loved with the same love, chosen in the same head, and secured in the same covenant; they are bought with the same price of Christ's blood, and are justified by the same righteousness; they are all equally the sons of God, and so heirs of the same heavenly inheritance; and are all made kings and priests unto God, and there is but one kingdom, one crown, one inheritance for them all; and the holiness and beatific vision of the saints in heaven will be alike; and therefore they should be heartily affected to one another here on earth, who are to be partners together in glory to all eternity. So the Jews say [f39], that in the world of souls, all, small and great, stand before the Lord; and they have a standing alike; for in the affairs of the soul, it is fit that they should be all µywç, “equal”, as it is said (<2Cor 8:15>Exodus 30:15), “the rich shall not give more”.

Ver. 5. *One Lord*, &c.] The Lord Jesus Christ, who, by right of creation, is Lord of all; and by right of marriage, and redemption, is the one and only Lord of his church and people; he has betrothed them to himself, and is

their husband, and so their Lord, whom they are to worship and obey; he has redeemed them, he has bought them with the price of his blood, and therefore they are not their own, but his, and should glorify him both with their bodies and souls, which are his; he is the head of his body the church, the King of saints, and Father and master of the family named of him, and therefore they ought to agree among themselves, and not be many masters, and usurp a domination over one another. The Ethiopic version reads, “one God”, but that is expressed in the following verse.

One faith; there is but one grace of faith; there are indeed different sorts of faith; there is the faith of miracles, and an historical, temporary faith, but there is but one true grace of faith; and which, though it is in different subjects, and its degrees and acts are various, yet as to its nature, it is like precious faith in all; and has the same author and object, Jesus Christ, and springs from the same cause, the free grace of God, and has equally in all everlasting salvation connected with it, and consequent upon it: and there is but one doctrine of faith; the Gospel is so called, because it consists of things to be believed, is the means of implanting faith, it proposes the object to be believed in, and requires the exercise of it upon it, and should be mixed with faith whenever heard. Now this is but one, and is all of a piece, and consistent with itself, and so should the professors of it be, and love one another in the faith.

One baptism, there were divers baptisms under the law, but there is but one baptism under the Gospel; for John's and Christ's are the same: there are, besides, figurative or metaphorical ones, which are so in an improper sense, as the baptism of the Spirit, and the baptism of blood, or of sufferings; but there is but one baptism, literally and properly so called, which is water baptism; and which is to be administered in one and the same way, by immersion in water; and on one and the same subjects, believers in Christ; and in one and the same name, the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and to be performed but once, when rightly administered.

Ver. 6. *One God and Father of all*, &c.] That there is but one God is the voice of nature and of revelation; and may be concluded from the perfections of deity, for there can be but one eternal, infinite, immense, omnipotent, all-sufficient, perfect, and independent Being; and from one first cause of all things, and the relations he stands in to his creatures: there is but one God, who is truly, and really, and properly God, in opposition to

all nominal and figurative deities, and which are not gods by nature, and to the fictitious deities and idols of the nations; and there is but one God of Jews and Gentiles; nor is the unity of the Godhead inconsistent with a trinity of persons in it: and this one God is the Father of all; the Father of all mercies, and of all spirits, both angels and souls of men; and he is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of all the elect in him: and seeing that they have all one covenant God and Father, who has predestinated them to the adoption of children, and who has put them among the children, and adopted them into his family, and stand in the same relation to him, and enjoy the same privileges, they ought to love as brethren:

who is above all; which may denote the superior excellency of his nature, not above his Son and Spirit, who are of the same nature with him, but above angels and men; and the extensiveness of his government, over all creatures in general, and over his church and people in particular:

and through all; the Arabic version renders it, “taking care of all”; which may have respect to his providence, which is either universal, and reaches to all creatures his hands have made; or special, and concerns his own chosen people, who belong to his family, and to whom he stands in the relation of a covenant God and Father: or this clause may refer to the perfections of his nature, which appear through the whole of the salvation of all the chosen ones; as his wisdom, love, grace, mercy, justice, holiness, truth, and faithfulness:

and in you all; which is to be understood, not of his being in his creatures, by his powerful presence, which is everywhere supporting them; but of the gracious union there is between him and his people, and of his gracious inhabitation in them by his Spirit. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, the Complutensian edition, and some copies, read, “in us all”; and the Alexandrian copy, and the Ethiopic version, read only, “in all”.

Ver. 7. *But unto everyone of us is given grace*, &c.] Which may refer to the saints in common, and may be interpreted of justifying, pardoning, adopting, sanctifying, and persevering grace, bestowed upon them all, freely and liberally, not grudgingly, nor niggardly, and without motive and condition in them; or to the ministers of the Gospel, and so design gifts fitting for the ministry, which every one has, though differing one from another, and all of free grace:

according to the measure of the gift of Christ: either according to the gift of grace to Christ before the world began, and the measure of it, which he communicates to them in time, even grace for grace; or according to that measure of gifts which Christ received from men at his ascension: it may be observed that every member of Christ, and minister of his, receive more or less grace and gifts from him; and that what they receive is all of free grace, and in measure; and though they may have gifts differing one from another, yet all are useful; so that there is no room for pride, envy, and contempt, which would break in upon the unity of the Spirit; for what is said from (<4003>Ephesians 4:3) contains so many arguments to stir up the saints to endeavour to preserve that.

Ver. 8. *Wherefore he saith*, &c.] God in the Scripture, (<1968>Psalm 68:18)

when he ascended up on high; which is not to be understood of Moses's ascending up to the firmament at the giving of the law, as some Jewish writers [f40] interpret it; for though Moses ascended to the top of Mount Sinai, yet it is never said that he went up to the firmament of heaven; nor of David's going up to the high fortresses of his enemies, as another of those writers [f41] would have it; nor of God's ascent from Mount Sinai, when he gave the law, of which there is no mention in Scripture; but of the Messiah's ascension to heaven, which may very well be signified by this phrase, “on high”; (see <1902>Psalm 102:19) (<2425>Jeremiah 25:30), and which ascension is to be taken not in a figurative, but literal sense, and as real, local, and visible, as Christ's ascension to heaven was; being from Mount Olivet, attended by angels, in the sight of his apostles, after he had conversed with them from the time of his resurrection forty days; and which ascension of his was in order to fulfil the type of the high priest entering into the most holy place; and to make intercession for his people, and to send down the Spirit with his gifts and graces to them, and to make way and prepare mansions of glory for them, and receive the glory promised and due to him: in the Hebrew text it is, “thou hast ascended”; there the psalmist speaks to the Messiah, here the apostle speaks of him; though the Arabic and Ethiopic read there, “he ascended”, as here:

he led captivity captive; which is expressive of Christ's conquests and triumph over sin, Satan, the world, death, and the grave; and indeed, every spiritual enemy of his and his people, especially the devil, who leads men captive at his will, and is therefore called captivity, and his principalities and powers, whom Christ has spoiled and triumphed over; the allusion is to

the public triumphs of the Romans, in which captives were led in chains, and exposed to open view [f42]:

and gave gifts unto men; meaning the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and particularly such as qualify men for the work of the ministry; these he received µdab, "in man"; in human nature, in that nature in which he ascended to heaven; hl[ml [wdyh µdab, "in the man that is known above" [f43], as say the Jews; and these he bestows on men, even rebellious ones, that the Lord God might dwell among them, and make them useful to others: wherefore the Jews have no reason to quarrel with the version of the apostle as they do [f44]; who, instead of "received gifts for" men, renders it, "gave gifts to men"; since the Messiah received in order to give, and gives in consequence of his having received them; and so Jarchi interprets the words, µttl, "to give them" to the children of men; and besides, as a learned man has observed [f45], one and the same Hebrew word signifies to give and to receive; to which may be added that their own Targum renders it atbhy, "and hast given gifts to the children of men"; and in like manner the Syriac and Arabic versions of (<19818>Psalm 68:18) render the words; very likely the apostle might use the Syriac version, which is a very ancient one: it was customary at triumphs to give gifts to the soldiers [f46], to which there is an allusion here.

Ver. 9. *Now that he ascended*, &c.] These words are a conclusion of Christ's descent from heaven, from his ascension thither; for had he not first descended from thence, it could not have been said of him that he ascended; for no man hath ascended to heaven but he that came down from heaven, (<43013>John 3:13) and they are also an explanation of the sense of the psalmist in the above citation, which takes in his humiliation as well as his exaltation; which humiliation is signified by his descent into the earth:

what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? this the Papists understand of his decent into a place they call Limbus Patrum, which they make to be contiguous to hell; and where they say the patriarchs were detained till Christ's coming; and that he went thither to deliver them out of it; and that these are the captivity he led captive; all which is fictitious and fabulous: for certain it is, that the place where Abraham was with Lazarus in his bosom was not near to hell, but afar off, and that there was a great gulf between them, (<42623>Luke 16:23,26) and the spirits or souls of the patriarchs returned to God that gave them, when

separated from their bodies, as the souls of men do now, (Ecclesiastes 12:7) nor did Christ enter any such feigned place at his death, but went to paradise, where the penitent thief was that day with him; nor were the patriarchs, but the principalities and powers Christ spoiled, the captivity he led captive and triumphed over: some interpret this of Christ's descent into hell, which must be understood not locally, but of his enduring the wrath of God for sin, which was equivalent to the torments of hell, and of his being in the state of the dead; but it may rather design the whole of his humiliation, as his descent from heaven and incarnation in the virgin's womb, where his human nature was curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth; and his humbling himself and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, when he was made sin and a curse for his people, and bore all the punishment due to their transgressions; and his being in Hades, in the state of the dead, in the grave, in the heart of the earth, as Jonah in the whale's belly: reference seems to be had to (Psalm 139:15) where “the lower parts of the earth”, is interpreted by the Targum on the place of amad asyrk, “his mother's womb”; and so it is by Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melec. The Alexandrian copy and the Ethiopic version leave out the word “first” in this clause.

Ver. 10. *He that descended is the same also that ascended*, &c.] It was the same divine Person, the Son of God, who assumed human nature, and suffered in it, which is meant by his descent, who in that nature ascended up to heaven: this proves that Christ existed before he took flesh of the virgin; and that though he has two natures, yet he is but one person; and disproves the Popish notion of the descent of Christ's soul into Limbus or hell, locally taken: and this ascension of his was,

up far above all heavens: the visible heavens, the airy and starry heavens; Christ ascended far above these, and went into the third heaven, the holiest of all; and this is expressive of the exaltation of Christ, who is made higher than the heavens; and the end of his ascension was,

that he might fill all things, or “fulfil all things”; that were types of him, or predicted concerning him; that as he had fulfilled many things already by his incarnation doctrine, miracles, obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead; so he ascended on high that he might accomplish what was foretold concerning his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, and answer to the type of the high priest's entering once a year into the holiest of all: or that he might complete,

perfect, and fill up all his offices; as the remainder of his priestly office, his intercession for his people; and more finally his prophetic office by the effusion of his Spirit; and more visibly his kingly office, by sending forth the rod of his strength out of Zion, and subduing the people under him: or that he might fill all places; as God he fills all places at once being infinite, immense, and omnipresent; as man, one after another; at his incarnation he dwelt with men on earth at his crucifixion he was lifted up between heaven and earth; at his death he descended into the lower parts of the earth, into hell, “Hades”, or the grave; and at his resurrection stood upon the earth again, and had all power in heaven and in earth given him; and at his ascension he went through the airy and starry heavens, into the highest heaven; and so successively was in all places: or rather that he might fill all persons, all his elect, both Jews and Gentiles; and so the Arabic version renders it, “that he might fill all creatures”; as the Gentiles were called; particularly that he might fill each and everyone of his people with his grace and righteousness, with his Spirit, and the fruits of it, with spiritual knowledge and understanding, with food and gladness, with peace, joy and comfort; and all his churches with his gracious presence, and with officers and members, and all with gifts and graces suitable to their several stations and work.

Ver. 11. *And he gave some apostles*, &c.] That is, he gave them gifts by which they were qualified to be apostles; who were such as were immediately called by Christ, and had their doctrine from him, and their commission to preach it; and were peculiarly and infallibly guided by the Spirit of God, and had a power to work miracles for the confirmation of their doctrine; and had authority to go everywhere and preach the Gospel, and plant churches, and were not confined to anyone particular place or church; this was the first and chief office in the church, and of an extraordinary kind, and is now ceased; and though the apostles were before Christ's ascension, yet they had not received till then the fulness of the Spirit, and his extraordinary gifts to fit them for their office; nor did they enter upon the discharge of it in its large extent till that time; for they were not only to bear witness of Christ in Jerusalem, in Judea and Samaria, but in the uttermost parts of the earth:

and some prophets; by whom are meant, not private members of churches, who may all prophesy or teach in a private way; nor ordinary ministers of the word; but extraordinary ones, who had a peculiar gift of interpreting the Scriptures, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and of foretelling

things to come; such were Agabus and others in the church of Antioch, (<44 11 27>Acts 11:27 13:1)

and some evangelists; by whom are designed, not so much the writers of the Gospels, as Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, some of which were also apostles; as preachers of the Gospel, and who yet were distinct from the ordinary ministers of it; they were below the apostles, and yet above pastors and teachers; they were the companions of the apostles, and assistants to them, and subserved them in their work; such were Philip, Luke, Titus, Timothy, and others; these were not fixed and stated ministers in anyone place, as the following officers be, but were sent here and there as the apostles thought fit:

and some pastors and teachers, or doctors; these may be thought to differ, but not so much on account of the place where they perform their work, the one in the church, the other in the school; nor on account of the different subject of their ministry, the one attending to practical, the other to doctrinal points; but whereas the pastors are the shepherds of the flock, the overseers of it, and the same with the bishops and elders, and the teachers may be the gifted brethren in the church, assistants to the pastors, bare ministers of the word; so the difference lies here, that the one has the oversight, and care, and charge of the church, and the other not; the one can administer all ordinances, the other not; the one is fixed and tied to some certain church, the other not: though I rather think they intend one and the same office, and that the word "teachers" is only explanative of the figurative word "pastors" or shepherds; and the rather because if the apostle had designed distinct officers, he would have used the same form of speaking as before; and have expressed himself thus, "and some pastors, and some teachers"; whereas he does not make such a distribution here as there; though the Syriac version reads this clause distributively as the others; and among the Jews there were the singular men or wise men, and the disciples of the wise men, who were their companions and assistants; and it is asked [f47],

> "who is a singular man? and who is a disciple? a singular man is everyone that is fit to be appointed a pastor or governor of a congregation; and a disciple is one, that when he is questioned about any point in his doctrine, gives an answer:"

wherefore if these two, pastors and teachers, are different, it might be thought there is some reference to this distinction, and that pastors answer

to the wise men, and teachers to their disciples or assistants; and so Kimchi in (Jeremiah 3:15) interprets the pastors there of lrçyd µysnrp, "the pastors of Israel", which shall be with the King Messiah, as is said in (Micah 5:5) and undoubtedly Gospel ministers are meant: from the whole it may be observed, that as there have been various officers and offices in the Gospel dispensation, various gifts have been bestowed; and these are the gifts of Christ, which he has received for men, and gives unto them; and hence it appears that the work of the ministry is not an human invention, but the appointment of Christ, for which he fits and qualifies, and therefore to be regarded; and that they only are the ministers of Christ, whom he makes ministers of the New Testament, and not whom men or themselves make and appoint.

Ver. 12. *For the perfecting of the saints*, &c,] The chosen ones, whom God has sanctified or set apart for himself in eternal election: the ministry of the word is designed for the completing the number of these in the effectual calling; and for the perfecting of the whole body of the church, by gathering in all that belong to it, and of every particular saint, who is regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God: for the best of saints are imperfect; for though there is a perfection in them, as that designs sincerity, in opposition to hypocrisy, and as it may be taken comparatively with respect to what others are, or they themselves were; and though there is a perfection of parts of the new man in them, yet not of degrees; and though there is a complete perfection in Christ, yet not in themselves, their sanctification is imperfect, as their faith, knowledge, love, &c. sin is in them, and committed by them, and they continually want supplies of grace; and the best of them are sensible of their imperfection, and own it: now the ministration of the word is a means of carrying on the work of grace in them unto perfection, or "for the restoring or joining in of the saints"; the elect of God were disjointed in Adam's fall, and scattered abroad, who were representatively gathered together in one head, even in Christ, in redemption; and the word is the means of the visible and open jointing of them into Christ, and into his churches, and also of restoring them after backslidings:

for the work of the ministry; gifts are given unto men by Christ to qualify them for it: the preaching of the Gospel is a work, and a laborious one, and what no man is sufficient for of himself; it requires faithfulness, and is a good work, and when well performed, those concerned in it are worthy of

respect, esteem, and honour; and it is a ministering work, a service and not dominion:

for the edifying the body of Christ; not his natural body the Father prepared for him; nor his sacramental body in the supper; but his mystical body the church; and gifts are bestowed to fit them for the preaching of the Gospel, that hereby the church, which is compared to an edifice, might be built up; and that the several societies of Christians and particular believers might have spiritual edification, and walk in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and their numbers be increased, and their graces be in lively exercise.

Ver. 13. *Till we all come in the unity of the faith*, &c.] These words regard the continuance of the Gospel ministry in the church, until all the elect of God come in: or "to the unity of the faith"; by which is meant, not the union between the saints, the cement of which is love; nor that which is between Christ and his people, of which his love, and not their faith, is the bond; but the same with the "one faith", (<4405>Ephesians 4:5) and designs either the doctrine of faith, which is uniform, and all of a piece; and the sense is, that the ministration of the Gospel will continue until the saints entirely unite in their sentiments about it, and both watchmen and churches see eye to eye: or else the grace of faith, which as to its nature, object, author, spring, and cause, is the same; and it usually comes by hearing; and all God's elect shall have it; and the work and office of the ministry will remain until they are all brought to believe in Christ;

and of the knowledge of the Son of God; which is but another phrase for faith in Christ, for faith is a spiritual knowledge of Christ; it is that grace by which a soul beholds his glory and fulness, approves of him, trusts in him, and appropriates him to itself; and such an approbatory, fiducial, appropriating, practical, and experimental knowledge of Christ, is here intended; and which is imperfect in those that have it, and is not yet in many who will have it; and inasmuch as the Gospel ministry is the means of it, this will be continued until every elect soul partakes of it, and arrives to a greater perfection in it: for it follows,

unto a perfect man; meaning either Christ, who is in every sense a perfect man; his human nature is the greater and more perfect tabernacle, and he is perfectly free from sin, and has been made perfect through sufferings in it; and coming to him may be understood either of coming to him now by faith, which the Gospel ministry is the means of, and encourages to; or of

coming to him hereafter, for the saints will meet him, and be ever with him, and till that time the Gospel will be preached: or else the church, being a complete body with all its members, is designed; for when all the elect of God are gathered in and joined together, they will be as one man; or it may respect every individual believer, who though he is comparatively perfect, and with regard to parts, but not degrees, and as in Christ Jesus, yet is in himself imperfect in holiness and knowledge, though hereafter he will be perfect in both; when he comes

unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: not of Christ's natural body, but of his mystical body the church, which will be his fulness when all the elect are gathered in; and when they are filled with his gifts and graces, and are grown up to their proportion in it, they will be come to the measure and stature of it: or it may be understood of every particular believer, who has Christ formed in him; who when the work of grace is finished in him, will be a perfect man in Christ, and all this will be true of him; till which time, and during this imperfect state, the Gospel ministry will be maintained: the phrase is taken from the Jews, who among the forms and degrees of prophecy which the prophets arrived to, and had in them the vision of God and angels, make hmwq rw[ç, "the measure of the stature" [f48], a principal one; and is here used for the perfection of the heavenly state in the vision, and enjoyment of God and Christ.

Ver. 14. *That we henceforth be no more children*, &c.] Meaning not children of men, for grace does not destroy natural relations; nor children of God, which is a privilege, and always continues; nor indeed children of disobedience, though the saints cease to be such upon conversion; but in such sense children, as they were when first converted, newborn babes, little children: there are some things in which they should be children still, namely, with respect to an ardent and flaming love to God and Christ, and to the saints; and with regard to their eager desire after the sincere milk of the word; and as to pride, malice, envy, evil speakings, guile and hypocrisy; in these things it becomes them to be children: but not in understanding; they should not always remain ignorant, imprudent, or be always fed with milk, and not able to digest meat; nor be unable to go unless led, and be tender and incapable of bearing hardships for Christ and his Gospel, and of defending it, and his cause and interest; but should play the man, and quit themselves as such and be strong, which the Gospel ministry is a means of, and encourages to:

tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine; false doctrine, which may be compared to wind for its lightness and emptiness, and for its swelling and puffing nature, and for the noise and bluster it makes, and for its rapidity and force, with which it sometimes comes and bears all before it, and for its infectiousness, which is the nature of some winds; and to be tossed to and fro, and carried about with it, is expressive of much ignorance and want of a discerning spirit, and implies hesitation, and doubts and scruples, and shows credulity, fickleness, and inconstancy: and which is brought on

by the sleight of men; either through the uncertain and changeable state of things in life; the mind of man is fickle, the life of man is uncertain, and all the affairs of human nature are subject to change, by reason of which men are easily imposed upon; or rather through the tricking arts of false teachers; the word here used is adopted by the Jews into their language, and with them aybwq signifies the game at dice [f49]; and swjswybwq, is a gamester at that play, and is interpreted by them, one that steals souls [f50], and deceives and corrupts them; and may be filly applied to false teachers, who make use of such like artifices and juggling tricks, to deceive the hearts of the simple, as the others do to cheat men of their money: hence it follows,

and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; or "unto the deceitful methods or wiles of the devil", as the Alexandrian copy reads; which not only suggests that their principal end in view is to deceive, but their insidious, private, and secret way of deceiving, and their expertness in it, which they have from the devil; and now the ministration of the Gospel is the best and surest guard and antidote against such fluctuations and deceptions.

Ver. 15. *But speaking the truth in love*, &c.] Either Christ himself, who is the truth, and is to be preached, and always spoken of with strong affection and love; or the Gospel, the word of truth, so called in opposition to that which is false and fictitious; and also to the law, which is shadowish; and on account of its author, the God of truth, and its subject matter, Christ, and the several doctrines of grace; and because the spirit of truth has dictated it, and does direct to it, and owns and blesses it: this, with respect to the ministers of the Gospel, should be spoken openly, honestly, and sincerely, and in love to the souls of men, and in a way consistent with love, in opposition to the secret, ensnaring, and pernicious ways of false

teachers; and with respect to private Christians, as they are to receive it in love, so to speak of it to one another from a principle of love, and an affectionate concern for each other's welfare, to the end that they

may grow up into him in all things which is the head, even “Christ”: the work of grace upon the soul is a gradual work, and an increase of this in the exercise of faith, hope, love, and spiritual knowledge, is a growth; and this is a growth in all things, in all grace, as in those mentioned, so in others, as humility, patience, self-denial, resignation of the will to the will of God, and especially the knowledge of Christ; for it is a growing into him, from whom souls receive all their grace and increase of it; for he is the head of influence to supply them, as well as the head of eminence to protect them; (see <4012>Ephesians 1:22) and now the preaching of the Gospel, or the sincere speaking of the truth, is the instrumental means of such growth.

Ver. 16. *From whom the whole body fitly joined gether*, &c.] By which is meant, the church; (see <4012>Ephesians 1:23) sometimes it designs all the elect of God in heaven and in earth, but here the church militant, which only can admit of an increase; this body is from Christ, as an head, and the phrase denotes the rise and origin of the church from Christ, her dependence upon him, and union to him, and of its members one to another; she has her being and form, from him, and all her blessings, as her life and light, righteousness and holiness, her grace and strength, her joy, peace, and comfort, her fruitfulness and final perseverance; and her dependence is upon him for subsistence, sustenance, protection and safety, and for grace and glory; and her union to him is very near, strict and close, and indissoluble; and the union between the several members is also very close, and both are very beautiful:

and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part. The Alexandrian copy reads, “of every member”; and so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; the author of the union of the members of Christ's body to one another is the Spirit of God, by him they are baptized into one body; the cement or bond of this union is the grace of love wrought in their souls by him; and the means are the word and ordinances, and these convey a supply from Christ the head to every member, suitable to the part it bears in the body, according to the energy of the Spirit, who makes all effectual: and so

maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love; the increase of the body the church, is either in numbers, when persons are converted and added to it; or in the exercise of grace, under the influence of the Spirit, through the ministration of the word and ordinances; and both these tend to the edifying or building of it up; and nothing is of a more edifying nature to the church than love, which bears the infirmities of the weak, and seeks for, and follows after those things which make for peace and godly edification, (1 Corinthians 8:1).

Ver. 17. *This I say therefore and testify in the Lord*, &c.] These words may be considered either as an assertion, and so a testimonial of the different walk and conversation of the saints at Ephesus, from the rest of the Gentiles; or as an exhortation in the name of the Lord to such a walk, the apostle here returning to what he stirs them up to in (Ephesians 4:1)

that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind; every natural man walks in a vain show; the mind of man is vain, and whoever walk according to the dictates of it, must walk vainly: the phrase is expressive of the emptiness of the mind; it being naturally destitute of God, of the knowledge, fear, and grace of God; and of Jesus Christ, of the knowledge of him, faith in him, and love to him; and of the Spirit and his graces; and it also points at the instability and changeableness of the human mind, in which sense man at his best estate was altogether vanity; as also the folly, falsehood, and wickedness of it in his fallen state: and the mind discovers its vanity in its thoughts and imaginations, which are vain and foolish; in the happiness it proposes to itself, which lies in vain things, as worldly riches, honours, &c. and in the ways and means it takes to obtain it, and in words and actions; and the Gentiles showed the vanity of their minds in their vain philosophy and curious inquiries into things, and in their polytheism and idolatry: to walk herein, is to act according to the dictates of a vain and carnal mind; and it denotes a continued series of sinning, or a vain conversation maintained, a progress and obstinate persisting therein with pleasure: now God's elect before conversion walked as others do, but when they are converted their walk and conversation is not, at least it ought not to be, like that of others: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word “other”, and only read, “as the Gentiles”, &c.

Ver. 18. *Having the understanding darkened*, &c.] Not that the natural faculty of the understanding is lost in men, nor the understanding in things

natural and civil, and which is quick enough, especially in things that are evil; but in things spiritual it is very dark and ignorant, as about the nature and perfections of God, his holiness and righteousness; about sin and the consequences of it; about Christ, his person, office, and work, and salvation by him; about the Spirit, and his work of grace upon the soul; and about the Scripture, and the doctrines contained in it; and so it came to be by sin: the understanding of man was at first filled both with natural and divine knowledge; but man was not content with this, and being ambitious of more, even of being as God, lost what he had; for on account of his sin he was banished from the divine presence, which brought not only a darkness upon him, but upon all his posterity; and which is increased by personal iniquity, and oftentimes by Satan the god of this world, who blinds the minds of men; and sometimes men are given up in just judgment by God, to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart; and which issues in utter darkness, in blackness of darkness for evermore:

being alienated from the life of God; not that which God lives in himself, but that which he lives in his people; nor that natural life which men receive from him, but a spiritual life, a life of grace, faith and holiness; and which may be called the life of God, because it is infused by the Spirit of God, and the word of God is the means of it, and it is supported and secured by the power of God, and is according to the will of God, and is directed to his glory: now wicked and unconverted men are alienated from this life; they are estranged from God the fountain of it; and go astray from the law, the rule of an holy life; and are entirely destitute of a principle of life, from whence men can only act and are utterly unacquainted with the pleasures and sweetness of the life of faith and holiness; nor do they approve of such a life, but have the utmost aversion to it:

through the ignorance that is in them; every unregenerate man is an ignorant man, and especially the Gentiles were very ignorant of God, and of divine things; ignorance is natural to men, it comes by sin, and is itself sinful, and is sometimes the punishment of sin, and also the cause of it, as here of alienation from the life of God; for where is ignorance of God, there can be no desire after him, no communion with him, no faith in him, had dependence on him; no true worship of him, or living according to his will, and to his glory: and this ignorance is,

because of the blindness of their hearts, or “the hardness of it”; there is a natural hardness of the heart, the heart is naturally stony, and so it remains

till grace takes away the stony heart, and gives an heart of flesh; it is insensible and inflexible, and not susceptive of any impression; and there is a voluntary hardness of it, men willingly harden themselves against the Lord, and make their hearts like an adamant stone, all sin is of an hardening nature; and there is a judicial hardness, which God gives up men unto; and when and where this is the case, in either sense, it is no wonder men should be so ignorant of God, and so alienated from the life of him: בלה תומס, "blindness of heart" [f51], is a Rabbinical phrase.

Ver. 19. *Who being past feeling*, &c.] Their consciences being cauterized or seared as with a red hot iron, which is the consequence of judicial hardness; so that they have lost all sense of sin, and do not feel the load of its guilt upon them, and are without any concern about it; but on the contrary commit it with pleasure, boast of it and glory in it, plead for it and defend it publicly, and openly declare it, and stand in no fear of a future judgment, which they ridicule and despise: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, and the Claromontane exemplar read, who "despairing": of mercy and salvation, saying there is no hope, and therefore grow hardened and desperate in sin;

have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness; by "lasciviousness" is meant all manner of lusts, and a wanton and unbridled course of sinning; and their giving themselves over unto it denotes their voluntariness in sinning, the power of sin over them, they being willing slaves unto it, and their continuance in it; and this they do in order

to work all uncleanness; to commit every unclean lust, to live in a continued commission of uncleanness of every sort; and that

with greediness; being like a covetous man, never satisfied with sinning, but always craving more sinful lusts and pleasures.

Ver. 20. *But ye have not so learned Christ*, &c.] Some distinguish these words, and make two propositions of them, "but ye not so", or "ye are not so, ye have learned Christ"; the first of these propositions has respect to what goes before, and suggests that regenerate persons are not as other men: they do not walk in the vanity of their minds as others, their minds are not empty and vain; but are filled with God, with a saving knowledge of God in Christ, with the fear and love of God, and with Christ, with a spiritual knowledge of him, with faith in him and love to him, and with the

Spirit, with his graces and fruits of righteousness; and though there is a great deal of vanity, instability, treachery, and sinfulness in them, yet their walk and the course of their conversation is not according to this: nor are their understandings darkened as others; they are enlightened to see their lost state and condition by nature, the plague of their own hearts, the insufficiency of their own righteousness, the way of life and salvation by Christ, and that salvation from first to last is all of grace; they have some light into the doctrines of the gospel, and have some glimpse of glory; and their light is of an increasing nature: they are not alienated from the life of God as others, but live a life of communion with him, a life of faith upon him, and a life of holiness according to his mind; they are not past feeling as others, they are sensible of sin, and are often pressed down with the weight of it, and groan, being burdened by it; they cannot sin with that delight and pleasure as others do, nor will they plead for it, but confess it with shame and sorrow; nor do they give up themselves to it, and continue in it, and in an insatiable pursuit of it: the reason of all which is, they "have learned Christ": so as to know him as God over all blessed for ever; as the Lord and heir of all things; as the Alpha and Omega of the covenant of grace; as intrusted with all that is near and dear to his Father; as the Father's free gift to men, and as the sinner's Saviour; as the way of access to God and acceptance with him; as the church's head and husband; as the saints' prophet, priest, and King, and as the only Mediator between God and men; and so as to receive him, believe in him, and commit their souls unto him; and so as to embrace his truths, and submit to his ordinances: and this lesson they learn, not in the book and school of nature, nor of carnal reason, nor of the law; but in the book of the covenant, and of the Scripture; and in the school of the church, and under the ministry of the Gospel; for the ministers of the Gospel are the instructors, the instruments of teaching; though the Spirit of God is the efficient cause, the anointing which teacheth all things, and leads into all truth, as it is in Jesus: and this lesson being truly learnt, will teach men to walk differently from others; to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly.

Ver. 21. *If so be that ye have heard him*, &c.] Not heard him preach, but heard him preached; and that not merely externally, with the outward hearing of the ear; though oftentimes spiritual conviction and illumination, true faith in Christ, real comfort from him, and establishment and assurance of interest in him, come this way, as to these Ephesians, (⁴⁹⁰¹³Ephesians

1:13) but internally, so as to know him, understand his word, and distinguish his voice; so as to approve of him and love him, and believe in him; feel the power of his Gospel, relish his truths, and obey his ordinances, and so bring forth fruit to his glory; as such do, who are quickened by him, whose ears are unstopped, and their hearts opened, and their understandings enlightened; and who have hearing ears, and understanding hearts given them:

and have been taught by him: not personally, but by his Spirit and ministers; for Christ is not only the subject of the ministry of the word, and whom the Spirit of God teaches and directs souls to for righteousness, pardon, cleansing, and for every supply of grace; but he is the efficient cause of teaching; and there is none who teaches like him: and those who are taught by him, are taught

as the truth is in Jesus; as the Gospel is in him, as in its original and subject; for he is truth itself, and grace and truth came by him; and as it was preached by him, and so is pure and unmixed.

Ver. 22. *That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man*, &c.] Which is the corruption of nature; why this is called a man, and an old man, (see Gill on " Romans 6:6"), the putting him off, is not a removing him from the saints, nor a destroying him in them, nor a changing his nature; for he remains, and remains alive, and is the same old man he ever was, in regenerate persons; but it is a putting him off from his seat, and a putting him down from his government; a showing no regard to his rule and dominion, to his laws and lusts, making no provision for his support; and particularly, not squaring the life and conversation according to his dictates and directions; and therefore it is called a putting him off, concerning the former conversation: the change lies not, in the old man, who can never be altered, but in the conversation; he is not in the same power, but he retains the same sinful nature; he is put off, but he is not put out; and though he does not reign, he rages, and often threatens to get the ascendant: these words stand either in connection with (Ephesians 4:17) and so are a continuation and an explanation of that exhortation; or else they point out what regenerate souls are taught by Christ to do, to quit the former conversation, to hate the garment spotted with the flesh, and to put it off; for the allusion is to the putting off of filthy garments, as the works of the flesh may be truly called, which flow from the vitiosity of nature, the old man:

which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; the old man, or the vitiosity of nature, has its lusts; and these are deceitful; they promise pleasure and profit, but yield neither in the issue; they promise liberty, and bring into bondage; they promise secrecy and impunity, but expose to shame, and render liable to punishment; they sometimes put on a religious face, and so deceive, and fill men with pride and conceit, who think themselves to be something, when they are nothing: and through these the old man is corrupt; by these the corruption of nature is discovered; and the corruption that is in the world is produced hereby; and these make a man deserving of, and liable to the pit of corruption; and this is a good reason, why this corrupt old man, with respect to the life and conversation, should be put off.

Ver. 23. *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind*.] Or by the Spirit that is in your mind; that is, by the Holy Spirit; who is in the saints, and is the author of renovation in them; and who is the reviver and carrier on, and finisher of that work, and therefore that is called the renewing of the Holy Spirit, (<56305>Titus 3:5) or rather the mind of man, which is a spirit, of a spiritual nature, immaterial and immortal, and is the seat of that renewing work of the Spirit of God; which shows, that the more noble part of man stands in need of renovation, being corrupted by sin: and this renewing in it, designs not the first work of renovation; for these Ephesians had been renewed, and were made new creatures in Christ; but the gradual progress of it; and takes in, if not principally intends, a renewal, or an increase of spiritual light and knowledge, of life and strength, of joy and comfort, and fresh supplies of grace, and a revival of the exercise of grace; and in short, a renewal of spiritual youth, and a restoration of the saints to that state and condition they were in, in times past: and the exhortation to this can only mean, that it becomes saints to be concerned for such revivings and renewings, and to pray for them, as David did, (<19510>Psalm 51:10) for otherwise, this is as much the work of the Spirit of God, as renovation is at first; and he only who is sent forth, and renews the face of the earth, year by year, can renew us daily in the Spirit of our minds.

Ver. 24. *And that ye put on the new man*, &c.] Which some understand of Jesus Christ, who is truly and really man, and a new or extraordinary one, (<243122>Jeremiah 31:22) and as such is God's creature, and is made after his image, and which appears in his perfect holiness and righteousness; and the phrase of putting on well agrees with him, (<451314>Romans 13:14 <480327>Galatians 3:27) whose righteousness is a garment, pure and spotless, and which is

put on by the hand of faith: though rather by the “new man” is meant, the new nature, the new principle, or work of grace in the soul, elsewhere called a new creature; and it bears this name in opposition to, and distinction from the old man, or corruption of nature, before spoken of; and because it is “de noro”, or anew, put into the hearts of men; it is not what was in them naturally; nor is it any old principle renewed, or wrought up in another and better form; but it is something that is infused, that was never there before: and because it is new in all its parts; such who have it, have new hearts and new spirits given unto them; they have new eyes to see with, and new ears to hear with, and new hands to handle and work with, and new feet to walk with; and they live a new life and conversation: so the Jews says of a man that truly repents of sin, and does not return to it, that he is çdj jya, “a new man” [f52]: now to put on this new man, is not to make ourselves new creatures; for this is not by the power of man, but by the Spirit of God; this is God's work, and not man's; it is he who made us at first, remakes us, and not we ourselves; besides, these Ephesians the apostle writes to, were already made new men, or new creatures; but to put on the new man, is to walk in our lives and conversations agreeably to the new man, or work of grace upon the soul; as to put off the old man, respects the former conversation, or a not walking as formerly, and agreeably to the dictates of corrupt nature, so to put on the new man, is to walk according to the principles of grace and holiness formed in the soul: and of this new man it is further said,

which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; the principle of the soul is “created”, and therefore is not the effect of man's power, which cannot create; it is peculiar to God only to create; it is a creature, and therefore not to be trusted in, and depended on; for not grace, but the author of grace, is the object of trust: it is created “after God”; by his power, according to his mind and will, and after his image, and in his likeness; which greatly consists “in righteousness and true holiness”; called “true”, in opposition to the typical and ceremonial holiness of the Jews, and to the pretended holiness of hypocrites; and denotes the truth and genuineness of the Spirit's work of sanctification upon the heart; unless this should rather be considered as the effect of his grace upon the soul; for so the words may be rendered, “unto righteousness and true holiness”; for the new man is of such a nature, and so formed, as to tend to acts of righteousness and holiness, and to engage men to the performance

of them: some copies read, “in righteousness, and holiness, and truth”; and so the Ethiopic version seems to have read.

Ver. 25. *Wherefore putting away lying*, &c.] Which is one of the deeds of the old man, and a branch of the former conversation agreeable to him: a lie is a voluntary disagreement of the mind and speech, with a design to deceive; it is to speak that which is false, contrary to truth shining in the mind; and it is spoken knowingly and willingly, and with a design to impose upon others; hence a man may speak what is false, and not be a liar, if he does not know it to be so; and hence parables, fables, tropes, figures, hyperboles, &c. are not lies, because they are not used to deceive, but to illustrate and enforce truth: there are several sorts of lies; there is an officious lie, which is told for the service of others, but this is not lawful; for evil is not to be done, that good may come of it; and a man may as well tell a lie to serve himself, as another; and any other sin by the same rule may be allowed of, and tolerated; besides, it is not lawful to lie for God, and therefore not for a creature: and there is a jocose lie; this ought not to be encouraged; all appearance of evil should be abstained from; every idle word must be accounted for; and hereby also an evil habit of lying may be acquired: and there is a lie which is in itself directly hurtful, and injurious; as is every false thing, said with a design to deceive: and there are religious lies, and liars; some practical ones, as those who do not sincerely worship God, and who are dissolute in their lives, and their practice is not according to their profession; and there are others who are guilty of doctrinal lies, as antichrist and his followers, who are given up to believe a lie; and such who deny the deity, incarnation, Messiahship, work, office, grace, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; and who profess themselves to be Christians, and are not: the springs and causes of lying are a corrupt heart and the lusts of it, which prompt unto it; such as covetousness, malice, and the fear of men; and also a tempting devil, the father of lies; and who is a lying spirit, in the hearts and mouths of men; this is a vice which ought to be put away, especially by professors of religion; the effects of it are sad; it brings infamy, disgrace, and discredit, upon particular persons; and has brought judgments upon nations, where it has in general obtained; and has been the cause of corporeal diseases and death; and even makes men liable to the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death: it is a sin exceeding sinful; it is a breach of God's law; an aping of the devil; it is against the light of nature, and is destructive of civil society, and very abominable in the sight of God: wherefore

speak every man truth with his neighbour; both with respect to civil and religious affairs, in common conversation, in trade and business, and in all things relating to God and men:

for we are members one of another; as men, are all of one blood, descended from one man, and so are related one to another; and as in civil society, belong to one body politic; and in a religious sense, members of the same mystical body, the church; of which Christ, who is the truth itself, is the head; and therefore should not attempt to deceive one another by lying, since there is such a near relation and close union of one to another.

Ver. 26. *Be ye angry, and sin not*, &c.] There is anger which is not sinful; for anger is fouled in God himself, in Jesus Christ, in the holy angels, and in God's people; and a man may be said to be angry and not sin, when his anger arises from a true zeal for God and religion; when it is kindled not against persons, but sins; when a man is displeased with his own sins, and with the sins of others: with vice and immorality of every kind; with idolatry and idolatrous worship, and with all false doctrine; and also when it is carried on to answer good ends, as the good of those with whom we are angry, the glory of God, and the promoting of the interest of Christ: and there is an anger which is sinful; as when it is without a cause; when it exceeds due bounds; when it is not directed to a good end; when it is productive of bad effects, either in words or actions; and when it is soon raised, or long continues: the Jews have a like distinction of anger; they say [f53],

> "there is an anger and an anger; there is an anger which is blessed above and below, and it is called blessed, as it is said (<01149>Genesis 14:19) and there is an anger which is cursed above and below, as it is said (<01314>Genesis 3:14 49:7)"

And these two sorts are compared to "Ebal" and "Gerizzim", from the one of which proceeded blessing, and from the other cursing: anger for the most part is not only sinful, but it tends to sin, and issues in it; hence that saying of the Jews, yjjt alw jtrt al, "be not angry, and thou wilt not sin" [f54]: the spring of it is a corrupt heart, it is stirred up by Satan, encouraged by pride, and increased by grievous words and reproachful language:

let not the sun go down upon your wrath; there is an allusion to (<05240>Deuteronomy 24:10,13-15) it seems to be a proverbial expression; and

the design of it is to show, that anger should not be continued; that it should not last at furthest more than a day; that when the heat of the day is over, the heat of anger should be over likewise; and that we should not sleep with it, lest it should be cherished and increased upon our pillows; and besides, the time of the going down of the sun, is the time of evening prayer, which may be greatly interrupted and hindered by anger. R. Jonah [f55] has an expression or two like to this;

> "let not the indignation of anyone abide upon thee; and let not a night sleep with thee, and anger be against any one:"

it should be considered, that as God is slow to anger, so he does not retain it for ever; and that to retain anger, is to gratify the devil; wherefore it follows,

Ver. 27. *Neither give place to the devil*.] Or "to the accuser", or "slanderer"; that is, to any adversary, that takes delight in slandering and reproaching the saints; give such no room, nor reason, to calumniate the doctrine and ways of Christ, through an unbecoming conversation, by lying and sinful anger, or by other means; or rather the devil, the great accuser of the brethren is meant; and the Ethiopic version renders it, "do not give way to Satan"; which is done, when men indulge any lust or corruption; and when they easily fall in with his suggestions and temptations; when they are off of their watch and guard; and when they do not resist, but quietly yield unto him.

Ver. 28. *Let him that stole steal no more*, &c.] Stealing, or theft, is a fraudulent taking away of another man's goods, without the knowledge and will of the owner, for the sake of gain; to which evil may be reduced, not making good, or not performing payments, all unjust contracts, detention of wages, unlawful usury, unfaithfulness in anything committed to trust, advising, encouraging, and receiving from thieves: theft is a very great evil; it is a breach of the common law of nature, to do to others, as we would be done by; it is contrary to particular laws of God, and is against common justice, and ought not to be continued in, and is punishable by God and man; it springs from a corrupt heart, and often arises from poverty, idleness, sloth, covetousness, and prodigality: the remedy against it follows,

but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good; labouring with diligence and industry, at any manufacture, trade, or

business, which is honest, lawful, and of good report, is a proper antidote against theft; and ought to be preferred to such a scandalous way of living, and to be constantly attended to: and that for this end among others,

that he may have to give to him that needeth; and not take away another man's property; needy persons are the objects of charity; and what is given to them, should be a man's own; and what a man gets by his hand labour, he should not prodigally spend, or covetously lay up, but should cheerfully distribute it to indigent persons.

Ver. 29. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth*, &c.] As unsavoury speech, foolish talking, light and frothy language, that which is filthy, unprofitable, noxious, and nauseous, and all that is sinful; such as profane oaths, curses, and imprecations, unchaste words, angry ones, proud, haughty, and arrogant expressions, lies, perjury, &c. which may be called corrupt, because such communication springs from a corrupt heart; is an evidence of the corruption of it; the subject matter of it is corrupt; and it conveys corruption to others, it corrupts good manners; and is the cause of men's going down to the pit of corruption: wherefore a restraint should be laid upon the lips of men; men have not a right to say what they please; good men will be cautious what they say, otherwise their religion is in vain; and conscious of their own weakness, they will pray to God to set a watch before their mouth, and to keep the door of their lips, and not suffer anything to come out,

but that which is good for the use of edifying: or "for edification", as the Syriac version renders it; the Arabic version reads, "for the edification of all"; that is, that hear; and the Vulgate Latin version and Claromontane exemplar, "for the edification of faith": for the building up of saints on their most holy faith, and for the encouragement and increase of the grace of faith: in the Greek text it is literally, "for the edification of use"; for useful edification, or what is useful for edification; and is suited to the present want or opportunity, as the word is by some rendered: and that must be "good", which answers such an end; meaning not that the language should be formally and grammatically good, though to speak with propriety is useful and serviceable, and tends the more to instruction and edification; but that which is materially good, or the subject of it is good; that which is true, pure, pleasant, and profitable:

that it may minister grace unto the hearers; may be grateful and acceptable to them, or may minister the grace of God to them; that is, the doctrine of

grace, the Gospel of the grace of God; and be a means of conveying the principle of grace into the hearers, and of drawing it forth into exercise where it is; and such speech or communication which springs from a gracious heart, and from a principle of grace in the heart, and is upon the subject of the grace of God, is most likely to be thus useful and edifying: agreeably to all this are some sayings of the Jews [f56],

> "says R. Joshua ben Levi, for ever let not a man suffer any thing hnwgm, "that is filthy", or unseemly, to proceed out of his mouth; says R. Ishmael, for ever let a man discourse hyyqn ^wç l b, "in a pure language";"

not corrupt.

Ver. 30. *And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God*, &c.] Not a believer's own spirit, sanctified by the Holy Ghost, which is grieved by sin; nor the spirit of a good man, that hears our words and sees our actions, and is displeased and troubled at them; but the third person in the Trinity: and this is said of him by an anthropopathy, and supposes something done that is offensive to him; and he may be grieved, not only by unconverted persons, by their stubborn resistance and opposition to the Gospel and means of grace, and by their contempt of his person, office, and grace, but by believers themselves, and who are here spoken to; and which may be done both by their words, lying, angry, and corrupt ones, before cautioned against, (<4025>Ephesians 4:25,26,29) and by their actions, their behaviour towards God, their conversation in the world, and by their carriage to one another, which is suggested in the following verse: also he may be grieved by their thoughts, their vain and sinful thoughts, and that they are no better employed; and especially when they entertain any undervaluing ones of Jesus Christ, whose glorifier he is; and by the unbelief of their hearts, and by their unmindfulness of the things of the Spirit; and when they disregard the rules, dictates, and advice of the Spirit, and make no use of him: and his being grieved appears by his departure from them; which is to be perceived by the darkness of their souls, the prevailings of corruption, the weakness of grace, and their backwardness to duty: and now there are many reasons why he should not be grieved; as because he is God, and the author of the new birth, the implanter and applier of all grace, and the finisher of it; because he is the saints' comforter, their advocate, helper, and strengthener; and their constant companion, who dwells in them, and will remain in them, until death: and it follows,

whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption; of the sealing work of the Spirit, (see Gill on "⁴⁹Ephesians 1:13"). By "the day of redemption" may be meant, either the day of death, when the saints have a deliverance from the incumbrance of the body; from their present state of exile and banishment; from the body of sin and death; from all sorrows and afflictions; from the reproaches and persecutions of men; from the temptations of Satan; from doubts, fears, and unbelief; and from all fear of death, corporeal, spiritual, and eternal: or the day of the resurrection, when the body will be redeemed from mortality, corruption, weakness, and dishonour; when it will be refined and spiritualized, so that it will not stand in need of natural sustenance; will be endowed with great agility, like that of spirits; and will be subject to the soul, or spirit, and will be suited to spiritual objects; to which may be added, the day of judgment, (⁴²Luke 21:28) when Christ shall appear in glory, and his saints with him, and he will put them, soul and body, into the possession of everlasting happiness; which will consist in the vision of Christ, in conformity to him, and in that happy company and conversation that will then be enjoyed, and that delightful employment they will be taken up in: and now the saints being sealed up by the Spirit unto this time, shows the perpetual indwelling of the Spirit in them; and that it will continue even after death, who will give them confidence at the day of judgment; and that it is the Spirit which works up the saints, and makes them meet for glory; and gives them the assurance of it, and therefore they should not be grieved.

Ver. 31. *Let all bitterness*, &c.] These words are a dehortation from several vices good men are liable to, by which the Spirit of God is grieved: "bitterness" sometimes designs the corruption of nature, which is the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity; and sometimes actual sins and transgressions, even those of God's own people, which are evil and bitter things; and sometimes heretical doctrines, which are roots of bitterness; and sometimes sinful words spoken by the saints, one against another; and here perhaps it signifies, the first offence taken in the mind, against any person, upon any account, which should at once be put away, and not encouraged:

and wrath: heat of spirit, which follows upon bitterness, or upon the spirit being embittered and offended; (see ²⁶Ezekiel 3:14).

And anger; a sinful one, cautioned against before, (⁴⁹Ephesians 4:26).

And clamour and evil speaking; such as brawlings, contentions, contumelies, reproaches, slanders, &c. arising from an embittered, wrathful, and angry disposition: these should all

be put away from you, with all malice; being the deeds of the old man, unbecoming such as are born again, and grieving to the Spirit of God.

Ver. 32. *And be ye kind one to another*, &c.] Good, affable, courteous; which appears in looks, words, and actions; by looking pleasantly on each other, speaking kindly to one another, and mutually doing every good office that lies in their way, and in their power:

tender hearted: which is opposed to a being hard hearted to them that are in distress, and close at hand to the needy; to cruelty and severity to such who are subject to them, or have injured them; and to a rigid and censorious spirit to them that are fallen:

forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you; whatever offences are given, or injuries done by the saints one to another, and so far as they are committed against them, they should forgive, and should pray to God for one another, that he would manifest his forgiveness of them, as committed against him; and this should be done in like manner as God forgives in Christ, and for his sake; that is, fully and freely, and from their hearts; and so as to forget the offences, and not to upbraid them with them hereafter; yea, they should forgive them before they repent, and without asking for it, and that for Christ's sake, and because they are members of his: the Complutensian edition reads, “even as Christ hath forgiven us”: the Arabic version also reads us, and so some copies: the words may be rendered, “giving freely to one another, even as God in Christ has given freely to you”; saints should give freely to one another, for outward support, where it is needful; and should impart spiritual gifts and experience for inward comfort, where it is wanted, and as they have ability; and that from this consideration, that all they have, whether in temporals or spirituals, is freely given by God in Christ, and for his sake; with whom he freely gives them all things; in whom he has given them grace, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings; as peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS 5

The apostle, in this chapter, goes on with his exhortations to the duties of religion; and such in general as relate to purity of life, and against uncleanness; and particularly treats of the duties of married persons. And whereas in the latter part of the preceding chapter, he had exhorted to kindness and tenderness, and which he enforced by the example of God himself, he here repeats and urges it; and to it adds the example of Christ in loving his people, and giving himself for them a propitiatory sacrifice, acceptable to God, (⁴⁹⁵¹Ephesians 5:1,2), then follows a dehortation from several vices of the impure kind, some as being filthy actions, and unbecoming saints, and not to be named by them, and much less done, (⁴⁹⁵³Ephesians 5:3), others, and such as are vices of the tongue, as being inconvenient, and to which thanksgiving is preferred, (⁴⁹⁵⁴Ephesians 5:4), and the former especially, as excluding from having any part or portion in the kingdom of God and Christ (⁴⁹⁵⁵Ephesians 5:5), and all of them, as bringing the wrath of God upon men, (⁴⁹⁵⁶Ephesians 5:6), wherefore professors of religion should avoid such sins, and not join with the children of disobedience in the commission of them, (⁴⁹⁵⁷Ephesians 5:7), to which exhortation they should the rather give heed, from the consideration of their present state, illustrated by their former one; who were once darkness, but now light, and therefore should walk as enlightened persons, (⁴⁹⁵⁸Ephesians 5:8), and as having the Spirit of God, which is known by its fruits, (⁴⁹⁵⁹Ephesians 5:9), studying to know, approve of, and do that which is acceptable to God, (⁴⁹⁶⁰Ephesians 5:10), and on the contrary, should have no society and communion with men in the commission of sins, the works of darkness, but should reprove them for them, (⁴⁹⁶¹Ephesians 5:11), since the things done by them were such, that it was a shame to relate them, and much more to commit them, (⁴⁹⁶²Ephesians 5:12), and the rather this was incumbent upon them, since it was agreeably to their character, as being made light in the Lord; seeing it is the property of light to make manifest and detect what is done in the dark, (⁴⁹⁶³Ephesians 5:13), which is confirmed by a passage of Scripture pertinently produced, to stir up drowsy and lifeless professors to the

discharge of their duty, (<4014>Ephesians 5:14), and from hence the apostle enforces a wise and circumspect walk and conversation, one part of which lies in redeeming time; and which should be done for this reason, because the present days were evil ones, (<4015>Ephesians 5:15,16), and that they might avoid a foolish walk, and order their conversation wisely and aright, he suggests it would be proper to learn what was the will of the Lord, which is the rule of a Christian's walk and conversation, (<4017>Ephesians 5:17), and whereas drunkenness is oftentimes the cause of all the above mentioned vices, the apostle cautions against that, and on the contrary advises them to be concerned for a larger measure of the Spirit of God; that under his influence they might sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, in a melodious manner, and heartily to the Lord; and so express their thankfulness to him, for all mercies from him; and not abuse their mercies and themselves, spend their time in singing lewd and profane songs, as drunkards often do, (<4018>Ephesians 5:18-20), and hence he passes to the special duties of wives and husbands, to which he premises a general exhortation to submission to one another, (<4021>Ephesians 5:21), and begins with the subjection of wives to their husbands, this being the will of the Lord, (<4022>Ephesians 5:22), and besides, the relation which the wife stands in to her husband, being her head, requires it; and which is illustrated by Christ being the head and Saviour of his body, the church, (<4023>Ephesians 5:23), and which is further urged and enforced by the instance and example of the church's subjection to Christ, (<4024>Ephesians 5:24), and next the apostle exhorts husbands to love their wives, in imitation of Christ, who has loved his church; and as an instance of it, has given himself to death for her; than which, there cannot be a greater instance of love, (<4025>Ephesians 5:25), the ends of which were, the sanctification and cleansing of the church with his blood, by means of water and the word; and the presentation of her to himself, all glorious and beautiful, (<4026>Ephesians 5:26,27), and then another argument is used, to engage the affections of husbands to their wives, they being their own bodies; so that loving them, is loving themselves, (<4028>Ephesians 5:28), nor was it ever known, and it would be unnatural, for a man to hate his own flesh, but on the contrary, he nourishes and cherishes it; and therefore seeing the wife is a man's own flesh, he ought not to hate her, but to nourish and cherish her; and this is also enforced by the example of Christ, who does not hate his church, but nourishes and cherishes her, (<4029>Ephesians 5:29), the reason of which is, because the saints which make up the church are members of him, one flesh and blood with him, (<4030>Ephesians 5:30), which is the case of a man and

his wife; and hence it is, that according to the original law of marriage, a man was to leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, (Ephesians 5:31), the whole of which is a mystery, and typical of the marriage relation and union between Christ and his church, (Ephesians 5:32), and the chapter is closed with a recapitulation of the mutual duties of husband and wife, love in the one, and reverence in the other, (Ephesians 5:33).

Ver. 1. *Be ye therefore followers of God*, &c.] Not in his works of infinite wisdom and almighty power, which is impossible; but in acts of righteousness and holiness, and particularly in acts of mercy, goodness, and beneficence; as in forgiving injuries and offences, and in freely distributing to the necessities of the saints; as the connection of the words with the preceding chapter, and the instance and example in the following verse show: and this should be done by the saints,

as dear children; and because they are such by adopting grace; being predestinated unto the adoption of children, in the eternal purpose of God, and taken into that relation in the covenant of grace; and which is declared and made manifest in regeneration, and by faith in Christ Jesus: and they are dear, or beloved children, being loved with an everlasting and unchangeable love, and which is the spring and source of their adoption; and their being dear to him is seen by what he is unto them, their covenant God and Father; and by what he has done for them, in giving his Son to them, and for them; as well as in choosing, calling, and quickening them by his grace, and by the account he makes of them, as his jewels, his peculiar treasure, and the apple of his eye; and by the pity and compassion he has for them, and the care he takes of them; and therefore it becomes them to imitate him; for who should they imitate and follow after, but their Father, and especially when they are so dear unto him?

Ver. 2. *And walk in love*, &c.] To God; to which the saints are obliged, not only by the law of God, which requires it, but by the goodness of God, and the discoveries of his love to them; and which shows itself in fearing to offend him, in a conformity to his will, in making his glory the chief end of all actions, and in loving all that belong to him: and also the saints should walk in love to Christ; who is to be loved fervently, constantly, in sincerity, with all the heart, and above all creatures and things; because of the loveliness of his person, the love he bears to them, and the things he has done for them, and the relations he stands in to them; and which is manifested in keeping his commands, in delighting in his presence, and in a

concern at his absence: and also they should walk in love to one another, which is chiefly designed; which is Christ's new commandment, and is an evidence of regeneration; and without which a profession of religion is in vain: and to “walk” in love, is not merely to talk of it, but to exercise it; and to do all that is done for God, and Christ, and the saints, from a principle of love; and to advance, increase, and abound in it, and to go on and continue therein: the example to be copied after, and which carries in it an argument engaging to it is,

as Christ also hath loved us; with a love exceeding great and strong, which is wonderful, inconceivable, and unparalleled; and even as the Father has loved him; with a love that is free and sovereign, unchangeable and everlasting, of which he has given many instances; and a principal one is hereafter mentioned: the “as” here is a note of similitude, not of equality; for it cannot be thought that the saints should love God, or Christ, or one another, with a love equal to Christ's love to them, but only that theirs should bear some likeness to his: the Alexandrian copy and Ethiopic version, instead of “us”, read “you”:

and hath given himself for us; not the world, and the things of it, which are his; not men, nor angels, nor animals, but himself; he gave away his time, service, and strength; his name, fame, and reputation; all the comforts of life, and life itself; his whole human nature, soul and body, and that as in union with his divine person; and that not only for the good of his people, but in their room and stead; not for angels, nor for all men, but for his chosen ones, the church, his sheep, his people, and when they, were sinners; in the following manner, and for the said purpose:

an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour; Christ was both priest and sacrifice; he offered up himself a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of his people, to expiate them, and make reconciliation and satisfaction for them; and this he offered up to God, against whom they had sinned, and whose justice must be satisfied, who called him to this work, and engaged him in it; and which was well pleasing to him, he smelled a sweet savour of rest in it, it being an unblemished sacrifice, and voluntarily offered up; and was complete, full, and adequate to the demands of his justice; by it sin was put away, finished, and made an end of, and his people perfected for ever; (see Genesis 8:20,21).

Ver. 3. *But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness*, &c.] The apostle proceeds to dehort from several vices, which are unbecoming the

dear children and followers of God; and which the love of Christ should constrain them to avoid: the first of these, which is simple “fornication”, is the sin which is committed between single or unmarried persons; and is contrary to the law of God, is a work of the flesh, and is against a man's own body; it renders persons unfit for church communion, brings many temporal calamities upon them, and exposes them to divine wrath, and excludes from the kingdom of heaven, without repentance; and the reason why it is so often taken notice of is, because it was very frequent among the Gentiles, and not thought criminal: “all uncleanness” takes in adultery, incest, sodomy, and every unnatural lust; and “covetousness” seems not so much to design that sin which is commonly so called, namely, an immoderate desire after worldly things, as a greedy and insatiable appetite after the above lusts:

let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; that is, neither one or other of them; the sense is, that they should not be committed; so that there might be no occasion to speak of them, even though with abhorrence, as if there were no such vices in being; and much less should they be named with pleasure, and pleaded for: for thus it becomes such who are set apart by God the Father, whose sins are expiated by the blood of Christ, and whose hearts are sanctified by the Spirit of God; who profess the Gospel of Christ, and have a place and a name in God's house, better than that of sons and daughters.

Ver. 4. *Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting*, &c.] The former of these may include all filthy gestures and behaviour, every indecent habit and attire, and all actions which have a tendency to excite lust; and also all impure words, these discover an impure heart, and are the means of corrupting men's minds and manners; filthy speaking, is a verbal commission of the things that are spoken of; and it may include all impure songs and books, and the reading or hearing of them; this is what the Jews call hp lwbn, “filthiness of the mouth”, obscene words; which they say they do not use on feast days, as the Gentiles do [f57]: “foolish talking” does not so much design every imprudent thing that is said, as that which is wicked, corrupt, unsavoury, light, vain, idle, and unprofitable; and takes in all fabulous stories, and mimicking of fools in words and gestures: and “jesting”, when it is with wantonness, and excites unto it, and is inconsistent with truth, and when the Scriptures are abused by it, and not our neighbour's edification, but hurt, is promoted by it, ought not to be used:

which are not convenient; are disagreeable to the will of God, and unsuitable to the characters of the saints, and are very unbecoming them to practise:

but rather giving of thanks; instead of these, as the Syriac version renders it; it is much more suitable and becoming to give thanks to God for temporal and spiritual mercies, and to speak those things which are grateful to good men; this is to use the tongue to much better purpose, than in an obscene, foolish, or jocose way: one of Stephens's copies read, “but only of giving of thanks”.

Ver. 5. *For this ye know*, &c.] Or, “know ye this”, as the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read:

that no whoremonger, nor unclean person; anyone that is guilty of fornication, adultery, incest, &c.

Nor covetous man, who is an idolater: as every man is, that indulges his lusts, the idols of his own heart; and who serves divers lusts and pleasures, and gives up himself to work all uncleanness with greediness; never having his fill of sin, but is ever craving and coveting it; as well as he who is immoderately desirous of worldly things: the covetous man may be called an idolater, because the idolater and he worship the same in substance, gold and silver, and brass, or what is made of them; the covetous man admires his gold, lays it up, and will not make use of it, as if it was something sacred; and through his over love to mammon, whom he serves, he neglects the worship of God, and the good of his own soul, and puts his trust and confidence in his riches: now no such person

hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God; meaning either a Gospel church state, in which persons of such characters, and living in such sins, ought not to be; or else the kingdom of heaven and of glory, which may be called the kingdom of Christ, because it is in his hands, for his people; and it is his righteousness that gives a title to it, and his Spirit and grace which make meet for it; and it is by his power saints are preserved unto it; and he will put them into the possession of it; and which will greatly consist in the enjoyment of him: and this is also the kingdom of God, either of Christ who is God, or of God the Father; it being of his preparing and giving, and which he calls unto, and makes meet for; and this may be said to be an inheritance, because it is peculiar to children, the

bequest of their heavenly Father, and is not purchased or acquired by them, but comes to them from the free donation of God, through the death of Christ; and to have an inheritance in it, is to have a right unto it, a meetness for it, and to be possessed of it: now the meaning of these words is, not that all who have been guilty of these sins shall be excluded the kingdom of God, but all such who live and die in them, without the grace of God, and righteousness of Christ.

Ver. 6. *Let no man deceive you with vain words*, &c.] With vain philosophy, vain babblings, with foolish and filthy talking; suggesting that these were not sinful the apostle had condemned; or that they were small sins, the frailties of human life; and that God would take no notice of them, and they might continue in them with impunity: such deceivers there were, doctrinal and practical ones, who lay in wait to deceive men with such vain pretences; and there was danger of being carried away with their error; for the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, and is easily taken in such snares: wherefore the apostle cautions against such deceptions, adding,

for because of these things; fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking, and jesting:

the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience; in temporal judgments, and in eternal ruin; there have been instances of it; it is usually the case, and always if grace prevents not; this wrath comes down from above, and sometimes suddenly, with great force and power, like a mighty flood; and there is no standing up under it, and against it; and though it falls upon the children of disobedience, such as are disobedient both to law and Gospel, are unbelievers in Christ, and not persuadable by his ministers, are stubborn, obstinate, and rebellious; yet it shows how much these things are displeasing to God, and resented by him, and therefore should be avoided by his people; and the consideration of their not being appointed to this wrath, though deserving of it as others, and of their deliverance from it by Christ, should engage them the more to abstain from these sins.

Ver. 7. *Be not ye therefore partakers with them*.] In their sins, and acts of disobedience; by keeping needless company with them; by abetting and encouraging sinful practices; by conniving at them, and not reproving for them; or by committing the same things.

Ver. 8. *For ye were sometimes darkness*, &c.] Not only dark, but darkness itself; exceeding blind, dark, and ignorant, respecting spiritual things; so the

Gentiles were wont to be called by the Jews, Æçwh, “darkness” [f58] itself; of this darkness, (see Gill on “Ephesians 4:18”).

But now [are ye] light in the Lord; either in, or by the Lord Jesus Christ, the light of men, from whom all spiritual light comes; or by the Lord the Spirit, by whom the eyes of their understandings were enlightened, to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, in heart and life; the insufficiency of their own righteousness and moral virtues, to justify them before God; and the true and right way of righteousness, life and salvation by Christ; and to have some light into the several doctrines of the Gospel, and even a glimpse of the invisible glories and realities of another world: and this light is so great, that they are not only said to be enlightened, but to be light itself; and this they have not of, and from themselves, but the Lord; and therefore should

walk as children of light; not in sins, which are works of darkness, but in faith, truth, and holiness.

Ver. 9. *For the fruit of the Spirit*, &c.] Either of the spirit of man, as renewed, or rather of the Spirit of God; the allusion is to fruits of trees: the believer is a tree of righteousness; Christ is his root; the Spirit is the sap, which supports and nourishes; and good works, under the influence of his grace, are the fruit: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read “the fruit of light”; which agrees with the preceding words: and the genuine fruit of internal grace, or light,

[is] in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth; the fruit of “goodness”, lies in sympathizing with persons in distress; in assisting such according to the abilities men have in a readiness to forgive offences and injuries; and in using meekness and candour in admonishing others: “righteousness” lies in living in obedience to the law of God; in attending the worship and service of him; and in discharging our duty to our fellow creatures; and this as goodness, is very imperfect, and not to be boasted of, or trusted to, nor is salvation to be expected from it: “truth” is opposed to lying, to hypocrisy, to error and falsehood; and where the Spirit of God, and the work of grace are, there will be more or less an appearance of these fruits.

Ver. 10. *Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord*.] There are many things that are acceptable to God, as the person of Christ, his righteousness, sacrifice, sufferings, death, and mediation; the persons of his people, their

services, sufferings, sacrifices of prayer, and praise to him, and of bounty and liberality to the poor; their graces, and the exercise of them; and the actions of their lives and conversations, when they are becoming the Gospel, are according to the will of God, and are done in faith, and are directed to his glory: and these things which are acceptable to God, as all the truths of the Gospel, and duties of religion are, should be proved, or tried by men; and in order to the trial of spiritual things, it is necessary that the mind be renewed, the understanding be enlightened, the spiritual senses be in exercise, and all be under the influence and directions of the Spirit of God: and the trial is to be made, not according to human reason, which is corrupt and fallible; and besides, there are some things in revelation above it; but according to the Scriptures, which are the word of God, and the rule of faith and practice; and whither the prophets, Christ, and his apostles, always sent men for the trial of divine things; and things being here tried, and found to be right, should be approved of, valued, and esteemed, cleaved to and held fast.

Ver. 11. *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*, &c.] It is not said with the workers of darkness, or with the men of the world, who are in darkness, and are darkness itself; to have fellowship with them in a civil way, or to dwell among them, is not prohibited; it is allowed of, and countenanced by the greatest examples; and especially it is lawful and right, when there is any prospect of doing good to the souls of men; and even when natural right, relation, and necessity require it; and indeed, the contrary is impracticable: conversation with them in things sinful and superstitious should be abstained from; and when it tends to draw off the soul from Christ and his interest, and is infectious; and when weak ones are offended, and sinners are hereby hardened and confirmed in sin; and the name of God is blasphemed, and the Gospel is evil spoken of: but fellowship is not to be maintained "with the works of darkness"; which are sins, so called, because they are opposite to light; to the light of nature, to the light of the divine word, both law and Gospel, to the light of grace, to God the fountain of light, and to Christ the light of the world; and because the source and spring of them are the original darkness of the mind, and Satan the prince of darkness; and because they are generally committed in the dark; and because the effect and consequence of them is utter darkness, and blackness of darkness: and these are "unfruitful"; they are of no profit and advantage, they bring forth no fruit, unless it be guilt, fear, shame, corruption, and death; wherefore no fellowship should be had with them,

by committing the same, by assisting in them, by consenting to them, by approving of them, by receiving any worldly advantage from them, and by winking and conniving at them: it is contrary to the character of saints to have fellowship with such, as the apostle says, (<470614>2 Corinthians 6:14), where he gives the mystical explanation of the law, in (<052210>Deuteronomy 22:10); agreeably to which, and to the passage here, is the sense of a Jewish commentators [f59] who upon it observes, that that law

> “intimates that a righteous man, Pttçyalç, “should have no fellowship” with a wicked man;”

this is to be unequally yoked, signified by the ox and the ass ploughing together:

but rather reprove [them]; both by words and by deeds, by an agreeable life and conversation, which last seems to be the design of the apostle here; because it is not a brother, but such who are in darkness, and live in works of darkness; yea, not sinners, but sins are to be reproved, which can be done no other way; nor are all saints proper to reprove verbally, nor are they qualified for it; but all should, and may by facts; and the light discovers darkness, by its own splendour; and this appears from the apostle's reasoning in the next words.

Ver. 12. *For it is a shame even to speak of those things*, &c.] This is a reason, why persons should walk as children of light; why they should prove what is acceptable to God; why they should have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; why the apostle exhorts to reprove them, and yet does not express what they are; and why they should be reproved rather by deeds than by words: and he tacitly intimates, that if it is a shame to speak of those sins

which are done of them in secret, it is much more shameful to commit them; the persons the apostle refers to, are the unconverted Gentiles in general; such who have no inheritance in the kingdom of God, who deceive men with vain words, who are children of disobedience, who are in darkness, and destitute of the Spirit; and it may be that respect may be had to the followers of Simon Magus, the Gnostics, and such like impure professors, by whom the vilest things were done in secret; for sins, works of darkness, will not bear the light; there is a consciousness in men of the evil of sin, unless past feeling, and therefore they do not care that others should know their crimes; and besides, there is an imaginary pleasure in

committing sin secretly; but then though these things are secret to men, they are not to God; nor will they always remain secrets, they will be brought to light, and therefore no fellowship should be had with them; and especially when they are of such a scandalous nature, that it is a shame to mention the very names of them.

Ver. 13. *But all things that are reproved*, &c.] As all sins should be, by the ministers of the Gospel, and by other saints, and will be by God; either by his Spirit convincing of them, or by his judgments, and the letting out of his wrath and fury, either here or hereafter, for the punishment of them:

are made manifest by the light: either by the saints, who are made light in the Lord, and detect and reprove the sins of others; or by the word of the Lord, which discovers the heinousness of sins; or by Christ the light of the world, who as Judge will bring to light the hidden things of darkness; or by the omniscience of God, to whom darkness and light are both alike

for whatsoever doth make manifest, is light; this is true in things natural and spiritual, whether of the sun in the firmament, or of Christ the sun of righteousness; or of the divine word, or of good men.

Ver. 14. *Wherefore he saith*, &c.] Either the man that is light in the Lord, who reproves the unfruitful works of darkness; or else the Holy Ghost by Paul, who here speaks after the manner of the prophets; or God, or the Spirit, or the Scripture; (see <590406>James 4:6); but where is it said? some think the apostle refers to (<230902>Isaiah 9:2); others to (<232619>Isaiah 26:19); others to (<236001>Isaiah 60:1); some are of opinion the words are cited out of an apocryphal book of Jeremy, or from some writing now lost; and some have thought them to be a saying of Christ, that was fresh in memory: it may not be improper to observe what Maimonides says [f60], that

> “the blowing of the trumpet in the beginning of the year had an intimation in it, as if was said, µynyçy wrw[“awake ye that sleep”, from your sleep, and ye that slumber rouse up from your slumber, and search into your actions, and return by repentance, and remember your Creator;”

whether any reference may be had to this, may be considered: the words are spoken not to unregenerate men, for though they are asleep, and dead in sin, and need awaking out of sleep, and raising from the dead, yet they are never called upon to awake and arise of themselves; such a sense would

countenance the doctrine of man's free will and power, against the quickening and efficacious grace of God; but to regenerate persons, professors of religion, to whom the epistle in general was written; and who are spoken to, and exhorted in the context:

awake thou that sleepest: the children of God are sometimes asleep, and need awaking; of the nature, causes, and ill consequences of such sleeping, and of the methods by which they are sometimes awaked out of it, (see Gill on “ <45B13>Romans 13:11”).

And arise from the dead; living saints are sometimes among dead sinners, and it becomes them to arise from among them, and quit their company, which is oftentimes the occasion of their sleepiness: besides, the company of dead sinners is infectious and dangerous; it is a means of hardening in sin, and of grieving of the people of God, who observe it; and by abstaining from their company, a testimony is bore against sin, and conviction is struck into the minds of sinners themselves; to which add, that so to do is well pleasing to God, who promises to receive such who come out from among them, and separate themselves from them: and it follows here as an encouragement, and Christ shall give thee light; for such who are made light in the Lord, stand in need of more light; and by keeping close to the word, ways, ordinances, and people of Christ, they may expect more light from Christ: they need fresh light into pardoning grace and mercy, through the blood of Christ; they want more to direct them in the way they should go; and they are often without the light of God's countenance; and they may hope for light from Christ, since it is sown in him, and promised through him; and he is given to be a light unto them, and he is the giver of it himself.

Ver. 15. *See then that ye walk circumspectly*, &c.] The Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, “see then, brethren”, it being an exhortation to the saints at Ephesus, upon the foregoing discourse and citation, to take heed to their walk: the believer's walk is both inward and outward; his inward walk is by faith on Christ; his outward walk is his conversation among men: this supposes life; requires strength and prudence; denotes continuance and progression; with patience and courage: this walk should be seen to, and watched over; a man should see to it that he does walk, and to the way in which he walks, and how he walks; that he walks circumspectly, with his eyes about him; that he walks with diligence, caution, accuracy, and exactness, to the uttermost of his

strength and power; and with wisdom and prudence, looking well to his going:

not as fools, but as wise; such walk like fools, whose eyes are not upon their ways; who walk in their own ways, which are crooked, and ways of darkness, and lead to destruction; who walk after the flesh, and naked, without the garments of a holy life and conversation; and with lamps, but no oil in them: and such walk as wise men, who walk according to the rule of God's word, make Christ their pattern, have the Spirit for their guide, and walk as becomes the Gospel of Christ; inoffensively to all men, in wisdom towards them that are without, and in love to them that are within; and as pilgrims and strangers in this world, looking for a better country; and so as to promote the glory of God, and the good of souls.

Ver. 16. *Redeeming the time*, &c.] Or "buying time"; a like expression is used in (<2008>Daniel 2:8), which we render, gain time: but in the Chaldee text it is, "buy time": and so Jacchiades, a Jewish commentator on the place, renders it, µyrkmn µta tazh t[h, "ye buy this opportunity"; and the Septuagint version uses the same phrase the apostle does here; but there it seems to signify a study to prolong time, to put off the business to another season; but here taking time for a space of time, it denotes a careful and diligent use of it, an improvement of it to the best advantage; and shows that it is valuable and precious, and is not to be trifled with, and squandered away, and be lost, as it may be; for it can neither be recalled nor prolonged: and taking it for an opportunity of doing good to ourselves or others, it signifies that no opportunity of discharging our duty to God and man, of attending on the word and ordinances of the Gospel, and to the private and public exercises of religion, of gaining advantage to our own souls, or of gaining the souls of others, and of doing good either to the bodies or souls of men, should be neglected; but even all risks should be run, and means used to enjoy it: in the Syriac and Chaldee languages, anmz, "time", comes from ^bz, "to redeem": the reason the apostle gives for the redemption of time is,

because the days are evil; as such are, in which iniquity abounds, and many wicked men live, and errors and heresies prevail, and are days of affliction or persecution; (see <0147>Genesis 47:9).

Ver. 17. *Wherefore be ye not unwise*, &c.] No one would be thought to be unwise, but such are, who do not redeem time, and are ignorant of the will

of the Lord; believers should not act the unwise part, neither in their talk, nor in their walk and conversation, nor in their use of time:

but understanding what the will of the Lord [is]; or "of God", as read the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions: there is the secret will of God, which is the rule of all his proceedings; and is unknown to men, till facts make it appear; this is always fulfilled, and sometimes by persons who have no regard to his revealed will; to this the wills of the people of God should be always resigned: and there is his revealed will, which lies partly in the Gospel; which declares it to be his will, that Christ should work out the salvation of his people, which is what he came to do; that whoever believes in him shall be saved; that all that are redeemed shall be sanctified; and that they shall persevere to the end, and be glorified; and partly in the law, in the precepts and commands of it, which contain the good, perfect, and acceptable will of God: and the understanding of it is not a mere speculative knowledge of it, but a practical one; when a man not only knows, but does the will of God, and his heart and actions agree with it; and this is to be done in faith, in virtue of grace and strength received, with a view to the glory of God, having no dependence on what is done; and to the right understanding of it, so as to act according to it, as should be, the word of God, and the illuminations, instructions, and grace of the Spirit, are necessary: the Alexandrian copy, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read the words as an exhortation, "understand ye the will of God".

Ver. 18. *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess*, &c.] The sin of drunkenness here dehorted from, is a custom, or habit, of voluntary excessive drinking of any strong liquor, whereby the mind is disturbed, and deprived of the use of reason: though wine is only here mentioned, that being the usual liquor drank in the eastern countries, yet the same holds good of any other strong liquor, as of that; nor is drinking wine for necessary use prohibited, nor for honest delight and lawful pleasure; but excessive drinking of it, and this voluntary, and with design, and on purpose; otherwise persons may be overtaken and intoxicated, through ignorance of the strength of the liquor, and their own weakness; and it is a custom, or habit of excessive drinking, for not a single act, but a series of actions, a course of living in this sin, denominates a man a drunkard; and generally speaking, excessive drinking deprives persons of the use of reason, though not always; and such are criminal, who are mighty to drink wine, and strong to mingle strong drink; as are also such, who though not

guilty of this sin themselves, are the means of it in others: the sin is very sinful; it is one of the works of the flesh; it is an abuse of the creature; it is opposed to walking honestly; for it persons are to be excluded from the communion of the church; and, without the grace of true repentance, shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven: many things might be said to dissuade from it; it hurts the mind, memory, and judgment; deprives of reason, and sets a man below a beast; it brings diseases on the body, and wastes the estate; it unfits for business and duty; it opens a door for every sin, and exposes to shame and danger; and therefore should be carefully avoided, and especially by professors of religion:

but be filled with the Spirit; that is, "with the Holy Spirit", as read the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; with the gifts and graces of the Spirit: some have been filled with them in an extraordinary way, as the apostles on the day of Pentecost; and others in an ordinary manner, as common believers; and who may be said to be filled with the Spirit, as with wine, or instead of it, or in opposition to it, when the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Spirit, which is compared to wine, for its antiquity, purity, and refreshing nature; and they are filled with it, who have a comfortable sense of it, and a firm persuasion of interest in it, and are delighted with the views of it, and are as it were inebriated with it; and they are filled with the Spirit, in whom his grace is a well of living water, and out of whose belly flow rivers of it; and who have a large measure of spiritual peace and joy, expressed in the following manner.

Ver. 19. *Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs*, &c.] By psalms are meant the Psalms of David, and others which compose the book that goes by that name, for other psalms there are none; and by "hymns" we are to understand, not such as are made by good men, without the inspiration of the Spirit of God; since they are placed between psalms and spiritual songs, made by men inspired by the Holy Ghost; and are put upon a level with them, and to be sung along with them, to the edification of churches; but these are only another name for the Book of Psalms, the running title of which may as well be the Book of Hymns, as it is rendered by Ainsworth; and the psalm which our Lord sung with his disciples after the supper, is called an hymn; and so are the psalms in general called hymns, by Philo the Jew [f61]; and songs and hymns by Josephus [f62]; and twjbçwtw twryç, "songs and praises", or "hymns", in the Talmud [f63]: and by "spiritual songs" are meant the same Psalms of David, Asaph, &c. and the titles of many of them are songs, and sometimes

a psalm and song, and song and psalm, a song of degrees; together with all other Scriptural songs, written by inspired men; and which are called "spiritual", because they are indited by the Spirit of God, consist of spiritual matter, and are designed for spiritual edification; and are opposed to all profane, loose, and wanton songs: these three words answer to µyryç µylht µyrwmzm the several titles of David's Psalms; from whence it seems to be the intention of the apostle, that these should be sting in Gospel churches; for so he explains speaking to themselves in them, in the next clause:

singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord; singing, as it is a distinct thing from prayer, so from giving of thanks, which is mentioned in (⁴⁹50Ephesians 5:20) as another duty; it is not a mental praising of God, for it is called speaking, and teaching, and admonishing, but it is a praising of God with the modulation of the voice; and is rightly performed, when the heart and voice agree; when there is a melody in the heart, as well as in the tongue; for singing and making melody in the heart, is singing with, or from the heart, or heartily; of as elsewhere, "with grace", and which the Alexandrian copy reads here; that is, either with gratitude and thankfulness, or with grace in exercise; and the end in view should be the glory of God.

Ver. 20. *Giving thanks always for all things*, &c.] For things temporal, for our beings, and the preservation of them, and for all the mercies of life; for things spiritual, for Christ, and for all spiritual blessings in him; for electing, redeeming, sanctifying, adopting, pardoning, and justifying grace; for a meetness for heaven, and for eternal life itself; for the Gospel, promises, truths, ordinances, and ministry; and this is to be done always, at all times, in times of adversity, desertion, temptation, affliction, and persecution, as well as in prosperity:

unto God, and the Father; to God who is, and as he is the Father of mercies, and of all creatures; and as he is the Father of Christ, and of all the elect in him:

in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; for all the mercies of God's people, both temporal and spiritual, come through him, and for his sake; and thanksgivings for them are only acceptable to God as they are offered up by him; nor is there any other way of bringing them to God, but through him: this duty, as it stands connected with the former, shows that praise and thanksgiving are the principal subject matter of psalms, hymns, and

spiritual songs, to be sung; and that the manner of singing is with thanksgiving; and that the end of it is to give thanks to God.

Ver. 21. *Submitting yourselves one to another*, &c.] Which may be understood either in a political sense, of giving honour, obedience, and tribute, to civil magistrates, since they are set up by God for the good of men, and it is for the credit of religion for the saints to submit to them; or in an economical sense; thus the wife should be subject to the husband, children to their parents, and servants to their masters, which several things are afterwards insisted on, as explanative of this rule; or in an ecclesiastic sense, so the Ethiopic version renders it, "subject yourselves to your brethren": thus members of churches should be subject to their pastors, not in the same sense as they are to Christ, the head, nor are they obliged to believe or do everything they say, right or wrong; yet honour and esteem are due to them, and submission and obedience should be yielded to their doctrines, precepts, and exhortations, when they are agreeably to the word of God; since God has set them in the highest place in the church, called them to the highest service, and most honourable work, and bestowed on them the greatest gifts; the younger members should also submit to the elder, and the minority to the majority; one member should submit to another, to the superior judgment of another, and to the weakness of another, and to the admonitions of others, and so as to perform all offices of love: and the manner in which this duty is to be performed, is

in the fear of God; which may be considered as the moving cause of submission, or, as the rule of it; submission should be on account of the fear of God, and so far as is consistent with it; and indeed, the fear of God is that which should influence and engage to every duty; and which should be before our eyes, and in exercise in our hearts, in all concerns, civil and religious: the Alexandrian copy and some others, the Complutensian edition, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, "in the fear of Christ"; who is the head of the church, and King of saints, and as such to be feared and reverenced; and for his sake there should be a submission to one another; the Syriac version reads, in the love of Christ, which should constrain the saints to this duty.

Ver. 22. *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands*, &c.] This is an instance, explaining the above general rule; which subjection lies in honour and reverence, (⁴⁰⁵³Ephesians 5:33), and in obedience; they should think well of their husbands, speak becomingly to them, and respectfully of

them; the wife should take care of the family, and family affairs, according to the husband's will; should imitate him in what is good, and bear with that which is not so agreeable; she should not curiously inquire into his business, but leave the management of it to him; she should help and assist in caring and providing for the family; and should abide with him in prosperity and adversity, and do nothing without his will and consent: and this subjection is only to her husband; not to any other man, nor to her children, nor to her servants, or any brought into her house; and this consideration should render the subjection more easy, voluntary, and cheerful: and which is but reasonable that it should be; as may be gathered from the time, matter, and end of the woman's creation, she was made after him, out of him, and for him; and from her fall, and being first in the transgression; and from her being the weaker and inferior sex; and from the profitableness and comeliness of it; and the credit of religion requires it, that so the word of God be not blasphemed: wherefore it follows,

as unto the Lord; that is, either as the Lord has commanded, that so it should be, showing a regard to his precepts; or as in the sight of the Lord, and so yielding it sincerely and heartily; or in things pertaining to the Lord, which are consistent with the law of the Lord, and the Gospel of Christ; and in like manner as the church is subject to Christ, her Lord and husband, as follows.

Ver. 23. *For the husband is the head of the wife*, &c.] (See Gill on "<4611 03>1 Corinthians 11:3").

Even as Christ is the head of the church; all the elect; (see Gill on "<4001 22>Ephesians 1:22"). And he is the Saviour of the body; not "of our body", as the Ethiopic version reads, of that part of man, which is called the body; though that indeed is redeemed and saved by Christ, as well as the soul; but "of his body", as the Vulgate Latin version reads; that is, of the church, which is his body; (see <4001 23>Ephesians 1:23); of which he is the Saviour; he provides everything for it, preserves and protects it, and has wrought out salvation for it, which every member of it partakes of.

Ver. 24. *Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ*, &c.] Her head, being wholly dependent upon him, and entirely resigned to him, and receiving all from him; from whom alone is all her expectation of provision, protection, comfort, and happiness; wherefore she has respect to all his commands, and esteems all his precepts concerning all things to be right; and yields a cheerful, voluntary, sincere, and hearty obedience to them;

arising from a principle of love to him, and joined with honour, fear, and reverence of him:

so [let] the wives [be] to their own husbands in everything: political, domestic, and ecclesiastic; that is consistent with the laws of God, and the Gospel of Christ.

Ver. 25. *Husbands, love your wives*, &c.] Which consists in a strong and cordial affection for them; in a real delight and pleasure in them; in showing respect, and doing honour to them; in seeking their contentment, satisfaction, and pleasure; in a quiet, constant, and comfortable dwelling with them; in providing all things necessary for them; in protecting them from all injuries and abuses; in concealing their faults, and covering their infirmities; in entertaining the best opinion of their persons and actions; and in endeavouring to promote their spiritual good and welfare: this love ought to be hearty and sincere, and not feigned and selfish; it should be shown in private, as well as in public: it should be chaste and single, constant and perpetual; it should exceed that which is bore to neighbours, or even to parents, and should be equal to that a man bears to himself; though not so as to hinder, and break in upon love to God and Christ: many are the reasons why husbands should love their wives; they are given to be helps unto them; they are companions of them; they are wives of covenant; they are their own wives, yea, their own bodies, their own flesh, nay, as themselves; they are their image and their glory; and especially the example of Christ, in his love to his church and people, should engage to it:

even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it: (see Gill on "Ephesians 5:2"); the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, "his own church"; his bride and spouse, whom he betrothed to himself from all eternity, the Father having given her to him; and is no other than the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, even all the elect of God.

Ver. 26 *That he might sanctify and cleanse it*, &c.] Being defiled, both with original sin and actual transgressions; for God's elect, whom Christ loved and espoused from everlasting, fell in Adam with the rest of mankind; and, in their natural state, live in sin as others do; and so are under the guilt, and in the pollution of it, as others be: Christ gave himself for them, that he might deliver them out of this state; he gave himself a sacrifice for them, that he might expiate their sins and make atonement and satisfaction for them; he shed his blood that he might cleanse them from

them; and he wrought out a righteousness that he might justify them from all their iniquities; and which being put upon them, makes them to appear pure and spotless in the sight of divine justice; for this sanctifying and cleansing does not so much refer to the inward work of sanctification of the Spirit, though that is a fruit and effect of the death of Christ, and is brought about by the following means, as to the justification of them by the blood and righteousness of Christ: which is said to be,

with the washing of water; not baptism, which is never expressed by washing; nor does it purify or cleanse from sin; nor is it the means of sanctification and regeneration, which ought to be before it; nor the grace of the Spirit, though that is often compared to water, and regeneration and sanctification are owing to it; yet the saints are not so cleansed from sin by it, as to be without spot or wrinkle; but the blood of Christ, which is the fountain to wash in, and which cleanses from all sin:

by the word; not the form of words in baptism; but either the Gospel, which brings the good news and glad tidings of peace, pardon, atonement, and justification by Christ; or the sentence of justification pronounced upon the conscience by him; (see John 15:2).

Ver. 27. *That he might present it to himself a glorious church*, &c.] There is a presentation of the church by Christ to his Father at his death, when he gathered the elect together in one, brought them nigh, and reconciled them to God, and presented them to holy, unblamable, and unreproveable in his sight; and now in heaven, where he represents their persons, appears and makes intercession for them; and at the last day, when he will deliver the whole number of them complete and perfect, in consequence of his suretyship engagements: but this is a presentation of them to himself; and is either in this life, when they are brought to him in raiment of needlework, clothed with his righteousness, and washed in his blood, and he beholds them all fair, and without spot; or at the first resurrection, and during the thousand years' reign; as well as in the ultimate glory, when the open marriage of the Lamb will be come, when his bride will be arrayed with line linen, clean and white; and have the glory of God upon her, and appear in glory with Christ, and will be a glorious church indeed:

not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; the bodies of the saints will be like to Christ's glorious body, and will shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father; and in their souls they will be completely conformed to the image of Christ, and enjoy uninterrupted communion with him, and have

perfect knowledge of him; they will be always in his presence, and he will take unspeakable delight and complacency in them, which his presentation of them to himself is expressive of; the church will then be free from all spots and blemishes; from all hypocrites and formal professors; and all heresies and heretics; from all declensions and infirmities, and from all sin and iniquity: the allusion seems to be to the customs and practices of the Jews, in their espousals: if a man espoused a woman on condition that she had no spots in her, and afterwards spots were found in her, she was not espoused; for spots or blemishes, as in priests, so in women, render them unfit; as the one for service, so the other for marriage; and they reckon up eight several spots or blemishes, for which they may be rejected [f64]: but Christ's church has no spots or blemishes, nor anything like them; and will never be rejected by him, but will be always pleasing in his sight:

but that it should be holy and without blemish; as it is, being justified by his righteousness, washed in his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit.

Ver. 28. *So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies*, &c.] It is a common saying with the Jews, that a man's wife is wpwgk, "as his own body" [f65]; and it is one of the precepts of their wise men, that a man should honour his wife more than his body, wpwgk hbhaw, and "love her as his body" [f66]; for as they also say, they are but one body [f67]; the apostle seems to speak in the language of his countrymen; however, his doctrine and theirs agree in this point: wherefore

he that loveth his wife loveth himself; because she is one body and flesh with him.

Ver. 29. *For no man ever yet hated his own flesh*, &c.] This is unnatural, contrary to the first principles of nature; (see <23B807>Isaiah 58:7); which the [f68] Jews understand of one that is near akin, and there is none nearer than a wife:

but nourisheth and cherisheth it; feeds and clothes it:

even as the Lord the church; who never hated her, but nourishes and cherishes her: Christ never hated his church and people; for his love is not only a love of benevolence, but of complacency and delight: there is a difference between anger and hatred, Christ may be angry with them, but not hate them; and there is a difference between persons and actions, Christ may hate their actions, but not their persons; and there is a difference

between desert and fact, they may be deserving of his wrath and hatred, but are not the objects of it in fact; and there is a difference between what is real, and what is imaginary, they may imagine themselves to be hated by him, when they are not; and there is a difference between hatred, and a non-discovery of love, Christ may not manifest his love, and yet not hate; as he never does his own people, for his love is everlasting and unchangeable: and he "nourishes" them, as a father his child, as a shepherd his flock, and as an husband his wife; he feeds them with that which is nourishing, and with himself the bread of life, with his covenant and promises, with the Gospel and the doctrines of it, and with his love and grace; and by his Spirit, ministers, word, and ordinances: and he "cherishes" them, he grants them near and intimate communion with himself, than which nothing is more desirable by them, or joyful to them; nor is there anything that more revives and encourages faith, hope, and love; he clothes them suitable to their dignity and character, as his spouse and bride; and with which they are well contented, and in which they look exceeding comely in his sight: these phrases are expressive of the whole care Christ takes of his church, in furnishing her with everything pertaining to life and godliness; for her comfort and happiness in this world, and that to come: instead of the Lord, the Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, Christ; and the Arabic version reads, "as the Lord loves the church".

Ver. 30. *For we are members of his body*, &c.] Not of his natural body, for this would make Christ's human nature monstrous; Christ, as man, is of our flesh and of our bones, or a partaker of the same flesh and blood with us; or otherwise, his incarnation would have been of no service to us; and had our human nature been from Christ, it would not have been corrupted; but our bodies, flesh, and bones, are from the first, and not the second Adam, and so corrupt and sinful; Christ indeed, as God, is the former of all human nature, and, as man, was set up in God's thoughts as the pattern of it; but the apostle is here speaking of the saints, not as men, but as Christians, as new creatures in Christ; and of what is peculiar to them; and therefore this must be understood of Christ's mystical body the church; which is his by the Father's gift, and his own purchase; and of which he is the head, and which is united to him; now of this saints are members; (see <4512>Romans 12:5 <4612>1 Corinthians 12:12,18,27).

Of his flesh and of his bones: for so the church may be called, his own flesh, his flesh and bones, on account of the marriage relation she stands in

to him, and that spiritual union there is between them, which these phrases are expressive of; and which the near relation of man and wife is an emblem of; these words are wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 31. *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother*, &c.] These words contain the law of marriage, and are cited from (<0102 24>Genesis 2:24); and declare what ought to be, and are a prophecy of what should be; and are observed against polygamy, and to stir up mutual affection; (see Gill on "<0401 9>Matthew 19:5").

Ver. 32. *This is a great mystery*, &c.] It has something mysterious in it; it is a figure and emblem of the mysterious union between Christ and his people: for so it follows,

but I speak concerning Christ and the church; or mention this law and institution of marriage, with respect to them; for the leaving of father and mother prefigured Christ's coming forth from the Father, and coming into this world in human nature, and his disregard to his earthly parents, in comparison with his people, and his service for them; the man cleaving to the wife very aptly expresses the strong affection of Christ to his church, and the near communion there is between them; and their being one flesh denotes the union of them; and indeed, the marriage of Adam and Eve was a type of Christ and his church; for in this the first Adam was a figure of him that was to come, as well as in being a federal head to his posterity: Adam was before Eve, so Christ was before his church; God thought it not proper that man should be alone, so neither Christ, but that he should have some fellows and companions with him: the formation of Eve from Adam was typical of the church's production from Christ; she was made of him while he was asleep, which sleep was from the Lord, and it was not an ordinary one; which may resemble the sufferings and death of Christ, which were from the Lord, and were not common; and which are the redemption of his church and people; and which secure their comfort and happiness, and wellbeing: she was taken out of his side, and built up a woman of one of his ribs; both the justification and sanctification of the church are from Christ, from the water and the blood which issued out of his side, when on the cross: the bringing and presentation of Eve to Adam has its mystery; it was God that brought her to him; and she was the same that was made out of him; and to the same Adam was she brought of whose rib she was made, and that not against her will: so it is God that draws souls to Christ, and

espouses them to him, even the same that he has chosen in him, and Christ has redeemed by his blood; and to the same are they brought, who was wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their sins; and they are made willing in the day of his power upon them, to come and give themselves to him. Adam's consent and acknowledgment of Eve to be his wife, shadow forth Christ's hearty reception and acknowledgment of the saints, as being of him, and his, when they are brought unto him under the influences of his grace and Spirit.

Ver. 33. *Nevertheless, let everyone of you in particular*, &c.] The apostle returns to his former subject, and recapitulates the mutual duties of husband and wife, after he had enforced them from the instance and example of Christ, and his church; and would have every married person in particular take the directions and instructions given, to themselves: as that the husband

so love his wife even as himself; since they two are one flesh:

and the wife [see] that she reverence [her] husband; since he leaves father and mother for her, and is the head of her; (see Gill on "Ephesians 5:22").

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS 6

In this chapter the apostle goes on with his exhortations to relative and domestic duties, and considers those of children and parents, and of servants and masters; and next he exhorts the saints in general to constancy and perseverance in the exercise of grace, and the performance of duty in the strength of Christ, and with the use of the armour of God described by him; entreats them to pray for him; gives the reasons of sending Tychicus, who brought them this epistle, and closes it with his apostolical salutation. He begins with the duties of children to their parents, which are submission and obedience to them, honour, fear, and reverence of them; the arguments engaging thereunto are taken from the light of nature and reason, from the command of God, and the promise annexed to it, (<4001>Ephesians 6:1-3). Then follow the duties of fathers to their children, who are exhorted not to use them with too much rigour, and so provoke them to wrath, but to bring them up in a religious manner, that they may serve the Lord, (<4004>Ephesians 6:4). Next he observes the duties of servants to their masters, which are subjection and obedience, which should be done with reverence of them, with simplicity of heart, as unto Christ, not with eyeservice, as menpleasers, but with the heart, and with good will, as doing the will of God, and as if it was to the Lord, and not men; to which they are encouraged by a promise of reward which is given without respect to bond or free, (<4005>Ephesians 6:5-8). And masters, they are exhorted to do what is right and just to their servants, and not terrify them with menaces; to which they are moved by the consideration of their having a master in heaven, who is no respecter of persons, (<4009>Ephesians 6:9). From hence the apostle passes to a general exhortation to the saints to behave with firmness and constancy of mind, though they had many enemies, and these mighty and powerful, and more than a match for them; relying on the power and strength of Christ, and making use of the whole armour of God, which he advises them to take, that they might stand and withstand in the worst of times, (<4010>Ephesians 6:10-13), the several parts of which he enumerates, as the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the Gospel of peace, the shield of faith, whereby the fiery darts of Satan are quenched,

the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit the word of God, and spiritual prayer of every sort for all saints, attended with watching and perseverance, (<4614>Ephesians 6:14-18), which last part of the spiritual armour being mentioned, leads on the apostle to entreat the Ephesians to pray for him, that he might freely and boldly preach the Gospel; which he commends from the mysterious nature and subject of it, from his character as an ambassador for it, or for Christ, the sum and substance of it, and from his being in bonds for it; which showed how great an esteem he had of it, and how heartily concerned he was to preach it without fear, (<4619>Ephesians 6:19,20). And then adds, that the reasons of his sending Tychicus, whom he describes by his relation to him as a brother, and his affection for him, and by his office as a minister, and his faithfulness in it, were, that they might be acquainted with his circumstances, in what state and condition he was, both with respect to things temporal and spiritual, and that their hearts might be comforted by him, (<4621>Ephesians 6:21,22). And the epistle is concluded with the apostle's salutation; and the persons saluted are the brethren of this church, and all that love Christ Jesus sincerely; and the blessings wished for are peace, love, with faith and grace; the persons from whom they are desired are God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, (<4623>Ephesians 6:23,24).

Ver. 1. *Children, obey your parents in the Lord*, &c.] The persons whose duty this is, “children”, are such of every sex, male and female, and of every age, and of every state and condition; and though the true, legitimate, and immediate offspring of men may be chiefly respected, yet not exclusive of spurious children, and adopted ones, and of children-in-law; and the persons to whom obedience from them is due, are not only real and immediate parents, both father and mother, but such who are in the room of parents, as step-fathers, step-mothers, guardians, nurses, &c. and all who are in the ascending line, as grandfathers, grandmothers, &c. to these, children should be subject and obedient in all things lawful, just, and good; in everything that is not sinful and unlawful, by the word of God; and in things indifferent, as much as in them lies, and even in things which are difficult to perform: and this obedience should be hearty and sincere, and not merely verbal, and in show and appearance, nor mercenary; and should be joined with gratitude and thankfulness for past favours: and it should be “in the Lord”; which may be considered either as a limitation of the obedience, that it should be in things that are agreeable to the mind and will of the Lord; or as an argument to it, because it is the command of the

Lord, and is wellpleasing in his sight, and makes for his glory, and therefore should be done for his sake:

for this is right; it appears to be right by the light of nature, by which the very Heathens have taught it; and it is equitable from reason that so it should be; and it is just by the law of God, which commands nothing but what is holy, just, and good.

Ver. 2. *Honour thy father and mother*, &c.] This explains who parents are, and points at some branches of obedience due unto them; for they are not only to be loved, and to be feared, and reverenced, their corrections to be submitted to, offences against them to be acknowledged, their tempers to be bore with, and their infirmities covered; but they are to be honoured in thought, word, and gesture; they are to be highly thought of and esteemed; they are to be spoken to, and of, very honourably, and with great veneration and to be behaved to in a very respectful manner; and they are to be relieved, assisted, and maintained in comfortable way when aged, and in necessitous circumstances; and which may be chiefly designed. So the Jews explain dwbk, "the honour" due to parents, by, &c. lykam, "giving them food, drink", and "clothing", unloosing their shoes, and leading them out and in [f69]. Compare with this (<540504>1 Timothy 5:4,17); (see Gill on "<401504>Matthew 15:4");

which is the first commandment with promise: it is the fifth commandment in the decalogue, but the first that has a promise annexed to it: it is reckoned by the Jews [f70] the weightiest of the weightiest commands of the law; and the reward bestowed on it, is length of days, as follows.

Ver. 3. *That it may be well with thee*, &c.] In this world, and that which is to come; (see <051516>Deuteronomy 5:16). The Jews [f71] say,

> "there are four things, which if a man does, he eats the fruit of them in this world, and the capital part remains for him in the world to come; and they are these, µaw ba dwbyk; "honouring father and mother", doing acts of beneficence, making peace between a man and his neighbour, and learning of the law, which answers to them all."

And thou mayest live long on the earth: length of days is in itself a blessing; and though men's days cannot be lengthened beyond God's purpose and decree; and though obedient children do not always live long;

yet disobedience to parents often brings the judgments of God on children, so that they die not a common death, (2 Samuel 18:14 Proverbs 30:17). On those words in (Deuteronomy 32:47), the Jews [f72] have this paraphrase;

> "because it is your life, µaw ba dwbyk hz, "this is honouring father and mother; and through this thing ye shall prolong your days", this is beneficence."

It may be observed, that the words in this promissory part are not the same as in the decalogue, where they stand thus, "that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee", (Exodus 20:12), referring to the land of Canaan; for the law in the form of it, in which it was delivered by Moses, only concerned the people of the Jews; wherefore to suit this law, and the promise of it, to others, the apostle alters the language of it.

Ver. 4. *And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath*, &c.] Neither by words; by unjust and, unreasonable commands; by contumelious and reproachful language; by frequent and public chidings, and by indiscreet and passionate expressions: nor by deeds; preferring one to another; by denying them the necessaries of life; by not allowing them proper recreation; by severe and cruel blows, and inhuman usage; by not giving them suitable education; by an improper disposal of them in marriage; and by profusely spending their estates, and leaving nothing to them: not but that parents may, and ought to correct and rebuke their children; nor are they accountable to them for their conduct; yet they should take care not to provoke them to wrath, because this alienates their minds from them, and renders their instructions and corrections useless, and puts them upon sinful practices; wrath lets in Satan, and leads to sin against God; and indeed it is difficult in the best of men to be angry and not sin; (see Colossians 3:21). Fathers are particularly mentioned, they being the heads of families, and are apt to be too severe, as mothers too indulgent.

But bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; instructing them in the knowledge of divine things, setting them good examples, taking care to prevent their falling into bad company, praying with them, and for them, bringing them into the house of God, under the means of grace, to attend public worship; all which, under a divine blessing, may be very useful to them; the example of Abraham is worthy of imitation,

(<01819>Genesis 18:19), and the advice of the wise man deserves attention, (<202206>Proverbs 22:6).

Ver. 5. *Servants, be obedient to them that are [your] masters*, &c.] The apostle enlarges on the duty of servants, as well as frequently inculcates it in his epistles; because, generally speaking, they were more rude and ignorant, and less pains were taken with them to instruct them; they were apt to be impatient and weary of the yoke; and scandal was like to arise from servants in the first ages of Christianity through some libertines, and the licentiousness of the false teachers, who insinuated, that servitude was inconsistent with Christian freedom: the persons exhorted are “servants”, bond servants, and hired servants; who are to be subject to, and obey their “masters”, of each sex, whether male or female, of every condition, whether poor or rich, believers or unbelievers, good or bad humoured, gentle or froward: such as are their masters

according to the flesh; or “carnal masters”, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; even though they are unregenerate men, and are in a state of nature, and only mind the things of the flesh, yet they are to be obeyed in their lawful commands; or “in things pertaining to the flesh”, as the Arabic version renders it; in things temporal, which concern the body, and this temporal life; not in things spiritual and religious, or that belong to conscience, and which are contrary to them: or “according to your flesh”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; signifying that they are only masters over their bodies, not their consciences; and that their power only extends to corporeal things, and can last no longer than while they are in the flesh; (see <183919>Job 3:19); and obedience is to be yielded to them

with fear and trembling; with great humility and respect, with reverence of them, and giving honour to them, with carefulness not to offend them, with submission to their reproofs and corrections, and with fear of punishment; but more especially with the fear of God, being by that influenced and constrained to obedience;

in singleness of heart; with readiness and cheerfulness, without hypocrisy and dissimulation, and with all integrity and faithfulness:

as unto Christ; it being agreeable to his will, and what makes for his glory, and serves to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

Ver. 6. *Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers*, &c.] Doing nothing but when under the master's eye, and then pretending a great deal of diligence and

industry, in order to ingratiate themselves into his affections, and neglecting his business when he is absent; whereas they ought to attend his service in his absence, as well as in his presence, and so seek to please him, which is commendable.

But as the servants of Christ; acting in like manner as the servants of Christ, who are not menpleasers; or as if they themselves were serving Christ, as indeed they are, when they are doing that which is the will of Christ:

doing the will of God from the heart; meaning not the will of God in a religious, but in a civil sense, yielding a cheerful and hearty obedience to their own masters.

Ver. 7. *With good will doing service*, &c.] To their masters; not grudgingly, with an ill will; no otherwise, nor longer than when they are forced to it; but of a ready mind, and with a cheerful spirit, taking delight in their work, and reckoning it a pleasure to serve their masters; as an Israelite that is not sold, who does his work wnwx r b, "with his good will", and according to his own mind [f73]; doing what they do

as to the Lord, and not to men; not merely because it is the will of men, and they are commanded by them, and in order to please them, but because it is the will of the Lord, and is wellpleasing in his sight.

Ver. 8. *Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth*, &c.] According to the will of God, from right principles in his heart, and with a view to God's glory:

the same shall he receive of the Lord; that is, he shall receive the fruit and advantage of it, in a way of grace,

whether [he be] bond or free; a bondman or a free man, a master or a servant.

Ver. 9. *And ye masters do the same things unto them*, &c.] This does not refer to service and obedience, but to singleness of heart, benevolence, humanity, and a regard to Christ, and the will of God, and to the doing of good things, and to the performance of their duty, as they would have their servants do theirs; whose duty, if religious masters, is, with respect to their souls, to instruct them in, and use them to religious exercises, to pray with them, and for them, to set them good examples, to prevent them falling

into, bad company, and to allow them proper time for religious duties; and with respect to their bodies, and outward concerns, to provide sufficient food and proper raiment for them, or to give them their due wages, to take care of them when sick or lame, and show compassion and humanity to them, to encourage those that are prudent, faithful, and laborious, and to correct the disobedient, and expel the incorrigible:

forbearing threatening; not that they may not in any sense threaten, but not always, nor too often, nor too much, and with great things on light occasions; nor should they be too forward to execute their threatenings, especially when their servants repent and amend; they should then forbear them and forgive; and so the Syriac version renders it, "forgive their offences": this is opposed to all hard rigour, and ill usage, either by words or blows. And this is a rule given by the Jews [f74], that a master should not multiply clamour and anger, but should speak him (his servant) quietly, and in a still manner, and he will hear his objections, or arguments and reasons:

knowing that your master also is in heaven; meaning Christ, who employs, provides for, and uses well all his servants, and to whom masters must be accountable for their usage of servants; for he is the common master of masters and servants; and so the Alexandrian copy, and Vulgate Latin version, read, "their and your master": and the place of his habitation is mentioned, to distinguish him from earthly masters; and the more to move and excite masters to their duty, since he being in heaven overlooks and takes notice of all their actions, as the omniscient God; and being omnipotent, has it in his power to plead and avenge the cause of the injured:

neither is there respect of persons with him; as whether they are of this, or the other nation, Jew or Gentile; whether in this, or that state and condition, or in such and such circumstances of life; whether masters or servants, bond or free, or whether Canaanitish or Hebrew servants; between which the Jews [f75] made a difference, and allowed of rigour to be used to the one, but required mercy and kindness to be showed to the other; and so were respecters of persons.

Ver. 10. *Finally, my brethren*, &c.] This is the conclusion of the apostle's exhortations, in which he addresses the saints as his brethren; which appellation he uses, not merely as a familiar way of speaking among the Jews, but in regard to them as regenerate persons, and of the same family and household of God with himself; and he calls them so, to show his

humility, and as a proof of his affection to them, and with a design to encourage them to their duty, as follows:

be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; which is directed to, partly on account of the things before exhorted to, which could not be performed in their own strength; and partly with respect to their many and potent enemies hereafter mentioned, against whom they had no might nor power of their own; and therefore the apostle points out the Lord Jesus Christ unto them, in whom are strength, power, and might, even everlasting strength, to enable them to perform their duty, and to fight against every enemy, sin, Satan, and the world; for though they are weak, and strength in themselves, and can do nothing of themselves, and without Christ; yet since there is strength in him, which is communicable to them, they may expect it from him, and depend upon it; and they may come at, or strengthen themselves in it, and by it, by meditation on it, by prayer for it, by waiting on Christ in his own ways, by exercising faith upon him, and through the Spirit, who strengthens them from him with might in the inward man.

Ver. 11. *Put on the whole armour of God*, &c.] Not that which God himself is sometimes clothed with, and uses against his enemies; but what he has provided for his people, and furnishes them with; the particulars of which are after mentioned: and it is called "the armour of God", because it is prepared by him for his people, and is bestowed on them by him; and because it is in its own nature divine and spiritual, and not carnal; and because it is provided for fighting the Lord's battles, and is used in them; and because the efficacy of it is from him, and the execution it does is owing to him: and it is whole, complete, and perfect; and all of it is useful, and no part to be neglected, but all to be taken and "put on"; which is not to make and provide this armour, but to take it, as in (Ephesians 6:13); as being ready made and provided, and to expect and prepare for battle, and make use of it; and this supposes saints to be in a warfare state, and that they are in the character of soldiers, and have enemies to fight with, and therefore should be accoutred with proper and suitable armour, to meet them:

that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil; who is the grand enemy of Christ and his people, and a very powerful and cunning one he is; so that the whole armour of God should be put on, which is proof against all his might and craft, in order to stand against him, oppose

him, and fight, and get the victory over him, which in the issue is always obtained by believers; for they not only stand their ground in the strength of Christ, and by the use of their armour confound his schemes, and baffle all his arts and stratagems, but are more than conquerors through him that has loved them.

Ver. 12. *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood*, &c.] The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and some copies, read "you", instead of "we". This is a reason why saints should be strong in the Lord, and why they should put on the whole armour of God, and prepare for battle, since their enemies are such as here described: not "flesh and blood"; frail mortal men, such as were wrestled against in the Olympic games, to which the apostle alludes. For this wrestling, as Philo the Jew says[f76], concerning Jacob's wrestling, is not of the body, but of the soul; (see <40167>Matthew 16:17 <48116>Galatians 1:16); and the meaning is, not with men only, for otherwise the saints have a conflict with men; with profane men, and wrestle against them, by bearing a testimony against their enormities, and by patiently enduring their reproaches, and conquer them by a constant adherence to Christ, and an exercise of faith upon him, which gets the victory over the world; and with heretical men, and maintain a conflict with them, by watching and observing the first appearance of their errors and heresies, and declaring against them, and by using Scripture arguments to confute them, and by rejecting the stubborn and incorrigible from church communion: yet they wrestle not against these only,

but against principalities, against powers; by whom are meant not civil magistrates, or the Roman governors, though these are sometimes so called, (<56301>Titus 3:1), and may be said to be the rulers of the darkness of this world, or of the dark Heathen world, and were in high places, and were of wicked and malicious spirits, against the people of Christ; yet these cannot be opposed to flesh and blood, or to men, since they were such themselves; and though they were in high, yet not in heavenly places; and the connection with the preceding verse shows the contrary, the enemy being the devil, and the armour spiritual; wherefore the devils are here designed, who are described from their power, rule, and government, (see Gill on "<49021>Ephesians 1:21"), both in this clause, and in the next:

and against the rulers of the darkness of this world; that is, over wicked men in it, who are in a state of darkness itself; and so Satan is called the prince, and god of the world, (<48231>John 12:31 <47004>2 Corinthians 4:4). The

Jews use this very word, the apostle does here, of the angel of death; who is called darkness [f77]; and the devil is called by them, Æçwj lç rç, "the prince of darkness" [f78]; and mention is made by them of aml[ykwçj, "the darkness of the world" [f79]; from whom the apostle seems to have taken these phrases, as being in common use among the Jews; who also use it of civil governors [f80], and render it, as here, "the rulers of the world", and say it signifies monarchs, such as rule from one end of the world to the other [f81]: some copies, and the Ethiopic version, leave out the phrase, of this world. It follows,

against spiritual wickedness in high places; or wicked spirits, as the devils are, unclean, proud, lying, deceitful, and malicious; who may be said to be in "high" or "heavenly places"; not in places super celestial, or in the highest heavens, in the third heaven, where God, angels, and saints are; but in the aerial heavens, where the power or posse of devils reside, and where they are above us, over our heads, overlooking us, and watching every advantage against us; and therefore we should have on our armour, and be in a readiness to engage them; and so the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, "under", or "beneath heaven"; and the Arabic version, "in the air".

Ver. 13. *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God*, &c.] This is a repetition of the exhortation in (<4061>Ephesians 6:11); which repetition seems necessary by reason of the many powerful enemies mentioned in the preceding verse, and serves to explain what is meant by putting it on: and leads on the apostle to give an account of the several parts of this armour: the end of taking it is much the same as before,

that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day; that is, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles and stratagems of Satan, against his power and might, to oppose his schemes, and resist his temptations: and so the Syriac version renders it, "that ye may be able to meet the evil one"; to face him, and give him battle, being accoutred with the whole armour of God; though the Greek copies, and other versions, read, "in the evil day"; in which sin and iniquity abound, error and heresy prevail, Satan is very busy, trials and afflictions come on, persecution arises because of the word, and God's judgments are in the earth:

and having done all to stand; or having overcome, having routed the enemy, stand as conquerors; or rather, having took and put on the whole armour of God, in order to stand, and withstand the enemy.

Ver. 14. *Stand therefore*, &c.] Keep your ground, do not desert the army, the church of Christ, nor his cause; continue in the station in which you are placed, keep your post, be upon your watch, stand upon your guard:

having your loins girt about with truth; by which is meant the Gospel, and the several doctrines of it; (see <490113>Ephesians 1:13 4:15); and to have the loins girt with it, shows, that it should be near and close to the saints, and never departed from; and that it is a means of keeping them close to God and Christ, and of strengthening them against the assaults and attacks of Satan; and is of great use in the Christians' spiritual conflict with their enemies; the girdle is a part of armour, and so considerable as sometimes to be put for the whole, (<230527>Isaiah 5:27); and here it is mentioned in the first place:

and having on the breastplate of righteousness; in allusion to (<235917>Isaiah 59:17), meaning not works of righteousness done by men, though these are a fence when rightly used against the reproaches and charges of the enemy, as they were by Samuel, (<091203>1 Samuel 12:3), but rather the graces of faith and love, (<520508>1 Thessalonians 5:8), though faith has another place in the Christian armour, afterwards mentioned; wherefore it seems best to understand this of the righteousness of Christ, which being imputed by God, and received by faith, is a guard against, and repels the accusations and charges of Satan, and is a security from all wrath and condemnation.

Ver. 15. *And your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace*.] The Gospel is so called, because it makes men to be of peaceable tempers and behaviour, and gives peace to distressed minds: it directs the way to eternal peace, and publishes peace made by the blood of Christ; and has a much better claim to this name, and epithet, than the law has, which is often called “peace” by the Jews [f82]: the “preparation” of it does not design a promptitude or readiness to preach the Gospel, or to receive it, or profess it, or to give a reason of faith in it, or to endure reproach and persecution for it; nor that readiness which the Gospel is a means of, as for every good work, for the spiritual warfare, for the Christian's journey heavenward, or for heaven itself: but the word ετοιμασια signifies a “base”, or foundation; and so it is used by the Septuagint interpreters on (<380511>Zechariah 5:11); and here it designs a firm and solid knowledge of the

Gospel, as it publishes peace by Jesus Christ, which yields a sure foundation for the Christian soldier to set his foot upon, and stand fast on; it being that to him, as the shoe is to the foot, its base or foundation: and for the feet to be “shod with” it, does not mean the outward conversation being agreeably to the Gospel, though such a walk and conversation is very beautiful and safe, and such may walk and war with intrepidity: but it designs the constant and firm standing of believers in the faith of the Gospel, and so striving and contending for it, without being moved from it, that it may continue with them. Shoes or boots, which were sometimes of iron, and sometimes of brass, are reckoned among the armour of soldiers [f83].

Ver. 16. *Above all, taking the shield of faith*, &c.] Which may be understood either of the grace of faith, which is like a golden shield, precious, solid, and substantial; and like a shield of mighty men, by which mighty things are done, and by which the believer not only repels, but conquers the enemy. The Jews say [f84], that repentance and good works are as a shield against divine vengeance: or rather of the object of faith, that which faith makes use of as a shield; so God himself is a shield, (<01501>Genesis 15:1); his divine perfections, as his power, faithfulness, truth, and immutability, which encompass the saints as a shield, and are opposed by faith to the temptations of Satan; also the love and favour of God, (<19512>Psalm 5:12); and particularly God in his word, (<20305>Proverbs 30:5), which is a shield against false doctrines, and the wiles of Satan. Moreover, Christ is a shield, (<19411>Psalm 84:11); and faith makes rise of him as a shield, his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; which it holds up and opposes to all the charges and objections of Satan; and who is the saints' protection, and security from the wrath of God, divine justice, and eternal death. The disciples of the wise men are said to be [f85] ^wsyrt, “shielded men”, who, as the gloss says fight in the war of the law; but they are not like Christ's disciples, who have on the shield, and fight the fight of faith: and this is “above all” to be taken, as being the most useful part of the Christian armour; or “with all”, with the rest, this is to be taken, and by no means to be neglected; and it is to be used “in all”; in every temptation of Satan, in every conflict with that enemy, or any other.

Wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; of the wicked one, Satan; who was the first wicked one, and the tempter of others to wickedness; and is emphatically the wicked one, being wickedness itself; and his temptations are “fiery darts”: they may be

compared to “darts”, because they sometimes come suddenly and swiftly and thick and fast, are very numerous, and where they stick are very troublesome and grieving; (see <01423>Genesis 49:23,24). And they may be said to be “fiery”, because they serve to inflame the mind, and excite to sin, as lust, anger, revenge, and the like; and were they not repelled, would be the occasion of bringing into everlasting burnings. The allusion is to βελεσι πεπυρωμενοις, “the fiery darts”, cast by enemies into towns, and upon houses, in order to burn them [f86]. Mention is also made of açad yryg, “fiery darts”, with the Jews [f87], and of Satan's casting a dart at David [f88]: from these customs, and ways of speaking, the apostle borrows his phrases; and suggests, that the shield of faith is of use to quench the fiery darts of Satan's temptations; so that they may not have the malignant influence they are designed for; which is chiefly done by faith's dealing with the blood of Christ. And there were ways of quenching the fiery darts alluded to; which was done by skins and hides of beasts made wet, or anointed with alum [f89].

Ver. 17. *And take the helmet of salvation*, &c.] Meaning either Christ himself, the Saviour; and so the Arabic version renders it, “the helmet of the Saviour”: or the salvation itself, which he is the author of, and a well grounded hope of it; (see <52508>1 Thessalonians 5:8); the allusion is to (<23917>Isaiah 59:17); and such an hope of salvation by Christ is a defence of the head against false doctrines; for the helmet is a piece of armour for the head; and it is an erecter of the head in times of difficulty, affliction, and distress; and it covers the head in the day of battle, when engaged with Satan, the enemy of souls:

and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; the word of God is compared to a “sword”, for its two edges, the law and Gospel; the one convicts of sin, and cuts to the heart for it, and the other cuts down all the goodliness of man; and the Scriptures in general are a sharp sword, in convincing of sin, reproving for it, and threatening with wrath and ruin, in refuting error and heresy, and repelling Satan's temptations, and will be used in the destruction of antichrist: and this word may be called “the sword of the Spirit”, because it is not carnal, but of a spiritual nature; and is used by the spiritual man; and because the Holy Spirit, as the Ethiopic version here expresses it, is the author of it; and which he furnishes the saints with, and teaches them how to make use of, and makes it powerful

and effectual. So the Jews say [f90], the words of the law are like to a sword, and speak of hrwt brj "the sword of the law" [f91]

Ver. 18. *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit*, &c.] The last weapon is prayer, and takes in all sorts of prayer, mental and vocal, public and private; and every branch of it, as deprecation of evils, petitions for good things, and thanksgiving for mercies: and which should be used always: this stands opposed to such who pray not at all, or who have prayed, but have left it off; or who pray only in distress, and it suggests, that a man should pray as often as he has an opportunity; and particularly, that he should make use of it in times of darkness, desertion, and temptation: and this, when performed aright, is performed "in the Spirit"; with the heart, soul, and spirit engaged in it; it is put up with a true heart, and a right spirit, and without hypocrisy; in a spiritual way, and with fervency, and under the influence, and by the assistance of the Spirit of God.

And watching thereunto; either to the word, as a direction for prayer, or to prayer itself; for opportunities to pray for the assistance of the Spirit in prayer, for an answer of it, and to return thanks for blessings when bestowed; and against all dependence on it, and against Satan's temptations, and our own corruptions with respect to it:

with all perseverance; in it, notwithstanding what Satan and an unbelieving heart may suggest to the contrary:

and supplication for all saints; of every nation, age, sex, and condition, in all places, and of every denomination. So Christ taught his disciples to pray, saying, our Father, suggesting, that they were not only to pray for themselves, but for all the children of God.

Ver. 19. *And for me*, &c.] This shows the great humility of the apostle, and the sense he had of the greatness of the work of the ministry; and that it is the duty of people to pray for their ministers; and that no man is perfect in this life; and that the more superior members need the assistance of the inferior ones; for this request is made by the apostle not in dissimulation, or as feigning humility and modesty; but in the sincerity of his heart, and from a real sense of his need of fresh supplies of gifts and grace, to fit him for the work and service of Christ:

that utterance may be given unto me, or “that the word”; meaning not the subject matter of the ministry, the word of the Gospel, the word of faith, truth, and reconciliation, for that was committed to him; unless he should mean an increase of light and knowledge in it; but rather a faculty of speaking it freely and aptly, and what is commonly called elocution; not speaking with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but with the words of the Holy Ghost: or else an opportunity of preaching the word, and liberty to do it, as follows;

that I may open my mouth boldly; or “in the opening of my mouth”; the phrase is Rabbinical. The Jews[f92] say, that when Moses came to write that passage, “let us make man in our image”, &c. (Gen 1:26), he said before the Lord of the world, why dost thou give hp ^wjtp, “opening of the mouth”, to heretics? i.e. an occasion to them of speaking, objecting to us, and of reproving and convincing us with respect to a plurality of persons in the Deity: and a little after they say,

> “wherever you hp ^wjtp, “an opening of the mouth to heretics”, you will find an answer by its side, or along with it.”

Now the apostle desired he might have something to say, to object to, and to reprove and convince the unbelieving Jews; that he might do this with boldness, with all faithfulness with Courage, and intrepidity, and with freedom of speech; or “openly” and “publicly”, as the Syriac version renders it:

to make known, the mystery of the Gospel; or the mysterious doctrines of it, such as the doctrines of a trinity of persons, of the union of the two natures in Christ, justification by his righteousness, regeneration by his Spirit and grace, the saints' union to Christ, and communion with him, the resurrection of the dead, &c. which are called mysteries, because they were hid until revealed; and though revealed, the “modus” and “ratio” of them are not to be accounted for. Now the apostle's work was to make known these mysteries, to prove the truth of them from the word of God, and to defend them against the opposers of them; and that he might be able to do this he entreats the prayers of the saints.

Ver. 20. *For which I am an ambassador in bonds*, &c.] The character the apostle bore was that of an ambassador; and he was an ambassador from and for Christ, in his room and stead; he represented him, he was sent by him, and entrusted by him with the Gospel; he gave him it, and a

commission to preach it, and furnished him with qualifications for it; such as knowledge and faithfulness wisdom and prudence, courage and greatness of mind; and made his embassy successful: and he was chiefly an ambassador to the Gentiles, which showed great condescension in Christ to send him to them, and base ingratitude in the despisers and rejecters of the Gospel, for which he was an ambassador; for the embassy Christ's ministers are sent on, is the embassy of the Gospel of peace: their business is to declare that men by nature are enemies to God; that peace is made by the blood of Christ for such; by which means they are made useful to conciliate the minds of men to God's way of salvation and to bring them to submit to his government and laws: and when he adds, “in bonds”, or “in a chain”, he means, that he was in such circumstances, not for any crime, but for the Gospel, for which he was an ambassador; and therefore was not ashamed of his bonds, or chain, but rather gloried in them; and he makes mention of them to engage persons to a regard to him as an ambassador, and to his embassy; for an ambassador, especially an ambassador of Christ, that comes with his Gospel, and more especially that is suffering for it, ought to be received, heard, and honoured.

That therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak; that is, the apostle beseeches the saints to pray for him, that since he was an ambassador for the Gospel, and in bonds, that he might speak in it, or rather of it boldly and freely; that he might have both liberty from his bonds, and liberty in his soul, and freedom of speech; and that he might use boldness in delivering his message, as became an ambassador of Jesus Christ.

Ver. 21. *But that ye also may know my affairs, [and] how I do*, &c.] Both his temporal and spiritual affairs; as that he was in bonds, and how he was supported under them, and of what use they were to others; how that he preached in his own hired house, and with what success; and what ministering brethren he had with him to assist him; and in what condition was the church at Rome where he now was: the apostle's life and actions would bear the light, and what he did was worthy of imitation, and must be both delightful and useful to know; and the account he sends, by a messenger hereafter named, of whom he gives the following character, that credit might be the more readily given to his relation:

Tychicus, a beloved brother, and faithful minister in the Lord, *shall make known to you all things*. This Tychicus was of Asia, who accompanied the apostle in his travels, and went with him to Rome, from whence he sent

him to several places to relate his case, and to know the state of the churches, (Colossians 4:7,8 2 Timothy 4:12 Titus 3:12). He calls him “a beloved brother”: he was a “brother”, because he was a partaker of the same grace, was of the same family and household of God, and was of the same function, being a minister of the Gospel, and was a “beloved” one: he was beloved of God and Christ, and of all the saints that knew him, and especially a brother beloved of the Apostle Paul; and where there is brotherhood, there should be love: he also styles him a “faithful minister in the Lord”; he was a “minister” in the work and service of the Lord, in things pertaining to him; he was one of his appointing, qualifying, and sending; and he preached Christ, and him crucified; and was a “faithful” one, to his Lord or master, in whose name he ministered, to the Gospel which he ministered, and to the souls of men to whom he ministered; and a greater character he could not well have; and therefore it need not be doubted but that he would faithfully relate all things concerning the apostle, and what he said might be depended on as truth.

Ver. 22. *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose*, &c.] Which shows the great concern the apostle had for the churches, being willing to inform them of everything that might be for their use and service:

that ye might know our affairs; temporal and spiritual, and not only the apostle's affairs, but the affairs of those that were with him, who were concerned in the same common cause:

and [that] he might comfort your hearts; both by such a relation, and by the ministry of the Gospel to them: believers in Christ are sometimes disconsolate, by reason of indwelling sin, Satan's temptations, the hidings of God's face, afflictions and persecutions, their own sufferings, and those of others; and it is the business of the ministers of Christ to comfort them; their commission is to speak comfortably to them; and they are qualified for it, by inward comforts in their own souls; the Gospel they preach, and the message they bring, is of a comfortable nature; the Spirit of God acts by them, and with them as a comforter; and sad indeed is the state of Zion, or the church of Christ, when it has no comforters.

Ver. 23. *Peace [be] to the brethren*, &c.] The members of the church at Ephesus, who stood in a spiritual relation to each other; meaning all prosperity outward and inward, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; especially peace of conscience under the sprinklings of the blood of Christ, and a view of peace made with God by that blood:

and love with faith from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ; that is, an increase of these graces, and of the exercise of them, is wished for; for otherwise these brethren had both these graces, faith and love; (see <40115>Ephesians 1:15); which go together; faith works by love, and love discovers faith, and both are imperfect; faith has something lacking in it, and love is apt to grow cold, and need reviving and increasing; and these, and the increase of them, are from God the Father, who is the God of all grace, and from Jesus Christ, in whom all fulness of grace is; and these things are equally desired from the one as from the other, and shows a plurality of persons in the Godhead, and the equality of Christ with the Father; and such a wish expresses the apostle's great love and affection for the brethren, and points out the things they stand in need of; and which, being asked for such, might be expected to be enjoyed.

Ver. 24. *Grace [be] with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ*, &c.] Christ is the object of love, and a lovely object he is: he is to be loved because of the loveliness of his person, and the transcendent excellencies that are in him; because of his suitableness and fulness as a Saviour; and because of his great love shown to his church and people; and because of the relations he stands in to them, and the communion they have with him: love to Christ is a grace of the Spirit, and is in all believers; and though it is imperfect, and sometimes cold, it will abide for ever; it ought to be universal and superlative; all of Christ is to be loved, and he is to be loved above all: and it shows itself in a value for his Gospel, and the truths of it; in an esteem of his ordinances, and a regard to his commands; in parting with all for Christ, when called for; and in bearing all for his sake; in a well pleasedness in his company and presence, and in a concern for his absence, and in an uneasiness until he is enjoyed again: it should be fervent, and constant, and cordial, and, as here said,

in sincerity; from the heart, and with all the heart, and without hypocrisy; not in word only, but in deed and in truth; which appears when he is loved, as before observed: and the apostle wishes “grace” to all such sincere and hearty lovers of him; by which may be meant a fresh discovery of the free grace, love, and favour of God in Christ to them; and a fresh supply of grace from the fulness of it in Christ; and a larger measure of the grace of the Spirit to carry on the good work begun in them; as well as a continuation of the Gospel of the grace of God with them, and an increase of spiritual gifts. Grace may be connected with the word translated “sincerity”, and be rendered “grace with incorruption”: or incorruptible

grace, as true grace is an incorruptible seed; or “grace with immortality”: and so the apostle wishes not only for grace here, but for eternal happiness and glory hereafter; and then closes the epistle with an Amen, as a confirmation and asseveration of the truth of the doctrines contained in it, and as expressive of his earnest desire that the several petitions in it might be granted, and of his faith and confidence that they would be fulfilled.

The subscription,

written from Rome to [the] Ephesians by Tychicus, seems to be right; for that this epistle is written to the Ephesians, the inscription shows; and that it was written when the apostle was at Rome, appears from (⁴⁹Ephesians 3:1 4:1 6:20); and that it was sent by Tychicus, seems very likely from (⁴⁹Ephesians 6:21,22).

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- L. 5. c. 29.

Ft2 -- Plin. ib. Justin ex Trogo, 50:2. c. 4.

Ft3 -- Philostrat. Vita Apollon. 50:8. c. 3.

Ft4 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 79. 2.

Ft5 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 76. 3.

Ft6 -- Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 119. 3. Jetzirah, p. 22. 78. Ed. Rittangel. R. Levi ben Gersom in Genesis fol. 14. 3. & Philo de opificio Dei, p. 15.

Ft7 -- Bechinat Olam, p. 260.

Ft8 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 50. 2. & in Exodus fol. 21. 2.

Ft9 -- Zohar in Gen, fol. 41. 3.

Ft10 -- Ib. in Numbers fol. 76. 1. Vid. ib;. in Exodus fol. 44. 2.

Ft11 -- Caphtor, fol. 30. 2.

Ft12 -- Shaare Ora, fol. 4. 1.

Ft13 -- Laert. Procem. in Vit. Philos, p. 5.

Ft14 -- lb. in Vit. Pythagor. p. 587.

Ft15 -- Apuleius de Deo Socratis, p. 331.

Ft16 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 21. 2.

Ft17 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 21. 2. & 22. 4. & 27. 4. & 28. 2. & 35. 2. & 44. 1.

Ft18 -- Kimchi in loc.

Ft19 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 8. 4. & in Exodus fol. 102. 3. Lex. Cabal. p. 44. 45.

Ft20 -- Maimon. Hilchot Milah, c. 2. sect. 1.

Ft21 -- Targum in <23601>Isaiah 16:1. 5.

Ft22 -- Lex. Decem Orator. p. 246.

Ft23 -- De Abrahamo, p. 350, 351.

Ft24 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 110. 2. Zohar in Exodus fol. 33. 1. Cosri, par. 2. sect. 22. fol. 85. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 129. 4. & 135. 2. & 153. 3. & 168. 3.

Ft25 -- R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 7. 2.

Ft26 -- Perek Shalom, fol. 20. 1. Baal Hatturim in <042512>Numbers 25:12.

Ft27 -- Vid. Kimchi in loc.

Ft28 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 87. 1.

Ft29 -- Caphtor, fol. 95. 1. & 101. 1.

Ft30 -- Itinerar. p. 28.

Ft31 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 89. 1. Shemot Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 92. 4.

Ft32 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 89. 3.

Ft33 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 28.

Ft34 -- Euterpe, c. 155.

Ft35 -- T. Hieros. Bava Kama, fol. 3, 4. Misna Sota, c. 9. sect. 15. Juchasin, fol. 79. 2.

Ft36 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 20. 4. & in Numbers fol. 66. 3. Targ. Jon. & Jeras. in <010324>Genesis 3:24.

Ft37 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 31. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 88. 2.

Ft38 -- Targ. in Cant. 1:15. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1. Zohar in Exodus fol. 105. 4. Raziel, fol. 42. 1. & 45. 2. Caphtor, fol. 58. 2. Shaare Orn, fol. 14. 3.

Ft39 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 154. 2.

Ft40 -- Targum & Jarchi in Psal. lxviii 18.

Ft41 -- Aben Ezra in loc.

Ft42 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:6. c. 6.

Ft43 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 61. 4.

Ft44 -- R. Isaac. Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 91.

Ft45 -- Pocock. not. Misc. p. 24.

Ft46 -- Alex. ab. Alex. ib. ut supra. (Genial. Dier. 50:6. c. 6.)

Ft47 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 10. 2.

Ft48 -- Maimon. in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1. Cosri, par. 4. sect. 3. p. 213. 2.

Ft49 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 82. 1. Misna Roshhashana, c. 1. sect. 8. & Sanhedrin, c. 3. sect 3.

Ft50 -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 91. 2. & Jarchi & Tosephot in ib. & Juchasin, fol. 88. 1.

Ft51 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 105. 1.

Ft52 -- Tzeror Hammor. fol. 156. 4.

Ft53 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 104. 1.

Ft54 -- T. Bab. Beracot fol. 80. 3.

Ft55 -- Apud Capell. in <4052>Matthew 5:23.

Ft56 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 3. 1.

Ft57 -- Jarchi in Psal. lxxv. 3. Vid. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 24. fol. 165. 3.

Ft58 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 2.

Ft59 -- Baal Hatturira in <5220>Deuteronomy 22:10.

Ft60 -- Hilchot Heshuba, c. 3. sect 4.

Ft61 -- De Mutat. Nomin. p. 1062. & alibi.

Ft62 -- Antiqu. 50:7. c. 12. sect. 3.

Ft63 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1.

Ft64 -- Misn. Cetubot, c. 7. sect. 7, 8. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft65 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 24. 1. & Becorot, fol. 35. 2. Maimon. Hilchot Becorot, c. 2. sect. 17. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 18. 2.

Ft66 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 62. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 76. 2. Derech Eretz, fol. 17. 4. Maimon Hilchot Ishot, c. 15. sect. 19.

Ft67 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 3.

Ft68 -- Jarchi in loc. & R. Sol. Urbin. in Ohel Moed, fol. 85. 1.

Ft69 -- T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 61. 2. T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 31. 1, 2. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Kiddushin, c. 1. sect. 7.

Ft70 -- Debarim Rabba, sect. 6. fol. 241. 3.

Ft71 -- Misna Peah, c. 1. sect. 1. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 127. 1, & Kiddushin, fol. 40. 1.

Ft72 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 4.

Ft73 -- Maimon. Hilchot Abadim, c. 1. sect. 7.

Ft74 -- Maimon. Hilchot Abadim, c. 9. sect. 8.

Ft75 -- Maimon. Hilchot Abadim, c. 9. sect. 8.

Ft76 -- Leg. Allegor. 50:2. p. 96,

Ft77 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 18. fol. 160. 1. & Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 25. 4.

Ft78 -- Pesikta in Kettoreth Hassammim in Targum in Genesis fol. 9. 4. Raziel, fol. 13. 1.

Ft79 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 19. 3.

Ft80 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 58. fol. 51. 2.

Ft81 -- Tanchuma & Aruch in Guidon. Diet. Syr. Chal. p. 169.

Ft82 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 73. 3. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 9. 3.

Ft83 -- Pausan. 50:6. p. 362, 378. Julian. Orat. 2. p. 105. Alex. ab Alexandro, 50:6. c. 22.

Ft84 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 11.

Ft85 -- T. Bab. Becorot, fol. 36. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

Ft86 -- Apollodorus de Orig. Deorum, 50:2. p. 89.

Ft87 -- Targum Jon. & Jerus. in (2193)Exodus 19:13.

Ft88 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 95. 1. & 107. 1.

Ft89 -- Ammian. Marcellin. 50:20. c. 11.

Ft90 -- Targum in Cant. 3. 8.

Ft91 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 19. 1.

Ft92 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 7. 1. & Vajikra Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 163. 1. Megillat Esther, fol. 94. 1, 3.

PHILIPPIANS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS

Philippi was a Roman colony, and the chief city of one part of Macedonia, (<4416 2>Acts 16:12), it is by Appianus called Datos which was its original name; and by Diodorus Siculus it is called Crenidae [f1], from, the fountains about it; and it took its name Philippi, from Philip king of Macedon, father of Alexander the great, who rebuilt and fortified it; near this place a famous battle was fought, and a victory obtained by Augustus Caesar and Mark Antony, over Brutus and Cassius; it is now called Chrixopolis, properly Chrysopolis, from the plenty of golden mines near it: here the apostle was directed by a vision, to go and preach the Gospel; and which was succeeded, to the conversion of Lydia, and the jailer, and their families; which laid the foundation of a Gospel church in this place, to whom this epistle is written; and which was written by the apostle when he was a prisoner at Rome, as many things in it show; for he more than once makes mention of his bonds, and of these being made manifest in Caesar's palace, and of some of Caesar's household sending their Christian salutations to this church: Dr. Hammond makes the date of this epistle to be the year 59, and Dr. Lightfoot places it in the year 60, and the sixth of Nero; the occasion of it was this, the Philippians, to whom the apostle was very dear, he being the first preacher of the Gospel to them, and the instrument of their conversion, hearing that he was a prisoner at Rome, send their minister and pastor Epaphroditus to him, to visit him, and by him a present to support him under his afflicted circumstances, and who related to him the case of this church; and at his departure he sent by him this letter; the design of which is, to express his love and affection to them; to give them an account of his bonds, and the usefulness of them, and how he was supported under them; to encourage them under all the afflictions and persecutions, they endured for the sake of Christ; to excite them to love, unity, and peace, among themselves; to caution them against false teachers, judaizing Christians, that were for joining Moses and Christ, law and Gospel, works and grace together, in the business of salvation; to exhort them to a holy life and conversation, and to return them thanks for their kind present.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS 1

This chapter contains the inscription of the epistle; the apostle's salutation of the Philippians; an account of his thanksgivings, prayers, and affection for them, and confidence of them; a narrative of his sufferings, and the use of them; and an exhortation to a conversation becoming the Gospel, to abide by it, and suffer cheerfully for it. The inscription is in (Philippians 1:1), in which are mentioned by name the persons that subscribed the epistle, Paul and Timothy; and who are described by their character, servants of Jesus Christ; and also the persons to whom the epistle was sent, by the place of their abode, Philippi; the members of the church by their general character, saints in Christ Jesus; and the officers of it, by those that are peculiar to them as such, bishops and deacons: the salutation is in (Philippians 1:2), and then follows a thanksgiving for them to God, which was made in prayer, and upon every remembrance of them at the throne of grace, and that for their constant fellowship in the Gospel, (Philippians 1:3-5), and the apostle expresses his strong confidence of the good work of grace being begun in them, and of the performance of it, until the day of Christ; grounded upon a judgment of charity, and a belief of their being partakers of the same grace with himself, (Philippians 1:6,7), and declares the most tender and affectionate love to them, for the truth of which he calls God to witness, (Philippians 1:8), and as a proof of it, puts up several petitions for them; that they might have an increase of love, and spiritual knowledge, judgment, and sense, that so they might be capable of trying and approving things that differ, and which are the most excellent of them; that they might be sincere and harmless in their lives, and always doing good works in the strength of Christ, and to the glory of God, (Philippians 1:9-11), next follows an account of his bonds and imprisonment, and the usefulness of them, as that they were for the further spread of the Gospel in many places, and even in Caesar's palace, (Philippians 1:12,13), yea, by means of them several of the ministering brethren were the more emboldened to preach the Gospel without fear of men; though there was a difference among them, some preached Christ of envy, strife, and contention, thinking to add to the apostle's troubles, and

others, of good will, and of love to the apostle, who they knew was set for the defence of the Gospel, (Philippians 1:14-17), upon all which the apostle gives his sentiments, and makes his reflections, that whatever were the views of some men in preaching, it was, and ever would be, constant matter of joy to him that Christ was preached, (Philippians 1:18), yea, he was satisfied, that the ill designed by some to him would be overruled for his good, by means of the prayers of the saints, and the supply of the Spirit; for he had a pure and well grounded hope and expectation, that he should never be brought to shame and confusion, but that Christ would be magnified in him living and dying; for he knew that both his life, and his death, would be gain to Christ, or that it would be for the glory of Christ for him to live, and his own gain should he die, (Philippians 1:19-21), which put him in a strait what was most eligible in this case, whether, to live in the flesh, or depart out of the world; seeing to live in the flesh, and labour in the ministry, were fruitful and profitable, and more necessary and useful for the churches of Christ, and to die, and be with Christ, were better for himself, (Philippians 1:22-24), but upon maturely weighing things on both sides, like one of a truly noble public spirit, he inclines to the former; nay, is persuaded, that he should continue longer to be an instrument of increasing the faith and joy of the Lord's people, which he knew would abound in Christ on his account, should he be restored again, (Philippians 1:25,26), and then he concludes the chapter with an exhortation to the Philippians, to order their conversation agreeably to the Gospel of Christ, and to continue firm and unanimous in it, and use their utmost endeavours to keep it themselves, and spread it among others, (Philippians 1:27), being not daunted and intimidated by the persecutions of men, which to the persecutors was a sign of perdition, looked darkly, and with an ill aspect upon them, but to the persecuted was a token that they had an interest in that salvation which is of God, (Philippians 1:28), for as it is a gift of grace to believe in Christ, so likewise to suffer for him, (Philippians 1:29), to which the apostle animates them by his own example, that which they were called unto being no other than what they had seen endured by him, and had heard concerning high, (Philippians 1:30).

Ver. 1. *Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ*, etc.] The apostle sets his own name first, as being not only superior to Timothy in age, in office, and in character, but the sole writer of this epistle. The reasons of his joining Timothy with him are, because he was with him when he first

preached at Philippi, and so was known unto the Philippians, and respected by them; and because he was about to send him to them again, whose commendations he enlarges on in the epistle itself; and to let them see, that there was a continued agreement between them in affection and doctrine. It shows indeed great humility in the apostle to join with him one so young, and so much inferior to him on all accounts; though it must be observed, that Timothy was not a partner with him in composing the epistle; he only joined in the salutation to this church, and approved of the letter to it, and might be the amanuensis of the apostle; but had no hand in the epistle itself, which was dictated by Paul under divine inspiration. He chooses a character which agreed to them both; he does not say apostles, for Timothy was no apostle, though he himself was, but “servants of Jesus Christ”; not of men; nor did they seek to please men by preaching the doctrines and commandments of men, and which are suited to the carnal reasonings, lusts, and pleasures of men; for then the character here assumed would not belong to them: but servants of Christ; and that not in such sense only as all mankind are, or in right ought to be, since all are his creatures, and therefore ought to serve him; nor merely as all the saints in common are, being bought with the price of Christ's blood, and being effectually called by his grace, and so made willing to serve him from a principle of love, without servile fear, and with a view to his glory; but as ministers of the word, and preachers of the Gospel; they were his servants in the Gospel, they served him under the ministerial character, and as such were the servants of the most high God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; so that this title is far from being mean and despicable, it is high, honourable, and glorious.

To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons. The persons to whom this epistle is inscribed are here described by the place of their abode, Philippi, and by the various characters they bore in the church; which was at this time very numerous, consisting of many members, and of proper officers, and are both taken notice of here. The members are meant by “all the saints in Christ Jesus”; they were saints or holy persons, not by Moses and his law; not by ceremonial ablutions and sacrifices, which only sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, but could not take away sin, or cleanse from it; nor by themselves and their moral righteousness; for though thereby men, nay outwardly appear holy and righteous, yet they remain inwardly unholy and impure; nor by baptism, which has no regenerating nor sanctifying virtue in

it; if persons are not saints before that, they are never by it; it leaves them as it finds them, and neither takes away original or actual sin: but these were saints in and by Christ; they were become holy in consequence of being in Christ; men are first in Christ, and then saints in him; they are chosen “in him” before the world began to be holy, and in time are made new men, new creatures, are created in him unto good works by virtue of their being in him; hence he sanctifies his church and people by his blood, they being so nearly related to him, and interested in him, and he in them; hence they being first of God in Christ, he is made sanctification to them; and hence internal holiness is wrought in them from Christ, by his Spirit; which being begun is carried on, and will be performed until the day of Christ; and which was the happy case of these Philippians, as the apostle was confident of. The officers of this church were “the bishops and deacons”. The “bishops” were the pastors, elders, and overseers of the church, for a bishop and an elder is one and the same; (see <4401>Acts 20:17,28); where the elders of the church at Ephesus are called “overseers” or “bishops”; for the same word is used there as here; and the Syriac version here renders the word by açyçq, “elders”: and they design no other than common and ordinary pastors; who have the name of elders from their age, gravity, and seniority; and that of bishops and overseers from the nature of their office, which is to feed, watch, inspect, and take the oversight of the flock, minister sound doctrine to them, and preserve them from error and heresies. It seems by this, and the instance of the church at Ephesus, that there were, and so may be, where there is necessity for it, more pastors or bishops than one in a church; unless it can be thought that there were more churches than one in each of these cities; or that the pastors of adjacent churches are here included; neither of which seem to be a clear case, but the contrary: but then these pastors or bishops were all upon an equal foot; one had not any authority or power over another, or more authority than another; they were not metropolitan or diocesan bishops, but pastors of a particular church; and were neither lords over one another, nor of God's heritage. The “deacons” were such as served tables, the Lord's table, the minister's table, and the poor's table; took care of the secular affairs of the church, received and disbursed moneys, kept the church's accounts, and provided everything necessary for its temporal good. The one sort of these officers were concerned with the souls and spiritual estate of the members of the church; the others with their bodies and temporal estate, by visiting the sick, relieving the poor, etc. and both these exhibit the true primitive plan of church offices and

discipline; there being no other order of offices or officers, in a Christian church of divine institution, but pastors and deacons; whatever else is introduced is without warrant, and comes from the man of sin. These officers are mentioned by the apostle, not only to show his respect to them, but to observe to the members of this church, that they ought to esteem them highly for their works' sake; these being offices of great importance and usefulness to the church, which, by having such, was a truly organized church of Christ.

Ver. 2. *Grace be unto you*, etc.] This form of salutation is used by the apostle in all his epistles; (see Gill on " <4501>Romans 1:7");

Ver. 3. *I thank my God*, etc.] After the inscription and salutation follows a thanksgiving, the object of which is God; to whom thanks is to be given at the remembrance of his name, and the perfections of his nature, and for all his mercies, temporal and spiritual. The apostle expresses his propriety and interest in him, calling him "my God"; thereby distinguishing him from all others, the nominal and fictitious gods of the Gentiles, and the idols and lusts of men's hearts; he was the God whom he served in the Gospel, by whom he was sent, and from whom he received all his possessions, and to whom he was accountable. He had a special, particular, covenant interest in him, had knowledge of it, and faith in it; and therefore could draw nigh to God with freedom, use confidence, plead promises, expect favours, and do all he did, whether in a way of prayer, or praise in faith, and therefore was acceptable unto God. This work of thanksgiving he was often employed in on account of these Philippians, even, says he,

upon every remembrance of you; that is, as often as I remember you, or make mention of you to God at the throne of grace, it being a customary thing with the apostle to mention by name the several churches, the care of which was upon him, in his prayers to God; (see <4501>Romans 1:9 <4901>Ephesians 1:16 <5102>1 Thessalonians 1:2); and so he used to mention this church; and whenever he did, it was with thankfulness. The Arabic version reads it, "for", or "concerning all your remembrance"; meaning of himself, and as if the sense was, that he gave thanks to God for their remembrance of him at all times, and particularly at that time, by sending him relief in his present circumstances. But the former sense is preferable.

Ver. 4. *Always in every prayer of mine for you all*, etc.] The apostle was a praying believer, and a praying minister: notwithstanding all his gifts, and graces, and high attainments, he was not above the work and duty of

prayer, and in which he was sensible he stood in need of the assistance and direction of the Spirit of God, As soon as he was converted he prayed, and continued to do so without ceasing, as he himself directs; he was constant and assiduous at the throne of grace, and was concerned for others, as well as himself, for all the churches, and for this church, and all the saints in it.

Making request with joy; for what God had done for them, and continued with them. Requests are to be made known to God with thanksgiving. When we request a favour of him, it becomes us to return thanks for what we have received from him. Thanksgiving is a branch of prayer; as we have always mercies to ask for, we have always mercies to be thankful for.

Ver. 5. *For your fellowship in the Gospel*, etc.] Or "for your communication unto the Gospel"; that is, to the support of it. These Philippians were one of the churches of Macedonia the apostle so highly commends for their liberality in (<470801>2 Corinthians 8:1-3); they had been very communicative to him, and those that were with him, from the beginning of the Gospel being preached to them: as the instances of Lydia and the jailer show, and which are taken notice of in this epistle, (<500415>Philippians 4:15,16); And this same generous spirit still continued, of which their present by Epaphroditus was an evidence; and for this the apostle gives thanks, not only that they had an ability to support the Gospel, and assist Gospel ministers, but that they were willing to communicate, and did communicate, readily and cheerfully, largely and liberally; or this may intend their "participation in the Gospel", as the Arabic version renders it. The Gospel was in a very wonderful and providential manner brought unto them, and it was attended with mighty power to the conversion of them; they received it with joy and gladness, and cheerfully submitted to the ordinances of it; they had much light into it, and spiritual knowledge of it; and were made partakers of the blessings of grace, which are revealed and exhibited in it, and of the exceeding great and precious promises of it, for which the apostle gives thanks to God; for all this was from him, and a wonderful instance of his grace it was. Moreover, through the Gospel being thus brought unto them, and succeeded among them, they became a Gospel church, and had, through the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, fellowship one with another; yea, they had fellowship with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, unto which they were called by the Gospel; and in this they remained

from the first day until now; they continued in the Gospel which they were made partakers of, and in fellowship with one another, in breaking of bread, and in prayer, and in hearing the word, which they constantly attended to, and were blessed with communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, to that time; and therefore the apostle continued from the first of their receiving the Gospel, to that moment, to give thanks to God for them on that account: for this last clause may be connected with the words in (³⁰⁰³Philippians 1:3), "I thank my God", as well as with those immediately preceding, "your fellowship in the Gospel"; and shows not only their perseverance in the Gospel, from the first to the present time, as the Ethiopic version renders it, for which he was abundantly thankful; but the continuance of his thankfulness on that account, from his first acquaintance with them to that time.

Ver. 6. *Being confident of this very thing*, etc.] The reason of his thanksgiving, and of his making request with joy continually on the behalf of this church, was the confidence and full persuasion he had of this same thing, of which he could be as much assured as of any thing in the world:

that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform [it] until the day of Jesus Christ: by this good work is not meant the preaching of the Gospel among them, nor a Gospel church state set up in the midst of them: for though the preaching of the Gospel was a good work, and issued well in the conversion of many, in their edification and comfort, and which was still continued; and though a Gospel church state was erected among them, and was now flourishing, yet the apostle could not assure himself of the continuance of either of them, especially until the day of Christ; and both have been removed from thence many hundreds of years ago: nor is their liberal communication to the support of the Gospel intended; for though this was a good work, yet this was not wrought by God, but by themselves, and was not wrought in them, but done by them; nor their good lives and conversations. The Syriac version indeed renders it "good works", but these cannot be designed, for the same reasons as before; for though they are good things, and answer many valuable ends and purposes, yet they are external works done by men, and not internal ones wrought in them by God; wherefore by it is undoubtedly meant the work of grace upon their hearts, sometimes called the work of faith, because that is a principal part of it: this is God's work, and not man's, as may be concluded from the nature of the work itself, which is the transforming of a man by the reviewing of him, a regeneration, a resurrection, and a creation, and

therefore requires almighty power; and from the condition man is in by nature, he is dead in sin, and has no power to act spiritually, and much less what is equal to such a work as this; he has no will, desire, and inclination to it, but all the reverse; and if he had, he could no more effect it, than the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision could cause themselves to live. This is the work of God. Sometimes it is ascribed to the Father, who regenerates, calls by his grace, reveals his Son, and draws souls unto him; and sometimes to the Son, who quickens whom he will, whose Spirit is given, whose image is stamped, and out of whose fulness grace is received; but more commonly it is attributed to the Spirit, who is a spirit of regeneration, sanctification, and faith: and this is a “good work”, as it must needs be, since it is God's work; he is the efficient cause of it; his good will and pleasure, his grace and mercy are the moving cause of it, and not men's works; and his good word is the means of it. The matter of it is good; it is an illumination of the understanding, a subduing of the will, a taking away of the stony heart, and a giving of an heart of flesh, an infusion of spiritual life, a formation of Christ in the soul, and an implantation of all grace there: it is good in its effects; it makes a man a good man, and fits and qualifies him to perform good works, which without it he cannot do; it makes a man a proper habitation for God, and gives him meetness for the heavenly inheritance. And this is an internal work, a work begun “in” the saints; nothing external is this work; not an outward reformation, which, when right, is the fruit of this good work; nor external humiliation for sin; nor a cessation from the grosser acts of sin; nor a conformity and submission to Gospel ordinances; all which may be where this work is not; but it is something within a man; as appears from the names by which it goes; such as spirit, so called, because it is of a spiritual nature, wrought by the Spirit of God, and has its seat in the spirit of man; it is called the inward man, which is renewed day by day; a seed that remains in him, and a root which is out of sight, and oil in the vessel, the heart, as distinct from the lamp of an outward profession: as also from the several things, which, together, make up the subject of it; it is the understanding which is enlightened; the will which is subdued; the heart and inward parts in which the laws of God are written; the mind and conscience, which are sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and cleansed; and the affections, which are set on divine objects. This is a begun work, and but a begun one. It may be said to be begun as soon as light is let into the soul by the Spirit of God; when it sees its lost state, and need of a Saviour, for as the first thing in the old creation was light, so in the new; when the fear of God is put into the heart, which is the beginning of wisdom; when

love appears in the soul to God, to Christ, to his people, word, and ordinances; and when there are the seeing, venturing, and relying acts of faith on Christ, though there is a great deal of darkness, trembling, and unbelief; and when it is got thus far, and even much further, it is but a begun work; it is not yet finished and perfect: this appears from the several parts of this work, which are imperfect, as faith, hope, love, knowledge, etc. from the indwelling of sin, and corruption in the best of saints; from their various continual wants and necessities; from their disclaiming perfection in this life, and their desires after it. But the apostle was confident, and so may every good man be confident, both for himself and others, that God who has, and wherever he has begun the good work of grace, will “perform”, finish it, or bring it to an end, as the word here used signifies: and this the saints may assure themselves of, from many considerations; as from the nature of the work itself, which is called living water, because it always continues, a well of it, because of its abundance, and is said to spring up to eternal life; because it is inseparably connected with it, where there is grace, there will be glory; grace is the beginning of glory, and glory the perfection of grace; this work of grace is an incorruptible seed, and which remains in the saints, and can never be lost; it is a principle of life, the root of which is hid in Christ, and that itself is maintained by him, and can never be destroyed by men or devils: and also from the concern God has in it, who is unchangeable in his nature, purposes, promises, gifts, and calling; who is a rock, and his work is perfect sooner or later; who is faithful, and will never forsake the work of his hands, and has power to accomplish it; and who has promised his people, that they shall grow stronger and stronger, that they shall not depart from him, and he will never leave them. Moreover, this may be concluded from the indwelling of the Spirit, as a spirit of sanctification, as the earnest and seal of the inheritance, and that for ever; and from the intercession and fulness of grace in Christ, and the saints' union to him, and standing in him; as well as front the impotency of any to hinder the performance of this work, as sin, Satan, or the world: to which may be added the glory of all the three Persons herein concerned; for if this work is not finished, the glory of God the Father in election, in the covenant of grace, in the contrivance of salvation, in the mission of his Son, the glory of Christ in redemption, and of the Spirit in sanctification, would be entirely lost: wherefore it may be depended on, this work will be performed wherever it is begun, and that “until the day of Jesus Christ”; meaning either the day of death, when Christ takes the souls of believers to himself,

and they shall be for ever with him, when this work of grace upon the soul will be finished; for God, who is the guide of his people, will be their God and guide even unto death: or else the last day, the day of judgment, the resurrection day, when Christ shall appear and raise the dead, and free the bodies of the saints from all their bondage, corruption, vileness, and weakness, which will be putting the last and finishing hand to this good work; nor will even the bodies of the saints be quitted by the Spirit of God till this is done.

Ver. 7. *Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all*, etc.] Some connect these words with (Philippians 1:3-5); as if the apostle's sense was, that it became him to be thus affected to them, and mindful of them in his prayers, to make request for them with joy, and give thanks for their fellowship in the Gospel, and continuance in it; but they seem rather to refer to his confidence of the good work begun in them, being performed until the day of Christ, and which was but just and right in him to entertain and assert; and may be understood either of a judgment of faith, or a judgment of charity: in a judgment of faith the apostle might be confident, and so may every other man, that all that believe in Christ truly, and have a good work begun in them, that shall be finished; for nothing is more certain, nor is there anything that a man can be more confident of, than this, that he that believes in Christ shall be saved; and this the apostle was fully persuaded of with respect to everyone in this church, that was a believer in Christ; and in a judgment of charity, it was meet and proper, just and right, to think, judge, hope, and believe so of everyone of them, since there was nothing in their profession, conduct, and conversation, showing the contrary:

because I have you in my heart; or "you have me in your heart"; and either reading carries in it a reason why it was fit and right that he should so think and judge concerning them; because they were, as the Syriac version renders it, "put" or "laid" upon his heart; whenever he was at the throne of grace, his heart was enlarged on their account, his affections were wonderfully drawn out towards them, and they were ever in his mind, "both in [his] bonds, and in the defence of the Gospel"; whether in the prison, or in the pulpit, or whatever he was about in the cause or affairs of religion, they were in his heart and thoughts; from whence he concluded they must belong to God, the good work must be in them, and would be performed; it is a token for good when the Lord lays the case of any upon the hearts of his ministers, or any of his people; and also, because they had

him in their hearts, they were affectionate to him, ever thoughtful and mindful of him; and had lately given a specimen of their love to him, as a servant of Christ, and prisoner of the Lord; and as they, so he might know, that they had passed from death to life, because they loved the brethren, and him in particular for his works' sake, who had been an useful instrument in the hand of God among them: and another reason follows,

inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace; or "partakers with me of grace"; meaning either that they were partakers of the same electing, redeeming, adopting, justifying, pardoning, and regenerating grace, as he was; had obtained the same like precious faith in Christ, and knowledge of him, as he had, though not to the same degree; and therefore might well be assured of the performance of the good work in them, having no more to doubt of their salvation than of his own: or rather by "grace", or as the Vulgate Latin version reads it, "joy", he designs his sufferings for Christ, and the sake of his Gospel; which he so calls, because it was given him by God, as a token of his favour, and a mark of honour and respect, to suffer for Christ, as well as believe in him; and therefore rejoiced that he was counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. Now these Philippians were partakers with him of this, both in his "bonds", by sympathizing with him, praying for him, sending relief unto him, and by suffering such like things themselves; and "in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel", whether by suffering, preaching, or writing; they stood by him, encouraged and assisted him, when others forsook him, and laid difficulties and discouragements in his way; on account of all which it was but meet and proper he should entertain such sentiments of them as before expressed.

Ver. 8. *For God is my record*, etc.] Which is all one as swearing by him; it is in form of an oath, being a solemn appeal to him as the searcher of hearts, for the uprightness of his mind, the sincerity of his expressions, and the strength of his affections:

how greatly I long after you all; the common members, as well as the bishops and deacons, the weak as well as the strong believers, the poor as well as the rich; the apostle's respects were universal, and without distinction: he longed after their spiritual welfare, an increase of gifts and grace among them; he was their spiritual father, and he hankered after them; as parents after their children; he longed to see them, that he might

enjoy their company and conversation, have communion with them, and impart some spiritual gift unto them: and this he did

in the bowels of Jesus Christ; not with an human and carnal affection, but with a Christian and spiritual one; with a love which came from Christ, and was in imitation of him, and on account of their being in him, loved by him, belonging to him, and being believers in him: it was in the most tender manner that he loved them, and was affected to them; the phrase denotes, that his love towards them was internal, in his heart, and was most tender and strong; and like to that tender concern Christ had for them, and which he stirred up in him.

Ver. 9. *And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more*, etc.] As a proof of his great affection for them, he puts up this petition on their account; which supposes that they had love, as they must certainly have, since the good work of grace was begun in them; for wherever the work of the Spirit of God is, there is love, which is a fruit of the Spirit; and where there is not love, there cannot be that good work; for it signifies nothing what a man says, nor what he has, nor what he does, if love be wanting; but this grace was in these Philippians, they had love to God, to Christ, to one another, to all the saints, and to the ministers of the Gospel, and particularly to the apostle, of which they had lately given him a proof: and it also supposes, that this grace, which was implanted in them in regeneration, was in exercise, which is meant by its "abounding"; it was not only a principle in the heart, and expressed by the mouth, but it was in action; it lay not in word, and in tongue, but showed itself towards the objects of it in deed and in truth; and it was in a very larger and lively exercise; it abounded, it flowed and overflowed; it rose up out of the heart, as water out of a fountain; it was as grace is said to be, a well of living water, springing up, and spreading itself various ways; wherefore the apostle did not pray that they might have love, nor merely that their love might abound, but that it might abound "yet", might continue to abound, that there might be no stop put to its flow and exercise, and so concerns the perseverance of it, and its actings; and that it might abound "more and more"; which regards the increase of it, and enlargement of its exercise. The Syriac version reads it, that it "may be multiplied and abound"; intimating, that spiritual love cannot be exceeded in; there is no going to an extreme in the exercise of it; natural love may, but not spiritual; God and Christ can never be loved too much, nor saints, as saints, though they may as men: wherefore let love abound ever so much to these objects, it is

capable of abounding more and more, without any danger of excess; and it is to be wished for; for where it is ever so large and abundant in its actings, it is not perfect, nor will it be in this life; so that there is always room for such a petition; besides, the apostle knew how apt love is to grow cold, and saints to sink in their spiritual affections through the prevalence of sin, the cares of the world, and temptations of Satan: he adds,

in knowledge and [in] all judgment; that is, either with knowledge and judgment; and the sense be, that as their love abounded, so their knowledge might be increased, and their judgment in spiritual things be better informed and established. Some Christians are more affectionate, and less knowing; others are more knowing, and less affectionate; it is well when love and knowledge go and keep pace together: or it may be rendered “by knowledge”, suggesting, that love is increased thereby, which is true; for the more saints know of God and Christ, the more they love them; and the more they know of one another's grace and experience, the more they love each other: by “knowledge” may be meant the knowledge of God; not that which is general, is by the light of nature, and is very obscure and insufficient to salvation; but that which is special, is of God in Christ, as a God gracious and merciful, as a covenant God and Father in him; and which at best is imperfect, and needs increasing: and also knowledge of Christ; not general, notional, and speculative, as that he is the Son of God, the Messiah, and Saviour of the world in common; but that which is special, spiritual, and saving; and which is a knowledge of approbation, whereby a soul approves of Christ above all others, as a Saviour; a fiducial one, whereby it trusts in him, and commits itself to him; an experimental and practical one, to which is joined a cheerful obedience to his commands and ordinances, and becomes an appropriating one; yet is in this life imperfect, and so needs increasing; and all means should be used in order thereunto: moreover, the knowledge of one another may be included; an increase of which is necessary to promote brotherly love, and make communion with one another delightful and profitable. By all “judgment”, or “sense”, as in the Greek text, is designed a spiritual apprehension, judgment, and sensation of things. The Syriac version renders it, “all spiritual understanding”, and may intend a spiritual perception, and sense of the love of God shed abroad in the heart, an enlarged experience of the grace of God, and particularly faith, which is expressed by all the live senses; as by “seeing” the Son, the glory, fulness, suitableness, and excellency of him, and the unseen glories of another

world; by “hearing” the joyful sound, the voice of Christ in the Gospel, so as to understand and distinguish it; by “smelling” a sweet smell in the person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, which are of a sweet smelling savour to faith, as are also the things of God, and of the Spirit of God; and by “tasting” how good the Lord is, how sweet is his word, and delicious his fruit; and by “feeling”, laying hold on Christ, embracing and handling him, the word of life: and now a believer having these his spiritual senses exercised, he is capable of discerning between good and evil, and so of approving things most excellent; which is the end of this petition, as appears from the following words.

Ver. 10. *That ye may approve things that are excellent*, etc.] Or “try things that differ”. There are some things that differ one from other; as morality and grace, earthly things, and heavenly things, carnal and spiritual, temporal and eternal things, law and Gospel, the doctrines of men, and the doctrines of Christ; all which differ as much as chaff and wheat, as gold, silver, precious stones, and wood, hay, stubble. These are to be tried and proved; they are not to be received without distinction, but should be examined, which is right and best to be chosen and preferred; and to such trial and examination it is necessary that a man should be transformed, by the renewing of his mind, that he should have spiritual light, knowledge, and experience, have his spiritual senses exercised to discern the difference of things, and also the guidance, direction, and influence of the Spirit of God: and this trial must be made, not according to carnal reason, and the judgment and dictates of it; for the most excellent things are above it, and out of its sphere, and therefore judged foolish, and rejected by it; but according to the word of God, the Scriptures of truth, in the light of the divine Spirit, and with spiritual judgment and sense; when some things will be found excellent, as Christ, and the knowledge of him in his person, offices, grace, righteousness, blood, sacrifice, and satisfaction, and the several truths of the Gospel relating to peace, pardon, justification, adoption, sanctification, and eternal life; and of the several doctrines of the Gospel, some will appear in their nature and use more excellent than others, more grand and sublime; such as concern the sovereign and distinguishing grace of God, the glory of Christ, and the salvation of the elect; some being milk for babes, others meat for strong men. And these being tried and proved, first by the word of God, and then by the experience of the saints, are to be approved above thousands of gold and silver, and esteemed more than our necessary food; even the sincere milk

of the word, as it is by newborn babes, as well as the strong meat of it by the adult, and all to be highly valued and abode by, and held fast.

That ye may be sincere; or "pure", as the Syriac version renders it; pure as the sun, discerned and judged by the light of it, as the word signifies, which discovers motes, faults, and flaws; in which, some think, is a metaphor taken either from the eagle, which holds up its young against the sun, and such as can bear the light of it she retains as her own, but such that cannot she rejects as a spurious brood; or from persons in business, who hold up the goods they are buying to the sun, to see if they can observe any fault in them: so such may be said to be sincere, or pure, who are pure in heart, life, and conversation, whose principles and practices will bear the test of light; such are sincere, who are like honey without wax, and fine flour without leaven, that have no mixture of corruption in doctrine, life, or manners; whose grace is genuine and right; whose faith is unfeigned; whose love to God, and Christ, and one another, is without dissimulation; whose hope is lively, and of a soul purifying nature, and is built on a good foundation; and whose repentance is attended with genuine effects, and proper fruits; whose principles are unmixed; who do not corrupt or adulterate the word of God, but desire and retain the sincere milk of it, and hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience; whose worship is also pure and spiritual, who worship God in spirit and truth, under the influence, and by the assistance of the Spirit of God, and with their whole hearts and spirits, and according to the truth of the Gospel; who keep the ordinances as they were delivered, without any human inventions, corruptions, and mixtures; who are sincere in their hearts, pure and sound in heart, simple, plain hearted, and single eyed; choose to be good, rather than seem to be so; whose desires after God, and divine things, and whose affections for them, are true and real, and proceed from the bottom of their hearts; and who have their conversation in the world by the grace of God, in simplicity and godly sincerity; and such the apostle wishes these saints to be, and adds,

and without offence until the day of Christ; to God, as considered in the righteousness of Christ, in which they are perfectly without offence, and will always continue so; or in their walk and conversation before God, in which, though they may in many things offend, yet not be guilty of any notorious iniquity, and much less of living in it: and to themselves, to their own consciences, exercising a conscience void of offence towards God and men; acting according to that light they have received, and those principles

they have embraced and professed; desiring to be kept from all evil, that it might not grieve and wound them; and doing nothing in things of an indifferent nature, with offence, or against the dictates of conscience, and to the violation of it: and also to others, to Jew or Gentile, to the world, or to the church of God, by avoiding every thing that is offensive to either; not good things, but evil ones, and those that are indifferent; that peace may be preserved, and their own good may not be evil spoken of; that the children of God may not be grieved, staggered, and stumbled, nor sinners hardened, or have any occasion to blaspheme. The phrase denotes an harmless life and conversation, and a continuance in it to the end, to the day of death, or coming of our Lord, which is to be loved, longed, wished, and looked for, and to be always had in view; and that to engage to a becoming life and conversation, with sincerity, and without offence, since in that day all hearts and actions will be exposed and laid open.

Ver. 11. *Being filled with the fruits of righteousness*, etc.] Good works. Some think alms deeds, or acts of liberality and bounty, are here particularly intended; and that respect is had to the generosity of these Philippians to the apostle, and others: and true it is, that these are sometimes so called, as in (2 Corinthians 9:10), but rather good works in general are meant, which are called “fruits”, because, like fruits, they spring from a seed, even from the incorruptible seed of grace in the heart, implanted there in regeneration; and because they are owing, as the fruits of the earth are, to divine bounty and goodness, to the dews of grace, the rising and bright shining of the sun of righteousness, and to the south gale of the blessed Spirit, when brought forth aright; and also because they are pleasant and delightful, they are well pleasing to Christ, and are acceptable to God through Christ; and likewise, because they are profitable, not to God, but to men: and they are styled fruits of “righteousness”, either of imputed righteousness, the righteousness of Christ imputed without works, the effects of which are good works; for nothing more strongly influences and engages men to the performance of good works, than a view of their free justification by the righteousness of Christ; hence there can be no justification by works, since these are the fruits and effects of justification, and not the cause: or of righteousness and holiness implanted in the soul by the Spirit of God, the new man, which is created unto good works, and in or unto righteousness and true holiness; and which naturally tends thereunto, and which stimulates and qualifies men for the performance of the same: or good works are so called, because they are performed by a

righteous man; for as none but a good tree can bring forth good fruit, so none but a tree of righteousness can bear fruits of righteousness; or none but a righteous man do works of righteousness, which are truly such: or because they are such as are done according to the righteous law of God; for this is a necessary requisite of a good work, that it be according to the command and will of God; for otherwise, let it have never such a show of religion and goodness, it is no good work. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, read, “fruit”, in the singular number, but other copies and versions, read, “fruits”; and the apostle wishes, that these saints might be “filled” with them; that is, that they might be like trees laden with fruit, which have fruit on every branch, bough, and twig; that they might abound in the performance of them, be ready to, and fruitful in every good work; not doing a few of one sort only, but performing continually all manner of good works; and so be like fruitful trees that yield their fruit in their season, and do not cease from so doing, but still bring forth fruit, and that in large quantities:

which are by Jesus Christ; who is the green fir tree, from whom all fruit, as of grace, so of good works, is found; for all good works, which are truly and properly so, spring from union to Christ, and are owing to his grace: souls are married to Christ, that they may bring forth fruit unto God; they are created in him unto good works, and are ingrafted in him the true vine; and through abiding in him, and deriving life, grace, and strength from him, bear fruit, which otherwise they could not do: without Christ no good work can be performed; it is through him, strengthening his people, they do all they do; for they are insufficient to do anything of themselves, but his grace is sufficient for them, and his strength is made perfect in their weakness. He is the exemplar and pattern, according to which they do their good works; and they are motives drawn and taken from him, from his love, from the doctrines of grace relating to him, which are the most powerful, and do most strongly work upon the saints to perform these things; and which, under his grace, and the influence of it, are directed

unto the glory and praise of God: they are done by believers in Christ, not in order to obtain eternal life and happiness for themselves, which they know is the gift of God, and entirely owing to his free grace and abundant mercy; nor to gain honour and applause from men, but to glorify God; who is glorified when his people bring forth much fruit, and which also is the occasion of others glorifying him likewise: and this end is necessary to a good work, that it be done to the glory of God; for if anything else is in

view and not that, let it have ever such an appearance of a good work, it is none at all: and indeed, here we have all the requisites of a good work; as that it should be done according to the righteous law and will of God; that it springs from a principle of grace and holiness; that it be performed in the name, grace, and strength of Christ, and with a view to the honour and glory of God. The Ethiopic version reads, “in” or “to his [Christ's] glory, and the praise of God”; and the Arabic version thus, “to the glory of God and his praise”; and so the design of the clause is to show, either that both the glory of Christ and the praise of God are concerned in every truly good work; or that the glory of God secretly, and his praise openly, are to be sought therein; even all honour and glory, an abundance of it, and that continually; ascribing nothing to ourselves, but attributing all to him, acknowledging, when we have done all we can, we are but unprofitable servants.

Ver. 12. *But I would ye should understand, brethren*, etc.] The church at Philippi having heard of the apostle's troubles, he was very desirous that they should have a true and right understanding of them, and especially of the use they had been of, and were like to be of more and more; and that partly that such as were weak among them might not be offended and staggered, and partly that all might be comforted; as also that they might be animated and encouraged hereby to endure, with patience and cheerfulness, whatsoever afflictions might befall them for the sake of Christ: his sufferings are more obscurely expressed in the next clause, and more clearly in (<3001 3>Philippians 1:13),

that the things [which happened] unto me; by which he intends, not anything done by him, or his labour in the ministry, which had been greatly succeeded for the spread of the Gospel; as the Syriac version suggests, rendering the phrase, ylyd ynr[wsd, “that my work makes more abundant progress in the Gospel”: but his sufferings on account of the Gospel, which though said to happen, were not things of chance but of appointment; for as all the sufferings of Christ the head, were by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, so are those of all the members of his mystical body, and of his ministers who are appointed to these things, and they for them; of which Christ has given previous notice, so that they do not come unexpected, but are looked for by them; nor are they over distressed with them, being supported with the presence, Spirit, grace, and favour of God; hence they can rejoice in them, in hope of the glory of God; and as the afflictions of Gospel ministers, the quality and

quantity of them, are fixed and settled by divine appointment, and which accordingly come upon them, so the use of them is also determined, and which have their sure and certain effect as the apostle's had; for the very things by which men designed to have hindered the spread of the Gospel, he says,

have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel. The Gospel, though it is good news and glad tidings of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; yet is very disagreeable to carnal men, they are enemies to it; and do all they can to stop its progress, to shut the open door of it, and hinder its course by speaking reproachfully of it, and writing against it, and especially by persecuting its professors, and particularly its ministers; which oftentimes proves rather a furtherance than an hinderance of it; for hereby the Gospel, like gold and silver tried in the fire, shines out the more brightly, with more lustre and glory, and has the greater influence on the minds of men; persecution in one place has often been the means of carrying and spreading the Gospel in many others; (see <4401>Acts 8:1,5,6 11:19-21); and has been God's ordinance for the conversion of multitudes of souls, where it has been the fiercest and hottest; insomuch that it became a common saying in primitive times, that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church; and hereby also the Gospel has been confirmed, and they that have embraced it have been the more established in it. The apostle's sufferings and bonds were for the confirmation and defence of the Gospel.

Ver. 13. *So that my bonds in Christ*, etc.] What he had more darkly hinted before, he more clearly expresses here; the things that happened to him were his bonds; he was now a prisoner at Rome and in chains; though he had the liberty of dwelling alone in his own hired house, and of his friends coming to see him and hear him, yet he was bound with a chain, and under the care and guard of a soldier continually, who held one end of it. These bonds of his were not for debt, which he took care not to run into, but chose rather to work with his own hands, and so ministering to his own and the necessities of others, that he might not eat any man's bread for nought; nor for any capital crime, as murder, or theft, or anything that was worthy of death or of bonds; but his bonds were in Christ, or for Christ's sake, for professing Christ and preaching his Gospel; he was a prisoner in the Lord, or for his sake; (see <4901>Ephesians 4:1). The use of his sufferings, which is more generally signified in (<5012>Philippians 1:12), is here and in

(³⁰¹¹⁴Philippians 1:14) more particularly related, and the several instances of it given, these his bonds for the sake of Christ, he says,

are manifest in all the palace, and in all other [places], or “my bonds are manifest in Christ”, as the words may be read; that is, by the means of Christ, he causing them to be taken notice of by men, and some of the first rank: by his bonds being manifest may be meant he himself who was bound; who by his bonds became known to persons, to whom in all probability he would otherwise have remained unknown; as to Felix, and Festus, and King Agrippa, and others in Caesar's court: or the Gospel for the sake of which he was bound; this was made manifest and became known, not barely notionally, but savingly and experimentally; and even Christ himself the substance of it, for whom he was laid in bonds, by this means came to be known, “in all the palace”. The Arabic version reads it, “in the palace of the emperor”. The word “praetorium”, here used, signifies sometimes the judgment hall, or court of judicature belonging to the Roman governors, as Herod and Pilate; (see ⁴⁴²³⁵Acts 23:35 ⁴³⁸²⁸John 18:28,33 19:9); and if it designs any such court at Rome, then the sense is, that through the apostle's being sent a prisoner to Rome, and his cause heard in the praetorium, or judgment hall, he and the cause of his bonds came to be known by the judges in that court; and which might be the means of the conversion of some of them: sometimes it signifies the general's pavilion in the camp, and sometimes the emperor's palace at Rome, he being the chief “praetor”, or magistrate; and so here it seems to design Nero's house or court, where the Gospel, through the apostle's bonds, had made its way to the conversion of many there; (see ³¹⁰⁴²Philippians 4:22); and in all other places; or as the Arabic version renders it, “with all other men”; for it may be understood either of men or places; and that Christ and his Gospel came to be known through the apostle's sufferings, not only in the court of judicature where his cause was tried, or in Caesar's palace, and to many of his courtiers, but in other places in Rome, and parts of the empire, and to many persons there, both Jews and Gentiles; so that what was intended for the disadvantage of the Gospel, proved for the service of it.

Ver. 14. *And many of the brethren in the Lord*, etc.] This is another instance of the usefulness of the apostle's sufferings, and another proof of their being for the furtherance of the Gospel; they were not only the means of the conversion of many that were without, but were very encouraging and strengthening to them that were within the church, and to many that

were in the ministry; who are called “brethren”, some real, others nominal; being partakers of the grace of God, at least in profession, or otherwise they would not have been fit to have been ministers of the word, nor members of a Gospel church, which was necessary to their being regularly sent forth; and whom the apostle calls and owns as brethren in the ministry, being sent forth by Christ, at least some of them, and having the same commission to preach the Gospel as he had; though they had not equal gifts and qualifications with him: he styles them brethren “in the Lord”, to distinguish them from the Jews at Rome, who were his brethren according to the flesh; and to express their spiritual character and relation, and point out the work of the Lord, in which they were jointly concerned with him: now though not all the brethren, yet many of them were greatly affected with, and influenced by the apostle's patient and cheerfully suffering for Christ; insomuch that, as he says,

waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear; or as some read it, “waxing confident in the Lord”; connecting the phrase, “in the Lord”, with this word, and so make the ground and object of their confidence the Lord; whose presence, power, grace, and Spirit, emboldened them the more by the apostle's bonds to preach the Gospel with courage and intrepidity; the Lord being on their side, and their helper, they feared not what men could do unto them; or else being animated by the apostle's patience and firmness of mind in suffering, and by the use they saw his bonds were of for the spread of the Gospel, they took heart and courage to “speak the word”; the word “of God”, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read; and so the Alexandrian, Claromontane, and two of Stephens's copies: meaning either the essential word, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was the subject of their ministry; or the written word, the writings of Moses and the prophets, the books of the Old Testament, according to which they spoke; or the Gospel, called often the word, and sometimes with an addition, the word of truth, the word of faith, the word of reconciliation, the word of righteousness, the word of life, and the word of our salvation, from the several subjects of it: this they spake boldly and freely, as it ought to be spoken, and “without fear”, not without fear and reverence of God, whose word it is; nor of themselves and their own weakness and inabilities, which cause much fear and trembling; but without the fear of man, which brings a snare; they had no regard to the threats and menaces, the reproaches and persecutions of men; none of these things moved them; they feared God and not man, and

so went on boldly, preaching the Gospel; which is related with pleasure, as a fruit and effect of the apostle's sufferings, and which he doubted not would be very delightful to the Philippians to hear of.

Ver. 15. *Some, indeed, preach Christ*, etc.] That is, some of them, as the Arabic version reads; some of the brethren, that were only so in profession; wherefore these could not be the unbelieving Jews, who preached the Messiah in general, but did not believe Jesus of Nazareth to be he, and opened the prophecies of the Old Testament relating to him, to the Gentiles; at which the apostle is by some thought to rejoice; inasmuch as this might be a means of giving light to them that were without any knowledge of the Messiah, and of leading them into an inquiry concerning him, whereby they might come to know the true Messiah, and believe in him: for these men were brethren, were members of the church, and whom the apostle owned as brethren in the ministry; neither of which could have been admitted had they been unbelievers to Jesus being the Messiah; nor would the apostle have rejoiced in their ministry; and besides, they preached the same Christ as other Gospel ministers, only on different principles and with different views; they preached the pure Gospel of Christ, they did not preach themselves, or any doctrines of their own, but Christ, nor the doctrines of other men; nor did they read lectures of mere morality, as the Gentiles did; nor were they legalists, as the Jews; they did not insist on the doctrine of works, or preach up justification and salvation by the works of the law, a doctrine the apostle always militated against, nor would he ever express any pleasure and satisfaction in it; nor did they preach a mixed Gospel, partly of grace and partly of works; they were not such as joined Moses and Christ, the law and Gospel, works and grace, together in men's salvation; nor did they corrupt and adulterate the word of God, or blend it with their own, or other men's inventions, but they preached Christ clearly and fully; he was the sum and substance of their ministry; they preached up his person as the true God, the Son of God equal with the Father, and possessed of all divine perfections; as truly man, having assumed a true body and a reasonable soul, and as God and man in one person; they preached him in all his offices, as prophet, priest, and King; justification by his righteousness alone, pardon through his blood, atonement and satisfaction by his sacrifice and salvation alone by him; they directed souls to him for all grace, and every supply of it; and assured them that though he died, he rose again from the dead, is ascended on high, is set down at the right hand of God, is an advocate with the Father, and ever

lives to make intercession for his people; and when he has gathered them all in, he will come a second time to judge the world in righteousness, and take then, to himself, that they may be ever with him: and yet all this they did,

even of envy and strife; not of "envy" to Christ, whom they preached, but of envy to the apostle; they envied his gifts, his usefulness and success in the ministry; and he being now in bonds, they thought it a proper opportunity to exert themselves, and set up preaching Christ as he had done, in the clearest manner; hoping they should meet with the same success, and gain great honour and applause in the church, and even be able to transfer to themselves that glory which belonged to the apostle: as for their "strife" and "contention", of which they also preached Christ; it was not with other faithful ministers of the word, about the doctrines of the Gospel; for in these they were agreed with them, at least, in appearance and profession, and in their ministry ever did they raise strifes and contentions about words, from which comes envying among the brethren; for this would not have answered their ends, which were vain glory and popular applause; but they strove and contended one with another, who should preach Christ best and clearest, or with the apostle to get his glory and honour from him; they strove to out vie one another, and particularly him in preaching Christ: but there were others of the brethren who were truly such, who preached Christ as well as they, and upon better principles, and with better views;

and some also of good will; or "willingly" and "freely", as the Arabic version renders it; without any selfish end or sinister view of vain glory; not moved unto it by envy or ambition; not doing it in a contentious manner, and with an ill design; but of pure "good will" to the Gospel, having a real liking of it, an hearty love for it, a sincere desire to spread it, and promote the interest of a Redeemer, and the good of souls by it; having in a spiritual and experimental manner felt the power, and tasted the sweetness of it themselves: and so were inwardly affected and truly disposed to preach it, clear of all external motives and ambitious views; and as having a good will to the apostle himself, whose heart they knew was in the Gospel, though he was now hindered from the ministry of it; and therefore to the best of their abilities were desirous of supplying his place without the least injury to his character.

Ver. 16. *The one preach Christ of contention*, etc.] That is, those that preached of envy and strife, an not of good will to Christ, to the Gospel, to the souls of men, or to the apostle; and though they preached Christ, yet

not sincerely or “purely”; not but that they delivered the sincere milk of the word, and preached the pure Gospel of Christ, without any mixture and adulteration; but then they did not preach it with a sincere heart, and a pure intention; for this respects not the doctrine they preached, but their views in it, which were not honest and upright; they did not preach Christ from a principle of love to his person, and from an inward experience of the power of his Gospel, and a zealous affection for it, and firm attachment to it, and with a view to the glory of God, the honour of Christ, and the good of immortal souls; but were influenced by avarice, ambition, and envy: they had very evil designs upon the apostle,

supposing to add affliction to my bonds; imagining that by their free and bold way of preaching Christ openly in the city without control, and with impunity, it might be thought that the apostle did not lie in bonds for preaching Christ, but for some other crime; or otherwise why were not they laid hold on and put under confinement also? or thinking that by such numbers of them frequently preaching Christ about the city, it would either incense and stir up the Jews, Paul's accusers, to prosecute him more vigorously; or excite Nero to take more cognizance of his case, and either more closely confine him, or hasten the bringing his cause to a hearing, and him to punishment, as the ringleader of this sect, to the terror of others; but this they could not do without exposing themselves to great danger, unless they were determined to recant, as soon as they should be taken up; wherefore it should rather seem that their view was in preaching Christ to carry away the glory of it from the apostle, and take it to themselves; and fancying that he was a man of the same cast with them, desirous of vain glory, they thought it would afflict and distress him, he being in bonds, and not at liberty to exert himself, and make use of his superior gifts and abilities; but in this they were mistaken, he was so far from being made uneasy hereby, that he rejoiced at the preaching of Christ, let their intentions be what they would; and therefore he does not say that they did add affliction to his bonds; but they “supposed”, or thought, that the method they took would do it.

Ver. 17. *But the other of love*, etc.] Those that were truly brethren in the Lord, who had received the grace of God in truth, to whom the Gospel

was come in power, and who had a spiritual and experimental knowledge of Christ, and of the mysteries of his grace; these preached Christ of love, “out of the love of him”, as the Ethiopic version reads; that is, out of love to Christ, who to them was exceeding precious, altogether lovely, the chiefest among ten thousands, and their hearts being hot and burning with love to him, they therefore spoke of him with their tongues; and out of love to the Gospel of Christ, which with them was the pearl of great price, and every truth of it more valuable than gold, silver, and precious stones; and out of love to the church of Christ and the members of it, that their souls might be fed and nourished with the wholesome words of Christ, might be comforted with the doctrines of grace, and be established and built up in their most holy faith; and out of love to the souls of others, knowing their miserable estate by nature, and the danger they were in, and therefore preached Christ as the only way of salvation, whereby they could escape the wrath to come; and out of love to the apostle likewise, which the following clause shows;

knowing that I am set for the defence of the Gospel; meaning either that they knew he was a chosen vessel, to bear the name of Christ, and preach his Gospel in the world; that he was ordained and appointed a minister of it before the world was; separated to it from his mother's womb, and was called unto, and sent to preach it by Christ, and was set apart for it by the church; and was in a very eminent manner qualified to defend it, by preaching, disputing, writing, and suffering: or that they knew that he was laid, or lay, as the words may rendered, in prison, for defending the Gospel of Christ; yea, they knew that his lying in prison was in defence of the Gospel; and therefore, out of love to him, they joined issue with him to defend the Gospel; as he by suffering for it, so they by preaching it, which they knew full well would be matter of great joy to him.

Ver. 18. *What then? notwithstanding every way*, etc.] What follows from hence? what is to be concluded from all this? what is to be thought or said in this case? this, that notwithstanding these brethren acted on those different principles, and with those different views:

whether in pretence: of love to Christ, zeal for the Gospel, and concern for the good of souls; though their real views were their own applause, and detriment to the apostle's character; or a t l [b, “by occasion”, as the Syriac version renders the word, and as many interpreters think is the sense

of it; occasionally preaching Christ, and making a handle of this to gain some other points, and get, advantages to themselves as some:

or in truth; as the hearty friends of Christ and the apostle did; they not only preached Christ who is the truth, and the truth as it is in Jesus, and every truth of the Gospel; and especially that fundamental one, salvation alone by a crucified Christ, and that without any adulteration or concealing any part of it; but with great purity of mind, with integrity of heart, and in the uprightness of their souls; as of sincerity, and in the sight of God; without selfish and sinister ends, and any ambitious views and evil designs: whether it was now in the one or the other way, upon the one or the other principles and views, the apostle stood thus affected; and these were his sentiments, reflections, and resolutions, that inasmuch as

Christ is preached; in the glory of his person, in the fulness of his grace, in the suitableness of his offices and great salvation, in the excellency of his righteousness, and the virtue of his blood, and the efficacy of his sacrifice;

and therein I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice; not that it was an indifferent thing with him, whether Christ was sincerely or hypocritically preached; or that he could take any pleasure in the manner of preaching, and in the principles and views of one sort of these preachers; for nothing was more disagreeable to him than envy and ambition, strife and contention, hypocrisy and insincerity; but he rejoiced in the subject matter of their ministry, which was Christ Jesus the Lord, whom he dearly loved, and whose interest, if served by any means, or any sort of persons, was a pleasure to him; and also in the effects and consequences of their ministry, the establishing of the saints, the conversion of sinners, the spread of the Gospel, and the enlargement of the interest of Christ: all which may be answered through the preaching of Christ, by evil designing men; for Christ and his Gospel are the same by whomsoever preached, and God may make use of his own truths to answer his ends and purposes, whoever are the dispensers of them, and though they themselves may be cast away, as Judas and others.

Ver. 19. *For I know that this shall turn to my salvation*, etc.] Or "to salvation", to the salvation of others; that is, the preaching of Christ by these men, though designed by them to the hurt of the apostle; yet he knew that by the power and grace of God it should be made useful to the conversion, and for the salvation of many souls; and this was matter of rejoicing to him: or that affliction which they thought to have added to his

bonds, should it befall him, he knew either from a divine revelation, or from the word of God in general, which gives reason to believe that all things work together for good to the saints, and from his own experience; that this also would turn to his advantage, and be for his good, either temporal, spiritual, or eternal, and would work for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the world to come; and even in this world, he knew that every reproach, indignity, and suffering he endured, did but increase his fame and his honour, and make his name the more illustrious among the saints; which was the very thing these men envied in him, and strove to take from him; yea, he knew that the method they took would, quite contrary to their expectation, be the means of his enlargement and liberty, of his salvation and deliverance from his bonds: (see ^{Ph}Philippians 1:25,26); and which he believed would be brought about by the prayers of the saints, and particularly these Philippians:

through your prayer; as Peter was delivered out of prison through the incessant prayer of the church for him. The apostle knew that the prayer of a righteous man availeth much with God, and is very prevalent with him, and much more the prayers of a whole church; wherefore he frequently desired them for him on many accounts; and among others, that he might be delivered out of the hands of unreasonable men; and he firmly believed that he should be delivered by such means:

and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ; which he had reason to expect and hope would be given him through their prayers for him; for though God has made large provisions for the supply of the wants of his people, in his Son and in his covenant, to be dispensed unto them by his Spirit, yet for these will he be sought unto by them: the supply of the Spirit is a supply of gifts from Christ, fitting and qualifying men for his service, and which are ministered by the Spirit to them severally as he will; and a supply of grace out of the fulness of Christ, which the Spirit of grace is the applier of; and a supply of strength from the same by him, to enable the saints both to do and suffer whatever he is pleased to call, them to; it is in short a supply of all their need, which the Spirit of God helps them to, according to the riches of grace, in glory by Christ: this the apostle knew would be sufficient for him, to support him under his present troubles, to deliver him out of them, and to fit him for whatever future work and service his Lord and master had for him to do.

Ver. 20. *According to my earnest expectation and [my] hope*, etc.] These words are so placed as that they may refer both to what goes before and what follows after; and the sense be either that the apostle had earnest expectation and hope, even a strong confidence of his salvation, or deliverance from his confinement; and also of his having an interest in the prayers of the saints, and that hereby a supply of the Spirit would be given him; for as he knew and was sure that his God would supply the wants of others, he had great reason to believe he would supply his own; and especially since he had been told by Christ that his grace was sufficient for him: or as in connection with what follows; he had a full persuasion that he should not be put to shame on any account;

that in nothing I shall be ashamed; not of his hope, neither the grace of hope, which makes not ashamed; nor the object of hope, Christ Jesus; nor the thing hoped for, eternal life and happiness, or any of the above things about which this grace was conversant; nor of his reproaches and sufferings for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, which he esteemed as an honour to him, as jewels in his crown, as chains of gold about his neck, and as great riches; nor of the Gospel which he preached, so as to retract and deny it, drop the whole, or conceal any part of it, lay down his profession of it, or cease to preach it: “but” his earnest desire and his firm hope and faith were,

[that] with all boldness, as always; that as he had, so he should continue to use boldness in the exercise of faith at the throne of grace, come with freedom thither, and stand before God with intrepidity, through the blood and righteousness of his Son; and that as he had met with afflictions and sufferings for Christ's sake, with cheerfulness and an undaunted spirit, none of these things had moved him, so he believed he never should; and that as he had all along, throughout the whole course of his ministry, preached the Gospel with plainness, openness, and freedom, without any guise or reserve, and that with an holy courage and boldness in the face of all opposition;

[so] now also Christ shall be magnified in my body; for this being Christ's, his great concern was to glorify him in it; and though it was a poor, weak, and crazy body, yet rich treasure being put into this earthen vessel, Christ had been greatly magnified, extolled, and made very high in it; never was there, as the apostle, such a magnifier of Christ, by preaching him in the transcendent glories of his person as the Son of God, in the riches of his

grace as Mediator, in all his offices of prophet, priest, and King; and particularly in the justification and salvation of men, where he made him to be all in all. Christ was also magnified by him, by his life and conversation, which influenced by his grace, was in obedience to his will, was directed to his glory, was as became his Gospel, and what adorned his doctrine in all things; and also by enduring such hardships and so great sufferings on his account; the power of Christ was greatly magnified in supporting him under them, and carrying him through them; and as this had been the case ever since he was in the ministry, it being the main thing he had in view, he had a well grounded hope and confidence, that it would ever be so:

whether [it be] by life or by death; that is, should he live longer, should he be delivered from his present confinement, and be spared a little longer among men, he comfortably assured Christ would be magnified by him in his body, and as long as he was in it; for his determination was to preach him and him only, to spend his life in his service, and to seek not his own things, but the things of Christ; or should he be put to death quickly by the order of Nero, he doubted not but Christ would have some glory thereby; he should die calling upon his name with fervency, professing his constant and unshaken faith in him, and sealing the Gospel by his blood, with the greatest cheerfulness.

Ver. 21. *For to me to live is Christ*, etc.] Christ was his life “efficiently”, the efficient cause and author of his spiritual life; he spoke it into him, produced it in him, and disciplined him with it: and he was his life, objectively, the matter and object of his life, that on which he lived; yea, it was not so much he that lived, as Christ that lived in him; he lived by faith on Christ, and his spiritual life was maintained and supported by feeding on him as the bread of life: and he was his life, “finally”, the end of his life; what he aimed at throughout the whole course of his life was the glory of Christ, the good of his church and people, the spread of his Gospel, the honour of his name, and the increase of his interest; and this last seems to be the true sense of the phrase here;

and to die is gain; to himself, for death is gain to believers: it is not easy to say what a believer gains by dying; he is released thereby, and delivered from all the troubles and distresses of this life, arising from diseases of body, losses and disappointments in worldly things; from the oppressions and persecutions of wicked men; from indwelling sin, unbelief, doubts, and fears, and the temptations of Satan; he as soon as dies enters into the

presence of God, where is fulness of joy, and is immediately with Christ, which is far better than being here, beholding his glory and enjoying communion with him; he is at once in the company of angels and glorified saints; is possessed of perfect holiness and knowledge; inherits a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, and wears a crown of life, righteousness, and glory; enters upon an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled; is received into everlasting habitations, into mansions of light, life, love, joy, peace, and comfort; is at perfect rest, and surrounded with endless pleasures. This is the common interpretation, and is countenanced by the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, which read, “to die”, or “if I die, it is gain to me”: but instead of reading the words as consisting of two propositions, they may he considered as one, and the sense be either this; Christ is gain to me living or dying in life or in death; for Christ is the believer's gain in life; he is all in all, his righteousness, his wisdom, his sanctification, his redemption, his life, his light, his food, his raiment, his riches, his joy, peace, and comfort; he is everything to him he wants, can wish for, or desire: and he is his gain in death; the hope he then has is founded on him, and the triumphs of his faith over death and the grave arise from redemption by him; his expectation is to be immediately with him; and the glory he will then enter into will lie in communion with him, in conformity to him, and in an everlasting vision of him: or thus, for me to live and to die is Christ's gain; his life being spent in his service, in living according to his will, in preaching his Gospel, serving his churches, and suffering for his sake, was for his glory; and his death being for his sake, in the faith of him, and the steady profession of it, would be what would glorify him, and so be his gain likewise; and this seems to be the genuine sense of the words, which contain a reason of the apostle's faith, why he was persuaded Christ would be magnified or glorified in his body, whether by life or by death.

Ver. 22. *But if I live in the flesh*, etc.] To be in the flesh sometimes signifies to be in a state of nature and unregeneracy, and to live in and after the flesh, to live according to the dictates of corrupt nature; but here it signifies living in the body, or the life which is in the flesh, as the Syriac version renders the phrase here, and as the apostle expresses it in (Galatians 2:20), and the sense is, if I should live any longer in the body, and be continued for some time in this world:

this [is] the fruit of my labour; or “I have fruit in my works”, as the above version renders it:

yet what I shall choose I wot not, or “know not”; whether life or death; since my life will be for the honour and glory of Christ, and though a toilsome and laborious one, yet useful and fruitful: by his “labour”, he means his ministerial work and service; the ministry is a work, a good and honourable work, and a laborious one. Christ's faithful ministers are labourers; they labour in the word and doctrine, both in studying and preaching it; and such a labourer was the apostle, who by the grace of God laboured more abundantly than others; the “fruit” of which was the conversion of many sinners, the edification, comfort, and establishment of the saints, their fruitfulness in grace and works, the spread of the Gospel far and near, the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ, and the weakening of Satan's kingdom, and the glorifying of Christ in his person, offices, and great salvation; all which was a strong and swaying argument with him, to desire to live longer in the body, and made it on the one hand so difficult with him what to choose: for as a certain Jew [f2] says,

> “the righteous man desires to live to do the will of God while he lives;”

but not with that view, he adds,

> “to increase the reward of the soul in the world to come.”

Ver. 23. *For I am in a strait betwixt two*, etc.] Life and death; or between these “two counsels”, as the Arabic version reads; two thoughts and desires of the mind, a desire to live for the reasons above, and a desire to die for a reason following. The apostle was pressed with a difficulty in his mind about this, as David was when he was bid to choose which he would, either seven years' famine, or three months' flight before his enemies, or three days' pestilence; upon which he said, I am in a great strait, (2 Samuel 24:14); to which passage it is thought the apostle alludes; the same word as here is used by Christ, (Luke 12:50);

having a desire to depart; to die, a way of speaking much in use with the Jews, as expressive of death; thus Abraham is represented by them speaking after this manner on account of his two sons Isaac and Ishmael, the one being righteous and the other wicked [f3];

> “says he, if I bless Isaac, lo, Ishmael will seek to be blessed, and he is wicked; but a servant am I, flesh and blood am I, and tomorrow µlw[h ˆm rjka, “I shall depart out of the world”, or “die”; and

what pleases the holy blessed God himself in his own world, let him do: rjpnçk, “when Abraham was dismissed” or “departed”, the holy blessed God appeared to Isaac and blessed him:”

and again it is said[f4],

“iniquities are not atoned for, until aml[m rjptad, “a man is dismissed”, or “departs out of the world”;”

and once more[f5],

“when a man µlw[h jzm rjpn, “departs out of this world”; according to his merit he ascends above;”

(see Gill on “<4801>John 13:1”); the same word is used in the Syriac version here; death is departing out of this life, a going out of the body, a removal out of this world; it is like moving from one place to another, from the world below to the world above; with the saints it is no other than a removing from one house to another, from the earthly house of their tabernacle, the body, to their Father's house, and the mansions of glory in it, preparing for them. Death is not an annihilation of men, neither of soul nor body; it is a separation of them, but not a destruction of either; it is a dissolution of the union between them for a while, when both remain in a separate state till the resurrection: now this the apostle had a desire unto, which was not a new and sudden motion of mind; it was a thought that had long dwelt with him, and still continued; and this desire after death was not for the sake of death, for death in itself is a king of terrors, very formidable and terrible, and not desirable; it is an enemy, the last enemy that shall be destroyed; it is contrary to nature, and to desire it is contrary to a first principle in nature, self-preservation; but death is desired for some other end; wicked men desire it, and desire others to put an end to their lives, or do it themselves to free them from some trouble they are in; or because they are not able to support under a disappointment of what their ambition or lust have prompted them to: good men desire death, though always when right, with a submission to the will of God, that they may be rid of sin, which so much dishonours God as well as distresses themselves; and that they may be clothed upon with the shining robes of immortality and glory; and as the apostle here,

to be with Christ: for the former clause is to be strictly connected with this; he did not desire merely to depart this life, but chiefly to be with Christ,

and the former only in order to the latter; the saints are in Christ now, chosen in him, set upon his heart, and put into his hands, are created in him, and brought to believe in him, and are in him as branches in the vine; and he is in them, formed in their hearts, lives and dwells in them by faith, and they have sometimes communion with him in private duties and public worship; he comes into them and sups with them, and they with him: but this is only at times, he is as a wayfaring man that continues but for a night; hence the present state of the saints is a state of absence from Christ; while they are at home in the body, they are absent from the Lord, especially as to his bodily presence; but after death they are immediately with him, where he is in his human nature; and their souls in their separate state continue with him till the resurrection morn, when their bodies will be raised and reunited to their souls, and be both for ever with him, beholding his glory, and enjoying uninterrupted communion with him; which will be the completion and full end of Christ's preparations and prayers: hence it appears that there is a future being and state after death: the apostle desires to depart this life, and “be”, exist, be somewhere, “with Christ”; for the only happy being after death is with him; if souls are not with him, they are with devils and damned spirits, in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: and it is also manifest that souls do not sleep with the body in the grave until the resurrection; the souls of the saints are immediately with Christ, in the enjoyment of his presence, in happiness and glory, hoping, believing, and waiting for the resurrection of their bodies; had the apostle known that he must have remained after death in a state of inactivity and uselessness, deprived of the communion of Christ and of his church, it would have been no difficulty with him to determine which was most eligible, to live or die; and it would have been much better for him, and more to the advantage of the churches, if he had continued upon earth to this day, than to be sleeping in his grave, senseless and inactive; whereas he adds,

which is far better: to depart and be with Christ is better than to live in the flesh in this sinful world, in the midst of a variety of sorrows and troubles, and in which communion with Christ is but now and then enjoyed, though such a life is better than sleeping in the grave; but upon a soul's departure and being with Christ, it is free from sin and sorrow, and in the utmost pleasure, enjoying communion with him without interruption; and this is better than labouring in the ministry: for though no man took more pleasure in the work of the ministry than the apostle did, and no man's

ministry was more profitable and useful; yet it was toilsome, laborious, and wearisome to the flesh; wherefore dying and being with Jesus could not but be desirable, since he should then rest from his labours, and his works would follow him; at least it was better for him, and so the Syriac version adds, yl , "to me", far better for me; and so the Arabic: to live longer might be better and more to the advantage of Christ, the glory of his name, the good of his churches, it might be better for others; but leaving the world and being with Christ were better for him; and this was an argument swaying on the side of death, and inclining him to desire that, and made it so difficult with him what to choose.

Ver. 24. *Nevertheless to abide in the flesh*, etc.] To continue in the body, not always, but a little longer,

[is] more needful for you; for their comfort, edification, and instruction, their further profiting: and increase in faith, and the joy of it. The Syriac version renders the words thus, "but business for you", or "a good will towards you compels me to abide in the body"; and the Arabic version thus, "notwithstanding I choose to remain in the flesh, and this I think very necessary for you"; so that upon the whole, the argument for living longer on consideration of glorifying Christ, and of being more useful to the good of souls, preponderated with him; inclined him to desire rather to live than die; though the latter was better for him, and more to his personal advantage; and thus, like a brave and good man, he prefers a public good to a private one.

Ver. 25. *And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide*, etc.] In the flesh, in the body, live a little longer in the world. These words must be understood either of a certain infallible knowledge, arising from a divine revelation, and a firm persuasion and confidence founded upon that which the apostle had, of his being delivered from his bonds, and spared a little longer for further usefulness among the churches; and accordingly some have thought that he was after this set at liberty, and travelled through several countries preaching the Gospel, and after that was committed to prison and suffered death; but of this there is no sufficient proof: or rather therefore of a conjectural knowledge arising from the present state of things, and his view of it; being willing to hope, and persuade himself that he should be delivered from his confinement, and his life be spared for the good of the interest of Christ, and the glory of his name; it being what his heart was set upon, and he was very desirous of:

and continue with you all; not only with the Philippians, but other saints, and other churches, who were dear to him, and he to them; though he may mean more especially these believers:

for your furtherance, or "profiting"; in divine and spiritual things, in the knowledge of Christ, and the truths of the Gospel:

and joy of faith; for the furtherance, or increase of that joy which faith is attended with, and which springs from it; for true solid joy springs from faith in the person, blood, righteousness, and atonement of Christ; and is what may be increased, and is often done by and through the ministry of the word, and the ministers of the Gospel; who do not pretend to a dominion over the faith of men, only to be helpers of their joy, as they sometimes are, as also of their faith, which as it comes by hearing is increased the same way. The phrase is Jewish; mention is made in the writings of the Jews [f6] of atwnmyhmd hwdj, "the joy of faith".

Ver. 26. *That your rejoicing may be more abundant*, etc.] They had rejoiced greatly on his account already, blessing God that ever they had seen his face, or heard his voice; as they had great reason to do, he being the happy instrument of first bringing the Gospel to them, and of their conversion; and now he hoped he should be delivered out of prison, and see them again, that their joy might be increased and abound yet more and more, upon his deliverance, they had so earnestly prayed and so much longed for, and at the sight of him they so dearly loved: and yet to show that this their joy was not looked upon by him as a carnal one, or as arising from a natural affection, he observes that it was

in Jesus Christ; though they rejoiced in him as an instrument, and therefore he adds,

for me; yet it was on account of Jesus Christ, the subject of his ministry; their joy did not centre in the apostle, but had Christ for its object, whose person, righteousness, and salvation were held forth by him to their view and comfort; and though they would still more and more rejoice should he return to them once more,

by my coming to you again; yet still it would he in Christ, and because of the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, in which he should come to them.

Ver. 27. *Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ*, etc.] Or "behave as citizens worthy of the Gospel"; for not so much their outward conversation in the world is here intended, which ought to be in wisdom towards them that are without; so as to give no offence to any, and to put to, silence, the ignorance of foolish men, and them to confusion and: shame, who falsely accuse their good conversation in Christ; though this is what is highly becoming professors of the Gospel; and a moral conversation proceeding from principles of grace, under the influence of the Spirit of God, is very ornamental to the Gospel, being what that requires and powerfully teaches; but the conversation of the saints one with another, in their church state, is here meant. The allusion is to cities which have their peculiar laws and rules, to which the citizens are to conform; and such as behave according to them act up to the character of good citizens, and becoming, and worthy of the charter by which they hold their privileges and immunities. A church of Christ is as a city, and is often so called; the members of it are citizens, fellow citizens, one with another, and of the household of God, and have laws and rules according to which they are to conduct themselves; as such do who walk worthy of their calling, and becoming the charter of the Gospel by which they have and hold their freedom and privileges, as citizens of the new Jerusalem: and such a Gospel walk and conversation lies in such things as these; constant attendance on the preaching of the Gospel, and on the administration of Gospel ordinances; a strict observation of the rules of behaviour towards persons that have given offence, either in public or private; a just regard to the discipline of Christ's house, in admonitions; reproofs, censures and excommunications, as cases require; cultivating love, unity, and peace; keeping the ordinances as they were delivered; retaining and striving for the doctrines of the Gospel; holding the mysteries of it in a pure conscience, and adorning: it by a becoming life and conversation. This the apostle recommends as the "only", the main and principal thing these saints should attend to; and as what would give him the greatest joy and pleasure to hear of, whether he should ever come and see them again or not:

that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs. The Vulgate Latin version reads "hear of you"; and so do the Syriac and Ethiopic versions:

that ye stand fast in one spirit; meaning either the Gospel, which is the Spirit that giveth life; so called because it is from the, Spirit of God, and that by which he is conveyed into the souls of men, and contains spiritual

things: this is one, uniform, consistent scheme of truths; find in this believers ought to stand fast, and should abide by it, and never give up, or part with anyone branch of it; and so to do is one part of their Gospel conversation; for the apostle in this and the following things points out the several parts of that conversation he exhorts to: or else the holy Spirit of God is intended, who as he is the beginner of the good work of grace on the soul, is he also who carries it on and will perfect it; and therefore to him should the people of God look for grace and strength, to enable them to stand fast in the profession of their faith, to hold fast without wavering, and to persevere to the end; who is that one Spirit by which they are baptized into one body, and become fellow citizens with the saints: or the spirit of love, unity, and peace is here meant: true Christian love makes the saints to be of one heart and soul; and in this single affection to one another should they stand fast; brotherly love should continue, and all endeavours be used to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; which is another branch of becoming Gospel conversation: the apostle adds,

with one mind, or "soul"; either signifying the same as before, or else that they should be of one judgment in the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, and abide therein; which is necessary to their harmonious walk and conversation together, as citizens of Zion:

striving together for the faith of the Gospel: by the "faith of the Gospel", may be designed the grace of faith, which comes by the Gospel; as the means of it, and by which the Gospel becomes useful and beneficial to the souls of men, and which has the Gospel for its object; for faith comes by hearing the word, and that is only profitable when it is mixed with it, and is that grace which gives credit to every truth of it, upon the testimony of divine revelation: now as the doctrine of faith is that which the saints are to strive for, the grace of faith is that by which they strive for it; by which they resist Satan, oppose false teachers, and overcome the world; and agreeably to this sense the Arabic version reads, "by the faith of the Gospel": though rather the doctrine of faith is intended, that word of faith, or faith, which is the Gospel itself, and which is often so called; and for this, in all its parts and branches, believers should strive; as for all those doctrines of faith, which concern the unity of God, the trinity of persons in the Godhead, the divine sonship of Christ, the proper deity and distinct personality of him and the blessed Spirit; and for all such doctrines as regard the state and condition of men by the fall of Adam, as that the guilt

of his sin is imputed to all his posterity, the pollution of nature by it derived and communicated to them, that the bias of man's mind is naturally to that which is evil, and is averse to that which is good, and that he is impotent to everything that is spiritually good; and for all those doctrines which regard the free and distinguishing grace of God; of election, as eternal, personal, and irrespective of faith, holiness, and good works, as motives and conditions of it; of the covenant of grace, as from everlasting, absolute and unconditional, sure and firm; of redemption, as particular, and as proceeding upon a full satisfaction for sin to law and justice; of justification by the righteousness of Christ; of peace and pardon by his blood; of regeneration, conversion, and sanctification, as entirely owing to powerful and efficacious grace, and not to man's free will; of the saints' final perseverance, the resurrection of the dead, a future judgment, and eternal life, as the free gift of God: striving for these, as wrestlers do with one another, to which the allusion is, supposes persons to strive and wrestle against; and they are such as oppose truth and themselves unto it; as all such that deny divine revelation, or the authority of the Scriptures; that say that Jesus is not the Messiah; or that Christ is not the natural and eternal Son of God; or that deny his proper deity, his satisfaction and righteousness; that reject the efficacious grace of God, and the operations of the Spirit as unnecessary, to regeneration and conversion; that advance and plead for the purity of human nature, the power of man's free will, and ascribe justification and salvation to the works of men: all such are to be contended with and strove against, and that not with carnal weapons, but with spiritual ones, with the Scriptures of truth; by which a good warfare with them may be warred, and the good fight of faith fought with much success; and the whole requires great care and solicitude, earnestness, zeal, constancy, and courage: striving together for these, intends either striving with the apostle, and as they had him both as a fellow soldier, and for an example; or rather striving one with another, their ministers with their members, and their members with their ministers; the one by preaching, writing, and disputing more especially, the other by bearing a constant testimony to truth, and praying for the success of it; and both by dying for it when required; and so to do is to have the conversation as becomes the Gospel of Christ.

Ver. 28. *And in nothing terrified by your adversaries*, etc.] Not by Satan, though a roaring lion, for Christ is greater than he; nor by the world which Christ has overcome; nor by false teachers, though men of art and cunning;

nor by violent persecutors, who can do no more than kill, the body; let not the power, the rage, the cunning, or the violence of one or the other, move, discourage, or affright from a close attachment to the Gospel and the truths of it:

which is to them an evident token of perdition; when men wilfully oppose themselves to the truth, and show a malicious hatred to it, and hold it in unrighteousness, and either turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, or persecute it with rage and fury, it looks as if they were given up to reprobate minds, to say and do things not convenient; as if they were foreordained to condemnation; and were consigned over to destruction and perdition; and very rare it is, that such persons are ever called by grace:

but to you of salvation; when men are reproached and ridiculed, are threatened and persecuted for the sake of the Gospel, and are enabled to take all patiently, and persevere in the truth with constancy, it is a manifest token that such are counted worthy of the kingdom of God; that God has a design of salvation for them, and that they shall be saved with an everlasting one: so that the different effects of the opposition of the one, and the constancy of the other, are made use of as so many reasons why the saints should not be terrified by their enemies: it is added,

and that of God; meaning either that the whole of this is of God, as that there are adversaries, heretics, and persecutors; this is by divine permission, and in order to answer some ends and purpose of God, and the perdition or everlasting punishment of such persons will be righteously inflicted upon them by him; and that the constancy, faith, patience, and perseverance of the saints and their salvation, are all of God: or it particularly respects the latter, the salvation of those who persevere to the end; this is not of themselves, or merited by their constancy, patience, and perseverance, but is God's free gift. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, join this clause to the beginning of (^{Philippians 1:29}Philippians 1:29), thus, “and this is given of God to you”, etc.

Ver. 29. *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ*, etc.] For the sake of his Gospel, for the good of his interest, and the glory of his name. The Alexandrian copy reads, “to us it is given”, etc.

not only to believe in him; for faith in Christ, which is not merely believing that he is the Christ, and all that is said of him, or all that he himself says, but is a seeing of the Son, a going to him, receiving, embracing, leaning,

relying, and living upon him, as God's salvation, is a pure gift of grace; it is not in nature, nor in every man, and in whom it is, it is not of themselves, it is the gift of God; the first implantation of it, all its acts and exercise, its increase, and the performance of it at last with power, are all owing to the grace of God; and this is only given to the elect, for it is a distinguishing gift; it is given to them, and them alone, and, therefore called the faith of God's elect:

but also to suffer for his sake; for the sake of Christ personal; for the sake of Christ mystical, for his body's sake the church; for the sake of his Gospel, and for the sake of his cause and interest in the world: now to suffer in name and character, in estate or person, not as an evildoer, but as a Christian, is a gift of God, as faith in Christ is; all the sufferings of the saints are appointed by God; their being called forth to suffer shame for the sake of Christ, is an high honour conferred upon them; all the grace and strength by which they are supported under sufferings for Christ are given to them; and all the glory consequent upon them is not merited by them, which are by no meant to be compared with it, but is the free gift of God through Christ. The same persons to whom it is given to believe in Christ, to them it is given to suffer for him; and they all do in some shape or another, though some more, others less; yet all are partakers of sufferings for Christ, and so are conformed to him their head, and hereby enter the kingdom: now all this is said, as containing so many reasons to encourage believers to have their conversation as becomes the Gospel of Christ, by a steady adherence to it, and a joint contention and striving for it, without being intimidated by their enemies.

Ver. 30. *Having the same conflict*, etc.] For it seems that the Philippians were now under persecution for the Gospel of Christ; but this was no new or strange thing; it was the same the apostle was under formerly, and at that time:

which ye saw in me, and now hear [to be] in me; when he and Silas were at Philippi, and first preached the Gospel there, they were exceedingly ill used, and shamefully entreated; they were dragged to the market place, or court, were beaten and scourged, and put into the inner prison, and their feet made fast in the stocks, (<44169>Acts 16:19,22-24 <52102>1 Thessalonians 2:2); of all this the Philippians were eyewitnesses, and to which he here refers when he says, which ye saw in me; and now he was a prisoner at Rome, as they had heard, hence he says, “and now hear to be in me”; for they had

sent Epaphroditus to him with a present, as a token of their love to him, and to support him under his affliction; and which he mentions, in order to animate them to bear their sufferings patiently for Christ's sake, since the same were accomplished in him, as well as in the rest of their brethren and fellow Christians in the world.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS 2

This chapter contains several exhortations to unity, love, and concord, to humility, and lowliness of mind, and to a becoming life and conversation; and concludes with commendations of two eminent ministers of Christ, Timothy and Epaphroditus. The arguments engaging to harmony and mutual affection, are taken from the consolation that is in Christ, the comfort there is in love, the fellowship of the Spirit, and the bowels and mercies which become saints, (⁵⁰²⁰¹Philippians 2:1), as also from the joy this would fill the apostle with; and the things exhorted to are expressed by likeness of mind, sameness of love, and unity of soul, (⁵⁰²⁰²Philippians 2:2), and the manner directed to for the preservation of such a spirit, is to do nothing in a contentious and vainglorious way, but in an humble and lowly manner, having a better opinion of others than themselves; and observing their superior gifts and graces, and so submit things unto them, (⁵⁰²⁰³Philippians 2:3,4), and which humble deportment is further urged, from the instance and example of our Lord Jesus Christ, (⁵⁰²⁰⁵Philippians 2:5), which is illustrated by the dignity of his person, the glorious divine form in which he was, and his indisputable equality with his Father, (⁵⁰²⁰⁶Philippians 2:6), and yet such was his great condescension, that he became man, appeared in the form of a servant, and was humbled to the lowest degree, even to die the death of the cross, (⁵⁰²⁰⁷Philippians 2:7,8), nevertheless God exalted him as man, and gave him superior honour to all creatures; and will oblige all to be subject to him, and acknowledge his dominion over them, to the glory of his divine Father, (⁵⁰²⁰⁹Philippians 2:9-11), hereby suggesting, that in like manner, though not to the same degree, such who are humble and lowly minded shall be exalted by the Lord; and then with the greatest affection to the Philippians, and with high commendations of them, the apostle renews his exhortation to do all the duties of religion with humility and modesty; knowing that all the grace and strength in which they performed them was owing to the internal operation of divine power in them, (⁵⁰²¹²Philippians 2:12,13), and therefore should be done without murmuring against God, or disputings among themselves, (⁵⁰²¹⁴Philippians 2:14), and next he proceeds to exhort to an unblemished

and inoffensive life and conversation, as the end and issue of a modest and humble behaviour; and this he enforces on them, from the consideration of their relation to God, being his children, which would appear hereby; and from the wickedness and perverseness of the people they lived among; and therefore should be careful, lest they be ensnared by them, to the dishonour of God, and the grief of themselves; and from their character as lights in the world, whose business it was to hold forth the word of life; and also from this consideration, that it would be the joy of the apostle in the day of Christ, that his labours among them had not been fruitless, (Philippians 2:15,16), yea, such was his love to them, that if even he was to die on their account, it would be matter of joy and gladness to him; and he desires they would express the same joy with him, (Philippians 2:17,18), and though he could not be with them in person, he hoped in a little time to send Timothy, for this end, that he might know how things stood with them; which if well, would be a comfort to him, (Philippians 2:19), the reasons why he picked Timothy as a messenger to them were, because there were none like him, for the sincere regard he had for their spiritual good, (Philippians 2:20), and which is illustrated by the contrary disposition and conduct of others, who sought themselves, and not Jesus Christ, his honour and interest, (Philippians 2:21), and besides, they themselves were witnesses of his filial affection to the apostle, and of his faithful service with him in the Gospel, (Philippians 2:22), and then he repeats his hopes of sending him quickly, as soon as ever he knew how it would go with him, whether he should be released or suffer, (Philippians 2:23), the former of which he had some confidence of, and that he should be able to see them himself in a little time, (Philippians 2:24), however, in the mean while he thought it proper to send Epaphroditus to them, whom he commends as a brother of his, a co-worker, a fellow soldier, a messenger of theirs, and a minister to his wants, (Philippians 2:25), the reasons of sending him were, because he longed to see them, and because he was uneasy that they had heard of his sickness; which was not only true that he had been sick, but his sickness was very dangerous, and threatened with death; however, through the mercy of God to him, he was recovered; and which was a mercy also to the apostle, who otherwise would have had an additional sorrow; wherefore another reason of sending him was, that upon the sight of him they might be filled with joy, and the apostle himself have less sorrow, (Philippians 2:26-28), and then he exhorts them, that when he was returned to them, they would gladly receive him, and highly esteem of him; and the rather, since the

dangerous illness he was attended with was brought upon him through his labours in the service of Christ, and also of the apostle, which he performed in their stead, even to the neglect of his health and life, (^{Philippians 2:29,30}).

Ver. 1. *If [there be] therefore any consolation in Christ*, etc.] Or "exhortation", as the word is sometimes rendered; that is, either if there is any exhortation of Christ to love and unity, as there is in (^{John 13:34 15:11,17}), and this is of any weight and value; or if an exhortation hereunto made in the name of Christ, by any of his ministers, messengers, and ambassadors, will be regarded, as it ought to be, then fulfil ye my joy, etc. (^{Philippians 2:2}), but as the word is frequently translated "consolation", as it is here in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; the sense may be either, if there is any comfort to be given to them that are in Christ Jesus, as every converted man is, and as the apostle was, and especially to them that are afflicted and persecuted for the sake of Christ, are prisoners in him, and on his account, which was the apostle's case, then he desired they would attend to his following request: or if there was any consolation for them, and they had had any comfort in and from Christ; as all true, solid, strong, and everlasting consolation is only in Christ, and is founded on the greatness of his person, as God our Saviour, on the fulness of his grace, the efficacy of his blood, the perfection of his righteousness and sacrifice, and on the great salvation he is the author of: agreeably the Syriac version renders it, "if therefore ye have any consolation in Christ"; and the Arabic version, "if therefore ye enjoy any consolation from the grace of Christ"; which is displayed in the Gospel, as undoubtedly they did; and since then all this comfort was enjoyed by them, through the Gospel the apostle preached to them, the argument from hence must be strong upon them, to attend to what he desired of them:

if any comfort of love; in it, or from it; as from the love of God the Father, which is everlasting and unchangeable, and must be comforting, when shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit; and from the love of the Son, which is the same, and equally immovable and lasting, and which passeth knowledge; and from the love of the Spirit, in applying the grace of the Father, and of the Son, whereby he becomes a glorifier of them, and a comforter of his people; and from the love of the saints to one another, which renders their communion with each other comfortable, pleasant, and delightful: or the apostle's sense is, if they had so much love for him, as to wish and desire he might be comforted in his present situation, and that they would be willing

to make use of any methods to comfort him, then he desires this; and this is all he desires, mutual love, peace, harmony, and agreement among themselves:

if any fellowship of the spirit: of the spirit of one saint with another; if there is such a thing as an union of spirits, an oneness of souls, a tasting of each other's spirits, and a communion with one another, then care should be taken to keep this unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace, (<490403>Ephesians 4:3): or if there is any fellowship of the Holy Spirit of God, any communion with him, any such thing as a witnessing of him to, and with our spirits, or as fellowship with the Father and the Son by him, and saints are baptized into one body by one Spirit, and have been made to drink of the same Spirit, (<461213>1 Corinthians 12:13), then it becomes them to be of one mind, and to stand fast in one Spirit, (<500127>Philippians 1:27):

if any bowels and mercies; as there are in God, and in the Lord Jesus Christ, moving towards the saints; or such as become Christians, who, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, ought to put on bowels of mercies to one another; express the most hearty, inward, tender, and compassionate concern for each other's welfare, temporal and spiritual. Thus the apostle premises the most moving and pathetic arguments, leading on to the exhortations and advice, to love, harmony, and unity, given in (<500202>Philippians 2:2).

Ver. 2. *Fulfil ye my joy*, etc.] The Arabic version adds, “by these things”; meaning not his joy in the Lord Jesus Christ, which arose from views of interest his person, blood, and righteousness; which was had by believing in him, by enjoying communion with him, and living in hope of the glory of God; this in a fruit of the Spirit, (<480522>Galatians 5:22), and is called joy in the Holy Ghost; who, as he was the author, must be the finisher of it, and not the Philippians; much less does he mean that fulness of joy in the presence, and at the right hand of God in heaven, which he expected to have; but that which arose from the state, conduct, and mutual respect of the saints to each other; he had much joy in them, on account of the good work being begun, and carrying on in their souls; and because of their steadfastness in the faith, notwithstanding the persecutions they met with; and on account of their continued love to him, and the late fresh instance of it they had given, in sending their minister with a present to him, and who had given him a particular account of their affairs; but his joy was not yet full, there were some things which damped it; as the unbecoming walk and

conversation of some, of whom he spoke with grief of heart, and tears in his eyes; and the inclination of others to listen to the false teachers, those of the concision, or circumcision; and the murmurings, disputings, and divisions of others among them, that were contentious and quarrelsome; wherefore to crown his joy, and fill it brimful, he signifies that their unity in affection, judgment, and practice, would do it, for so he explains it as follows:

that ye be likeminded, or "equally affected to one another"; that since they were but as one man, were one body, and had but one head, and one Spirit, that quickened and comforted them, and had but one faith and one baptism, they ought to be one in affection, practice, and judgment; this is the general, of which the following are the particulars:

having the same love; both for quality, being hearty, sincere, and unfeigned; and for quantity, returning the same that is measured to them; and with respect to objects, loving the same Christ, the same doctrines of Christ, the same ministers of the Gospel, and all the saints, rich and poor, high and low, weak or strong believers, without making any difference, by which means unity is preserved: for if one loves Christ, and another antichrist; one loves one doctrine, and another the opposite to it; one loves a teacher of the law, and another a preacher of the Gospel, one loves one Gospel minister, and one loves another, in distinction from, and opposition to the other; one loves the rich and not the poor, men of great gifts and grace, and neglects the meaner saints; when this is the case, they cannot be said to have the same love, nor can there be harmony, concord, and agreement:

[being] of one accord, or "being alike in soul"; having the same soul, not in substance and number, as some philosophers have asserted, but having the same affection, judgment, and will, as the first Christians are said to be of one heart and of one soul; or "unanimous" in their sentiments about doctrines and ordinances, being all of a piece in their practices; and agreeing in all their counsels, debates, acts, and votes, in their church meetings:

of one mind; in the doctrines of grace, in the ordinances of the Gospel; and in the discipline of the church: the means of preserving and increasing such affection, unity, and agreement, are next directed to.

Ver. 3. *[Let] nothing [be done] through strife*, etc.] About words merely; otherwise they were to strive for the faith of the Gospel, the purity of Gospel ordinances, worship and discipline; but the apostle would not have them strive merely to carry a point determined on, without having any regard to reason and truth, or yielding to the infirmities of the weak; which is the case and conduct of contentious persons; than which nothing can be more contrary to the Spirit of the Gospel, or the peace of churches: the apostle adds,

or vain glory; for where this is predominant, persons will always be singular in their sentiments, and never relinquish them, let what reason soever be given against them; nor will they give way to the judg ment of others, but right or wrong will have their own wills; Diotrephes like, loving to have the preeminence in all things, (3 John 1:9); and such persons and conduct are very injurious to the comfort and harmony of the saints:

but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves; not as to the things of the world, in respect of which one man may be a better man than another, and he must know and think himself so; nor with respect to the endowments of the mind, and acquired abilities, which one man may have above another; and the difference being so great in some, it must be easily discerned, that one is more learned and knowing, in this or the other language, art, or science; but with regard to, grace, and to spiritual light, knowledge, and judgment: and where there is lowliness of mind, or true humility, a person will esteem himself in a state of grace, as the great apostle did, the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints; one in whom this grace reigns will pay a deference to the judgment of other saints, and will prefer their experience, light, and knowledge, to his own; and will readily give way, when he sees such that are of longer standing, of greater experience, and more solid judgment, as he has reason to think, than himself, are on the other side of the question; and so peace, love, and unity, are preserved. This grace of humility is an excellent ornament to a Christian, and wonderfully useful in Christian societies.

Ver. 4. *Look, not every man on his own things*, etc.] Not but that a man should take care of his worldly affairs, and look well unto them, and provide things honest in the sight of all men, for himself and his family, otherwise he would be worse than an infidel; but he is not to seek his own private advantage, and prefer it to a public good; accordingly the Syriac version reads it, “neither let anyone be careful of himself, but also everyone

of his neighbour"; and the Arabic version thus, "and let none of you look to that which conduces to himself alone, but let everyone of you look to those things which may conduce to his friend"; but this respects spiritual things, and spiritual gifts: a Christian should not seek his own honour and applause, and to have his own will, and a point in a church carried his own way, but should consult the honour of Christ, the good of others, and the peace of the church; he should not look upon his own gifts, he may look upon them, and ascribe them to the grace of God, and make use of them to his glory, but not to admire them, or himself for them, and pride himself in them, and lift up himself above others, neglecting and taking no notice of the superior abilities of others:

but every man also on the things of others; not on their worldly things, busying himself with other men's matters, and which he has nothing to do with, but on the sentiments and reasons of others; which he should well weigh and consider, and if they outdo and overbalance his own, should yield unto them; he should take notice of the superior gifts of others, and own and acknowledge them; which is the way to submit to one another in the fear of God, and to promote truth, friendship, and love.

Ver. 5. *Let this mind be in you*, etc.] The Arabic version renders it, "let that humility be perceived in you". The apostle proposes Christ as the great pattern and exemplar of humility; and instances in his assumption of human nature, and in his subjection to all that meanness, and death itself, even the death of the cross in it; and which he mentions with this view, to engage the saints to lowliness of mind, in imitation of him; to show forth the same temper and disposition of mind in their practice,

which also was in Christ Jesus; or as the Syriac version, "think ye the same thing as Jesus Christ"; let the same condescending spirit and humble deportment appear in you as in him. This mind, affection, and conduct of Christ, may refer both to his early affection to his people, the love he bore to them from everlasting, the resolution and determination of his mind in consequence of it; and his agreement with his Father to take upon him their nature in the fulness of time, and to do his will, by obeying, suffering, and dying in their room and stead; and also the open exhibition and execution of all this in time, when he appeared in human nature, poor, mean, and abject; condescending to the lowest offices, and behaving in the most meek and humble manner, throughout the whole of his life, to the moment of his death.

Ver. 6. *Who being in the form of God*, etc.] The Father; being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. This form is to be understood, not of any shape or figure of him; for as such is not to be seen, it is not to be supposed of him; or any accidental form, for there are no accidents in God, whatever is in God, is God; he is nothing but nature and essence, he is the το ον, the Jehovah, I am what I am; and so is his Son, which is, and was, and is to come, the fountain of all created beings nor does it intend any outward representation and resemblance of him, such as in kings; who, because of the honour and dignity they are raised unto, the authority and power they have, and because of the glory and majesty they are arrayed with, are called gods: nor does it design the state and condition Christ appeared in here on earth, having a power to work miracles, heal diseases, and dispossess devils, for the manifestation of his glory; and so might be said to be in the form of God, as Moses for doing less miracles is said to be a God unto Pharaoh; since this account does not regard Christ; as he was on earth in human nature, but what he was antecedent to the assumption of it; or otherwise his humility and condescension in becoming man, and so mean, will not appear: but this phrase, “the form of God”, is to be understood of the nature and essence of God, and describes Christ as he was from all eternity; just as the form of a servant signifies that he was really a servant, and the fashion of a man in which he was found means that he was truly and really man; so his being in the form of God intends that he was really and truly God; that he partook of the same nature with the Father, and was possessed of the same glory: from whence it appears, that he was in being before his incarnation; that he existed as a distinct person from God his Father, in whose form he was, and that as a divine person, or as truly God, being in the glorious form, nature, and essence of God; and that there is but one form of God, or divine nature and essence, common to the Father and the Son, and also to the Spirit; so that they are not three Gods, but one God: what the form of God is, the Heathens themselves [f7] say cannot be comprehended nor seen, and so not to be inquired after; and they use the same word the apostle does here [f8]: and now Christ being in this glorious form, or having the same divine nature with the Father, with all the infinite and unspeakable glories of it,

thought it no robbery to be equal with God; the Father; for if he was in the same form, nature, and essence, he must be equal to him, as he is; for he has the same perfections, as eternity, omniscience, omnipotence,

omnipresence, immutability, and self-existence: hence he has the same glorious names, as God, the mighty God, the true God, the living God, God over all, Jehovah, the Lord of glory, etc. the same works of creation and providence are ascribed to him, and the same worship, homage, and honour given him: to be “in the form of God”, and to be “equal with God”, signify the same thing, the one is explanative of the other: and this divine form and equality, or true and proper deity, he did not obtain by force and rapine, by robbery and usurpation, as Satan attempted to do, and as Adam by his instigation also affected; and so the mind of a wicked man, as Philo the Jew says [f9], being a lover of itself and impious, οιομενος ισος ειναι ψεω, “thinks itself to be equal with God”, a like phrase with this here used; but Christ enjoyed this equality by nature; he thought, he accounted, he knew he had it this way; and he held it hereby, and of right, and not by any unlawful means; and he reckoned that by declaring and showing forth his proper deity, and perfect equality with the Father, he robbed him of no perfection; the same being in him as in the Father, and the same in the Father as in him; that he did him no injury, nor deprived him of any glory, or assumed that to himself which did not belong to him: as for the sense which some put upon the words, that he did not “affect”, or “greedily catch” at deity; as the phrase will not admit of it, so it is not true in fact; he did affect deity, and asserted it strongly, and took every proper opportunity of declaring it, and in express terms affirmed he was the Son of God; and in terms easy to be understood declared his proper deity, and his unity and equality with the Father; required the same faith in himself as in the Father, and signified that he that saw the one, saw the other, (Mark 14:61,62) (John 5:17,18 10:30,33 14:1,10). Others give this as the sense of them, that he did not in an ostentatious way show forth the glory of his divine nature, but rather hid it; it is true, indeed, that Christ did not seek, but carefully shunned vain glory and popular applause; and therefore often after having wrought a miracle, would charge the persons on whom it was wrought, or the company, or his disciples, not to speak of it; this he did at certain times, and for certain reasons; yet at other times we find, that he wrought miracles to manifest forth his glory, and frequently appeals to them as proofs of his deity and Messiahship: and besides, the apostle is speaking not of what he was, or did in his incarnate state, but of what he was and thought himself to be, before he became man; wherefore the above sense is to be preferred as the genuine one.

Ver. 7. *But made himself of no reputation*, etc.] Or “nevertheless emptied himself”; not of that fulness of grace which was laid up in him from everlasting, for with this he appeared when he was made flesh, and dwelt among men; nor of the perfections of his divine nature, which were not in the least diminished by his assumption of human nature, for all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily; though he took that which he had not before, he lost nothing of what he had; the glory of his divine nature was covered, and out of sight; and though some rays and beams of it broke out through his works and miracles, yet his glory, as the only begotten of the Father, was beheld only by a few; the minds of the far greater part were blinded, and their hearts hardened, and they saw no form nor comeliness in him to desire him; the form of God in which he was, was hid from them; they reputed him as a mere man, yea, as a sinful man, even as a worm, and no man: and to be thus esteemed, and had in such account, he voluntarily subjected himself, though infinitely great and glorious; as he did not assume deity by rapine, he was not thrust down into this low estate by force; as the angels that sinned when they affected to be as God, were drove from their seats of glory, and cast down into hell; and when man, through the instigation of Satan, was desirous of the same, he was turned out of Eden, and became like the beasts that perish; but this was Christ's own act and deed, he willingly assented to it, to lay aside as it were his glory for a while, to have it veiled and hid, and be reckoned anything, a mere man, yea, to have a devil, and not be God: O wondrous humility! astonishing condescension!

and took upon him the form of a servant; this also was voluntary; he “took upon him”, was not obliged, or forced to be in the form of a servant; he appeared as one in human nature, and was really such; a servant to his Father, who chose, called, sent, upheld, and regarded him as a servant; and a very prudent, diligent, and faithful one he was unto him: and he was also a servant to his people, and ministered to men; partly by preaching the Gospel to them, and partly by working miracles, healing their diseases, and going about to do good, both to the bodies and souls of men; and chiefly by obtaining eternal redemption for his chosen ones, by being made sin and a curse for them; which though a very toilsome and laborious piece of service, yet as he cheerfully engaged in it, he diligently attended it, until he had finished it: so he was often prophesied of as a servant, in (<23A201>Isaiah 42:1 52:13 <380308>Zechariah 3:8), in which several places he is called in the Targum, ajyçm ydb[, “my servant the Messiah”: put these two together,

“the form of God”, and “the form of a servant”, and admire the amazing stoop!

and was made in the likeness of men; not of the first Adam, for though, as he, he was without sin, knew none, nor did any; yet he was rather like to sinful men, and was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, and was traduced and treated as a sinner, and numbered among transgressors; he was like to men, the most mean and abject, such as were poor, and in lower life, and were of the least esteem and account among men, on any score: or he was like to men in common, and particularly to his brethren the seed of Abraham, and children of God that were given him; he partook of the same flesh and blood, he had a true body, and a reasonable soul, as they; he was subject to the like sorrows and griefs, temptations, reproaches, and persecutions; and was like them in everything, excepting sin: a strange and surprising difference this, that he who was “equal to God”, should be “like to [sinful] men!”

Ver. 8. *And being found in fashion as a man*, etc.] Not that he had only the show and appearance of a man, but he was really a man; for “as” here, denotes not merely the likeness of a thing, but the thing itself, as in (<4Matthew 14:5 <4John 1:14), ωϛ here, answers to the Hebrew k, which is sometimes by the Jews[f10] said to be ˆwymdh Pk, and signifies likeness, and sometimes twtmah Pk, and designs truth and reality; which is the sense in which the particle is to be taken here: though he was seen and looked upon as a mere man, and therefore charged with blasphemy when he asserted himself to be the Son of God, he was more than a man; and yet found and known by men in common to be no more than a man, than just such a man as other men are; and so far is true, that his scheme, his habit, his fashion, his form, were like that of other men; though he was not begotten as man, but conceived in an extraordinary manner by the power of the Holy Ghost, yet he lay nine months in his mother's womb, as the human foetus ordinarily does; he was born as children are, was wrapped in swaddling bands when born, as an infant is; grew in stature by degrees, as men do; the shape and size of his body were like other men's, and he was subject to the same infirmities, as hunger, thirst, weariness, pain, grief, sorrow, and death itself, as follows:

he humbled himself: by becoming man, and by various outward actions in his life; as subjection to his parents, working at the trade of a carpenter, conversing with the meanest of men, washing his disciples' feet, etc. and

the whole of his deportment both to God and man, his compliance with his Father's will, though disagreeable to flesh and blood, his behaviour towards his enemies, and his forbearance of his disciples, showed him to be of a meek and humble spirit; he humbled himself both to God and man:

and became obedient unto death, or "until death"; for he was obedient from the cradle to the cross, to God, to men, to his earthly parents, and to magistrates; he was obedient to the ceremonial law, to circumcision, the passover, etc. to the moral law, to all the precepts of it, which he punctually fulfilled; and to the penalty of it, death, which he voluntarily and cheerfully bore, in the room and stead of his people:

even the death of the cross; which was both painful and shameful; it was an accursed one, and showed that he bore the curse of the law, and was made a curse for us: this was a punishment usually inflicted on servants, and is called a servile punishment [f11]; and such was the form which he took, when he was found in fashion as a man: this is now the great instance of humility the apostle gives, as a pattern of it to the saints, and it is a matchless and unparalleled one.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him*, etc.] The apostle proceeds to observe the exaltation of Christ, for the encouragement of meek and humble souls; that whereas Christ, who so exceedingly demeaned himself, was afterwards highly exalted by God, so all such who, in imitation of him, behave to one another in lowliness of mind, shall be exalted in God's due time; for whoso humbleth himself, shall be exalted. The first step of Christ's exaltation was his resurrection from the dead, when he had a glory given him as man; his body was raised in incorruption, in glory, in power, and a spiritual one; it became a glorious body, and the pledge and exemplar of the saints at the general resurrection, of which his transfiguration on the mount was an emblem and prelude; and he was also glorified then as Mediator, he was then justified in the Spirit, and acquitted and discharged from all the sins of his people, he took upon him and bore, having satisfied for them; and all God's elect were justified in him, for he rose as a public person, as their head, for their justification; yea, in some sense he was then glorified, as a divine person; not that any new additional glory was, or could be made to him as such; but there was an illustrious manifestation of his natural, essential, and original glory; he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead: the next step of his high exaltation was his ascending on high up to the third

heaven, where he is made higher than the heavens; when he was accompanied by an innumerable company of angels, and by those saints whose bodies rose out of their graves after his resurrection; and was received and carried up in a bright glorious cloud; and passing through the air, the seat of the devils, he led captivity captive, and triumphed over principalities and powers, having before spoiled them on his cross; and then entering into heaven, he sat down at the right hand of God, which is another branch of his exaltation; and shows that he had done his work, and that it was approved and accepted of; and had that glory and honour bestowed on him, which never was on any mere creature, angels or men, to sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; which as it is the highest pitch of the exaltation of the human nature of Christ, so by it there is a most illustrious display of the glory of his divine person as the Son of God; who was with God, as one brought up with him from all eternity; and was so likewise when here on earth, but not so manifestly; but now he is openly and manifestly glorified with himself, with that glory he had with him before the world began: moreover, Christ's exaltation lies in his having the gifts of the Spirit without measure, to bestow on his ministers and churches, in all succeeding generations, for the carrying on of his interest, and the enlargement of his kingdom; in having all power in heaven and in earth, to complete his work and great designs; in having dominion and authority over all creatures and things, which are made to be subservient to the execution of his mediatorial office; and in having the right and power of judging the world at the last day, when there will still be a more glorious display of his eternal deity and divine sonship; for he will come in his Father's glory, and in his own, and with his holy angels: now the causes of Christ's exaltation are these: the efficient cause is God; though he made himself of no reputation, and humbled himself, these were voluntary acts of his own; yet he did not exalt himself, but God exalted him, even God the Father; with him the covenant of grace and redemption was made, in which glory was promised Christ, in consideration of his obedience, sufferings, and death; and which he prayed to him for, and pleaded for with him, having done his work; and which exaltation of Christ is always ascribed to God, even the Father; (see <4023>Acts 2:33 3:13 5:31); the impulsive or moving cause, and indeed the meritorious cause, were the humiliation of Christ; because he, though he was originally so great and glorious, yet made himself as it were nothing, humbled himself to become man, and was contented to be accounted a mere man, and went up and down in the form of a servant; and because he became so cheerfully obedient to the whole

law, and to death itself, for the sake of his people, and out of love to them, “therefore” God exalted him: the exaltation of Christ was not only a consequence of his obedience and death, and his humiliation merely the way to his glory; but his high and exalted estate were the reward of all this; it was what was promised him in covenant, what was then agreed upon, what he expected and pleaded, and had as a recompense of reward, in consideration of his having glorified God on earth, and finished the work he undertook to do: it follows as an instance of the exaltation of Christ,

and [hath] given him a name which is above every name. The Syriac version renders it, “which is more excellent than every name”; and the Arabic version translates it, “which is more eminent than every name”; and the Ethiopic version thus, “which is greater than every name”: by which is meant, not any particular and peculiar name by which he is called; not the name of God, for though this is his name, the mighty God, and so is even the incommunicable name Jehovah, and which may be truly said to be every name; but neither of these are given him, but what he has by nature; and besides were what he had before his exaltation in human nature: it is true indeed, upon that this name of his became more illustrious and manifest unto men; it is a more clear point, that he is God over all blessed for evermore; and it will still be more manifest at his glorious appearing, that he is the great God, as well as our Saviour: to which may be added, that the name Jehovah in the plate of gold on the high priest's forehead, was set above the other word; so says Maimonides [f12],

> “the plate of gold was two fingers broad, and it reached from ear to ear; and there was written upon it two lines, “holiness to the Lord”; çdq, “holiness”, was written below, and hl[mlm hwhyl, “to the Lord”, or “to Jehovah”, above:”

whether here may not be an allusion to this, I leave to be considered: nor do I think that the name of the Son of God is meant; this is indeed a name of Christ, and a more excellent one than either angels or men have; for he is in such sense the Son of God, as neither of them are; but this is a name also which he has by nature, and is what he had before his exaltation; and was before this attested by his Father, and confessed by angels, men, and devils; though indeed upon his exaltation, he was declared more manifestly to be the Son of God, as he will be yet more clearly in his kingdom and glory: much less is the name Jesus intended, which was given him by the angel before his conception and birth, and was a name common to men

among the Jews; but it seems to design such fame and renown, honour, glory, and dignity, as were never given unto, and bestowed upon creatures; as his rising from the dead as a public person, his ascending on high in the manner he did, his session at the right hand of God, his investiture with all gifts, power, dominion, authority, and with the judgment of the world; and whatever name of greatness there is among men or angels, Christ has that which is superior to it. Was a priest a name of honour and dignity among the Jews? Christ is not only a priest, and an high priest, but a great high priest; a priest not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek, (<58711>Hebrews 7:11), and a greater than he himself. Is a king a great name among men? Christ has on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords. Is a deliverer of a nation a title of great honour? Christ is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour of men of all nations; nor is there any other name but his, that is given among men, whereby we must be saved. Is a mediator between warring princes and kingdoms accounted a name of greatness and glory? Christ is the one only Mediator between God and man, and of a new and better covenant. Are angels, seraphim, cherubim, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, great names in the other world? Christ is the Angel of God's presence, an eternal one, the Angel of the covenant, the head of all principality and power. These are all subject to him, and he is set at God's right hand far above them.

Ver. 10. *That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow*, etc.] Which is to be understood, not of the outward act of bowing the knee upon hearing the name, and the syllables of the mere name Jesus pronounced; for in the bare name there can be nothing which can command such a peculiar respect; it was a name common with the Jews: Joshua is so called in (<58408>Hebrews 4:8); and the name of Elymas the sorcerer was Barjesus: that is, the son of Jesus, (<441306>Acts 13:6); Now, how monstrously ridiculous and stupid would it be, for a man, upon hearing these passages, and upon the pronouncing of this word, to bow the knee? Moreover, the words ought not to be rendered at, but “in the name of Jesus”; that is, in and by reason of the power, authority, and dignity of Jesus, as exalted at God's right hand, every creature is to be subject to him: add to this, that there are several creatures included in the following account, who, in a corporeal sense, have not knees to bow with, as angels, the souls of men departed, and devils; and therefore an external corporeal bowing of the knee cannot

be meant. The Jews indeed, upon hearing the name Jehovah pronounced by the high priest, in the holy of holies, used to bow: they say[f13],

> "that the priests, and the people, that stand in the court, when they hear Shemhamphorash (i.e. the name "Jehovah") pronounced by the high priest, µy[rwk wyh, "bowed", and worshipped, and fell upon their faces, and said, blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom, for ever and ever:"

though it can hardly be thought there is any reference to this here. But inasmuch as this action is a token of reverence, worship; and subjection, it is used for those things themselves; and the sense is, that Christ is exalted as before described, that every creature may give him reverence, worship, and adoration, submit and be subject to him, as all do, and shall, either freely or forcedly. Some really and heartily trust in his name, are baptized in his name, and ascribe honour, and glory, and blessing to him from their whole hearts; and others feignedly, and whether they will or not, are subject to him, and sooner or later shall acknowledge his authority over them: and he shall be owned to be Lord

of [things] in heaven: the angels there, and the souls of departed saints, with those who are already clothed with their bodies:

and [things] in earth; both good men, and bad men:

and [things] under the earth; or "in the abyss", as the Ethiopic version renders it; meaning either the devils in the bottomless pit; or rather the dead bodies of men in the grave, which shall come forth and stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Ver. 11. *And [that] every tongue should confess*, etc.] Whether of angels or men, or of men of whatsoever nation. Confession is either true and hearty, as when the mouth and heart agree in confessing, and which is made only by true believers; or verbal only, or in mere outward form, and by force, as in hypocrites, wicked men, and devils themselves; who all either have confessed, or will confess,

that Jesus Christ [is] Lord: the holy angels confess him to be Lord, and their Lord truly, and are unfeignedly subject to him; and true believers heartily own him as their Lord, and cheerfully submit to his commands and ordinances; and the foolish virgins, and the goats on Christ's left hand, will,

at the last day, call him Lord, Lord; and the worst of men, yea, even devils, will be obliged to own his lordship and dominion; which will be

to the glory of God the Father. The Syriac reads, “his Father”, who has chose and constituted him as the Mediator, invested him with his office, ordained him to be Judge of quick and dead, and given him all power and authority, and exalted him at his own right hand; so he that honoureth the Son, honoureth the Father also. The Vulgate Latin version renders the words, “because the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father”: being in the form of God, of the same nature and essence with him, and equal to him; as he will appear to be at his second coming, for then he will come in the glory of his Father.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore, my beloved*, etc.] This is an inference from the instance and example of Christ; that since he, who was God over all, blessed for ever, made himself so low in human nature, in which he is now so highly exalted, having done the work and business he came about with such condescension, humility, and meekness; therefore it becomes those who profess to be his followers, to do all their affairs as men and Christians, with, and among one another, in all lowliness of mind. The apostle calls the saints here, “my beloved”, he having a strong affection for them, which he frequently expresses in this epistle; and he chooses to make use of such an endearing appellation, that it might be observed, that what he was about to say to them sprung from pure love to them, and a hearty desire for their welfare, and from no other end, and with no other view; and to encourage them to go on in a course of humble duty, he commends them for their former obedience,

as ye have always obeyed; not “me”, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions supply; but either God, acting according to his revealed will, they had knowledge of; or Christ, by receiving him as prophet, priest, and King, by submitting to his righteousness, and the sceptre of his grace; or the Gospel, by embracing the truths of it, professing them, and abiding in them, and by subjecting to the ordinances of it, and doing all things whatsoever Christ has commanded: and this they did “always”; they were always abounding in the works of the Lord, doing his will; they abode by Christ, and continued steadfastly in his doctrines, and kept the ordinances as they were delivered to them, and walked in all the commandments of the Lord blameless.

Not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence; which clause may either be referred to the foregoing, which expresses their

obedience; and so signifies that that was carefully and cheerfully performed, not only while the apostle was with them, but now when he was absent from them, and much more when absent than present:, which shows, that they were not eye servants, and menpleasers, but what they did they did sincerely and heartily, as to the Lord: or to the following exhortation, that they would attend to it; not only as they had done when he was among them, of which he was witness, but that they would much more do so now he was absent from them, namely,

work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; which is to be understood not in such a sense as though men could obtain and procure for themselves spiritual and eternal salvation by their own works and doings; for such a sense is contrary to the Scriptures, which deny any part of salvation, as election, justification, and calling, and the whole of it to be of works, but ascribe it to the free grace of God; and is also repugnant to the perfections of God, as his wisdom, grace, and righteousness; for where are the wisdom and love of God, in forming a scheme of salvation, and sending his Son to effect it, and after all it is left to men to work it out for themselves? and where is the justice of God in admitting of an imperfect righteousness in the room of a perfect one, which must be the case, if salvation is obtained by men's works? for these are imperfect, even the best of them; and is another reason against this sense of the passage; and were they perfect, they could not be meritorious of salvation, for the requisites of merits are wanting in them. Moreover, was salvation to be obtained by the works of men, these consequences would follow; the death of Christ would be in vain, boasting would be encouraged in men, they would have whereof to glory, and their obligations to obedience taken from the love of God, and redemption by Christ, would be weakened and destroyed: add to all this, that the Scriptures assure us, that salvation is alone by Christ; and that it is already finished by him, and not to be wrought out now by him, or any other; and that such is the weakness and impotence of men, even of believers, to whom this exhortation is directed, that it is impossible for them ever to affect it; therefore, whatever sense these words have, we may be sure that this can never possibly be the sense of them. The words may be rendered, “work about your salvation”; employ yourselves in things which accompany salvation, and to be performed by all those that expect it, though not to be expected for the performance of them; such as hearing of the word, submission to Gospel ordinances, and a discharge of every branch of moral, spiritual, and evangelical obedience for which the apostle

before commends them, and now exhorts them to continue in; to go on in a course of cheerful obedience to the close of their days, believing in Christ, obeying his Gospel, attending constantly to his word and ordinances, and discharging every duty in faith and fear, until at last they should receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls: agreeably the Syriac version renders the words, ˆwkyyjd anj lwp wjwlp, "do the work", or "business of your lives"; the work you are to do in your generation, which God has prescribed and directed you to, which the grace of God teaches, and the love of Christ constrains to. Do all that "with fear and trembling"; not with a slavish fear of hell and damnation, or lest they should fall away, or finally miscarry of heaven and happiness; since this would be a distrust of the power and faithfulness of God, and so criminal in them; nor is it reasonable to suppose, that the apostle would exhort to such a fear, when he himself was so confidently assured, that the good work begun in them would be performed; and besides, the exhortation would be very oddly formed, if this was the sense, "work out your salvation with fear" of damnation: but this fear and trembling spoken of, is such as is consistent with the highest acts of faith, trust, confidence, and joy, and is opposed to pride and vain glory; (see <19211>Psalm 2:11 115:11 <4512>Romans 11:20); and intends modesty and humility, which is what the apostle is pressing for throughout the whole context; and here urges to a cheerful and constant obedience to Christ, with all humility of soul, without dependence on it, or vain glorying in it, but ascribing it wholly to the grace of God, for the following reason.

Ver. 13. *For it is God which worketh in you*, etc.] Which is both an encouragement to persons conscious of their own weakness to work, as before exhorted to; (see <37204>Haggai 2:4); and a reason and argument for humility and meekness, and against pride and vain glory, since all we have, and do, is from God; and also points out the spring, principle, and foundation of all good works; namely, the grace of God wrought in the heart, which is an internal work, and purely the work of God: by this men become the workmanship of God, created unto good works, (<49210>Ephesians 2:10), and are new men, and fitted for the performance of acts of righteousness, and true holiness; and this grace, which God works in them, is wrought in a powerful and efficacious manner, so as not to be frustrated and made void. The word here used signifies an inward, powerful, and efficacious operation; and the "king's manuscript", mentioned by Grotius and Hammond, adds another word to it, which makes the sense still stronger, reading it thus, "which worketh in you", δυναμει, "by power";

not by moral persuasion, but by his own power, the power of his efficacious grace. The Alexandrian copy reads, δυναμεις, “powers”, or “mighty works”: God works in his people

both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure; God works in converted men a will to that which is spiritually good; which is to be understood, not of the formation of the natural faculty of the will; or of the preservation of it, and its natural liberty; or of the general motion of it to natural objects; nor of his influence on it in a providential way; but of the making of it good, and causing a willingness in it to that which is spiritually good. Men have no will naturally to come to Christ, or to have him to reign over them; they have no desire, nor hungerings and thirstings after his righteousness and salvation; wherever there are any such inclinations and desires, they are wrought in men by God; who works upon the stubborn and inflexible will, and, without any force to it, makes the soul willing to be saved by Christ, and submit to his righteousness, and do his will; he sweetly and powerfully draws it with the cords of love to himself, and to his Son, and so influences it by his grace and spirit, and which he continues, that it freely wills everything spiritually good, and for the glory of God: and he works in them also to “do”; for there is sometimes in believers a will, when there wants a power of doing. God therefore both implants in them principles of action to work from, as faith and love, and a regard for his glory, and gives them grace and strength to work with, without which they can do nothing, but having these, can do all things: and all this is “of [his] good pleasure”; the word “his” not being in the original text, some have taken the liberty to ascribe this to the will of man; and so the Syriac version renders it, “both to will and to do that”, ˆwtna ˆybxd, “which ye will”, or according to your good will; but such a sense is both bad and senseless; for if they have a good will of themselves, what occasion is there for God to work one in them? no; these internal operations of divine power and grace are not owing to the will of men, nor to any merits of theirs, or are what God is obliged to do, but what flow from his sovereign will and pleasure; who works when, where, and as he pleases, and that for his own glory; and who continues to do so in the hearts of his people; otherwise, notwithstanding the work of grace in them, they would find very little inclination to, and few and faint desires after spiritual things; and less strength to do what is spiritually good; but God of his good pleasure goes on working what is well pleasing in his sight.

Ver. 14. *Do all things*, etc.] Not evil things, these are to be abhorred, shunned, and avoided, even all appearance of them, they are not to be done, even the sake of good; nor all indifferent things at all times, and under all circumstances, when the peace and edification of others are in danger of being hurt by so doing; but all good things, all that are agreeable to the righteous law and good will of God; all those good things which accompany salvation, as hearing the word, and attendance on ordinances: all church affairs relating to public worship, private conference, everything at church meetings, and which concern the discipline and laws of Christ's house; and all things that are civilly, morally, spiritually, and evangelically good; even all things that God would have done, or we would desire should be done to us by fellow creatures and fellow Christians: let all these be done

without murmurings; either against God and Christ, as if anything hard and severe was enjoined, when Christ's yoke is easy, and his burden light, (Matthew 11:30), and none of his commands grievous; and because their presence is not always enjoyed, and that communion and comfort in ordinances had, which may be desired: or against the ministers of the Gospel, in whose power it is not to give grace, comfort, and spiritual refreshment; any more than it was in Moses and Aaron to give bread and water to the Israelites in the wilderness, for which they murmured against them, and in so doing against God himself, (Exodus 16:2,7); or against one another, because of superior enjoyment in nature, providence, and grace; but all things, both of a moral, civil, and religious nature, with respect to God, and one another, should be done readily, freely, cheerfully, and heartily; and also without

disputings; or "without hesitations", as the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it. Whatever appears to be agreeable to the will of God, should be done at once without dispute upon it, or hesitation about it, however disagreeable it may be to carnal sense and reason; the will of God is not to be disputed, nor flesh and blood to be consulted, in opposition to it; nor should the saints enter into any carnal reasonings, and contentious disputations, either at their public or private meetings, but do all they do decently, and in order, and in the exercise of brotherly love.

Ver. 15. *That ye may be blameless*, etc.] This, and what follows, show the end to be answered, by observing the above exhortation. This respects not their being blameless in the sight of God, which the saints are not in

themselves, being not without sin, though they are, as considered in Christ, clothed with his righteousness, and washed in his blood; but their being blameless before men: and this may be understood both actively and passively; actively, that they might be without blaming others; some are so unhappy in their disposition and conduct, as to be always finding fault with, and blaming all persons they are concerned with, and all things in them, and done by them, right or wrong, without any just reason; and this ought not to be, and may be prevented by doing all things, as before directed: or passively, that they might not be blamed by others justly; for no man can escape the blame and censure of everyone; our Lord himself did not, nor this our apostle; but doing, as before exhorted to, will, in a great measure, preclude any just reason for blame and complaint: it is added,

and harmless; that is, that they might be, and appear to be so; harmless as doves, in imitation of Christ, who was holy in his nature, and harmless in his conversation, as his followers should be; doing no injury to any man's person or property, behaving in an inoffensive manner to all men, to Jew and Gentile, and to the church of God: it follows,

the sons of God; not that they might be sons by so doing; but be “as the sons of God”, as the Syriac version renders it, be like them, and behave as such; for they were the sons of God already; not by creation only, as angels, and all men are, not merely by profession of religion, but by adopting grace; they were predestinated to the adoption of children, and were taken into this relation in the covenant of grace, Christ had redeemed them from under the law, that they might receive this blessing, and it was actually bestowed upon them by him in conversion: but the sense is, that they might appear to be the children of God, by acting as becomes such; not that they might appear so to themselves, for they were openly and manifestly to themselves the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus, and through the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing to their spirits that they were in such a relation to God; but that they might appear so to others, that they were the adopted sons of God, and also begotten again by him, and made partakers of the divine nature; by their being followers of God as dear children, and by their being obedient ones to him in all holiness and godly conversation, yielding a ready and cheerful obedience to his will, without repining at it, or disputing about it; and to be

without rebuke; not without the rebuke of their heavenly Father, for whom he loves he rebukes, and every son that he receives into his family he

scourges and chastises, not in wrath and anger, or with rebukes of fury, but of love; but without the rebuke of men, both of the churches and ministers of Christ, whose business it is to reprove and rebuke, publicly and privately, as cases and their circumstances require; and of the men of the world, who when they have any occasion, make use of it to speak reproachfully, as a railing Rabshakeh did, when it is a time of rebuke and blasphemy, and to be shunned and guarded against as much possible: especially since the saints live

in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation: or age and generation, as every age is; saints are like lilies in the valleys, liable to be trampled upon by the foot of every wild beast; like roses among thorns, to be scratched and torn; and like Lots in the midst of Sodom, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: the whole world lies in sin, and the saints are enclosed on every side with wicked men. Philippi, where these saints lived, was a place of wickedness, and so no doubt was the whole region of Macedonia; the inhabitants were evil for the most part; their ways were crooked, and their works perverse, being contrary to the law of God, and Gospel of Christ; and therefore the following exhortation to the saints there was very suitable.

Among whom ye shine; or "shine ye", as it may be rendered,

as lights in the world. This world is, in a moral sense, what the original chaos was in a natural sense, covered with darkness; the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, of impiety and superstition, has spread itself over the far greater part of the world; the men of it are children of the night, and of darkness; their works are works of darkness, and they are going on in darkness, not knowing where they are going. The saints are the lights of the world, they were once darkness itself, but are made light in and by the Lord; they are called into marvellous light, and are filled with light spiritual and evangelical; they are like the moon and stars, that give light to the world in the night; and as they receive their light from the sun, and communicate it to the world, so do the saints receive theirs from Christ, the sun of righteousness, and show it forth to others, both by doctrine and practice: or rather the churches of Christ are as candlesticks, in which the light of the Gospel is put, and held forth to men, as follows, (see <4105 14>Matthew 5:14-16).

Ver. 16. *Holding forth the word of life*, etc.] By which may be meant, either Christ the essential Word, in whom life was, and is, and who is called

the quick or living Word, (<43001>John 1:1,4 <58042>Hebrews 4:12); and here may be styled the Word of life, because he has all life in him; he has a divine life in him, as God, he is the living God; and it is given to him to have life in himself, as Mediator, for all his people; and he ever lives as man to make intercession for them: and because he is the author of life in every sense, of natural life to all men, of spiritual and eternal life to as many as the Father has given him: or else the Gospel is intended, and the doctrines of it; and which are sometimes called the words of eternal life, and of this life, (<43068>John 6:68 <44150>Acts 5:20); and that because they are a means of quickening dead sinners, they are a savour of life unto life, (<47216>2 Corinthians 2:16), and the Spirit that giveth life, and of enlivening and comforting living saints; they treat of Christ who is the life; by the Gospel, life and immortality are brought to light; that gives an account of everlasting life; points out Christ as the way to it, shows that meetness for it lies in regenerating grace, and a right unto it is in the righteousness of Christ. Now this Word of life is held forth, partly by the preaching of it to a dark world, as by some; and partly by professing it publicly, as it should be by all who are enlightened with it; and also by living lives and conversations becoming and suitable to it.

That I may rejoice in the day of Christ. The apostle having observed the advantages that would accrue to themselves, and the benefit they might be of to the men of the world, by regarding the several exhortations he had given them, and which ends he mentions as reasons and arguments to enforce them, closes with taking notice of the use and service it would be to himself; it would give him joy and pleasure when Christ should come a second time to judge the world; and when dead in Christ would be raised, and set at his right hand, and these among the rest, to whom the apostle had been useful; and who continued to bear an honourable testimony in the world to Christ, and his Gospel, to the end:

that I have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain; being blessed with such converts under his ministry, as were a credit to religion, an honour to the Gospel, and a crown of rejoicing to him. He expresses his ministerial function, and the discharge of it, by running in a race, as the ministry of a person is sometimes called his course, (<44325>Acts 13:25 20:24 <55007>2 Timothy 4:7); in allusion to the Olympic games, which the apostle often refers to, when the conqueror obtained a crown; and it was enough for our apostle, and a crown of rejoicing to him, that his spiritual children walked in the truth, and as became it, to the end: and also by labour, and hard service, as

the ministerial work is, when faithfully performed; and especially as his was, which was attended with so many difficulties, and yet with such constancy, diligence, and indefatigableness, all which was not in vain; and he could look back upon it with pleasure, when his followers stood fast in the faith, and adorned the doctrine of Christ.

Ver. 17. *Yea, and if I be offered*, etc.] Or "poured out", as the drink offerings of wine or oil were; meaning the effusion of his blood, which he compares to a libation, or drink offering, which was poured upon the sacrifice; and the laying down of his life for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel: which he knew not how soon might be, though he was in some hopes of a deliverance for the present, and therefore speaks of it in an hypothetical way: yet he expected it sooner or later; and that whenever it was, it would be as the libation upon the offering.

Upon the sacrifice and service of your faith; he had been the means of bringing them to the faith of Christ, in which they were an offering acceptable to God, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost; (see ^{Romans} 15:16); and should he suffer and shed his blood in the cause of Christ, it would be as a libation on them, as a sacrifice; it would be for the sake of preaching the doctrine of faith, by which they were brought to believe on Christ; and it would be for the further confirmation of their faith, and as a drink offering acceptable unto God; upon all which accounts it would be matter of joy to him.

I joy and rejoice with you all; meaning at his sufferings and death, and the advantages thereof to Christ, to his churches, and to himself.

Ver. 18. *For the same cause also do ye joy and rejoice with me*.] He would not have them be sorrowful, should they hear of his death for the sake of the Gospel, and of his blood being poured out in such a cause, since it was as a libation on their faith, and for the confirmation of it, and would be gain to Christ, and his interest, and to the apostle also: and therefore they should be so far from indulging grief and sorrow on that account, that they should rather joy and rejoice with him, who was ready to be offered up, or poured out; since he had run out his race, and that not in vain, but to so good a purpose, and especially among them.

Ver. 19. *But I trust in the Lord Jesus*, etc.] Or "hope"; not in himself, his wisdom, will, resolutions, and purposes; nor in an arm of flesh, in any human aid and power; nor in princes, nor in Nero, the Roman emperor, as

expecting a release from bonds by him, when he could the more easily part with Timothy; but in the Lord Jesus, in the Lord whom every tongue shall confess to be so; and in that Jesus, in whose name every knee shall bow; who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, and the only Saviour and Deliverer of his people; who has the hearts of all men in his hands, and all power in heaven and in earth: he hoped and trusted, that through the goodness and power of Christ, opening a way for him, he should be able

to send Timotheus shortly unto you; one that had known the Scriptures from his youth, and was very early converted to the Christian faith, was an eminent preacher of the Gospel, and well known to the Philippians. The apostle hoped to send him to them “shortly”, in a very little time; this he said in order to encourage them, and thereby suggesting, that he thought his own deliverance was at hand: this hope did not arise from a sure and certain persuasion of the thing, but from love to these saints; he had a very great affection for them; he knew that a Gospel minister, and particularly Timothy, would be of great comfort and service to them; wherefore, from that love which hopes all things, he hoped he should, in a short time, be able to serve them in love that way: the end he proposed in it is next expressed,

that I also may be of good comfort when I know your state; not their worldly estate, their secular affairs, and whether they prospered in their trades and business, and increased in riches; nor their corporeal estate, or state of health, and whether they prospered in their bodies, not but that the knowledge of each of these would be welcome to the apostle; nor everyone's personal spiritual estate, what was the particular case and state of each member; for though it is the business of a pastor of a church to look diligently to the state of his flock, and learn the case of every particular member, the apostle could not be thought to come at such an exact knowledge of things, who had the care of all the churches upon him; but their ecclesiastical state, their church state in general; how the Gospel stood with them, and they in that; whether they held it fast, and strove for it, and what ground the false teachers got among them; how the ordinances of the Gospel were regarded and attended on by them; with what life and light, and liberty and zeal, their ministers preached the word; and what success they had to the conversion of sinners, and comfort of saints; and how they behaved towards them, in honouring, obeying, and submitting to them, and esteeming them highly for their works' sake; what an increase of gifts, grace, and numbers there was among them; and what harmony, love,

peace, and concord subsisted between them; and what afflictions and persecutions they endured for the sake of Christ; and with what patience, faith, and cheerfulness they bore them. By the return of Timothy he hoped to have knowledge of these things, that so he might “also be of good comfort”; as they would be by the coming of Timothy to them, by his preaching among them, and relating to them the case and circumstances of the apostle, how cheerful he was under his afflictions, and of what use they were to the cause of Christ. The comfort and pleasure of Gospel ministers lie in the good of the churches of Christ; it puts them in good heart and soul, as the word here used signifies, when they hear of their steadfastness in the faith of Christ, of their love to one another, and all the saints, and of their patience under sufferings.

Ver. 20. *For I have no man likeminded*, etc.] With myself; as my soul, so the Syriac version renders it. Timothy had a soul like the apostle's, which none that were with him, besides him, had; he was of the same judgment with him in the doctrines of grace; he received and preached the same Gospel as he did; he preached the same Christ, the Son of God, without yea and nay; he had the same affection for the apostle, and the souls of men, as he had; his soul was knit to his, and they had, as it were, but one soul in two bodies; he was engaged in the same work of the Lord, and pursued it with the same zeal and diligence: he was a second Paul in the pulpit; and there was no man likeminded as he, or so well disposed to the Philippians as he was, that had their good and cause at heart, and was willing to take so long a journey to do them service; for he had a particular affection for them, having been among them with the apostle, when he first preached the Gospel to them:

who will naturally care for your state. There were none like him that would; many were like the shepherds of Israel, that fed themselves and not the flock; but he was one that was diligent to know the state of the flock, and looked well to the herd under his care; and had an anxious care and solicitude, as the word signifies, for the good of souls. The work of a faithful Gospel minister is a work of care; one of his characteristics is, that he cares for the church of God; and though anxious care in worldly things is forbidden, yet in the affairs of Christ's house it is highly commendable, and especially when it is natural, or genuine and sincere, as Timothy's was: he had a sincere love, an hearty and real concern for their good; and which he would show by delivering to them the sincere milk of the word, by preaching the Gospel in the power and purity of it, with all sincerity and

uprightness, with a single eye to the glory of Christ, and the good of their souls; and which is the apostle's reason for sending him unto them.

Ver. 21. *For all seek their own*, etc.] Meaning not every individual, but the greatest part; and not merely such as were manifestly false teachers, but such as were with the apostle, as ministers of the word; and we may suppose him to be stripped, by one means or another, of the more valuable preachers of the Gospel, and to be in much such a case as he describes himself to be, in (<5040>2 Timothy 4:10-12). He had none with him, excepting a very few, but such as he speaks of in the preceding chapter, that preached Christ of envy, strife, and contention; and these chiefly sought their own worldly interest and advantage; they sought great things for themselves, and looked every man for his gain from his quarter, Demas like, loving this present world, (<5040>2 Timothy 4:10); they sought for dominion and authority over men, and their faith, to lord it over God's heritage, as Diotrephes, who loved to have the preeminence, (<6009>3 John 1:9); they sought for popular applause, for honour and glory of men, as the Pharisees of old did; and particularly their own ease and health, and did not choose to undertake such a fatiguing journey as from Rome to Philippi:

not the things which are Jesus Christ; they had no true regard to the Gospel of Christ, to the continuance, establishment, and spread of it in the world, or in any particular place; nor any hearty affection for the ordinances of Christ, and the retaining and preserving of them in their purity and simplicity; nor for the churches of Christ, and their spiritual good and welfare, as the Jews formerly, they cared not if the house of God lay waste, provided they dwelt in their ceiled houses; nor had they any concern for the honour and glory of Christ. But Timothy was a man of a quite different spirit and complexion; and which is another reason of the apostle's sending him to this place and people.

Ver. 22. *But ye know the proof of him*, etc.] They had had an experiment of him, a trial of his spirit, and a proof of his gifts and ministry, when he was among them with the apostle at his first preaching the Gospel to them, to the conversion of Lydia, and of the jailer, and their households, which laid the foundation of a Gospel church state among them, (see <4403>Acts 16:3,12). The Vulgate Latin version reads in the imperative, “know ye the proof of him”; but the former reading is to be preferred:

that as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the Gospel; he served not the apostle, but with him; he served God as the apostle did, in

the Gospel of his Son; he served Jesus Christ, whose Gospel he preached, the interest and spread of which he greatly laboured in with him, as a fellow servant or work fellow; (see Romans 16:21); which expresses the modesty of the apostle, and the great honour put upon Timothy, and which was not abused by him; for as a son honours, obeys, and imitates his father, so did he honour the apostle, and give him all respect and reverence that was due to him on account of his office, age, and usefulness; and obeyed his orders cheerfully, going wherever he sent him, and doing whatever he bid him; and imitated him in his ministry, in his constancy, diligence, and zeal, having a true filial affection for him.

Ver. 23. *Him therefore I hope to send presently*, etc.] For the reasons now given:

so soon as I shall see how it will go with me; whether he should be released from his bonds or not; whether he should live or die; whether he should be set free, or be called to suffer martyrdom for the sake of Christ; for he expected, that the matter would be determined in a very short time, when, be it at it would, Timothy would be spared.

Ver. 24. *But I trust in the Lord*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, “in my Lord”:

that I also myself shall come shortly: this he adds, partly to let them see, that he still retained a secret hope and persuasion in his own mind of a deliverance, though he could not be certain of it, how things would go with him; and partly, that he might not be thought to put them off with sending Timothy to them; for notwithstanding that, his intention still was, should he be released, to pay them a visit himself. The Alexandrian copy adds, “to you”: so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions.

Ver. 25. *Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus*, etc.] In the mean while, before either he or Timothy could come to them. This man was sent by the Philippians to the apostle with a present, and had been detained at Rome for some time, partly through business, and partly through sickness; but now the apostle thought it proper, he being recovered, to send him to them, who was one of their ministers. One of this name lived at Rome about this time, and was one of Nero's freemen [f14], but not the same person here intended. This person has a very high character. The apostle calls him,

my brother; not in a natural relation, or as being his countryman, and so according to a way of speaking with the Jews, and himself, his brother and kinsman according to the flesh; for by his name and country he seems to be a Greek; but in a spiritual relation, being born again of the same Father, belonging to the same household and family, and also a brother in the ministry, as it follows:

and companion in labour; in the laborious work of preaching the Gospel. The ministry of the word is a work; it is called the work of the ministry; and it is a laborious one when diligently and faithfully performed: the apostle was a workman that needed not to be ashamed, a labourer in Christ's vineyard, and one that laboured more abundantly than others; and he was not alone, he had companions in his work, and this good man was one of them: he adds,

and fellow soldier; the life of every believer is a warfare; he is always engaged in a war with sin, and Satan, and the world; and is often called to fight the fight of faith, to contend earnestly against false teachers for the faith once delivered to the saints, to stand up for it, and fast in it; and is provided for with the whole armour of God, with weapons of warfare, which are not carnal, but spiritual and mighty, being enlisted as a volunteer under the great Captain of his salvation, Jesus Christ, under whose banner he fights, and is more than a conqueror through him: but though this is the common case and character of all the saints, it more especially belongs to ministers of the Gospel; who are set for the defence of it, and at the front of the battle, and are called to meet the enemy at the gate, and endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ; and such an one was the apostle; and he had other fellow soldiers, and this person among the rest, who were engaged in the same common cause with the same enemies, under the same Captain, and would enjoy the same crown:

but your messenger; or “apostle”; meaning either that he was the pastor of them, a preacher to them, a minister among them; for ordinary ministers of the word were sometimes called apostles, as well as extraordinary ones, (see <451607>Romans 16:7); or rather, that he was their messenger to him, to relieve, comfort, and assist him in his bonds; and such persons were called the messengers of the churches, (<470823>2 Corinthians 8:23), which sense is strengthened by what follows:

and he that ministered to my wants: to his personal wants in prison, and to the wants of the poor saints, which the apostle reckoned as his own, and

which he used to supply; but now not able; and to his ministerial wants, filling up his place in preaching the Gospel to the saints at Rome.

Ver. 26. *For he longed after you*, etc.] This verse and (Philippians 2:28) contain the reasons of the apostle's sending him; and the first is, because he had a very vehement and longing desire after all of them; to see them, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions add, and as it is read in the Alexandrian and Claromontane copies, and in others: it was not the city of Philippi he longed to see, which might be his native place, nor his natural relations and family, but the church there; and not the officers of it only, the bishops and deacons, but all the members of it, rich and poor, high and low, strong and weak believers:

and was full of heaviness: almost pressed down, quite disheartened and dispirited, ready to sink and die away, not so much with his own disorder and illness, as with sorrow on account of the church at Philippi:

because that ye had heard that he had been sick: he understood that the news of his sickness had reached them, and he knew how distressing it would be to them, that it would cut them to the heart, and press them heavily, fearing they should never see his face, nor hear his voice more. We have here an instance of that mutual love, tender affection and sympathy; which were in the first churches, and what subsisted between ministers and people; see how they loved one another! but, alas! this first love is left.

Ver. 27. *For indeed he was sick nigh unto death*, etc.] It was not a mere rumour, or a false alarm, but was real matter of fact; and it was not a light disorder, a slight indisposition, but a very dangerous illness; though the sickness was not unto death, yet near it. Good men, such as Christ loves, as he did Lazarus, are sometimes sick; though their spiritual diseases are healed, and their sins forgiven, so that the inhabitants of Zion have no more reason to say that they are sick, since Christ has took their infirmities, and bore their sickness, yet they are not exempt from bodily disorders; and which are sometimes such as bring them to the brink of the grave, and, as it were, to the gates of death; and such was this good man's case:

but God had mercy on him: his disorder was such as was out of the reach of man; his recovery was not by man, but by God, and owing to his power, mercy, and goodness; and indeed, whenever means are made rise of, and they succeed to the restoration of health, it ought to be ascribed to the divine blessing on them. The raising up of this man is reckoned as an

instance of mercy to him; as it was the removing of a grievous affliction, a return of him to his delightful work of the ministry, and the continuation of an useful life for the good of others; and so a mercy to him, and to the churches of Christ, and to the apostle also: who adds,

and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow: one affliction added to another; the death of this brother of his to his bonds: moreover the sickness of this companion of his filled him with sorrow: and had he died, it would have greatly increased it, and which would have had a fresh addition by the loss this church would sustain, and the grief and trouble they would be overwhelmed with: grace, and the doctrine of grace, though they regulate the passions, and restrain them from immoderate sorrow, they do not destroy them, nor deny the proper use of them. Christianity does not countenance a stoical apathy, but requires and encourages a Christian sympathy, and directs us to weep with them that weep within due bounds.

Ver. 28. *I sent him therefore the more carefully*, etc.] Or in greater haste, and as soon as possible:

that when ye see him again ye may rejoice; for this must greatly increase their joy, to see him again after he had been so long from them, and under such a disorder, which had made them to fear they should never see him more. The Syriac version renders it, “that when ye see him ye may rejoice again”; as they had done heretofore in his conversation and ministry, when among them:

and that I may be the less sorrowful; when he should hear of his safe arrival among them, and of their joyful reception of him to their mutual satisfaction, which would be an alleviation of the apostle's sorrow in his present circumstances; for he did not expect to be wholly without sorrow while in this life.

Ver. 29. *Receive him therefore*, etc.] Not only into their houses, where such as bring the doctrine of Christ should be admitted, and not others; but into their bosoms, into their hearts and affections, as he had reason to believe they would, and into their fellowship and communion, and to the exercise of his office among them, as their minister: and that

in the Lord; or “for the Lord”, as the Arabic version renders it; for his sake, because he was one that was put into the ministry by him, was called unto it, and qualified for it, and sent forth to minister in it by him; or in the

name of the Lord, as an ambassador of his, as representing him, and as if he himself was present; for he that receives a minister of Christ, receives Christ himself; (see <42 10 16>Luke 10:16 <48 01 14>Galatians 4:14);

with all gladness; with sincere affection, undissembled joy, perfect pleasure, and with all demonstrations of respect unto him, and delight in him at his return to them.

And hold such in reputation: account such as he precious and valuable; highly esteem of them for their works' sake; reckon them worthy of double honour, and give it to them.

Ver. 30. *Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death*, etc.] Meaning either the work the church sent him about, and which he cheerfully undertook, and faithfully performed in carrying of a present to, and visiting the apostle in prison; which is called the work of Christ, because taken by Christ as if it was done to himself; and which, what with the long and fatiguing journey from Philippi to Rome, and the frequent visits he made to the apostle, and the much business besides that lay upon his hands, brought upon him a disorder which greatly threatened his life, and had almost issued in his death: or else the work of preaching the Gospel so frequently and constantly, and with so much zeal and vehemency at Rome; and which may be called the work of Christ, because it is what he calls unto, and qualities for, and in which his glory is greatly concerned; and on which this good man was so intent, gladly spending himself, and being spent in it, that he was brought through it to the brink of the grave:

not regarding his life: he was careless of that, and of his health; he loved not his life, nor counted it dear to himself; he rather despised it, and made no account of it, being very willing to deliver it up, and sacrifice it in such a good work and cause:

to supply your lack of service towards me; to do that in their name, room, and stead, which they, through absence, could not do in person; signifying, that what was done to him, and for him, was but a piece of service and duty to him; and which this good man and faithful minister and messenger of theirs having done for them to the hazard of his life, he ought therefore to be received by them with great joy, and to be highly honoured and respected.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS 3

In this chapter the apostle cautions the Philippians against false teachers, whom he describes as evil men, and exhorts them to walk as they had him, and other faithful ministers for an example. And whereas these judaizing teachers were for drawing them off from Christ, and weakening their joy and glorying in him, he exhorts them in the first place to rejoice in Christ, (Philippians 3:1), and to beware of them, whom he describes as dogs, as evil workers, as the concision, (Philippians 3:2), and opposes to them the characters of real saints, who are truly what they vainly boasted of, really circumcised persons in a Gospel sense, spiritual worshippers of God, joyful believers in Christ, and such as placed no confidence in outward things, (Philippians 3:3), This the apostle illustrates in his own case, who had as much reason for trusting in such things as any man whatever, (Philippians 3:4), of which he gives an enumeration in several particulars, (Philippians 3:5,6), upon which he passes his judgment, and shows of what account, and in what esteem they were with him before, and now; that formerly they were reckoned gain, but now loss, (Philippians 3:7), and which he explains as referring to every thing short of Christ, and in comparison of the knowledge of him, and which he preferred to everything; and this he confirms by his willingness to suffer the loss of all things for him; his ends in which were, that he might win him, and be found in him, without his own righteousness, that legal one the false teachers extolled, and with the righteousness of God which faith receives, and is the only justifying one; and that he might know more of him, feel more of his power, have more fellowship with him, and conformity to him, (Philippians 3:8-10). His view in all which was, that he might attain to that glorious and happy state of the resurrection of the dead in Christ, (Philippians 3:11), and to prevent mistakes, and anticipate an objection that might be made to him, as if he ascribed perfection to himself in the present state, he owns he had not arrived to it: all he meant was, that it was his desire to enjoy that which Christ had laid hold on him for; in order to which he buried in oblivion what was past, looking and pressing to things before hint, even to Christ, and the glory he was called unto, which was

with him, (Philippians 3:12-14). Next follow various exhortations, as to be of the same mind with the apostle in pressing after spiritual and heavenly things, to which he exhorts those that had a greater knowledge of them than others; and who, though otherwise minded, the apostle was persuaded would have, the same revealed to them, (Philippians 3:15), and both he exhorts, according to their different attainments, to walk by the same rule and mind the same thing, (Philippians 3:16), and to be followers of him, and of them that walked after his example, (Philippians 3:17), giving this as a reason, because there were men who walked otherwise, to the grief of him, to the dishonour of Christ, and to their own shame and destruction, whom he describes as sensual and earthly minded men, (Philippians 3:18,19), and to engage them to follow him, and others, and not such persons, he draws a character of them opposite unto them; that whereas the minds of those others were carnal and earthly, their minds were spiritual and heavenly; their conversation was in heaven, and they were waiting for Christ from hence, (Philippians 3:20), and the blessedness they expect from him then, is the resurrection of their bodies, which is illustrated by the efficient cause of it, Christ; the subject of it, their vile bodies, as in this lifts, and in the grave; the exemplar and pattern of it, the glorious body of Christ; and the means by which it will be effected, the energy and power of Christ, who is omnipotent, (Philippians 3:21).

Ver. 1. *Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, “in our Lord”, i.e. Christ. The apostle seems as if he was about to conclude his epistle; and therefore, as if he was taking his farewell of this church, and giving his last advice to them, he exhorts them in a most affectionate manner, as his dear brethren in a spiritual relation, that they would make Christ their chief joy; that whatever sorrow they might have on account of his bonds, or the sickness of Epaphroditus, yet, he observes they had reason to rejoice in their Lord and Saviour; and however, it might be matter of rejoicing to them to hear of his hope of coming once more to them, and of the recovery of their minister and his return to them, yet Christ should be the principal object of their joy. A believer has always reason to rejoice in Christ; in the greatness of his person, he being in the form of God, and equal to him, and therefore able to save his to the uttermost by his obedience and death, and has interest enough in heaven to make his intercession prevalent and successful and power to keep safe all that are committed to him; and in the fitness of his person to be a Mediator, and daysman, to take care of things pertaining to the glory of

God, and to make reconciliation for sin; and in the fulness of his person, he having all grace in him for his people, which is all theirs, and with joy may they draw water out of the full wells of salvation in him; and in the beauty of his person which surpasses all others, a sight of which fills with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. They may, and should rejoice, as they sometimes do, in his salvation; in the contrivance of it by infinite wisdom; in the impetration of it by himself; and in the application of it by his spirit; and that because hereby justice is satisfied, the law is magnified and made honourable, sin is finished, and an everlasting righteousness brought in. Also they are called upon to rejoice in his resurrection, which is for their justification; in his ascension, seeing he then received gifts for men; and in his session at the right hand of God, which is in their nature; and in his intercession which is to their advantage; and in all the relations he stands in to them, as head, husband, father, brother, friend; and in everything that is his, and that belongs unto him, as his Gospel, ordinances, ways, and worship.

To write the same things to you. The apostle finding he had more time on his hands, or fresh thoughts occurred to him, writes on, and makes an apology for writing the same things, which he had either wrote to other churches, or which he had delivered when first among them, or which he had since wrote to them. For sometimes it is necessary to say and write the same things over and over again, partly that they may be the better understood, and partly that they may be more strongly fixed in the memory; as also, that the saints may be the more established in the present truth: and which he says,

to me indeed [is] not grievous; or troublesome; he found no backwardness to it, nor sluggishness in it; he was not loath to do it, nor was it wearisome to him; or made him slothful, as the Arabic renders it; nor was he afraid to repeat what he had wrote, or again to warn them against false teachers, of whom he stood in no fear:

but for you [it is] safe; or “necessary”, as the Vulgate Latin version reads, being a means of preserving them from the error of the wicked; for though the saints are safe in Christ, and can never finally and totally be deceived, yet the Gospel, and the frequent ministration of it, are a means of keeping them from the deception of evil men; for as the Syriac version renders it, “they make you more cautious”; when truth is repeated, and afresh

confirmed, it guards against falling in with damnable heresies. And so the Arabic version renders it, “is a guard”, or “garrison to you”.

Ver. 2. *Beware of dogs*, etc.] By whom are meant the “judaizing” teachers, who were for imposing the works and ceremonies of the law upon the Gentiles, as necessary to salvation; and they have the name retorted on them they used to give to the Gentiles; (see <40156>Matthew 15:26,27); nor should they think it too severe, since the Jews themselves say [f15],

> “the face of that generation (in which the Messiah shall come) shall he, blkh ynpk, “as the face of a dog”.”

The apostle calls them so, because they returned to Judaism, as the dog to its vomit, (<61022>2 Peter 2:22); and because of the uncleanness in which many of them lived, and the impudence they were guilty of in transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ, and putting themselves upon an equal foot with them; as also for their calumny and detraction, their wrangling with the apostles, snarling at their doctrines, and biting them with the devouring words of reproach and scandal: likewise, they may be styled dogs for their covetousness, being such greedy ones as in (<23510>Isaiah 56:10), with feigned words making merchandise of men; and for their love of their, bellies, which they served, and not Christ, and made a god of, (<50319>Philippians 3:19). Moreover, because they were without, as dogs are, (<66215>Revelation 22:15); having gone out from the communion of the saints, because they were not of them; or if among them, yet not true members of Christ, nor of his mystical body; all which are so many arguments why the saints should beware of them, and why their persons, conversation, and doctrine should be avoided.

Beware of evil workers: meaning the same persons, who were deceitful workers, did the work of the Lord unfaithfully, walked in craftiness, and handled the word of God deceitfully, endeavoured to subvert the Gospel of Christ, and the faith of men in it; who worked from bad principles, and with evil views; and notwithstanding their large pretensions to good works, teaching that justification and salvation were by them, which notion the apostle tacitly refers to in this character; yet were of bad a character, and such as Christ will reject another day as workers of iniquity; a character they deservedly bear, if there was no other reason for it than their preaching the doctrine of salvation by men's own works of righteousness, and who, and their ministry, are by all means to be shunned.

Beware of the concision; the men of the circumcision, as the Arabic version renders it; they chose to be called so, but the apostle would not give them that name, but calls them the “concision”; or “the concision of the flesh”, as the Syriac version renders it; referring either to the cuttings in the flesh, forbidden (<03205>Leviticus 21:5); or to the circumcision of the flesh rather, which they valued themselves upon, and were for introducing among the Gentiles, whereby they made sad divisions, and cutting work among the churches; and were some of them at least “cut” off, as the Ethiopic version renders it, from the churches; and who, as much as in them lay, cut themselves off from Christ, and rendered him unprofitable to them; (see <480502>Galatians 5:2,4).

Ver. 3. *For we are the circumcision*, etc.] And not they; they have the name, and we the thing, or that which legal circumcision was a shadow of, namely, circumcision of the heart; which lies in being pricked to the heart under a true sense of sin; in having the hardness of the heart removed, and the iniquity of it laid to open view; in pain and contrition of heart about it, joined with shame for it, and loathing of it, the consequence of which is, a putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh, (<510211>Colossians 2:11), according to the former conversation; and also in a renouncing a man's own righteousness in point of justification before God, and acceptance with him. All which is the work of God, and not man, and is therefore called the circumcision made without hands, (<510211>Colossians 2:11); it has God, and not man, for its author; and its praise is of God, and not of men; and its seat is in the heart and spirit, and not in the flesh; and such whose hearts are circumcised to love the Lord their God, and fear him, are the true circumcision:

which worship God in the spirit. The object of worship is “God”, and him only; not a creature animate or inanimate, stocks or stones, beasts, birds, men, or angels; only God, Father, Son, and Spirit: that the Father is to be worshipped, is not disputed, (see <430421>John 4:21,23); and the Son is to be worshipped with the same worship the Father is; since he is in the form of God, and equal to him, is the Creator of all the Lord of angels and men, and is to be, and is worshipped by both; prayer is made unto him, baptism is administered in his name, and trust and confidence are placed in him; and so is the Holy Ghost, he being equally God with the Father and the Son, and therefore the same homage is to be given to him as to them: and so some indeed read the words here, “which worship God the Spirit”; or the Spirit, who is God. “Worship” is either inward or outward; inward worship

lies in the exercise of grace on God, as of faith, hope, love, fear, etc. outward worship is the performance of certain external actions required by God, and both are to be performed: and it is also either private or public; private worship is in the closet, or in the family, and consists of praying, singing of praises, etc. public worship lies in tire observance of the outward ordinances of preaching, praying, hearing singing, etc. in the church of God; even all such ordinances as God has appointed, which are recorded in the Scriptures, and are confirmed by the authority of Christ. The manner in which worship is to be performed, is “in the Spirit”; either in and with the Spirit of God, without whose grace and assistance no part of it can be performed well. And the Alexandrian copy reads, “which worship in the Spirit of God”; and so the Complutensian edition, and several copies. Or in and with our own hearts and spirits, which should be engaged in every part of religious worship with much attention, diligence, and fervency; or in a spiritual manner, in opposition to the carnal worship of the Jews, and the bodily exercise of formal professors; and which lies in drawing nigh to God with true hearts, sincere and fervent ones, with grace in them, and that in exercise:

and rejoice in Christ Jesus; or “glory in” him, and make their boast of him; for a different word is here used from that in (Philippians 3:1). Such who have a true sense of themselves, and a spiritual sight of Christ, will not glory in themselves, in their wisdom, strength, riches, or righteousness, but in Christ, in his wisdom and strength, in his riches and righteousness, and in his person and grace only:

and have no confidence in the flesh; in any carnal descent, or birth privilege, as to be of the seed of Abraham, of the of Israel, or of such a tribe, or family, or born of such a parent; nor in circumcision, or any of the carnal ordinances of the ceremonial law; nor in any civil, moral, legal, and external righteousness, for so to do is but to make flesh an arm; or indeed to trust in anything out of Christ, or short of him; and all this makes up the character and description of a true believer in Christ.

Ver. 4. *Though I might also have confidence in the flesh*, etc.] This he says, lest it should be objected to him, that the reason why he had no confidence in the flesh, and did not boast of it, was, because he could not; he had nothing to glory of, and put his confidence in, and therefore acted the common part of such persons, who despise what either they have not, or are ignorant of: but this was not the apostle's case, he had as much

reason, and as good a foundation for trust in himself, his privileges and attainments, as any man had, and more; and his meaning here is not, that he might lawfully have confidence in the flesh, for that is criminal in every one, but that he had as good pretensions to it; and were it lawful, might with greater appearance of truth do it than some other persons, or indeed any other:

if any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: the sense is, if there were any other person besides the false teachers he speaks of in (Philippians 3:2); that were of the judaizing sect, or any whatever of the Jewish nation, be he who he will, who thought within himself he had, or seemed to others to have (for all such confidence, and the grounds of it, are only in show and appearance, and in imagination, not in reality), reasons for boasting and trusting in himself and in his carnal privileges and performances, the apostle had more, and which he enumerates in (Philippians 3:5,6); not but that he might be exceeded by some in some one particular or another; as for instance, he was not of the tribe of Levi: nor of Judah; he was neither of the house of Aaron, nor of David; neither of the priestly line, nor of the blood royal; but taking all together, there was not a man in whom so many reasons met, for boasting and confidence in the flesh, as in himself.

Ver. 5. *Circumcised the eighth day*, etc.] Circumcision was an appointment of God to Abraham, and his male issue; to him and them God gave the covenant of circumcision: this to Abraham personally was a sign and seal, that the righteousness of faith, which he had while he was an uncircumcised person, should come upon the uncircumcised Gentiles in the times or the Messiah, when the Gospel should come among them; and it was a distinguishing character of the Jews from the Gentiles, until the coming of Christ; it was typical of the effusion of his blood to cleanse from all the impurity of original and actual sin, and represented the circumcision of the heart. The Jews valued themselves much upon it, and treated the Gentiles with contempt for the want of it; and would neither converse with them in a civil or religious way, because they were uncircumcised: but the apostle was no Gentile, or an uncircumcised person; he had this mark in his flesh to glory in as well as others, if it had been lawful to trust in it; he was the subject of this ordinance while it was a standing one, and before it was abolished by Christ; and it was performed on him at the precise time fixed in the original institution of it, which was not always observed; for not to take notice of Jewish proselytes; who were circumcised at any age, when

they became such, whether in youth, manhood, or old age; and which by the way shows, that the apostle was no proselyte, but a natural Jew; Gershom, the son of Moses, was not circumcised till some years after his birth; and all the while the children of Israel were in the wilderness this ordinance was neglected, till Joshua had led them into Canaan's land, and then he circumcised all that generation that was born in the wilderness, some of whom must be near forty years of age; and in after times it was usual with the Jews, for one reason or another, to put off circumcision to a longer time. Take the following story as an illustration of this [f16]:

> "it is a tradition of R. Nathan; once, says he, I went to the cities of the sea, and a woman came to me who had circumcised her first son, and he died; the second, and he died; the third she brought to me; I saw him that he was red, I said unto her, my daughter, "wait a while" for him till his blood is swallowed up in him; she waited for him a while, and circumcised him, and he lived; and they called him Nathan the Babylonian, after my name. And again another time I went to the province of Cappadocia (the Jerusalem Talmud [f17] has it Caesarea of Cappadocia), a certain woman came to me, who had circumcised her first son, and he died; the second, and he died; the third, (the above Talmud adds, and he died, the fourth,) she brought to me, I saw that he was green, I inspected him, and the blood of the covenant was not in him, I said unto her, my daughter, wnytmh, "tarry a while" for him; (the Jerusalem Talmud has it, ^mz rjal whwjynh, "let him alone to another time";) till his blood fall in him, she waited for him, and circumcised him, and he lived; and they called him Nathan the Babylonian, after my name."

The Jewish canon, with regard to the time of circumcision, runs thus [f18]:

> "an infant may be circumcised at eight days, or at nine, or at ten, or at eleven, or at twelve, neither less nor more (not less than eight, nor more than twelve), how? according to its course at eight. If it is born between the two evenings, it is circumcised on the ninth day; if between the two evenings of the sabbath eve, it is circumcised on the tenth day; if on a feast day after the sabbath, it is circumcised on the eleventh; if on the two days of the beginning of the year, it is circumcised on the twelfth. An infant that is sick, they do not circumcise him until he is recovered."

And in the last case, they reckon seven days from the time of the recovery of the child, as Maimonides [f19] observes; with whom may be read other cases, in which circumcision was not always performed on the eighth day, but sometimes was deferred, and sometimes it was done the same day the child was born. But circumcision on the eighth day was reckoned most valid and authentic, and according to rule; and therefore it is not without reason, that the apostle mentions the time of his circumcision, and puts an emphasis upon it.

Of the stock of Israel; this is said to distinguish him from an Ishmaelite, or an Edomite, who were circumcised, and from the son of a proselyte, who might be circumcised on the eighth day; but he was a natural Israelite, to whom the various privileges belonged, mentioned in (<450904>Romans 9:4,5); and therefore had as much reason to trust in the flesh as any Israelite whatever.

[Of] the tribe of Benjamin; who was a genuine and legitimate son of Jacob, whom he had by his lawful and beloved wife Rachel. Of which tribe was the first king of Israel, whose name was Saul, (<091001>1 Samuel 9:1,2), and which was the apostle's first and Jewish name, and which perhaps was common in that tribe on that account. In this tribe stood the city of Jerusalem, and the temple of the Lord; this tribe retained the true worship of God with Judah, when the ten tribes revolted and worshipped the calves at Dan and Bethel, and returned with Judah from captivity, when the others did not. And the apostle was not only able to make himself appear to be of the stock Israel, but could name the tribe to which he belonged, which many of the Jews, that were of one, or rather of the ten tribes, were not able to do, and may be his chief reason for mentioning this circumstance.

An Hebrew of the Hebrews; not so called only because he could trace his pedigree from Abraham the Hebrew, or understood, and could speak the Hebrew language, which the Hellenistic Jews could not, or was an illustrious one among them, but because both his parents were Hebrews; he was an Hebrew by the father and mother's side both; he was a genuine Hebrew. The Arabians have the same way of speaking; and with them a genuine Arab is called an Arab of the Arabs [f20] as here. Some there were whose mothers were Hebrews, and their fathers Gentiles; such an one was Timothy, (<441601>Acts 16:1); and there were others whose fathers were Hebrews, and their mothers Gentiles; and these are thought by some to be the same the Talmudists [f21] call, µyl l j, “profane”: they not being

reckoned so holy as such whose fathers and mothers were both Hebrews; of which the latter gloried over the other.

As touching the law, a Pharisee: with respect to the interpretation and observance of the law, which was according to the traditions of the elders, and not the literal and genuine sense of it, he followed; and was of the sect of the Pharisees, which was strictest sect among the Jews, and in the greatest esteem among the people: and though they had put many false glosses on the Scripture, and held many erroneous principles, and were very tenacious of human traditions, yet they were preferable to the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead, and other things; and were more zealous in their devotion and religion, and more strict in their morals, and external holiness of life and conversation. They separated and distinguished themselves hereby from other people, and hence they had their name; (see Gill on "<40307>Matthew 3:7"). Now the apostle was not only a Pharisee, but the son of one; he was always brought up in that strict sect and severe way, (<44216>Acts 23:6).

Ver. 6. *Concerning zeal, persecuting the church*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version adds, "of God", as in (<480113>Galatians 1:13). The apostle was very zealous of the traditions of the elders, and for the law of God, and towards God also; though his zeal was not according to knowledge, but blind, ignorant, and furious; which pushed him on to persecute the followers of Christ, and the church of Christ at Jerusalem more especially, in a very violent and outrageous manner; he held the clothes of those that stoned Stephen, (<440758>Acts 7:58); he consented unto his death, (<440801>Acts 8:1); he made havoc of the church at Jerusalem, haling men and women to prison, (<440803>Acts 8:3); he continued breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ, (<440901>Acts 9:1); gave his voice against them when put to death, punished them frequently in the synagogues by scourging them, (<442610>Acts 26:10), and compelled them to blaspheme the name of Christ; was exceeding mad against them, pursued them to strange cities, (<442611>Acts 26:11), and persecuted the church of God exceedingly, more than anyone single person besides.

Touching the righteousness which is in, the law, blameless. This he mentions last, as including the whole of his righteousness, civil, ceremonial, and moral; and which he fancied was so perfect, that whatever righteousness was in the law, or required by it, he had it, and to such a degree, that he was blameless before God and men; that he was justified by

it in the sight of God, and could not justly be found fault with by any, or be charged with any defect in his obedience, either to the moral or ceremonial law; which must arise from great ignorance of the righteousness of God, and the strictness of his justice, and of the law of God, and the purity, spirituality, and extent of it, which reaches to the thoughts of the heart, and the first motions of sin; and of himself, the plague of his own heart, of the sin of lust, and of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, in every instance of it.

Ver. 7. *But what things were gain to me*, etc.] As circumcision, and the observance of the ceremonial law, which he thought were necessary to salvation; and his natural and lineal descent from Abraham, which he supposed entitled him to the favour of God, and eternal life, as well as to outward privileges; and his being of that strict sect of religion, a Pharisee, which he doubted not, being brought up and continued in, would secure to him everlasting happiness; and his zeal in persecuting the church of Christ, in which he thought he did God good service, and merited heaven for himself; and his legal righteousness, which he fancied was perfect, and so justified him in the sight of God, and rendered him acceptable to him: for the apostle's meaning is, not only that these things were judged by him, while in an unconverted state, good in themselves, and in some respects useful, but that they were really gainful, and meritorious of happiness in another world. But being converted, he saw all those things in a different light, and had a different opinion of them:

those I counted loss for Christ; circumcision he saw was now abolished, and was nothing, and that the circumcision of the heart was the main thing; and that the other was so far from being useful and necessary to salvation, that it was hurtful, was a yoke of bondage, bound men over to keep the whole law, and made Christ of none effect to them; and the same opinion he had of the whole ceremonial law: as for natural descent, which he once valued and trusted in, he now rejected it, well knowing it signified not whether a man was a Greek, or a Jew, a Barbarian, or Scythian, provided he was but a believer in Christ, (<51311>Colossians 3:11); and as for any outward form or sect of religion, he knew there was no salvation in it, nor in any other name but that of Christ, (<44012>Acts 4:12); and he was so far from thinking, that on account of his zeal in persecuting the church he was deserving of heaven, that for that reason he was not worthy to be called an apostle of Christ; and as for his legal righteousness, he now saw it to be as filthy rags, (<23606>Isaiah 64:6); that many things in it were really evil in themselves, such as his observance of the traditions of the elders, whereby

the commands of God were transgressed, and his mad zeal in persecuting the followers of Christ; and other things, which had the appearance of good works, were not truly so, did not spring from love, were not done in faith, and with a view to the glory of God; and that the best of them were very imperfect, and exceeding blamable; yea, that if they had been perfect, they could not have been meritorious of eternal life, as he once thought them to be; he saw now they were of no use in justification and salvation; nay, that they were hurtful and pernicious, being trusted to, as keeping persons off from Christ, and his righteousness: wherefore, he gladly suffered the loss of all his legal righteousness, and renounced and disclaimed it, and all pretensions to justification and salvation by it, for the sake of Christ; of life and salvation by him, and in comparison of him; of the knowledge of him, and of his justifying righteousness, as the following verses show. Hence, what before he pleased himself much with, and promised himself much from, he could not now reflect upon with any pleasure and satisfaction of mind; which is the sense of this phrase with Jewish writers [f22]: so it is observed of a drunken man, when he comes to himself; and it is told him what he did when in liquor, he grieves at it, jwyr alw dsph lkh bçjyw, "and counts all loss and not gain"; i.e. can take no pleasure in a reflection on it.

Ver. 8. *Yea, doubtless, and I count all things [but] loss*, etc.] Not only the things before mentioned, but anything, and everything else but Christ, or that stood in competition with him, or were short of him; as his natural and acquired parts; the whole compass of learning he had attained to; all that honour, credit, reputation, and popularity he was in for knowledge and devotion; all worldly substance, the comforts of life, and life itself; and all his righteousness since conversion, as well as before; of this no doubt could be made by those who knew him, his principles and his practices: and all this

for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: "by the knowledge of Christ" is not meant subjectively the knowledge that is in Christ, or which he has of others, either as God or man; but objectively, that knowledge which believers have of him, who know him not only in his person, as God over all, but as a Saviour and Redeemer, and as theirs; they know him in all his relations, and particularly as their Lord, not by creation only, but by redemption and grace, as the apostle did, putting an emphasis on these words, "my Lord"; thereby expressing his faith of interest in him,

his great affection for him, and cheerful subjection to him. And this knowledge is not general, but special, spiritual, and saving; it is a knowledge of approbation of Christ above all others; a fiducial one, which has faith in him joined with it, and is both experimental and, practical, and, at least at times, appropriating; and though imperfect, it is progressive and capable of being increased, and will at last be brought to perfection. It is attained to, not by the light of nature, nor by the help of carnal reason, nor by the law of Moses, but by the Gospel of the grace of God, as a means; and the efficient cause of it is Father, Son, and Spirit; the Father reveals Christ in his saints; the Son gives them an understanding to know him; and the Spirit is a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; and this knowledge is very excellent: a spiritual knowledge of Christ is more excellent than a general and notional one, or than a knowledge of Christ after the flesh; and the knowledge of Christ under the Gospel dispensation, though the same in nature, is more excellent than that which was under the legal dispensation, by promises, prophecies, and the ceremonial law, in degree, extensiveness, and clearness; but the most excellent knowledge of Christ is that of the saints in heaven; yea, even there is an excellency in what the saints have here on earth, and a superior one to all other knowledge, if the author and original of it is considered: it is not of ourselves, nor by the assistance of men; it is not in the book of nature, nor in the schools of the philosophers; it is not of earth, nor earthly, but it comes from afar, from above, from heaven, from God the Father of lights; it is a free grace gift, a distinguishing one, and is very comprehensive, unspeakable, and unchangeable: and as to the object of it, it is Christ, the chiefest among ten thousands; who made the heavens, earth, and seas, and all that in them are, the sun, moon, and stars, men and beasts, birds and fishes, fossils, minerals, vegetables, and everything in nature; and therefore the knowledge of him must be superior to the knowledge of everything else; and, which adds to its excellency, it makes Christ precious, engages faith and confidence in him, influences the life and conversation, humbles the soul, and creates in it true pleasure and satisfaction; when all other knowledge fills with self-love, pride, and vanity, and increases sorrow; whereas this is not only useful in life, but supports, as under afflictions, so in the views of death and eternity; through it grace is received now, and by it glory hereafter; for it is the beginning, earnest, and pledge of eternal life. Well may the believer count all things but loss for it, as the apostle did; who adds, for further confirmation of what he had asserted,

for whom I have suffered the loss of all things; he dropped all confidence in his carnal privileges, and civil, ceremonial, and moral righteousness, for Christ and his righteousness; he parted with all for this pearl of great price; he lost his good name, credit, and reputation among men, and suffered afflictions and persecutions in various shapes; he lost the comforts of life, being often in cold and nakedness, in hunger and thirst, and was ready to suffer the loss of life itself for professing and preaching Christ:

and do count them [but] dung; or dog's meat; (see Philippians 3:2); what is fit only to be cast to dogs, as the word signifies; and intends every thing that is base, mean, and worthless; as the faeces of men, the dregs and lees of liquor, the falling of fruit, chaff, stubble, the dross of metals, dung, and what not: so he esteemed his carnal descent; his form and sect of religion, and zeal in it; his ceremonial and moral righteousness before and after conversion; and everything of the creature, or what was his own, and but flesh; being of the same opinion with the church of old, who reckoned her righteousnesses, the best, and the whole of them, as “filthy rags”. The apostle next expresses his end and views in this,

that I may win Christ; not get an interest in him, for this he had already, and he knew he had, and that he should never lose it; and besides, an interest in Christ is not a thing that begins in time, but commenced from all eternity; and is not gotten at all, not by good works, nor repentance, nor faith; for these, if right and genuine, are the fruits and effects of an interest in Christ, but is what is freely given. The apostle's meaning is, either that he might gain or acquire a larger knowledge of Christ; and he cared not what pains he took, what expenses he was at, nor what loss he sustained for what he esteemed the most excellent, and for which he had already suffered the loss of all things; and if he had had more to lose, he could willingly part with it for more of this knowledge; compare (Philippians 3:10); or his sense is, that he might gain by Christ, or that Christ might be gain to him, as he found him to be, and as he is to every believer; who by parting with all for Christ, gains much by him, as a justifying righteousness, acceptance with God, peace, pardon, life, grace, and glory.

Ver. 9. *And be found in him*, etc.] This is another end the apostle had in view, in counting all things loss and dung, and suffering the loss of all for Christ. Calvin, different from other interpreters, reads the words actively, “and may find in him”; and thinks the sense is, that the apostle renounced all things for Christ, that he might recover all in him: and true it is, that for

the loss of carnal privileges, he found in Christ spiritual blessings; and for the loss of his own righteousness, another, and a better, even the righteousness of God; and in lieu of external goods, or worldly substance he was stripped of, true and lasting riches; and in the room of outward credit, peace and plenty, true honour, real peace, and spiritual pasture; and instead of the comforts of life, and life itself, spiritual and eternal life; though it is best to read the words passively, “and be found in him”; that is, “be in him”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; so the word found is used in (Galatians 2:17) (Philippians 2:8); and he means not a nominal being in Christ, or a being in him by profession, but a real one; and watch is either secret or open: a secret being in Christ he had from everlasting, being chosen in him, given to him, loved by him, betrothed unto him, preserved in him, and represented by him; and an open one he had at conversion, when he became a new creature, and was created in Christ Jesus unto good works: and here he intends a more clear and evident manifestation of his being in Christ; and his desire is, that he might appear to be in him, in life and at death, and at the day of judgment, and in the following manner:

not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law; by which he means his obedience to the moral, as well as the ceremonial law; for the one was as much his own as the other, and more properly his righteousness: this he calls his “own”, because performed by him, and wrought out in his own strength; and which he had an high opinion of, as if it was perfect and blameless; and which he had before put his trust and confidence in; as also to distinguish it from another's righteousness, even that which he had in Christ: he moreover calls it, “the righteousness which is of the law”; which the law required, and he performed in obedience to it, seeking for justification by it; this character distinguishes it from the righteousness of God, which is revealed in the Gospel, and is manifested without the law: and this his own legal righteousness he did not desire to “have”, and to be found in; not but that he desired to live soberly and righteously, to have, and do works of righteousness, but not depend on them; he would not have, and account this his moral righteousness, as a justifying one; he knew it was imperfect, filthy, and unprofitable, and that by it he could not be justified and saved, therefore he desired to have another.

But that which is through the faith of Christ; not through that faith which Christ himself, as man, had and exercised on God, as his God; but that

which he is the author and finisher of, and which has him and his righteousness for its object; not through faith, as the cause of it; for the moving cause of justification is the free grace of God, and the efficient cause is God himself: and it appears from hence, that faith is not the matter of our justification, or is not our righteousness; for faith and righteousness are two distinct things, otherwise righteousness could not be said to be "through" faith. The righteousness of Christ is here meant, and which is the sole matter of justification, and comes to us through faith apprehending, receiving, and embracing it; and which shows, that it must be before faith, or it could not be through it; as water that runs through a bridge must be before and after that bridge through which it runs. This righteousness is further described, as

the righteousness which is of God by faith; that righteousness which Christ, who is the true God, is the author of, hence it is a pure and perfect one, infinite, and serves for many; which God the Father approves of, and is well pleased with, because his law is magnified, and made honourable by it; and what he graciously gives, and freely imputes without works, to his people: and this is "by faith", which beholds the excellency of it, acknowledges its sufficiency, renounces its own righteousness, and submits to, and lays hold on this, and rejoices in it; and thus men are justified openly and manifestly by faith, receiving the justifying righteousness of Christ: or the words may be rendered "upon faith". This righteousness is as a garment put upon faith, or put upon him by God, who has true faith in Christ; (see ⁴Romans 3:22). This last clause, "by faith", is omitted in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, and seems to be read by them as belonging to the beginning of (³Philippians 3:10). Now this righteousness the apostle desired to have, and be found in; and this he says not, as supposing that a person may be found in Christ, and yet not have his righteousness; nor as if he himself had not this righteousness, and an interest in it; but to show his value for it, and his desire to be continually exercising faith on it, and the trust and confidence he placed in it; well knowing that in this he was safe and secure from all condemnation; this would answer for him in a time to come; being found in this he should not be naked nor speechless, and should have a right and an admission into the kingdom and glory of Christ Jesus.

Ver. 10. *That I may know him*, etc.] The Ethiopic version reads "by faith"; and to the same sense the Syriac. The apostle did know Christ, and that years ago; he knew whom he had believed; he knew him for himself; he

knew his personal interest in him; nor did he know any but him in the business of salvation: but his knowledge of Christ, though it was very great, it was, imperfect; he knew but in part, and therefore desired to know more of Christ, of the mystery and glories of his person, of the unsearchable riches of his grace, of his great salvation, and the benefits of it, of his love, which passes perfect knowledge, and to have a renewed and enlarged experience of communion with him. The apostle here explains what he means by winning Christ, for the sake of which he suffered the loss of all things, and counted them but dung; it was, that he might attain to a greater knowledge of the person and grace of Christ:

and the power of his resurrection; not that power which was put forth by his Father, and by himself, in raising him from the dead; but the virtue which arises from it, and the influence it has on many things; as on the resurrection of the saints: it is the procuring cause of it, they shall rise by virtue of union to a risen Jesus; it is the firstfruits, which is the earnest and pledge of their resurrection, as sure as Christ is risen, so sure shall they rise; it is the exemplar and pattern of theirs, their bodies will be raised and fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; and this the apostle desired to know, experience, and attain unto. Christ's resurrection has an influence also on the justification of his people; when Christ died he had the sins of them all upon him, and he died for them, and discharged as their public head and representative, and they in him: hence it is said of him, that "he was raised again for our justification", (<45 4:25>Romans 4:25). Now, though the apostle was acquainted with this virtue and influence of Christ's resurrection, he desired to know more of it, for the encouragement of his faith to live upon Christ, as the Lord his righteousness. Moreover, the regeneration of men is owing to the resurrection of Christ; as to the abundant mercy of God, as the moving cause, so to the resurrection of Christ, as the means or virtual cause; and therefore are said to be "begotten again by the resurrection of Christ from the dead", (<60 1:3>1 Peter 1:3). This power and virtue the apostle had had an experience of, yet he wanted to feel more of it, in exciting the graces of the spirit to a lively exercise, in raising his affections, and setting them on things above, and in engaging him to seek after them, and set light by things on earth, and in causing him to walk in newness of life, in likeness or imitation of Christ's resurrection, to all which that strongly animates and encourages; (see <51 3:1>Colossians 3:1,2 <45 6:4>Romans 6:4,5).

And the fellowship of his sufferings; either his personal sufferings, and so signifies a sharing in, and a participation of the benefits arising from them; such as reconciliation for sin, peace with God, pardon, righteousness, nearness to God, etc. or the sufferings of his members for him, and with him, and which Christ reckons his own: these the apostle was willing to take his part in, and lot of, knowing, that those that are partakers of his sufferings in this sense, shall reign with him, and be glorified together. What the Jews deprecated, the apostle was desirous of; namely, sharing in the sorrows and sufferings of the Messiah, and which they reckon the greatest happiness to be delivered from.

> "The disciples of R. Eleazar [f23] asked him, what a man should do that he may be delivered jyçm lç wlbjm, "from the sorrows of the Messiah?" he must study in the law, and in beneficence."

And elsewhere they say [f24],

> "he that keeps the three meals on the sabbath day shall be delivered from three punishments, jyçm lç wlbjm, "from the sorrows of the Messiah", and from the damnation of hell, and from the war of Gog and Magog."

But our apostle rejoiced in his sufferings for Christ, and was desirous of filling up the afflictions of Christ in his flesh, for his body's sake, the church:

being made conformable unto his death; either in a spiritual sense dying daily unto sin, (<461531>1 Corinthians 15:31), having the affections, with the lusts, crucified, (<480524>Galatians 5:24), and the deeds of the body mortified, (<450813>Romans 8:13), and so planted in the likeness of his death, (<450605>Romans 6:5); or rather in a corporeal sense, bearing always in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, (<470410>2 Corinthians 4:10), and being continually exposed to death for his sake, and ready to suffer it whenever called to it.

Ver. 11. *If by any means I, might attain unto the resurrection of the dead*.] Not in a figurative sense, the resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace, of which Christ is the efficient cause, for this the apostle had attained to; unless the consummation of that spiritual life, in perfect holiness, should be intended, than which nothing was more desirable by him; nor in a representative sense, for this also he enjoyed in Christ his head, being risen with him, and in him, when he rose from the dead; but in

a literal sense and designs not the general resurrection of the just and unjust, which he believed; for he knew that everyone must, and will attain to this, even Pharaoh, Judas, and the worst of men; but the special and particular resurrection of the righteous, the better resurrection, which will be first, and upon the personal coming of Christ, and by virtue of union to him, and in a glorious manner, and to everlasting life and happiness: and when the apostle says, “if by any means” he might attain to this, it is not to be understood as if he doubted of it, which would be inconsistent with his firm persuasion, that nothing should separate him from the love of God, and with his full assurance of faith, as to interest in Jesus Christ; but it denotes the difficulty of attaining it, since through various afflictions and great tribulations a believer must pass, before he comes to it; and also the apostle's earnest desire of it, and strenuous endeavour for it; not caring what scenes of trouble, or sea of sorrow what fiery trials, severe sufferings, or cruel death he went through, so be it he obtained as he believed he should, the glorious and better resurrection; he counted not his life dear to himself, he loved it not unto death, having in view the blissful and happy state after it.

Ver. 12. *Not as though I had already attained*, etc.] Or “received”; he had received much grace out of the fulness of it in Christ; he had received the gift of righteousness, the forgiveness of his sins, and the adoption of children; he had attained to a lively hope of the incorruptible inheritance, and had received a right unto it, and had a meetness for it; but as yet he had not received the thing itself, nor was he come to the end of his race, and so had not received the crown of righteousness laid up for him; he had not yet attained to perfect knowledge, nor perfect holiness, nor perfect happiness: wherefore he adds,

either were already perfect; he was perfect in comparison of others, that were in a lower class of grace, experience, and knowledge, in which sense the word is used in (Philippians 3:15), and in (1 Corinthians 2:6); he was so, as perfection intends sincerity, uprightness, and integrity; the root of the matter, the truth of grace was in him; his faith was unfeigned, his love was without dissimulation, his hope was without hypocrisy, his conversation in the world was in godly simplicity, and his preaching and his whole conduct in his ministry were of sincerity, and in the sight of God: he was perfect as a new creature with respect to parts, having Christ formed in him, and all the parts of the new man, though not as to degrees; this new man not being as yet grown up to a perfect man, or to its full growth, to

the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; he was perfect with respect to justification, being perfectly justified from all things, by the righteousness of Christ, but not with respect to sanctification; and though his sanctification was perfect in Christ, yet not in himself; his knowledge was imperfect, something was wanting in his faith, and sin dwelt in him, of which he sometimes grievously complained: now this he says, lest he should be thought to arrogate that to himself, which he had not:

but I follow after; Christ the forerunner, after perfect knowledge of him, perfect holiness from him, and perfect happiness with him: the metaphor is taken from runners in a race, who pursue it with eagerness, press forward with all might and main, to get up to the mark, in order to receive the prize; accordingly the Syriac version renders it, ana jhr, "I run", and so the Arabic: the apostle's sense is, that though he had not yet reached the mark, he pressed forward towards it, he had it in view, he stretched and exerted himself, and followed up very closely to it, in hope of enjoying the prize:

if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus; he was apprehended of Christ, when he met him in his way to Damascus, stopped him in his journey, laid him prostrate on the ground, and laid hold on him as his own, challenged and claimed his interest in him, (ACTActs 9:3-6 26:13-18), as one that the Father had given him, and he had purchased by his blood; he entered into him, and took possession of him, and took up his residence in him, having dispossessed the strong man armed, and ever since held him as his own; and he apprehended, or laid hold on him, to bring him as he had engaged to do, to a participation of grace here, and glory hereafter; that he might know him himself, and make him known to others; that he might be made like unto him, have communion with him, and everlastingly enjoy him: and these things the apostle pursued after with great vehemence, that he might apprehend them, and be in full possession of them; and which he did, in the way and manner hereafter described.

Ver. 13. *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended*, etc.] That for which he was apprehended of Christ: he had not attained to perfect knowledge, was not come to the mark, had not received the prize, or laid hold on eternal life; though he had received so much grace, and such gifts, as had qualified him for an apostle; and he had been so many years in that office, and had so great a knowledge in the mystery of the Gospel, and had

laboured in it more abundantly than others, and with great success; and even though he had been caught up into the third heaven, and had heard unspeakable words, not lawful to be uttered, (<47 12 12>2 Corinthians 12:2-4), yet he had no such opinion of himself, as if he was perfect: by which way of speaking, he tacitly strikes at the arrogance and vain confidence of false teachers, that pretended to perfection; and in this way led the brethren to conclude, that they could never have arrived to it, since so great an apostle had not; some copies read not “yet”, and so the Ethiopic version:

but this one thing [I do]; which he was intent upon, constantly attended to, and earnestly pursued; it was the main and principal thing he was set upon, and which he employed himself in; and which engrossed all his thoughts, desires, affections, time, and labour; (see <19 27 04>Psalm 27:4 <42 10 42>Luke 10:42). The Syriac version reads, “this one thing I know”; signifying that whatever he was ignorant of, and however imperfect his knowledge was in other things, this he was full well apprized of, and acquainted with. The Arabic version renders the whole thus, “I do not think that I have now obtained and received anything, but the one thing”; namely, what follows;

forgetting those things which are behind, meaning not the sins of his past life, which were indeed forgotten by God, and the guilt of which was removed from him, by the application of the blood of Christ, so that he had no more conscience of them; yet they were remembered and made mention of by him, partly for his own humiliation, and partly to magnify the grace of God: nor earthly and worldly things, which believers are too apt to have respect to, to look back upon, and hanker after, as the Israelites did after the fleshpots in Egypt, (<02 16 03>Exodus 16:3); though these were forgotten by the apostle, so as not anxiously to care for them, and seek after them, to set his affections on them, or trust in them: nor his fleshly privileges, and legal righteousness, which he pursued, valued, and trusted in before conversion, but now dropped, renounced, disregarded, and counted as loss and dung, (<50 03 07>Philippians 3:7,8); but rather his labours and works of righteousness since conversion, which though he times took notice of for the magnifying of the grace of God, for the defence of the Gospel, and to put a stop to the vain boasting of false teachers, yet he forgot them in point of dependence on them, and trust to them; and having put his hand to the plough, he did not look back, nor desist, but went on in his laborious way, not thinking of what he had done and gone through, nor discouraged at what was before him; as also he intends all his growth in grace, and proficiency in divine knowledge, which was very great; and though he was

thankful for these things, and would observe them to the glory of the grace of God, yet he trusted not in them: nor did he sit down easy and satisfied with what he had attained unto, and therefore was

reaching forth unto those things which are before; to perfection of knowledge, holiness, and happiness, which were before him, and he as yet had not attained unto; but was desirous of, and pursued after with great vehemence and eagerness; the metaphor is taken from runners in a race, who did not stop to look behind them, and see what way they have run, and how far they are before others, but look and move forwards, and stretch themselves out to the uttermost, and run with all their might and main to the mark before them; and so the apostle did in a spiritual sense.

Ver. 14. *I press toward the mark*, etc.] The allusion is to the white line, or mark, which the runners in the Olympic games made up to, and to which he that came first received the prize; and by which the apostle intends the Lord Jesus Christ, who is σκοπος, "the scope", or "mark", of all the thoughts, purposes, and counsels of God, to which they all aim, and in which they all centre; and of the covenant of grace of which he is the sum and substance, the Mediator, surety, and messenger, in whom are all the blessings and promises of it; and of the Scriptures of truth, the writings of the Old and New Testament, which all testify of him, and agree in him; and of both law and Gospel, he is the end of the law, and the substance of the Gospel; and of all the graces of the Spirit, in the hearts of his people, faith looks at him, hope is concerned with him, and love has him for its object; and of all the duties believers are concerned in, they all point at him, they are done in his name and strength, through faith in him, and from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory; and so he is of their thoughts, affections, and desires: and to this mark they press, or "run", as the Syriac version renders it; they look to Jesus, while they are running their Christian race; they keep him in their view, and follow after him, because he is their forerunner, (Hebrews 6:20), and the Captain of their salvation, (Hebrews 2:10); they set him before them as their guide to direct them, according to whom they steer their course, that so they may not lose their way, nor move out of it, to the right hand or the left; and from whom they take great encouragement to go on, and press through the difficulties they do; and besides, they know that there is no coming at the prize, but through the mark, for there is salvation in no other, (Acts 4:12); and that whoever comes up to the mark, or believes in Christ, shall enjoy the prize of eternal life, which is next mentioned:

for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus: by which is meant, the incorruptible crown; the crown of life, righteousness, and glory, that fadeth not away, (<901212>James 1:12 <550408>2 Timothy 4:8 <600504>1 Peter 5:4), styled "the prize of the calling of God"; because it is what God in the effectual calling calls his people to, even to a kingdom and glory, and to eternal glory and happiness; of which they have a sight, though but a glimmering view of it, and are blessed with hope in it; in which they rejoice, and see their right unto it, in the righteousness of Christ, and have a meetness for it: this is named "the high calling of God", because God is on high, who calls them to it, in allusion to the judge in the Olympic games, who was placed in an exalted situation, near the mark, with the crown in his hand, which he gave to him that came first; and because the grace by which the saints are called is from above, as every good and perfect gift is, (<590117>James 1:17); and because the prize they are called unto consists of things above, where Jesus is, and is the hope laid up in heaven, (<510105>Colossians 1:5), and the inheritance reserved there, (<600104>1 Peter 1:4); and expresses the great honour and dignity of called ones, who are called to a crown and kingdom, are raised from the dunghill, to sit among princes, and to inherit the throne of glory, and are made kings and priests unto God: and may also denote, that the calling to such high honour is from above, and not below; and is owing to the special grace and favour of God, and not to any merits of men; nor is the prize to which they are called, of him that willeth and runneth, but of God's grace and mercy, (<450916>Romans 9:16): and moreover, this calling is said to be "in Christ Jesus"; for both the purpose and grace, according to which men are called, are in him; the grace by which they are called, and which is implanted in them when called, is all in and from Christ; the blessings of grace, which they then in person enjoy, are spiritual blessings in him; and even the glory they are called unto is in his hands; not only the promise of eternal life, but that itself; the gift of it is with him, and it comes through him; yea, they are called by him, and said to be the called of Christ Jesus; now the prize of this calling, which is what God has prepared from all eternity, which Christ has in his hands, and will give to all his, and which is of immense richness and eternal duration, and shall be bestowed on all Christian runners, or true believers, is what the apostle was pressing for, pursuing after, with much difficulty, through great toil and labour, diligent searching of the Scriptures, frequent wrestling with God in prayer, and constant attendance on the means of grace, and ordinances of the Gospel.

Ver. 15. *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect*, etc.] Not absolutely, but comparatively, with respect to other believers, in a lower class of knowledge and experience; and not with respect to degrees, but parts; and regards such who were not children, but of riper age in divine things, unless the words are spoken ironically:

be thus minded; as the apostle was, to count what were gain to him, loss for Christ; to reckon all things but loss and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ; to be willing to suffer the loss of all things, to win him, (⁵⁰³⁰⁸Philippians 3:8); to desire to be found in him, and in his righteousness, and not a man's own, (⁵⁰³⁰⁹Philippians 3:9); to know more of him in his person, righteousness, sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead, (⁵⁰³¹⁰Philippians 3:10); and to attain to such a state, and yet to disclaim all perfection, and acknowledge their imperfection, (⁵⁰³¹¹Philippians 3:11,12); and to forget things behind, and reach to those before, (⁵⁰³¹³Philippians 3:13); and press towards the mark, Christ, for the prize of eternal glory, (⁵⁰³¹⁴Philippians 3:14):

and if in anything ye be otherwise minded; as to seek for justification by the works of the law, or partly by Christ and partly by the law, and to imagine and expect perfection in this life:

God shall reveal even this unto you; such errors will be made manifest sooner or later; the day will declare them, and such wood, hay, and stubble, will be burnt up by the fire, which will reveal every man's work, (⁴⁶³¹²1 Corinthians 3:12,13).

Ver. 16. *Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained*, etc.] Whatever degree of knowledge of Christ, and the truths of his Gospel, is attained to, let it be retained, and not departed from:

let us walk by the same rule; either the doctrine of justification by Christ's righteousness in particular, which is a rule of judgment concerning other things; for so far as they agree or disagree with this, they are to be received or rejected; or the Scriptures of truth, which are the rule of faith and practice, and the standard and test, to which all are to be brought and tried:

let us mind the same thing; be of one heart and affection to each other, (⁴⁵²¹⁰Romans 12:10), and of the same judgment in the doctrines of the Gospel, (⁴⁶¹¹⁰1 Corinthians 1:10), and pursue the same measures; particularly press towards the same mark, and for the same prize the

apostle did, (³⁰¹⁴Philippians 3:14), and be followers of him, as is exhorted to in (³⁰¹⁷Philippians 3:17).

Ver. 17. *Brethren, be followers together of me*, etc.] Not that the apostle set up himself as the head of a party, which is what he always blamed in others; he did not assume a dominion over the faith of men, or seek to lord it over God's heritage; nor did he desire any to be followers of him, any further than he was a follower of Christ; and in what he was, whether in doctrine or practice, he desires to be followed in: and here he has a particular regard to what went before, concerning reckoning what was gain loss; accounting all things but dung, in comparison of the knowledge of Christ, looking to his righteousness alone for justification, (³⁰⁰⁹Philippians 3:9); disclaiming perfection, yet forgetting things behind; reaching towards things before, and pressing to the mark for the prize, (³⁰¹³Philippians 3:13); and walking according to the rule of God's word; in which things he had some that followed him, who were his spiritual children, and to whom he had been useful in conversion and edification; (see ⁴⁰⁴⁵1 Corinthians 4:15,16 ⁵⁰⁰⁶1 Thessalonians 1:6,7); and he would therefore have these Philippians followers of him, “together” with them; and which contains in it an encouraging reason, or argument, since others were followers of him; or together with one another, he was desirous, that one and all of them might follow him; that they might all go in the same way, profess the same truth, be found in the practice of the same things, worship the Lord with one consent, pursue the same ends, and draw all the same way; and so be as the church was, like a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariot, (²⁰⁰⁹Song of Solomon 1:9);

and mark them which walk so; as the apostle did, and those that were followers of him; these he would have them mark, observe, attentively look to; not as others, who cause offences and divisions, and obey not the word, in order to shun, avoid, and keep no company with; but to imitate and follow, and next to Christ, the mark, to make use of them as inferior ones:

as ye have us for an ensample, or “type”; believers should be ensamples one to another, especially ministers of the word; pastors of churches are not to be lords over God's heritage, but to be ensamples to the flock, (⁶⁰⁰³1 Peter 5:3), in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit; in faith, in purity, as the apostle exhorts Timothy, (⁵⁰¹²1 Timothy 4:12), and in these things they are to be followed by believers.

Ver. 18. *For many walk*, etc.] tyaynrja, "otherwise", as the Syriac version adds; and which truly explains the words, and gives the sense; they walked not as the apostle and his followers; they walked as men, as carnal men, (<460303>1 Corinthians 3:3), according to the course of the world, after their ungodly lusts, (<490202>Ephesians 2:2,3); or according to the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic dispensation, and not uprightly, and according to the truth of the Gospel: and there were many that walked so; the road both of profaneness and error is a broad one, and many walk therein, which makes it the more dangerous; the examples of many have great force, though a multitude is not to be followed to do evil; the conversation of a great part of professors is not to be imitated; the few names in Sardis that have not defiled their garments with error or immorality should be marked for ensamples, (<660304>Revelation 3:4), and the majority shunned:

of whom I have told you often; both when present among them by word of mouth, and when absent from them by writing; for the apostle was a faithful watchman and monitor to this church, and to all the churches, the care of which lay upon him; and diligent he was to warn them against false teachers, whose doctrines and practices he knew were of pernicious consequence:

and now tell you even weeping; partly on account of those evil men, whose state and condition, notwithstanding their profession, was very bad; and partly on account of the glory of God and Christ, and the honour of religion, which suffered much through them; and also on account of the Philippians, lest they should be drawn aside by them; and because they had taken so little notice of his frequent cautions and advice: and that they might the better know the men he spoke of, and avoid them, he describes them by the following characters,

[that they are] the enemies of the cross of Christ; not that, though they might be Jews, they were like the unbelieving Jews, who were open and implacable enemies of a crucified Christ, called Jesus accursed, and anathematized him and his followers, and to whom the preaching of Christ crucified was an offence and stumblingblock, (<460123>1 Corinthians 1:23); for these were professors of Christ, and pretended to preach Christ, and him crucified: nor were they such heretics that denied that Christ really assumed human nature, and was really crucified and died; and affirmed that all this was only in appearance, or that an image was hung upon the cross for him, or Simon the Cyrenian was crucified in his room, as some have

thought, which was the heresy of Simon Magus, and his disciple Basilides: nor is the sense that they were averse to the crucifixion of the affections with the lusts, though this seems to be their true character, since they were sensual, and minded earthly things; but the meaning is, that they disliked the cross of Christ; they were unwilling to take it up for his sake, and follow him; they studied all ways and means to shun it; they ingratiated themselves into the affections of the unbelieving Jews, by complying with the ceremonies of the law, and bearing hard upon the apostle and his ministry, that so they might not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ; and besides, by enjoining circumcision and an observance of the law as necessary to salvation, they, as much as in them lay, made void the efficacy of the cross and death of Christ, and made that and him unprofitable, and of no effect to the souls of men; and were both doctrinally and practically enemies of the cross of Christ: and so all such professors of Christ, who walk not according to the Gospel, though they are not open and direct enemies to the Gospel, which is the preaching of the cross, yet they are secret and indirect ones, and oftentimes do more mischief to it by their lives, than the keenest adversaries of it can by their pens.

Ver. 19. *Whose end [is] destruction*, etc.] Everlasting destruction, the destruction of both body and soul in hell, (<40 10 28>Matthew 10:28); and this is the end, the reward and issue of bad principles and practices; the broad roads of sin and error lead to destruction, (<40 07 13>Matthew 7:13); however pleasing such ways may be to men, the end of them is eternal death; destruction and misery are in all the ways of profaneness and heresy; not only immoralities, but heresies, such as strike at the efficacy of Christ's cross, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, are damnable ones, and bring upon men swift destruction, (<61 02 01>2 Peter 2:1); and how should it otherwise be, for there is no salvation but by the cross of Christ? and if men are enemies to that, and the efficacy of it, and the way of salvation by it, there is no more, nor any other sacrifice for sin, (<58 10 26>Hebrews 10:26), but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, (<58 10 27>Hebrews 10:27); and this will be the case of all barren and unfruitful professors, who are like the earth, that brings forth briers and thorns, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned, (<58 06 08>Hebrews 6:8); for what will the hope of such an one, founded on his profession, though he may have got credit and reputation among men, avail, when God takes away his soul?

whose god [is their] belly; the belly was the god of the Cyclops, they sacrificed to none but to themselves, and to the greatest of the gods, their

own belly [f25]; as money is the covetous man's god, whom he loves, adores, and puts his confidence in, so the belly is the god of the sensualist, the epicure, and voluptuous person; he has more regard for the service of that, than for the service of God? and of this complexion were these professors; they were lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God, (<550304>2 Timothy 3:4); all their pretensions to religion, to Christ, and his Gospel, were only to serve themselves, their own bellies, and not the Lord Jesus Christ, and to do good to the souls of men: or their belly may be said to be their god, because they placed religion in the observance of meats and drinks, either allowed or forbidden in the law of Moses, which profited not those that were occupied therein, (<580910>Hebrews 9:10); for the kingdom of God, the Gospel dispensation, internal religion, and the exercise of it, lies not in these things, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, (<451417>Romans 14:17):

and whose glory [is] in their shame; in their evil practices committed in secret, of which it was a shame to speak; in their hidden things of dishonesty, crafty walking, and deceitful handling of the word of God, which were vile and scandalous, (<470402>2 Corinthians 4:2); in corrupting the Gospel, and the churches of Christ, with their false doctrine; in observing and urging the ceremonies of the law, which were dead, and ought to be buried; and particularly circumcision in the flesh, in that part of the body which causes shame, and in this was their glory, (<480613>Galatians 6:13). The idol Baal Peor, and which is no other than the Priapus of the Heathens, is called by this name, (<280910>Hosea 9:10); so the prophets of Baal are in the Septuagint on (<111819>1 Kings 18:19,25) called the prophets, της αισχυνης, "of that shame"; it may be the apostle may have a regard to the secret debaucheries of these persons; or because they made their belly their god, he calls it their shame in which they gloried, and which was the name given to the idols of the Gentiles:

who mind earthly things. The Arabic version renders it, "who entertain earthly opinions"; and some by, "earthly things" understand the ceremonies of the law, called the elements and rudiments of the world, which these false teachers were fond of, and were very diligent to inculcate and urge the observance of; though rather worldly things, such as honour, glory, and popular applause, and wealth, and riches, are meant; for they sought their own things, and not the things of Christ; through covetousness, with feigned words, they made merchandise of men, and amassed to themselves great sums of money; and yet were greedy dogs, could never have enough,

everyone looking for his gain from his quarter, (<235611>Isaiah 56:11): and now persons of such characters as these were by no means to be followed, but such who are hereafter described.

Ver. 20. *For our conversation is in heaven*, etc.] The Ethiopic version renders it, “we have our city in heaven”; and the words may be truly rendered, “our citizenship is in heaven”; that is, the city whereof we are freemen is heaven, and we behave ourselves here below, as citizens of that city above: heaven is the saints' city; here they have no continuing city, but they seek one to come, which is permanent and durable; a city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God, (<581110>Hebrews 11:10): as yet they are not in it, though fellow citizens of the saints, and of the household of God; they are pilgrims, strangers, and sojourners on earth, (<032523>Leviticus 25:23 <581113>Hebrews 11:13); but are seeking a better country, an heavenly one, and God has prepared for them a city, (<581116>Hebrews 11:16); they have a right unto it through the grace of God, and righteousness of Christ, and a meetness for it in him; and their conversation is here beforehand, while their commoration, or temporary residence, is below; their thoughts are often employed about it; their affections are set upon it, (<510302>Colossians 3:2); their hearts are where their treasure is, (<401621>Matthew 6:21); the desires of their souls are towards it, and they are seeking things above, and long to be in their own city, and Father's house, where Christ is; and to be at home with him, and for ever with him. This is the work and business of their lives now, and what their hearts are engaged in. The Syriac version renders it, “our work is in heaven”; the business, the exercise of our lives, and of our graces, tend that way:

from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; Christ is now in heaven, at the Father's right hand, (<440233>Acts 2:33), appearing in the presence of God for his people, and making intercession for them, (<580725>Hebrews 7:25); and so will remain, until the time of the restitution of all things; when he will descend from heaven, and be revealed from thence: and this the saints look for, and expect; they have good reason for it; from his own words, from the words of the angels at the time of his ascension, (<440111>Acts 1:11), and from the writings of the apostles and they expect him not merely as a Judge, under which consideration he will be terrible to the ungodly, but as a Saviour; who as he has already saved their souls from sin, and the dreadful effects of it, from the bondage and curse of the law, from the captivity of Satan, and from eternal ruin and wrath to come, so he will

save and redeem their bodies from the grave, corruption, mortality, and death, as follows.

Ver. 21. *Who shall change our vile body*, etc.] Which is defiled with sin, attended with frailty, and is mortal; and being dead, is sown and laid in the grave in corruption, weakness, and dishonour: in the Greek text it is, "the body of our humility"; sin has subjected the body to weakness, mortality, and death; and death brings it into a very low estate indeed, which is very humbling and mortifying to the pride and vanity man: now this vile body, in the resurrection morn, shall be stripped of all its vileness, baseness, and meanness; and be changed, not as to its substance, nor as to its form and figure, which shall always remain same, as did the substance and form of our Lord's body after his resurrection; but as to its qualities, it shall be changed from corruption to incorruption, (1 Corinthians 15:42), from mortality to immortality, from weakness to power, from dishonour to glory, and be free from all sin: so the Jews say [f26], that

> "the evil imagination, or corruption of nature, goes along with man in the hour of death, but does not return with him when the dead arise:"

and this change will be made by the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, when he shall descend from heaven; who as he is the pledge, the first fruits, the exemplar, and meritorious cause, so he will be the efficient cause of the resurrection of the saints; who will be raised and changed by him, by his power, and by virtue of union to him:

that it might be fashioned like unto his glorious body; or "the body of his glory", as it is now in heaven, and of which his transfiguration on the mount was an emblem and pledge; for glory, power, incorruption, and immortality, the bodies of the saints in the resurrection shall be like to Christ's, though not equal to it, and shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The Jews [f27] have a notion, that

> "the holy blessed God will beautify the bodies of the righteous in future time, like the beauty of the first Adam:"

but their beauty and glory will be greater than that, it will be like the glory of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, whose image they shall then bear: and whereas this requires almighty power, of which Christ is possessed, it will be done

according to the working, the energy of his power and might; or as the Syriac version renders it, “according to his great power”; which was put forth in raising himself from the dead, and whereby he was declared to be the Son of God: and

whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself; not only sin, Satan, and the world, but death and the grave; and so consequently able to raise the dead bodies of his saints, and to change the qualities of them, and make them like unto his own: and now who would but follow such persons, who are citizens of heaven, have their conversation there, look for Christ the Saviour from thence, (⁵⁰³²⁰Philippians 3:20), who when he comes will raise the dead in Christ first, put such a glory on their bodies as is on his own, (⁵²⁴¹⁶1 Thessalonians 4:16), and take them to himself, that where he is they may be also? see (⁴³⁰⁰³John 14:3 ⁵⁸⁶¹²Hebrews 6:12).

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS 4

This chapter contains exhortations to various duties becoming Christians, the apostle's thankfulness to the Philippians for their present to him, and the conclusion of the epistle with the salutations of the brethren: in (Philippians 4:1); the apostle exhorts the saints with great affection to perseverance in the doctrine and faith of Christ; and in (Philippians 4:2); mentions some persons by name, and to whom he recommends unity and agreement; and in (Philippians 4:3); entreats others to assist them therein; and in (Philippians 4:4); exhorts them all in general to joy in the Lord, and to moderation, enforced by this argument, the Lord being at hand, (Philippians 4:5); and to calmness and quietness of mind, and to prayer, and supplication, with thanksgiving, (Philippians 4:6); to which they are encouraged, by the promise of having the peace of God, keeping their minds through Christ, (Philippians 4:7); and to conclude, he exhorts them to everything that is virtuous had commendable; to which he stimulates them, from the consideration of the nature of the things themselves, from his own example, and from the presence of God with them, they might expect to enjoy, (Philippians 4:8,9); and then he proceeds to take notice of the kindness of the Philippians to him, declares his joy on account of it, and expresses it by their care of him again; which he corrects, by observing that it was not for want of care in them before, but of opportunity of showing it, (Philippians 4:10); nor did he take notice of this present of theirs, with so much exultation on account of his own penury, for he had learnt the great lesson of contentment in every state, (Philippians 4:11); which he enlarges upon and explains; namely, that he had been taught, and knew how to behave in fulness and want, in prosperity and adversity; though this was not owing to himself, but to the power and strength of Christ, (Philippians 4:12,13); however, he commends the Philippians for their communicating to him in his affliction, both at the first preaching of the Gospel to them, and at several times since, (Philippians 4:14-16), the reason of which commendation was not because he was covetous of gifts and presents from them, but to encourage them to bring forth fruit, which would turn to their own advantage,

(Philippians 4:17); as for himself he had enough, and therefore said not this on his own account, but because such communication was a sacrifice well pleasing to God, and a return would be made by him; who, as he was able to supply all their need, would; of which he assures them, and for which he prays, (Philippians 4:17-19), and to whom he gives the glory of what they had given, and he had received, (Philippians 4:20); and then the epistle is concluded with the salutation of the apostle, and the saints, and brethren with him, and with his usual benediction, (Philippians 4:21,22).

Ver. 1. *Therefore, my brethren*, etc.] Not in a natural but spiritual relation; having the same Father, being of the same family, and household of faith: seeing that on the one hand there were false teachers, who stand described by various characters in the preceding chapter, by whom they were in danger of being carried away from the simplicity of the Gospel; and on the other hand, such were the conduct and conversation of the apostle, and other true believers, and such were their expectations of Christ from heaven, and of happiness from him as there expressed; therefore he exhorts to steadfastness in him, and that under the most tender, affectionate, and endearing appellations; given in the uprightness of his soul, without any manner of flattery, to signify his strong affection for them, and to engage them to attend the more to what he was about to exhort them to; and which arose from pure love to them, an hearty concern for their good, and the honour of Christ Jesus:

dearly beloved: as belonging to Christ, interested in him, members of him, redeemed by him, and bearing his image; and as his brethren, and so not loved with a carnal, but spiritual love:

and longed for; to see them, converse with them, and impart some spiritual gift to them; being the excellent in the earth, as other saints, towards whom was his desire, and with whom was all his delight. These epithets are joined with the word “brethren”, in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, and read thus, “my dearly beloved, and longed for brethren”; and in the Ethiopic version, “our beloved brethren”: to which are added,

my joy and crown; they were matter of joy to him, as he had reason to hope well of them; yea, to be confident that the good work was begun, and would be carried on in them; and that they had hitherto continued in the doctrine of the Gospel, and walked worthy of it; and they were his “crown”, as they were seals of his ministry; and whom he valued more, and

reckoned a greater honour and ornament to him, than the richest diadem, set with the most costly jewels and precious stones, and which he hoped and believed would be his crown of rejoicing another day; when he, with them, should stand at the hand of Christ triumphing, as victors crowned, ever sin, Satan, the world, death, and hell:

so stand fast in the Lord; or "by the Lord"; by his power and strength, which is only able to make to stand fast; saints are liable to failing, and would fall, were they not upheld with his right hand, and kept by his power; they only stand fast, as they stand supported by his strength, trusting in his might, and leaning on his arm. Christ is the only foundation where they can stand safe and sure; and such as are rooted and grounded, and built up in him, are established and stand; though they are still in need of being exhorted to hold the head, abide by him, and cleave unto him; to stand fast in his grace, exercising the graces of faith, hope, and love upon him; in the liberty of Christ, in opposition to the bondage of the law, false teachers were for bringing them into; and in the doctrine of faith, and not depart from it in any degree, nor give way in the least to the opposers of it, but continue steadfast in it without wavering, and which is chiefly intended here: so the Arabic version renders it, "so stand in the faith of the Lord"; both in the grace faith, and in the doctrine of it, and in the profession of both: (see <4663>1 Corinthians 16:13). The apostle bids them so stand fast; that is, either as they had hitherto done, or as they had him and others for an example; whose views, conversation, and behaviour, are described in the foregoing chapter:

[my] dearly beloved; this, which otherwise would be a repetition of what is before said, is by some connected with the former clause, and read thus, "so stand fast my dearly beloved in the Lord"; and contains a reason, both why they were dearly beloved by the apostle, because beloved in and by the Lord; and why it became them to stand fast in him, and abide by him, his truths, ordinances, cause, and interest.

Ver. 2. *I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche*, etc.] Two women, who were members of this church at Philippi, and who seem to have been at variance; either with each other, on account of some temporal and civil things, as often is the case of the dear children of God, who fall out by the way; and it becomes a very hard and difficult task to reconcile them, though as here entreated in the most tender and importunate manner to agree: or else with the church, having entertained some sentiments in

religion different from it; being drawn aside by false teachers from the simplicity of the Gospel, and their steadfastness in the faith; and this may rather be thought to be the meaning, since the apostle would scarcely take notice of a private difference in so public a manner, and since this exhortation follows so closely the former:

that they be of the same mind in the Lord; either that they agree together, and be reconciled to each other, considering the relation they stood in to one another, and to the Lord; or that they become of the same mind, and embrace the same truths, and profess and maintain the same principles the church did; and so the Arabic version renders it, "that ye entertain one and the same opinion concerning the faith of the Lord".

Ver. 3. *And I entreat thee also, true yoke fellow*, etc.] Not his wife, as some think[f28], for he had none, as appears from (1 Corinthians 7:7,8), at the writing of which epistle he was at Ephesus, where he stayed some little time, and then went to Jerusalem; where he was quickly apprehended, and sent a prisoner to Rome, and where he now was as such; and therefore it is not likely that he should marry a wife within this compass of time, and much less that he should have one at Philippi; besides, the word used is of the masculine gender, and designs a man and not a woman: some think it is the proper name of a man, who was called "Syzygus", and so the Arabic interpreter seems to understand it; and by the apostle, true "Syzygus", signifying that as was his name, so was he, really and in truth, a companion and fellow labourer, that drew in the same yoke with him; the Syriac version renders it, "the son of my yoke", and the Ethiopic version, "my brother and my companion": some think this person was the husband or brother of one of the above women; and therefore is entreated to use his interest, and compose the difference between them, or endeavour to reconcile them to the church; and others that it was the jailer, that was converted by the apostle: but it seems most likely to have been one that was under the same yoke of the Gospel, and who had been employed with him in preaching of it, a fellow labourer; such an one as Barnabas, Silas, and Timothy, and might be one of those; or rather Epaphroditus, who was minister in this church, and by whom the apostle sent this letter, and whom he might address and importune in this manner; the word may very well be thought to answer to the Hebrew word `rbj`, often used in Jewish writings, for an associate, a colleague, and a disciple of the wise men, to which the apostle may allude; (see Philippians 2:25);

help those women; Euodias and Syntyche. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read “them”, referring to the above women; and the Arabic version reads, “help both”; that is, both those women; not by relieving their temporal wants, which it does not appear they were in; but either by composing their differences, or by assisting them with good counsel and advice; and giving them proper instructions in the doctrines of the Gospel, that they might be brought to think the same things the church did: and the rather such pains should be taken with them, since they were such, says the apostle,

which laboured with me in the Gospel; not in preaching it, for he suffered not a woman to teach in the church, (<540212>1 Timothy 2:12); but by professing it, and bearing reproach and persecution for it; and by supporting and encouraging, and spreading it with their worldly substance:

with Clement also; which some think is the same with Clemens Romanus, who was afterwards bishop of Rome, and whose epistle to the Corinthians is still extant; other writings are ascribed to him, but are spurious; however, by his name he seems to be a Roman; and from his being joined with the apostle, as one with whom these women also laboured in the Gospel, he appears to be a preacher of it at Philippi:

and [with] other my fellow labourers; in the work of the ministry, as Timothy, who was with him at Philippi, when he first preached the Gospel there, (<441601>Acts 16:1,12), and some others:

whose names [are] in the book of life; the book of God's eternal purposes and decrees, divine predestination to eternal life; and this being called a “book”, and the names of persons being said to be in it, denote the love of God to his elect, his care of them, his value for them, his remembrance of them, and the exact knowledge which he has of them; as well as imply, that his eternal election of them is personal and particular, is well known to him, and is sure and unchangeable; being more so than the writing of Pilate on the cross, who said, what I have written, I have written, (<431922>John 19:22); and is called the “book of life”, because those whose names are written in it, have a spiritual life here, and an eternal one hereafter; to both which they are afore written in this book, or pre-ordained in God's counsels, and certainly and infallibly enjoy it: now the apostle's knowledge of these persons being written in this book, did not arise from any special revelation, as being shown the book of life, and the names of the elect in it, when he was caught up into the third heaven, (<471202>2 Corinthians 12:2); nor

was his knowledge of this matter peculiar and limited to these persons only, but common to all that he had reason to hope and believe had received the grace of God in truth, and walked worthy of the calling wherewith they were called, (Ephesians 4:1); such persons in a judgment of charity, which hopes and believes all things, he concluded were in this book of life; and the same judgment, faith, and hope, ought all believers to form and entertain one of another, nothing appearing contrary to it, in their faith and conversation.

Ver. 4. *Rejoice in the Lord alway*, etc.] This is a repetition of the exhortation in the preceding chapter; (see Gill on "Philippians 3:1"); with this addition "alway"; for there is always cause and matter for rejoicing in Christ, even in times of affliction, distress, and persecution; since he is always the same; his grace is always sufficient; his blood has a continual virtue in it, and always speaks for peace and pardon; his righteousness is an everlasting one, and so is his salvation, and such is his love; though some join this word with what follows,

[and] again, I say, rejoice; this is what was continually inculcated by him, as being of great importance and use for the comfort of believers, and the honour of Christ.

Ver. 5. *Let your moderation be known unto all men*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin reads, "your modesty". The Syriac and Arabic versions, "your meekness", or "humility"; graces which accompany moderation, and are very necessary to it, but not that itself. The Ethiopic version renders it, "your authority", which by no means agrees; for moderation lies not in exerting authority and power to the uttermost, at least with rigour, but in showing clemency and lenity; not dealing with men according to the severity of laws and strict justice, but according to equity, and with mildness and gentleness; giving up strict and proper right, receding from what is a man's due, and not rigidly insisting on it; putting up with affronts and injuries, and bearing them with patience; and interpreting things in the best sense, and putting the best constructions on words and actions they will bear; and in using inferiors and equals with all humanity, kindness, and respect: and this is what is here intended, which the apostle would have made "known"; exercised and practised publicly, that it might be seen and known of all, and God might be glorified, by whose name they were called, though their agreeable conversation among men; (see Matthew 5:16); and he would not only have this known unto, but exercised towards "all

men”; not only to believers, the members of the church, by ruling with gentleness, by bearing the infirmities of the weak, and by forgiving offences; but also to unbelievers, to the men of the world, by not avenging themselves, but giving way to wrath; by patient suffering for well doing, without making any returns of ill, either by words or deeds: this is the moderation here meant, and not moderation in eating and drinking, and in apparel, and in the love and use of, and care for the things of this world; though such moderation highly becomes professors of religion; and much less moderation in religion, or towards the false teachers, thinking and speaking well of them; and interpreting their notions in the best sense, hoping they may mean otherwise than they say, and therefore should treat their persons with great respect, and their principles with tenderness; but this can never be thought to be the apostle's sense, after he had himself given them such names and characters, as in (<5032>Philippians 3:2,18,19); and besides, though we may, and many times ought, as men and Christians, to give way, and yield up what is our right and due, for the sake of peace, yet we cannot, nor ought to give up anything, that of right belongs to God and Christ, in matters of doctrine or worship; nor in the least abate of our zeal for the same, or give way to false teachers in any respect, nor for any time: moreover, moderation in religion is nothing else but lukewarmness and indifference, than which nothing is more detestable, or abhorred by Christ. The argument or reason enforcing moderation in the above sense of it follows,

the Lord [is] at hand. The Syriac version reads, “our Lord”: and the Ethiopic version, “God is at hand”. The sense is, either the Lord is near, he is omnipresent, and sees and observes the conduct of his people, their deportment in the world, and to one another; and therefore, as in his presence, and under his eye, they should behave according to equity, and with kindness and tenderness towards their fellow creatures and fellow Christians: or the Lord is nigh unto them, as he is to all that call upon him in truth, (<19518>Psalm 145:18); he is a present help in time of trouble, (<19601>Psalm 46:1); he is in the midst of them, and will help, and that right early, (<19605>Psalm 46:5); and will avenge his elect, and vindicate their cause, and right all their wrongs in his due time; and therefore they should take all things patiently, and not avenge themselves: or in a little while Christ will come to judgment, when he will plead the cause of his people, and convince ungodly sinners of their ungodly deeds, and hard speeches against him and his, (<60115>Jude 1:15); and therefore they should leave all to that

time, and commit themselves to him that judgeth righteously, (1 Peter 2:23).

Ver. 6. *Be careful for nothing*, etc.] This must be understood not in the most extensive sense, but with a limitation and restriction. There are many things that saints are to be careful for, as men and Christians; they are to be careful of their bodies, as well as of their souls; of the health of them, which is to be preserved by all lawful means, and not exposed to unnecessary danger; and for their families, to provide things honest for them, proper food and raiment, and the necessaries of life; for whoever does not do that, denies the faith, and is worse than an infidel; and even for the things of this world in a moderate way, using all diligence and industry in obtaining them; men ought to be careful to discharge the duties of their calling in civil life, and to care and concern themselves for the honour of God, the interest of religion, and the support of the Gospel; and that they offend not God, by sinning against him: but the carefulness the apostle speaks of, is an anxious solicitude for worldly things, an immoderate concern for the things of life, arising from diffidence, or negligence, of the power, providence, and faithfulness of God: saints should not be anxiously, or in a distressing manner concerned for the things of this world, but be content, whether they have less or more; nor be over much pressed with what befalls them, but should cast their care upon the Lord, and carry every case to him, and leave it there:

but in everything. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, “in every time”: always, constantly, every day, as often as there is opportunity, and need requires. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions join it with the following clause, “in every prayer and supplication”; but the grammatical construction of the words will not admit of such a version; it is best to understand it of every thing, or case, which should be brought to God; whether it be of a temporal or spiritual kind, relating to body or soul, to ourselves or others, to our families, relations, and acquaintance, the church, or the world:

by prayer and supplication: which may include all sorts of prayer, mental or vocal, private or public, ordinary or extraordinary, and every part of prayer: prayer may design petition, or asking for good things that are wanted; and “supplication”, a deprecating of evils that are feared; though these two are often used together for the same thing, for prayer in general: which ought always to be accompanied

with thanksgiving; for mercies received; for a man can never come to the throne of grace, to ask for grace and mercy, but he has mercies to bless God for, and so to do is very acceptable to God; nor can a person expect to succeed in the enjoyment of future mercies, when he is not thankful for past and present ones: in this manner therefore, at all times, upon every occasion, in a way of humble petition and supplication, joined with thankfulness for all favours,

let your requests be made known to God; not to men; fly not to an arm of flesh, but to God, to him only, and that in the most private mariner, as not to be known by men; and put up such requests, as there may be reason to hope and believe God will "know" and approve of; such as are agreeable to his will, to the covenant of his grace, and the declaration of his word: use familiarity with God, tell him as you would do a friend, freely and fully, all your case, pour out your souls and your complaints before him. This God would have his people do, and he expects it from them; and though he knows all their wants, and what are their desires before they express them, yet he will seem not to know them, or take any notice of them, until they open them to him in some way or other; either by vocal prayer, or mental; by ejaculations, or sighs and groans, by chattering as a crane or a swallow, all which he understands: and be the case made known in what way or manner soever, with ever so much weakness, so be it, it is made known, it is enough, it shall be regarded and not despised.

Ver. 7. *And the peace of God which passeth all understanding*, etc.] Not that peace which God calls his people to among themselves in their effectual calling; and which he requires of them to cultivate and maintain; and which he encourages in them by the promise of his gracious presence among them; and which indeed he is the author of, and therefore is so called, (^{Col 3:15}Colossians 3:15); and which may be said to surpass or exceed all speculative knowledge, and understanding; for the one puffs up and profits nothing, but the other edifies; and much less that peace which God has in himself, who is all peace and love, and which passes all understanding, human and angelic; but either that peace which is made with God by the blood of Christ, and is published in the Gospel of peace, which passes and surprises all understanding of men and angels, that it should be; that the thoughts of God should be concerning it from everlasting; that a council of peace should be called and held between the eternal Three, and a covenant of peace entered into; that Christ should be appointed the peace maker, and the chastisement of it laid on him; that he should make it by the

blood of his cross, and for men, while enemies to God and to himself: or else that peace of conscience, which arises from a view of peace made by Christ; of justification by his righteousness, and atonement by his sacrifice; and which may be called “the peace of Christ”, as the Alexandrian copy reads; both because it is founded upon, and springs from him, and is what he is the donor of: and this is what passes the understanding of every natural man; he knows nothing of this peace, what this tranquillity of mind means; he intermeddles not with this joy; it is unaccountable to him how it should be, that such then should have peace, who have so much trouble, are so much reproached, afflicted, and persecuted, and yet have peace in Christ, while they have tribulation in the world; which

shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ, or “in Christ Jesus”: some read these words prayer wise, or as a wish, “let it”, or “may it keep”, so the Vulgate Latin; but they are rather a promise, encouraging the saints to the discharge of the above duties; as rejoicing always in the Lord, showing their moderation to all men, avoiding anxious care, and betaking themselves at all times, on all occasions, to prayer to God; in which way they may expect peace, and such as will be of that see vice to them, as here expressed; that is, be a means of their final perseverance; for the peace of God, in either sense, is a preservation of the saints: peace made with God secures them in Christ from all condemnation by the law, sin, Satan, the world, or their own hearts; and peace in their own souls, on so good a foundation as it is, keeps them through Christ as in a garrison, from being overset with the troubles of the world, or the temptations of Satan; and is a means of preserving them from being carried away with the errors and heresies of the wicked, having a witness to truth within themselves; and from every evil way and work, from profaneness and immorality; the grace of God teaching them, and the love of Christ constraining them, which is shed abroad in their hearts, to live and act otherwise.

Ver. 8. *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true*, etc.] To close all with respect to the duties of Christianity incumbent on the professors of it, the apostle exhorts to a regard to everything that is true; that is agreeable to the Scriptures of truth, to the Gospel the word of truth, or to the law and light of nature; and whatever was really so, even among the very Heathens, in opposition to falsehood, lying, and hypocrisy

whatsoever things [are] honest; in the sight of men; or grave, or "venerable" in speech, in action or attire, in opposition to levity, frothiness, or foppery:

whatsoever things [are] just; between man and man, or with respect both to God and men; giving to God what belongs to him, and to man what is his due; studying to exercise a conscience void of offence to both, in opposition to all impiety, injustice, violence, and oppression:

whatsoever things [are] pure; or "chaste", in words and deeds, in opposition to all filthiness and foolish talking, to obscene words and actions. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it, "whatsoever things are holy"; which are agreeable to the holy nature, law, and will of God, and which tend to promote holiness of heart and life:

whatsoever [are] lovely; which are amiable in themselves, and to be found even among mere moral men, as in the young man whom Christ as man is said to love, (<41021>Mark 10:21); and which serve to cultivate and increase love, friendship, and amity among men; and which things also are grateful to God and lovely in his sight, in opposition to all contention, strife, wrath, and hatred:

whatsoever things [are] of good report; are well spoken of, and tend to get and establish a good name, which is better than precious ointment, (<21701>Ecclesiastes 7:1); for though a good name, credit, and reputation among men, are to be sacrificed for the sake of Christ when called for; yet care is to be taken to preserve them by doing things which may secure them, and cause professors of religion to be well reported of; and which beautiful in all, and absolutely necessary in some:

if [there be] any virtue; anywhere, among any persons whatever, in opposition to vice:

and if [there be] any praise; that is praiseworthy among men, and deserves commendation, even though in an unjust steward, (<42168>Luke 16:8), it should be regarded. The Vulgate Latin adds, "of discipline", without any authority from any copy. The Claromontane manuscript reads, "if any praise of knowledge":

think on these things: meditate upon them, revolve them in your minds, seriously consider them, and reason with yourselves about them, in order to put them into practice.

Ver. 9. *These things which ye have both learned*, etc.] Meaning from himself, in a doctrinal way:

and received; not only into their heads but hearts, had embraced cordially, with great affection, in the love thereof, as well as given a full assent to:

and heard; either publicly or privately, from the pulpit, or in conversation; or had heard of him when absent, or from him when present:

and seen in me: in his life and conversation, which were well known, and were a pattern to them that believe; and therefore he adds,

do; practise the same things which they had learned from him as their duty, and had heard him urge as such, and had seen exemplified in himself:

and the God of peace shall be with you; to give that peace which is beyond the conception of a natural man, and the expression of a spiritual one, and is the great preservative through Christ; and to enable to do and to continue to do the above things, and to keep them from all harm, and every enemy of their souls; to favour them with his gracious presence here, and with endless peace hereafter.

Ver. 10. *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly*, etc.] The apostle proceeds to the last part of this epistle, and to take notice of the present which these Philippians had sent him, on account of which this his rejoicing was; and which was not small but great, and was not of a carnal but spiritual kind; it was a joy in the Holy Ghost, which is opposed to meats and drinks, and earthly enjoyments; it was a joy in the Lord; "in our Lord", as the Syriac version renders it; it was not so much on account of the nature, substance, quantity or quality of the things sent him, and the suitableness of them to his present necessity; but because this thing was of the Lord, he had put it into their hearts to do it, and had given them not only ability, but a willing mind, and had wrought in them both to will and to do; and because what they did they did for the sake of Christ, and to him as an apostle of his, and in obedience to Christ, and with a view to promote his cause and interest, honour and glory:

that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; which supposes that they had formerly, at the first preaching of the Gospel, showed great respect to him, and took great care of him, as appears from (Philippians 4:15,16), but that for some time past, and it seems for a considerable while, they had dropped it, or at least had not shown it; but that now it revived

again, and was seen in the present they had now sent him. The allusion is to trees, which in the summer season bear much fruit, in autumn cast their leaves, and in the winter are entirely bare, and in the spring of the year revive again, and put forth leaves and fruit: and just so it is with the saints, they are compared to trees, and are called trees of righteousness, (<23613>Isaiah 61:3), and are fruitful ones, (<24233>Jeremiah 23:3); but they have their winter seasons, when they are barren and unfruitful, and look as if they were dead; but when it is a spring time with them they revive again, as in the exercise of their faith and hope in Christ, so of their love to him, and to one another, and the ministers of the Gospel; when the south wind of the Spirit blows, the sun of righteousness arises, and, the dews of divine grace fall upon them; and such a revival was now in this church; and this was what the apostle so much rejoiced in, not so much for the gift bestowed on him, as for the fruit that appeared in them; (see <50417>Philippians 4:17); but whereas he had said that this care of him flourished again, “at last”; lest this should be thought as finding fault with them, and bringing a charge against them, he corrects himself by adding,

wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity; signifying that he believed they had entertained the same sentiments of him, had the same affection and inward care for him all along; but they had no opportunity of showing it, he being at such a distance, and they having no convenient or proper persons to send to him; or were hindered through multiplicity of business on their hands, that they could not attend to him; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “but ye were busied”, or taken up and employed in business; or it was for want of ability; for the words will bear to be rendered, “but ye lacked ability”; and to this sense does the Syriac version render it, ˆwtywh ˆyqps al ala, “but ye were not sufficient”; or had not a sufficiency, were not able to do it, and therefore to be easily excused.

Ver. 11. *Not that I speak in respect of want*, etc.] Either of want of will in them; of their slowness and backwardness in their care of him, postponing him to others, caring for him last of all; this gave him no uneasiness, he did not take it ill, knowing and owning himself to be less than the least of all saints: or of his own want before this present came; and his sense is, that he did not express himself with so much joy, because of the penury and distress he was in before the things came to him which they sent; for he was not in want; though he had nothing, he possessed all things, and was

as happy, and in as comfortable a frame, and in as much content then as now:

for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, [therewith] to be content; or "to be sufficient", as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; or that that is sufficient for me which I have, as the Syriac version renders it; for the word here used signifies to be self-sufficient, or to have a sufficiency in one's self, which in the strict sense of the phrase is only true of God, who is "El-shaddai", God all-sufficient; but, in a lower sense, is true of such who are contented with their present state and condition, with such things as they have, be they more or less, and think that they have enough, as old Jacob did, (^{OTBible}Genesis 33:11); and such persons have a sort of an all-sufficiency in them; they are thankful for every thing they have, be it little or more, and in every state, whether of adversity or prosperity; and quietly and patiently submit to the will of God, and cheerfully take and bear whatever is assigned them as their portion; and such an one was the apostle: he was not only content with food and raiment, and such things as he had, but even when he had nothing at all; when he had neither bread to eat nor clothes to wear; when he was in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, as was sometimes his case; and therefore he does not say here, that he had learnt to be content with such things as he had, but εν οις ειμι, "in what I am": and this he had not by nature, but by grace; it was not natural, but adventitious to him; it was not what he had acquired by his industry, but what he had "learned"; and that not in the school of nature and reason, while an unregenerate man; nor at the feet of Gamaliel, while he was training up under him in the law of Moses, and in the traditions of the elders; but he learned it of God, and was taught it by the revelation of Christ, and under the teachings of the Spirit of God, and that in the school of affliction, by a train of experiences, of many sorrows, afflictions, and distresses; for this lesson is learned quite contrary to all the rules and reasons among men, not by prosperity, but by adversity: many are the things that may excite and encourage to the exercise of this heavenly grace, where it is wrought; as the consideration of the unalterable will of God, according to which every man's state and condition is settled, and therefore what God has made crooked can never be made straight; and of our case when we came into the world, and what that will be when we go out of it, naked and bare of this world's things; and of our unworthiness of the least mercy at the hand of God: add to which, the consideration of God being our portion and exceeding great reward; of having an interest in Christ and

all things in him; and of the profits and pleasures of a life of contentment; and of the promises which God has made to such; and of the future glory and happiness which will shortly be enjoyed: so that a believer may say, who has the smallest pittance of earthly enjoyments, this, with a covenant God, with an interest in Christ, with grace here and heaven hereafter, is enough.

Ver. 12. *I know both how to be abased*, etc.] Or "humbled"; to be treated with indignity and contempt, to be trampled upon by man, to suffer hardships and distress, to be in a very mean and low condition, to work with his own hands, and minister to his own and the necessities of others in that way; yea, to be in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, and have no certain dwelling place; and he knew how to behave under all this; not to be depressed and cast down, or to fret, repine, and murmur:

and I know how to abound; or "to excel"; to be in the esteem of men, and to have an affluence of the things of this world, and how to behave in the midst of plenty; so as not to be lifted up, to be proud and haughty, and injurious to fellow creatures; so as not to abuse the good things of life; and so as to use them to the honour of God, the interest of religion, and the good of fellow creatures, and fellow Christians:

every where; whether among Jews or Gentiles, at Jerusalem or at Rome, or at whatsoever place; or as the Arabic version renders it, "every time": always, in every season, whether of adversity or prosperity:

and in all things; in all circumstances of life:

I am instructed; or "initiated", as he was by the Gospel; and, ever since he embraced it, was taught this lesson of contentment, and inured to the exercise of it, and was trained up and instructed how to behave himself in the different changes and vicissitudes he came into:

both to be full, and to be hungry; to know what it was to have plenty and want, to have a full meal and to want one, and be almost starved and famished, and how to conduct under such different circumstances:

both to abound and to suffer need; which the apostle repeats for confirmation sake; and the whole of what he here says is an explanation of the lesson of contentment he had learned; and the knowledge he speaks of was not speculative but experimental, and lay not merely in theory, but in practice; and now lest he should be thought guilty of arrogance, and to

ascribe too much to himself, he in (Philippians 4:13) attributes all to the power and grace of Christ.

Ver. 13. *I can do all things*, etc.] Which must not be understood in the greatest latitude, and without any limitation; for the apostle was not omnipotent, either in himself, or by the power of Christ; nor could he do all things that Christ could do; but it must be restrained to the subject matter treated of: the sense is, that he could be content in every state, and could know how to behave himself in adversity and prosperity, amidst both poverty and plenty; yea, it may be extended to all the duties incumbent on him both as a Christian and as an apostle, as to exercise a conscience void of offence towards God and men; to take the care of all the churches; to labour more abundantly than others in preaching the Gospel; and to bear all afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions for the sake of it; yea, he could willingly and cheerfully endure the most cruel and torturing death for the sake of Christ: all these things he could do, not in his own strength, for no man was more conscious of his own weakness than he was, or knew more of the impotency of human nature; and therefore always directed others to be strong in the Lord, and in, the power of his might, and in the grace that is in Christ, on which he himself always depended, and by which he did what he did; as he adds here,

through Christ which strengtheneth me. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the word “Christ”, and only read “him”; and so the Alexandrian copy and others; but intend Christ as those that express it: strength to perform duty and to bear sufferings is in Christ, and which he communicates to his people; he strengthens them with strength in their souls, internally, as the word here used signifies; by virtue of which they can do whatever he enjoins them or calls them to, though without him they can do nothing.

Ver. 14. *Notwithstanding ye have well done*, etc.] This he says lest they should think he slighted their kindness, and lest they should be discouraged from doing any such thing of this kind another time, either to himself or others; for though he was so well contented with his state, and knew how to be abased and to suffer need, and could do all things through the strength of Christ, yet he observes they did well in communicating to him; for communicating to poor saints or ministers is a considerable branch of well doing; it is a good work when it is done in faith, and from love, and with a view to the glory, honour, and interest of Christ; it is what is

agreeable to the will of God, and is an odour of a sweet smell, and acceptable to him:

that ye did communicate with my affliction; by which is meant, not any affliction of mind, for he was in as comfortable a frame, had as clear views of his interest in God, as his covenant God, and was as contented and satisfied as ever he was in his life; nor any disorder or distemper of body; but he was in prison and penury: these Philippians communicated with him in it, both by sympathizing with him in his tribulation, and by sending their minister to visit him, and with him a present for his relief and support; in doing which they did well.

Ver. 15. *Now ye Philippians know also*, etc.] As well as the apostle did, that they not only communicated now, but also had done formerly, and when none else beside them did; wherefore he not only commends them for their present kindness to him, but for their past favours:

that in the beginning of the Gospel; of the preaching of it by the apostle in the parts of Macedonia, particularly at Philippi; as soon as ever the Gospel was preached to them, they showed a grateful and beneficent spirit; of which we have an instance in Lydia, the first person we read of converted there, and also in the jailer, who was the next; (see <441612>Acts 16:12,14,15,34,40); yea, not only while he was with them they communicated to him, but when he was gone from them:

when I departed from Macedonia; when he went to Corinth and other places, to preach the Gospel in other parts and to other people, they sent the brethren after him with presents which supplied what was lacking to him, and in which other churches were deficient; (see <471108>2 Corinthians 11:8,9); the Ethiopic version reads, “when ye went from Macedonia with me”: but is not supported by any copy or other version:

no church communicated with me, as concerning giving and receiving, *but ye only*; the phrase, “giving and receiving”, is the same with ˆtmw açm, which is often used by the Jews for trading and commerce [f29]; and the allusion is to the keeping of accounts by men in business, by debtor and creditor, in a book, putting down in one column what is delivered out, and in the other what is received, whereby accounts are kept clear: the apostle's meaning is, that whereas he and his fellow ministers had delivered out spiritual things to this church, they had in return communicated their carnal

things; so that there was a proper account kept, which was not observed by other churches, and which was greatly to the commendation of this.

Ver. 16. *For even in Thessalonica*, etc.] When the apostle was there; for from Philippi he went to Thessalonica; (see <44170>Acts 17:1);

ye sent once and again unto my necessity; for his use and service, to support him while he was at that place, and relieve and assist him in his necessities; for the people at Thessalonica were either not able to communicate, or were not of a beneficent disposition, or the apostle did not care to be chargeable to them; and they seem many of them to have been idle and lazy, and therefore he wrought among them with his own hands to set them an example; and the Philippians hearing and knowing that this was the case, sent frequently, while he was here, some of the brethren with gifts unto him.

Ver. 17. *Not because I desire a gift*, etc.] This commendation of them he entered into, not because he desired another present to be made to him, either by them or others; he was not a man of such a disposition, he was not like one of those that could never have enough; he was fully satisfied and highly contented with what he had; he was not like the false teachers, that made merchandise of men; he sought not theirs, but them:

but I desire fruit that may abound to your account; he had planted them, or had been an instrument in planting of them, as trees of righteousness, (<23603>Isaiah 61:3); and his great desire was to see fruits of righteousness grow upon them, (<50111>Philippians 1:11); by which sometimes are meant acts of beneficence, as in (<47910>2 Corinthians 9:10); and that these might be abundant and turn to their profit and advantage, as such fruit does; for God does not forget to recompence acts of bounty, and labours of love, but if even a cup of cold water is given to a prophet or minister of Christ, on account of his being so, it shall have its reward in the issue of things, upon the casting up of accounts, (<40042>Matthew 10:42); for the apostle still has reference unto that; his view was, that the balance might be on their side, and that much might be received by them; so that it was not for himself, but for their encouragement and future good, he said this; for as for himself he adds,

Ver. 18. *But I have all things, and abound*, etc.] Or “I have received all things”, as the Syriac version renders it; all that they had sent by Epaphroditus; and for which he now gives a receipt; and by virtue of which

he now abounded; and which abundance of his was not so much owing to the largeness of their presents, as to the peace of his mind; looking upon this gift of theirs, though it might be but small in itself, a fulness to him; for he adds,

I am full; as much as he desired, he wanted no more, he had enough:

having received of Epaphroditus the things [which were sent] from you: and which he acknowledged, that the character of this good man might stand clear, who had been intrusted with this affair:

an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God, this is said in allusion to the sacrifices under the former dispensation, in which God smelled a sweet savour, (Genesis 8:21), in reference to which, as the sacrifice of Christ is said to be of a sweet smelling savour, (Ephesians 5:2), and as the spiritual sacrifices of the saints, as praises and prayers, are called odours, (Revelation 5:8), and are said to be acceptable unto God, (1 Peter 2:5); so acts of beneficence are called sacrifices, with which he is well pleased, (Hebrews 13:16).

Ver. 19. *But my God shall supply all your need*, etc.] Or "fulfil all your need": the Jews, when they would comfort any, under the loss of any worldly enjoyment, used to say, Ænwrsj Æl almy µwqmh, "God fulfil", or "will fulfil thy need" [f30] . The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read these words as a wish or prayer, "but may my God supply" or "fulfil all your need"; I am not able to make you any returns, but I pray that my God would recompence it to you, that as you have supplied my want, he would supply all yours; but we with others, and as the Ethiopic version, read, "shall" or "will supply"; as an assertion by way of promise, though he could not, yet his God would; he who was his God, not only as the God of nature and providence, or as the God of the Israelites, but as the God of all grace; who had loved him as such, had chosen, adopted, regenerated, and sanctified him; who was his God in Christ, and by virtue of the covenant of grace, and which was made known in the effectual calling; whose ambassador he was, and whom he had faithfully served in the Gospel of his Son; this God, who had been his God, was and would be so unto death, in whom he had an interest, and because he had an interest in him, and was thus related to him, be firmly believed, and fully assures these saints, that he would supply their wants who had been so careful of him: believers, though they need nothing as considered in Christ, being complete and filled

full in him, having in him all grace, and all spiritual blessings, and under believing views of this at times, see themselves complete and wanting nothing; yet, in themselves, they are poor and needy, and often want fresh discoveries of the love of God to them, fresh supplies of grace from Christ, stand in need of more light from him, and to be quickened according to his word; they want fresh supplies of strength from him answerable to the service and work they are daily called to; and as their trials and afflictions abound, they have need of renewed comfort to support under them; and have also need of fresh manifestations and applications of pardoning grace to their souls, and fresh views of the righteousness of Christ, as their justifying righteousness before God; and, in a word, need daily food for their souls as for their bodies: now God, who is also their God, is able and willing to supply their wants; and he does so, he withholds no good thing from them, nor do they want any good thing needful for them, for he supplies "all" their need; and this they may expect, since he is the God of all grace, and a fulness of grace is in his Son; and this grace is sufficient for them, and a supply of it is given them by the Spirit;

according to his riches; God is rich not only in the perfections of his nature, which are inconceivable and incommunicable; and in the works of his hands, of creation and providence, the whole earth is full of his riches, (<19A424>Psalm 104:24), and according to these riches of his goodness he supplies the wants of all creatures living; but he is also rich in grace and mercy, (<490104>Ephesians 2:4,7), and it is according to the riches of his grace he supplies the spiritual wants of his people, and he does it like himself, according to the riches he has; he gives all things richly to enjoy, plenteously and abundantly:

in glory: in a glorious manner, so as to show himself glorious, and make his people so, to the glory of his rich grace; and "with glory", as it may be rendered, with eternal glory; he will not only give grace here, and more of it as is needful, according to the abundance of it in himself and in his Son, but glory hereafter: and all

by Christ Jesus; and through him, who is full of grace and truth; who is the Mediator in whom the fulness of it lies, and through whose hands, and by whom, it is communicated to the saints: or "with Christ Jesus"; along with him God gives all things freely, all things pertaining to life and godliness: or "for the sake of Christ Jesus"; not for any worth or merit in men, but for

the sake of Christ, in whom they are accepted, and on whose account respect is had to their persons, and so to their wants.

Ver. 20. *Now unto God and our Father*, etc.] To God, who is our Father in Christ,

[be] glory for ever and ever, Amen; for all the grace he gives now, and for all the glory and happiness expected hereafter; for the supply of every want both temporal and spiritual; seeing every good gift comes from him, and is to be ascribed to his free grace and favour, and not to any deserts of men: and particularly he may mean for what they had sent him, and he had received from them.

Ver. 21. *Salute every saint in Christ Jesus*, etc.] Meaning at Philippi, whether rich or poor, lesser or greater believers, common saints, as well as the officers of the church, bishops and deacons; who were in Christ by electing grace, and as their covenant head, and representative from everlasting, and which was manifested and made known by their conversion and the effectual calling:

the brethren which are with me greet you; such as Timothy; (see <501019>Philippians 2:19); and Epaphras, Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, and Lucas; (see <501023>Philemon 1:23,24); he makes no mention of Peter anywhere, when he writes from Rome or to it, which shows he was not there then, or a bishop of that place, as the Papists say.

Ver. 22. *All the saints salute you*, etc.] The members of the church at Rome,

chiefly they that are of Caesar's household; for by means of the apostle's bonds, which were made manifest in the emperor's palace, Christ was made known to some there likewise; though Nero, the then reigning emperor, was a very wicked prince, and his court a very debauched one, yet the grace of God reached some there: who these were cannot be said; as for the conjecture that Seneca the philosopher, Nero's master, was one of them, it is without foundation; the eight letters of his to the Apostle Paul, and the six letters of the apostle to him, are spurious, though of ancient date, being made mention of by Austin and Jerom [f31]: a like groundless conjecture is that, that Lucan the poet, Seneca's brother's son, was another; for there is nothing in his writings, or in any account of him, any more than in the former, that shows him to be a Christian. Torpes, a man in great favour and dignity in Nero's court, and Evellius his counsellor, who both

suffered martyrdom under him, according to the Roman martyrology, are also mentioned.

Ver. 23. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ [be] with you all*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, “with your spirit”, as in (<480618>Galatians 6:18); and so the Alexandrian copy and some others read. This is the apostle's token in all his epistles of the genuineness of them, and which he wrote with his own hand, (<530317>2 Thessalonians 3:17,18); (see Gill on “ <451622>Romans 16:22”), (see Gill on “ <451624>Romans 16:24”).

Amen: with which all the epistles are concluded; (see Gill on “ <451627>Romans 16:27”).

The subscription is,

[it was] written [to] the Philippians from Rome, by Epaphroditus; that this epistle was written to the Philippians by the Apostle Paul, when he was a prisoner at Rome, and sent to them by Epaphroditus their minister, when he returned from him to them.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Vid. Ptolom. Geograph. 50:3. c. 13.

Ft2 -- Kimchi in Psal. 6:5.

Ft3 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 11. fol. 202. 3.

Ft4 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 51. 3.

Ft5 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 2. 1.

Ft6 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 113. 4. & in Exodus fol. 36. 4.

Ft7 -- Socraticus, Xenophon, & Aristo Chius, apud Minuc. Felic. Octav. p. 20. & Hostanes apud Caecil. Cyprian. de Idol. van. p. 46.

Ft8 -- Laertii proem. ad Vit. Philosoph. p. 7.

Ft9 -- Leg. Alleg. 50:1. p. 48, 49.

Ft10 -- Vid. Kimchi in Joshua 3:4.

Ft11 -- Lipsins de Cruce, 50:1. c. 12.

Ft12 -- Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 9. sect. 1.

Ft13 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 66. 1. Maimon. Yom Haccippurim, c. 2. sect. 7.

Ft14 -- Artinn. Epictet. 50:1. c. 1, 19, 26. & Aurel. Victor. Epitome Romans Imp. in Nerone.

Ft15 -- Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 15.

Ft16 -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 47. 2.

Ft17 -- T. Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 7. 4.

Ft18 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 19. sect. 5. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. & Misn. Eracin, c. 2. sect. 2. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft19 -- Hilch. Mila, c. 1. 16.

Ft20 -- Pocock. Specim. A. ab. Hist. p. 3, 9.

Ft21 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 69. 1.

Ft22 -- Sepher Cosri, p. 3, sect. 16. fol. 152. 1.

Ft23 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

Ft24 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 1. See Cetubot, fol. 111. 1.

Ft25 -- Euripides.

Ft26 -- Midrash Tillim apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. 50:12. c. 2.

Ft27 -- Midrash Hanneelam in Zohar in Genesis fol. 69. 1.

Ft28 -- Vid. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 30.

Ft29 -- Vid. Kimchi in Psal. 15:3. & Targum in <2000>Isaiah 9:4.

Ft30 -- T. Bab. Betacot, fol. 16. 2. Debarim Rabba, sect. 4. fol. 239. 4.

Ft31 -- Vid. Fabricii Bibliothec. Latin, p. 69.

COLOSSIANS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

The Colossians, to whom this epistle is written, were not the Rhodians, by some called Colossians, from Colossus, the large statue of the sun, which stood in the island of Rhodes, and was one of the seven wonders of the world; but the inhabitants of Colosse, a city of the greater Phrygia, in the lesser Asia, near to which stood the cities of Laodicea and Hierapolis, mentioned in this epistle. Pliny [f1] speaks of it as one of the chief towns in Phrygia, and [f2] Herodotus calls it the great city of Phrygia; it is said to have perished a very little time after the writing of this epistle, with the above cities, by an earthquake, in the year of Christ 66, and in the tenth of Nero [f3]; though it was afterwards rebuilt; for Theophylact says, that in his time it was called Chonae. When the Gospel was brought hither, and by whom, is not known, nor who was the founder of the church in this place; for the Apostle Paul was not, since his face had never been seen by them, (<510201>Colossians 2:1), though it is said that Epaphras, the same name with Epaphroditus, was fixed by him pastor of this church; and others say Philemon was set over it by him. The occasion of this epistle was this, Epaphras, who had preached the Gospel to the Colossians, and very likely was the first that did, came to Rome, where the Apostle Paul was a prisoner, and gave him an account of them, how they had heard and received the Gospel, and of their faith Christ, and love to the saints; and also declared to him in what danger they were through some false teachers that had got among them, who were for introducing the philosophy of the Gentiles, the ceremonies of the law of Moses, and some pernicious tenets of the followers of Simon Magus, and the Gnostics; upon which the apostle writes this epistle to them, to confirm them in the faith of the Gospel Epaphras had preached unto them, and which was the same he himself preached; and to warn them against those bad men, and their principles; and to exhort them to a discharge of their duty to God, and men, and one another. It was written by the apostle, when in bonds at Rome, as many passages in it show, and about the same time with those to the Philippians and Ephesians; and the epistle to the latter greatly agrees with this, both as

to subject and style. Dr. Lightfoot places it in the year of Christ 60, in the second of the apostle's imprisonment, and in the sixth of Nero's reign.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO COLOSSIANS 1

This chapter contains the inscription of the epistle; the apostle's usual salutation; his thanksgiving to God on behalf of the Colossians for grace received; his prayers, that more might be given them; an enumeration of various blessings of grace, which require thankfulness, in which the glories and excellencies of Christ are particularly set forth: and it is concluded with an exhortation to a steadfast adherence to the Gospel, taken from the nature, excellency, and usefulness of the ministry of it. The inscription, and the salutation, are in (<51101>Colossians 1:1,2), and are the same with those in the epistle to the Ephesians, only Timothy is joined with the apostle here, and the Colossians have the additional character of brethren given them. The thanksgiving is in (<51103>Colossians 1:3-5), the object of it is God, the Father of Christ; the time when made, when in prayer to him; its subject matter, the faith and love of the saints; to which is added, their happiness secured for them in heaven, their hope was conversant with: and whereas the Gospel was the means by which they came to the hearing and knowledge of it, this is commended from the subject of it, the doctrine of truth; from the spread of it in the world; and from its efficacy in bringing forth fruit in all, to whom it came in power, and that with constancy, (<51105>Colossians 1:5,6), and also from the testimony of Epaphras, a faithful minister of Christ, and theirs, who was dear to the apostle, and of whom he had the above account of them, (<51107>Colossians 1:7,8). And then follow his prayers for them, that they might have an increase of spiritual knowledge, and that they might put in practice what they knew; and for that purpose he entreats they might be blessed with strength, patience, and longsuffering, (<51109>Colossians 1:9-11). And in order to excite thankfulness in himself and them, he takes notice of various blessings of grace; of the Father's grace in giving a meetness for eternal glory and happiness, by delivering from the power of darkness, and translating into the kingdom of his Son, (<51112>Colossians 1:12,13), and of the Son's grace in obtaining redemption by his blood, and procuring the remission of sins, (<51114>Colossians 1:14), which leads the apostle to enlarge upon the excellencies of the author of these blessings, in his divine person, as the image of God, and the first cause of

all created beings, (Colossians 1:15), which he proves by an enumeration of them, as created by him, and for his sake, by his pre-existence to them, and their dependence on him, (Colossians 1:16,17), and in his office capacity, as Mediator, being the head of the church, the governor of it, and the first that rose from the dead; by all which it appears that he has, and ought to have the pre-eminence, (Colossians 1:18). And this is still more manifest from his having all fulness dwelling in him, to supply his body the church, of which he is the head, (Colossians 1:19), and from the reconciliation of all the members of it to God by him, (Colossians 1:20), which blessing of grace is amplified partly by the subjects of it, who are described by their former state and condition, aliens and enemies, and by their present one, reconciled by the death of Christ in his fleshly body; and partly by the end of it, the presentation of them holy, blameless, and irreprovable in the sight of God, (Colossians 1:21,22). Wherefore it is a duty incumbent on such to abide by the Gospel of Christ, which brings the good tidings of peace and reconciliation, and is the means of faith and hope; and the rather, since they had heard it themselves, and others also, even every creature under heaven; and the apostle was a minister of it, (Colossians 1:23), and on his ministration of it he enlarges, by observing his sufferings for the church on account of the Gospel, which he endured with pleasure; and therefore they should, by his example, be encouraged to continue in it, (Colossians 1:24). Moreover, he argues the same from his commission of God to preach it for their sakes, (Colossians 1:25), and from the nature and subject matter of it, being a hidden mystery, and containing riches and glory in it; yea, Christ himself, the foundation of hope of eternal glory, (Colossians 1:26,27), and from the end of preaching it, which was to present every man perfect in Christ; which end the apostle laboured and strove to obtain through the power and energy of divine grace, which wrought in him, and with him, (Colossians 1:28,29).

Ver. 1. *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ*, etc.] The apostle puts his name to this epistle, by which he was known in the Gentile world, as he usually does in all his epistles; and styles himself “an apostle”, as he was, having seen Christ in person, and received his commission, doctrine, and qualifications immediately from him, with a power of doing miracles to confirm the truth of his mission. This he chose to make mention of, partly because the false teachers everywhere insinuated that he was not an apostle; and partly to give the greater sanction and authority, and

command the greater regard and credit to what he should say; as well as to excuse his freedom in writing to them whom he had never seen, since he was an apostle of the Gentiles, and so to them; (see <45 11 13>Romans 11:13 <54 2 7>1 Timothy 2:7 <55 1 11>2 Timothy 1:11); he calls himself an apostle "of Jesus Christ"; not of men, he was not sent out by men, but by Christ, who appeared to him, made him a minister of his, gave him his Gospel by revelation, abundantly qualified him for the work, sent him forth unto the Gentiles, in whose name he went as an ambassador and messenger of his, and whom he preached, and by whom he was greatly succeeded, to the conversion of many souls, who were seals of his apostleship in every place, (<46 9 2>1 Corinthians 9:2): into which office he came

by the will of God; not by the will of men, for he derived no authority and power, nor received any doctrine from men; nor by his own will, of his own head, by any usurpation of his; he did not take this office upon him of himself, but was invested with it, according to the secret will and purpose of God, from everlasting, who had ordained and appointed him to this service, and according to his will of command made known to him in time, when he told him what he should do, and openly separated, and sent him forth to do the work he had called him to; and which arose not from any merits or worthiness of the apostle, but from the sovereign good will and pleasure, free grace and favour, of God, to which the apostle continually ascribes it in all his epistles:

and Timotheus [our] brother; who joined with the apostle in this epistle, and whom he calls a "brother"; partly because of the Christian relation he stood in to him, and them, they being all brethren, children of the same Father, partakers of the same grace of regeneration, belonging to the same family, and so should own and love one another as brethren; and partly and chiefly because of his being a brother, companion, fellow soldier, and a fellow labourer in the Gospel. He mentions him, either because he was known unto them, or that he might be so; and to show the agreement there was between them in the doctrine of Christ, which might have the greater weight with them to abide in it.

Ver. 2. *To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ*, etc.] This is the inscription of the epistle, in which the persons wrote unto are described as "saints", or holy men; not by birth, for all are unholy and unclean by nature; nor by baptism, for that neither takes away sin, nor gives grace; nor merely externally, by an outward reformation; but by separation, being by an act of

eternal election set apart for God, for holiness, and happiness; and by imputation, Christ being made sanctification to them; and by the sanctifying grace of the Spirit of God in regeneration, being called with an holy calling, and having principles of grace and holiness wrought in them, and they formed as new men in righteousness and true holiness: and as “brethren”; being born of God, having him for their Father, and being of his household, and a part of the family in heaven and earth named of Christ, and heirs together of the grace of life, and of the heavenly glory: and as “faithful” ones; true and sincere believers in Christ, constant and persevering in the faith of him; faithful to the Gospel, and their profession of it, and to Christ, whose name they bore, and to one another, to whom they stood in the relation of brethren: and all this “in Christ”; and by, and through him; they were saints in him; they were chosen in him, and sanctified in him their head, and received all their holiness from him; they were brethren in him the firstborn of them; his God being their God, and his Father their Father; and had their faith and faithfulness from him, as well as it was exercised towards, and on him: and they are further described by the place of their abode,

which are at Colosse: a city of Phrygia:

grace [be] unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the salutation, and which stands in this form in most of Paul's epistles; (see Gill on “ ⁂Romans 1:7”). The Syriac version puts “peace” before “grace”, and leaves out the last clause, “and the Lord Jesus Christ”; as does also the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 3. *We give thanks to God*, etc.] Meaning himself and Timothy. This is the beginning of the epistle, which is introduced with a thanksgiving to God; to whom praise and thankfulness are always due as a Creator and preserver, as the author of all good things, as the Father of mercies, temporal and spiritual, and as the covenant God and Father of his people through Christ: wherefore it follows,

and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; the sense of which either is, that God the Father, who is the object of praise and thanksgiving, is both the God of Christ, and the Father of Christ, the God of Christ, as Christ is man, and the Father of Christ, as Christ is God; or the latter is exegetical of the former, and may be rendered thus, “God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”: and very properly are thanks given to him under this character, because it is as he is the Father of Christ that he blesses his

people with all spiritual blessings; and because he is their God, as well as his God; and their Father, as well as his Father, though in a different sense, his by nature, theirs by adoption. Moreover, as all their blessings come from God, as the Father of Christ, and through Christ, and for his sake, so it is very proper that thanks should be returned unto him under that character; and through Christ, by whom alone such sacrifices of praise are acceptable to God: it is added,

praying always for you; which, as it is expressive of the constant discharge of the duty of prayer, and the continual remembrance of these saints in it, and shows the affection the apostle had for them; so it points out the time when, and the way and manner in which Paul and Timothy gave thanks to God on account of them; it was when they were at the throne of grace, and in their frequent prayers to God; thankfulness for mercies received, both by ourselves and others, being a branch of the duty of prayer.

Ver. 4. *Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus*, etc.] This expresses the matter of their thankfulness, or what it was they gave thanks to God for, their faith in Christ; by which is not only meant their hearty assent to the whole doctrine of faith, concerning the person, offices, and grace of Christ, their soundness and steadfastness in it, and their sincere and constant profession of it; but the grace of faith in them, the operation of the Spirit of God in their souls, which had not Moses, nor any mere man, but Christ for its object; by which they looked unto him as a Saviour, went unto him as such, ventured on him, committed themselves unto him, leaned and relied upon him; that grace which comes from him, has him for its author and finisher, and returns unto him, and lives on him. This Paul and Timothy had heard of by their minister Epaphras; and it shows that they made no secret of it, did not keep it to themselves, but declared, confessed, and published it to others, as is the duty of all believers to do; and thanks being given for it to God, makes it a clear point that it was not of themselves, but was the gift of God, otherwise there would have been no need of thankfulness for it; as also, that it is a very eminent grace, and of great use and service to such who are possessed of it.

And of love [which ye have] to all the saints; this is another thing for which thanks are given to God. The object of this grace are “saints”; all men indeed are to be loved, and even our very enemies; and good is to be done to all, but especially to holy and good men, to the household of faith; and these are “all” to be loved and respected; nor is any respect or

difference of persons to be made on account of country, or natural relation, as Jews or Gentiles, or of outward state and condition, as rich or poor, bond or free, or of greater or lesser gifts and grace, weak or strong believers, or of different sentiments in the lesser matters of religion. It denotes both the grace of love itself, which is a fruit of the Spirit implanted in regeneration, and is an evidence of the new birth, and always is where true faith in Christ is, for faith works by it; and also the effects of it, which lies not in bare words, in expressions of spiritual affection and friendship, but in deeds, by serving one another in love, by relieving in necessity, sympathizing in distress, praying with and for one another, and the like; all which these saints were famous for.

Ver. 5. *For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven*, etc.] These words may be considered either in connection with the foregoing, and express the reason or motive which encouraged these saints to believe in Christ, and to go on believing in him, and hold fast the profession of their faith in him, and to love the saints, and show it upon all occasions, and in every case; because of the rich treasure of glory and happiness in reserve for them in heaven, which they were hoping and waiting for; this encouraged their faith in Christ, and enlarged their love and beneficence to the saints: or else with the thanksgiving of the apostle, and so contains fresh matter of it, that as thanks were given for faith and love, so for "hope"; by which is meant, not the grace of hope, for that is not in heaven, though it enters within the vail, and is conversant with heavenly things, but is in the heart; and though it supposes it, and which these persons had; they were not without it; they had a good hope through grace of eternal glory, for faith, hope, and love, always go together: nor Christ the foundation of hope; there are many things in him, which are a ground of hope of happiness, as his sufferings, and death, and redemption thereby; his resurrection from the dead, his intercessions and preparations; the promise of life in him, and the thing itself being in his gift; his righteousness and grace, which, give a title to it, and meetness for it; and he is also in heaven, but then he cannot be said to be laid up there: but the thing hoped for, everlasting happiness, is intended; (see Titus 2:13) (Galatians 5:5 2 Timothy 4:8); which is so called, because it is the object of hope; is not yet possessed; is future; is not seen; is difficult, and yet possible to be enjoyed: this is said to be "laid up"; which denotes the preciousness and valuableness of it, it is a treasure, an inheritance, a kingdom, and riches of glory; and the secrecy and hiddenness of it, it consists of things invisible to the bodily eye, and which are out of

the reach of carnal sense and reason, of which faith only has some small glimpse; and also the safety of it, it is hid in Christ, it is reserved “in heaven”, and cannot be come at, and spoiled by men or devils; and likewise the free grace and goodness of God in laying up and providing things of such a nature for his children and friends: the place where it is, in heaven, where moth and rust corrupt not, and thieves cannot break through and steal; and so is safe, and must be of an heavenly nature, as it is for heavenly persons: “for you”; the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, for those who were chosen in Christ, for whom it was prepared from the foundation of the world; for this is not laid up for any, for everyone, but for the chosen of God, and precious; whom God has distinguished by his grace, Christ has redeemed by his blood, and the Spirit regenerates and sanctifies, and who have faith, hope, and love, given unto them; and this was not only laid up for them, but they knew of it, they were made acquainted with it:

whereof ye heard before; before the writing of this epistle, under the ministry of their faithful teacher Epaphras:

in the word of the truth of the Gospel; or in the true word of the Gospel; which comes from the God of truth, is indited by the Spirit of truth, is concerning Christ the truth, and which contains nothing but truth, and lies in the Scriptures of truth: or “in the word of truth”, even the Gospel; which explains what word of truth is meant. The law is the word of truth; and many of the words of men, of the philosophers, were words of truth; but it was not in either of them they had heard of eternal life laid up in heaven; of which there were hopes to be entertained by sinful creatures, enjoying it through Christ: this is what only the Gospel brings an account of; life and immortality are only brought to light by the Gospel; which not only speaks of it, but lays that before men, which give them ground and encouragement to hope for it.

Ver. 6. *Which is come unto you*, etc.] That is, the Gospel, which came to them from God, from heaven, from Christ, out of Jerusalem, from whence the word of the Lord was to come, by the ministers of the Gospel, who being sent, came to Colosse, and there preached it; and so the Syriac version renders the words tzrktad yh, “which is preached unto you”. And a wonderful instance of the free grace of God this was; they did not seek, inquire for, and go after the Gospel, but it came to them; and so Christ was found of them by it, who sought him not, and made manifest in his person, grace, and righteousness to them that asked not after him: for

this Gospel came not to them in, word only, but with the power of the Holy Spirit: it was come, εις υμας, "into you", as the phrase may be rendered, into their very hearts, and wrought effectually there, enlightening, convincing, comforting, and instructing them; where it had a place, and remained; for the words may be read, as they are by the Arabic version, "which is present with you". The Gospel is always in one place or another, and will be to the end of the world; but it is not always in the same place; but as yet it was not removed from Colosse; it was still with them in the external ministry of it, and it remained in their hearts in the powerful and comfortable experience of it:

as [it is] in all the world; as it was come into, and preached to all the world, and was made useful, and continued in all the world at that time. Christ gave his disciples a commission to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; it was no more to be restrained to a particular nation, but was made general and common to all the nations of the world, and accordingly they preached it to all; and by this time had delivered the joyful message to the greater part of the world, which is sometimes meant by all the world, and the whole world; or it had been now preached in all the known and habitable parts of the world by one apostle and another, some being sent into one part, and some into another; so that the grace of God appeared to all men, and the doctrine of it had been preached to every creature under the heaven, according to Christ's commission; the Gospel of the kingdom was to be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations, before the end of the Jewish state came, or before the destruction of Jerusalem, which was not many years after the writing of this epistle. Now this shows, that it was the same Gospel which had been preached at Colosse by their faithful minister there, as had been preached in other areas, and in all parts of the world by the apostles; which is said in the commendation of the Gospel, it being one, uniform, consistent, and all of a piece in every place, and as preached by every faithful minister, and might serve greatly to confirm the Colossians in their faith of it:

and bringeth forth fruit: by which is meant, either the conversion of sinners, the fruit of the Gospel ministry, when attended with a divine blessing and power; or the graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, love, repentance, humility, self-denial, etc. with all the effects thereof, in new obedience, and a godly conversation, which come from Christ, the green fir tree, and are produced by the Spirit, through the preaching of the Gospel. The Vulgate Latin adds, "and increaseth"; the Syriac version has the same;

and it is so read in some Greek copies, as in the Alexandrian copy, two of Stephens's, and in the Complutensian edition; and may intend the spread of the Gospel among others, besides those who first received it, and the growing fruitfulness of the professors of it under its influence:

as [it doth] also in you, since the day ye heard [of it]; as soon as ever it came among them they hearkened to it, they were inclined to hear it externally, and a divine power going along with it, giving them hearing ears, and understanding hearts, they heard it, so as to know it, love it, and believe it; and from that time it brought forth fruit, and increased in them, and they continued in the faith and profession of it; so that as the Gospel is commended both from the large spread and efficacy of it, as well as its uniformity in every place, these Colossians also are commended for their hearing of it, both externally and internally, and for their perseverance in it: and which is further illustrated in the following clause,

and knew the grace of God in truth: by "the grace of God" may be meant the love and favour of God, in the mission and gift of his Son, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners, displayed in the Gospel, of which they had a comfortable experience, it being shed abroad in their hearts by the Spirit; or the blessings of grace revealed in the Gospel, as free justification by the righteousness of Christ, full pardon of sin, according to the riches of grace, and adoption of children, arising out of the love and free favour of God, of which they had had a real application made to them through the Gospel, by the Spirit of God; or rather the doctrine of grace itself, so called because it is a declaration of the free grace of God in the salvation of sinners and the means of implanting grace in the heart. This they knew not merely in a notional and speculative manner, but experimentally; for the Gospel was not only come to them, but into them; they had a spiritual knowledge of it, and affection for it; they felt the power of it in their hearts, and tasted and relished the sweetness of it; and owned and "acknowledged" it, as the word here used may be rendered; for as with the heart they believed it so with the mouth they made public profession of it: and this they did "in truth"; they came by the knowledge of the love of God, and the blessings of grace, and the doctrines of it, by the Gospel, the word of truth; in and through that they became acquainted with these things; and having known and embraced the doctrine of the Gospel of the grace of God, in the truth of it, without any mixture of error, as it had been purely, and without adulteration, truly and faithfully preached by their minister, they professed it truly heartily, and sincerely, and without

hypocrisy; which is another part of their commendation, and involves in it the praise of their minister also, which is enlarged upon in the following verses.

Ver. 7. *As ye also learned of Epaphras*, etc.] To know the grace of God, believe the truth of the Gospel, and to own and profess it sincerely.

Our dear fellow servant; a "servant" of Christ he was, and a "fellow" servant of the apostles, jointly engaged with them in preaching the Gospel; which character, as it greatly commends Epaphras, and shows him to be a very considerable preacher of the word, so it expresses the great humility and condescension of the apostle, in putting him upon a level with himself, though he was not in that high office of the apostleship he was. And "dear" this precious servant of Christ was to him, and his fellow ministers, on account of the grace and gifts bestowed on him, because of his usefulness in the ministry, and his faithfulness and integrity in the discharge of it; and whose company and conversation in the prison greatly endeared him to them, for he was a fellow prisoner, as well as a fellow servant, (<5023>Philemon 1:23). It follows,

who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; one whom Christ had made a "minister" and not man, who was qualified, and sent forth, and made successful by him in his service; and who preached none but Christ, and him crucified, in the business of salvation: and he was a "faithful" one; one that sought not his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him; nor to please men, but his master; who concealed no part of his message, but freely and fully declared the whole; he was faithful to Christ, who put him into the ministry, and to the souls of men, to whom he ministered: and therefore it is said, he was such an one "for you"; for them, not for himself; for their spiritual good and advantage; he sought not theirs, but them; he had a great zeal for them, dearly loved them, and spent his time and strength, and made use of his gifts and talents while among them, for their use and benefit.

Ver. 8. *Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit*.] Not only their love to God, and Christ, and to all the saints, which is before mentioned, but their love to the apostle; though they had only heard of him, and of his great capacity for, and faithfulness and usefulness in preaching of the Gospel, which had greatly endeared him to them. This, he says, was in the Spirit; it was spiritual love, to distinguish it from a carnal and worldly one; they loved him for the spiritual grace that was in him, the spiritual gifts

bestowed on him, the spiritual service he was engaged in, and the spiritual usefulness he was of: or they loved him in, and with their spirits, with all their hearts, sincerely, and without dissimulation; and though they had never seen him in the flesh, yet being, as it were, present with him in spirit, their affections were knit unto him: or this their love was "in the Holy Spirit", as the Ethiopic version reads it; it was a fruit of the Spirit of God, which he had implanted in their hearts in regeneration, as is also love to God, and likewise to Christ.

Ver. 9. *For this cause we also*, etc.] Not merely for their love to the apostle, and the rest that were with him; which sense is too much contracted, and carries some appearance of meanness and selfishness; but because of their faith in Christ, their love to all the saints, and the good hope they had of eternal happiness; and because they had heard the Gospel, and truly knew it, and sincerely professed it: therefore,

since the day we heard [it], do not cease to pray for you, and to desire; which shows that the apostles prayed without ceasing; not that they were every moment praying, without intermission, but that they were frequent and constant every day at the throne of grace; and as often as they were there, they were mindful of these Colossians, even ever since they heard of their reception of the Gospel, of their profession of it, and of the fruit it brought forth in them; and in their petitions "prayed" and "desired", earnestly and importunately entreated God on their behalf:

that ye might he filled with the knowledge of his will; the will "of God", as the Syriac version reads it, by which is meant, not the secret will of God, according to the counsel of which he does all things in nature, providence, and grace, but his revealed will; and that either as it is signified in the law, which declares the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God, relating to what he would have done, or avoided by his creatures; or rather, as it is exhibited in the Gospel, which contains the will of God respecting the salvation of his chosen ones; as that it is his will that Christ should obtain eternal redemption for them, to do which he voluntarily substituted himself in their room, came into this world, and has accomplished it; and that all those that are redeemed by Christ should be regenerated by the Spirit; and that whoever sees the Son, and believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life; as also, that all those whom he has chosen in Christ, and given to him, and he has redeemed by his blood, and who are sanctified by his Spirit, none of them should be lost, but that they should be all saved

with an everlasting salvation. Now the apostle does, not pray that they might have a “knowledge” of this will of God, for some knowledge of it they had already; they had heard of the hope laid up in heaven, in the truth of the word of the Gospel; they had not only had the external, revelation, and had heard the Gospel outwardly preached, but they had known truly the grace of God; and therefore what he asks for is, that they might be “filled” with the knowledge of it; which supposes that they had knowledge, but it was not full and complete; it was imperfect, as is the knowledge of the best of saints in this life; and that they might have a larger measure of it, and such a fulness of it as they were capable of in the present state, and not such an one as the saints will have in heaven, when they shall know even as they are known. He adds,

in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; his meaning is, that they might be led into all the wisdom of God, which is so largely displayed in the revelation of his will concerning the salvation of his people, which is made in the Gospel; which is the manifold wisdom of God, wherein he has abounded in all wisdom and prudence; and contains such a scheme of things, so wisely contrived and formed, that angels desire to look into it; and that they might have a “spiritual understanding” of the mysteries of grace, without which they cannot be discerned to spiritual advantage, nor indeed without the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of them: and the Ethiopic version renders it, by “the prudence of the Holy Ghost”: who searches the deep things of God, and reveals them to the saints, and improves and increases their spiritual and experimental knowledge of them, which is what is here intended.

Ver. 10. *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version reads, “of God”; to which the Ethiopic version agrees; but rather the Lord Jesus Christ seems to be designed: and to “walk worthy” of him, is to walk by faith in him; to walk after his Spirit, and according to his word, and in his ordinances; to have the conversation as becomes his Gospel, and worthy of that calling wherewith the saints are called by grace to the obtaining of his kingdom and glory. The apostle prays that their knowledge might issue in practice; for knowledge, without practice, is of no avail: he first asks for knowledge, and then practice, for how should men act according to the will of God, or Christ, unless they know it? and when they know it, they should not rest in their knowledge, but put it in practice:

unto all pleasing. The Syriac reads it, “that ye may please God in all good works”: an unregenerate man cannot please God in anything; without faith in Christ it is impossible to please him by anything man can do; Christ only could, and did always the things that pleased his Father; there are many things done by believers which are displeasing to God; nor is there anything they can do that is pleasing to God but through Christ, in whom their persons and, services are accepted; good works being done in faith, and from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God, are acceptable unto him through Christ; and therefore are to be carefully maintained, and studiously performed by all those that have a spiritual understanding of the will of God, and believe in Christ their Lord and Redeemer:

being fruitful in every good work; saints are trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord; good works are the fruit, which, under the influence of divine grace, they bring forth; and this is not of one sort only, as trees usually do, but of every kind; being ingrafted into Christ the true vine, and deriving life, sap, and nourishment from him, they are filled with the fruits of righteousness by him, which they bring forth and bear, to the glory of his heavenly Father; and being such, they are pleasant plants to him, as fruit bearing trees are to the owner of them: wherefore, in order to the saints walking in their lives and conversations unto all pleasing, or pleasing in all things, the apostle prays they might be fruitful in good works, and that in everyone, in every kind of good works:

and increasing in the knowledge of God; not barely of his nature and perfections, as they are displayed in the works of creation; but of his mind, and will, and the mysteries of his grace, as they are revealed in the Gospel; of the knowledge of him in Christ, as the God of all grace, and as a covenant God and Father. The apostle had before prayed for an increase of the knowledge of the will of God, previous to his request, for the putting of it in practice; and now suggests, that an increase of the knowledge of God himself may be expected in a practical use of means, an attendance on the ordinances of Christ, and a diligent performance of good works: from the whole of these petitions, it may be observed by the apostle's asking for them, that all our knowledge, and the increase of it, and all our fruitfulness in good works, are all from the Lord; and therefore we have no reason to boast of our knowledge, nor depend upon our works, but frankly to own, that notwithstanding all we know, and do, we are but unprofitable servants.

Ver. 11. *Strengthened with all might*, etc.] This is still a continuation of the apostle's prayer for these believers; for having prayed for an increase of spiritual knowledge, and that this might be put into practice, he proceeds to pray for strength for them, that they might be enabled to practise what they had knowledge of; to walk worthily, to please God in all things, to bring forth fruit with patience, to persevere in knowledge, practice, fruitfulness, and in an increase thereof. It implies, that believers are weak in themselves, and insufficient to do or bear anything of themselves, but stand in need of strength from above, even of “all might”; of all kind of spiritual might and strength, proportionate to the various kinds of services, temptations, and trials they are called unto, and exercised with: they have need of every kind, degree, and supply of strength, to enable them to resist the temptations of Satan, to stand against them, and bear up under them; to oppose the corruptions of their own nature, that great company which comes upon them, wars against them, threatens to carry them captive, and destroy them, and against which they have no power of their own; to bear the cross, which, without the presence and grace of Christ, is very heavy, and all afflictions and adversities of every sort, which are grievous to the flesh, and at which it recoils; to perform the various duties of religion, and the whole of the work of their generation; which though they have a will unto, yet often know not how to perform, they want renewed strength their souls; and also to persevere in faith and holiness, and hold on and out to the end: and which strength they cannot expect to have from themselves, or from any creature, but

according to his glorious power; the glorious power of God. Power belongs to God, is a perfection of his nature, and has been, and is gloriously displayed in many things; as in the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the upholding of all things in their being; in the redemption and salvation of sinners; in their faith and conversion; in supporting the saints under various trials and exercises; and in the safe keeping them through faith unto salvation: from this glorious power of God saints may hope to be supplied with all might, or a sufficient supply of strength for every service, and for every difficulty; as also from the grace that is in Christ, who has strength as well as righteousness for his people, who is the glorious power and arm of the Lord, without whom they can neither do, nor bear anything, but through him strengthening them, they can do, and bear all things; as likewise from the Spirit of the Lord, who is the finger of God, by whom Christ wrought his miracles; and is that glorious power from on high, with

which the apostles being endued, did the wondrous things they did; and it is by the same Spirit that believers are strengthened with might in the inner man:

unto all patience; to bring forth fruit with patience; to run with patience the race set before them; to bear patiently all afflictions and tribulations; to wait patiently for the things promised by God, and for the coming and appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the heavenly glory or hope laid up for them in heaven:

and longsuffering; to be slow to anger, and not easily provoked to wrath; to be ready to forgive injuries; and to bear long, and with patience, all reproaches and persecutions for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel; all which require daily fresh supplies of grace and strength, especially to endure all

with joyfulness, as well as with patience and longsuffering, with a cheerful spirit, or with joy in the Holy Ghost; to esteem reproach for Christ's sake above the riches and honours of this world; to rejoice when counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. This requires strength above that of nature, and a renewed supply of that of grace. This last clause, “with joyfulness”, the Syriac version connects with the following verse, reading it, “with joy do ye give thanks”, etc.

Ver. 12. *Giving thanks unto the Father*, etc.] To God the Father, as the Vulgate Latin and the Syriac versions read the clause; and the Complutensian edition, and some copies, “God and the Father”; who is both the Father of Christ by nature, and of all his people by adoption. The Ethiopic version renders it, as an exhortation or advice, “give ye thanks to the Father”; and so the Syriac version: but the words rather seem to be spoken in the first, than in the second person, and are to be considered in connection with (Colossians 1:9). So when the apostle had made an end of his petitions, he enters upon thanksgiving to God:

which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; by the “inheritance”, or “lot”, is meant not the common lot of the children of God to suffer persecution for the sake of Christ, and through much tribulation to enter into the kingdom, which they are by God the Father counted and made worthy of, with the rest of saints called out of darkness into light; nor their present state and condition, having a power to become the children of God, and to be fellow citizens with the saints, to

enjoy communion with them, under the Gospel dispensation, called “light”, in opposition to Jewish and Gentile darkness, to be brought into which state is an high favour of God; but the heavenly glory, so called, in allusion to the land of Canaan, which was divided by lot to the children of Israel, according to the will and purpose of God; and because it is not acquired by the works of men, but is a pure free grace gift of God, and which he, as the Father of his people, has bequeathed unto them; and which they enjoy through the death of the testator Christ; and of which the Spirit is the earnest; and because this glory is peculiar to such as are the children of God by adopting grace. It is no other than that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and which fades not away, reserved in the heavens; and designs that substance, or those solid and substantial things they shall possess hereafter; that kingdom, salvation, and glory, they are heirs of; and includes all things they shall inherit, and even God himself, who is their portion, their inheritance, their exceeding great reward, and of whom they are said to be heirs. This is the inheritance “of the saints”, and of none else; who are sanctified or set apart by God the Father in eternal election; who are sanctified by the blood of Christ, or whose sins are expiated by his atoning sacrifice; who are sanctified in Christ, or to whom he is made sanctification; and who are sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, or have the work of sanctification begun upon their souls by him; in consequence of which they live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world. And this inheritance of theirs is “in light”; unless this clause should be read in connection with the word “saints”, and be descriptive of them; they being called and brought out of darkness into light, and made light in the Lord, light being infused into them; in which light they see light, sin to be exceeding sinful, and Christ to be exceeding precious: or this phrase should be thought to design the means by which the Father makes meet to partake of the inheritance; namely, in or by the light of the Gospel, showing the way of salvation by Christ, and by the light of grace put into their hearts, and by following Christ the light of the world, which is the way to the light of life: though it rather seems to point out the situation and nature of the heavenly inheritance; it is where God dwells, in light inaccessible to mortal creatures, and who is light itself; and where Christ is, who is the light of the new Jerusalem; and where is the light of endless joy, and uninterrupted happiness; and where the saints are blessed with the clear, full, and beatific vision of God in Christ, and of Christ as he is, seeing him, not through a glass darkly, but face to face. This may be said in reference to a notion of the Jews, that the “light” which God created on the first day

is that goodness which he has laid up for them that fear him, and is what he has treasured up for the righteous in the world to come [f4]. Now the saints meetness for this is not of themselves; by nature they are very unfit for it, being deserving of the wrath of God, and not of an inheritance; and are impure and unholy, and so not fit to partake of the inheritance of saints, or Holy Ones, and much less to dwell and converse with an holy God; and being darkness itself, cannot bear such light, or have communion with it: but God the Father makes them meet, which includes all the acts of his grace towards them, upon them, and in them; such as his choosing them in Christ, and their inheritance for them; in preparing that for them, and them for that; blessing them with all grace, and all spiritual blessings in Christ; putting them among the children by an act of adoption, of his own sovereign will and free grace, and thereby giving them a goodly heritage, and a title to it; justifying them by the righteousness of his Son, and so making them heirs according to the hope of eternal life, and forgiving all their trespasses for Christ's sake; cleansing them from all in his blood, so that being the undefiled in the way, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, they are fit for the undefiled inheritance; regenerating them by his Spirit, and implanting principles of light and life, grace and holiness, in them, without which no man shall see the Lord, or enter into the kingdom of heaven. One copy, as Beza observes, reads it, “which hath called us to be partakers”, etc. and so does the Ethiopic version. And all such as the Father has thus called, and made meet, shall certainly be partakers of the inheritance; they partake of it already in Christ their head, and in faith and hope, having the Spirit as an earnest and pledge of it, and will wholly and perfectly enjoy it hereafter: for though, like Canaan's land, it is disposed of by lot, by the will, counsel, and free grace of God, yet will it not be divided into parts as that was; there is but one undivided inheritance, but one part and portion, which all the saints shall jointly and equally partake of, having all and each the same right and title, claim and meetness. For which they have abundant reason to give thanks to the Father, when they consider what they were, beggars on the dunghill, and now advanced to sit among princes, and to inherit the throne of glory; were bankrupts, over their head in debt, owed ten thousand talents, and had nothing to pay, and now all is frankly, forgiven; and besides, a title to, and meetness for, the heavenly inheritance, are freely bestowed on them; and particularly when they consider they are no more worthy of this favour than others that have no share in it, and also how great the inheritance is.

Ver. 13. *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness*, etc.] That is, from the power of Satan; (see <44618>Acts 26:18), who, though once an angel of light, is now darkness itself, and is reserved in chains of darkness; he is a ruler of the darkness of this world; his kingdom is a kingdom of darkness; and he blinds the minds of them that believe not, keeps them in darkness, and increases the natural darkness of their minds; he delights in works of darkness, and tempts men to them; and his everlasting state and portion will be blackness of darkness: his power over men, in a state of unregeneracy, which he usurps, and is suffered to exercise, is very great; he works effectually in them, and leads them captive at his will; and nothing less than the power of God, who is stronger than the strong man armed, can deliver out of his hands; and which is at least one part of the mercy for which thanks are here given; (see Gill on "<42253>Luke 22:53"); with the Jews, one of the names of Satan is Æçj, "darkness" [f5]. Moreover, the darkness of sin, ignorance, and unbelief, with which God's elect, while in a state of nature, are surrounded, and, as it were shut up and imprisoned, so that they have not the least spark of true spiritual light and knowledge, may be also meant; under the power of which they are to such a degree, that they know nothing of God in Christ, of the way of salvation by him, or of the work of the Spirit on their souls, or of the doctrines of the Gospel in an experimental manner; and so they continue, till, by an almighty power, they are turned from darkness to light; when, by powerful grace, they are plucked as brands out of the burning, and delivered from wrath to come, and from that utter darkness of misery and destruction their ways of sin and darkness led and exposed them to. This deliverance is wrought out for them in the effectual calling, when they are internally called, and powerfully brought out of this darkness, by introducing light into them, revealing Christ in them, causing the prince of darkness to flee from them, and the scales of darkness and blindness to fall from their eyes; and which is both an instance or the wonderful grace of God, and of his almighty power, and in which lies in part the saints' meetness for the inheritance; for these words are, in some sort, explanative of the former; for so long as a person is under the power of darkness, he cannot be meet for an inheritance which is in light: it follows, as another branch of this mercy, for which thanks are given,

and hath translated [us] into the kingdom of his dear Son; not into the kingdom of glory; for though the saints are heirs of it, and rejoice in hope of it, they have not yet an entrance into it; which they will have abundantly

when Christ shall introduce them into it, not only as his Father's, but as his own kingdom and glory: but the kingdom of grace is here meant, or that state of grace, light, and life, which such are brought into, when rescued out of Satan's hands, and recovered out of their former state of ignorance and infidelity; when they are by the drawings of the Father, by his powerful and efficacious grace, brought to Christ, and, in the day his power on their souls, are made willing to submit to his righteousness, and to embrace him as the alone Saviour and Redeemer, and be subject to him as King of saints, observing his commands, keeping his ordinances, and walking in his statutes and judgments with other saints, in a Gospel church state; which is Christ's kingdom here on earth, where he reigns as King over God's holy hill of Zion, being set there by his Father, from whom he has received this kingdom, and will deliver it to him, when it is complete and perfect. Now those whom Jehovah the Father snatches out of Satan's hands, and breaks in upon their souls with divine light and knowledge, he brings into such a state, and into this kingdom of Christ, who is called “his dear Son”: or “the Son of his love”; or “his Son of love”; who being his Son by nature, of the same nature with him, and equal to him, always was, is, and will be, the object of his love, complacency, and delight; as he cannot be otherwise, since he is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; and even as this Son of his is in an office capacity, as the Mediator between God and man, he is his elect, in whom his soul delights; and he is always well pleased with all the chosen ones in him, who are the sons of God through him, and always beloved in him. This clause is added, partly to distinguish the kingdom of Christ, into which the saints are brought in this life, from the kingdom of the Father, or the ultimate glory they shall possess hereafter; and partly to express the security of the saints, and their continuance in the love of God, being in the kingdom, and under the care and government of the Son of his love; and also to make way for what the apostle has further to discourse concerning the person, office, and grace of Christ, in the following verses.

Ver. 14. *In whom we have redemption*, etc.] Which is an excellent and wonderful blessing of grace saints have in and by Christ; and lies in a deliverance from sin, all sin, original and actual, under which they are held captive, in a state of nature, and by which they are made subject to the punishment of death; but through the sacrifice of Christ it is taken, and put away, finished, and made an end of; and they are freed from the damning power of it, or any obligation to punishment for it; and in consequence of

this are delivered from the enslaving governing power of it by his grace and Spirit, and will hereafter be entirely rid of the very being of it: it consists also of a deliverance from the law, the curse and bondage of it, under which they are held on account of sin, the transgression of it; but being delivered from sin, they are also from the law, its accusations, charges, menaces, curses, and condemnation; as likewise out of the hands of Satan, by whom they are led captive; for through the ransom price paid by Christ they are ransomed out of the hands of him that was stronger than they, the prey is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered by him that has led captivity captive: in short, this redemption is a deliverance out of the hands of all their enemies, and from all evils and misery, the effects of sin, from death, and hell, and wrath to come. The author of it is Christ, the Son of God, the Son of his love, his dear Son: he was called to this work in the council of peace, in which the affair of redemption was consulted; and he agreed to undertake it in the covenant of grace, of which this is a principal article; and being in his constitution, as Mediator, every way fit and proper for it: as man, the right of redemption belonged to him, being the near kinsman of his people, and, as God, he was mighty and able to perform it; as man he had something to offer, and, as God, could make that sacrifice valuable and effectual to all saving purposes; as man, he had compassion on human nature, and, as God, was concerned for things pertaining to his honour and glory. And thus being every way qualified, he was sent, and came on this errand, and has obtained a redemption, which is precious, plenteous, complete and eternal: it is now with him, and “in him”; and he is made this, and everything else to his people, that they want. The subjects of this blessing are, not angels, but men; and not all men, but some that are redeemed from among men, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; who are called by the name of Jacob, the people of Christ, a peculiar people, and the church of God; and evidentially are such, who have faith in Christ, love to the saints, and good hope of eternal life; who know the grace of God in truth, are made meet to be partakers of the eternal inheritance, being delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Christ, and are designed by the we in this text: the means by which this blessing is procured, is

through his blood. This phrase is left out indeed in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, and in the Complutensian edition, and in some copies; but rightly stands here, as it does in (⁴⁹⁰⁰⁷Ephesians 1:7), where there is another clause added, which is here omitted, at the end of the verse, “according to the

riches of his grace". This is the blood of Christ, his own blood, and not the blood of bulls and goats, and the same with that of the persons he redeems, but untainted with sin; the blood of Christ, as of a lamb without spot and blemish, of original or actual sin, otherwise it would not have been a sufficient redemption price for his people; nor even then, were it not as it was the blood of the Son of God, of one that was God as well as man, whereby it came to have a proper value and efficacy in it to obtain this blessing: Christ's shedding his blood freely on this account is a proof of his great love to his redeemed ones; the efficacy that was in it to answer this purpose shows the dignity and greatness of his person; and it not being to be effected without it, demonstrates the strictness of divine justice, and that the redemption of men is brought about in a way entirely consistent with the righteousness and holiness of God. A particular branch of this blessing follows, and which serves, in some sense, to illustrate and explain it,

[even] the forgiveness of sins; of all sin, original and actual; of heart, lip, and life, secret and open, past, present, and to come; which lies in a non-imputation of sin, a remembrance of it no more, a removing of it entirely out of the way, a covering and blotting it out of sight, so as to be no more visible and legible: this is in Christ, where all spiritual blessings are; nor is it to be had or expected from an absolute God, but from God in Christ, and through him, through his propitiatory sacrifice; for as redemption, so forgiveness of sin is through his blood, which was shed for it; so that it proceeds upon the foot of satisfaction made to the justice of God by a price paid, and is an act of justice as well as grace, and belongs to the same persons as redemption does; hence those that are redeemed are represented as without fault before the throne; and indeed, the reason why their iniquities are blotted out, and will be remembered no more against them, is, because they are redeemed.

Ver. 15. *Who is the image of the invisible God*, etc.] Not of deity, though the fulness of it dwells in him; nor of himself, though he is the true God, and eternal life; nor of the Spirit, who also is God, and the Spirit of the Son; but the Father, called "God", not to the exclusion of the Son or Spirit, who are with him the one God: "and he is invisible"; not to the Son who lay in his bosom, and had perfect and infinite knowledge of him; nor, in some sense, to angels, who always behold his face, but to men: no man hath seen him corporeally with the eyes of his body, though intellectually with the eyes of the understanding, when enlightened; not in his essence and nature, which is infinite and incomprehensible, but in his works of

creation, providence, and grace; nor immediately, but mediately, in and through Christ, in whom he gives the light of the knowledge of the glory of his person and perfections; and this not perfectly now, but in the other state, when the saints shall see him face to face. But chiefly the Father is said to be invisible, because he did not appear to Old Testament saints; as his voice was never heard, so his shape was never seen; he never assumed any visible form; but whenever any voice was heard, or shape seen, it was the second person that appeared, the Son of God, who is here said to be his "image", and that, as he is the Son of God; in which sense he is the natural, essential, and eternal image of his Father, an eternal one, perfect and complete, and in which he takes infinite complacency and delight: this designs more than a shadow and representation, or than bare similitude and likeness; it includes sameness of nature and perfections; ascertains the personality of the Son, his distinction from the Father, whose image he is; and yet implies no inferiority, as the following verses clearly show, since all that the Father hath are his. Philo, the Jew [f6], often speaks of the λογος, or Word of God, as the image of God. Also, this may be understood of him as Mediator, in whom, as such, is a most glorious display of the love, grace, and mercy of God, of his holiness and righteousness, of his truth and faithfulness, and of his power and wisdom:

the firstborn of every creature; not the first of the creation, or the first creature God made; for all things in (Colossians 1:16) are said to be created by him, and therefore he himself can never be a creature; nor is he the first in the new creation, for the apostle in the context is speaking of the old creation, and not the new: but the sense either is, that he was begotten of the Father in a manner inconceivable and inexpressible by men, before any creatures were in being; or that he is the "first Parent", or bringer forth of every creature into being, as the word will bear to be rendered, if instead of πρωτοτοκος, we read πρωτοτοκος; which is no more than changing the place of the accent, and may be very easily ventured upon, as is done by an ancient writer [f7], who observes, that the word is used in this sense by Homer, and is the same as πρωτογονος, "first Parent", and πρωτοκτιστης, "first Creator"; and the rather this may be done, seeing the accents were all added since the apostle's days, and especially seeing it makes his reasoning, in the following verses, appear with much more beauty, strength, and force: he is the first Parent of every creature, "for by him were all things created", etc. (Colossians 1:16), or it may be understood of Christ, as the King, Lord, and Governor of all

creatures; being God's firstborn, he is heir of all things, the right of government belongs to him; he is higher than the kings of the earth, or the angels in heaven, the highest rank of creatures, being the Creator and upholder of all, as the following words show; so the Jews make the word "firstborn" to be synonymous with the word "king", and explain it by rçw lwdg, "a great one", and "a prince" [f8]; (see <19B927>Psalm 89:27 <581202>Hebrews 1:2,6).

Ver. 16. *For by him were all things created*, etc.] This is a reason proving Christ to be before all creatures, to be the common Parent of them, and to have the government over them, since he is the Creator of them. The creation of all things, by him, is not to be understood of the new creation, for whenever that is spoken of, the word "new" is generally used, or what is equivalent to it, or some clause or phrase added, which determines the sense, and is not the case here: besides, all things that are in heaven are said to be created here: which, to say nothing of the sun, moon, and stars, which are not capable subjects of the new creation, to restrain them to angels, cannot be true of them; for as for those who were once in heaven, but kept not their first estate, and quitted their habitation, these find no place there any more; they never were, nor will be renewed and restored by Christ; and as for the good angels, since they never sinned, they stand in no need of renovation. Moreover, all things that are on earth are also said to be created by him, and are, but not anew: for to confine these only to men, all men are not renewed in the spirit of their minds; all have not faith, nor a good hope through grace, nor love to God and Christ, the greater part of the world lies in open wickedness; and all that profess religion are not new creatures, these are a chosen generation, and a peculiar people: wherefore these words must be understood, not metaphorically, but literally; in which sense all things are created by Christ, not by him as an instrument, but as the efficient cause; for the preposition "by" does not always signify the former; but sometimes the latter; (see <460109>1 Corinthians 1:9 <480101>Galatians 1:1); nor to the exclusion of the Father and Spirit, who, with the Son, were jointly concerned in the creating of all things out of nothing: and these "all things" can only refer to the things that are made: eternal things can never be said to be created; this is a contradiction in terms; the Father is not created by him, nor he himself as the Son of God, nor the Spirit; but everything that is made is created by him: hence it follows, that he himself is no creature, otherwise he must create himself, which also is a contradiction, since every creature is made by him; and consequently he

must be God, for he that made and built all things is God. These are divided as to the subject of them, or place where they are, into things

that are in heaven, and that are in earth. The things that are in heaven, are the things that are in the airy and starry heavens, and in the heaven of heavens. The things in the airy heavens, the fowls thereof, were on the fifth day created by him; and the things in the starry heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, were on the fourth day ordained by him; and the inhabitants of the third heaven, the angels, were made by him, (Hebrews 1:7); and, as the Jewish writers [f9] say, on the second day of the creation, though some say on the fifth. The earth comprehends the whole terraqueous globe, consisting of land and sea; and the things in it are all that are in the seas, the fishes and other things in it; and all that are in the bowels of the earth, as well as on the surface of it, all metals and minerals, all plants, herbs, and trees, every beast of the forest, the cattle on a thousand hills, the fowls on the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field, and all human creatures. Again, these all things are, as to the quality of them, distributed into

visible and invisible, both in heaven and in earth: the visible things in heaven are the fowls that fly in the airy heaven, the sun, and moon, and stars in the starry heaven, and the bodies of those saints that have been either translated, or raised, in the third heaven; the visible things in the earth are all creatures, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, all bodies, all corporeal and material beings: the invisible things in earth are not only those that are in the innermost parts of it, but the spirits or souls of men; and those in heaven are not the invisible God, Father, Son, and Spirit, but the angels, who are incorporeal and immaterial spirits, and so invisible: and which,

whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, are all made by him; by these some understand civil magistrates among men, and the various degrees and orders of them. By “thrones” they think kings, or monarchs, are meant, who sit on thrones; and by “dominions”, little petty kings, or lords, dukes, and earls; and by “principalities”, governors of provinces and cities; and by “powers”, interior magistrates; and indeed, political governors are sometimes called dominions, dignities, principalities, and powers; and there are different orders of them, the king as supreme, and governors under him; (see Jude 1:8 Titus 3:1 1 Peter 2:13,14). But since these seem rather to be said of the invisible things in heaven, and to be an explanation of them, angels may rather be thought to

be intended; and are so called, not as denoting different orders and degrees among them, which some have rashly ventured to describe, but because of the use that God makes of them in the government of the world, and the executions of the various affairs of Providence relating to particular persons and kingdoms; though these several names are not so much such as the apostle chose to call them by, as what they were called by others; the three latter are indeed elsewhere used by himself, (<40012>Ephesians 1:21 3:10 <51020>Colossians 2:10); but not the former, “thrones”, which yet are used by Jewish writers, and given to angels. Thus, in a book of theirs, which they esteem very ancient, and ascribe to the patriarch Abraham, it is said [f10],

> “there is no angel in which the name Jehovah is not found, which is everywhere, as the soul is in every member; wherefore men ought to allow Jehovah to reign in all the members, ˆysrk lkbw, “and in all the thrones”, and in all the angels, and in every member of men.”

And elsewhere, speaking of the garments of God,

> “by these (say they [f11]) ˆyysrk ḥbq arb, “the holy blessed God created the thrones”, and the angels, and the living creatures, and the “seraphim”, and the heavens, and the earth, and all that he created.”

And the thrones in (<27009>Daniel 7:9); are interpreted [f12], of

> “the superior princes, µyymjwr µykalml, “the spiritual angels”, who sit first in the kingdom; and they are called in the words of the Rabbins, “the throne of glory”; for so is the way of kings, that their princes sit before them, everyone on his throne, according to their dignity.”

Now the apostle's sense is, that the angels, the invisible inhabitants of the upper world, are all created by Christ, let them be called by what names they will, that the Jews, or the false teachers, or any sort of heretics of those times thought fit to give them, whether they called them thrones or dominions, etc. And so the Arabic version, rather interpreting than translating the words, renders them thus, “whether you say thrones, or whether you mention dominions, or whether you understand princes, or whether you say powers”; speak of them under what title or appellation you please, they are all the creatures of the Son of God. The apostle seems to have in view, and to oppose some notions of some heretics of his time,

the followers of Simon Magus, who held, that the angels were created by his Helena; or, as others, by what they call “Ennea”, and that these angels created the world, and are to be worshipped; but he here affirms, that

all things were created by him, by Christ, even all the angels; and therefore he, and not they, are to be worshipped, a notion he afterwards takes notice of in the following chapter: and as all things are affirmed to be created by him, which demonstrates the dignity and deity of his person, so likewise

for him; that is, for his pleasure, that he may take delight and complacency in them, and in his own perfections displayed by them; and for his service and use, as the angels, to worship him and minister to him and for others, he sends them to: elect men are made to serve and glorify him with their bodies and spirits, which are his; and even the non-elect are made to subserve his mediatorial kingdom and interest; yea, the whole world is built and kept in being purely on his account, until he has finished the great affair of the salvation of his people, in the application of it to each of them, as he has completed the impetration of it; and then he will dissolve the heavens, and burn up the earth and all the works that are therein: all are made for his glory, and that end is, and will be answered by them in one way or another.

Ver. 17. *And he is before all things*, etc.] Not only in dignity, being preferable to angels and men in his nature, names, offices, and works, and worthy of more honour than all creatures; but he is before them in existence, as he must needs be, since they are all made by him; he was not only before John the Baptist, his forerunner, before Abraham who saw his day and was glad, before the first man was made, but before the angels were in being, or the heavens and the earth, or any creature were formed; and therefore must be God, who is from everlasting to everlasting:

and by him all things consist; he upholds all things by the word of his power; the heavens have their stability and continuance from him; the pillars of the earth are bore up by him, otherwise that and the inhabitants of it would be dissolved; the angels in heaven are confirmed in their estate by him, and have their standing and security in him; the elector God are in his hands, and are his peculiar care and charge, and therefore shall never perish; yea, all mankind live and move, and have their being in him; the whole frame of nature would burst asunder and break in pieces, was it not held together by him; every created being has its support from him, and its consistence in him; and all the affairs of Providence relating to all creatures

are governed, directed, and managed by him, in conjunction with the Father and the blessed Spirit.

Ver. 18. *And he is the head of the body, the church*, etc.] By "the church" is meant, not any particular congregated church, as the church at Colosse, or Corinth, or any other; but the whole election of grace, the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven in the Lamb's book of life; the church which Christ has given himself for, and has purchased with his blood, and builds on himself the rock, and will, at last, present to himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; this is compared to an human body, and therefore called "the body"; which is but one, consisting of many members in union with each other, set in their proper places in just symmetry and proportion to each other, and subservient to one another, and are neither more nor fewer; (see <46122>1 Corinthians 12:12-14), etc. and of this body, the church, Christ is "the head"; he was the representative head of this body of elect men from all eternity, and in time; he is a political head of them, or in such sense an head unto them, as a king is to his subjects; he reigns in them by his Spirit and grace, and rules them by wholesome laws of his own enacting, and which he inscribes on their hearts, and he protects and defends them by his power; he is an economical head, or in such sense an head of them, as the husband is the head of the wife, and parents and masters are the heads of their families, he standing in all these relations to them; and he is to them what a natural head is to an human body; of all which (see Gill on "<46103>1 Corinthians 11:3"). The Messiah is called one head, in (<28111>Hosea 1:11); which Jarchi explains by David their king, and Kimchi on the place says, this is the King Messiah:

who is the beginning; which either denotes the eternity of Christ, who was not only in the beginning, and was set up from the beginning, from everlasting, but is also the beginning and the end; and who is, indeed, without beginning of days, or end of life: or his dominion; he is the principality, as the word may be rendered; he is the principality of principalities, the head of all principality and power, the angels; he is the Prince of the kings of the earth; he is King of saints; the kingdom of nature and providence is his, and the government of his people in a special manner is on his shoulders: or this may design his being the first cause of all things; he is the beginning of the creation of God; the efficient cause of all created beings; he is the beginning of the church, of which he is the head; as Eve was from Adam, so is the church from Christ; it is a body of his preparing,

and a temple of his building, and where he sits as a priest on his throne, and has the government of it: the second number, wisdom, in the cabalistic tree of the Jews, is called "the beginning" [f13], as is the Logos, or Word, by Philo the Jew [f14]:

the firstborn from the dead; the first that rose from the dead by his own power, and to an immortal life; for, though others were raised before him, and by him, yet not to a state of immortality; the path of life, to an immortal life, was first shown to him as man; and who also is the firstfruits of them that sleep, and so the pledge and earnest of the future resurrection of the saints; and is both the efficient and exemplary cause of it; the resurrection of the dead will be by him as God, and according to his own, as man:

that in all [things] he might have the pre-eminence; or might be the first and chief over all persons, angels, and men; having a superior nature, name, and place, than the former, and being the firstborn among many brethren designed by the latter: and in all things he is the first, and has the precedence and primacy; in sonship, no one is a Son in the sense he is; in election, he was chosen first, and his people in him; in the covenant, he is the surety, Mediator, and messenger of it, he is that itself; in his human nature, he is fairer than the children of men; in redemption, he was alone, and wrought it out himself; in life, he exceeded all others in purity, in doctrine, and miracles; and in dying he conquered death, and rose first from it; in short, he died, revived, and rose again, that he might be Lord both of dead and living; and he ought to have the pre-eminence and first place in the affections of our hearts, in the contemplations of our minds, in the desires of our souls, and in the highest praises of our lips.

Ver. 19. *For it pleased [the Father]*, etc.] The phrase, "the Father", is not in the original text, but is rightly supplied; since he is expressly mentioned in the context, as he who makes the saints meet to be partakers of the heavenly glory; who deliver, them from the power and dominion of sin, and translates them into the kingdom of his dear Son; and who, by Christ, reconciles all things to himself, (Colossians 1:12,13,20), and whose sovereign will and pleasure it is,

that in him should all fulness dwell: by which is meant, not the fulness of the deity, though it is read by some the fulness of the Godhead: which seems to be transcribed from (Colossians 2:9); but though all the perfections of God are in Christ, as eternity, omnipotence, omniscience,

omnipresence, immutability, independence, and necessary existence, and every other, or he would not be equal with God; nor could all the fulness of the Godhead be said to dwell in him, should anyone be wanting; yet this is a fulness possessed by him, that does not spring from, nor depend upon the Father's good will and pleasure; but what he naturally and necessarily enjoys by a participation of the same undivided nature and essence with the Father and Spirit: nor is the relative fulness of Christ intended, which is his church, so called, (⁴⁹Ephesians 1:23); and will be so when all the elect are gathered in, and filled with all the gifts and graces of his Spirit, and are arrived to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; for though every believer dwells in Christ, and Christ in him, yet the church is not said to dwell in Christ, but Christ in the church; moreover, as yet she is not his fulness, at least in the sense she will be, and much less can she be said to be all fulness: nor is this to be understood of Christ's fulness of fitness and abilities, as God-man and Mediator, to perform his work and office as such; though this may be taken into the sense of the text as a part, yet is not the whole; but rather chiefly that dispensatory communicative fulness, which is, of the Father's good will and pleasure, put into the hands of Christ to be distributed to others, is here designed. There is a fulness of nature in Christ; the light of nature is from him, and communicated by him to mankind; the blessings of nature are the blessings of his left hand, which he distributes to his people as he thinks fit; and all things in nature are subservient to his mediatorial kingdom and glory. There is a fulness of grace in him, out of which saints receive, and grace for grace, or a large abundance of it; the fulness of the spirit of grace, and of all the graces and gifts of the Spirit is in him; and of all the blessings of grace, as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, adoption, sanctification, even of all that grace that is implanted in regeneration, that is necessary to carry on and finish the good work upon the soul; there is a fulness of all light and life, of wisdom, and strength, of peace, joy, and comfort, and of all the promises of grace, both with respect to this world and that which is to come; and there is also a fulness of glory in him, not only the grace, but the glory of the saints, is laid up and hid with him, and is safe and secure in him: this is said to dwell in Christ, which implies its being in him; it is not barely in intention, design, and purpose, but it is really and actually in him, nor is it in any other; and hence it comes to be communicated to the saints: and it also denotes the continuance of it with him; it is an abiding fulness, and yields a continual daily supply to the saints, and will endure to the end of time, and be as sufficient for the last as the first believer; it is like the subject of it, the same

yesterday, today, and for ever: and it also intends the safety of it: the saints' life both of grace and glory is hid with Christ, and is secure, it is out of the reach of men and devils, and can never be lost, or they deprived of it; and all this is owing not to any merits of men, to their faith and holiness, or good works, which are all the fruits of this fulness, but to the good will of God; "it pleased the Father" to place it here for them; it was owing to his good will to his Son, and therefore he puts all things into his hands; and to his elect in him, for, having loved them with an everlasting love, he takes everlasting care of them, and makes everlasting provision for them; it was his pleasure from all eternity to take such a step as this, well knowing it was not proper to put it into the hands of Adam, nor into the hands of angels, nor into their own at once; he saw none so fit for it as his Son, and therefore it pleased him to commit it unto him; and it is his good will and sovereign pleasure, that all grace should come through Christ, all communion with him here, and all enjoyment of him hereafter; which greatly enhances and sets forth the glory of Christ as Mediator, one considerable branch of which is, that he is full of grace and truth; this qualifies him to be the head of the church, and gives a reason, as these words be, why he has, and ought to have, the preeminence in all things.

Ver. 20. *And by him to reconcile all things to himself*, etc.] This depends upon the preceding verse, and is to be connected with that phrase in it, it pleased the Father, (^{Col 1:19}Colossians 1:19); and the sense is, that it was the good will and pleasure of God from all eternity, as to lay up all fulness in Christ for his chosen people, so to reconcile them to himself by him; and which is another reason why Christ is, and ought to be considered as the head of the church, whose reconciliation he has procured, and why he ought to have the chief place in all things, and among all persons. Reconciliation supposes a former state of amity and friendship, and in such an one man was originally with God; and a breach of that friendship, which was made and issued in real enmity in the heart of man; and also a restoration to friendship again: and it is to be understood not of a reconciliation of God to men, which the Scriptures nowhere speak of, but of men to God; and is a reconciliation of them, not to the love of God, which his elect always shared in, but to the justice of God, offended by the transgression of a righteous law; and is indeed properly a reconciliation, atonement, and satisfaction for their sins, and so of their persons, and whereby all the perfections of God are reconciled to and agree with each other in the salvation of such sinners: now this takes its first rise from God

the Father; it is owing to his sovereign good will and pleasure; he took the first step towards it; he knew what a state of enmity and rebellion his people would fall into; his thoughts ran upon their peace and reconciliation from everlasting; he called a council of peace about it, and in it drew the model of it; he entered into a covenant of peace with his Son, and, in consequence of it, sent him in the fulness of time to effect it, laying on him the chastisement of their peace; it was his pleasure that this affair of reconciliation should be brought about, not by the means of angels, in whom he could put no such trust and confidence, and who, though they rejoice at peace being made on earth, could never have effected it; nor that it should be done by men, who have no knowledge of the way of it, no inclination to it, nor power to make it; but "by him", his Son Jesus Christ, whom he appointed and called to this work, and sent to do it; and who is therefore, in prophecy, before this reconciliation was actually made, styled "Shiloh", the Prince of peace, and the peace: and this, when made, was made "to himself"; meaning either to Christ, in whom all the elect were gathered together, as in one head, and were reconciled in one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, through him; or rather to God the Father, to whom they were enemies, yea, enmity itself, and to whom the satisfaction and atonement were made; it being his law that was broken, and his justice that was injured, and to whom they are always in Scripture said to be reconciled; though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, the one God with the Father: moreover, the sense of this phrase may be, that the reconciliation of the elect made by Christ, in a way of full satisfaction to law and justice, is to the glory of God, the glory of all his perfections; as of his grace and mercy, wisdom, power, and faithfulness, so of his righteousness and holiness: the means by which Christ has enacted it are, his sacrifice, sufferings, and death, expressed in the following clause;

having made peace through the blood of his cross. This was what man could not do, what Christ was appointed and sent to do, and what he was every way qualified for as God and man; as man he had blood to shed, and could make reconciliation for sin in the nature which had sinned, and, as God, could draw nigh to his Father, and treat with him about terms of peace, and perform them; and so a fit daysman and Mediator between, God and man: this peace he has made by his "blood", that is, by the shedding of it, by his death as a sacrifice, which he underwent on the cross; partly to denote the shame, and chiefly to signify the curse he endured in the room of his people: all which shows the malignant nature of sin, the strictness of

justice, and that peace is made in a way of full satisfaction, is upon honourable terms, will be lasting, as it is joyful, being attended with a train of blessings:

by him, [I say], whether [they be] things in earth, or things in heaven: by which are intended not the whole universe and fabric of the world, all creatures and things, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, which have been cursed for the sin of man, and have proved unfriendly to him, but, in consequence of redemption and reconciliation by Christ, will, as some think, in the time of the restitution of all things, be restored to their former state, and to their friendly use to mankind; nor elect men and elect angels, and their reconciliation together, for the apostle is not speaking of the reconciling of these things together, but of the reconciling of them to God, which though it is true of elect men, is not of elect angels, who never fell, and though they have confirming grace, yet not reconciling grace from Christ, which they never needed; nor Jews and Gentiles, for though it is true that God was in Christ reconciling the world of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews to himself, and the chosen of God among both are actually reconciled to God by the death of Christ, yet the one are never called things in heaven, or the other things on earth, in distinction from, and opposition to each other; but rather all the elect of God are here meant, the family of God in heaven and in earth; all the saints that were then in heaven, when actual reconciliation was made by the blood of Christ, and who went thither upon the foot of peace, reconciliation, and redemption, to be made by his sacrifice and death; and all the chosen ones that were or should be on the face of the earth, until the end of time; all these were reconciled to God by Christ: and then the apostle proceeds particularly to mention the Colossians, as also being instances of this grace, good will, and pleasure of God by Christ.

Ver. 21. *And you that were sometime alienated*, etc.] The general blessing of grace and reconciliation, which belongs to the whole body of Christ, the church universal, all the elect of God, whether in heaven or in earth, is here particularly applied to the saints at Colosse, who were eminent instances of it; and that the free grace of God towards them in it might more illustriously appear, the apostle takes notice of what they were before the coming of Christ in the flesh, before the Gospel came among them, and while in a state of unregeneracy, as that they were “alienated”: that is from God, not from his general presence, power, and providence, which reach to all his creatures, but from the life of God; (see <4018>Ephesians 4:18); from

living agreeably to the will of God, being estranged from him who is the fountain of moral and spiritual, as well as natural life; from the law, the rule of life, and from a principle of life in themselves; and altogether disapproving of such a life, as contrary to their carnal affections and lusts: and which alienation from God greatly lay in their forsaking him, the one only and true God, and following and serving strange gods, not attending to the dictates and light of nature; and being destitute of a divine revelation, they went further and further off from God, and from his people, worship, and ordinances; and were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise; the source of all which was sin, and was owing to themselves: God did not alienate himself from them first; they alienated themselves from him; their sins separated between God and them, set them at a distance from him, and at enmity to him, and which very early appeared, for they were estranged from the womb:

and enemies in [your] mind by wicked works. They were enemies to God, the true God, and were lovers and worshippers of idols; they were enemies to the being and perfections of God, as all men in a state of nature are; and more or less show it, by either denying there is a God, or wishing there was none, or fancying him to be such an one as themselves; or they dispute his sovereignty, deny his omniscience, arraign his justice and faithfulness, and despise the riches of his grace and goodness; they are enemies to his purposes, providences, and word; cannot bear that he should determine any thing concerning them or others; their eye is evil to him because he is good to others; they reply against him, they run upon him, and charge his decrees with unrighteousness and cruelty; murmur at and quarrel with the dispensations of his providence, as unequal and unjust; cast away the law of the Lord, will not be subject to it, and condemn the revelation of his will. They are enemies to Christ in one shape or another; either to his person, denying his proper deity, or real humanity; or to his offices, not hearkening to him as a prophet, trampling on his blood and sacrifice as a priest, and unwilling to have him to rule over them as a King; or to the way of salvation by him, of pardon by his blood, atonement by his sacrifice, justification by his righteousness, and acceptance with God through his person; or to his doctrines and ordinances, which are unsuitable to their vicious tastes, carnal affections, and appetites: they are enemies to the Spirit of Christ, by either denying his deity and personality, or by ridiculing the operations of his grace; or treating with contempt, and as foolish, everything of his, the Bible and all the truths contained in it, dictated by

him. They are enemies to the people of God, exceeding mad against them, hate them and persecute them, reckon them the faith of the world, and the offscouring of all things, living in malice to them, and hateful and hating one another: and this enmity to everything divine and good is seated “in the mind”; the mind is not the object of this enmity, as some read the words, “to the mind”: for the mind of a carnal man is enmity itself against God; but it is the subject of it, where it has its chief place, and from whence it proceeds, and shows itself in evil actions; and though the word “your” is not in the original text, it is rightly supplied; for the meaning is not that they were enemies “of his mind”; of the mind of the Lord, of his counsels and will, as some read and explain the words, though there is a truth in this, but in their own minds: so that not the body but the soul is the seat of this enmity; and not the inferior faculties of the soul only, the sensitive appetite and passions, but the understanding, the judgment and will, the more noble and rational powers of the soul; from hence spring all the malice and enmity expressed in word and actions: where then is man's free will to that which is good? and hence it is that the mind stands in need of being renewed, enlightened, cleansed and sanctified, and renovation begins here, which is the effect of almighty power; for nothing else can remove the rooted enmity in the heart of men; and which, as deep and as secret as it is, sooner or later, in one way or another, shows itself “by wicked works”; and that frequently, as by loving what God hates, and hating what he loves; by omitting what he commands, and committing what he forbids; by maintaining friendship with the world, and by harbouring his professed enemies, and persecuting his dear friends; and by their wicked words, and evil lives and conversations; and by the various works of the flesh, which are manifest, some being more directly against God, others by which they wrong themselves, and others by which they injure their neighbours:

yet now hath he reconciled; which may be understood either of the Father's reconciling them to himself by his Son; and so the words are a continuation of the account of the Father's grace, as to all the elect in general, so to the Colossians in particular, notwithstanding the black characters in which they stand described in their natural estate: or else of Christ's reconciling them to his Father, by the sacrifice of himself, which he voluntarily offered for them, though this was their case, and of enemies made them friends: and may be meant either of the impetration of reconciliation for them by his sufferings and death; or of the virtue and efficacy of it in the application of it; in the former sense the “now” refers to the coming of Christ into the

world, and the time of his death, and the offering up of his body once for all, when peace and reconciliation were completely made at once for all God's elect; in the latter sense it refers to the time of the conversion of these Colossians, when Christ by his Spirit, in consequence of reconciliation made in the body of his flesh, through death reconciled them to God; to his mind and will, to the way of salvation by himself, to the saints the excellent in the earth, to the Gospel and the ordinances of it, and to all his ways and worship.

Ver. 22. *In the body of his flesh through death*, etc.] Or "through his death", as the Alexandrian copy and some others, and all the Oriental versions, read. These words express the means by which that reconciliation was made, which in the virtue and efficacy of it was applied particularly to these Colossians at their conversion whereby their minds were actually reconciled to God, as "in" or "by the body of his flesh"; that is, by the offering up of his body on the accursed tree, in which he bore the sins of his people, and made reconciliation for them: and it is so called either to distinguish it from his mystical and spiritual body the church, of which he is the head before spoken of; or from his glorious and immortal body, as now raised and exalted at God's right hand; and to denote the truth of his human body, that it was a real fleshly body, consisting of flesh and blood as ours does, and the same with ours, and not an aerial, celestial bony, or a mere phantom; and also to signify the infirmity and mortality of it, being, excepting sin, in all points like to ours, and subject to death; and that it was in that body his Father prepared for him, and he assumed; and as he was clothed with it in the days of his flesh, or mortal state, that he made reconciliation for the sins of his people, and that "through death" in it; even the death of the cross, by which he bore the penalty of the law, the curse of it, made satisfaction to justice, obtained life, abolished death, and destroyed him that had the power of it, and fixed a sure and lasting peace for all his saints; his end in which was,

to present you holy and unblamable, and unreproveable in his sight. This presentation of the saints by Christ is either in his own sight, "before himself", as the Arabic version reads it; and is here in this present state, they being considered by him both as sanctified and as justified; he taking delight in the graces of his Spirit, and the exercise of them on himself, though imperfect, and in them as clothed with his spotless righteousness, in which they are perfectly comely, all fair, and without spot: or in the latter day glory, the New Jerusalem church state; when the church will be as a

bride prepared for her husband, will be brought into his presence in raiment of needlework, in fine linen clean and white, the righteousness of the saints, and be presented to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; or in the ultimate glory, when all the saints shall be for ever with him, continually before him, and in his sight; which is what his heart was set upon from everlasting, which he had in view in his sufferings and death, and still has in his prayers and preparations: or else this presentation is what has been or will be made before his Father, and in his sight; and which was partly done, when he gathered together all the elect in himself, and represented them on the cross, in the body of his flesh; and partly is now doing in heaven, where he appears in the presence of God for them, bears their names on his breastplate, presents their persons and their cases; and especially will be done at the last day, when he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and say, lo, I and the children thou hast given me: and who will be presented “holy” by him; he being their sanctification, and they having all their sins expiated by his sacrifice, and their persons washed and cleansed in his blood, and their hearts sanctified by his Spirit; which sanctification though it is imperfect in this life, yet will be completed by the author of it at death; without perfect holiness no man shall see God, or be presented in his sight: and this is in consequence of the death of Christ and reconciliation by it and a fruit of electing grace, by which persons are chosen in Christ, that they should be holy and without blame; and as here, “unblamable and unreproveable”: as they are, not now in themselves, but in Christ, as arrayed with his robe of righteousness and garments of salvation, being all glorious within, and their clothing of wrought gold, in which they will be introduced and presented to himself, and to his Father, faultless, with exceeding joy, and stand so before the throne, and that to all eternity.

Ver. 23. *If ye continue in the faith*, etc.] In the doctrine of faith which they had received and embraced; and in the grace of faith, and the exercise of it which was implanted in them; and in the profession of faith which they had made: not that the virtue and efficacy of Christ's blood, sufferings, and death, and reconciliation of their persons to God thereby, depended upon their faith, and abiding in it; but that faith and continuance in it were necessary means of their presentation in unblemished holiness and righteousness; for if they had not faith, or did not abide in it or if the good work of grace was not wrought upon their souls, and that performed until the day of Christ, they could not be presented holy and blameless: this shows the necessity of the saints' final perseverance in faith and holiness,

and is mentioned with this view, to put them upon a concern about it, and to make use of all means, under divine grace, to enjoy it; and nothing could more strongly incline and move unto it, than the blessed effect of Christ's death, reconciliation and the end of it, to present the reconciled ones blameless; in order to which it is necessary they should hold on and out to the end: hence the Ethiopic version reads the words, not as a condition, but as an exhortation enforced by what goes before; “therefore be ye established in the faith”: it follows,

grounded and settled; not on the sandy foundation of man's own righteousness, and peace made by his own performances; but upon the foundation and rock, Christ, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail; and so shall never finally and totally fall away, being rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith of him, in the doctrines of faith, respecting peace by his blood, justification by his righteousness, and life by his death; and so continue steadfast and immovable, always abounding in his work:

and [be] not moved away from the hope of the Gospel; the hope of eternal life and happiness, which as set before us in the Gospel; which that gives a good and solid ground and foundation of, in the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; and is the instrumental means, in the hand of the Spirit, of begetting to it, and of encouraging and increasing it: the law gives no hopes of eternal life to a poor sinner; it works wrath, and ministers death; there is nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment by it; but the Gospel encourages to hope in the Lord, from the consideration of rich mercy and plenteous redemption in him; and this hope of the Gospel is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, and not to be let go; this confidence and rejoicing of the hope is to be kept firm unto the end:

which ye have heard; that is, which Gospel they had heard from Epaphras their faithful minister, and that not only externally, but internally; they had heard it and believed it, and it had brought forth fruit in them; for it came to them not in word only, but in power; which is said in commendation of it, and to engage them to continue in it, and abide by it; as is also what follows:

[and] which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; and therefore since it was the same which was everywhere preached, they might depend upon the truth of it, should have the greater value for it, and by no means relinquish it. This must be understood not of every individual creature, even human and rational, that was then, or had been in, the

world; but that it had been, and was preached far and near, in all places all over the world, to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews; who are sometimes styled “every creature”, “the creature”, “the whole creation”, “all men”, etc. (see <41165>Mark 16:15 <450819>Romans 8:19-22) (<560211>Titus 2:11); and of this, the first preaching of the Gospel by Peter after our Lord's resurrection, was an emblem and pledge, (<440214>Acts 2:14-36); and some time after that, the sound of all the apostles went into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world:

whereof I Paul am made a minister; by Jesus Christ, who appeared unto him, and called, qualified, and sent him forth as such; and this is mentioned to encourage the Colossians to abide by the truths of the Gospel, since what they had heard and received were what were everywhere preached by the faithful ministers of the word; and particularly by the apostle, who was ordained to be a teacher and preacher of it to the Gentiles. The Alexandrian copy reads, “a preacher and an apostle, and a minister”; (see <540107>1 Timothy 2:7).

Ver. 24. *Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you*, etc.] The apostle, as soon as he had made mention of his being a minister of the Gospel, thinks and speaks of his “sufferings”; for those are what always more or less attend persons in such an office; they are appointed to them by God; Christ has foretold them of them; they are necessary for them; they must expect them, and patiently endure them: the apostle was under them now at this present time, for he wrote this epistle in his bonds when a prisoner at Rome, not for any immorality, any crime he had committed, but for Christ's sake, for his Gospel's sake, for the sake of the churches of Christ to whom he preached, for the confirmation of them, and so of these Colossians; and therefore he says, “for you”; and which he mentions to animate them to abide by the Gospel, for which he was suffering, that it might continue with them and others: nor was he distressed and discouraged at his afflictions, he “rejoiced” in them, because he had the presence of God in them, the Spirit of God and of glory rested on him, and God was glorified by them; he esteemed it an honour done him that grace was given, and he counted worthy to suffer for the sake of Christ; and as well knowing that he should live and reign with him, since he suffered with him and for him: and what greatly caused and increased his joy was what follows,

and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh; by which are meant not the afflictions or sufferings of Christ in his own

person; for these were all over, he was now entered into his glory, was exalted at the Father's right hand, and was crowned with glory and honour: there was nothing left behind of his sufferings, to be undergone by any of his people; he had drank of the cup and all the dregs of it; he had sustained the whole of his Father's wrath, and all the curses of the law, being abated nothing, but was made perfect through sufferings; having perfectly suffered all, he suffered once and once for all, he will suffer no more; nor is there any need of his suffering more or again, for he has finished sin, wrought righteousness, made peace, and obtained eternal redemption; nor had he any partner in his sufferings, nor did he need any, or left any part of his sufferings to be filled up by others; for he endured all and the whole, which the law and justice of God could require in his own body, in the body of his flesh through death; of these sufferings the apostle does not speak, but of such which he filled up in “his” own “flesh”; and design the afflictions of Christ in his members, which are called “his”, because of that near union there is between Christ and them; so that what befalls them may be predicated of him; when anyone of them suffers, he suffers with him, as the sufferings of a part of the body are ascribed to the whole person; and because of that sympathy there is between them, he has a fellow feeling with his people in all their infirmities; in all their afflictions he is afflicted: if Saul persecutes his saints, he persecutes him; whatever injury is done to them, he takes it as done to himself, who are to him as the apple of his eye. Moreover, hereby they are conformed unto him, and made like him; as he was, so are they in this world; there is a good deal of likeness between the afflictions of Christ and his people, though in some things there is a great disparity; add to this, that the afflictions of the saints are endured for Christ's sake, for the sake of his Gospel, and the profession of his name, and therefore called his, and the more cheerfully bore by them: now of these there were some remains to be filled up by the apostle; not that all the afflictions of the whole body of Christ were to be, or have been filled up by him; there was a great deal left behind by him to be filled up by others, and which has been filling up ever since, and still is, and yet all is not fulfilled to this day, nor will be till the end of time; but he speaks only of that part and measure of them, which was to be tilled up in his flesh; he had his measure of afflictions allotted to him, great part of which he had endured already, but some remained, the measure was not yet full, though pretty near being completed, which gave him pleasure; it was just filling up, and the time of his departure was at hand, when there would be no more sorrow; for it was only while he was in the flesh he was filling up this measure, and would be

quickly up; and what added to his joy was, that as these were the afflictions of Christ, and the measure of them was appointed by his heavenly Father, to be filled up by him in this mortal state, so they were

for his body's sake, which is the church; not in the room and stead of the church, and people of Christ, as were the sufferings of Christ personal; or to exempt them from sufferings who all have their share in this life; nor for their sins to make reconciliation for them, and procure the remission of them; nor to redeem them, or obtain salvation for them, all which is completed by Christ; but for their good and profit, that the Gospel might continue and be blessed to the conversion of many, for the increase of the church and additions to it, and for the furtherance of the Gospel, and that such who professed it might be established and confirmed in it, by the sufferings of the apostle for it: and such good effects did follow upon his sufferings and afflictions; they were for the consolation of many souls, the strengthening of weak believers, and causing even preachers of the Gospel to wax more confident, and more boldly preach the Gospel without fear of man.

Ver. 25. *Whereof I am made a minister*, etc.] Not of Christ, or of the Gospel as before, though both were true; but of the churches for whose sake he endured afflictions; and which carries in it a reason of his suffering for them: he was not a saviour of the body, nor a redeemer of the church, nor Lord of it; but a minister, a servant of it, that ministered to it in holy things, in the word and ordinances; not a deacon, as the word, sometimes signifies, nor an ordinary minister, or a pastor of a particular church; but a minister of the church in general, being an apostle sent to preach the Gospel everywhere: he was made a minister of it, not by men, or anything he received from men; nor by himself, not by usurpation, he did not thrust himself into this office, or take it upon him of himself; but was put into it by Christ, who counted him faithful, he appeared to him, and made him a minister, qualified him for this office, called him to it, and sent him to perform it: and which he executed

according to the dispensation of God: or divine economy, which denotes such an authority and administration as is used in a family. The church is God's family, it is called the house and household of God, and the household of faith, part of which is in heaven and part on earth; God is the householder or master of the family; Christ is the Son over his own house; ministers are stewards in it, and their work is to give to everyone their

portion of meat in due season; their authority from God to do so, and the exercise of it, are the economy or dispensation of the Gospel committed to them: this is of God and not man, for none but God can give them a power to dispense it, and which is purely of his grace, called therefore the dispensation of the grace of God, (<4002>Ephesians 3:2); and here said to be given,

which is given to me for you; not according to any merits of his, who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an injurious person to Christ and his Gospel; but according to the pure grace of God, and that not for himself, but for the good of others, for the Gentiles especially, and so for the Colossians:

to fulfil the word of God; either the promises and prophecies contained in the word of God, respecting the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, and their conversion by it; which had in a great measure their accomplishment through the ministry of the apostle: or to fill all places with the word of God and Gospel of Christ, as the apostle did from Jerusalem, and round about to Illyricum, diffusing the savour of the knowledge of Christ in every place; and sinners being converted, churches were planted and daily filled with such as should be saved; or to preach fully and faithfully the Gospel, keeping back nothing that was profitable, but declaring the whole counsel of God, continuing faithful to it to the end, as he did: to fill up or fulfil words is an Hebraism, and signifies to confirm them, or act according to them; (see <1001>1 Kings 1:14) and the Septuagint there.

Ver. 26. *[Even] the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations*, etc.] This is said, as explanative of the word of God; signifying that he did not mean the Scriptures in general, which are the word of God, and every part of them; some part of which is historical, another prophetical, another practical, and another doctrinal; nor the law, which also is the word of God, but the Gospel, called “the mystery”, as it often is; because it contains things, which, though revealed, are mysteries to a natural man; and even to enlightened persons, who have the clearest view of them, the “modus” of them is not to be accounted for; such as the doctrines of the Trinity, of the union of the two natures in Christ, the incarnation of the Son of God, the union and communion of the church with Christ, the resurrection of the dead, etc. And though perhaps great and special regard may be here had to the calling of the Gentiles, which,

though revealed in the prophecies of the Old Testament, was in a great measure hid in them, and not so clearly known in ages and generations past as now, yet the whole may be applied to the Gospel mystery in general; which was first hid in the heart of God, in his thoughts and purposes, in his counsel and covenant, and in his Son, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and then in the ceremonies and shadows of the law, which but few had any insight into, and discerning of; and, during that dispensation, was wholly hid from the Gentiles; and but in part known by the Jews, and but by a few, and comparatively by them very darkly; and not so clearly by the angels themselves, who pry into these mysteries, and now, under the Gospel dispensation, learn from the church the manifold wisdom of God; and indeed it was hidden from all men, Jews and Gentiles, in a state of nature, and even from the wise and prudent of this world:

but now is made manifest to his saints; now under the Gospel dispensation, since the coming of Christ; there is an external revelation of the Gospel by him, more clearly, by whom grace and truth came, called the revelation of Christ; and an internal revelation of it by his Spirit, who is the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him; which is made to saints, the holy apostles and prophets, who are the saints to whom this faith, and the mystery of it, were first delivered with so much power and evidence; and to all the elect of God, whom he has separated for himself in eternal election; whom Christ has sanctified by his blood, and to whom he is made sanctification; and who are called with an holy calling, have principles of grace and holiness wrought in them by the Spirit of God, and therefore called “his” saints; these have only a spiritual discerning of the Gospel, for the natural man neither knows nor receives it.

Ver. 27. *To whom God would make known*, etc.] The spring and cause of the manifestation of the Gospel to the saints, and chosen of God, is not their works, for God does not call them with an holy calling according to them, but according to his own grace; nor any preparations and dispositions in them before such manifestation, towards the Gospel and the truths of it, for there are none such naturally in men, but all the reverse; nor a foresight of their better improvement of it, when made known, for this is not the method of divine grace, witness the instances of Sodom and Gomorrha, Tyre and Sidon; nor any holiness in them, or because they were sanctified, for they became so by the power of divine grace, through the Gospel revelation; but it is the pure sovereign good will and pleasure of God; (see <4009>Ephesians 1:9 <4011>Matthew 11:25,26); as appears from what

they were before the Gospel came unto them, what is made known to them in it and by it; and from this, that they and not others, equally as deserving, are favoured with it:

what [is] the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles. The apostle, besides calling the Gospel a “mystery”, as before, ascribes “glory” to it; it is a glorious mystery, there is a glory in all the mysteries of it; it is a glorious Gospel, as it is often called, in its author, subject, matter, use, and efficacy: and also “riches” of glory, or glorious riches; containing rich truths, an immense treasure of them, comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones; rich blessings of justification, pardon, reconciliation, adoption, and eternal life; and rich promises, relating both to this life, and that which is to come; all which were opened and made known, not to the Jews only, but “among the Gentiles” also; who before were aliens, enemies, exceeding wicked, poor, blind, and miserable, but now, through the Gospel, were become rich and glorious, wise, knowing, and happy:

which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; this is to be connected with all that goes before: Christ is the riches of the Gospel; the riches of the divine perfections, which the Gospel more clearly displays than the works of creation or providence, are all in Christ, the fulness of them dwells in him; and this is the grace the Gospel reveals, that he, who was rich with all these, became poor to make us rich; the rich promises of the Gospel were all made to Christ, and are all yea and “Amen” in him; the rich blessings of it are all in his hands, righteousness, peace, and pardon, the riches both of grace and glory; the rich treasures of its divine truths are hid in him; and he is the substance of everyone of them: Christ is also the glory of the Gospel, inasmuch as he is the author, preacher, and subject of it; it is full of the glory of his person, both as the only begotten of the Father, and as the only Mediator between God and man; it is the glass through which this is seen: moreover, the glory of God in him is expressed hereby; the glory of his wisdom and power, of his truth and faithfulness, of his justice and holiness, of his love, grace, and mercy, and every other perfection, is eminently held forth in the Gospel; as this is great in the salvation and redemption of his people by Christ, which the Gospel brings the good news of; add to this, that that glory which the saints shall have with Christ, and will lie in the enjoyment of him to all eternity, is brought to light in the Gospel: Christ is also the mystery of the Gospel; he is one of the persons in the mystery of the Trinity; the mystery of his divine sonship, of his divine person, being God and yet man, man and yet God, and both in one person, and of his

incarnation and redemption, makes a considerable part of the Gospel: and Christ, who is the sum and substance of it, is "in" his people; not only as the omnipresent God, as the author of the light of nature, as the Creator of all things, in whom all live, move, and have their beings, but in a way of special grace; and the phrase is expressive of a revelation of him in them, of their possession of him, of his inhabitation in them by his Spirit and grace, particularly by faith, and of their communion with him, in consequence of their union to him; and being so, he is the ground and foundation of their hopes of glory. There is a glory which the saints are hoping for, which the glories of this world are but a faint resemblance of; which is unseen at present, and which the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared unto; what is eternal, and which Christ has entered into, and took possession of; and what will greatly consist in beholding his glory, and in everlasting communion with him; this through grace saints have a good hope of, and are waiting for, and even rejoice at times in the hope of it; of which hope Christ is the foundation; for not only the promise of it is with him, but the glory itself is in his hands; the gift of it is with him, and through him; he has made way by his sufferings and death for the enjoyment of it, and is now preparing it for them, by his presence and intercession; his grace makes them meet for it, his righteousness gives them a title to it, and his Spirit is the earnest of it, and the substance of it will be the fruition of himself.

Ver. 28. *Whom we preach*, etc.] Under the above considerations; as the riches, the glory, and the mystery of the Gospel; as the hope set before lost sinners to lay hold upon; as the only Saviour and Redeemer, by whose righteousness believers are justified, through whose blood their sins are pardoned, by whose sacrifice and satisfaction atonement is made, and in whose person alone is acceptance with God: Christ and him crucified, and salvation by him, were the subjects of the ministry of the apostles; on this they dwelt, and it was this which was blessed for the conversion of sinners, the edification of saints, the planting of churches, and the setting up and establishing the kingdom and interest of Christ:

warning every man; of his lost state and condition by nature; of the wrath to come, and the danger he is in of it; of the terrors of the Lord, and of an awful judgment; showing sinners that they are unrighteous and unholy, that their nature is corrupt and impure, their best righteousness imperfect, and cannot justify them before God; that they stand guilty before him, and that

destruction and misery are in all their ways; and therefore advise them to flee from the wrath to come, to the hope set before them in the Gospel:

and teaching every man in all wisdom; not natural, but spiritual and evangelical; the whole Gospel of Christ, the counsel of God, the wisdom of God in a mystery, and all the branches of it; teaching them to believe in Christ for salvation, to lay hold on his righteousness for justification, to deal with his blood for pardon, and with his sacrifice for the atonement of their sins; and to observe all things commanded by Christ, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly: by these two words, "warning" and "teaching", the several parts of the Gospel ministry are expressed; and which extend to all sorts of men, rich and poor, bond and free, greater and lesser sinners, Gentiles as well as Jews; and who are chiefly designed here, and elsewhere, by every man and every creature:

that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; not in themselves, in which sense no man is perfect in this life; but in the grace, holiness, and righteousness of Christ, in whom all the saints are complete: or it may regard that ripeness of understanding, and perfection of knowledge, which, when arrived unto, saints become perfect men in Christ; and is the end of the Gospel ministry, and to which men are brought by it; (see Ephesians 4:13); and to be understood of the presentation of the saints, not by Christ to himself, and to his Father, but by the ministers of the Gospel, as their glory and crown of rejoicing in the day of Christ.

Ver. 29. *Whereunto I also labour*, etc.] In the word and doctrine, by preaching Christ, warning sinners of their danger, teaching them the way of salvation, and their duty; with this view, that, in thee great day of account, he might bring a large number of them, and set them before Christ as the seals of his ministry, as instances of the grace of Christ, and as perfect in him:

striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily; meaning either in his prayers, earnestly entreating of God that he would succeed his labours, and bless them to the conversion of many; which sense is favoured by the Syriac version, which renders it, Pçktmw, "and make supplication"; that is, with that effectual fervent prayer, which was powerfully wrought in him: or in his ministry, combating with many enemies, fighting the good fight of faith; not in his own strength, but through the power of Christ; which enabled him to preach the Gospel far and near, in season and out of

season; which supported his outward man, and strengthened his inward man for that service, and made it effectual to the good of the souls of many: some refer this to the signs, wonders, and miracles, which Christ wrought by him, for the confirmation of the Gospel; but the other sense, which takes in both the power by which he was assisted in preaching, both in body and soul, and that which went along with his ministry to make it useful to others, is to be preferred.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO COLOSSIANS 2

In this chapter the apostle expresses his great concern for the Colossians, and others he had never seen; exhorts them to constancy in the faith of Christ; warns them of false teachers, and their tenets; takes notice of various blessings and privileges they had by Christ, and cautions against several superstitions and corruptions, which were obtaining among the churches of Christ: in (Colossians 2:1) the apostle declares the conflict he had for the persons he writes to, and for others, though they had never seen him, which he was desirous they might be acquainted with; partly for the comfort of their hearts, their cement in love, and the improvement of their knowledge of divine things, the treasures of which are in Christ, (Colossians 2:2,3), and partly that they might not be deceived by the enticing words of the false teachers, (Colossians 2:4), and should his absence and distance from them be objected to his professed concern and affection for them, he answers, that notwithstanding that, he was present with them in spirit, and had a discerning of their faith and order, and the steadfastness thereof, with pleasure, (Colossians 2:5), wherefore he exhorts them to perseverance in the faith of Christ, and to an abounding: in it, (Colossians 2:6,7), and to take heed of being hurt by the vain philosophy and traditions of the Jews, but to keep close to Christ, and the truths of his Gospel, seeing all fulness is in him, and they were full in him, who is over all, and superior to all, and therefore had no need to have recourse unto, and hearken to any other, (Colossians 2:9,10), nor did they need any Jewish ordinances, particularly circumcision, since they were partakers of another and better circumcision in Christ; and besides, were buried in baptism with him; and even though they had been dead in sin, and in their fleshly uncircumcision, yet they were alive, quickened with Christ, and had the forgiveness of all their sins for his sake; who had freed them from the ceremonial law, and had rid them of all their former lords and masters, and had brought them into the liberty of the Gospel, (Colossians 2:11-15), wherefore he concludes, by way of exhortation and advice, first with respect to Jewish ceremonies, not to suffer them to be imposed upon them, or to regard the censures of men for the non-

observance of them, since these were but shadows, of which Christ is the substance, (Colossians 2:16,17), and next with respect to the worship of angels, under a notion of humility, some were for introducing; who are described as bold intruders, vain, proud, and conceited persons, and as not holding the head Christ, to whom the body the church is joined, and by whom it is nourished and increased, (Colossians 2:18,19), and seeing now they that are Christ's are dead with him to the ceremonial law, and that dead to them, the apostle argues that they should not be subject to the ordinances, commands, and doctrines of men; some of which he instances in, as if they were still under the rudiments of the world; and the rather, since these things had no true wisdom in them, only a show of it, and were no other than will worship and superstition, and lay in a negligence of the body, and were dishonourable and unsatisfying, (Colossians 2:20-23).

Ver. 1. *For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you*, etc.] This is occasioned by what he had said in (Colossians 1:29), that he laboured and strove according to the energy of divine power in him, to present every man perfect in Christ; and lest these Colossians should think that these labours and strivings of his were only for all and every of those persons among whom he was, and to whom he personally preached, he would have them know, observe, and assure themselves, that the great conflict, strife, and agony, in which he was engaged, was for them also; by which he means, his fervent prayers and wrestlings with God, the conflicts he had in his own mind, with his own spirit, about the good of the churches of Christ, the care of which were upon him, and even of those to whom he was by face unknown, sometimes hoping, sometimes fearing, sometimes rejoicing, at other times weeping, at what he heard concerning them; also his combats with the false apostles, striving and earnestly contending for the faith of the Gospel, giving no place to them, no, not for an hour, defending truth, refuting error, and fighting the good fight of faith, by preaching, writing, and disputing; likewise the various persecutions, great afflictions, and hardships he met with from men, for the sake of the Gospel; add to all this, the frequent battles he had with the enemy of souls, his wrestlings against principalities and powers, the many temptations of Satan with which he was attacked, to draw him off from the service of Christ, to weaken his hands, and hinder his success in it; all which he endured and went through with a greatness of mind, and that for the good of the churches of Christ, and the glory of his name, which were the great things he had in view and among others, for the good of these Colossians,

and [for] them at Laodicea; the saints of that place, the church of Christ which was there; and is the rather mentioned, because near to Colosse: it was a famous city by the river Lycus, first called Diospolis, and then Rhoas [f15], and afterwards Laodicea; it was the metropolis of Phrygia, in which Colosse stood: hence this epistle is ordered to be read to them also, they being infested with false teachers, and in the same situation and circumstances as the Colossians were; and though the apostle was unknown to both of them, having never been at either place, yet was heartily concerned for each of their welfare, and he strove for them as he did for others; one of Stephens's copies adds, “and them in Hierapolis”; (see <5104 13>Colossians 4:13).

And [for] as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; meaning the churches in Christ, and believers in him; such as had never heard him preach, nor had any personal knowledge of him, and conversation with him, which tend to knit the hearts of Christians more firmly together; yet his heart was towards them, he laboured for them, by praying for them, writing to them, suffering all things for their sakes, for the confirmation of them, and of the Gospel of Christ. Christian love and care, and the benefit of the labours and sufferings of Gospel ministers, extend and reach to persons that never saw them.

Ver. 2. *That their hearts might be comforted*, etc.] Here follow the reasons why the apostle had so great a conflict, on account of the above persons, and why he was so desirous they should know it; one is, the consolation of their hearts. The hearts of God's people often need comfort, by reason of indwelling sin, the temptations of Satan, the hidings of God's face, and afflictive providences; and by reason of false teachers, who greatly trouble them, unsettle their minds, weaken their faith, and fill them with doubts and perplexities, and which was the case with these churches: now the business of Gospel ministers is to comfort such; this is the commission they are sent with; the doctrines of the Gospel are calculated for this very purpose, such as full redemption, free justification, complete pardon of sin, peace and reconciliation; and the bent of their ministry is to comfort distressed minds, upon what account soever; and it must be a comfort to these churches, when they found that they were regarded by so great an apostle; and it might tend to confirm them in the doctrine they had received at first, and deliver them from the scruples the false apostles had injected into their minds, and so administer comfort to them, when they perceived that the

apostle approved of the Gospel they had heard and embraced, and rejected the notions of the false teachers:

being knit together in love: as the members of an human body are, by joints and bands; as love is the bond of union between God and his people, Christ and his members, so between saints and saints; it is the cement that joins and keeps them together, and which edifies and builds them up, and whereby they increase with the increase of God; it makes them to be of one heart and one soul; it renders their communion with one another comfortable and delightful, and strengthens them against the common enemy, who is for dividing, and so destroying; and is what is the joy of Gospel ministers, and what they labour at and strive for, and which is another reason of the apostle's conflict:

and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding; that is, spiritual knowledge and understanding, or the understanding of spiritual things; for the understanding of things natural and civil is not designed; nor a mere notional knowledge of spiritual things, which persons may have, and yet not charity, or love, with which this is here joined; and such an one also, which is sure and certain: for as there is such a thing as the assurance of faith, and the assurance of hope, so likewise of understanding of the Gospel, and the truths of it; concerning which there ought to be no doubt, being to be received upon the credit of a divine testimony: moreover, such a knowledge and understanding of divine things is intended, as is large and abundant, signified by “all riches”; for though it is not complete and perfect in this life, yet it takes a vast compass, and reaches to all the deep things of God; to whatever relates to the person and grace of Christ; to all the things of the Spirit of God; to all the blessings and promises of the covenant of grace; to the riches both of grace and glory, to the things of time and eternity, and which is more clearly explained by the following clause:

to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; that is, to a greater and more perfect knowledge, approbation, and confession of the Gospel, which he had in the preceding chapter called the mystery; (see <51026>Colossians 1:26,27), and here “the mystery of God”, which he is both the author and subject of: it is by him as the efficient cause, ordained by him, and hid in him before the world was; and it is of him, as the subject matter of it; not as the God of nature and providence, which the works of both declare; but as the God of all grace, as God in Christ, which is the peculiar discovery of the Gospel: and “of” him as “the

Father" of Christ, which is not discoverable by the light of nature, nor known by natural reason, but is a point of divine revelation; and "of" him as the Father of his people by adoption; and of all his grace, in election to grace and glory; in predestination to sonship, and in the council and covenant of grace; in the scheme of salvation and redemption; in the mission of his Son, and the gift of him as a Saviour and Redeemer. The copulative "and" before "the Father", is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, which read "the mystery of God the Father"; and with it, it may be rendered, as it sometimes is, God, "even the Father": though the word "God" may be considered essentially, and as after distinguished into two of the persons of the Godhead; "the Father" the first person, so called, in relation to his Son, which is no small part of the mystery of the Gospel; and "Christ" the second person, who is equally God with the Father; and the Spirit, who, though not mentioned, is not excluded from this adorable mystery: and which is the mystery "of Christ", he being both the efficient cause and the subject matter of it; it treats of his deity and personality; of his offices, as Mediator, prophet, priest, and King; of his incarnation and redemption; of his grace, righteousness, sacrifice, and satisfaction; of justification by him, pardon through him, and acceptance in him.

Ver. 3. *In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*.] This may be understood either of the mystery of the Gospel, which contains the rich mines and hidden treasures of all divine truths; so called, because of the richness and intrinsic value and excellency of them; and because of their variety and abundance, being the unsearchable riches of Christ: or of Christ himself; and not so much of his personal wisdom, either as God, being the all-wise God, the wisdom of God, an omniscient Being, that knows all persons and things whatever, within the whole circle of wisdom and knowledge; or as man, whose wisdom and knowledge, though created, was very large and abundant; or as Mediator, on whom the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and of knowledge, rests; but of that fulness of truth as well as grace, which dwells in him as in its subject and fountain; by whom it comes, and from whom it is derived unto us; and our highest wisdom and knowledge lies in knowing him, whom to know is life eternal; and the excellency of whose knowledge surpasses everything else; it is the greatest riches, and most valuable treasure; nor is there anything worth knowing but what is in Christ, all is laid up in him: and being said to be "hid" in him, shows the excellency of the wisdom and knowledge that is in

him only valuable things being hid, or compared to hid treasure; that this cannot be had without knowing him; that it is imperfect in the present state, and is not yet fully and clearly revealed; and therefore should be inquired after, and searched for, and Christ should be applied unto for it: atmkj yzmn, "treasures of wisdom", is a phrase used by the Targumist [f16].

Ver. 4. *And this I say*, etc.] That he had such a conflict for them, and had told them of his care and fear on their account, and had signified his great desire that they might arrive to a more large and certain knowledge of the mysteries of grace, and had asserted that all solid spiritual wisdom and knowledge were in Christ; all which he said, to show his affection for them; to observe unto them, that there was no need to seek for wisdom and knowledge elsewhere, since there was such a fulness of it in Christ, and the Gospel; and to put them upon their guard against false teachers:

lest any man should beguile you with enticing words; by which are meant, not apt and pertinent words, such as are suited to the minds of men, and proper to convey right ideas of divine truth, poignant expressions, sound speech, and strong reasonings; for such the apostle himself used, and yet not enticing words of men's wisdom; and which design mere words, great swelling words of vanity, which like bubbles look big, and make a great noise, but contain nothing but wind and emptiness; fair speeches, specious pretences, false colourings, fallacious reasonings, a show of probability, and appearance of science, falsely so called; whereby deceitful workers, such as the followers of Simon Magus and the Gnostics, used, whom the apostle had in view; beguiled unstable souls, and deceived the hearts of the simple: wherefore the apostle said the above things, showing that all true wisdom was in Christ, and all spiritual knowledge was in the pure and unmixed Gospel; which was not to be parted with for other things, which through art and management, and the cunning craftiness of men, might at first sight carry in them a show of probability, and appearance of truth. The gold, the silver, and precious stones of divine truths, which have been proved by the standard, are not to be given up for such as only look like them, being wrought up through the fallacy of men; who by a set of unmeaning words, paralogisms, and false reasonings, lie in wait to deceive.

Ver. 5. *For though I be absent in the flesh*, etc.] Or body, as the Ethiopic version reads it, and as it is expressed in (1 Corinthians 5:3); here the apostle anticipates an objection which might be made, how he could have such a conflict and concern for them, and express so much affection for

them, and know so much of their affairs, in what condition and situation they were, and how liable to be deceived by false teachers, when he was absent from them, and had never been among them. That he had never been corporeally present with them, nor was he then, he owns; but this did not hinder but that he might be in another sense present with them, and so have cognizance of them and their state, and be affected towards them, and concerned for them:

yet am I with you in the spirit; as he was with the Corinthians in the place above cited, judging the incestuous person, determining concerning his case, and delivering him up to Satan, and so he was with these Colossians; for as he was a member of the same body with them, he was actuated by the same spirit; and by virtue of their union to each other in their common head, his spirit went out towards them, his heart was knit unto them; he had the same affection for them, and care of them, though he had never seen them with his bodily eyes, as he had for those whom he had seen: moreover, this may regard that extraordinary discerning and presence of his spirit which he had; and which was of the same kind with that of Elisha, when his servant Gehazi went after Naaman the Syrian, and took a present of him, to whom on his return he said, upon his denying that he had been anywhere, “went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee?” (2 Kings 5:26). Elisha's spirit went, and was present with him, and saw and knew all that passed, being under the impulse and inspiration of the Spirit of God, who made all known unto him: so the spirit of the Apostle Paul was at the church at Colosse, and saw: and discerned their whole estate; this being made known by the Spirit of God, under whose inspiration he wrote this letter, suitable to their case:

joying and beholding your order; or as the Syriac version renders it, “I rejoice that I can see your order”: that is, with pleasure observe, consider it, and contemplate on it; and that partly from the relation of Epaphras, and chiefly from the intimations of the Spirit of God in an extraordinary way: by their “order” is meant, either their orderly walk and conversation, which being as becomes the Gospel of Christ, was very pleasing and delightful to the apostle; or rather the order of their church discipline, they having regular officers, pastors, and deacons, ordained among them; who rightly performed their offices, and had respect and subjection yielded to them; the ordinances of the Gospel were duly administered, and constantly attended on; the members of the church were watched over, admonitions given, and censures laid where they were necessary, and everything was done decently

and in order; which was a beautiful sight, and gave the apostle an uncommon pleasure. The word used signifies a military order, such as is observed in armies, in battle array; suggesting, that these Christians were good soldiers of Christ, were enlisted under his banners, and kept in due order, in rank and file; stood fast in one spirit, contended and strove together for the faith of the Gospel, fought the good fight of faith, nor could any hardship move them from their station; so that they were, in the apostle's eye, beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, and terrible as an army with banners, (<200604>Song of Solomon 6:4); and so may denote their attachment to the Gospel, and to one another; they were united to, and abode by each other; they served the Lord with one consent, and kept the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace, (<490403>Ephesians 4:3), which is a pleasant thing to behold, as well as what follows;

and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ; either in the grace of faith, and the exercise of it on Christ, in opposition to doubtings and unbelief; whereby God is honoured, and with which he is well pleased; souls are filled with peace and joy; Satan is resisted and overcome; and the hearts of others, particularly ministers of the Gospel, are comforted: or in the doctrine of faith respecting Christ, in which they stood fast; notwithstanding there was a majority against it, the wise and learned, the rich and mighty, did not receive it; and though it was opposed by false teachers, persecuted by profane men, and loaded with reproach and obloquy; and also in the profession of it, which they held without wavering: now to see a set of Christians, a church of Christ walking together in Gospel order, steady in their faith on Christ, abiding by the doctrine of faith, and maintaining an honourable profession, how beautiful and delightful is it!

Ver. 6. *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord*, etc.] Receiving Christ is believing in him: faith is the eye of the soul, that sees the beauty, glory, fulness, and suitableness of Christ; the foot that goes to him, and the hand that takes hold on him, and the arm that receives and embraces him; so that this is not a receiving him into the head by notion, but into the heart by faith; and not in part only, but in whole: faith receives a whole Christ, his person as God and man; him in all his offices, as prophet, priest, and King; particularly as a Saviour and Redeemer, he being under that character so exceeding suitable to the case of a sensible sinner; and it receives all blessings of grace along with him, from him, and through him; as a justifying righteousness, remission of sins, adoption of children,

grace for grace, and an inheritance among all them that are sanctified; and both Christ and them, as the free grace gifts of God; which men are altogether undeserving of, and cannot possibly give any valuable consideration for: so these Colossians had received Christ gladly, joyfully, willingly, and with all readiness; and especially as “the Lord”, on which there is a peculiar emphasis in the text; they had received him and believed in him, as the one and only Lord and head of the church; as the one and only Mediator between God and man, to the exclusion of angels, the worship of which the false teachers were introducing; they had received the doctrines of Christ, and not the laws of Moses, which judaizing preachers were desirous of joining with them; they had heard and obeyed the Son, and not the servant; they had submitted to the authority of Christ as King of saints, and had been subject to his ordinances; wherefore the apostle exhorts them to continue and go on, believing in him, and holding to him the head:

[so] walk ye in him; not only in imitation of him as he walked, in the exercise of grace, as love, patience, humility, and meekness, and in the discharge of duty; but by faith in him, going on in a way of believing in him, always looking to him, leaning on him, and deriving grace and strength from him: to walk in Christ, is to walk in and after the Spirit of Christ, under his influence, by his direction, and through his assistance; and to walk in the doctrine of Christ, abiding by it, and increasing in the knowledge of it; and to walk in the ordinances of Christ, which with ills presence and spirit, are ways of pleasantness and paths of peace: particularly here it may signify, to make use of Christ, and walk on in him, as the way, truth, and the life; as the only way of access to God, and acceptance with him; as the way of salvation, as the only true way to eternal life and happiness, in opposition to every creature, angels, or men; the worshipping of the one, or works done by the other.

Ver. 7. *Rooted and built up in him*, etc.] By these metaphors, the apostle expresses the safe and happy state of these believers; and which he makes use of as arguments, to engage them to walk on in Christ, and as pointing out the manner in which they should. Believers are sometimes compared to trees, and are trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord; and their root is Christ, from whence as such they spring, and by whom they are filled with the fruits of righteousness; in him they are to abide, keep close unto him, and walk in him; deriving all their life, nourishment, fruitfulness, grace, and perseverance in it, from him as their root: they are also

sometimes compared to a building, to an house, a temple, an habitation for God; and Christ is the sure and only foundation on which they are laid, and where they are safe and secure; and, being fitly joined together, grow up as an holy temple to the Lord; and this being their case, they are to go on laying the whole stress of their salvation on him, building their faith and hope of eternal glory entirely upon him; and building up one another also on their most holy faith, of which he is the substance, as it follows:

and stablished in the faith: that of Christ, or in the doctrine of faith which respects Christ: the apostle here expresses the same thing without a figure, which he had signified by the two foregoing metaphors, and explains what he means by them; namely, that they were well settled and grounded in their faith in Christ, and thoroughly instructed and established in the doctrines of the Gospel; and a very good thing it is to have the heart established with grace, both as a principle and a doctrine; which is God's work, and was the happy case of these persons; wherefore it became them to act as such, and not be like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, or carried about with divers and strange doctrines, but abide by those which had been preached to them by the faithful ministers of Christ, and they had received: as

ye have been taught: by Epaphras their minister, and others; and therefore should not listen to false teachers, and to a contrary doctrine taught by them; considering of whom they had learnt the true doctrine, what evidence it carried with it, and what use it had been of to them, in convincing, converting, comforting, instructing, and establishing them: and therefore should be

abounding therein with thanksgiving; that is, in the faith; as in the grace, so in the doctrine of faith; for as saints are to abound in the work of the Lord, and in every good work, and in the exercise of every grace, so in the knowledge of truth; (see <4007>2 Corinthians 8:7); and to make use of all means for the increase of, and growth in Gospel grace and light, and the knowledge of a crucified Christ, which is meant by abounding: for all which there is great reason for thanksgiving; both for the unspeakable gift of Christ, who is received as such by faith, and in whom believers are rooted and built up; and for faith itself, which is the gift of God; and also for the Gospel, and the truths of it; and for every degree of spiritual light in it, and knowledge of it.

Ver. 8. *Beware lest any man spoil you*, etc.] Or despoil you; rob you of the rich treasure of the Gospel, strip you of your spiritual armour, take away from you the truths and doctrines of Christ, and divest you of your spiritual privileges and blessings; suggesting, that the false teachers were thieves and robbers, and men of prey: or drive and carry you away as spoils, as the innocent harmless sheep are drove, and carried away by wolves, and by the thief that comes to steal, to kill, and destroy; intimating, that such as these were the heretics of those times; wherefore it became them to be upon their guard, to watch, look out, and beware, lest they should be surprised by these deceitful workers, who lay in wait to deceive; were wolves in sheep's clothing, who transformed themselves into the apostles of Christ; and therefore it became them to take heed, lest any man hurt them, be he ever so wise and learned, or be thought ever so good, religious, and sincere; since men of this cast put on such masks and false appearances, on purpose to beguile. The things by which they imposed upon weak minds are as follow, and therefore to be shunned, avoided, and rejected:

through philosophy: not right philosophy, or true wisdom, the knowledge of God, of the things of nature, of things natural, moral, and civil; which may be attained unto by the use of reason, and light of nature. The apostle does not mean to condemn all arts and sciences, as useless and hurtful, such as natural philosophy in its various branches, ethics, logic, rhetoric, etc. when kept within due bounds, and in their proper place and sphere; for with instances of these the Scriptures themselves abound; but he means that philosophy, or science, which is falsely so called, the false notions of philosophers; such as the eternity of matter, and of this world, the mortality of souls, the worshipping of demons and angels, etc. and also such principles in philosophy, which in themselves, and in the things of nature, are true, but, when applied to divine things, to things above nature, the mere effects of divine power and grace, and of pure revelation, are false; as that out of nothing, nothing can be made, which in the things of nature is true, but not to be applied to the God of nature, who has made the world out of nothing; as also that from a privation to an habit there is no return, which is naturally true, but not to be applied to supernatural things, and supernatural agency; witness the miracles of Christ, in restoring sight to the blind, life to the dead, etc. and therefore is not to be employed against the resurrection of the dead: philosophy may be useful as an handmaid; it is not to be a mistress in theological things; it may subserve, but not govern; it is not to be made use of as a judge, or rule in such matters; the natural man,

on these principles, neither knows nor receives the things of the Spirit of God; judgment is not to be made and formed according to them; as of a trinity of persons in the Godhead; of the sonship of Christ, and his incarnation; of man's redemption by him, of reconciliation and satisfaction by his blood and sacrifice, of the pardon of sin, of a sinner's justification, of the resurrection of the dead, and such like articles of faith: that philosophy which is right, can only be a rule of judgment in things relating to it, and not in those which are out of its sphere: in a word, the apostle here condemns the philosophy of the Jews, and of the Gnostics; the former had introduced natural philosophy into the worship and service of God, and the things appertaining to their religion; and had made the tabernacle and temple, and the most holy place, and the things belonging thereunto, emblems and hieroglyphics of natural things; as of the sun, moon, and stars, and their influences, and of the four elements, and of moral virtue, etc. as appears from the writings of Josephus [f17], and Philo [f18]; when they were types and representatives of spiritual things under the Gospel dispensation; and the latter had brought in the philosophy of Pythagoras and Plato, concerning abstinences, purgations, sacrifices, and ceremonies of worship, given to demons and angels: in short, the apostle's meaning is, that philosophy is not to be mixed with the pure Gospel of Christ; it has always been fatal to it; witness the school of Pantaenus in Alexandria, in the early times of Christianity, by which the simplicity of the Gospel was greatly corrupted; and the race of schoolmen a few centuries ago, who introduced the philosophy of Aristotle, Averrois, and others, into all the subjects of divinity: to observe no more, such kind of philosophy is here meant, which may be truly called

vain deceit: that is, that which is vain and empty, and has no solid foundation, even in nature and reason itself; and which being applied to divine things and religious observances, is deceitful and delusory:

after the tradition of men; either of the Gentiles, who had their traditions in religion; or of the Jews, called the traditions of the elders, and of the fathers, which the Pharisees were fond of, by which they transgressed the commandments of God; which the apostle was brought up in, and was zealous of formerly, but now was delivered from, and rightly condemned as idle, trifling, and pernicious:

after the rudiments of the world, or “the elements of the world”; not the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water; or the worship of the sun,

moon, and stars, etc. among the idolatrous Gentiles, but the ceremonial laws of the Jews; (see <4808>Galatians 4:8,9); which were that to them in religion, as the A B C, or letters, are in grammar, the elements and rudiments of it; and though these were to them, when children, useful, but now under the Gospel dispensation are weak, beggarly, and useless, and not to be attended to:

and not after Christ; what he has taught and prescribed, the doctrines and commandments of Christ, the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are in him; and therefore all such vain and deceitful philosophy, human traditions, and worldly rudiments, are to be rejected; Christ and his Gospel, the revelation he has made, are the standard of doctrine and worship; he only is to be heard and attended to, and whatever it contrary thereunto is to be guarded against.

Ver. 9. *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*.] This is to be understood, not of the doctrine, or Gospel of Christ, as being a perfect revelation of the will of God; but of Christ, and particularly of his human nature, as consisting of a true body and a reasonable soul, in which the Godhead dwells in a most eminent manner: God indeed is everywhere by his powerful presence, was in the tabernacle and temple in a very singular manner, and dwells in the saints in a way of special grace; but resides in the human nature of Christ, in the highest and most exalted manner; that is to deity what the human body is to an human soul, it is the house in which it dwells: so Philo the Jew [f19] calls the "Logos" the house of God, who is the soul of the universe; and elsewhere says [f20], that God himself has filled the divine Logos wholly with incorporeal powers. The Godhead dwells in Christ as in a tabernacle, in allusion to the tabernacle of Moses, which looked mean without side, but glorious within; where God granted his presence, and accepted the sacrifices of his people; the human nature of Christ is the true antitypical tabernacle, which God pitched, and not man; and sometimes is called a temple, in allusion to Solomon's; and which is filled with the train of the divine perfections, signified by fulness here: for not the fulness of grace, or a communicative fulness, is here meant; nor the relative fulness, the church; but the fulness of the divine nature, of all the perfections of deity, such as eternity, immensity, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, immutability, necessary and self existence, and every other; for if anyone perfection was wanting, the fulness, much less all the fulness of the Godhead, would not be in him. The act of inhabitation denotes the union of the two natures in Christ, and

expresses the distinction of them; and is to be understood of the Godhead, as subsisting in the person of the Son of God, and not as subsisting in the person of the Father, or of the Spirit; and shows the permanency of this union, it is a perpetual abiding one; and this fulness is not dependent on the Father's pleasure; it is not said of this as of another fulness, (<5019>Colossians 1:19); that it pleased the Father that it should dwell in him: the manner in which it dwells, is “bodily”; not by power, as in the universe; nor by grace, as in the saints; nor by any glorious emanations of it, as in heaven; nor by gifts, as in the prophets and eminent men of God; nor by signs symbols, and shadows, as in the tabernacle and temple; but essentially and personally, or by personal union of the divine nature, as subsisting in the Son of God to an human body, chosen and prepared for that purpose, together with a reasonable human soul; which is the great mystery of godliness, the glory of the Christian religion, and what qualified Christ for, and recommends him to us as a Saviour; and is a reason why, as these words are, that the Gospel should be abode by, continued in, and that with thankfulness: nor should any regard be had to vain and deceitful philosophy, to the traditions of men, or rudiments of the world: Christ only is to be looked to, attended, and followed, who has all fulness in him.

Ver. 10. *And ye are complete in him*, etc.] Or “filled up”, or “filled full” in him; that is, are perfect in him: saints are in Christ, and all fulness being in him, they are full too, of as much as they stand in need, and are capable of containing: for these words are not an exhortation to perfection, as the Arabic version reads then, be ye complete in him, like those in (<0117>Genesis 17:1 <4048>Matthew 5:48 <4731>2 Corinthians 13:11); but are an affirmation, asserting not what the saints shall be hereafter, or in heaven, but what they now are; not in themselves, for in themselves none are perfect, not even those who are truly sanctified; for though all grace is seminally implanted in them, and they have a perfection of parts, of all the parts of the new man, or new creature, and are perfect in comparison of what they sometimes were, and of profane persons and hypocrites, and with respect to weaker believers, yet none are absolutely perfect; the good work of grace is not yet finished in them, sin dwells in them, they are full of wants and complaints; the best of them disclaim perfection as attained to by them, and express their desires of it; but they are perfect in Christ their head, who has all fulness in him, in whom they are chosen and blessed: they are complete and perfect in him as to sanctification; he having all fulness of grace and holiness for them, they have it in him; and he is made perfect sanctification

to them: and as to justification, he has perfectly fulfilled the law for them, he has made full atonement for sin, has obtained eternal redemption, brought in a complete and perfect righteousness, by which they are justified from all things; are freed from sin, and made perfectly comely, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: and as to knowledge, though it is imperfect in them in their present state, yet in Christ all the treasures of it are, and they have no need to go elsewhere for any; they are filled with the knowledge of God and of his will, and are complete therein in Christ; and what knowledge they have, is eternal life, the beginning, pledge, and earnest of it; so that they have no reason to be beholden to angels or men, only to Christ:

which is the head of all principality and power; not only of the body the church, and who is to be held unto as such, from whom all light, life, grace, and strength, are to be derived; but of all others, though in a different sense; and not only of the kings, princes, and potentates of this world, who hold their kingdoms, and receive their crowns from him, and rule by him; but also of the angels, good and bad, often called principalities and powers; especially the former is here meant, of whom Christ is head, being their Creator, Governor, and upholder; who not only maintains them in their beings, but has confirmed them in their state of holiness; so that they are dependent upon him, and beholden to him for all they have and are: with the Jews, “Metatron”, which with them is the name of the angel in (<2320>Exodus 23:20) and seems to be a corruption of the word “mediator”, and to design the Messiah, is said[f21] to be King over all the angels. This is mentioned, partly to set forth the glory and excellency of Christ; and partly against worshipping of angels, making use of them as mediators, or applying to them on any account, since Christ is the head of these, and of every creature; therefore no creature is to be looked and applied unto, trusted and depended on: unless rather should be meant the Jewish rulers, Scribes, and Pharisees, their doctors, wise men, and Rabbins, called the princes of this world; the Jews' tutors and governors, to whom Christ is superior; he is the only master and Father, and in whom perfection of wisdom is, and not in them; and therefore should not regard them, their vain philosophy, worldly rudiments and traditions.

Ver. 11. *In whom also ye are circumcised*, etc.] This is said to prevent an objection that might be made to the perfection of these Gentile believers, because they were not circumcised; for the Jews thought that perfection lay in circumcision, at least that there could be no perfection without it:

> “great is circumcision (say they [f22]), for notwithstanding all the commands which Abraham our father did, he was not called perfect until he was circumcised; as it is written, (<0117>Genesis 17:1); “walk before me, and be thou perfect:””

which objection the apostle anticipates, by observing, that they were circumcised in Christ their head, who is made unto them sanctification; and by him as the meritorious and efficient cause of their regeneration and conversion, or internal circumcision, the antitype and perfection of circumcision in the flesh; for the former, and not the latter, is here meant: these believers were circumcised in Christ, or by him; not with external circumcision, which was peculiar to the Jews, the natural seed of Abraham, prefigured Christ, and had its accomplishment in him, the body and substance of all the shadows of the ceremonial law; and so was now nothing, either to Jew or Gentile: as for the Gentiles, they never were obliged unto it; and as for the Jews, it was an insupportable yoke to them, binding them to keep the whole law of Moses, which they could not do, and so it made nothing perfect; but Christ the substance of that, and the end of the whole law, has, the head of the body the church, in whom all the members of it are complete, and are circumcised:

with the circumcision made without hands: which is that of the heart, in the spirit; every man, though he may be circumcised in the flesh, is uncircumcised in heart, until he is circumcised by Christ and his Spirit; which is done, when he is pricked to the heart, and thoroughly convinced of sin, and the exceeding sinfulness of it; when the callousness and hardness of his heart is taken off and removed, and the iniquity of it is, laid open, the plague and corruption in it discerned, and all made naked and bare to the sinner's view; and when he is in pain on account of it, is broken and groans under a sense of it, and is filled with shame for it, and loathing and abhorrence of it: now this is effected not “by the hand of man”, as the Ethiopic version reads it, as outward circumcision was; this is not done by any creature whatever; not by angels, who rejoice at the repentance of sinners, but cannot produce it; nor by ministers of the Gospel, who at most are but instruments of regeneration and conversion; nor by men themselves; this is not by might or power of man, by the strength of his free will, but by the Spirit of God: for though men are sometimes exhorted to circumcise themselves, as in (<5016>Deuteronomy 10:16 <2404>Jeremiah 4:4), in order to convince them of the corruption of their nature, and the need they stand in of spiritual circumcision; yet whereas there is an utter disability in

them to effect it, and they need the power and grace of God for that purpose, the Lord has graciously promised his people to do it himself for them, (<5D106>Deuteronomy 30:6); so that this circumcision is in the name sense made without hands, as the human nature of Christ is said to be a tabernacle not made with hands, that, is of men, but of God, being what God has pitched, and not man; and it stands opposed to circumcision in the flesh, which was made with hands, (<4D211>Ephesians 2:11); and by some instrument, as a sharp knife or stone:

in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh. The Vulgate Latin version leaves out the word “sins”, and so the Alexandrian copy and some others; and the Syriac version the word “body”: by “the flesh” is meant corrupt nature, which is born of the flesh, and propagated in a carnal way, and is the source and spring of all sin; by “the sins” of it are intended the works of the flesh, the inward motions of sin in the members, and the outward actions of it: these are said to be a “body”, because sin consists of various parts and members, as a body does; and these united together, and which receive frequent and daily additions; and which are committed and yielded to by the members of the natural body; and which body and bulk of sins arising from the corruption of nature are compared to a garment, and a very filthy one it is; in the putting off of which lies spiritual circumcision: this is done several ways; partly by Christ's wrapping himself in the sins of his people, bearing them in his body, and becoming a sacrifice for them, whereby the old man was crucified, and the body of sin destroyed; and by an application of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, to the consciences of his people, whereby their iniquities are caused to pass from them, and they are clothed with change of raiment; and by the power of his Spirit, laying sin under the restraints of grace, not suffering it to have dominion, but causing grace to reign through righteousness; and by the saints themselves, under the influence of grace, who put off the old man with his deeds, according to the former conversation:

by the circumcision of Christ; not that with which Christ was circumcised at eight days old, that he might appear to be truly man, and a son of Abraham, and under the law, and to fulfil all the righteousness of it, but that which he by his Spirit is the author of, and what is before expressed.

Ver. 12. *Buried with him in baptism*, etc.] The apostle goes on to observe how complete and perfect the saints are in Christ; that they are not only circumcised in him in a spiritual sense, and the body of the sins of their

flesh is put off, and removed from them, in allusion to the cutting off and casting away of the foreskin in circumcision; but that they and all their sins were buried with Christ, of which their baptism in water was a lively representation: Christ having died for their sins, was laid in the grave, where he continued for a while, and then rose again; and as they were crucified with him, they were also buried with him, as their head and representative; and all their sins too, which he left behind him in the grave, signified by his grave clothes there; and baptism being performed by immersion, when the person baptized is covered with water, and as it were buried in it, is a very significant emblem of all this; it is a representation of the burial of Christ, and very fitly holds him forth to the view of faith in the state of the dead, in the grave, and points out the place where the Lord lay; and it is also a representation of our burial with him, as being dead to sin, to the law, and to the world, by him. This shows now, that baptism was performed by dipping, or covering the whole body in water, for no other form of administration of baptism, as sprinkling, or pouring water on the face, can represent a burial, or be called one; and this is what many learned interpreters own, and observe on this place:

wherein also ye are risen with [him]; Christ is risen from the dead as the head and representative of his people, and they are risen with him; and their baptism is also an emblem of his and their resurrection, being administered by immersion, in which way only this can be signified; for as the going down into the water, and being under it, represents Christ's descending into the state of the dead, and his continuance in it, so the emersion, or coming up out of the water, represents his rising from the dead, and that of his people in him, in order to walk in newness of life; for the apostle's meaning is, that in baptism saints are risen with Christ, as well as in it buried with him: and this

through the faith of the operation of God; that is, it is through faith that saints see themselves buried and risen with Christ, to which the ordinance of baptism is greatly assisting, where there is true faith; for otherwise, without faith, this ordinance will be of no use to any such end and purpose; and it is not any faith that will avail, but that which is of God's operation; faith is not naturally in men, all men have it not; and those that have it, have it not of themselves, it is the gift of God; it is what be works in them, and by his power performs:

who hath raised him from the dead; this is a periphrasis of God the Father, to whom the resurrection of Christ from the dead is generally ascribed; though not to the exclusion of Christ, and of the Spirit, who were also concerned; and is here added, partly to show in what respect faith, which is God's work, has him for its object, as having raised Christ from the dead, who was delivered for offences, but is risen again through the power of God for justification, and whoever with his heart believes this shall be saved; and partly to show, that the same power is exerted in working true faith in the heart, as was put forth in raising Christ from the dead.

Ver. 13. *And you being dead in your sins*, etc.] Not corporeally, though sin had subjected them to a corporeal death, and their bodies were really mortal, and in a little time must die; but morally, sin had brought a death upon them in a moral sense, they were separated from God, as at death the body is from the soul, and so were alienated from the life of God, and consequently must be dead; they had lost the image of God, which consisted in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; and were dead as to the understanding of what was good, as to their affections for it, or will and capacity to do it; and, like dead men, were insensible of their state, their sin, and misery; and altogether inactive and helpless in spiritual things, being destitute of spiritual life, strength, and motion; and were moreover in themselves deserving of eternal death, and according to the law of works, under the sentence of it, and so liable and exposed unto it; and all this for, and on account of their sins, their actual sins and transgressions here meant; which separated them from God, deformed his image in them, and hardened their hearts, that they had no true sight and sense of themselves; as also on account of the corruption of their nature, signified in the next clause:

and the uncircumcision of your flesh; which is to be taken not literally, for the prepuce, or foreskin of their flesh, which was a sign and token of the corruption of nature, but figuratively that itself; it being usual with the Jews to call the vitiosity of nature lrl, "uncircumcision"; which, they say[f23], is one of the seven names of [r rxy, "the evil imagination", or corrupt nature, denoting the pollution, loathsomeness, and abominableness of it:

hath he quickened together with him; that is, with Christ; this may be understood either of the quickening of them in conversion and sanctification; for as they were dead in sin in a moral sense, in conversion a principle of life was implanted in them, or grace, as a living principle, was

wrought in their souls by the Spirit of life from Christ; so that they could see their lost state, their need of Christ, the glory of his person and righteousness, the fulness and suitableness of his grace; feel their burdens, and handle the word of life; could hear the Gospel, speak the language of Canaan, breathe in prayer and spiritual desires, walk in Christ, and do all things through him; and this was God's act and not theirs, and owing to his rich mercy and great love: and this may be said to be done “with Christ”, because this is in consequence of his being quickened, or raised from the dead; and by it they were made partakers of the life of Christ, they became one spirit with him; and it was not so much they that lived, but Christ lived in them; and besides, they were quickened, in order to live a life of grace and communion with him here, and of glory hereafter: or it may be interpreted of the quickening of them in justification; and the rather, because of what is said in the next clause; and that either openly, as when a sinner is convinced that he is dead in a legal sense, and faith is wrought in him to behold pardon and righteousness in Christ; upon which he prays for the one, and pleads the other; and the Spirit of God seals unto him the pardon of his sins, brings near the righteousness of Christ, enables him to lay hold on it as his, and pronounces him justified by it; and may well be called justification of life, for he is then alive in a legal sense, in his own comfortable view and apprehension of things: or secretly in Christ, as the head and representative of all his people; who when he was quickened, they were quickened with him; when he rose from the dead, they rose with him; and when he was justified, they were instilled in him, and this seems to be the true sense of this passage:

having forgiven you all trespasses. This was a past act, being done and over; not only at first conversion, when a discovery of it was made, but at the death of Christ, whose blood was shed for the remission of sin; yea, even as early as Christ became a surety, when the sins of his people were not imputed to them, but to him: and this was a single act, and done and complete at once; forgiveness of sin is not done by piecemeals, or at different times, or by divers acts, but is done at once, and includes sin past, present, and to come; and is universal, reaches to all sin, original and actual, before and after conversion; sins of thought, word, and action: and this is God's act, and his only; not men, nor ministers, nor angels, can forgive sin; this is the peculiar prerogative of God, and is owing to his abundant mercy and free grace, and which is signified by the word here used. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, “having forgiven us all our

trespasses”; and so the Alexandrian copy, and some others, read “us” instead of “you”.

Ver. 14. *Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances*, etc.] Various are the senses interpreters give of these words; some think by the handwriting is meant the covenant God made with Adam, (<01027>Genesis 2:17), which being broken, obliged him and all his posterity to the penalty of death, but is cancelled and abolished by Christ; others, the agreement which the Israelites made with God at Mount Sinai, when they said, “all that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient”, (<02407>Exodus 24:7); which was as it were setting their hands, and laying themselves under obligation to obedience, and, in case of failure, to the penalty of the law; others, God's book of remembrance of the sins of men, out of which they are blotted when pardoned; others, the book of conscience, which bears witness to every debt, to every violation and transgression of the law, which may be said to be blotted out, when pacified with an application of the blood and righteousness of Christ; rather with others it signifies the ceremonial law, which lay in divers ordinances and commands, and is what, the apostle afterwards speaks of more clearly and particularly; and may be called so, because submission to it was an acknowledgment both of the faith and guilt of sin; every washing was saying, that a man was polluted and unclean; and every sacrifice was signing a man's own guilt and condemnation, and testifying that he deserved to die as the creature did, which was offered in sacrifice: or rather the whole law of Moses is intended, which was the handwriting of God, and obliged to obedience to it, and to punishment in case of disobedience; and this the Jews[f24] call bwj rjç, “the writing of the debt”, and is the very phrase the Syriac version uses here: now this was as a debt book, which showed and testified the debts of men; that is, their sins, how many they are guilty of, and what punishment is due unto them: and may well be said to be that

that was against us, which was contrary to us; its nature being holy, just, good, and spiritual, is contrary to the unholy and carnal heart of man, and its commands disagreeable to his mind and will; nor can he perform what it requires; nor can he be subject to it without the grace of God, any more than he can like its precepts; and besides, it is contrary to him, and against him, as it charges him with debts, and proves them upon him, so that he has nothing to say in his defence; yea, it proceeds against him, and curses and condemns, and kills him: but God has “blotted” it out, Christ having engaged as a surety for his people, to pay off all their debts; and this being

done by him, God has crossed the debt book of the law, has blotted it out, so that this book is of no force; it does not stand against these persons, it cannot show or prove any standing debt, it cannot demand any, or inflict any penalty: nay, he has

took it out of the way; it is not to be seen or looked into as a debt book; it is abolished and done away; it is no more as administered by Moses, as a covenant of works, or as to its rigorous exaction, curse, and condemnation; this is true of the whole law of Moses, as well as of the ceremonial, which is utterly abolished and disannulled in every sense, because of the weakness and unprofitableness of it:

nailing it to his cross: to the cross of Christ, showing that the abolition of it is owing to the cross of Christ; where and when he bore the curse and penalty of the law for his people, as well as answered all the types and shadows of it: it is thought to be an allusion to a custom in some countries, to cancel bonds, or antiquate edicts and decrees, by driving a nail through them, so that they could not be legible any more: or it may be to the writing of Pilate, which contained the charge and accusation against Christ; and which was placed over his head upon the cross, and fastened to it with nails [f25]; every nail in the cross made a scissure in this handwriting, or bond of the law, that lay against us, whereby it was so rent and torn, as to be of no force: thus the Holy Ghost makes use of various expressions, to show that there is nothing in the law standing against the saints; it is blotted out, and cannot be read; it is took away, and cannot be seen; it is nailed to the cross of Christ, and is torn to pieces thereby, that nothing can ever be produced from it to their hurt and condemnation.

Ver. 15. *[And] having spoiled principalities and powers*, etc.] Principalities of hell, the infernal powers of darkness, the devil that had the power of death, the accuser of the brethren, who often objected their debts, with all his works and posse: these Christ has divested of their armour, wherein they trusted to have ruined men, as sin, the law, and death; he has ransomed his people from him that was stronger than they, and taken the prey out of the hands of the mighty; he has bruised the serpent's head, demolished his works, destroyed him himself, and all his powers, and defeated all their counsels and designs against his elect: some render the word απεκδυσαμενος, “having put off”, or “unclothed”: and which some of the ancient writers apply to the flesh of Christ, and understand it of his putting off the flesh by death, whereby he gave the

death blow to Satan and his powers, (^[30]Hebrews 2:14), to which sense agrees the Syriac version, which renders the words, hrgp jlçbw, "and by the putting off of his body, he exposed to shame principalities and powers": but it may be better interpreted of unclothing, or stripping principalities and powers of their armour, with which they were clothed; as is usually done to enemies, when they fall into the hands of their conquerors: unless rather this is to be understood of Christ's taking away the power and authority of the Jewish ecclesiastical rulers and governors, by abolishing the ceremonial law, and the ordinances of it; declaring himself to be the alone King and Lawgiver in his house, and requiring subjection to his institutions and appointments, which sense agrees with the context:

he made a show of them openly; when being raised from the dead, he ascended on high, and led captivity captive; he led Satan and his principalities and powers captive, who had led others, as he passed through the air, the territories of the devil, in the sight of God and the holy angels:

triumphing over them in it; which some understand of the cross, as if where and by what he got the victory, there he triumphed; the cross, where his enemies thought to make a show of him, expose him to public scorn and contempt, and to triumph over him, was as it were the triumphant chariot, in which he triumphed over all the powers of hell, when he had conquered them by it: but the words may be rendered "in himself", as they are by the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; and the sense be, that as he by himself got the victory, his own arm brought salvation to him, so he alone shared the glory and honour of the triumph: or it may be rendered "in him", and the whole in this and the preceding verse be applied to God the Father, who, as in (^[51]Colossians 2:12,13); is said to raise Christ from the dead, to quicken sinners dead in sins, and to forgive all their trespasses; so he may be said to blot out the handwriting of ordinances, and to spoil principalities and powers, expose them to public view and shame, and triumph over them, "in him", in and by his Son Jesus Christ: the whole is an allusion to the victories, spoils, and triumphs, of the Roman emperors, who when they had obtained a victory, a triumph was decreed for them by the senate; in which the emperor was drawn in an open chariot, and the captives being stripped of their armour, and their hands tied behind them, were led before him and exposed to public view and disgrace; while he was shouted and huzzaed through the city of Rome, and had all the marks of honour and respect given him [f26]: now all that is said in the preceding

verses show how complete the saints are in and by Christ; and stand in no need of the philosophy of the Gentiles, or the ceremonies of the Jews; nor have anything to fear from their enemies, sin, Satan, and the law, for sin is pardoned, the law is abolished, and Satan conquered.

Ver. 16. *Let no man therefore judge you*, etc.] Since they were complete in Christ, had everything in him, were circumcised in him; and particularly since the handwriting of the law was blotted out, and torn to pieces through the nails of the cross of Christ, the apostle's conclusion is, that they should be judged by no man; they should not regard or submit to any man's judgment, as to the observance of the ceremonial law: Christ is the prophet who was to be raised up like unto Moses, and who only, and not Moses, is to be heard; saints are to call no man master upon earth but him; they are not to be the servants of men, nor should suffer any yoke of bondage to be imposed upon them; and should they be suffered and condemned by others, as if they were transgressors of the law, and their state bad, for not observing the rituals of the former dispensation, they should not regard such censures, for the judaizing Christians were very censorious, they were ready to look upon and condemn a man as an immoral man, as in a state of damnation, if he did not keep the law of Moses; but such rigid censures were to be disregarded, “let no man judge”, or “condemn you”; and though they could not help or hinder the judgment and condemnation of men, yet they could despise them, and not be uneasy with them, but set light by them, as they ought to do. The Syriac version renders it, ˆwkdwdn, “let no man trouble you”, or make you uneasy, by imposing ceremonies on you: the sense is, that the apostle would not have them submit to the yoke they would lay upon them, nor be terrified by their anathemas against them, for the non-observation of the things that follow:

in meat or in drink; or on account of not observing the laws and rules about meats and drinks, in the law of Moses; such as related to the difference between clean and unclean creatures, to abstinence in Nazarites from wine and strong drink, and which forbid drinking out of an uncovered vessel, and which was not clean; hence the washing of cups, etc. religiously observed by the Pharisees. There was no distinction of meats and drinks before the law, but all sorts of herbs and animals, without limitation, were given to be food for men; by the ceremonial law a difference was made between them, some were allowed, and others were forbidden; which law stood only in meats and drinks, and such like things, but is now abolished; for the kingdom of God, or the Gospel dispensation, does not lie in the

observance of such outward things, but in internal ones, in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; it is not any thing that goes into the man that defiles, nor is anything in its own nature common or unclean, but every creature of God is good, so be it, it be used in moderation and with thankfulness:

or in respect of an holyday; or feast, such as the feast of the passover, the feast of tabernacles, and the feast of Pentecost; which were three grand festivals, at which all the Jewish males were obliged to appear before the Lord; but were never binding upon the Gentiles, and were what the Christians under the Gospel dispensation had nothing to do with, and even believing Jews were freed from them, as having had their accomplishment in Christ; and therefore were not to be imposed upon them, or they condemned for the neglect of them. The phrase εν μερει, which we render "in respect", has greatly puzzled interpreters; some reading it "in part of a feast"; or holyday; as if the sense was, that no man should judge or condemn them, for not observing some part of a festival, since they were not obliged to observe any at all: others "in the partition", or "division of a feast"; that is, in the several distinct feasts, as they come in their turns: some [f27] think the apostle respects the Misna, or oral law of the Jews, in which are several treatises concerning a good day, or an holyday, the beginning of the new year, and the sabbath, which treatises are divided into sections or chapters; and that it is one of these sections or chapters, containing rules about these things, that is here regarded; and then the sense is, let no man judge you or condemn you, for your non-observance of feast days, new moons, and sabbaths, by any part, chapter, or section, of bwj µwy, or by anything out of the treatise "concerning a feast day"; or by any part, chapter, or section, of hnçh çar, the treatise "concerning the beginning of the year"; or by any part, chapter, or section, of tbç, the treatise "concerning the sabbath"; and if these treatises are referred to, it proves the antiquity of the Misna. The Syriac version renders it, ada[d aglwpb, "in the divisions of the feast": frequent mention is made of gjh swrp, "the division", or "half of the feast", in the Jewish writings: thus for instance it is said [f28],

> "three times in a year they clear the chamber (where the half-shekels were put), swrpb, "in the half", or middle of the passover, in the middle of Pentecost, and in the middle of the feast."

again [f29]

> “there are three times for tithing of beasts, in the middle of the passover, in the middle of Pentecost, and the middle of the feast;”

that is, of tabernacles: and this, the Jewish commentators say [f30], was fifteen days before each of these festivals: now whether it was to this, swrp, “middle”, or “half space”, before each and any of these feasts the apostle refers to, may be considered:

or of the new moon; which the Jews were obliged to observe, by attending religious worship, and offering sacrifices; (see <042811>Numbers 28:11) (<120423>2 Kings 4:23).

Or of the sabbath [days], or “sabbaths”; meaning the jubilee sabbath, which was one year in fifty; and the sabbath of the land, which was one year in seven; and the seventh day sabbath, and some copies read in the singular number, “or of the sabbath”; which were all peculiar to the Jews, were never binding on the Gentiles, and to which believers in Christ, be they who they will, are by no means obliged; nor ought they to observe them, the one any more than the other; and should they be imposed upon them, they ought to reject them; and should they be judged, censured, and condemned, for so doing, they ought not to mind it. It is the sense of the Jews themselves, that the Gentiles are not obliged to keep their sabbath; no, not the proselyte of the gate, or he that dwelt in any of their cities; for they say [f31], that

> “it is lawful for a proselyte of the gate to do work on the sabbath day for himself, as for an Israelite on a common feast day; R. Akiba says, as for all Israelite on a feast day; R. Jose says, it is lawful for a proselyte of the gate to do work on the sabbath day for himself, as for an Israelite on a common or week day:”

and this last is the received sense of the nation; nay, they assert that a Gentile that keeps a sabbath is guilty of death [f32]; (see Gill on “<402727>Mark 2:27”). Yea, they say [f33], that

> “if a Gentile sabbatizes, or keeps a sabbath, though on any of the days of the week, if he makes or appoints it as a sabbath for himself, he is guilty of the same.”

It is the general sense of that people, that the sabbath was peculiarly given to the children of Israel; and that the Gentiles, strangers, or others, were not punishable for the neglect and breach of it [f34]; that it is a special and an additional precept, which, with some others, were given them at Marah, over and above the seven commands, which the sons of Noah were only obliged to regard [f35]; and that the blessing and sanctifying of it were by the manna provided for that day; and that the passage in (<010203>Genesis 2:3); refers not to the then present time, but dyt[h l[, “to time to come”, to the time of the manna [f36].

Ver. 17. *Which are a shadow of things to come*, etc.] By Christ, and under the Gospel dispensation; that is, they were types, figures, and representations of spiritual and evangelical things: the different “meats and drinks”, clean and unclean, allowed or forbidden by the law, were emblems of the two people, the Jews and Gentiles, the one clean, the other unclean; but since these are become one in Christ, the distinction of meats is ceased, these shadows are gone; and also of the different food of regenerate and unregenerate souls, the latter feeding on impure food, the ashes and husks of sensual lusts, or their own works, the former on the milk and meat in the Gospel, the wholesome words of Christ; and likewise the clean meat was a shadow of Christ himself, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed. The “holy days”, or “feasts” of the Jews, the feasts of tabernacles, of the passover and Pentecost, were types of Christ; the feast of tabernacles, though it was in remembrance of the Israelites dwelling in tents and booths when they came out of Egypt, yet was also a representation of the people of God dwelling in the earthly houses of their tabernacles here on earth; and particularly of Christ's dwelling, or tabernacling in human nature, and who likewise was born at the time of this feast; (see Gill on “<430114>John 1:14”). The passover, as it was a commemoration of the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt, and of God's passing over their houses when he smote the firstborn of the Egyptians, so it was a type of Christ our passover sacrificed for us, and was kept by Moses in the faith of him, (<581128>Hebrews 11:28); there is a very great resemblance, in many particulars, between Christ and the paschal lamb; (see Gill on “<460507>1 Corinthians 5:7”). The feast of Pentecost, or the feast of harvest and firstfruits, was a shadow of the firstfruits of the Spirit, which Christ having received, gave to his disciples on that day; and of the harvest of souls to be gathered under the Gospel dispensation, of which the conversion of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost was an earnest

and pledge. The “new moon” was typical of the church, which is fair as the moon, and receives all her light from Christ the sun of righteousness; and of the renewed state of the church under the Gospel dispensation, when the old things of the law are passed away, and all things relating to church order, ordinances, and discipline, are become new. The “sabbaths” were also shadows of future things; the grand sabbatical year, or the fiftieth year sabbath, or jubilee, in which liberty was proclaimed throughout the land, a general release of debts, and restoration of inheritances, prefigured the liberty we have by Christ from sin, Satan, and the law, the payment of all our debts by Christ, and the right we have through him to the heavenly and incorruptible inheritance. The seventh year sabbath, in which there was no tilling of the land, no ploughing, sowing, nor reaping, was an emblem of salvation through Christ by free grace, and not by the works of men; and the seventh day sabbath was a type of that spiritual rest we have in Christ now, and of that eternal rest we shall have with him in heaven hereafter: now these were but shadows, not real things; or did not contain the truth and substance of the things themselves, of which they were shadows; and though they were representations of divine and spiritual things, yet dark ones, they had not so much as the very image of the things; they were but shadows, and like them fleeting and passing away, and now are gone:

but the body [is] of Christ: or, as the Syriac version reads it, “the body is Christ”; that is, the body, or sum and substance of these shadows, is Christ; he gave rise unto them, he existed before them, as the body is before the shadow; not only as God, as the Son of God, but as Mediator, whom these shadows regarded as such, and as such he cast them; and he is the end of them, the fulfilling end of them; they have all their accomplishment in him: and he is the body of spiritual and heavenly things; the substantial things and doctrines of the Gospel are all of Christ, they all come by him; all the truths, blessings, and promises of grace; are from him and by him, and he himself the sum of them all. The allusion seems to be to a way of speaking among the Jews, who were wont to call the root, foundation, substance, and essence of a thing, apwg, “the body of it” [f37]: so they say [f38],

> “the constitutions concerning the sanctification of the offerings and the tithes, are, both the one and the other, hrwt ypwg, “the bodies”, or substantial parts of the law:”

and again [f39], that

> "the constitutions or rules about the sabbath, the festivals and prevarications, they are as mountains that hang by an hair; for the Scripture is small, and the constitutions are many; the judgments and the services, the purifications and uncleannesses, and the incests, they have, upon which they can support themselves, and these, and these, are hrwt ypwg, "the bodies of the law":"

they say [f40] of a small section, or paragraph, that all the bodies of the law depend upon it: once more [f41],

> "the sabbaths, and the good days (the feasts or holy days) are ^pwg, "the bodies" of the sign;"

which the phylacteries or frontlets were for; but our apostle says, that Christ is the body and substance of all these shadows, in opposition to these sayings and notions of the Jews: some connect this last clause with the former part of the following verse, rendering it as the Arabic version thus, "because of the communion of the body of Christ, let no man condemn you"; and the Ethiopic version thus, "and let no man account you fools, because of the body of Christ", but there is nothing in the text to support these versions.

Ver. 18. *Let no man beguile you of your reward*, etc.] Or prize; the allusion is to the Olympic games, one of which was running races; in which the stadium, or race plot was fixed, a mark set up to look and run unto, a corruptible crown proposed to be run for, and which was held by one who sat as judge, and determined who got the victory, and to whom the crown belonged; these judges sometimes acted the unfair part, and defrauded the victors of their proper right, and to such the apostle compares the false teachers: the Christian's reward, or prize he is running for, is the incorruptible and never fading crown of glory, life, and righteousness; the race plot is the Christian life, spent in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, and in holding fast, and holding out in a profession of faith unto the end; the mark he looks at, and presses towards, is Jesus Christ; and his great concern, the apostle by this metaphor suggests should be, lest by false teachers he should be defrauded of the prize of the high calling of God, through their removing the mark Christ from him, by denying his person and Godhead; or by intercepting his sight of him, placing other objects before him, such as angels, to be worshipped and adored; or by darkening of it, joining Moses and Christ, law and Gospel, works and

grace together, in the business of salvation; whereby he might seem to come short, or be in danger of coming short of the heavenly glory:

in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels; these things the apostle instances in, as in what lay their danger of being beguiled of their reward, or prize. True humility is an excellent grace; it is the clothing and ornament of a Christian; nor is there anything that makes a man more like Christ, than this grace; but in these men here respected, it was only the appearance of humility, it was not real; it was in things they devised and willed, not in things which God commanded, Christ required, or the Scriptures pointed at; they would have been thought to have been very lowly and humble, and to have a great consciousness of their own vileness and unworthiness to draw nigh to Christ the Mediator immediately, and by him to God; wherefore in pretence of great humility, they proposed to make use of angels as mediators with Christ; whereby Christ, the only Mediator between God and man, would be removed out of sight and use; and that humble boldness and holy confidence with God at the throne of grace, through Christ, which believers are allowed to use, would be discouraged and destroyed, and the saints be in danger as to the outward view of things, and in all human appearance of losing their reward: "worshipping of angels" was a practice which very early prevailed among some that were called Christians, and for a long time continued in Phrygia and Pisidia; some make Simon Magus, and others Cerinthus, the author of this idolatry; but was not only a branch of the Platonic philosophy, and so a part of that philosophy and vain deceit before mentioned, (Colossians 2:8), which these men might have borrowed from the Gentiles, but was a notion and practice of the Jews: before the Babylonish captivity, the names of angels were not known, nor are they ever mentioned by name in Scripture; hence they say [f42], that

> "the names of angels came up with them, or by their means from Babylon:"

after this they began to talk much of them, and to have too high a veneration for them, and ascribe too much to them; and observing that the law was ordained, spoken, and given by them, and that the administration of things under the former dispensation was greatly by their means, they fell to worshipping of them [f43]; and the believing Jews were hereby in great danger of falling into the same practice: hence the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, writing to the Jewish church, largely insists on the proof of

Christ being superior to angels; showing that he has a more excellent name than they had; that he was the Son of God in such sense as they were not the sons of God; that they were worshippers of him, yea, that they were creatures made by him, and even ministering spirits to his saints, the heirs of salvation: and very rightly, is worshipping of angels condemned here by the apostle, since God only is the object of worship; since these are creatures, and so not to be adored; are worshippers of God and Christ themselves, and have refused adoration when it has been offered to them: that the Jews did, and do worship angels, and make use of them as mediators and intercessors, is clear from their liturgy, or prayer books, where they say [f44]

> "µymjr ykalm, "O ye angels of mercies", or ye merciful angels, ministers of the most High, entreat now the face of God for good:"

and elsewhere [f45],

> "they say three times, let Juhach keep us, let Juhach deliver us, and let Juhach help us:"

now Juhach was the name of an angel, who they supposed had the care of men, and is taken from the final letters of those words in (<19111>Psalm 91:11), "for he shall give his angels charge over thee": so they speak of an angel whom they call Sandalphon, who they say is appointed over the prayers of the righteous [f46]: with this notion the judaizing and false teachers seem to have been tinctured, and against which the apostle here cautions the saints, lest, under a show of humility, they should be drawn into it: and to preserve them from it, he observes, that such an one who should spread and propagate such a notion, was one that was

intruding into those things which he hath not seen; thrusting himself in a bold and daring manner into an inquiry and search after, debate upon, and affirmation of things he could have no certain knowledge of; as of angels, whose nature, qualities, works, and ministrations, he had never seen with his bodily eyes; nor could ever discern with the eyes of his understanding any such things in the Scriptures, which he ascribed to them; but they were the birth of his own mind, the fruits of his own fancy and imagination, things devised in his own brain: being

vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind; judging of things not according to the word of God, and with a spiritual judgment, and according to a spiritual

sense and experience, but according to his own carnal reason, and the vanity of his mind; being puffed and swelled with an high opinion of himself, of his great parts and abilities, of his knowledge of things above others, and of his capacity to penetrate into, and find out things which were not seen and known by others: this shows that his humility was forced, and only in outward appearance, and was not true and genuine.

Ver. 19. *And not holding the head*, etc.] Christ, as some copies express it; for by making use of angels as mediators and intercessors, Christ the only Mediator, the Lord and head of angels, and of the church, was dropped and laid aside; which is another reason the apostle gives, why such men, and their principles and practices, should be shunned and avoided by all those that had a regard for Christ the head:

from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God: by "all the body", or the whole body, is meant the church, the mystical body of Christ; which, like an human body, consists of various members, all in union with one another, and with Christ the head: and "by joints and bands" are intended, either the grace of Christian charity, or love, the bond of perfectness; which is that in Christ's mystical body, as joints and bands are in an human body; for by this the members of Christ are joined, united, and knit together, and make increase: or else the ordinances of the Gospel, by which the saints are kept together in order, and through which is spiritual "nourishment ministered", from Christ the head to them; who hates not his own flesh, the members of his body, but nourishes and cherishes them, with the wine of divine love, with the water of life, with himself the bread of life, with his flesh which is meat indeed, and with his blood which is drink indeed; with his own wholesome words, even the words of faith and sound doctrine: and it is from him, that the saints "are knit together": both to one another in him the cornerstone, and also to him, being made one body and one spirit with him; and so from and through him, this body "increaseth with the increase of God": that which God has appointed for his church, and which he gives; and which it will arrive unto, when all the elect are gathered in, and they are filled with all the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and these are brought to their proper pitch and full degree; all which is had from, and owing to Christ: for if Christ the head is not held, the body will have no nourishment, but soon become a skeleton; the members of it will soon loosen from one another and fall into pieces, and there will be no spiritual increase or edification: all which are so many

reasons, why the saints should be upon their guard against these false teachers, and judaizing Christians, and which argument and exhortation the apostle further pursues in the following verses.

Ver. 20. *Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ*, etc.] Or "seeing ye are dead with Christ"; for these words do not signify any doubt about it, but suppose it, and press what is taken for granted. They were dead with Christ by virtue of union to him; they being one with him, and considered in him as their head and representative, died in him, and with him; they were crucified with him, as they are said to be buried with him, and risen with him; they were dead with him, by having communion with him in his death; they partook of the benefits of it, as redemption, pardon, justification, and reconciliation; and they were planted together with him in the likeness of his death, not merely partakers of his sufferings, or suffered with him, and were conformable unto his death, by undergoing such like things as he did, but as he died unto sin, and lived unto God, so did they; and through the virtue and efficacy of his death were dead to sin, so as that it was not imputed to them, so as to be freed and discharged from it, that it could not damn and destroy them; yea, so as that itself was crucified with him, and destroyed by him: and also to the law, to the moral law; not but that they lived according to it, as in the hands of Christ, in their walk and conversation, but did not seek for life, righteousness, and salvation by it; they were dead unto it as to justification by it, and even to obedience to it in a rigorous and compulsive way; and to all its terrors and threatenings, being moved to a regard to it from a principle of love to Christ; and to all its accusations and charges, its curses and condemnation, and as a ministration of death, fearing neither a corporeal, nor an eternal one: they were dead also to the ceremonial law, and were free

from the rudiments, or "elements"

of the world: the ordinances of a worldly sanctuary, the rites and ceremonies of the world, or state of the Jews, in opposition to, and distinction from, the Gospel dispensation, or times of the Messiah, called, and that by them, abh µlw[, "the world to come": these were like letters to a language, or like the grammar, which contains the rudiments of it; these were the first principles of the oracles of God, which led to Christ, and had their accomplishment and end in him; and so believers were dead unto them, and delivered from them, as they were also to the world, the Jewish state, and were entered into the world to come; and even to this

present evil world, and to the men and things of it, being by Christ crucified to it, and that to them: upon all which the apostle thus reasons,

why, as though living in the world; since ye are dead unto it, and from the rudiments of it, why should ye be as though ye lived in it? his meaning is not, that they should not live in the world, nor among the men of it, for then they must needs go out of the world; saints may live in the world, though they are not of it, and among the inhabitants of it, though they do not belong to them, but to another and better country: nor does he suggest, that they lived according to the course of the world, as they did in their unregenerate state; but what he seems to blame them for, and reason with them about, was, that they acted as if they sought for life and righteousness in the rudiments of the world, or by their obedience to ceremonial rites, or human inventions: for he adds,

are ye subject to ordinances? not civil and political ones, which are for the better and more orderly government of kingdoms, states, and cities, for these the saints ought to be subject to, both for the Lord's sake, and conscience sake; nor Gospel ordinances, as baptism, and the Lord's supper, for such all believers ought to submit unto; but either legal ones, the weak and beggarly elements, the yoke of bondage, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, the handwriting of ordinances, which some were desirous of conforming to; or rather the ordinances and appointments of the Jewish fathers, the traditions of the elders, their constitutions and decrees, which are collected together, and make up their Misna, or oral law; and so the argument is from the one to the other, from the greater to the less, that if they were delivered by Christ from the burdensome rites of the ceremonial law, which were originally appointed by God, it must be great weakness in them to be subject to the ordinances of men; or both the institutions of the ceremonial law, and the decrees of the Jewish doctors about them, which were devised by them, and added to them, and imposed as necessary to be observed, may be intended; of which the apostle gives some particulars in (⁵¹⁰²²Colossians 2:21).

Ver. 21. *Touch not, taste not, handle not*.] This the apostle says, not of himself, but in the person of the Jewish doctors; who urging the use of the ceremonial law, to which they added decrees and constitutions of their own, said, “touch not” the dead body of any man, the bone of a man, or a grave, any man or woman in their uncleanness; not only their flesh, but the bed they lay on, or the seat they sat on; or any creature that was by the law

unclean; of a Gentile, or any notorious sinner, or common man: hence the Pharisees used to wash themselves when they returned from market, lest they should have been by any means accidentally defiled by touching any thing unclean. There is a treatise in their Misna, called Oholot, which gives many rules, and is full of decrees about things [gmb µyamjm, "that defile by touching". And so they likewise said, "taste not", neither the fat, nor the blood of any creature which might be eaten itself, nor swine's flesh, nor the flesh of any creature that chewed the cud, or divided the hoof; nor might the Nazarites taste wine, or strong drink, or vinegar made of either, or moist grapes, or even the kernels and husks; and if a man ate but the quantity of an olive of any of the above things, he was, according to the Jewish canons, to be cut off, or beaten [f47]: and they also said, "handle not"; or, as the Syriac and Arabic read, "do not come near", or "draw not nigh", to a Gentile, to one of another nation, or any unclean person, to whom they forbid any near approach or conversation; or "handle not" any of the above things. Some think that these several rules have respect only to meats; as "touch not", that is, do not eat of things forbidden ever so little; nay, "taste not", do not let anything of them come within your lips; yea, "handle not", do not so much as touch them with your fingers. Others think that touch not regards abstinence from women; (see <460701>1 Corinthians 7:1); and respects the prohibition of marriage by some in those times; and "taste not", the forbearance of certain meats, at certain times, which God had not restrained any from; and "handle not", that is, make no use of, or enjoy your own goods, and so designs that voluntary poverty which some entered into under the direction of false teachers.

Ver. 22. *Which all are to perish with the using*, etc.] Meaning either the ordinances concerning touching, tasting, and handling, which bring destruction and death on them that use them, and comply with them, in order to obtain righteousness and life; for instead of enjoying salvation through them, they were the cause of damnation to them. Or rather the meats not to be touched, tasted, or handled; these are in their own nature perishing things, and perish by being used; they are only of service to the body, and can be of none to the soul; the using of them cannot defile the man, nor an abstinence from them sanctify him, or commend him to God; they only relate to this present life, and will cease with it, and can have no manner of influence on the spiritual and eternal concerns of men: and besides, the ordinances concerning them are not of God, but are

after the commandments and doctrines of men; for so even the ceremonial law, being now abolished, though originally of God, yet the imposition of it, as necessary to salvation, was a commandment and doctrine of man's; and particularly the traditions of the elders, and the various rules and decrees, which the doctors among the Jews obliged men to regard, were human inventions and devices: and this is another reason the apostle makes use of to dissuade from any regard unto them; for whatever is of man, and not of God, in religious worship, ought to be rejected.

Ver. 23. *Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom*, etc.] The authors of them set up for men of wisdom, and were esteemed such, and are often styled µymkj, "wise men"; and their scholars that received their traditions, and explained and enforced them on others, µymkjh ydyml t, "the disciples of the wise men": and they pretended, that these constitutions of theirs were "a hedge for the law", and for the honour of it, and to preserve it, and keep men from transgressing it; and this carried in it some appearance of wisdom: and their pretensions to it lay in the following things,

in will worship; being what was over and above that which was commanded by God, and so, like the freewill offerings under the law, must be acceptable to him; this was one of their colours, which had some show of wisdom, religion, and zeal:

and humility: in worshipping of angels, and not coming directly, and with boldness, to God or Christ; or rather in subjecting themselves to the yoke of the law, and submitting to the decrees of the fathers and doctors of the church, who were more wise, and learned, and knowing than they, and so had the appearance of prudence, gentleness, and goodness:

and neglecting of the body; by fastings and watchings, whereby they seemed to be very religious and devout, holy and mortified persons, who kept under their bodies, subdued their unruly appetites, and fulfilled not the lusts of the flesh: but then this was only a show of wisdom and godliness; there was no truth nor reality in these things; they were only a mere form, an outside show, a mere pretence; there was no true devotion nor religion in them: and so

not in any honour; or to be had in any esteem; for if the rites of the ceremonial law itself were weak and beggarly elements, much more must

these additions to it, and corruptions of it, be such; and at most only regarded things external, that were

to the satisfying, of the flesh; either the body, or the carnal mind, in which they were vainly pulled up: though some consider this last clause as explanative of the former, “neglecting of the body”, or not sparing it, but afflicting it with austerities of life; depriving it of its proper right, what is necessary for it, not taking due care of it, so as to satisfy nature; whereby instead of honouring, they dishonoured it: for though the body is not to be pampered, and the lusts of it indulged, or luxury and intemperance to be encouraged; yet since the body is the work of God's hands, is the habitation of the soul, and by which it performs its offices, and is the purchase of Christ, the temple of the Holy Spirit, and will be raised a glorious body at the last day, it ought not to be neglected and dishonoured; but should have a sufficiency of food and clothing, whereby it may be comfortably and honourably nourished and supported.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO COLOSSIANS 3

This chapter contains exhortations to several duties, some more general, which relate to all Christians, and others more particular, which belong to saints in such and such a state of life. The apostle begins with an exhortation to seek things heavenly, and not earthly, and to set the affections on the one, and not on the other: the arguments used to enforce it are taken from the saints being risen with Christ; from Christ being in heaven at the Father's right hand; from their being dead to sin, the law, and the world; from their having life in Christ safe and secure; yea, from Christ being their life, and their appearance with him in glory, (Colossians 3:1-4). And next he proceeds to an exhortation to the mortification of sin, and the deeds of it, which he urges from the wrath of God coming upon men for these things, and from the consideration of their former state and condition, expressed by walking and living in them, (Colossians 3:5-7), and by a metaphor taken from the putting off and on of garments, he exhorts to the putting off of the old man, with his deeds, several of which are mentioned, (Colossians 3:8,9), and to the putting on of the new man, and to the exercise of various graces, as mercy, meekness, forbearance, forgiveness, charity, and peace, (Colossians 3:10-15). And then he proceeds to exhort to such duties as relate to the word and worship of God; as that the word of Christ should have an abiding place in them, and that they should teach and instruct one another by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and do all they did in a religious way, in the name of Christ, with thankfulness to God by him, (Colossians 3:16,17). And closes the chapter with the duties of wives to their husbands, and of husbands to their wives, and of children to their parents, and of parents to their children, and of servants to their masters, (Colossians 3:18-25).

Ver. 1. *If ye then be risen with Christ*, etc.] The apostle having observed in the former chapter, that the believing Colossians were dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, were buried with him in baptism, and were risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, argues from hence how much it became them to regard a new and spiritual life, and to

seek after superior and heavenly things, and treat with neglect and contempt carnal and earthly ones. For he does not here call in question their being risen with Christ, but takes it for granted that they were, and makes use of it as an argument for his present purpose. They were risen with Christ as their head, and as members in union with him representatively, when he rose from the dead; and emblematically in their baptism, when having gone down into the water, and being baptized, they emersed from it; and spiritually in conversion, when they were raised from a death of sin, to a life of grace, by Christ, as the resurrection and the life, the efficient cause of it, and in virtue of his resurrection from the dead: wherefore being thus raised again in every sense, it highly became them to

seek those things which are above; the better and heavenly country, the continuing city, which is above the heavens, whose builder and maker is God; Christ, who is in heaven, and salvation alone by him without the works of the law; all spiritual blessings, such as pardon, peace, righteousness, life, and glory, which are in heavenly places in him; doctrines and ordinances, which come from heaven, and are the means of supporting a spiritual and heavenly life; especially that bread of life which came down from heaven, and gives life unto the world, and of which if a man eats, he shall never die, but live for ever; and particularly glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life, the crown of righteousness laid up above, the kingdom of God, and the righteousness of it; which are to be sought for in the first place with all affection, earnest desire, care, and diligence, not by or for works of righteousness, but in Christ, and as the gifts of God's grace through him.

Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: which contains other reasons and arguments to engage believers to look upwards, and seek after heavenly things; that as Christ, when he died and rose again from the dead, did not stay long on earth, nor minded the things of the world, but ascended up to heaven, where he now is, and will remain until his second coming; so they, being dead and risen with him, should, in their thoughts, desires, and affections, in the exercise of the graces of faith, hope, and love, ascend heavenwards, like pillars of smoke perfumed with frankincense; and the more should their hearts be where he is, and intent on things above there, from the consideration of that great honour and dignity in which he is. He is “on the right hand of God”; in human nature, an honour which none of the angels were ever admitted to: here he “sitteth”, as having done the work of redemption, and entered into his rest,

beholding the travail of his soul with satisfaction, though he continues to be an advocate, and to make intercession for his people; which is another reason enforcing this exhortation.

Ver. 2. *Set your affections on things above*, etc.] For unless the affections are set on them, they will never be sought after in a proper manner. The word signifies to mind them, and think on them, to favour and approve of them, to be affectionately desirous of them, and concerned for them; for where the treasure is, the heart should be; and as the saints' best things are above, their minds and affections should be there likewise; their contemplation should be on those things, and their conversation should be in heaven; nor should they regard anything but what is there, or comes from thence, for they belong not to this world, but to another and better country: their citizenship is in heaven, and there, in a short time, they must have their everlasting residence; and therefore should seek after, and highly prize and value heavenly things, and set their affections on them, and

not on things on the earth; not mind earth and earthly things, temporal enjoyments, riches, and honours; and though food and raiment, and the necessaries of life, are to be sought after, and cared and provided for, yet not with anxiety and perplexity of mind, in an over thoughtful and distressing manner; nor should the heart be set on those outward things, or happiness placed in the possession of them. Moreover, worldly lusts, the members which are on the earth, earthly pleasures that are sinful, may be here meant. Worldly lusts are to be denied, the deeds of the body are to be mortified, carnal desires are not to be gratified and indulged, provision is not to be made for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts; and particularly the vain philosophy of Jews and Gentiles, the traditions of the elders, the ceremonies of the law, which lay in earthly things, in worldly observances, the difference of meats and drinks, keeping of days, months, and years, new moons, feasts, and sabbath days; the rudiments of the world, the commandments and doctrines which were of the earth, and lay in not touching, tasting, and handling certain things that are on earth, and which perish with the using, as opposed to the doctrines of the Gospel, and ordinances of Christ, which are from above, and come from heaven, and have a spiritual and heavenly use: and which is the sense chiefly intended, though it is best to understand the words in their largest compass.

Ver. 3. *For ye are dead*, etc.] Not in a natural or corporeal sense, for they were living in the world; nor in a moral sense, for though they had been

dead in sins, they were quickened by the grace of God; nor in a legal sense, for all their trespasses were forgiven them; (see ⁵¹⁰¹³Colossians 2:13,20); but they were dead to the law, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, by the body of Christ; and to sin, as to its damning power, through his bearing it in his own body on the tree; and to the world by his cross: and therefore as dead men have nothing to do with the world, and the things of it, so believers being dead with Christ, should have no regard to the rudiments of the world, the ceremonies of the law, and the ordinances of men; to worldly lusts, and to the things that are in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; but should be dead as to their desires after, affections for, and subjection to these things:

and your life is hid with Christ in God; which is another reason why they should not mind things on earth, but things in heaven. The saint's “life” is either spiritual, and is a life of grace from Christ, a life of faith on him, and a life of communion with him, and may be distinguished into a life of sanctification, both internal and external, and into a life of justification; or eternal, which is a life free from all the sorrows of this, both outward and inward; a life of perfection and pleasure, of vision and enjoyment of God and Christ, and of fellowship with Father, Son, and Spirit, angels and saints, and which will never end. This is “theirs”, what they have a right unto, and shall everlastingly enjoy: it is not only promised to them, and prepared and laid up for them, but it is given unto them in Christ; and who has made way for their full possession of it, into which he himself will put them, having power, as Mediator, so to do; and even now they have it, the beginning, pledge, and earnest of it. This is said to be “hid”, which denotes the secrecy of it, and is true both of spiritual and eternal life. The spiritual life of the saints is hid from the men of the world, who are alienated from the life of God, are ignorant of the Lord of life, and know nothing of the spirit of life; they are strangers to the nature of this life, and to the food on which believers live, the hidden manna; and to the doctrines of the Gospel, by which they are nourished, these are hid to them that are lost; and to all the joys and pleasures of it: and this is sometimes hid from the saints themselves, when temptations are violent, corruptions prevail, grace is low, and seems to be gone, and God hides his face. Eternal life is also an hidden one from natural men; the things that are eternal, are things unseen by the carnal eye, and not to be conceived of by a carnal heart; and can only be beheld, and that in a very glimmering and imperfect manner, by an eye of faith, which is the evidence of things not seen, the clearest one saints have

in this life; for eternal glory and happiness is in part hid from the saints themselves; they see it but through a glass darkly; nor does it appear to themselves, as yet, what that felicity is in its fulness and perfection they shall enjoy. Moreover, this phrase is expressive of the safety, as well as of the value and preciousness of this life, things of worth being hid for security. It is hid, and it is hid "with Christ"; spiritual life is with him, as the head, root, and fountain of it, and so is safe, and can never be lost; because he the head lives, the members shall live also; and as long as it is in him, as the fountain, the streams and supplies of it shall not be wanting to his people; nor can the communication between him and them be ever cut off: eternal life is deposited in his hands by the Father; it is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord God, and is in him for ever safe: nay, it is not only with Christ, where it is secure enough, but it is with Christ "in God"; Christ is in God, the Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father; they are one in nature, and so in power and glory; and this union between them, which is natural and perfect, is the foundation of the security both of the persons, and of the life, spiritual and eternal, of God's elect; (see John 10:28-30). Moreover, this life itself is in God. Not only our natural life is in him; we live and move, and have our being in him; but our spiritual and eternal life: he is the spring of it; it arises originally from him; it was purposed in him; it was promised by him; the scheme of it, or what is called the fellowship of the mystery, was hid in him; it was given by him; he is the fountain of it, and that itself; and therefore the saints can never perish, nor need they fear any enemy.

Ver. 4. *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version, and some copies, read, "your life". Christ is the author of spiritual life, the fountain from whence it springs, the object on which the saints live, yea, their very life itself; it is not so much they that live, as Christ that lives in them: and he is their eternal life; it is in him, and given forth by him; to know him now is the beginning of it; and its perfection hereafter will lie in the vision of him, communion with him, and conformity to him. The Jews have a saying [f48],

> "that lives depend upon the son of Jesse,"

all sorts of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal. At present, Christ, the life of his people, is, as it were, hid; when he had done the work he came into this world about, and which he was manifest in the flesh, he departed out of it, ascended up into heaven, and went to his God and Father, where he is, and

will be retained, until the time of the restitution of all things; and though he appears in the presence of God, and on the behalf of his redeemed ones, yet he is now out of sight, and not to be seen with their bodily eyes; but, ere long, he will be revealed from heaven, and come in the clouds of it, and be seen by all, to the terror and confusion of some, and to the joy and salvation of others; when his appearance will be exceeding glorious, not only in his glorified body, or exalted human nature, and as the Judge of the whole earth, clothed with majesty, authority, and power, but as the Son of God, God equal with the Father, in all the perfections and glory of deity, which will be manifest and apparent to everyone:

then shall ye also appear with him in glory: the dead bodies of the saints will then be raised and united to their souls, which he will bring with him, when he appears; and living saints shall be changed, and be caught up together with the raised ones, into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so they all shall be with him together, wherever he is, whether in the air, or on earth, or in heaven, and while he is in either; and shall be for ever with him, enjoy communion with him, be made like unto him, and behold his glory: yea, they shall "appear in glory" too; with a glory on their bodies, which will be raised in glory like unto the glorious body of Christ; and on their souls, being in perfect holiness, having on the wedding garment, or robe of Christ's righteousness, being clothed upon with their house from heaven, and appearing in the shining robes of immortality, incorruption, and glory; having the glory of God upon them in soul and body, and such a glory revealed in them, as the sufferings of this present life, and all the enjoyments of it, are not to be compared with. All which furnish out strong arguments and reasons, enforcing the above exhortations to seek for, and set the affections on things in heaven, and not on earth.

Ver. 5. *Mortify therefore your members*, etc.] Not your bodies, as the Ethiopic version reads, nor the members of the natural body, but of the body of sin, indwelling sin; which as a body consists of various members, which are parts of it, rise out of it, and are used by it, as the members are by the body; and intend the sins of the flesh, or sinful actions, which are generally performed by the members of the natural body, in which the law of sin is, and by which it operates; so that the mortification the saints are here exhorted to, in consideration of having a spiritual life in them, and a hope of eternal life in Christ, from whence the apostle argues, is not a mortification or destruction of the body of sin itself, or of the being and principle of it in the soul, where it is, and lives, and dwells, and will as long

as the saints are in this tabernacle, but of the deeds of the body, or of sinful actions, as to the life and conversation; and signifies a denial of them, an abstinence from them, and a non-performance of them; (see Gill on "Romans 8:13"). These members, or deeds of the body, or acts of sin, are called "your": for as the old man is ours, the vitiosity of nature is what we bring into the world with us, and is rooted and incorporated into us; so the actions that flow from it, and are done by it, are not to be ascribed to God, nor even to Satan, but they are our own actions, and which are performed by the members of our mortal body, or by the faculties of our souls: and are,

which are on earth: or earthly; are concerned about earthly things, the things of the world, worldly lusts and pleasures, which rise out of earthly mindedness, and incline unto it, and are only what are done here on earth, and will have no place in heaven. The particulars of which follow:

fornication; the sin of uncleanness committed by single persons, or out of the state of marriage, and which the Gentiles did not account sinful: hence so much notice is taken of it, with a censure, and so often, by the apostle, in almost all his epistles, and dehorted from, as a sin against the body, as what disqualified for church communion, and was not to be named among the saints, who should be dead to that, and that to them, as to the commission of it.

Uncleanness; of every sort, all other impure actions, as adultery, incest, sodomy, and every other unnatural lust; all which should be abstained from, and never committed by those who profess to be alive unto God.

Inordinate affection; which may intend the passions, or first motions of sin, stirred up by the law, and which work in, and operate by the members of the body, and bring forth fruit unto death, and therefore to be opposed by such as have a life in Christ; and also those vile affections, which some in a judicial way are given up unto, and prevail with those who are effeminate, and abusers of themselves with mankind, and which are to be abhorred and denied by all who are heirs of the grace of life, and expectants of an heavenly one.

Evil concupiscence; so called to distinguish it from that natural concupiscence, or desire after things lawful and necessary, and which is implanted in nature by God himself; and from that spiritual concupiscence or desire after spiritual things, and that lusting against the flesh and carnal

things, which is formed in the heart of a regenerate man by the Spirit of God. It is the same with [rh rxy, “the evil imagination”, or corruption of nature so much spoken of by the Jews. This here is what is forbidden by that law, “thou shalt not covet”, (<2012017>Exodus 20:17); and includes every fleshly lust and inordinate desire, or every desire after that which is not lawful, or does not belong to a man; as what is another's property, his wife, or goods, or anything that is his; and so very naturally follows,

covetousness; an immoderate love of money, the root of all evil, an insatiable desire of having more, and of having more than a man's own; and is enlarged as hell, and as death is not satisfied, but still craves more, without making any good use of what is possessed:

which is idolatry. The covetous man, and the idolater, worship the same for matter and substance, even gold and silver; the covetous man lays up his money, makes no use of it, as if it was something sacred; he looks at it, and adores it, and puts his trust and confidence in it, and his heart is so much set upon it, that he neglects the worship of the true God; and indeed no man can serve God and mammon. Some think, that by this πλεονεξια rendered “covetousness”, is meant, that greedy desire after the commission of all uncleanness, and impure actions, which were perpetrated by the followers of Simon Magus in their religious assemblies, and under the notion of worship, and as acceptable to God, and therefore called idolatry; and which ought not to be once named, much less practised, among the living members of Christ. Moreover, such filthy actions were performed by the Gentiles in the worship of their deities.

Ver. 6. *For which things' sake*, etc.] Those sins above mentioned, (<510305>Colossians 3:5):

the wrath of God; the effects of it in temporal judgments, and eternal ruin and destruction, the wrath to come, which all are deserving of, and there is only deliverance from by Christ:

cometh upon the children of disobedience: who are disobedient both to the law of God, and Gospel of Christ: who are unbelievers in him, are rebellious and gainsaying, reject his calls, the persuasions of his ministers, set at nought his counsel, and will have none of his reproof. There have been already instances of God's displeasure at sin, his indignation against it, and his judgments on account of it: his wrath is revealed from heaven, and it will come down from thence on disobedient and rebellious sinners, and

that suddenly, and with great power, like a mighty torrent, that there will be no standing before it. This is a reason why such who have life in Christ should mortify, repress, and abstain from the above sins; for though this regards sinners, and ungodly persons, yet the effects of God's wrath on such show how much such sins are displeasing to him, and detested by him, and therefore to be avoided by the saints.

Ver. 7. *In the which ye also walked some time*, etc.] Either in or among the children of disobedience, (Colossians 3:6), or rather in the afore mentioned sins, (Colossians 3:5). Sin is a road or path, in which sinners walk a way of their own, or of their own choosing and approving, though a dark and crooked one, and which leads to destruction: walking herein denotes a continued series of sinning, a persisting in it, a progress therein, a proceeding from evil to evil, taking pleasure, and going on securely in it; and which is the case and state of God's elect before conversion, which is a turning of them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, and out of the ways of sin, into the paths of righteousness, when the course of their walk, of their lives and conversations, is altered; and which is suggested here, and made use of as another reason for the mortification of the deeds of the body of sin, taken from their former state, and their deliverance out of it; and therefore the time past of their lives, when they walked in these things, should suffice, and they should now cease from sin, from a series and course of sinning:

when ye lived in them; in sins, and were dead in them; for to be dead in sin, and to live in sin, is the same thing; living in sin is the death of sin. To live in sin is to live after the flesh, after the dictates of corrupt nature, to live a sinful course of life; it is for a man to give up himself to sin, be wholly bent upon it, take delight in it, and make it his work and business. This had been the case of these believers, but now they were dead to sin, and it became them to live no longer therein, but to mortify it by denying it, and abstaining from it, and living soberly, righteously, and godly.

Ver. 8. *But now you also put off all these*, etc.] Intimating, that now since they were converted and delivered out of the former state in which they were once, and professed not to walk and live in sin, it became them to separate, remove, and put at a distance from them all sins, and every vice, to lay them aside as dead weights upon them, and put them off as filthy garments; for such sins are never to be put on, and cleaved to again as formerly; and that not only those, the above mentioned, fornication,

uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, but the following also,

anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, or “evil speaking”; what vices are here intended, (see Gill on “Ephesians 4:31”); to which is added,

filthy communication, which comes

out of the mouth: and is to be removed and put out of it, or abstained from; and which is to be understood also of blasphemy, or evil speaking of one another, whereby the credit and reputation of each other may be hurt. “Filthy communication” is the same with that which is said to be corrupt, (Ephesians 4:29); and which, though it is applicable to all speech that is unsavoury, unedifying, idle, and useless, and may be properly enough said of flattery, lying, cursing, and swearing; yet chiefly regards obscene language, unchaste words, and filthy talking, which tend to encourage and cherish the sin of uncleanness in any of its branches, flattery, lying, cursing, and swearing; yet chiefly regards obscene language, unchaste words, and filthy talking, which tend to encourage and cherish the sin of uncleanness in any of its branches.

Ver. 9. *Lie not one to another* etc.] Which is another vice of the tongue, and to which mankind are very prone, and ought not to be done to any, and particularly to one another; since the saints are members one of another, and of the same body, which makes the sin the more unnatural; of this vice, (see Gill on “Ephesians 4:25”), and is another sin that is to be put off, or put away; that is to be abstained from, and not used. The arguments dissuading from this, and the rest, follow,

seeing that ye have put off the old man, with his deeds. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read this as an exhortation, as they do the next verse also. Who is meant by the old man, (see Gill on “Romans 6:6”), and what by putting him off, (see Gill on “Ephesians 4:22”), and as for “his deeds”, they are the same with the deceitful lusts there mentioned, and the works of the flesh in (Galatians 5:19) and with the members of the body of sin in the context, (Colossians 3:5,8). Some, as Beza, think, that here is an allusion to the rite of baptism in the primitive church; which, as he truly observes, was performed not by aspersion, but immersion; and which required a putting off, and a putting on of clothes, and when the baptized persons professed to renounce the sins of the flesh, and their former conversation, and to live a new life.

Ver. 10. *And have put on the new man*, etc.] Concerning which, and the putting it on, (see Gill on "Ephesians 4:24"),

which is renewed in knowledge; this man, or principle of grace in the soul, is a new one, which never was there before; and there is a daily renovation of it in the spirit of the mind, by the Spirit of God; for as the outward man decays, the inward man, which is the same with this new man, is renewed day by day, increases in holiness and righteousness, grows in grace, and particularly in "knowledge"; light and knowledge of a man's self, of his lost state and condition by nature, of his need of Christ, and of his salvation, is what appears at the first formation of this new man; and the daily renovation of him lies in an increase of spiritual, experimental, and saving knowledge of God, and Christ, and divine things; and indeed, until a man becomes a new creature, he neither knows, nor is he capable of knowing, the things of the Spirit of God; so that this new man, or principle of grace, begins with spiritual knowledge, and is formed in order to it, and its increase lies in it:

after the image of him that created him; the new man; for this is a creation work, and so not man's, but God's; and is made not after the image of the first man, no not as innocent, and much less as fallen; but after the image of Christ, to which the elect of God are predestinated to he conformed, and which is stamped in regeneration; and more and more appears by every transforming view of Christ, and will be perfected in heaven, when they shall see him as he is, and be perfectly like him, who is not only the pattern, but the Creator of it, even the author and finisher of faith.

Ver. 11. *Where there is neither Greek nor Jew*, etc.] That is, either in Christ, after whose image the new man is created; (see Galatians 5:6 6:15) or in the new man, and with respect to

regeneration; or in the whole business of salvation: it matters not of what nation a man is; this has no influence on his new birth, either to forward or hinder it; for he is never the more a new creature, a regenerate man, and interested in salvation, because he is a Jew, which he may be outwardly, and not inwardly; and he may be born again, though he is a Greek or Gentile, as the Syriac version reads; for God of his own will, and abundant mercy, and not out of respect to nations and persons, begets souls again to a lively hope of the heavenly inheritance:

circumcision or uncircumcision; a man's being circumcised in the flesh signifies nothing; this he may be, and not a new creature; for that is not true circumcision, but that which is of the heart, and in the spirit: and, on the other hand, it is no objection to a man's being born again, that he is uncircumcised in the flesh; this may be his case, and yet may be circumcised with the circumcision made without hands; neither one nor the other is of any account with God, nor makes the man either better or worse.

Barbarian, Scythian; all such were Barbarians to the Romans, that did not speak their language; and as were such also to the Greeks, who were not of their nation, and therefore Greeks and Barbarians are opposed to each other, (see <4501114>Romans 1:14) and so they are here in the Syriac version, which reads “Greek” and “Barbarian”. The Arabic version, instead of “Barbarian”, reads “Persian”, because it may be, a Persian is so accounted by the Arabians; and because the Scythians were, of all people, the most barbarous and unpolished [f49], and were had in great disdain by others, therefore the apostle mentions them, as being within the reach of the powerful and efficacious grace of God; nor were the fierceness of their dispositions, and the impoliteness of their manners, any bar unto it. Remarkable is the saying of Anacharsis the Scythian, who being reproached by a Grecian, because he was a Scythian, replied [f50],

> “my country is a reproach to me, but thou art a reproach to thy country.”

It matters not of what nation a man is, so be it he is but a good man; especially in Christianity, all distinctions of this kind cease. It is added,

bond or free; the grace of God in regeneration is not bestowed upon a man because he is a free man, or withheld from another because he is a bond servant. Onesimus, a fugitive servant, was converted by the Apostle Paul in prison; and whoever is called by grace, if he is a free man in a civil sense, he is Christ's servant in a religious one; and if he is a servant of men, he is, in a spiritual sense, the Lord's free man. It is not nation, nor outward privileges, nor the civil state and condition of men, which are regarded by God, or are any motive to him, or have any influence upon the salvation of men:

but Christ is all, and in all; he is “all” efficiently; he is the first cause of all things, the beginning of the creation of God, the author of the old, and of

the new creation, of the regeneration of his people, and of their whole salvation: he is all comprehensively; has all the fulness of the Godhead, all the perfections of deity in him; he is possessed of all spiritual blessings for his people; and has all the promises of the covenant of grace in his hands for them; yea, all fulness of grace dwells in him, in order to be communicated to them: and he is all communicatively; he is their light and life, their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, their food and clothing, their strength and riches, their joy, peace, and comfort, who gives them grace here, and glory hereafter, So, with the Jews, the Shekinah is called lk, "all" [f51]: and this likewise, with the Cabalists [f52], is one of the names of the living God, and well agrees with Christ, who has all things in him; and is the reason they give for this divine appellation: and Christ is "in all"; in all places, being infinite, immense, and incomprehensible, as God, and so is everywhere by his power, upholding all things by it; and in all his churches, by his gracious presence, and in the hearts of all his regenerate ones, of whatsoever nation, state, and condition they be: he is revealed in them, formed within them, and dwells in their hearts by faith; and is all in all to them, exceeding precious, altogether lovely, the chiefest among ten thousands, and whom they esteem above all creatures and things. The Arabic version reads, "Christ is above all, and in all".

Ver. 12. *Put on therefore*, etc.] As the apostle had argued for the putting off of the members of the body, from their having put off the old man himself; so he now argues from their having put on the new man, to their putting on of his members; that is, to the exercise of the various graces of the Spirit, and the discharge of the several duties of religion; which though they would not be a robe of righteousness, or garments of salvation to them, yet would be very becoming conversation garments, such as would be adorning to themselves, to the doctrine of Christ, and their profession of it, without which they would be naked in their walk, and exposed to shame, hçwdq jwrb açblthl, "to be clothed with the Holy Spirit", is a phrase used by the Cabalistic doctors [f53]; and is indeed a Scripture phrase, "the Spirit of the Lord came upon", hçbl, clothed Zechariah, (2 Chronicles 24:20) and so Esther is said, by the Jewish writers [f54], to be "clothed with the Holy Ghost" Here the metaphor is taken from the putting off of clothes; and what is here directed to, is like Joseph's coat, a coat of many colours. The arguments made use of lie in the characters under which the saints are addressed,

as the elect of God, holy and beloved; that is, “as becomes the elect of God”, as the Arabic version renders it; as such who were chosen in Christ from eternity, according to the sovereign will and pleasure of God, and his free grace unto salvation and eternal life; which carries in it a strong argument to enforce the performance of good works, since men are hereby chosen unto holiness, and good works are what God has foreordained that they should walk in, and especially to mercy, and acts of it; since hereby their salvation appears to be not of man's will and works, but of God, that shows mercy; and such who are the objects of this grace are vessels of mercy. The apostle calls all the members of this church by this name, though every individual of them might not be chosen of God; but because they were all under a visible profession of faith and holiness, and the greater part of them were truly believers, he in a judgment of charity gives them all this appellation, and upon the same foot, the next, “holy”; not by birth, for they were by nature unclean and filthy, conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; nor by baptism, which takes away neither original nor actual sin, but leaves men as it finds them, and who ought to be holy before they partake of that; but in Christ imputatively, as he was made of God unto them sanctification; and by him efficaciously, in virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, by which he sanctifies his people; and by his spirit inherently and internally, who is the author of the work of sanctification in the heart; and they were likewise so externally in a professional way, and therefore it highly became them to exercise and practise the following graces and duties, to which they were still more obliged, inasmuch as they were “beloved”; that is, of God, as appeared both from their election and sanctification. God had loved them, and therefore had chosen them in his Son, and had given his Son to die for them, that he might sanctify them; and because of his great love to them, had quickened them when dead in sin, and sanctified them by his spirit: wherefore, since God had so loved them, they ought to show love again to him, and to one another, and put on

bowels of mercies; a sympathizing spirit with saints in distress, weeping with them that weep, suffering with them that suffer, being touched, as their high priest is, with a feeling of their sorrows and weaknesses: it denotes inward pity and compassion to distressed objects, the most tender regard to persons in misery, and such compassion as is free from all hypocrisy and deceit, and therefore is expressed by “bowels”; and what is very large, and reaches to multitudes of objects, and is displayed and

exerted various ways, and therefore signified by “mercies”. Now such a spirit is a very beautiful one; the apostle begins with the innermost of these garments, adding to it

kindness, which is this inward, tender, unfeigned, and abundant mercy put into act and exercise; this is doing good to all men, especially to the household of faith, distributing to the necessities of the saints, and a showing mercy with cheerfulness, and is very ornamental to a Christian professor: as is also

humbleness of mind; which lies in the saints entertaining mean thoughts of themselves, looking upon themselves as the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints; as inferior to others in knowledge, experience, gifts, and graces; in esteeming others better than themselves; in ascribing all they have, and are, to the grace of God; in doing works of mercy and righteousness without ostentation, and boasting of them, or depending on them; owning, that when they have done all they can, they are but unprofitable servants; and this is a beautiful dress for a believer to appear in: be ye clothed with humility; (see 1 Peter 5:5). And of the like nature is

meekness; which shows itself in not envying the gifts and graces, the usefulness and happiness of others, but rejoicing therein; in quietly submitting to the will of God in all adverse dispensations of Providence, and patiently bearing what he is pleased to lay on them; and in enduring all the insults, reproaches, and indignities of men with calmness. This ornament of a meek and quiet, spirit is in the sight of God of great price, (1 Peter 3:4). And what follows is natural to it, and explanative of it,

longsuffering: whereby a person patiently bears the evil words and actions of others, and is not easily provoked to wrath by them, but puts up with injuries, and sits down contented with the ill usage he meets with.

Ver. 13. *Forbearing one another*, etc.] Not only bearing one another's burdens, and with one another's weaknesses, but forbearing to render evil for evil, or railing for railing, or to seek revenge for affronts given, in whatsoever way, whether by words or deeds:

and forgiving one another; all trespasses and offences, so far as committed against themselves, and praying to God to forgive them, as committed against him:

if any man have a quarrel against any; let him be who he will, high or low, rich or poor, of whatsoever age, state, or condition, and let his quarrel or complaint be what it will, ever so great, or ever so just and well founded, yet let him put up with it, and forgive it:

even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye; what God is said to do for Christ's sake, (see Gill on "Ephesians 4:32"), what here Christ is said to do: as Mediator, he has procured the remission of sins by the shedding of his blood; and as God he forgives sins freely, fully, forgetting the injuries done, not upbraiding with former offences, and that too without asking, and before there is any appearance of repentance; and so should the saints forgive one another, as they expect to have an application and manifestation of forgiveness to themselves.

Ver. 14. *And above all these things*, etc.] Bowels of mercies, kindness, etc.

put on charity, or brotherly love, for without this all is nothing; they will only be done in show and appearance, in mere guise and hypocrisy, if love is wanting; this actuates and exercises all the rest; it is only from this principle that true sympathy, real kindness, undisguised humility, and meekness, patient longsuffering, and forbearance, and hearty forgiveness proceeds: this is greater, and more excellent, than all the other, and adds a glory, lustre, and beauty to them; this is the upper garment that covers all the rest, for so the words may be rendered, "upon all these things put on charity"; whereby a disciple of Christ is visible, and distinguished, and is known to be what he is; this is like a strait and upper garment, keeps close all that is under it, and within it: and it is called

the bond of perfectness; either of the law, and the duties of religion, which it is said to be the fulfilling of; or rather of the saints, for this is the bond of union between them, which knits and cements them together, so that they are perfectly joined together, and are of one mind and one heart: it is the bond of peace among them, of perfect unity and brotherly love; and a most beautiful and pleasant thing it is for brethren to live and dwell together in unity; such are beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem among themselves, and terrible to their enemies as an army with banners, being not to be divided or broken by them. The Claromontane exemplar reads, "the bond of unity".

Ver. 15. *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts*, etc.] By "the peace of God" is meant, either the peace believers have with God, which is his gift, and passes all understanding, and flows from a comfortable apprehension of interest in the blood, righteousness, and atonement of Christ; or rather that peace which does, or should subsist among the saints themselves, which God is the author of, calls for, and requires, and encourages in them. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and, Ethiopic versions, read, "the peace of Christ"; and so the Alexandrian copy, and some others. This may be said to "reign" in their hearts, when it is the governing principle there; when it restrains the turbulent passions of anger, wrath, and revenge, allays undue heats, moderates the spirits, and composes differences. The metaphor is taken from the judge in the Olympic games, who was the umpire, the moderator, and who determined whose the victory was, and to whom the crown belonged; the apostle would have no other umpire among the saints than the peace of God: and the arguments he uses follow,

to the which also you are called in one body; the saints in their effectual calling are called to peace by God, who is the God of peace; by Christ, who is the Prince of peace; and by the Spirit, whose fruit is peace; and through the Gospel, which is the Gospel of peace, and into a Gospel state, which lies in peace, righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost: and they are not only called to this, but they are called "in one body"; though they are many members, yet they are but one body; and therefore ought to be in peace, and that should bear the sway in them, seeing it is unnatural for members of the same body to quarrel with each other.

And be ye thankful; which intends either gratitude to men, to fellow creatures, for any service or kindness done by them, especially to the saints, the members of the same body, who are placed in a subservience, and in order to be useful to each other; or else to God, for all spiritual blessings in Christ, and particularly the peace he gives, for the effectual calling, and a place in the body, the church; and "to Christ", as the Syriac version reads, for all those graces which come from him, and strength to exercise them, and for himself, and an interest in him, who is all in all; and a grateful spirit, both for spiritual and temporal mercies, is a very becoming and beautiful one, and is another part of the ornament of a Christian: this last is added to make way for what follows.

Ver. 16. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy and Arabic version read, “the word of God”; by which may be meant the whole Scripture, all the writings of the Old and New Testament, which are by inspiration of God, were endited by the spirit of Christ, speak and testify of him, and were written for his sake, and on his account, and therefore may be called his word; and are what should be searched into, carefully attended to, diligently read, and frequently meditated upon; and which are able, under a divine blessing, to furnish with all spiritual wisdom, or to make men wise unto salvation: or by the word of Christ may be meant more especially the Gospel, which Christ is the author of as God, the preacher of as man, and the subject matter of as God-man and Mediator: it is the word concerning him, his person and offices; concerning peace and pardon by his blood, justification by his righteousness, and complete salvation through his obedience, sufferings and death. The exhortation to let it

dwell in them, supposes that it had entered into them, and had a place in them through the spirit and power of Christ; and that it should have a constant and fixed place there, and not be like a stranger or wayfaring man, that tarries but for a night, or like a sojourner, that continues but for a while; but as an inhabitant that takes up its residence and abode, never more to depart; and intends not only a frequent reading, and hearing of, and meditating upon the word of God but continuance in the doctrines of the Gospel, with a steady faith in them, and a hearty affection for them; for such an inhabitation imports a very exact knowledge of the Gospel, and familiarity with it, and affectionate respect for it; as persons that dwell in a house, they are well known by those of the family, they are familiarly conversed with, and are treated with love and respect by them: and so the word of Christ, when it has a fixed and established abode in a man's heart, he has an inward, spiritual, experimental knowledge of it; he is continually conversant with it; this word of Christ is his delight, and the men of his counsel his guide, his acquaintance, with whom he takes sweet counsel together, and esteems it above the most valuable things in the world, and receives and retains it as the word of God. The manner in which the apostle would have it dwell is

richly; that is, largely, plentifully, in an abundant manner, as this word signifies; (see <5467>1 Timothy 6:17) and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it here, “abundantly”; and to the same sense the Arabic version. His meaning is, that not one part of the Scripture only should be regarded and

attended to but the whole of it, every truth and doctrine in it, even the whole counsel of God; which as it is to be declared and preached in its utmost compass, so all and every part of it is to be received in the love of it, and to be abode in and by; there is a fulness in the Scriptures, an abundance of truth in the Gospel, a large affluence of it; it is a rich treasure, an invaluable mine of precious truths; all which should have a place to their full extent, in both preacher and hearer: and that

in all wisdom; or, “unto all wisdom”; in order to attain to all wisdom; not natural wisdom, which is not the design of the Scriptures, nor of the Gospel of Christ; but spiritual wisdom, or wisdom in spiritual things, in things relating to salvation; and which is, and may be arrived unto through attendance to the word of Christ, reading and hearing of it, meditating on it; and especially when accompanied with the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and which is to be desired and prayed for.

Teaching and admonishing one another. The Syriac version renders it, “teach and instruct yourselves”; and may regard not only publicly teaching Christ, his Gospel, the truths and doctrines of it, and all his commands and ordinances, for which he qualifies men, and sends them forth in his name; but private teaching, by conference, prayer, and singing the praises of God, according to the measure of the gift of grace bestowed on everyone: and so admonishing may not only respect that branch of the public ministry, which is so called, and intends a putting into the mind, or putting persons in mind both of their privilege and duty; nor only that part of church discipline which lies in the admonition of a delinquent, but private reproofs, warnings, and exhortations; and as by other ways, so, among the rest,

in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; referring very probably to the title of several of David's psalms, lykçm; “Maschil”, which signifies giving instruction, or causing to understand; these psalms, and the singing of them, being appointed as an ordinance, of God to teach, instruct, admonish, and edify the saints; for the meaning of these three words, and the difference between them, (see Gill on “4059Ephesians 5:19”).

singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord; that is, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; and what is meant by singing of them, see the note on the above place: the manner in which they are to be sung is, “with grace”; meaning either by the assistance of the spirit and grace of God, without which no ordinance can be performed aright, to the glory of God,

and to spiritual profit and edification, (see <461415>1 Corinthians 14:15), or with grace in the heart in exercise, particularly faith, without which it is impossible to please God, (see <581106>Hebrews 11:6) or with gratitude to God, with thankfulness of heart for his mercies, and under a grateful sense of them; or in such a manner as will minister grace unto the hearers, be both amiable and edifying, (see <510406>Colossians 4:6) all these senses may be taken in: that the phrase, “in your hearts”; does not mean mental singing, or what is opposed to singing with the voice, (see Gill on “<490519>Ephesians 5:19”). The object here, as there, is “to the Lord”; the Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory, of his person and grace: the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, “to God”: and indeed God, in the three divine Persons, and in all his perfections and works, is the object of praise, and his glory is the end of singing praise.

Ver. 17. *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed*, etc.] Whether in preaching the word of Christ, in hearing the Gospel, in singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and in conference and conversation with each other; or in whatsoever action, civil or religious throughout the whole life and conversation, in the performance of things natural, moral, and evangelical, relating to God or man, or one another, in the world or church:

do all in the name of the Lord Jesus; both in the strength of Christ, without whom nothing can be well said or done; and according to the mind and will of Christ declared in the Gospel, which is his name; and calling upon his name for assistance in the ministration of his word, administration of his ordinances, and in the performance of every duty, directing all to, and having solely in view his honour and glory:

giving thanks to God, and the Father by him; this shows, that singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, is a distinct thing from giving of thanks, mentioned in the preceding verse. The things for which thanks are to be given, are “all things”; and the time when, always, as in (see Gill on “<490520>Ephesians 5:20”). The person to whom they are to be given is God the Father, the Father of our spirits, and of our mercies, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of us in him; and the person by whom they are to be given, is Christ, which is just and proper, since all mercies come from, and through him; nor is there any other way of bringing and offering the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God; nor are they, nor can they be acceptable to God by, and through any other, but by him alone.

Ver. 18. *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands*, etc.] The apostle proceeds from those duties which related to them as church members one towards another, for their mutual good and edification, and the glory of God, to such as concerned them in their own houses and families, as in a natural relation to each other; as husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants; showing hereby, that the Gospel does not at all break in upon, but establishes the duties of common and civil life. Concerning the duty wives to their husbands, here exhorted to, (see Gill on "<4952>Ephesians 5:22"). The reason urging to a regard to it is,

as it is fit in the Lord; that is, Christ, as the Syriac version reads it. Subjection of wives to their own husbands is "fit" and proper in its own nature, by reason of the original creation of man, and of the woman from him: man was made first, and then the woman; and the woman was made out of the man, out of one of his ribs; and so, though not to be trampled under his feet, but to be by his side, and an help meet to him, yet not to be head, or to rule over him. Moreover, the woman was made for the man, and not the man for the woman; add to this, that the woman was in the transgression, and the means of the fall of man, which gave a fresh reason for, and made the obligation to subjection to him the stronger: and it is also a "decent" and becoming thing for wives to be subject to their husbands; for as it is giving honour to them, it is a real ornament to themselves, and is one of those good works which women professing godliness should adorn themselves with; and makes more comely and beautiful than broidered hair; gold, pearls, or costly array, yea, than their natural favour and beauty: it is what is fitting "in the Lord": it is what he requires, not only what the law of God requires, (see <4611434>1 Corinthians 14:34) and which was enjoined originally, (see <0010316>Genesis 3:16) and was charged as a duty under the legal dispensation; but is what is commanded by Christ under the Gospel dispensation, and is to be observed by all those that are "in" him, that profess to be new creatures, converted persons, that so the word of God be not blasphemed, and the enemy have no occasion to reproach, see (<5601205>Titus 2:5 <5405414>1 Timothy 5:14) though this phrase may also be considered as a restriction and limitation of this subjection; that though it reaches to all things, yet only to such as are agreeable to the will of the Lord, and not contrary to the Gospel of Christ; for in these they are not to be subject to them, but to Christ the Lord; but in all other things they are, even as the church is subject to Christ: and when this is the case, such

subjection is regarded by Christ as if it was done to himself; and indeed his honour and glory should be the governing view in it; (see <4052>Ephesians 5:22).

Ver. 19. *Husbands, love your wives*, etc.] (See Gill on "<4525>Ephesians 5:25").

and be not bitter against them; turning love into hatred of their persons; ruling with rigour, and in a tyrannical manner; behaving towards them in a morose, churlish, and ill natured way; giving them either bitter words, or blows, and denying them their affection, care, provision, protection, and assistance, but using them as servants, or worse. All which is barbarous, brutish, and unchristian, and utterly unbecoming the Gospel.

Ver. 20. *Children, obey your parents*, etc.] Both father and mother; (see Gill on "<4601>Ephesians 6:1").

in all things; not in things sinful, which are contrary to the law of God, and Gospel of Christ; in things repugnant to the duties of religion, the ordinances of the Gospel, and the doctrines of Christ, parents are to be neglected and disobeyed. God is to be regarded, and not men; but in all things good and lawful, and in all things that are of an indifferent nature, which may, or may not be done, in these things the will of earthly parents is to be attended to; of which there is a considerable instance in the Rechabites, (see <2506>Jeremiah 35:6-10) and even they are to be obeyed in things that are hard and difficult to be complied with, and which are disagreeable to flesh and blood, as the cases of Isaac and Jephthah's daughter show.

For this is well pleasing unto the Lord; and is a reason sufficient to engage to the performance of the duty; for whatever is grateful and well pleasing to God ought to be done with pleasure by us, from a principle of love to him, by faith in him, and with a view to his glory; and then such an action is acceptable in his sight through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Alexandrian copy reads, "in the Lord"; and so the Vulgate Latin version.

Ver. 21. *Fathers, provoke not your children to anger*, etc.] (See Gill on "<4604>Ephesians 6:4").

lest they be discouraged; or disheartened and dispirited; their spirits be broke through grief and trouble, and they become indolent, sluggish, and unfit for business; or, despairing of having any share in the affections of

their parents, disregard their commands, instructions, and corrections, and grow obdurate, stubborn, and rebellious.

Ver. 22. *Servants, obey in all things your masters*, etc.] That is, in all things relating to the body, and bodily service; not to the conscience, and religious worship; in things worldly, and not spiritual; in all things that are within a master's power, and it is lawful for him to command; and in all things that are fitting and proper that a servant should do; and even in such things as may be difficult, troublesome, and disagreeable to the flesh unto them; (see <42170>Luke 17:7-9) who those servants are that are to obey, and who their masters, said to be according to the flesh, to whom they are to be subject, (see Gill on "<49065>Ephesians 6:5").

not with eyeservice, as menpleasers, but in singleness of heart; (see Gill on "<49065>Ephesians 6:5-6").

fearing God; who sees and knows all things, what servants do when their masters are absent from them, and to whom they are accountable; and a servant that fears God will make conscience of discharging his service faithfully, will not misspend his master's time, nor embezzle his goods, or waste his substance; but from a principle of reverential affection for God, and fear of him, with a concern for his name, and a view to his glory, will with all diligence, uprightness, faithfulness, and sincerity, do his duty, seek his master's good and interest, and cheerfully obey all his lawful commands. The Alexandrian copy reads, "fearing the Lord"; and so the Syriac version, "in the fear of the Lord".

Ver. 23. *And whatsoever ye do*, etc.] Some have thought that these words, and the two following verses, regard the Colossians in general, and the performance of any, and all good works by them; but by their connection with the preceding verse, and with the beginning of the next chapter, they appear to concern servants only, and what they do under that character, and under the discharge of their duty:

do it heartily, not by mere force and necessity, grudgingly, and with murmurings, but from the heart, and with good will, having a true, real, and hearty affection for their masters, having their good and interest at heart, and a delight in their service; like the Hebrew servant, that loved his master, as also his wife and children, and therefore would not depart from him, (see <02105>Exodus 21:5),

as to the Lord, and not unto men; (see Gill on "<49067>Ephesians 6:7").

Ver. 24. *Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance*, etc.] This is said for the encouragement of Christian servants, who, though they may receive little or nothing from their earthly and carnal masters; yet they shall be used and treated as children by the Lord, and by whom they will be possessed of an eternal inheritance, after their work and labour is over: by "the reward of the inheritance" is meant the heavenly glory, called a reward, because the apostle is speaking to servants and therefore uses language agreeable to them; and who, though they may have no reward in this world, yet as there is a God that judgeth in the earth, there is verily one for them in the world to come: and though it is not given for working, yet it is given to those that do good, and continue in well doing; whose works follow, though they do not go before them; and is enjoyed after their work is over, as the servant receives his wages at evening and when he has done his work; though this will not be received as a reward of debt, but of grace; it cannot be of merit, as is clear from the nature of good works themselves, which are all due, to God, prior to the performance of them; and when done in the best manner, are no more than a man's duty, and are done not in his own strength, but by the grace of God; and in many things, yea in everything, he comes short of performing what is incumbent on him; and besides, there is no manner of proportion between: the best services of the saints, and eternal glory: to which may be added, that eternal life is the free gift of their heavenly Father to them, and is here called an inheritance, which never becomes the property of servants in a way of merit, but is the portion of children, from their Father's good pleasure. Wherefore the heavenly glory is such a reward as that it is an "inheritance"; or, as the Syriac version renders it, "in an inheritance"; it lies in an inheritance, an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fades not away, reserved in the heavens; and which is not got by industry, or obtained by the works of the law, nor bought with a price, but is a free bequest of God as a Father to his children; for an inheritance is peculiar to children, and this to the children of God, as these believing servants were; and which comes to them by and through the death of the testator; and it may be called an inheritance, because the heavenly glory is substantial, it is substance, a better and a more enduring substance than any inheritance in this world; and is a very plentiful possession and estate, it consists of all things, yea, God himself is the portion of his people, and they that are his children are heirs of God; there is not only a glory, but riches of glory, a plenty, a fulness of it in this inheritance; the way in which they come by it, is receiving it from Christ; "of the Lord ye shall receive it". It is in a way of

receiving, and so by gift, as a man can receive nothing but what is given him; and as all grace is in a way of receiving, and therefore boasting in it is excluded, so glory is enjoyed in the same way, and from the same hands, even from Christ, the righteous Judge, that will give it; it is in him they obtain this inheritance, and are in him chosen and predestinated unto it; it is by his resurrection from the dead, and in consequence of it, that they through the power of his Spirit and grace are begotten unto it; it is his grace that makes them meet for it; and he has it in his hands for them; he is a feoffee in trust on their behalf, and is able to give it to them; and will at the last day introduce them into the full possession of it. Now these Christian servants "knowing" all this, having a lively hope of this inheritance, a full persuasion, and a firm faith of right unto it, and meetness for it, and having the Spirit of God as an earnest and pledge of it; the consideration of it must greatly tend to make them quiet and easy in their present servitude, and to encourage them, to the discharge of their duty with diligence, faithfulness, and cheerfulness: since they might assure themselves of the inheritance hereafter, how small soever their reward was now:

for ye serve the Lord Christ; who is a good master, and faithful to all his engagements and promises, all whose servants are respected by him, and honoured by his Father, and shall be for ever where he is.

Ver. 25. *But he that doth wrong*, etc.] Which may be understood, both of servants that do wrong to their masters through sloth and idleness, neglecting their business, embezzling their masters' goods, and defrauding them of their substance; and of masters that injure their servants by withholding from them proper food, and raiment; by cheating them of their wages, either giving them none at all, or too little, or detaining them too long, and by giving them bad language, and hard blows, and such like severe usage:

shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; either in this world, or in the other; God will avenge all such injuries, sooner or later; so that these words may be considered either as said with a view to deter servants from evil practices, or to comfort them under the maltreatment they may meet with from cruel masters:

and there is no respect of persons. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic Versions add, "with God"; which undoubtedly is the sense; he regards not the rich more than the poor; he makes no difference between bond and free, the

servant and the master; he will not take the part of the one, because he is a master, nor neglect, the other, because he is a servant, but will do that which is just and right with regard to them both; (see Gill on “Ephesians 6:9”).

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO COLOSSIANS 4

This chapter begins with an exhortation to masters to behave towards their servants in a just and equitable manner, from the consideration of their having a master in heaven, which should have concluded the preceding one; and in it the apostle gives some general exhortations, and some particular instructions about reading this, and another epistle, and stirring up their minister to his duty; and great part of it is taken up in expressing his love to the Colossians, and in the salutations of others, and of himself. The general exhortations are to prayer, with watchfulness and thankfulness, not only for themselves, but especially for the ministers of the Gospel, (<51402>Colossians 4:2-4) and next to a wise behaviour towards them that were of the world, (<51405>Colossians 4:5) and also to a prudent conversation, particularly in language, with everyone, (<51406>Colossians 4:6). And then the apostle proceeds to declare his great affection for them, and care of them, which he showed by sending two proper persons to them from him, partly to make known his affairs to them, and partly to know the state and condition they were in, and comfort them, (<51407>Colossians 4:7-9) and next follow the salutations of various persons to them, who are mentioned by name, and whose characters are given, (<51410>Colossians 4:10-15). And then he orders them to read this epistle in the church of Laodicea, and also that which came from that place, (<51416>Colossians 4:16) and to admonish Archippus to take heed to, and fulfil his ministry, since it was what he had received in the Lord, (<51417>Colossians 4:17). And then closes the epistle with his own salutation and benediction, entreating a remembrance of him and his bonds, (<51418>Colossians 4:18).

Ver. 1. *Masters, give unto your servants*, etc.] This verse properly belongs to the preceding chapter, with which it should have been concluded. It is indeed strange, that those who made the division of chapters and verses should separate this from the former chapter, to which it so manifestly belongs, and begin a new one with it, when it has no connection with what follows; for the apostle having observed the duty of servants to their

masters, proceeds to direct masters to the discharge of their duty to their servants, by giving them

that which is just and equal: proper food and raiment, which is sufficient and fitting for them; the wages due unto them by law or contract; using them with gentleness and humanity, taking care of them when under affliction, and in sickness; encouraging the diligent and laborious by an addition to their salaries; correcting the disobedient within just bounds, not with too much rigour and severity; and carrying it with an even hand to all, not preferring or indulging one before another, without any reason:

knowing that ye also have a master in heaven: (see Gill on "Ephesians 6:9").

Ver. 2. *Continue in prayer*, etc.] This is not said particularly to masters, as in the foregoing verse, but to all the members of the church in general; for the apostle having taken notice of some special duties relating to persons in different stations of life, returns to such as were common to them all; as this of prayer to God is, for such prayer is intended; for though the object is not expressed here, he is in the following verse, and the Mediator Christ is supposed, and also the Holy Spirit, whose assistance is necessary to it. The things exhorted to, and required in prayer, are, first, as in this clause, continuance in it, which does not mean that men should be always formally praying to God; nor can it be thought that saints are always in praying frames of soul, though such are always desirable; but it intends frequency and constancy in prayer, in opposition to an entire restraint and omission of it, and to a performance of it but now and then, or very rarely; for though Christians are not, as the Jews were, bound to certain stated hours of prayer, so many times in a day, yet a day should not pass without prayer to God; for their daily cases call for it; their lives, their health, their daily bread, and all their temporal enjoyments, which depend on his daily goodness, providence, and power; their spiritual affairs, the renewing of the inward man day by day, fresh supplies of grace for new service; their daily trials and afflictions, their continued enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, all fully show the necessity of daily prayer: besides, God does not always immediately answer the prayers of his people, he will be sought unto time after time, even for a blessing he intends to give; and therefore the saints should not be discouraged, but continue in prayer till they receive the mercy, and their importunity is a means of enjoying it, as in the case of the poor widow; and which is an encouraging reason why men should pray

always, and not faint. Add to this, that constant prayer is a means of keeping up a spiritual acquaintance, intercourse, and familiarity with God, and of the soul alive in the vigorous exercise of the graces of the Spirit, and of preserving the saints from temptations and sin; for, generally speaking, restraining prayer before God, and casting off his fear, go together. The next things requisite in prayer are watchfulness and thankfulness:

and watch in the same with thanksgiving. There is not only a watchfulness unto it, previous to a man's entrance on it, as in (<49E6B>Ephesians 6:18 <610407>1 Peter 4:7) but a watchfulness in it, which is opposed both to sleepiness of body, and to coldness and indifference of mind, to all careless airs and negligent manner of performing it; and designs an intenseness of mind, an application of thought, and fervency of devotion, and affection in it. It lies in a concern, that the heart be lift up, with the hands to God; in a care, that what is asked is according to the will of God, and that the whole be performed in sincerity, faith, and fear. This is what the Jews call hlpt ^wy[, "the attention of prayer" [f55], and blh tnwk, "the intention of the heart"; and which, they say [f56], is the root of prayer, the main and principal thing in it; and that every prayer which is not with intention, is no prayer [f57]; and which, they observe, lies in this, that a man turns his heart from all (other) thoughts, and seems to himself as if he stood before the divine Majesty. To this

thanksgiving must be added; (see <510406>Philippians 4:6) for this is well pleasing to God; and the contrary, an ungrateful spirit, is highly resented by him. Besides, a believer has always mercies to bless God for, as well as favours to ask at his hands; nor is he ever in such a situation, either in temporals or spirituals, but he has something to bless God for. Moreover, how should it be expected that a person should succeed in a present request, who is not thankful for a former kindness?

Ver. 3. *Withal, praying also for us*, etc.] The persons to be prayed for are next directed to; and these are not only themselves, though their concern is very near and great, but others also, all the saints and people of God, yea, all men, and in particular the ministers of the Gospel. The apostle desires they would pray for him, and his fellow ministers, and which he says not in dissimulation, under a guise of humility, but in true humility and lowliness of mind; being sensible of the greatness of the ministerial work, which this shows, and of his own imperfection and weakness, and of what advantage the prayers, even of the meanest in the church, might be unto him: and this

shows, that it is the duty of churches, and of particular believers, to pray for their ministers, and, among the rest, as follows,

that God would open to us a door of utterance; or “of the word”; so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic; and Ethiopic versions; meaning, either the word of the Gospel, that the door of that might be opened, that it might have a free course, and be glorified; for though he was bound, that was not; nor does he desire that the door of the prison might be opened, but the door of the word; that there might be an opportunity of preaching it; in which sense this phrase is used, (1 Corinthians 16:9 2 Corinthians 2:12) that whereas he could not go abroad to preach it, the hearts of men might be inclined to come to him, and hear it from his mouth; and that the door of their hearts might be opened, that they might attend unto it; that it might have an entrance into them, and a place in them: or else the door of his own speech and words is intended, and the sense be, that God would not only set before him an open door for the preaching of the Gospel, and make it effectual for the conversion of many souls; but that, as he would furnish him with all abilities, and every gift for that service, so that with enlargement of heart, and liberty of mind, he would give him elocution, a mouth and wisdom to speak, utterance and freedom of speech; that the door of the Gospel being opened, or an opportunity given to preach it, and the door of men's hearts opened to receive it, the door, of his lips might be also opened to show forth the praise of the grace of God. The Alexandrian copy adds, “with boldness”, or “boldly”, as in (Ephesians 6:19)

to speak the mystery of Christ; the Gospel, of which Christ is the author, preacher, sum, and substance; the whole of which is a mystery; the wisdom of God in a mystery; all the doctrines of it are mysteries; and particularly those, and which are here more especially designed, which regard the person, offices, and grace of Christ, as the mystery of his divine and eternal sonship, of his incarnation, of the union of the two natures, divine and human, in his person, of redemption by his blood, justification by his righteousness, and satisfaction by his sacrifice, things dear to the apostle, and which his soul was full of, and he wanted to speak out; and therefore desires prayer, to be made for him, that a door might be opened, and way made for his speaking of these things with freedom:

for which, says he,

I am also in bonds; this he adds, partly to show how dear the Gospel was to him, that he was willing to suffer, and did suffer cheerfully for the sake

of it; and what an honour he esteemed it to lie in chains for it, of which, nor of that, was he in the least ashamed; and partly to stir them up the more to prayer for him, for his liberty in every respect.

Ver. 4. *That I may make it manifest*, etc.] It being a mystery, a secret, which was hid in God from everlasting, and, during the legal dispensation, was wrapped up in types, and shadows, and sacrifices, and is still hidden unto the natural man. Wherefore the apostle was desirous of making it manifest in a ministerial way; for God only, by his Spirit, makes it manifest in a spiritual, experimental, and saving way.

As, says he,

I ought to speak. The Arabic version adds, “concerning it”, the Gospel, the mystery of Christ. The apostle's meaning is, that he might deliver it with that clearness and evidence, and use that plainness of speech which became the Gospel, and him as a minister of it, and not ambiguous expressions, equivocal phrases, words of double meanings, on purpose to hide things from men, but by manifestation of the truth, to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. As also to speak it faithfully, declaring the whole counsel of God, keeping back nothing that might be profitable to the churches; and with all constancy and certainty, with all boldness and intrepidity of soul, and freedom of mind; not seeking to please men, aiming at vain glory, and popular applause, or being afraid of their faces, menaces, and reproaches.

Ver. 5. *Walk in wisdom*, etc.] Or wisely, circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise men; (see Gill on “<4055>Ephesians 5:15”).

Towards them that are without; so the Jews used to call the Gentiles, all that were out of their own land, that were not of their nation or religion, who were aliens from them, and strangers to their privileges; and sometimes the unbelieving. Jews bear the same character, (see <4041>Mark 4:11). Here it may design such who were not members of this church; so the distinction of those that are without, and such as are within, is used by the apostle in (<4052>1 Corinthians 5:12). A church is an house or family, and such as belong to it are called the household of faith, and those that do not are they that are, without; it is as a city, and, those that are of it are fellow citizens with the saints, but others are strangers and foreigners; it is a garden enclosed, they that are planted in it are those that are within, and such as lie in the wide open field of the world are those that are without:

but inasmuch as there are some who are not members of churches, and yet have the grace of God, this phrase may chiefly regard all unregenerate men, profane sinners, such as have not faith in Christ, nor hope in God, who are entirely destitute of the grace of God. Now it becomes saints to walk wisely towards them; all communication with them is not cut off, or correspondence and conversation with them forbidden; the saints indeed are not to have their conversation among them as in times past; they are to have no fellowship with them in immoral actions, and superstitious practices; but they may be concerned with them in things civil, with respect to trade and commerce, and the common business of life; on these accounts they may keep company with them; otherwise, as the apostle elsewhere says, they must needs go out of the world. But then it is incumbent upon them to behave wisely towards them, with the simplicity of the dove to join the wisdom of the serpent; they should walk inoffensively towards them, and do nothing to provoke them, to injure and persecute them, but take all prudent methods to gain their affections, escape their resentment and wrath, and obtain their liberty of worshipping God without disturbance; they should give to all their due, tribute, custom, fear, and honour, to whom they are due, and owe no man anything but love; they should submit to every ordinance of men and be subject to the higher powers, not only to escape wrath, but for conscience sake, and should give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; they should pray for kings, and all in authority; for the prosperity of the nation, city, and place where they are, for their carnal relations and neighbours, and even their very entities, and do them all the good, both for soul and body, that lies in their power, and as they have opportunity; and by so doing, they will heap up coals of fire on their heads. Such a prudent walk, and wise conduct, is necessary on account of the Gospel, that the public ministration of it may be continued, that it may spread and get ground, and that it may not be reproached and blasphemed; and on the account of them that are without, that they may not have any stumblingblocks laid in their way, and they be hardened in their impiety and irreligion, and be more set against the truths of the Gospel; and also on account of believers themselves, who ought so to converse with the men of the world, that they are not partakers with them in their sins, and have their manners corrupted by them, or the vital heat of religion damped, and they become dead, lifeless, lukewarm, and indifferent to divine things, which is often the case through an indiscreet and imprudent walk with such men: the apostle adds,

redeeming the time; as an instance of prudent walking towards them that are without; (see Gill on "Ephesians 5:16").

Ver. 6. *Let your speech be always with grace*, etc.] "In grace, or concerning grace": let grace be the subject matter of your speech and conversation. When saints meet together they should converse with each other about the work of grace upon their souls, how it was begun, and how it has been carried on, and in what case it now is; they should talk of the great things and wonders of grace, which God has done for them, which would be both comfortable and edifying to them, and make for the glory of the grace of God; and also, they should confer together about the doctrines of grace, and so instruct, establish, and build up one another in them; and at least their conversation should always turn on things graceful and acceptable, such as may minister grace unto the hearer, and be useful and edifying; wherefore all obscene words, unchaste expressions, filthiness, foolish talking, and jesting, ought not to be used. Or this may regard the manner of the speech, and language of the saints; it should be in the exercise of grace; it should be in truth, faithfulness, and sincerity, without lying, dissimulation, and flattery; it should be in consistence with the grace of love, therefore evil should not be spoken one of another; nor should there be whisperings, backbitings, or anything said that is injurious to the character, credit, and reputation of another; for this is contrary to love, and so not with grace: and whatever is said should be spoken in the fear of God; the reason why so many evil things proceed out of the mouths of men is, because the fear of God is not before their eyes. Moreover, the speech of the saints ought to be in a graceful way, with a cheerful and pleasant countenance, in an affable and courteous manner, and not after a morose, churlish, and ill natured fashion: and this should be "alway" the case; not that they should be always talking, for there is a time to keep silence, as well as a time to speak; but the sense is, that when they do speak, it should be both graceful things, and in a graceful manner; so that there is never any room and place for vain discourse, unprofitable talk, and idle words, which must all be accounted for in the day of judgment.

Seasoned with salt. The Syriac version adds, Æya, "as" and reads it, "as if it was seasoned with salt": grace being that to speech, as salt is to meat; as salt makes meat savoury and agreeable to the palate, so grace, prudence, and holiness, which may be meant by salt, (see Mark 9:50), make discourse savoury, pleasant, and acceptable to a spiritual man, who savours the things that be of God, as all such things are that relate to the grace of

God, the work or doctrines of it; and as salt preserves flesh from putrefaction and corruption, so when grace goes along with speech, it makes it pure and incorrupt, sound speech which cannot be condemned: and the apostle's view is, in this exhortation, that nothing unsavoury and corrupt proceed out of the mouths of believers; (see <4029>Ephesians 4:29),

that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, “and know ye how”, etc. and make it to be a fresh exhortation to the saints to be concerned for such a share of spiritual knowledge, that they may be able to give a proper and pertinent answer, with meekness and fear, to such as shall ask a reason of the hope that is in them; and to make suitable returns to persons according to their age, sex, capacities, and circumstances; for everyone is not to be answered alike, nor the same man under different circumstances; a fool is sometimes to be answered according to his folly, and sometimes not; and this seems to be a better reading than ours, which makes this to be the end of gracious, savoury, and incorrupt speech; whereas knowledge is not acquired by speaking, but ought to go before it; though indeed a person that uses himself to speaking with prudence, purity, and grace, is at all times ready to give an agreeable answer, in a graceful and acceptable manner, to everyone.

Ver. 7. *All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you*, etc.] This Tychicus was an Asian by birth; (see <4404>Acts 20:4). His name signifies “fortunate”, and is the same with “Fortunatus” in Latin, which name is mentioned in (<4617>1 Corinthians 16:17) whether he is the same person may be inquired. It is said that this Tychicus was one of the seventy disciples, and was afterwards bishop of Chalcedon. However, he was employed by the apostle as a messenger to Colosse, as he also was to Ephesus, (see <4621>Ephesians 6:21 <5412>2 Timothy 4:12), to inform the members of the church of his state and condition, how it was with him; as that he was in prison at Rome, for the sake of the Gospel, which he continued to abide by, and held fast the profession of, not being in the least moved and intimidated by what he suffered, being supported by the presence of Christ, and the discoveries of his love; and therefore, though his outward state was very mean and uncomfortable, yet the inward state of his soul was right and good; the inward man was renewed day by day. He might also send word by him what his thoughts were about his deliverance, or his dissolution, and what expectation he had of either of these: and that they might give the greater

credit to what Tychicus should relate from him, he gives him the following character,

who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister: the same character is given of him in (Ephesians 6:21 (see Gill on "Ephesians 6:21")) to which is here added,

and fellow servant in the Lord; he was a "brother" in Christ, being a partaker of the same grace, and in the same spiritual relation; and "beloved" of God, and Christ, of all the churches and saints that knew him, and especially by the apostle; and was also a "minister" of the Gospel, a preacher of Jesus Christ, and a "faithful" one to Christ, to his Gospel, and the souls of men; than which a greater character cannot well be given: and though the apostle was endued with such superior gifts, grace, and usefulness; yet he calls this ministering brother a "fellow servant in the Lord"; he having a commission to preach from the same Lord, and having the same Gospel intrusted with him, and being engaged in the same good work, and having the same ends in view, the glory of Christ, and the good of souls; though he had not equal abilities and qualifications, and was not in the same high post and office as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

Ver. 8. *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose*, etc.] That is, to relate to them his affairs both temporal and spiritual; and also,

that he might know your estate. The Arabic version renders it, "that I may know your estate" by him when he returned again; as whether they continued steadfast in the Gospel, and observed the order, ordinances, and discipline of it; how it prospered, and was succeeded among them, to their comfort and edification, and to the conversion of others; and what reception the false teachers had among them; and what love, concord, and harmony were among themselves; or what were their afflictions and distresses from their enemies. The Ethiopic version renders it, "that ye may know the history of me"; which agrees with a manuscript mentioned by Grotius, which reads, "that ye may know the things concerning us", as does the Alexandrian copy; and with (Ephesians 6:22) where it is added, as here, and "comfort your hearts"; who might be greatly cast down upon hearing of the sufferings of the apostle, and also with those they themselves endured both from within and from without, from sin, Satan, and the world; *see on Gill "Ephesians 6:22"*.

Ver. 9. *With Onesimus*, etc.] Who had been Philemon's servant, ran away from him, and was met with and converted by the Apostle Paul, of whom he says many things in his epistle to his master. According to the Apostolic Constitutions, he was afterwards bishop of Beyrhoea; and some say he suffered martyrdom under Domitian; a servant of this name is mentioned by Suetonius [f58], Ignatius [f59] speaks of one Onesimus as bishop of Ephesus, but not the same with this,

a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you; either one of their ministers, as Epaphras was, (<510312>Colossians 3:12) or one of their city, who was originally a native of that place; and which the apostle mentions, the more to recommend him; though this is the least part of his commendation; he calls him a “brother”, being both a converted man, and in the ministry; and being faithful in his work to Christ, and greatly beloved, by the saints; and particularly highly in the esteem and affections of the apostle:

they shall make known unto you all things which are done here; at Rome, either to him in prison, or in the church; and being two of them, were a proper number to bear a testimony, and which ought to be received.

Ver. 10. *Aristarchus my fellow prisoner saluteth you*, etc.] This man was a man of Macedonia, and a Thessalonian; (<441929>Acts 19:29 20:4) which hinders not but that he might be of the circumcision, or a Jew, as is suggested in the following verse; for he might be born at Thessalonica, and yet be of Jewish parents; nor is his Greek name any objection to it, for the Jews themselves say, that the greatest part of the Israelites that were out of the land, their names are as the names of strangers [f60]: he was a constant companion of the apostle, and one of his fellow labourers, as in (<570124>Philemon 1:24) and now a prisoner with him at Rome; and who having some knowledge of the members of the church at Colosse, takes this opportunity of sending his Christian salutation to them:

and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas; the same with John Mark, whose mother's name was Mary, said here to be sister to Barnabas, (<441212>Acts 12:12,24) concerning whom there was a difference between Paul and Barnabas, (<441537>Acts 15:37,38), and is the same Mark that wrote the Gospel, and was converted by the Apostle Peter, (<600513>1 Peter 5:13) and who is said to have received his Gospel from him; he is also mentioned (<550411>2 Timothy 4:11) (Philemon 24). The Arabic version calls him here, the “brother's son of Barnabas”: and the Syriac version, hdd rb, “his uncle's son”: however,

Barnabas being so great a man as he was, and so well known, it added some credit to Mark, that he was a relation of his:

touching whom ye received commandments; not concerning Barnabas, but Mark, concerning whom they had had letters of commendation, either from Barnabas or from Paul, to this purpose:

if he come unto you, receive him; for this was either the substance of those letters, or what the apostle now adds of his own, for the further confirmation of them; and that they might more readily and honourably receive him, when he should come unto them.

Ver. 11. *And Jesus, which is called Justus*, etc.] The former of these names is the same with Joshua, and was very frequent with the Jews, and the later a surname that was sometimes given to men remarkable for holiness and righteousness: so Joseph, called Barsabas, is surnamed Justus, (<44 01 23>Acts 1:23) and James, the brother of our Lord, was called by the Jews James the Just [f61]: whether this man was not the same with Justus of Corinth, whose house joined to the synagogue, and into which Paul entered, (<44 18 07>Acts 18:7) is not certain, but is likely: who are of the circumcision; were Jews, were circumcised persons, though not now sticklers for circumcision, and the rest of the ceremonies, as appears by what follows: this is to be understood of all the above persons, that sent their salutations to this church; though some confine it to Marcus, Barnabas's sister's son, and to Jesus, called Justus:

these only are my fellow workers unto the kingdom of God; who assisted him in preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and in promoting the honour and interest of Christ. These were the only persons of the Jewish nation that were then at Rome under that character; from whence it appears that Peter was not there at that time: the apostle adds,

which have been a comfort unto me; under his afflictions and sufferings, by visiting him, conferring with him, praying for him, communicating to him, and labouring in the Gospel in his room and stead.

Ver. 12. *Epaphras, who is one of you*, etc.] A native of Colosse, and one of their faithful ministers; (see <51 01 07>Colossians 1:7).

A servant of Christ; not merely in the same sense as every believer is, but as he was a preacher of the Gospel, in which he faithfully served his Lord and master, Christ:

saluteth you; sends his Christian respects to you, for whom he bore a sincere love and hearty affection, as appears by what follows:

always labouring fervently for you in prayers; in all his prayers, which were many and frequent, he never forgot his dear flock at Colosse, of which he was pastor, but strove with God for them, even to an agony, as the word signifies; he wrestled with the Lord as Jacob did, nor, as he, would he let him go without a blessing for this church; he was incessant, importunate, and fervent in prayer for them: and what he prayed in particular for them was,

that ye may stand perfect; in Christ Jesus their head, and in his spotless righteousness; (see <5102B>Colossians 1:28 2:10) and continue believing in him, and looking to him for righteousness and strength, in whom all the fulness, the perfection of grace dwells; and where the saints only are, and can continue to be perfect:

and complete in all the will of God; or "be filled" in it, have a perfect knowledge of the revealed will of God, both as to doctrine and practice, and be enabled to act according to it.

Ver. 13. *For I bear him record*, etc.] The apostle was an eye and ear witness of his fervent prayers, his labour of love, and zealous affection for these saints and others; and therefore, as he judged he ought, he bears a testimony for him,

that he hath a great zeal for you; for their spiritual welfare, that the Gospel might continue with them, and they in that, against false teachers, and their attempts to subvert them; that they might grow in the grace of the Gospel, and walk worthy of it, and be at peace among themselves:

and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis; cities in Phrygia, which lay near to Colosse, the one being situated by the river Lycus, and the other by the Maeander; here were many believers, for whom Epaphras had a like zeal and affections as for the Colossians, and to whom very likely he had been useful, either in conversion or edification, or both. The apostle takes no notice to the Colossians of Epaphras being his fellow prisoner, as, he does in his epistle to (<5702B>Philemon 1:23) it may be for this reason, lest they should be over much distressed and cast down with it.

Ver. 14. *Luke, the beloved physician*, etc.] Luke the Evangelist, though some doubt it, is here intended, who was a constant companion of the

apostle in his troubles, and went with him to Rome, as the Acts of the Apostles wrote by him show, and as from (2 Timothy 4:11) it appears; so Jerom [f62] calls the Evangelist Luke, the physician of Antioch, for from thence he was; and being converted by the Apostle Paul, as is very probable, though some make him to be one of the seventy disciples, he became of a physician of bodies, a physician of souls: some say [f63] he was a scholar of Galen, the famous physician, and others that he was his sister's son; who having heard of Christ's miracles, set out with his master Galen for Judea, to know the truth of them, of which they doubted; Galen died by the way, Luke came to Christ, and being taught by him, became one of the seventy disciples. The apostle calls him "beloved", not on account of his profession, in which he might be useful to many, but as he was a brother in Christ, a minister of the Gospel, and a fellow labourer of his. This is the same person as Lucas, mentioned along with Demas, and others, as here, in (Philemon 1:24). The name perhaps is Roman, but was, however, well known among the Jews; for they say [f64], the

> "witnesses that sign a divorce, and their names are as the names of strangers, what is to be done with it? there is none comes into our hands (is received) but swqwl "Lukus" and "Lus", and we allow it to be right:"

upon which the gloss says, because these were famous names:

and Demas greet you; the same who, through the love of the present world, forsook the apostle, (2 Timothy 4:10) which he did either after the writing of this epistle, or if before it, he was now returned again to him: his name seems to be the same with the Roman Dama, unless it should be a contraction of Demetrius, or rather of Demarchos; though the Jews make frequent mention of R. ymyd, "Dimi", or "Demi", in their writings [f65], which perhaps is the same name with this.

Ver. 15. *Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea*, etc.] Where there was a church mentioned in the following verse, of which *see on Gill "Revelation 2:10"*.

And Nymphas; which some, unskilful in the Greek language, have took for a woman; whereas it is the name of a man, as the following words show; and is a contraction of Nymphios, or Nymphidios, or Nymphodoros:

and the church which is in his house. This man seems to have been an inhabitant of Laodicea, and that the church there met at his house to worship God, to pray unto him, sing his praise, hear his word, and attend on all ordinances: or his own family was brought up so strictly to the observance of these things, that they looked like a little church of themselves.

Ver. 16. *And when this epistle is read amongst you*, &c,] Which the apostle was now writing, and sent unto them; and which was to be read publicly, before the whole church; being sent not to any particular person, or persons, but to the whole body, and for their general good and instruction:

cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; his will was, that after it had been read to the church at Colosse, it should be sent, or at least a copy of it, to the church of the Laodiceans, in order to be read there: his reason might be, not only because this church was near them, but because it was in much the same situation, being infested with the same sort of false teachers; and therefore what was said to the one, was pertinent to the other:

and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea; which was not an epistle of the apostle to the Laodiceans, as some have thought, but one that was "written from" thence, as the Syriac version renders it. Marcion, the heretic, called the epistle to the Ephesians, the epistle to the Laodiceans, but without any reason; and others have forged an epistle which bears this name, and appears to be a collection out of others, and chiefly from the epistle to the Philippians; and which being short, and may gratify the curious who cannot otherwise come at it, I shall transcribe it, and is as follows [f66].

> "Paul an Apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ; to the brethren which are of Laodicea, grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to Christ in every prayer of mine, that ye continue and persevere in good works, expecting the promise in the day of judgment: neither let the vain speeches of some that pretend to truth disturb you, so as to turn you from the truth of the Gospel which is preached by me; and now the Lord cause that those who belong to me may be serviceable for the furtherance of the truth of the Gospel, and doing kind actions, which are of salvation unto eternal life: and now my

bonds are manifest which I suffer in Christ, in which I am glad and rejoice; and this is to my perpetual salvation which is done by your prayers, the Holy Ghost supplying, whether by life or by death; for me to live is life in Christ, and to die is joy; and he will do his own mercy in you, that ye may have the same love, and be unanimous: therefore, most beloved, as ye have heard of the presence of the Lord, so think ye, and do in fear, and you shall have life for ever; for it is God that worketh in you; and whatsoever ye do, do without sin; and what is best, most beloved, rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ, and take heed of all filth in all gain; let your petitions be openly with God, be ye steadfast in the sense of Christ: and whatsoever things are sound and true, and chaste and just, and lovely, do; and what ye have heard and received retain in the heart, and peace shall be with you. Salute all the brethren with an holy kiss; all the saints salute you; the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Cause this to be read to the Colossians, and that which is of the Colossians to you."

Every one on reading it will easily see that it is a spurious piece, a collection out of other epistles, and very ill put together: however, the apostle here does not speak of any epistle written to the church of Laodicea, but of one that was written from thence; which some think was written by himself, and that he means his first epistle to Timothy, which is said to be written from Laodicea; and the rather, because in that the qualifications of the ministers of the Gospel are given; and also suitable instructions for the discharge of their work, and so very proper to be read in the presence of Archippus; who, from the following verse, seems to have been remiss and negligent, and needed stirring up to the performance of his office: but from (<5201>Colossians 2:1) it appears, that the apostle had not been at Laodices when he wrote this, and had not so much as seen any of the faces of the brethren there in the flesh; it therefore seems rather to be an epistle which was sent from Laodicea to him, or to the Colossians; which having something in it very instructive and useful, the apostle desires it might be publicly read.

Ver. 17. *And say to Archippus*, etc.] A name common among the Grecians. This person the apostle calls his fellow soldier, in (<5701>Philemon 1:2) and who was now the minister of the Gospel at Colosse, his fellow minister, or co-pastor Epaphras, being at Rome, and a prisoner there; though by some he is said to be the first bishop of the Laodiceans, but it

seems most likely that he now resided at Colosse, and was their minister: who being negligent in his office, they are called upon to say unto him,

take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it. The "ministry" he had, was not that of the office of a deacon, as some have thought, but of a preacher of the word; and this he had "received" gifts for, and was called unto it, and installed in it; and that "in", and "by the Lord" himself, and to whom he was accountable for it: and therefore it was incumbent on him to "fulfil it"; by constantly preaching the word, and faithfully administering the ordinances; by defending truth, detecting error, reproving vice, visiting the sick, and comforting the feeble minded; taking heed in all things to himself and doctrine, that he feed the whole flock of God with wholesome food; and, as a wise and faithful steward, give to everyone their portion of meat in due season: hence it appears, that when ministers are negligent in the discharge of their duty, the church has a power to admonish and exhort them to a diligent performance of it.

Ver. 18. *The salutation by the hand of me Paul*, etc.] After his amanuensis had finished the epistle, he added his usual salutation to it with his own hand, to prevent all counterfeits and impositions, and that the churches to whom he wrote might be sure of the genuineness of his epistles; but before he added it to it, he either wrote with his own hand, or ordered to be written the following words,

remember my bonds; this he says, partly that they might be animated to abide by the Gospel, for which, as he had told them before, (^{Col 4:3}Colossians 4:3) that he was in bonds; and partly to encourage them, by his example, patiently to endure what afflictions and persecutions soever they should meet with, for the sake of it; as also that they might be moved hereby, to remember him in their prayers, that, if it was the will of God, he might be released, and be yet further useful in preaching the Gospel; or however, that he might be supported in his bonds, and cheerfully bear them, and remain steadfast in his faith in Christ unto the end: and then follows the salutation,

grace be with you, Amen; which is common to all his epistles, and well suits them; in which he so much displays the grace of God, as it is expressed in the Gospel; and which his heart was full of, and earnestly desired might be more largely manifested to, and bestowed upon the saints. This epistle is said to be

written from Rome to the Colossians, by Tychicus and Onesimus; and though the subscriptions of the epistles are not always to be depended on, yet this seems to be right; that it was inscribed to the Colossians, there is no doubt; and that it was written from Rome is clear enough, since by several expressions it is plain that he was now a prisoner, and in bonds; and that it was sent by Tychicus and Onesimus is more than probable, from (⁵¹⁰⁴⁷Colossians 4:7-9).

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 32.

Ft2 -- Polymnia, 50:7. c. 30.

Ft3 -- Eusebius in Chron.

Ft4 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 6. 3. & in Exodus fol. 32. 3. & in <0304>Leviticus 14:4. & 37:4. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 3. 2.

Ft5 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 25. 4.

Ft6 -- De Mund. Opific. p. 6. de Plant. Noe, p. 216, 217. de Coufus. Ling. p. 341. de Somniis, p. 600. de Monarch. p. 823.

Ft7 -- Isidior. Pelusiot. 50:3. Ep. 31.

Ft8 -- R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 50. 1.

Ft9 -- Targum Jon. in <0101>Genesis 1:26. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 1. 1. & 3. 3. Menass. ben Israel, Conciliator in Genesis Qu. 12.

Ft10 -- Sepher Jetzira, p. 17, Ed. Rittangel.

Ft11 -- Tikkune Zohar in ib. p. 127, 128. & Zohar in Exodus fol. 18. 2. & in Leviticus fol. 39. 1. & 47. 2.

Ft12 -- Abarbinel in Daniel fol. 45. 4. & 46. 4.

Ft13 -- Cabala denudata, par. 2. p. 7. & Lex. Cabal. p. 679, 681.

Ft14 -- Philo de Conf. ling. p. 341.

Ft15 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 29.

Ft16 -- Jonathan ben Uzziel in <0204>Exodus 40:4.

Ft17 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 6. sect. 4. 7.

Ft18 -- De Congressu quaerend. Erud. p. 440. 441. de Vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 665, etc. quod deterius pot. p. 184.

Ft19 -- De Migr. Abraham, p. 389.

Ft20 -- De Sommiis, p. 574.

Ft21 -- Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 120. 8.

Ft22 -- Misn. Nedarim, c. 3. sect. 11.

Ft23 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 106. 1. Caphtor, fol. 52. 2.

Ft24 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 87. 1, 3.

Ft25 -- Nonnus in Joh. 19:19. Vid. Niccqueti Titulus S. Crucis, 50:1. c. 18. p. 128.

Ft26 -- Vid. Lydium de re Militari, 50:6. c. 3.

Ft27 -- Vid. Casaubon. Epist. ep. 24.

Ft28 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 3. sect. 1.

Ft29 -- Misn. Becorot, c. 9. sect. 5.

Ft30 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft31 -- T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 9. 1. Piske Tosaphot Yebamot. art. 84. Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 20. sect. 14.

Ft32 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 58. 2.

Ft33 -- Maimon. Hilch. Melachim, c. 10. sect. 9.

Ft34 -- T. Bab. Betza, fol. 16. 1. Seder Tephillot, fol. 76. 1. Ed. Amtst.

Ft35 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 56. 2. Seder Olam Rabba, p. 17. & Zuta, p. 101. Ed. Meyer.

Ft36 -- Jarchi & Baal Hatturim in Genesis 2:3. Pirke Eliezer, c. 18.

Ft37 -- Vid. Misn. Abot, c. 3. sect. 18. & Bartenora in ib. & Halicot Olam, par. 2. c. 1. p. 48.

Ft38 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 32. 1.

Ft39 -- Misn. Chagiga, c. 1. sect. 8. T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 11. 2.

Ft40 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 63. 1.

Ft41 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 36. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 5. 1.

Ft42 -- T. Hieros. Roshhashanah, fol. 56. 4.

Ft43 -- Vid. Clement. Alex Stromat. 50:6. p. 635.

Ft44 -- Seder Tephillot, Ed. Basil fol. 222. 2.

Ft45 -- Ib. fol. 335. 1.

Ft46 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 97. 2. & in Exodus fol. 24. 3.

Ft47 -- Maimon. Maacolot Asurot, c. 7. sect. 1. & c. 14. sect. 2. & Nezirut, c. 5. sect. 3.

Ft48 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 2. 3.

Ft49 -- Vid. Justin. 50:2. c. 1, 2, 3. Plin. 50:4. c. 12. & 6. 17. Herodot. 50:4. c. 46.

Ft50 -- Laertius in Vita Anacharsis.

Ft51 -- Tzeror Hammot, fol. 28. 2.

Ft52 -- Shaare Ora, fol. 6. 1. & 22. 2. & 25. 3.

Ft53 -- Sepher Jetzirah, Nethib, 17. p. 136,

Ft54 -- T. Megilla, fol. 14. 2. & 15. 1. Zohar in Numbers fol. 70. 3. & 76. 2. & Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Leviticus fol. 38. 3.

Ft55 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 164. 2. & Sabbat, fol. 127. 1.

Ft56 -- R. Aben Ezra in 1987Psalm 78:37.

Ft57 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 4. sect. 15, 16.

Ft58 -- ln Vit. Galbae, c. 13.

Ft59 -- Ep. ad Ephes. p. 17. & ad Antioch. ascript. p. 89.

Ft60 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 11. 2.

Ft61 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:2. c. 1.

Ft62 -- Catalog. Script. Ecclesiastes p. 91. Vid. Nicephor. Hist. 50:2. c. 43.

Ft63 -- Vid. Castell. Lex. Polyglott. col. 1894.

Ft64 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 11. 2.

Ft65 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 19. 2. Nazir, fol. 36. 1. Sota, fol. 43. 2. Bava Kama, fol. 43.

Ft66 -- Jachasin, fol. 87. 2. & 117. 1.

1 THESSALONIANS

INTRODUCTION
TO THE BOOK OF 1 THESSALONIANS

Thessalonica was a very large, populous, and flourishing city, it was "liberae conditionis", as Pliny says [f1], a free city, and the metropolis of Macedonia; it was formerly called Halis [f2], and had the name of Thessalonica given it by Philip king of Macedon, on account of his conquest of Thessalia, which this name signifies; and some say he gave this name to a daughter of his on that occasion, who was afterwards the wife of Cassander; who, others say, called this place by his wife's name [f3], which before was Therme: its name with the Italians is Salonichi, and is now in the hands of the Turks, as all Greece is: here the Apostle Paul came after he had been at Philippi, and stayed about three weeks, and preached every sabbath day, and his ministry was blessed to the conversion of some Jews, a multitude of devout Greeks, and many of the chief women of the place, which laid the foundation of a Gospel church; to which the apostle wrote this epistle, and is the first of all the epistles he wrote: the occasion of it was this; the unbelieving Jews, vexed to see the apostle's success, raised a mob of the baser sort of people, and assaulted the house of Jason, where the apostle and his companions were; but Paul and Silas were sent away by night to Berea, which the rabble understanding, followed them thither; when Paul was sent as if he was going to the sea, but was conducted by the brethren to Athens, who gave orders that Silas and Timothy should come to him with all speed, as they did; and Timothy was sent back to Thessalonica to establish and comfort the young converts there; and returning with good news of their faith, and charity, to the apostle at Corinth, he sent them from thence this epistle, and not from Athens, as some have thought: the design of which is to encourage them under their afflictions and sufferings; to exhort them to stand fast in the Lord, to abide by his truths and ordinances, and to live an holy life and conversation, and to regard the several duties of religion, towards God and one another, and those that were set over them; and in it he instructs them concerning the resurrection of the dead, and the coming of Christ, articles of very great

importance and concern: the writing of this epistle is placed by Dr. Lightfoot in the 51st year of Christ, and in the 11th of Claudius Caesar.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO 1 THESSALONIANS 1

This chapter contains the inscription of the epistle; the apostle's salutation of the persons it is written to; his thanksgiving for blessings received by them; an account of the manner in which the Gospel came to them, how they behaved when it was preached to them, and of the success of it in their conversion. The inscription which expresses the names of the persons concerned in the epistle, and describes those to whom it is written, and also the salutation, which is the same as in other epistles, are in (<5201>1 Thessalonians 1:1) and then follows a thanksgiving to God made in prayer to him for the special graces of the Spirit bestowed on them, as faith, hope, and love, and the lively exercise of them in which they were; the source and spring of which was the electing love of God, (<5202>1 Thessalonians 1:2-4) and the evidence of their election of God to the apostle, was the manner in which the Gospel came to them; not merely in the external ministry of it, but in the internal efficacy of it, through the power of the Holy Ghost, (<5205>1 Thessalonians 1:5) and the effects of it upon them; it found an hearty reception among them, in much affliction, and with joy of the Holy Ghost; so that they not only professed it, and became the followers of Christ and his apostles, but were examples unto others, (<5206>1 Thessalonians 1:6,7) for the fame of the Gospel being preached unto them, and of their faith, were spread everywhere, so that the apostle had no need to say anything about it, (<5208>1 Thessalonians 1:8) the manner of their entrance among them, and the issue of it, their conversion, were so manifest to all; which is described by what they were turned from, idols; and by what they were turned to, the living God; and by the ends of it, which were to serve God, and wait for Jesus Christ; the arguments engaging to which are, his relation to God as his Son, his being raised from the dead by him; his being in heaven, exalted at his right hand there, from whence he is expected; and his having, by his sufferings and death, delivered his people from wrath to come, (<5209>1 Thessalonians 1:9,10).

Ver. 1. *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus*, etc.] These are the persons concerned in this epistle, and who send their greetings and salutations to

this church; Paul was the inspired writer of it, and who is called by his bare name, without any additional epithet to it, as elsewhere in his other epistles; where he is either styled the servant, or apostle, or prisoner of Christ, but here only Paul: the reason for it is variously conjectured; either because he was well known by this church, having been lately with them; or lest these young converts should be offended and stumble at any pompous title, which they might imagine carried an appearance of arrogance and pride; or because there were as yet no false apostles among them, who had insinuated anything to the disadvantage of Paul, as in other places, which obliged him to assert his character and magnify his office; or rather because this was the first epistle he wrote, and he being conscious to himself of his own meanness, and that he was the least of the apostles, and unworthy to be called one, chose not to use the title. Silvanus is the same with Silas, who was with the apostle at Thessalonica and at Corinth, when he wrote this epistle; he was originally a member of the church at Jerusalem, and was one of the chief of the brethren there, and a prophet; (see <44704>Acts 17:4 18:5) (<44152>Acts 15:22,23), Timothy was also with the apostle at the same place, and was sent back by him from Athens to know their state, and returned to Corinth to him with Silas; he stands last, as being the younger, and perhaps was the apostle's amanuensis, and therefore in modesty writes his name last: the reason of their being mentioned was because, having been with the apostle at this place, they were well known by the church, who would be glad to hear of their welfare; as also to show their continued harmony and consent in the doctrines of the Gospel; they stand in the same order in (<470119>2 Corinthians 1:19),

unto the church of the Thessalonians: which consisted of several of the inhabitants of Thessalonica, both Jews and Gentiles; (see Gill on "<44704>Acts 17:4"), who were called under the ministry of the word by the grace of God, out of darkness into marvellous light, and were separated from the rest of the world, and incorporated into a Gospel church state. This was a particular congregated church of Christ. Some have thought it was not as yet organized, or had proper officers in it; since no mention is made of pastors and deacons, but the contrary is evident from (<520512>1 Thessalonians 5:12,13), where they are exhorted to know, own, and acknowledge them that laboured among them, and were over them in the Lord, and esteem them highly for their works' sake. This church is said to be

in God the Father; were interested in his love and free favour, as appears by their election of God, (<520104>1 Thessalonians 1:4), and they were in the

faith of God the Father, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the profession of it, and so were distinguished from an assembly of Heathens that were in the faith of idols, and not of the one true and living God, and especially as the Father of Christ; they were in fellowship with God the Father, and they were drawn by the efficacy of his grace to himself and to his Son, and were gathered together and embodied in a church state under his direction and influence; he was the author of them as a church, and they were plants of Christ's heavenly Father's planting, not to be plucked up; and they were, as the Arabic version renders it, “addicted” to God the Father; they were devoted to his service; they had his word among them, which they had received not as the word of men, but as the word of God; and his ordinances were duly and faithfully administered among them, and attended on by them:

and in the Lord Jesus Christ; they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; they were chosen in him as their head and representative; they were in him as members of his body, and as branches in the vine; they were openly in him by the effectual calling and conversion, were in the faith of him, and in the observance of his commands, and in communion with him; and so were distinguished from a Jewish synagogue or congregation: all this being true, at least of the far greater part of them, is said of them all, in a judgment of charity, they being under a profession of the Christian religion:

grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the apostle's usual salutation and wish in all his epistles to the churches; (see Gill on “ <4801>Romans 1:7”), the words “from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” are left out in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; and the Arabic version omits the last clause, “and the Lord Jesus Christ”; and the Ethiopic version only reads, “peace be unto you and his grace”.

Ver. 2. *We give thanks to God always for you all*, etc.] For all the members of this church, Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, greater or lesser believers, officers or private Christians; for their being a church, for the gifts bestowed on them, for the graces hereafter mentioned that were wrought in them and exercised by them; the glory of all which is given to God, and thanks for the same, which shows them to be gifts of his, and not in the least owing to any merits of men: the apostle ascribes nothing to their free will, previous dispositions and qualifications, diligence and

industry; nor does he attribute anything to himself and to his companions, who were only ministers by whom these believed; but he refers all to God, to his grace and goodness: and he returned thanks to him for it, and that "always"; whenever he thought of it, made mention of it, or was at the throne of grace, as follows,

making mention of you in our prayers; to God, daily, both in private and in public, at which times thanksgivings to God were made on their account; for thanksgiving is a part of prayer, and requests are always to be made known unto God with thanksgiving. The Ethiopic version renders this clause in the singular number, "and I am mindful of you always in my prayer"; and leaves out the word "all" in the former clause.

Ver. 3. *Remembering without ceasing*, etc.] The phrase "without ceasing", is, by the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, joined to the last clause of the preceding verse; and the remembrance the apostle speaks of is either a distinct thing from the mention made of them in prayer, and suggests that they bore them on their minds at other times also; or it is the same with it; or rather a reason of their mentioning of them then, because they remembered them, and the following things of theirs:

as your work of faith; by which is meant not the principle of faith, for as such that is God's work, the product of his grace, and the effect of his almighty power; but the operative virtue and exercise of it under the influence of the grace of God: the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it, "the work of your faith"; and so some copies, and the Syriac version, "the works of your faith". The Targumist in (Habakkuk 1:12) represents God as holy atwnmyh ydbw[b, "in works of faith": faith is a working grace, it has a deal of work to do, it has its hands always full, and is employed about many things; it is the grace by which a soul goes to God, as its covenant God, lays hold on him as such, pleads his promises with him, asks favours of him, and is very importunate, and will have no denial; and by which it goes to Christ as at first conversion, afterwards for fresh supplies of grace, out of that fulness of grace that is in him; it receives him and all from him, and through him pardon, righteousness, adoption of children, and an eternal inheritance; and it is that grace which carries back all the glory to God and Christ, and to free grace; it glorifies God, exalts Christ, humbles the creature, and magnifies the grace of God, it has much work to do this way; and it works by love, by acts of love to God, to Christ, and to the saints; and it puts the soul upon a cheerful obedience to

every ordinance and command, and hence obedience is styled the obedience of faith; and indeed all good works that are properly so are done in faith, and faith without works is dead; it is greatly engaged against the world and the devil; it is that grace by which Satan is opposed and overcome, and by which the believer gets the victory over the world; so that he is not discouraged by its frowns, and cast down by the trials and afflictions he meets with in it, nor drawn aside by its snares and allurements; something of this kind the apostle had observed and remembered in these believers: he adds,

and labour of love; love is a laborious grace when in lively exercise; love to God and Christ will constrain a believer to engage in, and go through, great hardships, difficulties, toil, and labour, for their sakes; and love to the saints will exert itself, by serving them in things temporal and spiritual, ministering cheerfully and largely to their outward wants, for which reason the same epithet is given to love in (Hebrews 6:10) as here; regarding and assisting them in their spiritual concerns; praying for them and with them; building them up in their most holy faith; communicating their experiences, and speaking comfortable words unto them; reproving them for sin in love, and with tenderness; restoring them when fallen in a spirit of meekness; and stirring them up to love and good works: love has much toil and labour, not only in performing the several duties of religion, both towards God and man; but in bearing all things, the burdens of fellow Christians; the infirmities of weak believers, forbearing them in love, forgiving their offences, and covering their sins:

and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, or "of our Lord Jesus Christ". These persons had a good hope through grace given unto them, and which was founded in Christ Jesus, in his person, blood, and righteousness, and so was as an anchor sure and steadfast; and it had him for its object, it was an hope of interest in him, of being for ever with him, of his, second coming and glorious appearance, and of eternal life and happiness through him; and this was attended with patience, with a patient bearing of reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions, for the sake of Christ, and a patient waiting for his coming, his kingdom and glory; and this as well as the others were remembered by the apostle, and his fellow ministers, with great pleasure: and that

in the sight of God and our Father; or before God and our Father; which may be read in connection either with the above graces, which were

exercised, not only before men, but before God, and in his sight, who sees not as man seeth, and who cannot be deceived and imposed upon; and so shows that these graces were true and genuine, faith was unfeigned, love was without dissimulation, and hope without hypocrisy: or with the word remembering, as it is in the Syriac version, which reads, “remembering before God and our Father”; that is, as often as we appear before God, and lift up our hands and our hearts unto him in prayer, we bear you upon our minds before God; and particularly remember your operative faith, laborious love, and patient hope of Christ.

Ver. 4. *Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.*] Which intends not an election to an office, for this epistle is written not to the officers of the church only, but to the whole church; nor to the Gospel, the outward means of grace, since this was common to them with others, and might be known without the evidence after given; nor does it design the effectual calling, sometimes so called for this is expressed in the following verse as a fruit, effect, and evidence of the election here spoken of, which is no other than the eternal choice of, them to everlasting life and happiness: this is of God, an act of God the Father, made in Christ Jesus before the world began, and which springs from his sovereign will, and is the effect of his pure love and free favour; and therefore these persons who are the objects of it are said to be “beloved of God”; for so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read the words, and which agree with (2 Thessalonians 2:13) for this choice does not arise from the merits of men, or any conditions in them, or from the foresight of their faith, holiness, and good works, but from the free grace and good pleasure of God; and is the source and spring of all grace, and the blessings of it, and even of good works; and is a sure, immutable, and irreversible act of God, being founded on his own will, and not on the works of men; the knowledge they had of this was not what the Thessalonians themselves had, though they might have, and doubtless had the knowledge of this grace, and which may be concluded with certainty from the effectual calling; and is a privilege which many particular believers may, and do arrive unto the knowledge of, without any extraordinary revelation made unto them: but here it intends the knowledge which the apostle and his companions had of the election of the members of this church; not by inspiration of the Spirit of God, but by the manner of the Gospel's coming unto them, and the effects it had upon them, as expressed in the following verses; and from their faith, hope, and love, mentioned in the preceding verse; and which was the ground and

foundation of their thanksgiving for them; *see on Gill "2 Thessalonians 2:13"*.

Ver. 5. *For our Gospel came not unto you*, etc.] The apostle calls the Gospel "our Gospel", not because he and his fellow ministers were the authors of it; for in this respect it is solely of God, being the produce of his wisdom and grace, and by the revelation of Jesus Christ, hence he calls it the Gospel of God in (1 Thessalonians 2:2,8,9) nor because they were the subject of it, for they preached not themselves, but a crucified Christ, and him only, though it was a stumblingblock to some, and foolishness to others; but because it was committed to their trust, and they were the preachers of it, and agreed in the ministration of it; and it is opposed to, and is distinct from, that which was preached by the false teachers; and here intends not barely the Gospel itself, but chiefly their preaching of it: and this came unto them being sent of God, for wherever the Gospel comes, it comes with a mission and commission from God; and being brought unto them by the apostles, who were bringers and publishers of the good tidings of good things, it came unthought of, unsought and unasked for by them; and that not only externally, which to have is a great blessing, but internally, εις υμας, "into you"; it came not barely into their ears vocally, and into their heads notionally; but into their hearts, and worked effectually there; it was mixed with faith, and was profitable; it became the ingrafted word, and dwelt richly in them: for it came to them not

in word only; it did come in word, it could not come without words, there is no interpreting of Scripture, no preaching of the Gospel, nor hearing of it without words, without articulate sounds; but not only with these, nor with wisdom of words, with enticing words of man's wisdom, with words which man's wisdom teacheth; as also not in the mere notion and letter of the Gospel, which when it comes in that manner is a dead letter, and the savour of death unto death:

but in power; not merely preached in a powerful way, or attended with miraculous operations, though doubtless both were true; for the apostle was a powerful preacher, and his ministry was confirmed by signs and wonders and mighty deeds; but from neither of these could he conclude the election of these people: but the preaching of the Gospel was accompanied with the powerful efficacy of the grace of God, working by it upon them; so that it became the power of God unto salvation to them; it came to them in the demonstration of the Spirit of God, and of power, quickening them

who were dead in trespasses, and sin, enlightening their dark understandings, unstopping their deaf ears, softening their hard hearts, and delivering them from the slavery of sin and Satan; from whence it clearly appeared that they were the chosen of God, and precious:

and in the Holy Ghost; the Gospel was not only preached under the influence, and by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, and attended with his extraordinary gifts for the confirmation of it, which it might be, and be no proof of the election of these persons to eternal life; but it came by the power of the Holy Spirit to their souls, working and implanting his graces in them, as faith, hope, and love, and every other; and he himself was received along with it, as a spirit of illumination and conviction, of regeneration, conversion, and sanctification, and of faith and adoption; all which gave full evidence of their election:

and in much assurance; not on the preacher's side, as if the Gospel was preached by him with great assurance, boldness, and confidence; or with great strength of evidence, giving clear and full proof of what was delivered sufficient to ascertain it, and persuade anyone to the belief of it; or with “much fulness”, as some render the words, that is, of the Gospel of Christ, and of the gifts of the Spirit, and to a multitude of persons; all which might be, and yet be no proof of the choice of these persons in Christ to eternal salvation; but the Gospel preached to them was blessed to produce in them much assurance, or a large assurance, if not a full one, of the grace of faith in Christ, and of hope of eternal life by him, and of understanding of the doctrines of the Gospel, and of interest in the blessings of grace held forth in them; and this being a fruit, was an evidence of electing grace:

as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. The apostle appeals to themselves for the truth of what he had said; who must have observed, and could not but remember, with what meanness they appeared, with what fear and trembling, with what plainness and simplicity, without the enticing words of man's wisdom; what a contemptible figure they made, how they wrought with their own hands, and endured reproach and persecution for their sakes, that they might obtain salvation by Christ with eternal glory; and had nothing to recommend them to them, to win upon them, and engage their attention, and strike their affection; or persuade them to receive their persons, and believe their doctrines; wherefore the effects their ministry had upon them were not owing to the

charms of words, the force of language, and power of oratory; or to any external thing in them, or done by them; but must be ascribed to the Spirit of God, and to the power and efficacy of his grace.

Ver. 6. *And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord*, etc.] So far followers of them as they were of Christ, in embracing the Gospel, submitting to the ordinances of it, professing the name of Christ, and suffering for his sake; the Alexandrian copy reads, “of God”, and others, “of Christ”:

having received the word; the Gospel, the word of truth, peace, and righteousness, and of salvation by Christ; which they received not as the word of man, but of God; and that

in much affliction; referring to the uproar made by the baser sort of people, instigated by the unbelieving Jews, and the trouble they gave to Jason and other brethren, mentioned in (<4417 01>Acts 17:1,5-9) and this is a considerable commendation of them, that at a time when others were offended and fell off from hearing the word, and a profession of the Gospel, they should receive it, and that

with much joy of the Holy Ghost; not with a carnal joy, or with a mere flash of natural affection, as in the stony ground hearers, and in the Jews, who rejoiced for a while in John's ministry, and in Herod, who sometimes heard him gladly; but with a spiritual joy of the Holy Ghost's producing in them, applying the word with power to them, giving them a spiritual gust of it, and pleasure in it, raising in their souls a joy upon the most solid foundation.

Ver. 7. *So that ye were ensamples to all that believe*, etc.] They were not only followers of Christ and his apostles, whom they took for examples of faith, holiness, courage, meekness, and patience; but they were patterns of good works; and of suffering afflictions to other believers, even to all that knew them, or heard of them, particularly

in Macedonia; as at Philippi and other places: though the Gospel was first preached there, and they had received it, and a Gospel church state was formed there; yet these were more forward in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty, and were even ensamples to them to copy after; so the first are sometimes last, and the last first:

and Achaia; another part of Greece, the metropolis of which was Corinth, where there also was a very considerable church; but these saints at Thessalonica set them an example in many things, and particularly in acts of beneficence and liberality, being one of the churches of Macedonia spoken of in (<4801>2 Corinthians 8:1).

Ver. 8. *For from you sounded out the word of the Lord*, etc.] By which is meant the Gospel, and is so called because it is from the Lord, as the author of it: and it is of the Lord, as the subject of it; and it is by the Lord, as the minister or dispenser of it; and it is owing to the efficacy of his grace that it is useful and successful, and ought to be attended to, received, and obeyed, not as the word of man, but as the word of the Lord. This is said to have "sounded out", alluding to the blowing of a trumpet, to which the Gospel is sometimes compared, as to the silver trumpet under the law, for the gathering of the people of Israel; or to the trumpet blown in the years of jubilee, which proclaimed liberty, release of debts, and restoration of inheritances, as the Gospel in a spiritual sense does; or to the trumpet used in war to prepare for the battle, and therefore should not give an uncertain sound; or as used musically, the Gospel being a joyful sound; and this sounding of it may denote the clear publication and open declaration, and large spread of it far and near: though, when it is said to sound forth from the Thessalonians, it is not to be understood as if the Gospel first began to be preached among them, and from thence went to other places; it was preached at Philippi before it came to them, and at many other places before it was there; the word of the Lord, according to the prophecy of (<2302>Isaiah 2:2) came from Jerusalem; Christ and his apostles first preached there, and from thence their words and sound went to the ends of the earth; but not so much the preaching of the Gospel, as the fame and report of its being preached in this place, is here meant: and so the Latin translation of the Syriac version renders it, "for from you went the report of the word of our Lord"; the fame of its being preached and received at Thessalonica, in the manner it was, spread itself,

not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place; not only at Philippi, Berea, Athens, and Corinth, and other cities and towns in those countries, but also in other parts of the world; and what greatly contributed to it were the uproar that was made at Thessalonica, and continued at Berea upon the first preaching of the Gospel in those parts by the unbelieving Jews; as also the large numbers both of Greeks and Jews, and of devout women of considerable families, that were converted: to which

may be added, that Thessalonica was the metropolis of Macedonia, and a city of great trade, and much frequented from all parts both by sea and land; and by this means it came to pass, that not only the fame of the preaching of the word among them went abroad everywhere; but, as the apostle adds,

your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; meaning the grace of faith bestowed on them, by which they received the Gospel in the love of it, assented to it, and professed it, and which has God for its object, and is very valuable, since such public notice is taken of it; and which shows that it was not kept to themselves, and lay hid in their own breasts; but they declared it both by words and by deeds, by making a profession of it, and by walking agreeably to it:

so that we had no need to speak anything; the Syriac version adds, "concerning you"; concerning the preaching of the Gospel among them, their faith in it and profession of it, all being so well known in the several places where they came; for it seems it was usual with the apostles, when they came to any place, to speak of their success in others, and of the faith, and hope, and joy of other Christians, for the encouragement of, and as ensamples to those to whom they minister; but with relation to the Thessalonians this was unnecessary.

Ver. 9. *For they themselves show of us*, etc.] Either the above reports of the preaching of the Gospel to the Thessalonians, and of their faith in God; or rather the persons to whom these reports were brought, openly and publicly, and largely declared concerning

the apostles, what manner of entering in we had unto you; under what difficulties they laboured, what contention they had with the unbelieving Jews, what reproaches were cast upon them, and what persecutions they endured when they first entered their city and synagogue, and preached the Gospel to them; and in what manner they did preach it, with what boldness, sincerity, uprightness and affection, and without flattery, covetousness, and vain glory; and with what power it came to them, and what success attended it, and how readily, cheerfully, and reverently both they and that were received by them:

and how ye turned to God from idols; immediately and at once, upon the preaching of the Gospel to them, being first turned by the powerful and efficacious grace of God; for the first work of conversion is God's work;

then they themselves, under the influence of the same grace, turned to the one God, from their internal idols, their sins and lusts, and from their external idols, their many false and fictitious deities: for the Thessalonians before the Gospel came among them were idolaters; here the “Dii Cabiri”, the great and chief gods of the Gentiles, were worshipped; as Jupiter and Bacchus, Ceres and Proserpina, Pluto and Mercury, Castor and Pollux, and Esculapius; these the Macedonians, and particularly the Thessalonians, worshipped with great devotion and reverence [f4]: but now they turned from them and forsook them,

to serve the living and true God; who is called the living God, because he has life in and of himself, and is the fountain of life to others; from whom all living creatures have their life, and are supported in it by him; and in opposition to the above idols, which were inanimate things made of wood or metal, and were images of men that had been dead long ago: and the “true” God, because he is truth itself, and cannot lie, who faithfully performs all his promises, and is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth; and in opposition to the nominal and fictitious deities of the Gentiles, which were only in name, not in truth and reality, or by nature gods: now though these Thessalonians had before done service to these idols, they now turned from them to serve the one living and true God; not only externally, by embracing and professing his Gospel, submitting to his ordinances, and walking according to the rules prescribed by him; but also internally, in the exercise of faith, hope, love, and every other grace.

Ver. 10. *And to wait for his Son from heaven*, etc.] The Lord Jesus Christ, who is the natural, essential, and eternal Son of God; and whoever is truly converted, is not only turned to God the Father, and believes in him; but also believes in, receives, embraces, and professes his Son Jesus Christ; who became incarnate, and, in the human nature he assumed, obeyed, suffered, and died and rose again, and ascended into heaven, where he now is, and will be till the time of the restitution of all things; when he will descend from thence, and come and judge the world in righteousness; and from thence the saints expect him, and look and wait by faith for eternal glory and happiness by him, and with him at his appearance and kingdom; so that many articles of faith are contained in this expression, which these Thessalonians were acquainted with, believed, and acted upon: and Christ the Son of God is further described as that person

whom he raised from the dead; that is, God the Father raised from the dead, and whereby he was declared to be the Son of God; and which supposes his dying for the sins of his people, as it expresses his rising again for their justification; things which the faith of these believers was led unto, and in which light they viewed him:

even Jesus, which delivered us from wrath to come; which is revealed from heaven against sin, and comes upon the children of disobedience; which all men are deserving of, even God's elect themselves, but shall not partake of, because they are not appointed to it, but to salvation; and because they are justified by the blood and righteousness of Christ, and so are saved from it; not from all fears about it, and apprehensions of it, which they are filled with, especially under first awakenings, and sometimes afterwards when under afflictive providences; but they are delivered from the thing itself, by which is meant vindictive punishment, even from all punishment in this life, for there is no wrath mixed with any of their mercies or their chastisements; and from all punishment in the world to come, which will fall heavy on others; and that because Christ has bore their sins, and the wrath of God and curse of the law, due unto them, in their room and stead.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO 1 THESSALONIANS 2

The apostle in this chapter gives a further account of his ministry among the Thessalonians, of the nature, manner, and success of it, and of his regard to them, and conduct and conversation when with them; and commends their readiness in receiving the Gospel, and excuses his present absence from them. He appeals to them themselves for the truth of it, that his entrance to them, or preaching among them, was not in vain and without success, (1 Thessalonians 2:1) that it was with all boldness and intrepidity of mind, notwithstanding what he had suffered before for it, (1 Thessalonians 2:2) and with all integrity and faithfulness to the trust reposed in him by the Lord, without deceit and guile, or seeking to please men, but God the searcher of hearts, who had committed this trust unto him, (1 Thessalonians 2:3,4) and that neither then, nor at any other time, he had used flattery, or showed covetousness; which he calls God to witness, (1 Thessalonians 2:5) nor of them or others sought glory and honour, even that which was due unto him by virtue of his office, (1 Thessalonians 2:6) but had showed all gentleness, humanity, and, affection; which he illustrates by the simile of a nurse cherishing her children (1 Thessalonians 2:7) and by the willingness he showed not only to preach the Gospel to them, but to lay down his life for them, had it been necessary; so great was his affection for them, (1 Thessalonians 2:8) and, as a proof of this, he puts them in mind of his labours, both in preaching the word, and in working with his own hands; because he would not be burdensome and chargeable to them, (1 Thessalonians 2:9) and as for his conversation among them, he appeals both to God and them, how holy, just, and unblemished it was, (1 Thessalonians 2:10) and reminds them of his tenderness, diligence, and faithfulness, in exhorting, comforting, and charging them, particularly to walk worthy of God; since he had called them to his kingdom and glory, (1 Thessalonians 2:11,12) and then he expresses his thankfulness to God for their reception of the worth of the Gospel; not as an human invention, but as of God, which wrought effectually in them, (1 Thessalonians 2:13) the evidence of which were partly their imitation of the churches of Christ in Judea, in doctrine and

practice; and partly their suffering the same things they did, of the Jews, (52141 Thessalonians 2:14) who are described by their ill usage of, and cruelty to, Christ, their own prophets, and his apostles, by their not pleasing God, and by their opposition to men; an instance of which is given in prohibiting the apostles to preach to the Gentiles, whose end in so doing with respect to the Gentiles, was that they might not be saved; but God's end in suffering them so to do, was with respect to them that they might fill up their iniquity, and so entire wrath and ruin come upon them, as had been foretold, (52151 Thessalonians 2:15,16) and then the apostle concludes the chapter, by expressing his affectionate concern in parting with them, which was not in heart but in body; by declaring his earnest desire and endeavour to see them again; and by observing to them the reason he had not and could not come unto them, because Satan hindered him, (52171 Thessalonians 2:17,18) the cause of his being so desirous to see them, was their being his hope, joy, glory, and crown of rejoicing, both now and hereafter, (52191 Thessalonians 2:19,20).

Ver. 1. *For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you*, etc.] The apostle having observed in (51091 Thessalonians 1:9) that those persons to whom the report of the Gospel being preached at Thessalonica, and the success of it there was made, showed everywhere both what manner of entrance he and his fellow ministers had in that place, and the conversion of many souls there; he enlarges upon the latter, and here reassumes the former, and appeals to the Thessalonians themselves, who must know full well, and better than others, what an entrance it was; and which is to be understood not merely of a corporeal entrance into their city and synagogue, but of their coming among them, by the preaching of the Gospel, as the ministers of the word and ambassadors of Christ:

that it was not in vain; it was not a vain show with outward pomp and splendour, as the public entrances of ambassadors into cities usually are; but with great meanness, poverty, reproach, and persecution, having been lately beaten and ill used at Philippi; nor was it with great swelling words of vanity, with the enticing words of man's wisdom, to tickle the ear, please the fancy, and work upon the passions of natural men, in which manner the false teachers came: but the apostle came not with deceit and guile, with flattering words or a cloak of covetousness, or with a view to vain glory and worldly advantage; nor was the message they came with, from the King of kings, a vain, light, empty, and trifling one; but solid and substantial, and of the greatest importance; the doctrine they taught was

not comparable to chaff and wind; it was not corrupt philosophy and vain deceit, the traditions and commandments of men, but sound doctrine, the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ: nor was it fruitless and without effect; the word did not return void and empty; but was powerful and efficacious to the conversion of many souls. Christ was with them both to assist them in their ministry, and to bless it to the salvation of men; nor was their coming to Thessalonica an human scheme, a rash enterprise, engaged in on their own heads, on a slight and empty foundation; but upon good and solid grounds, by divine direction and counsel; (see <44169>Acts 16:9,10).

Ver. 2. *But even after that we had suffered before*, etc.] Before they came to Thessalonica, which they would not have done, had their ministry been a light and empty one in itself, and unprofitable to others; and especially had this been the case, they would never have rashly engaged in it again, and exposed themselves to fresh sufferings and dangers, as they did:

and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi; being beaten with many stripes, and put into prison, and their feet made fast in the stocks, at the instigation of the masters of the damsel that had a spirit of divination, by whom they got much gain, and which Paul dispossessed; (see <44166>Acts 16:16-24)

we were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much contention: and which still made it more manifestly appear, that the errand they came upon was a matter of importance, and that they did not proceed on a slight foundation: what they spoke was “the Gospel”, salvation by Christ, and not by the works of the law; the pure Gospel, and not a mixed one, free from the mixture of all human doctrines and inventions of men, without any adulteration and inconsistency; the whole of the Gospel, and not a part of it only; they declared the whole counsel of God, and kept back nothing that might be profitable: and this is styled the Gospel of God, to distinguish it from the Gospel of men, or that which the false teachers taught, and which was called the Gospel, though it was not so; and to express the excellency of it, from the author of it, who is God, it being the produce of his wisdom and grace; and from the matter of it, it containing the good will of God to men, setting forth the grace of God in election, redemption, justification, pardon, adoption, regeneration, and glorification, and expressing things relating to the kingdom of God, a meetness for it, and a right unto it; and it being so called shows it to be something divine, a

message sent from God to sinful men; and gives a reason why the apostles were so bold to speak it, because it was not of men, but God. The Syriac version renders it the “Gospel of Christ”; (see <450116>Romans 1:16) and it being so, they “were bold to speak it”; or they spoke it both with liberty of mind, the Spirit of God being with them, and with freedom of speech, a door of utterance being opened for them; as also with great courage and intrepidity, notwithstanding what they had suffered before, and the ill treatment they had met with at Philippi; and though they knew that the Gospel they spoke was contrary to the Jews, was a stumblingblock to them, and they had an inveterate prejudice against it; and was foolishness to the Greeks, and was derided by them, and they were sure to meet with reproach and persecution on account of it: yet they boldly and faithfully preached it, fearing not the face of men, nor their revilings: though it was

with much contention; referring to the tumult raised by the baser sort, who, instigated by others, assaulted Jason and the brethren, where the apostles were, (<441805>Acts 18:5,6) or to the disputes which they had with the unbelieving Jews, who contradicted and blasphemed what they said; or to the division the Gospel made, as through the corruption of nature it makes wherever it comes, between the nearest relations and friends, some being for it, and others against it; or this may be expressive of the zeal with which the apostles preached, who earnestly contended for it, as persons in a combat or agony; they fought the good fight of faith valiantly, they endured hardness as good soldiers of Christ, and gave not way to the enemy, no, not for an hour: and all this was “in our God”; or “by the confidence” of our God, as the Syriac version renders it; trusting in him and relying upon him, being assisted by his grace, and strengthened by his power, and receiving much encouragement from a view of him as a covenant God; faith in God as a covenant God, will make a man bold in his cause; (see <270317>Daniel 3:17).

Ver. 3. *For our exhortation*, etc.] Or “consolation”; for the ministry of the Gospel, which is here meant, consists of doctrines full of comfort to distressed minds, such as free justification by the righteousness of Christ, full pardon by his blood, and complete satisfaction by his sacrifice; as well as of exhortations to the exercise of grace and discharge of duty: and this was

not of deceit; or “error”, was not “fallacious”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; it consisted of nothing but truth, it was the word of truth, and

the truth as it is in Jesus; nor did it proceed from any intention to deceive and impose on persons; it was no imposture:

nor of uncleanness; it did not spring from any impure affection for any sin, for popular applause, or worldly interest; nor did the ministers of it connive at uncleanness in others, or practise it themselves, as did the false teachers; but bore their testimony against it, both by word and example, and taught no doctrine that encouraged to it; but, on the contrary, the doctrine which is according to godliness, and which teaches men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts:

nor in guile; as there was no deceitful design in the ministry of the word, nor anything impure and immoral in the matter of it; so there was no artifice used in the dispensing of it; it was plain and simple, without any colour and guile, without the hidden things of dishonesty, without craftiness and handling the word deceitfully; and this is a reason why the apostles preached it with so much freedom and boldness, because there was nothing false, impure, or artful in it.

Ver. 4. *But as we were allowed of God*, etc.] Or, “approved of God”; not that there were any previous fitness and worthiness in them to be ministers of the word; but such was the good will and pleasure of God, that he from all eternity chose and appointed them to this work; and in his own time by his grace called them to it, and by his gifts qualified them for it, who otherwise were unworthy of it, and insufficient for it:

to be put in trust with the Gospel; which is of great worth and value, a rich treasure, and of the last importance; which to be trusted with is a very great honour; and the discharge of such a trust requires great faithfulness, and which the apostles had:

even so we speak; the Gospel as delivered to them, both as to matter and manner; neither taking from it nor adding to it, nor mixing it with anything of their own, nor disguising it with any artifice:

not as pleasing men; to gain favour and affection, esteem, applause, and honour from them; to escape reproach and persecution, and obtain worldly advantages by dropping, concealing, or blending of truths to make them more agreeable to the taste of natural men:

but God, which trieth our hearts; studying to approve themselves to God, whose Gospel was committed to them, from whom they received gifts to

preach it, and to whom they were accountable for all; and who being the searcher of the hearts, and the trier of the reins of the children of men, knows the intentions and designs of men, and the springs of all actions; and sees through all artifices, and from whom nothing can be hidden, and who will, in his own time, bring to light the hidden things of darkness; under a sense of which faithful ministers act, as of sincerity, and as in the sight of an omniscient God.

Ver. 5. *For neither at any time used we flattering words*, etc.] To introduce them into the affections, and gain the esteem and good will of men; they did not in their ministry deliver such things as flattered men with a good opinion of themselves: they did not preach up the purity of human nature, but on the contrary the doctrine of original sin, the imputation of Adam's transgression to his posterity, and the corruption of all human nature; they asserted the universal pollution of it, of all men, and of all the powers and faculties of their souls, that they are all under the power and dominion of sin, are involved in the guilt of it, and are all guilty before God, and liable to everlasting wrath and punishment; and that unless they repented of their sins and believed in Christ, they would perish eternally; thus they dealt roundly and freely with men's consciences, and plainly, openly, and faithfully told them their case as it was: nor did they cry up the power of man's free will, which would have been grateful to Jews and Gentiles; but they declared the reverse, they asserted the weakness and impotency of man, to anything that is spiritually good; and represented him as a weak and strengthless creature, and unable to do anything, even to think a good thought of himself; and ascribed all that a man is, or has, or does, that is good, to the grace and power of God, who works in him both to will and to do: nor did they plead for the sufficiency of man's righteousness to justify him before God, a doctrine very pleasing to human nature; but, on the contrary, they gave out that there was none righteous, no, not one of the sons of Adam, in and of themselves, or by virtue of any righteousness of their own; so far from it that they were full of all unrighteousness, and were not capable of working out a righteousness, or of attaining to the righteousness of the law; that what they did pretend to was not a justifying righteousness, and would give no right and title to eternal glory; and that the righteousness of Christ was the only righteousness, by which a man could be justified from all things, and in which he could be found safe. They did not blend and mix their doctrine to suit with the tastes of different men, but with all sincerity and plainness

preached the truth, as it is in Jesus; they did not connive at the sins of men, cry Peace, Peace, when there was none, or sow pillows under their armholes, or promise them life, though they should not return from their wicked way; but they with great freedom inveighed against the sins of men, and exhorted them to repentance and reformation, as well as to faith in Christ for pardon and righteousness; nor did they wink at the sins of professors, or of one another, the Apostle Paul withstood Peter to the face because he was to be blamed; and when they praised men for their gifts and graces, and the exercise of them, they took care to ascribe them to the grace of God, and give him the glory, and prevent men from boasting in themselves; in short, they acted the reverse of the false teachers, who had men's persons in admiration because of advantage, and by good words and fair speeches deceived the hearts of the simple; but so did not the apostles of Christ, no, never, not “at any time”: when they first came to Thessalonica during their stay there, either in public or in private: and though this was true of any other time and place, yet here must be confined to this, since the apostle appeals to this church for the truth of what he said,

as ye know; for flattering words may be discerned; a flatterer is known by his words; though in general such is the weakness of human nature, that men love to be flattered, though they know they are:

nor a cloak of covetousness; or “an occasion of” it, they did not take the opportunity or advantage by the ministry of the word, to indulge a covetous disposition, or to amass wealth and riches to themselves; or an “excuse” for covetousness, which covetous men are never at a loss to make, always pretending one thing or another to hide and cover their evil; but the apostles made no excuses, nor used any cloak, nor needed any to cover their covetousness, because they had not the thing; they did not pretend one thing and mean another; they did not, as the false apostles did, pretend to serve Christ, preach his Gospel, seek the glory of God and the good of souls, and mean themselves, and design their own worldly advantage; they did not make these a “pretence” for covetousness, they sincerely served Christ, faithfully preached his Gospel, truly sought the glory of God, and were heartily concerned for the good of souls without any mercenary and selfish views; for the truth of which they could appeal to the heart searching and rein-trying God, as the apostle here does, saying,

God is witness; which is properly an oath, a solemn appeal to God; for since covetousness is an internal and secret sin, and may be so coloured and disguised as not easily to be discerned, as flattering words may, the apostle therefore calls God to witness the truth of what he had said.

Ver. 6. *Nor of men sought we glory*, etc.] Honour, esteem, and popular applause; for though there is an honour that is due to the faithful ministers of the word, who are highly to be esteemed for their works' sake, and as ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God; and especially there was an honour and glory that belonged to the apostles of Christ as such, who were set in the highest office and place in the church; yet they did not seek after it as the Pharisees and false teachers did, who received honour one of another, and sought not that which comes from God only: but so did not the apostles; they took no steps this way to procure glory and esteem among men, but all the reverse; they preached doctrines which were not of men, nor according to men, nor agreeable to them; and these they delivered in a disagreeable way, not with enticing words of men's wisdom, they did not seek to please men, but spoke and did everything that rendered them mean and despicable in their eyes; so that they looked upon them as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things: nor was this any disappointment to them, for to gain the favour of men was not their end and view; they did not seek for glory neither of the men of the world,

neither of you; the church at Thessalonica, and the inhabitants of that place:

nor yet of others; of other men, and churches elsewhere:

when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ: or “have used authority”, which was given them, though not for destruction, but for edification; put on a magisterial air, and made use of the apostolic rod; appeared with some severity and rigour, and so have commanded awe, respect, and reverence: or “have been in honour”; insisted upon being treated in an honourable way, as the apostles of Christ, his ambassadors, who were sent and came in his name, and represented his person; and therefore to be received as he himself; though the phrase may rather have regard to an honourable maintenance, as in (2 Corinthians 11:9) which as the apostles of Christ they might have required as their due, but they chose rather to relinquish their right, and labour with their own hands, that they might not be chargeable: and so “glory” in the former clause may mean the same, even great and glorious things for themselves, a

maintenance answerable to their high character and office, which they did not seek; but were content with a poor pittance, and such as they could get with their own hand labour; in which sense the phrase, “double honour”, seems to be used in (<5457>1 Timothy 5:17) as appears by the reason given in the next verse.

Ver. 7. *But we were gentle among you*, etc.] Meek and humble, mild and moderate; not using severity, or carrying it in a haughty imperious manner; assuming power and dominion, lording it over God's heritage, and commanding persons to do homage and honour to them, and forcing themselves upon them, and obliging them to maintain them. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, instead of “gentle”, read, “little children”; as the word signifies, by adding a letter to it, and expresses much the same as the other, that they were harmless and modest, and disinterested; and sought not themselves neither honour nor wealth, but the real good of others, and were kind and tender, and affectionate to them:

even as a nurse cherisheth her children: or “the children of her own self”; her own children, and so designs a nursing mother, one whose the children are, has bore them as well as nurses them, and therefore has the most tender concern for them; she lays them in her bosom, and hugs them in her arms, and so warms and cherishes them; gives them the breast, bears with their frowardness, condescends to do the meanest things for them; and that without any self-interest, from a pure parental affection for them: and such were the apostles to these Thessalonians; they were their spiritual parents, of whom they travailed in birth, till Christ was formed in them; they used them with the greatest kindness and tenderness; they fed them with the sincere milk of the word; they bore patiently all the slighting and ill treatment they met with; and condescended to men of low estates, and did them all the good offices they could, without any selfish views or sinister ends: a like simile is used by the Jews [f5], who say,

> “he that rises in the night to study in the law, the law makes known to him his offences; and not in a way of judgment, but amak, as a mother makes known to her son, “with gentle words”:”

but the ministration of the Gospel is much more gentle.

Ver. 8. *So being affectionately desirous of you*, etc.] Not of theirs but them; not of glory from them, nor a maintenance by them, but of their spiritual and eternal welfare; were as fond of them as a nursing mother is of

her children, who, when absent from them but ever so little a while, longs to see them; (see 1 Thessalonians 2:17) and (1 Thessalonians 3:1,5-8),

we were willing: took the utmost pleasure, delight, and complacency:

to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only; the sincere milk of the word, which they did freely, fully, and for their spiritual good and profit, without any regard to any advantage of their own:

but also our own souls, or "lives"; which is the highest expression and strongest proof of love that can be given; and respect is still had to the similitude of the nursing mother, who may be said to impart her blood, for such it her milk diversified, for the nourishment of her children: and such was the great concern of the apostles for the interest of Christ, the spread of the Gospel, and the good of souls, that their lives were not dear unto them, so that these ends might he answered: because ye were dear unto us; both because they were loved by God, redeemed by Christ, regenerated by the Spirit of Christ, and had the image of Christ stamped upon them; and also because that they were their spiritual children; and as children are dear to their parents, so were these to them, even to such a degree, as that, were there a necessity for it, they could freely have laid down their lives for them.

Ver. 9. *For ye remember brethren, our labour and travail*, etc.] The great pains they took, even to weariness. The Vulgate Latin version renders the last word, "weariness"; and the Arabic version, "anxiety"; and the Ethiopic version, "affliction"; it is to be understood both of corporeal and spiritual labour, working with their hands and preaching the Gospel; this could not but be remembered by them, since it was not a year ago they were with them:

for labouring night and day; at our handicraft, or "at the work of our hands", as the Syriac version renders it; which they continually attended to, even night and day, when they were not preaching the Gospel, or disputing with the Jews, or praying and conversing with those that believed, or refreshing themselves with food and rest. The apostle's business was making of tents, (see Gill on "Acts 18:3"),

because we would not be chargeable to any of you; neither to the whole body, nor to any single person; which shows that they did not seek their own ease and worldly interest; and proves what is before asserted, that

they did not use a cloak of covetousness, but chose to forego, and not insist on what they had a right to, lest the Gospel should be hindered or reproached:

we preached unto you the Gospel of God; freely and with great application and diligence; for this is the other part of their labour and travel; for the ministry of the word is a work, and a laborious one, when closely attended to; a preparation for it by prayer, reading, meditation, and much study, are wearisome and fatiguing; and to preach the word in season and out of season, with all longsuffering and doctrine, is very laborious; to which no man is sufficient of himself, and is a work which requires great faithfulness, application, and industry; and is oftentimes made the more heavy through the malice and opposition of enemies, and the weakness of friends.

Ver. 10. *Ye are witnesses, and God also*, etc.] Not so much to what goes before as to what follows after, relating to their holy walk and conversation among them, the more open part of which they were witness of; and for the more secret part God is appealed to, who is acquainted with the springs of actions, as well as with actions themselves:

how holily, and justly, and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe. The Syriac version joins the last clause of the preceding verse with this, and reads the whole thus, “ye are witnesses, and God also, how purely and justly we preached unto you the Gospel of God, and how unblamable we were among all that believed”; referring the former part to the purity and integrity in which they preached the Gospel, and the latter to their unblemished conduct among the saints; but the whole of it refers to their conversation, which was holy, externally holy, arising from internal principles of holiness in their hearts, and free from that impurity and filthiness with which the false teachers were polluted; and confirms what is before said, that their exhortation was not of uncleanness: and it was likewise “just”, they were righteous in the sight of God through the justifying righteousness of Christ, and in consequence of this lived righteously before men, and were injurious to no man's person nor property: and their conversation was also “unblamable”; not that they were, without sin, and so without blame in themselves, or without the commission of sin by them, or that they passed without censure in the world, for they went through honour and dishonour, through good report and bad report, and had all manner of evil spoken of them falsely for Christ's name's sake; but by the grace of God, they had their conversation

among them that believed so, that there was nothing material to be alleged against them, or any just cause of blame to be laid either on their persons or their ministry; and which is mentioned for imitation.

Ver. 11. *As you know*, etc.] This is added to the end of the last verse in the Arabic version, and which begins this verse thus, “as one of you, and as a father comforting his sons, so we”, etc. but for what is said in the former verse, an appeal is made both to God and to the Thessalonians, so that there is no need of adding such a clause there; it properly stands here in connection with what follows,

how we exhorted; to flee from wrath to come, and to Christ for refuge; to look to, and believe in him, as the only Saviour of lost sinners; to perform the duties of religion, and to continue in the faith; to cleave to Christ, and walk on in him as they had received him, and to abide by the truths and ordinances of the Gospel they had embraced:

and comforted; under a sense of sin, with the soul comforting doctrines of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, of full pardon by his blood, and of a plenary satisfaction and atonement by his sacrifice; and under all their afflictions and persecutions for the sake of Christ, with exceeding great and precious promises of the presence, grace, and strength of Christ here, and glory hereafter:

and charged everyone of you; not only publicly, but privately, going from house to house; not in an austere and domineering way, but with the greatest tenderness, and yet faithfulness: even

as a father doth his children; not only in an authoritative, but in an affectionate way, and also with solid wisdom and judgment; for in such a relation, in a Spiritual sense, did the apostle and his fellow ministers stand in to them; (see <4604>1 Corinthians 4:15) and the substance of the charge is as follows:

Ver. 12. *That ye would walk worthy of God*, etc.] In imitation of him; not of his perfections, which are inimitable, but of his works; and these not of his power and wisdom, but those of kindness and beneficence, and of righteousness and holiness; and in conformity to his revealed will, which is good, perfect, and acceptable; and agreeably to his Gospel, that that may be adorned, and not blasphemed; and particularly, in a manner worthy of the calling wherewith saints are called by him: since it follows,

who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory; which instance of the grace of God carries in it many arguments, and lays many obligations on the persons interested in it, to walk in their lives and conversations worthy of God; which may be taken from the nature of this call, which is not a mere external one by the outward ministry of the word, but an internal and effectual one, by the powerful and efficacious grace of God; it is a call of persons out of darkness into light, and therefore it becomes them to walk as children of the light, and honestly, as in the daytime; and from a state of bondage to sin and Satan, unto liberty, and therefore ought not to walk after the dictates of corrupt nature, nor the suggestions of Satan, but after the Spirit of God, who is a spirit of liberty; and from fellowship with the world, and the men of it, to communion with Christ, and therefore should not walk as other Gentiles do, nor run with them in the same excess of riot; in short, such are called with an holy calling, and to holiness, and have in their effectual calling principles of holiness implanted in them, and therefore should be holy in all manner of conversation: moreover, arguments may be taken from the consideration of him that calls, God, who is a holy Being, and therefore as he that hath called them is holy, so should they be likewise; he is the God of all grace that has called them, and he has called them by his grace, and to special blessings of grace, and that according to his sovereign will and pleasure; and has called them the most unworthy, base, mean, and despicable, and not others, which greatly enhances the obligation to walk worthy of him: to which add, that he that calls is God that dwells on high in heaven, and changes not, and such is his call; hence it is styled the high calling of God, and the heavenly calling, and said to be without repentance; and therefore the saints should live and walk as pilgrims and strangers here, and be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord: likewise the consideration of what they are called to should engage them to a becoming walk, being called “to his kingdom”; to the kingdom of grace, which lies in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and which cannot be moved, and where they are kings and priests unto God; and unto a Gospel church state, and to all the privileges and immunities of it; and unto the kingdom of heaven, prepared by God for them from the foundation of the world, their Father's free gift to them, of which they are born heirs apparent in regeneration, and have both a meetness for it, and a right unto it; and therefore ought to behave suitable to this high honour and dignity which belong unto them: and this latter sense is the rather to be chose, since it follows, “and glory”: or “to his glory”, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; to the glory of

God, to the beholding of the glory of God through Christ, and the glory of Christ himself; and to a participation of that glory which God has provided, and is in the hands of Christ for them, where it is hid, who when he shall appear, they will appear with him in glory; which will be both upon their souls and bodies; and this will be an eternal glory, a glory that fades not away, and not like the glory of this world, which is transient, and soon passes away, but this will abide for ever; and therefore since the saints are called to the obtaining of this, it is a reason why their conversation should be in heaven now, and as becomes God and his Gospel.

Ver. 13. *For this cause also thank we God without ceasing*, etc.] As for their election of God, (1 Thessalonians 1:4) so for their effectual calling by his grace, to his kingdom and glory, just now mentioned, as well as for their reception of the word of God as such, hereafter expressed; since their having it and receiving it, and the effectual operation of it in them, were owing to the goodness and grace of God, and therefore required a constant sense of the favour, and thankfulness, without ceasing, for it. The apostle having at large considered the manner of his and his fellow ministers' entrance among them without guile, flattery, covetousness, or any sinister view, and with all simplicity, integrity, labour, diligence, affection, and tenderness, returns to observe the reception their ministry met with, and the influence and effect it had upon them:

because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us; or "the word of hearing of God", as the Vulgate Latin version from the Greek text literally renders it; that is, the Gospel which was preached by the apostles, and was heard and received by these Thessalonians: and it is called the word of God, because God is the author of it; it comes from him, and is ministered by his authority, and is a part of that written word which is given by his inspiration; and because his grace in choosing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, regenerating, and giving eternal life to men, and the declaration of his will concerning saving them by his Son Jesus Christ, are the subject matter of it; and because he owns and blesses it, for the conversion and comfort of his people: and it may be called the word of hearing of God, because coming from him, and containing his will, and preached by his order, and succeeded by his power, hearing comes by it; it is divinely breathed by him; he speaks in it by his ministers, and he is heard of in it by his people; as he was by these believers, who heard his word both externally and internally; and received it into their understandings, so as to know it spiritually and experimentally; into their minds, not merely

notionally, and so as to assent to the truth of it, and give credit to it, but so as to believe in Christ revealed in it; and into their affections, in the love of it, and with joy in the Holy Ghost; they received it gladly, and with meekness and readiness, so that it became the ingrafted word, and brought forth fruit in them: the manner in which they received it follows,

ye received it not as the word of men: which is often fallacious and deceitful, at least dubious and uncertain, and not to be depended on; nor did they receive it as the words of wise men are received, and because it was clothed with the wisdom, eloquence, and oratory of men, for it was destitute of these; nor upon the credit and authority of men, no, not of the apostles themselves:

but as it is in truth the word of God: it appearing to be agreeably to the perfections of his nature, and to the Scriptures of truth, and it bearing his impress and divine authority, they received it with much assurance and certainty, as infallible truth; and which was inviolably to be adhered to, without any alteration, without adding to it or taking from it; and to be had and retained in the greatest esteem and reverence, and never to be departed from: and that they received it in this manner, appears from its operation in them,

which effectually worketh also in you that believe: the Vulgate Latin version reads, "who worketh"; referring it to God, as indeed it may be referred to him, as well as to his word; but the sense is much the same, for God works by and with his word, and his word only effectually works when it comes in power; or is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe; and when it does come with a divine commission and power, it effectually works to the quickening of dead sinners, the enlightening of dark minds, the unstopping of deaf ears, the softening of hard hearts, producing faith which works by love, encouraging hope, delivering from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law, and comforting and establishing the hearts of the saints under all afflictions, trials, and persecutions.

Ver. 14. *For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God*, etc.] As of the Lord and of the apostle, (<50106>1 Thessalonians 1:6) so of the churches of God that were before them, who were gathered out of the world by the grace of God; and who were united in the fear of God, and assembled together for his worship, to bear a testimony to his truth and ordinances, and for the glory of his name: these they followed in the faith and order of the Gospel, and "became like" them, as the Syriac and

Ethiopic versions render the word; or “equal” to them, were upon an equal foot with them, as the Arabic; that is, in suffering reproach and persecution for the Gospel, as the latter part of the verse shows; and their bearing these with patience, courage, and constancy, was a proof that the word of God had a place, and wrought effectually in them; otherwise they would never have endured such things as they did, and as other churches did:

which in Judea are in Christ Jesus; for besides the church at Jerusalem, there were many churches in Judea and Galilee; (see <44091>Acts 9:31 <48122>Galatians 1:22) which shows that the primitive churches were not national, but congregational: and these were in Christ Jesus; “in the faith” of Jesus Christ, as the Arabic version renders it; which distinguishes them from the synagogues, or congregations of the Jews, which did not believe in Christ; (see Gill on “<52101>1 Thessalonians 1:1”).

For ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen; the inhabitants of Thessalonica, the baser sort of them, who were stirred up by the unbelieving Jews of that place, to make an uproar in the city, and assault the house of Jason, in order to seize upon the apostles; (see <44176>Acts 17:6).

Even as they have of the Jews; in like manner as the churches of Judea suffered by the Jews their countrymen; (see <44081>Acts 8:1,3) (<58102>Hebrews 10:32-34).

Ver. 15. *Who both killed the Lord Jesus*, etc.] For though Pilate condemned him to death, and the Roman soldiers executed the sentence, yet it was through the malice and envy of the Jews that he was delivered to him, who brought charges against him, and insisted upon the crucifixion of him; and who are therefore said to have taken him with wicked hands, and crucified and slain him; and to have killed the Prince of life, and to have been the betrayers and murderers of him; and therefore it is no wonder that such persons should persecute the followers of Christ, whether in Judea or elsewhere:

and their own prophets; whom God sent unto them; these they not only mocked and misused, and persecuted, but many of them they put to death, as Isaiah and others; and though this was done by their fathers, yet the present generation were the children of them that killed the prophets; and showed themselves to be of the same principles, and by their practices approved of what they had done: hence our Lord addresses the city of

Jerusalem thus, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets”, (<4023>Matthew 23:31,34,37). The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the phrase “their own”, and so does the Alexandrian copy; but it stands in the Syriac and Arabic versions, and is rightly retained, it having an emphasis in it; these prophets being of their own nation, born among them, and raised up in the midst of them, and sent unto them particularly, and yet were so used; and therefore it need not seem strange that they should treat in an ill manner persons of a lower character, that did not agree with them; the consideration of which serves to support under reproach and persecution; (see <4005>Matthew 5:12).

And have persecuted us; the apostles of Christ; have drove us out of our own country, and pursued us from place to place, and caused us to flee from one city to another:

and they please not God: though they reckoned themselves his chosen people, the favourites of heaven, and whom God delighted in; but neither their persons nor their actions were pleasing to him, their carnal minds being enmity to him, to his law and to his Gospel; and they in the flesh, or in an unregenerate estate, and without faith in Christ, without which it is impossible to please God, and their actions such as before described:

and are contrary to all men; not only Christians, but Heathens; to all the Gentiles, who are called all men, the nations of the world, the world, and the whole world; they were contrary to these, both in their religious and civil principles, and had an aversion to them, of which the following is a full instance.

Ver. 16. *Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved*, etc.] Speaking or preaching the Gospel is the ordinary means of saving souls, or of acquainting them with the way of salvation, the necessity of it, and of the application of it to them, and with this end and view it is preached: now though the Jews disbelieved the Gospel, and despised the ministry of it, and disavowed any such use and end of it, yet such was their envy at the Gentiles, and their hatred of them, that could they have believed it to be the means of salvation, they would have forbidden the preaching of it to them, as they now did; and it is certain, that even the believing Jews, through ignorance, did at first disapprove of the ministry of the word to the Gentiles; (see <4401>Acts 11:1-3) such was the aversion of that nation to all others, and which perfectly agrees with their general sentiments, which forbid the explanation of the law to the Gentiles; and

therefore it need not be wondered at, that they should do all that in them lay to hinder the entrance and spread of the Gospel among them, of which take the following proof [f6]:

“whoever has not the holy name sealed and bound in his flesh (i.e. is not circumcised) atyrwad hlm hyl a[dwal rysa “it is forbidden to make known to him a word of the law”, and much less to study in it — and whoever is not circumcised, and they give to him atyrwad ryxz ta, “the least thing in the law”, it is as if he destroyed the world, and dealt falsely with the name of God — Hillell and Shammai did not make known to Onkelos a word of the law, until he was circumcised — and the traditions are, that even though a man is circumcised, yet if he does not do the commands of the law, lo, he is as a Gentile in all things, and “it is forbidden to teach him the words of the law”:”

nay, it is a rule with the Jews [f7], that

> “if a Gentile studies in the law, he is guilty of death:”

and thus were they left in providence, to judicial blindness and hardness of heart,

to fill up their sins alway; the measure of their own and their fathers' iniquities; (see <42332>Matthew 23:32) a phrase expressive of the abounding of their sins, and of their being under a divine appointment, and of their being limited and restrained by a divine power, and overruled by infinite wisdom, to answer some ends and purposes of God's glory;

for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost: which is to be understood, not of their wrath and fury being come to its highest degree and pitch against the followers of Christ, but of “the wrath of God”, as the Vulgate Latin version and Beza's ancient copy express it; and designs not so much “eternal punishment”, as the Ethiopic version renders the phrase, or everlasting wrath and damnation on the reprobate part of that people, as temporal ruin and destruction, which was now near at hand, and hung over their heads; and therefore is said to be come to them, and which in a little time fell upon their nation and city, and temple, even to the uttermost, to the last degree; and was, as the Arabic version renders it, “wrath consuming”; or “the consummation, and that determined poured upon the desolate”, spoken of in (<270927>Daniel 9:27) and which, as it is come upon them, will remain “unto the end”, as the phrase may also be rendered; unto

the end of the world, until the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, and then God's elect among the Jews shall obtain mercy, and be called, and so all Israel shall be saved, ([45]Romans 11:25,26).

Ver. 17. *But we, brethren, being taken from you*, etc.] Here more properly should begin the third chapter, in which the apostle having before observed the manner of his entrance among these people, the nature of his ministry, the reception the word of God met with among them, and the powerful effect it had upon them, insomuch that they patiently and cheerfully bore persecution for the sake of it; he excuses his not having been with them again as yet, which he knew was proper and necessary, as he was their apostle and spiritual father; and expresses an affectionate concern at his parting with them in the manner he did, which was not his own choice and voluntary act, but was obliged to it, being hurried away at once, at an unawares in the night, by reason of the uproar made in the city by the baser sort of people, instigated by the unbelieving Jews; so that he and his fellow ministers had not the opportunity of taking their leave of them, as they would have done: hence he says,

we being taken from you; they were, as it were, passive in it; they were forced away on a sudden, they did not go of themselves; the word used is very uncommon and emphatical, and may be literally rendered, “we being orphanized from you”; which represents this parting to be like the separation made by death, between parents and children; when either parents are deprived of their children, or children of their parents, and are left orphans or fatherless; and just in such a destitute and desolate condition were the apostle and his companions in, in their account; nor need it to be wondered at, when they are before compared to a nursing mother and a tender father, as they were to these their spiritual children: and he further observes, that this removal from them, was

for a short time, or “for the time of an hour”; which may either denote the suddenness of it, being as it were at an hour's warning, having no more notice of it than for the space of an hour; or it may express the great affection he and his fellow ministers had for them, insomuch that they could not bear an absence from them, though but for an hour; or it may be said by way of comfort, that this parting was but for a short time, and that in a little while they might hope to see them again; and if not in this life, yet in the future state, when they should meet and never part more, and which would be but in a short time at longest: moreover, this separation was only

in presence; in person, in face, in sight, in body, it was but a corporeal one: not in heart; the apostle's heart was with them, as much as if present; they were always in his mind, and remembered by him, at the throne; he had as it were the images of them continually before him, as parents have of their children when at a distance from them; his heart was after them, and his affections moved strongly towards them: and the effect this distance had on him, and those that were with him, was this, that they

endeavoured the more abundantly, he observes,

to see your face with great desire; it made them but the more desirous of seeing them face to face again, and put them upon attempting with more abundant earnestness and diligence to come and see them.

Ver. 18. *Wherefore we would have come unto you*, etc.] They not only had a will, and purposed in themselves, and entered into some resolutions to come unto them, but endeavoured to put them into execution:

even I Paul: as well as Silas and Timothy; the latter of which had been with them, and the others had as good a will, and especially Paul: and that

once and again: or "once and twice" so the Jews used [f8] to speak jyynçw hnwçar µ[p, "one time and a second"; that is, several times:

but Satan hindered us. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, "hindered me"; by moving the mob which rose at Thessalonica, to go to Berea, and disturb the apostle there; which obliged him, contrary to his will, to go to Athens instead of returning to Thessalonica, as he intended; and when at Athens, from whence also he might purpose to return thither, he was hindered by the disputes the Jews and the Stoics, and Epicurean philosophers, had with him; and after that, might be prevented by the lying in wait of the Jews for him, of which he might be informed; or by disturbances raised in the church, or churches where he was, by the false teachers; which required his stay with them, to oppose and refute error and heresy and to make up differences that arose among true Christians, fomented by Satan and his emissaries; (see <4501 13>Romans 1:13). Satan does all he can to hinder the preaching of the Gospel, the hearing of the word, the profession of religion, and the saints coming together, and having spiritual conversation with each other; being, as his name "Satan" signifies, an enemy to Christ and his interest, and to the souls of men: indeed he can do nothing but by divine permission, nor can he hinder the will of God, and

the execution of that, though he often hinders the will of man, or man from doing his will; he hindered the apostle from doing what he willed and purposed, but he did not hinder the will of God, which was that Paul should be employed in other work elsewhere.

Ver. 19. *For what is our hope, or joy*, etc.] The apostle here gives a reason why they were so concerned at parting with the Thessalonians, and were so desirous of seeing them again, and attempted it so often, cause they were their "hope"; not the foundation of it, which was Christ; nor the thing hoped for, which was eternal life; nor the ground of their hope, which was the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; but they were persons whom they hoped well of, and of whom their hope was steadfast; as of their election of God, of their redemption by Christ, of their effectual calling, of their perseverance in faith and holiness, notwithstanding all reproach and persecution; and of meeting the Lord, and being together with him for ever: and they were also their "joy"; their conversion was a matter of joy to them, because of the glory of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, displayed therein; because of the abundant grace bestowed on these persons; and because that hereby the kingdom of Satan was weakened, and the kingdom of Christ enlarged and his churches increased and beautified; and their own ministry was blessed and confirmed, and their hearts and hands strengthened, and they encouraged to go on in it: and they continued to be their joy, inasmuch as they stood fast in the Lord, walked on in the truth, and had their conversations as became the Gospel of Christ; and they were persuaded would be their joy hereafter, at the second coming of Christ; when they should give up their account of them with joy, and not with grief: and it is added,

or crown of rejoicing; or of "glorying", or "boasting"; not that they gloried in them, for they gloried not in men, but in the Lord, in his righteousness, riches, wisdom, strength, and grace, in the person, blood, and cross of Christ; but they gloried of them, as trophies of divine grace, as a prey taken out of the hand of the mighty, and as lawful captives delivered from the power of Satan, and of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Christ. The Alexandrian copy reads, as we render it,

crown of rejoicing: which is but a stronger phrase, to press the joy they had in their conversion and perseverance, in allusion to crowns wore at times of rejoicing, as at marriage feasts, and the like: hence we read [f9] of the crowns of the bridegrooms, and of the brides, which were forbidden the

use of in the war of Vespasian; the latter were made of gold, in the form of the city of Jerusalem, and from thence called golden cities [f10]; and the former, some say, were made of salt and sulphur, to put them in mind of the destruction of the Sodomites, for their unnatural lusts [f11]; others of a salt stone as clear as crystal, or of the stone Bdellium, painted in the colour of sulphur [f12]; and some were made of myrtles and roses, but in the war of Vespasian only those made of reeds were used [f13]; these crowns at weddings seem to be the "beautiful crowns" in (<233242>Ezekiel 23:42) where the Septuagint use the same phrase as here, στεφανον καυχησεως, "a crown of rejoicing", or "glorying": the Hebrew phrase trapt trj[, may be rendered "a crown of glory", as the phrase here is by the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions; but does not mean the crown of glory, life, righteousness, and immortality, the apostle expected at the hands of Christ another day; nor that his being an instrument of the conversion of these persons was the ground of such an expectation, or was what entitled him to such a crown; since he knew that conversion work was owing to the powerful grace of God, and the crown of eternal life was his free gift; but that it would be an honour to him, and give him abundant joy and pleasure at the coming of Christ, to be encircled with such a number of souls he had been useful to, and who were his spiritual children; just as children's children are the crown of old men, (<201706>Proverbs 17:6) all this is put by way of question, which strongly affirms,

are not even ye; or "ye also", as well as others, as the Corinthians and Philippians; (see <470107>2 Corinthians 1:7 Phi 1:6,7 4:1).

In the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? to judge the quick and dead, when both they and these should meet him, and stand before him with confidence, being clothed with his righteousness, and clad with robes of immortality and glory.

Ver. 20. *For ye are our glory and joy*.] Or "our joy", as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; this is a repetition, and a confirmation of what is before said; and signifies that these saints were then the glory of the apostles, being the seals of their ministry; and whom they gloried of and rejoiced in, and hoped and believed they would be such, as would be their joy and crown in time to come, and for ever.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO 1 THESSALONIANS 3

In this chapter the apostle expresses his great love to the Thessalonians, by sending Timothy to then, to establish and comfort them; and declares his satisfaction with the things he brought of them, and concludes the chapter with fervent prayers for them: such was his affection for them, that he chose rather to be left alone at Athens, and send Timothy to them, though so very dear and useful to him, as his characters show, to the end that they might be established and comforted, (52 1 Thessalonians 3:2) and not be shaken with the afflictions the apostles met with, seeing these were no other than what God had appointed them to; and besides, they had been apprized of them before hand by the apostle, (53 1 Thessalonians 3:3,4) but however, lest Satan should get an advantage of them, the apostle could not be easy without sending to know how things stood with them, (55 1 Thessalonians 3:5) next he proceeds to give an account of the success of this mission, and the satisfaction it gave him and his fellow ministers to hear of their faith and charity, their remembrance of them, and desire to see them, (56 1 Thessalonians 3:6) which comforted them under their afflictions, made them lively and cheerful, filled them with joy and thankfulness, and put them upon praying to God to see their face, and perfect what was lacking in their faith, (57 1 Thessalonians 3:7-10) and then follow the petitions themselves, which are made both to God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that their way might be directed to them, that they might increase and abound in love to one another, and to all men, as they did to them, and that God would establish them in holiness in his sight, at the coming of Christ, (58 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13).

Ver 1. *Wherefore when we could no longer forbear*, etc.] Or “bear”, as the word properly signifies; or “bear that”, as the Ethiopic version reads; that is, “that desire”, as the Arabic version renders it; that ardent and longing desire of seeing them again, expressed in the latter part of the preceding chapter; which was as fire in their bones, and was retained with great pain and uneasiness; but now they could hold it no longer, and like Jeremiah, (24 Jeremiah 20:9) were weary with forbearing, and could not stay; or it

was like a burden, which they stood up under as long as they could, even Paul, Silas, and Timothy, but now it became insupportable:

we thought it good to be left at Athens alone: that is, Paul and Silas, or Paul only, speaking of himself in the plural number; for he seems to have been alone at Athens, at least at last; he considering everything, thought it most fit and advisable when at Athens, where he waited for Silas and Timothy, having ordered them to come thither to him from Berea, (<44 17 14>Acts 17:14,15) either to send orders to Berea for Timothy to go from thence to Thessalonica, to know the state of affairs there, and Silas elsewhere; or if they came to him to Athens, of which Luke gives no account, he immediately dispatched Timothy to Thessalonica, and Silas to some other part of Macedonia, for from thence they came to him at Corinth, (<44 18 05>Acts 18:5) such was his desire of knowing how things were at Thessalonica, that he chose rather to be left alone at Athens, disputing with the unbelieving Jews, and Heathen philosophers of the Epicurean and Stoic sects, sustaining all their scoffs and jeers alone; and was content to be without his useful companions, Silas and Timothy, who might have been assisting to him at Athens, in hope of hearing of his dear friends at Thessalonica.

Ver. 2. *And sent Timotheus our brother*, etc.] In a spiritual relation, having the same heavenly Father, and belonging to the same Jerusalem, which is free, and the mother of us all; of the same household and in the same relation to Christ, the firstborn among many brethren; or their brother in the ministry, who was employed in the same business, and did the same work they did; or he is so called, on account of that strict and intimate friendship which subsisted between them, by virtue of which they stuck as close as brethren, or closer to one another than brethren usually do:

and minister of God; of his making, and not man's; of his calling and sending, and of his blessing and succeeding; and who was a minister of the things of God, of the mysteries of God, of the truths of his Gospel; and who ministered according to the ability God gave him, and was faithful to him:

and our fellow labourer in the Gospel of Christ; he was a labourer, and not a loiterer in the Lord's vineyard; one that laboured in the word and doctrine, that studied to show himself a workman, that gave himself wholly to meditation, reading, exhortation, and doctrine, and preached the word in season and out of season and was a fellow labourer with him who laboured more abundantly than any of the apostles; and not in the law, but in the

Gospel, even in the Gospel of Christ, of which he is the sum and substance, author and preacher. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out these words, and so do Beza's ancient copy and the Alexandrian manuscript, “and our fellow labourers”, reading the latter part of the clause in connection with the former thus, “a minister of God in the Gospel of Christ”, as the former of these versions, “in the doctrine of Christ”, as the latter. These characters are given of Timothy, partly to show what honour was done the Thessalonians, in sending such a messenger to them; and partly that they might receive him with the greater respect, and treat him according to his character, office, and dignity; and chiefly to observe to them the apostle's great affection for them, in parting with so dear and useful a minister for their good and advantage, as follows:

to establish you; which though the work of God, it is usually done by the ministry of the word; and then is the end of the Gospel ministration answered to the churches, when they are established by it; for notwithstanding the saints are in a stable condition, as in the arms of love, and in the hands of Christ, and in the covenant of grace, and upon the rock of ages, and in a state of regeneration, justification, and adoption, from whence they can never fall totally and finally; yet they are often very unstable in their hearts and frames, in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, and in their adherence to the cause and interest, Gospel and ordinances of Christ, through the prevalence of corruption, the temptations of Satan, and the reproaches and persecutions of men: and these Thessalonians were young converts, and just planted together as a church; and at their first setting out, sustained a considerable shock of afflictions, which made the apostle concerned for their establishment in the faith which they had received:

and to comfort you concerning your faith. This is another end of the Gospel ministry, to comfort afflicted minds, and distressed consciences; it is the will of God that his people should be spoke comfortably to; the doctrines of the Gospel are calculated for that purpose, and the ministers of it should be Barnabases, sons of consolation. These saints might be in some doubt about the grace of faith, whether it was right or not, or about the doctrine of faith they had received; and therefore Timothy is sent to comfort them under their afflictions, which might have created these doubts, and to remove them, by showing them that their faith was like precious faith with the apostles; and that the doctrine of faith they embraced was the faith once delivered to the saints, and was the true faith

of Christ: the words will bear to be rendered, “to exhort you concerning your faith”, as the Vulgate Latin version renders them; that is, to exhort you to continue in the faith, to stand fast in it, in the exercise of the grace of faith, and in the doctrine of faith, and in the profession of both. The Syriac version renders it, “to ask”, or inquire of you concerning your faith, being willing to know how it stood, since they left them, as in (1 Thessalonians 3:5).

Ver. 3. *That no man should be moved by these afflictions*, etc.] Which the apostle endured for the sake of preaching the Gospel among them, and which he feared might be a means of troubling their minds, of shaking their faith, and moving them from the hope of the Gospel; for though none of these things moved him, who was an old soldier of Christ, and used to hardness, and an apostle of Christ; yet these were young converts, and not used to such things, and therefore might be staggered at them, and be offended, as stony ground hearers are; and though the apostle hoped better things of them, yet was he concerned for them, that no one among them might be unhinged by them, or succumb under them:

for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto; by the immutable decree of God: afflictions, as to their nature, measure, and duration, are appointed for the people of God, and they are appointed for them; this is the case of all who will live godly in Christ Jesus, and especially of Gospel ministers; of which these saints had been apprized by the apostle, and therefore was nothing new, unheard of, and unexpected, or to be looked upon as a strange thing; and seeing this was the appointment of heaven, and the will of God, they should be patiently endured, and quietly submitted to.

Ver. 4. *For, verily, when we were with you*, etc.] In presence, in person, as they then were in heart and affection; when they were first among them, and preached the Gospel to them:

we told you before; before it came to pass;

that we should suffer tribulation: which they might say by virtue of Christ's prediction to all his disciples, that they should have tribulation in the world; and upon its being the common case of God's people, and the usual way through which they enter the kingdom; and the Apostle Paul might foretell this, upon the discovery that was made to him how many things he should suffer for the sake of Christ, and which therefore he always, and in every

place expected; and he might have a particular revelation of the disturbance and opposition he was to meet with at Thessalonica:

even as it came to pass, and ye know; referring to the tumult and uproar in (<4417 05>Acts 17:5-10), and which should be considered so far from being a discouragement, that it was a great confirmation of the truth of their mission and ministry; nor could it be so surprising to them as it might have been had they had no previous taste of it.

Ver. 5. *For this cause, when I could no longer forbear*, etc.] Or "bear" the above vehement desire of seeing them, or of hearing from them. Here the apostle speaks in the singular number, and seems to intimate, as if what was said before of the like kind is to be understood singly of him; for these words are a repetition and summary of the foregoing, with some diversity:

I sent to know your faith; how it stood, whether it was staggering through these afflictions, or firm; whether it was weak or strong, what was wanting in it; and whether it grew and increased. The Arabic version adds, "and charity"; for of this, as well as of faith, Timothy brought an account, as appears from the following verse.

Lest by some means the tempter; Satan, so called from his common and constant employ in tempting men to sin; (see <4004 03>Matthew 4:3)

have tempted you with success, and got an advantage over them, improving these afflictions to such a purpose as to move them from the hope of the Gospel, and relinquish the profession of it; for otherwise there was no question to be made but he had tempted them, or solicited them to it; for none of the saints are free from his temptations; the apostle himself was not, nor indeed our Lord Jesus Christ: but the apostle's fears were, lest he should so have tempted them as to have gained upon them, and have persuaded them to have turned their backs upon the Gospel, and not expose their name and credit, and hazard the toss of worldly substance, and even life itself, for the sake of it.

And our labour be in vain: in preaching the Gospel among them; not with respect to God, to whom the word never returns void and empty; nor with regard to the apostles, whose judgment was with the Lord, and their work with their God, who will of his own grace reward them; but with respect to the Thessalonians, to whom, should Satan gain his point, it would be of no use and service, for which the concern was. The Ethiopic version reads, "and your labour be in vain": in receiving the apostles, embracing and

professing the Gospel, and suffering for it; (see <4804>Galatians 3:4) but the common reading is best, and agrees with what the apostle elsewhere says, (<4811>Galatians 4:11 Phi 2:16).

Ver. 6. *But now when Timotheus came from you unto us*, etc.] At Corinth, as appears from (<4805>Acts 18:5) which shows that this epistle was not written from Athens, as the subscription to it asserts, but from Corinth; for as soon as ever Timothy came from Thessalonica, to the apostle at Corinth, and made the report to him, he immediately sent them this epistle which is here suggested: “but, now”, etc. just now; “lately”, as the Syriac version renders it, a very little while ago, Timothy was just come:

and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity; of their faith, the grace of faith, that it was of the right kind; as far as could be judged, it was the faith of God's elect, like precious faith with theirs; an unfeigned one, strong and lively, operative and growing: or of the doctrine of faith, as received and embraced by them; as that they were greatly led, and had much light into it, and had, for the time, made considerable proficiency in it; that they held it fast, and stood fast in it, and contended for it, notwithstanding all the afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions which they either saw in the apostles, or endured themselves for the sake of it; and likewise of the profession of both the grace and doctrine of faith, which they held fast, and without wavering, and that in a pure conscience, which was good news indeed. Timothy also brought an account of their “charity”, or love, which faith works by; these two graces are always found together; they are wrought in the soul by one, and the same hand, and at the same time; where the one is, the other is; and as the one flourishes and increases, so does the other. And by this grace is meant love to God, to Christ, to his truths, ordinances, ways, and worship, and to one another, and even to all men; and which was without dissimulation, in sincerity, in deed, and in truth, and was constant and fervent: and this was not the whole of the report, for it follows,

and that ye have a remembrance of us always they bore in memory the persons of the apostles; and when they made mention of their names, it was with the greatest respect and reverence; nor were they forgetful hearers of the word, but remembered with great affection and pleasure the truths, the doctrines, and exhortations they delivered to them, so as to put them in practice, and longed for another visit from them, to have their memories refreshed by them:

desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you, they had an equal desire to see their spiritual fathers, as they had to see their spiritual children. Now such a report as this concerning their steady faith in Christ, their fervent love to one another, and their affectionate regard to the ministers of the word, was a sort of a Gospel, as the word used signifies; or it was good news and glad tidings to the apostle, and those that were with him.

Ver. 7. *Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over, you*, etc.] Or "in you", as the Vulgate Latin version; or "from you", as the Arabic; or "by you", as the Syriac; or "for you", as the Ethiopic; that is, on account of them, either by what they had heard was in them, or had heard from them. This gave abundant consolation

in all our affliction and distress: which they met with at Corinth, where the apostle laboured with his own hands, and ministered to his own, and the necessities of others, and was greatly opposed, reproached, and persecuted; (see <44103>Acts 18:3,6,9,10,12), but the news of the good estate and condition the Thessalonians were in, was a great relief and comfort to him, particularly their faith:

by your faith: by the report of it, that it grew exceedingly, and that they walked in the truth; (see <61504>1 John 5:4). The Alexandrian copy reads, "in all your distress and affliction, and by your faith."

Ver. 8. *For now we live*, etc.] Before they were dead men, lifeless, disconsolate, dispirited, carrying about with them the dying of the Lord Jesus, and death working in them, and they, as it were, under the sentence of that, being killed all the day long for Christ's sake; but now, upon this news, in the midst of all their sore trials and troubles, their spirits revived, and they became alive and cheerful; (see <19226>Psalm 22:26 <25503>Isaiah 55:3), it was like life from the dead unto them:

if ye stand fast in the Lord: or "our Lord", as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read; that is, "in the faith of the Lord", as the Arabic version renders it: they were in the Lord secretly by electing grace, and openly by regenerating grace, and they abode in him; and by persevering grace, they were rooted and built up in Christ, and established in the faith of him, of his person, office, and grace; they were steady in the exercise of grace upon him, and stood fast in the liberty wherewith he had made them free, and continued steadfastly in the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel; for the "if" here is not expressive of doubting, but of reasoning, "seeing ye stand

fast in the Lord”; of which they were assured by Timothy: and this gave them fresh spirit and life amidst the deaths in which they often were.

Ver. 9. *For what thanks can we render to God again or you*, etc.] They had given thanks to God for them before, for their faith, love, and patience; (see 1 Thessalonians 1:2,3) and now having received a further account of them, they looked upon themselves bound to give fresh thanks to God for them, for the increase of their faith and love, and for their perseverance, as they did; (see 2 Thessalonians 1:3 2:13) since these are gifts of God's grace; but they knew not where to begin, what to render, and when to end: the phrase is much like that in (Psalm 116:12) “what shall I render unto the Lord”, etc.

for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God: the joy they had was all joy, perfect and complete in its kind; (see James 1:2) and it was not for themselves, on their own account, because of any worldly interest or advantage they had therein, but for the sake of these Thessalonians, whose spiritual welfare they rejoiced at: nor was their joy of a carnal nature, but spiritual; it was a joy in the Holy Ghost, and which was hearty and sincere: it was “before God our” God, their covenant God and Father; it was in his sight and presence, who sees and knows all things, all actions, and the principles of them. Though this last clause, “before our God”, is in the Syriac version, placed at the beginning of the next verse, according to which, it refers, not to thanks or joy before God, but to prayer before him.

Ver. 10. *Night and day praying exceedingly*, etc.] This good news, not only comforted their hearts, and revived their spirits, and filled them with joy and thankfulness, but also sent them to the throne of grace to pray without ceasing, continually, night and day, and as often as they went thither, and that with great fervency and earnestness, in a multitude of petitions; or, as the Arabic version renders it, “with prayers exceeding a multitude”; with innumerable requests:

that we might see your face: once more, and converse face to face:

and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith? in the grace of faith; for though they remembered their work of faith with pleasure, and had had good tidings of it very lately, and were thankful that it grew exceedingly as it did, yet they knew it was not perfect, there was unbelief attending them: and though it is God's work to increase faith, as well as to produce it, yet,

as the ministry of the word is the means of the first planting of it, so it also is of the increase of it. This may likewise be understood of the doctrine of faith, which though they had received in the love of it, and had made considerable progress in their knowledge of it; yet they knew but in part, and needed to be taught the way of God, and truths of the Gospel more perfectly; and the ministry of the word is for the perfecting of the saints in the knowledge of the Son of God, and of other truths; wherefore the apostle desired greatly to see them, that he might be an instrument of instructing them, more perfectly in the knowledge of divine things; and in this, and in the following epistle, he does particularly instruct them about the rise and fall of antichrist, the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead, articles of faith in which they seemed to have been deficient: but now, though these saints had deficiencies in their faith, yet they were not what the Jews call[f14] hnma yrswjm, "such as are deficient in faith", or want faith entirely, a phrase somewhat like this which is here used.

Ver. 11. *Now God himself, and our Father*, etc.] The Oriental versions leave out the copulative "and", and read, "God himself, our Father" the first person in the Trinity, who is God himself, truly and properly so; and who is a God that hears prayer; and who is omnipotent, and able to do more than the saints can ask or think; and omniscient, and knows their persons and cases, and what is proper for them, and how and when to help and supply them; and he is also the God of all grace, the author and giver of it, and who is able to make it abound, and increase it, and so a very proper object of prayer: and who is likewise the Father of Christ, and of all the saints, not only by creation, in which sense he is the Father of all men, but by adopting grace; and which is mentioned to encourage freedom and boldness in prayer, which children may use with a father, and to raise an expectation of succeeding and receiving an answer; for if earthly parents hear their children, and give good things to them, how much more will not our heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit, and all other good gifts, unto his children? And this shows that the apostle prayed to God in the manner Christ directed, (<400609>Matthew 6:9)

and our Lord Jesus Christ: who is equally the object of prayer with God his Father and ours; who is sometimes distinctly prayed unto, as in (<440759>Acts 7:59) and often in conjunction with his Father, as in all those places in the epistles, where grace and peace are wished for from them both; (see <450107>Romans 1:7), and sometimes he is set before the Father, as in (<530216>2 Thessalonians 2:16) to show the entire equality between them, and

that he is equally addressed as he, being truly and properly God, who knows all things, and is the Almighty, and whose grace is sufficient for us, and therefore rightly applied unto, as here: the petition put up to them both is, that they would

direct our way unto you: a journey is not to be taken without the will of God, without seeking to know it, without submission to it, and dependence on it; nor is there any prosperous one, but by it; (see <590413>James 4:13-15 <451010>Romans 1:10). Men may devise their own ways, but God directs their goings; especially a good man's steps are ordered by the Lord, and particularly ministers; who, as they are often directed to subjects and matter, in a very providential way, so to places, and are ordered both where and when to go; (see <441606>Acts 16:6,7,9,10). The apostle was aware, that there were obstacles in his way of coming to Thessalonica, for he had attempted it once and again, but Satan, and his emissaries, hindered; and therefore he desires that God and Christ would remove them out of the way, and make his way straight and plain, as the word signifies, that he might once more see their faces.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord make you to increase*, etc.] That is, the Lord the Spirit; so that the object of prayer, addressed by the apostle, is Father, Son, and Spirit, as in (<660104>Revelation 1:4,5). The Alexandrian copy reads “God”. The Spirit is God, equally with the Father and the Son, and so a fit object of prayer with them, which otherwise he would not be. The request is, that he would cause these saints to increase in number, as the first churches greatly did: and in the gifts of the Spirit, which he divides to men severally as he will; and in his graces, as in faith, in hope, in holiness, in humility, in knowledge, in spiritual joy and strength, an increase in all which is from him:

and abound in love one towards another; for though they were taught of God to love one another, and did do so, and the apostle had had good tidings of their love; yet it was not perfect, there was room for a further exercise of it, by serving each other by it, in things spiritual and temporal; and he had his request, for it did abound in everyone of them towards each other, (<530103>2 Thessalonians 1:3)

and towards all men; the men of the world, who were without, were not members of the church, nor professors of the Christian religion, but enemies to that, and to Christ, and to them; and yet they were to love them

as men, and pray for them, and do them all the good that lay in their power:

even as we do towards you; for the love of the apostle, and those with him, abounded more and more towards these saints, and was so far from being weakened, that it was increased by their absence from them; and they were more abundantly desirous of seeing them, and were even quite impatient until they sent to them, and heard of them.

Ver. 13. *To the end he may stablish your hearts*, etc.] Which are very unstable and inconstant in their frames, and in the exercise of grace, and have need to be established in the love of God, against the fears of men, the frowns of the world, the temptations of Satan, and in, and with the doctrines of grace; (see Gill on "1 Thessalonians 3:2"),

unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father. There is no holiness in men naturally; what is in them without the grace of God is only a show; true holiness is from the Spirit of God; and this is a stable thing in itself, and can never be removed or taken away; but the acts of it, through the prevalence of corruption, the force of Satan's temptations, and the snares of the world, are fickle and inconstant; and the saints need to be established in the discharge of duty, as well as in the exercise of grace: and whereas the apostle prays, that they might be "unblamable in holiness", the Alexandrian copy reads, "in righteousness" so one of Stephens's; it must be observed, that no man is perfectly holy in this life; no man is without sin in himself, or lives without the commission of it; holiness in the best is imperfect; no man, as yet, is in himself sanctified wholly; there is no unblamable holiness but in Christ; and in him the saints are without spot and blemish, who is their sanctification and their righteousness; but in themselves they are full of spots and stains; yet through the grace of God their hearts may be so established with principles of holiness, and they may be so assisted in the acts of it daily, as to give no just cause of blame to men, and so to behave as to approve themselves "before God", who sees the heart, and knows from what principles all actions flow: and this the apostle desires may be at the coming of our Lord Jesus; or unto the coming of him, as in (1 Thessalonians 5:23) Either at death, when he comes into his garden, and gathers his lilies, and takes his to himself to be for ever with him; or at the day of judgment, when he comes to judge the quick and dead; and which coming of his is certain, and will be quickly and suddenly, and with great glory and power: and, as it is here added,

with all his saints; meaning either his holy angels, or rather the souls of his people, whom he will bring with him, and will raise their dead bodies, and reunite them to their souls, when they shall be for ever with him; and then shall they be unblamable in holiness, both in soul and body, and shall be presented by him, first to himself, and then to his Father, faultless, and without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions add, “Amen”; and so does Beza's ancient copy, and the Alexandrian manuscript.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO 1 THESSALONIANS 4

In this chapter the apostle proceeds to exhort in general to the performance of good works, particularly to purity of life, to brotherly love, to quietness, diligence, and industry in the several callings of life, and not to mourn in an excessive and immoderate manner for deceased friends; which leads him to say some things concerning the second coming of Christ, and the resurrection of the dead. The general exhortation to holiness is in (1 Thessalonians 4:1-3) which is pressed in a way of entreaty for the sake of Christ; and the duties urged to were the commandments of Christ, and which the apostles had given them, and they had received, and were well acquainted with; and besides, a walk according to these commands was well pleasing to God, and sanctification in general was his will: and in particular the apostle exhorts to abstain from fornication, and all uncleanness; since it is a dishonouring the body of man; acting the part of the ignorant Gentiles that know not God; a defrauding another man, as is uncleanness with another man's wife; the vengeance of God will light on such; it is contrary to that calling with which the saints are called, that being to holiness, and not uncleanness; and to despise this exhortation, is casting contempt, not upon man, but God himself, (1 Thessalonians 4:4-8). Brotherly love is the next thing exhorted to, which seemed needless to write about, since, in regeneration, these saints were taught to exercise it, and had exercised it towards all the brethren throughout Macedonia, though it was necessary to exhort them to abound more and more in it, (1 Thessalonians 4:9,10) and to study peace and quietness, and be industrious in their business, that so they might live an honest life among their carnal neighbours, and not be in want of anything from them, (1 Thessalonians 4:11,12) and whereas some of them had lost some of their dear friends and relations by death, and were ready to exceed due bounds in their sorrow for them, he dehorts from such immoderate sorrow, as being like that of those that had no hope of a resurrection from the dead; whereas, seeing it was an article of their faith, that Christ was risen from the dead, they might assure themselves that those that sleep in him shall be brought along with him when he shall appear a second time, (1

Thessalonians 4:13,14) which will not be prevented by those that are alive when Christ comes; for as they will be changed, the dead in Christ will be raised at his coming; which coming of his will be in person, from heaven, with a shout, the voice of the archangel, and trump of God; and then both shall be caught up together to meet him in the air, and be for ever with him; and therefore they had no need to sorrow as others, since they should meet again, and never part more, and with which words they should comfort one another under their present loss, (<5045>1 Thessalonians 4:15-18).

Ver. 1. *Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren*, etc.] Or request of you in the most kind and tender manner, from real and hearty love and affection for you, and with a view to your good, and the glory of God:

and exhort you: or beseech and entreat you. The apostle does not lay his commands upon them as he might have done, and sometimes does, but endeavours to work upon them by way of entreaty, and which he doubtless thought the most effectual method to win upon them, and gain them; for some minds are more easily wrought upon by entreaty than by authority: and this he does in the most moving and powerful manner, even

by the Lord Jesus; or "in the Lord Jesus"; in his name and stead, as personating him, and as though he did beseech and entreat them by him, and his fellow ministers; or for his sake, intimating, that if they had any regard to him, any value for his name, if that had any weight with them, or they had any concern for his honour and interest, then he begs their attention to the following exhortation; or by the Lord Jesus, by all that is in him, or done for them by him; in whom they were chosen, by whom they were redeemed, in whom they were made new creatures, to whose image they were to be conformed, whose followers they professed to be, whose Gospel they embraced, and by whose name they were called.

That as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God. The walk of believers is twofold, either internal or external. Their internal walk is by faith, which is the going out of the soul by faith to Christ for every supply of grace. Their external walk is not as it was before conversion, according to the course of this world, or as other Gentiles walk, but in a holy religious life and conversation; and this requires spiritual life, strength and direction from Christ; for neither dead men, nor, if alive, yet weak, can walk; nor is it in a spiritual man, that walketh to direct his steps; and such a walk also denotes continuance, in well doing, and a progression or going on in it, and supposes ways to walk in. Christ,

he is the chief and principal way, and there are other paths which regard him, or relate and lead unto him; as the way of truth, the path of ordinances, and of religious worship, both public and private, and the ways of righteousness, holiness, and good works: the manner in which saints are to walk is as Christ himself walked, after the Spirit, and not after the flesh, according to the rule of the word, which is the standard of faith and practice, with prudence, wisdom, circumspection, and worthy of God, and of that calling wherein they are called: and of such a walk there is a necessity; it “ought”, it must be both on the account of God, it being his will, and for his glory, and the contrary would show great ingratitude to him; and on the account of the saints themselves, to adorn them, and their profession, and preserve them from shame and disgrace, to show their faith, and demonstrate their calling and election to others; and likewise on account of others, partly for the winning of some, by recommending in this way the Gospel to them, and partly for the bringing of others to shame and silence, who falsely accuse their good conversation. Now when the apostle, and those that were with him, were at Thessalonica, they gave these saints directions and instructions about their walk and conversation, to order it in such a manner as might “please God”; which is not to be understood of rendering their persons acceptable to God hereby, for the saints' acceptance with God is only in Christ the beloved; nor of their gaining the love and favour of God by such means, for the love of God is from everlasting, and is free, and sovereign, and does not arise from, or depend upon the holiness and obedience of men; or of making peace with God by such a walk, for peace is only made by the blood of Christ; but of doing those things, and in such a way God approves of: unregenerate men cannot please God, nor anything they do, because they are destitute of the Spirit of God, and are without Christ, and his grace and have not faith in him, without which it is impossible to please God; but what a believer does in faith, from a principle of love, in the name and strength of Christ, and to the glory of God, is approved of by God, and is acceptable to him through Christ, and for his sake; and there are many things of this kind, as prayer, praise, acts of beneficence to the poor, and indeed every good work and holy action: and inasmuch as they had been thus taught and instructed how to behave and conduct in their outward walk and conversation, they are entreated and exhorted to go on and abound in the work of the Lord:

so ye would abound more and more: that is, be more and more in the exercise of every grace, and in the discharge of every duty, making

advances in holiness of life, and perfecting it in the fear of God. Beza's ancient copy, and another manuscript, as also the Alexandrian copy, and some others, add between the preceding, and this last clause, “as ye also walk”; and so the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions seem to have read; commending them for their present and past walk and conversation, in order to persuade and encourage them to go forward.

Ver. 2. *For ye know what commandments we gave you*, etc.] When among them; such as those of faith and love, the ordinances of the Gospel, baptism, and the Lord's supper, and all such as relate to the worship and service of God, to the discipline of Christ's house, to their behaviour one towards another, and their conduct in the world: and which were delivered to them, not as from themselves, and by their own authority, but

by the Lord Jesus; in his name, and by his authority, and as ordered by him; for their commission ran to teach men all things, whatsoever Christ commanded: now since they knew what these commandments were, and whose they were, and the obligation they lay under to regard them, the apostle makes use of it as a reason or argument to engage them to obedience to them; for he that knows his Lord's will, and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes, (Luke 12:47).

Ver. 3. *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification*, etc.] Which is another reason to enforce the above exhortation. “Sanctification” is internal or external. Internal sanctification is the work of the Spirit of God, and is a principle of spiritual life in the soul, a divine and spiritual light in the understanding, a flexion of the will to the will of God, and a settlement of the affections on divine things, and is an implantation of every grace in the heart. External sanctification arises from this, and lies in holiness of life and conversation; and is what is chiefly designed, as appears both by what goes before, and follows after: and this is “the will of God”; the will of his purpose and decree; for in the same decree that he wills the salvation of any by Jesus Christ, he also wills their sanctification in heart and life, and here and hereafter: and this is his approving will, or what is well pleasing in his sight, being agreeable to his nature, and divine perfections, particularly his holiness, in which he is glorious; and it is his will of command, and what he requires in his law, which is holy, just, and good, and perfectly agrees with the sound doctrine of the Gospel, and the revelation of his will in both.

That ye should abstain from fornication: which is particularly mentioned, abstinence from it being a branch of external holiness; and because that this sin was common among the Gentiles, and not esteemed a sin by them; as also to observe to these Christians, that as simple fornication was not to be allowed of, much less other acts of uncleanness, as adultery, incest, sodomy, and the like, which were iniquities that greatly prevailed among the Heathens. The Syriac version renders it, “from all fornication”; on this subject the apostle enlarges in some following verses.

Ver. 4. *That everyone of you should know how to possess his vessel*, etc.] By which may be meant, either a man's wife, or his body, and it is not very easy to determine which, for the Jews call both by this name. Sometimes they call [f15] a woman µlwg, which the gloss says is a “vessel” unfinished. It is reported [f16], that when R. Eleazar died, Rabbenu Hakkadosh would have married his widow, and she would not, because she was hçwdq lç ylk, “a vessel of holiness”, greater than he. Moreover, it is said [f17], that

“he that forces (a young woman) must drink wxyx[b, “in his own vessel” how drink in his own vessel? though she be lame, though she be blind, and though she is stricken with ulcers.”

The commentators [f18] on the passage add,

> “in the vessel which he has chosen; that is to say, whether he will or not, he must marry her;”

(see <2055>Proverbs 5:15). And again, they sometimes call a man's wife his tent: hence that saving [f19],

> “wtça ala wlha ˆya “there is no tent but his wife”, as it is said, (<0550>Deuteronomy 5:30), go, say to them, get you into your tents again.”

And certain it is, that the woman is called the “weaker vessel” in (<0307>1 Peter 3:7), between which passage and this there seems to be some agreement. The same metaphor of a “vessel” is made use of in both; and as there, honour to be given to the weaker vessel, so here, a man's vessel is to be possessed in honour; and as there, husbands are to dwell with their wives according to knowledge so here, knowledge is required to a man's possessing his vessel aright. Now for a man to possess his vessel in this sense, is to enjoy his wife, and to use that power he has over her in a

becoming manner; (see 1 Corinthians 7:4), and which is here directed to "in sanctification and honour"; that is, in a chaste and honourable way; for marriage is honourable when the bed is kept undefiled; and which may be defiled, not only by taking another into it, and which is not possessing the wife in sanctification and honour, it is the reverse, for it is a breaking through the rules of chastity and honour; but it may even be defiled with a man's own wife, by using her in an unnatural way, or by any unlawful copulation with her; for so to do is to use her in an unholy, unchaste, wicked, and dishonourable manner; whereas possessing of her according to the order and course of nature, is by the Jews, in agreement with the apostle, called [f20], wmx[çdqm, "a man's sanctifying himself", and is chaste, and honourable. And it may be observed, that the Jews use the same phrase concerning conjugal embraces as the apostle does here. One of their canons runs thus [f21]:

> "though a man's wife is free for him at all times, it is fit and proper for a disciple of a wise man to use himself hçwdqb, "in", or "to sanctification"."

When these thing's are observed, this sense of the words will not appear so despicable as it is thought by some. The body is indeed called a "vessel"; (see 2 Corinthians 4:7), because in it the soul is contained, and the soul makes use of it, and its members, as instruments, for the performance of various actions; and, with Jewish writers, we read of wpwg ylk, "the vessel of his body" [f22]; so then, for a man to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour, is to keep under his body and bring it into subjection, and preserve it in purity and chastity; as the eyes from unchaste looks, the tongue from unchaste words, and the other members from unchaste actions; and to use it in an honourable way, not in fornication, adultery, and sodomy; for, by fornication, a man sins against his own body; and by adultery he gets a wound, and a dishonour, and a reproach that will not be wiped away; and by sodomy, and such like unnatural lusts, men dishonour their own bodies between themselves: particularly by "his vessel", as Gataker thinks, may be meant the "membrum virile", or the genital parts, which, by an euphemism, may he so called; (see 1 Samuel 21:5)

Ver. 5. *Not in the lust of concupiscence*, etc.] Or "passion of lust"; for the mere gratifying and indulging of that; for a man so to possess his vessel, is to cherish the sin of concupiscence, the first motions of sin in the heart, by

which a man is drawn away, and enticed; to blow up the flame of lust, and to make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof:

even as the Gentiles which know not God; for, though they knew him, or might know him with a natural knowledge, by the light and works of nature, yet they knew him not savingly and spiritually, as he is revealed in the word, of which they were destitute; or as the God of all grace, and the God and Father of Christ, or as he is in Christ: and though by the light of nature they might know there was a God, yet they knew not who that God was; nor did they act up to that light and knowledge they had; they did not glorify him as God, by ascribing to him what was his due; nor were they thankful for the mercies they received from him; nor did they fear, love, worship, and serve him; nor did they like to retain him in their knowledge, and therefore were given up to judicial blindness and hardness, to a reprobate mind, and to vile affections, and so did things very inconvenient, unnatural, and dishonourable. Wherefore, for a man to use either his wife or his body in any unchaste and dishonourable manner, for the gratifying of his lusts, is to act an Heathenish part; a like argument, dissuading from things unlawful, is used in (<4062>Matthew 6:32 20:25,26 <4908>Galatians 4:8,9).

Ver. 6. *That no man go beyond, and defraud his brother in any matter*, etc.] Or "in this matter", as the Syriac version. This is commonly understood of transgressing the bounds of justice and equity between men and men; and of cheating and defrauding in trade and business, by increasing or lessening the value and prices of goods by the buyer and seller, by not keeping to the bargain, contract, covenant, or sample, by false weights and measures, and by taking the advantage of the weakness and ignorance of men; all which is aggravated by dealing thus with a brother; (see <4608>1 Corinthians 6:8) and this hint is thought the rather necessary, since Thessalonica was a place of great trade and business. But the matter, or business referred to, is not trade, but the subject of chastity or uncleanness the apostle is speaking of, both before and after; and the phrases used either design the act of adultery, coveting a brother's wife, and lying with her, and so a defrauding and wronging of him by defiling his bed; or rather sodomitical practices, an unnatural lust and desire in men after men, and copulation with them; for υπερβαινειν, rendered, "go beyond", answers to ![ab], "to go upon", or "lie with", so often used in Jewish writings for lying with women, men, and beasts, in an unlawful way. Thus, for instance [f23],

> “these are to be burned, hça l[abh, “he that lies with a woman”, and her daughter, etc.”

And again[f24],

> “these are to be beaten, l[abh, “he that lies with” his sister, or his father's sister, etc.”

And the word πλεονεκτειν, translated “defraud”, signifies a greedy, insatiable, and unnatural lust and desire after a man, a brother, or the committing of sodomitical practices with greediness: (see <490419>Ephesians 4:19) which abominable iniquities are dissuaded from by the following reasons,

because that the Lord is the avenger of all such; or “with respect to all these things”, as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions render it; or “for all these things”, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; as fornication, adultery, lasciviousness, and all sorts of abominable uncleanness. The person that commits these things the Lord avenges, either in this life, by the hand of the civil magistrate, who is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath on him that does evil; or by a violent death, as in the case of Zimri and Cozbi, and twenty four thousand more at the same time; or by some awful judgment from heaven, as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah; or in the world to come; for the law of God is made and lies against such persons; these living and dying in such sins God will judge, to whom vengeance belongs; these shall not inherit the kingdom of God, but have their part and portion in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

As we have also forewarned you and testified; not by a former epistle, as if this was the second to them, and what follows the first, as Grotius thought; but they did this when they were in person with them, knowing that these abominable vices greatly prevailed in their city; therefore they bore their testimony against them, and exposed the evil of them, and warned them of the danger by them, so that they could not now plead ignorance. The Ethiopic version reads in the first person singular, “as I have before said unto you, and testified to you”.

Ver. 7. *For God hath not called us*, etc.] The Syriac version reads “you”. This is another reason to enforce the above exhortations, and to caution them against the above unclean practices, taken from the end of the effectual calling by the efficacious grace of God, which is not

unto uncleanness of any sort, as before specified. This they had lived in before their calling, and were now called from it into communion with Christ, who loves righteousness, and hates iniquity; and by the Gospel, which teaches to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to forsake all impurity, both of flesh and spirit:

but this call is

unto holiness of life and conversation in general, and to chastity in thought, look, word, and actions in particular; for God that calls is holy, and therefore those who are called ought to be so; the calling with which they are called is an holy calling, principles of grace and holiness are wrought in their souls, when they are called; and the end of their calling is to live soberly, righteously, and godly; and then, and then only, do they walk worthy of that calling wherewith they are called, and of God who has, by his grace, called them to his kingdom and glory.

Ver. 8. *He therefore that despiseth*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin adds, “these things”; these exhortations now delivered, the commandments given by the Lord Jesus Christ, and the will of God above declared; he that rejects these things with contempt, takes no notice of them, and acts not according to them,

despiseth not man; not men only, the apostles of Christ, and ministers of the Gospel; for, by despising these exhortations, they themselves were despised, though not alone: but God; Father, Son, and Spirit; God the Father, whose will was their sanctification, even to abstain from fornication, and every act of uncleanness, which, if not attended to, was a despising of him; and the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom, and for whose sake they were entreated and exhorted, and in whose name, and by whose authority the apostle gave them these commandments; wherefore to slight them, was to slight Jesus Christ himself; and, by the way, this is a proof of the true and proper deity of Christ. Moreover, such despisers also, in some sense, do despite unto the spirit of grace, by whom the apostles spake, or who spoke in them these things, as follows,

who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit; as he did to the prophets of the Old Testament, and therefore what they said was equally by divine inspiration of God; and hence despising them, was despising the Spirit of God that spake by them. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, “who hath given unto you his Holy Spirit”; and so all Stephens's copies; which

furnishes out a fresh reason or argument, dissuading from uncleanness, since God had given them his “Spirit” to convince them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, so that they were not ignorant of the things warned against; and he had given them his Spirit as an “holy” Spirit, as a Spirit of sanctification, to begin and carry on that work in them, to which uncleanness was very opposite; and he had given his Spirit unto, or “into” them, to dwell in them, as in his temple, and therefore should be careful not to defile it; and to cause them to walk in his statutes, and to assist them to keep his judgments, and do them, and as an earnest of their inheritance, and a sealer of them up unto the day of redemption; wherefore it became them not to grieve him by an impure life; and they were laid under obligations to live in the Spirit, and to walk after him, and not after the flesh.

Ver. 9. *But as touching brotherly love*, etc.] Another branch of sanctification; which is distinct from love to God and Christ, though it always accompanies it, and from love to all mankind; and is what is peculiar to brethren in a spiritual relation, and ought to be universal, fervent, and sincere, and as Christ has loved them: concerning which the following things are said,

ye need not that I write unto you. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “we have no need to write unto you”; and so some copies. It seems that it was needful to write unto them about other things, as to refresh their memories with the instructions they had given them, when with them, how they should walk and please God; and to put them in mind of the commandments given them by Christ, and that their sanctification was the will of God; and particularly it was necessary to write unto them about chastity, and purity of life, whether in or out of the conjugal state; but as for brotherly love, there was no immediate absolute necessity to write about that, either about the nature of it, or to describe the objects of it, or point out instances of it, or to exhort to it in a pressing manner: the reason is,

for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another; not merely by the light of nature, which teaches men to be kind, courteous, affable, and beneficent; nor by the law of Moses, which obliges men to love their neighbours as themselves; nor only doctrinally by the ministry of the Gospel, which frequently inculcates the exercise of this grace as a matter of great importance and consequence; nor only by the new commandment,

and example of Christ; but by the Spirit of God internally in regeneration, who, according to the tenor of the new covenant, writes this law of love, and of Christ, upon the heart; and this being written upon the hearts of the Thessalonians, by the finger of the Spirit of God, whereby they were dearly directed, and powerfully taught to exercise this grace, and discharge this duty, and under the influence of the same spirit did exercise it, it was unnecessary for the apostle to write about it, and press them to it.

Ver. 10. *And indeed ye do it towards all the brethren*, etc.] Whether high or low, rich or poor, bond or free, greater or lesser believers, and whether related in the bonds of nature or not; they exercised this grace of love without respect of persons, to all, and not only to all the brethren in the particular community at Thessalonica, but

which are in all Macedonia; throughout the whole country, particularly at Philippi and Berea, and other places:

but we beseech you, brethren. The Alexandrian copy reads, "beloved brethren"; and the Syriac version, "I beseech you, my brethren: that ye increase more and more"; in showing love to the brethren; which may be done both by administering to them in things temporal, by assisting them in distress, by sympathizing with them, and by giving them counsel and advice; and in things spiritual, by bearing their burdens, forbearing with them, and forgiving them; by admonishing them in love, by stirring them up to love and good works, by praying with them and for them, and by instructing and building them up in their most holy faith; and this increase, and abounding in the exercise of this grace, may respect not only the more frequent and fervent use of it, but also the larger extent of it to other objects; as not only to all the brethren in their own church, and to all that were in Macedonia, to which it did extend, but likewise to all the brethren in other parts of the world, and which are more distant and remote; and even to the poor saints at Jerusalem in particular; and accordingly we find that their love did abound unto them; (see Romans 15:25-27 2 Corinthians 8:1,2), this shows, that though brotherly love was much practised by these saints, yet it was not perfect; nor is any grace perfect as to degrees; nor is any saint perfect in the discharge of duty in this life.

Ver. 11. *And that ye study to be quiet*, etc.] To live peaceably in their own families, and to give no disturbance to other families, by talebearing, whispering, and backbiting; to behave with quietness in the neighbourhood, town, or city, they dwell in, and to seek the peace thereof; and to lead a

quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty, in the commonwealth, and under the government to which they belong; and not to create and encourage factions, divisions, animosities, and contentions, in their own church, or in any of the churches of Christ; and it becomes saints to make this their study, to be very solicitous for it, to strive for it, and pursue after it: the word used signifies to be ambitious of it, as what is a man's glory and honour, to emulate and strive to outdo each other, as who shall have the honour of being the quietest person, and the most peaceable member in the community:

and to do your own business: or private business, or what is proper and peculiar to a man's self; to abide every man in his own calling wherein he is called, and attend the business of it, and not thrust himself into other families, and officiously take upon him, under a pretence of zeal, affection, and friendship, to inspect, direct, or manage the business of others: in short, he should not meddle with other people's business, but mind his own: and this is what the Jews call ‏דרך ארץ‎, “the way of the earth”, or the business of life:

> “there are four things, (they say [f25]) in which a man should employ himself continually, with all his might, and these are they, the law, and good works, and prayer, and the business of life;”

upon which the gloss has this note by way of explanation,

> “if a man is an artificer (let him attend) to his art; if a merchant to his merchandise, and if he is a soldier to war;”

and which may serve to illustrate the apostle's sense:

and to work with your own hands; the reason of this is, because there were some among them, who would not work at all; (see 2 Thessalonians 3:11) and by this instruction it appears, that the members of this church, in common, were such as were brought up to handicraft trades and businesses, and were poor and mean; and this was the general case of the primitive churches: it pleased God to choose and call the poor of this world, to whom the Gospel was preached, and they received it; few of the rulers among the Jews believed in Christ, and not many mighty, rich, or noble among the Gentiles were called; some there were, and in this church there were some of the chief women of the city, (Acts 17:4), and though these and others of the better sort, as well as ministers of the

Gospel among them, who laboured in the word and doctrine, were not obliged by this to perform manual work and labour, yet were not exempted from all concern in the exhortation; it being proper and necessary, that all sorts of persons be employed in one sort of business or another, and to use diligence and application in it: the apostle's view being chiefly to inveigh against sloth and idleness, and to exhort to labour and industry as the most effectual method to preserve peace and quietness, and to keep persons from being troublesome and hurtful, in families, churches, and commonwealths: the reasons enforcing this follow in this and the next verse,

as we commanded you; and the command of an apostle carries weight and authority with it, and ought to be obeyed; yea, they not only strictly enjoined a diligent application to business, but set them an example themselves, (see 1 Thessalonians 2:9 2 Thessalonians 3:7,8).

Ver. 12. *That ye may walk honestly*, etc.] Decently, in good credit and reputation, providing things honest in the sight of all men, for themselves and families, and honestly paying every man his own; on which account it became them to mind their own business, and work at their trades; otherwise their walk and conversation would be scandalous, and not honest and honourable:

toward them that are without: the men of the world, who were without the church; (see 1 Corinthians 5:12) profane sinners, unconverted Gentiles, that were without Christ and hope, and God in the world, and were aliens and strangers; and yet care should be taken that no occasion be given to such to reproach the name of God, the ways of Christ, and the doctrines of the Gospel:

and that ye may have lack of nothing; but have wherewith to supply the necessaries of life, and give to them also that stand in need, which is more blessed and honourable than to receive; or might not need any such instruction and exhortation, or any reproof for sloth and idleness; or not stand in need of “any man”, as the Syriac version renders it; of the help and assistance of any, of any of those that are without, which would be dishonourable; or of them that are within, of the church, which might be burdensome. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “that ye may not desire anything of anyone”; as the slothful man covets greedily all the day long what is another's, and this desire kills him, (Proverbs 21:25,26) he covets an evil covetousness, and craves in a scandalous way the bread of

others; when it would be more honourable for him to work with quietness, and eat his own bread got by honest labour, and not be beholden to another.

Ver. 13. *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren*, etc.] As they seem to have been, about the state of the pious dead, the rule and measure of mourning for them, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, the second coming of Christ, and the future happiness of the saints; wherefore the apostle judged it necessary to write to them upon these subjects: the Alexandrian copy and others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “we would not have you to be ignorant”, etc.

concerning them which are asleep; that is, dead: it was in common use among the Eastern nations, when they spoke of their dead, to say they were asleep. This way of speaking is used frequently both in the Old and the New Testament; (see <110210>1 Kings 2:10 11:43 <270122>Daniel 12:2 <431111>John 11:11) (<461510>1 Corinthians 15:20) and very often with the Targumists; so the Targum on (<210304>Ecclesiastes 3:4) “a time to weep”, paraphrases it,

> “a time to weep abykç l[, “over them that are asleep”:”

and in (<210402>Ecclesiastes 4:2).

> “I praised abykç ty, “those that are asleep”,”

the dead: the reason of this way of speaking was, because there is a likeness between sleep and death; in both there is no exercise of the senses, and persons are at rest, and both rise again; and they are common to all men, and proper and peculiar to the body only. The apostle designs such persons among the Thessalonians, who either died a natural death, or were removed by violence, through the rage and fury of their persecutors, for whom their surviving friends were pressed with overmuch sorrow, which is here cautioned against:

that ye sorrow not, even as others that have no hope; the apostle's view is not to encourage and establish a stoical apathy, a stupid indolence, and a brutal insensibility, which are contrary to the make of human nature, to the practice of the saints, and even of Christ and his apostles, and our apostle himself; but to forbid excessive and immoderate sorrow, and all the extravagant forms of it the Gentiles ran into; who having no notion of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, had no hope of ever seeing their

friends more, but looked upon them as entirely lost, as no longer in being, and never more to be met with, seen, and enjoyed; this drove them to extravagant actions, furious transports, and downright madness; as to throw off their clothes, pluck off their hair, tear their flesh, cut themselves, and make baldness between their eyes for the dead; (see <05140>Deuteronomy 14:1) practices forbidden the Jews, and which very ill become Christians, that believe the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead: the words are to be understood not of other Christians, who have no hope of the eternal welfare of their deceased friends; not but that the sorrow of those who have a good hope of the future Well being of their dear relatives, must and ought to be greatly different from that of others, who have no hope at all: it is observed by the Jews [f26] on those words in (<01230>Genesis 23:2) and "Abraham came to mourn for Sarah", etc. that

> "it is not said to weep for Sarah, but to mourn for her; "for such a woman as this, it is not fit to weep", after her soul is joined in the bundle of life, but to mourn for her, and do her great honour at her funeral; though because it is not possible that a man should not weep for his dead, it is said at the end, "and to weep for her":"

but here the words are to be understood of the other Gentiles that were in a state of nature and unregeneracy, who had no knowledge of the resurrection of the dead, or and hope of a future state, and of enjoying their friends in it: they are called οι λοιποι, "the rest"; and the Syriac version renders it, "other men".

Ver. 14. *For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again*, etc.] As every Christian does, for both the death and resurrection of Christ are fundamental articles of faith; nothing is more certain or more comfortable, and more firmly to be believed, than that Christ died for the sins of his people, and rose again for their justification; on these depend the present peace, joy, and comfort of the saints, and their everlasting salvation and happiness: and no less certain and comfortable, and as surely to be believed, is what follows,

even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. The saints that are dead are not only represented as asleep, as before, but as "asleep in Jesus"; to distinguish them from the other dead, the wicked; for the phrase of sleeping in death is promiscuously used of good and bad, though most commonly applied to good men: and so say the Jews [f27],

> "we used to speak of just men, not as dead, but as sleeping; saying, afterwards such an one fell asleep, signifying that the death of the righteous is nothing else than a sleep."

To represent death as a sleep makes it very easy and familiar; but it is more so, when it is considered as sleeping in Jesus, in the arms of Jesus; and such as are asleep in him must needs be at rest, and in safety: some join the phrase "in", or "by Jesus", with the word bring, and read the passage thus, "them that are asleep, by Jesus will God bring with him"; intimating, that God will raise up the dead bodies of the saints by Christ, as God-man and Mediator; and through him will bring them to eternal glory, and save them by him, as he has determined: others render the words, "them which sleep through", or "by Jesus"; or die for his sake, and so restrain them to the martyrs; who they suppose only will have part in the first resurrection, and whom God will bring with Jesus at his second coming; but the coming of Christ will be "with all his saints"; (see 1 Thessalonians 3:13) wherefore they are best rendered, "them that sleep in Jesus"; that is, "in the faith of Jesus", as the Arabic version renders it: not in the lively exercise of faith on Christ, for this is not the case of all the saints at death; some of them are in the dark, and go from hence under a cloud, and yet go safe, and may be said to die, or sleep, in Jesus, and will be brought with him; but who have the principle, and hold the doctrine of faith, are, and live and die, true believers; who die interested in Christ, in union with him, being chosen and blessed, and preserved in him from everlasting, and effectually called by his grace in time, and brought to believe in him; these, both their souls and bodies, are united to Christ, and are his care and charge; and which union remains in death, and by virtue of it the bodies of the saints will be raised at the last day: so that there may be the strongest assurance, that such will God bring with him; either God the Father will bring them with his Son, or Jehovah the Son will bring them with himself; he will raise them from the dead, and unite them to their souls, or spirits, he will bring with him; the consideration of which may serve greatly to mitigate and abate sorrow for deceased friends.

Ver. 15. *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord*, etc.] The apostle having something new and extraordinary to deliver, concerning the coming of Christ, the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the saints, the change of the living saints, and the rapture both of the raised and living in the clouds to meet Christ in the air, expresses himself in this manner; either in allusion to the prophets of old, to whom the word of the Lord is said to

come, and who usually introduced their prophecies with a “Thus saith the Lord”; or in distinction from his own private sense, sentiment, and opinion of things; signifying, that what he was about to say, was not a fancy and conjecture of his own, the fruit and produce of his own brain, but what he could assert upon a sure foundation, upon the best and greatest authority, even the word of the Lord; and has respect either to some particular word of Christ, as some think, such as (40 24:30,31 40 5:28,29) or rather to a particular and peculiar revelation, and special instruction in these things, he had immediately from Christ; and it may be when he was caught up into the third heaven himself, and had an experience in himself of somewhat of that which both the living and raised saints shall feel, when they are caught up together in the clouds; since the change of the living saints, at the time of the resurrection of the dead, is a mystery which seems to have been first made known unto, and discovered by the Apostle Paul; (see 46 15:51,52).

That we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord: not that the apostle thought that he and the saints then in the flesh should live and continue till the second coming of Christ; for he did not imagine that the coming of Christ was so near, as is manifest from (52 2:1-3) though the Thessalonians might take him in this sense, which he there corrects; but he speaks of himself and others in the first person plural, by way of instance and example, for illustration sake; that supposing he and others should be then in being, the following would be the case: and moreover, he might use such a way of speaking with great propriety of other saints, and even of those unborn, and that will be on the spot when Christ shall come a second time; since all the saints make up one body, one family, one church and general assembly; so that the apostle might truly and justly say, “we which are alive”; that is, as many of our body, of our family, of our church or society, that shall be living at the coming of Christ; and he might choose the rather to speak in this form, person, and tense, to awaken the care, circumspection, diligence, and watchfulness of the saints, since it could not be known how soon the Lord would come: however, from hence it appears, that there will be saints alive at Christ's second coming; he will have a seed to serve him till he comes again; he always had in the worst of times, and will have, and that even in the last days, in the days of the son of man, which are said to be like those of Noah and of Lot: and these are said to “remain”, or to be “left”, these will be a remnant, the residue and remainder of the election of grace, and will be such as have

escaped the fury of antichrist and his followers, or of the persecutors of the saints: now these

shall not prevent them that are asleep; that is, that are dead, so the Ethiopic version; the reason why the dead are so called, see in the note on the preceding verses: the sense is, either they "shall not come up to them that are asleep, or dead", as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render the words; they shall not come into the state of the dead, they shall undergo a change equivalent to death, but not death itself; (see ⁴⁶¹⁵¹1 Corinthians 15:51,52) or rather they "shall not go before" them; they shall not get the start of them, and be in the arms of Jesus, and enjoy his presence when he comes, before the dead in Christ, which might be thought, but this will not be the case; for the dead saints will rise before the living ones are changed, and both will be caught up together to meet the Lord, as is said in the following verses; so that the one shall not come or go before the other, or come at, or into the enjoyment of Christ first, but both together.

Ver. 16. *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven*, etc.] Not by proxy, or by representatives; not by the ministry of angels, as on Mount Sinai; nor by the ministers of the word, as under the Gospel dispensation; nor by his spirit, and the discovery of his love and grace, in which sense he descends in a spiritual manner, and visits his people; but in person, in his human nature, in soul and body; in like manner as he went up to heaven will he descend from thence, so as to be visible, to be seen and heard of all: he will come down from the third heaven, whither he was carried up, into which he was received, and where he is retained until the time of the restitution of all things, and from whence the saints expect him: and this descent will be

with a shout; the word here used is observed by many to signify such a noise or shout as is made either by mariners, when they pull and row together; and shout to direct and encourage one another; or to an army with the general at the head of it, when about to undertake some considerable action, to enter on a battle, and make the onset; Christ will now appear as the King of kings, and Lord of lords, as the Judge of the whole earth, attended with the host, or armies of heaven, and the shout of a king will be among them: perhaps the same is intended, as by the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and of mighty thunderings upon the coming of Christ, the destruction of antichrist, and the marriage

of the Lamb, in (Revelation 19:1,6,7,14,15). The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions render it, “in”, or “with command”; and the Arabic version, “with his own government”, or “authority”; that is, he shall descend, either by the command of his Father, as man and Mediator, having authority from him, as the son of man, to execute judgment; or with his commanding power and authority over the mighty angels, that shall descend with him: it follows,

with the voice of the archangel; so Michael is called, in (Jude 1:9) with which compare (Revelation 12:7) and who perhaps is no other than Christ himself, who is the head of all principality and power; and the sense be, that Christ shall descend from heaven with a voice, or shall then utter such a voice, as will show him to be the archangel; or as the Syriac version renders it, “the head”, or “prince of angels”; and which whether, it will be an articulate voice, such as was expressed at the grave of Lazarus; or a violent clap of thunder, which is the voice of God; or the exertion of the power of Christ, is not certain: it is added,

and with the trump of God; called “the last trump”, (1 Corinthians 15:52) because none will be blown after it, and may be the same with the seventh trumpet, (Revelation 11:15) and here the trump of God, because blown by his order; or by Christ himself, who is God, and so be the same with the voice of the archangel; and these figurative expressions are used, to set forth the grandeur and magnificence in which Christ will come; not in that low, mean, and humble form in which he first came, but with great glory, and marks of honour and respect; with angels shouting, trumpets blowing, and saints rejoicing. This is said in allusion to the trumpet which was heard on Mount Sinai at the giving of the law, and of which the Jews say [f28], that it aytym ajam, “quickened the dead”; for they have a notion, that, when the Israelites first heard the voice of the Lord, they died; but upon hearing it the second time, they returned to life [f29]: and they suppose also in the time, to come, at the resurrection of the dead, a trumpet will be blown, which will quicken the dead [f30], and the day of judgment [f31]; and this is reckoned by them as one of the signs of the Messiah's coming [f32]:

> “Michael shall shout with a great shout, and the graves of the dead shall be opened at Jerusalem, and the holy blessed God will restore the dead to life, and Messiah the son of David shall come,” etc.

And the dead in Christ shall rise first; the same with those that are asleep in Jesus, (<5044>1 Thessalonians 4:14) not only the martyrs that died for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel; nor merely those who die in the lively exercise of faith in Christ; but all that die interested in him, and in union with him: and these shall "rise", in consequence of their being his; being given to him, made his care and charge, and engaged for by him, and in virtue of their union to him; and shall rise to an entire conformity to his glorious body, and in order to enjoy eternal life and glory with him: and these will rise "first", before the wicked, which is the first resurrection, (<6605>Revelation 20:5,6) even a thousand years before them; the righteous will rise in the morning of the resurrection, and so will have the dominion in the morning, (<9914>Psalm 49:14) even at the beginning of the thousand years, as soon as Christ will come; but the wicked will not rise till the evening of that day, or till the close of the thousand years: and this agrees with the notions of the Jews, who thought that some will rise before others;

> "Wheresoever thou findest the dead, take them and bury them, and I will give thee the first place in my resurrection." (2 Esdras 2:23)

Having mentioned those words in (<19609>Psalm 116:9) "I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living", it is asked [f33],

> "is there no land of the living but Tyre and its neighbours, and Caesarea, and its neighbours, where is cheapness and fulness? says R. Simeon ben Lekish, in the name of Bar Kaphra, the land in which the dead live, hlyjt, "first", in the days of the Messiah:"

and on the same place elsewhere [f34] they observe, that

> "our Rabbins say two things, or give two reasons, why the fathers loved to be buried in the land of Israel, because the dead in the land of Israel hlyjt µyyj, "live", or "rise first", in the days of the Messiah, and shall enjoy the years of the Messiah:"

and in another place [f35] they take notice of what is written in (<232619>Isaiah 26:19) "and the earth shall cast out the dead": says R. Jochanan,

> "the dead which are in the land (i.e. of Israel), they shall "live first"; as it is said, "thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise": these are they that are without the land; "awake

and sing ye that dwell in the dust", these are they that die in the wilderness:"

and again [f36],

"as it is said, (<230426>*Isaiah 40:26* "that bringeth out their host by numbers", come see, it is said, all that die in the land of Israel atymdqb ^wmwqy, "shall rise first", because the holy blessed God shall awake them, and raise them, according to (<232619>Isaiah 26:19)."

Once more they say [f37],

"they that study in the law as they ought, these are they that shall "rise first" to everlasting life, as it is said (<271202>Daniel 12:2), "and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life", etc. and these are for everlasting life, because they study in everlasting life, which is the law:"

to which may be added the following passage [f38],

"they that are worthy to be buried in the land of Israel, shall "be raised first" — and they shall be raised and quickened before the rest of the children of the world, who draw the waters of the law; and they draw, because they study to draw out of the waters of the law; and they are strengthened by the tree of life, and they shall go out "first", because the tree of life is the cause why they shall "rise first":"

they sometimes endeavour to fix the time, how long they will rise before the rest [f39];

""many of those that sleep", etc. these are the righteous that shall "go before" others in life, and how many years shall they go before them? R. Judah says, two hundred and ten years; R. Isaac says, two hundred and fourteen; according to others, the righteous shall go (or be raised) a year before the rest of men; says R. Nachman, it will be according to the computation (of time) that the carcass has been in the dust; R. Jose replies, if so, there will be many resurrections."

These instances may suffice to show, that the Jews had a notion of some persons rising before others, to which the apostle may have some reference; though his sense is not only this, but also that the dead in Christ

shall rise before the living saints are changed, and taken up to be with Christ, and so shall not go before to him; which illustrates and proves what he had before asserted.

Ver. 17. *Then we which are alive and remain*, etc.] (see Gill on "⁵1 Thessalonians 4:15").

shall be caught up; suddenly, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and with force and power; by the power of Christ, and by the ministry and means of the holy angels; and to which rapture will contribute, the agility which the bodies both of the raised and changed saints will have: and this rapture of the living saints will be

together with them; with the dead in Christ, that will then be raised; so that the one will not come before the other, or the one be sooner with Christ than the other; but the one being raised and the other changed, they will be joined in one company and general assembly, and be caught up together:

in the clouds; the same clouds perhaps in which Christ will come, will be let down to take them up; these will be the chariots, in which they will be carried up to him; and thus, as at our Lord's ascension a cloud received him, and in it he was carried up out of the sight of men, so at this time will all the saints ride up in the clouds of heaven:

to meet the Lord in the air; whither he will descend, and will then clear the regions of the air of Satan, and his posse of devils, which now rove about there, watching all opportunities, and taking all advantages to do mischief on earth; these shall then fall like lightning from heaven, and be bound and shut up in the bottomless pit, till the thousand years are ended: here Christ will stop, and will be visible to all, and as easily discerned by all, good and bad, as the body of the sun at noonday; as yet he will not descend on earth, because it is not fit to receive him; but when that and its works are burnt up, and it is purged and purified by fire, and become a new earth, he will descend upon it, and dwell with his saints in it: and this suggests another reason why he will stay in the air, and his saints shall meet him there, and whom he will take up with him into the third heaven, till the general conflagration and burning of the world is over, and to preserve them from it; and then shall all the elect of God descend from heaven as a bride adorned for her husband, and he with them, and the tabernacle of God shall be with men; (see ⁶Revelation 21:1-3). The resurrection by the

Mahometans is called hlla aql [f40], “a meeting of God”, or a going to meet God:

and so shall we ever be with the Lord; now the saints are with him at times, and have communion with him, but not always; but then they shall be ever with him; wherever he is; first in the air, where they shall meet him; then in the third heaven, where they shall go up with him; then on earth, where they shall descend and reign with him a thousand years; and then in the ultimate glory to all eternity: and this will be the issue and accomplishment of the counsel and covenant of grace, of the sufferings and death of Christ, and of his preparations and prayers.

Ver. 18. *Wherefore comfort one another with these words*.] Or doctrines; as that the saints, when they die, do not cease to be, but are asleep, and asleep in Jesus; that their souls are with him, and their bodies sleep in his arms, and are his care; that these will be as soon with Christ, as the saints that will be alive when he comes; that the coming of Christ will be with great power and glory; that the righteous will rise first in the morning of the resurrection, and before the living saints are changed, and are with Christ; that they will both be taken up together to meet him; and that they shall all be with him, and that for ever, and never part more; than which nothing can yield more true and solid comfort, under all the trials and troubles of this life, under all diseases and distempers of body, under all afflictions and persecutions for Christ's sake, under the loss of near and dear relations, and in a view of death and eternity: some copies read, “with these words of the spirit”; and so the Arabic version, “with these spiritual words”: for such they are, being the word of God, as in (<52045>1 Thessalonians 4:15).

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO 1 THESSALONIANS 5

In this chapter the apostle discourses concerning the suddenness of Christ's coming, and the necessity of sobriety and watchfulness, and being on our guard with respect unto it, and then proceeds to exhort to several duties of religion, and closes the epistle with prayers for the saints, salutations of them, advice unto them, and with his usual benediction. Having spoken of the coming of Christ in the preceding chapter, the apostle signifies he had no need to write of the time and season of it; since it was a well known thing that it would be sudden, and at an unawares, like the coming of a thief in the night, and the travail of a woman with child, though certain and inevitable; and would bring sure destruction on wicked men, unthought of by them, (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3) but such was the state and condition of the saints, being not in the night of nature's darkness and unregeneracy, but enlightened by the spirit of God, that they were not ignorant of these things, nor liable to be surprised unawares hereby, (1 Thessalonians 5:4,5), however, in consideration of their being in the light, and not in darkness, it became them to behave accordingly, and not indulge themselves in sleep and sloth, but be watchful and sober, and on their guard, having on their spiritual armour, (1 Thessalonians 5:6-8) and the rather, since they were not appointed to the wrath they deserved, but to salvation by Christ; whose end in dying for them was, that they might live together with him, and therefore should exhort and comfort, and edify one another, (1 Thessalonians 5:9-11) and then follow various exhortations, some, which respect their ministers, their knowledge of them, love to them, and esteem for them, on account of their dignity, office, work, and usefulness, (1 Thessalonians 5:12,13) others, which concern themselves and one another, as church members, (1 Thessalonians 5:13,14) others, which regard also them that are without, (1 Thessalonians 5:14,15) and others which relate to joy and thanksgiving, to prayer and praise; to the gifts of the spirit, and the ministry of the word; and to a trial and examination of what is good, and an abiding by it, and an abstinence from all evil, and every appearance of it, (1 Thessalonians 5:16-22) and the whole is concluded with prayers for them, for their perfect sanctification,

and entire preservation to the coming of Christ; which were put up in faith, grounded upon the faithfulness of God who had called them to grace and glory, (<52523>1 Thessalonians 5:23,24) and with a request to them to pray for him, and other ministers of the Gospel, and to salute all the brethren, (<52525>1 Thessalonians 5:25,26) and with a charge to read this letter to them all, (<52527>1 Thessalonians 5:27) and with his usual benediction, (<52528>1 Thessalonians 5:28).

Ver. 1. *But of the times and the seasons, brethren*, etc.] Of the coming of Christ, his “appointed time” and “his day”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; of the resurrection of the dead in Christ first, and of the rapture of all the saints in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, things treated of in the preceding chapter: and which might excite a curiosity to know the times and seasons of them; as in what year they would come to pass; in what season of the year, whether winter or summer; in what month, and on what day of the month; and whether in the night season, or in the daytime; and in what hour, whether at midnight, cockcrowing, morning, or noonday: to repress which the apostle observes,

ye have no need that I write unto you; to write to them concerning the things themselves was necessary and useful, to stir up and encourage their faith, hope, and expectation of them; to allay their grief for departed friends, and to comfort one another under the various trials and exercises of life; but to write to them about the time of these things would be trifling and unnecessary, would be an idle speculation, and an indulging a vain curiosity; and, besides, was impracticable: for of that day and hour knows no man; the times and seasons the Father hath put in his own power; for these things are equally true of Christ's second coming, as of the kingdom of Christ coming with power and glory, and of the destruction of Jerusalem, (<40246>Matthew 24:36 <40106>Acts 1:6,7). The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, “ye have no need that we write unto you”; the reason follows;

Ver. 2. *For yourselves know perfectly*, etc.] With great exactness and accuracy, with great clearness and perspicuity, as a certain truth, which was made plain and evident to them, and about which there could be no question; and which perfect knowledge they had, either from the words of Christ, (<40242>Matthew 24:42-44), or from the ministration of the apostle and his fellow labourers, when among them:

that the day of the Lord; of the Lord Jesus, when he will show himself to be King of kings, and Lord of lords, and the Judge of the whole earth; and which is sometimes styled the day of the Son of man, and the day of God, for Christ will appear then most gloriously, both in his divine and human nature; the day of redemption, that is, of the body from the grave, and from corruption and mortality; and the last day in which will be the resurrection of the dead, and the day of judgment, in which Christ will come to judge the quick and dead: and which

so cometh as a thief in the night; at an unawares, and the Lord himself in that day will so come, (<66003>Revelation 3:3 16:1) respect is had not to the character of the thief, nor to the end of his coming; but to the manner of it, in the dark, indiscernibly, suddenly, and when not thought of and looked for; and such will be the coming of Christ, it will be sudden, and unknown before hand, and when least thought of and expected: and since the Thessalonians knew this full well, it was needless for the apostle to write about the time and season of it; which they were sensible of, could no more be known and fixed, than the coming of a thief into anyone of their houses.

Ver. 3. *For when they shall say*, etc.] Or men shall say, that is, wicked and ungodly men, persons in a state of unregeneracy:

peace and safety; when they shall sing a requiem, to themselves, promise themselves much ease and peace for years to come, and imagine their persons and property to be very secure from enemies and oppressors, and shall flatter themselves with much and long temporal happiness:

then sudden destruction cometh upon them; as on the men of the old world in the times of Noah, and on the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah in the days of Lot; for as these, will be the days of the Son of man, as at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, so at the last day; (see <42726>Luke 17:26-30) and as was the destruction of literal Babylon, so of Babylon in a mystical sense, or antichrist and his followers: and which will be

as travail upon a woman with child; whose anguish and pains are very sharp, the cause of which is within herself, and which come suddenly upon her, and are unavoidable; and so the metaphor expresses the sharpness and severity of the destruction of the wicked, thus the calamities on the Jewish nation are expressed by a word which signifies the sorrows, pangs, and birth throes of a woman in travail, (<40248>Matthew 24:8), and likewise that the cause of it is from themselves, their own sins and transgressions; and

also the suddenness of it, which will come upon them in the midst of all their mirth, jollity, and security; and moreover, the inevitableness of it, it will certainly come at the full and appointed time, though that is not known:

and they shall not escape; the righteous judgment of God, the wrath of the Lamb, or falling into his hands; to escape is impossible, rocks, hills, and mountains will not cover and hide them; before the judgment seat of Christ they must stand, and into everlasting punishment must they go.

Ver. 4. *But ye, brethren, are not in darkness*, etc.] In a state of unregeneracy, which is a state of darkness, blindness, and ignorance, and which is the condition of all men by nature; they are born in darkness, and are brought up in it, and willingly, walk in it; they are covered with it, as the earth was covered with darkness in its first creation; and dwell in it, as the Egyptians did for some days, in thick darkness, darkness which might be felt; their understandings are darkened with respect to the true knowledge of God, the nature of sin, the way of salvation by Christ, the work of the spirit of God upon the soul, and the necessity of it, the Scriptures of truth, and the mysteries of the Gospel; and which is the case of God's elect themselves, while unregenerate: but now these persons were called out of darkness, turned from it, and delivered from the power of it; and therefore knew that the day of the Lord comes as above described, by the metaphors of a thief in the night, and a woman with child, and needed not to be informed about that matter: or

that that day should overtake you as a thief; or seize and lay hold upon you as a thief who comes in the dark, and lays hold upon a person suddenly; but these saints were not in the dark, but in the light, and so could see when the day of the Lord came; and would not be surprised with it, as a man is seized with terror and fright, when laid hold on by a thief; since they would be, or at least should be on their watch, and be looking out for, and hasting to the coming of the day of God.

Ver. 5. *Ye are all children of light*, etc.] Or enlightened persons, whose understandings were enlightened by the spirit of God, to see their lost state by nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the insufficiency of their righteousness to justify them before God, the fulness, suitableness, and excellency of Christ's righteousness, the way of salvation by Christ, and that it is all of grace from first to last; to understand in some measure the Scriptures of truth, and the mysteries of the Gospel; to have knowledge of

some things that are yet to be done on earth, as the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles, the conversion of the Jews, the destruction of antichrist, the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the change of living saints, and the rapture of both up into the air to meet Christ, the burning of the world, and the new heavens and new earth, where Christ and his saints will dwell; as also to have some glimpse of the heavenly glory, of the unseen joys, and invisible realities of the other world: and this the apostle says of them all, in a judgment of charity, as being under a profession of the grace of God, and in a church state, and nothing appearing against them why such a character did not belong to them:

and the children of the day; of the Gospel day, in distinction from the night of Jewish darkness; and of the day of grace which was come upon their souls, in opposition to the night of ignorance and infidelity, which was past; and of the everlasting day of glory, being heirs of, and having a right unto, and a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light:

we are not of the night, nor of darkness; that is not the children of darkness, as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; and the former changes the person, and reads, “ye are not the children of the night”, etc. of the night of the legal dispensation, or of Gentile ignorance; or of a state of natural darkness, in unregeneracy and was no need to write unto them concerning the time and season of Christ's coming, and lays a foundation for the following exhortations.

Ver. 6. *Therefore let us not sleep as do others* etc.] As the rest of the Gentiles, as unconverted persons, who are in a state of darkness, and are children of the night; let us not act that part they do, or be like them; which professors of religion too much are, when they indulge themselves in carnal lusts and pleasures, and are careless and thoughtless about the coming of the day of the Lord; and get into a stupid, drowsy, and slumbering frame of spirit; when grace lies dormant as if it was not, and they grow backward to, and slothful in the discharge of duty, and content themselves with the bare externals of religion; and become lukewarm and indifferent with respect to the truths and ordinance of the Gospel, the cause of God, the interest of religion, and glory of Christ; and are unconcerned about sins of omission or commission: and are willing to continue in such a position, being displeased at every admonition and exhortation given them to awake; but this is very unbecoming children of the light, and of the day:

but let us watch; over ourselves, our hearts, thoughts, affections, words and actions; and over others, our fellow Christians, that they give not into bad principles and evil practices; and against sin, and all appearance of it; against the temptations of Satan, the snares of the world, and the errors of wicked men, who lie in wait to deceive; and in the word and ordinances, and particularly in prayer, both unto it, in it, and after it; and for the second coming of Christ, with faith, affection, and patience; and the rather, because of the uncertainty of the time of it;

and be sober; not only in body, abstaining from excessive eating and drinking, using this world, and the good things of it, so as not to abuse them, or ourselves with them; but also in mind, that the heart be overcharged with the cares of this world; for men may be inebriated with the world, as well as with wine; and the one is as prejudicial to the soul as the other is to the body; for an immoderate care for, and pursuit after the world, chokes the word, makes it unfruitful, and runs persons into divers snares and temptations, and hurtful lusts. The Arabic version renders it, "let us repent"; and the Ethiopic version, "let us understand"; as intending the sobriety of the mind, repentance being an after thought of the mind, a serious reflection on past actions with sorrow and concern; and thinking soberly, and not more highly than a man ought to think of himself, his gifts, his attainments and abilities, in opposition to pride, vanity, and self-conceit, is very becoming; and shows a true and well informed understanding and judgment, and that a man is really sober and himself.

Ver. 7. *For they that sleep, sleep in the night*, etc.] The night is the usual season for sleep, and sleep is only for such who are in darkness, and are children of the night; and not proper to be indulged by such who are children of the day, and of the light:

and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night; drunkenness is a work of darkness, and therefore men given to excessive drinking love darkness rather than light, and choose the night for their purpose. To be drunk at noon is so shameful and scandalous, that men who love the sin, and indulge themselves in it, take the night season for it; and equally shameful it is, that enlightened persons should be inebriated, either with the cares of this life, or with an over weening opinion of themselves.

Ver. 8. *But let us, who are of the day, be sober*, etc.] As in body, so in mind; let us cast off the works of darkness, and have no fellowship with them; since the day of grace has passed upon us, the darkness is gone, and

the true light shines, let us walk as children of the light, living soberly, righteously, and godly:

putting on the breastplate of faith and love; this is the coat of mail, (<09I7O5>1 Samuel 17:5,38) which was made of iron or brass; and the Ethiopic version here calls it, “the iron coat.” The allusion seems to be to the high priest's breastplate of judgment, in which were put the Thummim and Urim, which signify perfections and lights; faith may answer to the former, and love to the latter: these two graces go together, faith works by love, and love always accompanies faith; as there can be no true faith where there is no love, so there is no true love where faith is wanting: “faith” is a considerable part of the Christian soldier's breastplate, and answers the end of a breastplate, it being that grace which preserves the vitals of religion, and keeps all warm and comfortable within; and secures the peace and joy of the saints, as it has to do with Christ and his righteousness; wherefore this breastplate is called “the breastplate of righteousness”, (<490614>Ephesians 6:14), it fortifies the soul, and preserves it from Satan's temptations, from his fiery darts entering, and doing the mischief they would; it defends the heart against the errors of the wicked, for a man that believes has a witness in himself to the truths of the Gospel, and therefore cannot be easily moved from them; and strengthens a man against the carnal reasonings of the mind, for faith in the promises of God surmounts all the difficulties that reason objects to the fulfilling of them; and secures from the fears of death, the terrors of the law, and dread of the wrath of God: and love is the other part of the breast plate; love to God and Christ is a means of keeping the believer sound both in faith and practice; for a soul that truly loves God and Christ cannot give in to principles that depreciate the grace of God, and derogate from the glory and dignity of the person and office of Christ, or the work of the Spirit; and such love the ordinances and commands of Christ, and hate every false way of worship, or invention of men; and love to the saints is the bond of perfectness, knits them together, preserves unity and peace, and fortifies against the common enemy:

and for an helmet, the hope of salvation; the helmet is that part of armour which covers the head, and was made of brass, (<09I7O5>1 Samuel 17:5,38) and used to be anointed with oil, that it might shine the brighter, last the longer, and more easily repel blows; to which this grace of the Spirit, hope of salvation by Christ, is fitly compared: for by “salvation” is meant salvation by Christ, spiritual salvation, and that as complete in heaven; and hope is a grace wrought in the soul by the spirit of God, which has for its foundation

Christ and his righteousness, and for its object the heavenly glory; it covers the head in the day of battle, and preserves from being overcome by sin and Satan, when one that is destitute of it says there is no hope, and we will walk every man after the imagination of his own evil heart; it erects the head in time of difficulty, amidst tribulation and afflictions; it defends it from fears of divine wrath which is revealed from heaven, and sometimes in appearance seems to hang over it; and it preserves from Satan's temptations, and being carried away with the error of the wicked, from the hope of the Gospel: and thus a Christian clothed and armed with these graces, faith, hope, and love, should be so far from indulging himself in sin and sloth, that he ought always to be sober and watchful, and prepared to meet the enemy in the gate; and be ready, always waiting for his Lord's coming.

Ver. 9. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath*, etc.] To destruction and ruin, the effect of wrath; though there are some that are vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, of old ordained to condemnation, and who are reserved for the day of evil; but there are others who are equally children of wrath, as deserving of the wrath of God in themselves as others, who are not appointed to it; which is an instance of wonderful and distinguishing grace to them:

but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ; salvation is alone by Christ, he alone has wrought it out; it is in him, and in no other; he was appointed to this work, was called and sent, and came to do it, and has done it; and God's elect, who were chosen in him, are appointed in the counsel and purpose of God, to obtain, possess, and enjoy this salvation; and which, as this appointment may be known, as it was by these Thessalonians; the Gospel having come to them, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as it is an encouragement to faith and hope, so it excites to sobriety and watchfulness, and the discharge of every duty. The doctrine of predestination does not lead to despair, but encourages the hope of salvation; and it is no licentious doctrine, for election to salvation by Christ is through sanctification of the Spirit, and unto holiness; and good works are the fruits of it, and are what God has foreordained his people should walk in.

Ver. 10. *Who died for us*, etc.] The elect of God, who are not appointed to wrath, but to salvation by Christ, on which account he died for them; not

merely as a martyr to confirm his doctrine, or only by way of example, but as a surety, in the room and stead of his people; as a sacrifice for their sins, to make atonement for them, and save them from them; so that his death lays a solid foundation for hope of salvation by him:

that whether we wake or sleep: which phrases are to be understood, not in the same sense in which they are used in the context; as if the sense was, whether a man indulges himself in sin, and gives way to sleep and sloth, and carnal security, or whether he is awake and on his watch and guard, he shall through the death of Christ have eternal life secured to him; not but that there is a truth in this, that eternal life and salvation by Christ, as it does not depend on our watchfulness, so it shall not be hindered by the sleepy, drowsy frame of spirit, the children of God sometimes fall into: but rather natural sleep and waking are intended; and the meaning is, that those for whom Christ died are always safe, sleeping or waking, whatever they are about and employed in, and in whatsoever situation and condition they are in this world; though it may be best of all to interpret the words, of life and death; and they may have a particular regard to the state of the saints at Christ's second coming, when some will be awake, or alive, and others will be asleep in Christ, or dead; and it matters not which they are, whether living or dead; (see Romans 14:7-9) for the end of Christ's dying for them, and which will be answered in one as well as in another, is, that

we should live together with him: Christ died for his people, who were dead in trespasses and sins, that they might live spiritually a life of sanctification from him, and a life of justification on him, and by him; and that they might live a life of communion with him; and that they might live eternally with him, in soul and body, in heaven, and reign with him there, and partake of his glory; and this all the saints will, whether they be found dead or alive at his coming; for the dead will immediately arise, those that sleep in the dust will awake at once, and they that are alive will be changed, and both will be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and be for ever with him: now the consideration of the death of Christ, and this end of it, which will certainly be answered, serves greatly to encourage hope of salvation by him, and faith in him, and an earnest expectation of his second coming.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore comfort yourselves together*, etc.] Either with the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, the second coming of Christ, and the thoughts of being for ever with him, and one another, and so may be a

repetition of the advice in (⁵²1 Thessalonians 4:18) or with this consideration, that they were not in a state of darkness, ignorance, and infidelity, but were children of the light, and of the day, being called out of darkness into marvellous light, and should enjoy the light of life; and with the doctrine of predestination, they being appointed not to that wrath they were deserving of, but to be possessed of salvation by Jesus Christ, of which they could never fail, since the purpose of God according to election always stands sure, not upon the foot of works, but upon his own sovereign and unchangeable grace; or with the doctrine of Christ's sufferings and death, in their room and stead, whereby the law was fulfilled, justice satisfied, their sins atoned for, pardon procured, an everlasting righteousness brought in, and their salvation fully accomplished, things the apostle had spoken of in the context: the words will bear to be rendered, “exhort one another”; that is, not to sleep, as do others, or indulge themselves in sin and sloth; but to be sober, and upon their watch and guard, and in a posture of defence against the enemy; to put on the whole armour of God, and particularly the plate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation:

and edify one another; by praying together, conversing with each other about the doctrines of the Gospel, and the dealings of God with their souls; abstaining from all corrupt communication, which has a tendency to hurt each other's principles or practices, or to stir up wrath and contention; attending only to those things which are for the use of edifying, whereby their souls might be more and more built upon Christ, and their most holy faith; and be a rising edifice, and grow up unto an holy temple in the Lord, and for an habitation of God through the Spirit:

even as also ye do; which is said in their commendation, and not through flattery, but to encourage them to go on in this way; and from whence it may be observed, that mutual consolation, exhortation, and edification, are things the saints should be stirred up to frequently, even though they are regarded by them, and much more then should these be pressed upon them who are careless and negligent of them.

Ver. 12. *And we beseech you, brethren*, etc.] Not in a natural or civil, but spiritual relation; and what follows relating to the ministers of the word, the apostle addresses this church on their behalf, not in an imperious and authoritative manner, but by way of entreaty, with great humility and strong affection:

know them that labour among you; who were not non-residents, but were upon the spot with them; and where indeed should pastors be, but with their flocks? and husbandmen and vinedressers, but in their fields and vineyards? and stewards, but in the families where they are placed? and parents, but with their children? nor were they loiterers in the vineyard, or slothful servants, and idle shepherds, but labourers; who laboured in the word and doctrine; gave up themselves to meditation, reading, and prayer; laboured hard in private, to find out the meaning of the word of God; and studied to show themselves workmen, that need not be ashamed; and preached the word in season and out of season; faithfully dispensed all ordinances, and diligently performed the duties of their office; and were willing to spend and be spent, for the glory of Christ, and the good of souls, and earnestly contended for the faith of the Gospel; and all this they did, as among them, so for them, for their spiritual good and welfare: some render the words, "in you"; they laboured in teaching, instructing, and admonishing them; they laboured to enlighten their understandings, to inform their judgments, to raise their affections, and to bring their wills to a resignation to the will of God; to refresh their memories with Gospel truths; to strengthen their faith, encourage their hope, and draw out their love to God and Christ, and the brethren: and what the apostle directs them to, as their duty towards these persons, is to "know" them; that is, not to learn their names, and know their persons, who they were; for they could not but know them in this sense, since they dwelt and laboured among them, and were continually employed in instructing them; but that they would make themselves known to them, and converse freely and familiarly with them, that so they might know the state of their souls, and be better able to speak a word in season to them; and that they would take notice of them, show respect to them, and an affection for them; acknowledge them as their pastors, and account of them as stewards of the mysteries of God, and own them as ministers of Christ; and reckon them as blessings to them, and acknowledge the same with thankfulness; and obey them, and submit unto them in the ministry of the word and ordinances, and to their counsel and advice, so far as is agreeable to the word of God: the Arabic version renders it, "that ye may know the dignity of them that labour among you"; and so conduct and behave towards them accordingly:

and are over you in the Lord; are set in the highest place in the church, and bear the highest office there; have the presidency and government in it, and go before the saints, and guide and direct them in matters both of doctrine

and practice, being ensamples to the flock; the Syriac version renders it, “and stand before you”; ministering unto you in holy things, being servants to you for Jesus' sake: and this “in the Lord”; or by the Lord; for they did not take this honour to themselves, nor were they appointed by men, but they were made able ministers of the word by God; received their gifts qualifying them for this work from Christ, and were placed as overseers of the church by the Holy Ghost: and it was only in things pertaining to the Lord that they were over them; not in things civil, which distinguishes them from civil magistrates; nor in things secular and worldly, they had nothing to do in their families, to preside there, or with their worldly concerns, only in the church of Christ, and in things pertaining to their spiritual welfare; and though they were over them, yet under Christ, and in subjection to him, as their Lord and King; governing not in an arbitrary and tyrannical way, lording it over God's heritage, usurping a dominion over the faith of men, coining new doctrines, and making new laws; but according to the word of God, and laws of Christ, in the fear of the Lord, and with a view to the glory of God, and in love to souls: hence the Arabic version renders it, in the love of the Lord; the phrase, “in the Lord”, is omitted in the Syriac version:

and admonish you; or instruct you, put into your minds good and wholesome things, and put you in mind of the doctrines of the Gospel, of the duties of religion, of former experiences; and give warning of sin and danger, and reprove and rebuke with faithfulness; and as the case requires, either in public or private, and with sharpness or tenderness.

Ver. 13. *And to esteem them very highly*, etc.] Or, as the Ethiopic version renders it, “honour them abundantly”; for such are worthy of double honour, and to be had in reputation; they should be honourably thought of, and be high in the affections of the saints, who should esteem them better than themselves, or others in the community; and should be spoke well of, and their characters vindicated from the reproach and obloquy of others; and should be spoke respectfully to, and be honourably done by; should be provided for with an honourable maintenance, which is part of the double honour due to them in (⁵⁴1 Timothy 5:17,18) and this should be

in love; not in fear, nor in hypocrisy and dissimulation; not in word and in tongue only, but from the heart and real affection: the Syriac version renders it, “that they be esteemed by you with more abundant love”; with an increasing love, or with greater love than is shown to the brethren in

common, or to private members: and that for their works' sake; for the sake of the work of the ministry, which is a good work as well as honourable; is beneficial to the souls of men, and is for the glory of God, being diligently and faithfully performed by them; on which account they are to be valued, and not for an empty title without labour.

And be at peace among yourselves. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “with them”; and so the Syriac version, connecting the former clause with this, “for their works' sake have peace with them”; that is, with the ministers of the word; do not disagree with them upon every trivial occasion, or make them offenders for a word; keep up a good understanding, and cultivate love and friendship with them; “embrace them with brotherly love”, as the Ethiopic version renders the words, understanding them also as relating to ministers; a difference with them is of bad consequence, and must render their ministry greatly useless and unprofitable to those who differ with them, as well as render them very uncomfortable and unfit for it. The Arabic version renders it, “in yourselves”; as referring to internal peace in their own souls, which they should be concerned for; and which only is attained to, enjoyed, and preserved, by looking to the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ: or else it may regard peace among themselves, and with one another as brethren, and as members of the same church; which as it is for their credit and reputation without doors, and for their comfort, delight, and pleasure within, in their church state and fellowship, so it tends to make the ministers of the Gospel more easy and comfortable in their work: thus the words, considered in this sense, have still a relation to them.

Ver. 14. *Now we exhort you, brethren*, etc.] This is said either to the ministers of the word that laboured among them, presided over them, and admonished them; and the rather, because some of these things here directed to are pressed upon the members of the church in (1 Thessalonians 5:11) and which otherwise must make a repetition here; or to the members in conjunction with their pastors:

warn them that are unruly; or disorderly, idle persons, working not at all, busying themselves with other men's matters, and living upon the church's stock, reprove them for their sloth, exhort them to work with their own hands, to do their own business, and with quietness eat their own bread; or such who keep not their places in the church, but are like soldiers that go out of their rank, desert their companies, and fly from their colours, or stand aside, rebuke these, and exhort them to fill up their places, to abide

by the church, and the ordinances of Christ; or such who are contentious and quarrelsome, turbulent, headstrong, and unruly, that cause and foment animosities and divisions, check them, admonish them, lay them under censure, for such a custom and practice is not to be allowed of in the churches of Christ.

Comfort the feebleminded: such as are not able to bear the loss of near and dear relations; are ready to stagger under the cross, and at the reproaches and persecutions of the world; and are almost overset with the temptations of Satan; and are borne down and discouraged with the corruptions of their hearts, speak a comfortable word to them, encourage them with the doctrines of grace, and the promises of the Gospel.

Support the weak; who are weak in faith and knowledge, strengthen them, hold them up; or as the Syriac version renders it, "take the burden of the weak" and carry it, bear their infirmities, as directed in (Romans 15:1),

be patient towards all men; towards the unruly, the feebleminded, and the weak as well as to believers; give place to wrath, and leave vengeance to him to whom it belongs; exercise longsuffering and forbearance with fellow creatures and fellow Christians.

Ver. 15. *See that none render evil for evil unto any man*, etc.] Not an ill word for an ill word, railing for railing, nor an ill action for an ill action; no, not to any man whatever, not to an enemy, a persecutor, a profane person, as well as not to a brother, a believer in Christ; and this the saints should not only be careful of, and guard against in themselves, but should watch over one another, and see to it, that no such practice is found in each other.

But ever follow that which is good; honestly, morally, pleasantly, and profitably good; even every good work, which is according to the will of God, is done in faith, from love, and to the glory of God; and particularly acts of beneficence and liberality to the poor; and which are not to be once, or now and then done, but to be followed and pursued after, and that always;

both among yourselves, and to all men; not only to the household of faith, though to them especially, and in the first place, but to all other men, as opportunity offers, even to our enemies, and them that persecute us, and despitefully use us; do good to their bodies, and to their souls, as much as in you lies, by feeding and clothing the one, and by praying for, advising, and instructing the other.

Ver. 16. *Rejoice evermore*.] Not in a carnal, but in a spiritual way, with joy in the Holy Ghost; and which arises from a view of pardon by the blood of Christ, of justification by his righteousness, and atonement by his sacrifice; not in themselves, as the wicked man rejoices in his wickedness, and the hypocrite and formalist in his profession of religion, and the reputation he gains by it; and the Pharisee and legalist in his morality, civility, negative holiness, and obedience to the rituals of the law; for such rejoice in their boastings, and all such rejoicing is evil; but in the Lord Jesus Christ, in the greatness, fitness, fulness, and glory of his person, in his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, in what he is in himself, and is made unto his people, and in what he has done, and is still doing for them, and particularly in the salvation he has wrought out; and not in the things of this life, and the attainments of it, either of body, or of mind, or of estate, as in strength, wisdom, or riches; but in things spiritual, that our names are written in heaven, and we are redeemed by the blood of Christ, and called by his grace, and shall be glorified together with him; and not only in prosperity, but in adversity, since all things work together for good, and afflictions serve for the exercise of grace; and especially, since to suffer reproach and persecution for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel, is a great honour, and the Spirit of God, and of glory, rests on such, and great will be their reward in heaven: and there is always reason, and ever a firm ground and foundation for rejoicing with believers, let their circumstances or their frames be what they will; since God, their covenant God, is unchangeable, and his love to them is from everlasting to everlasting invariably the same; the covenant of grace, which is ordered in all things, and sure, is firm and immovable; and Jesus, the Mediator of it, is the same today, yesterday, and for ever.

Ver. 17. *Pray without ceasing*.] Not that saints should be always on their knees, or ever lifting up their hands, and vocally calling upon God; this is not required of them, and would clash with, and break in upon other parts of religious worship, and the duties of civil life, which are to be attended to, as well as this, and besides would be impracticable; for however willing a spiritual man might be to be engaged in this work always, yet the flesh is weak, and would not be able to bear it; and it requires food and drink, sleep and rest, for its refreshment and support; for all which there must be time allowed, as well as for other actions of animal life, and the business of a man's calling. But the meaning is, that believers should be daily, and often found in the performance of this duty; for as their wants daily return upon

them, and they are called to fresh service, and further trials and exercises, they have need of more grace, strength, and assistance, and therefore should daily pray for it; and besides certain times both in the closet, and in the family, in which they should attend the throne of grace, there is such a thing as mental prayer, praying in the heart, private ejaculations of the soul, which may be sent up to heaven, while a man is engaged in the affairs of life. The Ethiopic version renders the words, “pray frequently”; do not leave off praying, or cease from it through the prevalence of sin, the temptations of Satan, or through discouragement, because an answer is not immediately had, or through carelessness and negligence, but continue in it, and be often at it; (see <2Luke 18:1-8). These words are opposed to the practice of such, who either pray not at all, or, having used it, have left it off, or who only pray in a time of trouble and distress, and bear hard on those who think they should not pray but when under the influences of the Spirit, and when his graces are in a lively exercise: the reason for this rule of praying with frequency and constancy is, because the saints are always needy, they are always in want of mercies of one kind or another, and therefore should continually go to the throne of grace, and there ask for grace and mercy to help them in time of need.

Ver. 18. *In everything give thanks*, etc.] That is, to God the Father, in the name of Christ; (see <4Ephesians 5:20) thanks are to be given to him for all things, as the Ethiopic version renders it; for all temporal good things; for our beings, the preservation of them; for food and raiment, and all the mercies of life; for the means of grace, the word and ordinances, and the ministers of the Gospel; for spiritual blessings, for electing, redeeming, regenerating, adopting, pardoning, justifying, and persevering grace: for a meetness for heaven, a right unto it, and a good hope of it; and especially for Jesus Christ, for such an husband, such an head, such a surety and Saviour, and advocate with the Father, as he is; and for life, peace, joy, comfort, righteousness, and salvation in him: and thanks should be given to God in every circumstance of life; in adversity, as Job did; when not in so comfortable and agreeable a frame of soul as to be wished for, since it might be worse, and is not black despair; even under the temptations of Satan, since they might be greater and heavier, and since the grace of God is sufficient to bear up under them, and deliver out of them, and since there is such a sympathizing high priest and Saviour; and in afflictions of every kind, since they are all for good, temporal, or spiritual, or eternal.

For this is the will of God; which may refer either to all that is said from (51 51 1 Thessalonians 5:11) to this passage, or particularly to this of giving thanks; which is the revealed and declared will of God, is a part of that good, perfect, and acceptable will of his, and what is well pleasing in his sight, and grateful to him; (see 19 69 30,31 Psalm 69:30,31) and is

in Christ Jesus concerning you; either declared in and by him, who has made known the whole of the will of God, and so the Arabic version, "which he wills of you by Jesus Christ"; or which is exemplified in Christ, who for, and in all things, gave thanks to God, and had his will resigned to his in every circumstance of life; or, which being done, is acceptable to God through Christ. The Alexandrian copy reads, "for this is the will of God towards you in Christ Jesus"; that is, with respect to you who are in Christ secretly by election, and openly by the effectual calling; and who, of all men in the world, have reason to be thankful for everything, and in every circumstance.

Ver. 19. *Quench not the spirit*.] By which is meant, not the person of the Spirit, but either the graces of the spirit, which may be compared to light, and fire, and heat, to which the allusion is in the text; such as faith, which is a light in the soul, a seeing of the Son, and an evidence of things not seen; and love, which gives a vehement flame, which many waters cannot quench; and zeal, which is the boiling up of love, the fervency of it; and spiritual knowledge, which is also light, and of an increasing nature, and are all graces of the spirit: and though these cannot be totally extinguished, and utterly put out and lost, yet they may be greatly damped; the light of faith may become dim; and the flame of love be abated, and that wax cold; the heat of zeal may pass into lukewarmness, and an indifference of spirit; and the light of knowledge seem to decline instead of increasing; and all through indulging some sin or sins, by keeping ill company, and by neglecting the ordinances of God, prayer, preaching, and other institutions of the Gospel; wherefore such an exhortation is necessary to quicken saints, and stir them up to the use of those means, whereby those graces are cherished and preserved in their lively exercise; though rather the gifts of the Spirit are intended. The extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, bestowed on the apostles at the day of Pentecost, are represented under the symbol of fire, to which perhaps the apostle may here have respect; and the more ordinary gifts of the Spirit are such as are to be stirred up, as coals of fire are stirred up, in order that they may burn, and shine the brighter, and give both light and heat, (55 06 2 Timothy 1:6) and which may be said to be

quenched, when they are neglected, and lie by as useless; when they are wrapped up in a napkin, or hid in the earth; or when men are restrained from the use of them; or when the use of them is not attended to, or is brought into contempt, and the exercise of them rendered useless and unprofitable, as much as in them lies. And even private persons may quench the Spirit of God, his gifts of light and knowledge, when they hold the truth in unrighteousness, imprison it, and conceal it, and do not publicly profess it as they ought.

Ver. 20. *Despise not prophesyings*.] Or “prophecies”; the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the first coming of Christ, concerning his person, office, and work, his obedience, sufferings, and death, his resurrection from the dead, ascension and session at God's right hand; for though all these are fulfilled, yet they have still their usefulness; for by comparing these with facts, the perfections of God, his omniscience, truth, faithfulness, wisdom, etc. are demonstrated, the authority of the Scriptures established, the truths of the Gospel illustrated and confirmed, and faith strengthened; and besides, there are many prophecies which regard things to be done, and yet to be done under the Gospel dispensation, and therefore should not be set at nought, but highly valued and esteemed: also the predictions of Christ concerning his own sufferings and death, and resurrection from the dead, and what would befall his disciples afterwards, with many things relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, his second coming, and the end of the world, these should be had in great esteem; nor should what the apostles foretold concerning the rise of antichrist, the man of sin, and the apostasy of the latter days, and the whole book of the Revelations, which is no other than a prophecy of the state of the church, from the times of the apostles to the end of the world, be treated with neglect and contempt, but should be seriously considered, and diligently searched and inquired into. Yea, the prophecies of private men, such as Agabus, and others, in the apostle's time, and in later ages, are not to be slighted; though instances of this kind are rare in our times, and things of this nature should not be precipitantly, and without care, given into: but rather prophesyings here intend the explanation of Scripture, and the preaching of the word, and particularly by persons who had not the gift of tongues, and therefore men were apt to despise them; (see <460102>1 Corinthians 13:2 14:1,3-5,24,31). Just as in our days, if persons have not had a liberal education, and do not understand Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, though they have ministerial gifts, and are capable of explaining the word

to edification and comfort, yet are set at nought and rejected, which should not be.

Ver. 21. *Prove all things*, etc.] That are said by the prophets, all the doctrines which they deliver; hear them, though they have not the gift of tongues, and all desirable advantages; do not reject them on that account, and refuse to hear them, for so, many useful men may be laid aside, and the Spirit of God in them be quenched; try their gifts, and attend to their doctrines, yet do not implicitly believe everything they say, but examine them according to the word of God the test and standard of truth; search the Scriptures, whether the things they say are true or not. Not openly erroneous persons, and known heretics, are to be heard and attended on, but the ministers of the word, or such who are said to have a gift of prophesying; these should make use of it, and the church should try and judge their gift, and accordingly encourage or discourage; and also their doctrines, and if false reject them, and if true receive them.

Hold fast that which is good; honest, pleasant, profitable, and agreeable to sound doctrine, to the analogy of faith, and the Scriptures of truth, and is useful and edifying, instructive both as to principle and practice; such should be held fast, that no man take it away; and be retained, though a majority may be against it, for the multitude is not always on the side of truth; and though it may be rejected by men of learning and wealth, as Christ and his doctrines were rejected by the Scribes and Pharisees, and rulers of the people; and though it may be reproached as a novel, upstart notion, or a licentious one, since these were charges against the doctrine of Christ, and his apostles; and though it may be attended with affliction and persecution, yet none of these things should move from it, or cause to let it go.

Ver. 22. *Abstain from all appearance of evil*.] Of doctrinal evil. Not only open error and heresy are to be avoided, but what has any show of it, or looks like it, or carries in it a suspicion of it, or may be an occasion thereof, or lead unto it; wherefore all new words and phrases of this kind should be shunned, and the form of sound words held fast; and so of all practical evil, not only from sin itself, and all sorts of sin, lesser or greater, as the [f41] Jews have a saying,

> “take care of a light as of a heavy commandment,”

that is, take care of committing a lesser, as a greater sin, and from the first motions of sin; but from every occasion of it, and what leads unto it, and has the appearance of it, or may be suspected of others to be sin, and so give offence, and be a matter of scandal. The Jews have a saying very agreeable to this [f42],

> "remove thyself afar off (or abstain) from filthiness, and from everything, wl hmwdh, "that is like unto it"."

Ver. 23. *And the very God of peace*, etc.] Or "the God of peace himself". The apostle follows his exhortations with prayer to God, knowing the weakness and impotency of the saints to receive them, and act according to them, and his own insufficiency to impress their minds with them; and that unless the Lord opened their ears to discipline, and sealed instruction to them, they would be useless and in vain: wherefore he applies to the throne of grace, and addresses God as "the God of peace"; so called, because of the concern he has in peace and reconciliation made by the blood of Christ, and because he is the giver of peace of conscience, and the author of peace, concord, and unity among the saints, and of all happiness and prosperity, both in this world, and in that which is to come; (see Gill on "Romans 15:33"). And the apostle might choose to address God under this character, partly to encourage boldness, freedom, and intrepidity at the throne of grace, and partly to raise hope, expectation, and faith of having his requests answered, since God is not an angry God, nor is fury in him, but the God of peace: and the petitions he puts up for the Thessalonians are as follow: and first, that God would

sanctify you wholly; or "all of you", as the Arabic version; or "all of you perfectly", as the Syriac version. These persons were sanctified by the Spirit of God, but not perfectly; the Gospel was come to them in power, and had wrought effectually in them, and they were turned from idols to serve the living God, and had true faith, hope, and love, implanted in them, and which they were enabled to exercise in a very comfortable and commendable manner; but yet this work of grace and sanctification begun in them was far from being perfect, nor is it in the best of saints. There is something lacking in the faith of the greatest believer, love often waxes cold, and hope is not lively at all times, and knowledge is but in part; sin dwells in all; the saints are poor and needy, their wants continually return upon them, and they need daily supplies; the most holy and knowing among them disclaim perfection in themselves, though desirous of it. Their

sanctification in Christ is perfect, but not in themselves; there is indeed a perfection of parts in internal sanctification, every grace is implanted, there is not one wanting; the new creature, or new man, has all its parts, though these are not come to their full growth; there is not a perfection of degrees, and this is what the apostle prays for; for sanctification is a progressive, gradual work, it is like seed cast into the earth, which springs up, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear, and is as light, which shines more and more to the perfect day. Sanctified persons are first as newborn babes, and then they grow up to be young men, and at last become fathers in Christ; and this work being begun, is carried on, and will be performed, fulfilled, and made perfect: and it is God's work to do it; he begins, and he carries it on, and he will finish it; and therefore the apostle prays to him to do it; this is his first petition: the second follows,

and I pray God your whole spirit, soul and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. A like division of man is made by the Jews: says one of their writers [f43]

> "a man cannot know God, unless he knows wpwgw wtmçnw wçpn, "his soul, his breath, or his spirit, and his body"."

Says [f44] R. Isaac,

> "worthy are the righteous in this world, and in the world to come, for lo, they are all holy; their body is holy, their soul is holy, their spirit, and their breath is holy"

(See Gill on "<30042>Hebrews 4:12"). Some by "spirit" understand the graces and gifts of the Spirit in a regenerate man; and by "the soul", the soul as regenerated, and as it is the seat and subject of these graces; and by the body, the habitation of the soul, which is influenced by the grace that is last; and this is a sense not to be despised. Others by "the spirit" understand the rational and immortal soul of man, often called a spirit, as in (<21207>Ecclesiastes 12:7) and by the soul, the animal and sensitive soul, which man has in common with brutes; (see <21021>Ecclesiastes 3:21) and by the "body", the outward frame of flesh and blood, and bones; but rather "spirit" and "soul" design the same immaterial, immortal, and rational soul of man, considered in its different powers and faculties. The "spirit" may intend the understanding, (<18208>Job 32:8) which is the principal, leading, and governing faculty of the soul; and which being enlightened by the Spirit of God, a man knows himself, Christ Jesus, and the things of the Spirit, the

truths of the Gospel, and receives and values them. The “soul” may include the will and affections, which are influenced by the understanding; and in a regenerate man the will is brought to a resignation to the will of God, and the affections are set upon divine things, and the body is the instrument of performing religious and spiritual exercises: and these the apostle prays may be

preserved blameless; not that he thought they could be kept from sinning entirely in thought, word, or deed; but that they might be preserved in purity and chastity from the gross enormities of life, and be kept from a total and final falling away, the work of grace be at last completed on the soul and spirit, and the body be raised in incorruption, and glory; and both at the coming of Christ be presented faultless, and without blame, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, first to himself, and then to his Father.

Ver. 24. *Faithful is he that calleth you*, etc.] Into the fellowship of his Son, and to his kingdom and glory, and who continues to do so, not only externally by his word, but internally by his Spirit and grace.

Who also will do it. Two things the apostle mentions as the ground of confidence that the above petition, would be heard and answered; that is, that God would wholly sanctify them, and preserve the whole of them blameless to the coming of Christ; and they are the faithfulness of God, and the effectual calling of his saints. God is faithful to his word, his covenant and promises; he has promised to sanctify and cleanse his people from all their sins, and to preserve them safe to his kingdom and glory; agreeably the Arabic version renders this last clause, “and will execute his promise”: and the effectual calling is a sure pledge of glorification; whom God calls he justifies and glorifies; as sure as he gives grace, he will give glory; and whom he calls to his eternal glory, he will make perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle. The Complutensian edition reads, “who also will make your hope firm”; that is, with respect to the above things.

Ver. 25. *Brethren, pray for us*.] Which is added with great beauty and propriety, after the apostle had so earnestly and affectionately prayed for them; and this is directed, not to the pastors of the church only, but to all the members of it, whom the apostle styles “brethren” in a spiritual relation, as he often does; and of whom he requests, that they would pray for him, and the rest of his fellow ministers and labourers in the word, that God would more and more qualify and fit them for their work, assist in private studies and meditations, give them freedom of thought, liberty of

expression, and a door of utterance, and follow their ministrations with a divine blessing and success, and deliver them out of the hands of unreasonable men; (see Gill on “<53>Hebrews 13:18”).

Ver. 26. *Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss*.] In opposition, to an unchaste and hypocritical one. His meaning is, that they would salute the members of the church in his name, and give his Christian love and affections to them. And his view is to recommend to them brotherly love to each other, and to stir them up to the mutual exercise of it more and more.

Ver. 27. *I charge you by the Lord*, etc.] Or “I adjure by the Lord”; by the Lord Jesus: it is in the form of an oath, and a very solemn one; and shows that oaths may be used on certain and solemn occasions:

that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren; to all the members of the church, who are called “holy”, because they were sanctified or set apart by God the Father in election; and were sanctified by the blood of Christ, or their sins were expiated, or atoned for by the sacrifice of Christ in redemption; and were sanctified or made holy by the Spirit of God in regeneration; and were enabled by the grace of God to live holy lives and conversations. Now this epistle being directed only to some of the principal members of the church, it may be to one or more of their elders; lest he or they should be tempted on any account to conceal it, the apostle in a very solemn manner adjures, that it be read publicly to the whole church whom it concerned, that all might hear, and learn, and receive some advantage from it; from whence we may learn, as is observed by many interpreters, that the sacred Scriptures, neither one part nor another, nor the whole of them, are to be kept from private Christians, but may be read, and heard, and used by all.

Ver. 28. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, Amen*.] This is the apostle's usual salutation in all his epistles, and the token of the genuineness of them, (<53017>2 Thessalonians 3:17,18). (See Gill on “<45160>Romans 16:20”), (see Gill on “<46152>1 Corinthians 15:23”), (see Gill on “<47314>2 Corinthians 13:14”).

The subscription to this epistle is not genuine, which runs thus, “The first Epistle unto the Thessalonians was written from Athens”; whereas it appears from (<53001>1 Thessalonians 3:1,6) compared with (<44801>Acts 18:1,5) that it was written from Corinth, and not from Athens; nor are these last words, “from Athens”, in Beza's Claromontane copy; though they stand in

the Syriac and Arabic versions of the London Polygot Bible, which add, “and sent by Timothy”, and in the Alexandrian copy, and Complutensian edition.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Nat. Hist. 50:4. c. 10.

Ft2 -- Ptolom. 50:3. c. 13.

Ft3 -- Strabe, 50:7.

Ft4 -- Gutherlothus de mysteriis Deor. Cabirorum, c. 15. p. 94, 95. Jul. Firmicus. de errore prof. relig. p. 18.

Ft5 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 10. 2.

Ft6 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 30. 2, 3.

Ft7 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 59. 1. Maimon. Hilchot Melachim, c. 10. sect. 9.

Ft8 -- Maimon. in Hilch. Chobel, c. 5. sect. 10.

Ft9 -- Misna Sota. c. 9. sect. 14.

Ft10 -- Maimon. in Misna Sota, & in Sabbat, c. 6. sect. 1.

Ft11 -- Ez Hechaim M. S. apud Wagenseil in Sota ib.

Ft12 -- Bartenora in Misna Sota, c. 9. sect. 14.

Ft13 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 49. 2.

Ft14 -- Maimon. Hilch. Mechira, c. 7. sect. 8, 9.

Ft15 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol 22. 2.

Ft16 -- Juchasin, fol. 48. 2. Shalsheleth Hakkabala, fol. 23. 1.

Ft17 -- Misna Cetubot, c. 3. sect. 4, 5.

Ft18 -- Jarchi & Bartenora in ib.

Ft19 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 7. 2. & 15. 2.

Ft20 -- Maimon. in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 4.

Ft21 -- Maimon. Hilch Deyot, c. 5. sect. 4.

Ft22 -- Caphtor, fol. 57. 2.

Ft23 -- Misna Sanhedrim, c. 9. sect. 1.

Ft24 -- Misna Maccot, c. 3. sect. 1.

Ft25 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 32. 2.

Ft26 -- Tzeror Hamnaor, fol. 23. 4.

Ft27 -- Shebet Juda, p. 294. Ed. Gent.

Ft28 -- Targum Jon. in (02018)Exodus 20:18.

Ft29 -- Kettoreth Hassamamim in ib.

Ft30 -- Mechilta in ib. & Abarbinel, Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 11. 4.

Ft31 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 42. 2. 4.

Ft32 -- Abkath Rocel, p. 138. Ed. Huls.

Ft33 -- T. Hieros. Kilaim, fol. 32. 3. & Cetubot, fol. 35. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 74. fol. 65. 1.

Ft34 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 96. fol. 83. 4. & 84. 1. & Shemot Rabba, sect. 32. fol. 135. 2.

Ft35 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 68. 4.

Ft36 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 79. 3.

Ft37 -- lb. fol. 100. 3.

Ft38 -- Ib. fol. 103. 1.

Ft39 -- Ib. fol. 83. 1.

Ft40 -- Alkoran, Surat. 6. 5:31. p. 113. Ed. Hinckelman.

Ft41 -- Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 1.

Ft42 -- Apud Drusium in loc.

Ft43 -- Aben Ezra in (02318)Exodus 31:18.

Ft44 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 29. 2.

2 THESSALONIANS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 2 THESSALONIANS

This second epistle was written, not from Athens, as the subscription testifies, nor from Rome, as Athanasius [f1] supposes; but from Corinth, from whence was sent the former, and where the apostle and Timothy, and Silvanus met; and which was sent about half a year after the other. The design of which is to comfort and support the Thessalonians under the afflictions and persecutions they endured for the sake of the Gospel; and to rectify a mistake they had gone into, and which might be occasioned by what the apostle had said in his former epistle, concerning the second coming of Christ, as though it was just at hand; which might lead them to neglect their worldly business, and duties of civil life, and give the enemies of the Gospel an advantage against the whole of it as false, should not this prove true; as also to exhort this church to take notice of disorderly persons such as were idle, and busy bodies, and withdraw from them, and remove them from their communion, as being not only burdensome to them, but a reproach to their profession.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO 2 THESSALONIANS 1

This chapter, besides the inscription and salutation, contains a thanksgiving for the flourishing condition in which the graces of the Spirit were in these saints, and consolation for them under their suffering circumstances. The inscription and salutation are in (53001 2 Thessalonians 1:1,2) and are as usual: the thanksgiving is in (53003 2 Thessalonians 1:3) for the growth of their faith, the abounding of their love, and their constant patience under persecutions and afflictions, insomuch that the apostle also gloried of them for these things among other churches, (53004 2 Thessalonians 1:4) and as an encouragement to them to continue patient under sufferings, he observes that this was a token of the righteous judgment of God, and that they were reckoned worthy of his kingdom for which they suffered, (53005 2 Thessalonians 1:5) and of which righteous judgment they might be assured, from the nature of God himself, whose justice required a retribution of vengeance to their persecutors, and rest to them with the apostles, (53006 2 Thessalonians 1:6,7) the time of which rest and ease is pointed at, as that it will be at the coming of Christ; which is described by the place from whence he comes, heaven; by his retinue, his mighty angels; by the manner in which he shall come, in flaming fire; and by the vengeance he will execute: the objects of which are also described, by their ignorance of God, and by their disobedience to the Gospel of Christ; and by the nature of the punishment inflicted on them, which will lie in an expulsion from the presence, power, and glory of God, and in an everlasting destruction of soul and body, (53007 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9) but as for them, the persecuted saints, and which is mentioned for their comfort, Christ shall at this day be glorified and admired in them, and by them, (53010 2 Thessalonians 1:10) wherefore the apostle prays for this perseverance of them, that the good work of faith might be performed in them, and they enjoy the glory they were called unto; and that Christ might be glorified in them, and they in him; not according to their works, but according to the grace of God through him, (53011 2 Thessalonians 1:11).

Ver. 1. *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus*, &c.] (See Gill on "<5001>1 Thessalonians 1:1").

Ver. 2. *Grace be unto you, and peace*, &c.] (See Gill on "<4501>Romans 1:7").

Ver. 3. *We are bound to thank God*, &c.] Since all blessings, temporal and spiritual, come from him: and that always: seeing he is ever giving out fresh favours, or continuing former ones; and because those, especially which are of a spiritual nature, always abide, such as faith and love; which the apostle particularly takes notice of, the members of this Church had, and were increasing in them: for it was not for himself, but for them he gives thanks,

for you, brethren: who were so, not in a natural or civil relation, but in a spiritual one, being the children of God, and brethren of Christ; and to do this for them, he looked upon himself with others under an obligation:

as it is meet; just, proper, and fitting; it not only becomes the persons who have received mercies from God to be thankful for them; but it is very right for others to join with them in it, and especially the ministers of the Gospel, who are bound, and whom it becomes: it is agreeable to their office and profession to give God the praise and glory of all the grace, and the increase of it, which those, who attend their labours, are favoured with, since this is not of them, but of God; and it was for an increase of grace the apostle here gives thanks, as he judged he was obliged to do, and it was fit he should.

Because that your faith groweth exceedingly. Their faith was not a faith of miracles, nor a mere historical faith, or a counterfeit and temporary one, but the faith of God's elect; which is the evidence of things not seen, of an unseen Christ, and the glories of another world; that grace by which a man goes out of himself to Christ for righteousness, life, and salvation; by which he is justified, and by which he lives on Christ, and walks on in him as he has received him. This was theirs; it was not of themselves, the produce of nature, or the fruit of their natural power and free will; but it was the gift of God, and of his operation; a fruit of the Spirit of God, and of which Christ was the author and finisher; and was only theirs, as being given unto them, implanted in them, and exercised by them under the influence of the Spirit of God, and for their use, comfort, and advantage. This was, at first, but like a grain of mustard seed, very small, but gradually increased, and grew exceedingly; and from seeing of Christ, and looking at him, and which at

first might be very dim and obscure, it proceeded to going or coming to him; and which might be in a very feeble manner, and was not without being drawn and led, and great encouragements, many invitations, and large assurances; and from thence to a laying hold upon him, though it may be but in a trembling way, and not without being called to stretch forth the hand of faith, and be no more faithless, but believing; and from thence to a leaning and relying on him, trusting in him with all, and for all; and from thence to claiming an interest in him, saying, my Lord, and my God, which is the full assurance of faith; and when it is come to this, it is grown exceedingly, which might be the case of these Thessalonians; which the apostle knew by the aboundings of their love, for faith works by love; and by their patience, firmness, and resolution in suffering for Christ; all which are in proportion to faith, and the growth of it; and for this he gives thanks to God, for faith is a precious thing; and as that itself, so the increase of it is from God, and therefore to him the praise belongs:

and the charity of everyone of you towards each other aboundeth; as their faith in Christ, so their love to one another was increasing, and showed itself in serving one another both in temporals and spirituals; and this was not the case of a few only, or of the greater part, but of everyone of them; which made their communion with one another very comfortable and delightful. For what is more pleasant than for brethren to dwell together in unity?

Ver. 4. *So that we ourselves glory in you*, &c.] Or “of you”; for though they were the subject concerning which, yet not the object in which they gloried; the apostle elsewhere advises not to glory in men, but only in the Lord; nor was this his practice contrary to his advice, for he did not boast of these persons with respect to their carnal things; he did not glory in their flesh, nor in their riches, nor wisdom, nor strength, nor any external gift; he gloried indeed of their graces, and of the exercise and increase of them; but of these not as of themselves, or as owing to him, and his fellow ministers, but as instances of the grace of God, and for which he gives thanks to him: and besides, he did not glory of these in the presence of God, in whose presence none should glory, but

in the churches of God; the other churches in Macedonia and Achaia, as Philippi, Berea, Corinth, &c. he gave thanks to God for them, and gloried of them before men, or among the saints, to the glory of the grace of God in them, and in order to stir up other churches to an emulation and

imitation of them. And the particulars he gloried of them for were as follow,

for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: many and sore were the reproaches, the afflictions, and persecutions that befell them for the sake of Christ, and their profession of him, and his Gospel; and which is more or less the case of everyone that will live godly in Christ Jesus: and these they endured, they bore and stood up under, they were not shocked, and staggered, and moved from the hope of the Gospel by them; which shows that the truth of grace was in them; for where there is not the root of the matter, when tribulation and affliction arise because of the profession of the word, such are offended, stumbled, and quickly gone; but these saints endured their afflictions, and with great patience, without murmuring and repining, and with great constancy, firmness, and resolution of mind. They stood fast in the grace and doctrine of faith, and in the profession of both, which they held without wavering, and none of the things they met with could move them from it. The apostle had mentioned their faith before, and he takes notice of it again, because their patience, constancy, and perseverance in sufferings, arose from it; for the trying of faith works patience, (⁵⁹James 1:3). The Ethiopic version leaves out the word “faith”, but very wrongly.

Ver. 5. *Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God*, &c.] That is, according as some think, that God should glorify those that are persecuted, and punish their persecutors: this sense indeed may seem to agree with what follows; but the apostle is speaking not of something future, but of something present; not of what God will do hereafter, but of the present sufferings of the saints. According to others the sense is, that God's suffering affliction and persecution to befall his own people, as a chastisement of them, that they may not be condemned with the world, is an evidence of his strict justice, that he will not suffer sin in any to go unobserved by him; and is a manifest token how severely and righteously he will punish the wicked hereafter, (see ⁶⁰1 Peter 4:17,18). But rather the meaning of the words is this, that whereas good men are afflicted and persecuted in this life, they have now their evil things, and bad men prosper and flourish, and have their good things, so that justice does not seem to take place; which seeming inequality in Providence has been sometimes the hardening of wicked men, and the staggering of the righteous, which should not be; this is now a manifest token, and a clear case, that there will be a righteous judgment, in which things will be set aright, and justice will

take place; for God is neither unrighteous nor careless, or negligent; and this is observed to support the saints under their sufferings, and to animate them to bear them patiently:

that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer; either of the Gospel, which is sometimes so called, and for which they suffered, and so judged themselves worthy of it; as those that put it away from them, and care not to suffer the least reproach for it, show themselves to be unworthy of it, and of eternal life also: or of a Gospel church state, and a name, and a place in it, for which the people of God likewise suffer; and those who shun reproach and sufferings for it are not worthy to have a place, or their names there: or rather of the heavenly glory; for the hope of which saints suffer much here, whereby their graces are tried, and so they are counted worthy, not by way of merit of it, but meetness for it; many tribulations are the way, or at least lie in the way to this kingdom. In the school of afflictions the saints are trained up for it; and though these are not worthy to be compared with their future happiness, yet they work for them an eternal weight of glory; by the means of these the graces of the Spirit of God are exercised and increased, their hearts are weaned from the world; and coming up out of great tribulations, they wash their garments, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, and are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light.

Ver. 6. *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God*, &c.] That which is righteous in itself, is righteous in the sight of God, but it is not always so with men; men may think it a righteous thing that they should be rewarded for persecuting the followers of Christ, supposing they hereby do God good service; but on the contrary, with God, and in his sight and account, it is a righteous thing, or a point of justice,

to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you: persecution is an affliction, or a trouble to the saints; persecutors trouble them in their minds and bodies, in their persons and property; they trouble their minds by casting reflections and reproaches upon them, by severe revilings, and cruel mockings, which all are not alike able to bear; and they trouble and afflict their bodies by imprisonment and bonds, by scourging and beating, and various cruel and torturing deaths; and they disturb them in the possession of their estates, by spoiling their goods, and confiscating them to their own use; and it is but according to “lex talionis”, the law of retaliation, to render tribulation to such troublers of God's Israel; and to them it is

recompensed, either in this world, or in the world to come: sometimes in this world persecutors are manifest instances of God's judgments and wrath upon them, as Herod, who stretched out his hands to vex certain of the church, killed James the brother of John, and imprisoned Peter, and was smitten by the angel of the Lord, and was eaten of worms; and the Jews, who were now the only and the implacable persecutors of the saints, in a short time had the wrath of God come upon them to the uttermost, even upon their nation, city, and temple, upon their persons and property. And if not in this life, it is a certain thing that hereafter such shall have indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish; they shall be cast into outward darkness, into the lake of fire; and the hottest place in hell will be their portion, even devouring flames, and everlasting burnings; and are what is designed by tribulations here.

Ver. 7. *And to you who are troubled, rest with us*, &c.] This is another branch of the justice of God, in rendering to them who are afflicted and persecuted for righteousness sake, “rest”; a relaxation or rest from persecutions, for a while at least; as the churches of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had, from that persecution raised at the death of Stephen, (<4409:31>Acts 9:31) and as the Christians had at the destruction of Jerusalem; which though it was a day of vengeance to the unbelieving Jews, were times of refreshing to the saints, who were now delivered from their persecutors: or rather this designs a rest which remains for the saints after death in the grave, and at the coming of the Lord, and to all eternity; when they shall rest from all their toil and labour, and be freed from sin, and all disquietude by it, and from the temptations of Satan, and likewise from the persecutions of men; (see <1807:17>Job 3:17). And this will be enjoyed in company with the apostles, and other believers; and as it is some alleviation to the sufferings and afflictions of saints now, that the same are accomplished in others, so it will enhance the heavenly glory, rest, and felicity, that they will be partners and sharers in it with the apostles of Christ Jesus, and have the same crown of glory they have; and indeed their company and conversation will be a part of their happiness.

When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven; then will the justice of God take place in both the above branches and instances of it, rendering tribulation to persecutors, and rest to the persecuted. Christ, ever since a cloud received him out of the sight of the apostles up to heaven, has been, as it were, hid, and has not been seen with corporeal eyes by men on earth ever since, but by a very few, as Stephen, and the Apostle Paul; he has only

been seen by an eye of faith; at his second coming there will be a revelation of him, and every eye shall see him: and this revelation of him will be “from heaven”: thither he was received at his ascension, and there he now is; and here he is received, and will be retained until the end of all things; and from hence the saints expect him, and from hence will he descend in person, and then he will be revealed, and appear to the view of everyone: and that

with his mighty angels; which will add to the glory, majesty, and solemnity of that appearance: these are called his angels, because he is the Creator of them, and the object of their worship and adoration, and he is the Lord and head of them, and they are ministering spirits to him and his; and “mighty” angels, because they excel all other creatures in strength; a remarkable instance of the might and strength of angels is in (<12195>2 Kings 19:35). The words from the original text may be rendered, “with the angels of his power”; as they are by the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, for they will be the ministers of the power of Christ in gathering the elect from the four winds, and all nations, before Christ; and in taking out of his kingdom all that offend, and do iniquity; and in severing the righteous from the wicked; and in casting the latter into the furnace of fire. The Syriac version reads the words, “with the power of his angels”.

Ver. 8. *In flaming fire*, &c.] Which may either refer to Christ, who will be revealed from heaven in such a manner; and whose coming will be as the lightning, not only sudden, but glorious, illustrious, and visible; he will be seen and easily discerned; there will be such a light and flaming fire about him, which, as it will serve to make him visible, will greatly add to the majesty of his appearance, and strike terror to his enemies, and burn them up round about; (see <270707>Daniel 7:7,9,10 <197803>Psalm 97:3,4) or else it may refer to the angels, who shall descend in fiery forms, which is agreeably to their nature, (<190404>Psalm 104:4) and so they appeared in the forms of horses of fire, and chariots of fire, when Elijah was carried up to heaven. And it is a tradition of the Jews [f2], that the angel Gabriel descended açad abwhlçb, “in a flame of fire”, to burn Moses, as he was in the inn, when upon his journey from Midian to Egypt: or this clause may be read in construction with the following, as it is in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, “in flaming fire taking vengeance”; and so expresses the manner in which vengeance will be taken on the wicked by Christ, the Judge of all, to whom it belongs: and the punishment of ungodly men is often signified by fire, and flames of fire, by the fire of hell, and a lake which burns with

fire and brimstone, by a furnace of fire, everlasting fire, and fire that cannot be quenched, to set forth the endless torture and inconceivable misery of the damned; and it may be, some regard is had to the general conflagration, which will be at the coming of Christ, when the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and all that is in it, shall be burnt up, when the bodies of the wicked, then living, will be consumed in flames of fire, and their souls feel the wrath of the Almighty. The persons who will then be punished, and on whom vengeance will be taken, are described as follows,

on them that know not God; which is a periphrasis, or common character of the Gentiles, (⁵20051 Thessalonians 4:5) who know not the one, true, and living God; or know him not so as to glorify him as God, and be thankful to him for the mercies they receive from him, and still less know him in Christ Jesus; which ignorance of theirs is not without sin, nor will it excuse from punishment; for though vengeance will not be taken on them, because they have not a spiritual saving knowledge of God, in the Mediator Jesus Christ, who never was revealed to them; yet forasmuch as they had the light and law of nature, by which the being of God, and the invisible perfections of his nature might be seen and understood, and much of his will, with respect to moral good and evil, be known, against both which they have rebelled, and having sinned, will perish without law: though it may also include all such persons, who having been favoured with an external revelation, have professed to know God, and yet in works have denied him:

and that obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; of which Christ is the author, was the preacher, and is the sum and substance; which is good news and glad tidings of the grace of, God, of peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation by Christ; which may be said to be obeyed, when it is received and embraced by faith, with and from the heart, and confession is made of it with the mouth, and the ordinances of it are submitted to; and which is called the obedience of faith, because faith without obedience is not right, and obedience without faith is of no avail: but all that hear the Gospel do not obey it; there are some that disbelieve and reject the doctrines and ordinances of it, and others that, do profess it, and do not yield a cordial and cheerful obedience to it; both may be reckoned among the disobeyers of it: and though the unbelieving Jews may be chiefly designed here, yet deists of every age and place, where the Gospel revelation has come, and carnal professors, and profane despisers

everywhere, may be included; whose condemnation will be aggravated by the external light which has shone around them, and they have hated; the severest punishment will be inflicted on them; it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah, than for such persons; (see <4Q47>1 Peter 4:17).

Ver. 9. *Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction*, &c.] With destruction both of soul and body, though not with the annihilation of either; their gnawing worm of conscience will never die, and the fire of divine wrath will never be quenched; the smoke of their torment will ascend for ever. Sin being committed against an infinite and eternal Being, will be infinite in its duration; nor will it cease to be in the persons punished, who will not be in the least reformed or purged from sin by punishment; which will make the continuance of it just and necessary. And these will be driven

from the presence of the Lord; as the former clause may express the punishment of sense the wicked will feel in their own breasts, this may intend the punishment of loss; or what they will be deprived of, the presence of the Lord, in which the happiness of angels, and of glorified saints lies; and may also signify how sudden and terrible their destruction will be. As soon as the Lord appears, they will perish at his presence like wax before the fire; and so awful will be his appearance, they will flee from it with the utmost terror, and call to the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of the Lord, and to screen them from his wrath:

and from the glory of his power; or his glorious power, in which he shall come, and which will be exerted, and shown in raising the dead, and gathering all nations before him, in passing sentence on them, and in executing it. For he has power, as to save, so to destroy, as to glorify the bodies and souls of his saints, so to destroy the wicked, both body and soul, in hell; and the glory of his power will be seen in the one, as well as in the other. And now it will be, that tribulation will be rendered to the troublers of the Lord's people.

Ver. 10. *When he shall come to be glorified in his saints*, &c.] Or by them who are set apart for holiness and happiness by God the Father; whose sins are expiated by the blood and sacrifice of Christ; to whom he is made sanctification; and who are sanctified by the Spirit and grace of God; and in whom Christ has a peculiar interest, through his Father's gift, his own purchase, and the power of his grace: and when he comes a second time he

will be glorified in these persons; he will appear glorious to them; he will come in his own glory both as God and man; and in his Father's glory, authority, and majesty, conferred on him as the Judge of the whole earth; and with the glory of his angels, who will accompany him. And he will also bestow a glory on them; their souls will be endowed with perfect knowledge and holiness; and their bodies will be made like to his glorious body; and both will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father; and this glory on the members of Christ will redound to the glory of him their head. And as he will then, in the most full and clear manner, display the glory of his person and perfections, of his wisdom, power, faithfulness, and goodness, set off the glory of his offices, and, the administration of them, and open the riches both of his grace and glory to them; so they will, in return, ascribe honour, praise, and glory, to him, and give him the glory of their salvation to all eternity:

and to be admired in all them that believe; who are the same with the saints; these are convertible terms; for no man can be a saint, unless he is a believer in Christ, let him make what pretensions to holiness he will: and no man can be a true believer in Christ, unless he is a saint; for true faith works by love, and in a way of holiness; and in those, or by those that are sanctified by faith in him, will he be admired when he appears a second time. He is admired by them now; he is with them the chiefest among ten thousands, and altogether lovely: they wonder at the glory and beauty of his person, and the fulness of his grace; and are amazed that such as they are should be admitted to communion with him; and how much more will they wonder, when they shall see him as he is? and he will be admired by others on the account of them, when they shall see those that they have despised, and persecuted, and accounted as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things, received into the arms of Jesus with all the expressions of tenderness and love; placed at his right hand, and set down with him on his throne, clothed with white robes, and crowns on their head, and palms in their hands: and he himself will be admired with them, when they shall see him whom they took to be a mere man, and who was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs, and was loaded with reproach and ignominy, and at last suffered a shameful death, coming in the clouds of heaven in power and great glory as the Judge of quick and dead; thus will he be admired by them, in them, and with them.

(Because our testimony among you was believed) in that day; the phrase, “in that day”, belongs to all that goes before, as that Christ shall take

vengeance on wicked men, and they shall be punished by him, and he shall be glorified and admired in and by his people in that day, when he shall be revealed from heaven, and come to judge both quick and dead. Though some versions read it in construction with the clause immediately preceding, “because our testimony among you was believed in that day”; or concerning that day; that is, you gave credit to the testimony we bore, when among you, concerning this illustrious day of the Lord; or our testimony, the ministry of the word by us, in which we bore a testimony to the person and grace of Christ, to his first, and to his second coming, was received and embraced by you with a view to this day, and to the enjoyment of the glory of it. The Arabic version renders it, “for our testimony will be true in that day”; that is, it will appear to be so, everything we have said will be accomplished then. The Syriac version is very remote, “that our testimony concerning you may be believed in that day”: but it is best to read this clause in a parenthesis, as in our version; which is an application of what is said to the Thessalonians, who might conclude, that since they had embraced the testimony of the Lord Jesus, borne unto him by his apostles, they would be found among the number of the saints and believers, in whom Christ would be glorified and admired; the consideration of which might animate and encourage them to endure afflictions and persecutions with patience, and to hold out to the end, and at last enjoy the heavenly glory, for which the apostle next prays.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore also we pray always for you*, &c.] Not only observe the above things to your comfort, to support you under sufferings, but we add our prayers, and not only now, but always, that you may be among them in whom Christ will be glorified and admired; in order to which we most sincerely pray,

that our God would count you worthy of this calling. The Syriac version reads, “your calling”, as in (<4012601>1 Corinthians 1:26). The Vulgate Latin reads, “his own calling”, meaning their effectual calling. This is indeed of God, and not of man; and is owing, not to any previous worthiness in man, as appears from the instances of Matthew the publican, Zacchaeus, the Apostle Paul, the Corinthians, and others, but entirely to the free grace of God, who counts them worthy, not for any worthiness there is in them; but “vouchsafes”, as the word may be rendered, this blessing of grace, their effectual calling, of his own good will and pleasure: but this cannot be meant here, because these persons were partakers of that grace, God had called them to his kingdom and glory; unless the sense of the petition is,

that God would cause them to walk worthy of the calling with which they were called, which becoming walk is owing to the grace of God: or else the meaning may be, that God would grant unto them perseverance in the grace, by and to which they were called, that so they might enjoy eternal glory; which though certain, should be prayed for by saints, both for themselves and others: the words may be rendered, “that our God would count you worthy of the call”; of the call of Christ when he shall be revealed from heaven, and come a second time; for then will he first call the saints out of their graves, as he did Lazarus, and they shall hear his all powerful voice, and come forth to the resurrection of life, the first and better resurrection, which those that have part in will be secure from the second death; this the apostle was desirous of attaining to himself, and prays that God would vouchsafe it to others; of this Job speaks in (<18145>Job 14:15). And next Christ will call the righteous, when raised and set at his right hand, to inherit the kingdom and glory prepared by his Father for them; and happy are those who by the grace of God will be counted worthy of this call or rather by calling here is meant, the ultimate glory itself, which the saints are called unto; this God gives a right unto in the justifying righteousness of his Son, and makes meet for by his own grace; and the thing itself is a free grace gift of his through Jesus Christ. In this sense calling seems to be used in (<490404>Ephesians 4:4) and to this agrees the Ethiopic version here, “that God may impart unto you that to which he hath called you”; and that is eternal glory, which though certainly and inseparably connected with the effectual calling, may, and should be prayed for:

and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness; not providential, but special goodness; not the good pleasure of his strict justice in the condemning of the wicked, denying his grace to them, and hiding from them the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, which is a part of his good pleasure, even of the good pleasure of his righteousness; but this is the good pleasure of his grace and kindness in Christ Jesus, and intends the whole of his gracious designs towards his people: and to express the free, rich, sovereign grace of God in them, the apostle uses a variety of words, calling them “his pleasure”, “his good pleasure”; and, as if this was not enough, “the good pleasure of his goodness”; and desires that all of it might be fulfilled; it consisting of many things, some of which were fulfilled, and others remained to be fulfilled. It consists of the choice of persons in Christ, and the predestination of them to the adoption of

children, which is according to the good pleasure of the will of God; the redemption of them by Christ, in which are displayed the exceeding riches of his grace; the free justification of them by the righteousness of Christ; the full pardon of all their sins, and their adoption into the household of God, and their regeneration, of rich grace, and abundant mercy; all these instances of the good pleasure of divine goodness were fulfilled in these persons; what remained were the carrying on and finishing the work of grace upon their souls, and their enjoyment of the heavenly glory: and for the former, in order to the latter, the apostle prays in the next clause,

and the work of faith with power; faith is not only an operative grace, (see Gill on "1 Thessalonians 1:3") and is attended with good works; but it is a work itself, not of man's, for he cannot produce it in himself, nor exercise it of himself; but it is the work of God, of his operation which he works in his people; it has not only God for its object, and therefore the Arabic version reads, "the work of faith on him"; but it has God for its author: and this now, though it had grown exceedingly in these believers, was not as yet fulfilled or perfect; something was still lacking in it; wherefore the apostle prays that he who was the author would be the finisher of it: and this will be done "with power"; not of man's, for this work is neither begun, nor carried on, nor will it be finished by the might and power of men; but the same hands which laid the foundation of it, raise it up, carry it on, and give the finishing stroke to it; it is done by the power of God, and so the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, "by his own power": which is greatly displayed in the production of faith at first; for a poor sensible sinner, in a view of all his sins, and the just deserts of them, to venture his soul on Christ alone for salvation; for a man to go out of himself and renounce his own righteousness, and trust to the righteousness of Christ for his justification before God, and acceptance with him, is owing to the exceeding greatness of God's power to them that believe; and the same power is seen in enabling faith to do the things it does; (see Hebrews 11:1) and in encouraging, supporting, and maintaining it under the most difficult circumstances, as in the case of Abraham; and to make it stand fast under the severest persecutions, and at the hour of death, and in the view of an awful eternity, when it receives its full completion.

Ver. 12. *That the name of the Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you*, &c.] This is the end of the apostle's prayer, and which is answered by the fulfilment of the things prayed for; as the name of Christ and his Gospel are dishonoured, by the unbelief, cowardice and the unworthy walk of

professors; so they are glorified in and by the saints, by their faith, patience, and good works in this world; which not only themselves adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, but cause others to glorify him likewise; and Christ will be glorified in them hereafter, by the glory which will be conferred upon them, and which will reflect glory upon him; when all the gracious designs of God are accomplished on them and the work of faith is finished in them; for should not these be completed, Christ would lose the glory of redemption and salvation, which by means of these will be given by the saints to him to all eternity:

and ye in him; that is, that ye may be glorified; the saints are now glorified in him as their head and representative, being raised together and made to sit together in heavenly places in him; and when the work of grace is finished upon their souls, they will be glorified together with him and by him; and in the resurrection morn shall appear in glory with him both in soul and body, and shall be made like him, and everlastingly enjoy him and see him as he is; the Alexandrian copy reads and us "in him"; and all this will be as it is wished for, "according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ"; according to the grace and free favour of God in election, and of Jesus Christ in, redemption, and of the blessed Spirit in sanctification; for election, redemption, calling, justification, pardon, adoption, and the whole of salvation from first to last are of grace and not of works; and according to this, all these things must be prayed for the application of, and must be expected only on such a foot; and to this must all be ascribed, the glory of which is the ultimate end of God, in all he has done, does, or will do for his people.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO 2 THESSALONIANS 2

In this chapter the apostle guards against a notion, as if the second coming of Christ was at hand; declares that, previous to it, there must be a great apostasy, and a revelation of antichrist; comforts the saints against fears of being included in this defection; exhorts them to stand fast in the faith, and closes this chapter with petitions for them. He entreats them in a most tender and solemn manner not to imagine that the day of Christ was at hand, and that they would not be disturbed and moved at it; and points unto the several ways, and cautions against them, they might be imposed upon and deceived by men with respect to it, (2 Thessalonians 2:1,2) and assigns his reasons why it could not be yet, because before this time there was to be a general apostasy, and antichrist must appear; whom from his character, he calls the man of sin, and from his end, the son of perdition; and describes him as an opposer of God, an exalter of himself above all that is called God, as sitting in the temple of God and declaring himself to be God, (2 Thessalonians 2:3,4) of which things he had told them before, (2 Thessalonians 2:5) nor were they ignorant of what at present hindered the revelation of the man of sin, who was then in being, and was working and growing up apace; only there was something (the Roman empire) which hindered, and would continue to do so, until the fixed time of his revelation was up, (2 Thessalonians 2:6,7) when be should be manifest; though he should not always continue, being to be consumed and destroyed by the breath of Christ's mouth, and the splendour of his coming, (2 Thessalonians 2:8) and the appearance of antichrist in the world, being a matter of considerable importance, it is described by being after the working of Satan, and as attended with lying and false miracles, and with all deceitful and unrighteous doctrines and practices; which reprobate men would be left to give into, as a punishment of their not receiving cordially the truth of the Gospel; upon which account God would give them to such judicial blindness, as to give credit to a lie, which would bring on their final damnation, they not believing the truth, but taking pleasure in unrighteousness, (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12), but lest this account of things should be discouraging to the saints at Thessalonica,

the apostle styles them brethren; asserts them to be the beloved of the Lord; gives an instance of it, for which he gives thanks, namely, their election of God; the date of which was from everlasting; the means sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; the end salvation by Jesus Christ; and the evidence of which was their effectual calling by the Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of Christ, (⁵³⁰¹³2 Thessalonians 2:13,14) and then he exhorts them to stand fast in the doctrines that had been taught them, either in an epistolary way, or by the ministry of the word, (⁵³⁰¹⁵2 Thessalonians 2:15) and concludes the chapter with petitions for them made to God the Father, and to Christ who had loved and comforted them, and given them good hope of everlasting things; that they might be comforted more and more, and be established in every good doctrine and practice, (⁵³⁰¹⁶2 Thessalonians 2:16,17).

Ver. 1. *Now we beseech you, brethren*, &c.] The apostle having finished his first design in this epistle, which was to encourage the saints to patience under sufferings, proceeds to another view he had in writing it, and that is, to set the doctrine of Christ's coming, as to the time of it, in its proper light; and this is occasioned by what he had said concerning it in the former epistle, which was either misunderstood or misrepresented; and as he addresses the saints with a very affectionate appellation as his “brethren”, so by way of entreaty “beseeching”, and yet in a very solemn manner:

by the coming of our Lord Jesus: which is to be understood not of the coming of Christ in the flesh, to procure the salvation of his people; nor of his coming in his kingdom and power to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, for their rejection of him as the Messiah; but of his coming to judge the quick and dead, than which nothing is more sure and certain, being affirmed by angels and men, by prophets and apostles, and by Christ himself, or more desirable by the saints; wherefore the apostle entreats them by it, that whereas they believed it, expected it, and wished for it, they would regard what he was about to say: so that the words, though an entreaty, are in the form of an adjuration; unless they should be rendered as in the Ethiopic version, as they may, “concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”; and so express subject matter of the discourse now entering upon, with what follows:

and by our gathering together unto him; which regards not the great gatherings of the people to Christ the true Shiloh upon his first coming, and the preaching of the Gospel to both Jews and Gentiles, when there

were not only great flockings to hear it, but multitudes were converted by it; nor the greater gatherings there will be in the latter day, at the time of the conversion of the Jews, and when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in; nor the conversion of particular persons, who are gathered in to Christ, and received by him one by one; nor the assembling of the saints together for public worship, in which sense the word is used in (Hebrews 10:25) but the gathering together of all the saints at the last day, at the second coming of Christ; for he will come with ten thousand of his saints, yea, with all his saints, when their dead bodies shall be raised and reunited to their souls, and they with the living saints will be caught up into the air, to meet the Lord there and be ever with him; when they will make up, complete and perfect, the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven: this will be the gathering together of all the elect of God; and so the Arabic version reads, “the gathering of us all”; and which, as it is certain, is greatly to be desired; it will be a happy meeting and a glorious sight; by this the apostle entreats and adjures them to regard what follows.

Ver. 2. *That ye be not soon shaken in mind*, &c.] Or “from your mind or sense”, as the Vulgate Latin version; or “from the solidity of sense”, as the Arabic version; that is, from what they had received in their minds, and was their sense and judgment, and which they had embraced as articles of faith; that they would not be like a wave of the sea, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; or be moved from the hope of the Gospel, from any fundamental article of it, and from that which respects the second coming of Christ particularly; and especially, that they would not be quickly and easily moved from it; (see Galatians 1:6)

or be troubled; thrown into consternation and surprise, for though the coming of Christ will not be terrible to saints, as it will be to sinners; yet there is something in it that is awful and solemn, and fills with concern; and to be told of it as at that instant might be surprising and shocking: the several ways in which their minds might be troubled and distressed with such an account are enumerated by the apostle, that they might guard against them, and not be imposed upon by them:

neither by spirit; by a prophetic spirit, by pretensions to a revelation from the Spirit, fixing the precise time of Christ's coming, which should not be heeded or attended to; since his coming will be as a thief in the night:

nor by word: by reason and a show of it, by arguments drawn from it, which may carry in them a show of probability; by enticing words of man's wisdom; by arithmetical or astronomical calculations; or by pretensions to a word, a tradition of Christ or his apostles, as if they had received it “viva voce”, by word of mouth from any of them:

nor by letter, as from us; by forging a letter and counterfeiting their hands, for such practices began to be used very early; spurious epistles of the Apostle Paul were carried about, which obliged him to take a method whereby his genuine letters might be known; (see <SCRIP>2 Thessalonians 3:17,18) or he may have respect in this clause to his former epistle, wherein he had said some things concerning the Coming of Christ, which had been either wrongly represented, or not understood; and as if his sense was, that it would be while he and others then living were alive and on the spot: wherefore he would not have them neither give heed to any enthusiastic spirits, nor to any plausible reasonings of men, or unwritten traditions; nor to any letters in his name, or in the name of any of the apostles; nor even to his former letter to them, as though it contained any such thing in it,

as that the day of Christ is at hand; or is at this instant just now coming on; as if it would be within that year, in some certain month, and on some certain day in it; which notion the apostle would have them by no means give into, for these reasons, because should Christ not come, as there was no reason to believe he would in so short a time, they would be tempted to disbelieve his coming at all, at least be very indifferent about it; and since if it did not prove true, they might be led to conclude there was nothing true in the Christian doctrine and religion; and besides, such a notion of the speedy coming of Christ would tend to indulge the idle and disorderly persons among them in their sloth and negligence: and now for these, and for the weighty reasons he gives in the next verse, he dissuades them from imbibing such a tenet; for though the coming of Christ is sometimes said to be drawing nigh, and to be quickly, yet so it might be, and not at that instant; besides, such expressions are used with respect to God, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years; and because the Gospel times, or times of the Messiah, are the last days, there will be no other dispensation of things until the second coming of Christ; and chiefly they are used to keep up the faith, and awaken the hope and expectation of the saints with respect to it. The Alexandrian copy, and

some others, read, “the day of the Lord”; and so the Vulgate Latin version; and accordingly the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, “the day of our Lord”.

Ver. 3. *Let no man deceive you by any means*, &c.] By any of the above means; by pretending to a revelation from the Spirit; or to have had it from the mouth of anyone of the apostles; or to have a letter as from them, declaring the day of Christ to be instant; or by any other means whatever; do not be imposed upon by them for the following reasons, for there were things to be done before the coming of Christ, which were not then done, and which required time: for that day shall not come,

except there come a falling away first; either in a political sense, of the nations from the Roman empire, which was divided into the eastern and western empire; for which, way was made by translating the seat of empire from Rome to Byzantium, or Constantinople; the former of these empires was seized by Mahomet, and still possessed by the Turks; and the latter was overrun by the Goths, Huns, and Vandals, and torn to pieces; Italy particularly was ravaged by them, and Rome itself was sacked and taken: or rather in a religious sense, of the falling of men from the faith of the Gospel, from the purity of Gospel doctrines, discipline, worship, and ordinances; and this not of some Jews who professed faith in Christ, and departed from it, or of some Christians who went off to the Gnostics; but is to be understood of a more general defection in the times of the Papacy; when not only the eastern churches were perverted and corrupted by Mahomet, and drawn off to his religion, but the western churches were most sadly depraved by the man of sin, by bringing in errors of all sorts in doctrine, making innovations in every ordinance, and appointing new ones, and introducing both Judaism and Paganism into the churches; which general defection continued until the times of the reformation, and is what the apostle has respect to in (<500401>1 Timothy 4:1-3) where he manifestly points out some of the Popish tenets, as forbidding marriage to priests, and ordering abstinence from meats on certain days, and at certain times of the year: this was one thing that was to precede the coming of Christ, another follows, which should take place at the same time;

and that man of sin be revealed; who was now hid, though secretly working; by whom is meant not only any particular person or individual; not the devil, for though he is the wicked one, a damned spirit, an opposer, an adversary of God and Christ, and his people, and who has affected deity, and sought to be worshipped, and even by Christ himself; yet the

man of sin is here distinguished from Satan, (⁵2 Timothy 2:9) nor is any particular emperor of Rome intended, as Caius Caligula, or Nero, for though these were monsters of iniquity, and set up themselves as gods, yet they sat not in the temple of God; nor is Simon Magus designed, who was a very wicked man, a sorcerer, and who gave out himself to be some great one, and was called the great power of God, before big profession of faith in Christ; and afterwards affirmed that he was God, the Father in Samaria, the Son in Judea, and the Spirit in the rest of the nations of the world; and, because of his signs and lying wonders, had a statue erected by the Roman emperor with this inscription, “to Simon the holy god”; but then this wicked man was now already revealed: nor is this to be understood of a certain Jew, that is to be begotten by the devil on a virgin of the tribe of Dan, and who is to reign three years and a half, and then to be destroyed by Christ, which is a fable of the Papists; but a succession of men is here meant, as a king is used sometimes for an order and succession of kings, (⁵Deuteronomy 17:18) and an high priest for that whole order, from Aaron's time to the dissolution of it, (⁵Hebrews 9:7) so here it intends the whole hierarchy of Rome, monks, friars, priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and especially popes, who may well be called “the man of sin”, because notoriously sinful; not only sinners, but sin itself, a sink of sin, monsters of iniquity, spiritual wickednesses in high places: it is not easy to reckon up their impieties, their adulteries, incest, sodomy, rapine, murder, avarice, simony, perjury, lying, necromancy, familiarity with the devil, idolatry, witchcraft, and what not? and not only have they been guilty of the most notorious crimes themselves, but have been the patrons and encouragers of others in sin; by dispensing with the laws of God and man, by making sins to be venial, by granting indulgences and pardon for the worst of crimes, by licensing brothel houses, and countenancing all manner of wickedness; and therefore it is no wonder to hear of the following epithet,

the son of perdition; since these are not only the Apollyon, the king of the bottomless pit, the destroyer, the cause of the perdition of thousands of souls, for the souls of men are their wares; but because they are by the righteous judgment of God appointed and consigned to everlasting destruction; the devil, the beast, and the false prophet, will have their portion together in the lake that burns with fire, (⁶Revelation 20:10) the same character as here is given of Judas, the betrayer of Christ, (⁴John 17:12).

Ver. 4. *Who opposeth*, &c.] Or is an opposer, an adversary of Christ, the antichrist; who opposes him in his kingly office, styling himself the head and spouse of the church, assuming to himself all power in heaven and in earth, taking upon him to dispense with the laws of Christ, and to make new ones; who opposes him in his priestly office, by pretending to offer him up again in the sacrifice of the mass, and by making angels and saints departed, intercessors and advocates; and also in his prophetic office, by teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, and setting up unwritten traditions before the word of God, requiring the worshipping of images, angels, and saints, when Christ requires that the Lord God only should be worshipped and served; and by introducing the doctrine of works and of merit instead of grace, and with a multitude of other things, in which he most manifestly appears to be diametrically opposite and contrary to Christ:

and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. The Syriac version renders the last clause, alj dw, "and religion"; and the Greek word does signify religion, worship, or devotion, as it is translated, in (<44723>Acts 17:23) but here the act of worship is put for the object, and is rightly rendered, "or that which is worshipped"; as it is in the Vulgate Latin version, and in the Arabic version, "or that which is to be worshipped"; and it was usual with the Jews to call God the object of worship, by the name of worship itself, and by which they used to swear: it is said [f3] of R. Benjamin the just, that he was appointed over the alms chest; one time a woman came to him and said, Rabbi, relieve me; he replied to her, hdwb[h, "by the worship" (that is, by God who is worshipped) there is nothing in the alms chest: and elsewhere [f4] it is said by one, concerning two that were fatherless, for whom the collectors of alms gathered, hdwb[h, "by the worship", they go before my daughter: and a little after, hdwb[h, "by the worship", these things are holy to thee; where the gloss says, it is an oath: and so here the word is to be understood of Deity itself; and the meaning is, that antichrist would exalt himself above all the gods of the Gentiles, who are only nominally, and not by nature, gods; to these were ascribed, some one thing, to some another; one had the government of heaven, another of hell, another of the seas, and an other of the winds, &c. but this haughty creature antichrist assumes to himself all power, both in heaven, earth, and hell. Angels are sometimes called gods, (<19804>Psalm 8:4) because they are sent of God, and sometimes represent him; the popes of Rome have exalted themselves above these; Pope Clement VI. proclaimed

a jubilee, and promised forgiveness of sins to all that should come to Rome; and in his bull for it says, that

> “if any that was confessed should die by the way, he should be free from all his sins; “and we do command the angels”, that they take such a soul out of purgatory entirely absolved, and introduce it into the glory of paradise:”

and in a manuscript in the library at Helmsted are these words,

> “we command the angels that they carry such a soul into Abraham's bosom, as soon as it has left the body:”

kings and civil magistrates are called gods, (¹⁹⁸⁰⁶Psalm 82:6) and this monster of iniquity and firstborn of Satan, the popes of Rome, have exalted themselves above these; they have not only took upon them to excommunicate emperors and kings, but to depose them, and take away their crowns from them, and give their kingdoms to others, and absolve their subjects from allegiance and fidelity to them; an emperor has held a pope's stirrup while he alighted from his horse, and was severely reprimanded for holding the left instead of the right stirrup; and the same emperor held another pope's stirrup while he got on his horse, and who set his foot upon his neck when he absolved him, being before excommunicated by him, using these words in (¹⁹⁸¹³Psalm 91:13) “thou shall tread upon the lion”, &c. An emperor and an empress waited at a pope's gates three days barefoot; another emperor and empress were crowned by the Pope with his feet; he took the crown with his feet, and, they bowing down, put it upon their heads, and then kicked it off; and one of our own kings resigned his crown and the ensigns of his royalty to the Pope's legate, who kept them five days; and when he offered a sum of money to the legate as an earnest of his subjection, to show his master's grandeur, he spurned at it; a king was thrown under a pope's table to lick the bones like a dog, while he was eating: so truly has this passage had its accomplishment in that impious and insolent set of men. Rome is by the Jewish [f5] writers called “Magdiel”, which signifies “magnifying itself”; the reason is, ldgtyç, “because it magnifies itself” above all these [f6]; that is, above all kingdoms and states: but what is worse, and most dreadfully blasphemous, follows,

so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God; not in the temple of Jerusalem, which was to be destroyed and never to be rebuilt more, and

was destroyed before this man of sin was revealed; but in the church of God, so called, (<46 03 16>1 Corinthians 3:16 <47 06 16>2 Corinthians 6:16) the Ethiopic version renders it, “in the house of God”; for antichrist rose up out of, and in the midst of the church; and it was a true church in which he first appeared, and over which he usurped power and authority; though it has been so corrupted by him, as now to be only nominally so; here he sits, and has homage done him by his creatures, as if he was a god, and is not only styled Christ's vicar, but a god on earth, and our Lord God the Pope; so in the triumphal arch at the entry of Pope Sixtus IV, these lines were put, “oraculo vocis, mundi moderaris habenas, et merito in terris crederis esse Dens”; the sense is, that he governed the world by his word, and was deservedly believed to be God on earth; and their canon law [f7] says,

> “it is clearly enough shown, that the Pope cannot be loosed or bound by any secular power; since it is evident that he is called God by that pious prince, Constantine, and it is manifest that God cannot be judged by men:”

and Pope John XXII is expressly called [f8] “our Lord God the Pope”: the Ethiopic version reads, “he shall say to all, I am the Lord God”; (see <26 28 02>Ezekiel 28:2), the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, leave out the phrase, “as God”, but the Syriac retains it: however, the same blasphemy is expressed in the next clause,

shewing himself that he is God; by usurping a power over the consciences and souls of men; by dispensing with the laws of God and man; by assuming to himself all power in heaven and in earth; by taking upon him to open and shut the gates of heaven at pleasure; and by pardoning sin, which none but God can do; this is the mouth speaking blasphemies, (<66 13 05>Revelation 13:5,6).

Ver. 5. *Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you*, &c.] At Thessalonica, for the apostle had been there in person, and had preached there with great boldness and success; he had declared the whole counsel of God, and the Gospel came in power and worked effectually in them, and yet there was too great a forgetfulness of it; with which the apostle tacitly charges them, and rebukes them gently for it; and as a faithful monitor, stirs up their pure minds by way of remembrance, and reminds them of former truths delivered to them:

I told you these things: or "words" as the Arabic version; concerning the coming of Christ as that it would not be yet, that there, must be a defection from the faith, and antichrist must be revealed; which shows that these were things of moment and importance, and were useful and profitable to be insisted on; and therefore the apostle had told them of them, and spoke freely and largely about them, at his first preaching among them, and were what he inculcated everywhere; and also that his doctrine was all of a piece at one time as another; it was not yea and nay, or contradictory; what he now said was no other than what he had said before; and therefore it was the more inexcusable in them, to be shaken or troubled by any means with another doctrine.

Ver. 6. *And now ye know what withholdeth*, &c.] Or hinders the revelation of the man of sin, or antichrist; by which is meant not the Apostle Paul, though he by his ministry was a very great hinderance of the growth of error, and the spread of evil practices in the churches, and so of the more open appearance of the man of sin in his forerunners; and after his departure from Ephesus, and imprisonment at Rome, and suffering death, there was a great falling off in the churches, and among professors of religion, which made way for the manifestation of antichrist in due time: nor the preaching of the Gospel, in its power and purity, in the several parts of the world; though so long as this obtained, got ground, and gained success, the man of sin could not show his head; and therefore it must, as it did, decline, and was gradually taken away that he might appear: nor the Spirit of God, as the spirit of truth and holiness, though as long as he continued in his gifts and operations of grace in the churches, they were preserved from antichristian doctrine and worship; but when he removed from them, this enemy and adversary of Christ and his Gospel came in like a flood: nor the general defection in (^{2Th}2 Thessalonians 2:3) though that was to be previous to the revelation of antichrist, and was to be what would usher him in; nor could he appear until the wickedness of men was come to a pitch, that they would be ready to receive him, and pay homage and worship to him: nor is the decree of God meant, though till the time came fixed by God for his appearance, the decree must be a bar in his way; since as there is a time for every purpose, nothing can come to pass till that time comes: but by that which withheld, let or hindered the open appearance of antichrist, were the Roman empire and emperors; these stood in his way, and while this empire lasted, and the emperors wore the imperial crown, and sat on the throne, and held the government in their

hands, the popes could not come at the height of their ambition, dignity, and authority, nor shine in their glory; nor could the whore of Babylon take her seat, and sit upon the seven hills of Rome until the Roman emperor was taken out of the way: this therefore hindered,

that he might be revealed in his time. The Ethiopic version renders it, "until his time appointed came": wherefore till the time that God had fixed for the appearance of this monster of iniquity, this son of perdition, the Roman empire must continue, and Roman emperors must keep their place and dignity to prevent his appearance sooner: the reason why the apostle expresses this not in plain words, but in an obscure manner, and with so much caution, was, that he might not offend the Roman emperors, and provoke them to a severe persecution of them as seditious persons, that sought the destruction of the empire: the word here used, which is rendered "withholdeth", or "letteth", as in the next verse, signifies a ruler or governor, and answers to the Hebrew word rx[, "to keep back, or restrain"; and which is used of kings, who by their laws and government restrain and withhold people from doing what they would; (see 1Sa 9:17 2Ch 14:11) to which the apostle, who well understood the Hebrew language, doubtless had reference; so rx[çrwy, is rendered, "a magistrate", in (Jdg 18:7).

Ver. 7. *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work*, &c.] Or "the mystery of that wicked one", as the Syriac; meaning either antichrist himself, and the spirit of antichrist, which were already in the world, (1Jo 2:18 4:2), "mystery" being one of the names of antichrist, (Rev 17:5) and anciently this word was engraven on the mitres of the popes of Rome: or the evil doctrines and practices of antichrist may be intended; for as the doctrine of the Gospel is called a mystery, and the mystery of godliness; so the doctrines and practices of antichrist may be called the mystery of iniquity, especially as they were now secretly spread, imbibed, and practised: the foundations of it were now laying in the church by false teachers; for errors and heresies of every sort, respecting the person and offices of Christ, and in opposition to them, were now broached; idolatry, and holding communion with idolaters, now obtained; worshipping of angels was used by some; and superstition and will worship, worship after the commandments of men, were practised; days, and months, and years, distinguished by Jews and Pagans, and difference of meats, were observed; celibacy and virginity began to be admired and

commended; dominion and magistracy were despised, and church authority contemned, and many, as Diotrephes, loved to have the pre-eminence; and the doctrine of justification by the works of the law was industriously spread, and zealously preached and received; all which laid the foundation, and are the life and soul of popery:

only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way; that is, the Roman empire and Roman emperors, and which were by degrees entirely removed, and so made way for the revelation of this wicked one: and which was done partly by Constantine the emperor receiving the Christian faith, whereby the Roman empire as Pagan ceased; and by increasing the riches of the church, and feeding the pride, ambition, and covetousness of the bishops, especially the bishop of Rome; and next by removing the seat of the empire from Rome to Byzantium, which he called Constantinople: here the Greek emperors continued in succession, and neither they themselves, nor even their exarchs, resided at Rome, but at Ravenna; so that way was made for antichrist to come to his seat, and there was nothing to rival and eclipse the grandeur, power, and glory of the Roman popes: and that which let was also taken out of the way, by the division of the empire, by Theodosius, giving to his elder son Arcadius, the eastern, and to the younger, Honorius, the western parts of it: the eastern empire was in process of time seized upon and possessed by Mahomet and the Saracens; and the western empire was overrun by the Goths, Vandals, and Huns, and became extinct about the year 476, in Augustulus, the last of the Roman emperors, who was obliged to abdicate the government by Odoacer king of the Heruli; when the kingdom of the Lombards took place in Italy, and afterwards that was translated to Charles the great, king of the French; so that there was nothing more of the Roman empire remaining than the bare name, as at this day; and by this means the popes of Rome got to the height of their power and glory, which is meant by the revelation of the man of sin.

Ver. 8. *And then shall that wicked be revealed*, &c.] That lawless one, who sets himself above the laws of God and man, and dispenses with them at pleasure, who judges all men, but is judged by no man; as he was in his ecclesiastical power, when Phocas, who murdered the Emperor Mauritius, granted to Boniface III. to be called universal bishop; and in his civil power in succeeding popes, who took upon them the power over kings and emperors, to crown, depose, and excommunicate at pleasure:

whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth: that is, the "Lord Jesus", as the Alexandrian copy, and Vulgate Latin version read; and the Syriac version, "our Lord Jesus": who is Lord of lords, and God over all; and so able to do what he is here said he shall do: and which he will do

with the Spirit of his mouth; meaning either the Holy Spirit, the third person which proceeds from him, as in (<19306>Psalm 33:6), and so the Ethiopic version, "whom the Spirit of our Lord Jesus shall cast out"; Christ will by his Spirit blow a blast upon antichrist and his kingdom, which he shall never recover again, but ever after consume and waste away: or else by his spirit is meant his Gospel; the Scriptures in general are the breath of God, being divinely inspired by him, and are the sword of the Spirit, the twoedged sword of law and Gospel, which proceeds out of Christ's mouth; the Gospel contains the words of Christ, which are spirit and life; these come out of his mouth, and are sharper than any twoedged sword; and as hereby sinners are cut to the heart, hewn and slain, convicted and converted, so by this likewise antichrist will be consumed, and is consuming; for this phrase denotes the beginning of his destruction, which took place at the time of the reformation by the preaching of the Gospel by Luther and others; by which this man of sin received his deadly wound, and has been in a consumption ever since, and is sensibly wasting in his power and glory every day, and will ere long come to utter destruction:

and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; either in a spiritual way, when he shall come in his spiritual kingdom and glory, by the light of his Gospel and the illuminations of his Spirit; when at eventide it shall be light; when he the sun of righteousness shall arise; when latter day light and glory shall appear, and latter day darkness, the gross darkness of Popery, Paganism, and Judaism, which cover the people, shall, be removed, and antichrist in every form shall disappear: or in a personal manner, when he shall come to judge the quick and dead, which will be in flaming fire and great glory; and then will antichrist and his followers, the beast and those that have worshipped him, be cast with the devil and the false prophet into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; and this will be the last and utter end of him. In this passage there is a manifest reference to (<23104>Isaiah 11:4), "with the breath of his mouth shall he slay the wicked": which the Targumist paraphrases,

> "with the words of his lips he shall slay a[yçr swlymra,
> "Armillus the wicked":"

and which the Jews say will be done by the Messiah at his coming;

> “for so [f9] (say they) that phrase in (<052208>Deuteronomy 22:8) “if a man fall from thence”, has respect to Armillus the wicked, who at the coming of our Messiah will be slain, as it is said in (<231104>Isaiah 11:4)”

This Armillus, the Jews say [f10], is the head of all idolatry, the tenth king who shall reign at Rome, the city of Satan; that he shall rise up after Gog and Magog, and shall go up to Jerusalem, and slay Messiah ben Joseph, and shall himself be slain by Messiah the son of David; yea, they say expressly [f11], it is the same whom the Gentiles call antichrist: it is the same with Romulus the first king of the Romans, and designs a Roman, the Roman antichrist; and it may be observed, that the Targumist interprets “the breath of his mouth”, by his word; and so says another of their writers [f12],

> “the meaning is by the word of his lips, for the word goes out of the mouth with the vapour and breath:”

such an expression as this is said [f13] to be used by Moses, when he was bid by God to answer the angels who objected to his having the law given him;

> “I am afraid (says he) they will slay (or burn me), µhypbç lbhb, “with the breath of their mouth”:”

much more may this be feared from the breath of Christ's mouth.

Ver. 9. *Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan*, &c.] That is, as a deceiver, a liar, and a murderer; for such was the working of Satan with our first parents; he seduced Eve, not only by subtlety, but by lying; he abode not in the truth, is the father of lies, and a murderer from the beginning: and such is the working of antichrist his firstborn; he comes in a deceitful way, under a profession of Christ, and a pretension of faith in him, and love to him; but speaks lies in hypocrisy, for such are his doctrines and tenets; and is not only a murderer of the bodies of the saints, but of the souls of men; which are the wares the whore of Babylon deals in:

with all power; not omnipotence, for that is peculiar to God, and is not in Satan nor in antichrist, though the latter assumes to himself all power in heaven and in earth, and claims a jurisdiction both temporal and spiritual over men; but rather this means great power, or all kind of power of doing miracles, as follows:

and signs, and lying wonders; that is, such signs and miracles as are not real, but reigned, only in appearance, not in truth, like those that were done by the magicians of Egypt; and these were done to countenance lies, and to induce persons to believe them; and how many miracles and lying wonders the church of Rome pretends to, everybody knows.

Ver. 10. *And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness*, &c.] Not that he deceives, or goes about to deceive, or thinks to deceive by open unrighteousness; but by unrighteousness, under a pretence of righteousness and holiness; as with the doctrines of justification and salvation by a man's own righteousness, with the doctrines of merit and of works of supererogation, which are taking to men, and by which they are deceived, and are no other than unrighteousness with God, and betray ignorance of his righteousness, and a non-submission to it; as also with practices which carry a show of holiness, religion, and devotion, when they are no other than acts of impiety, superstition, and will worship; as their litanies and prayers, their worship of images, angels, and saints departed, their frequent fasts and festivals, their pilgrimages, penance, and various acts of mortification and the like: but then these deceptions only have place

in them that perish; whom the god of this world has blinded, from whom the Gospel is hid, and to whom it is foolishness: all men indeed are in a lost perishing condition, through original and actual sin; but all shall not perish, there are some that God will not have perish, whom Christ is given for that they should not perish, and whom he has redeemed by his blood, and to whom he gives eternal life; but there are others that are vessels of wrath afore ordained to condemnation, reprobate men left to themselves, and given up to their hearts' lusts; and these, and only these, are finally and totally deceived, by the signs and lying wonders, and false appearances of antichrist; (see <4024>Matthew 24:24)

because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; by the “truth” is meant either Christ the truth of types, the sum of promises, in whom the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are, and by whom grace and truth came; or the Gospel, often called truth, and the word of truth, it coming from the God of truth, has for its subject Christ the truth, is dictated and directed into by the spirit of truth, and contains nothing but truth: and by “the love” of it is meant, either the loveliness of it, for truth is an amiable, lovely thing, in its nature and use; or an affection for it, which there is, where true faith in it is, for faith works by love: there

may be a flashy affection for the truths of the Gospel, where there is no true faith in Christ, or the root of the matter is not, as in the stony ground hearers; and there may be an historical faith in the doctrines of the Gospel, where the power of them is denied, and there is no true hearty love for them; and in these persons there is neither faith nor love; the truths of the Gospel are neither believed by them, nor are they affected with them, that so, they might be saved; for where there is true faith in the Gospel of Christ, and in Christ the substance of it, there is salvation; the reason therefore of these men's perishing is not the decree of God, nor even want of the means of grace, the revelation of the Gospel, but their rejection and contempt of it.

Ver. 11. *And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion*, &c.] Or "efficacy of error", which God may be said to send; and the Alexandrian copy reads, "does send"; because it is not a bare permission but a voluntary one; or it is his will that error should be that truth may be tried, and be illustrated by its contrary, and shine the more through the force of opposition to it; and that those which are on the side of it might be made manifest, as well as that the rejecters of the Gospel might be punished; for the efficacy of error is not to be considered as a sin, of which God cannot be the author, but as a punishment for sin, and to which men are given up, and fall under the power of, because they receive not the love of the truth, which is the reason here given: and this comes to pass partly through God's denying his grace, or withholding that light and knowledge, by which error may be discovered and detected; and by taking from men the knowledge and conscience of things they had, (see <460128>Romans 1:28). So that they call evil good, and good evil, and do not appear to have the common sense and reason of mankind, at least do not act according to it; and by giving them up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart, and to the god of this world, to blind their minds; and without this it is not to be accounted for, that the followers of antichrist should give into such senseless notions as those of transubstantiation, works of supererogation, &c., or into such stupid practices as worshipping of images, praying to saints departed, and paying such a respect to the pretended relics of saints, &c., as they do; but a spirit of slumber is given them, and eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, because of their rejection of the Gospel: and

that they should believe a lie; that the pope is Christ's vicar on earth, and has power to forgive sins; that the bread and wine in the Lord's supper are transubstantiated into the very body and blood of Christ; with other lying

tenets spoken in hypocrisy concerning good works, merit, pardon, penance; &c. with a multitude of lying wonders and false miracles, of which their legends are full; and this is the first and more near end of strong delusion or efficacious error being sent them; the more remote and ultimate one follows.

Ver. 12. *That they all might be damned*, &c.] Or judged, discerned and distinguished from true Christians and real believers, or rather that they might be condemned and punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and have their portion in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; where the devil, the false prophet, and the beast, whose followers they are, will be cast; and it is but a righteous thing with God to give them up to such delusion,

that they may be damned, since they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved; and the following character of them justifies the divine procedure:

who believed not the truth; neither the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation, nor Christ, who is truth itself; and therefore were righteously given up to believe a lie; and whose damnation is just, according to the declaration of Christ, he that believeth not shall be damned:

but had pleasure in unrighteousness; in sin, as all unrighteousness is; in sinful ways and works, and in unrighteous doctrines; as the doctrines of merit, of works of supererogation, and of justification by works, being derogatory to the justice of God, and to the righteousness of Christ; and in the unrighteous persecution and bloodshed of the saints, the martyrs of Jesus; in which the followers of antichrist take as much delight and pleasure, as an intemperate man does in drinking wine or strong drink to excess; and therefore the whore of Babylon is said to be drunk with the blood of the saints; and it is but just she should have blood to drink, or be punished both with temporal and eternal destruction.

Ver. 13. *But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you*, &c.] Lest the saints should be discouraged by the above account of antichrist, and his followers, and fear they should be left to the same deceptions, and damnation be their portion; the apostle being persuaded better things of them, gives their character, and represents their case in a quite different light; and signifies, that he and his fellow ministers were under obligation to be continually thankful to God for what he had done for them; for as

God is the Father of mercies, whether spiritual or temporal, thanks are to be given to him; and saints are not only to bless his name for what they themselves receive from him, but for what others enjoy also, and that continually; because spiritual blessings, especially such as are afterwards instanced in, are permanent and durable, yea, everlasting: the characters which show them to be different from the followers of antichrist, are

brethren, beloved of the Lord or “of God”, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read: they were the brethren of Christ, being the dear children of God, born of him, and belonging to his family, and of the apostles, and of one another, being of the household of faith; and they were beloved by God the Father, as the instances of their election to salvation by him, and their calling to eternal glory, show; and by the Lord Jesus Christ, who had wrought out for them the salvation they were chosen to; and by the Lord the Spirit, by whom they were regenerated, called, sanctified, and brought to the belief of the truth; and since they had interest in the everlasting love of the three divine Persons, there was no danger of their falling away and perishing. The reason of the apostle's thanksgiving for the persons thus described is,

because God hath from, the beginning chosen you to salvation; which is to be understood, not of an election of them, as a nation, for they were not a nation, only a part of one; nor of them as a church, for they were not so from the beginning; nor to the outward means of grace, the ministry of the word and ordinances, for the choice is unto salvation; nor to any office, for they were not all officers in the church, only some; nor does it intend the effectual calling, for that is distinguished from it in the following verse; but an eternal appointment of persons to grace and glory: and this is an act of God the Father, in Christ, from eternity; and which arises from his sovereign good will and pleasure, and is an instance of his free grace and favour, for the glorifying of himself; and is irrespective of the faith, holiness, and good works of men; all which are the fruits and effects, and not the motives, conditions, or causes of electing grace. This act is the leading one to all other blessings of grace, as justification, adoption, calling, and glorification, and is certain and immutable in itself, and in its effects. The date of it is “from the beginning”: not from the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel to them, and the sense be, that, as soon as the Gospel was preached, they believed, and God chose them; for what was there remarkable in them, that this should be peculiarly observed of them? The Bereans are said to be more noble than they were: nor from the

beginning of their calling, for predestination or election precedes calling; (see <450830>Romans 8:30) nor from the beginning of time, or of the creation of the world, but before the world began, even from eternity; and in such sense the phrase is used in (<200823>Proverbs 8:23) and that it is the sense of it here, is manifest from (<490104>Ephesians 1:4) where this choice is said to be before the foundation of the world. The end to which men, by this act, are chosen, is “salvation”: not temporal, though the elect of God are appointed to many temporal salvations and deliverances, and which they enjoy both before and after conversion; yet salvation here designs the salvation of the soul, though not exclusive of the body, a spiritual and an eternal salvation, salvation by Jesus Christ, as is expressed in (<520509>1 Thessalonians 5:9) and the same decree that appoints men to salvation, appoints Christ to be the Saviour of them; and there is salvation in and by no other. The means through which this choice is made, are

through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth by sanctification is meant, not anything external, as reformation of life, obedience to the law, or outward submission to Gospel ordinances; but internal holiness, which lies in a principle of spiritual life in the soul, and in a principle of spiritual light on the understanding; in a flexion of the will to the will of God, and the way of salvation by Christ; in a settlement of the affections on divine and spiritual things, and in an implantation of all grace in the heart; and is called the sanctification of “the spirit”, partly from the spirit or soul of man being the principal seat of it, and chiefly from the Spirit of God being the author of it; and this being a means fixed in the decree of election to salvation, shows that holiness is not the cause of election, yet is certain by it, and is necessary to salvation; and that the doctrine of election is no licentious doctrine, since it provides for and secures true and real holiness. “Truth” designs either the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the truth of types and promises, and the substance of the truth of the Gospel, in whom it lies, and by whom it comes; or the Gospel itself, which comes from the God of truth, lies in the Scriptures of truth, is dictated and directed into by the spirit of truth; the sum of it is Christ the truth, and has nothing in it but truth. The “belief” or “faith” of this intends, not an historical faith, or a mere assent to truth; but a cordial embracing of it, a receiving of the love of the truth, a feeling of the power of it unto salvation, and a believing in Christ, the substance of it; which is a seeing of him spiritually, and a going out of the soul to him in acts of hope; reliance, trust, and dependence; and this being also a means settled in the choice of men to salvation, makes it

appear, that faith is no cause of election, but the effect of it; that it is necessary to salvation, and therefore appointed as a means; that it is certain to the elect by it, and that they therefore cannot be finally and totally deceived, or be carried away with the error of the wicked, or with the deceivableness of unrighteousness with which antichrist works.

Ver. 14. *Whereunto he called you by our Gospel*, &c.] Salvation being appointed as the end in the decree of election, and sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, as means; the elect in the effectual calling are called to the participation of each of these; first to the one, and then to the other; to grace here, and glory hereafter: and the means by which they are called is the Gospel, which the apostle calls “our Gospel”, not because they were the authors, or the subject of it; for with regard to these it is styled the Gospel of God, and the Gospel of Christ; but because they were intrusted with it, and faithfully preached it, and in opposition to another Gospel published by false teachers. And by this they were called

to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; not his essential glory, though he will be seen and known in the glory of his person as he is, so far as creatures in a state of perfection will be capable of; nor his mediatorial glory, though it will be one part of the saints' happiness in heaven to behold this glory of Christ; but rather the glory which shall be personally put upon the saints, both in soul and body, in the resurrection morn, is here intended: and which is called the glory of Christ, because it is in his hands for them; and is what he is preparing for them, and for which he gives them both a right and a meetness; and which he at last will introduce them into; and it will lie greatly in conformity to him, and in the everlasting vision and enjoyment of him: and now God's elect are called by the ministry of the word to “the obtaining” of this, not by any merit of theirs, or by any works of righteousness done by them, but to the “possession” of it, as the word used properly signifies. The Syriac version renders it, “that ye may be a glory to our Lord Jesus Christ”: as the saints will be at the last day, and to all eternity, when they shall be raised again, and have the glory of God upon them, and be forever with the Lord.

Ver. 15. *Therefore, brethren, stand fast*, &c.] In the doctrine of the Gospel in general, and in the article of Christ's second coming in particular, and not in the least waver about the thing itself, nor be shaken in mind, and troubled as if it was just at hand; and the rather it became them to be concerned that they stood fast in the truth, and persevered unto the end,

since there was to be a falling away, and the mystery of iniquity was already working, and antichrist would shortly appear, whose coming would be with all deceivableness, of unrighteousness; and they had the greater encouragement to continue firm and unmoved, seeing they were chosen from eternity unto salvation through sanctification and belief of the truth, and were called in time by the Gospel to the enjoyment of the glory of Christ in another world.

And hold the traditions which ye have been taught: meaning the truths of the Gospel, which may be called traditions, because they are delivered from one to another; the Gospel was first delivered by God the Father to Jesus Christ, as Mediator, and by him to his apostles, and by them to the churches of Christ; whence it is called the form of doctrine delivered to them, and the faith once delivered to the saints: and also the ordinances of the Gospel which the apostles received from Christ, and as they received them faithfully delivered them, such as baptism and the Lord's supper; as well as rules of conduct and behaviour, both in the church, and in the world, even all the commandments of Christ, which he ordered his apostles to teach, and which they gave by him; (see 2 Thessalonians 3:6 1 Thessalonians 4:2). And so the Syriac version here renders it, “the commandments”: and these were such as these saints had been taught by the apostles, under the direction of Christ, and through the guidance of his Spirit; and were not the traditions of men or the rudiments of the world, but what they had received from Christ, through the hands of the apostles:

whether by word, or our epistle, that is, by “our” word, as well as by our epistle, and so the Arabic version reads; these doctrines, ordinances, and rules of discipline were communicated to them, both by word of mouth, when the apostles were in person among them, and by writing afterwards to them; for what the apostles delivered in the ministry of the word to the churches, they sent them in writing, that they might be a standing rule of faith and practice; so that this does not in the least countenance the unwritten traditions of the Papists; and since these were what were taught them, “viva voce”, and they received them from the mouth of the apostles, or by letters from them, or both, it became them to hold and retain them fast, and not let them go, either with respect to doctrine or practice.

Ver. 16. *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself*, &c.] The apostle having exhorted the saints to perseverance, closes this second part of his epistle, relating to the coming of Christ, with a prayer for the saints, that they

might be comforted and established. The objects addressed are Christ and the Father. And in each of their characters are reasons contained, encouraging to believe the petitions will be regarded; for it is “our Lord Jesus Christ himself” who is prayed unto; who is our Lord, not by creation only, in which sense he is Lord of all, but by redemption, and through a marriage relation; and he is our Jesus, our Saviour, and Redeemer; and our Christ, the anointed prophet, priest, and King; even he himself, who stands in these relations and offices; and what may not be expected from him?

and God, even our Father; not by creation, but by adoption; and as it is in his power, he has a heart to give, and will give good things unto his children: and inasmuch as Christ is equally addressed as the object of prayer as the Father, and is indeed here set before him, or first mentioned, it may be concluded that there is an entire equality between them, and that Christ is truly and properly God; otherwise religious worship, of which prayer is a considerable branch, would not be given him, nor would he be set upon an equal foot with the other, and much less before him. The Arabic version reads, “our Lord Jesus Christ, our Father”; and the Ethiopic version also, “our Lord Jesus Christ, God our Father”; as if the whole of this, or all these epithets and characters, belong to Christ, and he was the only person addressed; but the common reading is best: which hath loved us; this refers both to the Father and to Christ. The Father had loved them with an everlasting and unchangeable love, as appeared by his choosing them unto salvation by Christ, securing them in his hands, and making an everlasting covenant with him, on their account; by sending his Son to be the Saviour of them; by regenerating, quickening, and calling them by his grace, adopting them into his family, pardoning all their sins, justifying their persons, and giving them both a meetness for, and a right unto eternal glory. And Christ, he had loved them with the same love; and which he showed by undertaking their cause in the council of peace; by espousing their persons in the covenant of grace; by assuming their nature in the fulness of time; by dying in their room and stead; and by his continued intercession and mediation for them, and by many other instances. And since they had such a share in the affection both of the Father and the Son, it need not to have been doubted but that what was prayed for would be granted: to which is added,

and hath given us everlasting consolation: all true solid consolation is from God and Christ: God is called the God of all comfort; and if there be any real consolation, it is in, by, and from Christ; and it is the gift of God,

an instance of his grace and favour, and not a point of merit; the least degree of consolation is not deserved, and ought not to be reckoned small: and it is everlasting; it does not indeed always continue, as to the sensible enjoyment of it, in this life, being often interrupted by indwelling sin, the hidings of God's and the temptations of Satan, yet the ground and foundation of it is everlasting; such as the everlasting love of God, the everlasting covenant of grace, the everlasting righteousness of Christ, and everlasting salvation by him, and he himself, who is the consolation of Israel, as well as the blessed Spirit, the Comforter, who ever abides as the earnest and pledge of future happiness. And the present spiritual joy of the saints is what no man can take away from them, and what will eventually issue in everlasting consolation, without any interruption in the world to come, when sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and all tears be wiped from their eyes:

and good hope through grace. The Syriac version reads, “in his grace”; and the Ethiopic version, “a good hope; and his grace”, hope, as well as faith, is the gift of God, a free grace gift of his: and it may be called a good one, because God is the author of it; and it is built on a good foundation, the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; and is of good things to come, and therefore called the blessed hope; and is what is sure and certain, and will never deceive, nor make ashamed; and since consolation is given here, and hope of happiness hereafter, it may be concluded the following requests will be regarded.

Ver. 17. *Comfort your hearts*, &c.] That is, apply the comfort given, and cause it to be received, which unbelief is apt to refuse; and increase it, by shedding abroad the love of Christ, and of the Father; by the discoveries of pardoning grace; by the application of Gospel promises; by the word and ordinances, which are breasts of consolation; and by indulging with the gracious presence, and comfortable communion of Father, Son, and Spirit. The Arabic version reads, “comfort your hearts by his grace”, joining the last clause of the preceding verse to this. This petition stands opposed to a being troubled and distressed about the sudden coming of Christ, as the following one does to a being shaken in mind on that account, (2 Thessalonians 2:2).

And stablish you in every good word and work; that is, in every good word of God, or truth of the Gospel, which contains good tidings of good things, so as not to waver about them, or stagger in them, or to depart from them;

in practice of every duty, so as to be steadfast, and immoveable, and always abounding therein; good words and good works, principles and practices, should go together, and the saints stand in need of stability in both. For though, as to their state and condition, they are established in the love of God, in the covenant of grace, in the arms of Christ, and in him the foundation, so as they can never be removed; yet they are often very unstable, not only in their frames, and in the exercise of grace, but in their attachment and adherence to the Gospel and interest of Christ, and in the discharge of duty.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO 2 THESSALONIANS 3

In this chapter the apostle requests of the Thessalonians, that they would pray for him, and other Gospel ministers; and he puts up prayers for them, gives them rules about dealing with disorderly persons, and concludes the epistle with his usual salutation. The request to pray for ministers is in (2 Thessalonians 3:1) the petitions to be made for them are, that their ministry might be succeeded, and their persons preserved and delivered from evil minded men, destitute of faith in Christ, (2 Thessalonians 3:1-2) and, for the consolation of the saints, observes the faithfulness of God engaged in their behalf to establish them in the faith they had, and to preserve them from everything and person that is evil, (2 Thessalonians 3:3) and expresses his confidence in them with respect to their walk and conversation, (2 Thessalonians 3:4) and then prays for them that their hearts might be directed into the love of God, and patience of Christ, (2 Thessalonians 3:5). And next follows an order to withdraw from every disorderly walker, particularly idle and slothful persons, (2 Thessalonians 3:6) and from such a lazy idle life the apostle dissuades by his own example, who behaved not disorderly, nor ate the bread of others, but wrought with his own hands, though he had a right to a maintenance without it, but did this to set an example to them, (2 Thessalonians 3:7-9). He puts them in mind of a precept of his when among them, that such who would not work should not eat, (2 Thessalonians 3:10) and the order he now gave, and the precept he reminds them of, were not without reason; seeing there were disorderly idle persons, and busy bodies, among them, whom the apostle exhorts and beseeches, in the name of Christ, to be industrious, and eat their own bread, as the fruit of their labours, (2 Thessalonians 3:11,12) and as for the other members of the church, he exhorts them to diligence and constancy in well doing, and to mark those that were incorrigible, and have no conversation with them, yet dealing with them not as enemies, but admonishing them as brethren, (2 Thessalonians 3:13-15). And closes all with prayers, that the Lord would give them peace, and grant his presence to them, and with his usual salutation, written with his own hand, as a token of this being a genuine

epistle of his, and by which every epistle of his might be known, (2 Thessalonians 3:16-18).

Ver. 1. *Finally, brethren, pray for us*, &c.] The apostle now proceeds to the last and closing part of the epistle, which respects church discipline, and the removing of disorderly persons from their communion; and introduces it with a request to pray for him, and the rest of his fellow ministers, particularly Silvanus and Timothy, who joined with him in this epistle: he signifies that nothing more remained; this was the last he had to say, that they, "the brethren", not the preachers of the word only, but the members of the church, would be solicitous for them at the throne of grace; as it becomes all the churches, and the several members of them, to pray for their ministers: with respect to their private studies, that they might be directed to suitable subjects; that their understandings might be opened to understand the Scriptures; that their gifts might be increased, and they be more and more fitted for public service: and with respect to their public ministrations, that they be brought forth in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ; that they have a door of utterance given them to preach the Gospel freely and boldly, as it ought to be spoken; and that their ministry be blessed to saints and sinners: and with respect to the world, and their conduct in it, that they be kept from the evil of it, and so behave as to give none offence, that the ministry be not blamed; and that they be not allured by the flatteries, nor intimidated by the frowns of the world, but endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ: and with respect to their persons and state, that their souls may prosper, and that they may have much of the presence of God, and much spiritual joy, peace, comfort, and strength of faith; and that they may enjoy bodily health, and their lives be spared for further usefulness. This request is frequently urged by the apostle; which shows his sense of the importance of the work of the ministry, the insufficiency of men for it, the necessity of fresh supplies of grace, and the great usefulness of prayer. The particular petitions he would have put up follow,

that the word of the Lord may have free course. By "the word of the Lord", or "of God", as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, is meant the Gospel; which is of God, and not of man, comes by the Lord Jesus Christ, and is concerning him, his person and offices, and concerning peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation by him, as the subject matter of it: and the request is, that this might "have free course": or "might run": be propagated and spread far and near: the ministry of the

word is a course or race, and ministers are runners in it, having their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; which is the message they are sent with, and the errand they run upon: which comes from heaven, and is to be carried into all the world, and spread: Satan and his emissaries do all they can to hinder the progress of it; God only can remove all obstructions and impediments; when he works none can let; all mountains become a plain before Zerubbabel. Wherefore the apostle directs to pray to him for it, with what follows,

and be glorified, even as it is with you; the Gospel is glorified when it is attended upon by large numbers, and is heard with a becoming reverence; when it is received in the love of it, is greatly prized and highly esteemed; when it is cordially embraced, and cheerfully obeyed. It is glorified when sinners are converted by it, and the lives of the professors of it are agreeably to it; and thus it was glorified in these several instances at Thessalonica; and therefore the apostle puts them upon praying, that it might be so elsewhere, as there; even “everywhere”, as the Syriac version adds.

Ver. 2. *And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men*, &c.] Either from the unbelieving Jews, (see Romans 15:30,31) who were the avowed enemies of the Gospel, and did all they could to hinder the spread of it; and who were the implacable and constant adversaries of the apostle; who often lay in wait for him, and opposed him, and gave him trouble in all places, stirring up the people against him: or from the false teachers, and those of their party, who are the false brethren by whom he often was in perils; who were enemies of the cross of Christ, and great hindrances to the spread of the Gospel; being men of absurd principles, and of wicked lives and conversations, whereby they perverted the Gospel of Christ, brought a reproach upon it, stumbled some, and overthrew the faith of others; and from these the apostle desires to be delivered:

for all men have not faith: no man has faith of himself, it is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; and it is only given to the elect of God, who are ordained unto eternal life, and therefore it is called the faith of God's elect; all mankind have it not, none but Christ's sheep; and the reason why others have it not is, because they are not of his sheep. This is a truth; but rather the true sense of the words is, that all that are professors of religion, and members of churches, and even all that are preachers of the word, have not faith. They may have an historical and temporary faith and the faith of

miracles, and even all faith but the true faith; they may profess to believe, and yet not believe, as Simon Magus, and his followers seem to be intended here; for this is given as a reason why the apostle desired to be delivered from the above men. The Jews say [f14], that

> “he that studies not in the law, atwnmyhm hyb wal, “there is no faith in him” — and it is forbidden to come near him, or to trade with him, or to walk with him, “because there is no faith in him”.”

The apostle seems to allude to this custom.

Ver. 3. *But the Lord is faithful*, &c.] Or “God” as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, as do also the Alexandrian and Claromontane copies. This is said for the comfort of the saints, lest they should be discouraged upon hearing that all professors of faith in Christ had it not, who might be ready to take it to themselves, and fear, that either they had it not, or if they had, that they might lose it, and fall from it. Wherefore the apostle observes to them the comfortable attribute of God's faithfulness, which he will not suffer to fail. He has promised many things, and he is faithful that has promised, who also will do them, nor will any good thing he has promised ever fail.

Who shall stablish you: in the doctrines of the Gospel, so as not to be moved away from them, or be finally and totally seduced by those unreasonable and wicked men; and also in the grace of faith, which though it may be weakened, and there may be a falling from a degree of the steadfastness of it, as to its act and exercise, yet it shall never finally and totally fail, he who is the author will be the finisher of it; and likewise in the profession both of the doctrine and grace of faith, which true believers shall hold fast unto the end; for God will not suffer the righteous to be moved, or to depart from him; he has promised them perseverance, and he is faithful to give it to them.

And keep you from evil: from the evil of sin; not from the being and commission of it entirely, which is not to be expected in this life; but from the dominion of it, at least from its reigning unto death, and from the damning power of it: and also from that evil one Satan; from his snares and temptations, so as to be entangled and overcome by them; for God is faithful, who will not suffer his to be tempted beyond their strength, but will enable them to bear it, and make way for their escape, and deliver out of it; and likewise from evil men, unreasonable and wicked men, so as not

to be drawn aside by them, by their principles and practices, by their frowns or flatteries.

Ver. 4. *And we have confidence in the Lord touching you*, &c.] The ground of confidence concerning them was not in themselves, in their grace, and strength, and wisdom, and conduct, and good behaviour; but in the Lord, in his grace and strength, and in the power of his might, without whom they could do nothing, but through him strengthening them, could do all things.

That ye both do, and will do the things which we command you; referring both to the commandments, which they had already given them by Christ, and they had showed, and continued to show a proper regard unto, (see 1 Thessalonians 4:1,2) and also to what would be observed to them, as in (2 Thessalonians 3:6,12).

Ver. 5. *And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God*, &c.] By which may be meant either the love with which God is loved. This is the sum and substance of the first and chief commandment in the law, and is what every man in a state of nature is destitute of; it is implanted in the heart in regeneration, and is a fruit of the Spirit of God; and where it is it oftentimes grows cold, and needs to be stirred up and reinflamed, by the Spirit of God, which may be intended, by a directing of the heart into it, that is, to a lively exercise of it: or else the love with which God loves his people is designed, which is free, sovereign, unchangeable, and from everlasting to everlasting; and to have the heart directed into this, is to be led into it directly; or by a straight line, as the word signifies, and not in a round about way, by works and duties, as the causes or conditions of it; and to be led further into it, so as to wade into these waters of the sanctuary, from the ankles to the knees, and from thence to the loins, and from thence till they become a broad river to swim in; or so as to comprehend the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of this love, and to be rooted and grounded in it, and firmly persuaded of interest in it; and that nothing shall separate from it; and so as to have the heart sensibly affected with it. The phrase of directing the heart to God, and to seek him, is used in the Septuagint, in (2 Chronicles 19:3 20:33). And this is not to be done by a believer himself, nor by the ministers of the Gospel: the apostle could not do it, and therefore he prays “the Lord” to do it; by whom is meant the Spirit of God, since he is distinguished from God the Father, into whose love the heart is to be directed, and from Christ, a

patient waiting for whom it is also desired the heart may be directed into; and since it is his work to shed abroad the love of God in the heart, and to lead unto it, and make application of it; and which is a proof of his deity, for none has the direction, management, and government of the heart, but God, (Proverbs 21:1), and in this passage of Scripture appear all the three Persons; for here is the love of the Father, patient waiting for Christ, the Spirit and the Lord. For it follows, as another branch of the petition,

and into the patient waiting for Christ; or "patience of Christ", as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it; and may intend either that patience, of which Christ was the subject; and which appeared in his quiet submission to all that outward meanness he did in his state of humiliation; in bearing the insults and reproaches of men, and the frowardness of his own disciples, in suffering himself to be tempted by Satan; and in bearing the sins of his people, the wrath of God, and strokes of justice in the manner he did: and for the saints to have their hearts directed into this patience of Christ, is of great use unto them, to endear Christ unto, them; to lead them into the greatness of his love, and also of his person; and to make them more patient under the cross, when they consider him, and have him for an example. Or else it may respect the grace of patience, which he is the author of, for all grace comes from him; and he from hence may be called the God of patience, as his word, which is the means of it, is the word of his patience; and it is by his strength that saints are strengthened unto all patience, and longsuffering: and to be directed into this, or to the exercise of it, is of great use under afflictions from the hand of God, and under the reproaches and persecutions of men, and under divine desertions, and want of an answer of prayer, and under the temptations of Satan, and in an expectation of the heavenly glory. And the heart is never more in the exercise of this, than when it is directed into the love of God; (see Romans 5:2-5). Or this may refer to that patience of which Christ is the object, and be understood, either of a patient bearing the cross for his sake; for every believer has a cross to take up and bear for Christ, and which is to be borne constantly, cheerfully, and patiently; and nothing more strongly animates to such a patient bearing of it, than a sense of the love of God; so that a being directed into that, leads also to this: or as our version points out the sense, it may be understood of a patient waiting for the second coming of Christ. Christ will certainly come a second time, though when he will come is uncertain; and his coming will be very glorious in itself, and of great advantage to the saints: hence it becomes them, not only to believe it,

hope for it, love it, and look for it, but to wait patiently for it; which being directed to by the Spirit of God, is of great use unto them in the present state of things.

Ver. 6. *Now we command you, brethren*, &c.] The apostle is now come to the main thing itself he has in view in this part of the epistle, which is to encourage a regard to the discipline of God's house; and to exhort this church to excommunicate, or remove from communion, all disorderly persons; and those who are to do this he points out, and calls upon, and even commands; and these are the fraternity, the "brethren", the society of believers, all the members of the church; for to them to whom belongs the power of receiving members, to them only belongs the power of excluding offenders: the executive power lies in the hands of the elders or pastors of churches; they are the persons by whom the church receives or casts out members; but the power of judgment, or of determining who shall be received into, or who shall be removed from communion, lies in the church, and not in the pastors and elders only; whoever therefore take upon them to receive, or refuse, or cast out members of themselves, and at their own pleasure, act the part of Diotrephes, (3 John 1:9,10). The authority for removing disorderly persons from communion is an apostolical command, "we command you"; who are the apostles of Christ, immediately sent by him, who had their mission and commission from him, and which were confirmed by miracles; these had a greater power and authority than the ordinary ministers of the word; they were the ambassadors of Christ, stood in his stead, represented him, and acted in his name; what they said, he spake by them; and it was all one as if he had spoke it himself: and that this might appear not to be of them, but of him, it is added,

in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; that is, by his power and authority, if they had any regard to that, or to his honour and glory:

that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly; by a brother is meant, not one in a natural or civil sense, who is so by blood, or by neighbourhood, by being of the same country, or of the same human species, since all are of one blood; but one in an ecclesiastical sense, a church member, who is called a brother, though he may not be really a child of God, one of the brethren of Christ, or born of the Spirit; yet being a fellow citizen with the saints, and of the household of God externally, he bears this character; and such an one only is cognizable by a church, who

have nothing to do to judge them that are without, only them that are within: and "every brother" in this sense falls under their notice; everyone that is a member, whether male or female, for this word includes both; and as the sisters, as well as the brethren, stand in the same relation, are in the same church state, partake of the same ordinances, and enjoy the same privileges, they are obliged to regard the same rules of the Gospel, and duties of religion, and, in case of disorder, to be withdrawn from: and this also regards every brother, of whatsoever state or condition, bond or free, high or low, rich or poor; no partiality is to be used, no preference to be given to one above the other; a poor member in a disorder is not to be bore hard upon, while a rich one is winked and connived at: and it also respects the brethren, whether private members, or officers of the church; for not only the former, but also the latter, when they walk disorderly, whether in the discharge of their office, or in any other part of their conduct, are liable to the notice and censure of the church: and which is only to be done when any of them "walk disorderly"; not for every disorder they are guilty of; there is no man lives without sin; and church members have their infirmities, and will have, as long as they are in the flesh, or in the body; and they are not to be made offenders for a word, or for a single disorder, or for the common infirmities of life; nor are the just to be set aside for a thing of nought, or a small offence, and that not continued in: it is one thing to be guilty of a disorder, and another thing to walk disorderly; which denotes a way, a course, a series of disorder, and proceeding on in it, a going from evil to evil, an increasing to more ungodliness; for walking is a progressive action, and disorderly persons do not stop, but grow worse and worse; for they take pleasure in their disorders; they choose their own ways, and delight in their abominations; the paths of sin are pleasant paths to them: and they are disorderly walkers, who pertinaciously and stubbornly continue in their disorders, notwithstanding the admonitions of private persons, and of the whole church; and of this sort there are such that walk disorderly in the world, in the commission of notorious and scandalous sins, such as uncleanness, intemperance, covetousness, &c. and that walk disorderly in families; as husbands that are not affectionate to their wives, and provide not for their household; and wives that are not in subjection to their husbands; parents that provoke their children to wrath; and children that are disobedient to their parents; masters who give not that which is fit and equal to their servants; and servants that despise their masters because they are brethren, when they should serve them the more cheerfully, because faithful and beloved: and also that walk disorderly in

churches, that fill not up their places, but neglect attendance with the church, on the word and ordinances; and who are contentious and quarrelsome, and will not submit to the sentiments of those who are superior to them in number and sense; and likewise such who entertain bad notions and principles, derogatory to the grace of God, the person and offices of Christ, and the operations of the Spirit; who walk, not in the truth, nor according to the standard of the word of God; and especially such are designed here, who are busy bodies, and idle persons, who work not at all, but live at the tables, and upon the substance of others, as appears from (<scripRef>2 Thessalonians 3:11</scripRef>). These act contrary to the order and decorum of nations, towns, and families, and to that which God has fixed among mankind; and to the example of God, and Christ as God, who work hither to and jointly together in Providence, and in the government of the world; and to the example which Christ, as man, has set, and to the example of the apostles, and to their commands: wherefore it follows,

and not after the tradition which he received of us; meaning either the Gospel of Christ, which being, preached was received, but the walk and conversation of some was not agreeably to it; or the ordinances of the Gospel, and the precepts of religion which the apostles delivered, and were received, and yet due attendance to them was not given; (see Gill on "<scripRef>2 Thessalonians 2:15</scripRef>"), or rather that particular injunction concerning quietness, and doing their own business, and working with their own hands, (<scripRef>1 Thessalonians 4:11</scripRef>). The Vulgate Latin version reads, "which they received of us": the sense is the same; and the Ethiopic version, "and not according to the constitution we appointed them". Now what is commanded to be done to such disorderly persons, by the church, even the whole fraternity, is to "withdraw" themselves from them; by which is meant, not only to distinguish themselves from them by an orderly and regular conversation, and a strict observance of Gospel discipline, which to do is very right; nor barely to curb and restrain the affections towards such persons, lest by carrying it as heretofore, in a kind, tender, and affectionate manner, they should take encouragement from hence to continue in their disorders, as tender parents keep in their affections, and from showing them to their children, when in disorder, and under their corrections, that they might not seem to countenance them in that which is evil, though this is also very proper; nor also merely to contract or shut up the hand to such persons, and refuse to distribute to then, living such an idle life, and in such a disorderly way, though this is what ought to be done; nor does this

phrase only intend a forbidding such persons their houses and their tables, not suffering them to sit at the one, nor even to come into the other, not allowing any company and conversation with them, that they may have no opportunity of indulging their laziness and tale bearing, though so to serve them is highly just and reasonable; nor does it design only a suspension, or a debarring of them from the Lord's table, which ought not to be done to any persons, while they continue in relation to the church, and members of it; but a removal of them from church communion, or an excommunication of them; which is sometimes expressed by rejecting persons, casting them out of the church, and putting them away, and here by withdrawing from them; which are all synonymous phrases, and intend exclusion from the communion of the church. And so the Ethiopic version here renders it, “that ye remove every brother”, &c. From this passage we learn who they are that are to be excommunicated or removed from the communion of churches, all disorderly walkers; what the act of excommunication is, it is a withdrawing from them, a separating them from the church, and its communion; and who they are that have the power to do it, the whole fraternity or body of the church; and also the authority for it, an apostolical command, in the name of Christ.

Ver. 7. *For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us*, &c.] The apostle goes on to dissuade from that which denominates persons disorderly walkers, and exposes them to the censure of the church, and that partly by the example of the apostles, and partly by their command. He appeals to them, to their knowledge and judgment, it being a thing well known to them, that they ought to walk as they had the apostles for ensamples; for who should they follow but their spiritual fathers, shepherds, and guides? and especially so far as they were followers of Christ, as they were, in the case referred unto, working with their own hands:

for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; they could appeal to them as witnesses, and God also, how holily, justly, and unblamably they walked among them; (see <52210>1 Thessalonians 2:10) and particularly, that they did not live an idle and inactive life among them.

Ver. 8. *Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought* &c.] Or freely, at free cost, without paying for it; he signifies, that what they ate, they bought with their own money, and lived on no man, without giving him a valuable consideration for what they had; though if they had not paid in money for their food, they would not have ate it for nought, since they laboured

among them in preaching the Gospel to them; and such labourers are worthy of their maintenance, (<scripRef passage="Luke 10:7" />Luke 10:7) though the former sense is the apostle's here:

but wrought with labour and travail night and day: not only laboriously preaching the Gospel to them, as often as they could have opportunity, but working very hard and incessantly with their hands, at the occupations and trades they had been brought up to; and that of the Apostle Paul's was a tentmaker, at which he sometimes wrought, thereby ministering to his own, and the necessities of others, (<scripRef passage="Acts 18:3 20:34" />Acts 18:3 20:34), nor was this inconsistent with his learning and liberal education. It was usual with the Jewish doctors to learn a trade, or follow some business and calling of life; (see Gill on "<scripRef passage="Mark 6:3" />Mark 6:3"). The apostle's end in this was,

that we might not be chargeable to any of you; or burdensome to them, they being for the most part poor; and the apostles being able partly by their own hand labour, and partly by what they received from Philippi, (<scripRef passage="Philippians 4:16" />Philippians 4:16) to support themselves, chose to that they might not lie heavy upon them, and any ways hinder the spread of the Gospel among them, at its first coming to them. And so Maimonides says the ancient Jewish doctors behaved, and with a like view: wherefore, says he [f15],

> "if a man is a wise man, and an honourable man, and poor, let him employ himself in some handicraft business, even though a mean one, and not distress men (or be burdensome to them); it is better to strip the skins of beasts that have been torn, than to say to the people, I am a considerable wise (or learned) man, I am a priest, take care of me, and maintain me; and so the wise men have ordered: and some of the greatest doctors have been hewers of wood, and carriers of timber, and drawers of water for the gardens, and have wrought in iron and coals, and have not required anything of the congregation; nor would they take anything of them, when they would have given to them."

Ver. 9. *Not because we have not power*, &c.] To forbear working, or require a maintenance from the churches to whom we minister, since Christ has ordained, that they that preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel; (see <scripRef passage="1 Corinthians 9:4-6,14" />1 Corinthians 9:4-6,14). This the apostle says to preserve their right of claim, when and where they should think fit to make use of it; and lest other ministers of the word, who could not support themselves as they did, should be hurt by such an example; and lest covetous men should

make use of it to indulge their sin, and improve it against the maintenance of Gospel ministers: wherefore the apostle observes to them, that they did not do this, as conscious that they had no right to demand a supply from them,

but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us; for it seems there were many idle lazy persons among them, who either had no callings or trades, or did not attend to them; wherefore the apostles wrought with their own hands, to set an example, who could not for shame but work, when they saw persons in so high an office, and of such a character, working with labour and travail, night and day, among them.

Ver. 10. *For even when we were with you*, &c.] At Thessalonica in person, and first preached the Gospel to them,

we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat; the Ethiopic version reads in the singular number, "when I was with you, I commanded you"; using the above words, which were a sort of a proverb with the Jews, and is frequently used by them, lyka al yad, or sygn al y[l, "that if a man would not work, he should not eat" [f16]. And again [f17],

> "he that labours on the evening of the sabbath (or on weekdays), he shall eat on the sabbath day; and he who does not labour on the evening of the sabbath, from whence shall he eat (or what right and authority has he to eat) on the sabbath day?"

Not he that could not work through weakness, bodily diseases, or old age, the necessities of such are to be distributed to, and they are to be taken care of, and provided with the necessaries of life by the officers of the church; but those that can work, and will not, ought to starve, for any assistance that should be given them by the members of the church, or the officers of it.

Ver. 11. *For we hear that there are some*, &c.] This is the reason of the order or command given in (2 Thessalonians 3:6) for withdrawing from disorderly persons. When the apostle was with them, he observed that there were idle persons among them, and therefore gave orders then, that if they would not work, they should not eat; and in his former epistle, having intelligence that there were still such persons among them, he exhorts them to their duty, and puts the church upon admonishing them; and still information is given him, that there were some such persons yet among

them; for as the apostle had the care of all the churches upon him, so he kept a correspondence with them, and by one means or another, by sending messengers to them, or by receiving letters from those he corresponded with, he learned the state of them; and his information was generally good, and what might be depended upon; (see 1 Corinthians 1:11) as it was in this case relating to some persons: which walk among you disorderly; and who they were, and which also explains (2 Thessalonians 3:6), are immediately observed: working not at all; at their callings, trades, and businesses in which they were brought up, but lived an idle and lazy life: and this was walking disorderly indeed, even contrary to the order of things before the fall, when man was in a state of innocence; for before sin entered into the world, Adam was put into the garden of Eden to keep and dress it; man was created an active creature, and made for work and business; and to live without, is contrary to the order of creation, as well as to the order of civil societies, and of religious ones, or churches, and even what irrational creatures do not.

But are busy bodies; though they work not at all at their own business, yet are very busy in other men's matters, and have the affairs of kingdoms, and cities, and towns, and neighbourhoods, and churches, and families, upon their hands; which they thrust themselves into, and intermeddle with, though they have no business at all with them: these wander from house to house, and curiously inquire into personal and family affairs, are tattlers, full of prate and talk, and, like the Athenians, spend all their time in telling or hearing new things; and they also speak things which they should not; they carry tales from one to another, and privately whisper things to the disadvantage of their fellow creatures and Christians, and backbite and slander them. These are the pests of nations and neighbourhoods, the plagues of churches, and the scandal of human nature; (see 1 Timothy 5:13 1 Peter 4:15).

Ver. 12. *Now them that are such*, &c.] For this was not the case and character of them all. Did such practices generally obtain, no community, civil or religious, could subsist. And the apostle wisely distinguishes them from others, that the innocent might not be involved in the charge.

We command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ; using both authority and entreaty; taking every way to reclaim them, commanding in the name of Christ and beseeching for the sake of Christ

that with quietness they work: with their own hands, at their proper callings, and so support themselves, provide for their families, and have something to give to them that are in need; by which means they will live peaceable and quiet lives, in godliness and honesty, and not disturb the peace of neighbourhoods, churches, and families:

and eat their own bread; got by their own labour, and bought with their money, and not the bread of others, or that of idleness.

Ver. 13. *But ye, brethren*, &c.] The rest of the members of the church, who were diligent and industrious in their callings, minded their own business, and did not trouble themselves with other men's matters, took care of themselves, and their families, and were beneficent to others:

be not weary in well doing; which may be understood generally of all well doing, or of doing of every good work; which is well done when done according to the will of God, in faith, and from a principle of love, and in the name and strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God: or particularly of acts of beneficence to the poor; for though the idle and lazy should not be relieved, yet the helpless poor should not be neglected. This the apostle observes, lest covetous persons should make an handle of this, and withhold their hands from distributing to any, under a notion of their being idle and disorderly; or lest the saints should be tired, and become weary of doing acts of charity through the ingratitude, moroseness, and ill manners of poor people; (see Galatians 6:9).

Ver. 14. *And if any man obey not our word*, &c.] Of command, to work quietly, and eat his own bread, now signified "by this epistle", particularly in (2 Thessalonians 3:12),

note that man; some read this clause in connection with the preceding phrase, "by this epistle", or by an epistle; and so the Ethiopic version, "show", or "signify him by an epistle"; that is, give us notice of it by an epistle, that we may take him under our cognizance, and severely chastise him, according to the power and authority given us by Christ; but that phrase rather belongs to the preceding words: and the clause here respects the notice the church should take of such a person; not in a private way, or merely by way of admonition and reproof, such as is given before rejection from communion; but by the black mark of excommunication; lay him under censure, exclude him from your communion, put a brand upon him as a scabbed sheep, and separate him from the flock; and so the Syriac

version renders it, çrpty, “let him be separated from you” and this sense is confirmed by what follows,

and have no company with him; as little as can be in common and civil conversation, lest he should take encouragement from thence to continue in his sin, and lest others should think it is connived at; and much less at the Lord's table, or in a sacred and religious conversation, or in a way of church fellowship and communion:

that he may be ashamed; that he may have his eyes turned in him, as the word signifies, and he may be brought to a sight and sense of his sin, and be filled with shame for it, and loath it, and himself on the account of it, and truly repent of it, and forsake it; and this is the end of excommunication, at least one end, and a principal end of it, to recover persons out of the snare of the devil, and return them from the error of their ways: so the Jews say [f18],

> “in matters of heaven (of God or religion), if a man does not return privately, ^ymylkm, they “put him to shame” publicly; and publish his sin, and reproach him to his face, and despise and set him at nought until he returns to do well.”

Ver. 15. *Yet count him not as an enemy*, &c.] As an enemy of Christ, and the Christian religion, as the Jews and Pagans were; or as an enemy of all righteousness, as Elymas the sorcerer was; as one that has an implacable hatred to good men, and a persecutor of them, and has an utter aversion to them and their principles; nor deal with him in an hostile, fierce, furious, and passionate manner, as if you were seeking his destruction, and not his restoration. This seems to be levelled against the Jews, who allowed of hatred to incorrigible persons: they say [f19],

> “an hater that is spoken of in the law, is not of the nations of the world, but of Israel; but how shall an Israelite hate an Israelite? does not the Scripture say, “thou shall not hate thy brother in thine heart?” the wise men say, when a man sees him alone, who has committed a transgression, and he admonishes him, and he does not return, lo, it is wanwçl hwxm, “a commandment to hate him” until he repents and turns from his wickedness.”

But admonish, or “reprove” him

as a brother; as one that has been called a brother, and a member of the church, and who, though criminal, has no bitterness in him against the church, or against the name of Christ, and the doctrines of Christ; and therefore should not be treated in a virulent manner, but with a brotherly affection, meekness, compassion, and tenderness; and who indeed is to be reckoned as a brother, while the censure is passing, and the sentence of excommunication is executing on him; for till it is finished he stands in such a relation: though this also may have respect, as to the manner of excommunicating persons, so to the conduct of the church to such afterwards; who are not to neglect them, and much less to treat them as enemies, in a cruel and uncompassionate manner; but should inquire, and diligently observe, what effect the ordinance of excommunication has upon them, and renew their admonitions and friendly reproofs, if possible, to recover them.

Ver. 16. *Now the Lord of peace himself*, &c.] The Prince of peace, who is peaceable himself, and the author of peace in all his churches, and who requires peace, calls for it, and encourages it:

give you peace always by all means; both a conscience peace, through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and faith in them, which passes all understanding, and which, when he gives, none can take away; and a church peace, being freed from all such disorderly persons and their abettors, the disturbers of it: and indeed, the way to have true peace and prosperity in churches is to keep up the discipline of God's house. The apostle prays for it in faith, upon an observance of the rules he had given; he prays for constant and perpetual peace, which is greatly to be desired; and that it might be had by all means, and in every way through praying, preaching, administering the ordinances, laying on censures, when necessary, and Christian conversation. Some copies, and the Vulgate Latin version, read “in every place”; as well as at Thessalonica.

The Lord be with you all; by his presence, to comfort and refresh; by his power, to keep and preserve; by his grace, to assist; and by his Spirit, to counsel, advise, and direct.

Ver. 17. *The salutation of Paul with mine own hand*, &c.] In writing his epistles, the body and substance of them he used an amanuensis, but the salutation he wrote with his own hand:

which is the token in every epistle; by which they might be known to be true and genuine, and be distinguished from counterfeit ones: and the rather he mentions this, that they might be troubled neither by word, nor by spirit, nor by epistle, as from them, as they had been, (2 Thessalonians 2:2) for it seems that this wicked practice of counterfeiting the epistles of the apostles, or carrying about spurious ones, under their name, began so early; to prevent which, the apostle took this method,

so I write, as follows:

Ver. 18. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen*.] This was the sign or token; (see Gill on " Romans 16:20") The subscription to this epistle is, "The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Athens"; though it seems rather to be written from Corinth. In the Syriac version it is said,

> "the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, which is written from Laodicea of Pisidia, and sent by the hands of Tychicus."

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Synopsis Sacr. Script. Tom. 2:p. 129.

Ft2 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 63. 2.

Ft3 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 11. 1.

Ft4 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 24. 1.

Ft5 -- Jarchi in <0136>Genesis 36:43.

Ft6 -- Abarbinel in Daniel fol. 42. 3.

Ft7 -- Gratian. Decret. dist. 96. can. “satis”.

Ft8 -- Extrarag. “cum inter”.

Ft9 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 148. 2.

Ft10 -- Apud Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. col. 221, 222, 223.

Ft11 -- Abkath Rochel, par. 1. sign. 7. p. 52.

Ft12 -- In Ohel Moed. fol. 19. 1.

Ft13 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 88. 2.

Ft14 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 33. 2.

Ft15 -- Hilchot Mattanot Anayim, c. 10. sect. 18.

Ft16 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 14. fol. 13. 1. Echa Rabbati, fol. 48. 4. & Midrash Koholet, fol. 65. 4.

Ft17 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 1.

Ft18 -- Maimon, Hilch. Deyot, c. 6. sect. 8.

Ft19 -- Maimon. Hilchot Rotzeach, c. 13. sect. 14.

1 TIMOTHY

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 1 TIMOTHY

Timothy, to whom this epistle is written, was eminent for his early piety and acquaintance with the sacred Scriptures; his mother was a Jewess, and his father a Greek, which was the reason why he was not circumcised in his infancy. Mention is made in the second epistle to him of his mother Eunice, and grandmother Lois, as believers, and of his knowledge of the Scriptures from a child: this excellent person the apostle meeting with at Lystra, and having a good report of him from the brethren there, he chose him to be his companion in his travels, and to assist him in the spread of the Gospel; and knowing that it would be very disagreeable to the Jews to hear the word of God from the lips of an uncircumcised person, he took him and circumcised him, becoming all things to all, that he might gain some. This being done, he went along with him into several parts, and he made great use of him, in preaching the word, planting churches, and writing epistles; he sent him to various places with messages from him, to Corinth, Philippi, and Thessalonica; and now had left him at Ephesus, where he besought him to abide for a while; for that he was the bishop, pastor, or overseer of that church is not likely, since his residence here was not constant, and was afterwards called away from hence by the apostle, who desired his stay there, under whom, and by whose directions, he acted while there; and seeing that this church had elders, bishops, or overseers, whom the Holy Ghost had set over them, whom the apostle called to him at Miletus, and gave them some advice and instructions. The design of Timothy's continuance there was to check growing errors and heresies, and to take care of, and preserve the discipline of God's house; and to charge him with these things was the design of this epistle; in which he teaches him how to behave himself in the church of God, by taking heed to his doctrine and conversation; and gives rules relating to the qualifications of bishops and deacons, and to the care of widows, and with regard to church censures, and the becoming walk and conversation of all sorts of persons of every office, age, sex, rank, and order. This epistle is thought to be written about the year 55.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO 1 TIMOTHY 1

In this chapter, after the inscription and salutation, the apostle having entreated Timothy to abide at Ephesus, observes, that his end was, that he might check the false teachers there, whom he describes; and then he gives an account of his apostleship, and also of his conversion, to the encouragement of sinners, and to the glory of the grace of God; and closes with an exhortation to Timothy to constancy and perseverance in his Christian warfare. The inscription and salutation are in (<5401 01>1 Timothy 1:1,2) and much in the common form; and whereas, when he went into Macedonia, he desired Timothy to continue at Ephesus, his end was, to restrain the false teachers from preaching the doctrine they did, which was contrary to the Gospel, fabulous, useless, and unedifying, (<5401 03>1 Timothy 1:3,4) for though these men set up for teachers of the law, they went off, and strayed from its general end, which was love with faith, through their ignorance of it, (<5401 05>1 Timothy 1:5-7) not but that the law itself was good, as Gospel ministers full well knew; which is said to prevent an objection against them, as laying it aside as useless; but the abuse of it is what is complained of, it being made for some persons, and not for others who are mentioned, between which, and the sound doctrine of the Gospel, there is an agreement, (<5401 08>1 Timothy 1:8-11) which leads on the apostle to observe his call to the office of a preacher of it by Christ, his qualification for it, and investiture with it, for which he gives thanks, (<5401 12>1 Timothy 1:12) And in order to illustrate the grace of God in converting him first, and then making him a minister of the word, he takes notice of his state and condition before conversion, what a vile sinner he had been, and of the abundant grace God bestowed on him in it, (<5401 13>1 Timothy 1:13,14) And that this case of his might not seem strange and incredible, he observes, that this is the sum of the Gospel, that Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners, such an one as he was, (<5401 15>1 Timothy 1:15). And besides, the end of the Lord in his conversion was, by the pattern of longsuffering he showed in him, that others might be encouraged to believe in Christ also, (<5401 16>1 Timothy 1:16) and then for all this grace bestowed on him, he ascribes honour and glory to God, (<5401 17>1 Timothy 1:17) and renews his charge to Timothy to fight manfully against the false teachers, to which he should be

the more induced by the consideration of the prophecies that went before of him, (<5001B>1 Timothy 1:18) and to hold faith and good conscience, which had been dropped by some professors; of which instances are given in Hymenaeus and Philetus, (<5001>1 Timothy 1:19,20).

Ver. 1. *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ*, etc.] His name was well known to Timothy, and very dear to him; and so was his office as an apostle, and which he mentions, not so much for Timothy's sake, but for the sake of others, that what he delivers in this epistle might come with its proper weight and authority, and be regarded: of this his office, as well as name, (see Gill on " <4501>Romans 1:1"). How he came into this office next follows, not of himself, nor by men, but

by the commandment of God; the appointment and decree of God, by which he was separated to this office, even from eternity, and is the same with the counsel or will of God, (<4901>Ephesians 1:1) or it may refer to the order given by the Holy Ghost to the church; to set apart him and Barnabas, to the work of the ministry, (<4413>Acts 13:2) though this commandment is called the commandment of God

our Saviour; by whom is meant God the Father; and this character of him is mentioned, to show that the embassy the apostle was sent on as such, and in which the discharge of his office greatly lay, was the affair of salvation, to publish and declare that to the sons of men; and also to show the concern which God the Father has in that work: he resolved upon it, and appointed his people to it, and determined upon saving them by his Son, whom he pitched upon to be his salvation; he drew the scheme of it by his infinite wisdom, and sent his Son into the world to execute it; and he sends his ministers to publish the Gospel of it, and his Spirit to reveal and apply it to the hearts of his chosen ones; and keeps them by his power unto it, and will at last put them into the full possession of it; so that this character well suits with him, to whom it is also given, (<5304>Titus 3:4) as well as with his Son Jesus Christ, to whom it is more commonly ascribed, and from whom he is here distinguished: for it follows,

and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; who is both the author, and the ground and foundation of the grace of hope of salvation, and eternal life; not earthly enjoyments, nor any external thing whatever; not birth privileges, carnal descent, religious education, morality and civility, obedience to the law of Moses, moral or ceremonial; nor a profession of Christ, nor a bare subjection to his ordinances, but he himself: and there is

good ground to hope for pardon through his blood, which was shed for it; and for justification by his righteousness, which is freely wrought out, and freely imputed; and for salvation by him, since it is in him, and in no other, and is completely effected by him, and that for the worst of sinners, and is wholly of free grace, and which everyone that believes in him shall enjoy; and so for eternal life, which hope is conversant with; and good reason there is for it in Christ, seeing it is in him, and in his gift; what his grace gives a meetness for, and his righteousness a title to; and which he is possessed of in the name of his people, prepares for them, and will introduce them into. The Complutensian edition reads, "of the Father, and, our Saviour Jesus Christ"; and so the Ethiopic version, "of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ".

Ver. 2. *Unto Timothy my own son in the faith*, etc.] Not in the flesh, or by natural descent, but in a spiritual sense, in the faith of Christ; for Timothy was not related to the apostle according to the flesh, as some have thought, but the relation was spiritual; though the apostle was not properly his spiritual father, or the instrument of his conversion; for Timothy was a converted person, and a disciple of Christ, and well reported of by the brethren, when the apostle first met with him, (Acts 16:1,2) but he calls him his son, either because of his age, being a young man; or because of his affection for him, so the Vulgate Latin version reads, "a beloved son"; or rather, because he was instructed more largely by the apostle into the doctrine of faith; and as a son, with a father, served with him in the Gospel of Christ. It may be rendered "a true or genuine son in the faith", in distinction from nominal Christians, formal professors and hypocrites. Timothy was a real Christian, a true believer, and an hearty and upright professor and preacher of the faith of Christ, as well as truly regenerated by the Spirit of God.

Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord; the Arabic version reads, "and Lord Jesus Christ our Lord". The form of salutation is the same as in all the epistles of the apostle, only that "mercy" is here inserted; and when he wishes "grace" to Timothy, he may mean a fresh discovery of the love and free favour of God unto him, and an increase of grace in him, and of the gifts of the Spirit upon him; and by "mercy" he may intend a fresh application of the pardoning mercy of God, through Christ, and all assistance, and success in his work as a minister, and all succour and support under every trial and exercise, and mercy at the last day, or the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life; and by

“peace” he may design peace of conscience through the blood of Christ, and all prosperity, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. And all this being wished for equally from Christ, as from God the Father, is a proof of the proper deity of our Lord.

Ver. 3. *As I besought thee to abide, still at Ephesus*, etc.] Where it seems he now was, being left here by the apostle, and where he was desired by him to continue:

when I went into Macedonia; not when he went his first journey there, for Timothy was then along with him, (<441603>Acts 16:3,12) and so he seems to be in his journey through it, in (<442003>Acts 20:3,4). It may be this may refer to a journey which Luke has given no account of:

that thou mightest charge some, that they teach no other doctrine; than the doctrine of Christ and his apostles; than what had been preached by the apostle at Ephesus, and the saints there had received; than what was agreeably to the Scriptures of truth, and was according to godliness; for all other doctrines must be divers and strange ones: nor would he have them teach in another way, in new words, but hold fast the form of sound words; for new words often produce new doctrines: the apostle perhaps by other doctrine chiefly respects the doctrine of justification by the works of the law. It seems as if there were some teachers in this place the apostle was suspicious of, or he had heard that they began to innovate in the doctrine of faith; wherefore he desires Timothy to continue a while, in order to be a check on these persons, and to charge them not to introduce any new doctrine; for it was only “some”, and not all that taught there, he was so to charge. Some refer this to hearers; and render, the words, “that they follow no other doctrine”; but it seems best to understand it of teachers; the Syriac and Arabic versions render the words as we do.

Ver. 4. *Neither give heed to fables*, etc.] Old wives' fables, (<540407>1 Timothy 4:7) or Jewish fables, (<560114>Titus 1:14) the traditions of the elders; anything that was not true; or if it was, yet idle, vain, trifling, and unprofitable:

and endless genealogies; not of deities, as the Theogony of the Gentiles, or the ten Sephirot or numbers in the Cabalistic tree of the Jews, or the Aeones of the Gnostics and Valentinians, which are said to proceed from one another, as some have thought; but both the public and private genealogies of the Jews, which they kept to show of what tribe they were, or to prove themselves priests and Levites, and the like; of which there was

no end, and which often produced questions and debates. By reason of their captivities and dispersions, they were much at a loss to distinguish their tribes and families. Some care Ezra took of this matter, when the Jews returned from the Babylonish captivity. It is said [f1], that ˆysjwy hrç[,

> "ten genealogies (or ten sorts of persons genealogized) came out of Babylon; priests, Levites, Israelites, profane (or unfit for the priesthood, though they sprung from priests) proselytes, freemen (servants made free), bastards, Nethinim or Gibeonites, such whose father was not known, and those that were took up in the streets."

These Ezra brought up to Jerusalem thus distinguished, that they might be taken care of by the sanhedrim, and kept distinct; but these would often intermix and cause disputes; and sometimes these mixtures were connived at through partiality or fear [f2]

> "Says R. Jochanan, by the temple, it is in our hands, (the gloss adds, to discover the illegitimate families of the land of Israel,) but what shall I do? for lo, the great men of this age are hid (or impure): in which he agreed with R. Isaac, who said, the family that is hid, let it be hid. Abai also saith, we have learned this by tradition, there was a family of the house of Tzeriphah, beyond Jordan, and a son of Zion, (a famous man, a man of authority,) set it at a distance, (proclaimed it illegitimate,) by his authority. And again, there was another, and he made it near (or pronounced it right) by his power. Again, there was another family, and the wise men would not discover it."

By which we may see what management there was in these things, and what a foundation was laid for questions and debates. Of these public and private genealogies, (see Gill on "<4016>Matthew 1:16"), to which may be added what R. Benjamin says [f3] of some Jews in his time, who were the Rechabites, and were very numerous, and had a prince over them of the house of David; and, adds he, they have a genealogical book, twlaç twrgçmw, "and extracts of questions", which I should be tempted to render "clusters of questions", which are with the head of the captivity; and this comes very near to what our apostle here says. And when it is observed, that Herod, that he might hide the meanness of his descent and birth, burnt all the genealogical writings in the public archives [f4], it must be

still more difficult to fix the true account of things; and for the loss of the genealogical book, the public one, the Jews express a very great concern: for they say [f5], that

> “from the time the book of genealogies was hid, the strength of the wise men was weakened, and the light of their eyes grew dim. Says Mar Zutra, between Azel and Azel, (that is, between (1 Chronicles 8:38) and (1 Chronicles 9:44)) there is need of four hundred camel loads of commentaries.”

So intricate an affair, and such an endless business was this. And this affair of genealogies might be now the more the subject of inquiry among judaizing Christians, since there was, and still is, an expectation among the Jews, that in the times of the Messiah these things will be set aright. Says Maimonides [f6],

> “in the days of the King Messiah, when his kingdom shall be settled, and all Israel shall be gathered to him, µlwk ws jyyty, “they shall all of them be genealogized”, according to his word, by the Holy Ghost, as it is said, (Malachi 3:3) he shall purify the sons of Levi, and say, this is a genealogized priest, and this is a genealogized Levite; and shall drive them away who are not genealogized (or related) to Israel, as it is said, (Ezra 2:63). Hence you learn, that by the Holy Ghost they shall be genealogized, those that arrogate and proclaim their genealogy; and he shall not genealogize Israel but by their tribes, for he shall make known that this is of such a tribe, and this is of such a tribe; but he shall not say concerning such an one he is a bastard, and this is a servant; for so shall it be, that the family that is obscure shall be obscure.”

Or else the genealogical account of their traditions may be meant, which they trace from Moses to Joshua, from Joshua to the elders, from the elders to the prophets, from the prophets to the men of the great synagogue, and from one doctor to another [f7], which to pursue is endless, tedious, and tiresome:

which minister questions; as the traditions of the elders, and the genealogical account of them did; the Talmud is full of the questions, debates, contentions, and decisions of the doctors about them:

rather than godly edifying, which is in faith; and which is the principal end of preaching, hearing, and conversation; and that may be called “godly edifying, or the edification of God”, as it may be rendered, which he is the author of, and which he approves of, and is by, and according to his word; or that in which souls are built up an habitation for God, and are built up in faith and holiness, and by an increase of every grace: and this is “in faith”, not only in the grace of faith, but by the doctrine of faith, on which the saints may build one another, and by which they are edified through the faithful ministration of it by the ministers of the word; when fabulous stories and disputes, about genealogies, are useless and unedifying: not that the apostle condemns all genealogies, such as we have in the writings of the Old Testament, and in the evangelists, nor all inquiries into them, and study of them, which, rightly to settle, is in some cases of great importance and use, but the private and unprofitable ones before mentioned. Some copies read, “the dispensation of God, which is in faith”; meaning the dispensation of the mysteries of grace, which are in the doctrine of faith, which becomes a faithful steward of them, and not fables and genealogies, which issue in questions, quarrels, and contentions.

Ver. 5. *Now the end of the commandment is charity*, etc.] By the “commandment” may be meant, the order given to Timothy, or the charge committed to him; (see <5018>1 Timothy 1:18) to forbid the teaching of another doctrine, and to avoid fables and endless genealogies; the end and design of which was to cultivate peace, to maintain and secure brotherly love, which cannot long subsist, when a different doctrine is introduced and received; and to promote godly edification, which is brought about by charity or love, for charity edifies; but is greatly hindered by speculative notions, fabulous stories, and genealogical controversies and contentions: or by it may be intended the ministration of the Gospel, called the commandment, (<5614>1 Timothy 6:14), because enjoined the preachers of it by Christ; the end of which is to bring persons to the obedience of faith, or to that faith which works by love, to believe in Christ, to love the Lord, his truths, ordinances, people, and ways; or rather the moral law is designed, which is often called the commandment, (<4708>Romans 7:8-12) since of this the apostle treats in some following verses; the end and design, sum and substance, completion and perfection of which law are love to God, and love to one another; (see <4022>Matthew 22:36-39 <4508>Romans 13:8,9 <4814>Galatians 5:14), which charity or love, when right,

springs out of a pure heart; which no man has naturally; every man's heart is naturally impure; nor can he make it pure; by the strength of nature, or by anything that he can do: there are some that are pure in their own eyes, and in the esteem of others, and yet are not cleansed from their filthiness, and are inwardly full of all manner of impurity; though there are some that have pure hearts, and they are such, who have clean hearts created in them by the Spirit of God; who are regenerated and sanctified by him; whose hearts are purified by faith; and who have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience by the blood of Christ; and who are not double minded, speak with a heart and a heart, but whose hearts are sincere and upright, and without hypocrisy; so that charity or love, from such a heart, is love without dissimulation, which is not in tongue and words only, but in deed and in truth; it is an unfeigned love, or loving with a pure heart fervently.

And of a good conscience; there is a conscience in every man, that accuses or excuses, unless it is cauterized or seared: but this conscience is naturally evil and defiled, and does not perform its office aright; either it takes no notice of, and is not concerned about sin, and has no remorse for it, or it takes notice of little things, and lets pass greater ones, or speaks peace when destruction is at hand: a good conscience is a conscience purified by the grace of God, and purged from dead works by the blood of Christ; under the influence of which a man acts uprightly in the discharge of his duty, and exercises a conscience void of offence towards God and man; and charity, proceeding from such a conscience, is of the right kind: and of faith unfeigned; with which a man really, and from the heart, believes what he professes; so did not Simon Magus, and all other temporary believers, whose faith is a feigned faith, a dead and inactive one; whereas true faith is an operative grace, it is attended with good works, and particularly it works by love: and that charity or love, which springs from faith unfeigned, is unfeigned love also, such as answers the design, and is the substance of the commandment. These words may be considered in a gradation, or as a spiritual genealogy, in opposition to the endless ones before mentioned, thus; that charity which is the end of the commandment comes out of a pure heart, out of which proceeds a good conscience, and from thence faith unfeigned. But the other way of interpreting seems best.

Ver. 6. *From which some having swerved*, etc.] The apostle, in this verse and the next, describes the persons he suspected of teaching other doctrines, and of introducing fables and endless genealogies; they were such who departed from the above things; they erred from the

commandment, or law, notwithstanding their great pretensions to a regard unto it; at least they missed the mark, the end and design of it; they went astray from that, and instead of promoting charity or love, created feuds, contentions, and divisions in the churches; and were far from having a pure heart, being filthy dreamers, and sensual persons, destitute of the Spirit of God, and were such who put away a good conscience, and made shipwreck of faith: such were Hymenaeus, Philetus, Alexander, and others, of whom he also says, they

have turned aside to vain jangling; which he elsewhere calls empty talk, and vain babblings, (<5060>1 Timothy 6:20 <5516>2 Timothy 2:16), from the solid doctrines of the Gospel, and a solid way of handling them, they turned to vain, idle, useless, and unprofitable subjects of discourse, and to treating upon subjects in a vain, jejune, and empty manner; entertaining their hearers with foolish and trifling questions and answers to them about the law, and with strifes about words, which were unserviceable and unedifying; they were unruly and vain talkers, (<5010>Titus 1:10).

Ver. 7. *Desiring to be teachers of the law*, etc.] They were very fond of being called Rabbi, Rabbi, and styled doctors of the law, and of being thought to have skill in interpreting the law, and good talents in expounding it, and preaching upon it; which was now most in vogue, and gained the greatest applause, when the preaching of the Gospel was treated with contempt, not only by the unbelieving Jews, but by judaizing Christians, and carnal professors.

Understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm: they did not understand the law, the nature and end, the purity and spirituality, and perfection of it, which they were so fond of teaching, and went into many foolish and unlearned questions about it; (see <5523>2 Timothy 2:23 <5009>Titus 3:9), and which they as foolishly answered: these are the ignorant and unlearned men, who, notwithstanding their vain show of learning, and pretence to skill in interpreting the law, wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction, and that of others; they were ignorant of the things they talked of, and knew not by what arguments to confirm them, and yet were very bold and confident in their assertions: and generally speaking so it is, that those who can prove least assert most, and that with the greatest assurance.

Ver. 8. *But we know that the law is good*, etc.] The apostle says this to prevent an objection that might be made to him, that seeing he bore so hard

on such who were fond of being teachers of the law, he was himself against the law, and the preaching and proper use of it; but this he would not have concluded, for he and his fellow labourers in the ministry, and all true believers know, from the Scriptures of truth, from the agreement of the law with the Gospel, and from their own experience, that the law is good, provided it be used in a lawful way, and to lawful purposes: and this is to be understood not of the ceremonial law, which was now disannulled, because of the weakness and unprofitableness of it, so that there was no lawful use of that; but of the moral law, which must needs be good, since the author of it is God, who is only good; and nothing but good can come from him: the law, strictly moral, is a copy of his nature, transcribed out of himself, as well as with his own hands; and is a declaration of his will, and is stamped with his authority, and therefore must be good: the matter of it is good, it contains good, yea, great and excellent things; the matter of it is honestly and morally good, as to love mercy, do justice, and walk humbly with God: and it is pleasantly good to a regenerate man, who loves it, and delights in it after the inner man, and serves it with his spirit; though the carnal mind cannot be subject to it, but rejects it, and rebels against it: and it is also profitably good; for though obedience to it is not profitable to God, yet it is to men; and though eternal life is not obtained hereby, nor any reward given for keeping it, yet in keeping it there is a reward; and that peace is enjoyed, which the transgressors of it are strangers to: it is good in the uses of it, both to sinners and to saints. To sinners it is useful for the knowledge of sin, to convince of it, and bring them to a sense of it, and concern for it, which is effectually done, when the Spirit of God sets in with it, or brings this commandment home to the heart; and if it has not this use, it is sometimes a means of restraining men from sin, which is the use of civil laws among men; and if it has not this, it is of use however to accuse men rightly of sin, and to pronounce justly guilty before God for it, to curse them as they deserve it, and to sentence to condemnation and death: and to believers it is of use, though they are not under it as in the hands of Moses, and as a covenant of works, and are freed from its curse and condemnation, and under no obligation to seek for life and righteousness by it; to them it is of use, to point out to them what is the will of God, and what should be done, and not done; and it is a rule of walk and conversation to them, as in the hands of Christ; and is as a glass to them to behold their own deformity, the impurity of their nature, the plague of their own hearts, and the imperfection of their obedience; by which they see the insufficiency of their own righteousness, how far they

are from perfection, and what carnal creatures they are, when compared with this law: and as this serves to put them out of conceit with themselves, so it tends to make Christ and his righteousness more lovely and valuable in their esteem; who has wrought out a righteousness as broad and as long as the law is, and by which it is magnified and made honourable, and has delivered them from its curse and condemnation. And this law is good as it is holy, in its author, nature, and use; and as it is just, requiring just things, and doing that which is just, by acquitting those who are interested in Christ's righteousness, and in condemning those that have no righteousness; and as it is a spiritual and perfect law, which reaches the spirit and soul of man, and is concerned with inward thoughts and motions, as well as outward actions; and especially the end of it, the fulfilling end of it is good, which is Jesus Christ, who was made under it, came to fulfil it, and has answered all the demands of it: so that it must be good, and which cannot be denied,

if a man use it lawfully; for if it is used in order to obtain life, righteousness, and salvation by the works of it, or by obedience to it, it is used unlawfully: for the law does not give life, nor can righteousness come by it; nor are, or can men be saved by the works of it; to use the law for such purposes, is to abuse it, as the false teachers did, and make that which is good in itself, and in its proper use, to do what is evil; namely, to obscure and frustrate the grace of God, and make null and void the sufferings and death of Christ. A lawful use of the law is to obey it, as in the hands of Christ, the King of saints, and lawgiver in his church, from a principle of love to him, in the exercise of faith on him, without any mercenary selfish views, without trusting to, or depending on, what is done in obedience to it, but with a view to the glory of God, to testify our subjection to Christ, and our gratitude to him for favours received from him.

Ver. 9. *Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man*, etc.] No man is naturally righteous since Adam, excepting the man Christ Jesus: some that are righteous in their own opinion, and in the esteem of others, are not truly and really so; none are righteous, or can be justified in the sight of God by the works of the law; those only are righteous men, who are made so through the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them: and such a righteous man is here intended, who believes in Christ with the heart unto righteousness, who lays hold on Christ's righteousness, and receives it by faith; in consequence of which he lives soberly, righteously, and godly,

though not without sin, since there is no such just man upon earth. Now for such a man the law was not made; which must be understood not of its original constitution and make, for it was certainly made for, and given to Adam, who was a righteous man, and was written upon his heart in a state of innocence; and who had a positive law made also for him, and given to him as a trial of his obedience to this: it was also delivered to the Israelites on Mount Sinai, who were, many of them, at least, righteous men; and besides all this, the law was made for Jesus Christ; he was the end, the mark, and scope at which it aimed, and for whose sake it was given to Israel, that he might be made under it, and fulfil it. Nor does this expression deny all use of the law to a righteous man, which has been pointed out on the preceding verse, but only removes an unlawful use, and a wrong end of the law: it never was made with any such view as to obtain righteousness by it; for, a righteous man, as Adam, in innocence, and all that are justified by Christ's righteousness, need it not for such a purpose, because they are already righteous; and sinners can never attain to righteousness by it, since it cannot give life unto them: it is made therefore not for the former with the view now mentioned, but for the latter, and that both for the restraining of sin, and punishing of sinners. The words δικαιω νομος ου κειται, may be rendered, “the law does not lie upon a righteous man”, or against him. It does not lie as a weight or burden on him; its precept does not lie on him, as a task to be performed; nor does its penalty, the curse, lie on him as a punishment to be bore by him: it does not lie upon him, nor against him, as an accusing law, its mouth is stopped by the righteousness of Christ, by which he is denominated a righteous man; nor as a terrifying law, and bringing into bondage by its threats and menaces; nor as a rigorous law, obliging to obedience in a forcible and compulsive way; seeing there is no need of it, the righteous man delights in it, and cheerfully serves it, and the love of Christ constrains him to obey it freely. And much less does it lie on him, or against him as a cursing or condemning law, since Christ has redeemed him from the curse of it.

But for the lawless and disobedient; by the “lawless” are meant, not the Gentiles, which were without the written law, but such who have it, and despise and reject it, and live not according to it, but transgress it: and “the disobedient” design such who are not subject to it: who are sons of Belial, children without the yoke; who cast the law of the Lord behind their backs; who are not, nor can they be subject to it, without the powerful and

efficacious grace of God. Now the law lies upon, and against such persons, as an accusing, terrifying, cursing, and condemning law.

For the ungodly, and for sinners; by the “ungodly” are intended, such as are without God in the world, who neither fear God, nor regard man, who neglect and despise the worship of God, and say to him, depart from us, (<18214>Job 21:14,15) and by “sinners” are designed notorious ones, who are exceeding great sinners, always sinning, making sin their constant business and employment; on and against these the law lies:

for unholy and profane: such are unholy persons, who are destitute of inward principles of truth and holiness, and who live unholy lives and conversations; and “profane” persons are those who profane the name of the Lord by cursing and swearing, and who profane his day, doctrines, and ordinances, and live dissolute and profane lives, being abandoned to all sin and wickedness; these three couples of wicked men, expressed in general terms, seem to have respect greatly to the moral part of the four precepts of the decalogue, as the following particulars do to the other six:

for murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers; though there is no law that expressly mentions this, yet is beyond all doubt a breach both of the fifth and sixth commands; and if cursing parents, and disobedience to them, were punishable by the law with death, then much more the murder of them; (see <03209>Leviticus 20:9 <05218>Deuteronomy 21:18) though the words will bear to be rendered, “for strikers of fathers, and strikers of mothers”; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions render them, and against this there was an express law, (<02215>Exodus 21:15). According to the Pompeian law, one guilty of parricide was to be sewed up in a sack with a dog, a cock, a viper, and an ape, and cast into the sea, or into a river[f8]:

for manslayers, guilty of the murder of any man, which was always punishable with death, and was a breach of the sixth command; (see <01906>Genesis 9:6 <02013>Exodus 20:13 21:12).

Ver. 10. *For whoremongers*, etc.] Fornicators and adulterers, who were transgressors of the seventh command, (<02014>Exodus 20:14 <03210>Leviticus 20:10) these God will judge, and such shall have their portion in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone:

for them that defile themselves with mankind; who are guilty of sodomy; such, according to the law, were to die, (<03522>Leviticus 18:22 20:13) the wrath of God was revealed from heaven in a very visible and remarkable

manner against this abomination, by raining fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and upon the cities of the plain, who defiled themselves in this way:

for men stealers; who decoyed servants or free men, and stole them away, and sold them for slaves; see the laws against this practice, and the punishment such were liable to, in (<2121 16>Exodus 21:16 <5240 7>Deuteronomy 24:7). This practice was condemned by the Flavian law among the Romans [f9], and was not allowed of among the Grecians [f10]; the death with which such were punished was strangling, according to the Jews [f11]:

for liars; who speak what is false, against their own knowledge and conscience, and with a design to deceive; who lie against their neighbours, and act falsely and deceitfully in trade and merchandise, as well as speak that which is not true; (see <3302 2>Leviticus 6:2)

for perjured persons; who take a false oath on any account, and bear false witness against their neighbour. Now upon, and against all, and each of these, the law lies, as an accusing, threatening, and cursing law:

and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; the law lies against it, takes notice of it, charges with it, condemns and punishes for it: by "sound doctrine" is meant the doctrine of the Gospel, which is in itself pure and incorrupt, and is the cause of soundness and health to others; it is health to the navel, and marrow to the bones; its doctrines are the wholesome words of Christ, and by them souls are nourished up unto eternal life; when the errors and heresies of men are in themselves rotten and corrupt, and also eat as do a canker. Here it may be observed, that there is an entire harmony and agreement between the Gospel and the law, rightly understood and used; what is contrary to the one, is also to the other; the Gospel no more countenances sin than the law does; and whatever is repugnant to the Gospel is liable to be punished by the law.

Ver. 11. *According to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God*, etc.] For no doctrine is sound, but what is agreeable to that: this is a very great encomium of the Gospel. The doctrine preached by the apostles was not only Gospel, or good news, and glad tidings, but the Gospel of God; of which he is the author, and which relates to his glory, the glory of all his perfections; which reveals his purposes, shows his covenant, and exhibits the blessings and promises of it; and is the Gospel of the blessed God, who is blessed in himself, and is the fountain of blessedness to others; and

particularly he blesses his chosen ones with spiritual blessings, and which are set forth and declared in the Gospel; for which reason this epithet seems to be given to God here: and it is a glorious one; it discovers the glory of God, of his wisdom, grace, and love in the salvation of men; its doctrines of peace and pardon, righteousness and salvation by Jesus Christ, are glorious ones; and so are its promises, being great and precious, all yea and amen in Christ, absolute, unconditional, unchangeable, and irreversible; its ordinances also are glorious ones, being amiable and pleasant, and not grievous and burdensome to believers; and it is glorious in its effects, being the power of God unto salvation, the means of enlightening the blind, of quickening the dead, of delivering men from bondage and servitude, of turning men from sin and Satan to God, and of refreshing and comforting distressed minds, and of reviving the spirits of drooping saints, of establishing and strengthening them, and nourishing them up to eternal life. The apostle adds,

which was committed to my trust: to distinguish this Gospel from another, from that of the false teachers, which was an inglorious one, and he had nothing to do with; and to show the excellency and worth of it; it being valuable, was deserving of care and keeping, and was a depositum the person intrusted with was faithfully and carefully to keep and preserve.

Ver. 12. *And I thank Jesus Christ our Lord*, etc. l The subject matter of this thanksgiving being the apostle's call to the ministry of the word, and his furniture and fitness for it, shows, that while others were fond of being teachers, and called doctors of the law, he esteemed it an high honour and special favour bestowed upon him, that he was a preacher of the Gospel; and that all his gifts and abilities for it were not of himself, nor from men, but were owing to the free grace of God, and favour of Christ; wherefore he gloried not in them, as if he had not received them, but gives Christ the glory of them, and thanks to him for them;

who hath enabled me; who gave him all his abilities for the preaching of the Gospel, and all that strength to perform the various parts of labour and service he was called unto, and all that firmness, resolution, and fortitude of mind he was endued with, to bear and suffer what he did for the sake of Christ and his Gospel.

For that he counted me faithful; not that he was so antecedent to the grace and gifts bestowed on him by Christ, or that Christ foresaw that he would be so, and therefore chose him for his service; but he counted him faithful,

having made him so by his grace, and thus he kept him; faithfulness being a necessary requisite and qualification for a Gospel minister, he having a great trust committed to him, being made a steward of the manifold grace and mysteries of God:

putting me into the ministry. The ministry of the word, the work of the ministry, or preaching of the Gospel, the dispensation or administration of it to the sons of men; this he did not thrust himself into, nor take this honour to, and of himself; nor was he put into it by men, but was chosen to it of God, and called unto it by the Spirit, and was placed in it by Christ himself, who in person appeared to him, and made a minister of him; (see <45001>Romans 1:1 <44015>Acts 9:15) (<44132>Acts 13:2 26:16). The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, “his ministry”, the ministry of Christ.

Ver. 13. *Who was before a blasphemer*, etc.] Of the name of Christ, contrary to which he thought he ought to do many things; and he not only blasphemed that name himself, calling him an impostor and a deceiver, but he compelled others to blaspheme it also, (<44609>Acts 26:9,11). This, as well as what follows, is said, to illustrate the grace of God in his conversion, and call to the ministry:

and a persecutor: for not content to speak evil of Christ, of his person, people, truths, and ordinances, he acted against them; not only breathed out against the disciples threatenings and slaughter, but did many evil things to them, and destroyed them which called on the name of Christ; persecuted Christ in his members, and them beyond measure, even unto death, (<44901>Acts 9:1,5,13,21 22:4 <48013>Galatians 1:13)

And injurious; not barely using contumelious and reproachful words of Christ, and his people, which is the sense of some versions, and seems to be included in the first character; but using force and violence, and doing injury, not only to the characters, but persons and properties of the saints, making havoc of the church, haling men and women out of their houses, and committing them to prison; and now it was that Benjamin ravined as a wolf, the apostle being of that tribe; (see <44803>Acts 8:3 <01427>Genesis 49:27).

But I obtained mercy: the Vulgate Latin version reads, “the mercy of God”; God had mercy on him, unasked and unsought for, as well as unmerited; God had mercy on him when he was in the career of his sin, and stopped him; and of his abundant mercy begat him again to a lively hope of forgiveness and eternal life; and through his great love quickened him,

when dead in trespasses and sins; and according to the multitude of his tender mercies, forgave and blotted out all his iniquities; and put him openly among his children, his family and household; and to all this added the grace of apostleship: he put him into the ministry, and, of a blaspheming and injurious persecutor, made him a laborious, faithful, and useful preacher of the Gospel.

Because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. This is said, not as an extenuation of this sin, or as an excuse for himself; for this was not the apostle's method, since in the next verse he calls himself the chief of sinners; besides, ignorance is not an excuse but an aggravation of sin, especially when there are means of knowledge, and these are not attended to; and when persons are not open to conviction, and reject the fullest evidence, which was the case here: nor can unbelief be pleaded in such a man's favour, who heard what Stephen had to say; and though he could not resist his wisdom, received not the truth spoken by him, but consented to his death; moreover, all sins spring from ignorance, and are aggravated by unbelief: but this phrase describes the apostle's state and condition; he was a poor, blind, ignorant bigot, an unbelieving and hardened creature, and so an object of mercy, pity, and compassion; and he who has compassion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way, had compassion on him. He indeed did not know that Jesus was the Christ, or that his followers were the true church of God; he really thought he ought to do what he did, and that, in doing it, he did God good service; he had a zeal, but not according to knowledge; and therefore did not sin wilfully and maliciously against light, and knowledge, and conscience, and so not the sin against the Holy Ghost; as some of the Pharisees did, and therefore died without mercy, and were not capable subjects of mercy, and proper objects of it; nor is it ever extended to such: but this not being the case of the apostle, mercy was of sovereign good will and pleasure vouchsafed to him; his ignorance and unbelief were not a reason or cause of his obtaining mercy, which is always shown in a sovereign way; but a reason, showing, that that was mercy that was vouchsafed to him, since he was such an ignorant and unbelieving creature. It is a good note of Beza's on the place, “en merita preparationis quae profert apostolus”; “what works, merits, previous qualifications and preparations were there in the apostle, fitting him for the grace and mercy of God”, seeing in the midst of his sins, and in the full pursuit of them, the grace of God laid hold upon him, and mercy was shown him? there is

nothing between his being a blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurious person, an ignorant unbeliever, and his obtaining mercy.

Ver. 14. *And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant*, etc.] That is, the love of Jehovah the Father; so the Ethiopic version reads, “the grace of God”; of God the Father, since he is distinguished in the text from Jesus Christ. God is abundant in grace and goodness; he is rich and plenteous in mercy; there is an overflow of love in his heart to his chosen people, and in conversion it flows out, and abounds and superabounds; (see Romans 5:20)

with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus; these are the effects of the love and favour of God displayed in conversion, or which the grace of God brings along with it, and implants in the soul at that time, as it did in the apostle; for by “faith” is not meant the faithfulness of God to his Son, and to his covenant, oath, and promise, which now began visibly to be made good; nor the faith of the Gospel committed to the apostle's trust, which was an high favour; but the grace of faith, which is a pure gift of God, and a distinguishing instance of his grace; for all men have it not, only his elect; and is a most precious and excellent grace, and of great use and importance: it receives every blessing from Christ, and gives him all the glory; through it much peace, joy, and comfort are enjoyed here, and with it is connected eternal life and salvation hereafter: and by “love” also is meant, not the love with which God loves his people, for that is designed by the grace of our Lord, though there is a very great display of that in conversion, which is a time of love; but the internal grace of love, even love to God, to Christ, and to his people, which the apostle was before destitute of; but now instead of unbelief he had faith, and instead of rage and madness against Christ, and the saints, his soul was filled with love to both. The Arabic version reads, “with my faith, and my love”. The phrase, “which is in Christ Jesus”, denotes either that the spring of these graces is in Christ, and that they come from him, in whom all fulness dwells; or that he is the object of them, in which they centre, and on whom they are exercised, and particularly that love to the saints was shown for his sake.

Ver. 15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation*, etc.] This is said, lest it should be thought strange, or scarcely credible, that so great a sinner should be saved; as well as to give a summary of the glorious Gospel the apostle was intrusted with; and in opposition to fables, endless genealogies, and vain jangling, and contentions about the law. The doctrine

of Christ's coming into the world, and of salvation by him, as it is the sum and substance of the Gospel, so it is a “faithful saying”; in which the faithfulness of God is displayed to himself, and the perfections of his nature, his holiness, justice, love, grace, and mercy; to his law, which is magnified, and made honourable; to his word of promise hereby fulfilled; and to his Son in carrying him through the work: and the faithfulness of Christ is discovered herein, both to his Father with whom, and to his friends for whom, he engaged to obtain salvation; and the faithfulness of ministers is shown in preaching it, and of other saints in professing it, and abiding by it: it is a true saying, and not to be disputed or doubted of, but to be believed most firmly; it is certain that God the Father sent his Son into the world for this purpose; and Christ himself assures us, that he came for this end; his carriage to sinners, and his actions, testified the same; his works and miracles confirm it; and the numberless instances of sinners saved by him evince the truth of it: and it is “worthy of all acceptation”; or to be received by all sorts of persons, learned, or unlearned, rich or poor, greater or lesser sinners; and to be received in all ways, and in the best manner, as the word of God, and not man; with heartiness and readiness, and with love, joy, and gladness, and with meekness, faith, and fear, and by all means; for it is entirely true, absolutely necessary, and suitable to the case of all, and is to be highly valued and esteemed by those who do approve and accept of it. It is the Christian Cabala, or the evangelical tradition, delivered by the Father to Christ, by him to his apostles, and by them to the saints, by whom it is cordially received. The apostle seems to allude to the Cabala of the Jews, their oral law, which they say [f12] was delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai, and by him to Joshua; and by Joshua to the elders; and by the elders to the prophets; and so from one to another to his times: but here he suggests, that if they would have a Cabala, here is one, that is firm, and true, and certain, and worthy to be received, whereas the Jewish one was precarious, yea, false and untrue. Indeed, sometimes the words of the prophets are so called by them; so that passage in (Joel 2:13) is called hlbq, “Cabala” [f13], some thing delivered and received; upon which one of their commentators [f14] has these words,

> “whatever a prophet commands the Israelites, makes known unto them, or exhorts them to, is a Cabala.”

And if a prophetic command or admonition, then surely: such an evangelical doctrine, as follows, is entitled to this character,

that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; Christ came into the world, being sent by his Father, but not against his will, but with his free consent: he came voluntarily in the fulness of time into this sinful world, where he was ill treated; and this was not by local motion, or change of place, but by assumption of nature; and the end of it was, that he might be the Saviour of lost sinners, as all men are, both by Adam's sin, and their own transgressions; though he came not to save all, for then all would be saved, whereas they are not; and if he came to save them, he must have then so far lost his end; but he came to save sinners, of all sorts, even notorious sinners, the worst and chief of sinners: and the apostle instances in himself,

of whom I am chief; or “first”; not that he was the first in time; Adam was the first man that sinned, though Eve was before him in the transgression: it is a most stupid notion, that some gave into from this passage, as if the soul of Adam passed from one body to another, till it came to Paul, and therefore he calls himself the first of sinners: but his meaning is, that he was the first in quality, or the greatest and chiefest of sinners, not only of those that are saved, but of all men, Jews or Gentiles; and this he said not hyperbolically, nor out of modesty, but from a real sense or apprehension he had of himself, and his sins, which were made exceeding sinful to him; or he was the chief of sinners, and exceeded all others in his way of sinning, in blaspheming the name of Christ, and persecuting his saints, otherwise his conversation was externally moral, and in his own, and in the opinion of others, blameless: he was no fornicator, adulterer, thief, extortioner, etc. but in the above things he went beyond all others, and was a ringleader in them; and the remembrance of these sins abode with him, and kept him humble all his days; he was always ready to acknowledge them, and express his vileness and unworthiness on account of them: hence he here says, not “of whom I was”, but “of whom I am chief”. Now such sinners, and all sorts of sinners, Christ came to save from all their sins, original and actual; from the law, its curse and condemnation; from the bondage of Satan, the evil of the world, and wrath to come, and from every enemy; and that, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, by fulfilling the law, bearing its penalty, offering himself a sacrifice for sin, thereby finishing it, making reconciliation for it, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness: and a great Saviour he is, and an only one; a full, suitable, able, and willing Saviour; a Saviour of the soul, as well as of the body, and of both with an everlasting salvation.

Ver. 16. *Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy*, etc.] Though so great a sinner, and even the chief of sinners:

that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering; not that the apostle was the first that was converted upon Christ's coming to save sinners; for there were many converted before him, and very great sinners too, and he speaks of himself as one born out of due time; unless it can be thought that he was the first of the persecutors of the church, upon the death of Stephen, that was converted: but the word “first” is not an “adverb” of time, but a “noun” expressing the character of the apostle, as before; and the sense is, that in him, the first or chief of sinners, Jesus Christ exhibited an instance of his abundant longsuffering exercised towards his elect for their salvation; he waiting in the midst of all their sins and rebellions to be gracious to them; and of this, here was a full proof in the Apostle Paul: what longsuffering and patience were showed, while he held the clothes of them that stoned Stephen, when he made havoc and haled men and women to prison, and persecuted them to death? and this was done,

for a pattern to them that should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting; either to those of his fellow persecutors, or of others in that age, who should be made sensible of their sins, and by this instance and example of grace be encouraged to believe in Christ for life and salvation; or to all awakened and convinced sinners then, and in every age, who from hence may conceive hope of salvation in Christ for themselves, though ever so great sinners; since such patience and longsuffering were exercised towards, and such grace bestowed upon, one that had been a sinner of the first rank and size, yea, the chief of sinners: in him was delineated the grace of God, and in his conversion it was painted in its most lively colours; and a just representation is given of it, for the encouragement of the faith and hope of others in Christ. Christ is here represented as the object of faith; and true faith regards him, looks unto him, and deals with him for eternal life and salvation. Our countryman, Mr. Mede, thinks that the sense is, that the conversion of the Apostle Paul was a pattern of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day; and his thought seems to be a very good one: the apostle's conversion is a pledge and earnest of theirs, and showed that God had not cast away all that people; and carries in it some likeness and agreement with theirs: as his, theirs will be in the midst of all their blindness and unbelief; and when they have filled up the measure of their sins; and they will be a nation born at once, suddenly, and by the immediate power

and grace of God, without the ministry of the word, which they will not hear: thus they will be converted as he was, and become as hearty lovers and friends of the Gentile churches.

Ver. 17. *Now unto the King eternal*, etc.] This doxology, or ascription of glory to God, on account of the grace bestowed upon the apostle, may be considered, either as referring to all the three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, who are the one and only God; and to whom all the attributes of wisdom, power, eternity, immortality, or incorruptibleness, and invisibility, belong; and who are jointly concerned in the grace bestowed upon any of the sons of men. Or else to God the Father, in agreement with a parallel place in (<4516 27>Romans 16:27) who is the only true God, in opposition to nominal and fictitious deities, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit; and to whom the several epithets here used may be unquestionably given: he has shown his wisdom in the works of creation, providence, and grace; he is the everlasting King, or the King of ages, or of worlds; he is Maker of the worlds, and the Governor of them throughout all ages and generations; he only has immortality, and is the incorruptible God, and who is invisible, whose shape has never been seen, nor his voice heard: or else this may be thought to belong to Jesus Christ, since it is to him the apostle gives thanks for putting him into the ministry; and from him he obtained mercy, and received abundant grace; and he it was who came into the world to save sinners, and who showed forth all longsuffering in him, (see <5401 2>1 Timothy 1:12-16), upon which the apostle breaks out into this attribution of glory and honour, and which agrees with (<6012 5>Jude 1:25). And everything here said is applicable to him; he is the eternal King, whose is the kingdom of nature, providence, and grace; his throne is for ever and ever, and of his kingdom and government there is no end; he is the "King of ages", as the phrase may be rendered, and so his kingdom is called µymlw[lk twklm, "the kingdom of all ages", (<1951 3>Psalm 145:13) and which endures throughout all generations; and this distinguishes him from all other kings. Scarce any king ever reigned an age, but Christ has reigned, and will reign throughout all ages. No regard is here had, as some have thought, to the Aeones of the Gnostics and Valentinians; but rather the apostle adopts a phrase into his doxology, frequently used by the Jews in their prayers, many of which begin after this manner;

> "blessed art thou, O Lord our God, µlw[h Ælm "the king of the age, or world", etc."

and µymlw[h lk ˆwbr, “Lord of all ages, or worlds”, etc. [f15]. Other attributes and epithets follow, as

immortal or “incorruptible”. Christ is the living God, and the living Redeemer; and though he died as man, he will die no more, but ever lives to make intercession for his people, and to reign over them, and protect them: who also may be said to be “invisible”, who was so in his divine nature, till manifest in the flesh; and now in his human nature he is taken out of the sight of men, and is not to be beheld with bodily eyes by men on earth: and he is

the only wise God; he is “the only God”, so the Alexandrian copy, the Syriac and Vulgate Latin versions, read; not to the exclusion of the Father or Spirit, but in opposition to all false deities, or those who are not by nature God: and he is the only wise God; who is wisdom itself, and of himself; and is the fountain of wisdom, both natural and spiritual, unto others; wherefore to him be

honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen. Christ is crowned with honour and glory, and he is worthy of it; and it becomes all men to honour the Son, as they do the Father: he is the brightness of his glory, and equal to him; and the glory of deity, of all the divine perfections, and works, and also worship, should be given him; as well as the glory of salvation, and of all the grace the sons of men partake of; and that not only now, but to all eternity.

Ver. 18. *This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy*, etc.] After a digression the apostle had made concerning himself, his conversion, and call to the ministry, he returns to his former subject, and original design, and renews the charge he gave to Timothy; and which was not only an order to charge others to teach no other doctrine than that of the Gospel; but includes the charge of preaching it himself, and intends the glorious Gospel of the blessed God committed to his trust, and the whole form of sound words he had heard of him, and which he had charged him to keep pure and incorrupt: and this was done,

according to the prophecies which went before on thee; by which are meant, not the prophecies of the Old Testament, though of these Timothy had a considerable share of knowledge from a child, and was hereby greatly qualified to have such a charge committed to him; but then these were not prophecies concerning him, but the Messiah, his person, office,

kingdom, and grace: nor are any particular revelations made unto the Apostle Paul concerning Timothy intended, of which there is no account; the revelations and visions he had, related not to men, and their characters, but to doctrines; rather the testimonies of the brethren at Lystra and Iconium, and the good reports they made of him to the apostle, which promised and foreboded future usefulness, are designed; though it seems best of all to understand these prophecies of such as were delivered out by the prophets in the church, for such there were in those times; who, when Timothy was a child, or a youth, foretold that he would have great gifts bestowed upon him, and would be a very useful, diligent, laborious, and successful preacher of the Gospel; and therefore the apostle mentions these to stimulate him the more to the discharge of his work, that he might answer the prophecies concerning him: for he adds,

that thou by them mightest war a good warfare: that is, that in consideration of the charge committed to him, and the prophecies that went before of him, might be the more industrious to fulfil his ministry, is signified by a warfare, in allusion to the service of the Levites, which is so called, (<04>Numbers 8:24) with zeal and courage, faithfulness and integrity: for not that warfare is intended, which is common to all believers; who being enlisted as volunteers under Christ, the Captain of their salvation, and having on the whole armour of God, fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil; and are more than conquerors through him that has loved them: but that warfare, which is peculiar to the ministers of the word; whose business it is more especially to fight the good fight of faith, and as good soldiers of Christ, to endure hardness for the sake of him, and his Gospel; and who, besides the other enemies, have to do with false teachers; and their warfare lies in publishing and defending the Gospel of Christ, and in contending for it, and in the weakening of Satan's kingdom, and enlarging the kingdom of Christ; and for which the weapons of their warfare are peculiarly made, and are eminently succeeded; and when they are used to such good purposes, by the ministers of the Gospel, they war a good warfare.

Ver. 19. *Holding faith, and a good conscience*. etc.] By “faith” is meant, not the grace of faith, but the doctrine of faith, a sense in which it is often used in this epistle; (see <54>1 Timothy 3:9 4:1 5:8) and the “holding” of it does not intend a mere profession of it, and a retaining of that without wavering, which is to be done by all believers; but a holding it forth in the ministry of the word, in opposition to a concealing or dropping it, or any

part of it; and a holding it fast, without wavering, and in opposition to a departure from it or any cowardice about it and against all posers: to which must be added, a good conscience; the conscience is not naturally good, but is defiled by sin; and that is only good, which is sprinkled by the blood of Christ, and thereby purged from dead works; the effect of which is an holy, upright, and becoming conversation; and which seems to be chiefly intended here, and particularly the upright conduct and behaviour of the ministers of the Gospel, in the faithful discharge of their work and office: (see <470112>2 Corinthians 1:12 <581318>Hebrews 13:18 <540309>1 Timothy 3:9).

Which some having put away; that is, a good conscience; and which does not suppose that they once had one, since that may be put away which was never had: the Jews, who blasphemed and contradicted, and never received the word of God, are said to put it from them, (<441346>Acts 13:46) where the same word is used as here; and signifies to refuse or reject anything with detestation and contempt: these men always had an abhorrence to a good conscience among men, and to a good life and conversation, the evidence of it; and at length threw off the mask, and dropped the faith they professed, as being contrary to their evil conscience: though admitting it does suppose they once had a good conscience, it must be understood not of a conscience cleansed by the blood of Christ, but of a good conscience in external show only, or in comparison of what they afterwards appeared to have: and, besides, some men, destitute of the grace of God, may have a good conscience in some sense, or with respect to some particular facts, or to their general conduct and behaviour among men, as the Apostle Paul had while unregenerate, (<442301>Acts 23:1) and which being acted against, or lost, is no instance of falling from the true grace of God, which this passage is sometimes produced in proof of:

concerning faith have made shipwreck; which designs not the grace, but the doctrine of faith, as before observed, which men may profess, and fall off from, and entirely drop and lose. Though supposing faith as a grace is meant, the phrase, “have made shipwreck of it”, is not strong enough to prove the total and final falling away of true believers, could such be thought to be here meant; since persons may be shipwrecked, and not lost, the Apostle Paul was thrice shipwrecked, and each time saved; besides, as there is a true and unfeigned, so there is a feigned and counterfeit faith, which may be in persons who have no true grace, and may be shipwrecked, so as to be lost.

Ver. 20. *Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander*, etc.] The former of these is mentioned in (<5017>2 Timothy 2:17,18) and that part of faith he made shipwreck of, or erred in, was the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, whereby the faith of some nominal believers was overthrown; and this was attended with the putting away of a good conscience, he seemingly before had; for his profane and vain babblings increased to more ungodliness: the latter seems to be the same with Alexander the coppersmith, who did the apostle much evil, (<5014>2 Timothy 4:14) and it may be is the same with him who was at Ephesus when the apostle was, there, (<4193>Acts 19:33,34) and where he might be now with Hymenaeus, with whom he might agree in his erroneous opinions, and therefore are particularly mentioned, Ephesus being the place where Timothy now was. It seems by their names that they were both Greeks; Alexander is a known name among the Greeks, since the times of Alexander the great, and even became common among the Jews; (see Gill on "<4006>Acts 4:6"), and Hymenaeus was a name among the Grecians, from Hymen, the Heathen god of marriage: one of this name is mentioned among those said to be raised from the dead by Aesculapius [f16]; there was also a bishop of Jerusalem of this name [f17].

Whom I have delivered to Satan; not by excommunication, which is the act of a church, and not of a single person; but by an apostolical power he had of delivering the bodies of men into the hands of Satan, by him to be tortured and afflicted, in order to bring them to a sense of their sins, and as a chastisement and correction for them, and a token of God's displeasure at them; (see Gill on "<4605>1 Corinthians 5:5").

That they may learn not to blaspheme; or "that being chastised", corrected, or disciplined, "they might not blaspheme", as they had before done; either by words, contradicting, reviling, and scoffing at the doctrine of the resurrection; or by their unbecoming lives and conversations, giving themselves great liberty in sinning, supposing there was no truth in that doctrine; whereby they not only blasphemed the Christian religion themselves, but caused it to be evil spoken of by others.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO 1 TIMOTHY 2

In this chapter the apostle exhorts to prayer for all sorts of men, gives rules and directions about the dress of women, and their subjection to their husbands; and concludes with some comfort to them. The apostle exhorts to prayer in the first place, directs to the several parts and branches of prayer, and points to the persons to be prayed for, and what should be prayed for on their account, (54001 Timothy 2:1,2). And next follow the reasons or arguments engaging to it, which are taken from the agreeableness of it in the sight of God; from the will of God, that all men should be saved: from there being but one God of all, and one Mediator between God and men; from Christ's giving himself a ransom price for all; and from the apostle being a preacher of the Gospel to the Gentiles, as well as Jews, (54001 Timothy 2:3-7) wherefore he concludes and determines, according to his apostolical power and authority, that prayer be made in any place, provided there were faith and purity, and wrath and doubting were laid aside, (54001 Timothy 2:8). Also, he exhorts women to appear, especially in public service, in a modest and becoming dress, and to adorn themselves with good works, (54001 Timothy 2:9,10), and that they should be silent learners, and not teachers, and be in subjection to their husbands, (54001 Timothy 2:11,12). The reasons of which subjection are taken from the formation of Adam before Eve, and from Eve's being deceived, and not Adam, (54001 Timothy 2:13,14). However, for the comfort of women, it is observed, that though in sorrow they bring forth children, yet through the birth of a Son, the promised Messiah, they shall be saved, who continue in faith, charity, and holiness, with sobriety, (54001 Timothy 2:15).

Ver. 1. *I exhort therefore, that first of all*, etc.] The two principal parts of public worship, being the ministry of the word and prayer; and the apostle having insisted on the former, in the preceding chapter, in which he orders Timothy to charge some that they teach no other doctrine than that of the Gospel, gives an account of his own ministry, and call to it, and of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to his trust, and stirs up Timothy to the faithful and diligent discharge of his work and

office; now proceeds to the latter, to prayer, and exhorts unto it; either Timothy in particular, for so read the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, “I exhort thee”, or “desire thee”; or else the church in general; unless it should rather be thought to be a charge to Timothy to exhort, and so Beza's Claromontane copy reads, “exhort thou therefore”: but it is commonly considered as an exhortation of the apostle's, which he was very urgent in: it was what lay much upon his mind, and he was greatly desirous that it should be attended unto; for so the words may be read, “I exhort first of all”, or before all things; of all things he had to say, this was the chief, or it was what he would have principally and chiefly done by others: for this does not so much regard the order of time, that prayer should be made early in the morning, in the first place, before anything else is done, and particularly before preaching, which seems to have been the custom of the primitive saints, (<4031>Acts 4:31) but the pre-eminence and superior excellency of it; though the words may be rendered, “I exhort, that first, the supplications of all be made”: and so may regard public prayer, the prayer of the whole church, in distinction from private prayer, or the prayer of a single person; which is expressed by different words,

supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks: the first of these, “supplications”, signifies such petitions for things that are wanted by men, either by themselves or others; and that either for their bodies or souls, as food and raiment for the one, and discoveries of pardoning love, supplies of grace, spiritual peace, comfort, etc. for the other: and the second word, “prayers”, signifies good wishes and desires, directed and expressed to God for things that are in themselves to be wished for, and desired of God, either for ourselves or others: and the next word, “intercessions”, intends either complaints exhibited in prayer against others that have done injuries; or prayers put up for others, either for the averting of evil from them, or for the bestowing some good thing on them: and the last word, “thanksgivings”, with which requests should always be made known to God, designs that branch of prayer in which thanks are given to God for mercies received, whether temporal or spiritual: and these are to

be made for all men; not only for all the saints, for all the churches of Christ, and, ministers of the Gospel; nor only for near relations and friends, according to the flesh; but for all the inhabitants of the country and city in which men dwell, the peace and prosperity of which are to be prayed for; yea, for enemies, and such as reproach, persecute, and despitefully use the saints, even for all sorts of men, Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, high and

low, bond and free, good men and bad men: for it cannot be understood of every individual that has been, is, or shall be in the world; millions of men are dead and gone, for whom prayer is not to be made; many in hell, to whom it would be of no service; and many in heaven, who stand in no need of it; nor is prayer to be made for such who have sinned the sin unto death, (<61516>1 John 5:16) besides, giving of thanks, as well as prayers, are to be made for all men; but certainly the meaning is not, that thanks should be given for wicked men, for persecutors, and particularly for a persecuting Nero, or for heretics, and false teachers, such as Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom the apostle had delivered to Satan. But the words must be understood of men of all sorts, of every rank and quality, as the following verse shows.

Ver. 2. *For kings, and for all that are in authority*, etc.] For supreme governors, as the emperor of Rome, and kings of particular nations; and for all sub-governors, or inferior magistrates, as procurators or governors of provinces, and proconsuls, and the like; all that were in high places, and acted under the authority of those that were supreme; these are particularly mentioned, the then governors, whether supreme or subordinate, who were avowed enemies, and violent persecutors of the saints; and it might be a scruple with some of them, whether they should pray for them, and therefore the apostle enjoins it; and this in opposition to the notions and practices of the Jews, who used to curse the Heathens, and pray for none but for themselves, and those of their own nation:

that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty; which does not merely design the end of civil government by kings and magistrates, which is to preserve the peace and quiet of the commonwealth; to protect the persons and properties of men, that they may possess their own undisturbed; and to secure to them their civil and religious rights and liberties, that they may have the free use and exercise of religion, signified by “all godliness”; and to encourage morality and virtue, expressed by “honesty”; and so is an argument for prayer, taken from the advantage of civil government: nor does this clause only point out the duty of saints to live peaceably under the government they are, and not disturb it; to mind only their religious exercises among themselves, and behave honestly and morally among men, as they generally speaking are, the quiet in the land; but also expresses the thing to be prayed for; and the sense is, that since the hearts of kings are in the hands of the Lord, and he can turn them as he pleases, prayer should be made to him for them, that he

would either convert them, and bring them to the knowledge of the truth, they now persecuted; or at least so dispose their hearts and minds, that they might stop the persecution, and so saints might live peaceably under them, enjoy their religious liberty, and be encouraged in their moral conversation. The Arabic version renders it, "that they may be preserved": that is, kings, and all in authority. It is a saying of R. Hananiah, or Ananias, the sagan of the priests [f18],

> "pray for the peace or safety of the kingdom (one of their commentators on it adds [f19], even of the nations of the world, which is remarkable, and agrees with the exhortation of the apostle); for if there was no fear of that, men would devour one another alive."

Ver. 3. *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour*.] Not only to live peaceably and quietly under the government men are, since that is the ordination of God, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, which his grace teaches; but to pray for all sorts of men, and for those who are set in the highest place of government, even though enemies and persecutors: this is good in itself, and in the sight of an omniscient God, who sees not as man seeth; and it is acceptable unto him through Jesus Christ, by whom every sacrifice of prayer or praise is so; for by God our Saviour is meant God the Father, who is the Saviour of all men, in a way of providence, and the Saviour of all the elect in a way of special grace; (see Gill on "1 Timothy 2:1").

Ver. 4. *Who will have all men to be saved*, etc.] The salvation which God wills that all men should enjoy, is not a mere possibility of salvation, or a mere putting them into a salvable state; or an offer of salvation to them; or a proposal of sufficient means of it to all in his word; but a real, certain, and actual salvation, which he has determined they shall have; and is sure from his own appointment, from the provision of Christ as a Saviour for them, from the covenant of grace, in which everything is secured necessary for it, and from the mission of Christ to effect it, and from its being effected by him: wherefore the will of God, that all men should be saved, is not a conditional will, or what depends on the will of man, or on anything to be performed by him, for then none might be saved; and if any should, it would be of him that willeth, contrary to the express words of Scripture; but it is an absolute and unconditional will respecting their salvation, and which infallibly secures it: nor is it such a will as is distinguishable into antecedent and consequent; with the former of which it is said, God wills

the salvation of all men, as they are his creatures, and the work of his hands; and with the latter he wills, or not wills it, according to their future conduct and behaviour; but the will of God concerning man's salvation is entirely one, invariable, unalterable, and unchangeable: nor is it merely his will of approbation or complacency, which expresses only what would be grateful and well pleasing, should it be, and which is not always fulfilled; but it is his ordaining, purposing, and determining will, which is never resisted, so as to be frustrated, but is always accomplished: the will of God, the sovereign and unfrustrable will of God, has the governing sway and influence in the salvation of men; it rises from it, and is according to it; and all who are saved God wills they should be saved; nor are any saved, but whom he wills they should be saved: hence by all men, whom God would have saved, cannot be meant every individual of mankind, since it is not his will that all men, in this large sense, should be saved, unless there are two contrary wills in God; for there are some who were before ordained by him unto condemnation, and are vessels of wrath fitted for destruction; and it is his will concerning some, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned; nor is it fact that all are saved, as they would be, if it was his will they should; for who hath resisted his will? but there is a world of ungodly men that will be condemned, and who will go into everlasting punishment: rather therefore all sorts of men, agreeably to the use of the phrase in (<5401>1 Timothy 2:1) are here intended, kings and peasants, rich and poor, bond and free, male and female, young and old, greater and lesser sinners; and therefore all are to be prayed for, even all sorts of men, because God will have all men, or all sorts of men, saved; and particularly the Gentiles may be designed, who are sometimes called the world, the whole world, and every creature; whom God would have saved, as well as the Jews, and therefore Heathens, and Heathen magistrates, were to be prayed for as well as Jewish ones. Moreover, the same persons God would have saved, he would have also

come to the knowledge of the truth: of Christ, who is the truth, and to faith in him, and of all the truth of the Gospel, as it is in Jesus; not merely to a notional knowledge of it, which persons may arrive unto, and not be saved, but a spiritual and experimental knowledge of it; and all that are saved are brought to such a knowledge, which is owing to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God, who hides the knowledge of Gospel truths from the wise and prudent, and reveals them to babes: whence it appears, that it is not his will with respect to every individual of mankind; that they should

thus come to the knowledge of the truth; for was it his will they should, he would, no doubt, give to every man the means of it, which he has not, nor does he; he suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, and overlooked their times of ignorance, and sent no message nor messenger to inform them of his will; he gave his word to Jacob, and his statutes unto Israel only; and the Gospel is now sent into one part of the world, and not another; and where it does come, it is hid to the most; many are given up to strong delusions to believe a lie, and few are savingly and experimentally acquainted with the truths of the Gospel; though all that are saved are brought to the knowledge of such truths as are necessary to salvation; for they are chosen to it through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.

Ver. 5. *For there is one God*, etc.] This does not so much regard the unity of God, with respect to himself, or his divine essence, though that is a truth; but does not carry in it any apparent and forcible reason why all men should be prayed for, for which it is produced; but the unity of God with respect to men, as that there is but one God, who is the Creator of all men, and who, in a providential way, is the Saviour of all men; and in a way of special grace is the one God, the one covenant God of all sorts of men, of Jews and Gentiles; for he has taken of the latter into the covenant of his grace, as well as the former, and has loved them with a special and distinguishing love, has chosen them in Christ to salvation, and has sent his Son to redeem them; and of these he calls by his grace, regenerates, sanctifies, adopts, pardons, and justifies; (see Romans 3:29,30) and therefore all sorts of men, Gentiles as well as Jews, are to be prayed for: another argument follows,

and one Mediator between God and men; a Mediator is of more than one, and has to do with two parties; and these at variance among themselves, between whom he stands as a middle person; his business is to bring them together, and make peace between them; and such an one is Christ: the two parties are God and his elect, who in their natural state are at a distance from God, and at enmity to him, and who have broken his law, and affronted his justice; Christ stands as a middle person, a daysman between them, and lays his hands upon them both; has to do with things pertaining to the glory of God, and makes reconciliation for the sins of the people; brings them that were afar off nigh to God, and makes peace for them by the blood of his cross, by fulfilling the law, and satisfying justice for them; in consequence of this he appears for them in the court of heaven,

intercedes and pleads for them, is their advocate, and sees that all covenant blessings, of which he is the Mediator, are applied unto them, and preserves their persons, which are committed to his care and charge, safe to everlasting happiness; and this Mediator is

the man Christ Jesus; not that he is a mere man, for he is truly and properly God; or that he is a Mediator only according to the human nature: it was proper indeed that he should be man, that he might have something to offer, and that he might be capable of obeying, suffering, and dying, and so of making satisfaction in the nature that had sinned; but then, had he not been God, he could not have drawn nigh to God on the behalf of men, and undertook for them, and much less have performed; nor would his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, have been available to cleanse from sin, to procure the pardon of it, justify from it, make atonement for it, or make peace with God: the reason why he is particularly mentioned as man, is, with a view to the argument in hand, praying for all men; since he who is the Mediator between God and man, has assumed a nature which is common to them all: and this Mediator is said to be one, not so much in opposition to other mediators, angels or saints departed, though it is a truth, and stands full against them, but with respect to men; there is but one Mediator between God and all sorts of men, through whom both Jews and Gentiles have an access to God, and peace with him; and therefore prayer through this Mediator should be made for all. So the Jews say of the Messiah [f20], that he is `y[xma la`, "a Mediator, God", a middle person between God and men. And they call him `aty[xmad adwm[`, "the Pillar of mediation" [f21] or the middle Pillar; that is, the Mediator or Reconciler. And Philo [f22] the Jew speaks of the word, as μεσος, a "middle" person, and standing in the middle between the dead and the living, and between God and men. The Ethiopic version here renders it, "there is one elect of God"; which is one of the characters of the Messiah, (<23A201>Isaiah 42:1).

Ver. 6. *Who gave himself a ransom for all*, etc.] What the Mediator gave as a ransom for men is "himself", his body and his soul, which were both made an offering for sin; and his life, which is the result of union between soul and body; his whole human nature as in union with his divine person, and so might be truly said to be himself: this he gave into the hands of men, of justice and of death; and that voluntarily, which shows his great love to his people; and also as a "ransom", or a ransom price for them, αντιλυτρον, in their room and stead; to ransom them from the slavery of

sin, and damnation by it, from the captivity of Satan, and the bondage of the law, and from the grave, death, hell, ruin, and destruction: and this ransom was given for "all"; not for every individual of mankind, for then all would be delivered, freed, and saved, whereas they are not; or else the ransom price is paid in vain, or God is unjust to receive a sufficient ransom price from Christ, and yet not free the captive, but punish the person for whom he has received satisfaction; neither of which can be said. But the meaning is, either that he gave himself a ransom for many, as in (<400028>Matthew 20:28) for the Hebrew word lk, to which this answers, signifies sometimes many, a multitude, and sometimes only a part of a multitude, as Kimchi observes [f23]: or rather it intends that Christ gave himself a ransom for all sorts of men, for men of every rank and quality, of every state and condition, of every age and sex, and for all sorts of sinners, and for some out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, for both Jews and Gentiles; which latter may more especially be designed by all, as they are sometimes by the world, and the whole world; and so contains another argument why all sorts of men are to be prayed for, since the same ransom price is given for them; as that for the children of Israel was the same, for the rich as for the poor. We [f24] read, that when the people of Israel comforted the high priest upon the death of his wife, or any relation, they used to say to him, Ætrpkwna, "we are thy atonement", expiation, or ransom; that is, as the commentators [f25] explain it, by us thou shalt be atoned, for we will be in thy room and stead, with respect to all things that shall come upon thee; but here the High priest and Mediator is the atonement and ransom for the people:

to be testified in due time; or "a testimony in his own times"; that is, the sum and substance of what is before said is the Gospel, which is a testimony concerning the person, office, and grace of Christ, exhibited in the times of the Messiah, or the Gospel dispensation. Some copies read, "the mystery", which is another word often used for the Gospel; for that that is intended, appears by what follows.

Ver. 7. *Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle*, etc.] He was ordained or appointed to be a preacher of the Gospel from all eternity, and was separated or set apart unto it in time, and was put into the ministry of it by Christ himself, and was not a common or ordinary preacher of the word, but an apostle, an extraordinary officer in the Gospel church.

I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not; which are a sort of an oath, or an appeal to Christ the omniscient God, for the truth of what he said, concerning his ordination to the Gospel; see a like phrase in (<4901>Romans 9:1). The phrase, “in Christ”, is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in three of Beza's ancient copies, and in some others, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions;

a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity; the Gospel of the uncircumcision, or which was to be preached to the uncircumcised Gentiles, was committed to this apostle; and his work and ministry lay among them, and therefore he is called the apostle of the Gentiles: and so he was in faith and verity; which may regard the subject matter of his teachings and ministry; it was the faith and truth of the Gospel, even the whole of it, the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and the truth as it is in Jesus; or else the character of the apostle, as a teacher, that he was a true and faithful one, who with all integrity and veracity, fully and faithfully preached the Gospel; and since he was appointed a teacher of it to the Gentiles, this is another argument why they, as well as the Jews, should be prayed for.

Ver. 8. *I will therefore that men pray everywhere*, etc.] In this declaration of the apostle's will concerning prayer, he only takes notice of “men”; not but that it is both the duty and privilege of women, as well as men, to pray in their houses and closets; but because he is speaking of public prayer in the church, which only belongs to men, he speaks only of them; and his will is, that prayer should be performed by them everywhere, or in any place, in any part of the world where they lived. Now was the prophecy in (<3911>Malachi 1:11) fulfilled, and now was the time come our Lord refers to, (<4021>John 4:21). This seems to be said in opposition to a Jewish notion, that the temple at Jerusalem was the only place for prayer, and that prayer made elsewhere ought to be directed towards that. The Jews say [f26], that

> “there is no way for the prayer of the nations of the world to ascend, seeing the gates of heaven are only opened in the land of Israel. — And again, that the prayers without the land have no way to go up before the Lord, but the Israelites send them without the land opposite Jerusalem; and when they come to Jerusalem, from thence they remove and ascend above. — No prayer ascends above from that place in which it is made, till it come to the land of Israel,

> and from thence to Jerusalem, and from thence to the sanctuary, and then it ascends above."

They have also many rules concerning places of private prayer, as that care should be taken that it be not in a place where there is any filth; or any bad scent [f27].

Lifting up holy hands; lifting up of hands was a prayer gesture among the Heathens [f28], and so it was among the Jews [f29]. R. Simeon lift up his hands in prayer to the blessed God, and prayed his prayer. Yea, they [f30] say,

> "it is forbidden a man to lift up his hands above, except in prayer, and in blessings to his Lord, and supplications, as it is said, (<01422>Genesis 14:22) which is interpreted of lifting up of hands in prayer."

And this was an emblem of the elevation of the heart in prayer to God, without which the former would be of little avail. It is an observation of the Jews [f31], we have found prayer without lifting up of hands, but we never found lifting up of hands without prayer. And these hands must be holy and pure; there must be purity of heart, and cleanness of hands, or a freedom from any governing sin, which renders prayer unacceptable unto God; (see <23015>Isaiah 1:15,16). The apostle alludes to a custom of the Jews, who always used to wash their hands before prayer;

> "Then Holofernes commanded his guard that they should not stay her: thus she abode in the camp three days, and went out in the night into the valley of Bethulia, and washed herself in a fountain of water by the camp. And when she came out, she besought the Lord God of Israel to direct her way to the raising up of the children of her people." (Judith 12:7,8)

So it is said [f32] of the Septuagint interpreters, that after the Jewish manner they washed their hands and prayed. The account Maimonides gives [f33], is this:

> "cleanness of hands, how is it done? a man must wash his hands up to the elbow, and after that pray; if a man is on a journey, and the time of prayer is come, and he has no water, if there is between him and water four miles, which are eight thousand cubits, he may go to the place of water, and wash, and after that pray. If there is between him more than that, he may rub his hands, and pray. But if

> the place of water is behind him, he is not obliged to go back but a mile; but if he has passed from the water more than that, he is not obliged to return, but he rubs his hands and prays; they do not make clean for prayer but the hands only, in the rest of prayers, except the morning prayer; but before the morning prayer a man washes his face, his hands and feet, and after that prays."

But, alas! what does all this washing signify? Unless, as Philo the Jew [f34], expresses it, a man lifts up pure, and, as one may say, virgin hands, to heaven, and so prays.

Without wrath and doubting; or reasoning, or disputation in a contentious way: the former of these, some think, has reference to "murmuring", as the Ethiopic version renders it, impatience and complaint against God in prayer, and the other to doubt and diffidence about being heard, and having the petitions answered; for prayer ought to be with praise to God, and faith in him: or rather "wrath" may intend an angry and unforgiving temper towards men, with whom prayer is made, which is very unbecoming; (see <401523>Matthew 5:23,24 6:10 <600307>1 Peter 3:7) and both that and doubting, or disputation, may have regard to those heats and contentions that were between the Jews and Gentiles, which the apostle would have laid aside, and they join together in prayer, and in other parts of public worship, in love and peace. Maimonides [f35] says, ``men may not stand praying, either with laughter, or with levity, nor with confabulation, "nor with contention, nor with anger", but with the words of the law."

And it is a saving of R. Chanina,

> "in a day of "wrath", a man may not pray [f36]."

Ver. 9. *In like manner also*, etc.] Let the women pray likewise; though they are not to lead in prayer, or be the mouth of the church, which would be indecent, yet they are to join with the church in public prayer; (see <440114>Acts 1:14) and in like manner as the men, with purity of heart and hand, without murmuring and impatience towards God, and without wrath and anger towards others, and in faith, without doubting and distrust: and the apostle proceeds to point out what sort of dress he would have them appear in at the time of prayer, and at any part of public worship; and thus the Ethiopic version renders it, "so let the women be clothed in prayer", namely, as follows;

that women adorn themselves in modest apparel: the word rendered "apparel" signifies a long robe, which reaches down to the feet; and the word translated "modest" signifies that which is clean, neat, and decent, yea, beautiful and ornamental; and the sense of the apostle is, that he would not have them to come to public worship in rags, and in dirty and filthy garments, but that their bodies should be covered with clean and decent raiment; so the Israelites washed their clothes that they might be ready to meet the Lord at Mount Sinai, (<2Exodus 19:14). The Jews always appeared in their best clothes on the sabbath day; this is one of their rules: [f37]

> "for the honour of the sabbath, every man must be clothed, hyyqn twsk, "with clean or neat apparel" and clothing on the weekday must not be as clothing on the sabbath day; and if a man can make no change, he must let down his talith (or upper garment, his cloak); so that his clothing may not be as the clothing of the weekdays, when that was girt up about him."

The apostle adds,

with shamefacedness and sobriety: these are the two general rules by which dress is to be regulated; it is right and proper, when it is consistent with chastity, when it is not immodest and impudent, and more like the attire of an harlot than of a woman professing godliness; and when it is moderate as well as modest, and suitable to a person's age and station, and is not beyond the circumstances of life in which they are. There is no religion or irreligion in dress, provided pride and luxury are guarded against, and modesty and moderation preserved.

Not with broidered hair, or plaited, as in (<1 Peter 3:3), (see Gill on "<1 Peter 3:3"). The Jews had women on purpose for this business; Mary Magdalene is thought to have her name from hence; (see Gill on "<Matthew 27:56"). Or gold, or pearls, or costly array: not that the apostle forbids all use or wear of such things by proper persons, whose circumstances would admit of it, and upon proper occasions, and at proper times: certain it is, that earrings and bracelets of gold, and jewels set in silver and gold, and raiment, costly raiment, were sent by Abraham, and given to Rebekah, and wore by her, who was a woman professing godliness so the church in (<Psalm 45:9,13,14) though in figurative expressions, yet in allusion to what is literal, and honourable, and

commendable, is said to be in gold of Ophir, and her clothing to be of wrought gold, and to be brought to the king in raiment of needlework: but however justifiable such a dress may be at other seasons, the apostle judged it very improper at the time of public prayer, or at the time of public worship; seeing it might swell the heart of the wearer with pride, so as to forget herself and the business she was come about, and draw the eyes of others upon her; and so cause a general inattention. It was a complaint of Chrysostom's many hundreds of years ago, that some who came to public worship, appeared in such a dress, as if they came rather to dance than to pray; such apparel should be avoided: it is said of Pythagoras[f38], that he taught the inhabitants of Crotona, the men literature, and the women chastity and modesty; and by his disputations so far prevailed upon the latter, as to lay aside their garments of gold and other ornaments of their dignity, as instruments of luxury; all which they brought into the temple of Juno, and dedicated them to that goddess; declaring, that shamefacedness or chastity, and not garments, are the true ornaments of matrons.

Ver. 10. *But (which becometh women professing god likeness)*, etc.] By which is meant not any particular grace, was it, the fear of God might be designed, and so the Syriac version renders it; nor the whole of internal religion only; nor the form of godliness, or the whole scheme of Gospel truth, which is according to godliness; nor only outward holiness of life and conversation; but the whole of all this, all religion, internal and external, the whole of godliness, both in a doctrinal and in a practical way. All this, these women the apostle gives directions unto, had made a profession of, and had been baptized upon it, and received members of churches; and as yet held their profession: and such persons, it best became them not so much to adorn themselves with any outward adornings, as

with good works; such as are mentioned in (<52510>1 Thessalonians 5:10 <60303>1 Peter 3:3-5) Good works are like good clothes, to which the apostle alludes; they do not make persons men and women, but they adorn them as such; so good works, they do not make men and women Christians, or believers, but they adorn them as such; they are ornaments to their persons, and to their profession, and to the Gospel they profess. (see <56210>Titus 2:10).

Ver. 11. *Let the woman learn in silence*, etc.] The apostle goes on to give some other instructions to women, how they should behave themselves in public worship, in the church of God; he would have them be learners and not teachers, sit and hear, and learn more of Christ, and of the truth of the

Gospel, and to maintain good works; and he would have them learn in silence, and not offer to rise and speak, under a pretence of having a word from the Lord, or of being under an impulse of the Spirit of the Lord, as some frantic women have done; and if they should meet with anything, under the ministry of the word, they did not understand, or they had an objection to, they were not to speak in public, but ask their own husbands at home; (see <460434>1 Corinthians 14:34,35). And thus, they were to behave

with all subjection; both to the ministers of the word, and to their own husbands; obeying from the heart the form of doctrine delivered to them; and submitting cheerfully to the ordinances of Christ; the whole of which is a professed subjection to the Gospel, and which becomes all professing godliness.

Ver. 12. *But I suffer not a woman to teach*, &c,] They may teach in private, in their own houses and families; they are to be teachers of good things, (<560203>Titus 2:3). They are to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; nor is the law or doctrine of a mother to be forsaken, any more than the instruction of a father; (see <200108>Proverbs 1:8 31:1-4). Timothy, no doubt, received much advantage, from the private teachings and instructions of his mother Eunice, and grandmother Lois; but then women are not to teach in the church; for that is an act of power and authority, and supposes the persons that teach to be of a superior degree, and in a superior office, and to have superior abilities to those who are taught by them:

nor to usurp authority over the man; as not in civil and political things, or in things relating to civil government; and in things domestic, or the affairs of the family; so not in things ecclesiastical, or what relate to the church and government of it; for one part of rule is to feed the church with knowledge and understanding; and for a woman to take upon her to do this, is to usurp an authority over the man: this therefore she ought not to do,

but to be in silence; to sit and hear quietly and silently, and learn, and not teach, as in (<540211>1 Timothy 2:11).

Ver. 13. *For Adam was first formed*, etc.] Immediately by God, out of the dust of the earth; and the breath of life was breathed into him, and he became a living soul; thus wonderfully and fearfully was he made; after this he was put into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and all creatures were

brought to him, to give them names; and still an help meet or a companion was not found for him. All this while Eve was not as yet formed, but after this,

then Eve. She was formed out of him, was made out of one of his ribs; and was formed for him, for his use, service, help and comfort; and here lies the strength of the apostle's reason, why the woman should be in subjection to the man; not so much because he was made before her; for so were the beasts of the field before Adam; and yet this gave them no superiority to him; but because she was made out of him, and made for him, (see <46108>1 Corinthians 11:8,9). So that the woman's subjection to the man is according to the laws of nature and creation; and was antecedent to the fall; and would have been, if that had never been; though that brought her into a lower, and meaner, and more depressed estate; which the apostle next mentions. The words may be rendered, “the first Adam”, or “Adam the first was formed, and then Eve”. (see <46545>1 Corinthians 15:45,47).

Ver. 14. *And Adam was not deceived*, etc.] There is no need to say with interpreters, that he was not deceived first; and that he was not deceived immediately by the serpent, but by Eve; and that he is never said in Scripture to be deceived, as Melchizedek is never said to have a father or mother. The apostle's positive assertion is to be taken without any such limitations or qualifications; Adam never was deceived at all; neither by the serpent, with whom he never conversed; nor by his wife, he knew what he did, when he took the fruit of her, and ate; he ate it not under any deception, or vain imagination, that they should not die, but should be as gods, knowing good and evil. He took and ate out of love to his wife, from a fond affection to her, to bear her company, and that she might not die alone; he knew what he did, and he knew what would be the consequence of it, the death of them both; and inasmuch as he sinned wilfully, and against light and knowledge, without any deception, his sin was the greater: and hereby death came in, and passed on all men, who sinned in him:

but the woman being deceived was in the transgression: and the serpent really beguiled her; she owned it herself, (<010313>Genesis 3:13). And this is elsewhere said of her, (<471103>2 Corinthians 11:3) which never is of Adam. She really thought the serpent spoke truth, that she and her husband should not die, if they ate of the fruit; but that it was good to make them wise; and that, upon eating it, they should be as gods, knowing good and evil; and

under this deception she fell into the transgression, and was the cause and means, by her persuasions and example, of bringing her husband into the same sin; which involved him and all his posterity in ruin and destruction. And therefore she is called by the Jews [f39] ˆw[h µa, "the mother of iniquity and sin"; to which they refer, (<195105>Psalm 51:5). And they say, [f40] she was the cause of death to Adam, and to all the world: (see Gill on "<451512>Romans 5:12"). And they observe [f41] the order of the punishment of the serpent, Eve, and Adam, as of their sin; the serpent was first accursed, then Eve, and last of all Adam. They say [f42]

> "Samael (the devil) could not subvert Adam, till the serpent came and turned the heart of Eve, and Eve turned his heart, and they both sinned; wherefore it is said, "the woman which thou gavest me"; Samael had no power to turn him, till Eve came, and she was the cause of his eating."

Now inasmuch as the serpent did not attack Adam, he being the stronger and more knowing person, and less capable of being managed and seduced; but made his attempt on Eve, in which he succeeded; and since not Adam, but Eve, was deceived, it appears that the man is the more proper person to bear rule and authority, as in civil and domestic, so in ecclesiastic affairs; and it is right for the woman to learn, and the man to teach: and seeing that Eve was the cause of transgression to Adam, and of punishment to him and his posterity, the subjection of the woman to the man was confirmed afresh: and she was brought into a more depressed state of dependence on him, and subjection to him; (see <010316>Genesis 3:16). The Ethiopic version renders the text, "Adam hath not deceived, the woman hath deceived and prevaricated".

Ver. 15. *Notwithstanding she shall be saved*, etc.] Not Eve, though no doubt she is saved; since she had a sense of her sin, and shame for it, a revelation of the Messiah to her, and faith in him; (see <010307>Genesis 3:7,8,15 4:2). But rather any woman, particularly such as profess godliness, who shall be saved

in childbearing; which is to be understood not of a temporal salvation, or being saved through childbearing, through the perilous time, and be delivered out of it; for though this is generally the case, yet not always, nor always the case of good women. Rachel died in childbed: the Jews say [f43], for three transgressions women die in childbearing; because they do not

take care of their menstrues, and of the cake of the firstfruits, and of lighting the lamp (when the sabbath approaches). But spiritual and eternal salvation is here meant; not that bearing children is the cause, condition, or means of salvation; for as this is not God's way of salvation, so it confines the salvation of women to childbearing ones; and which must give an uneasy reflection to maidens, and women that never bore any; but rather the meaning is, that good women shall be saved, notwithstanding their bearing and bringing forth children in pain and sorrow, according to the original curse, in (<01Gn3>Genesis 3:16). And so the words administer some comfort to women, in their present situation of subjection and sorrow; though they may be rendered impersonally thus, “notwithstanding there is salvation through the birth of a son”: and the sense is, that notwithstanding the fall of man by the means of the woman, yet there is salvation for both men and women, through the birth of Immanuel, the child born, and Son given; at whose birth, the angels sung peace on earth, good will to men; through the true Messiah, the deed of the woman, through the incarnate Saviour, who was made of a woman, there is salvation for lost sinners: he was born of a woman, and came into the world in order to obtain salvation for them; and he has effected it, and it is in him, for all such who apply to him for it; and with it all true believers, men and women, shall be saved through him,

if they continue in faith and charity, and holiness, with sobriety. The Vulgate Latin version reads in the singular, “if she continues”, etc. but the sense is the same; for the “she”, or woman, is to be taken in a collective sense, as it is in the context, for many women; even for such as profess faith and godliness. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions render the words, “she shall be saved by her children”, if they continue, etc. i.e. she shall be saved by bearing of children, and bringing of them up in a religious way; if they, the children, continue as they were brought up; which is a very strange rendering of the words, and is as strange an interpretation of them; and yet is what many have given into, but needs no confutation. The meaning of the words is, that there is salvation through the incarnate Messiah, for all sorts of persons; for all men and women who believe in him, with that faith which works by love, and shows itself in holiness and sobriety; provided that they continue herein. For there are some that profess these things, that have only a temporary faith, and feigned love, and not true holiness; and these fall away, and are not saved; but such who

have these graces in truth, as they do, and shall continue in them, so they shall certainly be saved.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO 1 TIMOTHY 3

In this chapter the apostle treats of the qualifications of officers of churches, bishops and deacons, and of their wives; and points at the principal reason of writing this epistle to Timothy: and first, he commends the office of a bishop, as a good and desirable one; and asserts it to be such in the strongest manner, (54001 1 Timothy 3:1) and then follow the qualifications for it, some of which are of the economical or domestic kind, and regard him as an husband and parent, and the head of the family; others of a moral nature, and relate to sobriety, hospitality, temperance, patience, and liberality; and others of the ecclesiastical sort, as aptness to teach, and that he should not be a novice in religion; and in general, that he should be a man of a blameless life, and of good report in the world, (54002 1 Timothy 3:2-7), next an account is given of the qualifications of deacons; some which concern their moral character; others their soundness in the faith; and others their domestic affairs, and their conduct in their families; about which they should be first examined, before they were put into their office; the characters of their wives are also given; and for their encouragement in the faithful performance of their office, it is observed, that they hereby obtain a good degree of honour and boldness in the faith of Christ, (54008 1 Timothy 3:8-13). And the end of the apostle's writing this epistle, and particularly of giving Timothy this account of the qualifications of the officers of the church of God, is, that he might know whom to appoint over it, and how to conduct himself in it; which he commends from its being the house of God, the church of the living God, and the pillar and ground of truth, (54014 1 Timothy 3:14,15). Of which truth he gives a summary, in several particulars of it, which open the great mystery of godliness, (54016 1 Timothy 3:16).

Ver. 1. *This is a true saying*, etc.] Some think this clause belongs to the last verse of the preceding chapter; and then the sense is, this is a doctrine that is true, and to be believed, that there is salvation through the birth of a Son, or through the incarnate Son of God, for men and women that believe in him, and continue in the faith of him, and love to him, joined with works

of righteousness and holiness. And so the same phrase seems to belong to what goes before in (<5408>1 Timothy 4:8,9 <5210>2 Timothy 2:10,11). Though it regards what follows in (<5015>1 Timothy 1:15) and so it seems that it should be considered here; and is used to excite attention, and suggests that what was about to be said was of moment and importance, and what was without controversy, and unquestionably true. The apostle, having denied to women the work and office of teaching, proceeds to observe, that though this belonged to men, yet not to every man; and therefore he gives the qualifications of such; which might serve as a direction to churches, in the choice of them; as well as be a means of stirring up persons in such an office, to a proper regard to themselves and their work:

if a man desire the office of a bishop; which is the same with that of a pastor or elder; and so here the Syriac version renders it, “if a man desires presbytery, or eldership”; and it lies in preaching the word, administering the ordinances of the Gospel, and taking care of the discipline of the church, and in the visiting, inspection, and oversight of it; as the word επισκοπη, “episcopacy”, here used, signifies; and this work and office may be lawfully and laudably desired, with a view to the glory of God, and the good of immortal souls. Nor should any undertake it, but such who find in themselves an hearty desire, and inclination to it, on such principles, and a real delight and pleasure in it; and such an one

he desireth a good work: the office of a bishop, elder, or pastor of a church, “is a work”, and a very laborious one; wherefore such are called labourers in the word and doctrine: it is not a mere title of honour, and a place of profit, but it is a business of labour and care; yet a good one, a famous and excellent one; it being an employment in things of the greatest excellency in themselves, and of the greatest usefulness for the good of men, and the honour of God; as the doctrines, ordinances, and discipline of the Gospel; and so must be excellently, honestly, pleasantly, and profitably a good work.

Ver. 2. *A bishop then must be blameless*, etc.] Or “an elder”, as the Syriac version renders it; not that it can be expected that such an one should be entirely free from sin, or be blameless in the sight of God; but that he should be one, who is so before men, and has not been guilty of any notorious and flagitious crime; and particularly, is not chargeable with the vices hereafter mentioned or hinted at. So the priests under the law were to

be without blemish, even in their bodies, (<21-17>Leviticus 21:17-23) to which the apostle may here allude.

The husband of one wife; which is not to be understood in a mystical and allegorical sense of his being the pastor of one church, since the apostle afterwards speaks of his house and children, that are to be ruled and kept in good order by him, in distinction from the church of God; but in a literal sense of his conjugal estate; though this rule does not make it necessary that he should have a wife; or that he should not marry, or not have married a second wife, after the death of the first; only if he marries or is married, that he should have but one wife at a time; so that this rule excludes all such persons from being elders, or pastors, or overseers of churches, that were "polygamists"; who had more wives than one at a time, or had divorced their wives, and not for adultery, and had married others. Now polygamy and divorces had very much obtained among the Jews; nor could the believing Jews be easily and at once brought off of them. And though they were not lawful nor to be allowed of in any; yet they were especially unbecoming and scandalous in officers of churches. So the high priest among the Jews, even when polygamy was in use, might not marry, or have two wives, at once; if he did, he could not minister in his office until he divorced one of them [f44]. For it is written, (<21-13>Leviticus 21:13), "he shall take a wife", µytç alw tja, "one, and not two" [f45]. And the same that is said of the high priest, is said of all other priests; (see <26-44-22>Ezekiel 44:22), likewise the Egyptian priests might not marry more wives than one, though others might have as many as they pleased [f46]: and so the Flamines among the Romans [f47]. An elder or pastor must also be one that is

vigilant; or wakeful and watchful, who is diligent in his business, and attends to his care and charge; is watchful over himself, his words, and actions; and watches for the souls of men, to do them all the good he can; and is sober in body, is temperate, and uses moderation in eating and drinking; and in mind, is modest, humble, and prudent; and so the Vulgate Latin Version renders the word "prudent": and the Ethiopic version, "a wise man", one of a sound judgment, a good understanding, and prudent conduct; is not wise above what is written, but thinks soberly of himself, as he ought. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, "chaste", as free from intemperance, so from uncleanness: and

of good behaviour: neat and decent in his apparel; modest in his whole deportment and conduct, and affable and courteous to all; beautiful in his

life and conversation, being adorned with every thing that is graceful and comely:

given to hospitality: to the love of strangers, and to the entertainment of them; and especially the saints and fellow ministers, who are exiled, or are travelling for the sake of spreading the Gospel, or upon some lawful and laudable account. These he is to assist by his advice and counsel, and with the necessaries of life, according to his abilities. Abraham and Lot are noted instances of this virtue.

Apt to teach; who has a considerable store of knowledge; is capable of interpreting the Scripture to the edification of others; is able to explain, lay open, and illustrate the truths of the Gospel, and defend them, and refute error; and who is not only able, but ready and willing, to communicate to others what he knows; and who likewise has utterance of speech, the gift of elocution and can convey his ideas of things in plain and easy language, in apt and acceptable words; for otherwise it signifies not what a man knows, unless he has a faculty of communicating it to others, to their understanding and advantage.

Ver. 3. *Not given to wine*, etc.] One that does not sit at it, or is continually drinking it, and is intemperate in the use of it; otherwise it is lawful for persons in such an office to drink wine, and sometimes absolutely necessary; (see 1 Timothy 5:23) it signifies one that is not given to much wine, as in (1 Timothy 3:8) is not addicted to it, or a follower of it; the Syriac version renders it, “who does not transgress over wine”, or go beyond due bounds in the use of it, who is not immoderate in it; the Arabic version renders it, “not insolent through wine”, as one that is heated with it is fierce and furious, and wrangling and quarrelsome, and often very mischievous and injurious; and this sense is followed by some.

No striker; either with his hands, so the Syriac version, “whose hand is not swift to strike”; not one who is nimble and ready at it, who no sooner is abused or injured, but he lifts up his hands and strikes; is but a word and a blow: or with his tongue; so the Arabic version, “not wounding with his tongue”; being too sharp and severe in the admonitions and reproofs of weak brethren, or fallen believers; and especially, he ought not to use scurrilous, reproachful, and contumelious language to any; (see Jeremiah 18:18).

Not greedy of filthy lucre; not covetous of getting money, of amassing wealth and riches together; or desirous of popular applause and glory from men. This clause is not in the Alexandrian copy, nor in five of Beza's manuscripts and other copies, nor is it in the Vulgate Latin version, nor in any of the Oriental versions; it seems to be transcribed from (⁵⁶Titus 1:7). And indeed it is unnecessary here; since the same is expressed by the word "covetous", at the end of the verse, and makes that a tautology; and moreover, by leaving out this clause, the opposition appears more manifest, between "no striker" and what follows,

but patient; one who patiently bears all reproaches and injuries, puts up with affronts, and gives up what is his right and due, rather than contend, quarrel, and strike; who is patient towards all men, and does not bear hard on those that have offended, but is moderate and mild, and gentle in his censures, reproofs, and admonitions:

not a brawler; not a quarrelsome litigious person, given to fighting, either with the fist or sword, or any other weapon:

not covetous; or a lover of money in an immoderate way, greedy of worldly substance and riches, and insatiable in his desires after them; niggardly, sordid, and illiberal; acting a mercenary part; seeking his own things, and not the things of Christ; his gain from his quarter, and not the good of souls; and withholding from himself, from his family, and the poor, what ought to be enjoyed by them. Whereas, on the other hand, he ought to be generous and liberal, hospitable and charitable, and ready to communicate on all occasions, according to his abilities.

Ver. 4. *One that ruleth well his own house*, etc.] His family, wife, children, and servants; and is not to be understood of his body, and of keeping of that under, and of preserving it chaste and temperate, as appears from what follows:

having his children in subjection with all gravity; keeping a good decorum in his family; obliging his children to observe his orders, and especially the rules of God's word; and not as Eli, who did not use his authority, or lay his commands upon his sons, nor restrain them from evil, or severely reprove them for their sins, but neglected them, and was too mild and gentle with them; ⁰⁹*1 Samuel 2:23 3:13* but like Abraham, who not only taught, but commanded his children and his household, to keep the way of the Lord; (⁰¹Genesis 18:19) and so should those act who are in such an

office as is here treated of; and should not only rule well in their families, preside over them, go before them, and set an example to them, and keep their children in obedience and subjection; but this should be "with all gravity": not only in the master of the family, but in the children; who as their father is, or should be, should be brought up in, and used to gravity in words and in dress; and in the whole of their deportment and conversation. This may he observed against the Papists, who forbid marriage to the ministers of the Gospel.

Ver. 5. *For if a man know not how to rule his own house*, etc.] Which is an affair of less importance, and more easy to be done; not requiring so much resolution, prudence, care, and thought:

how shall he take care of the church of God? preside over it, rule in it, provide for it, and see that everything is in its proper place, and done according to the will of God. The argument is from the lesser to the greater.

Ver. 6. *Not a novice*, etc.] Or one newly planted, the Arabic version adds, "in the faith"; meaning not a young man, for so was Timothy himself; but a young professor and church member; one that is lately come to the knowledge of the truth, and has just embraced and professed it, and become a member of a church, a new plant there: so the Hebrew word [jn, "a plant", is by the Septuagint in (<18149>Job 14:9) rendered by this very word. The reason why such a person should not be a bishop, elder, or pastor of a church, is,

lest being lifted up with pride; through the dignity of the office he is advanced to, and the high opinion of men he stands in, and the great gifts qualifying him for such a place, he is supposed to have: for pride on account of these is apt to creep in, and swell and elate the minds of young professors especially; so that there is danger

that he fall into the condemnation of the devil; or "of the slanderer", as the word is rendered in (<540311>1 Timothy 3:11) and the sense then is, lest he should be censured and condemned by such who are given to calumny and detraction, and are glad of any opportunity to reproach and vilify the ministers of the word: but it is better to understand it of Satan; and then the meaning is, either lest such an one fall under the censure and condemnation of the accuser of the brethren; or rather lest he fall into the same condemnation and punishment the devil is fallen into, their crimes being

alike. For it seems from hence, that pride was the first sin of the devil, and the cause of his apostasy from God; being elated with his own knowledge, strength, and dignity; and not being able to bear it, that the human nature should be advanced above that of angels.

Ver. 7. *Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without*, &c,] That is, "without the church", as the Arabic version reads; for wicked men, though they dislike the principles and profession of godly ministers, and despise their office, yet cannot but speak well of their becoming life and conversation. And this part of their character is necessary to invite persons to hear them, and to recommend their ministry to them, as well as for the reasons that follow:

lest he fall into reproach; into the reproach of men; not only of the world, but of professors of religion; who may be apt to upbraid him with his past sins; especially such that may fall under his censures, admonitions, and reproofs, which hereby will become in a great measure useless and ineffectual:

and the snare of the devil; lest Satan should take encouragement from hence to tempt him to other and greater sins; or lest finding himself slighted and despised by the people of God, because of his former sins, he should break out into anger and revenge against them; or into despondency and despair in himself; or should be negligent of his duty, and timorous of exhorting and reproving others, lest they should retort upon him, and reproach him with his former crimes. The Jews have a regard to the wisdom, prudence, gravity, and manners, of a man they appoint as a minister of a congregation. Their rule is this [f48]:

> "they do not appoint a messenger or minister of a congregation, but he who is the greatest in the congregation for wisdom and works; and if he is an elderly man, it is the better; and they take care that the messenger or minister of the congregation be a man whose voice is pleasant, and he is used to read: but he whose beard is not full grown, though he is a very considerable man, he may not be a minister of the congregation, because of the honour of the congregation."

Ver. 8. *Likewise must the deacons be grave*, etc.] The apostle proceeds to give the qualifications, and so the rules for choosing another sort of officers in the church, deacons; whose work and business is, not to preach

the Gospel, and administer ordinances; but to take care of the secular affairs of the church, and particularly to serve tables; to provide the bread and wine for the Lord's table, to attend at it, and distribute the elements from the minister to the people, to collect for it, defray the charges of it, and divide what remains among the poor; and they are to take care of the minister's table, that he is provided for in a comfortable way, and to stir up the members to their duty in this respect; and to take care of the poor's table, and distribute what the church collects for them, with simplicity and cheerfulness; and are to be helps to the pastor, in observing the walk of members, in composing differences between them, in visiting the sick and poor, and in preparing matters for church meetings. Their characters are, that they be “grave”; in their speech, gesture, and dress; honest, and of good report among men; and chaste in their words and actions; all which may be signified by the word here used; and the latter may be rather hinted at, because of Nicholas, one of the first deacons, who was charged with uncleanness:

not doubletongued; whose hearts and tongues do not agree together; and who, being a sort of middle persons between the pastor and the members of the church, say one thing to one, and another to the other; which to do is of bad consequence: or who speak well to the poor when they apply to them, and promise them to do them all the service they can, and when it comes to the upshot speak against them:

not given to much wine; which impairs the health, stupefies the mind, and so renders unfit for any such office, as well as wastes the temporal estate; and may lead them to embezzle and consume the church's stock:

not greedy of filthy lucre; for such would withhold from the poor that which is meet for them, and make use of money in their hands, to their own advantage.

Ver. 9. *Holding the mystery of the faith*, etc.] The doctrine of the Gospel, called the “faith”, because it contains things to be believed; proposes Christ the object of faith; is the means by which faith comes, and is unprofitable without it: it is called “the mystery”, because it is of divine revelation, and could have never been discovered by human reason; and now it is revealed, the modus of many things contained in it remains a mystery; several of the doctrines of it are mysterious ones, particularly the doctrine of the Trinity; and which the ancient Jews call by this very name,[f49] atwnmyhmd azr,

“the mystery of faith”; the incarnation of the Son of God, the union of the saints to Christ, and their communion with him, and the resurrection of the dead, with others. Now this mysterious doctrine of faith is to be held by deacons; they are to profess it, and to hold fast the profession of it and that

in a pure conscience; with a conscience sprinkled by the blood of Christ; with a conscience void of offence both towards God and man; with a suitable life and conversation; a conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ, and by which it is adorned: and this part of their character is necessary, that such may be able to instruct and establish those who are weak in the faith, and oppose and refute the erroneous, and also recommend the Gospel by their own example; otherwise should their principles or practices be bad, their influence on others might be very pernicious and fatal.

Ver. 10. *And let these also first be proved*, etc.] Not that they should be tried in any part of the deacon's office, to see how capable they are of performing it; but their internal and external characters are to be looked into and examined, and if they appear, to be right, then they are to be approved of, chosen and called unto, and invested with the office:

then let them use the office of a deacon; let them be employed and minister in the several parts and branches of that office:

being found blameless; not without sin, but free from any gross and enormous one; not before God, but in the sight of men; (see Gill on “54021 Timothy 3:2”).

Ver. 11. *Even so must their wives be grave*, etc.] Some instead of “wives” read “women”, and understand them of deaconesses, such as were in the primitive churches; whose business it was to visit the poor and sick sisters of the church, and take care of things belonging to them; but it is better to interpret the words of the wives of the deacons, who must be as their husbands, “grave” in speech, gesture, and dress, of an honest report, a good behaviour, and chaste conversation; which will reflect honour and credit to their husbands:

not slanderers; or accusers, and so act like devils, as the word is sometimes rendered; for should they act such a part, and accuse either the poor, or any of the members of the church wrongfully, or on any trifling occasion, as persons addicted to this vice are wont to do, it would be of bad consequence: and they also should be

sober, temperate, not given to wine; excessive drinking is very scandalous in the female sex; and is the rather mentioned here, because women in the eastern countries were too frequently addicted to it:

faithful in all things; as in the marriage bed, so with whatsoever else they are intrusted with in the family, and civil concerns of their husbands; and this is the rather observed, because the wives of deacons may be sometimes intrusted with the church's stock in their husband's absence, to impart to the poor.

Ver. 12. *Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife*, etc.] (See Gill on "1 Timothy 3:2")

ruling their children and their own houses well. These qualifications are the same with those of the bishop or elder; (see Gill on "1 Timothy 3:4").

Ver. 13. *For they that have used the office of a deacon well*, etc.] With diligence and faithfulness, with simplicity and cheerfulness; taking good care of the minister and poor, and of the discipline of God's house:

purchase to themselves a good degree; not an higher office, as that of presbytery or episcopacy, which is a sense calculated to serve a hierarchy; nor a degree in glory and happiness hereafter; but rather an increase of gifts and grace; or a degree of respect and honour in the church: or the sense is, they possess and enjoy, which is the meaning of the word rendered "purchase", a very honourable office in the church; and which is so to them, they using it well, and discharging it in an honourable manner; unless the apostle should design what the Jews called atwnmyhmd agrd, "a degree of faith": [f50] but that is expressed in the next clause:

and great boldness in the faith, which is in Christ Jesus: either in the exercise of the grace of faith at the throne of grace; or in asserting the doctrine of faith before men; and in reproving either for error or immorality: all which may be boldly done by those who use this office well.

Ver. 14. *These things write I unto thee*, etc.] Concerning the offices of bishops and deacons, their several qualifications, and the rules of judging of persons fit for such service:

hoping to come unto thee shortly; at Ephesus. He could not tell whether he could come or not, and therefore makes no promise, but hoped he should;

and since it was uncertain, he thought fit to write the above things for his instruction and use.

Ver. 15. *But if I tarry long*, etc.] Or should long delay coming, defer it longer than may be expected; let it be observed that these things are written,

that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God; that is, the church of God, as it is afterwards explained; called a house, in allusion either to an edifice, it being a spiritual house built of lively stories, or true believers, upon the foundation Jesus Christ, and who also is the door into it; the pillars of it are the ministers of the Gospel; and the windows are the ordinances, and which also are the entertainment in it: or else to a family, as this is sometimes called the household of God, and of faith; the family named of Christ, of which he is the master; and in which are fathers, young men and children; in which ministers are stewards; and which is regulated by good and wholesome laws: and it is called the house of God, because as an edifice, it is of his building and repairing, and in which he dwells; and as a family, is what he provides for. Now the above things were written to Timothy, that he might know bow to order and manage things in this house and family; what became him to do himself, in the character he was; and what persons to direct in the choice of to be officers in it. And of this house it is said,

which is the church of the living God; in opposition to, and distinction from the houses and temples of idols, which are inanimate and senseless creatures; whereas the true God is the living God, has life in himself, essentially, originally, and independently, and is the author and giver of life to others. It is added,

the pillar and ground of the truth; which holds forth the truth to be seen and read of all, as pillars that bear inscriptions; and which supports and maintains truth, as every true church of Christ does so long as it remains so; though truth is the pillar and ground of the church; for if once truth is gone, a church is no more so: rather therefore Timothy himself is here designed; and the sense is, that what was written to him was with this view, that he might the better know how to conduct himself in the church of God, as a pillar and ground of truth, to hold it forth and to secure it: ministers of the Gospel are called pillars, (Galatians 2:9) and that with greater propriety than the church itself, which is before called an house: though it may be best of all to understand it of Christ as incarnate, the

great mystery of godliness; who as he is the ground and foundation of the church, and all believers, so he is the foundation of all true doctrine; and particularly the doctrine of his person, as truly God and truly man, is the pillar and ground which supports all other truths, and without which they fall to the ground: and so this clause may be read in connection with the following words, thus; "the pillar and ground of the truth, and without controversy, is the great mystery of godliness, &c". And this way of speaking is used by the Jews, both of persons and things; so Zebulun is said [f51] to be hrwth dwm[, "the pillar of the law"; and it is said [f52] of

> "the great sanhedrim in Jerusalem, they are the root of the oral law; and they are harwhh ydwm[, "the pillars of doctrine"; and from them go forth the statutes and judgments unto Israel;"

and the same is said of things as of persons. Maimonides says [f53],

> "the foundation of foundations and the pillar of wisdom, is to know that there is a first Being, that gives being to all beings;"

and R. Sangari, another of their writers, says, [f54]

> "there are two things which are hrwth ydwm[, "the pillars of the law"; the one is, that the law is from God; the other is, that it is received with a faithful (or sincere) heart, from the congregation:"

to which may be added, that it is said [f55] that

> "the mystery of faith is "amwyqw arq[, "the root and ground" of the world";"

all which may serve to illustrate this passage.

Ver. 16. *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness*, etc.] What follows is so, the incarnation of Christ, his birth of a virgin, the union of the two natures, divine and human, in his person; this is a mystery, which though revealed, and so to be believed, is not to be discerned nor accounted for, nor the modus of it to be comprehended by reason: and it is a great one, next, if not equal, to the doctrine of a trinity of persons in the divine essence; and is a mystery of godliness, which tends to encourage internal and external religion, powerful and practical godliness in all the parts and branches of it; and is so beyond all dispute and doubt.

God was manifest in the flesh; not God essentially considered, or Deity in the abstract, but personally; and not the first nor the third Person; for of neither of them can this or the following things be said; but the second Person, the Word, or Son of God; (see 1 John 3:8) who existed as a divine Person, and as a distinct one from the Father and Spirit, before his incarnation; and which is a proof of his true and proper deity: the Son of God in his divine nature is equally invisible as the Father, but became manifest by the assumption of human nature in a corporeal way, so as to be seen, heard, and felt: and by "flesh" is meant, not that part of the body only, which bears that name, nor the whole body only, but the whole human nature, consisting of a true body and a reasonable soul; so called, partly to denote the frailty of it, and to show that it was not a person, but a nature, Christ assumed; and the clause is added, not so much to distinguish this manifestation of Christ from a spiritual manifestation of him to his people, as in distinction from all other manifestations of him in the Old Testament, in an human form for a time, and in the cloud, both in the tabernacle and temple. This clause is a very apt and full interpretation of the word "Moriah", the name of the mount in which Jehovah would manifest himself, and be seen, (Genesis 22:2,14).

Justified in the Spirit; either by the Spirit of God, making his human nature pure and holy, and preserving it from original sin and taint; and by descending on him at his baptism, thereby testifying that he was the Son of God; and by the miracles wrought by his power, which proved Jesus to be the Messiah against those that rejected him; and by his coming down upon the apostles at Pentecost; and who in their ministry vindicated him from all the aspersions cast upon him: or else it is to be understood of the divine nature of Christ, in distinction from his flesh or human nature; in the one he was manifest and put to death for the sins of his people, which were put upon him, and bore by him; and by the other he was quickened and declared to be the Son of God; and being raised from the dead, he was justified and acquitted from all the sins of his people, and they were justified in him; he having made full satisfaction to justice for them.

Seen of angels; meaning not ministers of the Gospel, and pastors of churches, who are sometimes so called; but the blessed spirits, the inhabitants of heaven: by these he was seen at his birth, who then descended and sung praise to God on that account; and in the wilderness, after he had been tempted by Satan, when they ministered unto him; and in the garden upon his agony and sweat there, when one appeared and

strengthened him; and at his resurrection from the dead, who rolled away the stone from the sepulchre, and told the women he was risen from the dead; as also at his ascension to heaven, when they attended him thither in triumph; and now in heaven, where they wait upon him, and worship him, and are ministering spirits, sent forth by him to do his pleasure; and he is seen by them the ministry of the Gospel; into the truths of which they look with pleasure, and gaze upon with unutterable delight and admiration; especially those which respect the person and offices of Christ. Some copies read, “seen of men”, but that is implied in the first clause:

preached unto the Gentiles; the worst of men, and that by the express orders of Christ himself; and which was foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and yet was a mystery, hid from ages and generations past:

believed on in the world; among the Jews, and in the nations of the world, so that he was preached with success; and faith in Christ is the end of preaching; though this is not of a man's self, but is the gift of God, and the operation of his power: and it was a marvellous thing, considering the reproach and ignominy Christ lay under, through the scandal of the cross, that he should be believed on as he was. This can be ascribed to nothing else but to the power of God, which went along with the ministry of the word.

Received up into glory; he was raised from the dead, and had a glory put upon his risen body; he ascended in a glorious manner to heaven, in a cloud, and in chariots of angels, and was received there with a welcome by his Father; and is set down at his right hand, and crowned with glory and honour, and glorified with the glory he had with him before the world was.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO 1 TIMOTHY 4

In this chapter the apostle foretells a dreadful apostasy which should happen in the last times, the particulars of which he gives; and on occasion of one branch of it, discourses of Christian liberty in eating all sorts of food fit for use; and delivers out exhortations to Timothy to various duties relating to himself, his doctrine, and his charge. The prophecy is in (5001 1 Timothy 4:1-3), the author of this prophecy is the Spirit of God; the manner in which it was delivered was very clear and express; the time when it should be fulfilled, the last days; the thing itself, a departure of some from the faith; the means whereby it would come about are, some giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, and the hypocrisy and hardened consciences of others, who would forbid marriage, and order an abstinence from certain meats; the evil of which last is exposed by their being the creatures of God, and by their being made for this purpose to be received with thankfulness by all believers, and who know the truth: and the reasons why they should be received and used follow; because they are all good, as they are the creatures of God; and because there is nothing to be refused, provided it be received with a thankful heart; and because every creature is sanctified by the word of God, and prayer, (5004 1 Timothy 4:4,5). And then Timothy is exhorted to put the brethren in mind of those things, by which he would show himself to be a faithful minister of Christ, and well instructed in the doctrines of the Gospel, (5006 1 Timothy 4:6), and to reject things profane and fabulous, but use himself to internal and powerful godliness, since outward worship signifies little, but the former has the promise of this, and the other world annexed to it; which is a true saying, and to be depended on, (5007 1 Timothy 4:7-9) and which is confirmed from the practice and experience of the apostles, and therefore should be taught with authority, (5010 1 Timothy 4:10,11). And then the apostle gives Timothy some advice, which being taken, would prevent his being despised, on account of his youth; as with respect to his life and conversation, so to behave as to be a pattern to others, (5012 1 Timothy 4:12), and with respect to the exercise of his ministry, to make use of such means, as reading and meditation, that his profiting might be manifest to

all, (⁵⁴1 Timothy 4:13-15) and with respect to the doctrines he preached, to abide by them, whereby he would be a means of saving himself, and others, (⁵⁴1 Timothy 4:16).

Ver. 1. *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly*, etc.] The prophecy hereafter mentioned was not an human conjecture, but, as all true prophecy, it came from the Spirit of God, who spoke or delivered it; either in the prophets of the Old Testament, who, as they spoke of the Gospel dispensation, so of the defection that should be in it; and particularly of antichrist, and of the apostasy through him, which is what is here intended, especially in Daniel's prophecies, under the names of the little horn, and vile person, (²⁷Daniel 7:1-28) and (²⁷Daniel 11:1-45), or in the Lord Jesus Christ, who foretold that false prophets would arise and deceive many; or in some of the prophets in the Christian church, such as Agabus, and others, who might in so many words foretell this thing; or rather in the apostle himself, at this time, since this prophecy was delivered not in dark sayings, in an enigmatical way, in an obscure manner, as prophecies generally were, but in plain language, and easy to be understood, and wanted no interpreter to unriddle it; and seeing that it is nowhere to be found in so many express words elsewhere: and moreover, the apostle does not say the Spirit “hath spoken”, but the Spirit “speaketh”; then, at the time of the writing of these words, in and by him. The prediction follows,

that in the latter times some should depart from the faith; that is, from the doctrine of faith, notwithstanding it is indisputably the great mystery of godliness, as it is called in the latter part of the preceding chapter; for from the true grace of faith there can be no final and total apostasy, such as is here designed; for that can never be lost. It is of an incorruptible nature, and therefore more precious than gold that perishes; Christ is the author and finisher of it; his prevalent mediation is concerned for it; it is a gift of special grace, and is without repentance; it springs from electing grace, and is secured by it; and between that and salvation there is an inseparable connection; it may indeed decline, be very low, and lie dormant, as to its acts and exercise, but not be lost: there is a temporary faith, and a persuasion of truth, or a mere assent to it, which may be departed from, but not that faith which works by love: here it intends a profession of faith, which being made, should be dropped by some; or rather the doctrine of faith, which some would embrace, and then err concerning, or entirely quit, and wholly apostatize from. And they are said to be some, and these many, as they are elsewhere represented, though not all; for the elect cannot be

finally and totally deceived; the foundation of election stands sure amidst the greatest apostasy; and there are always a few names that are not defiled with corrupt principles and practices; Christ always had some witnesses for the truth in the darkest times: and now this defection was to be “in the latter times”; either of the apostolic age, which John, the last of the apostles, lived to see; and therefore he calls it the last time, or hour, in which were many antichrists, (<GJ218>1 John 2:18). And indeed in the Apostle Paul's time the mystery of iniquity began to work, which brought on this general defection; though here it has regard to some later times under the Gospel dispensation; to the time when the man of sin, and the son of perdition, was revealed, and when all the world wondered after the beast: and indeed, such will be the degeneracy in the last days of all, that when the son of man comes, as the grace, so the doctrine of faith will be scarcely to be found in the world: the means by which this apostasy will obtain and prevail will be through men's

giving heed to seducing spirits; either to doctrines which are of a deceiving nature; or to men who profess to have the Spirit of God, and have not, but are evil men and seducers, deceiving, and being deceived; that lie in wait to deceive, and handle the word of God deceitfully; and by attending on the ministry of such persons, through hearing them, and conversing with them, the defection was to begin and spread; and therefore such should be carefully avoided, and their ministry shunned; nor should they be received, nor bid God speed.

And doctrines of devils; such as are devised by devils, as all damnable doctrines be; and all lying ones, for the devil is the father of them; and as are all the false doctrines introduced by antichrist, for his coming was after the working of Satan; and particularly those doctrines of his concerning worshipping of angels, and saints departed, may be called the doctrines of devils, or of “demons”; being much the same with the demon worship among the Heathens, of which the devil was the inventor: unless by doctrines of devils should be meant the doctrines of men, who for their cunning and sophistry, for their lies and hypocrisy, for their malice, and murdering of the souls of men, are comparable to devils.

Ver. 2. *Speaking lies in hypocrisy*, etc.] Or “through the hypocrisy of those that speak lies”; for the apostle is still speaking of the means by which the apostasy should rise, and get ground; and it should be by the means of persons that should deliver lying or false doctrine under the

colour of truth, and make great pretensions to religion and holiness, which would greatly take with men, and captivate and lead them aside: and this plainly points at the abettors of antichrist, the Romish priests, who deliver out the lying doctrines of merit, purgatory, invocation of saints, fastings, pilgrimages, etc. and the fabulous legends of saints, and the lying wonders and miracles done by them, and all under a show of godliness, and the promoting of religion and holiness:

having their conscience seared with a hot iron; which exactly describes the above mentioned persons, whose consciences are cauterized and hardened, and past feeling; and have no regard to what they say or do, make no conscience of anything, but under a cloak of sanctity commit the most shocking impieties; and are men of the most infamous characters, and of the most enormous and scandalous lives and conversations; so that the metaphor may be taken either from the searing of flesh with an iron, or cauterizing it, whereby it grows callous and hard; or from the stigmas or marks which used to be put on malefactors, or such who have been guilty of notorious crimes.

Ver. 3. *Forbidding to marry*, etc.] Which points out not the Encratites, Montanists, and Manichees, who spoke against marriage; but the Papists, who forbid it to their priests under a pretence of purity and holiness, and at the same time allow them to live in all manner of debauchery and uncleanness; for these are the persons that forbid marriage in an authoritative way, and in hypocrisy: for that phrase is to be joined to all the sentences that follow it; as through the hypocrisy of those whose consciences are seared; and through the hypocrisy of those that forbid marriage to their priests, this being, by the common people, taken as an instance of great purity and holiness, and hereby they are drawn into the deception; as well as also through the hypocrisy of those that command

to abstain from meats: not from some certain meats forbidden by the law of Moses, as did some judaizing Christians; but from all meats at some certain season of the year, as at what they call the Quadragesima or Lent, and at some days in the week, as Wednesdays and Fridays; and this all under an hypocritical pretence of holiness, and temperance, and keeping under the body, and of mortification; when they are the greatest pamperers of their bodies, and indulge themselves in all manner of sensuality: the evil of this is exposed by the apostle, as follows,

which God hath created; and therefore must be good, and ought not to be abstained from: and besides, the end of his creation of them is,

to be received: to be taken, and used, and eaten; and therefore it is wicked to command men to abstain from them, and evil in those that do it: and the manner in which they should be received is

with thanksgiving; since they are the creatures of God, and useful to men, and men are unworthy of them, having forfeited them by sin; and since they are the bounties of Providence, and a free use of them is allowed; so far then should men be from abstaining from them, that they ought to take them, and use them with all thankfulness: and especially this should be done

of them which believe and know the truth: that is, who believe in Christ, and know the truth of the Gospel, which frees from every yoke of bondage, and from the burdensome rites, ceremonies, and inventions of men; for these have the good creatures as the fruits of divine love, through Christ the Mediator, and as blessings indeed; and who have the best right, claim, and title to them through Christ, being in him heirs of the world, and for whose sake all things are; and therefore these, as they know how to use them, and not abuse them, are to receive them at the hands of God, with thanksgiving, and not put them away, or abstain from them under a pretence of religion and holiness.

Ver. 4. *For every creature of God is good*, etc.] For food; and should be taken and used for that purpose, at all times, without distinction; even every creature which is made for food, and which is easy to be discerned by men:

and nothing to be refused; or rejected as common and unclean, or to be abstained from at certain times:

if it be received with thanksgiving: if not, persons are very ungrateful, and very unworthy of such favours; and it would be just in God to withhold them from them; and this they may expect at his hands, who reject them with contempt, or receive them with unthankfulness, or abstain front them in a religious way he never enjoined.

Ver. 5. *For it is sanctified*, etc.] Or set apart for use, and may be lawfully used at all times:

by the word of God; which declares that there is nothing in itself common, or unclean, or unfit for use, and that nothing that goes into a man defiles him; so that by virtue of this word of God, every creature may be made use of, that is fit for food: or else this designs the word of God, which gives a blessing to what is eaten; for it is not by bread or meat only, but through the word of God commanding a blessing on what is eaten, that man lives, (<4004>Matthew 4:4) and therefore this blessing upon our food should be asked for: wherefore it follows,

and prayer; this being used before eating for a blessing on the food, and after it, in a way of thanksgiving for it, sanctifies every creature of God, or gives men a free use of any, or all of them. So the Israelites, when they had eaten, and were full, were to bless the Lord, (<5810>Deuteronomy 8:10). And thus our Lord Jesus Christ, at meals, used to take the food, and bless it or ask a blessing on it, (<4019>Matthew 14:19). And so did the Essenes among the Jews [f56], and the Christians in Tertullian's [f57] time; and the practice is highly necessary and commendable, nor ought it to be disused.

Ver. 6. *If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things*, etc.] Either of all the main and principal things already mentioned in the preceding chapters; as that the end of the commandment is love; that Christ's coming into the world to save the chief of sinners is a faithful saying, and worthy of acceptation; that prayers should be made for all sorts of men, for the reasons given; and that there is salvation for men and women through the incarnate Son of God; that such and such are the qualifications of elders and deacons; and that the incarnation of Christ is, without controversy, the great mystery of godliness: or of the things which are particularly hinted at in the prophecy delivered in the beginning of this chapter; as that there should be a falling off from the doctrine of faith in the latter days; that this should come to pass through attending to erroneous spirits, and doctrines of “demons”, and through the lies of hypocritical, hardened, and infamous men; whose particular dogmas, by which they might be known, would be, to forbid marriage to certain persons, which is of divine institution and honourable, and to order an abstinence from meats at certain times, contrary to the will and providence of God. These the apostle would have Timothy propose, and subject to consideration, and from time to time refresh the memories of the saints with, who are apt, through negligence and inattention, and the weakness of the natural faculty, to be forgetful hearers of the word; that whenever such persons should arise, they might be on their guard against them. It is one part of the

business of Gospel ministers to put the churches in mind of what they have received and known, and are established in. By “the brethren” are meant the members of the church at Ephesus; whom the apostle accounted as brethren, being of the same family and household, and would have Timothy reckon and use as such, and not as subjects and servants, to be lorded over.

Thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ; a minister of Jesus Christ is one of his making, qualifying, calling, and sending; and who makes Christ, the doctrines respecting his person and offices, his grace, righteousness, and salvation, the subject of his ministry; and he is a good one, who, besides having a good work of grace wrought in him, has good gifts and abilities from Christ, and who makes a good use of them, and freely and fully imparts them for the good of others; and being employed in a good work, he abides in it, and nothing can deter or remove him from it; and such an one was Timothy, and so would it be manifest by doing what the apostle hints unto him; as well as he would appear to be

nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine: by which are meant the truths of the Gospel, called the words of faith, because they are things to be believed, hold forth the object of faith, Christ, and are the means by which faith comes, and is increased: and good doctrine, being the doctrine of the Scriptures, and of Christ, and of his apostles, and according to godliness; and contain good things, which make for the glory of the grace of God, and the comfort and welfare of immortal souls. These are of a nourishing nature; they are the wholesome and salutary words of Christ; they have in them milk for babes, and meat for strong men; by which both grow and thrive, when error eats as does a canker. So Philo the Jew [f58] speaks of the soul, being “nourished with sciences”, and not with food and drink, which the body needs; and a little after he says, you see the food of the soul what it is, it is the continual word of God. Now Timothy, by discharging his work aright, would show to the brethren, that as he had been nourished and trained up, first under his religious parents, and then under the Apostle Paul; so he still continued in the same truths, and to live and feed upon them, and to be nourished by them: or the words may be rendered actively,

nourishing; that is, either himself, as the Syriac version renders it, or others; for though all nourishment comes from Christ the head, yet it is ministered by joints and bands to the members; it is conveyed by the means of the word and ordinances, ministered by the preachers of the Gospel,

who feed the church with knowledge, and with understanding; and none but those who are nourished themselves are fit to be the nourishers of others; and such an one was this evangelist: for it follows,

whereunto thou hast attained; he had arrived to a considerable degree of knowledge of Gospel truths, and was still pursuing and following on to know more of them, and was exhorted to continue in them, knowing of whom he had learned them. All this is said by way of encouragement to him to do as the apostle directs.

Ver. 7. *But refuse profane and old wives' fables*, etc.] Either Jewish ones, the traditions of the elders; or those of the Gnostics, concerning God, angels, and the creation of the world; or those doctrines of demons, and which forbad marriage, and commanded abstinence from meats before mentioned; which are called profane, because impious and ungodly, and old wives' fables, because foolish and impertinent; and which were to be rejected with abhorrence and contempt, in comparison of the words of faith and good doctrine.

And exercise thyself rather unto godliness; either to the doctrines which are according to godliness, and tend to godly edification, which the above fables did not, study these, meditate on them, digest them, and deliver them to others; or to a godly life and conversation, exercise thyself, to have a conscience void of offence to God and men; or to internal religion, inward godliness, the exercise of the graces of faith, hope, love, fear, reverence, humility, etc. or rather to the spiritual worship of God, according to his will, not in a formal, cold, and customary way, but with the heart, in truth and sincerity, in faith, and with fervency and purity.

Ver. 8. *For bodily exercise profiteth little*, etc.] Meaning not the exercise of the body in the Olympic games, as by running, wrestling, etc. which profited but little, for the obtaining of a corruptible crown at most; though since a word is used here, and in the preceding verse, borrowed from thence, there may be an allusion to it: much less exercise of the body for health or recreation, as riding, walking, playing at any innocent diversion; which profits but for a little time, as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; and the latter renders the phrase “bodily recreation”: nor is the exercise of the body in the proper employment of trade and business, to which a man is called, and which profits for the support of life for a little while, intended; nor any methods made use of for the mortification of the body, and the keeping of it under, as watchings, fastings, lying on the ground,

scourging, etc. but rather mere formal external worship, as opposed to godliness, or spiritual worship. There ought to be an exercise of the body, or a presenting of that in religious worship before God; there should be an outward attendance on the word and ordinances; but then, without internal godliness, this will be of little advantage: it is indeed showing an outward regard to public worship, and may be a means of keeping persons out of bad company, and from doing evil things; but if this is trusted to, and depended on, it will be of no avail to everlasting life; (see <2Luke 13:26,27)

but godliness is profitable unto all things; to the health of the body, and the welfare of the soul; to the things of this life, and of that which is to come; to themselves and others, though not to God, or in a way of merit:

having promise of the life that now is; of the continuance of it, of length of days, of living long in the earth, and of enjoying all necessary temporal good things, the mercies of life; for God has promised to his spiritual worshippers, to them that fear him, and walk uprightly, that their days shall be prolonged, that they shall want no good thing, nor will he withhold any from them that is for their good, that is proper and convenient for them:

and of that which is to come; even of eternal life; not that eternal life is received or procured hereby; for it is the free gift of God, and is not by any works of men, for otherwise it would not be by promise; for its being by promise shows it to be of grace: there is nothing more or less in it than this, that God promises glory to his own grace; for internal godliness, which animates and maintains spiritual worship, is of God, is of his own grace, and every part of it is a free gift of his, as faith, hope, love, fear, etc.

Ver. 9. *This is a faithful saying*, etc.] A true one, and to be believed, that godliness has such promises annexed to it; (see <1 Peter 3:10,11 <Matthew 6:33 <Psalm 84:11,12).

and worthy of all acceptation; by all godly persons, to encourage them to the exercise of godliness.

Ver. 10. *For therefore we both labour*, etc.] Not in the word and doctrine, though they did; nor in the exercise of internal godliness, though there is a work in faith, and a labour in love; nor with their own hands, at their trades and business, to support themselves, and others; but by enduring hardships and afflictions, as stripes, imprisonment, weariness, pain, watchings,

fastings, hunger, thirst, cold, and nakedness; (see 47123 2 Corinthians 11:23-27).

And suffer reproach; with patience and cheerfulness. The Alexandrian copy, and another manuscript, read, “we strive”; or contend even to an agony, combating with sin, Satan, and the world, with profane men, and with false teachers; and to all this they were animated by the promises made to godliness; and therefore they showed it by their practices, or rather by their sufferings, that they believed it to be a true and faithful saying; and which is further conferred by what follows:

because we trust in the living God; for the accomplishment of the said promises, who has power, and therefore can, and is faithful, and therefore will, make good what he has promised; and since it is life he has promised, faith is the more encouraged to trust in him, since he is the living God, in opposition to, and distinction from, lifeless idols; he has life in himself, essentially, originally, and independently, and is the author and giver of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal, unto others. Wherefore there is good reason to trust in him for the fulfilling of the promises of the present and future life, made unto godliness.

Who is the Saviour of all men; in a providential way, giving them being and breath, upholding them in their beings, preserving their lives, and indulging them with the blessings and mercies of life; for that he is the Saviour of all men, with a spiritual and everlasting salvation, is not true in fact.

Specially of those that believe; whom though he saves with an eternal salvation; yet not of this, but of a temporal salvation, are the words to be understood: or as there is a general providence, which attends all mankind, there is a special one which relates to the elect of God; these are regarded in Providence, and are particularly saved and preserved before conversion, in order to be called; and after conversion, after they are brought to believe in Christ, they are preserved from many enemies, and are delivered out of many afflictions and temptations; and are the peculiar care and darlings of providence, being to God as the apple of his eye: and there is a great deal of reason to believe this, for if he is the Saviour of all men, then much more of them who are of more worth, value, and esteem with him, than all the world beside; and if they are saved by him with the greater salvation, then much more with the less; and if he the common Saviour of all men, and especially of saints, whom he saves both ways, then there is great reason to trust in him for the fulfilment of the promises of life, temporal and eternal,

made to godliness, and godly persons. This epithet of God seems to be taken out of (<19107>Psalm 17:7) where he is called µyswj [yçwm, “the Saviour of them that trust”, or believe.

Ver. 11. *These things command and teach*.] What are to be commanded, command, and what are to be taught, teach; command to refuse and reject all profane and fabulous doctrines, and exhort to the exercise of true godliness, and teach the profitableness of that, and declare the promises made unto it, and assert the truth and acceptableness of them; command, order, and encourage believers to labour and suffer reproach for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel, in hope of enjoying the said promises, and teach them to trust in the God of their lives, and the Saviour of all men; and whereas to this authoritative way of teaching, Timothy's youth might be objected by himself, and others; it follows,

Ver. 12. *Let no man despise thy youth*, etc.] Timothy was now a young man; some think he was about three and twenty years of age; but he might be older, and yet be so called. Saul is said to be a young man, when he held the clothes of them that stoned Stephen, when he must be at least thirty years of age, some say thirty five; since thirty years after that he styles himself Paul the aged, when he must be sixty years of age and upwards, (<440758>Acts 7:58 <570109>Philemon 1:9). Young men are sometimes honoured by God with great gifts, for usefulness both in church and state, as Samuel, David, Solomon, Daniel, and his companions: nor should they be despised on account of their age, when they have gifts suitable to their office, and behave well in it, but, on the contrary, ought to be esteemed for their works' sake; and such should take care that no man has an opportunity or reason to treat them with contempt on that account: the apostle's sense is, either that Timothy, being in office, should not suffer any man to use him contemptuously; but exert his power and authority, and magnify his office, and not allow men to trample upon him, or use him ill, though he was a young man; which sense suits with the preceding words: or rather his meaning is, that he would have him so conduct and behave himself, as he had taught him to behave, in the house and church of God, and so fill up his place and office, and live such an exemplary life and conversation, that there might be no occasion for any to despise his age, or him, on the account of it: and this agrees with what follows,

but be thou an example of the believers; the members of the church, before called brethren, from their relation to one another, and here believers, from

their concern with Christ, the object of their faith; a more honourable character cannot be given of men, though treated with great contempt in this age of infidelity. The Mahometans would engross this character to themselves, calling themselves the believers, and reckoning all others infidels; but to them only it belongs, who believe in Christ unto righteousness and life everlasting. Now sometimes young men may be examples to older ones; and all that are in office in the church, especially in the ministry, whether old or young, should be ensamples to the flock, and that in the following things: “in word”; meaning either the word of truth, the doctrine of the Gospel; by delivering that which is according to the rule of God's word, showing in it uncorruptness, gravity, and sincerity, and by holding it fast; all which may for the imitation of others, to receive the pure doctrine and retain it: or rather this may respect common discourse; which should not be corrupt, filthy, nor foolish; but should be always with grace, Seasoned with salt, or should be grave and serious, wise and prudent, pleasant, profitable, and edifying.

In conversation; in the family, church, and world; which should be as becomes the Gospel of Christ, in all godliness and honesty, with simplicity and godly sincerity; so as to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, recommend it to others, stop the mouths of gainsayers, and obtain a good report of them that are without.

In charity; in love to God, to Christ, and one another; without which, if a man has the tongue of men and angels, or ever such great and excellent gifts, he is nothing.

In spirit; in the exercise of spiritual gifts; in spiritual talk and conversation; and in fervency of spirit, or true zeal for the honour of God, the glory of the Redeemer, the spread of his Gospel, truths, and ordinances, and the support of the same. This clause is wanting in the Alexandrian and Claromontane copies, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions.

In faith; in the exercise of the grace of faith; in holding fast the profession of faith; and in retaining the doctrine of faith, with all integrity, faithfulness, and constancy, standing fast in it, striving and contending for it.

In purity; or chastity of body, in opposition to all impurity of the flesh, by fornication, adultery, and the like; which was very proper to be suggested

to a young man: though this may also have respect to all that is before said, as to purity of language, conversation, love, zeal, and faith.

Ver. 13. *Till I come*, etc.] To Ephesus; where the apostle hoped to be shortly, but was prevented; he afterwards came to Miletus, and sent for the elders of Ephesus thither, when he took his final leave of them. He mentions this circumstance, not as if Timothy was to attend to the following things no longer, but to quicken him to an attendance to them from the consideration of his being shortly with him.

Give attendance to reading; that is, of the Scriptures, which the Jews call arqm, "reading". [f59]

> "Says R. Tanchum Bar Chanilai, for ever let a man divide his years or life into three parts; one third (let him spend) in the Mikra, (the Scriptures, and the reading of them,) another third in the Misna, and the other third in the Talmud."

And this is to be understood, not of the reading of the Scriptures in public, for the advantage of others, a custom which obtained in the Jewish synagogues; (see <44 13 15>Acts 13:15 15:21) but in private, for his own use and service, that he might be more perfect, and more thoroughly furnished to the work and office to which he was called; for the Scriptures are the fund of spiritual knowledge, as well as the test and standard of doctrine, out of which all must be fetched, and by which it must be tried; and if Timothy, who had known the Scriptures from a child, had been trained up in them, and was always conversant with them, had need to give diligent attention to the reading of them, then much more others: as also

to exhortation, to doctrine; as he was privately to read the Scriptures, for his own benefit, he was publicly to expound them, or preach from them, to the advantage of others; for these two, exhortation and doctrine, are branches of the ministerial work, which reading furnishes and qualifies for. "Exhortation" intends the stirring up of believers to the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty; and is a considerable part of the work of the ministry, and on which a minister of Christ should much insist; and it becomes the saints to suffer every word of exhortation from them, and receive it kindly, <55 04 02>*2 Timothy 4:2* <45 12 08>*Romans 12:8.* <58 13 22>*Hebrews 13:22*. The word signifies also "consolation", and which is another branch of the ministry. Believers are oftentimes disconsolate through the prevalence of corruptions, the power of Satan's temptations, and the hidings of God's

face, and need comfort; when the ministers of the Gospel should be Barnabases, sons of consolation, and should speak comfortably to them; for which they are qualified by the God of all comfort, who comforts them in all their tribulations, that they might be capable of speaking good and comfortable words to others. “Doctrine” designs the teaching and instructing of the church in the mysteries of the Gospel; opening and explaining the truths of it; defending them against all opposers, and refuting errors and heresies contrary to them. This is the evangelic Talmud; and these three, “reading”, “exhortation”, and “doctrine”, may answer to the above three things the Jew advises men to divide their time among, the Mikra, Misna, and Talmud: reading answers to the Mikra, and indeed is no other; and exhortation to the Misna, or oral law; and doctrine to the Talmud, and which also that word signifies: but the apostle would have Timothy spend his time in, and give his attention to that which might be truly beneficial to himself, and profitable unto others.

Ver. 14. *Neglect not the gift that is in thee*, etc.] What qualifies men for the work of the ministry is a gift from God: it is not of nature, nor is it mere natural abilities and capacity; nor is it any thing acquired, it is not human learning, or the knowledge of languages, arts, and sciences; nor is it special saving grace; for a man may have all these, and yet not be apt to teach, or fit for the ministry; but it is a peculiar and distinct gift, it is a gift of interpreting the Scriptures, and of dispensing the mysteries of grace to the edification of others; which, when it meets in a man with all the rest before mentioned, makes him very considerable: and this gift is in a man; it is a treasure put into earthen vessels, a good treasure in the heart, out of which a good minister of Christ brings forth many good things, things new and old, both for the delight and profit of men: and this gift is by no means to be neglected; this talent should not be hid in the earth, or wrapped up in a napkin; it should not lie dormant and useless, but should be stirred up, cultivated, and improved, as it may by reading, meditation, and prayer. And in order to enforce this exhortation on Timothy, the apostle adds,

which was given thee by prophecy; that is, it was prophesied of before hand, by some of the prophets in the church, that a very extraordinary gift should be bestowed upon this young man, which would make him a very useful person in the church of God; (see <540118>1 Timothy 1:18) and since it was now given, he ought not therefore to neglect it: or it was given him, as some read it, with prophecy, that he should use it, and it should be of great advantage to many souls; or, together with this gift of preaching, he had

also a gift of foretelling things to come; or it may be, the words may be better rendered, “for prophecy”: that is, for preaching, for prophesying is frequently used for preaching; (see <460102>1 Corinthians 13:2 14:1,3,31) and then the sense is, that this gift was given him to qualify him for the interpreting of the Scriptures, the explaining of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and for the preaching of the Gospel; and therefore he should not neglect it, but use it for this purpose: and he adds, that it was given him

with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery; or “of the eldership”, or elders. So γερουσια, “eldership”, is used by the Septuagint on (<021816>Exodus 3:16,18) for the elders of Israel. Now of these elders Paul was one, (<550106>2 Timothy 1:6) nor is it unusual to call the apostles elders; (see <600501>1 Peter 5:1 <630101>2 John 1:1 <640101>3 John 1:1). Who joined with the apostle, in the imposition of hands on Timothy, is not certain; I should think only apostles, since here was a gift of the Holy Ghost came along with it; and it was only through the laying on of the hands of the apostles that the Holy Ghost was given. Philip, an evangelist, laid not hands on the believing Samaritans; but Peter and John, apostles, were sent down from Jerusalem to Samaria to do it, whereby many received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, fitting them to take the care of those new converts, and to spread the Gospel further in those parts, (<440805>Acts 8:5,12,14,17,18). And since gifts have ceased being conveyed this way, the rite of laying on of hands in ordinations seems useless, and of no avail. The apostle in calling those that joined with him, in putting hands on Timothy, the “presbytery or eldership”, may have some reference to hd[h ynqz, “the elders of the congregation”, which laid hands on the bullock for a sin offering, (<030415>Leviticus 4:15) by whom some understand the great sanhedrim [f60]; others [f61], not all the elders, but some particular persons, in number three; and so the ordination of a Rabbi was by three [f62]; hence we read of µynqzb hkyms, “imposition of hands by the elders” [f63].

Ver. 15. *Meditate on these things*, etc.] Not only on those instructions, advices, and exhortations, which the apostle had given him, throughout this chapter, which might be very useful to him, often to think of, and revolve in his mind, and seriously consider and reflect upon; but upon the Scriptures, the reading of which he had recommended to him, and the doctrines contained therein; it becomes every man not only to read, but meditate on the word of God, and much more ministers of the Gospel. The Scriptures should be read with care, and be industriously and laboriously

searched into, as men dig in mines for silver or golden ore; and passages in it should be carefully compared together, the more obscure with those that are more plain and easy; and the whole is to be studied with great attention and application:

give thyself wholly to them: to the reading of the Scriptures, meditation upon them, and preaching the doctrines contained in them, clear of all secular affairs, or worldly business and employment. The apostles threw off the branch of deaconship, or ministering to the poor, that they might give themselves up wholly to the ministry of the word, and prayer; and much more should worldly business be cast off, where the circumstances of ministers and churches will admit of it; a Christian soldier, or minister of the Gospel, ought not, if possible, to be entangled with the affairs of this life; he finds enough to do without, in the discharge of his ministerial function; and though the apostles sometimes wrought with their own hands, yet it was not because they had so much leisure from the ministry, or time on their hands, or because they had not a power of forbearing working, but out of necessity, (see <442034>Acts 20:34 <461006>1 Corinthians 9:6,7 <550204>2 Timothy 2:4), or these words may be rendered,

be thou in these things; let thine heart be in them; for if a minister's heart is not in his work, if he does not take delight in it, it will be a slavery and drudgery to him; spend all the time and strength in them, give thyself continually to them, and be always diligent and laborious in them:

that thy profiting may appear to all; that it may be manifest to all that attend the ministry of the word that there is an increase in gifts, a growing in spiritual knowledge, an improvement of the talents bestowed: or that this profiting or increase might appear in all things; in every branch of the ministry, both in exhortation or consolation, and in doctrine; or that it might be manifest among all; that is, all that hear might receive some profit, might learn, and be comforted and edified; faith might be increased, and the joy of it be furthered; and all under the ministry visibly thrive and flourish.

Ver. 16. *Take heed unto thyself*, etc.] Not as a man, or a Christian only, but as a minister; and as every minister should take heed to his life and conversation, that it be exemplary, as in <540412>*1 Timothy 4:12* to his gifts, that they be not lost, or neglected, but used and improved; to the errors and heresies abroad, that he be not infected with them; and to his flock, which is the other part of himself, that he feed it with knowledge and understanding: and to thy doctrine: preached by him, that it be according to

the Scriptures, be the doctrine of Christ, and his apostles, and according to godliness; that it tend to edification, and is pure, incorrupt, and all of a piece; and that it be expressed in the best manner, with all boldness and plainness; and that he defend it against all opposition:

continue in them; or "with them"; the members of the church at Ephesus; or rather in the doctrines of the Gospel; which should be done, though a majority is against them; though rejected by the wise, learned, and rich; though not to be comprehended by carnal reason; and though loaded with reproach and scandal; and though persecuted, yea even unto death for them:

for in doing this, thou shall both save thyself; a minister by taking heed to himself, and doctrine, saves himself from the pollutions of the world, from the errors and heresies of false teachers, from the blood of all men, and from all just blame in his ministry.

And them that hear thee; by being an example to them in doctrine and conversation, a minister is the means of saving and preserving those that attend on him, from erroneous principles, and immoral practices; and by faithfully preaching the Gospel to his hearers, he is instrumental in their eternal salvation; for though Jesus Christ is the only Saviour, the only efficient and procuring cause of salvation, yet the ministers of the Gospel are instruments by which souls believe in him, and so are saved; the word preached by them, being attended with the Spirit of God, becomes the ingrafted word, which is able to save, and is the power of God unto salvation; and nothing can more animate and engage the ministers of the word to take heed to themselves and doctrine, and abide therein, than this, of being the happy instruments of converting sinners, and saving them from death; (see ^[illegible]James 5:20)

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO 1 TIMOTHY 5

In this chapter the apostle lays down rules about the manner of rebuking persons, suitable to their several ages; gives directions concerning widows, both old and young; and instructs Timothy how to behave towards elders in office on different accounts. The rules for giving reproof to old men, as fathers; to young men, as brethren; to elder women, as mothers; and to the younger, as sisters, are in (54001 Timothy 5:1,2). Next follow the directions about taking care of widows, who are to be honoured and maintained by the church, that are widows indeed, (54003 Timothy 5:3) not such who have relations that are capable of taking care of them, who ought to do it, and not burden the church; since so to do is an act of piety, a requiting parents for their former care and kindness, and is good and acceptable in the sight of God, (54004 Timothy 5:4) but such who are desolate and alone, and have no husbands nor children, nor any to support their wants, but wholly depend on the providence of God, and are constant at the throne of grace crying for help and relief, which shows they are living Christians; whereas such who spend their time in sinful lusts and pleasures, are dead while they live; wherefore if members of churches, with respect to this business, would be blameless, they ought to take care of the former, and reprove the latter, (54005 Timothy 5:5-7). And as for those persons who cast their poor widows upon the church, and will not provide for them, when they are able, they are to be looked upon as deniers of the faith, and to be worse than the Heathens themselves, (54008 Timothy 5:8). The qualifications of widows to be taken care of by the church, besides those before mentioned, are, that they be sixty years of age, having been the wife of one man, and well known for their good works, some of which are particularly mentioned, (54009 Timothy 5:9,10) but those who are under the age fixed, and especially are fit for marriage, and the procreation of children, should be rejected, because of their lasciviousness, idleness, tattling, and busying themselves about other people's matters; these, on the contrary, should be directed to marry, bear children, take care of household affairs, and give no occasion to the enemy to reproach and blaspheme; and the rather such advice should be taken, since there had been some sad instances of

apostasy in such persons, (1 Timothy 5:11-15). And then the apostle repeats his order to believers, to take care of their poor widows, who were able to do it themselves, that so the church might not be burdened, and might be able to relieve such as were real and proper objects, (1 Timothy 5:16). And then follow rules with respect to elders in office, as that those that rule well, and labour in the ministry of the word, should be honourably maintained; which is confirmed by a passage of Scripture in the Old Testament, and by a saying of Christ's in the New, (1 Timothy 5:17,18), that an accusation should not be received against one of such a character, but by two or three witnesses, (1 Timothy 5:19) and that such of them that fell into any notorious sin should be publicly rebuked, in order to make others afraid to sin, (1 Timothy 5:20). And these things the apostle, in the most solemn manner, charges Timothy, in the sight of God, Christ, and the angels, to observe, without partiality, (1 Timothy 5:21). To which he adds, that he would not have him be hastily concerned in the ordination of anyone as an elder, lest he should involve himself in his sin, whereas by acting otherwise he would be free, (1 Timothy 5:22) and then inserts some advice to himself, to take care of his health, (1 Timothy 5:23) and concludes the chapter with observing, on occasion of what he had said, (1 Timothy 5:22) that some men's sins were open, and their characters were easily discerned, and others were private, and such were also the good works of others; which made the case either more easy or more difficult to determine what was to be done; and therefore nothing should be done suddenly and rashly, (1 Timothy 5:24,25).

Ver. 1. *Rebuke not an elder*, etc.] By whom is meant, not an elder in office, but in age; for elders by office are afterwards spoken of, and particular rules concerning them are given, (1 Timothy 5:17,19). Besides, an elder is here opposed, not to a private member of a church, but to young men in age; and the apostle is here giving rules to be observed in rebuking members of churches, according to their different age and sex, and not according to their office and station; and this sense is confirmed by a parallel text in (Titus 2:2-6). Now an ancient man, a member of a church, is not to be rebuked in a sharp and severe way; the word here used signifies to smite or strike; and so the Arabic version renders it, “do not strike an elder”; meaning not with the hand, but with the tongue, giving hard words, which are as heavy blows; reproof is a smiting, and there is a gentle and a sharp one, (Psalm 141:4 Titus 1:13). It is with the former, and not the latter, that man in years is to be reproved, when he is in

a fault, whether with respect to doctrine or practice, as such persons may be as well as younger ones; and when they are observed to err, they should not be roughly and sharply dealt with:

but entreat him as a father; as a child should entreat a father, when he is going out of the way; give him honour and respect, fear and reverence, and persuade him to desist; entreat and beseech him to return to the right path of truth and holiness; use him as a father in Christ, that has known him that is from the beginning, and as of long standing in the church: this must be understood of lesser crimes, and not of atrocious and flagitious ones, obstinately continued in, to the great scandal of religion, and dishonour of the Gospel; for then severer methods must be used; (see <2350>Isaiah 45:20). But though this is the sense of the passage, yet the argument from hence is strong, that if an elder in years, a private member, who is ancient, and in a fault, is not to be roughly used, but gently entreated, then much more an elder in office.

And the younger men as brethren; the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “as thy brethren”. Timothy was a young man himself; and as he was to consider an elderly man as his father, and use him accordingly; so he was to consider young men as equal with him, at least in age, and take the more freedom with them, in reproving them for their faults, and use somewhat more authority with them; and yet consider them as brethren in Christ, and reprove them in a brotherly way, and with brotherly love.

Ver. 2. *The elder women as mothers*, etc.] When they offend in any point, they are to be reasoned, and argued, and pleaded with, as children should with their mothers; (see <2802>Hosea 2:2) and are to be considered as mothers in Israel, and to be treated with great tenderness and respect.

The younger as sisters; using the freedom as a brother may with a sister; and considering them as sisters in Christ, and in a way becoming the relation, tell them their faults freely and privately, but

with all purity: in such manner as to preserve chastity in looks, in words, and actions.

Ver. 3. *Honour widows that are widows indeed*.] Who those are, see in (<5005>1 Timothy 1:5,9,10). The honour to be given them is not a putting of them into the office of a deaconess, in the church; which office, some think, is referred to in (<4401>Acts 6:1 <5401>1 Timothy 3:11 5:9), and did obtain in some of the primitive churches; and it might be that some of these

widows, the apostle here and hereafter speaks of, might be preferred to the rest, and be set over them, and have the care of such, who were more infirm; but then this could only be the case of some, whereas the honour here spoken of is what is to be given to all that are really widows; and therefore rather regards some external honour and respect to be shown them, by words and actions; and especially it designs an honourable provision for them, and maintenance of them; in which sense the word is used in (<540517>1 Timothy 5:17 <401504>Matthew 15:4-6). So, with the Jews, giving gifts to persons, and making presents to them, is called honour. When Manoah asked the angel's name, that he might do him honour, when his saying came to pass, (<071317>Judges 13:17) the sense, according to them, is [f64],

> "that I may inquire in what place I may find thee, when thy prophecy is fulfilled, and give thee ^wrwd, "a gift"; for there is no honour but what signifies a gift, as it is said, (<042217>Numbers 22:17), "honouring I will honour thee"."

So giving gifts to the poor, or providing for their maintenance, is doing them honour; and that this is the sense here, appears by what follows in the context.

Ver. 4. *But if any widow have children or nephews*, etc.] Such are not widows indeed; they are not desolate, or alone, or without persons to take care of them; their children or nephews should, and not suffer the church to be burdened with them. Wherefore it follows,

let them learn first to show piety at home; which some understand of the widows, who, instead of casting themselves upon the church for a maintenance, or taking upon them the office of a deaconess, to take care of others, should continue in their own families, and bring up their children and nephews in like manner as they have been brought up by their parents, which will be more pleasing and acceptable unto God; but it is better to interpret it of their children; and so the Ethiopic version expresses it, "let the children first learn to do well to their own house", or family. It is the duty of children to take care of their parents in old age, and provide for them, when they cannot for themselves: this is a lesson they ought to learn in the first place, and a duty which they ought principally to observe; they should not suffer them to come to a church for relief, but first take care of them themselves, as long as they are in any capacity to do it; and these should be their first care before any others; so to do is an act of piety, a

religious action, a pious one; it is doing according to the will and law of God, and is well pleasing to him:

and to requite their parents; for all the sorrow, pain, trouble, care, and expenses they have been at in bearing and bringing them forth into the world, in taking care of them in their infancy, in bringing them up, giving them an education, providing food and raiment for them, and settling them in the world; wherefore to neglect them in old age, when incapable of providing for themselves, would be base ingratitude; whereas to take care of them is but a requital of them, or a repaying them for former benefits had of them:

for that is good and acceptable before God; it is good in itself, and grateful, and well pleasing in his sight; it is part of the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God; and which, as other actions done in faith, is acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Ver. 5. *Now she that is a widow indeed*, etc.] A real widow, whom the Jews[f65] call hrwmg, "a perfect one", in opposition to one that is divorced, or a brother's widow, that has had the shoe plucked off for her: and such an one as the apostle means, is one that is

desolate, or "alone": who has neither husband to take care of her, nor children or nephews to show kindness to her, nor any worldly substance to subsist upon:

but trusteth in God: not in man, nor in an arm of flesh, but in the living God, the giver of all good things, the Judge of widows; who vindicates their cause, avenges the injuries done them, protects and defends them, and relieves their wants, and gives all encouragement to them, to trust in him; (see <244911>Jeremiah 49:11).

and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day; as the widow Anna did, (<420236>Luke 2:36,37). A Widow indeed is one that has no outward dependence, betakes herself to the Lord, puts her confidence in him, and cries to him continually for a daily supply; and such an one, amidst all her poverty and meanness, is a living believer, one that lives by faith on the Lord; and is profitable, and useful to the church by her prayers and supplications made for them, as well as for herself; whereas she that is in the next verse described is just the reverse.

Ver. 6. *But she that liveth in pleasure*, etc.] Voluptuously, and deliciously; lives a wanton, loose, and licentious life, serving divers lusts and pleasures:,

is dead while she liveth; is dead in trespasses and sins, while she lives in them; is dead morally or spiritually, while she lives a natural or corporeal life. There is a likeness between a moral and a corporeal death. In a corporeal death, the soul is separated from the body; and in a moral death, souls are separated from God, and are alienated from the life of God; and are without Christ, who is the author and giver of spiritual life; and have not the Spirit, which is the Spirit of life: death defaces and deforms the man, and a moral death lies in the defacing of the image of God, first stamped on man, and in a loss of original righteousness; for as death strips a man naked of all, as he was when he came into the world, so sin, which brings on this moral death, has stripped man of his moral righteousness, whereby he is become dead in law, as well as in sin: and as in death there is a privation of all sense, so such who are dead, morally or spiritually, have no true sense of sin, and of their state and condition; are not concerned about sin, nor troubled for it, but rejoice in it, boast of it, plead for it, and declare it: between such persons and dead men there is a great similitude; as dead men are helpless to themselves, so are they; they can do nothing of, nor for themselves, in matters of a spiritual nature; and as dead men are unprofitable unto others, so are they to God, and man; and as dead men are hurtful and infectious to others, so they by their evil communications corrupt good manners; and as dead bodies are nauseous and disagreeable, so are such persons, especially to a pure and holy Being; and as dead men are deprived of their senses, so are these: they are blind, and cannot see and discern the things of the Spirit of God; they have not ears to hear the joyful sound of the Gospel, so as to understand it, approve of it, and delight in it; they have no feeling, nor are they burdened with the weight of sin; nor have they any taste and savour of the things of God, but only of the things of men; so that in a spiritual sense they are dead, while they are alive. It is a common, saying to be met with in Jewish writers, µytm ˆyywrq ˆhyyjb µy[çr, "the wicked while alive are said to be dead" [f66]. And they say [f67] also, that men are called µytm, "dead", from the time they sin; and that he that sins is accounted tmk, "as a dead man" [f68].

Ver. 7. *And these things give in charge*, etc.] Concerning rebuking persons of a different age and sex, and concerning the maintenance of widows; and

particularly that children provide for their parents when helpless; and that widows trust in God, and give themselves to prayer and supplication, and not live in sin:

that they may be blameless; before men, and in the view of the world, and not be chargeable with any notorious crime; though none are without blame in themselves, and before God, but as considered in Christ Jesus.

Ver. 8. *But if any provide not for his own*, etc.] Not only for his wife and children, but for his parents, when grown old, and cannot help themselves:

and specially for those of his own house; that is, who are of the same household of faith with him; (see <480610>Galatians 6:10), and so the Syriac version renders it, “and especially those who are the children of the house of faith”; for though the tie of nature obliges him to take care of them, yet that of grace makes the obligation still more strong and binding; and he must act both the inhuman and the unchristian part, that does not take care of his pious parents: wherefore it follows,

he hath denied the faith; the doctrine of faith, though not in words, yet in works; and is to be considered in the same light, and to be dealt with as an apostate from the Christian religion.

And is worse than an infidel; for the very Heathens are taught and directed by the light of nature to take care of their poor and aged parents. The daughter of Cimon gave her ancient father the breast, and suckled him when in prison. Aeneas snatched his aged father out of the burning of Troy, and brought him out of the destruction of that city on his back; yea, these are worse than the brute creatures, and may be truly said to be without natural affections; such should go to the storks and learn of them, of whom it is reported, that the younger ones will feed the old ones, when they cannot feed themselves; and when weary, and not able to fly, will carry them on their backs. The Jews [f69] have a rule or canon, which obliged men to take care of their families, which runs thus:

> “as a man is bound to provide for his wife, so he is hound to provide for his sons and daughters, the little ones, until they are six years old; and from thenceforward he gives them food till they are grown up, according to the order of the wise men; if he will not, they reprove him, and make him ashamed, and oblige him; yea, if he will not, they publish him in the congregation, and say such an one

is cruel, and will not provide for his children; and lo, he is worse than an unclean fowl, which feeds her young."

Ver. 9. *Let not a widow be taken into the number*, etc.] That is, of widows, to be maintained by the church; though some choose to understand these words of the number of such who were made deaconesses, and had the care of the poor widows of the church committed to them; and so the Arabic version renders it, "if a widow be chosen a deaconess"; but the former sense is best, for it appears from (<540501>1 Timothy 5:1,6) that the apostle is still speaking of widows to be relieved: now such were not to be taken under the church's care for relief, under threescore years old: for under this age it might be supposed they would marry, and so not be desolate, but would have husbands to provide for them; or they might be capable of labour, and so of taking care of themselves. The age of sixty years was by the Jews [f70] reckoned hnqz, "old age", but not under.

Having been the wife of one man; that is, at one time; for second marriages are not hereby condemned, for this would be to condemn what the apostle elsewhere allows, (<450702>Romans 7:2,3). Nor is the sense only, that she should be one who never had more husbands than one at once; for this was not usual for women to have more husbands than one, even where polygamy obtained, or where men had more wives than one: this rather therefore is to be understood of one who had never put away her husband, and married another, which was sometimes done among the Jews; (see <411012>Mark 10:12), and this being a scandalous practice, the apostle was willing to put a mark of infamy upon it, and exclude such persons who had been guilty of it from the number of widows relieved by the church.

Ver. 10. *Well reported of for good works*, etc.] Both by the members of the church, and by them that were without:

particularly if she have brought up children; that is, "well", as the Arabic version adds; in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; commanding them, as Abraham did, to keep the way of the Lord, and to do justice and judgment; training them up in the paths of religion and virtue, from which they will not so easily depart when grown up.

If she have lodged strangers; as Abraham and Lot did, who entertained angels unawares: this may be understood of strangers in common, but especially of the brethren, ministers, and others, who came from distant parts, and travelled about to spread the Gospel of Christ. The [f71] Jews say

many things aynska dwbkb, “in honour of hospitality” or entertaining of strangers, especially of receiving into their houses the disciples of the wise men, and giving them food and drink, and the use of their goods; this was what gave persons a very great character with them, and highly recommended them.

If she have washed the saints' feet; which was usual in those hot countries, where they wore sandals only, partly for refreshment, and partly for the removal of dust and filth, contracted in walking; instances of this we have in several places of Scripture, (<01804>Genesis 18:4 19:2). It was such a common piece of civility, that our Lord complains of the neglect of it towards him, (<42744>Luke 7:44). It was what he did to his own disciples, and in so doing set them an example of what they should do to one another, (<431314>John 13:14) and being a mean and low office, and which very likely was done by the servants of the house; the sense may be, if she has condescended to do the meanest office for the saints.

If she have relieved the afflicted; either in body, with her purse; or in mind, by visiting them, and speaking comfortably to them: in general,

if she have diligently followed every good work; not only have done good works at certain times, but has followed that which is good; has closely pursued it, and that with great eagerness and diligence; has been constant and indefatigable in the performance of it.

Ver. 11. *But the younger widows refuse*, etc.] To admit them into the number of widows relieved by the church; partly because they are fit for labour, and so can take care of themselves; and partly because they may marry, as the apostle afterwards advises they should, and so would have husbands to take care of them:

for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ; that is, being at ease, and without labour, live a wanton, loose, and licentious life, and in carnal lusts and pleasures, contrary to the commands of Christ, and to the reproach and dishonour of his name:

they will marry; not that it would be criminal for them to marry, or that second marriages are unlawful; for the apostle afterwards signifies that it was right, fit, and proper that such should marry; but his sense is, that marriage being the effect of wantonness, would not be so honourable in them, and especially after they had made application to the church for

relief, and had declared themselves widows indeed, and desolate, and such as trusted in God, and gave themselves up to supplication and prayer; wherefore it would be much better for them, and more to the credit of religion, to marry first, than afterwards and it would be best not to apply at all to the church; and if they should, it would be most advisable to reject them for the said reasons.

Ver. 12. *Having damnation, etc.*] Not for their second marriage, but for their wantonness against Christ, or their sinful and luxurious way of living, contrary to the Gospel of Christ: and this is to be understood not of eternal damnation, which cannot, with propriety, be said to be had now; but either of the reproach and scandal cast upon them, and religion, for their wantonness; or the judgment and censure of the church for the same; or having sin, and the guilt of sin upon them, in which sense the word is used, (<4516>Romans 5:16).

Because they have cast off their first faith; or that faith which they first professed, even the doctrine of faith; which they may be said to cast off, because they walked not according to it, their conversation was not becoming their profession of it; and though they continued to profess the same faith they did in words, yet in works they denied it, or cast it off; for which reason they fell under the notice, judgment, and condemnation of the church, as well as exposed themselves to the reproach of men.

Ver. 13. *And withal they learn to be idle*, etc.] Being at ease, and without labour, living at the expense of the church: "wandering about from house to house"; having nothing else to do: such an one is what the Jews [f72] call tybbwç hnmla, "the gadding widow"; who, as the gloss says,

> "goes about and visits her neighbours continually; and these are they that corrupt the world."

Of this sort of women must the Jews be understood, when they say [f73], it is one of the properties of them to be twynaxwy "going out", or gadding abroad, as Dinah did; and that it is another to be twyrbd, "talkative", which agrees with what follows:

and not only idle, but tattlers also; full of talk, who have always some news to tell, or report to make of the affairs of this, or the other person, or family:

and busy bodies; in the matters of other persons, which do not concern them:

speaking things which they ought not; which either are not true, and, if they are, are not to be spoken of, and carried from place to place: this is a very great inconvenience, the apostle observes, arising from the admission of such young widows to be relieved and maintained at the church's charge.

Ver. 14. *I will therefore that the younger women marry*, etc.] Or “the younger” widows rather; and so some copies read; for this is not the apostle's advice to young women in general, though it will suit with them, but with younger widows in particular, of whom he is speaking:

bear children; and bring them forth, and feed, and nourish them, and bring them up in a religious way:

guide the house; manage domestic affairs, direct, order, or do what is proper to be done for the good of the family; which is much more commendable than to throw themselves upon the church, and live an idle and wanton life, and after that marry: and so

give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully; that is, either that Satan, the grand adversary of the saints, might have no opportunity to reproach them, and cast in their teeth their unbecoming walk, or accuse them before the throne; or that any enemy of the Christian religion might have no room nor reason to speak evilly of Christ, his Gospel, truths, and ordinances, on account of the disorderly conversation of any that profess his name; or that the ο αντικειμενος, the great opposer of Christ, the man of sin, and son of perdition, even antichrist, (2 Thessalonians 2:4), might have no handle from hence to speak reproachfully of marriage, and forbid it, under a pretence of sanctity, as (1 Timothy 4:3).

Ver. 15. *For some are already turned aside after Satan*.] Meaning some of those younger widows, whom the apostle knew, and had observed to have departed from the faith they first professed, and turned their backs on Christ, and gave themselves up to carnal lusts and pleasures, and an idle and impure life and conversation, walked according to the course of this world, and the prince of it, by whom they were led captive at his will; for so everyone that apostatizes from a profession of Christ, and follows either false teachers, and their doctrines, as the Gnostics, that condemned marriage, or any sinful and impure way of life, may be said to turn aside

after Satan; and as that apostle knew this to be fact, from his own observation, he therefore gives the above advice.

Ver. 16. *If any man or woman that believeth have widows*, etc.] That is, if any member of a church, whether a brother or a sister, have mothers or grandmothers, or any near relations widows, in mean circumstances, and incapable of taking care of themselves:

let them relieve them; out of their own substance; which is what the apostle before calls showing piety at home, and requiting their own parents:

and let not the church be charged; or burdened with the maintenance of them:

that it may relieve them that are widows indeed; that the church may be in a better capacity, its stock not being expended on others, to supply the wants of those who are really widows; who have neither husbands, nor children, nor any relations, to provide for them; nor anything in the world to support themselves with.

Ver. 17. *Let the elders that rule well*, etc.] By whom are meant not elders in age; though such ought to be honoured and respected, and to have a proper maintenance either from their children or the church, when reduced, and incapable of helping themselves; but then this is what should be done to all such persons, whereas the elders here are particularly described as good rulers and labourers in the word and doctrine; besides, elders in age are taken notice of before; nor are civil magistrates intended, such as were called the elders of Israel; for though such as discharge their office well are worthy of honour, yet it does not belong to any of them to labour in preaching the doctrine of the Gospel: nor are deacons designed, for they are never called elders in Scripture; nor is their work ruling, but serving of tables; nor does the ministry of the word belong to them as such; nor is any maintenance allowed them from the church on account of their office: nor are lay elders meant, who rule, but teach not; since there are no such officers appointed in the churches of Christ; whose only officers are bishops or elders and deacons: wherefore the qualifications such are only given in a preceding chapter. There are no other that rule in churches, but such who also speak to them the word of God; wherefore by him that rules, and the labourer in word and doctrine, are not meant two distinct orders, but different persons of the same order; some of these ruling well, but do not take so much pains in the ministry of the word; while others of

them both rule well and labour in the word, and who are to be reckoned deserving of the honour hereafter mentioned. These are called “elders”, because they are commonly chosen out of the senior members of the churches, though not always, Timothy is an exception to this; and because of their senile gravity and prudence, which were necessary in them: and they may be said to “rule”, because they are set in the highest place in the church, and over others in the Lord, who are to submit themselves to them, and obey them. Christ's church is a kingdom, he is King of it, and his ministering servants are rulers under him; and who rule “well” when they rule not with force and cruelty, or lord it over God's heritage; but when they govern according to the laws which Christ the King and lawgiver has prescribed; when they explain and enforce those laws, and show them to the people, and see that they are put in execution and when they discharge this part of their work with diligence and prudence. Now let such be

counted worthy of double honour; which some understand of honour in this world, and in the world to come, and which they have; they are honoured now by Christ, though reproached by the world, by being called unto, qualified for, and succeeded in the work of the ministry; and when they have faithfully discharged it, they will be honoured by him hereafter, and be introduced into his joy with commendation, and shine as the stars for ever and ever. But rather this is to be understood both of that outward respect that is to be shown them by words and actions; and of a sufficient maintenance that is to be provided for them; in which sense the word “honour” is used in this chapter before; (see Gill on “1 Timothy 5:3”), and some think that the comparison is between the widows before mentioned, and these elders; that if poor widows in the church are to be honoured and maintained, then much more the officers of it; these are worthy of more honour, even of double honour, or, a larger and a more honourable main tenant: and indeed this seems to be the meaning of the word “double” when used both in an ill and in a good sense; (see Revelation 18:6 2 Kings 2:9) and is an allusion to the firstborn among the Jews, who was to have a double portion of his father's goods, (Deuteronomy 21:17) and so may here signify, that the ministers of the Gospel ought not to have a short and scanty, but a large and honourable maintenance.

Especially they who labour in the word and doctrine; which lies in a constant reading of the Scriptures, the word of God, and diligently searching into them, and comparing them together, in order to find out the

mind and will of God in them; in a daily meditation upon them, and study of them; and in frequent and fervent wrestling with God, or prayer to him, to give an understanding of them; and in endeavouring to find out the sense of difficult passages, which are hard to be understood; and in providing for the different cases and circumstances of hearers, that everyone may have a portion; and in the choice of apt and proper words to express truth in, to the capacities of all: this is labouring in the word in private; besides which there is labouring in doctrine, in public; in preaching the Gospel constantly, boldly, and faithfully; in holding it fast against all opposition, and in defending it by argument, both by word and writing. The phrase seems to be Jewish, a like one is often to be met with in Jewish writings: Rabbenu was sitting atyyrwab y[l,

> ""and labouring in the law" before the congregation of the Babylonians at Tzippore [f74];"

and again [f75],

> "R. Jonah gave tithes to R. Acha bar Alia, not because he was a priest, but because he atyrwab y[l, "laboured in the law";"

and they say [f76],

> "there is no greater reward for a man in the world, as for him atyrwab y[ld, "who labours in the law";"

hence we read [f77] of hrwt lm[, "the labour of the law", which they say the mouth is made for, and of labourers in the law [f78]; and such persons they judged worthy of the greatest respect, and to be preferred to others. For, they say [f79],

> "if a congregation is obliged to give a salary to a doctor (or ruler of the synagogue), and to a minister of the congregation, and it is not in their power to give to both; if the ruler is a famous man, and great in the law, and expert in doctrine, he is to be preferred, but if not the minister of the congregation is to be preferred."

Ver. 18. *For the Scripture saith*, etc.] In (<05 25 04>Deuteronomy 25:4)

thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn; (See Gill on "<46 09 09>1 Corinthians 9:9"). (See Gill on "<46 09 10>1 Corinthians 9:10"). The ox, for its strength and labour, is a fit emblem of a Gospel minister; and its treading

the corn out of the husk and ear aptly represents the beating out, as it were, of Gospel truths, by the ministers of it, their making the doctrines of the Gospel clear, plain, and evident to the understandings of men; wherefore, as the ox was not muzzled when it trod out the corn, but might freely and largely feed upon it, so such who labour in the preaching of the Gospel ought to have a sufficient and competent maintenance: for which purpose this citation is made, as also the following:

and the labourer is worthy of his reward; which seems to be taken from (<4210 07>Luke 10:7) which Gospel was now written, and in the hands of the apostle; who here, by two testimonies, the one from Moses, and the other from Christ, supports the right of the honourable maintenance of the ministers of the Gospel.

Ver. 19. *Against an elder receive not an accusation*, etc.] A charge of any crime:

but before two or three witnesses; good sufficient ones, who are capable of well attesting the fact: a charge against a pastor of a church is not to be easily received; it should not be listened to privately, unless it clearly appears by such a number of witnesses; nor should it be brought publicly before the church, until it is privately and previously proved, by a sufficient number of credible witnesses, that it is really fact. The sense is, not that judgment shall not pass against him but by such a number of witnesses, or that the evidence upon his trial shall consist of such a number; for this is no other than what ought to be in the case of a private member, and of every man, according to (<5 1915>Deuteronomy 19:15). But the sense is, that the affair of an elder shall not be put upon a trial, much less sentence pass, until it has been privately proved against him, by proper testimonies, beyond all exception; only in such a case, should a church admit a charge against its elder. The reason of this rule is, because of his high office and the honour of the church, which is concerned in his, as well as of religion; for it carries in it some degree of scandal for such a person to be charged, even though he may be cleared; as also because of his many enemies, who through envy, malice, and the instigation of Satan, would be continually pestering the church with charges, could they be easily admitted.

Ver. 20. *Them that sin rebuke before all*, etc.] This the apostle adds to the above rule, to show that he was far from screening wicked ministers, or elders, guilty of flagitious crimes, and gross enormities: for these words, though they may be applied unto, and may hold good of all offenders, that

are members of churches; yet they seem chiefly to regard elders, even such who sin, who continue to sin, who live in sin, in some notorious sin or another; which is evident and known, to the great scandal of religion, and dishonour of the Gospel: and so some read the words, “them that sin before all, rebuke”; not only admonish once and again, but degrade them from their office, and withdraw from them, as from other disorderly persons, and cut them off, and cast them out of the church, and that in a public manner; and so the Arabic version renders it, “before the congregation”: which was done only in case of notorious offences: and which rule is observed by the Jews, and runs thus [f80];

> “a wise man, an elder in wisdom, and so a prince, or the father of the sanhedrim, that sins, they do not excommunicate him (with Niddui) always ayshrpb, “publicly”, unless he does as Jeroboam the son of Nebat and his companions; but when he sins other sins, they chastise him privately.”

The end is,

that others also may fear; that other elders, or other members of the church, or both, may fear to do the same evil things, lest they incur the same censure and punishment: the Syriac version reads, “other men”; and the Arabic version, “the rest of the people”. The phrase seems to be taken out of (Deuteronomy 13:11 17:13).

Ver. 21. *I charge thee before God*, etc.] Who sees and knows all things, and is a righteous and most impartial Judge; with whom there is no respect of persons, and in whose place and stead, the judges of the earth, both civil and ecclesiastical, stand; and to whom they are accountable for the judgment they pass on men and things; and in whose house or church Timothy was, whose business he was doing, and which ought to be done, with a view to his glory; wherefore the apostle gives him this solemn charge as in his sight:

and the Lord Jesus Christ: who also is God omniscient; and is Jesus Christ the righteous, the Head of the church, and the Judge of quick and dead; before whose judgment seat all must appear; where there will be no respect of persons, nor any partiality used.

And the elect angels; by whom are meant not some of the angels, the more choice, excellent, and principal among them; as the seven angels in the

Apocryha: ``I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.” (Tobit 12:15)

among whom Raphael is said to be one. But this is a spurious account, and not to be credited; nor was it an ancient tradition of the Jews, that there were seven principal angels; (see Gill on “Revelation 1:4”). The Chaldee paraphrase on (Genesis 11:7) is mistaken by Mr. Mede, where not “seven”, but “seventy” angels are spoken of: but here all the good angels are designed, called sometimes the holy angels, and sometimes the angels in heaven; and here, by the Syriac version, “his angels”; either the angels of God, as they are sometimes styled; or the angels of Jesus Christ, being made by him, and being ministers to him, and for him; and also “elect”, because chosen to stand in that integrity and holiness, in which they were created; and to enjoy everlasting glory and happiness, while others of the same species were passed by and left to fall from their first estate, and appointed to everlasting wrath and damnation: so that it may be observed that God's election takes place in angels as well as in men; and which flows from the sovereign will and pleasure of God; and was made in Christ, who is their head, and by whom they are confirmed in their happy state; and in which they must be considered in the pure mass, since they never fell; and which may serve to illustrate and confirm the doctrine of election with respect to men. Now before these the apostle charges Timothy; since they are near to the saints, encamp about them, minister unto them, and are concerned for their good; are spectators of their actions, and witnesses of what is done in churches, since they frequently attend the assemblies of the saints, and will descend with Christ, when he comes to judge the world in righteousness: the mention of them in this, charge gives no countenance to the worshipping of angels, since they are not set upon a level with God and Christ; nor is the charge delivered before them as judges, but as witnesses; nor are the words in the form of an oath, but of a charge; the angels are not sworn by, or appealed unto; only in their presence is this solemn charge given; and it may be observed, that even inanimate creatures, the heavens and the earth, are sometimes called upon as witnesses; and besides, it was usual with the Jews to make such kind of obtestations, So Agrippa [f81], in his speech to the Jews, exhorting them to fidelity to the Romans, beseeches them by their holy things, και τους ιερους αγγελους του υεου, “and the holy angels of God”, and their

common country, that is, the good of it, that they would remain steadfast. What is the amount of this charge follows,

that thou observe these things; either all that are contained in the epistle, or more particularly the rules prescribed in this chapter; concerning rebuking members of a different age and sex, providing for poor widows, and taking care of the ministers of the Gospel, and chiefly what regards the discipline of the church with respect to the elders of it; as not to admit an accusation against them, unless it is sufficiently evident, and yet not connive at notorious sinners, but rebuke them publicly; and this charge belongs not only to Timothy, but to the whole church, and to all succeeding ministers and churches in all ages. The manner in which these things are to be observed is,

without preferring one before another; or, as the words may be rendered, "without prejudgment"; that is, without prejudging a case, or determining, before hearing, how it shall be; or as the Syriac version renders it, "in nothing let thy mind be prepossessed"; the sense is, that he should attend to any case that should come before him in the church, without prejudice or prepossession, and hearken to what is said on both sides; and judge impartially, and not in haste, but weigh well and consider the evidence that is given, and then determine as the case appears; so the Arabic version renders it, "without haste", or precipitancy; to which agrees the advice of the men of the great congregation, or Ezra's congregation, who were in his time, and succeeded him; ^ydb µynwtm wwh, "be slow in judgment" [f82], or long at it; that so by strict and close examination, things not known at first may be discovered: and when judgment is passed, it should not be through affection to one party, and disrespect to another; which is called in Scripture a respect of persons, and here a preferring one to another; and which is further explained by adding,

doing nothing by partiality; or by inclining to one side more than to another. A judge should not preponderate to either side, but should hold the balance of justice even, and do nothing to turn the scale one way or another, but as the weight and truth of the evidence direct; and such a rule should be observed in all church affairs.

Ver. 22. *Lay hands suddenly on no man*, etc.] Which is not to be understood of removing censures from off offenders, upon their repentance, which should not be suddenly and hastily done; and which it

seems in later times has been done by imposition of hands; but since no such custom obtained in the apostle's time, and a taking off of censures is never in Scripture signified by this phrase, it cannot be intended here; but rather the admission of persons into the work of the ministry, and the installing of them into the office of an or pastor; upon whom, in these early times, hands were laid by the apostles, whereby gifts were conveyed, as on Timothy; (see Gill on "5044 1 Timothy 4:14").

And from this rite this act was so called, as it might be when it was laid aside; just as, with the Jews, an ordination of one of their doctors is called hkyms, "imposition of hands", though they performed it by words, and not by laying on of hands; which now by them is not judged necessary [f83]: and then the sense is, do not hastily and at once admit any person into the sacred work of the ministry, or constitute him an elder, or pastor, over a church of Christ; but let him be first proved, and let it plainly appear, that he has the grace of God in him, and has gifts for public service bestowed on him; that he is sound in faith, and of a good life and conversation; and a man of uprightness and fidelity;

neither be partaker of other men's sins; of any of the members of the church; by doing the same, joining with them therein, or by consenting to them and taking pleasure in them, as done by others; by conniving at them, and not restraining them, nor reproving for them: or rather this refers to rash and hasty ordinations of ministers; and either regards the sins of those who lay hands suddenly on men, and with whom the apostle would not have Timothy join, that he might not be a partner in their sins; or else the sins of those that are ordained, and these, whether before or after their ordination; which such involve themselves in, who either rashly and ignorantly ordain such persons; and much more if they do it, knowing them to be such: and these sins may include both immorality and error; (see 2 John 10,11). Keep thyself pure; not from his own sins, the sin of nature, indwelling sin, and actual transgressions; no man is, or can be pure, from either of these; nor can any man keep himself; Christ only is able to keep them from falling. But the apostle's meaning is, that he should keep himself pure from the sins of others, by not rashly and suddenly admitting any into the ministry; just as the apostle was pure from the blood of all men, by faithfully preaching the Gospel; so he suggests that Timothy would be pure from partaking of other men's sins, by observing a strict discipline in the house of God. Some refer this to chastity of body, in opposition to the sin of uncleanness, which his youthful age and the temptations about him

might expose him to the danger of; and which is scandalous and infamous in a minister of the word. Which sense serves to show the connection of the following words, which otherwise seem to stand unconnected.

Ver. 23. *Drink no longer water*, etc.] Though it was commendable in him to keep under his body, as the apostle did, by abstemious living, and not pamper the flesh and encourage the lusts of it, and so preserve purity and chastity; yet it was proper that he should take care of his health, that it was not impaired by too much severity, and so he be incapable of doing the work of the Lord. And it seems by this, that his long and only use of water for his drink had been prejudicial to his health: wherefore the following advice was judged proper:

but use a little wine; some, by “a little wine”, understand not the quantity, but the quality of the wine; a thin, small, weak wine, or wine mixed with water; and so the Ethiopic version renders the words, “drink no more simple water”, (or water only,) “but mix a little wine”; though rather the quantity is intended, and which is mentioned. Not as though there was any danger of Timothy's running into an excess of drinking; but for the sake of others, lest they should abuse such a direction, to indulge themselves in an excessive way; and chiefly to prevent the scoffs of profane persons; who otherwise would have insinuated that the apostle indulged intemperance and excess: whereas this advice to the use of wine, was not for pleasure, and for the satisfying of the flesh, but for health,

for thy stomach's sake; to help digestion, and to remove the disorders which might attend it: the Ethiopic version renders it, “for the pain of the liver”, and “for thy perpetual disease”; which last might be a pain in his head, arising from the disorder of his stomach: the last clause we render,

and thine often infirmities; or weaknesses of body, occasioned by hard studies, frequent ministrations, and indefatigable pains and labours he endured in spreading the Gospel of Christ.

Ver. 24. *Some men's sins are open before hand*, etc.] Some men are such open and notorious sinners, that there is no need of any inquiry about them, or any examination of them; or any witnesses to be called to their character, in order to pass judgment concerning them; they even prevent and supersede any formal process about them. With such persons, the apostle intimates, Timothy could have no difficulty upon him, what to do with them; should they be proposed for the ministry, he would know at

once what to do with them; namely, reject them. There would be no danger of his laying hands suddenly on such; for the following phrase,

going before to judgment, is not to be understood of God's judgment, or of the last and future judgment of the great day, but of human judgment: it is true indeed that some men's sins are manifest and barefaced, before that day comes; while others are so private, that they will not be known till that day declares them, and brings to light the hidden things of darkness: and much such a way of speaking is used by the Jews; who say [f84],

> "whoever committeth one transgression, (a notorious one,) in this world, it joins to him, "and goes before him" ^ydh µwyl "to the day of judgment"."

But this sense agrees not with the context; and with what propriety soever it may be said, of some men's sins going before to judgment, it cannot be said with any, that others follow after judgment; since at the general judgment, every work, both good and bad, with every secret thing, will be brought into it; and nothing will follow after that: wherefore the next clause,

and some [men] they follow after; that is, some men's sins follow after, is to be understood of their following after human judgment; or of their appearing in the light after judgment has been passed upon them, which before were hid: and the sense of the whole is this, that the characters of some men are so well known, and it is so plain a case, that they are destitute of the grace of God; have not ministerial gifts; or are unsound in the faith; or are men of immoral lives and conversations; so that there can be no dispute about them, whether they are to be admitted into the ministry of the word or rejected. But there are other persons who may be proposed, whose sins or errors are so private, that they may not be known; and yet may appear afterwards; wherefore it is proper to take time, and not be too hasty, or lay hands suddenly on men.

Ver. 25. *Likewise also the good works [of some] are manifest before hand*, etc.] The characters of some men, on the other hand, are so fair and bright; and it is so clear a point, that they have received the grace of God in truth; and have a rich furniture for the ministry; and are sound in the doctrine of faith; and are men of such godly lives and conversations, that they prevent any formal inquiry, examination, and judgment; and there can be no difficulty in admitting them at once: and therefore the above rule is

not designed for such persons, but to guard against those with whom things do not appear so very clear and manifest:

and they that are otherwise cannot be hid; if they are men of bad principles or practices, they will be discovered in time; for there is nothing hid that shall not be revealed; time will make all things manifest; their errors and sins will break out, and be exposed: and therefore it is right to wait a while, and not to be quick in the reception of them into the Gospel ministry; for otherwise, much mischief may be done to the souls of men, and much dishonour brought on the ways and doctrines of Christ.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO 1 TIMOTHY 6

In this chapter the apostle gives some instructions to servants; lays down some rules, by which to judge of false teachers; advises to contentment; exposes the sin of covetousness; exhorts Timothy to avoid sin, and follow after things that are good, to be constant in his warfare, the issue of which would be eternal life; gives him a charge with respect to himself, and orders him what he should enjoin others, particularly the rich, and what he should do himself; and wishes grace unto him, to enable him to discharge his duty. The instructions to servants are of two sorts; first, to such who had unbelieving masters, whom they ought to honour and obey; that the name and doctrine of Christ be not evil spoken of: and then to such as had believing masters, that they despise them not being brethren, but should the more cheerfully serve them; because believers in Christ, beloved of God, and partakers of his grace; which duties are worthy to be insisted upon in the Gospel ministry, (<5401>1 Timothy 6:1,2), and such who teach not these things are to be accounted false teachers, whose characters are given in several particulars; as men unsound, proud, ignorant, quarrelsome, and covetous, and to be withdrawn from, (<5403>1 Timothy 6:3-5). And from hence the apostle exhorts to contentment; and argues for it, partly from the gain of it along with godliness; and partly from the consideration of what men are, when they come into the world, and what they will be, when they go out of it; and also from having food and raiment, which include all the necessaries of life, (<5406>1 Timothy 6:6-8). And then he exposes the folly and danger of covetousness, being the root of all evil; an enemy to true religion and godliness; and the cause of ruin and destruction, (<5409>1 Timothy 6:9,10). Wherefore he addresses himself to Timothy, in particular, to avoid everything of this kind; and to follow the reverse of those things that were in the false teachers; to fight the good fight of faith, and then lay hold on eternal life; to which he encourages him, from his calling, and the profession he had made, in a very public manner, (<5411>1 Timothy 6:11,12). And then follows a solemn charge unto him, given him before God and Christ; that he would observe what had been commanded him in the most perfect manner, until the appearance of Christ; which is certain, and may be

concluded will be, from the various epithets of God; who will make him manifest in his own time, (<5463>1 Timothy 6:13-16). To which is added an injunction on Timothy to charge rich men not to be elated with their riches, nor trust in them, since they are uncertain things; but in God, from whom they have received such a plentiful measure of them; that they be beneficent to others, which will turn to their own advantage in the issue, (<5467>1 Timothy 6:17-19). And to close all, he is very urgent upon Timothy, to keep the Gospel pure and uncorrupt, he was intrusted with; and avoid everything that was opposite to it, as profane and mere babbling, and having only a show of knowledge, but not that itself; and the rather, since some profane teachers and professors of the Gospel had erred from it: and concludes with wishing him grace, to enable him to attend to the several instructions which had been given him, (<5460>1 Timothy 6:20,21).

Ver. 1. *Let as many servants as are under the yoke*, etc.] Not under the yoke of the law of God, or under the yoke of Christ; though the servants here spoken of were under both; but "under the yoke of government", as the Arabic version renders it; that is, under the yoke of men, in a state of servitude, under the government of masters, and in their service; being either apprentices to them, or bought with their money, or hired by them:

count their own masters worthy of all honour; and give it to them; which includes subjection to them; obedience to all their lawful commands, which are consistent with religion and reason, with the laws of God, and with the light of nature; and all reverence of them, and respect unto them, expressed by words and gestures: and all this is to be given to their own masters to whom they belong; who have a property in them; whose money or goods they are; and that be they what they will, as to their religion and temper; whether they be believers or unbelievers; or whether they be good and gentle, kind and humane; or whether they be froward, peevish, and ill natured:

that the name of God and [his] doctrine be not blasphemed; by unbelieving masters, who, should their believing servants be refractory, disobedient, rebellious, or disrespectful, would be apt to say, what a God do these men serve? is this their religion? is this the Gospel they talk of? does their doctrine teach them such things, to be disobedient to their masters, and carry it disrespectfully to them? does it disengage them from the laws of nature, and dissolve the bonds of civil society, and destroy the relation that subsists between man and man? If this be the case, away with

their God and their doctrine too. Wherefore the apostle exhorts, that if believing servants have any regard to that name they are called by, and call upon, and to the doctrine of the Gospel they have embraced and professed; that they would be obedient and respectful to their masters; that they may have no occasion to speak reproachfully of God, and of the Gospel.

Ver. 2. *And they that have believing masters*, etc.] That believe in one God, in opposition to the Gentiles, that held many gods, and in Jesus Christ, in distinction from the Jews; who believed in him with the heart, and professed him with their mouths, and held the mystery of faith in a pure conscience. What is said before, is said to servants that had unbelieving masters; who would be ready to blaspheme, should they act amiss. Servants were under a snare both ways, through the insinuations of false teachers; who suggested, that their servitude was not consistent with their Christian liberty; that they ought not to serve wicked men, because being called of God, they were advanced above them; nor good men, because they were upon a level with them. But the apostle teaches another doctrine;

let them not despise [them], because they are brethren; of the same family named of Christ, and of the same household of God, and of faith, and have the same father; for though with regard to spiritual blessings, privileges, and ordinances, they were equal; yet not with regard to temporal and civil affairs; and therefore should not treat them with less respect, or be more backward to obey their lawful commands, on that account:

but rather do [them] service; more heartily, and with a greater good will, as to the Lord; these masters belonging to him, and being engaged in his cause; which they, their servants, by yielding a cheerful obedience to them, are assisting in: and the rather,

because they are faithful; in lesser things, in giving to them, their servants, what is just and equal, proper food and suitable raiment, and their just wages; and in using their wealth and riches in a good way, for the interest of Christ, the assistance of the poor saints, and the spreading of the Gospel; and so in greater things, by holding fast the profession of their faith, adhering to Christ, his truths and ordinances: or “because they are believing, or believers”; it is the same word as before used; and therefore they should be precious to them, and high in their esteem; for faith is a precious grace, and such as have it are chosen of God, and precious:

and beloved; of God, who had chosen them to salvation; and of Christ, who had redeemed them by his blood; and of the saints, who are taught of God to love one another; and this is another reason why they should be served, and not despised; and a third follows:

partakers of the benefit; of the free grace of God; of redemption and salvation by Jesus Christ, and of all spiritual blessings in him; and therefore should serve them the more cheerfully. The Syriac version renders it, “such as enjoy rest in”, or “are refreshed by their service”; or “by their service to them”, as the Arabic version: the sense is, that when believing servants serve their believing masters readily and faithfully, their masters are well pleased with them, delight in their service, and consider it as a benefit to them, and a kindness done them; and which therefore should animate and encourage them to serve them. Some understand these characters of

faithful and beloved, of the servants' themselves; that because they are such; therefore they should serve, and not despise their believing masters; and particularly the last clause, which may be rendered, “who in return receive a benefit from them”, as food, raiment, and wages; and besides, they are used with humanity and kindness, and in a manner becoming Christians; to which agrees the Ethiopic version, which renders it, “who will receive and help you”; will take care of you, and assist you, and supply you with what is proper and necessary:

these things teach and exhort; the Syriac and Arabic versions add them; the servants. The apostle was not above instructing and exhorting persons of such a capacity, and in so low a state of life; and it became Timothy to do so likewise; and every minister of the word.

Ver. 3. *If any man teach otherwise*, etc.] Or another doctrine, as the Syriac version renders it; a doctrine different from what the apostle had now taught, concerning the duty of servants to their masters; as did the false teachers, who despised dominion or government; not only civil government, and so spoke evil of rulers and magistrates; and church government, and therefore reviled the apostles, elders, and pastors of churches; but family government, and encouraged disobedience to parents and masters; (see 2 Peter 2:10 Jude 1:8)

or teach another doctrine, from that of the Bible, of Christ and his apostles:

and consent not to wholesome words: such as the doctrines of the Gospel; they are food to the saints, milk for babes, and meat for strong men; they are sweet and savoury food to a spiritual taste; they are nourishing, and the means of a spiritual growth; they are salutary and healthful; they have no corruption, taint, or poison in them:

[even] the words of our Lord Jesus Christ; the doctrines which he preached when on each, who was anointed with the Spirit of God without measure, to preach the Gospel, and by whom all the doctrines of grace and truth came; or the doctrines relating to Christ, to his person, offices, grace, righteousness, sacrifice and satisfaction; to what he is, has done, does, and will do.

And to the doctrine which is according to godliness. The whole Gospel is the mystery of godliness; it is the truth that is after it, and it has a tendency to promote true godliness in heart and life: even such is the nature of the more distinguishing doctrines of it, which are charged with licentiousness; as the doctrine of eternal and personal election; for though it is not of works, but of grace, yet holiness is a means fixed in election, and an end secured by it; it is the source and spring of all real holiness; holiness of heart is an evidence of it to believers themselves; and holiness of life is an evidence of it to the world; nor can anything more powerfully engage men to it than the consideration that they are chosen of God to grace and glory. The covenant of grace, which is absolute and unconditional, provides for both internal and external holiness; and the promises of it, under the influence of grace, powerfully operate in the minds of believers, to the cleansing of them from all impurity of flesh and spirit, and to the perfecting of holiness in the fear of the Lord: and so the doctrines of free justification, by the righteousness of Christ, which does not make void the law, nor discourage good works; and of Christ's bearing the sins of his people, and making satisfaction for them, that they being dead to sin might live unto righteousness; and of redemption of them by the blood of Christ from sin, Satan, and the law, which is done that they might be a peculiar people, zealous of good works; and of the effectual calling of them, which is with an holy calling; and of their final perseverance in grace and holiness, are all of them doctrines according to godliness, and greatly encourage and promote it: now, whoever does not accede to these truths, and acquiesce in them, but differs from them, and teaches the reverse of them, he is a false teacher, and is all that the apostle says in the next words.

Ver. 4. *He is proud*, etc.] Or swelled and puffed up with a vain conceit of himself and his own notions, and treats with an haughty air the faithful ministers of the word. The doctrines of grace are of an humbling nature, especially when they are spiritually and experimentally understood and received; but notional knowledge, knowledge of natural things, and the doctrines of men, such as are of their own invention, fill the mind with pride and vanity:

knowing nothing; as he ought to know; not anything that is solid and substantial; nothing of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: he may have knowledge of natural and civil things, but not of spiritual ones; he may have collected a medley of knowledge together, but what will be of no real use either to himself or others:

but doting about questions and strifes of words: or he is "sick or diseased"; his mind is distempered; he is like one in a fever, that is delirious; his head is light and wild; his fancy is roving, and he talks of things he knows not what; his head runs upon "questions"; foolish and unlearned ones, about the law and works, and the necessity of them to justification and salvation; concerning genealogies, and other fruitless and unprofitable subjects:

and strifes of words; mere logomachies; contending and quarrelling more about words than things, which tend to no profit, but to the subverting and confounding of hearers. The ill effects of which are as follow:

whereof cometh envy: at the superior gifts and talents of others; at their success, and any little degree of honour and respect they have from others; which shows that such men, in whom this vice is a governing one, are carnal men, for this is a work of the flesh; and that they are destitute of charity, or the grace of love, which envieth not: also from hence comes

strife; contention, quarrelling; the peace and comfort of particular persons, and even of whole communities, are broken and destroyed hereby; for foolish and unlearned questions gender strifes, (2 Timothy 2:24,25) which are very unbecoming the servants of the Lord, and very uncomfortable to the churches of Christ: yea, these also produce

railings; at one another, and especially at the faithful ministers of the Gospel; for when the false teachers cannot overcome them by Scripture and argument, they fall to railing and reviling of them: or entertain

evil surmises; groundless suspicions: or from hence follow, as the words may be rendered, “wicked opinions”: concerning the being, perfections, purposes, and providence of God; concerning the person and offices of Christ; concerning the law and Gospel, grace and good works; and so the Syriac version renders it, “an evil opinion of the mind”.

Ver. 5. *Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds*, etc.] Who being corrupt in their principles, and corrupters of the word of God, dispute in a very froward and perverse way, rubbing and galling one another, and so provoke, to wrath and anger, and, every evil work:

and destitute of the truth of Christ, who is the truth, knowing nothing of him spiritually and savingly; and of the Gospel, the word of truth; and also of the truth of grace, being carnal, sensual, and having not the Spirit of God.

Supposing that gain is godliness; such were Simon Magus and his followers, and other false teachers, who made merchandise of men, looked everyone for his gain from his quarter, and acted as if there was nothing in religion but worldly profit and gain; these served themselves, their own bellies, and selfish interests, and not the Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore the apostle gives the following advice to Timothy, and through him to all ministers and churches,

from such withdraw thyself: do not come near them; have nothing to do with them; do not lay hands on them, or admit them into the ministry; do not suffer them to preach, or encourage them by hearing them: if in the church, cast them out; have communion with them, neither in a civil nor in a religious way; avoid all conversation with them. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions omit this clause; it is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in Beza's Claromontane Exemplar, but is in other copies.

Ver. 6. *But godliness with contentment is great gain*.] By “godliness” is not meant any particular grace, but all the graces of the Spirit of God; as faith, hope, love, fear, etc. the whole of internal religion, as it shows itself in outward worship, and in all acts of holiness of life and conversation; and which the doctrine that is according to godliness teaches and engages to; and this is gain, very great gain indeed. A man possessed of true godliness is a gaining, thriving, man: such as are godly, or truly gracious, they are come into good and happy circumstances, and are possessor of the true, solid, satisfying, durable, and unsearchable riches of grace; all their debts

are paid, they are richly clothed, and deliciously fed, and are in a good family, even the household of God, who before were in debt, arrayed in rags, were in a starving condition, and strangers and foreigners; yea, they are heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ, and have both a right and a meetness for the heavenly inheritance; they are now made kings and priests to God, and, in the present state of things, have God to be their portion, and exceeding great reward; they have an interest in Christ, and in all spiritual blessings in him, and have the Spirit as the earnest of their future inheritance; they are rich in faith, and in good works; their souls, which were lost, are gained, and shall be saved with an everlasting salvation; and ere long they will be possessed of all the riches of glory, signified by a house not made with hands, a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God, an incorruptible inheritance, and a kingdom and glory: how great is the gain of godliness! And what adds to this gain, and now goes along with it, is "contentment"; for this is not to be considered as the condition of godliness being great gain, as if it was not so without it; but as the effect of godliness, what that produces, and as a part of its gain. The word here used signifies "sufficiency"; and so it is rendered in the Vulgate Latin version: it designs a competency of the good things of this life; and what that is, is expressed in *1 Timothy 6:8* and such God gives to them that fear him, his godly ones, who shall lack no good thing convenient for them; for godliness has the promise of this life, as well as of that which is to come; and God does give to such all things pertaining to life and godliness, even all things richly to enjoy. The word indeed properly signifies "self-sufficiency", which in its strict sense, only belongs to God, who is "El-Shaddai", God all-sufficient and self-sufficient; but here it intends such a sufficiency as a man himself judges to be so; for this phrase does not so much design the thing itself, which is a sufficiency, as the opinion, the sense which the godly man has of it, who himself judges it, as Jacob did, to be enough; and such a man is content with what he has, and thankful for it, submits quietly to the will of God, and patiently bears every adverse providence: and this is now the fruit and effect of godliness, or true grace, and is a considerable part of that gain which godliness brings with it; and such a man is a happy man indeed, let his circumstances be what they will. The Jews have a saying [f85], that

> "he is a rich man whose spirit rests in, or is contented with his riches;"

that is, as the gloss explains it.

> "who rejoices in his portion, be it little or much: thus, though godliness is not gain, nor gain godliness, in the sense of the false teachers, yet is it true gain in a spiritual sense."

Ver. 7. *For we brought nothing into this world*, etc.] Which is a reason both clearly showing that godliness is great gain, since those who have it brought nothing into the world with them but sin, and yet are now in such happy circumstances as before described; and that godly persons should be content with what they have, even of worldly things, seeing they are so much more than they had when they came into the world, into which they came naked; and which should be a quieting consideration under the most stripping providences; (see <1812>Job 1:21)

and it is certain we can carry nothing out: as men come into the world, so will they go out of it; nor will they need their worldly substance after death, any more than they did before they were born; and what they now have, and use not, will then be lost to them, whatever gain it may be to others: wherefore it becomes them cheerfully to use what they have, and be content therewith; (see <2165>Ecclesiastes 5:15,16). The Jews have a saying like this[f86], that

> "as a man comes (into the world), ˆyjylj b, "simply" or "nakedly", so he goes out in like manner."

Ver. 8. *And having food and raiment*, etc.] "Food" includes all things necessary to be ate and drank, of which there is a great variety, and is here expressed in the plural number; and "raiment" every necessary covering, as the word used signifies, and includes an habitation, which is a cover and shelter from the inclementencies of the weather. And now having all these comforts and necessaries of life, food to eat, and drink to extinguish thirst and refresh, raiment to put on, and a house to dwell in,

let us be therewith content: there is very good reason why the saints should be content; since more than these things cannot be enjoyed; and these they have with a blessing, and as a fruit and token of the love of God to them; these were all that Jacob desired, Agur petitioned for, and Christ directs his disciples daily to pray for; and which to have, is to have enough, a proper sufficiency and competency: the words may be rendered, "we shall be content with them"; which the apostle could say for himself, Timothy, and others, who had been content, even when they wanted these things. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, "we are content"; and the Syriac

version, “food and raiment are sufficient for us”; and so the apostle sets himself, and others, as examples of contentment to be imitated and followed.

Ver. 9. *But they that will be rich*, etc.] Not they that are rich; for some rich men are good men; and do much good with their riches; and are as free from temptations and snares, and foolish and hurtful lusts, as other persons, as Abraham, Joseph of Arimathea, Gaius, and others were; but such that would be rich, who labour after, make haste for it, and are resolved upon it, at any rate, right or wrong, as there be thousands, who never attain to it; so that the apostle does not point at rich men particularly, but at such who are determined to be rich, whether they ever are so or not: these

fall into temptation; not in such sense in which the phrase is used in (<59102>James 1:2) but in such sense as Christ uses it, (<40613>Matthew 6:13) namely, a falling into temptation to sin, so as to be drawn away by it, and overcome with it:

and a snare; the Vulgate Latin version reads, “the snare of the devil”, and so Beza's Claromontane copy; which perhaps is taken from (<540307>1 Timothy 3:7), and though this seems not to be the genuine reading, yet it may give the true sense: Satan may be compared to a fowler; his temptations to sin are his nets and snares; and they that will be rich, are the birds that are caught and entangled therein, out of which sometimes it is impracticable to extricate themselves:

and into many foolish and hurtful lusts; carnal and worldly lusts, the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which are the things that are in the world and draw the affections to them; yea, what sin is there but such persons may, and do fall into; as defrauding of the neighbour, oppressing the poor, lying, perjury, theft, murder, rapine, violence, and injustice of every kind? so that they may be said to be “many”, and some of them are “foolish”. All sin is folly, and every wicked man is a foolish one, and acts a part quite contrary to reason; but some evil ways are notoriously silly, weak and foolish, and which they that will be rich make use of to get money; though others of them are sly and artful enough, and all of them are “hurtful” to their credit and reputation, or to the health of their bodies, and especially to the welfare of their immortal souls. So the phrase açpj ˆwhyrxy, “their foolish lust”, is used by the Targumist in (<261505>Ezekiel

20:25) and the corruption of nature in general is by the Jews called the old and foolish king, in (<20413>Ecclesiastes 4:13). They ask [f87],

> "why is he called a king? because all obey him; why is he called old? because he is joined to him (a man) from his birth to his old age; and why is he called lysk, "foolish?" because he teaches him an evil way, which he knows not how to warn him of again."

Which drown men in destruction and perdition; that is, in utter ruin, in the ruin both of soul and body; and which is irrecoverable, like that of the drowning of a man in the sea, with a millstone about his neck; such folly and danger do those expose themselves to, who will be rich at any rate.

Ver. 10. *For the love of money is the root of all evil*, etc.] Of all the evils before mentioned, and of others; not money itself, as silver and gold, which are God's creatures, and his gifts, and may be used to, and answer many good purposes; but the love of it, and not any love of it; for there may be a lawful love of it, and desire after it, so far as it is requisite to the necessaries of life, to answer the calls of Providence, the duties we owe to God and men, to serve the interest of Christ, and do good to fellow creatures and fellow Christians: but it is an immoderate insatiable desire after it, and an inordinate love of it, which is here meant, such as is properly idolatry: as when a man loves it, not only besides, but above God; serves it as if it was God, and places his trust and confidence in it, independent of God, and his providence; such love of it is the source and spring of all iniquity, as above; it was the sin of Judas, and the root of all his iniquity. The phrase is Jewish. So idolatry is said to be twnw[lk rqy[, "the root of all iniquities" [f88]; (see <58125>Hebrews 12:15)

which while some coveted after; in a greedy and insatiable way:

they have erred from the faith; the doctrine of faith. Observing that the professors of it are generally poor, they have declined that path, and have not so much as heard the word; and if they have heard and embraced it, yet when persecution arises because of it, they drop their profession of it; or else their minds are so filled with worldly cares, and deceitful riches, that the word is choked, and becomes unprofitable, and by and by, Demas like, they forsake it, having loved this present world.

And pierced themselves through with many sorrows; riches are therefore fitly compared to thorns, which give great trouble and uneasiness, both in

getting and keeping them; and oftentimes the reflection upon the unlawful ways and means made use of to obtain them, gives very pungent pain and distress; (see <18015>Job 20:15-29). The apostle seem to allude to the Hebrew word [xb, used for a covetous man, which signifies one that pierces, cuts, and wounds, as such an one does both himself and others.

Ver. 11. *But thou, O man of God*, etc.] Not only by creation, as every man is; nor merely by special grace, as everyone is, that is chosen of God, redeemed by Christ, and regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit; but by his peculiar office, as an evangelist and minister of the word, being qualified for, and devoted to, and employed in the service of God. The phrase is taken out of the Old Testament, where the prophets, Elijah and Elisha, are so called, (<120109>2 Kings 1:9 4:7,9),

flee these things; the Arabic version reads "these abominations"; namely, all questions and strifes of words, from whence so many evils follow, (<540604>1 Timothy 6:4,5) and all worldly gain, selfish interest, and mercenary views in religion; a wicked resolution to be rich, at any rate, and an immoderate love of the things of the world, and an eager pursuit after them, which expose to great danger, and even utter ruin; things very unbecoming any professor of religion, but much more a minister of the Gospel.

And follow after righteousness; not for justification before God, that he had followed after, and attained unto, which is the righteousness of Christ, and not of the law; but for the honour of religion before men; and intends the doing of justice between man and man, giving everyone their own, which in undue affection for the world sometimes leads men from:

godliness; spiritual religion, holiness of heart, and conversation, which has the promise of this life, as well as of the other, and with contentment is great gain; wherefore to pursue this is much better than greedily to run after the riches of this world, or with the false teachers to suppose that godliness lies in worldly gain, or in securing to a man his worldly interest:

faith; the grace of faith, which looks not to things seen, which are temporal, but to things not seen, which are eternal; and leads off the mind from sublunary enjoyments to God, and Christ, and the glories of another world; and is the leading grace to all others, and the foundation of good works, without which there is no pleasing in acts of moral righteousness, or in any acts of religious worship, which may be called godliness:

love; to God, which is inconsistent with serving mammon, or with an immoderate love of money; and to Christ, which will put a man on seeking, not his own things, but the things of Christ; and to the saints, which will direct him to serve them by acts of beneficence and liberality:

patience; in bearing reproaches and indignities; in suffering injuries, loss of goods, imprisonment, and every sort of persecution, for the sake of the Gospel; which a covetous disposition will not admit of: last of all,

meekness; or humility, not seeking great things, but being content with a lower station of life; for generally it is pride that puts men upon a determination to be rich at any rate: it may also design meekness in instructing the ignorant, in refuting error, and in reproving offenders.

Ver. 12. *Fight the good fight of faith*, etc.] The apostle suggests to Timothy, that he had other business to do than to mind the things of this world; his life was a state of warfare; he was a soldier, and was not to entangle himself with the things of this life; he had many enemies to engage with, as Satan, and his principalities and powers; sin, and the lusts of the flesh; the world, and the men of it, and a great fight of afflictions to endure with them; as also false teachers, with, whom particularly he was to fight the good fight of faith, that so the truth of the Gospel, which they resisted, might continue with the saints. This fight is called "the fight of faith"; partly in opposition to the law, and to hrwt lç htmjlm, "the fight", or "war of the law" the Jews[f89] so much talk of; and in which the false teachers, in the apostle's time, were so much engaged, and against whom the apostles set themselves; and partly because the doctrine of faith, the faith of the Gospel, the faith once delivered to the saints, is what they earnestly contended, strove, and fought for; and because the grace of faith, as conversant with the Scriptures of truth, was the weapon they fought with: and this may be called a "good fight", because it is in a good cause, the cause of God and truth; and under a good Captain, Jesus Christ the Captain of our salvation; for which good weapons are provided, even the whole armour of God, and which are not carnal, but spiritual and mighty; to which may be added, that those who are engaged in this fight may be sure of victory, and the crown of glory, life, and righteousness: so that when they have done fighting they have nothing else to do but to

lay hold on eternal life; as Timothy for his encouragement is here bid to do. Eternal life is the prize of the high calling of God, which is held up, and

held forth to those who are fighting the Lord's battles; and this they should look unto as the recompense of reward; and this they may lay hold upon, even now by faith, believing their interest in it, their right unto it, and that they shall enjoy it; of which they may be the more assured, because of their effectual calling:

whereunto thou art also called; not barely by the external ministration of the Gospel, in which sense many are called, but few chosen and saved; but internally, by the special grace and power of the Spirit of God; and such who are so called, are not only called to grace, but to eternal glory; and the God of all grace, who has called unto it, of his sovereign good will and pleasure, is faithful, and will bestow it. The word “also” is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, and in all the Oriental versions; but it seems to be emphatic, and is used to strengthen Timothy's faith, as to the enjoyment of eternal life; since it was not only the reward of grace, following upon the good fight of faith, but was that also to which he was called by the grace of God:

and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses; both before the brethren at Lystra, at his baptism and admission into the church, before whom he gave an account of his faith, and made a profession of it; and who, upon this, and his agreeable life and conversation, gave a good report of him to the Apostle Paul, (Acts 16:1,2) and before the apostle, and the rest of the elders, when they laid their hands on him, whereby an extraordinary gift was conveyed unto him, (1 Timothy 4:14 2 Timothy 1:6) or it may be before the men of the world, some violent persecutors, before whom he bravely, and with great intrepidity, professed his faith in Christ Jesus; and which he continued constantly to do, in every place wherever he came; and which being done so often, and so publicly, is a reason why he should keep on till the battle was over.

Ver. 13. *I give thee charge in the sight of God*, etc.] Who is omniscient and omnipotent:

who quickeneth all things; all creatures, for all animate creatures have their life, motion, and bring in him; and who quickeneth all his people, at first conversion, when dead in sin, and afterwards when dull and lifeless; and who will quicken the dead at the last day. This seems to be mentioned to strengthen Timothy against the fears of death, that should he die in fighting the Lord's battles, he was able to raise him from the dead, and would do it.

And [before] Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; or rather "under Pontius Pilate"; or, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, "in the time of Pontius Pilate"; for this may refer not only to the confession Christ made in his presence, at his examination by him, when he owned himself to be a King, declared the nature of his kingdom, and signified that the end of his incarnation was to bear a testimony to the truth; but it may also refer to the faithful, plain, and open witness Christ bore to truth throughout the whole of his ministry, under Pontius Pilate, by his doctrine and miracles, and at last by his sufferings and death, which he endured under him; and this is mentioned for Timothy's imitation, and to encourage him, and all other saints, to hold fast the profession of their faith to the end.

Ver. 14. *That thou keep this commandment*, etc.] Meaning either what he had now last of all enjoined him, to fight the good fight of faith; or the whole of the orders he had given him throughout the epistle, relating both to the doctrine and discipline of the house of God; or rather the work and office of preaching the Gospel, which was committed to him by the Holy Ghost, and enjoined him by the commandment of the everlasting God: and this the apostle, before God and Christ, charges him to observe and keep, in the following manner,

without spot, and unrebukeable; the sense is, that he would discharge his ministerial function with all faithfulness and purity; that he would sincerely, and without any adulteration, preach the pure Gospel of Christ; and that he would so behave in his life and conversation, that his ministry might not be justly blamed by men, or he be rebuked by the church here, or by Christ hereafter: and this he would have him do,

until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; to judge the quick and dead at the last day, and which will be very illustrious and glorious. Now Christ is hid from the eyes of men, but to them that look for him he will appear a second time in great glory; in the glory of his Father, and of his own, and of the holy angels; and when his saints will appear with him in glory: and this the apostle the rather mentions, since every man's work and ministry will then be made manifest; this bright day of Christ's appearing will declare it, and everyone must give an account of himself, and his talents, unto him: and this shows that the apostle did not design this charge, and these instructions, for Timothy only, but for all other ministers of the Gospel, till the second coming of Christ; though this was then, as now, so much

unknown, when it would be, that it could not be said but Timothy might live unto it.

Ver. 15. *Which in his times he shall show*, etc.] For though the time of Christ's appearing is unknown, yet the thing itself is certain; God will bring it about, and make it manifest in his own time, in the time that is fixed and appointed by him; and which is only known unto him, and which he keeps in his own power, and has reserved in his own breast:

who is the blessed; the Syriac version reads, "the blessed God"; who is blessed in himself, in his Son and Spirit, in the perfections of his nature; who is God all-sufficient, has enough in himself for himself, and for all his creatures; who is the fountain and the author of all blessedness, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, which any of them are, or shall be possessed of:

and only Potentate; or Governor of the whole world, which can be said of none but himself: he is the Governor among the nations, and over all the nations of the earth; his kingdom rules over all other kingdoms; and he has his power and government from himself, whereas all other potentates have their power from him, as follows:

the King of kings, and Lord of lords; from whom they receive their sceptres, crowns, and kingdoms; by whom they reign, and are continued in their power; for he sets up kings, and removes kings at his pleasure, and to him they must be accountable for all their administrations another day; and at present they are under his influence, and at his control; he has their hearts, and their counsels, as well as kingdoms, in his hands, and under his overruling providence; and causes all to answer his wise and eternal purposes. These titles are used by the Jews, who style him, µyklmh lk l[Ælm µynwdah lk ˆwda, "Lord of all lords, King over all kings" [f90]. The same name is given to Christ, (Revelation 19:16) which shows him to be equal with the Father.

Ver. 16. *Who only hath immortality*, etc.] Angels are immortal, and so are the souls of men, and so will be the bodies of men after the resurrection; but then neither of these have immortality of themselves, they have it from God; who only has it, of himself, originally, essentially, and inderivatively.

Dwelling in that light which no man can approach unto; in this present, frail, and mortal state; yea, angels themselves cannot bear the lustre of it, but cover their faces with their wings; for God is light itself, as well as

clothes himself with light, as with a garment; and is the Father and fountain of lights to all his creatures.

Whom no man hath seen, nor can see: nowhere but in Christ, at least spiritually and savingly; and that but very imperfectly in the present state: the sin, frailty, and mortality of human nature must be taken away, in order to inherit the kingdom of God, and enjoy the beatific vision of him; which saints in heaven have, who see him as he is, and in such sort as no man now does, or can see him:

to whom [be] honour and power everlasting, Amen. Which may be considered either as a wish, that such honour, power, and glory might be ascribed unto him, as we supply it; or as an assertion that it is given to him, as it is by the angels, and by the saints in heaven and in earth.

Ver. 17. *Charge them that are rich in this world*, etc.] Or in the things of this world. The Arabic version reads, "in this present world": in distinction from the world to come: some are poor in this world, and rich in another; others are rich in this world, and poor, and wretched, and miserable in the world to come: some are rich in both worlds, and such were at least some of those the apostle here refers to, who were members of the church at Ephesus, which was a rich city, and some rich men in it were called by the grace of God; and to distinguish these from others, who, though poor in this world, were rich in grace and in spiritual gifts, he so calls them; as well as to observe that their riches were like the world they were in, deceitful, empty, unsatisfying, and perishing: these the apostle would have not only spoke to, instructed, exhorted, and entreated, but strictly charged and commanded, without paying any regard to their worldly grandeur and riches,

that they be not high minded; the Ethiopic version reads, "that they be not lifted up in this world"; with their wealth and worldly substance, and look down from the height of their honour and riches with contempt upon the poor, entertaining high thoughts of themselves, as if their bodies were of another matter and make, when they have all one Maker, are of one blood, and of the earth, earthly, and must return to it; or as if their souls were more large and capacious, and they were wiser and more knowing, whereas riches are not always to men of understanding, a fool may be rich, and a wise man poor; or as if they were the peculiar favourites of heaven, when, for the most part, God chooses and calls the poor of this world; or as if others were unworthy of their looks, company, and conversation.

Riches produce pride; rich men are apt to be proud of themselves, and despise others; and therefore this evil is taken notice of, as what they are to be cautioned against, and charged to the contrary:

nor trust in uncertain riches; or "in the uncertainty of riches"; they are here today, and gone tomorrow; no man that is possessed of them can be sure of them a moment; they make themselves wings and flee away; he that gives them, can take them away at pleasure: and there are various ways by which they are suddenly, and at once taken from the owners of them; as by loss in trade, by shipwreck, by inundations, by fire, by thieves, &c, and yet men are apt to promise themselves a continuance of them, and to have their dependence upon them, and place their trust and confidence in them, yea, even good men; and that very much to the neglect of, and disregard to the providence of God, which is always best and safest in every circumstance and station of life to depend upon, as follows:

but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; almost every word carries in it an argument or reason why he should be trusted, because he is God, and not a creature; the "living" God, who has life in himself, essentially and originally; is the author, giver, and maintainer of life in others; and who always is, ever continues unchangeably the same: and "giveth all things"; every good gift comes from him; all the gifts of nature, and bounties of Providence; and as he gives, he can take away, and therefore should be only regarded; and he gives all things "richly", largely, and plenteously; what is necessary and convenient, and abundantly more than men deserve: and that "to enjoy"; not to lay up, but to use for support, refreshment, and pleasure, though not to abuse.

Ver. 18. *That they do good*, etc.] Rich men sometimes do much ill to themselves, to the hurt of their bodies, by luxury, intemperance, and debauchery, and to their souls, to the ruin of them; and to others by fraud, oppression, and violence; for it is in the power of their hands to do much evil, and also to do much good, as they should; and much is required of them, since much is given them to do good with, and for which they are accountable: it becomes them, and especially such as believe in Christ, to do every good work in general, and to do acts of beneficence in particular, both to all men, and to the household of faith.

That they be rich in good works; or abound in the performance of them, as Dorcas is said to be full of good works and alms deeds; and to reckon that their true riches lie more in the exercise of grace, and in the fruits of it,

doing good works, than in their worldly enjoyments. The phrase seems to be Rabbinical. Frequent mention is made of hrwtb ryç[, "rich in the law", and twxmb ryç[, "rich in the commandments" [f91]; and it is said [f92], no man is poor but he that is without the law, and good works, for the riches of a man are the law, and good works.

Ready to distribute; unasked; and when they are asked, do not turn away, and put off, but give at once, and without grief, and with cheerfulness; want no arguments to press them to it, nor use any against it.

Willing to communicate; of their good things to the necessities of the poor, making them common to them, and them partakers of them. Some render the word "sociable", in opposition to that moroseness, stillness, and those haughty and forbidding airs, with which rich men are apt to treat the poor, when they should be affable and courteous to them, and admit them to a free conversation with them.

Ver. 19. *Laying up in store for themselves*. etc.] Laying up a treasure in heaven, which will be for themselves to enjoy to all eternity; whereas what they lay up here is for others, for their children or friends, and sometimes for strangers, and they know not who, whether for a wise man or a fool, yea, even for enemies: so it is said of King Munbaz, when he dispersed his father's treasures to the poor, his brethren and friends came about him, complaining of it; to whom he said [f93]

> "my fathers treasured up below, I treasure up above. My fathers treasured "up for others", I treasure up ymx[l, "for myself"; my fathers treasured up for this world, I treasure up for the world to come."

So it follows here,

a good foundation against the time to come; by which is meant, not a foundation of happiness, for that is laid already, and by God himself; and much less by doing acts of beneficence is that foundation laid; for there is no other foundation of happiness, life, and salvation, that can be laid, besides what is laid, which is Jesus Christ: nor is the apostle speaking of laying a foundation here, to build upon, but of laying up a foundation in heaven, by which he intends happiness itself; and which he calls a "foundation", because it is solid and substantial, permanent and durable, in

opposition to the uncertain, precarious, transitory, and perishing enjoyments and treasures of this life; and

good, because profitable, when the laying up of worldly riches is often to the hurt of its owners, and will be useful, when they will not profit; and besides, will always continue, and be a foundation that will always support them, and never give way: now to lay up this is no other than to seek those things which are above, to show a concern for them, and to set the affections on them, and live in the comfortable hope and expectation of enjoying them. The phrase is the same with that in (<40619>Matthew 6:19,20) and takes in a regard to spiritual riches, the riches of grace flow, such as sanctifying, justifying, and pardoning grace through Christ; which will be a good foundation

against the time to come; and will give both a right and meetness for the enjoyment of the heavenly treasures, which will be for futurity, even to all eternity.

That they may lay hold on eternal life; not by way of merit, but as the free gift of God, which the riches of grace give a title to, and a fitness for; and which shall be laid hold upon, and enjoyed by all that seek the true riches. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, “true life”; for the present life is rather a show, an appearance of life, than life itself.

Ver. 20. *Keep that which is committed to thy trust*, etc.] That is, the Gospel, (see <540111>1 Timothy 1:11) which is a rich treasure put into earthen vessels, and ought to be kept pure and uncorrupt, and faithfully dispensed, and diligently preserved, that so it may be continued genuine and sincere, and not be either adulterated and depraved, or be taken away by false teachers. And it may also include his gifts for the ministration of it, which were to be kept in use, and stirred up, and not neglected, but cultivated and improved to the advantage of the church, and of the interest of Christ:

avoiding profane and vain babblings; about the law, and circumcision, and other things, which the false teachers insisted much on, and amused their hearers with; and which were vain, empty, useless, and unprofitable talk. Some copies, and so the Vulgate Latin version, read, “profane newnesses of words”; or new words, which ought not to be introduced, for they often bring in new doctrines: the form of sound words, the wholesome words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, the words which the Holy Ghost

teacheth, should be held fast; and especially all new words should be avoided, which are contrary to them, or in the least weaken them, or detract from them.

And oppositions of science falsely so called; the false teachers boasted of their science and knowledge, but it was not true, solid, spiritual, and saving; it was not an experimental knowledge of the Gospel; it was not the excellent knowledge of Christ, which has eternal life connected with it; it was merely notional and speculative; it was idle, empty, and useless, mere Pagan philosophy, and vain deceit, upon which they formed antitheses, or oppositions and objections to the truths of the Gospel; and even opposed themselves, and the word of God, as well as the faithful ministers of it.

Ver. 21. *Which some professing*, etc.] Pretending to be masters of the above science, boasting and making great show of it, and valuing themselves upon it:

have erred concerning the faith: have wandered from the way of truth, and gone into the path of error; have fallen from the doctrine of faith, and made shipwreck of it, and become entire apostates: from the danger attending vain jangling, the use of new words, the profession of a false science, and making objections from it against the truth, does the apostle dissuade Timothy from them, since they generally issue in apostasy.

Grace be with thee. Amen. This the apostle wishes to him, that he might be enabled to discharge every branch of his duty he had pointed to him in this epistle, and to keep him from all evil, and every false way, and preserve him safe to the kingdom and glory of God. And which he doubted not but would be his case, and therefore puts his “Amen” to it. The Alexandrian copy and Arabic version read, “grace be with you. Amen”.

The first to Timothy was written from Laodicea, which is the chiefest city of Phrygia Pacatiana. This last clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy and Syriac version; and indeed, in the apostle's time, Phrygia was not known by such an appellation as “Pacatiana”, which was given it some years after by the Romans; and which shows, that the subscriptions to the epistles are not only of human authority, but of later date, at least some of them. The Arabic version calls it the metropolis of Phrygia, and leaves out “Pacatiana”; and one of Beza's manuscripts, instead of “Laodicea”, reads “Macedonia”, from whence, as from Philippi, or some other city there, he

thinks it was written; and several learned men have been of opinion that it was written from Philippi.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Misn. Kiddnshin, c. 4. sect. 1.

Ft2 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 71. 1. & Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 65. 3.

Ft3 -- Massaot, p. 83.

Ft4 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:1. c. 7.

Ft5 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 62. 2.

Ft6 -- Hilchot Melacim, c. 12. sect. 3.

Ft7 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1, etc.

Ft8 -- Pompon. Laetus de Leg. Romans p. 156.

Ft9 -- Pompon. Laetus de Leg. Romans p. 154.

Ft10 -- Philostrat. Vit. Apollon. 50:8. c. 3.

Ft11 -- Misna Sanhedria, c. 10. sect. 1. & Maimon. Hilch. Geniba, c. 9. sect. 1.

Ft12 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft13 -- Misn. Taanith, c. 2. sect. 1.

Ft14 -- Jarchi Misn. Taanith, c. 2. sect. 1.

Ft15 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 2. 2. & 3. 2. & 37. 1, 2. Ed. Basil. fol. 2. 1, 2. & 3. 1. & 4. 1. & 5. 2. & passim, Ed. Amsterdam.

Ft16 -- Apollodorus de Orig. Deor. 50:3. p. 172.

Ft17 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:7. c. 14. 30.

Ft18 -- Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 2.

Ft19 -- Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 2.

Ft20 -- R. Albo, Sepher Ikkarim, orat 2. c. 28.

Ft21 -- Sepher Jetzira, p. 126.

Ft22 -- Quis rerum divin. Hares, p. 508, 509, 510.

Ft23 -- Sepher Shorash. rad. l l k

Ft24 -- Misna Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 1.

Ft25 -- Jarchi & Bartenona in ib.

Ft26 -- Shaare Ors, fol. 24. 2, 3.

Ft27 -- Maimon. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 4. sect. 8, 9.

Ft28 -- Apuleius de Mundo, p. 276.

Ft29 -- Zohar in Exodus fol 4. 2.

Ft30 -- lb. in Numbers fol. 79. 1.

Ft31 -- T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 67. 2.

Ft32 -- Arist. Hist. 70. p. 98.

Ft33 -- Hilch. Tephilla, c. 4. sect. 2, 3.

Ft34 -- De Charitate, p. 698. Vid. ib. de Victim. Offerent. p. 848.

Ft35 -- Hilch. Tephilla, c. 4. sect. 18.

Ft36 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 65. 1.

Ft37 -- Maimon. Hilch. Subbat. c. 30. sect. 3.

Ft38 -- Justin. ex Trogo. 50:20. c. 4.

Ft39 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 141. 3.

Ft40 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 5. 2. Zohar in Gcn. fol. 27. 3. Caphtor, fol. 37. 2.

Ft41 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 18. 1. & Taanith, fol. 15. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 20. fol. 17. 1.

Ft42 -- Midrash Ruth in Zohar in Genesis fol. 27. 3.

Ft43 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 2. sect. 6.

Ft44 -- Maimon. lssurc Bia, c. 7. sect. 13. & Cele Hamikdash. c. 5. sect. 10.

Ft45 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 59. 1.

Ft46 -- Diodor. Sicul. 50:1. p. 51. vide Tertull. de monogamia, c. 17. & Exhort. castitat. c. 13.

Ft47 -- Alex. ab. Alex. Genial Dier. 50:6. c. 12.

Ft48 -- Maimon. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 8. sect. 11.

Ft49 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 12. 4. & 13. 1, 2. & in Exodus fol. 66. 3.

Ft50 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 36. 3.

Ft51 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 152. 1.

Ft52 -- Maimon. Hilchot Memarim, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft53 -- Hilchot Yesode Hattora, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft54 -- Cosri, par. 3. sect. 23. fol. 159. 2.

Ft55 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 124. 1.

Ft56 -- Porphyr. de Abstinentia, 50:4. sect. 12.

Ft57 -- Apolog. c. 39.

Ft58 -- Allegor. 50:2. p. 90, 92.

Ft59 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 19. 2.

Ft60 -- Bartenora in Misn. Menachot, c. 9. sect. 3.

Ft61 -- Siphri in Maimon. in Misn. ib. c. 9. sect. 7.

Ft62 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 3. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft63 -- T. Hieros. Horayot, fol. 46. 2.

Ft64 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 10. fol. 199. 4.

Ft65 -- Jarchi in Exek. 44:22.

Ft66 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 18. 2. & Hieros. Beracot, fol. 4. 4. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 78. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 58. 3. Caphtor, fol. 79. 1, 2. & 84. 1. Jarchi in <01132>Genesis 11:32. & Baal Hatturim in <05706>Deuteronomy 17:6.

Ft67 -- Tzeror Hammer, fol. 5. 9.

Ft68 -- lb. fol. 6. 2. & 127. 2.

Ft69 -- Maimon. Hilchot Ishot, c. 12. sect. 14.

Ft70 -- Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 21.

Ft71 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 63. 2.

Ft72 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 22. 1.

Ft73 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 45. fol. 40. 3.

Ft74 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 33. fol. 28. 3.

Ft75 -- T. Hieros. Masser, Sheni, fol. 56. 2.

Ft76 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 60. 4. & pasira.

Ft77 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 2.

Ft78 -- Derech Eretz, fol. 17. 4.

Ft79 -- Jore Des, Tit. 251. sect. 13.

Ft80 -- Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 7. sect. 1.

Ft81 -- Joseph. de Bello Jud. 50:2. c. 16. sect. 4.

Ft82 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1. Vid. Maimon in ib.

Ft83 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 3. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. Juthasin, fol. 60. 1. & Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 1, 2.

Ft84 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 3. 2. Vid. Avoda Zara, fol. 5. 1.

Ft85 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 25. 2.

Ft86 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 42. fol. 36. 3.

Ft87 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 70. 2.

Ft88 -- R. David Kimchi in <2270>Isaiah 27:9.

Ft89 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 99. 4. T. Hieros. Taanith, fol. 69. 2. & Bab. Chagiga, fol. 14. 1. Megilia, fol. 15. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 2. & 111. 2. Midrash Ruth, fol. 31. 4. Echa Rabbati, fol. 53. 2. Caphtor, fol. 93. 2. & Seder Olam Rabba, c. 25. & Jarchi in Cant. 3:8.

Ft90 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 100. 2.

Ft91 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 91. 3. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 34. fol. 173. 4. & Tzeror Hammaor, fol. 15. 2.

Ft92 -- Raya Mehimna in Exodus fol 48. 3. Vid. T. Bab. Megilia, fol. 11. 1.

Ft93 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 11. 1.

2 TIMOTHY

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 2 TIMOTHY

That this epistle was written to Timothy, while he was at Ephesus, where the apostle in his former epistle had desired him to stay, is evident from his making mention of some persons in it, who were Ephesians; as Onesiphorus, whom he commends, and Alexander the coppersmith, of whom he complains: and that this epistle was written by the apostle, when he was at Rome, is no less evident; for he expressly calls himself a prisoner, (2 Timothy 1:8) and speaks of being then in trouble, and in bonds, (2 Timothy 2:9,10) and the persons that send their salutations in it to Timothy were Romans, (2 Timothy 4:21) but at what time it was written is not so certain: it seems by (2 Timothy 4:7) that it was but a little time before his martyrdom; though those words may only signify, that he was now very much on the decline of life, was now grown an old man, and in continual expectation of death, and was in a constant readiness for it, come when it would; having faithfully discharged his duty, and his warfare being as good as accomplished, and his race almost run out; for he afterwards presses Timothy to come to him, and that before winter; and desires him to bring with him his cloak, books, and parchments, which one would think he would have little occasion for, if just upon his martyrdom: besides, he says he was delivered out of the mouth of the lion, that by him the preaching of the Gospel might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear it; and expresses his confidence, that he should be again delivered, (2 Timothy 4:9,13,17,18). And it looks as if this epistle was written before the epistles to the Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, since it appears that Timothy did come to him at Rome; as here desired, and is joined with the apostle in those epistles. Some, therefore, have placed this epistle in the year 58, or 59, about the fourth or fifth of Nero's reign. The design of it is to stir up Timothy to the faithful and diligent discharge of his duty, as a minister of the Gospel; to abide constantly by the truths of it, and to animate him to suffer patiently, cheerfully, and courageously for the sake of it; and to warn him against false teachers, and their errors, who were already risen, and would afterwards arise, and be followed by such who had itching ears, and could not bear sound doctrine;

but this should be no discouragement to him in the prosecution of his work; and lastly to desire his presence with him at Rome, being now destitute of his several assistants.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO 2 TIMOTHY 1

In this chapter, after the inscription and salutation, the apostle expresses his great affection for Timothy, and highly commends him; exhorts him to various things relating to his office, as a preacher of the Gospel; and concludes with taking notice of the kindness shown him by Onesiphorus. The inscription and salutation are in (2 Timothy 1:1,2) and then follows the preface to the epistle, in which the apostle testifies his great love to Timothy, and commends him; by declaring his thankfulness to God, that he had reason always to remember him in his prayers; by his desire to see him again, who had shed so many tears for him, that his joy might be filled; and by taking notice of his unfeigned faith, the same with that which had dwelt in his ancestors, (2 Timothy 1:3-5). And then he proceeds to exhort him to the exercise and improvement of his ministerial gift; to show a fortitude of mind, and a manly spirit in the cause of Christ; and to suffer cheerfully for the sake of it, (2 Timothy 1:6-8) and in order to animate and encourage him to the same, he gives a summary of the Gospel, as containing in it the great doctrines of salvation, and eternal life, according to the free grace of God through Jesus Christ, (2 Timothy 1:9,10) and observes, that he himself was appointed a preacher of it to the Gentiles, (2 Timothy 1:11) and instances in himself, as suffering for it, without being ashamed; and as having a strong confidence in Christ, as able to keep him, and what he had committed to him, (2 Timothy 1:12) and then returns to his exhortation to Timothy to hold fast the Gospel of Christ; to which he urges him from the consideration of the nature and value of it, being a form of sound words, and that famous good thing, and of the means and manner in which he came to the knowledge of it; and chiefly from its being committed to him by the Holy Ghost, that dwelt in him; and also because of the general defection of the Asian professors from it, (2 Timothy 1:13-15) but he excepts one person, Onesiphorus by name, whom he commends for his kindness to him both at Ephesus and at Rome; and therefore entreats of the Lord mercy, both for him and his house, at the great day, (2 Timothy 1:16-18).

Ver. 1. *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ*, etc.] Not of men, nor by men, but by Jesus Christ, from whom he was sent; by whom he was qualified; in whose name he came, and ministered; and whom he preached. Of his name Paul, and of his office, as an apostle, (see Gill on " <4501>Romans 1:1") into which office he came

by the will of God; not by the will of man, no, not of the best of men, of James, Cephas, or John, or any of the other apostles; nor by his own will, he did not thrust himself into this office, or take this honour upon himself; nor was it owing to any merits of his, which he always disclaims, but to the will and grace of God; it was by the secret determining will of God, that he was from all eternity separated unto the Gospel of Christ; and it was by the revealed will of God to the church, that he, with Barnabas, was set apart to the ministry of the word; (see <4501>Romans 1:1 <4413>Acts 13:2).

According to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus; or "with respect unto it"; this points at the sum and substance, or subject matter, and end of his apostleship, for which this grace was given to him, which was to publish the free promise of life and salvation by Jesus Christ. By "life" here is meant, not this corporeal life, which, and a continuation of it, were promised in the covenant of works, on condition of man's obedience to it; but eternal life, the promise of which is a free promise made by God, of his own free sovereign will and pleasure, in the covenant of grace, from everlasting; and is an absolute and unconditional one, not at all depending upon the works of the law, or obedience to it; (see Romans 14,16 <4818>Galatians 3:18) and this promise is "in Christ", in whom all the promises are yea and arisen: for it was made before the world began, (<5601>Titus 1:2) when the persons on whose account it was made were not in actual being; but Christ, their head and representative, then existed; and to him it was given, and into his hands was it put for them, where it is sure to all the seed; and not only the promise, but the life itself is in him, and which is here intended. Christ, as Mediator, asked it of his Father for all his people, and he gave it to him, where it is hid safe and secure. Christ is the Prince or author of life; he is the procuring cause of it; he was sent, and came, that his sheep might have it; he gave his flesh, his human nature for it; and by his sufferings and death removed all obstructions which sin had thrown in the way, and opened the way for their enjoyment of it; and he is the giver of it to as many as the Father has given him; nor is it to be had in any other way, or of any other; but of him; and it lies in the knowledge of him, communion with him, and conformity to him. Now it is the business, of

Gospel ministers, not to direct persons to work for life, or to seek to obtain eternal life by their own works of righteousness, but to hold forth the word of life, or to show men the way of life and salvation by Christ alone.

Ver. 2. *To Timothy, my dearly beloved son*, etc.] Not in a natural, but in a spiritual sense; and not on account of his being an instrument of his conversion, but by reason of that instruction in the doctrines of the Gospel which he gave him, it being usual to call disciples children; and he calls him so, because as a son, he, being young in years, served with him, and under him, as a father, in the Gospel of Christ; for whom he had a very great affection, on account of his having been a companion with him in his travels, and very useful to him in the ministry, and because of his singular and eminent gifts, great grace, religion, and holiness: Grace, mercy, and peace, etc. (see Gill on "1 Timothy 1:2").

Ver. 3. *I thank God*, etc.] After the inscription and salutation follows the preface to the epistle; which contains a thanksgiving to God upon Timothy's account, and has a tendency to engage his attention to what he was about to write to him in the body of the epistle. God is the object of praise and thanksgiving, both as the God of nature and providence, and as the God of all grace; for every good thing comes from him, and therefore he ought to have the glory of it; nor should any glory, as though they had not received it: and he is here described, as follows,

whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience; the apostle served God in the precepts of the law, as in the hands of Christ, and as written upon his heart by the Spirit of God, in which he delighted after the inward man, and which he served with his regenerated mind; and also in the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, in which he was very diligent and laborious, faithful and successful: and this God, whom he served, was the God of his "forefathers", of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of Benjamin, of whose tribe he was, and also of his more immediate ancestors. The Ethiopic version renders it, "from my original"; for though he preached the Gospel of Christ, and asserted the abrogation of the ceremonial law, yet he worshipped the one, true, and living God, the God of Israel, and was not an apostate from the true religion, as his enemies would insinuate: and this service of his was performed with a "pure conscience": every man has a conscience, but the conscience of every natural man is defiled with sin; and that is only a pure one, which is sprinkled and purged with the blood of Christ; and whereby a person is only fitted to serve the living God, without

the incumbrance of dead works, and slavish fear, and with faith and cheerfulness; and such a conscience the apostle had, and with such an one he served God. For this refers not to his serving of God, and to his conscience, while a Pharisee and a persecutor; for however moral was his conduct and conversation then, and with what sincerity and uprightness soever he behaved, his conscience was not a pure one. He goes on to observe what he thanked God for,

that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; that God had laid him upon his heart, and that he had such reason to remember him at the throne of grace continually. We learn from hence, that the apostle prayed constantly night and day; and if so great a man as he stood in need of continual prayer, much more we; and that in his prayers he was not unmindful of his friends, though at a distance from him; and in both these he is to be imitated: it becomes us to pray without ceasing: to pray always, and not faint and give out, to pray every day and night; and to pray for others as well as for ourselves, for all the saints, yea, for our enemies, as well as for our friends.

Ver. 4. *Greatly desiring to see thee*, etc.] In his former epistle he had desired him to stay at Ephesus, there being some work for him to do, which made it necessary he should continue; but now having answered the apostle's purpose, and he standing in need of him at Rome, being without any assistant there, some having left him, and others were left by him in other places, and others were sent by him elsewhere; and it having been some time since he saw Timothy, he longed for a sight of him:

being mindful of thy tears; shed either at the afflictions and sufferings of the apostle, of which Timothy, being his companion, was an eyewitness, and he being of a truly Christian sympathizing spirit, wept with those that wept; or at their parting from each other, as in (Acts 20:37,38)

that I may be filled with joy; at the sight of him, and not at the remembrance of his tears; for the last clause is to be read in a parenthesis, and these words stand not connected with that, but with the preceding part of the text. The apostle intimates, that a sight of his dearly beloved son Timothy would fill him with joy amidst all his troubles and afflictions he endured for the Gospel: this is an instance of hearty, sincere, and strong affection.

Ver. 5. *When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee*, etc.] This caused him to give thanks to God for it, whose gift it is and made him the more desirous of seeing one, who was a true believer, and an Israelite indeed. This is to be understood of the grace of faith, which was implanted in the heart of Timothy by the Spirit of God, and was genuine and sincere; he believed with the heart unto righteousness; his faith worked by love to God, and Christ, and to his people, and was attended with good works;

which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois: who was his grandmother, not by his father's side, who was a Greek, but by his mother's side; and so the Syriac version renders it, “thy mother's mother”; who, though she might not know that the Messiah was come in the flesh, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he, yet believed in the Messiah to come, and died in the faith of it, and in a dependence upon righteousness and salvation by him; and so her faith was of the same kind with Timothy's; and which dwelt in her, and continued with her to the last:

and thy mother Eunice: who was a Jewess, and a believer in Christ, (Acts 16:1) though her name is a Greek one, and so is her mother's name; hers signifies “good victory”, and is the name of one of the Nereides, the daughters of Oceanus [f1]; and her mother's signifies “better”, or “more excellent”. She lived, it seems, if her mother did not, to know that Christ was come, and that Jesus, the son of Mary, was he; and she believed in him for righteousness, life, and salvation; and in her this faith dwelt and abode to the end.

And I am persuaded that in thee also; not only that faith was in him, and that that was unfeigned, but that it also dwelt, remained, and would continue with him to the end of life; for true faith is an abiding grace, it is a gift of God, that is irrevocable, and without repentance; Christ is the author and finisher of it, and prays that it fail not, whose prayers are always heard; it is begun, carried on, and performed by the power of God, and has salvation inseparably connected with it. Now when the same faith is said to dwell, first in his grandmother, and in his mother, and in him, this is not to be understood as if this grace was conveyed from one to another by natural generation; for grace comes not that way, only sin; men are not born of blood, but of God; but the sense is, that the same like precious faith was obtained by one, as by another. This was a rich family mercy, and deserved special notice, as being a thing uncommon, and required a particular

thanksgiving; and is designed as a motive and encouragement to stir up Timothy to the exercise of that grace, and every other gift God had bestowed upon him, as in the following verse.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance*, etc.] Because of the great affection the apostle had for Timothy, and because of that confidence he had of him, that unfeigned faith dwelt in him, as well as because this had had a place in his relations before him; he therefore acts the part of a kind monitor to him, and, upon these considerations, doubts not of succeeding in his following admonition:

that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee; by "the gift" is meant his ministerial gift; for what qualifies men for the ministry, is not anything natural in them, nor acquired by them, but what is given unto them, and that of God: and this was "in" him; it continued with him; it was not lost by him, nor taken from him, as gifts may be, when they are not used; and yet it seems as if there was some decline, some backwardness and indifference as to the exercise of it: he might be too remiss, negligent, and forgetful of it; wherefore the apostle puts him in mind to "stir" it up: there is in the word used a metaphor taken from coals of fire covered with ashes, as if almost extinct, and need to be blown up into a flame, and a very apt one it is; since the gifts of the Spirit, especially his extraordinary ones, such as ministers in those times had, are compared to fire: (see <40311>Matthew 3:11 <40203>Acts 2:3) and these may be reinflamed or increased, when they seem on the decline, by reading, meditation, prayer, and the frequent exercise of them. Agreeably to this the Arabic version renders it, "that thou kindle the fire of the gift of God which is in thee"; and the rather the apostle took this freedom with Timothy, not only because of his superior age and office, but because this gift was through his means;

by the putting on of my hands; though not alone, but with the rest of the presbytery; (see Gill on "<54414>1 Timothy 4:14").

Ver. 7. *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear*, etc.] A pusillanimous, cowardly spirit, so as to be afraid of men or devils, of what they will say or do; and so as to be discouraged in, sink under, or be deterred from the work of the Lord, the preaching of the Gospel, opposing the errors of false teachers, and reproving men for their sins, and doing other parts of the ministerial function; such a spirit is not from God, and such a fear brings a snare:

but of power, and such is the Spirit of God, who is called “power from high”; (⁴²⁴⁹Luke 24:49) by which the minds of Christ's servants are fortified against reproaches and persecutions for his sake, and are strengthened to resist Satan's temptations, to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ, to quit themselves like men, in opposition to false teachers, and to do the will and work of God:

and of love; to God, and Christ, and his church, and which is a fruit of the Holy Spirit; and such who have it seek not their own ease and credit, but the glory of God, the interest of Christ, and the good of souls; and having such a spirit, and fired with such love, they are not easily intimidated by the adversary;

and of a sound mind: in the principles and doctrines of the Gospel; and which shows itself in a prudent conduct and behaviour; in sobriety, moderation, temperance, purity, and honesty; all which may be signified by the word here used: and these who have such dispositions and qualities from God, will not easily give way to the enemies of religion, or decline their duty for fear of them.

Ver. 8. *Be not then therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord*, etc.] Either that testimony which Christ bore personally by his doctrine and miracles, and by his sufferings and death; or rather the Gospel so called, because it comes from Christ, and because it is a testimony concerning him; concerning his person, his offices, his righteousness, blood, sacrifice, and satisfaction; concerning his obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, session at God's right hand, intercession for his people, and second coming to judgment; and concerning life and salvation by him: and which no preacher or professor of Christ has reason to be ashamed of, it being so true in itself, so great, so glorious, and so useful; and whoever is, Christ will be ashamed of him another day:

nor of me his prisoner; for Paul was now a prisoner at Rome, but not for any capital crime, or for any immorality, but for the sake of Christ, and for preaching his Gospel; wherefore none of his friends had any reason to be ashamed of him; he was suffering in a glorious cause, and setting a noble example to others; it looks as if Timothy was somewhat blameworthy in this respect.

But be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel; the Gospel is here represented as a person suffering afflictions, and the apostle would have

Timothy suffer them as that did, and along with it; he means those afflictions which come upon men for preaching and professing the Gospel; for though the Gospel is a Gospel of peace, yet, through the corruption and depravity of men, it brings a sword, division, and trouble. Tribulation arises on account of it; and this should be endured patiently, and constantly, for the sake of it:

according to the power of God; which is only sufficient to enable persons to bear them; and is mentioned for the encouragement of Timothy and others, to endure them cheerfully.

Ver. 9. *Who hath saved us, and called us*, etc.] And therefore should not be ashamed of his Gospel, but should readily partake of the afflictions of it, depending on his power to support under them. There is a salvation previous to calling: there is a temporal salvation; a special providence attends the elect of God, as soon as born; God's visitation in a very special manner preserves their spirits; they are kept from many imminent dangers, and some of them from the grosser immoralities of life; and there is a chain of providences, as the fixing of their habitations, bringing to such a place, and under such a ministry, with various other things, ways and methods, which lead on to the effectual calling: and there is a preservation of them in Christ Jesus, antecedent to calling, (GOIC Jude 1:1). God had a mind to save some; he pitched on his own Son to be the Saviour of them; he put those persons into his hands, where they are safely preserved; so as not to be damned, and everlastingly perish, notwithstanding their fall in Adam, their original corruption, and actual transgressions, until called by grace: yea, that spiritual and eternal salvation, which is by Jesus Christ, is before calling; this was resolved upon from eternity; a council of peace was formed; a covenant of grace was made; a promise of life given; persons were fixed upon to be saved; a Saviour was appointed, and blessings of grace were put into his hands; and all according to an eternal purpose. Salvation was not only resolved upon, but the scheme of it was contrived from eternity, in a way agreeable to all the divine perfections, in which Satan is most mortified, the creature abased, and the elect effectually saved; nay, salvation is obtained before calling, Christ being called to this work, and having undertook it, was in the fulness of time sent to effect it, and is become the author of it: the thing is done, and all that remain are the application of it, which is in the effectual calling, and the full possession of it, which will be in heaven. The calling here spoken of is not to an office, nor a mere call by the external ministry of the word, but a call by special

grace, to special privileges, to grace and glory; and is an high and heavenly one, and is here called holy, for it follows,

with an holy calling. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, “with his holy calling”: the author of it is holy; it is a call to holiness, and the means of it are holy; and in it persons have principles of grace and holiness implanted in them; and are influenced to live holy lives and conversations:

not according to our works; neither salvation nor calling are according to the works of men: not salvation; works are not the moving cause of it, but the free love and favour of God; nor the procuring cause of it, but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor the adjuvant or helping cause of it, for his own arm brought salvation alone: nor calling; which must be either according to works before, or after; not according to works before calling, for such are not properly good works, being destitute of faith in Christ, and proceeding neither from a right principle, nor to a right end; not according to works after calling, as they are after it they are the fruits of calling grace, and cannot be the cause, or rule, and measure at it:

but according to his own purpose and grace; salvation is according to both: it is according to the purpose of God; God resolved upon the salvation of some; in pursuance of this resolution, he set up Christ as the Mediator; and it being necessary that he should be man, this was agreed to, and a body was prepared him; the time of his coming was fixed, called the fulness of time; and his sufferings and death, with all the circumstances of them, were determined by God. And it is according to grace; the resolution for it, and the contrivance of it, are owing to the grace of God; and which also appears in the making of a covenant; in setting up Christ as the Mediator of it; in the mission of him into this world; and in all the parts and branches of salvation: in the choice of persons to it; in the redemption of them by Christ; in their justification by his righteousness; in the pardon of their sins through his blood; in their adoption, regeneration, sanctification, and eternal glory; and the end of it is the glory of the grace of God. Vocation is also according to both the purpose and grace of God: it is according to his purpose; the persons called are fixed upon by him; whom he predestinates he calls; none are called, but whom God purposed to call; and for their calling no other reason can be assigned but the sovereign will of God, nor can any other reason be given why others are not called; the time of their calling is fixed in the decrees of God; and the place where, and means whereby, and occasion whereof, all are predetermined by him: and

this is also according to grace; the author of it is the God of all grace; and in it is made the first discovery of grace to sinners; nothing out of God could move him to do it, and so it is sovereign grace; it is of some men, and not all, and so is distinguishing grace; it is of sinners, and so is free grace; and it is both to grace and glory, and so is rich grace: and it is according to grace

which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; it is a gift, and a free gift, not at all depending upon any conditions in the creature, and entirely proceeding from the sovereign will of God; and it was a gift from eternity; there was not only a purpose of grace in God's heart, and a promise of it so early, but there was a real donation of it in eternity: and though those to whom it was given did not then personally exist, yet Christ did, and he existed as a covenant head and representative of his people; and they were in him, as members of him, as represented by him, being united to him; and this grace was given to him for them, and to them in him; in whom they were chosen, and in whom they were blessed with all spiritual blessings. The Ethiopic version reads, “in Christ Jesus, who before the world [was]”; but without any foundation.

Ver. 10. *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ*, etc.] The grace according to which the elect of God are saved and called; though it was given to them in Christ, before the world was, yet lay hid in the heart of God; in his thoughts, council and covenant; and in Jesus Christ; and in the types, shadows, sacrifices, prophecies, and promises of the Old Testament; but is now made manifest in the clearness, freeness, and abundance of it by the appearance of Christ, as a Saviour in human nature; who is come full of grace and truth, and through whom there is a plentiful exhibition of it to the sons of men:

who hath abolished death; the law of sin and death, which is the cause of death; and has destroyed him which has the power of it, the devil; he has abolished corporeal death with regard to his people, as a penal evil, he has took away its sting, and removed its curse, and made it a blessing to them; and he has utterly, with respect to them, abolished the second death, so as that it shall have no power over them, or they ever be hurt by it; all which he did by dying, and rising again: for though he died, yet he continued not under the power of death; but rose again and triumphed over it, as having got the victory of it; and the keys of it are in his hand:

and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Christ was the first that rose again from the dead to an immortal life; the path of life was first shown to him, and brought to light by him; and though the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was known by the Old Testament saints, yet not so clearly as it is now revealed in the Gospel; and in which is so fully attested the resurrection of Christ, and of many of the saints with him, as well as the general resurrection at the last day: and besides, eternal life, which is the free gift of God, lay hid in his purpose, promise, and covenant, and in his Son Jesus Christ, into whose hands it was put; and which he has brought to light in a more clear manner than ever it was before; by his appearance in human nature, by his personal ministry, by his death and resurrection from the dead, and through the Gospel, as preached by his ministers; which gives an account of the nature of it, shows the way unto it, and points out and describes the persons that shall enjoy it.

Ver. 11. *Whereunto I am appointed a preacher*, etc.] Both from eternity, in the counsel and purpose of God, (Acts 9:15) and in time, by the church at Antioch, and the prophets in it, according to the express order of the Holy Ghost, (Acts 13:2). And if ever there was a preacher of the Gospel, Paul was one; he preached purely, powerfully, publicly, constantly, boldly, and with all faithfulness and integrity:

and an apostle; that is, of the Gentiles, as follows, and as he elsewhere styles himself, (Romans 11:13) for it does not run so smooth and easy to connect this with the word Gospel. In (2 Timothy 1:1), he is called the apostle of Jesus Christ, because he was sent by him; and here the apostle of the Gentiles, because, he was sent to them; and this by the same appointment, by which he became a preacher:

and a teacher of the Gentiles; though all the apostles, by their commission, were sent to teach all nations, or the Gentiles in the several parts of the world, as well as Jews; yet the apostle was eminently a teacher of them; his work chiefly lay among them; the Gospel of the uncircumcision, or the ministration of the Gospel to the uncircumcised Gentiles, was committed to him; and he was a teacher of them in faith and verity, as in (1 Timothy 2:7). The Alexandrian copy only reads, “and a teacher”.

Ver. 12. *For the which cause I also suffer these things*, etc.] The present imprisonment and bonds in which he now was; these, with all the indignities, reproaches, distresses, and persecutions, came upon him, for the sake of his being a preacher of the Gospel; and particularly for his being

a teacher of the Gentiles: the Jews hated him, and persecuted him, because he preached the Gospel, and the more because he preached it to the Gentiles, that they might be saved; and the unbelieving Gentiles were stirred up against him, for introducing a new religion among them, to the destruction of their idolatry and superstition; and the sufferings which he endured were many; and he was appointed to them, as well as to the Gospel, which he preached.

Nevertheless I am not ashamed; neither of the Gospel, and the truths and ordinances of it, for which he suffered; but he continued to own and confess it constantly, and to preach it boldly; none of these things moved him from it: nor of the sufferings he endured, for the sake of it; since they were not for murder, or theft, or sedition, or any enormity whatever, but in a good cause; wherefore he was so far from being ashamed of them, that he took pleasure in them, and gloried of them. Nor was he ashamed of Christ, whose Gospel he preached, and for whom he suffered; nor of his faith and hope in him. For it follows,

for I know whom I have believed. A spiritual knowledge of Christ is necessary to faith in him: an unknown Christ cannot be the object of faith, though an unseen Christ, as to bodily sight, may be, and is. Knowledge and faith go together: they that truly know Christ, believe in him, and the more they know him, the more strongly do they believe in him: such who spiritually and savingly know Christ, have seen the glories of his person, and the fulness of his grace; and they approve of him, as their Saviour, being every way suitable to them, and disapprove of all others; they love him above all others, and with all their hearts; and they put their trust in him, and trust him with all they have; and they know whom they trust, what an able, willing, suitable, and complete Saviour he is. This knowledge which they have of him, is not from themselves, but from the Father, who reveals him to them, and in them; and from himself, who gives them an understanding that they may know him; and from the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: and be it more or less, it is practical, and leads to the discharge of duty, from a principle of love to Christ; and is of a soul humbling nature, and appropriates Christ to a man's self; and has always some degree of certainty in it; and though it is imperfect, it is progressive; and the least measure of it is saving, and has eternal life connected with it: and that faith which accompanies it, and terminates on the object known, is the grace, by which a man sees Christ in the riches of his grace; goes to him in a sense of need of him; lays hold upon him as a

Saviour; receives and embraces him; commits its all unto him; trusts him with all; leans and lives upon him, and walks on in him till it receives the end of faith, even eternal salvation.

And I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. By that which he had committed to him is meant, not the great treasure of his labours and sufferings for Christ, as if he had deposited these in Christ's hands, in order to be brought forth at the great day of account to his advantage; for though his labours and sufferings were many, yet he always ascribed the strength by which he endured them to the grace of God; and he knew they were not worthy to be compared, nor made mention of, with the glory that was to be revealed in him. Rather this may be understood of the souls of those he had been instrumental in the converting of, whom he had commended to Christ, hoping to meet them as his joy and crown of rejoicing another day; though it seems best of all to interpret it either of his natural life, the care of which he had committed to Christ, and which he knew he was able to preserve, and would preserve for usefulness until the day appointed for his death; or rather his precious and immortal soul, and the eternal welfare and salvation of it: and the act of committing it to Christ, designs his giving himself to him, leaving himself with him, trusting in him for eternal life and salvation, believing he was able to save him to the uttermost; even unto the day of death, when he hoped to be with him, which is far better than to be in this world; and unto the day of the resurrection, when both soul and body will be glorified with him; and to the day of judgment, when the crown of righteousness will be received from his hands. And what might induce the apostle, and so any other believer, to conclude the ability of Christ to keep the souls of those that are committed to him, are, his proper deity, he having all the fulness of the Godhead, or the perfections of deity dwelling in him; his being the Creator and upholder of all things; his having accomplished the great work of redemption and salvation, by his own arm; his mediatorial fulness of grace and power; and his being trusted by his Father with all the persons, grace, and glory of the elect, to whom he has been faithful. And now the consideration of all this, as it was a support to the apostle, under all his afflictions, and sufferings for the Gospel, and in a view of death itself, so it may be, as it often has been, a relief to believers, under all the sorrows of this life, and in a prospect of death and eternity. Philo the Jew [f2] speaks in like manner as the apostle here of παρακαταψηκη θυχης, “the depositum of the soul”: though he knew not

where to commit it for safety, as the apostle did, and every true believer does.

Ver. 13. *Hold fast the form of sound words*, etc.] By “words” are meant, not mere words, but doctrines; for the servants of the Lord should not strive about words, to no profit, or be too tenacious of them. Indeed when words have long obtained, and have been very useful to convey just ideas of truth to the mind, they are not to be easily parted with, though they are not syllabically expressed in Scripture, unless other and better words can be substituted in their room; and especially they are to be tenaciously abode by, when the apparent design by dropping or changing them is to set aside the truths signified by them; such as trinity, unity, essence, person, imputed righteousness, satisfaction, etc. But here words design doctrines, the words of faith and good doctrine, the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ; and which are said to be “sound”, in opposition to the words and doctrines of false teachers, which are corrupt and unsound, and are pernicious, and eat as do a canker; and because they are so in themselves; they are not only sweet and pleasant, but salutary and nourishing; they are milk for babes, and meat for strong men; they are food for faith, and nourish up to eternal life. The “form” of them either intends the manner of teaching them, which should be it, apt and acceptable words, plain and easy to be understood, and not with the enticing words of men's wisdom; or a brief summary, a compendium of Gospel truth. It was usual with both Jews and Christians to reduce the principles of their religion into a narrow compass, into a short form or breviary. The Jew had his “form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law”, (Romans 2:20), which was a rule to himself, and an instruction to others; and such a form, or Jewish creed, may be seen in (Hebrews 6:1,2). The Apostle Paul gives a summary of the Gospel, which he preached, and which he reduces to two heads; repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, (Acts 20:20) and an excellent compendium and abridgment of the Gospel, and a glorious form of sound words, we have in (Romans 8:29,30) and such an one Timothy had heard and received from the apostle, as a “pattern” for him hereafter to preach by, as this word signifies; and as it is rendered in (1 Timothy 1:16). There seems to be an allusion to painters, who first make their outlines, and take a rough draught before they lay on their colours and beautiful strokes; and which rough draught and first lines are the rule and pattern of their after work; and which they never exceed, but keep within the compass of: so there is a set of Gospel

truths, which may be called the analogy or proportion of faith, which are a rule and pattern, as for hearers to judge by, so for ministers to preach according to, (<540603>1 Timothy 6:3 <480108>Galatians 1:8,9 <630109>2 John 1:9,10) And such a form or pattern was the apostle's doctrine to Timothy, and which he full well knew: and this form includes the doctrines concerning the trinity of persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit, and the proper deity and distinct personality of each of them; concerning the everlasting love of the three Persons to the elect, the covenant of grace, and the transactions in it relating to them; their personal and eternal election in Christ, and his suretyship engagements for them; the state and condition of men by the fall, and through, sin, as that Adam's sin is imputed to all his posterity, and a corrupt nature propagated from him, and that man is altogether impure, and entirely impotent all that is spiritually good; as also such doctrines as concern particular redemption by Christ, satisfaction for sin by his sacrifice, free and full pardon by his blood, and justification by his imputed righteousness: regeneration and sanctification by the powerful and efficacious grace of the Spirit of God; and the final perseverance of the saints to eternal glory, as the free gift of God. And this is a form never to departed from, but to be held fast, as Timothy is exhorted; which supposes that he had it, as he had, not only in his head, but in his heart; and that there was danger of dropping it through the temptations that surrounded him, the reproach and persecution the Gospel lay under, and through the sleight of false teachers, who lay in wait to deceive, and to take every opportunity of wringing it out of his hands; and therefore it became him, as he had it, not only to hold it forth, and publish it, but to hold it fast, in opposition to any wavering about it, or cowardice in it, or departure from it in any degree. And the argument to hold it fast follows,

which thou hast heard of me; both in private conversation, and in the public ministry of the word; and which the apostle had not from men, but by the revelation of Christ; and therefore was to be depended upon, and to be abode by, or held fast, in the manner next directed to:

in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus; in the exercise of faith, and from a principle of love; which two graces always go together, and have Christ, as here, for their object: though this clause, may be connected with the word “heard”, and the sense be, either that Timothy had heard Paul preach these sound doctrines with great faith and faithfulness, and with much fervency and affection to Christ, and the souls of men; or Timothy had heard them himself, and embraced and mixed them with faith, and received

them in love: or it may be read in connection with “the form of sound words”; the sum of which is faith in Christ, and love to him; the Gospel is the doctrine of faith; and it puts men on discharging their duty from love to Christ.

Ver. 14. *That good thing which was committed to thee*, etc.] By which he means either his ministerial work and office, which is a good work, the dispensation of which was committed to him, and which it became him so to observe, as that the ministry might not be blamed; or else the good and excellent gifts of the Spirit, which qualified him for the discharge of that work, and which were not to be neglected, but to be stirred up, exercised, and improved, lest they should be lost, or took away; or rather the Gospel, which was committed to his trust, to preach: and this may be called a good thing, from the author of it, who is good, whence it is named the Gospel of God, and the Gospel of Christ; and from the matter of it, it consists of good things come by Christ, the High priest, and which it publishes, such as peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal salvation by him; and from the end and use of it, it being both for the glory of God, the magnifying the riches of his grace, and the exaltation of Christ; and also is the power of God in regeneration and sanctification unto salvation to everyone that believes. And it being said to be “committed to” Timothy, denotes the excellency of it; that it is a treasure, as indeed it is a rich one, it contains the riches of grace, even the unsearchable riches of Christ, is more valuable than thousands of gold and silver: and that it is a trust, and requires faithfulness in ministers, who are the stewards of it; and that it is to be accounted for. Wherefore great care should be had in dispensing and keeping it:

keep by the Holy Ghost. It should be kept pure and incorrupt, free from all the adulterations and mixtures of men; and safe and sound, that it be not snatched away from the churches by false teachers. And whereas the apostle knew, that neither Timothy, nor any other, were sufficient of themselves, for these things, he directs to the keeping of it by the Holy Ghost; who makes men overseers of churches, bestows gifts upon them, to fit them for their work, and leads them into all the truths of the Gospel; and under his influence and teachings, and by the assistance of his grace, are they enabled to discharge their trust, abide by the Gospel, and persevere in the ministration of it to the end.

Which dwelleth in us; in all believers, who are the temples of the Holy Ghost; and in all the churches, which are built up by him, an habitation for God; and in all the ministers of the word, to direct, instruct, support, and uphold them; and who dwells with them, and continues in them, and that for ever, (<43146>John 14:16,17).

Ver. 15. *This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia*, etc.] Either those that followed the apostle from Asia to Rome; or who came from thence thither, upon business, and were upon the spot when the apostle was in his greatest troubles, and yet all forsook him and no man stood by him; or else the churches and ministers in Asia, that is, a great number of them; for it cannot be said of every minister and church, and of all the members of churches there, what follows,

be turned away from me; were ashamed of him, because of his chain, and despised him under his afflictions, and had him in abhorrence and contempt, and revolted from his doctrine; though the defection was very general, and the apostle appeals to Timothy for the truth of it, as a fact well known to him: “this thou knowest”; Timothy being at Ephesus, which was in Asia; and since there was so great an apostasy in the country where he was, the above exhortations were very seasonable, to hold fast the form of sound words, and keep the good thing committed to him; seeing so many were falling off from the truth of the Gospel:

of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes: who very likely were ministers of the word, and who had shone for a while, but were now stars fallen from heaven, had erred from the faith, and were become apostates, and proved men of corrupt minds, and deceivers of the people; and it may be that these were more open and infamous than some others, or might be more known to Timothy, and therefore are particularly mentioned. They are both of them said to have been of the seventy disciples; (see Gill on “<42001>Luke 10:1”) and afterwards followers of Simon Magus. The name of the first of these signifies a “fugitive”, and such was he from the cause of Christ. Pliny [f3] makes mention of a town in Asia, called Phygella, from the fugitives which built it; and the latter signifies born of Mercury; there was one of the name in Tertullian's time, against whom he wrote.

Ver. 16. *The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus*, etc.] Who seems to have been one of Asia, and of Ephesus, and is an exception from the general apostasy, or from those that turned away from the apostle; and therefore he prays that the Lord would show mercy to his family; that he

would give regenerating grace and mercy to such of them as were without it, or pardoning grace and mercy, or the great mercy of eternal life and salvation by Christ; and this doubtless was a prayer in faith, upon the promises of God, and upon instances and examples, in which God has remarkably shown mercy to the families of good men, who have faithfully served him, and abode in his interest in times of trouble; thus the house of Obed Edom was blessed for the sake of the ark, that was taken care of by them; the reasons of this prayer and good wishes follow:

for he oft refreshed me; both with his Christian visits, and spiritual conversation, which to the apostle, in the heat of his affliction and persecution, were like a fan in hot weather, cooling and reviving, as the word signifies; and also by supplying him with the necessaries of life, as food and raiment, or money to purchase them with. He answered to his name, which signifies, "one that brings profit": he is said to be one of the seventy disciples; (see Gill on "<42100>Luke 10:1") and afterwards to be bishop of Corone:

and was not ashamed of my chain; the Syriac version adds, "with which I am bound"; in which he lay, or by which he was held, and led by a soldier; (see <442816>Acts 28:16,20). Onesiphorus was not ashamed of the apostle, though he was bound with a chain; nor was he ashamed of the cause for which he suffered: and the apostle proposes him to Timothy, as an example worthy of imitation, in those times of defection. (see <550108>2 Timothy 1:8).

Ver. 17. *But when he was in Rome*, etc.] Upon some business or another, where the apostle was a prisoner:

he sought me out very diligently, and found me; as there might be many prisons in Rome, he went from one to another, till he found him; and was one of those to whom Christ will say hereafter, "I was in prison and ye came unto me", (<402536>Matthew 25:36) or the reason of his going from place to place in quest of him was this; the apostle was not in any particular place of confinement, but had a lodging where he was kept by a soldier, and which with some difficulty Onesiphorus found out: the manner of his bonds was this; he had a long chain fastened at one end to his right arm, and at the other to the left arm of the soldier that kept him, who constantly attended him in this form, wherever he went; and it is possible that in this way he might have liberty to go about and visit his friends; and this might still make it more difficult for Onesiphorus to find him.

Ver. 18. *The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day*; etc.] In return for his diligent seeking till he found the apostle. By "mercy", he means the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life; or that crown of righteousness and everlasting glory and happiness, which will be a grant from the Lord, or a free gift through Jesus Christ; the effect of pure grace and mercy, and not of merit. The apostle does not propose to requite him himself; he knew it was out of his power; but he had an interest in the Lord, and at the throne of grace; and he makes use of that in his favour, and prays the Lord that he might find mercy of him: and the meaning is either, that he prayed to God, that he might find mercy of him; or he prayed particularly to the Lord Jesus Christ to act the part of a Mediator for him with his Father, that he might enjoy eternal life through him; or he prayed to God the Father, that he would grant that he might find mercy at the hands of Jesus Christ his Son, the Judge of quick and dead, who, at the great and last day, will give the crown of righteousness to all that love him, and his appearance:

and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well: or "better". Timothy being at Ephesus, of which city Onesiphorus seems to have been, and that when the apostle was there, he very freely communicated to him, as Timothy, who was with him there, knew very well: the apostle does not forget, but remembers former kindnesses, as well as takes notice of present favours, and which shows a grateful mind. The phrase, "unto me", is not in the Greek copies, though it is in the Vulgate Latin and in all the Oriental versions; wherefore the words may be understood of the things which Onesiphorus had ministered to Timothy, and to the church at Ephesus, and to the poor saints there; which Timothy was "better" acquainted with than the apostle could be, he being on the spot: and now since there were so many fallen off, and so few that remained hearty and faithful, but one Onesiphorus to all them that were in Asia; the apostle exhorts to firmness and constancy, in a dependence on the Spirit and grace of God, as follows.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO 2 TIMOTHY 2

In this chapter the apostle continues his exhortations to Timothy, with respect both to his office and his conversation, and closes with the character of a minister of the Gospel. The apostle having exhorted Timothy, in the former chapter, to abide by the Gospel, notwithstanding whatsoever he might suffer for it, here points out to him that grace and strength in Christ, which he would have him have recourse unto, to enable him to discharge his duty, (5001)*2 Timothy 2:1* and that the Gospel might continue, he advises him to take care of a succession, and to commit the Gospel preached by him to others, whose qualifications for it are faithfulness and aptitude to teach, (5002)*2 Timothy 2:2* and in order to animate him to labour diligently in the Gospel, and suffer cheerfully for it, he observes to him that he was a soldier, and must endure hardships, and not indulge to the ease and pleasures of life; was a runner in a race, and therefore must strive before he received the crown; and was as an husbandman that must first labour before he partakes of the fruit: which things he would have him seriously consider; and desires that the Lord would give him understanding in them, (5003)2 Timothy 2:3-7), and then with the same view, to encourage him to suffer for the Gospel of Christ, he puts him in mind of the incarnation and resurrection of Christ, as a summary of the Gospel, and a specimen of what he had heard of him, (5004)2 Timothy 2:8) and instances in his own sufferings for it, the nature, use, and end of them, by way of example and imitation, (5005)2 Timothy 2:9,10), and for the same purpose mentions several useful sayings and pithy sentences, as true and, to be depended on, (5006)2 Timothy 2:11-13) which he would have Timothy put his hearers in mind of, and especially those to whom he committed the Gospel to preach; charging them, in a solemn manner, not to strive about words, which is not only unprofitable, but hurtful, (5007)2 Timothy 2:14) and with respect to himself, he exhorts him to diligence and study, in interpreting and explaining the word of God, that so he might be approved unto God, and not be ashamed before men, (5008)2 Timothy 2:15) and on the contrary, to avoid false doctrines, as being profane, empty, and mere babble; and as tending to greater impiety; and as being dangerous and

threatening, like the spreading canker; of which he gives instances in Hymenaeus and Philetus, (2 Timothy 2:16,17) whose error was, that the resurrection was already past; and succeeded in the spreading of it, to the subversion of the faith of some, (2 Timothy 2:18). However, for the comfort of real believers, it is observed, that notwithstanding such errors, and the success of them, the foundation stands sure; God has a certain knowledge of his own people, and will keep them; and therefore it becomes such who either call on the name, or are called by the name of Christ, to depart from such evil doctrines, (2 Timothy 2:19) and that such things happening in the world, and in churches, should not be thought strange, the apostle illustrates the case by a simile of a great house, which has vessels of all sorts in it, and for different uses and purposes, (2 Timothy 2:21,22). Wherefore, to conclude his exhortations to Timothy, he advises him to flee those lusts which are incident to youth; to follow things that are good, and to avoid foolish and unlearned questions, which tend to strife, (2 Timothy 2:22,23) which leads him on to give the character of a servant of the Lord, or a preacher of the Gospel; that he must not strive, but be gentle, patient, and meek, in instructing adversaries; for which he should have an aptness; and is encouraged to act this part, from the consideration of success under a divine blessing; namely, bringing such persons to repentance, and to own the truth, and the recovery of them out of the snare of the devil, (2 Timothy 2:24,25)

Ver. 1. *Thou therefore, my son*, etc.] The illative particle, “therefore”, shows the connection between this and the preceding chapter; the appellation, “thou, my son”, expresses the apostle's tender affection for Timothy, and is the rather used to engage his attention to the advice he was about to give him; which is, that since he had received the true grace of God, and unfeigned faith dwelt in him; and since he had such gifts, qualifying him for the work of the ministry; and since so good a thing as the glorious Gospel of the blessed God was committed to his trust; and since there were so many who had departed from it, and so few that abode by it, he would have him

be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; by which may be meant either the free favour and love of God in Christ, (Romans 8:39) which is in itself always strong, immovable, and unalterable; and is the strength and security of the saints, though they have not always the same strong believing views of it; and to be strong in it, is to be rooted and grounded in it, and to have a strong sense and firm persuasion of interest in it, and that

nothing can separate from it: or else the Gospel, which is a declaration of grace, and is in Christ, and comes by him; and to be strong in it, is to preach it boldly, to defend it bravely, and courageously oppose every error and heresy, and every abettor thereof; and it also becomes every private believer to hold it fast, stand fast in it, abide by it, and earnestly contend for it; and so the phrase may stand opposed to atyrwab Pyqt, or rbg, "one strong in the law", which is so often used by the Jews[f4]: or rather by grace is meant the fulness of grace which is in Christ, for the supply of his people; for in that grace which is in him, and not in that which is in themselves, should their dependence be. It is very agreeable to be strong in grace received, in point of exercise, but not in point of contentment; so as to rest satisfied with the present measure of it, without growing in it, and going on to perfection; and much less in point of consolation, so as to derive peace and comfort from it; and still less in point of trust and confidence in it; for it is but a creature, though a very glorious one, being the workmanship of God, and very variable as to its exercise, and as yet imperfect; and not that, but the object of it, is to be trusted in: though indeed a person's enjoyment of everlasting glory and happiness may be strongly concluded from the work of grace which is begun in him; that being an immortal seed, and a well of living water springing up into eternal life; and with which glory is inseparably connected. But grace in Christ is what believers should always have recourse unto, and exercise faith on; and not only believe that there is such a fulness of grace in Christ, which they have both heard of and seen, and which they know is laid up for them, and given to them, and is sufficient for them; but they should go forth out of themselves unto it, and draw water with joy out of the full wells of salvation in Christ: and this grace is of a strengthening nature, both to ministers of the word, to enable them to fulfil their ministry, to bear reproaches, afflictions, and persecution for the Gospel, and the infirmities of weak brethren; and to private believers, to strengthen them against every corruption, temptation, and snare, to exercise every grace, and discharge every branch of duty.

Ver. 2. *And the things that thou hast heard of me*, etc.] Meaning the doctrines of the Gospel, the form of sound words. The Arabic version renders it, "the secrets, or mysteries that thou hast heard of me"; the mysteries of the grace of God, which he had often heard him discourse of, unfold and explain:

among many witnesses; or by them; which some understand of the testimonies out of Moses, and the prophets, with which the apostle confirmed what he delivered; for the doctrines of justification, pardon of sin, etc. by Christ, were bore witness to by the prophets; though rather the many persons, who, with Timothy, heard the apostle preach, and were and would be sufficient witnesses for Timothy, on occasion, that what he preached and committed to others were the same he had heard and received from the Apostle Paul; unless reference should be had here to the time of imposition of hands upon him, when he received some ministerial gifts, or an increase of them; at which time the apostle might deliver to him the form of doctrine he was to preach, and that in the presence of the presbytery, who joined in the action, and so were witnesses of what was said to him:

the same commit thou to faithful men; who not only have received the grace of God, and are true believers in Christ, but are men of great uprightness and integrity; who having the word of God, will speak it out boldly, and faithfully, and keep back nothing that is profitable, but declare the whole counsel of God, without any mixture or adulteration; for the Gospel being committed to their trust, they would become stewards, and of such it is required that they be faithful; and therefore this is mentioned as a necessary and requisite qualification in them; and not only so, but they must be such

who shall be able or sufficient

to teach others also. No man is sufficient for these things, of himself, but his sufficiency is of God; it is he who makes men able ministers of the word, by giving them gifts suitable for such work; so that they have a furniture in them, a treasure in their earthen vessels, an understanding of the sacred Scriptures, a gift of explaining them, and a faculty of speaking to edification; and so are apt to teach men, to their profit and advantage, The Ethiopic version renders it, “who are fit to teach the foolish”.

Ver. 3. *Thou therefore endure hardness*, etc.] “Or afflictions”; as in (2 Timothy 4:5). The same word is used there as here, and properly signifies, “suffer evil”; and means the evil of afflictions, as persecutions of every kind, loss of name and goods, scourging, imprisonment, and death itself, for the sake of Christ and the Gospel:

as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Christ is the Captain of salvation, the Leader and Commander of the people, who are made a willing people in the day of his power; or when he raises his forces, and musters his armies, these are volunteers, who willingly enlist themselves into his service, and under his banners fight his battles; and such who manfully behave against sin, Satan, and the world, are his good soldiers; such are all true believers in Christ, and particularly the ministers of the word, whose ministry is a warfare, and who fight the good fight of faith; and besides the above enemies, which they have in common with other saints, have to do with teachers, who are wolves in sheep's clothing.

Ver. 4. *No man that warreth*, etc.] Who is a soldier, and gives himself up to military service, in a literal sense: the Vulgate Latin version, without any authority, adds, “to God”; as if the apostle was speaking of a spiritual warfare; whereas he is illustrating a spiritual warfare by a corporeal one; and observes, that no one, that is in a military state,

entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; with civil affairs, in distinction from military ones. The Roman soldiers might not follow any trade or business of life, or be concerned in husbandry, or merchandise of any sort, but were wholly to attend to military exercises, and to the orders of their general; for to be employed in any secular business was reckoned an entangling of them, a taking of them off from, and an hindrance to their military discipline: and by this the apostle suggests that Christ's people, his soldiers, and especially his ministers, should not he involved and implicated in worldly affairs and cares; for no man can serve two masters, God and mammon; but should wholly give up themselves to the work and service to which they are called; and be ready to part with all worldly enjoyments, and cheerfully suffer the loss of all things, when called to it, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel:

that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier; his captain, or general, who has enlisted him, enrolled and registered him among his soldiers; whom to please should be his chief concern; as it should be the principal thing attended to by a Christian soldier, or minister of the Gospel, not to please men, nor to please himself, by seeking his own ease and rest, his worldly emoluments and advantages, but to please the Lord Christ, in whose book his name is written.

Ver. 5. *And if a man also strive for masteries*, etc.] In the Olympic games, by running, wrestling, leaping, etc.

yet is he not crowned; with a corruptible, fading crown, a crown made of herbs and leaves of trees, as parsley, laurel, etc.

except he strive lawfully; according to the laws and rules fixed for those exercises; so no man that calls himself a Christian, minister, or any other, can expect the crown of life, the prize of the high calling of God, except he runs the race set before him, in the right way; looking to Christ, the mark, pressing through all difficulties, towards the prize, and holds on and out unto the end.

Ver. 6. *The husbandman that laboureth*, etc.] In manuring his ground, in ploughing, in sowing, in weeding, in reaping, etc.

must be first partaker of the fruits; of his labour, before others; and the design may be to observe that the ministers of the word ought first to be partakers of the grace of God, the fruits of the Spirit, and of the Gospel, and rightly and spiritually understand it, before they preach it to others; or that such who labour in the word and doctrine, ought in the first place to be taken care of, and have a sufficient maintenance provided for them, (<4617>1 Corinthians 9:7,11) or that as they shall have in the first place some seals and fruits of their ministry, in the conversion of souls, so they shall shine in the kingdom of heaven as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever. Though the words may be rendered, and which seems more agreeable to the context, and to the apostle's argument, “the husbandman must first labour before he partakes of the fruits”; so a minister of the Gospel must first labour, and endure hardships in this life, before he sits down in the kingdom of heaven, and takes his rest, and enjoys the crown of glory, which fades not away, which the chief Shepherd shall give unto him.

Ver. 7. *Consider what I say*, etc.] The advice given by the apostle to Timothy, to be strong in the grace of Christ; to commit the doctrines of the Gospel to faithful and able men; and to endure hardness for the sake of it: as also the characters which he bore as a soldier, a runner in a race, or a wrestler, and an husbandman; and therefore must not expect ease and rest, but war, difficulties, toil, and labour; and likewise under what titles Christ was to be regarded; as his General, and Captain of salvation, that commanded him; as the righteous Judge, that held the prize and crown for which he was running; and the chief Shepherd, who would reward all his labours; and moreover, the glorious reward of grace itself, he might expect, as eternal life, when he had fought the good fight the crown of

righteousness, when he had finished his course, or run his race; and a crown of glory that fades not away, when the chief Shepherd should appear: and by putting him upon the consideration of these things, he suggests, that they were matters of moment and importance, and would be of great use to him in assisting and encouraging his faith, amidst all trials and exercises; and whereas they were expressed in figurative terms, taken from the soldier, the runner in a race, and the husbandman, they might not at first view be so easy to be understood; and therefore he would have him think of them, and meditate upon them, and weigh them in his mind; as well as he would not have him take things upon trust from him, but examine them whether they were right or not; though he doubted not but that they would be found to be agreeable to the standard of truth: wherefore he prays as follows,

and the Lord give thee understanding in all things; in all the above things, and in all others; in all the doctrines and mysteries of grace, and in all the rules of conduct in life. No man has of himself an understanding in spiritual things; this is the gift of God; and where it is given there is need of an increase of it, and always of such a prayer for it. The Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, read, “the Lord will give thee”, &c, and so the words are a promise, an encouragement to Timothy, to consider well of these things; for he might assure himself, that, in so doing, God would give him more understanding in them.

Ver. 8. *Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David*, etc.] This is said either as an encouragement to suffer hardness in the cause of Christ; since he, who though he was of the seed of David, of the blood royal, and heir to his crown, yet suffered and died; and whereas he rose again from the dead, those who suffer for his sake shall rise also, and live and reign with him for ever: or else as a specimen of the form of sound words, or of the things which Timothy had heard of the apostle; for this, with what follows, is a summary of them: Christ being of the seed of David, according to the flesh, or human nature, is expressive of his incarnation; shows that he was really come in the flesh, and was truly man; and that he assumed human nature with all its frailties and infirmities, excepting sin, and was, like David, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs; and it includes his whole life, and his righteousness, and obedience to the law of works, and points him out as the true Messiah, who was well known to the Jews by the name of the son of David. And now the apostle puts Timothy in mind, that he

was raised from the dead; which implies that he died; and so includes all the doctrines relating to his death; as that he died to make reconciliation, atonement, and satisfaction for the sins of his people, and to procure peace for them, and the full remission of all their iniquities; and to obtain redemption for them, from sin, Satan, the law, and its curses; as well as it expresses his resurrection from the dead, for their justification: and this being his first step to glory, has connected with it his ascension to heaven, session at the right hand of God, intercession for the saints, and his second coming to judgment; and is therefore particularly mentioned, because it is an article so comprehensive, and is a fundamental one, and of the greatest importance to faith, and was what was struck at in those times: the apostle adds,

according to my Gospel; meaning not the Gospel of Luke, in which there is a clear account given of the resurrection of Christ, said to be written by him, at the instigation, and under the direction of the apostle, and published with his approbation, as some think; but the doctrine of the Gospel, and which he calls his, not because he was the author, or the subject of it; for in these respects it is the Gospel of God, and of Christ; but because it was committed to him, and he was intrusted with it, and fully and faithfully preached it; and in distinction from another Gospel, that of the false teachers; and agreeably to this doctrine, which the apostle everywhere taught, Christ was raised from the dead; so the Ethiopic version renders it, “as I have taught”.

Ver. 9. *Wherein I suffer trouble as an evildoer*, etc.] As a malefactor, as if guilty of some capital crime; an enemy to the law of Moses, a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition everywhere, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, (<4245>Acts 24:5). The Ethiopic version renders it, “as a thief”. The “trouble” he suffered were reproaches, persecutions, whipping, beating, stoning, imprisonment: for he adds,

even unto bonds; for he was now a prisoner, and in chains; nor was it the first time, he was in prisons frequent; and all this for the sake of the Gospel, which he preached, concerning the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ:

but the word of God is not bound; for the apostle, while a prisoner at Rome, had the liberty of dwelling by himself, in his own hired house, though held in chains, and guarded by a soldier, and of receiving his friends, and of preaching the Gospel to as many as would come to hear

him, (⁴⁴2816Acts 28:16,17,23,30,31) as well as of sending letters to the churches; for several of his epistles were written by him when a prisoner, as those to the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians; and this to Timothy, and also that to Philemon: so that the Gospel was not restrained, or the apostle restrained from publishing it, both by word of mouth, and by writing; which was a great support to him under his troubles. Moreover, the Gospel was the more spread through the bonds of the apostle, and met with great success; it became known in Caesar's palace, and was the means of the conversion of some of his household; and many of the brethren, through his bonds, became bolder to preach the Gospel of Christ; so that it had a free course, and was glorified: and sometimes so it is, that persecution is a means of the greater spread of the Gospel; which was an effect that followed upon the persecution raised against the church at Jerusalem, upon the death of Stephen, (⁴⁴0801Acts 8:1-4). And indeed, when God opens an effectual door, none can shut it, though there be many adversaries; and when he gives the word a commission, there is no stopping it; when it comes in power, it bears down all before it; it cannot be fettered and bound by men, though men may be fettered and bound for the sake of it.

Ver. 10. *Therefore I endure all things for the elects' sakes*, etc.] There is a certain number of persons whom God has chosen in Christ from everlasting unto salvation, who shall certainly be saved; for these Jesus Christ suffered and died; and on their account is the Gospel sent, preached, and published to the world; for their sakes are ministers fitted and qualified for their work, and have their mission and commission to perform it, and suffer what they do in the execution of it; and since it was for the sake of such, whom God had loved and chosen, that the apostle endured all his reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions, he was the more cheerful under them; and the consideration of it was a support unto him:

that they may also obtain; as well as himself, and other chosen vessels of salvation, who were called by grace already; for the apostle is speaking of such of the elect, who were, as yet, in a state of nature:

the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory; salvation is only by Christ Jesus, and in him; and this is only for the elect of God; and it is published in the Gospel, that they might obtain it; and in all ages they do obtain it, or enjoy it: the thing itself is obtained by Christ for them, through his obedience, sufferings, and death; and it is published in the everlasting

Gospel, that they might come to the knowledge of it; and in the effectual calling it is brought near by the Spirit of God, and applied unto them; and they have now both a meetness for it, and a right unto it, and shall fully enjoy it in heaven; for it has “eternal glory”, or “heavenly glory”, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, “annexed to it”; or rather the full enjoyment of it will consist in an eternal and heavenly glory, which will be put upon the saints, both in soul and body, and remain to all eternity.

Ver. 11. *It is a faithful saying*, etc.] This may refer either to what goes before, that all things, all reproaches and sufferings, through the ministration of the Gospel, are endured for the elects' sake; and that shall certainly obtain salvation in Christ, and eternal glory, to which they are predestinated: or to what follows, which being of moment and importance, and difficult to be believed, as that death led to life, and sufferings were the way to the kingdom; the apostle prefaces it in this manner, affirming the truth of it, that it was sure and certain, and to be believed, and depended on as such.

For if we be dead with him; with Christ, as all his people are, by virtue of union to him; they are dead with him, he and they being one, in a legal sense; when he died, they died with him; being crucified with him, as their head and representative, their old man, their sins, were also crucified with him, being imputed to him, and laid upon him; and through the efficacy of his death, they became dead to sin, both to its damning and governing power, and so are planted together in the likeness of his death; so that as he died unto sin once, and lives again to die no more, they die unto sin, and are alive to God, and shall live for ever. Moreover, this, agreeably to what follows, may be understood of the saints dying for Christ's sake, and the Gospel, whereby they are conformed unto him, and feel the fellowship of his sufferings, and so may be said to be dead with him: and such may assure themselves of the truth of what follows,

we shall also live with him; as many as were crucified with Christ, and buried with him, rose with him from the dead, and were justified in him, as their head and representative; the free gift came on them to justification of life; and they that are dead to sin, through the efficacy of his death, live a life of sanctification, which they have from him, and is maintained and supported by him, and is to his glory; and they live a life of communion with him, in whose favour is life; and though they die, and for his sake, they shall rise again; and because he lives, they shall live also, even a life of

glory, happiness, and endless pleasure. And this is part of the faithful saying, and to be believed, and is believed by the saints: (see Romans 6:8). Moreover, since the word “him” is not in the original text, and the elect are spoken of in the preceding verse, what if the sense should be this, this is true doctrine, and a certain matter of fact, if we and the elect of God die together in the same cause, and for the sake of Christ, and the Gospel, we shall live together in everlasting bliss and glory?

Ver. 12. *If we suffer*, etc.] With him, with Christ, as in (Romans 8:17) all the elect suffered with Christ when he suffered; they suffered in him the whole penalty of the law, all the righteousness, strictness, and severity of it; and they are partakers of the benefits of his sufferings, as peace, pardon, righteousness, redemption, and everlasting salvation. And such being called by grace, and having made a profession of Christ, they suffer shame and reproach, loss of credit and reputation, and sometimes loss of goods, and corporeal punishment, and even death itself: but though they do, and if they should, they may be satisfied of the truth of this,

we shall also reign with him; they reign with him now in the kingdom of grace; grace reigns in their hearts, where Christ, the King of glory, has entered, and has set up his throne, and where he dwells by faith, they being made kings and priests unto God by him; and they shall reign with him in his kingdom here on earth, for the space of a thousand years; and they shall reign with him in glory to all eternity: this is certain, for this kingdom is prepared for them, it is given to them, they are called unto it, and have both a right unto, and meetness for it; (see Romans 8:17),

if we deny him, he also will deny us: there is a denying of Christ in words; so it is denied by the Jews that Christ is come in the flesh, and that Jesus is the Messiah; and some that have bore the Christian name, though very unworthily, have denied his true deity, his real humanity, proper sonship, and the efficacy of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, for pardon, justification, and atonement: and there is a denying of him in works; so some that profess to know him, and do own him in his person and offices, yet in works deny him; their conversation is not becoming their profession of him; they have the form of godliness, but deny the power of it: there is a secret and silent denying of him, when men are ashamed of him, and do not confess him; and there is an open denying of him, by such who set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh throughout the earth; there is a partial denying of Christ, which was Peter's case, though his faith

in him, and love to him, were not lost; and there is a total denying of him, a thorough apostasy, and from which there is no recovery; and if there be any such apostates among those who have named the name of Christ, he will deny them, he will not own them for his another day; he will set them at his left hand; he will declare he knows them not, and will banish them from his presence for evermore. This is another branch of the faithful saying; this will certainly be the case; Christ himself has said it, (<4010 33>Matthew 10:33).

Ver. 13. *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful*, etc.] The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, "if we believe not him". This may be understood, either of such who are altogether destitute of faith, who do not believe in Christ at all; and particularly do not believe what was just now said concerning his denying such that deny him, but mock and scoff at his coming, and at a future judgment: this unbelief of theirs will not make void his faith or faithfulness; (see <4503 3>Romans 3:3), he will abide faithful to his word of threatening; and what he says in (<4116 16>Mark 16:16) will be found to be an everlasting truth: or it may be understood of true believers, whose faith sometimes is very low, as to its exercise on Christ, and with reference to their future glory and happiness; but Christ is faithful to all his, covenant engagements for them, to bring them to glory, and to every word of promise concerning their happiness, and to every branch of the faithful saying above mentioned; and he is ever the same in his love to them, and in the efficacy of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; and his salvation is an everlasting and unchangeable one; nor do the saints' interest in it, and security by it, depend upon their acts of believing, or their frames, but upon the firmness and unchangeableness of Christ, the object of faith.

He cannot deny himself; he cannot go contrary to his word; that would be to act contrary to his nature and perfections, and would be a denying of himself, which is not possible; wherefore his faithfulness will never fail, even though, the faith of his people does, as to the exercise of it.

Ver. 14. *Of these things put them in remembrance*, etc.] Meaning either his hearers, or those to whom he was to commit the things he had heard of the apostle, and who must expect to suffer afflictions, and endure hardships, for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel; wherefore to remind them of the above sayings might be of use and comfort to them. This clause is wanting in the Arabic version.

Charging them before the Lord; the omniscient God, as in his sight, as they will answer it to him another day; (see 1 Timothy 5:21 6:13),

that they strive not about words; it became them to strive and contend for the form of sound words, for the wholesome words or doctrines of our Lord Jesus, but not about mere words, and especially such as were

to no profit; to no advantage to truth, nor to themselves nor others; were not to edification, to spiritual edification, to godly edifying, which is in faith:

but to the subverting of the hearers; the confounding of their minds, misleading their judgments, and overthrowing their faith; and therefore were not only unprofitable, but hurtful and pernicious, and by all means to be avoided.

Ver. 15. *Study to show thyself approved unto God*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy reads, “to Christ”; (see Romans 16:10). Not unto men, as pleasing them; for such who study to please men, are not the servants of Christ; and sometimes those that are approved to and by men, are disapproved of by God and Christ: but unto God, showing all fidelity and uprightness; speaking out the Gospel openly, and freely, with all sincerity, as in the sight of God; commending themselves to him, and to every man's conscience, by manifestation of the truth; and such will hear, “Well done, good and faithful servant” another day.

A workman that needeth not to be ashamed; the ministry of the word is a work, and it is a good work; and those that perform it aright are worthy of honour and esteem; and it requires industry, diligence, and application, and for which no man is sufficient without the grace of God; and those who are employed in it are workmen, workers together with God, and labourers in his vineyard: and such who are faithful and diligent ones, “need not to be ashamed”; such do not cause shame, neither in themselves nor in others, as false teachers do, who foam out their own shame, and as negligent ministers of the word, and such whose lives are not agreeable to the doctrines they preach; nor have they any reason to be ashamed, neither of the Gospel, which they preach, nor of their sufferings, which they endure for the sake of it, nor of their upright ministrations of the word; and as they are not afraid to suffer shame for the sake of Christ now, they will not be ashamed before him at his coming.

rightly dividing, or “cutting”

the word of truth; that is, the Scriptures of truth, (<27A021>Daniel 10:21) which come from the God of truth, are concerning Christ, who is the truth, and are dictated and led into by the spirit of truth, and contain in them nothing but truth: to divide the word, is not merely to divide the text into its proper parts, though care should be taken that this be done aright; and some think that the allusion is to the verses of the Hebrew Bible, which are called µyqwsp, "divisions", sections, or cuttings, from the word qsp, "to cut" or "divide", being cut or divided one from another; hence those that were employed in the law, and were conversant with the sacred writings, and exercised therein, were called trwtb µyqswp, "cutters", or "dividers of the law" [f5]; and so qwsp l[b is one that is well versed in the Bible, and knows every part of it, and readily uses it, in speaking or writing; and such an one was Timothy, (<540315>2 Timothy 3:15) though I rather think the apostle refers to a wrong way of dividing the Scriptures by the Jews, to which he opposes the right dividing of them. They had used not only to take away a letter out of one word, and add it to another, and so expound the text, but to remove words in it, and make that which went before to go behind, and that which was behind to go before; and this they call a sharp knife, which bwtkh qyspmw Ætwj, "cuts and divides the Scriptures" [f6]: but this way, which his countrymen used, the apostle would not have Timothy, and other Gospel ministers, make use of; for this is not rightly to divide, but to mangle and tear in pieces the word of truth. Moreover, to divide the word of truth, or to cut it, is to cut it open, and dissect its several parts, and search and look into the inside and bottom of it, for to find out every truth contained in it, and lay them open to others; and may be, as some have thought, an allusion to the cutting open the sacrifices, and laying the parts of them aright, and in a decent manner: to which may be added, that since ministers of the Gospel are stewards, and who, when wise and faithful, give to everyone of the household their portion of meat in due season; the metaphor may be taken from such, and from masters and governors of families, who cut up the food, and distribute it to each, according to their age and appetite; and so the ministers of the Gospel are to distribute the spiritual food of the word to babes in Christ, and to grown Christians, according to their capacities, and suitable to their cases and circumstances, dividing to everyone what is proper for him: in short, one that divides the word of truth rightly, is, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it, one that "rightly handles"; or, as the Syriac version, that "rightly preaches the word of truth"; who gives the true sense of Scripture, does not pervert and wrest

it, and take from it, or add to it; who points out the truth in it, and shows unto men the way of salvation, and plainly and faithfully preaches the Gospel contained in it, without keeping back anything that is profitable, but declares the whole counsel of God. This same Greek word is used by the Septuagint in (<2Ch 6>Proverbs 3:6 11:5) where it answers to the Hebrew word רָצָה, which signifies to direct the way, and make it plain; and may here design a plain and open interpretation of the word of God: and to answer these several characters in the text should be the studious concern of every Gospel minister; and study is necessary thereunto; it requires great care that a man take heed to himself, and to his doctrine; and great industry, diligence, and application, and much reading, meditation, and prayer.

Ver. 16. *But shun profane and vain babblings*, etc.] The ministry of false teachers is mere babbling; a voice, and nothing else, as the man said of his nightingale; a sound of words, but no solid matter in them; great swelling words of vanity, like large bubbles of water, look big, and make a great noise, but have nothing in them; contain nothing but vain, empty, idle, and trifling stuff; what is unprofitable and unedifying, yea, what is profane, contrary to the nature and perfections of God, and not agreeable to the doctrine which is according to godliness; and being palmed upon the Holy Scriptures, is a profanation of them. And all such wicked and empty prate, and babbling, is to be shunned, avoided, and discouraged, refused, and rejected; and, as much as can be, a stop should be put to it, both by ministers and hearers of the word.

For they will increase unto more ungodliness meaning either that such babblings, if used and encouraged, will grow more and more profane and wicked; or the persons that use them, the unruly and vain talkers, will grow more daring, bold; and impudent, will wax worse and worse, and from one error will proceed to another, for such seldom stop; and having abused one passage of Scripture, will go on to attack another, and will not cease, till they have wrested the whole Scripture to their own destruction, and that of others.

Ver. 17. *And their word will eat as doth a cancer*, etc.] Or “gangrene”, which gnaws and feeds upon the flesh, inflames and mortifies as it goes, and spreads swiftly, and endangers the whole body; and is therefore to be speedily taken notice of, and stopped. It is better rendered “gangrene”, as in the marginal reading, than “cancer”.

> "The word "gangrene" is Greek [f7], and is derived by some authors from the Paphlagonian "gangra", a goat; it being the character of a goat to browse the grass all around without shifting. It is more correct, perhaps, to derive it from the Greek word γραω, γραινω, "manduco", "consumo", I eat, I consume. The "gangrene" is a disease in the flesh of the part which it corrupts, consumes, and turns black, spreading and seizing itself of the adjoining parts, and is rarely cured without amputation. By the microscope, a gangrene has been discovered to contain an infinite number of little worms engendered in the morbid flesh; and which continually producing new broods, they swarm, and overrun the adjacent parts: if the gangrene proceed to an utter sphacelation (or mortification), and be seated in any of the limbs, or extreme parts, recourse must be had to the operation of amputation"

And so the errors and heresies of false teachers worm and spread, and feed upon the souls of men, and eat up the vitals of religion, or what seemed to be such, and even destroy the very form of godliness; and bring destruction and death, wherever they come; and when they get into Christian churches, threaten the ruin of them; and therefore are to be opposed in time, and those infected with them to be cut off.

Of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; these were some of the principal among the false teachers, the chief authors and spreaders of error and heresy: the former of these is mentioned before in (<5012>1 Timothy 1:20) along with Alexander, as guilty of blasphemy, and as delivered up to Satan for it. Philetus is a Greek name as well as the other, though it is sometimes found in Roman inscriptions [f8]: it is very likely that these were both in Asia, and probably in Ephesus, or near to it, since the apostle mentions them by name to Timothy, that he might beware of them.

Ver. 18. *Who concerning the truth have erred*, etc.] That is, the two persons just mentioned; they fell from the truth, wandered and departed from it; they did not keep to the Scriptures of truth, but deviated from them; they missed that mark, and went astray into gross errors and mistakes; rejected the Gospel, the word of truth, in general, and particularly in

saying, that the resurrection is past already; and no other is to be expected; or that there was no future resurrection of the dead: their error was, as some think, that there is no other resurrection than that of parents

in their children, who, though they die, live in their posterity; or than the resurrection of Christ, and of the saints, that rose at the same time; or rather, that there is no other resurrection than the spiritual one, or regeneration, which is a quickening of dead sinners, or the resurrection of them from the death of sin, to a life of grace; which seems to be the truest account of their principle, seeing this is what has been received and propagated by others since; though some have thought that they gave into the Palingenesia of the Pythagoreans, who supposed that when men die, their souls go into other bodies; and that these men imagined, that this is all the resurrection that will be: and others have been of opinion, that their notion was, that whereas the deliverance of the Jews out of the Babylonish captivity is signified by a resurrection of them, in (Ezekiel 37:1-28) that this is the resurrection they meant was past, and no other to be looked for; but that which has been fixed upon seems to be the truest account:

and overthrow the faith of some; the Ethiopic version reads, “of many”; that is, of nominal professors of religion; not of true believers, for true faith cannot be overthrown. Hence it follows,

Ver. 19. *Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure*, etc.] That faith, which is the faith of God's elect, is of the operation of God, and is the gift of his grace, and of which Christ is the author and finisher, is firm and immovable as a foundation; it is solid and substantial; it is the substance of things hoped for; and it is permanent and abiding; it stands sure, being supported by the power of God, and prevalent mediation of Jesus Christ; and so cannot be overthrown by false teachers, when an historical faith, or the faith of temporary believers may: or the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is here meant, which was said to be past by the above false teachers; which is a fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, without which the preaching of it is vain, and faith is vain; and which is a doctrine of God, of pure revelation; and this will be effected by his power: this stands sure upon the testimony of the patriarchs, prophets, and of Christ, and his apostles; upon the sure word and writings both of the Old and New Testament; and will stand its ground against all opposition, and will have its certain effect; for the Lord Jesus knows who are his distinctly and perfectly; nor will he lose them, nor anything that belongs to them; not their bodies, any more than their souls, nor any dust of theirs, but will raise it up at the last day. Or else the doctrine of eternal election may be here designed; which is the foundation of all spiritual blessings, of faith and of holiness, of joy and comfort here, and happiness hereafter, and even of

complete and everlasting salvation; and is of God's laying, and is owing to his sovereign pleasure and free rich grace; and stands sure, not on the foot of works, but upon the unchangeable and unfrustrable will of God; and this secures from a final and total deception by false teachers: and also into the account may be taken the persons of God's elect themselves; who are of God's founding, and are as immovable as the firmest foundation whatever, even as rocks and mountains, and stand sure upon the rock of ages, Christ Jesus, and shall never perish; nor can they be deceived by false Christs and false prophets, but will remain safe and sound, when the faith of ever so many is subverted by them.

Having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his: faith is sealed and insured to God's elect, by his foreknowledge and predestination of them; so that they certainly have it, and shall never lose it: and their election is according to God's foreknowledge of them; which designs not a foresight of their faith, holiness, and good works, as the motives of his choosing them; nor a bare prescience of their persons; but such a foreknowledge as includes special love to them, which is distinguishing, unchangeable, and everlasting; and this being a seal affixed to all the elect, shows the distinguishing grace of God in their election, the secrecy of it, and its firmness and irrevocableness, and also the safety of the chosen ones; things being sealed, to distinguish one thing from another, and to keep things secret, or to render them firm and authentic. So, among the Jews, seals were used in buying and selling, that it might be known what was bought, and to confirm the purchase [f9]. The inference from this comfortable doctrine is,

and let everyone that nameth the name of Christ; “or of the Lord”, as the Alexandrian copy, and others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read; that is, whoever either are called by the name of Christ, or Christians, or whoever call upon his name: let them

depart from iniquity; both from doctrinal iniquity, the errors and heresies of the above false teachers, which increased to ungodliness, and ate as a gangrene, and were the subversion of the faith of some; and from all practical iniquity, which those men, and their followers, especially the Gnostics, were guilty of; and, generally speaking, when men make shipwreck of faith, they put away a good conscience: and the apostle may also mean, that all such should depart from iniquitous men, from men

whether of bad principles or practices, or both, and have no fellowship with them, it being unworthy of the name by which they were called. Some reference seems to be had to (Numbers 16:5,26) and so the false teachers, and their followers, may be compared to Korah, and his company, and the elect of God to Moses, and the Lord's people, who were bid to depart from the tents of those wicked men; and who stood firm, sure, and safe, when the earth opened, and swallowed up the others.

Ver. 20. *But in a great house*, etc.] This simile the apostle makes use of, to show that it need not seem strange, nor should it be distressing to anyone's mind, to hear that men of such wicked principles and practices should be in the church of God, who are before mentioned; since in every great house or palace, the house of a nobleman, or palace of a king, there is a variety of vessels of different matter, and for different uses, and some are mean, despicable, and dishonourable; and so it is in the church of God: for by this great house, in the application of the simile, is not meant the world, as some think; for though that is a house built by God, who built all things; and is a very large one, and full of inhabitants, comparable to vessels; and there are in it both good and bad, as always have been; yet it is no startling thing to any man, that there should be bad men in it; rather the wonder is, that there should be any good; but by this house is meant the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth, (1 Timothy 3:15 (see Gill on "1 Timothy 3:15")).

There are not only vessels of gold and of silver; persons who are members of the visible church, who are comparable to gold and silver, for their worth and value, and preciousness in the sight of Christ, who accounts them his jewels, and peculiar treasure; and for their excellency and usefulness in the church, by reason of those differing gifts bestowed upon them; and for their lustre and purity, both of doctrine and of life; and for their solidity and duration:

but also of wood, and of earth: there are others in a visible church state, who are like to dry wood, destitute of the grace of God, and are fit matter for Satan to work upon, and by them raise and increase the flames of contention and division, and will be fit fuel for everlasting burnings; and there are others who are sensual, and carnal, and worldly, who mind earth, and earthly things, and have no spirituality, nor spiritual mindedness in them:

and some to honour; who are designed for honourable service, and behave honourably, and are worthy of honour in the church; are honourable officers, or members in it; and are to the honour of Christ, and the Gospel; and shall at last enjoy honour, glory, immortality, and eternal life.

And some to dishonour; who are to the disreputation of the church, the dishonour of religion, and scandal of the Gospel; by them God is dishonoured, his ways evil spoken of, his doctrines blasphemed, and his name reproached; and who are themselves dishonourable among men now, and will be covered with shame and everlasting contempt hereafter.

Ver. 21. *If a man therefore purge himself from these*, etc.] That is, if a man clears himself, and keeps himself clear from such men as Hymenaeus and Philetus, who are comparable to wooden and earthen vessels, and are dishonourable ones; if he shuns their defiling company, and polluting principles; if he keeps clear of their heresies, and is not carried away with the errors of these wicked men, and is not drawn aside by them into immoral practices, but stands fast in the faith, and departs from iniquity:

he shall be a vessel unto honour; he will be made manifest, and appear to be a vessel chosen to honour; and will be an honourable member of the church here, and will be honoured by Christ hereafter:

sanctified: he will appear to be one that is set apart by God the Father, and whose sins are purged away by the blood of Christ, and who is sanctified internally by the Spirit of God; for external holiness springs from internal holiness, and is, an evidence of it:

and meet for the master's use: the use and service of Christ, who is the master of the house; either for the ministry of the word, the administration of ordinances, or for some service or another, which he calls him to, and employs him in.

And prepared unto every good work; which an unregenerate man is not; he is to every good work reprobate; he is not capable of performing good works; he is not prepared for them, nor ready at them; but a true believer, one that is regenerated, and sanctified by the Spirit of God, he is created in Christ Jesus unto good works; and has in the performing of them right principles, aims, and ends, as well as a supply of grace, by which he is enabled to do them.

Ver. 22. *Flee also youthful lusts*, etc.] Meaning not lusts of uncleanness, lasciviousness, and filthiness; nor any of those follies and vanities which the youthful age usually lusts and desires after, to which Timothy was not inclined; but such lusts as are apt to prevail with young ministers of the Gospel, such as vain glory, popular applause, seeking to have the pre-eminence, contentions with, and contempt of others, and the like.

But follow righteousness; the righteousness of Christ; or doing that which is just between man and man, and as one man would choose another should do to him; or rather integrity and faithfulness, in the ministry of the word, without seeking honour from men:

faith; both as a doctrine and grace; or veracity and truth in preaching the Gospel, striving for that, and not through ambition, and for the pre-eminence:

charity; or love, to God and Christ, and to his people; without which all gifts and works are of no avail; and which will engage a man to bear much, and to hope and believe all things:

peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart; peace is to be pursued and followed after with all men, as much as possible, but especially with the saints, the true worshippers of God; who draw nigh to him with true hearts, and call upon him in the sincerity of their souls: great care should be taken that peace be maintained with them; for they have great interest at the throne of grace; and God is nigh unto them, and hears their prayers. The Alexandrian copy reads, “with all that love the Lord”.

Ver. 23. *But foolish and unlearned questions avoid*, etc.] Such as have no solid wisdom in them, and are foreign from the Gospel, the wisdom of God in a mystery, and are not useful and unedifying; such ought to be avoided, publicly and privately; they should not be started in the public ministry, nor attended to in private conversation; as being unworthy of the notice of a minister of the Gospel wise and learned, and useless to the church, and to his hearers.

Knowing that they do gender strife; about words, and contentions, which break the peace of churches, and hinder the profit of souls, and the progress of the Gospel.

Ver. 24. *And the servant of the Lord must not strive*, etc.] By “the servant of the Lord” is not meant any believer in common, but a minister of the

word, as Timothy was; such an one ought not to strive about words to no profit, about mere words, and in a litigious, quarrelsome manner, and for mastery and not truth; though he may, and ought to strive for the faith of the Gospel; this is praiseworthy in him:

but be gentle unto all men; not only to troubled minds, and wounded consciences, by supplying them with the precious promises and truths of the Gospel; and to backsliders, by restoring them in a spirit of meekness; but even to those who contradict the truth, and themselves, by mild and kind instructions.

Apt to teach, showing a willingness to instruct the ignorant and obstinate, and making use of abilities given for that purpose, notwithstanding all discouragements; for it follows,

patient, or "bearing evil"; not only the infirmities of weak brethren in the church, and the reproaches and persecutions of profane men in the world; but also the contradictions and oppositions of the adversaries of truth, so as not to be irritated and provoked, or to be discouraged, and desist from the defence of the Gospel.

Ver. 25. *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves*, etc.] To the truth; resist it and deny it; or contradict some other tenets and principles of theirs, or the Scriptures, which they themselves allowed to be the word of God, and the rule of faith and practice, and so are self-convinced and self-condemned. These are to be instructed, being ignorant, and in a tender and gentle manner, though very perverse and obstinate.

If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth: repentance here designs a repentance of errors in principle, a change of mind upon conviction, and such as issues in a free and ingenuous confession, and acknowledgment of the truth before opposed; and such a repentance is the gift of God: it is he that opens the eyes of the understanding, and works conviction in the mind, and leads into all truth, as it is in Jesus; and induces men to repent of their errors, confess their mistakes, and own the truth; even as repentance of evil practices is not owing to the power of men, nor to the bare influence of means, but to the efficacious grace of God, it being a grant from him. And though this is not certain, that God will give repentance to such contradictors and blasphemers of his Gospel; yet as it is his will, that all his chosen ones should come to repentance, and that some of all sorts should be saved, and

come to the knowledge of the truth; and seeing these things have been brought about under and by the ministry of the word, it is an encouragement to the ministers of the Gospel to continue their instructions in the manner here directed.

Ver. 26. *And that they may recover themselves*, etc.] Or “awake”, and come to themselves, and appear to be sober, and in their right mind: the metaphor is taken from drunken men, who are overcharged, and are not in their senses, and being stupified fall asleep; and like these are persons intoxicated with errors and heresies, who when their minds are enlightened, and they are convinced of their evil tenets, repent of them, come to themselves, and acknowledge the truth, and so escape

out of the snare of the devil; for as carnal lusts and pleasures are the snares and nets, in which Satan, who may be compared to a fowler, catches some; so errors and heresies are those with which he ensnares others: “who are taken captive”, or “alive”,

by him at his will; such are taken in his nets and snares, as creatures are taken alive, by fowlers, and huntsmen; and they are held fast, and become his captives, and his slaves, and do his will, being led by him to whatsoever he pleases; he works powerfully in them, and they readily comply with him, and obey his lusts. Though some understand this, not of the will of the devil, but of the will of God; and that the sense is, that such persons are held captive by Satan, as long as it is the pleasure of God, and no longer; when the prey is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered; and so it is an encouragement to the ministers of the word to go on in instructing, hoping this may be the case. Others connect this phrase, “to his will” or “according to his will”, as they differently render it, with the word, “recover”: and then the meaning is, that such, repenting of their errors, might escape out of the snare of Satan, in which they were taken alive; that so they might do the will of God, by professing and holding fast his truths; or that their repentance, recovery, and escape out of Satan's snare and captivity, are according to the will of God, and his sovereign good pleasure.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO 2 TIMOTHY 3

In this chapter the apostle delivers out a prophecy of the last days, showing how perilous the times will be, describing the persons that will live in them, and what will be their end; and in opposition to these men, proposes himself an example in doctrine and sufferings; and encourages Timothy to persevere, and highly commends the sacred writings. The prophecy begins (2 Timothy 3:1) the description it gives of hypocrites, formal professors, and false teachers, that should rise up in the last days, and perilous times spoken of, is in (2 Timothy 3:2-7). And these are compared to the magicians of Egypt for the corruption of their minds, the badness of their principles, and their opposition to truth, and for their exit, and the issue of things; they will be stopped in their progress, and their folly exposed, (2 Timothy 3:8,9) and as the reverse of these men, the apostle gives an account of his own doctrine, conversation, and sufferings; which he proposes to Timothy for imitation, as being well known to him, and as also the common state of all godly persons in this life, being a suffering one, (2 Timothy 3:10-12) nor can it be expected that it should be otherwise, since false teachers, who are wicked and deceitful men, grow worse and worse, (2 Timothy 3:13). And then the apostle exhorts Timothy to abide by, and continue in the doctrines of the Gospel, from the assurance he had of the truth of them, from the consideration of his having learned them of the apostle, and especially from their agreement with the holy Scriptures, which he had knowledge of from a child, (2 Timothy 3:14,15) which Scriptures are commended, partly from the useful effect of them, making men wise unto salvation; and chiefly from the author of them, being by the inspiration of God; and also from the profitableness of them, both for doctrine and manners, and especially to furnish a Gospel minister for the work he is called unto, (2 Timothy 3:15-17).

Ver. 1. *This know also*, etc.] That not only men of bad principles and practices are in the churches now, as before described in the preceding chapter, but that in succeeding ages there would be worse men, if possible, and the times would be still worse; this the apostle had, and delivered by a

spirit of prophecy, and informed Timothy, and others of it, that he and they might be prepared for such events, and fortified against them:

that in the last days perilous times shall come; "or hard" and difficult times to live in; not by reason of the outward calamities, as badness of trade, scarcity of provisions, the ravages of the sword, etc. but by reason of the wickedness of men, and that not of the profane world, but of professors of religion; for they are the persons afterwards described, who will make the times they live in difficult to others, to live soberly, righteously, and godly; the days will be evil, because of these evil men: or they will be "troublesome" times, very afflicting and distressing to pious minds; as the places and times, and men and customs of them were to Lot, David, Isaiah, and others: and also "dangerous" ones to the souls of men; who will be beguiled by their fair speeches, and specious pretences, to follow their pernicious ways, which will bring destruction upon them; their doctrines will eat as a gangrene, and their evil communications will corrupt good manners, before observed. And these times will be "in the last days" of the apostolic age, and onward to the end of the world: the Jews generally understand by this phrase, when used in the Old Testament, the days of the Messiah; and which are the last days of the world, in comparison of the times before the law, from Adam to Moses, and under the law, from thence to Christ; and even in the times of the apostles, at least towards the close of them, great numbers of men rose up under the Christian name, to whom the following characters well agree, as the Gnostics, and others; and who paved the way for the man of sin, the Romish antichrist, whose priests and votaries are here likewise described to the life: so that these last days may take in the general defection and apostasy of the church of Rome, as well as those times, which followed the apostles, and those which will usher in the second coming of Christ. The Ethiopic version renders it, "in the latter days will come an evil, or bad year".

Ver. 2. *For men shall be lovers of their own selves*, etc.] Not in a good sense, as men may be, and as such are who love their neighbours as themselves, and do that to others they would have done to themselves; and who take all prudent and lawful care to preserve the life and health of their bodies, and seek in a right way the salvation of their immortal souls: but in a bad sense, as such may be said to be, who only love themselves; their love to God, and Christ, and to the saints, being only in pretence, not in reality; and who do all they do in a religious way, from a principle of self-love, and to selfish and mercenary ends; either to gain glory and applause

from men, or to merit something for themselves at the hands of God, without any view to the glory of God, the honour and interest of Christ, and the good of others; and ascribe all they have and do to themselves, to their industry, diligence, power, free will, worth, and merit, and not to the grace of God: and this character may be seen in the principles and practices of the church of Rome, in their doctrines of merit and free will, in works of supererogation etc. “Coveteous”; lovers of silver, greedy of filthy lucre, doing nothing but for money; everyone looking for his gain from his quarter; making merchandise of the souls of men; and which are reckoned among the wares of Babylon, the Romish antichrist, (Revelation 18:13). “No penny, no pater noster”.

Boasters; of their wealth and riches, of their honour and grandeur; I sit a queen, etc. (Revelation 18:7), of their numbers, of their holiness, of the infallibility of their popes, of their having the true knowledge, and certain sense of the Scriptures, and of having all power in heaven and in earth.

Proud; as have been the popes of Rome; exalting themselves above all that is called God, above all princes, kings, and emperors of the earth; deposing one, excommunicating another, treading upon their necks, obliging them to hold their stirrups while they mounted their horses; the pride of the popes, cardinals, priests, and the whole clergy of the church of Rome, is notorious.

Blasphemers; of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ; sitting in the temple as God, as antichrist does, showing himself that he is God; assuming that to himself which belongs to God only, which is to forgive sin; calling himself Christ's vicar on earth; taking upon him to enact new laws, and to dispense with the laws of God, and Christ; and has a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies against God, his name, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven, (2 Thessalonians 2:4 Revelation 13:5,6).

Disobedient to parents: as many of the votaries of the antichristian church have been; who have withdrew themselves from under the care of their parents, and their fortunes too out of their hands, when they have been in their power; and have shut themselves up in cloisters, monasteries, and nunneries, without the leave and consent, or knowledge of their parents.

Unthankful: to God, for what is enjoyed by them, ascribing all to themselves, and to their merit and good works; and to men, to the princes of the earth, by whom they were first raised to, and supported in their

dignity; as the popes of Rome were by the Roman emperors, and whom they in return tyrannized over, and dethroned at pleasure.

Unholy; notwithstanding his holiness the pope at the head of them their holy father, and holy mother church, and holy priests, and holy orders they talk of; yet are without the fear of God, or any regard to him, living most unholy lives and conversations, (27137 Daniel 11:37).

Ver. 3. *Without natural affection*, etc.] To parents, or children, or wife; parents thrusting their children into religious houses, cloisters, etc. against their wills; children leaving their parents without their knowledge or consent; married bishops and priests being obliged to quit their wives, and declare their children spurious; with many other such unnatural actions.

Trucebreakers; or covenant breakers; stirring up princes to break through their treaties and covenants with one another; dissolving the allegiance of subjects to their sovereigns, and moving them to rebellion against them; loosing the marriage bond between husband and wife; making void all oaths, contracts, and agreements, among men, which stand in the way of their designs; teaching that no faith is to be kept with heretics.

False accusers; or devils, being like Satan, the accuser of the brethren, charging all that depart from their communion with schism and heresy.

Incontinent; though they pretend to the gift of continency, yet give themselves up to all lasciviousness, and work all uncleanness with greediness; or "intemperate" in eating and drinking, indulging themselves in rioting and drunkenness: "she hath lived deliciously", (66807 Revelation 18:7).

Fierce; like beasts of prey; such was Rome Pagan, in the times of the ten persecutions; and such has been Rome Papal, exercising the greatest cruelties and barbarities on the saints, being drunk with their blood.

Despisers of those that are good; or without love to good; both to good works, to which they are reprobate, notwithstanding all their pretensions to them, and bluster about them; and to good men, whom they hate.

Ver. 4. *Traitors*, etc.] To their princes and sovereigns, whose deaths they have contrived and compassed, and whom they have assassinated and murdered; and have been betrayers of the secrets of persons, which they have come at by auricular confession to them; and of their best and nearest friends, to preserve and secure themselves.

Heady; rash, daring, bold, and impudent, fit to say and do any thing, though ever so vile and wicked.

High, minded; puffed and swelled up with a vain conceit of themselves, and speaking great swelling words of vanity;

lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; lovers of sinful pleasures, or the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, and not God; serving divers lusts and pleasures, and not God; making a god of their belly; sensual idolaters, delighting themselves in their carnal lusts, and not in the service of God.

Ver. 5. *Having a form of godliness*, etc.] Either a mere external show of religion, pretending great piety and holiness, being outwardly righteous before men, having the mask and visor of godliness; or else a plan of doctrine, a form of sound words, a scheme of truths, which men may have without partaking of the grace of God; and which, with respect to the doctrine of the Trinity, the church of Rome has; or else the Scriptures of truth, which the members of that church have, and profess to hold to, maintain and preserve; and which contains doctrines according to godliness, and tend to a godly life and godly edification:

but denying the power thereof; though in words they profess religion and godliness, the fear of God, and the pure worship of him, yet in works they deny all; and though they may have a set of notions in their heads, yet they feel nothing of the power of them on their hearts; and are strangers to experimental religion, and powerful godliness: or though they profess the Scriptures to be the word of God, yet they deny the use, the power, and efficacy of them; they deny the use of them to the laity, and affirm that they are not a sufficient rule of faith and practice, without their unwritten traditions; and that they are not able to make men wise, or give them a true knowledge of what is to be believed and done, without them; and that the sense of them is not to be understood by private men, but depends upon the infallible judgment of the church or pope:

from such turn away; have no fellowship with them, depart from their communion, withdraw from them, and come out from among them: this passage sufficiently justifies the reformed churches in their separation from the church of Rome.

Ver. 6. *For of this sort are they which creep into houses*, etc.] Privily and unawares, in a clandestine manner, and insinuate themselves into families,

by fawning and flattering, and under specious pretences to knowledge and virtue. The Syriac version uses a word, from whence comes adlwj, "Chulda", which signifies "a weasel"; suggesting, that their entrance into houses was like to the way of that creature, which is sometimes covered, and sometimes open: there was also a gate of the temple, which was called "Huldah"; whether there is any allusion in the word to that, may be inquired [f10].

And lead captive silly women; the coming of antichrist is after the working of Satan; as Satan attacked the woman, and not the man, and beguiled Eve and not Adam, so these his instruments and emissaries, work themselves into the affections of the weaker vessel, and into the weaker sort of women, as the diminutive word here used signifies; and gain upon them, instil their principles into them, attach them to their interests, captivate them to them, and lead them as they please:

laden with sins; covered with them, full of them, and so ready to receive any set of principles that would encourage them to continue in them; or else were pressed down with a sense of them, their consciences being awakened, and they under some concern on account of them, and so fit persons for such deceivers to gain upon, by pretending to great sanctity and religion, and by providing them with pardons and indulgences, and putting them upon penance, etc. though the former sense seems most agreeable, and is confirmed by what follows,

led away with divers lusts. The Alexandrian copy adds, "and pleasures"; that is, sinful ones; though this may be understood, not of unclean lusts, but of the itch and desire after new teachers, and new doctrines, and practices, which prevail in weak women, and by which they are governed and led away.

Ver. 7. *Ever learning*, etc.] Some new notion and practice or another: and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth; partly because of the teachers, which they heap up to themselves, who are unapt to teach, are blind and ignorant guides, and know not the truth, but are enemies to it, and resist it; and partly because of themselves, the sins they are laden, and the lusts they are led away with, which hinder them from coming to the knowledge of the truth.

Ver. 8. *Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses*, etc.] These were not Jews, who rose up and opposed Moses, as Dathan and Abiram did, as

some have thought; but Egyptian magicians, the chief of those that Pharaoh sent for, when Moses and Aaron came before him, and wrought miracles; and who did in like manner by their enchantments, (<2Exodus 7:11) upon which place the Targum of Jonathan has these words:

> "and Pharaoh called the wise men and the magicians; and Janis and Jambres, the magicians of the Egyptians, did so by the enchantments of their divinations."

And the same paraphrase on (<2Exodus 1:15) calls them by the same names; and this shows from whence the apostle had these names, which are not mentioned in any place in the Old Testament; namely, from the traditions and records of the Jews, with which he was well acquainted: there is no need to say he had this account by divine revelation, for some of the Heathens had knowledge of this story some such way. Numenius; the philosopher, speaks of Jannes and Jambres as Egyptian scribes, and famous for their skill in the magic art; and who opposed themselves to Moses when the Jews were driven out of Egypt [f11]. Pliny also makes mention of Janme and Jotape as magicians; though he wrongly calls them Jews, and places Moses with them [f12], as Jannes likewise is by Apuleius [f13]. It is commonly said by the Jews [f14], that these were the two sons of Balaam, and they are said to be the chief of the magicians of Egypt [f15]; the latter of these is called in the Vulgate Latin version Mambres; and in some Jewish writers his name is Mamre [f16] by whom also the former is called Jochane or John; and indeed Joannes, Jannes, and John, are the same name; and R. Gedaliah [f17] says, that their names in other languages are John and Ambrose, which is not unlikely. Mention is made of the sons of Jambri in the Apocrypha:

> "But the children of Jambri came out of Medaba, and took John, and all that he had, and went their way with it." (1 Maccabees 9:36)

these things are not to be depended on: however, certain it is, that they withstood Moses by their enchantments, and hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that, for a while, he would not let the children of Israel go. Now between these magicians, and the Papists before described, there is a very great agreement; as these men were Egyptians, so the Papists may be called, since Rome is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, (<66108Revelation 11:8) as the one were, so the other are idolaters, who worshipped devils, idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, (<66920Revelation 9:20) and both sorcerers, using the magic art; (<66921Revelation 9:21) and they both pretended to miracles; though what they did were no other than lying

wonders, (2 Thessalonians 2:9 Revelation 13:13,14) and both agreed to keep the people of God in bondage, as much, and as long as they could: and particularly, as the magicians of Egypt withstood Moses, whom Josephus [f18] calls the sons of Amaraeus. These are said to be the persons that told Pharaoh, that a child should be born among the Israelites, by whom the whole land of Egypt should be destroyed, and which was the reason of Pharaoh's giving such a charge to the Hebrew midwives [f19]; also the making of the golden calf is ascribed to them [f20]; for, according to the Jews, they afterwards became proselytes; but

so do these also resist the truth; the truth of one God, by their worshipping of images; and of one Mediator, by making use of angels, and saints departed, to intercede with God for them; and of justification by the righteousness of Christ, by introducing the doctrine of works, of merit, and supererogation; and of pardon and cleansing by the blood of Christ, and atonement by his sacrifice, by their pardons, indulgences, penance, purgatory, and the sacrifice of the Mass; yea, they resist the Scriptures of truth, not allowing them to be a sufficient rule without their unwritten traditions, and even Christ, who is truth itself, in all his offices, prophetic, priestly, and kingly.

Men of corrupt minds, of bad principles, holding antichristian tenets, derogatory to the grace of God, and glory of Christ; giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; like Jannes and Jambres, who were given to magic arts, and were under the influence of Satan:

reprobate concerning the faith; men of no judgment in the doctrine of faith; who have not their senses exercised to discern good and evil, to try things that differ, and approve the more excellent, but call good evil, and evil good: or as those who are disobedient and wicked in their lives, are said to be to every good work reprobate, (Titus 1:16) so these are said to be reprobate to the faith; that is, to have no liking of it, or value for it, but despise it, hate it, and reject it; and upon that account, as they are like reprobate silver, whom God has rejected, they ought to be rejected by men.

Ver. 9. *But they shall proceed no further*, etc.] They may proceed to more ungodliness, and wax worse and worse in error; but they shall proceed no further than the magicians of Egypt, who did lying wonders, hardened Pharaoh's heart, and deceived him and the Egyptians; but could not destroy the Israelites, nor hinder their departure out of Egypt, when their time was come: so these wicked men do false miracles, harden the popes of Rome,

and deceive the nations subject to them; but they cannot deceive the elect of God, nor destroy the church of God, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail; nor could they hinder the reformation, or the departure of the Lord's people out of Babylon.

For their folly should be manifest unto all [men], as theirs also was; as the folly of Jannes and Jambres was, when Aaron's rod devoured theirs; and when they could not produce lice, but was obliged to own to Pharaoh, that that plague was the finger of God; and when they could not stand before Moses, because of the boils that were upon them, ([2]Exodus 7:12 8:18,19 9:11). And so the Arabic version renders it, “as is manifest the folly, or madness of these two”; and it is notorious in how many instances the frauds, impostures, tricks, and villanies of the church of Rome, and its votaries, have been detected and exposed; which have been the means of hindering them from proceeding any further than they have. The Alexandrian copy reads, “their understanding”; that which they pretended to have of divine things.

Ver. 10. *But thou hast fully known my doctrine*, etc.] This, with what follows, is said in opposition to the characters, principles, and practices of the above wicked men, and for the imitation and encouragement of Timothy, and of others, whether ministers or private believers: the apostle calls the doctrine he delivered, “my doctrine”: not because he was the author of it, or that it was a scheme of principles formed and contrived by him; but because it was the doctrine which he had received from God, which was given him to preach, and which he did preach purely and faithfully; otherwise it was the doctrine of Christ, and the same with that which was preached by the rest of the apostles; and which was the doctrine of the Scriptures, and was according to godliness; and as preached by him, was all of a piece, and without any adulteration, or mixture, and was open and manifest, and well known to Timothy, and others; for he used no hidden things of dishonesty, nor did he conceal his principles, or keep back anything that was profitable. And as well known was his

manner of life; both his civil life, how he spent his time, not in ease and idleness, but oftentimes in labour with his own hands; nor did he live in a sensual and voluptuous manner, but frequently was in hunger, and thirst, and nakedness; and likewise his religious life, and conversation, not only in the church, which was spent in the ministry of the word, and ordinances; but in the world, which, by the grace of God, was in simplicity and godly

sincerity, in a very just, holy, and unblamable manner: his life was agreeable to his doctrine, and ornamental to his profession: and even the secrets of his mind, his views, his aims and ends in all he did, which are signified by his

purpose, were open and manifest; and which were not to obtain glory and applause from men, nor to gather wealth and riches for himself; but that God might be glorified in the salvation of men; that Christ might be magnified both in his life and death; that his Gospel might be spread, his kingdom be enlarged, and that many souls might be converted and brought to the knowledge of him; and hence he became all things to all, that he might gain some. And as the doctrine of

faith, embraced, professed, and preached by him, was well known, so no less conspicuous was the grace of faith in him, with respect to his interest in God's everlasting love, in salvation by Jesus Christ, and in eternal glory and happiness; of which be had a full assurance, and which remained constant and firm in him to the end. Unless rather his faithfulness in the discharge of his ministerial work should be here designed, for which he was very remarkable; as also for his

longsuffering both towards those that were without, the open enemies and persecutors of the Gospel, and towards them that were within, the brethren, whose infirmities he bore; and also for the success of the Gospel as the husbandman has long patience, and waits long for the former and latter rain to which is added

charity; which suffers long, and is kind; and may include his love to God, to Christ, and to the souls of men; which was very great, and particularly to his countrymen, the Jews, and also to the Gentiles; and especially to the churches he was more immediately concerned with, and even to all the saints: this is left out in the Alexandrian copy: it follows,

patience; in bearing all indignities, reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; by which he was not in the least moved, but persevered with, great courage and constancy to the end.

Ver. 11. *Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch*, etc.] In Pisidia; where the Jews that contradicted and blasphemed his doctrine, and envied his success, stirred up the chief of the city, both men and women, against him, and Barnabas; who persecuted them and expelled them out, of their coasts, (<4413 6>Acts 13:45,50) and also at Iconium; where both Jews and

Gentiles made an assault upon them, to use them ill, and stone them, (Acts 14:5) and likewise at Lystra; where the apostle was stoned, and drawn out of the city, and left for dead, (Acts 14:19). And these instances are the rather mentioned because they were done in those parts, where Timothy had lived, (Acts 16:1) and so knew the truth of these things, not only from the apostle's mouth, but from the testimonies of others; and perhaps he might have been a witness to some of them himself;

what persecutions I endured: not only in the above places, but elsewhere; see a detail of them in (2 Corinthians 11:23-28),

but out of them all the Lord delivered me; (see 2 Corinthians 1:10) (2 Timothy 4:17,18), this he says to the glory of the grace and power of God, to whom he ascribes all his deliverances; and for the encouragement of Timothy, and other saints, under sufferings, who may hope and believe that the Lord will deliver them in his own time and way, (Psalm 34:19).

Ver. 12. *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus*, etc.] All that live according to the will of God revealed in his word; and to the glory of God, as the end of all their actions; and which the grace of God in the Gospel, and in their own hearts, teaches them; and who have the principles of a godly life from Christ, and derive the fresh supplies of grace and life from him, to maintain it; in whom their life is hid, and who live by faith upon him; all such that live, and that will live so, are desirous of living after this manner; in whom God has wrought in them both to will and to do, and are concerned when it is otherwise with them: these

shall suffer persecution; it is the will of God, and the appointment of heaven; Christ has foretold it, that so it shall be; and he the head has suffered it himself, and it is necessary that his members should, that they may be conformed unto him; it is the way Christ himself went to glory, and through many tribulations his people must enter the kingdom; and this is the common lot and certain case of all the saints, in one shape or another; for though all do not suffer confiscation of goods, beating, scourging, imprisonment, or a violent death; yet all are more or less afflicted and distressed by wicked men, and are subject to their reproaches and revilings, which are a branch of persecution; and that for professing Christ, and living a godly life in him and under his influence: and since such suffer as Christians, and not as evildoers; and this is the common condition of the people of God, in this world, it should not be thought strange, but be

cheerfully endured; to encourage to which is the apostle's view in this passage.

Ver. 13. *But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse*, etc.] By "evil men" are meant, not sinful men in common, as all are by nature and practice; nor only open profane sinners but rather wicked men under a form of godliness, as before; and who are full of wickedness and malice against truly godly persons, even as the devil himself, of whom the same word is used, when he is called the wicked one; and this is a reason why true professors of religion must expect persecution, seeing as there ever were, so there ever will be such sort of men, who will not grow better, but worse and worse. The word for "seducers", signifies sorcerers, enchanters, a sort of jugglers; and as the other, it well suits with the ecclesiastics of the church of Rome, who pretend to miracles, and do lying wonders, and by their sorceries deceive all nations, (Revelation 18:23) and these "shall wax worse and worse"; in principle and in practice, in ungodliness, and in error, in wickedness and malice against the saints, and in the arts of deceiving; so the church of Rome is never to be expected to be better, but worse; at the time of the fall of Babylon she will be an habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird, (Revelation 18:2)

deceiving: not God, but themselves and others even all nations, excepting the elect of God; which they do by their good words and fair speeches, and by their show of devotion and religion, and by their pretended miracles and lying wonders:

and deceived by the old serpent, the devil, under whose power and influence they are, in whose snare they are taken, and by whom they are led captive, and will at last share the same fate with himself, and be cast into the same lake of fire and brimstone.

Ver. 14. *But continue thou in the things*, etc.] That is, in the doctrines of the Gospel, and not be moved away from them, either through the malice or persecutions, or the cunning sleight of men that lie in wait to deceive; and which is an exhortation suitable to the godly in all ages: and what follow are so many reasons enforcing it:

which thou hast learned: not merely in a theoretical way, as arts and sciences are learned, but in a spiritual and experimental manner; a comfortable knowledge and experience of which he had attained unto; and

were not like those in (2 Timothy 3:7), who had been ever learning, and yet could not come to the knowledge of the truth: and since therefore he had learned the truths of the Gospel, and had attained to a good understanding of them, it was his duty, as it is the duty of all such, to abide by them:

and hast been assured of: the doctrines of the Gospel are certain things; they are truths without controversy; there is a full assurance of understanding of them, which men may arrive unto, and which ministers should, since they are to affirm them with certainty. Scepticism is very unbecoming one that calls himself a minister of the Gospel; and when a man is assured of the truth and reality of Gospel doctrines, it would be shameful in him to drop them, or depart from them:

knowing of whom thou hast learned them. The apostle means himself, though he modestly forbears the mention of himself: and it is another argument why Timothy should continue steadfastly in the doctrines of the Gospel, seeing he had learned them of so great an apostle of Christ; whose mission, as such, was abundantly confirmed by miracles and success, and who had received these doctrines by immediate revelation from Christ; so that it was all one as if Timothy had learned them from Christ himself. The Alexandrian copy reads the word “whom”, in the plural number, as if the apostle referred to more teachers of Timothy than himself; however, he doubtless was the principal one.

Ver. 15. *And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures*, etc.] And therefore must know that the doctrines he had learned were agreeable to them; and so is another reason why he should continue in them. The Jews very early learned their children the holy Scripture. Philo the Jew says [f21], εκ πρωτης ηλικιας “from their very infancy”; a phrase pretty much the same with this here used. It is a maxim with the Jews [f22], that when a child was five years of age, it was proper to teach him the Scriptures. Timothy's mother being a Jewess, trained him up early in the knowledge of these writings, with which he became very conversant, and under divine influence and assistance, arrived to a large understanding of them; and it is a practice that highly becomes Christian parents; it is one part of the nurture and admonition of the Lord they should bring up their children in: the wise man's advice in (Proverbs 22:6) is very good. From hence the apostle takes occasion to enter into a commendation of the sacred writings; and here, from the nature and character of them, calls them the

holy Scriptures; to distinguish them from profane writings; and that because the author of them is the Holy Spirit of God; and even the amanuenses of him, and the penmen of them, were holy men of God; the matter of them is holy, both law and Gospel; and the end of writing them is to promote holiness; the precepts, promises, and doctrines contained in them are calculated for that purpose; and even the account they give of the sins and failings of others, are for the admonition of men: and next these Scriptures are commended from the efficacy of them:

which are able to make thee wise unto salvation. Men are not wise of themselves; they are naturally without an understanding of spiritual things; and the things of the Spirit of God cannot be known by natural men, because they are spiritually discerned; particularly they are not wise in the business of salvation, of which either they are insensible themselves, and negligent; or foolishly build their hopes of it upon their civility, morality, legal righteousness, or an outward profession of religion: but the Scriptures are able to make men wise and knowing in this respect; for the Gospel is one part of the Scriptures, which is the Gospel of salvation, and shows unto men the way of salvation. The Scriptures testify largely of Christ, the Saviour; and give an ample account both of him, who is the able, willing, suitable, complete, and only Saviour, and of the salvation which is wrought by him; and describe the persons who do, and shall enjoy it: not that the bare reading of the Scriptures, or the hearing of them expounded, are able to make men wise in this way; but these, when accompanied with the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, are; when he who endited the Scriptures removes the veil from their eyes, opens their understandings, and gives them light and knowledge in them: and then may persons be said to be wise unto salvation, when they not only have a scheme of it in their heads, but are in their hearts sensible of their need of it, and know that there is salvation in no other but in Christ; and when they look to him for it, to his righteousness for justification, to his blood for peace, pardon, and cleansing, to his sacrifice for atonement, and to his fulness of grace for a continual supply, and to him for eternal life and glory; when they rejoice in him and his salvation, and give him all the glory of it: the apostle adds,

through faith which is in Christ Jesus: wisdom to salvation lies not in the knowledge of the law the Jew boasted of; nor in the works of it, at least not in a trust and confidence in them for salvation; for by them there is no justification before God, nor acceptance with him, nor salvation: but true

wisdom to salvation lies in faith, which is a spiritual knowledge of Christ, and a holy confidence in him; and that salvation which the Scriptures make men wise unto, is received and enjoyed through that faith, which has Christ for its author and object; which comes from him, and centres in him, and is a looking to him for eternal life.

Ver. 16. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*, etc.] That is, all holy Scripture; for of that only the apostle is speaking; and he means the whole of it; not only the books of the Old Testament, but of the New, the greatest part of which was now written; for this second epistle to Timothy is by some thought to be the last of Paul's epistles; and this also will hold good of what was to be written; for all is inspired by God, or breathed by him: the Scriptures are the breath of God, the word of God and not men; they are "written by the Spirit", as the Syriac version renders it; or "by the Spirit of God", as the Ethiopic version. The Scriptures are here commended, from the divine authority of them; and which is attested and confirmed by various arguments; as the majesty and loftiness of their style, which in many places is inimitable by men; the sublimity of the matter contained in them, which transcends all human understanding and capacity ever to have attained unto and discovered; as the trinity of persons in the Godhead, the incarnation of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, etc. The purity and holiness of them before observed, show them to be the word of him that is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; as also their harmony and agreement, though wrote by different persons, in different places, and ages, and at sundry times, and in divers manners; what seeming inconsistencies are observed in them may, with labour and industry, by divine assistance, be reconciled. The predictions of future events in them, as particularly concerning Josiah and Cyrus, by name, long before they were born, and especially concerning Jesus Christ, and which have had their accomplishment, and many others in the New Testament both by Christ and his apostles, are a proof that they could not be the writings of men, but must have the omniscient God for their author; the impartiality of the writers of them, in not concealing the mean extract of some of them, the sins of others before conversion, and even their sins and failings afterwards, as well as those of their nearest relations and dearest friends, strengthens the proof of their divine authority; to which may be added, the wonderful preservation of them, through all the changes and declensions of the Jewish church and state, to whom the books of the Old Testament were committed; and notwithstanding the violence and malice of Heathen

persecutors, particularly Dioclesian, who sought to destroy every copy of the Scriptures, and published an edict for that purpose, and notwithstanding the numbers of heretics, and who have been in power, as also the apostasy of the church of Rome; and yet these writings have been preserved, and kept pure and incorrupt, which is not the case of other writings; nor are there any of such antiquity as the oldest of these: to which may be subjoined the testimony of God himself; his outward testimony by miracles, wrought by Moses and the prophets, concerned in the writings of the Old Testament, and by the apostles in the New; and his internal testimony, which is the efficacy of these Scriptures on the hearts of men; the reading and hearing of which, having been owned for the conversion, comfort and edification of thousands and thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand: and

is profitable for doctrine; for the discovering, illustrating, and confirming any doctrine concerning God, the being, persons, and perfections of God; concerning the creation and fall of man; concerning the person and offices of Christ, redemption by him, justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, reconciliation and atonement by his sacrifice, and eternal life through him, with many others. The Scripture is profitable for ministers to fetch doctrine from, and establish it by; and for hearers to try and prove it by:

for reproof; of errors and heresies; this is the sword of the Spirit, which cuts all down. There never was, nor is, nor can be any error or heresy broached in the world, but there is a sufficient refutation of it in the Scriptures; which may be profitably used for that purpose, as it often has been by Christ and his apostles, and others since in all ages:

for correction; of vice; there being no sin, but the evil nature of it is shown, its wicked tendency is exposed, and the sad effects and consequences of it are pointed out in these writings: for instruction in righteousness; in every branch of duty incumbent upon men; whether with respect to God, or one another; for there is no duty men are obliged unto, but the nature, use, and excellency of it, are here shown: the Scriptures are a perfect rule of faith and practice; and thus they are commended from the usefulness and profitableness of them.

Ver. 17. *That the man of God may be perfect*, etc.] By the man of God may be meant everyone that in a special relation belongs to God; who is chosen by God the Father, redeemed by the Son, and called by the Spirit;

but more especially a minister of the Gospel; for as it was usual to call a prophet under the Old Testament by this name, it seems to be transferred from thence to a minister of the New Testament, (see 1 Timothy 6:11) and the design of the Scriptures and the end of writing them are, that both preachers of the word, and hearers of it, might have a perfect knowledge of the will of God; that the former might be a complete minister of the Gospel, and that nothing might be wanting for the information of the latter:

thoroughly furnished unto all good works, or “every good work”; particularly to the work of the ministry, which is a good one; and to every part and branch of it, a thorough furniture for which lies in the holy Scriptures; from whence, as scribes well instructed in the kingdom of heaven, do Gospel ministers bring forth things new and old, both for delight and profit: though this may be also applied to all good works in common, which the Scriptures point unto, give directions about, as well as show where strength is to be had to perform them.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO 2 TIMOTHY 4

In this chapter the apostle charges Timothy to perform his office as an evangelist with great diligence, constancy, and faithfulness, with reasons for it; gives some hints of several particular persons mentioned, which made him very desirous that Timothy would come quickly to him; relates how things were with him when he made his first defence at Rome; and concludes the epistle with salutations, and his usual blessing. The charge is made in the most solemn manner in the sight of God; and of Christ, as Judge of quick and dead; and directs to the several parts of the ministerial work, and the manner in which they should be performed, (2 Timothy 4:1,2). The reason of which charge is, because the time was hastening on that sound doctrine would not be endured, and men would depart from the truth to fables and false teachers, (2 Timothy 4:3,4). Wherefore the apostle repeats his charge and exhortation to Timothy, though in other words, to be vigilant, patient, courageous, and faithful in the discharge of his office, (2 Timothy 4:5) adding a fresh reason moving to it, taken from the apostle's death being at hand; which is expressed by a sacrifice, and by a departure out of the world, (2 Timothy 4:6) which leads him to give an account of his past conduct in fighting the good fight, finishing his course, and keeping the faith, (2 Timothy 4:7) and of his firm belief of eternal glory and happiness, (2 Timothy 4:8) and next he desires Timothy to use all diligence to come quickly to him, (2 Timothy 4:9) his reasons for which were, because he had scarce anybody with him: one had forsook him through love of the world; another was gone to Thessalonica; a third to Galatia, and a fourth to Dalmatia; only Luke the evangelist was with him; and as for Tychicus, he had sent him to Ephesus: he therefore desires he would bring Mark with him, and his cloak, books, and parchments he had left at Troas, (2 Timothy 4:10-13) and then takes notice of persons that had used him ill, particularly Alexander the coppersmith; he wishes justice might be done him; and advises Timothy to beware of him, because of his opposition to the doctrines of the Gospel, (2 Timothy 4:14,15) and also of others that neglected him, who forsook him when he defended himself: however, he prays that this might not be

charged upon them; and observes the goodness of God in standing by him and delivering him; and expresses his faith and confidence that he should be delivered and preserved safe to eternal glory, (2 Timothy 4:16-18) and next follow the apostle's salutations of some persons at Ephesus, and an account of two others, one at Corinth, and another at Miletum; and a repetition of his request to Timothy, to come quickly to him, and before winter; and then some salutations of persons at Rome, sent by Timothy; and the whole is concluded with the apostle's usual benediction, (2 Timothy 4:19-22).

Ver. 1. *I charge thee therefore before God*, etc.] Whose word the Scriptures are, and by whom they are inspired; who had made Timothy an able minister of the New Testament, and to whom he was accountable for his ministry:

and the Lord Jesus Christ; who is equal with God, and bestows ministerial gifts on men, and from whom Timothy had his; whose Gospel he preached; in whose cause he was embarked; and before whom he must appear, to give an account of his ministry, talents, and souls under his care:

who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; it is certain there will be a general judgment; the day is appointed, and Christ is ordained the Judge of all men; all judgment is committed to him, and he is ready to exercise it; for which he is abundantly qualified, being God omniscient and omnipotent; and which he will execute in the most righteous and impartial manner. The persons that will be judged by him are, “the quick and the dead”; by which are meant, not the different parts of men, their souls which are living and immortal, and their bodies which die and will be raised from the dead, though they will be judged in their whole persons; nor the different sorts of men, as good men, who are made alive by the Spirit and grace of God, and evil men, who are dead in trespasses and sins, and die in their sins; though this is a truth that God will judge both the righteous and the wicked: but rather by the “quick”, are meant, such as will be found alive at Christ's coming; and by the “dead”, such as having been dead, will be raised by him; and in short, the characters include all mentioned; who must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. The time when this will be, is,

at his appearing, and his kingdom; which may be considered as an hendyadis, expressive of one and the same thing; and so the Syriac version renders it, “at the revelation of his kingdom”; or as two things, the one as

antecedent and preparatory to the other; the former refers to the appearance of Christ at the last day. He appeared frequently to the Old Testament saints in an human form; and he really appeared in human nature in the fulness of time; and after his resurrection to his apostles and others, and even after his ascension to some; and he appears in a spiritual manner to believers in all ages; but to them that look for him, he will appear a second time in person, in a most glorious manner: for the present he is received up into heaven, where he is as it were hid, and is unseen to corporeal eyes; but in his due time he will be manifested in his own and his Father's glory, and in the glory of his angels; and this appearance will be greatly to the advantage of the saints, who will then appear in glory, and be like him, and see him as he is, and hence they look for it, and love it; and at this time will be the judgment, and then will the kingdom of Christ take place. Christ has a kingdom now, and ever had, which is not of this world, but is of a spiritual nature; and which will be more manifest in that latter day, by the spread of the Gospel, the numerous instances of conversion, and the revival of powerful religion and godliness, which we commonly call the spiritual reign of Christ; but the kingdom here designed, is the personal reign of Christ, for a thousand years: at the beginning of which will be the judgment of the saints, who having the crown of righteousness given them by the Judge, will reign with him as kings and priests; and at the end of this period will be the judgment of the wicked. The charge made before these two divine Persons, God and his Son Jesus Christ, follows.

Ver. 2. *Preach the word*, etc.] Either Christ the essential Word, who is the sum and substance of the Gospel ministry; or the word of truth and faith, the Gospel of salvation, the word of righteousness, peace, and reconciliation by Christ; which is to be preached, or published, in like manner as heralds proclaim the will of their princes; openly, publicly, and with a loud voice, without adding to it, or taking from speaking out the whole, and keeping back no part of it; and that with all courage and boldness: some copies read, “the word of God”; and the Ethiopic version, “his word”; that is, the word of Christ:

be instant in season, out of season; that is, be constant and assiduous in the work of the ministry; be always and wholly in it, either preparing for it, or performing it; or doing those things which are annexed to it, or follow upon it; redeem time, and take every opportunity of dispensing the mysteries of grace, as a faithful steward of them; not only make use of the common and stated seasons for the ministration of the word and

ordinances, but embrace every other that offers; make use not only of those seasons which may seem commodious and advantageous both to preacher and hearer, and promise usefulness and success, but even such as may seem incommodious and disadvantageous to flesh and blood; such as times of persecution and opposition; but none of these things should deter and move from the preaching of the Gospel. Several parts of the ministerial function to be insisted on and attended to are next mentioned, as being within the solemn charge given before God and Christ:

reprove; errors, and men for their errors and heresies; make use of convincing arguments taken out of the Scriptures, which are profitable for reproof of this kind; and which reproof sometimes is to be given with sharpness, as the case requires, that men may be sound in the faith.

Rebuke; or chide for sin; some privately, others more publicly, according to the nature and circumstances of the offence; some more gently, others more roughly, as is needful.

Exhort; to all the duties of religion respecting God and man; to show love, and to do good works; to hold fast the profession of faith, and walk as becomes the Gospel of Christ; and to persevere in faith and holiness: or "comfort", as the word may be rendered; for as the ministers of the Gospel are in some cases to be "Boanergeses", sons of thunder, so other cases they should be Barnabases, sons of consolation; and comfort distressed minds, by preaching the comfortable doctrines of peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation by Jesus Christ:

with all longsuffering: or patience. The success of the Gospel ministry should be patiently waited for as husbandmen do for the fruits of the earth. Those that give into error, and oppose themselves to the truth, should be instructed in meekness; and those who are overtaken in a fault should be gently rebuked, and restored in such a spirit; and every exhortation should be pressed as persons are able to bear it:

and doctrine; in a way that is instructive and teaching, and in agreement with the doctrine of the Scriptures, which are profitable for that purpose.

Ver. 3. *For the time will come*, etc.] This is a reason of the solemn charge above given: the time referred to was future, when the apostle wrote, but quickly came on; and the characters of it have appeared more or less in all ages since; and in none more than in ours:

when they will not endure sound doctrine; the Gospel which contains the wholesome words of Christ, and is sound itself, having no corruption in it, and salutary in its effects to the souls of men; and yet such is the depravity of some men, both in principles and practice, that they cannot receive it, nor bear to hear it, turn their backs on it, express their indignation at it, and treat it not only with neglect, but with ridicule and contempt:

but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers; not being content with the ministry of one man only, or of a few, though of their own sort; but must follow many, and have heaps of them; which seems to express not only the number of false teachers which they accumulate to themselves, but the confused and indiscreet choice they make of them; and that after their own lusts; choosing to hear such as either indulge them in their sinful lusts and pleasures; or are agreeable to their private corrupt sentiments, in opposition to the generally received doctrine of faith. It is a blessing to have pastors and teachers after God's heart, and who preach according to the word of God; these feed men with knowledge and understanding, (<24315>Jeremiah 3:15) but it is a curse upon a people, when they are left to choose teachers after their hearts' lusts:

having itching ears; always desirous of new things, as the Athenians of old; or loving to have their ears scratched and tickled with smooth things; that are pleasing and agreeable to natural men, and carnal minds; as the purity of human nature, the power of man's free will, the excellency of his righteousness, and the merit of his works, and the like; (see <23009>Isaiah 30:9,10). Now, this being the case, should not discourage, but rather animate the ministers of the Gospel to preach it; for should they desist, in all likelihood the Gospel would soon be gone.

Ver. 4. *And they shall turn away their ears from the truth*, etc.] The solid truths of the Gospel, not being able to bear the hearing of them:

and shall be turned unto fables; things idle, trifling, useless, and, unprofitable; and which are no better than old wives' fables; some respect may be had either to Jewish fables, or to the miraculous mythologies of the Gentiles, or of the Gnostics, and others: but in general, it includes everything that is vain, empty, and senseless; and this is to be considered as a just judgment upon them; that since they like not to retain the knowledge of the truth, but turn away their ears from it, God gives them up to a reprobate mind, a mind void of sense and judgment, to attend to things idle and fabulous.

Ver. 5. *But watch thou in all things*, etc.] Relating to himself, his doctrine, and conversation; and to others, to feed the flock of God under his care, to know the state of them, and care for them; to give the time of night, and notice of approaching danger, and see the laws of Christ put in execution; either in allusion to shepherds, who watch over their flocks night and day; or to watchmen that are upon the walls of cities, or go about them; or to the priests and Levites in the temple:

endure afflictions; the Alexandrian copy adds, “as a good soldier of Jesus Christ”, as in (2 Timothy 2:3) meaning reproaches and persecutions for the sake of the Gospel, from without, and all trials and exercises from within, through the infirmities and ill conduct of the saints themselves; all which are to be endured patiently, cheerfully, and courageously; so as not to be moved by them to desist from the work of the ministry:

do the work of an evangelist; which may design either an officer, then in the church, distinct from apostles and prophets on the one hand, and pastors and teachers on the other; and was below the former, and above the latter; and was aiding and assisting to the apostles, and such an one Timothy may be thought to be: or it may intend a preacher of the Gospel in common; and to do the work of such an one is not to read lectures of morality, or to preach up justification and salvation by the works of the law; or to mix law and Gospel together, and confound them both; but to preach peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation alone by Jesus Christ, and through the free grace of God:

make full proof of thy ministry: the work of the ministry, which lies in preaching the Gospel, and administering ordinances, and doing all the duties belonging to it, which is to fulfil it, or discharge it; and which gives full proof of a man's being a true and faithful minister of the word; particularly when he diligently and constantly attends to his work; seeks not his own things, but the things of Christ; cheerfully and patiently suffers for Christ and his Gospel, and lives an agreeable life and conversation.

Ver. 6. *For I am now ready to be offered*, etc.] Or poured out, as a libation, or a drink offering; or as the blood was poured out at the bottom of the altar; which is expressive of martyrdom, and shows that the apostle knew what death he should die; for which he was habitually ready; and this sacrifice of himself was not to atone for sin, his own, or others; Christ's death was the only sacrifice for sin, and that is a complete one, and needs no other to be added to it; but this was in the cause of Christ, and for the

confirmation of the Gospel, and the faith of the saints in it: so covenants have been confirmed by libations or drink offerings of wine; and this was an offering acceptable unto God, in whose sight the death of his saints is precious; as the wine in the drink offering is said to cheer God, that is, to be acceptable to him:

and the time of my departure is at hand; death is not an annihilation of man, neither of his body, nor of his soul; the one at death returns to dust, and the other to God that gave it; death is a dissolution of soul and body, or a dissolving of the union that is between them, and a resolution of the body into its first principles; hence the Syriac version renders it, “the time in which I shall be dissolved”; and the Vulgate Latin version, “the time of my resolution”. Death analyzes men, and reduces them to their first original earth; it is a removing of persons from one place and state to another; from an house of clay, from this earthly house of our tabernacle, to an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, to everlasting habitations, and mansions in Christ's Father's house. This phrase, “a departure”, is an easy representation of death, and supposes an existence after it; (see Gill on “<50123>Philippians 1:23”). Now there is a “time” for this; saints are not to continue here always; this is a state of pilgrimage, and a time of sojourning, and which is fixed and settled; the time for going out of this world, as well as for coming into it, is determined by God, beyond which there is no passing; the number of men's days, months, and years, is with him; and the apostle knew partly from his age, and partly from his situation, being in bonds at Rome, and it may be by divine revelation, that his time of removing out of this world was very near; and which he mentions, to stir up Timothy to diligence, since he would not have him long with him, to give him counsel and advice, to admonish him, or set him an example.

Ver. 7. *I have fought a good fight*, etc.] The fight of faith; the same as in (<54610>1 Timothy 6:10 (see Gill on “<54610>1 Timothy 6:10”)):

I have finished my course, or race; the race of life set before him, his course of years; his days were extinct, the grave was ready for him, and he for that; his last sands were dropping, and he was just going the way of all flesh; or else he means the course of his ministry, which he desired to finish with joy, and was now finishing; (<441325>Acts 13:25 20:24) he was now got to the end of his line, to Rome, where he was to be a martyr for Christ, (<442311>Acts 23:11) so that he now concluded his work was done, and his warfare accomplished:

I have kept the faith; by which he means, not so much the grace of faith, that was kept by Christ, the object, author, and finisher of it, and through his effectual grace and powerful intercession; but rather the profession of faith, which he had held fast without wavering; and chiefly the doctrine of faith, which was committed to his trust, which he had kept pure and incorrupt against all opposition; unless his faithfulness and integrity in the ministerial work should be thought rather to be intended; and which sense is favoured by the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, which render it, "I have kept my faith"; or have been faithful to my trust, as a good steward of the mysteries of God; not concealing and keeping back any thing that was profitable, but declaring the whole counsel of God; and now what remained for him was the crown of righteousness; and this he says for the comfort and encouragement and imitation of Timothy and others. The phrase seems to be Jewish; it is said [f23] by the Jews, that he that does not keep the feast of unleavened bread, is as he who does not atwnmyhm ryjn, "keep the faith of the holy blessed God".

Ver. 8. *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness*, etc.] The happiness of the future state of the saints is signified by a crown, on account of the glory and excellency of it; and in perfect agreement with the character of the saints, as kings; and who are raised to sit among princes, and to inherit the throne of glory, and have a kingdom prepared for them; and this is called a crown "of righteousness", because it comes through the righteousness of Christ; it is that which gives a right unto it, and without which it cannot be enjoyed; and because it is obtained and possessed in a righteous way, and not by force and usurpation, as crowns sometimes are: it is God the Father's free gift unto his children, what they are born heirs unto, and have a meetness for, through regenerating and sanctifying grace, and have a legal title to it through the righteousness of Christ. Moreover, this may be expressive of the perfect holiness and righteousness of the heavenly state, and of the saints in it, wherein will dwell none but righteous persons, and who will be entirely without sin. And this happiness, signified by a crown, is "laid up"; in the covenant of grace for the saints, which is ordered in all things and sure; and in Christ, in whose hands their persons are, and their grace is, and with him also is their life of glory hid and secured: and this also is laid up in heaven, and reserved there, and that

for me, and thee; for particular persons, for all the vessels of mercy, for all that are chosen in Christ Jesus, and redeemed by his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit;

which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. By the Lord is meant the Lord Jesus Christ; as is evident from his character, as a Judge, for the Father judgeth no man; and from mention being made hereafter of his appearing: Christ is ordained Judge of quick and dead, for which he is abundantly qualified, and a "righteous" one he will be; he is righteous as God, and as man, and as Mediator, in the discharge of all his offices, and so he will be as a Judge, in the administration of that office; righteousness will be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins; and from Christ, under this character, the apostle expected to receive all his future glory and happiness; and that both in a way of gift, as a free grace gift from him, and through him, and in a way of righteousness; and this seems to be a Jewish way of speaking. One of the Septuagint interpreters, whom Ptolomy king of Egypt sent for from Judea, to translate the law of Moses into Greek, in answer to a question put to him by the king, uses this phrase of στεφανος δικαιοσυνης, "a crown of righteousness"; and which he represents as the gift of God [f24]:

at that day; either at the day of death, the time of his dissolution, which was at hand; or at the day of the resurrection, and of the last judgment, when Christ will appear under the above character: and the apostle further observes, to the comfort and encouragement of Timothy, and others, that this happiness was not intended and prepared for himself only, but for others:

and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing; that is, his appearing at his second coming; which is to be loved, and so looked for by the saints, not only because it will be glorious in itself, in its attendants and consequences, but will be of great advantage to the saints; Christ will appear unto salvation to them, and so to their joy; they will appear with him in glory, and be like him, and enjoy the everlasting vision of him. The devils believe this appearance of Christ, but tremble at it; wicked men will behold him, and fear; saints know, believe, and love both Christ and his appearing; and such will wear that crown: the Ethiopic version renders it, "who love him at his coming"; all that love him now, will love him then.

Ver. 9. *Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me*.] From Ephesus, where Timothy was, to Rome, where the apostle was; and this request did not

arise purely from a desire of seeing Timothy, as in (<5501004>2 Timothy 1:4) but rather because he had some things to say to him, relating to the care of the churches and the good of the interest of Christ, which he chose not to write with ink and paper; and he desires the rather that he would use diligence, and hasten his coming to him; partly because winter was coming on, when travelling would not be so safe and comfortable, (<5501421>2 Timothy 4:21) and partly because the time of his death was at hand, (<5501407>2 Timothy 4:7) and also because he was almost alone.

Ver. 10. *For Demas hath forsaken me*, etc.] Of this person, (see Gill on "<5104414>Colossians 4:14"). It does not appear by what is said in this clause, and in the following, that he entirely apostatized; he might forsake the apostle, and yet not forsake Christ and his interest, or make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience: his faith might be right, though low, and his love sincere, though not fervent; and through a fear of persecution, and loss of life, he might be tempted to leave the apostle, and withdraw from Rome, for his own safety; which though it was far from being commendable in him, yet may be accounted for in this state of frailty and imperfection, consistent with the grace of God; and it should seem that he afterwards was delivered from this temptation, and returned to the apostle, (<5104414>Colossians 4:14 <5701424>Philemon 1:24) for when those epistles were written, both Timothy and Mark, who are here wrote for, (<5501409>2 Timothy 4:9,11) were with the apostle, (<5101001>Colossians 1:1) and (<5701001>Philemon 1:1) and especially he ought to be thought very well of after all this, if Demas is only a contraction of Demetrius, and he is the same who is so much commended many years after this, in (<6401201>3 John 1:12),

having loved this present world, not the sins and corruptions of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; such a love is inconsistent with the love of the Father and the grace of God; nor an immoderate love of worldly substance, or of money, which is the root of all evil; but a love of life, or of a longer life in this present world; he was desirous of living longer in this world, and chose not to hazard his life by staying with the apostle, a prisoner at Rome; and therefore left him, and provided for his own safety and security: and is departed unto Thessalonica: which perhaps was his native country; and however he was at a sufficient distance from Rome, where he might judge himself safe; and if he was a worldly and earthly minded man, this was a fit place for him, being a place of trade and business: and this doubtless gave rise to a tradition, that he afterwards became a priest of the idol gods among the

Thessalonians. Epiphanius [f25] places him among the heretics Ebion and Cerinthus, as if he was one of them.

Crescens to Galatia; he might not depart on the same account as Demas, but might be sent by the apostle to Galatia, to visit the churches there, to set things in order, and establish them in the faith, and bring an account of their state. Epiphanius [f26], instead of Galatia, reads Gallia, or France; and so does Eusebius [f27] and the Ethiopic version; and Jerom asserts, [f28], that Crescens preached in France, and was there buried; though others say he was bishop of Chalcedon in Galatia, and put him among the seventy disciples; (see Gill on "<4210>Luke 10:1"). The Syriac version calls him "Crispus", and the Arabic version "Priscus".

Titus to Dalmatia; who Titus was is well known; the place he went to, Dalmatia, is a country in Europe, a part of Illyricum, where the apostle had preached, (see Gill on "<4559>Romans 15:19"). Pliny says [f29], that part of Pannonia, which lies to the Adriatic sea, was called Dalmatia; it had its name from Dalmius, a city in it. The Alexandrian copy reads "Dermatia". Here the apostle had doubtless been useful for the conversion of souls, and planting of churches, and therefore sent Titus thither, to assist them in their state and condition, and bring him an account of them. For in the "second" and "third" centuries we read of churches in Dalmatia; and likewise in the "fourth" century; for there were bishops from Dalmatia in the synod at Sardica; and in the "fifth" century, Glycerius was bishop of Salo, a city in this country; and in the "sixth" century, one Malchus was bishop of the Dalmatian church [f30].

Ver. 11. *Only Luke is with me*, etc.] The beloved physician, who wrote the Gospel that bears his name, and "the Acts of the Apostles", and was a constant companion of Paul's in his travels and sufferings:

take Mark, and bring him with thee; who might be at Ephesus, or somewhere in Timothy's way as he came to Rome. This seems to be the same with John Mark of Jerusalem, the son of Mary, the sister of Barnabas, and who was with Paul and Barnabas in their travels, and who parted from them at Pamphylia; on whose account, and for that reason, there was so great a difference between Paul and Barnabas, as to separate upon it; but now the apostle had entertained a better opinion of him, and was reconciled unto him, and was very desirous of his company and assistance; and which he had, (<5140>Colossians 4:10 <5724>Philemon 1:24).

For he is profitable to me for the ministry; that is, of the Gospel, to assist in preaching it.

Ver. 12. *And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus*.] To supply the place of Timothy, while he came to Rome, and continued there: so careful was the apostle of the church there, that they might not be without the ministry of the word during his absence; (see <49620>Ephesians 6:20,21).

Ver. 13. *The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus*, etc.] About the word here rendered a "cloak", interpreters are not agreed: some take it for a garment, and about this they differ; some would have it to be a dignified robe, such as the Roman consuls and senators of Rome wore; which is not likely, this being not suitable to the apostle's character, state, and circumstances. Others take it to be a courser and meaner garment, wore in cold and rainy weather, to preserve from the inclementencies of it; and winter now coming on, (<55421>2 Timothy 4:21) the apostle sends for it; which he perhaps had left at Troas in the summer season, as he came: but others take it to be a kind of desk or scrutoire, to put papers in, or a chest for books, a book press; and so the Syriac version renders it; and which agrees with what follows. Jerom understands it of a book itself, of the Hebrew volume of the Pentateuch [f31]. Troas, where this cloak, or book press, or book was, was a city in Asia Minor, that stood upon, or near the same place where old Troy stood, and from whence it seems to have had its name, and lay in Timothy's way from Ephesus to Rome; (see Gill on "<44608>Acts 16:8") (see Gill on "<44207>Acts 20:7") and as for Carpus, he was Paul's host when he was at Troas. Some make him to be first bishop of Laodicea, and then of Crete; he is reckoned among the seventy disciples, and is said to be bishop of Berytus in Thrace; (see Gill on "<42201>Luke 10:1").

When thou comest, bring with thee; he would have him call for it at Troas as he came by, and bring it with him:

and the books; that were in it, or were there, besides the Hebrew Pentateuch: the apostle was a great reader of books, of various sorts, both Gentile and Jewish, as appears by his citations out of the Heathen poets, and his acquaintance with Jewish records, (<44728>Acts 17:28 <46153>1 Corinthians 15:33 <56012>Titus 1:12 <55313>2 Timothy 3:13). And though he was now grown old, and near his exit, yet was mindful and careful of his books, and desirous of having them to read; and herein set an example to Timothy and others, and enforced the exhortation he gave him, (<54413>1 Timothy 4:13).

But especially the parchments: which might contain his own writings he had a mind to revise before his death, and commit into the hands of proper persons; or some observations which he had made in his travels, concerning persons and things; though it is most likely that these were the books of the Old Testament, which were written on parchments, and rolled up together; and hence they are called the volume of the book; and these the apostle had a special regard for, that whatever was neglected, he desired that these might not, but be carefully brought unto him.

Ver. 14. *Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil*, etc.] This seems to be the same person that was at Ephesus in the tumult, when the apostle was there, (<40 20 33,34>Acts 20:33,34) and whom he afterwards delivered to Satan, along with Hymenaeus, for blasphemy, (<54 1 20>1 Timothy 1:20). It was very likely he had lately been at Rome, though now returned to Ephesus, and had done great injury to the apostle's character, and had reproached and reviled him as a man of bad principles and practices; his business is mentioned, to distinguish him from any other of that name, and to show the insolence of the man, that though he was an illiterate person, and in such a mean station of life, yet took upon him to resist the apostle and his doctrine.

The Lord reward him according to his works; which may be considered either as an imprecation upon him, as knowing him to be a wicked blasphemer, and a reprobate person; and which arose, not from private resentment, and on account of the private injury he had done to him; but from a pure zeal for the glory of God, and the honour of his name, without mingling his own spirit and passions with it: or as a prophecy, or declaration of what would be; and so the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read, “the Lord will render to him”, etc.

Ver. 15. *Of whom be thou ware also*, etc.] For he was now at Ephesus; and since he was such a malicious, ill natured, and troublesome person, as well as a blasphemer, an heretic, and had been delivered up to Satan, it was very advisable to shun his company, and have no conversation with him, and be upon the guard against him, that he might have no opportunity of doing hurt to him, or to the church at Ephesus:

for he hath greatly withstood our words: or doctrines; the truths of the Gospel preached by Paul and Timothy, which he opposed himself to, and resisted with all his might, and endeavoured to confute and overthrow; and wherein he was deficient in argument, he made up with railing and

blasphemy; and this was the true reason of the apostle's imprecations on him, and why he would have Timothy beware of him, and avoid him, and not the personal injury he had done him.

Ver. 16. *At my first answer no man stood with me*, etc.] Meaning, that when he made his first defence against the charges laid unto him in one of the courts of judicature in Rome, no man appeared in his cause, to speak to his character, to be a witness for him, or plead his cause:

but all men forsook me; all his friends, all that came with him from Judea, or from Asia; (see 2 Timothy 1:15) being timorous of coming into danger, and of the loss of their lives; as the disciples of Christ were, when he was apprehended, who all at that time forsook him and fled:

[I pray God] that it may not be laid to their charge; that this sin may not be imputed to them, or they be punished for it, but that it might be pardoned; so differently does he express himself on the account of these, than on the account of the coppersmith; he sinning through malice, wilfully and obstinately, these through surprise, temptation, and weakness.

Ver. 17. *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me*, etc.] Either personally appearing to him, as in (Acts 23:11) or by the ministry of an angel, (Acts 27:23,24) or else by granting him his gracious presence, which was what Christ had not when he was forsaken by his disciples: the presence of God or Christ is more than all friends whatever, and is often enjoyed by the believer, when they drop him; and is a bulwark against all enemies and fears of them; if God is with him, and on his side, though friends fail, and enemies rage, he has nothing to fear:

and strengthened me; inwardly with strength in his soul, with might in his inward man, unto all longsuffering with joyfulness: he was weak in himself, and could do nothing without Christ; Christ was his strength, in him it lay, and to him he looked for it; of which he often had experience, and now afresh; he strengthened him to plead his own cause, to make his defence without fear; he gave him presence of mind, boldness, courage, and intrepidity, freedom of thought and expression; and put it into his heart what he should say, and gave him a mouth and wisdom, which his adversaries could not resist. All which he takes notice of with thankfulness, admiring the divine goodness to him, and taking nothing to himself: and the end of this was,

that by me the preaching might be fully known; that is, that the doctrine of the Gospel, preached by him, might be made fully known by him; as to the author and original of it, to be of God, and not of men; and as to the matter of it, to be spiritual, and not concerning the things of the world; and as to the effects and consequences of it, to have no tendency to raise sedition and disturbances in commonwealths, but, on the contrary, promote peace and love:

and that all the Gentiles might hear; in Caesar's palace, or in the courts of judicature at Rome, and all over Rome, and from thence in other parts of the empire, what a Gospel it was that was preached by the apostle; and if not by his personal ministry, at least by his epistles he afterwards wrote in prison: however, the effect of his defence, the Lord being with him, and strengthening him, was his deliverance:

and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion; from death he was threatened with, which, like a lion, gaped upon him to devour him; or from Satan the roaring lion, who desired to have had him, and sought to have intimidated him, and brought him to have denied his Lord, to have deserted his cause, and blasphemed his name; or else from Nero the Roman emperor, so called from his power and fierceness. So Tiberius is called by Marsyas, Agrippa's freeman, when he brought the news of his death to his master [f32]; and Ahasuerus by Esther [f33]; and Nero himself is called a civil beast by Apollonius Tyanaeus [f34]; though some think that not Nero, but Helius, whom he had appointed governor in his room, he being at this time in Greece, is here meant, before whom Paul was tried, and out of whose hands he was delivered.

> "Give me eloquent speech in my mouth before the lion: turn his heart to hate him that fighteth against us, that there may be an end of him, and of all that are likeminded to him:" (Esther 14:13)

Ver. 18. *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work*, etc.] From wicked and unreasonable men, and all their attempts upon him, and from all afflictions by them; not but that he expected afflictions as long as he was in the world, but he knew that God would support him under them; and in his own time and way deliver out of them; and at last entirely by death, when he should be no more attended with them; and from all the temptations of Satan, and his evil designs upon him, and from sin and iniquity; not that he expected to live free of Satan's temptations, or without sin, but he believed that he should be kept from sinking under the former,

and from being under the dominion of the latter; and should not be left to deny his Lord, desert his cause, blaspheme his name, and apostatize from him:

and will preserve [me] unto his heavenly kingdom, the ultimate glory and happiness of the saints in heaven; so called, both because of its nature and place, and to distinguish it from the church, which is Christ's kingdom in this world, though it is not of it; and from his personal reign with his saints on earth, for the space of a thousand years; whereas this will be for ever: and unto this the apostle believed he should be preserved, as all the saints will be, notwithstanding the persecutions of the world, the temptations of Satan, and their own corruptions; for they are secured in an everlasting covenant, and in the hands of Christ; and have not only angels to encamp about them, and salvation, as walls and bulwarks to them, but God himself is a wall of fire around them, and they are kept by his power unto salvation: and besides, this heavenly kingdom is prepared for them, and given to them; they are chosen to be heirs and possessors of it; they are called unto it, and Christ is gone to receive it in their name, to prepare it for them, and will come again and introduce them into it:

to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen: of the present deliverance, and of all others he had, or should receive, as well as of the provision of the heavenly kingdom for him, and of his preservation to it.

Ver. 19. *Salute Prisca and Aquila*, etc.] The same with Priscilla and Aquila: and so the Complutensian edition, and some copies, read here; who were of the same occupation with the apostle, and with whom he wrought at Corinth, and whom he left at Ephesus; and who seem by this salutation to have continued there, (<44182>Acts 18:2,3,18,19).

And the household of Onesiphorus: who also lived at Ephesus, and whose kindness to the apostle, when he was at Rome, is before mentioned, (<55116>2 Timothy 1:16-18).

Ver. 20. *Erastus abode at Corinth*, etc.] He was chamberlain of that city, (<45623>Romans 16:23) who being sent along with Timothy into Macedonia, (<44922>Acts 19:22) very probably went from thence into Achaia, to Corinth, his native place, where he stayed.

But Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Trophimus was an Asian, of the city of Ephesus, the same that is spoken of in (<44204>Acts 20:4 21:29). Some say he suffered martyrdom the same day the Apostle Paul did; but others

say, that after that time he was bishop of Arles in France. This man went with the apostle into Asia, and from thence to Jerusalem, and came along with him in his voyage to Rome, but falling sick by the way, was left at Miletum. Some, instead of Miletum, would read Melita, that being the island Paul, and the ship's company, escaped to, when they were shipwrecked, (<4401>Acts 28:1) here it is supposed Trophimus was left sick. Others have observed, that there was a city called Miletus in the island of Crete, under which Paul sailed, (<4407>Acts 27:7), see footnote [f35], and is the place intended; but there is no need to suppose either of these; no doubt Miletum, near to Ephesus, is meant; and as the apostle sailed by the coast of Asia, (<4407>Acts 27:7), on which shore Miletum was, there is no difficulty in supposing him put ashore there. The Alexandrian copy reads “Melotus”.

Ver. 21. *Do thy diligence to come before winter*, etc.] When travelling would not be so safe and comfortable: the apostle consults Timothy's good, as well as his own advantage.

Eubulus greeteth thee. Eusebius [f36] makes mention of one of this name of Manganaea, who suffered martyrdom with one Adrian at Caesarea; but he cannot be thought to be the same with this, since he suffered in the times of Dioclesian.

And Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia; the first of these is said to be a person of note at Rome, and of the senatorial order, and the father of two pious virgins, Praxis and Pudentiana. He is put among the seventy disciples; (see Gill on “<4201>Luke 10:1”). Mention is made by Pliny the younger [f37], of Servilius Pudens, a Roman; and Martial, a poet of those times, speaks [f38] of the marriage of Pudens and Claudia, and of Aulus Pudens. Linus is said to be the first bishop of Rome after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul [f39]. Though some will have it, that he was bishop of Rome in the time of Peter, and that he and one Cletus were co-pastors with Peter; and Platina, who wrote the “Lives of the Popes”, first makes Peter to consecrate Clement his successor, and to commend the chair, and the church of God, to him, and yet afterwards places Linus, and not Clement, as his immediate successor; yea, puts Cletus also before Clement; so much are the Papists at a loss about, and so little account can they give of the boasted succession of their popes from Peter, that they are not agreed about his immediate successor. This Linus is said to be born at Volterra in Tuscany, and to be of the family of the Moors, whose father was one Herculaneus, who sent him at twenty two years of age to Rome, for the

sake of his studies; at which time, as is pretended, Peter came thither, by whom he was converted, and with whom he continued as a fellow helper in the Gospel. He is moreover said to be bishop of Rome ten years, (Platina says eleven,) three months, and twelve days, and to have suffered martyrdom under Saturninus the consul, whose daughter he had delivered from a diabolical possession, and was buried in the Vatican. He is reckoned among the seventy disciples of Christ, but very wrongly; (see Gill on "Luke 10:1"). The name is a Latin one, and is often mentioned by Martial the poet. And Claudia is the name of a woman, very likely of considerable note. Some think she was the wife of Pudens, the same Martial speaks of, and is said to be a Briton.

And all the brethren: that is, of the church of Rome, these all sent greeting to Timothy.

Ver. 22. *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit*, etc.] To counsel and advise in every difficult matter; to comfort under every distress; to supply with all grace in every time of need; and to strengthen and fit for every part and branch of duty.

Grace be with you, Amen: which is the apostle's common salutation in all epistles. The Syriac version renders it, "grace be with thee"; but the Greek copies read in the plural, "with you"; which shows that the epistle was designed for the use of the whole church, as well as of Timothy. The subscription follows, which is not in many ancient copies, and is not to be depended on.

The second epistle unto Timotheus; so far is right; this is certainly the second epistle to Timothy:

ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians: this is omitted in the Syriac version; nor is it likely, much less certain, that he ever was bishop of Ephesus, or ordained as a bishop of any place, but was rather an evangelist, (2 Timothy 4:5),

was written from Rome: this is evident from his being a prisoner when he wrote it, (2 Timothy 1:8). And yet in the Alexandrian copy it is said to be written from Laodicea:

when Paul was brought before Nero the second time; but whether he was before Nero at all is a question, or only before a Roman governor or judge.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Hesiod. Theogonia, Apollodorus de Deor. Orig. 50:1. p. 5. Vid. Theocrit. Idyll. 13.

Ft2 -- Quis rer. Divin. Haeres. p. 498, 499.

Ft3 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 29.

Ft4 -- Targum in <08104>Ruth 2:1. & in Psal. lxxxii. 1. & cxii. 2. & in Eccl. 10:17. & in Cant. 8:10, vid. T. Bab. Sota, fol. 14. 1. & Tzeror Hammor, fol. 9. 3.

Ft5 -- Vid. Fuller Miscell. Saora, 50:3. c. 16.

Ft6 -- Halichot Olim, port. 4. c. 3. p. 192.

Ft7 -- See Chambers's Cyclopedia in the word “Gangrene”.

Ft8 -- Vid. Kirchman. de Funer. Roman. 50:3. c. 10. p. 390.

Ft9 -- Maimon. Hilchot Mechira, c. 7. sect. 6, 7, 8.

Ft10 -- Vid. L. Empercur in Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 3.

Ft11 -- Apud Euseb. Praeparat. Evangel. 50:9. p. 411.

Ft12 -- Nat. Hist. 50:30. c. 1.

Ft13 -- Apolog. p. 248.

Ft14 -- Targum Jon. in <04222>Numbers 22:22. & Zohar in Numbers fol. 78. 3. & Chronicon Mosis, fol. 6. 2.

Ft15 -- Targum Jon. in <02015>Exodus 1:15. & 7:11. & Zohar in Exodus fol. 75. 1.

Ft16 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 85. 1. Midrash Shemot Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 97. 3. & Aruch. in voce.

Ft17 -- Shalsheleth Hakabala, fol. 7. 1.

Ft18 -- Antiqu. 50:13. c. 1. sect. 2.

Ft19 -- Targum Jon. in <02015>Exodus 1:15.

Ft20 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 75. 1. & in Numbers fol. 78. 3. Shalsheleth, ib.

Ft21 -- De Legat. ad Caium, p. 1022.

Ft22 -- Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 21.

Ft23 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 51. 2.

Ft24 -- Aristeae Hist. 72. Interpr. p. 91, Ed. Oxon.

Ft25 -- Contra Haeres, Haeres. 51.

Ft26 -- lbid.

Ft27 -- Hist. Eccl 50:3. c. 4.

Ft28 -- Catalog. Script. Ecclesiastes sect. 13. p. 90.

Ft29 -- Nat. Hist. 50:3. c. 25.

Ft30 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg, cent. 2. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 6. c. 9. p. 425. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 7. cent 6. c. 2. p. 8.

Ft31 -- Epist. ad Damas. qu. 2. p. 12. Tom. 3.

Ft32 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:18. c. 7. sect. 10.

Ft33 -- Apocryph.

Ft34 -- Philostrat. Vit. Apollon. 50:4. c. 12.

Ft35 -- Plin. 50:4. c. 12.

Ft36 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:8. de Martyr. Palestin. c. 11.

Ft37 -- L. 10. ep. 10.

Ft38 -- Epigram. 50:4. ep. 10. 23. 1. 6. ep. 45. 50:7. ep. 10.

Ft39 -- Iren. adv. Haeres. 50:3. c. 3. Euseb. Ec. Hist. 50:3. c. 2, 4. & 50:5. c. 6.

TITUS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF TITUS

Titus, to whom this epistle is inscribed, was a Greek, an uncircumcised Gentile, and so remained; nor did the apostle circumcise him, as he did Timothy, when he became his companion; nor did the apostles at Jerusalem oblige him to be circumcised, when Paul took him with Barnabas along with him thither, (<480201>Galatians 2:1,3). He was a man of great grace, and large gifts, and very dear to the apostle: he calls him his brother, his partner, and fellow helper, and says he walked in the same spirit, and in the same steps, (<470213>2 Corinthians 2:13 <470823>8:23 <471218>12:18). He was employed by the apostle much, and sent into various parts, on different occasions: he sent him to Corinth, to finish there the collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem, (<470806>2 Corinthians 8:6,16,17) and to Dalmatia, to know the state of the saints there, and to confirm them in the faith, (<550410>2 Timothy 4:10). As he was a Greek, so his name is a Greek name, yet used among the Romans, as Titus Vespasian, and others [f1]; and among the Jews, so we read of R. Chijah bar sjyj, "Titas" [f2], and of R. Judah ben Titas [f3]: when and where this epistle was written, is not very easy to determine; some think it was written between the first and second time the apostle was in bonds at Rome; and certain it is, that he was not in bonds when he wrote it, for he desires Titus to meet him at Nicopolis, (<560319>Titus 3:19) from whence some have supposed it to be written, as the subscription shows; but others think it was wrote much earlier, and when the apostle was at Ephesus, towards the close of his three years stay there, before he went into Macedonia; but it seems rather that it was written when he returned from Macedonia into Greece: he left Titus at Crete, and staying in Greece three months, he intended to have sailed to Syria, but was prevented by the Jews lying in wait for him, upon which he steered his course to Macedonia again; and as he was going there, or when there, writes this letter to Titus, to come to him at Nicopolis. The occasion of it was partly the judaizing preachers, and false teachers, that got into that island, and were corrupting the principles of the people; and partly the unbecoming conversation and practices of some professors of religion: and whereas the apostle had left Titus in Crete, to finish what he had begun, and to put the churches in

order, and see that they had proper officers, particularly pastors over them, that they might be taken care of, both with respect to doctrine and practice; the design of this epistle is to lay before Titus the several qualifications of a pastor, which might be instruction to him, and to the churches, in the choice and ordination of them; and to stir him up to zeal and diligence in refuting false teachers, and dealing with heretics; and to put him upon exhorting the saints to the discharge of their duty, in every branch of it, from the best principles, by arguments taken from the grace of God, and the doctrines of it. This epistle is supposed to be written about the year 55.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO TITUS 1

This chapter contains the inscription of the epistle, the apostle's salutation and preface to it; an account of the qualifications of an eider, or pastor of a church; a description of these teachers; and a charge to Titus to rebuke the Cretians for their errors and immoralities. The inscription and salutation are in (Titus 1:1-4), in which the writer of the epistle is described by his name and office; by the faith and hope he had; and by the ministration of the Gospel, committed to him by the order of Christ: and the person to whom it is written is mentioned by name; and is described by the spiritual relation he stood in to the apostle, and to whom he wishes grace, mercy, and peace: the preface to the epistle is in (Titus 1:5) which gives the reason of the apostle's leaving Titus in Crete, which was to set things in order there, and to ordain elders in all the churches; which leads him to point at the necessary qualifications of them for his direction; some of which respect their moral life and conversation, and others their doctrine, and are in (Titus 1:6-9) and on occasion of the latter, and which is a reason why the elders should be sound in the faith, and hold it fast, the apostle takes notice of the false teachers that were in Crete, whom he describes by their noisy, vain, and deceitful talk; by their being pernicious and hurtful to whole families; and by their covetousness and sensuality, which is confirmed by a testimony out of one of the Cretian poets, (Titus 1:10-12) wherefore he charges Titus sharply to rebuke either these false teachers, or those they had corrupted, that they regard sound doctrine, and not Jewish fables, and the commandments of erroneous men, (Titus 1:13,14) and instances in things forbidden in the law of Moses as unclean, which were not now to be attended to by those who were pure in heart, and sound in faith, to whom all things were pure and lawful; and as for others that were impure, whose minds and consciences were defiled, and were unbelieving, nothing was pure to them, (Titus 1:15) and who are further described as professors in words of the true knowledge of God, and yet practically were deniers of him; and as abominable in their nature and actions, disobedient to law and Gospel, and unfit for any good work whatever, (Titus 1:16).

Ver. 1. *Paul, a servant of God*, etc.] So James styles himself, (⁵⁹01James 1:1) and others of the apostles, as Peter and Jude, call themselves the servants of Jesus Christ; and as does the Apostle Paul also; and both seem to be esteemed by them as high characters and titles of honour, by which they chose to be described and known. Paul, before his conversion, was a servant of sin, of divers lusts and pleasures, and which he owns in this epistle, (⁵⁶03Titus 3:3) but being called by grace, he became free from the vassalage of sin, and became a servant of God, and of righteousness; and henceforward, from a principle of grace, and being constrained by love, served the Lord, and yielded obedience to his commands and ordinances, with all readiness and cheerfulness: though this character belongs to him in a higher sense than it does to believers in common; and respects his ministerial service, or his serving God in the Gospel of his Son; in which he, and others, were eminently the servants of the most high God, whose business greatly lay in showing unto men the way of salvation.

And an apostle of Jesus Christ: constituted, qualified, and sent by him to preach his Gospel; and who had his mission, commission, and doctrine from him; and was an ambassador of his, who represented him, and preached him; and had a power of working miracles to confirm his mission and ministry; and so had all the signs and proofs of an apostle in him; (see Gill on "⁴⁵01Romans 1:1").

And according to the faith of God's elect: which may either denote the agreement there was between the ministry of the apostle, and the faith of the choice and eminent saints of God, under the former dispensation; he saying no other things than what Moses, and the prophets did; and laying no other foundation of salvation than they did, and which is therefore called the foundation of the apostles and prophets; and directing souls to the righteousness, sacrifice, and blood of Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, to which the faith of Old Testament saints looked, and by whose grace they were justified, pardoned, and saved, as we are: or else the way and manner in which he became an apostle; it was "by, in, or through the faith of God's elect", as the Syriac version renders it; he was chosen of God, and brought as such to believe in Christ, and then called to be an apostle: or rather this may regard the end of his apostleship, and be rendered, "unto the faith of God's elect"; that is, either he was appointed an apostle, to preach the doctrine of faith, which once he destroyed, and which is but one, and is common to all the elect, and what is commonly received, and embraced by the elect of God, in all ages; or to be a means

and instrument of bringing the elect of God to that faith in Christ, which is peculiar to them; (see <4501>Romans 1:5 <4501>10:17). There are some persons who are styled the elect of God; these are not all men, some are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, ungodly men, foreordained to condemnation and given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned; nor the Jews only, nor all of them, for though, as a nation, they were chosen, above all others, to many outward privileges, yet they were not chosen to special grace, and eternal glory; only a remnant, according to the election of grace: but these are some of both, Jews and Gentiles; some of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; these were chosen in Christ from eternity, and are the peculiar objects of the affection and care of God, whom he calls, justifies, and glorifies: and there is a special "faith" that belongs to these; which is a spiritual looking to Christ, a going to him, a laying hold and leaning on him, and trusting in him for salvation; and this faith is peculiar to the elect of God; all men have it not, and those that have it, have it through the free gift of God; nor is it given to any but to the chosen ones. The reason why the Jews did not believe in Christ, was, because they were not of this number, (<4301>John 10:26). And this faith is secured and, made sure to them by their election; they are chosen to it, and through it to salvation; they believe in consequence, and by virtue of it; and certainly obtain it in all ages, as well as righteousness, life, and salvation; and it is that by which they are known to be the elect of God: and the apostle mentions it in this form, and manner, to distinguish it from other faith; the faith of devils, and of reprobates, and the historical and temporal faith of hypocrites, and nominal professors.

And the acknowledging of the truth; by which is meant the Gospel, often called the truth, and the word of truth; in distinction from that which was shadowy, the ceremonies of the law; and in opposition to that which is false, it being from the God of truth, concerning Christ, who is the truth; and containing nothing but truth, and what is led into by the Spirit of truth. Now to preach, spread, and defend this, was the apostle constituted in his office as such; and which he did preach with all clearness and faithfulness, to bring souls to a spiritual and experimental knowledge of it, and so to an acknowledgment, a public owning and professing of it:

which is after godliness; the Gospel is a doctrine according to godliness; the truths of it have an influence, both on internal and external godliness; they direct to, and promote the worship and fear of God, and a religious, righteous, sober, and godly life and conversation.

Ver. 2. *In hope of eternal life*, etc.] Or “for the hope of eternal life”; in order to bring souls to the hope of it. This is another end of the Gospel ministry, as to bring God's elect to faith in Christ, and to the knowledge and acknowledgement of the truth, as it is in Jesus, so to the hope of eternal glory and happiness: in a state of nature, they are without the grace of hope, or any true ground and foundation of it; and though it is the gift of God's grace, and is implanted on the soul by the Spirit of God in regeneration; yet the Gospel is the means of producing it at first, as well as afterwards encouraging and increasing it; for in it, Christ the foundation of hope is proposed, and set forth before awakened and convinced sinners: the object of this hope is “eternal life”; not anything now seen and enjoyed, for that is not hope; not anything in this present life, but something future; a life of perfect bliss and happiness with Christ to all eternity; which is a hope laid up in heaven, an inheritance reserved there; a life which is secured in the hands of Christ, which he has a power to give, and does give to all his sheep, and is the gift of God through him: and of which it is further said,

which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; eternal life is a “promise”, and so of free grace, and not by the works of the law, which is inconsistent with a promise: it is the promise of God, who is faithful to his word, and “can not lie”; being the God of truth, that can neither deceive, nor be deceived: this does not contradict his omnipotence, but argues the perfection of his nature, which cannot admit of anything that implies weakness and mutation: and this promise was made before the world was, as early as the choice of God's elect in Christ, and the gift of grace to them in him; as early as the covenant was made with him, and he was set up as the Mediator of it; who was present to receive this promise as their head and representative for them, and to whom it was made as federally considered in him, and in whom it was secured for them; (see 2 Timothy 1:1).

Ver. 3. *But hath in due times manifested his word*, etc.] Either Christ, his essential Word; or the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation; or rather his word of promise of eternal life in Christ Jesus:

through preaching; through the ministry of the word by the apostles; in which Christ is revealed in the glory of his person, and the fulness of his grace, and in the efficacy of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; and in which the Gospel, that was ordained before the world was, and is the

fellowship of the mystery which was hid in God, is published; and in which the promise of eternal life, which lay in God's heart, in the covenant of grace, and in the hands of Christ, and which with Christ, and his Gospel, were hid under the dark types, shadows, and sacrifices of the law, is clearly made known: “in due times”; appointed by God, agreed between the Father and the Son, and suitable to the state, case, and condition of men; when the law of Moses, and the light of nature, legal sacrifices, and moral power, had been sufficiently tried, the one in the Jewish, the other in the Gentile world; and after that the Son of God was become incarnate, which was in the fulness of time; and when he had suffered for the ungodly, which was in due time; (see <540206>1 Timothy 2:6).

Which is committed unto me; that is, which preaching or ministry of the word, the Gospel, and the dispensation of it, which, as a trust, was deposited in the hands of the apostle, and of which he was a faithful steward: according to the commandment of God our Saviour; either God the Father, so called, (<560304>Titus 3:4) compared with (<560106>Titus 1:6) and who is the Saviour of all men in a providential way, and of all the elect in a way of special grace, by his Son Jesus Christ; and by whom the apostle was appointed and separated to the preaching of the Gospel; and by whom this was committed to his trust: or rather the Lord Jesus Christ, who is truly and properly God, the great God, and our Saviour, (<560213>Titus 2:13) and who is the only Saviour of lost sinners; and he it was that personally appeared to Paul, and made him a minister of the word, committed the Gospel to him, and gave him a commandment, and orders to preach it among the Gentiles, (<442605>Acts 26:15-18).

Ver. 4. *To Titus, mine own son after the common faith*, etc.] Not in a natural, but in a spiritual sense; the apostle being the instrument of his conversion, as he was of the conversion of Onesimus, and of many of the Corinthians, and therefore is said to beget them, (<570110>Philemon 1:10 <460415>1 Corinthians 4:15) and so was their spiritual father, and they his children: Titus was, in this sense, his “own son”, or a true son, a legitimate one; a true convert; one really born again; a sincere believer, an Israelite indeed: and this he was “after the common faith”; either the doctrine of faith, which is but one, and is common to all the saints; or the grace of faith, which though different in degrees, yet is alike precious faith in all; the same for nature, kind, object, operation, and effects: and this phrase is used to show in what sense Titus was son to the apostle; as he was a believer, and no otherwise.

Grace, mercy, and peace, etc. which is the apostle's usual salutation; (see <540102>1 Timothy 1:2). The word “mercy” is left out in the Claromontane copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 5. *For this cause left I thee in Crete*, etc.] Not in his voyage to Rome, (<442707>Acts 27:7) but rather when he came from Macedonia into Greece, (<442002>Acts 20:2). Crete is an island in the Mediterranean sea, now called Candy; (see Gill on “<442211>Acts 2:11”). Here Paul preached the Gospel to the conversion of many; but not having time to finish what he begun, left Titus here for that purpose:

that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting; that is, form the young converts into Gospel order, into a regular Gospel church state; settle a proper discipline among them; instruct them more largely into the doctrines of the Gospel; and correct their manners, and direct them in everything, both with respect to faith and practice:

and ordain elders in every city: for this island, though it was not above fifty miles in breadth, and two hundred and seventy in length, yet had an hundred cities in it [f4]; and it seems as if the Gospel had been preached in most, if not all of them, and churches were formed: however, in as many of them as there were churches, the apostle would have Titus see to it, and take care that they had proper officers fixed in them, particularly elders, pastors, or overseers, to preach the Gospel, and administer the ordinances to them, to watch over them in the Lord, and put the laws of Christ's house in execution, and keep up a strict discipline in it, according to the will of God. What Titus was to do in this affair, was to put the churches upon looking out, and choosing from among themselves proper persons for such service, and to direct, assist, and preside at the elections and ordinations of them: for we are not to suppose, that the ordination of elders was the sole act of Titus, or alone resided in him; but in like manner as Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in every church, by the suffrages of the people, signified by the stretching out of their hands; in which they directed, presided, and also assisted in prayer, with fasting, (<441423>Acts 14:23)

as I had appointed thee; when he left him at Crete; when he gave him orders and instructions, both with respect to the persons, and their qualifications, whom he would have ordained, and with respect to the manner in which it should be done: the former of these he repeats in the following verses. From all which it clearly appears, that there were churches in Crete, and pastors placed over those churches; very probably

the Cretes, who were at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, (<4402 11>Acts 2:11), and heard Peter's sermon, and were converted by him, some of them returning to their own country, might first bring the Gospel to this island, and lay the foundation of a Gospel church state here. It seems by what is said in this text, that the Apostle Paul was in this island himself, and preached the Gospel, and after him Titus, whom he left behind; and if any credit is to be given to the subscription of this epistle, he was the first bishop of the church in it: and it is certain, that in the "second" century there were churches in this island, particularly at Gortyna, and other places, to whom Dionysius [f5], bishop of Corinth, wrote letters, in which he greatly extols Philip their bishop; and in another letter of his to the Gnossians, or to the church at Gnossus, another city in Crete, he makes mention of Pinytus as their bishop, and whom he commends for his orthodox faith, great knowledge of divine things, and care of his flock; and both these lived in the times of the Emperors Antoninus Verus and Commodus [f6]; which churches, no doubt, continued in the "third" century, since in the "fourth" we read of bishops sent from Crete to the synod at Sardica: and in the "fifth" century, a bishop of Gortyna in Crete is reckoned among the bishops in the council of Chalcedon: and in the "sixth" century, Theodorus, bishop of the same place, subscribed in the fifth synod at Constantinople: and in the "seventh" century, Paul archbishop of Crete, Basil bishop of Gortyna, with several other bishops of churches in the island, were present at the sixth synod at Constantinople: and in the "eighth" century, as appears from the acts of the Nicene synod, Helias was bishop of Crete, Anastasius bishop of Gnossus, a city in it, and Melito, Leontins, and Galatas, bishops of other places in the same island: and in the "ninth" century, a bishop of Gortyna, in defence of the cause of Christ, became a martyr [f7]; so far churches, and bishops, bearing the Christian name, are to be traced in this island.

Ver. 6. *If any be blameless*, etc.] In his outward life and conversation, not chargeable with any notorious crime; (see Gill on "<5402 1>1 Timothy 3:2"),

the husband of one wife; (see Gill on "<5402 1>1 Timothy 3:2"):

having faithful children; legitimate ones, born in lawful wedlock, in the same sense as such are called godly and holy, in (<3002 15>Malachi 2:15) (<4607 14>1 Corinthians 7:14) for by faithful children cannot be meant converted ones, or true believers in Christ; for it is not in the power of men to make their children such; and their not being so can never be an objection to their

being elders, if otherwise qualified; at most the phrase can only intend, that they should be brought up in the faith, in the principles, doctrines, and ways of Christianity, or in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Not accused of riot; or chargeable with sins of uncleanness and intemperance, with rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness; or with such crimes as Eli's sons were guilty of, from which they were not restrained by their father, and therefore the priesthood was removed from the family: “or unruly” not subject, but disobedient to their parents; (see Gill on “1 Timothy 3:4”). (See Gill on “1 Timothy 3:5”).

Ver. 7. *For a bishop must be blameless*, etc.] This shows that a bishop and an elder is the same; and the Syriac version here renders it, “an elder”; the character or qualification necessary to him is the same as before, and in like manner to be understood; unless it should more particularly refer to his faithfulness in the discharge of his office: since it follows,

as the steward of God; one appointed by God over his household and family, the church, to give to everyone their portion of meat in due season; one that dispenses the manifold grace, or various doctrines of the grace of God, and mysteries of Christ; and of such an one it is required, that he be faithful, both to his Lord and master, to the trust committed to him, and to the persons under his care.

Not selfwilled; not doing things in the worship and house of God, in the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances, according to his own will, but according to the will of God, revealed in his word; otherwise what he does will come under the name of will worship: or obstinate, stubborn, and inflexible, conceited of his own sense and judgment, and resolute to have his own will and way in all things relating to the affairs of God's house. The word signifies one that is pleased with himself, has an over weening opinion of himself, is proud and haughty, and despises others:

not soon angry: but slow to wrath, which shows a man to be a man of understanding, and fit to teach others, which an angry man is not. It is a saying of R. Hillell [f8], that

> “neither one that is ashamed (to ask questions) learns well, nor one that is “angry” teaches well”

And the Jews say [f9], that

"the law is not rightly explained but by one that is not angry."

Hence, that direction [f10],

"for ever let a man be meek as Hillell, and not angry as Shammai;"

who were two of their principal doctors, the heads of their schools, in the times of Christ: a man that rules his own spirit, and has the command of his temper and passions, is fit to govern in the church of God.

Not given to wine, no striker, nor given to filthy lucre; (See Gill on "1 Timothy 3:3").

Ver. 8. *But a lover of hospitality*, etc.] (See Gill on "1 Timothy 3:2")

a lover of good men, or "of good"; the Syriac version renders it, "of good things"; as prayer, preaching, reading, meditation, spiritual conversation, and every religious exercise: or "of good men"; for such an elder or bishop has chiefly to do and converse with; and if he is not a lover of them, their company will be disagreeable to him, and he will be of no advantage to them; and if he does not love the souls of men, he will not naturally care for their state, or be concerned for their good.

Sober: in body, using moderation in diet and dress; and in mind, being prudent, modest, and humble, and thinking soberly of himself, and others, as he ought.

Just; righteous in his dealings with men, giving to everyone their due; upright and sincere in his conversation with the saints; and faithful in his counsel, admonitions, and reproofs.

Holy; devout towards God, constant in all religious exercises in the closet, family, and church; and living soberly, righteously, and godly in the world.

Temperate; in eating and drinking; continent from the lusts of the flesh; and even abstaining from those things which might be lawfully used, though inexpedient, for the sake of the weak, the peace of the church, and the glory of God.

Ver. 9. *Holding fast the faithful word*, etc.] The doctrine of the Gospel, so called because it is true, and to be believed; it is the word of truth, and truth itself, and contains nothing but truth; and because it never deceived any, that gave credit to its doctrines, and its promises; and because it is pure, unmixed, and unadulterated, and is the sincere milk of the word; and

because in it is a glorious display of the faithfulness of God to his perfections, to his holiness and justice, to his law, and to his covenant, word, and oath; and of the faithfulness of Christ, to him that appointed him and to his covenant engagements, and which has appeared in the discharge of his various offices: and this is not only to be held forth by the elder, but to be held fast, and tenaciously abode by; in opposition to all wavering about it, departure from it, dropping or concealing any part of it, and pusillanimity concerning it; whatever temptations there may be to the contrary, through popular applause on the one hand, and reproaches and persecutions on the other; and though there may be many that may endeavour to wring it out of his hands; (see 2 Timothy 1:13),

as he hath been taught; or "according to doctrine": that is, according to the doctrine of the Scriptures, Christ, and his apostles; according to the doctrine that lies in the Scriptures that was delivered by Christ, and preached by his apostles; whatever is according to that should be held fast:

[or] which is for doctrine, which tends to teach, instruct, and edify the minds of men, that ought to be constantly abode by: or as the elder himself has been taught, not by men, in a theoretical way, as logic, rhetoric, and other arts and sciences are taught; for such who are only taught the faithful word in this way, are not likely to hold it fast, in a time of temptation; but as he has been taught it experimentally by the Spirit of God; and such an one, who has not only the knowledge of it in his head, but the experience of it in his heart, will hold it, and hold it fast against all opposition:

that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers; sound doctrine is the faithful word, the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, which being retained, qualify an elder to discharge the following branches of his office; to "exhort" the members of churches to their duty, according to their age, sex, state, and condition, as in chapter 2 to which the doctrines of grace influence and engage; or to comfort them, as the word also signifies, and the Alexandrian copy reads, "to comfort them in all tribulation"; and this is one considerable part of the elder's work, to comfort souls under affliction, whether of body or mind; and sound doctrines, or the doctrines of the Gospel, are wonderfully suited to such a purpose: and the other part of his work is, "to convince gainsayers"; such who resist the truth, oppose themselves to it, cavil at it, and object against it; these are to be refitted, and convinced by the Scriptures, and arguments taken from them, as the Jews were by Apollos,

(Acts 18:28) and nothing is so powerful to do it as sound doctrine, and holding fast the faithful word.

Ver. 10. *For there are many unruly*, etc.] Persons who are not subject to the law of God, or Gospel of Christ; whose spirits are not subject to the prophets; and who will not submit themselves to them that have the rule over them, nor attend to the admonitions of the church, nor be brought into any regularity and order; and there were many of this sort, who were not sent forth by Christ, or his churches, but went forth of themselves, and were corrupters of the word; and therefore Christ's ministers ought to hold fast the faithful word, and convince such opposers by sound doctrine;

and vain talkers; who deliver out in their discourses empty, trifling, superficial, and frivolous things; which have no solidity and substance in them, nor do they tend to edification; only great swelling words of vanity, vain jangling and babbling about things to no profit.

And deceivers; both of themselves and others; who lie in wait to deceive, and are deceitful workers; and by their good words, and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple; and so are dangerous persons, and of pernicious consequence:

especially they of the circumcision; or “of the Jews”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; that is, not the unbelieving Jews, but such as professed Christianity, judaizing Christians, who joined Moses and Christ and blended the law and Gospel together; who taught that circumcision, and the observance of other ceremonies of the law, were necessary to justification and salvation; and hereby did a great deal of mischief among the churches.

Ver. 11. *Whose mouths must be stopped*, etc.] Or they be silenced, by reasons and arguments fetched out of the word of God; as were the Sadducees and Pharisees by Christ, so that they durst ask him no more questions; and as the Jews at Damascus were by Saul, who confounded them, proving in the clearest and strongest manner, that Jesus was the very Christ:

who subvert whole houses; into which they creep; that is, whole families, whose principles they corrupt, whose faith they overthrow, and carry them away with their own errors; and therefore, since this was the case not of a single person, or of a few, but of whole families, it was high time to

attempt to convince them, and stop their mouths, that they might proceed no further:

teaching things which they ought not; which were not agreeable to the perfections of God, to the Scriptures of truth, to sound doctrine, and which were hurtful and pernicious to the souls of men: and that only

for filthy lucre's sake; having no regard to the glory of God, the honour and interest of Christ, or the good of immortal souls; only seeking to gain popular applause and honour from men, and to gather and increase worldly substance. Covetousness was a sin which the Cretians were remarkably guilty of [f11].

Ver. 12. *One of themselves, even a prophet of their own*, etc.] This was Epimenides, in whose poems stand the words here cited; the apostle rightly calls him "one of themselves", since he was a Cretian by birth, of the city of Gnossus; it is reported of him, that being sent by his father to his sheep in the field, he by the way, at noon, turned aside into a cave, and slept fifty seven years [f12] and he is very properly called a "prophet" of their own; for in Crete Jupiter had his prophets [f13], and he might be one of them: the priests among the Heathens were called prophets; so Baal's priests are called the prophets of Baal, and the prophets of the groves, (<111819>1 Kings 18:19). Besides, Epimenides was thought to be inspired by the gods: he is called by Apuleius [f14], a famous fortune teller; and is said by Laertius [f15] to be very skilful in divination, and to have foretold many things which came to pass; and by the Grecians were supposed to be very dear to the gods; so Balaam, the soothsayer and diviner, is called a prophet, (<610216>2 Peter 2:16). Add to this, that the passage next cited stands in a poem of this writer, entitled, "Concerning Oracles"; and it is easy to observe, that poets in common were usually called "vates", or prophets; so that the apostle speaks here with great propriety. Now concerning the inhabitants of Crete, Epimenides, a native of the place, and a person of great character and repute among them,

said, the Cretians are always liars: living is a sin common to human nature, and appears in men as early, or earlier than any other; and all men are guilty of it, at one time or another; but all are not habitually liars, as it seems these Cretians were: lying was a governing vice among them; they were not only guilty of it in some particular instances, but always; not only for saying that Jupiter's sepulchre was with them, when it was the sepulchre of Minos his son, which they had fraudulently obliterated; and

for which [f16] Callimachus charges them with lying, and uses these very words of Epimenides; though he assigns a different reason from that now given, which is, that Jupiter died not, but always exists, and therefore his sepulchre could not be with them: but this single instance was not sufficient to fasten such a character upon them; it was a sin they were addicted to: some countries are distinguished by their vices; some for pride; some for levity, vanity, and inconstancy; some for boasting and bragging some for covetousness; some for idleness; some for effeminacy; some for hypocrisy and deceit; and others, as the Cretians, it seems, for lying; this was their national sin [f17]; and this is said by others, as well as Epimenides. Crete is, by Ovid [f18], called “mendax Creta”, lying Crete. Hence, with the Grecians, to “cretize”, is proverbially used for to lie; this is a sin, than which nothing makes a man more like the devil, or more infamous among men, or more abominable to God. The Ethiopic version, instead of Cretes, or Cretians, reads “hypocrites”. Other characters of them, from the same Heathen poet, follow,

evil beasts: slow bellies; by evil beasts are meant beasts of prey, savage and mischievous ones; (see <0137:20,33>Genesis 37:20,33) and are so called, to distinguish them from other beasts, as sheep, and the like, which are not so; and perhaps Crete might abound with such evil beasts; for the Cretians are said [f19] to excel in hunting; and to these they themselves are compared, by one of their own prophets, for their cruelty, and savage disposition: so cruel persecutors are compared to beasts, (<4650>1 Corinthians 15:30) and the false teachers, the apostle has respect to in citing this passage, were cruel, if not to the bodies, yet to the souls of men, whom they poisoned and destroyed. And the Cretians are called, by the poet, slow bellies partly for their intemperance, their gluttony and drunkenness: which suited with the false teachers, whose god was their belly, and which they served, and not the Lord Jesus; and partly for their sloth and idleness, eating the bread of others without working.

Ver. 13. *This witness is true*, etc.] The apostle confirms what the poet had said; he knew it to be fact from his own experience, and by the observation he had made when in the island: he does not say, that all that Epimenides had said, in the poem referred to, was true; but this character, which he had given of the Cretians, and which he cites, and uses to a good purpose; from whence it may be observed, that the writings of the Heathen poets may be read with profit, and be used to advantage, if carefully and prudently

attended to; for what is truth, let it come from whom, or by what means it will, ought to be received.

Wherefore rebuke them sharply: not merely upon the testimony of the poet, but upon the confirmation of it by the apostle; and not because of these general and national characters, but because these things personally and particularly belonged to the persons before described; whom the apostle would have rebuked, both for their bad principles, teaching things that they ought not; and for their immoralities, their lying and deceit, their intemperance, luxury, and idleness, things very unbecoming the Christian name; and therefore since their offences were of an heinous nature, and they lived in them, and were hardened and obstinate, and were like to have a bad influence on others, they must be rebuked "sharply": rebukes ought to be given according to the nature of offences, and the circumstances of them, and the offenders; some are to be given privately, others publicly; some should be reproved with gentleness and meekness, and be used in a tender and compassionate way; others more roughly, though never in a wrathful and passionate manner, yet with some degree of severity, at least with great plainness and faithfulness; laying open the nature of the evils guilty of in all their aggravated circumstances, without sparing them in the least; doing, as surgeons do by wounds, though they take the knife, and use it gently, yet cut deep, to the quick, and go to the bottom of the wound, and lay it open: and so the phrase may be rendered here, "rebuke them cuttingly"; cut them to the quick, and spare them not; deal not with them as Eli with his sons, (1 Samuel 2:23) but speak out, and expose their crimes, severely reprove them, that others may fear: and

that they may be sound in the faith; that they may be recovered from their errors, to the acknowledgment of the truth; that they may receive the sound doctrine of faith, the wholesome words of Christ, and speak the things which become them, and use sound speech, which cannot be condemned; and that they may be turned from their evil practices, and appear to be sound, as in the doctrine, so in the grace of faith; or that that by their works may appear to be genuine, true, and unfeigned; and that they may be strong and robust, hale and healthful, and not weak and sickly in the profession of their faith. Rebukes being to persons infected with bad principles and practices, like physic to sickly constitutions, a means of removing the causes of disorder; and in rebukes, admonitions, and censures, this always ought to be the end proposed, the good of the persons rebuked, admonished, and censured.

Ver. 14. *Not giving heed to Jewish fables*, etc.] Concerning God himself, the angels, and the creation of man; concerning the giving of the law at Mount Sinai; concerning the Messiah and his earthly kingdom, and the feast that will be made for the righteous in his days, which will consist of flesh, fish, and fowl, Behemoth, Leviathan, and Zuz, and of wine kept in the grape from the foundation of the world; and concerning the rolling of the dead through the caverns of the earth at the resurrection, with a multitude of other things which were traditionally received.

And commandments of men: the traditions of the elders, which the Jews charged the disciples of Christ with the transgression of; and he, on the other hand, very justly reproached them with breaking the commands of God, by attending to them, (<40 15 1>Matthew 15:1-39). These were the laws and traditions of the fathers, which the Apostle Paul was brought up in, and was zealous of, before his conversion, (<44 22 3>Acts 22:3 <48 1 14>Galatians 1:14) and which these judaizing preachers and professors, he here has respect to, were fond of, though they were made by men,

that turn from the truth; or "hate it", as the Syriac version renders it; who were enemies unto it, as Hillell and Shammai, the heads of the traditional doctors, and as the Jews, and their Rabbins in general were; and therefore their commandments, of all men, should not be given heed to, by those that bear the Christian name.

Ver. 15. *Unto the pure all things are pure*, etc.] The apostle having made mention of Jewish fables, and the traditions of the elders, takes notice of some darling notions, that these judaizing Christians had imbibed or retained; that there were some things, which being touched, or handled, or tasted, occasioned uncleanness, and which the apostle denies to them that are "pure"; by whom are meant, not such who are so in their own eyes, who yet may not be cleansed from their filthiness; nor do any become pure through ceremonial, moral, or evangelical performances, done by them; they are only pure, who are justified from all sin by Christ's righteousness, and are clean through the word or sentence of absolution spoken by him; and who are washed from their sins in his blood, and have that sprinkled upon their consciences, by which they are purged and cleansed from all sin; and who have the clean water of sanctifying grace sprinkled upon them, and have clean hearts, and right spirits created in them; and whose hearts are purified by faith, and have true principles of grace and holiness formed in them; whose graces are pure and genuine, their faith is unfeigned, their

love is without dissimulation, and their hope without hypocrisy; and who, in consequence of all this, love pureness of heart, speak the pure language of Canaan, hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, and follow after purity of life and conversation: to these “all things are pure”; whatever they touch, or handle, or eat, nothing can defile them; for it is not what enters into man that can pollute him; nor is any creature unclean of itself, but good, and to be received with thanksgiving; (see <401511>Matthew 15:11 <451414>Romans 14:14 <540403>1 Timothy 4:3-5).

But unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; all mankind are defiled with sin; they are altogether become filthy; there is none good, no, not one; and all of them, or that belong to them, are unclean; the members of their body, and the powers and faculties of their soul, their mind and conscience, understanding, will, and affections; there is no place clean: they are originally so, from their first conception and birth; and they are actually defiled by their own evil thoughts, words, and doings: some are openly impure, like the dog and the swine, who wallow in their impieties, such are the profane part of the world; others are more secretly so, as those of a pharisaical complexion, nominal Christians, and formal professors; and such the apostle has here in view: and who, notwithstanding their profession of the Christian religion, were “unbelieving”; they had not true faith in Christ, though they professed it; they were not indeed unbelieving, as the Jews, who rejected Jesus as the Messiah: yet they did not purely and cordially embrace the doctrines of the Gospel, nor yield a spiritual and cheerful subjection to the ordinances of it; but were for mixing the ceremonies of the law with the institutions of Christ: and to these were “nothing pure”; right and lawful to be done, or not done, even in the case supposed, about eating things forbidden by the ceremonial law; to eat them would be to eat with offence, to their own consciences, on their principles, and so be evil, (<451420>Romans 14:20) and to abstain from them on account of laws not in force, would be superstition and will worship, and so criminal, (<510221>Colossians 2:21-23). There is nothing that defiled persons can do, but what is unclean; as are their persons, so are their offerings and works, (<370214>Haggai 2:14), and being destitute of true faith, whatever they do is sin, and not anything they do can be acceptable and well pleasing to God, (<451423>Romans 14:23 <581106>Hebrews 11:6). There were some things among the Jews, which were prohibited to them that were defiled, and were free to them that were pure: thus, for instance [f20],

> “the flesh of the most holy things, and the flesh of those which are lightly holy, boiled with flesh of delight, (or common flesh,) are forbidden µyamjl, “to the defiled”, but are free µyrwhjl, “to the pure”.”

Which one of their commentators[f21] thus explains;

> “the flesh of the most holy things is forbidden to strangers, though pure; the flesh of things lightly holy is free to strangers that are pure, but forbidden to them that are defiled.”

Whether there may be any allusion to this, may be considered: however, the reason the apostle gives why nothing is pure to the impure, is, because of the pollution of the superior powers and faculties of their soul:

but even their mind and conscience is defiled; there is nothing in them, or that belongs to them, that is pure; their mind or understanding, which conceives and judges of things, and forms notions of them; and the conscience, which draws conclusions from them, are both defiled with sin; and what then must the thoughts, the words and actions of such persons be? it matters not what they do, or abstain from, what they touch, taste, or handle, or if they do not, they sin in all they do.

Ver. 16. *They profess that they know God*, etc.] That there is a God; that there is but one, only, true, and living God, the God of Israel, as professed by the Jews; and that this God is Father, Son, and Spirit, as believed by the Christians: for the persons the apostle speaks of were judaizing Christians. Yet this knowledge was but notional; it lay in theory and profession only; they had not a spiritual experimental knowledge of God in Christ, which only has eternal life connected with it:

but in works they deny him. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “in their own works”; they were not professed, but practical atheists; they owned there was a God, and boasted of their knowledge of him; but their lives and conversations showed that they had no true knowledge of him, and that the fear of him was not before their eyes; these gave the lie to their profession; they practically denied that faith they professed to hold, and the power of godliness, of which they had the form.

Being abominable; in the sight of God, however esteemed by men; and notwithstanding the vizor and mask of sanctity and religion they put on, which could not screen them from the omniscience of God, who will one

day declare he knows them not, and will bid them depart from him, being workers of iniquity.

And disobedient; to God; to his law, and Gospel; to his ministers and churches; and even to parents and civil magistrates; for of this cast were the false teachers, and their followers, as maybe learned from many passages.

And unto every good work reprobate: or “unaccustomed”, unused to them, as the Arabic version renders it; or rather “without judgment”, and understanding, concerning them; there was no good in them, nor was it in them to do good; to do good they had no knowledge, nor any inclination; they were unfit for it, and had not a capacity to perform it; they were not good themselves, and therefore could not do good; the tree must first be made good, ere its fruit will be good; they were without Christ, and without his Spirit, and grace, without which no man can do anything that is spiritually good; they had no true faith, and therefore what they did was sinful; they had neither right principles, from which, nor right ends to which they acted, and therefore were not qualified for the performance of good works; which require that men should be good men, created in Christ Jesus, be believers in him, and have principles of truth and love, and views to the glory of God.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO TITUS 2

In this chapter the apostle exhorts Timothy to the discharge of his office with respect to all sorts of persons, of every age, sex; and condition, he was concerned with, giving reasons for it, taken from the nature of the Gospel of Christ: he exhorts him in general to insist in his public ministry on those things, which were agreeable to sound doctrine, (Titus 2:1) and particularly what became aged men and aged women, and young men and young women, (Titus 2:2-6) in all which, both with respect to doctrine and practice, he desires him to be a pattern to them, that so even his very adversaries may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of him, (Titus 2:7,8). And next he charges him to exhort servants, to obey their masters, and seek to please them, and not contradict them, and to be faithful to them; that so the doctrine of God their Saviour, professed by them, might be adorned in all things, (Titus 2:9,10). And the reasons why the apostle would have duty urged on persons of every age, sex, and state, are taken from the nature of the Gospel being a doctrine of grace and salvation, which was preached to all sorts of persons, (Titus 2:11), and from the efficacy of it, in teaching men to deny sin, and live a holy life and conversation, (Titus 2:12) and from an expectation of eternal glory and happiness at the appearance of Christ, which the Gospel encourages to, (Titus 2:13); and from the end of Christ's giving himself for his people, and redeeming them from sin, the sum and substance of the Gospel, which was, that they might be purified, and be zealous of good works, (Titus 2:14) and these exhortations were to be delivered by Titus with authority, and in such a manner, that he might not be despised, (Titus 2:15).

Ver. 1. *But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine*.] Concerning sound doctrine, and the form of it, (see Gill on "2 Timothy 1:13"). The things which become it are a good life and conversation, the various duties incumbent on professors of religion, according to their different station, age, and sex, which are observed in some following verses; these become the Gospel of Christ, and are ornamental to the doctrine of God our Saviour; and these are to be spoken of by the ministers

of Christ, in their proper places, and at proper times; who ought not to be dumb, and keep silence at any time, but especially when there are many unruly and vain talkers: sound doctrine ought to be spoken out openly and publicly, fully and faithfully, with great plainness and evidence, that it may be understood and known by all; and with much certainty, without hesitation, as being, without controversy, undoubted truth; and with all boldness, not fearing men, or seeking to please them; and it should be constantly and continually spoken, in season, and out of season; and care should be taken that it be spoken consistently, and in an uniform manner, that there be no clashing and contradiction; and the duties of religion, which become sound doctrine, should be set in their true light, and proper place, as fruits of the grace of God, and to glorify him; these should be spoken out plainly, frequently insisted upon, and warmly and zealously urged, as being decent things, for the honour of God, the recommending of religion, the good of mankind, and the service of one another: as particularly,

Ver. 2. *That the aged men be sober*, etc.] Or “vigilant”, and watchful over themselves, their conduct and conversation, lest being evil, it should be drawn into an example by younger persons: this is to be understood not of men in office, of presbyters or elders; for their characters are described in the preceding chapter; but of men in years, of ancient men, that are professors of religion, and members of churches: who should also be

grave; in their behaviour, speech, and dress; levity of conversation, frothy language, and airy dress, are very unbecoming aged persons: and who ought to be

temperate; in eating and drinking, especially the latter, to which old age is most addicted, and care should be taken that they be not over charged with it, and that day overtake them unawares, since they are upon the brink and borders of eternity: the word is rendered “discreet” in (Titus 2:5) and sober in (1 Timothy 3:2) and both are characters suitable to men in years.

Sound in faith, in charity, in patience; though they may be unhealthful in their bodies, and become decrepit through age, they should be sound in their minds; in the doctrine of faith, lest they should lead others into error; and their faith in Christ should appear to be right and genuine; and their love to God, to Christ, and to his people, should be real and sincere, and be taken off from the things of the world, of time and sense; an affection for

which is an evil that frequently cleaves to old age: and patience should have its perfect work; not only to bear the infirmities of body, brought on by age; but whatsoever sufferings they may be called unto for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, in their last day; and to run out the race that is set before them.

Ver. 3. *And the aged women likewise*, etc.] Speak also to them the things which become their profession, and what is right for them to be, and do: these aged women design not persons in office, who were ancient widows, and had some care of the poor; or presbyteresses, as some call them, the wives of presbyters or elders, as being distinct from deaconesses; but godly women in years, who are to be instructed and exhorted:

that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness; or "holy women", sanctified by the Spirit of God; and who are priestesses unto God, as the word may signify, being made so by Christ unto the Father, as men are made kings and priests by him; such ought to be in their clothing, and in their speech, and in the whole of their conduct and conversation, as become the character which they bear, and the profession they make:

not false accusers; of the brethren, and sisters, which is to act the part of the devil; and indeed, the same word is here used which is commonly given to him; not raising false reports of, bringing false charges against members of churches, and so making differences and divisions among them.

Not given to much wine; or serving it, or being enslaved by it, which is very scandalous in any, especially in the female sex, and yet was what was too common in the eastern countries.

Teachers of good things; both by example and by instruction, but in their own houses privately; for they were not suffered to teach publicly, or to speak in the church; these should be teachers, not of old wives' fables, of superstitious customs, rites, and ceremonies, of the intrigues of love, and of things filthy and obscene, which are too often handed down to posterity by such persons; but of things that are solid and substantial, useful and improving, honest and honourable, chaste and pure. Particularly,

Ver. 4. *That they may teach the young women to be sober*, etc.] Or to be chaste, modest, and temperate; or to be wise and prudent in their conduct to their husbands, and in the management of family affairs, who have had a large experience of these things before them.

To love their husbands; to help and assist them all they can; to seek their honour and interest; to endeavour to please them in all things; to secure peace, harmony, and union; to carry it affectionately to them, and sympathize with them in all afflictions and distresses; for this is not so much said in opposition to placing their affections on other men, and to the defilement of the marriage bed, as to moroseness and ill nature.

To love their children; not with a fond, foolish, loose, and ungoverned affection; but so as to seek their real good, and not only their temporal, but spiritual and eternal welfare; to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and to use and keep proper discipline and government over them; for otherwise, amidst all the fondness of natural affection, a parent may be said to hate a child, (<20:1324>Proverbs 13:24).

Ver. 5. *To be discreet*, etc.] Or temperate in eating and drinking, so the word is rendered in (<56:202>Titus 2:2) or to be sober both in body and mind; or to be wise and prudent in the whole of their conduct, both at home and abroad:

chaste; in body, in affection, words and actions, having their love pure and single to their own husbands, keeping their marriage bed undefiled.

Keepers at home: minding their own family affairs, not gadding abroad; and inspecting into, and busying themselves about other people's matters. This is said in opposition to what women are prone unto. It is reckoned among the properties of women, by the Jews, that they are twynaxwy, "gadders abroad" [f22]: they have some rules about women's keeping at home; they say [f23],

> "a woman may go to her father's house to visit him, and to the house of mourning, and to the house of feasting, to return a kindness to her friends, or to her near relations — but it is a reproach to a woman to go out daily; now she is without, now she is in the streets; and a husband ought to restrain his wife from it, and not suffer her to go abroad but about once a month, or twice a month, upon necessity; for there is nothing more beautiful for a woman, than to abide in the corner of her house; for so it is written, (<19:4513>Psalm 45:13) "the king's daughter is all glorious within"."

And this they say [f24] is what is meant by the woman's being an helpmeet for man, that while he is abroad about his business, she is tybb tbçwy,

“sitting at home”, and keeping his house; and this they observe is the glory and honour of the woman. The passage in (<234413>Isaiah 44:13) concerning an image being made “after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man, that it may remain in the house” is by the Targum thus paraphrased:

> “according to the likeness of a man, according to the praise of a woman, to abide in the house.”

Upon which Kimchi, has this note.

> “it is the glory of a woman to continue at home, and not go abroad.”

The tortoise, which carries its house upon its back, and very rarely shows its head, or looks out of it, was, with the ancients, an emblem of a good housewife. These also should be instructed to be “good” or “kind” to their servants, and beneficent to the poor, and to strangers, towards whom, very often, women are apt to be strait handed, and not so generous and liberal as they should be:

obedient to their own husbands; (see Gill on “<461522>Ephesians 5:22”), (see Gill on “<461524>Ephesians 5:24”).

that the word of God be not blasphemed; by unbelieving husbands, who, by the ill conduct of their wives, would be provoked to speak ill of the Gospel, as if that taught disaffection and disobedience to them.

Ver. 6. *Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded*.] Temperate, chaste, modest, moderate, wise, and prudent in all things: this is said to Titus, as being his province to instruct and exhort the young men; as it were proper and convenient for aged women to teach the young women how they should behave and conduct themselves.

Ver. 7. *In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works*, etc.] It was not enough for Titus, and so neither for any other Gospel minister, to deliver out sound doctrine, and to exhort persons of different ages and sexes to the things which become it, but he should through the whole of his conversation be a pattern of every good work unto them; for they that are the shepherds of the flock, are not only to feed them with knowledge, and with understanding, but to be ensamples to them, as well as they who are under their care ought to walk, as they have them for an example; (see <540412>1 Timothy 4:12).

In doctrine, showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity; the apostle here either returns again to his advice about doctrine, that it should be delivered out pure and incorrupt, free from error and heresy, and every mixture and invention of man's; and with all gravity of speech and countenance, without levity in expression, and airiness of gesture; and that it be the sincere milk of the word that is given forth, and that with all integrity and uprightness of soul: or else this refers to the life and conversation of the teacher, as answering to his doctrine, and going along with it; and the sense is, in, or with doctrine, along with the doctrine preached, let the conversation be pure and incorrupt, free from the pollutions of the world, and from any governing vice; and let it be attended with gravity in word, gesture, look, and dress; and with all sincerity, faithfulness, and simplicity, in all our dealings, either with the saints, or with the men of the world.

Ver. 8. *Sound speech that cannot be condemned*, etc.] In the public ministry, the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus should be used, and the doctrines of the Gospel be expressed, as near as can be, in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, and not in the enticing words of man's wisdom; such speech or language should be chosen, that is plain, easy, and acceptable, and conveys just ideas of things; and which being agreeable to the Scriptures of truth, and the analogy of faith, cannot be justly found fault with: or this may refer to private conversation, in which no rotten speech, or corrupt communication should proceed out of the mouth; nothing but what is pure, sound, graceful, and edifying; no filthiness, nor foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient, and are rightly condemned.

That he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed: that is, that he who is on the other side of the question, who opposes the truths of the Gospel, and is an adversary to them; whether he be an Heathen philosopher, or a Jewish Rabbi, or a judaizing teacher, or an heretical man, under the Christian name, may be put to shame and confusion; partly on account of that uncorruptness in doctrine and conversation, which he observes in the true and faithful ministers of the word, and is wanting in himself; and so being convinced, may be converted and brought to repentance, and to the acknowledgment of the truth; and partly on the account of the false charges and accusations brought by him against such:

having no evil thing to say of you; whether with respect to doctrine or practice. The Vulgate Latin version, and all the Oriental versions, read

"us", instead of "you". The whole body is reproached for the sake of one or more.

Ver. 9. *[Exhort] servants to be obedient to their own masters*, etc.] And not others, whether they be believers, or unbelievers, gentle or froward, all their lawful commands ought to be obeyed; (See Gill on "Ephesians 6:5") and to please [them] well in all things; not only to obey and serve them, and do what they order, but to seek and endeavour to do it in such a way as may be grateful, acceptable, and well pleasing to them, whereby an interest in their affection, esteem, and commendation, may be gained: and this should be done always, and in all things, that are not contrary to a good conscience and to the Christian religion, and to the laws of God and nature. Or "that they may be well pleased in all things"; that is, be satisfied and contented with such things as they have, and in their state and condition as servants, and cheerfully abide in the calling wherein they are called:

not answering again; replying to their masters' orders, or complaints, either in a pert, or saucy, or grumbling manner; an evil very incident to servants, and which greatly provokes.

Ver. 10. *Not purloining*. etc.] Or stealing, embezzling their master's substance, taking away, and making use of what is their property, keeping back part of money or goods committed to their trust: the word is used in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. (Acts 5:2),

but showing all good fidelity; approving themselves to be faithful servants in everything they are intrusted with:

that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things; Christ is our alone Saviour, and he is truly and properly God, and so fit and able to be a Saviour; and the Gospel is his doctrine, not only what he himself preached, when on earth, but it is a doctrine concerning him; concerning his deity, and the dignity of his person, and concerning his office as Mediator, and the great salvation by him; and which are so many reasons why it should be adorned by a suitable life and conversation; for this is what becomes the Gospel of Christ, throws a beauty upon it, and is ornamental to it; and in this way the doctrine of Christ may be, and ought to be, adorned by servants, as well as others: to adorn the Gospel, is first to believe and receive it, then to profess it, and hold fast that profession,

and walk worthy of it. Two of Stephens's copies read, “in”, or “among all men”.

Ver. 11. *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation*, etc.] By which is meant, not the free love and favour of God, which lies in his own heart; for though that is productive of salvation, and is the source and spring of it, and what brings it forth, and is far from encouraging licentiousness, but instructs in real piety, and constrains to obedience to the will of God; yet this does not appear, nor has it been, nor is it made manifest unto all men, but is peculiar to the Lord's own people; nor does it design the grace of God wrought in the hearts of believers; for though salvation is strictly connected with it, and it powerfully influences the lives and conversations of such, who are partakers of it; yet it has not appeared to, nor in all men; all men have not faith, nor hope, nor love, nor any other graces of the Spirit: but by the grace of God is intended the doctrine of grace, the Gospel of the grace of God; called so, because it is a declaration of the grace of God, and of salvation by it: and is the means, in the hand of the Spirit, of conveying grace to the heart, and implanting it in it; in which sense the phrase is used in (<442024>Acts 20:24 <470601>2 Corinthians 6:1 <581215>Hebrews 12:15) and this is called the Gospel of salvation, the word of salvation, and salvation itself, and so may be said to bring it; it brings and publishes the good news of it; it shows unto men the way of salvation; it gives an account of the Saviour himself, that he is the great God, and so fit to be a Saviour; that he was appointed by God the Father to be his salvation; that he was sent, and came to work out salvation; and that he is become the author of it; and that he is the only Saviour, and an able, willing, and complete one: it gives an account of the salvation itself; that it is the salvation of the soul; that it is a great one, and includes both grace and glory; that it is everlasting, and all of free grace; and it points out the persons who are interested in it, and shall enjoy it, even all those that are chosen to it, and are redeemed, reconciled, and justified by the blood of Christ, and are brought to believe in him: and the Gospel not only brings the news of all this to the ear, in the external ministration of it; but it brings it to the heart, and is the power of God unto salvation, when it comes, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost; or when it comes under the powerful influences and application of the Spirit of God. Some read this clause thus, “that bringeth salvation to all men”; to which agrees the Syriac version, which renders it, lk tyjm, “that quickeneth” or “saveth all”; and so the Arabic version: but then this cannot be understood of every

individual person; for the Gospel has not brought salvation to everyone in any sense, not even in the external ministry of it; there have been multitudes who have never so much as heard the outward sound of salvation by Jesus Christ, and fewer still who have an application of it to their souls by the Spirit of God; to many to whom it has come, it has been an hidden Gospel, and the savour of death unto death: it follows indeed,

hath appeared to all men; which supposes it to have been hid, as it was, in the thoughts, purposes, and counsels of God; and in Jesus Christ, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid; and in the covenant of grace, of which the Gospel is a transcript; and in the types and shadows of the ceremonial law: it was in some measure hid from angels, who desire to look into it, and from the Old Testament saints, to whom it was not known as it is now, by the apostles and prophets; and it was entirely hid from the Gentiles, the times of whose ignorance God overlooked: and it suggests, that it now appeared or shone out more clearly, and more largely. The Gospel had been like a candle lighted up in one part of the world, only in Judea, but now it shone out like the sun in its meridian glory, and appeared to all men; not to every individual person; it has neither shined upon, nor in everyone: it did not in the apostle's time, when it appeared the most illustrious, and shone out the most extensively, as well as the most clearly; nor has it in ages since, nor does it in ours; there are multitudes who know nothing of it, and are neither under its form nor power: but this is to be understood of all sorts of men, of every nation, of every age and sex, of every state and condition, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, masters and servants; which sense well agrees with the context, (<scripRef passage="Titus 2:2-4,6,9,10" />) and the words are a reason why the apostle would have duty urged on all sorts of persons, because the Gospel was now preached to all; and it had reached the hearts of all sorts of men; particularly the Gentiles may be intended from whom the Gospel was before hid, and who sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death; but now the great light shined upon them, and the Gospel was no more confined to one people only, but was preached to every creature under heaven, or to the whole creation; namely, to the Gentiles, pursuant to the commission in (<scripRef passage="Mark 16:15" />).

Ver. 12. *Teaching us*, etc.] Not all men, to whom the Gospel appears in its outward ministry; for there are many who externally receive the Gospel, and profess it, who are never influentially taught by it to deny sin, or love holiness of life; they profess in words to know it, but in works deny it; they have a form of godliness, but deny its power: but the persons effectually

taught by the Gospel are the “us”, to whom it was come, not in word only, but in power; and so taught them, not only doctrinally, but with efficacy, both negative and positive holiness, as follows:

that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts; all impiety, or sin more immediately against God; or which is a violation of the first table of the law, as idolatry, will worship, superstition, perjury, and the like; and all sinful lusts, as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life; which fill the world, and are reigning lusts in it, and which are common to the men of the world; and they are under the power of: to “deny” these, is to abhor and detest them, and to abstain from them, and have nothing to do with them: and this lesson of self-denial, or of the denial of sinful self, the Gospel teaches, and urges upon the most powerful motives and arguments; and when attended by the Spirit of God, does it effectually: so that

we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; not, only “temperately”, but wisely and prudently, as children of the light, on whom, and into whom the Gospel has shined; and “righteously” among men, giving to every man his due, and dealing with all according to the rules of equity and justice; as being made new men, created unto righteousness and true holiness; and as being dead to sin, through the death of Christ, and so living unto righteousness, or in a righteous manner; and as being justified by the righteousness of Christ, revealed in the Gospel: and “godly”; in a godly manner, according to the Word of God, and agreeably to the will of God; and in all godly exercises, both public and private, and to the glory of God: and that as long as

in this present world: which lies in wickedness, and in which there are so many strong temptations to a contrary way of living. The Gospel then is no licentious doctrine; it is according to godliness, and teaches and promotes it; it is an holy faith, yea, a most holy faith; wherefore it is a vile slander to charge it with leading to looseness of life and conversation.

Ver. 13. *Looking for that blessed hope*, etc.] Not the grace of hope; though that being a good hope through grace, and a hope of blessedness, may be called a blessed hope; yet this the saints have already implanted in their hearts in regeneration, and cannot be said to look for it: rather Christ, the object and ground of hope, who is our hope, and Christ in us the hope of glory, who is blessed for evermore; and in the enjoyment of whom the happiness of the saints hereafter will greatly consist; and whom they look for, and expect from heaven, and who is expressly mentioned in the next

clause: but as this may be something distinct from that, it may be best, by this blessed hope, to understand the thing hoped for, eternal glory and happiness; called elsewhere the hope of righteousness, and the hope laid up in heaven, (Galatians 5:5 Colossians 1:5) and which will lie in the beatific vision of God and Christ; in a perfect knowledge of them, in communion with them, and conformity to them; and in the society of angels and glorified saints; and in a freedom from all evil, outward and inward, and in the possession of all good: and to be looking for this, is to be desiring it with the heart and affections set upon it, longing to be in the enjoyment of it, and yet waiting patiently in the exercise of faith and hope; for looking includes all the three graces, faith, hope, and love; and particularly the former, which is always attended with the latter; for it is such a looking for this blessedness, as that a man firmly believes he shall partake of it: and there is good reason for a regenerate man so to look for it; since it is his Father's gift of free grace, and is laid up for him; Christ is gone to prepare it by his presence, mediation, and intercession; yea, he is gone, as the forerunner, to take possession of it in his name: this man is begotten again to a lively hope of it; he is called by the grace of God unto it; he is a child of God, and so an heir of it; he has a right unto it, through the justifying righteousness of Christ, and has a meetness for it through the sanctifying grace of the Spirit; and who is in him as the earnest and pledge of it: now such a firm expectation of the heavenly glory does the Gospel, the doctrine of the grace of God, teach, direct, and encourage to; for these words must be read in connection with the preceding, as a further instruction of the Gospel, as well as what follows:

and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; not two divine persons, only one, are here intended; for the word: rendered “appearing”, is never used of God the Father, only of the second person; and the propositive article is not set before the word “Saviour”, as it would, if two distinct persons were designed; and the copulative “and” is exegetical, and may he rendered thus, “and the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ”; who, in the next verse, is said to give himself for the redemption of his people: so that here is a very illustrious proof of the true and proper deity of Christ, who will appear at his second coming; for of that appearance are the, words to be understood, as the great God, in all the glories and perfections of his divine nature; as well as a Saviour, which is mentioned to show that he will appear to the salvation of his people, which he will then put them in the full possession

of; and that the brightness of his divine Majesty will not make them afraid: and this appearance will be a glorious one; for Christ will come in his own glory, in the glory of his deity, particularly his omniscience and omnipotence will be very conspicuous; and in his glory as Mediator, which will be beheld by all the saints; and in his glory as a Judge, invested with power and authority from his Father, which will be terrible to sinners; and in the glory of his human nature, with which it is now crowned; and in his Father's glory, in the same he had with him before the world was, and which is the same with his, and in that which he will receive from him as man and Mediator, and as the Judge of the whole earth; and in the glory of his holy angels, being attended with all his mighty ones: to which may be added, that saints will be raised from the dead, and with the living ones appear with Christ in glory, and make up the bride, the Lamb's wife, having the glory of God upon her; so that this will be a grand appearance indeed. Now this the Gospel directs, and instructs believers to look for, to love, to hasten to, most earnestly desire, and yet patiently wait for, most firmly believing that it will be: and this the saints have reason to look for, with longing desire and affection, and with pleasure, since it will be not only glorious in itself, but advantageous to them; they will then be glorified with Christ, and be for ever with him.

Ver. 14. *Who gave himself for us*, etc.] Not another, or another's, but himself; not merely his own things, but his own self; not the world, and the riches of it, not gold and silver, and such like corruptible things, as the price of redemption; not the cattle on a thousand hills for sacrifice; not men nor angels, but himself; all that belong to him, all that is near and dear, his name, fame, credit, and reputation; his time, strength, and service: all the comforts of life, and life itself; his whole manhood, soul, and body, and that as in union with his divine person; which he gave into the hands of men, and of justice, and to death itself, to be a ransom price of his people, and for a propitiation and sacrifice for their sins, to be paid and offered in their room and stead: not for all mankind, but for many; for us, for all the elect of God, for the church; and who are represented when he gave himself, or died for them, as ungodly, sinners, and enemies: this was a free and voluntary gift, and is an unspeakable one; who can say all that is contained in this word “himself?” it is an instance of the greatest love, of love that passeth knowledge; God, because he could swear by no greater, swore by himself; and Christ, because he could give no greater gift, nor any greater instance of his love, gave himself, for the following ends and purposes:

that he might redeem us from all iniquity: sin brings into bondage and, slavery, redemption is a deliverance from it; sin binds guilt upon the sinner, and lays him under obligation to punishment, and renders him liable to the curse and condemnation of the law; Christ was made sin, and a curse for his people, that he might redeem them from both, and deliver them from the punishment due to sin; which he has done by bearing it in his own, body on the tree, whereby he has redeemed them from all iniquity, that so it shall not be their ruin, or they come into condemnation on account of it; even from original sin, and from all actual transgressions; from all which his blood cleanses, and his righteousness justifies, and which God, for his sake, freely and fully forgives. Christ was called to this work by his Father, to which he agreed; and the plan of redemption being drawn in the everlasting council, and the whole adjusted and fixed in the covenant of peace; promises and prophecies were given out of it, and in the fulness of time Christ was sent, and came to effect it; and he has obtained eternal redemption for us, through the price of his own blood, which could have never been wrought out by any creature; and wherein all the divine perfections are glorified and is a plenteous and complete one; it includes in it, or connects with it, the blessings of justification, peace, pardon, adoption, and eternal life. It follows as another end of Christ's giving himself, or what is a branch of redemption, or consequent upon it,

and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works; all mankind are filthy and unclean by nature, in all the powers and faculties of their souls; nor can they cleanse themselves from their impurity of flesh and spirit, by anything that they can do: Christ has a peculiar people among these, a church whom he loves, and for whom he has given himself, that he might sanctify and cleanse them from their sins; which he has done by shedding his blood for them, and washing them in it, which cleanses from all sin, and he has purified them unto himself, for his own use and service, for his pleasure and delight, and to his glory; that they might be a proper habitation for him now; and that they might be made ready for him, to have the marriage between, him and them consummated; and that they might be presented to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, and be with him, both in the new Jerusalem state, into which nothing that defiles, or is defiled, enters, and in heaven, to all eternity. Now these people, for whom Christ has given himself, and whom he has redeemed and purifies, are a “peculiar people”; for whom Christ has a peculiar love, in whom he takes a peculiar delight, and to whom he grants peculiar nearness to

himself, and bestows peculiar blessings on them, and makes peculiar provisions for them, both for time and eternity; these are Christ's own, his possession, his substance, what he has a special right to by his Father's gift, his own purchase, and the conquest of his grace; and they are a distinct and separate people from all others, in election, redemption, effectual calling, and in Christ's intercession, and will be in the resurrection morn, at the day of judgment, and to all eternity; and they are, as the word also signifies, an excellent and valuable people; they are Christ's portion and inheritance; they are his peculiar treasure, his jewels, whom, as such, he values and takes care of. The Syriac version renders it, “a new people”. And they who are redeemed and purified by Christ, through the power of his grace upon them, become a people “zealous of good works”; not in order to their justification and salvation, but in obedience to the will of God, and to testify their subjection and gratitude to him, and for his honour and glory, and for the credit of religion, and the good of men, These not only perform them, but perform them from principles of truth and love, and with a zeal for the glory of God, and the honour of his Gospel; and with an holy emulation of one another, striving to go before, and excel each other in the performance of them.

Ver. 15. *These things speak and exhort*, etc.] Sound doctrine, the doctrine of grace, the doctrines of salvation and redemption by Christ, of peace, pardon, and cleansing by his blood; these speak out clearly, plainly, publicly, boldly, and faithfully: and the things which become sound doctrine; the duties of religion suitable to every age and sex, a denying of ungodliness and worldly lusts, a sober, righteous, and godly life and conversation, exhort unto; and encourage the saints to be zealous of good works, and comfort them with the expectation of the blessed hope, and glorious appearance of Christ.

And rebuke with all authority; such as imbibe errors and heresies, or indulge to vice and wickedness, with the authority both of Christ and his church, in the name of the one, and by the order and vote of the other, that the reproof may come with the greater weight; and in a grave and solemn manner, suitable to the dignity of the ministerial office and character, and with that sharpness and severity the offence requires.

Let no man despise thee; as negligent in the discharge of his office, or as doing it in a pusillanimous manner, or as behaving in his life and conversation unworthy of the character he bore, and so is a direction to

himself; or else it may be considered as designed for the churches in Crete, and the professors of religion, and to be an instruction to them to value Titus, and treat him with respect, and not with contempt; which shows that this epistle was not written for Titus only, or for his own use, but for the service of others. The Ethiopic version reads, “let no man deceive thee”.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO TITUS 3

In this chapter the apostle exhorts Titus to press various duties incumbent on Christians, with arguments engaging to them; gives him some directions about dealing with heretics, and some instructions about private matters, and particular persons, and closes it with salutations. And first, he charges him to put his hearers in mind of their duty, to be subject to civil magistrates, and readily perform whatever is right and proper for them to do; and to abstain from blaspheming and brawling, and to exercise gentleness and meekness to all men, (Titus 3:1,2). The arguments inducing thereunto are taken partly from their former state and condition, while unregenerate: when they were as ignorant and as wicked as other men, they are exhorted to behave well to; and partly from the consideration of the salvation they were now partakers of, (Titus 3:3,4) which leads on the apostle to give an account of its causes and means: the moving cause of it is the love and mercy of God; the way and means in which it is brought about, are not works of righteousness done by men, but the regenerating and renewing grace of the Spirit, which is plentifully bestowed through Jesus Christ the Saviour, and justification by the free grace of God, by virtue of which men become heirs unto, and have an hope of eternal life, (Titus 3:4-7) which several blessings of grace should be constantly insisted on in the ministry of the word, in order to engage believers carefully to perform good works; and because such doctrines are good in themselves, and profitable to men; whereas questions, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law, are foolish, vain, and unprofitable, and to be avoided, (Titus 3:8,9), wherefore an heretical man should be rejected from all Christian conversation and communion, after he has been admonished at least twice, seeing he is off of the foundation, has sinned, and is self-condemned, (Titus 3:10,11). Next the apostle desires Titus to meet him at Nicopolis, where his design was to pass the winter, upon sending two ministering brethren to Crete, who are mentioned by name, (Titus 3:12) and that he would accommodate two others, who are also named, with everything convenient for their journey, (Titus 3:13) and charges him to exhort the brethren under his care to learn to be diligent and

industrious in the performance of good works, which have their necessary uses, and prevent unfruitfulness, (Titus 3:13,14). And the epistle is concluded with salutations, and the apostle's usual benediction, (Titus 3:15).

Ver. 1. *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers*, etc.] Not angels, good or bad, which are sometimes so called, but men in high places; the higher powers ordained of God, as the apostle elsewhere calls them; and which the Apostle Peter distinguishes into the king as supreme, and into governors under him: the Roman emperor and senate, the consuls, and proconsuls, deputies and governors of provinces and islands, are here meant; particularly such who were appointed over the island of Crete. Now the reasons why the apostle exhorts Titus to put in remembrance those that were under his care, to yield a cheerful subjection to their superiors, were, because the Jews, from whom the Christians were not distinguished by the Romans, were reckoned a turbulent and seditious people; which character they obtained, partly through the principles of the Scribes and Pharisees, which they at least privately entertained, as not to give tribute to Caesar, or be under any Heathen yoke; and partly through the insurrections that had been made by Judas of Galilee, and Theudas, and others; and besides, there were many Jews in the island of Crete, and the Cretians themselves were prone to mutiny and rebellion: to which may be added, that the false teachers, and judaizing preachers, that had got among them, despised dominion, and were not afraid to speak evil of dignities, according to the characters which both Peter and Jude give of them, and taught the saints to abuse their Christian liberty, and use it for a cloak of maliciousness, to the great scandal of the Christian religion.

To obey magistrates; inferior ones; in all things that are according to the laws of God, and right reason, that do not contradict what God has commanded, or break in upon the rights and dictates of conscience; in all things of a civil nature, and which are for the good of society, and do not affect religion, and the worship of God: hence it follows,

to be ready to every good work; which may be taken in a limited and restrained sense, and design every good work enjoined by the civil magistrate; and all right and lawful obedience that belongs to him, as giving to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, tribute, custom, fear, and honour to whom they are due; and which should be done readily and cheerfully: or it may be understood more comprehensively of good works in general, which

wicked men are reprobate to, and unfit for; and which they that are sanctified are meet for, and ready to; though this may not only intend their capacity, fitness, and qualifications, for the performance of good works, but their alacrity, promptitude, and forwardness unto them.

Ver. 2. *To speak evil of no man*, etc.] As not of one another, so not of the men of the world, to the prejudice of their names and characters, which are tender things, and ought to be gently touched; nor of magistrates, principalities, and powers, of persons in dignity and authority, which the false teachers were not afraid to speak evil of, and by their principles and practices taught others to do the same:

to be no brawlers; or "fighters", either by blows or words; not litigious and quarrelsome, wrangling and striving about things to no profit, and to the detriment and disturbance of civil government, churches, neighbourhood, and families; which is very unbecoming the followers of Jesus, who strove not, nor cried, nor was his voice heard in the streets. But gentle, showing all meekness to all men; yielding and giving way, rather choosing to suffer wrong than to brawl, contend, and litigate a point; taking the advice of Christ in (40Matthew 5:39-41), carrying it in a meek and humble manner to men of all ranks and degrees, whether superior or inferior, rich or poor, bond or free, Jews or Gentiles, members of the church, or men of the world.

Ver. 3. *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish*, etc.] Nothing has a greater tendency to promote humility, and check pride in the saints, than to reflect upon their past state and condition, what they themselves once were; and this is a reason why magistrates, though evil men, should be obeyed in things good and lawful, and why no man should be spoken evil of, and why every man should be treated in a gentle manner, and used with mildness and meekness; since the apostle himself, and Titus, and other saints, whom he designed this as an instruction for, were formerly, in their unregenerate state, just such persons themselves; and therefore should not glory over them, and treat them in a contemptuous manner: and besides, the same grace that had made a difference in them, could make one in these also, and which might be made in God's own time: and particularly, whereas they observed great ignorance in these men, they should consider that they also had been "foolish", and without understanding of things, divine and spiritual, and neither knew their own state and condition, nor the way of salvation by Christ; yea, the apostle himself, though he had a

zeal for God, yet not according to knowledge; he did not know lust, nor the exceeding sinfulness of sin, until he was enlightened by the Spirit of God; he was ignorant of the righteousness of God, and went about to establish his own, which he imagined to be blameless; and thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus:

disobedient; both to the law of God, and Gospel of Christ; disbelieving the truths of the Gospel, and not subjected to the ordinances of it, notwithstanding the evidence with which they came, and the miracles by which they were confirmed.

Deceived; by the old serpent Satan, who deceives the whole world; and by an evil heart of unbelief, as well as by false teachers and leaders; and so, as the word signifies, were wandering about in darkness and ignorance, and were as sheep going astray, until they were returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

Serving divers lusts and pleasures; the lusts of the flesh are many and various, which promise pleasure to them that obey them, though that is but imaginary, and very short lived, and which subjects persons to bondage and slavery; for such who indulge to these things, are overcome by them, led captive, and brought into bondage, and are the servants of sin, vassals and slaves to their own corruptions; and such these saints had been, here spoken of:

living in malice and envy; they had not only malice and envy in their hearts against their fellow creatures, but practised it in their lives; yea, their lives were a continued series of malice and envy; particularly this was true of the apostle, who haled men and women out of their houses, and committed them to prison; breathed out slaughter and threatenings against the saints; was exceedingly mad against them, persecuted them to strange cities, and compelled them to blaspheme, and gave his vote for punishing them with death.

Hateful, and hating one another; abominable in the sight of God, as considered in themselves, and on account of their nature and practices; and to be abhorred by all good men; and who, by their continual feuds, quarrels, and animosities among themselves, showed an hatred, an abhorrence of one another.

Ver. 4. *But after that*, etc.] After all this series and course of wickedness; notwithstanding all this foolishness, disobedience, deception, bondage to

sin, envy, malice, and malignity; or “when” all this was, as the word may be rendered, amidst all this iniquity; when these persons were in the full career of sin, and so had done no preparatory works, or had any previous qualifications and dispositions for the grace of God:

the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared; unto them; and the Ethiopic version adds, “unto us”. The apostle takes the advantage of the above character of himself, and others in their former state, to set off and magnify the grace of God in their conversion; so contraries, as black and white, illustrate each other. By “God our Saviour” is not meant the Lord Jesus Christ, though he is commonly designed by our Saviour, and is several times called God our Saviour in this epistle; (see <5001>Titus 1:3 <5002>2:10, 13) and who is truly God, and the only Saviour of lost sinners; and whose kindness and love towards them has appeared in many instances; as in his suretiship undertakings for them, in his assumption of their nature, and in his suffering and dying in their room and stead: and yet it appears from (<5003>Titus 3:6) that God our Saviour here, is distinguished from Jesus Christ our Saviour there; and therefore here must be understood of God the Father; who contrived the scheme of salvation, appointed Christ to be his salvation, and made a covenant with him, in which it secured, and sent him in time to obtain it, and through his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, saves all his people: it is his kindness and love to men that is here spoken of; and which designs not his general and providential goodness and kindness, which extends to the whole human nature, and to all the individuals of it; but his special love and grace shown in his kindness in Christ Jesus; that good will to men the angels sung of at Christ's incarnation; or that free favour and love of God towards elect men, which is sovereign and special, from everlasting to everlasting, unchangeable and unspeakable, which is better than life; the excellency of which cannot be expressed, and which has shown itself in various instances: it is said to have “appeared”; because it was hid from all eternity in the heart of God, in the thoughts of his heart, in his purposes, counsel, and covenant, and has been made manifest in time; particularly, it has broke forth and showed itself in the mission of Christ into this world, and in redemption and salvation by him; wherein God has manifested and commended his love, and shown forth the exceeding riches of his grace; and also in the effectual calling, which being a time of life, is a time of love, and is owing to the great love of God, and is a fruit and evidence of his everlasting and unchangeable love; and it is this instance and appearance of

it, which is here meant, since it follows the account of the state and condition of the saints by nature; and is what was made to them when in this state, by which means they were brought out of it.

Ver. 5. *Not by works of righteousness which we have done*, etc.] The great instance of the kindness and love of God our Saviour is salvation; which the apostle denies that it is brought about by any works, even the best works of men; for "works of righteousness" are works done according to a righteous law, and in obedience to it; and in a righteous manner, from right principles of grace, in faith, and with a view to the glory of God; or otherwise they are not righteous actions, or works of righteousness; wherefore not works before, but after conversion, are here meant; for works before conversion are not properly works of righteousness: besides, these are such which we have done, who formerly were as before described, but now are regenerated and renewed by the Holy Ghost, and created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Now salvation, neither in whole, nor in part, is by these, either as causes; conditions, or means; (see Gill on "2 Timothy 1:9"); hqdx µyç[m, "works of righteousness", is a Jewish phrase used for righteous or good works [f25]

but according to his mercy he saved us; the mercy of God is natural and essential to him, but the actings and exercise of it, towards this or the other objects, are sovereign and free, and according to his will; the effects of it are many, he is rich and abundant in it; and they are channelled in, and flow forth through the blood and righteousness of Christ; and this is the moving cause of salvation: this moved God to make a covenant with his Son, the blessings of which are the sure mercies of David, and in which God is merciful to the sins and unrighteousnesses of his people; it is owing to the tender mercy of God, that Christ, the dayspring from on high, has visited the earth; and the glory of it is very conspicuous in the affair of redemption by him; the pardon of sin is according to the multitude of God's tender mercies; and regeneration springs from the abundance of it; and even eternal life is the effect of it. Now according to this, God has "saved" his people; salvation is not only a thing determined, and resolved on in the mind of God, but is actually and completely accomplished by Jesus Christ, and an application of it is made to the saints in effectual calling; and because of the certain enjoyment of the whole of it, even eternal glory, the saints are said to be saved already; as they are also in faith and hope, as well as in Christ, their head and representative; (see Gill on "Ephesians 2:8"). It follows, as the means of salvation,

by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; by the former is meant, not the ordinance of water baptism; for that is never expressed by washing, nor is it the cause or means of regeneration; the cause being the Spirit of God, and the means the word of God: and besides, persons ought to be regenerated before they are baptized; and they may be baptized, and yet not regenerated, as Simon Magus; nor is it a saving ordinance, or a point of salvation; nor can it be opposed to works of righteousness, as this washing is; for that itself is a work of righteousness; (see <40315>Matthew 3:15) and if persons were saved by that, they would be saved by a work of righteousness, contrary to the text itself: but regenerating grace is meant, or a being born of water, and of the Spirit; that is, of the grace of the Spirit, comparable to water for its purity and cleansing virtue: hence such who are regenerated and sanctified, are said to be washed and cleansed, having their hearts purified by faith, and their consciences purged from sin by the blood of Christ: by the latter,

the renewing of the Holy Ghost, is meant either the fruit and effect of the former, even newness of life and conversation, under the influence of the Holy Spirit; or else the gradual increase and progress of the work of grace upon the soul, renewed day by day in the spirit of the mind, by the Holy Ghost; or rather it means the same thing with regeneration, and is added partly as explanative of the washing of regeneration, showing that that is no other than the new creature, the new man, the new heart, and new spirit, formed in the soul, in the effectual calling; and partly to observe that the Holy Ghost is the author of it. Now it is in this way God saves his people, namely, by regenerating and renewing them; in this is the first appearance and discovery of the love of God to them; this is their open passage into a state of grace, and without this there is no entrance into glory; this is the foundation of all grace and good works, and by which saints appear to be heirs of the heavenly inheritance.

Ver. 6. *Which he shed on us abundantly*, etc.] “Or richly”; either which love he shed abroad in the hearts of those whom he regenerated and renewed by his Spirit; or which water of regeneration, that is, grace, comparable to water, he plentifully shed, and caused to abound where sin had done; or rather whom, or which Holy Spirit, with his gifts and graces, such as faith, hope, and love, and every other, he poured forth in great abundance on them; (see <23443>Isaiah 44:3; <540114>1 Timothy 1:14)

through Jesus Christ our Saviour; the love and kindness of God the Father our Saviour, comes through him; the mercy of God streams through him; the salvation itself is by, and through him; the grace communicated in regeneration and renovation is out of his fulness; the Spirit himself is given forth from him; and every supply of grace, by which the work is carried on, comes out of his hands; and everything wrought in us, that is well pleasing in the sight of God, is through him; and even the gift of God, eternal life itself.

Ver. 7. *That being justified by his grace*, etc.] This is another way and means, as well as regeneration, by which God saves his people; for he saves no unjustified ones; no unrighteous persons shall inherit the kingdom of heaven; such as are without the wedding garment, and robe of Christ's righteousness, shall be cast into outer darkness: whom God saves, he justifies by the righteousness of his Son; and whomsoever he justifies, them he saves. The justification here spoken of is a declarative one, which takes place in regeneration; and which that is in order to, as here expressed, "that being justified": regeneration does not justify any, but makes the justified to appear to be such; justification is an act of God's gracious will conceived in his mind from eternity, by which he wills not to impute sin to his people, but to Christ their surety; and that they should be accounted righteous through the righteousness of his Son; in which act of his will the whole essence of justification in his sight lies: this was pronounced on Christ, as their head and representative at his resurrection, when he, as such, was justified, acquitted, and discharged, and they in him; and this is declared in the conscience of a sinner, by the Spirit of God, at his regeneration, when he passes from death to life; and this declaration is here intended, and which is the same with justification by faith; and is here said to be by the grace of God, as justification in every view is, and stands opposed to works of righteousness done by men, by which no man can be justified in the sight of God; in what sense justification is by the free grace of God, (see Gill on "Romans 3:24").

We should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life; or "according to hope we should be made heirs of eternal life". Eternal life is an inheritance, and so is not acquired by labour and industry, nor purchased, but is a free gift; it is a bequest of God the Father to his children, of his own free good will and pleasure; and it belongs only to children; they only are heirs, and they become such by adopting grace; neither regeneration, nor justification, make them the children of God, and

heirs of the grace of life, but make them appear to be so: God, by his gracious act of adoption puts them among the children, and gives them the goodly heritage; and this adoption lies in eternal predestination in Christ, in whom the inheritance is obtained on that account, (<4005>Ephesians 1:5,11). Regeneration shows them to be the adopted ones, and gives them the nature of children, and a meetness for the inheritance; and justification gives them a right unto it, upon the foot of justice, and opens a way for their enjoyment of it, consistent with the justice and holiness of God; (see <4004>Galatians 4:4,5), wherefore such as are washed with the washing of regeneration, and are renewed in the spirit of their minds, and justified by the grace of God; these are manifestly heirs of eternal life, of salvation, of a kingdom and glory, of all things, even of God himself, who is their portion, and exceeding great reward; and such in regeneration are begotten to a lively hope of it, and by this they are saved, (<4524>Romans 8:24). And thus the apostle makes regeneration by the free mercy of God, and justification by his grace, and special adoption, and heirship, with a good hope through grace, the way and means in which God saves his people, who were like others by nature, and brings them to the enjoyment of eternal happiness.

Ver. 8. *This is a faithful saying*, etc.] Meaning the whole of what is before expressed, concerning the state and condition of God's elect by nature; the appearance of the love and kindness of God to them in the effectual calling; the salvation of them, according to the mercy of God, and not by works of righteousness; regeneration, and renovation by the Spirit of God, in which such an abundance of grace is communicated; and justification by the free grace of God, as God's way of salvation; and by which men are made to appear to be heirs of eternal life, and to have hope of it: now all, and each of this is a faithful saying, is true doctrine, and to be believed, professed, and published: wherefore it follows,

and these things I will that thou affirm constantly; that is, the above doctrines; the Arabic version renders it, “I will that thou be firm in these things”; and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, “I will that thou confirmest them”: the sense of the apostle is, that he would have Titus be assured of those truths himself; be at a point about them, and without any doubt or hesitation concerning them; and abide firm and constant in them, and speak of them with certainty, boldness, and confidence to others; and endeavour to confirm and establish them in them: for which purpose he would have them be frequently inculcated and insisted on; and that with this further view,

that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works; for “that”, does not design the subject matter of the charge, or what the apostle would have constantly affirmed, but the end, and final event and issue of it; and nothing can more strongly engage to a studious concern for the performance of good works than the frequent insisting upon the above doctrines of grace: “by good works”, are meant, not merely honest trades, and the lawful occupations and businesses of life, which should be carefully attended to, and diligently followed, in order to be useful and profitable to themselves, their families, and others; but every good work, every branch of duty, moral, civil, and religious: to “maintain” these according to the signification of the word used, is to excel in them; to outdo others; to go before others, by way of example, and so to provoke to love and to good works; and to make them the employment and business of men's lives; for which there should be a thoughtfulness, a carefulness, a studious concern, especially in those who “have believed in God”; who are regenerated and renewed by the Spirit of God, and are justified by faith in the righteousness of Christ; who believe in him for peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation: these are under great obligations to perform good works; the love of Christ should constrain them to them; and they are the only persons that are capable of doing them well, for they are sanctified, and made meet, and ready for every good work; they are created in Christ Jesus to them; they have the Spirit of Christ in them, and the strength of Christ with them, without which they cannot be performed well; and they have faith in Christ, without which it is impossible to please God.

These things are good and profitable unto men: which is to be understood not of good works, though these are good in themselves, and profitable to men in their effects; being done among them, and before them, they set them an example of doing good likewise, when evil communications corrupt good manners; and many of them issue in their temporal good, profit, and advantage: but rather the doctrines of the Gospel are here designed, which are before briefly treated of, and are said to be a faithful saying; and which the apostle would have affirmed with, certainty and constancy, in order to engage believers to the performance of good works; and that for this reason, because these doctrines are “good”, excellent, valuable, and precious, comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones: the author, matter, end, and use of them are good; they come from God; they are concerning Jesus Christ, and his grace; they contain good tidings of good things; and are exceeding useful to influence faith, hope, love, and a

cheerful obedience to the will of God: they are profitable in the hands of the Spirit of God for conviction, conversion, comfort, and edification; for the quickening and enlightening of dead and dark sinners; for the reviving, establishing, and building up of the saints; they are the wholesome words of Christ, and are according to godliness, and are nourishing, when other doctrines eat as a canker: and this sense is confirmed, not only by what goes before, but by what follows after in the next verse; where insipid notions and controversies are opposed unto them, as unprofitable and vain.

Ver. 9. *But avoid foolish questions*, etc.] Such as were started in the schools of the Jews; (see 2 Timothy 2:23)

and genealogies; of their elders, Rabbins, and doctors, by whom their traditions are handed down from one to another, in fixing which they greatly laboured; (see 1 Timothy 1:4) and contentions and strivings about the law; the rites and ceremonies of it, and about the sense of it, and its various precepts, as litigated in the schools of Hillell and Shammai, the one giving it one way, and the other another; and what one declared to be free according to the law, the other declared forbidden; which occasioned great contentions and quarrels between the followers of the one, and of the other, as both the Misna and Talmud show: and agreeably to this sense, the Syriac version renders it, “the contentions and strifes of the scribes”; the Jewish doctors, who were some on the side of Hillell, and others on the side of Shammai; as well as went into parties and strifes among themselves, and oftentimes about mere trifles; things of no manner of importance; wherefore it follows,

for they are unprofitable and vain; empty things, of no manner of use, to inform the judgment, improve the mind, or influence the life and conversation.

Ver. 10. *A man that is an heretic*, etc.] An heretic, according to the notation of the word, is either one that makes choice of an opinion upon his own judgment, contrary to the generally received sense of the churches of Christ, and prefers it to theirs, and obstinately persists in it; separates from them, forms a party, and sets himself at the head of them, whom he has drawn into the same way of thinking with himself: or he is one that removes and takes away a fundamental doctrine of Christianity, which affects particularly the doctrine of the Trinity, the deity, and personality of Father, Son, and Spirit, and especially the doctrines relating to the person, office, and grace of Christ; one that brings in, or receives damnable

doctrines; speaks or professes perverse things, and draws away disciples after him; or is among such disciples: for though schism and heresy do differ, and every schismatic may not be an heretic, yet every heretic is a schismatic; he makes a rent in the doctrine of Christ, and makes parties and divisions in his church; and such are not always to be contended and disputed with, but to be avoided and rejected:

after the first and second admonition reject; have nothing to do with him; have no society with him; admit him not to private conversation; and eject him from church communion, after he has been publicly admonished twice by the order of the church; for this is not to be understood of private admonition, by a particular person or persons; as in the case of private offences, (<4018 15>Matthew 18:15,16) but of public admonition, in the name of the church. An admonition with the Jews did not continue less than seven days [f26]; some say [f27] thirty; that is, there were so many days before it was out, or between one and another.

Ver. 11. *Knowing that he that is such is subverted*, etc.] Or overturned and demolished; he is like an edifice, that is not only decaying, and falling, but is entirely everted, and pulled down; so that there is no hopes of a restoration or recovery; he is in a desperate condition, having opposed the person, or office, or sacrifice of Christ; having either trodden the Son of God underfoot, or counted his blood common, or done despite unto the spirit of grace; in either of which cases there is no more sacrifice for sin:

and sinneth; not practically, but doctrinally, and wilfully after he has received the knowledge of the truth; by denying the truth he received, in which he continues, notwithstanding the evidence of the word of God is against him; and; notwithstanding the arguments taken from it by the ministers of the Gospel, to convince him; and notwithstanding the admonitions of the church to recover him out of the snare of the devil:

being condemned of himself; not that an heretic is one that is convinced in his own conscience that he is in an error, and that that is a truth which he opposes; and yet he obstinately persists in the one, and continues to set himself against the other; for then, none but an hypocrite, that conceals his true sentiment, can be an heretic; nor can any man be known to be one unless he accuses himself; since no man can know the heart of another; and it would be impracticable in a church to deal with heretics, or reject and excommunicate them: but either the meaning is, that he is such an one, who by his own practice has condemned himself; for whereas he has

separated himself not only from the faith of the church, but from the church itself; by so doing he practically condemns himself, or judges himself unworthy of the communion of the church, and so justifies the church in their rejection and exclusion of him: or rather, an heretic is one who having professed Christianity, and received the Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice, and still professes to abide by the same, and that all doctrine is to be tried by them, and to be approved or condemned as that agrees or disagrees with them, stands condemned by those Scriptures, which he himself allows to be the rule of decision and determination; and so may be said to be self-condemned.

Ver. 12. *When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus*, etc.] These were both of them ministers of the Gospel; there is no mention of Artemas anywhere else; some say he was one of the seventy disciples, and that he was afterwards bishop of Lystra; but these are uncertain things; (see Gill on "Luke 10:1"); the name is a contraction of Artemidorus. Tychicus is often spoken of; and a very great character is given of him by the apostle, in (Ephesians 6:21),

be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis; which was a city, not in Epirus, but in Thrace, situated by the river Nessus, and had its name from a victory obtained there: hither the apostle would have Titus come to him, after one or other of the above ministers were come to Crete; for as the apostle had the care of all the churches upon him, he would not remove a minister from one place to another, without making a provision in their room: his reasons for having Titus come to him, might be either to know the state of the churches in Crete; or because he stood in need of his assistance; or to send him elsewhere:

for I have determined there to winter; that is, to continue there all the winter; not without labour, but to preach the Gospel, and administer the ordinances to the saints there: and whereas he says "there"; this shows that this epistle was not written from thence, as the subscription asserts; for then he would have said "here", and not "there".

Ver. 13. *Bring Zenas the lawyer*, etc.] Whether he was brought up to the civil law, either among the Greeks or Romans, is not certain; it may be he was a Jewish lawyer, or scribe, an interpreter of Moses's law among the Jews; for with them a lawyer and a scribe were one and the same, as appears from (Matthew 22:35) compared with (Mark 12:28) and the Syriac version here calls him "a scribe", and the Ethiopic version "a scribe

of the city"; which looks as if it was a civil office he bore; but however, be he what he will, he seems to have been now a preacher of the Gospel, being joined with Apollos, who certainly was one: he is said to have been one of the seventy disciples of Christ, and afterwards bishop of Diospolis; (see Gill on "<4201>Luke 10:1"); his name is the contraction of Zenodorus: him the apostle would have Titus bring,

and Apollos, on their journey diligently; who was a Jew born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures; who had preached at Corinth, but was now at Crete; and whom the apostle, with Zenas, would have provided with everything necessary for their journey:

that nothing be wanting unto them; which might be proper for them in their travels, to make them comfortable, and their journey pleasant and easy.

Ver. 14. *And let ours also learn to maintain good works*, etc.] By which are not only meant honest trades, as some choose to render the words: it is true, that a trade is a work; and an honest lawful employment of life is a good work; and which ought to be maintained, attended to, and followed, and to be learnt, in order to be followed. The Jews say, that he that does not teach his son a trade, it is all one as if he taught him to rob or steal; hence their doctors were brought up to trades; (see Gill on "<4003>Mark 6:3"); as was the Apostle Paul, though he had an education under Gamaliel: and such an one is to be learned and maintained for necessary uses, for the good of a man's self, and for the supply of his family; for the assistance of others that are in need; for the support of the Gospel, and the interest of Christ; and for the relief of poor saints; that such may not be unfruitful and useless, in commonwealths, neighbourhoods, churches, and families. The Jews say [f28]

> "there are four things which a man should constantly attend to with all his might, and they are these; the law, "good works", prayer, ˆwda Ærdw, and "the way of the earth", or "business"; if a tradesman, to his trade; if a merchant, to his merchandise; if a man of war to war."

But though this may be part of the sense of these words, it is not the whole of it; nor are acts of beneficence to the poor of Christ, to the household of faith, to strangers and ministers, to whom good is especially to be done, only intended; though they, may be taken into the account, in agreement with the context; but all good works in general, which are done in

conformity to the revealed will of God, in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God, are meant: to maintain them, is to endeavour to outdo others in them, not only the men of the world, but one another; and to set examples of them to others, and to provoke one another, by an holy emulation, to them; and to be constant in the performance of them: and which believers may "learn" partly from the Scriptures, which contain what is the good and perfect will of God; these show what are good works, and direct unto them, and furnish the man of God for them; and also the grace part of the Scripture, the doctrines of the grace of God, teach to deny sin, and to live sober, righteous, and godly lives; and from the examples of the apostles and followers of Christ; and above all from Christ himself, the great pattern and exemplar of good works: and this lesson of good works is to be learnt by ours; meaning not only those of the same function, who were in the same office, ministers of the Gospel, as were the apostle and Titus; but all that believed in God, who were of the same Christian community and society, professors of the same religion, and partakers of the same grace; and were not only nominally, but really of the same number, even of the number of God's elect, the redeemed from among men, the family of Christ, sharers in the common faith, and heirs of the grace of life; who lie under the greatest obligations to learn to do good works: "for necessary uses"; not to make their peace with God, or to atone for their sins, or to procure the pardon of them, or to cleanse them from them, or for their justification before God, or to obtain salvation and eternal life; but to glorify God, testify their subjection to him, and gratitude for mercies received; to show forth their faith to men; to adorn the doctrine of Christ, and a profession of it; to recommend religion to others; to stop the mouths of gainsayers, and put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: and "that they be not unfruitful"; in them, and in the knowledge of Christ; good works are the fruits of the Spirit, and of his grace; they are fruits of righteousness; and such as are without them are like trees without fruit, useless and unprofitable.

Ver. 15. *All that are with me salute thee*, etc.] All the apostles, fellow labourers, and the ministers of the Gospel that were with him; and all the members of the church where he was, sent their Christian salutation to Titus; he being a person greatly esteemed, and whose praise was in all the churches:

greet them that love us in the faith; not merely as men, as their countrymen, as related to them in the flesh; or on account of any external

things, but as believers; because of the doctrine of faith, professed and preached; and because of the grace of faith obtained and possessed; or who love us faithfully, sincerely, and uprightly, from their hearts, and not in word and tongue only:

grace be with you all, Amen; which is the common concluding salutation in all Paul's epistles. This shows that this epistle was not designed for Titus only, but for the saints at Crete.

It was written to Titus the first bishop of the church of the Cretians. But this subscription, as many others, is not to be depended upon; it is not very likely that Titus was bishop of this church at all; since his stay there was but short, nor indeed elsewhere, seeing he was an evangelist; though this is asserted both by Eusebius [f29], and Sophronius [f30], who adds, that he died and was buried here: and what follows, that it was written

from Nicopolis of Macedonia, does not seem to be just, as may be concluded from (Titus 3:12). Many learned men think it was written from Colosse, or some neighbouring place; though when he wrote his epistle to the Colossians it looks as if he had never been there before: the Syriac version adds, “sent by the hands of Zenas and Apollos”; which is not unlikely, since he desires they might be accommodated by Titus with what was necessary for the remaining part of their journey, (Titus 3:13).

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Vid. Martial. Epigram. 50:1. ep. 18. 50:7. ep. 48.

Ft2 -- T. Hieros. Trumot, c. 8. fol. 45. 3.

Ft3 -- T. Hieros. Trumot Biccurim, fol. 65. 4. & Succa, fol. 55. 4.

Ft4 -- Plin. 50:4. c. 12. Mela, 50:2. c. 14. Solin, c. 16.

Ft5 -- Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 24.

Ft6 -- Sophronius in Hieron. Catalog. Script. Eccl. c. 38. 40.

Ft7 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 5. c. 9. p. 425. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 255. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 9. c. 2. p. 4.

Ft8 -- Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 5.

Ft9 -- Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. col. 2026.

Ft10 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 30. 2.

Ft11 -- Cornel. Nepos, 50:23. c. 9.

Ft12 -- Laert. 50:1. Vita Epimenidis.

Ft13 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier, 50:4. c. 17.

Ft14 -- Florida, sect. 15.

Ft15 -- Ib.

Ft16 -- Hymn. 50:in Jovem, 5:8.

Ft17 -- Alex. ab Alex. 50:4. c. 13.

Ft18 -- De Arte Amandi, 50:1.

Ft19 -- Alex. ab Alex. ib.

Ft20 -- Minn. Orla, c. 2. sect. 17.

Ft21 -- Bartenora, in Misn. Orla, c. 2. sect. 17.

Ft22 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 45. fol. 40. 3.

Ft23 -- Maimon. Hilchot Ishot, c. 13. sect. 11.

Ft24 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 5. 4.

Ft25 -- Seder Tephillot, Ed. Amsterdam, fol. 46. 2.

Ft26 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1.

Ft27 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 33. fol. 28. 3.

Ft28 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 32. 2. & Gloss. in. ib.

Ft29 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 4.

Ft30 -- In Hieron. Eccl. Script. Catalog. sect. 12.

PHILEMON

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF PHILEMON

This epistle was written by the Apostle Paul, when a prisoner at Rome, as appears from its inscription and subscription; and seems to have been written at the same time, in the year 60, and sent by the same hand, as the epistle to the Colossians; seeing the same persons were with the apostle at the writing of both, and send their Christian salutations in the one, as in the other; compare (<57023>Philemon 1:23,24) with (<51040>Colossians 4:10,12,14) and Archippus, the minister in Colosse, is made mention of in both, (<57002>Philemon 1:2 <51047>Colossians 4:17) and it is very probable that Philemon, to whom it was written, was a Colossian, since Onesimus, his servant, on whose account, and by whom it was sent, is said to be one of the Colossians, (<51049>Colossians 4:9). Philemon is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and afterwards Bishop of Gaza; (see Gill on "<42001>Luke 10:1"). The occasion of the epistle was this; Philemon's servant, Onesimus, having either embezzled his master's goods, or robbed him, ran away from him, and fled to Rome, where the apostle was a prisoner in chains in his own hired house, under the custody of a soldier, and where he received all that came, and preached the Gospel to them, (<44830>Acts 28:30) and among those that went to hear him, this fugitive servant was one, and was converted under his ministry; and who not only received the grace of God, but had such gifts bestowed on him as qualified him to be a preacher of the word. Now the design of this epistle is to reconcile Philemon to his servant, and to entreat him to receive him again, not only as a servant, but as a brother in Christ; and the most proper and prudent methods and arguments are used to engage him to it. The epistle, though it is a familiar one, and short, is very instructive; it shows great humility in the apostle, and that he did not think it below him to be concerned in doing such an office as to reconcile a master to his servant, and which is worthy of imitation; as also it teaches the right that masters have over their servants, which is not lost by their becoming Christians, and even ministers of the Gospel; and that recompense should be made unto them for injuries done

by them: it likewise displays the riches of the grace of God, in the conversion of such a vile creature: and the wonderful providence of God in overruling that which was sinful in itself, running away from his master, to the greatest good, even the conversion of him; and is an instance of surprising grace: and from hence may be learned, that there is salvation in Christ for the chief of sinners; and that the conversion of them is not to be despaired of. The authority of this epistle was not questioned by the ancient writers, and stands always in their catalogues of the canon of the Scripture; and Marcion the heretic, who either rejected, or changed, or mutilated the rest of the epistles, could not lay his hands on this, because of the brevity of it, as Tertullian [f1] and Jerom [f2] observe.

PHILEMON

INTRODUCTION TO PHILEMON 1

This epistle has an inscription, salutation, and preface, the same with others, which are in (<5701>Philemon 1:1-4), the principal view of it is to persuade Philemon to receive his servant Onesimus; the arguments used are taken from the general character he had for love to the saints, and people of God, and therefore it was hoped he would act up to it in this instance, (<5705>Philemon 1:5-7), from the consideration of the person who made the suit to him, who could have used authority, but chose rather to entreat him in love; and also of his age, and the condition in which he was, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, (<5708>Philemon 1:8,9) from the spiritual relation Onesimus was in to the apostle, who had begotten him in his bonds, (<5710>Philemon 1:10) from the present usefulness of him, both to Philemon and the apostle, who before was useless, (<5711>Philemon 1:11), from the strong affection the apostle had for him, being as his own bowels, (<5712>Philemon 1:12) from his unwillingness to do anything without his consent, though he could have detained him upon the foot of equity and justice, to have served him in his stead, (<5713>Philemon 1:13,14), from the overruling providence of God, which had so ordered it, that he should depart from him for a time, that he might be received for ever, (<5715>Philemon 1:15) from the character under which he could now be received, not as a servant, but as a beloved brother, (<5716>Philemon 1:16) from the partnership and association in which the apostle and Philemon were, (<5717>Philemon 1:17) from the assurance he gave him of repaying him whatever his servant owed him, and making good whatever he had injured him in, (<5718>Philemon 1:18,19) and from that pleasure, delight, and refreshment he should have, should he receive him, (<5720>Philemon 1:20). And, upon the whole, the apostle expresses his confidence that he would grant his request, obey his commands, and even do more than he had mentioned to him, (<5721>Philemon 1:21). And then gives him some hope of his being delivered from prison, through the prayers of Philemon, and others, and of seeing him shortly; and therefore desires he would prepare a lodging for him, (<5722>Philemon 1:22) and closes with the salutations of several friends to him, mentioned by name, with their characters,

(Philemon 1:23,24) and with his own common salutation, (Philemon 1:25).

Ver. 1. *Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ*, &c.] Not made a prisoner by Christ, though he was apprehended, laid hold on, and detained by Christ as a prisoner of hope, at his conversion; but this is not intended here: but he was a prisoner at Rome for the sake of Christ, on account of professing him, and preaching in his name; his bonds were for the sake of the Gospel of Christ; and therefore they are in this epistle called the bonds of the Gospel. He was not a prisoner for any capital crime, and therefore had no reason to be ashamed of his chain, nor was he; but rather gloried in it, as his taking this title and character to himself, and prefixing it to this epistle shows; and which he chooses to make use of rather than that of a servant of God, or an apostle of Christ, as he elsewhere does, that he might not by constraint, or authority, but by love, move the pity and compassion of Philemon to grant his request, and receive his servant; which, should he deny, would be to add affliction to his bonds: and that this is his view in the choice of this character, is manifest from (Philemon 1:8,9)

and Timothy our brother, not according to the flesh, or as being of the same country, for he was the countryman of neither of them; nor only on account of his being a regenerate than, born of God, a child of God, and of the same family; but chiefly because he was of the same function, was a minister of the Gospel: him the apostle joins with himself in the epistle, and so in the request, because he might be well known to Philemon, and be much respected by him; and to show that they were united in this affair, and both desired this favour of him; hoping that by their joint application it would be obtained:

unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow labourer: the name of Philemon is Greek; there was a Greek poet of this name, and a Greek historian that Pliny made use of in compiling his history: there is indeed mention made in the Jewish writings [f3], of a Rabbi whose name was wmyl p, “Philemo”; but this our Philemon seems to have been an inhabitant of Colosse, and rather to have been a Gentile than a Jew; he was a rich and hospitable man, and greatly respected, and therefore here called, “our dearly beloved”; that is, dearly beloved by the apostle and Timothy, not only as being a believer, but as being also generous and useful in his station, and likewise as he was a minister of the Gospel; for so the next phrase, “and fellow labourer”, seems to import; for though such are

sometimes said to be labourers and fellow helpers with the apostle, who assisted in carrying on the interest of Christ, with their purses, and prayers, and private conversation; yet as it is used in this same epistle, of such who were in the work of the ministry, (<5024>Philemon 1:24) it is very probable it is so to be understood here: and now though these expressions of affection and respect were without dissimulation; nor were they mere compliments; yet the intention of them was to work upon the mind of Philemon, to reconcile him to his servant; suggesting, that as he had an interest in the affections of the apostle and others, this would be a means of establishing it, and would be acting agreeably to his character, as a minister of the Gospel.

Ver. 2. *And to our beloved Apphia*, &c.] The Alexandrian copy reads, “to sister Apphia”; and the Vulgate Latin version, “to the beloved sister Apphia”; for this is a woman's name; and it is thought that she was the wife of Philemon, since she is placed next to him, and before Archippus, a minister of the word; and very prudently is she wrote to, and justly commended, in order to engage her to use her interest with her husband to receive his servant again, who otherwise might have stood against it, and been a very great hinderance to a reconciliation: this clause is wanting in the Ethiopic version:

and Archippus our fellow soldier; that this Archippus was a preacher of the Gospel at Colosse is manifest from (<5047>Colossians 4:17) wherefore the apostle styles him a fellow soldier; for though this character belongs to private Christians, who are enlisted as volunteers under Christ, the Captain of salvation, and fight under his banners, against sin, Satan, and the world, being accoutred with the whole armour of God, and are more than conquerors through Christ that has loved them; yet it very eminently belongs to the ministers of the Gospel, who are more especially called upon, to endure hardness, as good soldiers of Christ; to war a good warfare, to fight the good fight of faith; and besides the above enemies common to all believers, to engage with false teachers, and earnestly contend for the faith of the Gospel, that so it may continue with the saints. Now this man was in the same company, and in the same service, engaged in the same common cause, against the same enemies, and under the same Captain, and was expecting the same crown of immortality and glory, and therefore he calls him his fellow soldier; and he wisely inscribes his epistle to him, that he might make use of the interest he had in Philemon, and his wife, to bring this matter to bear, the apostle writes about:

and to the church in thy house: not in the house of Archippus, but in the house of Philemon; and designs not the church at Colosse, as though it met at his house; but his own family, which for the great piety and religion which were among them, and for the good order and decorum in which they were kept, were like a church of themselves; and here again the apostle acts the wise part, in order to gain his point, by taking notice of them, who might some of them have been injured or affronted by Onesimus, when with them; and so entertained some resentment against him, and might put a bar in the way of his reception into the family again.

Ver. 3. *Grace to you and peace, from God*, &c.] Which is the same form of salutation used in the other epistles; (see Gill on "Romans 1:7") for though this epistle is but a very small one, yet it is introduced in the same form as the larger epistles are; and has an inscription in the former verse, a salutation in this, and a preface in the three following.

Ver. 4. *I thank my God*, &c.] Meaning on account, of Philemon, for the grace bestowed upon him, thereafter mentioned; (see Gill on "Romans 1:8") making other saints, (Romans 1:9 Ephesians 1:16 Philippians 1:3,4 Colossians 1:3 1 Thessalonians 1:2), the apostle was a man much in prayer, frequent at the throne of grace; and he prayed not for himself only, but for all the saints, for all the churches and ministers of the Gospel; whom he not only bore upon his mind and heart, but made mention of them, it may be by name; however, he remembered them, and put up petitions, with thanksgivings, for them; and so he did for Philemon; and which he takes notice of with the same view as before: the word, "always", is so placed in the original text, as to be put either to his thanks to God, or his prayers, and may be true of both; the Syriac and Arabic versions join it to the former; and the Vulgate Latin and the Ethiopic versions place it to the latter.

Ver. 5. *Hearing of thy love and faith*, &c.] Those two spring from the free favour and love of God, and are the pure gifts of his grace; and therefore thanks are to be given for them to God; nor are they to be ascribed to the power and will of man; they are the fruits of the Spirit of God; and are the principal ingredients in sanctification, which is entirely his work; and they are in all regenerate persons; and are the evidences of regeneration; by which it is known that men are passed from death to life; and they always go together, and are inseparable from each other: there cannot be true faith where love is wanting, for faith works by love; and there cannot be real

love, where there is not faith; they only love the saints aright, who love them in the faith, and because of it; and these graces are visible, and to be known by their fruits, whereby they come to be heard of, and talked of, as these in Philemon were. Faith in the heart is confessed by the mouth; and love, both to Christ and to his people, shows itself, as well as faith, in works of righteousness. Sometimes faith is put before love, it being a leading grace, and the great receiver of all the blessings of grace; and here love is placed before faith, because of its being more excellent on account of its continuance and duration; or there may be no design at all in it; but rather, as sometimes one, and sometimes another is mentioned first, it shows that they are upon an equal foot, and both have their proper place and usefulness; the objects of them follow:

which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints; which are either to be considered as equally objects of the same grace, or as distinct ones; that is, either that Christ is the object both of faith and love, and the saints are the object both of faith and love; or else these graces are to be distinguished by their respective objects; as that faith is toward Christ, and love toward all the saints: that Christ is both the object of faith and love is certain; nor is there any difficulty to consider him as such; faith is equally to be exercised on him, as on God the Father; and he is indeed the immediate object of faith, and by whom men believe in God; and he is to be loved, and is loved by his people above all things, and at all times, and in sincerity: and that the saints are the objects of the love of all truly gracious souls, is a plain case; but the greater difficulty is, how they should be the objects of their faith; and yet there are instances of this, (<2143>Exodus 14:31 <1420>2 Chronicles 20:20) and indeed, true love believes all things, and hopes all things, (<4607>1 Corinthians 13:7). But it seems better to divide these objects according to the different graces, and to consider faith as being towards our Lord Jesus; which is a looking towards Christ, a moving towards him, a laying hold upon him, and embracing him, a staying and leaning on him, a living upon him, and walking in him; and which in Philemon might be a strong one, as well as unfeigned, and operative: and love may be considered as being toward all saints; for though all men are, in a sense, to be loved, and kindness to be shown to them, and that even to enemies, yet more especially the saints; who are set apart by God the Father, whose sins are expiated by the blood of Christ, and who are internally sanctified by the Spirit, and are enabled to live soberly and righteously: and all of these are the objects of love, whether rich or poor,

greater or lesser believers, of meaner or larger abilities; for they are all equally loved by God, redeemed by Christ, and regenerated by his Spirit; are justified by his righteousness, are all the children and heirs of God, and are called in one hope of their calling; and love to them should be unfeigned, fervent, active, and laborious, and as Christ has loved us; and such was Philemon's love, as well as it was universal and this distribution of these graces to their respective objects may be confirmed from a parallel place in (<510104>Colossians 1:4) which epistle was written and sent at the same time with this.

Ver. 6. *That the communication of thy faith*, &c.] The grace of faith itself cannot be communicated from one to another; a believing parent cannot communicate it to his children, nor a master to his servants, nor a minister to his hearers; but an account of it, of its actings and exercises, of the joy of it, and of the peace a soul is filled with through believing, may be given to the mutual comfort and edification of saints; and it may be shown forth to others by the fruits of it, works of righteousness: but here it seems to design acts of beneficence, communicating to the necessities of others, as flowing from faith; and these words are to be connected with (<570104>Philemon 1:4) as a part of the apostle's prayers, as what is contained in the preceding verse is the matter of his thanksgiving. And his prayer is, that such a communication of good things, which springs from faith,

may be effectual; to answer some very good purposes, the good of others, and the service of the interest of Christ, and the glory of God; or, as the Vulgate Latin version reads, only by the change of one letter, that it “may be evident”; to which the Syriac version seems to incline, rendering it, that it “may be fruitful in works”; or show itself in fruits of righteousness, in works of mercy and kindness; and the apostle's sense is, that it might be more and more so:

by the acknowledging of every good thing that is in you in Christ Jesus; the meaning is, that every good thing that is in the saints, or among them, should be acknowledged to come to them in and through Christ Jesus, in whom all fulness of grace dwells, and from whom all is imparted; and that every good thing that is communicated, or done in faith, which is effectual to any good purpose, should be owned as done by the grace and strength of Christ, and be done to his saints, as if done to himself, and be directed to his glory: the phrase, “in you”, respects not Philemon only, but Apphia,

Archippus, and the church in Philemon's house; the Arabic version reads, in us.

Ver. 7. *For we have great joy and consolation in thy love*, &c.] In the expressions and acts of it to the poor saints; for which reason the apostle gives thanks for it before; and it is a pleasure and comfort to an ingenuous mind, though it is not in his power to do good to the poor saints himself, to see that others have both abilities, and a heart to relieve them:

because the bowels of the saints are, refreshed by thee, brother; meaning, not only that their bellies were filled with food, for the phrase is used in (<5020>Philemon 1:20) where that cannot be intended; but their hearts were filled with gladness, the load upon their spirits, the pressures upon their minds were removed, and they had an inward pleasure in their souls, and rest, refreshment, and comfort, through the liberal communications of Philemon to them; who did what he did cheerfully, that so it did their souls good, as well as their bodies; and in doing which, he acted the part of a brother in Christ.

Ver. 8. *Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ*, &c.] Or use much freedom of speech in the name of Christ, as an ambassador of his, and great authority as his apostle, which was given him for edification:

to enjoin thee that which is convenient; which became him as a believer in Christ, and a minister of the Gospel; which was his duty, and was obligatory upon him, agreeable to the doctrines of Christ; who taught men to love their enemies, to be reconciled to their brethren, that had offended them, especially when they repented; and therefore it was fit and proper that he should receive his servant again, since God had called him by his grace, and given him repentance for his sins: upon this foot the apostle could have commanded him, as he did in other cases, (<5306>2 Thessalonians 3:6,12), but he chose not to address him in an authoritative way, but by way of entreaty, as follows.

Ver. 9. *Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee*, &c.] Either for the sake of the great love which the apostle bore to Philemon, being, as he calls him, his dearly beloved, he took this method; or because of Philemon's great love to all the saints before mentioned, he was encouraged to proceed in this manner, hoping on that account to have success; or it may be, it was for the sake of that love with which God had loved him, and which he puts him in mind of, to engage him to grant his request; that seeing God the

Father had loved him, and chosen him in Christ; and Christ had loved him, and redeemed him by his blood; and the Holy Spirit had loved him, and sanctified him by his grace, that therefore he would receive his servant again for the sake of this love; who also was the object of it; (see Romans 15:30). The Alexandrian copy reads, “for”, or “through necessity”, as if necessity obliged him to this request.

Being such an one as Paul the aged; or “the elder”; meaning either in office, which he might mention with this view, that his request might have the greater weight and influence; or else in years, and which he might observe partly to move compassion in Philemon, and that he might not grieve him in his old age, as he would, should he deny his request; and partly to suggest to him, that the advice he was about to give him, to receive his servant, did not come from a raw young man, but from one well stricken in years, with whom were wisdom and understanding; and therefore not to be treated with neglect or contempt: how old the apostle was at this time, is not certain; he could not be less than sixty years of age, or he would not have called himself an old man; for no man was so called by the Jews, but he that was at the age of sixty [f4]. Some editions of the Vulgate Latin version, as that of the London Polyglot Bible, read, “seeing thou art such an one as Paul the aged”; as if Philemon was an old man, as the apostle was, and therefore he would not lay his commands upon him, as an ancient man might upon a young man, but rather entreat him as equal to him in years: but then it follows, which does not appear to be true of Philemon, or that he was in the like case,

and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ; which is observed with the same view as in (Philemon 1:1). (See Gill on “Philemon 1:1”).

Ver. 10. *I beseech thee for my son Onesimus*, &c.] Now he comes to the request itself, and mentions by name the person on whose account he makes it, and whom he calls his son; not merely because of his affection to him, but because he really was his spiritual father; he had been the happy instrument of his conversion, and he was his son according to the common faith, or in a spiritual sense: hence it follows,

whom I have begotten in my bonds: which is to be understood of a begetting again, or of regeneration; not as if the apostle was the efficient cause of it, as the nature of it shows, it being expressed by men's being born from above; by their being quickened, when dead in trespasses and sins; by being made new creatures, and transformed in the renewing of

their minds; by Christ being formed in them, and by a partaking of the divine nature; and who is sufficient for these things? besides it is expressly denied to be of man, but is always ascribed to God, Father, Son, and Spirit; but as being the instrument and means of it, through the preaching of the Gospel, the word of truth, by which God of his own will, and by the power of his grace, regenerated this person; and this is said to be done "in his bonds": by which it appears, that the word of God was not bound, but had a free course, and was glorified, and the bonds of the apostle were the means of the spread of it; and that it was attended with great power, to the conversion of souls: and this circumstance is mentioned to engage Philemon to regard the entreaty of the apostle; he had been the instrument of begetting many souls to Christ; but this man was begotten by him in his bonds, when he was a prisoner, and so was peculiarly dear to him.

Ver. 11. *Which in time past was to thee unprofitable*, &c.] Yea, injurious and hurtful; one that was an eye servant, that loitered away his time, and set an ill example to fellow servants; and not only so, but embezzled his master's goods, and robbed him, and run away from him. So every man, in his state of unregeneracy, is an unprofitable man, (Romans 3:12) unprofitable to God, to men, and to themselves; their sins will not profit them, though they may promise them liberty and pleasure; nor will their riches, should they lose their own souls: nor their own righteousness, in the business of justification and salvation; nor even an outward profession of religion: yea, they are not only said to be unprofitable, but are represented as good for nothing; hence they are compared to dishonourable and unserviceable vessels; to briers and thorns, and the earth which brings them; to the salt that has lost its savour, and is fit neither for the land, nor for the dunghill; to rotten figs, to chaff, and dross of metals: yea, they are hurtful and injurious to themselves, on whom they bring ruin and destruction; to others, to wicked men, whom they more and more corrupt, and harden in sin; and to good men, whom they grieve; and also to the interest and glory of God, whose laws they transgress, and against whom they sin, affront his justice, and provoke the eyes of his glory.

But now profitable to thee and to me; that is, he was now likely to be so, to be profitable to Philemon, as a servant, and to the apostle as a ministering brother. Some think there is in this an allusion to his name Onesimus, which signifies "profitable"; before he did not answer to his name, but now he was a true Onesimus, really a profitable person; grace, of an unprofitable man, makes a profitable one. Such an one is profitable to

himself; his godliness is gain unto him, it having both the promise of this life, and of that which is to come; and he is profitable to others, if he has gifts qualifying him for the public work of the ministry, as Onesimus seems to have had; then he is made and becomes very useful to many for conviction, conversion, comfort, and edification; and if only a private believer, he is often profitable to others, by relating the work of God upon his soul; he is serviceable to the interest of Christ, for the support of the ministry, and supply of the poor; he is useful by his good examples, and prayers, in the neighbourhood, town, city, or nation, in which he dwells. This argument from profit, the apostle knew would be an engaging one.

Ver. 12. *Whom I have sent again*, &c.] From Rome to Colosse, or to Philemon, wherever he was, along with this epistle:

thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels; meaning his son, who, in a spiritual sense, came out of his bowels, to whom he stood in the relation of a spiritual father; so the Syriac version renders it, as my son, so receive him; (see <01150>Genesis 15:4 <10161>2 Samuel 16:11) and for whom he had a most strong affection, and tender regard; his bowels yearned for him, and he suggests by this expression, that should he reject him, it would give him the utmost pain and uneasiness; and he should be obliged to cry out as the Prophet Jeremy did, “my bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart”; (<24019>Jeremiah 4:19) wherefore he entreats him to receive him again into his house and family, into his service, and into his heart and affections, where the apostle had received him.

Ver. 13. *Whom I would have retained with me*, &c.] At Rome, where the apostle was a prisoner:

that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the Gospel; the apostle was in bonds, not for any crime, for any immorality he had been guilty of, but for the sake of the Gospel, for professing and preaching that; for this he was an ambassador in bonds, as he elsewhere says, (<49160>Ephesians 6:20). Now he would have kept Onesimus with him, either to have waited upon him, in his bonds, and to have provided for him the necessaries of life; or to have assisted him in the ministration of the word, in the room of Philemon, who, had he been there, would have been employed in such service; so that if the apostle had retained him, he would have been acting not for himself, but in the room of his master, and doing what he should have done, had he been on the spot. This the apostle observes to prevent an objection that might have been made; that since

Onesimus was become so profitable to him, why did he send him back? why did he not keep him for his own service? this he obviates and removes, by signifying he should have done it, but for the following reason.

Ver. 14. *But without thy mind would I do nothing*, &c.] Which shows great modesty and humility in the apostle, that though as such he had an authority, which he could have used, as well as had understanding and judgment how to have used it without consulting Philemon, or having his sense of this affair, yet chose to consult him: and it also shows the strict regard the apostle had to equity and justice, that he would do nothing with another man's servant without his consent; he would not seem to alienate, or engross another man's right and property, whatever power he might have, as an apostle, to have retained Onesimus as a minister to him.

That thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly; that is, that his goodness in forgiving his servant, and renouncing all claim and property in him, and admitting him to continue in the service of the apostle, might not look like a forced thing; but that it might appear to be a voluntary action, when he should of himself return him, after he had been thus sent to him, and received by him.

Ver. 15. *For perhaps he therefore departed for a season*, &c.] The apostle in this clause seems to soften this business of Onesimus in running away from his master; he calls it not a running away, but a departure, an absence from him, and that but for a little while; and suggests that the hand of God might be in it; that there was an overruling providence that attended it, such as was in Joseph's going down into Egypt; and that this separation of Onesimus from his master, for a short time, was in order that they should come together again, and never part more, as follows:

that thou shouldest receive him for ever; or during life, referring to the law in (Exodus 21:6) or to all eternity, since they were in the same spiritual relation, partakers of the same grace, and had a right to the same heavenly inheritance, and should be together with Christ for evermore.

Ver. 16. *Not now as a servant*, &c.] That is, not only as a servant, for a servant he was, and was to be received as such; his call by grace had not dissolved the civil relation that was between him and his master, though it had added to it something that was above it, and greater than it:

but above a servant; in a higher condition, as the Arabic version renders it, than a servant; not barely considered in that relation, but as being in one much preferable to it:

a brother beloved, specially to me; a brother in Christ, and to be beloved on that account, as he was especially by the apostle, who had been the instrument of his conversion; (see <5049>Colossians 4:9).

But how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord? both in a natural and civil sense, as being of the same nation and country, and as being part of his family, his servant, and now become an useful and profitable one; and, in a spiritual sense, being in the Lord, belonging to the Lord Jesus, to that family which is named of him, being a fellow citizen with the saints, and of the household of God, and therefore must be doubly dear to him.

Ver. 17. *If thou count me therefore a partner*, &c.] A companion and friend, who reckon each other's affairs and interest their own: the word answers to rbx, a word often used in Talmudic writings, for an associate of the doctors or wise men: here it may mean also a partner both in grace, and in the ministry; one that shared in the same gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, and one that was to be a partaker of the inheritance with the saints in light: now if Philemon reckoned the apostle such an one, as he doubtless did, as being engaged in the same common cause, and a partaker of the same common faith, and interested in the same common salvation; then he entreats him on account of Onesimus, in the following manner,

receive him as myself; intimating, that he was as dear to him as himself; that he loved him as his own soul; and that he should take whatever respect and affection were shown to him as done to himself; and that he would have him receive him into his house, his heart and affections, as he would receive him the apostle himself, should he come to him.

Ver. 18. *If he hath wronged thee*, &c.] By squandering away his time, spoiling his work, or corrupting his fellow servants:

or oweth thee ought; by embezzling his master's goods, robbing him of his money, and running away from his service:

put that on mine account; Signifying that he would be answerable for all, and make good all debts and damages.

Ver. 19. *I Paul have written it, with mine own hand*, &c.] Meaning either this epistle, which being short, he used no amanuensis, but wrote it all himself, and which might be taken as an engagement to do what he promised; or else a bill, a promissory note, written with his own hand, which he sent along with Onesimus, by which he laid himself under obligation to give Philemon full satisfaction in every thing, in which he had been injured by his servant; adding,

I will repay it: this was not an ironical expression, nor a piece of vanity in the apostle; he spoke seriously, and heartily, and meant what he said; and though his circumstances were often so mean, that he was forced to work with his own hands to minister to his necessities; yet such was his interest in the churches, and such their obligation to him, on account of his personal and useful ministrations to them, that he could easily raise a sum of money among them, upon any emergent occasion; so that Philemon had a good surety and paymaster of the apostle: and this shows his great humility to be a bondsman for a servant, and to make good damages and debts brought on in a scandalous manner; as also that suretyship in some cases is lawful, though it ought to be cautiously, and for very good reasons, entered into: and this engagement of the apostle for Onesimus bears some resemblance with, and may serve to illustrate the suretyship of Christ, for his people, they, and Onesimus, being much in a like condition; as he was an unprofitable and run away servant, so they are all gone out of the way, and together become unprofitable; and Christ engaged with his Father to bring them back again, and set them before him; and by his sufferings and death has brought them nigh, which were afar off; as he had wronged his master and was indebted to him, so they have injured the law of God, affronted his justice, and incurred his displeasure; and having owed to him more than ten thousand talents, and having nothing to pay, Christ engaged to satisfy law and justice, to make reconciliation for them, and pay all their debts; all which he has accordingly done; their sins have been placed to his account, imputed to him, and charged upon him; and he has bore them, and the punishment due to them, and so has satisfied for them, and restored that which he took not away.

Albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides; having respect to his conversion, which he was the happy instrument of the apostle was his spiritual father, and he was his son, according to the common faith; he had been the instrument of saving his soul from death; he had been the means of that in the hand of God, which

all his riches, and the riches of his friends and relations, could never have procured: the salvation of his soul, his better part, was instrumentally owing to him, and so his whole self; and therefore, what favour might he not ask of him? and what was it he could, or should deny him? this the apostle introduces in a very artificial manner, and does not insist upon it, but suggests, that should he forgive the injuries and debts, he had took upon him to make satisfaction for, it would not be an equivalent to the debt he owed to him. From hence may be observed, how greatly obliged regenerated persons are to those, who have been the means and instruments of their conversion.

Ver. 20. *Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord*, &c.] Through the apostle was his spiritual father, having been the instrument of his conversion, yet he calls him his brother, as being a partaker of the same grace, and a minister of the same Gospel; and intimates to him, that should he grant his request, and receive his servant again, it would give him great joy and pleasure, and that not of a carnal, but of a spiritual kind, even joy in the Lord; he should rejoice in the presence of the Lord, and before him, concerning him; he should rejoice in his faith in the Lord, and love for him, and obedience to him; all which would be discovered in such a conduct: the Syriac version renders it, as an assurance to himself,

I shall be refreshed by thee in our Lord; not doubting but that he would gratify him in the thing he asked of him, which would be a refreshment to him; the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “may I enjoy thee in the Lord”: meaning not his company and presence, either in this world, or in the world to come; but that he might enjoy or receive the favour from him he had petitioned him for, for the Lord's sake; the Arabic version renders it, as a reason why he should do it, “I have been profitable to thee in the Lord”; confirming what he had said before, that he owed himself to him; he having been useful to him in bringing him to the knowledge of Christ, and faith in him; and the Ethiopic version refers it to a promise, “I will repay in our Lord”; in spiritual things in our Lord, if not in things temporal:

refresh my bowels in the Lord; or “in Christ”; as the Alexandrian copy, the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, read; and by his “bowels”, he either means Onesimus, as in (<5012>Philemon 1:12) who, in a spiritual sense, came forth out of his bowels; or else himself, his soul, his spirit, his inward parts; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “refresh my soul”; and the sense is, that he desired in the Lord, and for his sake, that he would receive Onesimus

again, which would give him an inward pleasure, and refresh his spirit; and indeed he intimates, that nothing could be more cheering and reviving to him.

Ver. 21. *Having confidence in thy obedience*, &c.] In his obedience of faith to Christ, and his Gospel; he having been made willing in the day of his power to serve him, as well as to be saved by him; and being constrained by his love, and the Spirit of Christ having wrought in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure:

I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say; the knowledge the apostle had of Philemon's cheerful obedience to Christ in all the parts of duty, encouraged him to write to him, on this head; believing that he would even do more than he had desired of him.

Ver. 22. *But withal prepare me also a lodging*, &c.] Not that the apostle expected or desired any grand apartment to be fitted up for him; a room with such furniture as the Shunamite provided for the man of God was sufficient for him, and what he would have been entirely contented with; but his view in this was, to let Philemon know that he hoped to be released from his bonds, and that he might expect to see him; and this he hinted to him, in order to stir him up to receive his servant sooner, and the more readily; who otherwise might have been indifferent to it, and negligent of it, thinking he should never see the apostle's face any more.

For I trust, that through your prayers I shall be given you; to minister in the Gospel again among them: the apostle was a man of prayer himself, and he had a very great regard to the prayers of others, and often desired an interest in them; that he might perform his ministerial work as it should be; that he might have success in it; and that he might be delivered from the unbelieving Jews, and from wicked and unreasonable men; and he had some secret hope and trust in his own mind, that through the prayers of the saints he should be delivered from his bonds, and go up and down preaching the Gospel as heretofore: he doubtless was acquainted with the case of Peter, for whom prayer was made incessantly by the church, when in prison, and he had deliverance; however, he knew that the prayers of the saints availed much with God; but whether this hope and expectation of his were answered, is a matter of doubt and question: some think he was released, and went into several parts, and preached the Gospel, and then was taken up again, and committed to prison, and suffered under Nero, some years after; and others think not.

Ver. 23. *There salute thee Epaphras*, &c.] Who was a Colossian, and minister of the church at Colosse, and so might be well known to Philemon, who seems to have been of the same place and church; (see <51007>Colossians 1:7 <51042>4:12,13) his name is omitted in the Ethiopic version:

my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus; this good man, and minister of Christ, might have been sent by the Colossians, as Epaphroditus was by the Philippians, to the apostle at Rome, to pay him a visit, and comfort and assist him under his afflictions; and staying and preaching the Gospel there, was committed to prison, or was laid in bonds, as the apostle was, and upon the same account; namely, for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel. For by this time Nero began to persecute the Christians, which he did in the better and more moderate part of his reign; for among several things for which he is commended by the historian [f5], this is one;

> "Afficti suppliciis Christiani, genus hominum superstitionis novae ac maleficae"; the Christians were punished, a sort of men of a new and bad religion:"

and Epaphras being at Rome, when this persecution broke out, was taken up and put in prison, as were also Aristarchus, (<51040>Colossians 4:10) and Timothy, (<581323>Hebrews 13:23).

Ver. 24. *Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas*, &c.] Marcus was Barnabas's sister's son, the son of that Mary, in whose house the church met, and prayed for Peter when in prison; whose name was John Mark, whom Saul and Barnabas took along with them to Antioch, and from thence, in their travels, to other parts; but he leaving them at Pamphylia, was the occasion of a contention between Saul and Barnabas afterwards, when returned to Antioch; the latter insisting on his going with them again, and the former refusing it on account of his departure from them; which contention rose so high that they parted upon it, (<441212>Acts 12:12,25 <441305>13:5,13 <441537>15:37-39) though after this the apostle was reconciled to him; he approving himself to be a faithful and useful minister of the Gospel; and therefore he desires Timothy to bring him along with him, (<550411>2 Timothy 4:11) and if this epistle was written after that, he was now come to him; however, he was now with him, whether before or after: Aristarchus was a Macedonian of Thessalonica; or very likely the apostle had been the instrument of converting him there, and who followed him from thence, and attended him wherever he went; he was with him in the uproar raised by Demetrius at Ephesus, and accompanied him into Asia; went with him in his voyage to

Rome, and was now a fellow prisoner there, (<44>Acts 19:29 <44>20:4 <44>27:2 <51>Colossians 4:10). Demas is the same with him who is mentioned in (<51>2 Timothy 4:10) and if this epistle is later than that, it should seem that he was restored from his fall, and was returned to the apostle. Lucas is the same with Luke the Evangelist, the beloved physician, the brother whose praise was in all the churches, and a constant companion of the apostle, in his travels; and who wrote the book called, “The Acts of the Apostles”: these the apostle styles, “my fellow labourers”, being all ministers of the Gospel; and this shows the apostle's great humility, so to call them, when they were far from being on an equal foot with him in office, gifts, or usefulness: and the Christian salutations of these persons are sent to Philemon, with this view, to engage him the more to attend to the apostle's request, in which they all joined.

Ver. 25. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen*.] Not with his spirit only, but with the spirit of Apphia and Archippus, to whom also the epistle was sent; and therefore the word is in the plural number; and the Syriac version adds pertinently enough, “my brethren”: the salutation is the same as in all the epistles; the form of it agrees with (<48>Galatians 6:18) the subscription of the epistle is,

written from Rome, to Philemon, by Onesimus, a servant; that is, it was written by the Apostle Paul when at Rome, and sent to Philemon by the hands of Onesimus, who was his servant, and upon whose account the letter was written.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Advers. Marcion. 50:5. c. 21.

Ft2 -- Proaem. in Philem.

Ft3 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 4. 1. & Menachot, fol. 37. 1. & Juchasin, fol. 101. 1. 108. 1. & 159. 2.

Ft4 -- Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 1.

Ft5 -- Suetonius in Vita Neronis, c. 16.

HEBREWS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

That this epistle was written very early appears from hence, that it was imitated by Clement of Rome, in his epistle to the Corinthians, who took whole sentences out of it; and therefore it could not be a new work, as Eusebius [f1] observes: it has been denied to be authentic by some heretics, as the Marcionites and Arians, but has been generally received as such by the orthodox: some indeed doubted of it, because it was not received by the Roman church, as an epistle of the Apostle Paul [f2]; though others, who have thought it was not his, as Origen, yet looked upon it as genuine [f3]. It has been ascribed to different persons, as to Barnabas, to Apollos, to Luke the Evangelist, and to Clement of Rome, but without any just reason. Clement of Alexandria, a very ancient writer, asserts it to be the Apostle Paul's [f4]; and his name stands in the title of it, in all R. Stephens's exemplars, and in all Beza's copies, excepting one, and so it does in the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions; and that it is his, is highly probable from the agreement there is between this, and other epistles of his; compare (<580102>Hebrews 1:2,3) with (<510115>Colossians 1:15,16) and (<580502>Hebrews 5:12-14) with (<460301>1 Corinthians 3:1,2) and (<581201>Hebrews 12:1) with (<460924>1 Corinthians 9:24) and (<581307>Hebrews 13:7,17) with (<520511>1 Thessalonians 5:11,12), and (<581309>Hebrews 13:9) with (<490414>Ephesians 4:14) and (<581318>Hebrews 13:18) with (<471202>2 Corinthians 1:12) and (<581320>Hebrews 13:20) with (<450513>Romans 15:13 16:20 <520523>1 Thessalonians 5:23) and many other places; and also from the order and method of it, first treating of doctrines, and then proceeding to practical exhortations, which is the common form of Paul's epistles: to which may be added various circumstances; as that it was written from Italy, where Paul was a prisoner; and the mention the author of it makes of his bonds, and of Timothy, as well known unto him, who was Paul's companion; besides, the token of his epistles appears in this, namely, his usual salutation to the churches; (see <581323>Hebrews 13:23-25). But above all, the testimony of the Apostle Peter is greatly in favour of its being his, (<610315>2 Peter 3:15,16) from whence it clearly appears, that the Apostle Paul did write an epistle to the Hebrews; for to them Peter wrote; (see <600101>1 Peter 1:1 <610301>2 Peter 3:1) and what

epistle could it be but this? and what Peter refers to is to be found in it; (see <580125>Hebrews 10:25,36,37) and which is written with great wisdom; in none of Paul's epistles is there a greater discovery of his knowledge of divine mysteries than in this; and in it also are things hard to be understood, (<580511>Hebrews 5:11). The common objections to its being his are, its not bearing his name, the diversity of its style, and the author of it seeming to be not an apostle, but a disciple of the apostle's: as to his not setting his name to it, the reasons might be, because he was the apostle of the Gentiles, and not so much of the Jews; and because of the prejudice of the Jews against him, both believers, and unbelievers; wherefore had his name been to it, it might have prevented the usefulness of it to the one, and have stirred up the rage of the other: as to the difference of style, different subjects require a different style; and yet in many things there is a likeness, as before observed: and as to the author's not being an apostle, which is concluded from (<580203>Hebrews 2:3) the word “us” there is to be understood of the believing Hebrews, the disciples of the apostle, and not inclusive of the author, by a figurative way of speaking often used by Paul; and besides, the apostle received a confirmation of the Gospel from Ananias, who might have been an hearer of Christ, though he was at first taught it by Christ himself; add to this, that whoever was the writer of it, it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, and when several of the apostles were living, and therefore he could never design by those words to put himself in a succeeding generation. The persons to whom this epistle was written were Hebrews, or Jews; so called, as some think, from the name of Abraham, the father of them; or, as others, from his passing over the river Euphrates, when he came out of Chaldea into Palestine. So Abram the Hebrew, in (<011413>Genesis 14:13) is by the Septuagint rendered, περατης, “one that passes over”, taking it to come from the word rb[, which signifies to “pass over”; with this compare (<061203>Joshua 24:3) and this is the opinion of some of the Jewish Rabbins [f5]; though it seems rather that they were called so from Heber, who lived at the time of the confusion of languages; (see <011021>Genesis 10:21 <042424>Numbers 24:24). And this is the sense of many Jewish writers, ancient and modern, of Josephus [f6], of Jonathan ben Uzziel [f7], of R. Nehemiah [f8], of Aben Ezra [f9], and Kimchi [f10], and others; (see Gill on “<471122>2 Corinthians 11:22”). And these were the Hebrews that dwelt in the land of Judea, and particularly at Jerusalem; nor were they the unbelieving inhabitants of those parts, but believers in Christ, who were embodied in a Gospel church state, It was a tradition of the ancients [f11], that this epistle was written originally in Hebrew, and was translated into

Greek, either by Luke the Evangelist, or by Clement of Rome. But for this there is no foundation; no Hebrew copy can be produced; Munster's edition of it in Hebrew is a translation from the Greek, in which it was, no doubt, originally written, that being the common language, and well known to the Jews; and which appears from the citations in it out of the Old Testament, which are made, not from the Hebrew text, but from the Greek version; and besides, had it been written in Hebrew, the writer would not have interpreted the Hebrew words, Melchizedek and Salem, as he does, in (³⁰⁰Hebrews 7:1,2). The time of its writing was before the destruction of Jerusalem, which in this book is signified by the coming of the Lord, and the day approaching; and after Timothy was released from prison, and some time within the two years of his own imprisonment at Rome; when he hoped for a release, as his epistles to the Philippians and to Philemon show. Dr. Lightfoot places it in the year 62, and in the eighth of Nero. And the occasion and design of it is, to set forth the superior excellency of Christ to angels and men, to Moses, to Joshua, to Aaron, and his sons, and the preferableness of his priesthood and sacrifice to the Levitical priesthood and its sacrifices; to teach the Hebrews the true knowledge of the mysteries of their law; to point out to them the design, use, and abrogation of its ceremonies; and to prepare them for what afflictions and persecutions they would be called to endure for Christ; and to exhort them to perseverance, and to strengthen them against apostasy, as well as to instruct them in the various duties of religion.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 1

The intention of this epistle being to demonstrate the superior excellency of the Gospel revelation to the legal one, the apostle begins with the divine author of it, in which they both agree, and observes that in other things they differ. The revelation under the law was made in times past, the Gospel revelation in these last days; the former was made to the Jewish fathers that were of old, the latter to the then present apostles; the one was made at sundry times, and in divers manners, the other was made at once, and in one way; the one was made by the prophets of the Lord, the other by his own son, (<58A01>Hebrews 1:1,2) and therefore the latter must be the more excellent; in proof of which the author enlarges on the character of the Son of God, with respect to his person, office, and glory; showing that he is heir of all things, the Maker of the worlds, of the same nature and glory with his Father; is omnipotent, and upholds all things by the word of his power; is the High Priest of his people, who has made satisfaction for their sins, and purged them from them, and is now at the right hand of God, (<58A02>Hebrews 1:2,3) He goes on to prove that he is more excellent than the angels, by a variety of arguments, and these supported by testimonies from the Scriptures; as that he has a more excellent name than any of them, being called the Son of God, (<58A04>Hebrews 1:4,5) which is proved from (<19A07>Psalm 2:7 <10A72>2 Samuel 7:12-16) that he is the object of the worship of angels, (<58A06>Hebrews 1:6) which is required of them, (<19A97>Psalm 97:7) that he is their Maker and Creator, (<58A07>Hebrews 1:7) which appears from (<19A404>Psalm 104:4) that he has an everlasting kingdom, is a righteous King, and is richly anointed above his fellows, (<58A08>Hebrews 1:8,9) which is the sense of some passages in (<19A406>Psalm 45:6,7) and that he is the founder and former of the heavens, and of the earth, and will endure when they shall not, (<58A10>Hebrews 1:10-12) which is confirmed by testimonies out of (<19A225>Psalm 102:25-27) that he sits at the right hand of God, where none of the angels were ever admitted, (<58A13>Hebrews 1:13) as is clear from (<19A001>Psalm 110:1-7) and besides, the angels, as they are ministers made by him, they are sent out from him to wait on his people,

the heirs of salvation, and minister to them, and therefore he must be greater than they, (<30114>Hebrews 1:14).

Ver. 1. *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners*, etc..] The apostle begins the epistle with an account of the revelation God has made of his mind and will in former times: the author of this revelation is God, not essentially, but personally considered, even God the Father, as distinguished from his Son in the next verse; for the revelation under the Old Testament is divine, as well as that under the New; in this they both agree, in whatsoever else they differ: and this revelation was made at several times, at different seasons, and to different persons; and consisted of a variety of things relating to doctrine and worship, and concerning the Messiah, his person and office; of whom, at different times, there were gradual discoveries made, both before and after the giving of the law, from the beginning of the world, or the giving forth of the first promise, and in the times of the patriarchs, of: Moses, David, Isaiah, and other prophets: and this was delivered in various manners; sometimes by angels; sometimes in a dream; at other times by a vision; and sometimes by Urim and Thummim: and this he

spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets; by Moses, and other succeeding prophets, as David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, Zechariah, Malachi, and others; who were sent to the Jewish fathers, the ancestors of the people of the Jews, to whom they prophesied and declared the will of God, as they were moved and inspired by the Holy Ghost: and the apostle suggests, by this way of speaking, that it was a long time since God spake to this people; for prophecy had ceased ever since the times of Malachi, for the space of three hundred years; and this time past includes the whole Old Testament dispensation, from the beginning to the end of it, or of prophecy in it.

Ver. 2. *Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son*, etc..] This is the Gospel revelation, or the revelation in the Gospel dispensation; which though it comes from the same author the other does, yet in many things differs from it, and is preferable to it; and indeed the general design of this epistle is to show the superior excellency of the one to the other; the former was delivered out in time past, but this “in these last days”; the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and several other copies, read, “in the last of these days”: perfectly agreeable to the phrase µymyh tyrjab, used in (<01401>Genesis 49:1 <04414>Numbers 24:14 <23102>Isaiah 2:2) to

which the apostle refers, and in which places the days of the Messiah are intended; and it is a rule with the Jews [f12], that wherever the phrase, “the last days”, is mentioned, the days of the Messiah are designed: and they are to be understood not of the last days of the natural world, but of, the Jewish world and state; indeed the times of the Messiah, or Gospel dispensation, may be called the last days of the natural world, according to the tradition of the house of Elias; which teaches, that the duration of the world will be six thousand years, and divides it into three parts, the last of which is assigned to the Messiah, thus; two thousand years void, (or without the law,) two thousand years the law, and two thousand years the days of the Messiah [f13]: but it is best to understand this of the last days of the Mosaic economy, or Jewish dispensation; for the Messiah was to come before the Jewish civil and church states were dissolved; before the sceptre departed from Judah, and before the second temple was destroyed; and he was to come at the end, or toward the close of both these states; and which is called the end, or ends of the world, (<scripture_ref type="bible_ref">Habakkuk 2:3</scripture_ref> <scripture_ref type="bible_ref">Hebrews 9:26</scripture_ref> <scripture_ref type="bible_ref">1 Corinthians 10:11</scripture_ref>) and quickly after Jesus, the true Messiah was come, an end was put to both these: from whence it may be observed, that the Messiah must be come; that the Mosaic economy, and Jewish worship, will never be restored again; that the Gospel revelation being made in the last days, ought to be regarded the more, it being the last revelation God will ever make. Moreover, this differs from the former in this respect, that was made to the fathers, this “to us”; meaning either the apostles in particular, or the Jews in general, to whom the apostle is writing: this shows that the Gospel revelation was first made to the Jews; and it being made to them personally, they were under great obligation to regard it; and that God had not cast off his people; and that though he had greatly indulged their fathers, he had showed greater favour to them, having provided some better thing for them: and there is a difference between these two revelations in the manner in which they were made; the former was at sundry times, and in divers manners, the latter was made at once, and in one way; that was delivered out in parts, and by piece meal, this the whole together; the whole mind and will of God, all his counsel, all that Christ heard of the Father; it is the faith that was once, and at once, delivered to the saints; and it has been given out in one way, by the preaching of the word: to which may be added, that formerly God spoke by many persons, by the prophets, but now by one only, “by his Son”; who is so not by creation, nor by adoption, nor by office, but by nature; being his own Son, his proper Son, begotten of him, of the same nature with him,

and equal to him; and so infinitely preferable to the prophets: he is a Son, and not a servant, in whom the Father is, and he in the Father, and in whom the Spirit is without measure; and God is said to speak by him, or in him, because he was now incarnate; and what he says from God should be attended to, both on account of the dignity of his person, as the Son of God, and because of the authority he came with as Mediator: whom he hath appointed heir of all things; which must be understood of him not as God, and Creator; for as such he has a right to all things; all that the Father has are his; the kingdom of nature and providence belongs to him, he being the Former and Maker of all things; but as Mediator, who has all things committed to him, to subserve the ends of his office; and has a kingdom appointed him, and which he will deliver up again the word all may refer either to persons or things; to persons, not angels, good or bad, though both are subject to him, yet neither are called his inheritance; but elect men, who are his portion, and the lot of his inheritance; and to things relating to these persons, and for their use and service, in time, and to all eternity; as all temporal things, and all spiritual ones, the blessings and promises of the covenant of grace, the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and eternal glory and happiness, the saints' inheritance, who are joint heirs with Christ.

By whom also he made the worlds; this is said in agreement with the notions of the Jews, and their way of speaking, who make mention of three worlds, which they call, the upper world (the habitation of God), the middle world (the air), and the lower world [f14] (the earth); and sometimes they call them the world of angels (where they dwell), the world of orbs (where the sun, moon, and stars are), and the world below [f15] (on which we live); and it is frequent in their writings, and prayer books [f16], to call God µymlw[h lk ^wbr, "Lord of all worlds"; (see Gill on "<3810>Hebrews 11:3"), these God made by his Son, not as an instrument, but as an efficient cause with him; for by him were all things made, whether visible or invisible; and the preposition "by" does not always denote instrumentality, but sometimes efficiency; and is used of God the Father himself, and in this epistle, (<3810>Hebrews 2:10).

Ver. 3. *Who being the brightness of his glory*, etc..] Or "of glory"; of God the Father, the God of glory, and who is glory itself; so called on account of his glorious nature and perfections and because of the glorious manifestations of them in his works of creation and providence, and in the various dispensations of his grace, and especially in his Son; and because he is the author of all glory, in the creatures, in the whole world, in Christ

as man and Mediator, and in his own people. Now Christ is the "brightness" of this, as he is God; he has the same glorious nature and perfections, and the same glorious names, as Jehovah, the Lord of glory, etc.. and the same glory, homage, and worship given him: the allusion is to the sun, and its beam or ray: so some render it "the ray of his glory"; and may lead us to observe, that the Father and the Son are of the same nature, as the sun and its ray; and that the one is not before the other, and yet distinct from each other, and cannot be divided or separated one from another: so the phrase hyrqy ˆyz, "the brightness of his glory", is used of the divine Being, in the Chaldee paraphrases [f17]; see the Apocrypha.

> "For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness." (Wisdom 7:26)

And the express image of his person; this intends much the same as the other phrase; namely, equality and sameness of nature, and distinction of persons; for if the Father is God, Christ must be so too; and if he is a person, his Son must be so likewise, or he cannot be the express image and character of him; (see Gill on "<5015>Colossians 1:15").

And upholding all things by the word of his power; the Syriac version renders it, "by the power of his word", to the same sense, only inverting the words. The Targumist on (<1406>2 Chronicles 2:6) uses a phrase very much like this, of God, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain; because, adds he, hytrwbg [rdb alk lybs, "he bears", or "sustains all things by the arm of his power"; and the words are to be understood not of the Father, upholding all things by his essential and powerful Word, his Son; but of the Son himself, who upholds all creatures he has made; bears up the pillars of the universe; preserves every creature in its being, and supports it, and supplies it with the necessaries of life; rules and governs all, and providentially orders and disposes of all things in the world, and that by his all powerful will; which makes it manifest, that he is truly and properly God, and a very fit person to be a priest, as follows:

when he had by himself purged our sins; the Arabic and Ethiopic versions seem to refer this to God the Father, as if he, by Christ, made the expiation of sin, and then caused him to sit down at his right hand; but it belongs to the Son himself, who of himself, and by himself alone, and by the sacrifice of himself, made atonement for the sins of his people; which is meant by

the purgation of them: he took their sins upon himself, and bore them, and removed them far away, and utterly abolished them, which the priests under the law could not do: and when he had so done,

he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; by "Majesty" is meant God the Father, to whom majesty belongs; who is clothed with it, and which is before him: and his "right hand" designs his power, greatness, and glory, and is expressive of the high honour Christ, as man, is possessed of; for his sitting here denotes the glorious exaltation of him in human nature, after his sufferings, and death, and resurrection from the dead; and shows that he had done his work, and was accepted, and was now enjoying rest and ease, honour and glory, in which he will continue; and the place of his session, as well as of the habitation of God, at whose right hand he sits, is on high, in the highest heavens.

Ver. 4. *Being made so much better than the angels*, etc..] Christ is so much better than the angels, as the Creator, than the creature; as an independent being, than a dependent one; as he that blesses, than he that is blessed; as he that is worshipped, than he that worships: as a king, than his subjects; as a master, than his servants; and as he that sends, than he that is sent: and Christ may be said to be "made so", when he was manifested and declared to be so; and he was actually preferred to them, and exalted above them in human nature, after he had expiated the sins of his people, and when he was set down at the right hand of God, as in the latter part of the preceding verse, with which these words stand connected; for in his state of humiliation, and through his sufferings and death, he was made lower than they; but when he was risen from the dead, and ascended to heaven, he was placed at the right hand of God, where none of them ever was, or ever will be: besides, the phrase, "being made", signifies no more than that "he was"; and so the Syriac version renders it, "and he was so much better than the angels"; and so the Ethiopic version, "he is so much better": and this is observed, to prove him to be more excellent than any creature, since he is preferred to the most excellent of creatures; and to show, that the Gospel dispensation is superior to the legal dispensation, which was introduced by the ministration of angels; and to take off the Jews from the worship of angels, to which they were prone: and this doctrine of his could not be well denied by them, since it was the faith of the Jewish church, that the Messiah should be preferred to the angels: for in their ancient writings they say of him, he shall be exalted above Abraham, he shall be lifted up

above Moses, and be higher than the ministering angels [f18]; and that he is above them, appears from what follows,

as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they; which is that of the Son of God, a name peculiar to him; and which belongs to him in such a sense as it does not to angels, as is evident from the following verse: and though this name is not founded on his office, as Mediator, but arises from his nature and relation to God; yet he was declared to be the Son of God, and it was made manifest, that this name of right belonged to him, upon the discharge of his office, at his resurrection and ascension to heaven; and therefore he is said to obtain it by inheritance; or he appeared to inherit it of right, and that it was his possession for evermore.

Ver. 5. *For unto which of the angels said he at any time*, etc..] That is, he never said to any of the angels what he has said to Christ; namely, what follows,

thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee for though angels are called the sons of God, (<18006>Job 1:6 2:1 38:7) yet are never said to be begotten by him; or, with this clause annexed to it, “this day have I begotten thee”; nor are they ever so called in a proper sense, or in such sense as Christ is: this is said to Christ, and of him, in (<19207>Psalm 2:7) and that agreeably to the sense of the Jewish church at this time, or the apostle would never have produced it to the Hebrews in such a manner; and not only the whole psalm in general, but this verse in particular, is owned by Jewish writers [f19], both ancient and modern, to belong to the Messiah. Christ is the Son of God, not by Creation, nor by adoption, nor by office, but by nature; he is the true, proper, natural, and eternal Son of God; and as such is owned and declared by Jehovah the Father, in these words; the foundation of which relation lies in the begetting of him; which refers not to his nature, either divine or human: not to his divine nature, which is common with the Father and Spirit; wherefore if his was begotten, theirs must be also, being the same undivided nature, common to all three; much less to his human nature, in which he is never said to be begotten, but always to be made, and with respect to which he is without Father; nor to his office, as Mediator, in which he is not a Son, but a servant; besides, he was a Son, previous to his being a prophet, priest, and King; and his office is not the foundation of his sonship, but his sonship is the foundation of his office; or by which that is supported, and which fits him for the performance of it:

but it has respect to his divine person; for as, in human generation, person begets person, and like begets like, so it is in divine generation; though care must be taken to remove all imperfection from it, as divisibility and multiplication of essence, priority and posteriority, dependence, and the like; nor can the modus, or manner of it, be conceived, or explained by us: the date of it, today, designs eternity, as in (<23813>Isaiah 43:13), which is one continued day, an everlasting now; and this may be applied to any time and case, in which Christ is declared to be the Son of God; as at his incarnation, his baptism, his transfiguration on the Mount, and his resurrection from the dead, as in (<44133>Acts 13:33 <45104>Romans 1:4) and at his ascension to heaven, when he was made Lord and Christ, and his divine sonship more manifestly appeared; which seems to be the time, and case, more especially referred to here. And again, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a Son: which words are taken from (<10714>2 Samuel 7:14) and the sense is, not that he should be his son by adoption; or that he would be instead of a father to him; or that he should be as dear to him as a son is to a father; but that he was really and properly so; and he would make it manifest, and own him as such, as he did at Jordan's river, upon the Mount, and at his resurrection and ascension; though the words are spoken of Solomon, as a type of Christ, they properly belong to the antitype, who is greater than Solomon.

Ver. 6. *And again, when he bringeth the first begotten into the world*; etc..] By “the first begotten” is meant Christ. This is a name given him in the Old Testament, and is what the Hebrews were acquainted with, and therefore the apostle uses it; it is in (<19827>Psalm 89:27) from whence it seems to be taken here, and which the ancient Jews [f20] acknowledge is to be understood of the Messiah; who, as the Son of God, is the only begotten of the Father, and was begotten from eternity, as before declared, and before any creature had a being, and therefore called the firstborn of every creature, (<51015>Colossians 1:15) and is sometimes styled the first begotten from the dead; he rose the first in time, and is the first in causality and dignity: and he may be called the firstborn, with respect to the saints, who are of the same nature with him, and are partakers of the divine nature, and are adopted into the family of God, though they are not in the same class of sonship with him; and the bringing of him into the world may refer to his second coming, for this seems agreeable from the natural order of the words, which may be rendered, “when he shall bring again”, etc.. that is, a second time, and from (<19701>Psalm 97:1-12) from whence the following

words are cited; and from the glory he shall then have from the angels, who will come with him, and minister to him; and not to his resurrection from the dead, when he was exalted above angels, principalities, and powers; though, as we read the words, they seem to regard his first coming in to this habitable world, at his incarnation and birth, when he was attended with angels, and worshipped by them, according to the order of God the Father, as follows:

he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him; these words are cited from (<19707>Psalm 97:7) where the angels are called Elohim, gods. So Aben Ezra on the place observes, that there are some (meaning their doctors) who say, that "all the gods are the angels"; and Kimchi says, that the words are not imperative, but are in the past tense, instead of the future,

all the angels have worshipped him; that is, they shall worship him; as they have done, so they will do. According to our version, they are called upon to worship God's firstborn, his only begotten Son, with a religious worship and adoration, even all of them, not one excepted; which shows, that Christ, as the first begotten, is the Lord God, for he only is to be served and worshipped; and that if angels are to worship him, men ought; and that angels are not to be worshipped, and that Christ is preferable to them; and the whole sets forth the excellency and dignity of his person. Philo the Jew [f21] often calls the Logos, or Word of God, his first begotten.

Ver. 7 *And of the angels he saith*, etc..] Or "to the angels", as in the following verse, "to the Son", which stands opposed to this; and the words said to them, or of them, are found in (<19404>Psalm 104:4)

who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire: this cannot be understood of the wind and lightning, and of God's making these his messengers and ministers to do his will; for such a sense is not suitable to the scope of the psalm, from whence they are taken, nor to the order of the words in which they stand; for it is not said he makes spirits, or winds, his angels, and flaming fire his ministers, but the reverse; and is contrary to the design of the apostle in citing them, which is to show the superiority of Christ to angels, of whom it is said, that they are made spirits: they are "spirits", created ones, and so differ from God the Creator: they are incorporeal ones, and so differ from men; they are immaterial, and so die not; they are spiritual substances subsisting in themselves: and they are "made" such by God the Father, and by the Son the Lord Jesus Christ, within the six days of the creation, and all at once; for it is not to be

supposed that the Lord is daily making them; and this proves the Son to be God, as well as more excellent than the angels; unless this is to be understood of the daily disposal of them in providence, in causing winds, thunder, lightning, and the like. Some choose to supply the word with “as”, and read, who maketh his angels as winds; for invisibility, velocity, power, and penetration: “and his ministers as a flame of fire”; and these are the same with the angels, for they are ministers to God; they attend his presence; are ready to perform any service for him; they sing his praise, and are his chariots in which he rides: and they are ministers to Christ; they attended at his incarnation: were solicitous for his preservation, ministered to him in distress, assisted at his resurrection, and accompanied him in his ascension, and will be with him at his second coming: and they are as a flame of fire, so called from their great power, force, and swiftness; and from their burning love, and flaming zeal, hence named seraphim; and because they are sometimes the executioners of God's wrath, and will descend in flaming fire, when Christ shall be revealed from heaven: angels sometimes appear in fiery forms; the chariots and horses of fire, by which Elijah was carried up to heaven, were no other than angels, in such forms: so the Jews [f22] say of the angels,

> “all the angels, their horses are horses of fire, and their chariots fire, and their bows fire, and their spears fire, and all their instruments of war fire.”

And they have a notion, that an angel is half water, and half fire [f23].

Ver. 8. *But unto the Son, he saith*, etc..] What he does not to angels, and which sets him infinitely above them; which shows him to be a Prince and King, and not a servant, or minister; and which even ascribes deity to him:

thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: this, with what follows in this verse, and the next, is taken out of (<19E506>Psalm 45:6,7) which psalm is not spoken of Solomon, to whom many things in it will not agree; he was not fairer than other men; nor was he a warrior; nor was his throne for ever and ever; and much less a divine person, and the object of worship; but the Messiah, and so the ancient Jews understand it: the Targum applies it to him, and mentions him by name in (<580102>Hebrews 1:2) and some of their modern writers [f24] affirm it is said of the Messiah; though Aben Ezra seems doubtful about it, saying, it is spoken concerning David, or Messiah his Son, whose name is so, (<263725>Ezekiel 37:25). Deity is here ascribed to the Son of God; he is expressly called God; for the words will not bear to be

rendered, “thy throne is the throne of God, or thy throne is God”; or be supplied thus, “God shall establish thy throne”: nor are the words an apostrophe to the father, but are spoken to the king, the subject of the psalm, who is distinguished from God the Father, being blessed and anointed by him; and this is put out of all doubt by the apostle, who says they are addressed “to the Son”, who is not a created God, nor God by office, but by nature; for though the word “Elohim” is sometimes used of those who are not gods by nature; yet being here used absolutely, and the attributes of eternity, and most perfect righteousness, being ascribed to the person so called, prove him to be the true God; and this is the reason why his throne is everlasting, and his sceptre righteous, and why he should be worshipped, served, and obeyed. Dominion and duration of it are given to him; his throne denotes his kingly power, and government; which is general, over angels, good and bad; over men, righteous and wicked, even the greatest among them, the kings and princes of the earth: and special, over his church and people; and which is administered by his Spirit and grace in the hearts of his saints; and by his word and ordinances in his churches; and by his powerful protection of them from their enemies; and will be in a glorious manner in the latter day, and in heaven to all eternity; for his throne is for ever, and on it he will sit for ever: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; he will have no successor in it, nor can his government be subverted; and though he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, it will not cease.

A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom; the sceptre is an ensign of royalty; and a sceptre of righteousness, or rightness, is expressive of the justice of government; the Syriac version renders it, “a sceptre stretched out”; which is a sceptre of mercy, as the instance of Ahasuerus stretching out his sceptre to Esther shows; and such is the Gospel of Christ, which holds forth and declares the mercy, grace, and love of God to men through Christ; and which may be called a sceptre of righteousness, since it reveals and directs to the righteousness of Christ, and encourages to works of righteousness; but here it designs the righteous administration of Christ's kingly office; for just and true are, have been, and ever will be his ways, as King of saints.

Ver. 9. *Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity*, etc..] Christ loves righteous persons and righteous works, faithfulness and integrity, and a just administration of government, everything that is holy, just, and good; which has appeared in the whole course of his life on earth, in working out

a righteousness for his people, and in encouraging righteousness in them, which he leads them in the way of; and his love of justice will still more appear at the last day, when he will judge the world in righteousness, and give the crown of righteousness to proper persons: and he hates iniquity; or "unrighteousness", as the Alexandrian copy and another read; as being contrary to his nature, both as God and man, and to the righteous law of God; which has appeared by his inveighing against it, and dehorting from it; by his severity exercised towards delinquents; by his suffering for it, and abolishing of it; and by chastising his own people on account of it; and his abhorrence of it will still more appear at the day of judgment, when all workers of iniquity, professors and profane, will be bid to depart from him:

therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows: the anointer is the God of Christ; that is, God the Father, who is the God of Christ, as man; and is so called, because he prepared and formed the human nature of Christ, and supported it under all its sufferings, and has glorified it; and as such Christ prayed unto him, believed in him, loved him, and obeyed him: the anointed is the Son of God, the Son spoken to, and is called God in the preceding verse; though he is not anointed as God, but as Mediator, to be prophet, and priest, and King: what he is anointed with is not material oil, but spiritual, the Holy Ghost, as it is explained in (Acts 10:38) called the oil of gladness, in allusion to the use of oil at feasts and weddings, for the delight and refreshment of the guests; and because of the spiritual effects of joy and gladness, both on Christ, as man, and on his people. Now Christ was anointed as Mediator from all eternity; that is, he was invested with his office as such; and at his conception and birth he was filled with the Holy Ghost; who also descended on him at his baptism, after which he went about doing good, and healing diseases; but here it seems to refer to the time of his ascension, when he was declared to be Lord and Christ, the anointed one; and received gifts for men, the fulness of the Spirit without measure, and with which he was anointed above his "fellows"; by whom are meant, not the angels, nor the kings and princes of the earth; but the saints, who are so called, because they are of the same nature, and are of the same family, and are partakers of the same spirit, and grace; and having received the unction from him, are also kings, priests, and prophets, and will be companions with him to all eternity. Now the reason of his being anointed, or exalted, and made Lord and Christ, is, because he loves righteousness; (see Philippians 2:7,8) or rather, because he is anointed

with the Holy Spirit without measure, therefore he loves righteousness; for the words may be rendered, “thou lovest righteousness — because God, thy God, hath anointed thee”.

Ver. 10. *And thou Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth*, etc..] The person here addressed, as the Lord or Jehovah, and as the Maker of the heavens and the earth, is the same with the Son spoken to, and of, before; for the words are a continuation of the speech to him, though they are taken from another psalm, from (<19A225>Psalm 102:25-27). The phrase, “thou, Lord” is taken from (<19A212>Psalm 102:12) and is the same with, “O my God”, (<19A224>Psalm 102:24) and whereas it is there said, “of old”, and here, in the beginning, the sense is the same; and agreeably to the Septuagint, and the apostle, Jarchi interprets it by hlyjtm, “at”, or “from the beginning”; and so the Targum paraphrases it, zywrç ^m, “from the beginning”, that the creatures were created, etc.. that in the beginning of the creation, which is the apostle's meaning; and shows the eternity of Christ, the Lord, the Creator of the earth, who must exist before the foundation of the world; and confutes the notion of the eternity of the world: and the rounding of it shows that the earth is the lower part of the creation; and denotes the stability of it; and points out the wisdom of the Creator in laying such a foundation; and proves the deity of Christ, by whom that, and all things in it, were made:

the heavens are the works of thine hands: there are more heavens than one; there are the airy heaven, and the starry heaven, and the heaven of heavens, the third heaven; and they were created the beginning, as the earth was, (<01001>Genesis 1:1) and are the immediate work of Christ; they were made by himself, not by the means of angels, who were not in being till these were made; nor by any intermediate help, which he could not have, and which he did not need: the phrase is expressive of the power of Christ in making the upper parts of the creation, and of his wisdom in garnishing them, in which there is a wonderful display of his glory; and the whole serves to set forth the dignity and excellency of his person.

Ver. 11. *They shall perish*, etc..] That is, the heavens and the earth; not as to the substance of them, but as to the quality of them; the present form and fashion of them shall pass away; the curse will be removed from them, and they will be renewed and purified, but the substance of them will continue; otherwise there would be no place, either for the righteous or the wicked,

But thou remainest; without any change or alteration, neither in his natures, divine or human, as God or man, nor in his office as Mediator; as a priest, he has an unchangeable priesthood, and ever lives to make intercession; as a King, his kingdom is an everlasting one, and of it there will be no end; and as a prophet, he will be the everlasting light, of his people.

They all shall wax old as doth a garment; garments in time wax old, and lose their beauty and usefulness, unless when a miracle is wrought, as in the case of the children of Israel in the wilderness. Now the heavens, and the light thereof, are as a garment and a curtain, (<19A402>Psalm 104:2) and these, together with the earth, will in time come to their end of usefulness, in the present form of them; (see <25106>Isaiah 51:6).

Ver. 12. *And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up*, etc..] In order to lay them aside, and make no use of them in the manner they now are; just as clothes, when they are grown old, or out of fashion, are folded up, and laid aside from use at present, or are put into another form. In the Hebrew text it is, “as a vesture shalt thou change them”; but the sense is the same, for a garment is changed by folding it, or turning it; agreeably to which Jarchi interprets the Hebrew phrase thus, ``as a man turns his garment to put it off;”

the Vulgate Latin version reads as the Hebrew does, and one of the manuscripts of New College, Oxford.

And they shall be changed; as to their form and use, not as to their being; for a change, and an annihilation, are two things:

but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail; which is expressive of the immutability of Christ, in his nature and perfections, in his person, and offices, in the virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; and of his duration or continuance, in opposition to the fading and transitory nature of the heavens and earth, and of all outward enjoyments: and this may serve to take off the heart from the one, and set it upon the other; and to strengthen our faith in Christ, and encourage us to expect a continuance of blessings from him; all supplies of grace now, and eternal glory hereafter.

Ver. 13. *But to which of the angels said he at any time*, etc..] That is, he never said to any of them in his council, or covenant; he never designed to give them any such honour, as hereafter expressed; he never promised it to

them, or bestowed it on them; he never called up any of them to so high a place, or to such a dignity:

sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool; yet this he said to his Son, (<19A001>Psalm 110:1) for to him, the Messiah, are they spoken, and have had their fulfilment in him: (see Gill on "<402244>Matthew 22:44"); and therefore he must be greater than the angels.

Ver. 14. *Are they not all ministering spirits*, etc..] Servants to God, to Christ, and to his people, and therefore must be inferior to the Son of God. The phrase is Rabbinical; frequent mention is made in Jewish writings [f25] of trçh ykalm, "the angels of ministry", or "the ministering angels"; this is their common appellation with the Jews; and the apostle writing to such, uses a like phrase, well known to them, and appeals to them, if the angels were not such spirits.

Sent forth to minister for them who shall be the heirs of salvation? the persons they minister to, and for, are those, who shall be the heirs of salvation; that is, of eternal glory, which will be possessed by the saints, as an inheritance: hence it belongs to children, being bequeathed to them by their Father, and comes to them through the death of Christ, of which the Spirit is the earnest; and this shows that it is not of works, and that it is of an eternal duration, and takes in all kind of happiness: and of this the saints are heirs now; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "who are heirs of salvation"; nor should it be rendered, "who shall be heirs", but rather, "who shall inherit salvation"; for this character respects not their heirship, but their actual inheriting of salvation: and the ministry of angels to, and for them, lies in things temporal and spiritual, or what concern both their bodies and their souls; in things temporal, in which they have often been assisting, as in providing food for their bodies, in curing their diseases, in directing and preserving them in journeys, in saving and delivering them from outward calamities, in restraining things hurtful from hurting them, and in destroying their enemies; in things spiritual, as in making known the mind and will of God to them, in comforting them, and suggesting good things to them, and in helping and assisting them against Satan's temptations; and they are present with their departing souls at death, and carry them to heaven, and will gather the elect together at the last day. And they are "sent forth" to minister to them in such a way; they are sent forth by Christ, the Lord and Creator of them, who therefore must be superior to them; they do not take this office upon themselves, though, being put into

they faithfully and diligently execute it, according to the will of Christ: and this shows the care of Christ over his people, and his kindness to them, and the great honour he puts upon them, to appoint such to minister to them; and since they are of so much use and service, they ought to be respected and esteemed, though not worshipped.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 1

In this chapter the apostle, from the superior excellency of Christ, by whom the Gospel revelation is come, discoursed of in the preceding, urges the believers he writes to, to a more diligent attention to the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; to which he adds another motive inducing thereunto, lest those things should be let slip, and be lost, (Hebrews 2:1) and then, by another argument from the less to the greater, that if the law, which was given by angels, could not be broken with impunity, then how should such escape divine punishment that neglected and despised the Gospel, which is a doctrine of salvation, was delivered by the Lord himself, and confirmed by various testimonies and miracles, (Hebrews 2:2-4). And besides the Gospel dispensation is not put into the hands of angels, but into the hands of Christ, to whom all things are subject, which is proved out of (Psalm 8:4-6) and which proof shows, that though Christ, on account of his sufferings and death, was for a while made lower than the angels, yet being now crowned with glory and honour, he is above them, and they are subject to him, since all things are, (Hebrews 2:5-9). And this anticipates an objection that might be taken from hence against what the apostle had asserted in the foregoing chapter, concerning the superiority of Christ to angels; and this leads him on to observe the reason of the sufferings and death of Christ, and also of his incarnation; that the moving cause of Christ's sufferings and death was the grace and good will of God; that he did not suffer for himself, but for others, for everyone of those described in the context; that inasmuch as he was the surety of those persons, it was agreeable to the justice of God, and it could not be otherwise, but he must be made perfect through suffering; and this was the way to bring many sons to glory, (Hebrews 2:9,10) and as for his incarnation, or his becoming man, that was necessary, that the sanctifier and the sanctified might be of the same nature, that he might be able to call them brethren and children, (Hebrews 2:11-13) as he does, for which are cited (Psalm 22:22 18:2 Isaiah 8:18) and because the children he engaged to bring to glory were partakers of flesh and blood; and also that he might be capable of dying, and by dying destroy the devil, and deliver

his timorous people, who, through fear of death, lived in a continual state of bondage, (Hebrews 2:14,15) for which reason he did not take upon him the nature of angels, but of the seed of Abraham, (Hebrews 2:16) And besides, it was necessary he should be in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be merciful to them, and faithful to God, and be in a state and condition capable of sympathizing with them, and succouring them under their temptations, which he was able to do by suffering through temptation himself, (Hebrews 2:17,18).

Ver. 1. *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed*, etc..] This is an inference from the apostle's discourse in the preceding chapter; since he, by whom God has spoke in these last days, is his Son, who is infinitely above the angels, they being his creatures, and worshippers of him, and ministers to him, and his; therefore the greater regard should be had to the Gospel spoken by him: even to the things which we have heard; which are no other than the truths of the Gospel, which had been preached unto them, and which were heard by the apostles, who had preached them to them; and they had heard them from them, or from Christ himself, and were what their forefathers had desired to hear, and which the carnal ear has not heard; for there is an internal and an external hearing of the Gospel. Now it becomes the hearers of it to give heed, or attend unto it, to beware of that which is pernicious and hurtful, and to regard that which is good and profitable; and this giving heed takes in a close consideration of Gospel truths, a diligent inquiry into them, a valuable esteem of them, a strict adherence to them, and a watchfulness to retain what is heard, and to conform unto it: and this was to be done “more earnestly” than their forefathers had, or than they themselves had; or this may be put for the superlative degree, and signify, that they should give the most earnest heed; for they had the most abundant reason to give heed, since what they heard was not from Moses, and the prophets, to whom they did well to take heed, but from Christ the Son of God, who was greater than they: “lest at any time we should let them slip”: and this either respects persons; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “lest we should run out”; and the Syriac version, “lest we should fall”; and the Arabic version, “lest we should fall from honesty”: which may intend partial slips and falls, to which the people of God are subject; and which are oftentimes owing to inadvertency to the word; for the Gospel, duly attended to, is a preservative from falling: or it may respect things, even the doctrines of the Gospel, lest we should let them slip out of us, through us, or besides us:

the metaphor seems to be taken either from leaking vessels, which let out what is put into them; or to strainers, which let the liquor through, and it falls on the ground, and cannot be gathered up, and so becomes useless; and which is expressive of unprofitable hearing of the word, through inattention, negligence, and forgetfulness, and the irrecoverableness of it, when it is gone: the Gospel may be lost to some that hear it, as to any real benefit and advantage by it; and some who hear the Gospel may be lost and perish; but the grace of the Gospel can never be lost.

Ver. 2. *For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast*, etc..] This is a description of the law, from whence the apostle argues to a stricter regard to the Gospel, as from the lesser to the greater: this is called “the word”, and a terrible one it was; it was a voice of words, which they that heard entreated they might hear no more; it was the word “spoken” with an articulate voice, and was heard by the Israelites, and it was spoken “by angels”. Jehovah the Father's voice was never heard; when he came to give the law, ten thousand angels came along with him; and the ministry of these he used in the delivery of the law; by them he spoke it; they formed in the air the voices heard; it was ordained by them, and given by the disposition of them; (see <4053>Acts 7:53 <4819>Galatians 3:19). To which agree those words of Herod, spoken to the Jews, recorded by Josephus [f26]; that we learn of God, δι' αγγελων, “by angels”, the best of doctrines, and the most holy things in the law. And this was “steadfast”; firm, and sure, being the word of God, which cannot pass away, until it be fulfilled: it was confirmed by terrible signs attending it, and by the people's assent unto it; the penalty of it is sure and certain, in case of disobedience; and as to the form and ministration of it, it remained until Christ, the end of it, came; and as to the matter of it, so far as of a moral nature, it still remains: the judicial and ceremonial parts of it are abrogated; and the whole of it is abolished, as in the hands of Moses, and as a covenant of works, and as to the curse and condemnation of it, and with respect to justification by it; but it still continues as a cursing law to all that are under it; and as a means of conviction to sinners in the hands of the Spirit; and as a rule of walk and conversation to saints, as in the hands of Christ:

and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; every precept of the law had a penalty annexed to it; and every breach of it was punished as that penalty required; and that according to the strict justice of God, and the just demerit of sin; and none escaped, but

suffered the punishment due to the violation of the precept either in themselves, or in their surety; so steadfast and immovable was this law.

Ver. 3. *How shall we escape*, etc..] The righteous judgment of God, and eternal punishment:

if we neglect so great salvation? as the Gospel is, which is called salvation; in opposition to the law, which is the ministration of condemnation; and because it is a declaration of salvation by Christ; and is the means of bringing it near, and of the application of it in conversion, and so is the power of God unto it: and it is a "great" salvation; the Gospel which reveals it is great, for the author of it is Christ; it has been confirmed by miracles, and attended with great success; and has in it great things, great mysteries, and exceeding great and precious promises: and the salvation which it declares is great; it is the produce of great wisdom; it is wrought by a great person, by a Saviour, and a great one, and who is the great God, and our Saviour; it has been procured at great charge and expense, even at the expense of the blood and life of the Son of God; and has been obtained through great difficulties; and is the salvation of the soul, the more noble part of man; and it is a complete and everlasting one: to "neglect" this, is to be careless of it; to condemn it, and to despise the ministers of it; and to make anything else but Christ the way of salvation: and the danger such are in is very great; it is not possible that they should escape divine vengeance, since their sin is so great, and attended with such aggravating circumstances; for it is a contempt of the grace and wisdom of God in providing such a Saviour, and a trampling under foot the Son of God, and a counting his blood as a common thing; and besides, there is no more sacrifice for sin, they can have nothing to atone for it; and that God, whom they offend hereby, is both omniscient and omnipotent, and there will be no escaping out of his hands: to which must be added, that this Gospel of salvation is that

which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord; by the Lord Jesus Christ himself; the Gospel was preached by him, and he was extraordinarily qualified for it; and he spake it as never man did: it was preached by John indeed, and by all the prophets before him, and to the Israelites in the wilderness, and to Abraham before them, and even to Adam in Eden's garden, which was the first time it was spoken; but then it was spoken to him by the Lord; by the Word of the Lord, the essential Word, the Son of God, as the ancient Chaldee paraphrases, which express the sense of the

old Jewish church, show [f27]: besides, it began most fully and clearly to be preached by him in the days of his flesh, so as it never was preached before, nor since; grace and truth, the doctrines of grace and truth came by him, in all their fulness and glory: and

was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; the Gospel is in itself firm and stable; nor did the words of Christ need any confirmation, who is truth itself, the “Amen”, and faithful witness; but in condescension to human weakness, and by reason that Christ, as man, was not everywhere, and that by the mouth of more witnesses it should be established, he sent forth his apostles to preach it; who heard it from him, and they published it to the Jews first, as these were to whom the apostle writes, and then to the Gentiles. And though the apostle had it first by revelation from Christ himself, (<480111>Galatians 1:11,12) it was confirmed to him by Ananias.

Ver. 4. *God also bearing them witness*, etc..] The apostles of Christ; God testifying to their mission and commission, and the truth of the doctrine they preached:

both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles; such as taking up serpents without hurt, healing the sick, causing the lame to walk, and raising the dead, and casting out devils, and the like; all which were for the confirmation of the Gospel preached by them: a sign, wonder, or miracle, for these signify the same thing, is a marvellous work done before men, by the power of God, to confirm a divine truth; God is the sole author of miracles; and they were done in the first ages of Christianity, when they were necessary, to give evidence of the truth of it, and to establish men in it; and these were various, as before observed: and gifts of the Holy Ghost; such as besides gifts of healing and working miracles, gifts of foretelling things to come, discerning of spirits, speaking with divers kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues, (<461208>1 Corinthians 12:8,9,10) according to his own will; either according to the will of God, who bore testimony by these miracles and gifts; or according to the will of the Holy Spirit, who distributed them to men severally as he pleased, (<461211>1 Corinthians 12:11).

Ver. 5. *For unto the angels*, etc..] Though angels were concerned in the giving of the law, and were frequently employed under the former dispensation, in messages to men, and in making revelations of God's mind and will to them, yet to them

hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak: by which is meant, not the future state of eternal glory and happiness in heaven, as opposed to this world, and the present state of things; though there may be much truth in this sense, as that the present world is in subjection to angels, and the world to come is not; the present world is much in subjection, though it is not put into subjection, to evil angels, who usurp a power over it, hence Satan is called the god and prince of this world; and it is in some sense in subjection to good angels, as they are used by God in the execution of his providential care and government, in influencing and assisting at the councils of princes, in inflicting God's judgments on kingdoms and nations, and in the special care of his own people: but the world to come, as opposed to this, is not at all subject to them; they are employed in carrying the souls of departed saints thither, and shall be with them there, and join with them in their service; but they will not be as kings, nor even as children, but as servants; much less is heaven at their dispose to give to whomsoever they please; it is only in this sense in subjection to Christ, the Prince of life, who has power to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given to him: but it is not of this world the apostle is speaking; he is speaking of something now, which bears this name, and in proof of it cites a passage out of (Psalm 8:1-9) where mention is made of sheep, and other things, which cannot refer to the world of glory: rather it designs the new heavens and new earth at the resurrection, and day of judgment, for these will not be put in subjection to angels; though of these the apostle is not speaking in the context: it seems therefore to intend the Gospel, and the Gospel dispensation and church state, in opposition to the Jewish state, and legal dispensation, which was called a world, and had in it a worldly sanctuary, and worldly ordinances, which is now at an end; and at the end of which Christ came, and then another world took place, here called “the world to come”, as the times of the Messiah are frequently called by the Jews abh µlw[, “the world to come”, the Gospel dispensation, the apostle was treating of in the preceding verses, in distinction from the law, the word spoken by angels; for the Gospel was not spoken by them, but by the Lord: the Gospel state is very properly the world to come, with respect to the Old Testament saints, who were looking for it, and in which old things are past away, and all things are become new; angels desire to look into the mysteries of it, and learn from the church the manifold wisdom of God; but not they, but men, are the dispensers of the doctrines of it; and Christ, he is the Head, King, Governor, and Father of this new world: so instead of “everlasting

Father", the Septuagint render the clause πατηρ του μελλοντος αιωνος, in (<23>Isaiah 9:6) "the Father of the age", or "world to come"; and hence mention is made in the Jewish writings of ajyçmd ytad aml[, "the world to come of the Messiah" [f28].

Ver. 6. *But one in a certain place testified*, etc..] That is, David, for he is the penman of the psalm, out of which the following words are taken; and though his name is not mentioned by the apostle, nor the particular place, or the psalm pointed at, as in (<441333>Acts 13:33,35) yet this was not through ignorance of either, nor out of disrespect to the penman; but because the apostle is writing to Jews, who were conversant with the Scriptures, and knew full well who said the words, and where they were: and it is usual with the Jews to cite passages in this manner; and the form by which the passage is introduced, by the word testified, is quite agreeable to their way of citing Scripture, of which there is another instance in (<581707>Hebrews 7:17) and I think that this form is only used in this epistle to the Hebrews, with which they were acquainted: it is common with them to say, hdy[h hrwth, "the law testified" [f29], as it is said in such or such a place; and here the apostle produces a passage, as a witness and testimony of the truth of what he had said, that the Gospel dispensation is not put in subjection to angels, but to the Messiah: the passage stands in (<190804>Psalm 8:4) which psalm belongs to the times of the Messiah, as appears from the non-application of it to others; and from the application of a passage in it to the children in his time, (<402116>Matthew 21:16) by Christ himself, and of the passage here by the apostle; nor in any other time was the name of the Lord excellent in all the earth, with which the psalm begins and concludes:

Saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? this is not to be understood of mankind in general: not of man in a state of innocence; there were no babes nor sucklings in paradise, nor enemies to restrain; "Enosh", the word for man, signifies a frail mortal man, which Adam then was not; nor could he be called the son of man; nor can it so well suit with him, to be said to be made a little lower than the angels, and then crowned with glory and honour: nor of man as fallen, for all things are not subjected unto him; but of Christ, with whom everything agrees, as the name by which he is called, "Enosh", a frail man; for he was a man encompassed with infirmities; of no note and esteem among men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs; was subject to death, and did die; and is often called the son of man: what is said of him suits with him,

as that God was “mindful of him”; which may be expressive of his love and delight in, and choice of his human nature, to be taken into union with his divine person; and of his counsel and covenant in preparing it for him; and of his uniting it to his person; and of his providential care of it, and great affection for it; of his unction of it, and of his great regard to it in its sufferings, by supporting it, and in raising it from the dead: and also that he “visited” him; not in a way of wrath, but of favour, with his presence, with the gifts and graces of his Spirit, with divine supports, and spiritual peace and joy; all which in itself it was not deserving of, nor could it claim; and therefore these things are spoken of as favours, and in a way of admiration.

Ver. 7. *Thou madest him a little lower than the angels*, etc..] In the Hebrew text it is, “than Elohim”, which some render, “than God”; but it is rightly rendered by the apostle, “than angels”; and so the Targum, Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret it. Christ was made a little lower than the angels, through the assumption of the human nature, which is inferior to angels, especially the corporeal part of it, and in this Kimchi makes the lessening to be; and more especially as that was assumed by Christ, with the infirmities of it; and by reason of the straits and indigencies he was brought into in it; besides, he was in it made under the law, which was given by angels, and to some parts of which they are not subject; and sometimes he stood in need of the ministry and support of angels, and had it; particularly he was made lower than they, when he was deprived of the gracious presence of God, and in the time of his sufferings and death; and which seem chiefly to be respected, as appears from (⁵⁸Hebrews 2:9) and the word “little” may not so much intend the degree of his humiliation, as the duration of it; for it may be rendered, “a little while”; in which sense it is used in (⁴⁴Acts 5:34) as the Hebrew word jl[m is in (¹⁹Psalm 37:10) and so may respect the time of his suffering death; and at most the time from his incarnation to his resurrection; for he could not continue long in this low estate, which is matter of joy to us; he could not be held by the cords of death, but must rise, and be exalted above angels, as he is: and he was made so low by God, Jehovah the Father, whose name is excellent in all the earth, (¹⁹Psalm 8:1) he preordained him to this low estate; he prepared a body for him, and had a very great hand in his sufferings and death; though neither of these were contrary to his will:

thou crownest him with glory and honour; with that glory he had with the Father before the world was, and which followed upon his sufferings and death; for through them he entered into it, and upon his resurrection had it,

and he is ascended on high, where he has the honour to sit at the right hand of God, which none of the angels have; and therefore is now above them, though once for a while below them, and they are now subject to him:

and didst set him over the works of thy hands: over angels, principalities, and powers; over the kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of it, and all things in it, and made him higher than the heavens, and gave him a name above every name.

Ver. 8. *Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet*, etc..] Good angels, men and devils, all things in heaven, earth, and sea; (see 1 Peter 3:22)

for in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him; there is no one person or thing that is not subject to Christ; the subjection is the most universal, either voluntary or involuntary; whether they will or not, they are, and must be subject; God has left nothing but what he has put under his power:

but now we see not yet all things put under him; this seems to be an objection, and even a contradiction to what is before said; which may be removed by observing, that though this general subjection is not seen by us, it does not follow that it is not; and though it is not as yet visible, yet it will be: and besides, the apostle's sense may be, that no such general subjection to any mere man has ever been seen and known; as not to Solomon, nor Ahasuerus, nor Cyrus, nor Alexander the great, nor Julius, nor Augustus Caesar, nor any other; and this he may observe, to show the non-application of this passage to any but to Jesus Christ; and this sense is confirmed by what follows.

Ver. 9. *But we see Jesus*, etc..] Not with bodily eyes, but with the eyes of the mind, and understanding; that he is Jesus, as the Syriac version reads; and that he is designed in the above words; and that he has all things made subject unto him; and that he was humbled, and now exalted, as follows:

who was made a little lower than the angels; in his state of humiliation; (see Gill on “Hebrews 2:7”)

for the suffering of death: this clause may be considered either as connected with the preceding; and then the sense is, that Jesus became lower than the angels, by, or through suffering death; in that respect he was lower than they, who die not; this proved him to be in a condition below

them, and showed how pertinent the above words were to him, and how they were fulfilled in him: or with the following; and then the meaning is, that because Jesus suffered death in the room and stead of his people; humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross, when he was very low indeed, therefore he is

crowned with glory and honour; (see <3021218>Philippians 2:8,9) and (see Gill on "<3021207>Hebrews 2:7").

that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man; that is, Christ was made a little lower than the angels by becoming man, and assuming a body frail and mortal, that he might die for his church and people: to "taste death", is a Jewish phrase, often to be met with in Rabbinical writings; (see Gill on "<401628>Matthew 16:28") and signifies the truth and reality of his death, and the experience he had of the bitterness of it, it being attended with the wrath of God, and curse of the law; though he continued under it but for a little while, it was but a taste; and it includes all kinds of death, he tasted of the death of afflictions, being a man of sorrows all his days, and a corporeal death, and what was equivalent to an eternal one; and so some think the words will bear to be rendered, "that he by the grace of God might taste of every death"; which rendering of the words, if it could be established, as it is agreeable to the context, and to the analogy of faith, would remove all pretence of an argument from this place, in favour of the universal scheme: what moved God to make him lower than the angels, and deliver him up to death, was not any anger towards him, any disregard to him, or because he deserved it, but his "grace", free favour, and love to men; this moved him to provide him as a ransom; to preordain him to be the Lamb slain; to send him in the fulness of time, and give him up to justice and death: the Syriac version reads, "for God himself through his own grace tasted death for all"; Christ died, not merely as an example, or barely for the good of men, but as a surety, in their room and stead, and that not for every individual of mankind; for there are some he knows not; for some he does not pray; and there are some who will not be saved: the word "man" is not in the original text, it is only υπερ παντος, which may be taken either collectively, and be rendered "for the whole"; that is, the whole body, the church for whom Christ gave himself, and is the Saviour of; or distributively, and be translated, "for everyone"; for everyone of the sons God brings to glory, (<3021210>Hebrews 2:10) for everyone of the "brethren", whom Christ sanctifies, and he is not ashamed to own, and to whom he declares the name of God, (<3021211>Hebrews 2:11,12) for

everyone of the members of the “church”, in the midst of which he sung praise, (Hebrews 2:12) for every one of the “children” God has given him, and for whose sake he took part of flesh and blood, (Hebrews 2:13,14) and for everyone of the “seed” of Abraham, in a spiritual sense, whose nature he assumed, (Hebrews 2:16).

Ver. 10. *For it became him, for whom are all things*, etc..] This is not a periphrasis of Christ, who died, but of God the Father, who delivered him to death; and who is the final cause of all things, in nature, and in grace, all things being made for his pleasure and for his glory; and he is the efficient cause of all things, as follows:

and by whom are all things; all the works of creation, providence, and grace:

in bringing many sons to glory; not to worldly glory, but to the heavenly glory, which they are undeserving of; and which was long ago prepared for them; is at present hid; is weighty, solid, durable, yea, eternal: the persons whom God, of his rich grace, brings to this, are “sons”; who are predestinated to the adoption of children; are regenerated by the Spirit of God; believe in Christ; and have the spirit of adoption given them, and so being children, are heirs of glory: and these are “many”; for though they are but few, when compared with others, yet they are many, considered by themselves; they are many that God has ordained to eternal life, and given to Christ, and for whom he has given himself a ransom, and whom he justifies; and accordingly there are many mansions of glory provided for them in their Father's house, whose act it is to bring them thither: he has chosen them to this glory, and prepared it for them; he sent his Son to redeem them; he reveals his Son in them, the hope of glory; he calls them to his eternal glory, and makes them meet for it, and gives them an abundant entrance into it: and

him it became — to make the Captain of their salutation perfect through sufferings; Christ is “the Captain of salvation”, and is so called, because he is the author of it; and he is the Prince and Commander of these sons, who are committed to his charge, and are under his care; and is their guide and leader; and who is gone before them to prepare their mansions of glory for them: and he is made “perfect through sufferings”; he suffered all that the law and justice of God could require; and hereby he became perfectly acquainted with the sufferings of his people, and a perfect Saviour of them; and in this way went to glory himself: and it “became” God the Father, the

first cause, and last end of all things, since he had a design to bring all his adopted sons to glory, that his own Son should perfectly suffer for them; this was agreeable to, and becoming the perfections of his nature, his wisdom, his veracity, his justice, grace, and mercy.

Ver. 11. *For both he that sanctifieth*, etc..] Not himself, though this is said of him, (<430719>John 17:19) nor his Father, though this also is true of him, (<230813>Isaiah 8:13) but his people, the sons brought to glory, whose salvation he is the Captain of; they are sanctified in him, he being made sanctification to them; and they have their sanctification from him, all their grace and holiness; and they are sanctified by him, both by his blood, which expiates their sins, and removes the guilt of them, and by his Spirit, working internal principles of grace and holiness in them, who are by nature, and in their unregenerate state, guilty and unclean:

and they who are sanctified; the sons brought to glory; they are not naturally holy, nor so of themselves, they are made holy; all that are sons are made holy; whom God adopts into his family, he regenerates: sanctification is absolutely necessary to their being brought to glory; and between the sanctifier and the sanctified there is a likeness, as there ought to be: they are

all of one: they are both of one God and Father, Christ's God is their God, and his Father is their Father; they are of one body, Christ is the head, and they are members; they are of one covenant, Christ is the surety, Mediator, and messenger of it, and they share in all its blessings and promises; they are of one man, Adam, Christ is a Son of Adam, though not by ordinary generation, they descend from him in the common way; they are all of one nature, of one blood; Christ has took part of the same flesh and blood with them:

for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; Christ, and these sons that are sanctified, stand in the relation of brethren to each other; Christ is the firstborn among many brethren; he is a brother born for the day of adversity, and one that sticks closer than a brother: and this relation is founded both upon the incarnation of Christ, who thereby became his people's “Goel”; or near kinsman, yea, brother, (<220801>Song of Solomon 8:1) and upon their adoption unto his Father's family, which is made manifest by their regeneration, and by their doing his Father's will under the influence of his grace and Spirit, (<401249>Matthew 12:49,50) and this relation Christ owns; he called his disciples brethren, when God had raised him from the

dead, and given him glory; and so he will call all his saints, even the meanest of them, in the great day, (<40:28:10>Matthew 28:10 25:40), and “he is not ashamed” to do it; he does not disdain it, though he is God over all, and the Son of God, and is also in his human nature made higher than the heavens; which shows the wonderful condescension of Christ, and the honour that is put upon the saints; and may teach them not to despise the meanest among them: such a relation the Jews own will be between the Messiah and the Israelites. The Targumist on (<22:08:01>Song of Solomon 8:1) paraphrases the words thus;

> “when the King Messiah shall be revealed to the congregation of Israel, the children of Israel shall say unto him, Come, be thou with us, jal, for “a brother”, or “be thou our brother”.”

Nor can they say this will reflect any discredit upon Christ, when they make such a relation to be between God and them. The Israelites, they say [f30], are called, hbqhl µyja “the brethren of the holy blessed God”; in proof of which they often produce (<19:12:08>Psalm 122:8) as being the words of God to them; and again, interpreting those words in (<03:25:48>Leviticus 25:48) “one of his brethren may redeem him”, this, say [f31] they, is the holy blessed God.

Ver. 12. *Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren*, etc..] These words, with the following clause, are cited from (<19:22:22>Psalm 22:22) as a proof of what the apostle had before asserted; and that this psalm is to be understood, not of the Jewish nation, or people of Israel, nor of Esther, nor of David, but of the Messiah, appears from the title of it, “Aijeleth, Shahar”, which signifies “the morning hind”; from the particular account of Christ's sufferings in it; from his several offices herein pointed to; from the conversion of the Gentiles it prophesies of; and from several passages cited from hence, and applied to Christ; (see <40:27:35>Matthew 27:35,39,43,46). And these are the words of Christ addressed to his Father; whose name he promises to declare to his brethren; meaning not the Jews, in general, his brethren according to the flesh; but his disciples and followers, particularly the twelve apostles, and the five hundred brethren to whom he appeared after his resurrection; and indeed all the saints and people of God may be included: and by his name he would declare to them, is not meant any particular name of his, as Elohim, El-shaddai, Jehovah, or the like; but rather he himself, and the perfections of his nature, which he, the only begotten Son, lying in his bosom, has declared; though the Gospel seems

chiefly to be designed; (see <430706>John 17:6,26) and this Christ declared with great exactness and accuracy, with clearness and perspicuity, and with all integrity and fidelity: he spoke it out plainly, and concealed no part of it; as he received it from his Father, he faithfully made it known to his people; this is expressive of Christ's prophetic office, of his preaching of the Gospel, both in his own person, and by his ministers:

in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee; or "a hymn"; this is to be understood not of the church above, but of the church below; and not of the synagogue of the Jews, but of the disciples of Christ, and of his singing an hymn to God, with and among them, as he did at the institution of the supper, (<402630>Matthew 26:30) for though the number of the apostles was but small, yet they made a congregation or church, and which was a pure and glorious one. With the Jews [f32], ten men made a congregation.

Ver. 13. *And again, I will put my trust in him*, etc..] These words are taken not from (<230817>Isaiah 8:17) where, in the Septuagint version, is a like phrase; for they are not the words of the Messiah there, but of the prophet; and besides, the apostle disjoins them from the following words, which stand there, by saying, "and again"; but they are cited from (<191802>Psalm 18:2) in which psalm are many things which have respect to the Messiah, and his times; the person spoken of is said to be made the head of the Heathen, to whom unknown people yield a voluntary submission, and the name of God is praised among the Gentiles, (<191843>Psalm 18:43,49). The Targum upon it makes mention of the Messiah in (<191832>Psalm 18:32) and he is manifestly spoken of under the name of David, in (<191850>Psalm 18:50) and which verse is applied to the Messiah, by the Jews, both ancient and modern [f33]: and these words are very applicable to him, for as man he had every grace of the Spirit in him; and this of faith, and also of hope, very early appeared in him; he trusted in God for the daily supplies of life, and that he would help him in, and through the work of man's salvation; (see <192209>Psalm 22:9,10 <235007>Isaiah 50:7-9) he committed his Spirit into his hands at death, with confidence, and believed he would raise his body from the dead; and he trusted him with his own glory, and the salvation of his people: and this is a citation pertinent to the purpose, showing that Christ and his people are one, and that they are brethren; for he must be man, since, as God, he could not be said to trust; and he must be a man of sorrows and distress, to stand in need of trusting in God.

And again, behold I and the children which God hath given me; this is a citation from (Isaiah 8:18) in which prophecy is a denunciation of God's judgments upon Israel, by the Assyrians, when God's own people among them are comforted with a promise of the Messiah, who is described as the Lord of hosts; who is to be sanctified, and be as a sanctuary to the saints, and as a stone of stumbling to others; and the prophet is ordered to bind and seal up the doctrine among the disciples, at which he seems astonished and concerned, but resolves to wait; upon which Christ, to encourage him, speaks these words; for they are not addressed to God, as the Syriac version renders them, “behold I and the children, whom thou hast given me, O God”; in which may be observed, that the saints are children with respect to God, who has adopted them, and with respect to Christ, who is their everlasting Father; that they were given to Christ as his spiritual seed and offspring, as his portion, and to be his care and charge; and that this is worthy of attention, and calls for admiration, that Christ and his people are one, and that he is not ashamed to own them before God and men.

Ver. 14. *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood*, etc..] By the children are meant, not the children of this world, or the men of it; nor the children of the flesh, or Abraham's natural seed; nor visible professors of religion; nor the apostles of Christ only; but all the children of God, the children given to Christ; all the sons that are brought to glory: these “are partakers of flesh and blood”; of human nature, which is common to them all, and which is subject to infirmity and mortality; and the sense is, that they are frail mortal men: and this being their state and case,

he also himself took part of the same; Christ became man also, or assumed an human nature like theirs; this shows that he existed before his incarnation, who of himself, and by his own voluntary act, assumed an individual of human nature into union with his divine person, which is expressive of wondrous grace and condescension: Christ's participation of human nature, and the children's, in some things agree, in others they differ; they agree in this, that it is real flesh and blood they both partake of; that Christ's body is not spiritual and heavenly, but natural as theirs is; and that it is a complete, perfect, human nature, and subject to mortality and infirmity like theirs: but then Christ took his nature of a virgin, and is without sin; nor has it any distinct personality, but from the moment of its being subsisted in his divine person: and now the true reason of Christ's assuming such a nature was on account of the children, which discovers

great love to them, and shows that it was with a peculiar view to them that he became man; hence they only share the special advantages of his incarnation, sufferings, and death: and his end in doing this was,

that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; the devil is said to have the power of death, not because he can kill and destroy men at pleasure, but because he was the first introducer of sin, which brought death into the world, and so he was a murderer from the beginning; and he still tempts men to sin, and then accuses them of it, and terrifies and affrights them with death; and by divine permission has inflicted it, and will be the executioner of the second death. The apostle here speaks in the language of the Jews, who often call Samael, or Satan, twmh Æalm, "the angel of death", in their Targums [f34], Talmud [f35], and other writings [f36]; and say, he was the cause of death to all the world; and ascribe much the same things to him, for which the apostle here so styles him: and they moreover say [f37], that he will cease in the time to come; that is, in the days of the Messiah: and who being come, has destroyed him, not as to his being, but as to his power; he has bruised his head, destroyed his works, disarmed his principalities and powers, and took the captives out of his hands, and saved those he would have devoured: and this he has done by death; "by his own death", as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; whereby he has abolished death itself, and sin the cause of it, and so Satan, whose empire is supported by it.

Ver. 15. *And deliver them, who through fear of death*, etc..] This is another end of Christ's assuming human nature, and dying in it, and thereby destroying Satan, that he might save some out of his hands:

[who] were all their lifetime subject to bondage; meaning chiefly God's elect among the Jews; for though all men are in a state of bondage to the lusts of the flesh, and are Satan's captives; yet this describes more particularly the state of the Jews, under the law of Moses, which gendered unto bondage; which they being guilty of the breach of, and seeing the danger they were exposed to on that account, were subject, bound, and held fast in and under a spirit of bondage: and that "through fear of death"; through fear of a corporeal death; through fear of chastisements and afflictions, the forerunners of death, and what sometimes bring it on; and through fear of death itself, as a disunion of soul and body, and as a penal evil; and through fear of what follows it, an awful judgment: and this the Jews especially were in fear of, from their frequent violations of the

precepts, both of the moral, and of the ceremonial law, which threatened with death; and this they lived in a continual fear of, because they were daily transgressing, which brought on them a spirit of bondage unto fear: and, as Philo the Jew [f38] observes, nothing more brings the mind into bondage than the fear of death: and many these, even all the chosen ones among them, Christ delivered, or saved from sin, from Satan, from the law, and its curses, from death corporeal, as a penal evil, and from death eternal; even from all enemies and dangers, and brought them into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Ver. 16. *For verily he took not on him the nature of angels*, etc..] Good angels; for they are all along spoken of in this book; and it would have been impertinent to have said this of evil angels: and this is to be understood not of a denying help and assistance to the angels; for though they have not redemption from Christ, which they needed not, yet have they help from him; they are chosen in him, and are gathered together under him; and he is the head of them, and they are upheld and sustained by him in their being, and well being: but of a non-assumption of their nature; there was no need of it with respect to good angels, and there was no salvation designed for evil ones; and to have assumed the nature of angels, would have been of no service to fallen man; an angelic nature is not capable of death, which was necessary to atone for sin, save men, and destroy Satan: this negative proposition is very strongly put, “he never took”, as the Vulgate Latin version more rightly renders it; at no time, in no place; nor is it said in any place of Scripture that he did; this is a certain truth, and not to be disputed. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, “he took not of, or from angels”; he took not any individual from among them:

but he took on him the seed of Abraham; not all his posterity, but some individual, as the word seed is sometimes used, (<01045>Genesis 4:25 15:3). Christ assumed human nature as derived from Abraham; for the Messiah was to spring from Abraham, and is promised, as that seed of his, in whom all nations should be blessed; and he was particularly promised to the Jews, the seed of Abraham, to whom the apostle was writing; and it was with a view to Abraham's spiritual seed, the children of the promise, that Christ partook of flesh and blood: the word here used signifies to catch hold of anyone ready to perish, or to lay hold on a person running away, and with great vehemence and affection to hold anything fast, that it be not lost, and to help persons, and do good unto them; all which may be observed in this act of Christ's, in assuming an individual of human nature, in Abraham's

line, into union with his divine person; whereby he has saved those that were gone out of the way, and were ready to perish, and done them the greatest good, and shown the strongest affection to them: and from hence may be learned the deity and eternity of Christ, who was before Abraham, as God, though a son of his as man; and his real humanity, and that it was not a person, but a seed, a nature he assumed; and also the union and distinction of natures in him: and Christ's taking human, and not angelic nature, shows the sovereignty of God, and his distinguishing grace and mercy to men.

Ver. 17. *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren*, etc..] The adopted sons of God, who were brethren before Christ's incarnation, being from all eternity predestinated to the adoption of children: Christ's incarnation was in time, and after that many of the brethren existed; and it was only for their sakes that he assumed human nature; and therefore it was proper he should be like them in that nature, in all things: in all the essentials of it; it was not necessary that he should have it by natural generation; nor that it should have a subsistence in itself as theirs: and in all the properties and affections of it, that are, not sinful; for it did not behove him to be like them in sin, nor in sickness, and in diseases of the body: and in all temptations; though in some things his differ from theirs; none of his arose from within; and those from without could make no impression on him: and in sufferings, that there might be a conformity between the head and members; though there is in some things a difference; his sufferings were by way of punishment, and were attended with wrath, and were meritorious, which cannot be said of theirs; but that he should have an human nature, as to its essence and perfection, like to theirs, was necessary: it was proper he should be truly and really man, as well as truly God,

that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest; he could not be an high priest, offer sacrifice for sin, and make intercession, unless he was man; nor could he be a “merciful” and compassionate one, sympathize with his people in their sorrows, temptations, and sufferings, unless he was like them in these; nor would he be a “faithful”, that is, a true and lawful one otherwise, because every high priest is taken from among men:

in things [pertaining] to God; in things in which God has to do with his people, as to preside in his name over them, to declare his will unto them, and bless them; and in things in which the people have to do with God, to

offer to God a sacrifice for their sins, to present this sacrifice to him, to appear in his presence for them, to carry in their petitions, and plead their cause as their advocate:

to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; of God's covenant people, the people he has chosen for himself, and given to his Son; and whom Christ saves from their sins, by making satisfaction for them, to the law and justice of God, which is here meant by reconciliation: and in order to this, which could not be done without blood, without sufferings and death, it was proper he should be man, and like unto his brethren: the allusion seems to be to the two goats on the day of atonement, one of which was to be slain, and the other let go; which were to be, as the Jews say [f39], ˆywç, "alike", in colour, in stature, and in price; and so were the birds to be alike in the same things, that were used at the cleansing of the leper [f40]: and the Jews tell us [f41], that the high priest was to be greater than his brethren, in beauty, in strength, in wisdom, and in riches; all which is true of Christ.

Ver. 18. *For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted*, etc..] By Satan, at his entrance on his public ministry, and a little before his death; which was done, not by stirring up sin in him, for he had none, nor by putting any into him, which could not be done, nor could Satan get any advantage over him; he solicited him one thing and another, but in vain; though these temptations were very troublesome, and disagreeable, and abhorrent to the pure and holy nature of Christ, and so must be reckoned among his sufferings, or things by which he suffered: and as afflictions are sometimes called temptations, in this sense also Christ suffered, being tempted, with outward poverty and meanness, with slight and neglect from his own relations, and with a general contempt and reproach among men: he was often tempted by the Jews with ensnaring questions; he was deserted by his followers, by his own disciples, yea, by his God and Father; all which were great trials to him, and must be accounted as sufferings: and he also endured great pains of body, and anguish of mind, and at last death itself. And so

he is able to succour them that are tempted; as all the saints, more or less, are, both with Satan's temptations, and with afflictions in the world, which God suffers to befall them, on various accounts; partly on his own account, to show his grace, power, and faithfulness in supporting under them, and in delivering out of them; and partly on his Son's account, that they might be

like unto him, and he may have an opportunity of succouring them, and sympathizing with them; and also on their own account, to humble them, to try their faith, to excite them to prayer and watchfulness, and to keep them dependent on the power and grace of God: and these Christ succours, by having and showing a fellow feeling with them; by praying for them; by supporting them under temptations; by rebuking the tempter, and delivering out of them: and all this he is able to do; he must be able to succour them as he is God; and his conquering Satan is a convincing evidence to the saints of his ability; but here it intends his qualification, and fitness, and readiness to help in such circumstances, from the experience he himself has had of these things.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 3

The apostle having discoursed, in the preceding chapters, concerning the dignity of Christ's person, and his wondrous grace in the assumption of human nature, and suffering in the room and stead of his people, exhorts the Hebrews in this to a serious consideration of him, attention to him, and faith in him, and constancy in it; the arguments he uses to engage them to these things are taken from the grace and benefit they themselves were partakers of through him, from the office in which he was, and his faithfulness to his Father in the discharge of it, (Hebrews 3:1,2) which is illustrated in the case of Moses, who was faithful in the house of God, and whom Christ excelled, and therefore was worthy of more honour; partly, because he is the builder of the house; and partly, because he is a Son in it, when Moses was only a servant; which house is Christ's own, and consists of true and steadfast believers in him, (Hebrews 3:2-6), wherefore the exhortation to regard him is renewed, enforced, and expressed in the words of the Holy Ghost, (Hebrews 3:7-11) which are taken out of (Psalm 95:7-11) and applied to the present case: hence the apostle cautions against unbelief, as being a great evil in itself, and bad in its consequence, causing persons to depart from the living God, (Hebrews 3:12), in order to prevent which he advises to a daily exhortation of each other to their duty, that so they might not be hardened in sin through the deceitfulness of it, (Hebrews 3:13) and the rather it became them to be concerned to hold fast their faith in Christ to the end, since this is the grand evidence of being a partaker of him, (Hebrews 3:14). And then the exhortation in the above passage of Scripture is recited, (Hebrews 3:15) to show, that though not all the persons spoken of, yet some did provoke the Lord by their unbelief, and unbecoming carriage, (Hebrews 3:16) wherefore, by the example of punishment being inflicted on such, of which instances are given in the forefathers of these people, such as their carcasses falling in the wilderness, and their not entering into the land of Canaan, which they could not, because God swore they should not, being grieved and provoked by them, and because of their unbelief, they are dissuaded from

the same evils, lest they should be punished in like manner, (Hebrews 3:17-19).

Ver. 1. *Wherefore, holy brethren*, etc..] The apostle calls the Hebrews "brethren", not because they were of the same natural stock and lineage, but because they were in the same spiritual relation; they all had the same Father, belonged to the same family, were the adopted sons of God, the brethren of Christ, of one another, and of the apostle; and they were "holy", not by birth, nor by their external separation from other nations, but through sanctification of the Spirit; and they were so by profession, and in the opinion of the apostle:

partakers of the heavenly calling; by which is meant not any business, or employment of life; nor a call to any office in church or state; nor a mere external call by the ministry of the word; but an internal special call of grace, to the enjoyment of the blessings of grace here, and to glory hereafter; and which is not according, to works, but according to the grace of God, and is by powerful, efficacious, and irresistible grace: and this is said to be "heavenly", because the grace by which the saints are called is from heaven, and it is to heaven they are called; and the means of their calling, the Gospel, is from heaven; and this epistle epithet is used to show the excellency of their calling, and to distinguish it from all others: and this the Hebrews are said to be "partakers of"; which shows, that God had not utterly cast off that people, and yet that they were not the only persons that enjoyed the grace of the effectual calling, they were but partners with others; and that the saints are alike sharers in this blessing, they are called in one hope of their calling; and it denotes the truth and reality of it: the duty they are exhorted to is,

to consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read, only "Jesus"; who is called "the apostle", because he was sent of God to preach the Gospel, work miracles, and do the will of God, particularly to obtain redemption and salvation for his people, which mission does not suppose any inequality of persons, or change of place, or any compulsion or disrespect to Christ, but love to men; and is to be understood of him as in office as Mediator, and shows his authority, and that he was no impostor. The high priest among the Jews was, on the day of atonement, considered as jylç, "an apostle", or "messenger" [f42]; for so the elders of the sanhedrim address him on that day, saying,

> “Lord high priest, we are the messengers of the sanhedrim, and thou art wnyjwlç, “our apostle”, or “messenger”, and the messenger of the sanhedrim.”

And it follows here, and “the high priest of our profession”; which may be understood either objectively, whom they professed, both by words or deeds; for a profession of him should be public, visible, and sincere; or efficiently, he being the author, sum, and substance of the religion, faith, and Gospel which was professed by them: and he is to be “considered” in the greatness and dignity of his person, as the Son of God; and in his wondrous grace and love in assuming human nature, and dying for his people; and in the relations he stands in to them as a Father, husband, brother, friend; and in his several offices, as Mediator, and particularly as sent of God, to be the Saviour of sinners; and as the high priest, who has offered himself a sacrifice, and ever lives to make intercession; and all this to encourage the saints to hold fast their profession of him.

Ver. 2. *Who was faithful to him that appointed him*, etc..] Or “made him”; Christ, as man, was made, but not as God; nor is the apostle speaking of the divine nature of Christ, but of his offices: wherefore this phrase designs the constitution and settlement of him in office; which may take in the eternal appointment of him as Mediator; the open promise of him in time; his mission, unction, and attestation from God; and his manifestation and declaration as such, at his ascension and session at God's right hand, when he was made Lord and Christ. Now, as Mediator, he had a trust reposed in him; as the persons of all God's elect, and a fulness of all grace for them; the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and eternal life and happiness; and also the glory of God in their salvation: which trust he has faithfully discharged as an apostle, and high priest; in a declaration of the whole will of God; in acknowledging it was his Father's doctrine he brought, and in seeking not his own, but his Father's glory; in redeeming and saving the persons committed to him; in distributing his grace to them; and in bringing them safe to glory; and in taking care of things pertaining to God:

as also Moses was faithful in all his house; the passage referred to is in (Numbers 12:7) and which seems not so much to intend the fidelity of Moses in managing the affairs of God's house, as the largeness of the trust reposed in him, the dignity and honour conferred on him, and the power and authority he was invested with, in having the whole house of Israel committed to his care and charge, in which he exceeded all other prophets;

and so the faithfulness of Christ is not so much to be understood of the discharge of his trust, as of the trust itself; and the sense is, that he was trusted much by God the Father, who constituted him Mediator, even as Moses was; and this sense best agrees with (Hebrews 3:5,6). And Deuteronomy Dieu has observed, that the Hebrew word ˆman, in Misnic writings [f43], signifies, as it does, one that is trusted, or is fit to be trusted, as Christ and Moses were; though the former is much more worthy than the latter, as follows.

Ver. 3. *For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses*, etc..] Moses was counted worthy of glory and honour, and had it given him, both by God and by men; by God, as appears from the work he called him to, to deliver his people Israel, to reveal his mind and will to them, and to rule and govern them; and from the favours he showed him, as the miracles he did by him, the near converse he admitted him to, and the view he gave him of his glory, which he made to pass before him, and his regard to him at his death and burial, as well as the testimony he gave of him; and he was counted worthy of honour by men, and who gave it him, as Pharaoh and his people, and the Israelites. The Jews give very great commendations of him; they call him a father in the law, a father in wisdom, and a father in prophecy [f44]; and say, that he is the father, master, head, and prince of all the prophets [f45]; yea, the great prophet expected in the last days, they say, will be but next to Moses, their master [f46]: they observe, that there were more miracles wrought by, and for him, than were wrought by, and for all the prophets that have been since the world began [f47]; so that he not only exceeded them in the excellency and sublimity of prophecy, but in the multitude of miracles; but Christ is worthy of more glory than Moses, and has it given him by God, angels, and men: he is a greater Saviour than Moses; Moses was but a temporal saviour, but he is the author of spiritual and eternal salvation: he is a greater prophet than Moses, being the only begotten Son of God, who lay in the bosom of the Father, and has declared him, his mind and will, his Gospel, grace, and truth, as Moses never did: he is a greater King than he, being made higher than the kings of the earth: he did more miracles than Moses, and had a greater testimony from God than he had, as that he was his beloved Son, and to be heard; he was also raised, from the dead, and is set down at the right hand of God, and is appointed Judge of all; he is ministered to, and worshipped by angels, is believed on by men, who ascribe the whole glory of their salvation to him.

Inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house; this "house", or "temple", as the Arabic version renders it, is the church, of which Christ is the builder; though not to the exclusion of the Father and the Spirit, who are coefficient builders with him, nor of ministers of the Gospel as instruments, nor of believers in a private capacity, who build up one another; but he has the chief concern in the building, which lies in the conversion of souls, and in the edification of them, and is carried on by his Spirit in the ministry of the word and ordinances, and from hence he has a glory; (see <3862>Zechariah 6:12,13) a greater glory than Moses, seeing he was but a part of this house, at most but a pillar in it; but Christ is the builder, foundation, and cornerstone.

Ver. 4. *For every house is built by some man*, etc..] Or by some one; for a house does not build itself: this is true of houses properly taken, or improperly, as nations, tribes, families, and kindred, of the whole church in general, of particular congregations, and of individual believers; the greatest saints, even apostles and prophets, such an one as Moses, are built by and upon Christ; their persons are built on him; they receive all their gifts for edification from him, and their success is owing to him; though they are to be esteemed of in their proper places: the apostle's design is to bring down the high esteem the Jews had of Moses, that they might rightly value Christ.

But he that built all things is God; Christ has built all things, and therefore he is God, and must be infinitely above Moses; for this is not to be understood of God and of the creation of the world, and of all things in it by him; but of Christ, and of his building the church, and of his ordering and managing of that, and all affairs relating to it; such as the constitution of it, settling the worship of God, and the ordinances in it, the redemption and salvation of the members of it, and its rule and government; all which prove him to be God, and above Moses.

Ver. 5. *And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant*, etc..] Moses was not only a servant to the Israelites, but he was also the Lord's servant, a servant of his choosing, sending, and approving; he was a servant in holy things, and served the Lord heartily, sincerely, and ingenuously, with all becoming fear and reverence, respect, and honour, and with all ready and cheerful obedience; the house in which he was a servant, was not his own, but belonged to God, even the Son of God, as appears from the following verse; he was not a servant in the world, and

with respect to civil things, and the affairs of Providence, but in the church of God, and in divine things; and he was faithful here, and that in all things; he did all things exactly according to the pattern showed him in the Mount; and the apostle strongly affirms all this, as well he might, since there was full proof of it, and God himself had bore a testimony to it: and the end of his being a servant here was,

for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; these words may regard his faithful testification of God's will to the people of Israel, after he was fixed as a servant in God's house; or what he said afterwards concerning the Messiah, of whom he spake and wrote, and of whom he bore an honourable testimony, (Deuteronomy 18:1,5) or they may have respect to the things spoken after Moses's time, by the prophets, Christ, and his apostles, which agreed with the testimony of Moses; or to the things afterwards spoken of in this epistle; to which may be added, that Moses in his office was typical of things to be spoken and done by the Messiah, when he came; as his deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt; his leading them through the Red sea and wilderness, to Canaan's land; his giving them the law from Mount Sinai; the erection of the tabernacle, with all its furniture, and the institution of sacrifices and the like.

Ver. 6. *But Christ as a Son over his own house*, etc..] As Moses was not, though the Jews say that he was `tybd hyram`[f48] and `tybh l[b`[f49], “lord and master of the house”; yea, and `tyb ^b`, “the Son of the house”[f50]; but this he was not: Christ is the Son and heir, the Lord and master; he is a Son, not by creation, or by adoption, or by office, but by nature: hence it appears that he is God, and is equal with God; and this his sonship is the foundation of his office, and he becomes the heir of all things: and when he is said to be “as a Son”, it does not intend mere resemblance; but is expressive of his right to heirship and government, and of the esteem and reverence he had in his house, and of his fidelity as a Son there; and though he was a servant, as man and Mediator, and had a great piece of service to perform, and which he has performed with diligence and faithfulness, yet he was also a Son, Lord and heir, as Moses was not; and he is over the house of God, as King, priest, and prophet in it, and as the firstborn, Son and heir, and as the master and governor of it; and which is called his own, because given him by the Father, purchased by himself, and which he has built, and in which he dwells:

whose house are we; believers in Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles; who, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, in whom Christ dwells by faith, and over whom he presides and reigns:

if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. These words are not to be understood as a condition of the former assertion; nor is a final falling away from grace to be inferred from hence, for the supposition proves not such an inference, but the contrary; namely, that they that have true faith, hope, and confidence, shall keep them to the end; and therefore are the house of Christ: besides, the doctrine of apostasy is quite repugnant to the apostle's argument; according to which, Christ might have no house, and can have none till men have persevered: but the apostle's design is to give a word of exhortation to himself and others, to hold fast the confidence; and so the words are rather descriptive of the persons, who are the house of Christ; such who have a good hope, through grace, wrought in them, and can rejoice in hope of the glory of God; and can use freedom of speech and boldness at the throne of grace; and have an holy confidence of interest in the love of God, and salvation by Christ, and go on in the exercise of these graces to the end of their days.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith*, etc..] In (Psalm 95:7)

today if you will hear his voice; either the precepts of Christ, to hear which is to obey them; and this is an acknowledgment to Christ as King of saints, and is a testimony of love to him, and is wellpleasing in his sight; and in which the saints find pleasure themselves, and profit also: or the Gospel of Christ, which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy; of peace and reconciliation; of pardon and righteousness; of liberty, redemption, and salvation by Christ; and to hear it, is not only to hear it externally, but internally, so as to understand it, and distinguish it from the voice of a stranger, and to approve of it, and believe it, and put in practice what is heard: and “today” may intend some festival day in David's time, when, and on account of which, this psalm was penned; as the feast of tabernacles, which was a type of Christ tabernacling in human nature; or it may regard the time of man's life, while it is day, or the present instant of life: or rather the whole Gospel dispensation. The psalm from whence these and some following words are taken, belongs to the Messiah; for the person the subject of it, is called the rock of our salvation; and every thing in it is applicable to him; as the ascription of deity, and divine worship; the creation and preservation of the universe; yea, he is represented as a

shepherd, and the saints as his sheep; which plainly points at the office of Christ; and these very words are often made use of by the Jews, and applied to the Messiah, showing that if the Jews would repent but one day, or keep the sabbath but one day, the son of David, the Messiah, would come; since it is said, “today if you will hear his voice” [f51]; which the Chaldee paraphrase renders hyrmym, “his Word”, his essential Word, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ver. 8. *Harden not you hearts*, etc..] There is a natural hardness of the heart; the heart of man is like a stone, destitute of spiritual life, motion, and activity; it is senseless, stupid, impenitent, stubborn, and inflexible, on which no impressions can be made, but by powerful grace: and there is an acquired, habitual, and voluntary hardness of heart, to which men arrive by various steps; as entertaining pleasing thoughts of sin; an actual commission of it, with frequency, till it becomes customary, and so habitual; an extenuation or justification of it, and so they become hardened against all reproofs and sermons, and to all afflictions and judgments; are insensible and past feeling, and openly declare for sin, and glory in it: and there is a hardness which God's people are liable to, and should guard against; and which is brought on by a neglect of private and public worship, and by keeping bad company, and through the ill examples of others, and by giving way to lesser sins; for all sin is of an hardening nature:

as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness; the Jews provoked God in the wilderness by their unbelief, murmurings, ingratitude, and idolatry; and they tempted him there by distrusting his power and goodness; hence one of the places in which they murmured against him was called Massah and Meribah, (<2707>Exodus 17:7) and it is an aggravation of their sin, that it was in the wilderness, after they had been just brought out of bondage into liberty, and had lately had such an instance of the power and goodness of God, in bringing them through the Red sea; and where they could have no human supplies, and therefore should have been entirely dependent on God, and trust in him.

Ver. 9. *When your fathers tempted me*, etc..] This the apostle cites and repeats, to expose the glorying of the Jews in their ancestors; to dissuade them from following their sinful practices; to deter them from the same by observing both their sin and punishment; and to heighten their regards to the voice and Gospel of Christ:

proved me; this is either an explication of the former phrase; or it may design the experience this people had of the power and goodness of God, notwithstanding their tempting and provoking the Lord by a distrust of them; which is an aggravation of their sin and ingratitude, and shows the forbearance of God, and that wicked men may partake of outward favours:

and saw my works forty years; that is, God's works of providence, in furnishing them with the necessaries of life, in guiding, protecting, and supporting them for the space of forty years, in the wilderness; and his miracles, and the punishment of their enemies; yet they saw and perceived not, but all this time sinned against the Lord, (see <05292>Deuteronomy 29:2-8) the space of time, forty years, is in the psalm placed to the beginning of the next verse, and is joined with God's grief and indignation at the people, as it is also by the apostle, in (<19503017>Hebrews 3:17) but the people's sin, and God's grief at it, being of equal duration, it matters not to which it is placed, and therefore to both; perhaps, one reason of its being repeated, and so much notice taken of it is, because there was just this number of years from Christ's sufferings, to the destruction of Jerusalem; which the apostle might have in view.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore I was grieved with that generation*, etc..] rbdmh rwd, "the generation of the wilderness", as the Jews often call them; and which they say was more beloved than any generation[f52]; and yet they will not allow them a part in the world to come; (see Gill on "<19503011>Hebrews 3:11"). When God is said to be grieved with them, it is to be considered as an anthropopathy, as speaking after the manner of men, as in (<01006>Genesis 6:5,6). The word signifies, that he was wearied by them, and weary of them; that he loathed them, and was displeased with them; it shows the notice God took of their sin; the heinousness of it, his displicency at it, and determination to punish it: the cause of his grief and indignation were their unbelief, ingratitude, and idolatry:

and said, they do alway err in their heart; all sins are errors, or aberrations from the law of God; all men err in this sense: these people erred in their hearts, for there is error in the understanding, and will, and affections, as well as in life and actions; and they may be said to err in their hearts, because their sins not only sprung from the heart, but they were done heartily, or with their hearts, and that continually; which shows the sottishness of this people: their stubbornness and rebellion; their want of

integrity, and their constancy in sinning: heart sins, as well as others, are taken notice of by God:

and they have not known my ways; they did not take notice of God's ways of providence towards them; nor did they approve of, and delight in his ways of worship and duty, or in his commands.

Ver. 11. *So I sware in my wrath*, etc..] Swearing is ascribed to God, to show the certainty of the thing spoken of; as of mercies, when he swears in love, and by his holiness; so here, of punishment, when he swears in wrath, in indignation, in sore displeasure, and the threatened evil is irrevocable and inevitable:

they shall not enter into my rest; into the land of Canaan, called God's rest, because he promised it, and gave it to the Israelites as their rest; and where he himself had a place of rest; and where he gave the Messiah, the author of peace and rest; and which was a type of heaven, that rest from toil and labour, which remains for the people of God; and into which it is said this generation did not enter; for the Jews say [f53],

> “the generation of the wilderness have no part in the world to come:”

but this seems too harsh, for doubtless there were many who died in the wilderness, that went safe to heaven, notwithstanding all their sins and provocations.

Ver. 12. *Take heed, brethren*, etc..] This exhortation is grounded upon the state and case of their ancestors before given, as a warning and caution to the then present Hebrews; and whom the apostle styles “brethren”, to show that he had no hard thoughts of them, and that his jealousy was a godly one, and not an evil suspicion; and may teach us that all exhortations, admonitions, and reproofs should be given in love:

lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief; or such an evil heart, in which unbelief prevails, and is predominant: there is in every man, whether a profane sinner, or an hypocritical professor, an evil heart, and an unbelieving one; and there is unbelief in regenerate persons, which when cherished and encouraged by them is a great evil, and should be avoided; and this sin is aggravated by the many instances of God's grace, and by the many declarations of it, and by the exceeding great and precious promises God has made, and by the great discoveries of his love to their souls in

times past: and this sin, when it gets ahead, has a very great influence on the heart, to make it evil; and unbelief was the first sin of man, at least it very early appeared; it is the mother sin, and puts persons upon every sin; it defiles the conscience, hardens the heart, renders the word unprofitable, unfit for duty and makes men unstable, and therefore to be shunned; and especially because of the dreadful effect following:

in departing from the living God; that is, from Christ, who is the Son over his own house, and whose voice is to be heard; for of no other is the apostle speaking in the context; and who is not only the Son of the living God, but he is himself the living God; he is life in himself, and is the fountain and author of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal. This is mentioned to exalt the person of Christ, the apostle and high priest of our profession; and to discover the greatness and heinousness of the sin of such as depart from him and his Gospel, and to deter men from it: there is a final and total departure from Christ, from his Gospel and ordinances, from his people, and from a former profession of faith, which is never to be found in true believers; for they are as Mount Zion, which can never be removed; but there is a partial departure, and for a while, which they are liable to, and is attended with bad effects to them, and should be guarded against: saints should take heed of themselves, and of their hearts, and of the unbelief of them, that they do not in the least depart from Christ, by letting go their hold of him, or by a non-exercise of faith upon him; and this should be the care and concern of every individual member of the church, and at all times; unbelief is very dishonourable to God and Christ; contradicts the word and promises of God; is uncomfortable to the saints; it is a sin that very easily besets, and is very provoking to God, and is highly resented by him.

Ver. 13. *But exhort one another daily*, etc..] In order to prevent unbelief and apostasy. The phrase is sometimes rendered, “comfort one another”, or, “yourselves together”, as in (⁵⁰⁵¹1 Thessalonians 5:11) which the saints may do, by discoursing together about divine things; by praying together; by instructing one another in the doctrines of the Gospel; by putting one another in mind of the covenant of grace, and its promises; and by observing the near approach of everlasting happiness with Christ. And though the business of exhortation greatly belongs to ministers of the word, yet it ought not to be neglected by private believers; who ought, when it becomes necessary, to exhort one another to prayer; to an attendance on the word and ordinances; to a regard to their conversations;

to a close adherence to their profession; and to a believing view and consideration of Christ, the apostle and high priest of it; and to a due concern for his truth and interest: and this should be done in love, with good and consolatory words, and in things, in which the saints are concerned, and do themselves regard; and it is an affair which requires prudence and faithfulness; and supposes that God's own people may be dull, heavy, and sluggish; and this is to be done “daily”, every day, as often as there is an occasion, and an opportunity for it; and

while it is called today; while the Gospel dispensation continues; or while the time of life lasts. This shows that the phrase “today”, in (Psalm 95:7) did not respect David's time only. The Syriac version renders it, “until that day which is called today”: until the everlasting day appears, when there will be no need of such exhortations, nor any danger of what follows:

lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; actual sin, which is a transgression of the law; every sin is of an hardening nature, and by being often committed, an habit is contracted, and a callousness brought upon the heart and conscience; or the corruption of nature, indwelling sin, may be meant; an evil and a corrupt heart, which deceives through promises of pleasure, or profit to a man's self, or of secrecy and impunity; it suggests the power a man has to repent at pleasure, and the mercy of God, by which means the man is drawn in to it, and by frequent repeating it, grows hardened in it.

Ver. 14. *For we are made partakers of Christ*, etc..] Being loved by him, given to him, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and so participate of all spiritual blessings in him; for this respects something past, and may be rendered, “we have been made”. The phrase is expressive of union to Christ, which is not by faith on man's part, and by the Spirit on Christ's part, but by his everlasting love, taking his people into an oneness with himself; thereby becoming their head, surety, and representative, which is the ground and foundation of all the blessings of grace being imparted to them: hence arises communion; as this is a conjugal union, there is communion of names, of persons, of goods, of honour and dignity, and of everlasting glory; as it is a federal or representative union, hence a non-imputation of sin, justification, and freedom from condemnation; and as it is an union of head and members; hence a communication of life, and

the security of it, and of all grace and strength; hence holiness, fruitfulness, and perseverance, and everlasting happiness both of soul and body:

if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end; by "confidence" is meant faith, which is an hypostasis, or subsistence, which is the word here used; and is so called, because it gives a kind of subsistence, substance, or being, to things it is concerned with, (Hebrews 11:1) and because it is a great support to believers, under their various exercises; and is that by which they have an open, spiritual, and comfortable subsistence, and abiding in Christ: the "beginning" of it, which is to be held fast, is either Christ himself, who is the αρχη, "the beginning", the author, and finisher of faith; and so this shows from whom, and in what way, this grace is distributed; and is expressive of communion with Christ, and is an evidence of the participation of him: or else the Gospel, which is the means of implanting faith, and directs to that which is the ground and foundation of it; and this is to be held fast, and never to be departed from: or else the grace of faith itself, which is a grace but begun, not yet finished, but shall continue, and is to be held fast, and constantly exercised; and perseverance in believing on Christ is an evidence of union to him.

Ver. 15. *While it is said today*, etc..] Exhort one another, and hold fast Christ and his Gospel, and faith and confidence therein; what follows is a repetition of the citation in (Hebrews 3:7,8) in order to make a further improvement of it; which shows, that the words belong to the present times of the Gospel, and contain in them matter of moment, and great concern; and that Scripture instructions and exhortations are of perpetual use.

Ver. 16. *For some, when, they had heard*, etc..] The Arabic version adds, "his voice"; the law on Mount Sinai; the voice of words, with the voices and thunderings that attended it; the book of the covenant read; the whole system of laws and ordinances delivered to Moses, and by him to them; and also the Gospel, for that was preached to the Israelites in the wilderness, and heard by them; as appears from (Hebrews 4:2) and which seems chiefly intended: and yet some of the hearers of it

did provoke; not only Moses, to speak unadvisedly with his lips; but they provoked Jehovah himself, and the angel of his presence, and his Holy Spirit, by their idolatry, ingratitude, and unbelief: and the aggravation of their sin is, that they did it when they had heard the Gospel, and while they were hearing it; which shows that the Gospel may be heard to no advantage; as when it is heard in a careless and indifferent manner; when it

makes no impression, takes no place, and has no root; when the world and the things of it are the great concern of the mind, while hearing it; when it is not attended with the power and Spirit of God; when it is not received in love, nor mixed with faith, nor put in practice: and hence the Gospel heard, comes to be an aggravation of men's condemnation:

howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses; that is, they did not all provoke, but some did; which is another aggravation of their sin; they were just come out of Egyptian bondage; brought out of it by the Lord, with the mighty and outstretched arm of his power; and yet they provoked him: and this was done by Moses; by the hand of Moses, as the Syriac version renders it; by his means, by him as an instrument; and yet they provoked him: but however all did not, yet these were but few; it seems only Caleb and Joshua, out of six hundred thousand; God will have a few to serve him in the worst of times.

Ver. 17. *But with whom was he grieved forty years*? etc..] As is said in (<19510>Psalm 95:10), (see Gill on "<58310>Hebrews 3:10"),

was it not with them that had sinned; not merely by committing personal iniquities, and particular provocations, which all men are guilty of, but by committing public sins; they sinned as a body of men; they joined together in the commission of sin; every sin is grieving to God, because it is contrary to his nature, is an act of enmity to him, is a transgression of his righteous law, and a contempt of his authority; but especially public sins, or the sins of a multitude, and when they are persisted in, which was the case of the Israelites; they sinned against him during the forty years they were in the wilderness; and so long was he grieved with them: the Alexandrian copy reads, "with them that believed not"; which points out the particular sin these men were guilty of, and which was so grieving to God, and suits well with the apostle's design:

whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? and so never entered into the land of Canaan. They died in the wilderness; and they did not die common and natural deaths, at least not all of them; their deaths were by way of punishment; in a way of wrath; in a judicial way: the Syriac version renders it, "their bones fell in the wilderness"; they lay scattered and unburied, and exposed to view, as an example of divine vengeance, (see <04429>Numbers 14:29).

Ver. 18. *And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest*, etc..] As in (<19951>Psalm 95:11 (see Gill on "<19301>Hebrews 3:11")),

but to them that believed not? the Lord; notwithstanding the signs and wonders he showed among them, they would not be persuaded by Moses and Aaron, by Joshua and Caleb, to be still and quiet, to cease murmuring, and submit to the will of God, and believe in him; they were disobedient, stubborn, and rebellious, and would go up, when they were bid not to go up; for which reason God swore in his wrath that they should not enter into the good land. Unbelief is a source of sin, and cause of judgment, being greatly provoking to God.

Ver. 19. *So we see that they could not enter in*, etc..] To God's rest, the land of Canaan, for they died by the plague before the Lord, and their carcasses fell in the wilderness, before they came to it, (<04147>Numbers 14:37,45) and the reason was,

because of unbelief; their distrust of God, his power, and his providence; this instance is produced by the apostle, to show the evil nature of unbelief, and the sad effects of it; to deter persons from it, and that they might take heed of encouraging it; and which instance he further improves in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 4

From the punishment inflicted on the unbelieving Hebrews, who died in the wilderness, and entered not into the land of rest made mention of in the preceding chapter, the apostle proceeds to caution the present Hebrews of his time, and who professed faith in Christ, lest seeing there was a rest, and a promise of entering into it, they should seem to come short of it, (Hebrews 4:1), and the rather, since they that fell in the wilderness had the Gospel preached to them as well as they; and the reason why it did not profit was, because it was not received by faith, (Hebrews 4:2) as also seeing it is by faith that believers now enter into rest, (Hebrews 4:3) which rest is not the rest of the seventh day, on which God rested; nor, the rest of the land of Canaan, which Joshua led the Israelites into; for if he had entered them into the rest the apostle means, David, so many hundred years after him, would not have made mention of another rest, (Hebrews 4:4-8) wherefore it follows that there is another rest for the people of God, which he that enters into ceases from his own works, as God did from his, (Hebrews 4:9,10) and this is the rest that everyone that professes faith in Christ, should be solicitous and diligent to enter into, lest he should fall short of it through unbelief; as the unbelieving Israelites did of their rest, (Hebrews 4:11) and the arguments engaging to such a concern are taken from the properties and perfections of Christ, the essential Word of God; particularly from his omnipotence and his omniscience, (Hebrews 4:12,13). And seeing he is by nature the Son of God, and by office a great high priest that is entered into heaven for his people, the encouragement is great to hold fast the profession of faith in him they have made, (Hebrews 4:14) and the rather since he is a sympathizing high priest, as he must needs be, since he has been tempted, afflicted, and has suffered every way as his people, and is in all respects like them, excepting that he has no sin, (Hebrews 4:15) and this consideration should engage believers to come to the throne of grace with all boldness, and in expectation of having grace and mercy bestowed on them for the supply of their daily wants, (Hebrews 4:16).

Ver. 1. *Let us therefore fear*, etc..] Not with a fear of wrath and damnation; nor with a fear of diffidence and distrust of the power, grace, and goodness of God; but with a cautious fear, a godly jealousy, a careful circumspection, and watchfulness:

lest a promise being left [us] of entering into his rest; not the land of Canaan, the type of heaven, but rather heaven itself, the ultimate glory: there is a rest of the body in the grave, from work, service, and labour, and from distempers and diseases, where it rests under the guardianship of the Spirit, until the resurrection morn; and there is a rest of the soul before the resurrection, in the arms of Christ, with whom it immediately is, upon its departure from the body; and there is a rest both of soul and body after the resurrection, from sin, from afflictions, from Satan's temptations, from unbelief, doubts, and fears, and from all enemies: and this may be called the rest of God, because he is the author and giver of it; and it will lie much in communion with him; and besides, heaven is the place of God's rest, (<23601>Isaiah 66:1,2) and the possession and enjoyment of the heavenly glory is often signified by an entering into it: and there is a promise of this, which is left in Christ's hands, and shall never fail; though some who have hoped for it may come short of it, or at least seem to do so: but rather a rest under the Gospel dispensation is here intended, since it is a rest believers enter into now, (<30403>Hebrews 4:3) and since the Gospel church is represented as a state of peace and rest, (<23106>Isaiah 11:6-10) and which lies in a more clear and comfortable application of the blood and righteousness of Christ to the saints; in a freedom from a spirit of bondage to fear, and from the yoke of carnal ordinances, and in the enjoyment of Gospel privileges and ordinances; and this is God's rest, which he has provided for New Testament saints, and into which they enter by faith, and a profession of it; and the Gospel is the promise or declaration which was left among these Hebrews, and in the world, to encourage them so to do: lest

any of you should seem to come short of it; either of the promise, or the rest promised; which if understood of the heavenly glory, the sense is, that though true believers shall not come short of that, yet they may “seem” to others to do so; and therefore should be careful of their lives and conversations, that they might not seem to come short; and this they should do, for the glory of God, the honour of Christ and his Gospel, and the good of others; but if the rest, and the promise of it, intend the Gospel and its dispensation, the meaning is, that saints should be concerned so to behave, that they might not seem to fail of the doctrine of the grace of

God, and to be disappointed of that rest and peace promised in it. One of Stephens's copies read, lest “any of us”; which seems most agreeable both to what goes before, and follows.

Ver. 2. *For unto us was the Gospel preached*, etc..] The Gospel is the good news and glad tidings of salvation by Christ; and this may be said to be preached, when men preach not themselves, nor read lectures of morality, nor mix law and Gospel together, nor make justification and salvation to be by works, nor set persons to make their peace with God, or get an interest in Christ; but when they preach Christ and salvation alone by him; and so it was preached to the Hebrews, and that more fully, and with more clearness, power, and success than formerly; and which is a privilege and blessing; and is sometimes blessed for the conviction of sinners, for regeneration, for the implanting of faith, and the comfort of believers. The words may be rendered, we were evangelized; as such may be said to be, who have a spirit of liberty, in opposition to a spirit of bondage; who live by faith on Christ alone; who derive their peace and comfort, not from their works, but from him; whose repentance and obedience are influenced by the love of God; and who desire to perform all duties aright, and depend on none: now though this was true of the apostle and others, yet is not the sense here, because of what follows,

as well as unto them, or “even as they”; for though the Gospel was preached to the Israelites in the wilderness, in the ministry of Moses, and by types and sacrifices; yet they were not evangelized by it, or cast into a Gospel mould, or brought into a Gospel spirit: however, it was preached unto them; which shows the antiquity of it; the sameness of the method of salvation in all ages; the necessity of salvation by Christ, and the unity of Christ's church under different dispensations:

but the word preached did not profit them; that is, the Gospel, which is here called the word of hearing, as it may be rendered; because it is and may be heard; and there is a necessity of hearing, in order to faith in Christ: the word signifies a rumour, or report: the Gospel is a report of Christ, his person and offices; of his great love to sinners, and of what he has done for them; but though it is a word of hearing, a report made, and the word preached, yet to some it is unprofitable; it has no good effect upon them; yea, it is the savour of death unto death to them, and the aggravation of condemnation; and the reason of the inefficacy and unprofitableness of the word to the Israelites was, its

not being mixed with faith in them that heard it; the Gospel is as food, and faith is the hand that receives it, and takes it, and tastes of it, and eats it, and concocts and digests it; and when this is the case, it is profitable and nourishing; but when it is otherwise, it is not. The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and five of Beza's ancient copies, and as many of Stephens's, with others, read, “they were not mixed” referring it not to the word, but to persons; and so read the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: and the sense is, that the generality of the Israelites did not join themselves in faith, in believing in God, to Caleb and Joshua; who hearkened to the Lord, and received and obeyed his word; and so the word became useless to them: there ought to be an union or conjunction of the saints, and the bond of this union is love; and the thing in which they unite is faith, believing in Christ, and the doctrine of faith, which is but one; and though the word may be profitable to others who are not in the communion of the saints; yet forsaking the assembly of the saints, and not constantly attending with them, or not mixing with them continually in public worship, is one reason of the unprofitable hearing of the word when it is preached to them.

Ver. 3. *For we which have believed do enter into rest*, etc..] Not eternal rest; all believers shall enjoy this, and they only; but this is not now, or at present enjoyed, unless things future may be said to be present, because of faith in them, and the certainty of them but spiritual rest in Christ under the Gospel dispensation, which is a rest from the burden of the law of Moses, and from all toil and labour for life, and salvation by works, and lies in an enjoyment of much inward peace of soul, notwithstanding the world's troubles and Satan's temptations; and such who believe the word or Gospel preached, and Christ in it, not with a general and historical high, or only in profession, but with the heart, and in truth, these enjoy this rest; they are kept in perfect peace, and have much spiritual ease and comfort: this character distinguishes them from the unbelieving Israelites of old, and from present hypocrites and formal professors:

as he said, as I have sworn in wrath, if they shall enter into my rest; the words are in (<19511>Psalm 95:11), and are before cited in (<19311>Hebrews 3:11) they entered not in because of unbelief; none but believers enter into spiritual rest. The apostle applies this proof to his design, by removing all other rests, and particularly by showing that does not mean God's rest from the works of creation:

although the works were finished from the foundation of the world; that is, though the works of creation, that God designed to make, were finished and perfected within the first six days of the world, and then God rested, or ceased to work in a creative way; yet this is not the rest designed in the passage of Scripture cited, nor is it that rest which believers enter into.

Ver. 4. *For he spake in a certain place*, etc..] (<0102>Genesis 2:2) that is, Moses, the penman of that book spoke, or God by him:

of the seventh day on this wise; of the seventh day of the world, or from the creation of the heavens and the earth:

and God did rest the seventh day from all his works: of creation, but not of providence; for in them he works hitherto; nor does this rest suppose labour with fatigue and weariness, and ease and refreshment from it; only cessation from working in a creative way, and the utmost delight, complacency and satisfaction in what he had done. The Alexandrian copy leaves out the phrase, “the seventh day”.

Ver. 5. *And in this place again*, etc..] In (<9511>Psalm 95:11) he speaks again of another rest distinct from that on the seventh day; which, and not the latter, is what believers under the Gospel dispensation enter into:

if they shall enter into my rest: that is, unbelievers shall not enter into it; as the unbelieving Israelites did not enter into the typical rest, so neither shall any unbeliever enter into the Gospel rest, the antitype of the former.

Ver. 6. *Seeing therefore it remaineth*, etc..] It follows by just consequence,

that some must enter therein; for God's swearing concerning some, that they should not enter into his rest, supposes that others should: and

they to whom it was first preached; to whom the Gospel was first preached, namely, the Israelites in the wilderness: entered not in because of unbelief; (see <3819>Hebrews 3:19).

Ver. 7. *Again he limiteth a certain day*, etc..] Since the seventh day of the creation was a day of rest which God entered into, and not man; and since the land of Canaan was a typical rest, which the unbelieving Israelites did not enter into, because of unbelief; and yet there must be persons, and there must be a time for them to enter into the true rest which God has left a promise of; therefore he has limited, fixed, and appointed a certain day, the Gospel dispensation, for believers to enter into it:

saying in David; or by David, who was the penman of the 95th psalm, as may be learned from hence; and this is agreeably to, and confirms a rule which the Jews give, that those psalms which are without a title were written by David [f54]; the Spirit of God spake in him and by him, and plainly pointed out another day of rest from the above mentioned:

today, after so long a time; as two thousand five hundred years from the first seventh day to the time of Moses, and five hundred years from the times of Moses and Joshua, to his:

as it is said; the Alexandrian copy reads, "as it is before said", or, "above said", as the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions; that is, in (Psalm 95:7,8) before cited, (Hebrews 3:7,8)

today if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; (see Gill on "Hebrews 3:7-8")

Ver. 8. *For if Jesus had given them rest*, etc..] That is, Joshua; for Hosheah, Joshua, and Jesus, are one and the same name; or Jesus himself, as two of Stephens's copies read; and so Joshua is called Jesus by the Septuagint interpreters on (Exodus 17:10 24:13) and other places where he is mentioned; and also, by Josephus [f55], and Philo [f56] the Jew. The Syriac version, lest any should mistake this for Jesus Christ, adds, "the son of Nun": who is certainly the person designed, as the apostle's reasoning shows; who was an eminent type of Jesus Christ: there is an agreement in their names, both signify a saviour, Joshua was a temporal saviour, Christ a spiritual one; and in their office they were both servants; and in their qualifications for their office, such as wisdom, courage, faithfulness, and integrity. Joshua was a type of Christ in many actions of his life; in the miracles he wrought, or were wrought for him; in the battles he fought, and the victories he obtained; in saving Rahab and her family; in receiving the Gibeonites, who came submissively to him; and in leading the children of Israel into Canaan's land, which he divided to them by lot: but though he brought them into a land of rest, into the typical rest, where they had rest for a while from their temporal enemies, yet he did not give them the true spiritual rest: had he,

then would he not afterward have spoken of another day; that is, God, in David's time, and by him, would not have so long after appointed another day of rest; meaning, not any particular day of the week, but the whole

Gospel dispensation, in the times of the Messiah; wherefore the apostle concludes as follows.

Ver. 9 *There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God.*] Not all mankind; nor the people of the Jews only; rather the people of God, both Jews and Gentiles, under the New Testament; the people whom God has loved with a special love, has chose in Christ, and given to him, with whom he has made a covenant in him, and whom Christ saves from their sins, and calls by his grace; and the rest which remains for them is not a new sabbath day, but a sabbatism: and this does not so mush design eternal rest in heaven; though the Jews often call that a sabbath; the 92nd psalm they say is a psalm for the time to come, `tbç wlkç`, "which is all sabbath", and the rest of eternal life [f57]: but rather this intends the spiritual rest believers have in Christ under the Gospel dispensation, which they now enter into, and of which the apostle had been treating; and as for the word "remaineth", this does not denote the futurity of it, but the apostle's inference or consequence from what he had said; and the sense is, it remains therefore, and is a certain fact, a clear consequence from what has been observed, that there is another rest distinct from God's rest on the seventh day, and from the rest in the land of Canaan; which were both typical ones of the present rest the saints now enjoy: so the Jews call the world to come the times of the Messiah, `lwdgh tbç`, "the great sabbath" [f58].

Ver. 10. *For he that is entered into his rest*, etc.] This is to be understood not of believers, nor of their entrance into the Gospel rest, or into eternal rest, but of the Lord Jesus Christ; for a single person is only spoken of, and not many, as in (Hebrews 4:3) and the rest entered into is his own, which cannot be said of any other; and besides, a comparison is run between his entrance into rest, and ceasing from his works, and God's resting the seventh day, and ceasing from his, which can only agree with him; and besides, Christ is immediately spoken of, and at large described in (Hebrews 4:12-14). Now he entered into his rest, not when he was laid in the grave, but when he rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God, as having done his work; and this is the ground and foundation of the saints' rest under the Gospel dispensation; for these words are a reason of the former, as appears by the causal particle "for": and now being at rest,

he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his; Christ had works to do, as preaching the Gospel, performing miracles, and obtaining

the redemption and salvation of his people: these were given him to do, and he undertook them, and he has finished them; and so ceases from them, as never to repeat them more; they being done effectually, stand in no need of it; and so as to take delight and complacency in them; the pleasure of the Lord prospering in, his hand, the effects of his labour answering his designs; just as God ceased from the works of creation, when he had finished them.

Ver. 11. *Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest*, etc..] Not eternal rest; this is not to be entered into now; nor is an entrance into it to be obtained by labour; salvation is not by works; eternal life is a free gift; good works do not go before to prepare heaven for the saints, but follow after: nor is the saints' entrance into it a precarious thing; God has promised it, and provided it for his people; Christ is in the possession of it, and is preparing it for them; and the Spirit of God is working them up for the self same thing, and Christ will give them an abundant entrance into it: but the Gospel rest is here meant, that rest which believers now enter into, and is at this present time for them, (³⁰⁰³Hebrews 4:3,10) and though true believers are entered into it, yet their rest, peace, and joy in Christ, is not full; they enter by degrees into it, and by believing enjoy more of it: and this is to be laboured for by prayer, hearing the word, and attendance on ordinances; and this requires strength, diligence, and industry; and supposes difficulties and discouragements, through the corruptions of the heart, and the temptations of Satan; and this is designed to quicken and awaken a godly jealousy in God's people, over themselves:

lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief; into the sin of unbelief, and into punishment through it, as the Israelites did; who sinning, their carcasses fell in the wilderness, and they entered not into God's rest, as he swore they should not: true believers may fall into sin, and from a degree of the exercise of grace, and of the steadfastness of the Gospel; but they cannot finally and totally fall away, because they are kept by the power of God; yet they may so fall, as to come short, or at least seem to come short of enjoying the rest and peace of the Gospel state: external professors may fall from the Gospel, and the religion they have professed, and come short of the glory they expected; and fall into just and deserved punishment, in like manner as the unbelieving Israelites did.

Ver. 12. *For the word of God is quick and powerful*, etc..] This is to be understood of Christ, the essential Word of God; for the Word of God was

a known name of the Messiah among the Jews; (see Gill on "<4001>John 1:1") and therefore the apostle makes use of it when writing to them: and the words are introduced as a reason why care should be taken, that men fall not off from the Gospel, because Christ, the author, sum, and substance of it, is the living God, omnipotent and omniscient; for not a thing, but a person is spoken of, who is a Judge, and a critical discerner of the secrets of men's hearts: and certain it is, that this Word is spoken of as a person, and is said to be a priest in the following verses; to which may be added, that the several things said of the Word exactly agree with Christ: he is "the Word of God"; as the word is the birth of the mind, he is the only begotten of the Father; he is the Word that spoke for the elect in the council and covenant of grace, and that spoke all things out of nothing in creation; he is the Word that has been promised, and spoken of by the prophets from the beginning of the world; and is the interpreter of his Father's mind, and our Advocate with the Father: he is

quick, or, as it may be better rendered, "living"; he has life in himself as God, he is the living God; he is the living Redeemer and Mediator, and he lives for ever as man; he is the author and giver of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal: and he is powerful, as he appears to be in the creation and sustaining of all things; in his miracles and ministrations; in the work of man's redemption; in the preservation of his people, and in his advocacy and intercession:

and sharper than any twoedged sword; or "more cutting than one", by the words of his mouth, by the power of his Spirit, and the efficacy of his grace; for his mouth itself is as a sharp sword, and out of it comes forth one, (<2349>Isaiah 49:2 <6913>Revelation 19:13,15) by which he pierces the hearts of men, cuts them to the quick, and lays them open. Jehovah is called a twoedged sword with the Jews [f59]; and Philo the Jew speaks of the flaming sword of the Logos [f60].

Piercing even to the dividing asunder soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; the like property Philo the Jew ascribes to the "Logos", or Word; he calls him τομευς, "a cutter", and says he cuts and divides all things, even all sensible things, yea, atoms, and things indivisible [f61]; the apostle seems here to have respect to the several names with which the soul of man is called by the Jews, hmçnw jwr çqn, "soul, spirit, and breath" [f62]; the latter of these, they say, dwells between the other two. Some by the soul understand the natural and unregenerate part in man, and by the spirit the

renewed and regenerate part, which though sometimes are not so easily distinguished by men, yet they are by Christ; others think the soul designs the inferior faculties, the affections; and the spirit the superior ones, the mind and understanding; but the apostle's meaning seems to be this, that whereas the soul and spirit are invisible, and the joints and marrow are covered and hid; so sharp and quick sighted, and so penetrating is the divine Word, that it reaches the most secret and hidden things of men: and this sense is confirmed by what follows,

and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; Christ knows what is in man; he is the searcher of the hearts, and the trier of the reins of the children of men; and this will be more apparent at the last day, when he will make manifest the counsels of the heart, and will critically inquire, and accurately judge of them.

Ver. 13. *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight*, etc..] Christ is the Lord God omniscient; there is no creature, in general, rational, or irrational, animate or inanimate, but what are known to him, and seen by him; for all creatures are made, and upheld by him, and he is omnipresent; and in particular, there is no man but is manifest to him; so hyrb, "creature", is often used by the Rabbins for "man"; all men, openly profane men, who are enemies to Christ, and his people, are under his eye and notice; he knows their persons, he sees their actions, even those that are most secretly devised and performed against him, and his saints; and he takes such notice of them, as to bring them into judgment for them; he knows formal professors of religion, and upon what foot they have taken up their profession, and how they keep their lusts with their profession; he can distinguish between profession and grace; and he knows and observes the springs and progress of their apostasy: and as for true believers, he knows their persons, and knows them to be his; he sees their sins and their weaknesses; he takes notice of their graces, and observes their wants; and there is nothing in them, or belongs to them, but what is before him, even the secret desires of their souls. So Philo the Jew says [f63] the divine Word reaches to, and comprehends all things, nothing escapes him: and this phrase is very commonly used of the divine Being by the Jews, wynpl ywlg lkh, "all things are manifest before him" [f64]; and this being used of Christ, is no inconsiderable proof of his proper deity:

but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. The words are an allusion to wrestlers, who exercised naked,

and took each other by their necks and collars; and when one was thrown upon his back, as the word rendered “opened” is by some translated, he was publicly exposed and known: or to the putting of a creature in such a posture when sacrificed; or rather to the cutting of it up, and laying open its entrails: and especially to the manner of doing it among the Jews, with which these persons, the apostle writes to, were acquainted: and it was this; when the lamb for the daily sacrifice was slain, the priest hung it up by the foot, and skinned it; and when he came to the breast, he cut off the head; and having finished the skinning of it, he divided the heart, and took out the blood; then he cut off the shoulders; and when he came to the right leg, he cut it off, and then cut it down through the chine bone, and wynpl ywlg wlwk, “all of it was manifest before him” [f65]. The very phrase before used. The word here used seems to answer to Prl, which, with the Arabians, signifies, “to know”, or make known; and Pyrlm, with the Rabbins; is used for a companion, a familiar one that is well known; the theme in the Hebrew, is, Prwl, the “neck”. The last clause, “with whom we have to do”, manifestly points at the person here spoken of, Jesus Christ: saints have a concern with him now, as their way to the Father, as their Saviour and Redeemer; they have to do with his blood for pardon and cleansing, and with his righteousness for justification, and with his fulness for every supply of grace; and with him as their King to rule over them, protect and defend them, and as their prophet to teach them, and their high priest to intercede for them. Moreover, the words may be rendered, “to whom we must give an account”; and so the Syriac version renders them, “to whom they give an account”; as all men must at the great day: and all this that is said of the Word of God should engage to care, watchfulness, and circumspection in the course of a profession of religion.

Ver. 14. *Seeing then that we have a great high priest*, etc..] That Christ is a priest, and an high priest, has been observed already, in (Hebrews 2:1-7) but here he is called a great one, because of the dignity of his person, as follows, and the virtue of his sacrifice; and because of the place where he now officiates as a priest, heaven and with respect to the continuation of his priesthood; and likewise because he makes others priests unto God; and this great high priest is no other than the Word of God before spoken of: so the divine Logos, or Word, is often called a priest, and an high priest, by Philo the Jew [f66]. This great high priest believers “have”, and have an interest in him; he is called to this office, and invested with it; he has been

sent to do his work as a priest; and he has done the greatest part of it, and is now doing the rest; and saints receive Christ as such, and the blessings of grace from him, through his sacrifice and intercession:

that is passed into the heavens; he came down from thence, and offered himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people; and having done this, he ascended thither again, to appear for them, and to make intercession for them; whereby he fully answers to his character as the great high priest: and what makes him more fully to appear so is what follows,

Jesus, the Son of God: the former of these names signifies a Saviour, and respects his office; the latter is expressive of his dignity, and respects his person; who is the Son of God in such sense as angels and men are not; not by creation, nor adoption; but by nature; not as man and Mediator, but as God, being of the same nature with his Father, and equal to him; and it is this which makes him a great high priest, and gives virtue and efficacy to all he does as such: wherefore,

let us hold fast our profession: of faith, of the grace and doctrine of faith, and of Christ, and salvation by him, and of the hope of eternal life and happiness; which being made both by words and deeds, publicly and sincerely, should be held fast; which supposes something valuable in it, and that there is danger of dropping it; and that it requires strength, courage, and greatness of mind, and an use of all proper means; and it should be held without wavering; for it is good and profitable, it recommends the Gospel; and it has been made publicly before witnesses; and not to hold it fast is displeasing to God, and resented by him: and the priesthood of Christ is an argument to enforce this duty, for he is the high priest of our profession; he has espoused our cause, and abode by it; he has bore witness to the truth of the Gospel himself; he prays for the support of our faith; he pities and succours; and he is passed into the heavens, where he appears for us, owns us, and will own us.

Ver. 15. *For we have not an high priest*, etc..] That is cruel and unmerciful; the saints have an high priest, but not such an one:

which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; such as bodily diseases and wants, persecutions from men, and the temptations of Satan; under all which Christ sympathizes with his people; and which sympathy of his arises from his knowledge and experience of these things, and the share he has had of them, and from that union there is between him and his

people: and it is not a bare sympathy, but is attended with his assistance, support, and deliverance; and the consideration of it is of great comfort to the saints:

but was in all points tempted like as we are: of the temptations of Christ, and of the saints, (See Gill on "Hebrews 2:18")

yet without sin; there was no sin in his nature; though he was encompassed about with infirmities, yet not with sinful infirmities, only sinless ones; nor was there any sin in his temptations; though he was solicited to sin by Satan, yet he could find none in him to work upon; nor could he draw him into the commission of any sin.

Ver. 16. *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace*, etc..] Either to Christ, who is before spoken of as an high priest, and who was typified by the mercy seat, to which there seems to be an allusion; and coming to him as a priest upon his throne is very proper: to him saints come for pardon and cleansing, and for a justifying righteousness, for the acceptance of their persons, and the presentation of their services, and for every supply of grace; and to him they may come "boldly", since he stands in the relations of a Father, husband, and brother, and from him they may expect receive mercy, since it is kept for him, and with him, and is only dispensed through him; and in him they may hope to find grace, since all fulness of it dwells in him; and help in every time of need, since their help is laid on him. Or else to God the Father, since Christ, the high priest, is the way of access to God, and it is by him the saints come unto the Father; who is represented as on a "throne", to show his majesty, and to command reverence; and as on a "throne of grace", to encourage distressed souls to come unto him; and to express his sovereignty in the distribution of his grace: and this coming to him is a sacerdotal act, for every believer is a priest; and is not local, but spiritual, and with the heart, and by faith; and chiefly regards the duty of prayer, and a drawing nigh to God in that ordinance with spiritual sacrifices to offer unto him: and this may be done "boldly"; or "with freedom of speech"; speaking out plainly all that is in the heart, using an holy courage and intrepidity of mind, free from servile fear, and a bashful spirit; all which requires an heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, faith, in the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, a view of God, as a God of peace, grace, and mercy, and a holy confidence of being heard by him; and such a spirit and behaviour at the throne of grace are very consistent with reverence of the divine Majesty, with submission

to his will, and with that humility which becomes saints. The Jews often speak of ˆydh ask, “a throne of judgment”, and µymjr ask, “a throne of mercy” [f67]; and represent God as sitting upon one or other of these, when he is dispensing justice or mercy [f68]; and the latter they sometimes call, as here, µymjrw dsj ask, “a throne of grace and mercy” [f69]: and so they make the first man Adam to pray to God after this manner [f70];

> “let my prayer come before the throne of thy glory, and let my cry come before Æymjr ask, “the throne of thy mercy”.”

The end of coming hither is,

that we may obtain mercy; the sure mercies of David, the blessings of the everlasting covenant; particularly pardoning mercy, and the fresh application of it, and every other blessing of grace that is needful: and there is reason to expect it, since there is mercy with God; and it is with Christ, as the head of the covenant; and it is ready for those that ask it; and it has been obtained by many, and is everlasting.

And find grace to help in time of need; the Syriac version renders it, “in time of affliction”; which is a time of need, as every time of distress is, whether from the immediate hand of God, or through the persecutions of men, or the temptations of Satan: and help at such times may be expected; since not only God is able to help, but he has promised it; and he has laid help on Christ; and gives it seasonably, and at the best time; and it springs from grace, yea, it is grace that does help; by which may be meant, the discoveries of God's love, and the supplies of grace from Christ: which may be hoped for, seeing God is the God of all grace; and he is seated on a throne of grace; and all fulness of grace dwells in Christ: to find grace often, signifies to find favour with God, to be accepted by him, as well as to receive grace from him.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 5

The apostle having made mention of Christ as an high priest, in the preceding chapter, proceeds in this to give an account of an high priest, and applies the character of him to Christ; and shows that he is of another order of priesthood than that of Aaron, even of the order of Melchisedec; of whom he could say many things, but the Hebrews were dull of hearing them; which leads him to blame them for their rudeness, and non-proficience. The description of the high priest is taken from his relation to men, separation from them, and ordination for them; from his oblation of their gifts and sacrifices; from his sympathy with them, and from his call of God, (Hebrews 5:1-4) all which are accommodated to Christ; as his vocation of God, (Hebrews 5:5,6) confirmed by two testimonies out of (Psalm 2:7 110:4) his being a man, and having infirmities, though sinless ones, and his sympathy with men, and compassion on them, (Hebrews 5:7) his obedience and sufferings, and the oblation of himself, whereby he became the author of salvation to his people, which is the main thing in his priesthood, (Hebrews 5:8,9) and which was not of the order of Aaron, though in some things there was an agreement with it, but of the order of Melchizedek, (Hebrews 5:10) of whom the apostle could say many surprising things; but these Hebrews were dull of apprehension, and incapable of receiving them, (Hebrews 5:11). And then he proceeds to blame them for their dulness, which he aggravates by the time they had been in the school of Christ, when it might have been expected they would have been teachers of others; by their being yet scholars, and of the lowest class, who had need to be taught the first rudiments of the Christian religion; yea, by their being as babes that stood in need of milk, and could not bear meat, (Hebrews 5:12). And then follows a description both of babes, and of adult persons; such as are unskilful in the word of righteousness are babes, and use milk; but those who exercise their spiritual senses, to discern between good and bad doctrine, are adult, and can digest strong meat, (Hebrews 5:13,14).

Ver. 1. *For every high priest taken from among men*, etc..] Every one that was an high priest under the law was a man, and not an angel; and it was proper he should be so, that he might be a priest for men, have compassion on them, and offer for them; and he was among the number of common men, and was taken out from them, and chosen and separated from the rest of men, as Aaron and his sons were from the children of Israel, (<2801>Exodus 28:1). And such an one

is ordained for men; in their room and stead, and for their good; and above them, as the word sometimes signifies; he was exalted unto, and invested with a superior office, to which he was ordained according to the law of a carnal commandment, by anointing with oil, and without an oath.

In things pertaining to God; in things in which God had to do with men; and so he presided over them in the name of God, and declared the will of God unto them, and blessed them; and in things in which men had to do with God; and so he appeared in their name, and represented their persons, and presented their sacrifices to God, as follows:

that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; freewill offerings, peace offerings, burnt offerings, sin and trespass offerings, all kind of sacrifice.

Ver. 2. *Who can have compassion on the ignorant*, etc..] Who have committed sins of ignorance, and bring their sacrifices for them; these he does not insult and upbraid, nor break out into anger and indignation against; but pities them, and sympathizes with them; has a just measure of compassion suitable to their condition, and bears with them with great moderation and temper:

and on them that are out of the way; of God's commandments; who are like sheep going astray, and turn to their own way; who transgress the law of God, and err from it; perhaps such who sin knowingly and wilfully, and through infirmity, are meant:

for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity; not of body only, but of mind, sinful infirmity; he had much of it, it beset him all around; he was “clothed” with it, as the Syriac version renders it; as Joshua the high priest was with filthy garments, (<3803>Zechariah 3:3).

Ver. 3. *And by reason hereof*, etc..] Because of his sinful infirmity:

he ought, as for the people, so also for himself to offer for sins; as he offered sacrifice for the sins of the people, so he was obliged to offer for his own sins; in this Christ differed from the high priest, for he had no sin of his own to offer for, (<scripRef passage="Hebrews 7:27" />Hebrews 7:27) but he had, and therefore offered for them, (<scripRef passage="Leviticus 16:11" />Leviticus 16:11) and made a confession of them: the form of which, as used on the day of atonement, was this;

> "he put both his hands upon the bullock, and confessed, and thus he said: I beseech thee, O Lord, I have done wickedly, I have transgressed, I have sinned before thee, I and my house; I beseech thee, O Lord, pardon the iniquities, transgressions, and sins, which I have done wickedly, transgressed, and sinned before thee, I and my house."

And this he did a second time on that day [f71].

Ver. 4. *And no man taketh this honour to himself*, etc..] That is, the honour of the priesthood: the office of the high priest was a very honourable one; it was a peculiar honour to Aaron, and his sons, to be separated unto it; their instalment into it was very grand and solemn; at that time they were anointed with oil, and clothed with glorious garments, and sacrifices were offered for them; they had an honourable maintenance assigned them, and a large retinue of priests and Levites to attend them; great respect and reverence were shown them: but their principal honour lay in the work they performed; in representing the whole body of the people; in offering gifts and sacrifices for them; in blessing them; and in the resolution of difficult cases brought unto them; in all which they were types of Christ, the high priest. Now no man might take this honourable office upon himself, or intrude himself into it, or obtain it by any unjust method, or in any other way than by a call from God; nor did any man dare to do it, until of late, when some got into it of themselves, and were put in by the Roman governors, and even purchased it of them [f72]: so Joshua ben Gamla became an high priest [f73]; and some have thought the apostle has some respect to these wicked practices, and tacitly reproves them, as what ought not to be: for no one ought to be in this office,

but he that is called of God, as [was Aaron]; whose call was immediately from the Lord, and was unquestionable: Moses was ordered to separate him, and his sons, from the children of Israel, and install them into this office; they were destroyed by fire, or swallowed up by the earth, that disputed his call; and this was confirmed by a miracle, by his dry rod

budding, blooming, and bringing forth almonds: and the apostle instances in him, because his call was so remarkable and authentic; and because he was the first high priest of the Jews, and from whence the rest descended, who were lawful ones.

Ver. 5. *So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest*, etc..] It was a glorifying of Christ, to make him an high priest; not as God, for as such no addition can be made to his glory; yea, it was a condescension in him to become a priest: but as man; it was an honour to the human nature to be united to the Son of God; and to be separated from others to this office; and to be called unto it, qualified for it, and invested with it; and to be of the order he was, and to do the work; and the very assistance he had in it, for the accomplishment of it, was a glorifying of him, for which he prayed; and the work being done, he had glory given him by his Father; and an ascription of glory is made to him by angels and saints: but Christ did not take this high and honourable office to himself, nor the glory of it; indeed, he did not receive it from man, nor was he made a priest according to the ceremonial law; yet he did not intrude himself into this office:

but he that said unto him, thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee; he appointed him to this office; he sent him to execute it; he anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows; he consecrated and established him in it with an oath; and prescribed to him what he should do, suffer, and offer; and declared to him what he might expect as the reward thereof. These words are taken out of (Psalm 2:7), (see Gill on "Hebrews 1:5"), and they are not to be considered as constitutive of Christ's priesthood, as if that was intended by the begetting of him as a Son; but as descriptive of the person, who called him to it, who stood in the relation of a Father to Christ, and Christ in the relation of a Son to him; therefore the one was very proper to call, and the other a very fit person to be called to this office, being every way capable of executing it, to the glory of God, and to the good of men.

Ver. 6. *As he saith also in another place*, etc..] Or psalm; namely, in (Psalm 110:4) that is, the same person, even God the Father; who spake the words before cited, also expressed the following:

thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec; that the psalm, from whence these words are taken, belongs to the Messiah, (see Gill on "Matthew 22:44") and this very passage is applied unto him by the

Jewish writers [f74]; and had not this been the general sense of the Jewish church at this time, the apostle writing to Hebrews would not have produced it; and it very clearly expresses the priesthood of Christ, the eternity of it, and the order according to which it was; and it being not according to the order of Aaron, but of another, shows the change of the priesthood, and so of the law; of Melchizedek, (see Gill on "<3001>Hebrews 7:1")

Ver. 7. *Who in the days of his flesh*, etc..] Or "of his humanity", as the Arabic version renders it; or "when he was clothed with flesh", as the Syriac version; in the time of his humiliation, when he was attended with the sinless infirmities of the flesh, or human nature; it may take in the whole course of his life on earth, especially the latter part of it: it is not to be concluded from hence, that he has not flesh now, or is not in the flesh; for it is certain that he had flesh after his resurrection; only now he is free from all the infirmities of the flesh, the pains, and sorrows, and griefs of it, which he endured when here on earth:

when he had offered up prayers and supplications; as he often did in many parts of his life, particularly in the garden, and upon the cross, when he offered up himself: and as the days of Christ's flesh were filled up with prayers and supplications, so should ours be also: the word for "supplications" signifies branches of olive trees, covered with wool [f75]; which such as sued for peace carried in their hands, and so came to signify supplications for peace: the manner in which these were offered up by Christ was

with strong crying and tears; with a most vehement outcry, with a loud voice, as when on the cross; and though there is no mention of his tears at that time, or when in the garden, no doubt but he shed them: all that Christ did, and said, are not written; some things were received by tradition, and by inspiration; Christ wept at other times, and why not at these? and there are some circumstances in his prayers which intimate as much, (<4038>Matthew 26:38 27:46 <4244>Luke 22:44) which shows the weight of sin, of sorrow, and of punishment, that lay upon him, and the weakness of the human nature, considered in itself: and it may be observed to our comfort, that as Christ's crying and tears were confined to the days of his flesh, or to the time of his life here on earth, so shall ours be also. Mention is made of twqzj twlpt, "strong prayers" [f76], in Jewish writings. The person to whom Christ offered his prayers is described in the following words,

unto him that was able to save him from death; from a corporeal death, as he could, but that it was otherwise determined; or rather to raise him from the dead, to deliver him from the state of the dead, from the power of death, and the grave, as he did; and so the Syriac version renders it, “to quicken him from death”; to restore him from death to life:

and was heard in that he feared; or “by fear”; by God, who was the object of his fear, and who is called the fear of Isaac, (<01342>Genesis 31:42) he was always heard by him, and so he was in the garden, and on the cross; and was carried through his sufferings, and was delivered from the fear of death, and was saved from the dominion and power of it, being raised from the dead by his Father: or “he was heard because of his fear”, or “reverence”; either because of the dignity and reverence of his person, in which he was had by God; or because of his reverence of his Father.

Ver. 8. *Though he were a Son*, etc..] The Son of God, as the Vulgate Latin version reads; not by creation, nor by adoption, nor by office, but by nature, being the only begotten of the Father, having the same nature and perfections with him:

yet learned he obedience; not to his parents, or civil magistrates, though that is true; nor merely to the precepts of the law, which he did; but unto death: through sufferings he became obedient to death, even the death of the cross: and this he learnt; not that he was ignorant of the nature of it; nor was he destitute of an obedient disposition to it; but the meaning is, he had an experience of it, and effected it; and which was voluntary, and done in our room and stead; and is the rule and the measure of our righteousness before God: and this he learned,

by the things which he suffered; from men, from devils, and from the justice of God. Christ's sonship did not exempt him from obedience and sufferings; this shows the dignity of Christ's person, that he is the Son of God, not as Mediator, for as such he is a servant; and it would be no wonder that he should learn obedience as a servant; and this shows also the great humility and condescension of Christ in obeying and suffering for us; though so great a person; and likewise the vile nature of sin, and the strictness of divine justice: and we may learn from hence, not to expect to be exempted from sufferings on account of sonship; nor to conclude we are not sons, because we suffer; and that afflictions are instructive, and by them experience is learned.

Ver. 9. *And being made perfect*, etc..] In his obedience, through sufferings; having completed his obedience, gone through his sufferings, and finished his sacrifice, and being perfectly glorified in heaven:

he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; the salvation Christ is the author of is “eternal”; it was resolved upon from eternity, and contrived in it; it was secured in the everlasting covenant, in which not only a Saviour was provided, but blessings both of grace and glory: and it is to eternity; and stands distinguished from a temporal salvation, and is opposed to eternal damnation; it is the salvation of the soul, which is immortal; and it takes in both grace and glory, which are of a durable nature; and the continuance of it is owing to the abiding and lasting virtue of Christ's person, blood, and righteousness: and Christ is the cause or author of this salvation, by his obedience and sufferings; by obeying the precept, and bearing the penalty of the law; by the price of his blood, and by the power of his arm; by his death and by his life; by his sacrifice on the cross, and by his intercession in heaven; by bestowing grace here, and glory hereafter: this shows that salvation is done, and that Christ is the sole author of it, and that all the glory of it should be given to him; and those to whom he is the author of salvation, are such as hearken to the voice of his Gospel, and obey hin in his ordinances. Christ is not the author of salvation to all men; all men do not obey him; all those whom Christ saves, he brings them to an obedience to himself; for his obedience for them does not exempt them from obedience to him, though their obedience is no cause of their salvation; Christ himself is the alone author of that.

Ver. 10. *Called of God an high priest, after the order of Melchisedec*.] ytrbd l[, according to what is said of him, (Psalm 110:4) there is a resemblance between Melchizedek and Christ; many things that are said of the one, agree with the other: there is a likeness in Melchizedek to Christ; in his person, and what is said of him, that he was without father and mother; and in his office as a priest, and in the manner of his instalment into it; and in the antiquity, dignity, and perpetuity of it: and this is repeated for the further confirmation of Christ's priesthood, and is a conclusion of the truth of it from sufficient evidence: this does not so much design the constitution of Christ as priest, nor the call of him to that office, as the denomination or surnaming of him a priest of Melchizedek's order, because of the agreement between them; and contains a reason of Christ's being the author of eternal salvation, because he is a priest for ever; and

prevents any objections against Christ's priesthood, and opens a way to discourse more largely concerning it.

Ver. 11. *Of whom we have many things to say*, etc..] Either of Melchizedek, or of Christ, or of his priesthood or of all of these; since the apostle does largely treat of them in the following chapters: he says many things concerning Melchizedek in the seventh chapter, and many things of Christ, and his priesthood, in those that follow; Christ is a large and inexhaustible subject in the Gospel ministry, and what a Gospel minister delights to dwell on; and it is a fund and stock from whence he is furnished with things of the greatest usefulness, and of the utmost importance:

and hard to be uttered; as were many things respecting Melchizedek, mentioned in (Hebrews 7:3) and also concerning Christ, and his priesthood: abstruse and difficult things are to be looked into, considered, searched after, and insisted on: the whole Scripture is profitable, and the whole counsel of God is to be declared, and things hard to be explained should be attempted; this is the way to an increase of light and knowledge; though it becomes ministers to consult their own abilities, and the capacity of their hearers, that they do not go beyond them:

seeing ye are dull of hearing; this dulness of hearing is thought by some to arise from their afflictions; or from their attachment to the law of Moses; or rather from their sluggishness, indocility, and want of industry; and often times this arises from pride and prejudice, and irreverence of the word of God; and frequently from the deceitfulness of riches, and the cares of this life.

Ver. 12. *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers*, etc..] These Hebrews had had great advantages; they were not only descended from Abraham, and had the law of Moses, and the writings of the Old Testament, but some of them had enjoyed the ministry of Christ, and however of his apostles; and it was now about thirty years from the day of Pentecost, in which the gifts of the Holy Ghost were bestowed in such an extraordinary manner, and a large number were converted, and a church state settled among them; and therefore considering the length of time, the opportunities and advantages they had enjoyed, it might have been expected, and indeed it is what should have been, that they would have been teachers of others, some in a private, and some in a public way: from whence it may be observed, that to have time for learning, and yet make no proficiency, is an aggravation of dulness; moreover, that men ought to be

hearers, and make some good proficiency in hearing, before they are fit to be teachers of others; also, that persons are not only to hear for their own edification, but for the instruction of others, though all hearers are not designed for public teachers; for to be teachers of others, requires a considerable share of knowledge: to which may be added, that the churches of Christ are the proper seminaries of Gospel ministers. But this was so far from being the case of these Hebrews, that the apostle says of them,

ye have need that one teach on again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; by the oracles of God are meant the Scriptures, not the law of Moses only, but all the writings of the Old Testament, which were given by the respiration of God, and are authoritative and infallible; and by the "first principles" of them are intended, either the first promises in them, concerning the Messiah; or the institutions, rites, and ceremonies of the law, which are sometimes called στοιχεια, elements, (<400>Galatians 4:3,9) where the same word is used as here; and which were the alphabet and rudiments of the Gospel to the Jews: or else the apostle designs the plain doctrines of the Gospel, which were at first preached unto them, in which they needed to be again instructed, as they were at first; so that instead of going forward, they had rather gone back:

and are become such as have need of milk; of the types, shadows, and figures of the law, which were suited to the infant state of the church, who by sensible objects were directed to the view of Gospel grace; or of the plain and easier parts of the Gospel, comparable to milk for their purity, sweetness, nourishing nature, and being easy of digestion:

and not of strong meat: such as the deep things of God, the mysteries of the Gospel; those which are more hard to he understood, received, and digested; such as the doctrines of the Trinity, of God's everlasting love, of eternal election and reprobation, of the person of Christ, the abrogation of the law, etc..

Ver. 13. *For everyone that useth milk*, etc..] And sits down contented with the first principles of the Gospel, such as are easily taken in and digested; or makes use of the ceremonial law, as a schoolmaster to teach him the Gospel:

is unskilful in the word of righteousness; the Gospel, which is a doctrine of righteousness; not of works of righteousness done by men, and of justification by them, or of a man's own righteousness; but of the pure,

perfect, and everlasting righteousness of Christ: and it is called so, because it is the means of stripping a man of his own righteousness; and of revealing the righteousness of Christ unto him; and of working faith in him to lay hold upon it; and of discovering the agreement there is between the righteousness of Christ, and the justice of God; and of teaching men to live soberly, righteously, and godly: and such are unskilful in it, who either have no knowledge of the doctrine of justification; of the matter of it, Christ's righteousness; of the form of it, by imputation; and of the date of it, before faith: or have a very confused notion of it, joining their own works with Christ's righteousness, for justification, as many judaizing professors did; or who, if they have a notional knowledge of it, have no practical concern in it; do not believe with the heart unto righteousness; have not the experience, sweetness, and power of this doctrine upon them; and do not live lives agreeable to it:

for he is a babe. This word is used sometimes by way of commendation, and is expressive of some good characters of the saints; such as harmlessness and inoffensiveness, humility, and meekness, a desire after the sincere milk of the word, freedom from rancour and malice, hypocrisy and guile; but here it is used by way of reproach, and denotes levity and inconstancy, ignorance and non-proficiency, want of digestion of strong meat, and incapacity to take care of themselves, as standing in need of tutors and governors.

Ver. 14. *But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age*, etc..] Or perfect; (see 1 Corinthians 2:6). This does not intend a perfection of justification; for though some have a greater degree of faith than others, and a clearer discovery of their justification, yet babes in Christ are as perfectly justified as more grown and experienced believers; nor a perfection of sanctification, for there is no perfection of holiness but in Christ; and though the work of sanctification may be in greater perfection in one saint than in another, yet all are imperfect in this life; and as to a perfection of parts, babes have this as well as adult persons: but it designs a perfection of knowledge; for though none are entirely perfect, yet some have arrived to a greater degree of the knowledge of Gospel mysteries than others, and to these the strong meat of the Gospel belongs; they are capable of understanding the more mysterious parts of the Gospel; of searching into the deep things of God; and of receiving and digesting the more sublime truths of the Christian religion:

even those who by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil; that is, their spiritual senses, the internal senses of the understanding and judgment, signified by external ones; as by seeing the Son; hearing the voice of Christ; savouring or smelling a sweet odour in the things of God, and Christ; tasting that the Lord is gracious; feeling and handling the word of life, as these are held forth in the everlasting Gospel: and these being exercised on their proper object, by use, an habit is contracted; and such are qualified for discerning, as between moral good and evil, and the worse and better state of the church, and between law and Gospel, so between the doctrines of Christ, and the doctrines of men; who find they differ: the doctrines of Christ such experienced persons find to be good, wholesome, nourishing, and salutary; and the doctrines of men to be evil, to eat, as does a canker, and to be pernicious, poisonous, and damnable; and the discernment they make, and the judgment they form, are not according to the dictates of carnal reason, but according to the Scriptures of truth, and their own experience.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 6

In this chapter the apostle exhorts the believing Hebrews not to rest in the rudiments of the Christian religion they had learned; and much less to lay them again in the foundation after the Jewish manner, of which he instances in six particulars; but to seek after a perfect knowledge of evangelic truths, which, under a divine permission, was his determination to do, (Hebrews 6:1-3) which was the best method to prevent apostasy, he dissuades from; by giving the characters of apostates, showing how far they may go in the knowledge of divine things, and yet fall away; by asserting the impossibility of their repentance and recovery, with the reason of it, taken from the blackness of their crimes, (Hebrews 6:4-6) and the difference between them, and true believers, he illustrates by two sorts of earth, the one takes in the rain that comes down from heaven, and brings forth herbs for the use of its dresser, and is blessed of God: such are true believers in Christ, (Hebrews 6:7) the other bears thorns and briers, and is rejected and cursed, and in the issue burned; and to such earth the above apostates may be compared, (Hebrews 6:8) but lest the believing Hebrews, such as were truly gracious among them, should conclude that this was their case, and that it was desperate; and lest they should think the apostle had an ill opinion of them, he declares he was otherwise persuaded of them, and hoped and believed they were interested in the things of salvation, (Hebrews 6:9) the reasons of which persuasion are taken from the work of grace, which was wrought in them; from their laborious love they showed to the name of God, and to his people, and which they continued to show: and from the righteousness of God in not forgetting all this, (Hebrews 6:10). And then he proceeds to exhort them to diligence in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, that so they might arrive to a full assurance of hope, (Hebrews 6:11) and not to indulge slothfulness, but to be followers of the saints that were gone before them; whose character is, that through faith, and patience, they had inherited the promises, things the apostle would have those believers imitate them in, (Hebrews 6:12) and particularly instances in Abraham, the father of this people, and of all believers; who having a promise from God, to which an

oath was annexed, patiently waited for it, and obtained it, (Hebrews 6:13-15) and having made mention of an oath, the apostle takes notice of the nature and use of one among men, (Hebrews 6:16) and of the design of God in making use of one himself, which was to confirm his promise, and show its immutability to the heirs of it; and that by observing these two immutable things, which could never fail, they might have solid and abiding comfort: even all such, who, under a sense of danger, flee to Christ for refuge, who is the ground of hope proposed to them in the Gospel, to lay hold upon, (Hebrews 6:17,18) and because of the firmness of the grace of hope, as it is conversant with Christ, and is cast on him, the good ground of it, it is compared to an anchor; and is said to be sure and steadfast, and to enter within the vail, where Christ is gone as a forerunner; and which is an encouragement to that grace to enter in after him; who is further described by his name Jesus, by his office as an high priest, and by the order of which he is, that of Melchizedek, (Hebrews 6:19,20) which is mentioned, to lead on to what the apostle had to say concerning him, in the next chapter.

Ver. 1. *Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ*, etc..] The Gospel is the doctrine of Christ, and is so called, because Christ, as God, is the author of it; as Mediator, he received it from his Father; as man, he was the preacher of it; and he is also the sum and substance of it: the principles of this doctrine are either the easier parts of the Gospel, called milk in the latter part of the preceding chapter; which are not to be left with dislike and contempt, nor so as to be forgotten, nor so as not to be recurred to at proper times; but so as not to abide in and stick here, without going further: or rather the ceremonies of the law, which were the elements of the Jews' religion, and the beginning, as the word may be here rendered, of the doctrine of Christ; which were shadowy and typical of Christ, and taught the Jews the truths of the Gospel concerning Christ: in these the believing Jews were very desirous of sticking, and of abiding by them, and of continuing them in the Gospel church; whereas they were to be left, since they had had their use, and had answered what they were designed for, and were now abolished by Christ.

Let us go on to perfection: in a comparative sense, to a more perfect knowledge of things, which the clear revelation and ministry of the Gospel lead unto; and which the rites and ceremonies, types and figures of the law, never could:

not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works; the Syriac version reads this by way of interrogation, “do ye lay again, etc..” and makes the third verse to be an answer to it: the phrase, “not laying again the foundation”, is to be read in connection, not only with this article of repentance, but with each of the other five articles, the foundation of which is no more to be laid again than this: and not laying it again, either means not teaching it, and so refers to the apostle, and other ministers of the word, who should not insist upon the following things, at least not stick there, but go on to deliver things more sublime and grand; or not hearing it, and so refers to the Hebrews, who should seek after a more perfect knowledge of evangelic truths than the following articles exhibited to them: and the several parts of this foundation, which; are not to be laid again ministerially, by preachers, or attended to by hearers, design either the first things, with which the Gospel dispensation was ushered in; or rather, and which I take to be the true sense, the general principles and practices of the Jews under the former dispensation; for these are not the six principles of the Christian religion, as they are commonly called, but so many articles of the Jewish creed; some of which were peculiar to the Jews, and others common to them, with us Christians: thus,

repentance from dead works, does not intend evangelical repentance, the doctrine of which is to be ministerially laid, and the grace itself to be exercised over and over again; but a repentance which arose from, and was signified by the sacrifices of slain beasts; for by them the Jews were taught the doctrine of repentance, as well as remission of sin; and in and over them did they confess their iniquities; yea, every beast that was slain for sacrifice carried in it a conviction of sin, an acknowledgment of guilt; and it was tacitly owning, that they, for whom the creature was slain, deserved to be treated as that was, and die as that did. So the Jews[f77] say,

> “when a man sacrifices a beast, he thinks in his own heart, I am rather a beast than this; for I am he that hath sinned, and for the sin which I have committed I bring this; and it is more fitting that the man should be sacrificed rather than the beast; and so it appears that, jrjy awh wnbrq ydy l[, “by the means of his offering he repents”.”

But now, under the Gospel dispensation, believing Jews, as these were to whom the apostle writes, were not to learn the doctrine of repentance from slain beasts, or to signify it in this way; since repentance and remission of

sins were preached most clearly to them in the name of Christ: nor were they to lay again another part of this foundation, or a second article of the Jewish creed,

and of faith towards God; which article is expressed in language agreeable to the Jewish dispensation; whereas evangelical faith is usually called the faith of Christ, or faith in Christ, or towards our Lord Jesus Christ; but this respects faith in God, as the God of Israel: hence says our Lord to his disciples, who were all Jews, “ye believe in God”: ye have been taught, and used to believe in God, as the God of Israel; “believe also in me”, as his Son and the Messiah, and the Mediator between God and man, (John 14:1), so that now they were not only to have faith towards God, as the God of Israel, and to teach and receive that doctrine; but to have faith in Christ as the Saviour of lost sinners, without the intermediate use of sacrifices.

Ver. 2. *Of the doctrine of baptisms*, etc..] Some read this divisively, “baptism and doctrine”, as the Ethiopic version; as if the one respected the ordinance of baptism, and the other the ministry of the word; but it is best to read them conjunctively: and by which most understand the Gospel ordinance of water baptism, so called by a change of number, the plural for the singular, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, who render it baptism; or because of the different persons baptized, and times of baptizing, as some; or because of the trine immersion, as others; or because of the threefold baptism of spirit, blood, and water, which have some agreement with each other; or because of the baptism of John, and Christ, though they are one and the same; or because of the inward and outward baptism, the one fitting and qualifying for the other; and so the doctrine of it is thought to respect the necessity, use, and end of it; but since there is but one baptism, and the above reasons for the plural expression are not solid, and sufficiently satisfying, it is best to interpret this of the divers baptisms among the Jews, spoken of in (Hebrews 9:10) which had a doctrine in them, to that people; teaching them the cleansing virtue of the blood of Christ, and leading them to it, to wash in for sin, and for uncleanness; but now, since this blood was shed, they were no more to teach nor learn the doctrine of cleansing by the blood of Christ this way; nor any more to be led unto it through these divers baptisms, ablutions, and purifications.

And of laying on of hands; the foundation of this was to be no more laid, nor the doctrine of it to be any longer taught and learned in the way it had

been; for not the rite, but the doctrine of laying on of hands is here intended; and it has no reference to the right of laying on of hands by the apostles, either in private persons, or officers of churches; for what was the doctrine of such a rite, is not easy to say; but to the rite of laying on of hands of the priests, and of the people, upon the head of sacrifices; which had a doctrine in it, even the doctrine of the imputation of sin to Christ, the great sacrifice. It was usual with the Jews [f78] to call the imposition of hands upon the sacrifice, simply, hkyms, "laying on of hands"; and they understood by it the transferring of sin from the persons that laid on hands, to the sacrifice, on which they were laid; and that hereby, as they express it, sins were separated from them, and, as it were, put upon the sacrifice [f79]; but now believers were no longer to be taught and learn the great doctrine of the imputation of sin, by this rite and ceremony, since Christ has been made sin for them, and has had sins imputed to him, and has bore them in his own body on the tree:

and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment: articles of faith, which distinguished the Jews from the Gentiles, who were greatly strangers to a future state, the resurrection of the dead, and judgment to come: these are doctrines of pure revelation, and were taught under the Old Testament, and were believed by the generality of the Jews, and are articles which they hold in common with us Christians; yet the believing Hebrews were not to rest in the knowledge of these things, and in the smaller degrees of light they had in them, under the former dispensation; but were to go on to perfection, and bear forward towards a greater share of knowledge of these, and other more sublime doctrines of grace; since life and immortality are more clearly brought to light by Christ through the Gospel.

Ver. 3. *And this will we do, if God permit*.] That is, leave the rites and ceremonies of the law, which were the rudiments, or first principles of the Gospel, and go on to a more perfect knowledge of Gospel truths; and, not lay again as the foundation of the ministry, or insist upon them as if they were the main things, even the above articles of the Jewish creed, especially in the, way and manner in which they had been taught and learnt: the sense is, that the apostle and his brethren, in the ministry were determined to insist upon the more solid and substantial parts of the Gospel, and which tended to bring on their hearers to perfection; and that it became the believing Hebrews to seek after a greater degree of knowledge under the ministry of the word. It is, or at least should be, the determination of a Gospel minister, to preach Christ, and the great truths

of the Gospel; and wheresoever God has called him to it, though there may be many adversaries, and though he may be reproached, calumniated, and deserted: resolution in preaching the Gospel, and adhering to it, is very commendable in a minister; and it is very laudable in hearers to attend to it, stand by it, and search further into it; and which both should determine upon with a regard to the will of God, "if God permit": God's permission is much to be observed in the ministry of the word, in giving gifts to men, in placing them out here and there, where they shall exercise them, in directing them to subjects, and in making their ministry useful and successful: and it may be observed in general, that nothing can be done, or come to pass, good or bad, but what God permits or wills to be done; no good things, no actions, civil, natural, moral, or spiritual; no evil things, the evil of punishment, afflictions, the persecutions of wicked men, the temptations of Satan, heresies, and even immoralities.

Ver. 4. *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened*, etc..] The Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, "baptized"; and the word is thought to be so used in (⁵⁸Hebrews 10:32). And indeed baptism was called very early "illumination" by the ancients, as by Justin Martyr [f80], and Clemens Alexandrinus [f81], because only enlightened persons were the proper subjects of it; and the word once here used seems to confirm this sense, since baptism, when rightly administered, was not repeated; but then this sense depends upon an use of a word, which it is not certain did as yet obtain; nor does the apostle take notice of baptism in a parallel place, (⁵⁸Hebrews 10:26,27). This gave rise to, and seems to favour the error of Novatus, that those who fall into sin after baptism are to be cut off from the communion of the church, and never more to be restored unto it; contrary to the promises of God to returning backsliders, and contrary to facts, as well as to the directions of Christ, and his apostles, to receive and restore such persons; and such a notion tends to set aside the intercession of Christ for fallen believers, and to plunge them into despair: it is better therefore to retain the word "enlightened", in its proper sense, and to understand it of persons enlightened with Gospel knowledge; there are some who are savingly enlightened by the Spirit of God, to see the impurity of their hearts and actions, and their impotency to perform that which is good, the imperfection of their own righteousness to justify them, their lost state and condition by nature, and to see Christ and salvation by him, and their interest in it; and these being "once" enlightened, never become darkness, or ever so fall as to perish; for if God had a mind to destroy

them, he would never have shown them these things, and therefore cannot be the persons designed here; unless we render the words, as the Syriac version does, “it is impossible” — — ˆwj jy bwtd, “that they should sin again”; so as to die spiritually, lose the grace of God, and stand in need of a new work upon them, which would be impossible to be done: but rather such are meant, who are so enlightened as to see the evil effects of sin, but not the evil that is in sin; to see the good things which come by Christ, but not the goodness that is in Christ; so as to reform externally, but not to be sanctified internally; to have knowledge of the Gospel doctrinally, but not experimentally; yea, to have such light into it, as to be able to preach it to others, and yet be destitute of the grace of God:

and have tasted of the heavenly gift; either faith, or a justifying righteousness, or the pardon of sin, or eternal life; which are all spiritual and heavenly gifts of grace, and which true believers have real tastes of; and hypocrites please themselves with, having some speculative notions about them, and some desires after them, arising from a natural principle of self-love. Some think the Holy Ghost is intended; but rather Christ himself, the unspeakable gift of God's love, given from heaven, as the bread of life. Now there are some who have a saving spiritual taste of this gift; for though God's people, while unregenerate, have no such taste; their taste is vitiated by sin, and it is not changed; sin is the food they live upon, in which they take an imaginary pleasure, and disrelish every thing else; but when regenerated, their taste is changed, sin is rendered loathsome to them; and they have a real gust of spiritual things, and especially of Christ, and find a real delight and pleasure in feeding by faith upon him; whereby they live upon him, and are nourished up unto eternal life, and therefore cannot be the persons here spoken of: but there are others who taste, but dislike what they taste; have no true love to Christ, and faith in him; or have only a carnal taste of him, know him only after the flesh, or externally, not inwardly and experimentally; or they have only a superficial taste, such as is opposed to eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of Christ, by faith, which is proper to true believers; the gust they have is but temporary, and arises from selfish principles.

And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost; not his person, nor his special grace; there are some who so partake of him, as to be united to him, in whom he becomes the principle of spiritual life, and motion: such have the fruits of the Spirit, and communion with him; they enjoy his personal presence and inhabitation in them; they have received him as a spirit of

illumination and conviction, of regeneration and sanctification, as the spirit of faith, and as a comforter; and as a spirit of adoption, and the earnest and seal of future glory; but then such can never so fall away as to perish: a believer indeed may be without the sensible presence of the Spirit; the graces of the Spirit may be very low, as to their exercise; and they may not enjoy his comforts, gracious influences, and divine assistance; but the Spirit of God never is, in the above sense, in a castaway; where he takes up his dwelling, he never quits it; if such could perish, not only his own glory, but the glory of the Father, and of the Son, would be lost likewise: but by the Holy Ghost is sometimes meant the gifts of the Spirit, ordinary or extraordinary, (<460104>1 Corinthians 12:4-11) and so here; and men may be said to be partakers of the Holy Ghost, to whom he gives wisdom and prudence in things natural and civil; the knowledge of things divine and evangelical, in an external way; the power of working miracles, of prophesying, of speaking with tongues, and of the interpretation of tongues; for the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost seem chiefly designed, which some, in the first times of the Gospel, were partakers of, who had no share in special grace, (<400722>Matthew 7:22,23 <461302>1 Corinthians 13:2,3).

Ver. 5. *And have tasted the good word of God*, etc..] Not the Lord Jesus Christ, the essential Word of God, who seems to be intended before by the heavenly gift; but rather, either the Scriptures of truth in general, which are the word of God, endited by him, and contain his mind and will; which he makes use of for conviction, conversion, instruction, and comfort; and which are preserved by him: and these are a good word; they come from him who is good; they are a revelation of good things; they make known things true, pleasant, and profitable: or else the Gospel in particular, of which God is the author; and in which is a wonderful display of his wisdom and grace; and which he owns and blesses for his own glory, and the good of others: and this is a “good word”, the same with bwj rbd, “good matter”, or “word”, in (<194501>Psalm 45:1) ybwj µgtp, “my good word”, or “the word of my goodness”, in the Targum on (<235511>Isaiah 55:11) for it is the word of righteousness, reconciliation, peace, pardon, life, and salvation. And there is a special and spiritual taste of this good, word, which is delightful, relishing, and nourishing; and such who have it can never totally and finally fall away; because they who taste it, so as to eat and digest it, and be nourished by it, to them it becomes the ingrafted word, which is able to save them: but there is such a taste of this word as is

disrelishing, as in profane sinners, and open opposers and persecutors of the word, or as in hypocrites and formal professors; which is only an assent to the Scriptures, as the revelation of God, or a superficial knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel without the experience of them, and a temporal faith in them, and a natural affection for them, and pleasure with them for a time; as the Jews, and Herod with John's ministry, and the stony ground hearers.

And the powers of the world to come; meaning either the state of the church, and the glorious things relating to it, after the first resurrection, which they might have some notional apprehensions of; or the ultimate state of glory and happiness, the powers of which are the immortality, incorruption, and glory of the body, the perfect holiness and knowledge of the soul, entire freedom from all evils of every kind, full communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, and a complete enjoyment of all happiness for ever; which hypocrites may have a notional knowledge of, a natural desire after, and delight in the contemplation and hope of, as Balaam had; or rather the δυναμεις, miracles and mighty works in the former part of the Gospel dispensation, or times of the Messiah, the Jews' world to come, (see Gill on "Hebrews 2:5"), are intended; which many, as Judas and others, were able to perform, who were not sincere Christians, or true believers.

Ver. 6. *If they shall fall away*, etc..] This is not supposed of true believers, as appears from (Hebrews 6:9) nor is it to be supposed of them that they may fall totally and finally; they may indeed fall, not only into afflictions and temptations, but into sin; and from a lively and comfortable exercise of grace, and from a degree of steadfastness in the Gospel; but not irrecoverably: for they are held and secured by a threefold cord, which can never be broken; by God the Father, who has loved them with an everlasting love, has chosen them in Christ, secured them in the covenant of grace, keeps them by his power, has given them grace, and will give them glory; and by the Son, who has undertook for them, redeemed and purchased them, prays and makes preparations in heaven for them, they are built on him, united to him, and are his jewels, whom he will preserve; and by the Holy Ghost, whose grace is incorruptible, whose personal indwelling is for ever, who himself is the earnest and seal of the heavenly inheritance, and who having begun, will finish the good work of grace: but falling away, so as to perish, may be supposed, and is true of many professors of religion; who may fall from the profession of the Gospel they have made, and from the truth of it, and into an open denial of it; yea, into

an hatred and persecution of what they once received the external knowledge of; and so shall fall short of heaven, and into condemnation: for,

to renew them again unto repentance, is a thing impossible: by "repentance" is meant, not baptism of repentance; nor admission to a solemn form of public repentance in the church; nor a legal repentance, but an evangelical one: and so to be "renewed" unto it is not to be baptized again, or to be restored anew to the church by repentance, and absolution; but must be understood either of renovation of the soul, in order to repentance; or of the reforming of the outward conversation, as an evidence of it; or of a renewing of the exercise of the grace of repentance and to be renewed "again" to repentance does not suppose that persons may have true repentance and lose it; for though truly penitent persons may lose the exercise of this grace for a time, yet the grace itself can never be lost: moreover, these apostates before described had only a show of repentance, a counterfeit one; such as Cain, Pharaoh, and Judas had; and consequently, the renewing of them again to repentance, is to that which they only seemed to have, and to make pretensions unto; now to renew them to a true repentance, which they once made a profession of, the apostle says is a thing "impossible": the meaning of which is not only that it is difficult; or that it is rare and unusual; or that it is unsuitable and improper; but it is absolutely impossible: it is impossible to these men to renew themselves to repentance; renovation is the work of the Holy Ghost, and not of man; and repentance is God's gift, and not in man's power; and it is impossible for ministers to renew them, to restore and bring them back, by true repentance; yea, it is impossible to God himself, not through any impotence in him, but from the nature of the sin these men are guilty of; for by the high, though outward attainments they arrive unto, according to the description of them, their sin is the sin against the Holy Ghost, for which no sacrifice can be offered up, and of which there is no remission, and so no repentance; for these two go together, and for which prayer is not to be made; (see <40122>Matthew 12:32 <581026>Hebrews 10:26,27 <620416>1 John 4:16) and chiefly because to renew such persons to repentance, is repugnant to the determined will of God, who cannot go against his own purposes and resolutions; and so the Jews [f82] speak of repentance being withheld by God from Pharaoh, and, from the people of Israel; of which they understand (<020916>Exodus 9:16 <232610>Isaiah 6:10 <141616>2 Chronicles 36:16) and say, that when the holy blessed God withholds repentance from a

sinner, bwçl lwky wnya, “he cannot repent”; but must die in his wickedness which he first committed of his own will; and they further observe [f83], that he that profanes the name of God has it not in his power to depend on repentance, nor can his iniquity be expiated on the day of atonement, or be removed by chastisement:

seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh; who is truly and properly God, begotten of the Father, and of the same nature with him, in whom he greatly delights; this is Christ's highest name and title; and it was for asserting himself to be the Son of God that he was crucified; and his being so puts an infinite virtue in his sufferings and death; and it heightens the sin of the Jews, and of these apostates, in crucifying him. He was once crucified, and it is both impossible and unnecessary that he should be, properly speaking, “crucified afresh”, or “again”; it is impossible, because he is risen from the dead, and will never die more; it is unnecessary, because he has finished and completed what he suffered the death of the cross for; but men may be said to crucify him again, when, by denying him to be the Son of God, they justify the crucifixion of him on that account; and when they lessen and vilify the virtue of his blood and sacrifice; and when both by errors and immoralities they cause him to be blasphemed, and evil spoken of; and when they persecute him in his members: and this may be said to be done “to themselves afresh”; not that Christ was crucified for them before, but that they now crucify him again, as much as in them lies; or “with themselves”, in their own breasts and minds, and to their own destruction. Now this being the case, it makes their renewal to repentance impossible; because, as before observed, the sin they commit is unpardonable; it is a denial of Christ, who gives repentance; and such who sin it must arrive to such hardness of heart as to admit of no repentance; and it is just with God to give up such to a final impenitence, as those, who knowingly and out of malice and envy crucified Christ, had neither pardon nor repentance; and besides, this sin of denying Christ to be the Son of God, and Saviour of men, after so much light and knowledge, precludes the way of salvation, unless Christ was to be crucified again, which is impossible; for so the Syriac version connects this clause with the word “impossible”, as well as a foregoing one, rendering it, “it is impossible to crucify the Son of God again, and to put him to shame”; and so the Arabic version. Christ was put to open shame at the time of his apprehension, prosecution, and crucifixion; and so he is by such apostates, who, was he on earth, would treat him in the same manner the Jews did; and who do

traduce him as an impostor and a deceiver, and give the lie to his doctrines, and expose him by their lives, and persecute him in his saints.

Ver. 7. *For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it*, etc..] Here the apostle illustrates what he had before been speaking of, by a simile taken from the earth, to which men in general answer, who are of the earth; earthy and unregenerate men and carnal professors are of earthly minds; they are like the earth when it was rude and without form, and cursed by God; and are as insensible as the earth: but the earth is particularly distinguished into that which is fruitful, and which is unfruitful; and the former is spoken of in this verse, to which true believers in Christ agree; who are the good ground, into which the seed of God's word is received, and brings forth fruit; these are God's tillage or husbandry: and the "rain" that comes upon them may signify either the grace of Christ, which, like rain, is an instance of his sovereignty, and what he alone can give, and not the vanities of the Gentiles; and which he gives to persons undeserving of it; and which refreshes, revives, and makes fruitful: or else Christ himself, (<19D706>Psalm 72:6 <280603>Hosea 6:3) whose first coming was like rain much desired, and long expected; and so is his spiritual coming very desirable, delightful, refreshing, and fructifying: or rather his Gospel, (<053202>Deuteronomy 32:2 <235509>Isaiah 55:9) which comes from above, and is the means of softening hard hearts, of reviving distressed and disconsolate minds, and of making barren souls fruitful; which is done by coming "oft" upon them, at first conversion, and afterwards, alluding to the former and latter rain; and may refer to the receiving of more grace, even grace for grace, out of Christ's fulness, through the ministration of the word, which is drank in by faith, under the influence of the Spirit of God:

and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed; God the Father, who is the husbandman, and ministers of the Gospel, who arc labourers under him; and where the Gospel comes in power, it brings forth the fruits of the Spirit, the fruits of righteousness, the fruits meet for repentance; and which are to the glory of God the Father, and are answerable to the means be makes use of, the ministry of the word and ordinances; and no man can bring forth fruit without Christ, his Spirit, and grace: and such earth, or those signified by it,

receiveth blessing from God; both antecedent to all this, and which is the cause of fruitfulness; and as consequent upon it, for such receive more grace, even all the blessings of grace, and at last the blessing of glory; and

all this being in a way of receiving, shows it to be of gift, and of pure grace.

Ver. 8. *But that which beareth thorns and briers*, etc..] To which wicked men answer; who are unfruitful and unprofitable, and are hurtful, pricking and grieving, by their wicked lives and conversations, by their bitter and reproachful words, and by their violent and cruel persecutions; and particularly carnal professors, and especially apostates, such as before described; for to such earth, professors of religion may be compared, who are worldly, slothful, defrauding and overreaching, carnal and wanton; as also heretical men, and such as turn from the faith, deny it, and persecute the saints: and the things or actions produced by them are aptly expressed by "thorns and briers"; such as errors, heresies, and evil works of all kinds; and which show that the seed of the word was never sown in their hearts, and that that which they bear, or throw out, is natural to them: and such earth is

rejected; as such men are, both by the church, and by God himself; or "reprobate", as they are concerning the faith, and to every good work; and are given up by God to a reprobate mind: and is "nigh unto cursing"; and such men are cursed already by the law, being under its sentence of curse and condemnation; and are nigh to the execution of it; referring either to the destruction of Jerusalem, which was near at hand; or to the final judgment, when they shall hear, Go, ye cursed:

whose end is to be burned; with everlasting and unquenchable fire, in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

Ver. 9. *But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you*, etc..] The apostle addresses the believing Hebrews, as "beloved"; being beloved by the Lord, not as the descendants of Abraham, but as the elect of God, and so as loved with an everlasting love; and which might be known to themselves, by its being shed abroad in their hearts, and by their being called by grace, and by their love to him, and to his people: and from hence they might conclude they should not fall away, as the apostates before spoken of; since, in consequence of being beloved by God, they were chosen in Christ unto salvation; Christ was given to die for them; they had the Spirit sent down into their hearts; they were justified, pardoned, and adopted; nor could they be separated from the love of God: and the apostle also so calls them, because they were beloved by him, not merely as being his countrymen, but as saints: and this he says to testify his affection to

them; to show that what he said was not from hatred of them, or prejudice to them; and that his exhortations, cautions, and reproofs, might be better taken; and particularly that they might credit what he here says, that he was "persuaded better things" of them, than what he had said of others in (Hebrews 6:4-6) even such as are expressed in (Hebrews 6:10) he was persuaded they had the true grace of God; whereas the above mentioned persons had only gifts, when in the height of their profession; and the least degree of grace is better than the greatest gifts men can be possessed of: grace makes a man a good man, not gifts; a man may have great gifts and not be a good man; grace is useful to a man's self, gifts are chiefly useful to others; grace makes men fruitful, when gifts leave them barren in the knowledge of Christ; grace is lasting, when gifts fail, and cease and vanish away; grace will abide the fire of persecution, when gifts will not; grace is saving, gifts are not:

and things that accompany salvation; which enter into salvation; are ingredients in it, and parts of it, and with which salvation is connected; such as faith, love, etc.. or which mutually touch or follow one another in the chain of salvation; as to be predestinated, justified, called, adopted, sanctified, and, at last, glorified:

though we thus speak; concerning others, as in the preceding verses: the hard things spoken by him of some, were consistent with such persuasions in general; for there might be some among them to whom the aforesaid characters belonged; and saying such things might be a means to make others watchful and careful.

Ver. 10. *For God is not unrighteous*, etc..] He is just and true, righteous in all his ways and works; there is no unrighteousness nor unfaithfulness in him; and this the apostle makes a reason of his strong persuasion of better things concerning the believing Hebrews; because he was well satisfied of the good work upon them, and he was assured that God was not unrighteous and unfaithful:

to forget your work: which is not to be understood of any good work done by them, for these are generally expressed in the plural number; and besides, these, if at all, are designed in the next clause; moreover, external good works, or such as appear to men to be so, are performed by hypocrites; nor can they be said to be better things, at least, not such as men are saved by: men may fall from these; and supposing them intended, the merit of works cannot be established, as is attempted from hence by the

Papists; for the apostle could only consider them as fruits, not as causes of salvation; they are imperfect, and cannot justify, and therefore cannot save; they do not go before to procure salvation, but follow after, and, at most, but accompany; and though God does remember and not forget them, this is owing to his grace, and not to their merit; God's righteousness in remembering them regards not a debt of justice, but a point of faithfulness: but this is to be understood of the work of God upon them, called in Scripture a good work, and the work of faith; and is elsewhere joined, as here, with the labour of love; (see ⁵³1 Thessalonians 1:3) and this might be called their work, not because wrought by them, but because it was wrought in them; and the grace that came along with it was exercised by them: now from hence the apostle might be persuaded of better things of them, even such as accompany salvation; since this work is a fruit of everlasting and unchangeable love, and is itself immortal, and the beginning of eternal life; and particularly faith is the effect of electing grace; shall never fail; is the means of the saints' preservation; and is connected with everlasting salvation: it follows,

and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name; the word “labour” is omitted in the Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions: this may be understood either of love to God, the name of God being put for himself; who is to be loved for his own sake, on account of the perfections of his nature, as well as for the works of his hands; and which is to be showed for the sake of glorifying him: and this love is laborious; it sets a man to work for God; nor are any works to be regarded but what spring from love to God, and to his name; and from hence the apostle might entertain a good hope of these persons, since their love to God was an effect of God's love to them, is a part of the work of grace, and cannot be lost; all things work together for good to such as love God; and these have a crown of life promised unto them: or else it may be understood of love to the saints, as follows,

in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister; in seeking both their temporal and spiritual good; and though all men in general are to be loved, yet especially the saints, who are set apart by God, whose sins are expiated by Christ, and who are sanctified by the Spirit; and love to them being laborious, and appearing in many instances, and this shown for the Lord's sake, for his name's sake, might lead the apostle more strongly to conclude better things of them, even things of a saving nature; since charity or love to the saints is better than gifts, and is the evidence of grace, of

passing from death to life, and of being the disciples of Christ; (see 1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

Ver. 11. *And we desire that everyone of you do show the same diligence*, etc..] In the constant exercise of the graces of faith and love, and in ministering to the necessities of the saints: there is a spiritual labour, diligence, and industry to be used by the saints; and former diligence is a motive to future; and is a means of attaining to full assurance, as appears by what follows; and this is to be shown for the glory of God, for the evidence of the above graces, and for an example and encouragement to other saints: and the persons addressed being "everyone", this shows the apostle's impartiality in his exhortations, and served to remove all groundless suspicions in particular persons; and the manner of his addressing them shows his hearty concern for their welfare, his mildness and gentleness towards them, and his design to encourage them to go forward; and that his exhortation might have the greater weight, he uses the plural "we"; and this exhortation, put in this form, moreover shows that what he had said before had no tendency in some things to encourage despair, or in others carelessness and indolence: and what he had in view in the whole was, that they might arrive

to the full assurance of hope unto the end; not only that they might keep up an hope, but attain to the full assurance of it; as to interest in the love and grace of God; in the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises; in God, as a covenant God and Father; in Christ, as a Saviour and Redeemer; and as to the truth of the work of grace upon their souls, and their right and meetness for the possession of eternal glory and happiness: the phrase, "unto the end", may either respect the continuance of the grace of assurance; or refer to the showing forth of their diligence and industry in ministering to the saints, as they had done, to the end of their lives.

Ver. 12. *That ye be not slothful*, etc..] With respect to hearing the word, and attendance on every ordinance; with respect to the use of means for the increase of knowledge, faith, and hope; and with respect to ministering to the saints; but on the contrary, should take every opportunity of improvement and doing good:

but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises; or things promised; not the land of Canaan, nor the coming of the Messiah; but either grace and salvation by Christ; or eternal Life, which is expressed by a promise, to show that it is not by any works, or merits of men; that it

is wholly of grace, and shall certainly be enjoyed: and it is expressed in the plural number, “promises”, because it is the grand promise, which is inclusive of all others; and because it has been given out at various times, and in different manners: and the possession of it being signified by “inheriting”, it shows that this is their Father's gift and legacy, which they have as children; and which comes to them through the death of Christ, and of which the Spirit is the seal; and comes not by works of righteousness done by them: and the means through which saints that are gone before are come to the enjoyment of this happiness, are “faith and patience”; not that “faith” is the cause of, or what gives right to the inheritance, but it designs a course and walk of believing, at the end of which, saints come to glory; and faith is connected with salvation, and salvation with that; and through faith believers are preserved unto it: and “patience” is joined with faith, as a fruit and evidence of it; and supposes troubles which are patiently endured before men come to the possession of the inheritance: now the apostle exhorts these Hebrews to be followers and imitators of such, in diligence, faith, and patience, when they need not doubt of inheriting the same promised blessedness they do.

Ver. 13. *For when God made promise to Abraham*, etc..] The apostle proposes Abraham as a pattern, because he was the father of these Hebrews, and of all believers; and because they were interested in the promise made to him, and had a right to the same blessing with him; and because he was remarkable for his faith and patience: the promise made to him is not that in (<01120>Genesis 12:1-3) nor that in (<01501>Genesis 15:1,4,5,13,14) but that in (<01221>Genesis 22:16,17) for that only had an oath annexed to it: and this was made by Jesus Christ, there called the Angel of the Lord, and here God; and who is truly and properly so; and than whom there is none greater; and who elsewhere, as here, is said to swear by himself, (<23523>Isaiah 45:23) as follows:

because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself; swearing is ascribed to a divine person after the manner of men, and in condescension to them; and who is never introduced swearing, but in matters of moment and of great importance; the note of Philo the Jew [f84] on the passage in (<01221>Genesis 22:16) from whence the following words are cited, is worthy of observation, being very near the apostle's words;

> “well does he (God) confirm the promise with an oath, and with an oath that becomes God; for you see that God does not swear by

another, for nothing is better than himself, but by himself, who is the best of all; but some have suggested as if it was inconvenient to swear, for an oath is taken for the sake of faith; but God alone is faithful, etc..”

Ver. 14. *Saying, surely blessing I will bless thee*, etc..] Which is expressive of the certainty of the blessings; the reality and substantiality of them; the abundance of them, and the continuance of the same: and of this nature are all spiritual blessings; as to be chosen of God; to have God to be a covenant God and Father; to be justified, pardoned, adopted, and sanctified, and so have a right and title to eternal happiness:

and multiplying I will multiply thee; meaning both in his natural and spiritual seed, which has had its accomplishment.

Ver. 15. *And so, after he had patiently endured*, etc..] He waited long for a son, from whom the Messiah was to spring, after he had had the promise of one; and he endured many afflictions with patience, in his journeys from place to place, throughout his life to the end:

he obtained the promise; he was greatly blessed in temporal things; he lived to see the son of the promise, and his sons; he saw the day of Christ by faith, and now inherits the heavenly glory, which is the thing chiefly designed.

Ver. 16. *For men verily swear by the greater*, etc..] These words contain a reason why God swore by himself, and why his promises, having an oath annexed to them, ought to be believed. Men when they swear, they swear by the greater; not by themselves, as God does, because there is one greater than they; not by any of the creatures on earth, nor by the angels in heaven, but by God; because he is the God of truth, the searcher of hearts, and who can take vengeance on perjurers: and an oath may lawfully be taken, when it is truth that is sworn to, and is just and good; and in cases of weight and moment; and in what is possible and right to perform; and when it is done with deliberation, in the fear of God, with a view to his glory, and the good of men: for an oath is of a moral nature, what God has commanded, and he himself has taken; it has been used by Christ, and by the saints of the Old and New Testament; and is prophesied of the New Testament saints, as what they should practise; and is a part of religious worship:

and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife; it is used to confirm things that are doubtful, and in dispute; and to put an end to strife and contention; so Philo [f85] the Jew says,

> "by an oath things doubtful are determined, and things uncertain are confirmed, and what were not believed receive credit."

The manner in which an oath was taken among the Jews, to which, the apostle writing to such, must be thought to have respect, was this;

> "he that swore took the book of the law in his hand, and he stood and swore by the name (of God), or by his surnames; and the judges did not suffer anyone to swear but in the holy tongue; and thus he said, behold I swear by the God of Israel, by him whose name is merciful and gracious, that I do not owe this man anything [f86]."

The Hebrew word h[bç, used for an oath, is of the root [bç, which signifies to "fill, satiate, satisfy": for an oath being taken about matters in controversy, not clear but doubtful give content unto and satisfy the minds of men; and the same word also signifies "seven", a number of fulness and perfection; an oath being for the perfecting and finishing an affair in debate; agreeably, when covenants were made by oaths, seven witnesses were used, (Genesis 21:28-30) and Herodotus says [f87] as Cocceius [f88] observes, that the Arabians, when they swore at making covenants, anointed the stones with blood.

Ver. 17. *Wherein God, willing*, etc..] Or "wherefore", as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it; that is, whereas an oath is used among men to confirm anything that might be doubted; therefore God, in condescension to the weakness of men, made use of one; being very desirous and determined,

more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel; by which is meant, not the Gospel nor the ordinances of it, though these are sometimes called the counsel of God; but the decree of God, concerning the salvation of his people by Jesus Christ, which is immutable; as appears from the unchangeableness of his nature, the sovereignty of his will, the unsearchableness of his wisdom, the omnipotence of his arm, and the unconditionality of the thing decreed, and from that and the purpose of it being in Christ: and the immutability of this, God was willing to show

“more abundantly” than in other purposes, though all God's purposes are unchangeable; or than had been shown to the Old Testament saints; and more than was necessary, had it not been for man's weakness: even to “the heirs of promise”; not any earthly temporal promise, but the promise of grace and glory; the promise of eternal life; the heirs of which are not only Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or God's elect among the Jews, but all that are Christ's; who are justified by his righteousness, believe in him, and are the children of God; for as many as are such are heirs of eternal glory, and of the promise of it: and that the unchangeableness of God's purpose in saving them by Christ might be manifest to them, and be out of all doubt, he “confirmed it by an oath”; his counsel and purpose; he not only determined in his mind that he would save them, and promised it in his covenant; but he also, to confirm it the more to the persons concerned in it, if possible, annexed his oath to it; or “he interposed or acted the part of a Mediator by an oath”; which some refer to Christ's mediation between God and Abraham, when he swore unto him, as before observed; but rather it expresses the interposition of the oath between God's purpose and promise, and man's weakness: God did as it were bind himself by his oath, or lay himself under obligation, or become a surety, for the fulfilment of his purpose and promise; which shows the super-abounding grace of God, the weakness of man, and what reason the heirs of promise have to believe.

Ver. 18. *That by two immutable things*, etc..] God's counsel and oath, which never change and alter, and from which he never varies:

in which it was impossible for God to lie; fail or deceive, nor, indeed, in anything else, besides his counsels, promises, and oath, (see Titus 1:2)

we might have a strong consolation; the saints often stand in need of consolation, by reason of sin, Satan, and the world; and it is the will of God that they should be comforted; and he would have them have

strong consolation; that which is solid and an abundance of it; and this much depends on the immutability of God's counsel and oath: *who have fled for refuge*; either in allusion to mariners, as some think; who make all the haste they can to their port and haven, and are glad when they arrive there, and there cast anchor; of which mention is made in the next verse: or to runners in a race, who make up to the mark, in order to lay hold on the prize; hence Christ is afterwards spoken of as a forerunner: or rather to such as fled to the cities of refuge, which were a type of Christ; the names of these cities were, Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron, Bezer, Romath, and

Golan; (^[6107]Joshua 20:7,8) and the situation of them, according to the Jews [f89], was like two rows in a vineyard. Hebron in Judah was over against Bezer in the wilderness; Shechem in Mount Ephraim was over against Ramoth in Gilead; Kedesh in Mount Naphtali was over against Golan in Bashan: the names of these several cities agree with Christ; Kedesh signifies “holy”, as Christ is, both as God and man, and is made sanctification to his people; Shechem is “the shoulder”, and Christ has not only bore the sins of his people in his own body, on the tree, but he bears and carries their persons, and has the government of them on his shoulders, where they are safe and secure; Hebron may be interpreted “fellowship”, and the saints have not only fellowship with Christ; but with the Father through him; Bezer may be rendered a “fortified place”; Christ is a stronghold, a tower, a place of defence, whither the righteous run, and are safe; Ramoth signifies “exaltations”; and may fitly be applied to Christ, who is exalted at God's right hand, and who will exalt those that trust in him in due time: Golan may be translated “manifested”; Christ the Son of God has been manifest in the flesh, to destroy the works of the devil; and he will be revealed from heaven in a glorious manner at the last day: these cities were known to be such; and they were open to all Israelites and proselytes, that killed any person at unawares; and they were open at all times; and the way to them was made plain and large; every year care was taken to make the way good, to remove every hillock, or anything that hindered; if there was a river in the way, to make a bridge over it; and where more ways met, to set up pillars with a hand to them, and these words written on it, jlqm jlqm, “refuge, refuge”; nor was the road to be less in breadth than thirty two cubits [f90]; and there was always room in these cities; and whoever fled there was safe; but those that were found without died: thus Christ is known to be a refuge for distressed sinners; and he is open to all that come unto him, and at all times; the way of life and salvation by him is plainly pointed out in the Gospel, and by the ministers of it; who are appointed to direct unto him, and to remove all impediments and discouragements from such who are seeking to him; and though so many have been received and saved by him, still there is room for more; and whoever betake themselves to him are safe, but those that are without him die and perish: so Philo the Jew [f91] makes the divine Word, or Logos, to be the chief and most profitable refuge to fly unto, of all the six which he takes notice of; and the Jews have a notion that in the time to come, in the days of the Messiah, three other cities of refuge will be added [f92]. There is in some things a difference between Christ and these cities of

refuge; there were six of these, but there is no other than Christ; the cities of refuge were only for such who shed blood ignorantly, but Christ is a refuge for all sorts of sinners; they were in a kind of exile who fled to them, but in Christ is complete liberty; it was possible that such might die in them, but those that are in Christ never die the second death; and at best those who fled thither were only saved from a temporal death, whereas those who betake themselves to Christ are saved with an everlasting salvation. Now "fleeing" to Christ, implies danger in the persons that flee, as such are in danger, in themselves, of the curse and condemnation of the law, of the wrath of God, and eternal death; it supposes a sense of this danger, which when right comes from the Spirit of God; it shows guilt of conscience, and a consciousness of the insufficiency of other refuges, and a knowledge of Christ; as a suitable one; and is expressive of haste and hearty desire to be there:

to lay hold on the hope set before us; by which is meant, not the grace of hope, but either heaven hoped for, or rather Christ the object of hope; who is not only set down at God's right hand, but is set forth in the Gospel and in the ordinances, both by the Spirit of God, and by the ministers of the word; that men may look and go to him, and trust and believe in him, to the saving of their souls; where he is in sight, near at hand, accessible to; the way to him is straightforward; and here he abides: and he is set before us to be laid hold upon, which intends an act of faith; which grace lays hold on the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; and is done in a view of fulness and safety in him, and under a sense of danger otherwise; it supposes grace, and that in exercise and somewhat strong; and some degree of resolution and courage of faith, and the steadfastness and continuance of it; the soul determining, if it perishes it will perish here; and it shows that Christ and his grace are to be touched and laid hold upon by faith.

Ver. 19. *Which [hope] we have as an anchor of the soul*, etc..] This world is as a sea; the church in it, and so every believer, is as a ship; the port that is bound unto is heaven; Christ is the pilot, and hope is the anchor: an anchor is cast on a bottom, out of sight; and when the ship is in a calm, or in danger of a rock, or near the shore; but is of no service without a cable: and when cast aright, keeps the ship steady: so hope is cast on Christ; whence he is often called hope itself, because he is the ground and foundation of it, and who is at present unseen to bodily eyes; and the anchor of hope without the cable of faith is of little service; but being cast

aright on Christ, keeps the soul steady and immovable: in some things there is a difference between hope and an anchor; an anchor is not of so much use in tempests as in a calm, but hope is; the cable may be cut or broke, and so the anchor be useless, but so it cannot be with faith and hope; when the ship is at anchor, it does not move forward, but it is not so with the soul, when hope is in exercise; the anchor of hope is not cast on anything below, but above; and here it is called the anchor of the soul, to distinguish it from any other, and to show the peculiar benefit of it to the soul. Pythagoras makes use of the same metaphor [f93];

> "riches (he says) are a weak anchor, glory: is yet weaker; the body likewise; principalities, honours, all these are weak and without strength; what then are strong anchors? prudence, magnanimity, fortitude; these no tempest shakes."

But these philosophical moral virtues are not to be compared with the Christian's grace of hope, which is

both sure and steadfast; it is in itself a grace firm and stable; it is permanent and can never be lost: and it is still more sure and steadfast, by virtue of what it is fixed upon, the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; and by the immutability, faithfulness, and power of God it is concerned with; and through the aboundings and discoveries of divine love, grace, and mercy; and from the instances of grace to the vilest of sinners:

and which entereth into that within the vail; the holy of holies, heaven itself; in allusion to the vail which divided between the holy and the holy of holies: the things within the vail, or in heaven, which hope entering into fixes upon, are the person of Christ, who is entered there, and appears in the presence of God for his people; his blood which he has carried along with him, and by which he is entered there; his justifying righteousness, by which the law is fulfilled, the two tables of stone in the ark of the testimony; the sweet incense of his mediation, which is continually offered up by him; the mercy seat, or throne of grace, on which Jehovah sits as the God of grace; and all the glories of heaven; all which hope is concerned with, and receives strength and rigour from: and their being within the vail, is expressive of their hiddenness and invisibility at present, and of their safety and security, as well as of their sacredness; and this shows a difference between the hope of believers and others, whose hope fixes upon things short of these; and likewise the great privilege of a believer, who being made a priest unto God, has liberty and boldness to enter into

the holiest of all. The Jews [f94] speak of a vail in the world to come, which some are worthy to enter into.

Ver. 20. *Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus*, etc..] Christ was a runner; he had a race to run, which lay in going about to heal diseases, in preaching the Gospel, in obeying the law, and in suffering death for his people; which race was run by him with great swiftness, strength, and courage, with patience, cheerfulness, and joy, and is now ended; as appears from the accomplishment of salvation, from his entrance into heaven, and session at the right hand of God; from the glorification of his human nature, and its everlasting freedom from the dominion of death: and this race is run out, as a "forerunner"; Christ is the most excellent runner; there is none like him; there is none that can come up to him; he has out ran and exceeded all others; he has performed in the best manner; he has run out his race first, and has entered into heaven first by his own blood; and he has cleared the way thither, and opened the gates of heaven for his people; and is a guide and pattern for them to follow: and he is the forerunner for them, as well as entered for them; for he was born, and he lived, and died for them, for their good and service; and he is entered into heaven for them, as man and Mediator, and as their high priest; where he represents their persons, appears and intercedes for them, takes care of their affairs, and presents their services; prepares mansions of glory for them, and takes possession of heaven in their name, and opens the way for them to follow him thither; all which gives great encouragement to hope to enter now, where Jesus is: who is

made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec; (see Hebrews 5:6,10). This is repeated here, to lead on to what the apostle had to say concerning Melchizedek in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 7

The apostle having made mention of Melchizedek in the latter part of the preceding chapter, proceeds in this to give some account of him, and of the excellency of his priesthood, and to show that Christ is a priest of his order, and is superior to Aaron and his sons. He first declares what Melchizedek was, that he was both king and priest; he names the place he was king of, and tells whose priest he was, even the priest of the most high God; and goes on to observe what he did, that he met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, that he blessed him, and took tithes of him, (Hebrews 7:1,2) and then interprets his name, and royal title, the one signifying king of righteousness, the other king of peace; that for anything that can be learned from the Scriptures, it is not known who was his father or his mother; what his lineage and descent; when he was born, or when he died; and that he is like to the Son of God, and continues a priest, (Hebrews 7:2,3) upon which the apostle calls upon the Hebrews to consider the greatness of his person; and as it appears from that single instance of his receiving tithes from the patriarch Abraham, (Hebrews 7:4) by which it is evident, that he is greater than the Levites; and which is demonstrated in the following particulars: the Levites received tithes of their brethren that came out of Abraham's loins, as they did, but Melchizedek, whose descent was not from them, received tithes from Abraham himself, and besides blessed him; and it is a clear case, that the lesser is blessed of the greater, (Hebrews 7:5-7) the Levites were mortal men that received tithes, but a testimony is bore to Melchizedek, that he lives, (Hebrews 6:8) yea, Levi himself paid tithes to Melchizedek, since he was in the loins of his father Abraham when Melchizedek met him, and took tithes of him; and therefore must be greater than Levi, (Hebrews 7:9,10). And next the apostle proves the imperfection of the Levitical priesthood from this consideration, that there is another priest risen up, not of the order of Aaron, but of the order of Melchizedek, of which there would have been no need, if the Levitical priesthood had been perfect; nor would it have been changed, as it is, and which has also made a change of the law, by which it is established, necessary, (Hebrews 7:11,12) that

the priest that is risen up is not of the order of Aaron, is clear, because he is of another tribe, even of the tribe of Judah, to which the priesthood did not belong, (Hebrews 7:13,14), and that he is of the order of Melchizedek, and so not according to the ceremonial law, but after the power of an endless life, is manifest from the testimony of the sacred Scripture, (Hebrews 7:15-17) which lies in (Psalm 110:4) and that the ceremonial law, on which the Levitical priesthood stood, is changed and abrogated, is strongly asserted, and the reasons of it given, because it was weak and unprofitable, and made nothing perfect; and this was disannulled by Christ, the better hope brought in, who has made something perfect, and through whom we have access to God, (Hebrews 7:18,19). Moreover, the superior excellency of Christ's priesthood to the Levitical one is shown in several particulars; the priests of Aaron's order were made without an oath; Christ was made with one, as is evident from the above cited testimony, (Hebrews 7:20-22) they were many, he but one; they were mortal, and did not continue, he continues ever, having an unchangeable priesthood, (Hebrews 7:23,24) wherefore, as they were not suffered to continue by reason of death, their priesthood was ineffectual; they could not take away sin, and save sinners; but Christ is able to save to the uttermost all that draw nigh to God by him, as a priest, and that because he ever lives to complete his office by intercession, (Hebrews 7:25) wherefore such an high priest as he is, must become men, and be suitable to them, especially since he is pure and holy, and in such an exalted state, (Hebrews 7:26) and this is another difference between him and the priests under the law; they were men that had infirmity, and were guilty of sins themselves, and so had need to offer for their own sins, and then for the sins of others; but Christ, the Son of God, who was consecrated a priest for evermore, by the word of the oath, had no sin of his own to offer sacrifice for, only the sins of his people, which he did once, when he offered himself, (Hebrews 7:27,28).

Ver. 1. *For this Melchisedec, king of Salem*, etc..] Various have been the opinions of writers concerning Melchizedek; some have thought him to be more than a man; some, that he was an angel; others, that he was the Holy Ghost; and others, that he was a divine person superior to Christ, which needs no refutation; others have supposed that he was the Son of God himself: but he is expressly said to be like unto him, and Christ is said to be of his order; which manifestly distinguish the one from the other; besides, there is nothing said of Melchizedek which proves him to be more than a

man: accordingly others take him to have been a mere man; but these are divided; some say that he was Shem, the son of Noah, which is the constant opinion of the Jewish writers [f95]: but it is not true of him, that he was without father, and without mother, an account of his descent being given in Scripture; nor is it probable that he should be a king of a single city in Ham's country, and Abraham be a stranger there: others say, that he was a Canaanitish king, of the posterity of Ham; others affirm him to be a perfect sinless man, and that all that is said of him in Genesis, and in this context, is literally true of him; but that he should be immediately created by God, as Adam, and be without sin as he, are things entirely without any foundation: others take him to be a mere man, but an extraordinary one, eminently raised up by God to be a type of the Messiah; and think it most proper not to inquire curiously who he was, since the Scripture is silent concerning his genealogy and descent; and that as it should seem on purpose, that he might be a more full and fit type of Christ; and this sense appears best and safest. Aben Ezra says, his name signifies what he was, the king of a righteous place: Salem, of which he was king, was not Shalem, a city of Shechem, in the land of Canaan, (<01338>Genesis 33:18) afterwards called Salim, near to which John was baptizing, (<43023>John 3:23) where is shown the palace of Melchizedek in its ruins, which cannot be, since that city was laid to the ground, and sowed with salt by Abimelech, (<07045>Judges 9:45) but Jerusalem is the place; which is the constant opinion of the Jews [f96], and is called Salem in (<19602>Psalm 86:2). The interpretation of this word is given in the next verse; some of the Jewish writers referred to say, that it was usual for the kings of Jerusalem to be called Melchizedek and Adonizedek, as in (<06003>Joshua 10:3) just as the kings of Egypt were called Pharaoh. This king was also

priest of the most high God, as he is said to be, (<01418>Genesis 14:18) for he was both king and priest, in which he was an eminent type of Christ; and his being a king is no objection to his being a priest, since it was usual for kings to be priests; and though the Hebrew word “Cohen” sometimes signifies a prince, it cannot be so understood here, not only because the word is rendered “priest” by the Septuagint, and by the apostle, but because he is called the priest of God; and Christ is said to be of his order: and he is styled the priest of God, because he was called and invested by him with this office, and was employed in his service; who is said to be the most high God, from his dwelling on high, and from his superior power to

all others, and to distinguish him from idol gods; this is a character of great honour given to Melchizedek;

who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings; the four kings, whose names are mentioned in (<01401>Genesis 14:1) whom Abraham slew, and over whom he got an entire victory, with only three hundred and eighteen men of his own house, after they had conquered the kings of Sodom, Gomorrha, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela: which shows that war is lawful; that enemies may be slain in war; that kings may fall as well as other men; and that those who have conquered others, may be conquered themselves: and as he was returning with his spoils, Melchizedek met him; not alone, which is not to be supposed of so great a person; nor empty, for he brought with him bread and wine, not for sacrifice, as the Papists would have it; but as Jarchi, a Jewish interpreter on the place observes, they used to do so to such as were fatigued in war; for this is to be considered as a neighbourly action, done in point of interest and gratitude, and was a truly Christian one, and very laudable and commendable; and doubtless had something in it typical of Christ, who gives to hungry and weary saints the bread of life, and refreshes them with the wine of divine love and grace:

and blessed him; Abraham, and the most high God also: the form of blessing both is recorded in (<01419>Genesis 14:19,20). This was not a mere civil salutation, nor only a congratulation upon his success, nor only a return of thanks for victory, though these things are included; nor did he do this as a private person, but as the priest of the most high God, and blessed him in his name authoritatively, as the high priest among the Jews afterwards did, (<04623>Numbers 6:23-27) and in this he was a type of Christ, who blesses his people with all spiritual blessings, with redemption, justification, pardon, peace, and all grace, and with eternal glory.

(Gill changed his mind on the location of Salam when he later wrote the Old Testament portion of the Expositor. (See Gill on "<01418>Genesis 14:18"). Ed.)

Ver. 2. *To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all*, etc..] Or tithes, as in (<01420>Genesis 14:20). Philo the Jew [f97] renders the Hebrew phrase, lkm rç[m, just as the apostle does δεκατην απο παντων, "a tenth part of all", or "out of all"; not of all that he brought back, as Lot's goods, or the king of Sodom's, or any others; only of the spoils of the enemy, as in (<581704>Hebrews 7:4) which is no proof of any obligation on men to pay tithes

now to any order of men; for this was a voluntary act, and not what any law obliged to; it was done but once, and not constantly, or every year; it was out of the spoils of the enemy, and not out of his own substance, or of the increase of the earth; nor was it for the maintenance of Melchizedek, as a priest, who also was a king, and was richly provided for; but to testify his gratitude to God, for the victory obtained, and his reverence of, and subjection to the priest of God.

First being by interpretation king of righteousness; or a "righteous king", as Melchizedek was; not the king of a righteous place, as Aben Ezra thought, a place wherein dwelt righteousness, or righteous persons; but it was his proper name, which so signifies, and in which he was a type of Christ; who is righteous, not only as God, and as man, and as Mediator, but particularly in the administration of his kingly office: his kingdom lies in righteousness, as well as peace; the subjects of it are righteous persons, and all his ways are just and true; his Gospel, by which he rules, is a declaration of righteousness; and he himself is the author of righteousness to all his people:

and after that also king of Salem, which is king of peace; and may respect his peaceable government; and is very applicable to Christ, the Prince of peace; whose kingdom is a kingdom of peace; his sceptre is a sceptre of peace; his royal proclamation is the Gospel of peace; and his subjects are the sons of peace; and he himself is the author of peace, not only between Jew and Gentile, but between God and his people; and he is the donor of peace, external, internal, and eternal. So Philo the Jew [f98] interprets this name, "king of peace", just as the apostle does.

Ver. 3. *Without father, without mother, without descent*, etc..] Which is to be understood not of his person, but of his priesthood; that his father was not a priest, nor did his mother descend from any in that office; nor had he either a predecessor or a successor in it, as appears from any authentic accounts: or this is to be interpreted, not of his natural, but scriptural being; for no doubt, as he was a mere man, he had a father, and a mother, and a natural lineage and descent; but of these no mention is made in Scripture, and therefore said to be without them; and so the Syriac version renders it; "whose father and mother are not written in the genealogies"; or there is no genealogical account of them. The Arabic writers tell us who his father and his mother were; some of them say that Peleg was his father: so Elmacinus [f99], his words are these; Peleg lived after he begat Rehu two

hundred and nine years; afterwards he begat Melchizedek, the priest whom we have now made mention of. Patricides [f100], another of their writers, expresses himself after this manner

> “they who say Melchizedek had neither beginning of days, nor end of life, and argue from the words of the Apostle Paul, asserting the same, do not rightly understand the saying of the Apostle Paul; for Shem, the son of Noah, after he had taken Melchizedek, and withdrew him from his parents, did not set down in writing how old he was, when he went into the east, nor what was his age when he died; but Melchizedek was the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Salah, the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah; and yet none of those patriarchs is called his father. This only the Apostle Paul means, that none of his family served in the temple, nor were children and tribes assigned to him. Matthew and Luke the evangelists only relate the heads of tribes: hence the Apostle Paul does not write the name of his father, nor the name of his mother.”

And with these writers Sahid Aben Batric [f101] agrees, who expressly affirms that Melchizedek was `glap ^ba`, “the son of Peleg”: though others of them make him to be the son of Peleg's son, whose name was Heraclim. The Arabic Catena [f102] on (Genesis 10:25), “the name of one was Peleg”, has this note in the margin;

> “and this (Peleg) was the father of Heraclim, the father of Melchizedek;”

and in a preceding chapter, his pedigree is more particularly set forth:

> “Melchizedek was the son of Heraclim, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber; and his mother's name was Salathiel, the daughter of Gomer, the son of Japheth, the son of Noah; and Heraclim, the son of Eber, married his wife Salathiel, and she was with child, and brought forth a son, and called his name Melchizedek, called also king of Salem: after this the genealogy is set down at length. Melchizedek, son of Heraclim, which was the son of Peleg, which was the son of Eber, which was the son of Arphaxad, etc.. till you come to, which was the son of Adam, on whom be peace.”

It is very probable Epiphanius has regard to this tradition, when he observes [f103], that some say that the father of Melchizedek was called Eracla, and his mother Astaroth, the same with Asteria. Some Greek [f104] writers say he was of the lineage of Sidus, the son of Aegyptus, a king of Lybia, from whence the Egyptians are called: this Sidus, they say, came out of Egypt into the country of the Canaanitish nations, now called Palestine, and subdued it, and dwelled in it, and built a city, which he called Sidon, after his own name: but all this is on purpose concealed, that he might be a more apparent of Christ, who, as man, is "without father"; for though, as God, he has a Father, and was never without one, being begotten by him, and was always with him, and in him; by whom he was sent, from whom he came, and whither he is gone; to whom he is the way, and with whom he is an advocate: yet, as man, he had no father; Joseph was his reputed father only; nor was the Holy Ghost his Father; nor is he ever said to be begotten as man, but was born of a virgin. Some of the Jewish writers themselves say, that the Redeemer, whom God will raise up, shall be without father [f105]. And he is without mother, though not in a spiritual sense, every believer being so to him as such; nor in a natural sense, as man, for the Virgin Mary was his mother; but in a divine sense, as God: and he is "without descent or genealogy"; not as man, for there is a genealogical account of him as such, in (<4001>Matthew 1:1-17 <4203>Luke 3:23-38) and his pedigree and kindred were well known to the Jews; but as God; and this distinguishes him from the gods of the Heathens, who were genealogized by them, as may be seen in Hesiod, Apollodorus, Hyginus, and other writers; and this condemns the blasphemous genealogies of the Gnostics and Valentinians. It follows,

having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; that is, there is no account which shows when he was born, or when he died; and in this he was a type of Christ, who has no beginning of days, was from the beginning, and in the beginning, and is the beginning, and was from everlasting; as appears from his nature as God, from his names, from his office as Mediator, and from his concern in the council and covenant of peace, and in the election of his people; and he has no end of life, both as God and man; he is the living God; and though as man he died once, he will die no more, but lives for ever. It is further said of Melchizedek,

but made like unto the Son of God: in the above things; from whence it appears, that he is not the Son of God; and that Christ, as the Son of God,

existed before him, and therefore could not take this character from his incarnation or resurrection:

abideth a priest continually; not in person, but in his antitype Christ Jesus; for there never will be any change of Christ's priesthood; nor will it ever be transferred to another; the virtue and efficacy of it will continue for ever; and he will ever live to make intercession; and will always bear the glory of his being both priest and King upon his throne: the Syriac version renders it, “his priesthood abides for ever”; which is true both of Melchizedek and of Christ.

Ver. 4. *Now consider how great this man was*, etc..] Melchizedek, of whom so many great and wonderful things are said in the preceding verses: and as follows,

unto whom the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils; of Abraham's giving tithes to him, (see Gill on “Hebrews 7:2”) and Melchizedek's greatness is aggravated, not only from this act of Abraham's, but from Abraham's being a “patriarch”, who did it; he was the patriarch of patriarchs, as the sons of Jacob are called, (Acts 7:8,9) he is the patriarch of the whole Jewish nation, and of many nations, and of all believers, the friend of God, and heir of the world; how great then must Melchizedek be, to whom he paid tithes? and how much greater must Christ, the antitype of Melchizedek, be?

Ver. 5. *And verily they that are of the sons of Levi*, etc..] Or Levites; who are of the tribe of Levi, whose descent is from him:

who receive the office of the priesthood; as some of them were priests, though not all; and the Levites therefore are sometimes called priests. R. Joshua ben Levi says, that in twenty four places the priests are called Levites; and this is one of them, (Ezekiel 44:15) “and the priests and Levites”, etc..[f106]

these have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law; the ceremonial law, (Numbers 18:20-26), these they took of all the people of Israel in the rest of the tribes, by the commandment of God, on account of their service in the tabernacle; and because they had no inheritance in the land; and to show that the Israelites held their land of God himself:

that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham; who are their brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh, though of different tribes; and from these they receive, notwithstanding they are the sons of Abraham: but here a difficulty arises, how the Levites that were priests can be said to receive tithes from the people, when they received the tenth part of the tithes, or the tithe of tithes from the Levites, (<04826>Numbers 18:26 <16038>Nehemiah 10:38), but it should be observed, that it was not necessary that the Levites should give these tithes to the priests themselves; an Israelite might do it, and so give the Levites the less; on which account the priests may be said to receive from the people; besides, Ezra in his time ordered, that the first tithe should not be given to the Levites, but to the priests, because they would not go up with him to Jerusalem [f107].

Ver. 6. *But he whose descent is not counted from them*, etc.] That is, Melchizedek, whose genealogy or pedigree is not reckoned from the Levites, nor from any from whom they descend; his lineal descent is not the same with theirs; and so did not receive tithes by any law, as they did, but by virtue of his superiority: received tithes of Abraham; not from the people, or his brethren, but from Abraham, the father of the people of Israel, and of Levi himself:

and blessed him that had the promises; of a Son, and of the Messiah, that should spring from him, in whom all nations should be blessed, and of the land of Canaan, and of the blessings of grace and glory. This shows that Melchizedek had a descent, though it was not known; and that, since his descent was not the same with the Levites, he was a more proper type of Christ, who belonged not to that, but another tribe.

Ver. 7. *And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the greater*.] This is a self-evident truth, and is undeniable; it admits of no controversy, and cannot be gainsaid, that he that blesseth is greater in that respect than he that is blessed by him; as the priests were greater in their office than the people who were blessed by them; and so Melchizedek, as a priest of the most high God, and as blessing Abraham, was greater than he; and so must be greater than the Levites, who sprung from him; and his priesthood be more excellent than theirs; and consequently Christ, his antitype, and who was of his order, must be greater too; which is the design of the apostle throughout the whole of his reasoning.

Ver. 8. *And here men that die receive tithes*, etc.,] The priests and Levites were not only men, and mortal men, subject to death, but they did die, and so did not continue, by reason of death, (⁵⁸Hebrews 7:24)

but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth; which is to be understood of Melchizedek; who is not opposed to men, as if he was not a man, nor to mortal men, but to men that die; nor is he said to be immortal, but to live: and this may respect the silence of the Scripture concerning him, which gives no account of his death; and may be interpreted of the perpetuity of his priesthood, and of his living in his antitype Christ; and the testimony concerning him is in (¹⁹Psalm 110:4).

Ver. 9. *And as l may so say*, etc..] With truth, and with great propriety and pertinence:

Levi also who receiveth tithes; or the Levites, who receive tithes according to the law of Moses from the people of Israel:

paid tithes in Abraham; that is, to Melchizedek; and therefore Melchizedek must be greater than they, and his priesthood a more excellent one than theirs; since they who receive tithes from others gave tithes to him.

Ver. 10. *For he was yet in the loins of his father*, etc..] Abraham; namely, Levi and his whole posterity; which is to be understood seminally, just as all mankind were in the loins of Adam, when he sinned and fell, and so they sinned and fell in him; and so Levi was in Abraham's loins,

when Melchisedec met him; which, as it proves Melchizedek to be greater than Levi, and much more Jesus Christ, who is a priest of his order, which is the grand thing the apostle has in view; so it serves to illustrate several points of doctrine, in which either of the public heads, Adam and Christ, are concerned, with respect to their seed and offspring; such as personal election in Christ, an eternal donation of all blessings of grace to the elect in him, eternal justification in him, the doctrine of original sin, and the saints' crucifixion, burial, resurrection, and session in Christ, and together with him.

Ver. 11. *If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood*, etc..] The priesthood which was established in the tribe of Levi; so called, to distinguish it from that which was before this institution, from the times of Adam, as well as from the priesthood of Melchizedek, and from the priesthood of Christ, and from that of his people under the Gospel, who

are all priests; as well as to restrain it to the subject of the apostle's discourse: the design of which is to show, that there is no perfection by it; as is clear from the priests themselves, who were but men, mortal men, sinful men, and so imperfect, and consequently their priesthood; and from their offerings, between which, and sin, there is no proportion; and at best were but typical of the sacrifice of Christ; and could neither make the priests nor the worshippers perfect, neither in their own consciences, nor in the sight of God: moral actions are preferred before them, and yet by these there is no perfection, justification, and salvation; to which may be added, that the sacrifices the priests offered did not extend to all kind of sins, only to sins of ignorance, not to presumptuous ones; and there were many under that dispensation punished with death; and at most they only delivered from temporal, not eternal punishment, and only entitled to a temporal life, not an eternal one.

For under it the people received the law: not the moral law, which was given to Adam in innocence, and as it came by Moses, it was before the Levitical priesthood took place; but the ceremonial law, and which was carnal, mutable, and made nothing perfect: the Syriac version renders it, “by which a law was imposed upon the people”; to regard the office of priesthood, and the priests in it, and bring their sacrifices to them; and the Arabic version reads, “the law of a the priest's office”; which office was after the law of a carnal commandment, and so imperfect, as is manifest from what follows: for had perfection been by it,

what further need was there that another priest should arise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? that there was another priest promised and expected, and that he should arise after the order of Melchizedek, and who was to make his soul an offering for sin, is certain, (Ezra 2:63 Psalm 110:4 Isaiah 53:10) and such an one is risen, even Jesus of Nazareth; and yet there would have been no need of him, and especially that he should be of a different order from Aaron's, had there been perfection by the Levitical priesthood.

Ver. 12. *For the priesthood being changed*, etc..] Not translated from one tribe, family, or order, to another, but utterly abolished; for though it is called an everlasting priesthood, yet that is to be understood with a limitation, as the word “everlasting” often is, as relating to things under that dispensation; for nothing is more certain than that it is done away: it was of right abrogated at the death of Christ, and it is now in fact; since the

destruction of Jerusalem, the daily sacrifice has ceased, and the children of Israel have been many days without one, and without an ephod. And the Jews themselves own, that the high priesthood was to cease in time to come [f108], and which they say Azariah the son of Oded prophesied of in (<145B>2 Chronicles 15:3).

There is made of necessity a change also of the law; not the moral law, that was in being before the priesthood of Aaron, nor do they stand and fall together; besides, this still remains, for it is perfect, and cannot be made void by any other; nor is it set aside by Christ's priesthood: though there is a sense in which it is abolished; as it is in the hands of Moses; as it is a covenant of works; as to justification by it; and as to its curse and condemnation to them that are Christ's; yet it still remains in the hands of Christ, and as a rule of walk and conversation; and is useful, and continues so on many accounts: but either the judicial law; not that part of it which is founded on justice and equity, and was a means of guarding the moral law, for that still subsists; but that which was given to the Jews as Jews, and some parts of which depended on the priesthood, and so ceased with it; as the laws concerning the cities of refuge, raising up seed to a deceased brother, preserving inheritances in families, and judging and determining controversies: or rather the ceremonial law, which was but a shadow of good things to come, and was given but for a time; and this concerned the priesthood, and was made void by the priesthood of Christ; for that putting an end to the Levitical priesthood, the law which related to it must unavoidably cease, and become of no effect. This the Jews most strongly deny; God, they [f109] say, will not change nor alter the law of Moses for ever. The nineth article of their creed, as drawn up by Maimonides, runs thus [f110];

> “I believe with a perfect faith that this law tpljwm aht al
> “shall not be changed”, nor shall there be another law from the Creator, blessed be his name.”

But the reasoning of the apostle is strong and unanswerable.

Ver. 13. *For he of whom these things are spoken*, etc..] In (<19B004>Psalm 110:4) and in the type of him Melchizedek, in the preceding verses; for not Melchizedek is here meant, but the Lord Jesus Christ, as appears by what follows; the antitype of Melchizedek, the Lord our righteousness, the

Prince of peace, the priest of God, that lives for ever, without father, without mother, etc..

pertaineth to another tribe; the tribe of Judah, and not the tribe of Levi:

of which no man gave attendance at the altar; either of burnt offering or of incense; that is, no man waited there, or took upon him and exercised the priest's office that was of the tribe of Judah: no man might lawfully do it; Uzziah, indeed, thrust himself into the priest's office, who was of that tribe, and went into the temple and burnt incense upon the altar of incense; but then he had no right to do it, and was punished for it.

Ver. 14. *For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah*, etc..] Out of the tribe of Judah; it is certain that the Messiah was to spring from that tribe, (<0490>Genesis 49:10 <1302>1 Chronicles 5:2) he was to be of the family of Jesse, and of the house of David; and hence he is sometimes called David himself; and so the Jews expect that he will come from the tribe of Judah, and not from any other [f111]; and it is evident that Jesus, who is our Lord by creation, redemption, and the conquest of his grace, sprung from this tribe: this is clear from the place of his birth, Bethlehem of Judah; and from his reputed father Joseph, and real mother Mary, being both of the house of David; and this was known to the Jews, and it is owned by them that he was near to the kingdom [f112], which he could not be if he was not of that tribe; and hence he is called the lion of the tribe of Judah;

of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood: he said many things of it in (<5308>Deuteronomy 33:8) and relates many things concerning it as spoken by Jacob, but nothing about the priesthood, as if it belonged to that, or that any that should spring from it should exercise that office, The Alexandrian copy, the Claromontane manuscript, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, “concerning the priests”; whence it follows that there is a change of the priesthood, and that the Messiah, as he was not to be, so he is not a priest of Aaron's order, not being of the same tribe.

Ver. 15. *And it is yet far more evident*, etc..] From a fact which cannot be denied;

for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest; or another has risen, even Jesus the son of David, of the tribe of Judah; another from Aaron, one that is not of his family or tribe, but one like to Melchizedek: hence we learn that Melchizedek and Christ are not the same person; and that the order and similitude of Melchizedek are the same; and

that Christ's being of his order only imports that there is a resemblance and likeness between him and Melchizedek, in many things, which are observed in the beginning of this chapter: and this “arising” does not intend Christ's setting up himself, only his appearance in this form; and being expressed in the present tense, denotes the continual being, and virtue of his priesthood.

Ver. 16. *Who was made*, etc..] Not as man, much less as God; but as a priest, constituted and appointed one:

not after the law of a carnal commandment: either the ceremonial law in general, which was a carnal one, if we consider the persons to whom it belonged, the Israelites according to the flesh; it was incumbent upon, and might be performed by such who were only carnal; and it was performed by and for men that were in the flesh, or mortal; and if we consider the matter of it, the subject on which various of its rites were exercised was the flesh or body, and which were performed by manual operation; and the sacrifices of it were the flesh of beasts; and these were for the sins of the flesh, and for the removing the ceremonial uncleanness of it; and the virtue of them reached only to the purifying of the flesh; and the whole of it is distinct from the moral law, which is spiritual, and reaches to the spirit or soul of man; whereas this only was concerned about temporal and external things: or else the law of the priesthood is particularly intended; or that commandment which respected the priesthood of Aaron; which law regarded the carnal descent of his sons; enjoined a carnal inauguration of them, and provided for their succession and continuance in a carnal way; after which, Christ the great high priest did not become one:

but after the power of an endless life; this may be understood either of the Gospel, according to which Christ is a priest; and which is called “life”, in opposition to the law which is the ministration of death; and because it is the means of quickening dead sinners, and of reviving drooping saints; and points out Christ the way of life, and has brought life and immortality to light: and may be said to be “endless”, in distinction from the law, which is temporary; and because it is itself permanent and everlasting; contains in it the promise of eternal life, and is the means of bringing souls unto it: and there is a “power” goes along with it; which distinguishes it from the weak and beggarly elements of the ceremonial law, which is abolished, because of the weakness of it; for it is attended with the power of the Spirit of God, and is the power of God unto salvation: or else this intends the endless life which Christ has, in and of himself; and which qualifies him for a priest;

and stands opposed to the mortality of the priests, and to that law which could not secure them from it: the priests died, and the law by which they were priests could not prevent their death; Christ is the living God, the Prince of life, he had power to lay down his life as man, and power to take it up again; and his life, as man, is an endless one, which qualifies him for that part of his priestly office, his intercession and advocacy: or it may design that power, which his Father has given him as Mediator, of an endless life, both for himself and for all his people; and regards his ever living as a priest, and the perpetuity of and the continual virtue and efficacy of it.

Ver. 17. *For he testifieth*, etc..] That is, either David, the penman of the psalm, or rather the Holy Ghost, the enditer of it, or God in the Scripture, in (<19D904>Psalm 110:4) of this form of citing Scripture, (see Gill on "<580306>Hebrews 2:6").

thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec; (see <580306>Hebrews 5:6,10 6:20).

Ver. 18. *For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment*, etc..] Not the moral law; though what is here said of the commandment may be applied to that; that is sometimes called the commandment, (<450712>Romans 7:12,13) it went before the promise of the Messiah, and the Gospel of Christ, and the dispensation of it; it is in some respects weak; it cannot justify from the guilt of sin, nor free from the power of it, nor secure from death, the punishment of it, nor give eternal life; though it has a power to command, accuse, convince, and condemn: and it is also unprofitable in the business of justification and salvation; though otherwise it is profitable to convince of sin, to show what righteousness is, and to be a rule of conversation to the saints in the hand of Christ; yet not this, but the ceremonial law is meant, which is the commandment that respected the Levitical priesthood, and is called a carnal one, and is inclusive of many others, and, which distinguishes that dispensation from the Gospel one: and this may be said to be

going before; with respect to time, being before the Gospel state, or the exhibition of the new covenant of grace; and with respect to use, as a type or shadow of good things to come; and as it was a schoolmaster going before, and leading on to the knowledge of evangelical truths: and this is now disannulled, abrogated, and made void; the middle wall of partition is

broken down, and the law of commandments contained in ordinances is abolished:

for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof; the ceremonial law was weak; it could not expiate or atone for sin, in the sight of God; it could not remove the guilt of sin from the conscience, but there was still a remembrance of it; nor could it cleanse from the filth of sin; all it could do was, to expiate sin typically, and sanctify externally to the purifying of the flesh; and all the virtue it had was owing to Christ, whom it prefigured; and therefore, being fulfilled in him, it ceased: and it was "unprofitable"; not before the coming of Christ, for then it was a shadow, a type, a schoolmaster, and had its usefulness; but since his coming, who is the body and substance of it, it is unprofitable to be joined to him; and is of no service in the affair of salvation; and is no other than a grievous yoke of bondage; yea, is what renders Christ unprofitable and of no effect, when submitted to as in force, and as necessary to salvation; and because of these things, it is abolished and made null and void. The Jews, though they are strenuous assertors of the unalterableness of the law of Moses, yet sometimes are obliged to acknowledge the abrogation of the ceremonial law in the times of the Messiah; the commandment, they say [f113], meaning this, shall cease in the time to come; and again,

> "all sacrifices shall cease in the future state, or time to come, (i.e. the times of the Messiah,) but the sacrifice of praise [f114]."

Ver. 19. *For the law made nothing perfect*, etc..] Or no man; neither any of the priests that offered sacrifices, nor any of the people for whom they were offered: it could not perfectly make atonement for sin; nor make men perfectly holy or righteous; it could neither justify nor sanctify; neither bring in a perfect righteousness, nor bring men to perfect holiness, and so to eternal life and salvation:

but the bringing in of a better hope did; not the grace of hope; that is not something newly brought in, the saints under the Old Testament had it; nor is it better now than then, though it has greater advantages and more encouragement to the exercise of it: nor heaven and eternal glory, the thing hoped for; the saints under the legal dispensation hoped for this, as well as believers under the present dispensation; nor is what the latter hope for better than that the former did: nor is God the author and object of hope intended; the phrase of bringing in will not suit with him; besides, he is distinguished from it, in the next clause: to understand it of the Gospel, the

means of hope, and of encouraging it, is no ill sense; that standing in direct contradistinction to the law: but the priesthood of Christ, of which the apostle is treating in the context, is generally understood, which is the ground of hope; for all promises respecting eternal life are confirmed by it, and all blessings connected with it procured; and it is better than the Aaronic priesthood, under the law; and a better ground of hope than the sacrifices of that law were: Christ himself may be designed, who is often called hope, being the object, ground, and foundation of it; and is a better one than Moses, or his law, Aaron, or his priesthood; and it is by him men draw nigh to God; and the bringing in of him or his priesthood shows that Christ's priesthood was not upon the foot of the law, and that he existed as a priest, before brought in, and as a better hope, though not so fully revealed; and it may have respect to his coming in the flesh, being sent, or brought in by his father: now the bringing in of him and his priesthood did make something perfect; it brought to perfection all the types, promises, and prophecies of the Old Testament, the whole law, moral and ceremonial; it brought in perfect atonement, reconciliation, pardon, righteousness, and redemption; it perfected the persons of all God's elect; and perfectly provided for their holiness, peace, comfort, and eternal happiness: some read the words “but it”, the law, “was the bringing in of a better hope”: the law led unto, made way for, and introduced. Christ, the better hope; and so the Arabic version, “seeing it should be an entrance to a more noble hope”; the Syriac version renders it, “but in the room of it entered a hope more excellent than that”; than the law:

by the which we draw nigh unto God; the Father, as the Father of Christ, and of his people in him, and as the Father of mercies, and the God of all grace and this drawing nigh to him is to be understood not locally but spiritually; it includes the whole worship of God, but chiefly designs prayer: and ought to be done with a true heart, in opposition to hypocrisy; and in faith, in opposition to doubting; and with reverence and humility, in opposition to rashness; and with freedom, boldness, and thankfulness: and it is through Christ and his priesthood that souls have encouragement to draw nigh to God; for Christ has paid all their debts, satisfied law and justice, procured the pardon of their sins, atonement and reconciliation for them; he is the way of their access to God; he gives them audience and acceptance; he presents their prayers, and intercedes for them himself.

Ver. 20. *And inasmuch as not without an oath*, etc..] Our version supplies as follows,

he was made priest; which well agrees with what is said in the next verse; the Syriac version renders it, “and which he confirmed to us by an oath”; that is, the better hope, Christ and his priesthood, said to be brought in, and by which men draw nigh to God; this is established by the oath of God himself referring to (<19810>Psalm 110:4) afterwards cited in proof of it.

Ver. 21. *For these priests were made without an oath*, etc..] The priests of the tribe of Levi, and of the order of Aaron, were installed into their office, and invested with it, without an oath; no mention is made of any when Aaron and his sons were put into it in Moses's time; nor was any used afterwards, neither by God, nor by the priests, nor by the people; it is true indeed that after the sect of the Sadducees arose, the high priest on the day of atonement, was obliged to take an oath that he would not change any of the customs of the day [f115]; but then this regarded not his investiture, but the execution of his office; and was an oath of his and not of the Lord's, which is here designed:

but this with an oath; that is, Christ was made an high priest with an oath, even with an oath of God; which gives his priesthood the preference to the Levitical priesthood, which was without one: and this oath was made,

by him that said unto him: the Syriac version reads, “as he said to him by David”; that is, in (<19810>Psalm 110:4). David being the penman of that psalm, in which stand the following words of the Father to Christ:

the Lord sware and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec; which proves that Jehovah swore that Christ should be a priest, and continue so: swearing, when ascribed to God, is after the manner of men, and is always by himself, and never upon any trivial account; but either to confirm his love to his people, or his covenant with them, or the mission of his Son to be the Redeemer, or, as here, his priestly office: and this oath was made not so much on Christ's account, as on account of the heirs of promise, for their consolation; and shows the dignity, validity, importance, and singularity of Christ's priesthood, as well as the durableness of it; and of this oath God will never repent: repentance cannot properly fall upon God, on any account; for it is contrary to his holiness and righteousness, and to his happiness, to his unchangeableness, omniscience, and omnipotence; it is indeed sometimes ascribed to him improperly, and after the manner of men; and only regards a change of his outward conduct according to his immutable will; and the change that is made is in the creature, and not in God himself: but God will not repent in

any sense of the priesthood of Christ, nor of his oath, that it should continue for ever according to the order of Melchizedek; for he was every way qualified for it, and has faithfully performed it, not his investiture, but the execution of his office; and was an oath of his and not of the Lord's, which is here designed:

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Ver. 22. *By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament*.] Or "covenant", for the word signifies both; and what is intended may be called both a testament and a covenant; a testament, because it is founded in the good will and pleasure of God, and respects an inheritance bequeathed by God the Father to his children, which was confirmed and comes to them by the death of Christ the testator; and a covenant, it being a compact or agreement made by the Father with Christ, as the representative of all the

elect; in which promises and blessings of all sorts are provided and secured for them in him; and is called in Scripture a covenant of life and peace, because these are things concerned in it; and is commonly by men called the covenant of grace, because it springs from the grace of God, the subject matter of it is grace, and the end of it is the glory of God's grace: now this is better than the covenant of works broken by man, and which exposes him to the curse and condemnation of the law; or than the covenant of the Levitical priesthood, by which was no perfection; and the form of administration of it under the Gospel dispensation is better than that under the law, for it is now revealed more clearly, and administered without types, shadows, and sacrifices; and the extent of its administration is larger, reaching to Gentiles as well as Jews; and besides, it is now actually ratified and confirmed by the blood of Christ, which is therefore called the blood of the everlasting covenant: and of this testament or covenant Christ is the “surety”; the word signifies one that draws nigh: Christ drew nigh to his Father in the council of peace, and undertook to be the Saviour and Redeemer of his people he substituted himself in their place and stead; he interposed between the creditor and the debtor, and became surety for the payment of the debts of the latter, and so stood engaged for them, and in their room: Christ is not the surety for the Father to his people, but for them to the Father; as to satisfy for their sins, to work out a righteousness for them, to preserve and keep them, and make them happy; which is an instance of matchless love.

Ver. 23. *And they truly were many priests*, etc..] There were many common priests at a time; and though there was but one high priest at a time, yet there were many of them in a line of succession from Aaron down to the apostle's time. The Jews say[f116], that under the first temple eighteen high priests ministered, and under the second temple more than three hundred: this shows the imperfection of this priesthood, since it was in many hands; no one continuing and being sufficient to execute it; but Christ is the one and only high priest; there is no other, nor is there any need of any other: the reason why there were so many under the law was,

because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; death has a power to forbid a long continuance in this world, and no man does continue long here: death puts a stop to men's works, and to the exercise of their several callings; no office, even the most sacred, exempts from it; no, not the office of high priests: these were but men, sinful men, and so died; and their discontinuance by reason of death shows the imperfection of

their priesthood: there was another reason besides this which the apostle gives, why the high priests were so many, and especially about this time; and that is, the office was bought for money, and men that would give most were put into it: hence there were frequent changes; the Jews themselves say, they changed every twelve months [f117].

Ver. 24. *But this man, because he continueth ever*, etc..] Though he died, death did not forbid him to continue, as it does other men; he was not forced to die, he died voluntarily; and he continued but for a small time under the power of death; besides, his death was a branch of his priestly office: so that he not only continued in his divine nature, which still had the human nature in union with it, but he continued in his office as a priest, and quickly rose from the dead; and the virtue of his sacrifice always remains, and he himself ever lives as an intercessor: wherefore he

hath an unchangeable priesthood; which will never be antiquated, and give place to another; nor does it, or ever will it pass from him to another, for it is needless, seeing he lives, and no other is sufficient for it; and it would be injustice to pass it to another; the glory of it is due to him; and this is matter of comfort to the saints, that he sits a priest upon his throne, and that his priesthood always continues.

Ver. 25. *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost*, etc..] Because he continues ever, and has an unchangeable priesthood. This is to be understood not of temporal salvation, nor of providential favours, but of spiritual and eternal salvation; and includes a deliverance from all evil, here and hereafter, and an enjoyment of all good in this world, and in that to come: Christ was called to this work by his Father; he was promised by him to do it, and was sent by him to effect it, and has accomplished it; and this is the reason of his name Jesus, and was the end of his coming into this world, and which the Gospel always represents as such: this work required ability; here was a law to be fulfilled; justice to be satisfied; sin to be bore, removed, and atoned for; many enemies to engage with, and a cursed death to undergo: it was a work no creature, angels, or men, were able to undertake and perform; the priests under the law could not; men cannot save themselves, nor can any creature work out salvation for them: but Christ is able; as appears from the help his Father laid on him, who knew him to be mighty; from his own undertaking it, being mighty to save; and from his having completely effected it; and he must needs be able to do it, since he is the mighty God: and he is able to save to the uttermost; “to the

utmost perfection", as the Arabic version renders it; so as nothing can be wanting in the salvation he is the author of, nor anything added to it; or "for ever", as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions render it; to the utmost of time, even to eternity, as well as to the utmost of men's wants: the persons he is able to save, are such

that come to God by him; Christ is able to save all the world, were it his will; but not his absolute power is designed by his ability, but that power which by his will is put into act; and reaches not to all men, for all are not saved; and those that are, are described by special characters, as here; they are such who come to God, not essentially considered, but personally, or in the person of the Father; and not as an absolute God, but as in Christ; not as on a throne of justice, but as on a throne of grace and mercy; not only as Christ's Father, but as theirs; and not only as the God of nature and providence, but as the God of grace: and this act of coming to him is a fruit of his everlasting love; an effect of Christ's death; is peculiar to regenerate persons; takes in the whole service of God, especially prayer; is not local but spiritual, it is by faith; and supposes spiritual life, and implies a sense of need, and of God's ability and willingness to help: the medium, or mean, by which such come to God, is Christ. Man had access to God in his state of innocence, but sinning, was not admitted; there is no approaching now unto him without a middle person; Christ is the Mediator, who having made peace, atoned for sin, satisfied justice, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, introduces his people into God's presence; in whom their persons and services are accepted, and through whom all blessings are communicated to them:

seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them; Christ ever lives as God, he is the living God; and though he died as man, he is risen from the dead, and will not die again, but live for evermore; and he lives as Mediator and Redeemer, and particularly as a priest; one branch of whose office it is to intercede for his people: this he does now in heaven; not by vocal prayer and supplication, at least not as in the days of his flesh; or as if he was supplicating an angry Judge; nor as controverting, or litigating, a point the court of heaven; but by the appearance of his person for them; by the presentation of his sacrifice, blood, and righteousness; by declaring his will, that such and such blessings be bestowed on such and such persons; and by recommending the prayers of his people, and removing the charges and accusations of Satan: the things he intercedes for are, the conversion of his that are in a state of nature; the consolation of distressed ones; fresh

discoveries of pardoning grace to fallen believers; renewed strength to oppose sin, exercise grace, discharge duty, and bear up under temptations, and deliverance out of them; perseverance in faith and holiness, and eternal glorification; and he intercedes for these things; not for all the world, but for all the elect, even though transgressors; and he is very fit for this work, as the following verse shows; he is the one and only Mediator; and he is a very prevalent intercessor, he always succeeds; and he does this work readily, willingly, cheerfully, and freely; and all this proves him to be able to save; for though the impetration of salvation is by his death, the application of it is owing to his interceding life; had he died and not lived again, he could not have saved to the uttermost; his life is the security of his people's, and he lives for them, and as their representative; the blessed, effects of which they constantly enjoy.

Ver. 26. *For such an high priest became us*, etc..] Is suitable to us, answers to our cases and necessities, is every way such an one as is wanted:

[who] is holy; by nature, originally and underivatively, perfectly and completely, internally as well as externally; he was typified by the high priest, who had holiness to the Lord written on his forehead, and far exceeds any of the priests in holiness; and such an one becomes us, for had he not been holy he could not have entered into the holy place for us, or have appeared there on our account, or have been our sanctification; so Philo the Jew speaks of the true priest as being not man, but the divine Word, and as free from all sin voluntary and involuntary [f118]

harmless; without any vitiosity in his nature, without guile in his mouth, or malice in his heart; doing no injury to any man's person or property: the character chiefly regards the innocence and holiness of his life and conversation; and in which he exceeded the priests under the law; and is a suitable one for us, for hereby he was fit to be made sin, and to take it away:

undefiled; with the sin of Adam, with which all mankind are defiled; with the blood of slain beasts, with which the priests under the law were sprinkled; with the filthy conversation of the wicked, which affects good men: hence he was more excellent than the priests under the law; and one that becomes us, since his blood is the blood of a lamb, without spot and blemish: the high priests under the law, according to the Jews [f119], were to

excel their brethren in knowledge, beauty, and riches; but the distinguishing character of our high priest is purity and holiness:

separate from sinners; not but that he took the nature of sinners, though not a sinful nature; and he was often in the company of sinners, when on earth, and was reckoned among them, and as one of them; but he was separated from them in Adam; he was not among the individuals of human nature that sinned in him; and he was brought into the world in a different manner from them, not descending from Adam by ordinary generation; and he had no communion with them in sin; nor did he encourage them to it in the days of his flesh; and now he is removed far from them; and herein he exceeds the priests under the law, and is suitable to us: the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, "separate from sins"; the allusion seems to be, to the separating of the high priest from his own house to one of the courts of the temple seven days before the day of atonement [f120], and so before the burning of the heifers [f121]:

and made higher than the heavens; than the visible heavens, the airy and starry heavens, and than the angels in heaven; and so preferable to the high priests, and exceedingly agreeable to us, (<3044>Hebrews 4:14) the allusion may be to the carrying of the high priest on the day of atonement to an upper chamber in the temple, called the chamber of Abtines [f122]: this may be understood either of Christ's exaltation in heaven, where angels are subject to him, and his priesthood is completed; or of his excelling the angels in the holiness of his nature, which agrees with the other characters in the text, and stands opposed to the infirmities of the priests.

Ver. 27. *Who needeth not daily, as those high priests*, etc..] They being sinners, and he not:

to offer up sacrifice first for his own sins and then for the people's; as they did on the day of atonement; (see <030616>Leviticus 16:6,11,15,16) upon which place the Jews [f123] make the same remark the apostle does here;

> "he (the high priest, they say) offers sacrifices for the sins of the people, for his own atymdqb, "first", rtblw, "and afterwards for the sins of the people":"

which was one reason of the imperfection and insufficiency of their sacrifices; but Christ needed not to offer for his own, nor could he, for he had none of his own; what he had was by imputation; wherefore he only

needed to offer, and he only did offer, for the sins of the people; not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, even of all God's covenant people; nor did he need to do this daily, as they did; they offered sacrifice daily, the common priests every day, morning and evening, and the high priest on a stated day once a year, on the day of atonement:

for this he did once, when he offered up himself; and in this also he differed from them; they offered not themselves, but what was inferior to themselves, and what could not take away sin, and, therefore, was repeated; but Christ offered himself, his whole human nature, soul and body, and both as in union with his divine nature; and this being offered to God freely and voluntarily, in the room and stead of his people, was acceptable to God: hereby justice was satisfied; the law fulfilled; sin taken away, and complete salvation obtained; so that there never was since any need of his offering again, nor never will be; which shows the perfection and fulness of his priesthood, and the preference of it to the Levitical one.

Ver. 28. *For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity*, etc..] Every word has an emphasis on it, and shows the difference between Christ and these priests: they were many; they were made priests by the law, the law of a carnal commandment, which made nothing perfect, and was disannulled; they were men that were made priests by it, and could not really draw nigh to God, and mediate with him for themselves, or others, nor atone either for their own or others' sins; and they were men that had infirmity, not natural and corporeal, for they were to have no bodily blemishes and deficiencies in them, but sinful ones; and especially such were they who bore this office under the second temple, and particularly in the times of Christ and his apostles [f124]:

but the word of the oath, which was since the law; that word which had an oath annexed to it, which declared Christ an high priest after the order of Melchizedek, was since the law of the priesthood of Aaron; for though Christ was made a priest from eternity, yet the promise which declared it, and had an oath joined to it, was afterwards in David's time, (<19B004>Psalm 110:4) and this word of the oath maketh the son; not a son, but a priest; publishes and declares him to be so: Christ, though a man, yet he is not mere man; he is the Son of God, and as such opposed to men; and therefore is not the Son of God as man; and this shows that he was a son before he was a priest, and therefore is not so called on account of his office; and it is his being the Son of God which gives lustre and glory to his

priestly office, and virtue and efficacy to his sacrifice and intercession, and gives him the preference to all other priests:

who is consecrated for evermore; or “perfected”, or “perfect”; he is perfect in his obedience and sufferings, in his sacrifice, and as he is now in heaven, in complete glory; the law made men priests that did not continue, but Christ is a priest for evermore, and absolutely, perfect.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 8

The apostle observing that the priesthood of Christ is the sum of what he had treated of in the preceding chapter, proceeds to show the superior excellency of it in other instances, particularly in the place where Christ now officiates, which is in heaven; he being set down at the right hand of God there, and so was a minister of the sanctuary, and true tabernacle pitched by God, and not man; whereas the priests of Aaron's line only ministered on earth, and in the typical sanctuary and tabernacle, (Hebrews 8:1,2) and after he had observed that Christ must have something to offer, meaning his body, to answer to the gifts and sacrifices priests were ordained to offer, (Hebrews 8:3) he proves the necessity of his ministering in heaven, because if he was on earth he would not be a priest, a complete one, and would have been useless and needless, (Hebrews 8:4) and besides, it was proper that he should go up to heaven, and minister there, as the antitype of the priests, who, to the example and shadow of heavenly things, served in the tabernacle which was made by Moses, by the order of God, and according to the pattern showed him in the Mount, (Hebrews 8:5) and that the ministry of Christ in the true sanctuary is much more excellent than the ministry of the priests in the shadowy one, is evident from his being the Mediator of a better covenant, (Hebrews 8:6) and that the covenant he is the Mediator of is the better covenant, appears froth the better promises of which it consists, and from the faultiness of the former covenant, (Hebrews 8:6,7) and that that was faulty, and succeeded by another, he proves from a passage in (Jeremiah 31:31-34) in which mention is made of a new covenant, and as distinct from that made with the Jewish fathers, and violated by them; and several of the promises of this new and second covenant are rehearsed, and which manifestly appear to be better than what were in the former, (Hebrews 8:8-12) from all which the apostle concludes, that a new covenant being made, the old one must be antiquated; and that whereas it was decaying and waxing old, it was just ready to vanish away, (Hebrews 8:13).

Ver. 1. *Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum*, etc..] The scope and drift, the compendium and substance; or the principal of what has been said in or from (<19B004>Psalm 110:4) and has been discoursed of in the three preceding chapters, is the priesthood of Christ:

we have such an high priest; as is described in the foregoing discourse, and in the following words: Christ is a priest, an high priest, and the saints' high priest; they are not without one under the Gospel dispensation; and Christ is he, and always continues, in whose sacrifice and intercession they have a share:

who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; he is "set", whereas the Levitical priests stood; which shows that he has done his work, and that with acceptance; and is in a state of ease and rest; and is possessed of honour, glory, majesty, and authority, and which continue: the place where he is set is, "on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty"; the same with the right hand of God; for by the throne of the Majesty is meant God the Father, in his royal glory and dignity; so Tiphereth, one of the ten numbers in the Jews' Cabalistic tree, whose name is Jehovah, is called dwbkh ask, "the throne of glory" [f125]; so angels are called thrones, (<510116>Colossians 1:16) but God is a throne of majesty superior to them; and at his right hand sits Christ the great high priest; which is expressive of his high honour, glory, and power, and even of his equality with God: the phrase, "in the heavens", may refer both to God the throne of majesty, who is there, and to Christ the high priest, who is passed into them, and received by them, and sits there.

Ver. 2. *A minister of the sanctuary*, etc..] The heavenly one, so called, in allusion to the holy of holies, the type of it; and because it is truly an holy place; and which Christ sanctifies and prepares for his people by his presence and intercession: or "of the Holy Ones", or "saints"; who are sanctified or set apart by God, the Father, to whom Christ is made sanctification, and who are made holy by the Spirit of God; to these Christ is a minister; he was so in his prophetic office, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and in his priestly office, to all the chosen ones, when on earth, offering himself a sacrifice for them, and now he is a minister to them in heaven, interceding for them; and in his kingly office, governing, protecting, and defending them: or "of holy things"; to his people, such as the gifts of his Spirit, grace, and all supplies of it, and at last glory; and for

them, presenting their sacrifices of prayer and praise to God, which become acceptable to him through his powerful mediation:

and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man; by which is meant, not heaven, the same with the sanctuary, for this would be an unnecessary tautology, and an explanation of a word by another more obscure; nor is there any reason why it should be added, “which the Lord pitched, and not man”; since everyone must believe that heaven is made by God alone; but rather the church of Christ, which is sometimes called a tabernacle, and is a true one, of which the tabernacle of Moses was a type, and is of God's building, and where Christ ministers, being the high priest over the house of God; though it is best to interpret it of the human nature of Christ, in which he tabernacled among men, and which was typified by the tabernacle of Moses, and therefore is called the “true” one, in distinction from that; for as there God dwelt, and his glory was seen, and he granted his presence to his people, and the sacrifices were brought and offered up there, and to this the people looked when at a distance, and this appeared very coarse without, but within full of holy things; so in Christ's human nature the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily; here the glory of God is seen, even in the face of Jesus; and through him God vouchsafes communion with his people; and by him the sacrifices of prayer and praise are offered up; and to him do the saints look for the acceptance of them; and though in the days of his flesh he looked very mean and despicable, yet was full of grace and truth, and of all the gifts of the Spirit: and the human nature of Christ was not of man; it was not propagated by human generation, but was produced through the power of the Holy Ghost; and in this tabernacle Christ ministered when on earth, and now ministers in heaven.

Ver. 3. *For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices*, etc..] (See Gill on “Hebrews 5:1”)

wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer; or this person; for the word “man” is not in the text, and seems not so proper a word to be supplied, since it was his human nature that it was necessary he should have to offer; he was a person, and existed as a divine person antecedent to his assumption of human nature: as God, he had nothing to offer, or that was capable of being offered; something to offer as a sacrifice was necessary to him as a priest, but not any thing was proper to him; Levitical sacrifices would not do, these could not take away sin; besides,

the great high priest was not of the tribe of Levi, nor of the order of Aaron, and therefore could not offer these. An angelic nature would have been improper, that is not capable of dying; and the offering up of such an one would have been of no service to men, for whom priests are ordained; but an human nature is meant, and which it was necessary Christ should have, and offer, for it is for men that he became an high priest; it was human nature that had offended God, and satisfaction must be made in that nature; and this was capable of suffering and dying; yet not human nature under any consideration was necessary for him to have and offer; not merely as in a state of innocence, without any infirmity, nor as sinful, yet as perfect as to parts and qualities; and a nature, and not a person, was necessary to be had, and to be taken into close and inseparable union to his divine person; and of this there was a necessity, not absolute, or a necessity of coaction and force: Christ was not forced unto it; but on the foot of his suretyship engagements, and because of making satisfaction for the sin of man, it was necessary; otherwise Christ voluntarily engaged to be a priest, and willingly became man, and freely offered himself, soul and body, in the room and stead of his people.

Ver. 4. *For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest*, etc..] The Socinians from hence attempt to prove that Christ was not a priest, and did not offer sacrifice on earth; whereas his coming into the world, and his appearance in human nature, was in the character of a priest, and to qualify himself for one; his death was his sacrifice, which was on earth; and he never offered but one sacrifice; and it was after he had offered himself that he went to heaven; so the sacrifices under the law were first offered, before their blood was carried within: but the meaning is, either if “that” was on earth, namely, what it was necessary he should have to offer; if his human nature had been earthly, had been of men, had come by ordinary generation, he had not been properly, only typically a priest, at most; and had been no better than the typical ones; yea, he would have been needless, nay, might not have offered, not being of Levi's tribe, and could not have existed as a priest with the sons of Aaron; but he had his human nature in another way, through the power of the Holy Ghost from above, and therefore is said to come from above, from heaven, and to be the Lord from heaven: or the sense is, if he was on earth, and had not died, he had not been a priest; and if he had died and remained under the power of death, he had been a priest of no account and use; and had he rose again and remained on earth, without going to heaven, with his blood and

sacrifice, he had not been a perfect priest; if Christ had remained on earth, the Levitical priesthood had remained, and so he would have been no priest, since two priesthoods could not have subsisted together. The Levitical priesthood was in force while Christ was on earth; Christ's priesthood was not perfected on earth; the Levitical priesthood remaining while he was on earth, proves he was not then a perfect priest, or had not completed his priesthood; had he been so, that would not have subsisted; it was necessary therefore that Christ should enter into the holy place, to put an end to the Levitical priesthood: moreover, if he had remained on earth, he had been needless;

seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law; there were priests when Christ was upon earth; their work was to offer gifts the people brought, and sacrifices for sin, and that according to the law of Moses, which till the death of Christ was in full force.

Ver. 5. *Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things*, etc..] Things respecting the person, office, and grace of Christ; the priests themselves were types of him; the places they ministered in were an exemplar of the heavenly places, as the word may be rendered, where Christ is; and the things they ministered were shadows of the good things which are by Christ; and the shadows were mere representations; dark, obscure, glimmering ones, and were fleeting and transitory:

as Moses was admonished of God; by an oracle; he was a peculiar favourite of God, and was the mediator between God and the people of Israel, and what he received was oracle wise; what he delivered to the people was what he received from God; and what was thus delivered ought to be received as from God: and this admonition or oracle was given him

when he was about to make the tabernacle; the Levitical one, with everything appertaining to the worship of God in it: this is ascribed to Moses, though it was made by others, because it was by his direction, and under his care and oversight; and he had this admonition at the beginning of it; and at the finishing of it he looked upon it, and saw that it was all done as the Lord had commanded; (¹²⁵⁴Exodus 25:40 39:43),

for see, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the Mount; Moses was taken up into a mountain with God, even Mount Sinai; and while he was there, a pattern was given him of the tabernacle and all its utensils; this was not a device of his own, but was

shown him by God; and this pattern reached to every particular thing; and great care and circumspection were used that the most minute thing answered to it. The Jews think this pattern was given him by the ministry of angels; Gabriel, they say [f126], girt himself with a girdle, and showed to Moses the work of the candlestick; and they further say, that an ark of fire, and a table of fire; and a candlestick of fire, descended from heaven, and Moses saw them, and made according to them: from whence it may be observed that the tabernacle, and tabernacle worship, were of divine institution; the ceremonious rites of the Jews were not, as some have affirmed, borrowed from the Egyptians; nor were they given as diversions to that people, nor only to preserve them from idolatry, and keep them separate from others, but were designed to lead them to Christ, whom they were typical of; wherefore the abuse, and not the use of them, were condemned under the former dispensation; though they were to continue no longer than till Christ came, and suffered and died; and now they are abolished: moreover, it may be gathered from hence, that whatever is done in a way of religious worship, should be according to a divine rule; a church of Christ ought to be formed according to the primitive pattern, and should consist, not of all that are born in a nation, province, or parish; nor should all that are born of believing parents be admitted into it; no unholy, unbelieving, and unconverted persons, only such as are true believers in Christ, and who are baptized according as the word of God directs; the officers of a church should be only of two sorts, bishops, elders, pastors or overseers, and deacons; the ordinances are baptism, which should only be administered to believers, and by immersion, and the Lord's supper, of which none should partake, but those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious; and this should be performed as Christ performed it, and as the Apostle Paul received it from him; the discipline of Christ's house should be regarded, and all the laws of it carefully and punctually in execution; and a conversation becoming the Gospel should be attended to.

Ver. 6. *But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry*, etc..] Christ has a ministry, he is the minister of the sanctuary, (Hebrews 8:2) he has "obtained" this ministry of his Father; he was called unto it and engaged in it by him; and he has "now" obtained it; for though he was called to it from eternity, it was in time he came an high priest of good things, to come; and his ministry is

a more excellent one than that of the priests, who offered gifts according to the law and served to the example and shadow of heavenly things; as

abundantly appears from the preceding chapter, and from this, as well, as from what follows:

by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant; the covenant of grace, as administered under the Gospel dispensation; which is not only better than the covenant of works, that being conditional, this absolute; that stood on the foot of works, this on the foot of grace, and is established in Christ; that being broken and made void, this continues; and not only better than the covenant of the Levitical priesthood, which was but a typical one, and is now ceased, but also than the covenant of grace, as administered under the legal dispensation; being better than that, as to the manner of its manifestation, which is more full and clear; and as to the extent of its administration, reaching to Gentiles as well as Jews; and as to the ratification of it by the blood of Christ, called from thence the blood of the everlasting covenant; and as to the promises of it, here said to be better:

which was established upon better promises; which are not now delivered out as before, under the figure of earthly and temporal things; nor under a condition to be performed nor confined to a particular people and nation; and which are attended with a greater measure of the Spirit, to open and apply them; and are all secured in Christ Jesus, and confirmed by his blood: and now of this covenant Christ is the "Mediator"; a mediator is of more persons than one, and of these at variance; and he is a middle person between both; and his business is to bring both parties together, and make peace between them: the two parties in this case are God and man, set at a distance from each other by the sin of man, whereby man is become enmity to God; Christ is the Mediator between God and man, a middle person between both, being both God and man, the daysman, who lays his hands on both; who brings men to God that were afar off, and makes peace for them by the blood of his cross, and satisfies the justice of God, which he has done by the sacrifice of himself; and now appears in the presence of God for them, and intercedes for them, and applies the blessings of the covenant to them by his Spirit, and keeps and preserves them safe to his everlasting kingdom; and for this office he is every way fit, and in this he excels the Levitical priests, and has a ministry superior to theirs, since he is such a Mediator, and a Mediator of such a covenant,

Ver. 7. *For if that first covenant had been faultless*, etc..] Not the covenant of works; that was made in paradise, this on Mount Sinai; that

was made with Adam and his posterity, this with the Jews only; that had no mediator, this had one, Moses; that was not dedicated with blood, this was; that had no forgiveness of sin in it, this had; under that saints are not, but they were under this; to be under that was no privilege, but to be under this it was, as to the Israelites, who on this account were preferable to all other nations: nor is the pure covenant of grace as administered under the Gospel, meant; for though that was first made, yet is the second in administration; that includes the elect of God among the Gentiles, this only the Jews; that is made only with them, and is made known to them whom God calls by his grace in time, this was made with good and bad; that was of pure grace, this required works in order to life and the enjoyment of its blessings; that is an everlasting covenant, this is done away; and the one is manifestly distinguished from the other in this chapter: but the covenant here designed is the covenant of grace, as administered under the legal dispensation, and which was a typical one; the people with whom it was made were typical of the true Israel of God; the blessings promised in it were shadows of good things to come; the works it required were typical of Christ's obedience to the law, in the room and stead of his people, by which he fulfilled it; the sacrifices on which it was established were types of the sacrifice and death of Christ; the mediator of it. Moses, was a type of Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant; and it was confirmed by the blood of beasts, which was typical of the blood of Christ: this covenant was not “faultless”, but was faulty or blameworthy; not that there was anything sinful and criminal in it, but it was deficient; there was a weakness in it; its sacrifices could not make men perfect, nor take away sin; there wanted a larger supply of the grace of the Spirit to write the law of God upon the heart, and to enable men to keep it; there was not in it so full a revelation of the mind and will of God, and of his love and grace, as has since been made; nor did it exhibit a free and full pardon for all sins, unclogged of every condition; the persons that were under it were faulty; hence it follows, that God found fault with them, they could not answer the requirements and end of it: had it been faultless,

then should no place have been sought for the second; the covenant of grace unveiled in the Gospel dispensation, called the better testament, the better covenant, and the new covenant; in order to, introduce which, the first was removed, that this might succeed it; just as because there was no perfection by the Levitical priesthood, it became necessary that another priest should arise, of another order.

Ver. 8. *For finding fault with them*, etc..] Both with the covenant, which had its faults, and with the people who continued not in it, and were therefore disregarded by the Lord, (<scripRef passage="Hebrews 8:9" />Hebrews 8:9)

he saith, behold, the days come (saith the Lord) when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; the words are cited from (<scripRef passage="Jeremiah 31:31,32" />Jeremiah 31:31,32) in which God promises a "new covenant"; so called, not because newly made; for with respect to its original constitution, it was made from eternity; Christ the Mediator of it, and with whom it was made, was set up from everlasting; and promises and blessings of grace were put into his hands before the world began: nor is it newly revealed, for it was made known to Adam, and in some measure to all the Old Testament saints, though it is more clearly revealed than it was; but it is so called in distinction from the former administration of it, which is waxen old, and vanished away; and with respect to the order of succession, it taking place upon the former being removed; and on account of the time of its more clear revelation and establishment being in the last days; and because of its mode of administration, which is different from the former, in a new way, and by the use of new ordinances; and because it is always new, its vigour and efficacy are perpetual; it will never be antiquated, or give place to another; and it provides for, and promises new things, a new heart, a new spirit, etc.. to which may be added, that it is a famous, excellent covenant, there is none like it; just as an excellent song is called a new song. The persons with whom this covenant is promised to be made, are the houses of Israel and Judah; which being literally taken, had its fulfilment in the first times of the Gospel, through the ministry of John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles, by whom this covenant was made known to God's elect among the twelve tribes; but being mystically understood, includes both Jews and Gentiles, the whole Israel of God; Israel not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; such as were Jews inwardly; God's elect of every nation: the word συντελεσω, rendered, "I will make", signifies, I will consummate, or finish, or end, or fulfil it; which shows the perfection of this covenant, and the imperfection of the former; and that what was typified in the first is fulfilled in this; and that it is now established and ratified by Christ; and is so finished, as to the manifestation and administration of it, that there will be no alteration made in it, nor any addition to it: the time of doing all this is called "the days to come"; the last days, the days of the Messiah, which were future in Jeremiah's time: and a "behold" is prefixed to the whole, as a note of attention, this being an affair

of great moment and importance; and as a note of demonstration, or as pointing to something that was desired and expected; and as a note of admiration, it containing things wonderful and marvellous.

Ver. 9. *Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers*, etc..] The ancestors of the Jews at Mount Sinai:

in the day when I took then, by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; which is mentioned, not only to observe the time when the former covenant was made with the Israelites, which was just upon their deliverance out of Egypt; but also to show their weakness and inability to have delivered themselves, and the tenderness of God towards them; they were like children, they could not help themselves when God took them by the hand, and brought them forth with an outstretched arm; and likewise to expose their ingratitude, and vindicate his conduct towards them:

because they continued not in my covenant; though they promised, at the reading of it, that all that the Lord had said, they would hear and do; but their hearts were not right with God, and they were not steadfast in his covenant, and therefore their carcasses fell in the wilderness:

and I regarded them not, saith the Lord; the words in (Jeremiah 31:32) are very differently rendered in our translation, “although I was an husband unto them”: and so it becomes an aggravation of their sin of ingratitude, in not continuing in his covenant: in the margin it is rendered interrogatively, “should I have continued an husband unto them?” that is, after they had so treated him, no; as if he should say, I will not behave towards them as such; I will reject them, and disregard them. The Chaldee paraphrase is just the reverse of the apostle's translation, “and I was well pleased with them”: some render them, “I ruled over them”, as a lord over his servants, in a very severe manner. Others, observing the great difference there is between the Hebrew text, and the apostle's version, have supposed a different Hebrew copy from the present, used by the Septuagint, or the apostle, in which, instead of ytlb, it was read either ytljb, or ytlg; but there is no need of such a supposition, since Dr. Pocock [f127] has shown, that lb, in the Arabic language, signifies to loath and abhor, and so to disregard; and Kimchi [f128] relates it as a rule laid down by his father, that wherever this word is used in construction with b, it is to be taken in an ill part, and signifies the same as ytljb, “I have loathed”; in which sense that word is used in (Zechariah 11:8) and so here, I have loathed them,

I abhorred them, I rejected them, I took no care of them, disregarded them, left their house desolate, and suffered wrath to come upon them to the uttermost.

Ver. 10. *For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel*, etc..] That is, this is the sum and substance of the covenant, which God promised to make with, or to make manifest and known to his chosen people, the true Israelites, under the Gospel dispensation; or the following are the several articles of that covenant, he proposed to consummate or finish, as before:

after those days, saith the Lord; after the times of the Old Testament, when the Messiah shall be come, and the Gospel day shall take place. So the Jews [f129] apply these days, when they represent the Israelites saying to Moses, O that he (God) would reveal (himself or will) to us a second time! O that he would kiss us with the kisses of his mouth, and that the doctrine of the law was fixed in our hearts; when he (Moses) said to them, this is not to be done now, but ablh dyt[l, in the time to come, (i.e. in the times of the Messiah,) as it is said, (<243133>Jeremiah 31:33).

I will put my law, etc.. and so [f130] they are elsewhere applied to the same times. And the first article in it is,

I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; by the laws of God are meant not the precepts of the ceremonial law, which were now abrogated, but either the moral law, and its commands; which is a transcript of the divine nature, was inscribed on Adam's heart in innocence, and some remains of it are even in the Gentiles, but greatly obliterated through the sin of man; and there is in men naturally a contrary disposition to it; in regeneration it is reinscribed by the Spirit of God; and great respect is had to it by regenerate persons, in which lies one part of their conformity to Christ: or else, since the word “law” signifies sometimes no other than a doctrine, an instruction, the doctrines of grace, of repentance towards God, of faith in Christ, and love to him, and every other doctrine may be intended; and the tables where, according to the tenor of this covenant, these are put and written, are two tables, as before, the “mind” and “heart”; but not two tables of stone, on which the law of Moses was written, partly that it might not be lost, through defect of memory, and partly to denote the firmness and stability of it, as also to point at the hardness of man's heart; but the fleshly tables of the heart; not that part of our flesh that is

called the heart; but the souls of men, such hearts as are regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God, and such minds as are renewed by him: and the “putting” of them into the mind, designs the knowledge of them, which God gives; as of the moral law, of its spirituality and perfection, showing that there is no life and righteousness by it, that it is fulfilled by Christ, and is a rule of conversation to the saints; and of all other laws, ordinances, and doctrines of Christ: and the “writing” them in, or on the heart, intends a filling the soul with love and affection to them, so that it regards them singly and heartily; and a powerful inclination of the heart to be subject to them, through the efficacious grace of God; and which is done not with the ink of nature's power, but with the Spirit of the living God, (40032 Corinthians 3:3).

And I will be to them a God; not in such sense as he is the God of all mankind, or as he was the God of Israel in a distinguishing manner, but as he is the God of Christ, and of all the elect in him; and he is their God, not merely as the God of nature and providence, but as the God of all grace; he is so in a covenant way, and as in Christ, and by virtue of electing grace, and which is made manifest in the effectual calling; and as such, he has set his heart on them, and set them apart for himself; he saves them by his Son, adopts and regenerates them, justifies and sanctifies them, provides for them, protects and preserves them; and happy are they that are interested in this blessing of the covenant, which is preferable to everything else; they have everything, and can want no good thing; they need fear no enemy; all things work together for their good; and God continues to be their God in life and in death; so that they may depend on his love, be secure of his power, expect every needful supply of grace, and to be carried through every duty and trial, and to share in the first resurrection, and to enjoy eternal happiness:

and they shall be to me a people; not in such sense as all mankind are, or the Jews were in a more peculiar respect, but as all God's elect are, whether Jews or Gentiles; and who are such whom God has loved with a special love, has chose in Christ, and given to him, and with whom he has made a covenant in him; whom Christ saves from their sins by his blood, and calls them by his grace and Spirit, and who give up themselves to him; these are a distinct and peculiar people, a people near unto the Lord, and who are all righteous in Christ, and are made willing in the day of his power on their souls.

Ver. 11. *And they shall not teach every man his neighbour*, etc..] The Alexandrian copy reads, “citizen”; that is, fellow citizen; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions: “and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord”: this is not to be understood, so as to set aside the external and public ministry of the word, which is a standing ordinance of God under the Gospel dispensation; or even the, private instructions of saints one to another, in Christian conversation, whereby they may build up one another in their most holy faith; but the sense is, that men should not only teach, but the Spirit of God should teach with them, and by them; and it stands opposed to particular and pretended revelations, and especially to magisterial dictates; and denotes the abundance of knowledge that should be in Gospel times, which should not be restrained to particular persons, and sets of men, but should be shared by all believers, more or less:

for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest; from babes to fathers in Christ; not with a natural, but with a spiritual knowledge; not with general knowledge of him, that he is, but with a special knowledge of him, that he is theirs; not with a legal, but with an evangelical knowledge; not with the knowledge of him in, and through the creatures, but in Christ; and that not speculative, but experimental; such as is attended with faith in him, fear of him, love to him, and a cheerful obedience to his will: the knowledge of the Lord, under the New Testament dispensation, is greater than under the former dispensation; the subject matter of it is more distinct; God is more known in the persons of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the perfections of his nature, in his titles and characters, and in his Son; the manner of it is more clear, open, and perspicuous; the persons to whom it is communicated are more numerous; it is not restrained to Jews, but is given to the Gentiles; and all this owing to a greater effusion of the Spirit; (see 1 John 2:27).

Ver. 12. *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness*, etc..] That is, sin; for all unrighteousness is sin, being contrary to the justice of God, and his righteous law: and the phrase is expressive of God's forgiveness of it, which is a very considerable article of the covenant of grace; mercy is the spring and original of pardon; it is what God delights in, and therefore he pardons freely; it is large and abundant, and hence he pardons fully; and this lays a foundation for hope in sensible sinners: and the way and means, in and by which God pardons, is the propitiatory sacrifice of his Son; and the word here rendered “merciful”, signifies “propitious”; God pardons none but those to whom he is pacified, or rendered propitious by Christ;

there is no mercy, nor pardon, but through him; he pardons on the foot of reconciliation and satisfaction for sin by Christ; so that forgiveness of sin is an act of justice, as well as of mercy; or it is an act of mercy streaming through the blood and sacrifice of Christ.

And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more; by which are meant all kind of sin, original and actual; sins before and after conversion; every sin but that against the Holy Ghost, and that God's covenant people are never guilty of; these God remembers no more; he casts them behind his back, and into the depths of the sea, so that when they are sought for, they shall not be found; God will never charge them with them, or punish them for them: this is another phrase to express the forgiveness of sins, and distinguishes the new covenant from the old one, or the former dispensation; in which, though there were many typical sacrifices, and a typical removal of sin, yet there was a remembrance of it every year.

Ver. 13. *In that he saith a new covenant*, etc..] In the above prophecy, (Hebrews 8:8)

he hath made the first old; this naturally follows from hence; if the second is new, the first must be old; which is called so, not on account of its date and duration; for the covenant of grace itself is older than this mode of administration of it, and the manifestation of that to the patriarchs was before this covenant, and so was the covenant of works before it; but on the account of its faultiness and deficiency, its weakness, and unprofitableness, and especially its being antiquated, and made to give way to another.

Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away; the apostle argues from the first covenant, being old, to its being near to dissolution, or a disappearance; and the dissolution or disappearance of this covenant was gradual; it began when the Chaldeans seized the land of Canaan; and the ark, an eminent type of Christ, being wanting in the second temple, gave a hint of its waxing old; and both the civil and ecclesiastical government of the Jews were in great confusion under the second temple, at least towards the close of it; and even before the times of Christ, John the Baptist came, and proclaimed the near approach of the Messiah, and his kingdom: this covenant was of right abolished at the time of Christ's death; upon his ascension the Spirit was given, and the Gospel published among all nations, by which it more and more disappeared; and in fact it quite vanished away, when the city and temple of Jerusalem were

destroyed, which was in a little time after the writing of this epistle; so that the apostle, with great propriety, says, it is “ready to vanish away”.

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 9

The apostle having, in the former chapter, taken notice of the first covenant, in this proceeds to show what belonged to it, that it had service performed under it, and a place in which it was performed, (Hebrews 9:1) and he begins with the latter, which he distinguishes into two parts, and shows what was in each of them; in the first, which was the holy place, were a candlestick, table, and shewbread; in the second, which was the holiest of all, were a golden censer, the ark of the covenant, the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod, the tables of the covenant, and the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat, (Hebrews 9:2-5). And next he speaks of the service performed in these places; in the first, the holy place, the common priests entered every day, doing service, as offering sacrifice, etc.. (Hebrews 9:6) and in the second, the holy of holies, only the high priest entered into, and that but once a year, with blood of slain beasts, which he offered for his own sins, and the sins of the people, (Hebrews 9:7) and this being shut up, and entered into but once a year, was an indication from the Holy Ghost, that the way into the holiest of all, which this was then a figure of, was not yet made manifest, while the tabernacle or temple was standing, in which sacrifices were offered, which could not perfect the offerer of them, or remove guilt from his conscience, (Hebrews 9:8,9) which shows the imperfection of that priesthood, it consisting of meats, drinks, baptisms, and carnal ordinances imposed on the Jewish nation until the times of the Messiah, (Hebrews 9:10) which are now come, and in which there is an accomplishment of all those types and figures; Christ was typified by the high priest; and he is come as such, and the good things, the law was a shadow of, are come by him; who came into the world by the assumption of human nature, a more perfect tabernacle than the type of it was; and now having obtained eternal redemption for his people, he is gone into heaven, the most holy place, not as the high priest, with the blood of slain beasts, but with his own blood, (Hebrews 9:11,12) the efficacy of which blood is argued from the lesser to the greater, that if the blood of beasts, and water of separation, sanctified and purified externally, then much more must the blood of Christ

purge the conscience from sin, that it may serve God, since Christ offered himself to God without spot, through the eternal Spirit, (Hebrews 9:13,14). The necessity of Christ's shedding his blood, or of his death, is proved from his being the Mediator of the new covenant, which required the redemption of transgressions under the first testament, that called ones might have the promise of the eternal inheritance, (Hebrews 9:15). And this is reasoned from the nature of testaments or wills among men, which make the death of the testator necessary, they being of no force while he lives, only after his death, (Hebrews 9:16,17). And this is further illustrated by the first testament being dedicated by blood, and everything belonging to it purged by it, the book, the people, the tabernacle, and all the vessels of it; nor is there any remission of sin, whether typical or real, without shedding of blood, (Hebrews 9:18-22) wherefore, as it was necessary that the patterns and types of heavenly things should be purified in this manner; it must be more so, that the antitypes should be purified with better sacrifices, even with the sacrifice of Christ, (Hebrews 9:23) and accordingly Christ is entered into heaven itself, of which the holy places in the tabernacle were figures, there to present and plead his sacrifice on account of his people, (Hebrews 9:24) not that it was necessary that he should offer up himself again, or often, as the high priest, his type, went every year into the holy place with the blood of others; for then he must have often suffered since the world began, of which there was no need, since his appearing once in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, is sufficient, (Hebrews 9:25,26) for as it is the appointment of God, that men should die but once, and then come to judgment, so it was only necessary that Christ should be offered once to bear the sins of all his people, and then appear a second time without any sin at all upon him, to the salvation of those that look for him, (Hebrews 9:27,28).

Ver. 1. *Then verily the first covenant had ordinances of divine service*, etc..] The design of the apostle in this chapter, as it stands in connection with what goes before, is to show the pre-eminence of Christ, from the tabernacle, and the things in it; as well as from the priesthood and covenant; and as also the abrogation of the Levitical ceremonies in particular, as well as the first covenant in general; and that they were all types and figures of Christ, and had their fulfilment in him: the word “first”, here used, designs not the tabernacle, but the covenant; therefore it is rightly thus supplied in our version, as it is in the Arabic and Ethiopic

versions: which is said to have “ordinances of divine service”; belonging to the service of God, which was performed both by the priests, and by the people; and these ordinances were no other than the carnal ordinances, or rites of the ceremonial law: the word used signifies “righteousnesses”; and they are so called, because they were appointed by a righteous God; and were imposed on the people of the Jews in a righteous way; and by them men became externally and typically righteous; for they were figures and types of justification by the righteousness of Christ, though no complete, perfect, real righteousness, came by them.

And a worldly sanctuary. Philo the Jew says [f131], it was a type of the world, and of the various things in it; though it was rather either a type of the church, or of heaven, or of Christ's human nature: the better reason of its being so called is, because it consisted of earthly matter, and worldly things; it was in the world, and only had its use in the world, and so is opposed to the heavenly sanctuary; for the Jews often speak of hl[mlç çdqm, “a sanctuary above”, and hjmlç çdqm, “a sanctuary below” [f132], and of aly[ld ankçm, “a tabernacle above”, and attld ankçm, “a tabernacle below” [f133]; which answered to one another: the words may be rendered “a beautiful sanctuary”, a well adorned one; and such especially was the temple, or sanctuary built by Solomon, rebuilt by Zerubbabel, and repaired and adorned by Herd, (<422105>Luke 21:5). And the Jews say, that he that never saw Herod's building, meaning the temple, never saw a beautiful building; (see <422105>Luke 21:5).

Ver. 2. *For there was a tabernacle made*, etc..] By the direction of Moses, according to the pattern showed him in the Mount:

the first; that is, the first part of the tabernacle, called the holy place, in distinction from the holy of holies, which was the second part of the tabernacle; for otherwise there were not a first and a second tabernacle; there never was but one tabernacle:

wherein was the candlestick; that this was in the tabernacle, and on the south side of it, and without the vail, where the apostle has placed it, is plain from (<022635>Exodus 26:35 40:24). This was wanting in the second temple [f134]: it was a type of Christ mystical, or the church; in the general use of it, to hold forth light, so the church holds forth the light of the Gospel, being put into it by Christ; in the matter of it, which was pure gold, denoting the purity, worth, splendour, glory, and duration of the church; in

the parts of it, it had one shaft in the middle of it, in which all the parts met and cemented, typical of Christ the principal, and head of the church, whose situation is in the midst of the church, and who unites all together, and is but one: the six branches of it may intend all the members of the church, and especially the ministers of the word; the seven lamps with oil in them, may have a respect to the seven spirits of God, or the Spirit of God with his gifts and graces, and a profession of religion with grace along with it: and it was typical of the church in its ornaments and decorations; its bowls, knops, and flowers, may signify the various gifts of the Spirit, beautifying ministers, and fitting them for usefulness; and in the appurtenances of it, the tongs and snuff dishes may signify church discipline, censures, and excommunications.

And the table and the shewbread; the table, with the shewbread on it, was also in the tabernacle, on the north side of it, and without the vail, (Exodus 26:35 40:22). This was also wanting in the second temple [f135]: the table was typical of Christ, and of communion with him; of the person of Christ; in the matter of it, which was Shittim wood overlaid with gold, whereby were signified the two natures of Christ in one person; the human nature by the Shittim wood, which is incorruptible, for though he died he saw no corruption, and is risen again, and lives for ever; and the divine nature by the gold, all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him; and in the decorations of it, as the border, golden crown, etc.. which may respect the fulness of his grace, and the honour and glory he is crowned with, which render him exceeding valuable and precious: and it may be typical of communion with him, either hereafter, when the saints shall sit with him as at a table, and eat and drink with him in the kingdom of his Father; or here, to which Christ admits them, and than which nothing is more honourable, comfortable, and desirable; and it may be significative of the ministration of the word and ordinances, of which Christ is the sum and substance, and in which he grants his people fellowship with him: to this table belonged rings and bars to carry it from place to place, which was done by the priests; where the church is, there Christ is, and there is the ministration of his word and ordinances; and which are sometimes moved from one place to another, by the ministers of the word, according to divine direction. The “shewbread”, on the table, was typical either of the church of Christ, the saints, who may be signified by the unleavened cakes, being true and sincere, and without the leaven of malice and hypocrisy; and by twelve of them, which may represent the twelve tribes of Israel, the whole spiritual

Israel of God; and by bread of faces, as the word for shewbread may be rendered, since they are always before the Lord, and his eyes are continually upon them; they are set upon the pure table, Christ, on whom they are safe, and by whom they are accepted with God: and the shewbread being set in rows, may denote their order and harmony; and their being removed every sabbath day, may signify the succession of saints in the church, as one is removed, another is brought in; and the frankincense put upon each row, shows them to be a sweet savour to God: or else the shewbread was typical of Christ himself, who is the bread of life, the food of his people; and may be signified by the shewbread for its fineness and purity, being made of fine flour, Christ is the finest of the wheat, bread from heaven, and angels' food; for its quantity, twelve cakes, with Christ, is bread enough, and to spare, for all the elect; for its continuance, Christ always abides, and such as feed upon him live for ever; for its gratefulness, Christ's flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; and for its being only for the priests, as only such who are made priests to God, live by faith on Christ; (see Leviticus 25:5-9). Moreover, the intercession of Christ may be prefigured by the shewbread, or bread of faces, he being the angel of God's presence or face, who appears in the presence of God for his people; and this consisting of twelve loaves, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, shows that Christ represents the whole Israel of God in heaven, and intercedes for them; and whereas the shewbread always continued, no sooner was one set of loaves removed, but another was put in their room; this may point at the continual intercession of Christ for his people; and the frankincense may denote the acceptableness of it to God.

Which is called the sanctuary; or “holy”; this refers either to the first part of the tabernacle, which was called the holy place, in which the priests in common ministered; or else to the things which were in it, now mentioned, the candlestick table, and shewbread; to which the Ethiopic version adds, and the golden censer, which it leaves out in the fourth verse; which version renders these words, “and these they call holy”; and so the Arabic version, “which are called holy things”, as they were, as well as the place in which they were; so the candlestick is called the holy candlestick in the Apocrypha, ``As the clear light is upon the holy candlestick; so is the beauty of the face in ripe age.” (Sirach 26:17)

and the ark, candlestick, table, censer, and altar, are called σκευη ιερα, “holy vessels”, by Philo the Jew [f136]; but the former sense seems best, when compared with the following verse.

Ver. 3. *And after the second vail*, etc..] Were there more vails than one? the Scripture speaks but of one, (Exodus 26:31) there was indeed an hanging for the door of the tent, but that is not called a vail; nor was there more than one vail in the tabernacle, nor in the temple of Solomon; but in the second temple, under which the apostle lived, there were two vails, which divided between the holy place, and the holy of holies; and the innermost of these the apostle means: and so the Jewish writers [f137] constantly affirm, that there were two vails between the said places, and that two new ones were made every year [f138]. So on the day of atonement, when the high priest went into the most holy place, with the incense, it is said [f139], that

> "he walked in the temple till he came between twkwrph ytç, "the two vails", which divide between the holy, and holy of holies, and there was the space of a cubit between them."

The reason of these two vails may be seen in the account Maimonides gives of this matter [f140]:

"in the first temple there was a wall which divided between the holy, and holy of holies, the thickness of a cubit; but when they built the second temple, it was doubted by them, whether the thickness of the wall was of the measure of the holy place, or of the measure of the holy of holies; wherefore they made the holy of holies twenty cubits complete, and the holy place forty cubits complete, and they left the space of a cubit between the holy, and the holy of holies; and they did not build a wall in the second temple, but they made twkwrp ytç, "two vails", one on the side of the holy of holies, and the other on the side of the holy place, and between them a cubit answerable to the thickness of the wall, which was in the first temple; but in the first temple there was but one vail only, as it is said, (Exodus 26:33) and the vail shall divide unto you, etc.."

And to this account other Jewish writers [f141] agree; and the space between the two vails is called by them ˆysqrj [f142], ταραξις, from the trouble and perplexity this affair gave them. This vail, or vails, might represent the sin of man, which separates between God and men, excludes from heaven; but is removed by the death of Christ, when the vail was rent in twain; so that now there is an open way to heaven; Christ has entered into it by his own blood; and saints have boldness to enter there by faith and hope now, and shall hereafter personally enter into it: or else this vail may signify the

ceremonial law, which separated between Jew and Gentile, and is abolished by the death of Christ: or rather it was typical of the flesh, or human nature of Christ, called the vail of his flesh, (Hebrews 10:20 (see Gill on "Hebrews 10:20")). Now within this second vail was

the tabernacle, or that part of it, the second part,

which is called the holiest of all; which was either typical of Christ, who is called the most Holy, (Daniel 9:24) he being so in both natures, divine and human; or of heaven, for the holy places, made with hands, were figures of heaven, (Hebrews 9:24) for its holiness, it being the habitation of the holy God, holy angels, and spirits of just men made perfect; and for its invisibility, and the unseen things which faith and hope, which enter within the vail, are the evidence of; and for the things that are in it, typified by the following ones.

Ver. 4. *Which had the golden censer*, etc..] There were various censers used by the priests in the daily service, but this was a peculiar one, which was used by the high priest on the day of atonement; on other days he used a silver censer, but on that day a golden one, and with it he entered into the holy of holies [f143]; and though Moses does not call it a golden one, (Leviticus 16:12) yet Josephus does [f144]; and so do the Jewish doctors in the place referred to, with whom the apostle agrees, and to this the allusion is in (Revelation 8:3) but here a difficulty arises, how this can be said to have been in the holy of holies, and within the vail, when, according to Moses, it was without the vail, and was only carried within on the day of atonement; and so Philo the Jew [f145] places it in the other part of the tabernacle; and it seems as if it was to avoid this difficulty, that the Ethiopic version has removed it from this verse to verse the second, and put it among the things that were in the holy place; but there is no need of this, nor to say that the altar of incense is intended, for that is never so called, and, besides, was without the vail too. It should be observed, that the apostle does not say, that the golden censer was laid up in the holy of holies, and kept there, but that it "had" it; as it had it on the day of atonement, when it was carried in there by the high priest, who there made use of it; and it was for the use of it in that place, that it was peculiarly designed. What was done by it was this, burning coals were with it taken off from the altar before the Lord, and were brought in within the vail, where incense was put upon them, which covered the mercy seat, that so the high priest died not. The burning coals signify the very great sufferings

of Christ, not only the sufferings of his body, which were very painful, but those of his soul, when the wrath and hot displeasure of God was poured out upon him; and those coals being taken off from the altar before the Lord, show that the sufferings of Christ were according to the will of God, were grateful to him, and always before him; and their being brought within the vail, does not denote that Christ is now in a suffering state, though he is in the midst of the throne, as a lamb that had been slain; but the continued virtue and efficacy of his sufferings, and that our faith and hope, which enter within the vail, have to do with his blood and sacrifice thither carried. And the incense, which was carried in with those coals, typified the intercession of Christ in heaven, which is pure and holy, sweet, fragrant, and perpetual; and the priest having his hands full of it, expresses the fulness of Christ's intercession for all his elect, and for all things for them, and his fulness of merit to plead, which makes his intercession efficacious and prevalent; and hence, through his much incense, the prayers of his people become odorous and acceptable: and the incense being put upon the burning coals in the censer, shows that Christ's intercession proceeds upon the foot of his blood and sacrifice, his sufferings and death; and hence it becomes grateful, and has its influence; the smoke of it covers the mercy seat, or throne of grace, and makes that accessible; and as the priest, who offers it, never dies, so none of those for whom he intercedes.

And the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold; this is called the ark of the covenant, because the tables of the covenant, afterwards mentioned, were put into it; and that it was overlaid with gold round about, is certain from (<02511>Exodus 25:11) where it is said to be overlaid with pure gold, within and without; and that the ark was within the vail, and in the most holy place, is manifest from (<02621>Exodus 40:21 <140507>2 Chronicles 5:7) that this was wanting in the second temple, is generally agreed [f146]; but who took it away, where it was put, or what became of it various are the sentiments of the Jewish writers: some say [f147], it was carried away by Nebuchadnezzar into Babylon, and is meant by the goodly vessels of the house of the Lord, (<143610>2 Chronicles 36:10) others say [f148], that Jeremiah the prophet took it, and hid it in a cave on Mount Nebo; but the more generally received opinion is, that it was hid by King Josiah in some hidden and deep place, which Solomon had built for that purpose under ground, knowing, that the temple would be destroyed [f149]; and it is often said, that it was hid under the pavement of a room in the temple, called µyx[h ryd tkçl, "the wood room" [f150]. The ark is, by some, thought to be a type of

the church, which is the ark of God, of his building, and where he dwells; the ark of the covenant, or testimony, where the oracles of God, his word and ordinances, are: its being made of Shittim wood may denote the incorruption and duration of it: and its being covered with gold within and without is expressive of its glory; and its being portable, and carried from place to place, shows that the church is not always in one place; its rings, staves, and priests that bore it, may point at the Gospel, and the ministers of it, the instruments of moving it; and its moving from place to place, and falling into the hands of enemies, were emblematical of the church's afflictions; as its rest at last, in Solomon's temple, may signify the church's rest here and hereafter: but the ark is rather to be considered as a type of Christ; its various names agree with Christ, as the ark of God, the ark of his strength, the glory of God, the face of God, the holy ark, the ark of the covenant, or testimony, yea, Jehovah, and God himself: the time of its making is observable, it was made before the tabernacle, and the tabernacle for the sake of it; Christ is before all creatures, and was set up as Mediator before anything existed, and all things are for his sake; it being made of Shittim wood, covered with gold, may denote both the incorruption and glory of Christ; and its several decorations, the graces with which he was adorned, as man and Mediator; its staves and rings may design the word, ordinances, and ministers, whereby he is carried into the several places of the world; here God granted his presence, and counsel was asked of him, and it was brought forth in time of war, as a security from enemies, all which is applicable to Christ; by it wonders were done, as the dividing of Jordan for the Israelites to pass into the land of Canaan, the falling of the walls of Jericho, and the fall of Dagon; so Christ has opened the way for his people to heaven, has spoiled principalities and powers, and his Gospel is powerful to the pulling down the strongholds of sin and Satan; the moving of the ark from place to place, and its rest in the temple, may signify the rest of Christ, after his many fatigues in this world.

Wherein was the golden pot that had manna; which Aaron filled with manna by the direction of Moses, who gave it at the appointment of God, that it might be preserved to future ages, as a memorial of the goodness, care, and power of God in feeding the Israelites with it in the wilderness, (Exodus 16:33,34). This pot held an omer, which was more than three pints and a half; some say six pints: and though Moses does not call it a golden pot, yet it is so called, not only by the Septuagint in (Exodus 16:33) but also by Philo the Jew [f151]; nor is it reasonable to think, with

some Jewish writers [f152], that it should be made of earth, which was to continue for ages to come: this also was wanting in the second temple [f153]; and this, with Aaron's rod, after mentioned, and other things, is said to be hid when the ark was, and along with it [f154]: but how this pot, as well as Aaron's rod, can be said to be in the ark, when it is asserted, at the bringing of the ark into the temple, at the dedication of it by Solomon, that there was nothing in it but two tables of stone, (<1 Kings 8:9> <2 Chronicles 5:10) and both the pot of “manna”, and Aaron's rod, are said to be before the testimony, (<Exodus 16:34> <Numbers 17:10) and not in it, is a difficulty. Some, in order to remove it, observe, that the phrase, “wherein”, refers not to the ark, but to the tabernacle; but since the tables of the covenant were in the ark, and these are mentioned with it, and the phrase, “over it”, in the next verse, cannot be understood of the tabernacle, but of the ark, this solution is not satisfactory. Others have observed, that they might be in the ark in Moses's time and in Jeremiah's time, when they are said to be hid, though they were not in Solomon's: and others have taken notice, that the preposition εν sometimes signifies “at”, or “with”, as in (<Colossians 3:1> <John 1:28> <Ephesians 6:1,2) and so the sense is, that these were near unto it in the most holy place, and might be in the sides of it, though not within it; for there were places in the sides of the ark to put things into, (<Deuteronomy 31:26> <1 Samuel 6:8). And certain it is from the above account from Scripture, that they were near it; and so, by the Jewish writers, they are always mentioned along with it: when that was carried away, and hid, they were hid with it; but what a certain Jewish commentator [f155] observes on (<1 Kings 8:9) is so express, as if it was designed to vindicate our apostle: his remark is this:

> “the intention of this is not to deny that there were not the things mentioned in the law, for they were wb µyjnwm, “left in it”, as Aaron's “rod”, and “the pot of manna”, only to deny, hereby, that there was not anything of the law, save the decalogue.”

And it should be observed, that it is not said of these, that they were put before the ark, but “before the testimony”; that is, before the tables of the covenant, which were within the ark. The “manna”, in this pot, was typical of Christ; in the signification of its name, whether it comes from hnm, “manah”, which signifies to appoint, prepare, and distribute, Christ being appointed, prepared, and distributed, as food for his people; or from wh ˆm, “man hu”, what is it? the words said by the Israelites, when they first

saw it, not knowing what it was; so Christ is unknown to his people until revealed to them, and remains unknown to all natural and unregenerate men: the manna came from heaven, from God, and was a free gift of his, and so Christ: it was round in form, and may be expressive of Christ's perfection, and eternity: it was in colour white, which may signify his purity and innocence; it was sweet in taste, and so is Christ, his fruits, his word and ordinances: it was small in quantity, which may denote the meanness and despicableness of Christ in the eyes of the world: the people went out and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in mortars, and baked it, and ate, which may be typical of the apprehension, sufferings, and death of Christ, in order to be fit food for the faith of believers. The persons that were fed by it were the Israelites, who were brought out of Egypt, and then in the wilderness, a large number, and men of all sorts, rich, and poor, and who had an equal portion, though very undeserving; so those who are fed by Christ, and nourished with him, the bread of life, are the spiritual Israel of God, whom Christ has redeemed from worse than Egyptian bondage and darkness, though they are yet in the wilderness of this world; and they are a large number, the whole family of God, who receive out of Christ's fulness grace for grace; and there is no difference of high and low, rich and poor, bond or free, male or female; they are all one in Christ, and Christ is all in all; and they have all a whole Christ, though they are very undeserving, being by nature children of wrath as others. And as the Israelites had the manna every day, and all the while they were in the wilderness, so Christ is the daily bread of believers; by him, in his word and ordinances, is his church nourished in the wilderness, to whom he gives to eat of the hidden manna, the food of the wilderness. The “pot”, in which this manna was kept, was typical of the ordinances of the Gospel; in its matter, being made of gold, denoting the preciousness and duration of them; in the size of it, holding an “omer”, showing that these contain plenty of good things to satisfaction; in the situation of it before the ark, signifying the presence of Christ with his ordinances; and in its use to hold manna, and be a memorial of it to ages to come, as the ordinances have in them food for souls, and are the means of remembering Christ in future generations, till his second coming.

And Aaron's rod that budded; and not only budded, but bloomed; blossomed, and yielded almonds, (Numbers 17:8). This also was laid before the ark of the testimony, (Hebrews 9:10), and may be said to be in it, or with it, in the same sense as the pot of manna was; it was likewise

wanting in the second temple [f156], and is said to be hid with the pot of manna, and other things, as before observed: it was a type of Christ: it is affirmed by the Jews, that in the days of the Messiah, the priesthood shall return, and the rod of Aaron shall flourish [f157]; it was, very probably, as some have thought [f158], an almond tree stick, as that in (<24011>Jeremiah 1:11,12). The almond tree has its name, in Hebrew, from a word which signifies haste and vigilance; it being, as Pliny says [f159], the first of trees that buds and blossoms, and is very hasty in putting them forth. An almond tree rod may be a proper emblem of Christ's speedy incarnation in the fulness of time; and Aaron's almond tree rod, of his right to the priesthood, and his vigilance in it: this was first a dry rod or stick, and may design the mean descent and appearance of Christ, being born of mean parents, living a mean and obscure life; his entrance on his public ministry, and continuance in it, were without any pomp or grandeur; he was as a root out of a dry ground; and though he did many miracles, these were treated with contempt; and he was at last apprehended, arraigned, and condemned as a malefactor, and died a shameful and an accursed death: it looked very unlikely and unpromising, that he should be the King Messiah; that he should have all power in heaven and in earth; that he should have the wisdom he had, and do the miracles he did; and that he should be the author of eternal salvation; and that such fruits of grace, peace, pardon, and righteousness, should spring from him, as that Aaron's dry rod should bud, blossom, and bear almonds, in which it was a lively figure of Christ; that lying among other rods, and perhaps being like them, may denote Christ's assuming the common nature of men, or an individual of human nature in all things like to man: and this being cut off from the tree, and being a dry stick, may represent the death of Christ; and its budding and blossoming may point at the resurrection of Christ from the dead; and as Aaron's priesthood was confirmed by the budding and blossoming of his rod, so the deity and Messiahship of Christ are confirmed by his resurrection; and its bringing forth almonds may design the fruits of Christ's death and resurrection; and moreover, the almond tree being, as Philo the Jew says [f160] the first of trees that buds and blossoms in the spring, and the last that casts its leaves, it may be, as he observes, a symbol of the priestly tribe; and it may be a figure of the perpetuity of Christ, and his priesthood:

and the tables of the covenant; the same with the testimony which was ordered to be put into the ark, and accordingly was, (<02516>Exodus 25:16,21 40:20 <05502>Deuteronomy 10:2,5). About this there is no controversy; though

it is a matter of dispute with the Jews, whether the book of the law was in the ark or not: some say it was in the side of it, and others within it [f161]; but Maimonides [f162] says, that Moses wrote the whole law with his own hand before he died, and gave a book (or copy) to every tribe, and one copy he put ˆwrab, "in the ark": so Jarchi says [f163], that the book of the law of Moses was put into the midst of the ark, and the ark was glorious and beautiful by that which was wkwtb, "within it". These tables were made of stone, an emblem of the hardness of man's heart, which is destitute of spiritual life and motion, senseless and stupid, impenitent, stubborn, and inflexible, and on which no impressions can be made but by powerful and efficacious grace; and also of the stability and duration of the law, as moral, which is not antiquated by another, nor made void by the Gospel, nor altered in its nature and terms, but remains the same as to the matter of it; though it is now no covenant of works to believers, and they are freed from the curse and condemnation of it: the number of these tables is two; the whole law is reduced by our Lord to two grand precepts of it, (<402237>Matthew 22:37-40) and the fleshly tables, on which it is reinscribed in regeneration, are the heart and mind, (<470303>2 Corinthians 3:3 <581010>Hebrews 8:10). The place where these tables were put is the ark, which was typical of the law being in Christ, not only in his hands, but in his heart, (<194008>Psalm 40:8) and in his keeping of which he is the fulfilling end; for he being the surety of his people, and becoming man, answered every part of the law; in the holiness of his nature, in the perfect obedience of his life, and in his sufferings and death, in which he bore the penalty of it: and these tables are called the tables of the covenant, because the law on Mount Sinai was a covenant made with the people of Israel; and was typical of the covenant, of which Christ is the surety and Mediator, and which is ratified by his blood.

Ver. 5. *And over it the cherubim of glory*, etc..] Or "glorious cherubim", where the Shechinah, or divine glory, dwelt, (<198001>Psalm 80:1). These were over the ark, and were in number two, as were the cherubim which God placed at the garden of Eden, (<010324>Genesis 3:24) according to the opinion of the ancient Jews [f164]; and very likely these were made after the form of them. Some have thought them to be birds of a very terrible aspect, which were set there to deter Adam and Eve from coming to the tree of life; and both Philo [f165] and Josephus [f166] say, they were winged fowls; but the generality of the Jewish writers take them for angels [f167]; and some of them say they were destroying angels, or noxious spirits [f168], which is not

probable; but why angels should be so called, and what was their appearance, there are different opinions. Jerom says [f169] the word signifies a multitude of knowledge; and indeed Philo the Jew [f170] observes, that the Greeks would interpret the Hebrew word, much knowledge and understanding; and another Jewish writer [f171] affirms, that the word "cherubim" is a name for separate intelligences, as if angels were so called from their great knowledge, and that the word is the same as "cerabbim", as "Rabbins", doctors, or teachers; but for the most part they interpret it, "as young men" [f172], because that angels have appeared in the form of young men. So in the Talmud [f173] it is asked,

> "what does cherub signify?" says R. Abhu, aybrk, "as a young man", for so in Babylon they call a young man aybr."

Some think that the word "cherub" is the same with bwkr, "Recub", the letters transposed, which signifies "a chariot", because God is said to ride upon a "cherub" and the angels are called the chariots of the Lord, (<19B810>Psalm 18:10 68:17 <380601>Zechariah 6:1,5) to which may be added, that Ezekiel's vision of the "cherubim" is frequently, by the Jews [f174], called hbkrm, "Mercabah", or "the chariot"; and mention is made of the chariot of the cherubim, in (<132818>1 Chronicles 28:18) to which reference may be had in (<350308>Habakkuk 3:8) though I rather think, with others, that the word is derived from brk, "Carab", which in the Syriac and Arabic languages signifies "to plough", and so in the Talmud [f175]; and a cherub took its name from hence, because of the ox, whose face it had, that being a creature made use of in ploughing; and that the face of an ox, and the face of a cherub, is the same, may easily be concluded from (<261010>Ezekiel 1:10 10:14). And now because that Ezekiel's cherubim had four faces, the face of a man, the face of a lion, the face of an ox, and the face of an eagle; and the "cherubim" in the temple were in the same form, as may be gathered from (<264118>Ezekiel 41:18,19) those that were placed at the garden of Eden may be thought to be in the same form also: and some of late have fancied, that they were an hieroglyphic of the trinity of persons in the Godhead, signified by the ox, the lion, and eagle; and of the incarnation of the Son of God, the face of a man being added to them; to support which notion it is further observed, that the word µybwrk should be pronounced "ce-rubbim", and interpreted, "as the mighty ones". But it should be known, that the word is also used in the singular number, (<19B810>Psalm 18:10 <261004>Ezekiel 10:4) and every single cherub had these four faces, so that each of them must be a

representative of the Trinity, and of the incarnate Saviour, of which only the word in the singular number can be used; and then it can only be said of it, “cerub”, as “the mighty one” which observation greatly weakens what is brought to support the fancy: besides, if the cherubim were an emblem of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, they would rather be an emblem of a quaternity, and not of a trinity of persons, since each had four faces, and those distinct from each other; for the face of a man is as much a distinct face as any of the rest. Now the human nature of Christ is no distinct person, much less one in the Godhead; and besides is the inferior nature of Christ, whereas the face of the man, in the “cherubim”, is superior to the rest, which are the faces of irrational animals. Moreover, this would give us a similitude of the divine Being, and of that in him which is most incomprehensible by us, the trinity of persons in the Godhead; and so an answer may be given to such questions, the sense of which suggests, that no answer can be returned to them, (<23408>Isaiah 40:18,25 46:5) and though the second Person often appeared in human form, and in the fulness of time became incarnate, and the Holy Ghost once descended as a dove, yet the Father's shape was never seen at any time, (<43537>John 5:37) to which may be added, that this notion seems contrary to the second command, “thou shall not make unto thee any likeness of anything that is in heaven above”, (<02004>Exodus 20:4) for allowing that the cherubim at the garden of Eden were figures made by the Lord himself, it is not credible he should make such, he afterwards forbid others to make; besides, the “cherubim” in the tabernacle and temple were the same figures with those in Eden, as is owned; and these were ordered of God to be made by men, and therefore surely cannot be thought to be figures, emblems, and representations of God himself in his three divine persons; likewise the cherubim are not only distinguished from him, but instead of being figures of him, they are always represented as vehicles on which he sits or rides, (<02522>Exodus 25:22 <19801>Psalm 80:1 18:10). Once more, it may deserve some little consideration, that the prince of Tyre, a type of antichrist, the man of sin, is called a “cherub”, (<26814>Ezekiel 28:14,16) which surely cannot be in allusion to the divine Being, and the persons in the Godhead, but very well in allusion to angels, the sons of God, as civil magistrates, good and bad, are sometimes called. No doubt there was something signified by the “cherubim” in the tabernacle and temple; but that this should be the mystery of them, is not easy of belief. Philo the Jew makes the “cherubim” to signify the two powers of God, his creative and governing powers [f176]; and the Jews frequently speak of µybwrkd azr, “the mystery of the cherubim” [f177]: the

"cherubim" over the ark, here spoken of, are sometimes allegorized of the two Testaments, the Old and New; the matter of them being of gold may denote the excellency, purity, simplicity, and duration of them; their number is two, as were the "cherubim"; and as they were alike, and of one measure and size, this may intend the agreement between them; the doctrines, promises, prophecies, types, and figures of the Old Testament agree with the New; and the account that the one gives of the person and offices, and grace of Christ, agrees with the other; their situation and position, being placed at the two ends of the mercy seat, and looking towards it, may denote their being full of Christ, from one end to the other, and their pointing at him, and bearing witness to him; here God also reveals himself, as he did between the "cherubim"; and these are glorious as they were, full of glory, containing the glorious Gospel of the blessed God: though rather the "cherubim" on the mercy seat were symbols and representations of angels, since to these the Apostle Peter seems to allude, in (<60112>1 Peter 1:12), their being made of gold may denote their excellency, purity, and simplicity; their being on the mercy seat shows their dependence on Christ, their confirmation by him, and ministration to him; their having wings, expresses their readiness to do his will; and their looking one to another, signifies their unity and concord among themselves; and their looking to the mercy seat, their inspection into the mysteries of grace; and their being over the ark, and God being in the midst of them, declares the presence of God with them, whose face they always behold; and as these "cherubim" of glory, they are very glorious creatures, and in the glory of them will Christ come a second time:

shadowing the mercy seat; that is, with their wings, as in (<022520>Exodus 25:20) which was typical of Christ; its name agrees with him, a mercy seat; for in him God shows himself merciful to his people; all the stores of mercy are laid up in him; the mission of him into this world is owing to the mercy of God; and the mercy of God was glorified by him in the redemption of his people; and he himself is the way through which they obtain and receive mercy; and he is also a merciful high priest to them: the Hebrew word for the mercy seat, trwpk, signifies "a covering": nor is our English word in sound very different from it; and it was so called, as Kimchi [f178] observes, because it covered the ark: Christ is a covering to his people; their persons are clothed with his righteousness, and all their sins are covered by it; and they are secured from the curse and condemnation of the law, and wrath to come: the Septuagint interpreters render it by ιλαστηριον, the word used

here by the Apostle Paul, in (Romans 3:25), there rendered "propitiation", and applied to Christ, who has made reconciliation for sin, and through whom God is propitious to his people. The matter, of which the mercy seat was made, was pure gold, denoting the excellency and preciousness of Christ; the make of it, in its length and breadth, was just the same with the ark, in which the two tables were, (Exodus 25:10,17). Christ is the fulfilling end of the law, and exactly answers to all its requirements; his nature, to the holiness and spirituality of it; his righteousness, to all the obedience it commands; and his sufferings and death, to the penalty it enjoins: its situation above the ark shows that there is no mercy but in a way of righteousness, and that Christ stands between God and the law, and, by fulfilling it, covers all the transgressions of it; and being above it, is able to suppress all its accusations and charges: from off the mercy seat, God communed with his people; the way to communion with God is by Christ; the encouragement to go to God is from him; and the enjoyment of him is through him: on the day of atonement the mercy seat was sprinkled with blood, typical of the blood of Christ, whereby peace is made, and a way opened into the holiest of all:

of which we cannot now speak particularly; not only of the mercy seat, but of all the things before mentioned; for the word "which" is in the plural number, and refers to all the preceding things; to discourse of which, largely and particularly, required more time than the apostle had, and must have exceeded the bounds of an epistle. The Ethiopic version renders it in the singular number; "of this".

Ver. 6. *Now when these things were thus ordained*, etc..] Or prepared and got ready; that is, when the tabernacle was finished, and set up, and provided with all its vessels and furniture:

the priests went always into the first tabernacle; the first part of the tabernacle, which was called the holy place, (Hebrews 9:2) here the common priests went continually every day, morning and evening; the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, "the outward tabernacle", in distinction from the innermost part of the tabernacle, or the most holy place:

accomplishing the service of God; by offering sacrifices, burning incense, and trimming the lamps, which they did every day: the priests entered into the holy place every day for service; but they might not go in at any other time but the time of service [f179] the phrase, "of God", is not in the text, but is a supplement; and it was usual with the Jews to call the worship of the

temple, and especially that part of it which lay in sacrifices, hdwb[, "the service": Simeon the just used to say, the world stands upon three things; upon the law, hdwb[h l[w, "and upon the service", and upon beneficence[f180]; by "the service", the commentators[f181] on the passage understand sacrifices; and again it is said[f182], no man enters into the court hdwb[l, "for service", though he is clean, until he has dipped himself: the word here used in the Greek text is in the plural number, and may be rendered the services, because there were several sorts of services performed every day, as before observed, and several sacrifices offered; and the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "the offices of sacrifices"; and the Ethiopic version, "their offerings"; and the Arabic version, "offices": and the service which the high priest performed in the holiest of all once a year, was divers, which is mentioned in the following verses, and is called "service", (<580908>Hebrews 9:8) it is said, that on the day of atonement there were five twdwb[, "services" of the morning daily sacrifice[f183], in which the high priest ministered in his golden garments: but here the service of the common priests is meant, which was every day; and it becomes such who are employed in sacred service; both to be constant in it, and to do it fully and completely.

Ver. 7 *But into the second went the high priest alone, once every year*, etc..] Though this is not expressed in so many words in (<030602>Leviticus 16:2) only it is said that "Aaron came not at all times into the holy place within the vail"; yet it is the constant and generally received sense of the Jewish writers, in agreement with the apostle here, that the high priest went into the holy of holies but once a year[f184], on the day of atonement, which was on the tenth of the month Tisri, and answers to part of September; not but that he went in more than once on that day, for he went in no less than four times[f185]; the first time he went in to offer incense; the second time with the blood of the bullock, to sprinkle it; the third time with the blood of the goat; and the fourth time to bring out the censer[f186]; and if he entered a fifth time, they say he was worthy of death; wherefore Philo the Jew[f187] seems to be mistaken when he affirms that, if he went in three or four times on the same day, he suffered death, nor was there any pardon for him; and as it was but one day in a year he might enter, so when he did, no other man, either Israelite or priest, might go in along with him; he went in alone without any attendance: the Jews say[f188], that a cord or thong was bound to the feet of the high priest when he went into the holy of holies, that if he died there, the rest might be able to draw him out; for it was not lawful for

another priest to go in, no, not an high priest, none besides him on the day of atonement. Pausanias [f189] makes mention of a temple of Minerva into which the priests entered once every year; which very likely was observed in imitation of this custom of the Jewish high priest; who in it was a type of Christ, and of his entrance into heaven, and of his constant and continued intercession there:

not without blood; for he went in with the blood of the bullock and the blood of the goat; which was typical of the blood of Christ, by which he entered in once into the holy place, into heaven, when he had obtained eternal redemption by it, (Hebrews 9:12) which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people; the bullock was offered by the high priest for himself and his family; and the goat for the sins of the people of Israel, even all their iniquities, transgressions, and sins, (Leviticus 16:11,15,16,21), but Christ the antitype having no sin, had no need to offer for himself, only for the sins of the people; (see Gill on "Hebrews 7:27").

Ver. 8. *The Holy Ghost this signifying*, etc..] This shows that the Holy Ghost existed under the Old Testament; that he is a distinct person in the Godhead, a personal act being here ascribed to him; that he is truly and properly God, the God whose service the priests accomplished in the tabernacle; and by whom Moses was admonished to make all things in it according to the pattern, and by whom the high priest was warned not to come at all times within the vail; moreover, that the Levitical ordinances were of God, and that they had a spiritual signification; that the Old Testament saints were not without some knowledge of the spiritual meaning of them; and that the Holy Ghost was the author of that knowledge; particularly by enjoining the high priest to enter within the vail but once a year, he gave a plain and strong intimation,

that the way into the holiest of all was not yet manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing; by which is meant, not only the first part of the tabernacle, as in (Hebrews 9:2,6) but the whole of it; and not only that, but the temple built in its room, and also the whole Levitical service is included; and the sense is, that while the tabernacle and tabernacle worship, the temple and temple service, were in being, "the way into the holiest of all was not yet manifest": the Vulgate Latin and all the Oriental versions render it, "the way of the saints"; of the priests who ministered in holy things, and were holy to the Lord, and of all the saints that lived before

Christ; not that they did not go to heaven, but their way to it was not so manifestly known; life and immortality were not so clearly brought to light, as now by the Gospel; though rather it designs holy places, even heaven itself, which was typified by the holy place within the vail; and may be called the holiest of all, it being the residence of the holy God, holy angels, and holy men, and is sanctified by the presence of Christ, for his people, and where perfect holiness will be the glory of it: the way to it is not by works of righteousness done by men, which being imperfect cannot justify, and so not save, though this is the way men naturally seek and take; but Christ is the only way, and he is the plain, pleasant, and safe one: now let it be observed, that heaven was not shut to the Old Testament saints; there was a way into it for them, and they went the same way New Testament saints do; and that way was in some measure known, but it was not fully manifested; it lay hid in obscure prophecies, types, shadows, and sacrifices; hence being more clearly revealed under the Gospel dispensation, in comparison, of its former obscurity, and with respect to the manifestation of it, it is called a “new way”.

Ver. 9. *Which was a figure for the time then present*, etc..] The tabernacle in general was a figure of Christ's human nature, (Hebrews 8:2) and the most holy part of it was a figure of heaven itself, (Hebrews 9:24) the whole service of it was typical and shadowy; but it was but a temporary figure; it was for that present time only; the things of it were suited to that dispensation, and are now abolished, and ought not to be revived, the ordinances of the Gospel being greatly preferable to them; and while it did continue, it was only a parable, as the word here used signifies; it was like a dark saying; it had much obscurity and darkness in it; or as the Vulgate Latin version renders it, it was a “figure of the present time”; that is, of the Gospel dispensation; it was a shadow of good things to come under that; it prefigured what is now accomplished; or rather it was a “figure unto, or until the present time”; till Christ came, when all figures, types, and shadows fled away, and were of no more real use and service:

in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices; that is, in which tabernacle, or at which then present time, or κατ' ην, “according to which figure or parable”, as the Alexandrian copy and Vulgate Latin version read, gifts and sacrifices were offered by the priests; (see Hebrews 5:1 8:3),

that could not make him that did the service perfect; neither the priest that offered them, nor the people whom he represented, and for whom he did

the service; they could not make real and perfect expiation for sin, nor justify from it, nor cleanse and sanctify; the spiritual worshippers had their sins expiated by the sacrifice of Christ; and their persons were justified by his righteousness, and they were cleansed by his blood: the particular instance in which, legal sacrifices did not make perfect is, “pertaining to the conscience”; there is in every man a conscience, and when sin is charged home upon it, that is filled with a sense of divine wrath; nor can it be pacified with anything short of what will answer the law and justice of God, and which is only done by the blood and righteousness of Christ.

Ver. 10. *[Which stood] only in meats and drinks*, etc..] That is, along with the gifts and sacrifices offered, there only were meat offerings and drink offerings; things which only respect the body, and cannot therefore make perfect, as to the conscience; to which may be added, that while the tabernacle was standing, and typical service was in being, there was a prohibition of certain meats, as unclean, and an allowance of others, as clean, (Leviticus 11:2-31) and there were certain drinks which were unlawful to certain persons, at certain times, as to the priests and Nazarites, (Leviticus 10:9 Numbers 6:3) and which, for the above reason, could make no man perfect:

and divers washings or “baptisms”: the doctrine of which, the apostle would not have laid again, (Hebrews 6:2) these were the washings of the priests and of the Israelites, and of sacrifices, and of garments, and of vessels and other things; and which, because they were performed by immersion, they are called “baptisms”: and now since these only sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, or what was outward, they could not reach the conscience, or make perfect with respect to that: and

carnal ordinances: which belonged to the flesh, and not the spirit or soul, and therefore could not affect that; besides, these were only

imposed on them until the time of reformation; they were enjoined the Jews only, though by God himself; and were put upon them as a burden, or a yoke, and which was on some accounts intolerable, but were not to continue any longer than the time of the Gospel, here called “the time of reformation”, or of “correction”, and emendation; in which, things that were faulty and deficient are amended and perfected, and in which burdensome rites and ceremonies are removed, and better ordinances introduced: or rather of direction: in which saints are directed to Christ, the

sum and substance of all types, shadows, and sacrifices, and in whom alone perfection is.

Ver. 11. *But Christ being come an high priest*, etc..] Christ is come, as appears from the cessation of civil government among the Jews, which was not to be till Shiloh came; from the destruction of the second temple, into which the Messiah was to come, and did; from the expiration of Daniel's weeks, at which he was to appear, and be cut off; from the coming of John the Baptist, his forerunner, and from the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, and the calling and conversion of them, and the effusion of the Spirit upon them: and he is come an high priest; he was called to be one, and was constituted as such in the council and covenant of peace; and he agreed to do the work of one; he was typified by the high priest under the law; and he came as such into this world, and has done the work of an high priest, by offering himself a sacrifice for sin, and by his entrance into the holiest of all, with his own blood: and he is come an high priest of good things to come; such as peace, reconciliation, and atonement, a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, eternal life and salvation, which the law was a shadow and figure of; and which under the former dispensation were to come, as to the actual impetration of them by Christ; who is called the high priest of them, to distinguish him from the high priests under the law, who could not bring in these good things, nor make the comers to them and to their offerings perfect; but Christ is the author and administrator of them; and these things are owing to the performance of his priestly office; and such rob Christ of his glory, as a priest, who ascribe these good things to their own merits, or the merits of others: and the way in which he is come is,

by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; meaning the human body of Christ, which was greater than tabernacle of Moses; not in bulk and quantity, but in value, worth, and dignity; and was more perfect than that, that being only an example, figure, shadow, and type, this being the antitype, the sum and substance of that; and by it things and persons are brought to perfection, which could not be, in and by that; and this is a tabernacle which God pitched, and not man; which was reared up without the help, of man: Christ was not begotten by man, but was conceived in the womb of a virgin, under the power of the Holy Ghost; he came not into the world in the way of ordinary generation, but in a supernatural manner; and so his human

body is a tabernacle, not of the common building, or creation, as the word may be rendered, as other human bodies are.

Ver. 12. *Neither by the blood of goats and calves*, etc..] With which the high priest entered into the holy place, within the vail, on the day of atonement, (<3Leviticus 16:14,15) for Christ was not an high priest of the order of Aaron, nor could the blood of these creatures take away sin, nor would God accept of such sacrifices any longer:

but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place; which shows the truth of his human nature, and the virtue of its blood, as in union with his divine Person; by which he opened the way into the holiest of all, as the surety of his people, and gives them boldness and liberty to follow him there; he carried his blood not in a basin, as the high priest carried the blood of goats and calves, but in his veins; and by it, having been shed by him, he entered not into the holy place made with hands, but into heaven itself; and that not every year, as the high priest, but "once" for all, having done his work; or as follows,

having obtained eternal redemption; for us, from sin, Satan, the law, and death, to which his people were in bondage, and which he obtained by paying a ransom price for them; which was not corruptible things, as silver and gold but his precious, blood: in the original text it is, "having found eternal redemption"; there seems to be an allusion to (<18Job 33:24). This was what was sought for long ago by the, Old Testament saints, who were wishing, waiting, and longing for this salvation; it is a thing very precious and difficult to find; it is to be had nowhere but in Christ, and when found in him, is matter of great joy to sensible sinners; God found it in him, and found him to be a proper person to effect it; and Christ has found it by being the author of it: this is called an eternal redemption, because it extends to the saints in all ages; backwards and forwards; it includes eternal life and happiness; and such as are sharers in it shall never perish, but shall be saved with an everlasting salvation; it is so called in opposition to the carnal expiations of the high priests, and in distinction from temporal redemptions, deliverances, and salvations. Remarkable is the paraphrase of Jonathan ben Uzziel on (<1Genesis 49:18).

> "Jacob said, when he saw Gideon the son of Joash, and Samson the son of Manoah, who should be redeemers; not for the redemption of Gideon am I waiting, nor for the redemption of Samson am I looking, for their redemption is a temporal redemption; but for thy

> redemption am I waiting and looking, O Lord, because thy redemption is ^yml[^qrwp, “an everlasting redemption”:”

another copy reads, for the redemption of Messiah the son of David; and to the same purpose is the Jerusalem paraphrase on the place; in Talmudic language it would be called tymlw[hyydp [f190]

Ver. 13. *For if the blood of bulls and of goats*, etc..] Shed either on the day of atonement, or at any other time: the former of thee, Pausanias [f191] relates, was drank by certain priestesses among the Grecians, whereby they were tried, whether they spoke truth or no if not, they were immediately punished; and the latter, he says [f192], will dissolve an adamant stone; but neither of them can purge from sin:

and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean; the apostle refers to the red heifer, (<042001>Numbers 19:1-22) which being burnt, its ashes were gathered up and put into a vessel, and water poured upon them, which was sprinkled with a bunch of hyssop on unclean persons; the ashes and the water mixed together made the water of separation, or of sprinkling; for so it is called by the Septuagint, υδωρ ραντισμου, “the water of sprinkling”, and in the Targum in a following citation: this was the purification for sin, though it only

sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; the body, or only in an external and typical way, but did not really sanctify the heart, or purify and cleanse the soul from sin. The Jews say, that the waters of purification for sin were not waters of purification for sin, without the ashes [f193]; and to this the Targumist, on (<263625>Ezekiel 36:25) and on (<380101>Zechariah 13:1) refers, paraphrasing both texts thus;

> “I will forgive their sins as they are cleansed with the water of sprinkling, and with the ashes of the heifer, which is a purification for sin.”

Ver. 14. *How much more shall the blood of Christ*, etc..] Which is not the blood of a mere man, but the blood of the Son of God; and the argument is from the lesser to the greater; that if the ashes of the burnt heifer, which was a type of Christ in his sufferings, mixed with water, typically sanctified to the purifying of men externally, in a ceremonial way, then much more virtue must there be in the blood of Christ, to cleanse the soul inwardly:

who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God; Christ is a priest, and the sacrifice he has offend up is “himself”; not his divine nature, but his human nature, soul and body, as in union with his divine person; which gives his sacrifice the preference to all others; and is the reason of its virtue and efficacy, and is expressive of his great love to man: and this sacrifice was offered up “to God”, against whom his people had sinned, and whose justice must be satisfied, and which is of a sweet smelling savour to him; besides, he called him to this work, and engaged him in it, and is well pleased with this offering, as he must needs be, since it is offered up “without spot”; which expresses the purity of Christ's nature and sacrifice, and the perfection of it, which is such, that no fault can be found in it by the justice of God; and hence, the saints, for whom it is offered, are unblamable and irreprovable, There is an allusion in the clause, both to the priests and to their sacrifices, which were neither of them to have any spot or blemish on them; and this unblemished sacrifice was offered unto God by Christ,

through the eternal Spirit; not the human soul of Christ; for though that is a spirit, yet not eternal, and besides, was a part of the sacrifice; but rather the divine nature of Christ, which is a spirit, and may be so called in distinction from the flesh, or human nature, as it sometimes is, and this is eternal; it was from everlasting, as well as is to everlasting; and this supported him under all his sufferings, and carried him through them, and put virtue unto them; and Christ was a priest, in the divine, as well as human nature: though by it may be better understood “the Holy Ghost”; and so the Vulgate Latin version reads, and also several copies; since the divine nature rather acts by the human nature, than the human nature by the divine; and Christ is often said to do such and such things by the Holy Spirit; and as the Holy Ghost formed and filled the human nature of Christ, so he assisted and supported it under sufferings. This whole clause is inserted by way of parenthesis, showing the efficacy of Christ's blood, and from whence it is:

to purge your conscience from dead works; that is, “from the works of sin”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; which are performed by dead men, separate and alienated from the life of God, are the cause of the death of the soul, and expose to eternal death, and are like dead carcasses, nauseous and infectious; and even duties themselves, performed without faith and love, are dead works; nor can they procure life, and being depended on, issue in death; and even the works of believers themselves are sometimes

performed in a very lifeless manner, and are attended with sin and pollution, and need purging: the allusion is to the pollution by the touch of dead bodies; and there may be some respect to the sacrifices of slain beasts, after the sacrifice and death of Christ, by believing Jews, who were sticklers for the ceremonies of the law, and thereby contracted guilt; but immoralities are chiefly designed, and with these the conscience of man is defiled; and nothing short of the blood of Christ can remove the pollution of sin; as that being shed procures atonement, and so purges away the guilt of sin, or makes reconciliation for it, so being sprinkled on the conscience by the Spirit of God, it speaks peace and pardon, and pacifies and purges it, and removes every incumbrance from it: the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions, read, "our conscience". The end and use of such purgation is, "to serve the living God"; so called to distinguish him from the idols of the Gentiles, and in opposition to dead works; and because he has life in himself, essentially and independently, and is the author and giver of life to others; and it is but the reasonable service of his people, to present their souls and bodies as a living sacrifice to him; and who ought to serve him in a lively manner, in faith, and with fervency, and not with a slavish, but a godly filial fear; and one that has his conscience purged by the blood of Christ, and is sensibly impressed with a discovery of pardoning grace, is in the best capacity for such service. The Alexandrian copy reads, "the living and true God".

Ver. 15. *And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament*, etc..] (See Gill on "Hebrews 7:22"), (see Gill on "Hebrews 8:6"), (see Gill on "Hebrews 8:8"). This may refer both to what goes before, and what follows after; for Christ, that he might offer himself to God, and by his blood purge the consciences of his people from dead works, that so they might serve the living God, became the Mediator of the New Testament, or covenant; and also he took upon him this character and office,

that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance; Christ became the Mediator of the New Testament, and assumed human nature that he might die, and by dying might obtain redemption for his people; not only for those that were then in the world, or should be in it, but also for all those that had been in it. "The first testament" is the first dispensation of the covenant of grace, reaching from the first promulgation of it to Adam after the fall, to the death of Christ; "the transgressions" that were under it are the sins of the saints who lived

under that dispensation, froth Adam to Moses, and from Moses to Christ, and takes in all their iniquities of every kind: and the “redemption” of these, or from these, by Christ, at and through his death, does not suppose that there was no remission of sins, or justification from them, under that dispensation; or that the Old Testament saints did not go to heaven, but were detained in a prison, till redeemed by the death of Christ; or that their sins were only redeemed, not their persons; for transgressions may stand for transgressors; and so the Syriac version renders it, “that by his death he might be a redemption for them who transgressed the first testament”; so the Jews say, that the Messiah must die twba ta twdpl “to redeem the fathers” [f194]: but the sense is, that though legal sacrifices could not atone for sin, nor ceremonial ablutions cleanse from them; yet the sins of Old Testament saints were expiated, their iniquities pardoned, and they justified and saved, through the blood of Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; whose death is a redemption from transgressions past, present, and to come; whose blood is the ransom price for them, and was shed for the remission of them, even of sins that are past through the forbearance of God; who took the surety's word for the performance of all this, which in the fulness of time he strictly fulfilled, to the satisfaction of law and justice; (see <4825>Romans 3:25) and the ultimate end of Christ's being a Mediator, and dying for such purposes, was, that called ones might receive the promised inheritance: by the “eternal inheritance”, is meant heaven, which is by gift and bequest, belongs to children only, and comes through the death of Christ; and is a very substantial, plentiful, and glorious one; it is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fades not away, and as here, “eternal”; it was prepared from the foundation of the world, and will continue for ever; and it may be so called, to distinguish it from the inheritance of the land of Canaan, or any temporal one: “the promise” of this was made before the world began, and was put into the hands of Christ, the surety of the better testament, by whose death the heirs of it come to enjoy both the promise, and the thing promised; and they are such who are “called”, not merely externally, but internally and effectually; by whom were meant, not Abraham and his natural seed, nor the Old Testament saints only, but all that are called with an holy calling, whether Jews or Gentiles, and who will enjoy both the promise of the inheritance, and that itself, in a way of “receiving”: every word shows this affair to be all of grace; it is an “inheritance”, and therefore the Father's gift; it is by “promise”, and so of grace; and it is “received”, and so freely given, and not merited; and only such who are “called” by grace possess it; and yet it

is through the death of Christ, that so it might be received in a way consistent with the justice of God.

Ver. 16. *For where a testament is*, etc..] The covenant of grace, as administered under the Gospel dispensation, is a testament or will. The Jews have adopted the Greek word, here used, into their language, and pronounce it ytqytyyd, and by it understand a dying man's last will and testament [f195]. Some of them make it to be of Hebrew derivation; as if it was said, µqyml yht ad, "this shall be to confirm" [f196], or this shall be stable and firm; though others own it to be the same with this Greek word διαψηκη [f197]. The covenant of grace, is properly a covenant to Christ, and a testament or will to his people: it is his and their Father's will, concerning giving them both grace and glory; it consists of many gifts and legacies; in it Christ is made heir of all things, and his people are made joint heirs with him; they are given to him as his portion; and they have all things pertaining to life and godliness bequeathed to them, even all spiritual blessings; the witnesses of it are Father, Son, and Spirit; and the seals of it are the blood of Christ, and the grace of the Spirit; and this is registered in the Scriptures by holy men as notaries; and is unalterable and immutable: and this being made,

there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; who is Christ; he has various parts in this will or testament; he is the surety and Mediator of it; and he is the executor of it; what is given in it, is first given to him, in order to be given to others; all things are put into his hands, and he has a power to give them to as many as the Father has given him; and here he is called the "testator": Christ, as God, has an equal right to dispose of the inheritance, both of grace and glory; and as Mediator, nothing is given without his consent; and whatever is given, is given with a view to his "death", and comes through it, and by virtue of it: hence there is a "necessity" of that, and that on the account of the divine perfections; particularly for the declaration of God's righteousness, or by reason of his justice; and also because of his purposes and decrees, which have fixed it, and of his promises, which are yea and amen in Christ, and are ratified by his blood, called therefore the blood of the covenant; and likewise on account of the engagements of Christ to suffer and die; as well as for the accomplishment of Scripture prophecies concerning it; and moreover, on account of the blessings which were to come to the saints through it, as a

justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, peace and reconciliation, adoption and eternal life.

Ver. 17. *For a testament is of force after men are dead*, etc..] The necessity of Christ's death is here urged, from the nature and force of a testament or will, among men, which does not take place, and cannot be executed, till a man is dead.

Otherwise it is of no strength at all whilst the testator liveth; no claim can be made by the legatees for the part they have in it, nor can any disposition be made by the executor of it; not that hereby is suggested, that the testament or will of God was uncertain and precarious till the death of Christ, and subject to change and alteration as men's wills are till they die; nor that the inheritance could not be enjoyed by the Old Testament saints; for it is certain, it was entered upon by them before the death of Christ; but the sense is, that there was a necessity of it, that the saints right unto it, upon the foot of justice, might be evident by it.

Ver. 18. *Whereupon neither the first testament*, etc..] Or the first administration of the covenant of grace under the law:

was dedicated without blood; or "confirmed" without it, that dispensation being a typical one; and that blood was typical of the blood of Christ, by which the new covenant or testament is ratified; (see Exodus 24:7,8).

Ver. 19. *For when Moses had spoken every precept*, etc..] Contained in the decalogue, in the book of the covenant, everyone of the precepts in (Exodus 22:1-23:33) for this is to be understood of the written law, and not of the oral law the Jews talk of, which they say Moses first delivered by word of mouth to Aaron, then to his two sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, then to the seventy elders of Israel, and then to the whole congregation; so that Aaron heard it four times, his sons thrice, the seventy elders twice, and all Israel once [f198]: but this is the written law which he spoke audibly, and in a known language,

to all the people according to the law; which God gave him on the Mount: this may instruct persons concerned in the public ministry, to speak out plainly and clearly the whole counsel of God, to all to whom they are sent, according to the word of God, which is the rule of faith and practice:

he took the blood of calves, and of goats; in the relation of this affair in (Exodus 24:5) which is referred to, only mention is made of oxen,

bullocks, or heifers, here called calves, which were sacrificed for peace offerings, and not of goats; though perhaps they may be intended by the burnt offerings there spoken of, since they were sometimes used for burnt offerings, (<3301>Leviticus 1:10). The Syriac version only reads, “he took the blood of an heifer”; and the Arabic version, “he took the blood of calves”; but all the copies, and other versions, read both. “With water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop”; neither of these are mentioned in (<2401>Exodus 24:1-18), but since sprinkling is there said to be used, and blood and water mixed together, and scarlet and hyssop were used in sprinkling, as in sprinkling the leper, and the unclean house, (<3145>Leviticus 14:5-7,49-51) the apostle justly concludes the use of them here; the blood, with water, was typical of the blood and water which sprung from the side of Christ pierced on the cross, the one signifying justification by him, the other sanctification; the scarlet wool, which is originally white, but becomes scarlet by being dyed, may denote the native purity of Christ, and his bloody sufferings and death; the hyssop may signify his humility, and the purging virtue of his blood, and the sweet smelling savour of his person, righteousness, and sacrifice. The apostle calls scarlet, scarlet wool; though whenever the word is used in the Jewish laws of the Old Testament, wool is not expressed, but it is always intended; for it is a rule with the Jews [f199], that

> “the blue, which is spoken of in every place, is wool dyed of a sky colour; purple is wool dyed red, and scarlet is wool dyed in scarlet.”

And sprinkled both the book, and all the people. In (<2408>Exodus 24:8) no mention is made of the sprinkling of the former, only of the latter, which the apostle either concludes from the sprinkling of the blood upon the altar, upon which the book might lie, or from tradition, or from divine revelation: some think it does not necessarily follow from the text, that the book was sprinkled; and repeating the word λαβων, “he took”, read the words, “and he took the book and sprinkled all the people”; but this seems not natural, but forced; and besides, all the Oriental versions are express for the sprinkling of the book: the book of the law was sprinkled, not because of any impurity in it, but to show the imperfection of it, and its insufficiency to justify men; or rather the imperfection of man's obedience to it, and to point out what the law requires in case of disobedience, even the blood and life of men; and what it would be, was it not sprinkled with blood, or satisfied by the blood of Christ, namely, an accusing, cursing, and condemning law: the people, all of them, being sprinkled with the blood,

were typical of God's peculiar people, even all the elect of God, being sprinkled with the blood of Christ, called the blood of sprinkling, by which they are redeemed, and which speaks peace and pardon to them. Some have thought only the seventy elders were sprinkled, as representing the whole congregation; and others, that the twelve pillars were only sprinkled, as representing the twelve tribes of Israel; but Moses and the apostle agree, that they were the people that were sprinkled.

Ver. 20. *Saying, this is the blood of the testament*, etc..] The first testament or covenant; this proves what the apostle had asserted in (<58>Hebrews 9:18) that it was dedicated with blood, or confirmed by it; compare with this (<40>Matthew 26:28)

which God hath enjoined unto you; the people of Israel, to observe, and which they promised to do; (see <02>Exodus 24:7,8).

Ver. 21. *Moreover, he sprinkled likewise both the tabernacle*, etc..] Not at the same time that he sprinkled the book and the people, for then there was no tabernacle; but afterwards, at the time that it was set up, when it was anointed with oil, (<02>Exodus 40:9) and though no mention is there made of blood, yet Josephus, in agreement with the apostle, asserts [f200], that the tabernacle, and its vessels, were not only anointed with oil, but sprinkled with the blood of bulls and goats, as well as the garments of Aaron, and his sons: the tabernacle was typical of the church, in which God dwells, being purified and cleansed by the blood of Christ; and this shows, that there is no coming into the presence of God, the place where he dwells, without blood.

And all the vessels of the ministry; which were used in the service of the tabernacle these may denote the vessels of grace and mercy, the elect of God, whose hearts are sprinkled by the blood of Christ from an evil conscience, and whose garments are washed in it, and made white by it.

Ver. 22. *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood*, etc..] All "except a few things", as the Arabic version renders it; for some things were cleansed by water, and others purged by fire, (<04>Numbers 31:23). Some join the word almost with the word purged, as if the sense was, that all things were purged by blood, but not perfectly, only almost; but the former sense is best.

And without shedding of blood is no remission; that is, of sin; there was no typical remission without it; and there can be no real remission but by, the

blood of Christ; no instance can be given of pardon without it; if it could have been otherwise, the blood of Christ had not been shed; for so it would seem to be shed in vain, and his satisfaction to be unnecessary; nor is it agreeable to the justice of God to forgive sin without satisfaction; nor is it consistent with his veracity, and faithfulness to his word, (<010217>Genesis 2:17). It is a common saying with the Jews, and often to be met with in their writings, µdb ala hrpk ˆya, "there is no atonement but by blood" [f201]; by the shedding of blood; not by the shedding of it, as it flows out of the body of the sacrifice, but as it is poured out on the altar; for the pouring of the blood at the four corners, and at the bottom of the altar, were the chief rites required in sacrifices; nor did they reckon expiation to be expiation, unless the altar was moistened by the blood of the sacrifice [f202].

Ver. 23. *It was therefore necessary*, etc..] On account of the divine appointment, and that types and antitypes might correspond; and especially it was necessary with respect to the Messiah, the substance and body of all types. So Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases the text in (<024009>Exodus 40:9):

> "and thou shalt take the anointing oil, and thou shalt anoint the tabernacle, and all that is in it; and thou shall sanctify it, lwjm, because of the crown of the kingdom of the house of Judah, and the King Messiah, who shall redeem Israel in the latter days."

Upon his account it was necessary,

that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; that is, that all the people, and the book of the covenant, and the tabernacle, and its vessels, which were types and patterns of persons and things in Gospel churches, should be purified with blood and water, and with scarlet wool and hyssop.

But the heavenly things themselves, with better sacrifices than these; the sum and substance of the above patterns, shadows, and examples, such as heaven itself; which though not impure in itself, yet some think it, may be said to be purified, because saints are made meet for it, by being purged with the blood of Christ; others observe, that sin reaches to heaven, and provokes God that dwells there; hence atonement for it may be called a purification of heaven: but rather this may be said of it, inasmuch as by the blood of Christ an entrance and preparation is made for the saints into it. Likewise, the human nature of Christ is among these heavenly things; not

that it is heavenly, as to the matter and substance of it, but may be so called, because of its wonderful formation; and which has been purified, not from any real internal pollution that was in it, but from what was imputed to it, the sin of his people. Also the whole church, triumphant and militant, may be intended by heavenly things: the Old Testament saints went to heaven before Christ came; and though they were not impure, but were the spirits of just men made perfect, yet their iniquities were purged by the blood and sacrifice of Christ, after they were gone to heaven; (see <scripRef passage="Hebrews 9:15" />Hebrews 9:15 <scripRef passage="Romans 3:25" />Romans 3:25). The church militant, or believers on earth, may be said to be heavenly, since they are partakers of an heavenly birth and calling; their head is in heaven, and their conversation is there; and they have a right unto it, and are making meet for it; and they are in themselves defiled with sin, and are purified by the blood of Christ, and sanctified by the offering up of his body once for all: to which may be added, that spiritual blessings are heavenly things; they are from heaven, and saints are blessed with them in heavenly places and these come to them through the blood and sacrifice of Christ; yea, the Gospel, which is from heaven, and the doctrines of it, are sealed and confirmed by the blood of Christ: his sacrifice is expressed in the plural number; not that there has been a repetition of it, for it is but one sacrifice, and but once offered up, and will never be reiterated; but to show the excellency of it, being usual with the Jews to use the plural number of things the most excellent; so Christ is called “Wisdoms”, (<scripRef passage="Proverbs 1:20" />Proverbs 1:20) besides, respect may be had to the many sacrifices under the law, which were types of it, and were answered and fulfilled by it; and to the many persons on whose account it was offered; and to the parts of it, the soul and body of Christ: and this is a better sacrifice than the legal ones, in its own nature and in its use and efficacy to take away sin, and make perfect, which they could not.

Ver. 24. *For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands*, etc..] The most holy place in the tabernacle of Moses, or in the temple built by Solomon, and rebuilt by Zerubbabel, and repaired by Herod,

which are the figures of the true; that is, the most holy place in the tabernacle and temple, was a figure of the truth of that type; (see <scripRef passage="Hebrews 9:9" />Hebrews 9:9) as follows. Josephus [f203] suggests the same, when speaking of the most holy place; he says, that it was inaccessible to the priests, that it might be as heaven to God.

But into heaven itself; not the visible heavens, the airy and starry ones, through which he passed, but the third heaven, the habitation of God, angels, and glorified saints: this shows that heaven is a place; that Christ, as man, was out of it when on earth; and that at his ascension he entered into it, having done the work he came about, and that with acceptance: the end of his entrance was

now to appear in the presence of God for us; Christ, as God, was always in his presence, from everlasting; as Mediator, he was with him in the council of peace; while he was here on earth his Father was with him, he was not alone; but now in his human nature he is at his right hand, where he appears before him, as a favourite before his Prince, on the behalf of another, or as an advocate on the behalf of his client: Christ appears in the court of heaven for his elect, by representing their persons; by presenting himself, his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness, before God on their account; by introducing them into the presence of God, and offering up their prayers with the incense of his mediation; by presenting them to himself, and to his Father, and obtaining every blessing for them. And this he does “now”, since his entrance; not that he did not appear before God for the saints of the Old Testament, for he was the angel of God's presence then, though he did not appear then in the manner he does now, as the Lamb in the midst of the throne, as if it had been slain; but it denotes the continuance and perpetuity of his appearance for his people; he is ever interceding for them.

Ver. 25. *Nor yet that he should offer himself often*, etc..] Or at all again; which shows the perfection of his sacrifice, for justice was satisfied, the law fulfilled, sin done away, and complete salvation obtained at once; which lies against the errors of the Socinians, who say he offers himself now in heaven; and of the Papists, who pretend to offer the body of Christ daily in their mass:

as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; not his own, nor other men's, but the blood of goats and calves; but Christ entered into heaven with his own blood, he having been altar, priest, and sacrifice: the high priest went into the most holy place every year, but Christ has entered into heaven once for all, where he sits down and continues, having done his work effectually.

Ver. 26. *For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world*, etc..] For if it was necessary that he should often offer up himself

now, which is the same as to suffer, since the sacrifice of himself, the same was necessary before; seeing sin was in the world from the beginning, and the saints from the foundation of the world had their sins expiated by the sacrifice of Christ; but the truth is, Christ's sufferings were but once, though the virtue of them is always, both before and after; nor can he suffer more, or again, because of his power over death and the grave, and because he has effectually obtained what he suffered for:

but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; this is to be understood, not of his appearance in heaven, of which mention is made in (<scripRef passage="Hebrews 9:24" />) but of his incarnation on earth, called an appearance; not as though his human nature was a mere phantom or apparition, for it was a real thing; or as if he was then manifested to be what he really was before; for before his incarnation he was not truly and actually man; but this is said with respect to the manifestation of his invisible deity; or of him as the Son of God in human nature; and in regard to the types of the old law, under which he was hid; and with respect to the prophecies of his coming; and it designs the same thing with his descent from heaven, and coming into this world, in which he appeared in fashion as a man, as a mean man, as an afflicted one; yea, he looked like a sinful man, bearing the infirmities and sins of his people; his appearance was but to a very few, and for a little time; and the time of it was, “in the end of the world”; the same with the last days; the last age of the world; the end of the Jewish economy; at the close of their civil and ecclesiastical state, according to (<scripRef passage="Habakkuk 2:3" />) & so the Jews expect their Messiah µymyh tyl, “at the end of days” [f204]: and this appearance was but “once”; there were many appearances of him in an human form, under the Old Testament dispensation; and there were many after his resurrection; but this is said to be but once, in opposition to the many types and sacrifices under the law, and agrees with his one oblation, and once suffering: the end of his appearance was, to put away sin; the filth of it, by his blood; the guilt of it, by his atoning sacrifice; and the punishment of it, by his sufferings and death, the penalty of the law; and in consequence of all this, the dominion of it by the power of his grace, and the very being of it hereafter: and this putting it away is signified by his bearing, carrying, and taking it away; by removing it as far as the east is from the west; by finishing and making an end of it; by crucifying the old man, destroying the body of sin, and by an utter disannulling and abolishing it, as a debt, and as

a law; and all this is done by the sacrifice of himself; by the offering up of his body and soul an offering for sin; as in (Hebrews 9:14).

Ver. 27. *And as it is appointed unto men once to die*, etc..] Not a moral, or what is commonly called a spiritual death, nor an eternal one, but a corporeal one; which does not arise from the constitution of nature, but from the sin of man, and God's decree on account of it; by which it is fixed that men shall die, and how long they shall live, and when they shall die; so that they cannot die sooner nor later; all things antecedent to death, which lead on to it, and issue in it, are appointed by God, and so is death itself, with all its circumstances; men's days can neither be lengthened nor shortened, either by Christ himself, or others: and this statute and appointment of God concerns men, not angels, and reaches to all men, wicked and righteous; and though there have been some exceptions, as Enoch and Elijah; and all will not sleep, or die, some will be found alive at Christ's appearing; yet such will undergo a change which is equivalent to death, as Enoch and Elijah have done: and generally speaking men die but once; it is not usual for men to die, and live again, and then die again; there have been some extraordinary instances of this kind, but they are rare; it is the statute law of heaven in common for men to die and that but once; so Cicero [f205] the Heathen says, “omnibus definitam esse mortem”: Christ died once, he will die no more; and it is the comfort of the saints, that though they die the first death, they shall not be hurt of the second death; and the consideration of this decree should excite to diligence and industry: death is certain to God, but uncertain to us, as to the time, nor should we curiously inquire into it, but patiently wait for it, and quietly submit unto it:

but after this the judgment; the last and general judgment, which will reach to all men, quick and dead, righteous and wicked, and in which Christ will be Judge. There is a particular judgment which is immediately after death; by virtue of which, the souls of men are condemned to their proper state of happiness or woe; and there is an universal judgment, which will be after the resurrection of the dead, and is called eternal judgment, and to come; this is appointed by God, though the time when is unknown to men; yet nothing is more certain, and it will be a righteous one.

Ver. 28. *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many*, etc..] As man dies but once, Christ was offered but once, or he suffered and died but once; and that was not on his own account, or for his own sins, “but to bear the sins of many”: not of angels but of men, and these not a few, but

“many”; which is said to magnify the grace of God, to exalt the satisfaction and righteousness of Christ, and to encourage souls to hope in him: hence many are brought to believe in him, and many are justified by him, have their sins forgiven them, and are glorified; though Christ bore not the sins of all men; for as all men have not faith, all are not justified, pardoned, and saved: what he bore were “sins”; all kind of sin, every act of sin, and all that belongs to it; its filth, guilt, and punishment, even the iniquity of all his people; which must be a prodigious weight, and than which nothing could be more nauseous: his bearing them supposes they were upon him, though not in him, imputed, though not inherent; that he did not sink under them; that he made an entire satisfaction for them, and bore them wholly away, both from the persons of his people, and from the sight of justice. The way in which he came to bear them was this; he became a surety for all the elect; his Father imputed to him all their sins, and he voluntarily took them upon himself; where justice found them, and demanded satisfaction of him for them, and he gave it; which is an instance both of his great love, and of his great strength:

and unto them that look for him: with affection, faith and patience:

shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation; this is to be understood of Christ's visible and personal appearance on earth, which will be a glorious one; he will appear in his own glory, and in his Father's glory, and in the glory of the holy angels, and in the glory of his power, to the joy of saints, and to the terror of the wicked; for every eye shall see him: and this is said to be “the second time”; that is, that he appears on earth, and personally; for though he often appears to his people, it is in a spiritual way; and though he appeared to Stephen and to Paul, yet not on earth, but in heaven; and this is called the second time, with reference to his first appearance in human nature at his incarnation, and after that he ascended to heaven; and as this will be the second, it will be the last: the manner in which he will appear, will be, “without sin”; without sin itself; without any thing like it: without any infirmities, which though not sinful are the effects of sin; without sin imputed to him, with which he appeared before; without being a sacrifice for sin; and without sin upon his people that come with him, or he shall meet whom he shall raise, or change, and take to himself: and the end of his appearance with respect to them, will be “unto salvation”; the end of his first appearance was to obtain salvation for his people, and he has obtained it, and there is a comfortable application of it made unto them by the Spirit of God; but the full possession of it will be

hereafter, and into this will Christ put them, when he shall appear: the Alexandrian copy adds, “by faith”, and also some other copies.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 10

In this chapter the apostle pursues his argument, showing the weakness and imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, and the superior excellency of Christ's, which he closes with suitable exhortations to faith on Christ, as the alone high priest, and to a constant profession of him. The imperfection of the Levitical priesthood is proved, from the law by which it was established, being only a shadow of good things to come; from the insufficiency of annual sacrifices to perfect the comers to them, or to purge the consciences of the worshippers from sin; and from the non-cessation of these sacrifices which would have been, if the above ends could have been answered by them, (<58B101>Hebrews 10:1,2), but on the contrary, by the annual return of these sacrifices, sins are afresh remembered, and very good reason there is for it, since it is an impossible thing that the blood of slain beasts should take away sin, (<58B103>Hebrews 10:3,4) moreover, the apostle proves the insufficiency of such sacrifices, by a divine testimony, out of (<19A006>Psalm 40:6-8) by which it appears, that they are not agreeable to the will of God, and are rejected by him as useless, (<58B105>Hebrews 10:5-8) and this leads the apostle to discourse of the excellency of Christ's sacrifice above them; that they are taken away, and his is substituted in their room; that as they are not agreeable to the will of God, his is a fulfilment of it; that though they could not expiate sin, yet by the offering up of the body of Christ, once for all, his people are sanctified, or their sins are expiated, (<58B109>Hebrews 10:9,10) and this is further illustrated by a comparison between the priests under the law, and Christ; they were many, he but one; they daily offered the same sacrifices, he offered but one sacrifice; theirs could not take away sin, by his offering he has perfectly expiated the sins of his people; they stood daily ministering, their work being never at an end; he is set down at the right hand of God, expecting his enemies to be made his footstool, having done his work to perfection, (<58B111>Hebrews 10:11-14) and that legal sacrifices are ceased, and no more to be used, is proved by a testimony of the Holy Ghost, out of (<24B133>Jeremiah 31:33,34) relating to the covenant of grace, among the promises of which stands that of the forgiveness of sin; from whence the apostle justly concludes, that where

remission of sin is, there is, and there needs no more offering for it, (Hebrews 10:15-18) and from hence, the apostle passes to exhortations to the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, which he strongly urges from the consideration of Christ's priesthood, and the efficacy of it: and first, he presses them to the duty of prayer, to draw nigh to God to the throne of his grace. The manner in which he would have them approach to God, is in the sincerity of their hearts, in a plerophory of faith, an high and full exercise of it, and impurity of soul and body: the motives or encouragements to it are taken from their having boldness and liberty to enter by faith into heaven itself with their prayers, through the blood of Jesus; from there being a new and living way opened for them through, the flesh of Christ; and from their having such an high priest over the house of God as he is, (Hebrews 10:19-22), and next he exhorts them to a constant and steadfast profession of their faith, to which he animates them by the faithfulness of a promising God, who will never leave nor forsake his people, (Hebrews 10:23) and then to consider one another in their church relation, and to stir up one another to the exercise of the grace of love, and to the performance of good works, (Hebrews 10:24), and also not to forsake their public assemblies, as was the custom of some, but to exhort each other to greater diligence in attending there, especially since they might observe that a time of great tribulation was at hand, (Hebrews 10:25) and in order to deter from apostasy, which is expressed by a sinning wilfully, after a man has received and professed the knowledge of the truth, the apostle observes that the destruction of such is inevitable; since there never will be another propitiatory sacrifice offered up, and therefore there can be no other than a dreadful expectation of an awful judgment, and of the wrath of God, which, like a consuming fire, will destroy such adversaries of Christ, (Hebrews 10:26,27) the justice of which is argued from the less to the greater; that if the transgressors of the law of Moses had no mercy shown them, but died when there were proper and sufficient witnesses of their crimes, then such must be deserving of a far greater punishment, who treat with the greatest rudeness the person of the Son of God, and his precious blood, and with the greatest contempt the person and grace of the Holy Spirit, (Hebrews 10:28,29), and such persons have reason to expect the vengeance of God will fall on them, since it is threatened them in the word of God, (Deuteronomy 32:35,36) and a dreadful thing it is to fall into his hands, (Hebrews 10:30,31). But in order to encourage these believing Hebrews to hold on and out unto the end, the apostle puts them in mind of their good

beginning, how well they set out, and how bravely they behaved, by bearing afflictions and reproaches themselves; by being the companions of those that were afflicted and reproached; by having compassion on the apostle when in bonds; and by cheerfully suffering the loss of their goods upon this consideration, that they had in heaven a better and a more enduring substance, (Hebrews 10:32-34) wherefore it would be exceeding wrong and very unbecoming, after all this, to drop their faith and a profession of it, which otherwise would issue in the enjoyment of the great recompense of reward, (Hebrews 10:35) and as patience is necessary, it is right to exercise it under sufferings for Christ's sake, partly because it is doing the will of God, and partly because that after that is done, such shall receive the promised happiness; and what may serve the more to engage to the exercise of it is, it is but a little while and Christ will come and put an end to all the sufferings of his people, (Hebrews 10:36,37) and that faith should be in exercise, is proved from a divine testimony, (Habakkuk 2:4) and so must be pleasing to God, when the contrary is highly resented by him, (Hebrews 10:38) and now, lest the believing Hebrews should conclude from all this that the apostle suspected them as going into apostasy, he declares his belief, that he and they were not in the number of apostates, but of believers, whose souls would be saved, (Hebrews 10:39)

Ver. 1. *For the law having a shadow of good things to come*, etc..] By which is meant not the moral law, for that is not a shadow of future blessings, but a system of precepts; the things it commands are not figuratively, but really good and honest; and are not obscure, but plain and easy to be understood; nor are they fleeting and passing away, as a shadow, but lasting and durable: but the ceremonial law is intended; this was a “shadow”, a figure, a representation of something true, real, and substantial; was dark and obscure, yet had in it, and gave, some glimmering light; and was like a shadow, fleeting and transitory: and it was a shadow of good things; of Christ himself, who is the body, the sum and substance of it, and of the good things to come by him; as the expiation of sin, peace and reconciliation, a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, and eternal life; these are said to be “to come”, as they were under the former dispensation, while the ceremonial law was in force, and that shadow was in being, and the substance not as yet.

And not the very image of the things; as it had not neither the things themselves, nor Christ, the substance of them, so it did not give a clear

revelation of them, as is made in the Gospel, nor exhibit a distinct delineation of them, such as an image expresses; it only gave some short and dark hints of future good things, but did not exactly describe them: and therefore

can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually: namely, the sacrifices of bullocks and goats, which were offered on the day of atonement, year after year, in successive generations, from the first appointment of that day, to the writing of this epistle: sacrifices of such a kind, and so often repeated, could never

make the comers thereunto perfect; either the people that came to the temple, and brought them to the priests to offer them for them, or the priests that offered them; so the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, "perfect them that offer"; and if not one, then not the other: legal sacrifices could not make perfect expiation of sin; there is no proportion between them and sin: nor did they extend to all sin, and at most only typically expiated; nor could they justify and cleanse from sin. Contrary to this, the Jews [f206] say,

> "when Israel was in the holy land, there was no iniquity found in them, for the sacrifices which they offered every day stoned for them;"

but spiritual sacrificers and worshippers were expiated, justified, and cleansed another way, even by the blood of Christ, slain from the foundation of the world in purpose, promise, and type, and to which their faith had respect in every sacrifice.

Ver. 2. *For then would they not have ceased to be offered*, etc..] The Complutensian edition, and the Syriac and Vulgate Latin versions, leave out the word "not"; and the sense requires it should be omitted, for the meaning is, that if perfection had been by the legal sacrifices, they would have ceased to have been offered; for if the former ones had made perfect, there would have been no need of others, or of the repetition of the same; but because they did not make perfect, therefore they were yearly renewed; unless the words are read with an interrogation, as they are in the Arabic version, "for then would they not have ceased to be offered?" yes, they would; they are indeed ceased now, but this is owing to Christ and his sacrifice, and not to the efficacy of these sacrifices; for yearly sacrifices

were offered for former sins, as well as for fresh ones, as appears from the following verse.

Because the worshippers, once purged, would have had no more conscience of sins; there are external and internal worshippers; the latter are such who worship God in Spirit and in truth: but here ceremonial worshippers are meant, who, if they had been really purged from sin by legal sacrifices, and purifications, would have had no more conscience of sins, and so have had no need to have repeated them; as such spiritual worshippers, who are once purged from sin by the blood and sacrifice of Christ; not that they have no sin, or no sense of sin, or that their consciences are seared, or that they never accuse for sin, or that they are to make no confession and acknowledgment of sin; but that they are discharged from the guilt of sin, and are not liable to condemnation for it; and through the application of the blood of Christ to them, have peace with God, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 3. *But in those sacrifices*, etc..] The Arabic version reads, “but in it”; that is, in the law; but the Syriac version reads, and supplies, as we do, ˆwhb ajbdb, “in those sacrifices”, which were offered every year on the day of atonement:

there is a remembrance of sins made again every year; of all the sins that were committed the year past, and even of those that were expiated typically by the daily sacrifice, and others that had been offered; which proves the imperfection and insufficiency of such sacrifices: there was a remembrance of sins by God, before whom the goats were presented, their blood was sprinkled, and the people cleansed, (<3162716>Leviticus 16:7,14,15,30) and there was a remembrance of them by the people, who, on that day, afflicted their souls for them, (<3162929>Leviticus 16:29,31) and there was a remembrance of them by the high priest, who confessed them over, and put them upon the head of the goat, (<3162121>Leviticus 16:21) by which it was owned, that these sins were committed; that they deserved death, the curse of the law; that the expiation of them was undertook by another, typified by the goat; that this was not yet done, and therefore there was no remission, but a typical one, by these sacrifices; but that sins remained, and required a more perfect sacrifice, which was yet to be offered up. Legal sacrifices were so far from inducing an oblivion of sins, that they themselves brought them to remembrance, and were so many acknowledgments of them. Though Philo the Jew thinks the contrary, and

gives this as a reason why the heart and brain were not offered in sacrifice, because

> "it would be foolish, that the sacrifices should cause, not a forgetfulness of sins, but a remembrance of them [f207]."

Ver. 4. *For it is not possible*, etc..] There is a necessity of sin being taken away, otherwise it will be remembered; and there will be a conscience of it, and it must be answered for, or it will remain marked, and the curse and penalty of the law must take place: but it is impossible

that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins; which was shed on the day of atonement: sin is a breach of the moral law, but these sacrifices belong to, the ceremonial law, which are less acceptable to God than moral duties; sin is committed against God, and has an objective infiniteness in it, and therefore can never be atoned for by the blood of such creatures; it leaves a stain on the mind and conscience, which this blood cannot reach; besides, this is not the same blood, nor of the same kind with the person that has sinned; yea, if this could take away sin, it would do more than the blood of the man himself could do; such blood shed can never answer the penalty of the law, satisfy divine justice, or secure the honour of divine holiness: but what the blood of these creatures could not do, the blood of Christ has done, and does: that takes away sin from the sight of justice, and from the consciences of the saints. Compare with this the Septuagint version of (<24B115>Jeremiah 11:15).

> "what, has the beloved committed abomination in my house? shall prayers, and the holy flesh take away thy wickednesses from thee, or by these shall thou escape?"

Ver. 5. *Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith*, etc..] In (<19A007>Psalm 40:7,8). This was said by David, not of himself, and his own times, for sacrifice and offering were desired and required in his times; nor was he able to do the will of God; so as to fulfil the law, and make void legal sacrifices; nor did he engage as a surety to do this; nor was it written of him in the volume of the book that he should: besides, he speaks of one that was not yet come, though ready to come, when the fulness of time should be up; and who is here spoken of as coming into the world, and who is no other than Jesus Christ; and this is to be understood, not of his coming into Judea, or the temple at Jerusalem; or out of a private, into a public life; nor of his entrance into the world to come, into heaven, into life

eternal, as the Targum on (<19407>Psalm 40:7) paraphrases it, after he had done his work on earth, for the other world is never expressed by the world only; nor did Christ go into that to do the will of God, but to sit down there, after he had done it; besides, Christ's entrance into heaven was a going out of the world, and not into it. To which may be added, that this phrase always signifies coming into this terrene world, and intends men's coming into it at their birth; (see Gill on "<43009>John 1:9") and must be understood of Christ's incarnation, which was an instance of great love, condescension, and grace; and the, reason of it was to do what the law, and the blood of bulls and goats, could not do. For it follows,

sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not; or didst not desire and delight in, as the word ˆpj , used in (<19406>Psalm 40:6) signifies; meaning not the sacrifices of wicked men, or such as were offered up without faith in Christ; but the ceremonial sacrifices God himself had instituted, and which were offered in the best manner; and that not merely in a comparative sense, as in (<28606>Hosea 6:6 <09152>1 Samuel 15:22) but the meaning is, that God would not have these continue any longer, they being only imposed for a time, and this time being come; nor would he accept of them, as terms, conditions, and causes of righteousness, pardon, peace, and reconciliation; but he willed that his Son should offer himself an offering, and a sacrifice for a sweet smelting savour to him.

[But a] body hast thou prepared me; or "fitted for me"; a real natural body, which stands for the whole human nature; and is carefully expressed, to show that the human nature is not a person. This was prepared, in the book of God's purposes and decrees, and in the council and covenant of grace; and was curiously formed by the Holy Ghost in time, for the second Person, the Son of God, to clothe himself with, as the Syriac version renders it, "thou hast clothed me with a body"; and that he might dwell in, and in it do the will of God, and perform the work of man's redemption: in (<19406>Psalm 40:6) it is, "mine ears thou hast opened"; digged or bored, the ear being put for the whole body; for if he had not had a body prepared, he could not have had ears opened: besides; the phrase is expressive of Christ's assuming the form of a servant, which was done by his being found in fashion as a man, (<50207>Philippians 2:7) and of his being a voluntary servant, and of his cheerful obedience as such, the opening, or boring of the ear, was a sign, (<02106>Exodus 21:5,6). And thus by having a true body prepared for him, and a willing mind to offer it up, he became fit for sacrifice.

Ver. 6. *In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin*, etc..] Which were the principal kinds of offerings under the law:

thou hast had no pleasure; not only in comparison of moral duties, or spiritual sacrifices, such as those of praise and thanksgiving, (<19B930>Psalm 69:30,31) but so as to accept of the offerers for the sake of them, and smell a sweet savour in them; for these could not satisfy his justice, appease his anger, or expiate sin; and when they were in full force, and offered in the most agreeable manner, they were no otherwise well pleasing to God, than as they were types of, and had respect unto the sacrifice of his Son. In the Hebrew text it is, "thou didst not require, or ask for"; for them, when the time was up that Christ should come into the world.

Ver. 7. *Then said I, lo, I come*, etc..] Christ observing that legal sacrifices were not acceptable to God; that there was a body prepared for him; and that it was written of him in the book of God, that he should come; and the time being now come, with a note of attention and admiration, the matter being of great moment and concern, he cheerfully expresses his readiness to come, immediately, without any compulsion, even he himself, and not another.

In the volume of the book it is written of me; in the book of the law, as the, Targum and Kimchi on (<19A007>Psalm 40:7 *Heb. verse 8) interpret it; and which may design the Bible in general, the whole book of the Scriptures of the Old Testament: so rps, "the book", is used for the whole Bible[f208], and it is said[f209], all the whole law, that is, all Scripture, is called hlygm, "a volume"; accordingly there are things written of Christ in all the writings of the Old Testament, in the law, and in the prophets, and in the psalms. Jarchi interprets it of the law of Moses, and so it may design the pentateuch, or the five books of Moses; and there are several places therein, in which it is written of Christ, and particularly in Genesis, the first of these books, and in the head, the beginning, the frontal piece, the first part of that book; namely, (<010315>Genesis 3:15) which may be principally designed. Books were formerly written in rolls of parchment, and hence called volumes; (see Gill on "<420417>Luke 4:17"), (see Gill on "<420420>Luke 4:20"). The end of his coming is next expressed by him,

to do thy will, O God; which, when he came, he set about with the utmost delight, diligence, and faithfulness, in preaching the Gospel, performing miracles, doing good to the bodies and souls of men, and in finishing the

great work of man's redemption, which was the main part of his Father's will he came to do; and which he did, by fulfilling the law in its precept and penalty; by offering himself a sacrifice to God; by suffering death, the death of the cross; by destroying all his and our enemies, and so working out everlasting salvation.

Ver. 8. *Above when he said*, etc..] In the afore cited place, (<19407>Psalm 40:7,8)

Sacrifice and offering, and burnt offerings, and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; this is a recapitulation of what is before said; and all kind of sacrifices are mentioned, to show that they are all imperfect, and insufficient, and are abolished; and the abrogation of them is expressed in the strongest terms, as that God would not have them, and that he took no pleasure in them:

which are offered by the law; according as that directs and enjoins: this clause is added, to distinguish these sacrifices from spiritual ones, under the Gospel dispensation, and which are well pleasing to God; and to prevent an objection against the abolition of them, taken from hence, that they are according to the law; and yet, notwithstanding this, God will not have them, nor accept of them.

Ver. 9. *Then said he, [lo], I come to do thy will, O God*, etc..] (See Gill on "<19407>Hebrews 10:7")

he taketh away the first, that he may establish the second; the sense is, either that God has taken away, and abolished the law, that he might establish the Gospel; or he has caused the first covenant to vanish away, that place might be found for the second, or new covenant; or he has changed and abrogated the priesthood of Aaron, that he might confirm the unchangeable priesthood of Christ; or rather he has taken away that which was first spoken of in the above citation, namely, sacrifice, offering, burnt offerings, and sin offerings; these he has removed and rejected as insignificant and useless, that he might establish what is mentioned in the second place; namely, the will of God, which is no other than the sacrifice of Christ, offered up according to the will of God, and by which his will is done.

Ver. 10. *By the which will we are sanctified*, etc..] That is, by the sacrifice of Christ, which was willingly offered up by himself, and was according to the will of God; it was his will of purpose that Christ should be crucified

and slain; and it was his will of command, that he should lay down his life for his people; and it was grateful and well pleasing to him, that his soul should be made an offering for sin; and that for this reason, because hereby the people of God are sanctified, their sins are perfectly expiated, the full pardon of them is procured, their persons are completely justified from sin, and their consciences purged from it: even

through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all; this is said, not to the exclusion of his soul; it designs his whole human nature, and that as in union with his divine person; and is particularly mentioned, in allusion to the legal sacrifices, the bodies of slain beasts, which were types of him, and with a reference to his Father's preparation of a body for him, for this purpose, (<scripRef type="bible">Hebrews 10:5</scripRef>). Moreover, his obedience to his Father's will was chiefly seen in his body; this was offered upon the cross; and his blood, which atones for sin, and cleanses from it, was shed out of it: and this oblation was “once for all”; which gives it the preference to Levitical sacrifices; destroys the Socinian notion of Christ's continual offering himself in heaven; and confutes the error of the Popish mass, or of the offering of Christ's body in it.

Ver. 11. *And every priest standeth daily ministering*, etc..] The Alexandrian copy, one of Stephens's, the Complutensian edition, the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, read, “every high priest”; who might minister daily, if he would; but since the daily sacrifice was generally offered by the common priests, these are rather designed. The apostle passes from the anniversary sacrifices offered by the high priest on the day of atonement, having shown the insufficiency and imperfection of them, to the lambs of the daily sacrifice, which were offered morning and evening, and whatsoever else might be daily offered on other accounts; and which he also shows are equally ineffectual to take away sin; almost every word he uses shows the imperfection of the priesthood of Aaron, and serves to illustrate the priesthood of Christ. When he says “every priest”, it supposes there were more than one, as indeed there were many, not only in succession to one another, but together, having different parts of service to perform; and everyone of them “standeth” at the altar, showing that his work was not done; and the present tense is used, because sacrifice in fact had not ceased at the writing of this epistle, though of right it ought to have done; and he stood “daily ministering”; every day, and sometimes often in a day, and always morning and night, (<scripRef type="bible">Exodus 29:38,39</scripRef>) The priest always stood to minister, (<scripRef type="bible">Deuteronomy 18:5</scripRef>). Hence the Jews

say [f210], there is no ministration or service, dmw[m ala, "but standing"; and perhaps some reference may be had to twdm[m, the "stations" [f211], or stationary men, who were always upon the spot at Jerusalem, to offer for such as were at a distance.

And offering oftentimes the same sacrifices; as a lamb in the morning, and another at evening; and if it was a burnt offering, or a sin offering, or an offering for the purification of a woman, or for the cleansing of the leper, they were always the same: and this frequent offering, and the offering of the same things, show that they were such

which can never take away sins; for notwithstanding these many and repeated offerings, even the sins of Old Testament saints remained to be atoned for by Christ; (see <450325>Romans 3:25 <581015>Hebrews 9:15).

Ver. 12. *But this man*, etc..] Jesus Christ, for he is a man, though not a mere man; or this great high priest, who came to do the will of God, and whose body was offered once for all:

after he had offered one sacrifice for sins; the sacrifice of himself, body and soul, and this but once:

for ever sat down on the right hand of God; as having done his work effectually, and that with acceptance; and therefore is placed as a token of honour at the right hand of God, where he sits enjoying rest, ease, and pleasure, and that for ever; all which is opposed to the priests under the law; they were many, he but one; they offered many sacrifices, he but one; they offered theirs often, every day, he but once; they stood ministering, he sat down; his sacrifice being effectual to take away sin, when theirs was not.

Ver. 13. *From henceforth expecting*, etc..] According to God's promise and declaration to him, (<190110>Psalm 110:1).

Till his enemies be made his footstool, (See Gill on "<581013>Hebrews 1:13").

Ver. 14. *For by one offering*, etc..] The same as before; himself, body and soul; this is a reason why he is set down, and will continue so for ever, and why he expects his enemies to be made his footstool; because by one sacrifice for sin, which he has once offered,

he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified; that is, who are sanctified by God the Father, (Jude 1:1) or, who are set apart by him in eternal election, from the rest of the world, for his own use, service, and glory, to a state of grace and holiness here, and happiness hereafter; for this is not to be understood either of their being sanctified in Christ, though the Syriac version reads, “that are sanctified” in him, or by his Spirit, though both are true of the same persons; these Christ, by his sacrifice, has perfected, and has perfectly fulfilled the law for them; he has perfectly expiated their sins; he has obtained the full pardon of all their sins, and complete redemption; he has perfectly justified them from all things, and that for ever; which shows the continued virtue of Christ's sacrifice, in all generations, to all the elect of God, and the fulness and duration of their salvation; and so Christ by his one sacrifice did what the law, and all its sacrifices, could not do, (Hebrews 10:1).

Ver. 15. *Wherefore the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us*, etc..] In (Jeremiah 31:33,34). This preface to the following citation shows that the books of the Old Testament are of divine original and authority; that the penmen of them were inspired by the Holy Ghost; that he existed in the times of the Old Testament; that he is truly and properly God, the Lord, or Jehovah, that speaks in the following verses; and that he is a distinct divine Person, and the author of the covenant of grace; and in what he says in that covenant, he bears testimony to the truths before delivered, concerning the insufficiency and abolition of legal sacrifices, and of full and perfect remission of sin, by the blood and sacrifice of Christ:

for after that he had said before; what is expressed in the following verse.

Ver. 16. *This is the covenant that I will make with them*, etc..] (See Gill on “Hebrews 8:10”).

Ver. 17. *And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more*.] (See Gill on “Hebrews 8:10”). The words are cited to a different purpose here than there; the principal thing for which they are cited here, is to observe God's promise of non-remembrance of sin; which is no other than remission of sin, and which is not consistent with legal sacrifices, in which there is a remembrance of sin every year, (Hebrews 10:3) and consequently, since this new covenant has taken place, legal sacrifices must be abolished, as the apostle argues in the next verse. In one of Beza's copies are inserted, at the, beginning of this verse, these words, “then he

said", which seem necessary to answer to the last clause of (<3805>Hebrews 10:15).

Ver. 18. *Now where remission of these is*, etc..] That is, of these sins; and that there is remission of them, is evident from this promise of the covenant, just now produced; from God's gracious proclamation of it; from the shedding of Christ's blood for it; from his exaltation at the Father's right hand to give it; from the Gospel declaration of it; and from the several instances of persons favoured with it:

there is no more offering for sin; there may be other offerings, as of praise and thanksgiving, but none for sin; "there is no need", as the Syriac version; or there is not required, as the Arabic version; there is no need of the reiteration of Christ's sacrifice, nor will he be offered up any more, nor of the repetition of legal sacrifices, nor ought they to continue any longer. The Jews themselves say [f212], that

> "in the time to come (i.e. in the times of the Messiah) all offerings shall cease, but the sacrifice of praise."

And one of their writers says [f213], when

> "the King Messiah, the son of David, shall reign, there will be no need of hrpk, "an atonement", nor of deliverance, or prosperity, for all these things will be had;"

Ver. 19. *Having therefore, brethren*, etc..] As they were to the apostle, in a natural and civil sense, being Hebrews, as well as in a spiritual relation, being believers in Christ; which is observed, to testify his affection to them, and to engage their regard to the duties hereafter urged, particularly brotherly love, and to signify their common and equal right to the privilege next mentioned, which is

boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus: the place saints have boldness to enter into is heaven, called "the holiest", in reference to the holy of holies, in the tabernacle; which was a type of it, for the sacredness and invisibility of it, and for what was in it, went into it, or was brought thither; as the Shechinah, or divine Majesty, which resided there; the high priest who went into it once a year; the blood of sacrifices which was carried into it; the sweet incense; the ark of the testimony, in which was the law; and the mercy seat; all which were typical of Christ, his person, blood, sacrifice, righteousness, intercession, and the grace and

mercy which come through him. Heaven was symbolically shut by the sin of man, when he was drove out of the garden of Eden; it was typically opened by the entrance of the high priest into the holy of holies, on the day of atonement; Christ has in person entered into it by his blood, and opened the way for his people; and believers in him may "enter" now, and they do, when they exercise grace on him, who is there, and when they come and present their prayers and praises to God by him; and they have now an actual right to enter into the place itself, and will hereafter enter in person: and the manner of their present entrance is, "with boldness"; which signifies their right unto it, the liberty granted them by God, and the liberty which they sometimes have in their own souls, and great courage and intrepidity of mind; which arises from a sense of remission of sins, as may be concluded from the connection of these words with the preceding; and is found to be true by experience; and such boldness is consistent with reverence, humility, and submission. The way of entrance is "by the blood of Jesus"; and which gives both entrance and boldness; for hereby sin is removed both from the sight of God, and the conscience of the believer; peace is made with God, and spoken to him; pardon is procured, law and justice satisfied, and neither to be feared, and the everlasting covenant confirmed.

Ver. 20. *By a new and living way*, etc..] Which is Christ, the God-man and Mediator; who is called the "new" way, not as to contrivance, revelation, or use; for it was contrived before the world was, and was revealed to our first parents, immediately after the fall, and was made use of by all the Old Testament saints; but in distinction to the old way of life, by the covenant of works; and because newly revealed with greater clearness and evidence; (see <BIBLE>Hebrews 10:8) and because it is always new, it never will be old, nor otherwise, there never will be another way: some render it, "a new slain way"; because Jesus was but newly slain, and his blood lately shed, by which the way is, and entrance is with boldness: and Christ is a "living way"; in opposition to the dead carcasses of slain beasts, and to the dead and killing letter of the law; Christ gives life to all his people; and all that walk in him, the way, live; and none in this way ever die; it leads to eternal life, and infallibly brings them thither:

which he hath consecrated for us; either God the Father, and so it intends the designation of Christ to be the way to life and happiness, and the qualification of him for it, by preparing a body, an human nature for him, and anointing it with the Holy Spirit, and the instalment of him into his

priestly office, called a consecration, (Hebrews 10:28) or else Christ himself, and so designs his compliance with his Father's will, and his devoting of himself to this service; his preparation of himself to be the way, by the shedding of his blood, and by his entrance into heaven, and by giving a clearer discovery of this way in the Gospel, by which life and immortality are brought to light: and this is

done through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; the human nature of Christ, through which the way to heaven is opened, renewed, and consecrated, is compared to the vail of the tabernacle, (Exodus 26:31-33) the matter of which that was made, was fine twined linen, which the Jews [f214] say was of thread six times doubled; which may denote the holiness of Christ's human nature; the strength, courage, and steadfastness of it, under all its sorrows and sufferings; and the purity and duration of his righteousness; the colours of it were blue, purple, and scarlet, which may signify the sufferings of the human nature; the preciousness of Christ's blood, and the dignity of his person, and his royalty; purple and scarlet being wore by kings: the vail was of cunning work, which may intend the curious workmanship of Christ's human nature, and the graces of the Spirit, with which it is adorned; and it was made with “cherubim”, pointing to the ministration of angels, both to Christ, and to his people. The pillars of it may signify the deity of Christ, the support of his human nature, in which it has its personal subsistence; and being of Shittim wood, may denote his eternity: and being covered with gold, his glory: its hooks and sockets may be symbolical of the union of the two natures in him.

Ver. 21. *And [having an] high priest over the house of God*.] The church of God, over which Christ is as prophet, priest, and King, and as the Son and owner of it; (see Gill on “Hebrews 3:6”); (see Gill on “Hebrews 4:14”). In the Greek text it is, “a great priest”; so the Messiah is called by the Targum on (Zechariah 6:12) br ˆhk, “a great priest”, as he is; even a great high priest, as in (Hebrews 4:14), and greater than Aaron, and any of his sons.

Ver. 22. *Let us draw near with a true heart*, etc..] Either to the holiest of all, into which the saints have boldness to enter; or to Christ the high priest, who is entered there; or to the house of God, over which he is an high priest; or rather to God himself, as on a throne of grace, on the mercy seat in heaven, the most holy place: to “draw near” to him is a sacerdotal act, common to all the saints, who are made priests to God; and includes

the whole of divine worship, but more especially designs prayer; to which believers are encouraged from the liberty and boldness they may have and use, of entering into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; from Christ's being the new and living way into it, and from his being an high priest over the house of God: the manner of drawing near is, “with a true heart”; not with the body only, but with the heart principally; with a renewed one, one that is right with God, and is single and sincere, is hearty in its desires, and upright in its ends.

In full assurance of faith; in God, Father, Son, and Spirit; without faith, drawing near to God can neither be acceptable to him, nor of service to men; and a full assurance of faith, with respect to the object drawn nigh unto, and of the way unto him, and of acceptance with him through Christ, and of having the petitions put up to him granted, is very comfortable to believers, greatly becomes them, and is well pleasing to God:

having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience; which is blind, inactive, partial, stupid, or guilty; and it is the blood of Christ, which being sprinkled on it by the Spirit of God, purges it from dead works, cleanses it from all sin, and speaks peace and pardon to it; and such may draw near with freedom and boldness, with readiness and cheerfulness, and with reverence and godly fear:

and our bodies washed with pure water; not baptismal water, but the grace of the Spirit, which is often compared to water, in Scripture: the body, as well as soul, needs washing, and renewing; internal grace influences outward, actions, which adorn religion, and without which bodies cannot be presented holy to God. The allusion is to a custom of the Jews, who were obliged to wash their bodies, and make them clean, when they prayed. So Aben Ezra observes on (<0135D2>Genesis 35:2)

> “that every Israelite, when he went to pray at a fixed place, was obliged to have yqn wpwg, “his body pure”, and his garments pure.”

So a priest might not enter into the court for service, though clean, until he had washed himself all over[f215]; and it is to sacerdotal acts that the reference is here.

Ver. 23. *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering*, etc..] Either in the grace or doctrine of faith, or in the profession of both; (see Gill on “<580414>Hebrews 4:14”).

For he [is] faithful that promised; that is God; and it is true of Father, Son, and Spirit; but God the Father may be more especially designed: he is a promising God, and is known to be so by his people; he is eminently and emphatically the Promiser; and all other promisers, and the promises made by them, signify little; but the promises of God are exceeding great and precious, very ancient, free, and unconditional, irrevocable and immutable, and are admirably suited to the cases of his people, and will be fulfilled everyone of them: they include in them things temporal, spiritual, and eternal; things temporal, as that his people shall not want, that their afflictions shall work for good, and that he will support them under all their troubles; things spiritual, as that he will be their God, which takes in his everlasting love to them, and his gracious presence with them, and his protection of them; and that all grace shall be wrought in them, and every blessing of grace bestowed on them: and things eternal; as everlasting glory and happiness; the promise of eternal life was in God's heart, made in the covenant, and put into Christ's hands before the world began, and is declared in the Gospel: now God is faithful to all his promises, nor can he fail, or deceive; he is all wise and foreknowing of everything that comes to pass; he never changes his mind, nor forgets his word; and he is able to perform, and is the God of truth, and cannot lie; nor has he ever failed in anyone of his promises, nor will he suffer his faithfulness to fail; and this is a strong argument to hold fast a profession of faith.

Ver. 24. *And let us consider one another*, etc..] Saints should consider one another as men, that they are but men, of like passions and infirmities; they should consider their different tempers, and make allowance for them, and their outward state and condition in the world: they should consider one another as saints, partakers of the same grace; as that they are all loved with the same love, all conceived and brought forth in the womb of God's eternal electing grace, interested in the same covenant, redeemed by the same blood, and have the same graces and privileges, and an equal right to glory; having one and the same Spirit, the same grace of faith, the same righteousness, the same fountain to wash in, the same fulness to partake of, the same throne of grace to go to, and the same inheritance to enjoy: they should consider one another as church members, the grace and gifts of the another, their different age and standing in the church, their relation to each other as brethren; they should consider them under suffering or sorrowful circumstances, under afflictions, temptations, desertions, declensions, and

as attended with infirmities and sins: and the end of such consideration should be,

to provoke unto love; to brotherly love, to stir it up, and stir up to it, which is apt to wax cold, that so it may be rekindled, and give a most vehement flame; for this is Christ's new commandment, the bond of perfection, the evidence of regeneration, that which makes the saints' communion comfortable and delightful, and without which a profession of religion is in vain.

And to good works; not for justification before God, and in order to procure salvation; but that God may be glorified, the Gospel adorned, the mouths of gainsayers stopped, faith evidenced to the world, and gratitude to God for his benefits shown, and for the profit and advantage of fellow creatures, and fellow Christians.

Ver. 25. *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*, etc..] Or the episynagogue of one another; which word is used to distinguish Christian assemblies from Jewish synagogues, and to denote the coalition of Jews and Gentiles in one church state, and to express the saints' gathering together to Christ; (see <500201>2 Thessalonians 2:1) and their act of meeting together in some one place to attend his worship, word, and ordinances. Now to “forsake” such assembling, signifies a great infrequency in attending with the saints, a rambling from place to place, and takes in an entire apostasy. It is the duty of saints to assemble together for public worship, on the account of God, who has appointed it, who approves of it, and whose glory is concerned in it; and on the account of the saints themselves, that they may be delighted, refreshed, comforted, instructed, edified, and perfected; and on account of others, that they may be convinced, converted, and brought to the knowledge and faith of Christ; and in imitation of the primitive saints. And an assembling together ought not to be forsaken; for it is a forsaking God, and their own mercies, and such are like to be forsaken of God; nor is it known what is lost hereby; and it is the first outward visible step to apostasy, and often issues in it.

As the manner of some is; or custom; and this prevailing custom among these Jews might arise from contempt of the Gentiles, or from fear of reproach and persecution: and in our day, this evil practice arises sometimes from a vain conceit of being in no need of ordinances, and from an over love of the world, and from a great declension in the exercise of grace; the consequence of it is very bad. The Jews[f216] reckon among those

that go down to hell, and perish, and have no part in the world to come, rwbx ykrdm µyçrwph, "who separate from the ways of the congregation"; that is, who do not do the duties thereof, attend with it, and fast when that does, and the like:

but exhorting one another; to prayer, to attend public worship, to regard all the duties of religion, to adhere to Christ, and a profession of him, and to consider him, and walk on in him: or "comforting one another"; by meeting privately together, and conferring about experience, and the doctrines of grace; and by observing to one another the promises of God, relating to public worship; and by putting each other in mind of the bright day of the Lord, that is coming on:

and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching; either of death, or the last judgment, or rather of Jerusalem's destruction; which at the writing of this epistle was near at hand; and was an affair that greatly concerned these Hebrews; and by various symptoms might be observed by them, as approaching; and which was no inconsiderable argument to engage them to a diligent discharge of their duty; unless the day of darkness, infidelity, and blasphemy in the last days of the world, should be intended, after which will succeed the latter day glory.

Ver. 26. *For if we sin wilfully*, etc..]] Which is not to be understood of a single act of sin, but rather of a course of sinning; nor of sins of infirmity through temptation, or even of grosser acts of sin, but of voluntary ones; and not of all voluntary ones, or in which the will is engaged and concerned, but of such which are done on set purpose, resolutely and obstinately; and not of immoral practices, but of corrupt principles, and acting according to them; it intends a total apostasy from the truth, against light and evidence, joined with obstinacy.

After that we have received the knowledge of the truth; either of Jesus Christ, or of the Scriptures, or of the Gospel, or of some particular doctrine, especially the principal one, salvation by Christ; of which there may be a notional knowledge, when there is no experimental knowledge; and which is received not into the heart, but into the head: and whereas the apostle speaks in the first person plural, we, this is used not so much with regard to himself, but others; that so what he delivered might come with greater weight upon them, and be more readily received by them; when they observed he entertained no hard thoughts or jealousies of them, which

would greatly distress the minds of those that were truly gracious. Moreover, the apostles use this way of speaking, when they do not design themselves at all, but others, under the same visible profession of religion, and who belonged to the same community of believers; (see 1 Peter 4:3 Titus 3:3 Ephesians 2:3) compared with (Acts 22:3 26:5 Philippians 3:6). Besides, these words are only hypothetical, and do not prove that true believers could, or should, or do sin in this manner: to which may be added, that true believers are manifestly distinguished from these persons, (Hebrews 10:38,39),

there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins; meaning, not typical sacrifice; for though the daily sacrifice ought to have ceased at the death of Christ, yet it did not in fact until the destruction of Jerusalem; but the sacrifice of Christ, which will never be repeated; Christ will die no more; his blood will not be shed again, nor his sacrifice reiterated; nor will any other sacrifice be offered; there will be no other Saviour; there is no salvation in any other, nor any other name whereby we must be saved. These words have been wrongly made use of to prove that persons sinning after baptism are not to be restored to communion again upon repentance; and being understood of immoral actions wilfully committed, have given great distress to consciences burdened with the guilt of sin, committed after a profession of religion; but the true sense of the whole is this, that after men have embraced and professed the truths of the Gospel, and particularly this great truth of it, that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of men by his blood and sacrifice; and yet after this, against all evidence, all the light and convictions of their own consciences, they wilfully deny this truth, and obstinately persist in the denial of it; seeing there is no more, no other sacrifice for sin, no other Saviour, nor any salvation in any other way, the case of these men must be desperate; there is no help for them, nor hope of them; for by this their sin they shut up against themselves, in principle and practice, the way of salvation, as follows.

Ver. 27. *But a certain fearful looking for of judgment*, etc..] Either of some outward visible judgment in this life, which sometimes falls on such persons; or of the particular judgment which immediately follows after death; or of the universal judgment, after the resurrection, and the dreadful sentence of condemnation which will then pass, and be immediately executed; and which will be done by Christ, and according to truth, and in strict justice; it is certain, and there will be no escaping it, for it will be general. Now there is in this life an expectation in men of a future

judgment, and in wicked men it is a fearful one; it is dreaded by them, and more especially in such men before described, when their consciences are awakened; it is a very dreadful one, inexpressibly so:

and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries; which is to be understood, not of the fire of purgatory, for this is after judgment, that is pretended to be before it; this devours, that only purges, according to the Papists; this is for adversaries, that, as is supposed, is for friends: but perhaps some fiery judgment, expressive of the wrath and indignation of God, such as befell Sodom and Gomorrah, the two sons of Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and the men that rose up with Korah against Moses and Aaron: or rather the fire of hell, which is not corporeal and material, but is the wrath of God let down into the conscience; which shows the vile nature of sin, the strictness of God's justice, and the intolerableness of future punishment: and this is said to “devour the adversaries”; not only open ones, but secret, underhanded enemies, as the word here signifies; as such apostates are, before described, to God, and Christ, and the Spirit; to the Gospel, its doctrine, discipline, and ordinances; and to the children of God, and to the power of godliness in them: and with the fire of God's wrath they shall be devoured; not so as to be annihilated, but shall be eternally destroyed, both soul and body; that is, everlastingly punished, or punished with everlasting destruction.

Ver. 28. *He that despised Moses' law*, etc..] By breaking it wilfully, and presumptuously, for which there was no sacrifice; meaning the law which Moses was the minister of not the author; and it respects the whole body of laws given by him, from God; and is instanced in for the sake of the comparison between him and Christ, and between the law and the Gospel, and for the illustration of the case in hand. Now one that transgressed that law, either in whole, or in part, by denying it entirely, or by breaking any particular precept of it presumptuously,

died without mercy; a corporeal death; there was no atonement nor sacrifice for him, nor pity to be shown him, (Deuteronomy 13:8 19:13).

Under two or three witnesses; who “stood by”, or were present, as the Arabic version renders it, when the transgression was committed; or that “accused him”, as the Ethiopic version; that were witnesses against him, and plainly and fully proved the fact, (Deuteronomy 17:6 19:15).

Ver. 29. *Of how much sorer punishment*, etc..] Than a mere corporeal death, which was the punishment inflicted on the transgressors of the law of Moses.

Suppose ye; the apostle appeals to the Hebrews themselves, and makes them judges of what punishment

shall he be thought worthy; who is described as follows:

who hath trodden under foot the Son of God: this seems to be a stronger expression than crucifying him again, (⁵⁸⁶⁶Hebrews 6:6) and is to be understood, not of what was in fact committed, but in will by persons; who, could they have had their will of him, would have pulled him from his throne, and trampled upon him: it is a phrase expressive of the utmost scorn, contempt, and ill usage; and which such are guilty of, who deny his deity, and eternal sonship; who render him useless in his offices, undervalue his sacrifice, despise his righteousness, and strip him of the glory of his person, office, and grace. And this is aggravated by his being the Son of God who is thus used, who became the son of man for the sake of men, is superior to men, and equal with God:

and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing; or "common thing"; putting it upon a level with the blood of a bullock, or at most counting it çnlkd Æya, "as that of another man"; as the Syriac version renders it; yea, reckoning it as unclean and abominable, as the blood of a very wicked man: this is aggravated by its being "the blood of the covenant"; of the covenant of grace, because that is ratified and confirmed by it, and the blessings of it come through it; and from sanctification by it: either of the person, the apostate himself, who was sanctified or separated from others by a visible profession of religion; having given himself up to a church, to walk with it in the ordinances of the Gospel; and having submitted to baptism, and partook of the Lord's supper, and drank of the cup, "the blood of the New Testament", or "covenant": though he did not spiritually discern the body and blood of Christ in the ordinance, but counted the bread and wine, the symbols of them, as common things; or who professed himself, and was looked upon by others, to be truly sanctified by the Spirit, and to be justified by the blood of Christ, though he was not really so: or rather the Son of God himself is meant, who was sanctified, set apart, hallowed, and consecrated, as Aaron and his sons were sanctified by the sacrifices of slain beasts, to

minister in the priest's office: so Christ, when he had offered himself, and shed his precious blood, by which the covenant of grace was ratified, by the same blood he was brought again from the dead, and declared to be the Son of God with power; and being set down at God's right hand, he ever lives to make intercession, which is the other part of his priestly office he is sanctified by his own blood to accomplish. This clause, “wherewith he was sanctified”, is left out in the Alexandrian copy:

and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace; by denying his being, deity, and personality; despising his powerful operations as enthusiasm; treating his extraordinary gifts as illusions; and ascribing his miracles to Satan, and representing the Gospel dictated by him as a fable, or a lie: and this is aggravated by his being “the spirit of grace”; the author, giver, and applier of all grace to the saints; and who therefore ought not to be in the least slighted, but highly esteemed and honoured; nor will such affronts go unpunished.

Ver. 30. *For we know him that hath said*, etc..] That is, God, whom the apostle and the Hebrews knew; not merely by the works of creation and providence, but by the Scriptures, which they were favoured with, and by which they were distinguished from the Gentiles, and by which they knew his being, nature, and perfections; particularly, that what he said he was able to perform, and that he was true and faithful to every word of his, and to what he has said, (Deuteronomy 32:35)

vengeance [belongeth] unto me, I will recompence, saith the Lord. Vengeance belongs to God, not as to the affection, as if there was any such passion in him; but as to the effect, there being that produced by him, which answers to the effect of such a passion among men, namely punishment: and punishment for sin belongs to God, against whom it is committed; and not to Heathen deities, one of which goes by the name of Vengeance, (Acts 28:4) nor to Satan, and his spiteful angels; nor to men, to exercise it in a private and personal way; though civil magistrates, being in God's stead, are allowed to exercise it in a public way, according to the laws of God: and there is good reason to believe, that what the Lord here says, “I will recompence”, or revenge sin, shall be done; which may be concluded from his hatred of sin; from his purity, holiness, and justice; from his faithfulness to his word; from his omnipotence; from the notice he takes of sin, in his own people, in a way of chastisement, and correction; and from the vengeance he has poured on his own Son, as their surety.

And again, in (Deuteronomy 32:36) the Lord shall judge his people; such as are truly so, his chosen and covenant people, his redeemed and called ones; these he judges by chastising them in a fatherly way, that they may not be condemned with the world; and by governing and protecting them; and by vindicating and pleading their cause, and avenging them on their enemies: or else such as are only his people by profession; on these he will write a “Lo-ammi”; he distinguishes them from his own, and judges between them and his people, and will condemn them; nor will their profession screen them from his wrath and vengeance.

Ver. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*.] For this is to be understood not in a good sense; so in general all mankind may be said to fall into, or be in the hands of God, as they are the work of his hands, the care of his providence, and are subject to his sovereignty; and in especial manner, believers, whose times and persons are in God's hand, which bespeaks his great affection for them, their nearness to him, the support they have by him, and protection from him; and they choose to fall into the hands of him as a chastising Father, rather than into the hands of men, and at death commend themselves into his hands: but here it is taken in a bad sense, and signifies to be arrested by justice as a criminal, and be brought to the bar of God, and receive the sentence of condemnation; when such will feel the weight of his hand, and the fierceness of his wrath; and this is “a fearful thing”: it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of men, injured and affronted, and that have power, and will show no mercy; it is very tremendous to fall into the hands of God, in the way of his judgments in this world; the apprehensions of a future judgment are terrible before hand; and the apparatus of the judgment, when it comes, will be very striking and surprising; but to stand before the Judge, charged with sin, naked, and without righteousness, speechless, and no one to speak in favour of them; to hear the dreadful sentence pronounced, and feel the wrath of God to the uttermost, how horrible must this be! the aggravations of this are, that it is into the hands “of God” that such fall, and not into the hands of men, or mere creatures; but of God, who is omniscient, and sees through all pretences; omnipotent, and none can rescue out of his hands by force; omnipresent, and so no escaping from him; just and faithful, and not to bribed, inexorable, immutable, and unalterable: and that he is “the living God”; in opposition to the lifeless deities of the Gentiles, and to mortal men; and is expressive of his eternity, and so of the duration of the sinner's punishment, that falls into his hands.

Ver. 32. *But call to remembrance the former days*, etc..] The words may be considered either as a declaration of what they had done, and be read, “but ye do call to remembrance”, etc.. or as an exhortation to remember the days of their espousals, the times of their first conversion: and the apostle's design in this is, to mitigate the terror the preceding words might strike them with; and to aggravate the disgrace of turning back, when they had behaved so bravely in former times; and to encourage their faith and trust in God:

in which after ye were illuminated, by the Spirit of God, to see their impurity, impotence, and unrighteousness, and their lost and miserable state by nature; and to behold Christ and salvation by him; and to have some light into the doctrines of the Gospel; and some glimmering of the glories of another world. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it “baptized”; now such as are converted, and are brought to make a public profession of their faith, and submit to the ordinances of Christ, are, in common, immediately called to suffer reproach and persecution of one kind or another; so Christ, after his baptism, was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil: Satan is spiteful and malicious, and God suffers afflictions to befall his people to try their graces, and to inure them to troubles early, as follows;

ye endured a great fight of afflictions; meaning some violent persecution from their own countrymen, either at the death of Stephen, in which the apostle, being then unconverted; was concerned himself; or rather some other time of trouble, after the apostle was converted, to which he seems to have respect in (<52214>1 Thessalonians 2:14,15), these Hebrews, being enlisted as soldiers under Christ, the Captain of their salvation, were quickly engaged in a warfare, and were called forth to fight a fight of afflictions, and a very great one; and which they endured with patience, courage, and intrepidity.

Ver. 33. *Partly whilst ye were made a gazing stock*, etc..] Brought upon the stage or theatre, and made a spectacle to the world, angels, and men, (<46409>1 Corinthians 4:9)

both by reproaches and afflictions; suffering both in their characters and reputations, and in their persons and substance:

and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used; they maintained their communion with them, relieved them in distress, and sympathized with them.

Ver. 34. *For ye had compassion of me in my bonds*, etc..] When he was bound at Jerusalem, by the chief captain Lysias, with two chains, (<442133>Acts 21:33) or when he was in bonds elsewhere; which they did by sympathizing with him in their hearts; by their prayers for him, and in their letters to him; and by sending presents to him for his relief and support. The Alexandrian copy, and two of Stephens's, the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read, "had compassion on the prisoners"; or "them that were bound"; meaning prisoners in general, remembering them that were in bonds, as bound with them; or particularly such as were prisoners for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel; and it may be some of them, which the apostle himself committed to prison, in his state of unregeneracy:

and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods; the furniture of their houses, their worldly substance, of which they were stripped by their persecutors; and this they took quietly and patiently, yea, joyfully; rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer the confiscation of their goods for the sake of Christ: the reason of which joy was,

knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance: that which is laid up for the saints in heaven is "substance"; it is signified by an house, a city, a kingdom; and so it is rendered here in the Ethiopic version; and by riches, true, glorious, and durable; and by a treasure and an inheritance: and this is "better" than anything in this world; as to the quality of it, it being celestial; and as to the quantity of it, it being all things; and as to the place where it is, "in heaven"; though this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; and as to the company with whom it is enjoyed, saints in light; yea, God himself is the portion of his people: and this is an "enduring" substance; it cannot be wasted by the saints themselves; nor taken away from them by others; nor can it decay in its own nature; and the saints will always endure to enjoy it: and this they may be said to "have": it is promised to them, and prepared for them; they have a right unto it, and the earnest of it; and they have it already in Christ, their head and representative; so that it is, upon all accounts, sure unto them: and this they know in themselves; from what they find and feel in their own hearts; from

the sealing testimony and earnest of the Spirit, and from the promise of Christ, (<4010>Matthew 5:10).

Ver. 35. *Cast not away therefore your confidence*, etc..] The same word is used here, as in (<5810>Hebrews 10:19) where it is translated “boldness”; and may design here, as there, an holy boldness in prayer, free from a servile and bashful spirit; and which appears in a liberty of speaking to God, and in a confidence of being heard; prayer itself should not be left off, nor should freedom, boldness, and confidence in it be slackened, or laid aside: or else a profession of faith is intended, which ought to be free and open, bold and courageous, firm and constant; and which ought by no means to be let go and dropped: or the grace of faith in its full assurance, with respect to interest in God, as a covenant God and Father, and in his love; and with respect to interest in Christ, and in his grace, and a right to the glorious inheritance, the better and enduring substance: and this shield of faith is by no means to be cast away; it was reckoned infamous and scandalous in soldiers to lose or cast away their shield; with the Grecians it was a capital crime, and punished with death [f217]; to which the apostle may here allude. There are two sorts of believers, nominal and real; and there are two sorts of faith; an historical one, which may be in persons destitute of the grace of God, and is in devils; and a true and unfeigned one, which has salvation connected with it; the former may be cast away and lost; the latter, though it may be remiss and weak in its exercise, yet it cannot be wholly and finally lost; and this exhortation may be designed as a means of continuing it, and of perseverance in it: the reason urging it follows,

which hath great recompence of reward; freedom and boldness in prayer has its reward, for such that ask in faith shall have; and so has a firm and constant profession of religion, for he that endures to the end shall be saved; and so has a true and strong faith in Christ; everlasting salvation is connected with it; the reward of the inheritance follows upon it; and this reward is the recompense of God's own grace: and it is a very great one; it is the fruit of great love and grace; yea, it is no other than God himself, who is the exceeding great reward of his people; it is Christ and his glory, and the riches of it; it is a reward exceeding, and beyond all deserts of men, and beyond all thought and expression.

Ver. 36. *For ye have need of patience*, etc..] Not that they were destitute of the grace of patience; for where God is the God of all grace, he is the God of patience; and such, who are called by grace, are conformed to the

image of Christ, and, among other things, are like him in this; and those who are born of the Spirit, have the fruits of the Spirit, and this, among the rest; to whom the word of God is effectual, this fruit is produced in them, that being the word of patience; and such who are brought into the kingdom of Christ, are also in the patience of Jesus; where there is one grace, there is every grace; saints are immediately called to sufferings and trials, which require patience; and, without this, there can be no enjoyment of a man's self: but the meaning is, that they needed the continuance, exercise, and increase of it; in general, to run the race set before them; to bear afflictions from the hand of God, and reproaches and persecutions from men; to wait for God, when he hides his face, and for answers of prayer, when they are deferred; and to bear up, and not to sink under temptations; and to live in the constant expectation of heaven and happiness: and, in particular, it is necessary for the following,

that after ye have done the will of God: there is the purposing will of God, which is done by himself; and there is his revealed will, touching the salvation of men, which is done by his Son; and there is his will of precept to be done by men; and which, when done aright, is done according to the rule of his word, in faith, from love, through the strength of Christ, and by the assistance of his Spirit and grace, with a view to his glory, and without any dependence on what is done: and the will of God regards suffering, as well as doing; for to that the saints are also called, to which patience is necessary:

ye might receive the promise; that is, of eternal life; not the promise itself, which they had received already, but the thing promised; which is the sense, in which this word is often used in this book, (Hebrews 6:12,17 11:13,39) which is so called, to show that it is not of works, for promise and merit do not agree together; but that it is of grace, and will certainly be enjoyed, but must be patiently waited for.

Ver. 37. *For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come*, etc..] That the person spoken of is the Lord Jesus Christ, is evident from the prophecy in (Habakkuk 2:3) here referred to, and from the character of him that is to come, (Matthew 11:3) and from parallel places, (James 5:7-9) and this is to be understood, not of his coming in the flesh, for he was come in the flesh already; though Habakkuk indeed refers to his first coming, yet not to that only, but including his second coming also; but of his coming in his kingdom and power to destroy Jerusalem, and

take vengeance on the Jews, for their rejection of him: the kingdom of Christ was at hand, when he began to preach; upon his ascension to heaven, it began to appear more visible; but still the temple was standing, and that worship continued, which stood in the way of the glory of his kingdom; during which time the saints suffered much: but in a little while from the writing of this epistle, he, who was to come, did come, even within about ten years after this, and showed his power and his glory, in delivering his people, and destroying his enemies; (see <4016 28>Matthew 16:28 <4109 1>Mark 9:1). It may be applied to his coming to help his people in time of need; the afflictions of the saints are many; they are all for an appointed time, and but for a while; and Christ has promised to come, and visit them; and which he does often, and speedily, and seasonably: it may also be accommodated to Christ coming to take his people to himself by death; Christ may be said to come in this sense, and he will certainly come; and this will be in a little while; man is but of few days; death is certain, and should be patiently expected: and it may likewise be suitably improved, with respect to Christ's coming to judgment; that he will come is certain, from prophecies, particularly from the prophecy of Enoch, from his own words, from the testimony of angels, from the institution of the Lord's supper, till he comes, and from the general expectation of the saints; and this coming of his is desirable, because it will be the marriage of the Lamb, and the redemption of the saints, and because of the grace and glory that will be brought unto them, and because they shall then be for ever with him; and this will be quickly, in a little time, in comparison of the time that went before his first coming, and of the eternity that will follow after this; and though it may seem long, yet with God it is but a little while, with whom a thousand years are as one day; and however, since it is certain that he will come,

and will not tarry, beyond the appointed time, patience should be exercised.

Ver. 38. *Now the just shall live by faith*, etc..] The “just” man is one not in appearance only, but in reality; not by his obedience to the law, but by the obedience of Christ; and he is evidently so by the Spirit, and by faith: and he is one, who lives soberly and righteously; and the life he lives, and shall live, at present, is, not eternal life; for though he shall live that life, yet this is not intended; for it is a living by faith that is spoken of, and as antecedent to the coming of Christ; but a spiritual life is meant, a life of justification in Christ, a life of communion with Christ, and a life of holiness from Christ,

with peace, joy, and comfort through him: and the manner of this just man's living is “by faith”; not upon his faith, but upon Christ, the object of it; and by “his faith”, as in (<scripture_ref type="bible">Habakkuk 2:4</scripture_ref>) his own, and not another's; or by the faith of Christ: the Syriac version here renders it, “by the faith of myself”; that is, by the faith of Christ, who speaks, and who is the author and object of faith: the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, “my just man shall live by faith”; and this life is to be now, in the mean while, until Christ comes, and because he will certainly come:

but if [any man] draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. The Hebrew word hlp[, used in (<scripture_ref type="bible">Habakkuk 2:4</scripture_ref>) and which, by the Septuagint there, and by the apostle here, is translated by υποστειληται, and rendered “draw back”, according to R. David Kimchi [f218] signifies, pride and haughtiness of heart; and, according to R. Sol. Jarchi [f219] it signifies impudence; R. Moses Kimchi [f220] takes it to be the same with lp[, which is used for a tower, or fortified place; and thinks it designs one who betakes himself to such a place for safety from the enemy, and seeks not to God for deliverance: so that such a person seems to be designed, who swells with pride and confidence in his own righteousness; who betakes himself to some fortress of his own for safety; who withdraws from the assembly of the saints, through fear of reproach and persecution; who withholds the truth, shuns to declare it, or maintain a profession of it; plays the hypocrite, and deals deceitfully in religious things; and, in short, it may intend one, who finally and totally apostatizes from the doctrine of faith, and the profession of it: and in such persons God has no pleasure, never had, nor never will have; but, on the contrary, they are abominable to him, and will lie under his sore displeasure, and feel the keen resentments of it; such stand opposed to the just man, that lives by faith, walks humbly with God, in a dependence, not on his own righteousness, but on the righteousness of Christ, in which he is safe from condemnation, and secure of the divine favour; for drawing back is not supposed of the just man, but of any man, as we, with the Ethiopic version, rightly supply; and is to be understood of anyone of the external professors of religion, who forsake the assembling of the saints, (<scripture_ref type="bible">Hebrews 10:25</scripture_ref>) and is denied of the truly righteous in the following words.

Ver. 39. *But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition*, etc..] There is a drawing back which is not unto perdition; persons may be attended with much unbelief, may be very cold and indifferent to Gospel

ordinances, may fall into great sins, and may greatly backslide, and yet be recovered, as David, Peter, and others: and there is a drawing back to perdition; when Christ is rejected as the alone Saviour; when he is not held to as the head; when false doctrines and damnable heresies are given into; and when men draw back, and never return, nor are they, nor can they be returned, and their apostasy is total, and final: but true believers do not, and cannot draw back in this sense; because they are held fast in the arms, and with the cords of everlasting love, are chosen of God unto salvation, are given unto Christ, and secured in him; they are redeemed and purchased by him; they are united to him, and built upon him; they are interested in his prayers and preparations, and are his jewels, and his portion; they are regenerated, sanctified, inhabited, and sealed by the Spirit of God, and have the promises and power of God, on their side.

But of them that believe to the saving of the soul; or “of faith, to the salvation of the soul”; not of faith of miracles, nor of an historical faith; but of that faith, which is the faith of God's elect, is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; by which a soul sees Christ, goes to him, lays holds on him, commits all to him, and expects all from him: this stands opposed to drawing back; for by faith a man lives, walks, and stands; and with this is connected the salvation of the soul, as opposed to perdition; not as though it is a cause of salvation, but as a means of God's appointing to receive the blessings of salvation, and which is entirely consistent with the grace of God; and since salvation and faith are inseparably connected together, so that he that has the one shall have the other, it follows, that true believers can never perish. The nature and excellency of this grace is largely treated of in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 11

The apostle having, in the preceding chapter, spoken in commendation of the grace, and life of faith, and of its usefulness to preserve from apostasy, proceeds in this to give some account of the nature and actings of it; and which he illustrates by the examples of many of the Old Testament saints: he begins with a definition of it, which consists of two parts, (Hebrews 11:1) and with an account of the usefulness of it to the elders in general, who by it obtained a good report, (Hebrews 11:2) and of the service it is of in understanding the creation of the worlds, the author and original of them, (Hebrews 11:3) and then goes on to give particular instances and examples of faith among the elders, or ancient believers, which are reduced into several classes; and the first is of the saints before the flood, Abel, Enoch, and Noah. Abel's faith lay in offering a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, in obtaining a testimony from God that he was righteous, and in yet speaking, though dead, (Hebrews 11:4). Enoch's faith is evidenced by his translation of God, that he should not see death, and by the testimony he received from him before it, that he was acceptable to him; by which it is clear he had faith, since, without it, it is impossible to please God; nor can any come aright unto him, without believing that he is, and has a gracious respect to all that diligently seek him, (Hebrews 11:5,6). Noah's faith was seen in preparing an ark, by the order of God, for the saving of his family, and in condemning the world by so doing, and by becoming an heir of righteousness through faith, (Hebrews 11:7). The next class is that of the saints from the flood, to the times of Moses, in which are Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Abraham's faith is celebrated for his obedience to the divine call, quitting the country where he was, and going he knew not where; and for his sojourning in the promised land, as in a strange one, in which Isaac and Jacob dwelt with him in tents; and for looking by faith for the heavenly city built by the Lord; and for his offering up his son at the command of God, who was the son of promise, believing God was able to raise him from the dead, from whence he received him by faith, (Hebrews 11:8-10,17-19). Sarah's faith lay in receiving strength through it to conceive, bear, and bring forth a child

when past age, which was, founded upon the faithfulness of a promising God; hence from Abraham, by her, sprung a large posterity, like the stars of the sky, and the sand on the sea shore, (⁵⁸Hebrews 11:11,12). Now all these patriarchs, both before and after the flood, as they lived by faith, they died in it; who, though they had not received the things promised, yet by faith saw them at a distance, were very well persuaded they would come to pass, and so, in some sense, enjoyed them; hence, while they lived, they lived like pilgrims and strangers, showing that they had no regard to the country they came from, and had no mind to return thither, but sought another, a better, and an heavenly one; so that God is not ashamed to be called their God, he having prepared a city for them, (⁵⁸Hebrews 11:13-16). Isaac's faith is commended in blessing his two sons with respect to things future, (⁵⁸Hebrews 11:20) and Jacob's faith is well spoken of for blessing both the sons of Joseph in his last moments, worshipping on the top of his staff, (⁵⁸Hebrews 11:21) and Joseph's faith is instanced in two things; in making mention of the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt, as a certain thing; and in giving them strict orders to carry his bones along with them, when they went from thence, (⁵⁸Hebrews 11:22) the third class of men, famous for faith, is that of such from the times of Moses to the judges, in which are the parents of Moses, Moses himself, the Israelites in general, and the harlot Rahab. The parents of Moses showed their faith in hiding him three months, seeing him to be a lovely child, contrary to the king's edict, (⁵⁸Hebrews 11:23). Moses's faith lay in refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; in preferring afflictions to the pleasures of sin, and the reproach of Christ to the riches of Egypt; he having, by faith, a respect to the heavenly glory, another instance of it; and by forsaking Egypt, without fear of the king's displeasure, by faith seeing a King who is invisible; and by keeping the passover, with the sprinkling of blood, that so the destroyer of the firstborn of Egypt might not touch the Israelites, (⁵⁸Hebrews 11:24-28). The instances of the faith of the Israelites are their passage through the Red sea, as on dry land, when the Egyptians, who attempted it, were drowned; and their compassing the walls of Jericho seven days, believing they would fall, as accordingly they did, (⁵⁸Hebrews 11:29,30). The faith of Rahab, the harlot, is commended for two things; for peaceably receiving the spies that came to her; and for the salvation she believed she should have, and had, when the unbelieving inhabitants of Jericho perished, (⁵⁸Hebrews 11:31). And the last class of heroes for faith, includes the times of the judges, kings, prophets, and the Maccabees; the judges, kings, and prophets, are lumped together, and only a few of

their names are observed as a specimen of the rest, the apostle not having time to mention particular one, (^{Heb}Hebrews 11:32) and various instances of without reference to particular persons to whom they belong, are recorded; some which lay in doing things greatly heroic, and even miraculous, (^{Heb}Hebrews 11:33-35) and others in suffering things the most cruel and torturing, and death itself in divers shapes, (^{Heb}Hebrews 11:35-38). And thus, by an induction of particulars, the apostle proves both his definition of faith, (^{Heb}Hebrews 11:1) and the usefulness of it to the elders, (^{Heb}Hebrews 11:2) they by it obtaining a good report, though they did not receive the thing promised, (^{Heb}Hebrews 11:39) wherefore New Testament saints have great encouragement, and much more reason, to exercise this grace; since God has provided for them the better thing he promised to others, that the one without the other might not be perfect, (^{Heb}Hebrews 11:40).

Ver. 1. *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for*, etc..] The “faith” here spoken of is not a mere moral virtue, which is a branch of the law; nor a bare assent to anything revealed, declared, and affirmed in the Gospel; nor a faith of doing miracles; nor an implicit one; nor a mere profession of faith, which sometimes is but temporary; nor the word or doctrine of faith; but that which is made mention of in the preceding chapter, by which the just man lives, and which has the salvation of the soul annexed to it: and it does not so much design any particular branch, or act of faith, but as that in general respects the various promises, and blessings of grace; and it chiefly regards the faith of Old Testament saints, though that, as to its nature, object, and acts, is the same with the faith of New Testament ones; and is a firm persuasion of the power, faithfulness, and love of God in Christ, and of interest therein, and in all special blessings: it is described as “the substance of things hoped for”; and which, in general, are things unseen, and as yet not enjoyed; future, and yet to come; difficult to be obtained, though possible, otherwise there would be no hope of them; and which are promised and laid up; and in particular, the things hoped for by Old Testament saints were Christ, and eternal glory and happiness; and by New Testament ones, more grace, perseverance in it, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal life. Now faith is the “substance” of these things; it is the ground and foundation of them, in which there is some standing hope; in which sense the word υποστασις is used by Septuagint in (^{Psa}Psalm 69:2). The word of promise is principal ground and foundation of hope; and faith, as leaning on the word, is a less principal ground; it is a confident

persuasion, expectation, and assurance of them. The Syriac version renders it, the “certainty” of them; it is the subsistence of them, and what gives them an existence, at least a mental one; so with respect to the faith and hope of the Old Testament saints, the incarnation, sufferings, and death of Christ, his resurrection, ascension, and session at God's right hand, are spoken of, as if they then were; and so are heaven, and glory, and everlasting salvation, with regard to the faith and hope of New Testament saints: yea, faith gives a kind of possession of those things before hand, (<4006>John 6:47). Philo the Jew [f221] says much the same thing of faith;

> “the only infallible and certain good thing (says he) is, that faith which is faith towards God; it is the solace of life, πληρωμα χρηστων ελπιδων, “the fulness of good hopes”, etc..”

It follows here,

the evidence of things not seen; of things past, of what was done in eternity, in the council and covenant of grace and peace; of what has been in time, in creation, and providence; of the birth, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; of things present, the being, perfections, love, etc.. of God; of the session of Christ at God's right hand, and his continual intercession; and of the various blessings of grace revealed in the Gospel; and of future ones, as the invisible realities of another world: faith has both certainty and evidence in it.

Ver. 2. *For by it the elders obtained a good report*.] By whom are meant, not merely old men, or elders in age, but such who lived in ancient times; some before the flood, and to a great age, and others who were in office, civil or ecclesiastical, and were the ancestors and predecessors of the Hebrews; who in general obtained or received a good report from God; that they were the chosen of God, and were justified and accepted with him; that they were the children and friends of God, and should be glorified; and from men, from good men, for their faith and holiness; and from evil men, for their good works: and these also believed the report of the Gospel, and gave a good report of God, and of the good land, and adorned their profession; particularly, Abel received a good report, that he was righteous; and Enoch, that he pleased God, and walked with him; and Noah, that he was a just man, perfect in his generation, and also walked with God; and Abraham, that he was a believer, a friend of God, and one that feared and obeyed him; and Job, that he was a man that feared God, and shunned evil; and Moses, that he was a meek man, and a faithful one;

and David, that he was a man after God's own heart, and fulfilled his will; and so others: and they received this report by faith, and as a fruit of it; which shows that faith is no new thing, and that the character of a believer is an old and honourable one. The apostle mentions this, to take off the Hebrews from any esteem of their traditionary elders, who had got a name, not by their faith, but by their traditions; and to engage their imitation of men of antiquity, authority, and wisdom superior to them; and to let them know, unless they had the same faith with their ancestors, it would be a vain thing to boast of descent from them.

Ver. 3. *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God*, etc..] The celestial world, with its inhabitants, the angels; the starry and ethereal worlds, with all that is in them, the sun, moon, stars, and fowls of the air; the terrestrial world, with all upon it, men, beasts, etc.. and the watery world, the sea, and all that is therein: perhaps some respect may be had to the distinction of worlds among the Jews; (see Gill on "<scripRef type="bible">Hebrews 1:2</scripRef>"), though the apostle can scarce be thought to have any regard to their extravagant notions of vast numbers of worlds being created: they often speak of three hundred and ten worlds, in all which, they say, there are heavens, earth, stars, planets, etc..[f222]; and sometimes of eighteen thousand[f223]; but these notions are rightly charged by Philo[f224] with ignorance and folly. However, as many worlds as there are, they are made "by the Word of God"; by Christ, the essential Word of God, to whom the creation of all things is ascribed in (<scripRef type="bible">John 1:1-3</scripRef>). And this agrees with the sentiments of the Jews, who ascribe the creation of all things to the Word of God, as do the Targumists[f225], and Philo the Jew[f226]. And these are "framed" by the Word, in a very beautiful and convenient order; the heavens before the earth; things less perfect, before those that were more so in the visible world, or terraqueous globe; and things for men, before men, for whom they were; and it is by divine revelation and faith that men form right notions of the creation, and of the author of it, and particularly of the origin of it, as follows:

so that things which are seen: as the heaven, earth, and sea, and in which the invisible things of God, the perfections of his nature, are discerned:

were not made of things which do appear; they were not made from pre-existent matter, but out of nothing, out of which the rude and undigested chaos was formed; and from that invisible mass, covered with darkness, were all visible things brought into a beautiful order; and all from secret

and hidden ideas in the divine minds; and this also is the faith of the Jews, that the creation of all things is ˆyam, "out of nothing" [f227]. There seems to be an allusion to the word arb, used for creation, which signifies to make appear a thing unseen; and is rendered in the Septuagint version by δεικνυμι, (<041630>Numbers 16:30) and καταδεικνυμι, (<232626>Isaiah 40:26 41:20) to show, or make appear; and thus God created, or made to appear, the heavens and earth, which before were not in being, and unseen, (<010101>Genesis 1:1,2) and created to make, as in (<010203>Genesis 2:3) that is, made them to appear, that he might put them into the form and order they now are.

Ver. 4. *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain*, etc..] The apostle proceeds to examples of faith, and begins with Abel: it may seem strange that Adam and Eve are not mentioned; this omission is not because they were not believers; but either because of the fall and ruin of mankind by them; or because the apostle speaks only of such who had received some eminent testimony by faith, and therefore passes by many believers, and hastens to Abraham, the father of the Jews. The superior excellency of Abel's sacrifice to Cain's, lay both in the matter, and in the manner of it; the one was offered heartily to the Lord, the other only in show; the one was offered in faith, the other not; Abel looked through his sacrifice to the sacrifice of Christ, not so Cain. Abel's sacrifice was a lamb, a type of Christ, the Lamb of God; a firstling, a figure of him who is the firstborn of every creature; one of the fattest of his flock, expressive of the excellency of Christ; and this was offered up at the end of days, as Christ at the end of the world; and the superior excellency of the sacrifice of the one to that of the other, appears from God's regard to the one, and not to the other, (<010403>Genesis 4:3-5) from whence it may be observed, that sacrifices were of divine institution, and were very early types of Christ; and that there always were two sorts of worshippers, spiritual and carnal ones, whom God can distinguish, for he seeth not as man seeth; that the acceptance of persons is in Christ, and is previous to their offerings; that whatsoever works do not spring from faith are unacceptable to God; that no dependence is to be had on birth privileges, or outward actions; and that electing and distinguishing grace very early took place, and appeared.

By which he obtained witness that he was righteous; not righteous by his offering, nor by his faith, but by the righteousness of Christ, which his faith

in his sacrifice looked unto; though it was by his faith that he obtained, or received a witness in his own conscience, from the Spirit of God, testifying that he was a justified person; and in consequence of this, he had an outward testimony bore to him in the Scriptures, that he was a righteous person hence he is called righteous Abel, (<4023 5>Matthew 23:35).

God testifying of his gifts: not of his own gifts, temporal or spiritual, but of Abel's gifts, which he offered to the Lord; that is, his sacrifices; of these he testified, when he showed respect either by an audible voice, declaring his acceptance of them; or by sending down fire from heaven, upon his sacrifice, which in later times was a symbol of acceptance.

And by it, he being dead, yet speaketh; good men die, and some of them die a violent death, as did Abel, yet he speaks in the Scriptures, which have a voice in them, (<4216 29>Luke 16:29) or by his blood, which calls for vengeance; or rather by, or because of his faith, though he is dead, “he is yet spoken of”, as the word may be rendered.

Ver. 5. *By faith Enoch was translated*, etc..] Which is to be understood, not of a spiritual translation from the power of darkness, into the kingdom of Christ, as all converted, persons are translated, and doubtless Enoch was; nor of a rapture, or removal from one part of the earth to another, or from one part of a country to another, as Philip was caught away by the Spirit, after the baptism of the eunuch; but of a translation from earth to heaven; and not for a while only, as Paul was caught up to the third heaven; but as Elijah was, there to continue, and as the living saints will be at the last day; and this was a translation of him, soul and body, to heaven, to eternal glory and happiness, by a change from mortality to immortality, which passed upon him; and which is a pledge of the resurrection of the dead, and a proof of the Old Testament saints knowing, expecting, and enjoying eternal life. And with this agrees the sense of some of the Jewish writers concerning this affair. Jonathan ben Uzziel, in his paraphrase on (<0105 24>Genesis 5:24) has these words:

> “and Enoch worshipped in truth before the Lord; and behold he was not with the inhabitants of the earth, dygnta, “he was translated”, and ascended to the firmament (or heaven), by the Word before the Lord.”

And the Jerusalem Targum to the same purpose;

> “and Enoch worshipped in truth before the Lord; and lo, he was not, for he was translated by the Word from before the Lord;”

or by the Word of the Lord, which went out from him; for this translation was of God, as our apostle afterwards asserts. R. Eleazar says [f228]:

> “the holy blessed God took Enoch, and caused him to ascend to the highest heavens, and delivered into his hands all the superior treasures, etc.”

He is said [f229] to be one of the seven which entered into paradise in their life; and some of them say [f230], that God took him, çpnw Pwgb, body and soul; see the Apocrypha:

> “He pleased God, and was beloved of him: so that living among sinners he was translated.” (Wisdom 4:10)

> “Enoch pleased the Lord, and was translated, being an example of repentance to all generations.” (Sirach 44:16)

And this translation is said to be “by faith”; not through any virtue and efficacy in that grace to procure it; nor through faith, in that particular point; but God put an honour upon the faith of Enoch, and on him as a believer, this way.

That he should not see death; meaning not a spiritual or moral death; nor an eternal one, though some have suggested this to be the sense; and which is favoured by the character some of the Jewish writers give of Enoch, which will be hereafter taken notice of; but a corporeal death, which he died not; to which agrees the Targum of Oukelos on (<01054>Genesis 5:24),

> “and Enoch walked in the fear of the Lord, and he was not, for the Lord, tymh al, “did not kill him”, or cause, or suffer him to die:”

though an exemplar of that paraphrase is cited [f231], without the negative particle, thus,

> “and he was not, for the Lord killed him,”

or inflicted death on him: and it is the sense of several of the Jewish commentators, that he did die a common death, as Jarchi, Eben Ezra, and others; who by the phrase, “God took him”, understand death, for which they cite the following places, (<111904>1 Kings 19:4 <262416>Ezekiel 24:16,18).

and was not found, because God had translated him; that is, he was not found among men, in the land of the living; he appeared no more there, for God had removed him from earth to heaven; so Elijah, after his rapture and translation, was sought for, but could not be found, (2 Kings 2:16,17)

for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God: he did those things which pleased him; he walked with God before, (Genesis 5:22,24) which the Targumists explain by worshipping in truth, and walking in the fear of the Lord, which are things well pleasing to God; he walked with God by faith in the ways of his worship and service; and he was acceptable to him in Christ; the same phrase is used in the Apocrypha:

> "He pleased God, and was beloved of him: so that living among sinners he was translated." (Wisdom 4:10)
>
> "Enoch pleased the Lord, and was translated, being an example of repentance to all generations." (Sirach 44:16)

This testimony he received from God, from men, and in his own conscience, and which now stands in the sacred Scriptures, (Genesis 5:24). Some of the Jewish writers very wickedly, and without any ground and foundation, give a different character of him; some of them say that he was a hypocrite, sometimes righteous, and sometimes wicked, and that the holy blessed God removed him, while he was righteous [f232]; and others [f233], that allow him to be a righteous and worthy man, yet represent him as fickle and inconstant; and, therefore, God, foreseeing that he would do wickedly, and to prevent it, made haste, and took him away, by death, before his time: and which is not only contrary to what the apostle here says, but to the account of Moses, concerning him; from whence it appears, that he was a walker with God; that the course of his conversation was holy and upright; and which was the reason of his being taken, or translated; and which was an high honour bestowed upon him: and upon the whole, he has obtained a better testimony than those men give him.

Ver. 6. *But without faith it is impossible to please him*, etc..] Or do things well pleasing in his sight; or any of the duties of religion, in an acceptable way; as prayer, praise, attendance on the word and ordinances, or any good works whatever; because such are without Christ, and without his Spirit; and have neither right principles, nor right ends: for this is not to be understood of the persons of God's elect, as considered in Christ; in whom

they are well pleasing to him before faith; being loved by him with an everlasting love; and chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world; (see Gill on " <4508>Romans 8:8").

for he that cometh to God; to the throne of, his grace, to pray unto him, to implore his grace and mercy, help and assistance; to the house of God, to worship, and serve him, and in order to enjoy his presence, and have communion with him; which coming ought to be spiritual and with the heart; and supposes spiritual life; and must be through Christ, and by faith: wherefore such a comer to God,

must believe that he is; or exists, as the Arabic version; and he must not barely believe his existence, but that, as it is revealed in the word: he must believe in the three Persons in the Godhead; that the first Person is the Father of Christ; that the second Person is both the Son of God, and Mediator; and that the third Person is the Spirit of them both, and the applier of all grace; for God the Father is to be approached unto, through Christ the Mediator, by the guidance and assistance of the Spirit: and he must believe in the perfections of God; that he is omniscient, and knows his person and wants; is omnipotent, and can do for him, beyond his thoughts and petitions; is all sufficient, and that his grace is sufficient for him; that he is immutable, in his purposes and covenant; that he is true and faithful to his promises; and is the God of grace, love, and mercy: and he must believe in him, not only as the God of nature and providence, but as his covenant God and Father in Christ:

and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him; who are such, as are first sought out by him; and who seek him in Christ, where he is only to be found; and that with their whole hearts, and above all things else: and, of such, God is a rewarder, in a way of grace; with himself, who is their exceeding great reward; and with his Son, and all things with him; with more grace; and, at last, with eternal glory, the reward of the inheritance.

Ver. 7. *By faith Noah, being warned of God*, etc..] In the Greek text, Noah is called "Noe", and so the Septuagint interpreters of the Old Testament call him; but Josephus calls him "Noeos": or "having received an oracle from God"; in which he was admonished, how to make an ark, as Moses was, in like manner, how to make a tabernacle, (<5805>Hebrews 8:5). This oracle or warning is extant, in (<0613>Genesis 6:13-22) and it was

of things not seen as yet; as the universal deluge; the building of an ark or ship, which was the first that ever was in the world; the entrance of all creatures into it; their preservation in it, and the destruction of all without it: and this divine warning, or oracle, concerning things of such a nature, delivered to Noah, and received by him, shows that he was a favourite of God; that his faith rested in the word of God; and that it agreed with the apostle's definition of faith, (<58B101>Hebrews 11:1),

moved with fear; not with a fear of his own damnation; nor with a distrust of the salvation of himself and his family in the ark; but with an awful sense of the judgments of God upon the wicked; and with reverence of God, from whom he received the oracle; and with a religious fear, with which he worshipped God, and which he discovered by a regard to his word and ordinances; and which fear does not arise from nature, but from grace; and is increased by the discoveries of divine love; and is consistent with faith, goes along with it, and is a fruit of it: hence he

prepared an ark for the saving of his house. Immediately, and without delay, he set about the building of the ark, and made it exactly according to the pattern which was given him; and his end in it was to secure his family, himself and his wife, his three sons and their wives, from the flood, which he believed would shortly come upon the world, according to the word of God; and in this his faith was seen: and from hence it may be observed, that, though God can save without means, yet, generally speaking, it is his will to save by them; and that as God saved Noah and his family in the waters, so he can, and does, save his people in afflictions; and also, that true faith is attended with obedience:

by the which he condemned the world: the inhabitants of the world, the world of the ungodly: as a preacher, he declared they would be condemned, in case of impenitence and unbelief; and his words heard, and his actions seen by them, were aggravations of their condemnation; for by his works, as well as by his words, he reproved, and condemned them; by building the ark, as he declared his own faith, so he condemned their unbelief; (see Gill on "<401241>Matthew 12:41")

and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith: not of the law, but of the righteousness of Christ, and of eternal life through that; for he was not only heir of this world, as Abraham, but of that which is to come; and not through works of righteousness done by him, but through the

righteousness of Christ received by faith, or through faith in Christ, the antitype of the ark.

Ver. 8. *By faith, Abraham, when he was called*, etc..] The Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, "by faith he who was called Abraham"; but this call is not to be understood of his name; for though his first name Abram might be given him, in the faith of his being a great man, and his second name Abraham, when he himself was a believer; yet this change was made some years after the call referred to; which is that in (<0112>Genesis 12:1) when he was called out of his own country, kindred, and father's house; which was an emblem of the call of God's people out from among the men of the world, and from their friends, relations, and acquaintance, and even out of themselves; and as Abraham was called from "Ur" of the Chaldees, so they from darkness, bondage, idolatry, and communion with wicked men; that, as he, they might not perish with idolaters, being chosen vessels, and for whom God has peculiar blessings in store: and so the grace of God is seen in calling them, without any respect to their deserts, as in calling Abraham: and the care and goodness of God may be observed, in raising up fit instruments to propagate his cause and interest. Now Abraham, being called

to go out into a place; from Ur of the Chaldees, to the land of Canna;

which he should afterwards receive for an inheritance; not in his own person, but in his seed and posterity, unless after the resurrection, in the New Jerusalem church state, and which inheritance was typical of heaven;

obeyed the divine call; and which was a fruit and evidence of his faith, and may he called the obedience of faith:

and he went out, not knowing whither he went: for though he went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan he came, (<0125>Genesis 12:5), yet, when God called him to go forth, and he prepared to obey his call, he knew not what land he was to go into; for it is only said, (<0120>Genesis 12:1),

unto a land that I will show thee: upon which words a Jewish commentator [f234] has this note;

> "he (God) did not immediately make known the land unto him, that so it might be lovely in his eyes;"

and it is, elsewhere, said by the Jews[f235], that Abraham

> "came from Aspamia (i.e. Mesopotamia), and its companions, ^kyh [dwy hyh alw, "and he knew not where" he was, as a man that is in the dark;"

all which agrees with our apostle: and, from hence, it may be observed, that God sometimes leads his people in ways they have not known, though they are known to him, and are always right; and that it is the property of faith to follow God, when it cannot see its way; and a great mercy it is to have God for a guide. This also shows, that Abraham's faith agrees with the apostle's definition of it, (<581101>Hebrews 11:1).

Ver. 9. *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise*, etc..] The land of Canaan, so called, because it was promised to Abraham and his seed; and is typical of heaven, which is not by the works of the law, but by the free promise and grace of God: here Abraham sojourned for a while,

as in a strange country; which was not his native place, and not his own, but another's; (see <440705>Acts 7:5) and an idolatrous one; here he sojourned by faith, believing that as it was promised, it would be given to him, and his seed: so all God's people are sojourners in this world, strangers and pilgrims in it; this is not their dwelling place; they do not belong to it, but to another; their stay in it is but for a while; and, while they are in it, do not look upon themselves at home, but are looking out for another, and better country; they are unknown to the men of the world, and the men of the world are strangers to them; though they have a civil conversation with them, they separate from them, both as to profaneness and superstition, and live by faith, in the expectation of the heavenly country, as Abraham also did:

dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; the same promised land, the same promised blessings, and the same promised seed, the Messiah; (see <011203>Genesis 12:3 26:3,4 28:13,14) with these Abraham dwelt, for he lived until Isaac was seventy five years of age, and Jacob fifteen; he was an hundred years old when Isaac was born, (<012105>Genesis 21:5) and he lived one hundred and seventy five years, (<012507>Genesis 25:7) and Isaac was sixty years old when Jacob was born, (<012526>Genesis 25:26) and Abraham dwelt with them in tabernacles, or tents, which they pitched at pleasure, and moved from place to place. So true believers, as they are Abraham's seed, they are heirs with him,

according to the promise; and are heirs together of the grace of life; and dwell in earthly tabernacles, in houses of clay, which are erected for a while, and then taken down.

Ver. 10. *For he looked for a city which hath foundations*, etc..] Not the city of Jerusalem, nor the Gospel church state; but either the city of the new Jerusalem, said to have twelve foundations, (<66214>Revelation 21:14) and in which glorious state, Abraham, with the rest of the saints, being raised from the dead, will in person possess the promised land; or else the ultimate glory of the saints in heaven, where God dwells, and keeps his palace; and which will be the dwelling place of the saints, and will have in it many habitations; and which will be both peaceable and safe, and full of glory, riches, joy, and pleasure; and into which none but holy and righteous persons will enter; the "foundations" of which are the everlasting love of God, eternal election, the covenant of grace, the promise and preparation of it by God, from the foundation of the world, and the Lord Jesus Christ, his blood and righteousness; which show the immovableness of it, it being opposed to the tabernacles Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob dwelt in, and to the transitory enjoyments of this world: and for this sure, immovable, and comfortable state of things, Abraham was "looking" by faith; he looked through, and above temporal things, to spiritual things; he went through difficulties with cheerfulness, did not greedily covet earthly things, but looked with disdain upon them, and to heaven with faith, affection, and earnest desire; and this proves his faith to be, as that is defined, (<581101>Hebrews 11:1)

whose builder and maker is God: God the Father has prepared this glory from the foundation of the world, and has promised before the world began, and has chosen his people to it; the Spirit of God makes it known, and prepares them for it; and the Lord Jesus Christ is the forerunner entered, who is gone to get it ready for them, and will put them into the possession of it: this shows the superior excellency of this city, or glorious state; and that God has the sole right to dispose of it.

Ver. 11. *Through faith also Sarah herself*, etc..] Some copies add "being barren"; and so read the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions; which is a circumstance which makes her faith appear the greater: but it is a question whether the apostle speaks of the faith of Sarah, or of Abraham; some think he speaks of Abraham's faith; and that it was through his faith that Sarah conceived; and observe, that the last clause may be rendered,

“because he judged him faithful”, etc.. and the rather, because the apostle, both before and after, is speaking of Abraham's faith, (<58108>Hebrews 11:8-10,17). And in (<58112>Hebrews 11:12) mention is made only of one, even of Abraham; and in (<45417>Romans 4:17) only notice is taken of Abraham's faith, respecting this matter; nor is Sarah's faith observed in the history of it, but her diffidence: but why may not Sarah be joined with Abraham, in this commendation, as well as Isaac and Jacob? and though, at first, she distrusted, yet she afterwards feared, and believed: other women are mentioned in this catalogue of believers; and they share in the same grace and privileges as men: and Sarah, being a believer, as well as Abraham,

received strength to conceive seed: sometimes “strength” itself signifies seed, as in (<201803>Proverbs 31:3) and so to receive strength is to receive seed; which the female does from the male; hence that saying of the Jews [f236], the male does not receive strength from another, but the female jk tlbqm “receiveth strength” from another; but here it is to be understood of receiving power from God to retain seed, received from men, and conceive by it; which Sarah, in her circumstances, without the interposition of the almighty power, could never have done. The nymph Anobret is so called, in imitation of this conception of Sarah's; or as she is called in the Phoenician language, trbn[^j, which signifies “conceiving by grace”: as this conception must be entirely ascribed to the power and grace of God:

and was delivered of a child when she was past age; of bearing and bringing forth children, being ninety years of age, (<011717>Genesis 17:17). Now though the conception, bearing, and bringing forth of children are things natural, ordinary, and common, yet here was a particular promise respecting this matter; and there were great difficulties in nature attending it, and such as to reason were insuperable; but these were got over, through the power and grace of God, and which is ascribed to faith in the faithfulness of a promising God:

because she judged him faithful who had promised; that she should have a son at the time of life; (see Gill on “<581023>Hebrews 10:23”).

Ver. 12 *Therefore sprang there even of one*, etc..] That is, Abraham: the Arabic version has here a strange interpolation;

> “this faith Isaac and Rebecca conceived in mind, and so there were born of one, Esau and Jacob.”

And him as good as dead; being an hundred years of age; (see Gill on "Romans 4:19"). The Ethiopic version reads, "the bodies of both were like a dead carcass"; both of Abraham and Sarah:

so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable; as was promised to Abraham, (Genesis 15:5 22:17) which has been fulfilled, (Isaiah 10:22) and will still have a further fulfilment, (Hosea 1:10).

Ver. 13. *These all died in faith*, etc..] Not all the seed of Abraham, but all the believers in the preceding verses, excepting Enoch, particularly the three patriarchs, with Sarah; these died a corporeal death, which is common to all, to the righteous, and to the wicked; and yet saints die not as other men; they die in faith, having the grace itself, which being once implanted, can never be lost; and sometimes in the exercise of it, as these believers did: they died in the faith of their posterity inheriting the land of Canaan, and in the faith of the promised Messiah, and in the believing views of the heavenly glory; and so to die is comfortable to themselves, and a confirmation of the truth of religion to others, and is very precious, desirable, and gainful. It may be rendered, "according to faith"; they died according to the life of faith they lived, and the doctrine of faith they professed, being the Lord's both living and dying.

Not having received the promises; the things promised, the land of Canaan, the Messiah, and the blessings of the Gospel dispensation; they had the promises of these things, and though they were not fulfilled in their days, they believed they would be fulfilled, and died in the faith of them:

having seen them afar off; the things themselves in the promise; as Abraham saw the going forth of his posterity out of Egypt, after they had been afflicted four hundred years, and saw the day of Christ at a greater distance still, (Genesis 15:13,14 John 8:56).

And were persuaded of [them], and embraced [them]; they had a full assurance of faith, that what was promised would be fulfilled; and they took a kind of possession of them before hand, as Abraham did of the land of Canaan, by sojourning in it; as did also Isaac and Jacob; and all of them by faith embraced the Messiah, and dealt with, and laid hold upon his blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and grace, by which they were saved, as New Testament saints are.

And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth; for they sojourned in the land of Canaan, as in a strange land, as the saints do in this world; (see <58B109>Hebrews 11:9). And they were pilgrims, travelling through this world to the heavenly country, and they confessed themselves to be such, (<01470>Genesis 47:9) nor are believers ashamed to own and confess their mean estate in this world; for it is only with respect to earth, and earthly things, that they are strangers and pilgrims, and only while they are on earth; and it is therefore but for a little time that they are so, ere long they will be at home, and know as they are known.

Ver. 14. *For they that say such things*, etc..] That they are strangers and pilgrims on earth:

declare plainly that they seek a country; heaven, so called, for the largeness of it; it is a good land, a land of uprightness; a pleasant land, a land of rest, though a land afar off; here the Father of Christ, and Christ himself, and all his people dwell: the Syriac version renders it, “their own city”; the place of their nativity, of which they were citizens: the act of “seeking” it supposes some things, with respect to the place where they were, as that they were in a strange land, had no settlement there, nor satisfaction in it, and that they sat loose to the world, and the things of it; and some things respecting the country sought after, as that they were not in it; that it was at a distance from them; that they had some knowledge of it, and of the way to it; that their desires were after it, and that they had a strong affection and value for it: the right way to this country is not mere civility and morality, nor legal righteousness, nor birth privileges, nor submission to outward ordinances, nor a mere profession of religion, but the Lord Jesus Christ; he is the true way to eternal life; it is his righteousness which gives a title to it, and on account of which believers expect it, though not without holiness, nor without trouble. The right manner of seeking it is, in the first place, above all things else, with the whole heart, by faith, and by patient continuance in well doing. Many are the reasons which may induce believers to seek it; it is their own, and their Father's country; it is a better one than that in which they are; and because of the company they shall there enjoy, and the work they shall be employed in; and because of the happiness they will be possessed of; and because their inheritance, riches, and treasures, lie here.

Ver. 15. *And truly if they had been mindful of that country*, etc..] Chaldea, which was Abraham's country:

from whence they came out; as Abraham and Sarah did, in person, and their posterity in them:

they might have had opportunity to have returned: for the way from Canaan or Egypt, where they sojourned, was short and easy: and though Abraham sent his servant thither to take a wife for his son Isaac, yet he would not go thither himself, nor suffer his son; nay, made his servant swear that he would not bring him thither, if even the woman should refuse to come; so unmindful was he of that country; so little did he regard it; yea, so much did he despise it: so when men are called by grace, and converted, they come out of a country, this world, which is a land of sin and iniquity, of great folly and ignorance, of darkness, and of the shadow of death; a desert, a mere wilderness; a country where Satan reigns, full of wicked and ungodly men; and which is the land of their nativity, as to their first birth: and they may be said to come out of it, not in a natural and civil sense, but in a spiritual one; and it is the character of a converted man, or one that is come out of the world, and is separated from it, to be unmindful of it; not so as not to consider from whence he came out, as owing to rich grace; nor so as not to lament the iniquities of it; nor so as not to pray for the conversion of the inhabitants of it; but he is unmindful of it, so as to be desirous of the company of the men of it, or to have the affections set upon it, and the heart tickled with the pleasures of it, or so as to desire to return to it, for which there is a great deal of reason: for this country is not worth minding; and there is much in it to set a gracious mind against it; a good man has better things to mind; and it is below, and unworthy of a Christian, to mind the world; and besides, worldly mindedness is attended with bad consequences. Moreover, though the saints have opportunities of returning, yet they do not; they are near it, and the country they are seeking is afar off: many things in it are alluring and ensnaring; a corrupt and deceitful heart often lingers after them, and Satan is not wanting to tempt unto, and by them. And yet they do not return; some that bear the name of Christians, but are not truly such, may wholly return, and never come back more; and true believers may strangely go back again in some instances; but they shall not return finally and totally: for they are held and drawn with the cords of love; they are in the hands of Christ, and are secured in the covenant of grace; they are returned to Christ, in the effectual calling, who will keep them; they are of the household of God, and shall be no more foreigners; should they return in such sense, they would be condemned with the world, which cannot be.

Ver. 16. *But now they desire a better country*, etc..] Which is not to be understood of the then present time, in which the apostle wrote; for the patriarchs, of whom he speaks, were not then on earth, nor in any third place between heaven and earth; they were then in heaven; and though there are indeed in heaven desires after perfect happiness, in soul and body; yet this intends the desires of these saints when on earth, and which are common to all believers in the present state of things; who, as the patriarchs desired a better country than Chaldea, or even Canaan itself, so they desire a better country than this world; and such is heaven: it is on high; here are no noxious and pestilential vapours, no mists or fogs beclouding, no storms and tempests, but it is full of light and glory; having the delightful breezes of divine love, and the comfortable gales of the blessed Spirit; here is no heat of persecution, nor coldness, nor chills of affection; here is plenty of most delicious fruits, no hunger nor thirst; and here are riches, which are solid, satisfying, durable, safe and sure: many are the liberties and privileges here enjoyed; here is a freedom from a body subject to diseases and death, from a body of sin and death, from Satan's temptations, from all doubts, fears, and unbelief, and from all sorrows and afflictions; the inhabitants of it are the spirits of just men made perfect, angels, God, Father, Son, and Spirit, and Christ in human nature; upon all which accounts it is abundantly the better country, and as it is explained,

that is, an heavenly; an inheritance in heaven, an house eternal in the heavens, the kingdom of heaven; and it is no wonder that it should be desired by such who know it, and the nature of it: the word denotes a vehement desire; and it is such, that the saints desire to depart from this world, and go unto it; which shows that they are weaned from this, and have seen something glorious in another. Remarkable is the saying of Anaxagoras [f237] who, when one said to him, hast thou no regard to thy country? answered, I have, and that the greatest, pointing with his fingers towards heaven; and, says Philo the Jew [f238], the soul of every wise man has heaven for his country, and the earth as a strange place:

wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; their covenant God and Father; (see Gill on "Hebrews 8:10"), even though he is the God of the whole earth;

for he hath prepared for them a city; in his council and covenant, and by his Son; (see Gill on "Hebrews 11:10"). This proves that he is not

ashamed of the relation he stands in to them, since he has made a provision for them to dwell with him to all eternity.

Ver. 17. *By faith Abraham, when he was tried*, etc..] Or tempted; that is, by God, (Genesis 22:1). This temptation or trial respects the command given by God to Abraham, to offer up his son Isaac; which lays no foundation for a charge against God, either of sin or cruelty; for God's will is the rule of justice and goodness, and whatever he requires is just and good; and though his creatures are bound by the laws he prescribes them, he himself is not: besides, he is the Lord of life, the giver and preserver of it; and he has a right to dispose of it, and to take it away, when, and by what means, and instruments, he thinks fit; to which may be added, that the secret will of God was not that Isaac should die, but a command was given to Abraham to offer him up, for the trial of his faith and love; this was a temptation of probation, not of seduction, or to sin, as are the temptations of Satan; for God tempts no man with sin. The Jews speak [f239] of ten temptations, with which Abraham was tried, and in all which he stood; and say, that this of the binding of Isaac was the tenth and last.

Offered up Isaac; he showed great readiness to do it; as soon as he had the command given him, he travelled three days' journey in order to it; took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it on his son; took fire, and a knife in his hand, with the one to burn the wood, with the other to slay his son; he built an altar, laid the wood in order on it; and bound his son, and laid him on that; and took the knife, and stretched forth his hand to slay him, and fully intended to do it, had he not been prevented: and all this he did by faith; he believed the equity, justice, and wisdom of the divine command; he was fully assured of the truth and faithfulness of God in his promises, however contrary this might seem thereunto; and he was strongly persuaded of the power of accomplishing them in some way or another. This was great faith, and it was greatly tried, as follows:

and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son; he had a promise made him that he should have a son, and that a numerous issue should spring from him, which should inherit the land of Canaan; yea, that the Messiah himself should be of his seed: and he had received these promises; given credit to them, and firmly believed them, and fully expected the performance of them; as he had reason to do, since the first was fulfilled, the son was born; and yet now he is called to offer him up, on whom his expectation was placed; everything was trying; it was an human

creature he was called to offer, whose blood is not to be shed by man; a child of his own, a part of himself; a son, an own son; an only begotten son; a son whom he loved; an Isaac, a son of joy; a son of promise; and his heir, the son of his old age, and who was now a grown up person. The Jews are divided about the age of Isaac at his binding: Josephus [f240] says he was twenty five years of age; others say twenty six [f241]; some say [f242] thirty six: but the more prevailing opinion is [f243], that he was thirty seven years of age; only Aben [f244] Ezra makes him to be about thirteen; rejecting the more commonly received account, as well as that he was but five years old, that being an age unfit to carry wood. Some Christian writers have thought he might be about three and thirty years of age, the age of Christ when he suffered, of whom he was a type.

Ver. 18. *Of whom it is said*, etc..] That is, of Isaac, Abraham's own son, whom he offered up; or rather, “to whom it was said”, as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions render it; that is, to Abraham, for to him was this said, (<01212>Genesis 21:12)

that in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that numerous natural seed of his, which should inherit the land of Canaan; and his special famous seed, the Messiah, to whom the promises were made; (see Gill on “ <450907>Romans 9:7”).

Ver. 19. *Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead*, etc..] Abraham did not go about this affair without thought; and yet he did not consult with flesh and blood; his reasoning was the reasoning of faith; and the conclusion of it was, not that he believed that God would raise his son from the dead, but that he was able to do it. He knew that he had received him at first, as it were, from the dead; he sprung from his own dead body, and out of Sarah's dead womb; and though his faith did not prescribe to God, yet as he believed the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, he might believe that God would raise his son from the dead, rather than that his promise should fail; and this conclusion proceeded upon the power and faithfulness of God:

from whence also he received him in a figure; or for an “example” of faith and obedience; or for a “parable or proverb”, that such a proverbial expression might be made use of, for the comfort and encouragement of saints in distressed and difficult circumstances, as is in (<01214>Genesis 22:14) or as a type of the death and resurrection of Christ, whose type he was in other things, as well as in this; as in his birth, and the circumstances of it;

he was long promised and expected, as Christ, was; his birth was beyond the ordinary course of nature, and attended with great joy; he was circumcised the eighth day; at his weaning a great feast was made, typical of the Gospel feast; and as he was persecuted by Ishmael, so was Christ by Herod, in his infancy: and he was a figure of him in his oblation; they were both sons of Abraham; both only begotten and beloved sons; both heirs; both carried the wood on which they were offered; both were offered on a Mount, and by their father, by whom neither of them were spared; and both by the command of God, and alone, none were with them: and Isaac prefigured him in his deliverance; Abraham stretched out his hand, but was restrained, and not a bone of Christ must be broken; not Isaac, but the ram was slain, not the divine, but the human nature suffered; both were delivered on the third day, the one as from death, the other really from death; and both returned to their father's house. Moreover, Abraham received his son in the similitude of a resurrection; it was as life from the dead; it was like the return of the prodigal, (<42I532>Luke 15:32). Abraham, looked upon him as dead to him, and Isaac thought himself a dead man; so that he that was accounted as one dead, was received alive. The Jews speak of this matter agreeably to the apostle; they say, a man has two breaths or souls, one in this world, and another in the world to come; and of Isaac they say [f245], that

> “in the time that he was offered upon the altar, his soul (or “breath”), which he had in this world, “went out”; and when it was said to Abraham (or by him) blessed be he that quickeneth the dead, his soul (or breath), which he had in the world to come, returned to him — for tmk bçjta, “he was accounted as dead”.”

They speak of him as if he was just dead; they say [f246],

> “when he saw the sword over his neck, his breath fled from him, and came to the place of the soul, hyh wlyak, “as if he was at the point of giving up the ghost”.”

So that a Jew cannot find fault with the apostle for expressing himself in this manner.

Ver. 20. *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau*, etc..] The history of this is in (<01273>Genesis 27:33-39). The former of these was a good man, and, though the youngest son, he is set before, and was blessed before the

eldest; and the latter was a wicked man, and yet had a blessing; for temporal blessings are enjoyed in common: and this blessing was prophetic, it was concerning things to come. Jacob's blessing was plenty of temporal things, and under which may be signified the dews of divine grace, the fatness of God's house, the bread of life, and wine of divine love, which true Israelites partake of; also dominion over his brother, and government over nations, which had their accomplishment in his posterity; and may be expressive of the spiritual reign of the saints, and their dominion, by grace; and of the kingdom that shall hereafter be put to their hands; and of the extensiveness of Christ's kingdom in the latter day, who was to spring front him. Esau's blessings were merely temporal ones, and respected things future, which were fulfilled in his posterity; and these several blessings Isaac pronounced upon them by faith, believing they would be bestowed upon them; and so his faith answered to the account of faith in (<58B101>Hebrews 11:1). It may be asked, how Isaac can be said to have blessed Jacob by faith, when he was deceived by him? It is certain he took him to be Esau, when he blessed him, wherefore it was not the design of Isaac, though it was the will of God that he should bless him, (<012718>Genesis 27:18-30), but yet notwithstanding this, Isaac might do it in faith, believing that the person he blessed would be blessed, though he was mistaken in him; and which he confirmed when he did know him, (<012733>Genesis 27:33,37) to which the apostle may have respect; and besides, he blessed him after this, (<012801>Genesis 28:1-3).

Ver. 21. *By faith Jacob, when he was a dying*, etc..] Which was the usual time of blessing with the patriarchs; and the reason of it was, that what was said might be more attended to and regarded, and more strongly impressed upon the mind; and this is a proof that it was done in faith by Jacob, when there was no appearance of the fulfilment of these things, and it was not likely that he should see them; and this shows the truth of what the apostle says in (<58B101>Hebrews 11:1,13), blessed both the sons of Joseph; whose names were Ephraim and Manasseh; the form of blessing them is recorded in (<014815>Genesis 48:15,16) and which was done in faith, and under the direction and inspiration of the Spirit of God, as appears by his setting Ephraim before Manasseh, (<014813>Genesis 48:13,14,17-19) and when he delivered the blessing he firmly believed it would be fulfilled, though they were then in a strange land:

and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff; not that he “worshipped the top of his staff”, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it, either his own,

or Joseph's, or any little image upon the top of it; which would be an instance of idolatry, and not faith, contrary to the scope of the apostle; nor is there any need to interpret this of civil worship and respect paid to Joseph, as a fulfilment of his dream, and with a peculiar regard to Christ, of whom Joseph was a type; whereas, on the contrary, Joseph at this time bowed to his father, as was most natural and proper, (<01482>Genesis 48:12) nor is there any necessity of supposing a different punctuation of (<01473>Genesis 47:31) and that the true reading is not “mittah”, a bed, but “matteh”; a staff, contrary to all the Targums [f247], and the Talmud [f248], which read “mittah”, a bed, seeing it is not that place the apostle cites or refers to; for that was before the blessing of the sons of Joseph, but this was at the same time; and the apostle relates what is nowhere recorded in Genesis, but what he had either from tradition, or immediate revelation; or else he concludes it from the general account in (<01480>Genesis 48:1-12) and the sense is, that Jacob, having blessed the two sons of Joseph, being sat upon his bed, and weak, he leaned upon the top of his staff, and worshipped God, and gave praise and glory to him, that he had lived to see not only his son Joseph, but his seed also, (see <01482>Genesis 48:2,11,20).

Ver. 22. *By faith Joseph, when he died*, etc..] The riches and honours of Joseph, as they could not secure him from death, so they did not make him unmindful of it; nor was he afraid of dying, or uneasy about it; nor did his prosperity make him proud, or above speaking to his brethren, nor revengeful to them, nor unthoughtful of their future afflictions; nor did his affluence of temporal things take off his regards to divine promises, nor weaken his faith in them, which is here commended in the following instances; as that at the time of his death,

he made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; that is, out of the land of Egypt: he remembered it himself, and put his brethren in mind of it, by speaking of it to their comfort, with great assurance; he knew they were well situated in the land of Egypt, and yet speaks of their departure out of it; he foresaw, and firmly believed they would be greatly afflicted in it, and that God would look upon them, and visit them, and bring them out of it, into the land of Canaan; all which shows the strength of his faith, and that it was about things not seen.

And gave commandment concerning his bones; and the command was a very strict one when he gave it; he took an oath of his brethren to fulfil it; it was concerning his bones, not his body, which shows that he believed their

departure out of Egypt was at a great distance, when his flesh would be consumed, and only his bones left, as it was about two hundred years after his death; it respects the carrying them out of Egypt with them, and burying them in the land of Canaan, when they came there; and this is an instance of his humility, in choosing to lie with his fathers, rather than with the kings, and great men in Egypt, and of his care to prevent idolatry, which he might observe the Egyptians would be prone unto: and this command was a great instance of Joseph's faith, that the children of Israel would return to Canaan, and which might serve greatly to confirm their faith in it; it also shows his belief of the resurrection of the dead, and of his enjoying the heavenly inheritance, signified by the land of Canaan; (see <0150 24>Genesis 50:24,25), the Papists, from hence, plead for the relics of saints; but it should be observed, that it was at the request, and by the command of Joseph, that his bones were preserved, which is not the case of the saints, whose relics are pleaded for; besides, these were the true and real bones of Joseph, whereas the relics of the saints are only pretended; to which may be added, that the bones of Joseph, were ordered to be buried, not to be showed for a sight, much less worshipped, as Popish relics are. Joseph's coffin, the Jews say [f249], was put into the river Nile; and so says Patricides [f250], an Arabic writer: others say it was in the buryingplace of the kings, until it was taken up and removed by Moses.

Ver. 23. *By faith Moses, when he was born*, etc..] Which is to be understood, not of the faith of Moses, but of the faith of his parents, at the time of his birth; which was when Pharaoh had published an edict, ordering every male child to be cast into the river; but instead of obeying this order, Moses was hid three months of his parents; that is, in his father's house, as it is said in (<4407 20>Acts 7:20) and is here expressed in the Ethiopic version. According to the Targumist [f251], his mother went with him but six months, at the end of which he was born, and that she hid him three months, which made up the nine, the time in which a woman usually goes with child; and after that she could conceal him no longer: the hiding of him is here ascribed to both his parents, though in (<0202 2>Exodus 2:2) it is represented as the act of his mother; which, no doubt, was done, with the knowledge, advice, and consent of his father; and the Septuagint there renders it, εσκεπασαν, “they hid him”; though the order of the history makes it necessary that it should be read in the singular. Parents ought to take care of their children; and persons may lawfully hide themselves, or others, from the cruelty of tyrants, and that as long as they can, for their safety; and this

was so far from being wrong in the parents of Moses, that it is commended, as an instance of faith: they believed the promise in general, that God would deliver the people of Israel; they believed this to be about the time of their deliverance, and had some intimation, that this child in particular would be the deliverer, because they saw he was a proper child; not only of a goodly and beautiful countenance, but that he was peculiarly grateful and acceptable to God; they perceived something remarkable in him, which to them was a token that he would be the deliverer of God's people, and therefore they hid him; (see Gill on "<4407>Acts 7:20").

And they were not afraid of the king's commandment; nor did they observe it, for it was contrary to nature, and to the laws of God, and to the promise of God's multiplying of that people, and to their hopes of deliverance: there is a great deal of courage and boldness in faith; and though faith may be weakened, it cannot be lost; and a weak faith is taken notice of, as here; for though they feared not at first, they seem to be afraid afterwards; but when God designs to work deliverance, nothing shall prevent.

Ver. 24. *By faith Moses, when he was come to years*, etc..] Or "was great"; a nobleman in Pharaoh's court; or when he was arrived to great knowledge, being learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; or rather when he was well advanced in years, being full forty years of age, (<4407>Acts 7:22,23)

refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; by whom Moses was taken up out of the water; by whom he was named, and provided for; she reckoned him as her own son, and designed him for Pharaoh's successor, as Josephus reports [f252]: he refused all this honour, both in words, and by facts; he denied that he was the son of Pharaoh's daughter, as the words will bear to be rendered; for to be "called", often signifies only to "be"; and by taking part with the Israelites, and against the Egyptians, he plainly declared that his descent was from the former, and not the latter: and this discovered great faith; and showed that he preferred being called an Israelite to any earthly adoption, and the care of the church, and people of God, to his own worldly honour and interest; and that he believed the promises of God, before the flatteries of a court; and esteemed afflictions and reproaches, with the people of God, and for his sake, better than sinful pleasures, and earthly riches, as in the following words. Of Pharaoh's daughter, (see Gill on "<4407>Acts 7:21").

Ver. 25. *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God*, etc..] The Israelites, who were God's chosen and peculiar people, and were the true worshippers of him; Moses chose to be with those: the company and conversation of such is most eligible to every good man, because God is with them; his word and ordinances are with them; there are large provisions of grace in the midst of them; so that it is profitable, delightful, and honourable, to be among them, and is attended with comfort, peace, and satisfaction: but then those are a poor, and an afflicted people; affliction is with them, for the sake of God, and Christ, and the truths which they profess, and the worship and service they are engaged in; and their afflictions are many and grievous: and now Moses chose to suffer these with them, to suffer the same afflictions they did, and to sympathize with them: and this was more eligible to him,

than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: meaning, either the pleasures, honours, and riches in Pharaoh's court, attended with sin; as indulging himself in the luxury of a court, when his brethren were in distress; approving Pharaoh's cruelty and persecution, at least conniving at it, and not opposing it, which could not be without sin; carrying himself as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, when he was an Hebrew; and preferring his own ease to the deliverance of his people; and now these, had he continued at court, would have been but for a short season: or else sinful lusts in general are intended, in which men promise themselves much pleasure, when it is only imaginary, and lasts but for a while neither; and both may be intended, and are what the Jews call [f253] `[gr ygwn[t`, "pleasures for a moment", or momentary ones. And the reasons which might induce Moses, and so every good man, to such a choice, may be taken partly from the nature of afflictions themselves, which are such that God has chosen for them, and appointed them unto, and which he gives them to suffer for his name, and which are an honour to them, and issue in their good, and in the glory of God; and partly from the nature of sinful pleasures; there is no solidity, nor satisfaction, in the best of worldly enjoyments; there can be no true pleasure in sin; there is always bitterness in the end, and it issues in death, if grace prevent not: now it was by faith Moses made this choice, for it is manifestly contrary to flesh and blood: it showed him to be a man thoroughly acquainted with the nature of sin; and that he looked beyond the things of sense and time, to those of eternity.

Ver. 26. *Esteeming the reproach of Christ*, etc..] That is, either Christ personal; meaning not any reproach that lay upon Christ, as the immediate

object of it; nor upon the people of Israel for the delay of his coming; but rather for the sake of Christ: Christ was made known to the Old Testament saints, and they believed in him; he was typified by sacrifices which they offered; and they were reproached for his sake, for the sacrifices they offered, and for the worship they performed, for their faith in the Messiah, and their expectation of him: or this may be understood of Christ mystical, the church; called Christ, because of the union, communion, sympathy, and likeness there is between them, insomuch that what is done to the one, is done to the other: when the saints are reproached, Christ himself is reproached; and therefore all reproaches of this nature should be bore willingly, cheerfully, courageously, patiently, and constantly: and such Moses reckoned

greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; he counted reproach itself riches; that is, he esteemed that riches for which he was reproached, as Christ, his word, and ordinances, and communion with the saints in them; all which are comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones; yea, are more valuable and desirable than thousands of gold and silver, or than the treasures in Egypt, which were very large; money, cattle, and lands coming into the hands of the king, through the seven years' famine in it, (<01474>Genesis 47:14,17,20) and for which immense treasure, treasure cities were built, (<02011>Exodus 1:11) which would have become Moses's, had he been Pharaoh's successor, to which he bid fair, before he discovered himself.

For he had respect unto the recompence of the reward; by which is meant, either the deliverance of the Israelites from their bondage, which he judged a sufficient recompence for all his afflictions and reproaches he endured, as the Apostle Paul did for the elect's sake, for the sake of Christ's body the church, (<51024>Colossians 1:24 <550210>2 Timothy 2:10) or the enjoyment of the land of Canaan, promised for an inheritance to the seed of Abraham; or the enjoyment of God's presence among his people, who is their shield, and exceeding great reward; or rather eternal glory, which is the reward of the inheritance, and is a reward of grace, and not of debt; this he had respect unto, looked for, and believed he should enjoy; so that his faith was of things unseen; and this caused him to prefer even afflictions with the saints, and reproaches for Christ, to all worldly riches and grandeur.

Ver. 27. *By faith he forsook Egypt*, etc..] Either when he fled to Midian; this was before the eating of the passover, and so it stands in its proper

order; whereas, his going out of Egypt with the children of Israel was after it, and mentioned in (Hebrews 11:29). The word “forsook” implies fleeing; and then it was when Pharaoh's wrath was kindled against him: but it may be said, that Moses seemed then to be afraid of it, seeing he fled: to which it may be answered, that he showed great courage and intrepidity in slaying the Egyptian; and he took no methods to gain the king's favour, when the thing was known; his fleeing was consistent with courage, and was a point of prudence, and in obedience to the will of God: his departure shows, that he would not desist from the work he was called unto; but that he waited God's time, when he should be again employed; wherefore he endured affliction and meanness in Midian, and waited, patiently, till God should call him again to service: or this is to be understood of the time when he led the children of Israel out of Egypt; when he had many difficulties on the part of that people: they were seated and settled in the land of Egypt; they knew nothing of Canaan, nor of the way to it; and, besides, that was in the possession of others; they were a very morose, impatient, stiffnecked, and an ungovernable people, whom he led into a wilderness, without food or arms; and their number was very large; and he had many difficulties, on the part of Pharaoh and the Egyptians. The Israelites were in the midst of them; he brought them out from among them, with the spoil of them in their hands; he knew the changeableness and fury of Pharaoh's mind, and yet he led them out, and left Egypt,

not fearing the wrath of the king; of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; though it was as the roaring of a lion: so such as are called by grace, from a state of darkness and bondage, and out of a strange land, forsake this world, and leave their situation in it, their sinful lusts and pleasures, the company of wicked men, and everything that is near and dear, when it is in competition with Christ; not fearing the wrath of any temporal king or prince; nor of Satan, the prince of this world:

for he endured; afflictions, reproach, and menaces, with patience and courage; his mind was not broken with them, nor overborne by them; he expected divine help, and persevered; and so do such, who are called by the grace of God:

as seeing him who is invisible; that is God, as the Syriac version expresses it; who is not to be seen corporeally, though intellectually; not in his essence, though in his works of creation and providence; not immediately, though mediately in and through Christ; not perfectly now, though face to

face hereafter. Moses saw him visionally, and symbolically in the bush; he saw him by faith, and with the eyes of his understanding; and so believing in his power, faithfulness, etc.. did what he did.

Ver. 28. *Through faith he kept the passover*, etc..] Which Moses made, or appointed by divine direction; he kept it, with all its rites and ceremonies, and caused the people of Israel to observe it; and which he did, in faith of the speedy deliverance of the children of Israel, from the house of bondage; and in the faith of the Messiah, of whom the passover was a type; (see Gill on "46071 Corinthians 5:7"). The Syriac version reads, "through faith they kept the passover"; that is, the Israelites:

and the sprinkling of blood; of the paschal lamb; which was received into a basin, and was sprinkled upon the lintel, and two side posts of the doors of the houses, in which the Israelites dwelt; which was done with a bunch of hyssop dipped into it:

lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them; for the Lord, seeing the blood sprinkled, as above, when he smote the firstborn of Egypt, passed by the houses of the Israelites, so distinguished; and they were all safe within, and not one of them touched: this was typical of the blood of Christ being sprinkled upon the hearts and consciences of his people; whereby they are purified through faith; which blood is looked upon by Jehovah, so that justice passes by them; and they are all safe and secure, and will be, when others are destroyed; nor can they be hurt by the second death.

Ver. 29. *By faith they passed through the Red sea, as by dry land*, etc..] Not through a river, but through the sea, the Red sea, the sea of Suph, or weeds; (see Gill on "4076Acts 7:36"). Some say they came out on the same side they went in; but it should seem rather, by the phrase here used, that they passed through it, from one side to the other; and that all one as if it had been on dry ground; even Moses, and all the children of Israel: and this they did by faith, believing, that God would make a passage quite through it for them, and deliver them out of the hands of their enemies, who were closely pursuing them:

which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned. These were Pharaoh, and his numerous army; who, observing the Israelites march on through the sea, as on dry land, thought they could do the same; and so made an attempt, but were everyone of them drowned; in just retaliation for the

cruel edict for drowning the male infants of the Israelites, as soon as they were born.

Ver. 30. *By faith the walls of Jericho fell down*, etc..] Of themselves, not from any natural cause: the Jews say [f254] they sunk right down into the ground, and were swallowed up; even the whole wall fell round about, as the Septuagint version in (Joshua 6:20) expresses it: or, it may be, only that which was over against the camp of Israel, as Kimchi observes; since Rahab's house was built upon the wall, and yet fell not. And this was by the faith of Joshua, and the Israelites, who believed the walls would fall, at the sound of the rams' horns, as God said they should: after they were compassed about seven days; which was a trial of their faith and patience: the Jews say [f255] it was on the sabbath day that they fell: this was a preternatural act, and cannot be ascribed to any second cause; nothing is impossible with God; no defences, ever so strong, are anything against him; unlikely means are sometimes made use of by him; faith stops at nothing, when it has the word of God to rest upon; and what God does, be does in his own time, and in his own way. This may be an emblem of the fall of the walls of the hearts of unregenerate men; of their unbelief, hardness, enmity, and vain confidence; and of the conversion and subjection of them unto Christ, through the preaching of the Gospel; which, in the eyes of men, is as mean and despicable, and as unlikely to bring about such an event, as the sounding of the rams' horns might be to the inhabitants of Jericho: and it may be also an emblem of the fall of Babylon, and other antichristian cities, (Revelation 16:19).

Ver. 31. *By faith the harlot Rahab*, etc..] The Targum on (Joshua 2:1) calls her atyqdnwp atta, “a woman, that kept a victualling house”: this paraphrase is taken notice of by Jarchi and Kimchi on the place, who interpret it, “a seller of food”: and even the Hebrew word hnwz, is so explained by a considerable Jewish writer [f256]; and this may rather seem to be the sense of the word, and to be her proper business, from the spies going to her house, as being an house of entertainment; and from Salmon's marrying her, which might be thought strange that a prince of Israel would, had she been a person of ill fame; to which may be added, the encomiums of her for her faith and works, both by our apostle, and by James: but yet, the constant use of the word, in this form, the testimonies of two apostles, and her making no mention of her husband and children, when she agreed with the spies, confirm the generally received character of her, that she was

an harlot. Some Jewish writers say [f257] that she was ten years of age when the Israelites came out of Egypt; and that all the forty years they were in the wilderness, htnz, "she played the harlot"; and was one and fifty years of age when she was proselyted. She is called an harlot; not with respect to her present, but past life. In the Greek text, she is here called Raab, as also in (⁵⁹25James 2:25) and so in the Septuagint in (⁶⁰02Joshua 2:1,3). Rachab, which exactly answers to the Hebrew word bjr, (⁶⁰02Joshua 2:1) and by Josephus [f258] "Rachabe". This woman was a wonderful and singular instance of the free, sovereign, distinguishing, powerful, and efficacious grace of God; being one that sprung from Canaan, and was of the nations that were abhorred; but, being called by grace, became an eminent believer: she believed that the God of the Israelites was God in heaven and on earth; that he had given the land of Canaan to them; she received the spies, and hid them through that faith; she caused them to swear by the Lord, that they would show mercy to her, and her family; and gave credit to them; and observed their instructions: and so she

perished not with them that believed not; the inhabitants of Jericho, who were unbelievers, and disobedient, and all perished by the sword: but Rahab perished not, neither temporally, nor eternally; her temporal salvation was an emblem and type of her spiritual salvation; her receiving the spies was an emblem of a soul's receiving the Gospel, and the ministers of it; the scarlet thread, that was hung out, was an emblem of the blood of Christ, by which sins, though as scarlet, are made white as wool; and the saving of her whole family is an emblem of the complete salvation of all the elect, soul and body, by Christ:

when she had received the spies with peace; and had hid them, for some time, in her house, and then let them down by the wall; and who, at the taking of the city, saved her, and hers, according to their promise and oath: the number of these spies were two, according to (⁶⁰02Joshua 2:1). The Jews [f259] say one of them was Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the high priest; and others [f260] of them say they were Phinehas and Caleb.

Ver. 32. *And what shall I more say*, etc..] Intimating he had said enough to prove the definition of faith he had given; and that the elders, by it, had obtained a good report; and yet he had not said all he could; and that he had so much to say, that he could not say all:

for the time would fail me; either the time of life, and so it is an hyperbolical expression; or the time convenient for the writing this epistle; to enumerate all the instances of faith, and enlarge upon them, would take up too much of his time, and make the epistle prolix and tedious: this form of speech is often used by Philo the Jew [f261], and by Julian the emperor [f262]. It may be observed, that many, who are not mentioned by name, do not stand excluded from being believers; and that the number of believers, under the Old Testament, was very large:

to tell of Gedeon; so Gideon is called in the Septuagint version of (Judges 6:11) and other places; and by Josephus [f263], and Philo [f264] the Jew, as here: he was a man, but of a mean extract, and had his infirmities; and even in the exercise of that particular grace, for which he is mentioned; but was, no doubt, a good man, and is commended for his faith; which appeared in ascribing former mercies and present afflictions to the Lord; in destroying the altar of Baal; in crediting the word of the Lord, that Israel should be saved by him; which he showed by the preparation he made, and in marching against a numerous army, with only three hundred men, and they but weak: all which may be seen in the book of Judges, (Judges 6:1-8:35) and

of Barak; who was before Gideon, as Jephthah was before Samson, and Samuel before David; for the apostle does not observe strict order, reciting these in haste. Barak, when the word of the Lord came to him, showed some diffidence, yet acted in obedience to it, under the sole direction and counsel of a woman; he engaged Sisera's vast army with a small number, and gave the glory of the victory to the Lord, (Judges 4:1-5:31).

and of Samson: who was a child of promise, and devoted to the Lord; he was famous for his great strength; he had his infirmities, but was, without doubt, a good man: the last act of his life seems to be a great instance of faith; he did it with calling upon the Lord; he was strengthened for it by the Lord; he acted, not as a private person, but as the judge of Israel; nor did he act from private revenge, but from zeal for God, and love to his country; and his intention was not to destroy himself, but his enemies; in which he acted as a type of Christ:

and of Jephthah; the Syriac version calls him “Nepthe”, and the Arabic version “Naphtah”; he was base born; and, for a time, joined himself to vain men, but became a believer; and is marked for his faith, in ascribing the conquests of Israel in the wilderness to the Lord; in fighting with the

Ammonites, whom he conquered; and in his conscientiousness, in observing his vow, (Judges 11:30-40).

of David also; a man after God's own heart, raised up to fulfil his will; whose faith appeared in his dependence on God, when he fought with Goliath; in encouraging himself in the Lord his God, when in exile and distress; and in believing his interest in the covenant of grace, when his house and family were in a disagreeable situation, and he just going out of the world:

and Samuel; a child of prayer, and early devoted to the Lord, who ministered to him, when a child; was always ready to hearken to his voice; was used very familiarly by him, and behaved with great uprightness, all his days; and had a good report of God and man:

and of the prophets; from Samuel to John the Baptist, who were famous for their trust in God, their faith in the Messiah, and for their honourable walk and conversation.

Ver. 33. *Who through faith subdued kingdoms*, etc..] As David did particularly; who subdued Syria, Moab, Ammon, Amalek, Edom, and the Philistines, (2 Samuel 8:12,14). War, in some cases, is lawful; and kingdoms may be subdued; and faith makes use of means to do it: these kingdoms, though subdued by faith, yet not without fighting. Believers have no reason to be afraid of kings, or kingdoms; and this should encourage the saints, in their combats with the powers of darkness.

Wrought righteousness; exercised vindictive justice, in taking vengeance on the enemies of God, and his people; civil righteousness, in the discharge of their offices; and moral righteousness, in their conversation before God and men; which, being imperfect, was not justifying: wherefore they stood in need of another, and better righteousness, which is perfect and durable; and, in consequence of which being known, embraced, and received, men work righteousness: it may be observed, that to do works of righteousness in faith, and by it, is something very considerable; it is reckoned here among actions of the greatest fame; and that true faith is an operative grace, it works by love, and is always attended with works of righteousness; and that righteousness is a fruit and evidence of faith; and that faith is not the believer's righteousness; and that the righteousness of faith is not that which faith works, but which it receives.

Obtained promises; the promise of the land of Canaan; particular promises of victory over their enemies; promises concerning the Messiah, and of everlasting life and happiness: their faith was not the cause of promises being made, nor of their being fulfilled; but was the grace by which these believers received them, believed them, and waited for the accomplishment of them; and, in some sense, enjoyed the things promised before hand; their faith realizing things future and invisible to them: to obtain a promise from God is a great and marvellous thing; it is an instance of rich grace; and there is never a promise, but what is great in itself, and precious to the saints: all God's promises are obtained; they are sure, and are certainly fulfilled; and it is the work and business of faith to receive, and enjoy them.

Stopped the mouths of lions: a lion was slain by Samson, and another by David; but the most remarkable instance of stopping the mouths of lions, was in the den, into which Daniel was cast; and this may encourage the faith of God's people, when they are in the midst of men, comparable to lions; and may animate them not to fear the devouring lion, Satan.

Ver. 34. *Quenched the violence of fire*, etc..] Which may be said to be done, when a believer, or a righteous man, is delivered out of it, as Lot from Sodom, when God rained fire and brimstone on it; when, by prayer, it is stopped, as by Moses, at Taberah, (Numbers 11:1,2) when persons are not hurt by it, as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, when cast into Nebuchadrezzar's fiery furnace; and many of the martyrs have triumphed in the flames: so believers are delivered out of the fire of afflictions, and are not consumed thereby; and quench the fiery darts of Satan, thrown at them; and are untouched by the fire of God's wrath, in every state and case; and shall not be hurt of the second death, which is a lake of fire, burning with brimstone.

Escaped the edge of the sword; and were not destroyed by it; as Lot, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, the Judges, David, Elijah, Elisha, and others.

Out of weakness were made strong; being recovered from bodily diseases, as David, Hezekiah, etc.. by an increase of bodily strength, as Samson; by being filled with courage, and strength of mind; when before timorous, as Barak, etc.. so believers, when they have been weak in the exercise of grace, have been made strong:

waxed valiant in fight; as Barak, Gideon, David, etc.. so believers, in the spiritual fight of faith, have waxed valiant; being engaged in a good cause,

and under a good Captain; being well provided with armour, and assured of victory, and a crown.

Turned to fight the armies of the aliens: such as the Canaanites, the Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and others; who were put to flight by Joshua, the Judges, David, and others.

Ver. 35. *Women received their dead raised to life again*, etc..] As the widow of Zarephath, and the Shunammite, (<11722>1 Kings 17:22 <12434>2 Kings 4:34,35). Their sons were really dead, and they received them alive gain, from the hands of the prophets, Elijah and Elisha, in the way of a resurrection, and by faith; by the faith of the prophets:

and others were tortured; racked, or tympanized; referring to the sufferings of seven brethren, and their mother, in the times of Antiochus, recorded in 2 Maccabees 7 as appears from the kind of torment endured by them; from the offer of deliverance rejected by them; and from their hope of the resurrection: for it follows,

not accepting deliverance; when offered them by the king, see the Apocrypha:

> “24 Now Antiochus, thinking himself despised, and suspecting it to be a reproachful speech, whilst the youngest was yet alive, did not only exhort him by words, but also assured him with oaths, that he would make him both a rich and a happy man, if he would turn from the laws of his fathers; and that also he would take him for his friend, and trust him with affairs. 25 But when the young man would in no case hearken unto him, the king called his mother, and exhorted her that she would counsel the young man to save his life.” (2 Maccabees 7)

that they might obtain a better resurrection; which they died in the faith of, see the Apocryha:

> “7 And him he sent with that wicked Alcimus, whom he made high priest, and commanded that he should take vengeance of the children of Israel. 11 And said courageously, These I had from heaven; and for his laws I despise them; and from him I hope to receive them again. 14 So when he was ready to die he said thus, It is good, being put to death by men, to look for hope from God to

be raised up again by him: as for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection to life. (2 Maccabees)

The resurrection of the saints, which is unto everlasting life, is a better resurrection than mere metaphorical, and figurative ones, as deliverances from great afflictions, which are called deaths; or real ones, which were only to a mortal state, and in order to die again, as those under the Old Testament, and under the New, before the resurrection of Christ; or than the resurrection of the wicked: for the resurrection the saints will obtain will be first, at the beginning of the thousand years; the wicked will not live till after they are ended; it will be by virtue of union to Christ, whereas the wicked will be raised merely by virtue of his power; the saints will rise with bodies glorious, powerful, and spiritual, the wicked with base, vile, and ignoble ones; the righteous will come forth to the resurrection of life, the wicked to the resurrection of damnation. The consideration of the better resurrection is of great use to strengthen faith, under sufferings, for righteousness sake, and this is obtained by suffering; not that suffering is the meritorious cause of it, but saints in this way come to it; it is promised to such, and it will be attained unto, and enjoyed by such; for all that live godly, do, and must suffer persecution in one way or another.

Ver. 36. *And others had trial of cruel mockings*, etc..] As Samson by the Philistines; Elisha by the children, whom the bears devoured; Jeremiah by Pashur, and others; the Jews by Sanballat and Tobiah, when building the temple; the prophets, whom God sent to the Jews, as his messengers, (<07016 25-28>Judges 16:25-28 <12023>2 Kings 2:23,24 <24007>Jeremiah 20:7,8 Neh 4:1-6) (<14615>2 Chronicles 36:15,16).

and scourgings; or smitings, as Jeremiah and Micaiah, (<24002>Jeremiah 20:22 <14823>2 Chronicles 18:23,24).

yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; as Joseph, Samson, and Jeremiah, (<01940>Genesis 39:20 <07162>Judges 16:21 <24002>Jeremiah 20:2 37:15). Now of these things they had trial, or experience; their graces were tried by them, and they patiently endured them.

Ver. 37. *They were stoned*, etc..] As Naboth, by the order of Ahab, (<11213>1 Kings 21:13-19), Zachariah in the court of the Lord's house; (<14421>2 Chronicles 24:21) and the character of Jerusalem is, that she stoned the prophets that were sent unto her, (<40237>Matthew 23:37).

They were sawn asunder; to which there seems to be an allusion in (^[425]Matthew 24:51). There is no instance of any good men being so used in Scripture: perhaps reference is had to some that suffered thus in the time of Antiochus. The Jews have a tradition, that the Prophet Isaiah was sawn asunder in the times of Manasseh, and by his order; which some think the apostle refers unto; though it seems to be all fictitious, and ill put together. The tradition is in both Talmuds: in the one, the account is this: [f265] that

> "Manasseh sought to kill Isaiah, and he fled from him, and fled to a cedar, and the cedar swallowed him up, all but the fringe of his garment; they came and told him (Manasseh), he said unto them, go and saw the cedar, wrsnw, "and they sawed the cedar", and blood was seen to come out."

And in the other [f266] thus,

> "says R. Simeon ben Azzai, I found a book of genealogies in Jerusalem, and in it was written that Manasseh slew Isaiah."

And after relating the occasion of it, being some passages in Isaiah Manasseh was displeased with and objected to; and the prophet not thinking it worth his while to return an answer, or attempt to reconcile them with other passages, objected, knowing that the king would use him contemptuously; he is made to say,

> "I will swallow (or put myself into) a cedar, they brought the cedar, wrsnw, "and sawed it asunder", and when it (the saw) came to his mouth, he expired."

Another Jewish writer [f267] out of the Midrash, reports it thus;

> "Manasseh sought to slay him, and Isaiah fled, and the Lord remembered him, and he was swallowed up in the middle of a tree; but there remained without the tree the fringe of his garment; and then Manasseh ordered the tree to be cut down, and Isaiah died."

And it is become a generally received opinion of the ancient Christian writers, that Isaiah was sawn asunder; as of Justin Martyr [f268], Origen [f269], Tertullian [f270], Lactantius [f271], Athanasius [f272], Hilary [f273], Cyril of Jerusalem [f274], Gregory Nyssene [f275], Jerom [f276], Isidorus Pelusiota [f277], Gregentius [f278], Procopius Gazaeus [f279], and others; but more persons seem to be designed:

were tempted; either by God, as Abraham, and Job; or by the devil, as all the saints are; or rather by cruel tyrants, to deny the faith, and renounce the worship of God, as Eleazar, and the seven brethren with their mother; at least some of them were, 2 Maccabees 6,7. Some think the true reading is επρηψησαν, "were burned"; as one of the seven brethren were in the Apocrytha,

> "Now when he was thus maimed in all his members, he commanded him being yet alive to be brought to the fire, and to be fried in the pan: and as the vapour of the pan was for a good space dispersed, they exhorted one another with the mother to die manfully, saying thus," (2 Maccabees 7:5)

and as Zedekiah and Ahab were roasted in the fire, by the king of Babylon, (<2922>Jeremiah 29:22) though they were lying prophets, and cannot be referred to here; (see <2713>Daniel 11:33). This clause is wanting in the Syriac version:

were slain with the sword; as the priests at Nob, by the order of Saul; (<092218>1 Samuel 22:18,19). The prophets of the Lord by Jezebel, (<111822>1 Kings 18:22 19:10) and many in the times of the Maccabees; (<2713>Daniel 11:33) and in the Apocrypha:

> "And there were destroyed within the space of three whole days fourscore thousand, whereof forty thousand were slain in the conflict; and no fewer sold than slain." (2 Maccabees 5:14)

they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; with the wool or hair upon them; and with such Elijah and Elisha might be arrayed; since the former is said to be a hairy man, or covered with a hairy garment, as John the Baptist was, who came in his spirit and power, and also in his form; and the latter, wore the mantle of the other; (<120108>2 Kings 1:8 2:8,14) and to these reference may be had, who were obliged to wander about, because of those who sought their lives; and was the case of others who were forced, by reason of persecution, to quit their habitations, and wander abroad; and some clothed themselves in this manner, to show their contempt of the world, and their contentment with mean apparel; and others, because they could get no other raiment:

[being] destitute; of bodily food, as Elijah, who was fed by ravens, and by the widow of Zarephath; (<111706>1 Kings 17:6-15),

afflicted; pressed, drove to the greatest straits, despairing of, life, and weary of it, as the same prophet, (<11190401>1 Kings 19:4-10),

tormented; or evilly treated, reproached, vilified, persecuted, and made the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things.

Ver. 38. *Of whom the world was not worthy*, etc..] These words are inserted in a parenthesis, to remove or prevent such objections as these; that they were restless and unquiet persons, that made disturbance in the world, and so unfit to live in it; and that they were deservedly punished for crimes they were guilty of; and to show the great worth and inestimable value of the people of God, which exceeds that of the whole world; and to intimate the removal of them out of the world, or from dwelling among the men of it, is by way of punishment to it:

they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth; as Elijah did; (<11180401>1 Kings 18:4 19:9,10), and many in the times of the Maccabees;

> "And they kept the eight days with gladness, as in the feast of the tabernacles, remembering that not long afore they had held the feast of the tabernacles, when as they wandered in the mountains and dens like beasts." (2 Maccabees 10:6)

Ver. 39. *And these all having obtained a good report through faith*, etc..] This may either be limited to the sufferers in the preceding verses, who were martyred, or suffered martyrdom for the faith, as the words may be rendered; and who are called martyrs or witnesses, in (<581201>Hebrews 12:1) and so the Ethiopic version renders the clause, "and all these were witnesses concerning the faith": or it may be extended to all the instances of faith throughout the chapter; and so the apostle reasserts what he had said, (<581102>Hebrews 11:2), having proved it by a variety of examples; (see Gill on "<581102>Hebrews 11:2").

received not the promise; not that they did not receive the promise of the land of Canaan, for so did Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, etc.. nor that they did not receive the promise of deliverance and victory, for so did Joshua, the Judges, and others; or that they did not receive the promise of eternal life, for that they all did; but the promise of the Messiah, that is, the Messiah promised: for they had the promise, but not the thing; who is called "the Promise", emphatically, because he is the first and grand promise; and because in him all the promises centre, and are yea, and amen:

him the Old Testament saints received not; they, greatly desired to see him in the flesh; they saw him by faith; they believed in him, and rejoiced in the expectation of his coming; but he was not exhibited to them incarnate. Now since these saints so strongly believed, and so cheerfully suffered before Christ came; the apostle's argument is, that much more should the saints now, since Christ is come, and the promises received, go on believing in him, and readily suffering for his sake; (see <BIBLE>Hebrews 12:1-4).

Ver. 40. *God having provided some better thing for us*, etc..] Not a better state of the church, in such respect, as to be free from suffering reproach and persecutions; for this is the case of saints under the New Testament as under the Old; nor the felicity of the soul after death; nor any greater degree of happiness in the other world; nor the perfection of blessedness in soul and body; things common to all believers; but Christ, as now exhibited in the flesh: Jesus Christ was the same in the yesterday of the Old Testament, as he is in the present day of the Gospel dispensation; he was slain from the foundation of the world; and the saints then were saved as now, by his grace and righteousness: only with this difference between them and us; they had Christ in the promise, we have him himself that was promised; they had him in type and shadow, we have him in reality and truth; they believed in, and were saved by Christ, who was to come; we believe in him, and are saved by him, as being come. Hence our case is, with respect to these circumstances, better than theirs; we have a better covenant, or a better administration of the covenant of grace; we have a better priesthood, and a better sacrifice; the Gospel is dispensed in a better manner, more dearly and fully: our condition is better than theirs; they were as children under tutors and governors, and were under a spirit of bondage; but we are redeemed from under the law, and are clear of its burdensome rites, as well as of its curse and condemnation; and have the spirit of liberty and adoption. And this God has provided for us in his council and covenant: for this denotes God's determination, designation, and appointment of Christ, to be the propitiatory sacrifice for sin; and has respect to the nature and circumstances of his death, which were fixed in the purposes of God; as well as the time of his coming into the world, and the season of his death; and in all this God has shown his great goodness, his amazing love, and the riches of his grace: and his end herein is,

that they without us should not be made perfect; the Old Testament saints are perfectly justified, perfectly sanctified, and perfectly glorified; but their

perfection was not by the law, which made nothing perfect, but by Christ, and through his sacrifice, blood, and righteousness; and so were not made perfect without us; since their sins and ours are expiated together by the same sacrifice; their persons and ours justified together by the same righteousness; they and we make up but one church, and general assembly; and as yet all the elect of God among the Jews are not called, and so are not perfect in themselves, or without us. Jews and Gentiles will incorporate together in the latter day; and besides, they and we shall be glorified together, in soul and body, to all eternity.

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 12

In this chapter the apostle presses to a constant exercise of faith and patience, amidst the various afflictions the saints are exercised with; delivers out several exhortations useful in the Christian life; and shows the difference between the legal and Gospel dispensations. Having in the preceding chapter given many illustrious instances and examples of faith, he makes use of this cloud of witnesses, as he calls them, to engage the Hebrews to drop their unbelief, and run with faith and patience the race set before them, (Hebrews 12:1), and which he further urges from the example of Christ; from his concern in faith, being the author and finisher of it; from what he suffered when here on earth, both the contradiction of sinners, and the death of the cross, for the joy of having his people with him in heaven; and from his glorious state, being set down at the right hand of God. Whereas, as yet, they had not been called to shed their blood in their warfare against sin, (Hebrews 12:2-4). And that they must expect chastisement, and should bear it patiently, he cites a passage of Scripture out of (Proverbs 3:11,12) which suggests, that those who are the children of God, and are loved and received by him, are chastened and scourged, (Hebrews 12:5,6). Wherefore this was no other than dealing with them as children; and should they not be thus dealt with, it would be an argument that they were bastards, and not sons, (Hebrews 12:7,8). And next the apostle argues from the right of parents to chastise their children, and the subjection that is yielded to them; that if the corrections of them, who were the fathers of their bodies, were quietly submitted to; then much more should those of the Father of their souls; and the rather, since the chastenings of the former are only for temporal good, and according to their fallible judgments; whereas the latter are for spiritual profit, and an increase of holiness, (Hebrews 12:9,10). And though it must be allowed, that no chastening, for the present time, is matter of joy, but of grief; yet the effects of them are the peaceable fruits of righteousness, to them that are exercised by them, (Hebrews 12:11). Wherefore the apostle exhorts the believing Hebrews to encourage themselves and others under afflictions; and to behave in such manner, and

carry it so evenly, that they might not be an occasion of stumbling to weak believers, (Hebrews 12:12,13). He exhorts them in general to follow peace with all men, and particularly holiness; which is absolutely necessary to the beatific vision of God, (Hebrews 12:14), and to take care that no heresy or immorality spring up among them, and be connived at, and cherished by them, to the troubling of some, and defiling of others, (Hebrews 12:15), and particularly, lest the sin of uncleanness, or any sort of profaneness, should be found among them; of which Esau, the brother of Jacob, from whence they sprung, was guilty; whose profaneness lay in selling his birthright for a morsel of meat, and whose punishment was, that he should be deprived of the blessing; which decree was irrevocable, notwithstanding his tears, (Hebrews 12:16,17) and to enforce these exhortations, the apostle observes to these believers, that they were not now under the law, but in a Gospel church state. The terror of the legal dispensation they were delivered from is described by the place where the law was given, a mount burning with fire; by circumstances attending it, blackness, darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet; by the matter of it, a voice of words, which they that heard, entreated they might hear no more; and by the effect the whole had upon. Moses himself, who quaked and trembled at what he saw and heard, (Hebrews 12:18-21). The happiness of the Gospel dispensation, or of the Gospel church state, is expressed by the names of it, called Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the new Jerusalem; and by the company the saints have there, and their fellowship with them; angels innumerable; elect men, whose names are written in heaven, and whose spirits are made perfectly just; God the Judge of all, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant; whose blood being sprinkled on their consciences, spoke peace and pardon to them; such as neither Abel's blood nor sacrifice could speak, (Hebrews 12:22-24). From whence the apostle argues, that care should be taken not to neglect and despise the voice of Christ, who is now in heaven, and speaks from thence in his Gospel and ordinances; seeing they escaped not who rejected him that spoke on earth, at Mount Sinai, which was shaken by his voice; and the rather, since it appears from a prophecy in (Haggai 2:6,7), that under the Gospel dispensation, not only the earth but the heavens would he shaken, (Hebrews 12:25,26) which is an emblem of the shaking and removing the ordinances of the ceremonial law, that Gospel ordinances might take place, and remain for ever, (Hebrews 12:27). Upon the whole, the apostle exhorts the believing Hebrews, that seeing they had received the immovable kingdom of grace, and were

admitted into the Gospel dispensation, or church state; that they would hold fast the Gospel of the grace of God, and serve the Lord, according to his revealed will, with reverence and godly fear, which would be acceptable to him; or otherwise he would be a consuming fire; as he is to all the despisers and neglecters of his Gospel and ordinances, (Hebrews 12:28,29).

Ver. 1. *Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about*, etc..], As the Israelites were encompassed with the pillar of cloud, or with the clouds of glory in the wilderness, as the Jews say; (see Gill on "1 Corinthians 10:1"), to which there may be an allusion, here, since it follows,

with so great a cloud of witnesses; or "martyrs", as the Old Testament saints, the instances of whose faith and patience are produced in the preceding chapter: these, some of them, were martyrs in the sense in which that word is commonly used; they suffered in the cause, and for the sake of true religion; and they all bore a noble testimony of God, and for him; and they received a testimony from him; and will be hereafter witnesses for, or against us, to whom they are examples of the above graces: and these may be compared to a "cloud", for the comfortable and reviving doctrines which they dropped; and for their refreshing examples in the heat of persecution; and for their guidance and direction in the ways of God; and more especially for their number, being like a thick cloud, and so many, that they compass about on every side, and are instructive every way. Hence the following things are inferred and urged,

let us lay aside every weight; or burden; every sin, which is a weight and burden to a sensible sinner, and is an hinderance in running the Christian race; not only indwelling sin, but every actual transgression, and therefore to be laid aside; as a burden, it should be laid on Christ; as a sin, it should be abstained from, and put off, with respect to the former conversation: also worldly cares, riches, and honours, when immoderately pursued, are a weight depressing the mind to the earth, and a great hinderance in the work and service of God, and therefore to be laid aside; not that they are to be entirely rejected, and not cared for and used, but the heart should not be set upon them, or be over anxious about them: likewise the rites and ceremonies of Moses's law were a weight and burden, a yoke of bondage, and an intolerable one, and with which many believing Jews were entangled and pressed, and which were a great hinderance in the performance of evangelical worship; wherefore the exhortation to these Hebrews, to lay

them aside, was very proper and pertinent, since they were useless and incommodious, and there had been a disannulling of them by Christ, because of their weakness and unprofitableness. Some observe, that the word here used signifies a tumour or swelling; and so may design the tumour of pride and vain glory, in outward privileges, and in a man's own righteousness, to which the Hebrews were much inclined; and which appears in an unwillingness to stoop to the cross, and bear afflictions for the sake of the Gospel; all which is a great enemy to powerful godliness, and therefore should be brought down, and laid aside. The Arabic version renders it, “every weight of luxury”: all luxurious living, being prejudicial to real religion:

and the sin which doth so easily beset us; the Arabic version renders it, “easy to be committed”; meaning either the corruption of nature in general, which is always present, and puts upon doing evil, and hinders all the good it can; or rather some particular sin, as what is commonly called a man's constitution sin, or what he is most inclined to, and is most easily drawn into the commission of; or it may be the sin of unbelief is intended, that being opposite to the grace of faith, the apostle had been commending, in the preceding chapter, and he here exhorts to; and is a sin which easily insinuates itself, and prevails, and that sometimes under the notion of a virtue, as if it would be immodest, or presumptuous to believe; the arguments for it are apt to be readily and quickly embraced; but as every weight, so every sin may be designed: some reference may be had to (<250114>Lamentations 1:14) where the church says, that her transgressions were “wreathed”, wgrtçy, “wreathed themselves”, or wrapped themselves about her. The allusion seems to be to runners in a race, who throw off everything that encumbers, drop whatsoever is ponderous and weighty, run in light garments, and lay aside long ones, which entangle and hinder in running, as appears from the next clause, or inference.

And let us run with patience the race that is set before us. The stadium, or race plot, in which the Christian race is run, is this world; the prize run for is the heavenly glory; the mark to direct in it, is Christ; many are the runners, yet none but the overcomers have the prize; which being held by Christ, is given to them: this race is “set before” the saints; that is, by God; the way in which they are to run is marked out by him in his word; the troubles they shall meet with in it are appointed for them by him, in his counsels and purposes; the mark to direct them is set before them in the Gospel, even Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, whom they are to look

unto; the length of their race is fixed for them, or how far, and how long they shall run; and the prize is determined for them, and will be given them, and which is held out for their encouragement, to have respect unto: and it becomes all the saints, and belongs to each, and everyone of them, to "run" this race; which includes both doing and suffering for Christ; it is a motion forward, a pressing towards the mark for the prize, a going from strength to strength, from one degree of grace to another; and to it swiftness and agility are necessary; and when it is performed aright, it is with readiness, willingness, and cheerfulness: it requires strength and courage, and a removal of all impediments, and should be done "with patience"; which is very necessary, because of the many exercises in the way; and because of the length of the race; and on account of the prize to be enjoyed, which is very desirable: the examples of the saints, and especially Christ, the forerunner, should move and animate unto it.

Ver. 2. *Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith*, etc..] Not with bodily eyes, for at present he is not to be looked upon in this manner, but with the eye of the understanding, or with the eye of faith; for faith is a seeing of the Son; it is a spiritual sight of Christ, which is at first but glimmering, afterwards it increases, and is of a soul humbling nature; it is marvellous and surprising; it transforms into the image of Christ, and fills with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: a believer should be always looking to Christ, and off of every object, as the word here used signifies. Christ is to be looked unto as "Jesus", a Saviour, who being appointed and sent by God to be a Saviour, came, and is become the author of eternal salvation; and to him only should we look for it: he is able and willing to save; he is a suitable, complete, and only Saviour; and whoever look to him by faith shall be saved; and he is to be considered, and looked unto, as "the author and finisher of faith": he is the author or efficient cause of it; all men are by nature without it; it is not in the power of man to believe of himself; it is a work of omnipotence; it is an instance of the exceeding greatness of the power of God; and it is the operation of Christ, by his Spirit; and the increase of it is from him, (<4217>Luke 17:5) and he is the finisher of it; he gives himself, and the blessings of his grace, to his people, to maintain and strengthen it; he prays for it, that it fail not; he carries on the work of faith, and will perform it with power; and brings to, and gives that which is the end of it, eternal life, or the salvation of the soul.

Who for the joy that was set before him; the word αντι, rendered "for"; sometimes signifies, in the room, or stead of, as in (<4022>Matthew 2:22

20:28) and is so rendered here in the Syriac and Arabic versions; and then the sense is, that Christ instead of being in the bosom of the Father, came into this world; instead of being in the form of God, he appeared in the form of a servant; instead of the glory which he had with his Father from eternity, he suffered shame and disgrace; instead of living a joyful and comfortable life on earth, he suffered a shameful and an accursed death; and instead of the temporal joy and glory the Jews proposed to him, he endured the shame and pain of the cross: sometimes it signifies the end for which a thing is, as in (<4005>Ephesians 5:31) and may intend that, for the sake of which Christ underwent so much disgrace, and such sufferings; namely, for the sake of having a spiritual seed, a numerous offspring with him in heaven, who are his joy, and crown of rejoicing; for the sake of the salvation of all the elect, on which his heart was set; and for the glorifying of the divine perfections, which was no small delight and pleasure to him. And to this agrees the Chaldee paraphrase of (<1921>Psalm 21:1).

> "O Lord, in thy power shall the King Messiah yd j y, "rejoice", and in thy redemption how greatly will he exult!"

And also because of his own glory as Mediator, which was to follow his sufferings, and which includes his resurrection from the dead, his exaltation at the right hand of God, and the whole honour and glory Christ has in his human nature; (see <1608>Psalm 16:8-11) and with a view to all this, he endured the cross; which is to be taken not properly for that frame of wood, on which he was crucified; but, improperly, for all his sufferings, from his cradle to his cross; and particularly the tortures of the cross, being extended on it, and nailed unto it; and especially the death of the cross, which kind of death he endured to verify the predictions of it, (<2216>Psalm 22:16 <3810>Zechariah 12:10) and to show that he was made a curse for his people; and this being a Roman punishment, shows that the sceptre was taken from Judah, and therefore the Messiah must be come; and that Christ suffered for the Gentiles, as well as Jews: and this death he endured with great courage and intrepidity, with much patience and constancy, and in obedience to the will of his Father: despising the shame; of the cross; for it was an ignominious death, as well as a painful one; and as he endured the pain of it with patience, he treated the shame of it with contempt; throughout the whole of his life, he despised the shame and reproach that was cast upon him; and so he did at the time of his apprehension, and when upon his trial, and at his death, under all the ignominious circumstances

that attended it; which should teach us not to be ashamed of the reproach of Christ, but count it an honour to be worthy to suffer shame for his name.

And is set down at the right hand of the throne of God; Which is in heaven; and is expressive of the majesty and glory of God; and of the honour done to Christ in human nature, which is not granted to any of the angels: here Christ sits as God's fellow, as equal to him, as God, and as having done his work as man, and Mediator; and this may assure us, that when we have run out our race, we shall sit down too, with Christ upon his throne, and be at rest.

Ver. 3. *For consider him*, etc..] In the greatness of his person, as God, the Son of God, the heir of all things; and in his offices of prophet, priest, and King, as the Saviour of lost sinners, the Leader and Commander of the people, as the apostle and high priest of our profession: consider him in his human nature, his conversation on earth, and what he did and suffered for men; how that in his nature he was pure and holy, in his conversation harmless and innocent, in his deportment meek and lowly; who went about doing good to the souls of men, and at last suffered and died, and is now glorified: consider the analogy between him and us, and how great is the disproportion; and therefore if he was ill treated, no wonder we should consider him under all his reproaches and sufferings:

that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself; against his person, they denying his deity, and speaking against his sonship, and against his offices; mocking him as a King, deriding him as a prophet, and treating him with the utmost contempt as a priest and Saviour; and against his actions, his works of mercy to the bodies of men, when done on the sabbath day; his conversing with sinners for the good of their souls, as if he was an encourager of them in sin, and a partner with them; his miracles, as if they were done by the help of the devil; and against the whole series of his life, as if it was criminal. Now we should analogize this contradiction, and see what proportion there is between this, and what is endured by us: we should consider the aggravations of it, that it was “against himself”; sometimes it was against his disciples, and him through them, as it is now against his members, and him in them; but here it was immediately and directly against himself: and this he endured “from sinners”; some more secret, as the Scribes, Sadducees, and Pharisees; some more open, as the common people; some of them the vilest of sinners, the most abandoned of creatures, as the Roman soldiers, and Herod's men of war: and this should

be considered, that we cannot be contradicted by viler or meaner persons; and it is worthy of notice, with what courage and bravery of mind, with what patience and invincible constancy he endured it: this should be recollected for imitation and encouragement,

lest ye be wearied, and faint in your minds; contradiction is apt to make persons weary and faint, as Rebekah was, because of the daughters of Heth, and as Jeremiah was, because of the derision of the Jews, (<01Ge27:46>Genesis 27:46 <24Je20:8,9>Jeremiah 20:8,9) but a consideration of Jesus, and of what he has endured, tends to relieve the saints in such a condition; (see <40Mt10:25>Matthew 10:25 <42Lu23:31>Luke 23:31).

Ver. 4. *Ye have not yet resisted unto blood*, etc..] They had resisted sin, and Satan, and the world, the men of it, and the lusts of it, and its frowns and flatteries, and also false teachers, even every adversary of Christ, and their souls; but they had not, as yet, resisted unto blood, or to the shedding of their blood, as some of the Old Testament saints had done; as some in the times of the Maccabees, and as James the apostle of Christ, and as Christ himself: wherefore the apostle suggests, that they ought to consider, that they had been indulged; and what they had been engaged in, were only some light skirmishes; and that they must expect to suffer as long as they were in the world, and had blood in them; and that their blood, when called for, should be spilled for the sake of Christ:

striving against sin; which is the principal antagonist the believer has, and is here particular pointed out: sin is here, by some, thought to be put for sinful men; or it may design the sin of those men, who solicited the saints to a defection from the truth; or the sin of apostasy itself; or that of unbelief; or rather indwelling sin, and the lusts of the flesh, which war against the soul. Now this is said, to sharpen and increase the saints resentment and indignation against it, as being their antagonist, with whom they strive and combat, and which is the cause of all the evils in the world, exposes to wrath to come, and separates from communion with God; and to encourage them to bear their sufferings patiently, since they are not without sin, as Christ was; and since their afflictions and sufferings are for the subduing of sin, and the increase of holiness.

Ver. 5. *And ye have forgotten the exhortation*, etc..] Or consolation, the consolatory word or doctrine, in (<20Pr03:11>Proverbs 3:11). This, by their conduct, the apostle feared they had forgotten, and therefore puts them in

mind of it; or it may be read by way of question, “and have ye forgotten?”, etc.. do not ye remember? it would be right to call it to mind:

which speaketh unto you as unto children; not as the children of Solomon, but as the children of God, or of Christ, the wisdom of God: here, by a prosopopeia, the word of exhortation is introduced as a person speaking,

my son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord; by which is meant, not vindictive punishment; this would not be speaking to them, nor dealing with them as children, and would be contrary to the love of God towards them; besides, chastisement in this sense has been upon Christ for them, and it would be unjust to lay it on them again; but a fatherly correction is designed, and which is given in love by God, as a Father, and for the instruction of his children, as the word used signifies: and it is called not the chastening of men, but of the Lord; every chastening, or afflictive providence, is appointed by God, and is looked upon by believers, when grace is in exercise, as coming from him; and it is directed, and governed, and limited by him, and is overruled by him for his own glory, and their good: and this is not to be despised, as something nauseous and loathsome, or as not useful and unprofitable, or as insignificant and unworthy of notice, but should be esteemed for the good ends, which are sometimes answered, by it:

nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; God has various ways of rebuking, reproving, and convincing, sometimes by his Spirit, sometimes by his word and ministers, and sometimes by afflictive providences; by these he rebukes his people for their sins, convinces them of them, and brings them to acknowledgment and confession; he makes them hereby sensible of their duty, in which they have been remiss, and brings them to a more constant and fervent discharge of it; he reproves them for, and convinces of their folly in trusting in the creature, or loving it too much, and of every wrong way they have been walking in; and these rebukes are not in a way of wrath, but love, and therefore saints should not faint at them: there are two extremes they are apt to run into, under such a dispensation; either to take no notice, and make light of an affliction, or else to be overwhelmed by it, and sink under it; both are guarded against in this exhortation.

Ver. 6. *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth*, etc..] All men are not the objects of God's love, only a special people, whom he has chosen in Christ; for whom he has given his Son, when they were sinners and enemies; whom he quickens and calls by his grace, justifies, pardons, and accepts in

Christ; and whom he causes to love him; these he loves with an everlasting and unchangeable love, and in a free and sovereign way, without any regard to any motive or condition in them. Now these are chastened by him, and loved while they are chastened; their chastening is in love, as appears from the nature of God's love to them, which changes not; from the nature of chastening itself; which is that of a father; from the divine supports granted under it; from the ends of it, which are, among others, that they might be more and more partakers of holiness, and not be condemned with the world; and from the issue of it, which is a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. So the Jews [f280] often speak of hbha lç ˆyrwsy, "chastisements of love", in distinction from evil "chastisement", or vindictive ones:

and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth; by whom are meant, not any of the angels, nor all the sons of men, but such whom God has predestinated to the adoption of children, and in the covenant of his grace has declared himself a father to; for whom Christ has a special regard, as children, and therefore partook of human nature, and died to gather them together, and redeemed them, that they might receive the adoption of children; and who appear to be the children of God by faith in Christ; and who have the spirit of adoption, witnessing their sonship to them; this is a valuable blessing of grace, and springs from love: and such are received by God into his heart's love and affection, with complacency and delight; and into the covenant of his grace, to share all the blessings and promises of it; and into his family, to enjoy all the privileges of his house, and into communion with himself; and they will be hereafter received by him into glory: now these he scourges; he suffers them sometimes to be scourged by men, and to be buffeted by Satan; and sometimes he scourges them himself with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men, but always in love.

Ver. 7. *If ye endure chastening*, etc..] In faith, with patience, with courage and constancy, with humility and reverence: there are many things which may encourage and animate the saints to endure it in such a manner; as that it is but a chastening, and the chastening of a father; it should be considered from whence it comes, and for what ends; that it comes from the Lord, and is for his glory, and their good; the example of Christ, and of other saints, should excite unto it. The Jews have a saying [f281], that

> "the doctrine of chastisements is silence;"

that is, they are to be patiently bore, and not murmured at. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read the words as an exhortation; the former of these renders it, “persevere in discipline”; the Syriac version, “endure correction”; the Arabic version, “be ye patient in chastisement”; and the Ethiopic version, “endure your chastening”: but then the word, “for”, should be supplied in the next clause, as it is in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, making that to be a reason, enforcing this,

for God dealeth with you as with sons: chastening is owning of them for his children, and it discovers them to be so, and shows that they continue such; he does not chasten them but when it is necessary; and whenever he does, it is in love and mercy, and for good, and in the best time, seasonably, and in measure:

for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? no one can be named, not the Son of God himself; he had the chastisement of our peace upon him; nor the more eminent among the children of God, as Abraham, David, and others; nor any in any catalogue, or list of them, such as in the preceding chapter; not one in any age or period of time whatever, in any bodies, societies, or communities of them, either under the Old or New Testament.

Ver. 8. *But if ye be without chastisement*, etc..] Or have no affliction:

whereof all are partakers; that is, all the children of God; they are all alike children; they are all in a state of imperfection, and prone to sin; God has an impartial respect unto them: and though they are not all alike chastened, nor chastened at all times, yet none are exempted from chastisement, but have it in some way or another, and at some time or another.

Then are ye bastards, and not sons; all are not sons that are under a profession of religion; all that are under a profession of religion are not chastised; but then those are not the children of God, but the children of the world, of Satan, and of the antichristian harlot; for though all that are chastised are not children, yet all that are children are chastised: hence we learn, that outward peace and prosperity is not a note of a true church; and that such have reason to distrust their state, who know not what it is to have the chastising rod of God upon them; and that afflictions are rather arguments for than against sonship.

Ver. 9. *Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh*, etc..] Earthly parents; who are so called, because they are the immediate causes and

instruments of the generation of their children, and of their fleshly bodies and worldly beings; and to distinguish them from the Father of spirits: and this shows, that they have not the spirit or soul from them, only the flesh or body, and which is frail and corrupt; and therefore goes by this name.

Which corrected us; early, and at proper seasons, in love, and for instruction, and to prevent ruin, and death:

and we gave them reverence; by submitting to their correction, and hearkening to it; by taking shame to themselves, and acknowledging the offence committed; by retaining the same affection for them; and, by a carefulness not to offend for the future.

Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? that is, to God, who is so called; not because he is the Creator of angels, who are spirits; but because he is the Creator of the souls of men; the soul is the more noble and excellent part of man: it bears a resemblance to God; it is, the life of man, and is immortal; it is exceeding precious, and the redemption of it; this was at first immediately created by God; and he still continues to create souls, which he preserves in their being, and has the power of saving and destroying them. Besides, God may be so called, because he is the author and donor of all spiritual gifts, and particularly of regenerating grace; it is he who renews a right spirit in them, and puts a new spirit into them: now such ought to be in "subjection" to him; not only as creatures to a Creator, and as subjects to their prince: but as children to a father, and particularly to him, as and when correcting; they should bow to his sovereignty, resign to his will, be humble under his mighty hand, be still and quiet, and bear all patiently; the advantage arising from such a subjection is life: "and live"; or "that ye may live"; or "and ye shall live": more comfortably, and more to the glory of God, in communion and fellowship with him here, and in heaven to all eternity.

Ver. 10. *For they verily for a few days chastened us*, etc..] Which respects not the minority of children, during which time they are under the correction of parents, and which is but a few days; nor the short life of parents; but rather the end which parents have in chastening their children, which is their temporal good, and which lasts but for a few days; which sense the opposition in the latter part of the text requires: and this they do

after their own pleasure: not to please and delight themselves in the pains and cries of their children, which would be brutish and inhuman; though

corrections are too often given to gratify the passions; nor merely in an arbitrary way, and when they please; but the sense is, they correct as seems good unto them; in the best way and manner; to the best of their judgments, which are fallible:

but he for our profit; saints are no losers by afflictions; they lose nothing but their dross and tin; they do not lose the love of God; nor their interest in the covenant of grace; nor the presence of God; nor grace in their own hearts; nor spiritual peace and comfort: on the contrary, they are real gainers by them; their graces gain by them fresh lustre and glory; they obtain a greater degree of spiritual knowledge; and a larger stock of experience; and are hereby restored to their former state, duty, and zeal; and become more conformable to Christ; yea, their afflictions conduce to their future glory; many are the profits arising from them. The Alexandrian copy reads in the plural number, “profits”: particularly God's end in chastening of his children is,

that we might be partakers of his holiness; not the essential holiness of God, which is incommunicable; but a communicative holiness of his, which it is his determining will his people should have: it comes from him, from whom every good and perfect gift does; it is in Christ for them, and is received out of his fulness; and is wrought in them by the Spirit; and it bears a resemblance to the divine nature: now men are naturally destitute of this holiness; they have it not by nature, but by participation; as God's gift; and they first partake of it in regeneration; and here an increase of it is designed, a gradual participation of it; and it may include perfect holiness in heaven: afflictions are designed as means to bring persons to this end; to bring them to a sense of sin, an acknowledgment of it, an aversion to it, and to a view of pardon of it; to purge it away; to wean the saints from this world; to increase their grace, and lead them on to a perfect state of glory, where there will be no more sin, and no more sorrow.

Ver. 11. *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous*, etc..] These words anticipate an objection, taken from the grief and sorrow that comes by afflictions; and therefore how should they be for profit and advantage? The apostle answers, by granting that no affliction “seemeth” to be joyous, in outward appearance to flesh and blood, and according to the judgment of carnal sense and reason; in this view of afflictions, it must be owned, they do not appear to be matter, cause, or occasion of joy; though they really are, when viewed by faith, and judged of by sanctified

reason; for they are tokens of the love of God and Christ; are evidences of sonship; and work together either for the temporal, or spiritual, or eternal good of the saints: and so likewise indeed “for the present time”, either while under them, or in the present state of things, they seem so; but hereafter, either now when they are over; or however in the world to come, when the grace, goodness, wisdom, and power of God in them, in supporting under them, bringing out of them, and the blessed effects, and fruits of them, will be discerned, they will be looked upon with pleasure: but for the present, and when carnal sense and reason prevail, it must be allowed, that they are not matter of joy,

but grievous; or matter, cause, and occasion of grief; they cause pain and grief to the afflicted, and to their friends and relations about them; and especially, they are very grieving, and occasion heaviness, and are grievous to be borne, when soul troubles attend them; when God hides his face, and the soul is filled with a sense of wrath, looking upon the chastening, as being in wrath and hot displeasure; when Satan is let loose, and casts his fiery darts thick and fast; and when the soul has lost its views of interest in the love of God, and in the grace of Christ, and in eternal glory and happiness.

Nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby: who are used unto afflictions; “trained” up and instructed in the school of afflictions, as the word may signify; in which many useful lessons of faith and hope, patience and experience, humility, self-denial; and resignation of will, are learned: and to such afflictions yield “the fruit of peace”; external peace and prosperity sometimes follow upon them; and oftentimes internal peace is enjoyed in them; and they always issue to such in eternal peace and everlasting happiness; and this peace arises from the “righteousness” of Christ, laid hold upon by faith, which produces a true conscience peace, and entitles to that everlasting joy and rest which remains for the people of God. Moreover, the fruit of holiness may be designed, which saints by afflictions are made partakers of, and the peace enjoyed in that; for there is a peace, which though it does not spring from, yet is found in the ways of righteousness; and though this peace may not be had for the present, or while the affliction lasts, yet it is experienced “afterwards”; either after the affliction is over in the present life, or however in eternity, when the saints enter into peace; for the end of such dispensations, and of the persons exercised by them, is peace,

Ver. 12. *Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down*, etc..] These words may be considered as spoken to the Hebrews, with respect to themselves; accordingly, the Syriac version reads, “your hands”, and “your knees”; who were sluggish, and inactive in prayer, in hearing the word, in attendance on ordinances, in holding fast their profession, and in the performance of those things which adorn it; they were weary and fatigued with weights and burdens of sins and afflictions; and were faint, fearful, and timorous, through distrust of the promised good, because of their persecutions, being in present distress, and in a view of approaching danger, with which they might be surprised, as well as affected with their present afflictions: and then the exhortation to “lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees”, is to be active in every duty; to be courageous against every enemy: to bear patiently every burden; to take heart, and be of good cheer under every afflictive providence: or else they may be considered as an exhortation to them with respect to others, which seems to be most agreeable to (<23503>Isaiah 35:3) from whence they are taken; and then what is signified in them is done by sympathizing with persons in distress; by speaking comfortably to them, and by bearing their burdens.

Ver. 13. *And make straight paths for your feet*, etc..] By “feet” are meant the walk and conversation of the saints, both in the church, and in the world, (<22701>Song of Solomon 7:1) and there are paths made ready for these feet to walk in; as the good old paths of truth, of the word and worship of God, of faith and holiness: and to make these paths “straight”, is to make the word of God the rule of walking; to avoid carefully joining anything with it as a rule; to attend constantly on the ordinances of Christ; to go on evenly in a way of believing on him; to walk in some measure worthy of the calling wherewith we are called, and by way of example to others.

Lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; a lame member, as the Syriac version, a lame member of the body of Christ, the church; or a lame person, as the Arabic version, a weak believer; one that is ready to halt, either through the corruption of nature, or through the weakness of grace, or through want of light and judgment, and through instability and inconstancy; lest such an one should, through the irregular walk and conversation of others, be stumbled and offended, and go out of the way, and leave the paths of righteousness and truth. God takes care of, and has a regard to such, and he would have others also, (<33406>Micah 4:6 <36319>Zephaniah 3:19). The Ethiopic version reads, “that your halting may be healed, and not offended”: that you yourselves may not halt and stumble.

But let it rather be healed; the fallen believer be restored, the weak brother be confirmed, the halting professor be strengthened, and everyone be built up and established upon the most holy faith, and in the pure ways of the Gospel.

Ver. 14. *Follow peace with all men*, etc..] That are in a natural and domestic relation to one another, being of the same family; and that are in a civil and political one, being of the same nation, city, or society; and that are in a spiritual one, being members of the same church; or, if not, yet being saints, and though in some things different in judgment; yea, even peace is to be followed with enemies, as much as in us lies: and perhaps by "all men", the Gentiles may be more especially designed, whose peace the Hebrews thought they were not to seek, (<5206>Deuteronomy 23:6) mistaking the sense of the text, by applying it to the Gentiles in general: to "follow peace", signifies an eager pursuit after it, in the use of proper means; exerting the utmost of a man's power to attain it, in all things possible: many things serve to enforce this upon the saints; this is most agreeable to all the three divine Persons; to God, who is the God of peace; to Christ, the Prince of peace; and to the Spirit, one of whose fruits is peace; and to the characters of the saints, who are sons of peace, and who are called to peace, and who make a profession of the Gospel of peace; and to the privileges they enjoy, being interested in the covenant of peace, partaking of spiritual peace now, and being entitled to eternal peace hereafter: and this agrees with the sayings and counsels of the ancient Jews. It was a saying of Hillell [f282], who lived about the times of Christ;

> "be thou one of the disciples of Aaron, who loved peace, µwlç Pdwrw, "and followed peace"."

This is said of Aaron in the Talmud [f283], that

"he loved peace, and followed peace, and made peace between a man and his neighbour, as is said, (<3006>Malachi 2:6)."

They recommend peace on many accounts, and say, great is peace, and among the rest, because it is one of the names of God [f284]:

and holiness: this being added to peace, shows that peace is no further to be followed than is consistent with holiness; and holiness here does not design any particular branch of holiness, as chastity of the body and mind, but the whole of holiness, inward and outward; and intends true holiness, in

opposition to ceremonial holiness, which the Hebrews were fond of, and pursued after: it means even perfect holiness; for though holiness is not perfect in this life, yet it will be in heaven; and there is a perfection of it in Christ; and it is to be followed after, by going to Christ for more grace, and exercising faith upon him, as our sanctification; and by eager desires that the Spirit of God would sanctify us more and more, and enable us, by his grace and strength, to walk in the way of holiness, till we get safe to heaven:

without which no man shall see the Lord; or "God", as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read; that is, with the beatific vision in heaven: or the Lord Jesus Christ, "our Lord", as the Syriac version reads; even in this life, so as to have communion with him; and hereafter, so as to behold his glory, both intellectually and corporeally: to such a sight holiness is necessary; for God is holy, and Christ is holy, and so is heaven, and so are the angels, and the souls of men in it.

Ver. 15. *Looking diligently*, etc..] Acting the part of bishops, or overseers, as the word signifies; and so this exhortation either respects officers of the church of the Hebrews, whose business it was more especially to inspect into the principles and practices of the members of it, and take care that they did not imbibe false doctrines, or live immoral lives; or rather the several members of the church, whose business it is to watch over one another, since this epistle seems to be written to the whole church.

Lest any man fail of the grace of God; not the free favour and love of God in Christ, which is everlasting, unchangeable, and from whence there is no separation; nor the grace of God implanted in the heart in regeneration, which is incorruptible, never failing, but always remains, as do faith, hope, and love; but either the whole doctrine of the Gospel, which is a declaration of the grace of God; or particularly the doctrine of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, which men may receive in vain, and fall from, (2 Corinthians 6:1 Galatians 5:4) to which these Hebrews might be prone: and such "fail" of it, who either come short of it, do not come up to it, receive and embrace it; or who having professed it, drop it and deny it: now such should be looked after, and such a case should be diligently looked into; because the glory of God, the honour of Christ, the good of souls, and the well being, and even the continuance of the church state are concerned:

lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, [and] thereby many be defiled; the Alexandrian copy reads οι πολλοι, "the many", the common people, the private members of the church; though it may intend either things or persons: it may design things; and these either the corruption of nature in general, which is a root that lies hidden in a man's heart; and is a root or gall of bitterness; and is apt to spring up, and bring forth bitter fruit, and gives trouble both to a man's self and others; and is of a defiling nature, in particular sins; such as malice, strife, and contention, covetousness, lust, pride, oppression, idleness, etc.. which make bitter work, and occasion great trouble in churches, oftentimes: or errors and heresies, which sometimes, like roots, lie under ground, secret and undiscovered; and are bitter ones in their effects, bringing ruin and swift destruction on the souls of men; and these sometimes spring up in churches, while ministers and members are asleep, or not so diligent and watchful as they should be; and occasion great trouble, and are very infectious, and defiling: moreover, persons may be designed; which agrees well with (<052918>Deuteronomy 29:18) from whence this phrase is taken; and with the instance in the following verse, such as all immoral persons, and false teachers, particularly self-justiciaries, that preach the doctrine of justification by the works of the law: this was the capital mistake, and rooted error of the Jewish nation; and a bitter one it was; it produced many bitter fruits of pride and vain glory; and this sprung up in the church, and troubled and defiled many there and elsewhere, being spread by the abettors of it; (see <441524>Acts 15:24 <480106>Galatians 1:6 5:9,10). Now, care should be taken, that no such person be in churches, holding such an error; because of the glory of God, Father, Son, and Spirit; the comfort of souls; the peace of the church, and the growth and increase of it, which must be hurt by such men and doctrines; so ριζα αμαρτωλος, "a sinful root", is used for a "wicked man", in the Apocrypha:

> "In those days went there out of Israel wicked men, who persuaded many, saying, Let us go and make a covenant with the heathen that are round about us: for since we departed from them we have had much sorrow." (1 Maccabees 1:11)

and yrmh çrwç, "a root of bitterness", signifies, in Jewish writings [f285], an error, or heresy, in opposition to a root of faith, or a fundamental doctrine.

Ver. 16. *Lest there be any fornicator or profane person*, etc..] The first of these is guilty of a sin against the second table of the law, as well as against

his own body; and which is opposed to the holiness the apostle had before exhorted to; such who are guilty of it, are not to be continued in the communion of the church; and it is a sin, which, lived in not repented of, excludes from the kingdom of heaven: the latter is one who is a transgressor of the first table of the law; who is an idolater, a swearer, a despiser of public worship and ordinances, and who behaves irreverently in divine service, and mocks at the future state, as Esau; to whom both these characters seem to belong: and this agrees with what the Jews say concerning him: they have a tradition [f286], that he committed five transgressions on the day he came out of the field weary.

> "He committed idolatry: he shed innocent blood; and lay with a virgin betrothed; and denied the life of the world to come (or a future state); and despised his birthright."

It is elsewhere [f287] a little differently expressed.

> "Esau, the wicked, committed five transgressions on that day: he lay with a virgin betrothed; and killed a person; and denied the resurrection of the dead; and denied the root, or foundation, (i.e. that there is a God,) and despised his birthright; and besides, he desired his father's death, and sought to slay his brother."

It is common for them to say of him, that he was an ungodly man; and particularly, that he was a murderer, a robber, Pawnw, "and an adulterer" [f288]; and that he has no part in the world to come [f289]: who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright; the account of which is in (<0125>Genesis 25:29-34) this includes all the privileges which he had a right unto by being the firstborn; as a peculiar blessing from his father; a double portion of goods; and dominion over his brethren: and it is commonly said by the Jews, that the priesthood belonged to the firstborn, before the Levitical dispensation; and that for this reason, Jacob coveted the birthright [f290], Esau being a wicked man, and unfit for it. The birthright was reckoned sacred; it was typical of the primogeniture of Christ; of the adoption of saints, and of the heavenly inheritance belonging thereunto; all which were despised by Esau: and so the Jewish paraphrases [f291] interpret the contempt of his birthright, a despising of his part in the world to come, and a denial of the resurrection of the dead: and his contempt of it was shown in his selling it; and this was aggravated by his selling it for "one morsel of meat"; which was bread, and pottage of lentiles, (<0125>Genesis 25:34). The Jewish writers speak of this bargain and sale much in the same language as the apostle here does; they

say [f292] of him, this is the man that sold his birthright µhl rkk d[b, "for a morsel of bread"; and apply to him the passage in (<202821>Proverbs 28:21) "for a piece of bread that man will transgress".

Ver. 17. *For ye know how that afterwards*, etc..] After he had had his pottage; after he had sold his birthright for it, and the blessing with it; after his father had blessed Jacob: this the apostle relates to the Hebrews, as a thing well known to them; they having read the books of Moses, and being conversant with them, in which the whole history of this affair is recorded:

how that when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; by his father, who refused to give him the blessing, but confirmed what he had given to Jacob; and also by God, he being the object of his hatred; concerning whom he had said, even before his birth, the elder shall serve the younger, (<450911>Romans 9:11-13),

for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears, (<012734>Genesis 27:34,38) though he was very solicitous for the blessing, and shed many tears to obtain it, yet he had no true repentance for his sin in soiling the birthright. Tears are not an infallible sign of repentance: men may be more concerned for the loss and mischief that come by sin, than for the evil that is in it; and such repentance is not sincere; it does not spring from love to God, or a concern for his glory; nor does it bring forth proper fruits: or rather, the sense of the words is, that notwithstanding all his solicitude, importunity, and tears, he found no place of repentance in his father Isaac; he could not prevail upon him to change his mind; to revoke the blessing he had bestowed on Jacob, and confer it on him, (<012733>Genesis 27:33) for he plainly saw it was the mind of God, that the blessing should be where it was; whose counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. This latter seems to be the better interpretation of the words, though the former agrees with the Targum on (<181520>Job 15:20)

> "all the days of Esau the ungodly, they expected that he would have repented, but he repented not."

Ver. 18. *For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched*, etc..] The design of the apostle in the following words is, in general, to engage the Hebrews to adhere closely to the Gospel, from the consideration of the superior excellency of it to the law; and in particular, to enforce his former exhortations to cheerfulness under afflictions; to an upright walk in the ways of God; to follow peace with all men, even with the Gentiles, and

holiness both of heart and life; and to value the doctrine of the Gospel; and to take heed that none fail of it, or act unbecoming it: and here the apostle observes, what the believing Hebrews were not come to, being delivered from it, namely, the legal dispensation, which was their privilege; the happiness of which as expressed by a detail of particular circumstances, which attended the giving of the law to the Jews: it was given on a "mount which might be touched"; that is, by God, who descended on it, and by, touching it caused it to smoke, quake, and move, (<2Ex 19:18>Exodus 19:18). Compare with, (<19Ps 68:8 104:32 144:5>Psalm 68:8 104:32 144:5) for it was not to be touched by the Israelites, nor by their cattle, (<2Ex 19:12,13>Exodus 19:12,13), that is, at the time that the law was given, and Jehovah was upon it, otherwise it might be touched; and the meaning is, that it was an earthly mountain, that might be approached to, and be seen and felt, and not of a spiritual nature, as Sion, or the church of God; and so may be expressive of the carnality of the law, and also of the movableness of it:

and that burned with fire; as Mount Sinai did, (<2Ex 19:18>Exodus 19:18) (<5De 4:11>Deuteronomy 4:11 5:23) which set forth the majesty of God, when upon it, at whose feet went forth burning coals; and also the wrath of God, as an avenging lawgiver and Judge; and the terror of that law, which strikes the minds of the transgressors of it with an expectation of fiery indignation; and so points out the end of such transgressors, which is, to be burnt:

nor unto blackness and darkness; which covered the mount when God was upon it, (<2Ex 19:16>Exodus 19:16,18 <5De 4:11>Deuteronomy 4:11) and which also may express the majesty of God, round about whom are clouds and darkness; and also the horror of the legal dispensation, and the obscurity of it; little being known by the Jews of the spirituality of the law, of the strict justice of God, and of the righteousness which the law requires, and of the end and use of it; and especially of the way of salvation by Christ; and so dark were they at last, as to prefer their own traditions before this law: it is added,

and tempest; there being thunderings and lightnings, which were very terrible, (<2Ex 19:16>Exodus 19:16 20:18) and though there is no express mention made of a tempest by Moses, yet Josephus [f293] speaks not only of very terrible thunderings and lightnings, but of violent storms of wind, which produced exceeding great rains: and the Septuagint on (<5De 4:11>Deuteronomy 4:11 5:22) use the same words as the apostle does here, "blackness, darkness, and tempest". This also may denote the majesty of God, who

was then present; the terror of that dispensation; the horrible curses of the law; and the great confusion and disquietude raised by it in the conscience of a sinner.

Ver. 19. *And the sound of a trumpet*, etc..] (<2Ex1916>Exodus 19:16,19 20:18), which made it still more awful, as the sound of the trumpet will at the last day:

and the voice of words; of the ten words, or decalogue; which was as an articulate voice, formed by angels; and, therefore, the law is called the word spoken by angels, (<580202>Hebrews 2:2) and is represented, as the voice of God himself, (<2Ex2001>Exodus 20:1) who made use of the ministry of angels to deliver the law to Moses; "which" voice is called µyrbd lwq, "the voice of words", in (<5De512>Deuteronomy 4:12), and this voice,

they that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: fearing that they should die; wherefore they desired Moses to be their mediator, and draw nigh to God, and hear his words, and speak them to them, from him, (<2Ex2019>Exodus 20:19 <5De524>Deuteronomy 5:24-27).

Ver. 20. *For they could not endure that which was commanded*, etc..] In the law; not that they disliked and despised the law, as unregenerate men do; but they could not endure it, or bear it, as a yoke, it being a yoke of bondage; nor as a covenant of works, it requiring perfect obedience, but giving no strength to perform; and as it showed them their sins, but did not direct them to a Saviour; as it was an accusing, cursing, and condemning law; and, as a fiery one, revealing wrath, and filling the conscience with it; unless this should have any respect to the following edict, more particularly:

and if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned or thrust through with a dart; and, if a beast, much more a man: and, how easily, through inadvertence, might this be done? and how terrible was the punishment? nothing less than death, by stoning, or being shot: and this they could not bear to hear, or think of: the last clause, "or thrust through with a dart", is wanting in the Alexandrian and Beza's Claromontane copies, in the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions; and yet is necessary to be retained, being in the original text, in (<2Ex1912>Exodus 19:12,13).

Ver. 21. *And so terrible was the sight*, etc..] Of the smoke, fire, and lightnings; or of God himself, who descended on the mount; with which agrees the Arabic version, which renders the words, “and so terrible was he who vouchsafed himself to be seen”; not in the bush burning with fire; at which time Moses was afraid to look upon God, (<02306>Exodus 3:6) but on Mount Sinai, when the law was given:

[that] Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake: perhaps he might say this, when he spake, and God answered him, (<02019>Exodus 19:19). These words are nowhere recorded in Scripture; wherefore the apostle had them either by divine revelation, or from tradition, confirmed by the former: for the Jews have a notion that Moses did quake and tremble, and when upon the mount; and that he expressed his fear and dread. They have such a tradition as this [f294];

> “when Moses ascended on high, the ministering angels said before the holy blessed God, Lord of the world, what has this man, born of a woman, to do among us? he said unto them, to receive the law he is come; they replied before him, that desirable treasure, which is treasured up with thee, nine hundred, and seventy, and four generations, before the world was created, dost thou seek to give to flesh and blood? “What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him? who hast set thy glory above the heavens!” The holy blessed God said to Moses, return them an answer; he said, before him, Lord of the world, `an[ aryytm`, “I am afraid”, lest they should burn, (or consume) me, with the breath of their mouth.”

Compare this last clause with (<530208>2 Thessalonians 2:8) and elsewhere [f295] those words being cited, he called unto Moses, (<022516>Exodus 25:16) it is observed:

> “this Scripture comes not, but `wyl[ µyyal` “to terrify him”; that so the law might be given with fear, fervour, and trembling; as it is said, (<190211>Psalm 2:11)”

Once more [f296],

> “at the time that the holy blessed God said to Moses, “go, get thee down, for thy people have corrupted themselves”, (<023207>Exodus

32:7) hçm [z[dza, “Moses trembled”; and he could not speak, etc..”

And again, it is said [f297], that when Moses was on Mount Sinai, supplicating for the people of Israel, five destroying angels appeared, and immediately hçm aryytn, “Moses was afraid”. Now this circumstance is mentioned by the apostle, to aggravate the terror of that dispensation; that Moses, a great and good man; and who had much familiarity with God; the general of the people of Israel; their leader and commander; a man of great courage and presence of mind; and was their mediator between God and them; and yet feared, and quaked: the best of men are not without sin; and the most holy man on earth cannot stand before a holy God, and his holy law, upon the foot of his own righteousness, without trembling: it is an awful thing to draw nigh to God; and there is no such thing as doing it without a Mediator; and that Mediator must be more than a creature: and it is our happiness that we have such a Mediator, who never feared, nor quaked; who failed not, nor was he discouraged.

Ver. 22. *But ye are come unto Mount Sion*, etc..] The Alexandrian copy reads, as in (<BIBLE>Hebrews 12:18) “for ye are not come”; which may seem to favour that interpretation of this passage, which refers it to the heavenly state; to which saints, in this present life, are not, as yet, come: but, by “Mount Sion”, and the other names here given, is meant the church of God, under the Gospel dispensation, to which the believing Hebrews were come; in distinction from the legal dispensation, signified by Mount Sinai, from which they were delivered: and this is called Mount Sion, because, like that, it is beloved of God; chosen by him; and is the place of his habitation; here his worship is, and his word and ordinances are administered; here he communes with his people, and distributes his blessings and this, as Mount Sion, is a perfection of beauty the joy of the whole earth; is strongly fortified by divine power, and is immovable; and is comparable to that mountain, for its height and holiness: and to come to Sion is to become a member of a Gospel church, and partake of the ordinances, enjoy the privileges, and perform the duties belonging to it:

and unto the city of the living God; the Gospel church is a city, built on Christ, the foundation; and is full of habitants, true believers, at least it will be, in the latter day; it is pleasantly situated by the river of God's love, and by the still waters of Gospel ordinances; it is governed by wholesome laws, of Christ's enacting, and is under proper officers, of his appointing; and is

well guarded by watchmen, which he has set upon the walls of it; and it is endowed with many privileges, as access to God, freedom from the arrests of justice, and from condemnation, adoption, and a right to the heavenly inheritance: and this may be called “the city of God”, because it is of his building, and here he dwells, and protects, and defends it; and who is styled “the living God”, to distinguish him from the idols of the Gentiles, which are lifeless and inanimate, no other than sticks and stones.

The heavenly Jerusalem: the church of God goes by the name of Jerusalem often, both in the Old and in the New Testament; with which it agrees in its name, which signifies the vision of peace, or they shall see peace: Christ, the King of it, is the Prince of peace; the members of it are sons of peace, who enjoy a spiritual peace now, and an everlasting one hereafter: like that, it is compact together, consisting of saints, cemented together in love, in the order and fellowship of the Gospel; and is well fortified, God himself, and his power, being all around it, and having salvation, for walls and bulwarks, and being encamped about by angels; and it is a free city, being made so by Christ, and, through him, enjoying the liberty of grace now, and having a title to the liberty of glory in the world to come; as Jerusalem was, it is the object of God's choice, the palace of the great King, and the place of divine worship: it is called “heavenly”, to distinguish it from the earthly Jerusalem; and to express the excellency of it, as well as to point out its original: the members of it are from heaven, being born from above; their conversation is now in heaven; and they are designed for that place; and its doctrines and ordinances are all from thence.

And to an innumerable company of angels; which are created spirits, immaterial and immortal; very knowing, and very powerful; and swift to do the will of God; they are holy, and immutably so, being the elect of God, and confirmed by Christ: and saints now are brought into a state of friendship with them; and into the same family; and are social worshippers with them; and they have access into heaven, where angels are; and with whom they shall dwell for ever: and, in the present state of things, they share the benefit and advantages of their kind offices; who have, sometimes, provided food for their bodies; healed their diseases; directed and preserved them on journeys; prevented outward calamities; delivered them out of them, when in danger; restrained things hurtful, and cut off their enemies: and, with regard to things spiritual they have, sometimes, made known the mind and will of God unto the saints; have comforted them under their distresses; helped them against Satan's temptations; are

present at their death, and carry their souls to glory; and will gather the saints together, at the last day: and, as to the number of them, they are innumerable; they are the armies of heaven; and there is a multitude of the heavenly host; there are more than twelve legions of angels; their number is ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands: and this makes both for the glory and majesty of God, whose attendants they are; and for the comfort and safety of saints, to whom they minister, and about whom they encamp: a like phrase is used in the Apocrypha:

> "Before the fair flowers were seen, or ever the moveable powers were established, before the innumerable multitude of angels were gathered together," (2 Esdras 6:3)

Ver. 23. *To the general assembly*, etc..] A "panegyris", the word here used, was a public and solemn assembly of the Greeks, either at their games, or feasts, or fairs, or on religious accounts; and signifies a large collection and convention of men; and sometimes the place where they met togethers [f298]; and is here used, by the apostle, for the church of God, consisting of all his elect, both Jews and Gentiles, and the meeting of them together: they met together, in the infinite mind of God, from all eternity; and in Christ, their head and representative, both then and in time; and at the last day, when they are all gathered in, they will meet together personally; and a joyful meeting it will be; and a very general one, more so than the assembly of the Jews, at any of their solemn feasts, to which the apostle may have some respect; since this will consist of some of all nations, that have lived in all places, and in all ages of time:

and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven; by the "church", is not meant any particular, or congregational church, nor any national one; but the church catholic, or universal, which consists only of God's elect, and of all of them, in all times and places; and reaches even to the saints in heaven: this church is invisible at present, and will never fail; of which Christ is the head, and for which he has given himself: now the persons, that belong to this church, are styled the "firstborn"; who are not the apostles only, who received the first fruits of the Spirit; nor the first converts among the Jews, who first trusted in Christ; but also the chosen of God, who are equally the sons of God, and born of him; are equally loved by him, and equally united to Christ, and interested in him: they have the same privileges, honours, and dignity, and shall enjoy the same inheritance; they are all firstborn, and are so called, with respect to the angels, the sons

of God, as Christ is with respect to the saints, the many brethren of his: and these are said to be “written in heaven”; not in the earth, (<24>17:13), such writing abides not; nor in the book of the Scriptures, for the names of all are not written there; nor in the general book of God's decrees, which relate to all mankind; but in the Lamb's book of life, kept in heaven; and is no other than their election of God: and this way of speaking, concerning it, shows it to be personal and particular; that it is firm, sure, and constant; that it is out of the reach of men and devils to erase it; it denotes the exact knowledge God has of them, and expresses their right to heaven, and the certainty of their coming there: now all such, who are truly come to Sion, are openly come to this assembly and church, and appear to be a part thereof, and are among the firstborn, and have their names written in heaven:

and to God the Judge of all: the Ethiopic version reads, “the Judge of righteousness”, or the righteous Judge: some think that Christ is here meant; who is truly and properly God, and is the Judge: all judgment is committed to him; he is Judge of all; he is ordained Judge of quick and dead; for which he would not have been fit, had he not been God: true believers come to him by faith, and that, as their Judge, King, and Governor; and it is their privilege, that Christ is and will be the Judge of all at the last day and hence is his coming to judgment desirable to them. But since Christ is spoken of in the next verse, as a distinct person, to whom the saints come, God the Father seems rather to be designed here: and it is one of the privileges of the saints, in the present life, that they have access to God: all men are at a distance from him, in a state of nature; and they naturally run further and further from him, and have no desire after him; and, when they are made sensible of sin, they are afraid and ashamed to come to him; nor is there any coming to God, but through Christ; and this is a fruit of God's everlasting love, what follows upon electing grace, is an effect of Christ's death, and owing to the quickening grace of the Spirit; it is performed in a spiritual way, and is by faith; it is a coming to the throne of God, even to his seat, to communion with him, and to a participation of his grace: and it is their privilege that they have access to him as the Judge of all; not only as a Father, and as the God of all grace, but as a Judge, and a righteous one, to whom they can come without terror; for though he is just, yet he is a Saviour, and the justifier of his people, on account of the righteousness of his Son; whose sins he pardons in a way of justice,

through the blood of Christ; and is their patron, protector, and defender, who will right their wrongs, and avenge their cause:

and to the spirits of just men made perfect; which may be understood of the saints on earth, who are "just men"; not naturally, for so no man is, but the reverse; nor in opinion only, or merely externally, as the Scribes and Pharisees were; nor by the deeds of the law; nor by obedience to the Gospel; nor by faith, either as wrought in them, or done by them, though by the object of it; nor by an infusion of righteousness into them; but by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ unto them: and these are "made perfect"; not as to sanctification, unless in Christ, or in a comparative sense, and with respect to the parts of the new man, but not as to degrees; for no man is without sin, and the best stand in need of fresh supplies of grace; but as to justification, Christ has perfectly fulfilled the law for them, and has perfectly expiated their sins, and perfectly redeemed them from all sin, and has procured a full pardon of them; and they are completely righteous through his righteousness; and the "spirits", or souls of these are only mentioned, because the communion of saints in a Gospel church state lies chiefly in the souls and spirits of each other, or in spiritual things relating to their souls; and their souls are greatly affected, and knit to each other: though the saints in heaven may be here intended, at least included; whose spirits or soul's are separate from their bodies; and they are the souls of just men, for none but such enter into the kingdom of heaven; where they are made perfect in knowledge and holiness, in peace and joy; though they have not their bodies, nor as yet all the saints with them. Now, believers, in the present state of things, may be said to be come to them, being come to the Church below, which is a part of that above; as also in hope, expectation, and desire. The apostle seems to have respect to some distinctions among the Jews: they divide mankind into three sorts; some are perfectly wicked; and some are perfectly righteous; and there are others that are between both [f299]: they often speak of µyrwmg µyqydx, "just men perfect" [f300]; and distinguish between a just man perfect, and a just man that is not perfect [f301]; as they do also between penitents and just men perfect; (see Gill on "Luke 15:7").

Ver. 24. *And to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant*, etc..] Of the new covenant, and, of Christ's being the Mediator of it, (See Gill on "Hebrews 8:6"). (See Gill on "Hebrews 8:8"). Coming to Christ is by faith; and is different from a corporeal coming to him in the days of his flesh; and from an outward attendance on ordinances; it is a coming to him

under a sense of want, and upon a sight of fulness; and is the produce of God's efficacious grace; and souls must come to Christ as naked sinners; and without a Mediator, without anything of their own to ingratiate them; and it is free to all sensible sinners to come to him, and is the great privilege of saints: it is the blessing of blessings; such are safe, and settled, and at peace, who are come to Jesus; they can want no good thing, for all are theirs; they have free access to God through him, and a right to all privileges:

and to the blood of sprinkling: that is, the blood of Christ; so called, either in allusion to the blood of the passover, which was received in a basin, and with a bunch of hyssop was sprinkled upon the lintel and two side posts of the doors of the houses, in which the Israelites were; which being looked upon by Jehovah, he passed over them, and all were safe within, so that the destroyer did not touch them, when the firstborn in Egypt were destroyed, (<0201>Exodus 12:1-49) which is the case of all such as are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus: or else to the blood of the covenant, sprinkled by Moses on the book, and on all the people, (<0248>Exodus 24:8) or to the several sprinklings of blood in the legal sacrifices: and the phrase may denote the application of Christ's blood to his people, for justification, pardon, and cleansing, which is their great mercy and privilege:

that speaketh better things than that of Abel; either “than Abel”, as the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions render it, who being dead, yet speaks; and who was a type of Christ in his death, and the punishment of it; for as he was slain by his own brother, who was punished for it, so Christ was put to death by his own nation and people, the Jews, for which wrath is come upon them to the uttermost: but the efficacy of Christ's blood for the procuring pardon, peace, reconciliation, and the redemption and purchase of his church and people, shows him to be greater than Abel; and it speaks better things than he did, or does: or else, “than the blood of Abel”, as the Arabic version renders it; Abel's blood cried for vengeance; Christ's blood cries for peace and pardon, both in the court of heaven, where it is pleaded by Christ, and in the court of conscience, where it is sprinkled by his spirit: or than the sprinkling of the blood of Abel's sacrifice, or than Abel's sacrifice; which was the first blood that was sprinkled in that way, and the first sacrifice mentioned that was offered up by faith, and was typical of Christ's; but then Christ's sacrifice itself is better than that; and the sprinkling of his blood, to which believers may continually apply for their justification, remission, and purgation, and by which they have entrance

into the holiest of all, is of greater efficacy than the sprinkling of blood in Abel's sacrifice; and calls for and procures better things than that did; which sense may the rather be chosen, since the apostle's view, in this epistle, is to show the superior excellency of Christ's sacrifice to all others, even to the more excellent of them, as Abel's was, (Hebrews 11:4).

Ver. 25. *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh*, etc..] Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, whose blood speaks better things than Abel, or than his blood and sacrifice: he was the speaker in the council and covenant of grace, that spoke for the elect; in the creation of all things out of nothing, that said, and it was done; in giving the law to the Israelites, in the wilderness, for he is the angel which spake to Moses in Mount Sinai, he spoke to God for the Old Testament saints, and was the angel of God's presence to them; he spoke in his own person, as the prophet of the church, in the days of his flesh; and he now speaks in heaven, by appearing in the presence of God for his people, and by presenting his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; he speaks by his Spirit, in and to the hearts of his saints; and by his ministers in the Gospel, and the ordinances of it: nor should he be refused, as he is, when his Gospel is made light of, and neglected; when men excuse themselves from an attendance on it; when they will not hear it; or, when they do, and contradict and blaspheme, despise and reproach it, or leave off hearing it. Care should be taken that Christ is not refused in the ministry of the word; which may be enforced from the greatness and excellency of the person speaking, who is God, and not a mere man; from the excellency of the matter spoken, the great salvation: and the rather diligent heed should be had unto him, since there is a backwardness to everything that is spiritual and heavenly; and since Satan is vigilant and industrious to put off persons from hearing the Gospel, or to steal the word from them:

for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth: the Ethiopic version renders it, “who appeared to them on the mount”; that is, on Mount Sinai; meaning either God himself, who descended on the mount, and spoke the ten commandments to the children of Israel; or Christ, the Angel that spoke to Moses in it; or rather Moses himself, who was on the earth, and of the earth, earthly; who spake from God to the people, being their mediator; him the Jews refused, would not obey him, but thrust him away, (Acts 7:39), though they promised to hear and do all that was said to them; wherefore they did not escape divine vengeance and

punishment; their carcasses fell in the wilderness at several times, in great numbers, and were not suffered to enter into Canaan's land: much more

shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven; that is, Christ, who came from heaven originally; is the Lord from heaven; whose doctrine is from heaven; and who, having done his work, is gone to heaven; where he now is, and from whence he speaks; and from hence he will come a second time, as Judge of all. There have been, and are some, that turn away from him; from a profession of him, and his Gospel and ordinances, and draw back unto perdition; such shall not escape divine wrath and vengeance; the sorest punishment shall be inflicted on them; (see <58 10 29>Hebrews 10:29).

Ver. 26. *Whose voice then shook the earth*, etc..] That is, at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai: Christ was then present; his voice was then heard; which was either the voice of thunder, or the voice of the trumpet, or rather the voice of words: this shook the earth, Sinai, and the land about it, and the people on it; which made them quake and tremble, even Moses himself; (see <02 19 18>Exodus 19:18 <19 68 08>Psalm 68:8)

but now he hath promised, saying in (<37 02 06>Haggai 2:6)

yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven; not only the land of Judea, and particularly Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of it, who were all shaken, and moved, and troubled at the news of the birth of the Messiah, the desire of all nations, the prophet Haggai speaks of, (<40 02 02>Matthew 2:2,3) but the heaven also; by prodigies in it, as the appearance of a wonderful star, which guided the wise men from the east; and by the motions of the heavenly inhabitants, the angels, who descended in great numbers, and made the heavens resound with their songs of praise, on account of Christ's incarnation, (<40 02 02>Matthew 2:2 <42 02 10>Luke 2:10,13,14). How the apostle explains and applies this, may be seen in the next verse.

Ver. 27. *And this word yet once more*, etc..] Or as it is in (<37 02 06>Haggai 2:6) “yet once it is a little while”; which suggests, that as something had been done already, so in a very little time, and at once, something very marvellous and surprising would be effected: and it

signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made; which some understand of what will be done at Christ's coming to judgment; as the passing away of the heavens and the earth, which are things that are made, or created, by the power of God; when there will be a

shaking of them, so as that they shall be removed, and pass away with a great noise; and so they interpret the next clause, of the permanency of the new heavens and the new earth, and of the immovable kingdom of glory, and the never fading inheritance of the saints; and of their fixed, unalterable, and unshaken state: but rather this is to be understood of Christ's coming to the destruction of Jerusalem; when there was an entire removal of the Jewish state, both political and ecclesiastical; and of the whole Mosaic economy; and of things appertaining to divine worship, which were made with hands, as the temple, and the things in it; and which were made to be removed; for they were to continue no longer than the time of reformation: and this removing of them designs the abolition of them, and entire putting an end to them; at which time, not only their civil government was wholly put down, but their ecclesiastic state also; for the place of their worship was destroyed, the daily sacrifice ceased, and the old covenant, and the manner of administering it, vanished away; and all the legal institutions and ordinances, which were abolished by the death of Christ, were no more performed in Jerusalem; the temple and temple service perishing together:

that those things which cannot be shaken may remain: the kingdom and priesthood of Christ, which are everlasting; and the good things which come by him, as remission of sins, justification, adoption, sanctification, and the heavenly inheritance; as also the Gospel, and the doctrines and ordinances of it, baptism, and the Lord's supper, and the mode of Gospel worship; all which are to continue until Christ's second coming.

Ver. 28. *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved*, etc..] Not the kingdom of glory; eternal glory is a kingdom, and it is an immovable one; and is a free gift of God, and may be said to be now received; God's people are called unto it, and are made meet for it, and have a right unto it, and have it in faith and hope, and in Christ their head and representative: but the kingdom of grace, under the Gospel dispensation, is meant: there are several things in this dispensation which are called a kingdom; as a Gospel church, the Gospel itself, and the privileges and blessings of grace bestowed, especially spiritual and internal ones, (<40251>Matthew 25:1 <42616>Luke 16:16) (<45147>Romans 14:17) and the whole dispensation is called the kingdom of heaven, (<40302>Matthew 3:2 4:17). Christ he is King, believers are his subjects, the Gospel is his sceptre, and the ordinances are his laws and appointments, and all are immovable; and a man may be said to receive this kingdom, when he is delivered from

the power of darkness, is regenerated, and has the blessings of grace actually bestowed on him, and is brought to Zion:

let us have grace; by which is meant, not thankfulness for so great a blessing, though this is highly requisite and necessary; nor the favour of God, though, as the reception of the kingdom springs from hence, a sense of it ought to abide; nor the habit or principle of grace in the heart, unless particularly the grace of faith, and the exercise of it, should be designed; but rather the doctrine of grace, the Gospel, is intended; and the sense is, εχωμεν, "let us hold it", as the Ethiopic version renders it; let us hold the Gospel fast, and a profession of it: the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, "we have grace"; this goes along with the immovable kingdom; all that have truly received the one, have the other:

whereby we may serve God; God is to be served, and not a creature, nor the elements of this world, the ceremonial law, and its rites: nor is he to be served in any form, only in a spiritual way; and without holding to the Gospel, there is no serving him in an evangelic manner; the true and right way of serving him is as follows:

acceptably; in Christ, in the Gospel of his Son, and by faith in him, without which it is impossible to please God:

with reverence; of the majesty of God, with shame for sin, and with a sense of unworthiness:

and godly fear; which has God for its author and object, and which springs from his grace, and is increased by discoveries of his goodness; and which is consistent with faith, and spiritual joy; (see <19211>Psalm 2:11 5:7).

Ver. 29. *For our God is a consuming fire*.] Either God personally considered, God in the person of Christ; so the Shechinah, with the Jews, is called a consuming fire [f302]. Christ is truly God, and he is our God and Lord; and though he is full of grace and mercy, yet he will appear in great wrath to his enemies, who will not have him to reign over them: or rather God essentially considered; whose God he is, and in what sense, and how he comes to be so, (see Gill on "<58810>Hebrews 8:10"), what is here said of him, that he is a consuming fire, may be understood of his jealousy in matters of worship, (<50423>Deuteronomy 4:23,24), and so carries in it a reason why he is to be served acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. God, and he only, is to be worshipped; and he is to be worshipped in a way suitable to himself; and he has the sole right of fixing the manner of

worship, both as to the external and internal parts of it: under the legal dispensation, he was worshipped in a way he then pitched upon, and suitable to it; and under the Gospel dispensation he is to be worshipped in an evangelical way; and he is to have all the glory in every part of worship; and the ordinances of Gospel worship are immovable; nor are they to be altered, or others put in their room, without recurring his displeasure. Moreover, this phrase may be expressive of the preservation of his people, and of the destruction of their enemies, (Deuteronomy 9:1-3). We commonly say, that God out of Christ is a consuming fire; meaning, that God, as an absolute God, is full of wrath and vengeance; and it is a truth, but not the truth of this text; for here it is our God, our covenant God, our God in Christ; not that he is so to the saints, or to them that are in Christ: he is indeed as a wall of fire in his providences, to protect and defend them, and as fire in his word to enlighten and warm them, to guide and direct them, but not a consuming fire to them; this he is to their enemies, who are as thorns, and briers, and stubble before him: and so the Jews interpret (Deuteronomy 4:24) of a fire consuming fire [f303]; and observe, that Moses says, thy God, and not our God [f304]; but the apostle here uses the latter phrase.

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 13

The apostle having finished the doctrinal part of this epistle, closes it with practical exhortations to these Hebrews, puts up prayers for them, and sends salutations to them. The exhortations are to brotherly love, and the continuance of it, (Hebrews 13:1) to hospitality, by which some have entertained angels unawares, (Hebrews 13:2), to sympathy with those that are in bonds, and in, afflictions, (Hebrews 12:3) to purity and chastity in the honourable state of marriage, urged by the judgment of God on unclean persons, (Hebrews 13:4) to avoid covetousness, and to be content with present things, enforced by the promises of God, which give boldness and strength to faith, (Hebrews 13:5,6), to remember their spiritual guides and governors, the preachers of the Gospel to them; to follow their faith, and consider the end of their conversation, which is Christ Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and for ever, (Hebrews 13:7,8). And then he cautions them from being carried about with the doctrines of men, which are divers and strange; which he urges from the profitable effect of the Gospel to establish the heart, and from the unprofitableness of meats to legal worshippers, and from the Christians having an altar, which is Christ, which those who are seeking life by the service of the law have nothing to do with, (Hebrews 13:9,10). And this he illustrates in the type of burnt offerings, which were burnt without the camp, and there was nothing left for the priests to eat of, (Hebrews 13:11). In like manner Christ, the antitype, suffered without the gates of Jerusalem, for the sanctification of his people, by his blood; and who only, and not those who seek for righteousness by the law, have an interest in, (Hebrews 13:12). However, it becomes the saints to quit everything, and all dependence on themselves, and fellowship with others, and go forth to Jesus, believing in him, whatsoever reproach they suffer on his account; for here is nothing permanent and durable in this world; but there is a state of happiness to come, which will last for ever, (Hebrews 13:13,14). And since Christ has offered himself for his people, they ought to offer up the sacrifices of praise to God by him, and to do acts of beneficence and goodness, which are sacrifices well pleasing to God through him, (Hebrews 13:15,16).

And to these exhortations apostle adds others; as to obey their spiritual rulers and governors, and submit unto them; since they watch for their souls, and must give an account, which to do with joy, and not with grief, is best and profitable, (Hebrews 13:17) and to pray for the apostle, and other ministers, since they had a good conscience, and were willing to live honestly; and the rather, that he might be restored to them the sooner, (Hebrews 13:18,19) and to engage them to this their duty, he sets them an example, by putting up prayers for them, (Hebrews 13:20,21) and desires them to take in good part the letter he had wrote unto them, (Hebrews 13:22) and acquaints them that Timothy was set at liberty, with whom he hoped to see them in a short time, (Hebrews 13:23) and then closes the epistle with his own, and the salutations of others, and with his usual benediction, (Hebrews 13:24,25).

Ver. 1. *Let brotherly love continue*.] The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions add, “in you”; or among you, as a church and society of Christians; for this is not to be understood of love to all mankind, or to those of the same nation, or who are in a strict natural relation brethren, though they are all in a sense brethren, and to be loved; but of love to those who are in the same spiritual relation to God, as their Father, to Christ, as the firstborn among many brethren; and are in the same church state, at least partakers of the same grace: and which love ought to be universal, and reach to all the saints, and be fervent and unfeigned, and as Christ hath loved us; and when it is genuine, it is active and laborious; and shows itself in praying with and for one another; in bearing one another's burdens; in forbearing and forgiving one another; in admonishing one another in love; in building up each other in the most holy faith; and in stirring up one another to the several duties of religion: and without this excellent and useful grace, a profession of religion is in vain; this is an evidence of regeneration; it is the bond of perfectness, and what renders the saints' communion delightful and edifying: many are the arguments moving to the exercise of it; as the love of God, and Christ; the new commandment of Christ; the relation saints stand in to one another; the comfort and joy of Gospel ministers, and our own peace and edification: and this should continue; for the love of God and Christ continues; the relation between the saints continues; and without this, churches cannot continue long: the apostle means, not the grace itself, the internal principle, for that, where it once is, always continues, and can never be lost; but the exercise and

increase of it, an abounding in it yet more and more. One of the Jewish prayers is to this purpose [f305];

> “he that dwells in this house, let him plant among you hbhaw hwja, “brotherhood and love”, (or brotherly love,) peace and friendship.”

Ver. 2. *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers*, etc..] By whom are meant, not unconverted men, who are strangers to God and Christ, and the covenants of promise; nor saints, who are as pilgrims and strangers in this world; but such as are of another country, and are unknown; and even though wicked men, they are not excluded; though such as are obliged to quit their own country for righteousness sake are chiefly designed; all strangers in distress are meant, and hospitality is to be exercised towards them; which lies negatively in doing nothing to distress them, and positively in providing food, raiment, lodging, etc.. for them, and in comforting, counselling, and directing them in all matters in which they may stand in need thereof: and that this is a duty, appears from the light of nature, and practices of the Heathens, (<440802>Acts 28:2,7), from the express law of God, (<051019>Deuteronomy 10:19) and many others made in favour of strangers, binding on the Jews; from the sundry exhortations to it in the New Testament, (<451213>Romans 12:13 <600409>1 Peter 4:9) and from the exhortation here not to forget it; and from the great regard which Christ will show to such as mind it, and his disregard to others at the last day: the persons who are to exercise it are not only the ministers of the Gospel, who should be given to hospitality; but all the saints, even the meaner sort are not exempted, but should use it according to their ability; though it is chiefly binding on those that are rich. And this should not be forgot, but pursued and followed after; it should be frequently performed; men should be given, and used to it; it should be done without grudging, and in a friendly and loving manner:

for thereby some have entertained angels unawares; as Abraham, (<011801>Genesis 18:1-8), he knew them not to be angels at first; they appeared as men, and he treated them as such; but they were angels, yea, one of them was Jehovah himself; and hereby he received many favours, (<011810>Genesis 18:10,17,23,33), and Lot, (<011901>Genesis 19:1-3) who knew not that they were angels he took into his house; but they were, and he was delivered by them from the burning of Sodom; yea, some have unawares, this way, entertained Christ himself, (<422415>Luke 24:15-31) and indeed,

entertaining of his members is entertaining him, (<4025>Matthew 25:38,40). It is an observation of a Jewish writer [f306] upon the first of these instances;

> “from hence we learn (says he) how great is the strength (or virtue) of the reception of travellers (or hospitality), as the Rabbins of blessed memory say, greater is µyjrwa tsnkh, “hospitality”, than the reception of the face of the Shechinah.”

And this is said to be one of the six things which a man enjoys the fruit of in this world, and for which there remains a reward in the world to come [f307].

Ver. 3. *Remember them that are in bonds*, etc..] Not for criminal actions, or for debt, though such should be remembered, and pity showed them, especially the latter; but such as are in bonds for the sake of Christ, and the Gospel. This has been often the lot of God's people, who should be remembered, by praying for them, sending comfortable letters to them, personally visiting them, and relieving them under their distresses:

as bound with them; as if it were so, as if in the same condition, and circumstances; by sympathizing with them; by considering themselves liable to the same bonds; by dealing with them as it would be desirable to be dealt with in the same case: and

them which suffer adversity; outward afflictions of body, distress for want of temporal mercies, food and raiment, and persecution by enemies; or spiritual adversity, as the prevailings of corruptions, and particularly unbelief, the hidings of God's face, and the temptations of Satan.

As being yourselves also in the body; as if in their bodies, enduring the same things; or as being afflicted in the body with diseases, necessities, and persecutions; or as being in the body, the church, of which these afflicted ones are a part, and therefore should have a fellow feeling with them; or rather as being in this world, in the flesh, or in a body and state subject to the like adversities, temporal and spiritual.

Ver. 4. *Marriage is honourable in all*, etc..] Some read these words as an exhortation, “let” it “be so”; others as an assertion, it is so. “Marriage” is the union of one man and one woman in wedlock, whereby they become one flesh; it is a joining together of male and female in this relation, and of two only, and of such as are not within the degrees of blood forbid by the law, (<0318>Leviticus 18:6-18) and of such as are fit for marriage: and this is

“honourable”, as it was instituted by God, and has been honoured with the presence of Christ, (<01022>Genesis 2:22,24 <430201>John 2:1-11). And it is so in the ends of it, being to procreate children, multiply the earth, build up families, preserve a legitimate offspring, and prevent fornication and all uncleanness; and it is so, when the duties of the relation are performed on both sides: and it is honourable “in all”; in all things, in all respects, upon all accounts; “every way”, as the Arabic version renders it; or as the Ethiopic version, “everywhere”; it has been honourably esteemed of among all nations; it becomes persons of all ranks and degrees, quality, and order; and it is honourable in all that are lawfully married, and do not violate the marriage contract, or defile the marriage bed: hereby are condemned such who despise marriage, that they may give a loose to their wandering and insatiable lusts; and such who, under a pretence of greater sanctity and perfection, reject it as unlawful; and the Papists, who deny it to men employed in sacred work:

and the bed undefiled: the Arabic version reads, “his bed”; and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, “their bed”; the bed of such whose marriage is honourable; which is not polluted by admitting others into it, or by acts of fornication and adultery: “but”, or “for”, as the Alexandrian copy reads,

whoremongers and adulterers God will judge; the former of these may be rendered “fornicators”, as it is by the Vulgate Latin version: fornication is a sin committed by single persons, unmarried ones; and though it was reckoned among the Gentiles a thing indifferent, yet is contrary to the law of God, and is a work of the flesh, and makes unfit for the kingdom of God, and brings down the judgments of God both here and hereafter. And this is in opposition to marriage, which is appointed to prevent it. The sin “adulterers” are guilty of, is a sin committed by persons, who are either one or both in a married state, and so is directly a pollution of the marriage bed: this was punishable with death by the law of God, and light of nature; and though men may make light of it, God will judge and punish such as commit it, both in this life, with diseases, poverty, and disgrace, and in the world to come, at the great day of account; for however secretly it may be committed, God, who is omniscient, sees it, and will bring it into judgment; nor shall any be able to escape the righteous judgment of God, for he is omnipotent, as well as omniscient. The Jews say,

> “whoever lies with another man's wife, shall not escape hnyd, “the judgment”, or damnation of hell [f308]”

Ver. 5. *Let your conversation be without covetousness*, etc..] Which is an immoderate desire, of riches, an over anxious care for worldly things, attended with dissatisfaction, and discontent with their present state: it discovers itself many ways; in preferring the world to religion; in laying up treasure for a man's own self, without being any ways useful to others; in withholding from himself the necessaries of life, and in making no use of his substance for the glory of God, and the interest of religion: this is a very great evil; it is called idolatry, and is said to be the root of all evil; and is very pernicious to true religion: a believer's conversation should be without it; in his family, for whom he should provide things convenient and honest; and in the world, where he should deal uprightly, and not defraud and overreach; and in the church, where he should be liberal, and generously communicate, upon all occasions; and such a conversation is becoming the Gospel, which is a declaration of things freely given to us of God. The reason of the apostle's mentioning this sin of covetousness is, because the Jews were prone to it, and these believing Hebrews might be inclined to it, and be dissatisfied with their present condition, in which they suffered the spoiling of their goods; and besides, unless this was avoided, the above mentioned duties could not be performed aright, as brotherly love, hospitality, remembering and relieving persons in bonds, and adversity.

And be content with such things as ye have; or with present things; with present riches, or with present poverty; with present losses and crosses; with present reproaches and afflictions; and contentment with these things shows itself by thankfulness for every mercy, and by submission to the will and providence of God in every state of life: and there are many things which may move and engage unto it; as the consideration of the state and condition men are in, when they come into the world, and will be when they go out of it; the will of God, and the disposition of his providence according to it, which is unalterable; a sense of: their own unworthiness; a view of interest in God and Christ; and an eye to the recompense of reward; as well as the many promises of God to support and supply his: and among the rest, what follows,

for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee; which is a promise made to Joshua, and belongs to all believers, (Joshua 1:5) which may regard things temporal, as that God will not leave his people in the hands of their enemies, nor forsake them in distress, nor withhold any good thing from them needful for them, but will supply them with the necessaries of life, with which they should be content: and this passage is

very pertinently cited for this purpose, and could be easily understood in this sense by the Hebrews; for the Jews explain such places as speak of God's not forsaking men, of the sustenance of them, as (Psalm 37:25) and observe that the word hbyz[, "forsaking", is never used but with respect to hsnrp, "sustenance" [f309]; though the words may also relate to things spiritual, as that God will not leave them to themselves, to their own corruptions, which would overpower them; nor to their own strength, which is but weakness; nor to their own wisdom, which is folly; nor to Satan, and his temptations, who is an over match for them; nor to the world, the frowns and flatteries of it, by which they might be drawn aside; nor will he leave them destitute of his presence; for though he sometimes hides his face, and withdraws himself, yet not wholly, nor finally; nor will he forsake the work of his own hands, in them, but will perform it until the day of Christ; he will not leave or forsake them, so as that they shall perish; he will not forsake them in life, nor at death, nor at judgment.

Ver. 6. *So that we may boldly say*, etc..] Or confidently assert; for nothing is more true than this,

the Lord is my helper; he is able to help, and does help, when none else can; he has promised to be the helper of his people; he has laid help for them on Christ, who is mighty; and he has helped him as man, that he might help them; he has set up a throne of grace for them to come to, where they may find help; and experience confirms the truth of this assertion; every believer can set up an Ebenezer, and say, hitherto hath the Lord helped me: the people of God are of themselves helpless ones; there is no help for them in man; their help is only in the Lord; who helps them out of the pit of sin and misery; out of the hands of all their enemies; out of all their afflictions, and "out" of all the dangers they are exposed unto by Satan and his temptations, by reason of a body of sin and death, and no account of the world, and the men of it: he helps them "in" the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty; in bearing the cross; in fighting the Lord's battles; and in their journeying through the wilderness: he helps them "to" temporal blessings, and spiritual ones; to spiritual food and raiment, and to all needful supplies of grace, and, at last, to eternal glory and happiness: and the help he now affords is quick and present, suitable and seasonable, and is what is sufficient; and is sometimes with, and sometimes without means.

And I will not fear what man shall do unto me. There is a becoming fear and reverence which is due to men that are our superiors, whether in civil or religious affairs; but men are not to be feared, when opposed to God; not a single man only is not to be feared, but even all men; and not they only, but all that they can do; the utmost of which is to kill the body; the ground of this fearlessness in believers are the infinite power, grace, and goodness of God. The words seem to be taken out of (Psalm 54:4 56:4 118:6).

Ver. 7. *Remember them which have the rule over you*, etc..] Christ's church is a kingdom, and he is King in it; pastors of churches are subordinate governors; who rule well when they rule not in an arbitrary way, according to their own wills, but according to the laws of Christ, with all faithfulness, prudence, and diligence. The word may be rendered "guides" or "leaders"; for such point out the way of peace, life, and salvation to men, and direct them to Christ; and guide them into the understanding of the Scriptures, and the truths of the Gospel; and lead them in the paths of faith and holiness, and are examples to them. The Greek word, here used, is what the Jews call Christian bishops by; and ηγεμονια, is, by Maimonides[f310], said to be the same as twdyqp, "a bishopric": to "remember" them is to know, own, acknowledge, and respect them as their governors; to obey them, and submit to them; to treasure up in memory their doctrines and exhortations; to be mindful of them at the throne of grace, to pray for them; and to take care of their maintenance and outward supply of life:

who have spoken unto you the word of God; of which God is the author, being agreeably to the Scriptures, given by inspiration of God; the subject of which is the love and grace of God in Christ; and which God makes useful for conversion and comfort; and which, when spoken aright, is spoken freely, boldly, and faithfully:

whose faith follow; or "imitate"; meaning either their faithfulness, by owning the truths and ordinances of the Gospel before men; by reproving fellow Christians in love; by discharging the several duties of their place in the church; and by performing the private duties of life: or the grace of faith, their strong exercise of it, together with its fruits and effects, love, and good works; also the profession of their faith, which they hold fast unto the end; and the doctrine of faith, by embracing the same, as it

appears agreeably to the word; by abiding by it, standing fast in it, striving for it, and persevering in it to the end.

Considering the end of their conversation; which may intend the whole of their conduct in the discharge of the several duties of their office; the end of which designs either the manner of it, as Deuteronomy Dieu explains it, agreeably to the sense of the Hebrew word, twaxwt in (<19B820>Psalm 68:20) or the drift and scope of it, which was Christ, his honour and glory, as in connection with the following verse; or the event of it in life, being for the glory of God, and the good of men; or rather the issue of it in death, or what a comfortable end they made; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "considering" their "last manner of living, in their exit out of the world"; and this is to be considered for imitation and encouragement.

Ver. 8. *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever*.] Who is the substance of the word spoken by the above mentioned rulers, the author and object of their faith, and the end in which their conversation terminated. These words may be expressive of the duration of Christ: he was "yesterday", which does not design the day immediately foregoing, nor some little time past, but ancient times, formerly, of old; and though it does not extend to eternity, which is true of Christ, yet may be carried further than to the days of his flesh here on earth, even to the whole Old Testament dispensation; yea, to the beginning of the world, when he existed not only as the eternal Word, the everlasting "I am", but as the Saviour and Redeemer of his people; during which dispensation he frequently appeared in an human form, and was the sum of all promises and prophecies, and the substance of all types and shadows, and the spiritual food of his people: and he is "today" under the Gospel dispensation; in his person as God-man, and in his offices as prophet, priest, and King: and will be so "for ever": he will never die more; his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his priesthood an unchangeable one. Moreover, these words may regard the immutability of Christ; who is unchangeable in his person, perfections, and essence, as God; and in his love to his people; and in the fulness of his grace, and in the efficacy of his blood, and in the virtue of his sacrifice and righteousness: it may be observed, that ο αυτος, translated "the same", answers to awh, "he", a name of God, (<19A227>Psalm 102:27 <23B812>Isaiah 48:12) and which is used in Jewish writings [f311] for a name of God; and so it is among the Turks [f312]: and it is expressive of his eternity,

immutability, and independence; and well agrees with Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever.

Ver. 9. *Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines*, etc..] The word "divers" may denote the variety and multitude of other doctrines; referring either to the various rites and ceremonies of the law, or to the traditions of the elders, or to the several doctrines of men, whether Jews or Gentiles; whereas the doctrine of the Scriptures, of Christ, and his apostles, is but one; it is uniform, and all of a piece; and so may likewise denote the disagreement of other doctrines with the perfections of God, the person and offices of Christ, the Scriptures of truth, the analogy of faith, and even with themselves: and "strange" doctrines may design such as were never taught by God, nor are agreeable to the voice of Christ, nor to be found in the word of God; and which are new, and unheard of, by the apostles and churches of Christ; and appear in a foreign dress and habit: wherefore the apostle exhorts the believing Hebrews not to be "carried about with them"; as light clouds and meteors in the air, by every wind: for so to be, is to be like children; and discovers great ignorance, credulity, levity, inconstancy, uncertainty, fluctuation, and inconsistency:

for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; with the doctrine of grace, which is food for faith, and does not leave men at uncertainties about things; but establishes the heart, with respect to the love and favour of God, and builds souls upon the foundation, Christ; so that they are not at a loss about the expiation of sin, justification, and salvation; but firmly look for, and expect eternal happiness by Christ, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God:

not with meats; referring to the distinction of meats among the Jews; or the sacrifices ate both by the priests and by the people; or the whole ceremonial law which stood in divers meats and drinks:

which have not profited them that have been occupied therein; they were only profitable to the body; and could be of no other use to the soul, when they were in force, than as they led to Christ, and were regarded by believers; for they were of no advantage to hypocrites and carnal men; they could not sanctify, nor justify, nor cheer the spirits, nor establish the heart; and are of no manner of service at all, since the death of Christ, whereby the whole ceremonial law is abolished.

Ver. 10. *We have an altar*, etc..] By which is meant, not the cross of Christ, on which he was crucified; nor the Lord's table, where his flesh and blood are presented to faith, as food, though not offered; but Christ himself, who is altar, sacrifice, and priest; he was typified by the altar of the burnt offering, and the sacrifice that was offered upon it; the altar was made of Shittim wood, and covered with brass, denoting the incorruptibleness, duration, and strength of Christ: the horns of it, at the four corners, were for refuge; whoever fled to it, and laid hold on them, were safe; so Christ is a refuge to his people, that come from the four corners of the earth; and who believe in him, and lay hold on him, are preserved and protected by his power and grace: the use of it was for sacrifice to be offered upon it; which being a male, without blemish, and wholly burnt with fire, was a sweet savour to God; and which was typical of Christ's human nature, offered on the altar of his divine nature; which was pure and holy, suffered the fire of divine wrath, and was for a sweet smelling savour to God: this altar was but one, and most holy, and sanctified what was put upon it; all which is true of Christ: now this altar the saints have, and have a right to eat of it; even all Christ's friends and beloved ones; all that are made priests unto God by him; all that know him, believe in him, have a spiritual discerning of him, and hunger and thirst after him:

whereof they have no right to eat that serve the tabernacle: there is something of this altar, or that was offered up upon this altar, that is to be eaten, even the flesh and blood of Christ; and to “eat” of it is to believe that Christ is come in the flesh, and is become an offering for sin, and for us that eat; it is to receive, embrace, and possess the blessings procured by it; which is done by faith, with spiritual joy and gladness, and with sincerity and singleness of heart: now those, who served the tabernacle, or adhered to the service of the ceremonial law, they had no right to eat of this altar: the allusion is to the priests' eating of the sacrifices, and to some sacrifices, of which they might not eat, (<3RJO>Leviticus 2:10 6:16,18,26,29 7:9 16:27) and this is not to be understood of believers, before the coming of Christ, who did attend tabernacle service; for they ate the same spiritual meat, and drank the same spiritual drink, as believers do now; but of such, who obstinately persisted in the ceremonies of the law, when they were abolished; and so cut off themselves from all right to the substance of these shadows. (see <4RJO>Galatians 5:2-4).

Ver. 11. *For the bodies of those beasts*, etc..] Not the red heifer, (<04190>Numbers 19:1-22) nor the sin offering in general, (<03630>Leviticus 6:30) nor those for the priest and people, (<03041>Leviticus 4:11,12 21:6,7,18) but the bullock and goat, on the day of atonement, (<03611>Leviticus 16:11-18,27) which were typical of Christ, in the bringing of their blood into the most holy place, by the high priest, for sin; and in the burning of them, without the camp: these beasts were slain, their blood was shed, and was brought into the most holy place, by the high priest; and was sprinkled on the mercy seat, and the horns of the altar of incense; and, by it, atonement was made for the priest, his house, and all Israel; which was a type of the death of Christ; the shedding of his blood; the carrying of it into heaven; the sprinkling it upon the throne of grace and mercy; by which reconciliation is made for the sins of all God's people:

whose blood is brought into the sanctuary: that is, into the holy of holies, as the Ethiopic version renders it:

by the high priest for sin; to make atonement for it, for his own, and for the sins of his family, and of all Israel:

are burnt without the camp, (<03627>Leviticus 16:27) even their skins, flesh, and dung; and the men that burnt them were unclean, though, upon being washed, were received: which was typical of the dolorous sufferings of Christ without Jerusalem, as the next verse shows; and points out the extent of his sufferings, reaching to all parts of his body, and even to his soul; and expresses not only the pains, but the shame and reproach he endured, signified by the burning of the dung; and hints at the pardon of the wicked Jews, who were concerned in his sufferings; which was applied unto them upon their repentance.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore Jesus also*, etc..] In order to answer the type of him;

that he might sanctify the people with his own blood: by “the people” are meant the people who are the objects of divine love and favour; a chosen and covenant people; a distinct and peculiar people; Christ's own special people, by the gift of his Father to him: and the sanctification of them does not design the internal sanctification of them, though this is from Christ, and in consequence of his blood; nor does it so much regard the cleansing of the filth of sin, though Christ's blood sanctifies, in this sense; but rather the expiation of the guilt of sin, which Christ has fully took away; complete pardon being procured, and a perfect righteousness brought in: and this by

“his own blood”; the priests sanctified, to the purifying of the flesh, with the blood of others, with the blood of bulls and goats; but Christ with his own blood, which he was, really, a partaker of; and his human nature, being in union with his divine person, as the Son of God, it had a virtue in it, to sanctify and cleanse from all sin, and to make full expiation of it; in shedding of which, and sanctifying with it, he has shown great love to his people: and, that he might do this agreeably to the types of him on the day of atonement, he

suffered without the gate; that is, of Jerusalem: the Syriac version reads, “without the city”; meaning Jerusalem; which answered to the camp of Israel, in the wilderness; without which, the bodies of beasts were burnt, on the day of atonement: for so say [f313] the Jews;

> “as was the camp in the wilderness, so was the camp in Jerusalem; from Jerusalem to the mountain of the house, was the camp of Israel; from the mountain of the house to the gate of Nicanor, was the camp of the Levites; and from thence forward, the camp of the Shechinah, or the divine Majesty:”

and so Josephus [f314] renders the phrase, without the camp, in (Leviticus 16:27) by εν τοις προαστειοις; “in the suburbs”; that is, of Jerusalem, where Christ suffered,

Ver. 13. *Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp*, etc..] Either of legal ceremonies, which are to be quitted; or of this world, which may be compared to a “camp”; for its instability, a camp not being always in one place; and for its hostility, the world being full of enemies to Christ and his people; and for the noise and fatigue of it, it being a troublesome and wearisome place to the saints, abounding with sins and wickedness; as also camps usually do; and for multitude, the men of the world being very numerous: and a man may be said to “go forth” from hence, when he professes not to belong to the world; when his affections are weaned from it; when the allurements of it do not draw him aside; when he forsakes, and suffers the loss of all, for Christ; when he withdraws from the conversation of the men of it, and breathes after another world; and to go forth from hence, “unto him”, unto Christ, shows, that Christ is not to be found in the camp, in the world: he is above, in heaven, at the right hand of God; and that going out of the camp externally, or leaving the world only in a way of profession, is or no avail, without going to Christ: yet there must be a quitting of the world, in some sense, or there is no true coming to Christ,

and enjoyment of him; and Christ is a full recompence for what of the world may be lost by coming to him; wherefore there is great encouragement to quit the world, and follow Christ: now to go forth to him is to believe in him; to hope in him; to love him; to make a profession of him, and follow him:

bearing his reproach; or reproach for his sake: the reproach, which saints meet with, for the sake of Christ, and a profession of him, is called “his”, because of the union there is between them, and the sympathy and fellow feeling he has with them in it; he reckons what is said and done to them as said and done to himself; and besides, there is a likeness between the reproach which Christ personally bore, and that which is cast upon his followers; and this is to be bore by them willingly, cheerfully, courageously, and patiently.

Ver. 14. *For here have we no continuing city*, etc..] Neither for religious worship, the city of Jerusalem being quickly to be destroyed, nor for civil life to dwell in; and so may have a peculiar regard to the Hebrews, whose temple and city would, in a short time, become desolate; though it was the general case of the saints, in those times, to be obliged to flee from one city to another, having no certain dwelling place: and it may respect the common instability of this world, and of the state of the saints in it: this world, and all things in it, are unstable and transitory, the riches, honours, pleasures, and profits of it, and the persons in it, and even the world itself; the fashion of it passes away: the saints have no settlement and abiding here; they are not of it, though in it; and though they are in it, it is but for a time; and, when they have done the will of God, they are taken out of it; another place is prepared for them: they are but sojourners, and strangers, and pilgrims; and this they are sensible of, and own, and acknowledge: and it is their mercy, that they are not to continue here; since, while in it, they are exposed to a great many sorrows and afflictions, both of soul and body; are often disturbed with Satan's temptations; and are liable to the snares, insults, and reproaches of the world; and, seeing they have no continuance here, they will be the sooner at home: and they have that to support them, under the instability of worldly things, which others have not; they are interested in an unchangeable God, and in his love; and in an unchangeable Saviour; and in an unchangeable covenant; and have a right to eternal glory and happiness, a city which has foundations, as follows:

but we seek one to come; heaven; which is compared to a city; is future, yet to come; though certain, being built and prepared by God; and is continuing, will abide, being well founded: hence the saints seek for it; (see Gill on "⁵⁸Hebrews 11:10").

Ver. 15. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise*, etc..] For temporal and spiritual mercies; particularly for sanctification, or expiation of sin, by the blood of Christ; and for heaven, the continuing city, that is to come: this sacrifice is not a proper, nor a propitiatory one, but spiritual and evangelical; it is enjoined by God, is well pleasing to him, and glorifies him; and is our reasonable service, that believe in Christ; for being made priests by him to God, and having faith in him, such are capable of offering it aright; to do which, they are under the greatest obligations: and it is to be offered up by Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever; and who has suffered without the gate, that he might sanctify the people by his blood; it is to be done in imitation of him, and by his assistance; and for him, and blessings in him; and on him, as the altar, which sanctifies the gift; and through him, as the high priest and Mediator; for, as there is no coming to God but by Christ, and all our mercies come to us through him, and our thanksgivings are only acceptable to God on his account, it must be right to offer them up by him: and that,

to God continually: as the Creator and Preserver of us, in our beings; as the Father of mercies; as the Father of Christ; and as our covenant God and Father in him; since he is always bestowing mercies on us, of one kind or another; and, therefore, should be continually praised, even in times of adversity, affliction, and temptation; in the midst of reproach and persecution; even when unsettled in mind, body, and estate; since there is a continuing city to come; nor can a believer be in any state of life but he has something to be thankful for:

that is, the fruit of our lips; the sacrifice of praise is so called, in allusion to the offering of the firstfruits under the law; and to distinguish it from legal sacrifices; and to show in what way and manner we are to praise God, namely, with our lips: in (²⁸Hosea 14:2) which is thought to be referred to here, it is, "the calves of our lips"; sacrifices of praise being instead of calves: and the apostle interprets it in great agreement with the Jewish writers; the Chaldee paraphrase explains it by antwps ylm, "the words of their lips": and so Jarchi, wnytpç yrbd, "the words of our lips"; and Kimchi, wnytpç ywdyw, "the confession of our lips": and it may be

observed, that there is a great nearness in µyrp, “calves”, and yrp, “fruit”; though perhaps rather the phrase is borrowed from (<235719>Isaiah 57:19) where it is expressly had; the Septuagint indeed have it in (<281402>Hosea 14:2) & the apostle adds, for further explanation,

giving thanks to his name; to the name of God; to the glory of his name; to the honour of his divine perfections; for mercies of every kind: the word signifies “a speaking together”; and may design not only the conjunction of the heart and tongue together in praise, but a social giving thanks to God by the saints, as a body together: the phrase ψυσια αινεσεως, “the sacrifice of praise”, is used by the Septuagint in (<142931>2 Chronicles 29:31 33:16). The apostle having shown that legal sacrifices were all superseded and abolished by the sacrifice of Christ, which is the design of this epistle, points out what sacrifice believers should offer up to God, under the Gospel dispensation; and the Jews themselves say, that

> “in future time (i.e. in the days of the Messiah) all sacrifices shall cease, but hdwt ^brq, “the sacrifice of praise” shall not cease [f315].”

Ver. 16. *But to do good and to communicate forget not*, etc..] Which is to be understood, not of doing good works in general, but of acts of beneficence, or communicating to “the poor”, as the Syriac version renders it: the apostle proceeds to take notice of another sort of sacrifice, which continues under the Gospel dispensation; and that is, alms; which should be attended to: alms should be given, or beneficence be exercised to all men in need, even to our enemies, as well as to our friends and relations; and especially to poor saints, and ministers of the Gospel: and this believers should not “forget”; which shows that it is a duty of importance; and that men are too apt to neglect it, and should be stirred up unto it:

for with such sacrifices God is well pleased; not that they are meritorious of the favour of God and of eternal life; for what a man gives in a way of charity is but what God has given him, and cannot be profitable to God, though it is to a fellow creature; nor is there any proportion between what is given, and grace and glory which the saints receive; yet doing good in this way, when it is done in faith, springs from love, and is directed to the glory of God, is well pleasing to him; yea, these sacrifices are preferred by him to legal ones, (<280606>Hosea 6:6) and the Jews also say, that

> “greater is he who does alms than (if he offered) all sacrifices [f316].”

Ver. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you*, etc..] Not the ecclesiastical rulers among the Jews, for to these they were no longer obliged, they being no longer under such tutors and governors; nor civil magistrates, though it was their duty to obey them, even Heathen ones; for as for Christian magistrates, as yet there were none; but their spiritual guides and governors, the same that are mentioned (⁵⁸Hebrews 13:7) these the apostle exhorts them to "obey": by constantly tending upon the word preached by them, and hearkening to it; by receiving it with faith and love, as it appears agreeable to the Scriptures; for a contrary behaviour is pernicious to souls, and highly resented by God; and by being present at, and joining with them in the ordinances of Christ, as administered by them; and by regarding their admonitions, counsels, and advice:

and submit yourselves; to the laws of Christ's house, as put in execution by them; and to their censures and reproofs, as delivered by the authority of the church; for they are spiritual fathers, and children should obey their parents, and submit to them; they are the ambassadors of Christ, stand in his stead, and represent him, wherefore their authority is great; and they are pastors or shepherds of the flock, whom the sheep should follow:

for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account: they watch not for themselves, for their worldly gain and advantage, and for the estates of men; but for the souls of men, to do them good, to comfort and edify them, to feed them with knowledge and understanding, and for the salvation of them; as such that must give an account to their own consciences, that they discharge their work aright, or they cannot be satisfied; and to the church, to whom they minister, to whom they are accountable, if they are dilatory and negligent; and especially as such as must stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and give an account to him of their ministry, of their use of talents committed to them, and of souls that are put under their care and charge; how they have discharged their duty to the souls of men, and how these have behaved towards them under the ministry of the word: the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, "for they watch, as those that must give an account for your souls": the sense is much the same:

that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; either do their work with joy, cheerfully; which they do, when they are obeyed and submitted to; when men attend upon the word and ordinances administered by them, and receive advantage, and grow in grace and spiritual knowledge; when they

abide by the Gospel, and walk worthy of it; otherwise they do their work heavily, and with sorrow: or else give up their account with joy, and not with grief; either at the throne of grace, where they either rejoice or complain; or at the great day, when they will be witnesses, either for or against those that have been committed to them:

for that is unprofitable unto you; for whose souls they watch; that is, the latter would be so, either to do their work sorrowing, or to give up their account by way of complaint; either of them must be to the disadvantage of such persons that occasion grief and sorrow.

Ver. 18. *Pray for us*, etc..] Who are in the ministry; your guides and governors; since the work is of so much moment, and so arduous and awful, and you have such a concern in it; (see Gill on "2 Thessalonians 3:1").

for we trust we have a good conscience; there is a conscience in every man, but it is naturally evil: a good conscience is a conscience sanctified by the Spirit of God, and sprinkled by the blood of Jesus; here it chiefly respects the upright discharge of it in the ministerial work: this the apostle often asserts, and appeals to, and which he here expresses with modesty, and yet with confidence; and which he uses as an argument for prayer for them:

in all things willing to live honestly; not only as men, but as ministers; faithfully dispensing the word of truth, without any regard to the favour or frowns of men, as good stewards of the mysteries of God; which contains in it another reason for prayer: the phrase, "in all things", is so placed, that it may be read in connection with either clause; and the sense is either that they exercised a good conscience in all things, in which they were concerned with God, or man, and among all persons, Jews and Gentiles; or that they were willing to live honestly in every respect, as men, Christians, and ministers.

Ver. 19. *But I beseech you the rather to do this*, etc..] To pray earnestly; to strive together in their prayers for them, (Romans 15:30-32)

that I may be restored to you the sooner: Christ's ministers are sometimes hindered from being with their people, through Satan, or his emissaries, creating troubles, or casting them into prison; which might be the apostle's case now; but God can make their way through all; and for this he should be prayed unto.

Ver. 20. *Now the God of peace*, etc..] This is the concluding part of the epistle, which is ended with a prayer, made up of very suitable petitions for the Hebrews; and as the apostle desires them to pray for him and other ministers, he, in turn, and by way of example, prays for them: and he addresses God, as "the God of peace"; who is so called, because of his concern in the peace and reconciliation of his people; because he is the giver of conscience peace to them; because he is the author of all felicity and prosperity, temporal and spiritual; the promoter of peace and concord among saints, and at last brings them to eternal peace; (see Gill on "Romans 15:33"), a consideration of this gives boldness at the throne of grace; furnishes out a reason why blessings asked for may be expected; has a tendency to promote peace among brethren; may bear up saints under a sense of infirmity and imperfection, in prayer and other duties; and be an encouragement to them under Satan's temptations, and all afflictions. The Arabic version makes the God of peace to be Christ himself; whereas Christ is manifestly distinguished from him in the next verse; and even in that version, reading the words thus, "now; the God of peace raised from the dead Jesus the Shepherd of the sheep, magnified by the blood of the everlasting covenant; Jesus, I say, our Lord confirm you, etc.. through Jesus Christ"; for which version there is no foundation in the original text. The God of peace is manifestly God the Father, who is distinguished from Christ his Son:

that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus; who died for the sins of his people; was buried, and lay under the power of death for some time; but was raised from the dead by his Father; though not exclusive of himself, and the Spirit of holiness; in the same body in which he suffered and died; as the firstfruits of his people, and as their Lord and Saviour, head and surety, for their justification, and as a pledge of their resurrection. The apostle addresses the God and Father of Christ in prayer, under this consideration, to observe his power and ability to help in the greatest distress, and in the most difficult and desperate case; to encourage faith and hope in him, when things are at the worst, and most discouraging; to comfort the saints under afflictions, in a view of their resurrection; to engage them to regard a risen Christ, and things above, and to expect life and immortality by him:

that great Shepherd of the sheep: the people of God, whom the Father has chosen, and given to Christ; for whom he has laid down his life; and whom the Spirit calls by his grace, and sanctifies; to whom Christ has a right, by

his Father's gift, his own purchase, and the power of grace: these being partakers of his grace, are called “sheep”, because they are harmless and inoffensive in their lives and conversations; and yet are exposed to danger; but meek and patient under sufferings; are weak and timorous of themselves; are clean, being washed in the blood of Christ; are sociable in their communion with one another; are profitable, though not to God, yet to men; are apt to go astray, and are liable to diseases: they are also called sheep, and are Christ's sheep before conversion; (see <43106>John 10:16) and Christ, he is the Shepherd of them, who in all respects discharges the office of a shepherd to them, diligently and faithfully; (see Gill on “<43106>John 10:16”), here he is called, “that great Shepherd”; being the man, God's fellow, equal to him, the great God and our Saviour; and having a flock which, though comparatively is a little one, is a flock of souls, of immortal souls, and is such a flock as no other shepherd has; hence he is called the Shepherd and Bishop of souls: and his abilities to feed them are exceeding great; he has a perfect knowledge of them; all power to protect and defend them; a fulness of grace to supply them; and he takes a diligent care of them: and this great Person so described was raised from the dead,

through the blood of the everlasting covenant: for the sense is not, that God is the God of peace, through that blood, though it is true that peace is made by it; nor that Christ becomes the Shepherd of the sheep by it, though he has with it purchased the flock of God; nor that the chosen people become his sheep through it, though they are redeemed by it, and are delivered out of a pit wherein is no water, by the blood of this covenant; but that Christ was brought again from the dead through it; and it denotes the particular influence that it had upon his resurrection, and the continued virtue of it since. The “covenant” spoken of is not the covenant of works made with Adam, as the federal head of his natural seed; there was no mediator or shepherd of the sheep that had any concern therein; there was no blood in that covenant; nor was it an everlasting one: nor the covenant of circumcision given to Abraham; though possibly there may be some reference to it; or this may be opposed to that, since the blood of circumcision is often called by the Jews tyrb µd, “the blood of the covenant” [f317]: nor the covenant on Mount Sinai, though there may be an allusion to it; since the blood which was then shed, and sprinkled on the people, is called the blood of the covenant, (<02408>Exodus 24:8) but that was not an everlasting covenant, that has waxed old, and vanished away; but the covenant of grace is meant, before called the new and better covenant,

of which Christ is the surety and Mediator; (see Hebrews 7:22 8:6). This is an “everlasting one”; it commenced from everlasting, as appears from the everlasting love of God, which is the rise and foundation of it; from the counsels of God of old, which issued in it; from Christ's being set up from everlasting, as the Mediator of it; from the promises of it which were made before the world began; and from the spiritual blessings of grace in it, which were given to God's elect in Christ before the foundation of it: moreover, it will endure for ever; nor will it be succeeded by any other covenant: and the blood of Christ may be called the blood of it, because the shedding of it is a principal article in it; by it the covenant is ratified and confirmed; and all the blessings of it come through it, as redemption, peace, pardon, justification, and even admission into heaven itself; and Christ, through it, was brought again from the dead, because by it he fulfilled his covenant engagements, satisfied divine justice, and abolished sin, yea, death itself.

Ver. 21. *Make you perfect in every good work to do his will*, etc..] The Alexandrian copy reads, “in every good work and word”; as in (2 Thessalonians 2:17) every good work is to be done: a good work is what is done in obedience to the command of God, and in faith, and from a principle of love, in the name and strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God; and every such work should be diligently attended to; such as concern God, and are of a moral nature, or of positive institution; and such as concern each other, whether as men or Christians: and the will of God is the rule of every good work, both as to matter and manner; whatever is not agreeably to the revealed will of God, let it have ever such a show of religion and holiness in it, it is not a good work; continuance in the performance of good works, and the perfection of them, are things to be desired of God; it requires grace to perform good works, and more grace to abound in them, and to keep men from being weary of well doing; and though the best of works are imperfect, yet perfection in them is desirable, and it is God alone that can make the saints perfect in any sense; (see 1 Peter 5:10). The Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, “strengthen you”, or “confirm you”; saints need to be strengthened with spiritual strength, to perform good works; for they are weak and feeble, and unable of themselves to do anything spiritually good; without Christ they can do nothing, but through him strengthening them, they can do all things; and they have need to be confirmed in them, that they are the will of God, and that it is their duty to regard them. The Vulgate Latin version

renders it, “fit you”: men are naturally unfit for good works; in order to do them aright, it is necessary that they should have knowledge of the will of God; that they be regenerated and created in Christ; that they be sanctified and cleansed, and so meet for the master's use; that they have the Spirit of God, and strength from Christ; and that they be believers in him: nor is there always a fitness in saints themselves, or a readiness to good works, only when God gives both will and power to do them; wherefore such a petition as this is very proper and pertinent; another follows, or the same carried on, and more largely expressed; though it rather seems to be a distinct one, and that in order to the former:

working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; the good work of grace being necessary to the performance of good works; nor can any man do a good work well, unless he has the good work of grace wrought in him: grace is a work not of man, but of God; it is an internal work, something in a man's heart, and not anything without him, or done by him; and it is a gradual and progressive work; it is carried on by degrees, and is not yet perfect, though it will be. God is continually working in his people, carrying on his work, and will at length perform it; (see Gill on “Philippians 1:6”), and this is “well pleasing in his sight”; it is in his sight; it is obvious to his view, when it is not to others, nor to themselves, being the hidden man of the heart; and it is very agreeable to him; it makes men like unto him; hereby they become a suitable habitation for him, and are put into a capacity of serving him; to such he gives more grace, and on that grace he entails glory: and all this is

through Jesus Christ; all the grace necessary for the beginning and carrying on, and finishing of the good work of grace, and for the performance of every good work, comes through the hands of Christ, in whom all fulness of it dwells; and through the blood and intercession of Christ, by virtue of which it is communicated; and all become acceptable to God through him, as the persons of the Lord's people, so the grace that is wrought in them, and the works that are done by them:

to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen; either to God the Father of Christ, and the Father of mercies, and God of salvation; and as he is the God of peace, and the bringer of Christ from the dead; the appointer, provider, and giver of the great Shepherd; the author and finisher of all good in his people: or to Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through whom all grace and good things come; to him does this doxology

of right belong; he has a glory both as God, and as Mediator; and the glory of both is to be given to him: the glory of his deity, by asserting it; by attributing all divine perfections and works unto him; by worshipping of him, and by ascribing the efficacy of his mediatorial actions to it: and the glory of salvation and redemption is to be given to him, who alone has obtained it; by discarding all other Saviours; by trusting alone in him; by looking to him alone for peace, pardon, justification, sanctification, and eternal life: and this glory should be ascribed continually, for ever and ever, as it will be by angels, and saints to all eternity, The word “Amen” is added, to show that the apostle assented to it, and wished it might be, and that he firmly believed it, and so asserted that it would be; for it is expressive of assent, asseveration, and prayer.

Ver. 22. *And I beseech you, brethren*, etc..] The apostle closes his epistle to the Hebrews in a very tender and affectionate manner, calling them “brethren”, as he often does; and speaking to them, not in an authoritative way, nor by way of advice, but by entreaty: the reason may be, because he was the apostle of the Gentiles, and because the Jews were not so well pleased with him, on account of his preaching down the ceremonies of the law; though such language is used by him in other epistles; he became all things to all, that he might gain some. The subject matter of his entreaty is, that they would

suffer the word of exhortation; either from one another, as to prayer, to attendance on the word and ordinances, to a regard to their lives and conversations, and to a close adherence to the Gospel, and the profession of it; or from their ministers, their guides, and governors, whose business it was to exhort them to the several duties of religion; or rather from himself; and it designs either the particular exhortation in (Hebrews 12:5) or the continued exhortation to various duties in this chapter; or any, and everyone throughout the epistle: and this shows that the children of God are sometimes heavy and sluggish, and need stirring up; and that there are some things often in exhortations and reproofs which are not so agreeable to the flesh, and yet ought to be taken kindly, and patiently endured: the word may be rendered “consolation”, or “solace”, as it is by the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; and may refer to the whole of this epistle, which is of a consolatory nature: this may suggest that these Hebrews were under afflictions, and needed comfort; and yet through unbelief might be tempted to refuse the comfort administered to them; which is too often the case with God's people:

for I have written a letter unto you in few words; or, "I have sent, or, wrote to you in brief"; meaning either the exhortatory part of the epistle, which lay in few words, and chiefly in this chapter; or the whole of the epistle, which was but short in comparison of the length he might have carried it, and as the subject matter of it might seem to require; it treating on the great doctrines of the Gospel, and mysteries of grace; things of the greatest moment and importance, and which might have been largely insisted on; but he had contracted things, and had wrote much in a little; and this he makes a reason why they should suffer or bear with the exhortation given, since it was not pressed with a multitude of words, wearing out their patience.

Ver. 23. *Know ye that [our] brother Timothy is set at liberty*, etc..] This is the same person to whom the Apostle Paul wrote two epistles, and whom he often calls his son, though sometimes his brother, as here, (<510101>Colossians 1:1 <520302>1 Thessalonians 3:2) of him he says, that he was set at liberty, or "dismissed"; either by the apostle, by whom he was sent into some parts, upon some business; or rather was loosed from his bonds, having been a prisoner for the sake of Christ and the Gospel; and, it may be; a fellow prisoner with the apostle, at Rome, as Aristarchus and others were; and this very great and useful person being known, very likely, to the Hebrews, since his mother was a Jewess, and he himself was well reported of by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium, (<441601>Acts 16:1,2) it was a piece of good news to them to hear of his release:

with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you; by which it seems that Timothy was now absent from the apostle, but that he expected him to come in a short time; when, if he should, they would both come together, and visit the Hebrews; which looks as if the apostle was at liberty himself, or at least had some hopes of his deliverance from prison; but whether he ever had his liberty after this, and saw the Hebrews any more, cannot be said; the contrary seems most probable.

Ver. 24. *Salute all them that have the rule over you*, etc..] The pastors and officers of the church of the Hebrews, the same with those in (<581307>Hebrews 13:7,17) and all the saints; the several members of the church, who were set apart to holiness by God; whose sins were expiated by Christ; to whom Christ was made sanctification; and who were internally sanctified by the Spirit of God, and lived holy lives and conversations; to these the apostle wished all prosperity, inward and outward, spiritual and temporal; and he

uses the word “all” in both clauses; and, including every officer and member, expresses his universal love to them, whether high or low, rich or poor, greater or lesser believers:

they of Italy salute you; that is, the brethren, as the Vulgate Latin version reads; the Italian brethren; such as were at Puteoli, and other places, in that country; (see <44>Acts 28:13,14). Italy is a famous and well known country in Europe; a very fruitful and delightful one; of which Rome, where the apostle very likely now was, is the chief city: it has been called by different names, as Saturnia from Saturn; and Ausonia, Aenotria, and Hesperia Magna; and it had its name Italy, some say, from Italus, the son of Penelope and Telegonus; others, from Italus, a king of the Arcadians, or, as some say, the Sicilians; but, according to Timsaeus and Varro [f318], it was so called from the multitude of oxen in it, which in the old Greek language were called ιταλοι, “Italoi”, to which comes near in sound the Latin word “vituli”, used for “calves”; and Italy is frequently, by Jewish writers [f319] called ˆwy lç aylijya, “Italy of Greece”; and formerly it was inhabited by Greeks, and was called Great Greece [f320]: it is bounded on the east with the Adriatic sea; and on the west by the river Var, with the Alps, which separate France from Italy; and on the south with the Tyrrhene, or Tuscan sea, called the lower, and on the north, partly with the Alps, which are on the borders of Germany, and partly with the Adriatic sea, called the higher. There were Christians in this country before the Apostle Paul came to Rome, both at Rome, and other places, as before observed. It is said [f321], that Barnabas was first at Rome, and planted the church there; that he went round Lombardy, and lived at Milain; that in the “first” century, Apollinaris preached at Ravenna, and Hermagoras at Aquileia; and there were Christian churches in the “second” century, not only at Rome, but in many other cities and places; and so likewise in the “third” century, as at Verona, Spoletum, Beneventum, etc.. and in the “fourth” century, there were great numbers of churches in this country; as at Verona, and Capua, in Calabria, Campania, and Apulia; and which might be traced in following centuries.

Ver. 25. *Grace be with you all, Amen*.] Which is the apostle's usual salutation in all his epistles, (<53>2 Thessalonians 3:17,18) in which he wishes renewed discoveries of the love and favour of God; fresh communications of grace from Christ; an abundant supply of the spirit of grace; an increase of internal grace and external gifts; and a continuance of the Gospel of the grace of God. Of “Amen”, (see Gill on “<58>Hebrews 13:21”). The subscription of this epistle is,

written to the Hebrews from Italy by Timothy; in the Alexandrian copy it is, "written to the Hebrews from Rome"; which is very probable, since the Italian brethren send their salutations in it; and the words, "by Timothy", are left out; nor is it likely that it should, since it is clear, from (Hebrews 13:23) that he was absent from the apostle; and if he had sent it by him, what need was there to inform them that he was set at liberty?

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 38.

Ft2 -- Ib. c. 3. & 50:6. c. 20.

Ft3 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:6. c. 25.

Ft4 -- Ib. c. 14.

Ft5 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 42. fol. 37. 3. Jarchi in <0100210>Genesis 10:21. & 14:13.

Ft6 -- Antiqu. 50:1. c. 6. sect. 4.

Ft7 -- Targum in <0100210>Genesis 10:21.

Ft8 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 42. fol. 37. 3.

Ft9 -- In <0100210>Genesis 10:21. & in Jonam, 1. 9.

Ft10 -- Sepher Shorashim, rad. r b [

Ft11 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:6. c. 14. Hieronymi Catalog. Script. Eccl. sect. 15. fol. 91. Tom. 1.

Ft12 -- Kimchi & Aben Ezra in <2300210>Isaiah 2:2.

Ft13 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1.

Ft14 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 4. & 3. 2, 3. Caphtor, fol. 79. 1.

Ft15 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 83. 2. Caphtor, fol. 90. 1.

Ft16 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 5. 2. & 40. 2. Ed. Amstelod.

Ft17 -- Targum in 2 Sam 22:13. & in Cant. 5:10.

Ft18 -- Tanchuma spud Huls. p. 321.

Ft19 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 82. 2. Maimon. in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. 1. & Abarbinel, Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 37. 4. & 38. 1.

Ft20 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 104. 4.

Ft21 -- De Agricultura, p. 195. De Confus. Ling. p. 329, 341. Somniis, p. 597.

Ft22 -- Sepher Jetzirah, p. 16. Ed. Rittangel.

Ft23 -- T. Hieros. Roshhashana, fol. 58. 1.

Ft24 -- Kimchi & R. Sol. ben Melech in loc. & R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 49. 2.

Ft25 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 12. 2. & 14. 1, 2. & 16. 1. Taanith, fol. 11. 1. & Megilia, fol. 15. 2. & in Zohar passim.

Ft26 -- Antiqu. 50:15. c. 5. sect. 3.

Ft27 -- Targum Onkelos & Jon. in <0103> Genesis 3:8. & Hieros. in 5:9.

Ft28 -- Targum in <1043> 1 Kings 4:33.

Ft29 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 37. 1. Maimon. Hilchot Yesode Hattorsh, 3. 7. sect. 6. & Melachim, c. 11. sect. 1. Vid. Aben Ezra in <0308> Leviticus 16:8.

Ft30 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 23. 3. & in Leviticus fol. 3. 3. & 9. 3. & 32. 2.

Ft31 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 106. 3.

Ft32 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 6.

Ft33 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 47. 3.

Ft34 -- Targum Jon. in <0106> Genesis 3:6. & in Hab. 3:5.

Ft35 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 53. 1. & Avoda Zara, fol. 5. 1. & 20. 2.

Ft36 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 27. 1, 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 2. & 22. 4. Caphtor, fol 26. 2. & alibi.

Ft37 -- Baal Hatturim in <0409> Numbers 4:19.

Ft38 -- Quod omnis Probus Liber, p. 868.

Ft39 -- Misna Yoma, c. 6. sect. 1.

Ft40 -- Misna Negaim, c. 14. sect. 5.

Ft41 -- T. Bab. Horayot, fol. 9. 1. Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 5. sect. 1.

Ft42 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 5.

Ft43 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 3. sect. 2.

Ft44 -- T. Bab. Megilia, fol. 12. 1.

Ft45 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 106. 3. Maimon. Yesode Hattorah, c. 7. sect. 6. Obede Cochabim, c. 1. sect. 3. & in Misn Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 18. 3.

Ft46 -- Maimon. Teshubah, c. 9. sect. 2.

Ft47 -- Menasseh ben Israel, Conciliat. in De Qu. 11.

Ft48 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 2. 2.

Ft49 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 35. 2.

Ft50 -- Lexic. Cabalist. p. 203.

Ft51 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 1. Shemot Rabba, sect. 25. fol. 109. 3. & Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 19. 3.

Ft52 -- T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 39. 2.

Ft53 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 118. 1.

Ft54 -- Aben Ezra & Kimchi Praefat. in Tillim.

Ft55 -- Antiqu. Jud. 50:4. c. 7. sect. 2. c. 8. sect. 46, 47, 48. & 50:5. c. 1. sect. 1. & passim.

Ft56 -- De Charitate, p. 698, 699, 700.

Ft57 -- Misn. Tamid, c. 7. sect. 4. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1, Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 16. 3. Massecheth Sopherim, c. 18. sect. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 3. 1.

Ft58 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 31. 4. Shaare Orn, fol. 17. 1. Caphtor, fol. 64. 1.

Ft59 -- Zohar in Cab. Lex. p. 364.

Ft60 -- De Cherubim, p. 112.

Ft61 -- Onis rerum divin. Haeres, p. 499, 500, 510, 511, 513.

Ft62 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 55. 2. & 113. 1, 2. & is Exodus fol. 58. 3, 4. & in Leviticus fol. 29. 2. T. Hieros. Celaim, fol. 31. 3. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 2. 1.

Ft63 -- De Sacrif. Abel, p. 140.

Ft64 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 122. 2. Vid. Seder Tephillot, fol. 281. 1. Ed. Basil.

Ft65 -- Misna Tamid, c. 4. sect. 2.

Ft66 -- Alleg. 1. 2. p. 76. De Profugis, p. 466. & de Somniis, p. 597.

Ft67 -- Targum in Psal. 29:10. T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2. Zohar in Genesis fol. 38. 3. & in Numbers fol. 91. 2. & 93. 2.

Ft68 -- Megillat Esther, fol. 95. 1.

Ft69 -- Raziel, fol. 32. 1.

Ft70 -- lbid. fol. 3. 1.

Ft71 -- Misna Yoma, c. 3. sect. 8. & c. 4. sect. 2.

Ft72 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 2. Bartenora in Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 1. & Maimon. in ib. sect. 3.

Ft73 -- Misn. Yebamot, c. 6. sect. 4. & Gloss. in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 18. 1.

Ft74 -- Moses Hadarsan apud Galatin. 50:10. c. 6. Abot R. Nathan, c. 34.

Ft75 -- Harpocration. Lex. p. 152. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. sect. 5. c. 3.

Ft76 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 37. 4.

Ft77 -- Nizzachon Vet. p. 11. Ed. Wagenseil.

Ft78 -- Misn. Kiddushin, c. 2. sect. 8. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft79 -- R. Levi ben Gersom in Exodus fol. 109. 1. & in Leviticus fol. 117. 2.

Ft80 -- Apolog. 2. p. 94.

Ft81 -- Paedagog. 50:1. c. 6. p. 93.

Ft82 -- Maimon. Hilchot. Teshuba, c. 6. sect. 3.

Ft83 -- Vid. R. David Kimchi in <22214>Isaiah 22:14.

Ft84 -- Leg. Allegor. 50:2. p. 98.

Ft85 -- De Somniis, p. 567.

Ft86 -- Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Torah, pr. Affirm. 123.

Ft87 -- Thalia, 50:3. c. 8.

Ft88 -- Lexic. Rad. [bç col. 848.

Ft89 -- T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 9. 2.

Ft90 -- T. Hieros. Maccot, fol. 31. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 232, 3. 4. Maimon. Hilchot Rotzeach, c. 8. sect. 5. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Torah, pr. Affirm, 76, Bartenora in Misn. Maccot, c. 2. sect. 6.

Ft91 -- De Profugis, p. 464.

Ft92 -- T. Hieros. Maccot, fol. 32. 1. Maimon. ut supra, (Hilchot Rotzeach, c. 8.) sect. 4.

Ft93 -- Apud Stobaeum, Serm. I.

Ft94 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 73. 3.

Ft95 -- Targum in Jon. & Jerus. Jarchi, Baal Hatturim, Levi ben Gersom & Abendana in <01418>Genesis 14:18. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 4. fol. 182. 4. Pirke Eliezer, c. 8. Juchasin, fol. 135. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 16. 2. Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 1. 2. Peritzol. Itinera Mundi, p. 17.

Ft96 -- Targ. Onk. Jon. & Jerus. Levi ben Gersom, Aben Ezra & ben Melec in <01418>Genesis 14:18. Tosaphot T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 16. 1.

Ft97 -- De Congressu, p. 438.

Ft98 -- Leg. Alleg. 50:2. p. 75.

Ft99 -- In Hottinger. Smegma Orientale, 50:1. c. 8. p. 269, 254.

Ft100 -- In ib. p. 305, 306, 254.

Ft101 -- In Mr. Gregory's Preface to his Works.

Ft102 -- In ib.

Ft103 -- Contra Haeres. Haeres. 55.

Ft104 -- Suidas in voce Melchisedec, Malala, 50:3. Glycas, Cedrenus, & alii.

Ft105 -- R. Moses Hadarsan apud Galatin. 50:3. c. 17. & 50:8. c. 2.

Ft106 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 86. 2. & Becorot, fol. 4. 1.

Ft107 -- Maimon. Hilchot Maaser, c. 1. sect. 4.

Ft108 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 160. 4.

Ft109 -- Seder Tephillot, Ed. Amsterd. fol. 2. 1.

Ft110 -- Apud Seder Tephillot, Ed. Basil. fol. 86. 2.

Ft111 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exodus fol. 49. 3. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 62. 2.

Ft112 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

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Ft114 -- Vajikra Rabba, scct. 9. fol. 153. 1. & sect. 27. fol. 168. 4.

Ft115 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 5.

Ft116 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 9. 1. Piske Tosephot Zebachim, Art. 72.

Ft117 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 2.

Ft118 -- De Profugis, p. 466, 467. & de Victimis, p. 843.

Ft119 -- Maimon, & Bartenora in Misn, Yoma, c, 1. sect. 3.

Ft120 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft121 -- Misn. Parah, c. 3. sect. 1.

Ft122 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 5.

Ft123 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 26. 4.

Ft124 -- Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 2. & 9. 1.

Ft125 -- Lex. Cabal. p. 483.

Ft126 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 29. 1.

Ft127 -- Not. Miscell. in Port. Mesis, p. 9.

Ft128 -- In <24032>Jeremiah 31:32. & Sepher Shorashim, rad. l [b

Ft129 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 3. 2.

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Ft131 -- De vita Mosis, p. 667.

Ft132 -- Jarchi in <012817>Genesis 28:17.

Ft133 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 65. 4. & 94. 4. & 96. 2. & in Leviticus fol. 1. 3.

Ft134 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1.

Ft135 -- Menasseh ben Israel Conciliat. in Genesis qu. 41.

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Ft138 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 8. sect. 5. Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 7. sect. 16.

Ft139 -- Misna Yoma, c. 5. sect. 1. Vid. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 10. fol. 8. 3.

Ft140 -- Hilchot Beth Habbechira, c. 4. sect. 2.

Ft141 -- Gloss. & Tosephot in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 51. 2. & Bartenora in Misn. Yoma, c. 5. sect. 1. & in Middot, c. 4. sect. 7.

Ft142 -- Misn. Middot ib. & T. Bab. Yoma ib. & Gloss. in T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 106. 1.

Ft143 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 4. sect. 4. Maimon. Yom Hacippurim, c. 2. sect. 5.

Ft144 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 8. sect. 3.

Ft145 -- De vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 668.

Ft146 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 27. 2. & Yoma, fol. 21. 2. Menasseh ben Israel Concil. in Genesis qu. 41. Kimchi in Hagg. 1:8.

Ft147 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 53. 2. Seder Olam Rabba, c. 25. T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 49. 3.

Ft148 -- Joseph ben Gorion, 50:1. c. 17. 2 Maccab. 2:4, 5.

Ft149 -- T. Hieros. Sota, fol. 22. 3. T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 5. 2. Maimon. Beth Habbechira, c. 4. sect. 1.

Ft150 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 6. sect. 1, 2. T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 49. 3. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 54. 1.

Ft151 -- De Cong. Quaer. Erud. Gratia, p. 438.

Ft152 -- Mechilta, fol. 20. 1. & Tanchuma, fol. 29. 4.

Ft153 -- Menasseh ben Israel Conciliat. in Genesis qu. 41.

Ft154 -- T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 49. 3. & Sota, fol. 22. 3. T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 5. 2. & Horayot, fol. 12. 1. Maimon. Beth Habbechira, c. 4. sect. 1.

Ft155 -- R. Levi ben Gersom in <1 Kings 8:9>1 Kings 8:9. so others in Laniado Celi, Yekar in loc.

Ft156 -- Menasseh ben Israel Conciliat. in Genesis qu. 41.

Ft157 -- Baal Hatturim in <Numbers 17:5>Numbers 17:5.

Ft158 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:4. c. 4. sect. 2. Aben Ezra in <Numbers 17:8>Numbers 17:8.

Ft159 -- Nat. Hist. 50:16. c. 25.

Ft160 -- De vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 681.

Ft161 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 1, 2. Jarchi in <Deuteronomy 31:26>Deuteronomy 31:26.

Ft162 -- Praefat. in Yad Chazaka in principio.

Ft163 -- Gloss. on T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 24. 2.

Ft164 -- Targum Jon. &. Hieros. in <Genesis 3:24>Genesis 3:24.

Ft165 -- De vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 668.

Ft166 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 6. sect. 5.

Ft167 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 19. 1. & Mattanot Cehunah in ib. Aben Ezra in Gen 3:24.

Ft168 -- Jarchi & Baal Hatturim in loc.

Ft169 -- Ep. Paulino, Tom. III. fol. 3. F.

Ft170 -- Ut supra. (De vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 668.)

Ft171 -- R. Samuel Tzartzah, Sepher Meker Chayim, fol. 8. 3.

Ft172 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 122. 3. & Imre Binah in ib. Aben Ezra in Genesis 3:24. Kimchi Sepher Shorash. in rad. bwrb, & R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 58. 2.

Ft173 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 13. 2. & Succa, fol. 5. 2.

Ft174 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 14. 2.

Ft175 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 32. 2. Bava Kama, fol. 96. 2.

Ft176 -- De Cherubim, p. 112. de Profugis, p. 465. & de Vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 669.

Ft177 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 99. 1. & 122. 4.

Ft178 -- Sopher Shorash. rad. rpk.

Ft179 -- Maimon. Biath Hamikdash, c. 2. sect. 1, 2.

Ft180 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 2.

Ft181 -- Maimon & Bartenora in ib.

Ft182 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 3.

Ft183 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 32. 1.

Ft184 -- T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 42. 4. & 43. 1. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 86. 1.

Ft185 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect 7. fol. 188. 4. Maimon. Biath Hamikdash, c. 2. sect. 3. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 303.

Ft186 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misna Celim, c. 1. sect. 9.

Ft187 -- De Legatione ad Caium, p. 1035.

Ft188 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 43. 3. & Imre Binah in ib.

Ft189 -- Arcadica, sive 50:8. p. 531.

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Ft195 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 17. 4. & T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 152. 2.

Ft196 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 19. 1. Maimon & Bartenora in Misn. Moed Katon, c. 3. sect. 3. & in Bava Metzia, c. 1. sect. 7. & in Bava Bathra, c. 8. sect. 6.

Ft197 -- Cohen de Lara Ir David, p. 30.

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Ft199 -- lb. Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 13.

Ft200 -- Antiq. 50:3. c. 8. sect. 6.

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Ft202 -- Reland. Hebrews Antiqu. par. 3. c. 2. sect. 8.

Ft203 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 5. sect. 4. & c. 7. sect. 8.

Ft204 -- Seder Tephillot, Ed. Amstelod. fol. 2. 1.

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Ft206 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 107. 1.

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Ft208 -- T. Hieros, Megilla, fol. 73. 4.

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Ft210 -- Jarchi in Deuteronomy 18:5. Maimon. Biath Hamikdash, c. 5. sect. 16.

Ft211 -- Misn. Taanith, c. 4. sect. 2.

Ft212 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 153. 1.

Ft213 -- R. Abendana Not. in Miclol Yophi in Psal. lxxii. 20.

Ft214 -- Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 14. Jarchi in <1260>Exodus 26:1. Kimchi in Sepher Shorash. rad. rzç.

Ft215 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 3. Vid. Philo de Victimas Offerent. p. 848.

Ft216 -- T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 17. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Teshuba, c. 3. sect. 6, 11.

Ft217 -- Alex. ab. Alexand. Genial. Dier. 50:2. c. 13.

Ft218 -- In Hab. 2:4.

Ft219 -- In ib.

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Ft221 -- De Abrahamo, p. 387.

Ft222 -- Misn. Oketzim, c. 3. sect. 12. Targum Jon. in <1280>Exodus 28:30. Kettoreth Hassamim in Targum Jon. in Genesis fol. 4. 4. Lex. Cabel. p. 60, 61.

Ft223 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2. Yalkut, par. 2. fol. 50. 4.

Ft224 -- De Opificio, p. 39.

Ft225 -- Targum Oak. in <5327>Deuteronomy 33:27. & Ben Uzziel in <2813>Isaiah 48:13.

Ft226 -- De Opificio, p. 4. & Leg. Alleg. 50:1. p. 44.

Ft227 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 1. Kettoreth Hassamim in Targ. Jon in Genesis fol. 5. 1, 2.

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Ft231 -- In Tosaphta in T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 16. 2. & in not. ad triplex Targum in <0524>Genesis 5:24. Ed. Hanov.

Ft232 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 25. fol. 21. 3.

Ft233 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 44. 2. 3. Jarchi in <0524>Genesis 5:24. Wisd. c. 4:11, 12, 13, 14.

Ft234 -- Jarchi in <01201>Genesis 12:1.

Ft235 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 60. fol. 52. 3.

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Ft237 -- Laert. in Vit. Anaxag. p. 92.

Ft238 -- De Agricultura, p. 196. Vid. ib. de Confus. Ling. p. 331.

Ft239 -- Targum in Cant. 7:8. Pirke Eliezer, c. 26. & c. 31. Maimon. Jarchi & Bartenora in Misn. Abot, c. 5. sect. 3.

Ft240 -- Antiqu. 50:1. c. 13. sect. 2.

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Ft242 -- Targum Jon. in <01201>Genesis 22:1.

Ft243 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 68. 2. & 74. 4. & 76. 2. Targ. Hieros. in <02142>Exodus 12:42. Pirke Eliezer, c. 31, Juchasin, fol. 9. 1. Prefat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 40. 2. Seder Olam Rabba, c. 1. p. 3. Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 3. 1.

Ft244 -- In <01204>Genesis 22:4.

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Ft247 -- Onkelos, Jonathan & Jerusalem in <01473>Genesis 47:31.

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Ft255 -- Jarchi & Kimchi in ver. 15.

Ft256 -- R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 24. 1.

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Ft264 -- De Confusione Ling. p. 339.

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Ft281 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 62. 1.

Ft282 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 12.

Ft283 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 6. 2. & Gloss. in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 71. 2.

Ft284 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 153. 1, 2.

Ft285 -- Cosri, Orat. 1. fol. 35. 1.

Ft286 -- Targum Jon. ben Uzziel in (01259)Genesis 25:29.

Ft287 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. I. fol. 89. 3. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 2.

Ft288 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 27. 1.

Ft289 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 26. 3.

Ft290 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 63. fol. 56. 2.

Ft291 -- Targum Hieros. & Jon. in Genesis 25. 34. Bereshit Rabba, ib.

Ft292 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 26. 4. & 27. 1.

Ft293 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 5. sect. 2.

Ft294 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 88. 2. Yalkut, 2. par. 2. fol. 92.

Ft295 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 4. 2.

Ft296 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 84. 4.

Ft297 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 69. 4.

Ft298 -- Vid. Philostrat. Vita Apollen. 50:8. c. 7.

Ft299 -- T. Hieros. Roshhashanah, fol. 57. 1. & T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 16. 2. Derech Eretz, fol. 19. 4.

Ft300 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 28. 2. & 29. 1. & 39. 3. T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 18. 2. & Roshbahanah, fol. 4. 1. Pesachim, fol. 8. 1. 2.

Ft301 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 6. 2. & Avoda Zora, fol. 4. 1.

Ft302 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 21. 4.

Ft303 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 35. 3. & 51. 1. & in Exodus fol. 91. 1. & in Leviticus fol. 11. 1.

Ft304 -- Lexic. Cabalist, p. 111.

Ft305 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 3. 3.

Ft306 -- R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 18, 4.

Ft307 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 127. 1.

Ft308 -- T. Bab. Sota. fol. 4. 2.

Ft309 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 69. fol. 61. 4. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 35. fol. 175. 2. Yalkut, par. 2. fol. 103. 2.

Ft310 -- In Misn. Gittin, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft311 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 2. 1. & 4. 1. Ed. Basil. fol. 6. 2. & 7. 1. Ed. Amstelod. Zehar in Exodus fol. 35. 4. Maimonides in Misn. Succa, c. 4. sect. 5.

Ft312 -- Smith de Moribus Turc. p. 40.

Ft313 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 116. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 188. 3. 4. Maimon. Beth Habbechira, c. 7. sect. 11.

Ft314 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 10. sect. 3.

Ft315 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 153. 1. & sect 27. fol. 168. 4.

Ft316 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 49. 2.

Ft317 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 135. 1. & T. Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 9. 1.

Ft318 -- Apud Aul. Gell. Noct. Attic. 50:11. c. 1. Vid. Apollodor. de Orig. Deorum, 50:2. p. 101.

Ft319 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 67. fol. 59. 4. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 56. 2. R. Sol. Jarchi in (01Z79)Genesis 27:39.

Ft320 -- lsidor. Hispal. Origin. 50:14. c. 4.

Ft321 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 1. 50:2. c. 2. p. 17. cent. 2. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 6.

JAMES

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JAMES

This epistle is called “general”, because not written to any particular person, as the epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon are; nor to any particular churches, as the epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, etc. but to the believing Jews in general, wherever they were. The author of it is James; and whereas there were two of this name, who were the apostles of Christ; some have thought it was written by one, and some by another: some think it was written by James the son of Zebedee, and brother of John, which is favoured by the Syriac version, which to this epistle, and the following, premises these words;

> “the three epistles of the three apostles, before whose eyes our Lord transfigured himself, that is, James, and Peter, and John.”

Now, that James, who was present at the transfiguration of Christ, was James the son of Zebedee: but neither the time, nor occasion, nor matter of this epistle, seem to agree with him, for he was put to death by Herod, about the year 44, (<44120>Acts 12:1,2), whereas this epistle was written, as some think, about the year 60, or as others, 63; and it seems pretty manifest that it must be written after the Gospel had been spread in the Gentile world, and was received by the Jews, who were scattered abroad in it; and after many hypocrites had crept into the churches, and many false teachers, and vain boasters, and wicked men, had arisen among them: it seems therefore more agreeable to ascribe this epistle to James, the son of Alphaeus, sometimes called the brother of our Lord, and who was present at the assembly at Jerusalem, when the necessity of the Gentiles' circumcision was debated, (<44150>Acts 15:1-27) and is the same whom Eusebius [f1] calls James the just, and Oblias; and who seems to have resided at Jerusalem, and to have been the bishop, or overseer of the church there; and therefore in character writes this epistle to the Jews, in the several parts of the world: nor need there be any doubt of the authenticity of it. Eusebius indeed says [f2], that it had been accounted spurious by some, and that not many of the ancient writers had made mention of it: but he himself says, that it was publicly read in most churches; and certain it is, that some

very early writers have respect unto it. Irenaeus [f3] manifestly refers to it, and so does Tertullian [f4]; and it is expressly mentioned by Origen [f5] among the canonical books of Scripture. The objections against it are of no weight, which are taken from the seeming disagreement between the Apostle Paul, and the writer of this epistle, concerning the doctrine of justification; and from his calling the law the perfect law of liberty, and insisting so much on the doctrine of works; all which will be seen to be agreeable to the other parts of Scripture, and easily reconciled with them; nor is there anything in it unworthy of an apostle and an inspired writer. The occasion of it seems to be partly the troubles and persecutions which attended the saints for the sake of Christ and the Gospel; and the design of it is to encourage them to patience under them, and to wait and hope for the speedy coming of Christ; and partly the evil practices of some that boasted of their faith and knowledge, though they lived very dissolute lives: and the view of the apostle is to show, that faith, without the fruits of righteousness, is not genuine; and he very largely in it exhorts to several duties very becoming Christians, and inveighs against several vices, which were scandalous to them.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO JAMES 1

In this chapter, after the inscription and salutation, the apostle instructs the saints he writes to, how to behave under afflictions, and in every state of life; teaches them not to impute their sins to God, but to themselves; directs them in hearing the word, and cautions against self-deception in religion. The inscription and salutation are in (⁵⁹⁰⁰¹James 1:1) in which the author of the epistle is described by his name and office; and the persons it is written to, by the tribes of Israel they belonged to, and by the condition in which they were scattered about in the world, to whom the apostle wishes all grace. And as they were in an afflicted state, he begins with an exhortation to rejoice in their afflictions; because hereby faith was tried, and that produced patience, and patience being perfect, is the way to be complete, and want nothing, (⁵⁹⁰⁰²James 1:2-4), but if any wanted wisdom, how to behave under such exercises, he advises to apply to God for it, from whom it may be expected, since he is the giver of it, and gives it to all, and that liberally, and does not upbraid with the former conduct, (⁵⁹⁰⁰⁵James 1:5) but then such should ask in faith, or otherwise it cannot be thought they should receive, and besides would justly deserve the characters of fluctuating and unstable persons, (⁵⁹⁰⁰⁶James 1:6-8). And the exhortations the apostle had given, he observes, suited all sorts of persons, poor and rich; the one who is exalted amidst his poverty, and the other who is mean, and frail, and mortal, amidst all his riches; which is illustrated by the flower of the grass falling off and perishing, (⁵⁹⁰⁰⁹James 1:9-11). And upon the whole, he concludes the blessedness of the man that endures affliction patiently, since a crown of life is promised him, and he will receive it, (⁵⁹⁰¹²James 1:12) and from external temptations or afflictions, the apostle proceeds to internal ones, temptations to sin; and denies them to be of God, and imputes them to the lusts of men, and gives a very accurate account of the beginning, progress, and finishing of sin by man; and observes, that to place sin to the account of God, and not man, is a very great error, (James 1:13-16), which he proves from the pure and holy nature of God; and from the good and perfect gifts, which all, and only, come from him; and instances in regeneration, which is of his will, and by

his word, and is the beginning and spring of all good in man, (⁵⁹17James 1:17,18). And having mentioned the word, as a means of that grace, he gives some rules about hearing it; that it should be heard with eagerness, and received with meekness; and whatsoever is contrary thereunto should be avoided; as a forwardness to be teachers of it: wrath and anger at the doctrines of it, which do not work the righteousness of God; and all impurity and naughtiness of the mind, which must render it inattentive to it; and the rather all this should be regarded, since the word is the ingrafted word, and able to save the souls of men, (⁵⁹19James 1:19-21) and particular care should be had, that what is heard is put in practice, or otherwise it will be a self-deception; and such will be like a man that beholds his face in a glass goes away, and forgets what sort of a man he is; whereas, if a man looks into the glass of the Gospel hears the word attentively, remembers what he hears, and continues in it, he finds many blessed advantages in so doing, (⁵⁹22James 1:22-25) and then the apostle distinguishes between a vain religion, and a pure one; a vain religion is only a seeming one, and may be known to be so by a man's having no guard upon his tongue; wherefore if he thinks himself religious, he is mistaken and his heart deceived, (⁵⁹26James 1:26) but pure and undefiled religion, which is so in the sight of God, shows itself in a holy life and conversation in general, and particularly in visiting and assisting widows and orphans in distress, (⁵⁹27James 1:27).

Ver. 1. *James, a servant of God*, etc.] That is, of God the Father; not by creation only, as every man is; nor merely by calling grace, as is every regenerate person; but by office, as a preacher of the Gospel, being one that served God in the Gospel of his Son, and was an apostle of Christ; nor is this any sufficient objection to his being one, since others of the apostles so style themselves:

and of the Lord Jesus Christ; the Ethiopic version reads this in connection with the former clause, without the copulative “and”, “James, the servant of God, our Lord Jesus Christ”: and so some consider the copulative as explanative of who is meant by God, even the Lord Jesus Christ: but it seems best to understand them as distinct; and that this apostle was not only the servant of God the Father, but of his Son Jesus Christ, and that in the same sense, referring to his office as an apostle of Christ, and minister of the word:

to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad; by whom are meant believing Jews, who were of the several tribes of Israel, and which were in number “twelve”, according to the number and names of the twelve patriarchs, the sons of Jacob; and these were not the Christian Jews, who were scattered abroad upon the persecution raised at the death of Stephen, (<44801>Acts 8:1,4 11:19) but they were the posterity of those who had been dispersed in former captivities, by the Assyrians and others, and who remained in the several countries whither they were carried, and never returned. The Jews say [f6], that the ten tribes will never return, and that they will have no part nor portion in the world to come; but these the Gospel met with in their dispersion, and by it they were effectually called and converted, and are the same that Peter writes to, (<60101>1 Peter 1:1,2) (<61001>2 Peter 1:1 3:1). And thus we read of an hundred and forty and four thousand sealed of all the tribes of Israel, (<66704>Revelation 7:4) and to these the apostle here sends greeting; that is, his Christian salutation, wishing them all happiness and prosperity, in soul and body, for time and eternity; and it includes all that grace, mercy, and peace, mentioned in the usual forms of salutation by the other apostles. The same form is used in (<44523>Acts 15:23) and since it was James that gave the advice there, which the rest of the apostles and elders came into, it is highly probable that the epistles sent to the Gentiles were dictated by him; and the likeness of the form of salutation may confirm his being the writer of this epistle.

Ver. 2. *My brethren*, etc.] Not only according to the flesh, he being a Jew as they were; but in a spiritual sense, they being born again of the same grace, belonging to the same family and household of faith, and having the same Father, and being all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus:

count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; not the temptations of Satan, or temptations to sin; for these cannot be matter of joy, but grief; these are fiery darts, and give a great deal of uneasiness and trouble; but afflictions and persecutions for the sake of the Gospel, which are so called here and elsewhere, because they are trials of the faith of God's people, and of other graces of the Spirit of God. God by these tempts his people, as he did Abraham, when he called him to sacrifice his son; he thereby tried his faith, fear, love, and obedience; so by afflictions, God tries the graces of his people; not that he might know them, for he is not ignorant of them, but that they might be made manifest to others; and these are “divers”: many are the afflictions of the righteous; through much tribulation they must enter the kingdom; it is a great fight of afflictions which they endure, as

these believers did; their trials came from different quarters; they were persecuted by their countrymen the Jews, and were distressed by the Gentiles, among whom they lived; and their indignities and reproaches were many; and their sufferings of different sorts, as confiscation of goods, imprisonment of body, banishment, scourgings, and death in various shapes: and these they "fall" into; not by chance, nor altogether at an unawares, or unexpectedly; but they fell into them through the wickedness and malice of their enemies, and did not bring them upon themselves through any crime or enormity they were guilty of: and when this was their case, the apostle exhorts them to count it all joy, or matter of joy, of exceeding great joy, even of the greatest joy; not that these afflictions were joyous in themselves, but in their circumstances, effects, and consequences; as they tried, and exercised, and improved the graces of the Spirit, and worked for their good, spiritual and eternal, and produced in them the peaceable fruit of righteousness; and as they were attended with the presence and Spirit of God, and of glory; and as they made for, and issued in the glory of God; and because of that great reward in heaven which would follow them; (see <40 5:11,12 <60 4:14 Matthew 5:11,12 1 Peter 4:14). The Jews have a saying [f7],

> "whoever rejoices in afflictions that come upon him, brings salvation to the world."

Ver. 3. *Knowing this*, etc.] By experience; as everyone that is trained up in the school of affliction does: the apostle appeals to the saints, to whom he writes, for the truth of what he was about to say; and which he gives as a reason why they should rejoice in afflictions, because it is a known fact,

that the trying of your faith worketh patience: two things afflictions do when sanctified; one is, they try faith, the truth of it, and make it appear to be true, genuine, and precious, like gold tried in the fire; (see <60 1:6,7 1 Peter 1:6,7) and the other is, that they produce patience: saints being inured to afflictions, become by degrees more patient under them; whence it is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth: this phrase may be understood, both of faith, which being tried by afflictions, produces patience; for where the one is in exercise, the other is also, and both are necessary under afflictive providences; and also of afflictions, which try faith, and being sanctified by the Spirit of God, work patience, which is a fruit of the Spirit; for otherwise the effect of them is impatience; and this agrees with the Apostle Paul in (<45 5:3,4 Romans 5:3,4).

Ver. 4. *But let patience have her perfect work*, etc.] Or effect; or be brought unto perfection; which may denote both the sincerity and continuance of it unto the end, with constancy: patience may be said to be perfect, when it appears to be real and sincere, and not dissembled; for as there may be a feigned faith, a dissembled love, and an hypocritical hope, so likewise a mere show of patience: and certain it is, that as there is a patience which is commendable, there is one that is not, (612201 Peter 2:20). And this phrase may also design the constant exercise of this grace to the end; for he that endures, or is patient, and continues so unto the end, shall be saved, and enjoy that perfection of glory and happiness expressed in the next clause:

that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing; which cannot be understood of the saints in this present life; only as they are in Christ, and in a comparative sense; or as perfection may denote sincerity, and uprightness; or of a perfection of parts, but not of degrees; for the saints are very imperfect in themselves, and are very far from being complete in soul, body, and spirit; and want many things, and are wanting in many things, both in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty; but when patience has had its perfect work, and has been tried to the uttermost, and is found right, and has held out to the end; then shall the saints be perfect in holiness and happiness, and be entire, whole, and complete; as they will be in the resurrection morn, both in soul and body, and will want no good thing, and will be free from every sorrow, nor will they be deficient in any service; and to this sense agrees (59012James 1:12).

Ver. 5. *If any of you lack wisdom*, etc.] This shows that the perfection before spoken of is not to be understood as in this life, since the apostle immediately supposes lack of wisdom in them; for this is not said in a form of doubting, whether they wanted it or not, but rather as supposing, and taking it for granted that they did; and in the first, and primary sense of the words, it intends wisdom to behave aright under temptations or afflictions. Saints often want wisdom to consider God as the author of them, and not look upon them as matters of chance, or impute them merely to second causes; but to regard them as coming from the hand of God, and as his hand upon them, as Job did; who does not ascribe his calamities to the thieving Chaldeans and Sabeans, to the boisterous wind, and to the malice of Satan, but to God: they want wisdom to observe the sovereignty of God in them, and bow unto it, and be still, and know that he is God, who does all things well and wisely; and likewise to see and know that all are in love,

and in very faithfulness, and for good; as well as to see his name, to hear his rod, and him that has appointed it, his voice in it, his mind and meaning, and what he designs by it; as likewise to learn the useful lessons under it, and particularly to take the cross well, to bear it patiently, and even to count it all joy, and reckon it to be right, necessary, and useful: it requires much wisdom to learn all this, and act up to it. Moreover, this may be applied to all other cases, in which wisdom is wanted; men want wisdom to conduct them in the common affairs of life, and especially the people of God; for the children of the world are wiser in their generation, for themselves and posterity, and in the management of worldly affairs, than the children of light; and also to observe the providences of God, and the footsteps of Providence, and to follow them; and likewise to make a right use of providences, and behave suitably under them, and not be lifted up too much in prosperity, nor be cast down, and too much distressed in adversity; but to consider, that the one is set against the other, and both work together for good. Saints have need of wisdom in things spiritual; they want more grace, which is the truest wisdom, and a larger knowledge of the Gospel, which is the wisdom of God, the hidden wisdom of God; and they lack wisdom to know how to walk towards them that are without, and towards them that are within, so as becomes the Gospel of Christ: and as this is more or less the case of everyone

let him ask of God wisdom; of God the Father, who is the only wise God, who has abounded in creation, in providence, and, above all, in redemption and grace, in all wisdom and prudence; and of his Son Jesus Christ, who is the wisdom of God, and has all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him; and of the Spirit of God, who is a Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and all divine things:

that giveth to all men liberally; God is the giver of all good things, in nature, providence, and grace; every good and perfect gift comes from him, and therefore he, and he only, should be applied unto: and he gives to "all men" the bounties of his providence; and to all that ask, and call upon him in sincerity, the riches of his grace; even to Jews and Gentiles, high and low, rich and poor, greater or lesser sinners; all which he gives "liberally", readily, and at once, freely and cheerfully, and largely and abundantly; not grudgingly, sparingly, and with a strait hand, but with an open one, and in a very extensive manner.

And upbraideth not; with former sins and transgressions, with former miscarriages and misconduct; or with former kindnesses, suggesting that he had given largely already, and his favours had been despised or abused; or he had been treated with ingratitude and neglect; in which manner sometimes men put off those that apply unto them, but so does not God; wherefore every word here used is encouraging to go to God for wisdom: yea, it follows,

and it shall be given him; God has said it, Christ has promised it, and the apostle might, with certainty, say it after them, and all experience confirms the truths of it; (see <4007>Matthew 7:7,8 <4314>John 14:13,14,16,23).

Ver. 6. *But let him ask in faith*, etc.] Not only in the faith of the divine Being that God is; but in the faith of the promises he has made; and in the faith of his power and faithfulness to perform them; and in the faith of this, that whatever is asked, according to the will of God, and is for his glory, and his people's good, shall be given.

Nothing wavering; about the thing asked for, whether it is right or no to ask for it; for that should be settled before it is asked for; nor about the power of God to do it; nor about his will, in things he has declared he will do; nor about his faithfulness to his promises; nor at all questioning but what is proper, suitable, and convenient, will be given in God's own time and way.

For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed; he is troubled, restless, unquiet, and impatient; and he is fickle, inconstant, unstable, and unsettled; and is easily carried away with every wind of doctrine, temptation, and lust.

Ver. 7. *For let not that man think*, etc.] Imagine, conclude, or please himself with such thoughts,

that he shall receive anything from the Lord; wisdom, or anything else, he is seeking after; for wanting faith, he has nothing to receive with; faith is the grace, which receives the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and all grace from him; which receives a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, adoption of children, and even the everlasting inheritance, at least, the right unto it; wherefore those who have not faith, as the wavering man, cannot receive any thing.

Ver. 8. *A double minded man*, etc.] A man of two souls, or of a double heart, that speaks and asks with an heart, and an heart, as in (Psalm 12:2) who halts between two opinions, and is at an uncertainty what to do or say, and is undetermined what to ask for; or who is not sincere and upright in his requests, who asks for one thing, and means another, and asks amiss, and with an ill design; does not call upon God in truth, and in the sincerity of his soul; draws nigh to him with his mouth, and honours him with his lips, but his heart is far from him. Such an one is

unstable in all his ways; he is confused in his mind; restless in his thoughts, unsettled in his designs and intentions; inconstant in his petitions; uncertain in his notions and opinion of things; and very variable in his actions, and especially in matters of religion; he is always changing, and never at a point, but at a continual uncertainty, both in a way of thinking and doing: he never continues long either in an opinion, or in a practice, but is ever shifting and moving.

Ver. 9. *Let the brother of low degree*, etc.] By "the brother" is meant, not one in a natural, but in a spiritual relation; one of Christ's brethren, and who is of that family that is named of him; of the household of faith, and is in church communion: and whereas he is said to be of "low degree", or "humble", this regards not the affection of his mind, or his conduct and deportment, he being meek and lowly, and clothed with humility, as every brother is, or ought to be; but his outward state and condition, being, as to the things of this world, poor, and mean in his outward circumstances, and so humbled and afflicted. This appears from the rich man, who, in the next verse, is opposed unto him, and distinguished from him; (see Psalm 62:9) such an one is advised to

rejoice in that he is exalted; or to "glory in his exaltation"; in that high estate, to which he is advanced; for a person may be very low and mean, as to his worldly circumstances, and yet be very high, and greatly exalted in a spiritual sense: and this height of honour and grandeur, of which he may boast and glory, amidst his outward poverty, lies in his high birth and descent, being born from above, and of God, and belonging to his family; in being an adopted Son of God, and so an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ, and of the heavenly inheritance and kingdom; in the present riches of grace he is possessed of, as justifying, pardoning, and sanctifying grace; and in the high titles he bears, as besides the new name, the name better than that of sons and daughters of the greatest potentate, even that

of a Son of the Lord God Almighty, his being a King, and a priest unto God, and for whom a kingdom, crown, and throne are prepared; and also in the company he daily keeps, and is admitted to, as of God, and Christ, and the holy angels: and this height of honour have all the saints, be they ever so poor in this world, who can vie with the greatest of princes for sublimity and grandeur.

Ver. 10. *But the rich, in that he is made low*, etc.] That is, the rich brother; for there were rich men in the churches in those times, and which James often takes notice of in this epistle. Such an one should rejoice or glory in his lowness, or low estate; in the consideration of the low estate, out of which he was raised, by the good providence of God, and was not owing to any merit of his; and in the low estate into which he may be at present reduced, through the violence of persecution being stripped of all his riches for Christ's sake, of which he might make his boast, and count it his greatest glory; or in that low estate he may quickly expect he shall be brought into, either in the above manner, or by some calamity or another, and at least by death, which will put him upon a level with others: or this may have respect to the temper of his mind, which he has, through the grace of God, and the station he is in, in the church of God, being a brother, and no more than a brother, and upon an equal foot with the meanest member in it; and which yet is matter of rejoicing, that he is one, and that he is so blessed with the grace of humility, as not to lift up himself above others, not to mind high things, but to condescend to men of low estate; and such a deportment the apostle exhorts rich saints unto, from the consideration of the instability and inconstancy of worldly riches.

Because, as the flower of the grass he shall pass away; shortly, and suddenly; either he himself by death, or his riches at death, or before, and therefore are not to be gloried in; nor should the possessors of them be proud and haughty and elate themselves with them, but should behave humbly and modestly to their fellow creatures and Christians, as knowing that in a short time they will all be upon a par, or in an equal state; (see <1842>Job 14:2 <1915>Psalm 90:5,6 102:11 103:15,16). The metaphor here used is enlarged upon in the following verse, for the further illustration of the fickleness, perishing, and transitory nature of earthly enjoyments.

Ver. 11. *For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat*, etc.] As it is about the middle of the day, when it shines in its full strength, and its heat

is very great and scorching, especially in the summer season, and in hot climates:

but it withereth the grass; strikes it with heat, causes it to shrivel, and dries it up;

and the flower thereof falleth; drops off from it to the ground:

and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth; its form and colour, its glory and beauty, which were pleasant to the eye, are lost, and no more to be recovered. This shows, that earthly riches, like the flower of the field, have an outward show and glory in them, which attract the mind, and fix an attention to them for a while; they are gay and glittering, and look lovely, are pleasant to behold, and desirable to enjoy; but when the sun of persecution, or any other outward calamity arises, they are quickly destroyed, and are no more.

So also shall the rich man fade away in his ways; riches are uncertain things now, they often make themselves wings and flee away; they are things that are not, that are not solid and substantial they are a vain show; they sometimes fade away in a man's lifetime, before he dies; and he fades away, and comes to decay, amidst all the ways and means, designs and schemes, he forms and pursues, and all the actions and business he does; and if not, when he fades away, and dies amidst all his riches, his glory does not descend after him, but falls off from him, as the flower of the field before the heat of the sun.

Ver. 12. *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation*, etc.] Or affliction, which is designed by temptation, as in (ⓈJAMES 1:2James 1:2) and the man that endures it is he that so bears it, and bears up under it, as not to be offended at it, and stumble in the ways of Christ, and fall away from the truth, and a profession of it, as temporary believers in a time of temptation do; but manfully and bravely stands up under it, and does not sink under the weight of it, or faint on account of it; and endures afflictions in such manner as not to murmur and repine at them, but is quiet and still, and bears them patiently and constantly, and so endures to the end. Such expect afflictions, and when they come, they are not moved by them, but, notwithstanding them, continue in the ways and work of the Lord; and such are happy persons; they are happy now, and shall be hereafter. Saints are happy under afflictions, and even on account of them, for they are tokens of God's love to them, and evidences of their sonship; and especially they are happy

under them, when they enjoy the presence of God in them, when they are instructive to them, and are saner, lifted, when they learn from them the useful lessons of faith, patience, humility, and resignation to the will of God, and are made more partakers of his holiness; and they will be happy hereafter, as follows. The Jews have a saying [f8] much like this,

> "blessed" is the man, wnwysnb dmw[awhç, "who stands in his temptation", for there is no creature whom the holy blessed God does not tempt."

For when he is tried; by the fire of afflictions, as gold is tried in the fire; when God hereby has tried what is in his heart, and the truth of grace in him, as faith, love, patience, etc. and has purged away his dross and tin, and has refined and purified him, as gold and silver are refined and purified in the furnace, or refining pot: and when being thus tried and proved, and found genuine, and comes forth as gold, after this state of temptation and affliction is over,

he shall receive the crown of life, eternal happiness, called a "crown", because of the glory of it, which will be both upon the bodies and souls of believers to all eternity; and as suitable to their character, they being kings, and having a kingdom and thrones prepared for them; and in allusion to the crown that was given to the conquerors in the Olympic games: and it is called a "crown of life", because it is for life, which an earthly crown is not always; and because it lies in eternal life, and is an everlasting crown; it is a crown of glory that fadeth not away, an incorruptible one; and differs from the corruptible crown given to the victors in the above mentioned games, which were made of fading herbs, and leaves of trees: and now the man that bears up under afflictions, and holds out unto the end, shall have this crown put upon him, and he shall "receive it"; not as merited by him, by his works or sufferings, for neither of them are worthy to be compared or mentioned with this crown of life and glory; but as the free gift of God, as it will be given him by the righteous Judge, as a reward of grace, and not of debt:

which the Lord hath promised to them that love him; either the Lord Jesus Christ, as in (<40510>Matthew 5:10,12 10:22) or else God the Father; the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, "God"; and the Alexandrian copy leaves out the word "Lord", which may be supplied by the word God; (see <590205>James 2:5) and this promise he made before the world was, who cannot lie, nor deceive, and who is able to perform, and is

faithful, and will never suffer his faithfulness to fail; so that this happiness is certain, and may be depended upon: besides, the promise of this crown of life is in Christ, where all the promises are yea and amen; yea, the crown itself is in his hands, where it lies safe and secure for “them that love him”; either the Lord Jesus Christ, his person, his people, his truths, and ordinances, and his glorious appearing, (2 Timothy 4:8) or God the Father; not that their love is the cause of this crown of life, or eternal life, for then it would not be the free gift of God, as it is said to be; nor of the promise of it, for that was made before the world was, and when they had no love unto him; but this phrase is descriptive of the persons to whom God manifests his love now, admits to near communion and fellowship with himself, makes all things, even their afflictions, to work for their good, and whom he will cause to inherit substance, and will fill their treasures.

Ver. 13. *Let no man say when he is tempted*, etc.] Here the apostle uses the word “tempted”, in another sense than he did before. Before he speaks of temptations, as matter of joy and boasting, here of temptations, which are criminal, and issue in shame and death; the temptations he before makes mention of, being patiently endured, denominate men happy, but here such are designed, which are to be deprecated, and watched against; before he treats of temptations, which were the means of trying and exercising grace, and of purging away the dross of sin and corruption, but here of temptations to sin, and which are in themselves sinful; before he discourses of temptations in which God was concerned; but here of temptations which he removes from him, and denies of him, as being unworthy of him: wherefore, when any man is tempted to sin, whether when under adversity, or in prosperity, let him not say,

I am tempted of God; for God is holy, and without iniquity, nor does he delight in sin, but hates and abhors it; nor can he commit it, it being contrary to his nature, and the perfections of it; whereas no one can tempt another to sin, unless he is sinful himself, and delights in sin, and in those that commit it, nor without committing it himself; and yet sinful men are apt to charge God with their sins, and temptations to them, in imitation of their first parent, Adam, when fallen, (Genesis 3:12) who, to excuse himself, lays the blame upon the woman, and ultimately upon God, who gave her to him; and suggests, that if it had not been for the woman, he should not have ate of the forbidden fruit, nor should he have had any temptation to it, had not God given him the woman to be with him, and therefore it was his fault; and in this sad manner do his sons and daughters

reason, who, when, through affliction, they murmur against God, distrust his providence, or forsake his ways, say, if he had not laid his hand upon them, or suffered such afflictions to befall them, they had not been guilty of such sin: he himself is the occasion of them; but let no man talk at this wicked rate,

for God cannot be tempted with evil; or "evils", He was tempted by the Israelites at Massah and Meribah, from which those places had their names, who by their murmuring, distrust and unbelief, proved and tried his patience and his power; and so he may be, and has been tempted by others in a like way; he may be tempted by evil men, and with evil things, but he cannot be tempted "to evil", as the Ethiopic version renders it; he is proof against all such temptations: he cannot be tempted by anything in himself, who is pure and holy, or by any creature or thing without him, to do any sinful action:

neither tempteth he any man; that is, to sin; he tempted Abraham, to try his faith, love, and obedience to him; he tempted the Israelites in the wilderness, to try them and humble them, and prove what was in their hearts; and he tempted Job, and tried his faith and patience; and so he tempts and tries all his righteous ones, by afflictions, more or less: but he never tempts or solicits them to sin; temptations to sin come from another quarter, as follows.

Ver. 14. *But every man is tempted*, etc.] To sin, and he falls in with the temptation, and by it,

when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed; the metaphor is taken either from fishes, who are enticed by the bait, and drawn out by the hook; or from a lascivious woman, who meeting with a young man, entices him, and draws him away after her to commit iniquity with her: by "lust" is meant the principle of corrupt nature, which has its residence in the heart of man; is natural and hereditary to him, and therefore is called his own; he is conceived and shapen in it; he brings it into the world with him, and it continues in him, and is called his own heart's lust, (<6024>Romans 1:24). Now this meeting with some bait, which entices and draws it out, or with some external object, which promises pleasure or profit, a man is allured, and ensnared, and drawn away by it, and so the temptation begins: thus, for instance, covetousness was the predominant lust in Judas; this meeting with an external object, or objects, which promised him profit, he is at once enticed and drawn away to betray his Lord and master for the sake of it: so

sin often promises pleasure, though it is but an imaginary, and a short lived one; which takes with a man's own lust, and corruption within him, and so he is allured and drawn aside; and to this, and not to God, should he attribute temptation to sin.

Ver. 15. *Then when lust hath conceived*, etc.] A proposal of pleasure or profit being made, agreeable to lust, or the principle of corrupt nature, sinful man is pleased with it; and instead of resisting and rejecting the motion made, he admits of it, and receives it, and cherishes it in his mind; he dallies and plays with it; he dwells upon it in his thoughts, and hides it under his tongue, and in his heart, as a sweet morsel, and forsakes it not, but contrives ways and means how to bring it about; and this is lust's conceiving. The figure is used in (<19714>Psalm 7:14) on which Kimchi, a Jewish commentator, has this note;

> "he (the psalmist) compares the thoughts of the heart ˆwyrhl, "to a conception", and when they go out in word, this is "travail", and in work or act, this is "bringing forth"."

And so it follows here,

it bringeth forth sin; into act, not only by consenting to it, but by performing it:

and sin, when it is finished: being solicited, is agreed to, and actually committed:

bringeth forth death; as the first sin of man brought death into the world, brought a spiritual death, or moral death upon man, subjected him to a corporeal death, and made him liable to an eternal one; so every sin is deserving of death, death is the just wages of it; yea, even the motions of sin work in men to bring forth fruit unto death. Something like these several gradual steps, in which sin proceeds, is observed by the Jews, and expressed in much the like language, in allegorizing the case of Lot, and his two daughters [f9];

> "the concupiscent soul (or "lust") stirs up the evil figment, and imagines by it, and it cleaves to every evil imagination, trb[tmç, "until it conceives a little", and produces in the heart of man the evil thought, and cleaves to it; and as yet it is in his heart, and is not "finished" to do it, until this desire or lust stirs up the strength of

the body, first to cleave to the evil figment, and then h[rh µwlçt, “sin is finished”; as it is said, (Genesis 19:36).”

Ver. 16. *Do not err, my beloved brethren*.] For to make God the author of sin, or to charge him with being concerned in temptation to sin, is a very great error, a fundamental one, which strikes at the nature and being of God, and at the perfection of his holiness: it is a denying of him, and is one of those damnable errors and heresies, which bring upon men swift destruction; and therefore to be guarded against, rejected, and abhorred by all that profess any regard unto him, his name and glory.

Ver. 17. *Every good gift and every perfect gift*, etc.] Whether of nature, providence, or grace, and especially the latter; spiritual gifts given along with Christ, or spiritual blessings in him; every such gift is; as the Vulgate Latin version reads, the “best” gift; better than those which only relate to the present life: and is “perfect” such as the gifts of righteousness, remission of sins, adoption, regeneration, and eternal life. The Jews say[f10], that the good things of this world are not truly good, in comparison of the good things of the world to come, and are not bwj rwmg, “a perfect good.” And every such an one is from above; is not from a man's self, from the creature, or from below, but from heaven, and from God who dwells there:

and cometh down from the Father of lights; or author of lights; of all corporeal light; as the sun, moon, and stars; of all natural, rational, and moral light, in angels and men; of all spiritual light, or the light of grace in regenerate persons; and of eternal light, the light of glory in the spirits of just then made perfect:

with whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning: as there is in that great luminary, the sun in the firmament, which has its parallaxes, eclipses, and turnings, and casts its shadow; it rises and sets, appears and disappears every day; and it comes out of one tropic, and enters into another at certain seasons of the year: but with God, who is light itself, and in him is no darkness at all, there is no change, nor anything like it; he is changeable in his nature, perfections, purposes, promises, and gifts; wherefore he being holy, cannot turn to that which is evil; nor can he, who is the fountain of light, be the cause of darkness, or admit of any in him; and since every good and perfect gift comes from him, evil cannot proceed from him, nor can he tempt any to it.

Ver. 18. *Of his own will begat he us*, etc.] The apostle instances in one of those good and perfect gifts, regeneration; and he pitches upon a very proper and pertinent one, since this is the first gift of grace God bestows upon his people openly, and in their own persons; and is what involves other gifts, and prepares and makes meet for the gift of eternal life; and therefore may well be reckoned a "good" one, and it is also a "perfect one"; it is done at once; there are no degrees in it, as in sanctification; a man is born again, at once, and is born a perfect new man in all his parts; no one is more regenerated than another, or the same person more regenerated at one time than at another: and this comes from above; it is called a being born from above, in (<4003>John 3:3) as the words there may be rendered; and it comes from God the Father, even the Father of our Lord Jesus, as well as of all lights, (<6001>1 Peter 1:3) and who in it produces light, in darkness, and whose gifts of grace bestowed along with it are without repentance. And since this comes from him, he cannot be the author of evil, or tempt unto it. This is a settled and certain point, that all the good that is in men, and is done by them, comes from God; and all the evil that is in them, and done by them, is of themselves. This act of begetting here ascribed to God, is what is elsewhere called a begetting again, that is, regeneration; it is an implantation of new principles of light and life, grace and holiness, in men; a quickening of them, when dead in trespasses and sins; a forming of Christ in their souls; and a making them partakers of the divine nature; and this is God's act, and not man's. Earthly parents cannot beget in this sense; nor ministers of the word, not causally, but only instrumentally, as they are instruments and means, which God makes use of; neither the ministry of the word, nor the ordinance of baptism, can of themselves regenerate any; nor can a man beget himself, as not in nature, so not in grace: the nature of the thing shows it, and the impotent case of men proves it: this is God's act, and his only; (see <4001>John 1:13) and the impulsive or moving cause of it is his own will. God does not regenerate, or beget men by necessity of nature, but of his own free choice; Christ, the Son of God, is begotten of him by necessity of nature, and not as the effect of his will; he is the brightness of his glory necessarily, as the beams and rays of light are necessarily emitted by the sun; but so it is not in regeneration: nor does God regenerate men through any consideration of their will, works, and merits: nor have these any influence at all upon it; but he begets of his own free grace and favour, and of his rich and abundant mercy, and of his sovereign will and pleasure, according to his counsels

and purposes of old. And the means he makes use of, or with which he does it, is

with the word of truth; not Christ, who is the Word, and truth itself; though regeneration is sometimes ascribed to him; and this act of begetting is done by the Father, through the resurrection of Christ from the dead; but the Gospel, which is the word of truth, and truth itself, and contains nothing but truth; and by this souls are begotten and born again; (see <490113>Ephesians 1:13 <600123>1 Peter 1:23) and hence ministers of it are accounted spiritual fathers. Faith, and every other grace in regeneration, and even the Spirit himself, the Regenerator, come this way: and the end is,

that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures; either of his new creatures, and so it has respect to such, as James, and others; who received the firstfruits of the Spirit, who first hoped and trusted in Christ, and were openly in him, and converted to him before others; or of his creatures, of mankind in general, who, with the Jews, are usually called creatures; (see Gill on "<411615>Mark 16:15"), and designs those who are redeemed from among men, and are the firstfruits to God, and to the Lamb, as their regeneration makes appear: and this shows that such as are begotten again, or regenerated, are separated and distinguished from others, as the firstfruits be; and that they are preferred unto, and are more excellent than the rest of mankind, being made so by the grace of God; and that they are by regenerating grace devoted to the service of God, and are formed for his praise and glory.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore, my beloved brethren*, etc.] Since the Gospel, the word of truth, is the means and instrument which God makes use of in regeneration, and in forming people for himself:

let every man be swift to hear; not anything; not idle and unprofitable talk, or filthy and corrupt communication; but wholesome advice, good instructions, and the gracious experiences of the saints, and, above all, the word of God; to the hearing of which men should fly, as doves to their windows; should make haste, and be early in their attendance on it, as well, as constant; and receive it with all readiness, and with a sort of greediness of mind, that their souls may be profited, and God may be glorified: the phrase is Jewish; things easy and smooth, a man is ˆ[mçl ryhm, "swift to hear them [f11]: slow to speak"; against what is heard, without thoroughly weighing and considering what is said; and this may regard silence under

hearing the word, and is also a rule to be observed in private conversation: or the sense may be, be content to be hearers of the word, and not forward to be preachers of it; and if called to that work, think before you speak, meditate on the word, and study to be approved to God and men. Silence is not only highly commended by the Pythagoreans, among whom it was enjoined their disciples five years [f12]; but also by the Jews: they say, nothing is better for the body than silence; that if a word is worth one shekel, silence is worth two, or worth a precious stone; that it is the spice of speech, and the chief of all spices; that it is the hedge of wisdom; hence it is the advice of Shammai; "say little, and do much" [f13]: and they cry up, as a very excellent precept, "be silent, and hear"; and as containing more than persons are aware of [f14]:

slow to wrath; in hearing; when admonitions and reproofs are given, sin is exposed, and vice corrected, and the distinguishing doctrines of grace, are preached; which are apt to fill natural men with wrath, and which must greatly hinder the usefulness of the word; (see <4028>Luke 4:28). This is omitted in the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 20. *For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*.] This is so far from engaging persons to do that which is right and acceptable in the sight of God, that it puts them upon doing that which is evil. The Alexandrian copy reads, "with the wrath of men do not work the righteousness of God"; do not attend upon the word and ordinances of God with a wrathful spirit. Compare, with this, (<5408>1 Timothy 2:8).

Ver. 21. *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness*, etc.] All manner of filthiness, both of flesh and spirit; all pride, vanity, wrath, malice, and evil speaking, under hearing the word: the allusion seems to be to a boiling pot, which casts up scum and filth, which must be taken off: and such is the spirit of wrathful men; it throws up the filth of haughtiness and pride, of anger, wrath, and wickedness, which must be taken off, and laid aside; or the word will not be heard to any profit, or advantage:

and superfluity of naughtiness, or "malice"; the abundance and overflow of it, which arises from such an evil heart, where wrath prevails, and governs: (see <6001>1 Peter 2:1). There seems to be an allusion to the removing of the superfluous foreskin of the flesh, in circumcision, typical

of the foreskin of the heart, spoken of in (Jeremiah 4:4) which the Targum, in that place, calls ˆwkbl [çr, “the wickedness”, or “naughtiness of your hearts” to be removed:

and receive with meekness the ingrafted word; which becomes so when it is received; when it is put into the heart by the Spirit of God, and is mixed with faith by them that hear it; so that it is, as it were, incorporated into them, and becomes natural to them, which before was not; and taking deep root in them, brings forth much fruit: and where it comes with power, it reduces every high thought into the obedience of Christ, and makes men meek and humble; and only such receive the truth in the love of it; and to such is the Gospel preached, (Isaiah 61:1), and none but such hear it with profit and edification:

which is able to save your souls; even your whole persons, both soul and body: but the soul is only mentioned, as being the more excellent part of man: this must not be understood of the word, as if it was the author or cause of salvation, but as an instrument; it being a declaration of salvation by Christ, or what shows unto men the way of salvation by him; and is the power of God unto salvation to them, when it is attended with the energy of the Spirit, and the efficacy of divine grace. (see 2 Timothy 3:15).

Ver. 22. *But be ye doers of the word*, etc.] And they are such, who spiritually understand it; gladly receive it; and from the heart obey it, and make a sincere and ingenuous profession of it; and who submit to the ordinances it directs to, and keep them as they have been delivered; and live, and walk, becoming their profession of it. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, “be ye doers of the law”; and so one of Stephens's copies, as in (Romans 2:13)

and not hearers only; though the word should be heard swiftly and readily, and received with meekness; yet it should not be barely heard, and assented to; but what is heard should be put in practice; and especially men should not depend upon their hearing, as if that would save them; this is deceiving your own selves; such as rest upon the outward hearing of the word will be sadly deceived, and will find themselves miserably mistaken, another day; (see Luke 13:25,26). Arguments taken from hence are like the sophisms, paralogisms, and false reasonings of sophisters, which carry a fair show, and ensnare and deceive.

Ver. 23. *But if any man be a hearer of the word, and not a doer*, etc.] The Arabic version here again reads, “a hearer of the law”, and so some copies; not hearing, but practice, is the main thing; not theory, but action: hence, says R. Simeon, not the word, or the searching into it, and the explanation of it, is the root, or principal thing, hç[mh ala, “but the work” [f15]: and if a man is only a preacher, or a hearer, and not a doer,

he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; or, “the face of his generation”; the face with which he was born; his true, genuine, native face; in distinction from any counterfeit one, or from the face of his mind: it means his own corporeal face. The Ethiopic version renders it, “the lineaments of his face”.

Ver. 24. *For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way*, etc.] He takes a slight glance of himself, and departs:

and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was; he forgets either his spots, blemishes, and imperfections; or his comeliness and beauty; the features of his face, be they comely or not: so a bare hearer of the word, who is not concerned to practise what he hears, while he is hearing, he observes some things amiss in himself, and some excellencies in Christ; but, when the discourse is over, he goes his way, and thinks no more of either.

Ver. 25. *But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty*, etc.] By which is meant, not the moral law, but the Gospel; for only of that is the apostle speaking in the context: this is no other than the word of truth, with which God begets men of his own will; and is the ingrafted word which is able to save, and of which men should be doers, as well as hearers, (<590118>James 1:18,21,22), and this is compared to a glass by the Apostle Paul, (<470318>2 Corinthians 3:18), and the word here used for looking into it is the same word the Apostle Peter uses of the angels, who desired to look into the mysteries of the Gospel, (<600112>1 Peter 1:12) all which serve to strengthen this sense; now the Gospel is called a law; not that it is a law, strictly speaking, consisting precepts, and established and enforced by sanctions penalties; for it is a declaration of righteousness and salvation by Christ; a publication of peace and pardon by him; and a free promise of eternal life, through him; but as it is an instruction, or doctrine: the law with the Jews is called hrwt, because it is teaching and instructive; and everything that is so is by them called by this name: hence we find the doctrine of the Messiah, which is no other than the Gospel, is in the Old Testament called

the law of the Lord, and his law, (Isaiah 2:2 42:4) and in the New Testament it is called the law, or doctrine of faith, (Romans 3:27) and this doctrine is perfect, as in (Psalm 19:7), it being a perfect plan of truths, containing in it all truth, as it is in Jesus, even all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and because it is a revelation of things perfect; of the perfect righteousness of Christ, and of perfect justification by it, and of free and full pardon of sins through him, and of complete salvation by him; and because it directs to Christ, in whom perfection is: and it is a law or doctrine of liberty; τον της ελευψηριας, "that which is if liberty"; which has liberty for its subject, which treats of it, even of the liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free: the Gospel proclaims this liberty to captive souls; and is the word of truth, which makes them free, or is the means of freeing them from the slavery of sin, from the captivity of Satan, and from the bondage of the law; and is what gives souls freedom and boldness at the throne of grace; and is that which leads them into the liberty of grace here, and gives them a view and hope of the glorious liberty of the children of God hereafter. This doctrine is as a glass to look into; in which is beheld the glory of Christ's person and office, and grace; and though by the law is the knowledge of sin, yet a man never so fully and clearly discovers the sin that dwells in him, and the swarms of corruption which are in his heart, as when the light of the glorious Gospel shines into him, and when in it he beholds the beauty and glory of Jesus Christ; (see Isaiah 6:5) and looking into this glass, or into this doctrine, is by faith, and with the eyes of the understanding, opened and enlightened by the Spirit of God; and the word here used signifies a looking wistly and intently, with great care and thought, and not in a slight and superficial manner; and such a looking is designed, as is attended with effect; such an one as transforms into the same image that is beheld, from glory to glory; and happy is the man that so looks into it.

And continueth therein; is not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, nor carried about with divers and strange doctrines; but is established in the faith, stands fast in it, and abides by it; or continues looking into this glass, and to Christ, the author and finisher of faith, who is beheld in it; and keeps his eye upon it, and the object held forth in it; and constantly attends the ministration of it:

he being not a forgetful hearer; but takes heed to the things he hears and sees, lest he should let them slip; and being conscious of the weakness of

his memory, implores the divine Spirit to be his remembrancer, and bring to his mind, with fresh power and light, what he has heard:

but a doer of the work; of the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, and of every work and ordinance the Gospel ministry points unto; doing and being subject to all in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God and Christ.

This man shall be blessed in his deed; or "doing", and while he is doing; not that he is blessed for what he does, but "in" what he does; (see <19911>Psalm 19:11) he having, in hearing the word, and looking into it, and in submitting to every ordinance of the Gospel, the presence of God, the discoveries of his love, communion with Christ, and communication of grace from him by the Spirit; so that Wisdom's ways become ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace; (see <19504>Psalm 65:4 84:4,5), moreover, in all such a man does, he is prosperous and successful; in all he does he prospers: and so he is blessed in his deed, by God, whose blessing makes rich, both in spirituals and temporals: there seems to be an allusion to the blessed man in (<19001>Psalm 1:1,3).

Ver. 26. *If any man among you seem to be religious*, etc.] By his preaching, or praying, and hearing, and other external duties of religion, he is constant in the observance of; and who, upon the account of these things, "thinks himself to be a religious man", as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions render it; or is thought to be so by others:

and bridleth not his tongue; but boasts of his works, and speaks ill of his brethren; backbites them, and hurts their names and characters, by private insinuations, and public charges without any foundation; who takes no care of what he says, but gives his tongue a liberty of speaking anything, to the injury of others, and the dishonour of God, and his ways: there seems to be an allusion to (<19901>Psalm 39:1).

But deceiveth his own heart; with his show of religion, and external performances; on which he builds his hopes of salvation; of which he is confident; and so gives himself to a loose way of talking what he pleases:

this man's religion is vain; useless, and unprofitable to himself and others; all his preaching, praying, hearing, and attendance on the ordinances will be of no avail to him; and he, notwithstanding these, by his evil tongue, brings a scandal and reproach upon the ways of God, and doctrines of Christ.

Ver. 27. *Pure religion and undefiled*, etc.] That which is sincere and genuine, and free from adulteration and hypocrisy:

before God and the Father; or in the sight of God the Father of Christ, and all his people; that which is approved of by him, who is the searcher of hearts, and the trier of the reins of men, "is this": not that the apostle is giving a full definition of true religion; only he mentions some of the effects of it, by which it is known, and without which it cannot be true and genuine; and they are these:

to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction; and not only to see them, and speak a word of comfort to them, but to communicate to them, and supply their wants, as they may require, and according to the ability God has given: where there is true religion in the heart, there is love to God; and where there is love to God, there is love to the saints; and this will show itself to them, in times of affliction and distress; and where this is wanting, religion itself is not pure and undefiled:

and to keep himself unspotted from the world: from the men of the world, who defile by their evil communications; and "from the vices of the world", as the Arabic version renders it, which are of a defiling nature; and, where religion is in its power and purity, and the Gospel of the grace of God comes with efficacy, it teaches to separate from the rest of the world, and to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO JAMES 2

In this chapter the apostle dissuades from a respect of persons, on account of outward circumstances; shows that the law is to be fulfilled, and that mercy is to be exercised, as well as justice done; and exposes the folly of such who boast of faith without works: he dissuades the saints from all partiality to the rich and poor, from their relation to one another, as brethren, and from their common faith, of which Christ, the Lord of glory, is the object, (⁵⁹²⁰¹James 2:1) supposes an instance of it, either in a court of judicature, or a religious assembly, (⁵⁹²⁰²James 2:2,3) and then makes an appeal unto them, and expostulates with them about it, (⁵⁹²⁰⁴James 2:4) and makes use of an argument against it, taken from the divine conduct, and an instance of his grace in the choice of persons to eternal life, (⁵⁹²⁰⁵James 2:5) a conduct very different from some persons here blamed, (⁵⁹²⁰⁶James 2:6), and other arguments follow, dissuading from a respect of persons, taken from the characters of rich men, as oppressors of the poor, litigious and quarrelsome with their neighbours, and blasphemers of the name of God, (⁵⁹²⁰⁷James 2:7) and from the law of God, which requires the love of the neighbour, and which to fulfil is to do well, (⁵⁹²⁰⁸James 2:8) and from the breach of it, by having respect to persons, whereby its penalty is incurred, (⁵⁹²⁰⁹James 2:9) for which a reason is given; because whoever offends in one point of the law, is guilty of the whole, (⁵⁹²¹⁰James 2:10) as is a clear case, since the same lawgiver that forbids one sin, forbids another; so that he that is guilty of either of them is a transgressor of the law, (⁵⁹²¹¹James 2:11) wherefore it is right both to speak and act according to it, since men will be judged by it, (⁵⁹²¹²James 2:12) and he will have no mercy shown him that has shown none to the poor, but merciful ones will escape damnation, (⁵⁹²¹³James 2:13) and then the apostle argues from the unprofitableness of faith itself without works, (⁵⁹²¹⁴James 2:14) and which he exemplifies in the case of a poor brother or sister who are wished well, but nothing given them; which good words, without deeds, are of no profit, (⁵⁹²¹⁵James 2:15,16) so in like manner, faith without works is a dead faith, (⁵⁹²¹⁷James 2:17) nor indeed can it be made out that a man has faith, if he has not works, (⁵⁹²¹⁸James 2:18) at least such a faith as has justification and

salvation connected with it; his faith, at most, is no better than that of the devils, who are damned, (James 2:19) and that such a faith is a dead faith, (James 2:2) and that true faith is attended with, and evidenced by works, the apostle proves by two instances; the one is that of Abraham, whose faith appeared to be genuine, and he to be a justified person, by the works he did; particularly by offering up his son Isaac; in which way his faith operated, and showed itself to be sincere and hearty; and the Scripture was fulfilled that Abraham was a believer; and had righteousness imputed to him, and was a friend of God, and a justified person, (James 2:21-24) and the other instance is that of Rahab, whose faith was also shown by her works, and so a justified person, by receiving the spies with peace, and dismissing them with safety, (James 2:25), and then the apostle explains what he means, by saying more than once, that faith without works is dead; which he illustrates by the simile of a man's body being dead, without the spirit or soul in it, (James 2:26).

Ver. 1. *My brethren*, etc.] As the apostle is about to dissuade from the evil of having respect to persons, this is a very fit introduction to it, and carries in it an argument why it should not obtain; since the saints are all brethren, they are children of the same Father, belong to the same family, and are all one in Christ Jesus, whether high or low, rich, or poor:

have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [the] Lord of glory, with respect of persons: that is, such as have, and hold, and profess the faith of Christ, ought not along with it to use respect of persons, or to make such a distinction among the saints, as to prefer the rich, to the contempt of the poor; and in this exhortation many things are contained, which are so many arguments why such a practice should not be encouraged; for faith, whether as a doctrine or as a grace, is alike precious, and common to all; and is the faith of Christ, which, as a doctrine, is delivered by him to all the saints, and as a grace, he is both the author and object of it; and is the faith of their common Lord and Saviour, and who is the Lord of glory, or the glorious Lord; and the poor as well as the rich are espoused by him, as their Lord and husband; and are redeemed by him, and are equally under his government and protection, and members of his body: the Syriac Version reads, “have not the faith of the glory of our Lord Jesus”, etc. meaning either the glory which Christ is possessed of, whether as the Son of God, in the perfections of his nature, or as man and Mediator, being now crowned with glory and honour, and which is seen and known by faith; or else that glory which Christ has in his hands, to bestow upon his

people, and to which they are called, and will appear in, when he shall appear, and about which their faith is now employed: and since this glory equally belongs to them all, no difference should be made on account of outward circumstances, so as to treat any believer with neglect and contempt.

Ver. 2. *For if there come unto your assembly*, etc.] The place of religious worship where saints are assembled together for that purpose; though some think a civil court of judicature is intended, and to which the context seems to incline; (see James 2:6)

a man with a gold ring; on his finger, which shows him to be a man of dignity and wealth; so those of the senatorian and equestrian orders among the Romans were distinguished from the common people by wearing gold rings; though in time the use of them became promiscuous [f16]; the ancients used to wear but one [f17], as here but one is mentioned; and only freemen, not servants, might wear it: however, by this circumstance, the apostle describes a rich man, adding,

in goodly apparel; gay clothing, bright shining garments, glistering with gold and silver, very rich and costly, as well as whole, neat, and clean:

and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; mean and despicable, filthy and ragged: in the courts of judicature with the Jews, two men, who were at law with one another, might not have different apparel on while they were in court, and their cause was trying: their law runs thus [f18];

> "two adversaries (at law with each other), if one of them is clothed "with precious garments", (µyrqy µydgb, "goodly apparel",) and the other is clothed with ˆyywzb µydgb, "vile raiment", (the judge) says to the honourable person, either clothe him as thou art, while thou contendest with him, or be clothed as he is, that ye may be alike, or on an equal foot."

Ver. 3. *And ye have respect to him that wears the gay clothing*, etc.] Take notice of him, and show favour to him, to the neglect and contempt of the other. This is an instance of respect of persons condemned and dissuaded from:

and say unto him, sit thou here in a good place; the best place; whether it be in a religious assembly, or in a civil court of judicature:

and say to the poor, stand thou there; or in a lower and meaner place:

or sit thou here under my footstool; this also was contrary to the Jewish canons [f19], that one should sit, and another stand, while their cause was trying; the law runs thus:

> "one shall not sit, and another stand, but both shall stand; but if the sanhedrim, or court, please to let them sit, they sit; but one does not sit above, and the other below; but one by the side of the other."

Ver. 4. *Are ye not then partial in yourselves*, etc.] That is, guilty of such partiality as must appear to yourselves, and your own consciences must accuse you of; or do not ye distinguish, or make a difference among yourselves, by such a conduct, towards the rich and the poor:

and are become judges of evil thoughts; or "are distinguishers by evil thoughts"; that is, make a distinction between the rich and the poor, by an evil way of thinking, that one is better than the other, and to be preferred before him.

Ver. 5. *Hearken, my beloved brethren*, etc.] As to a matter of importance, and worthy of attention and regard; being an instance of the divine conduct towards the poor, and carries in it a strong argument against respect of persons:

hath not God chosen the poor of this world? this interrogative is equal to a strong affirmative; and the sense is, that God has chosen the poor of this world; and which is to be understood, not of the choice of them to an office, either in church or state; though sometimes this has been the case, as the instances of David, and the apostles of Christ, show; nor merely to the Gospel, and the outward means of grace, though the poor have the Gospel preached unto them; nor of the effectual calling, though this is true; but of eternal election, which is the act of God the Father, and passed before the foundation of the world; and is an act of sovereign grace, and is irrespective of faith, holiness, and good works; and is the source of all grace, and remains immutable and irrevocable: now the objects of this are, "the poor of this world"; that is, who are poor with respect to the things of this world, but not with respect to the things of another world; for they are chosen to be heirs of a kingdom, and shall enjoy it; though these are not all chosen by God, nor are they the only persons that are chosen; there are some poor men that are not chosen, and are miserable here and hereafter;

and there are some rich men that are chosen; but for the most part, or generally speaking, they are not many mighty, nor noble, but the poorer sort, which God has made choice of to partake both of grace and glory. It may be the apostle has some peculiar respect to the poor among the Gentiles, whom God had chosen; it was usual with the Jews to call the Gentiles the world, and they were Jews the apostle now writes to, and who were scattered abroad among the Gentiles; and therefore he might very aptly call them “this world”, among whom they lived; and suggest to them, that God had chosen some of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews, and even some of the poorer sort of them; and it was usual with the Jews to distinguish between larçy yyn[, “the poor of Israel”, and µlw[yyn[, “the poor of the world”, or µlw[h twmwa yyn[“the poor of the nations of the world” [f20]: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, leave out the word “this”, and so the Syriac and Arabic versions, which makes the phrase more agreeable to the Jewish way of speaking. The Gentiles, in common, were despicable with the Jews, and especially the poor of them; and yet God chose these:

rich in faith; not that they were so, or were considered as such, when chosen, and so were chosen because of their faith; for then also they were, or were considered as heirs of the kingdom, which would be monstrously absurd; and yet there is as much reason, from the text, for the one, as for the other; but the sense is, that they were chosen “to be rich in faith”; and so the Syriac version supplies in the next clause, “that they might be heirs”; which if it had been placed before this clause also, would have been right; election to grace is signified in the one, and election to glory in the other: men are chosen, not because they do believe, or shall believe, but that they might believe; and which faith they have in consequence of election; and which when they have, they are rich: faith is a rich precious grace itself; it is a part of the riches of grace, and is more worth than thousands of gold and silver; and it is the means of receiving and enjoying much riches, as Christ the pearl of great price himself, and all spiritual blessings along with him; such as the rich robe of his righteousness, full pardon of sin, which is according to the riches of his grace, and adoption, which makes men heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, and even the eternal inheritance itself, both the promise of it, and a right unto it; all which are said to be received by faith; and therefore believers, how poor soever they may be, to this world's goods, are truly rich men:

and heirs of the kingdom; of glory, which is prepared for all the chosen ones, from the foundation of the world; and is freely given to them by their Father, and to which they are called in the effectual calling; and hence they are made kings and priests unto God, and have crowns and thrones provided for them: the Alexandrian copy reads, “heirs of the promise which he hath promised to them that love him”; that is, which God has promised them, as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read; not that their love to God is the cause of this kingdom, or of their choice to it, or of the promise of it to them; all which flow from the love of God to them; but this is descriptive of the persons who shall enjoy it, and may expect to enjoy it, as in (<59012>James 1:12).

Ver. 6. *But ye have despised the poor*, etc.] Or dishonoured, and reproached them, by showing respect of persons, in preferring the rich to them, and in distinguishing them in such a manner as was to their contempt and injury; which is a reproaching not only of them, but their Maker; and is in effect saying, that God has done either a weak or a wrong thing, in choosing them to be rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom, it being directly contrary to his conduct:

do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? which may be understood either of rich men that were unbelievers; and these either the Heathen magistrates, who ruled over them in a tyrannical way, and with rigour, and often summoned them before them, and persecuted them with violence; or their own countrymen, the Jews, who stirred up the chief men of the Gentiles against them, and drew them to their judgment seats, as they drew Paul to the judgment seat of Gallio, (<441350>Acts 13:50 18:12) or else of rich professors of religion, who assumed a despotic power over the poor brethren of the church, and loved to have the pre-eminence over them, as Diotrephes did, and set up tribunals in the churches, and tried and condemned them in an arbitrary way; or else upon civil accounts had them before heathen magistrates, and went to law with them in their courts, before unbelievers, which is a practice condemned in (<460601>1 Corinthians 6:1), and seeing now rich men used them so ill, the apostle mentions this as an argument to dissuade them from respect of persons; seeing they had but little reason to show so much regard unto them, who had treated them in so evil a manner: this is not to be understood of all rich men; nor is the apostle's design to destroy that natural and civil order there is among men, by reason of their different stations, offices, and circumstances; it being highly proper that honour

should he given to whom honour is due, but not to the dishonour of another.

Ver. 7. *Do they not blaspheme that worthy name*, etc.] Of Christ, or Christians;

by the which ye are called? and which, as before, may design either unbelieving rich men, whether among Jews, or Gentiles, who blasphemed and cursed the name of Christ, and compelled others to do so likewise; or such who professed the Christian religion, who by their supercilious and disdainful treatment of their poor brethren, and by their dragging of them to the tribunals of the Heathens, and distressing them with vexatious law suits there, caused the name of Christ, after which they were called Christians, to be blasphemed and evil spoken of, among the Gentiles.

Ver. 8. *If ye fulfil the royal law*, etc.] Which is the law of love to men, without distinction of rich and poor, high and low, bond and free; and is so called, because it is the law of the King of kings; hence the Syriac version renders it, "the law of God", it is the law of Christ, who is King of saints; and because it is a principal law, the chief of laws; as love to God is the sum of the first and great commandment in the law, and may be called the king of laws; so love to the neighbour is the second and next unto it, and may very well bear the name of the queen of laws, and so has royalty in it; and indeed this last is said to be the fulfilling of the law, (<45 13:8-10 <48 5:14Galatians 5:14) and it is also submitted to, and obeyed by such who are made kings and priests to God; and that in a royal manner, with a princely spirit, willingly, and with all readiness: the same word, in the Hebrew language, µybydn, signifies "princes", and to be willing. The Jews frequently ascribe royalty to the law, and often speak of hrwt rtk, "the crown of the law" [f21]; and they suppose the Israelites had crowns upon their heads, when the law was given them on Mount Sinai, in which were engraven the name of God, and which they were stripped of when they made the golden calf [f22]: now this royal law is fulfilled, when it is regarded without respect of persons,

according to the Scripture, in (<03 19:18Leviticus 19:18)

thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself; and which is to be understood of every nation, without distinction of Jews and Gentiles, and of persons of every state and condition, rich and poor, without any difference: and when this law is so observed, it is commendable:

ye do well: that which is right, and which is a man's duty to do; this, when done from right principles, and to a right end, is a good work, and is doing a good work well.

Ver. 9. *But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin*, &c] This is not doing well, but is a transgression of the law, as every sin is; hence it follows,

and are convinced of the law as transgressors; which carries on a formal process against such persons; it accuses them of sin, and charges them with it; it proves it upon them, and convicts them of it; it pronounces them guilty, and curses them for it; and passes the sentence of condemnation and death upon them; wherefore care should be taken not to commit this sin, and so fall under the convictions and reproofs of the law.

Ver. 10. *For whosoever shall keep the whole law*, etc.] Or the greatest part of it, excepting only in one point, as follows: Adam, in a state of innocence, was able to keep the whole law, but by sin he lost that power, nor can any of his posterity now keep it perfectly: they are all transgressors of it, and liable to its penalty; unregenerate men are not obedient to it, and have an aversion to it, and despise it, and cast it behind their backs; regenerate persons, who love it, and delight in it, after the inner man, do not keep it perfectly; the several parts of the law may be indeed kept by a believer, and that sincerely, but not to a perfect degree, for in many things they all offend; Christ only has perfectly kept it, and is the fulfilling end of it for righteousness; men of a pharisaical disposition may fancy they have kept it wholly, as the young man in the Gospel, and Saul, before his conversion; but this is but a fancy, and a sad mistake: the case in the text is only a supposed one, and, as it is here put, implies perfection; for it follows,

and yet offend in one point; sin, which is a transgression of the law, is an offense to God the Father, who is of purer eyes than to behold it; to Jesus Christ, who loves righteousness, and hates iniquity; and to the blessed Spirit who is grieved and vexed by it; and to the justice of God, which being injured by it, demands satisfaction; and to the law of God, which accuses, convinces, reproves, and condemns for it. The word used signifies to “fall”, and designs more than stumbling, even an open breach and violation of the law; and which being made, by any, in a single instance,

he is guilty of all: this seems to agree with some common sayings of the Jews, that he that is suspected in one thing, is suspected in the whole law [f23]; and he that keeps this or the other command, keeps the whole law; and he that breaks this, or the other command, breaks the whole law; as whether it respects the sabbath, or adultery, or that command. Thou shall not covet, or any other [f24]: and this must be understood, not of every particular command in the law, as if he that is guilty of murder is in that instance also guilty of adultery; or he that is guilty of adultery is in that instance guilty of murder; but the sense is, that he is guilty of the breach of the whole law, though not of the whole of the law; as he that breaks anyone condition of a covenant, which may consist of many, though he does not violate every condition, yet breaks the whole covenant; so he that transgresses in anyone point of the law, breaks the whole, commits sin, and is deserving of death, and is treated by the law as a transgressor of it, let it be in what instance it will. But it does not follow from hence, that all sins are equal, as the Stoics say [f25], for there are greater and lesser sins, (<43 19 11>John 19:11) though not some venial, and others mortal, for the wages of every sin is death; nor that the punishment of sin will be alike, as all sins were punishable alike by Draco's laws, but not by the law of God, (<40 11 22>Matthew 11:22,24) but this may be fairly concluded from hence, that there can be no justification in the sight of God, by an imperfect obedience to, the law, or by a partial righteousness: the law requires perfect obedience, and in failure of that, though but in one point, curses and condemns; and likewise it may be inferred from hence, that a man is not at liberty to obey and neglect what commandments of the law he pleases, but should have respect to them all; which seems greatly the design of the apostle, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 11. *For he that said, Do not commit adultery*, etc.] That same lawgiver, who is but one, and is God, that gave out the seventh command, and forbids adultery,

said also, Do not kill; delivered the sixth command, which forbids murder.

Now if thou commit no adultery; do not break the seventh command;

yet if thou kill, break the sixth command,

thou art become a transgressor of the law; not of that particular precept of the law, the seventh command, for the contrary is supposed before, but of the sixth only; and yet by so doing, a man becomes a violator of the whole

law; for the law is but one, though it consists of various precepts; and the breach of one precept, as well as of another, is the breach of the law: and besides, there is but one lawgiver, who has enjoined one command, as well as another, and whose legislative power and authority is despised and trampled upon by the violation of one command, as of another. This is the apostle's argument, and way of reasoning, proving the above assertion, that he that breaks the law in one particular instance, is guilty of the breach of the whole law.

Ver. 12. *So speak ye, and so do*, etc.] Both words and actions should be taken care of; it becomes men to observe what they say, and what they do; for both sinful words and works are transgressions of the law, and will be brought to judgment; every idle word, as well as every evil work, both open and secret, men must give an account of in the day of judgment: wherefore it is incumbent on them so to behave,

as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty: (See Gill on "James 1:25") with which compare (Romans 2:12,16). Heathens will be judged by the law of nature, Jews by the law of Moses, and those who live under the Gospel dispensation, according to the Gospel of Christ.

Ver. 13. *For he shall have judgment without mercy*, etc.] Strict justice, and no mercy shown him:

that hath showed no mercy; to the poor brethren, and distressed members of Christ, but has shown respect of persons to the hurt of the poor, and has despised and oppressed them, instead of relieving and comforting them; so the rich man, that neglected Lazarus at his gates, is refused a drop of water to cool his tongue; and the servant that cruelly insisted on his fellow servant's paying him all he owed, justly incurred the displeasure of his Lord, and was by him delivered to the tormentors; and that servant that beats his fellow servants will be cut asunder, and, have his portion with hypocrites; and such who have seen any of the brethren of Christ hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, and in prison, and have showed no regard for them, will hear, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire":

and mercy rejoiceth against judgment; that is merciful men, who have shown mercy to the poor saints, will not be afraid of the awful judgment, but rather rejoice or glory, as the word signifies, in the view of it, since they will obtain mercy at that day, and hear, Come, ye blessed of my Father, etc. (Matthew 25:34-36) so the Ethiopic version renders it, he

only shall glory in the day of judgment, who hath showed mercy; the Alexandrian copy reads in the imperative, “let mercy glory”, etc. and the Syriac version, “be ye exalted by mercy over judgment”.

Ver. 14. *What doth it profit, my brethren*, etc.] The apostle having finished his discourse on respect of persons, and the arguments he used to dissuade from it, by an easy transition passes to treat upon faith and works, showing that faith without works, particularly without works of mercy, is of no profit and advantage:

though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? it is clear that the apostle is not speaking of true faith, for that, in persons capable of performing them, is not without works; it is an operative grace; it works by love and kindness, both to Christ, and to his members; but of a profession of faith, a mere historical one, by which a man, at most, assents to the truth of things, as even devils do, (James 2:19) and only says he has faith, but has it not; as Simon Magus, who said he believed, but did not.

Can faith save him? such a faith as this, a faith without works, an historical one, a mere profession of faith, which lies only in words, and has no deeds, to show the truth and genuineness of it. True faith indeed has no causal influence on salvation, or has any virtue and efficacy in itself to save; Christ, object of faith, is the only cause and author of salvation; faith is only that grace which receives a justifying righteousness, the pardon of sin, adoption, and a right to the heavenly inheritance; but it does not justify, nor pardon, nor adopt, nor give the right to the inheritance, but lays hold on, and claims these, by virtue of the gift of grace; and it has spiritual and eternal salvation inseparably connected with it; but as for the other faith, a man may have it, and be in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity; he may have all faith in that sense, and be nothing; it is no other than the devils themselves have; and so he may have it, and be damned.

Ver. 15. *If a brother or sister*, etc.] A Christian man or woman, a fellow member of a church of Christ; for this relation is to be understood in a spiritual sense, though it does not exclude such who are in this relation in a natural sense:

be naked; or clothed in rags, or in very mean and sordid apparel, such as will neither keep them warm, nor clean and decent; for they must not be supposed to be entirely naked, but to be in a very uncomfortable and indecent garb:

and destitute of daily food; have not food sufficient for the day; or aught to support nature with, and yield them proper refreshment and nourishment.

Ver. 16. *And one of you say unto them*, etc.] That is, one of the same faith, and in the same communion and church fellowship.

Depart in peace; wishing them all prosperity and happiness, inward and outward:

be ye warmed and filled; clothed and fed; signifying, that they wished them all the accommodations of life:

notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful for the body; neither clothes to wear, nor food to eat; nothing to warm their bodies, or fill their bellies:

what doth it profit? the Ethiopic version reads, "what doth it profit them?" either the poor brother, or sister, to whom these good words are given, and nothing else; for these will neither warm them, nor fill them; or the persons themselves, that say these tidings to them: and the apostle, by this instance, shows, that as that charity which lies only in words, and in tongue, and not in deed, and in truth, is unprofitable, and good for nothing, even to them that profess it; so that faith, which a man says he has, and yet is without works, is alike unprofitable unto him.

Ver. 17. *Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone*.] It is like a lifeless carcass, a body without a soul, (James 2:26) for as works, without faith, are dead works, so faith, without works, is a dead faith, and not like the lively hope and faith of regenerated persons: and indeed, such who have no other faith than this are dead in trespasses and sins; not that works are the life of faith, or that the life of faith lies in, and flows from works; but, as Dr. Ames observes [f26], good works are second acts, necessarily flowing from the life of faith; to which may be added, and by these faith appears to be living, lively and active, or such who perform them appear to be true and living believers.

Ver. 18. *Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works*, etc.] That is, a true believer in Christ may very justly call upon a vain boaster of his faith, who has no works, to give proof and evidence of it, and address him after this manner; you say you have faith, be it so that you have; I have works, you see I have, I say nothing about my faith at present; now,

shew me thy faith without thy works, if thou canst; see what ways, means, and methods thou canst make use of, to make it appear to me, or any other, that you have the faith you talk of: the words are a sort of sarcasm and jeer upon the man, and yet very just, calling upon him to do that which is impossible to be done, and thereby exposing his vain boast; for faith is an inward principle in the heart; an hidden thing, and cannot be seen and known but by external acts; and where it is right, it is operative, and shows itself by works, which is not practicable in those who have none:

and I will show thee my faith by my works; there may be indeed an appearance of good works, where there is no faith, as in the Heathens, in the Scribes and Pharisees, and in the Papists, and others; and on the other hand, there may be the principle of faith implanted, where there is not an opportunity of showing it by a series of good works, or a course of godly living, as in elect infants dying in infancy, and in those who are converted in their last moments, as the thief upon the cross; wherefore works are not infallible proofs and evidences of faith, yet they are the best we are capable of giving of it to men, or they of receiving. In short, works may deceive, and do not infallibly prove truth of faith, yet it is certain, that where they are not, but persons live in a continued course of sinning, there cannot be true faith.

Ver. 19. *Thou believest that there is one God*, etc.] These words are a continuation of the address of the man that has works, to him that boasts of his faith without them, observing to him, that one, and a main article of his faith, is, that there is one God; which is to be understood in the Christian sense, since both the person speaking, and the person spoken to, were such as professed themselves Christians; so that to believe there is one God, is not merely to give into this article, in opposition to the polytheism of the Gentiles, or barely to confess the God of Israel, as believed on by the Jews, but to believe that there are three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, and that these three are the one God; wherefore this article of faith includes everything relating to God; as to God the Father, his being and perfections, so to Christ, as God, and the Son of God, and the Messiah, etc. and to the Holy Spirit; and to believe all this is right:

thou doest well; for that there is but one God, is to be proved by the light of nature, and from the works of creation and providence, and has been owned by the wisest of the Heathens themselves; and is established, by divine revelation, in the books both of the Old and of the New Testament;

what has been received by the Jews, and is well known by Christians, to whom it is set in the clearest light, and who are assured of the truth of it: but then

the devils also believe; the Arabic version reads, “the devils likewise so believe”; they believe the same truth; they know and believe there is but one God, and not many; and they know that the God of Israel is he; and that the Father, Son, and Spirit, are the one God; they know and believe him to be the most high God, whose servants the ministers of the Gospel are; and they know and believe that Jesus is the Holy One of God, the Son of God, and the Messiah, (<44167>Acts 16:17 19:15 <42434>Luke 4:34,41).

And tremble; at the wrath of God, which they now feel, and at the thought of future torments, which they expect, (<41507>Mark 5:7 <40829>Matthew 8:29) and which is more than some men do; and yet these shall not be saved, their damnation is certain and inevitable, (<610204>2 Peter 2:4 <650106>Jude 1:6) wherefore it follows, that a bare historical faith will not profit, and cannot save any; a man may have all faith of this kind, and be damned; and therefore it is not to be boasted of, nor trusted to.

Ver. 20. *But wilt thou know, O vain man*, etc.] These are the words of the apostle reassuming the argument, that faith without works is dead, useless, and unprofitable; and the man that boasts of his faith, and has no works to show it, he calls a “vain man”, an empty one, sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal; empty vessels make the greatest sound; such are proud boasters, vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind; but are empty of the true knowledge of God, and of the faith of Christ, and of the grace of the Spirit: the Syriac version renders it, “O weak”, or “feeble man”, as he must needs be, whose faith is dead, and boasts of such a lifeless thing; and the Ethiopic version renders it, “O foolish man”, for such an one betrays his ignorance in spiritual things, whatever conceit he has of his knowledge and understanding: the character seems levelled against the Gnostics, who were swelled with a vain opinion of their knowledge, to whom the apostle addresses himself thus. The phrase, “vain man”, is a proper interpretation of the word aqyr, “Raca”, or Reka, used in (<40522>Matthew 5:22), (see Gill on “<40522>Matthew 5:22”), which though not to be said to a man in an angry way, yet may be applied to men of such a character as here described; who were empty of solid good, and yet boasted of their knowledge. “Wilt thou know?” dost thou require proofs,

that faith, without works, is dead? as in (<59217>James 2:17) and that true faith has always works accompanying it, and is shown and known by it? then take the following instances.

Ver. 21. *Was not Abraham our father justified by works*, etc.] Not as the causes of his justification, that is denied, (<45402>Romans 4:2) but as effects of it, showing the truth of his faith, and the reality of his justification: he had both faith and works, and the former were known by the latter; and even the faith which he had expressed years ago was manifested, demonstrated, and confirmed to be true and genuine, by the instance of his obedience to God, here produced; by which it appeared he was a true believer, a justified person, approved of God, and loved by him. Now if this was the case of Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, yea, the father of the faithful, of all that believe, he is, and must be a vain man, that talks of faith without works; and his faith must be a dead one, and he be very unlike the father of them that believe: the good work instanced in is the offering up of Isaac;

when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar: for when he was bid to take his son, his only and beloved son, Isaac, and offer him up on one of the mountains, that should be shown him, he made haste to do it; he provided everything for it; he split the wood, and carried it with him, and fire in his hand; he built an altar, laid the wood on it, bound his son, laid the wood on the altar, and his son on the wood, and stretched out his hand, with his knife in it, to slay him; so that it was all one, with respect to his intention and will, as if he had actually offered him, and was a full trial and proof of his obedience to God. This was not the only act of obedience, or good work, which he performed; but this being a very eminent one, the apostle instances in it, as a very considerable evidence of his faith in God, and love to him; and which showed him to be a justified person, as he was long before he performed this action, even before Isaac was born; (see <01506>Genesis 15:6) and therefore it can never be the apostle's meaning, that he was justified before God by this, or any other good work or works, as cause or causes of it; but only that he was declared to be so; or, in other words, that his faith was attended with good works, and evidenced by them.

Ver. 22. *Seest thou how faith wrought with his works*, etc.] Not to justify him before God; for neither faith nor works are ever said in Scripture to justify any man; but his faith being of the right kind, a faith which works by love, it put him upon doing this work, and many others; for this was done

in faith, (<58B11 17>Hebrews 11:17-19) as all good works are, which are properly such; and where there is true faith, it will influence and engage a man to do good works, as it did Abraham.

And by works was faith made perfect? not with an absolute perfection; for though Abraham's faith was very great, yet there were things lacking in it, and he had his fits and times of unbelief; and had he lived till now, his faith, in this sense, would not have been perfect; and he would have had reason to have used the apostle's petition, (<42 17 5>Luke 17:5) much less would it have been made thus perfect by works; but the sense is, that hereby his faith was declared to be sincere, unfeigned, true, and genuine; just as love is said to be perfected, (<61 4 17>1 John 4:17).

Ver. 23. *And the Scripture was fulfilled*, etc.] (<01 15 6>Genesis 15:6) which speaks of Abraham's faith, and the imputation of to him for righteousness; for the above action of Abraham, in offering up his son, was a clear proof of the truth of his faith, there commended: by this it was made known what a strong faith he had in God, and what reason there was to believe that he was a justified person.

Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness; (See Gill on “ <45 4 3>Romans 4:3”) which shows both that Abraham was justified before he wrought this work, and therefore that could not be the cause or matter of his justification, but only an effect and evidence of it; and that his justification was by faith, or that object which his faith regarded, and had to do with, was his justifying righteousness:

and he was called the friend of God, (<14 20 7>2 Chronicles 20:7 <23 41 8>Isaiah 41:8) he was loved by God with an everlasting love, who showed acts of friendship to him; called him by his grace, and blessed him with spiritual blessings, and increased him with the increase of God; favoured him with near communion with him, honoured him with high characters, and distinguished him by peculiar marks of his favour, and reckoned his enemies and friends as his own; (<01 12 8>Genesis 12:8) and Abraham, on the other hand, loved God, and showed himself friendly to him; trusted in him, and believed every word of his; readily complied with his will, and not only yielded a cheerful obedience to his commands, but enjoined his children after him to observe them: this was a name which Abraham was well known by among the eastern nations; hence he is called by the

Mahometans, hlla lylj, “Khalil Allah”, the friend of God; and Mahomet says himself [f27],

“God took Abraham for his friend.”

Ver. 24. *Ye see then how that by works a man is justified*, etc.] Not as causes procuring his justification, but as effects declaring it; for the best works are imperfect, and cannot be a righteousness justifying in the sight of God, and are unprofitable in this respect; for when they are performed in the best manner, they are no other than what it is a man's duty to perform, and therefore cannot justify from sin he has committed: and besides, justification in this sense would frustrate the grace of God, make void the death of Christ, and encourage boasting in men. Good works do not go before justification as causes or conditions, but follow it as fruits and effects:

and not by faith only: or as without works, or a mere historical faith, which being without works is dead, of which the apostle is speaking; and therefore can bear no testimony to a man's justification; hence it appears, that the Apostle James does not contradict the Apostle Paul in (Romans 3:28) since they speak not of the same sort of faith; the one speaks of a mere profession of faith, a dead and lifeless one; the other of a true faith, which has Christ, and his righteousness, for its object, and works by love, and produces peace, joy, and comfort in the soul. Moreover, the Apostle Paul speaks of justification before God; and James speaks of it as it is known by its fruits unto men; the one speaks of a justification of their persons, in the sight of God; the other of the justification and approbation of their cause, their conduct, and their faith before men, and the vindication of them from all charges and calumnies of hypocrisy, and the like; the one speaks of good works as causes, which he denies to have any place as such in justification; and the other speaks of them as effects flowing from faith, and showing the truth of it, and so of justification by it; the one had to do with legalists and self-justiciaries, who sought righteousness not by faith, but by the works of the law, whom he opposed; and the other had to do with libertines, who cried up faith and knowledge, but had no regard to a religious life and conversation; and these things considered will tend to reconcile the two apostles about this business, but as effects declaring it; for the best works are imperfect, and cannot be a righteousness justifying in the sight of God, and are unprofitable in this respect; for when they are performed in the best manner, they are no other than what it is a man's duty

to perform, and therefore cannot justify from sin he has committed: and besides, justification in this sense would frustrate the grace of God, make void the death of Christ, and encourage boasting in men. Good works do not go before justification as causes or conditions, but follow it as fruits and effects:

and not by faith only: or as without works, or a mere historical faith, which being without works is dead, of which the apostle is speaking; and therefore can bear no testimony to a man's justification; hence it appears, that the Apostle James does not contradict the Apostle Paul in (Romans 3:28) since they speak not of the same sort of faith; the one speaks of a mere profession of faith, a dead and lifeless one; the other of a true faith, which has Christ, and his righteousness, for its object, and works by love, and produces peace, joy, and comfort in the soul. Moreover, the Apostle Paul speaks of justification before God; and James speaks of it as it is known by its fruits unto men; the one speaks of a justification of their persons, in the sight of God; the other of the justification and approbation of their cause, their conduct, and their faith before men, and the vindication of them from all charges and calumnies of hypocrisy, and the like; the one speaks of good works as causes, which he denies to have any place as such in justification; and the other speaks of them as effects flowing from faith, and showing the truth of it, and so of justification by it; the one had to do with legalists and self-justiciaries, who sought righteousness not by faith, but by the works of the law, whom he opposed; and the other had to do with libertines, who cried up faith and knowledge, but had no regard to a religious life and conversation; and these things considered will tend to reconcile the two apostles about this business.

Ver. 25. *Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot*, etc.] (See Gill on "Hebrews 11:31") justified by works; this woman was an instance of the grace of God in calling the chief of sinners, and was a true believer; and what she did, she did in faith, (Hebrews 11:31) and her faith was shown by her works to be true and genuine; and it was manifest that she was a justified person. This instance is produced with the other, to show, that wherever there is true faith, whether in Jew or Gentile, in man or woman, in greater or lesser believers, or in such who have been greater or lesser sinners, there will be good works; and therefore that person is a vain man that talks and boasts of his faith, and depends upon it, and slights and rejects good works as unnecessary to be done.

When she had received the messengers: the spies that Joshua sent, into her house, with peace and safety:

and had sent them out another way; than they came in, even through the window upon the town wall, (Joshua 2:1,15).

Ver. 26. *For as the body without the spirit is dead*, etc.] This simile is made use of to illustrate what the apostle had asserted in (James 2:17,20) that as a body, when the spirit or soul is departed from it, or the breath is gone out of it, is dead, and without motion, and useless; which the Jews[f28] express in like manner, jwr alb Pwg rgp, "the body without the spirit", or "breath, is a carcass".

So faith without works is dead also: a vain thing, useless and unprofitable, can neither justify, nor save, nor prove that a man is justified, or will be saved.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO JAMES 3

In this chapter the apostle cautions against censoriousness, and reproving others with a magisterial air; advises to bridle the tongue, and guard against the vices of it; and shows what true wisdom is, and from whence it comes. He advises the saints not to arrogate too much to themselves, and take upon them to be the censorious reprovers of others; which he dissuades from, by the consideration of the greater damnation such shall receive, and by the frailty of all men, and a common proneness to offend by words; for he must be a very singular man indeed that does not offend by words, (James 3:1,2) wherefore he exhorts them to watch over their words, and bridle their tongues; which he illustrates by the methods used with horses to keep them in subjection, and with ships, to turn them as occasion serves, and the master pleases, (James 3:3,4) and though the tongue is a little member, and not comparable to a horse, or ship, for its bulk; yet it boasts of great things, has a world of iniquity in it, and much mischief is done by it, being influenced by the powers of hell; therefore care, and all possible means, should be used to restrain it, (James 3:5,6) though it is not tameable by man, only by the Lord, when all sorts of creatures are, even the most fierce and savage, and therefore are worse than they, being an unruly evil, and full of deadly poison, (James 3:7,8). And what is the most monstrous and shocking, blessing and cursing come out of the same mouth, are pronounced by the same tongue, which is used in blessing God, and cursing men made after his image, which by no means ought to be done, (James 3:9,10) and which is not to be paralleled in nature; no instance like it can be given, no fountain sending forth, in the same place, water sweet and bitter, salt and fresh, or any fig tree bearing olives, or vine figs, (James 3:11,12). And because all this evil springs from a vain opinion men have of their own wisdom, the apostle proceeds to give an account of true wisdom; and observes, that that shows itself in good works, in a holy conversation, attended with meekness and humility, and not in envying, strife, and lies, (James 3:13,14). Such sort of wisdom is not from heaven, but of the earth; it is not rational; it is no better than that of brutes; yea, no other than that of devils, since where the above

sins prevail, it is a hell on earth, there is nothing but confusion, and everything that is vile and wicked, (James 3:15,16) but, on the other hand, true wisdom is of an heavenly original, of a pure, peaceable, gentle, and tractable nature, and is full of good fruits or works in its effects, particularly mercy, and is clear of partiality and hypocrisy, (James 3:17) and as one of its fruits is righteousness, that is sown in peace by the peacemaker, and produces it, (James 3:18).

Ver. 1. *My brethren, be not many masters*, etc.] The apostle having dispatched the subject of faith and good works, which constitute the pure and undefiled religion mentioned in (James 1:27) which gave rise to this discourse, he proceeds to consider the evidence of a religious man, suggested in (James 1:26) who is one that bridles the tongue; and enters into an account of the use and abuse of the tongue: and which is introduced by this exhortation; and which seems to be opposed to an affectation among the Jews, to whom James writes, of being called “Rabbi, Rabbi”, or “Mori, Mori”, master, master, condemned by Christ, (Matthew 23:8,10). The words may be rendered, “be not many teachers”; or be not fond, and forward, and ambitious of being preachers of the word, but rather choose to be hearers of it, agreeably to the advice in (James 1:19), “be swift to hear, slow to speak”; not but that the office of a teacher is a good work, and a very desirable one; and spiritual gifts, qualifying for it, are to be coveted with a view to the glory of God, and the good of souls; and to have many teachers is a blessing to the churches of Christ and a large number of them is often not only proper, but absolutely necessary: but then this office should not be entered upon without suitable gifts, a divine mission, and a regular call by a church; and when entered into, should not be performed in a magisterial way, as lords over God's heritage, and as claiming a dominion over the faith of men, but as helpers of their joy, peace, and comfort; nor according to the commandments of men, but according to the oracles of God. Or it may be, this exhortation may have respect to censorious persons, rigid and severe reprovers of others, who take upon them, in a haughty manner, to charge and rebuke others for their faults; reproof for sin ought to be given; sin should not be suffered upon the brethren; to reprove is not blameworthy, but commendable, when it is done in a right manner, with a good spirit, and to a good end: in case of private offences, it should be privately given, and for public ones, men should be rebuked before all; but then this ought to be done in a gentle manner, and in a spirit of meekness; and when it is a clear

case, and plain matter of fact, and which ought not to be exaggerated and aggravated; mole hills are not to be made mountains of, or a man be made an offender for a word, or a matter of human frailty; and reproof should be given by persons not guilty of the same, or worse crimes, themselves, and always with a good end; not to screen and cover their own vices, or to be thought more holy and religious than others, or to satisfy a revengeful spirit, but for the glory of God, and the restoring of the person that has sinned.

Knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation: should men enter into the office of teaching others without a call, or perform it negligently, or live not according to the doctrine they teach others, such would be judged out of their own mouths, and by their own words, and their condemnation would be aggravated; and should men judge rash judgment, they themselves will be judged at a higher tribunal; and should they be too censorious, and bear too hard on others, they will have judgment without mercy.

Ver. 2. *For in many things we offend all*, etc.] Or "we all offend", slip and fall; no man lives without sin; in many, in most, if not in all things, a good man himself does, he sins; and this extends to the most solemn services, and best works of a good man; there is sin in his holy things, imperfections in all his performances; his righteousnesses are as filthy rags; hence no man can be justified by his works before God, nor is any man perfect in this life, so as to be without sin in himself: the apostle includes himself in this account, and that not out of modesty merely, or in a complaisant way, but as matter of fact, and what he found in himself, and observed in the conduct of his life: and now this is given as a reason why persons should not be anxious of teaching others, since in many instances, in common speech and conversation, men are apt to offend, and much more in a work which requires a multitude of words; or why men should be careful how they charge, censure, and reprove others, in a rash, furious, and unchristian manner; since they themselves are in the body, and may be tempted, and are attended with many infirmities, slips, and falls in common life.

If any man offend not in word; from slips and falls in general, the apostle proceeds to the slips of the tongue, and to the use and abuse of that member; and his sense is, that if a man has so much guard upon himself, and such a command over his tongue, and so much wisdom to use it, as to give no offence by it, to his fellow creatures, and fellow Christians:

the same is a perfect man; not that he is perfect in himself, and without sin, that is denied before; unless this is considered as a mere hypothesis, and by way of concession; that could there be found out a man that never, for instance, offends in word in anyone part of life, that man may be allowed, and be set down to be a perfect man; but no such man is to be found, and therefore none perfect: but rather the sense is, that he who in common is so careful of his speech, as not to offend his brethren, may be looked upon as a sincere and truly religious man; (see <3026>James 1:26) or he may be accounted a wise and prudent man, such an one as in (<3013>James 3:13) he is not a babe in understanding, a child in conduct, but a grown man; at full age; a perfect man; in which sense the word is used in (<4006>1 Corinthians 2:6 <3054>Hebrews 5:14).

And able also to bridle the whole body; either to govern the whole body, the church, to teach a society of Christians, and to feed them with knowledge, and with understanding; or rather, as he appears to be able to bridle that member of the body, the tongue, so likewise to be able, through the grace of God, to keep under the whole body, that sin shall not reign in it, or the lusts of it be in common obeyed.

Ver. 3. *Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths*, etc.] By this, and the following simile, the apostle not only expresses the smallness of that member of the body, which is like the bit in the horse's mouth, and the helm of a ship, but the good use of it, and the great influence it has over the whole body. Horses are without understanding, and need direction in what path to go, and are strong, and would be truly and ungovernable unless bits and bridles were put into their mouths:

that they may obey us; and go in the way we would have them:

and we turn about the whole body of the horse, this way, and that way, as is thought best, by the help of the bit and bridle; and of such use is the tongue to the natural body, that being bridled itself, bridles, directs, and governs the whole body; and its influence on bodies, and societies of men, and Christians, is like that of the bit in the horse's mouth; who, like horses, would be unruly and ungovernable, were it not for the force of language, the power of words, and strength of argument.

Ver. 4. *Behold also the ships, which though they be so great*, etc.] Of so large a bulk, of such a prodigious size, and are such unwieldy vessels:

and are driven of fierce winds; with great vehemence, rapidity, and swiftness:

yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth; the helm, or tiller of a ship, is a beam or piece of timber fastened into the rudder, and so coming forward into the steerage, where he that stands at helm steers the ship [f29], who is here called the governor; or "he that directs", as the word may be rendered; that is, that steers; the word for "helm" is translated rudder in (<442740>Acts 27:40), and the helm or tiller is sometimes, though improperly, called the rudder itself [f30]; and this is very small, in comparison of the bulk of the ship that is guided by it [f31]. Aristotle calls it πηδαλιον μικρον, "a small helm", as the apostle here does, and accounts for it how large ships should be moved and steered by it. And so, though the tongue is to the rest of the body as a small helm to a large ship, yet, like that, it has great influence over the whole body, to check it when it is carrying away with the force of its appetites and passions; and so churches, societies, and bodies of Christians, which are large and numerous, and are like ships upon the ocean, tossed to and fro with tempests, driven by Satan's temptations and the world's persecution, and ready to be carried away with the wind of false doctrine, yet are influenced and directed aright by those that are at the helm, the faithful ministers of the word, who say to them, this is the way, walk in it.

Ver. 5. *Even so the tongue is a little member*, etc.] Like the bit in the horse's mouth, or like the helm of a ship.

And boasteth great things: and does them; for this word may be taken in a good sense: a bridled and sanctified tongue, that is influenced by the grace of God, and directed by the Spirit of God, as it speaks great and good things, it has great power, weight, and influence: the tongue of the just is as choice silver, and the lips of the righteous feed many, (<201020>Proverbs 10:20,21), the Gospel, as preached by Christ's faithful ministers, who are the church's tongue, when it comes not in word only, but in power, is the power of God unto salvation: faith comes by hearing it, and hearing by this word; by it souls are convinced, converted, and comforted, enlightened, quickened, and sanctified.

Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth; what vast quantities of wood, large forests, stately buildings, and populous towns and cities, are at once seized on by a little fire, a few sparks, and in a short time burnt down,

and utterly destroyed. One of the proverbs of Ben Syra is, ``burning fire kindles great heaps;''

suggesting, that an evil tongue does great mischief, as did the tongue of Doeg the Edomite, as the gloss upon it observes: from hence the apostle passes to consider the abuse or vices of the tongue.

Ver. 6. *And the tongue is a fire*, etc.] It is like to fire, very useful in its place, to warm and comfort; so is the tongue in Christian conversation, and in the ministry of the word; the hearts of God's children burn within them, while they are talking together, and while the Scriptures of truth are opening to them; but as fire should be carefully watched, and kept, so should men take heed to their ways, that they sin not with their tongue, and keep their tongue from evil, and their lips from speaking guile; for as fire kindles and rises up into a flame, so unchaste, angry, and passionate words, stir up the flame of lust, anger, envy, and revenge; and as fire is of a spreading nature, so are lies, scandal, and evil reports vented by the tongue; and as fire devours all that comes in its way, such are the words of an evil tongue; and therefore are called devouring words, (Psalm 52:4) they devour the good names of men, and corrupt their good manners, and destroy those who make use of them; and what wood is to fire, and coals to burning coals, that are whisperers, tale bearers, backbiters, and contentious persons to strife, (Proverbs 26:20,21)

a world of iniquity; that is, as the world is full of things, and full of sin, for it lies in wickedness, so is the tongue full of iniquity; there is a world of it in it; it abounds with it; it cannot well be said how much sin is in it, and done, or occasioned by it; as blasphemy against God, Father, Son, and Spirit; cursing of men, imprecations on themselves, their souls, and bodies, and on others, with a multitude of profane and dreadful oaths; obscene, filthy, and unchaste words; angry, wrathful, and passionate ones; lies, flatteries, reproaches, backbitings, whisperings, tale bearings, etc. And the Jews say, that he that uses an evil tongue multiplies transgression, and that it is equal to idolatry, adultery, and murder[f32], and the cause of all sin; and which they express by way of fable, in this manner[f33]:

> "when Adam sinned, God laid hold on him, and slit his tongue into two parts, and said unto him, the wickedness which is, or shall be in the world, thou hast begun with an evil tongue; wherefore I will make all that come into the world know that thy tongue is the cause of all this."

The Syriac version renders this clause thus, “and the world of iniquity is as wood”; or the branch of a tree; the tongue is fire, and a wicked world is fuel to it.

So is the tongue amongst our members, that it defileth the whole body: the body politic, a whole nation, filling it with contention, strife, division, and confusion; and the ecclesiastical body, the church, by sowing discord, fomenting animosities, making parties, and spreading errors and heresies, whereby the temple of God is defiled; and the natural body, and the several members of it, even the whole person of a man, soul and body, bringing upon him a blot of infamy and reproach never to be wiped off; as for instance, the vice of the tongue, lying, does; and oftentimes through the tongue, the actions done in the body, which seem good, are quite spoiled:

and setteth on fire the course of nature, or “wheel of nature”: the natural body, as before, in which there is a continual rotation or circulation of the blood, by which it is supported; this is the wheel broken at the cistern at death, in (<21206>Ecclesiastes 12:6) or the course of a man's life and actions, yea, of all generations, and the vicissitudes and changes which have happened in them, on which the tongue has a great influence; and so the Syriac version renders it, “and sets on fire the series of our genealogies, or our generations, which run like wheels”: or it may intend the frame of nature, the whole fabric of the universe, and the general conflagration of it, which will be owing to the tongue; or because men's tongues are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory, because of the hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Christ and his people, of which they will be convinced by flames of fire about them:

and it is set on fire of hell; that is, by the devil; for as heaven sometimes is put for God, who dwells in heaven, (<40225>Matthew 21:25 <42518>Luke 15:18) so hell is put for the devil, whose habitation it is; (see <40168>Matthew 16:18), and the sense is, that the tongue is influenced, instigated, and stirred up by Satan, to speak many evil things, and it will be hereafter set on fire in hell, as the tongue of the rich man in (<42624>Luke 16:24). To which purpose are those words of the Talmud [f34];

> “whoever uses an evil tongue, the holy blessed God says to hell, I concerning him above, and thou concerning him below, will judge him, as it is said, (<19003>Psalm 120:3,4). “What shall be done to thee, thou false tongue? sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper”, there is no arrow but the tongue, according to

(Jeremiah 9:8) and there is no mighty one but God, (Isaiah 42:13) “coals of juniper”, µnhyg wnyyh, these are hell.”

Ver. 7. *For every kind of beasts, and of birds*, etc.] Or the “nature” of them, as it is in the Greek text; however fierce, as beasts of prey are, or shy, as the fowls of the air be:

and of serpents and things in the sea; the fishes there:

is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind, or “by human nature”: by the wit and industry of man; by the various ways, means, and methods devised by man. So Pliny [f35] relates, that elephants lions and tigers among beasts, and the eagle among birds, and crocodiles, asps, and other serpents, and fishes of the sea, have been tamed: though some think this is only to be understood of their being mastered and subdued, by one means or another; or of their being despoiled of their power, or of their poison: and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, “subjected to human nature”.

Ver. 8. *But the tongue can no man tame*, etc.] Either his own, or others; not his own, for the man that has the greatest guard upon himself, his words and actions; yet, what through pride or passion, or one lust or another in his heart, at one time or another, bolts out vain, idle, angry, and sinful words: and he that does not may be set down for a perfect man indeed: nor can he tame or restrain the tongues of others from detraction, calumnies, backbitings, and whisperings; who say, their lips are their own, and who is Lord over us? no man can, by his own power and strength, tame or subdue his tongue, or restrain it from evils it is habituated to, be it lying, cursing, swearing, or what else: God, by his Spirit, power, and grace, can, and often does, change the note of the curser, swearer, liar, and blasphemer; but no man can do this, though he can tame beasts, birds, serpents, and fishes; which shows the tongue to be worse than anything to be found in the whole compass of nature:

[it is an] unruly evil: an evil it is, for it is a world of iniquity; and an unruly one, being more so than the horse and mule, which are without understanding, who are kept in and governed, and turned any way by the bit and bridle: but though in nature the tongue is fenced by a double fence of the lips and teeth, this is not sufficient to restrain it; it breaks all bounds, and is not to be kept in by nature, art, or argument: nothing but the grace of God can in any measure govern it, or lay an embargo on it:

full of deadly poison, which, privately, secretly, and gradually, destroys the characters, credit, and reputation of men; and is of fatal consequence in families, neighbourhoods, churches, and states.

Ver. 9. *Therewith bless we God, even, the Father*, etc.] Of Jesus Christ, and of spirits, and of mercies: this is the instrument that is used in blessing God daily every meal that is eaten; and in joining with the saints, though only verbally and outwardly, in blessing God for all spiritual blessings in Christ, both in prayer, and in singing psalms:

and therewith curse we men: make imprecations, and wish evils upon them:

which are made after the similitude of God as man was originally, (Genesis 1:26,27) and though sin has greatly defaced it, yet there are still some remains of it: and now, what an absurd and monstrous thing is this, that one and the same instrument should be used in blessing God, the Father of all creatures, and in cursing his children, his offering, as all men are by creation, and bear some resemblance to him.

Ver. 10. *Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing*, etc.] Which is not only a contradiction, but unnatural, as well as wicked and sinful:

my brethren, these things ought not so to be: in any, and much less in professors of religion: such things are unbecoming men, are a scandal upon human nature, and exceeding unworthy of the Christian name; (see Psalm 50:16,19,20).

Ver. 11. *Doth a fountain send forth at the same place*, etc.] "Or hole"; for at divers places, and at different times, as Pliny [f36] observes, it may send forth

sweet [water] and bitter: and it is reported [f37], there is a lake with the Trogloditae, a people in Ethiopia, which becomes thrice a day bitter, and then as often sweet; but then it does not yield sweet water and bitter at the same time: this simile is used to show how unnatural it is that blessing and cursing should proceed out of the same mouth.

Ver. 12. *Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries*? etc.] Every tree bears fruit, according to its kind; a fig tree produces figs, and an olive tree olive berries; a fig tree does not produce olive berries, or an olive tree figs; and neither of them both:

either a vine, figs? or fig trees, grapes; or either of them, figs and grapes:

so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. The Alexandrian copy reads, “neither can the salt water yield sweet water”; that is, the sea cannot yield sweet or fresh water: the Syriac version renders it, “neither can salt water be made sweet”: but naturalists say, it may be made sweet, by being strained through sand: the design of these similes is to observe how absurd a thing it is that a man should both bless and curse with his tongue.

Ver. 13. *Who is a wise man*.] Meaning, not in things natural and civil, or merely moral, but in things spiritual: and he is a wise man, who is both wise to do good, and wise unto salvation; who has learned to know his own ignorance, folly, and stupidity; for the first lesson in the school of spiritual wisdom is for a man to know that he is a fool: and he is a wise man who considers his latter end, thinks of a future state, and what will become of him in another world; and who builds his faith and hope of eternal salvation on the sure and only foundation, the rock Christ Jesus; and who takes up a profession of religion upon principles of grace, and with views to the glory of God, and, upon mature deliberation, reckoning the cost, and what he must expect to meet with; and which he holds fast, without wavering, and yet does not depend upon it; and who walks circumspectly, and with wisdom, towards them that are without; and who observes both providences and promises, for the encouragement of his faith; and keeps looking to the mark for the prize, preferring heavenly things to earthly ones.

And endued with knowledge amongst you? as he is, who is endued with the knowledge of himself; of the impurity of his nature, and the plague of his heart; and of his impotency and inability to do any thing that is spiritually good of himself; and of the imperfection and insufficiency of his righteousness to justify him before God; and of his lost state and condition by nature, how deserving of the wrath of God, and obnoxious to the curses of the law; and how miserable he must be without the grace of God and righteousness of Christ: and who is also endued with the knowledge of Christ, so as to see a fulness, suitableness, and ability in him as a Saviour; so as to love him, approve of him, as such, and trust in him; which knowledge is always practical and soul humbling; and the least degree of it saving; and though it is imperfect, it is growing, and will at last come to perfection: now such a man is a Gnostic, in the best sense; for this question is put with a view to the Gnostics of those times, who valued themselves

upon their knowledge, and despised practical religion and godliness: hence it follows,

let him show out of a good conversation his works, with meekness of wisdom; such an one ought to perform good works, and he will perform them; and it is right in him to show them forth, that they may be a means of others glorifying God upon the sight of them; and that they may be evidences of the truth of faith in themselves to others; and that they may be for the imitation of others; and that they may put to silence, and stop the mouths of false accusers, and adorn the Gospel, and recommend religion: and these should be shown forth "out of a good conversation"; not in a single act or two, but in a series and course of living; which may be said to be good, when it is ordered aright, according to the word of God, and is honest among the Gentiles, and upright and holy; and is as becomes the Gospel of Christ, and is worthy of the calling of God to grace and glory; and when it is influenced by the grace of God: and the works shown out of it, and in it, are done in faith, from love in the strength of Christ, and are directed to the glory of God: and all this should be "with meekness of wisdom"; in a wise and humble manner, without trusting to, and depending upon, such works for justification and salvation; and without glorying in them, and boasting of them; acknowledging the deficiency and imperfection of them, and his own weakness in the performance of them; and ascribing them to the power and grace of God, by the assistance of which they are performed.

Ver. 14. *But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts*, etc.] Though these may not be expressed by words, or actions: envy at the happiness of others, whether at the external blessings of Providence, as riches and honours, or at the internal endowments of their minds, as their wisdom and knowledge, their parts and abilities, is a root of bitterness in the heart, which bears wormwood and gall, and produces bitter effects in the persons in whom it is; it embitters their minds against their neighbours and friends; it is rottenness in their bones, and slays and destroys those who are so silly as to be governed by it; and also in the persons the objects of it; for who can stand before it? and strife in the mind, or an intention to strive end quarrel with others, who are the objects of envy, is very sinful, and of pernicious consequence: and if these be fomented and cherished in the minds and breasts of men, though they may not outwardly show themselves, yet

glory not; let not such boast of their being Gnostics, wise men, and endued with knowledge; they are far from deserving such a character; and such boasting is contrary to truth, yea, is lying against it, as follows:

and lie not against the truth; for, for a man to assert himself to be a wise and knowing man, and yet cherishes bitterness in his heart, and quarrelling and contention in his mind, arising from envy, at the equal or superior knowledge of others, he lies both against the truth of God's word and his own conscience, which condemn such things as ignorance, folly, and madness.

Ver. 15. *This wisdom descendeth not from above*, etc.] If it must be called wisdom, as it ought not; an envious, quarrelsome, and contentious spirit, does not deserve such a name; yet if any will call it so, or can think that a man of such a disposition is a man possessed of wisdom; it is such wisdom as does not come from above, from heaven, from the Father of lights, from Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and from the spirit of wisdom and revelation: what the Jews say [f38] of the wisdom of Egypt, may be said of this, that it is hatt hmkj "wisdom from below", or inferior wisdom, as it follows:

but is earthly, sensual, and devilish; it is "earthly", or of the earth, and springs from thence; and it is only conversant about earthly things, and is only suitable to earthly minds: it is sensual, or natural; what a natural man, one destitute of the Spirit of God, and without the knowledge of the things of the Spirit, may have; it is what is acquired by the mere strength of nature, and only relates to natural things; and is only agreeable to corrupt nature, or to a natural and unregenerate man: yea, it is devilish, or such as the devil himself has; and which comes from him, and being used, serves only his kingdom and interest.

Ver. 16. *For where envying and strife is*, etc.] Where these are cherished in the heart, and especially where they break out into action, in families, neighbourhoods, states, or churches:

there is confusion and every evil work; these occasion disturbances, raise uneasiness, make disquietude, and cause tumults whenever they appear; and put persons upon doing everything that is wicked, to gratify such insatiable lusts.

Ver. 17. *But the wisdom that is from above*, etc.] Which has God for its author; which is infused into the soul by the Spirit of God; and leads into the knowledge of things that are above, of heavenly things; and which only is true wisdom and knowledge; and those who are possessed of it are the only true Gnostics; for which, (See Gill on "James 3:13") namely, the grace of God: this wisdom

is first pure; it is pure in itself, it is free from everything that is earthly, carnal, or sensual, or devilish; it produces purity of heart, of life, and conversation; and is the means of keeping persons pure and chaste, and free from impure lusts, lusts of uncleanness, pride, envy, wrath, etc. which prevail in carnal and unregenerate men:

and then peaceable; it inclines and engages those who have it to live in peace with the saints, and even with all men; with those of their own household, with their neighbours, yea, with their enemies: it is also "gentle"; or makes men gentle, moderate, and humane, so as that they bear, and forbear; they bear with the infirmities of the weak; readily forgive injuries done them; do not rigidly exact what is their due, but recede from their just right for the sake of peace and love; and do not bear hard upon others for their failings, but cover them with the mantle of love: and it is

easy to be treated; or those who have it readily yield to the superior judgments and stronger reasonings of others; and are easily induced to hope and believe all things, and entertain a good opinion of men, and their conduct; and are far from being proud, arrogant, obstinate, and overbearing:

full of mercy and good fruits; of compassion and beneficence to the poor; feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the widows and fatherless in their affliction; and doing all other good works and duties, both with respect to God and man, as fruits of grace, and of the Spirit:

without partiality: to one another; or making a difference between them; showing no respect to persons; bestowing upon the poor and indigent, without any distinction: and

without hypocrisy; either with respect to God or man; not making show of that which they have not, or do not intend.

Ver. 18. *And the fruit of righteousness*, etc.] Which is either eternal life, which is the fruit of Christ's righteousness, and shall be enjoyed by all those

who are justified by it; and who, in consequence of it, through the grace of God, live soberly, righteously, and godly; (see Romans 6:22) or else what is enjoyed in this life, as the fruit and effect of a righteous and holy conversation, which is peace of conscience; and may be truly called the peaceable fruit of righteousness; (see Isaiah 32:17)

is sown in peace of them that make peace; that is, either such as are possessed of that wisdom which is peaceable, and makes them so; that peace which they make, pursue after, exercise, and maintain, is a seed, which, being sown by them, will, in the issue, be followed with eternal happiness and felicity; (see Matthew 5:9) or such who live a godly life and conversation, and are filled with the fruits of righteousness, and, among the rest, with this of making and preserving peace among men, shall enjoy, as what will spring up from such good seed sown, much conscience peace and spiritual pleasure of mind: righteousness and peace promise a large and comfortable harvest both here and hereafter.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO JAMES 4

In this chapter the apostle gives the true cause of contentions and strifes; and cautions against intemperance, covetousness, pride, detraction, and vain confidence. Having, in the latter part of the preceding chapter, inveighed against strife and contention, he here shows from whence they spring, from a covetous desire of riches and honour; and which yet are not obtained, because they did not ask these things of God with submission to his will; or they asked with a wrong view, namely, to gratify their lusts, (James 4:1,3) and he dissuades from such unlawful desires, partly because they were no other than adultery; and partly because indulging them was declaring themselves enemies of God, (James 4:4) and he deters from pride, under the name of envy, proud men being generally envious; from the sense of the Scripture, which says, not in vain, that the spirit lusts unto it; and from the consequence of it, such as are proud being resisted by the Lord, when he gives more grace to humble ones, (James 4:5,6) hence follow several exhortations, and various duties relating to humility; as to submit to God, and resist the devil, encouraged thereunto by this motive, he will flee, (James 4:7), to draw nigh to God in a way of religious worship, who will draw nigh in a way of grace to his people; to purity of action, and of heart, or to that which is outward and inward, (James 4:8) to be humbled, mourn, and weep, instead of joy and laughter, (James 4:9) to lie low before the Lord, who will raise such up, (James 4:10) and not to speak evil of anyone, since this is judging a brother; nay, a speaking evil of the law, and a judging of that; which is to invade the prerogative of God, the lawgiver, who is able to save, and to destroy; and therefore one man should not take upon him to judge another, (James 4:11,12) and as another instance of great neglect of God, and his providence, and disrespect unto it, the apostle takes notice of a common practice among men, and even professors of religion, who resolve to go to such a place, and continue so long, and there make merchandise, and promise themselves success; not considering what frail short lived creatures they are, and how much all depends upon the will of God; and which they should consider, submit to, and be determined by, (James

4:13-15) and he reproves them for their boastings and joy in them, as evil, (⁵⁹46James 4:16), and observes, that it is not enough to know what is right and good, unless it is done; and that such knowledge is but an aggravation of the evil of sin committed, (⁵⁹47James 4:17).

Ver. 1. *From whence come wars and fightings among you*? etc.] Which are to be understood, not of public and national wars, such as might be between the Jews and other nations at this time; for the apostle is not writing to the Jews in Judea, as a nation, or body politic, but to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, and to such of them as were Christians; nor were Christians in general as yet increased, and become such large bodies, or were whole nations become Christians, and much less at war one against another, which has been the case since; and which, when it is, generally speaking arises from a lust after an increase of power; from the pride and ambitious views of men, and their envy at the happiness of other princes and states: nor do these design theological debates and disputes, or contentions about religious principles; but rather lawsuits, commenced before Heathen magistrates, by the rich, to the oppression of the poor; (see ⁵⁹26James 2:6) though it seems best of all to interpret them of those stirs and bustlings, strifes, contentions, and quarrels, about honours and riches; endeavouring to get them by unlawful methods, at least at the expense of their own peace, and that of others:

[come they] not hence, [even] of your lusts that war in your members? as pride, envy, covetousness, ambition, etc. which, like so many soldiers, are stationed and quartered in the members of the body, and war against the soul; for in the believer, or converted man, however, there is as it were two armies; a law in the members, warring against the law of the mind; the flesh against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and from this inward war arise external ones; or at least from the corruption of nature, which militates against all that is good, all quarrels and contentions, whether public or private, of a greater or lesser nature, and consequence, spring.

Ver. 2. *Ye lust, and have not*, etc.] The apostle proceeds to show the unsuccessfulness of many in their desires and pursuits after worldly things; some might be like the sluggard, whose soul desireth all good things, and yet he has nothing, (²⁰04Proverbs 13:4) because he does not make use of any means, even of such as are proper and necessary, and ought to be used:

ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain; some, instead of kill, which seems not so agreeable, read envy; and then the sense is, they envy at the

good and happiness of others, and covet after another's property, but cannot enjoy it; all such envy and covetousness are fruitless, as well as sinful:

ye fight and war, yet ye have not; go to law one with another about each other's property; or rather, make a great stir and hustle to get the things of the world; rise early, and sit up late; strive who should get most, and quarrel about what is gotten, and seek to get all advantages of one another; and yet still have not, what at least is desired and strove for:

because ye ask not; of God, whose blessing only makes rich: instead of all this worldly stir and bustle, and these strivings and quarrellings with one another, it would be much more advisable, and, in the issue, be found to turn to more account, to pray to God for a blessing on your endeavours; and to ask of him the good and necessary things of life, in submission to his will, and with thankfulness for what he has bestowed.

Ver. 3. *Ye ask, and receive not*, etc.] Some there were that did ask of God the blessings of his goodness and providence, and yet these were not bestowed on them; the reason was,

because ye ask amiss; not in the faith of a divine promise; nor with thankfulness for past mercies; nor with submission to the will of God; nor with a right end, to do good to others, and to make use of what might be bestowed, for the honour of God, and the interest of Christ: but

that ye may consume it upon your lusts; indulge to intemperance and luxury; as the man that had much goods laid up for many years did, to the neglect of his own soul, (<42>Luke 12:19) or the rich man, who spent all upon his back and his belly, and took no notice of Lazarus at his gate; (<42>Luke 16:19).

Ver. 4. *Ye adulterers and adulteresses*, etc.] Not who were literally such, but in a figurative and metaphorical sense: as he is an adulterer that removes his affections from his own wife, and sets them upon another woman; and she is an adulteress that loves not her husband, but places her love upon another man; so such men and women are adulterers and adulteresses, who, instead of loving God, whom they ought to love with all their hearts and souls, set their affections upon the world, and the things of it: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word “adulteresses”: these the apostle addresses in the following manner;

know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? that an immoderate love for the good things of the world, and a prevailing desire after the evil things of it, and a delight in the company and conversation of the men of the world, and a conformity to, and compliance with, the sinful manners and customs of the world, are so many declarations of war with God, and acts of hostility upon him; and show the enmity of the mind against him, and must be highly displeasing to him, and resented by him:

whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God; whoever is in league with the one must be an enemy to the other; God and mammon cannot be loved and served by the same persons, at the same time; the one will be loved, and the other hated; the one will be attended to, and the other neglected: this may be known both from reason and from Scripture, particularly from (<40624>Matthew 6:24).

Ver. 5. *Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain*? etc.] Some think that the apostle refers to a particular passage of Scripture in the Old Testament, and that he took it from (<10603>Genesis 6:3) as some; or from (<20205>Exodus 20:5), as others; or from (<50702>Deuteronomy 7:2,5) or from (<18506>Job 5:6) or from (<20210>Proverbs 21:10) others think he had in view some text in the New Testament; either (<45612>Romans 12:2) or (<48517>Galatians 5:17) and some have imagined that he refers to a passage in the apocryphal book:

> "For into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter; nor dwell in the body that is subject unto sin." (Wisdom 1:4)

and others have been of opinion that it is taken out of some book of Scripture then extant, but now lost, which by no means can be allowed of: the generality of interpreters, who suppose a particular text of Scripture is referred to, fetch it from (<04129>Numbers 11:29) but it seems best of all to conclude that the apostle has no regard to any one particular passage of Scripture, in which the following words are expressly had, since no such passage appears; but that his meaning is, the sense of the Scripture everywhere, where it speaks of this matter, is to this purpose: nor does it say this, or any thing else in vain; whatever is written there is to answer some end, as for learning, edification, and comfort, for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness; neither with respect to what is before suggested, that what is asked in a right manner, and for a right end, shall be given; and that the love of the world, and the love of God, are things incompatible; nor with respect to what follows:

the spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? that is, the depraved spirit of man, the spirit of an unregenerate man; that as it is prone to every lust, and prompts to every sin, the imagination of the thought of man's heart being evil, and that continually, so it instigates to envy the happiness of others; (see <01065>Genesis 6:5 8:21) or this may be put as a distinct question from the other, “does the spirit that dwelleth in us lust to envy?” that is, the Holy Spirit, who dwells in the hearts of his people, as in his temple: the Ethiopic version reads, “the Holy Spirit”: and then the sense is, does he lust to envy? no; he lusts against the flesh and the works of it, and envy among the rest; (see <48517>Galatians 5:17,21) but he does not lust to it, or provoke to it, or put persons upon it; nor does he, as the Arabic version renders it, “desire that we should envy”; he is a spirit of grace; he bestows grace and favours upon men; and is so far from envying, or putting others upon envying any benefit enjoyed by men, that he increases them, adds to them, and enlarges them, as follows.

Ver. 6. *But he giveth more grace*, etc.] The Arabic version adds, “to us”; the Ethiopic version, “to you”; and the Syriac version reads the whole thus; “but our Lord gives more grace to us”; or “greater grace”; than the world can give, whose friendship is courted by men; the least measure of grace, of faith, and hope, and love, and of a spiritual knowledge of Christ, and interest in him, and of peace, joy, and comfort, is more worth than all the world, and everything in it: or greater grace, more favours than the saints are able to ask or think; so Solomon had more favours given him than he could think of asking for: or greater grace, and larger measures of it, even of spiritual light and knowledge, under the Gospel dispensation, than under the former dispensation; or where God bestows gifts qualifying for service and usefulness, and these are made use of and employed for such purposes, he gives more: or this may refer to internal grace wrought by the Spirit of God, in the hearts of his people; more of which he may be said to give, when he causes it to abound, as to its acts and exercises; when faith grows exceedingly, hope revives, and is lively, and abounds through his power and influence, and love to God and Christ, and one another, abounds yet more and more; when there is a growth in every grace, and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus, so that this grace becomes a well of living waters, springing up into eternal life, which at last will have its perfection in glory:

wherefore he saith; either the Spirit that gives more grace, or the Scripture, or God in the Scripture, in (<20334>Proverbs 3:34),

God resisteth the proud: or scorns the scorners; he rejects them that trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others; that say, Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou; that are proud of themselves, their enjoyments, their gifts, their external righteousness, and holiness, and are full, and rich, and increased with goods, and stand in need of nothing; these he opposes, he sets himself against, he thrusts them away from him, he sends them away empty, and scatters them in the imagination of their own hearts; and in the things in which they deal proudly, he is above them; he sits in the heavens and laughs at them, and frustrates all their schemes:

but he giveth grace unto the humble; who are sensible of their own vileness and meanness, and acknowledge it; who think the meanest of themselves, and the best of others; and do not envy the gifts and graces of God bestowed upon others, but rejoice at them; and ascribe all they have, and are, to the free grace of God; and ingenuously confess the deficiency of their duties, and the insufficiency of their righteousness to justify them before God; and that when they have done all they can, or are assisted to do, they are but unprofitable servants: now to these God gives grace; he not only gives grace at first, to make them humble, but he gives them more grace, or increases what he gives: grace is God's gift; he gives all the grace that is in Christ, and all the blessings of grace that are in the covenant, and all the grace that is in the hearts of his people; as faith, hope, love, repentance, humility, patience, self-denial, resignation to his will, and every degree of spiritual knowledge; and grace is only his gift; men cannot give it to themselves, nor can the best of men give it to others; not godly parents to their children; nor ministers to those to whom they preach; no, nor the angels in heaven; nor is it to be obtained by the works of men: it is a free gift; it is given of the sovereign will and good pleasure of God, to whom, and when, and in what measure he pleases; to which he is not induced by any motives in men, for they have nothing in them to move him to it; and it is given by him absolutely, without conditions, not suspending it till the performance of them; and he gives it cheerfully and not grudgingly, largely, bountifully, and in great abundance.

Ver. 7. *Submit yourselves therefore to God*, etc.] To the will of God, with respect to worldly things, and be content with such things as are enjoyed, and be satisfied with the portion that is allotted; it is right and best for the people of God to leave themselves with him, to choose their inheritance for them, since by all their anxious cares, their striving and struggling, their impatient desires, wars and fightings, as they cannot add one cubit to their

stature, so nothing to their worldly substance; and it becomes them to submit to God in all afflictive dispensations of his providence, and be still and know that he is God; as well as to submit to his way and method of salvation by Christ, and particularly to the righteousness of Christ, for justification; and to depend upon him for supplies of grace in the discharge of every duty, and the exercise of every grace:

resist the devil, [and] he will flee from you; Satan is to be looked upon as an enemy, and to be opposed as such, and to be watched and guarded against; the whole armour of God should be taken and made use of, particularly the weapon of prayer, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and the shield of faith; and also the grace of humility, than which nothing is more opposite to him: he is a proud spirit, and he endeavours to swell men with pride of themselves; and when he has worked them up to such a pitch, he is then master of them, and can manage them as he pleases; but a poor humble believer, with whom God dwells, to whom he gives more grace, and who comes forth not in his own strength, but in the strength of the Lord God, as David against Goliath, and who owns his vileness and sinfulness, and flies to the grace of God, and blood of Christ, Satan knows not what to do with him, he is puzzled, baffled, and confounded; such he leaves, from such he flees; he does not like the power of prayer, nor the strength of faith, nor the sharpness of the twoedged sword, the word of God, nor the humble believer's staff, bag, scrip, and sling.

Ver. 8. *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you*, etc.] This must be understood consistently with the perfection of God's immensity and omnipresence: the saints draw nigh to God when they present their bodies in his sanctuary; when they tread in his courts, and attend his ordinances; where they always find it good for them to draw nigh unto him; and blessed is the man that approaches to him in faith and fear: they draw nigh to him when they come to the throne of his grace, for grace and mercy to help them; when they draw near to him in prayer with true hearts, and lift them up with their hands to God; when in the exercise of faith and hope they enter within the vail, and come up even to his seat; and lay hold on him as their covenant God and Father; and he draws nigh to them by granting them his gracious presence, by communicating his love to them, by applying the blessings of his grace, by helping them in times of need and distress, and by protecting them from their enemies; the contrary to which is expressed by standing afar off from them. Now this is not to be

understood as if men could first draw nigh to God, before he draws nigh to them; for as God first loves, so he first moves; he takes the first step, and, in conversion, turns and draws men to himself; though this does not respect first conversion, but after acts in consequence of it; nor is it to be considered as a condition of the grace and favour of God, in drawing nigh to his people, but is expressive of what is their duty, and an encouragement to it:

cleanse [your] hands, ye sinners, and purify [your] hearts, ye double minded; the persons addressed are not the profane men of the world, but sinners in Zion, formal professors, hypocritical persons; who speak with a double tongue to men, and who draw nigh to God with their mouths, but not with their hearts; who halt between two opinions, and are unstable in all their ways: cleansing of their hands and hearts denotes the purity of outward conversation, and of the inward affections; and supposes impurity both of flesh and spirit, that the body and all its members, the soul and all its powers and faculties, are unclean; and yet not that men have a power to cleanse themselves, either from the filth of an external conversation, or from inward pollution of the heart; though a man attempts the one, he fails in it; and who can say he has done the other? (Job 9:30,31 Proverbs 20:9). This is not to be done by ceremonial ablutions, moral services, or evangelical ordinances; this is God's work only, as appears from his promises to cleanse his people from their sins, by sprinkling clean water upon them; from the end of Christ's shedding his blood, and the efficacy of it; and from the prayers of the saints, that God would wash them thoroughly from their iniquity, and cleanse them from their sin, and create clean hearts in them: and yet such exhortations are not in vain, since they may be useful to convince men of their pollution, who are pure in their own eyes, as these hypocritical, nominal professors, might be; and to bring them to a sense of their inability to cleanse themselves, and of the necessity of being cleansed elsewhere; and to lead them to inquire after the proper means of cleansing, and so to the fountain of Christ's blood, which only cleanses from all sin.

Ver. 9. *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep*, etc.] Not in a bare external way; not by afflicting the body with fastings and scourgings, by renting of garments, and clothing with sackcloth, and putting ashes on the head, and other such outward methods of humiliation; but afflicting the soul is meant, an inward mourning and weeping over the plague of the heart, the impurity of nature, and the various sins of life; after a godly sort, and because

contrary to a God of infinite love and grace; in an evangelical way, looking to Jesus, and being affected with the pardoning grace and love of God in Christ.

Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness; meaning their carnal joy, on account of their friendship with the world, and their enjoyment of the things of it, since they consumed them on their lusts, and which betrayed enmity to God.

Ver. 10. *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord*, etc.] Which is done, when men, before the Lord, and from their hearts, and in the sincerity of their souls, acknowledge their meanness and unworthiness, their vileness, sinfulness, and wretchedness, and implore the grace and mercy of God in Christ, as did Abraham, Jacob, Job, Isaiah, Paul, and the publican; and when they walk humbly with God, acknowledging they can do nothing without him; owning their dependence on his grace, and ascribing all they have, and are, unto it:

and he shall lift you up; this is God's usual way to lift up the meek, and exalt those that humble themselves; he lifts them from the dunghill, to set them among princes; he gives them a place, and a name in his house, better than sons and daughters; he adorns them with his grace; he clothes them with the righteousness of his Son, he grants them nearness to himself; and at last will introduce them into his kingdom and glory.

Ver. 11. *Speak not evil one of another, brethren*, etc.] The apostle here returns to his former subject, concerning the vices of the tongue, he had been upon in the preceding chapter, (James 3:6-10), and here mentions one, which professors of religion were too much guilty of, and that is, speaking evil one of another; which is done either by raising false reports, and bringing false charges; or by aggravating failings and infirmities; or by lessening and depreciating characters, and endeavouring to bring others into discredit and disesteem among men: this is a very great evil, and what the men of the world do, and from them it is expected; but for the saints to speak evil one of another, to sit and speak against a brother, and slander an own mother's son, is barbarous and unnatural.

He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; he that is a talebearer and backbites his brother, his fellow member, and detracts from his good name and character, and takes upon him to judge his heart, and his state, as well as,

to condemn his actions, he speaks evil of the law; and judges and condemns that, as if that forbid a thing that was lawful, even tale bearing and detraction, (Leviticus 19:16), or by speaking evil of him for a good thing he does, he blames and condemns the law, as though it commanded a thing that was evil; and by passing sentence upon his brother, he takes upon him the province of the law, which is to accuse, charge, convince, pronounce guilty, and condemn:

but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law; as is a duty, and would best become:

but a judge; and so such a person not only infringes the right of the law, but assumes the place of the Judge and lawgiver himself; whereas, as follows,

Ver. 12. *There is one lawgiver*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and others, and the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Vulgate Latin versions, add, “and judge”. Who is the one only Lord God, (Isaiah 33:22). This is a character that may be applied to God the Father, who gave the law to the people of Israel, both the judicial and ceremonial law, and also the moral law; from his right hand went a fiery law, and to him belongs the giving of it; and also to the Son of God, the Lord Jesus who is King of saints, and lawgiver in his house; who has given out commandments to be observed, and laws of discipline for the right ordering of his house, and kingdom, to be regarded; and particularly the new commandment of love, which is eminently called the law of Christ; and which is most apparently broke, by detraction and speaking evil one of another: now there may be inferior and subordinate lawgivers, as Judah is said to be God's lawgiver, and Moses is said to command the Jews a law; yet there is but one supreme, universal, and perfect lawgiver, who is God; and though there may be many lawgivers in things political, whose legislative power is to be obeyed, both for the Lord's sake, and for conscience sake; yet in things religious, and relating to conscience, God is the only lawgiver, who is to be hearkened unto:

who is able to save, and to destroy; this is true of God the Father, who is able to save, and does save by his Son Jesus Christ, and even persons that have broken the law he has given, and are liable to the curse and condemnation of it; and he is able to save them according to that law, in perfect consistence with it, and with his justice and holiness, since Christ, by whom he saves, was made under it, and has fulfilled it; and that Christ is mighty to save, able to save to the uttermost, is certain from the Scripture,

and all experience; and God, the lawgiver, is able to destroy both body and soul in hell, for the transgressions of his law; and even Christ the Lamb is also the lion of the tribe of Judah, who will break his enemies in pieces, as a potter's vessel, and punish the contemners of his Gospel with everlasting destruction, from his presence and glory: in a word, God, the lawgiver, is sovereign, and can destroy, or save, whom he pleases; he is able to save the brother that is spoken against, and to destroy him that speaks against him:

who art thou that judgest another? another man's servant, as in (Romans 14:4) or "thy neighbour", as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read; or "the neighbour", as the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin version; that is, any brother, friend, or neighbour, in the manner as before observed in the preceding verse.

Ver. 13. *Go to now, ye that say*, etc.] The apostle passes from exposing the sin of detraction, and rash judgment, to inveigh against those of presumption and self-confidence; and the phrase, "go to now", is a note of transition, as well as of attention, and contains the form of a solemn and grave address to persons, who either think within themselves, or vocally express, the following words, or the like unto them:

today, or tomorrow, we will go into such a city; in such a country, a place of great trade and merchandise; as Tyre then was in Phoenicia, Thessalonica in Macedonia, Ephesus in Asia, and others: some render this as an imperative, or as an exhortation, "let us go", which does not alter the sense.

And continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain; as is customary for merchants to do; nor does the apostle design by this to condemn merchandise, and the lawful practice of buying and selling, and getting gain; but that men should not resolve upon those things without consulting God, and attending to his will, and subjecting themselves to it; and without considering the uncertainty and frailty of human life; as well as should not promise and assure themselves of success, of getting gain and riches, as if those things were in their own power, and had no dependence upon the providence and blessing of God.

Ver. 14. *Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow*, etc.] Whether there would be a morrow for them or not, whether they should live till tomorrow; and if they should, they knew not what a morrow would bring forth, or what things would happen, which might prevent their intended

journey and success: no man can secure a day, an hour, a moment, and much less a year of continuance in this life; nor can he foresee what will befall him today or tomorrow; therefore it is great stupidity to determine on this, and the other, without the leave of God, in whom he lives, moves, and has his being; and by whose providence all events are governed and directed; (see <27>Proverbs 27:1)

for what is your life? of what kind and nature is it? what assurance can be had of the continuance of it? by what may it be expressed? or to what may it be compared?

it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away; which rises out of the earth, or water, and expires almost as soon as it exists; at least, continues but a very short time, and is very weak and fleeting, and carried about here and there, and soon returns from whence it came: the allusion is to the breath of man, which is in his nostrils, and who is not to be accounted of, or depended on.

Ver. 15. *For that ye ought to say*, etc.] Instead of saying we will go to such and such a place, and do this, and that, and the other thing, it should be said,

if the Lord will, and we shall live, and do this and that; the last "and" is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; and the passage rendered thus, "if the Lord will, and we shall live, we will do this": so that here are two conditions of doing anything; the one is, if it should be agreeable to the determining will and purpose of God, by which everything in the world comes to pass, and into which the wills of men should be resolved, and resigned; and the other is, if we should live, since life is so very uncertain and precarious: and the sense is, not that this exact form of words should be always used, but what is equivalent to them, or, at least, that there should be always a sense of these things upon the mind; and there should be a view to them in all resolutions, designs, and engagements: and since the words are so short and comprehensive, it might be proper for Christians to use themselves to such a way of speaking; upon all occasions; we find it used by the Apostle Paul frequently, as in (<441802>Acts 18:2 <460419>1 Corinthians 4:19 <450110>Romans 1:10 <580603>Hebrews 6:3), and even by Jews, Heathens, and Turks. It is a saying of Ben Syra, the Jew [f39],

> "let a man never say he will do anything, before he says µçh rzwg µa, "if God will""

So Cyrus, king of Persia, when, under pretence of hunting, he designed an expedition into Armenia, upon which an hare started, and was caught by an eagle, said to his friends, this will be a good or prosperous hunting to us, ην ψεος ψελη, "if God will" [f40]. And very remarkable are the words of Socrates to Alcibiades, inquiring of him how he ought to speak; says Socrates, εας ψεος εψελη, "if God will" [f41]; and says he, in another place [f42],

"but I will do this, and come unto thee tomorrow, "if God will"."

And it is reported of the Turks [f43], that they submit everything to the divine will; as the success of war, or a journey, or anything, even of the least moment, they desire to be done; and never promise themselves, or others, anything, but under this condition, "In Shallah", if God will.

Ver. 16. *But now ye rejoice in your boastings*, etc.] Of tomorrow, and of the continuance of life, and of going to such a place, and abiding there for such a time, and of trading and trafficking with great success, to the obtaining of much gain and riches; (see <scripRef passage="Proverbs 27:1" />)

all such rejoicing is evil; wicked and atheistical, as expressing a neglect of and independence on Providence; arrogating and ascribing too much to themselves, their power and will, as if they had their lives and fortunes in their own hands, and at their own dispose, when all depend upon the will of God. The Syriac version renders it, "all such rejoicing is from evil"; from an evil heart, and from the evil one, Satan.

Ver. 17. *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good*, etc.] This may regard not only the last particular of referring all things to the will of God, the sovereign disposer of life, and all events, which some might have the knowledge of in theory, though they did not practise according to it; but all the good things the apostle had exhorted to, and the contrary to which he had warned from, in this epistle; and suggests, that a Gnostic, or one that knows the will of God, in the several branches of it, revealed in his word,

and doth it not, to him it is sin: it is a greater sin; it is an aggravated one; it is criminal in him that is ignorant of what is good, and does that which is evil, nor shall he escape punishment; but it is much more wicked in a man that knows what is right and good, and ought to be done, and does it not, but that which is evil, and his condemnation will be greater; (see <scripRef passage="Luke 12:47" />,<scripRef passage="48" />). The omission of a known duty, as well as the commission of a known sin, is criminal.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO JAMES 5

In this chapter the apostle reproves the vices of rich men, and denounces the judgments of God upon them; exhorts the saints to patience under sufferings; warns them from vain and profane swearing, and presses to various duties and branches of religious worship, private and public, and to the performance of several good offices of love to one another. He represents the miseries of wicked rich men as just at hand, (⁵⁹⁰⁰¹James 5:1) because they made no use of their riches, either for themselves, or others, and because of the trust they put in them, heaping them up against a time to come, (⁵⁹⁰⁰²James 5:2,3), and because of their injustice in detaining the hire of labourers from them, (⁵⁹⁰⁰⁴James 5:4) and because of their wantonness and luxury, (⁵⁹⁰⁰⁵James 5:5) and because of their cruelty to the innocent, (⁵⁹⁰⁰⁶James 5:6) and such who suffer at their hands are exhorted to exercise patience, from the instance of the husbandman waiting patiently for the fruit of the earth, and the rain to produce it; and from the consideration of the coming of Christ, the Judge, being near at hand, (⁵⁹⁰⁰⁷James 5:7-9) and from the example of the prophets of the Lord, who suffered much, and were patient, and so happy; and particularly from the instance of Job, his patience, the end of the Lord in his afflictions, and his pity and compassion towards him, (⁵⁹⁰¹⁰James 5:10,11). But of all things the apostle entreats them, that they would take care of profane swearing, and all vain oaths, since these bring into condemnation, (⁵⁹⁰¹²James 5:12) and from hence he passes to various exercises of religion; the afflicted he advises to prayer; and those in comfortable circumstances of body and mind to singing of psalms, (⁵⁹⁰¹³James 5:13), and such that are sick, to send for the elders of the church to pray over them, and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord, whereby not only the sick man would be delivered from his sickness, the Lord raising him up, but even his sins would be declared to be forgiven, (⁵⁹⁰¹⁴James 5:14,15). And not only it became the elders to pray for sick persons, but also the saints in general, one for another, and to acknowledge their faults to each other, since the fervent prayer of every righteous man is of great avail with God, (⁵⁹⁰¹⁶James 5:16) of which an instance is given in Elias, whose prayer, though a man subject

to like passions as other men, against, and for rain, was very successful, (³⁹⁵⁷James 5:17,18). And Christians should not only be concerned for the health of each other's bodies, but also for the good of their souls; wherefore, whenever it is observed that any are straying from the path of truth, methods should be taken to restore them, and turn them from the error of their ways; and whoever is the happy instrument of such a restoration is the means of saving a soul from death, and hiding a multitude of sins, (³⁹⁵⁹James 5:19,20).

Ver. 1. *Go to now, ye rich men*, etc.] All rich men are not here designed; there are some rich men who are good men, and make a good use of their riches, and do not abuse them, as these here are represented; and yet wicked rich men, or those that were the openly profane, are not here intended neither; for the apostle only writes to such who were within the church, and not without, who were professors of religion; and such rich men are addressed here, who, notwithstanding their profession, were not rich towards God, but laid up treasure for themselves, and trusted in their riches, and boasted of the multitude of their wealth; and did not trust in God, and make use of their substance to his glory, and the good of his interest, as they should have done:

weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you; meaning, not temporal calamities that should come upon them at the destruction of Jerusalem, in which the rich greatly suffered by the robbers among themselves, as well as by the Roman soldiers; for the apostle is not writing to the Jews in Judea, and at Jerusalem; but to the Christians of the twelve tribes scattered in the several parts of the world, and who were not distressed by that calamity; but eternal miseries, or the torments of hell are intended, which, unless they repented of their sins, would shortly, suddenly, and unavoidably come upon them, when their present joy and laughter would be turned into howling and weeping.

Ver 2. *Your riches are corrupted*, etc.] Either through disuse of them; and so the phrase is expressive of their tenaciousness, withholding that from themselves and others which is meet, and which is keeping riches for the owners thereof, to their hurt; or these are corrupted, and are corruptible things, fading and perishing, and will stand in no stead in the day of wrath, and therefore it is great weakness to put any trust and confidence in them:

and your garments are moth eaten; being neither wore by themselves, nor put upon the backs of others, as they should, but laid up in wardrobes, or

in chests and coffers, and so became the repast of moths, and now good for nothing.

Ver. 3. *Your gold and silver is cankered*, etc.] Or grown rusty like iron, by lying long without use; this is not easily and quickly done, but in length of time gold and silver will change, and contract a rustiness; and so this conveys the same idea of hoarding up riches and laying up money, without making use of it in trade, for the support of the poor, and without distributing it to their necessities:

and the rust of them shall be a witness against you: at the day of judgment; which will be a proof that they have not been employed to such services, and for such usefulness, for which they were designed and given.

And shall eat your flesh as it were fire; that is, a remembrance of this, a sense of it impressed upon them, shall be like fire in their bones; shall distress their minds, gnaw their consciences, and be in them the worm that never dies, and the fire that shall never be quenched:

ye have heaped treasure together for the last days; either for many years, as the fool in the Gospel, for the times of old age, the last days of men, for fear they should then want; or for the last days of the world, or of time, as if they thought they should live for ever: the Vulgate Latin version reads, "ye have treasured up wrath for yourselves in the last days"; instead of riches, as they imagined; and that by their covetousness and wickedness, by a wicked disuse of their riches, and an unrighteous detention of them; but this supplement seems to be taken from (Romans 2:5) though the sense is confirmed by some copies which connect the phrase, "as it were fire", in the preceding clause, with this, "ye have treasured up as it were fire"; and the Syriac version renders it, "ye have treasured up fire"; the fire of divine wrath; this is the fruit of treasuring up riches in an ill way, and without making a proper use of them.

Ver. 4. *Behold the hire of the labourers, which have reaped down your fields*, etc.] The wages agreed for by the day, with the labourers in their fields, particularly their reapers; which one instance serves for many others; and is the rather mentioned, because reaping is a laborious work, and those who are employed in it have nothing to live upon but their hand labour; and especially because they are made use of in cutting down the corn when it is fully ripe, and in great plenty; wherefore, to detain their just wages from

them argues great inhumanity and wickedness; and yet this was what was done by rich men:

which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; unto God for vengeance, as the blood of Abel did; and shows that such an evil, however privately and fraudulently it may be done, will be made public, and is a crying one:

and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth; that is, the Lord of hosts; of angels, and of men; of the host of heaven, and of the inhabitants of the earth; of Jews and Gentiles, and of rich and poor; and who has power to vindicate the cause of the latter against their rich oppressors, and will do it; his ears are open to their cries, he takes notice of them, and regards them, and will take vengeance on those that injure them. The reference is to (5245Deuteronomy 24:15).

Ver. 5. *Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth*, etc.] This is said of other rich men; for all that is here said is not to be understood of the same individuals, but some things of one, and some of another; some made no use of their riches, either for themselves, or others; some did make use of them, and employed the poor, and then would not give them their wages; and others lived a voluptuous and luxurious life, indulged themselves in carnal lusts and pleasures, and gratified the senses by eating, drinking, gaming, and so were dead while they lived. The phrase suggests, that their pleasures were but short lived, but for a season, even while they were on earth; and that hereafter they would not live in pleasure:

and been wanton; through the abundance and plenty of good things, their delicious way of living, and the swing of pleasures which they took; the allusion is to fatted beasts, which being in good pastures, grow fat and wanton:

ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter, when beasts were slain for some extraordinary entertainment, or for the solemn festivals and sacrifices the Jews, when they lived more deliciously than at other times; and then the sense is, that these rich men fared sumptuously every day; every day was a festival with them; they indulged themselves in intemperance; they ate and drank, not merely what was necessary, and satisfying, and cheering to nature, but to excess, and gorged, and filled themselves in an extravagant manner: the Syriac version, instead of “hearts”, reads “bodies” and one copy reads, “your flesh”: and the last phrase may be rendered, as it is in the same version, “as unto”, or “for the

day of slaughter"; and so the Arabic version, "ye have nourished your hearts, as fattened for the day of slaughter": like beasts that are fattened in order to be killed, so were they preparing and fitting up by their sins for destruction.

Ver. 6. *Ye have condemned and killed the just*, etc.] Meaning not Christ, the Just One, as some have thought; whom the Jewish sanhedrim condemned as guilty of death, and got the sentence passed upon him, and him to be crucified by Pontius Pilate, on the day of slaughter, at the time of the passover, as some connect the last clause of the preceding verse with this; since the apostle is not writing to the Jerusalem Jews, nor to unbelievers, but to professors of religion; though he might say they did it, because their nation did it: but rather this is to be understood of the poor saints, who were just, through the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them, and lived soberly, righteously, and godly, and were harmless and inoffensive in their conversation: who were evil spoken of, censured, and judged, and condemned in a rash and uncharitable manner by their brethren; or were drawn to the judgment seats by the rich, who obtained a judicial process against them, and procured a sentence of condemnation to pass upon them unrighteously; and who killed them, by taking away their good names from them, and by withholding from them their supplies of life, the fruit of their own labour, whereby their lives were embittered and made miserable:

and he doth not resist you; it being neither in his power, nor in his inclination; but takes it patiently, quietly submits, and makes no opposition: or God does not resist you, as yet; he will do it shortly.

Ver. 7. *Be patient therefore, brethren*, etc.] The apostle here addresses himself to the poor who were oppressed by the rich men, and these he calls "brethren" of whom he was not ashamed; when he does not bestow this title upon the rich, though professors of the same religion: these poor brethren he advises to be patient under their sufferings, to bear them with patience,

unto the coming of the Lord; not to destroy Jerusalem, but either at death, or at the last, judgment; when he will take vengeance on their oppressors, and deliver them from all their troubles, and put them into the possession of that kingdom, and glory, to which they are called; wherefore, in the mean while, he would have them be quiet and easy, not to murmur against

God, nor seek to take vengeance on men, but leave it to God, to whom it belongs, who will judge his people:

behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth; ripe fruit, which arises from the seed he sows in the earth; and which may be called "precious", because useful both to man and beast; (see Deuteronomy 33:14-16) and between this, and the sowing of the seed, is a considerable time, during which the husbandman waits; and this may be an instruction in the present case:

and hath patience for it until he receive the early and latter rain; the Jews had seldom rains any more than twice a year; the early, or former rain, was shortly after the feast of tabernacles [f44], in the month Marchesvan, or October, when the seed was sown in the earth; and if it did not rain, they prayed for it, on the third or seventh day of the month [f45]; and the latter rain was in Nisan, or March [f46], just before harvest; and to this distinction the passage refers.

Ver. 8. *Be ye also patient*, etc.] As well as the husbandman, and like him; and wait for the rains and dews of divine grace to fall, and make fruitful, and for the ripe fruit of eternal life; and in the mean while cheerfully and patiently bear all injuries, and oppressions:

stablish your hearts; though the state of the saints is stable, they being fixed in the everlasting love of God, in the covenant of grace, in the hands of Christ, and on the rock of ages; yet their hearts are very unstable, and so are their frames, and the exercise of grace in them, and need establishing, which God's work; which is often done by the means of the word and ordinances; and these the saints should make use of, for the establishing of their hearts: the sense may be, take heart, be of good cheer, do not be dismayed, or faint, or sink under your pressures, but be of good courage, pluck up your spirits, lift up your heads: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh; when he will render tribulation to them that trouble them, free them from all their sorrows and afflictions, and enter them into the joy of their Lord; which will be either at death, which was not very far off, or at the last day, which was drawing nearer and nearer, and which with God was near; with whom a thousand years are as one day.

Ver. 9. *Grudge not one against another, brethren*, etc.] On account of any happiness, temporal or spiritual, which another enjoys; do not inwardly repine at it; or secretly sigh and groan in an envious manner at it, though

nothing may be said, as the word used signifies; much less complain of, accuse, and condemn one another, or meditate and seek revenge:

lest ye be condemned; hereafter, at the bar of Christ, by the Judge of the whole earth, who is privy to the secret murmurings and grumblings, and the envious sighs and groans of men; (see <4007>Matthew 7:1)

behold the judge standeth before the door; there is another that judgeth, who is the Lord, and he is at hand; he is just at the door; a little while and he will come, and not tarry; which may refer not to Christ's coming to destroy Jerusalem, but to his second coming to judgment, which will be quickly; for the Gospel times are the last times; there will be no other age; at the end of this, Christ will come.

Ver. 10. *Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord*, etc.] Men who have been highly honoured of God, with a gift of prophesying, or foretelling things to come; to whom God revealed his secrets, doing nothing without acquainting them with it; and who were sent forth by him, and prophesied in his name what were made known unto them; and yet, though these were his favourites, they suffered much; as cruel mockings, scourgings, imprisonment, famine, nakedness, and death in various shapes; some being stoned, others sawn asunder, and others killed by the sword; all which they endured with incredible patience. And therefore the apostle proposes them to be taken,

for an example suffering affliction, and of patience; their afflictions were many and great, and yet they were very patient under them; and through faith and patience they went through them, and now inherit the promises; and so are a very proper example and pattern for New Testament saints to follow and copy after.

Ver. 11. *Behold, we count them happy which endure*, etc.] Affliction, with courage, constancy, and patience, and hold out to the end; for such shall be saved; theirs is the kingdom of heaven; they are happy now, and will be so hereafter: the Spirit of God, and of glory, now rests upon them; and it is an honour done them that they are counted worthy to suffer for Christ; and they will be glorified with him to all eternity; the consideration of which may serve to encourage and increase patience.

Ye have heard of the patience of Job; from the account which is given of him, and his patience, in the book that bears his name; how he behaved under every trial, which came one upon the back of another; as the

plundering of his substance, the loss of his children, and of the health of his body; and yet in all this Job sinned not, nor murmured against God, nor charged him foolishly, and was a mirror of patience; and though he afterwards let fall some expressions of impatience, yet he was humbled for them, and brought to repentance: this shows, that as the Apostle James, so the Jews, to whom he writes, believed that there had been really such a man as Job; and that the book which bears his name is an authentic piece of holy Scripture, and contains a narrative of matters of fact; or otherwise this reference to him would have been impertinent. How long Job endured the chastenings of the Lord cannot be said. The Jews [f47] say they continued on him twelve months, which they gather from (<18703>Job 7:3).

And have seen the end of the Lord; that is, the happy end, or exodus, out of all his troubles; which the Lord gave "to him", as the Oriental versions add; for he gave him twice as much as he had before, and blessed his latter end more than his beginning, (<18420>Job 42:10,12). Some understand this of the Lord Jesus Christ, both of his great patience in sufferings, in which he is an example to his people, and they would do well to look to, and consider him; and of the end of his sufferings, his glorious resurrection from the dead, and session at the right hand of God, where he is crowned with glory and honour; but the former sense is best:

that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy; as to Job, so to all his people; his paternal relation to them engages his pity towards them; nor does he willingly afflict them; and when he does, he sympathizes with them; he is afflicted with them, and in his pity redeems them; his heart moves towards them, and he earnestly remembers them, and works deliverance for them in his own time and way; and therefore it becomes them to be patient.

Ver. 12. *But above all things, my brethren, swear not*, etc.] As impatience should not show itself in secret sighs, groans, murmurings, and repinings, so more especially it should not break forth in rash oaths, or in profane swearing; for of such sort of swearing, and of such oaths, is the apostle to be understood; otherwise an oath is very lawful, when taken in the fear and name of God, and made by the living God, and is used for the confirmation of anything of moment, and in order to put an end to strife; God himself, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and angels, and good men, are in Scripture sometimes represented as swearing: and that the apostle is so to be understood, appears from the form of swearing prohibited,

neither by the heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; of the like kind; such as are forbidden, and cautioned, and reasoned against by our Lord, in (<4054>Matthew 5:34,35,36) to which the apostle manifestly refers; (see Gill on "<4054>Matthew 5:34-36").

But let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; that is, whenever there is an occasion for affirming, or denying anything, let it be done nakedly, simply, and absolutely, without any form of oath annexed to it; for whatever addition of that kind is made comes from evil, and tends to it, and is evil:

lest ye fall into condemnation; by the Lord; for either false, or rash, or profane swearing; for he will not suffer it to go unpunished; (see <2007>Exodus 20:7). Some copies read, "lest ye fall into hypocrisy"; or dissimulation, and get into a habit and custom of lying and deceiving, as common swearers do; and so reads the Arabic version.

Ver. 13. *Is any among you afflicted*? etc.] As the people of God generally are; they are commonly a poor, and an afflicted people; at least there are many among them that are so, and many are their afflictions: those whom Christ loves, as he did Lazarus, are not free from sicknesses and diseases; and these are rather signs of love than arguments against it; and when this is the case of any of the saints, what is to be done?

let him pray; to God that can save him; in the name of Christ; under the influence of the Spirit; believing in the word of promise. Times of afflictions are proper times for prayer; there is then more especially need of it; and God sometimes lays his afflicting hand upon his people, when they have been negligent of their duty, and he has not heard of them for some time, in order to bring them near to him, to seek his face, pay him a visit, and pour out a prayer before him; (see <1905>Psalm 50:15).

Is any merry? in good heart and spirit, in a good frame of mind, as well as in prosperous circumstances, in soul, body and estate:

let him sing psalms; let him not only be inwardly joyful, as he should be in prosperity, and be thankful to God for his many mercies, temporal and spiritual, he enjoys; but let him express it vocally, and melodiously, by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs: not that these are the only persons that are to sing psalms, or this the only time, any more than that afflicted persons are the only ones that are to pray, or the time of affliction the only time of prayer; but as affliction more especially calls for prayer, so spiritual joy, and rejoicing in prosperous seasons, for singing of psalms:

weeping, and singing of psalms, were thought, by the Jews, inconsistent. Kimchi, on the title of the third psalm, observes, that their Rabbins say, that when David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, he wept; and if he wept, why is this called a psalm? and if a psalm, hkb hml, "why did he weep?"

Ver. 14. *Is any sick among you*? etc.] Which is often the case; the bodies of the saints, as well as others, are liable to a variety of diseases; they are sick, and sometimes nigh unto death, as Epaphroditus was: and then,

let him call for the elders of the church; in allusion to the elders of the congregation of Israel, (<03045>Leviticus 4:15). By these may be meant, either the elder members of the church, men of gravity and soundness in the faith, persons of long standing and experience; who have the gift and grace of prayer, and are not only capable of performing that duty, but of giving a word of counsel and advice to the sick. It was a kind of proverbial saying of Aristophanes the grammarian;

> "the works of young men, the counsels of middle aged persons, and ευχαι γεροντων, "the prayers of ancient men" [f48]:"

or rather officers of churches are meant, particularly pastors, who are so called in Scripture; these should be sent for in times of sickness, as well as physicians; and rather than they, since their prayers may be the means of healing both soul and body: so in former times, the prophets of God were sent to in times of sickness, for advice and assistance. It is a saying of R. Phinehas ben Chama [f49] that

> "whoever has a sick person in his house, let him go to a wise man, and he will seek mercy for him."

And it follows here,

and let them pray over him; or for him, for the recovery of his health:

anointing him with oil, in the name of the Lord; which some think was only done in a common medicinal way, oil being used much in the eastern countries for most disorders; and so these elders used ordinary medicine, as well as prayer: or rather this refers to an extraordinary gift, which some elders had of healing diseases, as sometimes by touching, and by laying on of hands, or by expressing some words, and so by anointing with oil; (see <41063>Mark 6:13) which extraordinary gifts being now ceased, the rite or

ceremony of anointing with oil ceases in course: however, this passage gives no countenance to the extreme unction of the Papists; that of theirs being attended with many customs and ceremonies, which are not here made mention of; that being used, as is pretended, for the healing of the souls of men, whereas this was used for corporeal healing; that is only performed when life is despaired of, and persons are just going out of the world; whereas this was made use of to restore men to health, and that they might continue longer in it, as follows.

Ver. 15. *And the prayer of faith shall save the sick*, etc.] That is, the prayer of the elders, being put up in faith by them, and in which the sick person joins by faith; such a prayer is a means of bringing down from God a blessing on the sick man, and of restoring him to his former health:

and the Lord shall raise him up; from his bed of sickness, on which he is laid, and bring him forth to praise his name, and to fear and glorify him.

And if he have committed sins; not that it is a question whether he has or not, for no man lives without sin, nor the commission of it; but the sense is, if he has been guilty of any sins, which God in particular has taken notice of, and on account of which he has laid his chastising hand upon him, in order to bring him to a sense of them, and to acknowledge them; which is sometimes the case, though not always, at the same time that his bodily health is restored:

they shall be forgiven him; he shall have a discovery, and an application of pardoning grace to him: and indeed the removing the sickness or disease may be called the forgiveness of his sins, which is sometimes the sense of this phrase in Scripture, as in (1 Kings 8:34,36,50).

Ver. 16. *Confess your faults one to another*, etc.] Which must be understood of sins committed against one another; which should be acknowledged, and repentance for them declared, in order to mutual forgiveness and reconciliation; and this is necessary at all times, and especially on beds of affliction, and when death and eternity seem near approaching: wherefore this makes nothing for auricular confession, used by the Papists; which is of all sins, whereas this is only of such by which men offend one another; that is made to priests, but this is made by the saints to one another, by the offending party to him that is offended, for reconciliation, whereby a good end is answered; whereas there is none by the other, and very often bad consequences follow.

And pray for one another, that ye may be healed; both corporeally and spiritually:

the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Not any man's prayer; not the prayer of a profane sinner, for God heareth not sinners; nor of hypocrites and formal professors: but of the righteous man, who is justified by the righteousness of Christ, and has the truth of grace in him, and lives soberly and righteously; for a righteous man often designs a good man, a gracious man, one that is sincere and upright, as Job, Joseph of Arimathea, and others; though not without sin, as the person instanced in the following verse shows; "Elias, who was a man of like passions", but a just man, and his prayer was prevalent: and not any prayer of a righteous man is of avail, but that which is "effectual, fervent"; that has power, and energy, and life in it; which is with the Spirit, and with the understanding, with the heart, even with a true heart, and in faith; and which is put up with fervency, and not in a cold, lukewarm, lifeless, formal, and customary way: it is but one word in the original text; and the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "daily"; that prayer which is constant and continual, and without ceasing, and is importunate; this prevails and succeeds, as the parable of the widow and the unjust judge shows. Some translate the word "inspired": the Spirit of God breathes into men the breath of spiritual life, and they live, and being quickened by him, they breathe; and prayer is the breath of the spiritual man, and is no other than the reverberation of the Spirit of God in him; and such prayer cannot fail of success: it may be rendered "inwrought"; true prayer is not what is written in a book, but what is wrought in the heart, by the Spirit of God; who is the enditer of prayer, who impresses the minds of his people with a sense of their wants, and fills their mouths with arguments, and puts strength into them to plead with God, and makes intercession for them according to the will of God; and such prayer is always heard, and regarded by him: this has great power with God; whatever is asked, believing, is received; God can deny nothing prayed for in this manner; it has great power with Christ, as Jacob had over the angel, when he wrestled with him; and as the woman of Canaan, when she importuned him, on account of her daughter, and would have no denial: such prayer has often been of much avail against Satan, who has been dispossessed by it; even the most stubborn kind of devils have been dislodged by fasting and prayer: it has often been the means of preserving kingdoms and nations, when invaded by enemies, as the instances of Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah show; and of removing judgments from a

people, as was often done, through the prayers of Moses, as when fire and fiery serpents were sent among them; and of bringing down blessings as rain from heaven by Elijah; and of delivering particular persons from trouble, as Peter was delivered from prison, through the incessant prayer of the church for him: and this power, and efficacy, and prevalence of prayer, does not arise from any intrinsic worth and merit in it, but from the grace of the Spirit, who influences and endites it, directs to it, and assists in it; and from the powerful mediation, precious blood, and efficacious sacrifice of Christ; and from the promise of God and Christ, who have engaged, that whatever is asked according to the will of God, and in the name of Christ, shall be done. The Jews have had formerly a great notion of prayer: the power of prayer, they say [f50], is strong; and extol it above all other services: they say [f51], it is better than good works, or than offerings and sacrifices;

and particularly, the prayer of righteous men: says R. Eliezar [f52]

> "to what is µyqydx lç ˆtlpt, "prayer of righteous men" like? it is like a shovel: the sense is, that as the shovel turns the corn on the floor, from one place to another, so prayer turns the holy blessed God from wrath to mercy."

Ver. 17. *Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are*, etc.] The apostle gives an instance of earnest and fervent prayer, and of the efficacy of it in Elias; who is the same with the prophet Elijah, or Elijah the Tishbite; who, by the Septuagint in (<390405>Malachi 4:5) is called Elias, as here, and elsewhere, in the New Testament: of him James says, that he was a "man", contrary to the notion of some of the Jewish writers, who affirm, that Elijah was not born of a father and mother, but was an angel, who was clothed with the four elements of the world [f53]; but he was not only born, but born in sin, as others are, and was by nature no better than others; and he himself confesses that he was no better than his fathers, (<111904>1 Kings 19:4). And the apostle further observes; concerning him, that be was "subject to like passions as we are"; both in body and soul; he was subject to hunger and weariness, and was fed by ravens, and by the widow of Zarephath, and by an angel; and he was subject to reproach, affliction, and persecution, being charged by Ahab as a troubler of Israel, and persecuted by Jezebel, who sought his life; he was a mortal man, and liable to death, and requested to die, and must have died, had it not been for the wonderful power of God, which translated him, that he should not see death; and he was not free from sinful passions, as impatience, fear, and unbelief, (<111720>1

Kings 17:20 19:3-5,10,18). And he prayed earnestly; or prayed in prayer; an Hebraism: it is said [f54] of one, that hytwlx ylx, "he prayed his prayer"; and of others, that ^ytwlx ^alx, "they prayed prayers"; though the phrase here seems to design something more than bare praying; a praying, not merely externally, or formally, and with the lip only, but with the Spirit, and with the understanding, and with the heart engaged in it, with inwrought prayer. The prophet prayed with much earnestness, with great vehemence and intenseness of Spirit, as this Hebraism denotes; his prayer was fervent, and it was constant, and importunate, and was continued till he had an answer: he may be thought to have prayed each of the seven times he sent his servant to look out for a sign of rain, (<111843>1 Kings 18:43), he first prayed,

that it might not rain; this is not recorded in express words, but may be gathered from (<111701>1 Kings 17:1) where he says, "as the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew, nor rain, these years, but according to my word"; so the passage is understood by the Jewish interpreters: the phrase, "before whom I stand", is paraphrased by one of them [f55] thus; before whom I am used to stand, hlyptb, "in prayer"; and it is a common saying with the Jews, there is no standing ever mentioned, but prayer is intended; (see Gill on "<400605>Matthew 6:5") And the other phrase, "according to my word", is, by another [f56], interpreted to this sense, that the rain should not descend naturally, according to the custom of the world, but it should descend when Elijah wyl[llpty, "prayed for it", and so it was:

and it rained not on the earth: on the land of Israel, which is only meant; it rained in other parts of the world, for the drought in those times was not universal: and this was,

by the space of three years and six months; which exactly agrees with the words of Christ, (<420425>Luke 4:25) and this was in judgment upon the land of Israel, for the idolatry it was filled with in the times of Ahab: and this instance of prayer is mentioned, not with a view that it should be imitated; we are not to pray for judgments, unless we have a divine order for it, as Elijah had; but to show the efficacy of prayer made according to the will of God.

Ver. 18. *And he prayed again*, etc.] (<111842>1 Kings 18:42,43). Here also is no express mention of his prayer, but it may be concluded from his gestures;

and so the Jewish interpreters understand these words, “Elijah went up to the top of Carmel”, llpthl, “to pray, and he cast himself down upon the earth”, µymçgh l[llpthl, “to pray for rain; and he put his face between his knees”, llpthw, “and prayed, and said to his servant, go up now, look toward the sea”; and this he said while he was wtlyptb, “in his prayers” [f57]: and the effect of this his prayer was,

and the heaven gave rain; (see <11846>1 Kings 18:45).

And the earth brought forth her fruit: which for the years past it had not; hence there was a sore famine in the land, (<11802>1 Kings 18:2). Now the apostle chose to give this example, because it was a common thing for the Jews to ask for rain: we often read of such a doctor, that he prayed for rain, and it came; and of another, that he asked for the rains, and they descended [f58]: and his view is to observe, that the weakness and infirmities of the saints ought not to discourage them from prayer; and that they should be earnest and fervent in it, as was Elias, a man of like passions with themselves.

Ver. 19. *Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth*, etc.] Either from Christ, who is the truth, by departing from him, forsaking his ways, worship, and ordinances; or from the Scriptures of truth, not speaking according to them, and embracing notions that are contrary unto them; or from the Gospel, the word of truth, from the doctrine of faith, and from uprightness of life and conversation, after having made a profession of Christianity; for this is to be understood of one who has embraced the Christian religion, become a member of a church, and has walked in the path of truth and holiness, but now fallen into error, either in principle, or in practice, or both:

and one convert him; or turn him from his error, to truth again; for this designs not first conversion, or the turning of a sinner from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, and from the evil of a man's heart and ways and from a dependence on his own righteousness, to the Lord Jesus Christ, to look to him for righteousness, life, and salvation, which is wholly and entirely God's work, and not man's; but conversion after backslidings; for a restoration from a fallen condition is sometimes so called, (<19501>Psalm 51:1,2,13 <42232>Luke 22:32) and which one brother may be an instrument of to another, by showing him, and setting before him, the evil of his errors, whether in principle or practice; and by instructing him in

the doctrines of the Gospel, and in the duties of religion; and by reproving him in meekness, and according to the rules of Christ; which means are sometimes blessed for the gaining of such; and which may be called conversion: and also, this is sometimes done by praying for him; and which seems chiefly to be intended here; for from praying for the healing of the diseases of the body, the apostle proceeds to encourage the saints to pray for one another, for the healing of the diseases of the mind; and suggests, that if prayer avails to the one, it may to the other; and which is the most desirable, and the greatest blessing, as follows.

Ver. 20. *Let him know*, etc.] And observe it for his encouragement:

that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way; who is the instrument of restoring a backsliding professor, for such an one is meant by a sinner, and not a profane person; or of turning a poor bewildered believer, who is got out of the way of truth and holiness, into the right way again; or of convincing him of the error of his way, whether it be in point of doctrine, or of duty; and so of bringing him to the fold of Christ again, from whence he has strayed:

shall save a soul from death; not efficiently, but instrumentally, as in (1 Timothy 4:16) for otherwise Christ is the only Saviour; and he will be the means of saving “a soul”, which is of more worth than a world; and that from death, the second death which lies in the separation of the soul from God, and in a sense of his wrath; which apostasy threatens with, and leads unto, if grace prevents not. The Alexandrian copy and others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, “his soul”; but the common reading is more emphatic; the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, “his own soul”; and the Ethiopic version, “himself”, as respecting him that is the instrument of the conversion of the other, and not the person converted:

and shall hide a multitude of sins; either “his own”, as the same versions read; and then the sense is, he shall be blessed with a discovery and application of the forgiveness of all his sins, though they have been many and great; or rather the sins of the person converted. Sin is only covered by the blood and righteousness of Christ; and thereby it is so covered, as not to be seen by the eye of vindictive justice and in such manner as that the persons of those who are covered therewith are all fair, without fault and unreproveable in the sight of God; and though their sins are many, even a multitude, they are blotted out as a thick cloud, and are abundantly pardoned; yea, all their sins are covered, be they ever so many, for God

forgives all trespasses, for Christ's sake; and the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, and his righteousness justifies from all: and whoever is an instrument of bringing a backslider to a sense of the evil of his ways, and to true repentance for the same; as he, upon such repentance, has his iniquities caused to pass from him, or, in other words, to be covered, as from the sight of God, so from his own; he may be said to be the instrument of this also.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Ecclesiastes Hist. 50:2. c. 23.

Ft2 -- Ib. & 50:3. c. 25.

Ft3 -- Adv. Haeres. 50:5. c. 1.

Ft4 -- Adv. Judaeos, c. 2.

Ft5 -- Homil. 7. in Josuam, fol. 156. E.

Ft6 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 110. 2.

Ft7 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 8. 1.

Ft8 -- Shemot. Rabba, sect. 34. fol. 133. 3.

Ft9 -- Midrash Haneelam in Zohar in Genesis fol. 67. 4.

Ft10 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 23. 2, 3.

Ft11 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 21. 1.

Ft12 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:2. c. 25.

Ft13 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 15. 17. & 3. 13. T. Bab. Megilla. fol. 18. 1. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 16. fol. 158. 3. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 71. 1.

Ft14 -- Philo Zuis Rer. Divin. Haeres. p. 482. Vid. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 7. 1.

Ft15 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 17.

Ft16 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:2. c. 29.

Ft17 -- Isidor. Hispal. Originum, 50:19. c. 32. p. 171.

Ft18 -- Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 21. sect. 2.

Ft19 -- Maimon. ib. sect. 3. vid. T. Bab. Shebuot, fol. 30. 1.

Ft20 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 30. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 10. 2.

Ft21 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 13. & Abot R. Nathan, c. 41. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 28. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 4. fol. 183. 2. & sect. 14. fol.

215. 2. & Midrash Kohelet, fol. 73. 4. Targum Jon in (5345)Deuteronomy 34:5.

Ft22 -- Vid. Targum. Jon. & Jerus. in (0225)Exodus 32:25. & 33:4.

Ft23 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 69. 1.

Ft24 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 192. 3. Zohar in Exodus fol. 20. 2. & 37. 1. & in Leviticus fol. 32. 3. Shemot Rabba, sect. 25. fol. 109. 3. T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 39. 2. & Menachot, fol. 43. 2. & Abkath Rochel, par. 1. p. 3.

Ft25 -- Zeno & Chrysippus apud Laert. Vit. Zeno, p. 510.

Ft26 -- Medulla Theolog. 50:2. c. 7. sect. 35.

Ft27 -- Koran, Sura 4:125.

Ft28 -- Ohel. Moed, fol. 15. 1.

Ft29 -- Chambers's Cyclopedia, in the word “Helm”.

Ft30 -- lb. in the word “Rudder”.

Ft31 -- Quaest. Mechanic. c. 5.

Ft32 -- T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 15. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 100. 1.

Ft33 -- Otiot R. Aquiba in Ketoreth Hassammim in Genesis fol. 12. 4.

Ft34 -- T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 15. 2. Yalkut, par. 2. fol. 127. 2.

Ft35 -- Nat. Hist. 50:8. c. 9. 16, 17. & 10. 5, 44.

Ft36 -- Nat. Hist. 50:2. c. 103.

Ft37 -- Isodor. Hispal. Originum, 50:13. c. 13. p. 115.

Ft38 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 119. 2.

Ft39 -- Sentent. 11.

Ft40 -- Xenophon. Cyropaed. 50:2. c. 25.

Ft41 -- Plato in Aleibiade, p. 135.

Ft42 -- Plato in Laches.

Ft43 -- Smith de Moribus Turc. p. 74.

Ft44 -- Bartenora in Misn. Taanith, c. 1. sect. 2.

Ft45 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 4. 2. & 6. 1. & 10. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 28. 1. Maimon. Tephilla, c. 2. sect. 16.

Ft46 -- Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, & Miclol Jophi in <2023>Joel 2:23. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 35. fol. 175. 3.

Ft47 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 3. p. 9.

Ft48 -- Apud Harpocratian. Lex. p. 125.

Ft49 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 116. 1.

Ft50 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 100. 1.

Ft51 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 32. 2.

Ft52 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 14. 1. & Yebamot, fol. 64. 1.

Ft53 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 31. 1. & Imre Binah in ib.

Ft54 -- Ib. in Exodus fol. 4. 2. & in Numbers fol. 79. 2.

Ft55 -- R. David, Kimchi in loc.

Ft56 -- Vid. Laniado in loc.

Ft57 -- Jarchi, Kimchi, Ralbag, & Laniado in loc.

Ft58 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 28. 1. & Taanith, fol. 19. 1. 23. 1. 24. 2. 25. 2. & Yoma, fol. 53. 2.

1 PETER

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 1 PETER

That Simon, called Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, was the writer of this epistle, is not questioned by any; nor was the genuineness and authenticity of it ever made a doubt of. Eusebius says [f1], that it had been confessed by all, and received without controversy; and that the ancients, without any scruple, had made use of it in their writings. It is called his “general”, or catholic epistle, because it was not written to any particular person, or to any particular church, but in general, to a number of Christians dispersed in several places. The time when this epistle was written is not certain; some place it in the year of Christ 44 or 45, and so make it to be the most ancient of all the epistles, and which is the more commonly received opinion; but Dr. Lightfoot [f2] places it in the year 65, because in it the apostle speaks of the end of all things being at hand, and of the fiery trial just coming on them, and of judgment beginning at the house of God, (<600407>1 Peter 4:7,12,17) all which he applies to the destruction of Jerusalem; though others fix it to 61, in the seventh year of Nero [f3]. The place from whence it seems to be written was Babylon, (<600513>1 Peter 5:13) which is to be understood not figuratively, either of Rome or Jerusalem, but properly of Babylon, the metropolis of Chaldea, or Assyria. The persons to whom it is written were Jews, at least chiefly; for there might be some Gentiles among them, who may be taken notice of in some parts of the epistle; but the principal part were Jews, as appears from their being called the strangers of the dispersion, or, as James calls them, “the twelve tribes scattered abroad”; from the mention of the tradition of their fathers; from their having their conversation honest among the Gentiles, and their past life among them; from urging subjection to the civil magistrates among the Heathens, and the right use of their Christian liberty as to the ceremonies of the law; and from the near destruction of Jerusalem, which could only affect them; and from the use made of the writings of the Old Testament, and the authority of the prophets; (see <600101>1 Peter 1:1,18 2:12 4:3 2:13,16 4:7,12,17) as well as from the second epistle, which was written to the

same; (see <60119>2 Peter 1:19 2:1 3:1,2,15) in which he seems to refer to the epistle to the Hebrews, written by Paul, as to these. And besides, Peter was the minister of the circumcision, or of the circumcised Jews, as Paul was of the Gentiles; and even those passages in this epistle, which seem most likely to concern the Gentiles, may be understood of the Jews, as which speak of their ignorance, idolatry, and having not been a people, (<60114>1 Peter 1:14 4:3 2:10) which were true of them before conversion, and as living among Gentiles. The occasion of writing it was this; Peter meeting with Sylvanus, a faithful brother, and who had been a companion of the Apostle Paul, he takes this opportunity of sending a letter by him to the converted Jews, dispersed among the Gentile countries, where he, with Paul, and others, travelled: the design of which is to testify of the true doctrine of grace, in which they were agreed; (see <60512>1 Peter 5:12). And accordingly in it he does treat of the doctrine of electing grace, of redeeming grace, of regenerating and sanctifying grace, and of persevering grace; and exhorts believers to the exercise of grace, of faith, hope, and love, and to the discharge of such duties becoming their several stations, whereby they might evidence to others the truth of grace in themselves, and adorn the doctrine of the grace of God, and recommend it to others: and particularly he exhorts them patiently to bear all afflictions and persecutions they should meet with, for their profession of the true grace of God, in which he encourages them to stand steadfast: and this is the general scope and design of the epistle.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER 1

In this chapter, after the inscription and salutation, the apostle gives thanks to God for various blessings of grace bestowed, or to be bestowed upon the persons he writes to; and then, with the best of arguments and motives, urges them to the performance of several duties of religion. In the inscription, the person who is the writer of the epistle is described, both by his name, and by his office; and also the persons to whom it is sent, by their outward condition, strangers dispersed through several countries particularly mentioned, and by their spiritual estate, elect men; the source and spring of which election is the foreknowledge of God the Father; the means, the sanctification of the Spirit; and the end, obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ; and to these the apostle wishes a multiplication of grace and peace, (<60101>1 Peter 1:1,2) and then he gives thanks to God for the regeneration of them; the efficient cause of which is God the Father; the moving cause, his abundant mercy; the means, the resurrection of Christ from the dead; the end, a lively hope of a glorious inheritance, (<60103>1 Peter 1:3,4) and next follows a description of regenerate ones; they are such who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation; who rejoice in hope of that salvation, though now for a little while are sorrowful, by reason of afflictions, which are for the trial of their faith; they are believers in Christ, lovers of him, and rejoice in him, and shall at last receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls, (<60105>1 Peter 1:5-9) the excellency of which salvation is set forth from the concern the prophets had in it, the scrutiny they made into it, and the revelation of it made to them; from the concern the apostles had in it, and their report of it, and from the desire of angels to look into it, (<60110>1 Peter 1:10-12) upon which the apostle exhorts to the exercise of various graces and duties, to attention of mind, to sobriety, to a constant hope of eternal glory, and to holiness of life and conversation, (<60113>1 Peter 1:13,14) the arguments engaging to which are taken from the nature of God, who had called them by his grace, (<60115>1 Peter 1:15,16) from their concern with him, as a Father and a judge; from their state and condition, as sojourners in this world, and from their redemption by the blood of Christ from a vain conversation,

(<60117>1 Peter 1:17-19) and of Christ, the Redeemer of them, many things are said, as that he was ordained before the foundation of the world to be the Redeemer; was manifested in human nature in these last days, for the sake of such that believe; was raised from the dead, and glorified, that there might be a sufficient foundation for the exercise of faith and hope in God, (<60120>1 Peter 1:20,21) and next the apostle exhorts to brotherly love, in purity, and with fervency; from the consideration of the internal purification of them by the Spirit, through obedience to the truth; and from their regeneration, the cause of which was not corruptible, but incorruptible seed; and the means, the living and abiding word of God, (<60122>1 Peter 1:22,23) which is illustrated by a passage out of (<23406>Isaiah 40:6-8) setting forth the frailty and mortality of men, and the transitoriness of all outward enjoyments; to which is opposed the duration of the everlasting Gospel, the means of regeneration, (<60124>1 Peter 1:24,25).

Ver. 1. *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ*, etc.] The writer of this epistle describes himself first by his name, Peter, the same with Cephas, which signifies a rock, or stone; a name given him by Christ at his first conversion, and which respected his after firmness, solidity, resolution, and constancy; for his former name was Simeon, or Simon, as sometimes called; (see <40418>Matthew 4:18 <40142>John 1:42) and he further describes himself by his office, as

an apostle of Jesus Christ; being one of the twelve apostles, and the first of that number; who saw Christ in the flesh, was conversant with him, had his call and commission immediately from him, and was qualified by him to preach the Gospel; and was sent out first into Judea, and then into all the world to publish it, with a power of working miracles to confirm it; and this his character he makes mention of, in order to give the greater weight and authority to his epistle; and it is to be observed, that he does not style himself, as his pretended successor does, the head of the church, and Christ's vicar on earth; nor does he call himself the prince of the apostles, but only an apostle, as he was upon an equal foot with the rest. The persons he writes to are

the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia: these Jews here intended are called strangers; not in a metaphorical sense, either because they were, as the wicked are, estranged from the womb, and alienated from the life of God, as all unconverted men are, and as they were before conversion; for now they were no more

strangers in this sense: or because of their unsettled state and condition in this life; having no continuing city, and seeking one to come, an heavenly country; and living as pilgrims and strangers, in which respect they are indeed so styled, (<60211>1 Peter 2:11) but in a civil sense, and not as the Gentiles were, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, for these were Jews; but on account of their not being in their own land, and in a foreign country, and therefore said to be "scattered", or "the strangers of the dispersion"; either on account of the persecution at the death of Stephen, when multitudes of the converted Jews were scattered abroad, not only throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, but as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch; (see <44001>Acts 8:1,4 11:19) and so it may be afterwards throughout the places here mentioned; or else these were some remains of the ten tribes carried captive by Shalmaneser, and of the two tribes by Nebuchadnezzar; or rather the dispersion of the Greeks, mentioned in (<43735>John 7:35) under the Macedonians, by Ptolemy Lagus: however, there were Jews of Pontus, who inhabited that place, and of such we read in (<44209>Acts 2:9) who came to worship at the feast of Pentecost, some of which were converted to the Christian faith, and being mentioned first, has occasioned this epistle to be called, both by Tertullian [f4], and Cyprian [f5], "the epistle to the Pontians". Perhaps these Jews converted on the day of Pentecost, on their return hither, laid the first foundation of a Gospel church state in this country: it is a tradition of the ancients, mentioned by Eusebius [f6], that Peter himself preached here, and so, very likely, formed the Christians he found, and those that were converted by him, into Gospel churches; and it appears by a letter of Dionysius, bishop of Corinth [f7], that there were churches in Poutus in the "second" century, particularly at Amastris, the bishop of which was one Palma, whom he commends, and Focas is said to be bishop of Syncope, in the same age; and in the "third" century, Gregory and Athenodorus, disciples of Origen, were bishops in this country [f8]; the former was a very famous man, called Gregory Thaumaturgus, the wonder worker, and was bishop of Neocaesarea: in the "fourth" century there was a church in the same place, of which Longinus was bishop, as appears from the Nicene council, at which he and other bishops in Pontus were present; and in this age, in the times of Dioclesian, many in this country endured most shocking sufferings, related by Eusebius [f9]; and in the same century Helladius is said to govern the churches of Pontus; and in the "fifth" century we read of churches in Pontus, reformed by Chrysostom; in this age Theodorus was bishop of Heraclea, and Themistius of Amastris, both

in this province, and both these bishops were in the Chalcedon council; and in the "sixth" century there were churches in Pontus, whose bishops were in the fifth synod held at Rome and Constantinople; and so there were in the "seventh" and "eighth" centuries [f10]

Galatia, next mentioned, is that part of the lesser Asia, called Gallo Graecia, in which were several churches, to whom the Apostle Paul wrote his epistle, called the epistle to the Galatians; (see Gill on "Acts 16:6") (see Gill on "Galatians 1:2").

Cappadocia, according to Ptolomy [f11], was bounded on the west by Galatia, on the south by Cilicia, on the east by Armenia the great, on the north by part of the Euxine Pontus; it had many famous cities in it, as Solinus [f12] says; as Archelais, Neocaesarea, Melita, and Mazaca. The Jews oftentimes talk [f13] of going from Cappadocia to Lud, or Lydda; so that, according to them, it seems to be near to that place, or, at least, that there was a place near Lydda so called; of this (see Gill on "Acts 2:9"). From this country also there were Jews at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, some of whom were converted; and here likewise the Apostle Peter is said to preach, as before observed of Pontus, and who probably founded a church or churches here in the "first" century; and in the "second" century, according to Tertullian [f14], there were believers in Christ dwelling in this country; and in the "third" century, Eusebius [f15] makes mention of Neon, bishop of Larandis, and Celsus, bishop of Iconium, both in Cappadocia; there was also Phedimus of Amasea, in the same country, in this age, and at Caesarea, in Cappadocia, several martyrs suffered under Decius; and in this century, Stephen, bishop of Rome, threatened to excommunicate some bishops in Cappadocia, because they had rebaptized some that had been heretics: in the "fourth" century there were churches in Cappadocia, of one of which, namely, at Sasimi, the famous Gregory Nazianzen was first bishop, and afterwards of Nazianzum, as was also the famous Basil of Caesarea, in the same country; hither the persecution under Dioclesian reached, and many had their thighs broken, as Eusebius relates [f16]; from hence were sent several bishops, who assisted at the council of Nice, under Constantine, and at another held at Jerusalem: in the "fifth" century there were churches in Cappadocia, in several places, the names of whose bishops are on record; as Firmus, Thalassius, Theodosins, Daniel, Aristomachus, Patricius, and others: in the "sixth" century there were many famous churches in this country, whose bishops were in the fifth synod held at Rome and Constantinople; and in the "seventh" century there were

several of them in the sixth synod of Constantinople; and in the "eighth" century mention is made of bishops of several churches in Cappadocia, in the second Nicene synod; and even in the "ninth" century there were Christians in these parts [f17].

Asia here intends neither the lesser nor the greater Asia, but Asia, properly so called; and which, according to Solinus [f18], Lycia and Phrygia bounded on the east, the Aegean shores on the west, the Egyptian sea on the south, and Paphlagonia on the north; the chief city in it was Ephesus, and so it is distinguished from Phrygia, Galatia, Mysia, and Bithynia, in (<44>16:6,7) as here from Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bithynia, and from Pontus and Cappadocia, in (<44>2:9) though they were all in lesser Asia. Here also were Jews converted on the day of Pentecost; and here likewise Peter is said to preach; and by him, and by the Apostle John, who also lived and died in this country, churches were planted; and churches there were here, even in the "seventh" century, as distinct from the other Asia, greater or less; for out of it bishops were sent to, and were present at, the sixth council at Constantinople, whose names are recorded; yea, in the "eighth" century there were churches and bishops, one of which persuaded Leo to remove images from places of worship; and another was in the Nicene synod [f19]. The last place mentioned is

Bithynia, of which (see Gill on "<44>16:7"). And though the Apostle Paul, and his compassions, were not suffered at a certain time to go into Bithynia, and preach the Gospel there, yet it is certain that it was afterwards carried thither; and as Peter is said to preach in Pontus, Asia, and Capadocia, so likewise in Bithynia; here, according to the Roman martyrology, Luke, the evangelist, died; and, according to tradition, Prochorus, one of the seven deacons in (<44>6:5) was bishop of Nicomedia, in this country; and Tychicus, of whom the Apostle Paul makes frequent mention, was bishop of Chalcedon, another city in it; and who are both said to be of the seventy disciples; (see Gill on "<42>10:1"), and it is certain, from the testimony of Pliny [f20], an Heathen writer, in a letter of his to Trajan the emperor, written about the year 104, that there were then great numbers of Christians in Bithynia; not only the cities, but the towns and villages were full of them; and in the "third" century, the persecution under Dioclesian raged, particularly at Nicomedia, where Anthimus, the pastor of the church in that place, had his head cut off as Eusebius [f21] relates: in the beginning of the "fourth" century, Nice, in Bithynia, became famous for the council held there under Constantine, against Arius; and in

this century, bishops from Bithynia assisted at a synod held at Tyre, in Phoenicia; and in the “fifth” century was held a synod at Chalcedon, a city in this country, against the Nestorinn heresy; and the names of several bishops of Chalcedon, Nicomedia, and Nice, who lived, in this age, are on record; and in the “sixth” century there were bishops from these several places, and others, who were present in the fifth synod at Constantinople; as there were also in the “seventh” century, at the sixth synod held at the same place, whose names are particularly mentioned; and in the “eighth” century bishops from hence were in the Nicene synod; and even in the ninth century there were some that bore the Christian name in Bithynia [f22]. In these places however, it seems, dwelt many Jews, who were converted to Christ, to whom the apostle inscribes this epistle, and whom he further describes in the following verse.

Ver. 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*, etc.] Not to any office, as to that of bishops or presbyters; for though the apostle writes to some of them under this character, (<600501>1 Peter 5:1) yet not all; nor were they so called, as a nation, for they were persons scattered about in several countries; nor as a church, for they are not wrote to as such; nor does this character merely design their effectual calling; though as that is a fruit and evidence of election, it is sometimes so styled, and the saints called by grace are said to be chosen; (<431519>John 15:19 <460126>1 Corinthians 1:26) but it intends the eternal election of those persons both to grace and glory; which the apostle knew of, not by divine revelation, or any particular discovery made to him; but he concluded it in a judgment of charity, they being all under a profession of faith in Christ, and he having reason to believe that the greater part of them were truly partakers of that faith which demonstrated them to be the elect of God: the cause, spring, and source of their election was, “the foreknowledge of God the Father”: to whom election is commonly ascribed, agreeably to the order of the divine Persons in the Trinity, and their distinct parts in the economy of salvation, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit: and by this his “foreknowledge” is meant, not his eternal, universal, and infallible knowledge, and which is infinite, and reaches to all things and persons, present, future, or possible, for this has for its objects persons whom God never predestinated and chose: though certain it is that he knows and foreknows all whom he does predestinate and choose; nor does it intend the mere decree of election, or God's eternal purpose and resolution to choose, but the spring and source of that act of his: and much less does it

mean a bare prescience of men, and choice of them, upon a foresight of faith, holiness, good works, and perseverance therein; for these are all, when genuine, the fruits and effects of election, which are included in it, and secured and brought about by it; but the sovereign grace, good will, and pleasure of God, or the everlasting love of God the Father, which is the cause of, and has given birth to the act of election, is meant by foreknowledge, joined with affection, delight, and approbation; knowledge, and foreknowledge, as ascribed to the divine Being, often signify such things; (see <19106>Psalm 1:6 <55219>2 Timothy 2:19 <46829>Romans 8:29,30) (<45101>Romans 11:1,2) and such a knowledge God the Father had of the persons of the elect from all eternity; and which is the ground and foundation of his choosing them to grace and glory, and not anything in them, or done by them, or anything out of himself; no other reason can be given of it than his own grace, his pure love, and sovereign good will and pleasure: the means follow, through which they were chosen,

through sanctification of the Spirit; as in (<53213>2 Thessalonians 2:13). (See Gill on "<53213>2 Thessalonians 2:13"). The ends to which the saints are chosen are,

unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; by "obedience" is meant either the obedience of elect men to Christ, which lies in obeying the truth of the Gospel, called the obedience of faith; and so is the same with the "belief of the truth", which goes along in election with the sanctification of the Spirit, in (<53213>2 Thessalonians 2:13) and in submission to Gospel ordinances, and doing all good works in the name, faith, and strength of Christ; and which also are fruits and effects, and so not causes of divine predestination; (see <49210>Ephesians 2:10) and also follow upon the sanctification of the Spirit; or else the obedience of Christ is intended; and so the Arabic version renders it, "unto the obedience of Jesus Christ"; which lay in his performing the precepts of the law, and bearing the penalty of it, death; and by which the chosen seed are justified, or made righteous in the sight of God, and have a title to eternal life and glory, and are safe from wrath to come; and to the enjoyment of this grace, they are chosen of God the Father; and between these two, predestination and justification, there is a close and inseparable connection; so that they that are interested in the one, are in the other; (see <46830>Romans 8:30), the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; does not denote a small quantity of it, for it was shed and poured out in great abundance; but is said in allusion to the sprinkling of the blood of the passover lamb. (<21222>Exodus 12:22,23)

or to the sprinkling of the blood on the book of the covenant, and on the people at Mount Sinai, (<2Exodus 24:8) or to other sprinklings of blood in their legal sacrifices: the application of the blood of Christ to the heart, by the Spirit of God, for cleansing, pardon, and justification, is meant; which affords true, solid, conscience peace and joy now, and entitles to eternal happiness and glory; all which are secured by electing grace. The salutation of these persons follows:

grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied; which is much the same that is used by the Apostle Paul in all his epistles; (see Gill on "<Romans 1:7"), only Peter adds the word "multiplied"; which makes it more express, and the sense more clear: he means an enlarged view of interest in the love of God, an increase of grace out of the fulness of it in Christ, and of Gospel light, and of the several gifts of the Spirit; and also of all prosperity outward and inward, of a conscience peace through the blood of Christ, which passeth all understanding, and a more established and well grounded hope of enjoying eternal peace hereafter. The phrase is Jewish, and is used in their salutations in this form, ygsy ˆwkmlç, "let your peace be multiplied" [f23].

Ver. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, etc.] The epistle begins here with thanksgiving to God, or an ascription of blessing, praise, and glory to him; for this does not mean an invoking or conferring a blessing on him; neither of which can be, for there is not a greater than he to be invoked, nor can anything be added to his blessedness: but God may be blessed by his creatures when they speak well of him, and his wonderful works of creation, providence, and grace; when they ascribe all their mercies, spiritual and temporal, to him; give him the glory of them, and express their thanks for them in heart, lip, and life; and such a blessing of God for a special and spiritual favour, the grace of regeneration, is intended here: by "God" is meant, not God essentially, but personally considered, even God the Father, as is clearly expressed: the words are rendered in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions without the copulative "and", thus, "blessed be God the Father"; and if that is retained, they, may be rendered thus, "blessed be God, even the Father"; as in (<472 Corinthians 1:3) and so the latter be exegetical of the former; though both are true of Christ, in different senses; God is the God of Christ, as Christ is man; and he is the Father of Christ, as Christ is God; for, as man, he had no father, nor is he a son by office, but by nature; (see Gill on "<Ephesians 1:3").

which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again: regeneration is the blessing thanks are given for; and if we are to be thankful to God, and bless his name, because he hath made us creatures, and hath given us a natural being; much more should we praise him for making us new creatures, and giving us a spiritual being. To be “begotten again”, and so to be born again, is opposed unto, and distinguished from our first birth, when we were conceived, and shapen in sin; and designs a birth, spiritual, holy, and heavenly; it is signified by a being quickened, or made alive; so as in a spiritual sense, to see, and hear, and breathe after divine things, and to live a life of faith and holiness; by Christ being formed in the heart; by a partaking of the divine nature, and by being made new men, or new creatures: God, and not man, is the efficient cause of this, which is sometimes ascribed to the Spirit, and sometimes to the Son, and here to the Father; and it is not men's works, but his own good will and pleasure, his great love and free favour, his rich grace and abundant mercy, are the impulsive, or moving cause of it; and abundance of grace and mercy indeed is displayed in the regeneration and conversion of sinners: what they are regenerated to is,

unto a lively hope; meaning either the grace of hope, which is implanted in regeneration, and not before; for then, and then only, is a good hope through grace given; and it may be said to be “lively”, or “living”, inasmuch as it is fixed, not on dead works, but on a living Christ, on his person, blood, and righteousness; and is not the hope of a dead sinner, of a lifeless hypocrite, and formal professor, that has a name to live, and is dead, but of a living believer, one made truly alive by the spirit of life, from Christ; and is what is sometimes, at least, in lively exercise, and makes the heart of a believer cheerful, brisk, and lively; and is what is lasting and durable, and will never be lost, but will be held fast unto the end: or else the thing hoped for is intended, the hope laid up in heaven; the blessed hope regenerate ones are born unto, and are looking for, even eternal life and happiness; and the Syriac version renders it, “unto hope of life”: that is, or eternal life; and so reads one of Stephens's copies. Saints are both begotten again to the grace of hope, and to the glory which that grace is waiting for: the means is,

by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; which may be connected either with the act of begetting again; for Christ's resurrection is the virtual cause of regeneration, or regeneration is in virtue of Christ's resurrection; had he not risen from the dead, none would have been quickened, or made

to live, or have been raised to newness of life: his resurrection is the exemplar of regeneration; there is a likeness between them; as his resurrection was a declaration of his sonship, so regeneration is a manifestation of adoption; and as Christ's resurrection was his first step to glory, so is regeneration to eternal life; and both are wrought by the same almighty power: or the clause may be connected with the foregoing, “unto a lively hope”; for the resurrection of Christ is what is the means of, and lays a solid foundation of hope, both of the saints' resurrection from the dead, of which Christ is the meritorious cause, pledge, and pattern, and of eternal glory and happiness, since he rose for our justification, with which glorification is inseparably connected.

Ver. 4. *To an inheritance incorruptible*, etc.] This is a further explanation of the “lively hope”, or hope laid up in heaven, which regenerate ones are begotten to: it is an “inheritance”; a large estate, and rich possession, they are born heirs apparent to; what is not to be got by industry, or obtained by the works of the law; for they that are of the law are not heirs; but what is the pure bequest and free gift of God, as a Father to his children; for an inheritance is proper and peculiar to children, nor does it belong to any but them; and it comes to them through the death of the testator, Christ, and of it the Holy Spirit is the pledge and earnest: and here it is said to be

incorruptible; it is free from corruption in itself; nor can it be corrupted by others, by moth, or rust, or other things, as gold, silver, and garments may, which are a part of earthly inheritances; nor can it be enjoyed by corrupt persons, either corrupted with sin, or clothed with frailty and mortality; wherefore, in order to inherit it, corruption must put on incorruption, in every sense; other epithets and commendations of it follow:

and undefiled; it is in its own nature pure and holy, and free from any defilement of sin; nor are there any of those impurities in it which Jews and Mahometans dream of in their vainly expected earthly paradise; nor will it be possessed by any but undefiled persons, such as are made so through the blood and righteousness of Christ:

and that fadeth not away; as do world, and the glory of it, and all inheritances and possessions in it; here is no continuing city, but there is one to come; in this inheritance are durable riches, everlasting habitations, an house eternal in the heavens, glories in it that will never wither and die, and pleasures which will never end, and which will be enjoyed without decrease or loathing:

reserved in heaven for you; the Alexandrian copy reads, “for us”; and the Ethiopic version renders it, “for us and you”; for all the saints; for all who are the elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, and who are begotten again to a lively hope; for these this inheritance is prepared, laid up, and secured in the hands or Christ their feoffee, who has it in trust for them, and with whom they are co-heirs; and it is safe for them “in heaven”; out of the reach of men and devils: this serves both to commend the inheritance, to set forth the excellency of it, lying in such a place as heaven; for the situation of an inheritance adds oftentimes to the valuableness of it; and also the safety and security of it; it is safe, being in heaven, and more so as it is in Christ's hands there. The Jews are wont to call the future state an inheritance of the land of the living: they say [f24]

> “this is called hljn, “an inheritance”; and add, but in this world a man has no inheritance, nor continuance;”

so they interpret that phrase, “by the God of thy father”, in (<0425>Genesis 49:25) thus [f25]

> “this is ansja, “the inheritance” of the superior place, which is called “heaven”;”

and sometimes they style it hal[atnsja, “the superior inheritance”, or “the inheritance above” [f26]; all which agrees with Peter's language.

Ver. 5. *Who are kept by the power of God*, etc.] This is a description of the persons for whom the inheritance is reserved in heaven; they are not only chosen to salvation, and begotten again to an inheritance, but they are preserved unto it; their happiness is very great; their inheritance is safe in heaven for them, and they are kept below, amidst a thousand snares and difficulties, till they safely arrive to the possession of that: they are kept, not in and by themselves, the way of man is not in himself; nor in the hands of angels, for no such trust does God put in them; but in the hands of Jesus Christ, where they are safe, and out of which none can pluck them; on him, as a foundation, and in him, as a strong hold; they are kept in the love of God, and on his heart, from whence they can never be separated, and in the covenant of grace, out of which they will never be put; and in a state of justification, and shall never enter into condemnation; and in the family of God, for, being sons, they are no more servants; and in a state of grace and holiness, in the fear of God, and faith of Christ, and love to both; and in the path of truth, from whence they can never finally and totally fall: for

though they are not kept from the being of sin, and the workings of it, and slips and falls into it, yet from being destroyed by it; and though not from Satan, and his temptations, yet from being overcome by them; and though not entirely from unbelief, doubts, and fears, yet from final unbelief; for Christ prays for them, that their faith fail not; and from a final and total falling away from grace into sin: and they are kept thus, not by their own power and might, or that of any mere creature, but "by the power of God"; meaning, not the Gospel, nor the Spirit of God, but the perfection of his power; by which they are kept, as with a guard, or in a garrison, as the word here used signifies; not only angels encamp about them, and salvation is for walls and bulwarks, all around them; but God himself, in the perfection of his power, is a wall of fire to them; he is round about them from henceforth and for ever; their place of defence is the munition of rocks; his name is a strong tower, where they run and are safe: it is added,

through faith; some versions read it, "and by faith", as the Syriac and Ethiopic; by that faith which is of the operation of God, of which Christ is the author and finisher, and shall never fail, it being supported by the same power the saints are kept; through faith in the power and faithfulness of God; through faith looking to Christ, leaning on him, and living upon him; by faith getting the victory over the world, and every other enemy, and being more than conquerors, through Christ. That to which the saints are kept is, "unto salvation"; salvation is already obtained for them, by the obedience and sufferings of Christ, and is applied to them in conversion, by the Spirit of Christ; but the full enjoyment of it, which is here intended, is reserved for them in heaven; and to this they are kept, being heirs of it, and shall certainly possess it: and which

is ready to be revealed in the last time; it is "ready", being a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, and a salvation obtained by the blood of Christ, and a mansion of glory made fit for them, through the presence and intercession of their Redeemer: and it is ready "to be revealed"; in a short time it will be made manifest; at present it is much out of sight; eye has not seen, nor ear heard the full glories of it; saints themselves as yet do not know what they shall be, and have: but "in the last time", when Christ shall come a second time to judge the world, he will raise the dead bodies of his saints; and then this salvation shall be fully manifested to them; and they shall enjoy it both in soul and body to all eternity.

Ver. 6. *Wherein ye greatly rejoice*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version reads, “in which ye shall rejoice”: and so the Syriac version, adding, “for ever”; and refer these words to the “last time”; or, times spoken of in the preceding verse; when the saints will greatly rejoice, being in full possession of eternal salvation; in distinction from the present time, in which they are in heaviness; but it is better to read the words in the present tense, and as expressive of the saints in this life, who are blessed with that fruit of the Spirit, joy, and have always reason to rejoice, and greatly rejoice. The connection is with the whole that goes before; and the sense is this, that regenerated persons rejoice, in that they are the elect of God, according to his everlasting love towards them, and free grace, and good will; in their regeneration, which is an evidence of their election of God; in the abundant mercy of God displayed in their regeneration; and in that lively hope of eternal life which is the effect of it; and in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, which secures their justification of life, and their resurrection from the dead; and in the inheritance they are born heirs unto; and in their preservation to it by the power of God through faith; and in that complete salvation which is ready for them, and in a short time will be revealed, to which they are kept:

though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations. This seems to be a contrast, but is no real contradiction; for the character of the saints in this world is, that they are as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, (<4060>2 Corinthians 6:10) rejoicing even in their tribulations and temptations; yea, for them, and on account of them, in some respects, which in others make them sorrowful, and heavy, or “heavy” with sorrow: the cause of this heaviness is not only indwelling corruptions, the hidings of God's face, and the temptations of Satan, but afflictions and persecutions, which are here meant by “manifold temptations”; for not the temptations or to sin, are here intended, but the temptations with which God tempts and tries his people: so he sometimes does, by calling them to hard service, to do things difficult and disagreeable to flesh and blood, in which way he tempted Abraham; and by laying afflictions, or suffering afflictions to come upon them, by which he tried Job; and by permitting wicked men to reproach and persecute them, and to injure them in their characters, persons, and properties; and which was the case of the primitive Christians, and has been more or less the case of the saints ever since: now such exercises are called, from the quality of them, temptations, or trials; because they try the hearts, principles, and graces of them that believe, and

particularly their faith hereafter mentioned; and from the quantity of them, they are said to be various; they are of different sorts; as reproach, imprisonment, loss of goods, and death itself in divers shapes; and are more or less at different times and ages; and are exercised on various persons: and are sometimes very heavy, and grievous to be borne, and cause great heaviness and sorrow of heart; and yet there are things, and circumstances, and which are here hinted at, that greatly mitigate the heaviness occasioned by them; as, that these afflictions, and the heaviness that comes by them, are but little, and light, in comparison of the eternal weight of glory; though they are great tribulations in themselves, through and out of which the people of God come to the kingdom; and so the Syriac version renders it, "though at this time" lylq, "ye are a little made sorrowful"; and then it is only "now", for the present time, and but for a short time; for a little season, even for a moment, comparatively speaking; and also, "if need be", which the Syriac version omits, though by all means to be retained: afflictive dispensations, in whatsoever form, are necessary, by the will of God, who has appointed them, and therefore must be, and ought to be, quietly submitted to, and patiently borne, on that consideration; and are also necessary, on account of Christ the head, to whom there must be a conformity of his members; and likewise on their own account; for the humbling of their souls; for the weaning of them from the things of this world; for the restraining, subduing, and keeping under the corruptions of their nature; and for the trial of grace: and it is only "if", and when there is a necessity for them, that they are in heaviness by them; otherwise God does not delight to afflict and grieve the children of men, and much less his own; (see Lamentations 3:33) so the Jews say [f27], that Ærxwh, "there was a necessity" of God's tempting Abraham as he did, to humble and purify him.

Ver. 7. *That the trial of your faith*, etc.] This is the principal end which God has in afflictive providences, to try the faith of his people; so the faith of Abraham, Job, Habakkuk, and others, have been tried:

being much more precious than of gold that perisheth: the grace of faith is much more precious than gold; since that perisheth by using, but faith does not; and since it is so valuable as not to be obtained by it; and since those that have it, though poor in this world, are rich, and heirs of a kingdom: but the trying of it is abundantly more precious than gold; for not only as gold being tried in the fire is purged from its dross, and is proved to be

genuine and shines the brighter, so faith, being tried in the fire of afflictions, is purged from unbelief; and the believer is purged from his dross and tin, and his iniquity is purged, and the fruit of all is to take away sin; and he is tried and proved to be a true believer, and his faith shines the more illustriously, as in the above instances; yea, the very trying of it has an influence on other graces, for great usefulness; for the trying of faith works patience, and that, experience, and that, hope:

though it be tried with fire: either though gold be tried with fire, and so is greatly refined, yet it is more precious than that; or though faith be tried with the fire of afflictions, yet it is precious, and more precious than gold: and it is tried for this purpose,

that it might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; who is now in the highest heavens, and out of sight, but will appear a second time without sin unto salvation, and every eye shall see him; and when the believer will be found in him, and his faith be found unto praise by him, he will have praise of him himself; it will be said unto him, “Well done, good and faithful servant”; his faith will be praised for its steadiness and constancy, notwithstanding all persecutions and tribulations; and his good works, the fruits of faith, will be taken notice of by him with commendation; he will be honoured, by being placed on the right hand of Christ, and by being set down with him in his throne, and having a crown of righteousness given to him; and he will be glorified both in soul and body; his body will be made like to Christ's glorious body, and his soul will have a glory revealed in it; and in his whole person he shall appear, when Christ does, with him in glory.

Ver. 8. *Whom having not seen, ye love*, etc.] That is, Jesus Christ, whom they had never seen with their bodily eyes, being Jews, who dwelt not in Judea, when Christ was upon earth, but were scattered about in several parts of the Gentile world; and yet Christ being made known to them, through the preaching of the Gospel, they received and embraced him, and their affections were strongly set upon him: they loved him because of his excellencies and perfections, because of the loveliness of his person, and because he first loved them; they loved him because of the fulness of grace that was in him, because of what he had done for them, and was unto them, and because of the offices he sustained on their account, and the relations he stood in to them; they loved him above all creatures and things, and all of him, and that belong unto him, his people, truths, ordinances, ways, and

worship; they loved him with all their hearts, and in the sincerity of their souls, though they had never seen his face in the flesh; whereas sight often begets and increases love: their love was not carnal, but spiritual; it was a fruit of the Spirit of God in their souls; was accompanied with faith in Christ, and proceeded upon the report the Gospel made of him:

in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing; the Arabic version adds, “in him”: that is, in Christ, who was then received up into heaven, and must be retained there until the time of the restitution of all things; and therefore not now to be beheld with corporeal sight: and yet these regenerate ones, and lovers of Christ, believed in him; (see <43 20:29>John 20:29) not with a notional, historical, and temporary faith, believing not merely what he said, or did, or does, or will do; but looking on him, and to him, for life and salvation; going out of themselves to him, embracing of him, leaning upon him as their Saviour and Redeemer; venturing their souls upon him, committing their all unto him, expecting all from him, both grace and glory: and so

rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; with a joy in believing on him, which is better experienced than expressed; a joy that not only strangers intermeddle not with, know nothing of, which entirely passes their understanding, but is such as saints themselves cannot speak out, or give a full and distinct account of; they want words to express it, and convey proper ideas of it to others: and it is a joy that is glorious; there is a rejoicing that is evil and scandalous; but this is honourable, and of which none need be ashamed; it is solid and substantial, and the matter of it always abiding, when the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment; it is a joy on account of the glory of God, which the believer lives in the hope and faith of; and it is a beginning, a presage and pledge of it; it is a glory begun here; it is the firstfruits, and a part also of it; and by it saints may know a little what heaven itself will be.

Ver. 9. *Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls*.] Which is a just and sufficient ground of joy and rejoicing. “Salvation” intends spiritual and eternal salvation; that which God appointed his people to from all eternity, which is obtained by Christ, applied by the Spirit, and will be fully enjoyed in heaven: this is the salvation “of souls”: which are of more worth than a world; and the redemption of which is precious, and requires a great price, and for which a great price is paid, as in (<60 1:18>1 Peter 1:18,19). It is rightly supplied in our version by “your”, as in the Syriac,

Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; though the Vulgate Latin version only reads, "the salvation of souls"; and which is to be understood, not to the exclusion of bodies, for God has designed the salvation of them; and Christ has procured the redemption of them; and these will be preserved unto the coming of Christ, being united to him; and will be raised by him, and with their souls enjoy everlasting happiness with him; though, in the present state of things, salvation rather takes place in the soul than in the body, which is exposed to various labours, afflictions, and diseases; but the chief design of the phrase is, to distinguish this salvation from a corporeal and temporal one: and so the Jews use the phrase çpnh t[wçt, "the salvation of the soul" [f28], in opposition to, and distinction from, a mere bodily one; and it intends a salvation from sin, Satan, the law, and its curses; from hell, the second death, and wrath to come, and every spiritual enemy: which is the end of faith; or, as the Syriac version renders it, an[rwp, "the reward of faith"; not that faith is the cause of salvation, or meritorious of it; for that itself is the gift of God, and is rather a part of salvation, and, at most, but the means of perceiving an interest in it, and of enjoying the comfort of it; and is what will issue in it, and in the full enjoyment of it; when faith will both have its end and scope, and be at an end, being exchanged for fruition; just as a reward is given at the end of a man's labours: hence it is called tyrja, "the end", (<20>2318<20>Proverbs 23:18) and even now salvation is the end of faith, in like sense as Christ is the end of the law: as the law has its full accomplishment, and all its ends answered in Christ, so faith has its end, and all it looks for, desires, and wants, in salvation by Christ: and which is now "receiving"; for the saints not only shall receive, and enjoy the full possession of it hereafter, but they have it now; it is not only appointed to them, and wrought out for them, but is brought near, set before them, and applied to them, and put into the hands of faith by the Spirit of God; they have it in faith and hope, by which they are already saved; and in Christ their head and representative, in whom they are set down in heavenly places; and besides, they have the beginning, firstfruits, earnest, and pledge of it in their own hearts, as well as a right unto, and a meetness for the perfect possession of it hereafter; all which is matter of joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

Ver. 10. *Of which salvation the prophets have inquired*, etc.] They greatly desired the coming of the Saviour, and to see him; they longed after the salvation to be accomplished by him, and expressed their wishes for him, and that; and inquired into the nature of it, and gave an account thereof,

according to the measure of light and knowledge communicated to them; they pointed out Christ as a Redeemer of his people, and his salvation as spiritual and eternal:

and searched diligently; in the use of means; by prayer and supplication; by reading the prophecies that went before; by observing the types, shadows, and sacrifices of the law; and by waiting upon the Lord for the inspiration of his Spirit. This last clause is omitted in the Syriac version, but rightly retained in all others:

who prophesied of the grace; [that should] come unto you; Jews, and also the Gentiles. They prophesied both of Christ, who is the unspeakable gift of God's free grace, who is full of grace, and by whom it comes; and also of the several blessings of grace through Christ, as of redeeming grace from sin, Satan, death, and the grave; of justifying grace, through his righteousness, he being the Lord our righteousness, in whom all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and glory; for though his righteousness is revealed without the law, yet it is witnessed to by law and prophets; of pardoning grace, as with God, and as a blessing of the new covenant, and as received through faith in Christ, to which give all the prophets witness; of adopting grace, both to Jews and Gentiles, signifying, that where they were not called the people of God, they should be called the sons of God; of regenerating and sanctifying grace, in giving a new heart and Spirit, in sprinkling with clean water, in writing the laws of God in the inward parts, and pouring out the Spirit in a plenteous manner on all sorts of men; of persevering grace, intimating that they that fear the Lord shall not depart from him, and that his loving kindness shall never depart from them; and of eternal life and glory, as God's free gift, which is that everlasting salvation, they say, Israel shall be saved in the Lord with.

Ver. 11. *Searching what, or what manner of time*, etc.] The prophets made a very diligent inquiry into the exact time when Christ should come to work out the salvation of his people; to whom it was made known that his coming should be before the sceptre, or tribe of Judah, and all civil government in it, ceased; and before the second temple was destroyed, into which the Messiah, the messenger of the covenant, was to come, as the Lord and proprietor of it; and that it should be seventy weeks, or 490 years, from a date given in (<270924>Daniel 9:24-26) as it was revealed to the Prophet Daniel; who particularly inquired, and diligently searched into this matter, and was eminently a man of desires this way, as he is styled,

(<27>2923Daniel 9:23) and they not only searched into the exact time, but into the manner and quality of the time when the Saviour should come; and foretold that it would be, with respect to the nations of the world, a time of profound peace; with respect to the Jews, that it would be a time of great blindness, ignorance, unbelief, and hardness of heart; that such would be that generation, or age, for wickedness and barbarity, as could not be declared and expressed; and that few would believe the report of the Gospel; and that the Messiah would be rejected of men, and be wounded, bruised, and put to death; and with respect to the Gentiles, that the Gospel would be preached to them, and that they should seek to Christ, be gathered to him, and hope and trust in him; and that the followers of the Messiah should be persecuted, and greatly distressed, and yet comforted and sustained; and this should be the face of the times, and the state of things, when the salvation should be revealed: and all this, and much more,

the Spirit of Christ in them did signify; or "make manifest": from whence it appears, that Christ then existed, as he did before there were any prophets, and even from everlasting, being the eternal God; and that the Spirit is from him, as well as from the Father; and as here, so he is often by the Jews[f29] called ajyçm ajwr, "the Spirit of the Messiah", or "Christ"; and that the Spirit is truly God, since he could declare beforehand the exact time of Christ's coming, and the finality of the age in which he came, as well as bear a previous testimony to his sufferings and glory; as also, that he was in the prophets, and they were inspired by him, and spake as he moved and directed them:

when, it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. The "sufferings of Christ" are what the Jews call[f30] jyçm ylbj, "the sorrows of the Messiah". These are particularly testified of in (<19>2201Psalm 22:1-31 69:1-36 <23>5301Isaiah 53:1-12 <27>2606Daniel 9:26) (<38>1210Zechariah 12:10). The glory, or "glories", as it may be rendered, design his resurrection from the dead, his ascension to heaven, his session at the right hand of God, and having all power, authority, and judgment committed to him; and which are eminently and distinctly prophesied of in (<19>1610Psalm 16:10 68:18 110:1 <27>0713Daniel 7:13,14).

Ver. 12. *Unto whom it was revealed*, etc.] The salvation they searched and inquired into, and the grace of it; the time of its being wrought out, and what sort of times they would be when Christ should come, both to the church, and to the world, among Jews and Gentiles; as also what cruel

sufferings the Messiah should undergo, and what great glory should be put upon him afterwards:

that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read “unto you”; and so do some copies. Not that they were ignorant of the things they searched into, and were revealed unto them, and they prophesied of; as the Jews sometimes say [f31] of them,

> “that they prophesied, and knew not what they prophesied of;”

though it is not to be supposed that they had such clear and distinct ideas of things as saints have now under the Gospel dispensation; yet they knew much of the grace of the Gospel, and had the comfort of it, and a view of interest in the great salvation, and saw the day of Christ afar off with pleasure: nor that they did not minister, and were not useful to the saints of the age in which they lived; for their prophecies concerning Christ, and salvation by him, were particularly calculated for their spiritual refreshment and comfort, and the support of their faith and hope under afflictive circumstances; but then they were not to have their accomplishment in their times; for though they sometimes speak of them, because of the certainty of them, as if they were already done, yet they knew they were not to be brought about until the last days; and therefore what was written by them, was written for our learning and instruction chiefly and principally, on whom the ends of the world are come; and though they were both profitable to themselves, and others that lived with them, yet they are more so to the saints under the Gospel dispensations, who are able to compare prophesies and facts together: even

the things which are now reported unto you; as accomplished facts; such as relate to the person and offices of Christ, and salvation wrought out by him; to his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension into heaven, and session at the right hand of God; of all which there is a true and faithful report made in the Gospel:

by them that have preached the Gospel unto you; meaning himself, and the rest of the apostles, who had been called, and qualified, and sent out by Christ to preach glad tidings, and publish peace, which they had done in the several parts of the world, both to Jew and Gentile:

with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; by Christ from the Father, particularly at the day of Pentecost, when the apostles had an extraordinary

and plentiful effusion of the Spirit, qualifying them to preach the Gospel to which they were called and sent: and thus, as the great salvation is commended, from the concern that the prophets of old had in it, so from the preaching of it by the apostles, who were influenced and guided by the same Spirit of Christ as they were, and in a far greater manner; and this salvation is still more commended from the great regard the blessed angels have unto it:

which things the angels desire to look into. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “into whom”; either into the Holy Spirit, and the things of the Spirit, which he testified in the prophets, and published by the apostles; or rather into Christ, his person, offices, and grace, the allusion being to the cherubim on the mercy seat, a type of Christ, which looked to one another, and to the mercy seat, (<02520>Exodus 25:20) and was true of them in the days of Christ's flesh, when they ascended and descended on the son of man, (<43051>John 1:51) and when he rose from the dead, and went to heaven; for then was he seen and gazed on by angels, as he now is, (<54316>1 Timothy 3:16) or “into which things”: so the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; namely, the sufferings of Christ, and the glories following; the great mystery of redemption and salvation by Christ; the several doctrines of the Gospel, in which the glory of the grace, wisdom, righteousness, truth, and power of God is displayed; things they are highly delighted with, take pleasure in the contemplation of, and desire to have a greater knowledge of, and acquaintance with: they sung glory to God in the highest at the incarnation of Christ; they rejoice at the conversion of a sinner; and disdain not to be ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation; and learn of the church the manifold wisdom of God; which may serve greatly to commend the excellency of Gospel truths, and engage us in the study of them.

Ver. 13. *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind*, etc.] With the girdle of truth; (see <49614>Ephesians 6:14) since angels desire to look into the mysteries of grace, do you apply your minds, and diligently attend unto them, in opposition to all loose and vagrant thoughts of the mind, about other things: give yourselves up wholly to them, meditate upon them, employ yourselves in them, and about them; seeing they are the study and inquiry of angels, and what the prophets have prophesied of, and searched into and ministered, and the apostles of Christ have preached; and besides, are things which relate to the person, office, sufferings, and glory of Christ, and the salvation of immortal souls. Though the phrase is sometimes used to denote preparation and readiness, and to be in a fit position to do

anything, as the Israelites were at the eating of the first passover, to march at the least notice out of Egypt; and so to go a journey, to run a race, to serve another, to wait on him, and for him, and also be prepared for battle; and is a metaphor taken from the custom of the eastern nations, who used to wear long garments, which they gathered up close to them, and girt about them, when they were about any of the above things, that they might be no hinderance to them, and that they might perform them with more expedition and dispatch; and so may be expressive of the readiness of believers, as pilgrims and travellers, for their journey towards the heavenly country, and to run the race set before them, and also to do every good work, according to the station they are placed in, to serve their Lord and master Jesus Christ in whatsoever he calls them to, and to wait for his coming; (see <4012535>Luke 12:35-37) and also to fight his battles, to quit themselves like men, and be strong in defence of his Gospel, and against every enemy of his and theirs.

Be sober; which is not only opposed to intemperance in eating and drinking, which greatly disqualifies for the above readiness and attention, but also to a being inebriated with the cares of this life, which choke the word, and make it unfruitful, and lead men into temptation, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, and from the faith of Christ; and likewise to a being intoxicated with errors, and false doctrine, which lull men asleep, and render them incapable of serving Christ, and his church; and turn their heads from faith to fables, and are contrary to the words of truth and soberness; so that to be sober, is not only to be moderate in eating and drinking; but to be disengaged from the anxious cares of the world, and to be disentangled, recovered, or awaked from the error of the wicked:

and hope to the end; or "perfectly", as the Greek word may be rendered, and as it is in the Syriac version, which joins it with the other phrase, and renders it, "be ye perfectly awaked". The Arabic version renders it, "trusting with a perfect confidence"; so that it designs either the nature of that lively hope, to which they were begotten again, and are here exhorted to exercise, it being perfect, sincere, and without hypocrisy; not like the hope of the hypocrite, which shall perish, and stand him in no stead, but an undissembled one; for as there is faith unfeigned, and love without dissimulation, so hope without hypocrisy; and also the full assurance of it, for as there is a plerophory of faith and love, and of understanding, so of hope; (see <580611>Hebrews 6:11) or it intends the duration of this grace, and the exercise of it: it is a grace that does, and will remain, and it ought to be

continually exercised, and the rejoicing of it to be kept firm, to the end; to the end of life, and until the saints come to the enjoyment of what they are hoping for; even

for the grace that is to be brought unto you as the revelation of Jesus Christ; and which may be rendered for the grace that is brought unto you, in or by the revelation of Jesus Christ: and the sense may be, that there is grace that is now brought to light by the Gospel, and that is brought home to the souls of God's people through it; as electing grace, redeeming grace, justifying grace, pardoning grace, adopting grace; and, in short, salvation, as all of grace; which Gospel is the revelation of Jesus Christ: it is a revelation that is made by him; and it is a revelation that is made of him; it is a revelation of the glory of his person and offices; herein is his righteousness revealed from faith to faith; and here the riches of his grace are made manifest, and laid to open view; life and immortality are brought to light by Christ in it; and the way to eternal life, glory, and salvation, as being by Christ, is pointed out by it; and all this grace that is brought, and set before the saints in the Gospel, they ought to hope for, and comfortably believe their interest in; and continue thus hoping, believing, and trusting to the end of their days: or if our version, and which is that of others also, be retained, the meaning is, that eternal glory and happiness, which is called "grace", because it is the free gift of God through Christ, to his children and flock, and is the finishing of the grace that is bestowed on them, and wrought in them, and is future, "is to be brought"; is a glory that shall be revealed in them, and a salvation ready to be revealed to them; and which will be done when Christ shall be revealed from heaven, when he shall appear a second time, and in glory; and is, and ought to be, the object of their hope, for it is laid up, and reserved for them; and they have the earnest of it in them, as well as the promise of it to them. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions, instead of "grace", read "joy"; and is the same with eternal glory, the joy of the Lord prepared for them, and which they shall enter into.

Ver. 14. *As obedient children*, etc.] Or "children of obedience". This may be connected either with what goes before, that seeing they were children of God, by adopting grace, and in regeneration brought to the obedience of faith, to whom the inheritance belonged, therefore they ought to continue hoping for it; or with what follows, that since they were manifestly the children of God by faith in. Christ Jesus, being begotten again to a lively hope, they ought to be followers of him, and imitate him in holiness and

righteousness, and show themselves to be obedient ones to his Gospel and ordinances, as children ought to honour, and obey, and imitate their parents:

not fashioning yourselves to the former lusts in your ignorance. The phrase is much the same with that in (Romans 12:2) “be not conformed to this world”; for to be conformed, or fashioned to the world, is to be fashioned to the lusts of it; and to be fashioned to the lusts of it is to indulge them, to make provision for them, to obey them, to live and walk in them; which should not be done by the children of God, and who profess themselves to be obedient ones to the Gospel, which teaches otherwise; and that because they are lusts, foolish, hurtful, and deceitful ones, ungodly ones; the lusts of the devil, as well as of the world, and of the flesh, and which war against the soul; and because they are “former” ones, which they served in a time of unregeneracy, and were now convinced and ashamed of, and therefore should no longer live to them; the time past of life being sufficient to have walked in them: and because they were lusts in ignorance, which they had indulged in a state of ignorance; not of Gentilism, though this might be the case of some, but of Judaism; when they knew not God, especially in Christ, and were ignorant of his righteousness, and of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, as committed against a law that was holy and spiritual; nor did they know Christ, and the way of salvation by him, but thought they ought to do many things contrary to his name; nor the work of the Spirit in regeneration, saying with Nicodemus, how can these things be? nor the true sense of the Scriptures, the sacred oracles, that were committed to them; much less the Gospel, which was hidden from them, and they were enemies to: but now it was otherwise with them; they were made light in the Lord, and had knowledge of all these things; and therefore, as their light increased, and the grace of God, bringing salvation, appeared unto them, and shone out on then, it became them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and not to walk as they had done before, since they had not so learned Christ.

Ver. 15. *But as he which hath called you is holy*, etc.] Which is a periphrasis of God the Father, who had called them, not merely in an external way, by the outward ministry of the word; but internally, powerfully, and efficaciously, by his Spirit and grace; and who had called them to holiness of life and conversation, as well as in calling had implanted principles of holiness in them, and therefore is said to call them with an holy calling; and who himself is holy, naturally, perfectly, and

originally, and in such sense as no creature is, angels or men; and is glorious in holiness, and is the source and fountain of holiness in others: therefore

[so] be ye holy in all manner of conversation; which respects not internal holiness, but supposes it; for that is God's work, and not the creature's act; it is the sanctification of the Spirit, of which he is the author; this they were chosen unto from the beginning, and made partakers of in regeneration; but external holiness, holiness of life and conversation, in all the parts and branches of it, both with respect to God and men, in matters both of religion and civil life: and to be holy in this sense is an imitating of God, a copying after him, though he is far from being equalled by a sinful creature, or even by an angel in heaven; however, the arguments to it, taken from the nature of God, and of his effectual calling to grace and holiness, are very strong and powerful; for it is walking worthy of him, who has called us to his kingdom and glory; and walking worthy of that calling wherein we are called; and a following of God, as dear and obedient children; and what is according to his will, and what he directs unto, and requires, as appears from what follows.

Ver. 16. *Because it is written*, etc.] In (Leviticus 11:44 19:2 20:7)

be ye holy, for I am holy: an argument the apostle knew must have weight with these persons, who were chiefly Jews, scattered abroad among the Gentiles, and had a value for the Scriptures of truth; and therefore, as the argument for holiness of life, from the nature and perfections of God, is strong, it must receive additional strength from this being the declared will of God, even their sanctification on this account; and though holiness, equal to God, is never to be attained to by a creature, yet so far as it is capable of it, it is desirable, because agreeable both to the nature and will of God, by all such who are truly his children, who love his name, adore his perfections, give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness, fear his goodness, and obey his will.

Ver. 17. *And if ye call on the Father*, etc.] Of Christ, and of all the saints; or "seeing" ye do. This is a fresh argument, engaging to holiness of life and conversation. Invocation of God includes the whole worship of him, the performance of every outward duty, and the exercise of every inward grace, particularly it designs prayer; and whoever are concerned in one, or the other, God will be sanctified by all them that draw nigh unto him: or the phrase may here intend an asserting God to be their Father, under the

influence of the spirit of adoption; and all such that do claim so near a relation to God ought to honour and obey him, and to be followers of him: whoever call God their Father, and themselves his children, ought to be careful that they do not blaspheme, or cause to be blasphemed, that worthy name by which they are called:

who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work. This is another reason why men should be holy, taken from the general judgment; for this God that is a Father, is also a judge. There is a judgment after death, which is sure and certain, and reaches to all persons and things; and though the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son, yet he will judge everyone by that man Christ, whom he has ordained to be the Judge of quick and dead: before his judgment seat all must stand, where they will be impartially, and without respect of persons, tried; no account will be had of what nation and place they are, whether Jews or Gentiles, or of this, or the other country, unless to aggravate or lessen their condemnation; for it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, for Sodom and Gomorrah, than for such who have been favoured with a Gospel revelation, and believe it not; nor from what parents they have descended, for the soul that sins, that shall die; nor of what age and sex they are, small and great shall stand before him; nor of what state and condition, rich or poor, high or low, bond or free; or of what religious sect and denomination, or whether they have conformed to some external things or not; no regard will be had to any outward appearance or profession. The Judge will not judge according to the sight of the eyes, and outward view of things; for he looks on the heart, and knows the secret springs of all actions; and according thereunto will he judge and pass the sentence; and therefore what manner of persons ought men to be, in all holy conversation and godliness? Hence it follows,

pass the time of your sojourning here in fear; the people of God in this world are “sojourners”, as all their fathers were; they are not natives of the place in, which they are; though they are in the world, they are not of it; they were natives of it by their first birth, but by their second they are born again from above, and so, belong to another place; they are of another country, even an heavenly one; are citizens of another city, a city which, has foundations, whose builder and maker is God, their citizenship is in heaven; and there is their Father's house, which is not made with hands, and is eternal; and there lies their estate, their inheritance; and though they dwell here below, neither their settlement nor their satisfaction are here;

they reckon themselves not at home while they are on earth, and are strangers in it, to the men of the world, and they to them; with whom they have not, or at least ought not to have, any fellowship. It is indeed but for a "time", that they are sojourners, not an eternity; which time is fixed, and is very short, and will be quickly gone; it is but a little while, and Christ wilt come and take them home to his Father's house, where they shall be for ever with him; for it is only here on earth that they are pilgrims and strangers: and while they are so they should spend their time "in fear"; not of men nor of devils, nor of death and judgment, hell and eternal damnation; for such a fear is not consistent with the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and is the effect of the law, and not encouraged by the Gospel; is in natural men, yea, in devils themselves; but in the fear of God, and which springs from the grace of God, and is increased by it; is consistent with the strongest acts of faith, and with the greatest expressions of spiritual joy; is opposite to pride and self-confidence, and includes the whole worship of God, external and internal, and a religious conversation, in humility and lowliness of mind.

Ver. 18. *Forasmuch as ye know*, etc.] From the Scriptures of truth, by the testimony of the Spirit, by his work upon the soul, and by the application of the benefits of redemption, such as justification, pardon, adoption, and sanctification; (see <181925>Job 19:25 <480220>Galatians 2:20),

that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold. The redemption of a soul, which is of more worth than a world, requires a greater price than gold and silver; and those who have the largest share thereof, can neither redeem their own souls with it, nor the souls of others. The soul is immortal and incorruptible, but these are corruptible things, which may be cankered, or wear away, and perish by using; and therefore, seeing redemption is not obtained by anything corruptible, nothing corrupt in principle, or practice should be indulged. The allusion is to the redemption of the people of Israel, and of the firstborn, by shekels, (<022012>Exodus 30:12,13 <040346>Numbers 3:46-48). Gold and silver do not mean pieces of gold and silver, but gold and silver coined; for only by such could redemption of anything be obtained [f32] but these are insufficient for the redemption of the soul; which is a deliverance from the slavery of sin, the bondage, curse, and condemnation of the law, the captivity of Satan, and from a state of poverty, having been deep in debt, and sold under sin. It here follows,

from your vain conversation [received] by tradition from your fathers; meaning not the corruption of nature, which is propagated from father to son by natural generation, and lies in the vanity of the mind, and is the spring and source of an evil conversation; though the saints, as they are redeemed from all sin, so from this, that it shall not be their condemnation; not Gentilism, which lay in vain philosophy, in idolatry and superstition, and in evil and wicked conversation, encouraged by the example of their ancestors; but Judaism, and either regards the ceremonial law, which was delivered by Moses to the Jewish fathers, and by them handed down to their posterity; and which was vain, as used and abused by them, and was unprofitable to obtain righteousness, life, and salvation by, and therefore was disannulled by Christ, who has redeemed and delivered his people from this yoke of bondage; or rather the traditions of the elders, which our Lord inveighs against, (<40153>Matthew 15:3) etc. and the Apostle Paul was brought up in, and zealous of, before conversion, (<48114>Galatians 1:14) as the Pharisees were. These were the inventions and decrees of them they called twba, "fathers", to whose dogmas and decisions they paid the utmost respect. These made up their oral law, which the Jews say [f33] Moses received from Sinai, and delivered to Joshua; and Joshua to the elders; and the elders to the prophets; and the prophets to the men of the great synagogue, the last of which was Simeon the just; and from him it was delivered to another; and so from one to another to the times of Christ and his apostles and afterwards; and which consisted of many vain, useless, and unprofitable things; to walk according to which must be a vain conversation; and the saints now being redeemed by a greater price than that of silver and gold, and which is after mentioned, they ought not therefore to be the servants of men, no, not of these fathers, but of God and Christ.

Ver. 19. *But with the precious blood of Christ*, etc.] Christ was prophesied of as a Redeemer under the Old Testament, (<235920>Isaiah 59:20) and the Jews frequently ascribe redemption to the word of the Lord God [f34]; and which the apostle here attributes to the blood of Christ; whose blood is the same with ours, only not tainted with sin; the blood of an innocent person, and of one who is God, as well as man, and was freely shed in the room and stead of his people, and so a sufficient price for their redemption: and it may truly be said to be "precious": as it is to God, to whom it is a sweet smelling sacrifice, and with which he is well pleased; not that he takes delight in the mere effusion of his blood, but as this is the ransom price,

and the atonement of his chosen ones; and so it is to all them that believe, since by it they are justified; through it they have the forgiveness of their sins; their peace and reconciliation with God is made by it; and by it they are sanctified, and have boldness to enter into the holiest of all: and this blood of Christ, by which they are redeemed, is

as of a lamb without spot and blemish; Christ is comparable to any lamb, for the innocence of his nature, the meekness of his disposition and deportment, and for his patience under sufferings and in death; and to the lambs of the daily sacrifice, which were typical of the continual and constant virtue and efficacy of his sacrifice to take away sin; and particularly to the paschal lamb, he being the true passover sacrificed for us; and which, as also the lambs of the daily sacrifice, and all others, were to be without spot and blemish: and in which they prefigured Christ, who is without the stain of original, and the spot and blemish of actual sin; and so was a very fit person to be a sacrifice for sin, and a Redeemer of his people. The Jews have a notion, that the redemption of the Israelites out of Egypt, when a lamb without blemish was taken, and sacrificed and eaten, had a respect to the future redemption by the Messiah; and which, they say [f35], was to be in the same time of the year; that as they were redeemed in Nisan, the month in which the passover was kept, so they were to be redeemed in the same month: and indeed at that time, and in that month, was redemption obtained by the blood of Christ. Of the former, the Targumist in (Hosea 3:2) says,

> "I have redeemed them by my word, on the fifteenth day of the month Nisan, and have given silver shekels, the atonement of their souls."

It is observable that the Hebrew word μd signifies both "blood" and "money", or price; whether some reference may not be had to this here, since both are included here, may be considered.

Ver. 20. *Who verily was foreordained*, etc.] Or "foreknown"; that is, by God; and which intends, not barely his prescience of Christ, of what he should be, do, and suffer; but such a previous knowledge of him, which is joined with love and affection to him; not merely as his own Son, and the express image of his person, but as Mediator; and whom he loved before the world was, and with a love of complacency and delight, and which will last for ever. It includes the choice of him as the head of the election, and

the pre-ordination of his human nature, to the grace of union to his divine Person, and the pre-appointment of him to various things. The Syriac version adds, “to this”; that is, to be the lamb for a sacrifice, to be a propitiation for the sins of his people, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them by his precious blood. The allusion is to the taking of the passover lamb from the sheep, or from the goats, and keeping it separate, from the tenth to the fourteenth day of the month, before it was slain; so Christ, as man, was chosen out from among the people; and as Joseph's antitype was separated from his brethren, and that

before the foundation of the world; for all God's decrees and appointments, relating either to Christ, or his people, are eternal; no new thoughts, counsels, and resolutions, are taken up by him in time. The affair of redemption by Christ is no new thing; the scheme of it was drawn in eternity; the persons to be redeemed were fixed on; the Redeemer was appointed in the council and covenant of peace; and even the very Gospel which proclaims it was ordained before the world, for our glory. A Saviour was provided before sin was committed, and the method of man's recovery was settled before his ruin took place; and which was done without any regard to the works and merits of men, but is wholly owing to the free and sovereign grace of God, and to his everlasting love, both to the Redeemer and the redeemed. The Jews [f36] reckon the name of the Messiah among the seven things that were created before the world was; in proof of which they mention, (Psalm 72:17) but was manifest in these last times for you; he was before, he existed from everlasting; he lay in the bosom of his Father from all eternity: and was veiled and hid under the shadows of the ceremonial law, during the legal dispensation; but in the fulness of time was manifest in the flesh, and more clearly revealed in the Gospel, and to the souls of men; his manifestation in human nature is principally intended, and which was in the last times of the legal dispensation, at the end of the Jewish world or state, when a new world, or the world to come, took place. It is a rule with the Jews [f37], that whenever the last days or times are mentioned, the times of the Messiah are designed: and this manifestation of Christ was for the sake of some particular persons, even for all God's elect, whether among Jews or Gentiles, and who are described in the following verse. The Alexandrian copy reads, “for us”; and the Ethiopic version, “for him”.

Ver. 21. *Who by him do believe in God*, etc.] Christ, as God, is the object of faith; as Mediator, he is the way to the Father, by which men come to

him, believe in him and lay hold upon him, as their covenant God and Father; and is also the author of that faith by which they believe in him; and all their encouragement to believe is taken from him; and such who do come to God by Christ, and stay themselves upon him, trusting in him, may know, and comfortably conclude, that Christ, who was foreordained from all eternity to be the Redeemer of his people, was manifest in the flesh for their sakes, and to obtain eternal redemption for them, which he was sent to do, by him

that raised him up from the dead: mention being made of his blood, as the price of redemption, (⁶⁰¹¹⁹1 Peter 1:19), supposes that he died; and lest it should be thought that he was held by the pains of death, and under the power of it, which it was impossible he should, considering the dignity of his person, as the Son of God, and the fulfilment of his engagements, as the surety of his people; his resurrection from the dead is asserted, which was not only foretold by himself, but predicted by the prophets, and was punctually accomplished; and which, as here, is usually ascribed to God the Father, though not to the exclusion of Christ himself, who had power to lay down his life, and take it up again; and which is a very great encouragement to faith in God, both with respect to justification in his sight, and acceptance with him, since Christ rose again for our justification, and with regard to a future resurrection:

and gave him glory; by raising him from the dead, when his body became a glorious one, being raised, spiritual, powerful, and incorruptible; and by his ascension to heaven, being received up in a cloud, attended by thousands of angels, and triumphing over the powers of darkness; and by placing him at his own right hand, which is an honour never bestowed on any mere creature; and by possessing him with the gifts of the Spirit for men, and giving him all power in heaven and in earth, and authority to exercise judgment on all, and a name above every name in this, or the world to come:

that your faith and hope might be in God; which are graces that go together, and much resemble and assist, each other; they are both the gifts of God, and have him for their object, and meet in the same persons; and are greatly encouraged by the resurrection of Christ, and the glory he now enjoys, since because he lives, those that believe in him shall live also, and appear with him in glory.

Ver. 22. *Seeing ye have purified your souls*, etc.] The apostle passes to another exhortation, namely, to brotherly love; the ground of which he makes to be, the purification of their souls; and which supposes that they had been impure; and indeed, their whole persons, souls and bodies, were so by nature; even all the members of their bodies, and all the powers and faculties of their souls: it is internal purity, purity of the heart, that is here particularly respected; though not to the exclusion of outward purity, for where there is the former, there will be the latter; but there may be an external purity, where there is not the inward one: this the apostle ascribes to the saints themselves, but not without the grace of God, the blood of Christ, and the operations of his Spirit; as appears by a following clause; but they are said to purify themselves, inasmuch as having the grace of faith bestowed on them, they were enabled, under the influences of the Spirit of God, to exercise it on the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin:

in obeying the truth; of the Gospel, by receiving, believing, and embracing it in the love of it; which teaches outward purity, and is a means in the hand of the spirit of inward purity, and of directing to the purifying blood of Jesus, who sanctifies and cleanses by the word:

through the Spirit; this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, but is in the Arabic version, and ought to be retained; for, as Christ died to purify to himself a peculiar people, the Spirit of Christ does from him purify the heart by faith in his blood; by sprinkling that on the conscience, and by leading the faith of God's people to the fountain of it, to wash it for sin, and for uncleanness; even both their consciences and their conversation, garments; whereby they obtain inward and outward purity:

unto unfeigned love of the brethren; which is the end of sanctification, and an evidence of it; when the saints are loved as brethren, and because such; and with a love without dissimulation, not in word and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth: this being the case, the exhortation follows:

[see that ye] love one another with a pure heart fervently: this is Christ's new commandment, and the evidence of regeneration; a distinguishing badge of Christianity, and without which all profession of religion is a vain and empty thing: this should he mutual and cordial; should proceed from the heart, and from an heart sprinkled from an evil conscience; and should be with warmth and fervency, and not with coldness and indifference;

though the word here used, εκτενως, may not only design the intenseness of it, but the extensiveness of it also; as that it should reach to all the saints, the poor as well as the rich, and the lesser as well as the greater and more knowing believers; and likewise may denote the continuance of it; it ought to be continually exercised, and to last always; and so the Arabic version renders it, “with a perpetual love”.

Ver. 23. *Being born again*, etc.] As they were of God, according to his abundant mercy, by the resurrection of Christ, to a lively hope of a glorious inheritance; as in (<600103>1 Peter 1:3) and therefore seeing they were brethren in a spiritual relation, they ought to love as brethren; being children of the same Father, belonging to the same family and household, having the same spirit, and the same nature and disposition, and being members one of another, and heirs of the same grace and glory; and not only so, but were taught of God their Father, in regeneration, to love one another: it became them highly, therefore, to exercise that grace, and particularly since they were born,

not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; referring not to seed cast into the earth, which first corrupts and dies, and then is quickened, and rises, and brings forth fruit; but to human seed, and which the Jews call hjwrs hpj, “the filthy drop” [f38]; which is in itself corrupt, and is corrupted, and whereby the corruption of human nature is propagated; for whatsoever is born of the flesh is carnal and corrupt; and so the apostle has reference to the first birth, or natural generation of men, in which they are polluted and depraved, and confirms what the evangelist says, (<430113>John 1:13) that regenerate persons are not “born of blood”; or become new creatures, and holy men, by their natural descent, or first birth, be it from whom it will; for all men are of one blood originally, and that is tainted with sin; nor by the will of fallen creatures, of corruptible men, themselves or others; but of water, and of the Spirit, of the grace of the Spirit of God, which is seed pure and incorruptible, having no mixture or taint of sin, nor any degree of pollution in it, and which remains so; nor can it be corrupted by all the wickedness there is in man's heart; nor by all the pollutions of the world, or temptations of Satan; and this seed is conveyed into the heart by the Spirit of God, in regeneration, and it contains all grace in it;

by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever; for the incorruptible seed, and the ever living and abiding word, are two distinct things; though interpreters generally confound them: and by “the word of

God" is either meant the essential Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; who is concerned in regeneration as well as the Father and the Spirit; by whose resurrection, and in consequence of it, the elect of God are begotten again; and who, as the Word, is able to build up all the sanctified ones, and give them the inheritance they are born heirs unto: or the Gospel, the word of truth, which is made use of as a means of begetting souls again; and the rather, since it seems to be so interpreted, (<60125>1 Peter 1:25) the phrases, "which liveth and abideth forever", may be either read in connection only with "God", and as descriptive of him, who is the living God, is from everlasting to everlasting, in distinction from idols; and here added, to show that he can give power and efficacy to his word, to regenerate and quicken, and will continue to preserve and make it useful to all his saving purposes; so Jarchi explains the passage in (<234008>Isaiah 40:8) after referred to, "the word of our God shall stand for ever";

> "because he lives and abides, and it is in his power to confirm it therefore it follows, "O Zion, that bringeth good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain"; for because he lives forever, this promise is published."

Or else with the word of God, and is true both of Christ, and of the Gospel. Christ is the Word which lives; in him, as such, is life; he has life in himself as God, as man, and as Mediator; and is the author of life, natural, spiritual, and, eternal; and abides for ever in his person, without any change; and in his offices and grace, and righteousness; he abides a priest continually, has an unchangeable priesthood, and ever lives to make intercession, and of his kingdom there is no end: the same is said of the "Memra", or Word of God, in the Chaldee paraphrase on (<280109>Hosea 11:9) "I am God", y r mym, "my word abideth for ever": compare (<661234>John 12:34). The Gospel also may be said to live, in opposition to the law, which is the killing letter; and because it points out the way of life and salvation to sinners; and is a means of quickening dead sinners, and of ingenerating that faith by which men live on Christ; and of revealing to them that righteousness which is unto justification of life; and of supporting and maintaining spiritual life in them; and of reviving drooping saints; the Syriac version renders it, "the living Word of God": and it remains, and will abide; all its promises, blessings, doctrines, and ordinances, are lasting; it will continue in the world until all the elect of God are gathered in, until the second coming of Christ, and to the end of the world; notwithstanding all the persecutions of men, and cunning, craft of false teachers, and all the

ridicule and contempt it is treated with by mockers and scoffers: and will abide in the effects of it, in the hearts of the saints, to all eternity.

Ver. 24. *For all flesh is as grass*, etc.] All men, as born of corruptible seed, are frail, mortal, and perishing; they spring up like grass, and look beautiful for a while, but are very weak and tender, and in a little time they are cut down by death, and wither away; and while they live, are, in a good measure, nothing but grass in another form; the substance of their life is greatly by it; what is the flesh they eat, but grass turned into it? and this mortality is not only the case of wicked men, as the Jews [f39] interpret the word, but of good men; even of the prophets, and preachers of the Gospel; and yet the word of God spoken by them continues for ever: the passage referred to is in (<2406>Isaiah 40:6-8)

and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass; all outward things which are in esteem with men, and render them glorious to one another, as riches, honour, wisdom, strength, external righteousness, holiness, and goodness; all which are fading and transitory, like the flower of the field; but the Gospel continues, and reveals durable riches, and honour with Christ; and true wisdom and strength with him, and spiritual knowledge, in comparison of which, all things are dross and dung; and an everlasting righteousness; and true holiness in him: some have thought respect may be had to the legal dispensation, and to all the glory and stateliness and goodliness of the worship and ordinances of it, which were to endure but for a time, and are now removed; and the Gospel dispensation has taken place of them, which will continue to the end of the world:

the grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away; and so fading are all the above things.

Ver. 25. *But the word of the Lord endureth for ever*, etc.] Though men die, and ministers of the word too, and everything in the world is uncertain, unstable, fleeting, and passing away, and whatever change has been in the ordinances of divine service; yet the word of the Lord, the Gospel of Christ, is settled for ever, and will never pass away:

and this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you; this is the apostle's application of the passage in Isaiah, showing that the word of the Lord there is the same with the Gospel preached by him, and the other apostles, at that present time; and is no other than that good tidings Zion is said to bring; (see <2409>Isaiah 40:9) the selfsame Gospel the Prophet Isaiah

preached the apostles did, though with greater clearness, and more success; (see <4510> Romans 10:8,16).

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER 2

This chapter consists of exhortations, in general, to a holy life; and, in particular, to obedience to superiors. It begins with an exhortation to lay aside various vices, which were unbecoming regenerate persons, (1 Peter 2:1) and, agreeably to their character, as new born babes, to express a desire after the Gospel, which is commended from its nature, being comparable to milk; and from its quality, being reasonable, sincere, and unmixed; and from the end and usefulness of it, a spiritual growth; and the argument engaging to such a desire is the experience they had of the grace of Christ in it, (1 Peter 2:2,3) whose excellency is declared, under the metaphor of a stone, said to be living, to be chosen of God, and precious to him, though rejected by men; to whom the saints are encouraged to come, as lively stones built up, a spiritual house, for the exercise of the holy office of the priesthood, by offering up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ, (1 Peter 2:4,5) and that Christ is such a precious stone, is proved from (Isaiah 28:16) and not only to God, but to all them that believe; though to them that believe not, he is the stone of rejection, stumbling, and offence; to stumble at which, and the doctrine of it, through disobedience, they were of old appointed by God, (1 Peter 2:6-8) but the character of the persons the apostle writes to was very different, quite the reverse, being chosen and called, and manifestly the people of God, and sharing in his grace and mercy, (1 Peter 2:9,10) and these he exhorts, suitable to their state and condition, to abstain from sin, as an enemy to their souls, and to live an honest life and conversation among the Gentiles, that they, instead of speaking evil of them, might, by beholding their good works, glorify God, (1 Peter 2:11,12). And particularly he exhorts them to obedience to civil magistrates, both superior and inferior; partly from the author of them, they being of the Lord; and partly from the usefulness of them to punish wicked men, and to encourage good men; and also from its being the will of God, by such obedience, to silence the cavils of foolish men, (1 Peter 2:13-15). And whereas it might be objected, that they were made free by Christ, and therefore should not be the servants of men; it is granted, that they were free; but then it is denied, that they should use

their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness: and besides, it should be observed, that they were the servants of God, and therefore ought to do what he enjoined them; and, among other things, yield obedience to civil magistrates, (1 Peter 2:16). And to this purpose are various exhortations in (1 Peter 2:17), and another particular one is added, which is to servants, to be subject to their masters, and fear them, whether they be good or bad, (1 Peter 2:18) and then he comforts such that had bad masters, and encourages them to bear the injuries they received from them patiently; because so to do was grateful to God, and acceptable in his sight; and because they were called unto it by him; and because of the example Christ had left them in suffering for them, (1 Peter 2:19-21). And this is further urged from the character of Christ, who was without sin, and yet suffered, and from his conduct, who, when reviled, made no return, but left his cause with God, (1 Peter 2:22,23) which leads on the apostle take notice of the nature of Christ's sufferings in his body on the cross, and the ends of them, which were expiation of sin, healing diseases, and holiness of life, as a consequent thereof, (1 Peter 2:24) previous to which conversion, which is illustrated by the former state and condition men are in, being as sheep going astray; and by their present one, being returned to Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, (1 Peter 2:25).

Ver. 1. *Wherefore, laying aside all malice*, etc.] Since the persons the apostle writes to were born again, and therefore ought to love one another, he exhorts them to the disuse of such vices as were disagreeable to their character as regenerate men, and contrary brotherly love; he dissuades them from them, and advises to “lay them aside”, either as weights and burdens, which it was not fit for new born babes to carry; (see Hebrews 12:1) or rather as old worn out clothes, as filthy rags, which should be put off, laid by, and never used more, being what were very unsuitable to their character and profession to wear: the metaphor is the same as in (Ephesians 4:22 Colossians 3:8,9) and the first he mentions is malice; to live in which is a mark of an unregenerate man, and very unbecoming such who are born again; and is not consistent with the relation of brethren, and character of children, or new born babes, who are without malice, and do not bear and retain it: “all” of this is to be laid aside, towards all persons whatever, and in every shape, and in every instance of it:

and all guile; fraud, or deceit, in words or actions; and which should not be found, and appear in any form, in Israelites indeed, in brethren, in the

children of God; who ought not to lie one to another, or defraud each other, nor express that with their lips which they have not in their hearts; which babes are free from, and so should babes in Christ:

and hypocrisies; both to God and men: hypocrisy to God is, when persons profess that which they have not, as love to God, faith in Christ, zeal for religion, fervent devotion, and sincerity in the worship of God; and do all they do to be seen of men, and appear outwardly righteous, and yet are full of all manner of iniquity: hypocrisy to men is, pretence of friendship, loving in word and tongue only, speaking peaceably with the mouth, but in heart laying wait; a sin to be abhorred and detested by one that is born from above; and is contrary to that integrity, simplicity, and sincerity of heart, which become regenerate persons, the children of God, and brethren one of another:

and envies; at each other's happiness and prosperity, riches, honours, gifts temporal or spiritual; for such are works of the flesh, show men to be carnal, are unbecoming regenerated persons, and contrary to the exercise of Christian charity, or love, which envieth not the welfare of others, either respecting body, soul, or estate:

and all evil speakings; backbitings, whisperings, detractions, hurting one another's characters by innuendos, false charges, and evil surmises; which is not acting like men that are made new creatures, and are partakers of the divine nature, nor like brethren, or as Christ's little ones, and who are of God, begotten again to be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Ver. 2. *As new born babes*, etc.] The Syriac version renders it, “be ye simple as infants”; and as if it was a distinct exhortation of itself, and from that which follows; though it seems rather to be descriptive of the persons spoken to, and a character of them, under which the apostle addresses them; which carries in it a reason strengthening the exhortation after given: he takes it for granted that they were begotten again, according to the abundant mercy of God, and born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, and that they were just, or lately born; and which is to be understood of them all in general, and not of younger converts among them, who might be called little children with respect to others who were young men or fathers; but that, comparatively speaking, those that had been of the longest standing were but as it were newly born, it being at most but a few years since they were called by grace: and they were as “babes”, not on account of their want of knowledge, or unskilfulness in the word of

righteousness; or of nonproficiency in the learning of divine truths, and their great dulness, backwardness, and imperfection; or because of their incapacity in taking in, and digesting the strong meat and sublimer doctrines of the Gospel; or for their instability and simplicity, being easily deceived and beguiled; nor for their weakness in faith, not being able to walk alone, and their insufficiency to defend, or provide for themselves; but because of their harmlessness and innocence, meekness and humility; and for the sincerity of their faith and love, obedience and profession. The proselytes to the Jews' religion are often said [f40] to be ymd dlwnç ˆwjqk, “as an infant just born”, or a new born babe; to which the allusion may here be made:

desire the sincere milk of the word; this is not a declaration that these new born souls did do so, though that might be true, but an exhortation to them so to do, as it became them: by “the sincere milk of the word” is meant the Gospel, even the whole of it, and not, as elsewhere, the more plain and easy truths of it; which is compared to milk for its purity in itself, for every word of God is pure and for its purifying nature, as used by the Spirit of God; and for its sweetness and agreeable taste to a regenerate man; and because easy of digestion to a spiritual one; and because it is nutritive to him, by it he is nourished up unto eternal life; and because, as milk is of a cooling nature, so the Gospel is a means, in the hand of the Spirit of God, of assuaging those inflammations, and of allaying that wrath and fiery indignation, raised in the conscience of a sinner by the law; and because as milk, medicinally used, is a restorative in consumptive disorders, so the Gospel is not only the means of helping a declining person, and who is wasted and consumed by sin, but even of quickening such as are dead in sin; it is the savour of life unto life. The Jewish writers speak of hrwt lç blj, “the milk of the law” [f41], of which they generally interpret [f42] the passage in (<2550>Isaiah 55:1) but it is much better applied to the Gospel, which is the milk of the word, or “rational milk”: not that the Gospel is a scheme according to the carnal reason of men; it is contrary to that, and above sound reason, though not repugnant to it; but it is what is calculated for faith, the spiritual reason of men, and for such who have their spiritual senses exercised, to discern between good and evil; it is a spiritual drink, and is made up of spiritual things, and suited to the spiritual man; it is milk, not in a natural, but in a mystic and spiritual sense: the Syriac version renders it, “the word which is as milk, pure and spiritual”: and it is “sincere”; without mixture, unadulterated with the inventions and doctrines

of men, Jews or heretics: or “without deceit”; being neither deceitfully handled by the faithful ministers of it, nor causing deceit, or deceiving those that cordially receive it. Now, this it becomes regenerate person, to “desire”; and vehemently long after, as a new born babe does after its mother's milk; for the Gospel is that to one that is born again, as the breast is to a babe: desire after it supposes knowledge of it; and where there is an experimental knowledge, there will be a value and esteem for it, even above necessary food, and, at times, an hungering and thirsting after it, an impatient longing for, and desire of it; when such souls will labour after it, and diligently observe and attend every opportunity of enjoying it, and think long ere the seasons of meeting with it return; for it is suitable food for them, savoury food, such as their souls love, and which indeed they cannot live without: now the end of this exhortation, and of such a desire, and of feeding on the words of faith and sound doctrine, is,

that ye may grow thereby: regenerate persons are not at their full growth at once; they are first children, then young men, and then fathers in Christ; the Gospel is appointed as a means of their spiritual growth, and by the blessing of God becomes so, and which they find to be so by good experience; and therefore this milk of the word is desirable on this account, for the increase of faith, and the furtherance of the joy of it; for their growth in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and in an experience of spiritual strength from him, and unto him, as their head in all things; not merely in the leaves of a profession, but in the fruits of grace, righteousness, and holiness. The Alexandrian copy, and several others, and also the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, add, “unto salvation”: that is, until they come to a perfect knowledge of Christ, and to be perfect men with him, being arrived to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, and in the possession of that salvation he has obtained for them.

Ver. 3. *If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious*.] Reference is had to (1Pe 2:3 Psalm 34:8), “O taste and see that the Lord is good”; and the Syriac version here adds, “if ye have seen”: by the Lord is meant, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the following words show, who is gracious and amiable, and lovely in his person; who has a fulness of grace in him for his people; has displayed his grace towards them, in engaging for them as a surety, in assuming their nature, obeying, suffering, and dying in their stead; he is gracious in his word and promises, truths and ordinances, and in all his offices and relations; and regenerate persons have tasted that he is so: an

unregenerate man has no spiritual taste; his taste is vitiated by sin, and not being changed, sin is a sweet morsel in his mouth, and he disrelishes everything that is spiritual; but one that is born again savours the things of the Spirit of God; sin is exceeding sinful to him, and Christ exceeding precious; he, and his fruit, his promises, and blessings of grace, his word and ordinances, are sweet unto his taste: and the taste he has is not a mere superficial one, such as hypocrites may have of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come; but such a taste of Christ, and of his grace, as, by a true faith, to eat his flesh, and drink his blood, and so have everlasting life; such have a saving and experimental knowledge of Christ, an application of him, and his saving benefits to them, a revelation of him in them, so that they find and feel that he dwells in them, and they in him; such receive out of Christ's fulness, and grace for grace, and live by faith upon him, and receive nourishment from him; and of this the apostle made no doubt concerning these persons, but took it for granted that they had had such tastes of Christ, and therefore could not but desire the Gospel, which is a revelation of Christ, and sets forth the glory of his person, and the riches of his grace: and whereas, such as have truly tasted of his grace cannot but desire to have more, and fresh tastes of it; where should they have them, but in his word and ordinances? and therefore, would they grow in grace, and know more of Christ, and taste more of his goodness, it is their interest, as it is their spiritual nature, to desire the Gospel, in the purity and sincerity of it.

Ver. 4. *To whom coming, as unto a living stone*, etc.] Christ here, as often elsewhere, is compared to a “stone”; and Peter, by the use of this metaphor, shows that he is not the rock, but Christ is the rock on which the church is built, and he is the foundation stone on which every believer is laid; and it is chiefly with respect to the usefulness of a stone in building, that Christ is compared to one, who is the foundation and cornerstone, as well as for strength and duration; and he is called a “living” one, because he has life in himself, as God, as Mediator, and as man; and communicates life to others, as natural life to all creatures, and spiritual and eternal life to his people, whose great privilege it is to come to him: and by coming to him is meant believing in him; and it does not design the first act of faith on Christ, or a soul's first coming to Christ, but an after and continued exercise of faith on him; and it supposes Christ to be come at, notwithstanding he is in heaven, and saints on earth, for their faith and hope can enter into, and reach him within the vail, and notwithstanding

their many transgressions and backslidings; it supposes life in them, or they could not come; and a sense of their need of him, of his righteousness to justify them, of his blood for pardoning and cleansing, of his fulness to supply their want of food, rest, peace, comfort, and salvation in him; and a persuasion of his ability and willingness to relieve them: and they are encouraged to come to him under the above considerations, as a stone, a foundation stone; believing that he is laid as a foundation, and that he is the only foundation, and therefore they lay the whole stress of their salvation, and build all their hopes of happiness on him; and as a living stone, deriving grace, life, and strength from him; exercising faith on him for all the mercies, blessings, and comforts of a spiritual life, and looking to his mercy for eternal life.

Disallowed indeed of men; by the Jewish builders, high priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, and the body and bulk of that nation; who rejected him as the Messiah, and stone of Israel, refused him as a foundation stone, and left him out of the building; and laid another foundation, even their own works of righteousness, on which sandy foundation they built themselves, and directed others to do so likewise; and set him, at nought, as a living stone, would not come to him for life, but sought it in the law, the killing letter, and among their dead works; but though Christ was thus disallowed and disesteemed of by men, yet was he highly valued and esteemed by God:

but chosen of God, and precious; his human nature was “chosen” from among, and above all other individuals of mankind; to be united to the Son of God; as God-man and Mediator, he was chosen to that high office, to be the head of the church, and the Saviour of the body; to be the foundation in the spiritual building, and to be the author and giver of spiritual and eternal life to as many as were given him. Moreover, this phrase denotes the superior excellency of Christ to angels and men in the account of God; being the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person, the Son of his love, in whom he was always well pleased, and in whom he took infinite delight, considered both as his Son, and the surety of his people; and to whom he was

precious, and by him highly honoured, made higher than the kings of the earth, than the angels in heaven, than the heavens themselves, being set down at God's right hand, and a name given him above every name in this world, or that to come; and who is precious to the saints too, more so than rubies, or any precious stones, or any thing or creature whatever; his

person is precious, and so are his name, his blood, his righteousness, his truths, his ordinances, and his people.

Ver. 5. *Ye also, as lively stones*, etc.] Saints likewise are compared to stones; they lie in the same quarry, and are the same by nature as the rest of mankind, till dug out and separated from thence by the powerful and efficacious grace of God, when they are hewn, and made fit for the spiritual building; where both for their ornament, beauty, and strength, which they receive from Christ, they are compared to stones, and are lasting and durable, and will never perish, nor be removed out of the building: and because of that life which they derive from him, and have in him, they are called "lively", or "living stones"; the spirit of life having entered into them, a principle of life being implanted in them, and coming to Christ, the living stone, they live upon him, and he lives in them; and his grace in them is a well of living water, springing up into eternal life. It was usual with poets and philosophers to call stones, as they lie in the quarry before they are taken out of it, "living" ones: so Virgil [f43], describing the seats of the nymphs, says, "intus aquae dulces vivoque sedilia saxo, nympharum domus", etc. but here the apostle calls such living stones, who were taken out from among the rest: the stones which Deucalion and Pyrrha cast over their heads after the flood are called [f44] ζωοψεντες λιψοι, "quickened stones", they becoming men, as the fable says. "Are built up a spiritual house"; these living stones being laid, and cemented together, in a Gospel church state, become the house of God in a spiritual sense, in distinction from the material house of the tabernacle, and temple of old, to which the allusion is; and which is built up an habitation for God, by the Spirit, and is made up of spiritual men; such as have the Spirit of God, and savour the things of the Spirit, and worship God in Spirit and in truth; among whom spiritual services are performed, as prayer, praise, preaching, and hearing the word, and administering ordinances. Some read these words in the imperative, as an exhortation, "be ye built up as lively stones; and be ye spiritual temples and holy priests", as the Syriac version. A synagogue with the Jews is called ygjwr tyb, "a spiritual house" [f45]; and so is the third temple which the Jews expect in the times of the Messiah; of which one of their writers [f46] thus says:

> "it is known from the ancient wise men, that the future redemption, with which shall be the third ynjwr, "spiritual" sanctuary, is the work of God, and will not be as the former redemptions: "I will fill

> this house with glory"; this is ynjwr, "a spiritual" one, for even the walls shall be µyynjwr, "spiritual" — for even all this "house" shall be "spiritual"; for that which was then built, which is the second, shall be turned into another a "spiritual" one:"

and which has been already done, and is what the apostle means here, the church, under the Gospel dispensation, or the Gospel church state, in opposition to the worldly sanctuary, and carnal worship of the Jews.

An holy priesthood; in allusion to the priests under the law, who were set apart, and sanctified for that office; but now, under the Gospel, all the saints are priests unto God, and are all appointed and directed

to offer up spiritual sacrifices; their whole selves, souls, and bodies, as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice; their prayers and praises, and all good works done in faith, and from love, and to the glory of God; particularly acts of kindness and beneficence to poor saints; these are called spiritual, in distinction from legal sacrifices, and because offered in a spiritual manner, under the influence, and by the assistance of the Spirit of God, and with their spirits. So the Jews speak of spiritual sacrifices, as distinct from material ones:

> "the intellectual sacrifice (they say [f47]) is before the material sacrifices, both in time and excellency. — Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the earth, and behold the intellectual attention did not agree with it, which is ynjwrh ^brq, "the spiritual sacrifice"."

Now such are

acceptable to God by Jesus Christ; through whom they are offered up; for it is through him the saints have access to God, present themselves to him, and their services; and both persons and services are only accepted in Christ, and for his sake, and in virtue of his sacrifice, which is always of a sweet smelling savour to God.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture*, etc.] (<23>2816Isaiah 28:16). This is produced as a proof of the excellency of Christ, as compared to a stone; and of his usefulness in the spiritual building; and of his being chosen of God, and precious, though rejected by men; and of the happiness, comfort, and safety of those that believe in him. That this

prophecy belongs to the Messiah, is the sense of some of the Jewish writers: the Targum on it applies it to a mighty king; it does not mention the King Messiah, as Galatinus [f48] cites it; but Jarchi expressly names him, and interprets it of him:

behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; Christ is here called a chief corner stone, as in (<490220>Ephesians 2:20) because he not only adorns and strengthens the building, but unites the parts, and keeps them together, even all the saints, Jews or Gentiles, in all ages and places, whether in heaven or earth; and he, as such, is chosen of God for that purpose, and is precious both to God and man, on that account; and is a stone, not of men's laying, but of God's laying in his council, covenant, promises, and prophecies, in the mission of him into this world, and in the Gospel ministry; the place where he is laid is in Sion, the Gospel church, of which he is both the foundation and corner stone: and this account is introduced with a “behold”, it being something very wonderful, and worthy of attention: to which is added,

he that believeth on him shall not be confounded: or “ashamed”; of the foundation and cornerstone Christ, nor of his faith in him; and he shall not be confounded by men or devils, neither in this world, nor in that to come; he shall have confidence before Christ, and not be ashamed at his coming; he shall be safe now, being laid on this stone; nor shall he be removed from it, or intimidated by any enemy, so as to flee from it; nor shall he make haste, as it is in (<232816>Isaiah 28:16) to lay another foundation; and he shall be found upon this hereafter; so that his person and state will be safe, though many of his works may be burnt up.

Ver. 7. *Unto you therefore which believe*, etc.] And such are not all they that can say their creed, or give their assent to the articles of it; nor all that believe a divine revelation, and that the Scriptures are the word of God, and give credit to all that is contained in the sacred oracles; or who believe the whole Gospel, and all the truths of it; as that there is one God; that there are three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit; that Christ is the Son of God, and truly God; that he is the Mediator between God and man; that he is the Messiah, is become incarnate, has obeyed, suffered, and died for men, and is the Saviour of them: that he rose again, ascended to heaven, is set down at the right hand of God, intercedes for his people, and will come a second time to judge the world in righteousness; together with all other truths which arise from, depend upon, and are connected with

these; nor all that say they believe, or profess to do so; but such who have seen themselves lost and undone by sin, their need of a Saviour, and Christ as the only one; who have seen the Son, the beauty of his person, the fulness of his grace, and the necessity and suitableness of salvation by him; who have beheld him as able to save them, as every way proper for them, and desirable by them, for faith is a sight of Christ; who also come to him under the drawings of efficacious grace, as perishing sinners, encouraged by his invitations and declarations, and venture on him; who likewise lay hold upon him, as their Saviour, and will have no other; give up themselves to him, and commit their all into his hands; who rely and stay themselves upon him, trust him with all they have, and for all they want, expecting grace and glory from him; who live upon him, and walk on in him, go on believing in him, till they receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls. Now to these, in proof of what is asserted in the above passage out of Isaiah, Christ is

precious; he is so in all his names and titles, as Immanuel, God with us, and that cluster of them in (²³Isaiah 9:6) and particularly his name Jesus, a Saviour, which is as ointment poured forth, and draws the love of believers to him; and so he is in both his natures, divine and human; the perfections of deity in him, his being in the form of God, and equal to him, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, render him very amiable in the view of believers; who rightly conclude from hence, that all he has done, and does, must answer the purposes for which they are designed; and his having a perfect human nature, like to theirs, excepting sin, in which he wrought salvation for them on earth, and is now glorified in heaven, makes him a delightful object to them: he is also precious to them in all his offices; in his priestly office, his blood is precious, as it must needs be, since by it they are purchased and redeemed; they are justified and sanctified by it; through it they have the forgiveness of sin, and boldness to enter into the holiest of all: his righteousness is precious to them, it being the best robe, the wedding garment, fine linen, clean and white, every way suitable to them, and answerable to the demands of the law; is pure, perfect, and everlasting; that by which they are justified from all things, and which will answer for them in a time to come, and entitles them to eternal life. His sacrifice is precious, of a sweet smelling savour to them, as well as to God; by which their sins are fully expiated, put, and taken away; full satisfaction being made for them, and they themselves thereby perfected for ever. And so he is in his prophetic

office. His word is precious, and all the truths of the Gospel, which are comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones; the promises of it are exceeding great and precious, being suited to the cases of all believers: and he is also precious in his kingly office; his commands are not grievous; his yoke is easy, and burden light; believers love his commandments above gold, yea; above fine gold, and esteem his precepts concerning all things to be right, and delight in his ways and ordinances: moreover, he is precious to them in all his relations, as he is the head of eminence and influence, their kind and loving husband, their everlasting Father, their affectionate brother, and faithful friend; his whole person, in every view, is precious to them that believe; the church of Christ, the members of his body, the sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, in these is all the delight of saints; everything that is in Christ, that is of him, or belongs to him, is precious to such souls: some read the words, "to you therefore that believe, he is honour"; as the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; and so the word is rendered in (<5107>Romans 13:7), he is both an honour to them, that they are related to him; and he is honoured by them, by believing in him, and obeying him; and he is the cause of all their true honour, both in this and the other world. The Syriac version renders it, "to therefore is this honour given"; namely, that such a stone is laid, and that they were built upon it, and should not be confounded or ashamed, either here or hereafter; connecting the words with the preceding. The Septuagint use the word the apostle here does, in (<23110>Isaiah 11:10) where it is prophesied of the Messiah, that his rest shall be glorious; they render it τιμη, "honour", or "precious". The Jewish writers have adopted the word ymyj into their language, and use it for profit and gain [f49]; in which sense it is applicable to Christ, who is gain to believers, both in life and in death; they being blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and he being all in all to them: and also they use it, as denoting the intrinsic price and value of anything [f50], and which is a right sense of the word; and to believers the price of wisdom, or Christ, is far above rubies, and all the things that can be desired; to them he is precious as a stone, as a foundation and corner stone, and more precious than the most precious stones or things in nature; this he is to them that believe: next follows, in this and the other verse, the account of what he is to them that believe not:

but unto them which be disobedient; who are not persuadable, unbelieving, and are children of disobedience; who neither obey God and his righteous law, nor Christ and his Gospel:

the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner; reference is manifestly had to (<19B822>Psalm 118:22) which is a passage that clearly belongs to the Messiah, and which is suggested by Christ himself, (see Gill on "<4212>Matthew 21:42"); and is by our apostle, in (<4411>Acts 4:11,12) applied unto him: by the builders are meant the rulers of the Jews, both civil and ecclesiastical, and especially the latter, the Scribes, Pharisees, and chief priests; who set up for builders of the church of God, but were miserable ones; they built themselves, and taught others to build, on the observance of the ceremonial law, and the traditions of the elders; on their carnal privileges, and moral righteousness; and these disallowed of Christ in the building, rejected him as the Messiah, refused him as the Saviour and Redeemer, and set him at nought, had him in the utmost derision, and reckoned him as a worm, and no man; but, to their great mortification, he is not only laid and retained as the foundation and cornerstone, but made the head of the building, and is exalted at God's right hand above angels and men; he is the head of the body, the church; he is higher than the kings of the earth, and angels are subject to him.

Ver. 8. *And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence*, etc.] The apostle alludes to (<23B814>Isaiah 8:14) and which is a prophecy of the Messiah; (see Gill on "<4533>Romans 9:33") and had its accomplishment in the unbelieving and disobedient Jews; who stumbled at his birth and parentage; at the manner of his birth, being born of a virgin; at the meanness of his parents, his supposed father being a carpenter, and his mother, Mary, a poor woman, when they expected the Messiah would have sprung from some rich and noble family; and at the place of his birth, which they imagined was Galilee, from his education and conversation there; they stumbled also at his education, and could not conceive how he should know letters, and from whence he should have his wisdom, having never been trained up in any of their schools and academies, or at the feet of any of their doctors and Rabbins; but, on the other hand, was brought up and employed in the trade of a carpenter; they stumbled at his outward meanness and poverty, when they expected the Messiah would be a rich, powerful, and glorious monarch; and so at the obscurity of his kingdom, which was not of this world, and came not with observation, when they dreamt of an earthly and temporal one, which should be set up in great splendour and glory; and they stumbled likewise at the company he kept, and the audience that attended him, being the poorer sort of the people, and the more illiterate, and also such who had been very profane and wicked, as publicans and

harlots; moreover, they stumbled at his ministry, at the doctrine he preached, particularly at the doctrine of his divinity, and of spiritual communion with him, by eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, and at the doctrines of distinguishing grace; and so at his miracles, by which he confirmed his mission and ministry, some of these being wrought on the sabbath day, and others they imputed to diabolical influence and assistance, in a word, they stumbled at his death, having imbibed a notion that Christ abideth for ever, and especially at the manner of it, the death of the cross; wherefore the preaching of Christ crucified always was, and still is, a stumbling block unto them:

even to them which stumble at the word; either the essential Word, Christ Jesus, as before; or rather at the doctrine of the Gospel, at that part of it which respects a trinity of persons in the Godhead; because their carnal reason could not comprehend it, and they refused to submit to revelation, and to receive the witness of God, which is greater than that of men; and at that part of it which regards the deity of Christ, and that for this reason, because he was a man, and in order to enervate the efficacy of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and fearing too much honour should be given to him; and also at that part of the word which concerns the distinguishing grace of God, as eternal personal election, particular redemption, and efficacious grace in conversion; against which the carnal mind of man is continually cavilling and replying, and, in so doing, against God himself, charging him with cruelty, injustice, and insincerity; and particularly at that part of the word which holds forth the doctrine of free justification, by the righteousness of Christ; this was the grand stumbling block of the Jews, who sought for righteousness, not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and of the spirituality of the law, and of themselves, and their own righteousness, of which they had an overweening opinion:

being disobedient; to the Gospel revelation, and unwilling to submit their carnal reason to it; this is the source and cause of their stumbling at Christ and his Gospel: it is worth while to compare this with the paraphrase of (Isaiah 8:14) which passage is here referred to; and the paraphrase of it runs thus;

> ""if ye obey not", his word shall be among you for revenge, and for a stone smiting, and for a rock of offence to both houses of the

princes of Israel, and for destruction and offence to those who are divided upon the house of Judah, etc."

whereunto also they were appointed; both to stumble at the word of the Gospel, and at Christ, the sum and substance of it, he being set in the counsel and purpose of God, as for the rising of some, so for the stumbling and falling of others; and also to that disobedience and infidelity which was the cause of their stumbling; for as there are some whom God appointed and foreordained to believe in Christ, on whom he has determined to bestow true faith in him, and who have it as a pure gift, in consequence of such appointment; so there are others, whom he has determined to leave in that disobedience and infidelity into which the fall brought and concluded them, through which they stumble at Christ, and his word, and, in consequence thereof, justly perish; but this is not the case of all; there are some who are the objects of distinguishing grace and favour, and who are described in the following verse.

Ver. 9. *But ye are a chosen generation*, etc.] Or "kindred"; the phrase is to be seen in the Septuagint, on (<2480>Isaiah 43:20), to which, and the following verse, the apostle refers here, and in another part of this text. The allusion is throughout to the people of Israel in general, who, in an external way, were all that is here said; but was only true in a spiritual sense of such as were chosen and called among the Jews: and who were a "generation or kindred"; being regenerate, or through abundant mercy begotten, and of an incorruptible seed born again; and were akin to God, he being their Father, and they his children by adopting grace, and which was made manifest by their new birth; and also akin to Christ, he being their head, husband, Father, and brother, and they his members, spouse, children, and brethren; and to the saints, being of the same household and family in heaven and in earth; having the same Father, Lord, Spirit, faith, baptism, and they all brethren: and they were a "chosen" generation or kindred; being famous, and in high esteem with God, and accounted by him for a generation; he having chosen them above all kindreds, tongues, people, and nations, and that from all eternity; and of his own sovereign good will and pleasure; and not on account of their faith, holiness, and good works; and to special benefits, to the relation and kindred they are in, to grace here, and glory hereafter; to regeneration and sanctification, and to salvation and eternal life; just as Israel, as a nation, were chosen above all others, because of the love of God to them, and for no other reason, to many external privileges and favours, which others did not enjoy: now the apostle mentions this

character first, because God's eternal election is the source and spring of all spiritual blessings, which provides and secures them, and according to which they are bestowed, and with which they are inseparably connected:

a royal priesthood; referring to (<2Pe 2:9>Exodus 19:6), where the Israelites are called a “kingdom of priests”; which the Chaldee paraphrase renders, kings, priests; (see <Rev 1:6>Revelation 1:6) a character which one of the Jewish commentators says [f51] shall return to the Jews abl dyt[l, “in time to come”; and well agrees with all the people of Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, who are all of them kings, through their relation to Christ; and at the present time have a kingdom which cannot be moved, or taken away from them; being not only brought into the Gospel dispensation, the kingdom of the Messiah, and having a right to all the privileges and immunities of it, but have also the kingdom of grace set up within them, or grace, as a reigning principle, implanted in them; which lies not in anything external, but in righteousness and true holiness, in inward peace, and spiritual joy; and they have the power of kings over sin, Satan, and the world; and the riches of kings, being possessed of the riches of grace now, and entitled to the riches of glory in another world; they live like kings, they wear royal apparel, the robe of Christ's righteousness; they sit at the king's table, and feed on royal dainties; and are attended on as kings, angels being their life guards, and ministering spirits to them; and hereafter they shall reign with Christ on earth, and that for the space of a thousand years, and, after that, for ever: being raised up from a low estate, to inherit the crown of glory, to wear the crown of life and righteousness, and possess the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world, of which they are now heirs: and they are “priests”, as well as kings; being made so by Christ, and through his priestly office; are anointed with the Holy Ghost, and sanctified by his grace, and allowed to draw near to God, and offer up by Christ their spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise; and are enabled and assisted to offer up the sacrifice of a broken heart, and their bodies also, and even their lives when called to it; the allusion is to the kingdom and priesthood being formerly together, and which met in Christ, (<Zec 6:13>Zechariah 6:13) and in his people. The Jews were wont to call the priestly dignity and office hnhk rtk, “the crown of the priesthood” [f52]:

an holy nation; referring to the same place in (<2Pe 2:9>Exodus 19:6) where the Israelites are so called, being separated by God from other nations, and legally and externally sanctified by him; as all the true Israel of God are

sanctified, or set apart by God the Father, in eternal election, to real and perfect holiness; and are sanctified or cleansed from sin, by the blood and sacrifice of Christ; and are internally sanctified by the Spirit of God; have principles of holiness wrought in them, from whence they live holy lives and conversations:

a peculiar people; as the Israelites are called a “peculiar treasure”, (<2Exodus 19:5) to which the reference is: God's elect are a peculiar people, to whom he bears a peculiar love; they are chosen by him to be a special people above all others, and have peculiar blessings bestowed on them, and peculiar care is taken of them; they are the Lord's, hlgs, his treasure, his jewels, his portion and inheritance, and therefore he will preserve and save them; they are a people for acquisition, purchase, and possession, as the words may be rendered; whom God has obtained, procured, and purchased for himself, with the precious blood of his Son; hence the Syriac version renders them, aqyrp açnk, “a redeemed company”: the same with the church God has purchased with his blood, (<4Acts 20:28) and the purchased possession, (<4Ephesians 1:14) and which are redeemed and purified to be, and appear to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works, (<5Titus 2:14) the end of all which grace being bestowed upon them in election, redemption, and regeneration, is,

that ye should show forth the praises of him; that is, God, who has chosen them into a spiritual kindred and relation, made them kings and priests, sanctified them by his Spirit, and redeemed them by his Son, as a peculiar people; all which laid them under obligation to show forth with their lips, and in their lives and conversations, his “virtues”: we read, “praises”; and so the Syriac version; that is, the power, wisdom, goodness, love, grace, and mercy of God, and the commendations of them, displayed in the above instances: the apostle seems to have his eye on (<23Isaiah 43:21), where the Septuagint use the same word for “praise”, as here: next follows a periphrasis of God, and in it an argument, or reason for speaking of his virtues, and showing forth his praise:

who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; which is to be understood, not of an external call by the ministry of the word only; for many are called in this sense, who are not chosen, redeemed, and sanctified; but of an internal, special, powerful, holy, and heavenly calling, by the Spirit and grace of God: and this is, “out of darkness”; out of the darkness of the law, under the former dispensation, which was as night, in

comparison of the Gospel day; and out of that darkness which the Jews were particularly in, in and about the coming of Christ, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and the spirituality of the law; having lost all right notions of the Messiah, and the true sense of the Scriptures, and were carried away with the traditions of the elders, and led by blind guides, the Scribes and Pharisees; out of this darkness, as well as what is common to men, in a state of unregeneracy, having no sight of themselves, their sin, and misery, nor knowledge of divine things, of God in Christ, and of salvation by him, and of the work of the Spirit upon the heart, they were called,

into his marvellous light: by which they saw the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the insufficiency of their righteousness, their need of Christ, and salvation by him; and astonishing it was to them, that they who were born blind, and were brought up in darkness, and were darkness itself, should be made light in the Lord; and the objects they saw were amazing to them; everything in a spiritual way was marvellous in their eyes; especially the sun of righteousness, the light of the world, and also the wonderful things out of the law, or doctrine of Christ, the Gospel, and the surprising love and grace of God, in the whole, and in the several parts of their salvation: it was with them, as if a child, from the moment of its birth, was shut up in a dungeon, where there was not the least crevice to let in the least degree of light, and should continue here till at years of maturity, and then be brought out at once, at noonday, the sun shining in its full strength and glory, when that particularly, and all objects about him, must strike him with wonder and surprise. The Syriac version renders it, “his most excellent light”; the apostle seems to refer to the form of praise and thanksgiving used by the Jews, at the time of the passover; who say [f53],

> “we are bound to confess, to praise, to glorify, etc. him who hath done for our fathers, and for us, all these wonders; he hath brought us out of bondage to liberty; from sorrow to joy, and from mourning to a good day, lwdg rwal hlypamw, “and out of darkness into great light”; and from subjection unto redemption.”

This was also part of their morning prayer [f54];

> “I confess before thee, O my God, and the God of my fathers, that thou hast brought me out of darkness into light.”

And it is to be observed, that the third Sephira, or number, in the Jewish Cabalistic tree, which answers to the third Person in the Trinity, among other names, is called, “marvellous light” [f55].

Ver. 10. *Which in time were not a people*, etc.] A “Loammi” being put upon them; (see <2Hos 1:9>Hosea 1:9,10 2:23) to which the apostle here refers: God's elect, whether among Jews or Gentiles, were, from eternity, his chosen people, and his covenant people; and, as such, were given to Christ, and they became his people, and his care and charge; and he saved them by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and redeemed them to himself, a peculiar people: but then, before conversion, they are not a people formed by God for himself, and his praise; nor Christ's willing people, either to be saved by him, or to serve him; nor are they, nor can they be truly known by themselves, or others, to be the people of God: the Syriac version gives the true sense of the phrase, by rendering it “these who before were not” ˆwbçj, “reckoned or accounted a people”; that is, by others:

but are now the people of God; being regenerated, called, and sanctified, they are avouched by God to be his people; they have the witness of the Spirit to their spirits, that they are the people of God; they can then claim their relation to God, and are known, acknowledged, and called the people of God, by others:

which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy; being called formerly, Loruhamah, (<2Hos 1:6>Hosea 1:6 2:23) which passages the apostle has in view: before conversion there is mercy in God's heart towards his elect, and so there is in the covenant of grace, and which was shown in the provision of his Son, as a Saviour, in the mission of him, and redemption by him; but this is not manifested to them, until they are begotten again, according to abundant mercy, and then they obtain mercy; having in their regeneration an evident display of the mercy of God towards them, and an application of his pardoning grace and mercy, through the blood of his Son, unto them.

Ver. 11. *Dearly beloved, I beseech you*, etc.] The apostle, from characters of the saints, and which express their blessings and privileges, with great beauty, propriety, and pertinency, passes to exhortations to duties; he addresses the saints under this affectionate appellation, “dearly beloved”, to express his great love to them, and to show that what he was about to exhort them to sprung from sincere and hearty affection for them, and was

with a view to their real good; nor does he in an authoritative way command, as he might have done, as an apostle, but, as a friend, he entreats and beseeches them:

as strangers and pilgrims; not in a literal sense, though they were in a foreign country, in a strange land, and sojourners there, but in a spiritual and mystical sense; they were “strangers”, not to God and Christ, and to the Spirit, to themselves, to the saints, and to all that is good, as they had formerly been, but to the world, the men of it, and the things in it; and therefore it became them to separate from it, and not conform to it; to abstain from all appearance of evil, to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts: and they were “pilgrims”; whose habit is Christ and his righteousness; whose food is Christ and his fulness; whose staff is Christ and the promises; whose guide is the blessed Spirit; the place for which they are bound is heaven, the better country, where is their Father's house, their friends, and their inheritance; this world not being their country, nor their resting place, it became them to have their conversation in heaven, and to

abstain from fleshly lusts; which spring from the flesh, and are concerned about fleshly things, and are exercised in and by the members of the flesh, or body; hence, in the Syriac version, they are called, “the lusts of the body”: these are to be abstained from; not that the apostle thought that they could be without them; for while the saints are in the body, flesh, or corrupt nature will be in them, and the lusts thereof; but then these are not to be indulged, or provision to be made for them, to fulfil them; they are not to be obeyed and served, or lived unto, but to be denied and crucified, being unsuitable to the character of strangers and pilgrims, and also because of their hurtful and pernicious nature:

which war against the soul; (see <4723>Romans 7:23 <5901>James 4:1 <2263>Song of Solomon 6:13), these are enemies to the spiritual peace, comfort, and welfare of the soul; and being of a man's household, and in his heart, are the worst enemies he has; and are to be treated as such, to be shunned and avoided, watched and guarded against; for though they cannot destroy the souls of true believers, they may bring much leanness upon them, and greatly distress them, and spoil them of their inward joy, and spiritual pleasure.

Ver. 12. *Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles*, etc.] To have the conversation honest, is to provide things honest in the sight of

men; to live and walk honestly before all; to do those things which are right and honest in the sight of God, and among men; to order the conversation aright, according to the law of God, which is a rule of walk and conversation, and as becomes the Gospel of Christ; and which was the more, and rather to be attended to, because these converted Jews were "among the Gentiles", that knew not God; idolaters, and unbelievers, profane sinners, who were watching for their halting, and that they might take an advantage against them, and the Gospel, and the religion they professed, from their conversations:

that whereas they speak against you as evildoers: charging them with the grossest immoralities, as the Heathens did the Christians in the first ages; which appears evidently from the apologies of Tertullian, Jnstin Martyr, and others; though it seems that the Jewish converts are here intended, who were accused by the Gentiles of seditious principles and practices, and of acting contrary to the laws of civil government, refusing to yield subjection to Gentile magistrates, and obedience to Heathen masters; and hence the apostle, in some following verses, enlarges on those duties, and which he exhorts them to attend unto, that they might put to silence the ignorance of such foolish accusers: and

that they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation; or "trial", or "examination", as the Syriac version renders it; which may be understood either of human or divine visitation; if of the former, then the sense is, let the saints attend to all the duties of civil life, that when Heathen magistrates come to visit their several districts, and inquire and examine into the conduct of men, and seeing and finding that the Christians behave well and orderly, instead of persecuting them, they will bless God that they are such good subjects; if of divine visitation, which seems most likely, this must either design a visitation by way of judgment, or of mercy; for as the Jews say [f56], there is hdyqp, "a visitation", for good, and a visitation for evil: God sometimes visits in a way of punishment for sin, and sometimes in away of grace, for the good and welfare of men; and then the sense is, that when wicked men take notice of and observe the good works of the saints, their civil, honest, and orderly conversation, they shall glorify God on that account, who has enabled them to perform them; and acknowledge the goodness of them, and the wrong judgment they have passed upon them, and the ill measure they have measured out to them; and this will be, either when God visits them in a way of wrath, as at the day of judgment, or at the time of some

temporal calamity before, or when he visits them in a way of mercy, calls them by his grace, and effectually works upon them by his Spirit: the same argument for the performance of good works is used by Christ, in (<40516>Matthew 5:16).

Ver. 13. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man*, etc.] Or, “to every human creation”, or “creature”; not to “all the sons of men”, as the Syriac version renders it; or to all the individuals of mankind; for there are some that are in such stations and circumstances, that they are not to be submitted to, but to be ruled over, and governed: so kings are not to submit to their subjects, nor are parents to be subject to their children, nor husbands to their wives, nor masters to their servants, which would be preposterous; but submission is limited and restrained to persons in such a place and situation: “the human creature”, or “creation”, here designs the Gentiles, who are elsewhere called the creature, the whole creation, every creature, and every creature under heaven, (<45819>Romans 8:19-22 <41615>Mark 16:15 <51023>Colossians 1:23) and particularly Heathen magistrates, styled creation, or creature: not as men, for all men, as such, are creatures; but as magistrates, being created, constituted, and appointed such, and installed into, and invested with such an office: and “human”; not only because they were men, and were taken out from among men that bore the office of magistrates, and governed over men, and were for the good and advantage of mankind, but because they were created and placed in such a station by men; though government itself is of God, is a divine institution, yet this and that particular form of government is of man; and especially the forms of government among the Gentiles were human; and are here so called, in distinction from the form of government among the Jews, which was a theocracy, and was divine; wherefore the Jews, and so these converted ones, scrupled yielding obedience to Heathen magistrates; on which account they were spoken against, as evildoers; hence the apostle, in the first place, and as a principal part of their honest conversation among the Gentiles, exhorts them to submission to civil magistrates, though they were creatures of men; and to everyone of them, though a Gentile, an unbeliever, and a wicked man: and this he urges,

for the Lord's sake; for the sake of Christ Jesus the Lord, because of his command, who ordered to give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and in imitation of him, who paid tribute to whom tribute was due; and for the sake of his honour and glory, who was ill thought and spoken of by the Gentiles, because of the disregard of the converted Jews to their

magistrates; and which served to prejudice them against Christ and his Gospel: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, “for God's sake”; because civil government is of God; magistracy is of divine appointment; the powers that he are ordained of God, though this or the other form is of man's prescription: it is the command of God that magistrates should be obeyed; and it makes for his glory, as well as for the good of men, when they are submitted to in things that do not contradict the revealed will of God; for otherwise, not man, but God, is to be obeyed:

whether it be to the king; to Caesar, the Roman emperor; and the then reigning one seems to be Nero, who, though a wicked man, was to be submitted to in things civil and lawful; and it holds good of any other king that has the supreme government of a nation: the Syriac version reads it in the plural number, “to kings”; and though the name of king was odious to the Romans, from the times of Tarquin, nor did they call their chief governor, or governors, by this name, yet other nations did; (see <19915>John 19:15) and subjection was to be yielded to him, “as supreme”; for the sake, and in consideration of his being in so high and exalted a station, having the supreme power and government of the people in his hands. The Syriac version renders it, “because of their power”; and the Arabic version, “because of his power”; and the Ethiopic version, “because all things are his”; the Roman emperors were absolute monarchs; (see <451301>Romans 13:1).

Ver. 14. *Or unto governors*, etc.] Inferior magistrates, such as were under the Roman emperor; as proconsuls, procurators, etc. such as Pontius Pilate, Felix, and Festus, who had under the emperor the government of particular nations, provinces, and cities:

as unto them that are sent by him; either by the king, the Roman emperor, by whom they were sent, from whom they received their commission, and derived their authority, under whom they acted, and to whom they were accountable; or by God, by whom they are ordained, and whose ministers they are, and for the ends hereafter mentioned; so that this contains an argument or reason why they should be submitted to:

for the punishment of evildoers; the breakers of the laws of God and men, on whom punishment is to be inflicted, by the civil magistrates, for the breach of them, by lines, scourgings, imprisonment, and death itself, according as the crimes are:

and for the praise of them that do well; who behave according to the laws of God and nations, and are obedient to magistrates, and subject to every ordinance; these have praise of men, of magistrates, and are rewarded by them; by protecting their persons, defending their properties, and preserving them in the peaceable enjoyment of their estates and possessions; (see <4513>Romans 13:3).

Ver. 15. *For so is the will of God*, etc.] Which refers not so much to what goes before; though it is a truth, that it is the will of God that men should be subject to magistrates, and that magistrates should encourage virtue, and discourage vice, reward the obedient, and punish delinquents; but to what follows:

that with well doing; by doing good works, and those well; by living soberly, righteously, and godly; by having the conversation honest among the Gentiles, agreeably to the law of God, and as becomes the Gospel of Christ; particularly, by living according to the laws of civil society, so far as is consistent with, and not contrary to the commands of God; and by being subject to every civil magistrate, and ordinance of man:

ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: or, as the Syriac version renders it, “that ye may stop the mouths of those foolish men who know not God”; or, as the Ethiopic version has it, “who know not these things”; who are ignorant of God, of his righteousness, of his law, his Gospel, and ordinances. The Gentiles were very ignorant of these things, and very foolish in their imaginations about religious affairs; and from this their ignorance and folly arose calumnies, reflections, and censures upon the people of God; they neither knew God, nor them, nor true religion, and reproached what they understood not, and for want of knowing it: now the apostle signified, that it was the declared will of God that his people should so behave in civil life, that their enemies should be entirely confounded, and silenced, and have nothing to say against them; the word signifies to be muzzled, to have the mouth shut up, as with a bit or bridle; it is used in (<4022>Matthew 22:12 <4609>1 Corinthians 9:9).

Ver. 16. *As free*, etc.] These converted Jews might value themselves on their freedom, partly as the descendants of Abraham, and so freeborn, and not to be brought into bondage to other people; and chiefly because of their liberty which they had in and by Christ Jews. The apostle allows that they were freemen, that they were Christ's freemen, were free from sin, its damning and domineering power, and from the curses and condemnation of

the law, and had freedom of access to God, and a right to all the privileges and immunities of the house of God; but then they were not free to sin, and to live in the contempt of the laws of God and men, to despise government, speak evil of dignities, and break in upon the rules of civil society:

and not using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness; under a pretence of Christian liberty, to hurt the persons, properties, and estates of men, without looking upon themselves accountable for their conduct to their superiors: some think the apostle alludes to the ancient custom of servants, who, when they were made free, walked with a cap, or covering on their heads, in token of it: it follows,

[but] as the servants of God; for they that are free are the servants of God and Christ, and show themselves to be so by submitting to and obeying those that are under them, and ordained by them; and which is no ways inconsistent with, and contrary to their Christian liberty, which never was designed to thwart and subvert the principles of natural religion, laws of a moral nature, or the rules of civil government; some instances of which are next mentioned.

Ver. 17. *Honour all men*, etc.] To whom honour is due, according to the place, station, and circumstances in which they are, the gifts of providence and grace bestowed on them, and the usefulness they are of, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, rich or poor, believers or unbelievers: it is a saying of Ben Zoma[f57],

> "who is to be honoured, or is worthy of honour? twyrbh ta dbkm, "he that honoureth creatures";"

meaning men in general, or the Gentiles particularly, who were sometimes so called by the Jews; (see Gill on "41615Mark 16:15"), and may be meant by "all men" here:

love the brotherhood; or "your brethren", as the Syriac version renders it: the whole company of the brethren in Christ, who are born of God, are members of Christ, and of the same body, and have the same spirit, belong to the same family, and are of the household of faith, let them be of whatsoever nation, or in whatsoever circumstances of life. The Jews had not that good opinion of, nor that affection for the Gentiles, but were ready to treat them with indifference, neglect, and contempt; and not only those that knew not God, but even believing Gentiles themselves; and which is

the reason of these exhortations, that they should despise no man, but honour all; and especially should express their love, both by words and deeds, to those that were in the same spiritual relation with them, and that without any difference, on account of their being of another nation:

fear God; not with a servile, but a filial fear, the new covenant grace of fear; which springs from the goodness of God, has that for its object, and is increased by the fresh instances and discoveries of it; and which shows itself in a reverential affection for God, a strict regard to his worship and ordinances, and a carefulness of offending him. This is placed between what goes before, and follows after, to show the influence it has on each of them; for where the fear of God is, there will be due respect shown to all men, more or less, and an hearty and affectionate love to all the saints, as brethren, and a proper regard to those that are set in high places of dignity and power:

honour the king; Caesar, the Roman emperor, though a wicked, persecuting Nero, and so any other king or governor; who, so far as he acts the part of a civil magistrate, preserves the peace, the property, and liberty of his subjects, is a terror to evil works, and an encourager of good ones, and rules according to the laws of God, and civil society, is deserving of great honour and esteem from men; and which is to be shown by speaking well of him; by a cheerful subjection to him; by an observance of the laws, and by payment of tribute, and doing everything to make him easy, and honourable in his government: advice much like this is given by Isocrates [f58];

> “fear God, honour parents, revere friends, and obey the laws.”

Ver. 18. *Servants, be subject to your masters*, etc.] This was another notion of the Jews, that because they were the seed of Abraham, they ought not to be the servants of any; and particularly such as were believers in Christ thought they ought not to serve unbelieving masters, nor indeed believing ones, because they were equally brethren in Christ with them; hence the Apostle Peter, here, as the Apostle Paul frequently elsewhere, inculcates this duty of servants to their masters; (see 1 Corinthians 7:20,21 Ephesians 6:5 Colossians 3:22 1 Timothy 6:1) (2 Timothy 2:9) the manner in which they are to be subject to them is,

with all fear; with reverence to their persons, strict regard to their commands, faithfulness in any trust reposed in them, diligence in the discharge of their duty, and carefulness of offending them: and all this,

not only to the good and gentle; those that are good natured, kind, beneficent, and merciful; that do not use them with rigour and severity; are moderate in their demands of service; require no more to be done than what is reasonable; allow them sufficient diet, give them good wages, and pay them duly:

but also to the froward; the ill natured, morose, and rigorous; who exact more labour than is requisite; give hard words, and harder blows; withhold sufficiency of food from them, and keep back the hire of their labours.

Ver. 19. *For this is thankworthy*, etc.] Or “grace”; this is a fruit and effect of grace, an instance of it, in which it shows itself: the Syriac version adds, “with God”; and so it is read in one of Beza's copies, and in the Alexandrian copy, and some others; that is, this is grateful to God, and acceptable with him; as in (1 Peter 2:20),

if a man for conscience towards God; or, “for a good conscience”, as the Syriac version reads it; for acting according to his conscience, in matters of religion, in the things of God; “for the knowledge of God”, as the Arabic version renders it; for the knowledge of God in Christ; for the Gospel of Christ, and a profession of it: or, “for God”, as the Ethiopic version; for the cause of God and truth, and for the sake of things appertaining to God, and that make for his glory:

endure grief; what occasions grief, as severe words, bitter reproaches, hard censures, and heavy blows; and that with patience, and without murmuring, and with resignation to the will of God:

suffering wrongfully; there being no just cause for an ill look, word, or blow, to be given.

Ver. 20. *For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults*, etc.] Which ye have committed, and are guilty of, and are truly such:

ye shall take it patiently? to be silent, and not murmur when beaten, within measure, for real faults, is no great honour, nor does it deserve any praise; it is the least that can be done:

but if, when ye do well; either in their master's service, or rather in the business of religion, and the things of God; as when what they do is according to the will of God, and from love to him, and in faith, and in the name and strength of Christ, and to the glory of God; without all which there is no well doing:

and suffer for it; reproach and persecution, by words or blows, in person or property:

ye take it patiently; without grieving and repining, or answering again, and making any returns:

this is acceptable with God; is agreeably to his will, and grateful in his sight, what he is well pleased with, is reckoned grace with him; and though it is his own grace, and of his own bestowing, he will reward it with glory.

Ver. 21. *For even hereunto were ye called*, etc.] Both to well doing, of which none but those who are called with an holy and effectual calling are capable; and which they are fitted for, and are under obligation to perform, and to suffer for so doing, which they must always expect, and to patience in suffering for it, which highly becomes them. This being then one end of the saints' effectual calling, is made use of as an argument to engage them to the exercise of the grace of patience in suffering for well doing; and another follows:

because Christ also suffered for us; in our room and stead, to fulfil the law, satisfy the justice of God, and make reconciliation for sin; and not only for our good, or merely as a martyr, to confirm the truth of his doctrine, or barely as an example to us, though this also is true: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, “for you”; for you servants, as well as others, and therefore should cheerfully and patiently suffer for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel; and the rather, because he suffered,

leaving us, or “you”, as the same copies, and the Vulgate Latin version read,

an example that ye should follow his steps: Christ is an example to his people in the exercise of grace, as of faith, love, zeal, meekness, and humility; and in the discharge of duty, in his regard to the commands of the moral law, and positive institutions of religion; in his constancy in prayer; in frequent attendance on public worship; in his submission to the ordinance of baptism, and his celebration of the supper; and likewise in his

sufferings; and in his meekness, patience, courage, and resignation to the will of God, which is what is here intended, and in which his people are to fellow and imitate him.

Ver. 22. *Who did no sin*, etc.] He was in the likeness of sinful flesh; he looked like a sinful man, being born of a sinful woman, and keeping company with sinful men, being himself a man of sorrows, greatly afflicted, and at last put to death. He was traduced as a sinner by his enemies, and had all the sins of his people on him, which he bore, and made satisfaction for, and were the reason of his sufferings; but he had no sin in his nature, nor did he commit any in his life:

neither was guile found in his mouth; though it was diligently sought for, by the Scribes and Pharisees; there was no deceit in his lips, no falsehood in his doctrine, any more than there was immorality in his conversation; he was an Israelite indeed on all accounts, and in the fullest sense of that phrase; reference is had to (<2510>Isaiah 53:9) and this is observed, partly to show that Christ suffered not for himself, or for any sins of his own, but for the sins of others, for which he was very fit, since he had none of his own; and partly as an argument for patience in suffering; for since Christ suffered, who had no sin, nor did any, nor could any be found in him, charged upon him, and proved against him; and which sufferings of his he bore with patience; then how much must it become sinful men to bear their sufferings patiently, though they may not be criminal with respect to the things for which they suffer, but yet are so in other things, whereas Christ was not criminal, nor blameworthy in anything?

Ver. 23. *Who when he was reviled, reviled not again*, etc.] When he was reproached as a glutton, a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, all the reply he made was, that Wisdom is justified of her children; and when he was charged with casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils, he defended himself, not with bad language, but with strong reasonings; and when he was said to be a Samaritan, and had a devil, his only answer was, that he had not, that he honoured his Father, and they dishonoured him; and when he was reviled on the cross, by those that passed by, by the chief priests, and Scribes, and the thieves that were crucified with him, he made no return, he opened not his mouth, and much less in a recriminating way.

When he suffered he threatened not; when he endured buffetings, and scourgings in his body, when the officers in the palace of the high priests

spit in his face, buffeted him, and smote him with the palms of their hands, and bid him prophesy who smote him, all which were very provoking; yet he said not one word to them, much less threatened them with what he would do to them for such usage another day, when he would let them know, with vengeance, who it was that smote him; no, he took all patiently from them, and from Pilate, and the Roman soldiers, when scourged by them; he gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; and when he suffered crucifixion, and was put to such distressing pains and agonies, he did not threaten his crucifiers with a future judgment, when he would take vengeance, and execute his wrath upon them, but prays to his Father for the forgiveness of their sins: and, as it follows;

but committed [himself] to him that judgeth righteously; he commended his Spirit, or soul, to God his Father, and committed his cause to him, to vindicate it in what way he should think fit, who he knew was the Judge of all the earth, that would do right; and so the Syriac version supplies it with hynyd, "his judgment": which he left with God, the righteous Judge, to whom vengeance belongs; and which is an example, and an instruction to the saints to do so likewise; not to render railing for railing, or to seek revenge, but to leave their cause with their God, who will, in his own time, avenge the wrongs and injuries done them. The Vulgate Latin version reads, contrary to all the Greek copies, and other versions, "but delivered himself to him that judgeth unjustly"; the sense of which is, that Christ delivered himself into the hands of Pilate, who unjustly condemned him to death; but is neither the reading, nor sense of the text.

Ver. 24. *Who his own self bare our sins*, etc.] As was typified by the high priest bearing the sins of the holy things of the people of Israel, when he went into the most holy place, and by the scape goat bearing the iniquities of all the people unto a land not inhabited, and as was foretold by the Prophet Isaiah. The apostle here explains the nature and end of Christ's sufferings, which were to make atonement for sins, and which was done by bearing them. What Christ bore were "sins", even all sorts of sin, original and actual, and every act of sin of his people; and all that is in sin, all that belongs to it, arises from it, and is the demerit of it, as both filth, guilt, and punishment; and a multitude of sins did he bear, even all the iniquities of all the elect; and a prodigious load and weight it was; and than which nothing could be more nauseous and disagreeable to him, who loves righteousness, and hates iniquity: and these sins he bore were not his own, nor the sins of

angels, but of men; and not of all men, yet of many, even as many as were ordained to eternal life, for whom Christ gave his life a ransom, whom he justifies and brings to glory; our sins, not the sins of the Jews only, for Peter was a Jew, and so were those to whom he writes, but of the Gentiles also, even the sins of all his people, for them he saves from their sins, being stricken for them. His “bearing” them was in this manner: he becoming the surety and substitute of his people, their sins were laid upon him by his Father, that is, they were imputed to him, they were reckoned as his, and placed to his account; and Christ voluntarily took them upon himself; he took them to himself, as one may take the debt of another, and make himself answerable for it; or as a man takes up a burden, and lays it on his shoulders; so Christ took up our sins, and “carried” them “up”, as the word here used signifies, alluding to the priests carrying up the sacrifice to the altar, and referring to the lifting up of Christ upon the cross; whither he carried the sins of his people, and bore them, and did not sink under the weight of them, being the mighty God, and the man of God's right hand, made strong for himself; and so made entire satisfaction for them, by enduring the wrath of God, the curse of the law, and all that punishment which was due unto them; and thereby bore them away, both from his people, and out of the sight of God, and his vindictive justice; and removed them as far as the east is from the west, and made a full end of them; and this he himself did, and not another, nor by another, or with the help of another; not by the means of a goat, as the high priest, but by himself; though he was assisted in bearing his cross, yet he had no help in bearing our sins; angels could not help him; his Father stood at a distance from him; there was none to help; his own arm brought salvation to him; but

his own self, who knew no sin, nor did any, he by himself purged away our sins, and made reconciliation for them, by bearing them: and which he did

in his own body, and not another's; in that body which his Father prepared for him, and which he took of the virgin, and was free from sin; though not to the exclusion of his soul, which also was made an offering for sin, and in which he endured great pains and sorrows for sin: and all this

on the tree; the accursed tree, the cross; which is expressive both of the shame and pain of his sufferings and death. The end of which was,

that we being dead to sin; “to our sins”, as the Alexandrian copy, and the Ethiopic version read; as all the elect are, through bearing their sins, and suffering death for them, so as that sin shall not be imputed to them; it is as

though it never was; it is dead to them, and they to that, as to its damning power and influence; so as that they are entirely discharged from it, and can never come into condemnation on account of it, and can never be hurt, so as to be destroyed by it; nor by death, either corporeal or eternal, since the sting of death, which is sin, is taken away, and the strength of sin, which is the law, is dead to them, and they to that: in short, through the death of Christ they are so dead to sin, that it is not only finished, made an end of, and put away, but the body of it is destroyed, that it should not be served; which is an end subordinate to the former, and expressed in the next clause:

should live unto righteousness; live, and not die the second death, and live by faith on the righteousness of Christ, for justification of life, and soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world; which the grace of God teaches, and the love of Christ in bearing sin constrains to, and the redemption by his precious blood lays under an obligation to do; for those whose sins Christ has bore are not their own, but being bought with the price of his blood, they are bound to live to him who has a property in them, and a right to claim all obedience from them:

by whose stripes ye were healed; the passage referred to is in (<23A305>Isaiah 53:5) which is a prophecy of the Messiah, as is acknowledged by the Jews [f59], who say [f60],

> “this is the King Messiah, who was in the generation of the ungodly, as it is said, (<23A305>Isaiah 53:5) “and with his stripes we are healed”; and for this cause God saved him, that he might save Israel, and rejoice with them in the resurrection of the dead.”

Sin is a disease, a natural and hereditary one, an epidemic distemper, that reaches to all men, and to all the powers and faculties of their souls, and members of their bodies; and which is nauseous and loathsome, and in itself mortal and incurable; nor can it be healed by any creature, or anything that a creature can do. Christ is the only physician, and his blood the balm and sovereign medicine; this cleanses from all sin; through it is the remission of sin, which is meant by healing; for healing of diseases, and forgiving iniquities, is one and the same thing; (see <19A303>Psalm 103:3 <23A324>Isaiah 33:24 <19A104>Psalm 41:4) on which latter text a learned Jew [f61] has this note,

> “this interpreters explain hjyls ˆwçl, “as expressive of forgiveness”;”

and the Jews say, there is no healing of diseases but it signifies forgiveness [f62]: it is an uncommon way of healing by the stripes of another. Some think the apostle alludes to the stripes which servants receive from their masters, to whom he was now speaking; and in order to encourage them to bear them patiently, observes, that Christ himself suffered stripes, and that they had healing for their diseases and wounds, by means of his stripes, or through his being wounded and bruised for them.

Ver. 25. *For ye were as sheep going astray*, etc.] This is a proof of their being healed, namely, their conversion; in which an application of the blood of Christ, and pardon, and so healing by it, was made to their souls. The apostle has still in view the prophecy of (<23>53<26>Isaiah 53:6). God's elect are sheep before conversion; not that they have the agreeable properties of sheep, as to be meek, harmless, innocent, clean, and profitable, for they are the reverse of all this; nor can some things be said of them before conversion, as may be after, as that they hear Christ's voice, and follow him; nor are they so called, because unprejudiced against, and predisposed unto the Gospel, for the contrary is true of them; but they are so in electing grace, and were so considered in the Father's gift of them to Christ, and when made his care and charge, and hence they are called the sheep of his hand; and when Christ laid down his life, and rose again, which he did for the sheep, and as the great Shepherd of them; and when called by grace, for their being sheep, and Christ's own sheep by the Father's gift, and his own purpose, is the reason why he looks them up, calls them by name, and returns them: but then they are not yet of his fold; they are lost sheep, lost in Adam, and by his fall, and by their own actual transgressions; they are as sheep going astray from the shepherd, and from the flock, going out of the right way, and in their own ways; and are, like sheep, stupid and insensible of their danger; and as they never return of themselves, until they are sought for, and brought back: hence it follows,

but are now returned; not returned themselves, but were returned by powerful and efficacious grace: saints are passive, and not active in first conversion; they are turned, not by the power of their own free will, but by the power of God's free grace; they are returned under the illuminations and quickenings of the blessed Spirit, and through the efficacious drawings of the Father's love, unto Christ:

unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls; by whom Christ is meant, who bears the office of a Shepherd, and fully performs it by feeding his

sheep, providing a good fold and pasture for them; by gathering the lambs in his arms, and gently leading those that are with young; by healing their diseases, and preserving them from beasts of prey; hence he is called the good, the great, and chief Shepherd: and he is the “Bishop” or “Overseer” of the souls of his people, though not to the exclusion of their bodies: he has took the oversight of them willingly, and looks well to his flock, inspects into their cases, and often visits them, and never forsakes them; nor will he leave them till they receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls; which he has undertook and effected by his obedience, sufferings and death. Philo the Jew [f63] observes, that

> “to be a shepherd is so good a work, that it is not only a title given to kings and wise men, and souls perfectly purified, but to God the governor of all — -who, as a Shepherd and King, leads according to justice and law, setting over them his right Logos, “the first begotten Son”, who has taken the care of this holy flock, as does the deputy of a great king.”

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER 3

In this chapter the apostle instructs wives how to behave towards their husbands, and husbands how to behave towards their wives; and then exhorts to various things common to all Christians, and particularly to suffer patiently for righteousness sake; to which he encourages them from the sufferings of Christ, and the benefits resulting from them, on which he enlarges to the end of the chapter. He begins with the duty of wives to their husbands, even unbelieving ones, which is subjection to them, urged from the profitable effect of it; since hereby they might be won over to the Christian religion, without the use of the word, as a means, by their conversation, which is explained of chastity and fear, (⁶⁰³⁰¹1 Peter 3:1,2). And he proceeds to give some advice about their apparel, that they should have a greater regard to internal ornaments; particularly meekness and quietness of spirit, which is highly esteemed of by God, rather than to outward adorning; and which he enforces by the examples of godly women in former times, who were so adorned, and were subject to their husbands, particularly Sarah, the wife of Abraham, (⁶⁰³⁰³1 Peter 3:3-6). And next the apostle directs husbands how to conduct towards their wives, to dwell with them, and honour them, because vessels, and weaker vessels, and also heirs of the same grace of life; and besides, to use them ill would be an hinderance of their praying together, (⁶⁰³⁰⁷1 Peter 3:7). And then follow various exhortations to unity of judgment, compassion, brotherly love, pity, courteousness, and patience under the reproaches and revilings of men, which is the way to inherit a blessing they are called unto, (⁶⁰³⁰⁸1 Peter 3:8,9) and that these are incumbent on the saints, and that they shall be blessed, who are helped to regard them, is proved by some passages out of (¹⁹⁴¹²Psalm 34:12-16), which passages are cited, (⁶⁰³¹⁰1 Peter 3:10-12). And in order to encourage to the exercise of the above things, the apostle suggests, that they that so behaved should not be hurt by any; and if they did suffer for righteousness sake from wicked men, yet still they would be happy; nor should this deter them from making a public confession of their faith; to which should be added a good conscience and conversation, to the shame and confusion of them that spoke evil of them, and accused them,

(<4013>1 Peter 3:13-16). And though they were distressed and injured by men, they should not be cast down, nor murmur, since it was the will of God it should be so; and since it was better to suffer for doing well than for doing ill; and especially the example of Christ should animate to patience, since he, an innocent person, suffered for the sins of unjust men, to reconcile them to God; and he is now glorified and happy, and so will his people be, (<4017>1 Peter 3:17,18). And having made mention of his being quickened by the Spirit, the apostle takes occasion from hence of observing, that by the same Spirit Christ preached in the times of Noah to disobedient persons, whose spirits were now in hell; and he takes notice of the longsuffering of God in that dispensation towards them, and of the goodness of God in saving Noah, and his family, in the ark, which was a figure of baptism; of which some account is given what it is, and is not, and which saves by the resurrection of Christ, (<4019>1 Peter 3:19-21) who is described by his ascension to heaven, session at the right hand of God, and dominion over angels, authorities, and powers, (<4022>1 Peter 3:22).

Ver. 1. *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands*, etc.] As well as subjects to princes, and servants to masters; though not with the same sort of subjection, but what is suitable to the relation they stand in to their husbands; (see Gill on "<4052>Ephesians 5:22"). (See Gill on "<5018>Colossians 3:18").

that if any obey not the word; any husband who is an unbeliever, has no love for the Gospel, and gives no credit to it, but despises, disbelieves, and rejects it, the word of truth, of faith, of righteousness, reconciliation, and salvation. The apostle, though he includes all wives, and exhorts them in general to subjection to their own husbands, yet has a particular regard to such as had unbelieving husbands, and who, on that account, were scrupulous of living with them, and of being in subjection to them; and therefore, as the Apostle Paul also did, he advises them to abide with them, and behave well to them, using much the same argument as he does in (<4070>1 Corinthians 7:10,13,16).

they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; for though the ordinary way and means of conversion is the word, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word; yet it may be sometimes done without it; or however by the agreeable conversation of professors, and so of religious wives, the hearts of such as were averse to Christianity, and the Gospel, as unbelieving husbands, may be so softened, and wrought upon,

as to entertain a better opinion of it, and in process of time be inclined to hear and attend it; the consequence of which may prove their conversion, which is a gaming, or winning of souls; and which, as it is for their good, is for the glory of Christ; for as every soul that is delivered from the power of darkness, and is translated into the kingdom of Christ, is a loss to Satan, it is a gain to Christ, and to his church. The Syriac version, instead of "without the word", reads, "without labour"; as if the winning of unbelieving husbands was easily obtained by the conversation of their wives.

Ver. 2. *While they behold your chaste conversation*, etc.] Cheerful subjection, strong affection, and inviolable attachment to them, and strict regard to the honour of the marriage state, and to the preserving of the bed undefiled with lusts and adulteries:

coupled with fear; with reverence of their husbands, giving them due honour, and showing all proper respect; or with the fear of God, which being before their eyes, and upon their hearts, engages them to such an agreeable conversation.

Ver. 3. *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning*, etc.] Or that only and principally; let not that be solely or chiefly attended to, nor anxiously sought after, nor ever in order to allure and ensnare others, or to fill with pride and vanity; nor should it be indecent and luxurious, immodest and immoderate, and unsuitable to the age, character, and station of persons; otherwise clothing is both convenient and necessary; and a decent garb, neat and modest apparel, and what is suitable to the years, rank, and quality of persons, is very commendable: nor are we to suppose that the apostle forbids the use of what follows, but only when used in a luxurious and extravagant manner, and to feed pride and vanity, and encourage, lasciviousness and wantonness:

of plaiting the hair; folding it up in curls, tying it up in knots, and putting it into the form of horns and towers, made by their crisping pins, with their cauls and round tires, like the moon, as was the custom of those times, and still is. There were women among the Jews, whose business it was to plait women's hair; Mary Magdalene is thought to have her name from thence, and that to be her business. The Jews often speak of one Miriam or Mary, by whom they seem to mean the mother of our Lord, who, they say [f64] was

ayyçn r[yç aldgm, “a plaiter of women's hair”; (see Gill on “Matthew 27:56”).

And of wearing of gold; or “golden things”; golden ornaments, as bracelets, chains, and rings, or pieces of gold stuck in the plaitings and folds of the hair. The Jewish women used to wear a crown of gold on their head, in the form of the city of Jerusalem, called a golden city [f65]; and which they wore, after its destruction, in memory of it; but with those they might not go out on a sabbath day. R. Akibah, it is said [f66], made a golden city for his wife, and the wife of Rabban Gamaliel envied her, for it seems this was reckoned a grand dress. Not that the sense is, that every thing of this kind is forbidden, but when used to excess and extravagance; otherwise the daughters of Abraham and Sarah were decked with ear rings, bracelets, and jewels of gold; (see Genesis 24:22,30,47,53).

or of putting on of apparel; that is “excellent”, or precious, as the Syriac version adds; or “of great price”, as the Ethiopic; that is beyond a person's ability or rank; the apostle means such apparel as is unbecoming and unsuitable, for he cannot be thought to forbid the putting on of any apparel; but his sense is, that women should not so much regard, and be so intent upon the outward adorning of their bodies, with any sort of clothing, and especially such as does not become them, as the inward adorning of their minds, next mentioned;

Ver. 4. *But [let it be] the hidden man of the heart*, etc.] By which is meant internal grace; which gives a beauty and ornament to the soul, far preferable to that which plaiting of the hair, wearing of gold, or any costly apparel, can give to the body: and this is called a man, as it is elsewhere the new man, (Ephesians 4:24) because it has that which answers to what is in man, to his soul, and the powers and faculties of it: this man, or new creature, has a new heart and Spirit; it has a will to that which is spiritually good, and an understanding of divine things, and affections for Christ, for his Gospel, ordinances, ways, and people, and for things above: it has what answers to all the five senses; there is in it a seeing of the Son of God in the glories of his person and the fulness of his grace, and of the invisible things of another world; an hearing of the word, of the voice of Christ, so as to understand it, and live, and to distinguish it from the voice of a stranger; a smelling a sweet savour in the things of God, and of his Spirit, and in the person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; a tasting that the Lord is gracious, his fruits pleasant, and his word sweeter than the honey, or the

honeycomb; and a feeling of the burden of sin, an handling of the word of life, a laying hold on Christ, and retaining him: and it has what answers to the parts and members of the body; it has eyes to see with, ears to hear with, hands to receive from Christ, and work with, to his glory, and feet to walk with: it has, in short, all the parts of a man, though these are not yet grown up to perfection; and so that is not yet a perfect man, or arrived to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; but a man it is: and "a man of the heart"; it has its seat there; it is an inward principle in the soul; hence it is called the "inner" and "inward man"; and nothing outward is it, as external humiliation for sin, abstinence from it, reformation of life and manners, a profession of religion, and conformity to Gospel ordinances; but it is something inward, as appears from its names, both here and elsewhere; it is called spirit, seed, the root of the matter, and oil in the vessels; and from the seat and subject of it, the heart, the spirit, the understanding and will, the mind, conscience, and affections: and it is the "hidden man"; it is wisdom in the hidden part; it is hidden from the men of the world; they do not know what it is, nor what it means, nor how it is, or can be; the life of it is hidden from them, and the food it lives upon is hidden manna to them, and so are both its joys and sorrows: it is sometimes hidden from the saints themselves; when they walk in darkness, and see no light, they are at a loss to know whether this principle is in them or not; and it is hidden from other believers, till they give an account of it to them, when by comparing it with the word of God, and their own experience, they perceive it is the grace of God in them; and it is hidden from Satan, it is out of his reach, he cannot touch it; though he can touch the old man, and stir up the corruptions of it, yet he cannot touch the new man, that which is born of God, nor hurt or destroy it; but it is not hidden from God; he sees it where men cannot, being covered with a variety of infirmities and sins, and knows it is not where men sometimes think it is. The nature of this hidden man is further expressed by what follows,

in that which is not corruptible; it is opposed to corruptible things, as the outward adorning consists of, such as plaited hair, silver and gold, golden chains, rings, etc. and costly apparel; nor is it corrupt in itself; the old man is corrupt according to its deceitful lusts, but this new man, the hidden man of the heart, has no corruption in it, nor cleaving to it: it is the workmanship of God, and is created in righteousness and holiness; though it is as yet imperfect, there is nothing impure in it; nor can it ever perish, or

be lost; it is an incorruptible seed, and will always remain when gold will perish, and the best of garments be moth eaten, and decay:

[even the ornament] of a meek and quiet spirit; this is one, and a principal part of the inward adorning, or hidden man of the heart; and those that are possessed of such a spirit are not easily provoked to anger; patiently bear, and put up with injuries; carry themselves affably and courteously unto all; entertain the meanest thoughts of themselves, and the best of others; do not envy the gifts and graces of others, and are willing to be instructed and admonished by the meanest saint; quietly submit to the will of God, in all adverse dispensations of Providence; and ascribe all they have, and are, to the free grace of God, and reckon that when they have done all they can, they are but unprofitable servants. This grace of meekness, humility, and quietness, is a fruit of the Spirit, and so a part of the hidden man, and is what is very ornamental to a believer; it is his clothing, his inward adorning, and what makes him lovely in the sight of God, and of his people; (see 1 Peter 5:5) and it is very useful to him in hearing the word, in giving a reason of the hope that is in him, in restoring others, and in showing forth a good conversation; and particularly it greatly becomes, and exceedingly beautifies women professing godliness; who ought to bear much with their husbands, and be in silence, which is what the apostle has a principal regard unto: and to encourage the more to the exercise of it, adds,

which is in the sight of God of great price; which may refer to the whole adorning, to the hidden man of the heart, which is incorruptible, in opposition to the outward adorning, which may be esteemed by men, and be precious in their sight; and particularly to the ornament of meekness and quietness of spirit; for God has a great regard to the meek, humble, and quiet souls; he lifts them up, when cast down; he causes glad tidings to be preached to them; he increases their joy in the Lord; he feeds them, when hungry, to their satisfaction; he guides them in judgment, and teaches them his ways; he will rise up in judgment for them, and reprove with equity for their sake; he gives more grace unto them, and beautifies them with salvation, and will cause them to inherit the earth.

Ver. 5. *For after this manner in the old time*, etc.] In ages past, the years of many generations, since the time that God created man upon earth; in the times before the flood, and after it; in the times of the patriarchs, judges, kings, and prophets of Israel, under the Old Testament

dispensation. The apostle exhorts and encourages to this inward dress and ornament, from the antiquity of it: for in this way, and after this fashion,

the holy women also: who were sanctified by the Spirit of God, and lived holy lives and conversations, such as Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Leah, Ruth, Hannah, and others:

who trusted in God; that he would send the Messiah, and make good all his promises, judging and believing him to be faithful to his word, and able to fulfil whatever he had promised, as Sarah, (<58B11> Hebrews 11:11). Such holy and believing women as these are worthy of imitation in their adorning and dress, and who, in the manner before described by the apostle, adorned themselves; or this was the adorning which they sought after, valued, and chiefly regarded; not what was external, but internal: and which lay in meekness and humility, and in a quiet deportment, and in

being in subjection unto their own husbands; according to their original make, and natural relation, and the laws of God, and of creation; which is more becoming and adorning than plaiting of hair, wearing of gold, or costly raiment, and recommends them more, both in the sight of God and men; nothing being a more indecent and uncomely sight than a woman not in subjection to her husband.

Ver. 6. *Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham*, etc.] Going along with him wherever he went, as from Chaldea to Canaan, and into Egypt, and the land of the Philistines, saying the words he put into her mouth, (<01205> Genesis 12:5,11,13) and doing the things he bid her do, (<01806> Genesis 18:6) "calling him lord"; or "my lord", as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, and as it appears she did from (<01812> Genesis 18:12). The Jews use this instance to the same purpose the apostle does, saying [f67],

> "the wife ought to take care of the family, to educate her children, to serve and minister to her husband in all things, "calling him her own lord"; which is what we learn from the example of Sarah, who called Abraham her lord, saying, "my lord is old"."

Whose daughters ye are; meaning not by natural descent, though they were, these being Jews the apostle writes to, but by grace, and in a spiritual sense; just as those are the children of Abraham, who walk in the steps of his faith, whether they be Jews or Gentiles; so such are the daughters of Sarah, the children of the free woman, who imitate her in faith and obedience; that is, they appear, and are declared to be so:

as long as ye do well: do acts of beneficence and hospitality to strangers, and proper objects, as Sarah did, and all and every good work, according to the will of God, from love, and in faith, and with a view to his glory; and particularly obey and live in subjection to their husbands, as she did: and are not afraid with any amazement; are not deterred from doing well, nor scared by the terrors and menaces of wicked men, either their own husbands, or others; or who with fortitude and intrepidity of mind continue in the discharge of their duty to God and men, and particularly to their husbands, following them, and obeying their lawful commands, as Sarah did in Egypt, and in Gerar, though she exposed herself to great danger: this is said, because women are timorous, and apt to be frightened at everything, from the performance of their duty.

Ver. 7. *Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them*, etc.] "With your wives", as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read; which not only included dwelling together in the same house, and bedding together in the same bed, but the whole of conjugal conversation, and all the offices and duties incumbent on men in a married state:

according to knowledge; of themselves, and their wives, and the duties belonging to the conjugal state, and the laws of God and man respecting it; and according to their knowledge of the Gospel, and the Christian dispensation, which no ways breaks in upon, but strengthens and encourages to the observance of things belonging to natural religion, and civil life; and according to that superior knowledge of things, which, generally speaking, men have to women; as also wisely, prudently, becoming their characters as men and Christians:

particularly giving honour to the wife; by speaking well of her, and respectfully to her, and by deeds as well as words; not only by clothing her in a decent and becoming manner, suitable to her station; but by providing everything honest and comely for her, food and raiment, a suitable maintenance, all the necessaries, conveniences, and delights of life, that are laudable and proper; in which sense the word honour is used in (1Ti 5:3,17) and this was agreeably to the doctrine of the Jews [f68], who say,

> "let a man always take care wtça dwbkb, "of the glory of his wife"; for there is no blessing found in a man's house, but for the sake of his wife, as it is said, (Ge 12:16) "and he entreated

> Abraham well for her sake": and Rabba used to say to the citizens, wkyyçnl wryqwa, "honour your wives", that ye may be rich."

And indeed this is what they promised in their marriage contract, which runs thus [f69]:

> "be thou unto me for a wife, according to the law of Moses and Israel, and I, by the word of heaven, or God, will worship, ryqwaw, "and honour", and nourish, and take care of thee, according to the custom of the Jews, who worship, and "honour", and nourish, and take care of their wives."

As unto the weaker vessel; so in (Th 4:4) the wife is called a vessel, (see Gill on "50041 Thessalonians 4:4"), and here "the weaker"; being so for the most part, both as to strength of body, and endowments of mind; and therefore to be used gently and tenderly, and not be treated with neglect and contempt, or with inhumanity and severity; but as, in every state and condition, the strong are to bear the infirmities of the weak; so a man should bear with, and accommodate himself to the infirmities of his wife, and hide them as much as he can, and not expose them, nor despise her on account of them. It is a saying of the Jews [f70],

> "if thy wife be short of stature, bow thyself, and whisper to her."

The meaning of the proverb is, that he ought to suit himself to her capacity and weakness:

and as being heirs together of the grace of life; not of a natural life, and the good things of it; though husbands and wives partake of the same kind of life, and have a right unto, and share in the same necessaries of life; so Adam and Eve were partakers of the same life, and sharers of the same benefits; and which is a reason indeed why they ought to live lovingly together: but something more is intended; not the external gifts of the Spirit, which, unless in some few instances, are bestowed on men, and not on women; nor the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, which are the means of grace and life; though men and women, called by grace, have an equal right to them, and enjoy them; (see 4028Galatians 3:28) but grace here, and glory hereafter, are here meant. Some copies, as the Alexandrian, and others, read, "heirs together of the manifold grace of life"; God's own people, without any difference as to sex, as men and women, equally share in grace, as it signifies the love and favour of God; which is the same to all

the objects, as to the date of it, which is from everlasting, one not being loved before another; and as to the quality of it, which is free, sovereign, special, discriminating and unchangeable, one being loved not with one sort of love, another with another; and as to the quantity of it, it not admitting of more or less; and as to the duration, which is for ever: and so they are heirs of it, as it denotes the blessings of grace; being equally heirs of, and sharers in electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, and adopting grace: and as it may intend the internal graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, and love; which as to their principles are the same in all the saints, though different as to the degree of the exercise of them: and which may be called "the grace of life"; or "living grace", as some copies and the Complutensian edition read, and so the Arabic version, because by it men and women, who were dead in trespasses and sins, are quickened; and in distinction to counterfeit grace, which differs as much from true grace, as the picture of a man from a living man; and because it lives for ever, and never dies, and gives a meetness for eternal life, which it springs up to, issues in, and is inseparably connected with. Moreover, by it may be meant eternal life and salvation, of which the saints, without any difference as to sex, are heirs of: so some copies read, "heirs of manifold grace, and life"; by the former, meaning grace here, and by the latter, glory hereafter; which is a life of vision of God, and uninterrupted communion with him; of perfection and pleasure, and which will last for ever; and may be called

the grace of life, because it is the free gift of God's grace: and agreeably the Syriac version renders it, "the gift of eternal life"; and the Ethiopic version, glorious life: and this is represented as an inheritance, being what belongs only to the children; and which they have not by their own works, as an acquisition of theirs, but by the free grace of their heavenly Father, and as his gift and bequest unto them. Now all the saints, of whatever state, condition, or sex, are equally heirs of this inheritance; for there is but one inheritance, one kingdom, one crown of glory, which all shall enjoy; and whatever disparity there may be, particularly between husband and wife, in their natural relation, there is none in the things of grace, and with regard to the kingdom of glory; and which is an argument why husbands should dwell peaceably and comfortably with their wives, and give all due honour to them, since they are upon a par in spiritual things, there being neither male nor female in Christ Jesus, and because they are now joint heirs of, and shall equally share in eternal life and happiness.

That your prayers be not hindered: as they would be were they not to dwell together; or should not the husband give honour to his wife, and take care of her as he ought to do: hence would arise strifes and quarrels, when they could not cordially, and to edification, join together in prayer; nor would such prayers, put up in wrath, be acceptable unto God, who requires that men should lift up holy hands everywhere, whether in public, or in private, in God's house, or in their own houses, without wrath and doubting. From hence we may observe, that family prayer is a duty incumbent on professors of religion, and great care should be taken that it be not neglected and hindered.

Ver. 8. *Finally, be ye all of one mind*, etc.] Not that the apostle was about to conclude his epistle; but having finished his exhortations respecting the obedience of subjects to magistrates, and of servants to their masters, and the duties incumbent on husbands and wives, he proceeds to sum up what he had further to say, in general rules; which regarded all sorts of Christians, magistrates and subjects, masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children, old and young, rich and poor, of whatsoever state, age, sex, or condition; and so the Arabic version renders it, “the sum of the commandment is”; and the Ethiopic version, “the sum of all is this”; namely, what follows; “be ye all of one mind”; whatever difference there might be in their natural and civil relation and character; and which is to be understood not of the sameness of affection to one another, or of an humble and condescending spirit, disposition, and carriage to each other, for these are expressed in some following exhortations; but of sameness of judgment with respect to the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, in which saints should be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment; for as the church is but one body, of which Christ is the head, there should be but one mind in it; even as there is but one Spirit of God, who convinces, enlightens, and leads into truth; and but one heart and way, given to fear the Lord; and there is but one hope of our calling, or to which we are called; and one way to it, and therefore ought to agree in everything respecting the way, the truth, and the life; though in things which do not, should bear with one another; and there is but one Lord, who gives the same laws and ordinances to one as to another, and which are to be kept alike by all; and there is but one faith, one doctrine of faith, which is uniform and all of a piece, and but one rule and standard of faith, the sacred Scriptures, and but one baptism, to be administered in the same way, and upon the same sort of subjects, and in the same name of the

Father, Son, and Spirit; and but one God and Father of all; all belong to the same family, and therefore should preserve a unity of spirit and mind, and speak the same things; which is necessary to carry on the worship of God, honourably and regularly, to the glorifying of him, and for the peace, comfort, and safety of the churches of Christ:

having compassion one of another; or sympathizing with each other, both in prosperity and adversity, whether in temporal or spiritual things; rejoicing with them that rejoice in Christ, make their boast of him, and have communion with him, and who are also blessed with health of body, and a competency of the good things of this life; and weeping with them that weep for the loss of goods, relations, etc. and being in bonds and afflictions; or because of sin, the absence of Christ, and the temptations of Satan; and being concerned also for such who are fallen into immorality, or error, and heresy; endeavouring to restore them out of the one or the other, in a spirit of meekness and tenderness: to all which they should be engaged by the example of Christ, the sympathizing high priest; by the consideration of the divine compassion to them, both in a providential way, and in a way of grace; and on account of their union and relation to each other, as members of the same body:

love as brethren; not in a natural and civil, but in a spiritual relation, being children of God, and brethren of Christ, and in a Gospel church state; and whose love to each other ought to be universal, fervent, without dissimulation, and as Christ has loved them; and which should show itself in praying for each other, in bearing one another's burdens, in forgiving each other, in admonishing in love, and building up one another on their most holy faith, and communicating to each other both in temporals and spirituals: and of a very excellent nature is it; it is the bond of perfectness, and evidence of regeneration; the glory and ornament of a profession, and without which it is nothing; and what renders the communion of the saints with each other pleasant and profitable, comfortable to themselves, and honourable in the eyes of others; and to which they should be induced from the consideration of the love of God and Christ unto them, and from their relation to each other, as brethren:

be pitiful; to those that are in distress; put on bowels of mercy, and relieve and succour them, distributing cheerfully to their necessities:

be courteous; gentle and affable, carrying it friendly to one another, seeking those things which may be most agreeable to each other, shunning

all moroseness, stiffness, and incivility. The Vulgate Latin version renders it by two words, “modest, humble”: not proud, haughty, and overbearing, but condescending to each other, and to men of low estates; and so the Syriac version renders it, “kind and meek”.

Ver. 9. *Not rendering evil for evil*, etc.] Doing an ill thing in return to one that has done ill to you, and in a way of revenge for it; which is contrary to what is before advised to, and which is taking God's prerogative and work out of his hands, whose vengeance is, and which is to be overcome of evil:

or railing for railing; returning ill language to such as have given it, but rather should imitate Christ, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, (1 Peter 2:23) and whose advice is, instead of returning injuries, blows, or words, to turn to him that smites on the right check the other also and to bless them that curse, do good to them that hate, and pray for them that persecute, (Matthew 5:39,44) and which is here directed to:

but contrariwise blessing; praying for a blessing on them; for if we are to do so for our enemies, for them that hate us, despitefully use and persecute us, as did Christ, Stephen the protomartyr, and the apostles, then much more our fellow Christians who may do us an injury or speak evil of us, or to us: who seem to be chiefly intended: the argument to persuade to it follows,

knowing that ye are thereunto called; referring either to what goes before being called by grace to the discharge of all the above duties exhorted to, and particularly to suffer patiently all injuries and affronts; and instead of making returns in the same way, to bless and pray for those that have hurt us, either by words or deeds; (see Pe 2:20,21) or to what follows, that ye should inherit a blessing; temporal blessing or blessings; for godliness has the promise of this life and godly persons shall not want any good thing; and even while the blessings of others are cursed they have their outward mercies with a blessing, and they are blessings indeed to them; wherefore, the little they may have is better than the large affluence of others: and also spiritual blessing, or blessings; such as peace of conscience, the pardon of all their sins a justifying righteousness adopting grace, all supplies of grace from Christ, his presence and communion with him: and also an eternal one, even life for evermore; called so, because it springs from the free favour, good will, and blessing of God, and which its being an inheritance also shows; and because such that enjoy it are eternally and unspeakably happy.

Ver. 10. *For he that will love life*, etc.] This, with what follows here and in the two next verses, are taken out of (<19B412>Psalm 34:12-16) and are produced as a proof of what is before said; that it is a good man's duty not to do or speak evil in return for what is done or said to him; but on the contrary, it becomes him to avoid evil, do good, and seek peace as much as possible, and leave it with a righteous God to vindicate him and his cause, who will not fail to do it; and that such shall inherit the blessing both here and hereafter: in the psalm, these words are put by way of question, "what man is he that desireth life?" that wills it with pleasure, that loves it with a love of complacency and delight? and which is to be understood, not of natural life; for what man is there that do not love that? love of a natural life is natural to men; it is a first principle in nature to desire life, and a preservation of it, and to a great length; a man will give all that he has for it, as Satan said, (<18B204>Job 2:4), but both of a spiritual life, a life of faith on Christ, communion with him, and holiness from him; the life of God, or to live soberly, righteously, and godly, which carnal men are alienated from, and enemies to, and cannot desire, only spiritual men; and of an eternal one; and so some of the Jewish interpreters [f71] understand by life and good days, in the psalm, such as are both in this world, and in that which is to come:

and see good days; not the days of this life, which are evil, even the days of a good man, (<01479>Genesis 47:9) and the more so, the longer he lives; for the days of old age are evil days, in which there is no pleasure, (<21120>Ecclesiastes 12:1), unless such days are meant, in which much good is done to the honour and glory of God, and in which gracious souls enjoy much of God, and see and taste of his grace and goodness in the land of the living; though, rather, the good days of eternity, even length of days for ever and ever, which holy men of God shall see, and enjoy in the other world, when they shall be possessed of fulness of joy, and of pleasure for evermore: in the psalm it is, "and loveth [many] days, that he may see good"; desires a blessed eternity of good things:

let him refrain his tongue from evil; bridle that unruly member, which has a world of iniquity in it; let him keep it as with a bit, from the vices incident to it; from all obscene words, filthy and corrupt communication, whatever is unsavoury and unedifying; from lying, cursing, swearing, and particularly from railing and evil speaking, in return for such language, which is chiefly meant; as well as from belching out blasphemies against God, and damnable heresies among men; for whoever would be thought a religious

man, and lays no restraint on his tongue, his religion is a vain thing, (Jam 1:26James 1:26) and his lips that they speak no guile; as flatterers do, who speak that with their mouth which does not agree with their heart, and so beguile and deceive persons; and as false teachers, who use dishonest arts, walk in craftiness, handle the word of God deceitfully, use ambiguous phrases, and words of double meaning, and with their good words, and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple but such things do not become persons that seek for glory, honour, and immortality; that profess to be Israelites indeed; in these guile should not be found in their lips, nor in their lives.

Ver. 11. *Let him eschew evil*, etc.] Avoid all kinds of evil, hate it, abstain from the appearance of it, and have no fellowship with it; and particularly should avoid rendering evil for evil, or taking revenge on persons for doing him ill:

and do good; everything that is good, all good works, according to the will of God, in the exercise of faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God; and without trusting to them, and depending upon them for life and salvation; and particularly do good for evil; do good to all men, acts of kindness and beneficence, even to enemies, and especially to them that are of the household of faith. The Jewish interpreters [f72] on the psalm from whence these words are taken observe, that in the first of these clauses are contained all the negative precepts, whose number with them is three hundred, sixty, and five; and in the latter of them, all the affirmative precepts, which amount to two hundred and forty eight:

let him seek peace and ensue it: "or pursue it"; let him seek after it, in the world, and with all men, as much as possible, yea, with his very enemies; and live a peaceable and quiet life, in the kingdom, city, town, and neighbourhood where he is; and particularly in the church of God, and with the saints; which he should seek with all diligence and eagerness, and pursue with all rigour to the utmost of his power; and endeavour to cultivate all he can, and follow the things which make for it. The note of one of the Jewish commentators [f73] on this passage is, "seek peace", in thine own place; "and pursue it", in another place.

Ver. 12. *For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous*, etc.] Who are so not merely in the sight of men, but of God; nor in their own account, and by their own works, but in the esteem of God, through the imputation of the righteousness of his Son unto them: and because he loves this

righteousness, and is well pleased with it, seeing by it his law is magnified and made honourable, therefore his countenance beholds with pleasure and delight those righteous ones who are clothed with it; his eyes of omniscience, love, care, and protection, are always upon them, watching over them, delighting in them, running to and fro in the earth on behalf of them; he sees every injury done them, and in his own time and way will do them justice; which is a reason why they should not take vengeance themselves, but leave it with him, whose it is:

and his ears are open to their prayers; or "prayer"; in the Hebrew text, "to their cry"; he is a God hearing prayer, and his righteous ones have his ear; he hears them while they are speaking, and will sooner or later answer, and avenge his elect, who cry unto him day and night; for as he has an ear to hear their cries, which is not heavy, he has an arm to save them, which is not shortened; and this is another reason why they should behave as before directed, and which is still strengthened by what follows;

but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil; it is added in the psalm, "to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth": by "the face of the Lord" is meant, as the Jewish writers [f74] interpret it, the anger of the Lord; it intends, not his kind, pleasant, and loving countenance, but his angry one with the former he beholds the upright, and with it he looks upon his righteous ones; but the latter is upon and against the wicked, and is dreadful and intolerable, and the consequence of it is everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

Ver. 13. *And who is he that will harm you*, etc.] Or "can harm you". God will not; for his eyes are upon the righteous, to protect and defend them, and, his ears are open to their cries, to avenge them; he is on their side, and he is the only lawgiver that is able to save, and to destroy. Christ will not; for when he came the first time, it was not to condemn, but to save; and when he comes a second time, though he will rule the wicked with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel; yet his people, who are his jewels, he will spare, as a man spares his only son. Good angels will not; these rejoice at the conversion, and in the salvation of sinful men, encamp about the saints, and are ministering spirits to them: nor the devil; though he would devour, he cannot; for greater is he that is in the saints, than he that is in the world: nor can sin; for though it wars against them, it shall not have the dominion over them; and though it often breaks in upon

their peace and comfort, it cannot damn and destroy their souls: nor the law; for though it pronounces guilty, and curses those that are under it, and are of the works of it, yet since Christ has fulfilled it for his people, by obeying its precepts, and bearing its penalty, the curse, it lies not against them, nor can it inflict any punishment on them: nor the men of the world; who hate and persecute the saints; these can do them no real harm; they cannot hurt their grace, which shines the brighter, being tried and proved in the furnace of affliction; they cannot destroy their peace and comfort by all the trouble they give them; all the harm they can do them is to their bodies; they can do none to their souls; and even all the evil things they do to their bodies work together for their good; and they must be very wicked men that will do harm in any respect to such as behave well in states, cities, towns, or neighbourhoods:

if ye be followers of that which is good; of God, who is essentially, originally, and infinitely good, and does good to all his creatures, by imitating him in holiness and righteousness, in kindness, mercy, and beneficence; and of Christ, the good Shepherd, following him in the exercise of grace, as of humility, love, patience, etc. and in the discharge of duty; and of good men, the apostles of Christ, the first churches, faithful ministers, and all such who through faith and patience have inherited the promises, and that both in doctrine and practice; and of all good things, whatever is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, particularly righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness. Some copies, as the Alexandrian, and others, read, “zealots”, or “zealous of good”; of good works, as in (Titus 2:14) and so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 14. *But and if ye suffer for righteousness sake*, etc.] For the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, which was the great stumbling block to the Jews, and on account of which they persecuted the Christians; it being not after man, nor according to the carnal reason of men, and was contrary to the method they had fixed on, and what excluded boasting in them, and was thought to be a licentious doctrine; and for a righteous cause, for professing Christ and his Gospel; for vindicating both which, whoever did must expect to suffer persecution; and also for living soberly, righteously, and godly; for by a religious life and conversation the saints are separated from the world, and are distinguished from them, which in effect sets a mark of infamy and reproach upon them; and saints, by an agreeable life, reprove others, and condemn them; all which irritate

and provoke them to hate and persecute them: now these words prevent an objection that might be made to what is before said; that none can, or will harm such as are followers of good; whereas it is a clear case, that saints for righteousness sake are hurt, and do suffer in their persons, characters, and estate; they are reproached and reviled, and often suffer confiscation of goods, imprisonment, and even death itself; to which the apostle answers, by granting it, and supposing that this should be the case, as it sometimes is; yet no hurt is done them, they are still happy persons: happy are ye; since suffering on such an account is a gift of God, even as believing in Christ itself is, and is a real honour done to a person, and to be so accounted; moreover, such generally enjoy much of the presence of God, and the comforts of his Spirit; the Spirit of God and of glory rests upon them; hereby the graces of the Spirit of God in them are exercised, tried, and proved, and shine out the brighter; the faith and hope of other Christians are strengthened, and God is glorified; and besides, the kingdom of heaven, the crown of life, and eternal glory, with which their sufferings are not to be compared, are theirs, and which they shall certainly enjoy: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; referring to a passage in (²³⁸¹²Isaiah 8:12) and the meaning is either, be not afraid with the same sort of fear as wicked men are; with a worldly slavish fear of men, and of the loss of worldly things, and of life itself: or, afraid of them, as the Syriac version renders it; who inject fear into you; do not be afraid of their revilings and reproaches, of their threatenings and menaces, and even of death itself by them, which is the utmost they can do; do not be troubled at anything they say or do to you; since nothing can harm you, since God is on your side, Christ has delivered you from this present evil world, and saved you out of the hands of every enemy; and since the love of God, which casteth out fear, is shed abroad in your hearts, and you are encompassed with it, and nothing can separate you from it.

Ver. 15. *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts*, etc.] Still referring to (²³⁸¹³Isaiah 8:13) not by making him holy, which need not, nor cannot be, he being essentially, infinitely, and perfectly holy; but by declaring and proclaiming his holiness, as the seraphim in Isaiah's prophecy, and the four living creatures in the Revelation did; and by glorifying of him, praising and applauding all his perfections, and among the rest, this of his holiness, and giving thanks at the remembrance of it; which he has so much displayed in the works of creation, providence, redemption, and grace; hence the Arabic version renders it, bless the Lord God in your hearts: the Lord God is

sanctified by his people externally, when they regard his commands, attend his ordinances, and call upon his name, and praise him; but here an internal sanctification of him, a sanctification of him in their hearts, is intended, and what is opposed to the fear of men, and unbelief, and lies in the exercise of the grace of fear upon him; (see <2808>Isaiah 8:13) and which has for its object his goodness, and is a fruit of the covenant of his grace, and is a child like and godly fear; and in the exercise of faith upon him, upon his covenant and promises, his faithfulness, and power to help, assist, and preserve; whereby glory is given to him, a witness borne to his truth, and he is sanctified: some copies, as the Alexandrian, and one of Stephens's, read, sanctify the Lord Christ; and so read the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; and certain it is that he is intended in (<2808>Isaiah 8:13) as appears from (<6014>1 Peter 3:14) compared with (<4609>Romans 9:33 <6018>1 Peter 2:8)

and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear; by the hope that is in the saints, is not designed the grace of hope itself, which is given to them, and implanted in them in regeneration; the reason, ground, and foundation of which are, the love, grace, and mercy of God, through Christ, and his person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and redemption; but the Gospel, the whole Christian doctrine, the doctrine of faith, and which the Syriac version here calls the “hope of faith”; and the profession of Christianity, called in (<5802>Hebrews 10:23), the profession of hope; in which persons profess their hope of eternal life and happiness through Christ, as doctrine of the Gospel directs them to. Now, a “reason” of this is to be given; not that they are to account for the Gospel, upon the foot of carnal reason; for that is not of men, nor according to the carnal reason of men; nor is it to be thought that every Christian should be capable of defending the Gospel, either in whole, or in part, by arguments and reasons, in a disputatious way, or to give a reason and argument for every particular truth; but that he should be well acquainted with the ground and foundation of the Christian religion; at least, with the first principles of the oracles of God, and be conversant with the Scriptures, and be able to point out that in them, which is the reason of his holding this and the other truth, though he is not able to give a gainsayer satisfaction, or to stop his mouth: and this is to be done with meekness and fear; with meekness, before men; in an humble modest way; not with an haughty air, and in a morose and surly manner, which serves only to irritate and provoke: and with fear; either of God, and so the Ethiopic Version renders it, with the fear of the

Lord; considering the subject of the argument, and the importance of it, and how much the honour of God is concerned in it; and taking care lest the answer should be delivered in a light, trifling, and negligent manner, and that no part of truth be dropped or concealed, in order to please men, and be screened from their resentments; or with all due reverence of, and respect to men, to superiors, to the civil magistrates, who may ask the reason; for they are to be treated with honour and esteem, and to be answered in an handsome and becoming manner, suitable to the dignity of their persons and office; as the sanhedrim was by Stephen; and as Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, by the Apostle Paul: and this answer, or reason, is to be given to every man; that has authority to ask, and that asks in a modest manner, and with a reverence suitable to the subject; for the phrases, "with meekness and fear", may respect him that asks the reason, as well as him that gives the answer; for that which is holy is not to be given to dogs, to impudent persons, mockers and scoffers, nor are pearls to be cast before swine, filthy and irreverent persons; (see <4076>Matthew 7:6) the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and so the Vulgate Latin version, read, "but with meekness and fear"; for if it is not asked in such a way, there is no obligation to give an answer: and this is to be given "always"; whenever it is asked in such a manner, and by proper persons; when there is a necessity of it, and as opportunity offers: and saints should be always "ready to" give and therefore it becomes them daily and diligently to search the Scriptures, meditate on them, and get all the help and assistance they can, to lead them into an acquaintance with them, that they may be so; for though the apostles had extraordinary assistance promised them, and therefore were bid not to consider beforehand what they should say, when brought before kings and princes; yet this is not to be expected by ordinary persons, nor in ordinary cases. Agreeably to this is the advice of R. Eleazar [f75];

> "be diligent to learn the law, and know what thou shouldest answer to an Epicure,"

or heretic: says R. Jochanan [f76],

> "in every place where the Sadducees object, ^dyxb ^tbwçt their answer is at their side,"

or ready; that is, in the same Scriptures on which they form their objections.

Ver. 16. *Having a good conscience*, etc.] Meaning not the faculty of the conscience itself, which is naturally evil, and defiled with sin, and is only made good by the sanctification of the Spirit, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, by which the heart is sprinkled from it, and that itself purged from dead works; but a life and conversation according to the dictates of such a conscience, in the uprightness and sincerity of it, and by the grace of God, and according to the Gospel, and whereby the doctrines of it are adorned; for, as besides internal sanctification of God, or a fearing of him, and believing in him with the heart, there must be a profession of him with the mouth, and a reason of faith and hope given verbally, when there is an occasion for it; so to both must be added a conscientious discharge of duty, both to God and men, which is one way of defending and recommending the doctrines of the Gospel:

that whereas they speak evil of you as of evildoers; as vain, proud, haughty, and arrogant persons, as seditious men, enemies to order and civil magistracy; as such that speak evil of dignities, and despise government; when they shall see your modest and humble deportment in the world, and before them, and with what reverence and esteem you treat them:

they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ; which was in consequence of their being in Christ, and made new creatures by him, and was as became his Gospel, and by and under the influence of his grace and Spirit.

Ver. 17. *For it is better, if the will of God be so*, etc.] For all things are ordered by the will of God, even all the sufferings and afflictions of the saints; and which is a reason why they ought to be patiently submitted to, and bore: and "better" it is, more honourable and profitable,

that ye suffer for well doing; for believing in Christ, professing him and his Gospel, giving a free and open reason for so doing, and for exercising a good conscience, and living godly in Christ Jesus:

than for evil doing; as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or a busy body in other men's matters, (<60045>1 Peter 4:15,16).

Ver. 18. *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins*, etc.] Not his own, for he committed none, but for the sins of his people; in order to obtain the remission of them, to make reconciliation for them, and to take and put them away, and finish and make an end of them; which sufferings of his, on account of them, were many and great: he suffered much by bearing the

griefs, and carrying the sorrows of his people, whereby he became a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs, from his cradle to his cross; and from the temptations of Satan, being in all points tempted, as his members are, though without sin; and from the contradiction of sinners against him, in his name, credit, and character, abusing him as the worst of men; and he suffered in his soul, from the wrath of God, and curses of the law, which lay upon him; and in his body, by many buffetings, scourges, wounds, and death itself, even the death of the cross; and which being the finishing part of his sufferings, is chiefly here meant. The Alexandrian copy reads, “died for you”; and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, “died for our sins”; and this he did once, and but once; he died once, and will die no more; he was offered up once, and will be offered up no more; there is no more offering, or sacrifice for sin; the reason is, because his one offering is sufficient to take away sin, which the legal sacrifices were not, and therefore were often offered; and the reason why this his one offering, or once suffering and dying, is sufficient, is, because of his divine nature, or eternal Spirit, by which he offered himself, and gave infinite virtue to his sacrifice and satisfaction: now, this is an argument for suffering patiently; since Christ, the head, has also suffered, and therefore, why not the members? and since he has suffered for their sins, therefore they should not grudge to suffer for his sake; and seeing also their sufferings are but once, in this life only, and as it were but for a moment, and not to be compared with his sufferings for them; and especially when it is considered what follows:

the just for the unjust; Christ, the holy and just one, who is holy in his nature, and righteous in his life and actions, which were entirely conformable to the righteous law of God, and upright and faithful in the discharge of his office, and therefore called God's righteous servant; he suffered, and that not only by unjust men, by the Jews, by Pilate, and the Roman soldiers, but for and in the room and stead of unjust men, sinners, and ungodly, who were destitute of righteousness, and full of all unrighteousness; and since he did, it need not be thought hard, or strange, that sinful men should suffer at the hands of others; and still it should be borne with the greater patience, since Christ not only suffered for them, but since an end is answered by it, as is here suggested:

that he might bring us to God; nigh to God, who, with respect to communion, were afar off from him; and in peace and reconciliation with him, who were enemies to him by wicked works; and that they might have

freedom of access, with boldness, unto God, through his precious blood, and the vail of his flesh; and that he might offer them unto God, as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions render it; as a sacrifice acceptable unto God, presenting them to him unblamable and unreproveable in his sight; that he might bring them into his grace and presence here, and, as the great Captain of their salvation, bring them to him in glory hereafter:

being put to death in the flesh; in the human nature: flesh includes the whole of human nature, both body and soul; for though the body only dies, yet death is the dissolution of the union between them both; and such was Christ's death; for though the union between the two natures continued, yet his body and soul were disunited; his body was left on the cross, and his soul, or Spirit, was commended to God, when his life was taken from the earth, and he was put to death in a violent manner by men:

but quickened by the Spirit; raised from the dead by his divine nature, the Spirit of holiness, the eternal Spirit, by which he offered himself, and by virtue of which, as he had power to lay down his life, so he had power to take it up again; when he was also justified in the Spirit, and all the elect in him. Now, as the enemies of Christ could do no more than put him to death in the flesh, so the enemies of his people can do no more than kill the body, and cannot reach the soul; and as Christ is quickened and raised from the dead, so all his elect are quickened together, and raised with him, representatively, and shall, by virtue of his resurrection, be raised personally, and live also; which is no inconsiderable argument to suffer afflictions patiently, and which is the design of this instance and example of the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ.

Ver. 19. *By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison*.] Various are the senses given of this passage: some say, that Christ, upon his death, went in his human soul to hell; either, as some, to preach to the devils and damned spirits, that they might be saved, if they would; and, as others, to let them know that he was come, and to fill them with dread and terror; but though hell may be meant by the prison, yet the text does not say that he went unto it, or preached in it; only that the spirits were in it, to whom he sometimes went, and preached; nor is his human soul, but his divine nature meant, by the Spirit, by which he went and preached to them: and as for the ends proposed, the former is impracticable and impossible; for after death follows judgment, which is an eternal one; nor is there any salvation, or hope of salvation afterwards; and the latter is absurd, vain,

and needless. Others, as the Papists, imagine the sense to be, that Christ, at his death, went in his human soul, into a place they call “Limbus Patrum”, which they suppose is meant by the prison here, and delivered the souls of the Old Testament saints and patriarchs from thence, and carried them with him to heaven; but this sense is also false, because, as before observed, not the human soul of Christ, but his divine nature, is designed by the Spirit; nor is there any such place as here feigned, in which the souls of Old Testament saints were, before the death of Christ; for they were in peace and rest, in the kingdom of heaven, in Abraham's bosom, inheriting the promises, and not in a prison; besides, the text says not one word of the delivering of these spirits out of prison, only of Christ's preaching to them: add to all this, and which Beza, with others, observes, the apostle speaks of such as had been disobedient, and unbelievers; a character which will not agree with righteous men, and prophets, and patriarchs, under the former dispensation: others think the words are to be understood of Christ's going to preach, by his apostles, to the Gentiles, as in (<49217>Ephesians 2:17) who were in a most miserable condition, strangers to the covenants of promise, and destitute of the hope of salvation, and sat in darkness, and the shadow of death, and, as it were, at the gates of hell; were in the bonds of iniquity, and dead in sin, and had been for long time past foolish and disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures, to which they were in bondage. This is, indeed, a more tolerable sense than the former; but it will be difficult to show, that men, in the present state of life, are called “spirits”, which seems to be a word that relates to the souls of men, in a separate state from their bodies; and especially that carnal and unconverted men are ever so called; and besides, the apostle is speaking of such who were disobedient in the times of Noah; and therefore not of the Gentiles, in the times of the apostles: add to which, that the transition from the times of the apostles, according to this sense, to the days of Noah, is very unaccountable; this sense does not agree with the connection of the words: others are of opinion, that this is meant of the souls of the Old Testament saints, who were εν φυλακη, “in a watch”, as they think the phrase may be rendered, instead of “in prison”: and said to be in such a situation, because they were intent upon the hope of promised salvation, and were looking out for the Messiah, and anxiously desiring his coming, and which he, by some gracious manifestation, made known unto them: but though the word may sometimes signify a watch, yet more commonly a prison, and which sense best suits here; nor is that anxiety and uneasiness, which represents them as in a prison, so applicable to souls in a state of happiness; nor such a

gracious manifestation so properly called preaching; and besides, not believers, but unbelievers, disobedient ones, are here spoken of; and though it is only said they were sometimes so, yet to what purpose should this former character be once mentioned of souls now in glory? but it would be tedious to reckon up the several different senses of this place; some referring it to such in Noah's time, to whom the Gospel was preached, and who repented; and though they suffered in their bodies, in the general deluge, yet their souls were saved; whereas the apostle calls them all, "the world of the ungodly", (2 Peter 2:5) and others, to the eight souls that were shut up in the ark, as in a prison, and were saved; though these are manifestly distinguished in the text from the disobedient spirits. The plain and easy sense of the words is, that Christ, by his Spirit, by which he was quickened, went in the ministry of Noah, the preacher of righteousness, and preached both by words and deeds, by the personal ministry of Noah, and by the building of the ark, to that generation who was then in being; and who being disobedient, and continuing so, a flood was brought upon them which destroyed them all; and whose spirits, or separate souls, were then in the prison of hell, so the Syriac version renders it, lwyçb, "in hell", (see Revelation 20:7) when the Apostle Peter wrote this epistle; so that Christ neither went into this prison, nor preached in it, nor to spirits that were then in it when he preached, but to persons alive in the days of Noah, and who being disobedient, when they died, their separate souls were put into prison, and there they were when the apostle wrote: from whence we learn, that Christ was, that he existed in his divine nature before he was incarnate, he was before Abraham, he was in the days of Noah; and that Christ also, under the Old Testament, acted the part of a Mediator, in his divine nature, and by his Spirit discharged that branch of it, his prophetic office, before he appeared in human nature; and that the Gospel was preached in those early times, as unto Abraham, so before him.

Ver. 20. *Which sometime were disobedient*, etc.] To all the instructions and warnings which God gave them, to all the strivings of his Spirit, and to the ministry of Christ, by Noah; they continued in their profaneness and impiety, and to corrupt their ways, and fill the earth with violence and wickedness; not believing what they were threatened with, or that ever a flood would come upon them, and destroy them: and this "sometime" refers to the time of their being upon earth, who were now in hell; "to the days of Noah"; hereafter mentioned; and which the Syriac version connects with this clause, reading it thus, "who of old were disobedient in the days

of Noah"; at which time it was, that Christ, by his Spirit in Noah, went and preached to them: when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah: that is, when God, who is longsuffering and patient, waited on these disobedient ones, in Noah's time, for the space of an hundred and twenty years:

while the ark was preparing; by Noah, according to the directions which God gave him, (<01064>Genesis 6:14-22) and which, as R. Tanchuma says [f77], was fifty two years a building; others say [f78] an hundred years; but Jarchi says [f79] it was an hundred and twenty; and which seems most likely, that being the term of time in which God's longsuffering waited on them; during which time Noah was preaching to them, and building the ark:

wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water; the eight persons were, Noah, and his wife, and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and their three wives. It is a common tradition with the Jews [f80], that besides these, Og, king of Bashan, escaped the flood; and who, they say, is the same that escaped, and told Abraham of Lot's being carried captive by the kings [f81]; the manner of his escape at the flood they relate thus [f82];

> "Og came, who was delivered from the men that died at the flood; and he rode upon the ark, and he had a covering upon his head, and was fed with the food of Noah; but not for his worthiness was he delivered, but that the inhabitants of the world might see the power of the Lord;"

and elsewhere [f83], after this manner, citing those words, "and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark", (<01023>Genesis 7:23) they add,

> "except Og, king of Bashan, who sat on a certain piece of wood which belonged to the scaffolding of the ark, and he swore to Noah, and his sons, that he would be their servant for ever. What did Noah do? he bored an hole in the ark, and every day reached out food to him, and he remained alive, according to what is said, (<05311>Deuteronomy 3:11) "only Og, king of Bashan", etc."

But this is all a mere fiction; and equally fabulous is the account the Arabians give, who say [f84] that eighty persons, together with Noah, were taken into the ark, among whom was Jorham, their father; for there were no more than eight persons saved; and this is the apostle's sense; and

agreeably the Syriac version renders it, “and eight souls” dwjlb, “only entered into it, and were saved by water”; and we are told by some of the eastern writers [f85], that when these eight went out of the ark, they built a city, which they called Themanin, which, in the Arabic language, signifies “eight”, according to their number. The ark was a type of Christ, into whom whoever enters by faith, or in whom whoever believes, shall be saved; but as they that entered into the ark were but few, so are those that enter in at the strait gate, or believe in Christ; and they that went into the ark were saved by the water bearing up the ark, even by that by which others were destroyed; as the very same thing, for different reasons, is the cause or means of destruction and salvation; so Christ is set, for the fall and rising of many, is a stumblingblock to some, and the power and wisdom of God to others; and the Gospel, and the ministers of it, are the savour of life unto life to some, and the savour of death unto death to others. This instance of the dispensation of the providence of God to the old world is very appropriately, though by way of digression, introduced by the apostle; showing, that in times past, as then, God's usual method has been to afford the outward means to ungodly men, and to bear with them long, and then bring down his vengeance upon them, and save his own people; and this suffering saints might depend upon would be their case, and therefore should bear their afflictions patiently.

Ver. 21. *The like figure whereunto [even] baptism doth also now save us*, etc.] The ark, and deliverance by it, as it was a type of Christ, and salvation by him, so it was a figure of baptism, and baptism was the antitype of that; or there is something in these which correspond, and answer to, and bear a resemblance to each other: as the ark was God's ordinance, and not man's invention, so is baptism, it is of heaven, and not of men; and as the ark, while it was preparing, was the scorn and derision of men, so is this ordinance of the Gospel; it was rejected with disdain by the Scribes and Pharisees, as it still is by many; and as the ark, when Noah and his family were shut up in it by God, represented a burial, and they seemed, as it were, to be buried in it, it was a lively emblem of baptism, which is expressed by a burial, (<450604>Romans 6:4 <510212>Colossians 2:12) and as they in the ark had the great deep broke up under them, and the windows of heaven opened over them, pouring out waters upon them, they were, as it were, immersed in, and were covered with water, this fitly figured baptism by immersion; nor were there any but adult persons that entered into the ark, nor should any be baptized but believers; to which may be added, that

as the one saved by water, so does the other; for it is water baptism which is here designed, which John practised, Christ gave a commission for, and his disciples administered: it saves not as a cause, for it has no causal influence on, nor is it essential to salvation. Christ only is the cause and author of eternal salvation; and as those only that were in the ark were saved by water, so those only that are in Christ, and that are baptized into Christ, and into his death, are saved by baptism; not everyone that is baptized, but he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, (<41616>Mark 16:16), for baptism

is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh; the design of it is not to take off the sordid flesh, as circumcision did; or in a ceremonious way, outwardly, to sanctify to the purifying of the flesh, as the Jewish baptisms did; (see <58910>Hebrews 9:10,13), or to take away either original or actual sin; this only the blood of Christ can do; and it is not a mere external cleansing of the body:

but the answer of a good conscience towards God; the Vulgate Latin renders it, “the interrogation of a good conscience”; referring, it may be, to the interrogations that used to be put to those who desired baptism; as, dost thou renounce Satan? dost thou believe in Christ? (see <44836>Acts 8:36,37), others render it, “the stipulation of a good conscience”; alluding also to the ancient custom of obliging those that were baptized to covenant and agree to live an holy life and conversation, to renounce the devil and all his works, and the pomps and vanities of this world; and baptism does certainly lay an obligation on men to walk in newness of life; (see <45604>Romans 6:4,5), the Ethiopic version renders it, “confession of God”; and to this the Syriac version agrees, rendering it, “confessing God with a pure conscience”; for, to baptism, profession of faith in Christ, and of the doctrine of Christ in a pure conscience, is requisite; and in baptism persons make a public confession of God, and openly put on Christ before men: the sense seems plainly this; that then is baptism rightly performed, and its end answered, when a person, conscious to himself of its being an ordinance of Christ, and of his duty to submit to it, does do so upon profession of his faith in Christ, in obedience to his command, and “with” a view to his glory; in doing which he discharges a good conscience towards God: and being thus performed, it saves,

by the resurrection of Jesus Christ; being a means of leading the faith of the baptized person, as to the blood of Christ, for pardon and cleansing, so

to the resurrection of Christ, to justification; (see <4402>Acts 2:38 22:16 <4505>Romans 4:25), moreover, the sense of the passage may be this, that baptism is a like figure as the ark of Noah was; that as the entrance of Noah and his family into the ark was an emblem of a burial, so their coming out of it was a figure of the resurrection; and just such a figure is baptism, performed by immersion, both of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and of the resurrection of saints to walk in newness of life. The Arabic version renders the whole verse thus; “of which thing baptism is now a type saving us, not by removing the filth of the flesh only, but by exhilarating a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ”.

Ver. 22. *Who is gone into heaven*, etc.] After he had been risen forty days, where he is received, and will remain, until the restitution of all things; and where he appears in the presence of God for his people, and ever lives to make intercession for them; and is entered as their forerunner, and is preparing mansions of glory for them; and will come again, and take them to himself, to be for ever with him, and from hence they expect him:

and is on the right hand of God; where Stephen saw him; and which is an honour never conferred on any angel, or man; and shows that Christ had done his work, and that in a way acceptable to God; the Vulgate Latin version here adds “swallowing up death, that we might be made heirs of eternal life”; but is not supported by any copy or version:

angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him; by “angels” may be meant angels both good and bad, who are all in subjection to Christ; and by authorities and powers, the kings, princes, and governors of this world, who hold their dominions from and under the Lord Jesus Christ; and which is an argument why believers should patiently bear all their sufferings and afflictions, since Christ has the government in his hands, and he rules and overrules all things for good; and when he pleases, he can put a stop to the rage and persecutions of men; and so the apostle returns to his former argument, in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER 4

In this chapter the apostle goes on to exhort to an holy life and conversation, and to the several duties of religion, and to suffer cheerfully for the sake of Christ. From the consideration of Christ's sufferings, he exhorts the saints to arm themselves with the same mind, and cease from sin, and live no longer to the lusts of men, but to the will of God, (<60401>1 Peter 4:1,2) the reason, or argument engaging to it, is taken from the past time of life, in which they walked in all manner of sin, and which ought to suffice, though they should be spoken evil of by wicked men, for not continuing therein, (<60403>1 Peter 4:3,4) and to fortify their minds against such abuses, the apostle takes notice of the general judgment, when such persons must give an account for their evil speaking to the Judge of quick and dead; and that though those to whom the Gospel is preached, and embrace it, suffer death for it, being judged of men in their bodies, yet they live to God in their souls, (<60405>1 Peter 4:5,6) and seeing the end of all things is near, he exhorts to various things, as to sobriety, watchfulness unto prayer, and especially to fervent charity, since that covers a multitude of sins, (<60407>1 Peter 4:7,8) and to hospitality, without grudging, and to a communication of all good things, as faithful stewards of them, (<60409>1 Peter 4:9,10) and particularly to the dispensation of the Gospel, according to the word of God; and to a ministration to the poor, according to a man's ability, with a view to the glory of God, by Christ, (<60411>1 Peter 4:11) and next, the apostle proceeds to comfort the saints under reproaches and persecutions, and to instruct them how to behave under such circumstances; as that they should not think such things strange, though grievous, since they were for the trial of their graces, (<60412>1 Peter 4:12) but should rather rejoice, since they were partakers of the sufferings of Christ now, and should share in his glory when revealed, which would make them exceeding glad, (<60413>1 Peter 4:13) yea, inasmuch as it was for the name of Christ they suffered reproach, they ought to reckon themselves happy persons; since the glorious Spirit of God rested on them, and since the issue of it was, the glorifying of God by them, though he was evil spoken of by those that reproached them, (<60414>1 Peter 4:14) indeed, they ought not

to suffer as persons guilty of capital crimes; should they, they would have reason to be ashamed, but not since they suffered as Christians; but, on the contrary, should give glory to God for it, who had done them so much honour as to call them to it, (1 Peter 4:15,16), and to reconcile their minds to sufferings, he observes, that the time was come, that afflictions should begin with the people of God, on account of which, the righteous are scarcely saved, though certainly; and that, therefore, sad must be the state of the disobedient and ungodly, even of their wicked persecutors, (1 Peter 4:17,18) wherefore, upon the whole, seeing it was the will of God they should suffer, they ought to suffer patiently, and, in well doing, commit the care of their souls to their faithful Creator, (1 Peter 4:19).

Ver. 1. *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh*. etc.] The apostle having finished his digression concerning Christ's preaching in the ministry of Noah, to men whose spirits were now in prison, and concerning the salvation of Noah's family in the ark, by water, and concerning its antitype, baptism, its nature and effect, returns to the sufferings of Christ he had before made mention of; and argues from thence to holiness of life, and patience in sufferings, after this manner; seeing then Christ, the eternal Son of God, the Lord of glory, the holy and Just One, suffered such indignities, reproaches, and persecutions from men, the wrath of God, the curses of the law, and death itself; and that not for himself, nor for angels, but for men, and those not all men, otherwise his death, with respect to some, must be in vain; but for a particular number of men, in distinction from others, described in the beginning of this epistle, as elect, according to the foreknowledge of God; and these sufferings he endured in the room and stead of those persons, in the days of his flesh, while here on earth, and in his human nature, both soul and body, and was crucified through the weakness of his flesh, and for the sins of our flesh, and which he bore in his own:

arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; that was in Christ; as he suffered for you, do ye likewise suffer for him, in his cause, for righteousness sake, for the sake of him and his Gospel; and bear all reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions on his account, willingly and cheerfully, with meekness and patience, as he did, and with the same view; not indeed to make satisfaction for sin, which was his principal design, but that being dead unto sin, you might live unto righteousness. The apostle speaks to the saints, in this exhortation, as to soldiers, and who had many

enemies to engage with, and therefore should put on their armour, and be in a readiness to meet any attack upon them:

for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin: meaning either Christ, who having suffered in human nature for the sins of his people, whereby he has made satisfaction for them, is now clear of them; the sins that were imputed to him being took and bore away, finished and made an end of, and he justified from them, and freed from all the effects of them, and punishment for them, as from all the infirmities of human nature, from mortality and death: or the person that has suffered in and with Christ, his head and representative, which is all one as if he had suffered himself, in person; by virtue of which his sin ceases, and he ceases from being chargeable with it, as if he had never sinned; which is the case of every criminal, when he has suffered the penalty of the law for his crime: or else the person that is dead to sin, by virtue of the death of Christ, and, in imitation of it, who has been baptized into Christ's death, and planted in the likeness of it; whose old man is crucified with Christ, and he is dead with him; who has crucified the affections with the lusts, and through the Spirit has mortified the deeds of the body; which way the generality of interpreters go: such a man has ceased from sin; not from the being and indwelling of it in him; nor from the burden of it on him; nor from a continual war with it in him; nor from slips and falls by it, and into it; no, nor from it in the most solemn and religious services; but as from the guilt of it, and obligation to punishment by it, through the death of Christ; so from the servitude and dominion of it, through the power of divine grace, in consequence of Christ's death: or rather, the believer that suffers death in his body, for the sake of Christ, such an one immediately ceases from the very being of sin, and all commission of it; he becomes at once perfectly pure and holy, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; and a noble argument this is to meet death without fear, and to suffer it cheerfully and willingly, since the consequence of this will be an entire freedom from sin, than which nothing can be more desirable by a believer: to this agrees the Syriac version, which renders the words thus: “for whoever is dead in his body hath ceased from all sins”; but the Arabic version more fully confirms this sense, and is the best version of the text, and is this; “be ye armed with this (same) thought, that (not for) he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin”; that is, fortify your minds against all the fears of sufferings, and of death, for the sake of Christ, with this single thought; that he that has suffered martyrdom for Christ, in his body, or has suffered

death for his sake, or dies in the Lord, is free from sin, and so from sorrow, and is the most happy person imaginable; so that this last clause is not a reason of the former, but points out, and is explanative of what that same mind or thought is Christians should arm themselves with, against the fears of death; and it is the best piece of armour for this service, a saint can make use of.

Ver. 2. *That he no longer should live*, etc.] The Arabic version reads, “that ye no longer should live”. This expresses the end of being armed with the above thought, that a suffering saint after death is clear of sin; and the use that is to be made of it in the present time of life, and the remainder of it, that such a person who so thinks, and is thus guarded and fortified against the fears of death, should no more, or any longer live,

the rest of [his] time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God: the phrase, “his time in the flesh”, means the present time of life, in the body, and is the same with those phrases, in the days of his flesh, to abide in the flesh, and be at home in the body; and the words of the text suppose the former part of this time to have been spent in sinful lusts and pleasures, as the former part of the time of God's elect, even that before conversion, is; and that the remaining part of it, be it longer or shorter, ought to be spent otherwise: “not to the lusts of men”; of wicked and unregenerate men, unconverted Gentiles; which they are addicted to, immersed in, and serve; and which they are desirous others should live in; and which are sometimes called divers worldly and fleshly lusts; and are foolish, and hurtful, and deceitful, and drown men in perdition, and therefore not to be lived unto: “but to the will of God”; revealed in his word, and which is good, acceptable, and perfect; one part of which is sanctification, holiness of heart, life, and conversation, as also patient suffering all reproach, injury, and persecution, for the sake of the Gospel; to live soberly, righteously, and godly, to study to exercise a conscience void of offence towards God and men, and to suffer patiently for his name's sake, is to live to the will of God; and nothing more strongly should engage to this than the consideration of a sinless life after death; (see <6031E>2 Peter 3:11,13,14). The lusts of men, and the will of God, being opposed to each other, shows that the nature of man is sadly corrupted, and is opposite to God; and that the will of man is depraved, and that the desires of it are not to that which is good, but are contrary to the will of God.

Ver. 3. *For the time past of our life may suffice us*, etc.] The word “our” is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions. The Arabic version reads, “the time of your past life”; and to the same purpose the Ethiopic version; and which seems to be the more agreeable reading, since it can hardly be thought that the apostle would put himself among the Jews dispersed among the Gentiles, who had walked with them in their unregeneracy, in all the sins hereafter mentioned, and best agrees with the following verse:

to have wrought the will of the Gentiles; or “when ye wrought”, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions;

when we walked, or “were walking in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries”. These converted persons, in the past time of their life, before conversion, “walked” in sin; which denotes a series and course of sinning, a persisting and progress in it, with delight and pleasure, promising themselves security and impunity: the particular sins they walked in are reducible to these three heads, unchastity, intemperance, and idolatry:

in lasciviousness, lusts; which belong to the head of uncleanness, and take in all kinds of it; as fornication, adultery, incest, sodomy, and all unnatural lusts:

excess of wine, revellings, banquetings; which refer to intemperance of every sort, by eating or drinking: as gluttony, drunkenness, surfeitings, and all luxurious feasts and entertainments, attended with riotings, revellings, and obscene songs; and which are here mentioned in the Syriac and Arabic versions, and which lead to lasciviousness, and every unclean lust:

and abominable idolatries; which some understand of worshipping of angels; but they seem rather to intend the idolatries the Jews were led into by the feasts of the Gentiles, either at their own houses, or in the idol's temple; by which means they were gradually brought to idolatry, and to all the wickedness and abominations committed by them at such times: and it is easy to observe, that the two former, uncleanness and intemperance, often lead men into idolatry; (see Exodus 32:6 Numbers 25:1,2). Now when they walked in these things, they “wrought the will of the Gentiles”; they did the things which the sinners of the Gentiles, the worst of men, that knew not God, took pleasure in, and what they would have others do; and therefore, since the past time of their life had been spent in

such a way, it was sufficient, and more than sufficient; (see Ezekiel 44:6), for no time is allowable for sin; and therefore it became them for the future, and in the remaining part of life, to behave in another manner; not to do the will of the Gentiles, but the will of God; to which that grace of God obliged them, that had made a difference between what they were themselves formerly, and themselves now, and between themselves, and others.

Ver. 4. *Wherein they think it strange*, etc.] Here the apostle points out what the saints must expect from the men of the world, by living a different life; and he chooses to mention it, to prevent discouragements, and that they might not be uneasy and distressed when they observed it; as that they would wonder at the change in their conversations, and look on it as something unusual, new, and unheard of, and treat them as strangers, yea, as enemies, on account of it:

that you run not with them into the same excess of riot; to their luxurious entertainments, their Bacchanalian feasts, and that profusion of lasciviousness, luxury, intemperance, and wickedness of all sorts, which, with so much eagerness of mind, and bodily haste, they rushed into; being amazed that they should not have the same taste for these things as before, and as themselves now had; and wondering how it was possible for them to abstain from them, and what that should be that should give them a different cast of mind, and turn of action:

speaking evil of you; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions supply “you” as we do; but in the Greek text it is only, “speaking evil of, or blaspheming”; God, Christ, religion, the Gospel, and the truths of it, and all good men; hating them because different from them, and because their lives reprove and condemn them; charging them with incivility, unsociableness, preciseness, and hypocrisy.

Ver. 5. *Who shall give account to him*, etc.] “To God himself”, as the Syriac version reads; of all their blasphemies, and hard speeches spoken by them against God, Christ, the Gospel, and good men, and receive their just punishment. This the apostle says, to calm the minds of God's people, and make them to sit easy under all censures, reproaches, and calumnies, and not think of avenging themselves, but commit themselves to him that will judge righteously; even to him,

that is ready to judge the quick and the dead; that is, all men, such as will be found alive when he comes, and those that have died before, who will then be raised from the dead, to receive their judgment; and by whom is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom all judgment is committed; and who is ordained to be the Judge of quick and dead, and will judge both at his appearing and kingdom; yea, the day is appointed when this judgment will proceed by him, and he is at the door; so that he may be truly said to be ready for it, as he is every way equal to it, and will finish it with righteousness.

Ver. 6. *For, for this cause was the Gospel preached also*, etc.] Not for what goes before, because Christ was ready to judge quick and dead; and because wicked men must give an account to him, and therefore the Gospel is preached to them also, that they may be left without excuse; but for what follows, and which does not so much design the reason of the preaching of it, as the event consequential upon it. By the Gospel is meant the good news of the incarnation, sufferings, and death of Christ, and salvation by him: and includes all the doctrines of grace, as of pardon, righteousness, and eternal life; and by its being "preached" is meant the publishing of it openly, freely, and boldly, with faithfulness and consistence: the persons to whom it was preached are

to them that are dead; not in a figurative sense, dead in trespasses and sins; though this is the case of all mankind, and of God's elect, in a state of nature, whether Jews or Gentiles; and the Gospel is preached to such, as it is ordered to be preached to all nations, to every creature, and is the means of quickening dead sinners; and this follows upon it, that such as receive it are judged and condemned by men, and live spiritually here, according to the will of God, and an eternal life hereafter; but the word "dead" is used in the same sense as in the preceding verse, where it manifestly signifies such who had been alive, but were now dead in a natural sense, whom Christ would judge as well as those that will be found alive when he comes; wherefore the Gospel has been preached also to them that are already dead, as well as to those who are now alive. And by these are meant, not the dead, whose souls are in hell, for to them, there, the Gospel never was, nor never will be preached, nor they saved, as Origen, and his followers, have vainly thought: nor the deceased patriarchs, before the coming of Christ, whose souls, by the Papists, are said to be in "Limbus", whither Christ, they say, went upon his death, and preached to them, and delivered them; but these never were in any such place, but in peace and rest; nor did

Christ, in his human soul, descend thither, but went to paradise: nor the dead in general, before the apostle's writing of this epistle; for though the Gospel had been preached from the beginning, from the fall of Adam, to certain persons, and at certain periods of time, yet not to all the individuals of mankind who were then dead, especially in the Gentile world; nor the Old Testament saints in general, who were now dead, though they had the Gospel preached to them in types and figures, in promises and prophesies; nor the men in the times of Noah, to whom the Gospel was preached by him, and who, some of them, as supposed, though they were judged and punished in their bodies in the view of men, being drowned in the waters of the flood, yet repenting and believing, upon Noah's preaching to them, they live in their spirits in eternal life, according to the free mercy and grace of God; but though the Gospel was preached to them, yet they remained disobedient to it, even all of them, but Noah's family, for anything that appears; and are styled the world of the ungodly, and are now spirits in the prison of hell, and therefore cannot be said to live according to God in the Spirit: but such are intended, to whom the Gospel had been preached, and to whom it had been effectual unto salvation; who had received it in the love of it, had sincerely professed it, and had suffered for it even death itself; such are designed who had suffered in the flesh, or were dead in their bodies, (1 Peter 4:1) who either were dead in the Lord, or especially had suffered death for his sake, as Stephen and others: and this, with what follows, is mentioned with a general view to encourage the saints to patient suffering for Christ; to fortify them against the ill opinion and judgment the world have formed of them; and to assure them, that Christ will judge his people, both quick and dead, and avenge their cause, since the Gospel has been preached to one as well as to another, and attended with the same power: the effect and consequence of which is,

that they might be judged according to men in the flesh; meaning, either that such persons that receive and profess the Gospel, and suffer for it, are judged according to the judgment of men that are in the flesh, in an unregenerate estate, that is, carnal men, to be a strange and unaccountable sort of people, as in (1 Peter 4:4) to receive such a strange set of notions, so strenuously to contend for them, and so constantly to abide by them, and to debar themselves of so many pleasures of life, and expose themselves to so much reproach and shame, to such dangers, and even to death itself: while they are judged to be by these men enthusiasts, madmen and fools; and at other times to be knaves and villains, hypocrites and

deceivers; and this is the common effect of the Gospel being preached and coming with power to any; (see 1 Corinthians 4:3) or the sense is, that such persons, according to men, or in their apprehensions, are judged of God, or have the judgments of God inflicted on them in their flesh, in their bodies, for some sins of theirs; and therefore they suffer what they do in the flesh, vengeance pursuing them; being ignorant that when they are judged, as they reckon it, they are only chastened by the Lord in a fatherly way, that they might not be eternally condemned with the world, (1 Corinthians 11:32) or else to complete the sense, for all may be taken into it, these persons, who were formerly alive, but now dead, and had embraced and professed the Gospel preached to them, were judged and condemned, and put to death in the flesh, according to the will of wicked men, and which was all that they were capable of;

but though this was their case, though they were thus judged, censured, and condemned, yet

live according to God in the Spirit; while they were here on earth, the Gospel preached to them had such an effect upon them, as to cause them to live spiritually, to live by faith on Christ, to live a life of holiness from him, and communion with him, and to live according to the will of God, in righteousness and true holiness; and now, though dead in their bodies, they live in their spirits or souls an eternal life of comfort, peace, pleasure, and happiness with God, according to his eternal purpose, unchangeable covenant, promise, grace, and love.

Ver. 7. *But the end of all things is at hand*, etc.] With respect to particular persons, the end of life, and which is the end of all things in this world to a man, is near at hand; which is but as an hand's breadth, passes away like a tale that is told, and is but as a vapour which appears for a while, and then vanishes away. Or this may be said with regard to the Jews, the end of their church and civil state was near at hand, of their sacrifices, temple, city, and nation; or with respect to the whole universe, to the scheme and fashion of this world, which will soon be gone, though the substance will abide; when the heavens shall pass away, and the earth and all therein will be burnt up; when there will be an end of all the purposes and promises of God respecting the present state of things concerning his church and people, and of the judgments of God upon his enemies here; when the man of sin will be destroyed, and the wickedness of the wicked will be come to an end, and the sorrows, afflictions, and persecutions of the saints, will be no

more; and when will be an end put to the present dispensation of things; there will be an end of the ministry of the word, and of the administration of ordinances; time will be no more, and the final state of both good and bad men will take place: this may be said to be at hand in the apostle's time, though so long ago, because that was the last time, and the last dispensation of things; and whereas they knew not the exact time when it would be, they frequently spoke of it as near, in order to stir up the saints to the more diligent discharge of duty, and fervent exercise of grace, as here:

be ye therefore sober, or "temperate", as the Arabic version renders it; and so is opposed to intemperance in eating and drinking, which is an abuse of the creatures of Gods, and unfits a man for the duties of religion; when Satan easily gets an advantage, and is often the cause of other sins, and is frequently dissuaded from, for the same reason as here; (see <460734>1 Corinthians 7:31 <422134>Luke 21:34,35) or chaste, as the Syriac version; and so is opposed to immodesty in words, actions, or apparel, in which sense sobriety is used in (<540209>1 Timothy 2:9) or "prudent", as the Vulgate Latin version; and is opposed to all self-conceit and vanity of mind, and imprudence in conduct and conversation; (see <451203>Romans 12:3) and to all immoderate care of the world, which has the same effect upon the soul as surfeiting and drunkenness on the body: it hinders the soul in the service of God, chokes the word, and makes it unprofitable, and runs men into many sins, snares, and temptations; and the consideration of the end of all things being at hand should draw off from it. It may also signify soundness of mind and judgment in the doctrines of faith, which are words of truth and soberness; and the rather this may be exhorted to, since towards the close of time there will be little of the doctrine of faith in the earth, and men will not be able to endure sound doctrine: it follows,

and watch unto prayer; watch all opportunities of praying, or of attendance on that ordinance, both in private and in public; watch and observe both your present wants, and present mercies, that ye may know what to pray for, and what to return thanks for; and that you have a due reverence of the divine Majesty, in whose presence you are entering. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it, "watch", or "be awake in prayers"; be careful that you lift up your hearts with your hands to God; that you pray for such things as are agreeable to the revealed will of God;, that you pray in faith, and lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting; and watch for the Spirit of God to enlarge your hearts in prayer, and to assist you both as to the

matter and manner of praying. And persons should also watch after prayer for a return of it; and that they do not depend upon the duty performed; and that they are not negligent to return thanks for the mercy prayed for, when received. Very rightly does the apostle join the above exhortation with this, since a man that is not sober is neither fit to watch nor pray; and a drunken man, according to the Jewish canons, might not pray [f86]:

> "one that is a drinker, or in drink, let him not pray, or if he prays, his prayer is deprecations; a drunken man, let him not pray, and if he prays his prayer is blasphemies."

Or, as it is elsewhere [f87] expressed,

> "let not a drunken man pray, because he has no intention; and if he prays, his prayer is an abomination, therefore let him return and, pray when he is clear of his drunkenness: let no one in drink pray, and if he prays, his prayer is prayer (unless the word hlpt should rather be rendered "folly", as it may); who is a drunken man? he that cannot speak before a king; a man in drink can speak before a king, and not be confounded; even though he drinks but a fourth part, or a quarter of wine, let him not pray until his wine is departed from him."

Ver. 8. *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves*, etc.] Not but that charity, or love, is to be exercised towards all men, even towards enemies, but more especially towards the saints, and that under such a consideration in which it cannot be exercised towards others; namely, as their brethren in Christ, and as belonging to him, as the children of God, as redeemed by Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit; and these not only such as are of the same nation, and belong to the same particular church and community, or of the same denomination, but all the saints everywhere, whether Jews or Gentiles, or of whatsoever name, and in whatsoever state and condition: and this love ought to be mutual and reciprocal, and to be warm and fervent, and not lukewarm and indifferent, as it too often is; and should be constant, "continued", and "perpetual", as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions here read: and this the apostle exhorts to above all things else; since outward sobriety, and watchings, and prayer, and all other duties, are nothing without this; this is the sum and substance of the law, and the fulfilling of it; and without this a mere

knowledge of the Gospel, and a profession of it, are in vain, and therefore in the first place to be attended to. And especially for the following reason,

for charity shall cover the multitude of sins; referring to (<20>Proverbs 10:12) not a man's own sins, but the sins of others; and not from the sight of God, for from that only the blood and righteousness of Christ cover sins, even all the sins, the whole multitude of the sins of God's elect; but from the sight of men, both of those against whom they are committed, and others; since charity, or true love, thinks no ill, but puts the best constructions upon the words and actions of fellow Christians, and does not take them up, and improve and exaggerate them, but lets them lie buried in oblivion: it takes no notice of injuries, offences, and affronts, but overlooks them, bears with them, and forgives them, so that they are never raked up, and seen any more; which prevents much scandal, strife, and trouble. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “covereth”, as in (<20>Proverbs 10:12).

Ver. 9. *Use hospitality*, etc.] Or, “be lovers of strangers”, as the phrase may be rendered, and as it is in the Syriac version; that is, such as are of a distant country, or come from afar, and are unknown by face, especially good men, that are obliged to remove from their native country for the sake of religion, or by one providence or another; and these are to be loved: and love is to be shown them, both negatively, by not vexing them, and making them uneasy in body or mind; by not oppressing them by violence and injustice, and making any exorbitant demands upon them; or by not perverting judgment with respect to them; and positively, by directing, counselling, and advising them, and if need be, by giving them food, and raiment, and lodging: and it is what men have been led to by the very light of nature, as in the instances of Jethro the Midianite towards Moses, and the inhabitants of Melita with Publius, the chief man of the island, towards the Apostle Paul and his company; and is what God enjoined the Israelites by divers laws, since they had been strangers in the land of Egypt; and various are the exhortations to it in the New Testament; and some, by the practice of it, have entertained angels unawares, as Abraham, and Lot; and even Christ himself, as the two disciples travelling to Emmaus; and is what is highly regarded and commended by Christ, and the contrary is resented by him; and therefore it ought to be used and practised frequently; saints should inure themselves to it, be given to it, pursue and follow hard after it; (see Gill on “ <45>Romans 12:13”), (see Gill on “<58>Hebrews 13:2”). The apostle adds here, one to another; which

clause is left out in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; the reason of which may be, because the authors of these versions might think this not so consistent with the duty exhorted to, since the objects of it are strangers; but it should be observed, that so were these persons the apostle writes to; (see 1 Peter 1:1), they were scattered about, and lived in different countries, and were strangers to one another, and therefore the clause is pertinent enough; and the sense is, that as they were in foreign countries, and at a distance one from another, whenever by any providence they were brought where each other were, that they would be hospitable to one another: and that

without grudging: food, raiment, and lodging, or what they want, whether direction or advice, thinking it no trouble to give them either; or without murmurings, as it may be rendered, as if they were burdensome, and they were too chargeable to them, and their stay too long; and without complaints of them, finding fault, and picking quarrels with them, and laying charges against them, in order to get rid of them. This is one branch of charity before recommended.

Ver. 10. *As every man hath received the gift*, etc.] That is, from God, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions add. This is a general rule laid down by the apostle, according to which, distribution of every kind, whether in things temporal or spiritual, is to be made, even according to the nature, quality, and quantity of the gift received: the greatest gift God bestows on men, next to himself, Son, and Spirit, and received by them in this life, is special grace; which God gives of his sovereign will and pleasure, liberally, abundantly, without the deserts of men, or conditions to be performed by them; of this kind are faith, repentance, hope, and love: the next to this is the ministerial gift, or what qualifies men for the work of the ministry; which is not anything in nature, or what is acquired by art and industry, but is a gift of grace, which is bestowed on some in a higher, on others in a lower degree: and besides these, there are the gifts of nature and providence, as human wisdom, and the knowledge of things natural and civil, riches and wealth, and the various good things of life; for there is nothing a man has in nature and in grace but what is a gift to him, and what he has received: and according to the measure of the gift received, be it what it will, the exhortation is,

even so minister the same one to another; or to, and among yourselves; to your neighbours or companions, as the Syriac, version renders it; if the gift

be special grace though that itself cannot be imparted from one to another, yet the knowledge of it may; and it becomes such who have an experience of the grace of God upon their hearts to make it known, both to particular friends in private conversation, and to the church of God in public, for the use and edification of others, and the glory of God's grace: if the gift be a ministerial one, whether it be greater or less, for it is not in all alike, it is not to be wrapped up in a napkin, and hid in the earth, or to lie neglected, but to be stirred up, and used for the benefit of the souls of men: and if it is a temporal one, the good things of this life, according to the measure of them, that a man has, he is to minister to the supply of the poor; and as God has prospered him, he is to distribute to the necessities of others; as men freely receive, be it what it will, they should freely minister it, according to the nature and measure of it:

as good stewards of the manifold grace of God; for they are but stewards of whatsoever gifts they have; and therefore, if they would approve themselves good stewards, they should minister the same in proportion to their reception of them. Manifold and various are the graces of the Spirit of God, and the rich experiences communicated to men, which are not only for themselves, but for the good of others also: gifts for public usefulness are different one from another; one man has one gift, and another has another; or the same gift is not alike in all, in some greater, and in others less; and all are but stewards: they are accountable for them, and the use of them, to their great Lord and master: and various are the doctrines of the grace of God; of the grace of the Father in election, in the everlasting covenant, in the mission of his Son, in the free justification of sinners by his righteousness, in the free and full pardon of all their sins, in the adoption of any into his family, and in the gift of eternal life; and of the Son of God, in engaging as the surety of his people from everlasting, in assuming their nature in time, in obeying, suffering, and dying in their room and stead; and of the Spirit of God in regeneration and sanctification; and of all these mysteries of grace the ministers of the Gospel are stewards; and it is required of them that they be faithful. Temporal good things are given to men, not for their own use only, but for others; and they are but stewards of them; the original proprietor is God, and to him they must give an account of their stewardship, and how they have used and disposed of the manifold gifts which God of his goodness has put into their hands; so that this last clause contains a reason or argument enforcing the above rule.

Ver. 11. *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God*, etc.] This is an application of the above general rule to a particular case, the public ministry of the word, for that is here meant: “if any man speak”; not in any manner, or on any subject; not in a private way, or about things natural and civil; but in public, and concerning divine things: “let him speak”: this is rightly supplied in our translation; and in which it is supported and confirmed by the Syriac and Arabic versions, who both supply the same way: “as the oracles of God”; by which are meant the writings of the Old Testament, the sacred Scriptures; (see <4B02>Romans 3:2) so called, because they come from God, are breathed and spoken by him, and contain his mind and will, and are authoritative and infallible; and according to these he is to speak who speaks in public on divine subjects, both as to the matter and manner of his speech: the matter of it must be agreeably to the divinely inspired word of God, must be fetched out of it, and confirmed by it; and he is to speak every thing that is in it, and keep back nothing, but declare the whole counsel of God, and only what is in it, without mixing his own chaff, or the doctrines of men with it; and it should be spoken in a manner agreeably to it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God; and not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words of the Holy Ghost; and with all boldness, for so the Gospel ought to be spoken; and with all certainty and assurance, constantly affirming the things of it, for nothing is more sure than they are; and with all openness, plainness, and freedom, making truth manifest, laying it plain and open before men, as it ought to be; and that with all reverence and godly fear, which becomes both speaker and hearer. The apostle next proceeds to mention another case, to which the above rule is applicable;

if any man minister, [let him do it] as of the ability which God giveth; that is, if any man minister in temporal things to the supply of the poor; if a private man, and in a private way, let him do it in proportion to his ability, as God has prospered him in the world; or if an officer of the church, a deacon; and which seems to be the sense, for so the word used signifies, διακονει, if any man perform the office, or act the part of a deacon, let him do it according to what God, in his providence, has put into his hands; that is, of the church's stock, which he should minister with simplicity and cheerfulness. A like division of church offices into public preaching of the word, and ministering to the wants of the poor, is here made, as in (<4506>Romans 12:6-8). The end of all this is,

that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; or by all means, as the Arabic version renders it; by all ways and methods proper; for the glory of God should be the principal view in every action of life: hence the Syriac version adds to the phrase, “in all things”, for the sake of explanation, “which ye do”; by sobriety, by prayer, by watching unto it; by exercising fervent charity, and using hospitality one to another; by ministering the gift as it is received; by the public ministration of the word; and by supplying the wants of the poor, whether in a personal or in a church way: or in all gifts, whether private or public, temporal or spiritual; since they all come from God, and men are accountable to him for them; and therefore should be used so as to glorify him by them, and give him the glory of them; and not glory in them, as if not received from him: or in all the members of the church, whether officers, as pastors and deacons, or private Christians; all should so behave in their respective stations, as God may have glory: “through Jesus Christ”: through whom all grace is communicated, by whom all gifts are bestowed, and by virtue of grace and strength received from him every good work is performed to the glory of God:

to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever; meaning either to God the Father, from whom every good gift comes; who is the God of all grace, of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things; and therefore the praise and glory of all belongs to him; and who has the dominion over all creatures and things, and has the disposal of all in nature, providence, and grace: or to Jesus Christ, out of whose fulness manifold grace, grace for grace, is received; and who having ascended on high, has received gifts for men, and gives them to them, and so is worthy of all praise; and who, as God, has the kingdom of nature and providence equally with the Father, and, as Mediator, the kingdom of grace, the government of the church; and whose dominion will be from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth; and of whose kingdom there will be no end.

Amen; so let it be, so shall it be.

Ver. 12. *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial*, etc.] By which may be meant either the destruction of Jerusalem, which was at hand, and of which the apostle may be thought to give the Jews he writes to notice of before hand; that they might be prepared for it, and not be overwhelmed with consternation and amazement when they should hear of it; who, though in other countries, must be affected with it, and would be a

trying dispensation to them: or else the afflictions and persecutions which daily come upon them, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; signified by "fire" or "burning", because grievous to the flesh, and gave great uneasiness, distress, and pain to it; and because of the fury of men, and the violence and fierceness of their rage, expressed thereby; as also because the people of God under them are sometimes ready to conceive that the wrath of God is poured out, like fire, upon them. But the apostle would not have these saints entertain any such thoughts, and therefore he calls them "beloved"; that is, of God, as they were notwithstanding all the fiery trials and afflictions which were brought upon them; or he means, that they were beloved by him, and dear unto him, and other saints, though they were ill treated and reproached by the world: the Syriac and Arabic versions read, "my beloved"; and the Ethiopic version, "our brethren": and the apostle exhorts them not to look upon their afflictions that either did or should attend them as strange and uncommon things; since afflictions, of whatsoever kind, are not things of chance, and do not rise up out of the dust, but are by the appointment, and according to the will of God; and are also the common lot of the people of God in all ages, from the beginning of the world, the same afflictions are accomplished in others; yea, Christ himself endured the same hatred, reproach, and contradiction of sinners, against himself; and they are what he has given his people reason to expect, having told them of them before hand, that they might not be offended at them; and as they lay in his way to glory, it need not seem strange that the saints also should, through many tribulations, enter the kingdom. Moreover, this fiery dispensation, be it what it will, was not to destroy them, but to try them, and that for their good, profit, and advantage; just as gold and silver are tried in the fire, and lose their dross, and become purer and brighter:

which is to try you; afflictions try the graces of the saints; as their faith in Christ, which becomes thereby much more precious than of gold that perisheth; and their love to him, by which it appears that no tribulation can separate them from it, nor many waters and floods of afflictions drown it; and their hope of eternal life, which grows more lively and strong, and is as an anchor, sure and steadfast, amidst the greatest storms. These try a man's profession of religion, whether it is took up on good principles, and without sinister views; since, if it is not, when persecution, because of the word, comes, he is offended and gone; and likewise what a man's principles are, whether worth suffering for or not; and whether they will bear him up,

and he abide by them, when called to suffer for them; and therefore, since such ends are answered by fiery trials, they should not be looked upon as strange and unusual things: as though some strange thing happened unto you; which was never known and heard of before; and as if useless, and of no service, and as foreign to the characters, cases, and circumstances of the saints in this world. The apostle in this verse returns to his former argument, to animate and encourage the saints in suffering afflictions patiently for righteousness sake.

Ver. 13. *But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings*, etc.] Not of his personal sufferings; though they were partakers of the benefits and blessings which come through them, and result from them, such as justification, peace, and pardon, and which are matter and ground of rejoicing; but of the sufferings of his body, the church, which is mystically himself; and are called his, because of the union between him and his people, and the sympathy he bears to them, and because they are endured for the sake of him and his Gospel, and conform the saints, and make them like unto him; and therefore suffering saints should rejoice in this, that their sufferings are accounted by Christ as his own, who in all their afflictions is afflicted; and that they are honoured to suffer for his name's sake, and are hereby made like unto him:

that when his glory shall be revealed; the glory of his divine nature, as the only begotten Son of God, in which he will come and appear at the last day; and which, though incommunicable, will be more manifest to all men, and especially to the saints, who will know more of him, as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; and when the glory of his office, as Mediator, will be more conspicuous, and shall be beheld by all that the Father has given to him; and also the glory of his human nature, which is now crowned with glory and honour at the right hand of God; and likewise the glory which he has in his hands for his people, even eternal glory and happiness: this is now, in a great measure, unseen, but it will then be revealed, both to the saints and in them; they will appear with Christ in glory, and have a glory both upon their souls and bodies. As they suffer with him, and for his sake, they will be glorified with him, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's glory, and in the glory of his holy angels: the consideration of which, as it must greatly encourage to suffer for his sake, so must be matter of great joy; as follows:

ye may be glad also with exceeding joy; a joy unspeakable, and full of glory, being made partakers of the glory of Christ, either in beholding, or in possessing it.

Ver. 14. *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ*, etc.] For being called by his name; for bearing the name of Christians; for believing in him, and professing him; and for the sake of his Gospel, which is sometimes called his name, (<441915>Acts 9:15) not that the apostle makes any doubt of this, for nothing is more certain than that the saints shall be reproached, and all manner of evil spoken of them falsely for Christ's name sake; but he supposes it, and takes it for granted, that they are, and will be reproached, and yet pronounces them blessed persons:

happy are ye; some supply it, “shall ye be”, as the Vulgate Latin version; that is, in the other world, because the kingdom of heaven, the crown of life and glory, belongs to such persons; they will be happy at death, in judgment, and to all eternity: others, with our translators, supply, “are ye”, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; for such are happy now in themselves, being both comfortable in their frames, and honourable in their persons and characters, however uncomfortable, miserable, and dishonourable they may appear to the men of the world:

for the Spirit of glory, and of God, resteth upon you; alluding to (<231102>Isaiah 11:2) that is, the glorious Spirit of God, as the Syriac version renders it; who is glorious in himself, in the perfections of his nature, being possessed of the same glorious divine essence with the Father and Son; and in his works both of nature, being equally concerned with the other Persons in the Godhead in the works of creation and providence, and also of grace, especially the latter; and in all his gifts and graces with which he adorns the saints, and makes them glorious: and his resting on them denotes his inhabitation in them, and his abiding with them, and remaining in them; and which appears by the comfort they enjoy in their souls amidst all the reproaches and revilings of men, and by the strength which they have to bear up under and endure shame and persecution for the sake of Christ; and which casts an honour upon them, and makes them both glorious and cheerful. The Jews have a saying [f88], that the Holy Ghost does not dwell on any, but on him that has a cheerful heart:

on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified: on the part of the revilers, the person, office, work, and grace, the operations and influences of the Spirit are blasphemed and ridiculed; the power of the

Spirit, with which the saints speak, the experiences of grace they express, the comforts of the Spirit they declare that they enjoy under suffering circumstances, as well as their courage, patience, and cheerfulness he gives them, are generally bantered by persecutors; and indeed all the reproaches they cast upon the people of God fall upon the Spirit of God, by whom they are animated and influenced: but on the part of the sufferers he is glorified; inasmuch as they continue to bear a testimony to his grace, depend upon his strength, and ascribe all their comfort and gracious experience unto him. This clause is wanting in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, but is in all Beza's Greek copies, excepting one; and is also in the Arabic version.

Ver. 15. *But let none of you suffer as a murderer*, etc.] The punishment for murder was death by the law of God, (Genesis 9:6)

or as a thief; whose fine or mulct, according to the Jewish law, was a fivefold or fourfold restitution, according to the nature of the thing that was stolen, (Exodus 22:1)

or as an evildoer; a breaker of any of the laws of God or men, which are of a moral nature, and for the good of civil society:

or as a busybody in other men's matters; “or as a bishop in another man's diocese”; that concerns himself in things he has nothing to do with, and neglects his own affairs, and lives in idleness, and upon the spoil of others; or takes upon him to manage, direct, order, and command other men's servants, or persons that do not belong to him, to do his business, or whatsoever he pleases. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “a desirer of other's goods”; and the Ethiopic version, “a covetous desirer of other's things”; and so is led on by an insatiable thirst for them, to obtain them in an evil way, either by secret fraud, or open violence and oppression. To suffer in any such cases is scandalous and dishonourable, and unbecoming the character of a Christian. This last clause is left out in the Syriac version.

Ver. 16. *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian*, etc.] Because he is one, and professes himself to be one. This name was first given to the disciples at Antioch, either by themselves, or by the Gentiles; however, it being agreeable to them, was retained; it is only mentioned here, and in (Acts 11:26 26:28),

let him not be ashamed; neither of Christ, and his Gospel, for which he suffers, nor of the name he bears, nor of the punishment he endures,

however ignominious and shameful it may be among men; but let him, as his Lord and master did, endure the cross, and despise the shame, (³⁸¹²Hebrews 12:2)

but let him glorify God on this behalf: that he bestows this gift upon him to suffer for Christ, as well as to believe in him; and that he does him so much honour to call him to such service, and to strengthen him in it, so as to take it joyfully, and endure it patiently and cheerfully. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and also the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, instead of “in this behalf”, read “in this name”; that is, of a Christian.

Ver. 17. *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God*, etc.] By the house of God is either meant the temple at Jerusalem, which is often so called, because it was built for God, and where were the symbol of his presence, and his worship; and now the time was come, or at hand, that God would begin at his sanctuary, and leave this house desolate, and not one stone should be left upon another, as Christ had foretold: or else the church of God, which is frequently called the house of God, because it is of his building, where he dwells, and grants his gracious presence, and which he beautifies, fills, repairs, and defends; and so may design believers in Christ, those that are of the household and family of God: and by judgment is meant, not punishment for sin, strictly speaking, because Christ has endured this in the room and stead of his church and people, and therefore in justice cannot be inflicted on them; but afflictions and persecutions, and which are fatherly chastisements, and different from God's judgment on the world, and condemnation with it; (see ⁴⁶¹³1 Corinthians 11:32) and these may be said to “begin” with them, because it is only in this life the saints have their afflictions; and which are in love to them, and therefore are early brought upon them to try them, and purge them, and make them partakers of his holiness: besides, wicked men are often made use of as instruments, by which God chastises his people; upon which account they are reserved till last, to be the objects of his vengeance, when they have filled up the measure of their sins; and then what is begun in love at the house of God, will end in wrath and severe punishment on them: and whereas it is said, “the time” is come, or at hand, it may be observed, that as God has his set time to favour his Zion, so likewise to chastise her; all his people's times are in his hand, as of comfort, so of temptation, affliction, and persecution. The first times of Christianity, or of the preaching of the Gospel, were times of trouble and distress; for as it

was necessary the Gospel should be confirmed by signs and wonders, so that it should be tried and proved by the sufferings of the saints for it: and the phrase also suggests, that these sufferings and afflictions were but for a time, and even as it were for a moment, for a little while; and is a reason why the saints should glorify God, as these words imply, being introduced with the causal particle, “for”; that they have their sufferings now, and not with the wicked in the world to come, which will have no end:

and if [it] first begin at us; either us Jews, for Peter, and those he writes to, were such; or us Christians, who believe in Christ, have embraced his Gospel, and profess his name:

what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? of which God is the author, and which contains things relating to him; as the grace of God, the righteousness of God, peace with him, pardon from him, justification before him, and acceptance with him; and which he commits to men, and qualifies them for preaching it, and succeeds the ministry of it; and it being his Gospel, as it makes it the more valuable in itself, so it is to be had in the greatest reverence and esteem; and the greater is the sin of such who despise and reject it, as did the unbelieving Jews, who seem chiefly designed, here; it was first preached to them, but they disbelieved the doctrines of it, and submitted not to its ordinances, and rejected Christ, the Saviour, the sum and substance of it; and put it away from them, judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life: and what shall the end of such be? in this world wrath came upon them to the uttermost, ruin upon their nation, city, and temple; and in the world to come everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and eternal vengeance in flames of fire. The Jews have various phrases, and frequent expressions in their writings, which resemble these, and serve to illustrate them. When Noah told the old world of the flood, and called upon them to repent, they are represented as saying to him [f89],

> “where does punishment begin? hytyb ˆm, “at the house” of that man does it “begin?” when Methuselah died, they said unto him, does not punishment begin at the house of that man?”

and elsewhere [f90], says R. Jonathan,

> “punishment does not come into the world, but in the time that the wicked are in the world; and it does not begin (i.e. at them) hljt µyqydxh ˆm ala, but it begins at the righteous;”

and again [f91]

> “when God executes judgment on the righteous, he is praised; for if he executes this on them, how much more on the ungodly?”

(see <23011>Isaiah 10:11,12 <24529>Jeremiah 25:29 49:12 <26906>Ezekiel 19:6).

Ver. 18. *And if the righteous scarcely be saved*, etc.] Reference is had to (<20131>Proverbs 11:31) where in the Septuagint version are the same words as here: the “righteous” are such, not who are so in their own opinion, or merely in the esteem of others, nor on account of their vility, morality, and external righteousness before men, or by the deeds of the law; but who are made righteous by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them: and such are “scarcely saved”; not as if they were but in part saved, for they are completely saved; Christ has wrought out and finished a complete salvation for them; and they are saved from all enemies, and everything that might hurt them; from sin, Satan, the law, the world, hell, and death; and they are completely justified, and have all their sins pardoned, and shall be perfectly saved: nor as if their salvation was doubtful; for though they are scarcely, yet certainly saved; for they are chosen to salvation, and Christ has obtained it for them, and they have the application of it already made to them by the blessed Spirit; and being justified, or made righteous persons, nothing is more certain than that they shall be glorified: but they are said to be “scarcely” saved, because of the difficulty of it, both with respect to Christ, who met with difficulties in working out their salvation; by reason of the strictness of divine justice, and the demands of the righteous law, which would make no abatement; the sins of his people he had to bear, and make atonement for; the many enemies he had to grapple with, and the accursed death of the cross, he had to undergo; though they were such he was able to surmount, and did: and especially with respect to the saints themselves; for though their salvation is certain and complete, being finished by Christ, yet their enjoyment of it is attended with many difficulties; by reason of the corruptions of nature, a law in their members warring against the law of their minds; the frequent temptations of Satan, who seeks to devour them, and their wrestlings with principalities and powers, which are above their match; and also by reason of various afflictions and persecutions, and many tribulations, which make their way to eternal life a strait way, and through which they must enter into the kingdom of heaven: and if this be their case, as it is,

where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? the profane sinner, the Christless, impenitent, unbelieving, and unregenerate man; otherwise all men are sinners, in themselves; but here it means such as are destitute of the sanctifying grace of the Spirit, and the justifying righteousness of Christ, and that live and die in their sins: where shall such appear? not in the congregation of the righteous; nor at the right hand of Christ; nor in heaven, into which no defiled sinner shall enter; nor even on earth, among and under the rocks and mountains, which will not be able to hide them from the face of the Judge, and his wrath, when he shall come; but at Christ's left hand, and in hell, and among the devils and damned there.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God*, etc.] This is the conclusion made from the foregoing premises; that seeing the state and condition of the saints in this world, at worst, and which is but for a time, is infinitely preferable to the dreadful state and condition of disobedient persons, ungodly men, and sinners, and which will endure to all eternity; they should not think strange of their sufferings, or complain of them, but patiently endure them; and especially when they consider that these are not the effects of chance, or merely owing to the malice and wickedness of men, or to any second cause only; but they are the will of God, are by his appointment, under his direction, and by his order, and for their good, and his own glory; and therefore it becomes them to

commit the keeping of their souls [to him], in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator: and which is not only their duty, but their privilege: and the sense is, that when they are called to suffer for Christ, they should commit their cause to God, who, as he is the Creator, is the Governor of the universe, and will judge righteously; and when they are even called to lay down their lives for his sake, they shall not lose them; though their bodies are killed, they may and should commit their souls, when departing from their bodies, into the hands of God; as Stephen, the first martyr, committed his into the hands of Christ, in imitation of him; where he that made them, as he is able to keep them, will faithfully preserve them in happiness and glory, till the resurrection morn, when their bodies shall be raised and reunited to them: and this is to be performed, in “well doing”; for which they suffer, and in which they should continue to the last; not rendering evil for evil, but blessing; and in imitation of Christ, and his servant Stephen, pray for their worst enemies, and wish them all the good, and do them all the acts of kindness that lie in their power.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER 5

In this chapter the apostle first exhorts pastors and members of churches to their respective duties as such; and then to those which were common to them all, as Christians; and closes the epistle with prayers for them, salutations of them, and with his apostolic benediction. He begins with the pastors or elders, and describes himself as a fellow elder, an eyewitness of Christ's sufferings, and a partaker of his glory, (1 Peter 5:1), and these he exhorts to feed the flock of God, where they were; to take the charge and oversight of them, freely, readily, and willingly, and not through force or covetousness; and not to exercise a tyrannical dominion over them, but to be examples to them, (1 Peter 5:2,3), and the argument made use of to encourage them to all this is, that at the appearance of Christ, the chief Shepherd, they should receive a never fading crown of glory, (1 Peter 5:4) and next, the members of the churches are exhorted to submit to the rule and government of their pastors, being according to the word of God; and to be subject to one another; and particularly to put on humility, as a garment very ornamental to them; and the rather, since God opposes himself to men that are proud, but gives more grace to the humble, (1 Peter 5:5) and especially he exhorts them to be humble under the hand of God, since that is a mighty one, and this is the way to be exalted in due time; and also to cast their care upon him, seeing he cared for them, (1 Peter 5:6,7) and then the apostle proceeds to the common duties of Christians, and to exhort them to sobriety and watchfulness, since Satan their adversary was a cruel and indefatigable one, and ever seeking the ruin of men; and to resist him in the steadfast exercise of faith, and patiently bear all afflictions, seeing the same were accomplished in their brethren in the world, (1 Peter 5:8,9) and then he puts up some petitions for them, that they might be perfected, stablished, strengthened, and settled, (1 Peter 5:10) and ascribes glory and dominion for ever to the God of grace, to whom he prays, (1 Peter 5:11) after which he names the person by whom he sends this epistle, giving a summary of it; that it was an exhortation and a testimony to the true doctrine of grace wherein they stood, (1 Peter 5:12), and next follow the salutations of the church at

Babylon, and of his son Marcus, to them, (1 Peter 5:13), and lastly, he desires they would salute one another with a kiss of love, and gives them his benedictory wish, (1 Peter 5:14).

Ver. 1. *The elders which are among you I exhort*, etc.] The apostle returns to particular exhortations, after having finished his general ones, and which chiefly concern patient suffering for Christ; and having particularly exhorted subjects to behave aright to civil magistrates, servants to their masters, and husbands and wives mutually to each other, here proceeds to exhort "elders" to the discharge of their office and duty; by whom are meant, not the elder in age, or the more ancient brethren in the churches, though they are distinguished from the younger, in (1 Peter 5:5) but men in office, whose business it was to feed the flock, as in (1 Peter 5:2) and though these might be generally the elder men, and whose office required, at least, senile gravity and prudence, yet they were not always so; sometimes young men, as Timothy, and others, were chosen into this office, which is the same with that of pastors, bishops, or overseers; for these are synonymous names, and belong to persons in the same office: and these are said to be "among" them, being members of the churches, and called out from among them to the pastoral office, and who were set over them in the Lord, and had their residence in the midst of them; for where should elders or pastors be, but with and among their flocks? they were fixed among them; and in this an elder differs from an apostle; an elder was tied down to a particular church, whereas an apostle was at large, and had authority in all the churches; and these the Apostle Peter does not command in an authoritative way, though he might lawfully have used his apostolic power; but he chose rather to exhort, entreat, and beseech, and that under the same character they bore:

who also am an elder; or, "who am a fellow elder"; and so the Syriac version renders it; and which expresses his office, and not his age, and is entirely consistent with his being an apostle; for though that is an higher office than a pastor, or elder, yet it involves that, and in some things agrees with it; as in preaching the word, and administering ordinances; and is mentioned to show the propriety and pertinency of his exhortation to the elders; for being an elder himself, it was acting in character to exhort them; nor could it be objected to as impertinent and unbecoming; and since he was still in an higher office, on which account he could have commanded, it shows great humility in him to put himself upon a level with them, and only entreat and beseech them; he does not call himself the prince of the

apostles and pastors, and the vicar of Christ, as his pretended successor does, but a fellow elder:

and a witness of the sufferings of Christ; as he was even an eyewitness of many of them; of his exceeding great sorrow in his soul, of his agony and bloody sweat in the garden, and of his apprehension, and binding by the officers and soldiers there; and of the contumelious usage he met with in the high priest's hall, where was mocked, blindfolded, buffeted, and smote upon the face; if not of his sufferings on the cross; since it is certain John was then present; and quickly after we read of Peter and he being together, (⁴John 19:26 20:2) and therefore a very fit person to exhort these elders to feed the churches under their care with the preaching of a crucified Christ; since he, from his certain knowledge, could affirm his sufferings and his death: moreover, he was a witness, that is, a minister, and preacher of the sufferings of Christ, and of the doctrines of peace, pardon, justification, and salvation through them; as appears from all his sermons recorded in the "Acts of the Apostles", and from these his epistles: and besides, he was a partaker of the sufferings of Christ; he bore witness to him, by suffering for him; and as the Apostle Paul did, filled up the afflictions of Christ in his flesh; he, with other apostles, were put into the common prison by the Jewish sanhedrim, for preaching Christ, as he afterwards was by Herod; and had, doubtless, by this time, gone through a variety of sufferings for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, as he afterwards glorified God by dying that death, which his Lord and master signified to him before hand; and therefore a very proper person to exhort these elders to discharge their work and office, and persevere in it, whatever they were called to suffer for it:

and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; which some think has reference to the transfiguration of Christ upon the mount, where Peter was present, and saw the glory of Christ, and of those that were with him, Moses and Elias, and enjoyed their company, and heard their conversation with so much pleasure and delight, that he was for continuing there; and which was an emblem and pledge of the glory of Christ, that was afterwards to be revealed, and still is to be revealed, and so the Syriac version renders it, "a partaker of his glory": of the glory of Christ, (see ⁶1 Peter 4:13) or it regards the eternal glory and happiness of the saints, which is at present hid, and unseen, but shall be revealed at the last time, at the coming of Christ, when he shall appear in his glory, both to the saints, in them, and upon them; a glory which shall be both upon body and soul;

and this the apostle calls himself a partaker of, as in Christ, his head and representative, and because of his interest in it, his assurance of right unto it, and meetness for it, and the certainty of enjoying it; nothing being more sure than this, that those that suffer with Christ, and for his sake, shall be glorified with him. Now, the exhortation of a person in such an office, as before expressed, and of one that was an eyewitness of Christ's sufferings, and had endured so much for Christ, and had had so large an experience of his grace, and such full assurance of glory, must carry great weight and influence in it, and is as follows.

Ver. 2. *Feed the flock of God which is among you*, etc.] Some read, "as much as in you is"; that is, to the utmost of your power, according to your abilities, referring to the manner of feeding the flock, doing it in the best way they are capable of; but the phrase is rather descriptive of the flock to be fed, which points it out, and distinguishes it from all others, and for which they should have a particular regard; it being the flock, as the Syriac version renders it, which "is delivered unto you"; which was committed to their care, and they were made overseers of, and stood in a special relation to; wherefore it was incumbent on them to regard them, so as they did not, and were not obliged to regard, any other distinct flock: by "the flock of God"; or, "of Christ", as some copies read, is meant, not the whole world, which Philo the Jew [f92] calls the greatest and most perfect, του οντος ψεου ποιμην, "flock of the true God"; but the church of God, over which they were elders or pastors, consisting of Christ's sheep and lambs, he ordered Peter to feed, as he now does his fellow elders; and because they are the flock of God, which he has chosen, distinguished, and separated from the rest of the world, and has made the care and charge of Christ; put them into his hands, whence they are called the sheep of his hand; which he has purchased with his blood, and effectually called by his grace, and returned them to himself, the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, who before were as sheep going astray, and folded them together in a Gospel church state; all this is a reason, and a strong one, why they should be fed; not with every wind of doctrine, which blows up the pride of human nature, and swells men with vain conceits of themselves; nor with the chaff of human doctrines; nor with trifling and speculative notions; but with knowledge and understanding of divine and evangelical truths, with the words of faith and sound doctrine, with the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ; with the Gospel of the grace of God, which contains milk for babes, and meat for strong men; and with a crucified Christ himself, who is

the bread of life, and whose flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; by directing them to his person, blood, and righteousness, to live by faith on; by preaching the doctrines of peace and pardon by his blood, atonement and satisfaction by his sacrifice, and justification by his righteousness, and complete salvation by his obedience and death: in short, feeding includes the whole of the pastor's work, the ministry of the word, the administration of ordinances, and the rule and government of the church, in the several branches of it; for the same word signifies to rule as to feed; and which work is further expressed by

taking the oversight thereof; that is, of the flock; or "take the care of it", as the Syriac version renders it, and adds, "spiritually"; in a spiritual manner; which is an interpretation of the phrase: an acting the part of a bishop or overseer of it, as the word signifies; looking diligently to it, inspecting into the various cases of the members of the church; using diligence to know the state of the flock, and performing all the offices of a careful shepherd; as feeding the flock; and not themselves; strengthening the diseased; healing the sick; binding up that which was broken; bringing again that which was driven away, and seeking that which was lost; watching over them that they go not astray; and restoring of them in the spirit of meekness, when they are gone out of the way; and overlooking both their practices and their principles; admonishing, reproving them for sin, as the case requires; and preserving them, as much as in them lies, from wolves, and beasts of prey; from false teachers, and from all errors and heresies: all which is to be done,

not by constraint; or with force, in a rigorous and severe manner; for this may be understood actively of pastors not forcing their flock, over driving them, or ruling them with force and cruelty, complained of in (Ezekiel 34:4) or passively, of their being forced to feed the flock, and superintend it; as such may be said to be, who enter into the ministry, and continue in it, because obliged to it for want of a livelihood, and not knowing how to get one any other way; or through the pressing instances of relations, acquaintance, and friends; this ought not to be a matter of necessity, but of choice; they should be induced to it by no other necessity than what Christ has laid upon them, by calling them to the work, and furnishing them for it with the gifts of his Spirit; and should engage and continue in it by no other constraint than that of his love; wherefore it follows,

but willingly. The Vulgate Latin version adds, “according to God”, and so some copies; according to the will of God, and agreeably to his word; and the Ethiopic version renders it, “with equity for God”; with all uprightness and integrity, for the sake of the honour and glory of God; this should be done with all a man's heart and soul, and should spring from pure love to Christ; for no man is fit to feed Christ's lambs and sheep but those who sincerely love him; (see <4215>John 21:15-17), and from a cordial and affectionate concern for the good of souls; and from, an hearty desire unto, and delight in, the work itself; otherwise all he does will be as a task and burden; he will do it grudgingly, and with negligence, and will murmur under it, at least secretly. The Arabic version renders it, “watching, not forced watches, but willing ones”. This contrast of phrases seems to be Jewish, or Rabbinical [f93]; it is a tradition of the Rabbans;

> “blood which is defiled, and they sprinkle it ignorantly, it is accepted; presumptuously, not accepted; of what things are these said? of a private person; but of a congregation, whether ignorantly or presumptuously, it is accepted; and of a stranger, whether ignorantly or presumptuously, ^wxrb ^yb snwab ^yb, “whether by constraint or willingly”, it is not accepted:”

it follows here,

not for filthy lucre; not from a covetous disposition, which is a filthy one; and for the sake of gaining money, and amassing wealth and riches, as the false prophets in Isaiah's time, who were never satisfied; and the false teachers in the apostle's time, who, through covetousness, made merchandise of men, and supposed that gain was godliness; whereas there is no such thing as serving God and mammon; and as the work of the ministry should not be entered upon, and continued in, with any such sordid view; so neither for the sake of gaining glory and applause, a presidency, and chief place in the churches, and a name among the ministers of the Gospel, and credit and esteem among men:

but of a ready mind; or, “from the whole heart”, as the Syriac version renders it; and in a cheerful view of reproaches and persecutions, of the loss of credit and reputation, of worldly substance, and of life itself; and with a sincere concern for the glory of God, and the good of immortal souls; being ready to do everything with cheerfulness, that may contribute to either of these. The Ethiopic version renders it, “in the fulness of your heart with joy”.

Ver. 3. *Neither as being lords over God's heritage*, etc.] Or “clergy”; meaning not ecclesiastical persons, as presbyters, and deacons, who are supposed to be under the government of bishops, though not to be governed with tyranny, and in a haughty, imperious, and arrogant manner; to which sense the Arabic version inclines, rendering the words thus; “not as those who domineer over such that are appointed in the dignities of the priesthood”; but such cannot be designed, because they are presbyters, or elders, which are here exhorted not to use such tyrannical power and authority; wherefore the flock, or church of God, the people of Christ, and members of churches, in common, are here intended: the Ethiopic version renders it, “his own people”; who are the lot, portion, and inheritance of God, and Christ; and moreover, the several churches are the parts, portions, and heritages, for the word is in the plural number, which are assigned to the care of their respective pastors, and elders, in allusion to the land of Canaan, which was distributed by lot: the word “clergy” is common to all the saints, and not to be appropriated to a particular order of men, or to officers of churches; and these are not to be lorded over by their elders, in a domineering and arbitrary way; for though they are set over them in the Lord, and have the rule over them, and should be submitted to, and obeyed in their right and lawful ministrations of the word and ordinances, and are worthy of double honour when they rule well; yet they are not to take upon them an absolute authority over the consciences of men; they are not to teach for doctrines the commandments of men; nor to have the dominion over the faith of men, but to be helpers of their joy; and are not to coin new articles of faith, or enact new laws, and impose them on the churches; but are to teach the doctrines of Christ, and rule according to the laws he has given:

but being ensamples to the flock. The Ethiopic version reads, “to his own flock”; that is, the flock of God; and the Vulgate Latin version adds, “heartily”; the meaning is, that they should go before the flock, and set an example to believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity; and be patterns of good works to them, and recommend the doctrines they preach, and the duties they urge, by their own lives and conversations; and particularly should be ensamples to the saints, in liberality and beneficence, in lenity and gentleness, in meekness and humility, in opposition to the vices before warned against.

Ver. 4. *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear*, etc.] This is the encouraging motive and argument to engage the elders and pastors of

churches to discharge their office faithfully, cheerfully, and in an humble manner: by "the chief Shepherd" is meant Christ, who may well be called so, since he is God's fellow, and in all respects equal with him, and is the Shepherd and Bishop of the souls of men; all other bishops, pastors, and elders, are under him; they receive their commissions from him to feed his lambs and sheep; are made pastors and overseers by him; and have their gifts, qualifying them for such offices, from him; and have their several flocks assigned unto them by him; and from him have they all the food with which they feed them, and are accountable to him for them, and the discharge of their office; so that Christ is the chief Shepherd, in the dignity of his person, he being God over all, blessed for ever; in his qualifications for his office, having all power, grace, and wisdom in him, to protect his flock, supply their wants, guide and direct them; and in the nature and number of his flock, being rational creatures, the souls of men, even elect men; and though they are, when compared with others, but a little flock, yet, considered by themselves, are a great number; and especially the general assembly will be, in comparison of the little bodies and societies of saints under pastors and teachers, of Christ's setting over them, with respect to whom, principally, he is called the chief Shepherd: the allusion is to the principal shepherd, whose own the sheep were, or, however, had the principal charge of them; who used to have others under him, to do the several things relating to the flocks he directed, and were called "little shepherds"; so Aben Ezra says [f94], it was customary for the shepherd to have under him µynjq µy[wr, "little shepherds": the same perhaps with the hirelings, whose own the sheep are not, (<430102>John 10:12) who are retained, or removed, according to their behaviour; these, in the Talmudic language, are called ylzrb [f95], or ylzrk; though, according to Guido [f96], the word, pronounced in the latter way, signifies a "chief shepherd", who takes care of men, and has other shepherds, servants under him; and such an one used to be called lwdgh h[wrh, "the great", or "chief shepherd"; so Maimonides [f97] says, it was the custom of shepherds to have servants under them, to whom they committed the flocks to keep; so that when lwdgh h[wrh, "the chief shepherd", delivered to other shepherds what was under his care, these came in his room; and if there was any loss, the second shepherd, who was under the "chief shepherd", was obliged to make good the loss, and not the first shepherd, who was the chief shepherd; and to the same purpose says another of their commentators [f98]; it is the custom of lwdgh h[wrh, "the chief shepherd", to deliver

(the flock) to the little shepherd that is under him; wherefore the shepherd that is under him is obliged to make good any loss: now, such a shepherd is Christ; he has others under him, whom he employs in feeding his sheep, and who are accountable to him, and must give up their account when he appears: at present he is out of the bodily sight of men, being received up to heaven, where he will be retained till the time of the restitution of all things; and then he will appear a second time in great glory, in his own, and in his Father's, and in the glory of his holy angels: and when he thus appears,

ye shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away; in distinction from those crowns which were given to the conqueror, in the Olympic games; which were made of divers flowers, of the olive, wild olive, pine tree, and of parsley, and inserted in a branch of the wild olive tree [f99] and which quickly faded away; or in allusion to crowns made of amaranthus [f100], the plant "everlasting", so called, from the nature of it, because it never fades: the eternal glory and happiness, which is here meant by a crown of glory, or a glorious crown, never fades away, but ever shines in its full lustre; and this faithful ministers shall receive at the hands of the chief Shepherd, as a gift of his, as a reward of grace; when they have finished their work, they will enter into the joy of their Lord, and shine as the stars for ever and ever; they shall reign with Christ, as kings, on a throne of glory, wearing a crown of glory, and enjoying a kingdom and glory to all eternity.

Ver. 5. *Likewise ye younger*, etc.] Not in office, as if inferior officers to bishops were here intended, who ought to be subject to them; for elders and pastors are the same with them, nor is there any other office but that of deacons; nor younger pastors and overseers, such an one as Timothy was; not but that a deference is to be paid, and proper respect had to such who are of greater age, and longer standing and experience, by younger brethren in the ministry; nor such as are only younger in years, who ought to rise up unto, and honour hoary hairs, which may be done where subjection is not required, as here; nor such as are young in grace and experience, since there are little children, young men, and fathers in the church; but all the members of churches in common are here intended, as distinguished from their officers; for as pastors and overseers were, for the most part, chosen from among those that were senior in age, so the members generally consisted of the younger sort; and besides, as it was usual to call chief men and rulers, whether in church or state, fathers, so

those that were subjects, the younger; (see <42126>Luke 21:26). These the apostle exhorts as follows,

submit yourselves unto the elder; not merely in age, but in office, as before; for as he had exhorted the elders to a discharge of their work and office, he proceeds, in the next place, and which is signified by the word “likewise”, to stir up the members of the churches to their duty to their elders, or pastors, who had the oversight of them; and that is to “submit” themselves to them, as in (<581317>Hebrews 13:17), which is done by attending constantly on the word preached by them, and receiving it, so far as it agrees with the Scriptures of truth; and by joining with them in all the ordinances of Christ, and their administrations of them; by being subject to the laws of Christ's house, as put in execution by them; by taking their counsel and advice, regarding and hearkening to their admonitions and reproofs, and taking them in good part, looking upon them, and behaving towards them, as their spiritual guides and governors. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, “to your elders”; such as were particularly set over them in the Lord, and had taken the care of them, for to no others are they obliged to submit themselves.

Yea, all [of you] be subject one to another; that is, all the members of the churches should not only submit themselves to their pastors, but to their fellow members, as in (<490521>Ephesians 5:21), they should submit to the superior judgments of one another, esteeming each other better than themselves, and not be tenacious of their own way of thinking and judging of things; yea, condescend to men of low estates and weaker minds, bear the infirmities of the weak, and take all admonitions and reproofs given in a friendly manner kindly; and cheerfully perform all offices of love, and by it serve one another in things temporal and spiritual; doing the meanest services for the good of each other, such as washing the feet of one another, in imitation of their Lord and master.

And be clothed with humility; without which there will be no subjection, either to the elders, or one another. This is a grace which shows itself in a man's thinking and speaking the best of others, and the worst of himself; in not affecting places and titles of eminence; in being content with the lowest place, and patiently bearing the greatest contempt; in not aspiring to things too high for him, always acknowledging his own meanness, baseness, and unworthiness, ascribing all he is, and has, to the grace and goodness of God, whether it be gifts of nature, providence, or grace: and this is a

believer's clothing, not the robe of his justifying righteousness before God, but is a considerable part of his inward garment of sanctification, which is in the sight of God of great price; and makes a large show in his outward conversation garments before men, and renders him lovely and amiable: it is an ornament to him, which is precious with God, and recommends him to the esteem of men, and the religion and Gospel he professes, and his profession of it. Some think there is a metaphor in the words, taken from knots of ribbons, and such like things, wore by women on their heads, or breasts, for ornament; and that the apostle's advice to the saints is, that their breast knot, or ornament, should be humility. Others think it is taken from a sort of badge which servants wore over their garments, by which they were distinguished; and so saints are directed to put on this badge, by which they may be known to be the servants of Christ: the former seems more agreeable: but as the word signifies to bind, or fasten anything, by tying of knots, it may denote the retaining of this grace in constant exercise, so as never to be without it; and to be clothed or covered with it, is always to have it on, and in exercise, in every action of life, in all our deportment before God and men, in all public and religious worship, and throughout the whole of our conversation, in the family, in the world, or in the church. The phrase seems to be Jewish, and is to be met with in the writings of the Jews. It is said [f101],

> "he that has fear, hwn[b çblt nw, "and is clothed with humility"; humility is the most excellent, and is comprehended in all, as it is said, (<202204>Proverbs 22:4). He who has the fear of God is worthy of humility, and everyone that hath humility is worthy of kindness or holiness."

And it is a saying of R. Meir [f102],

> "he that loves God loves men; he that makes God glad makes men glad; and it (the law) hwn[wtçblm, "clothes him with humility and fear"."

For he resisteth the proud; or "scorneth the scorners", as it is in (<203434>Proverbs 3:34), from whence these words are taken: the Lord treats them as they treat others; as they despise all other men and things, he despises them; he is above them, in that they have dealt proudly, and has them in derision; he eludes all their artifices, and frustrates their schemes, and disappoints their ambitious views, and scatters them in the imagination

of their hearts, and brings their counsels to confusion, and opposes himself to them, and as their adversary; and a dreadful thing it is for persons to have God stand up against them, and resist them. This is a reason dissuading from pride, and exciting to humility, as is also what follows: and giveth grace to the humble; that is, more grace; (see <5005>James 4:6). The first grace cannot be intended, for no man is truly humble before he has received the grace of God, it is that which makes him so; or it may design larger gifts of grace, which God bestows on those who acknowledge him to be the author and giver of what they have, and who make a proper use of them to his glory; when he takes away from the vain and ostentatious that which to themselves and others they seemed to have. Moreover, God grants his gracious presence to such as are of an humble, and of a contrite spirit; and at last he gives them glory, which is a free grace gift, and the perfection of grace; the poor in spirit, or humble souls, have both a right and meetness for, and shall enjoy the kingdom of heaven.

Ver. 6. *Humble yourselves therefore*, etc.] Or be ye humbled before God, and in his sight; quietly submit to his will; patiently bear every affliction without murmuring, repining, or replying against him; be still under the rod, and despise not the chastening of the Lord; mourn over sin as the cause, acknowledge your vileness and unworthiness, and stand in awe of his majesty, considering yourselves as

under the mighty hand of God a phrase expressive of his omnipotence which cannot be stayed, and it would be madness to oppose it; and which is able to cast down the proud, and dash them to pieces, as well as to exalt the humble. His hand, upon men, in a way of chastisement, presses sore, and, in a way of punishment, presses down, and crushes to pieces; but to be under it in an humble manner is safe and profitable; such are hid as in the hollow of his hand, and are safe as in a pavilion, and comfortable under the shadow of his wings; and such humiliation and submission to him, and putting themselves under his mighty hand and care, is the way to exaltation:

that he may exalt you in due time: the Arabic version reads, “in the time of exaltation”: when his time to exalt is come, either in this world, or more especially at the appearance of Christ and his kingdom. The Vulgate Latin version, and two copies of Beza's, one of Stephens's, and the Alexandrian, read, “in the time of visitation”; and so the Ethiopic version, “when he shall have visited you”; which seems to be taken out of (<6012>1 Peter 2:12) sooner

or later such who are humbled shall be exalted; it is the usual way and method which God takes to abase the proud, and exalt the humble; for humble souls honour him, and therefore such as honour him he will honour; and this he does in his own time, in a time that makes most for his glory, and their good; oftentimes he does it in this life, and always in that which is to come.

Ver. 7. *Casting all your care upon him*, etc.] "Upon God": as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read. The words are taken out of, or at least refer to (<19B522>Psalm 55:22), where, instead of "cast thy burden upon the Lord", the Septuagint have it, "cast thy care upon the Lord"; the care of the body, and of all the affairs of life, concerning which saints should not be anxiously thoughtful, but depend upon the providence of God, though in the diligent use of means, which is not forbidden, nor discouraged by this, or any such like exhortation; as also the care of the soul, and the spiritual and eternal welfare of it, which should be committed into the hands of Christ, on whom help is laid, and who is become the author of eternal salvation; nor should this slacken and make persons negligent in the use of means, for the good, comfort, and advantage of their souls:

for he careth for you; for the bodies of his people, and their outward concerns of life, for food and raiment for them, and for the preservation of them, who will not suffer them to want, nor withhold any good thing from them, or ever leave them and forsake them; and for their souls, for which he has made provision in his Son, and in the covenant of his grace has laid help upon a mighty Saviour; and who has obtained an eternal redemption for them, bestows his grace upon them, and gives every needful supply of it to them, and keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation.

Ver. 8. *Be sober, be vigilant*, etc.] The apostle had exhorted to each of these before; (see <600113>1 Peter 1:13 4:7) but thought fit to repeat them; sobriety and watchfulness being exceeding necessary and useful in the Christian life; and the one cannot well be without the other: unless a man is sober in body and mind, he will not be watchful, either over himself or others, or against the snares of sin, Satan, and the world; and if he is not on his watch and guard, he is liable to every sin and temptation. The Syriac version renders the words, "watch", and "be ye mindful", or "remember"; watch with diligence, care, and industry, keeping a good lookout, minding and observing everything that presents, and remembering the power and cunning of the enemy; and the Ethiopic version renders them thus, "be ye

prudent, and cause your heart to understand"; referring them not to temperance of body, but sobriety of mind, and to a prudent conduct and behaviour, as having a subtle as well as a malicious enemy to deal with:

because your adversary the devil; he who is a defamer and calumniator; who accuses God to men, and men to God, and is therefore styled the accuser of the brethren; he is the saints' avowed and implacable enemy. Satan is an enemy to mankind in general, but more especially to the seed of the woman, to Christ personal, and to Christ mystical, to all the elect of God: the word here used is a forensic term, and signifies a court adversary, or one that litigates a point in law, or opposes another in an action or suit at law. The Jews [f103] have adopted this word into their language, and explain it by ˆyd l [b, "a law adversary", or one that has a suit of law depending against another. Satan accuses men of the breach of the law, and pleads that justice might take place, and punishment be inflicted, and which he pursues with great violence and diligence:

as a roaring lion; so called, both on account of his strength, and also because of his rage, malice, and cruelty, which he breathes out against the saints, who, though he cannot destroy them, will do all he can to terrify and affright them; so the young lions in (<19A421>Psalm 104:21) are, by the Cabalistic Jews [f104], understood of devils; to which, for the above reasons, they may be truly compared:

walketh about; to and fro in the earth; (see <18107>Job 1:7) as a lion runs about here and there, when almost famished with hunger; and it also denotes the insidious methods, wiles, and stratagems Satan takes to surprise men, and get an advantage of them: he takes a tour, and comes round upon them, upon the back of them, at an unawares, so that they have need to be always sober, and upon their guard:

seeking whom he may devour; this is the end of his walking about: and the like is expressed in the Targum on (<18107>Job 1:7 2:2)

> "and Satan answered before the Lord, and said, from going about in the earth ydbw[b qdbml, "to search into the works" of the children of men, and from walking in it;"

that so he might have something to accuse them of, and they fall a prey into his hands. This is the work he is continually employed in; he is always seeking to do mischief, either to the souls, or bodies, or estates of men,

especially the former; though he can do nothing in either respect without a permission, not unless he “may”; and though this, with respect to body and estate, is sometimes granted, as in the case of Job, yet never with respect to the souls of any of God's elect, which are safe in Christ's hands, and out of his reach; this hinders not but that saints should be sober and watchful.

Ver. 9. *Whom resist*, etc.] By no means give way to him, by indulging any sin, or yielding to any temptation, but oppose him, and stand against his wiles, his cunning and his power:

steadfast in the faith; both in the doctrine of faith, which Satan endeavours to remove from, or cause to stagger in; and in the grace of faith, exercising it on the promises of God, and his perfections, particularly his power and faithfulness concerned in them, and in the blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and person of Christ, which faith is capable of making use of, as a shield, to good purpose, against all the fiery darts of Satan; as also in a profession of faith, which, as it should be held fast without wavering, and which the devil is very busy to keep persons from making, or to cause them to drop it when they have made it, by violent suggestions, strong temptations, and a flood of reproaches and persecutions; all which should be disregarded:

knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world; and therefore should not be surprised and staggered by them, nor think them strange, but endure them without murmuring, and with patience and cheerfulness; since they are the “same afflictions” and trials which others have been exercised with in all ages: the same which the fraternity, or “brotherhood”, as the word signifies, (see <6027>1 Peter 2:17) who stand in the same relation to God and Christ as they do, endure; yea, the same which Christ himself, who stands in this relation to them, has endured: and which must be expected while they are “in the world”; but this is the great mercy, that they are only endured in this world; there will be none in the world to come; they will be “accomplished” and finished here; and every believer has his measure, which must be filled up; and so has the whole of Christ, his church, and when they are fulfil they will be no more.

Ver. 10. *But the God of all grace*, etc.] Who has riches of grace, an immense plenty of it in himself, has treasured up a fulness of grace in his Son; is the author of all the blessings of grace, of electing, adopting, justifying, pardoning, and regenerating grace; and is the giver of the several graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, love, repentance, etc. and of all the

supplies of grace; and by this character is God the Father described as the object of prayer, to encourage souls to come to the throne of his grace, and pray, and hope for, and expect a sufficiency of his grace in every time of need; as well as to show that the sufferings of the saints here are but for a while; that they are in love and kindness; and that they shall certainly enjoy the glory they are called unto by him; and which is the next thing by which he stands described,

who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ. This "call" is not a mere external one by the ministry of the word, which is not always effectual and unto salvation; but an internal, special, and efficacious one, and which is high, holy, heavenly, and unchangeable. The persons who are the subjects of it are us, whom God has chosen in Christ, and are preserved in him, and redeemed by him; and who are a select people, and distinguished from others, and yet in themselves no better than others; nay, often the vilest, meanest, and most contemptible. Some ancient copies read "you", and so do the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: what they are called to is "his eternal glory"; that which is glorious in itself, and is signified by what is the most glorious in this world, as a kingdom, crown, throne, inheritance, etc. and lies in constant and uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit; in a complete vision of the glory of Christ, and in perfect conformity to him; in a freedom from all evil, and in a full enjoyment of all happiness: and this is "his", God the Father's; which he has prepared and provided for his people of his own grace, and which he freely gives unto them, and makes them meet for: and it is "eternal"; it will last for ever, and never pass away, as does the glory of this world; it is a continuing city, a never fading inheritance, an eternal weight of glory: and to this the saints are called "by", or "in Jesus Christ"; the glory they are called to is in his hands; and they themselves, by being called unto it, appear to be in him, and as such to belong unto him, or are the called of Christ Jesus; and besides, they are called by him, by his Spirit and grace, and into communion with him, and to the obtaining of his glory.

After that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you; some copies, and also the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read these words in the future tense, not as a prayer, but as a promise, "shall make you perfect", etc. the sense is the same; for if it is a prayer, it is a prayer in faith, for what shall be done; for God will make his people "perfect": and which respects not their justification; for in that sense they are perfect already in Christ, their head, who has perfectly fulfilled the law

for them, and fully expiated their sins; has completely redeemed them, and procured for them the pardon of all their trespasses; and has justified them from all their iniquities: but their sanctification; for though all grace is implanted in them at once, yet it is gradually brought to perfection; there is a perfection of parts, of all the parts of the new man, or creature, but not of degrees; and there is a comparative perfection with respect to themselves, before conversion, or with respect to hypocrites; for perfection oftentimes means no other than integrity and sincerity; or with respect to other Christians, who are weaker in knowledge and experience: and there is a perfection of holiness in Christ, who is their sanctification, but not in themselves; for every part of the work of grace is imperfect, as faith, love, knowledge, etc. and sin dwells in them, and they stand in need of fresh supplies of grace; and even the best of them disclaim perfection, though they greatly desire it, as here the apostle prays for it; and which shows that, as yet, they had it not, though they will have it hereafter in heaven, where there will be perfect knowledge, and perfect holiness, and perfect happiness. He also prays that God would "stablish" them, or believes and promises that he would. The people of God are in a safe and established state and condition already; they are in the arms of everlasting love, and in the hands of Christ, and in a sure and inviolable covenant of grace, and are built on the rock of ages; and are in a state of grace, of justifying, adopting, and sanctifying grace, from whence they can never finally and totally fall; and yet they are very often unstable in their hearts and frames, and in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, and in their adherence to the doctrines of the Gospel; and need to be established, and to have a more firm persuasion of their interest in the love of God, and a more steady view of their standing in Christ, and the covenant of his grace, and a more lively and comfortable exercise grace on him, and a more constant discharge of duty, and a more firm and closer adherence to the truths and ordinances of the Gospel; and they will have a consummate stability in heaven, where are sure dwelling places. Another petition, or promise, is, that God would "strengthen" them; which supposes them to be weak and feeble, not as to their state and condition, for their place of defence is the munition of rocks; nor in the same sense as natural men are, or as they themselves were before conversion; nor are they all alike weak, some are weaker in faith and knowledge, and of a more weak and scrupulous conscience than others, and are more easily drawn aside by corruptions and temptations, and are in greater afflictions: and this is to be understood, not of bodily, but spiritual strength; that God would strengthen their souls, and the work of his grace

in them, their faith, hope, and love; and strengthen them to perform their duties, to withstand temptations, oppose their own corruptions, bear the cross, reproaches, and persecutions, and do their generation work: and he further adds, and "settle" you, or "found" you; not that God would now lay the foundation, Christ, for he had been laid by him ready in his counsels and decrees, and in the covenant of his grace, in the mission of him into this world, and by his Spirit in their hearts; nor that he would afresh lay them on Christ, the foundation, for they were there laid already, and were safe; but that he would build them up, and settle their faith on this foundation, that they might be rooted and grounded in the love of God, have a lively sense and firm persuasion of their interest in it, and be grounded and settled in the faith of the Gospel; be settled under a Gospel ministry, have a fixed abode in the house of God, enjoy the spiritual provisions of it, and have fellowship with Christ, and his people here; and at last enter and dwell in the city which has foundations, where they will be never more subject to wavering, instability, and inconstancy, and from whence they will never be removed; this will be their last and eternal settlement: and this will be "after" they have "suffered awhile"; in their bodies, characters, and estates, through the malice and wickedness of men; and in their souls, from their own corruptions, the temptations of Satan, and the hidings of God's face; which will be but for a very little while, for a moment, as it were; these are only the sufferings of this present time, and in the present evil world; nor are they inconsistent with God being the God of all grace unto them, or with their being called to eternal glory, the way to which lies through them; and they are the means of perfecting, establishing, strengthening, and settling them.

Ver. 11. *To him be glory, and dominion, for ever and ever, Amen.*] The Syriac version begins this doxology in the preceding verse, reading the words thus, "to the God of grace", and then putting what follows, "who hath called us", etc. into a parenthesis, connects them with these, "be glory, and power, and honour", etc. "glory" is due to God for all the grace he bestows on men; and to give it to him shows a sense of divine goodness, and a grateful heart; and to him very fitly is "dominion" ascribed, whose kingdom rules over all, and who dispenses his grace, as well as his providential favours, in a sovereign way; and whom the saints are in a peculiar manner under obligation to obey; to which is added, "Amen", signifying that so the apostle prayed it might be, and believed it would be.

Ver. 12. *By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you*, etc.] Silvanus is the same with Silas, so often mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, as a companion of the Apostle Paul; whom Peter met with in his travels, and sent this letter by him, or used him as his amanuensis, or both: his character is, that he was "a faithful brother" to those persons to whom this epistle is written; that is, he was a faithful minister of the Gospel to them, who with great sincerity and integrity preached the word unto them, as the apostle was well informed, and had reason to believe; for what follows,

as I suppose, does not suggest any doubt of it, but, on the contrary, a firm belief; for the word used signifies to repute, to reckon, to conclude a thing upon the best and strongest reasons; though some connect this phrase, as that "also unto you", with the following clause,

I have written briefly; as does the Syriac version, which renders the whole thus, "these few things, as I think, I have written unto you, by Silvanus, a faithful brother"; and then the sense is, this short epistle, as in my opinion it is, I have wrote and sent to you by Silvanus, who is faithful and upright, as a brother, a minister, and a messenger. The Arabic version seems to refer the above clause, "as I suppose", neither to the character of Silvanus, nor to the brevity of the epistle, but to the matter of it, rendering it thus, "these things, in a few words, I have written unto you, according to my sense"; according to my judgment and reason, as I think, by which you will see and know my real sentiments and thoughts of things; for what I have written is according to the best of my understanding and knowledge:

exhorting, and testifying, that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand; or "have stood", and still continue to do so: the Syriac version renders it, "I am persuaded and testify"; expressing his great confidence and assurance, that the Gospel of the grace of God, which springs from the grace of God, is full of it, and declares it, and which he had delivered in this epistle, and they had formerly received, and had stood fast in, and abode by, was the true Gospel. The Arabic version gives another sense, rendering the words thus, "entreating and beseeching, that this grace of God, in which ye stand, may be true and firm"; that is, that ye may still continue truly to embrace and profess it, and firmly abide by it; though the meaning rather is, that the apostle bears a testimony to the truth of the Gospel, and of the Christian religion, as held and professed by them with constancy hitherto; and exhorts them unto the consideration of the truth of

it, which might be depended upon, to cleave unto it with full purpose of heart.

Ver. 13. *The church that is at Babylon*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, supply the word "church", as we do. Some, by "Babylon", understand Rome, which is so called, in a figurative sense, in the book of the Revelations: this is an ancient opinion; so Papias understood it, as [f105] Eusebius relates; but that Peter was at Rome, when he wrote this epistle, cannot be proved, nor any reason be given why the proper name of the place should be concealed, and a figurative one expressed. It is best therefore to understand it literally, of Babylon in Assyria, the metropolis of the dispersion of the Jews, and the centre of it, to whom the apostle wrote; and where, as the minister of the circumcision, he may be thought to reside, here being a number of persons converted and formed into a Gospel church state, whereby was fulfilled the prophecy in (<19874>Psalm 87:4) perhaps this church might consist chiefly of Jews, which might be the reason of the apostle's being here, since there were great numbers which continued here, from the time of the captivity, who returned not with Ezra; and these are said by the Jews [f106] to be of the purest blood: many of the Jewish doctors lived here; they had three famous universities in this country, and here their Talmud was written, called from hence [f107] Babylonian. The church in this place is said to be

elected together with you; that is, were chosen together with them in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to grace here, and glory hereafter; or were equally the elect of God as they were, for as such he writes to them, (<600102>1 Peter 1:2) and this the apostle said in a judgment of charity of the whole church, and all the members of it, being under a profession of faith in Christ; and nothing appearing to the contrary, but that their faith was unfeigned, and their profession right and sincere. This Church, he says,

saluteth you; wishes all peace, happiness, and prosperity of every kind,

and so doth Marcus, my son; either, in a natural sense, his son according to the flesh; since it is certain Peter had a wife, and might have a son, and one of this name: or rather in a spiritual sense, being one that he was either an instrument of converting him, or of instructing him, or was one that was as dear to him as a son; in like manner as the Apostle Paul calls Timothy, and also Titus, his own son. This seems to be Mark the evangelist, who was called John Mark, was Barnabas's sister's son, and his mother's name was

Mary; (see <51040>Colossians 4:10 <44212>Acts 12:12,25). He is said [f108] to be the interpreter of Peter, and to have wrote his Gospel from what he heard from him; and who approved of it, and confirmed it, and indeed it is said to be his.

Ver. 14. *Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, “with an holy kiss”; and so some copies, as in (<45616>Romans 16:16) and elsewhere; (see Gill on “ <45616>Romans 16:16”); and intends such a kiss, as is not only opposite to everything that is lascivious and impure, but is expressive of true love and affection, and is hearty and sincere: and such a love the Jews call, as the apostle does here, wmyjrd hqyçn, “a kiss of love” [f109]; for as Philo the Jew [f110] observes, a kiss and love differ, the one may be without the other, a mere compliment, a show of friendship, and not arise from sincere love.

Peace with you all, that are in Christ Jesus; who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and appeared to be in him by the effectual calling; and were at least by profession in him, and were in Christ mystical, and incorporated in a Gospel church; the Arabic version reads, “who are in the love of Jesus Christ”. To these the apostle wishes peace, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. The Vulgate Latin reads “grace”, which is most usual in Paul's epistles. The epistle is closed with

Amen, as is common; the apostle wishing that this might be the case, and believing that it would be.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 3.

Ft2 -- Harmony, etc. Vol. I. p. 335.

Ft3 -- Fabricii Bibliothec. Graec. 50:4. c. 5. sect. 10. p. 164.

Ft4 -- Scorpiace, c. 12.

Ft5 -- Testimon. ad Quirin. 50:3. c. 36, 37, 39.

Ft6 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 1.

Ft7 -- Apud Euseb. ib. 50:4. c. 23.

Ft8 -- Ib. 50:7. c. 14. Hieron. Script. Ecclesiastes Catalog. sect. 75.

Ft9 -- Ib. 50:8. c. 12.

Ft10 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 2. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. c. 7. p. 289. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 4. c. 1O. p. 602. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 5.

Ft11 -- Geograph. 50:5. c. 6.

Ft12 -- Polyhist. c. 57.

Ft13 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 51. 3. & in Exodus fol. 33. 2. & 35. 4.

Ft14 -- Adv. Judaeos, c. 7. ad Scapulam, c. 3.

Ft15 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:6. c. 19.

Ft16 -- lb. 50:8. 12.

Ft17 -- Eccl. Hist. Magdeburg. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 2. c. 3. p. 11. c. 7. p. 117. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 4. c. 9. p. 350, 390. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 605, 606. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 9. c. 2. p. 3.

Ft18 -- C. 53.

Ft19 -- Ib. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 5.

Ft20 -- Epist. 50:10. ep. 97.

Ft21 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:8. c. 5, 6.

Ft22 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. c. 9. p. 390. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 601, 602. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 9. c. 2. p. 3.

Ft23 -- T. Hieros. Masser Sheni, fol. 56. 3. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 11. 2.

Ft24 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 150. 3.

Ft25 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 131. 2.

Ft26 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 34. 3.

Ft27 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 22. 1.

Ft28 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 168. 4.

Ft29 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 19. 3. & passim.

Ft30 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 1. & passim.

Ft31 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 119. 2.

Ft32 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Beracot, c. 7. sect. 1.

Ft33 -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1, 2, etc.

Ft34 -- Targum in <2801>Hosea 1:7. & 3:2. & in <2901>Joel 2:17.

Ft35 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 102. 3.

Ft36 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 59. 1. & Nedarim, fol. 89. 2.

Ft37 -- Kimchi in <2302>Isaiah 2:2.

Ft38 -- Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 1. & Bartenora in ib. Zohar in Exodus fol. 62. 1. & 78. 2.

Ft39 -- Targum, Jarchi, & Kimchi, in <2306>Isaiah 40:6.

Ft40 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 22. 1. & 48. 2. & 62. 1. & 97. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Issure Bia, c. 14. sect. 11. & Eduth, c. 13. sect. 2.

Ft41 -- Jarchi in Cant. 5. 12.

Ft42 -- Jarchi, Aben Ezra, & Kimchi, in <2501>Isaiah 55:1. Abarbinel, Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 26. 1.

Ft43 -- Aeneid. 50:1.

Ft44 -- Eustathius in Homer. Iliad. 1.

Ft45 -- Neve Shalom apud Caphtor, fol. 14. 1.

Ft46 -- R. Alshech. in Hagg. 2:7, 8, 9, 10.

Ft47 -- Neve Shalom apud Caphtor, fol. 88. 2. Vid. Raziel. fol. 33. 1.

Ft48 -- De Aroan. Cathol. Ver. 50:3. c. 21.

Ft49 -- Targum in <17808>Esther 3:8. & 5:13. & 7:4.

Ft50 -- Targum Hierosol. in <01213>Genesis 21:33. Targum Jon. in <01235>Genesis 23:15. Targum in <20810>Proverbs 31:10. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 2. 3. & sect. 11. fol. 9. 3.

Ft51 -- Baal Hatturim in loc.

Ft52 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 13. Tzeror Hammot, fol. 78. 3.

Ft53 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 10. sect. 5. Haggada Shel Pesach, p. 23. Maimon. Hilchot Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. sect. 5.

Ft54 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, c. 4. fol. 7. 1.

Ft55 -- Cabala Denudata, par. 2. p. 8.

Ft56 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 93. 3.

Ft57 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 1.

Ft58 -- Paraen. ad Demos Orat. 1.

Ft59 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 85. 2. Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 53. 3. & 90. 1.

Ft60 -- R. Moses Haddarsan apud Galatin. de Areanis Cathol. Verit. 50:6. c. 2.

Ft61 -- R. Sol. Urbin Ohel Moed, fol. 64. 1.

Ft62 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 43. 1.

Ft63 -- De Agricultura, p. 194, 195.

Ft64 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 104. 2. Chagiga, fol. 4. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 67.

1.

Ft65 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 6. sect. 1.

Ft66 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 7. 4.

Ft67 -- Sepher Musar apud Drus. de Quaesitis, Ep. 54. & in loc.

Ft68 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 59. 1. & Sepher Musar apud Drusium in loc.

Ft69 -- Apud. Buxtorf. Chald. Gram. p. 389.

Ft70 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 59. 1.

Ft71 -- Kimchi in Psal. 34:17.

Ft72 -- Aben Ezra & Kimchi in Psal. 34:14.

Ft73 -- Jarchi.

Ft74 -- Jarchi & Menachem apud ib. & Aben Ezra in loc.

Ft75 -- Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 14.

Ft76 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 38. 2.

Ft77 -- In Pirke Eliezer, c. 23.

Ft78 -- Elmacin. Hist. apud Hottinger. Smegma Orient. 50:1. c. 8. p. 249.

Ft79 -- In <01065>Genesis 6:15.

Ft80 -- Targum Jon. in <05031>Deuteronomy 3:11. T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 61. 1.

Ft81 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 42. fol. 37. 2. Targum Jon. & Jarchi in <01143>Genesis 14:13.

Ft82 -- Targum Jon. in <01143>Genesis 14:13.

Ft83 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 23.

Ft84 -- Pocock. Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 38.

Ft85 -- Eutychii Annal. p. 43. Elmacin. Hist. 50:1. c. 1. p. 12. Patricides, p. 10. Apud Hottinger, Smegma Orient. 50:1. c. 8. p. 251, 252.

Ft86 -- T. Hieros. Terumot, fol. 40. 4.

Ft87 -- Maimon. Hilch Tephilla, c. 4. sect. 17.

Ft88 -- T. Hieros. Succa, fol. 55. 1.

Ft89 -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 79. 4.

Ft90 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 60. 1. Caphtor, fol. 70. 2.

Ft91 -- Jarchi in Numbers 179. apud Grotium in loc.

Ft92 -- De Agricultura, p. 195.

Ft93 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 25. 1. Vid. T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 54. 1. & Maimon. Hilch. Issure Mizbeach, c. 4. sect. 5, 6.

Ft94 -- Comment. in <3108>Zechariah 11:8.

Ft95 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 56. 2.

Ft96 -- Dictionar. Syr. Chald. p. 102.

Ft97 -- In Misn. Bava Kama, c. 6. sect. 2.

Ft98 -- Bartenora in Misn. Bava Kama, c. 6. sect. 2.

Ft99 -- Vide Paschalium de Coronis, 50:6. c. 1. p. 339. c. 16. p. 391. c. 18. p. 399. c. 19. p. 413.

Ft100 -- Ib. 50:3. c. 11. p. 178.

Ft101 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 60. 3.

Ft102 -- Pirke Abot, c. 6. sect. 1.

Ft103 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 41. 4. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 82. fol. 41. 4. & Jarchi & Aruch in Mattanot Cehuna in ib.

Ft104 -- Lex. Cabal. p. 231, 417.

Ft105 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:2. c. 15.

Ft106 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 69. 2. & 71. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

Ft107 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 24. 1.

Ft108 -- Papias apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 50:3. c. 39. Tertullian. adv. Marcion, 50:4. c. 5. Hieron. Catalog. Script. Eccl. sect. 2. 18.

Ft109 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 60. 3, 4.

Ft110 -- Quis rerum divin. Haeres. p. 486, 487.

2 PETER

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 2 PETER

Though there was, among the ancients, a doubt concerning the authority of this epistle, which is first mentioned by Origen [f1], and afterwards by Eusebius [f2] and Jerom [f3], yet it prevailed not among the churches, nor hindered the diligent reading and use of it, together with other Scriptures; it appearing to be useful and profitable, as Eusebius declares; and in process of time this doubt was entirely removed, and it was universally received by fathers and councils into the canon of the Scriptures, where it is justly retained, it having plain signatures of its divine original. Nor is there anything in it unworthy of so great an apostle, whose name it bears; but the whole of it is agreeable to the analogy of faith, to the rest of the sacred writings, particularly to the epistle of Jude, between which, and the second chapter of this, there is a great likeness. The only reason of the doubt of the genuineness of this epistle, and whether it was written by the Apostle Peter, is the difference of its style from the former; but the Holy Ghost, the dictator of the sacred writings, is not limited to a man's natural style, but could vary it as he pleased: besides, a man's style is not the same at different times, and when writing on different subjects; add to which, that this objection can only regard the second chapter, for the first and third agree with the former epistle. And some have thought that the second chapter is an extract out of some ancient Hebrew book, describing the characters of the old false prophets; which book Peter and Jude having before them, took the characters of the old prophets, and, under divine direction, applied them to the false teachers of the present age; and if so it is not to be wondered at that the style of the epistle should differ from the former, and even from itself in this part. But that it was written by the Apostle Peter, not only the inscription shows, which, if false, would indeed discredit the genuineness of the book, but the account that is given of the writer of it, as one that was with Christ at his transfiguration, (2 Peter 1:16-18). Now there were only the three following disciples there, Peter, John, and, James. The last of these had been dead some time when this

epistle was written, and it was never ascribed by any to the Apostle John, and therefore it remains that Peter must be the writer of it. As for Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, that succeeded James, whom Grotius would suggest as the author of it, the character does not agree with him; he was not with Christ on the holy mount, nor heard the voice from heaven, asserting the sonship of Christ, and the divine complacency in him: moreover, this epistle is called a “second epistle”, (<61301>2 Peter 3:1) and supposes a first, and manifestly refers to the former epistle of Peter's, about which there never was any doubt, as the authors before mentioned observe. It was written by the apostle in his old age, when upon the decline of life, just as he was about to put off his tabernacle, (<61301>2 Peter 1:13-15) a little before his martyrdom, in the year 68, though Dr. Lightfoot places it in 66; and it is sent to the same persons as his first, namely, to the believing Jews scattered throughout several parts of Asia, he being the minister of the circumcision; (see <60101>1 Peter 1:1) compared with (<61301>2 Peter 3:1). The scope and design of it are, to put them upon a concern for a larger increase of grace and spiritual knowledge; to confirm and establish them in the present truth of the Gospel; to warn them against false teachers, which he largely describes; and he puts them in mind of the dissolution of all things, and of what will precede and follow it; from whence he draws several useful hints and inferences.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO 2 PETER 1

In this chapter, after the inscription and salutation, the apostle takes notice of gifts of grace bestowed; and exhorts to the exercise of holiness and good works; and gives the reasons why he was so pressing to them; and endeavours to establish the saints in the Gospel that had been preached among them. In the inscription, the writer of the epistle describes himself by his names, the one given him by his parents, the other by his Lord and master, and by his character and office; and the persons to whom he writes are described as having faith, and that of the same kind with the apostles, and which they obtained through the righteousness of Christ, (<GI01F>2 Peter 1:1). The salutation is the same with that in the former epistle, only here is added a wish for an increase of divine knowledge, (<GI01G>2 Peter 1:2) and which might be expected, since, by the power of living grace, everything necessary to a spiritual and godly life bad been given them in the effectual calling, through the knowledge of Christ; even exceeding great and precious promises, whereby they partook of the divine nature, and escaped the vices which prevailed in the world, (<GI01H>2 Peter 1:3,4) upon which he exhorts not to rest where they were, but to go on in the exercise of grace, and performance of duties, many of which he enumerates, (<GI01I>2 Peter 1:5-7) to enforce which he adds several arguments, as that through an abounding in these things they would appear not to have a superficial and speculative knowledge of Christ, (<GI01J>2 Peter 1:8) or otherwise it would be evident that they were blind and ignorant, and in an unrenewed state, (<GI01K>2 Peter 1:9) whereas by these things they would make their calling and election sure and manifest to men, and would never fall totally and finally, and in the issue have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of Christ, (<GI01L>2 Peter 1:10,11) and then he gives the reasons of his conduct, why he so much urged a regard to these things, and put them in mind of them; namely, the usefulness of them for their establishment, the duty of his office, which required it, the short time he had to live, and the profitableness of such exhortations to them, after his decease, (<GI01M>2 Peter 1:12-15) and in order to establish them in the truths of the Gospel, and particularly in that which concerns the coming of Christ in power and

glory, on which he enlarges in the latter part of this epistle; he observes, that this was not a cunningly devised fable, but was what he and others were eyewitnesses of, even of that which was an emblem and pledge of it; namely, the transfiguration of Christ on the mount, when they saw the glory he received from God his Father, and heard the voice from heaven which declared him to be his well beloved Son, (<60116>2 Peter 1:16-18), and besides, they had a surer proof of the certainty of his coming; namely, the prophecies concerning it, which should be regarded and given heed to, being as a lamp to direct in the present state of darkness and imperfection, until the illustrious day of Christ's coming appears, (<61019>2 Peter 1:19) and the rather this should be attended to, since no scriptural prophecy is an invention and device of men; nor was it formerly given out at the pleasure of men, but by saints, who were influenced and moved unto it by the Holy Ghost, (<61020>2 Peter 1:20,21).

Ver. 1. *Simon Peter, a servant, and an apostle of Jesus Christ*, etc.] The writer of this epistle is described first by his names, Simon Peter; the first of these was the name by which he was called from his infancy by his parents, and by which he was known when Christ called him to be a disciple and follower of him, and is the same with Simeon; and so it is read in most copies; (see <44514>Acts 15:14) a name common with the Jews; the latter is what was given him by Christ at his conversion, (<40104>John 1:4), and answers to Cephas in the Syriac language; and both signify a rock or stone, because he was built upon Christ, the rock and foundation, and chief corner stone, and with a view to his future solidity, firmness, and constancy: and he is next described by his character as a servant, not of sin, nor Satan, nor man, but Jesus Christ, whose servant he was, not only by creation, but by redemption and grace; and not merely a servant of his, in common with other believers, but in a ministerial way, as a preacher of the Gospel, which this phrase sometimes designs. The use of it shows the apostle's humility, his sense of obligation to Christ, and acknowledgment of him as his Lord, and that he esteemed it an honour to stand in such a relation to him: but to distinguish him from a common servant of Christ, and an ordinary minister of the word, it is added, “an apostle of Jesus Christ”: one that was immediately sent by Christ, had his commission and doctrine directly from him, and a power of working miracles, in confirmation of his mission and ministry being divine, and an authority at large to go everywhere and preach the Gospel, plant churches, and put them in due order, and place proper persons over them. This is said to give

weight and authority to his epistle: and further, in this inscription of the epistle, the persons are described to whom it is written, as follows,

to them that have obtained like precious faith with us; they were believers in Christ, who had a faith of the right kind; not a faith of doing miracles, which was not common to all, nor was it saving; nor an historical faith, or a mere assent to truths, nor a temporary one, or a bare profession of faith; but that faith which is the faith of God's elect, the gift of his grace, and the operation of his power; which sees the Son, goes to him, ventures on him, trusts in him, lives upon him, and works by love to him. This is said to be "precious", as it is in its own nature, being a rich and enriching grace, of more worth and value than gold that perisheth, or than thousands of gold and silver; it is not to be equalled by, nor purchased with the riches of the whole world; it is precious in its object, it being conversant with the precious person, precious blood, and precious righteousness and sacrifice of Christ, and is that grace which makes Christ, and all that is his, precious to souls; it is precious in its acts and usefulness; it is that grace by which men go to God and Christ, receive from them, and give all glory to them, and without which it is not possible to please God: to which add the durableness of it; it is an abiding grace, and will never fail, when the most precious things in nature do: and it is "like precious" with that the apostles had; for there is but one faith, and which is called a common faith, even common to all the elect; and which is the same in all, not as to degrees, for in some it is strong, and in others weak; or as to the actings of it, which are not in all alike, nor in the same persons at all times; in some it is only a seeing of the Son, his glory, fulness, and suitableness, and longing for views of an interest in him; in others a reliance on him, and trusting in him; and in others a holy confidence, and full assurance of being his: but then it is alike with respect to its nature, as it is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen; and as it works by love to Christ and his people; it springs from the same cause, the love and favour of God, and has the same object, Jesus Christ, and is followed with the salvation; for though it is but as a grain of mustard seed, yet, being genuine, the person that has it shall certainly be saved: wherefore, for the comfort and encouragement of these scattered believers, the apostle assures them, that their faith was the same as their brethren that dwelt at Jerusalem and in Judea, who believed in Christ, and even with them that were the apostles of Christ; and this he says they had obtained, not by their own merits or industry, but by the grace of God; for faith is not of a man's self, it is the

gift of God, and the produce of his grace and power. Some have rendered it, “obtained by lot”; not by chance, but by the all wise, good, and powerful providence of God, ordering, directing, assigning, and giving this grace unto them. And which came to them

through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; or “of our God, and Saviour Jesus Christ”, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read; that is, of Christ Jesus, who is our God and Saviour: so that here is a testimony of the deity of Christ, as well as of his character as a Saviour, who is an able and a willing one, a full, complete, suitable, and only Saviour: and the reason why he is so is because he is truly and properly “God”; and why he is so to us, because he is “our” God: wherefore by “righteousness” here, cannot be meant the goodness and mercy of God, as some think, though faith undoubtedly comes through that; nor the faithfulness of God making good his purpose and promise of giving faith to his elect, as others think: but the righteousness of Christ, which is not the righteousness of a creature, but of God; that is wrought out by one that is God, as well as man, and so answerable to all the purposes for which it is brought in. Now faith comes “in”, or “with” this righteousness, as the phrase may be rendered; when the Spirit of God reveals and brings near this righteousness to a poor sensible sinner, he at the same time works faith in him to look to it, lay hold upon it, and plead it as his justifying righteousness with God: or it comes “through” it; hence it appears that faith and righteousness are two distinct things; and that faith is not a man's righteousness before God, for it comes to him through it; as also that righteousness is before faith, or otherwise faith could not come by it; and, moreover, is the cause and reason of it; faith has no causal influence upon righteousness, but righteousness has upon faith: the reason why a man has a justifying righteousness is not because he has faith; but the reason why he has faith given him is because he has a justifying righteousness provided for him, and imputed to him.

Ver. 2. *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you*, etc.] By a multiplication of grace may be meant a larger discovery of the love and favour of God; which though it admits of no degrees in itself, being never more or less in God's heart, yet, as to the manifestations of it, it is different, and capable of being increased, and drawn out to a greater length; or else an increase of the internal graces of the Spirit of God, as to the actings and exercise of them; or a larger measure of the gifts of the Spirit, for greater usefulness among them; or a clearer view, and a more enlarged knowledge of the

Gospel of the grace of God, and the truths of it; and indeed, the word grace may take in all these senses: and by a multiplication of peace, which the apostle in this salutation also wishes for, may be designed an affluence of all kind of prosperity, temporal, and spiritual, external and internal; and more especially an increase of spiritual peace, a fulness of joy and peace in believing, arising from a sense of free justification by Christ's righteousness, and full pardon and atonement by his blood and sacrifice:

through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord; which is to be understood, not of a natural, but of a spiritual and evangelical knowledge; of a knowledge of God, not as the God of nature and providence, but as the God of all grace, as in Christ, and a covenant God in him, and of the person, offices, and grace of Christ; and which designs true faith in him, by which means larger discoveries of the grace of God are made, and a greater enjoyment of spiritual peace is had: or it may be rendered, “with the knowledge of God”, etc. and the sense then is, that the apostle prays, as for a multiplication of grace and peace, so along with it, an increase of spiritual and evangelical knowledge; which in the best is imperfect, but may be increased by the blessing of God on those means which he has appointed for that end, such as the word and ordinances. The Syriac version renders this clause, “through the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”, leaving out the word “God”, and the copulative “and”, and adding the word “Christ”; and the Ethiopic version reads, “in the knowledge of our God, Christ Jesus our Lord”, without any distinction. After the inscription and salutation begins the epistle, with an account of various special favours bestowed upon these persons; and are mentioned by the apostle to encourage his faith and theirs, in expectation of enjoying what he here wishes unto them, since already such great and good things had been bestowed upon them.

Ver. 3. *According as his divine power*, etc.] Meaning either the power of God the Father, to whom belong eternal power and Godhead; and he is sometimes called by the name of power itself; (see Matthew 26:64) being all powerful and mighty; or rather the power of Christ, since he is the next and immediate antecedent to this relative; and who, as he has the fulness of the Godhead in him, is almighty, and can do all things; and is “El-shaddai”, God all-sufficient, and can communicate all things whatsoever he pleases, and does, as follows: for he

hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness; referring not so much to a temporal life, though he gives that and preserves it, and

furnishes with all the mercies and comforts of it; and which come to us, from him, in a covenant way, as his left hand blessings, and in great love; but rather a spiritual life, which he is the author and maintainer of, all the joys, pleasures, blessings, and supports of it, being given by him; as also eternal life, for that, and everything appertaining to it, are from him; he gives a meetness for it, which is his own grace, and a right unto it, which is his own righteousness; and he has power to give that itself to as many as the Father has given him, and he does give it to them; and likewise all things belonging to "godliness", or internal religion; and which is the means of eternal life, and leads on to it, and is connected with it, and has the promise both of this life, and of that which is to come; and everything relating to it, or is in it, or it consists of, is from Christ: the internal graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, and love, which, when in exercise, are the principal parts of powerful godliness, are the gifts of Christ, are received out of his fulness, and of which he is the author and finisher; and he is the donor of all the fresh supplies of grace to maintain the inward power of religion, and to assist in the external exercise of it; all which things are given

through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. The call here spoken of is not a bare outward call, by the ministry of the word, but an internal, special, and powerful one, which springs from the grace, and is according to the purpose of God, and is inseparably connected with justification and glorification; and is either of God the Father, who, as the God of all grace, calls to eternal glory by Christ; or rather of Christ himself, who calls by his Spirit and grace; and hence the saints are sometimes styled, the called of Jesus Christ, (<4106>Romans 1:6) what they are called unto by him is, "glory and virtue"; by the former may be meant, the glorious state of the saints in the other world, and so answers to "life", eternal life, in the preceding clause; and by the latter, grace, and the spiritual blessings of grace here, and which answers to "godliness" in the said clause; for the saints are called both to grace and glory, and to the one, in order to the other. Some render it, "by glory and virtue"; and some copies, as the Alexandrian and others, and so the Vulgate Latin version, read, "by his own glory and virtue"; that is, by his glorious power, which makes the call as effectual, and is as illustrious a specimen of the glory of his power, as was the call of Lazarus out of the grave; unless the Gospel should rather be intended by glory and virtue, which is glorious in itself, and the power of God unto salvation, and is the means by which persons

are called to the communion of Christ, and the obtaining of his glory: so then this phrase, “him that hath called us to glory and virtue”, is a periphrasis of Christ, through a “knowledge” of whom, and which is not notional and speculative, but spiritual, experimental, fiducial, and practical, or along with such knowledge all the above things are given; for as God, in giving Christ, gives all things along with him, so the Spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, when he makes him known in the glory of his person, grace, and righteousness, also makes known the several things which are freely given of God and Christ: and this is what, among other things, makes the knowledge of Christ preferable to all other knowledge, or anything else.

Ver. 4. *Whereby are given unto us*, etc.] Or “by which”, that is, glory and virtue; by the glorious power of Christ, or by the glorious and powerful Gospel of Christ; and so the Arabic version renders it, “by both of which”; or “by whom”, as the Vulgate Latin version reads; that is, by Christ; for as in him are all the promises of God, so they are at his dispose, and by him are given unto the saints:

exceeding great and precious promises; meaning the promises of the new and everlasting covenant, of which Christ is the Mediator, surety, and messenger; and which are “exceeding great”, if we consider the author of them, who is the great God of heaven and earth, and who was under no obligation to make promises of anything to his creatures; and therefore must arise from great grace and favour, of which they are largely expressive, and are like himself; are such as become his greatness and goodness, and are confirmed by his oath, and made good by his power and faithfulness: and they are also great, as to the nature and matter of them; they are better promises than those of the covenant of works; they are not merely temporal ones, nor are they conditional and legal; but as they relate to things spiritual and eternal, to grace here and glory hereafter, so they are absolute, free, and unconditional, and are irreversible and unchangeable; and they answer great ends and purposes, the glory of God, and the everlasting good and happiness of his people; and therefore must be “precious”, of more value and worth than thousands of gold and silver, and to be rejoiced at more than at the finding of a great spoil, being every way suited to the cases of God's people, and which never fail. The end of giving them is,

that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature; not essentially, or of the essence of God, so as to be deified, this is impossible, for the nature, perfections, and glory of God, are incommunicable to creatures; nor, hypostatically and personally, so as the human nature of Christ, in union with the Son of God, is a partaker of the divine nature in him; but by way of resemblance and likeness, the new man or principle of grace, being formed in the heart in regeneration, after the image of God, and bearing a likeness to the image of his Son, and this is styled, Christ formed in the heart, into which image and likeness the saints are more and more changed, from glory to glory, through the application of the Gospel, and the promises of it, by which they have such sights of Christ as do transform them, and assimilate them to him; and which resemblance will be perfected hereafter, when they shall be entirely like him, and see him as he is:

having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; not the corruption and depravity of nature, which is never escaped by any, nor got rid of so long as the saints are in the world; but the corrupt manners of the world, or those corruptions and vices which, are prevalent in the world, and under the power and dominion of which the world lies; and particularly the sins of uncleanness, adultery, incest, sodomy, and such like filthy and unnatural lusts, which abounded in the world, and among some that called themselves Christians, and especially the followers of Simon Magus. Now the Gospel, and the precious promises, being graciously bestowed and powerfully applied, have an influence on purity of heart and conversation, and teach men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly; such are the powerful effects of Gospel promises, under divine influence, as to make men inwardly partakers of the divine nature, and outwardly to abstain from and avoid the prevailing corruptions and vices of the times.

Ver. 5. *And besides this, giving all diligence*, etc.] "Or upon this", as the Syriac and Arabic versions read, bestow all your labour, diligence, and care; namely, on what follows, and that from the consideration of what goes before; for nothing can more strongly animate, and engage to the diligent exercise of grace and discharge of duty, than a consideration of the high favours, and free grace gifts of God, and the exceeding great and precious promises of his Gospel:

add to your faith virtue; or "with your faith", so the Arabic version renders it, and the like, in the following clauses. They had faith, even like precious

faith with the apostles, not of themselves, but by the gift of God, and which is the first and principal grace; it leads the van, or rather the “chorus”, as the word rendered “add” signifies; and though it is in itself imperfect, has many things lacking in it, yet it cannot be added to, or increased by men; ministers may be a means of perfecting what is lacking in it, and of the furtherance and joy of it, but it is the Lord only that can increase it, or add unto it in that sense, and which is not the meaning here: but the sense is, that as it is the basis and foundation of all good works, it should not stand alone, there ought to be virtue, or good works along with it, by which it may be perfected, not essentially, but evidentially, or might appear to be true and genuine; for by virtue may be either meant some particular virtue, as justice towards men, to which both the grace and doctrine of faith direct; and indeed pretensions to faith in Christ, where there is not common justice done to men, are of little account; or, as others think, beneficence to men; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “proceed to bounty by your faith”; and faith does work by love and kindness to fellow creatures and Christians; but this seems rather designed by brotherly kindness and charity, in (2 Peter 1:7) or boldness, courage, constancy, and fortitude, which ought to go along with faith. Where there is true faith in Christ, there should be a holy boldness to profess it, and constancy in it, and courage to fight the good fight of faith, and firmness of mind to stand fast in it, notwithstanding all difficulties and discouragements; or virtue in general here meant, not mere moral, but Christian virtues, which are the fruits of the Spirit of God, and of his grace; and differ from the other, in that they spring from the grace of God, are done in faith, by the assistance of the Spirit of Christ, and by strength received from him, and in love to him, and with a view to the glory of God; whereas moral virtues, as exercised by a mere moral man, spring from nature, and are performed by the mere strength of it, and are destitute of faith, and so but “splendida peccata”, splendid sins, and proceed from self-love, from sinister ends, and with selfish views:

and to virtue, knowledge; not of Christ, mentioned (2 Peter 1:8) and which is included in faith, for there can be no true faith in Christ, were there not knowledge of him; but of the will of God, which it is necessary men should be acquainted with, in order to perform it; or else though they may seem zealous of good works, their zeal will not be according to knowledge; they ought to know what are virtues or good works in God's account, and what are the nature and use of them, lest they should mistake

and misapply them; or of the Scriptures of truth, and of the mysteries of the Gospel, which should be diligently searched, for the increase and improvement of knowledge in divine things, and which has a considerable influence on a just, sober, and godly living; or by knowledge may be meant prudence and wisdom, in ordering the external conversation aright towards those that are without, and in showing good works out of it, to others, by way of example, and for the evidence of the truth of things, with meekness of wisdom.

Ver. 6. *And to knowledge, temperance*, etc.] Avoiding all excess in eating and drinking, and all impure and unclean lusts; for it signifies nothing what a man knows, or professes to know, if his life is a scene of intemperance and debauchery: this seems to be levelled against the followers or Simon Magus, who ascertained salvation to knowledge, though the life was ever so impure, Moreover, this may include abstinence, not only from hurtful lusts, but from the use of things indifferent, when the peace and comfort of a weak brother are endangered; for then to knowledge must be added love, otherwise that knowledge will not be right, at least not rightly used; (see 1 Corinthians 8:1,2,7,10,11),

and to temperance, patience; which is necessary to the running of the Christian race, which is attended with many difficulties and exercises; and under affliction from the hand of God, that there be no murmuring nor repining; and under reproaches and persecutions from men, that they faint not, and are not discouraged by them; and in the expectation of the heavenly glory: this is proper to be superadded to the former, because there may be intemperance in passion, as well as in the use of the creatures; a man may be inebriated with wrath and anger, and overcome with impatience, as well as with wine and strong drink:

and to patience, godliness; either internal, which is distinguished from bodily exercise, or outward worship, and lies in the inward and powerful exercise of grace, as faith, hope, love, fear, etc. and the Syriac version here renders it, “the fear of God”: or rather external, and intends the whole worship of God, as prayer, praise, hearing of the word, and attendance on all ordinances.

Ver. 7. *And to godliness, brotherly kindness*, etc.] Without which, godliness, or external worship, or a profession of religion, is a vain show; for this is both the evidence of regeneration, and of the truth and power of real godliness; and also the beauty, comfort, and security of Christian

society and worship, and without which they cannot be maintained with peace, profit, and honour:

and to brotherly kindness, charity: or “love”; that is, to all men, enemies, as well as to the household of faith; and to God and Christ, to his house, worship, ordinances, people and truths. Charity is more extensive in its objects and acts than brotherly kindness or love. As faith leads the van, charity brings up the rear, and is the greatest of all.

Ver. 8. *For if these things be in you*, etc.] Are wrought in you by the Spirit of God, and exercised and performed by his assistance, who works in his people both to will and do:

and abound; increase in their acts and exercises by the frequent performance of them: they make you; both by way of influence and evidence,

[that ye shall] neither [be] barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a knowledge of Christ which is barren and fruitless; and those that have it are so in their conversations, and it will be of no avail to them another day: and this is a mere notional and speculative knowledge, such as is not attended with any inward experience and application of Christ to themselves, or any fruits of righteousness in their lives, and is a bare theory of things relating to his person, offices, and works; but there is a knowledge of him that is spiritual and experimental, by which a soul not only approves of Christ, but places its trust and confidence in him, and appropriates him to himself, and practically observes his commands and ordinances in the faith of him; and in love to him he performs the above duties, and exercises the above graces; from whence it appears, that he is neither barren nor unfruitful himself in the profession of his knowledge of Christ; “or in the acknowledgment of him”, as it may be rendered; nor is that a vain, empty, and useless thing: he is not like the barren fig tree, or the earth that bears briers and thorns, and is nigh to cursing and burning, but like a tree planted by a river of water, and is green, flourishing, and fruitful. This is used as an argument to enforce the foregoing exhortation, to add to, that is, to exercise and perform the above graces and duties, in conjunction with each other.

Ver. 9. *But he that lacketh these things*, etc.] Or in, and with whom, they are not; that is, these virtues, as the Arabic version reads, as faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and

charity; where the principles of those things are not, and they are not exercised and performed, such an one

is blind: let him boast ever so much of his light and knowledge, and value himself upon it, and expect to be saved by it, let him live as he will; for he has no true knowledge of God, as in Christ, as the God of all grace, as his covenant God and Father; nor does he know what it is to have communion with him in Christ; he only professes to know him in words, while in works he denies him; nor has he any right knowledge of Christ, only notional and general, not spiritual, experimental, particular, and practical; he does not see the Son, so as truly to believe in him; he has no true sight of his beauty, suitableness, and fulness, and of him for himself; nor any experience of the work of the Spirit of God upon his heart, whom he neither receives, sees, nor knows spiritually, any more than the world itself does; nor does he see the plague of his own heart, the corruptions of his nature, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin; nor has he any true spiritual light into the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, only a form of godliness, without the power of it: and therefore, whatever natural understanding of things he has, he is spiritually blind,

and cannot see afar off: at least, not the good land that is afar off, the kingdom of heaven; the invisible glories of the other world; things that are not seen, which are eternal, which one that has true faith has a glimpse and sight of; nor Christ, who is in heaven at the right hand of God, and the things of Christ, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, carried within the vail; nor even what is within himself, the sins of his heart, the pollution of his nature, and the evil that dwells there; he sees not that he is poor, and wretched, and miserable, but fancies himself to be rich, and in need of nothing; he sees nothing but outward things, the things of time and sense, worldly and earthly things, which are near him, and all around him, which he minds, on which his heart is set, and he pursues with rigour. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “trying with the hand”, as blind men do, feeling and groping to find the way; (see <44172>Acts 17:27),

and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins; not by baptism, from the sins committed before it, for that does not purge from any sins, old or new, but that which it leads the faith of believers to, for pardon and cleansing, even the blood of Christ; but this also, and purification by it, is not meant here, though generally interpreters give this as the sense, and understanding it of the sin of ingratitude in such a person, who had

received so great a benefit by Christ, and was unmindful of it; since it cannot be thought that one so described as above should ever have had his conscience purged by the blood of Christ from his old sins, or those before conversion, unless it be by profession; and then the sense is, that he has forgotten that he once professed to have been purged from all his sins by Christ; which, if he had, would have made him zealous of good works, and put him upon glorifying Christ both in body and spirit. The Ethiopic version renders it, “and he hath forgot to purge himself from old sins”; which he would have been concerned for, had he had a true and spiritual knowledge of Christ, and his Gospel, and an application of the exceeding great and precious promises of it, or had been made a partaker of the divine nature through them; (see 2 Corinthians 7:1), but the words are better rendered agreeably to the original text, “and hath forgotten the purification of his old, or former sins”; or “sins of old”; as they are rendered by the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; that is, he does not consider, nor think of it, that he was a sinner of old, a sinner in Adam, that he was conceived and shapen in sin, and went astray, and was called a transgressor from the womb; he does not think that he stands in any need of being purged from former sins; and is entirely unmindful of, and neglects, the purification of them by the blood of Christ.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence*, etc.] To exercise the afore mentioned graces, and to perform the above duties, since this is the way

to make your calling and election sure; by calling is not meant a call to any office in the church, nor an external call, either by the voice of nature, or by the ministry of the word; but an internal and effectual call by special grace, to grace here, and glory hereafter; instead of “calling”, the Alexandrian copy reads, “comfort”: and by “election” is meant, not a national, nor church election, but a particular and personal one, since scattered saints, and particular believers, are here written to, and each called upon to be diligent to make their own, and not another's, calling and election sure; nor is a choice of persons to an office designed, seeing the apostle writes not to officers of churches in particular, but to believers in common; nor a separation of persons from the world by the effectual calling, since these two are both mentioned here, and as distinct from each other, and to be made sure; but an election of particular persons to eternal life and salvation is here intended, which is an eternal act of God, arises from his free grace and favour, and is according to his sovereign will and

pleasure; and is absolute, and independent of any condition, foreseen, or required in men, as faith, holiness, and good works; all which are fruits and effects, and not causes and conditions of electing grace. These may be made “sure”, not in themselves, or with respect to God, for in this sense they cannot be made surer than they are: effectual calling is according to the purpose of God, which cannot be frustrated, and is, without repentance, irreversible, and irrevocable, and is inseparably connected with eternal glory; and election stands not upon the foot of works, but upon the free grace of God, which cannot be made void, and upon the will of God, which cannot be resisted; and is also closely connected with glorification; (see Romans 8:30) nor are those to be made sure by saints, with respect to themselves; for though they may sometimes be at a loss about them, and may have some scruples and doubts in their minds concerning their interest in them, and an assurance of their being both called and chosen, may be after all attained unto by them; yet this is not their work, but it is the work of the Spirit of God, to certify and make sure unto them, or assure them of their calling and election of God: but the sense is, that diligence is to be used by the saints, to make their calling and election sure to others; not their election by their calling only, which is to themselves; for both are to be made sure, and that to others, and by some third thing; either to their fellow Christians, which they may do by giving them an account of the work of God upon their souls, joined with a testimony of their good lives and conversations; or rather to the world “by good works”, as the Vulgate Latin version and two copies of Beza's read; or “by your good works”, as the Alexandrian copy and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read; or by the exercise of the graces, and the discharge of the duties before mentioned, whereby the men of the world may be certified and assured, by the best evidence the saints are capable of giving to them, or they of receiving, that they are the called and chosen of God, they profess themselves to be; and which is a reason why those things should be done: and another follows,

for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; or “sin”, as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it; not that they should never fall at all, or in any sense, for in many things we all offend or fall; or should ever commit any act of sin, or fall into sin, for there is no man that lives, and sins not; or that they should not fall from a degree of the lively exercise of grace, or from a degree of steadfastness in the doctrine of faith, but that they should never sin the sin against the Holy Ghost, or fall totally and finally; for though they fall, they should rise again by faith and repentance, through the

grace and power of Christ, who is able to keep them from falling: and besides, while they were exercising those graces, and doing those duties, they should not fall; for these are the means of final perseverance, and therefore the rather to be regarded. Another argument, strengthening the exhortation, follows:

Ver. 11. *For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly*, etc.] An abundant supply of grace and strength shall be freely afforded, to carry you through all the duties and trials of life; and when that shall be ended, an admission will be granted

into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; meaning, not the Gospel dispensation, or the spiritual kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world, but lies among his people, who are called out of it, in whom he reigns by his Spirit and, grace, according to laws of his own enacting; nor his personal kingdom on earth with his saints, which will last only a thousand years, and not be for ever; but the kingdom of heaven, or the ultimate glory, which will be everlasting; and is called a kingdom, to denote the glory and excellency of that state; and an everlasting one, because it will never end; and the kingdom of Christ, because it is in his possession, for his people; it is prepared by him, and he will introduce them into it, when they shall be for ever with him, and reign with him for ever and ever. Some copies read, “the heavenly kingdom”. There is an entrance of separate souls into this kingdom at death; and which may be said to be ministered “abundantly” to them, or “richly” as the word signifies, when they depart out of this world with joy and comfort; triumphing over death, and the grave, in a full view by faith of their interest in the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the glories of another world; and there is an entrance into it at judgment, and which will be abundantly, when all the saints together, in their souls and bodies, shall be introduced by Christ into the full joy of their Lord. As the saints enter the kingdom through many tribulations, the gate is strait, and the way is narrow, and they are scarcely saved, and many of them so as only by fire; but when the abundant grace given unto them by the way to heaven, the great consolation many enjoy in their last moments, and especially the free and full admission of them, both at death and at judgment, to eternal happiness, are considered, the entrance ministered may be said to be abundantly; or, as the Arabic version renders it, “with a breadth”; the entrance is large and broad.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore I will not be negligent*, etc.] The apostle having made use of proper arguments to excite the saints he writes to regard the exhortation he had given, to the diligent exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, proceeds to give the reasons of his own conduct, why he gave such an exhortation to them, and pressed it, and continued to do so, and determined for the future to go on with it, as particularly the usefulness and profitableness of it; and therefore, seeing it would be attended with so many advantages before mentioned, he was resolved that he would not be careless, nor omit any opportunity that should offer:

to put you always in remembrance of these things; of the exercise of the above graces, and the performance of the above duties, which saints are too apt to forget, and therefore should be reminded of; and it is the duty and business of the ministers of the word frequently to inculcate those things:

though ye know them, and be established in the present truth; for those that know the most, know but in part; and may have their knowledge increased; and those that are the most established in the truths of the Gospel, may be confirmed yet more and more. This the apostle mentions as an apology for himself, and to prevent an objection that might be made, as if he had suggested that they were ignorant and unstable; or which might insinuate that there was no necessity of such frequent putting in remembrance; since they were both knowing and stable: by "the present truth" may be meant, either the whole scheme of the Gospel, which was now come by Christ, in opposition to the exhibition of it under the former dispensation, by promise and type; and it being so called, shows that it is always now, and new; that there will be no alteration in it, nor addition to it, it being like the author of it, the same yesterday, today, and for ever, and will not give place to another scheme of things; or else the particular truth of the coming of Christ, either to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, or to judge the world in righteousness, and introduce his own people into the new heavens, and new earth, (2 Peter 3:1-4,10,12,13).

Ver. 13. *Yea, I think it meet*, etc.] Or "just". This is the apostle's other reason for his conduct, taken from the duty of his place and office; judging it to be what became him as an apostle and elder, and the minister of the circumcision, and was what was due to God and Christ, whom he served, and the souls of men under his care:

as long as I am in this tabernacle: or “body”, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, and so some copies; for the body is as a tabernacle for the soul to dwell in, pitched for a time, and, ere long, to be taken down; (see Gill on “2 Corinthians 5:1”),

to stir you up; to the lively exercise of grace, and constant performance of duty: by putting you in remembrance: of the said things; for saints are apt to be forgetful of their duty, and backward to it, and sluggish and slothful in it.

Ver. 14. *Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle*, etc.] Which is another reason why the apostle was so pressing in this case, and so much urged the exhortation, and was so diligent in reminding the saints of it, and stirring them to observe it, because he knew he had but a little time to live, and which therefore he was willing to improve for their good. He sets forth his death in a very easy and familiar way, it being not at all terrible and distressing to him; it was but like the putting off of a garment, or unpinning of a tabernacle, or a removing from a tent to a palace. Saints are pilgrims here, they dwell in tents or tabernacles, at death they remove to their own country, and Father's house. Death is not a destruction of man, an annihilation of him, neither of his soul nor body: the soul is not mortal, it dies not with the body; it only removes from this world to another, from a cottage to a kingdom; and the body though it dies, it is not reduced to nothing, it is only like a tabernacle put off, or taken down, which will be put together again in better order than now it is.

Even as our Lord Jesus hath showed me; by some special revelation lately made to him; or by some strong impulse upon his mind; just as the Apostle Paul knew that the time of his departure was at hand, (2 Timothy 4:7) or this may have respect to the words of Christ to Peter, above thirty years before, in (John 21:18), which both signified what kind of death he should die, and when it should be; namely, when he was old, as now he was.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, I will endeavour*, etc.] He signifies, that he should not only use all diligence to stir them up to, and put them in remembrance of the necessary duties of their calling while he was alive, but should make it his study to concert some measures, and take some steps,

that you may be able after my decease: or Exodus, meaning his going out of this world by death, in allusion to the Israelites going out of Egypt, and

marching for Canaan's land; this world being, like Egypt, a place of wickedness, misery, and bondage; as heaven, like Canaan, a place and state of rest and happiness.

To have these things always in remembrance; by which they might be always put in mind of them, or by recurring to which they might have their memories refreshed; and what he means is, to leave these exhortations and admonitions in writing, which they might read, and be of use to them when he was dead and gone; and indeed by this, and his former epistle, though being dead, he yet speaketh.

Ver. 16. *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables*, etc.] Such as Jewish fables, cautioned against (<56114>Titus 1:14) which their traditionary and oral law, their Talmud, and other writings, mention; as concerning the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, the sumptuous feast, and carnal pleasures and entertainments, of that state, with many other things; some of which indeed are not very cunningly put together, but weak enough: or Gentile fables concerning the theogony and exploits of their deities; and which may be meant by fables and endless genealogies in (<54104>1 Timothy 1:4), and especially reference may be had to the metamorphoses of their gods, and their fables relating to them, devised by Ovid, and others, since the apostle is about to speak of the metamorphosis, or transfiguration of Christ; and also other fables with which their poets and histories abound; and likewise the prophecies of the Sibyls, and the oracles at Delphos, and elsewhere: or the fabulous accounts of the followers of Simon Magus concerning God, angels, the creation of the world, and the several Aeones; or the more artful composures of the false teachers, set off with all the cunning, sophistry, wit, and eloquence they were masters of. Now in order to set forth the nature, excellency, and certainty of the doctrine the apostle taught, especially that part of it which respected the coming of Christ; and to show that it was worth his while to put them in mind of it, and theirs to remember it; he observes, that he and his fellow apostles did not proceed in their account of it on such a foundation, but upon an evidence which they had received, both with their eyes and ears, and also on a word of prophecy surer than that:

when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; not his first coming, though that, and the benefits arising from it, were the subject of their ministry; and that was attended with divine power, which appeared in the incarnation of Christ itself, which was owing to the

power of the Highest; and was seen in his doctrine and ministry, which were with great authority; and in the miracles which he wrought, which proved him to have power equal with God, his Father; and in the work of redemption, which he came about and finished; in doing which he made an end of sin, and saved his people from it, redeemed them from the curse of the law, overcame the world, destroyed Satan, and abolished death; and especially in his resurrection from the dead, when he was declared to be the Son of God with power: but notwithstanding his first coming was in great humility, in much meanness and imbecility, he grew up as a tender plant, and was encompassed with infirmities, and at last was crucified through weakness. This therefore was to be understood of an after coming of his, which the apostle had wrote of, and made known in his former epistle, (<60107>1 Peter 1:7,13 4:5) and which he puts them in mind of in this, (<61301>2 Peter 3:1-4,10,12,13), nor is the word παρουσια, used of any other coming of Christ, and this will be with power; and it designs his more near coming to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, and deliver his people from the afflictions and persecution they laboured under, and which was with great power; (see <40403>Matthew 14:3,30 <41001>Mark 9:1), or more remote, namely, at the last day, when there will be a great display of power in raising the dead, gathering all nations before him, separating them one from another, passing the final sentence on each, and executing the same in the utter destruction of the wicked, and the complete glorification of the saints.

But were eyewitnesses of his majesty; meaning, not of the glory of his divine nature by faith, and with the eyes of their understanding, while others only considered him as a mere man; nor of the miracles he wrought, in which there was a display of his glory and majesty, of all which the apostles were eyewitnesses; but of that glory and greatness which were upon him, when he was transfigured on the mount before them; then his face was as the sun, and such a glory on his whole body, that it darted through his clothes, and made them glitter like light, and as white as snow, and so as no fuller on earth could whiten them; at which time also Moses and Elijah appeared in glorious forms: and now this was a prelude and pledge of his power and coming, of his kingdom coming with power, and of his coming in his own, and his Father's glory, and in the glory of the holy angels. This was a proof that notwithstanding his meanness in his incarnate state, yet he was glorified, and would be glorified again; and this was a

confirmation of it to the apostles, and might be to others: (see <40162>Matthew 16:27,28 17:1 <41838>Mark 8:38 9:1 <42926>Luke 9:26-28).

Ver. 17. *For he received from God the Father honour and glory*, etc.] Not as an inferior from a superior, for he was equal in glory with the Father, and was, and is, the brightness of his Father's glory; nor essentially, having the same glory as his Father, and to which nothing can be added; but declaratively, God the Father testifying of his glory, declaring the honour that belonged to him, as the Son of God, at the same time that an external glory was put on him, and received by him, as the son of man:

when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory; from the bright cloud which overshadowed Jesus, Moses, and Elijah and was a symbol of the glory and presence of God, as the cloud in the tabernacle and temple were, (<021435>Exodus 40:35,36 <110810>1 Kings 8:10,11), or from heaven, the habitation of the holiness and glory of God, and where he displays the glory of his being and perfections; or from himself, who is the God and Father of glory, and is glorious in himself, in all his attributes and works. So dwbk, "glory", with the Cabalistic Jews, signifies the Shechinah, or divine presence [f4]; and every number in the Cabalistic tree is called by the name of "glory"; the second number, which is "wisdom", is called "the first glory"; and the third number, "understanding", is called ˆwyl[dwbk, "the supreme", or "chief glory" [f5]: so the first path, which is the supreme crown, is sometimes called the first glory, as the Father is here the most excellent glory; and the second path, which is the understanding enlightening, the second glory [f6]. And this voice was not that at his baptism; for though that was from heaven, and from God the Father, and expressed the same words as here; yet it was not on a mount, nor from a cloud, nor was it heard by the apostles, who, as yet, were not with Christ, nor called by him; nor that of which mention is made in (<431228>John 12:28), for though that also was from God the Father, and from heaven, and which declaratively gave honour and glory to Christ, yet did not express the words here mentioned; but that voice which came from the cloud, when Christ was transfigured on the mount, and which was heard by his three disciples, Peter, James, and John, when the following words were articulately pronounced, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased": (see Gill on "<401705>Matthew 17:5"). The Vulgate Latin version adds here, as there, "hear ye him".

Ver. 18. *And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard*, etc.] Peter, who wrote this epistle, and James and John, the favourite disciples of

Christ; and who were a sufficient number to bear witness of what they then saw and heard:

when we were with him; and saw his glory, and the glory of Moses and Elias, and were so delighted with his company, and theirs, and with communion with him, that Peter, in the name of the rest, desired to stay there:

in the holy mount; the Ethiopic version reads, “in the mountain of his sanctuary”; and so Grotius understands it of Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built, called the holy hill, and the holy hill of Zion; and supposes that this voice was heard in the temple, and that it refers to (<43128>John 12:28), but without any foundation; for the mount on which Christ was transfigured is here meant; and which was either, as is generally said, Tabor, a mountain in Galilee; or it may be Lebanon, which was near Caesarea Philippi, in the parts of which Christ then was: and it is called “holy”, from his presence or transfiguration on it, who is the Holy One; just as the land on which Moses was, and the city and temple of Jerusalem, and Mount Sion, and Sinai, are called “holy”, from the presence of the holy God there, (<02305>Exodus 3:5 <40405>Matthew 4:5 <19106>Psalm 2:6 68:17). Now such a declaration of the honour and glory of Christ, as the Son of God, being made by God the Father, in a voice from heaven, which the apostles heard with their ears, at the same time that they saw with their eyes his human body glorified in an amazing manner, was to them a confirming evidence that he would come again in power and glory; and upon this evidence they declared, and made known to the saints, the power and coming of Christ; though not on this evidence only, but also upon the more sure word of prophecy, which entirely agrees with it.

Ver. 19. *We have also a more sure word of prophecy*, etc.] Though this word of prophecy is generally understood of the writings and prophecies of the Old Testament concerning Christ, yet different ways are taken to fix the comparison: some think the sense is, that they are more sure than the cunningly devised fables, (<61016>2 Peter 1:16) but as these have no certainty nor authority in them, but are entirely to be rejected, the apostle would never put the sacred writings in comparison with them: and it is most clear, that the comparison lies between this word of prophecy, and the testimony of the apostles, who were eye and ear witnesses of the majesty and glory of Christ; but how prophecy should be a surer evidence of Christ, and the Gospel, than such a testimony, is difficult to understand; and is a sense

which all agree to reject, by different methods: some think that a comparative is used for a positive, and that the meaning is, that besides the testimony of the apostles, prophecy is a very sure evidence; and this is countenanced by the Syriac version, which renders it, “and we have also a firm”, or “true word of prophecy”; to which the Arabic agrees, “and we have a word of prophecy very true”: others choose to retain the comparison, and which indeed ought not to be thrown out; but these are divided about it; some are of opinion that it is to be understood of the Jews to whom the apostle writes, and he himself was one, and the sense to be this; not that prophecy in itself was surer than an apostolical testimony, but that it was surer to the Jews, and more valid with them, who had been trained up in, and long used to the prophetic writings; and who had a greater esteem for the prophets of the Old Testament than for the apostles of the New; but it is scarcely credible that the apostle, who had been an eye and ear witness in the holy mount, would put himself in among them, and say, “we have”, etc. for whatever prophecy was to them, it could not be surer to him than what he had seen with his eyes, and heard with his ears. Others suppose that the meaning is, that prophecy was “now” surer to the Christians than it was “before”, it being confirmed and established by facts and events, and also by miracles, and even by the attestation of this voice heard on the mount, and by the majesty of Christ seen there; but if this had been the sense of the apostle, he would have used these words, “now” and “before”; and besides, this puts the comparison quite out of its place, which manifestly stands between former prophecy, and the present testimony of the apostles: but the truth of the matter is, that this word of prophecy is not to be understood of the prophetic writings of the Old Testament; for though these are the word of God, and do testify of Christ, and are to be taken heed, and attended to, as proofs and evidence of Gospel truths, and are a light to direct and guide in matters both of faith and practice, yet they are not the only light, and are far from being the clearest, and what are only to be attended to; for the Gospel that came by Christ, and is preached by his apostles, and is contained in the writings of the New Testament, is a much clearer light, and at least equally to be attended to: nor are the prophecies of the Old Testament, which particularly relate to Christ, designed; there are many of this kind, which, put together, may very well be called the word of prophecy, and which were to the Jews a light in a dark place, until Christ came in the flesh; and though they are to be attended to, and compared with facts, to show the truth of the divine revelation, yet they are not a surer evidence, nor so sure an evidence, as

the evangelical testimony is, which is of facts, and these supported by miracles; for now the dayspring from on high hath visited us, and Christ, the bright and morning star, has appeared: but the word of prophecy, concerning Christ's second coming, is here intended, whether it lies in the words of the prophets of the Old Testament, as in (<19613>Psalm 96:13 <27709>Daniel 7:9,10,13) or in the words of Christ, (<40162>Matthew 16:27,28 24:3,30,44), which latter is most likely. The Ethiopic version understands this of some particular prophecy, and as if the words were a citation of some prophet, rendering the words thus, “and we have a voice more ancient than this of a prophet, saying, ye do well who take heed”, etc. Sir Isaac Newton is of opinion, that the apostle refers to the book of the Revelation of St. John, which would not be unlikely, could it be proved that it was then written. Now this prophecy or prediction, concerning Christ's coming again with power and great glory, was a surer evidence of it than what the apostles saw with their eyes, and heard with their ears upon the mount; nothing was surer to them, nor could anything make it surer to them, that he was honoured and glorified, than what they saw and heard: but then this did not so certainly prove that he would hereafter be glorified, or come again in glory. What they saw and heard was a presumptive proof that it “might” be so, and was a confirming pledge and evidence to them that so it “would” be, and was a glorious representation of it; but Christ's prophecy or prediction, that so it “should” be, more strongly ascertained it, since he said it, to whom all things were known from the beginning, and whose counsel shall stand, and not one word of his shall ever fail.

Whereunto ye do well, that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. The prophecy concerning Christ's second coming is as “as a light”; it is a revelation of that which was in the dark, lay hid as a secret and mystery in the heart of God; and which could not be known by men, had it not been foretold by God; and it is made as prophecy in all other cases is, by throwing light, as to this affair, into the mind of him, or them, to whom it is revealed; and is a light to them to whom it is delivered, and which they should attend unto, as to a lamp or torch to guide and direct them; though in some sense it is but a feeble one, and is as a light “that shineth in a dark place”; meaning not the world, which is a place of darkness, ignorance, and error; nor merely the state of the saints in general in this life, who, at most and best, see but through a glass darkly; but has a particular respect to the

darkness which attends the saints, concerning the second coming of Christ, and which will especially attend them a little before that time. Prophecy holds out clearly that Christ will come again; that he will come in great glory, in his Father's, and in his own, and in the glory of his angels, and with great power, to raise the dead, and judge mankind; and though it gives hints, that, upon this, the saints shall be with Christ in the air, on earth, and in heaven; and that there will be new heavens, and a new earth; and that the saints shall reign here with Christ a thousand years, after which the Gog and Magog army will attack them without success; yet these are not so clear, as for saints to be agreed in the sense of them; and much more are they in the dark about the time of his coming. Now prophecy is the surest evidence and best light the saints have concerning this matter, “until the day dawn”; not the Gospel day, so much spoken of by the prophets, that had dawned already; rather a more clear knowledge of Christ, and Gospel truths, which will be in the spiritual kingdom and reign of Christ hereafter; or else the latter day glory, at the personal coming of Christ, when the light of the moon shall be as that of the sun, and that of the sun shall be sevenfold as the light of seven days; yea, when there will be no need of sun or moon, but Christ shall be come, and be the light of his people; (see <2306>Isaiah 30:26 60:1,2 <6623>Revelation 21:23,24) after which will follow the everlasting day of glory, when all darkness will be gone, and saints shall see face to face, and know as they are known:

and the day star arise in your hearts; or “the sun”, as the Syriac version renders it; not Christ, the morning star, the dayspring from on high, and the sun of righteousness, who was already risen upon them; nor the grace of God implanted in their hearts, by which they were already called out of darkness, and made light in the Lord; but as the day star is the bringer of light, as the word used signifies, or the forerunner of the day, so it here intends the immediate signs and forerunners of the coming of Christ; which when observed in their hearts, and by their understandings, as being come to pass, they may lift up their heads with joy, because their redemption draws near, (<4228>Luke 21:28) and so the Ethiopic here renders it, “and redemption, arise for you in your hearts”. Now till this time the sure word of prophecy concerning Christ's second coming is to be “taken heed unto”, as a lamp, light, and torch, to direct us to it, to encourage us to love it, long for it, and hasten to it: and in so doing we shall “do well”; it will be well for the glory of God and Christ, this being setting our seals to them as

true; and well for ourselves to keep up our faith, hope, and expectation of it, unmoved.

Ver. 20. *Knowing this first*, etc.] Especially, and in the first place, this is to be known, observed, and considered;

that no prophecy of the Scripture, that is contained in Scripture, be it what it will,

is of any private interpretation: not that this is levelled against the right of private judgment of Scripture; or to be understood as if a private believer had not a right of reading, searching, examining, and judging, and interpreting the Scriptures himself, by virtue of the unction which teacheth all things; and who, as a spiritual man, judgeth all things; otherwise, why are such commended as doing well, by taking heed to prophecy, in the preceding verse, and this given as a reason to encourage them to it? the words may be rendered, “of one's own interpretation”; that is, such as a natural man forms of himself, by the mere force of natural parts and wisdom, without the assistance of the Spirit of God; and which is done without comparing spiritual things with spiritual; and which is not agreeably to the Scripture, to the analogy of faith, and mind of Christ; though rather this phrase should be rendered, “no prophecy of the Scripture is of a man's own impulse”, invention, or composition; is not human, but purely divine: and this sense carries in it a reason why the sure word of prophecy, concerning the second coming of Christ, should be taken heed to, and made use of as a light, till he does come; because as no Scripture prophecy, so not that, is a contrivance of man's, his own project and device, and what his own spirit prompts and impels him to, but what is made by the dictates and impulse of the Spirit of God; for whatever may be said of human predictions, or the false prophecies of lying men, who deliver them out how and when they please, nothing of this kind can be said of any Scripture prophecy, nor of this concerning the second coming of Christ; and this sense the following words require.

Ver. 21. *For the prophecy*, etc.] The whole Scripture, all the prophetic writings; so the Jews call the Scriptures hawbnh, “the prophecy” [f7], by way of eminence, and from the subject matter of the sacred word:

came not in old time by the will of man; was not brought into the world at first, or in any period of time, as and when man would, according to his pleasure, and as he thought fit: neither Moses, nor David, nor Isaiah, nor

Jeremiah, nor Ezekiel, nor Daniel, nor any other of the prophets, prophesied when they pleased, but when it was the will of God they should; they were stirred up to prophesy, not by any human impulse, but by a divine influence: with this agrees what R. Sangari says,

> "that the speech of the prophets, when the Holy Spirit clothed them, in all their words was directed by a divine influence, and the prophet could not speak in the choice of his own words,"

or according to his will:

but holy men of God; such as he sanctified by his Spirit, and separated from the rest of men to such peculiar service; and whom he employed as public ministers of his word: for so this phrase "men", or "man of God", often signifies, (1 Samuel 2:27 2 Timothy 3:17)

spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; who illuminated their minds, gave them a knowledge of divine things, and a foresight of future ones; dictated to them what they should say or write; and moved upon them strongly, and by a secret and powerful impulse stirred them up to deliver what they did, in the name and fear of God: which shows the authority of the Scriptures, that they are the word of God, and not of men; and as such should be attended to, and received with all affection and reverence; and that the Spirit is the best interpreter of them, who first dictated them; and that they are to be the rule of our faith and practice; nor are we to expect any other, until the second coming of Christ.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO 2 PETER 2

This chapter contains a description of false teachers, that were then in Christian churches, as there had been false prophets among the Jews; and they are described by the doctrines, which they privily introduced; in general, damnable heresies; in particular, denying the Lord that bought them; and by their success, having many followers of them in their pernicious ways; and by the sad effects following hereupon; with respect to the way of truth, that was blasphemed; with respect to their hearers, they, through the covetousness of these false teachers, were made merchandise of; and with respect to themselves, swift and sure destruction would be brought upon them, (<61201>2 Peter 2:1-3), which is illustrated and confirmed by the instances of punishment in the angels, the men of the old world, and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, (<61204>2 Peter 2:4-8) and whereas, in these instances, notice is taken of the deliverance of some righteous persons, as Noah and Lot, when wicked men were destroyed; the apostle draws this conclusion from the whole, that the Lord knows both how to deliver the saints out of afflictions, and to reserve wicked men until the day of judgment, then to be punished, (<61209>2 Peter 2:9), especially such shall be then punished, who are described by their impure course of lift, their contempt of civil government, and their presumption and selfwill, (<61210>2 Peter 1:10) which sins of theirs are aggravated by the different conduct of angels, superior to them; and by their being like brute beasts, as ignorant as they, and even below them; whose punishment will be to perish in their corruption, as the just reward of their unrighteousness, since they are open in sin, take pleasure in it, and sport themselves with it, and are spots and blemishes in Christian societies, (<61211>2 Peter 2:11-13) and these, who are no other than the false teachers before spoken of, are further described by their adulterous eyes, which cannot cease from sin; by their beguiling unstable souls; by the covetous practices their hearts were exercised with; by their just desert, cursed children; by the course they steer, forsaking the right way, going astray from it, and following the way of Balaam in his covetousness, and other wicked practices, for which he was reproved by his ass; and by various metaphors, which express the emptiness of these

persons, and which also point at their destruction, and describe their boasts and brags, and the influence they have, through their lasciviousness and uncleanness, on some persons, who have been outwardly reformed, (<61214>2 Peter 2:14-18) and this they obtain over them in a very stupid and senseless way, by promising them liberty, when through being overcome by them, and drawn into sin, they were brought into bondage, and become servants of corruption; and so their case is worse than it was before their reformation, and profession of religion; and better it would have been not to have had the knowledge they had, than after it to turn from the paths of truth and holiness, which is illustrated by a true Scripture proverb, which expresses the filthy nature of sin, the character of these men, and their irrecoverable state and condition, (<61019>2 Peter 2:19-22).

Ver. 1. *But there were false prophets also among the people*, etc.] As well as holy men of God, who gave out prophecies, by the inspiration and impulse of the Holy Spirit; that is, among the people of the Jews, God's professing people, whose God was the Lord, and who had chosen them to be a special and peculiar people, above all people of the earth; and had distinguished them by his favours from all others: among these, though the Syriac version reads “in the world”, there were false prophets, who ran, and were not sent; and who prophesied, and the Lord spake not to them: of these there were many in Jeremiah's time, and in the times of Ezekiel; and in Ahab's time, besides the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, slain by Elijah, there were four hundred that called themselves the prophets of the Lord; among whom went forth a lying spirit, encouraging Ahab to go up to Ramoth Gilead, promising him prosperity and success; Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah, with whom Micaiah, the true prophet, had much contention, was at the head of them; and such there were among that people in all ages, until the times of Christ, and in his likewise; (see <40715>Matthew 7:15) now from these, by an easy transition, the apostle proceeds to another part of his design in this epistle, to describe the characters of false teachers under the present dispensation, that saints may beware, and avoid their pernicious principles and practices:

even as there shall be false teachers among you; which need not to be wondered at, or stumble any, it being no new or strange thing, but what was always more or less the case of the people of God. This is a prophecy of what should be, and agrees with the prediction of our Lord, (<402411>Matthew 24:11,24) and which regards not only the times immediately following, in which it had a remarkable fulfilment, for false teachers now

began to arise, and appeared in great numbers in the age succeeding the apostles, but to all periods of time from hence, to the second coming of Christ; and these were to spring from, and be among such that bore the Christian name, and so regards not Mahometans and Deists; and it is to be observed, that the phrase is varied in this clause, and these are called not "prophets" but "teachers": because as prophecy was more peculiar to the former dispensation, so is teaching to the present:

who privily shall bring in damnable heresies: errors in the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel; such as relate to a trinity of persons in the Godhead; and to the person of Christ, to his proper deity, distinct personality, eternal sonship, and real humanity; and to his office as Mediator, rejecting him as the true Messiah, and as the only Saviour of sinners; denying his sacrifice and satisfaction, and the imputation of his righteousness; and to the Holy Spirit, his deity, personality, and divine influences and operations: these are "damnable", or "destructive", or "heresies of destruction"; which lead to eternal destruction both those that introduce and propagate them, and those that embrace and profess them; for they remove, or attempt to remove, the foundation of eternal life and happiness: the manner in which these are usually introduced is "privily"; at unawares, secretly, under a disguise, and gradually, by little and little, and not at once, and openly; and which is the constant character and practice of such men, who lie in wait to deceive, creep into churches at unawares, and into houses privately; and insinuate their principles under specious pretences and appearances of truth, using the hidden things of dishonesty, walking in craftiness, handling the word of God deceitfully, and colouring things with false glosses and feigned words: and even denying the Lord that bought them; not the Lord Jesus Christ, but God the Father; for the word κυριος is not here used, which always is where Christ is spoken of as the Lord, but δεσποτης; and which is expressive of the power which masters have over their servants [f8], and which God has over all mankind; and wherever this word is elsewhere used, it is spoken of God the Father, whenever applied to a divine person, as in (<4029>Luke 2:29 <4024>Acts 4:24 <5522>2 Timothy 2:21 <6610>Revelation 6:10) and especially this appears to be the sense, from the parallel text in (<6104>Jude 1:4) where the Lord God denied by those men is manifestly distinguished from our Lord Jesus Christ, and by whom these persons are said to be bought: the meaning is not that they were redeemed by the blood of Christ, for Christ is not intended; and besides, whenever redemption by Christ is spoken of, the

price is usually mentioned, or some circumstance or another which fully determines the sense; see (<442028>Acts 20:28 <461620>1 Corinthians 6:20 7:23 <490107>Ephesians 1:7 <600118>1 Peter 1:18,19 <660509>Revelation 5:9) whereas here is not the least hint of anything of this kind: add to this, that such who are redeemed by Christ are the elect of God only, the people of Christ, his sheep and friends, and church, and who are never left to deny him so as to perish eternally; for could such be lost, or deceive, or be deceived finally and totally by damnable heresies, and bring on themselves swift destruction, Christ's purchase would be in vain, and the ransom price be paid for nought; but the word “bought” regards temporal mercies and deliverance, which these men enjoyed, and is used as an aggravation of their sin in denying the Lord; both by words, delivering out such tenets as are derogatory to the glory of the divine perfections, and which deny one or other of them, and of his purposes, providence, promises, and truths; and by works, turning the doctrine of the grace of God into lasciviousness, being disobedient and reprobate to every good work; that they should act this part against the Lord who had made them, and upheld them in their beings and took care of them in his providence, and had followed them with goodness and mercy all the days of their lives; just as Moses aggravates the ingratitude of the Jews in (<053206>Deuteronomy 32:6) from whence this phrase is borrowed, and to which it manifestly refers: “do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise! is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?” nor is this the only place the apostle refers to in this chapter, (see <610212>2 Peter 2:12,13) compared with (<053205>Deuteronomy 32:5) and it is to be observed, that the persons he writes to were Jews, who were called the people the Lord had redeemed and purchased, (<021513>Exodus 15:13,16) and so were the first false teachers that rose up among them; and therefore this phrase is very applicable to them:

and bring upon themselves swift destruction; either in this life, being suddenly cut off in the midst of their days, and by the immediate hand of God, as Arius and other heretics have been; or eternal damnation in the other, which their tenets lead unto, and which will swiftly come upon them when they are promising themselves peace and safety.

Ver. 2. *And many shall follow their pernicious ways*, etc.] Their principles and their practices, which lead to destruction, The Complutensian edition, the Alexandrian copy, and six copies of Beza's, and others, read “their lasciviousnesses”; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “their

luxuries”; and all the Oriental versions seem to have read in like manner. The Syriac version renders it, “their impurity”; and the Arabic version, “their unchastities”; and the Ethiopic version, “their lust”; and which seems to have respect to the impure conversation of the followers of Simon Magus, the Nicolaitans, the Gnostics, Carpocratians, and others, who indulged themselves in all unnatural lusts and uncleanness; and generally, when men make shipwreck of faith, they also do of a good conscience, and become immoral in their conversations; and yet, as destructive as their principles, and as dishonourable and scandalous as their practices be, many were, and are their followers; so it was foretold by Christ, (Matthew 24:11), and so it has been, (Revelation 13:3). The road both of error and wickedness is a broad one, in which many walk; and a multitude is no proof of the truth of a church or of the principles of men, nor to be followed:

by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of; that is, either Christ, who is truth itself, and the true way to eternal life and happiness; or the Gospel, the word of truth, which holds forth Christ the truth, and points to him, and every other truth, and nothing but truth; or the Christian religion, which is the true way, in opposition to all sects and heresies; and is what should be blasphemed and spoken against, either by these men or their followers; for the phrase may be rendered, “by whom”, as it is in the Vulgate Latin version, and the meaning be, that they should, in a blasphemous way, speak and write against Christ and his truths, reproach and revile them, and in a virulent manner oppose them, and trample them under foot: “or for the sake of them”, as other versions read; and as we do; “by reason of them”; they should be the occasion, by their impure lives, of the name of Christ, and his doctrines, being blasphemed by profane and irreligious men; (see Romans 2:24). The Alexandrian copy, and one of Stephens's, read “the glory of truth”; and so the Ethiopic version, “the glory of his truth”.

Ver. 3. *And through covetousness*; etc.] Which is generally a prevailing vice among false teachers, they having no other end in view than themselves; either to gain popular applause and vain glory, which they are always covetous of; or to amass riches to themselves, after which they have an insatiable desire:

shall they with feigned words; made words, words of their own devising, and not which the Holy Ghost teacheth; whereby they cover themselves,

and privily introduce their pernicious principles; and therefore new words and phrases are always to be suspected and guarded against, especially in articles of moment and importance: or with flattering words and fair speeches, great swelling words of vanity, having men's persons in admiration, because of worldly advantage; and in this way they gain their point:

make merchandise of you; deal with the souls of men, as merchants do with their goods, carry them to market and sell them; so false teachers deal with the souls of their followers, draw them, and sell them to Satan, and they themselves pay for it; (see <38115>Zechariah 11:5 <66183>Revelation 18:13) but in the issue, and that in a short time, they will be no gainers by such practices:

whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not: that is, their condemnation, which God in righteousness has determined, “from the creation of the world”, as the Ethiopic version reads, or from all eternity, (see <65104>Jude 1:4), to bring them into, for their vile principles and practices, is not retarded and delayed; it does not linger and stay behind, or slacken its pace; it will not tarry, it will come upon them at the appointed time:

and their damnation slumbereth not; an avenging God, who has appointed them to damnation for their sins, slumbers not; the justice of God is not asleep, nor careless and negligent, but is awake, and watches over them, to bring the evil upon them they have deserved, and is in reserve for them, and will hasten to perform it; the determined destruction does not lie dormant, but in a little time will be stirred up, and fall with dreadful weight on such sinners, as may be concluded from the following awful instances.

Ver. 4. *For if God spared not the angels that sinned*. etc.] By whom are meant the devil and his angels; who are spirits created by God and as such were good; their first estate which they left was pure and holy, as well as high and honourable; they, were at first in the truth, though they abode not in it; they were once among the morning stars and sons of God, and were angels of light; their numbers are many, and therefore are here expressed in the plural number, “angels”, though it cannot be said how large; a legion of them was in one man; one at first might be in the rebellion, and draw a large number with him into it, at least was at the head of it, who is called Beelzebub, the prince of devils: what their first sin was, and the occasion of it, is not easy to say; it is generally thought to be pride, affecting a likeness to, or an equality with God; since this was what man was tempted to by

them, and by which he fell, as they are thought to do; and because this is the sin of such who fall into the condemnation of the devil; (<540306>1 Timothy 3:6) and is the sin, that goes before a fall in common; as it did before the fall of man, so it might before the fall of angels, (<201618>Proverbs 16:18). The passage in (<430844>John 8:44) seems most clearly of any to express their sin, which was “not abiding in the truth”; in the truth of the Gospel, particularly the great truth of the salvation of men, by the incarnate Son of God; and which they could by no means brook and which might spring from pride, they not bearing the thought that the human nature should be exalted above theirs; hence the Jews, in opposing Christ as the Messiah and Saviour, are said to be of their father the devil, and to do his lusts; and Judas that betrayed him, and fell from his apostleship, and the truth, is called a devil; and the heresies of men, respecting the person and office of Christ, are styled doctrines of devils; and men that have professed this truth, and afterwards deny it, are represented in the same irrecoverable and desperate case with devils, and must expect the same punishment, (<430844>John 8:44 6:70 <540401>1 Timothy 4:1 <581006>Hebrews 6:6 10:26,29), and also it may be observed on the contrary, that the good angels that stand, greatly love, value, esteem, and pry into the truths of the Gospel; particularly the scheme of man's salvation, by the incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death of Christ: now these

God spared not; or “had no mercy on”, as the Arabic version renders it; he did not forgive their sin, nor provide a Saviour for them; but directly, and at once, notwithstanding the dignity and excellency of their nature, in strict justice, and awful severity, without any mercy, inflicted due punishment on them; wherefore it cannot be thought that false teachers, who, as they, abide not in the truth, but deny and oppose it, should escape the vengeance of God:

but cast them down to hell; they were hurled out of heaven, from whence they fell as lightning, into the “lowest”, or inferior places, as the Syriac version renders it; either into the air, as in (<490202>Ephesians 2:2) or into the earth; as in (<661209>Revelation 12:9) or into the deep, the abyss, the bottomless pit, where they are detained, as in a prison, (<420831>Luke 8:31 <660901>Revelation 9:11 20:3,7) though for certain reasons, and at certain times, are suffered to come forth, and rove about in this earth, and in the air: and these, when removed from their ancient seats in heaven, were not merely bid to go away, as the wicked will at the day of judgment; or were “drove” out, as

Adam was from the garden of Eden; but “cast down”; with great power, indignation, wrath, and contempt, never to be raised and restored again:

[and] delivered [them] into chains of darkness: leaving them under the guilt of sin, which is the power of darkness, and in black despair; shutting them up in unbelief, impenitence, and hardness of mind; being holden with the cords of their sins, and in the most dreadful state of bondage and captivity to their lusts, in just judgment on them; and in the most miserable and uncomfortable condition, being driven from the realms of light, deprived of the face and presence of God, in the utmost horror and trembling, and fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation to consume them; and in utter darkness, without the least glimmering of light, joy, peace, and comfort; and where there is nothing but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; and being also under the restraints of the power and providence of God, and not able to stir or move, or do anything without divine permission; and being likewise, by the everlasting, unalterable, and inscrutable purposes and decrees of God, appointed to everlasting wrath and destruction; by which they are consigned and bound over to it, and held fast, that they cannot escape it:

to be reserved unto judgment: to the day of judgment, to the last and general judgment; the judgment of torment, as the Syriac version here calls it; the words may be rendered, “and delivered them to be kept at judgment, in chains of darkness”; when they will be in full torment, which they are not yet in; and then they will be cast into the lake of fire prepared for them, and be everlastingly shut up in the prison of hell from whence they will never more be suffered to go out; till which time they are indeed under restraints, and are held in by Christ, who has the power of binding and loosing them at pleasure; and who then, as the Judge of men and devils, will bring them forth, and pass and execute sentence on them. The Jews give an account of the dejection, fall, and punishment of the angels, in a manner pretty much like this of Peter's, whom they speak of under different names; so of the serpent that deceived Adam and Eve, whom they call Samael, and because of that sin of his, they say [f9] that the Lord

> “cast down Samael and his company from the place of their holiness, out of heaven;”

and of Aza and Azael, angels, who, they say, sinned by lusting after the daughters of men, they frequently affirm, that God cast them down from their holiness [f10], and that he attl ˆwl lypa, “cast them down below in

chains”[f11]; and that God cast them down from their holiness from above; and when they descended, they were rolled in the air — and he brought them to the mountains of darkness, which are called the mountains of the east, and bound them “in chains” of iron, and the chains were sunk into the midst of the great deep[f12]: and elsewhere they say[f13], that God cast them down from their holy degree, out of heaven — from their holy place out of heaven — and bound them in “chains” of iron, in the mountains of “darkness”.

Ver. 5. *And spared not the old world*, etc.] In distinction from the present world, that now is; which was, as it were, formed anew out of that which was destroyed by the deluge. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “the original world”; and the Ethiopic version, “the first world”; it designs the ancient inhabitants of the world, as it was from the beginning, before the flood; who, being wicked, were not spared by God, but had just punishment inflicted on them:

but saved Noah the eighth person; not the eighth from Adam, as Enoch is said to be the seventh from him, (<jud 1:14>Jude 1:14) for he was the tenth; nor is it to be read with the following clause, “the eighth preacher of righteousness”; but he was the eighth person, or one of the eight persons, saved from the flood; (see <1pe 3:20>1 Peter 3:20) hence the Ethiopic version, rather as a paraphrase than a version, renders it, “but caused to remain seven souls with Noah; whom he saved”; Hottinger[f14] and Dr. Hammond[f15] observe, from the Arabic writers, that the mountain on which the ark rested, and a town near it, were called Themenim; that is, “the eight”, from the number of persons then and there saved:

a preacher of righteousness; of the righteousness of God, in all his ways and works, and in case he should destroy the world by a flood, as he had threatened; and of civil and moral righteousness among men, both by words, during the building of the ark, and by works, by his own example, in his righteous life and conversation; and of the righteousness of faith, or of Christ, by which he was justified and of which he was an heir, (<heb 11:7>Hebrews 11:7), the Jews[f16] say that Noah was a prophet; and they represent him also, as a preacher, and even tell us the very words he used in his exhortations to the old world[f17], saying,

> “be ye turned from your evil ways and works, lest the waters of the flood come upon you, and cut off all the seed of the children of men:”

but though Noah, a preacher of righteousness, was saved, false teachers cannot expect to escape divine vengeance; who only are transformed as ministers of righteousness, but in truth are ministers of unrighteousness; opposers of the righteousness of Christ, and live unrighteous lives and conversations, and so their end will be according to their works:

bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; or "the ungodly of the world", as a[ray[çr "the ungodly of the earth" [f18]; (see <197308>Psalm 75:8) though here it indeed means a whole world of wicked men, all but a very few, which were destroyed by the flood. This expresses both the wickedness of the men of that generation, the imagination of the thoughts of whose heart were evil continually; and whose lives were filled up with uncleanness, violence, rapine, oppression, injustice, and corruption, of all sorts; and likewise the large numbers of them, there was a whole world of them; and yet this did not secure them from the wrath of God, but served to stir it up the more; wherefore false teachers and their followers must not build upon their numbers, or hope to be screened from just punishment on that account; since a world of ungodly men were, for their wickedness, at once swept away, with a flood of God's bringing upon them; causing that very useful and serviceable element of water to be the means of their destruction; for this was not a casual thing, which came of itself, or by chance, but was of God himself, who broke up the fountains of the great deep, and opened the windows of heaven, and destroyed at once all mankind, men, women, and children, and every living creature, excepting what were with Noah in the ark: and since they were persons of such a character as here described, it is not to be thought their punishment is ended here; it is the general notion of the Jews [f19], that

> "the generation of the flood shall have no part in the world to come, nor shall they stand in judgment."

Ver. 6. *And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes*, etc.] By raining brimstone and fire upon them from heaven, (<011924>Genesis 19:24) which soon reduced them to ashes, with Admah and Zeboiim, (<052925>Deuteronomy 29:25), cities delightfully situated, which were as the garden of God, and the land of Egypt, together with the inhabitants of them; and after they had received a signal mercy, in being rescued by Abraham from the kings who had carried them captive; and though Abraham, the friend of God, interceded for them, and righteous Lot dwelt among them. The first of these cities is in the Hebrew language called

Sedom; Philo the Jew [f20] calls it Sodoma, as in (<460929>Romans 9:29) and in the Septuagint on (<011310>Genesis 13:10 18:22 19:1 <230109>Isaiah 1:9) here it is said to be a city, and Josephus [f21] always calls it the city of the Sodomites, but in (<401015>Matthew 10:15 11:24) we read of the land of Sodom; and so Philo [f22] the Jew speaks of χωρα, the region or country of the Sodomites; here the word is of the plural number, as in (<401015>Matthew 10:15 11:23,24) (<421729>Luke 17:29) as it is also in the Septuagint in (<011019>Genesis 10:19 13:13) (<011402>Genesis 14:2,8,10-12,16,17,21,22) and in Philo the Jew [f23], and so is Gomorrah in some copies of this, place, as in (<401015>Matthew 10:15). Solinus, the historian, gives an account of these cities, in agreement with this;

> “a good way off of Jerusalem (he says [f24]) is opened a sorrowful gulf, which the black ground, “in cinerem soluta”, “reduced to ashes”, shows it to be touched by heaven; there were two towns, or cities, the one called Sodom, and the other Gomorrah; where an apple is produced, which, although it has an appearance of ripeness, cannot be eaten; for the outward skin that encompasses it only contains a sort of soot, or embers within, which, ever so lightly squeezed, evaporates into smoke and dust;”

and so the author of the book of Wisdom 10:7 speaking of the five cities, on which fire fell, says,

> “of whose wickedness, even to this day, the waste land that smoketh is a testimony; and plants bearing fruit, that never come to ripeness.”

Philo the Jew [f25] says, that

> “there are showed to this day in Syria monuments of this unspeakable destruction that happened; as ruins, ashes, sulphur, smoke, and a weak flame, breaking forth as of a fire burning:”

condemned [them] with an overthrow; by this sad “catastrophe” God condemned the sins of those men of Sodom and Gomorrah, and condemned their persons to everlasting damnation; of which their temporal punishment was an emblem and figure; (see <650107>Jude 1:7), the word “overthrow” is generally used when this destruction is spoken of, (<052923>Deuteronomy 29:23 <231319>Isaiah 13:19 <245040>Jeremiah 50:40 <300411>Amos 4:11) and therefore retained by the apostle here:

making them ensamples unto those who after should live ungodly; in the commission of any sins, and be open, bold, and impudent in them, and declare them as they did; and especially that should live in the commission of the same sins, those unnatural lusts and uncleannesses, which to this day go by the name of “sodomy”, and “sodomitical” practices; now the punishment of the inhabitants of these cities was an ensample to such wicked conduct, showing what they must expect, and was a representation of those everlasting burnings, which such sinners, as a righteous retaliation for their burning lusts, shall be cast into. The Jews say [f26] the same of the men of Sodom and Gomorrah as of the old world;

> “the men of Sodom have no part in the world to come, as is said (<01313>Genesis 13:13) “but the men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly”; wicked in this world, and sinners in the world to come;”

(See Gill on “<65007>Jude 1:7”).

Ver. 7. *And delivered just Lot*, etc.] Who was a just man, being justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; and having the new man formed in him, which is created in righteousness and true holiness; and living soberly, righteously, and godly, though not without sin: for there is not a just man that lives and sinneth not; this righteous man was delivered from the burning of Sodom by the means of angels, (<01916>Genesis 19:16,17). The Jews are very injurious to this good man's character, and give a very different one of him from this of the apostle's; they call him a wicked man, a perfect wicked man, as wicked as the inhabitants of Sodom [f27]; and say, that because they abounded in sin, therefore Lot chose to dwell among them [f28]; and affirm [f29], that all the time he was with Abraham, God did not join himself to him, and did not commune with Abraham on his account; but, when he was separated from him, did; they call him the evil imagination, and the old serpent that was accursed, and cursed Lot [f30]; but Philo the Jew [f31] speaks better of him, and says that he did not embrace and delight in the iniquities of the inhabitants, though he did not arrive to the perfection of wisdom; and the author of the book of Wisdom calls him the “righteous man”,

> “When the ungodly perished, she delivered the righteous man, who fled from the fire which fell down upon the five cities.” (Wisdom 10:6)

as the apostle does here; and very truly, since it follows:

vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; the inhabitants of Sodom, who had no regard to the laws of God or man, or to the law and light of nature; but as worse than brute beasts, lived daily in the commission of unnatural lusts; and therefore their conversation is rightly said to be filthy, and was a grievous burden to righteous Lot: for to a good man, not only his own sins, but the sins of others, whether professors or profane, are a burden, and make him groan under them, being grievously fatigued with them, as this good man was, and weary of life because of them, as Rebekah was, through the daughters of Heth.

Ver. 8. *For that righteous man dwelling among them*, etc.] Which is sometimes the lot of good men, to their great sorrow and grief, (<19C005>Psalm 120:5-7 <230605>Isaiah 6:5). Upon mentioning those words in (<011312>Genesis 13:12,13) "and pitched his tent towards Sodom", but the men of Sodom were wicked, etc. says R. Eleazar [f32];

> "he is a righteous man that dwells between two wicked men, and does not learn their works;"

and such an one was Lot, whatever they are elsewhere pleased to say of him: "in seeing and hearing"; the Vulgate Latin version reads this in connection with the word "righteous", thus, "in seeing and hearing he was righteous": he could not bear to see their filthy actions, and hear their obscene language, but turned away from them, and shut his eyes, and stopped his ears, by which he appears to be a righteous and good man; though rather this belongs to what follows, seeing their wicked practices, and hearing their filthy talk:

vexed his righteous soul from, day today with their unlawful deeds; either "they vexed" him, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read; or rather "he vexed" himself; he fretted and teased himself, and became exceeding uneasy, and was put upon a rack and tortured, as the word signifies, continually, with their wicked actions; (see <19B913>Psalm 119:158).

Ver. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly*, etc.] That "fear him", as the Syriac version renders it; or that "rightly worship", as the Arabic; such as Noah and Lot, men that know God in Christ spiritually and experimentally; that believe in him, love him, fear him, worship him in spirit and truth, and live soberly, righteously, and godly. This verse is a conclusion from the preceding instances and examples, respecting both the

mercy and justice of God; the mercy of God in delivering the godly and righteous “out of temptations”; by which are meant, not the temptations of Satan to sin, distrust, and despondency, though the Lord knows how, and is both able and willing to, and does deliver them from them; but afflictions and tribulations, such as Noah and Lot were exposed to; and which are so called, because they try the graces, particularly the faith and patience of the godly; and to deliver from these is the Lord's work: he grants his presence in them; he supports under them; he sanctifies them to them, and in his own time delivers out of them; for he knows how, and by what means, and when to do it, and is both able and willing: he has determined to do it, for the nature, measure, and duration of afflictions are fixed by him, and in his providence he does do it, as the instances before given prove.

And to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished. This is that part of the conclusion from the above premises, respecting the justice of God; and by “the unjust” are designed, persons without a righteousness, and that are full of all unrighteousness, and take pleasure in it, and live unrighteous lives, committing acts of injustice, both with respect to God and men; and the Lord, that has reserved the fallen angels in chains of darkness unto judgment, knows how to reserve “in prison”, as the Arabic version renders it, the souls of those in hell, and their bodies in the grave “unto the day of judgment”; of the last and general judgment, when Christ shall judge both quick and dead, and bring every secret thing to light, which that day shall declare, God has appointed to judge the world in; in order “to be punished” in soul and body, with everlasting and complete destruction, which, as yet, is not. This phrase, “the day of judgment”, is used in Judith and is a Jewish one.

> “Woe to the nations that rise up against my kindred! the Lord Almighty will take vengeance of them in the day of judgment, in putting fire and worms in their flesh; and they shall feel them, and weep for ever.” (Judith 16:17)

Ver. 10. *But chiefly them that walk after the flesh*, etc.] Not merely after the dictates of corrupt nature, as all men, and even God's elect do, in a state of unregeneracy; but “after strange flesh”, as (GENJude 1:7) expresses it, after the flesh of men:

in the lust of uncleanness; not of fornication and adultery, but of sodomy, and sodomitical practices; sins exceeding great, not only contrary to the law and light of nature, but dishonourable to human nature; and are what

prevail where idolatry, infidelity, errors, and heresies do; and which, as they are sins of the deepest dye, deserve the greater damnation, and are chiefly and more especially punished by God with great severity:

and despise government: of parents, to whom these proud boasters and blasphemers are generally disobedient; and of masters, pretending it to be contrary to their Christian liberty; and of magistrates on the same account, and as being a restraint upon their lusts; which is to despise the ordinance of God, his representatives, and to introduce anarchy and confusion, and to open a door to all manner of sin; and also the government of Christ, as head of the church, and King of Zion, whom they will not have to reign over them, and therefore reject his laws, and submit not to his ordinances; and likewise the government of the world itself by God; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "despise their Creator"; denying his omniscience and his providence, giving out that he neither sees, observes, and takes notice of what is done in the world; nor does he himself do either good or evil, or concern himself about what is done by men.

Presumptuous [are they]; bold and daring, not fearing to speak against men of the most exalted character on earth, and against God himself in heaven; (see <19A308>Psalm 73:8,9).

Selfwilled; pleased with themselves, and their own conceits, their dogmas and opinions, with their high sense and profound judgment; and being obstinate in their sentiments, and resolutely bent to retain and defend them.

They are not afraid to speak evil of dignities; or "glories"; of the apostles, who were set in the first place in the church, and were the glory of Christ, (<461228>1 Corinthians 12:28 <470823>2 Corinthians 8:23); or of angels, styled thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers; or rather of civil magistrates, set in high places, and to whom glory and honour are due; which to do is contrary to the law of God, and of dangerous consequence, (<022228>Exodus 22:28 <211020>Ecclesiastes 10:20).

Ver. 11. *Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might*, etc.] Which is not to be understood of evil angels, or devils; for, besides that they are greatly weakened and impaired by their fall, they are the accusers of men, and railers and slanderers of the best and greatest of men, and the origin of all the blasphemies that are vented against God or men; but of good angels, who excel in strength, who are not only guardians to particular men, and encamp about the saints, but preside over provinces

and kingdoms, for which their power and might do abundantly qualify them; and in which they are greater, that is, not than the devils, or than the false teachers, though both are true, but than dominions and dignities, than kings, princes, and civil magistrates: and yet these

bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord; either "against themselves", as the Arabic version and one of Beza's copies read; against one another, against those of their own species, that are in a higher or lower class or office than themselves; and therefore men ought not to despise magistracy, or the higher powers that are over them: or else against the fallen angels, the devils, as should seem from (Jude 1:9), or rather against civil magistrates, kings, and princes of this world, who, though so much below them, they vouchsafe to take under their care, and protect them, even Heathen princes, (Daniel 10:20); and though there may be oftentimes many things unbecoming in them, yet they do not accuse them, or rail against them before the Lord; and even when, by his orders, they inflict punishment on their persons, as on Sennacherib, and Herod, and others, yet they do not speak evil of their office; and therefore, since angels, who are so much above men, even above the most dignified among them, behave in this manner, it must be an aggravation of the sin of these persons, who are so much below them, to speak evil of them.

Ver. 12. *But these, as natural brute beasts*, etc.] So far are these men from acting like the angels, that they are sunk below their own species, and are like beasts, and become brutish in their knowledge and behaviour; are like the horse and the mule, without understanding, act as if they were without reason; yea, are more stupid and senseless than the ox, or the ass, which know their owner, and their crib; and even in those things which they might, and do know by the light of nature, they corrupt themselves; and being given up to judicial blindness, and a reprobate mind, call good evil, and evil good, and do things that are not convenient, and which even brute beasts do not; and like as they are guided by an instinct in nature, to do what they do, so these men are led and influenced by the force and power of corrupt nature in them, to commit all manner of wickedness: and like them are

made to be taken and destroyed; or, as it may be rendered, "to take and destroy"; as beasts and birds of prey, such as lions, tigers, wolves, bears, vultures, hawks, etc. to which abusers of themselves with mankind, ravishers of women, extortioners, oppressors, thieves, robbers, and

plunderers of men's properties, may be compared: or “to be taken and destroyed”; that is, they are made or appointed to be taken in the net and snare of Satan, are vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, and are afore ordained to condemnation and ruin: and this being their case, they

speak evil of the things they understand not; either of angels, of whose nature, office, and dignity, they are ignorant; and blaspheme them, by either ascribing too much to them, as the creation of the world, and divine worship, as were by some ancient heretics; or by speaking such things of them as were below them, and unworthy of them; or of civil magistrates, not knowing the nature and end of magistracy and civil government, and therefore spoke evil of them, when they ought to pray, and be thankful for them, and live peaceable and quiet lives under them; or of the ministers of the word, whose usefulness for the conversion of sinners and edification of saints were not known, at least not acknowledged by these men; hence they were traduced, and went through ill report among them, being as unknown by them; or of the Scriptures of truth, which heretical men do not truly know and understand, but wrest to their own destruction, or deny; and of the Gospel and the mysteries of it, which are things not seen, known, and understood by carnal men, and therefore are blasphemed, reviled, and reproached by them:

and shall utterly perish in their own corruption: of which they are servants, (2 Peter 2:19), in their moral corruption, in their filthy and unnatural lusts, which are the cause of their everlasting perdition and destruction, to which they are righteously appointed of God.

Ver. 13. *And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness*, etc.] Due punishment, both in body and soul, for all their injustice to God and men; which will be a just recompense of reward they shall receive at the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his works: the justice of which appears by what follows,

[as] they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime; who place all their satisfaction and happiness in sensual delight, in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness, day after day; putting away the evil day far from them, supposing that tomorrow will be as this day, and that there will be no future judgment nor state; and therefore do not take the night for their revels, as other sinners do, but being without all shame, declare their sin as Sodom, and hide it not:

spots [they are], and blemishes; which defile themselves, their minds and consciences, their souls and bodies, with sin, and defile others by their evil communications, and bring dishonour and disgrace upon the ways, doctrines, and interest of Christ:

sporting themselves with their own deceivings; with their sins and lusts, by which they deceive themselves and others, it being a sport to them to commit sin; and in which they take great pleasure and pastime, and not only delight in their own sins, but in those of others, and in them that do them. Some versions, as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic, instead of απαταις, "deceivings", read αγαπαις, love feasts, as in (<6012>Jude 1:12), and so the Alexandrian copy; in which they behaved in a very scandalous manner, indulging themselves in luxury and intemperance: to which agrees what follows,

while they feast with you; at the above feasts, or at the Lord's table, or at their own houses, which shows that they were of them, and among them, as in (<6101>2 Peter 2:1); and carries in it a tacit reproof for the continuance of them, when they were become so bad in their principles, and so scandalous in their lives.

Ver. 14. *Having eyes full of adultery*, etc.] For the seventh command is not only violated by unclean actions, and obscene words, but also by unchaste looks: and so the Jews explain [f33] that precept,

> ""thou shalt not commit adultery", (<022014>Exodus 20:14); you shall not go after your hearts, nor after "your eyes"; says R. Levi, the heart and the "eye" are sin's two brokers."

Hence we read [f34] of wyn[b Pawn, "one that commits adultery with his eyes"; (see Gill on "<4058>Matthew 5:28"); compare (<183101>Job 31:1 <360609>Ezekiel 6:9). Some read the words, "having eyes full of the adulteress": that is, having a lewd and infamous woman always in mind and sight, continually looking at her and lusting after her:

and that cannot cease from sin: which may be understood either of these wicked men, who are like the troubled sea, that cannot rest, but are continually casting up the mire and dirt of sin out of their polluted heart; who live and walk in sin, and are always committing it, their conversation being nothing else but one continued series of sinning; nor can they do otherwise, since they are slaves to their lusts, and are carried away with the

force and power of them: or of their eyes, which were always rolling after unlawful objects; their eyes and their hearts were only, and always, for their lust, as the prophet says of others, that they were but for their covetousness, (<2Pe 2:14><2Pe 2:17>Jeremiah 22:17); a sin also which reigned in these men:

beguiling unstable souls: such as were unsteady in their principles, and unstable in their ways; were like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, not being rooted in Christ, nor established in the faith; these, as the serpent beguiled Eye, they corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ; imposed false doctrines on them, and deceived them by false glosses and outward appearances; and by fair words and good speeches, and by their wanton looks and carnal lusts, they allured them into the sin of adultery; or ensnared them, drew them into the net and snare of Satan, and so they were taken and led captive.

An heart they have exercised with covetous practices; an immoderate love of money, a covetous desire after it, is the root of all evil, the bane of religion, and source of heresy, and is a vice which has always prevailed among false teachers; and the character here given well agrees with Simon Magus, the father of heresies, and his followers: hence care is always taken to insert, among, the characters and qualifications of Gospel ministers, that they be not greedy of filthy lucre, (<1Ti 3:3><1Ti 3:8>1 Timothy 3:3,8); this iniquity, when it is a reigning one, and is become an habit, as it was in the persons here described, for it had its seat in their heart, they were habituated to it, and continually exercised it in a multitude of instances and wicked practices, is insatiable and damnable:

cursed children; or "children of the curse"; which may be understood either actively, children that do curse, as children of disobedience are such as commit acts of disobedience; so these were cursing children, who, though their mouths might not be full of cursing and bitterness, as openly profane sinners be, yet they inwardly, and from their hearts, cursed the true followers of Christ, and their principles; or passively, cursed children who were under the curse of the law, and from which there was no redemption for them, but at the last day will have the awful sentence pronounced on them, Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.

Ver. 15. *Which have forsaken the right way*, etc.] The right way of the Lord, the way of truth, the Gospel of truth; or Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life; the true way to eternal life, and which is the right way to eternal happiness; the way of life, righteousness, and salvation by Christ,

the Christian faith, and the doctrine of it, which they once professed, but now relinquished:

and are gone astray; from the right way, the way of truth and holiness, into the paths of error and profaneness:

following the way of Balaam [the son] of Bosor; which Jude calls his error, (Jude 1:11), and is the path of covetousness, uncleanness, and idolatry, sins which he was either guilty of himself, or taught, advised, and seduced others to; (see Revelation 2:14). The Vulgate Latin version reads "Balaam [out of] Bosor", taking "Bosor" for the name of a place, of which "Balaam" was; but not "Bosor", but "Pethor", was the place of Balaam's residence, (Numbers 22:5). The Arabic and Ethiopic versions supply, as we do, "the son of Bosor"; and the Syriac version reads, "the son of Beor", as in (Numbers 22:5); for Beor and "Bosor" are the same names; the "sheva" being pronounced by "o", as it is by "oa" in "Boanerges", and the "ain" by "s". Moreover, the letters x and [are sometimes used for one another, as in ˆax and ˆa[, Ua and [ra, and so [and ç, especially in the Chaldean dialect; and Peter now being at Babylon in Chaldea, (see 1 Peter 5:13); it is no wonder that he so pronounced.

Who loved the wages of unrighteousness: which were the rewards of divination, (Numbers 22:7); which were brought him for his divining or soothsaying, and may well be called unrighteous wages, since it was for doing unrighteous things, or things in an unrighteous manner; and these he loved, desired, and greedily coveted, and fain would he have taken Balak's gold and silver, and have cursed Israel, but was restrained by the Lord: he showed a good will to it, in going along with the messengers, and in building altars, and offering sacrifice in one place after another, in which there was a great resemblance between him and the men here spoken of.

Ver. 16. *But was rebuked for his iniquity*, etc.] Which was not merely going along with the messengers of Balak, for he had leave from the Lord so to do, (Numbers 22:20); but going along with them with a desire to curse Israel, when it was the will of God he should go and bless them, in order to get Balak's money; so that his governing iniquity was covetousness, which led him to other sins; and for this he was rebuked by the angel, (Numbers 22:32), as well as reproved by his ass, (Numbers 22:28): for

the dumb ass, as it was naturally so, the ass on which he rode,

speaking with man's voice; which was supernatural and miraculous, for it was God that opened the mouth of the ass: the mouth of that ass is said, by the Jews [f35], to be one of the ten things created between the two evenings on the sixth day of the creation; that is, as the gloss on it says, concerning which it was decreed, that its mouth should be opened to speak what this ass said; and the occasion of it may be seen in (<0222>Numbers 22:22-30). Lactantius [f36] observes, that there are two stars in the constellation of Cancer, which the Greeks call the “asses”; and which, the poets feign, are those that carried Liberus over a river, when he could not pass it; to one of which he gave this for a reward, “ut humana voce loqueretur”, “that it should speak with man's voice”; a fable, no doubt, hatched from the sacred history, and said in imitation of this ass. Which

forbad the madness of the prophet: and so Balaam, though a diviner and soothsayer, is called by the Jewish writers [f37]; who, they say, was first a prophet, and then a soothsayer, from whom Jerom [f38] seems to have received the tradition; who says, that he was first a holy man, and a prophet of God, and afterwards, through disobedience, and a desire of gifts, was called a diviner; for his eyes were opened, and he saw the vision of the Almighty; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied many things concerning Israel, and the Messiah, and others, (<0424>Numbers 24:4-9,16-24). His madness lay in going with the messengers of Balak, (<0222>Numbers 22:21), in order to curse Israel, contrary to the will of God, (<0212>Numbers 22:12); and it is madness in any to oppose God in his counsels, purposes, providences, and precepts; and every sin, which is an act of hostility against God, has madness in it; and this of Balaam's was forbid by his ass, and he was convinced of it. Very appropriately is mention made of this dumb ass, when the persons here spoken of were as natural brute beasts, and worse than them, (<6012>2 Peter 2:12).

Ver. 17. *These are wells without water*, etc.] Which look large and deep, promise much, and have nothing in them; so these men looked like angels of light, transformed themselves as ministers of righteousness, had a form of godliness, and boasted of their great knowledge; promised great advantages to their followers, but were like deceitful brooks, or dry wells, and so disappointed those that came to them, and attended on them; having nothing but the filth and slime of error and iniquity, being destitute both of the grace of God, comparable to water, and of the truth of heavenly doctrine, which is like the rain that fills the wells, pools, and fountains.

Clouds that are carried with a tempest; these false teachers may be compared to clouds for their number, for many antichrists and false prophets soon came into the world; and for their sudden rise in the churches, into which they crept privily and unawares; and because of the general darkness they spread, for when errors and heresies prevail it is a dark and cloudy day with the churches, a day of gloominess and darkness, of thick darkness, a day of trouble, rebuke, and blasphemy; and because of the height of them, especially light clouds, as these are compared to, who are high in their own conceits and imaginations, and think, and give out themselves to be some great persons; and also because of their sudden destruction, which lingers and slumbers not, but comes upon them in a moment, and their glory passes away like the morning cloud: and these may be said to be as clouds "carried with a tempest": of their own lusts and passions, by which they are governed, and are led, and carried away with the force of them, and have no power to resist them, being under the dominion of them, and captives to them; and of Satan's temptations, who works effectually in them, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, and being taken in his snare, are led captive by him at his will: Jude says, "carried about of winds", (<jud 1:12>Jude 1:12), with every wind of false doctrine, like meteors in the air; are never at a point, always unsteady and unsettled, and ready to embrace every new and upstart notion:

to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever; the nature of their punishment is expressed by "darkness", the blackest darkness, the mist of darkness, and which Jude calls blackness of darkness, the same with utter darkness; and which signifies a most forlorn and uncomfortable condition, and is a righteous judgment, and just retaliation upon them who studied to darken counsel by words without knowledge; and the certainty of their punishment is signified by its being "reserved", even as the happiness of the saints, and the safety and sureness of it are represented by an inheritance reserved in heaven: and as God has his treasures, magazines, and stores of grace and mercy, felicity and glory, for his people; so he has his wrath and vengeance reserved, laid up in store with him, and sealed up among his treasures, which he will surely bring forth in his own time: and the duration of this punishment is "for ever"; it is a worm that never dies, a fire that is never quenched, (<isa 66:24>Isaiah 66:24) (<mar 9:44>Mark 9:44,46,48); it is everlasting fire and burnings, the smoke of which ascends for ever and ever.

Ver. 18. *For when they speak great swelling [words] of vanity*, etc.] Marvellous things against the God of gods, great things and blasphemies against God, his name, his tabernacle, and his saints; (see <27116>Daniel 11:36 <66305>Revelation 13:5,6); or against men, dominions, and dignities, (<61210>2 Peter 2:10); or it may design their self-applauses and vain glorying in themselves, and their empty boast of knowledge and learning; and also express the windiness of their doctrines, and the bombast style, and high flown strains of rhetoric in which they were delivered; as likewise the flattering titles they bestowed on men for the sake of their own worldly interest and advantage; (see <60116>Jude 1:16) and hereby

they allure, through the lusts of the flesh, [through much] wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error: that is, from those who lived in the error of Heathenism or Judaism, from whom, and which, they were clean escaped; or truly, really, and entirely delivered, being fully convinced of the falsity thereof, and of the truth of the Christian religion; though some copies, as the Alexandrian, and two of Beza's, and two of Stephens's, read, not οντως, "truly", but ολιγως, "a little"; and the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "a very little"; to which agrees the Complutensian edition; and the Syriac version renders it "in a few words", or "almost"; and according to the Ethiopic version, "a few persons" are designed; but be they more or less, and truly, or but a little, and for a little while, or almost, escaped from their former errors, in which they were brought up, and lived; yet by the carnal lusts and liberties, lasciviousness and wantonness, which these false teachers indulged, they were allured, ensnared, and drawn by them into their wicked principles and practices.

Ver. 19. *While they promise them liberty*, etc.] Not Christian liberty, which lies in a freedom from sin, its dominion, guilt, and condemnation, and in serving God with liberty, cheerfulness, and without fear; but a sinful carnal liberty, a liberty from the law of God, from obedience to it as a rule of walk and conversation, and from the laws of men, from subjection to the civil magistrate, and from servitude to masters, and obedience to parents; a liberty to lay aside and neglect the ordinances of the Gospel at pleasure, and to live in all manner of sin and wickedness; a liberty which is contrary to the nature, will, and work of Christ, to his Spirit, and to the principle of grace in the heart, and to the Gospel, and to the conduct and conversation of real saints. Now this was the snare by which the false teachers beguiled unstable souls; liberty being what is greatly desirable to men, and is suited to their carnal lusts and interests: but a vain promise was this, when

they themselves are the servants of corruption; of sin, which has corrupted all mankind in soul and body; and particularly the lust of uncleanness, which these men walked in, and by which they not only corrupted themselves, but the good manners of others also; and which tended and led them both to ruin and destruction, signified by the pit of corruption: and yet these very preachers, that promised liberty to others, were the servants of sin; they were under the power and government of sin. They were not only born so, and were homeborn slaves to sin, but they sold themselves to work wickedness; voluntarily and with delight, they served divers lusts and pleasures, and were slaves and drudges thereunto; as likewise to Satan, whose lusts they would do, and by whom they were led captive; so that their condition was mean, base, and deplorable, and therefore could never make good their promise, or give that which they had not themselves: and which is confirmed by the following reasoning,

for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage: as this is a certain point in war, that when one man is conquered by another, he is no longer a free man, but the other's prisoner and captive, and is in a state of servitude and bondage; so it is when a man is overcome by sin, which must be understood not of a partial victory or conquest, for a good man may be surprised by sin, and overtaken in a fault, and be overcome and carried captive by it for a time, as was the apostle, (see <45 7 23>Romans 7:23 <48 6 1>Galatians 6:1); and yet not be a servant of corruption, or properly in a state of bondage to it; but this is to be understood of a total and complete victory, when a man is wholly under the dominion of sin, it reigns in his mortal body, and he obeys it in the lusts of it, and yields his members instruments of unrighteousness; such a man is neither a free man himself, nor can he much less promise and give liberty to others.

Ver. 20. *For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world*, etc.] The sins of it, the governing vices of it, which the men of the world are addicted to, and immersed in; for the whole world lies in wickedness, and which are of a defiling nature: the phrase is Rabbinical; it is said [f39],

> “he that studies not in the law in this world, but is defiled amlj ypwnjb, “with the pollutions of the world”, what is written of him? and they took him, and cast him without:”

these, men may escape, abstain from, and outwardly reform, with respect unto, and yet be destitute of the grace of God; so that this can be no

instance of the final and total apostasy of real saints; for the house may be swept and garnished with an external reformation; persons may be outwardly righteous before men, have a form of godliness and a name to live, and yet be dead in trespasses and sins; all which they may have

through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, our Lord, and the latter leave out, "and Saviour"; by which "knowledge" is meant, not a spiritual experimental knowledge of Christ, for that is eternal life, the beginning, pledge, and earnest of it; but a notional knowledge of Christ, or a profession of knowledge of him, for it may be rendered "acknowledgment"; or rather the Gospel of Christ, which, being only notionally received, may have such an effect on men, as outwardly to reform their lives, at least in some instances, and for a while, in whose hearts it has no place. Now if, after all this knowledge and reformation,

they are again entangled therein; in the pollutions of the world, in worldly lusts, which are as gins, pits and snares:

and overcome; by them, so as to be laden with them, and led away, and entirely governed and influenced by them:

the latter end, or state,

is worse with them than the beginning; (see <4012645>Matthew 12:45). Their beginning, or first estate, was that in which they were born, a state of darkness, ignorance, and sin, and in which they were brought up, and was either the state of Judaism, or of Gentilism; their next estate was an outward deliverance and escape from the error of the one, or of the other, and an embracing and professing the truth of the Christian religion, joined with a becoming external conversation; and this their last estate was an apostasy from the truth of the Gospel they had professed, a reception of error and heresy, and a relapse into sin and immorality, which made their case worse than it was at first; for, generally, such persons are more extravagant in sinning; are like raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; and are seldom, or ever, recovered; and by their light, knowledge, and profession, their punishment will be more aggravated, and become intolerable.

Ver. 21. *For it had been better for them*, etc.] Not that ignorance is good, or to be excused; but it would have been a lesser evil, and not so much aggravated:

not to have known the way of righteousness; the same with “the way of truth”, (<61202>2 Peter 2:2), and “the right way”, (<61215>2 Peter 2:15), the Gospel, which points out the way and method of a sinner's justification before God, which is not by the works of the law, but by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and received by faith; and which teaches men to live soberly, righteously, and godly; and a large, notional, though not an experimental knowledge, these apostates had of the word and doctrine of righteousness, and indeed of the whole of the Christian religion, which may truly go by this name:

than after they have known [it]; owned, embraced, and professed it:

to turn: the Vulgate Latin version, and some copies, as the Alexandrian and others, add, to that which is behind; to their former lusts, or errors, or worse, which they had turned their backs upon externally:

from the holy commandment delivered unto them; by the commandment is meant the Gospel also, (see <61202>2 Peter 3:2 <54614>1 Timothy 6:14); called holy, because of its nature and influence, and in opposition to the pollutions of the world; and which is the faith once delivered, (<60103>Jude 1:3), and which they received, as delivered to them; and, particularly, the ordinances of it, which they once submitted to, kept, and observed, as they were delivered to them, but now relinquished, or corrupted: wherefore, it would have been better for them to have been in their former ignorance, either in Judaism, or in Gentilism, since proportionate to a man's light is his guilt, and so his punishment, (see <45602>Romans 2:12 <42247>Luke 12:47,48).

Ver. 22. *But it is happened unto them, according to the true proverb*, etc.] Which is true, both in fact and in the application of it, and which lies in the Scriptures of truth, at least the first part of it, (<20261>Proverbs 26:11).

The dog [is] turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire; which expresses the filthy nature of sin, signified by vomit, mire, and dirt, than which nothing is more abominable and defiling; and also the just characters of these apostates, who are filly compared to dogs and swine and likewise their irreclaimable and irrecoverable state and condition, it being impossible they should be otherwise, unless their natures were changed and altered. In the Hebrew language, a “sow” is called rzyj, from the root rzj, which signifies to “return”, because that creature, as soon as it is out of the mire and dirt, and is washed from its filthiness, naturally returns to it again: so such apostates

return to what they were before, to their former principles and practices: in this manner the Jews explain the proverb,

> “Tobiah returns to Tobiah, as it is said, (2Pe 2:22 Proverbs 26:11); as a dog returneth to his vomit [f40].”

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO 2 PETER 3

In this chapter the apostle makes mention of the end and design of his writing this second epistle; foretells that there would be scoffers at the coming of Christ in the last days; describes the coming of Christ and the burning of the world; and closes with the use saints should make of these things. The end of his writing both this and the former epistle was to put the persons he writes unto in mind of the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, delivered by the prophets and apostles, (<61C301>2 Peter 3:1,2); and then, agreeably to what the prophets had said, he predicts that there would be scoffers in the last day; who are described by their sinful course of life, and by their words, what they would say concerning the coming of Christ, and their reasoning about it, (<61C303>2 Peter 3:3,4); which arose from their ignorance of the creation of the heavens and the earth, and of the situation of them; and is refuted by showing that things have not remained as they were from the creation; that the earth standing in and out of the water, as it was capable of being overflowed with a flood, so it perished by one; and that the present heavens and earth are reserved and prepared for a general burning at the day of judgment, in which wicked men will be destroyed, (<61C305>2 Peter 3:5-7); but let these men scoff as they will, the length of time since the promise of Christ's coming was made should be no objection with the saints to the performance of it; since the longest term of time is nothing with God, however considerable it may be with men, (<61C308>2 Peter 3:8); besides, the reason of the coming of Christ being deferred, is not owing to any dilatoriness in the performance of the promise, but to the longsuffering of God towards his elect, being unwilling that anyone of them should be lost, but that all should be brought to repentance, (<61C309>2 Peter 3:9); but as for the coming of Christ, that is certain, and will be sudden; at which time will be the general conflagration, which is described in a very awful manner, (<61C310>2 Peter 3:10-12); and the use to be made of such a tremendous dispensation by the saints is to live a holy and godly conversation, (<61C311>2 Peter 3:11); to be eagerly looking for the coming of Christ, (<61C312>2 Peter 3:12), and to expect, according to his promise, new heavens and a new earth, in which will dwell righteous persons, (<61C313>2 Peter

3:13); and to be diligent to be found in peace at that day, (2 Peter 3:14); and to account the longsuffering of God salvation; and the whole of this account, and the use of it, is strengthened by the testimony of the Apostle Paul, of whom, and of his epistles, a character is given, (2 Peter 3:15,16); and the epistle is concluded with some cautions and exhortations to the saints, to beware lest they should be carried away with the errors of wicked men, and so fall from any degree of steadfastness in the faith; and to be concerned for a growth in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus, to whom glory is to be ascribed for ever and ever, (2 Peter 3:17,18).

Ver. 1. *This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you*, etc.] This is a transition to another part of the epistle; for the apostle having largely described false teachers, the secret enemies of the Christian religion under a profession of it, passes on to take notice of the more open adversaries and profane scoffers of it; and from their ridicule of the doctrine of Christ's second coming, he proceeds to treat of that, and of the destruction of the world, and the future happiness of the saints: he calls this epistle his "second epistle", because he had written another before to the same persons; and that the author of this epistle was an apostle, is evident from (2 Peter 3:2); and which, compared with (2 Peter 1:18) shows him to be the Apostle Peter, whose name it bears, and who was an eyewitness to the transfiguration of Christ on the mount, (Matthew 17:1,2 Mark 9:2): he addresses these saints here, as also in (2 Peter 3:8,14,17), under the character of "beloved"; because they were the beloved of God, being chosen by him according to his foreknowledge, and regenerated by him, according to his abundant mercy; and were openly his people, and had obtained mercy from him, and like precious faith with the apostles; and were also the beloved of Christ, being redeemed by him, not with gold and silver, but with his precious blood; for whom he suffered, and who were partakers of his sufferings, and the benefits arising from them, and who had all things given them by him, pertaining to life and godliness, and exceeding great and precious promises; and were likewise beloved by the apostle, though strangers, and not merely as Jews, or because they were his countrymen, but because they were the elect of God, the redeemed of Christ, and who were sanctified by the Spirit, and had the same kind of faith he himself had. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, "my beloved"; and the Ethiopic version, "my brethren": his end in writing both this and the former epistle follows;

in [both] which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance; that this was his view both in this and the former epistle, appears from (<60113>1 Peter 1:13 <60102>2 Peter 1:12-15); he calls their minds pure; not that they were so naturally, for the minds and consciences of men are universally defiled with sin; nor are the minds of all men pure who seem to be so in their own eyes, or appear so to others; nor can any man, by his own power or works, make himself pure from sin; only the blood of Christ purges and cleanses from it; and a pure mind is a mind sprinkled with that blood, and which receives the truth as it is in Jesus, in the power and purity of it, and that holds the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. Some versions, as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic, render the word “sincere”, as it is in (<50110>Philippians 1:10); and may design the sincerity of their hearts in the worship of God, in the doctrines of Christ, and to one another, and of the grace of the Spirit of God in them; as that their faith was unfeigned, their hope without hypocrisy, and their love without dissimulation, and their repentance real and genuine; but yet they needed to be stirred up by way of remembrance, both of the truth of the Gospel, and the duties of religion; for saints are apt to be forgetful of the word, both of its doctrines and its exhortations; and it is the business of the ministers of the word to put them in mind of them, either by preaching or by writing; and which shows the necessity and usefulness of the standing ministry of the Gospel: the particulars he put them in mind of next follow.

Ver. 2. *That ye may be mindful*, etc.] This is an explanation of the above mentioned end of his writing this and the other epistle; which was, that those saints might be mindful of two things more especially:

of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets; that is, the prophets of the Old Testament, who were holy men of God, and therefore their words are to be regarded, and retained in memory; the Gospel itself was spoken by them, and so was Christ, and the things relating to his person and offices, and to his incarnation, sufferings, and death, and the glory that should follow; and indeed the apostles said no other than what they did, only more clearly and expressly; and particularly many things, were said by them concerning the second coming of Christ to judge the world, and destroy it, and to prepare new heavens and a new earth for his people, which is what the apostle has chiefly in view; (see <60114>Jude 1:14 <23108>Isaiah 11:3 65:17 <39401>Malachi 4:1 <27709>Daniel 7:9,10,13,14);

and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour; that is, Jesus Christ, as ([60]17Jude 1:17) expresses it, and the Ethiopic version adds here; and which likewise, and also the Syriac version, and some ancient copies, read, “our Lord and Saviour”, and omit the us before the apostles; by whom are meant the twelve apostles of Christ, of which Peter was one, and therefore says, “us the apostles”; though the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, and the Complutensian edition, read “your apostles”, and so the Alexandrian copy; but the former is the received reading: now “the commandment” of these intends either the Gospel in general, so called because it was the commandment of our Lord to his apostles to preach it; and therefore the word “commandment”, in the original, stands between “us the apostles”, and “the Lord and Saviour”, as being the commandment of the one to the other; unless it can be thought any regard is had to the new commandment of love, or that of faith, inculcated both by Christ and his apostles; ([43]34John 13:34 [60]271 John 2:7,8 3:23); or rather, particularly the instructions, directions, and predictions of the apostles concerning the second coming of Christ, and what should go before it, as appears from the following words, and the parallel place in ([60]17Jude 1:17,18), the words of the prophets and apostles being here put together, show the agreement there is between them, and what regard is to be had to each of them, and to anything and every thing in which they agree.

Ver. 3. *Knowing this first*, etc.] In the first place, principally, and chiefly, and which might easily be known and observed from the writings of the apostles and prophets; (see [54]011 Timothy 4:1,2 [55]012 Timothy 3:1);

that there shall come in the last days scoffers, or “mockers”; such as would make a mock at sin, make light of it, plead for it, openly commit it, and glory in it; and scoff at all religion, as the prejudice of education, as an engine of state, a piece of civil policy to keep subjects in awe, as cant, enthusiasm, and madness, as a gloomy melancholy thing, depriving men of true pleasure; and throw out their flouts and jeers at those that are the most religious, for the just, upright man, is commonly by such laughed to scorn, and those that depart from evil make themselves a prey; and particularly at the ministers of the word, for a man that has scarcely so much common sense as to preserve him from the character of an idiot, thinks himself a wit of the age, if he can at any rate break a jest upon a Gospel minister: nor do the Scriptures of truth escape the banter and burlesque of these scoffers; the doctrines of it being foolishness to them, and the commands and ordinances in it being grievous and intolerable to them; yea, to such lengths

do those proceed, as to scoff at God himself; at his persons, purposes, providences, and promises; at Jehovah the Father, as the God of nature and providence, and especially as the God and Father of Christ, and of all grace in him; at Jehovah the Son, at his person, as being the Son of God, and truly God, at his office, as Mediator, and at his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, which they trample under foot; and at Jehovah the Spirit, whom they do despite unto, as the spirit of grace, deriding his operations in regeneration and sanctification, as dream and delusion; and, most of all, things to come are the object of their scorn and derision; as the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, a future judgment, the torments of hell, and the joys of heaven; all which they represent as the trifles and juggles of designing men: such as these, according to the prophets and apostles, were to come in "the last days"; either in the days of the Messiah, in the Gospel dispensation, the times between the first and second coming of Christ; for it is a rule with the Jews [f41], that wherever the last days are mentioned, the days of the Messiah are intended; (see <580101>Hebrews 1:1); when the prophets foretold such scoffers should come; or in the last days of the Jewish state, both civil and religious, called "the ends of the world", (<461011>1 Corinthians 10:11); a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, when iniquity greatly abounded, (<402411>Matthew 24:11,12); or "in the last of the days"; as the words may be rendered; and so answer to µymyh tyrjab, in (<230202>Isaiah 2:2), and may regard the latter part of the last times; the times of the apostles were the last days, (<620218>1 John 2:18); they began then, and will continue to Christ's second coming; when some time before that, it will be a remarkable age for scoffers and scorners; and we have lived to see an innumerable company of them, and these predictions fulfilled; from whence it may be concluded, that the coming of Christ is at hand: these scoffers are further described as

walking after their own lusts; either after the carnal reasonings of their minds, admitting of nothing but what they can comprehend by reason, making that the rule, test, and standard of all their principles, and so cast away the law of the Lord, and despise the word of the Holy One of Israel; or rather, after their sinful and fleshly lusts, making them their guides and governors, and giving up themselves entirely to them, to obey and fulfil them; the phrase denotes a continued series of sinning, a progress in it, a desire after it, and pleasure in it, and an obstinate persisting in it; scoffers at religion and revelation are generally libertines; and such as sit in the seat of

the scornful, are in the counsel of the ungodly, and way of sinners, (<19101>Psalm 1:1).

Ver. 4. *And saying, Where is the promise of his coming*? etc.] That is, of the coming of the Lord and Saviour, (<61302>2 Peter 3:2); the object of their scorn and derision, and whom they name not, through contempt; and the meaning is, what is become of the promise of his coming? where the accomplishment of it? The prophets foretold he would come; he himself said he would come again, (<43003>John 14:3,28); the angels, at his ascension, declared he would come from heaven in like manner as he went up, (<44011>Acts 1:11); and all his apostles gave out that he would appear a second time to judge both quick and dead, (<44042>Acts 10:42 <55401>2 Timothy 4:1) (<60405>1 Peter 4:5), and that his coming was at hand, (<50305>Philippians 4:5 <53202>2 Thessalonians 2:2); but where is the fulfilment of all this? he is not come, nor is there any sign or likelihood of it:

for since the fathers fell asleep; or "died": which is the language of the Scriptures, and here sneered at by these men, who believe them so fast asleep as never to be awaked or raised more; and by "the fathers" they mean the first inhabitants of the world, as Adam, Abel, Seth, etc. and all the patriarchs and prophets in all ages; the Ethiopic version renders it, "our first fathers":

all things continue as [they were] from the beginning of the creation; reasoning from the settled order of things, the constant revolution of the sun, moon, and stars, the permanency of the earth, and the succession of the inhabitants of it, to the future continuance of things, without any alteration; and consequently, that Christ would not come, as was promised, to raise the dead, judge mankind destroy the world, and set up a new state of things: the fallacy of which reasoning is exposed by the apostle in the following words.

Ver. 5. *For this they willingly are ignorant of*, etc.] Namely, what follows; for as these men were such as had professed Christianity, and had the advantage of revelation, and had the opportunity of reading the Scriptures, they might have known that the heavens and the earth were from the beginning; and that they were made by the word of God; and that the earth was originally in such a position and situation as to be overflowed with a flood, and that it did perish by a general inundation; and that the present heavens and earth are kept and reserved for a general burning; and it might be discerned in nature, that there are preparations making for an universal

conflagration; but all this they chose not to know, and affected ignorance of: particularly

that by the word of God the heavens were of old: not only in the times of Noah, but “from the beginning”; as the Ethiopic version reads, and which agrees with the account in (<01001>Genesis 1:1); by “the heavens” may be meant both the third heaven, and the starry heavens, and the airy heavens, with all their created inhabitants; and especially the latter, since these were concerned in, and affected with the general deluge; and these were in the beginning of time, out of nothing brought into being, and so were not eternal, and might be destroyed again, or at least undergo a change, even though they were of old, and of long duration: for it was “by the word of God” that they at first existed, and were so long preserved in being; either by the commanding word of God, by his powerful voice, his almighty fiat, who said, Let it be done, and it was done, and who commanded beings to rise up out of nothing, and they did, and stood fast; and so the Arabic version renders it, “by the command of God”; or by his eternal Logos, the essential Word of God, the second Person in the Trinity, who is often in Scripture called the Word, and the Word of God, and, as some think, by the Apostle Peter, (<60123>1 Peter 1:23), and certain it is that the creation of all things is frequently ascribed to him; (see <43016>John 1:16 <58102>Hebrews 1:2,10 11:3); wherefore by the same Word they might be dissolved, and made to pass away, as they will:

and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; that is, “by the Word of God”; for this phrase, in the original text, is placed after this clause, and last of all; and refers not only to the being of the heavens of old, but to the rise, standing, and subsistence of the earth, which is here particularly described for the sake of the deluge, the apostle afterwards mentions: and it is said to be “standing out of the water”, or “consisting out of it”; it consists of it as a part; the globe of the earth is terraqueous, partly land and partly water; and even the dry land itself has its rise and spring out of water; the first matter that was created is called the deep, and waters in which darkness was, and upon which the Spirit of God moved, (<01002>Genesis 1:2); agreeably to which Thales the Milesian asserted [f42], that water was the principle of all things; and the Ethiopic version here renders the words thus, “and the Word of God created also the earth out of water, and confirmed it”: the account the Jews give of the first formation of the world is this [f43];

> "at first the world was µymb µym, "water in water"; what is the sense (of that passage (<01002>Genesis 1:2);) "and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters?" he returned, and made it snow; he casteth forth his ice like morsels, (<19717>Psalm 147:17); he returned and made it earth; "for to the snow he saith, Be thou earth", (<18306>Job 37:6), and the earth stood upon the waters; "to him that stretched out the earth above the waters", (<19606>Psalm 136:6);"

however, certain it is, that the earth was first covered with water, when at the word, and by the command of God, the waters fled and hasted away, and were gathered into one place, and the dry land rose up and appeared; and then it was that it "stood out of the water"; (see <01009>Genesis 1:9,10 <19406>Psalm 104:6,7); moreover, the earth consists, or is kept and held together by water; there is a general humidity or moisture that runs through it, by which it is compacted together, or otherwise it would resolve into dust, and by which it is fit for the production, increase, and preservation of vegetables and other things, which it otherwise would not be: and it is also said to stand "in the water", or by the water; upon it, according to (<19402>Psalm 24:2); or rather in the midst of it, there being waters above the firmament or expanse; in the airy heavens, in the clouds all around the earth, called the windows of heaven; and water below the firmament or expanse, in the earth itself; besides the great sea, a large body of waters is in the midst of the earth, in the very bowels of it, which feed rivers, and form springs, fountains and wells, called "the fountains of the great deep", (<01071>Genesis 7:11); and in this position and situation was the earth of old, and so was prepared in nature for a general deluge, and yet was preserved firm and stable by the word of God, for a long series of time; so the Arabic version renders it, "and the earth out of the water, and in the water, stood stable, by the command of God"; but when it was his pleasure, he brought the flood on the world of the ungodly, of which an account follows.

Ver. 6. *Whereby the world that then was*, etc.] The old world, as it is called in (<61205>2 Peter 2:5); and as the Ethiopic version here renders it; the world before the flood, that had stood from the creation 1656 years:

being overflowed with water; by the windows of heaven being opened, and the waters over the earth poured down upon it; and by the fountains of the great deep being broken up in it; thus by these waters from above and below, a general inundation was brought upon it; for that the deluge was universal is clear from hence, and from the account by Moses; for as the

earth was filled with violence, and all flesh had corrupted its way, God threatened a general destruction, and which was brought by a flood, which overflowed the whole earth; for all the hills that were under the whole heaven were covered with it, and everything that had life in the dry land died, and every living substance was destroyed that was upon the face of the ground; (see 0061Genesis 6:11-13 7:11,19,22,23); and hence it follows, that hereby the then world

perished; not as to the substance of it, whatever alteration there might be in its form and position; but as to the inhabitants of it; for all creatures, men and cattle, and the creeping things, and fowls of the heaven, were destroyed, excepting Noah and his wife, and his three sons and their wives, and the creatures that were with him in the ark; (see 0072Genesis 7:23 6020 Peter 3:20); and by this instance the apostle shows the falsehood of the above assertion, that all things continued as they were from the beginning of the creation; for the earth was covered with water first, and which, by the command of God, was removed, and, after a long series of time, was brought on it again, and by it drowned; and from whence it also appears, that this sort of reasoning used by those scoffers is very fallacious; for though the heavens and the earth may continue for a long time, as they did before the flood, in the same form and situation, it does not follow from thence that they always will, for the contrary is evident from what follows.

Ver. 7. *But the heavens and the earth which are now*, etc.] In being, in distinction from, and opposition to the heavens that were of old, and the earth standing in and out of the water, and the world that then was when the waters of the flood overflowed it:

by the same word are kept in store; that is, by the word of God, as in (6035 Peter 3:5); and the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “by his word”; by the same word that the heavens and the earth were made of old, or in the beginning, are they kept, preserved, and upheld in their being; or “are treasured up”; the heavens and the earth are a rich treasure, they are full of the riches God, as the God of nature and providence; and they are kept with care, as a treasure is, not to be touched or meddled with at present, but must continue in the same position and use; or they are laid up in the stores, and scaled up among the treasures of divine wrath and vengeance, and will be brought out another day, and made use of, to the destruction of the ungodly inhabitants of the world, and to aggravate and increase their misery and ruin: for it is further said of them, that they are

reserved unto fire; for though the world is, and has been preserved a long time without any visible alteration in it, yet it will not be always so preserved: and though it is, and will be kept from being drowned by water again, through the promise and power of God, yet it is kept and reserved for a general conflagration; (see <61Q3B0>2 Peter 3:10,12). And as the old world was put into a natural situation, so as to be drowned by water, there are now preparations making in nature, in the present world, for the burning of it; witness the fiery meteors, blazing stars, and burning comets in the heavens, and the subterraneous fires in the bowels of the earth, which in some places have already broke out: there are now many volcanos, burning mountains and islands, particularly in Sicily, Italy, and the parts adjacent, the seat of the beast, and where it is very likely the universal conflagration will begin, as Aetna, Vesuvius, Strombilo, and other volcanos; and even in our own island we have some symptoms and appearances of these fires under ground, as fiery eruptions in some places, and the hot waters at the Bath, and elsewhere, show; from all which it is plain that the heavens and earth, that now are, are not as they always were, and will be, but are reserved and prepared for burning; and that things are ripening apace, as men's sins also are, for the general conflagration. Josephus [f44] relates, that Adam foretold that there would be a destruction of all things, once by the force of fire, and once by the power and multitude of water; and it is certain the Jews had knowledge of the destruction of the earth by fire, as by water: they say [f45],

> "that when the law was given to Israel, his (God's) voice went from one end of the world to the other, and trembling laid hold on all the nations of the world in their temples, and they said a song, as it is said, (<19Q9D0>Psalm 29:9), "and in his temple doth everyone speak of his glory": all of them gathered together to wicked Balaam, and said to him, what is the voice of the multitude which we hear, perhaps a flood is coming upon the world? he said unto them, "the Lord sitteth upon the flood, yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever", (<19Q9E0>Psalm 29:10). Thus hath the Lord swore, that he will not bring a flood upon the world; they replied to him, a flood of water he will not bring, but ça lç lwbm, "a flood of fire" he will bring, as it is said, (<236616>Isaiah 66:16), "for by fire will the Lord plead",

or judge: and hence they speak [f46] of the wicked being judged with two sorts of, judgments, by water, and by fire: and, according to our apostle, the heavens and earth are kept and reserved to fire,

against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men; the time when God will judge the world is fixed, though it is not known; and it is called a "day", because of the evidence and light in which things will appear, and the quick dispatch of business in it; and the "judgment" spoken of is the future judgment, and which is certain, and will be universal, righteous, and eternal, and when wicked and ungodly men will be punished with everlasting destruction: the bodies of those that will be alive at the general conflagration will be burnt in it, though not annihilated, and will be raised again, and both soul and body will be destroyed in hell.

Ver. 8. *But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing*, etc.] Here the apostle addresses the saints he writes unto, and for whom he had a tender affection and regard, and for whose welfare he was concerned, lest they should be stumbled at the length of time since the promise of the coming of Christ was given, and which these scoffers object; and therefore he would have them know, observe, and consider this one thing, which might be of great use to them to make their minds easy, and keep up their faith and expectation of the coming of Christ:

that one day [is], with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day; referring either to (<19004>Psalm 90:4); or to a common saying among the Jews, founded on the same passage, µymç Pla hb ̈qh lç wmwy, "the day of the holy blessed God is a thousand years" [f47]; suggesting, that though between thirty and forty years had elapsed since the promise was given out that Christ would come again, and should even a thousand, or two thousand years more, run off, before the coming of Christ, yet this should be no objection to the accomplishment of the promise; for though such a number of years is very considerable among men, ye not "with God", as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, with whom a thousand years, and even eternity itself, is but as a day, (<23813>Isaiah 43:13). Unless this phrase should be thought to refer, as it is by some, to the day of judgment, and be expressive of the duration of that: it is certain that the Jews interpreted days of millenniums, and reckoned millenniums by days, and used this phrase in confirmation of it. Thus they say [f48],

> "in the time to come, which is in the last days, on the sixth day, which is the sixth millennium, when the Messiah comes, for the day of the holy blessed God is a thousand years."

And a little after,

> ""the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man". This is in the time of the Messiah which is in the sixth day."

And elsewhere [f49],

> "the sixth degree is called the sixth day, the day of the holy blessed God is a thousand years. And in that day the King Messiah shall come, and it shall be called the feast of gathering, for the holy blessed God will gather in it the captivity of his people."

So they call the sabbath, or seventh day, the seventh millennium, and interpret [f50]

> ""the song for the sabbath day", (Psalm 92:1) title, for the seventh millennium, for one day of the holy blessed God is a thousand years."

To which agrees the tradition of Elias, which runs thus [f51];

> "it is the tradition of the house of Elias, that the world shall be six thousand years, two thousand years void (of the law), two thousand years the law, and two thousand years the days of the Messiah;"

for they suppose that the six days of the creation were expressive of the six thousand years in which the world will stand; and that the seventh day prefigures the last millennium, in which will be the day of judgment, and the world to come; for

> "the six days of the creation (they say [f52]) is a sign or intimation of these things: on the sixth day man was created; and on the seventh his work was finished; so the kings of the nations of the world (continue) five millenniums, answering to the five days, in which were created the fowls, and the creeping things of the waters, and other things; and the enjoyment of their kingdom is a little in the sixth, answerable to the creation of the beasts, and living creatures created at this time in the beginning of it; and the kingdom of the house of David is in the sixth millennium, answerable to the creation of man, who knew his Creator, and ruled over them all; and in the end of that millennium will be the day of judgment, answerable to man, who was judged in the end of it; and the

seventh is the sabbath, and it is the beginning of the world to come."

Ver. 9. *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise*, etc.] The Syriac version reads in the plural, "his promises", any of his promises; though the words seem rather to regard the particular promise of Christ's coming, either to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, of which coming there was a promise made, and is often referred to by Christ, and his apostles; (see <4009>Mark 9:1 <4212>John 21:22) (<5810>Hebrews 10:37); and it now being upwards of thirty years since it was given out, some men began to charge God with slackness and dilatoriness; whereas the true reason of the delay of it was, that there might be time for the gathering in of his elect among them by his angels, or apostles and ministers, sent into the several parts of Judea, that so none of them might perish, but be brought to faith and repentance; and thus as the time of Christ's coming was prolonged more than was thought it would, so when the days of afflictions were come, they were shortened also for these elect's sake: or this promise regards the second coming of Christ, to judge the quick and dead at the last day, of which the former was a prelude, presage, and pledge; that Christ would come again, and appear a second time in person, was promised by himself, and often spoken of by his apostles; and many of the primitive Christians thought it would be very soon, and which might be occasioned by the hints that were given of his coming in the other sense. Now this being deferred longer than was expected, the scoffers or mockers take upon them to charge the Lord with slackness in the fulfilment of his promise:

as some men count slackness; as if he had either changed his purpose, or had prolonged it beyond the appointed time, or was unmindful of his promise, and would never fulfil it; whereas he is in one mind, and none can turn him, nor will he delay the fulfilment of his promise beyond the set time; he has fixed a day for his coming, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, and he will keep it: he is not dilatory,

but is longsuffering to us-ward: not to all the individuals of human nature, for the persons intended by us are manifestly distinguished from "some men" in the text, and from scoffers, mocking at the promise of Christ's coming, in the context, (<6103>2 Peter 3:3,4); and are expressly called beloved, (<6101>2 Peter 3:1,8,14,17); and God's longsuffering towards them is their salvation, (<6105>2 Peter 3:15), nor is it true of all men, that God is not willing that any of them should perish, and that everyone of them should

come to repentance, since many of them do perish in their sins, and do not come to repentance, which would not be the case, if his determining will was otherwise; besides, a society or company of men are designed, to which the apostle himself belonged, and of which he was a part; and who are described, in his epistles, as the elect of God, called out of darkness, into marvellous light, and having obtained like precious faith with the apostles; and must be understood either of God's elect among the Jews, for Peter was a Jew, and they were Jews he wrote to; and then the sense is, that the delay of Christ's coming is not owing to any slackness in him, but to his longsuffering to his elect among the Jews, being unwilling that any of that number among them should perish, but that all of them repent of their sins, and believe in him; and therefore he waits till their conversion is over, when a nation shall be born at once, and they that have pierced him look on him and mourn, and so all Israel shall be saved; or rather of the elect in general, whether among Jews or Gentiles, upon whom the Lord waits to be gracious, and whose longsuffering issues in their conversion and salvation. And upon account of these the Lord stays his coming till their number is complete in the effectual calling; and for their sakes he is longsuffering to others, and bears with a wicked world, with the idolatry, superstition, heresy, profaneness, and impiety, with which it abounds; but when the last man that belongs to that number is called, he will quickly descend in flames of fire, and burn the world, and the wicked in it, and take his chosen ones to himself. The Alexandrian copy reads, “for you”, or your sakes; and so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions. A passage somewhat like to this is met with in a book of the Jews [f53], esteemed by them very ancient.

> “God prolongs or defers his anger with men; and one day, which is a thousand years, is fixed, besides the seventy years he delivered to David the king. — And he does not judge man by his evil works which he continually does, for if so, the world would not stand; but the holy blessed God defers his anger with the righteous, and the wicked, that they may return, by perfect repentance, and be established in this world, and in the world to come.”

And it is an observation of theirs [f54], that when God is said to be “longsuffering”, it is not written Pa Æra, but µypa Æra, intimating, that he is longsuffering both to the righteous and the wicked; but then he bears with the latter, for the sake of the former: compare with this passage (Revelation 6:9-11);

not willing that any should perish; not any of the us, whom he has loved with an everlasting love, whom he has chosen in his Son, and given to him, and for whom he has died, and who are brought to believe in him. These, though they were lost in Adam, did not perish; and though in their own apprehensions, when awakened and convinced, are ready to perish; and though their peace, joy, and comfort, may perish for a while, and they may fear a final and total perishing; yet they shall never perish as others do, or be punished with everlasting destruction: and that this is the will of God, appears by his choice of them to salvation; by the provisions of grace for them in an everlasting covenant; by the security of their persons in the hands of Christ; by sending his Son to obtain salvation for them, and his Spirit to apply it to them; and by his keeping them by his power, through faith, unto salvation.

But that all should come to repentance; not legal, but evangelical, without which all must perish; and which all God's elect stand in need of, as well as others, being equally sinners; and which they cannot come to of themselves, and therefore he not only calls them to it, in his word, and by his spirit and grace, but bestows it upon them; he has exalted Christ at his own right hand, to give it to them; and repentance is a grant from him, a free gift of his grace; and the Spirit is sent down into their hearts to work it in them, to take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh; without which, whatever time and space may be given, or means afforded, even the most awful judgments, the greatest mercies, and the most powerful ministry, will be of no avail.

Ver. 10. *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night*, etc.] That is, the Lord will come in that day, which he has fixed, according to his promise, than which nothing is more certain; and he will come as a thief in the night: he will come "in the night", which may be literally understood; for as his first coming was in the night; (see <4208>Luke 2:8,10,11); so perhaps his second coming may be in the night season; or figuratively, when it will be a time of great darkness; when there will be little faith in the earth, and both the wise and foolish virgins will be slumbering and sleeping; when it will be a season of great security, as it was in the days of Noah, and at the time of the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the phrase, "in the night": and the Alexandrian copy uses the emphatic article, "in the night": and he will come, "as a thief", in the dark, indiscernibly; it will not be known what hour he will come; he will come suddenly, at an unawares, when he is not

expected, to the great surprise of men, and especially of the scoffers; when the following awful things will be done:

in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise; not the third heaven, the seat of angels and glorified saints, and even of God himself; but the starry and airy heavens, which shall pass away, not as to their matter and substance, but as to some of their accidents and qualities, and the present use of them; and that with a great noise, like that of a violent storm, or tempest; though the Ethiopic version renders it, "without a noise"; and which is more agreeable to his coming as a thief, which is not with noise, but in as still a manner as possible; and some learned men observe, that the word signifies swiftly, as well as with a noise; and, accordingly, the Syriac version renders it "suddenly"; and the Arabic version "presently", immediately; that is, as soon as Christ shall come, immediately, at once, from his face shall the earth and heavens flee away, as John in a vision saw, (<620111>Revelation 20:11);

and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: not what are commonly called the four elements, earth, air, tire, and water, the first principles of all things: the ancient philosophers distinguished between principles and elements; principles, they say [f55], are neither generated, nor corrupted; τα τε στοιχεια κατα την εκπυρωσιν φψειρεσψαι, "but the elements will be corrupted, or destroyed by the conflagration"; which exactly agrees with what the apostle here says: by the elements seem to be meant the host of heaven, being distinguished from the heavens, as the works of the earth are distinguished from the earth in the next clause; and design the firmament, or expanse, with the sun, moon, and stars in it, which will be purged and purified by this liquefaction by fire;

the earth also will be purged and purified from everything that is noxious, hurtful, unnecessary, and disagreeable; though the matter and substance of it will continue:

and the works that are therein shall be burnt up; all the works of nature, wicked men, cattle, trees, etc. and all the works of men, cities, towns, houses, furniture, utensils, instruments of arts of all sorts, will be burnt by a material fire, breaking out of the earth and descending from heaven, for which the present heavens and earth are reserved: this general conflagration was not only known to the Jews, but to the Heathens, to the poets, and Platonist and Stoic philosophers, who frequently [f56] speak of it in plain terms. Some are of opinion that these words refer to the

destruction of Jerusalem; and so the passing away of the heavens may design the removal of their church state and ordinances, (<58B026>Hebrews 12:26,27), and the melting of the elements the ceasing of the ceremonial law, called the elements of the world, (<480403>Galatians 4:3,9), and the burning of the earth the destruction of the land of Judea, expressed in such a manner in (<052923>Deuteronomy 29:23 32:22), and particularly of the temple, and the curious works in that, which were all burnt up and destroyed by fire, though Titus endeavoured to prevent it, but could not [f57]: which sense may be included, inasmuch as there was a promise of Christ's coming to destroy the Jewish nation, and was expected; and which destruction was a prelude of the destruction of the world, and is sometimes expressed in such like language as that is; but then this must not take place, to the exclusion of the other sense: and whereas this sense makes the words to he taken partly in a figurative, and partly in a literal way; and seeing the heavens and the earth are in the context only literally taken, the former sense is to be preferred; and to which best agrees the following use to be made of these things.

Ver. 11. *[Seeing] then [that] all these things shall be dissolved*, etc.] By fire; the heaven with all its host, sun, moon, and stars, clouds, meteors, and fowls of the air; the earth, and all that is upon it, whether of nature, or art; and, since nothing is more certain than such a dissolution of all things,

what manner [of persons] ought ye to be in [all] holy conversation and godliness? not as the scoffers and profane sinners, who put away this evil day far from them, but as men, who have their loins girt, and their lights burning, waiting for their Lord's coming; being continually in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of their religious duties, watching, praying, hearing, reading; living soberly, righteously, and godly; guarding against intemperance and worldly mindedness, and every worldly and hurtful lust.

Ver. 12. *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God*, etc.] The same with the day of the Lord, (<61B010>2 Peter 3:10), and so the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions here read; and it intends the day of Christ's second coming to judgment, and so is a proof of the deity of Christ; and is called “the day of God”, in distinction from man's day, or human judgment, (<460403>1 Corinthians 4:3), which is often fallacious; whereas the judgment of God is according to truth; and because in that day Christ will appear most clearly to be truly and properly God, by the manifest display of his omniscience, omnipotence, and other glorious perfections of his; and

because it will be, as the day of God is, a thousand years; and also the day in which God will finish all his works, as on the seventh day the works of creation, on this the works of Providence; when all his purposes, promises, and threatenings, relating to the final state of all persons and things, will be fulfilled, and every work be brought to light, and into judgment, and everything will stand in a clear light; for the day will declare it, either respecting God, or men; and there will be a display, as of his grace and mercy, to his church and people; for it will be the day of his open espousals to them, and of the gladness of his heart; so of his wrath and anger towards the wicked: for this great and dreadful day of the Lord shall burn like an oven, and destroy the wicked, root and branch: and it will be the day of Christ's glorious appearing, and of his kingdom, in which he will reign, before his ancients, gloriously; and when it is ended, God, Father, Son and Spirit, will be all in all: now “the coming” of this day saints should be “looking for” by faith; believing that it certainly will come, since the patriarchs, prophets, Christ himself, the angels of heaven, and the apostles of the Lamb, have all declared and asserted the coming of this day; and they should look for it, and love it, as with the strongest affection for it, and most vehement desire of it, since they will then appear with Christ in glory; and they should look out, and keep looking out for it, as what will be quickly; and though it is not as soon as they desire and expect, yet should still look wistly for it, and with patience and cheerfulness wait for it: yea, they should be “hasting unto” it, or “hastening” it; for though the day is fixed for the coming of Christ, nor can it be altered, as his coming will not be longer, it cannot be sooner, yet it becomes the saints to pray earnestly for it, that it may be quickly, and for the accomplishment of all things that go before it, prepare for it, and lead unto it; such as the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles; and by putting him in mind of, and pleading with him, his promises concerning these things, and giving him no rest till they are accomplished; there seems to be some reference to the prayers of the Jews for the Messiah's coming, which they desire may be hryhmb, “in haste”; which will show that they are in haste for the coming of this day; and all which things God will hasten, though it will be in his own time: and moreover, saints should be hasting to it by their readiness for it, having their loins girt, and their lights burning, and their lamps trimmed, and they waiting for their Lord's coming, and going forth in acts of faith and love, and in the duties of religion, to meet him, and not slumber and sleep:

wherein; in which day, as in (<61 03 10>2 Peter 3:10); or by which; by which coming of Christ, or of the day of God,

the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; at whose coming and presence, and from whose face the heavens and earth shall flee away, just as the earth shook, and the heavens dropped, and Sinai itself moved, when God appeared upon it; (see <66 20 11>Revelation 20:11 <19 68 08>Psalm 68:8). This is a repetition of what is said in (<61 03 10>2 Peter 3:10), exciting attention to the exhortation given.

Ver. 13. *Nevertheless we, according to his promise*, etc.] Or promises, as the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin version; namely those in (<23 65 17>Isaiah 65:17 66:22);

look for new heavens and a new earth; not figuratively, the world to come in distinction from the Jewish world or state; a new church state, the Gospel dispensation, with new ordinances, as baptism and the Lord's supper, all legal ceremonies and ordinances being gone, and everything new; for these things had taken place already, and were not looked for as future: but these phrases are to be understood literally, as the heavens and the earth are in every passage in the context, (<61 03 05>2 Peter 3:5,7,10); and designs not new heavens and earth for substance, but for qualities; the heavens and elements being melted and dissolved, and so purged and purified by fire, and the earth and its works being burnt up with it, and so cleared of everything noxious, needless, and disagreeable, new heavens and a new earth will appear, refined and purged from everything which the curse brought thereon for man's sin: and such heavens and earth the saints look for by faith and hope, and earnest expectation, and with desire and pleasure; and therefore are not distressed, as they have no reason to be, with the burning of the present heavens and earth, as awful as these things will be; and they expect them not upon their own fancies and imaginations, or the vain conjectures and cunningly devised fables of men, but according to the promises of God recorded in the above passages, and in which they may be confirmed by the words of Christ, and by the vision of John, (<66 20 01>Revelation 20:1,5). The Alexandrian copy reads, “and his promises”; as if it respected other promises the saints looked for besides the new heavens and earth; namely, the resurrection of the dead, eternal life, the in corruptible inheritance, the ultimate glory and happiness:

wherein dwelleth righteousness; meaning not the heavenly felicity, called sometimes the crown of righteousness, and the hope of righteousness, to

which righteousness gives a right, and where it will be perfect, for the apostle is not speaking of the ultimate glory of the saints; nor the righteousness of Christ, as dwelling in the saints, as if the sense was this, we in whom righteousness dwells, look for new heavens and a new earth; for though the righteousness of Christ is unto and upon them that believe, yet it is not in them; it is in Christ, and dwells in him, and not in them; it is not inherent in them, but imputed to them: by "righteousness" is meant righteous men; such as are so not in and of themselves, or by the deeds of the law, or by works of righteousness done by them, but who are made righteous by the obedience of Christ, and are righteousness itself in him; (see <2333:16>Jeremiah 33:16 <4721>2 Corinthians 5:21); now these, and these only, will be the inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth; there will be no unrighteous persons there, as in the present world, which lies in wickedness, and is full of wicked men; and they will be stocked with inhabitants after this manner; all the elect will now be gathered in, and Christ, when he comes, will bring all his saints with him from heaven, and will raise their bodies, and reunite them to their souls; and those that are alive will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and will make up together the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven; and whereas, upon the coming of Christ, the present heavens and earth will be burnt or purified by fire, and so made new and fit for the spirits of just men made perfect, who being again embodied, will fill the face of them, and shall inherit the earth, and reign with Christ on it for a thousand years, during which time there will not be a wicked man in them; for the wicked that will be alive at Christ's coming will be burnt with the earth, and the wicked dead shall not rise till the thousand years are ended, and who being raised, will, together with the devils, make the Gog and Magog army; wherefore none but righteous persons can look for these new heavens and earth, for to these only are they promised, and such only shall dwell in them; so the Targum on (<2333:23>Jeremiah 23:23) paraphrases the words,

> "I God have created the world from the beginning, saith the Lord, I God will "renew the world for the righteous":"

and this will be, the Jews say, for the space of a thousand years;

> "it is a tradition (they say [f58]) of the house of Elias, that the righteous, whom the holy blessed God will raise from the dead shall not return to their dust, as is said, (<2343:3>Isaiah 4:3), and it shall come

> to pass, etc. as the Holy One continues for ever, so they shall continue for ever; and if you should say those years (some editions read, “those thousand years”, and so the gloss upon the place) in which the holy blessed God “renews the world”: as it is said (<scripRef passage="Isaiah 2:11" />), and the Lord alone; etc. what shall they do? the holy blessed God will make them wings as eagles, and they shall fly upon the face of the waters:”

and this renovation of the heavens and the earth, they say, will be in the seventh millennium;

> “in the seventh thousand year (they assert [f59]) there will be found new heavens and a new earth;”

which agree with these words of Peter.

Ver. 14. *Wherefore, beloved, seeing ye look for these things*, etc.] For the burning of the heavens and the earth, for the coming of Christ, and for the new heavens and new earth,

be diligent that ye may be found of him; Christ, or αυτω, “in him”, as in (<scripRef passage="Philippians 3:9" />); for such as are in Christ will have an undoubted right to the new heavens and the new earth, and will certainly dwell in them, because they will be found not in their own righteousness, but in the righteousness of Christ: or “before him”, as the Arabic version renders it; before him the Judge of all, at whose tribunal they must stand; but being clothed with his righteousness, and so without spot and blemish, they will not be ashamed before him: or “by him”; Christ first finds his in redemption, and next in the effectual calling, and last of all at his coming, when all the elect will be looked up, gathered in, and presented first to himself, and then to his Father, complete and perfect, not one wanting: and thus to be found in him, and before him, and by him, should be the concern of all that look for the glorious things here spoken of, and particularly that they be found in the following situation and circumstances: in peace; interested in that peace Christ has made by the blood of his cross; for such as are reconciled to God by his death, shall be saved by his life, and live with him in the new heavens and new earth, and for ever in the ultimate glory; and in enjoying that peace of conscience which he himself gives, and which flows from his blood, righteousness, and atonement; so that the day of his coming by death, or at judgment, will not be terrifying to them, but they will look for these things with great delight and satisfaction: or

in peace one with another; for peace makers and keepers are called the children of God, and so heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; or in happiness and glory, expressed by peace, which is the end of the righteous man, which he enters into at death, and will rest in to all eternity:

without spot and blemish; no man is so in himself, sanctification is imperfect, and many are the slips and falls of the saints, though their desire is to be harmless and inoffensive, and to give no just occasion for blame or scandal; but the saints are so in Christ Jesus, being washed in his blood, and clothed with his righteousness, and will be found so by him when he comes again, when he will present them to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, and also before the presence of his Father's glory, as faultless, with exceeding joy; and so will they be fit and meet to be the inhabitants of the new heavens and new earth, and reign with him therein, and be with him to all eternity.

Ver. 15. *And account [that] the longsuffering of our Lord*, etc.] Not his longsuffering towards the wicked, and his forbearance with them, for that is not the means of, nor the way to, nor does it issue in, their salvation, but in their sorer punishment and greater damnation, (see Romans 2:4 9:22); but towards the elect, as in (2 Peter 3:9); whom he bears much and long with before conversion, while in their sins, and in a state of unregeneracy, and waits to be gracious to them, as he is in their calling, and to make known and apply his great salvation to them; and as with particular persons, so with the whole body of them, till they are all gathered in, and even with the world for their sakes; and particularly the Lord's longsuffering here intends the deferring of his coming, or his seeming slackness in the performance of his promise: the reason of which is,

salvation: the salvation of all his chosen ones, and in that it issues; he waits, he stays, that none of them might perish, but that they might be all brought to faith and repentance, and so be saved: wherefore the apostle would have the saints consider it in this light, and not imagine and conclude, with the scoffing infidels, that he is slack and dilatory, and will not come, but that his view in it is the salvation of all his people, which by this means is brought about: in confirmation of which, and other things he had delivered, he produces the testimony of the Apostle Paul;

even as our beloved brother Paul also; he calls him a “brother”, both on account of his being a believer in Christ, one that belonged to the same

family with him, and was of the household of faith, born of the same Father, and related to the same Redeemer, the firstborn among many brethren, and likewise on account of his being a fellow apostle; for though he was not one of the twelve apostles, but his call and mission were later than theirs, yet Peter does not disdain to put him among them, and upon an equal foot with them, nor was he a whit behind the chief of them: he styles him a “beloved” brother; expressing his affection for him, which the relation between them called for, and which he bore to him, notwithstanding his public opposition to him, and sharp reproof of him, (<480211>Galatians 2:11), and perhaps loved him the more for it; (see <19E105>Psalm 141:5 <202705>Proverbs 27:5,6); and he makes mention of him, and that under these characters, partly to show their agreement and consent in doctrine; and partly to recommend him to the Jews, to whom he writes, who had, upon report of his doctrine and ministry, entertained an ill, at least a mean opinion, of him; as also to set us an example to speak well of one another, both as ministers and private believers:

according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; meaning not all his epistles, as being written for the general good of all the saints, as well as for those particular churches or men to whom they were sent; for what Peter speaks of is what was particularly written to them, and is distinguished in (<610316>2 Peter 3:16) from the rest of Paul's epistles; nor does he intend the epistle of Paul to the Romans, for the longsuffering of God spoken of in that, as in (<450204>Romans 2:4 9:22), is his longsuffering to the wicked, which issues in their destruction, and not his longsuffering to his elect, which is salvation, as here; but he seems manifestly to have in view the epistle to the Hebrews, for Peter wrote both his first and second epistles to Jews; wherefore, since none of Paul's epistles but that were written particularly to them, it should seem that that is designed, and serves to confirm his being the author of it; in which he writes to the Hebrews concerning the coming of Christ, and of the deferring of it a little while, and of the need they had of patience to wait for it, (<581036>Hebrews 10:36,37); and in it also are some things difficult to be understood concerning Melchizedek, the old and new covenant, the removing of the Aaronic priesthood, and the abrogation of the whole ceremonial law, etc. things not easily received by that nation; and the whole is written with great wisdom, respecting the person and office of Christ, the nature of his priesthood, and the glory of the Gospel dispensation; and in a most admirable manner is the whole Mosaic economy laid open and explained: he was indeed a wise

master builder, and whatever he wrote was “according to wisdom”; not fleshly wisdom, the wisdom of this world, nor with enticing words of men's wisdom, but according to the divine wisdom, under the influence of the spirit of wisdom and revelation; for he had not this of himself naturally, nor did he learn it at Gamaliel's feet, but it was what was “given to him”; it came from above, from God, who gives it liberally; and as he himself always owned it to be a free grace gift of God bestowed on him, and that all his light and knowledge were by the revelation of Christ, so Peter ascribes it to the same, that God might have all the glory, and all boasting in man be stopped.

Ver. 16. *As also in all [his] epistles*, etc.] From whence it appears, that the Apostle Paul had, by this time, wrote several of his epistles, if not all of them; and they were all written according to the same wisdom, and under the influence of the same spirit, as his epistle to the Hebrews:

speaking in them of those things; of the same things, Peter had been speaking of, of the coming of Christ, as that he should appear a second time to them that look for him, and would come as a thief in the night, and that the fashion, scheme, and form of this world should pass away, and that saints should look and wait for his coming, and love it: something of this kind is said in all his epistles; (see <580928>Hebrews 9:28 <520502>1 Thessalonians 5:2 <460731>1 Corinthians 7:31 1:7 <560213>Titus 2:13 <550408>2 Timothy 4:8); and also of mockers, scoffers, seducers, and wicked men that would arise in the last days; (see <540401>1 Timothy 4:1 <550301>2 Timothy 3:1),

in which are some things hard to be understood. The phrase, “in which”, refers either to the epistles, or the things spoken in them. The Alexandrian manuscript, and three of Robert Stephens's copies, read εν αις, “in which” epistles, but the generality of copies read εν οις, “in”, or “among which things”, spoken of in them, concerning the subject here treated of, the coming of Christ; as the time of Christ's coming, which is sometimes represented by the apostle, as if it would be while he was living; and the manner of his coming in person with all his saints, and his mighty angels, with a shout, the voice of the archangel, and trump of God, things not easily understood; and the destruction of antichrist at his coming, which will be with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming; as also the resurrection of the dead, of the saints that will rise first, and that with spiritual bodies; and likewise the change of the living saints, and the rapture both of living and raised saints together, in the, clouds, to meet the

Lord in the air; and the standing of them before the judgment seat of Christ, and the account that everyone must give to him, (<52045>1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 <53107>2 Thessalonians 1:7,8 2:8) (<46154>1 Corinthians 15:44,51,52 <47510>2 Corinthians 5:10 <45142>Romans 14:12);

which they that are unlearned; untaught of God, who have never learned of the Father, nor have learned Christ, nor have that anointing which teacheth all things; who, though they may have been in the schools of men, were never in the school of Christ; and though they have been ever learning, yet will never come to the knowledge of the truth; for men may have a large share of human literature, and yet be unlearned men in the sense of the apostle; and very often it is, that such wrest and pervert the Scriptures to the ruin of themselves, and others:

and unstable; unsettled in their principles, who are like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; the root of the matter is not in them; nor are they rooted and built up in Christ, and so are not established in the faith; they are not upon the foundation Christ, nor do they build upon, and abide by the sure word of God, or form their notions according to it, but according to their own carnal reasonings, and fleshly lusts; and so

wrest the word of God, distort it from its true sense and meaning, and make it speak that which it never designed; dealing with it as innocent persons are sometimes used, put upon a rack, and tortured, and so forced to speak what is contrary to their knowledge and consciences; and so were the words of the Apostle Paul wrested by ill designing men, as about the doctrines of grace and works, so concerning the coming of Christ; (see <45308>Romans 3:8 <53201>2 Thessalonians 2:1,2);

as [they do] also the other Scriptures; the writings of Moses, and the prophets of the Old Testament, the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the other epistles of the apostles of the New Testament: and which is eventually

unto their own destruction; for by so doing they either add unto, or detract from the Scriptures, and so bring the curse of God upon them; and they give into doctrines of devils, and into heresies, which are damnable, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, which lingers not, and slumbers not. Now from hence it does not follow, that the Scriptures are not to be read by the common people; for not all the parts of Scripture, and all things in it, are hard to be understood, there are many things very plain and easy,

even everything respecting eternal salvation; there is milk for babes, as well as meat for strong men: besides, not the Scriptures in general, but Paul's epistles only, are here spoken of, and not all of them, or anyone whole epistle among them, only some things in them, and these not impossible, only difficult to be understood; and which is no reason why they should be laid aside, but rather why they should be read with greater application and diligence, and be followed with fervent prayer, and frequent meditation; and though unlearned and unstable men may wrest them to their perdition, those that are taught of God, though otherwise illiterate, may read them to great profit and advantage.

Ver. 17. *Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know [these things] before*, etc.] As that there will be such mockers and scoffers in the last days, and such unlearned and unstable men that will deprave the Scriptures, and wrest them in such a miserable manner:

beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked; from the simplicity of the Gospel, along with such wicked men, that wax worse and worse, deceivers and being deceived, by giving into any of their errors which respect the grace of God, or the person and offices of Christ, or particularly his second coming; be upon the watch and guard against them, having previous notice of them, for they lie in wait to deceive: lest ye

fall from your own steadfastness; which was proper to them, and which, by the grace of God, they had, and retained, both in the faith of Christ and doctrine of the Gospel; for though the saints can never finally and totally fall into sin, or from the truth, yet they may fall from their steadfastness, both as to the exercise of the grace of faith, and as to their profession of the doctrine of faith; and to be fluctuating, hesitating, and doubting in either respect, must be very uncomfortable and dishonourable.

Ver. 18. *But grow in grace*, etc.] In the gifts of grace, which, under a divine blessing, may be increased by using them: gifts neglected decrease, but stirred up and used, are improved and increase. And though men are to be thankful for their gifts, and be contented with them, yet they may lawfully desire more, and in the use of means seek an increase of them, which may be a means of preserving themselves, and others, from the error of the wicked. Moreover, by “grace” may be meant internal grace. The work of grace is gradual; it is like a grain of mustard seed, or like seed cast into the earth, which springs up, it is not known how, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear; saints are first babes, and from

children they grow to young men, and from young men to fathers. There is such a thing as growth in grace, in this sense; every grace, as to its act and exercise, is capable of growing and increasing; faith may grow exceedingly, hope abound, love increase, and patience have its perfect work, and saints may grow more humble, holy, and self-denying: this is indeed God's work, to cause them to grow, and it is owing to his grace; yet saint, should show a concern for this, and make use of means which God owns and blesses for this purpose, such as prayer, attending on the word, and looking over the promises of God, for an increase of faith; recollecting past experiences, and looking to the death and resurrection of Christ for the encouragement of hope, and to the love of God and Christ, for the stirring up of love to both, and to the saints; considering the sufferings of Christ, the desert of sin, and the glories of another world, to promote patience and self-denial, and the pattern of Christ, to excite to humility; though “grace” may also intend the Gospel, the knowledge of which is imperfect, and may be increased in the use of means, and which is a special preservative against error, a growth in which saints should be concerned for:

and [in] the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; of his person, office, and grace, than which nothing is more valuable, and is to be preferred to everything; it is the principal thing in grace, and is the beginning and pledge of eternal life, and will issue in it; for an increase of which, and a growth in it, the word and ordinances are designed; and nothing can be a greater security against error than an experimental growing knowledge of Christ. The Syriac version adds, “and of God the Father”; and so some copies read:

to him [be] glory, both now, and for ever; or “to the day of eternity”; that is, to Christ, who is truly God, or otherwise such a doxology would not belong to him, be ascribed the glory of deity, of all divine perfections; the glory of all his offices and work as Mediator; the glory of man's salvation; and the glory of all that grace, and the growth of it, together with the knowledge of himself, which saints have from him; and that both in this world, and that which is to come.

Amen; so be it.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:6. c. 25.

Ft2 -- Ib. 50:3. c. 3. 25.

Ft3 -- Catalog Script. Ecclesiastes sect. 2.

Ft4 -- Guido. Dictionar. Syr. Chald. p. 92.

Ft5 -- Lex. Cabalist. p. 464.

Ft6 -- Sepher Jetzirah, p. 1. 4.

Ft7 -- R. Eliahu in Adderet apud Trigland. de Sect Karaeorum, c. 10. p. 153.

Ft8 -- Vid. Ammonium περι ομοιων, in voce δεσποτης.

Ft9 -- Sepher Bahir in Zohar in Genesis fol. 27. 3.

Ft10 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 25. 3.

Ft11 -- lb. fol. 32. 3.

Ft12 -- Midrash Ruth in Zohar in Genesis fol. 45. 1. 2. vid. fol. 77. 3.

Ft13 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 84. 1. vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 4. & 9. 4. & Raziel, fol. 14. 2. & 18. 2.

Ft14 -- Smegma Orientale, p. 251, 252.

Ft15 -- In loc.

Ft16 -- Aben Ezra in Genesis 8:21.

Ft17 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 22.

Ft18 -- Targum in Psal. 46:8.

Ft19 -- Misna Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 3. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 4. fol. 149. 1. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 89. 2.

Ft20 -- De Temulentia, p. 272.

Ft21 -- Antiqu. 50:1. c. 8. sect. 3. c. 11. sect. 3.

Ft22 -- De Abrahamo, p. 381.

Ft23 -- De Temulentia, p. 272.

Ft24 -- Polyhistor. c. 48.

Ft25 -- De vifa Mosis, 50:2. p. 662.

Ft26 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 3. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 4. fol. 149. 1.

Ft27 -- Tzeror Hammot, fol. 14. 4. & 16. 4. & 20. 2.

Ft28 -- Jarchi in <01310>Genesis 13:10.

Ft29 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 57. 2. Jarchi in <01313>Genesis 13:13.

Ft30 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 56. 1, 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 7. 3. & 14. 3. & 20. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 44. fol. 39. 1.

Ft31 -- De vita Mosis, 50:2. p. 662.

Ft32 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 38. 2.

Ft33 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 3. 3.

Ft34 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 165. 1. Vid. A. Gell. Noct. Attic. 50:3. c. 5.

Ft35 -- Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 6. & Jarchi in ib. Sepher Cosri, par. 2. p. 254.

Ft36 -- De falsa Religione, 50:1. c. 21.

Ft37 -- Pesikta, Ilmedenu & Gerundensis apud Drus in loc. T. Bab Sanhedrin fol. 106. 1. Aben Ezra in <04228>Numbers 32:28.

Ft38 -- Tradition. Hebrews in Genes. fol. 69. D.

Ft39 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 104. 3. Vid. Bechinot Olam, p. 178.

Ft40 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 16. fol. 158. 4.

Ft41 -- Kimchi in <23202>Isaiah 2:2.

Ft42 -- Vid. Laert. 50:1:in Vit. Thaletis.

Ft43 -- T. Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 77. 1.

Ft44 -- Antiqu. Jud. 50:1. c. 2. sect. 3.

Ft45 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 116. 1.

Ft46 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 50. 4. & 51. 1.

Ft47 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 7. 3. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 160. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 14. fol. 216. 1. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 20. 1. Zohar in Exodus fol. 60. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 157. 1. & Nishmet Chayim Orat. 1. c. 5. fol. 12. 1.

Ft48 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 13. 4.

Ft49 -- Ib. fol. 16. 1.

Ft50 -- Bartenora in Misn. Tamid, c. 7. sect. 4.

Ft51 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1. & Avoda Zara, fol. 9. 1.

Ft52 -- Ceseph Misna in Maimon. Hilchot Teshuva, c. 9. sect. 2.

Ft53 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 83. 3.

Ft54 -- T. Hieros, Taanioth, fol. 65. 2. T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 50. 2.

Ft55 -- Diog. Laert. 50:7. in Vita Zenonis.

Ft56 -- Vid. Diog. Laert ib. & 50:9. in Vita Heraclit. & Hesych. de Philos. p. 36. Arrian. Epict. 50:3. c. 13. Phurut. de Natura Deorum, p. 39. Ovid. Metamorph, fab. 7. Min. Felix, p. 37. & Justin. Martyr. Apol. 2. p. 66.

Ft57 -- Vid. Joseph. de Bello Jud. 50:3. c. 9, 10. & 50:7. c. 14, 16.

Ft58 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 92. 1, 2. Ed. Coch. p. 317.

Ft59 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 35. 3.

1 JOHN

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 1 JOHN

The author of this epistle was John, the son of Zebedee, the disciple whom Jesus loved: he was the youngest of the apostles, and survived them all. He does not indeed put his name to this epistle, as the Apostles Paul, Peter, James, and Jude do to theirs; and it is easy to observe, that when this disciple, in his writings, had any occasion to speak of himself, it was usually by such a circumlocution, as the disciple whom Jesus loved, or the other disciple, studiously concealing his name: so that his not putting his name to this epistle need not create any scruple about his being the author of it, which everywhere breathes the temper and spirit of this great apostle; and whoever compares this epistle, and the Gospel written by him, together, will easily conclude it to be his, both from the style and subject matter of it: besides, as Eusebius asserts [f1], this epistle was generally received without scruple, both by ancient and modern writers. It is called "general", because it was not written and sent to any particular church, or person, and not because it was for the general use of the churches, for so are all the particular epistles but because it was written to the Christians in general, or to the believing Jews in general wherever they were; for that it was written to the Jews seems evident from (<620202>1 John 2:2). It was called, by some of the ancients, the epistle of John to the Parthians [f2]; by whom must be meant not the natives of Parthia but the Jews professing to believe in Christ, who dwelt in that empire. We read of Parthian Jews a the feast of Pentecost, (<440209>Acts 2:9), who at that time might be converted, and, upon their return to their own country, lay the foundation of a Gospel church state there Dr. Lightfoot [f3] conjectures from a passage in (<640109>3 John 1:9) that this epistle was written to the Corinthians; but there does not seem to be any sufficient reason for it. As for the time when, and place where, this epistle was written, it is not easy to say: some think it was written at Patmos, whither the apostle was banished in the reign of Domitian, and where he wrote the book of the Revelations; (see <660109>Revelation 1:9); and here some say he wrote his Gospel, and this epistle, and that a little before

the destruction of Jerusalem, and which he calls the last time or hour; and that his design in writing it was to exhort the believing Jews, either in Parthia, or scattered about in other countries, to brotherly love, and to warn them against false Christs and false prophets, which were now gone forth into the world to deceive men; (see <620218>1 John 2:18 4:1). Others think that it was written by him, when a very old man, after his return from his exile to Ephesus, where he resided during his life, and where he died, and was buried. It is called his “first” epistle general, not that it is the first general epistle, for the other two are written to particular persons, but is the first he wrote, and which is general: the occasion, and manifest design of it, is to promote brotherly love, which he enforces upon the best principles, and with the strongest arguments, taken from the love of God and Christ, from the commandment of Christ, and its being an evidence of regeneration, and the truth and glory of a profession of religion: and also to oppose and stop the growth of licentious principles, and practices, and heretical doctrines. The licentious principles and practices he condemns are these, that believers had no sin in them, or need not be concerned about it, nor about their outward conversation, so be they had but knowledge; and these men boasted of their communion with God, notwithstanding their impieties; and which were the sentiments and practices of the Nicolaitans, Gnostics, and Carpocratians. The heresies he sets himself against, and refutes, are such as regard the doctrine of the Trinity, and the person and office of Christ. There were some who denied a distinction, of persons in the Trinity, and asserted there was but one person; that the Father was not distinct from the Son, nor the Son from the Father; and, by confounding both, tacitly denied there was either, as Simon Magus, and his followers; regard is had to these in (<620222>1 John 2:22 5:7) and others, as the unbelieving Jews, denied that Jesus was the Messiah, or that Christ was come in the flesh; these are taken notice of in (<620222>1 John 2:22 4:2,3 5:1). Others, that professed to believe in Jesus Christ, denied his proper deity, and asserted he was a mere man, and did not exist before he took flesh, of the virgin, as Ebion and Cerinthus; these are opposed in (<620101>1 John 1:1,2 3:16 5:20). And others denied his real humanity, and affirmed that he was a mere phantom; that he only had the appearance of a man, and assumed human nature, and suffered, and died, and rose again in show only, and not in reality; of which sort were the followers of Saturninus and Basilides, and which are confuted in (<620101>1 John 1:1-3). This epistle is, by Clemens Alexandrinus [f4], called his “greater” or “larger epistle”, it being so in comparison of the other two that follow.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO 1 JOHN 1

In this chapter the apostle gives a summary of the Gospel, and the evidence of it, and from thence presses to a holy life and conversation, The sum of the Gospel is Jesus Christ, who is described both as God and man; his deity is expressed by being that which was from the beginning, the Word of life, life, and eternal life; his humanity by being the life manifested in the flesh, of which the apostles had full evidence by the several senses of seeing, hearing, and handling, and so were capable of bearing witness to the truth thereof, (1 John 1:1,2). And the ends had in view in giving this summary, evidence, and testimony, were, that the saints wrote unto might have fellowship with the apostles, whose fellowship was with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, and that their joy on hearing these things might be full, (1 John 1:3,4). And the amount of the message declared by them was, that God is light, or a pure and holy Being, and that there is no darkness of sin, or unholiness in him; wherefore all such that pretend to communion with him, and live a sinful course of life, are liars; only such have fellowship with him, and with his Son, whose blood cleanses them from all sin, who live holy lives and conversations, (1 John 1:5-7), not, that it is to be expected that men should be clear of the being of sin in this life, only that they should, as often as they sin, be humbled for it, and confess it before God, who will forgive them, and cleanse them from all unrighteousness; but as for those who affirm they have no sin in them, or any done by them, they are self-deceivers, the truth of grace is not in them, nor the word of God, and they make him a liar, (1 John 1:8-10).

Ver. 1. *That which was from the beginning*, &c.] By which is meant not the Gospel, as if the apostle's design was to assert the antiquity of that, and clear it from the charge of novelty; for though that is called the word, and the word of life, and is the Spirit which gives life, and is the means of quickening dead sinners, and brings the report of eternal life and salvation by Christ, yet the seeing of it with bodily eyes, and handling it with corporeal hands, do not agree with that; but Jesus Christ is here intended, who in his divine nature was, really existed as a divine person, as the

everlasting Jehovah, the eternal I AM, which is, and was, and is to come, and existed “from the beginning”; not from the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel by John only, for he was before the Gospel was preached, being the first preacher of it himself, and before John was; yea, before the prophets, before Abraham, and before Adam, and before all creatures, from the beginning of time, and of the creation of the world, being the Maker of all things, even from everlasting; for otherwise he could not have been set up in an office capacity so early, or God's elect be chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and they have grace and blessings given them in him before the world began, or an everlasting covenant be made with him; (see <4001>John 1:1);

which we have heard; this, with what follows, proves him to be truly and really man; for when the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among men, the apostles heard, and saw, and handled him; they not only heard a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God, but they often heard him speak himself, both in private conversation with them, and in his public ministry; they heard his many excellent discourses on the mount, and elsewhere, and those that were particularly delivered to them a little before his death; and blessed were they on this account, (<4013>Matthew 13:16,17);

which we have seen with our eyes: with the eyes of the body, with their own, and not another's; and they saw him in human nature, and the common actions of life he did, as eating, drinking, walking, &c. and his many miracles; they saw him raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, restore sight to the blind, cause the lame to walk, the dumb to speak, and the deaf to hear; and they saw him transfigured on the mount. John was one that was present at that time, and saw his glory, as he also was when he hung upon the cross, and saw him bleeding, gasping, and dying there; they saw him after his resurrection from the dead, he showed himself to them alive, and was seen of them forty days; they saw him go up to heaven, and a cloud receiving him out of their sight:

which we have looked upon; wistly and intently, once and again, and a thousand times, and with the utmost pleasure and delight; and knew him perfectly well, and were able to describe exactly his person, stature, features, and the lineaments of his body:

and our hands have handled of the Word of life; as Peter did when Jesus caught him by the hand on the water, when he was just ready to sink; and as this apostle did, when he leaned on his bosom; and as Thomas did, even

after his resurrection, when he thrust his hand into his side; and as all the apostles were called upon to see and handle him, that it was he himself, and not a spirit, which has not flesh and bones as he had. Now as this is said of Christ, the Word of life, who is so called, because he has life in himself, as God, as the Mediator, and as man, and is the author of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal, it must be understood as he, the Word, is made manifest in the flesh; for he, as the Word, or as a divine person, or as considered in his divine nature, is not to be seen nor handled: this therefore is spoken of the Word, or of the person of Christ, God-man, with respect to his human nature, as united to the Logos, or Word of God; and so is a proof of the truth and reality of his human nature, by several of the senses.

Ver. 2. *For the life was manifested*, &c.] That is, the Word of life, who is life itself, the fountain of life, having it as God, in and of himself, without derivation from, and independent of another, originally and eternally, and who is the cause, author, and giver of life in every sense to others; this living God, who from all eternity was invisible, was in the fulness of time manifested in human nature; (see <430114>John 1:14 <540316>1 Timothy 3:16 <620308>1 John 3:8).

And we have seen [it]; as before with the eyes of their bodies:

and bear witness; for they were both eye and ear witnesses of the Word, and of the truth of his incarnation, and bore a faithful record to his proper deity, and real humanity:

and show unto you that eternal life; Jesus Christ, the true God, and eternal life, as in (<620105>1 John 1:5:20); so called, because he has everlasting life in himself; as he is the living God, and because he has eternal life for all his people; not only the purpose and promise of it are in him, but the thing itself; and it is in his power and gift to bestow it on all the Father hath given to him, and to them he does give it. The beginning of it lies in the knowledge of him, and the consummation of it will be in the lasting vision and enjoyment of him:

which was with the Father; that is, which life, eternal life, and Word of life, was from the beginning, or from all eternity with God the Father; which phrase is expressive of the eternal existence of Christ, as the Word and Son of God, with his Father, his relation to him, his oneness in nature, and equality with him, and his personal distinction from him; (see <430101>John 1:1);

and was manifested unto us; in human nature, as before observed, and that to the apostles, as he was not to the patriarchs and prophets; for though they saw him in promise, in prophecy, in type, and figure, and he sometimes appeared in an human form for a short time to them, yet they did not see him incarnate, in actual union with human nature; nor had they him dwelling among them, and conversing with them, as the apostles had; this was an happiness peculiar to them.

Ver. 3. *That which we have seen and heard*, &c.] This is repeated, both to confirm and illustrate what had been before said, and to carry on the discourse to what follows:

declare we unto you; in the ministry of the word; the person and offices of Christ being the sum and substance of the Gospel ministration, that declares him to be the true God and eternal life, God over all, blessed for ever; and truly man, made of a woman, and made under the law; and to be the only Mediator between God and man, to be prophet, priest; and King, and to be the alone Saviour and Redeemer: this declares the greatness and excellency of his salvation, what an able, proper, and suitable Saviour he is; and what precious promises and spiritual blessings are in him, even all grace and eternal glory. And this declaration of him is made in the Gospel, for the following ends and purposes,

that ye also may have fellowship with us; in hearing, seeing, and handling of Christ in a spiritual sense; and by enjoying the same privileges in God's house and family, the same ordinances and spiritual provisions; joining and partaking with them in all the immunities and advantages of a Gospel church state here; and by being with them to all eternity hereafter.

And truly our fellowship [is] with the Father; the Father of Christ, the covenant God and Father of his people; and which they have with him, when under the influence and witnessings of the spirit of adoption, and can in the strength of faith call him their Father, draw nigh to him through Christ as such, and are indulged with his presence, and the discoveries of his love:

and with his Son Jesus Christ; being in union to him, they become partakers of him, and of his blessings; they receive out of his fulness, and grace for grace; they are admitted to an intimacy and familiarity with him; they are had into his chambers of secret retirement; they are brought into his banqueting house, where his banner over them is love, and where he

sups with them, and they with him; and into this fellowship are they called by the grace of God, through the Gospel; as also they have fellowship with the blessed Spirit, though not here mentioned; (see <47134>2 Corinthians 13:14).

Ver. 4. *And these things write we unto you*, &c.] Concerning the deity and eternity of Christ, the Word and concerning the truth of his humanity, and the manifestation of him in the flesh; and concerning that eternal life and salvation which is declared in the Gospel to be in him; and concerning the saints' fellowship one with another, and with God the Father, and with Jesus Christ:

that your joy may be full; meaning either their spiritual joy in this life, which has Christ for its object, and is increased by the consideration of his proper deity, his incarnation and mediation by a view of free justification by his righteousness, and atonement by his blood; by a sight of his glorious person by faith, and by intimate communion with him, and a discovery of his love, which passeth knowledge: and which joy, when it is large, and very great, may, in a comparative sense, be said to be full, though not absolutely so, and being as much as can well be enjoyed in this state; and nothing can more contribute to it than a declaration of the above things in the Gospel, and an experimental acquaintance with them, and enjoyment of them: or else it may intend the joy of the saints in the world to come, in the presence of Christ, where are fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore; and so may express the ultimate glory and happiness of God's people, which is the chief end, as of his purposes, promises, and covenant, so of the Gospel, and the declaration of it. The Syriac version renders it, “that our joy, which is in you, may be full”; it is the joy of the ministers of the word, when the saints are established in the faith of Christ's person and offices, and have communion with him, with which view they declare him, and bear record of him. Some copies read, our joy.

Ver. 5. *This then is the message*, &c.] Of God by his Son the Word, or from Christ by his apostles. The Syriac version renders it, “this is the Gospel”; which is good news from a far country, a message sent from the King of kings to sinful men: or this is the annunciation, or declaration; that is, the thing declared, or showed. Some render it, “this is the promise”, that whereas God is light, such who walk in the light shall have communion with him, and others shall not:

which we have heard of him; of Christ, who has declared him, that he is light without any mixture of darkness; that is a pure Spirit, and must be worshipped in a spiritual way; and that only spiritual worshippers are such as he seeks, and admits to communion with him. Moreover, they might hear and learn this of Christ, by his telling them that he himself was light, who is the image of the invisible God, insomuch, that he that has seen the Son, has seen the Father also. Wherefore, if the one is light, the other must be likewise; nor is there any coming to the Father, and enjoying communion with him, but through Christ; all which our Lord told his disciples. The Ethiopic version reads, "which ye have heard", very wrongly; for the words regard the apostles, who made a faithful declaration of the message they heard, and had from Christ, which is as follows:

and declare unto you that God is light; that is, God the Father, as distinguished from "him", Christ, of whom they had heard this message, and from Jesus Christ his Son, (⁶⁰⁰¹1 John 1:7), what is declared of him, agreeably to the report of Christ, is, that he is "light"; that is, as light is opposed to the darkness of sin; he is pure and holy in his nature and works, and of such pure eyes as not to behold iniquity; and so perfectly holy, that angels cover their times before him, when they speak of his holiness: and as light is opposed to the darkness of ignorance, he is wise and knowing; he knows himself, his own nature, being, and perfections, his Son and Spirit, and their distinct modes of subsisting; he sees clearly all things in himself, all things he could do, or has determined shall be done; he has perfect knowledge of all creatures and things, and the darkness and the light are alike unto him, nor can the former hide from him: he is knowable, and to be discerned; he is clothed with light, and dwells in it; he may be known by the works of creation and providence; even the invisible things of him, his eternal power and Godhead, may be clearly seen and understood by them, and especially in his word, and most clearly in his Son; it is owing to the darkness of men, and not to any in and about God, who is light, that he is so little known as he is: and, like the light, he illuminates others; he is the Father of lights, the author and giver of all light; of the light of reason to men in general; and of grace here, and glory hereafter, to his own people, which are both signified by light; in whose light they see light; and he refreshes and delights their souls with the light of his countenance now, and with his glorious presence in the other world:

and in him is no darkness at all; no darkness of sin; nothing is more contrary to him, or more distant from him: nor any darkness of error and

ignorance; what is unknown to men, as the times and seasons; what angels were ignorant of, and even Christ, as man, as the day and hour of Jerusalem's destruction, were known to the Father; in him is no ignorance of anything whatever; nor is there any variableness or shadow of turning in him, as there is in the luminous body of the sun; but God is always the same pure and holy, wise and knowing Being. It is usual with the Cabalistic Jews [f5], to call the supreme Being rwa, light the most simple light, hidden light, and infinite light, with respect to his nature, glory, and majesty, and with regard also to his grace and mercy, justice and judgment; though, as R. Sangart says [f6], this is to be understood of him figuratively.

Ver. 6. *If we say that we have fellowship with him*, &c.] The Alexandrian copy reads, “for if we say”: that is, if any profess to be partakers of the divine nature, to be like unto God, and to have communion with him, to have the light of his countenance, and the discoveries of his love:

and walk in darkness; in the darkness of sin, ignorance, and unbelief, or are in a state of unregeneracy and blindness; whose understandings are darkened, and they know not God in Christ, nor have any true sight and sense of themselves, their sin and danger; and are ignorant of Christ and his righteousness, and the way of salvation by him; and are strangers to the Spirit of God, and the work of his grace; and are unacquainted with the truths of the Gospel; and not only so, but go on in darkness more and more; prefer it to the light, love it, and the works of it; have fellowship with them, and choose them; take pleasure in the ways of sin and wickedness, and continue, and walk on in them; if such persons pretend to fellowship with God, they are liars:

we lie; it cannot be, it is a contradiction, the thing is impossible and impracticable; what communion hath light with darkness? or what fellowship can the throne of iniquity, or those in whom sin reigns, have with God? for God is light, and were they partakers of him, or like unto him, or had communion with him, they would consequently be in the light, and not in darkness, and much less walk in it; wherefore they are liars,

and do not the truth: they do not say the truth, nor act according to it; they do not act uprightly or sincerely, but are hypocrites, and pretend to that which they have not; and if they did the truth, they would come to the light, and not walk in darkness; (see <43321>John 3:21).

Ver. 7. , &c.] Are persons enlightened by the Spirit of God, so as to have a true sight and sense of sin, to know Christ,

on and increasing in spiritual light and knowledge; walk on in Christ, the light, by faith, and in the light and truth of the Gospel, and as becomes it,

marvellous light:

as he is in the light
itself, is in it, and dwells in it. This "as" denotes not equality, but likeness: when this is the case, then it is a clear point, that

; not with the saints, with the apostles, and other Christians, but with God: "we have mutual communion", as the

read, "with him", as in (
requires; and agreeably to this the Ethiopic version renders it, "and we are

appear to be like him, and partake of his nature, and have communion with him; and not only so, but with his Son Jesus Christ, as appears from our

and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin: there is a

internal, and is such that nothing can remove but the blood of Christ; not ceremonial ablutions and sacrifices, nor moral duties, nor evangelical

baptism, which is not the putting away the faith of the flesh; nor even the graces of the Spirit, no, not faith, no otherwise than as it has to do with

that more properly belongs to the Spirit of God, and besides, does not cleanse from all sin; for notwithstanding this, sin is in the saints: but either

justification from it by his blood, which is put for both his active and passive obedience, the one being finished in the other; or rather of the

blood to the conscience, which purges it from dead works, and which has a continued virtue in it for that purpose. Christ's blood, being applied by the

and was of this use, even before it was actually shed, to the Old Testament

saints; whence Christ is said to be the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and it has the same efficacy now as when first shed, and will have to the end of the world; and being sprinkled upon the conscience, by the Spirit of God, it takes away the sins of believers, and cleanses from them, as fast as the corruption of nature rises, or sins appear; and removes them out of their sight, and speaks peace to their souls; and which is owing, as to the dignity of Christ's person and the value of his sacrifice, so to his continual intercession, advocacy, and mediation; and which reaches to all sin, original and actual, secret and open sins; sins of heart, thought, lip, and life; sins of omission and commission, greater or lesser sins, committed against light and knowledge, grace and mercy, law and Gospel, all but the sin against the Holy Ghost; and in this Christ was the antitype of the scape goat, of which the Jews say [f7], that

> “it atoned for all the transgressions of the law, whether small or great, sins of presumption, or of ignorance, known, or not known, which were against an affirmative or negative command, which deserved cutting off (by the hand of God), or death by the sanhedrim.”

The Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, “from all our sins”; and this must be ascribed to the greatness of his person, as the Son of God; wherefore the emphasis lies on these words, “his Son”: the Son of God, who is equal with God, and is truly and properly God: as it must be the blood of man that must, according to the law, be shed, to atone for and expiate sin, and cleanse from it, and that of an innocent man, who is holy, harmless, and without sin; so it must not be the blood of a mere man, though ever so holy, but the blood of one that is God as well as man; (see <4428>Acts 20:28). The divine nature of the Son of God, being in union with the human nature, put virtue into his blood to produce such an effect, which still continues, and will, as long as there is any occlusion for it.

Ver. 8. *If we say that we have no sin*, &c.] Notwithstanding believers are cleansed from their sins by the blood of Christ, yet they are not without sin; no man is without sin: this is not only true of all men, as they come into the world, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and of all that are in a state of unregeneracy, and of God's elect, while in such a state, but even of all regenerated and sanctified persons in this life; as appears by the ingenuous confessions of sin made by the saints in all ages; by their complaints concerning it, and groans under it; by the continual war in them

pardoning grace, and for the fresh application of Christ's blood for cleansing; by their
frequent slips and falls, and often backslidings: and though their sins are all pardoned, and they are justified from all things by the righteousness of

sin, and are under no obligation to punishment on account of it, yet not from the being of it; their sins were indeed transferred from them to Christ,

redeemed from them, and are acquitted, discharged, and pardoned, so that sin is not imputed to them, and God sees no iniquity in them in the article

the guilt of them, and are taken out of their sight, and they have no more conscience of them, having their hearts sprinkled and purged by the blood

of God, or the second death, by reason of them; yet pardon of sin, and justification from it, though they take away the guilt of sin, and free from

cause it to cease to act, or do not make sins cease to be sins, or change the nature of actions, of sinful ones, to make them harmless, innocent, or

the same kind and nature, and equally transgressions of the law, and many of them are attended with more aggravating circumstances, and are taken

people in love: now though a believer may say that he has not this or that particular sin, or is not guilty of this or that sin, for he has the seeds of all

shall have no sin, for in the other state the being and principle of sin will be removed, and the saints will be perfectly holy in themselves, yet he cannot,

cleansed from sin by the blood of Christ should affirm this,

we deceive ourselves
put a cheat upon themselves, thinking themselves to be something when they are nothing; flattering themselves what pure and holy creatures they

deceptions, sad delusions, and gross impositions upon themselves:

and the truth is not in us
persons, for if there was a real work of God upon their souls, they would

know and discern the plague of their own hearts, the impurity of their nature, and the imperfection of their obedience; nor is the word of truth in them, for if that had an entrance into them, and worked effectually in them, they would in the light of it discover much sin and iniquity in them; and indeed there is no principle of truth, no veracity in them; there is no sincerity nor ingenuity in them; they do not speak honestly and uprightly, but contrary to the dictates of their own conscience.

Ver. 9. *If we confess our sins*, &c.] Not to one other; for though it is our duty to confess our faults to our fellow creatures and fellow Christians which are committed against them, yet are under no obligation to confess such as are more immediately against God, and which lie between him and ourselves; or at least it is sufficient to confess and acknowledge in general what sinful creatures we are, without entering into particulars; for confession of sin is to be made to God, against whom it is committed, and who only can pardon: and a man that truly confesses his sin is one that the Spirit of God has convinced of it, and has shown him its exceeding sinfulness, and filled him with a godly sorrow for it, and given him repentance unto salvation, that needeth not to be repented of; and who, under such a sight and sense of sin, and concern for it, comes and acknowledges it before the Lord, humbly imploring, for Christ's sake, his pardoning grace and mercy; and such obtain it:

he is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins: forgiveness of sin here intends not the act of forgiveness, as in God, proceeding upon the bloodshed and sacrifice of Christ, which is done at once, and includes all sin, past, present, and to come; but an application of pardoning grace to a poor sensible sinner, humbled under a sense of sin, and confessing it before the Lord; and confession of sin is not the cause or condition of pardon, nor of the manifestation of it, but is descriptive of the person, and points him out, to whom God will and does make known his forgiving love; for to whomsoever he grants repentance, he gives the remission of sin; in doing of which he is faithful to his word of promise; such as in (Proverbs 28:13 Isaiah 55:7); “and just”; in being “true”, as the Arabic version adds, to his word; and showing a proper regard to the blood and sacrifice of his Son; for his blood being shed, and hereby satisfaction made to the law and justice of God, it is a righteous thing in him to justify from sin, and forgive the sinner for whom Christ has shed his blood, and not impute it to him, or punish him for it; though the word here used may answer to the Hebrew word qydx, which sometimes carries in it the notion and idea of

mercy and beneficence; hence mercy to the poor is sometimes expressed by righteousness; and the righteous acts of God intend his mercies and
Daniel 4:27 1 Samuel 12:7); and so
forgiveness of sin springs from the tender mercies of our God, and is both

Christ, and of pure grace and mercy to the pardoned sinner: the following clause,

unrighteousness, is but the same thing
unrighteousness is sin, and to cleanse
from sin is to remove the guilt of it, by an application of the blood of Christ

who is light, and with whom the saints have fellowship; or his Son Jesus Christ, who is the nearest antecedent, and who, being truly God, has a

Ver. 10. , &c.] Have never sinned, in time past as well as now; deny original sin, and that men are born in sin, but

concupiscence is not sin; and so not regarding internal lusts and desires as sinful, only what is external, fancy they have so lived as to have been

we make him a liar: that is, God, who in his word declares that the wicked

speaking lies; that his own people are transgressors from the womb; that all have sinned and come short of his glory; and that there is none that does

and become filthy by it, and so obnoxious to the wrath of God:

and his word is not in us
word of God which declares these things; no regard is had unto it; it "is not with us", as the Ethiopic versions render it; it is not used and attended to as the rule and standard of truth, but is east away and despised;

for, was this the case, they would have other notions of themselves than that of sinless creatures. The apostle has regard either to the Gnostics, a set

even in the midst of all their impurities, and notwithstanding their vicious lives; or to
entertained such sort of notions as these of being perfect and without sin [f8]

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO 1 JOHN 2

In this chapter the apostle comforts the saints under a sense of sin; urges them to an observance of the commandments of God, in imitation of Christ, particularly to the new commandment of brotherly love, and gives his reasons for it; dehorts them from the love of the world, and the things of it; cautions them against false teachers and antichrists, and exhorts them to abide in Christ, and persevere in the faith of him. He first declares that the end of his writing was to prevent their sinning; but supposing any should fall into sin through infirmity, he comforts them with the consideration of the advocacy of Christ, and of his being the propitiation for the sins both of Jews and Gentiles, (1 John 2:1,2), and whereas some persons might boast of their knowledge of Christ, and neglect his commands, he observes, that the keeping of them is the best evidence of true knowledge, and of the sincerity of their love to God, and of their being in Christ; and that such who show no regard to them are liars, and the truth is not in them; and such that profess to be in Christ and abide in him, ought to walk as they have him for an example, (1 John 2:3-6), and instances in a particular commandment, to love one another, which on different accounts is called an old and a new commandment, and which has been verified both in Christ and his people; for which a reason is given in the latter, the darkness being past, and the true light shining, (1 John 2:7,8), upon which some propositions are founded, as that he that professes to be in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness to this very moment; and that he that loves his brother is evidently in the light, nor will he easily give or take offence; and that he that hates his brother is not only in darkness, but walks in it, being blinded by it, and so knows not whither he is going, (1 John 2:9-11), and this commandment of love the apostle writes to the saints, as distinguished into the several classes of fathers, young men, and children; and urges it on them from the consideration of the blessings of grace peculiar to them; as ancient knowledge to fathers, strength and victory to young men, knowledge of the Father, and remission of sins, to children, (1 John 2:12-14), and then he dissuades from the love of worldly things, seeing the love of them is not consistent with the love of

God; and seeing the things that are in it are vain and sinful, and are not of God, but of the world; and since the world and its lust pass away, when he that does the will of God abides for ever, (1 John 2:15-17), he next observes unto them, that there were many antichrists in the world; which was an evidence of its being the last time; and these he describes as schismatics and apostates from the Christian churches, (1 John 2:18,19), but as for the saints be writes to, they were of another character, they were truly Christians, having an anointing from the Holy One, by which they knew all things; nor did the apostle write to them as ignorant, but as knowing persons, and able to distinguish between truth and error, (1 John 2:20,21), and then he goes on with his description of antichristian liars, showing that they were such who denied Jesus to be the Messiah, and the relation that is between the Father and the Son, (1 John 2:22,23), and closes the chapter with an exhortation to perseverance in the doctrine of Christ; since it was what they had heard from the beginning, and since by so doing they would continue in the Father and in the Son, and besides had the promise of eternal life, (1 John 2:24,25), and indeed this was the main thing in view in writing to them concerning seducers, to preserve them from them, though indeed this was in a great measure needless, since the anointing they had received abode in them; and taught them all things, and according as they regarded its teaching they would abide in Christ, (1 John 2:26,27), to which he exhorts them from the consideration of that boldness and confidence it would give them at his appearance, who they must know is righteous, and so that everyone that doth righteousness is born of him, (1 John 2:28,29).

Ver. 1. *My little children*, &c.] The apostle may address the saints under this character, on account of their regeneration by the Spirit and grace of God, in which they were as newborn babes; and on account of his being the instrument of their conversion, and so was their spiritual father, and therefore calls them his own children; and he might the rather use such a way of speaking, because of his advanced age, being now in his old age, and John the elder in age as well as in office; as well as to show his paternal affection for them, and care of them, and that what he had wrote, or should write, was not from any disrespect, but from pure love to them; and it might serve to put them in mind of their weakness in faith, in knowledge, and spiritual strength, that they might not entertain high notions of themselves, as if they were perfect and without infirmities; and it is easy to observe, that this is one of Christ's expressions, (John 13:33),

from whose lips the apostle took it, whose words and phrases he greatly delighted in, as he seems to do in this, by his frequent use of it; (see 1 John 2:18,28 3:7,18 4:4 5:21).

These things write I unto you; concerning the purity and holiness of God, who is light itself; concerning fellowship with him, which no one that lives in sin can have; concerning pardon and cleansing from sin by the blood of Christ, and concerning sin being in them, and they not without it. The Ethiopic version reads, “we write”, as in (1 John 1:4);

that ye sin not; not that he thought they could be entirely without it, either without the being of it, or the commission of it, in thought, word, or deed, for this would be to suppose that which is contrary to his own words, in (1 John 1:8,10); but he suggests that the end of his writing on these subjects was, that they might not live in sin, and indulge themselves in a vicious course of living, give up themselves to it, and walk in it, and work it with all greediness: and nothing could be more suitably adapted to such an end than the consideration of the holiness of God, who calls by his grace; and of the necessity of light and grace and holiness in men to communion with him; and of the pardoning grace of God and cleansing blood of Christ, which, when savingly applied, sets men against sin, and makes them zealous of good works; and of the indwelling of sin in the saints, which puts them upon their guard against it:

and if any man sin; as every man does, even everyone that is in the light, and walks in it, and has fellowship with God; everyone that believes in Christ, and is justified through his righteousness, and pardoned by his blood; everyone of the little children; for the apostle is not speaking of mankind in general who sin, for Christ is not an advocate for all that sin, but of these in particular; hence the Arabic version renders it, “if any of you sin”; and this, with the following, he says not to encourage in sin, but to comfort under a sense of it:

we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; Christ is an advocate, not for just or righteous persons, for as he came not to call these to repentance, nor to die for them, so such have no need of an advocate, nor is he one for them; but as he came to call sinners, and to save them, and died for them, the just for the unjust, so he is an advocate, and makes intercession for transgressors; and not for all men, though they have all sinned; not for the world, or those so called in distinction from the persons given him by his Father, for these he prays not; but for all the elect,

and whatsoever charges are brought against them he answers to them, and for them; and for all that believe in him, be they weak or strong, even for the apostles as well as others; for they were not without sin, were men of like passions as others, and carried about with them a body of sin, and had their daily infirmities, and so needed an advocate as others; and hence John says, “we have an advocate”, &c. but then Christ is not an advocate for sin, though for sinners; he does not vindicate the commission of sin, or plead for the performance of it; he is no patron of iniquity; nor does he deny that his clients have sinned, or affirm that their actions are not sins; he allows in court all their sins, with all their aggravated circumstances; nor does he go about to excuse or extenuate them; but he is an advocate for the non-imputation of them, and for the application of pardon to them: he pleads in their favour, that these sins have been laid upon him, and he has bore them; that his blood has been shed for the remission of them, and that he has made full satisfaction for them; and therefore in justice they ought not to be laid to their charge; but that the forgiveness of them should be applied unto them, for the relief and comfort of their burdened and distressed consciences: and for this he is an advocate for his poor sinning people “with the Father”; who being the first Person, and the Son the advocate, and the Spirit sustaining a like character, is only mentioned; and he being God against whom sin is committed, and to whom the satisfaction is made; and the rather, as he is the Father of Christ, and of those for whom he is an advocate; seeing it may be concluded that his pleadings will be with success, since he is not only related to him, and has an interest in him himself, but the persons also, whose patron he is, are related to him, and have a share in his paternal affection and care: moreover, this phrase, as it expresses the distinct personality of Christ from the Father, so his being with him in heaven at his right hand, and nearness to him; where he discharges this office of his, partly by appearing in person for his people in the presence of God; and partly by carrying in and presenting their confessions of sin, and their prayers for the fresh discoveries and applications of pardoning grace, which he offers up to his Father with the sweet incense of his mediation; and chiefly by pleading the virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, which are carried within the vail, and are always in sight, and call aloud for peace and pardon; as also by answering and removing the charges and accusations of the court adversary, the accuser of the brethren, the devil; as well as by the declarations of his will, demanding in point of justice, in consideration of his sufferings and death, that such and such blessings be bestowed upon his

people, as pardon, righteousness, grace, and supplies of grace, and at last glory; and by applying these benefits to their souls as a “comforter”, which the word here used also signifies, and is so rendered, (<43B416>John 14:16,26 15:26 16:7); and by the Arabic version here. Now the saints have but one advocate, and that is enough for them; the apostle does not say we have advocates, but “an advocate”; not angels, nor saints departed, but Jesus Christ only, who is the one Mediator between God and man, (<540205>1 Timothy 2:5): and he is a continual one, he ever lives to make intercession; his blood is always speaking, and he always pleading; and therefore it is said “we have”, not we have had, or we shall have an advocate and he is a prevalent one, he is always heard, he thoroughly pleads the cause he undertakes, and ever carries it; which is owing to the dignity of his person, his interest with his Father, and the virtue and value of his sacrifice: and he every way fit for such a work, for he is “righteous”; not only in his natures, both divine and human, but in his office, as Mediator, which he faithfully and righteously performs; he is a very proper person to plead for guilty persons, which he could not do if he himself was guilty; but he is so holy and righteous that nothing can be objected to him by God; and it need not be doubted by men that he will act the faithful part to them, and righteously serve them and their cause; and it is moreover his righteousness which he has wrought out, and is imputed to them, that carries the cause for them; and therefore this character of Christ fitly added, as is also the following. The Jews [f9] have adopted the word in the text into their language, but have applied it to a different purpose, to alms deeds, repentance, and good works. Much more agreeably Philo the Jew [f10] speaks of the son of perfect virtue, παρακλητω, “as an advocate” for the forgiveness of sins, and for a supply of everlasting good things.

Ver. 2. *And he is the propitiation for our sins*, &c.] For the sins of us who now believe, and are Jews:

and not for ours only; but for the sins of Old Testament saints, and of those who shall hereafter believe in Christ, and of the Gentiles also, signified in the next clause:

but also for [the sins] of the whole world; the Syriac version renders it, “not for us only, but also for the whole world”; that is, not for the Jews only, for John was a Jew, and so were those he wrote unto, but for the Gentiles also. Nothing is more common in Jewish writings than to call the Gentiles amle, “the world”; and µlwh lk, “the whole world”; and Mlwh

twmwa, “the nations of the world” [f11]; (see Gill on “<4812 9>John 12:19”); and the word “world” is so used in Scripture; (see <4801 6>John 3:16 4:42 <4511 2>Romans 11:12,15); and stands opposed to a notion the Jews have of the Gentiles, that hrpk Nhl Nya, “there is no propitiation for them” [f12]: and it is easy to observe, that when this phrase is not used of the Gentiles, it is to be understood in a limited and restrained sense; as when they say [f13],

> “it happened to a certain high priest, that when he went out of the sanctuary, aml[ylwk, “the whole world” went after him;”

which could only design the people in the temple. And elsewhere [f14] it is said,

> “aml[ylwk, “the “whole world” has left the Misna, and gone after the “Gemara”;”

which at most can only intend the Jews; and indeed only a majority of their doctors, who were conversant with these writings: and in another place [f15],

> “aml[ylwk, “the whole world” fell on their faces, but Raf did not fall on his face;”

where it means no more than the congregation. Once more, it is said [f16], when

> “R. Simeon ben Gamaliel entered (the synagogue), aml[ylwk, “the whole world” stood up before him;”

that is, the people in the synagogue: to which may be added [f17],

> “when a great man makes a mourning, aml[ylwk, “the whole world” come to honour him;”

i.e. a great number of persons attend the funeral pomp: and so these phrases, ygylp al amleylwk, “the whole world” is not divided, or does not dissent [f18]; yrbœamleylwk, “the whole world” are of opinion [f19], are frequently met with in the Talmud, by which, an agreement among the Rabbins, in certain points, is designed; yea, sometimes the phrase, “all the men of the world” [f20], only intend the inhabitants of a city where a synagogue was, and, at most, only the Jews: and so this phrase, “all the world”, or “the whole world”, in Scripture, unless when it signifies the whole universe, or the habitable earth, is always used in a limited sense,

either for the Roman empire, or the churches of Christ in the world, or believers, or the present inhabitants of the world, or a part of them only, (<2201>Luke 2:1 <4501>Romans 1:8 3:19 <5101>Colossians 1:6 <6610>Revelation 3:10 12:9 13:3); and so it is in this epistle, (<6219>1 John 5:19); where the whole world lying in wickedness is manifestly distinguished from the saints, who are of God, and belong not to the world; and therefore cannot be understood of all the individuals in the world; and the like distinction is in this text itself, for "the sins of the whole world" are opposed to "our sins", the sins of the apostle and others to whom he joins himself; who therefore belonged not to, nor were a part of the whole world, for whose sins Christ is a propitiation as for theirs: so that this passage cannot furnish out any argument for universal redemption; for besides these things, it may be further observed, that for whose sins Christ is a propitiation, their sins are atoned for and pardoned, and their persons justified from all sin, and so shall certainly be glorified, which is not true of the whole world, and every man and woman in it; moreover, Christ is a propitiation through faith in his blood, the benefit of his propitiatory sacrifice is only received and enjoyed through faith; so that in the event it appears that Christ is a propitiation only for believers, a character which does not agree with all mankind; add to this, that for whom Christ is a propitiation he is also an advocate, (<6201>1 John 2:1); but he is not an advocate for every individual person in the world; yea, there is a world he will not pray for (<4709>John 17:9), and consequently is not a propitiation for them. Once more, the design of the apostle in these words is to comfort his "little children" with the advocacy and propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, who might fall into sin through weakness and inadvertency; but what comfort would it yield to a distressed mind, to be told that Christ was a propitiation not only for the sins of the apostles and other saints, but for the sins of every individual in the world, even of these that are in hell? Would it not be natural for persons in such circumstances to argue rather against, than for themselves, and conclude that seeing persons might be damned notwithstanding the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, that this might, and would be their case. In what sense Christ is a propitiation, (see Gill on " <4525>Romans 3:25"). The Jews have no notion of the Messiah as a propitiation or atonement; sometimes they say [f21] repentance atones for all sin; sometimes the death of the righteous [f22]; sometimes incense [f23]; sometimes the priests' garments [f24]; sometimes it is the day of atonement [f25]; and indeed they are in the utmost puzzle about atonement; and they even confess in their prayers [f26], that they have now neither altar nor priest to atone for them; (see Gill on "<6204>1 John 4:10").

Ver. 3. *And hereby we do know that we know him*, &c.] Either the Father, with whom Christ is an advocate; not as the God of nature, and by the light of it, nor as the lawgiver and Judge of the whole earth, and by the law of Moses; but as the God of all grace, as a God pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin, as the Father of Christ, and as in him by the Gospel; and this not in a mere notional and speculative way, but with love and affection; not with fear and trembling, as devils know him, nor in theory, as formal professors and hypocrites, but with a knowledge, joined with hearty love of him, and cheerful obedience to him: or else Christ, the advocate and propitiation for sin; and him also, not with a mere notional knowledge of his person and offices, which carnal men and devils themselves have of him, but with that which is spiritual, special, and saving, being from the Spirit and grace of God; and regards Christ as a Saviour, as a propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and an advocate with God the Father; and by which he is approved as such, to the rejection of all other savours, sacrifices, and advocates; and is trusted, confided, and believed in as such, and affectionately loved, and that above all others, in sincerity and truth; and is readily obeyed in his word and ordinances; for where there is true knowledge of Christ, there is faith in him; and where there is faith in him, there is love to him, for faith works by love; and where there is love to him, there will be an observance of his commands; and this is here made the evidence of the true knowledge of him: for it follows,

if we keep his commandments; not the commandments of men, for the keeping of them arises from ignorance of God, and is a proof of it; nor the commandments of the ceremonial law, which are abolished, particularly circumcision, which is opposed to the keeping of the commandments of God, (40791 Corinthians 7:19); but either those of the moral law, and which are more particularly the commandments of God the Father; the observance of which, though it cannot be with perfection, yet being in faith, and from love to God, and with a view to his glory, is an evidence of the true knowledge of him and of his will: or else those commandments, which are more especially the commandments of Christ Jesus; such as the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, which are peculiar to the Gospel dispensation; and which being kept as they were delivered by Christ, and in his name and strength, and to his glory, without depending on them for life and salvation, is an argument and proof of the right knowledge of him; and particularly his new commandment of loving one another may be chiefly designed, that being what the apostle has greatly in

view throughout this epistle; now let it be observed, that keeping of the commands of God, or Christ, is not the knowledge of either of them itself, for much may be done in an external way, yet neither God nor Christ be spiritually and savingly known; nor is it the cause of such knowledge, for that is owing to the Spirit and grace of God; but is an effect or consequence of spiritual knowledge, and so an evidence of it; hereby is not the knowledge itself, but the knowledge of that knowledge, that is, that it is true and genuine.

Ver. 4. *He that saith I know him*, &c.] God or Christ, as the Gnostics did, who pretended to great, even perfect, knowledge of divine things:

and keepeth not his commandments; which the above persons had no regard to, and as many who profess great light and knowledge in our days show no concern for:

is a liar; he contradicts what he says, and gives the lie to it; for though in words he professes to know God, in works he denies him, and which betrays his ignorance of him:

and the truth is not in him; there is no true knowledge of God and Christ in him; nor is the truth of the Gospel in his heart, however it may be in his head; nor is the truth of grace in him, for each of these lead persons to obedience. The Ethiopic version renders it, "the truth of God is not with him"; (see Gill on "1 John 1:8").

Ver. 5. *But whoso keepeth his word*, &c.] Either the word of the Gospel, and the truths of it, who receives it in love, cordially embraces and retains it, and will by no means part with it, but holds it fast, and stands fast in it; or the precepts and ordinances of the word, who loves these, and esteems them above fine gold, and concerning all things to be right, and observes them as they should be:

in him verily is the love of God perfected: not the love wherewith God loves him, for that is perfect in himself, and admits of no degrees, and cannot be more or less in his heart, and is entirely independent of the obedience of men, or any works of theirs; it is true indeed the manifestations of this love to the saints are imperfect, and may be more and greater, and greater manifestations of love are promised to such that love Christ, and keep his commandments, (John 14:21,23); but here it is to be understood not actively, but passively, of the love wherewith God is loved by his people; and intends not the absolute perfection of it in them, in

whom it often waxes cold, and is left, or the fervour of it abated, but the sincerity and reality of it; for by keeping the word of God, both his truths and his ordinances, it is clearly seen that their love to him is without dissimulation, and is not in tongue only, but in deed and in truth:, now it is not the keeping of the word of God that causes this love, or makes it perfect or sincere, for it is a fruit of the Spirit, and is owing to the grace of God; but love, on the other hand, is the cause of keeping of the word; and the latter being a consequent and an effect of the former, is the evidence of it, of the truth and sincerity of it:

hereby know we that we are in him: in Christ, not merely nominally, or by profession, as all that name the name of Christ, and are in a Gospel church state, may be said to be; but really, first secretly, through the love of Christ, the election of God, and the covenant of grace, and then openly, in conversion and the effectual calling, through believing in Christ, when the saints appear to be in him as branches in the vine; and which is known by their fruits, as here, by keeping the word, and doing the commandments of Christ, which do not put a man into Christ, but only show that he is there; for a man's being in Christ is owing to the grace of God; this is the first thing done in grace, (<4010>1 Corinthians 1:30).

Ver. 6. *He that saith he abideth in him*, &c.] As all do that are in him; once in Christ, and always in Christ; they are set as a seal on his arm and heart, which can never be removed; they are in his arms, and can never be plucked from thence; and are members of him, and can never be disunited from him: or dwelleth in him, as in (<4056>John 6:56); that is, by faith; who under a sense of sin and danger have fled to Christ, as to a strong tower and place of defence, where they dwell safely, peaceably, pleasantly, and comfortably, enjoying whatever is necessary for them. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, “he that saith I am in him”; loved by him, chosen in him, united to him, a member of his, and have communion with him:

ought himself also to walk even as he walked; as Christ walked, lived, and acted, so ought he; that is, to imitate him and follow him, as he has him for an example; not in his miraculous works in raising the dead, healing the sick, and walking upon the waters, &c. which were wrought as proofs of his deity and of his Messiahship, and not intended for imitation; nor in his mediatorial performances, as in his propitiatory sacrifice and advocacy; but in the exercise of grace, and duties of religion as a man, and in a private way; and may chiefly regard walking in love, as he walked, (see

(Ephesians 5:2); and is what is in the following verses insisted on, namely, the new commandment of love to the brethren; which should be to all as his was, and, like his, constant and lasting; and, when the case requires, should be shown by laying down life for them. The “as” is not a note of equality, but of likeness; for it cannot be thought that saints should walk in that degree of perfection, in humility, patience, love, and in the exercise of every other grace, and in the discharge of duty, as Christ did; only that they should copy after him, and make his obedience and life the rule of theirs.

Ver. 7. *Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you*, &c.] Some understand this of faith, which this apostle calls a commandment, (1 John 3:23); but it rather intends the commandment of love, especially to the brethren, of which the apostle says the same things as here in his second epistle, (1 John 2:5,6); and this sense agrees both with what goes before and follows after, and is a considerable branch of the commandments of Christ to be kept, and of walking as he walked; and the word “brethren”, prefixed to this account, may direct to, and strengthen this sense, though the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, “beloved”; and so the Alexandrian copy, and others: and this commandment is said to be not a new one,

but an old commandment, which ye had from the beginning; it being in its original a part of the eternal law of truth, founded upon the unalterable nature and eternal will of God, who is love itself, and requires it in all his creatures; being what was written on Adam's heart in a state of innocence, and a branch of the divine image stamped upon him; and is what was delivered in the law of Moses, for love to God and men is the sum and substance of that; and was taught by Christ and his apostles from the beginning of the Gospel dispensation; and was what these saints had been acquainted with, and influentially instructed in from their first conversion, being taught of God in regeneration to love one another; so that this was no novel doctrine, no upstart notion, no new law, but of the greatest and most venerable antiquity, and therefore to be regarded in the most respectful manner.

The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning; or this ancient law of love is contained in, and enforced by that word or doctrine which was delivered from the beginning of time; and which these saints had heard of, concerning the seed of the woman's

bruising the serpent's head, which includes the work of redemption and salvation by Christ, atonement by his sacrifice, forgiveness of sin through his blood, and justification by his righteousness, than which nothing can more powerfully engage to love God, and Christ, and one another; and which is also strongly encouraged by the word of God and Gospel of Christ, which they had heard, and had a spiritual and saving knowledge of, from the time they were effectually called by the grace of God: the phrase, “from the beginning”, is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and others, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; it is omitted in both clauses of the text in the latter.

Ver. 8. *Again, a new commandment I write unto you*, &c.] Which is the same with the former, considered in different respects. The command of brotherly love is a new one; that is, it is an excellent one, as a new name is an excellent name, and a new song is an excellent one; it is renewed by Christ under the Gospel dispensation; it is newly explained by him, and purged from the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees; (see <4043>Matthew 5:43,44); and enforced by him with a new argument, and by a new example of his own, even his own love to his people; and which is observed by them in a new manner, they being made new creatures; and this law being anew written in their hearts, under the renewing work of the Spirit of God, as a branch of the new covenant of grace; (see <4313>John 13:34). The Jews [f27] expect hvdj hrwt, “a new law” to be given them by the bands of the Messiah; and a new one he has given, even the new commandment of love, and which is the fulfilling of the law.

Which things is true in him, and in you. The Alexandrian copy reads, “in us”; the sense is either, it is true “in itself”, as the phrase will bear to be rendered, and it is verified in you, or in us, to be a new commandment; or it is true in Christ, it is yea and amen in him; it has its full completion in him, who is the fulfilling end of the law, as well as it has been faithfully delivered, truly explained, and warmly and affectionately recommended and urged by him; and he is the great pattern and exemplar of it: and the love which this new commandment requires is really and truly in the saints, implanted in them in regeneration, is a fruit of the Spirit, and which faith works by, and will always continue in them; and should be in its actings like Christ's, true, sincere, cordial, affectionate, constant, and universal: and some think the word εστι, or εστω, “is”, or “let it be”, is wanting in the last clause, and may be read, “which thing is true in him, and is”, or “let it be in you”: that is, as love to the brethren is true and sincere in Christ, so

it is, or should be in you; it should be without dissimulation, and so it was, as the reason following shows:

because the darkness is past, or is “passing”; meaning either the darkness of the ceremonial law, which lay in dark types and shadows, and in cloudy sacrifices, and mystical representations of things, and was a shadow of good things to come; and its shadows were now fleeing away apace, in fact as well as in right; and so the Alexandrian copy reads, “because the shadow is passing away”; the night of Jewish darkness was far spent, and the Gospel day was not only broke, but it was, or near noonday, which brought the light of faith, and the heat of love with it: or else the darkness of sin and ignorance, of a state of nature, and of the kingdom of Satan, in which the people of God are before conversion; which then passes away gradually, by little and little, for it is not removed at once, or wholly gone; for though the saints are at once removed out of a state of darkness, and from the kingdom of darkness, and the power of it, yet they are not wholly free from the darkness of sin and ignorance, they still see but through a glass darkly: and the words are better rendered, the darkness passes”, or “is passing away”, and not is past”, or “has passed away”; for as yet it is not entirely gone;

and the true light now shineth; either the Gospel, which is a light, and a true and substantial one, in distinction from the dim light of nature, or the shadowy law of Moses; and which now, under the present dispensation, shines out in a most glorious manner, as the sun in its full strength; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “the light of truth”; the word of truth, the Gospel of our salvation: or Jesus Christ, who is so called, (1Jo 1:1-10John 1:9); in distinction from typical lights, as the “Urim” on the high priest's breastplate, the candlestick in the tabernacle and temple, and the pillar of fire by night, which guided the Israelites through the wilderness; and in opposition to all false lights, to the Scribes and Pharisees, to false Christs and false prophets, which are so many “ignes fatui”; but Christ is the sun of righteousness that is risen in our “horizon”, and the true light which shines out in a most illustrious manner: or the light of grace is here intended, that light which the Spirit of God illuminates with in conversion; in which a man sees sin in its true colours, and has a spiritual and saving sight of Christ, of pardon, peace, life, righteousness, and salvation by him; which is no other than the light of faith, by which an enlightened person sees the Son, looks to him, and has an evidence of the unseen glories of another world. Now this is a true light, things are seen by the believer in a right light, both his

own sins, and the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; this is a shining one, which cannot but be observed by himself, and shines more and more to the perfect day; and it now shines as it did not before, in a state of nature, and continues to shine, and ever will: this light will never be put out, and is the cause of brotherly love, being truly in the saints, and of the continuance of it; before this light shines, men live in malice, but when it comes and shines, as they walk in light, they walk in love.

Ver. 9. *He that saith he is in the light*, &c.] Is in Christ the light, or has the true knowledge of the light of the Gospel, or is illuminated by the Spirit of God; for persons may profess to be enlightened ones, and not be so: wherefore the apostle does not say, he that is in the light, but he that says he is,

and hateth his brother; who is so either by creation, as all men are brethren, having one Father, that has made them, and brought them up; or by regeneration, being born of God the Father, and in the same family and household of faith; and so regards such who are in a spiritual relation, whom to hate internally, or not to love, is inconsistent with being in the light, or having faith, which is always naturally and necessarily accompanied with the heat of love; for as light and heat, so faith and love go together: wherefore, let a man's profession of light be what it will, if love to his brother is wanting, he

is in darkness even until now; he is in a state of nature and unregeneracy, which is a state of darkness and ignorance; he is under the power of darkness, and in the kingdom of Satan; who is the ruler of the darkness of this world; he ever was so from his birth; he never was called nor delivered out of it, but is still in it to this moment, and so remains. This seems to be very much levelled against the Jews, who make hatred of the brother in some cases lawful: for they say [f28],

> “if one man observes sin in another, and reproves him for it, and he does not receive his reproof, wtwanç l rtwm, “it is lawful to hate him”;”

(see Gill on “Matthew 5:43”).

Ver. 10. *He that loveth his brother*, &c.] As such, and because he is his brother in Christ, and that cordially and sincerely, without hypocrisy and

dissimulation, and by love serves him, both in things temporal and spiritual, and so observes the new, and yet old commandment,

abideth in the light: it is a plain case, that such a man is in the light of grace, and continues in it; for though it is not his love to the brethren which is the cause of his light, of his being and continuing in it, for that is owing to the spirit of light and knowledge, but on the contrary, light is the cause of his love; yet it is an evidence of it, that by which it is known, as the cause is known by the effect; (see <4014>John 3:14);

and there is none occasion of stumbling in him, or "there is no scandal" or "offence in him"; he gives no offence to his brother, or at least, as much as in him lies, he takes care that he gives none; he avoids, as much as can be, putting a stumblingblock, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way, by the use of things indifferent, or by any other action; nor will he easily take offence at what is said or done unto him, for charity or love is not easily provoked, it suffers long, and bears all things; (see <4604>1 Corinthians 13:4,5,7); nor does he so much and so frequently transgress the laws of God, and particularly those which regard his neighbour or his brother, and so easily fall into the snares of Satan, because he is in the light, and walks in the light, and sees his way, and what lies in his way, and, so shuns and avoids occasion of stumbling and falling. There is not in him that wrath, and malice, and envy, which lead on to the commission of other sins; for love works no ill, but fulfils the law, and will not suffer him to commit adultery, to kill, to steal, or bear false witness against his neighbour, friend, and brother; (see <4509>Romans 13:9,10); and such an one enjoys great peace, tranquillity, and happiness; he has much comfort in himself, and pleasure in the saints, and delight in their company; he walks inoffensively, and in an harmless manner, without hurting himself, or any other, (<19916>Psalm 119:165).

Ver. 11. *But he that hateth his brother is in darkness*, &c.] As is before expressed in (<6209>1 John 2:9), to which is added,

and walketh in darkness; he goes on in it, and takes delight in it, as dangerous and uncomfortable as it is:

and knoweth not whither he goeth; he cannot discern between good and evil; he puts darkness for light, and light for darkness; he sees not what is before him, nor what stumblingblocks lie in the way; he is not aware of the snares, pits, and traps he is in danger of falling into; nor does he know and

consider what these paths of darkness, of sin, and ignorance, and infidelity, lead unto, even unto utter darkness, where is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth: and the reason is,

because that darkness hath blinded his eyes; either Satan, the god of this world, who blinds the minds of them that believe not, and who is darkness itself, and the cause of darkness in himself and in others, and one of whose names this was with the Jews [f29]; (see Gill on "<4225>Luke 22:53"); or that natural darkness which sin has brought upon the understanding, and has blinded the eyes of it, called the blindness of the heart, (<4018>Ephesians 4:18), so that a man under the power of it is ignorant of himself, and knows not that he is blind and miserable; is a stranger to the way of peace, and life by Christ, and knows not what he is about, and where he is, or whither he is going, and what his end will be.

Ver. 12. *I write unto you, little children*, &c.] By whom the apostle means in common all the saints he writes to, whom he afterwards distributes into fathers, young men, and little children; for the same word is used here as in (<6201>1 John 2:1); and a different one from that which is rendered little children in (<6213>1 John 2:13); and besides, the following blessing of pardon of sin is common to all the children of God of different ages: now what the apostle says he writes unto them, intends not the epistle in general, but the new commandment of love in particular; and which he urges and enforces on them all, for this reason,

because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake; these little children had been sinners by nature and practice, and were not now without sin, but they shared in the blessing of the forgiveness of it; which arises from the abundant mercy and rich grace of God, and proceeds on the blood and sacrifice of Christ; and therefore is said to be "for his name's sake"; not for the sake of any merits in men, any services or works of theirs, but for the sake of Christ, his blood, sacrifice and satisfaction; and it reaches to all sins, original and actual, secret and open, past, present, and to come; and here intends the application of it by the Spirit of God, and the reception of it by faith: and which, as it is a reason and argument encouraging love to God, who freely and fully forgives, and to Christ, whose blood was shed for the remission of sin, so to their brethren and fellow Christians; who are equally sharers in the same blessing, and when they should love, because they are loved of God and Christ; and whom they should forgive, because God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven them. It may be, they may be called

here “little children”, with a view to their interest in this blessing of grace. So the Jews say [f30], that Saul was called

> ““the son of one year in his reign”; (1 Samuel 13:1); because all his iniquities were forgiven him, qwnytk “as a sucking child” of a year old.”

Ver. 13. *I write unto you, fathers*, &c.] Not merely in age, though they might be men in years who are here intended, or only with respect to their long standing in the church, which might be the case; though persons may be in years, and of a long standing in the church, and yet be children in knowledge and experience: but here it designs such, who, in comparison of others, were perfect, and were spiritual, and judged all things; had a well informed and established judgment in divine things, and were, in understanding, men, fathers, and not babes in Christ; so the Jews used to call their men of wisdom, and knowledge, and understanding, twba, “Abot”, “fathers”. Hence there is a whole treatise in the Misna called Pirke Abot, which contains the apophthegms, wise sayings, and sentences of their fathers, or wise men. Now the apostle writes the new commandment of love, and urges it on these, for this reason,

because ye have known him [that is] from the beginning; either God the Father, who is from everlasting to everlasting, the Ancient of days, the eternal I AM, whom to know is life eternal; whose everlasting love to them, whose covenant of grace with his Son for them, before the world was, and the ancient transactions, and settlements of his grace on their account, they were acquainted with: or Jesus Christ, the Logos or Word, which was from the beginning, who existed from all eternity, as a divine person, as the Son of God, co-eternal with the Father; as the eternal choice made in him, and the everlasting covenant with him show; and who in his office capacity, as Mediator, was set up from everlasting; and who, with respect to the virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, was from the beginning of the world, and was the same yesterday, today, and for ever; it being by his blood that all the patriarchs, from the beginning of time, were pardoned, and by his righteousness they were justified, and by his grace they were saved; all which, respecting the antiquity of Christ's person, office, and grace, was known to these fathers: they knew him, so as to approve of him, trust in him, and appropriate him to themselves, and which obliged them to the new commandment of love, not only to God and Christ, but to one another; and the reason here given, engaging to it, is

exceeding suitable to their character, it being what fathers and aged men delight in, even ancient things, to call them to remembrance, to talk of them as things well known unto them; but nothing is more ancient than what is here instanced in, and nothing so honourable and profitable to know as this, or to be gloried in; and therefore the argument from hence to love those that belong to him, who is the everlasting Father, is very strong and forcible.

I write unto you, young men; who are warm and zealous for God, for his cause and interest, for the glory of a Redeemer, for his truths and ordinances; and are lively in the exercise of grace, and fervent in the discharge of duty; and are active, diligent, and industrious, always abounding in the work of the Lord; and are strong and robust, able to go alone, to walk by faith, being strong in it, and in the grace that is in Christ, and do not need the staff that old age does, nor the hand to lead and teach to go, as children do: to these the apostle writes the new commandment of love, for this reason,

because ye have overcome the wicked one; Satan, who is eminently so, being the first that was, and the worst that is so; for he is wickedness itself, he is wholly, entirely, immutably, and unalterably wicked; and his whole work and employment is in wickedness. Now these young men had overcome him, not only in Christ their head, who has spoiled him, destroyed him, and led him captive in triumph, in whom they were more than conquerors; but in themselves, through the power of divine grace, holding up, and making use of the shield of faith against him, whereby they quenched his fiery darts, and got the victory over him: and this is also said in perfect agreement with the character of young men, who are apt to glory in their strength, and are fond of getting the advantage, or a victory over others; and which is used to teach such as are so in a spiritual sense, not to glory in their strength, but in the Lord; and to love him whom they know, and whose lovingkindness is exercised towards them, and in Christ; and to love him through whom they get the victory, and to bear the infirmities of weaker saints, to whom they should be strongly affected.

I write unto you, little children; or babes in Christ, such as were newborn babes, just born again, not able to go alone, or walk by faith, but were dandled on the knee, and lay at the breasts of divine consolation: could speak but stammeringly, and not plain, it being as much as they could do to

say “Abba”, Father. To these the apostle writes, and urges the new commandment of love, for this reason,

because ye have known the Father: the Father of Christ, and him, as their Father in Christ, under the witnessings of the spirit of adoption; so as, in some good measure, to hope and believe he was their Father, and to love, honour, and obey him as such, to apply to him for whatever they stood in need of, and always to put themselves under his care and protection: and a consideration of this their relation to him, and interest in him, is a strong and prevailing argument why they should not only love him, their Father, and Christ, who is begotten of him, but also all the saints, who are the children of this their Father, and their brethren; and very aptly does the apostle mention their knowledge of the Father as suitable to their age and character, it being one of the first and most necessary things for a child to know.

Ver. 14. *I have written unto you, fathers*, &c.] This, with the reason annexed to it, is repeated, to raise the attention of the aged servants of Christ, and to quicken them to a discharge of their duty, who are apt to abate in their zeal, to grow lukewarm and indifferent, to cleave to the world, and to the things of it, which they are cautioned against in (<GJ2215>1 John 2:15). The whole of this, with the reason,

because ye have known him [that is] from the beginning, is left out in the Vulgate Latin version, and Complutensian edition.

I have written unto you, young men; this repetition to them, with some additions, is also made, to stir them up the more to love the saints, who are too apt to be carried away with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, warned against in (<GJ2216>1 John 2:16);

because ye are strong; not naturally, for sin has sadly weakened human nature, so that a man, by the strength of nature, can do nothing that is spiritually good: nor in themselves, though regenerated, but in Christ, in whom are righteousness and strength; without whom they can do nothing, though they can do all things through him strengthening them; and so are strong in the exercise of grace on him, and in the performance of every duty, being strengthened by him with strength in their souls:

and the word of God abideth in you; either Christ the Logos, the essential Word of God, who might be said to be in them, and abide in them, because his grace was implanted in their hearts, called Christ, formed there, and

because he dwelt in their hearts by faith, and lived in them; and hence they had their strength, or came to be so strong as they were, and also overcame Satan, because he that was in them was greater than he that is in the world: or else the Gospel is meant, which cometh not in word only, but in power, has a place in the heart, and works effectually, and dwells richly there; and this is a means of spiritual strength against sin and temptation, and to perform duty, and to stand fast in the truth against the errors and heresies of men and is that piece of spiritual armour, the sword of the Spirit, by which Satan is often foiled, and overcome: hence it follows,

and ye have overcome the wicked one; (see Gill on "1 John 2:13").

Ver. 15. *Love not the world*, &c.] The habitable earth, the world in which men live; this is not to be loved by saints, as if it was their habitation, where they are always to be, and so loath to remove from it, seeing they are but sojourners, and pilgrims, and strangers here; this is not their rest, nor dwellingplace, their continuing city, or proper country, that is heaven. Nor should they love the men of the world, who are as they came into it, are of it, and mind the things of it, and lie in wickedness, and are wicked men; for though these are to be loved, as men, as fellow creatures, and their good, both spiritual and temporal, is to be sought, and good is to be done to them, as much as lies in our power, both with respect to soul and body; yet their company is not to be chosen, and preferred to the saints, but to be shunned and avoided, as disagreeable and dangerous; their evil conversation, and wicked communications, are not to be loved, but abhorred, and their works of darkness are to be reproved; nor are their ways to be imitated, and their customs followed, or their manners to be conformed unto:

neither the things [that are] in the world; good men that are in the world, though they are not of the world, are to be loved; and the kingdom of Christ, though it is not of the world, yet it is in the world, and is to be regarded and promoted to the uttermost; and there are the natural and civil things of the world, called this world's goods, which may be loved within due bounds, and used in a proper manner, though they are not to be loved inordinately and abused. This is the character of worldly men; so the Jews call such, hzh µlwe ybha, "such that love world" [f31]. Near relations and friends in the world, and the blessings of life, may be loved and enjoyed in their way, but not above God and Christ, or so as to take up satisfaction and contentment in them, to make idols of them, and put trust and

confidence in them, and prefer them to spiritual and heavenly things, and be so taken with them, as to be unconcerned for, and careless about the other; but the evil things of the world, or at least the evil use of them, and affection for them, are here intended, as appears from the following verse. Now it is chiefly with respect to the fathers, and young men, that this exhortation is given; and the repetition of what is said to them before is made, to introduce this; which is exceeding suitable to their age and characters. Old men are apt to be covetous, and love the world and worldly things, just when they are going out of it, and about to leave them; and young men are apt to be carried away with lust, vanity, ambition, and pride: and therefore, from each of these, the apostle dissuades, from the following arguments,

if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him; that is, "the love of God", as the Alexandrian copy and the Ethiopic version read; who is the Father of Christ, and of all the elect in him; and who is indeed, by creation, the Father of all men, the Father of spirits, of the souls of men, and of angels, and the Father of mercies and of lights, and by the love of him is meant, either the love with which he loves his people, and which being shed abroad in the heart, attracts the soul to himself, and causes it to love him above the world, and all things in it; and such an one esteems of it, and an interest in it, more than life, and all the enjoyments of it, and is by it loosened to the world, and sets light by it, and can part with all good things in it, and suffer all evil things cheerfully, under the constraints and influence of this love; so that it is a clear case, that when the affections of men are set upon the world, and they are glued to the things of it, their hearts are not warmed with a sense of the love of God, or, that is not sensibly in them, or shed abroad in their hearts: or else by the love of God is meant love to God, which is inconsistent with the love of the world, or with such an inordinate love of mammon, as to serve it; for a man may as soon serve two masters, as serve God and mammon, which he can never do truly, faithfully, and affectionately; and which also is not consistent with friendship with the men of the world, or a conversation and fellowship with them in things that are evil, whether superstition or profaneness; (see <4006>Matthew 6:24 <5904>James 4:4).

Ver. 16. *For all that [is] in the world*, &c.] This is the sum of the evil things in the world; or these following are the objects of sin in the world, or about which wicked men are conversant; even such as are carnal or grateful to the flesh, visible to the eye, and belong to this vain life, or serve

to fill with pride and vanity; or these are the main things, which men that love the world most highly value and esteem:

the lust of the flesh; by which is meant, not lust in general, or concupiscence, the corruption of nature, which is the fountain of all sin, or indwelling sin, the flesh, or that corrupt principle which lusts against the Spirit; nor the various lusts of the flesh, fleshly lusts, which war against the soul, and which are many, and are also called worldly lusts; but some particular one, “a lust of the body”, as the Syriac version reads; either the lust of uncleanness, which includes all unchaste desires, thoughts, words, and actions, fornication, adultery, rape, incest, sodomy, and all unnatural lusts; and which make up a considerable part of the all that is in the world: or else intemperance in eating and drinking, gluttony and drunkenness, excess of wine, surfeitings, rioting, and revellings, and all the sensual pleasures of life, by which the carnal mind, and the lusts of it, are gratified; whereby the soul is destroyed, the body is dishonoured, and a wound, dishonour, and reproach brought on the character, not to be removed; for which reasons the world, and the things of it, are not to be loved: the next follows,

the lust of the eyes: after unlawful objects, and may design unchaste and lascivious looks, eyes full of adultery, and whereby adultery is committed; (see <40528>Matthew 5:28); but then this falls in with the other, unless that be confined to intemperance; rather then this may intend a sinful curiosity of seeing vain sights, and shows, with which the eye of man is never satisfied, (<21008>Ecclesiastes 1:8); and against which the psalmist prays, (<19937>Psalm 119:37), or rather the sin of covetousness is here designed, the objects of which are visible things, as gold, silver, houses, lands, and possessions, with which riches the eyes of men are never satisfied, and which sin is drawn forth and cherished by the eyes; and indeed a covetous man has little more satisfaction than the beholding his substance with his eyes, and in which he takes much sinful pleasure; (see <21008>Ecclesiastes 4:8 5:11); and what a poor vain empty thing is this! therefore, love not the world, since this is a principal thing in it: as is also

the pride of life; by which seems to be meant, ambition of honour, of chief places and high titles, as in the Scribes and Pharisees, (<40206>Matthew 23:6,7), or of grand living, for the word signifies not so much life as living; living in a sumptuous, gay, luxurious, and pompous manner, in rich diet, costly apparel, having fine seats, palaces, and stately buildings, and

numerous attendance; all which is but vanity and vexation of spirit; (see Ecclesiastes 2:1,3-8,11). The Syriac and Arabic versions read, “the pride of the age”; and every age has some peculiar things in which the pride of it appears. Now neither of these

is of the Father; of God the Father, as the Ethiopic version reads; the things which are desired and lusted after are of God, but not the lust itself; God is not the author of sin, nor is it agreeable to his will:

but is of the world; of the men of it, and agreeable to their carnal minds; and is a reason why things of the world are not to be loved by the saints, who are not of it, but chosen and called out of it; and besides, all these things are mean, base, vile, and contemptible, and unworthy of their love and affection.

Ver. 17. *And the world passeth away*, &c.] Not the matter and substance, but the fashion, form, and scheme of it, (1 Corinthians 7:31); kingdoms, cities, towns, houses, families, estates, and possessions, are continually changing, and casting into different hands, and different forms; the men of the world, the inhabitants of it, are continually removing; one generation goes, and another comes, new faces are continually appearing; the riches and honours of the world are fading, perishing, and transitory things; everything is upon the flux, nothing is permanent; which is another argument why the world, and the things of it, are not to be loved:

and the lust thereof; also passes away; and objects of lust are fading and fleeting, as beauty, and riches, and honours; these are continually taking away from men, or men are taken away from them, and will not be hereafter; and even the pleasure of lust itself passes away as soon as enjoyed; the pleasures of sin are but for a season, and a very short one; and are indeed but imaginary, and leave a real bitterness and sorrow behind them, and at length bring a man to ruin and destruction:

but he that doeth the will of God; not perfectly as contained in the law, which is the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God; for no man can do that in such a manner, though a regenerate man desires to do it, even as it is done in heaven, and serves the law of God with his mind, and under the influence of the Spirit of God; and does walk in his statutes, and keeps his judgments from a principle of love, in faith, and without mercenary views and sinister ends, without depending on what he does for life and salvation; and such an one may be said to be a doer of the will of God:

though rather here it intends such an one as believes in Christ, as the propitiation for his sins, and as his advocate with the Father, and who, makes Christ his pattern and example, and walks as he walked; and particularly observes the new commandment of love, loves God, and Christ, and his fellow Christians, and not the world, and the things of it: and such a man is happy, for he

abideth for ever; in the love of God, which will never depart from him, nor shall he be separated from that; and in the hands and arms of Christ, out of which none can pluck him; and in the family and household of God, where he, as a son, abides for ever, and shall never be cast out; and in a state of justification, and shall never enter into condemnation; and in a state of grace and holiness, from whence he shall never fall totally and finally; and in heaven with Christ to all eternity: the reason of this his abiding is not his doing the will of God, which is only descriptive of him manifestatively, and not the cause of his perpetuity and immovableness; but his eternal election of God, which stands sure, not on the foot of works, but of him that calleth; and the covenant of grace in which he is interested, and which is immovable, sure, firm, and inviolable; and the foundation Jesus Christ, on which he is built; and the principle of grace in him, which always remains, and is connected with eternal life.

Ver. 18. *Little children, it is the last time*, &c.] Or hour; not of the Jewish civil and church state, for that had been at an end for some time; this epistle was written some years after the destruction of Jerusalem; nor the last hour of the Gospel dispensation, or world to come, for this was but the first age of that; and much less the last hour of time, or of the present world itself, for that has been many hundreds of years since; but the last hour of the apostolic age. All the apostles were now dead, John was the last of them; perilous times were now coming on, impostors and heretics were rising apace, against which the apostle cautions his little children; and so still he writes to them, agreeably to their age and character, who, being such, were most likely to be imposed upon by those who lie in wait to deceive.

And as ye have heard that antichrist shall come; or "is coming"; and begins to show himself in the false teachers and deceivers, who were his forerunners; and this they had heard and understood, either from the words of Christ in (<43 5:43>John 5:43); or from the account the Apostle Paul gave to the Thessalonians concerning him, (<53 2:3>2 Thessalonians 2:3,4,7-10); or rather it may be from what, the apostle had said to the elders of the church

at Ephesus, where the Apostle John now was, when he met them at Miletus, (<44Acts 20:29,30),

even now there are many antichrists. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, “false Christs”; but such are not intended here, that set up for Messiahs, whom Christ foretold should arise before the destruction of Jerusalem, (<40Matthew 24:24); for that was now over, and those false Christs had arisen and were gone: if this sense could be admitted, Bar Cocab, in Adrian's time, bids fair to be the false Christ, or Messiah, in the preceding clause, as the same versions there read; but such as were adversaries of Christ, as the Arabic version renders it, are meant, who set themselves against Christ, and were opposers of his person, incarnation, and office; who either denied that he was the Christ, or that he was come in the flesh, the truth of his incarnation, or his proper deity, or real humanity, such as Ebion, Cerinthus, and others. The apostle might well say there were many, since in his time were the followers of Simon Magus, the Menandrians, Saturnilians, Basilidians, Nicolaites, Gnostics, Carpocratians, Cerinthians, Ebionites, and Nazarenes, as reckoned up by Epiphanius. And hence we learn, that antichrist is not one single individual, but many; antichrist in the former clause is explained by antichrists in this; (see <62 1 John 2:22 4:1,3 2 John 7); and though the popes of Rome are, by way of eminence, the antichrist that should come, and which those deceivers were the forerunners of, and paved the way for; yet they are not the only antichrists, there were others before them, and there are many now besides them.

Whereby we know that it is the last time; the pure apostolic age was now going off, with the doctrines, discipline, and worship of it, which was easy to be discerned by the multitude of antichrists which now appeared; and it may well be thought to be the last time, or near the end of things with us, since almost every heresy is revived among us.

Ver. 19. *They went out from us*, &c.] Which intends not the persons that went down from Judea to Antioch, (<44Acts 15:1,24), who preached destructive doctrines to the Gentiles, which the apostles and the church of Judea disowned and censured; by which it appeared, that all the preachers of these doctrines were not of them, and of the same mind with them: for this sense makes these antichrists to be only preachers; whereas, though many of them might be such, yet not all; for whoever, in a private capacity denied the Father and the Son, or that Christ was come in the flesh, was

antichrist; and to these private believers are opposed in (1 John 2:20); and it also makes the “us” to be the apostles, whereas they were all dead but John; and these antichrists were men that had risen up then in the last time, and therefore could not, with propriety, be said to go out from the apostles; besides, whenever the apostle uses this pronoun “us”, he includes with himself all true believers, and may more especially here intend the churches of Asia; or rather the members of the church at Ephesus, where he was; nor is it likely he should have in view the church of Judea, and a case in which that was concerned near forty years ago: moreover, such a sense makes the going out to be merely local and corporeal, and which is in itself not criminal; the persons that went from Judea to Antioch were not blamable for going thither, nor for going out from the apostles thither, but for troubling the disciples with words, to the subverting of their souls; nor was a corporeal departure from the apostles any evidence of not being of the same mind with them; for they often departed one from other, yet continued of the same mind, and in the same faith: but the sense is, that there were some persons in the Apostle John's time, who had made a profession of religion, were members of the church, and some of them perhaps preachers, and yet they departed from the faith, and dropped their profession of it, and withdrew themselves from the church, or churches to which they belonged, and set up separate assemblies of their own:

but they were not of us: they were of the church, and of the same mind with it, at least in profession, antecedent to their going out; for had they not been in communion with the church, they could not be properly said to go out of it; and if they had not been of the same mind and faith in profession, they could not be said to depart from it; but they were not truly regenerated by the grace of God, and so apparently were not of the number, of God's elect: notwithstanding their profession and communion with the church, they were of the world, and not of God; they were not true believers; they had not that anointing which abides, and from which persons are truly denominated Christians, or anointed ones:

for if they had been of us, they would [no doubt] have continued with us; in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the fellowship of the church, as true believers do: if their hearts had been right with God, they would have remained steadfast to him, his Gospel, truths, and ordinances, and faithful with his saints; for such who are truly regenerate are born of an incorruptible seed, and those that have received the anointing which makes them truly Christians, that abides, as does every true grace, faith, hope, and

love; and such who are truly God's elect cannot possibly fall into such errors and heresies as these did, and be finally deceived, as they were:

but [they went out]; “they went out from us”, so the Syriac version reads;

that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us; the word “all” is left out in the Syriac version. The defection and apostasy of these persons were permitted by God, that it might appear they had never received the grace of God in truth; and their going out was in such a manner, that it was a certain argument that they were not of the elect; since they became antichrists, denied the deity or sonship of Christ, or that he was come in the flesh, or that he was the Christ, and therefore are said to be of the world, and not of God, (<60 2 22>1 John 2:22 4:1,3-6), so that this passage furnishes out no argument against the saints' perseverance, which is confirmed in (<60 2 20>1 John 2:20).

Ver. 20. *But ye have an unction from the Holy One*, &c.] Meaning the Spirit, and his graces, with which Christ, the head, is anointed without measure, and his members in measure; from whence he is called Christ, and they Christians. These were really the Lord's anointed ones; they were true believers; were the wise virgins who had oil in their vessels with their lamps, which would never go out. The grace of the Spirit is called a chrism, or an ointment, or an anointing, in allusion to the anointing oil under the law; (see Gill on “<40 25 03>Matthew 25:3”); of which anointing oil the Jews say[f32], that it continues all of it, awbl dyt[l, “to time to come”, (i.e. to the times of the Messiah,) as it is said, (<02 30 31>Exodus 30:31). Now this these saints had, “from the Holy One”; or that Holy One; meaning, not the Holy Spirit of God, though it is true that this anointing, or these graces, were from him; he is the author of them, and may truly be said to anoint with them; nor the Father, who is holy in his nature, and in his works, and is the God of all grace, and is said to anoint the saints too, (<47 01 21>2 Corinthians 1:21), but rather the Lord Jesus Christ, who is holy, both as God and man, and from whose fulness all grace is had. This oil, or ointment, was first poured on him without measure, and from him it descends to all the members of his mystical body, as the ointment poured on Aaron's head descended to his beard, and to the skirts of his garments; (see <60 2 27>1 John 2:27);

and ye know all things; for this anointing is a teaching one; it makes persons of quick understanding; it enlightens their understandings,

refreshes their memories, and strengthens all the powers and faculties of the soul; it leads into the knowledge of all spiritual things, into all the mysteries of grace, and truths of the Gospel, into all things necessary for salvation; for these words are not to be taken in the largest sense, in which they are only applicable to the omniscient God, but to be restrained to the subject matter treated of, and to those things chiefly in which the antichrists and deceivers cited; and regard not a perfect knowledge, for those that know most of these things, under the influence of this unction, know but in part. The Syriac version reads, “all men”, and so refers to that discerning of spirits, of the Spirit of truth, from the spirit of error; a gift which was bestowed on many in the primitive times, by which they could distinguish hypocrites from true believers, and antichrists and deceivers from the faithful ministers of the word. One of Stephens's copies reads, “and ye all know”.

Ver. 21. *I have not written unto you*, &c.] Either this epistle, or rather what particularly here regards those apostates from the truth, in order to shun them and not be deceived by them: the apostle here obviates an objection that he saw might be made upon what he last said, that they knew all things; and, if so, why then did he write the things he did, since they knew them before? to which he answers, that he did not write to them as to ignorant, but as to knowing persons:

because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it: the Father, who is the God of truth; Christ, who is truth itself; and the Spirit, who is the Spirit of truth; and the Gospel, which is the word of truth; and the Scriptures, which are the Scriptures of truth, and from whence truth is to be fetched, and by them to be confirmed and defended; and which, if they had not known, it would have been to no purpose for him to have written to them about the antichrists that were come into the world; and though they did know the truth, it was very proper to put them in remembrance of it, and to establish them in it, against these deceivers, which supposes former knowledge of it:

and that no lie is of the truth; either springs from it, or is according to it, but just the reverse. The apostle has respect to the errors and heresies of the above apostates, which were flagrant contradictions to the Gospel, and as distant from it as a lie is to truth; and of such lies, and of those liars, he speaks in the next verses. The Arabic version reads, “and that every liar is not of the truth”.

Ver. 22. *Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ*? &c.] Or that very Christ, and true Messiah, who was spoken of by all the prophets, since the beginning of the world, and so much, and so long desired by the Old Testament saints: he that denies that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah of the prophets, is not indeed the only liar in the world, but he is the greatest of liars; this is a consummate lie, being opposed to a glaring truth, to a fact clear an indisputable; and which rests not merely on the testimony of Jesus, who is truth itself, and who, in express words, more than once, declared and asserted himself to be the Christ; but all the characters of the Messiah, everything that is said of him in the Prophets, meet in Jesus, and the miracles which were done by him are flagrant proofs and undeniable evidences of his being the Christ of God; and all the apostles believed, and were sure that he was Christ, the Son of the living God: to which may be added the testimony of John, who was sent, and came to bear witness of him, and did; and who was a prophet, and a man of great probity and integrity. But there was a greater witness than he; even God himself, by a voice from heaven, bore a testimony to him; and angels, at his incarnation, declared him to be the Saviour, which is Christ the Lord; yea, the devil himself, who is a liar, and the father of ties in other things, knew and owned Jesus to be the Christ; so that those that deny him are the worst of liars, even worse than the devil himself. This may have regard not only to the Jews, that deny Jesus to be the Messiah, but chiefly to such who went by the name of Christians; who denied either his proper deity, or real humanity, as Ebion and Cerinthus, which was denying him to be the God-man, the Mediator, and Messiah; and is true of all such that deny him in any of his offices, or in things relating to them, as his Gospel, and any of the peculiar doctrines of it, delivered by him, and so deny his prophetic office; or any of his ordinances, institutions, and appointments, as lawgiver in his house, and King of saints, and so deny him in his kingly office; or reject him as the alone Saviour, joining their own works with him, in the business of salvation, and oppose his sacrifice and satisfaction, and despise his imputed righteousness, and so deny him in his priestly office. Now these are some of the liars, and these some of the doctrinal lies, which are not of the truth, as in (^{Gl2t}1 John 2:21).

He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son: that denies the Father of Christ to be the Creator of the world, but asserts that it was made by angels, as some ancient heretics did; or that the Father of Christ is not the God of the Old Testament, as Marcion; or that denies that God is the

Father of Christ, and that Christ is the Son of God; who will not allow that there is any such relation in nature between them; who affirm that Christ is only the Son of God by adoption, or because of his love to him, or because of his incarnation and resurrection from the dead; or that he is not his true and proper Son, only in a figurative and metaphorical sense; that he is not the natural and eternally begotten Son of God, only by office, and as Mediator, and that God is only his Father, as having installed him into an office; or he that denies that these two are distinct from each other, but affirms that Father is the Son, and the Son is the Father, and so confounds them both, and, by confounding both, denies that there are either Father or Son; and all such persons are antichrists, or opposers of Christ.

Ver. 23. *Whosoever denieth the Son*, &c.] Jesus Christ to be the true, proper, natural, essential, and eternal Son of God:

the same hath not the Father; or does not hold the Father; or "believe the Father", as the Syriac version renders it; for there cannot be a father without a son; and he that honours not the Son, by owning him as such, honours not the Father; whatever reflects dishonour on the Son, reflects dishonour on the Father. If Christ is not truly and properly the Son of God, the Father is not truly and properly the Father of Christ; if Christ is only a Son in a figurative and metaphorical sense, the Father is only a Father in a figurative and metaphorical sense; if Christ is a Son only by office, then the Father is a Father only by office, which is monstrously stupid. Such an one does not hold the true doctrine of the Father, and does not appear to have true faith in him, true love unto him, or real interest in him, only by profession:

[but he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also]: this clause is left out in many copies, and stands as a supplement in our version; but is in the Alexandrian copy, in four of Beza's manuscripts, and in some others; and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; and confirms and illustrates what is before said; for as he that denies the sonship of Christ cannot hold the paternity of God, so he that owns the sonship of Christ, the second Person, maintains the paternity of the first; for these two are correlates, and mutually put, or take away each other: no mention is made of the Spirit, because, as yet, no controversy had risen concerning him.

Ver. 24. *Let that therefore abide in you*, &c.] Meaning the word of God, (1 John 2:14); the Gospel of Christ, which there was reason to believe had a place in their hearts, and which they had embraced and professed;

and therefore the apostle exhorts them to perseverance in it; and particularly not to let go the doctrine concerning the Father and the Son, and this their relation to each other, which is the foundation of the doctrine of the Trinity, and of the distinct personality of Father, Son, and Spirit; the contrary to which leaves the three without either name, or distinction from each other: the arguments to enforce this exhortation follow,

which ye have heard from the beginning; they had heard it not externally only, but internally; they had hearkened to it, and from the heart obeyed it; they had mixed it with faith, and received the love of it; they had heard it from the apostles of Christ, who were eye and ear witnesses of the word; and this they had heard at the first preaching of the Gospel to them, at the first of their conversion: the apostles of Christ began their ministry with the sonship of Christ, and greatly insisted on it, in it, and required a profession of it before baptism, and which was made in order to it; and these believers had been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, as standing in such a relation to each other; (see <4402>Acts 9:20 8:37 <4019>Matthew 28:19); and therefore ought not to relinquish this truth, and receive a new and upstart notion: and for further encouragement to continue in it, it is added,

if that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, *ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father*; as those that are once in either always will; what is here said is not either the cause or condition of men being in the Father, and in the Son, or of their continuance in them, but is descriptive of the persons that are in them, and is an open and manifest evidence of their being and continuance in them. Such are in union with Christ, and at times enjoy sensible communion with him, and shall never be finally and totally removed from it; they are in the love of Christ, from whence there is no separations, and in the arms and hands of Christ, out of which none can pluck them; and they abide by him in the exercise of faith and love, and cleave unto him with full purpose of heart, and will hold on and out, professing his name to the end: and they are, and abide in the love of God the Father, which is from everlasting to everlasting; and in the covenant of his grace, which is sure and inviolable; and in the participation of all the blessings and promises of it, among which, the following one, eternal life, is a principal one.

Ver. 25. *And this is the promise that he hath promised us*, &c.] Either God the Father, who is that God that cannot lie, who in the covenant of his grace, before the world began, made this promise unto his people,

[even] eternal life; which promise, with all others, was put into the hands of Christ, where, with them, it is yea and amen; and also the thing itself promised, where it is hid, and lies safe and secure: or the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who has promised it in the Gospel; for this is the sum of the Gospel declaration, that whoever believes in him shall have everlasting life; and this lies in the knowledge of the Father, and of the Son, and in the enjoyment of them, and conformity to them; wherefore the doctrine respecting them ought to be retained, and firmly adhered to.

Ver. 26. *These [things] have I written unto you*, &c.] The little children, who were most likely to be imposed upon by antichrists and deceivers:

concerning them that seduce you. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it, “for them that seduce you”; not that they were actually seduced and carried away with the error of the wicked; for though God's elect may be staggered and waver, and be tossed to and fro by false teachers, and their doctrines, yet they cannot be totally and finally deceived: but the sense is, these men endeavoured to seduce them: they lay in wait to deceive, and attempted to deceive them, by walking in craftiness, and handling the word of God deceitfully; and therefore that they might be known, and so shunned and avoided, the apostle points them out, and shows who they are; that they are such who deny that Jesus is the Christ, and do not own neither the Father nor the Son; in doing which he acted the part of a tender Father, a faithful shepherd, and a careful monitor.

Ver. 27. *But the anointing which ye have received of him*, &c.] The Spirit, and the grace of the Spirit, which they had received out of the fulness of grace which is in Christ; and is compared to oil or ointment; (see Gill on “1 John 2:20”); for Christ, the anointed, is the fountain of it all, and it is had from him in a way of giving and receiving. So the second “Sephira”, or number in the Jews' Cabalistic tree, which is wisdom, has for one of its surnames, the fountain of the oil of unction [f33] this

abideth in you; the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, “if it abideth”, which spoils the text, for the words are not conditional, but affirmative: grace is an internal thing, it is oil in the vessel of the heart, and where it once is, it abides; as does every grace of the Spirit, as faith, hope, love, and every other: grace can never be taken away; God will not take it away, where he has once bestowed it, and men and devils cannot; it can never be lost as to the principle and being of it; it is an incorruptible seed, and a living principle, which can never be destroyed, notwithstanding all the

corruptions in a man's hart, the pollutions of the world, and the temptations of Satan:

and ye need not that any man teach you; not that they were perfect in knowledge, for no man is absolutely, only comparatively so, in this life; or that they needed not, and were above and exempt from the instructions of Christ's faithful servants; for John himself taught them, and to teach and instruct them was the end of his writing this epistle to them; but the sense is either that they needed not the teachings of these men before mentioned, the antichrists, liars, and seducers, being better taught, and having an unction by which they knew all things; or they needed not to be taught as if they were babes in Christ, as unskilful in the word of righteousness, but so as to increase in spiritual knowledge, and go on to perfection, and be established in the present truths, at least so as to be put in remembrance of them; or rather they needed not, nor were they to regard any mere human revelation and doctrine, for the whole Gospel was come by Jesus Christ, and no other is to be expected or received by men, nor any doctrine but what is according to the revelation of Christ; wherefore saints under the Gospel dispensation are taught of God by his Spirit, according to the word of truth, and by the ministry of it, and have no need of learning every man from his neighbour, or from his brother, any separate revelation; so that this passage does not militate against the external ministry of the Gospel, or human teachings according to that perfect rule and declaration of the whole mind and will of God by Christ under the Gospel dispensation:

but as the same anointing. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, “his anointing”; that is, God's or Christ's; and so the Syriac version renders it, “that unction which is of God”; meaning the same as before: the Ethiopic version renders it, his Spirit, which, though not a true version, is no improper or impertinent sense of the phrase: and this

teacheth you of all things; truths and doctrines necessary to salvation, as in (<6120>1 John 2:20);

and is truth, and is no lie; or true and not a liar; which is a just character of the spirit of truth, in opposition to the spirit of error; and holds good of the grace of the Spirit, which is truth in the inward parts, and is genuine and sincere:

and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him; in Christ, from whom they received this anointing, (see Gill on “<6124>1 John 2:24”); or in the

anointing itself, in the grace of the Spirit, in which they stood. Some versions read in the imperative, abide in him, or it, as in (1 John 2:28).

Ver. 28. *And now, little children, abide in him*, &c.] The apostle having finished his separate instructions exhortations to the fathers, young men and children, returns to the whole body of the saints in general, whom he addresses, as in (1 John 2:1,12); under the name of little children; (see Gill on "1 John 2:1"); and whom he exhorts to abide in Christ, that is, in the exercise of faith on him, of hope in him, and love to him; and to hold to him the head, and to hold fast his word and Gospel, and abide by his truth and ordinances, and adhere to his cause and interest, and not to be moved away on any consideration; to which the following encouragement is given:

that when he shall appear; that is, Christ, who is now hid, and out of the sight of bodily eyes, is in heaven, at the right hand of God; but ere long he will appear a second time, and not only to those that look for him, but even every eye shall see him; and his appearance will be a glorious one, and his saints shall appear in glory with him, and shall be like him, and see him as he is:

we may have confidence; boldness or freedom, as now at the throne of grace, so then at the throne of judgment; where the saints will stand with courage and intrepidity, when the wicked will flee to the rocks and mountains, being filled with amazement, terror, and trembling:

and not be ashamed before him at his coming; they will not be put to shame by him; nor will they be ashamed of their confidence, faith, hope, and expectation; their hope will not make them ashamed, for they will now enjoy what they hoped for; and, notwithstanding all their sins and infirmities, they will not be ashamed, for they will have on the wedding garment, the righteousness of Christ, and will stand before the throne without fault, spot, or blemish; nor will Christ be ashamed of them who have not been ashamed of him and his words, but have confessed him, and have been faithful unto death, and have cleaved to him and his cause with full purpose of heart to the end. Some think ministers of the Gospel are here meant, who, when those that are under their care abide faithful, and persevere to the end, will give up their account with joy; and will have what they have expressed confidence in, and will have their expectations answered, and not disappointed, by having such souls as their joy and crown of rejoicing.

Ver. 29. *If ye know that he is righteous*, &c.] That is, Christ, who is righteous as God in his nature and in his works; and as man in his obedience, life, and conversation; and as Mediator, in faithfully discharging the work he undertook; and is the author of an everlasting righteousness, which is imputed by God, revealed in the Gospel, and received by faith; all which they knew, for this is not said as doubting, but rather as taking it for granted that they did know it; "if", or "seeing ye know", &c. then it follows;

ye know, or "know ye"; ye may assure yourselves,

that everyone that doeth righteousness; not merely works of righteousness, especially in order to justify him before God; for such an one is so far from being born of God, or born again, that he is manifestly in a state of nature, and of opposition to, and enmity against God; he is not subject to him, he does not submit to the righteousness of God, but goes about to establish his own and betrays his ignorance and want grace; but it intends such an one who with the heart believes unto righteousness, and lays hold by faith, and lives upon the righteousness of Christ for justification; and who performs, good, works in faith, and from a principle of love, not to obtain a justifying righteousness, but because he is justified by the righteousness of Christ: and: such an one

is born of him; either of God, or rather, of Christ; being regenerated by his Spirit, having his, grace implanted in him, as appears by his faith in his righteousness and by his works of righteousness, as fruits of faith; and having his image stamped on him, and he himself formed in him, and so made like unto him; by all which it is evident he is one of his spiritual seed and offspring. The Syriac version reads, "is of him"; belongs to him, is one of his; and this makes way for what is said of adoption in the following chapter and which should begin here.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO 1 JOHN 3

In this chapter the apostle exhorts to a holy life and conversation in general, and to the exercise of brotherly love in particular. The former of these is urged from the consideration of the great blessing of adoption, which springs from the free love and favour of God, is unknown to the men of the world, and indeed, in the present state of things, does not appear to the saints themselves in all its fulness and advantages, as it will do in the future state, when the children of God will be like to Christ, and see him as he is; the hope of which should engage them to purity of life and conversation, (1 John 3:1-3), and this is further enforced from the nature of sin, which is a transgression of the law, (1 John 3:4), from the end of Christ's manifestation in the flesh, which was to take away sin, and who was without it, (1 John 3:5), from communion with Christ, expressed by abiding in him, seeing and knowing him, which such must be strangers to that live a sinful course of life, (1 John 3:6), from this, that only such that do righteousness are righteous persons, and these are righteous as Christ is, (1 John 3:7), and from a man's being of the devil, that is, of a vicious conversation, who was a sinner from the beginning, and whose works Christ was manifested in the flesh to destroy, (1 John 3:8), and from the nature of the new man, or that which is born of God, which is not to sin, nor can it, (1 John 3:9), and from the distinction there is between the children of God and the children of the devil, those not being of God who do not righteousness, nor love their brethren, (1 John 3:10), from hence the apostle passes to brotherly love, and excites and engages to that, from its being a message which had been heard from the beginning, (1 John 3:11), which is illustrated by its contrary in the instance of Cain, who by the instigation of Satan slew his brother, because his works were righteous, and his own were evil, (1 John 3:12), wherefore, it is no wonder that good men should be hated by the world, who, as Cain, are of the same wicked one, (1 John 3:13), brotherly love is further urged unto, from its being an evidence of passing from death to life, or of regeneration; whereas he that hates his brother openly continues in a state of death, is a murderer, and so has not eternal life abiding in him,

(<61D314>1 John 3:14,15), and from the great instance of Christ's love, in laying down his life for his people, the saints are incited to lay down their lives for one another; to such a pitch does the apostle carry brotherly love, (<61D316>1 John 3:16), wherefore, he that is rich, and is uncompassionate to his brother in distress, cannot be thought to have the love of God dwelling in him, (<61D317>1 John 3:17), hence he presses the exhortation to brotherly love, that it be not in profession only, but true, real, and cordial, (<61D318>1 John 3:18), and that by observing the advantages of it, as that hereby men know they are of the truth, and can assure their hearts before God; and which is illustrated by the contrary, the condemnation of the heart, (<61D319>1 John 3:19,20), the advantages of non-condemnation of the heart are confidence before God, and receiving whatsoever we ask of him; the reason of which is, because his commandments are kept, and things done which are pleasing to him, (<61D321>1 John 3:21,22), the commandments are explained of faith in Christ, and love to one another, (<61D323>1 John 3:23), and the happiness of them that do them is, that Christ dwells in them, and they in him, the evidence of which is, the Spirit that is given unto them, (<61D324>1 John 3:24).

Ver. 1. *Behold what manner of love*, &c.] See, take notice, consider, look by faith, with wonder and astonishment, and observe how great a favour, what an instance of matchless love, what a wonderful blessing of grace,

the Father hath bestowed upon us: the Father of Christ, and the Father of us in Christ, who hath adopted us into his family, and regenerated us by his grace, and hath freely given us the new name:

that we should be called the sons of God. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, add, “and we are”, or “be”; and the Ethiopic version, “and have been”; for it is not a mere name that is bestowed, but the thing itself in reality; and in the Hebrew language, “to be called”, and “to be”, are terms synonymous; (see <230906>Isaiah 9:6 <281010>Hosea 1:10); in what sense the saints are the sons of God; (see Gill on “<480406>Galatians 4:6”); this blessing comes not by nature, nor by merit, but by grace, the grace of adoption; which is of persons unto an inheritance they have no legal right unto; the spring of it is the everlasting and unchangeable love of God, for there was no need on the adopter's side, he having an only begotten and beloved Son, and no worth and loveliness in the adopted, they being by nature children of wrath; it is a privilege that exceeds all others, and is attended with many; so that it is no wonder the apostle

breaks out in this pathetic manner, and calls upon the saints to view it with admiration and thankfulness:

therefore the world knoweth us not; that is, the greater part of the world, the world that lies in wickedness, the men of the world, who have their portion in this life, whom the god of this world has blinded, and who only mind the things of the world, and are as when they came into it, and have their conversation according to the course of it; these do not know the saints are the sons of God; the new name of sons is what no man knoweth but he that receiveth it; they do not own the saints as theirs, as belonging to them, but reckon them as the faith of the world, and the offscouring of all things; nor do they love them, and that because they are not their own, but hate them and persecute them: the reason is,

because it knew him not; neither the Father, whose sons they are, and who has bestowed the grace upon them; wherefore they know not, and disown and persecute his children; (see <4817 25>John 17:25 15:21 16:3); nor the Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father, the firstborn among many brethren; who, though he made the world, and was in it, was not known by it, but was hated, abused, and persecuted; and therefore it need not seem strange that the saints, who are the sons of God by adoption, should be treated in like manner.

Ver. 2. *Beloved, now are we the sons of God*, &c.] By adoption, secretly in God's predestination, and in the covenant of grace; and openly in regeneration, through faith in Christ, and by the testimony of the Spirit:

and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; though they are sons, they do not appear now as such, as they will do, when they shall be introduced into their Father's house, and into the many mansions there prepared for them; when Christ shall publicly own them as the children given unto him, and when they shall be put into the possession of the inheritance they are heirs of; besides, they will appear then not only to be kings' sons, but kings themselves, as they now are; they will then inherit the kingdom prepared for them, and will sit down on a throne of glory, and have a crown of righteousness, life, and glory, put upon them; and will appear not only perfectly justified, their sins being not to be found; and the sentence of justification afresh pronounced, and they placed out of the reach of all condemnation; but they will be perfectly holy and free from all sin, and perfectly knowing and glorious; they have a right to glory now, and glory is preparing for them, and they for that: and they are now representatively

glorified in Christ, but then they will be personally glorified: now, though all this shall certainly be, yet it does not now manifestly appear; it appears to God, who calls things that are not as though they were and to Christ, whose delights were with the sons men, these children of God, before the world was, and saw them in all the glory they were to be brought to; but not even to angels, until they are owned and confessed before them; much less to the world, who do not know what they are now, and still less what they will be, seeing them now in poverty, meanness, under many reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions; and even this does not appear to the saints themselves, whose life is a hidden life; and that by reason of darkness, desertion, and diffidence, for want of more knowledge, and from the nature of the happiness itself, which is at present unseen:

but we know that when he shall appear; that is, Jesus Christ, who is now in heaven, and out of sight, but will appear a second time: the time when is not known, but the thing itself is certain:

we shall be like him; in body, fashioned like to his glorious body, in immortality and incorruption, in power, in glory, and spirituality, in a freedom from all imperfections, sorrows, afflictions, and death; and in soul, which likeness will lie in perfect knowledge of divine things, and in complete holiness;

for we shall see him as he is; in his human nature, with the eyes of the body, and in his glorious person, with the eyes of the understanding; not by faith, as now, but by sight; not through ordinances, as in the present state, but through those beams of light and glory darting from him, with which the saints will be irradiated; and this sight, as it is now exceeding desirable, will be unspeakably glorious, delightful, and ravishing, soul satisfying, free from all darkness and error, and interruption; will assimilate and transform into his image and likeness, and be for ever. Philo the Jew observes [f34], that Israel may be interpreted one that sees God; but adds, ουχ οιος εστιν ο ψεος, “not what God is”, for this is impossible: it is indeed impossible to see him essentially as he is, or so as to comprehend his nature, being, and perfections; but then the saints in heaven will see God and Christ as they are, and as much as they are to be seen by creatures; God will be seen as he is in Christ; and Christ will be seen as he is in himself, both in his divine and human natures, as much as can be, or can be desired to be seen and known of him.

Ver. 3. *And every man that hath this hope in him*, &c.] Or on him, Jesus Christ; for a true hope of that eternal happiness, which lies in likeness to Christ, and in the vision of him, is only founded on his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice: and this hope every man has not, only he who is born again; for this grace is implanted in regeneration, when men are of abundant mercy begotten unto it, and have it bestowed upon them as a free grace gift; and which is of great service to them both in life and in death; and among the rest it has this influence and effect upon them, that every such person that has it,

purifieth himself even as he is pure; not that any man can purify or cleanse himself from sin, this is only owing to the grace of God and blood of Christ; nor that any man can be so pure and holy as Christ is, who is free from all sin, both original and actual; but this must be understood either of a man that has faith and hope in Christ, dealing by these with the blood of Christ for purity and cleansing, with whom and which these graces are conversant for such purposes; or of such a person's imitating of Christ in the holiness of his life and conversation, making him his pattern and example, studying to walk as he walked; to which he is the more excited and stimulated by the hope he has of being a Son of God, a dear child of his, and therefore ought to be a follower of him, and walk as Christ walked, in humility; love, patience, and in other acts of holiness; and by the hope he has of being like unto him, and with him in the other world to all eternity: but then this “as” is only expressive of some degree of likeness and similitude, and not perfect equality, which is not to be expected in this, or in the world to come; believers indeed, who have faith and hope in the justifying righteousness of Christ, may, and should consider themselves pure and righteous, and free from sin, as Christ is; being clothed upon with his robe of righteousness, in which they stand without fault before the throne, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but this does not seem to be the sense of the place here, the argument being to engage the saints to purity and holiness of life and conversation, from the consideration of the great love of God bestowed upon them in their adoption, and from their hope of eternal happiness, as the context shows; (see 2 Corinthians 7:1); other arguments follow.

Ver. 4. *Whosoever committeth sin*, &c.] This, in connection with what follows, is true of any sin, great or small, but here designs a course of sinning, a wilful, obstinate, persisting in sin:

transgresseth also the law; not of man, unless the law of men is founded on, and agrees with the law of God, for sometimes to transgress the laws of men is no sin, and to obey them would be criminal; but the law of God, and that not the ceremonial law, which was now abolished, and therefore to neglect it, or go contrary to it, was not sinful; but the moral law, and every precept of it, which regards love to God or to our neighbour, and which may be transgressed in thought, word, and deed; and he that committeth sin transgresses it in one or all of these ways, of which the law accuses and convicts, and for it pronounces guilty before God, and curses and condemns; and this therefore is an argument against sinning, because it is against the law of God, which is holy, just, and good, and contains the good and acceptable, and perfect will of God, which is agreeable to his nature and perfections; so that sin is ultimately against God himself:

for sin is a transgression of the law; and whatever is a transgression of the law is sin; the law requires a conformity of nature and actions to it, and where there is a want of either, it is a breach of it; it is concerned with the will and affections, the inclinations and desires of the mind, as well as the outward actions of life; concupiscence or lust is a violation of the law, as well as actual sin; and especially a course of sinning both in heart, lip, and life, is a continued transgression of it, and exposes to its curse and condemnation, and to the wrath of God; and is inconsistent with a true hope of being the sons and heirs of God: but then the transgression of what is not the law of God, whether the traditions of the elders among the Jews, or the ordinances of men among Papists, Pagans, and Turks, or any other, is no sin, nor should affect the consciences of men.

Ver. 5. *And ye know that he was manifested*, &c.] This is a truth of the Gospel the saints were well instructed in and acquainted with; that Jesus Christ, the Word and Son of God, who is here meant, who was with the Father, and lay in his bosom from all eternity, was in the fulness of time made manifest in the flesh, or human nature, by assuming it into union with his divine person; in which he came and dwelt among men, and became visible to them: the end of which manifestation was,

to take away our sins; as the antitype of the scape goat, making reconciliation and satisfaction for them, through the sacrifice of himself; which was doing what the blood of bulls and goats, or any legal sacrifices or moral performances, could never do: and this he did by taking the sins of his people upon himself, by carrying them up to the cross, and there

bearing them, with all the punishment due unto them, in his body; by removing them quite away, and utterly destroying them, finishing and making an end of them: and by causing them to pass away from them, from off their consciences, through the application of his blood by his Spirit:

and in him is no sin; neither original, nor actual; no sin inherent; there was sin imputed to him, but none in him, nor done by him; and hence he became a fit person to be a sacrifice for the sins of others, and by his unblemished sacrifice to take the away; and answered the typical sacrifices under the law, which were to be without spot and blemish: and this shows that he did not offer himself for any sins of his own, for there were none in him, but for the sins of others; and which consideration, therefore, is a strong dissuasive from sinning, and as such is mentioned by the apostle; for, since sin is of such a nature that nothing could atone for it but the blood and sacrifice of Christ, an innocent, as well as a divine person, it should be abhorred by us; and since Christ has taken it away by the sacrifice of himself, it should not be continued and encouraged by us; and since in him is no sin, we ought to imitate him in purity of life and conversation; the end of Christ's bearing our sins was, that we might live unto righteousness, and to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works; and his love herein should constrain us to obedience to him: so the Jews [f35] speak of a man after the image of God, and who is the mystery, of the name Jehovah; and in that man, they say, there is no sin, neither shall death rule over him; and this is that which is said, (<19B504>Psalm 5:4); neither shall evil dwell with thee.

Ver. 6. *Whosoever abideth in him*, &c.] As the branch in the vine, deriving all light, life, grace, holiness, wisdom, strength, joy, peace, and comfort from Christ; or dwells in him by faith, enjoys communion with him as a fruit of union to him; and stands fast in him, being rooted and grounded in him, and abides by him, his truths and ordinances, takes up his rest, and places his security in him, and perseveres through him:

sinneth not; not that he has no sin in him, or lives without sin, but he does not live in sin, nor give up himself to a vicious course of life; for this would be inconsistent with his dwelling in Christ, and enjoying communion with him:

whosoever sinneth; which is not to be understood of a single action, but of a course of sinning:

hath not seen him, neither known him; that is, he has never seen Christ with an eye of faith; he has never truly and spiritually seen the glory, beauty, fulness, and suitableness of Christ, his need, and the worth of him; he has never seen him so as to enjoy him, and have communion with him; for what communion hath Christ with Belial, or light with darkness, or righteousness with unrighteousness? (<4614>2 Corinthians 6:14,15), nor has he ever savingly known him, or been experimentally acquainted with him; for though he may profess to know him in words, he denies him in works.

Ver. 7. *Little children, let no man deceive you*, &c.] Neither by these doctrines, nor by wicked practices, drawing into the belief of the one, or into the performance of the other; suggesting, as the Gnostics did, that knowledge without practice was enough, and that it was no matter how a man lived, provided his notions of the Gospel were right:

he that doeth righteousness, is righteous; not that any man is made righteous by the works of the law, or by his obedience to the law of works, for this is contrary to the express word of God; and besides, the best righteousness of man is imperfect, and can never constitute or denominate him righteous before God; and was he justified by it; it would not only lay a foundation for boasting in him, which ought not to be, but would make the death, the sacrifice, and righteousness of Christ, to be in vain; men are only made righteous by the righteousness of Christ, which be has wrought out which is revealed in the Gospel, and received by faith, and which God imputes without works; so that he that doeth righteousness is he that being convinced of the insufficiency of his own righteousness, and of the excellency and suitableness of Christ's righteousness, renounces his own, and submits to his; who lays hold upon it, receives it, and exercises faith on it, as his justifying righteousness; and, in consequence of this, lives in a course of holiness and righteousness, in opposition to, and distinction from one that commits sin, or lives a sinful course of life; which, though it does not make him righteous in the sight of God, yet it shows him to be righteous in the sight of men, and proves that faith to be right which lays hold on the righteousness of Christ, by which he is truly righteous:

even as he is righteous; as Christ himself is righteous; and so the Syriac version reads; not as personal, or as he is personally and essentially righteous as God; but as mystical, every member of his body being clothed with the same robe of righteousness the whole body of Christ is, and indeed justified by the same righteousness that he as Mediator was, when

he rose from the dead, as the representative of his people: moreover, as Christ showed himself to be righteous as man, by doing good, so believers in him, by imitating him, and walking as he walked, show themselves to be good and righteous, like, though not equal to him; for as a tree is known by its fruits, so is a good man by his good works, and a righteous man by doing righteousness; and as good fruit does not make a good tree, but shows it to be good, so good works do not make a good man, nor a man's own righteousness make him a righteous man, but show him to be so.

Ver. 8. *He that committeth sin is of the devil*, &c.] Not everyone that sins, or commits acts of sin, then every man is of the devil, because no man lives without the commission of sin; but he who makes sin his constant business, and the employment of his life, whose life is a continued series of sinning, he is of the devil; not as to origin and substance, or by proper generation, as some have literally understood the words; but by imitation, being like him, and so of him their father, doing his lusts, living continually in sin, as he does, and so resemble him, as children do their parents; and hereby also appear to be under his government and influence, to be led captive by him at his will, and so to belong to him, and such as will have their part and portion with him in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, so living and dying:

for the devil sinneth from the beginning; not of his creation, for he was made by God a pure and holy creature; but from the beginning of the world, or near it, at least from the beginning of man's creation; for he not only sinned by rebelling against God himself, and by drawing in the rest of the apostate angels into the rebellion with him, but by tempting man, as soon as created, to sin against God: what was his first and particular sin is not certain, whether pride or envy, or what; seems to be, his not abiding in the truth, or an opposition to the truth of the Gospel, respecting the incarnation of the Son of God, mentioned in the following clause; (see <4844>John 8:44); however, he has been continually sinning ever since: he “sinneth”; he is always sinning, doing nothing else but sin; so that he that lives a vicious course of life is like him, and manifestly of him:

for this purpose the Son of God was manifested; in human nature, as in (<6105>1 John 3:5); whence it appears that he was the Son of God before his incarnation, and so not by it; he did not become so through it, nor was he denominated such on account of it; he was not made the Son of God by it, but was manifested in it what he was before; and for this end:

that he might destroy the works of the devil; and the devil himself, and all his dominion and power, and particularly his power over death, and death itself; and especially the sins of men, which are the works of the devil, which he puts them upon, influences them to do, and takes delight in; and which are destroyed by Christ, by his sacrifice and death, being taken, carried, removed away, finished, and made an end of by him; (see Gill on "1 John 3:5").

Ver. 9. *Whosoever is born of God*, &c.] In a figurative and spiritual sense; who are regenerated, or born from above; who are quickened by the grace of God, and have Christ formed in them; who are made partakers of the divine nature, and new creatures in Christ; which spiritual birth is not owing to men, to the power and will of men, but to the grace of God; and is sometimes ascribed to the Father, who of his own will and abundant mercy begets souls again to a lively hope, and saves them by the washing of regeneration; and sometimes to Christ, who quickens whom he will, whose grace is implanted, and image stamped in it, and by whose resurrection from the dead men are begotten again; and chiefly, to the Spirit of God, who is the author of regeneration, and of the whole of sanctification: and such as are born of him are alive through him, the spirit of life entering into them, and live to God and upon Christ, and breathe after divine and spiritual things, and have their senses to discern them; they see, hear, feel, taste, and savour them; and desire the sincere milk of the word, for their nourishment and growth; and have every grace implanted in them, as faith, hope, and love: and of every such an one it is said, he

doth not commit sin; does not make it his trade and business; it is not the constant course of his life; he does not live and walk in sin, or give up himself to it; he is not without the being of it in him, or free from acts of sin in his life and conversation, but he does not so commit it as to be the servant of it, a slave unto it, or to continue in it; and that for this reason:

for his seed remaineth in him; not the word of God, or the Gospel, though that is a seed which is sown by the ministers of it, and blessed by God, and by which he regenerates his people; and which having a place in their hearts, becomes the ingrafted word, and there abides, nor can it be rooted out; where it powerfully teaches to avoid sin, is an antidote against it, and a preservative from it: nor the Holy Spirit of God, though he is the author of the new birth, and the principle of all grace; and where he once is, he always abides; and through the power of his grace believers prevail against

sin, and mortify the deeds of the body, and live: but rather the grace of the Spirit, the internal principle of grace in the soul, the new nature, or new man formed in the soul, is meant; which seminally contains all grace in it, and which, like seed, springs up and gradually increases, and always abides; and is pure and incorruptible, and neither sins itself, nor encourages sin, but opposes, checks, and prevents it:

and he cannot sin; not that it is impossible for such a man to do acts of sin, or that it is possible for him to live without sin; for the words are not to be understood in the sense of those who plead for perfection in this life; for though the saints have perfection in Christ, yet not in themselves; they are not impeccable, they are not free from sin, neither from the being nor actings of it; sin is in them, lives in them, dwells in them, hinders all the good, and does all the mischief it can: or in such sense, as if the sins of believers were not sins; for though they are pardoned and expiated, and they are justified from them, yet they do not cease to be sins; they are equally contrary to the nature, will, and law of God, as well as the sins of others; and are oftentimes attended with more aggravated circumstances, and which God in a fatherly way takes notice of, and chastises for, and on the account of which he hides his face from them: nor does the phrase intend any particular single sin, which cannot be committed; though there are such, as sinning wilfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, or denying Christ to be the Saviour of sinners, and a sacrifice for sin, and hatred of a Christian brother as such, and sinning the sin unto death, or the unpardonable sin; neither of which can be committed by a regenerate man: nor is the meaning only, though it is a sense that will very well bear, and agrees with the context, that such persons cannot sin as unregenerate men do; that is, live in a continued course of sinning, and with pleasure, and without reluctance, and so as to lie in it, as the whole world does: but rather the meaning is, he that is born of God, as he is born of God, or that which is born of God in him, the new man, or new creature, cannot sin; for that is pure and holy; there is nothing sinful in it, nor can anything that is sinful come out of it, or be done by it; it is the workmanship of the Holy Spirit of God; it is a good work, and well pleasing: in the sight of God, who is of purer eyes than to behold sin with delight; and an incorruptible seed, which neither corrupts nor is corrupted; and though it is as yet an imperfect work, it is not impure: the reason of the impeccability of the regenerate man, as such, is

because he is born of God: for that which is born of God in him, does, under the influence of the Spirit, power, and grace of God, preserve him from the temptations of Satan, the pollutions of the world, and the corruptions of his own heart; (see 1 John 5:18); which the Vulgate Latin version there renders, “the generation of God”, meaning regeneration, or that which is born of God, “preserveth him”: this furnishes out a considerable argument for the perseverance of the saints.

Ver. 10. *In this the children of God are manifest*, &c.] By regenerating grace, and not sinning, in the sense before explained, in consequence of it: adoption is an act of God's grace and sovereign will; it is secret in his own heart, and is secured in divine predestination, and in the covenant of grace, and is antecedent to regeneration: regeneration and faith do not make men the children of God, but manifest them to be so; adoption makes them the children of God, and entitles them to the inheritance; regeneration gives them the nature of the children of God, and makes them meet for it, and manifests their right unto it; not to the men of the world, but to themselves and other saints:

and the children of the devil; such as imitate him, do his will and his lusts, and are openly under his power and influence; these are distinguishable from regenerate persons, and the children of God, by their lives and conversations; so the people of the nations of the world are called, ywnb, “the children of Samael”, and the serpent, by the Jews[f36], which are with them the names of the devil.

Whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God: that is, he does; not appear to be born of God, who does not by faith lay hold on the righteousness of Christ for his justification before God, and acceptance with him; and who does not do works of righteousness in faith from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God; for where regenerating grace is, there will be such graces and such practices:

neither he that loveth not his brother; for as he that loveth God, and Christ, and the brethren, appears manifestly to be born again, and to have passed from death to life, so he that does not is in darkness, in a state of unregeneracy, and walks and continues therein; for was he born again, he would be taught of God to love the saints; (see 1 John 4:7 3:14 2:11).

Ver. 11. *For this is the message*, &c.] Sent from God by Christ, or what he in his ministry declared, and is the commandment which was so frequently urged by him, (<43B334>John 13:34 15:12,17);

that ye have heard from the beginning; of the preaching of the Gospel to them, and of their conversion; (see <620207>1 John 2:7);

that we should love one another; to which the command of Christ, the reason with which it is enforced, and the early notice of it, should engage.

Ver. 12. *Not as Cain*, &c.] That is, let us not be like him, or do as he did, hate the brethren. The apostle illustrates brotherly love by its contrary, in the instance of Cain, who was the first instance and example of hatred of the brethren, and of fratricide, and a very detestable one, by which he would dissuade from so vile and abominable a practice:

[who] was of that wicked one; Satan, a child of his, an imitator of him, one that appeared to be under his influence, and to belong unto him. So the Jews say of Cain [f37], that

> "he was of the side of the serpent (the old serpent the devil); and as the way of the serpent is to slay and to kill, so Cain immediately became a murderer."

And again,

> "because Cain came from the side of the angel of death, he slew his brother [f38];"

though they say that he afterwards repented, and became worthy of paradise [f39].

And slew his brother; (see <010408>Genesis 4:8). According to the tradition of the Jews [f40] he struck a stone into his forehead, and killed him:

and wherefore slew he him? what was the cause and occasion of it? what moved him to it?

because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous; or "his work", as the Ethiopic version reads: the sacrifice which he offered up, which, though it was not evil as to the matter and substance of it, yet was so, being offered with an evil mind, and with an hypocritical heart, and without faith in the sacrifice of Christ, and so was unacceptable to God; whereas, on the other hand, the sacrifice his brother brought was offered

up in the faith of Christ, by which he obtained a testimony that he was righteous, and that the work he did was a righteous work, being done in faith, and so was acceptable to God; which Cain perceiving, was filled with envy, and this put him upon killing him. The Jews [f41] relate the occasion of it after this manner;

> "Cain said to Abel his brother, come, and let us go out into the open field; and when they were both out in the open field, Cain answered and said to Abel his brother, there is no judgment, nor Judge, nor another world; neither will a good reward be given to the righteous, nor vengeance be taken on the wicked; neither was the world created in mercy, nor is it governed in mercy; or why is thy offering kindly accepted, and mine is not kindly accepted? Abel answered and said to Cain, there is judgment, and there is a Judge, and there is another world; and there are gifts of a good reward to the righteous, and vengeance will be taken on the wicked; and the world was created in mercy, and in mercy it is governed, for according to the fruit of good works it is governed; because that my works are better than thine, my offering is kindly accepted, and thine is not kindly accepted; and they both strove together in the field, and Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."

In the Hebrew text in (Genesis 4:8); there is an extraordinary large pause, as if a discourse of this kind, which passeth between the two brothers, was to be inserted. Philo the Jew says [f42], that in the contention or dispute between Cain and Abel, Abel attributed all things to God, and Cain ascribed everything to himself; so that the controversy was about grace and works, as now; and as then Cain hated his brother upon this account, so now carnal men hate and persecute the saints, because they will not allow their works to be the cause of justification and salvation: and from hence also it may be observed, that a work may be, as to the matter of it, good, and yet as to its circumstances, and the end and view of it, evil.

Ver. 13. *Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you*.] By "the world" is meant the inhabitants of the world, the wicked part of them; these hate the saints, though without a cause, any just cause, and for no other reason, but because they are chosen and called out of the world, and do not live the wicked life they do: and this hatred of theirs is not at all to be wondered at; so it was from the beginning, and has been in all ages since; immediately upon the fall there was enmity between the seed of the woman

and the seed of the serpent, which showed itself in Cain, the instance just given, who hated and murdered his righteous brother; Ishmael, that was born after the flesh, persecuted Isaac, that was born after the Spirit; and as it was then, it is now, the Jews persecuted the prophets of old, and hated Christ and his apostles. This is the common lot of all the saints, of all that will live godly in Christ Jesus; and therefore it should not be reckoned a strange and unusual thing; it always was so, even from the beginning, as soon as ever there were two sorts of persons, good and bad, righteous and wicked. This is a corollary or conclusion drawn from the above instance of Cain.

Ver. 14. *We know that we have passed from death to life*, &c.] From a death in sin, a moral or spiritual death; which lies in a separation from God, Father, Son, and Spirit; in an alienation from the life of God; in a loss of the image of God, of righteousness, holiness, and knowledge, in which man was created; in a privation of all true sense of sin, and in a servitude to it, which is unto death, and is no other than death: and from a legal death, or death in a legal sense, under the sentence of which all men are, as considered in Adam; and which God's elect are sensible of, when convinced by the Spirit of God, and are in their own apprehension as dead men. Now in regeneration, which is a quickening of sinners dead in sin, a resurrection of them from the dead, the people of God pass from this death of sin, and the law, to a life of sanctification, having principles of grace and life implanted in them; and to a life of justification, and of faith on Christ, as the Lord their righteousness; and to a life of communion with Christ; and to such a life as is to the glory of Christ; and to a right to eternal life. And this passing from the one to the other is not of themselves, it is not their own act; no man can quicken himself, or raise himself from the dead; in this men are passive: and so the words are rendered in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, “we know that we are translated”; that is, by God the Father, who delivers from the power of darkness, and death, and translates into the kingdom of his dear Son, which is a state of light and life; or by Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, who is the author of the resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace; or by the Spirit of life from Christ, by whom souls are quickened, and of whom they are born again: and this passage from death to life, or regeneration, is a thing that may be, and is known by the regenerate man; who, as he knows surely, that whereas he was blind he now sees, so that whereas he was dead in sin, he is now alive; and among other things it may be known by this,

because we love the brethren: this is not the cause of passing from death to life, but the effect of it, and so an evidence of it, or that by which it is known; brotherly love being what the saints are taught of God in regeneration, and is a fruit of the Spirit of God, and is what true faith works by, and is what shows itself as soon as anything in a regenerate man; nor can anyone love the saints, as such, as brethren in Christ, unless he is born again; a man may indeed love a saint, as a natural relative, as a good neighbour, and because he has done him some good offices, and because of some excellent qualities in him, as a man of learning, sense, candour, civility, &c. though he has not the grace of God; but to love him as a child of God, a member of Christ, and because he has his image stamped on him, no man can do this, unless he has received the grace of God; so that this is a certain evidence of it:

he that loveth not [his] brother, abideth in death; in the death of sin, in a state of nature and unregeneracy; under the sentence of condemnation and death; and he is liable to eternal death, which is the wages of sin, under the power of which such a manifestly is. This is said to deter from hatred, as also what follows.

Ver. 15. *Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer*, &c.] A soul murderer, as the Ethiopic version renders it; not only of himself, for every sinner, by sinning, wrongs and destroys his own soul; but of his brother whom he hates: he is a murderer of him in his heart, even as he that lusts after a woman hath committed adultery with her in his heart, out of which arise murders, as well as adulteries; it is not only taking away life, but also causeless anger, malice, and hatred, that is a breach of the sixth command; (see <4010521>Matthew 5:21,22,28 15:19);

and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him; he has not the grace of life, or the beginning of eternal life in him; he has no meetness for it, being unregenerate; and no right unto it, being unrighteous; nor has he the earnest and pledge of it, being destitute of the Spirit of God; all which a regenerate man has, and has them abiding in him: not but that the sin of murder may be forgiven; a man guilty of it may truly repent, and have pardoning grace applied unto him, and enjoy eternal life, through the grace of the Spirit, and the blood and righteousness of Christ; but without these he is so far from having eternal life, that he is not only punishable with a corporeal death, according to the laws of God and man; but he is exposed unto, and will die the second, or an eternal death.

Ver. 16. *Hereby perceive we the love [of God]*, &c.] The phrase “of God” is not in the Oriental versions, nor in the Greek copies, but is in the Complutensian edition, and in the Vulgate Latin version, and is favoured by the Syriac version, which reads, “by this we know his love to us”; and so the Ethiopic version, “by this we know his love”. That is, the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is truly and properly God, the great God, the mighty God, the true God, and God over all, blessed for ever. His love is manifested to his people, and perceived by them in various instances; but in nothing is it more clearly seen than in the following one:

because he laid down his life for us: of the life of Christ, and his laying it down in the room of his people, (see Gill on “1Jo 3:16John 15:13”), which shows his love, his free grace and favour; for this arose not from any merit or worth in the persons he died for; not from their love, loveliness, or duty, but from his rich mercy, and the great love wherewith he loved them; and which, though it cannot be equalled, should be imitated:

and we ought to lay down [our] lives for the brethren: not in such sense, or for such ends and purposes, as Christ laid down his life for us; for no man, as by giving his money, so by laying down his life, can redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him: but the meaning is, that saints ought to risk their lives, and expose themselves to dangers, for the sake of their brethren, when they are called to it, and the case requires it: as Priscilla and Aquila laid down their necks, or ventured their lives for the Apostle Paul, (Ro 16:3,4Romans 16:3,4); and they should also, when called unto it, freely lay down their lives in the cause of Christ, and for the sake of his Gospel, for the gaining of souls to Christ, and for the confirming of the faith of the brethren in him, as the apostles of Christ, and the martyrs of Jesus, have done; this is an argument for brotherly love, in the highest instance of it, taken from the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, than which nothing is more forcible, or can lay a greater obligation on the saints.

Ver. 17. *But whoso hath this world's good*, &c.] The possessions of this world, worldly substance, the temporal good things of it; for there are some things in it, which are honestly, pleasantly, and profitably good, when used lawfully, and not abused, otherwise they are to the owner's hurt: or “the living of this world”; that which the men of the world give up themselves to, are bent upon, and pursue after; or on which men live, and by which life is maintained, and preserved, and made comfortable in the present state of things; such as meat, drink, apparel, money, houses, lands,

&c. The Ethiopic version renders it, “he that hath the government of this world”; as if it pointed at a person that is in some high office of worldly honour and profit, and is both great and rich; but the words are not to be restrained to such an one only, but refer to any man that has any share of the outward enjoyments of life; that has not only a competency for himself and family, but something to spare, and especially that has an affluence of worldly substance; but of him that has not, it is not required; for what a man distributes ought to be his own, and not another's, and in proportion to what he has, or according to his ability:

and seeth his brother have need; meaning, not merely a brother in that strict and natural relation, or bond of consanguinity; though such an one in distress ought to be, in the first place, regarded, for no man should hide himself from, overlook and neglect his own flesh and blood; but any, and every man, “his neighbour”, as the Ethiopic version reads, whom he ought to love as himself; and especially a brother in a spiritual relation, or one that is of the household of faith: if he has need; that is, is naked and destitute of daily food, has not the common supplies of life, and what nature requires; and also, whose circumstances are low and mean, though not reduced to the utmost extremity; and if he sees him in this distress with his own eyes, or if he knows it, hears of it, and is made acquainted with it, otherwise he cannot be blameworthy for not relieving him.

And shutteth up his bowels [of compassion] from him; hardens his heart, turns away his eyes, and shuts his hand; has no tenderness in him for, nor sympathy with his distressed brother, nor gives him any succour: and this shows, that when relief is given, it should be not in a morose and churlish manner, with reflection and reproach, but with affection and pity; and where there is neither one nor the other,

how dwelleth the love of God in him? neither the love with which God loves men; for if this was shed abroad in him, and had a place, and dwelt in him, and he was properly affected with it, it would warm his heart, and loosen his affections, and cause his bowels to move to his poor brother: nor the love with which God is loved; for if he does not love his brother whom he sees in distress, how should he love the invisible God? (1 John 4:20); nor that love which God requires of him, which is to love his neighbour as himself.

Ver. 18. *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue*, &c.] Which though it holds good of love to God, and to Jesus Christ, yet here is

to be understood of love to the brethren, as the context shows; and so the Syriac version reads, “let us not love one another in word”, &c. that is, without the heart, or with a double heart; speaking one thing with the lip, and designing another thing in the heart; speaking peaceably with the mouth, and with the heart laying wait; or we should not love in this manner “only”; and so the Arabic version of Deuteronomy Dieu adds. It is very lawful, and right to express our love to one another, and to all men in words, to give good words, and use courteous language, and speak in a kind, tender, and affectionate manner, and especially to persons in distress; but this should not be all, it will be of no avail to say to such, be warmed and filled, and give them nothing but these good words, nothing to warm and fill them with; (see <9025>James 2:15,16);

but in deed and in truth; for true love is a laborious and operative grace, hence we read of the work and labour of love; it shows itself by the saints serving one another, in spirituals; as by bearing one another's burdens, forbearing with, and forgiving one another, praying for each other, and building up one another on their most holy faith; exhorting each other to the duties of religion, and not suffering sins upon one another, but admonish in love, and restore with meekness; and in temporals, distributing to the necessities of the saints, ministering: to them of their worldly substance, and supplying their daily wants: and this is loving “in deed”, or “in work”; this is actual love, love in fact, and what is apparent and evident: and it is “in truth”, when it is in reality, and not in show only; and when it is cordially and heartily done, with cheerfulness, and without grudging.

Ver. 19. *And hereby we know that we are of the truth*, &c.] By the saints loving one another in deed and in truth, they know, as the cause is known by the effect, that they are of God, who is the true God, the God of truth, and cannot lie, and is truth itself; that they are the children of God, and are born of him, since they love those that are, and every like loves its like; and that they are of Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life; that they belong to him, are his, since they have his Spirit, as appears by his fruits in them, and this, among the rest, love to the brethren; and that they are his disciples, which others, even all men know, as well as themselves, by their mutual brotherly love; and that they are of the Gospel, which is truth, and the word of truth; that they are begotten, and born again, according to the will and grace of God by it, and are on the side of it, and can do nothing against, but all for it; and that they are true, sincere, and

upright persons, true believers in Christ, whose faith works by love, and are real lovers of him, and his, since they love not in word only, but in deed and in truth.

And shall assure our hearts before him; or "persuade our hearts": arrive to a full assurance of faith, hope, and understanding, that we are of the truth, do belong to God, are loved by him with an everlasting love, are chosen by him unto salvation, and are his adopted and regenerated ones, having passed from death to life, of which brotherly love is a sure evidence, (1 John 3:14). Some render the words "shall pacify", or "make our hearts tranquil": or "quiet"; this only the blood of Christ can do, and does, being sprinkled on the conscience: he only has a quiet mind, or true peace of conscience, that looks to the righteousness of Christ for justification, and deals with his blood for the full and free remission of his sins: it is true indeed, that one that loves his brother heartily and sincerely, has peace of mind in it, though not for it; when, on the other hand, there is no peace to the wicked man, that hates his brother; for where there is envying, malice, hatred, and strife, there is no true peace, pleasure, and comfort, but confusion, uneasiness, distraction, and every evil work. Or this passage may refer to that holy confidence before God, which true believers in Christ, and cordial lovers of the brethren, have; both now at the throne of grace, where they can come with boldness, intrepidity, and freedom, to ask for what they want, and confidently believe they shall receive what is proper and needful for them; and also hereafter, at the throne of judgment, and in the day of judgment, when they shall have boldness, and not be ashamed before the Judge at his coming; who will particularly take notice of their love in feeding, clothing, and visiting the least of his brethren, which he takes as done to himself.

Ver. 20. *For if our heart condemn us*, &c.] Of want of love to the brethren, and of hypocrisy in it, as well as of any other sin; for the conscience, which is meant by the heart here, is accuser, witness and judge; it accuses of the evil of sin, and is as good as a thousand witnesses; and upon its own testimony pronounces guilty, and condemns.

God is greater than our heart: for he is the Maker of it, and he has the power over it, and the management of it; it is in his hands, and to be turned by him as he pleases; and he is the searcher and trier of it; and besides, is a swifter witness than conscience, and a superior Judge unto it.

And knoweth all things; that are in the heart; the principles of actions, and all the actions of men, for which their hearts condemn them; and all the sinfulness in them, and the aggravations of them; wherefore, as he knows them more perfectly, he judges of them more exactly, and will reprove more sharply, and condemn more severely for them: hence, if the condemnation of men's hearts and consciences be so very great, as sometimes to be intolerable and insupportable, what will be the righteous judgment, and dreadful condemnation of God? how fearful a thing will it be to fall into the hands of the living God! this sense is confirmed by the Syriac version rendering it, “how much greater is God than our hearts?” there is another sense given by some, which is not by way of terror, but comfort, and that is, that if the hearts of believers accuse, reprove, and condemn for sin through unbelief, or want of clear view of pardon and righteousness by Christ, God is greater, as in power, so in knowledge, than the hearts of men; and he knows the thoughts he has towards them, which are of peace, and not of evil; the covenant he has made with his Son, of which he is ever mindful; and what his Son has done, that he has made full satisfaction for sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness: so that let sin, or Satan, or the world, or the law, or their own hearts condemn them, there is no condemnation of any avail unto them. But the former sense seems best to agree with the context.

Ver. 21. *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not*, &c.] Which must be understood, not of a stupidity of mind, as is in unregenerate men, who have no sense of sin, no sorrow for it, or remorse of conscience on account of it; or as is in them who are past feeling; having their consciences seared as with a red hot iron; such cannot be entitled to the advantages that follow; nor is it of persons the apostle speaks, but of himself, and Christians, the beloved of the Lord, and one another, who had an experience of the grace of God upon their souls, and made a profession of religion: nor does it design such a purity of heart and life in believers, as that their hearts do not smite, reproach, and condemn them for sin at any time, for such a state of perfection is not to be attained to and expected in this life; but rather a conscience purged by the blood of Christ, or an heart sprinkled from an evil conscience by that blood, which speaks peace and pardon, so that there is no more conscience of sin, for the removal of which that is applied; and this gives boldness and confidence at the throne of grace: though it is best of all to confine it to the case of brotherly love; for the sense is not, if our

heart condemn us not of anything but of the want of brotherly love, or insincerity in it,

[then] have we confidence towards God; or with him, at the throne of his grace: such can draw nigh to him, and stand before him with an holy and humble confidence, when such as hate the brethren, as Cain did, in whom the apostle instances, and those that go in his way, cannot; whose heart condemned him, his conscience smote him, and he went from the presence of the Lord; but those that love the brethren have confidence of their relation to God; by this they know their regeneration, and by that their adoption, and so that they are the children of God; and can therefore draw nigh to God as their Father, and call him so; they can come with an holy boldness and intrepidity of mind before him, and use a παρρησια, "freedom of speech", with him; can tell him all their mind, pour out their souls unto him, and lay before him their case and wants; they have confidence of his power, faithfulness, and willingness to supply their need, and fulfil all his promises to them, and that their prayers will be heard, answered, and regarded by him in his own time.

Ver. 22. *And whatsoever we ask we receive of him*, &c.] According to his promise, (<4707>Matthew 7:7); that is, whatever is asked according to the will of God, in the name of Christ, and for his sake, and in faith, nothing wavering, but believing in God, in his covenant and promises, for these are provisos in the case; and such as ask in this way may exercise an holy confidence that they shall receive; and indeed they do receive what they ask for; (see <6514>1 John 5:14 <4314>John 14:13,14 <4122>Matthew 21:22);

because we keep his commandments; not that keeping the commands of God is the meritorious cause of receiving anything from him; for when men have done all they can, or are assisted to do, they are but unprofitable servants in point of merit: whatever is received from God, as it is in consequence of asking, so it is entirely owing to his own grace and favour, and for the sake of Christ; but keeping the commands of God is a necessary adjunct, or, as Calvin on the text calls it, an inseparable accident, or what necessarily belongs unto, and enters into the character of such, who are heard and answered by God, and receive at his hands; for there is a great deal of truth in what the Jews say to the blind man, (<4031>John 9:31); and which may serve as a comment on these words:

and do those things that are pleasing in his sight; as keeping of his commandments is; not that these things ingratiate into the love and favour

of God, or are the causes and conditions of it, for the love of God is prior to anything of this kind; nor are they the causes of men's acceptance with God, for the acceptance both of persons and services is only in Christ the beloved; but these things are what God approves of, when done in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to his glory: and since he hears such persons that are worshippers of him, and do his will, and has promised good things to them; this is therefore a reason strengthening their confidence in him, that what they ask they shall receive.

Ver. 23. *And this is his commandment*, &c.] Having mentioned the keeping of the commandments of God, the apostle proceeds to show what they are; that they are faith in Christ, and love to one another; which two are reduced to one, because they are inseparable; where the one is, the other is; faith works by love.

That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ; Christ is the object of faith, and he is no, as he is Jesus, a Saviour; faith deals with him as such, and will have no other Saviour but he: and now to believe in him, is not merely to believe that he is the Son of God, the true Messiah, the Saviour of the world, that he is come in the flesh, has suffered, and died, and rose again from the dead, is ascended into heaven, and is set down at the right hand of God, makes intercession for his people, and will come again to judge the quick and dead; but it is to go forth in special and spiritual acts upon him, such as looking at him, coming to him, venturing on him, trusting in him for life and salvation, committing all into his hands, and expecting all from him. And this is called a “commandment”, and comes under the notion of one; not that it is properly a law, or belongs to the law; for faith in Christ Jesus is a fruit of electing grace, and a blessing of the covenant of grace; it is the free gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit, and is peculiar to the elect of God, and sheep of Christ; and so cannot belong to the law of works; but, as the Hebrew words, hrwt, and hwxm, both signify any doctrine, and instruction in general; (see <19907>Psalm 19:7,8); so the word here used designs an evangelical doctrine, a divine instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Gospel, which declares that he that believes in Christ shall be saved; and so the word is used for a doctrine in this epistle, (<62207>1 John 2:7); and that of the next command or doctrine, which follows,

and love one another as he gave us commandment; that is, as Christ taught and instructed his disciples, (<43434>John 13:34 15:17).

Ver. 24. *And he that keepeth his commandments*, &c.] Attends to those instructions and declarations concerning faith in Christ, and love to the brethren, and acts according to them:

dwelleth in him, and he in them; that is, he dwells in Christ, and Christ dwells in him; the same is said of believing in Christ under the figurative expressions of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, (see Gill on "John 6:56");

and hereby we know that he abideth in us; or dwelleth in us, as before,

by the Spirit which he hath given us; which if understood of private Christians, as the preceding verses incline to, the sense is, that union to Christ, and the continuance of it, or his indwelling as a fruit of union, and the permanency of that, are evidenced by the Spirit of God; who is given in consequence of union and relation to Christ, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, of faith and love, of adoption, and as the earnest of the heavenly inheritance; but if of the apostles and ministers of the word, it may regard the gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed on them, fitting them for their work and office, and who is a spirit of truth, and not of error; and by having and enjoying these, they knew that Christ abode in them, and had reason to believe, according to his promise, that he would be with them, and with his ministering: servants in succession, to the end of the world; and this sense seems to be encouraged by the former part of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO 1 JOHN 4

In this chapter the apostle cautions against seducing spirits; advises to try them, and gives rules by which they may be known, and by which they are distinguished from others; and then returns to his favourite subject, brotherly love. He exhorts the saints not to believe every man that came with a doctrine to them, but to try them, since there were many false teachers in the world; and gives a rule by which they may be tried and judged, as that whatever teacher owns Christ to be come in the flesh is of God, but he that does not is not of God, but is the spirit of antichrist that should come, and was in the world, (<6001>1 John 4:1,2), but, for the comfort of those to whom he writes, he observes, that they were of God, and had overcome these false teachers, through the mighty power of the divine Spirit in them, who is greater than Satan, and all his emissaries, (<6004>1 John 4:4). He distinguishes between seducing spirits, and faithful ministers of the word; the former are of the world, speak of worldly things, and worldly men hear them; but the latter are of God, and they that have any spiritual knowledge of God hear them; but such as are not of God do not heal them, by which may he known the spirit of truth from the spirit of error, (<6005>1 John 4:5,6). And then the apostle returns to his former exhortation to brotherly love, which he enforces by the following reasons, because it is of God, a fruit of his Spirit and grace, and because it is an evidence of being born of God, and of having a true knowledge of him; whereas he that is destitute of it does not know him, seeing God is love, (<6007>1 John 4:7,8), and having affirmed that God is love, he proves it, by the mission of his Son, to be a propitiation for the sins of such that did not love him, and that they might live through him; wherefore he argues, that if God had such a love to men, so undeserving of it, then the saints ought to love one another, (<6009>1 John 4:9-11). Other arguments follow, engaging to it, as that God is invisible; and if he is to be loved, then certainly his people, who are visible; and that such who love one another, God dwells in them, and his love is perfected in them; and that he dwells in them is known by the gift of his Spirit to them, (<6012>1 John 4:12,13), and that God the Father so loved the world, as to send his Son to be the Saviour of it, before asserted,

is confirmed by the apostles, who were eyewitnesses of it; who also declare, that whoever confesses the sonship of Christ, God dwells in him, and he in God; and who had an assurance of the love of God to them, who is love itself; so that he that dwells in God, and God in him, dwells in love, (1 John 4:14-16). And great are the advantages arising from hence, for hereby the saints' love to God is made perfect; they have boldness in the day of judgment, since as he is, so are they in this world, and fear is cast out by it, (1 John 4:17,18), but lest too much should be thought to be ascribed to love, that is said to be owing to the love of God to them, which is prior to theirs to him, and the reason of it, (1 John 4:19). And the chapter is closed with observing the contradiction there is between a profession of love to God, and hatred of the brethren, seeing God, who is invisible, cannot be loved, if brethren that are seen are hated; and also the commandment, that he that loves God should love his brother also, (1 John 4:20,21).

Ver. 1. *Beloved, believe not every spirit*, &c.] The apostle having mentioned the word “spirit” in the latter part of the preceding chapter, takes an occasion from thence to return to what he had been suggesting in the “second” chapter, concerning the many antichrists that then were, and whom he points out, and here cautions against. By “every spirit” he means, either every doctrine that is pretended to come from the Spirit of God, or every teacher, who professes to be qualified and sent by him, and to have his light, knowledge, and doctrine from him. Every true minister of the Gospel has the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit, more or less, to qualify him for his work; he is separated, and called to it by him, and receives his spiritual light find knowledge from him; it is he that teaches him sound doctrine, and leads him into all truth, as it is in Jesus, and brings every necessary truth to his remembrance; and who succeeds his ministrations to the good of souls: but there are some who call themselves the ministers of the Gospel, who, though they may have some natural abilities, and a share of human learning, and a notional knowledge of things, yet have never received either grace or gifts from the Spirit; nor have they been ever called by him; nor are their ministrations according to that divine word which is inspired by him, nor attended with his demonstration and power; wherefore, though some professing to have the Spirit of Christ are to be believed, yet not everyone; and though the Spirit is not to be quenched in any, nor prophesying to be despised, yet care should be taken what is heard and received: some persons are so obstinate and incredulous as not to

believe anything that is declared, be the evidence what it will; as the Jews would not believe Christ and his apostles, though what they said agreed with Moses and the prophets, and was confirmed by miracles; and others are too credulous; at once receive every teacher, and embrace every upstart doctrine: this they should not do,

but try the spirits whether they are of God; not by human reason, especially as carnal and unsanctified; for though the doctrines of the Gospel are not contrary to true reason, they are above it, and not to be judged of by it, and are disapproved of and rejected by carnal reason; but by the word of God, which is the standard of all doctrine; and whatever agrees with that is to be received, and what does not should be rejected. And so to do is very commendable, as appears from the instance of the Beraeans, who on this account are said to be more noble than those of Thessalonica, (<44171>Acts 17:11); and from the commendation of the church at Ephesus, (<66202>Revelation 2:2). And this is what every believer, every private Christian should do; to them it belongs to read and search the Scriptures, and prove all things, and judge for themselves of the truth of doctrine; and to such a probation or trial of the spirits, spiritual light, knowledge, judgment, sense, experience, and divine guidance are necessary, which should be asked of God, and an increase thereof; and all such diligent searchers, and humble inquirers, are capable of making judgment of persons and doctrines, whether they are from the Spirit of God or not, for the Spirit of God never speaks contrary to his word: and the reason why such a trial should be made is,

because many false prophets are gone out into the world: such who pretended either to a revelation of future things, and to foretell things to come; or rather to a gift of prophesying, or preaching in Christ's name, to be “prophets” and spiritual men, and ministers of the word, but were “false” ones; who either predicted what did not come to pass, or rather preached false doctrine, by corrupting the word, and handling it deceitfully, and so imposed upon and ruined the souls of others, as well as deceived their own: and there were not only one, or two, or a few of these, but “many”, as our Lord had foretold, (<40241>Matthew 24:11,24); and which makes the reason the stronger for not believing every spirit, but trying them; and the rather, since they were not sent of God, hot called out by his churches, but were “gone out” of themselves; of their own heads, and without any mission from God or man: and “into the world” too; they were in every part of it, and especially where there were any churches of Christ;

into which they first crept in privily, and at unawares, but afterwards became public preachers of the word, and then separating from them, set up openly in the world for themselves.

Ver. 2. *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God*, &c.] This is a rule by which believers may know whether a man professing to have the Spirit of God, and to be called and sent by him, and whether the, doctrine he preaches, is of him or not:

every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God; or of the Spirit of God; that is, every doctrine which carries this truth in it; or every man that owns, and professes, and publishes this doctrine concerning Christ, is on the side of God and truth; and which contains several articles in it, respecting the person and office of Christ; as that he existed before he came in the flesh, not in the human nature, or as man, or as an angel, but as the Son of God, as a divine person, being truly and properly God; so that this confession takes in his divine sonship, and proper deity, and also his true and real humanity; that the Messiah was incarnate, against the Jews, and was God and man in one person; and that he was really man, and not in appearance only, against the heretics of those times: and it also includes his offices, as that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the Messiah, which the Jews denied, and that he was the anointed prophet, priest, and King; and so is a confession or acknowledgment of all the doctrines of the Gospel, which came by him, as a prophet; and of his satisfaction, sacrifice, and intercession, as a priest; and of all his ordinances and commands as a King; and that he is the only Saviour and Redeemer of men. Now, whoever owns and declares this system of truth, “is of God”; not that everyone that assents unto this, or preaches it, is born of God; a man may believe, and confess all this, as the devils themselves do, and yet be destitute of the grace of God; but the spirit, or doctrine, which contains these things in it, is certainly of God, or comes from him; or whoever brings these truths with him, and preaches them, he is, so far as he does so, on the side of God and truth, and to be regarded.

Ver. 3. *And every spirit that confesseth not*, &c.] The proper deity and sonship of Christ, his true and real humanity, and his Messiahship; or any of his offices, doctrines, and ordinances; or his satisfaction and righteousness; or that peace, pardon, justification, life, and salvation, are by him; all which are meant by what follows,

that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh: this clause is left out in the Ethiopic version, and that without hurting the sense, since it is easily supplied from the preceding verse; and the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin version, only read “Jesus”: and the latter reads the whole thus, “and every spirit that dissolves Jesus”; that separates the two natures, human and divine, in him, and makes two persons of them; or denies either of them, either that he is truly God, or really man, or denies him to be Jesus, the Saviour; who, as much as in him lies, destroys his person, office, and work, and makes void his obedience, sufferings, and death:

is not of God; neither he nor his doctrine are of God; his doctrine cannot come from God, being contrary to the word of God; and he himself is neither born of God, nor on his side.

And this is that [spirit] of antichrist: who is against Christ, or opposes himself to him; as he who denies his sonship, his deity, his humanity, his offices, and his grace, manifestly does; every doctrine that is calculated against these truths is the spirit and doctrine of antichrist:

whereof you have heard that it should come, and even now already is it the world; in the false teachers, the forerunners of antichrist; (see Gill on “1 John 2:18”).

Ver. 4. *Ye are of God, little children*, &c.] This, with what follows, is said for the comfort of the saints, and to deliver them from the fears of being drawn aside by the delusions of the false prophets, and antichrists; since they belonged to God, were his elect, and therefore could not be finally and totally seduced; they were the children of God by adopting grace, and could not become the servants of men; they were born of God, and so were kept by the power of God unto salvation, as all that are begotten unto a lively hope are; they were enlightened by the Spirit of God, and had a discerning of truth from error, and therefore could not be imposed upon:

and have overcome them; the false prophets, being in a good cause, fighting the good fight of faith, and having good weapons, particularly the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and invincible arguments from thence; and also gracious assistance from the Spirit of God, who gives a mouth that none can shut, and wisdom that none can resist; as well as an inward experience of the truth, and power of Gospel doctrines: a testimony within themselves, which will stand the whole shock and opposition of the enemy: the Vulgate Latin version reads, “and have

overcome him”; antichrist, whose spirit was then in the world; or the world itself, or Satan, the god of the world; and so the Ethiopic version reads, “and have overcome the evil one”, as in (<60213>1 John 2:13,14); the reason of which victory, and which adds to the comfort and support of saints in their present warfare, is,

because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world; by “he that is in the world” is meant either the devil, the prince and god of the world, and who goes up and down in it, dwells in the hearts of the men of it, under whose influence they are, and in whom he works effectually; or antichrist, whose spirit was now in the world, and whose doctrine was propagated by the false teachers, in whom he began to appear; but he that is in the saints, either God who dwells in them, and their in him, (<60415>1 John 4:15); is mightier than the man of sin, and his emissaries, to keep and preserve from all corruptions, and every false way; or Christ, who dwells in their hearts by faith, and is stronger than the strong man armed, and able to save and deliver out of his hands; or the Spirit of God; and so the Arabic version reads, “the Spirit that is in you”; who is in the saints, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, as a spirit of adoption, and the earnest of their inheritance; he is able to carry on the work of grace in them, and finish it, and will do it; and he, as a spirit of truth, is more powerful than the spirit of error; and when the enemy comes in like a flood, or pours in a flood of errors and heresies, he lifts up a standard against him, causes him to fly, and secures the saints from being carried away with it: compare with this the Septuagint version of (<19C401>Psalm 124:1,2), “if it had not been the Lord who was on our side”; which render it thus, “if the Lord had not been in us”.

Ver. 5. *They are of the world*, &c.] That is, the false prophets and teachers that were gone into the world, and had the spirit of antichrist in them; these were as they were when they came into the world, under the pollution, guilt, and dominion of sin, in a state of unregeneracy, carnality, and darkness; they properly belonged unto it, and walked after the course of it, and were under the influence of the god of it, who led them into error; and were sensual, and indulged themselves in worldly lusts, and were seeking after worldly things; supposed that gain was godliness, and had men's persons in admiration because of advantage; their nature and disposition, their principles and practices, and their ends and views, were worldly; and were quite different from Christ and his apostles, (<431714>John 17:14,16),

therefore speak they of the world; they speak the wisdom of the world, or that in which the world thinks wisdom lies, and cry up for true knowledge, and right principles; and this they do with the enticing words of man's wisdom, or in words which man's wisdom teacheth; speaking great swelling words of vanity, which take with vain and carnal minds; and preach doctrines suited to their own taste, and the taste of others, as carnal and worldly men; such as the purity of human nature, in its first conception and birth, its freedom from any original corruption, and from any concern with the sin of Adam, only with actual sin of its own; and the power of it to do that which is good, keep the law of God, and obtain his favour; the non-necessity of any internal work of efficacious grace, a reformation of life and manners being thought sufficient to render a man acceptable to God, and prepare him for eternal happiness; the doctrine of justification and salvation by works; all which are pleasing to carnal men: hence it follows,

and the world heareth them; the wicked of the world; worldly and unregenerate men attend on their ministry, approve of what they deliver, and receive it with pleasure, and believe it: this expresses both the quality of the hearers of false teachers, that they are that part of the world, the worse part of it, which lies in wickedness; and the quantity of them, the greater part of the world, as it was foretold by Christ, and his apostles, that they should deceive many, that many should follow their pernicious ways, and that they should draw many disciples after them; wherefore the numbers that attend such persons, as it need not be wondered at, since both preachers and hearers, and the doctrines preached and heard, are all alike, they are of the world, so it should not be stumbling to the people of God.

Ver. 6. *We are of God*, &c.] Not only as the chosen of God, the children of God, regenerated ones, and believers, but as ministers of the Gospel; they were chosen, and called, and sent of God to preach the Gospel, and were qualified for it, by gifts received from him, and had their doctrine from him, as well as their commission and mission: they were not of the world, and therefore did not speak of the world, nor things suited to worldly men; but being of God, they spoke the words of God, which were agreeable to him, which made for the glory of the three divine Persons, and were consistent with the divine perfections; which maintained the honour and dignity of the persons in the Godhead; which magnified the grace of God in salvation, and debased the creature:

he that knoweth God; not only as the God of nature and providence, but as in Christ, and that not only professionally, but practically; that has an experimental knowledge of him, that knows him as exercising lovingkindness, having tasted of his grace and goodness; that knows him so as to trust in him, and love him; for such a knowledge of God is meant, as has true real affection to him joined with it; so that it is he that loves his name, his glory, his truths, and his ordinances: he

heareth us: not only externally, constantly attending on the ministry of the word, as such do; but internally, understanding what is heard, receiving it in love, cordially embracing it, and firmly believing it, and acting according to it:

he that is not of God; who is not born of God, but is as he was when born into the world, and is of it: and who does not righteousness, nor loves his brother, nor confesses the divinity, humanity, and offices of Christ, and so is not on the side of truth, nor has the truth of grace in him; (see 1 John 3:10 4:3); such a man

heareth not us; he is a mere natural man, a carnal and unregenerate man; and such an one cannot attend on a Gospel ministry, or receive Gospel doctrines, which are with him senseless, stupid, and foolish notions, yea, foolishness itself; nor can he know and understand them through ignorance, and want, of a spiritual discerning; they are hard sayings, and he cannot hear, nor bear them; and when this is the case, it is a plain token of unregeneracy, and that such persons are not of God; (see John 8:47).

Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error; the difference between truth and error; can distinguish one from another, and discern who are the true ministers of Christ, and who are the false teachers; for not only the word of God, the Scriptures of truth, are the test and standard, the touchstone to bring them to, and try them by; and the doctrines they severally bring show who they are; but even their very hearers distinguish them. Spirits, or men pretending to the Spirit of God, may be known in a great measure by their followers; they who have the spirit of error, and are of the world, they are followed, and caressed, and applauded by the men of the world, by unregenerate persons; they who have the spirit of truth, and are of God, they are heard and approved of, and embraced by spiritual men, by such who know God in Christ, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Ver. 7. *Beloved, let its love one another*, &c.] The apostle having finished what he proposed to say concerning the trying of spirits, returns to his former exhortation to brotherly love, and which comes with fresh force and strength; for since worldly men follow, hear, embrace, and cleave to the false teachers; such as are of God, and on the side of truth, should love one another, and their faithful ministers, and stand fast in one spirit by the truths of the Gospel, in opposition to every error:

for love is of God: to love one another is the command of God, it is his revealed will, and is well pleasing in his sight; it comes from him, is a gift of his grace, and a fruit of his Spirit, and which he teaches regenerate ones to exercise:

and everyone that loveth God, as the Alexandrian copy reads, or Christ, and the saints, who seem to be particularly meant:

is born of God; for love to the brethren is an evidence of regeneration; (see Gill on "1 John 3:14");

and knoweth God; he knows God in Christ, and therefore loves those who have the grace of God in them, and the image of Christ upon them; he knows the mind and will of God, being taught of God to love the brethren; and he knows the love of God, and has had an experience of the grace of God, which influences him to love the saints.

Ver. 8. *He that loveth not, knoweth not God*, &c.] If a man loves not the children of God, those that are born of him, he does not know, so as to love God, the Father of them; for to pretend love to God, the begetter of them, whom he sees not, and not love those who are begotten by him, and are visible objects of respect, is a contradiction, and cannot be reconciled: (see 1 John 4:20). This clause is left out in the Ethiopic version, and is transposed in the Syriac version, which reads the text thus, "for God, is love, and whoever loveth not, knoweth not God". By which reading, the following reason stands in close connection with (1 John 4:7).

For God is love; he loves himself; there is an entire love between the three divine Persons, who are in the strictest, and in the most inconceivable and inexpressible manner affected to each other; their love is natural and essential: God loves all his creatures as such, nor does he hate any of them, as so considered; and he bears an everlasting, unchangeable, and invariable love to his elect in Christ Jesus; of which an instance is given in the following verses, and is a reason why the saints should love one another;

that they might be like their heavenly Father, by whom they are begotten, and of whom they are born, and whose children they are; seeing he is love itself, and in his breast is nothing else but love. So the Shekinah is, by the Cabalistic Jews [f43], called hbha, “love”.

Ver. 9. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us*, &c.] The love of God here spoken of, and instanced in, is not his general love to all his creatures, which is shown in the make of them, and in the support of them in their beings, and in his providential care of them, and kindness to them; but his special love towards his elect, and which was before it was manifested; it was secretly in his heart from everlasting, and did not begin to be at the mission of Christ into the world, but was then in a most glaring manner manifested: there were several acts of it before, as the choice of them in Christ, the appointment of him to be their Saviour, and the covenant of grace made with him on their account; these were more secret and hidden; but now the love and kindness of God appeared, broke forth, and shone out in its glory; this is a most flagrant and notorious instance of it, in which it is exceedingly conspicuous; this is a most clear proof, a plain and full demonstration of it:

because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world; the sender is God the Father, who is distinguished from the Son that is sent; of which act of sending, (see Gill on “ Romans 8:3”) and (see Gill on “Galatians 4:4”); and for him, who is that God against whom we have sinned, and is that lawgiver that is able to save, and to destroy, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, to send his Son to be the Saviour of sinful men is an amazing instance of love; and which appears the more manifest, when it is observed that it is “his only begotten Son” that is sent; of which (see Gill on “John 1:14”); and the place he was sent into is the world, where his people are, and where their sins are committed, he came to expiate; and where he was treated with great indignity and contempt, and suffered many things, and at last death itself: the end of his mission was,

that we might live through him; who were dead in Adam, dead in sin, and dead in law, and could not quicken themselves; nor obtain eternal life for themselves, by their performances. Christ came, being sent, that they might have life, and that more abundantly than Adam had in innocence, or man lost by the fall; and accordingly they were quickened together with him; when he was quickened, after he had been put to death, they were virtually

and representatively quickened and justified in him; and in consequence of his death and resurrection from the dead, they are regenerated and made spiritually alive, and live unto righteousness; and through his righteousness wrought out for them, and imputed to them, they are in a legal sense alive unto God, and alive and comfortable in their own souls, living by faith on Christ, and have a right and title to eternal life; and which they also have through him, and which is chiefly intended here; for the design is not only that they may live spiritually and comfortably here, but eternally hereafter.

Ver. 10. *Herein is love*, &c.] The love of God, free love, love that cannot be matched: herein it is manifested, as before; this is a clear evidence of it, an undoubted proof, and puts it out of all question:

not that we loved God: the love of God is antecedent to the love of his people; it was when theirs was not; when they were without love to him, yea, enemies in their minds, by wicked works, and even enmity itself, and therefore was not procured by theirs; but on the contrary, their love to him is caused by his love to them; hence his love, and a continuance in it, do not depend on theirs; nor does it vary according to theirs; wherefore there is good reason to believe it will continue, and never be removed; and this shows the sovereignty and freeness of the love of God, and that it is surprising and matchless:

but that he loved us; that is, God; and so the Syriac version reads, "but that God himself loved us". The Vulgate Latin version adds, first, as in (1 John 4:19); the instance of this love follows:

and sent his Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins: this is a subordinate end to the other, mentioned in (1 John 4:9); for, in order that sinful men may possess everlasting life and happiness, it is necessary that their sins be expiated, or atonement be made for them, which is meant by Christ's being a propitiation for them; that the justice of God should be satisfied; that peace and righteousness, or love and justice, should be reconciled together; and kiss each other; and that all obstructions be removed out of the way of the enjoyment of life, which are brought in by sin; and that the wrath of God, which sin deserved, be averted or appeased, according to our sense apprehension of it; for otherwise the love of God people is from everlasting, and is unchangeable, never alters, or never changes from love to wrath, or from wrath to love; nor is the love of God procured by the satisfaction and sacrifice of Christ, which are the effects of it; but hereby the way is laid open for the display of it, and the application of its effects,

in a way consistent with the law and justice of God. This phrase is expressive of the great love of Christ to his people, and of his substitution in their room and stead; and so it is used among the Jews for a substitution in the room of others, wtbha bwrl, “to express the greatness of love” [f44]; (see Gill on “ <4525>Romans 3:25”) and (see Gill on “ <4503>Romans 9:3”).

Ver. 11. *Beloved, if God so loved us*, &c.] As to send his Son to be a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, and to obtain eternal life for us through his sufferings and death: the apostle uses the same language his Lord and master did, (<4316>John 3:16);

we ought also to love one another; for those who are the objects of God's love ought to be the objects of ours; and if God has loved our fellow Christians and brethren to such a degree, as to send his Son to die for them, we ought to love them too; and if we are interested in the same love, the obligation is still the greater; and if God loved them with so great a love, when they did not love him, but were enemies to him, then surely we ought to love them now they are become the friends of God, and ours also; as God loved them freely, and when unlovely, and us likewise in the same manner, and under the same circumstances, then we ought to love, and continue to love the saints, though there may be something in their temper and conduct disagreeable: God is to be imitated in his love; and his love to us, which is unmerited and matchless, should influence and engage us to the love of the brethren, who have a far greater claim to our love than we can make to the love of God; and which indeed is none at all, but what he is pleased to give us.

Ver. 12. *No man hath seen God at any time*, &c.] The same is said by the Evangelist John, (<4318>John 1:18); but here it is observed with a different view, and upon another account; there it signifies that no man has seen and looked into the counsels and designs of God, and been able to make a discovery and declaration of his mind and will, his love and grace, and which is there ascribed to the Son of God, (see Gill on “<4318>John 1:18”); but here the sense is, that whereas God is invisible in his nature, and incomprehensible in his being and perfections, so that there is no coming to him, and seeing of him, and conversing with him in a familiar way, and so not of loving him as he is in himself, and ought to be loved, as one friend sees, converses with, and loves another, and finds his love increased by sight and conversation; then we ought to love the saints and people of God, who are visible, may be seen, come at, and conversed with, (see <6040>1

John 4:20); for this clause stands among the arguments and reasons for brotherly love:

if we love one another God dwelleth in us; not as he does in his Son, by union of nature; nor as in heaven, by the displays of his glory; nor as in the whole world, by his omnipresence and power; but by his Spirit, and the communications of his love, and by his gracious presence and communion, which he indulges the saints with; for such who love one another, as they appear to have the Spirit of God, of which that grace is a fruit, so they are by the Spirit built up a fit habitation for God, and by which Spirit he dwells in them; and such may expect the presence of God, for they who live in peace, the God of love and peace shall be with them:

and his love is perfected in us; not that love of God, with which he loves his people; for that admits of no degrees, and is not more or less in itself, or in his heart; but is always invariably and unchangeably the same, and is full, complete, and perfect in his own breast, as it was from all eternity; and does not pass by degrees, or gradually rise from a love of benevolence to a love of complacency and delight, or increase as our love does to him and to one another, on which it has no dependence: nor is this love perfected in the saints in this life; that is to say, they have not perfect knowledge and enjoyment of it; nor have they all the effects of it bestowed upon them, and applied unto them; the perfection of it, in this sense, will be in heaven: but the love with which God is loved is here designed; and it is called his, because he is both the object and the author of it; and this is no effect as to degrees; yea, sometimes, instead of abounding and increasing, it goes back, it is left, and waxes cold; and it will not have its completion till the saints come to heaven, and then it will be in its full perfection and glory, when faith and hope shall be no more: but the sense is, that this grace of love is sincere and hearty, and without dissimulation; it is unfeigned love; and it is in deed and in truth, and not in word and in tongue only; and this appears to be so, by the love which is shown to the brethren, the children of God; so that love to God in the saints is perfected by love to the brethren, just in such sense as faith is made perfect by works, (Jam 2:22James 2:22), that is, is made to appear to be genuine, right, and true.

Ver. 13. *Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us*, &c.] That there is a communion between God and us, and a communication of his love and grace to us, and an exercise of grace upon him; for God dwells in

his people by his Spirit and grace, and they dwell in him by the exercise of faith and love upon him: and this is known,

because he hath given us of his Spirit: not of the essence and nature of the Spirit, which is the same with the nature of the Father and of the Son, and is incommunicable; but either of the gifts of the Spirit, which are divided to every man as he pleases, and which being bestowed on men, and used by them, for the profit and advantage of the church of God, show that God is with them, and dwells among them of a truth; or of the graces of the Spirit, such as faith, hope, and love, which are each the gifts of God; and these being bestowed and exercised, are proofs of the mutual indwelling of God and his people; (see Gill on "1 John 3:24").

Ver. 14. *And we have seen, and do testify*, &c.] This seems to be particularly said of the apostles, who had a clear discerning of the love and grace of God, manifested in the mission of Christ into the world; for though no man had seen his nature and his person, yet they had seen his love, and the exceeding riches of his grace, which he had shown forth in Christ Jesus; and they had also seen Christ, God manifest in the flesh; they had seen his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father; they had seen him with their bodily eyes; they had seen his works and miracles; they had seen him dying and risen again from the dead, and go up to heaven; they were witnesses, and eyewitnesses of him, and bore a faithful testimony of him, and for him, and particularly set their seal to this truth,

that the Father sent the Son [to be] the Saviour of the world; not of every individual person in it, for there are some that will go into everlasting punishment, and even a world that will be condemned; Christ is not in fact the Saviour of all the individuals of human nature, and therefore was not sent to be such; for if he was, the end of his mission is not fully answered; nor of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, and who are chiefly intended by "the world"; (see Gill on "1 John 2:2"); and even of all the elect of God, styled his people, his sheep, his friends, his church, and the sons of God; and it may be said of all that believe in him throughout the whole world, without any distinction of nation, age, sex, state, or condition: and Christ is the Saviour both of the souls and bodies of these, from all their sins, original and actual; from the power of Satan, the bondage and curse of the law, and wrath to come, and he is the only, able, willing, and complete Saviour, and who saves with an everlasting salvation.

Ver. 15. *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God*, &c.] The only begotten of the Father; that he is not a mere man, as the Jews, and Ebion and Cerinthus said, but a divine person, equal with the Father; which contains all that relates to the dignity of his person, and his fitness for his office as a Saviour, and which was the test of faith in those times, and the grand article of belief: not that a bare assent to this had what followed annexed to it; for the devils believed and owned that Jesus was the Son of God; and so might, and did, unregenerate persons, as the centurion at the cross of Christ, who know nothing what communion with God is; but this confession is such as is attended with a believing in Christ from the heart unto righteousness, life, and salvation, and a cheerful obedience to his ordinances and commands, from a principle of love to him, and faith in him, things not to be found in devils and carnal men; (see Romans 10:9,10).

God dwelleth in him, and he in God; (see Gill on "1 John 4:13"); this should encourage to an open and hearty confession of Christ as the Son of God, and Saviour of sinners, and to a public profession of his name, and faith in him, and an holding it fast without wavering.

Ver. 16. *And we have known and believed*, &c.] Or have a full assurance and knowledge of, and faith in,

the love that God hath to us; shown as in many instances, so more especially in sending his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, to be the Saviour of us, and that we might live through him.

God is love; (see Gill on "1 John 4:8"):

and he that dwelleth in love; who dwells by faith upon the love of God as displayed in Christ, and abides in the exercise of love to God and to the saints:

dwelleth in God, and God in him; (see Gill on "1 John 4:13"); the last clause, "and God in him", is left out in the Syriac version.

Ver. 17. *Herein is our love made perfect*, &c.] Or love with us; which some understand of the love of God towards his people, and which is shed abroad in them: this indeed removes all fear of an awful judgment, and renders that amiable and desirable; and such who are interested in it, shall stand in that day with intrepidity and boldness; and this sense may seem to be favoured by the Syriac version, which reads, "his love with us"; and

especially by the Vulgate Latin version, which renders it, “the love of God with us”; but it is best to understand it agreeably to the context, of our love to God, which is with and in our hearts; and which is made, or made to appear to be perfect, true, and genuine, by our love to the brethren; since the love of God to us does not admit of degrees, nor does it, or the reality and sincerity of it, depend upon our love to the saints; (see Gill on “<6042>1 John 4:12”);

that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; not of men's judgment, when brought before judges, governors, and kings, for the sake of Christ and the Gospel, and stand at their bar, where saints, who have true love to God and Christ and the brethren, have stood with great courage and intrepidity, and shown much boldness, and used great freedom of speech; nor of judgment in this life, which sometimes begins at the house of God, though the saints often have great boldness and presence of mind, and freedom of expression both to God and man in a day of affliction, as Job had; but of the future judgment, which, though it will be very awful and solemn, Christ the Judge will appear with great majesty and glory, and all men will stand before him, and the books will be opened, and the judgment will proceed with great strictness and justice, and will issue in the everlasting perdition of devils and wicked men, yet the saints will have boldness in it: while evil men and devils tremble at the thoughts of it now, they rejoice and are glad; they love it, look for it, long for it, and hasten to it; and will stand fearless, and without the least dread, while others will flee to the rocks, and into the holes of the earth; and they will use freedom of speech with Christ, as the word here signifies; they will sing his new song, and ascribe the glory of their salvation to him, and express their praises of him, and love to him, then and to all eternity: and this boldness the saints may be said to arrive at through a perfect, or sincere, and genuine love of the brethren; for by this they know they are born again, and are born to an inheritance incorruptible, which they have both a meetness for, and a right unto; and knowing hereby that they are passed from death to life, they justly conclude they shall not enter into condemnation, and therefore are not afraid of the awful judgment: hereby they know that their faith is right, and that therefore they are manifestly the children of God; and if children, then heirs, and so shall be saved, and have everlasting life:

because as he is, so are we in this world; which may be understood either of God, to whom the saints are like; for such who are born again, as those who love the brethren are, they are partakers of the divine nature, and bear

a resemblance to God, even in this present state of things; and as it becomes them to be holy in all manner of conversation, as he is holy, and to be merciful to wicked men, as he is merciful, so to love the saints as he does, and to be kind, tenderhearted, and forgive one another, as he for Christ's sake has forgiven them; for as God is love, they should be all love likewise; or of Christ, (see 1 John 3:3,7); and that with respect to God; as he is the Son of God, so are they the sons of God; he by nature, they by grace and adoption; as he is loved by God with an everlasting and unchangeable love, with a love of complacency and delight, so are they loved by him with the same kind of love, even while they are in this world; and as he is the chosen of God, and precious, so they are chosen in him, and unto salvation by him. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, render it, “as he was”: and the sense may be, as he was in this world, so are they; and which may regard not so much likeness in nature, though there is an agreement in that, excepting sin, but the sameness of state and condition; as he was a man of sorrows, attended with afflictions, loaded with reproaches, and followed with the persecutions of men, so are they; nor need they wonder that they are the objects of the world's hatred and contempt, since he was also; as he was tempted by Satan, forsaken by his friends, and deserted by his God, so sometimes are they in this world; and as he went through a variety of sufferings, and death itself, to glory, so through many tribulations do they enter the kingdom: moreover, as he now is in heaven, so are they in this world; even as he is in heaven, so are they representatively in him, while in this world; and as he is righteous, being justified and acquitted from all the charge of sin he took upon him, and therefore will appear a second time without sin, so they are completely righteous in him: and once more, as he is, so they are, or should be in this world; they should be holy as he is holy, and be humble, meek, and patient, as he is, and walk as he walked; and particularly love the saints and one another, as he does; and which seems to be greatly intended here, and must be understood not of an equality, but of a likeness. The Arabic version reads the words conditionally, and as depending on the preceding clause, “if as he was, we are in this world”; and then the sense is, that the saints shall have boldness in the day of judgment, provided they are in this world as Christ was.

Ver. 18. *There is no fear in love*, &c.] In the love of the brethren; where that is, there is no fear: so far as that prevails and gains ground, fear removes; not the filial fear of God, the new covenant grace of fear, which

is the beginning of wisdom, and is consistent with faith, hope, love, and spiritual joy; but either the fear of men, which brings a snare: those that truly love Christ, his Gospel, and his people, they are not afraid of men; the spirit of power, love, and of a sound mind, is opposite to a spirit of fear, nor can they stand together; and such strength there is sometimes in brotherly love, that the saints are not afraid of death itself, but freely lay down their lives for one another; (see 1 John 3:16); or it may be rather, that they are not afraid of the day of judgment, and of hell and damnation; where hatred of the brethren has place, there is a fear and dread of these things, as were in Cain; but those that love the brethren, they know they are passed from death to life, and shall not enter into condemnation, and therefore are in no fear of any of these things:

but perfect love casteth out fear; when love to the brethren appears to be perfect, that is, genuine and sincere, and a man knows that from the bottom of his heart he sincerely loves the saints, he concludes from hence, as he may, the truth of his faith, which works in this way; and this frees him from the fears of men and devils, and of the future judgment and wrath to come. The Jews have a saying [f45],

> "worthy is his portion that rules over the place of fear, for lo, there is nothing that rules over the degree of "fear" but "love"."

Because fear hath torment: it distresses a man, fills him with anguish, and makes him restless and uneasy, and keeps him in servitude; through the fear of men, of the devil, death, judgment, and hell, he is all his lifetime, or as long as this fear lasts, subject to bondage: or "fear has punishment", as it may be rendered, and is by the Vulgate Latin version; it is a punishment itself to a man; and its being criminal deserves punishment, and is punishable; (see Revelation 21:8);

he that feareth is not made perfect in love; or "by love"; that is, he that is possessed, and under the power of a servile fear of punishment, is one who is not, by the love to the brethren, made to appear to himself to be a sincere lover of God, and true believer in Christ; for was he, he would not be in fear of destruction and death, since whoever truly loves God, and believes in Christ, shall certainly be saved; though such persons, at times, may not be without their doubts and fears.

Ver. 19. *We love him, because he first loved us*.] Lest love to God, and so to one another, should be thought to be of ourselves, and too much be

ascribed unto it, the apostle observes, that God's love to us is prior to our love to him; his love is from everlasting, as well as to everlasting; for he loves his people as he does his Son, and he loved him before the foundation of the world; his choosing them in Christ as early, and blessing them then with all spiritual blessings, the covenant of grace made with Christ from all eternity, the gift of grace to them in him before the world began, and the promise of eternal life to them so soon, show the antiquity and priority of his love: his love shown in the mission and gift of his Son was before theirs, and when they had none to him; and his love in regeneration and conversion is previous to theirs, and is the cause of it; his grace in regeneration brings faith and love with it, and produces them in the heart; and his love shed abroad there is the moving cause of it, or what draws it first into act and exercise; and the larger the discoveries and applications of the love of God be, the more does love to him increase and abound; and nothing more animates and inflames our love to God, than the consideration of the earliness of his love to us, of its being before ours; which shows that it is free, sovereign, distinguishing, and unmerited. Some read the words as an exhortation, “let us love him”; and others as in the subjunctive mood, “we should love him”, because, &c. some copies read, “we love God”, and so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and the Alexandrian copy, read, “because God first loved us”: and so some others.

Ver. 20. *If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother*, &c.] Than which profession nothing can be more contradictory, not black and white, or hot and cold in the same degree:

he is a liar; it is not truth he speaks, it is a contradiction, and a thing impossible:

for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen; his person, which might have drawn out his affection to him; and something valuable and worthy in him, which might have commanded respect; or his wants and distresses, which should have moved his pity and compassion:

how can he love God whom he hath not seen? it cannot be thought he should; the thing is not reasonable to suppose; it is not possible he should; (see Gill on “1 John 4:12”).

Ver. 21. *And this commandment have we from him*, &c.] Either “from God”, as the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read; and that

to love the brethren is a commandment of God, is clear from (<60323>1 John 3:23); or from Christ, for it is also a command of his, even his new commandment, which he has given, and his people have received from him:

that he who loveth God, love his brother also; (see <43334>John 13:34) (<43512>John 15:12,17); which is an argument persuading to attend to the one as well as to the other; for the same command that requires the one, requires the other: and he that transgresses it in one case, is a transgressor of it, as well as in the other.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO 1 JOHN 5

In this chapter the apostle treats of the nature of faith and love; of Christ the object of both, and of the witness that is bore to him; of the necessity of believing the testimony concerning him; of the confidence of prayer being heard, and concerning whom it should be made; of the happiness of regenerate persons, and of their duty to keep themselves from idols. Faith in Christ is the evidence of regeneration, and where that is, there will be love to the author of regeneration, and to them that are regenerated; and love to them is known by love to God, and keeping his commandments; and keeping the commandments of God, and which are not grievous, is a proof of love to God, (1 John 5:1-3); and whereas every regenerate man overcomes the world, it is by his faith, the evidence of his regeneration, that this victory is obtained; nor can any other man be pointed out that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God, (1 John 5:4,5); and Christ, the Son of God, the object of this victorious faith, is described by his coming by water and blood, of which the spirit is witness, who is a true one; and six witnesses of the truth of this and his divine sonship are produced, three in heaven, the Father, Word, and Spirit, who are the one God, and three on earth, the Spirit, water, and blood, who agree in their testimony, (1 John 5:6-8); wherefore this testimony concerning the Son of God ought to be received, since it is the testimony of God, which is greater than that of men; besides, he that believes in Christ has a witness of this in himself, and honours God, whereas he that believes not makes God a liar, not giving credit to his record concerning his Son; the sum of which is, that God has made a grant of eternal life to some persons, which is in his Son, which those that believe in the Son of God have, but those that do not believe in him have it not: all which show the necessity of receiving the above testimony; and the ends proposed in writing these things were, to believe in Christ, and that it might be known they had eternal life in him, (1 John 5:9-13), and from faith in Christ the apostle passes to confidence in prayer, as a particular effect and fruit of it: as, that whatever is asked according to the will of God is heard; and that such who are satisfied of this, that they are heard, may be assured

that they have the petitions they desire to have, (⁶²1 John 5:14,15), and whereas it is one branch of prayer to pray for others as well as for ourselves, the apostle directs who we should pray for; for the brethren in general, and in particular for such who have sinned, but not unto death, and life shall be given to such: but as for those who have sinned unto death, he does not say prayer should be made for them, for though all unrighteousness in general is sin, yet there is a particular sin which is unto death, and is not to be prayed for, (⁶²1 John 5:16,17); but happy are those who are born of God, for they do not sin this sin; and through the use of the armour of God, and the power of divine grace, they keep themselves from the evil one, and he cannot come at them, to draw them into this sin; also they know that they are of God, and are distinguished from the world, which lies in wickedness; yea, they know that the Son of God is come in the flesh, and hath given them an understanding of the true God, by which they know that they are in him, and in his Son Jesus Christ, who is with him, and the divine Spirit, the one true God, and the author and giver of eternal life, (⁶²1 John 5:18-20); and the chapter, and with it the epistle, is concluded with an exhortation to these regenerate ones, as they had kept themselves from Satan, that they would also keep themselves from idols of all sorts, (⁶²1 John 5:21).

Ver. 1. *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ*, &c.] Or the Messiah that was prophesied of old, was long promised to the Jews, and whom they expected; there was a person spoken of in the writings of the Old Testament under this character, (¹⁹Psalm 2:2 ²⁷Daniel 9:25,26); and the Jews looked for him; and Jesus of Nazareth is he, as appears by all the characteristics of the Messiah in prophecy being found upon him: this the Jews deny, but is the grand article of faith embraced by the apostles and followers of Jesus, and is of very great importance; he that denies it is a liar, and he that does not believe it shall die in his sins: the word signifies “anointed”, and includes all the offices of the Son of God, to which he was anointed, as prophet, priest, and King; so that to believe him to be the Christ, is to believe him to be that prophet Moses said should come, and who has declared the whole mind and will of his Father; and that he is that priest that should arise after the order of Melchizedek, and make atonement for sin, and intercession for transgressors; and that he is that King whom God has set over his holy hill of Zion, whose laws are to be obeyed, and his commands observed: but to believe that Jesus is the Christ, or the Messiah, is not barely to give an assent to this truth, or to

acknowledge it; so the devils themselves have done, (⁴⁰⁴¹Luke 4:41); and whole nations of men, multitudes of which were never born of God; it is not a mere profession of it before men, or an idle, inoperative faith, which is destitute of love to Christ, and obedience to him; but whereas his work and business, as the Christ of God, was to bring in an everlasting righteousness, to procure the remission of sin, and to make peace and reconciliation for it, and to obtain eternal salvation; true faith in him as the Messiah is a believing with the heart unto righteousness, or a looking to, and trusting in the righteousness of Christ for justification; and a dealing with his blood for pardon and cleansing, under a sense of guilt and filth; and a laying hold on his atoning sacrifice for the expiation of sin, and peace with God; and a reception of him as the only Saviour and Redeemer, or a dependence on him for life and salvation; and which faith shows itself in love to him, and in a professed subjection to his Gospel, and cheerful submission to his ordinances: and every such person

is born of God; is a partaker of the divine nature; has Christ formed, and every grace of the Spirit implanted in him, among which faith in Christ is a considerable one; and such an one in consequence is openly a child and heir of God, wherefore, to be born of God is an instance of great grace, and an high honour and privilege, and of the greatest moment and importance. Regeneration is not owing to the power and will of man, but to the abundant mercy and good will of God, and is an instance of his rich mercy, great love, and free favour, and commands love again:

and everyone that loveth him that begat; that is, God the Father, who has begotten them again to a lively hope, according to his abundant mercy and sovereign will; and as he is their Father that has begotten them, they cannot but love him: and such an one

loveth him also that is begotten of him; not only Jesus Christ, who by nature is the only begotten of the Father; for those who know God to be their Father by adoption and regeneration, will love Christ, who is the Son of God by nature; (see ⁴⁰⁴²John 8:42); but also every regenerate person, all that are born of God; since they are the children of the same Father with them, belong to the same household and family, and bear the image and likeness of their heavenly Father on them.

Ver. 2. *By this we know that we are the children God*, &c.] The Ethiopic version reads, “by this know that we love God”; which, in connection with what follows, makes a tautology, and is a proving “idem per idem”:

whereas the apostle's view is to show when love to the saints is right; and that is,

when we love God, and keep his commandments: love to the brethren may arise from such a cause, as may show that it is not brotherly love, or of a spiritual kind; it may arise from natural relation, or civil friendship, or from a benefit or favour received from them, and from some natural external excellency seen in them; and a man may do acts of love and kindness to the brethren, from what may be called good nature in himself, or with sinister views; but true love to the brethren springs from love to God: such who love the saints aright, and by which they may know they do so, they love them because they themselves love God, and in obedience to his command; they love them because they belong to God, and are the objects of his love; because his grace is wrought in them, and his image stamped upon them.

Ver. 3. *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments*, &c.] Keeping of the commandments of God is an evidence of love to God; this shows that love is not in word and tongue, in profession only, but in deed and in truth; and that such persons have a sense of the love of God upon their souls, under the influence of which they act; and such shall have, and may expect to have, greater manifestations of the love of God unto them:

and his commandments are not grievous; heavy, burdensome, and disagreeable; by which are meant, not so much the precepts of the moral law, which through the weakness of the flesh are hard to be kept, and cannot be perfectly fulfilled; though believers indeed, being freed from the rigorous exaction, curse, and condemnation of the law, delight in it after the inward man, and serve it cheerfully with their spirit; and still less the commands of the ceremonial law, which were now abolished, and were grievous to be borne; but rather those of faith in Christ, and love to the saints, (1 John 3:23); or it may be the ordinances of the Gospel, baptism, and the Lord's supper, with others, which though disagreeable to unregenerate persons, who do not care to be under the yoke of Christ, however easy and light it is, yet are not heavy and burdensome to regenerate ones; and especially when they have the love of God shed abroad in them, the presence of God with them, communion with Jesus Christ, and a supply of grace and strength from him; then are these ways ways of pleasantness, and paths of peace, and the tabernacles of the Lord are amiable and lovely.

Ver. 4. *For whatsoever is born of God*, &c.] Which may be understood either of persons born; of God; or of the new creature, or principle of grace wrought in them, particularly faith hereafter mentioned, which is an heaven born grace, the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit: this

overcometh the world; the god of the world, Satan; the lusts which are in the world; false prophets gone forth into the world; and the wicked men of the world, who by temptations, snares, evil doctrines, threatenings, promises, and ill examples, would avert regenerate ones from observing the commands of God; but such are more than conquerors over all these, through Christ that has loved them:

and this is the victory that overcometh the world, [even] our faith. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, “your faith”; great things, heroic actions, and wonderful victories, are ascribed to faith; (see Hebrews 11:33,34); which must not be understood of the grace itself, as separately considered, but of Christ the object of it, as supported, strengthened, assisted, and animated by him: and then it does wonders, when it is enabled to hold Christ, its shield, in its hand, against every enemy that opposes.

Ver. 5. *Who is he that overcometh the world*, &c.] This question carries in it a strong affirmation, that no other person is the conqueror of the world:

but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? and this points out what that faith is which obtains the victory over the world; and shows that it is not that trust and confidence which has a man's self, or any mere creature, thing, or person, for its object, but only Jesus Christ, and that as he is the Son of God; and which is not a mere assent to such a proposition, to which devils and unregenerate persons may assent, and do; but it is a seeing of the Son in the glory, fulness, and suitableness of his person, office, and grace; a going to him, being drawn by the Father; and a living upon him as the Son of God, and trusting in him for life, righteousness, and salvation: and this shows, that the victory over the world is not owing to faith itself, but to its object Christ, who has overcome it, and makes true believers in him more than conquerors over it.

Ver. 6. *This is he that came by water and blood, [even] Jesus Christ*, &c.] By “water” is not meant the ablutions or washings of the ceremonial law; Christ came not by these, but to make an end of them; his blood, which cleanseth from all sin, being the antitype, and so the fulfilling end of them: nor the purity of his nature, life, and conversation; though he came into the

world that holy thing which is called the Son of God; and was holy in his nature, and harmless in his life, and did no sin, and so was fit to be a sacrifice for the sins of others: nor does it intend the washing and cleansing of his people from their sins; this is what he came to do, and has done, and not what he came by: but the ordinance of water baptism is designed; and though Christ did not come baptizing with water, he having a greater baptism to administer, yet that he might be made manifest, John came baptizing in that way; and Christ, as the Son of God, came, or was made manifest by John as such, at the waters of Jordan, and at his baptism; there he was declared to be the Son of God by his Father's voice from heaven:

not by water only; he did not come by water only, as Moses did, who was drawn out of it, and therefore so called; or as John, who came administering water baptism externally only:

but by water and blood; by "blood" as well as water; by which is meant, not the blood of bulls and goats; Christ came to put an end unto, and lay aside the shedding of that blood; but his own blood is intended, and not reconciliation and atonement for the sins of his people, which was what he came to do, and has done, and not what he came by: but the sense is, that as at baptism, so at his sufferings and death, he was made manifest to be the Son of God; as he was to the centurion and others, that were with him, when they observed the earthquake, and the things that were done; and at his from the dead he was declared to be the Son of God with power: and this might be seen in the cleansing and atoning virtue of his blood, which is owing to his being the Son of God. There may be here an allusion to the water and blood which came out of his side, when pierced on the cross, which this Apostle John was an eyewitness of. Some copies add here, and in the former clause, "and by the Spirit"; as the Alexandrian copy, three of Beza's copies, and the Ethiopic version: but it seems unnecessary, since it follows,

and it is the Spirit that beareth witness; by which may be meant, either the Gospel, which is the Spirit that gives life, and is so called, because by it the Spirit of God, in his gifts and graces, is received, and which is a testimony of the person, as well as of the offices, and grace of Christ; or rather those miraculous works which Christ did by the Spirit, to which he often appeals, as witnesses of his divine sonship, and equality with the Father, as well as of his being the true Messiah; or else the Holy Spirit, who bore testimony to Christ, by his descent on him at his baptism, and upon his apostles at the

day of Pentecost, and by attending, succeeding, and confirming the Gospel, which is the testimony of him; and he is elsewhere, as well as here, and in the context, spoken of as a witness of Christ, (<scripture_ref type="bible">Acts 5:32</scripture_ref>);

because the Spirit is truth; he is the Spirit of truth, and truth itself; he is essentially truth; his testimony is most true, and firmly to be believed. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “because Christ is the truth”.

Ver. 7. *For there are three that bear record in heaven*, &c.] That is, that Jesus is the Son of God. The genuineness of this text has been called in question by some, because it is wanting in the Syriac version, as it also is in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; and because the old Latin interpreter has it not; and it is not to be found in many Greek manuscripts; nor cited by many of the ancient fathers, even by such who wrote against the Arians, when it might have been of great service to them: to all which it may be replied, that as to the Syriac version, which is the most ancient, and of the greatest consequence, it is but a version, and a defective one. The history of the adulterous woman in the eighth of John, the second epistle of Peter, the second and third epistles of John, the epistle of Jude, and the book of the Revelations, were formerly wanting in it, till restored from Bishop Usher's copy by Deuteronomy Dieu and Dr. Pocock, and who also, from an eastern copy, has supplied this version with this text. As to the old Latin interpreter, it is certain it is to be seen in many Latin manuscripts of an early date, and stands in the Vulgate Latin edition of the London Polyglot Bible: and the Latin translation, which bears the name of Jerom, has it, and who, in an epistle of his to Eustochium, prefixed to his translation of these canonical epistles, complains of the omission of it by unfaithful interpreters. And as to its being wanting in some Greek manuscripts, as the Alexandrian, and others, it need only be said, that it is to be found in many others; it is in an old British copy, and in the Complutensian edition, the compilers of which made use of various copies; and out of sixteen ancient copies of Robert Stephens's, nine of them had it: and as to its not being cited by some of the ancient fathers, this can be no sufficient proof of the spuriousness of it, since it might be in the original copy, though not in the copies used by them, through the carelessness or unfaithfulness of transcribers; or it might be in their copies, and yet not cited by them, they having Scriptures enough without it, to defend the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of Christ: and yet, after all, certain it is, that it is cited by many of them; by Fulgentius [f46], in the beginning of the “sixth” century, against the Arians, without any scruple or hesitation; and Jerom, as before

observed, has it in his translation made in the latter end of the “fourth” century; and it is cited by Athanasius [f47] about the year 350; and before him by Cyprian [f48], in the middle, of the “third” century, about the year 250; and is referred to by Tertullian [f49] about, the year 200; and which was within a “hundred” years, or little more, of the writing of the epistle; which may be enough to satisfy anyone of the genuineness of this passage; and besides, there never was any dispute about it till Erasmus left it out in the, first edition of his translation of the New Testament; and yet he himself, upon the credit of the old British copy before mentioned, put it into another edition of his translation. The heavenly witnesses of Christ's sonship are,

the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. The “Father” is the first Person, so called, not in, reference to the creatures, angels, or men, he is the Creator, and so the Father of; for this is common to the other two Persons; but in reference to his Son Jesus Christ, of whose sonship he bore witness at his baptism and transfiguration upon the mount. The “Word” is the second Person, who said and it was done; who spoke all things out of nothing in the first creation; who was in the beginning with God the Father, and was God, and by whom all things were created; he declared himself to be the Son of God, and proved himself to be so by his works and miracles; (see <411462>Mark 14:61,62 <430517>John 5:17 10:30), &c. and his witness of himself was good and valid; (see <430813>John 8:13-18); and because it is his sonship that is, here testified of, therefore the phrase, “the Word”, and not “the Son”, is here used. “The Holy Ghost” is the third Person, who proceeds from the Father, and is also called the Spirit of the Son, who testified of, Christ's sonship also at his baptism, by descending on him as a dove, which was the signal given to John the Baptist, by which he knew him, and bare record of him, that he was the Son of God. Now the number of these witnesses was three, there being so many persons in the Godhead; and such a number being sufficient, according to law, for the establishing of any point: to which may be added, that they were witnesses in heaven, not to the heavenly inhabitants, but to men on earth; they were so called, because they were in heaven, and from thence gave out their testimony; and which shows the firmness and excellency of it, it being not from earth, but from heaven, and not human, but divine; to which may be applied the words of Job, in (<181619>Job 16:19); it follows,

and these three are one; which is to be understood, not only of their unity and agreement in their testimony, they testifying of the same thing, the sonship of Christ; but of their unity in essence or nature, they being the one

God. So that, this passage holds forth and asserts the unity of God, a trinity of persons in the Godhead, the proper deity of each person, and their distinct personality, the unity of essence in that they are one; a trinity of persons in that they are three, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and are neither more nor fewer; the deity of each person, for otherwise their testimony would not be the testimony of God, as in (<61 5 9>1 John 5:9); and their distinct personality; for were they not three distinct persons, they could not be three testifiers, or three that bare record. This being a proper place, I shall insert the faith of the ancient Jews concerning the doctrine of the Trinity; and the rather, as it agrees with the apostle's doctrine in words and language, as well as in matter. They call the three Persons in the Godhead three degrees: they say [f50],

> "Jehovah, Elohenu (our God), Jehovah, (<05 6 4>Deuteronomy 6:4); these are the three degrees with respect to this sublime mystery, in the beginning Elohim, or God, created, (<01 1 1>Genesis 1:1), &c."

And these three, they say, though they are distinct, yet are one, as appears by what follows [f51]:

> "come see the mystery of the word; there are three degrees, and every degree is by itself, yet they are all one, and are bound together in one, and one is not separated from the other."

Again, it is said [f52],

> "this is the unity of Jehovah the first, Elohenu, Jehovah, lo, all of them are one, and therefore: called one; lo, the three names are as if they were one, and therefore are called one, and they are one; but by the revelation of the Holy Spirit it is made known, and they by the sight of the eye may be known, djaNylaatltd, "that these three are one": and this is the mystery of the voice which is heard; the voice is one, and there are three things, fire, and Spirit, and water, and all of them are one in the mystery of the voice, and they are but one: so here, Jehovah, Elohenu, Jehovah, they are one, the three, Nynwwg, forms, modes, or things, which are one."

Once more [f53],

> "there are two, and one is joined unto them, and they are three; and when the three are one, he says to them, these are the two names which Israel heard, Jehovah, Jehovah, and Elohenu is joined unto

> them, and it is the seal of the ring of truth; and when they are joined as one, they are one in one unity."

And this they illustrate by the three names of the soul of man [f54];

> "the three powers are all of them one, the soul, spirit, and breath, they are joined as one, and they are one; and all is according to the mode of the sublime mystery,"

meaning the Trinity.

> "Says R. Isaac [f55] worthy are the righteous in this world, and in the world to come, for lo, the whole of them is holy, their body is holy, their soul is holy, their Spirit is holy, their breath is holy, holy are these three degrees "according to the form above". — Come see these three degrees cleave together as one, the soul, Spirit, and breath."

The three first Sephirot, or numbers, in the Cabalistic tree, intend the three divine Persons; the first is called the chief crown, and first glory, which essence no creature can comprehend [f56], and designs the Father, (<430118>John 1:18); the second is called wisdom, and the intelligence illuminating, the crown of the creation, the brightness of equal unity, who is exalted above every head; and he is called, by the Cabalists, the second glory [f57]; (see <461224>1 Corinthians 1:24 <430109>John 1:9 <660314>Revelation 3:14) (<580103>Hebrews 1:3 <490121>Ephesians 1:21). This is the Son of God: the third is called understanding sanctifying, and is the foundation of ancient wisdom, which is called the worker of faith; and he is the parent of faith, and from his power faith flows [f58]; and this is the Holy Spirit; (see <600102>1 Peter 1:2 <470413>2 Corinthians 4:13). Now they say [f59] that these three first numbers are intellectual, and are not twdm, "properties", or "attributes", as the other seven are. R. Simeon ben Jochai says [f60],

> "of the three superior numbers it is said, (<196211>Psalm 62:11), "God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this"; one and two, lo the superior numbers of whom it is said, one, one, one, three ones, and this is the mystery of (<196211>Psalm 62:11)."

Says R. Judah Levi [f61],

> "behold the mystery of the numberer, the number, and the numbered; in the bosom of God it is one thing, in the bosom of man

> three; because he weighs with his understanding, and speaks with his mouth, and writes with his hand."

It was usual with the ancient Jews to introduce Jehovah speaking, or doing anything, in this form, I and my house of judgment; and it is a rule with them, that wherever it is said, "and Jehovah", he and his house or judgment are intended [f62]; and Jarchi frequently makes use of this phrase to explain texts where a plurality in the Godhead is intended, as (<01126>Genesis 1:26 <22011>Song of Solomon 1:11); and it is to be observed, that a house of judgment, or a sanhedrim, among the Jews, never consisted of less than three. They also had used to write the word "Jehovah" with three "Jods", in the form of a triangle, y y y

as representing the three divine Persons: one of their more modern [f63] writers has this observation on the blessing of the priest in (<04624>Numbers 6:24-26):

> "these three verses begin with a "Jod", in reference to the three "Jods" which we write in the room of the name, (i.e. Jehovah,) for they have respect to the three superior things."

Ver. 8. *And there are three that bear witness on earth*, &c.] To the same truth of the sonship of Christ:

the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; by the "Spirit" is not meant the human Spirit or soul of Christ; for however that may be a witness of the truth of his human nature, yet not of his divine sonship: and moreover cannot be said to be a witness in earth; rather the Gospel, called the Spirit, which is a testimony of Christ's person, office, and graces and is preached by men on earth; or else the gifts of the Spirit bestowed on men on earth, both in an extraordinary and ordinary way, by which they have been qualified to bear witness to this truth; or it may be the Holy Spirit itself is intended, as he is in the hearts of his people here on earth, where he not only witnesses to the truth of their sonship, but also of the sonship of Christ, and is that witness a believer has within himself of it, mentioned in (<620510>1 John 5:10). By water is designed, not internal sanctification, which though an evidence of regeneration and adoption, yet not of Christ's sonship; but water baptism, as administered on earth in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and which is a noble and standing testimony to the proper, natural, and eternal sonship of Christ: and by "blood" is intended, not justification by the blood of Christ, but

rather the blood of the saints, the martyrs of Jesus, who have shed it on earth, in testimony of their faith in the Son of God, and thereby sealing the truth of it; or rather the ordinance of the Lord's supper, which is the communion of the blood of Christ; and represents that blood which was shed for the remission of sins, and has a continual virtue to cleanse from all sin, which is owing to his being the Son of God. The three witnesses on earth seem therefore to be the Gospel, attended with the Spirit and power of God, and the two ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper:

and these agree in one; in their testimony of Christ, the word and ordinances agree together; and the sum and substance of them is Christ; they come from him, and centre in him; they are like the cherubim over the mercy seat, that looked to one another, and to that; and the two ordinances are the church's two breasts, which are equal, and like to one another; there is a great agreement between them, they are like to two young roes that are twins.

Ver. 9. *If we receive the witness of men*, &c.] The witness of a sufficient number of credible men, of men of good character and report, is always admitted in any case, and in any court of judicature; it was allowed of in the law of Moses; everything was proved and established hereby; upon this men were justified or condemned, cognizance was taken of men's sins, and punishment inflicted, yea, death itself, (Deuteronomy 17:6 19:15 Hebrews 10:28); and even in this case concerning the Son of God, his coming into the world, and the dignity of his person, the testimony of men is credited; as that of the wise men, who declared that the King of the Jews was born, and his star had been seen in the east, which Herod himself gave credit to, and upon it summoned the chief priests, and inquired of them where he should be born; and also of the shepherds, who testified to the appearance of angels, who told them that there was then born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord, and who also related that they themselves saw the infant at Bethlehem; and especially of John the Baptist, whose testimony was true, and could not be objected to by the Jews themselves, who sent to him, before whom he bore a plain and faithful witness. Now if an human testimony may be, and is received,

the testimony of God is greater; more valuable, surer, and to be more firmly depended on, since it must be infallible; for God can neither deceive, nor be deceived:

for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son; even the witness of the Spirit, the water, and the blood, is the testimony, not of men, but of God; the Gospel, attended with the Spirit of God, is the testimony of God; and so the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, which bear witness of Christ, are not of men, but of God; and especially the witness of the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, must be the testimony of God, since, though three persons, they are one God; particularly the witness which God the Father testified of his Son Jesus Christ at his baptism and transfiguration, must be allowed to be the testimony of God, and far greater than any human testimony, and therefore to be received.

Ver. 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God*, &c.] As a divine person who came in the flesh, and obeyed the law, and brought in everlasting righteousness, and obtained life and salvation for men: he that with the heart believes in him for righteousness, and eternal life, he being the Son of God, truly and properly God, and so able to save all that believe in him,

hath the witness in himself; of the need he stands in of Christ, and of the suitableness, fulness, and excellency of him; the Spirit of God enlightening him into the impurity of his nature, his impotence to do anything spiritually good, his incapacity to atone for sin, and the insufficiency of his righteousness to justify him before God; and convincing him that nothing but the blood of the Son of God can cleanse him from sin, and only his sacrifice can expiate it, and his righteousness justify him from it, and that without him he can do nothing; testifying also to the efficacy of his blood, the completeness of his sacrifice and satisfaction, the excellency of his righteousness, and the energy of his grace and strength: so he comes to have such a witness in himself, that if ten thousand arguments were ever so artfully formed, in favour of the purity of human nature, the power of man's free will, and the sufficiency of his righteousness, and against the sacrifice and righteousness of Christ, the dignity of his person, as the Son of God, which gives virtue to his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness, they would all signify nothing to him, he would be proof against them. And such an one very readily receives into him the testimony God gives of his Son, of the glory and excellency of his person, and retains it in him. The Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, “hath the witness of God in him”; to which the Ethiopic, version agrees, and confirm the last observation:

he that believeth not God; does not receive his testimony concerning his Son: the Alexandrian copy, and two of Stephens's, and the Vulgate Latin version read, “he that believeth not the Son”; and the Ethiopic version, his Son; and the Arabic version, “the Son of God”; and so is a direct antithesis to the phrase in the former clause of the verse:

hath made him a liar; not the Son, but God, as the Arabic version renders it, “hath made God himself a liar”; who is the God, of truth, and cannot lie; it is impossible he should; and as nothing can be, more contumelious and reproachful to the being and nature of God, so nothing can more fully expose and aggravate the sin of unbelief, with respect to Christ, as the Son of God:

because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son; at the times and places before observed.

Ver. 11. *And this is the record*, &c.] The sum and substance of it, with respect to the person of Christ, and the security of salvation in him, who is the true God, and eternal life:

that God hath given to us eternal life; which is a life of glory and happiness hereafter; in the present state is unseen, but will in the world to come be a life of vision, free from all the sorrows and imperfections of this; and will be of the utmost perfection and pleasure, and for ever. This is a pure free grace gift of God the Father, proceeding from his sovereigns good will and pleasure, and which he gives to all his chosen ones, for they are ordained unto eternal life; to as many as he has given to his Son; to all that are redeemed by his blood, and are brought to believe in him: to these he gave it in his Son before the world began; and to the same in time he gives the right unto it, the meetness for it, and the pledge and earnest of it; and will hereafter give them the thing itself, the whole of it, to be possessed and enjoyed by them in person, to all eternity.

And this life is in his Son: not only the purpose and promise of it, but that itself; Christ asked it of his Father in the covenant of peace, and he gave it to him, that he might have it in himself for all his people; and here it is safe and secure, it is hid with Christ in God, it is bound up in the bundle of life with him; and because he lives, this life will never be lost, or they come short of it.

Ver. 12. *He that hath the Son*, &c.] Has a spiritual and experimental knowledge of him, true faith in him; who has him dwelling in his heart, and living in him:

hath life: not only spiritual life, being quickened by him, and living by faith on him, but eternal life; the knowledge he has of him is eternal life; he has it in faith and hope, and has a right unto it, and the earnest of it, as well as has it in Christ his representative, whom he has, and in whom this life is:

[and] he that hath not the Son of God; no knowledge of him, nor faith in him, nor enjoyment of him:

hath not life; he is dead in sin, he is alienated from the life of God, has no title to eternal life, nor meetness for it, nor shall enjoy it, but shall die the second death.

Ver. 13. *These things have I written unto you*, &c.] Which are contained in the epistle in general, and particularly what is written in the context, concerning the victory of the world, being ascribed to him who believes that Christ is the Son of God; and concerning the six witnesses of his sonship, and the record bore by God, that the gift of eternal life is in him: and which are especially written to them,

that believe on the name of the Son of God; who not only believed that Christ is the Son of God, which this six fold testimony would confirm them in, but also believed in his name for righteousness, life, and salvation; in which name there is all this, and in no other; and who also professed their faith in him, and were baptized in his name, and continued believing in him, and holding fast their profession of him. The end of writing these things to them was,

that ye may know that ye have eternal life; that there is such a thing as eternal life; that this is in Christ; that believers have it in him, and the beginning of it in themselves; and that they have a right unto it, and meetness for it, and shall certainly enjoy it; the knowledge of which is had by faith, under the testimony of the Spirit of God, and particularly what is above written concerning eternal life, being a free grace gift of God; and this being in Christ, and the assurance of it, that such who have him, or believe in him, have that which might serve to communicate, cultivate, and increase such knowledge:

and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God; which they had done already, and still did; the sense is, the above things were written to them concerning the Son of God, that they might be encouraged to continue believing in him, as such; to hold fast the faith of him and go on believing in him to the end; and that their faith in him might be increased; for faith is imperfect and is capable of increasing, and growing exceedingly: and nothing more tends unto, or is a more proper means of it, than the sacred writings, the reading and hearing them explained, and especially that part of them which respects the person, office, and grace of Christ. The Alexandrian copy, and one of Beza's manuscripts, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, “these things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, who believe in the name of the Son of God”.

Ver. 14. *And this is the confidence that we have in him*, &c.] Either in God, to whom prayer is made; or in the Son of God, through whose blood and righteousness believers in him have confidence with God at the throne of grace; they can come with boldness and intrepidity, and use freedom and liberty of speech, as the word here used signifies; especially when they have the Spirit of Christ with them, and are under the sprinklings of the blood of Christ, and have a comfortable assurance of being heard and answered; and this is what the Jews call hlpt Nwyy, “the consideration”, or “attention of prayer” [f64], which they explain thus;

> “after a man has prayed, he judges in his heart that the holy blessed God will give him his reward, and will do everything needful for him, and will hear his prayer, because he has prayed with intention;”

but this is much better expressed, and upon a much better foundation, by our apostle here:

that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; to ask anything according to the will of God, is to ask, as to matter, what, and in a manner which, is agreeably to it; by which is meant, not his secret will, or his purposes and decrees, which are unknown, though, so far as these are made known, they are not to be prayed against, for they can never be made void; and therefore, when God had declared it as his purposing will, that the Israelites in the wilderness should not enter into Canaan's land, and that he had rejected Saul from the kingdom, in these cases it would have been

wrong for Moses to have prayed for the one, or Samuel for the other; (<09601>1 Samuel 16:1); and though no one person is to be excluded from our prayers on the account of the decree of reprobation, since no man can certainly be known to be a reprobate; yet it does not become us to pray for the conversion and salvation of reprobates in general, since this would be contrary to the decree of God: and such purposes which God has declared by prophecy he has purposed in himself, as the conversion of the Jews, the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, the destruction of antichrist, and the glory of the Gospel church, for these we should pray that God would hasten them in his own time, and we are sure of being heard; but the revealed will of God is here intended, by which it appears that all grace is laid up in Christ, and all spiritual blessings are with him, and that the covenant of grace is ordered in all things, and full of the sure mercies of David, and of exceeding great and precious promises; all which are treasured up for the benefit and use of the people of God; and if, therefore, they ask for any grace, or supply of grace, for any spiritual blessing or mercy laid up in Christ, in the covenant, or in any of the promises, they ask that for matter which is according to the will of God, and which they may be assured they shall have, sooner or later: and to ask in a manner agreeably to his will, is to come in the name of Christ, and make mention of his righteousness, and ask for his sake; to put up all petitions in faith, with fervency, in sincerity, and uprightness; with reverence, humility, and submission to the divine will, and with importunity; and such askers God hears, even so as to answer, and grant their requests in his own time, though not always in theirs; in some cases sooner, in others later, according to his infinite wisdom, and in his own way, which is always the best, though not in theirs, as in the case of the Apostle Paul, (<471207>2 Corinthians 12:7-9). The Alexandrian copy and the Ethiopic version read, “if we ask anything according to”, or in his name: that is, of Christ, and which agrees with (<431413>John 14:13,14) (<431623>John 16:23,24).

Ver. 15. *And if we know that he hear us*, &c.] As it may be assured he does hear and answer all such persons that ask according to his will:

whatsoever we ask, we know, or are assured,

that we have the petitions that we desired of him: for as it is the nature of that holy confidence, which believers have in God, to believe whatever they ask according to his will, in general, shall be grappled, so every request in particular; yea, before the mercy desired, or the favour asked for is

conferred, they are as sure of having it in God's own time and way, as if they now had it in hand and fact.

Ver. 16. *If anyone see his brother sin*, &c.] Those who have such an interest at the throne of grace, and such boldness and freedom there, should make use of it for others, as well as themselves, and particularly for fallen believers; for a “brother”; not in a natural or civil sense, but in a spiritual sense, one that is judged to be born again, and belongs to the family and household of God, and is a member of a Gospel church; and so is under the watch, inspection, and care of the saints; and is observed to sin, as the best of men are not without it, nor the commission of it, in thought, word, or deed: and this sin of his is

a sin [which is] not unto death; every sin, even the least sin, is in its own nature mortal, or deserving of death; the proper wages of sin is death, yea, death eternal; yet none of the sins of God's elect are unto death, or issue in death, in fact; which is owing not to any different nature there is in their sins, or to their good works which counterbalance them; but to the grace of God, and to the blood and righteousness of Christ, by which they are pardoned and justified, and freed from obligation to punishment, or eternal death, the just demerits of them: but how should another man know that a brother's sin is not unto death, when it is of the same nature and kind with another man's? it is known by this, that he does not continue in it; he does not live in the constant commission of it; his life is not a course of iniquity; that sin he sins is not a governing one in him; though he falls into it, he rises up out of it through divine grace, and abides not in it; and he has a sense of it, and is sorry for it, after a godly sort, loaths it, and himself for it; is ashamed of it, ingenuously confesses it, and mourns over it and forsakes it: now when any strong believer or spiritual man sees or knows that a brother has sinned, and this is his case,

he shall ask; he shall pray to God for him, that he would administer comfort to him, discover his love, and apply his pardoning grace to him, and indulge him with his presence and the light of his countenance:

and he shall give him life; that is, God shall give the sinning brother life; by which may be meant comfort, that which will revive his drooping spirits, and cause him to live cheerfully and comfortably, that so he may not be swallowed up with over much sorrow; or he shall grant a discovery of the pardon of his sin unto him, which will be as life from the dead, and will

give him a comfortable hope of eternal life, of his right unto it, and meetness for it:

for them, or “to them”

that sin not unto death, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; for this phrase is only descriptive of the persons to whom life is given by God, upon the prayers of saints for them, and not that this life is given to him that prays, and by him to be given to the sinning person. The Vulgate Latin version renders the whole thus, “and life shall be given to him that sins not unto death”; which leaves the words without any difficulty: the Ethiopic version indeed renders it, “and he that prays shall quicken him that sins [a sin] not unto death”; and this sense some interpreters incline to, and would have with this text compared (<540416>1 Timothy 4:16 <590520>James 5:20).

There is a sin unto death; which is not only deserving of death, as every other sin is, but which certainly and inevitably issues in death in all that commit it, without exception; and that is the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is neither forgiven in this world nor in that to come, and therefore must be unto death; it is a sinning wilfully, not in a practical, but doctrinal way, after a man has received the knowledge of the truth; it is a wilful denial of the truth of the Gospel, particularly that peace, pardon, righteousness, eternal life, and salvation, are by Jesus Christ, contrary to the light of his mind, and this joined with malice and obstinacy; so that there is no more or other sacrifice for such a sin; there is nothing but a fearful looking for of wrath and fury to fall on such opposers of the way of life; and as the presumptuous sinners under Moses's law died without mercy, so must these despiteful ones under the Gospel; (see <401231>Matthew 12:31,32 <581026>Hebrews 10:26-29). Some think there is an allusion to one of the kinds of excommunication among the Jews, called “shammatha”, the etymology of which, according to some Jewish writers, is htym µv, “there is death” [f65].

I do not say that he shall pray for it; the apostle does not expressly forbid to pray for the forgiveness of this sin, yet what he says amounts unto it; he gives no encouragement to it, or any hopes of succeeding, but rather the reverse; and indeed where this sin is known, or can be known, it is not to be prayed for, because it is irremissible; but as it is a most difficult point to know when a man has sinned it, the apostle expresses himself with great caution.

Ver. 17. *All unrighteousness is sin*, &c.] All unrighteousness against God or man is a sin against the law of God, and the wrath of God is revealed against it, and it is deserving of death; yet all unrighteousness is not unto death, as the sins of David, which were unrighteousness both to God and man, and yet they were put away, and he died not; Peter sinned very foully, and did great injustice to his dear Lord, and yet his sin was not unto death; he had repentance unto life given him, and a fresh application of pardoning grace:

and there is a sin not unto death; this is added for the relief of weak believers, who hearing of a sin unto death, not to be prayed for, might fear that theirs were of that kind, whereas none of them are; for though they are guilty of many unrighteousnesses, yet God is merciful to them and forgives, (Hebrews 8:12), and so they are not unto death.

Ver. 18. *We know that whosoever is born of God*, &c.] Who is regenerated by his Spirit and grace, and quickened by his power; who has Christ formed in him, and is made a partaker of the divine nature, and has every grace implanted in him:

sinneth not; the sin unto death; nor does he live in sin, or is under the power and dominion of it, though he does not live without it; (see Gill on "1 John 3:9");

but he that is begotten of God; the Vulgate Latin version reads, "the generation of God keeps or preserves him"; that is, that which is born in him, the new man, the principle of grace, or seed of God in him, keeps him from notorious crimes, particularly from sinning the sin unto death, and from the governing power of all other sins; but all other versions, as well as copies, read as we do, and as follows:

keepeth himself; not that any man can keep himself by his own power and strength; otherwise what mean the petitions of the saints to God that he would keep them, and even of Christ himself to God for them on the same account? God only is the keeper of his people, and they are only kept in safety whom he keeps, and it is by his power they are kept; but the sense is, that a believer defends himself by taking to him the whole armour of God, and especially the shield of faith, against the corruptions of his own heart, the snares of the world, and particularly the temptations of Satan:

and that wicked one toucheth him not; he cannot come at him so as to wound him to the heart, or destroy that principle of life that is in him, or so

as to overcome and devour him; he may tempt him, and sift him, and buffet him, and greatly afflict and grieve him, but he can not touch his life, or hurt him with the second death; nay, sometimes the believer is so enabled to wield the shield of faith, or to hold up Christ the shield by faith, and turn it every way in such a manner, that Satan, who is here meant by the wicked one, because he is notoriously so, cannot come near him, nor in with him; cannot work upon him at all with his temptations, nor in the least hurt his peace, joy, and comfort: the saints know their perseverance from the promises of God and declarations of Christ; (<19C501>Psalm 125:1,2) (<24324>Jeremiah 32:40 <40168>Matthew 16:18 <43028>John 10:28).

Ver. 19. *[And] we know that we are of God*, &c.] The sons of God, and regenerated by him; this is known by the Spirit of God, which witnesses to the spirits of the saints that they are the children of God; and by the fruits and effects of regenerating grace, as love to the brethren, and the like:

and the whole world lies in wickedness; that is, the men of the world, the greater part of the inhabitants of it, who are as they were when they came into it, not being born of God; these are addicted to sin and, wickedness; the bias of their minds is to it, they are set upon it, and give themselves up to it, are immersed in it, and are under the power of it: or "in the wicked one"; Satan, the god of this world; they are under his influence, and led according to his will, and they are governed by him, and are at his beck and command; and this is known, by sad experience, it is easy of observation;

> "And cannot comprehend the things that are promised to the righteous in time to come: for this world is full of unrighteousness and infirmities." (2 Esdras 4:27)

Ver. 20. *And we know that the Son of God is come*, &c.] That the second Person in the Godhead, who is equal to the Father, and of the same nature with him, is come from the Father, from heaven into this world, not by local motion, but by assumption of nature; that he is come in the flesh, or is become incarnate, in order to work out salvation for his people, by his obedience, sufferings, and death; and this John and others knew, for they had personal knowledge of him, and converse with him; they saw him with their eyes, heard him, and handled him: he dwelt among them, preached to them, wrought miracles before them, which proved him to be what he was; and it may be known that the Messiah must become, since Daniel's weeks, which fixes the time of his coming, are long ago up; the sceptre is departed from Judah, and the second temple is destroyed, neither of which were to

be till the Messiah came; and that Jesus of Nazareth is he who is come may be known by the characters of him, and the works done by him:

and hath given us an understanding; not a new faculty of the understanding but new light into it; a knowledge of spiritual things of himself, and of God in him, and of the truths of the Gospel, and of all divine and heavenly things; for he, the Son of God, is come a light into the world, and gives spiritual light to men:

that we may know him that is true; or "the true God", as the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; that is, God the Father, who is the true God, in opposition to the false gods of the Heathens, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit; and the spiritual knowledge of him as the Father of Christ, and as a covenant God and Father in him, is only given to men by Christ, and this is life eternal; (see <4011 27>Matthew 11:27 <4317 3>John 17:3);

and we are in him that is true, [even] in his Son Jesus Christ; the words "Jesus Christ" are left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin version; however, certain it is, that Jesus Christ is meant by his Son, who is the Son of the true and living God, and is himself "true"; not only true God, as hereafter asserted, but true man, having a true body and a reasonable soul, and was true and faithful in the discharge of his offices, as prophet, priest, and King; he faithfully declared the whole will of God, and taught the way of God in truth; he was faithful to him that appointed him, by securing his glory when he made reconciliation for the sins of the people; and all the administrations of his kingly office are just and true; yea, he is truth itself, the substance of all the types, in whom all the promises are yea and amen, and who has all the truths of the Gospel and treasures of wisdom in him; now his people are in him; they were secretly in him before the world was, being loved by him, chosen in him, put into his hands, preserved in him, and represented by him; and openly, at conversion, when they are anew created in him, brought to believe in him, and live upon him, and he lives in them, and they are in him as branches in the vine; and this is known by his Spirit being given them, by the communication of his grace unto them, and by the communion they have with him.

This is the true God and eternal life; that is, the Son of God, who is the immediate antecedent to the relative "this"; he is the true God, with his Father and the Spirit, in distinction from all false, fictitious, or nominal deities; and such as are only by office, or in an improper and figurative

sense: Christ is truly and really God, as appears from all the perfections of deity, the fulness of the Godhead being in him; from the divine works of creation and providence being ascribed to him; and from the divine worship that is given him; as well as from the names and titles he goes by, and particularly that of Jehovah, which is incommunicable to a creature; and he is called “eternal life”, because it is in him; and he is the giver of it to his people; and that itself will chiefly consist in the enjoyment and vision of him, and in conformity to him.

Ver. 21. *Little children, keep yourselves from idols, Amen*.] From Heathen idols and idolatry, into which the saints in those times might be liable to be drawn, by reason of their dwelling among Heathen idolaters, and being related to them, and by the too great freedom used in eating things sacrificed to idols in their temples; and from all other idols that might be introduced by some who went by the name of Christians, as the Gnostics, who worshipped the images of Simon and Helena; and the passage may be an antidote against the worshipping of images, afterwards introduced by the Papists. Moreover, errors and false doctrines, which are the figments of men's minds, and what they are fond of, may be called idols, and should be guarded against, and abstained from; as also the lusts of men's hearts, and all the evil things that are in the world, which are adored by the men of it; and even every creature that is loved too much is an idol; hence covetousness is called idolatry; nor should any creature or thing be loved more than God or Christ: the one only living and true God, Father, Son, and Spirit, he is only to be worshipped, feared, and loved.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 24.

Ft2 -- Augustin. apud Grotium.

Ft3 -- Hor. Hebr. in <46114>1 Corinthians 1:14.

Ft4 -- Stromat. 50:2. p. 389.

Ft5 -- Lex. Cabalist, p. 63, 64.

Ft6 -- Sepher Cosri, par. 2. sect. 2. fol. 61. 2.

Ft7 -- Misn. Shebuot, c. 1. sect. 6.

Ft8 -- Vid. T. Bab. Temura, fol. 15. 2. & Bava Kama, fol. 80. 1. T. Hieros. Sota, fol. 24. 1. &. Chagiga, fol. 77. 4.

Ft9 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 11. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 32. 1. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 10. 1.

Ft10 -- De vita Mosis, 50:3:p. 673.

Ft11 -- Jarchi in <23505>Isaiah 53:5.

Ft12 -- T. Hieros. Nazir, fol. 57. 3. Vid. T. Bab. Succa, fol. 55. 2.

Ft13 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 71. 2.

Ft14 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 33. 2.

Ft15 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 22. 2.

Ft16 -- T. Bab. Horayot, fol. 13. 2.

Ft17 -- Piske Toseph. Megilla, art. 104.

Ft18 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 90. 2. & Kiddushin, fol. 47. 2. & 49. 1. & 65. 2. & Gittin, fol. 8. 1. & 60. 2.

Ft19 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 48. 1.

Ft20 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 11. sect. 16.

Ft21 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 29. 1.

Ft22 -- Ib. fol. 24. 1. T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 38. 2.

Ft23 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 88. 2. & Erachin, fol. 16. 1.

Ft24 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, ib. T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 44. 2.

Ft25 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 87. 1. & T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 45. 2, 3.

Ft26 -- Seder Tephillot, fol. 41. 1. Ed. Amsterd.

Ft27 -- Yalkut Simconi, par. 2. fol. 461.

Ft28 -- Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 5.

Ft29 -- Yalkut Simconi, par. 2. fol. 44. 4.

Ft30 -- T. Hieros. Biccurim, fol. 65. 4.

Ft31 -- Kimchi in Psal. 49:9. Ben Melech in ib. ver. 14.

Ft32 -- T. Hieros. Horayot, fol. 47. 3.

Ft33 -- Cabala Denudata, par. 2. p. 8.

Ft34 -- De praemiis. & Paenis, p. 917.

Ft35 -- Sepher Tikkunim, fol. 112. 1. apud Rittangel, de ver. Rel. Christ, p. 68.

Ft36 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Leviticus fol. 34. 2.

Ft37 -- Midrash Ruth in Zohar in Genesis fol. 42. 4.

Ft38 -- Zohar in ib. fol. 43. 1.

Ft39 -- Ib. fol. 41. 1, 2.

Ft40 -- Targum Jon. in <01048>Genesis 4:8. Pirke Eliezer, c. 21.

Ft41 -- Targum Hieros. & Jon. in <01048>Genesis 4:8.

Ft42 -- Quod Det. Potior. p. 161.

Ft43 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 15. 1. & Lex. Cabal. p. 43, 44.

Ft44 -- Misn. Negaim, c. 2. sect. 1. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 1. & Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 23. 1. & Succa, fol. 20. 1.

Ft45 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 87. 1.

Ft46 -- Respons. contr. Arian. obj. 10. & de Trinitate, c. 4.

Ft47 -- Contr. Arium, p. 109.

Ft48 -- De Unitate Ecclesiastes p. 255. & in Ep. 73. ad Jubajan, p. 184.

Ft49 -- Contr. Praxeam, c. 25.

Ft50 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 1. 3.

Ft51 -- Ib. in Leviticus fol. 27. 2.

Ft52 -- Ib. in Exodus fol. 18. 3, 4.

Ft53 -- lb. in Numbers fol. 67. 3.

Ft54 -- lb. in Exodus fol. 73. 4.

Ft55 -- lb. in Leviticus fol. 29. 2.

Ft56 -- Sepher Jetzira, Semit. 1.

Ft57 -- Sepher Jetzira, Semit. 2.

Ft58 -- Ib. Semit. 3.

Ft59 -- R. Menachem apud Rittangel. in Jetzira, p. 193.

Ft60 -- Tikkune Zohar apud ib. p. 64.

Ft61 -- Apud ib. p. 38.

Ft62 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 48. 4. Jarchi in Genesis 19:24. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 6. 1. & Gloss. in ib. & Sanhedrin, fol. 3. 2.

Ft63 -- R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 113. 2.

Ft64 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 164. 2.

Ft65 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 17. 1.

2 JOHN

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 2 JOHN

Though this epistle was called in question and gainsaid by some as authentic, as Eusebius says [f1], yet there is no room to doubt of the authority of it; it was very early received into the canon of the Scripture, and is cited as such, and also as the Apostle John's, by Irenaeus [f2], who was a disciple of Polycarp, and an hearer of Papias, who were both disciples of the Apostle John; nor need there be any question as to his being the author of it. Eusebius indeed does say [f3], it was a doubt whether it was the Apostle John's or another of the same name; and some have since asserted, that it was written not by John the Evangelist, but by John the Presbyter of Ephesus, after the apostle; and this is thought to have some confirmation from the author of it being called an elder, or presbyter, which is judged not so agreeable to the Apostle John; though it should be observed, that Peter an apostle styles himself an elder, as John here does, (<60501>1 Peter 5:1), moreover, the above ancient writer, Irenaeus, expressly ascribes this epistle to John, the disciple of the Lord; and whoever compares some passages in this epistle with the former, particularly (<60501>2 John 1:5-7,9), with (<60102>1 John 2:7,8 <60203>3:23 <60503>5:3 <60401>4:1-3), will easily conclude, from the likeness of style and matter, that it is a genuine epistle of the Apostle John: the design of which is to exhort and encourage the lady he writes to, to continue in the truth and faith of the Gospel, and in love to God and his people, and to avoid false teachers and their doctrines.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO 2 JOHN 1

The writer of this epistle describes himself by his office, an “elder”, and inscribes it to a certain matron, whom he styles, on account of her honour and riches, a “lady”; and by reason of her grace, “elect”; and to her children, who, as well as herself, were the objects of the apostle's love, and of all that knew the truth, and that for the sake of it, which was common to them all, (2 John 1:1,2), the salutation follows, (2 John 1:3), and then a congratulation of the lady, that some of her children walked in the same path of truth with herself, (2 John 1:4), and next an exhortation to brotherly love, which is the commandment from the beginning; the evidence of which love is walking according to that, and every other command of God, (2 John 1:5,6), and the rather this should be closely attended to, since many deceivers, who were no other than antichrist, had got into the world, who did not own that Christ was come in the flesh; wherefore it became those that were concerned for his name and glory, as well as their own interest, to take heed lest what was wrought should be lost, and so a full reward be not received, (2 John 1:7,8), and then a description of these deceivers and false teachers is given; that they are transgressors of the rule of God's word, abide not in the doctrine of Christ, and so have not God, any interest in him; whereas he that abides in the doctrine of Christ has an interest both in the Father and in the Son, (2 John 1:9), wherefore the apostle gives advice to the lady how to behave towards such; not to receive them into her house, nor wish them success, since so to do would be to join with them in their evil deeds, (2 John 1:10,11), and then he excuses the shortness of his letter, though he had many things to write unto her, yet would not, because he hoped shortly to visit her, and then would personally relate what he had to communicate to their mutual joy, (2 John 1:12), and closes the epistle with the salutation of her sister's children to her, (2 John 1:13).

Ver. 1. *The elder unto the elect lady and her children*, etc.] By the “elder” is meant the writer of this epistle, the Apostle John, who so calls himself either on account of his age, he being now near an hundred years of age,

having outlived all the apostles: or on account of his office, being a bishop or overseer, not only of the church at Ephesus, but of all the Asiatic churches, which is the same with an elder; nor is this incompatible with his being an apostle; (see <1PE 5:1>1 Peter 5:1), the elect lady is the person he writes unto; by whom is designed not the church of Christ, since such a way of speaking is unusual; and besides, he speaks of coming to see her face to face, and of the children of her elect sister: but some particular person, some rich, as well as gracious woman of John's acquaintance; and these words, “elect lady”, are neither of them proper names of the person: some think that the word “Kyria”, rendered “lady”, was the name of the person, as “Domina” with the Romans, and answers to the Hebrew word “Martha”; for as רם, “Mar”, signifies lord, so אתרם, “Martha, lady”; and then the inscription runs, “to the choice” or “excellent Martha”; and the Syriac and Arabic versions read, “to the elect Kyria”: and others think that the word rendered elect is a proper name, and that this person's name was “Electa”, as “Electus” [f4] is a man's name; and then it must read thus, “to the lady Electa”; but her sister also is so called, and it can hardly be thought that two sisters should be both of a name; neither of them are proper names, but characters and titles of respect and honour: she is called a “lady”, because she was a person of distinction and substance, which shows that God sometimes calls by his grace some that are rich and noble; and also that titles of respect and honour, where flattery is avoided, may be lawfully given to persons of dignity and wealth; so Nazianzen [f5] calls his own mother by the same title; and it was usual to call women by this name from fourteen years of age [f6]: and this person also is said to be “elect”; either because she was a choice, famous, and excellent person, not only for her birth, nobility, and riches, but for her virtue, grace, and good works; or because she was chosen unto eternal life and salvation; and which the apostle might know without a special and divine revelation, by the Gospel coming with power to her; by the grace that was wrought in her; by the faith of God's elect, which she appeared to have, seeing it worked by love; and which may be, and ought to be concluded in a judgment of charity, of everyone that professes faith in Christ, and walks according to it; and this also makes it appear that election is of particular persons, and not of nations, communities, and churches, as such; nor is it unusual to salute single persons under this character; (see <ROM 16:13>Romans 16:13), this epistle is inscribed not only to this lady, but also to “her children”; who were not infants, but grown up, and had made a profession of the truth, and walked

in it, (⁶⁰⁰⁴2 John 1:4), and both the mother and the children the apostle represents as the objects of his love:

whom I love in the truth; either as being in the truth and faith of the Gospel; for though all men are to be loved as men, and to be done well to, yet they that are of the household of faith, or are in the faith, are in and especial manner to be loved and respected; (see ⁴⁸⁰⁶Galatians 6:10 ⁵⁰³⁵Titus 3:15); or the sense is, that the apostle loved this lady and her children sincerely and heartily, without dissimulation; not in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth, (⁶⁰¹⁸1 John 3:18):

and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth; either the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the truth; not with a notional knowledge, but with the knowledge of approbation and affection; with a fiducial and appropriating one: or the Gospel, the word of truth; not with a speculative, but with a spiritual and experimental knowledge of it: and this is not to be understood of every individual person then living, which had such a knowledge of the truth; for it cannot be reasonably thought that every individual person should know this lady and her children; but of all such persons who had any knowledge of them; for such who are born again by the word of truth, love not only him that begot them, but all those who are begotten of him: this shows in what sense the word “all” is sometimes taken.

Ver. 2. *For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us*, etc.] Not for her high birth, nobility, or riches; but either for Christ's sake, who is the truth, and who dwells in the hearts of believers by faith, and who is the same that dwells in one as in another; and on his account it is that saints love one another, because they belong to him, he is formed in them, and his image is stamped upon them; and every like loves its like: or for the Gospel's sake, which has a place, and dwells in every saint, and is the same for matter and substance in one as in another; and unity of mind and judgment produces unity of affection: or for the sake of the truth of grace, the inward principle of grace, which dwells in every regenerate person; a communication of the experience of which knits the saints one to another:

and shall be with us for ever; where Christ enters and takes up his abode, from thence he never finally and totally departs, though he may sometimes hide his face with respect to communion, or withdraw his gracious presence; and where the Gospel has once took place in the heart, and is become the ingrafted word, it can never be rooted out, or be removed; and

where the truth of grace is, it will remain; it is an incorruptible seed, a well of living water, springing up into eternal life.

Ver. 3. *Grace be with you, mercy [and] peace*, etc.] This form of salutation, or wish and prayer for the blessings mentioned,

from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, is the same used by other apostles; (see 1 Timothy 1:2 Jude 1:2) and (see Gill on "Romans 1:7"). Only it is added here with respect to Christ, that he is

the Son of the Father in truth and love; which is mentioned by the apostle to confirm the deity of Christ, which is plainly implied in wishing for the above things equally from him, as from the Father; and to oppose and confront some heretics of those times, who denied the true and proper sonship of Christ; and therefore he calls him, "the Son of the Father", the only begotten of the Father; and that "in truth", or truly and properly, and not in a figurative and metaphorical sense, as magistrates are called the sons of God, and children of the most High, by reason of their office; but so is not Christ, he is God's own Son, in a true, proper, and natural sense: and he is so "in love"; he is his well beloved Son, his dear Son, the Son of his love; as he cannot otherwise be; since he is not only the image of him, but of the same nature, and has the same perfections with him.

Ver. 4. *I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children*, etc.] Not all, but some of them; for good parents have not always good children, or at least not all of them; Adam had a Cain, Abraham an Ishmael, and Isaac an Esau: God is pleased to show his discriminating grace in tribes and families, by taking some, and leaving others: it is a great mercy when any are called by grace, and instead of the fathers are the children: and this was the case of some of the children of this elect lady, they were

walking in the truth: in Christ, the truth, by faith, as they had received him; and in the truth of the Gospel, as they had embraced and professed it; they abode in it, and by it, and made a proficiency in the knowledge of it, which may be signified by walking, that being a progressive action: as also they walked according to it, and as became it; and likewise they walked in the truth of Gospel worship, discipline, and ordinances:

as we have received a commandment from the Father; and which has been made known by Jesus Christ, as his mind and will. Now as it is matter of joy and gladness to godly parents when their children walk in the paths of faith, truth, and holiness, so it is also to ministers of the Gospel, as well as

to the angels in heaven; it gives them an inward pleasure and joy, and which is not only expressed by them, to such children and their parents, but is also abundant by many thanksgivings unto God.

Ver. 5. *And now I beseech thee, lady*, etc.] Or "Kyria", which word the Syriac and Arabic versions retain, as if it was a proper name: the apostle having finished the inscription, salutation, and congratulation in the preceding verses, passes to an exhortation and entreaty to observe the commandment of love to one another, which is not a new commandment, but what was from the beginning:

not as though I wrote a new commandment, etc. (see Gill on "1 John 2:7") and (see Gill on "1 John 2:8").

Ver. 6. *And this is love, that we walk after his commandments*, etc.] By observing them as a rule of conversation, in so doing love is shown to God; and such may expect the fresh discoveries of the love of God to, them; (see Gill on "1 John 5:3");

this is the commandment, that as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it; that is, this is the will of God, that his people should walk in the truth of the Gospel, and abide by it, as they heard and received it at their first conversion, from the mouths of the apostles, or other faithful ministers of the word; a reason for which, is given in (2 John 1:7).

Ver. 7. *For many deceivers are entered into the world*, etc.] By whom are meant false teachers, who are described by their quality, "deceivers", deceitful workers, pretending to be ministers of Christ, to have a: value for truth, a love for souls, and a view to the glory of God, but lie in wait to deceive, and handle the word of God deceitfully; and by their quantity or number, "many", and so likely to do much mischief; and by the place where they were, they were "entered into the world"; or "gone out into the world", as the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read; (see Gill on "1 John 4:1"); and by their tenet,

who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; these were not the Jews who denied that Jesus was the Christ, though they would not allow that Christ was come in the flesh; but these were some who bore the Christian name, and professed to believe in Jesus Christ, but would not own that he was really incarnate, or assumed a true human nature, only in appearance; and denied that he took true and real flesh of the virgin, but

only seemed to do so; and these are confuted by the apostle, (<60101>1 John 1:1); and upon everyone of these he justly fixes the following character.

This is a deceiver and an antichrist; one of the deceivers that were come into the world, and one of the antichrists that were already in it; and who were the forerunners of the man of sin, and in whom the mystery of iniquity already began to work; for antichrist does not design anyone particular individual person, but a set of men, that are contrary to Christ, and opposers of him.

Ver. 8. *Look to yourselves*, etc.] This is an exhortation to the elect lady, and her children, to look about them, and take care of themselves, and beware of these deceivers, and their doctrines:

that we lose not those things which we have wrought; or as the Alexandrian copy, and many other copies, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, "that ye lose not those things which ye have wrought"; in embracing the Gospel, making a profession of it, walking in it, showing a zeal, and contending for it, expressing a love both by words and actions to the ministers of it, and suffering much reproach on the account of it; all which would be lost, and in vain, should they at last drop the Gospel, and embrace the errors of the wicked; (see <480404>Galatians 3:4). Moreover, such who do not go such lengths, as to let go the head, Christ, but retain him as the foundation, and the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, yet, among many precious things, may lay much rubbish on this foundation; and therefore should take heed what they build upon it, since, though they themselves may be saved, their works may be destroyed, and so they suffer loss; (see <460311>1 Corinthians 3:11-15); and if we read the words, "that we lose not — which we have wrought"; the sense is the same, it being only a figure which rhetoricians call communion, and it is frequently used when a common duty is exhorted to; (see <620228>1 John 2:28 <630105>2 John 1:5); unless it should be thought that this has a peculiar reference to the ministers of the Gospel, as it may: for though the Gospel preached by them can never be lost, being the everlasting Gospel, and the word which abides for ever; yet it may be received in vain, and persons may fall from it, and imbibe error, and so the labour of Christ's faithful ministers may be so far in vain, and lost; and likewise, many souls whom they have thought they have gained to Christ, and that they have been instruments of working upon them for good, and have hoped they would be their joy and crown of rejoicing another day; when such are carried away by deceivers, fall off from the

truth, ministers of the word lose what they thought they had wrought, which must give them great concern; and this is improved by the apostle into a reason and argument why the persons he wrote to should beware of seducers and their errors:

but that we receive a full reward; in heaven, and which itself is called the recompense of reward, and the reward of the inheritance; not that this is a reward of debt due to the works of men, which are not rewardable in themselves; for they are such as are due to God before they are performed; and when they are done, they are not profitable to him, nothing is given to him, or received by him; when all is done that can be done, men are unprofitable servants; but this is a reward of grace, God has of his own grace promised it to those who love and serve him; and because it will be given them of his grace, after their work is over, as wages are given to a servant when he has done his work, it goes by this name: and whereas it is said to be a "full" one, the meaning is not as if it was different to different persons, for there is but one recompense of reward, or reward of the inheritance common to all the saints; or, as if it might be incomplete in some; it only signifies a large and exceeding great reward; (see <01501>Genesis 15:1 <08012>Ruth 2:12); in which last place the same phrase is used as here; and where the Septuagint interpreters use the same words as here; and which is thus paraphrased by the Targumist,

> "the Lord give thee a good recompence in this world for thy good work, and let thy reward be amylç, "full", or "perfect", in the world to come."

And the Jews [f7] often speak of a full reward, and an equal one, to be received hereafter. Perhaps regard is here had particularly to the ministers of the Gospel, who have their reward in part here, for the workman is worthy of his reward, and they will have it in full hereafter. Moreover, the apostle might here be concerned, that he, and every faithful minister, might have their full number, they expected, that none may be missing, and which he may call a full reward: though the above copies and versions read here, as before, "ye", and "not we".

Ver. 9. *Whosoever transgresseth*, etc.] Not the law of God, of which everyone is a transgressors and that daily, in thought, word, or deed; but who passes over the rule and standard of doctrine, the word of God, and

will not adhere to that, nor walk according to it, but rejects and despises that rule:

and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ; which he received from his Father, and delivered to his apostles, and of which he is the sum and substance; the doctrine which is concerning his person as the Son of God, and as truly God, and the union of the two natures, divine and human, in his one person; and concerning his office, as the Mediator, surety, and messenger of the covenant, and as the prophet, priest, and King of his church; and concerning his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, session at God's right hand, intercession for his people, and second coming to judgment; concerning peace and pardon by his blood, atonement by his sacrifice, justification by his righteousness, and complete salvation by him: this is jyçmh Ælm lç wdwmlt, "the doctrine of the King Messiah", or the Messiah's Talmud [f8], to use the Jewish phrase, and which agrees with John's. Now, whoever has embraced and professed this doctrine, but errs concerning it, and rejects it, and abides not in it, as Satan abode not in the truth, appears to be of him:

hath not God; for his Father, but the devil, the father of lies; he has no true knowledge of God, for there is none but in Christ, whose doctrine such an one has denied; nor has he, nor can he, have communion with him, nor any interest in him.

He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ; as he hath received and professed it; neither can anything remove him from it, not the arguments of false teachers, nor the reproaches and persecutions of men, or the snares and allurements of the world:

he hath both the Father and the Son; he has an interest in them both, and has knowledge of each of them, and fellowship with them. The Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version leave out the phrase, "of Christ", in the preceding clause, and only read, "in the doctrine"; and the Syriac version, "in his doctrine"; the sense is the same.

Ver. 10. *If there come any unto you*, etc.] Under the character of a preacher;

and bring not this doctrine; or does not preach the doctrine of Christ, as before explained, but despises it, and preaches a contrary one:

receive him not into [your] house; neither into the house of God, suffer him not to preach there; nor into your own house, give him no entertainment there: false teachers always tried to creep into houses, where they served their own turn every way, both by feeding their bellies, and spreading their pernicious doctrines; and therefore such should: be avoided, both publicly and privately; their ministry should not be attended on in the church, or house of God; and they should not be entertained in private houses, and much less caressed:

neither bid him God speed; or give him the usual civil form of salutation, as a good day to you, all hail, all health and prosperity attend you, the Lord be with you, and the like. The word used by the Jews was רְצָיָה, which signifies “happiness”; so it is said [f9], what do they salute with? רְצָיָה, “God speed”; which was forbidden to say to one that was ploughing in the seventh year. The meaning is, that with such no familiar conversation should be had, lest any encouragement should be given them; or it should induce a suspicion in the minds of other saints, that they are in the same sentiments; or it should tend to make others think favourably of them, and be a snare and a stumblingblock to weak Christians.

Ver. 11. *For he that biddeth him God speed*, etc.] Wishes him well, and success in his ministry, or in a friendly and familiar way converses with him:

is partaker of his evil deeds; he has fellowship with him, instead of reproving or shunning him, as he ought; he is an abettor of him in his principles, and so far joins in the propagation of them, and helps to spread them, and gives too much reason to think he is one with him in them.

Ver. 12. *Having many things to write unto you*, etc.] Either on a civil, or on a religious account, concerning the state of the churches of Asia, and particularly Ephesus, and of private families and persons, and concerning the truths and doctrines of the Gospel; not that he had any new one, or any other than what they had heard from the beginning, to communicate to them, by word of mouth, for this he denies, (<GJOC>2 John 1:5,6); wherefore this makes nothing for the unwritten traditions of the Papists, and as if the Scriptures did not contain the whole of doctrine and of the will of God.

I would not [write] with paper and ink; any more than what was written:

but I trust to come unto you; where they were, but where that was is not known; very likely in some parts of Asia, and it may be not far from Ephesus, since any long journey would not have been fit for the apostle to have taken in this his old age:

and speak face to face; that is, freely and familiarly converse together about things omitted in this epistle:

that our joy may be full; in seeing one another's faces, and through hearing the things that may be talked of; and since the conversation would doubtless turn on divine and evangelic things, so fulness, or a large measure of spiritual joy, may be here intended. Instead of “our joy”, the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin and the Ethiopic versions, read, “your joy”.

Ver. 13. *The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen*.] Not the members of a sister church, as some think; but the children of one who was the sister of this lady, according to the flesh; and who, as she was either a very famous and excellent person, or rather one chosen of God likewise unto eternal life and salvation; and whose children also were walking in the truth, and here send their Christian salutation to their aunt; very likely those sister's children lived at Ephesus, where John resided.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 24.

Ft2 -- Adv. Haeres. 50:1. c. 13. & 50:3. c. 18.

Ft3 -- Adv. Haeres. 50:3. c. 25.

Ft4 -- Herodian. Hist. 50:1. c. 51, 52, 53, 54.

Ft5 -- Epist. ad Basil. 4. p. 769. vol. 1.

Ft6 -- Epictet. Enchirid. c. 62.

Ft7 -- Targum on Eccl. 1:3. & 2:11. & Midrash Kohelet, fol. 72. 4.

Ft8 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 98. fol. 85. 3.

Ft9 -- T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 35. 2. Vid. Taanith. fol. 64. 2.

3 JOHN

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 3 JOHN

This epistle was written by the Apostle John, who calls himself an “elder”, as in the preceding, and is inscribed to a friend of his, whom he mentions by name, and expresses a very great affection for, on account of his steady adherence to the truths of the Gospel, (3 John 1:1); he wishes him bodily health equal to that prosperity of soul he was indulged with, (3 John 1:2); congratulates him upon the testimony the brethren that came from him gave him of the truth being in him, and of his walking in it, and upon hearing that his children also trod in the same path, (3 John 1:3,4); commends him for his hospitality and charity, of which testimonies were given before the church; and encourages him to go on doing the same acts of beneficence, since it was to such persons that went forth for the sake of Christ, and preaching in his name, and had nothing of the Gentiles for so doing; wherefore they ought to be received, and entertained by those of ability, that they might be fellow helpers to the truth with them, (3 John 1:5-8). He complains of Diotrephes as a proud, haughty, and overbearing man in the church, where Gaius was a member, who would neither receive the letters the apostle sent, nor the brethren that came with them; nay, forbid them that would, and cast them out of the church for it, and prated against them with malicious words, whom he threatens to remember when he himself should come thither, (3 John 1:9,10); wherefore he exhorts Gaius not to follow such an ill example, but that which is good in any person; since he that does good appears to be of God, and he that does evil, it looks as if he had never known him, (3 John 1:11). And particularly he recommends Demetrius, who had a good report of all men, and of the truth itself, and had a testimony from the apostle, and those that were with him, which was known to be a true one, (3 John 1:12). But though he had many things to say, both of one, and of the other, he determines to write no more at present, hoping he should shortly see him, and personally converse together; and closes the epistle with his own good wish, and with mutual salutations of friends, (3 John 1:13,14).

Ver. 1. *The elder unto the well beloved Gaius*, etc] The elder is the writer of the epistle, the Apostle John, who so styles himself on account of his age, and office, as in the preceding epistle. The person to whom he writes is "the well beloved Gaius"; not that Gaius, who was the Apostle Paul's host, (<45 16 23>Romans 16:23), for though their characters agree, being both hospitable men, yet neither the place nor time in which they lived. The Apostle Paul's Gaius lived at Corinth, this is in some place near to Ephesus, for the apostle in his old age purposed to come and see him shortly; the other was contemporary with Paul, this with John; there were thirty or forty years difference between them: besides, the Corinthian Gaius was baptized by Paul, and was doubtless one of his spiritual children, or converts, whereas this Gaius was one of the Apostle John's spiritual children, (<64 01 04>3 John 1:4); nor does he seem to be the same with Gaius of Macedonia, (<44 19 29>Acts 19:29), or with Gaius of Derbe, (<44 20 04>Acts 20:4), who seem to be two different persons by their country, though both companions in travel of the Apostle Paul; for which reason, as well as the time of their living, neither of them can be this Gaius, who was a settled housekeeper, and resided at some certain place. His name is a Roman name, and the same with Caius, though he seems to have been a Jew, as he might, it being usual with the Jews in other countries to take Gentile names. His character is, that he was "well beloved"; that is, of God, as it appears he was from the grace bestowed on him, from the prosperous estate of his soul, and from the truth that was in him, and his walking in it; and of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the same reasons; and also of all the brethren and saints that knew him; he being a person not only truly gracious, and of faithfulness and integrity, but of great liberality and beneficence, which must gain him much love and esteem among them; and he was well beloved by the Apostle John; and so the Syriac version renders it, "to my beloved Gaius": though his love to him is expressed in the following clause,

whom I love in the truth; as being in it, or for the sake of it, or truly and sincerely; (see Gill on "<64 01 01>2 John 1:1").

Ver. 2. *Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper*, etc] Or succeed in all temporal affairs, in the business of life, in which he was; and as success of this sort depends upon the blessing of God, which maketh rich, it is to be wished and prayed for from him:

and be in health; that is, of body, which above all things above all outward mercies, is the most desirable; for without this, what are the richest

dainties, the largest possessions, or the best of friends? without this there can be no comfortable enjoyment of either of them; and therefore of this sort of mercies, it is in the first place, and above all others, to be wished for, and desired by one friend for another. The rule and measure of this wish is according to the prosperity of his soul,

even as thy soul prospereth: the soul is diseased with sin, and may be said to be in good health, when all its iniquities are forgiven; and may be said to prosper, when having a spiritual appetite for the Gospel, the sincere milk of the word, it feeds upon it, is nourished by it, and grows thereby; when it is in the lively exercise of faith, hope, and love; when spiritual knowledge is increased, or it grows in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus; when the inward man is renewed day by day with fresh strength; and when it enjoys communion with God, has the light of his countenance, and the joys of his salvation; and when it is fruitful in every good work.

Ver. 3. *For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came*, etc] From the place where Gaius lived, to that where John now resided; these brethren seem to be preachers of the word, who travelled from place to place to spread the Gospel:

and testified of the truth that is in thee; either of Christ, who was formed in him; or of the Gospel, which had a place in his heart; or of the truth of grace that was in him, as well as of that faithfulness, integrity, and sincerity he appeared to be possessed of, being an Israelite indeed, and without guile:

even as thou walkest in the truth: in Christ, and in the Gospel, and as became it, and with all uprightness; (see 2 John 1:4); and this occasioned great joy in the apostle; as it is matter of joy to every one that truly loves Christ, and his Gospel; or has the true grace of charity in him, which envies not the gifts and graces of others, but rejoiceth in the truth, wherever it is found; and especially to the faithful ministers of the word, when they hear of the truth of grace in any souls, and that such continue walking in the truth of the Gospel, and particularly those who have been wrought upon under their ministry, as follows.

Ver. 4. *I have no greater joy*, etc] Nothing that causes greater joy. The Vulgate Latin version reads “grace” or “thanks”; and then the sense is, that he had nothing to be more thankful for:

than to hear that my children walk in truth; meaning his spiritual children, those whose conversion he had been the instrument of; and among these it seems Gaius was one.

Ver. 5. *Beloved, thou doest faithfully*, etc] Or a faithful thing, and as became a faithful man, a believer in Christ; in all his beneficence and charity he acted the upright part; he did not do it in an hypocritical way, to be seen of men, and gain applause from them, but from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God:

whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; which may design either different persons; and by "brethren" may be meant the poor brethren of the church that. Gaius belonged to, and others that were well known to him; and by "the strangers", not unconverted persons, but such of the saints as came from foreign parts, and travelled about to spread the Gospel, and enlarge the interest of Christ: or else the same persons may be intended, for the words may be read, as they are in the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and in the Vulgate Latin version, "what thou doest to the brethren, and this to strangers"; that is, as the Arabic version renders it, "to strange brethren"; or, as the Syriac version, "to the brethren, [and] especially [them] that are strangers"; so that Gaius was a very hospitable man, one that entertained and lodged strangers, and used them very civilly and courteously, with great liberality, and with much integrity and sincerity.

Ver. 6. *Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church*, etc] At Ephesus, where John was; these brethren and strangers coming thither, and being greatly affected with Gaius's kindness and liberality to them, could not forbear speaking of it to his praise, in the presence of the members of the church, as well as acquainted the Apostle John with it; the Syriac version reads, "before the whole church"; they bore testimony of his liberality in a very public manner And this the apostle mentions to encourage Gaius to go on, and continue in his kindness to the same persons, since they retained such a grateful sense of past favours; and whereas they were now returning back, he desires that he would give them some further assistance:

whom if thou bring forward on their journey; the word here used signifies, to send on before, as in (<44503>Acts 15:3 <44208>20:38 <44205>21:5 <45524>Romans 15:24) (<46106>1 Corinthians 16:6,11 <47116>2 Corinthians 1:16 <56303>Titus 3:13), and is used by the Septuagint in the same sense as here, and in the above places,

in (Genesis 18:16); where it is said, that “Abraham went with them (the angels) to bring them on in the way”, µjlçl, “to send them on”, or “send them away”; dismiss them, take his leave of them in a friendly and honourable way. The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan render it, ˆwhyawwlal, “to accompany them”; and so this Greek word, which seems to answer to the Hebrew phrase, signifies an honourable accompanying, leading forth, and taking leave of friends; and so the apostle encourages Gaius to behave in like manner to the brethren and strangers; meaning, either by accompanying them in person, or by sending his servants along with them, both to direct them the way, and to secure them from danger, and chiefly by furnishing them with everything necessary for them; (see Titus 3:13). And this he would have him do,

after a godly sort; or “worthy of God”; in imitation of God, who is merciful, kind, and beneficent; or as it became him whom God had called by his grace to his kingdom and glory; or as it was fit and proper such servants of God, as those brethren were, should be used; and this would be doing well:

thou shalt do well; what is grateful and well pleasing to God, and beautiful and lovely in the eyes of his people.

Ver. 7. *Because that for his name's sake they went forth*, etc] From Judea; either of their own accord to preach the Gospel, or being drove out by the unbelieving Jews, for professing the name of Christ; and be it which it will, there was good reason why they should be regarded, and especially since they did as follows,

taking nothing of the Gentiles; even of those who were converted, though their preaching the Gospel, to whom they ministered, for of others, the unconverted Gentiles, they could not expect to receive; and this they did, as the apostles before them, because they would not be chargeable to them, and lest it should be thought they sought their own worldly interest, and not the good of souls and glory of Christ, and so a stumblingblock be laid in the way of the Gospel, to hinder the progress of it. The Ethiopic version reads this in the singular number, “and I went forth for his name's sake, taking nothing of the Gentiles”.

Ver. 8. *We therefore ought to receive such*, etc] We who are Jews, that have believed in Christ, for such an one Gaius, it seems, as well, as the apostle, were, ought to receive such preachers of the word into our houses,

and entertain them cheerfully, while they continue, and supply them with all necessaries when they depart:

that we might be fellow helpers to the truth; that is, to the Gospel, and the propagation of it in the world: some are helpers to it, in preaching of it, by making use of the ministerial gifts bestowed upon them; and others are fellow helpers with them, to the same good work, by their purses, communicating freely to the support of those, who labor in the word and doctrine; and these latter have the honor to be co-workers, or fellow laborers with the former, as the word here used signifies. The Alexandrian copy reads, “fellow helpers to the church”, that so the whole burden of taking care of these ministers might not lie upon them. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “fellow helpers of the truth”.

Ver. 9. *I wrote unto the church*, etc] Where Gaius was a member: those who take Gaius to be the same with Paul's host, and whom he baptized at Corinth, think the church at Corinth is here meant; but it seems rather to be meant of some church in Asia nearer Ephesus; nor is it likely that John's first epistle should be here intended, which makes no mention of relieving the brethren, the ministers of the Gospel, that came from Judea: and that this epistle should not be preserved, need not seem strange; for it cannot be thought that everything that was written by him to particular persons, or churches, should be continued. The Alexandrian copy and one of Stephens's read, “I wrote something to the church”; upon this head, concerning receiving and supporting ministers of the Gospel, and so prevents an objection that Gaius might make, why did he not write to the church about it? The Vulgate Latin version reads, “I should”, or “would have wrote”: and the Syriac version, “I desired”, or “wished to have wrote”; suggesting, that though he had not wrote, yet it was much upon his mind, he had a great desire to it:

but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not; which hindered him from writing, or was the reason why he wrote now to Gaius since Diotrephes gave no heed to what he had wrote, suppressed his letter, and would not suffer it to be read to the brethren. This Diotrephes, by his name, which signifies one “nourished”, or “brought up by Jupiter”, was a Gentile; there was one of this name, who was one of the kings of Athens [f1]; and what may confirm this is, his slighting and rejecting the brethren that came from Judea: it is very likely he was more than a private member in the church, and that he was an

officer, and it may be the pastor; and though there is a preeminence, which of right belongs to such an officer, as to preside over the church, to govern, guide, and direct, according to the laws of Christ, he being set over the church, as a ruler, governor, and guide; yet this may be carried too far, as it was by this man, who coveted more than was his due, and lorded it over God's heritage, ruled the flock with force and cruelty, and usurped a tyrannical power over them; whereas every thing in a church ought to be done, by pastor and people, in love, meekness, and with mutual consent. And it may be also, that he sought to have the preeminence over the rest of the elders of the church, for in those large churches there were oftentimes more elders and pastors than one; (see <44017>Acts 20:17,28 <50101>Philippians 1:1). This ambitious spirit prevailed and obtained among the false teachers, who set up themselves at the head of parties, and above the apostles of Christ, and paved the way for antichrist, who assumed the title of universal bishop, which has introduced all the errors and impieties of the Romish church. Now this man such an ambitious, lordly, and governing spirit, received not the Apostle John, and those that were with him; meaning not their persons, for as yet he and they were not in person where he was; but his letter, his orders, and instructions; these he paid no regard to, concealed them from the church, and would not admit them to be read: or else the apostle's sense is, that he received not the brethren that came from him, and were recommended by him, and whom he affectionately loved, and who were near and dear to him as himself; and therefore not receiving them is interpreted by him as not receiving himself.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore, if I come*, etc] Where both Gaius and Diotrephes lived, as he trusted he should shortly, (<64014>3 John 1:14);

I will remember his deeds which he doth; meaning, not only that he would tell him of them to his face, but make mention of them, and expose them to the whole church, and reprove him for them: and which are as follow,

prating against us with malicious words; it is a common thing for ministers of the Gospel to be prated against, not only by the men of the world, but by professors of religion, and by such who call themselves preachers also; nor need it be wondered at, since John, an apostle of Christ, the beloved disciple, who was so harmless and inoffensive in his conversation, so kind and loving in his disposition and temper, so meek and humble in his deportment, and now in such an advanced age, was prated against by a Diotrephes: and what is said against Christ's ministers is no other than

prating; silly, idle, trifling, and empty stuff, as the word used signifies; for want of greater things, they take up any little matter, and improve it against them; and this is often done with a malicious intent, to hurt their characters, spoil their usefulness, and render their ministry unprofitable.

And not content herewith; with prating against the Apostle John, and the ministers with him, in this wicked way:

neither doth he himself receive the brethren; the meaning is not, that he did not receive them into the church, for they were there, since afterwards mention is made of his casting them out from thence; but he did not receive them into his house, and entertain them as he ought to have done; for a minister of the Gospel, and a pastor of a church, ought to be hospitable, and given to hospitality, and entertain strangers, especially those who are brethren in Christ, and fellow ministers of the word: and the rather these were to be received, since they traveled about to spread the Gospel among the Gentiles, and took nothing of them. And this was not all, he not only did not receive them himself, and reject them, but was not willing that others should receive them:

and forbiddeth them that would; on such who had a heart, as well as ability, to receive and entertain these poor brethren, he laid his injunctions, and gave them strict orders, in his lordly and tyrannical way, not to show any respect unto them;

and casteth [them] out of the church; that is, he excommunicated them, either those that entertained them, or rather the brethren themselves; which was an abuse of the ordinance of excommunication, as that ordinance is abused, when any single person, a pastor, or any other, as here, assumes the power of doing it himself, and does it without the church; whereas it is a punishment or censure, to be inflicted by many, or to be done by the joint suffrage of the church; and when it is done in a wrong cause, for some small trifling matter, or none at all, and not in a case of heresy or immorality, obstinately persisted in; and when it is done from wrong principles, and with wrong ends, as to gratify the pride and passion of some; and not for the good of the person cast out, or to prevent others from falling into the same snare, or for the honour of religion, and the glory of God. The phrase seems to be taken from the Jews, who expressed their excommunication, or putting out of the synagogue, by a casting out; (see [illegible]John 9:34,35).

Ver. 11. *Beloved, follow not that which is evil*, etc] Follow not evil in general, it being hateful to God, contrary to his nature and will, and bad in itself, as well as pernicious in its consequences; and particularly follow not, or do not imitate the particular evil or evils in Diotrephes; as his pride, ambition, love of preeminence, and tyrannical government in the church, and especially his hard heartedness, cruelty, and inhospitality to the poor saints; and so the Arabic version reads, "do not imitate him in evil"; the examples of persons in office and authority have great influence, especially in cases of charity, when men can be excused thereby, and save their money, or be freed from an expense:

but that which is good; follow and imitate that, be a follower of God, imitate him in acts of kindness and beneficence, be merciful as he is; copy the deeds of Jesus Christ, who went about doing good, and declared it to be more blessed to give than to receive; and tread in the steps of those good men, who have shown love to the name of Christ, by ministering to his saints; for though the apostle may mean everything that is good, which is to be followed and imitated in any, yet he chiefly designs acts of kindness and beneficence to poor saints and ministers: to which he encourages by the following,

he that doeth good is of God; he is a child of God, he appears to be so, in that he is like to his heavenly Father, who is kind and merciful; he is born of God, he is passed from death to life, which his love to the brethren shows; he has the grace of God, and strength from Christ, and the assistance of the Spirit, without either of which he could not do that which is good:

but he that doeth evil hath not seen God; has had no spiritual saving sight of God in Christ; for if he had, he would abhor that which is evil, and, with Job, abhor himself for it, and reckon himself, with Isaiah, as undone, (<18426>Job 42:6 <23605>Isaiah 6:5), for such effects has the sight of God on the souls of men; such an one knows not God, nor what it is to have communion with him: for those who live in sin, in whom it is a governing principle, cannot have fellowship with God; nor has such an one ever felt the love of God in his soul, or been made a partaker of his grace, which would teach and constrain him to act otherwise. Compare this text with (<62310>1 John 3:10), which shows the Apostle John to be the writer of this epistle. The Ethiopic version reads, "shall not see God"; that is, hereafter, in the world to come.

Ver. 12. *Demetrius hath good report of all [men]*, This man was of a quite different cast from Diotrephes, and therefore the apostle makes mention of him to Gaius, to be followed by him, and not the other; he was either the same with Demas, which is a contraction of this name, or the person that John sent from Ephesus with this letter: we read of an Ephesian of this name, (<44 19 24>Acts 19:24); though not the same person; or else one that also was a member of the same church with Gaius and Diotrephes; and he being kind and beneficent, obtained a good report of the generality of men, not only of the brethren, but of those that were without; for a liberal man is universally respected. The Syriac version adds, “and of the church itself”; as distinct from all men, or the generality of the men of the world:

and of the truth itself; that is, whoever speaks truth must give him a good character, for this cannot be understood with any propriety of the Gospel, nor of Jesus Christ:

yea, and we also bear record; or a testimony to the character of Demetrius; that is, I, John, the apostle, and the saints at Ephesus:

and ye know that our record is true; faithful, and to be depended upon. The Alexandrian copy, and several others, read, “thou knowest”, as does also the Vulgate Latin version, which seems most agreeable, since this epistle is directed to a single person; compare this with (<43 19 35>John 19:35); and it will give a further proof of this epistle being the Apostle John's.

Ver. 13. *I have many things to write*, etc] With regard to churches, and particular persons, and concerning hospitality to the poor brethren:

but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee; suggesting he should take another method of communicating his mind to him, which he next mentions.

Ver. 14. *But I trust I shall shortly see thee*, etc] Either at Ephesus, where John was, or rather at the place where Gaius lived, (see <61 01 10>3 John 1:10);

and we shall speak face to face; freely and familiarly converse together about these things, which were not thought proper to be committed to writing:

peace [be] to thee; which was the usual form of salutation with the Jews, and John was one; (see Gill on “<43 20 19>John 20:19”);

[our] friends salute thee; or send their Christian salutation to thee, wishing all health and prosperity in soul and body; meaning the members of the church at Ephesus: the Arabic version reads, “thy friends”; such at Ephesus as had a particular knowledge of him, and affection for him. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “the friends”: the members in general; and the Alexandrian copy reads, “the brethren”; and the Syriac version, our brethren: and then the epistle is closed thus,

greet the friends by name; meaning those that were where Gaius lived, to whom the apostle sends his salutation, and desires it might be delivered to each of them, as if they had been mentioned by name. This and the epistle of James are the only epistles which are concluded without the word “Amen”.

FOOTNOTE

Ft1 -- Vid. Fabricii Bibliograph. Antiqu. p. 211.

JUDE

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JUDE

That this epistle was written by Jude, one of the twelve apostles of Christ, and not by Jude the fifteenth bishop of Jerusalem, who lived in the time of Trojan, a little before Bar Cocab, the false Messiah, as Grotius thought, is evident from his being called, in the epistle itself, the brother of James, and which is confirmed by all copies; and its agreement with the second epistle of Peter shows it to have been written about the same time, and upon the same occasion. As to Jude's not calling himself an apostle, but a servant of Jesus Christ, it may be observed, that the latter is much the same with the former, and the Apostle Paul sometimes uses them both, as in (<450101>Romans 1:1) (<560101>Titus 1:1), and sometimes neither, as (<520101>1 Thessalonians 1:1 <530101>2 Thessalonians 1:1 <570101>Philemon 1:1), and sometimes only servant, as Jude does here, (<500101>Philippians 1:1), though in some copies of the title of this epistle he is called “Jude the Apostle”; and as to Jude's making mention of the apostles as if he was later than they, and not of their number, (<600117>Jude 1:17), it may be returned for answer to it, that the Apostle Peter expresses himself much in the same manner, (<610302>2 Peter 3:2), where some copies, instead of “us the apostles”, read “your apostles”, (see Gill on “<610302>2 Peter 3:2”); moreover, Jude seems to cite a passage out of Peter, as Peter in the same chapter cites the Apostle Paul, which only shows agreement in their doctrine and writing; and at most it only follows from hence, that Jude wrote after some of the apostles, as Paul and Peter, who had foretold there would be mockers in the last time; and that Jude had lived to be a witness of the truth of what they had said; nor does he exclude himself from their number. And that this epistle is a genuine one appears from the majesty of its style, the truth of doctrine contained in it, and its agreement with the second epistle of Peter, and from the early reception of it in the churches. Eusebius [f1] says, it was reckoned among the seven catholic epistles, and was published in most churches; though he observes, that many of the ancients make no mention of it: but certain it is, that several of the ancient writers before him do make mention of it, and cite it as genuine, as Clemens Alexandrinus [f2], Tertullian [f3], and Origen [f4]: and as for the prophecy of Enoch, cited in this epistle, it is not taken out of

an apocryphal book, that bears that name, for the apostle makes no mention of any writing of his, but of a prophecy; and had he cited it out of that book, as it was truth, it can no more prejudice the authority of this epistle, than the citations made by the Apostle Paul out of the Heathen poets can affect his epistles: and whereas there is an account also given in this epistle of a dispute about the body of Moses, nowhere else to be met with, supposing it to be understood of his real body, of which (see Gill on "Jude 1:9"); this can be no more an objection to the genuineness of this epistle, than the mention of Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses, by the Apostle Paul, (2 Timothy 3:8), is an objection to an epistle of his, whose names are not to be met with in other parts of Scripture; but were what were known by tradition, as might be the case here. The epistle is called "catholic", or "general", because it is not written to any particular person or church, but to the saints in general, and it may be to the same persons that Peter wrote his; (see 1 Peter 1:1 2 Peter 1:1), and who seem to be chiefly the believing Jews; (see Jude 1:5,17), though the Syriac version of (Jude 1:1) reads, "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ" — amm[l, "to the nations", or "Gentiles, called", etc. the design of the epistle to both is to exhort them to continue in the faith, and contend for it; and to describe false teachers, to point out their principles, practices, and dreadful end, that so they might shun and avoid them.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO JUDE 1

The writer of this epistle describes himself by his name, Jude; by his spiritual condition, “a servant of Christ”; and by his natural relation, “a brother of James”; and inscribes it to persons chosen of God, secured in Christ, and called by grace, (⁶⁵Jude 1:1), whom he salutes, and wishes a multiplication of mercy, peace, and love unto, (⁶⁵Jude 1:2), and then points at the subject matter of his epistle, “the common salvation”; and his view in writing it, which was to exhort them to contend earnestly for, the Gospel; which exhortation was necessary, since some reprobate and wicked men, abusers of the grace of God, and blasphemers of the person of Christ, had got in among them, (⁶⁵Jude 1:3,4), and in order to deter them from following their pernicious ways, he lays before them various instances of divine vengeance on sinners; as the Israelites, whom God delivered out of Egypt, and yet destroyed them for their unbelief; the angels, who not content with their first estate, forsook their habitation, and are reserved in chains of darkness to the day of judgment; and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha, and the adjacent cities, who for their uncleanness suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, as an example to others, (⁶⁵Jude 1:5-7), in like manner, the apostle observes, these false teachers, who were filthy dreamers, defiled themselves with such sins, and also despised and spoke evil of civil magistrates, (⁶⁵Jude 1:8), which sin of theirs is aggravated by Michael the archangel not railing at the devil, in a contention with him about the body of Moses, but gently reproving him; by speaking evil of what they were ignorant of, and by their brutish sensuality, in corrupting: themselves in things they had natural knowledge of, (⁶⁵Jude 1:9,10), and both their sin and punishment are exemplified in the cases of Cain, Balaam, and Korah; being guilty of hatred of the brethren, of covetousness, and of contradiction, (⁶⁵Jude 1:11), and by various metaphors are set forth their intemperance, hypocrisy, instability, unfruitfulness, pride, wrath, and lust, for whom the blackest darkness is reserved for ever, (⁶⁵Jude 1:12,13), the certainty of which is proved from an ancient prophecy of Enoch, concerning the coming of Christ to judgment, when vengeance will be taken on those men for their ungodly deeds and hard speeches, (⁶⁵Jude

1:14,15), who are further described by their murmurs and complaints; by their pride, respect of persons, and covetousness; by their scoffs, and walking after their own lusts, as had been foretold by the apostles of Christ; by separating themselves from the saints, and by their sensuality, and not having the Spirit of God, (<60117>Jude 1:17-19), and the apostle having thus at large described these false teachers, by reason of whom the saints were in danger, directs them to the use of means by which they might be secured from them; such as building themselves up in their most holy faith, praying in the holy Ghost, keeping themselves in the love of God, and looking for the mercy of Christ unto eternal life, (<60120>Jude 1:20,21), and he teaches them not only to be concerned for themselves, but for others also, who were in danger from these deceivers; to deal with some in a tender and compassionate way, with others more roughly, expressing an hatred to a filthy conversation, (<60122>Jude 1:22,23), and then the epistle is concluded with a doxology, or an ascription of glory to the only wise God our Saviour, who is able to keep his people from falling into such pernicious principles and practices, and to present them faultless before his glorious presence with exceeding joy, (<60124>Jude 1:24,25).

Ver. 1. *Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ*, etc.] The author of this epistle is the same who is elsewhere called Judas, (<42216>Luke 6:16 <43142>John 14:22), who was one of the twelve apostles of Christ, whose name was also Lebbaeus, and whose surname was Thaddaeus, (<40103>Matthew 10:3), the name is the same with Judah, (<012935>Genesis 29:35 <014908>49:8), which comes from a word that signifies "to praise" or "confess"; and in the Rabbinical dialect is called adwy, "Juda" [f5], as here. He styles himself "the servant of Jesus Christ"; (see Gill on "<450101>Romans 1:1"); though this is a title common to all believers, yet here, and in some other places, it is peculiar to an apostle, or minister of the Gospel; and therefore is used not merely in humility, and to acknowledge obedience to Christ, but as a title of dignity and honour: and the apostle goes on to describe himself by his natural relation,

and brother of James; not the son of Zebedee, but of Alphaeus, (<40102>Matthew 10:2,3); and this he mentions partly to distinguish himself from others of that name, as Judas Iscariot, and Judas called Barsabas; and partly for the sake of honour and credit, James being a very great man, a man of great note and esteem, and who seemed to be a pillar in the church, and was called the brother of our Lord, (<480209>Galatians 2:9 <480119>1:19); an account of the persons to whom this epistle is inscribed next follows,

to them that are sanctified by God the Father; which is to be understood not of internal sanctification, which is usually ascribed to the Spirit of God, but of the act of eternal election, which is peculiar to God the Father; in which sense Christ is said to be sanctified by the Father, and men ordained and appointed to an office, and vessels are set apart the owner's use; (<43>10:36) (<24>1:5 <55>2 Timothy 2:21); the language is taken from the ceremonial law, by which persons and things were sanctified, or set apart for sacred use and service; (see <02>13:2,12 <03>27:14,16); and so the elect of God are by God the Father sanctified and set apart in the act of election, which is expressed by this word; partly because of its separating nature, men being by it separated from the rest of the world, to the use and service of God, and for his glory, so that they are a distinct and peculiar people; and partly because such are chosen through sanctification of the Spirit, and unto holiness both in this world and that which is to come; so that the doctrine of election is no licentious doctrine; for though holiness is not the cause of it, yet is a means fixed in it, and is certain by it, and an evidence of it; the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read, “to them that are loved by God the Father”: election is the fruit and effect of love; those that are sanctified or set apart by the Father in election, are loved by him. The Ethiopic version renders it quite otherwise, “to them that love God the Father”; which flows from the Father's love to them:

and preserved in Jesus Christ; those who are sanctified, or set apart by God the Father in election, are in Christ, for they are chosen in him; they have a place in his heart, and they are put into his hands, and are in him, and united to him as members to an head, and were represented by him in the covenant of grace; and being in him, they are preserved by him, and that before they are called, as well as after; wherefore this character is put before that of being called, though the Syriac version puts that in the first place: there is a secret preservation of them in Christ before calling, from condemnation and the second death; they were not preserved from falling in Adam, with the rest of mankind, nor from the corruption of human nature, nor from actual sins and transgressions; yet, notwithstanding these, were so preserved that the law could not execute the sentence of condemnation on them, nor sin damn them, nor Satan, who led them captive, hale them to prison; and after calling, they are preserved not from indwelling sin, nor from the temptations of Satan, nor from doubts and fears and unbelief, nor from slips and falls into sin; but from the tyranny

and dominion of sin, from being devoured by Satan, and from a total and final falling away; they are preserved in the love of God, and of Christ; in the covenant of grace; in a state of justification and adoption; and in the paths of truth, faith, and holiness; and are preserved safe to the heavenly kingdom and glory: their other character follows,

[and] called; not merely externally by the ministry of the word, but internally by the Spirit and grace of God; so that this is to be understood of a special and effectual call, whereby souls are called out of darkness into light, and from bondage to liberty; and from a dependence on themselves to the grace and righteousness of Christ; and from society with the men of the world to fellowship with him; and to eternal glory, so as to have faith and hope concerning it.

Ver. 2. *Mercy unto you, and peace and love be multiplied*.] In this salutation the apostle wishes for a multiplication of “mercy”, from God the Father, by whom these persons were sanctified: mercy is a perfection in God; and shows itself in a special manner towards the elect, in the covenant of grace, in the provision of Christ as a Saviour, in the mission of him into this world, in redemption by him, in the forgiveness of sin, in regeneration, and in their whole salvation; and the multiplication of it intends an enlarged view and fresh application of it, which they sometimes stand in need of, as under desertions, when they want the sense and manifestation of it to them; and under temptations and afflictions, when they need sympathy and compassion; and when they fall into sin they stand in need of the fresh discoveries and application of pardoning mercy to them. Moreover, herein is wished for a multiplication of “peace” from Christ, in whom these chosen ones were preserved; and may design a fresh and enlarged view of peace being made for them by his blood, and an increase of conscience peace in their own hearts, as the effect of it; and may include peace, and an abundance of it, among themselves, as well as all prosperity, both external, internal, and eternal: likewise in the salutation, “love”, and a multiplication of it is wished for from the Spirit of God, by whom they were called; and may be understood of the love with which God loved them; and which may be said to be multiplied, when it is gradually shed abroad in their hearts by the Spirit, and they are by degrees led into it more and more, and the acts of it are drawn out and set before them one after another, and fresh manifestations of it are made unto them; as in afflictive providences, after the hidings of God's face, and under

temptations: and it may design the love with which they love God, which may be increased and made to abound more and more.

Ver. 3. *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you*, etc.] The apostle calls the persons he writes unto "beloved"; as they were of God, and by him and other saints; and he signifies his diligence in writing to them: and the subject of his writing was,

of the common salvation; which designs either the Gospel, sometimes called salvation, in opposition to the law, which is a ministration of condemnation; and because it is a declaration of salvation, and a means of it; and may be said to be "common", because preached to all, Jews and Gentiles: or Jesus Christ the Saviour himself, who is also sometimes called "salvation", because he was called and appointed to it, and undertook it, and is become the author of it; and may be said to be a "common" Saviour, not of all men, but of all his people; of his whole body, the church, and every member of it, and of all sorts of men, in all nations: or else that spiritual and eternal salvation wrought out by him, which is common, not to all men, for all are not saved with it, but to all the elect of God, and true believers in Christ; the love of God is common to them all alike; the choice of them to eternal salvation is the same; the covenant of grace, the blessings and promises of it, are equally shared by them; and they are bought with the same price of Christ's blood, and are justified by the same righteousness, and are regenerated, sanctified, and called by the same grace, and shall possess the same glory: there is but one way of salvation, and that is not confined to any nation, family, community, or sect among men. The Alexandrian copy and two of Beza's, and the Syriac version, read, "our common salvation"; and two other of Beza's copies and the Vulgate Latin version read, "your common salvation"; the sense is the same: it was

needful for me to write unto you, and exhort [you], that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints; by the "faith" is meant the doctrine of faith, in which sense it is used whenever faith is said to be preached, obeyed, departed, or erred from, or denied, or made shipwreck of, or when exhortations are made to stand fast, and continue in it, or to strive and contend for it, as here; and which is sometimes called the word of faith, the faith of the Gospel, the mystery of faith, or most holy faith, the common faith, and, as here, faith only; and designs the whole scheme of evangelical truths to be believed; such as the

doctrine of the Trinity, the deity and sonship of Christ, the divinity and personality of the Spirit; what regards the state and condition of man by nature, as the doctrines of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, the corruption of nature, and the impotence of men to that which is good; what concerns the acts of grace in the Father, Son, and Spirit, towards, and upon the sons of men; as the doctrines of everlasting love, eternal election, the covenant of grace, particular redemption, justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, pardon and reconciliation by his blood, regeneration and sanctification by the grace of the Spirit, final perseverance, the resurrection of the dead, and the future glory of the saints with Christ. This is said to be “delivered to the saints”: it was delivered by God the Father to Christ as Mediator, and by him to his apostles, who may more especially be meant by “the saints”, or holy men; who were chosen to be holy, and to whom Christ was made sanctification, and who were sanctified by the Spirit of God; and this faith, being a most holy faith, is fit for holy men, and only proper to be delivered to them, and preached by them; and by them it was delivered to the churches, both by word and writing; and this delivery of it supposes that it is not an invention of men, that it is of God, and a gift of his, and given in trust in order to be kept, held forth, and held fast; and it was but “once” delivered, in opposition to the sundry times and divers manners in which the mind of God was formerly made known; and designs the uniformity, perfection, and continuance of the doctrine of faith; there is no alteration to be made in it, or addition to it; no new revelations are to be expected, it has been delivered all at once: and therefore should be “earnestly contended for”; for could it be lost, another could not be had; and the whole of it is to be contended for; not only the fundamentals, but the lesser matters of faith; and not things essential only, but also what are circumstantial to faith and religion; every truth, ordinance, and duty, and particularly the purity of faith, and its consistency: and this contention includes a care and solicitude for it, to have it, own it, and hold it fast, and adorn it; and for the preservation of it, and for the spread of it, and that it might be transmitted to posterity: and it denotes a conflict, a combat, or a fighting for it, a striving even to an agony: the persons to be contended with on account of it, are such who deny, or depreciate any of the Persons in the Godhead, the assertors of the purity and power of human nature, and the deniers of sovereign, efficacious, and persevering grace: the persons who are to contend with them are all the saints in general, to whom it is delivered; which they may do by bearing an experimental testimony to it, by praying

for the continuance and success of it, by standing fast in one spirit in it, and by dying for it; and particularly the ministers of the Gospel, by preaching it boldly, openly, fully, and faithfully, by disputing for it, and writing in the defence of it, and by laying down their lives, when called for: the manner in which this is to be done, is “earnestly”, heartily, in good earnest, and without deceit, zealously, and constantly.

Ver. 4. *For there are certain men crept in unawares*, etc.] These words contain a reason why the doctrine of faith should be contended for, because of false teachers, who are described as being then upon the spot; the Apostles Peter and Paul had foretold that they would come, but Jude here speaks of them as in being; wherefore present rigour and vigilance were necessary to be used: their names are not mentioned, nor their number, only that there were “certain”, or “some men”; which is done to stir up the saints to self-examination, whether they were in the faith; to diligence, in finding out these men; to vigour, in opposing them; and to care, to nip error and heresy in the bud: and they are said to have “crept in unawares”: either into private houses, as was the custom of those men; or into the churches, and become members of them being the tares the enemy sows among the wheat; or into the ministry, assuming that office to themselves, without being called and sent of God; and so into the public assemblies of the saints, spreading their poisonous doctrines among them; and also into their affections, until discovered; and so the Ethiopic version reads here, “because ungodly men have entered into your hearts”; and all this was at an unawares, privily, secretly, without any thought about them, or suspicion of them:

who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; or judgment; meaning either judicial blindness of heart, they were given up to, in embracing and spreading errors and heresies; so that these are not casual things, but fall under the ordination and decree of God, which does not make God the author of them, nor excuse the men that hold them; and they are ordained and ordered for many valuable ends; on the part of God, to show his power and wisdom; and on the part of truth, that it might be tried and appear the brighter, and to manifest his people and their graces: or else punishment is designed, even everlasting condemnation, to which some are preordained of God; for this act of preordination respects persons, and not mere actions and events; and is not a naked prescience, but a real decree, and which is sure, certain, and irrevocable; is God's act, and springs from his sovereignty, is agreeably to his justice and holiness; nor is it contrary to

his goodness, and is for his glory: the date of this act is “of old”; or as the Syriac version renders it, ayrwç Nm, “from the beginning”; that is, from eternity; (see 2 Thessalonians 2:13 Proverbs 8:22); for reprobation is of the same date with election; if the one is from eternity, the other must be so too, since there cannot be one without the other: if some were chosen before the foundation of the world, others must be left or passed by as early; and if some were appointed unto salvation from the beginning, others must be foreordained to condemnation from the beginning also; for these words cannot be understood of any prophecy of old, in which it was forewritten, or prophesied of these men, that they should be condemned for their ungodliness; not in (Matthew 24:1-51), in which no such persons are described as here, nor any mention made of their punishment or condemnation; nor in (2 Peter 2:1-3); for then the apostle would never have said that they were “of old”, a long while ago, before written, or prophesied of, since according to the common calculation, that epistle of Peter's, and this of Jude's, were written in the same year; nor in the prophecy of Enoch, (Jude 1:14); for Enoch's prophecy was not written, as we know of; and therefore these men could not be said to be before written in it; besides, that prophecy is spoken of as something distinct from these persons being before written, to condemnation; and after all, was a prophecy referred to, the sense would be the same, since such a prophecy concerning them must be founded upon an antecedent ordination and appointment of God; the word here used does not intend their being forewritten in any book of the Scriptures, but in the book of God's eternal purposes and decrees; and the justice of such a preordination appears by the following characters of them,

ungodly men: all men are by nature ungodly, some are notoriously so, and false teachers are generally such; here it signifies such who are destitute of the fear of God, and of all internal devotion, and powerful godliness; and who did not worship God externally, according to his institutions and appointments, and much less sincerely, and in a spiritual manner; and who even separated themselves from the true worshippers of God, and gave themselves up to sensuality, and therefore their condemnation was just:

turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness; not the love and favour of God, as in his own heart, or as shed abroad in the hearts of others; for that can never, be turned to such a purpose, it always working in a contrary way; nor the principle of grace wrought in the soul, which being of a spiritual nature, lusteth against the flesh, and cannot be turned into it; more

likely the goodness of God in his providential dispensations, which is despised by some, and abused by others; but rather the doctrine of grace, which though lasciviousness is not in its nature, nor has it any natural tendency to it, yet wicked men turn or transfer it from its original nature, design, and use, to a foreign one: and they may be said to turn it into lasciviousness, either by asserting it to be a licentious doctrine, when it is not; or by treating it in a wanton and ludicrous manner, scoffing at it, and lampooning it; or by making the doctrine of grace universal, extending it equally alike to all mankind, and thereby harden and encourage men in sin.

And denying the only Lord God; God the Father, who is the only sovereign Lord, both in providence and grace; and the only God, not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, but in opposition to nominal and fictitious deities, or Heathen gods; and he was denied by these men, if not in words, yet in works: the word “God” is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin version.

And our Lord Jesus Christ; as his deity, or sonship, or humanity, or that he was the Messiah, or the alone Saviour, or his sacrifice, satisfaction, and righteousness; with respect to either of which he may be said to be denied doctrinally, as he is also practically, when men do not walk worthy of their profession of him; and both might be true of these men, and therefore their condemnation was righteous. The copulative “and” is omitted in the Syriac version, which seems to make this clause explanative of the former.

Ver. 5. *I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once know this*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, “knew all things”; but rather it is to be restrained by the following instance of, God's vengeance on unbelievers; which with others is produced, to vindicate the divine conduct in the condemnation of the above persons, and to show that that is certain, and may be expected, since God has always dealt thus with such persons; and this they knew by reading of the Scriptures; at least they had known it once, though it might now be forgotten by them; and they had known it once for all; they had been perfectly acquainted with it; which is said, lest the apostle should be thought to write to persons ignorant, and rude in knowledge, and to show that he wrote nothing new and unheard of, and so should have the more weight and influence upon them; and he thought fit to remind them of it, though they had known it: it is one part of the work of the ministers of the word to put people in mind of what they have known; which is necessary,

because of the inattentiveness of hearers, their forgetfulness, and loss of knowledge, and the weakness of some capacities to take in, and retain things; and if the judgment is not more informed hereby, yet the affections may be afresh raised, and grace be drawn out into exercise, and the mind be established and confirmed. The instance follows,

how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt; that is, the people of Israel, who were the chosen people of God, a special people, above all others, and had peculiar privileges; these the Lord brought out of the land of Egypt, with an high hand, and a mighty arm, and saved them out of their bondage, and delivered out of their oppressions and afflictions: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, instead of "the Lord", read "Jesus": and yet, though they were a special people, and notwithstanding this wonderful deliverance, and great salvation, he

afterward destroyed them that believed not; their carcasses fell in the wilderness by one judgment or another upon them; so that of all that came out of Egypt, but two entered into the land of Canaan: this shows the evil nature of unbelief; and that God will not suffer sin to go unobserved in any; no outward privileges and profession will screen any from divine vengeance; God sometimes makes severe examples of mere nominal professors; nor must false teachers, deniers of Christ, and perverters of his Gospel, expect to go free: moreover, it may be observed, that God may do great things for persons, and yet after all destroy them; great riches and honours may be conferred on some, great natural gifts on others; some may seem as if they had the grace of God, and were brought out of spiritual Egypt, and enjoy great mercies and favours, and have many deliverances wrought for them, and yet at last perish.

Ver. 6. *And the angels which kept not their first estate*, etc.] Or "principality"; that holy, honourable, and happy condition, in which they were created; for they were created in perfect holiness and righteousness, stood in the relation of sons to God, and were, for the lustre of their nature, comparable to the morning stars; they were among the thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers; were a superior rank of creatures to men, and who beheld the face, and enjoyed the presence of God; but this estate they kept not, for being mutable creatures, one of them first sinning, the rest were drawn into it by him, and so were not what they were before, nor in the same estate, or place:

but left their own habitation; by attempting to rise higher; or by quitting their station and posts of honour, being unwilling to be subject to God, and especially to the Son of God, who was to assume human nature, and in it be above them, which they could not bear; and by gathering together in a body, in another place, with Satan at the head of them; though this may be considered as a part of their punishment, and they may be said to do what they were forced to; for they were drove out of their native habitation, heaven; they were turned out of it, and cast down to hell; (see <6Q0204>2 Peter 2:4). And this their habitation, which they left, or fell from, or they were cast out of, is by the Jews frequently called the place of their holiness, or their holy place[f6].

He hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness; by these "everlasting chains" may be meant the power and providence of God over them, which always abide upon them; or their sins, and the guilt of them upon their consciences, under which they are continually held; or the decrees and purposes of God concerning their final punishment and destruction, which are immutable and irreversible, and from which there is no freeing themselves:, the phrase, under darkness, may refer to the chains, as in (<6Q0204>2 Peter 2:4); where they are called "chains of darkness"; either because the power, providence, and purposes of God are invisible; so the Syriac version reads, "in unknown chains"; or because horror and black despair are the effects of sin, and its guilt, with which their consciences are continually filled: or it may denote the place and state where they are, either in the darkness of the air, or in the dark parts of the earth, or in hell, where is utter darkness, even blackness of darkness; or that they are under the power of sin, which is darkness, and without the light of God's countenance, or any spiritual knowledge, or comfort: and they are "reserved" in these chains, and under this darkness; or "in prison", as the Arabic version renders it; which denotes the custody of them, and their continuance in it, in which they are kept by Jesus Christ, who can bind and loose Satan at his pleasure; and it shows that they are not as yet in full torment, but are like malefactors that are kept in prison, until the assize comes: so these are laid in chains, and kept in custody

unto the judgment of the great day; that is, the future and last "judgment" of men and devils, which is certain, and will be universal, and executed with the strictest justice: this is called "a day", which is fixed by God, though unknown to men and angels; and because of the evidence and quick dispatch of things, the matters judged will be as clear as the day, and

finished at once; and a great one, for the Judge will appear in great glory; great things will be done, the dead will be raised, and all nations will be gathered together, and the process will be with great solemnity; the thrones will be set, the books opened, the several sentences pronounced, and, all punctually executed; the judgment of the great day is the same the Jews call abr anyd µwy, "the day of the great judgment" [f7]. This account shows the imprisoned state of the devils, that they are not their own lords, and cannot do as they would; they are under restraints, and in chains, and not to be feared; which must be a great mortification to their proud and malicious spirits: and since this is the case of fallen angels, what severity may be expected from God against the opposers of the truths of the Gospel?

Ver. 7. *Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them*, etc.] Admah and Zeboiim, for Zoar was spared. This is a third instance of God's vengeance on sinners; and which, like that of the Israelites, and of the angels, was after great favours had been enjoyed: these places were delightfully situated, and very fruitful, as the garden of God; they were under a form of government, had kings over them, and had lately had a very great deliverance from the kings that carried them captive, being rescued by Abraham; they had a righteous Lot among them, who was a reprover in the gate, and Abraham made intercession for them with God. But they

in like manner giving themselves over to fornication; not as the angels, who are not capable of sinning in such a manner; though the Jews make this to be a sin of theirs, and so interpret (<0106>Genesis 6:2,4) [f8], but rather the Israelites, among whom this sin prevailed, (<4608>1 Corinthians 10:8); though it seems best of all to refer it to the false teachers that turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, and were very criminal this way; and then the sense is, that in like manner as they, the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, gave themselves over to the sin of fornication; wherefore these men might expect the same judgments that fell upon them, since their sin was alike; which sin is a work of the flesh, contrary to the law of God, is against the body, and attended with many evils; exposes to judgment here and hereafter, and unfits for the communion of the saints, and for the kingdom of heaven:

and going after strange flesh; or "other flesh"; meaning not other women besides their own wives, but men; and designs that detestable and unnatural

sin, which, from these people, is called sodomy to this day; and which is an exceeding great sin, contrary to the light of nature and law of God, dishonourable to human nature, and scandalous to a nation and people, and commonly prevails where idolatry and infidelity do, as among the Papists and Mahometans; and arose from idleness and fulness of bread in Sodom, and was committed in the sight of God, with great impudence: their punishment follows,

are set forth for an example; being destroyed by fire from heaven, and their cities turned into a sulphurous lake, which continues to this day, as a monument of God's vengeance, and an example to all such who commit the same sins, and who may expect the same equitable punishment; and to all who live ungodly lives, though they may not be guilty of the same crimes; and to all that slight and reject the Gospel revelation, with whom it will be more intolerable than for Sodom and Gomorrah; and to antichrist, who bears the same name, and spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt; and particularly to all false teachers, who besides their strange doctrines, go after strange flesh:

suffering the vengeance of eternal fire; which may be understood of that fire, with which those cities, and the inhabitants of it, were consumed; which, Philo the [f9] Jew says, burnt till his time, and must be burning when Jude wrote this epistle. The effects of which still continues, the land being now brimstone, salt, and burning; and is an emblem and representation of hell fire, between which there is a great likeness; as in the matter of them, both being fire; in the efficient cause of them, both from the Lord; and in the instruments thereof, the angels, who, as then, will hereafter be employed in the delivery of the righteous, and in the burning of the wicked; and in the circumstance attending both, suddenly, at an unawares, when not thought of, and expected; and in the nature of them, being a destruction total, irreparable, and everlasting: and this agrees with the sentiments of the Jews, who say [f10], that

> “the men of Sodom have no part or portion in the world to come, and shall not see the world to come.”

And says R. Isaac,

> “Sodom is judged μnhygd anydb, “with the judgment of hell” [f11].”

Ver. 8. *Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh*, etc.] Which may be literally understood, either of the Jewish doctors, who pretended to be interpreters of dreams, as R. Akiba, R. Lazar, and others [f12]; or of the false teachers in the apostle's time, and of their filthy dreams, and nocturnal pollutions in them; which sense the Arabic and Ethiopic versions confirm; the former rendering the words thus, “so these retiring in the time of sleep, defile their own flesh”; and the latter thus, “and likewise these, who in their own sleep, pollute their own flesh”; as also of their pretensions to divine assistance and intelligence by dreams; and likewise may be figuratively understood of them; for false doctrines are dreams, and the teachers of them dreamers, (Jeremiah 23:25,27,28,32), as are all those doctrines of men that oppose the trinity of persons in the Godhead; that contradict the deity and sonship of Christ; that depreciate any of his offices; that lessen the glory of the person and grace of the Spirit; that cry up the purity, power, and righteousness of human nature, and are contrary to the free grace of God. These arise from the darkness of the understanding, and a spirit of slumber upon them; are the fictions of their own brain, and of their roving imagination; are illusory and deceitful, and are in themselves vanities, and like dreams pass away. And the dreamers of these dreams may be said to “defile the flesh”; since they appear to follow and walk after the dictates of corrupt nature; and because by their unclean practices, mentioned in the preceding verse, they defile the flesh, that is, the body: all sin is of a defiling nature, and all men are defiled with it; but these were notoriously so; and often so it is, that unclean practices follow upon erroneous principles.

Despise dominion; either the government of the world by God, denying or speaking evil of his providence; the Ethiopic version renders it, “they deny their own God”, either his being, or rather his providence; or the dominion and kingly power of Christ, to which they cared not to be subject; or rather civil magistracy, which they despised, as supposing it to be inconsistent with their Christian liberty, and rejected it as being a restraint on their lusts; choosing rather anarchy and confusion, that they might do as they pleased, though magistracy is God's ordinance, and magistrates are God's representatives:

and speak evil of dignities; or “glories”; the Arabic version reads, “the God of glory”: this is to be understood either of angels, those glorious creatures, called thrones, dominions, etc. or ecclesiastical governors, who are set in the first and highest place in the church, and are the glory of the

churches; or else civil magistrates, as before, who are the higher powers, and sit in high places of honour and grandeur. False teachers are injurious to themselves, disturbers of churches, and pernicious to civil government.

Ver. 9. *Yet Michael the archangel*, etc.] By whom is meant, not a created angel, but an eternal one, the Lord Jesus Christ; as appears from his name Michael, which signifies, "who is as God": and who is as God, or like unto him, but the Son of God, who is equal with God? and from his character as the archangel, or Prince of angels, for Christ is the head of all principality and power; and from what is elsewhere said of Michael, as that he is the great Prince, and on the side of the people of God, and to have angels under him, and at his command, (Daniel 10:21 12:1 Revelation 12:7). So Philo the Jew [f13] calls the most ancient Word, firstborn of God, the archangel; Uriel is called the archangel in this passage from the Apocrypha:

> "And unto these things Uriel the archangel gave them answer, and said, Even when the number of seeds is filled in you: for he hath weighed the world in the balance." (2 Esdras 4:36)

when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses; which some understand literally of the fleshly and natural body of Moses, buried by the Lord himself, partly out of respect to him; and partly, as some think, lest the Israelites should be tempted to an idolatrous worship of him; but rather it was to show that the law of Moses was to be abolished and buried by Christ, never to rise more: and they think that this dispute was either about the burying of his body, or the taking of it up again; Satan on the one hand insisting upon the taking of it up, in order to induce the Israelites to worship him, and Michael, on the other hand, opposing it, to prevent this idolatry; but then the difficulty is, where Jude should have this account, since the Scriptures are silent about it. Some have thought that he took it out of an apocryphal book, called "the Ascension of Moses", as Origen [f14], which is not likely; others, that he had it by tradition, by which means the Apostle Paul came by the names of the Egyptian magicians Jannes and Jambres; and some passages are referred to in some of their writings [f15], as having some traces of this dispute; but in them the discourse is not concerning the body, but the soul of Moses; not concerning burying or taking up of his body, when buried, but concerning the taking away of his soul, when he was alive; which none of the angels caring to undertake, at length Samael, the chief of devils, did, but without success, wherefore

God took it away with a kiss himself: besides, the apostle produces this history as a thing well known; nor is it reasonable to suppose that such an altercation should be between Michael, and the devil, on such an account; or that it was in order to draw Israel into idolatry on the one hand, and on the other hand to prevent it; since never was the custom of the Israelites to worship their progenitors or heroes; nor did they seem so well disposed to Moses in his lifetime; nor was there any necessity of taking up his body, were they inclined to give him honour and worship; yea, the sight of his dead body would rather have prevented than have encouraged it: but this is to be understood figuratively; and reference is had to the history in (<300301>Zechariah 3:1,2); as appears from the latter part of this verse: some think the priesthood of Christ is intended, which was the end, the sum and substance, of the law of Moses; and seeing that Joshua, the high priest, was a type of Christ, and the angel of the Lord contended with Satan about him, he might be said to dispute with him about the body of Moses; but this sense makes a type of a type, and Christ to contend about himself; besides, this should rather be called the body of Christ than of Moses, others think that the temple of the Jews is meant about the rebuilding of which the contention is thought to be; and which may be called the body of Moses, as the church is called the body of Christ; though it should be observed, that the temple is never so called, and that not the place where the church meets, but the church itself, is called the body of Christ: but it is best of all to understand it of the law of Moses, which is sometimes called Moses himself, (<430545>John 5:45 <441521>Acts 15:21 <442121>21:21 <470315>2 Corinthians 3:15); and so the body of Moses, or the body of his laws, the system of them; just as we call a system of laws, and of divinity, such an one's body of laws, and such an one's body of divinity: and this agrees with the language of the Jews, who say [f16], of statutes, service, purification, etc. that they are hrwth ypwg, "the bodies of the law"; and so of Misnic treatises, as those which concern the offerings of turtle doves, and the purification of menstruous women, that they are ypwg, "the bodies" of the traditions [f17], that is, the sum and substance of them: so the decalogue is said [f18] to be "the body of the Shema", or "Hear, O Israel", (<060604>Deuteronomy 6:4), so Clemens of Alexandria [f19] says, that there are some who consider the body of the Scriptures, the words and names, as if they were, το σωμα του μωσεως, "the body of Moses" [f20]. Now the law of Moses was restored in the time of Joshua the high priest, by Ezra and Nehemiah. Joshua breaks some of these laws, and is charged by Satan as guilty, who contended and insisted upon it that he should suffer for it; so that this dispute or

contention might be said to be about the body of Moses, that is, the body of Moses's law, which Joshua had broken; in which dispute Michael, or the angel of the Lord, even the Lord Jesus Christ himself,

durst not bring against him a railing accusation; that is, not that he was afraid of the devil, but though he could have given harder words, or severer language, and which the other deserved, yet he chose not to do it, he would not do it; in which sense the word “durst”, or “dare”, is used in (Romans 5:7);

but said, the Lord rebuke thee; for thy malice and insolence; (see Zechariah 3:2); and this mild and gentle way of using even the devil himself agrees with Christ's conduct towards him, when tempted by him in the wilderness, and when in his agony with him in the garden, and amidst all his reproaches and sufferings on the cross. And now the argument is from the greater to the lesser, that if Christ, the Prince of angels, did not choose to give a railing word to the devil, who is so much inferior to him, and when there was so much reason and occasion for it; then how great is the insolence of these men, that speak evil of civil and ecclesiastical rulers, without any just cause at all?

Ver. 10. *But these speak evil of those things which they know not*, etc.] Which may more particularly refer to dignities, (Jude 1:8); either angels, who are little known, and not at all, but by revelation, and yet were blasphemed, or evil spoken of by these men; either by ascribing too much to them, as the creation of the world; or by saying such things of them, as were below, and unworthy of them, as their congress with women, etc. or civil magistrates; these men were ignorant of the nature, use, and end, of magistracy and civil government, and so treated it with contempt; or the ministers of the Gospel, whose usefulness was not known, at least not acknowledged by them, and so became the object of their scorn and reproach: or it may refer more generally to the Scriptures, which false teachers are ignorant of, and yet speak evil of; either by denying them to be the Word of God, or by putting false glosses on them; and so to the several parts of the Scriptures, as to the law, the nature, use, and end of which they are not acquainted with; and therefore blaspheme it, by not walking according to it, or by denying it to be of God, and to be good, or by making the observance of it necessary to justification and salvation; and also to the Gospel, the doctrines and ordinances of it, which they speak evil of, despise and reject, not knowing the nature, value, and design of them:

but what they know naturally as brute beasts: man originally had a large share of natural knowledge, and there is in man still, notwithstanding the fall, by which his knowledge is impaired, a natural knowledge of God, and of things natural, civil, and moral; and there is a sensitive knowledge in man, which he has in common with the brutes, and which is here meant: and such was the brutish sensuality of these men, that

in those things they corrupt themselves; and act as brute beasts without shame and fear; yea, worse than brute beasts, as in the acts of unnatural lust, mentioned in (<6007>Jude 1:7); whereby they corrupt both their souls and bodies, and so shall be destroyed, and perish in their corruption.

Ver. 11. *Woe unto them*, etc.] This may be considered as a commiseration of their case, or as a denunciation of deserved punishment, or as a prediction of what would befall them. The Arabic version prefaces these words with an address to the saints, “O my beloved”: that what was about to be said might be attended to, as a caution and instruction to them.

For they have gone in the way of Cain; which was a way of envy, for Cain envied the acceptance of his brother's gift, and that notice which the Lord took of him; so these men envied the gifts bestowed on Christ's faithful ministers, and the success that attended their labours, and the honour that was put upon them by Christ, and that was given them by the churches; which shows, that they were destitute of grace, and particularly of the grace of charity, or love, which envies not, and that they were in an unregenerate estate, and upon the brink of ruin and destruction. Moreover, the way of Cain was a way of hatred, and murder of his brother, which his envy led him to; so these men hated the brethren, persecuted them unto death, as well as were guilty of the murder of the souls of men, by their false doctrine: to which may be added, as another of Cain's ways, in consequence of the former, absence from the presence of God, or the place of his worship; so these men separated themselves, and went out from the churches, forsook the assembling together with them, and so might expect Cain's punishment, to be driven from the face of God; yea, to be bid go as cursed into everlasting burnings:

and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward; Balaam's error, which he himself was guilty of, was covetousness, or an immoderate love of money, (<6025>2 Peter 2:15); which, as it is the root of all evil, is the bane of religion, and the source of heresy, and what the false teachers were greatly addicted to; and where it prevails, it is insatiable, and not to be

checked and stopped, as in these men; and is a damnable sin, and excludes from the kingdom of heaven, as well as is dishonorable to religion; hence such particular notice is taken of it, lest it be found in a minister of the word: this character exactly agrees with the followers of Simon Magus. The error which Balaam led others into, was both idolatry and adultery, (<66214>Revelation 2:14), which these false teachers were both guilty of themselves, and taught others, and indulged them therein; and which both teachers and people ran greedily after. Balaam is one of the four private persons, who, according to the Jews, shall have no part or portion in the world to come [f21].

And perished in the gainsaying of Core: the same with Korah, (<041601>Numbers 16:1). The Septuagint there call him Core, and so does Philo the Jew [f22], as the apostle does here, and by Josephus he is called [f23] "Cores": now the gainsaying or contradiction of these men was like Korah's; as his was against Moses, the ruler of the people, so theirs was against magistracy, (<650108>Jude 1:8); which was gainsaying God's own ordinance, and a contradiction of that which is for the good of men; the ground of which contradiction was love of liberty, and their own lusts; and, generally speaking, men perish in their factions and rebellions against good and lawful magistrates: also, as Korah gainsayed Aaron, the priest of the Lord, so these men contradicted and opposed the ministers of Christ, whom they would have thrust out in order to put in themselves, and whose persons they reviled, and contradicted their doctrines, which to do is of dangerous consequence; and they might be said to perish in his gainsaying, as a type and example of their destruction, which would be swift and sudden, as his was; and to denote the certainty of it. So the Jews [f24] say of Korah and his company, that they shall never ascend, or rise up and stand in judgment, and that they shall have no part or portion in the world to come [f25].

Ver. 12. *These are spots in your feasts of charity*, etc.] Or "love". The Jews speak atwnmyhmd hytdwb, "of a feast of faith" [f26]. These here seem to be the Agapae, or love feasts, of the primitive Christians; the design of which was to maintain and promote brotherly love, from whence they took their name; and to refresh the poor saints, that they might have a full and comfortable meal now and then: their manner of keeping them was this; they began and ended them with prayer and singing; and they observed them with great temperance and frugality; and they were attended with much joy and gladness, and simplicity of heart: but were quickly abused, by

judaizing Christians, as observing them in imitation of the passover; and by intemperance in eating and drinking; and by excluding the poor, for whose benefit they were chiefly designed; and by setting up separate meetings for them, and by admitting unfit persons unto them; such as here are said to be spots in them, blemishes, which brought great reproach and scandal upon them, being persons of infamous characters and conversations. The allusion is either to spots in garments, or in faces, or in sacrifices; or to a sort of earth that defiles; or else to rocks and hollow stones on shores, lakes, and rivers, which collect filth and slime; all which serve to expose and point out the persons designed. The Alexandrian copy and some others read, "these are in their own deceivings, spots", απαταις, instead of αγαπαις, as in (<2 Peter 2:13>);

when they feast with you; which shows that they were among them, continued members with them, and partook with them in their solemn feasts, and were admitted to communion; and carries in it a kind of reproof to the saints, that they suffered such persons among them, and allowed them such privilege, intimacy, and familiarity with them:

feeding themselves without fear; these were like the shepherds of Israel, who fed themselves, and not the flock, and were very impious and impudent, open and bare faced in their iniquities, neither fearing God nor regarding man.

Clouds [they are], without water; they are compared to clouds for their number, being many false prophets and antichrists that were come out into the world; and for their sudden rise, having at once, and at an unawares, crept into the churches; and for the general darkness they spread over the churches, making it, by their doctrines and practices, to be a dark and cloudy day, a day of darkness, and gloominess, a day of clouds, and of thick darkness, a day of trouble, rebuke, and blasphemy; and for the storms, factions, rents, and divisions they made; as also for their situation and height, soaring aloft, and being vainly puffed up in their fleshly mind; as well as for their sudden destruction, disappearing at once. And to clouds "without water", because destitute of the true grace of God, and of true evangelical doctrine; which, like rain, is from above, from heaven; and which, like that, refreshes, softens, and fructifies. Now these false teachers looked like clouds, that promised rain, boasted of Gospel light and knowledge, but were destitute of it, wherefore their ministry was uncomfortable and unprofitable.

Carried about of winds; either of false doctrines, or of their own lusts and passions, or of Satan's temptations:

trees whose fruit withereth: or “trees in autumn”; either like to them, which put forth at that season of the year, and so come to nothing; or like to trees which are bare of leaves as well as fruit, it being the time when the leaves fall from the trees; and so may be expressive of these persons casting off the leaves of an outward profession, of their going out from the churches, separating from them, and forsaking the assembling together with them, when what fruit of holiness, and good works, they seemed to have, came to nothing; and so were

without fruit, either of Gospel doctrine, or of Gospel holiness and righteousness; nor did they make any true converts, but what they made were like the Pharisees, as bad, or worse than themselves; and from their unfruitfulness in all respects, it appeared that they were not in Christ the true vine, and were not sent forth by him, nor with his Gospel, and that they were destitute of the Spirit of God.

Twice dead; that is, entirely, thoroughly, and really dead in trespasses and sins, notwithstanding their pretensions to religion and godliness; or the sense may be, that they were not only liable to a corporeal death, common to them with all mankind, but also to an eternal one, or to the death both of soul and body in hell. Homer calls [f27] those διψανεις, “twice dead”, that go to hell alive: or rather the sense is this, that they were dead in sin by nature, as all men are, and again having made a profession of religion, were now become dead to that profession; and so were twice dead, once as they were born, and a second time as they had apostatized:

plucked up by the roots; either by separating themselves from the churches, where they had been externally planted; or by the act of the church in cutting them off, and casting them out; or by the judgment of God upon them.

Ver. 13. *Raging waves of the sea*, etc.] False teachers are so called, for their, swelling pride and vanity; which, as it is what prevails in human nature, is a governing vice in such persons, for knowledge without grace puffs up; and this shows that they had not received the doctrine of grace in truth, for that humbles; as also for their arrogance, boasting, and ostentation; and for their noisiness, their restless, uneasy, and turbulent

spirits, for their furious and wrathful dispositions; as well as for their levity and inconstancy, and for their turpitude and filthiness:

foaming out their own shame: wrathful words, frothy and obscene language, and filthy doctrines; and which expresses the issue of their noisy and blustering ministry, which ends in uncleanness, shame, emptiness, and ruin.

Wandering stars; they are called “stars”, because they have the appearance of such, and blaze for a while, in seeming light, zeal, and warmth, and in fame and reputation; and “wandering” ones, not comparable to the planets, which go their regular course, but to fiery exhalations, gliding and running stars; because they wander about from house to house, as well as from one nation to another, and being never settled in their principles, nor at a point in religion; and wander also after their own carnal lusts, and cause others to wander likewise, and at last become falling stars; not from real grace and sanctified knowledge, which they never had; but from truth to error, and from a seemingly holy life and conversation, to a vicious one; and from a profession of religion, to open profaneness; and whose fall is irrecoverable, as that of stars:

to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever; or the blackest darkness, even utter darkness; which phrase not only expresses the dreadful nature of their punishment, their most miserable and uncomfortable condition; but also the certainty of it, it is “reserved” for them among the treasures of divine wrath and vengeance, by the righteous appointment of God, according to the just demerit of their sins; and likewise the duration of it, it will be for ever; there will never be any light or comfort, but a continual everlasting black despair, a worm that dieth not, a fire that will not be quenched, the smoke and blackness of which will ascend for ever and ever; hell is meant by it, which the Jews represent as a place of darkness: the Egyptian darkness, they say, came from the darkness of hell, and in hell the wicked will be covered with darkness; the darkness which was upon the face of the deep, at the creation, they interpret of hell [f28].

Ver. 14. *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam*, etc.] This was Enoch the son of Jared; his name signifies one “instructed”, or “trained up”; as he doubtless was by his father, in the true religion, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and was one that had much communion with God; he walked with him, and was translated by him, body and soul, to heaven,

and did not see death; (Genesis 5:18,22,24); he is said to be “the seventh from Adam”; not the seventh man from him that was born into the world, for there were no doubt thousands born before him; but he was, as the Jews express it [f29], ybçh rwd, “the seventh generation” from him; and they have an observation [f30], that all sevenths are always beloved by God; the seventh in lands, and the seventh in generations; Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, as it is written, (Genesis 5:24); and this is said partly to distinguish him from others of the same name, and particularly from Enoch the son of Cain, the third: from Adam in his line, as this was the seventh from Adam in the line of Seth; and partly to observe the antiquity of the following prophecy of his: for it is said, he

prophesied of these; of these false teachers, and such as they; what would be their sad state and condition at the second coming of Christ to judgment: that he had a spirit of prophecy is evident from the name he gave to his son Methuselah, which signifies, “when he dies is the emission”, or the sending out of the waters of the flood, which came to pass the very year he did die. The Arabic writers [f31] call him Edris the prophet; and the Jews say [f32], that he was in a higher degree than Moses or Elias; they also call [f33] him Metatron, the great scribe, a name which they sometimes give to the angel that went before the children of Israel in the wilderness, and which seems to belong to the Messiah: that Enoch wrote a prophecy, and left it behind him in writing, does not appear from hence, or elsewhere; the Jews, in some of their writings, do cite and make mention of the book of Enoch; and there is a fragment now which bears his name, but is a spurious piece, and has nothing like this prophecy in it; wherefore Jude took this not from a book called the “Apocalypse of Enoch”, but from tradition; this prophecy being handed down from age to age; and was in full credit with the Jews, and therefore the apostle very appropriately produces it; or rather he had it by divine inspiration, and is as follows:

saying, behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints; by the “Lord” is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, who is ordained the Judge of quick and dead, and for which he is richly qualified, being omniscient and omnipotent, and faithful and righteous, and who will certainly come again to judge the world in righteousness; for not of his first coming, which was not to judge and condemn, but to seek and save, but of his second coming at the last day is this to be understood; and this is expressed in the present tense, “cometh”, in the manner of the prophets, who speak of things future as if they already were, as Isaiah does of the incarnation, sufferings, and

death of Christ, and to awaken the attention of persons to it, as if it was near at hand, as also to signify the certainty of it: and when he comes, he will be attended “with ten thousand of his saints”: meaning either the souls of glorified saints, even all of them, (⁵²1 Thessalonians 3:13), which will come with Christ, and meet the living ones, and be reunited to their own bodies, which will then be raised; or else the holy angels, as in (⁰⁵Deuteronomy 33:2); and so some copies and the Arabic version read; which will be both for the showing forth of his glory and majesty, and for service in gathering his elect together, as well as for terror to the wicked; and a “behold” is prefixed to all this, to denote the certainty of Christ's coming, and the importance and wonderfulness of it: the ends of his coming follow.

Ver. 15. *To execute judgment upon all*, etc.] Quick and dead, small and great, high and low, rich and poor, good and bad, righteous and wicked, sheep and goats; to pass the definitive sentence on each, that of absolution, life, and happiness, on his own people, and that of condemnation, death, and misery, on the wicked; which will be done in the most strict and righteous manner:

and to convince all that are ungodly among them; those who are without God, the fear of him love to him, or faith in him; who have lived without the worship of him, or in a false worship; and particularly false teachers are here meant, the same as in (⁶⁵Jude 1:4); who will then be convicted in their own consciences, by that clear evidence, and full light, in which things will be set:

of all their ungodly deeds; both against law and Gospel:

which they have ungodly committed; which they lived in the commission of, and continually practised in a vile manner, publicly, and in defiance of heaven, and with seared consciences:

and of all their hard [speeches], which ungodly sinners have spoken against him; either “against” God, as the Vulgate Latin version reads, against his being, his perfections, his providence, his purposes, his word, and worship; or rather against Jesus Christ the Lord, who will come to judge them, against his person and offices, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; his ministers and people, his truths and ordinances.

Ver. 16. *These are murmurers*, etc.] That is, at others; secretly, inwardly, in a muttering way, grunting out their murmurs like swine; to which, for

their filthiness and apostasy, false teachers may be filly compared: and their murmurs might be both against God and men; against God, against the being of God, denying, or at least wishing there was no God, and uneasy because there is one; against the perfections of God, particularly his sovereignty over all, his special goodness to some, his wisdom, justice, truth, and faithfulness; against his purposes and decrees, both with respect to things temporal, spiritual, and eternal; against the providence of God and his government of the world, and the unequal distribution of things in it; and especially against the doctrines of free grace, and the ordinances of the Gospel: and not only are they murmurers against God, and all divine things and persons, but also against men; particularly against civil magistrates, who restrain them, and are a terror to them; and against the ministers of the Gospel, whose gifts and usefulness they envy; and indeed against all men, their neighbours, and what they enjoy, and at everything that goes besides themselves: it follows,

complainers; some join the above character and this together, and read, as the Vulgate Latin version, “complaining murmurers”; others, as the Syriac version, place not only a comma, but a copulative between them; and as the former may design secret and inward murmuring, this may intend outward complaining in words; not of their own sins and corruptions, nor of the sins of others, with any concern for the honour of religion; or of the decay of powerful godliness in themselves or others; or of the failure of the Gospel, and the decrease of the interest of Christ; but either of God, that he has not made them equal to others in the good things of life, as the Arabic version renders it, “complaining of their own lots”; or that he lays so much affliction upon them more than on others; or of men, that their salaries are not sufficient, and that they are not enough respected according to their merit; and indeed, as the Syriac version reads, “they complain of everything”, and are never satisfied and easy:

walking after their own lusts; which are carnal and worldly, (see Gill on “2 Peter 3:3”);

and their mouth speaketh great swelling [words]; both against God and men; and this may point at their boast of knowledge, their great ostentation of learning, their vain and empty doctrines, their high flights, their rhetorical style, and bombast language:

having men's persons in admiration because of advantage; crying up men of their own stamp for the advantage of the party; and giving flattering

titles to men of wealth and riches, for the sake of their money: so the Ethiopic version, “they studied to please persons, to make gain of them”; they were respecters of persons; so the phrase is used by the Septuagint in (<5107>Deuteronomy 10:17 <5850>28:50), and in (<1808>Job 22:8) (<1822>Job 32:22 <1849>34:19), and in (<2005>Proverbs 18:5) and in (<2915>Isaiah 9:15).

Ver. 17. *But, beloved*, etc.] Or “my beloved”, as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; or “our brethren”, as the Ethiopic version; the apostle addresses the saints in this manner, to distinguish them from the false teachers, and to show that he had a different opinion of them from them; and that be would have them beware of them, and not be surprised at them, since it was no other than what was foretold; and also to engage their attention and regard to the following exhortation:

remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; these words mean not the doctrines of the apostles in general, but particularly the prophecies delivered out by them, as by the Apostles Paul and Peter, concerning the false teachers that should arise; and these being spoken of before, and by apostles, even by the apostles, of our Lord Jesus Christ, were worthy of regard, and deserved to be remembered; a remembrance of which is a preservative from error, and a relief in the worst of times, whether of persecution, or heresy. This does not suppose that Jude was not an apostle, only that there were other apostles besides him; and that these, some of them at least, had prophesied of these men, and that he had lived to see their predictions verified; nor does he exclude himself from being one of them; yea, the Ethiopic version reads, “which we the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ have formerly declared unto you”; (see <6102>2 Peter 3:2).

Ver. 18. *How that they told you that there should be mockers in the last time*, etc.] (See Gill on “<6103>2 Peter 3:3”).

Ver. 19. *These be they who separate themselves*, etc.] Not from sinners openly profane; such a separation is commendable, being according to the will and word of God, to the mind and practice of Christ, and which tends to the good of men, and to the glory of God; but from the saints and people of God; it is possible that a child of God may for a time leave the fellowship of the saints, but an entire and total forsaking of them, and of assembling with them, looks with an ill aspect; nor did they separate themselves from superstition and will worship, and every false way of worship, which would have been right, but from the pure worship,

ordinances, and discipline of God's house, by a perversion of them, and as being above them, or unwilling to be under any notice and government; not from errors and heresies, and persons that held them, with these they herded; but from the pure doctrines of the Gospel, and ministers of the word, and made divisions and separations among the churches, for worldly ends, and through pride and affectation of vain glory, as if they were more knowing, more holy, and more spiritual than other men: when they were

sensual; such as gave themselves up to sensual lusts and pleasures; and at best were but natural men, who had only natural and rational abilities, but without spiritual and experimental knowledge: hence it follows,

having not the Spirit; though they might have some external gifts of the Spirit; or he himself dwelling in them as a spirit of conviction and illumination, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, as a spirit of faith and comfort, as a spirit of adoption, and as the earnest and pledge of the heavenly glory; they were not under his influence, nor did they feel the operations of his grace, nor had they communion with him: hence they appeared to be none of Christ's, nor could they claim interest in him, and were without life, and so could not persevere.

Ver. 20. *But ye, beloved*, etc.] (See Gill on "Jude 1:17");

building up yourselves on your most holy faith; some copies, and the Complutensian edition, read, "our most holy faith"; meaning the doctrine of faith in all its branches, which is holy, a most holy doctrine; which displays the holiness of God, and is a means of beginning and increasing internal holiness in the saints, and of encouraging and exciting them to external holiness of life and conversation: this phrase, açydq atwnmyhm, "holy faith", is in use with the Jews [f34]: and it becomes the saints to build up one another upon this; the doctrine of faith, is a foundation to build upon, particularly what regards the person, offices, and grace of Christ, and is itself of an edifying nature; and they should not content themselves with their present knowledge of it, but seek for an improvement in it; and though they were passive when first built on Christ and his doctrines, and though ministers are greatly instruments in building of them up more and more; yet they are capable of building up themselves, and one another, by attending on the ministry of the word, and by private conversation, with each other, and particularly by

praying in the Holy Ghost; which is a special means of increase and establishment in the doctrine of faith; the Holy Ghost is the author and enditer of prayer, and an assister in it; without him saints cannot call God their Father, nor pray with faith and fervency, or with freedom and liberty.

Ver. 21. *Keep yourselves in the love of God*, etc.] By which may be meant either the grace and favour of God, that love with which God loves his people; and then the exhortation to the saints to keep themselves in it is, to set it always before them, to keep it constantly in view, to exercise faith on it, firmly believing their interest in it; as also to meditate on it, give themselves up wholly to the contemplation of it, and employ their thoughts constantly about it, which is the foundation of all grace here, and glory hereafter; or to preserve themselves by it, for so the words may be rendered, “preserve yourselves by the love of God”; against Satan's temptations, the snares of the world, and the lusts of the flesh; whenever Satan solicits to sin, and any snare is laid to draw into it, and the flesh attempts to be predominant, saints should betake themselves to the love of God, as to a strong hold and preservative against sin, and reason as Joseph did, (<01G9I9>Genesis 39:9), for the love of God, and continuance in it, do not depend on anything that can be done by men; nor is there any danger of real believers falling from it, or losing it, since it is unchangeable, and is from everlasting to everlasting; or else by the love of God we are to understand that love with which his people love him and of which he is the object, (<421142>Luke 11:42); and then the meaning of the exhortation is, that though this grace of love cannot be lost, yet, inasmuch as the fervor of it may be abated, and the people of God grow cold and indifferent in their expressions of it, it becomes them to make use of all proper means to maintain and increase it in themselves and others; such as are mentioned in the context, as conversing together in an edifying way about the doctrines of the Gospel, and praying either separately or together, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, and looking forward for the grace and mercy of Christ unto everlasting life; all which, with many other, things, by the blessing of God, may serve to maintain and revive the grace of love, and blow it up into a flame: though perhaps this phrase may chiefly design that love, peace, and concord, which ought to subsist among saints as brethren, and which they should be careful to preserve; and may be called the love of God, just as the same thing is styled the peace of God, (<510315>Colossians 3:15), because it is what God requires, what he calls unto, which is of him, and is taught by him in regeneration, and what his, love engages to, and

without which there is no true love to him; and he takes, love shown to his people as if shown to himself; and this sense is favored by the context, both by the words in the preceding verse, and in the following ones:

looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. The mercy of Christ may be considered either as past, which was shown in eternity, in his covenant transactions with his Father, in engaging in the cause of his people, in espousing them to himself, and in the care of their persons, grace, and glory; and in time, in assuming their nature, in his tender concern for the bodies and souls of men, in bearing the sins and sorrows of his people, in the redemption of them, and in their regeneration and calling; and there is the present mercy of Christ, in interceding for his people, in sympathizing with them under all their afflictions, in succouring them under all their temptations, in suiting himself, as the great Shepherd, to all the circumstances of his flock; and there is the future mercy of Christ, which will be shown at death, in the grave, and at the resurrection, at the day of judgment, and in the merciful sentence he will pronounce on his people; and this seems to be designed here; the consequent of which, or what is annexed to it, and in which it issues, is eternal life; which is not owing to the works of men, but to the grace of God, and mercy of Christ; eternal life is in him, and is given through him, and to his mercy should men look for it. Christ himself is to be looked for, who will certainly come a second time; and eternal life is to be looked for by him; and this is only to be expected through his grace and mercy; and this is to be looked for by faith, in the love of it, with delight and pleasure, and cheerfulness, with eagerness, and yet with patience.

Ver. 22. *And of some have compassion*, etc.] That is, of such who have gone astray, being drawn aside; who are simple and ignorant, and out of the way; who sin through infirmity, and the force of temptation; and who are tractable and open to conviction, and whose mistakes are in lesser matters of religion; as also such who are convicted and wounded in their consciences for their sins and mistakes: and to these compassion is to be shown, by praying with them, and for them, with ardency and affection; instructing them in meekness; giving friendly and brotherly reproofs to them; expressing on all occasions a tender concern for their good; doing them all the good that can be done, both for their souls and bodies: and good reason there is why compassion should be shown them, because God is a God of compassion; Christ is a merciful high priest; a contrary spirit is grieving to the Holy Ghost; saints should consider what they themselves

were, and what they now are, and that compassion has been shown to them, and they may want it again. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read, “reprove”.

Making a difference; between one and another; using some more tenderly, others more severely, as the nature and circumstances of their case appear to be. The Syriac version renders the whole, “when they repent, have compassion on them”.

Ver. 23. *And others save with fear*, etc.] Meaning false teachers, who lead others into errors, and such as give themselves over unto sin, whether teachers or hearers, and who are obstinate and irreclaimable; even such as these, means should be used to save, if possible, by sharp admonitions and severe language; by denouncing the awful judgments of God, which threaten them; by inflicting on them church censures in a terrible manner; by declaring the terrors of the Lord, and of hell, and of everlasting damnation:

pulling [them] out of the fire; of their soul destroying doctrines, and of their filthy and unnatural lusts, and as it were out of the fire of hell, of which they are in great danger:

hating even the garment spotted, by the flesh; by which may be meant the conversation of those men, even their filthy conversation, which is to be hated, though their persons are not; but all ways and means should be used to save them; and this is one way, by showing a dislike unto, and a resentment at their wicked way of living, excluding them from church communion for it, and shunning all conversation with them. The allusion is not to garments defiled by profluvious persons, or menstruous women, as some think, but to garments spotted with nocturnal pollutions, or through unnatural lusts, which these persons were addicted to [f35]. It was reckoned very dishonourable for religious persons, in the time of divine service, or on a sabbath day, to have on a garment spotted with any thing; if a priest's garments were spotted, and he performed service in them, that service was not right [f36]; and if a disciple of a wise man had any grease on his garments (on a sabbath day), he was guilty of death [f37].

Ver. 24. *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling*, etc.] The people of God are liable to falling into temptation, into sin, into errors and mistakes, from an exercise of grace, or from a degree of steadfastness in Gospel truths, and even into a final and total apostasy, were it not for

divine power; and they are not able to keep themselves. Adam, in his state of innocence, could not keep himself from falling; nor could the angels, many of whom fell, and the rest are preserved by the grace of God; wherefore, much less can imperfect sinful men keep themselves, they want both skill and power to do it; nor can any, short of Christ, keep them, and it is his work and office to preserve them; they were given to him with this view, and he undertook to do it; and sensible sinners commit themselves to him, as being appointed for that purpose; and this is a work Christ has been, and is, employed in, and he is every way qualified for it: he is “able” to do it, for he is the mighty God, the Creator and upholder of all things; and as Mediator, he has all power in heaven and in earth; instances of persons kept by him prove it; and there is such evidence of it, that believers may be, and are persuaded of it: and he is as willing as he is able; it is his Father's will he should keep them, and in that he delights; and as he has undertook to keep them, he is accountable for them; besides, he has an interest in them, and the greatest love and affection for them; to which may be added, that the glory of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in man's salvation, depends on the keeping of them: and what he keeps them from is, from falling by temptations, not from being tempted by Satan, but from sinking under his temptations, and from being devoured by him; and from falling by sin, not from the being or commission of sin, but from the dominion of it, and from the falling into it, so as to perish by it; and from falling into damnable heresies; and from the true grace of God, and into final impenitence, unbelief, and total apostasy. Instead of “you”, the Alexandrian copy reads “us”, and some copies “them”:

and to present [you] faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to himself, in this present state of things, as washed in his blood, and justified by his righteousness, and hereafter in the millennium state, and in the ultimate glory; and also to his Father, and this he died to do, and in some sense did it at his death, even in the body of his flesh, through death, and now as the representative of his people in heaven; and will at the last day, when he will deliver them up complete and perfect; all which is in consequence of his suretyship engagements: and this presentation is made “before the presence of his glory”; either before the glorious presence of Christ, or Christ himself, who is glorious, and will appear in glory, in his own, and in his Father's, and in his holy angels; or else before the glorious presence of God the Father, and who is glory itself: and the condition in which the saints are, and will be presented, is

“faultless”; though they have sinned in Adam, and were so wretchedly guilty and filthy in their nature state, so prone to backslidings, and guilty of so many after conversion, and though a body of sin and death is carried by them to the grave; yet they will at last be presented by Christ in perfect holiness, in complete righteousness, and in the shining robes of immortality and, glory. The manner in which they will be presented is “with exceeding joy”; in themselves, for what they shall be delivered from, from sin and sorrow, and every enemy, and for the glory and happiness they shall then enjoy; and also in the ministers of the Gospel, who will then bring their sheaves with joy, and then will their converts be their joy and crown of rejoicing; and likewise this presentation will be with the joy of angels, for if they rejoice at the conversion of men, much more at their glorification; and even with the joy of Father, Son, and Spirit.

Ver. 25. *To the only wise God our Saviour*, etc.] By whom is meant, not the Trinity of Persons in general, nor the Father in particular; but the Lord Jesus Christ, who is truly God, though not to the exclusion of the Father and Spirit; and is the wisdom of God, and the author of all wisdom, natural and spiritual; and is the only Saviour of his people; and to him may be, as is ascribed, the

glory of his deity, and divine sonship, of his mediatorial works, and of salvation:

and majesty: which belongs to him as God, and which he has in his human nature, being crowned with glory, and honour, and enthroned and set down at the right hand of God:

dominion; both natural, the kingdom of nature and providence belonging to him, and mediatorial, which is above all, reaches far and wide, and will last for ever:

and power; in making and upholding all things; in redeeming his people; in protecting and defending them, and in destroying his and their enemies; in raising the dead, and judging the world. Though the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, “to the only God our Saviour, by Jesus Christ our Lord”, and leave out the word “wise”; and so they are to be understood of God the Father; but the Ethiopic version reads, “this is the only God our Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom”, etc. And all this is to be attributed to him,

both now, and ever; in the present life, and to all eternity.

Amen: which is an assent unto it, that so it should be; and a wish that so it may be; and an expression of faith, and strong asseveration, that so it shall be.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Hist. Eccl. 50:2. c. 23.

Ft2 -- Paedagog. 50:3. c. 8. p. 239. & Stromat. 50:3. p. 431.

Ft3 -- De Cultu Foemin. 50:1. c. 3.

Ft4 -- In Joshua Homil. 7. fol. 156. E. & Comment, in Matthew p. 223. Ed. Huet.

Ft5 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 50. 2.

Ft6 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 73. 1. Pirke Eliezer, c. 14, 22, 27. Zohar in Genesis fol. 28. 1. & Sepher Bahir in ib. fol. 27. 3.

Ft7 -- Targum in Psalm 50:3.

Ft8 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 22. Joseph. Antiqu. 50:1. c. 3. sect. 1.

Ft9 -- De Abrahamo, p. 370.

Ft10 -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 3.

Ft11 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 71. 3.

Ft12 -- T. Hieros. Maaser Sheni, fol. 55. 2, 3.

Ft13 -- De Confus. Ling. p. 341. & quis. rer. divin. Haeres. p. 509.

Ft14 -- περι αρχων, 50:3. c. 2.

Ft15 -- Debarim Rabba, fol. 245. 3, 4. Abot R. Nathan, c. 12. fol. 4. 2, 3. Petirath Mosis, fol. 57. 1. &. c.

Ft16 -- Misn. Chagiga, c. 1. sect. 8.

Ft17 -- Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 18.

Ft18 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 6. 2.

Ft19 -- Stromat, 50:6. p. 680.

Ft20 -- Vid. Chion. Disput. Theolog. par. 1. & 2. De Corpore Mosis, sub Praesidio Trigland. Lugd. Batav. 1697.

Ft21 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 2.

Ft22 -- De Profugis, p. 471.

Ft23 -- Antiqu. 50:4. c. 2. sect. 2.

Ft24 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, ib. sect. 2. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 89. 3. Sanhed. ib. sect. 3.

Ft25 -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 3.

Ft26 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 36. 3, 4.

Ft27 -- Odyss. 50:12. lin. 22.

Ft28 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 14. fol. 99. 3.

Ft29 -- Juchasin, fol. 5. 2. Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 5. 1.

Ft30 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 29. fol. 170. 1.

Ft31 -- Elmacinus, p. 10. apud Hottinger. Smegma Orient. p. 240.

Ft32 -- Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 1, 2.

Ft33 -- Targum Jon. in 01054Genesis 5:24. Tosephot in T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 16. 2. Juchasin, fol. 5. 2.

Ft34 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 47. 4.

Ft35 -- Vid. Sueton. in Vita Neronis, c. 28.

Ft36 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 65. 2. & Zebachim, fol. 18. 2. & Piske Tosephot in Yoma, art. 9. & Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 4.

Ft37 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 114. 1.

REVELATION

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF REVELATION

That this book was written by the Apostle and Evangelist John, is clear not only from the express mention of his name, and from his office, a servant of Jesus Christ, (Revelation 1:1); but also from the character this writer gives of himself, (Revelation 1:2); as being an eyewitness of the essential Logos, or Word of God, and who bore a faithful record of him as such, as John did in his Gospel, in a very peculiar and remarkable manner, and from this writer's being in the isle of Patmos when he wrote, (Revelation 1:9); for of what other John can this be said? to which may be added the testimonies of the ancient writers, as Justin Martyr [f1], who lived within fifty years of the apostle, and Irenaeus [f2], who was the disciple of Polycarp, an hearer of this apostle, and Clemens Alexandrinus [f3], Tertullian [f4], Origen [f5], and others, who ascribe it to him. It was a most monstrously stupid notion of Caius, Dionysius of Alexandria mentions [f6], that it was written by Cerinthus the heretic, when his heresies concerning the divinity and humanity of Christ are most strongly refuted in it. What seems to have led to such a thought is, that the account of the thousand years' reign, and the descent of the new Jerusalem from heaven, seemed to favour the judaism of this man, and his carnal notions of an earthly paradise, whereas they have no such tendency. And as for its being written by another John, who is said to be presbyter at Ephesus, after the apostle, it is not certain there ever was such a man; and if there was, he must be too late to be the writer of this book; nor to him can the above characters agree. What is observed in favour of him, that the penman of this book is called, in the title, John the divine, and not the evangelist, or apostle, will do him no service; for to whom does this character so well agree, as to the Evangelist John, who wrote of divine things in so divine a manner, and particularly concerning the divinity of Christ? hence this book was sometimes called ψεολογια, “Divinity” [f7]: besides, the title of the book is not original, but is what has been affixed to it by others, and varies; for in the Complutensian edition it runs thus,

"the Revelation of the holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Divine."

In the Vulgate Latin version it is called the Apocalypse of the blessed John the Apostle; and in the Syriac version, the Revelation which was made to John the Evangelist; and in the Arabic version, the Vision of John, the Apostle and Evangelist, to wit, the Apocalypse. All which acknowledge the Apostle John to be the writer of it, and show the sense of the ancients concerning it. Nor is it of any moment what is alleged, that this writer makes mention of his name several times, whereas it was usual with John, both in his Gospel and epistles, to conceal his name; since there is a wide difference between writing an history and epistles to friends, and prophecy which requires the author's name, on whom the authority and truth of the prophecy greatly depend: and so likewise the disagreement of style observed in this book, with the other writings of John, has no force in it; since the prophetic style is always different from an historical and epistolary one; and yet, after all, in many things, there is an agreement; John in this, as in his other writings, speaks of Christ as the Word and Son of God and under the character of the Lamb; and likewise the following: passages may be compared together, as (Revelation 1:2) with (John 19:35) and (1 John 1:1, 2) (Revelation 1:5) with (1 John 1:7). All which being observed there no room to doubt, neither of the writer nor of the authority of this book; especially when the agreement of the doctrine contained in it with other parts of the Scripture, the majesty of its style, and above all the many prophecies of things to come to pass in it, several of which have been already fulfilled, are considered; and though it was called in question and rejected by some heretical men, because some things in it did not suit with their tenets, yet we have not the least reason to doubt of its being authentic who have lived to see so much of it already accomplished and which could come from no other but God. As for the time of its writing this is not agreed upon on all hands; the place where, seems to be the isle of Patmos, which yet some question. Some think it was written in the times of Claudius Caesar[f8], before the destruction of Jerusalem. In the title of the Syriac version, this revelation is said to be made to John in the isle of Patmos, into which he was cast by Nero Caesar. But the more commonly received opinion is, that he had this vision there, at the latter end of Domitian's reign[f9] by whom he was there banished, about the year 95, or 96. But be this as it will, the book is certainly of divine authority, and exceeding useful and instructive; and contains in it the

most momentous and important doctrines of the Gospel, concerning a trinity of persons in the Godhead, the deity and sonship of Christ, the divinity and personality of the Spirit, the offices of Christ, the state and condition of man by nature, justification, pardon, and reconciliation by the blood of Christ; and it recommends the several duties of religion, and encourages to the exercise of every grace and gives a very particular account of the rise, power, and fall of antichrist, and of the state of the church of Christ in all the periods of time to the end of the world. And though it is written in an uncommon style, yet may be understood, by the use of proper means, as by prayer and meditation, by comparing it with other prophetic writings, and the history of past times, by which many things in it will appear to have had their accomplishment; and it ought to be observed, that it is a revelation, and not a hidden thing; that it is now not a sealed book, but an open one; and that such are pronounced blessed that read and hear it, and observe the things in it, (Revelation 1:3); and which is no small encouragement to attempt an explanation of it.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 1

This chapter contains the preface and introduction to the book, and the first vision in it. The preface begins with the title of the book, in which the subject matter of it is pointed at, a Revelation; the author of it, Jesus Christ, who had it from his Father; the minister of it, an angel: the person to whom it was made known, described by his name, office, and the testimony he bore to Christ, his Gospel, and to whatever he saw; and for encouragement to persons to read, hear, and observe it, happiness is pronounced to them (<66 01 01>Revelation 1:1-3); the inscription of the book follows, in which are the name of the writer, and the place where the churches to whom it is inscribed were, with a salutation of them; in which grace and peace are wished for them, from God the Father, from the Holy Spirit, and from Jesus Christ; who is described by characters expressing his prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices, and by the benefits, favours, and honours bestowed by him on his people, to whom a doxology or ascription of glory is made, (<66 01 04>Revelation 1:4-6); who is further described, first by his future visible coming in the clouds, which will greatly affect the inhabitants of the earth, and then by himself, as the eternal and almighty God, (<66 01 07>Revelation 1:7,8); and in order to introduce the vision, hereafter related in this chapter, he that saw it gives an account of himself, by his name, by his relation to the churches, and by his partnership with them in affliction, and of the place he was in; and for what, and of the time when he had the vision, and the frame he was in, and what awakened his attention to it, (<66 01 09>Revelation 1:9-11); and how, that adverting to it he saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of them one like the son of man, who is described by his clothes and girdle, by his head, hair, and eyes, by his feet and voice, by what he had in his right hand, and by what went out of his mouth, and by his face shining like the sun in its strength, (<66 01 12>Revelation 1:12-16), next is related the effect this vision had on. John, who upon it fell down as one dead, but was comforted by Christ, laying his right hand on him, and telling him who he was, and bidding him write what he had seen, or should see, (<66 01 17>Revelation 1:17-19); and the chapter is concluded with

an interpretation of the mystery of the seven stars, and the seven candlesticks, (Revelation 1:20).

Ver. 1. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, etc.] Either of which he is the author: for it was he that sent and showed it by his angel to John; it was he, the lion of the tribe of Judah, that took the book, and opened the seals of it, and which is a very considerable proof of his deity; since none but God could foreknow and foretell things to come, or declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet, as is done in this book: or of which he is the subject; for it treats much of his person, offices, and grace, and of Christ mystical, of the state of his church, in the several ages of time; or it is that revelation which was first made unto him, to which sense the following words incline:

which God gave unto him; not to him as he is God, for as such he is omniscient, and foreknew whatever would come to pass, and needed no revelation to be made to him, but as he was man and Mediator; and this was given him by God the Father, and put into his hands, to make known as being a part of the administration of his prophetic office: the end of its being given him was,

to show unto his servant things which must shortly come to pass: the Arabic version adds, “in future ages”; things that were to be hereafter, the accomplishment of which was necessary, because of the certain and unalterable decree of God, the good of his people, and his own glory; and these were to come to pass quickly, in a very little time; not that they would all be fulfilled in a short space of time, for there are some things not fulfilled yet, though it is nineteen hundred years ago and more, since this revelation was made; and we are sure there are some things that will not be accomplished till a thousand years hence, and more, for the millennium is not yet begun; and after that is ended, there is to be a second resurrection, and a destruction of the Gog and Magog army; but the sense is, that these things should very quickly begin to be fulfilled, and from thenceforward go on fulfilling till all were accomplished. Now to show, to represent these things, in a clear manner, as the nature of them would admit of, to the servants of Christ, all true believers, read and hear and diligently observe them, and especially to the ministers of the Gospel, whose business is to search into them, and point them out to and particularly to his servant John, was this revelation made by Christ, who immediately answered this end:

and he sent, and signified [it] by his angel unto servant John; he who is the Lord of angels, and to whom they are ministering spirits, sometimes sent one angel and sometimes another; and by various emblems, signs, and visions, represented and set before John, a faithful servant, and a beloved disciple of his, the whole of this revelation.

Ver. 2. *Who bore record of the word of God*, etc.] Of the essential and eternal Word of God, his only begotten Son; as John the apostle did in his Gospel, and in his epistles, and also in this book; and which is a clear evidence of his being the writer of it.

And of the testimony of Jesus Christ; that is, the Gospel, which testifies of the person of Christ, of the truth of his divinity, and reality of his human nature; of the union of the two natures, divine and human, his person: of his several offices, of prophet, priest and King; of what he did and suffered for his people; and of the blessings of grace which they receive by him:

and of all things that he saw; with his bodily eyes, as the human body of Christ, the miracles he wrought in it, the transfiguration of it on the mount, the crucifixion of it, and the piercing of it with a spear, and the resurrection of it from the dead; and also the visions recorded in this book; and such a faithful witness serves greatly to confirm the authority of this book, and to recommend the perusal of it. The Complutensian edition and the Arabic version read, “which are, and which shall”, or “must be hereafter”, as in (<66019>Revelation 1:19).

Ver. 3. *Blessed [is] he that readeth*, etc.] This book the Revelation, privately, in his closet or family, carefully and diligently, with a desire of understanding it; or publicly in the church of God, and endeavours open and explain it to others; and may allude to the reading of the law and the prophets in the synagogues, which were not barely read, but expounded; (see <441315>Acts 13:15 15:21); and the rather this may be thought to be the sense of the words, since there is a change of number in the next clause,

and they that hear the words of this prophecy; that listen attentively to the reading and exposition of this book, and have ears to hear, so as to understand the prophecies contained in it: for the whole, when delivered to John, was a prophecy of things to come: but some versions read the number alike in both clauses; as either, “blessed is he that readeth, and he that heareth”, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; or “blessed are they that read, and they that hear”, as the Arabic version:

and keep those things which are written therein; the last version adds, “concerning this frail world”; who not only read, and hear, but put in practice what they read and hear; for there are some things in this book which are of a practical nature, especially in the epistles to the seven churches; or the sense is, happy are those persons that observe, and take notice of what is written herein, and meditate upon them, and well weigh them in their minds, and retain them in their memories. Now, though eternal happiness does not depend upon, nor is procured by any of these means, as reading, hearing, and observing; yet there is a real happiness, a true pleasure, that does attend these things, which may stir up to a regard unto them; and for which purpose the following words are added:

for the time [is] at hand; when thee things should begin to be fulfilled.

Ver. 4. *John to the seven churches which are in Asia*, etc.] In lesser Asia; their names are mentioned in (Revelation 1:11);

grace [be] unto you, and peace; which is the common salutation of the apostles in all their epistles, and includes all blessings of grace, and all prosperity, inward and outward: (see Gill on “ Romans 1:7”). The persons from whom they are wished are very particularly described,

from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; which some understand of the whole Trinity; the Father by him “which is”, being the I am that I am; the Son by him “which was”, which was with God the Father, and was God; and the Spirit by him “which is to come”, who was promised to come from the Father and the Son, as a Comforter, and the Spirit of truth: others think Christ is here only intended, as he is in (Revelation 1:8) by the same expressions; and is he “which is”, since before Abraham he was the “I am”; and he “which was”, the eternal Logos or Word; and “is to come”, as the Judge of quick and dead. But rather this is to be understood of the first Person, of God the Father; and the phrases are expressive both of his eternity, he being God from everlasting to everlasting; and of his immutability, he being now what he always was, and will be what he now is, and ever was, without any variableness, or shadow of turning: they are a periphrasis, and an explanation of the word “Jehovah”, which includes all tenses, past, present, and to come. So the Jews explain this name in (Exodus 3:14);

> "Says R. Isaac [f10], the holy blessed God said to Moses, Say unto them, I am he that was, and I am he that now is, and I am he that is to come, wherefore hyha is written three times."

And such a periphrasis of God is frequent in their writings [f11].

And from the seven spirits which are before his throne; either before the throne of God the Father; or, as the Ethiopic version reads, "before the throne of the Lord Jesus Christ"; by whom are meant not angels, though these are spirits, and stand before the throne of God, and are ready to do his will: this is the sense of some interpreters, who think such a number of them is mentioned with reference to the seven angels of the churches; or to the seven last "Sephirot", or numbers in the Cabalistic tree of the Jews; the three first they suppose design the three Persons in the Godhead, expressed in the preceding clause, and the seven last the whole company of angels: or to the seven principal angels the Jews speak of. Indeed, in the Apocrypha,

> "I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One." (Tobit 12:15)

Raphael is said to be one of the seven angels; but it does not appear to be a generally received notion of theirs that there were seven principal angels. The Chaldee paraphrase on (Genesis 11:7) is misunderstood by Mr. Mede, for not "seven", but "seventy angels" are there addressed. It was usual with the Jews only to speak of four principal angels, who stand round about the throne of God; and their names are Michael, Uriel, Gabriel, and Raphael; according to them, Michael stands at his right hand, Uriel at his left, Gabriel before him, and Raphael behind him [f12]. However, it does not seem likely that angels should be placed in such a situation between the divine Persons, the Father and the Son; and still less that grace and peace should be wished for from them, as from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ; and that any countenance should be given to angel worship, in a book in which angels are so often represented as worshippers, and in which worship is more than once forbidden them, and that by themselves: but by these seven spirits are intended the Holy Spirit of God, who is one in his person, but his gifts and graces are various; and therefore he is signified by this number, because of the fulness and perfection of them, and with respect to the seven churches, over whom he presided, whom he influenced, and sanctified, and filled, and enriched with his gifts and graces.

Ver. 5. *And from Jesus Christ*, etc.] Who, though the second Person in the Trinity, is mentioned last, because many things were to be said of him; and who is described in all his offices: in his prophetic office,

the faithful witness; as he is of his Father, of his mind and will, with respect to doctrine and worship; of his truth and faithfulness in his promises; and of his love, grace, and mercy, to his chosen; and of himself, of his true deity, proper sonship, and perfect equality with the Father; of his Messiahship, and of salvation through his obedience, sufferings, and death; and of all truth in general, to which he has bore a faithful testimony several ways, in his ministry, by his miracles, at his death, and by the shedding of his blood to seal it; by his Spirit since, and by the ministers of his word: he is described in his priestly office by

the first begotten of the dead: being the first that rose from the dead by his own power, and to an immortal life; for though some few were raised before him, yet not by themselves, nor to live for ever, but to die again. Moreover, he is the firstfruits of the resurrection, the pledge and earnest of it, as well as the efficient cause and exemplar of it. This character supposes that he died, as he did, for the sins of his people; and that he rose again from the dead, as he did, for their justification; and that he rose first as their head and representative, and opened the way of life for them. And he is described in his kingly office, for it follows,

and the Prince of the kings of the earth: which is not to be understood figuratively of the saints, who have power over sin, Satan, and the world, through the efficacious grace of Christ, and of whom he is Prince or King; but literally of the kings and princes of this world, over whom Christ is King and Lord, who receive their crowns and kingdoms from him, and rule by him, and are accountable to him, as they one day must be. Next follows a doxology, or an ascription of glory to him,

unto him that hath loved us; his own, his people, his church, his chosen, and who are given him by his Father; these he has loved with an everlasting and unchangeable love, with a love of complacency and delight, which passes knowledge, and will never end: and which he has shown in espousing their persons, undertaking their cause, assuming their nature, and in nothing more than in giving himself for them as a propitiatory sacrifice, or in dying and shedding his precious blood for them, as is next expressed:

and washed us from our sins in his own blood; which shows that these persons were loved before washed; they were not first washed, and then loved, but first loved, and then washed. Love was the cause of washing, and not washing the cause of love; hence it appears that they were in themselves filthy, and unclean through sin; and that they could not cleanse themselves by anything they could do; and that such was the love of Christ to them, that he shed his precious blood for them, which is a fountain opened, to wash in for sin, and which cleanses from all sin. This is to be understood, not of the sanctification of their natures, which is the work of the Spirit, but of atonement for their sins, and justification from them by the blood of Christ, whereby they are so removed, that they are all fair, and without spot. It is afterwards said, that these same persons are made priests; and it may be observed, that the priests were always washed, before they performed their service, as such [f13]. The Alexandrian copy and the Syriac and Arabic versions read, "and hath loosed us from our sins in", or "by his blood"; that is, from the guilt of them, which was bound upon them.

Ver. 6. *And hath made us kings and priests*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and Complutensian edition, read, "a kingdom, priests"; and the Vulgate Latin version, "a kingdom and priests"; and the Arabic version, "a kingdom of priesthood"; reference seems to be had to (<2Q06>Exodus 19:6): "and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests"; which the Jerusalem Targum renders, "ye shall be unto me", ^ynhkw ^ykl m, "kings and priests"; and so the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases it thus, "and ye shall be before me", ^ykl m, "kings" crowned with a crown, ^ynhkw, "and priests" ministering. Hence it is a common saying with the Jews, that all Israelites are the sons of kings [f14]; and sometimes their doctors are called hrwt ykl m, "kings of the law" [f15]: and they ascribe the same thing to the word of the Lord as is here attributed to Jesus Christ: so the Targum of Jonathan on (<5813>Deuteronomy 28:13) paraphrases the words;

> "the word of the Lord shall appoint or constitute you kings, and not private persons."

Likewise they say [f16]

> "that even a Gentile, if he studies in the law, is lwdg ^hkk, "as an high priest"."

All which may serve to show to what the reference is had in the text, and from whence the language is taken. But the words are used in a higher and greater sense. The saints are made “kings” by Christ; they are so now; they have received a kingdom of grace, which cannot be taken away; and they have the power of kings over sin, Satan, and the world, and all their enemies; and they live and fare like kings, and are clothed like them, in rich apparel, the righteousness of Christ; and are attended as kings, angels being their lifeguards; and they will appear much more so hereafter, when they shall reign on earth with Christ a thousand years, shall sit upon the same throne, and have a crown of life and righteousness given them, and at last be introduced into the kingdom of glory. And they become such by being the sons of God, which power and privilege they receive from Christ, and so are heirs of God, and joint heirs with him, and by being united to him. And he also makes them “priests” to offer up the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, and those of a broken heart, and of a contrite spirit, and even their souls and bodies, as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice unto God, by anointing and sanctifying them by his Spirit: and they are made such by him

to God, and his Father; not to men, nor to angels. Now to him that has shown so much love, and bestowed such high favours and honours, is the following ascription made,

to him [be] glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen. The glory of his deity, and of all his offices; of his being the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth; and of all the benefits and blessings, favours and honours, received from him by his people: and “dominion”; over all creatures, and over all his saints, and especially in his kingdom, in the last days, which will be an everlasting one; and which is continually to be wished and prayed for, that it would come, and come quickly. “Amen”; so let it be, and so it shall be.

Ver. 7. *Behold he cometh with clouds*, etc.] John carries on the account of Christ in his kingly office, one branch of which is to execute judgment; and describes him by a future coming of his, which cannot be understood of his coming to take vengeance on the Jews, at the time of Jerusalem's destruction, though that is sometimes expressed in such language, and with such circumstances, as here; (see <4240>Matthew 24:30 26:64); because if this revelation was made to John, in the latter end of Domitian's reign, as is commonly reported by the ancients, and in the year 95 or 96, as

chronologers generally place it, it must be upwards of twenty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and therefore cannot relate to that; nor to his coming in a spiritual sense to convert the Jews in the latter day; for this coming is personal, and with clouds, when he will be seen by every eye; all which circumstances do not so well agree with that; besides, all the kindreds of the earth will not lament on that account: the wicked will take little notice of it, the tribes of the Jews will rejoice at it, and so will all the converted Gentiles: it is better therefore to understand this of Christ's second coming to judge the quick and dead, which is represented as just at hand, to denote the certainty of it; and a "behold" is prefixed to it, to excite attention, and to denote the importance of it: things of great moment, and very surprising, will then be done; Christ will appear in great glory and majesty, the dead in Christ will be raised, Christ's personal kingdom will take place, and the general judgment come on. The manner of his coming will be "with clouds"; either figuratively, with angels, who will attend him both for grandeur and service, or literally, in the clouds of heaven; he shall descend in like manner as he ascended, and as Daniel prophesied he should, (<20713>Daniel 7:13). Hence, one of the names of the Messiah, with the Jews, is, ynn[, "Anani" [f17], which signifies "clouds"; and his coming is so described, both to denote the grand and magnificent manner, in which he will come, making the clouds his chariots; and to strike terror into his enemies, clouds and darkness being about him, thunder and lightning breaking out of them, as tokens of that vengeance he comes to take upon them; as also the visibility of his coming, he shall descend from the third heaven, where he now is, into the airy heaven, and sit upon the clouds, as on his throne, and be visible to all: hence it follows,

and every eye shall see him; that is, everyone that has eyes shall see him, or all men shall see him; the righteous shall see him, and be glad; they shall see him in his glory, as he is, and for themselves, and be satisfied; they shall rejoice at the sight of him; they will be filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: but the wicked will see him and tremble; they will be filled with the utmost consternation and astonishment; they will not be able to bear the sight of him; they will flee from him, and call to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from his face.

And they [also] which pierced him; his hands, feet, and side, when they crucified him; both the Roman soldiers, who actually did it, and the body of the Jewish nation, the rulers and common people, who consented to it, and

at whose instigation it was done; these, being raised from the dead, shall see him with their bodily eyes, whom they so used.

And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him; all the wicked, in the several parts of the world, will lament, and wring their hands, and express the inward terror and horror of their minds, at his appearing; they will fear his resentment of all their wicked words and actions; will dread his wrath, and tremble at his righteous judgment:

even so, Amen, says John, and so say all true believers; what the wicked lament, they rejoice at; they desire the coming of Christ, they love it, look and long for it; they believe it shall be, and wish it may be quickly, as in (<66>Revelation 22:20); This expression of faith in, and desire after the coming of Christ, is signified by two words, the one Greek and the other Hebrew; suggesting, that this is an article of faith among all the saints of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, and is what they are wishing and waiting for.

Ver. 8. *I am Alpha and Omega*, etc.] These are the words of Christ himself, appearing at once, and confirming what John had said of him, concerning his person, offices, and future coming: Alpha is the first letter, and Omega the last in the Greek alphabet, and signifies that Christ is the first and the last, as it is interpreted in (<66>Revelation 1:11,17), and is a character often given to the divine Being in prophetic writings; (see <23>Isaiah 41:4 44:6 48:12); and is no small proof of the proper deity of Christ. Alpha is used by the Jews for the chief of persons or things;

> “Macmas and Mezonicha (names of places) are tlsl apla, “Alpha for fine flour”;”

that is, the best fine flour is there, they are the chief places for it: and again,

> “Tekoah is ˆmçl apla, “Alpha for oil”,”

or the chief place for oil; the best oil was to be had there [f18]: so Christ, he is the Alpha, the chief as to his divine nature, being God over all, blessed for ever; and in his divine sonship, none, angels or men, are in such sense the Son of God as he is; and in all his offices, of prophet, priest, and King; he is the prophet, the great prophet of the church, never man spake like him, or taught as he did; he is the most excellent priest, that exceeds Aaron and all his sons, having an unchangeable priesthood; and he is the King of kings, and Lord of lords; he has the chief place in the church, he is the head of it, and has in all things the preeminence; he is the chief in honour and

dignity, is at the right hand of God, and has a name above every name: he also in some sense may be said to be the Omega, the last and the lowest; as in his state of humiliation, he was not only made lower than the angels, but than man; he was despised and rejected of men, and scarcely reckoned a man, a worm, and no man; and he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. Moreover, these letters, Alpha and Omega, being the first and the last in the alphabet, may stand for the whole; and it seems to be a proverbial expression taken from the Jews, who use the phrase, from Aleph to Tau, for the whole of any thing, which two letters in the Hebrew alphabet stand in the same place as these; accordingly the Syriac version renders it Olaph and Tau; and the Arabic version Aleph and Ye. It is said in (Ezekiel 9:6), "begin at my sanctuary";

> "R. Joseph taught, do not read "my sanctuary", but "sanctified ones", these are the children of men who confirm "the whole law", wyt d[w Plam, "from Aleph to Tau";"

the same as from Alpha to Omega, or from one end to the other: and a little after,

> "says R. Levi, Tau is the end of the seal of the holy blessed God, for says R. Chanina, the seal of the holy blessed God is tma, "truth": says R. Samuel bar Nachmani, these are the children of men who confirm the whole law "from Aleph to Tau" [f19]."

So Christ, he is the Alpha and Omega, the first and last, the chief, the whole of things; as of the covenant of grace, he is the first and last of it, he is the Mediator, surety, and messenger of it, and the ratifier and confirmer of it, he is the covenant itself, all its blessings and promises are in him; he is the sum and substance of the Scriptures, both of the law and of the Gospel; he is the fulfilling end of the law, and he is the subject matter of the Gospel; he stands in the first verse in Genesis, and in the last of the Revelation; he is the Alpha and Omega, the first and last, the whole and all in the business of salvation, in the affair of justification before God, in the sanctification of his people, in their adoption, and eternal glorification; he stands first and last in the book of God's purposes and decrees, in the book of the covenant, in the book of the creatures, or creation, being the first cause, and last end of all things, in the book of Providence, and in the book of the Scriptures: likewise, as these two letters include all the rest, this phrase

may be expressive of the perfection of Christ, who as God has the fulness of the Godhead, all the perfections of the divine nature in him; and, as man, is in all things made like unto his brethren; and, as Mediator, has all fulness of power, wisdom, grace, and righteousness in him, in whom all the saints are complete; and this may also denote his eternity, he having none before him, nor any after him; and which also is signified by some other following expressions:

the beginning and the ending; the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, leave out this; which seems to be explanative of the former clause, Alpha being the beginning of the alphabet, and Omega the ending of it; and properly belongs to Christ, who knows no beginning, nor will he have any end with respect to time, being from everlasting to everlasting; and agrees with him as the first cause of all things, both of the old and new creation, and the last end to which they are all referred, being made for his pleasure, honour, and glory: these things now

saith the Lord; that is, the Lord Jesus Christ; the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “the Lord God”; and the Ethiopic version only God:

which is, and which was, and which is to come; who is God over all, “was” God from all eternity, and is to come as such; which he will show by: his omniscience and omnipotence, displayed in the judgment of the world: who “is” now a Saviour of all that come to God by him; “was” so under the Old Testament dispensation, being the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and “is to come”, as such, and shall appear a second time unto salvation to them that look for him: particularly this phrase is expressive of the eternity of Christ, who is, was, and ever will be; and of his immutability, who is the same he was, and will be for ever the same he is, and was, unchangeable in his person, in his love, and in the virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; he is the same today, yesterday, and for ever. This same phrase is used of God the Father in (Revelation 1:4); and is a further proof of the deity of Christ; and which is still more confirmed by the following character,

the Almighty; as he appears to be, by creating all things but of nothing; by upholding all creatures in their beings; by the miracles he wrought on earth; by the resurrection of himself from the dead; by obtaining eternal redemption for his people; and by his having the care and government of

them upon him, whom he keeps, upholds, bears, and carries to the end, through all their infirmities, afflictions, temptations, and trials.

Ver. 9. *I, John, who also am your brother*, etc.] Here begins the narrative of the visions and prophecies of this book, the former verses containing a general preface to the whole; and this, and the two following verses, are the introduction to the first vision, which John saw; who describes himself by his name, "I John", the evangelist and apostle, a servant of Christ, and a beloved disciple of his; one that was well known to the seven churches to whom he writes, and who had no reason to doubt of his fidelity in the account he gives them; and also by his relation to them as a "brother", not in a natural, but in a spiritual sense, they and he belonging to that family that is named of Christ, to the household of God, and of faith, and having one and the same Father, even God: thus, though he was an elder, an evangelist, yea, an apostle by office, yet he puts himself on a level with the several members of these churches, as he was a believer in Christ:

and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ; many are the afflictions and tribulations of the saints; these lie in the way to the kingdom; and they are companions and partners with one another in them, both by enduring the same, and by their sympathy and compassion with each other; and as they go sharers in the troubles of this life, so they do, and shall in the kingdom; in the kingdom of grace now, being all of them made kings and priests unto God, and in the kingdom of Christ on earth, where they will all reign with him a thousand years, and in the kingdom of glory, where they shall reign together to all eternity; and in the mean while, they join in the exercise of the grace of patience, of which Christ is the author, exemplar, and object; they are directed by the Spirit of God into a patient waiting for Christ, or a patient expectation of his coming, kingdom, and glory: the Alexandrian copy reads, "patience in Christ"; and the Complutensian edition, "patience in Christ Jesus": this same person John, who gives this account of himself,

was in the isle that is called Patmos; but now "Palmosa"; it is one of the islands of the Cyclades, in the Archipelago, or Icarian sea, and sometimes called the Aegean sea, and had its name from the turpentine trees in it; it is, as Pliny [f20] says, about thirty miles in circumference; and it lay next to the churches on the continent, and is said to be about forty miles southwest of Ephesus, from whence John came thither, and to which church he writes first; how he came here he does not say, concealing, through modesty, his

sufferings; he did not come here of his own accord; Ignatius says [f21], John εφυγαδευετο, “was banished to Patmos”: by Domitian emperor of Rome, as Irenaeus says [f22], at the latter end of his reign, about the year 95 or 96; and, as Tertullian [f23] after he had been cast into a vessel of flaming oil, where he got no hurt: and this banishment was not for any immorality, and capital sin he had committed, but

for the word of God; for believing in Christ, the essential Word of God, and for professing and bearing record of him, both in preaching and writing:

and for the testimony of Jesus; for the Gospel of Christ, (see <66012>Revelation 1:2); for embracing it, adhering to it, and publishing it: it is generally thought that John wrote his Revelation in this isle, though some think it is not to be concluded from these words, but the contrary that he had been here, but now was not, but at Ephesus, where he wrote what he had a vision of there.

Ver. 10. *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day*, etc.] Not on the Jewish sabbath, which was now abolished, nor was that ever called the Lord's day, and had John meant that, he would have said on the sabbath day; much less the Jewish passover, but the first day of the week is designed; so the Ethiopic version renders it “on the first day”; and is so called just as the ordinance of the supper is called the Lord's supper, being instituted by the Lord, and the Lord's table, (<46021>1 Corinthians 10:21 11:20), and that because it was the day in which our Lord rose from the dead, (<41609>Mark 16:9); and in which he appeared at different times to his disciples, (<43019>John 20:19,26), and which the primitive churches set apart for his worship and service, and on which they met together to hear the word, and attend on ordinances, (<44007>Acts 20:7 <46601>1 Corinthians 16:1); and Justin Martyr [f24] tells us, who lived within about fifty years after this time, that on the day called τη του ηλιου ημερα, “Sunday”, (by the Greeks,) the Christians met together in one place, and read the Scriptures, and prayed together, and administered the ordinance of the supper; and this, he adds, was the first day in which God created the World, and our Saviour Jesus Christ rose from the dead; yea, Barnabas [f25], the companion of the Apostle Paul, calls this day the eighth day, in distinction from the seventh day sabbath of the Jews, and which he says is the beginning of another world; and therefore we keep the eighth day, adds he, joyfully, in which Jesus rose from the dead, and being manifested, ascended unto heaven: and this day was

known by the ancients by the name of “the Lord's day”; as by Ignatius [f26], Irenaeus [f27], Tertullian [f28], Origen [f29], and others; for it must be some day that was known by this name, otherwise it is mentioned to no purpose, because it would not be distinctive from others; for which reason it cannot merely design the day in which John saw this vision, because the Lord appeared on it to him, for this would not distinguish it from any other day. Some have conjectured that this was not the weekly Lord's day observed by the Christians, but the anniversary of Christ's resurrection; and so the Ethiopians still call Easter “Schambatah Crostos”, the sabbath of Christ: to understand it of the former is best. Now, though John was driven from the house and worship of God, and could not join with the saints in the public worship of that day; yet he was employed in spiritual contemplations and exercises, and was under a more than ordinary influence of the Spirit of God; and his spirit or soul was wholly intent upon, and taken up with divine and spiritual things, with visions and representations that were made unto his mind, which he perceived in his spirit, and not with the organs of his body; he was in an ecstasy of spirit, and knew not scarcely whether he was in the body or out of it:

and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet; which was the voice of the Son of God, as appears by what it uttered, (Revelation 1:11); and is afterwards said to be as the sound of many waters; and it was behind him, as in (Isaiah 30:21), it came to him at an unawares, and surprised him, while he was in deep meditation on spiritual things: and it was a very “great” one; it was the voice of a great person, of the Son of God, and expressed great things, and was very sonorous and loud, it was like the sound of a trumpet; and this was partly to awaken the attention of John to it, and partly to express the certainty of the relation he gives of what it said; had it been a low muttering voice, it might be questioned whether John rightly understood it, and whether he might not be mistaken in the account of what he heard; but it being so loud and clear, there is no room for such a doubt.

Ver. 11. *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last*, etc.] These characters, which are repeated here, (see Gill on “Revelation 1:8”); are left out in the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; but are very fitly retained, to point out the person that speaks; to express his dignity, deity, and eternity; to excite the attention of John, and to give weight to what he said:

and, what thou seest, write in a book; that it might remain, and be read of all men, and be profitable to the churches in the then present age, and in all future ones:

and send [it] unto the seven churches which are in Asia; from whence it appears, that not only the seven following epistles were sent to the churches, but that after John had written in a book the account of all the visions that he saw, the whole was sent unto them, for their use and benefit; and who are particularly named:

unto Ephesus; which was a city of Ionia, and which Pliny calls [f30] the work of the Amazons, and the light of Asia; it was famous for the temple of Diana, but more so for having a church of Christ in it: hither the Apostle Paul came and preached, and continued for the space of two years; where a very famous church was planted by him, and proper officers appointed, to whom he wrote a very excellent epistle: this is now a miserable desolate place, not a city, but a village; and is called by the Turks, Aiasalik: of this place and church; (see Gill on "<44819>Acts 18:19"), (see Gill on "<44017>Acts 20:17");

and unto Smyrna; another city of Ionia, so called from Smyrna, the wife of Theseus [f31], the builder of it; or from Smyrna, an Amazon [f32], the relies of whose marble bust are to be seen there to this day: it lies about forty six miles from Ephesus, and is by the Turks now called Esmir, and is still a place famous, not for pompous buildings, but for number of inhabitants, riches, and commerce:

and unto Pergamos; this was a city of Mysia, situated by the river Caicus, formerly the seat of the kings of Attalia, and was bequeathed by Attalus, their last king, to the Romans: it is famous for being the native place of Galen the physician, and of Apollodorus the rhetorician, master to Augustus Caesar, and for the invention of parchment in it, from whence it seems to have its name: it is now called by the Turks Bergamo, and is almost sixty four miles from Smyrna:

and unto Thyatira; a city of Lydia, near the river Lycus, formerly called Pelopia, and Euhippia, and now, by the Turks, Ak Hissar, or "the white camp", and is distant from Pergamos about forty eight miles; (see Gill on "<44614>Acts 16:14");

and unto Sardis; this was another city of Lydia, situated at the side of Mount Tmolus, it was the metropolis of Lydia, and the seat of King

Croesus, and is now called, by the Turks, Sart; and instead of a famous city, it is now an obscure little village, of mean houses, and scarce any other inhabitants in it than shepherds and cow keepers, and is thirty three miles from Thyatira:

and unto Philadelphia; another city of Lydia, situated at the foot of Mount Tmolus; it had its name from Attalus Philadelphus, the builder of it; it is now called, by the Turks, Alah Shahr, or "the fair city", though there is nothing beautiful or magnificent in it; it is distant from Thyatira about twenty seven miles:

and unto Laodicea; another city of Lydia, near the river Lycus, first named Diospolis, afterwards Rhoas, and is now, by the Turks, called Eski Hissar, or "the old camp"; and is inhabited by none, unless it be in the night, by wolves, foxes, and jackals, as our countryman Dr. Smith affirms, in his "Notitia" of the seven churches of Asia; from whom I have taken the account of these cities as they now are, and the rest from Pliny and Ptolomy chiefly.

Ver. 12. *And I turned to see the voice that spake with me*, etc.] The Complutensian edition reads, "and there I turned": and so the Arabic version; that is, to see who it was that spoke, from whom the voice came, and by whom it was uttered; (see <2Exodus 20:18>);

and being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; which represented the seven churches, (<Revelation 1:20>); in allusion to the seven lamps in the candlestick of the sanctuary, (<Exodus 25:37> <Zechariah 4:2>); compared to "candlesticks", for the use of them, which is to hold forth light; these have none of themselves, but what is put into them, and being put into them, they hold it forth; so the churches of Christ have no light of themselves, but what is put into them; and the light which is put into them, is not the mere light of nature, nor the law of Moses, but the Gospel of Christ; which dispels darkness, and is the means of enlightening sinners, and gives light to saints, by which they walk and work; and this light is put into the churches by Christ, whose the Gospel is, and who is himself come a light into the world; and being put here by him, it is held forth by them, especially by the ministers of it, who are the lights of the world, both by their ministry, and in their lives and conversations: and they are compared to "golden" candlesticks, because of their excellency, preciousness, and value, in the esteem of Christ; and for their brightness and purity in doctrine, discipline, and life; and for their splendour, glory, and beauty; and

for their stability and duration; and though they are liable to corruption and taint, yet may be melted, refined, and purified as gold.

Ver. 13. *And in the midst of the seven candlesticks [one] like unto the son of man*, etc.] By whom is meant not an angel, for he speaks of himself as a divine Person, as the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, phrases not applicable to any created beings; and of himself also as having been dead, which angels are not capable of, and of living again, and of living for evermore, and having power over death and the grave, which no creature has; yea, he calls himself expressly the Son of God, (Revelation 1:11,17,18 2:18); so that Christ is manifestly designed, who, as a divine Person, appeared in a form like that individual human nature which was at his Father's right hand; for that human nature of his, or he as the son of man, was not in the midst of these candlesticks, or churches, but he the Son of God was in a form like to his human nature in heaven; so before his incarnation, he is said to be like unto the son of man, in (Daniel 7:13); to which there is a reference here, and not only in this, but in some other parts of the description; so after his ascension, he in a visionary way appears, not in that real human nature he assumed, but in a form like unto it, that being in heaven; but when he was here on earth he is called the son of man, and not like to one; though even such a phrase may express the truth and reality of his humanity, for who more like to the son of man than he who is so? (see John 1:14 Philippians 2:7); now Christ was seen by John in the midst of the candlesticks or churches, and among whom he walked, as in (Revelation 2:1); which is expressive of his presence in his churches, and which he has promised unto the end of the world; and of the gracious visits he makes them, and the sweet communion and conversation he indulges them with, to their joy and comfort; as well as the walks he takes among them for his own delight and pleasure; and where he is, abides and takes his turns, particularly as a priest, in which form he now appeared, as the antitype of Aaron the high priest, to him the lamps or candles in the candlesticks, to cause them to burn more brightly and clearly:

clothed with a garment down to the foot; which some understand of the righteousness of Christ; this is called a garment, a wedding garment, the best or first robe, the robe of righteousness; and is fitly compared to one, it being unto, and upon believers, put upon them, and which covers their persons, keeps them warm and comfortable, and beautifies and adorns them; and is a very beautiful, pure, and spotless robe; and reaches to the feet, covers all the members of Christ's mystical body, the meanest and

lowest, as well as the more excellent; the weakest believer as well, and as much, as the strongest: but not Christ mystical, but personal, is here represented; others therefore think that this long garment is a sign of gravity and wisdom, it being usual for men of power and authority, and learning, as the Jewish sanhedrim, Scribes and Pharisees, to wear long garments; but it seems rather to design a priestly robe; the robe of the ephod wore by the high priest is called by this name in the Septuagint version of (<02804>Exodus 28:4,31); and so it is by Josephus [f33], who speaking of the hyacinthine tunic, or robe of blue, says, this is ποδηρης, "a garment down to the foot", which in our language is called "Meeir"; rather it should be lym, "Meil", which is its Hebrew name; and so this robe is expressed by the same word here, used by Philo the Jew [f34], and by Jerom [f35]; so Maimonides [f36] says, the length of his garment was to the top of his heel: and in the habit of a priest did Christ now appear; and so he is described in his priestly office, in the midst of his churches, having made atonement for their sins by the sacrifice of himself; and now as their high priest had entered into the holiest of all with his own blood and righteousness; bore their names on his breastplate, appeared in the presence of God on their account, and ever lived to make intercession for them:

and girt about the paps with a golden girdle; as the high priest was with the girdle of the ephod, which was made of gold, of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen, (<02808>Exodus 28:8); and with which the priests were girt about the paps, or breast, as Christ is here described: it is said of the priests in (<264418>Ezekiel 44:18), "they shall not gird themselves with anything that causeth sweat"; which some render "in sweating places": and so some Jewish writers interpret it, which will serve to illustrate the present place;

> "says R. Abai [f37], (upon citing (<264418>Ezekiel 44:18)) they do not gird themselves in the place in which they sweat; according to the tradition, when they gird themselves they do not gird neither below their loins, nor above their arm holes, but over against their arm holes;"

the gloss says, upon their ribs, against their arm pit, that is, about their breast, or paps; and which is still more plainly expressed by the Targum on the above place, which paraphrases it thus,

> "they shall not gird about their loins, but they shall gird ˆwhbbl l[, "about their heart"."

So Josephus [f38] says, the high priest's garment was girt about the breast, a little below the arm holes. Christ's girdle, as a King, is the girdle of faithfulness and righteousness, which is about his loins; and his girdle, as a prophet, is the girdle of truth; but, as a priest, it is the girdle of love; it is that which has constrained him to put himself in the room and stead of his people, to assume their nature, give himself a sacrifice for them, and intercede on their behalf: this is like a girdle, round from everlasting to everlasting; is said to be "golden", because of the excellency, purity, glory, and duration of it; and because it is very strong, affectionate, and hearty, it is hid to be a girdle about the paps, near where is the heart, the seat of love; and this may also denote the power, strength, and readiness of Christ to assist and help his churches in every time of need.

Ver. 14. *His head and [his] hairs [were] white like wool, as white as snow*, etc.] In allusion to the white head and hairs of old men, said to be hoary, or like the hoar frost, and compared to an almond tree in bloom, (Ecclesiastes 12:5); and here to wool and snow for whiteness; (see Ezekiel 27:18); and according to the Jews [f39], ^bl rmx, "white wool", is the wool of a lamb just born, about which a cloth is bound, that it may not be defiled; now these metaphors are expressive of the antiquity of Christ, who is the everlasting Father, and whose goings forth were of old, even from everlasting; and of his senile gravity and prudence, for with the Ancient is wisdom; he is the wisdom of God, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid; and also of his glory and majesty, being the brightness of his Father's glory; and likewise of his true and proper deity, since this description is the same with that of the Ancient of days in (Daniel 7:9); for by his head is not here meant either God the Father, who is sometimes called the head of Christ, (1 Corinthians 11:3), nor his divine nature, which is the chief and principal in him, nor his headship over the church; nor do his hairs intend his elect, which grow upon him, and are nourished by him, and are so called for their number, weakness, and purity:

and his eyes [were] as a flame of fire: (see Daniel 10:6); which may design the omniscience of Christ, which reaches to all persons, and things, and is very searching and penetrating, and discovers and brings to light things the most dark and obscure; and also Christ's eyes of love upon his own people, which have both heat and light; Christ's love never waxes cold, and, being shed abroad in the hearts of his people, warms theirs; and in the light of his gracious countenance do they see light; and his love, like

flames of fire, melts their souls into a true and genuine repentance for sin: or else, rather his eyes of wrath and vengeance, as set upon his enemies, are here meant: which will be fierce and furious, bring swift and sudden destruction on them, before which there is no standing, and from which there is no fleeing. It is said of Augustus Caesar, that he had fiery eyes [f40].

Ver. 15. *And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace*, etc.] By which is meant, not his human nature in a suffering state; or his people, the meaner and lower parts of his mystical body, in a like state; or his apostles and ministers, who are supporters of his church, and run to and fro with spiritual knowledge, for which, though they suffer much, are permanent and glorious; but either the power of Christ in bearing up and supporting his people, in the care and government and defence of them; or his ways, works, and walks in his churches, and all his providential administrations towards them, which are holy, just, and righteous, and will be manifest; or his wrath and vengeance in treading down and trampling upon his enemies:

and his voice as the sound of many waters; meaning his Gospel, as preached by his apostles and ministers, which was heard far and near; (see <450818>Romans 10:18); and which made a great noise in the world; or his voice of vengeance on his enemies, which will be very terrible and irresistible.

Ver. 16. *And he had in his right hand seven stars*, etc.] The angels or pastors of the seven churches, (<660120>Revelation 1:20). The ministers of the Gospel are compared to stars, because of their efficient cause, God, who has made them, and fixed them in their proper place, and for his glory; and because of the matter of them, being the same with the heavens, so ministers are of the same nature with the churches; and because of their form, light, which they receive from the sun, so preachers of the Gospel receive their light from Christ; and because of their multitude and variety, so the ministers of the Gospel are many, and their gifts different; and chiefly for their usefulness, to give light to others, to direct to Christ, and point out the way of salvation, and to rule over the churches: nor was it unusual with the Jews to compare good men to stars, and to the seven stars. The Targumist [f41] says, the seven lamps in the candlestick answer to the seven stars to which the righteous are like. These are led and held in Christ's right hand; which shows that they are dear unto him, and highly valued by him; that they are his, in his possession, at his dispose, whom he uses as his instruments to do his work; and whom he upholds and sustains,

that they shall not sink under their burdens; and whom he preserves from failing, and so holds them that they shall stand fast in the faith, and not be carried away with the error of the wicked:

and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword; which designs the word of God; (see <490617>Ephesians 6:17 <581204>Hebrews 4:12); This comes out of the mouth of Christ, it is the word of God, and not of man; and is a sharp sword, contains sharp reproofs for sin, severe threatenings against it, and gives cutting convictions of it, and is a twoedged one; and by its two edges may be meant law and Gospel; the law lays open the sins of men, fills with grief and anguish for them, yea, not only wounds, but kills; and the Gospel cuts down the best in man, his wisdom, holiness, righteousness, and carnal privileges, in which he trusts; and the worst in man, teaching him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts: or the word of God may be so called, because it is a means both of saving and of destroying; it is the savour of life unto life to some, and the savour of death unto death to others; and is both an offensive and defensive weapon; it is for the defence of the saints, against Satan, false teachers, and every other enemy; and an offensive one to them, which cuts them down, and destroys them and their principles: or this may mean the judiciary sentence of Christ upon the wicked, which will be a fighting against them, and a smiting of the nations of the world; (see <660216>Revelation 2:16 19:15 <191506>Psalm 149:6); which the Jews interpret of the law [f42]:

and his countenance [was] as the sun shineth in his strength; at noonday; such was the countenance of Christ at his transfiguration, (<401702>Matthew 17:2); and designs here the manifestation of himself in the glories of his person, and in the riches of his grace; who is the sun of righteousness that arises upon his people with light, heat, joy, and comfort; see the phrase in (<070531>Judges 5:31), which the Jewish writers understand of the strength of the sun both in the summer solstice, and in the middle of the day, or at noon, at which time its heat is strongest, and it usually shines brightest; the design of the metaphor is to set forth the glory and majesty of Christ.

Ver. 17. *And when I saw him*, etc.] The glorious person here described, who was just behind him, and of whom he had a full view, being so near him:

I fell at his feet as dead; through consternation and fear, the sight was so amazing and terrible; the appearance of a divine person in any degree of majesty and glory, has had some considerable effect upon men, even upon

the best of men; but John seems to be more affected with it than any, as the vision was the more grand and illustrious: Manoah was afraid he should die, but did not fall down as dead; Ezekiel fell upon his face, but had his senses; Daniel's comeliness turned into corruption, and he retained no strength, he fainted, and fell into a deep sleep; (see <070132>Judges 13:22 <261028>Ezekiel 1:28) (<270108>Daniel 10:8,9); but John fell down at once, as dead. This panic which good men were seized with, at any more than ordinary appearance of God, or apprehension of his presence, arose from a notion that present death ensues a sight of him; hence Jacob wonders, and is thankful, that he had seen God face to face, and yet his life was preserved, (<013230>Genesis 32:30); and such an effect as here, upon the body, any uncommon discovery of the divine Being has, partly through the weakness of human nature, which in its present circumstances is not able to bear the rays and glories of a divine person; hence the resurrection of the body in power, glory, and immortality, incorruption and spirituality, is necessary to the enjoyment of God and Christ in a state of bliss and happiness to all eternity; and partly through a consciousness of sin, which ever since the fall of Adam has occasioned fear and perturbation of mind, even in the best of saints, when they have had any sense of the divine Majesty being near, in an unusual form of glory:

and he laid his right hand upon me; even the same in which he had, and held the seven stars; and which showed what an affection he had for him, in what esteem he had him, what care he took of him, and what power he would exert in lifting up, strengthening, and supporting him; for he laid not his hand on him in wrath and angers, but in love; and in order to raise him up and revive his spirits, and remove his fears; hence the Ethiopic version renders it, “and he took hold on me with his right hand, and lifted me up”; as he does all who in a spiritual sense fall at his feet; it is always safe and comfortable falling there:

saying unto me, fear not; language which John had heard from him in the days of his flesh, and might therefore be chose now on purpose that he might the sooner know who he was and be comforted; (see <401427>Matthew 14:27 <421232>Luke 12:32).

I am the first and the last; a way of speaking used by God when he is about to comfort his people, and remove their fears; (see <234104>Isaiah 41:4 44:6 48:12); and is used by Christ for the same purpose here; and so is a proof of his true and proper deity, and is expressive of his eternity, and also

of his dignity and excellency: he is the first and last in divine predestination, in the covenant of grace, in creation, in the business of salvation, and in his church, by whom, and for whom, are all things in it; he is the head of the body, the Son over his own house, and the firstborn among many brethren; and so the Alexandrian copy read, here, "the firstborn and the last". ^wçar, "the first", is a name of the Messiah with the Jews [f43]; (see Gill on "Revelation 1:8").

Ver. 18. *I [am] he that liveth*, etc.] As the eternal God, who has life in himself, originally, essentially, and inderivatively, and is the fountain and author of life to others; and who ever lived as the Mediator and Redeemer, and still does, and ever will, yea, even when he was dead as man:

and was dead; he died the death of the cross, for the sins of his people, in due time, and but once; and it was but a short time he was held under the power of death, and will never die any more:

and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; he was always alive as God, or he was always the living God, and ever will be; and he is now alive as man, and will for ever continue so; and he is alive to God, he lives by him, with him, and to his glory; and he is alive to the benefit and advantage of his redeemed ones, for whom he died; he ever lives to make intercession for them; he rose again from the dead for their justification; their being quickened together with him, and their being begotten again to a lively hope, are owing to his being alive; and as their reconciliation is by his death, so their salvation, or the application of it to them, is by his interceding life; and his resurrection is the cause of theirs: this is very fitly said to John, who was fallen as dead at the feet of Christ, and might be to animate him against the fears of death, or whatever he was to meet with on account of Christ; as well as to make himself known unto him, who had before known him, living, dying, and risen again. The word "Amen" is left out in the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; but is in others, and is rightly retained, either as an asseveration of Christ to the truth of what is before said, or as an assent of John's unto it, who was a proper witness both of the death and resurrection of Christ:

and have the keys of hell and death; or "of death and hell"; as the words are transposed in the Alexandrian copy and Complutensian edition, in the Vulgate Latin and in all the Oriental versions, agreeably to (Revelation 6:8 20:13,14), by which phrase is expressed the power of Christ over both:

his power over death is seen in taking away persons by death when he pleases, the instances of Ananias and Sapphira are proofs of this; and in delivering persons from death when near it, as the centurion's servant, Peter's wife's mother, and the nobleman's son of Capernaum; and in raising persons from the dead, as Jairus's daughter, the widow of Naam's son, and Lazarus, when he was here on earth; and in his raising up his own body when dead, and which will also appear in raising all the dead at the last day: and his power over "hell", by which may be meant the grave, or the place of the departed, and separate souls, or the place of the damned and of the devils which are there, will be seen in opening the graves at the time of the resurrection, when death and hell, or the grave, will deliver up the dead in them, at his command; and in retaining or sending out the separate souls "in hades"; and in opening the doors of hell, and casting in the wicked, and destroying them, soul and body, there; and in shutting them up, that they cannot come out from thence who are once in; and in binding Satan, and casting him into the bottomless pit, and shutting him up there, the key of which he has in his hand; and in preserving his church and people from his power and malice, so that the gates of hell cannot prevail against them. This is an expression of the sovereignty, power, and authority of Christ; and is designed to encourage and support John under his present concern and anxiety of mind about the person he saw in this vision: hrwbq lç jtpm, "the key of the grave", and of the resurrection of the dead, is frequently said by the Jews to be one of the keys which are in the hands of the holy blessed God, and his only; not in the hands of an angel or a seraph, or any other[f44].

Ver. 19. *Write the things which thou hast seen*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Complutensian edition, read, "write therefore the things", etc. meaning what he had now seen, the vision of one like to the son of man, amidst the golden candlesticks, with seven stars in his right hand, and as above described; this was what he had seen (<660112>Revelation 1:12,13,16); for it does not refer to what he had seen of Christ in the days of his flesh, but to what he had now seen in this representation of him:

and the things which are; the state of the churches of Christ in the apostolic age, and at that time signified by the Ephesian church, and that part of the Smyrnean which John lived to see:

and the things which shall be hereafter; from hence unto the end of the world, in successive generations, signified by the rest of the churches, and in the visions of the seals, trumpets, and vials.

Ver. 20. *The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand*, etc.] The sense is, that John was to write the mystery of these stars, or the mystical sense of them:

and the seven golden candlesticks; the mystery, or mysterious sense of them also; for the words are in a continued connection with (Revelation 1:19), and have respect to the following interpretation of them, and to the epistles in the following chapter, which are mystical, and prophetical of the state of the churches in all succeeding ages:

the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; that is, the seven stars which John saw in Christ's right hand, represent the angels, or pastors of the seven churches of Asia, and in them all the pastors and ministers of the churches in all the periods of time until Christ's second coming. Here it may be observed, that the ministers of the Gospel are not only compared to "stars", for which (see Gill on "Revelation 1:16"); but likewise to "angels", which signifies "messengers", as ministers are sent forth by Christ with the message of the Gospel to publish to the sons of men; and as the angels are Christ's ministering spirits, so are the preachers of the Gospel the ministers of Christ, that wait upon him and serve him in the ministry of the word, and in the administration of ordinances; and there is some agreement between them in holiness, knowledge, zeal, diligence, and watchfulness, in their work; as also they may be so called for the honour and esteem in which they are, both with Christ and his churches; and who like the angels rejoice at the conversion of sinners, and the enlargement of the interest of Christ:

and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches; represent the seven churches, of Asia, and in them all the churches of Christ, in successive ages, to the end of time; the reasons why these are signified by "candlesticks", (see Gill on "Revelation 1:12"); and that they are prophetic of the churches of Christ in the several periods of time, until he comes again, will appear from the following considerations: the whole book is called a prophecy, and a revelation of things that were shortly to come to pass, and it would be very strange, and very unsuitable to its title, should the three first chapters contain nothing prophetic in them; the characters of the divine Person under which these seven churches

are saluted, as he which is, and was, and is to come, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, show that the things written to them belong to the Gospel church state, from the beginning to the end of it, for what other reason can be given for such a peculiar use of them? the very grand and illustrious appearance of Christ, antecedent to these epistles, when compared with the appearance of God, previous to the opening of the sealed book, and the seven seals of it, may induce one to conclude, that as the latter introduces the book prophecy in this revelation, so the former introduces the church prophecy; nor does it seem that such a magnificent appearance is necessary to the bare sending of some letters of advice to some particular churches: moreover, as there are some things in these epistles too common to all the churches and ministers to be restrained to some particular ones, such as Christ's affording his presence among them, signified by his walking amidst the candlesticks, and his care of, and respect unto the ministers of the Gospel, expressed by holding seven stars in his right hand; for can it be thought that Christ only granted his presence to the seven churches in Asia? or that the pastors of those churches were the only ones Christ holds in his right hand? so there are others too particular to certain periods to belong to those churches, as that Smyrna should have a crown of life, Pergamos hidden manna and a white stone, Thyatira the morning star, and Philadelphia be delivered from a temptation that would reach all the world, and is not yet come; for which no reason can be given in the literal sense of these epistles; and it is strange that only seven churches should be sent to, and these only in Asia; why not to the churches in Africa and Europe? and these churches also, all but Ephesus, very obscure ones; why not to the churches at Antioch, Corinth, Rome, etc. and it is stranger still, if, as Epiphanius says [f45], there was no church at Thyatira till after the writing of these letters: nothing can account for all this but their being prophetic, there being something in the number, names, situation, and case of these churches, which were emblematical of the state of the church in successive periods of time; to which may be added, that the epiphonema at the close of every epistle, “he that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches”, shows that each epistle to every church is not designed for that church only, but for churches; and for what churches but for those who are represented in that period of time, since they must be unsuitable to one another? and besides, this concluding sentence shows, that what is contained in each epistle is something intricate, abstruse, and parabolical, it being only used when some such thing is delivered; (see <401115>Matthew 11:15 13:9,43). There is one

observation more to be made, and which runs through all the epistles, and that is, that the names of the several churches, and the titles which Christ assumes in writing to each, as well as the subject matter of the epistles, have respect to the several distinct periods of the church; all which will more clearly appear in the following notes upon them.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 2

This chapter contains the epistles to the churches at Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, and Thyatira. It begins with that to Ephesus, in which the sender of it describes himself by some of his characters mentioned in the preceding chapter; takes notice of some things commendable in this church, (Revelation 2:1-3), reproves her for leaving her first love; gives some advice upon it; threatens her in case of non-repentance; yet notwithstanding commends her for her detestation of some bad practices; and concludes the epistle with a phrase exciting to attention to what is written, and with a promise to them that are constant and conquering, (Revelation 2:4-7), next follows the epistle to the church at Smyrna, in which the sender assumes some of his former titles; takes notice of her works in general, and of her afflictions in particular, and of the blasphemy of others, (Revelation 2:8,9), fortifies her against a great affliction to be endured, described by its author, kind, use, and duration; and exhorts to faithfulness and constancy, with a promise of a crown of life, (Revelation 2:10), and closes the epistle in the same form as the preceding, promising security from the second death to the persevering and conquering Christian, (Revelation 2:11), and next in order is the epistle to the church at Pergamos, in which the sender takes to him one of the above characters in the description of him; observes her works and place of abode, and commends her faithfulness to him in the worst of times and places, (Revelation 2:12,13), yet exhibits a complaint against her for having, and conniving at persons of bad principles and practice, called Balaamites and Nicolaitans, (Revelation 2:14,15), exhorts to repentance, and in failure of it threatens to come and fight against them; and closes the epistle in the same manner as the two former, with a promise of hidden manna, a white stone, and a new name to him that overcomes, (Revelation 2:16,17), and the last epistle in this chapter is that to the church at Thyatira, in which the sender makes use of some other titles and characters of his before mentioned; takes notice of her good works, and yet signifies he had a controversy with her, for permitting a false prophetess to teach in her, who seduced men to fornication and idolatry, (Revelation

2:18-20), whose impenitence is complained of, and which was aggravated by having space for repentance given her, (Revelation 2:21), wherefore, in case of continuance in impenitence, he threatens both her and her followers with tribulation and death, whereby the omniscience and justice of Christ would be manifest to all the churches, (Revelation 2:22,23), and then another and better sort of men in this church are addressed, who are described as not having imbibed the doctrine of the false prophetess, and as not approving the depths of Satan, or her doctrines of devils; and these are told that no other burden should be laid on them than was, and are exhorted to hold fast what they had, until the coming of Christ, (Revelation 2:24,25), and for their encouragement to hold on to the end, many promises are made unto them respecting their power and rule over their enemies, and the happy days that they should enjoy, (Revelation 2:26-28), and the epistle is concluded with the usual epiphonema, (Revelation 2:29).

Ver. 1. *Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write*, etc.] Of the city of Ephesus, (see Gill on "Revelation 1:11") and (see Gill on "Acts 18:19"). The church here seems to have been founded by the Apostle Paul, who continued here two years, by which means all Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, (Acts 19:10); of this church, (see Gill on "Acts 20:17"); it is named first, because it was the largest, most populous, and famous, and was nearest to Patmos, where John now was, and most known to him, it being the place where he had resided; and it was the place from whence the Gospel came to others, and spread itself in lesser Asia; but especially it is first written to, because it represented the church in the apostolic age; so that this letter contains the things which are, (Revelation 1:19); and in its very name, to the state of this church in Ephesus, there may be an allusion; either to εφεσις, "ephesis", which signifies "desire", and may be expressive of the fervent love of that pure and apostolic church to Jesus Christ at the beginning of it; their eager desire after more knowledge of him, and communion with him; after his word and ordinances, and the maintaining of the purity of them; after the spread of his Gospel, and the enlargement of his kingdom in the world; as well as after fellowship with the saints, and the spiritual welfare of each other: the allusion may be also to αφεσις, "aphesis", which signifies "remission", or an abatement; and so may point out the remissness and decay of the first love of these primitive Christians, towards the close of this state; of the abatement of the fervency of it, of which complaint is

made in this epistle, and not without cause. This epistle is inscribed to the angel of this church, or the pastor of it; why ministers are called angels, (see Gill on "Revelation 1:20"); some think this was Timothy, whom the Apostle Paul sent thither, and desired him to continue there, (1 Timothy 1:3), there was one Onesimus bishop of Ephesus, when Polycarp was bishop of Smyrna, of whom he makes mention in his epistle [f46] to the Ephesians, and bids fair to be this angel; though if any credit could be given to the Apostolic Constitutions [f47] the bishop of this place was one John, who is said to be ordained by the Apostle John, and is thought to be the same with John the elder [f48], the master of Papias; but though only one is mentioned, yet all the elders of this church, for there were more than one, (see Acts 20:17); are included; and not they only, but the whole church over whom they presided; for what was written was ordered to be sent to the church, and was sent by John, (see Revelation 1:4,11); the letter was sent to the pastor or pastors, to the whole body of ministers, by them to be communicated to the church; and not only to this particular church did this letter and the contents of it belong, but to all the churches of Christ within the period of the apostolic age, as may be concluded from (Revelation 2:7).

These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand; the Syriac version reads, "that holds all things, and these seven stars in his right hand"; for the explanation of this character of Christ, (see Gill on "Revelation 1:16"); only let it be observed how suitably this is prefixed to the church at Ephesus, and which represents the state of the churches in the times of the apostles; in which place, and during which interval, our Lord remarkably held his ministering: servants as stars in his right hand; he held and protected the Apostle Paul for two years in this place, and preserved him and his companions safe amidst the uproar raised by Demetrius the silversmith about them; here also he protected Timothy at a time when there were many adversaries, and kept the elders of this church pure, notwithstanding the erroneous persons that rose up among them; and last of all the Apostle John, who here resided, and died in peace, notwithstanding the rage and fury of his persecutors: likewise Christ in a very visible manner held all his faithful ministers during this period in his right hand, safe and secure, until they had done the work they were sent about, and preserved them in purity of doctrine and conversation; so that their light in both respects shone brightly before men. Moreover, as this title of Christ is prefixed to the epistle to the first of the churches, and its

pastor or pastors, it may be considered as relating to, and holding good of all the ministers of the Gospel and pastors of the other churches; and likewise of all the churches in successive ages to the end of the world, as the following one also refers to all the churches themselves:

who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; (see Gill on "Revelation 1:12"); (see Gill on "Revelation 1:13"); Christ was not only present with, and took his walks in this church at Ephesus, but in all the churches of that period, comparable to candlesticks, which held forth the light of the Gospel, and that in order as the antitype of Aaron, to him these lamps, and likewise in all his churches to the end of the world; see (Matthew 28:20).

Ver. 2. *I know thy works*, etc.] The good works, both of ministers and churches; no evil works are mentioned, nor anything complained of in this church but an abatement of the fervour of her first love. Christ, as the omniscient God, knows all the works of his people, and the springs, and principles, and ends, and views of them, whether they are done in obedience to him, and spring from love to him, and are performed in his strength, and by his grace, and are directed to his glory; and such he takes notice of, approves of, and is well pleased with, not as the ground of his delight in their persons, but as the fruits of his own grace; and during the apostolic age, churches and ministers were very diligent in working; yea, they were laborious, as follows:

and thy labour: particularly the labour of ministers of the Gospel, in these times, in the frequent preaching of it, in season and out of season; and in the constant administration of the ordinances; and in the diligent exercise of church discipline. The work of the ministry is a laborious work to the mind in studying, and to the body in the outward discharge of it; and it becomes more so, through the malice and opposition of enemies, and the weakness of friends; and such as are diligent and laborious deserve respect, even double honour; and though they may not have it from men, yet Christ takes notice of them and their labours, and commends them for them, and will reward them.

And thy patience; as this may refer to the ministers of the word, it may denote their patience in suffering reproaches and persecutions for the sake of the Gospel, which they bore patiently, cheerfully, and constantly; and in bearing the infirmities of weak saints, in their several communities; and in reclaiming and restoring persons out of the way; and in waiting for the

success of their ministry, and their continuance and perseverance in it. And as this may respect members of churches, it may point at their patience under afflictions from the hand of God, and under reproach and persecution from men, for their embracing and professing the Gospel; and their patient waiting for the heavenly glory, and their firm expectation of it, and their perseverance unto it.

And how thou canst not bear them that are evil; that were so either in their principles or in their practices, or both; men that lived immoral lives, and held erroneous doctrines, these the primitive ministers and churches could not bear; they had an inward abhorrence and detestation of them in their minds; they could not bear them in communion with them; they admonished them according to the nature of their offence, and cast out such as were obstinate and incorrigible; they withdrew from such as were disorderly, and rejected heretics after the first and second admonition; their zeal for church discipline is here taken notice of to their commendation.

And thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, *and hast found them liars*; this doubtless was done in the church at Ephesus, where, after the Apostle Paul's departure, grievous wolves, in sheep's clothing, entered, and men arose from among themselves, speaking perverse things, (Acts 20:29Acts 20:29,30); yet it was not peculiar to that church, though it was to the apostolic age; for in no other could men with any face pretend to be the apostles of Christ; and such there were, who sprung up in the several churches at Jerusalem, Corinth, Galatia, and elsewhere, who called themselves the apostles of Christ, but were false apostles, deceitful workers; they pretended to have their doctrine, call, mission, and commission, immediately from Christ, as the true apostles had, and a power to work miracles, and talked of inspirations and revelations by the Spirit of God. Now the apostles, ministers, and churches of those times, tried their pretensions and doctrines by the word of God, and by the fruits which they produced in themselves and others; and through that discerning of spirits which they had, they found them to be liars; that they were not, nor had they what they pretended to be, and have, and exposed them as such.

Ver. 3. *And hast borne*, etc.] Not evil men, nor false apostles, but “burdens”, as the Ethiopic version reads, and as the word signifies; meaning afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions, which pressed sore, and lay heavy on these ministers and churches; and yet they bore them with

constancy and cheerfulness, and were not moved by them. The Arabic version reads, “and thou hast borne me”; my name and Gospel, among the Gentiles, and carried it from place to place; (see <44915>Acts 9:15);

and hast patience; which they had from God, as his gift, and which they had in their hearts, and in exercise, and found it useful to them. It was in exercise in a suitable time, and it continued with them; it was not worn out through the length and greatness of their trials.

And for my name's sake hast laboured: which may refer either to enduring sufferings for Christ's name's sake, for his Gospel's sake, for righteousness sake, for the sake of the elect, and for the sake of the honour, glory, and interest of Christ; or to labouring in the ministry, not for filthy lucre sake, nor for party sake, but for the honour of Christ, and the good of souls; and there never was an interval in which this was more true:

and hast not fainted: so as to sink under the burden borne; to have patience quite tired out; to, be weary of labouring for Christ's name's sake; and so as to give out, and quit the service of Christ.

Ver. 4. *Nevertheless I have [somewhat] against thee*, etc.] So the Jews represent God saying, concerning their fathers, “Abraham”, etc. µhyl[yl çy, “I have something against them” [f49]. Christ has nothing against his people, his faithful ministers, and true churches, in a judicial way, or to their condemnation, for there is none to them that are in him; but he has often many things to complain of in them, and to rebuke and chastise them for, in a way of providence: and what he had against the church at Ephesus, and against the churches in the period which that represents, follows,

because thou hast left thy first love: by which is meant, not hospitality to strangers, or an affectionate care of the poor of the church, or a zealous concern to feed the flock, and maintain church discipline; but the love of the saints to God, and Christ, and one another, which appeared at the beginning of this church state, when they were all of one heart and one soul, as generally at first conversion love is the warmest; and so it was at the first planting of Gospel churches, and therefore here called first love. Now this, though it was not lost, for the true grace of love can never be lost, yet it was left; it abated in its heat and fervour; there was a remissness in the exercise of it; what our Lord had foretold should be before the destruction of Jerusalem was fulfilled in this period of time, the love of

many waxed cold, (<4012>Matthew 24:12); through the prevalence of corruption in some; and through an over love to the world, as in Demas, and others; and through a desire of ease and freedom from reproach and persecution; and through the introduction of errors, which damp the heat of love, and spirit of religion; and through the contentions and divisions among themselves, as at Corinth, Galatia, and elsewhere, which greatly weakened their love to one another, and to divine things; and which was very displeasing to Christ, who, for the restoring of them, gives the following advice. Compare with this (<5015>2 Timothy 1:15).

Ver. 5. *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen*, etc.] Believers cannot totally and finally fall away from the grace which they have received; but they may fall into sin, and from a degree of grace, and the exercise of it, as these first and pure churches did, from some degree of their love to God, and Christ, and one another; and therefore are called upon to remember, mind, and observe from what degree of it they were fallen; in order to bring them under a conviction and acknowledgment of their evil, and a sense of their present state, and to quicken their desires after a restoration to their former one:

and repent; of their coldness and lukewarmness, of the remissness of their love, and of those evils which brought it upon them:

and do the first works; of faith and love, with the like zeal and fervour, which will show the repentance to be sincere and genuine; so the Arabic version reads, "and exercise the former works, to wit, charity" or "love". The Jews have a saying [f50],

> "if a man repents, do not say to him, "remember" µynwçarj Æyç[m, "thy first works";"

which they seem to understand of evil works; but former good works are to be remembered and done, to show the truth of repentance for evil ones.

Or else I will come unto thee quickly; not in a spiritual way, to pay a love visit, nor in a judicial way, to take vengeance or inflict punishment, but in a providential way, to rebuke and chastise:

and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent; or thee out of the candlestick, the pastor from the church, either by persecution or by death; or else the church, and church state itself, signified by a candlestick; (see Gill on "<6612>Revelation 1:12"); and may design a

shaking and an unsettling of it, which is sometimes done by violent persecutions, and by false teachers and their doctrines, and by the divisions and contentions of saints among themselves; and by the former particularly was there a change made in the state of this apostolic church, when it passed into the Smyrnean one, which was a period of great persecution and distress; for this cannot be understood of the total removing of the church state itself quickly, no, not of Ephesus itself; for though there is not now indeed, nor has there been for many hundred years, a church of Christ in that place, yet there was one till the times of Constantine, when there was none in any of the other seven cities, and a long time after; (see Gill on "Acts 20:17"); which shows, that this was not a commination or threatening of divine vengence to that church literally, but to the state of the church, which that represented; nor does it intend the utter abolition of that church, for the apostolic church still continued, though it ceased to be in the circumstances it was before.

Ver. 6. *But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans*, etc.] Though these Christians had left their first love, yet they bore an hatred to the filthy and impure practices of some men, who were called "Nicolaitans"; who committed fornication, adultery, and all uncleanness, and had their wives in common, and also ate things offered to idols; who were so called, as some think [f51], from Nicolas of Antioch, one of the seven deacons in (Acts 6:5); though as to Nicolas himself, it is said [f52], that he lived with his own lawful married wife, and no other, and that his daughters continued virgins all their days, and his son incorrupt; and that these men, so called, only shrouded themselves under his name, and abused a saying or action of his, or both, to patronize their wicked deeds: he had used to advise παραχρησψαι τη σαρκι, by which he meant a restraining of all carnal and unlawful lusts; but these men interpreted it of an indulgence in them, and so gave themselves up to all uncleanness; and whereas, he having a beautiful wife, and being charged with jealousy, in order to clear himself of it, he brought her forth, and gave free liberty to any person to marry her as would; which indiscreet action of his these men chose to understand as allowing of community of wives. Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, that these Nicolaitans were not called so from any man, but from the word hlykn, "Nicolah", "let us eat", which they often used to encourage each other to eat things offered to idols. However this be, it is certain that there were such a set of men, whose deeds were hateful; but neither their principles nor their practices obtained much in this period of

time, though they afterwards did; (see <66025>Revelation 2:15). Professors of the Christian religion in general abhorred such impure notions and deeds, as they were by Christ:

which also I hate; all sin is hateful to Christ, being contrary to his nature, to his will, and to his Gospel; and whatever is hateful to him should be to his people; and where grace is, sin will be hateful, both in themselves and others; and men's deeds may be hated when their persons are not; and hatred of sin is taken notice of by Christ, with a commendation.

Ver. 7. *He that hath an ear*, etc.] Such who have new ears given them, as all have who are made new creatures; such who have their ears circumcised, and opened by the Spirit of God; who hear with understanding, affection, and faith; who try what they hear, and approve, embrace, and retain that which is good.

Let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; let such hearken, and listen with attention to what is said by the Spirit, in what goes before, and follows after, in this epistle, designed for the use of all the churches; from whence it appears, that this epistle was endited by the Spirit of God, and is of divine inspiration; that it was not intended for the single use of the church at Ephesus, but of all the churches; and not of the seven churches only, though the Alexandrian copy reads, “to the seven churches”: but of all the churches in that period of time, which the Ephesine church represents; and which may also be useful to the churches of Christ in all other ages and periods of time. And moreover, it may be concluded from hence, that there are in this epistle, and so in all the rest, for the same words are subjoined to them all, some things which are parabolical and prophetic, and not obvious to everyone's understanding and view; for a like expression is used by our Lord, when he had delivered anything in a parabolical way, or was obscure; (see <40115>Matthew 11:15 13:9).

To him that overcometh: the false apostles, false teachers, and their doctrines; coldness, lukewarmness, and remissness in love; the impure tenets and practices of the Nicolaitans:

will I give to eat of the tree of life; by which is meant Jesus Christ himself, in allusion to the tree of life in the garden of Eden; and is so called, because he is the author of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal; and because of his fruit, the blessings of life and grace, that are in him, of which believers may eat by faith, and which they find to be soul quickening, comforting,

strengthening, and satisfying; and which are Christ's gift to them, even both the food they eat, and the faith by which they eat, are his gifts. So Christ, under the name of Wisdom, is called the Tree of life, in (Proverbs 3:18); and this is a name which is sometimes given by the Jews to the Messiah [f53]:

which is in the midst of the paradise of God; as the tree of life was in the garden of Eden, (Genesis 2:9). The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, "the paradise of my God"; the God of Christ, as well as of his people; and by which may be meant, either the church on earth, which is as a paradise, (Song of Solomon 4:12); in the midst of which Christ is, affording his gracious presence, and reaching forth his grace, and the benefits of it, to his people; or heaven, (see Gill on "2 Corinthians 12:4"), said to be of God, because it is of his preparing, and where he dwells, and in the midst of which Christ, the Tree of life, is; and this shows, that he is to be come at by faith, and his fruit to be eaten, and lived upon; and he is to be beheld and enjoyed by all his saints, as he is now, and will be more perfectly hereafter.

Ver. 8. *And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write*, etc.] Of the city of Smyrna, (see Gill on "Revelation 1:11"). That there was a church of Christ here is not to be doubted, though by whom it was founded is not certain; very likely by the Apostle Paul, who was in those parts, and by whose means all Asia heard the Gospel of Christ, (Acts 19:10). Some think the present angel or pastor of this church, was Polycarp, the disciple of John. Irenaeus [f54], who knew him, says he was appointed bishop of Smyrna by the apostles. Here he suffered martyrdom, and was buried: the large amphitheatre, in which he was put to death, is still to be seen, and his sepulchre is yet preserved in this place [f55]: a very famous epistle, sent by this church at Smyrna to the churches at Pontus, giving an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, and others, is extant in Eusebius [f56]. According to the Apostolical Constitutions [f57], the first bishops of Smyrna were Aristo Strataeas and Aristo the second, and Apelles, of whom mention is made in (Romans 16:10); and who is reckoned among the seventy disciples; (see Gill on "Luke 10:1"); and is said to be bishop of Smyrna before Polycarp; who succeeded Polycarp, I do not find; but it is said there was a church at Smyrna in the "third" century; and so there was in the beginning of the "fourth", since there was a bishop from hence in the council at Nice: and in the "fifth" century, mention is made of several bishops of this place; as of Cyrus, a native of Constantinople; and Protherius, who, it is thought, succeeded him, and was present in the synod at Chalcedon; and Aethericus,

who assisted at three synods in this century, at Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon: and in the “sixth” century, there was a bishop of Smyrna in the fifth synod held at Rome and Constantinople: and even in the “eighth” century, one Antony, a monk, supplied the place of the bishop of Smyrna in the Nicene synod [f58]. The Turks have in this place now thirteen mosques, the Jews two synagogues, and of the Christians there are two churches belonging to the Greeks, and one to the Armenians [f59]. This church, and its pastor, represent the state of the church under the persecutions of the Roman emperors. Smyrna signifies “myrrh”, which being bitter of taste, is expressive of the bitter afflictions, and persecutions, and deaths, the people of God in this interval endured; and yet, as myrrh is of a sweet smell, so were those saints, in their sufferings for Christ, exceeding grateful and well pleasing to him; wherefore nothing is said by way of complaint to this church; not that she was without fault, but it was proper to use her tenderly in her afflicted state: and, as Dr. More observes, as myrrh was used in the embalming of dead bodies, it may point to the many deaths and martyrdoms of the saints in this period, whereby their names and memories are perpetuated and eternized.

These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive. Of these characters of Christ, (see Gill on “Revelation 1:8”), (see Gill on “Revelation 1:11”), (see Gill on “Revelation 1:17-18”); and they are very appropriately mentioned, to encourage the saints under their sufferings of death; since Christ, who is the eternal God, had in human nature tasted of the bitterness of death for them, and was risen again; suggesting, that though they were called to undergo the bitterest deaths for his sake, they should be raised again as he was, and live with him for ever. The Ethiopic version reads, “thus saith the holy Spirit”; but it cannot be said of him that “he was dead”.

Ver. 9. *I know thy works*, etc.] Good works, as before in (Revelation 2:2);

and tribulation; this is Christ's legacy to his people, and which lies in their way to heaven; and never was the way of any to heaven more strewed with it than was the way of the saints in this period. But Christ took notice of it, and of them in it; he knew their souls in adversity, and remarked their patience under it, and their constancy, and close adherence to him:

and poverty; which was true in a literal sense, through the spoiling of their goods, to which they were exposed for the profession of Christ: nothing is

more contemptible among men than poverty, yet Christ takes notice of it, and owns his people in it; for this poverty came not by sin, but by sufferings for his sake:

but thou art rich; they were rich, in faith, and heirs of a kingdom, though poor in this world; they were rich with the riches of Christ, with the blessings of the covenant, with the graces of the Spirit, and in good works; they were kings and priests unto God, had a kingdom of grace here, and a right to the kingdom of glory hereafter; and were heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

And [I know] the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not; who asserted themselves to be the true Israel of God, Jews that were so inwardly, regenerate persons, or truly Christians; for the Christians, baptized persons [f60], were by the Heathens called Jews; but these were not, they professed Christianity in words, but in works denied it; they were men of bad principles and practices, and both blasphemed the ways and doctrines of Christ themselves, and caused them to be blasphemed by others also; they were false Christians, nominal professors, and shunned persecution for the Gospel; who were not what they would be thought to be: these were the broachers of heresies in this period of time, in which there was a multitude of them, and which chiefly respected the doctrine of the Trinity, and the person of Christ; and they were introducers of Pagan and Jewish rites into the church, and were men of flagitious lives and conversations, and paved the way for the man of sin:

but [are] the synagogue of Satan: were the children of the devil, imitated him, and were influenced by him, and were the forerunners of antichrist, whose coming was after the working of Satan.

Ver. 10. *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer*, etc.] God's people undergo sufferings of various sorts, as the Christians of those times did, scourgings, imprisonment, confiscation of goods, and death itself in various shapes; and these are certain, they shall suffer them; they are all known beforehand to Christ, and he sometimes gives his people previous notice of them, nor should they indulge a slavish fear about them. It is reported of Polycarp, bishop of this church at Smyrna, in a letter written by the church itself [f61] that three days before he suffered, he dreamed his pillow, on which he laid his head, was on fire; upon which, awaking, he said to those that were by him, that he should be burnt for Christ; and

when he came to suffer, as he was led along, a voice was heard by the bystanders, Polycarp, be strong, and play the man.

Behold, the devil shall cast [some] of you into prison; which has been the lot of many of the saints, and was of some, even of the faithful ministers of the word in this interval; in which Satan had an hand, instigating their enemies to prevent and stop the progress of the Gospel, and deter others both from preaching and professing it: the end was in the permission of it,

that ye may be tried; that their graces might be tried, their faith, love, zeal, courage, faithfulness, and constancy. Suffering times are trying times, whether men are real Christians or not; whether they have the true grace of God or not; and whether the principles they hold are right and true, and are worth, and will bear suffering for:

and ye shall have tribulation ten days: meaning it may be the ten persecutions under the Roman emperors; the "first" was under Nero, in the year 64 or 66; the "second" was under Domitian, about the year 93; the "third" was under Trojan, in the year 104; the "fourth" was under Hadrian, in the year 125; the "fifth" was under Marcus Antoninus, in the year 151; the "sixth" was under Septimius Severus, in the year 197; the "seventh" was under Maximinus, in the years 235, 236, 237; the "eighth" was under Decius, in the year 250; the "ninth" was under Valerianus, in the year 257; and the "tenth" was under Dioclesian, in the year 303. Austin [f62] reckons the ten persecutions thus: the first by Nero, the second by Domitian, the third by Trojan, the fourth by Antoninus, the fifth by Severus, the sixth by Maximus, the seventh by Decius, the eighth by Valerianus, the ninth by Aurelianus, the tenth by Dioclesian and Maximianus. Others, inasmuch as Nero's persecution was before this vision, reckon the ten persecutions thus: Domitian, Trojan, M. Antoninus, Verus and Lucius, Severus, Maximinus, Decius, Valerianus, Aurelianus, Dioclesianus, Licinius: the Dioclesian persecution lasted ten years almost throughout: and some think that this last persecution, which held ten years, is here particularly meant, and not without some good reason; since it is usual in prophetic writings, and in this book of the Revelation, to put days for years; so that these ten days may be the ten years the last persecution held, and at which time the period of this church state ended, and that of Pergamos took place.

Be thou faithful unto death: which is an address to the ministers in this interval, to be faithful in preaching the pure and unmixed Gospel of Christ; in a constant administration of the ordinances, as they were delivered; in

watching over the souls of men under their care, reproving, exhorting, etc. with all longsuffering; continuing in the discharge of duty, though in continual danger of death, and though it issued in it. And also to the churches and the members of them, to continue believing in Christ, professing his name, striving for his Gospel, attending on his ordinances, and following him whithersoever he went; though this should expose them to sufferings, even unto death, which it became them cheerfully to undergo: and to which they are encouraged by what follows,

and I will give thee a crown of life; which may refer not only to eternal life, which is so called, (Jam 1:12James 1:12); because of the glory of that state, and its everlasting continuance, and is in the possession and gift of Christ; but to the deliverance of the Christians from persecution, by Constantine; who coming to the imperial crown, that became not only a crown of glory to him, but of life to the church, and was as life from the dead unto the saints: to dead men is promised a crown of life, in allusion to the Gentiles, who crowned their dead [f63].

Ver. 11. *He that hath an ear, let him hear*, etc.] (See Gill on "Rev 2:7Revelation 2:7");

he that overcometh; and is not intimidated by poverty, confiscation of goods, tribulation, persecution, and death itself, but through Christ is a conqueror, and more than a conqueror over all these things:

shall not be hurt of the second death; by which is meant eternal death, in distinction from a corporeal and temporal one; and lies in a destruction of both body and soul in hell, and in an everlasting separation from God, and a continual sense of divine wrath; but of this the saints shall never be hurt, they are ordained to eternal life; this is secured for them in Christ, and he has it in his hands for them, and will give it to them. The phrase is Jewish, and is opposed to the first death, or the death of the body; which is the effect of sin, and is appointed of God, and which the people of God die as well as others; but the second death is peculiar to wicked men. So the Jerusalem Targum on (Deu 33:6Deuteronomy 33:6); paraphrases those words, "let Reuben live, and not die", thus;

> "let Reuben live in this world, and not die anyynt atwmb, "by the second death", with which the wicked die in the world to come."

Of which sense of the text and phrase Epiphanius makes mention [f64]. See the same phrase in the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel, in (Isaiah 22:14 65:6,15); and in (Jeremiah 51:39,57); and in Philo the Jew [f65].

Ver. 12. *And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write*, etc.] Of the city of Pergamos, (see Gill on "Revelation 1:11"). In it was a church of Christ, but when it begun, and how long it lasted, is not certain. Antipas, who is mentioned, (Revelation 2:13); is thought, by some, to have been the pastor of it. Though, according to the Apostolical Constitutions [f66], Caius was the first bishop of it; and it appears, that in the "second" century there were several in this place that suffered martyrdom for Christ, as Carpus, Papulus, and a woman whose name was Agathonice [f67]. Attalus, the martyr, who suffered in the same century, was also a native of this place [f68]. In the "fifth" century there was a bishop of Pergamos in the council at Ephesus; and in the "sixth" century, there was one in the "fifth" synod at Constantinople; and in the "seventh" century, Theodorus, bishop of the church here, was in the sixth synod held at the same place; and in the "eighth" century one Pastilas was bishop of Pergamos; and in the same age, Basil, bishop of this place, was in the Nicene synod [f69]; and the Christian name now is not wholly, though almost extinct; for when our countryman, Dr. Smith [f70], was there, there was a little church called St. Theodore's, whither a priest was frequently sent from Smyrna, to perform divine service, there being but a very few Christian families in it. This church represents the church from the time of Constantine, and onward, rising up to, and enjoying great power, riches, and honour Pergamos signifies high and lofty; things that were sublime and lofty, were, by the Greeks, called τα περγαμα, and also all high and lofty towers [f71]. It was built under a very high and steep mountain, upon the top of which a tower was erected, by the lords of the lesser Asia, which still continues [f72]. The church it represents had its principal seat at Rome, where Satan dwelt, (Revelation 2:13); which signifies exalted likewise; and it introduces the man of sin, antichrist, the popes of Rome, who exalted themselves above all that is called God, princes, kings, and emperors; whom they excommunicated, dethroned, trod upon their necks, kicked off their crowns, and obliged them to hold their stirrups while they mounted their horses, with other haughty action, too many to name.

These things, saith he, which hath the sharp sword with two edges: of which (see Gill on "Revelation 1:16"); This title is used partly to show, that the only weapon this church, and the true ministers and members of it

had, to defend themselves against the growing corruptions of antichrist, who in this interval rose up by degrees, and was revealed, and came to the height of his power, was the word of God, the Scriptures of truth; and partly to show, that in process of time, though not in this period, the man of sin should be destroyed, with the breath of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming; of which his fighting against the Nicolaitans, with the sword of his mouth, (<66216>Revelation 2:16); is an emblem.

Ver. 13. *I know thy works*, etc.] Both good and bad, and which in that pure part of this church, which opposed the growing corruptions of antichrist, were for the most part good.

And where thou dwellest, [even] where Satan's seat [is]. Pergamos was a city very much given to idolatry, here Satan reigned while it was Pagan, and so was a fit emblem of the idolatrous church of Rome. Pausanias says [f73], the country the Pergamenes inhabited was sacred to the Cabiri, the chief gods of the Heathens. And the same writer [f74] observes, that Aesculapius particularly was worshipped at Pergamos; and hence he is called by Martial [f75] the Pergamean god; to his temple here, men used to go from different parts of the world for cure of diseases; hither Antoninus the emperor went for such a purpose, as Herodian [f76] relates; and this being a common thing, hence Lucian [f77] scoffingly says, that Aesculapius had an apothecary's shop at Pergamos. As Rome, and its dominions, were the principal seat of the church in this period of time, it may well be called Satan's seat or throne; not only because it had been the seat of the Roman emperors, the ten horned and seven headed beast, (<66132>Revelation 13:2); but because it was the seat of antichrist, which the great dragon Satan gave him, whose coming was after the working of Satan, and he was influenced by him; and who, like Satan, exalted himself above all that is called God; yea, placed himself in the temple of God, the church, as God, showing himself to be God, assuming that power to himself which only belonged to God. Moreover, he may be called so for his enmity and malice against the saints, and for his art and subtlety, and insidious methods to ensnare and destroy them. Now to dwell where such an one has his seat, his throne, has a kingdom, power, and authority, must be very uncomfortable, as well as dangerous; and required great care, circumspection, and prudence how to behave: and yet to the commendation of this church it is said,

and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith: the pure members of this church are the two witnesses, which rose up at the

beginning of the apostasy of Rome, and bore their testimony against it, and for the truth; and continued to do so amidst all the corruptions and persecutions of that state: these are the two olive trees, that, through the golden pipes of the word and ordinances, emptied the golden oil of Gospel truths out, of themselves, pure and incorrupt, and the two candlesticks that held forth the light of the Gospel in the darkest times of Popery; these held fast the name of Christ, or the Gospel, and denied not, but confessed the doctrine of faith in the worst of times. They had the truths of the Gospel in their possession, which were dear and valuable to them; and whereas there was danger of losing them, they held them fast, with great courage, magnanimity, and strength, though the greater number was against them, and they were attended with reproach and persecution:

even in those days wherein Antipas [was] my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. Antipas is the proper name of a man; so a son of Herod was called [f78], even he that beheaded John, and mocked Christ: and there might be a man of this name at Pergamos, that might suffer martyrdom for the Gospel of Christ; and who was an emblem of the confessors, witnesses, and martyrs, that suffered for Christ, in this period of time, through their opposition to the popes of Rome; for Antipas is the contraction of Antipater, and is the same with Antipapas, or Antipappas, which signifies one that is against the pope, an opposer of that holy father; and so intends all those that made head against him, upon his rising and revelation, and when he assumed the power he did to himself; such as the Waldenses and Albigenses particularly, who set themselves against him, openly declared that the pope was antichrist, and that his government was tyrannical, and his doctrines the doctrines of devils, abominable and fabulous. They bore a faithful testimony against all his corruptions and innovations, and became martyrs in the cause of Christ, many thousands of them being slain for his sake within the dominions of this firstborn of Satan. The Alexandrian copy reads “Anteipas”; and his name is left out in the Syriac and Arabic versions.

Ver. 14. *But I have a few things against thee*, etc.] The members of this church before their open separation from the apostasy; who still continued in the communion of the corrupt church of Rome, though they remonstrated against the errors and evil practices that crept in; and so were a stumbling block, and a snare to others to join in their idolatry and superstition:

because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication: which latter was in order to the former: the instruction Balaam gave to Balak, which is here called his doctrine, was, that Balak should get some of the most beautiful women in his kingdom to ply the men of Israel, and draw them into uncleanness, and so to idolatry; by which means, God being angry with them, he might get an advantage over them: that the Israelites did commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab, and eat things sacrificed to idols, and bowed down to Baal Peor, is certain, (Numbers 25:1-3); but that this was brought about through the counsel of Balaam is not so plainly expressed, though it is hinted at in (Numbers 31:15,16); but the Jewish writers are very express about this matter. Jonathan ben Uzziel, one of their Targumists on (Numbers 24:14), has these words of Balaam;

> "Come, and I will counsel thee, (speaking to Balak,) go and set up inns, and place in them whorish women, to sell food and drink at a low price: and this people will come and eat and drink, and be drunken, and will lie with them, and deny their God; and they will be quickly delivered into thine hands, and many of them shall fall."

This now was the stumbling block he taught Balak to lay before them. And elsewhere [f79] it is said,

> "that Balaam, the wicked, gave counsel to Balak, the son of Zippor, to cause the Israelites to fall by the sword; he said to him, the God of this people hates whoredom, cause thy daughters to commit whoredom with them, and ye shall rule over them."

And then they go on to relate how they built shops, and placed an old woman without, and a young woman within; and when the Israelites came to buy, how well they used them, and what familiarity they admitted them to; how they made them drink of Ammonitish wine, which inclined to lust and when the signified their desire, oblige them to worship Baal Peor, and renounce the law of Moses. Both Philo [f80] and Josephus [f81] speak of this counsel of Balaam, much to the same purpose. The Samaritan Chronicle says [f82] that this counsel pleased the king, and he sent into the camp of Israel, on a sabbath day, twenty four thousand young women, by whom the Israelites were so seduced, that they did everything they desired them, which was just the number of those that were slain, (Numbers 25:9). By Balaam may be meant the pope of Rome, for that name signifies, "the lord

of the people"; and is very appropriate to him, who in this interval took upon him to be universal bishop, and lorded it over both church and state, in a most haughty and tyrannical manner; and the Balaamites were those who submitted to his power and authority, and received his doctrines; and by Balak, king of Moab, may be intended the secular powers, the emperors, kings, and princes of the earth, who were instructed by the popes of Rome, to draw their subjects into idolatry, which is spiritual fornication, to eat the breaden God, to worship the host, images, and saints departed; and which proved a snare, and a stumbling to some of this church, as to the Israelites of old, to do the same things.

Ver. 15. *So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans*, etc.] These impure heretics sprung up in the time of the apostolic church, but their doctrines were not received, and their deeds were hated, (see ‹6006›Revelation 2:6). This seems to design the doctrines of the church of Rome, which in this period took place; which forbid marriage to the priests, and recommended celibacy and virginity to others also; which were the source of all uncleanness and abominable lusts; for which pardons and indulgences were given, and, in process of time, brothel houses were set up, and licensed and encouraged by authority.

Which thing I hate; the doctrine of these men, as well as their deeds.

Ver. 16. *Repent*, etc.] This is said to those who were truly godly in those times, but still retained their communion with these corrupt men, and had not, as yet, separated from then; nor had they protested against these evil doctrines and practices, at least but very coldly, and had too much connived at them; and therefore are called upon to repent of their lukewarmness, negligence, and sinful compliances:

or else I will come unto thee quickly: in a providential way, to rebuke and chastise for such remissness, indifference, and evil communication:

and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth; of this sword, (see Gill on "‹6006›Revelation 1:16"). And it is observable, that Christ does not say, "I will fight against thee"; the true members of his mystical body, though lax and supine, for Christ does not fight against his people, but for them; but he says, "and will fight against them"; the Balaamites and Nicolaitans, for their idolatry and uncleanness.

Ver. 17. *He that hath an ear, let him hear*, etc.] (See Gill on "‹6007›Revelation 2:7").

To him that overcometh; the Balaamites and Nicolaitans, and do not give in to the doctrines and practices of the one, or of the other, whatever persecution and trouble he meets with, and endures on that account:

will I give to eat of the hidden manna; in opposition to eating things sacrificed to idols, refused by him. The allusion is to the manna which the Israelites ate of in the wilderness, which may be called "hidden": either because they knew not what it was, when they first saw it; or because it was laid up in a golden pot, and put in the most holy place, where it was secret, and none but the high priest could see it, and who entered there but once a year: or rather, because it was at first, hidden under the dew; for according to the account the Jews give of it, a dew first fell upon the ground, then the manna upon that, and then another dew upon the manna; so that there was a dew under it, and a dew over it; insomuch that it was as if it was laid up, they say, in a box or chests [f83]; and they supposed the manna had respect to things future [f84] and do expect it in the times of the Messiah. They say [f85], as the first, so the last Redeemer will cause manna to descend from heaven; and the clouds are by them reckoned the mills which will grind manna for the righteous in the world to come [f86]: yea, they speak [f87] of amts anm, "hidden manna", as the food of the righteous, the very phrase here used. Now this being the food of the children of Israel in the wilderness, is very fitly mentioned here; since the church, in this period of time, in which antichrist arose, was obliged to flee into the wilderness, and there abide during his reign, and where she is nourished with this hidden manna; by which may be meant the Gospel, which is soul quickening, comforting, strengthening, and satisfying food, by which the saints are nourished up unto everlasting life, and which is hid to the world, which the men of it know nothing of; and especially Jesus Christ, the sum and substance of it, may be meant, and that secret spiritual consolation enjoyed in communion with him, and by eating him, or feeding by faith upon him; in what respects Christ may be compared to manna, (see Gill on "John 6:32"). And he may be said to be "hidden", because he is unknown to men, until revealed; and is wholly hidden from carnal and unregenerate men, and is enjoyed only by believers; and it may denote the private way, in which the true church of Christ had communion with him in his word and ordinances in the wilderness, and during the dark times of Popery. Philo the Jew [f88] often interprets the manna by the "Logos", the Word of God, the most ancient Word of God.

And will give him a white stone. The phrase, “to add a white stone”, with the Latins, is used to give one's approbation of anything; and could it be applied here, might signify the approbation Christ gives of his church and people here, amidst the testimonies they bear, and the persecutions they endure for his name's sake, and that which he will give of them before his Father, angels, and men, at the last day: white stones were used on various accounts. The Grecians used them to mark good or lucky days with them, as they called them; and could the allusion be thought to be to this custom, the sense would be, that Christ promises, to his people that overcome, happy days, after the times of Popish darkness and persecution were over: white stones were also given to the conquerors in the Olympic games, with their names upon them, and the value of the prize they won; and, here applied, may respect the crown of life and glory given to them who are more than conquerors through Christ, with their right and title to it, and the excellency of it. The Romans in judgment used to give their suffrages for condemnation by casting black stones into the urn, and for absolution white stones; to which Ovid has respect, when he says [f89],

> “Mos erat antiquis, niveis atrisque lapillis, His damnare reos, illis absolvere culpa.”

And this is thought by many to be referred to here, and may denote, that though the pure members of Christ, and who abhorred and protested against the abominations of the church of Rome, were charged with heresy and schism, and what not, yet Christ would absolve them, and justify them from all those charges. But rather the allusion is to a custom among the Jews, who used to examine the priests and Levites before they went to their service, or to the sanhedrim, to judge and pass sentence, whether their ways and works were right; and if they were as they should be, they gave them açdqmd armwj, “the stone of the sanctuary”: if not, they might not enter on business, as it is said; “and of Levi he said, thy Urim and thy Thummim be with thy Holy One”, (<053308>Deuteronomy 33:8) [f90]. Now on the Urim and Thummim, the stones in the high priest's breastplate, were engraven the names of the children of Israel; and, as the Jews say, the name Jehovah, to which reference may be had in the following clause; and may denote that the church, though in the wilderness, is regarded by Christ, is bore upon his heart and cared for by him; and also its spotless purity in him, and justification by him.

And in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth [it]; by this name may be meant, either the name of "Jehovah" our righteousness, which is the name both of Christ, and of his church, (<24>Jeremiah 23:6 33:16), or the name of a child of God, sometimes called a new name; (see <23>Isaiah 56:5 62:2); and so designs the blessing of adoption; this may be said to be a new name, because renewed, manifested to, and put upon the people of God, when they are made new creatures, though provided in predestination, and in the covenant of grace from eternity; and because a renowned and excellent one, better than that of the sons and daughters of the greatest prince on earth; and because a wonderful one, being an instance of amazing love and grace; and is what "no man knoweth", but the receiver of it; the Father of these adopted ones is unknown to natural men; and so is Christ, through whom this blessing is bestowed; and the Spirit of God also, who witnesses to it; and the persons that enjoy it, and the blessing itself, and the inheritance to which they are adopted: and this new name being on the white stone, may show that the blessings of justification and adoption, though they are two distinct ones, yet they are inseparable: they go together, and both give a right to the heavenly inheritance; and they are also, as well as the hidden manna, gifts of free grace, and not owing to the works and merit of men, and are given by Christ, and in and through him. At Rome, some white stones have been dug up, some lesser, some greater, with names and letters, and other engravings upon them, which Pignorius [f91] has given the figures of; and to such some have thought the allusion here is, and may serve to illustrate this passage. The Ethiopic version, instead of a "white stone", reads, a "famous book".

Ver. 18. *And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write*, etc.] Of the city of Thyatira, (see Gill on "<66011>Revelation 1:11"); a church was formed here very likely by the Apostle Paul; Lydia was a native of this place, who, and her household were converted and baptized by him at Philippi, (<44164>Acts 16:14); though Epiphanius [f92] seems to grant, what some heretics objected to the authority of this book, that there was no church at Thyatira when this letter was written; however, it is certain, there was one in the "second" century, as the same writer observes, since, as he relates, it was overrun with the Cataphrygian heresy; and in the "fourth" century there was a bishop from Thyatira in the council of Nice; and even in the "eighth" century there was one Esaias a presbyter, who supplied the place of the bishop of Thyatira in another council at Nice [f93]: the Turks have now eight

mosques in it, but there is not one Christian church or place of worship to be found in it [f94]. Who was the angel, or pastor of this church at the writing of this epistle, is not certain; however, it is designed for all the ministers and churches in the interval this church represents; and this period takes in the darkest and most superstitious times of Popery, until the Reformation. Thyatira is the same as Thygatira, which signifies a “daughter”; and it had its name, as Stephanus Byzantius says [f95], from hence: Seleucus, the son of Nicanor, being at war with Lysimachus, and hearing that he had a daughter born, called this city Thygatira, which was before called Pelopia, and Semiramis; which is a very fit name for this church, and expresses the effeminacy of it, when the virgin Mary, whom the Romanists call the daughter of God, was more worshipped than her son; and was not only made a partner with him in the business of salvation, but even set above him; when there were such swarms of monks and friars, and religious orders of several sorts, as Franciscans and Dominicans, who claimed her as their patroness; when such numbers of them clad themselves in cowls and long garments, that they looked more like women in hoods and petticoats, than really men; hence also the corrupt part of this church is signified by the woman Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal the Zidonian; and it should not be forgot that there was once a she pope, a woman that sat in the papal chair, a whore in a literal sense; wherefore antichrist, or the popes of Rome, are filly called the great whore, the mother of harlots. Mr. Daubuz observes, that the first Christian of Thyatira was a woman, and that the false prophets which first enticed the Christians to apostasy in this church were women, as Maximilia, Quintilia, and Priscilla; to which I would add, that according to Epiphanius, that among those heretics, and which swallowed up this church, their bishops were women, and so were their presbyters, or elders; and Dr. Smith [f96] is of opinion, that the inhabitants of this place, when Heathen, were worshippers of the goddess Diana; so that, upon all accounts, the church here was a fit symbol of the effeminate Church of Rome.

These things saith the Son of God; he who is truly, properly, naturally, and essentially the Son of God: this character Christ makes use of to assert his proper deity, as being of the same nature, and having the same perfections with his Father, as well as to command the greater regard to what he ordered to be written to the churches; and chiefly in opposition to the effeminate state of this church; it was time for him to take to him his highest name, as expressive of his highest nature, and to assert himself the

Son of God, when Mary, his mother according to the flesh, and who was but a mere creature, was called the daughter of God, and set upon a level with him, and even preferred unto him:

who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire; quick and sharp, and penetrating through the darkness of this state; seeing into, discovering, and exposing the horrid actions and wickednesses of men done in the dark; expressing fury, wrath, and vengeance against the Romish antichrist and his followers; and may also design the light of Gospel doctrine, which broke out in those times at certain seasons, to the dispelling of Popish darkness in some measure; (see Gill on "Revelation 1:14");

and his feet [are] like fine brass; in the description of Christ in (Revelation 1:14); it is added, as if they burned in a furnace; (see Gill on "Revelation 1:14"); and may denote the strength, stability, and support Christ gave his people while suffering for his sake, when in the furnace and burning for him, which kind of death was much used in those times: hence Dr. More, to whom I am much obliged for many hints in this exposition of the epistles to the churches, thinks that Thyatira is an allusion to ψυητρια, which signify "altars" for the burning of sweet odours; and so may be expressive of the burning of the saints, those sweet odours, as they are to God and Christ, with fire and faggot; which was now practised, as in the other period killing with the sword was chiefly used; in the midst of which Christ was present, supporting his people.

Ver. 19. *I know thy works*, etc.] Good works, as appears from the particular enumeration of them afterwards, and the commendation of proficiency in them, the last being more than the first, and the distinction from the evil ones in (Revelation 2:20); this is said to the faithful followers and professors of Christ in this interval:

and charity; by which is meant not a relieving the wants of the poor; much less such a charity as connives at the errors and heresies of men; but the divine grace of love to God nod Christ, and the saints, without which a profession of religion is a vain thing; and, generally speaking, this grace is most in exercise in a time of trouble and persecution:

and service; or "ministry", meaning either the ministry of the word, which was exercised by many with great zeal, diligence, and faithfulness, as by Wickliff, John Huss, Jerom of Prague, and others; or the ministering to the necessities of the poor saints, as an evidence of their charity or love; or else

the service of God is here intended, which is but reasonable, and is his due, and ought to be performed to him only, and that with fear and fervency, in faith, and with a pure conscience, with humility, and without mercenary views, and in righteousness and true holiness; or the service of love which the saints perform to one another, as praying for one another, bearing one another's burdens, admonishing and reproving for sin, restoring such as are gone astray, comforting the distressed, building up one another in their most holy faith, and exhorting and stirring up each other to the duties of religion:

and faith; not the doctrine of faith, as preached by the ministers of the word, and held and maintained by the true professors of it; but either the grace of faith, or the profession of both; or rather the faithfulness, both of the ministers and private believers of those times, as the Waldenses and Albigenses, the Lollards and Wickliffites, who abode by, and were faithful to the light which they had received:

and thy patience; in suffering for the sake of Christ and the Gospel: and very much it was they did endure, and yet held out to the end:

and thy works, and the last [to be] more than the first; that is, that their works or acts of love to God and Christ and one another, and of service to God and to the saints, and of faith and faithfulness in the cause of God, and of patience in suffering for the Gospel of Christ, were more in quantity, and greater in quality, toward the close of this period, which brought on the Reformation, than at the beginning of it; and which were done by the persons before mentioned, and by others.

Ver. 20. *Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee*, etc.] By way of complaint; so the Arabic version renders it, “I have a certain complaint against thee”. The impartiality of Christ may be observed in taking notice of the bad deeds, as well as of the good ones of his people, and his tenderness in representing them as few; and these things he had against them not in a judicial way to their condemnation, but in a providential way, in order to chastise them for them, for their good; and they are as follow:

because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel; or “thy wife Jezebel”, as the Complutensian edition and Syriac version read; the name of King Ahab's wife, who seduced him, in the Hebrew language is “Izebel”, but is read by the Septuagint in (<1116>1 Kings 16:31), Jezebel, as here; and by Josephus [f97] Jezabela; she had her name from לבז, “Zebel”, “dung”, to which Elijah has

reference in (12 2 Kings 9:37); the Ethiopic version calls her “Elzabel”. By her is meant the apostate church of Rome, comparable to Jezebel, the wife of Ahab; as she was the daughter of an Heathen, so is Rome Papal the daughter of Rome Pagan; and as she was the wife of Ahab, and therefore a queen, so the whore of Babylon calls herself; and as Jezebel was famous for her paintings, so the church of Rome for her pretensions to religion and holiness, and for the gaudiness of her worship; and as she was remarkable for her idolatry, whoredoms, witchcrafts, and cruel persecution of the prophets of the Lord, and for murder, and innocent blood she shed; so the church of Rome, for her idolatrous worship of images, for her whoredoms, both in a literal and spiritual sense, and for the witchcrafts, magic, and devilish arts many of her popes have been addicted to, and especially for her barbarities and cruelties exercised upon the true professors of Christ, and for the blood of the martyrs, with which she has been drunk; and as Jezebel stirred up Ahab against good and faithful men, is has this church stirred up the secular powers, emperors, kings, and princes, against the true followers of Christ: and the end of both of them is much alike; as scarce anything was left of Jezebel, so Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, shall be cast into the sea, and be found no more at all: compare (12 2 Kings 9:7,22,30,31,33,37) with (66 Revelation 17:1,2,4-6,17,18 18:3,7,21,23);

which calleth herself a prophetess; as perhaps Jezebel might do, since she was such a favourer of the prophets of Baal, and so familiarly conversed with them, and kept them, even a hundred of them, at her table: and certain it is, that the antitype of her pretends to an infallible interpretation of the Scriptures, and to have a bulk of unwritten traditions; and which interpretations and traditions are to be regarded as an infallible rule of faith and practice. Now what is complained of in the true members and followers of Christ is, that they suffered this woman

to teach; when it was insufferable for a woman to teach, and especially such a strumpet:

and to seduce my servants to commit fornication; to deceive such who called themselves the servants of Christ, and draw them into the commission of spiritual fornication, which is idolatry; as the idolatrous worship of the Mass, and of images and saints departed:

and to eat things sacrificed unto idols; as Balaam, or the pope, before had done, (66 Revelation 2:14). This may have respect to the latter part of this

period, when the eyes of many began to be opened to see these false doctrines and idolatrous practices, and yet had not courage enough to oppose them as they should.

Ver. 21. *And I gave her space to repent of her fornication*, etc.] Of idolatry. This may have respect to the time of the witnesses, the Waldenses, and others, who bore a testimony against the Romish idolatry, and reproved for it, and denounced the judgment of God in case of impenitence; and as these things were repeated time after time, this may be called a space given to repent in; just as Jezebel had a space given her to repent in, from the time that Elijah declared the word of the Lord, that the dogs should eat her: so the Jews [f98] say of the old world, that God gave them bwçl ˆmz, "space to repent", but they repented not, as here:

and she repented not; (see Revelation 9:20,21); for the time for, and means leading to repentance may be given, yet if the grace of repentance itself is not given, men, either particular persons, or whole bodies of men, will never repent of their sins. The Alexandrian copy, Complutensian, Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, "and she would not repent".

Ver. 22. *Behold, I will cast her into a bed*, etc.] Of sickness and languishing; and which denotes the sickly, pining, and languishing state of the church of Rome, as a just retaliation for her bed of luxury and deliciousness, adultery and idolatry, she had indulged herself in; this was threatened, and was yet to come, and began at the time of the Reformation, signified by the next church state; and, ever since, the whore of Rome has been visibly sickening and decaying. The Alexandrian copy reads, "into a prison":

and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation: the kings of the earth, and their subjects, who have joined in the idolatries and corruptions of the Romish church, (Revelation 17:2 18:3), which may be understood either of that distress and uneasiness the Reformation in some countries gave them; or those outward troubles, wars, and desolations they have been since attended with, particularly the empire of Germany; which has been in great tribulation, formerly by the Turks, and of late by internal broils among themselves, and by the armies of other princes entering into it; or it may regard that eternal vengeance that will be recompensed to all such persons:

except they repent of their deeds; their spiritual fornication or idolatry, and all the abominations the members of that apostate church are guilty of. There seems to be an allusion in this verse to Ahaziah and Joram, sons of Ahab and Jezebel, who followed their mother's idolatrous practices, and were cast upon a bed of sickness, (2 Kings 1:2 8:29).

Ver. 23. *And I will kill her children with death*, etc.] Her popes, cardinals, priests, Jesuits, monks, friars, and all that join in the Romish apostasy, they shall be killed with death; there shall be an utter extirpation of them in God's own time; or they shall be killed with the second death: antwm, when used alone, or as distinct from any other kind of death, signifies the plague; compare with this (2 Kings 9:24 10:1,7);

and all the churches: that shall be in being at the time of Rome's destruction:

shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and heart; or am the omniscient God; which will be known by inflicting punishment on the followers of antichrist; when their hidden things of darkness will be brought to light, and exposed by him; and they shall receive the righteous reward of their evil practices, which they have coloured over, and glossed with specious pretences of religion and holiness, and a zeal for God and his glory, when they only meant themselves, the gratifying their carnal lusts, and securing their worldly interests, and amassing riches and honours to themselves:

and I will give unto everyone of you according to your works; who have connived at, and joined with them in their evil deeds; as many as were seduced by the false prophetess to commit spiritual fornication with her: as Christ is omniscient, and does not judge according to the outward appearance of things, but knows the principles and ends of all actions, however covert they may be; so he is righteous in judging and in punishing, which will be according as men's works are; and not one shall escape his righteous judgment, nor the due desert of their sins, though the punishment of some may be greater than that of others.

Ver. 24. *But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira*, etc.] The copulative and is left out in the Alexandrian copy and Complutensian edition, and if retained, it may be rendered thus, “even unto the rest”; the persons spoken to are the same, the pastor of this church, with his colleagues, and all the rest of the faithful in it; which shows that this

epistle, and so the rest, were not written to the pastors only, but to the churches; and that the pastor and his colleagues, with others, were free from the abominable errors and corruptions before spoken of; and that, in the worst of times, God does, and will reserve a people for himself, who are described as follows:

as many as have not this doctrine; who had not given into, and embraced this doctrine of the antichristian church of Rome, concerning infallibility, the worshipping of images, transubstantiation, etc. the Arabic version reads, “this new doctrine”; for notwithstanding the large pretensions of the Romish church to antiquity, her doctrine is but a novel doctrine:

and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; that is, had not approved of the doctrines of antichrist, which though his followers called deep things and mysteries of their holy religion, such as transubstantiation, etc. yet, to speak in the language of the pure and faithful professors of the Gospel, they are no other than the depths of Satan, or doctrines of devils; or else the sense is, as Jezebel and her followers say, to the contempt of the faithful, arrogating knowledge to themselves, and upbraiding them with simplicity and ignorance, as not knowing Satan's devices, nor how to rescue souls out of them, as they did; but the former sense seems best:

I will put upon you none other burden; meaning not any affliction or tribulation than the present one; nor any other errors and heresies than what were broached; but no other precept or command than what follows; (see 2 Kings 9:25).

Ver. 25. *But that which ye have [already]*, etc.] Which was something good, even the faithful word, the form of sound words, the mystery and doctrine of faith; this they had received from Christ and his apostles; they had it in their hearts, and a comfortable experience of the truth and power of it, and had made a profession of it, which they now held, and are here exhorted to hold fast:

hold fast till I come; meaning the coming of Christ, either at the Reformation by Luther, Calvin, and others, which began at the close of this church state, when the hands and hearts of those professors would be more strengthened, which seems to be the first sense of the words; or to judge Jezebel, destroy antichrist, which will be by the brightness of his coming; till which time the doctrine of the Gospel is to be held fast: and such an

exhortation will be always necessary, since, till then, there will be always more or less an opposition to it, and attempts made to wrest it out of the hands of its professors, to cause them to hesitate about it, and to intimidate them in the profession of it, by loading them with reproaches, calumnies, and persecution.

Ver. 26. *And he that overcometh*, etc.] Jezebel and her idolatries, her children, and all that commit adultery with her; such as are not drawn into the same evil practices with them, but bravely stand their ground against the Romish antichrist and his followers, and bear their testimony against his impious doctrines and idolatrous practices:

and keepeth my works unto the end; either of life, or of this church state, or of time, when Christ will personally appear, even at the end of the world; and by his works are meant, not the works which were done by him, as his miracles and works of mercy to the souls and bodies of men, and works of righteousness in obedience to the law, and the work of redemption and salvation; though these are works to be observed, and kept in view, and to be preserved in memory, and for the encouragement of faith and hope; but the works which are commanded, and required by Christ to be done by his people; as the public work of the ministry, by the preachers of the Gospel; and every private work, both internal and external, as the work of faith, the labour of love, and every act of obedience, which is constantly to be discharged. The Arabic version reads, “and keepeth my words and my works”; things both relating to doctrine and practice:

to him will I give power over the nations; or Gentiles, the Papists; so called because of the Pagan notions and worship introduced by them; and because they consist of many nations, tongues, and people, who are deceived, and drawn into idolatry by them: and this power over them may be understood in a spiritual sense, through the preaching of the Gospel, which being attended with the power of God, is the means of converting sinners, and so of weakening the kingdom of Satan, and of antichrist; and which had its fulfilment, at least in part, at the time of the Reformation, and onward, and will have still a greater accomplishment in the spiritual reign of Christ and his people, under the Philadelphian church state; and it may also design the temporal power which the saints shall have over antichrist, when they shall take away his dominion, and consume and destroy it, and the kingdom and the dominion under the whole heaven shall be given to the saints of the most High; (Daniel 7:25-27).

Ver. 27. *And he shall rule them with a rod of iron*, etc.] Either with the Gospel, which is the rod of Christ's strength, and is the power of God unto salvation, and by which the kingdom of Christ is enlarged, and the power of the church of Christ over the antichristian party is increased; or it may design great strictness and severity, with which the man of sin will be used by the saints of the most High, when they shall take away his dominion from him:

as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; which may be expressive either of the breaking of rocky hearts in pieces at conversion, and of making souls humble and contrite; or of the irreparable ruin and destruction of antichrist, when the saints shall consume and destroy him:

even as I received of my Father; Christ, as God, has an underived power and government; but, as Mediator, his rule and power over the nations are asked by him, given to him, and received by him, (Psalm 2:8,9). This "as" does not intend equality, but similitude; and denotes the participation the saints will have with Christ in the judgment and destruction of antichrist, and in his kingdom and power.

Ver. 28. *And I will give him the morning star*.] So Christ is called, (Revelation 22:16); and here it designs an illustrious appearance of Christ at the close of this church state, and a communication of much light and grace from him, which introduced the Sardian church state, or the reformation by Luther, Calvin, etc. which is the phosphorus, or morning star, to the spiritual reign of Christ under the Philadelphian church state; which will be the bright, clear, day of the Gospel, when the present twilight, which is between the appearance of the morning star and that glorious day, will be removed: for by this morning star is not meant the glory that shall be put upon the bodies of the saints in the resurrection morn; nor the heavenly glory itself, or the hope of it; but the dawning of the latter day glory, which began at the Reformation, and is promised the faithful professors in the Thyatirian church state, who lived in the darkness of Popery.

Ver. 29. *He that hath an ear, let him hear*, etc.] (See Gill on "Revelation 2:7").

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 3

This chapter contains the epistles to the churches at Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, and begins with that to Sardis; in which the sender describes himself by some things taken out of a former description of him; and gives an account of the state of this church; that her works were known by him, which were imperfect; and that she had the name of a living church, but was dead; wherefore she is exhorted to watchfulness and diligence, to remember how she had heard and received the Gospel, and to hold it fast, and repent of her sins: if not, he threatens to come as a thief unawares upon her, (Revelation 3:1-3), but excepts some few persons from this general account, who were not defiled with the corruptions of the majority, and who therefore should be favoured with communion with him, (Revelation 3:4), and then some gracious promises are made to persevering saints, and the epistle is concluded in the usual form, (Revelation 3:5,6). Next follows the epistle to the church at Philadelphia; in which the sender assumes some peculiar titles not before mentioned, taken from his holiness, truth, and power, (Revelation 3:7), signifies his approbation of her works; declares he had set before her an open door, which could not be shut; affirms she had a little strength, and commends her for keeping his word, (Revelation 3:8), and, for her encouragement, promises that some persons, formerly of bad characters, should come and worship before her, and should know what an interest she had in his love; and that since she had kept his word, he would keep her from an hour of temptation, which will be a trying time to all the world, (Revelation 3:9,10), and in consideration of his speedy coming, he exhorts her to hold fast what she had, that she might not lose her honour and glory; and promises the overcomer a fixed place and name in the house of God; and closes the epistle as the rest, (Revelation 3:11-13), and then follows the last epistle of all, which is that to the church at Laodicea; in which the sender describes himself by some characters taken from his truth and faithfulness, and from his eternity, power, and dominion, (Revelation 3:14), represents the members of this church as lukewarm, and very disagreeable to him, (Revelation 3:15,16), and as having a vain

opinion of themselves, being ignorant of their real state and case, (Revelation 3:17), wherefore he gives them some wholesome counsel and advice, suitable to their condition, (Revelation 3:18), and whereas there were some among them he loved, he lets them know that his rebukes and chastenings were from love, and with a view to stimulate them to zeal, and bring them to repentance, which became them, (Revelation 3:19), and then he informs them where he was, what he expected from them, and what they might upon a suitable behaviour enjoy with him, (Revelation 3:20), and next promises to the overcomer great honour and glory, such as he had with his Father; and concludes the epistle in his usual manner, (Revelation 3:21,22).

Ver. 1. *And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write*, etc.] Of the city of Sardis (see Gill on "Revelation 1:11") when, and by whom this church was founded, and who was the present angel or pastor of it, is not now to be certainly known; however, here was a church in the "second" century, of which Melito was then pastor; and he is thought by some to be the angel here intended; this man wrote upon the book of the Revelation, and an apology for the Christians, sent to the Emperor Antoninus Verus, in whose time he lived [f99]; and in the "third" century a church remained in this place; and also in the "fourth", as appears from the council of Nice, which makes mention of it; and likewise in the "fifth", as is evident from the acts of the synod at Chalcedon, in which age it was the metropolitan church of the Lydians; and in the "sixth" century there was a bishop of this church in the fifth synod at Constantinople; and in the "seventh" century, Marinus bishop of Sardis assisted at the sixth synod in the same place; and in the "eighth" century, Euthymius bishop of it was present in the Nicene synod; and even in the "ninth" century mention is made of an archbishop of Sardis [f100]: but now there are but very few Christians to be found here, and who have not a place to worship in, nor any to minister to them [f101]. This church represents the state of the church from the time of the Reformation by Luther and others, until a more glorious state of the church appears, or until the spiritual reign of Christ in the Philadelphian period; under the Sardian church state we now are: (this was published in 1747, Ed.) that this church is an emblem of the reformed churches from Popery, is evident not only from its following the Thyatirian state, which expresses the darkness of Popery, and the depths of Satan in it; but from its being clear of Balaam, and those that held his doctrine; and from the Nicolaitans and their tenets, and from Jezebel, and those that committed adultery with her;

things which the two former churches are charged with; but from these the present church reformed. This city of Sardis was once a very flourishing and opulent city; it was the metropolis of Lydia, and the royal seat of the rich King Croesus, though now a very poor and mean village; and may denote the magnificence and splendour of this church state, at least in name and figure, it has appeared in, in the world; though now in a very low and mean condition, and may be worse before the spiritual reign of Christ begins in the next period: there may be some allusion in the name of this church to the precious stone "sarda", which, Pliny says [f102], was found about Sardis, and had its name from hence; the same with the Sardian stone in (Revelation 4:2 21:20). This stone, naturalists say [f103], drives away fear, gives boldness, cheerfulness, and sharpness of wit, and frees from witchcrafts and sorceries; which may be expressive of the boldness and courage of the first reformers; of the cheerfulness, joy, and pleasure, which appeared in their countenances, and which they spread in others by preaching the doctrines of the Gospel; and of those excellent gifts and talents both of nature, learning, and grace, by which they were fitted for their service; and of their being a means of delivering men from the witchcrafts of Jezebel, and the sorceries of the whore of Rome: and perhaps some allusion may be in this name, as is thought by Cocceius, to the Hebrew word dyrç, "sarid", which signifies a "remnant", since in this church state there was a remnant according to the election of grace, a few names, whose garments were undefiled; or to the word drç, "sered", which signifies a carpenter's rule or line; since the first reformers were endeavouring to bring every doctrine and practice to the rule and line of God's word:

these things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God; the fulness and perfection of the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, as in (Revelation 1:4), which Christ, as Mediator, has without measure, and are at his dispose, and which he, having received for men, gives unto them; and at the time of the Reformation bestowed them on many eminent servants of his in a very plenteous manner; for which reason he assumes this character in writing to this church:

and the seven stars; the ministers of the Gospel; (see Gill on "Revelation 1:16"), (see Gill on "Revelation 2:1"); these were filled by Christ at this time with evangelical light and knowledge; and were sent, and held forth by him as lights in the world; and were instruments in his

hand for great good; and were wonderfully held, kept, and preserved by him, notwithstanding the greatness of their work, their weakness in themselves, and the power, rage, and fury of the antichristian party; Luther is a remarkable instance of this: Christ's making use of the same title here as in the epistle to the church at Ephesus, which represents the apostolic church, may show that this church state bore some degree of likeness to that, and that it was a sort of renewing of it:

I know thy works; good works chiefly; the nature and imperfection of them; and also bad works: that

thou hast a name that thou livest: the reformed churches have had a name for spiritual living, by faith on Christ's righteousness only for justification, that article being the great article of the Reformation: there was in them an appearance of liveliness, by their zeal for Gospel doctrine and worship, and a form of living according to godliness; they were esteemed, were celebrated, and famous for these things, especially for living by faith on Christ's righteousness:

and art dead; or “but art dead”; for, the most part, or greater part of the members of these churches, are dead in trespasses and sins; and as for the rest, they are very dead and lifeless in their frames, in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duties; and under great spiritual declensions and decays, just as it were ready to die; and but few really alive in a spiritual sense, and especially lively, or in the lively exercise of grace, and fervent discharge of duty; yea, dead as to those things in which they had a name to live: and this seems to be our case now, who, it is to be hoped, are at, or towards the close of this period.

Ver. 2. *Be watchful*, etc.] Which may respect both ministers and members: the ministers of the Gospel, whose business is to watch over themselves, their conversation and doctrine, and watch every opportunity to preach it, and the success of their ministry; and that they do not grow careless, or be drawn aside through frowns or flatteries; and over others, as shepherds do, to know the state of their flock; as watchmen of cities to give the time of night, and notice of approaching danger; and to see that the laws of Christ's house are put in execution: and this may also respect the members of these churches, who ought to be watchful, and constant attenders on the word and ordinances, and in the duty of prayer; and should watch over themselves, their hearts, thoughts, affections, words, and actions, and against sin, Satan, the world, and false teachers: or “be awake”; which

shows that both ministers and churches are asleep, or much inclined to it; which is the present case of both in this period of time:

and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; not good works; though these may be said to be ready to die when men grow weary of them, are lifeless in the performance of them, and want zeal for them; and may be said to be strengthened when men do their first works: nor the graces of the Spirit; for the whole work of grace remains, and though it is imperfect, yet no part is, or can be taken away from it; yea, there is an increase of it, though it may not be discerned; the work of grace cannot die, or be ready to die; there may be a decline as to the exercise of it, and a want of liveliness in it; and things may be ready to die in appearance, and in the apprehension of believers, but not in reality; and besides it is God's work, and not man's, to strengthen this: therefore they may intend the truths of the Gospel, which at the beginning of the Reformation were revived, and were preached with great life and liveliness; but towards the close of this state, as now, would be just ready to expire, to be almost lost, and dead, and buried, as they are; and which it becomes both ministers and members of churches to hold, and hold up, establish, and confirm: or else the rest of the members of this church may be meant, those of them that remained, that were not wholly sunk and apostatized; and yet were in a very faint and sickly state, scarce any life in them, ready to give up their religion and profession; which should be strengthened, by preaching the pure Gospel, by faithfully administering the ordinances of it, and by speaking comfortable and encouraging words to them. The Complutensian edition and some copies read, “which thou art about lose”; which seems a good reading; and the Arabic version, and some other copies, “which thou art going to reject”:

for I have not found thy works perfect before God; meaning that the reformers, and reformed churches, stuck where they first began; and did not carry their works neither with respect to doctrine, and especially with respect to discipline and worship, to a greater perfection, as they ought to have done: and however perfect they might appear before men, they were not so in the sight of the omniscient God, nor found so by Christ, before whom all things are naked and open: the Arabic version reads, “before me”; and the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, “before my God”. This church, though she has departed from the corrupt church of Rome, and from her evil doctrines and practices; yet did not go on to that perfection which

might have been expected and desired, and which would have rendered her praiseworthy, whereas she is now discommended. It is an observation of a Jewish writer [f104], that

> “if one departs from an evil way, and does not do that which is good, he does not whç[m µylçh, “make his work perfect”, and he is not pronounced blessed.”

Ver. 3. *Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard*, etc.] That is, hast received upon hearing; for hearing goes first, and then receiving: the design of the advice is to put this church in mind of the doctrines of grace she had heard at the beginning of the Reformation, from Luther and others; such as justification by the righteousness of Christ, pardon through his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice, doctrines now almost lost and buried in forgetfulness; wherefore Christ would have her remember these things; how that she heard them with attention, reverence, humility, and without prejudice; and with much affection, so as to approve and love them, believe them, feel the power of them, and taste the goodness in them; and how she received them with all meekness, readiness, and joy, when now they are greatly disliked and rejected by many; very few attend to the doctrines of the Reformation. This is exactly our case:

and hold fast; the above doctrines, though the majority is against them, and learned men despise them, and they are charged with enthusiasm and licentiousness. It looks as if there was danger, as there is, that they would be entirely wrested out of her hands:

and repent: of her deadness, coldness, and indifference to these truths; of her unwatchfulness over them, and imperfection in them; not carrying truth to its fulness and perfection, resting in her first light and knowledge, and even going back from that:

if therefore thou shalt not watch: and preserve truth, and hold fast the form of sound words, and keep to the order, as well as the faith of the Gospel, and constantly attend divine worship, and look for the coming and kingdom of Christ:

I will come on thee as a thief; in the night, and at unawares, unthought of, and unexpected; which must be understood of coming to her in a way of rebuke and chastisement, by bringing some affliction, or suffering some

sore distress to fall upon her: the phrase, “on thee”, is left out in the Alexandrian copy and in the Ethiopic version:

and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee: which, though applicable to the spiritual coming of Christ in the next church state, and to his second coming in his kingdom and glory, which will be both sudden and unexpected, yet these will be to the joy and comfort of the church; whereas what is here spoken is by way of threatening, and must relate to some severe dispensation on her; and which we might now justly expect, were we not in the unwatchful, unthoughtful, and ignorant situation here described.

Ver. 4. *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy and others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, “but thou hast a few names”, etc. or “a few men”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; who were called by name, and were men of renown, excellent men, men famous for holding the truth of doctrine, and for powerful and practical godliness; men of great light and grace, and who were known by name to God and Christ: these are said to be but “few”, not in comparison of the world, in which sense all the elect of God are but few, though a large number, considered in themselves; but in comparison of formal lifeless professors of religion, with which this church state abounds; and which, if we were not as dead as we are, might easily be observed; there may not only be hypocrites in churches, but a majority of them: yea, these few may be understood in comparison of the greater number of true believers; for in this period of the church there are but few, even of them, that are lively, zealous, and careful, and are heartily concerned for the purity of doctrine, discipline, worship, and conversation; and a few there are, blessed be God, even in this our Sardian church state. God will have a few in whom he will be glorified in the most declining times; and the Lord knows and takes notice of these few; and for their sake the church state is kept up, the Gospel and its ordinances are continued; nor is a church to be judged of by the number of its members, nor is a multitude to be followed to do evil.

Which have not defiled their garments; the Ethiopic version adds, “with a woman”, the woman Jezebel. They were not guilty either of corporeal or spiritual fornication, which is idolatry; they kept their outward conversation garments pure, and maintained a profession of Christ and his truths incorrupt; they did not defile it by an unbecoming walk, or by a

denial of Christ and a departure from him, and by embracing false doctrines; they were neither erroneous in their principles, nor immoral in their practices; few there, are indeed of this sort. Defiled garments, in either sense, very ill become members of the reformed churches. Among the Jews [f105], if a priest's garments were spotted or defiled, he might not minister; if he did, his service was rejected.

And they shall walk with me in white; there is a walking in Christ by faith; and a walking before him as in his sight; and a walking worthy of him, in all well pleasing in his ways and ordinances; and here a walking with him, in a way of special and comfortable communion, both here and hereafter: and this is in white; in white raiment, meaning either in the robe of his own righteousness, compared to fine linen and white; or in the shining robes of immortality and glory; and may be expressive of that spiritual joy which such shall be partakers of, as well as of their spotless purity and innocence in the other world. White raiment was used among the Romans as a token of joy at festivals, and on birthdays, and at weddings, and such like times.

For they are worthy; not of themselves, or through any works of righteousness done by them, which are neither meritorious of grace here, nor of glory hereafter; but through the grace of God, and worthiness of Christ. The Jews have a saying somewhat like this [f106];

> “they that walk with God in their lifetime, µykwz, “are worthy” to walk with him after their death;”

In the Apocrypha we read:

> “Take thy number, O Sion, and shut up those of thine that are clothed in white, which have fulfilled the law of the Lord.” (2 Esdras 2:40)

This clause is left out in the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 5. *He that overcometh*, etc.] The deadness, formality, and imperfection of this church state; gets over these things, and is among the few names in it:

the same shall be clothed in white raiment; the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, “thus shall he be clothed in white raiment”; he shall have abundance of spiritual peace and joy, great success and prosperity, both inward and outward, in himself, and in the church; and

triumph over all his enemies, sin, Satan, the world, death, and every other enemy; and not only be clothed with change of raiment, the pure and spotless righteousness of Christ, but shall enjoy eternal glory and happiness! the allusion seems to be to the custom of the Jewish sanhedrim in judging of priests fit for service[f107];

> "they examined the priests concerning their genealogies and blemishes; every priest in whom was found anything faulty in his genealogy, he was clothed in black and veiled in black, and went out of the court; but everyone that was found perfect and right, µynbl çbwl, "he was clothed in white", and went in and ministered with his brethren the priests."

And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life; by which is meant the choice of persons to everlasting life and salvation; and this being signified by a book, and by writing names in it, shows the exact knowledge God has of his elect, the value he has for them, his remembrance of them, his love to them, and care for them; and that this election is of particular persons by name, and is sure and certain; for those whose names are written in it shall never be blotted out, they will always remain in the number of God's elect, and can never become reprobates, or shall ever perish; because of the unchangeableness of the nature and love of God, the firmness of his purposes, the omnipotence of his arm, the death and intercession of Christ for them, their union to him, and being in him, the impossibility of their seduction by false teachers, and the security of their persons, grace, and glory in Christ, and in whose keeping this book of life is; which respects not this temporal life, that belongs to the book of providence, but a spiritual and eternal life, from whence it has its name.

But I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels; which shows that Christ has an exact and perfect knowledge of all the chosen ones, he knows them by name; and that he has a strong and affectionate love for them, and is not ashamed of them, of their cause, of their persons, and of their relation to him; and that he does and will own, acknowledge, and approve of them, both here and hereafter: and the confession he will make of them will be in their praise; in praise of their persons and the comeliness of them, which he has put upon them; and of their graces, though they are his own; and of their good works as the fruits of grace: and this will be made before his Father, who chose these persons, and gave them to him to preserve and save; and before the angels, who rejoice at

their salvation and happiness; and this will be at the last day; (see Gill on "Matthew 10:32").

Ver. 6. *He that hath an ear, let him hear*, etc.] (See Gill on "Revelation 2:7").

Ver. 7. *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write*, etc.] Of the city of Philadelphia, (see Gill on "Revelation 1:11"); According to the Apostolical Constitutions [f108], one Demetrius was ordained bishop of this church by the Apostle John; but this is not to be depended on; nor is it known who this angel was: however, certain it is there was a church in this place in the "second" century, in the times of Ignatius, who wrote an epistle to it, and which then had a bishop or pastor over it, whom he mentions [f109], though not his name. And in the same century twelve Philadelphians suffered martyrdom at the same time Polycarp did [f110]; and in the "third" century a church remained in this place; and also in the "fourth", since a bishop of this church was in the council at Nice; and in the "fifth" century, a presbyter of Philadelphia was in the synod at Ephesus under Celestine; and in the "sixth" century, a bishop of this place assisted at the fifth synod at Constantinople; and in the "eighth" century, Stephen, bishop of the church here, was in the Nicene synod [f111]; and there are now very many that bear the name of Christians of the Greek Church in this place [f112]. This church is an emblem of, and represents the church in that period of time, in which will be the spiritual reign of Christ. Its name signifies "brotherly love", which in this interval will be very remarkable; saints shall not envy, vex, and distress one another any more; they shall be one in the hand of the Lord, and among themselves. Love, which is now so cold, and so much wanting in our present Sardian church state, will be exceeding warm and fervent, and in its highest pitch in the Philadelphian state. The characters Christ here assumes point at the holiness of life, truth of doctrine, and purity of discipline, for which this church state will be distinguished: in this period of time an open door for the Gospel will be set; it will be preached in its power and purity, and; will be greatly succeeded; the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in, and the Jews will be converted; hypocrites and formal professors will be discerned and detected; great honour and respect will be shown the church by all men; and this state will be an emblem and pledge of the new Jerusalem state, of which mention is made in this epistle, or the thousand years' personal reign of Christ with all his saints:

these things saith he that is holy; which character not only agrees with Christ, as God, who is the Holy One of Israel, and equally glorious in holiness as his Father, but as man; his nature was free from original sin; his life from any actual transgression; his doctrines were pure and holy, and so were all his works, and all his administrations in each of his offices: and, as Mediator, he is the cause and author of holiness to his people; they are sanctified in him, and have their sanctification from him, and are sanctified by him: this character he chooses now to take, because he was sending an epistle to such as were lovers of holiness, and famous for it, both internal and external; so that while he describes himself, he points at persons, the members of churches in this interval:

he that is true; truly God, and truly man: true and faithful in the discharge of his several offices, and in the trust reposed in him, both of the grace and persons of the saints, and in what he undertook to do for them: he is truth itself, the truth of types, promises, and prophecies; and the sum and substance of all the truths of the Gospel; and is therefore to be depended on in every prediction and promise; and this title of Christ may have some view to the truth of doctrine which shall, in this period, prevail, and to the faithfulness and integrity of his people to his cause and interest:

he that hath the key of David; mention is made of David, because he was a type of Christ; and because from him Christ came according to the flesh, and whose throne he was to sit upon, in a spiritual sense; and because, in this period of time, the Jews are to be converted, who will seek the Lord their God, and David their king: and by the key of David is meant the key of the house of David; that is, the church of Christ, of which David's house and family were a type: and this key is either the key of knowledge, or it is expressive of power and authority. Christ has the key of knowledge, he knows all the persons of his people, all their affairs, and what they do in his house, and how they behave there: he has the key of knowledge in the Scriptures, and gives it to his ministers. And it may also design his authority in his house and church, in fixing the ordinances of it, in bestowing gifts on men, and in dispensing the blessings of grace and goodness; this may have some regard to the pure discipline of this church, as well as to its light and knowledge in the doctrines of the Gospel. The Targum on (Isaiah 22:22) interprets the key of the house of David, of ˆjlwç, “the dominion” or “government of the house of David”.

He that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth; he opens the Scriptures, which are shut to a natural man, as he did in his own personal ministry, when here on earth, and now by his Spirit; and none can shut them, either men or devils, or hinder the spread of light and knowledge by them: he opens the door of the Gospel, and gives an opportunity to preach it, and liberty of mind and expression to his ministers, and a door of utterance to them, and of entrance for it into the hearts of men, which none can shut, or hinder: he opens the door of the church, which is himself, and lets in his sheep into the sheepfold, into a Gospel church state, and the ordinances of it; and he opens the door of heaven by his blood and righteousness, and gives his people liberty and boldness to enter into the holiest of all, and brings many sons to glory in spite of all the opposition of men and devils: on the other hand, when he pleases, he shuts up the Scriptures, and the eyes of men from seeing what is in them; he shuts up the door of the Gospel, and forbids the preaching of it in this and that place; and the door of heaven will be shut by him at the last day, when all called to the marriage of the Lamb are entered, and there will be no opening. This shows the sovereignty, power, and authority of Christ, and which he will exercise in this church state, (see <18|12|14>Job 12:14). A like phrase is in the Talmud[f113], `j twp wnya bwç rgwsç ˆwyk`, "when he shuts again, there is none that opens".

Ver. 8. *I know thy works*, etc.] Good works, of faith, love, and patience; and which lay much in preaching, professing, and maintaining the pure Gospel, and in acts of charity to one another; and which were done to some degree of perfection, and with great sincerity; since this church is not complained of, that her works were not perfect before God, as the former church is:

behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; or "which no man can shut", as read the Alexandrian copy, and others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions. This "open door" may design an uncommon opportunity of preaching the Gospel; and a very great freedom of mind in the preachers of it, and great attention in the hearers, whose hearts will be opened to observe, receive, and embrace it; and a very large gathering in of souls to Christ, and his churches; much and frequent preaching of the word with great success, which it will not be in the power of any creature to stop or hinder: now will the abundance of the sea, the forces of the Gentiles flow in, and the nation of the Jews shall be born at once.

For thou hast a little strength; which is not to be understood of inward spiritual strength, for of this the church in this period will have a great deal, as well as of courage and fortitude of mind, but outward power and authority: some great men, and princes of the earth, will come into the churches of Christ, even kings will come to the brightness of her rising; for now will all those prophesies have their accomplishment, which respect the secular grandeur of the church, with regard to its numbers, power, and riches; (see <23 49 18>Isaiah 49:18-23 60:3-17).

And hast kept my word; both the commands and ordinances of Christ in practice, and that in their primitive purity, as they were delivered by Christ and his apostles, particularly baptism and the Lord's supper; which have been, one or other of them, or both, most sadly corrupted in all the periods of the churches hitherto, excepting the apostolical one, but will now be restored to their pristine purity and glory; and also the doctrines of the Gospel, which will be kept, not in memory only, but in the heart and life; they will be publicly and openly preached, professed, and defended:

and hast not denied my name: Christ himself, his doctrine respecting his person, office, and grace, neither in words, nor in works, but both ways confessed and owned it.

Ver. 9. *Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan*, etc.] Which may be understood either of the Papists, the followers of the man of sin, whose coming was after the working of Satan, and whose doctrines are the doctrines of devils, many of whom will now be converted, and brought to the true church; or rather of the Jews, who had, and have, and will have till this time, their synagogues for religious worship in their way; but they are no other than synagogues of Satan; the men that assemble in them are of their father the devil, and do his works, and will do them:

which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; they are Jews by name and nation; they are. Jews outwardly, but not inwardly and spiritually, (<45 02 28>Romans 2:28,29); they are carnal wicked men, under the influence of Satan, though they pretend to be religious men, and worshippers of God:

behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet; the conversion of the Jews is here intended. The worship here spoken of is not either a religious or civil worship of the church, for the church is not the object of worship; only before whom, and at whose feet, this worship shall be given to God in the most humble and hearty manner: the sense is, that

the convinced and converted Jews shall come to the church, and in the most lowly and contrite manner acknowledge their former blindness, furious zeal, and violent hatred of the Christians, and shall profess their faith in Christ; shall join themselves to the church, and partake of the ordinances of the Gospel with them; and shall worship God and Jesus Christ, their Lord and King, in their presence, and at their feet:

and to know that I have loved thee; the Gentile church, and the members of it, in assuming human nature, and dying for, and redeeming them, as well as the Jews; in sending his Gospel to them, and calling them by his grace, and planting them into Gospel churches; giving them a place, and a name in his house, better than that of sons and daughters.

Ver. 10. *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience*, etc.] The Gospel; so called because it gives an account of the patience of Christ, in the midst of all his outward meanness and humiliation; and because it is a means of implanting and increasing the grace of patience, which God is the efficient cause of, and Christ is the example of; that patience, which bears a resemblance to his, in enduring afflictions, reproaches, persecutions, desertions, and temptations, and in waiting for his kingdom and glory; and because both the preachers and professors of the word have need of patience, and should exercise it in like manner as Christ did. This word, the churches, in the Philadelphian state, will keep pure and incorrupt, and observe the ordinances of it according to the directions given in it; and will believe the promise of Christ's personal coming, and patiently wait for it: wherefore, Christ promises as follows,

I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth; this hour seems to refer not to any of the vials which will be poured out on the antichristian states, but to some affliction and distress which will befall the reformed churches, and will light upon the outward court worshippers among them It seems to be the last struggle of the beast of Rome, and to denote some violent and sharp persecution, such as what Daniel mentions, that never was before nor since; but it will be but short, but one hour, the twenty fourth part of a prophetical day or year, perhaps about a fortnight; yet it will be very extensive; it will reach all the world, the whole Roman empire, and all that dwell upon the earth, that are called by the name of Christians, and will try them, whether they are so or not; Christ will now have his fan in his hand, and purge his floor of all his formal professors and hypocrites;

and it will be known who are his true churches, and pure members; and these he will keep close to himself, and preserve safe amidst all the distress and confusion the world will be in. This cannot refer to the bloody persecutions under the Roman emperors, for from those the church at Philadelphia was not preserved. We read [f114] of twelve members of it that suffered with Polycarp.

Ver. 11. *Behold, I come quickly*, etc.] To bring on this hour of temptation on the reformed churches, which will be at the beginning of this period; to help and deliver, save and preserve the truly godly among them; to destroy antichrist, and introduce the latter day glory:

hold that fast which thou hast; either her grace in the exercise of it, as her faith, patience, etc. or rather the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, which she had received, as delivered by Christ and his apostles: and which she had held in the truth and purity of them, and is now exhorted to hold them fast, since this hour of temptation would be a trying time to her faith, patience, integrity, and constancy:

that no man take thy crown; not eternal happiness, called a crown of life, glory, and righteousness, and which was prepared for her, and promised to her, and would be certainly given her; nor was there any danger of another's taking it from her; not but that exhortations of this kind to the saints are necessary, with respect to that, to excite to diligence, care, and watchfulness; and are no ways contrary to their final perseverance, and certain salvation, but are means thereof: but either her honour for her faith and faithfulness, for her integrity, sincerity, and purity, is here meant; or the glorious things which were spoken of this church state, and to be accomplished in it, (Psalm 87:3); (see Isaiah 60:1-22).

Ver. 12. *He that overcometh*, etc.] In the hour of temptation, in this period of time; that stands his ground then, sustains the shock of the beast, with courage and intrepidity, and overcomes him:

will I make a pillar in the temple of my God; by which is meant not the church triumphant, though such will have a place, and an abiding one there; but the church militant, so called in allusion to the temple at Jerusalem, for its author, matter, situation, strength, solidity, magnificence, and stateliness, and for its holiness; and may be said to be the temple of God, because it is of his building, and is the place where he dwells, and is worshipped; and the temple of Christ's God, as he is man and Mediator,

through whom all worship is given to God in it; and those who are overcomers by the grace and strength of Christ are made pillars by him here, in allusion to the two pillars, Jachin and Boaz, in Solomon's temple; that is, they become very ornamental in the church, they are made honourable members of it; they come in at the right door into it, and fill up their places, and all relative duties in it, and walk becoming their profession; and, like pillars, are a support to it, to the interest of the church, the truths of the Gospel, and to weak and poor saints; and, as pillars, they are upright in heart and conversation, and are steady, firm, and constant:

and he shall go no more out; out of the church, the temple of the Lord, but shall abide in it unto death: it is a promise of perseverance both in the grace of God, and in a profession of religion; there shall not be such instances of apostasy as now.

And I will write upon him the name of my God; in allusion to inscriptions of names on pillars; the sense is, that it should be manifest that such are interested in God, as their covenant God and Father, in like manner as he is the God and Father of Christ; and this should be as plain and as evident as an inscription on a pillar, or as if it was written upon their foreheads, as the high priest had on his forehead written, “holiness to the Lord”; and indeed it will be by their holiness that it will so clearly appear that God is their covenant God; for in this church state, or spiritual reign of Christ, holiness unto the Lord shall be upon the bells of the horses:

and the name of the city of my God; [which is] new Jerusalem, in allusion to “Jehovah Shammah”; meaning the Gospel church in the latter day glory; and the sense is, that such shall be manifestly citizens of this city, in this new and glorious state of the church, and shall enjoy all the privileges of it, which at this time especially will be many and great. This will not be the new Jerusalem church state, or the thousand years' reign of Christ in person, for in that there will be no temple, as in this; but it will have the name, and some appearance of it; it will bear some resemblance to it, and be a pledge of it:

which cometh down out of heaven, from my God; as it is before called new Jerusalem, in distinction from the old, so here it is said to come down from heaven, or to be the heavenly Jerusalem, in distinction from the earthly one. The inhabitants of it will be born from above, and be called with an

heavenly calling, and their conversation will be in heaven, and all the glory of this church will come from God.

And [I will write upon him] my new name; either the name of "Jehovah" our righteousness; or rather the name of King of kings, and Lord of lords, (<66916>Revelation 19:16); which Christ will now acquire, or at least this will now be made more manifest upon the destruction of antichrist, in this church state; in which conquest he will make all his people sharers, and they shall now more openly appear to be kings, and to reign with him in his spiritual kingdom.

Ver. 13. *He that hath an ear, let him hear*, etc.] (See Gill on "<66207>Revelation 2:7").

Ver. 14. *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write*, etc.] Of the city of Laodicea, (see Gill on "<66011>Revelation 1:11"); there was a church here in the times of the Apostle Paul; by whom it was founded is not known; mention is made of it in (<51001>Colossians 2:1,2 4:13,15,16), who was now the angel, or pastor of it, whether Epaphras, who is there named, or another, is not certain. According to the Apostolical Constitutions [f115], Archippus was ordained bishop of it by the apostles; (see <51046>Colossians 4:16,17). There was a church here in the second century, for Sagaris, bishop of it, suffered martyrdom in the times of Antoninus Verus [f116]; and in the "fourth" century, this church was famous for two eminent bishops, Theodorus and Gregory; and in the "fifth" century, it was the metropolitan church of Phrygia, as it was in the "seventh" century, in which age Tyberius, bishop of this place, was in the sixth synod at Constantinople [f117]; but now it is even without inhabitants [f118]. This church represents the state of the church, from the end of the spiritual reign of Christ, till the time of his personal appearing and kingdom, to judge the quick and dead; for after the spiritual reign is over, professors of religion will sink into a formality, and into a lukewarm frame of spirit, and into great spiritual sloth and security, (<66015>Revelation 3:15,16), which will make those times like the times of Noah and of Lot; and such will be the days of the coming of the son of man to judge the world. Its name signifies either "the righteousness of the people"; and so may point at that popular and external righteousness, which the majority of the professors of religion in this period of time will be boasting of, and trusting in; being self-sufficient, and self-dependent, when at the same time they will be naked, as well as poor and blind, (<66017>Revelation 3:17,18); or it signifies "the judging of the

people”; for this church state, at the end of it, will bring on the general judgment; the Judge will now be at the door indeed, standing and knocking; and they that are ready to meet the bridegroom, when he comes, will be admitted into the nuptial chamber, and sit down with him in his throne, in the thousand years' kingdom, at the close of which will be the second resurrection, when all the people, small and great, shall be judged, (<66019>Revelation 3:19-21).

These things saith the Amen; (see <23516>Isaiah 65:16); The word “Amen” is the name of a divine Person with the Jews, and it seems the second Person; for so on those words in (<20830>Proverbs 8:30); “then was I by him as one brought up with him”, they observe [f119], do not read “Amon”, the word there used, but “Amen”; and, a little after, “Amen”, they say, is the “notaricon”, or sign of ^man Ælm la, “God the faithful King”; they make [f120] “Amen” to be one of the names of the second “Sephira”, or number in the Cabalistic tree, by whom the second Person in the Godhead seems to be designed: and they say [f121], that the word “Amen”, by gematry (or numerically) answers to the two names “Jehovah, Adonai”. Christ may be so called, because he is the God of truth, and truth itself; and it may be expressive of his faithfulness, both to God his Father, and to his people, in whom all the promises he either made, or received, are yea and amen; and also of the firmness, constancy, and immutability of Christ, in his nature, person, and offices, in his love, fulness of grace, power, blood, and righteousness; and is very appropriately assumed by him now, when he was about to give the finishing stroke to all covenant engagements, and to all promises and prophesies; (see <66018>Revelation 1:18).

The faithful and true witness; who as he was in the days of his flesh, (see Gill on “<66005>Revelation 1:5”); so he will be at the day of judgment, a swift witness against all ungodly men; and he may the rather take up this title, not only on that account, but to show that the description he gives of the state and condition of this church is just, (<66015>Revelation 3:15,16); and to engage it to take his advice the more readily, (<66018>Revelation 3:18); and to assure it of the nearness of his coming, (<66020>Revelation 3:20); and to strengthen the faith of his people, and quicken their hope and expectation of the happiness with him promised, (<66021>Revelation 3:21); the same character is given to the Logos, or Word of the Lord, by the Targumist in (<24205>Jeremiah 42:5), let the Word of the Lord be to us ^myhmw jwçq Æyhsl, “for a true and faithful witness”; the very phrase here used.

The beginning of the creation of God; not the first creature that God made, but the first cause of the creation; the first Parent, producer, and efficient cause of every creature; the author of the old creation, who made all things out of nothing in the beginning of time; and of the new creation, the everlasting Father of, everyone that is made a new creature; the Father of the world to come, or of the new age and Gospel dispensation; the Maker of the new heaven and new earth; and so a very fit person to be the Judge of the whole world, to summon all nations before him, and pass the final sentence on them. The phrase is Jewish, and it is a title the Jews give to Metatron, by whom they sometimes mean the Messiah; so those words in (⁰²⁴²Genesis 24:2), and Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, they paraphrase thus [f122];

> ""and Abraham said unto his servant", this is Metatron, (or the Mediator,) the servant of God, "the eldest of his house"; for he is µwqm lç wytwyrb tljt, "the beginning of the creation of God", who rules over all that he has; for to him the holy blessed God has given the government of all his hosts."

Christ is the αρχη, "the Prince", or Governor of all creatures.

Ver. 15. *I know thy works*, etc.] Which were far from being perfect, and not so good as those of the former church:

that thou art neither cold nor hot; she was not "cold", or without spiritual life, at least in many of her members, as all men by nature are, and carnal professors be; she was alive, but not lively: nor was she wholly without spiritual affections and love; to God, and Christ, to his people, ways, truths, and ordinances; she had love, but the fervency of it was abated: nor was she without spiritual breathings and desires altogether, as dead men are; or without the light and knowledge of the Gospel, and a profession of it, and yet she was not "hot"; her love to God and Christ, and the saints, was not ardent and flaming; it was not like coals of fire, that give most vehement flame, which many waters cannot quench the had not fervency of spirit in the service of the Lord; nor was she zealous for the truths of the Gospel, and for the ordinances of it, and for the house of God and its discipline; nor did she warmly oppose all sin, and every error and false way.

I would thou wert cold or hot; which must be understood, not absolutely, but comparatively; and not that it was an indifferent thing to Christ

whether she was one or the other; but he alludes to what is natural among men, it being generally more agreeable to have anything entirely hot, or entirely cold, than to be neither; and so uses this phrase to show his detestation of lukewarmness, and that it is better to be ignorant, and not a professor of religion, than to be a vain and carnal one; Christ desires not simply that she might be cold, but that she might be sensible of her need of spiritual heat and fervency.

Ver. 16. *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot*, etc.] A lukewarm professor is one that serves God and mammon; that halts between two opinions, and knows not what religion is best, and cares little for any, yet keeps in a round of duty, though indifferent to it, and contents himself with it; and is un concerned about the life and power of godliness, and takes up with the external form of it; and has no thought about the glory of God, the interest of Christ and truth; and this was too much the case of this church, at least of a great number of its members; wherefore it was very loathsome to Christ, hence he threatens:

I will spew thee out of my mouth; this shows how nauseous lukewarmness is to Christ, insomuch that on account of it he would not own and acknowledge her as his; but even cast her out, unchurch her, and have no more any such imperfect church state upon earth, as he afterwards never will, this is the last; nor is there any church state, or any remains of one in Laodicea; it is indeed quite uninhabited.

Ver. 17. *Because thou sayest, I am rich*, etc.] In worldly goods, which occasioned her lukewarmness, as riches often do, and her vanity, pride, and arrogance, afterwards expressed. Laodicea was a very rich city, and so will be this church state, through the accession of kings and princes, and great men of the earth unto it, in the former period: riches seldom do any good to the churches of Christ, they did not in Constantine's time; and it seems that even at the close of the spiritual reign of Christ they will be of bad consequence, since they will usher in the Laodicean church state: or her meaning is, that she was rich in spiritual things; not in grace, but in external gifts, which still remained, upon the very great pouring forth of the Spirit in the last church state; and in good works, on which she too much trusted for salvation, placing her righteousness in them: she is one whom the Jews [f123] call hrwtb ryç[, “rich in the law”:

and increased with goods: with outward peace and prosperity, with much natural and divine light and knowledge, with the purity of Gospel ordinances, even beyond the former church state in her own imagination:

and have need of nothing: contenting herself with these external things: true believers, as considered in Christ, stand in need of nothing indeed, they are complete in him, and have everything in him; but, as considered in themselves, they are daily in need of daily food for their souls, as for their bodies, of fresh light and life, strength and comfort, and of new supplies of grace; wherefore this church shows great ignorance of herself, as well as great pride and arrogance to express herself in this manner:

and knowest not that thou art wretched; as all men are in a state of nature and unregeneracy; which may be the case of many professors, and they be ignorant of it; as to be under a sentence of wrath, obnoxious to the curses of the law, in danger of hell and destruction, lost and undone, and unable to extricate themselves out of such a state: true believers account themselves wretched, as the Apostle Paul did, on account of indwelling sin, and the plague of their own hearts, which the members of this church, the greater part of them, were ignorant of:

and miserable; a miserable man is one that is attended with outward afflictions, but this was not the case of this church; and with spiritual poverty, blindness, and nakedness, and this was her case; some persons neither know their misery, nor their need of mercy:

and poor; not in purse, nor in spirit, nor with respect to outward afflictions, nor as to her church state, but in a spiritual sense; one whom the Jews call a [f124] hrwtb çr, "poor in the law"; as such may be said to be who have nothing to eat that is fit to eat; nothing to wear but rags, and have no money to buy either; who are in debt, and not able to pay, nor to help themselves on any account; and this may be the case of professors, and yet not known and considered by them:

and blind; natural men are blind as to a saving knowledge of God in Christ, as to the way of salvation by Christ, as to the plague of their own hearts, as to the work of the Spirit of God upon the soul, and as to the truths of the Gospel, in the power of them; but here it regards blindness with respect to her church state, and its imperfection:

and naked; sin has stripped man of his moral clothing; man's own righteousness will not cover his nakedness; and whoever is destitute of the righteousness of Christ is a naked person.

Ver. 18. *I counsel thee*, etc.] Christ is a Counsellor, and is every way fit to be one, for he is the all wise God, the Ancient of days, and the Father of his people, and, as Mediator, the Wisdom of God; and he was concerned in the council of peace from everlasting; and when he was here on earth he gave counsel in person, and now he gives it by his Spirit, and by his word and ministers; and the substance of it is, to come to him for grace, life, and salvation; for pardon, peace, and righteousness; for spiritual light and knowledge, and every supply of grace; and his advice is always wholesome, good, and suitable, is hearty, sincere, and faithful, and is freely given, and is wise and prudent; and, being taken, infallibly succeeds; the counsel here given follows:

to buy of me gold tried in the fire; by which is meant either a more pure and glorious state of the church, such as was in the former period, or greater; or a larger measure of light and knowledge in the Gospel, which is better than fine gold; or some particular graces, and a comfortable exercise of them, as fervent love and strong faith, which is much more precious than gold; or rather, all spiritual riches in general, which are in Christ, and are unsearchable, solid, substantial and satisfying; are lasting and durable, precious, excellent, and incorruptible: and the buying of this gold is not to be understood in a proper sense, by giving a valuable consideration for it, for no such is to be given, but in an improper sense; it is a buying without money and without price; Christ and his grace are given freely; Christ of whom it is to be had and of him only, does not sell it, but he gives it to those that come to him for it, and desire to have it, and are willing to part with all, so they may but enjoy it; for that it is to be understood in such a sense, is clear from the character of the persons who are advised to buy, who were poor, or beggars, (Revelation 3:17); the end of it is,

that thou mayest be rich; for though this church was rich, yet not in spirituals; and though she was rich in her own conceit, yet not really so: persons are not to be accounted truly rich who have only this world's goods; none are rich but those who have an interest in Christ and his grace; and they who are poor in this world, and yet have grace, are really rich: the next thing advised to is,

and white raiment; that is, and buy white raiment, by which some understand the heavenly glory, robes of immortality, a being clothed upon with the house which is from heaven; this may be compared to raiment, for it is a glory, an immortality, an incorruption to be put on; and fitly enough to white raiment, for the purity and spotlessness of it; and being clothed with this, no nakedness, or shame of it will appear; and this is to be had from Christ, and in the same way as gold is to be bought of him; the design of this advice may be to quicken the desires of the church after heavenly things; though it rather seems to respect something suitable to her in this present state: wherefore others think that by it are meant good works, holiness of life and conversation; but these are never called white raiment, but even rags, yea, filthy ones, in the best; and whatever cover they may be from nakedness in the sight of men, they are no cover from it in the sight of God, nor do they preserve from shame and blushing: rather then by it is meant the righteousness of Christ, which may be compared to raiment; it is upon the saints, and is put upon them as such; it covers as a garment does, protects from injuries, keeps warm, beautifies and adorns, as raiment does; and it may be compared to white raiment for its purity and perfection; now this is to be bought of Christ, it is to be had of him, and is to be had of him freely, without money and without price; it is a free gift of grace; and even faith itself, which receives it, is the gift of God: the ends of giving this advice are,

that thou mayest be clothed, and [that] the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; the soul may be naked when the body is well clothed; and notwithstanding a man's moral righteousness, he may not be clothed; they, and they only are clothed, who have on the righteousness of Christ; nakedness arises from want of, righteousness, which is only covered by the righteousness of Christ; and from hence also springs shame, which Christ's righteousness hides:

and anoint thine eyes with eye salve; by which may be meant the word of God, particularly the Gospel; and anointing with it is making use of it for the gaining of light and knowledge: all without this divine revelation are in darkness, and such who reject the authority of it go astray; the Scriptures are the only directory, and rule of faith and practice; the law is a means of enlightening persons to see their sin and misery, and the danger they are in; and the Gospel is a light, whereby is beheld the glory of Christ, of his person and office, of his grace and righteousness, and of salvation by him; and this is the Gospel of Christ, and is to be had of him freely, even the

saving knowledge of it. The Jews have adopted the very Greek word here used into their language, and apply it to the law; says R. Chija [f125], speaking of the law,

> "ˆy[l tyrwlyq, "it is a salve for the eye", a plaster for a wound, etc. it is a salve for the eyes, as is written (Psalm 19:8)."

or else the illumination of the Spirit is meant, by which the eyes of the understanding being enlightened, men see themselves, the impurity of their hearts and nature, the imperfection of their righteousness, their impotency to all that is spiritually good, and that they are lost and undone in themselves; and by which they see Christ and salvation by him, that it is in him, and in no other, and that it is full and suitable, and for the chief of sinners, and that it is all of free grace, and that they have an interest in it; by this they have light into the doctrines of the Gospel, and have some glimpse of the glories of another world; and this is to be had of Christ, who gives his Spirit freely, and an understanding to know spiritual things: and the end of the advice is,

that thou mayest see; who, notwithstanding the conceit she had of herself, was blind; persons may have much human prudence, much knowledge in things moral, yea, in things evangelical, notionally, and yet be blind as to true spiritual light and experience; they only see spiritually and savingly who have the Spirit of God.

Ver. 19. *As many as I love I rebuke and chasten*, etc.] The persons the objects of Christ's love here intended are not angels, but the sons of men; and these not all of them, yet many of them, even all who are his own by his Father's gift and his own purchase; and who are called his church, and sometimes represented as such who love him and obey his commands: the instances of his love to them are many; as his suretyship engagements for them, his assumption of their nature, dying in their room and stead, paying their debts, procuring their peace and pardon, bringing in a righteousness for them, purchasing their persons, his intercession for them, preparations in heaven, supplies of grace, and frequent visits in a kind and familiar manner; and as for the nature of his love, it is free and sovereign, everlasting and immutable, and it is matchless and inconceivable, it is strong and affectionate, and as his Father loved him; and such are rebuked by Christ, not in a way of wrath, but in a tender manner, in order to bring them under a conviction of their sin and of their duty, and of their folly in

trusting in, or loving any creature more than himself, and of all their wrong ways; and they are chastened by him, not in a vindictive, but in a fatherly way, which is instructive and teaching to them, and for their good. This seems to refer to some afflictions which Christ was about to bring upon this church, by some means or another, to awaken her out of her sloth and security, and which would be in love to her, and the end be to rouse her zeal and bring her to repentance. Some think this respects the Gog and Magog army, which will encompass the camp of the saints, and the beloved city; but that will not be till after the thousand years' reign, and besides will be no affliction to them; rather it designs the unchurching them, signified by spewing them out of his mouth, (Revelation 3:16);

be zealous, therefore, and repent; zeal was what was wanting in this church; which is nothing else than hot, fervent, and ardent love, love in a flame; whereas she was neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm, Christ would have her be “zealous” for God; for his cause and interest, for his Gospel, ordinances, and the discipline of his house, and against everything that is evil; against all false worship, all errors in doctrine, all sin and iniquity; and to be zealous of good works, and in the worship of God, both private and public: and “repent”; in an evangelical way, of her lukewarnmess, remissness, and supineness; of her pride, arrogance, and vain boastings of herself; and of her self-sufficience, self-dependence, and self-confidence.

Ver. 20. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock*, etc.] The phrase of standing at the door may be expressive of the near approach, or sudden coming of Christ to judgment, (see James 5:9); and his knocking may signify the notice that will be given of it, by some of the immediate forerunners and signs of his coming; which yet will be observed but by a few, such a general sleepiness will have seized all professors of religion; and particularly may intend the midnight cry, which will, in its issue, rouse them all:

if any man hear my voice; in the appearances of things and providences in the world:

and open the door; or show a readiness for the coming of Christ, look and wait for it, and be like such that will receive him with a welcome:

I will come unto him, and sup with him, and he with me; to and among these will Christ appear when he comes in person; and these being like wise virgins, ready, having his grace in their hearts, and his righteousness upon

them, he will take them at once into the marriage chamber, and shut the door upon the rest; when they shall enjoy a thousand years communion with him in person here on earth; when the Lamb on the throne will feed them with the fruit of the tree of life, and lead them to fountains of living water, and his tabernacle shall be among them.

Ver. 21. *To him that overcometh*, etc.] The lukewarmness, and self-confidence, and security of this state:

will I grant to sit with me in my throne; at the close of this church state, which will be the last of this kind, consisting of imperfect saints, Christ will descend from heaven with the souls of all the righteous, and raise their bodies and unite them to them; which, with the living saints, will make one general assembly and church of the firstborn, all perfect soul and body; among these he will place his tabernacle, and fix his throne; and they being all made kings as well as priests to him, shall now reign on earth with him, and that for the space of a thousand years: and this is the blessing promised the overcomers in the Laodicean state, that when Christ shall set up his kingdom among men, and reign gloriously before his ancients, they shall sit on the same throne with him, or share with him in his kingdom and glory; (see Revelation 5:10 20:4 Daniel 7:27);

even as I also overcame; sin, Satan, the world, death, and hell:

and am set down with my Father in his throne; in heaven, at his right hand; which is expressive of equality to him, distinction from him, communion with him, and of the honour and glory he is possessed of; but it is not on this throne that the saints will sit, only Christ sits on the same throne with the Father in heaven; it is on Christ's throne on earth, or in his personal reign there, that the saints shall sit down with him; and which honour they shall all have, all that are more than conquerors through him, and are made kings by him. And when this reign is over, then will follow the second resurrection, or the resurrection of the wicked, when will come on the judgment of the people, as Laodicea signifies; and when these, with the devils, will form themselves into the Gog and Magog army, and attack the beloved city, the church of glorified saints on earth, under Christ their King, which will issue in the everlasting destruction of the former; and thus these seven churches bring us to the end of all things.

Ver. 22. *He that hath an ear, let him hear*, etc.] (See Gill on "Revelation 2:7").

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 4

This chapter contains an account of the second vision John saw, as preparatory to the sealed book, and the opening of it, as the first vision was to the epistles to the seven churches. The preface to this vision, or the introduction to it, and preparation of John for it, are in (Revelation 4:1,2), which declare the time of it, the position John was in, what he saw and heard, a call to him to come up, and the effect it had upon him; and then follows the vision itself, which is of a throne, described by the place where it was set, in heaven; and by him that sat upon it, (Revelation 4:2), who was like to a jasper and a sardine stone; and by what was about it, first a rainbow of an emerald colour, (Revelation 4:3), then four and twenty seats, with as many elders upon them, sitting clothed and crowned, (Revelation 4:4), and by what went out from it, lightnings, thunderings, and voices; and by what were before it, seven burning lamps, which are the seven spirits of God, (Revelation 4:5), and a sea of glass like crystal; and by what were between it all around, and the elders, four living creatures, described in general by their being full of eyes, before and behind, (Revelation 4:6), in particular, the first by its likeness to a lion, the second by its likeness to a calf, the third by its likeness to a man, and the fourth by its likeness to a flying eagle, (Revelation 4:7), and by what were common to them, first by their wings, of which they had each of them six; and by their eyes, they were full of within; and by their constant employment in celebrating the perfections of God, and in giving glory, honour, and thanks unto him, (Revelation 4:8,9), at which time also the four and twenty elders appear in a worshipping posture, and give adoration to God; partly by deeds, casting their crowns before his throne; and partly by words, ascribing glory, honour, and power to him; giving a reason for it, taken from his creating all things for his pleasure, (Revelation 4:10,11).

Ver. 1. *After this I looked*, etc.] After John had seen the vision of Christ, in the midst of the golden candlesticks, with seven stars in his right hand; after he was bid to write what he had seen, and what were, and should be hereafter; and after he had by order written the seven epistles to the seven

churches, he looked about him to see what else he could, having his desires and expectations raised of seeing more, and other things, for the eye is never satisfied with seeing; though this is to be understood, not of looking with the eyes of his body, but with the eyes of his mind; of his beholding things in a visionary way, as the prophets did, whence they are called "seers", and their prophecies "visions": how long this was after the first vision is not certain, it may be but a few minutes; and it is to be observed, that as the first chapter of this book, with the vision in it, is the preface or introduction to the church prophecy delivered out in the seven epistles; so this and the following chapter, with the vision therein, contain the preface or introduction to the book prophecy exhibited in the opening of the seven seals of the sealed book:

and behold, a door [was] opened in heaven: not in a literal sense, as the heavens were opened at Christ's baptism, and at Stephen's martyrdom, but in a figurative sense; and the phrase is to be understood of a discovery of things that were, or were to be in the church of God, which in this book is oftentimes signified by "heaven": and it must be conceived as done in a visionary way, just as Ezekiel, in the visions of God, was brought to Jerusalem, and the temple there, and in at a door was shown all the abominations committed in the court and temple; so John, in a visionary way, through an opened door, had a scene of things in the church presented to him, as follows:

and the first voice which I heard [was], as it were, of a trumpet talking with me; this voice is not called the first voice with respect to any other voices that were to follow; but it designs the former voice, the voice that John heard behind him, when he saw the first vision; and this, as that, was clear, loud, and sonorous as a trumpet, so that he thoroughly heard, and rightly understood what was said; it was the same Person that made the following representation of things as did then, even he who is the Alpha and the Omega, the Lord Jesus Christ, the author of the whole revelation; the "first" is left out in the Arabic version: the allusion is to the blowing of trumpets at the opening of the door of the temple;

> "every day there were one and twenty soundings of a trumpet in the temple, three µyr[ç tjytpl, "at the opening of the doors", and nine at the daily morning sacrifice, and nine at the daily evening sacrifice [f126]."

And one of them was called the great door of the temple; and he that slew the daily sacrifice, did not slay till he heard the sound of that door when it was opened [f127]; so here at the opening of the door in heaven, in the church, of which the temple was a type, the voice of the Son of God is heard as the sound of a trumpet, talking loudly and familiarly to John:

which said, come up hither; from the isle of Patmos, where he was, up to heaven; not into the third heaven, where Paul was caught up, but rather up into the Gospel church, the Jerusalem which is above; though this, as before, is to be understood in a visionary way, in like manner as Ezekiel was lifted up by the Spirit between the earth and the heavens; and so John, in a vision, was called up from Patmos into the air, where he had a representation of the church made unto him:

and I will show thee things which must be hereafter; in the world, in the Roman empire, and in the church of God, to the end of the world; not but that there were some things shown him, as before, in the church prophecy, which had been, and were, and which was done to give him a complete view of things from first to last: and these things were shown in the following visions of the seals, trumpets, and vials, and by the Lord Jesus Christ, who talked with him, and to whom this revelation was given to show unto his servants; and it was of things that "must" be, because determined and resolved upon in the unalterable purposes and decrees of God.

Ver. 2. *And immediately I was in the Spirit*, etc.] As he had been before, (Revelation 1:10); it seems he had been some little time out of his ecstasy, how long cannot be said, and now, upon this new scene of things, returned to it; upon the opening of the door in heaven, and hearing the former voice, and the things it said, the Spirit of God at once possessed and filled him, in an extraordinary manner; and his soul or spirit was immediately taken from the consideration of all sensible objects, and was fixed and intent upon the things presented to it in the vision, so that it was as if it was out of the body. The Arabic version reads, "then therefore I went in the Spirit"; in obedience to the voice that called him up, in which he was assisted by the Spirit of God, who lifted him up as he did Ezekiel, when he saw what follows:

and behold, a throne was set in heaven; not for the final judgment, on which the son of man will sit, when he comes to judge the quick and dead, for he is not the person that fills this but this is a symbol of the power,

authority, and dominion now exercised by God, not over the world in general, who has prepared his throne in the heavens, and governs among the nations, according to his sovereign will and pleasure, but which he exercises in his church, signified by “heaven”. The allusion is to the temple, and the throne of God in it, (<230601>Isaiah 6:1 <241712>Jeremiah 17:12). The temple was an emblem of the Gospel church, Jerusalem, or the Gospel church state, and was to be called the throne of the Lord, (<241703>Jeremiah 3:17), and now his throne is set there. Here he exercises a jurisdiction and government; he is King and lawgiver in it; he has enacted laws, and he writes them on the hearts of his people, and puts his Spirit within them, and makes them both able and willing to obey them.

And [one] sat on the throne; not the trinity of persons in the Godhead, which some think are signified by the three precious stones in (<660403>Revelation 4:3), the jasper, sardine, and emerald; for, as distinct from him that sat upon the throne, the Lamb is said to be in the midst of it, and the seven spirits of God are said to be before it: nor is Jesus Christ intended, and his two natures; his divine nature by the jasper, and his human nature by the red and blood coloured sardine; since he, the Lamb, is represented as in the midst of the throne, and is often distinguished from him that sat upon it; (see <660506>Revelation 5:6,7,13 7:10); but God the Father is designed, who sits on the throne, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, yet in distinction from them. This clause is left out in the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 3. *And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper*, etc.] For the brightness, glory, and majesty of his countenance, and for his being light itself, clothed with it, and dwelling in it; (see <662111>Revelation 21:11,18,19); and for the various perfections of his nature, as eternity, infinity, immutability, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, wisdom, power, goodness, truth, love, grace, and mercy; for the jasper, at least one sort of them, is of various colours, and spotted with divers spots; that which is most valued is the green, spotted with red or purple [f128]: hence this stone, which is the twelfth in the high priest's breastplate, and on which the name of “Benjamin” was written, is called, by the Chaldee paraphrase of Onkelos on (<022820>Exodus 28:20), “Pantere”, and of ben Uzziel, on the same place, “Apanturin”, and on (<220514>Song of Solomon 5:14), “Apantor”, because some are variegated and spotted like panthers.

And a sardine stone; the same with the “Sardius”: and so read here the Alexandrian copy, the Syriac and Arabic versions, as in (<662120>Revelation 21:20), and in (<022817>Exodus 28:17) on which Reuben's name was written; this is of a red, or blood colour as its name µda, in Hebrew, shows, and the same that is called a cornelian; and is expressive of the fiery indignation of God whose fury is poured out like fire, and who nakedly and absolutely considered, is a consuming fire to the wicked, his enemies, and the enemies of his church and people. Some jaspers being white and sky coloured and the white colour being most agreeable to deity, as Cicero says [f129], and the sardine being red, and a gem of the ruby kind make up the description of the church's beloved; (<220510>Song of Solomon 5:10); and may denote in general his purity, glory, and excellency, and in particular good will to his people, and wrath to his enemies. And to the comfort of the former it is added,

and [there was] a rainbow round about the throne; which signifies the covenant of grace; (see <010912>Genesis 9:12,16 <235409>Isaiah 54:9,10 <261028>Ezekiel 1:28). The rainbow is a reverberation, or a reflection of the beams of the sun upon a thin watery cloud; and the covenant of grace is owing to Jesus Christ, the sun of righteousness; it is he that has formed it, and filled it with blessings and promises; he is the Mediator, surety, and messenger of it, and who in (<661001>Revelation 10:1) is represented as clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow on his head: the rainbow is of, various colours and fitly expresses the various promises and blessings, in the covenant of grace, and the various providences, both prosperous and adverse, with respect to soul and body; and as the rainbow was an emblem of mercy, peace, and reconciliation in God to man, after he had destroyed the world by a flood, so the covenant is a covenant of grace and mercy; it springs from it, and is full of it, and provides for the peace and reconciliation of the people of God, by the blood of Christ; whence it is called a covenant of peace: and as the rainbow is a security to the world, and the inhabitants of it, from a destruction by a flood any more, so the covenant is a security to those who are interested in it, from eternal destruction, and wrath to come; herein lies all their salvation, and this is the security of it: to which may be added, that God calls it my bow, as he often calls the covenant of grace my covenant, in distinction from man's; (see <010912>Genesis 9:12 <199928>Psalm 89:28,34 <261660>Ezekiel 16:60-62); and this being round about the throne of God, shows that the covenant of grace does, as it were, include and enclose God in his persons, and in his perfections; all the three divine Persons have a concern

in it, and all the divine perfections are glorified by it; and it being around it, it is always in his view; he is ever mindful of it, and constantly remembers it for the good of his people, and faithfully keeps it; and it being in this form denotes, that in whatsoever way he comes forth unto his people, it is always in a covenant way, whether it be in things temporal or spiritual, in adversity or prosperity, with regard to the things of time and eternity; nor is there any coming to him with comfort, but as he is encompassed with the rainbow of the covenant; stripped of this, he is like the jasper and sardine stones, full of sparkling majesty, dread and terror, so that there is no coming nigh him; but being encircled with the rainbow, he may be approached as a covenant God, as the God of all grace, seated on a throne of grace, whither believers may come with boldness, freedom, and cheerfulness: and this rainbow was

in sight like unto an emerald; the stone on which Judah's name was written, in the high priest's breastplate; this is of a green colour, which colour is the prevailing one in the rainbow; it is of an exceeding fine green, very delightful to the eye, and gives pleasure to the mind to look upon it: and what a lovely and delightful sight is the covenant of grace to a believer! to see God as a covenant God, Christ as the Mediator of it, the exceeding great and precious promises and blessings, both of grace and glory, which are in it, yields an unspeakable pleasure to such persons; the covenant of grace, like the emerald, is ever green, it is always new; its promises and blessings are always fresh, and, like that, it is durable; it is sure, and cannot be broken, and is more immovable than rocks and mountains: the emerald is very bright, clear, and transparent; it is reported of Nero [f130], that he could see in his emerald the combat of the gladiators in the theatre; in the covenant of grace, as in a glass, may be seen the glory of all the three Persons in the Godhead, for it is ordered in all things for the glory of each Person; as also all the perfections of the divine nature; here God appears abundant in goodness and truth; here mercy and truth meet together; and righteousness and peace kiss each other: to which may be added, that the emerald is said [f131] to help and refresh the memory; now though God stands in no need of any thing to bring things to his remembrance, yet such is his condescension to men, that he sets the rainbow in the cloud, to look at, that he might remember his everlasting covenant; and so he allows his people to put him in remembrance, by making mention of the covenant of grace, and pleading the promises of it.

The Alexandrian copy and the Ethiopic version, instead of ιρις, "a rainbow", read ιερεις, "priests".

Ver. 4. *And round about the throne [were] four and twenty seats*, etc.] In a semicircular form, as the rainbow also was; the thrones in the above form, came to both ends, or sides of it; just as when the sanhedrim, or great court of judicature among the Jews say [f132], the "Nasi", or prince, sat in the uppermost seat, at his right hand was "Ab beth din", or the father or the sanhedrim, and at his left hand a doctor or wise man, and all the rest of the members sat in a semicircular form upon seats before them, so that they could see them all; and to this the allusion might be thought to be, did their numbers agree, but in the great sanhedrim there were seventy one, and the lesser twenty three, which last comes very near the number here;

and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting; by whom are not meant the twenty four books of the Old Testament, as some of the ancients thought, and also some of the modern writers, as Lord Napier and others; for the things said of them are such as cannot be applied to inanimate things, such as sitting on seats, being clothed with white raiment, having golden crowns on their heads, falling down before the throne, and worshipping him that sat on it; and besides, in (Revelation 5:8,9), they are said to be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, out of very kindred, tongue, people, and nation; for which last reason, angels also cannot be designed, and who, moreover, in the place referred to, are manifestly distinguished from these elders; nor are they to be understood as to the representatives of the Jewish church, or of the Jewish and Christian church together, as triumphant in heaven; and so be signified by the twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles, which together make up twenty four; but rather the members of the Gospel church state, throughout the whole of it, in every succession and period of time, are here meant; and are expressed by the number "twenty four", in allusion to the twenty four courses of the priests, into which they were divided by David, (1 Chronicles 24:1,4,18), and to the twenty four stations of the Levites, who in turn attended the service of the temple daily, and represented the whole body of the people of Israel, in putting their hands upon the sacrifices, and praying for them; of which (see Gill on "Luke 1:5"); add to this, that in twenty four places the priests and Levites kept watch in the temple [f133]; so these twenty four elders before the throne of God, in his temple, represent the whole Israel of God, all the members of the Gospel church state, from the first to the last of it: and they are styled "elders", not on account of office,

as pastors of the churches are called, but because of their senile gravity, prudence, and knowledge; they having a greater degree of spiritual knowledge of the manifold wisdom of God than the Jewish church, which was in a state of infancy, and under tutors and governors, had; but the Gospel church is in a state of manhood, and no longer under a schoolmaster, and so fitly expressed by “elders”; and these are represented as “sitting” on their seats, not only to hear the word of God, but as judging in cases that come before them, respecting the admission or exclusion of members, the laying on or taking off of censures, etc. and these, their seats being around and near unto the throne, denote their nearness to God, and their communion with him, in his house and ordinances, and his dwelling in the midst of them.

Clothed in white raiment; in the pure and spotless robe of Christ's righteousness, which is comparable to fine linen, clean and white; and is the righteousness of the saints in common, of every true member of Christ's body.

And they had on their heads crowns of gold; being made by Christ kings, as well as priests, unto God; for so these four and twenty elders are said to be, in (<66510>Revelation 5:10); and they now reign as kings over sin, Satan, and the world, and have a kingdom of grace which shall never be removed; and they shall reign with Christ on earth a thousand years, and then reign with him to all eternity in heaven. It is a common saying with the Jews [f134],

> “that there is no eating and drinking in the world to come, but the righteous are “sitting”, µyhçarb µhytwrj[w, “and their crowns upon their heads”.”

Ver. 5. *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings, and voices*, etc.] Which may be understood either of the doctrines of the Gospel which come out of Zion, and out of Jerusalem, the church of God, where he has his throne; and which are comparable to “lightning”, both for the light and knowledge they give, and for the swiftness with which they were spread over the world, by the apostles of Christ; and to “thunderings”, for the awfulness, authority, and majesty of them, especially as they were delivered out by the Boanergeses, or sons of thunder; and as the prophesies of the prophets are called “the voices” of the prophets, (<441327>Acts 13:27); so may the doctrines of the Gospel be called “voices”, as they are the voice of God, and of Christ, and of his ministers; and are

voices of love, grace, mercy, peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life. The allusion is to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, when such things were seen and heard, (<2Exodus 19:16) or else the judgments of God, and the punishments inflicted upon his enemies, and the enemies of his church and people, and his awful threatenings of them, may be designed; (see <19Psalm 18:13,14 <28Joel 3:16); with which compare (<66Revelation 8:5).

And [there were] seven lamps of burning fire before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God; in allusion to the seven lamps in the tabernacle and temple, which were trimmed by the priests, and always kept burning, and are expressive of the Spirit, and his gifts; and these being signified by the number “seven”, denote the fulness and perfection of them; and being said to be “before the throne”, show that there is always a sufficiency of them for the supply of the churches in all ages, to fit and qualify proper persons to minister the word, and administer ordinances; and these being called “lamps of burning fire”, point at the light the Spirit of God in his gifts communicates to the churches; and that warmth and heat, comfort and refreshment; conveyed to them, through the preaching of the Gospel, and the dispensation of the ordinances of it, under his illuminating and quickening influences.

Ver. 6. *And before the throne [there was] a sea of glass like unto crystal*, etc.] By which is meant, not heaven, nor the souls of the blessed there, nor the multitude of the holy angels, nor the first converts to Christianity at Jerusalem; for those that got the victory over the beast are said to stand upon this sea, (<66Revelation 15:2), which these senses, especially the three last, will by no means admit of. Some by it understand the world, which may be compared to a “sea”, for the multitude of people in it, as many waters in this book signify people and nations, (<66Revelation 17:15); and to a sea of glass, which is brittle, for the frailty and transitoriness of the world, of the fashion of it, and of men and things in it; and to the clear “crystal”, because all things in it are open and manifest to the omniscient eye of God; but the world, and men of it, used not to be compared to a still and quiet sea, as this is, but to one disturbed and troubled by winds and tempests, whose waters cast up mire and dirt, (<23Isaiah 57:20). Others think the ordinance of baptism is designed, of which the Red sea, through which the Israelites passed under the cloud, was an emblem; and which may be compared to a “sea of glass”, for its transparency, it clearly expressing the sufferings, burial, and resurrection of Christ; and to crystal, for its purity; and to all this for its cleansing nature,

as it leads unto the blood of Christ; and its being before the throne may denote its being the way of entrance into the Gospel church. Others think the blood of Christ is meant, in allusion to the brazen sea in the tabernacle, which was made of the looking glasses the women brought, and for the priests to wash in, before they entered on business, (<2Exodus 30:18 38:8), and to the molten sea in the temple, which was for the same purpose, (<111 Kings 7:23). Christ's blood is the fountain opened to wash in for sin, and may be compared to a sea for its abundant efficacy in cleansing from all sin; and it is this which makes way to the throne, and to him that sits on it; and is a special privilege enjoyed by those who come to Mount Zion, or into a Gospel church state; there is always this laver to wash their garments in, and make them white: though this sea, being of glass, seems not so much designed to wash in; and therefore rather I think by it is meant the Gospel, compared to a "sea" for the deep things of God and mysteries of grace which are in it; to a sea of "glass", because in it is beheld, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, of his person, office, and righteousness, as well as many other wondrous things; and to one like "crystal", for the clearness, perspicuity, and evidence of the truths contained in it; and to a, fixed, still; and quiet sea, because it is the Gospel of peace, love, grace, and mercy, and brings peace, joy, and tranquillity to troubled minds, when the law works wrath: but here are no tossing, foaming, raging waves of wrath, and fury, but all smooth, stable, solid, tranquil, and quiet. And this is said to be before the throne, where the rainbow of the covenant is, of which the Gospel is a transcript; and where the four and twenty elders, or members of churches be, for their delight and comfort; and where the seven spirits of God are, to furnish men with gifts to preach it; and where the four living creatures, or ministers of the word, have their place, who officiate in it. Agreeably to this figurative way of speaking, the Jews call [f135] the law, atyrwad amy, "the sea of the law", and the "sea of wisdom"; and frequently give the characters of such and such a doctor, as being very expert and conversant dwmlth µyb, "in the sea of the Talmud", or "doctrine" [f136]. The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read, "there was as a sea of glass", somewhat that looked like one. The word "glass" is left out in the Ethiopic version, but very aptly is it so described, the colour of the sea being sometimes green like that of glass.

And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, [were] four beasts; or "living creatures", as the word may be better rendered, agreeably

to (Ezekiel 1:5), to which reference is here had; and by whom are meant not the angels, though there are many things which agree with them; they are said to be the “four spirits” of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth, (Zechariah 6:5). They may be rightly called living creatures, since they live a most happy life in heaven; their situation is before the throne, and in the presence of God; and their being so sedulous, diligent, and watchful in doing the will of God, may be signified by their being “full of eyes behind, and before, and within”; their strength may be fitly expressed by “the lion”; their indefatigableness in the service of God, by “the ox”: their wisdom, prudence, and knowledge, by “the face of a man”; and their swiftness in obeying the divine commands by “the flying eagle”; their number of wings agrees with that of the seraphim in (Isaiah 6:2); to which the allusion seems to be; and their work, in continually ascribing glory to God, suits with them: to which may be added, that the Jews often speak of four angels, waskl bybs, “round about his throne”, that is, the throne of God; whose names are Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael; the three first they place in this manner, Michael at his right hand, Uriel at his left, and Gabriel before him [f137]. Sometimes thus, Michael on his right hand, Gabriel on his left, Uriel before him, and Raphael behind him, and the holy blessed God in the middle; and they are expressly called [f138] by them the four living creatures, meaning in Ezekiel's vision; and they make mention of the intellectual living creatures which are aysrkl ^yrjs, “round about the throne” [f139]. Notwithstanding all this, the angels cannot be intended, because these four living creatures are said to be redeemed by the blood of Christ, and are distinguished from angels in (Revelation 5:8-11); nor are the four Gospels, with the four evangelists, here meant; for whatever agreement may be fancied there is between these, and the likeness of the living creatures; as that Matthew may be signified by the creature that has the face of a man, because he begins his Gospel with the genealogy of Christ, as man; and Mark by the lion, because he begins his Gospel with the voice of one crying in the wilderness; and Luke by the ox, because he begins his Gospel with an account of Zacharias the priest, offering in the temple; and John by the eagle, because he begins his Gospel, the first face or leaf of it, in a very high style, and with the divinity of Christ: and with what truth soever it may be said of these that they are full of divine light and knowledge, and swiftly spread it in the world, and are continually giving glory to God; yet it cannot be said of them, with any propriety, as is said of these four living creatures, that they fall down before God, and worship him, and are

redeemed by the blood of the Lamb: besides, these four are represented as calling to John at the opening of the first four seals, to come and see what was to be seen; and one of them is said to give to the seven angels the vials of wrath to pour out, (Revelation 5:8,9 6:1,3,5,7 15:7), to which may be added, that this sense is attended with this inconvenience, that it makes John to be one of the four creatures which he saw: nor are four particular apostles, as Peter and John, Paul and Barnabas, pointed at, as others think; nor the pure apostolical church, for the church is represented by the four and twenty elders, and these four living creatures are distinguished from the hundred and forty four thousand on Mount Zion, in (Revelation 14:1,3). Dr. Goodwin has a very ingenious thought upon these words, could it be supported; he thinks that these four living creatures design the four officers in the Christian church, the ruling elder, the pastor, the deacon, and the teacher; the ruling elder by the "lion", who needs courage to deal with men in case of sins; the pastor by the "ox", for his laboriousness in treading out the corn; the deacon by that which has the "face of a man", it being necessary that he should be merciful and pitiful to the poor, as is the heart of a man; and the teacher by the "flying eagle", who is quick to espy errors, and soars aloft into high mysteries: but then it should be observed, that there is no such officer ass ruling elder in the church, distinct from the pastor; and that the pastor and teacher are one; so that there are but two sorts of officers in the church, pastor, and deacon; (see Philippians 1:1); to which may be added, that the four living creatures are all in the same situation, and are alike full of eyes, and have the same number of wings, and are employed in the same work; all which cannot be said equally of church officers. By these four living creatures, I apprehend, we are to understand the ministers of the Gospel in general, in the successive ages of the church, to whom all the characters do well agree. And though they may not be all found in everyone, at least not in all alike, yet thou are in one or another of them, and in them as together considered. They are said to be "four", being fewer in number than the members of the church, which are signified by the twenty four elders, and yet a sufficient number; and in allusion to the four standards of the camp of Israel in the wilderness, to which there seems to be some reference in the whole of this account; as the tabernacle there was placed in the midst, so the throne of God here; as the priests and Levites were round about that, so the four and twenty elders here; as there were seven lamps, over against the candlestick in the tabernacle, continually burning, so there are seven spirits here before the throne; and as there were four princes, who were

standard bearers, placed at the four corners of the camp, so here four living creatures, or ministers of the word, who are standard bearers: the standard of Judah, with Issachar and Zabulon under him, was at the east of the tabernacle; and Ephraim, with Manasseh and Benjamin, at the west; Reuben, with Simeon and Gad, at the south; and Dan, with Asher and Naphtali, at the north; and the Jewish writers say [f140], that on Judah's standard was the figure of a lion, on Ephraim's the figure of an ox, on Reuben's the figure of a man, and on Dan's the figure of an eagle; and to which the four living creatures are likened here. And this number "four" may be the rather mentioned, with respect to the four parts of the world, and corners of the earth, whither the ministers of the Gospel are sent to preach, and whither their commission reaches; there being of the elect of God in all parts to be gathered in by their ministry: and very properly may they be called "living creatures", because they are alive in themselves, being quickened by the Spirit of God; or otherwise they would not be fit for their work; and because their work requires liveliness in the exercise of grace, and fervency in the performance of duty: and because they are a means in the hand of God of quickening dead sinners, and of reviving drooping saints by the word of life, which they hold forth: the situation of these four living creatures agrees with them, who are said to be both in the midst of, and round about the throne, and so were nearer to it than the four and twenty elders, and were between that and them; as the ministers of the Gospel are set in the first place in the church; have nearness to God, and much of his presence, which is particularly promised them; and stand between God and the people, and receive from the one, and communicate to the other, and lead on the worship of God, as these four do; (see ‹6009›Revelation 4:9,10). And these are said to be

full of eyes; of spiritual light, and evangelical knowledge; and they have need of all the eyes they have to look into the Scriptures of truth, to search and pry into them, and find out the sense and meaning of them; to overlook the flock committed to them, they have taken the oversight of; to look to themselves, their doctrine, and their conversation; to espy enemies and dangers, and give notice of them to the churches; to look to God upon the throne, and to the Lamb in the midst of it, for fresh supplies of gifts and grace; and to see to it, that all their ministrations tend to the glory of God, the honour of a Redeemer, and the good of souls. And they had eyes

before and behind; "before" them, to look to the word of God, and the deep things in it, which continually lies before them, and to the things that

are yet to come relating to the kingdom and church of Christ; and “behind” them, to observe how all sacrifices and types, predictions and promises, have had their accomplishment in Christ; they have eyes before them to watch over the church they are in the midst of, and which is the flock that is before them; and eyes behind, to guard against Satan and his emissaries, false teachers, who sometimes slyly and secretly come upon the back of them; they have eyes before them, to look to him that sits upon the throne, on whom their dependence, and from whom their expectations are; and they have eyes behind them, to look on the four and twenty elders, the members of the churches, to whom they minister.

Ver. 7. *And the first beast [was] like a lion*, etc.] And this figure expresses the strength of the ministers of the word, the lion being the strongest among beasts, (<20>Proverbs 30:30), to do the work they are called to, to endure hardness, as good soldiers of Christ, and to bear the infirmities of the weak; and also it denotes their courage and boldness in preaching the Gospel of Christ, without fearing the faces of men, or of being afraid of their revilings:

and the second beast like a calf; or “ox”, for so the word here used signifies in the Hellenistic language, and with the Septuagint interpreters, and agrees with (<26>Ezekiel 1:10), and designs the laboriousness of Christ's faithful ministers in treading out the corn of Gospel truth, who labour in the word and doctrine, and are labourers with God; as also their humility, meekness, and patience in bearing insults, reproaches, and sufferings for Christ, and instructing those that oppose themselves:

and the third beast had a face as a man; and points at the humanity and tender heartedness, the wisdom, prudence, knowledge, and understanding, and the use of the reasoning faculty, together with a manly spirit in abiding by the Gospel at any rate; all which are so necessary in the ministers of the word.

And the fourth beast [was] like a flying eagle; which sets forth the sagacity and penetration of Gospel ministers into the deep things of God, and mysteries of grace, and their readiness and swiftness to do the will of God, in publishing the everlasting Gospel; (see <66>Revelation 14:6).

Ver. 8. *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about [him]*, etc.] As the seraphim in (<23>Isaiah 6:2) with two of which they might cover their faces as they did, testifying thereby their reverence of God, when in

his presence; and with the other two cover their feet, signifying their sense of their sinfulness, weakness, and imperfection, in their conversation, even in their best works, and in the ministry of the word; and with the other two fly about, as denoting their readiness to minister the word and ordinances, to visit the members of the church, and do all good offices of love and service to them that lie in their power:

[and they were] full of eyes within; to look into the sin and corruption of their own hearts, which is a means of keeping them humble amidst all their attainments, gifts, and graces, and of qualifying them to speak aptly of the cases of others; and they have eyes within, to look into and consult their own experience; for besides the word of God, which lies before them, they have a testimony in themselves of the truth of the doctrines of the Gospel, which they do well to attend unto; and they have these inward eyes to look into that treasure which God has put into their earthen vessels, in order to bring out of it things new and old.

And they rest not day and night; they give up themselves to the ministry of the word, and prayer; are wholly in these things, meditate on the word continually, and preach the Gospel in season, and out of season:

saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come; living under a continual sense of the holiness of God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and how necessary holiness is in themselves, who bear the vessels of the Lord, and in the churches and house of God; taking care that all their doctrines are according to godliness, and serve to promote holiness of life and conversation; and also under a sense of the power of God, and of their need of it, to carry them through their work, and make their ministry successful; and of the eternity and immutability of God, which is a wonderful support unto them amidst all the difficulties and troubles that attend them. The word “holy” is three times used here, as by the seraphim in (Isaiah 6:3); and in some copies it is repeated six times, and in others nine times, as in the Complutensian edition.

Ver. 9. *And when these beasts give glory*, etc.] When they give God the glory of all his perfections, covenant, and promises, and of all the gifts and grace bestowed on them, and of the success of their ministry; and in it glorify Father, Son, and Spirit, who bear their respective parts in the business of salvation; and ascribe to each their due glory in election, redemption, and sanctification:

and honour; in the several parts of religious worship performed by them; and not with their lips only, but with their hearts also:

and thanks; for all blessings, temporal and spiritual, bestowed on them, and on the saints: even

to him that sat on the throne; God the Father, (Revelation 4:3);

who liveth for ever and ever; he who is the living God, and will always continue so.

Ver. 10. *The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne*, etc.] The ministers of the Gospel begin the worship of God, and lead in it, who are the four living creatures; when the members of churches, who are the four and twenty elders, follow, and approach the divine Being in a most humble manner:

and worship him that liveth for ever and ever: in Spirit, and in truth, with faith and fervency, in every part of duty they are directed to:

and cast their crowns before the throne; signifying, that they received them, from him that sits upon it, being by the grace of God what they are; and that they are unworthy to wear them in his presence, being but unprofitable servants in all they do; and hereby also acknowledging their subjection to him as their King and lawgiver. Something like this the Jews relate of the family above; they say,

> "when the holy blessed God ascends the glorious "throne of judgment", the whole family above tremble; and when they see the holy blessed God "they take their crowns from off their heads" — and pray and seek mercy for Israel; and immediately he ascends the "throne of mercy" [f141]."

And such like actions have been done by kings and princes to one another, in token of subjection. Thus Tigranes, king of Armenia, fell down at the feet of Pompey, and cast his crown from his head, which Pompey replaced; and having commanded him certain things, ordered him to enjoy his kingdoms [f142]: so Herod meeting Augustus Caesar at Rhode, when he entered the city took oil his crown, and after a speech made to him, with which Caesar was pleased, he set it on him again [f143].

Saying; as follows.

Ver. 11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory honour, and power*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin version, and all the Oriental ones, read, “thou art worthy, O Lord, and our God, to receive”; that is, to receive the acknowledgment and ascription of glory, honour, and power; for otherwise God cannot be said to receive these from his creatures, than by their confessing and declaring that they belong unto him: and that for the reasons following,

for thou hast created all things; the whole universe, the heavens, the earth, and sea, and all that in them are:

and for thy pleasure they are and were created; God is the first cause, and the last end of all things; by his power they are made, and according to his will, and for his own glory, and therefore is worthy of such a doxology; (see <20160>Proverbs 16:4 <45136>Romans 11:36). What is here said is contrary to a notion imbibed by the Jews [f144], that the world was not created but for the sake of the Israelites: and elsewhere [f145] they say,

> “the world was not created but for David; and one says for Moses; and Rabbi Jochanan says for the Messiah;”

which last is truest.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 5

This chapter contains the vision of the sealed book, and the opening of it by Christ, which occasions universal joy among all ranks and sorts of creatures. The book is described by the place where it was, in the right hand of God; by the uncommon manner in which it was written within and without; and by the seven seals it was sealed with, (Revelation 5:1), next follows a proclamation made by a mighty angel, with a loud voice, to find out a person worthy and able to open this book, and loose its seals, (Revelation 5:2), upon which a declaration is made, that none could be found in heaven, earth, or hell, (Revelation 5:3), which had such an effect upon John, that it set him a weeping, (Revelation 5:4), but was comforted by one of the elders suggesting, that there was a person that could, and would do it, when he calls the lion of the tribe of Judah, and the root of David, which are names of Christ, (Revelation 5:5), of which he was assured by what he quickly saw, namely, the same person the elder spoke of, described by his position, standing between the throne, and the living creatures, and elders; and by his similitude and likeness, as a Lamb that had been lately slain, with seven horns and eyes in him; and by what he did, he went and took the book out of the right hand of God, his Father, (Revelation 5:6,7). This occasioned a general joy among all kind of creatures; first among the four living creatures, and four and twenty elders, who are described by what they had, harps and golden vials, the one for praise, the other for prayer; and by what they did, they fell down in a worshipping posture before the Lamb, and sung the new song of redeeming love to him; in which they ascribe worthiness to him, to take the book and open its seals; declare their redemption unto God, by his blood, out of all nations of the earth; take notice of the honour done them by him, in making them kings and priests to God; and express their assurance that they shall reign with him on earth, (Revelation 5:8-10), and next an innumerable company of angels join the living creatures and elders, in a doxology or ascription of glory to him, (Revelation 5:11,12), yea, every creature in heaven and earth, upon it, and under it, and in the sea, are introduced as giving glory both to him that sat upon the throne, and to the

Lamb, (Revelation 5:13), and the whole is closed by the living creatures saying “Amen”, to all, and by the elders prostrating themselves, and worshipping the living and eternal God, (Revelation 5:14).

Ver. 1. *And I saw on the right hand of him that sat on the throne*, etc.] Of this throne, and who it was that sat upon it, (see Gill on “Revelation 4:2”); and who had “in” his right hand, or “at”, or “upon” his right hand, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, lying by, or near his right hand; though according to (Revelation 5:7), the book appears to have been in his right hand, as our version, and others render it:

a book written within, and on the backside, sealed with seven seals: this book was very much like Ezekiel's roll, (Ezekiel 2:9,10); which was written rwjaw µynp, “within” and “without”, before and behind, and indeed it was in the form of a roll: the manner of writings in those times was on sheets of parchment, which, when finished, were rolled up in the form of a cylinder; hence a book is called a “volume”. This book seems to have consisted of seven rolls, to which was annexed seven seals; and there being not room enough within, contrary to the common way of writing, some things were written upon the backside of the outermost roll; and such writings were by the ancients called “Opistographi”: and the word is used by them sometimes for very prolix writings [f146]. By this book some understand the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which were written in rolls; (see Hebrews 10:5 Luke 4:17,20); and which came out of the right hand of God, and were given forth by him; and being written within, and on the backside, may denote the fulness of them, they containing a variety of matter, useful and profitable, for different purposes; or else the literal and mystical, or spiritual meaning of some parts of them: or, as others think, the more clear explanation of the books of the Old Testament, by those of the New Testament; and its being sealed may signify the authenticity of those writings, having the seal of God's truth, and the impress of his wisdom, power, and goodness on them; and also the hidden sense and meaning of them, they being, especially in the prophetic and spiritual part of them, a sealed book to natural men, and of which Christ is the truest and best interpreter; but then this book was opened, and looked into, and read, and, in some measure, understood, even by the Old Testament saints, and had been before this time expounded by Christ, concerning himself; yea, he had opened the understandings of his disciples to understand those Scriptures, and had counted them, and others, worthy to open and explain this book to others, and had sent them into all the

world for this purpose; and for the same reasons it cannot be understood of the Gospel published to Jews and Gentiles, the one within, and the other without; rather therefore the book of God's decrees is here meant, which respects all creatures, and all occurrences and events in the whole world, from the beginning to the end of time; and so Ezekiel's roll, according to the Targum on (Ezekiel 2:10); which was written before and behind, signified that which was aywrç ˆm, "from the beginning", and which apwsb ywhml dyt[d, "shall be in the end", or hereafter. This book God holds "in [his] right hand", as the rule and measure of all he does, and of the government of the world, and which he constantly fulfils and executes; and its being written "within and without" may denote the perfection and comprehensiveness of it, it reaching to all creatures and things, even the most minute; and its being "sealed" shows the certainty of its fulfilment, and the secrecy and hiddenness of it, until accomplished; though it seems best of all to understand it of that part of God's decrees relating to the church and world, particularly the Roman empire, which from henceforward, to the end of time, was to be fulfilled; and so is no other than the book of the Revelation itself, exhibited in the following scenes and visions; and this may be truly said to be in the right hand of God, and from thence taken by the Lamb, it being the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, (Revelation 1:1); and may be said to be written, both "within and on the backside", to show that it contains a large account of things, a long train of events to be accomplished; as also to signify, that it regards the church, and the members of it, who are those that are within, in the several ages of time, and the world, or those that are without; for this book prophecy regards both the state of the Roman empire, and of the Christian church; and its being "sealed" shows the authenticity, certainty, and also the obscurity of what was contained therein; and with "seven" seals, with respect to the seven periods of time, in which the prophecies in it are to be fulfilled.

Ver. 2. *And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice*, etc.] This was not the uncreated angel, Jesus Christ; for he is after spoken of as the lion of the tribe of Judah, and as the Lamb in the midst of the throne, but a created one; though who he was, whether Gabriel, as some say, because his name signifies the strong or mighty One of God, is not material to be known; angels are said to be mighty, and to excel in strength: this is called so here, chiefly with respect to his voice, which he, by reason of his great strength, exerted so loudly, as to be heard by all the creatures in heaven,

and in earth, and under the earth however, this was not John the Baptist, but if a minister of the Gospel, rather some one since, making the following proclamation:

who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? suggesting, that if there was any such person, that he was desired to come, and do it; and it seems, that he must not only be one of power and ability, but of dignity and authority, a person of greatness and worth, from whence his ability arises; as he ought to be that can engage his heart to draw nigh to God, and take a book out of his right hand, this mysterious book of the Revelation, as it was indeed while sealed; and open and explain it to others, unseal it or exhibit it, as it afterwards was in the following scenes and visions, and gave a view of all that is contained in it; and not only so, but fulfil and accomplish all the prophecies in it; and who can, or is worthy to do all this, but he that sits at the right hand of God, and who is God as well as man? and this proclamation was made to stir up an earnest desire in John, and all the saints he represents, to know what was in this book; and to show the impotence of all creatures to make any discovery of it; and to illustrate, and set off with a greater foil, the glory, excellency, ability, and worth of Jesus Christ. There seems to be an allusion to the president of the temple calling to the priests under him, to attend to the several parts of service assigned them, saying unto them, hkzç ym, "whosoever is worthy, let him" do so and so [f147].

Ver. 3. *And no man in heaven*, etc.] Or "no one in heaven", whether angels, or the souls of departed saints; neither the one nor the other know anything of what is to come, until it is revealed unto them:

nor in earth: among all the men on earth, even those of the greatest sagacity and penetration, the wise, the prudent, the scribe, the disputer of this world, such who are most conversant with books, and have the greatest reach into the things of nature, or of grace:

neither under the earth; the dead buried there, good or bad; which may be said agreeably to the notions of the ancient Jews, who believed the immortality of souls, and that they were rewarded or punished, υπο χψονος, "under the earth", according to their virtue or vice in life [f148]: or the devils in hell; or whoever on the earth are influenced by them, as magicians, sorcerers, soothsayers, and necromancers:

was able to open the book, neither to look thereon; or in it, so as to read it, understand it, and show to John what was in it; for the sense is, there was no creature in heaven, earth, or hell, who were masters of the deepest knowledge, and made pretensions to any, that were able to foresee and foretell things to come; or to exhibit the prophecies in this book, and represent them to John in the manner they afterwards were, and much less to accomplish them.

Ver. 4. *And I wept much*, etc.] Not so much on his own account, because he feared his curiosity would not be gratified, and that strong desire answered, which were raised in him upon sight of the book, and increased by the angel's proclamation; but for the sake of the church of God, whose representative he was, and to whom the knowledge of this book, and the things contained in it, he judged must be very useful and profitable. The Ethiopic version reads, “and many wept”; many of those that were about the throne, as well as John:

because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon; because there was no creature in heaven, earth, or under it, that were of dignity and authority, as well as of ability, to open the book by unsealing it; and read and deliver out the prophecies in it upon the taking off of every seal; and so not to look into it, and foresee and foretell what was hereafter to come to pass, in the church and world: the phrase of being worthy to look on it seems to be Jewish; of the book of the generation of Adam, (<01501>Genesis 5:1), the Jews say [f149] that

> “it descended to the first man, and by it he knew the wisdom which is above; and this book came to the sons of God, the wise men of the age, hyb ajgça l ykzd ˆam, “whoever is worthy to look in it”, knows by it the wisdom which is from above.”

The whole verse is left out in the Alexandrian copy; and the phrase, “to read”, is neither in the Vulgate Latin, nor in any of the Oriental versions.

Ver. 5. *And one of the elders said unto me*, etc.] The Ethiopic version reads, “one of these elders”; that is, one of the four and twenty elders that were round about the throne; not the first of the four and twenty books of the Old Testament; nor the patriarch Jacob, because of the prophecy concerning Shiloh, Judah's son, which stands in (<01491>Genesis 49:10), nor Moses, who spoke of the Messiah as the great prophet of the church; nor John the Baptist, who pointed out the Lamb of God; these are all fancies

and conjectures. It was one of the members of the Christian church, who was near the throne of God, had communion with him, and knowledge of his will, who in this visionary way is represented as comforting John under his sorrow and concern, and giving him information: and sometimes persons of superior abilities may receive instruction from meaner persons, as did Apollos from Aquila and Priscilla: the same said unto John,

weep not; cease sorrowing, do not be cast down, nor despair;

behold the lion of the tribe of Judah; by whom is meant Christ, who, according to the flesh, was to come of the tribe of Judah; and certain it is, that our Lord sprang from thence: and he is said to be the lion of that tribe, in allusion to the prophecy concerning Judah in (<0149>Genesis 49:9), where he is said to be a lion, an old lion stooping down and couching, and on whose standard was the figure of a lion. Christ may be compared to one, because of his great strength, he being the mighty God, the able Saviour, and strong Redeemer, and protector of his church and people, and the avenger of their enemies; and because of his courage and intrepidity when he engaged with Satan, and his principalities and powers, when he bore the sins of his people, sustained his Father's wrath, and the terrors of death set themselves in array against him; and because of the fierceness of his wrath, and fury against the wicked, and for his generosity and lenity towards those that stoop unto him, and obey him. So the Jews say [f150], that

> “of Messiah, the son of David, who comes forth from Judah, is it said, (<0149>Genesis 49:9), “Judah is a lion's whelp”;”

and a little after, Messiah, the son of David, who is hyra, “a lion”, shall be on his right hand, and Messiah, the son of Joseph, who is an ox, on his left hand; so the word of the Lord frequently, in the Chaldee paraphrase, is said to be a lion [f151].

The root of David; in like manner is Christ called the root of Jesse in (<2811>Isaiah 11:10); and the meaning either is, that he is a branch that springs out of the roots of Jesse and David, is David's son and offspring, according to his human nature; (see <6622>Revelation 22:16); or that he is David's Lord, according to his divine nature: and the metaphor of a root well agrees with him as Mediator, he being hidden out of sight, and unknown to a natural man; and may denote his meanness in his state of humiliation, when he was as a root out of a dry ground; and because he is the root from whence all the elect of God spring, in whom they have their being, and by whom they

are bore and supported, and from whom are derived to them all the blessings of grace, all their spiritual life, holiness, fruitfulness, and perseverance. Now this illustrious Person, so described,

hath prevailed; or overcome all difficulties, being one of worth and value, of great authority and ability:

to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof; and deliver out all the prophecies in it, and fulfil them; and this through the merits of his blood, and in consequence of his sufferings and death: hence, in the next verse, he is represented as a lamb as it had been slain; and the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders, put his worthiness to take the book, and open it, upon his having been slain, and having redeemed them by his blood, (<66509>Revelation 5:9). And as he, upon his resurrection from the dead, had all power in heaven and in earth given him, as Mediator, for the protection of his church, so he was deserving; and it was fit and necessary that he, as the great prophet of the church, should have and deliver out the prophecies concerning the state and condition of his redeemed ones in all ages.

Ver. 6. *And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts*, etc.] These words, "in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts", are left out in the Syriac version:

and in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb; John, upon the intimation given him by the elder, lift up his eyes, and with great earnestness looked about, and saw the person he pointed at, though not in the form of a lion, but in the appearance of a lamb, to which Christ, both in the Old and New Testament, is often compared; and that very aptly, for his innocence and purity of nature; for his harmless and inoffensive conversation; and for his meek and humble deportment throughout the whole of his life; and for his patience at the time of his sufferings and death; and for his usefulness both for food and clothing to his people; and chiefly for his sacrifice for them, typified both by the passover lamb, and by the lambs of the daily sacrifice: hence it follows,

as it had been slain; or "as having been slain"; Christ had been really slain by the wicked hands of the Jews, and not in appearance only; the as, here, is not a note of mere similitude and likeness, but of reality and truth; (see <43014>John 1:14 <50207>Philippians 2:7); but he was now risen from the dead, and therefore is said to have been slain some time before, though now alive;

and he appeared to have the marks of his sufferings and death upon him, as he had after his resurrection the print of the nails and spear, in his hands, feet, and side; and he was as a lamb that had been newly or lately slain: and it may denote the continued efficacy of his blood, to cleanse from all sin, and of his sacrifice to take it away; he was as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, with respect to the continual virtue of his blood and sacrifice; and he will be, on the same account, the Lamb as it had been slain, unto the end of the world. The position and situation of this Lamb were, he "stood in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders"; he "stood", being risen from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, but was not as yet set down upon the throne with his Father, but was very near it; he stood before it, ready to be placed upon it, and receive his power and his kingdom; he stood between the throne, and between the living creatures, and the elders, being the Mediator between God, and his church, and people; he, appeared before the throne for them, as their advocate, and stood ready to give them all the assistance, and to do them all the good he could: and this his situation may also denote, that he is continually in view, is always in the sight of God, as the Lamb that had been slain; his blood is carried within the vail, is sprinkled upon the mercy seat, and is always in sight, and calls for peace and pardon; and God the Father always looks upon it, and to his righteousness, sacrifice, and satisfaction, on account of his people: moreover, his being in the midst of the four living creatures, and elders, may signify his presence in his churches, and with his ministers, which he has promised them to the end of the world. This Lamb is further represented,

as having seven horns; it is very unusual for a lamb to have horns, and especially seven: these horns are expressive of the power of Christ, of his dominion and government, even of his kingly power and authority; so kings are signified by horns in (<270820>Daniel 8:20,21 7:24); and Christ himself is called the horn of David, and the horn of salvation, (<191327>Psalm 132:17 <420169>Luke 1:69); and signify, that upon his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven, he was made and declared Lord and Christ; and the number "seven" expresses the fulness and perfection of his power and authority, having, as Mediator, all power in heaves and in earth given him; and what is above all power, might, dominion, and every name in this world, and that to come; and may have some relation to the seven states of his churches in so many periods of time; and show not only that he has power sufficient to protect and defend his people in all times, and to push

at and destroy his and their enemies, but to open the then sealed book, and unloose the seals: and as another qualification for this work, it follows,

and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent into all the earth; which some understand of angels, and of a sufficient number of them, which belong to Christ, and are at his command, and who are ready to do his will, and to be sent forth by him, into the several parts of the earth, to execute his pleasure: but these rather design the Spirit of God and his gifts, which Christ received without measure, both in his human nature, at his incarnation, and after his resurrection from the dead, and ascension; which he bestowed on his apostles and ministering servants, whom he sent forth into all the world, to preach his Gospel with them; and which he has, more or less, ever since continued to do. The Ethiopic version reads in the singular number, "and this is the Spirit of God which is sent into all the earth"; (see Gill on "Revelation 1:4"); these "seven eyes" may design the perfect knowledge of Christ, his foresight of future events, and his all wise providence, which is always and everywhere concerned to fulfil and accomplish them; so that he is every way qualified to take the book of future events, as to the church and world, and reveal it, open and explain it, and fulfil the things contained in it; (see Zechariah 3:9).

Ver. 7. *And he came*, etc.] He drew nigh to the throne of God, he engaged his heart to approach unto him, and came up even to his seat, which a mere creature, without a Mediator, cannot do:

and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne; (see Gill on "Revelation 5:1"); it being given unto him, as in (Revelation 1:1); and a commission and authority to open it, and make it manifest to others, and to accomplish the several events, in the several periods of time, it points unto.

Ver. 8. *And when he had taken the book*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version reads, "when he had opened the book", very wrongly; for the opening of it by unloosing the seals, one after another, is hereafter mentioned, in (Revelation 6:1,3,5,7,9,12), but when it was observed, that the Lamb took the book, and his commission to open, unseal, and fulfil it,

the four beasts, and four [and] twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb; by way of religious worship and adoration of him; which shows that he was not a mere creature, who assumed human nature, suffered, and died, and is the Mediator between God and men, but is truly God, and is the proper

object of worship; and so he is regarded by all his faithful ministers, and true churches, which are here signified by the four living creatures, and four and twenty elders; who are represented as

having everyone of them harps; which were instruments of music, and with which the saints formerly used to praise God, (<19332>Psalm 33:2); and so may here intend the praises and thanksgivings of the saints, of everyone of them, greater or lesser, upon the present occasion; having their hearts in right tune, making melody with them to the Lord, and giving thanks unto him for all their blessings, temporal and spiritual, and particularly for the Lamb, and his worthiness to open the book, and unloose the seals:

and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints; this is said in allusion to the golden censers full of incense, which ascended upwards, and was of a sweet smell; the vessels on the shewbread table, in which incense was put, are by Josephus [f152] called "golden vials", as here; his words are, upon the loaves were put two φιαλαι χρυσεαι, "golden vials", full of incense: the prayers of the saints are compared to "odours", or "incense", as the word may be rendered, and as they are called, (<19102>Psalm 141:2); partly because as incense goes upwards, so do they go up to God, and are received, regarded, and had in remembrance by him; and partly because as incense is of a sweet smell, so the prayers of the saints, put up in the name and faith of Christ, are very grateful and acceptable to God: the "golden vials" said to be "full" of them, may design the hearts of believers, in which they first are, and from whence they proceed; true prayer is that which is inwrought in the soul, and comes from the heart, even from a heart pure like gold, purified by faith in the blood of Christ, a true heart, that asks in faith, nothing wavering; such as are really saints, true believers in Christ, are praying souls; they are full of prayers for themselves and others; they pray always, and for all saints: this makes nothing for praying to angels and saints departed; for these prayers were their own, and not others; and besides, these four living creatures, and four and twenty elders, were not angels, for they are said to be redeemed by the blood of Christ, and are distinguished from angels in the following verses; nor the saints in heaven, but ministers and churches on earth, and who were to reign with Christ on earth, (<66510>Revelation 5:10); it may be observed, that the Jews sometimes represent prayer in such like figures as here;

> “prayer (they say) ascends with those spices which are mentioned in (Song of Solomon 4:14); and at the time that prayer ascends it is perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, and of this the holy blessed God asks, “who is this that comes up”, etc. [f153] (Song of Solomon 3:6);”

and they say, prayer is greater than all offerings [f154]. (see Revelation 8:3).

Ver. 9. *And they sung a new song*, etc.] Upon a new occasion and subject, redemption by the blood of the Lamb, and his worthiness to open the sealed book; and in distinction from the old song of Moses and the children of Israel at the Red sea; and this was a most famous and excellent song, an unheard of one, and which none could learn, or sing, but the redeemed of the Lamb:

saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and open the seals thereof. The Arabic version reads, “thou, O Lamb”; the reasons why they ascribe such fitness, ability, and dignity to him, are as follow:

for thou wast slain: by men, and for the sins of men; whereby, as he became worthy in his priestly office to take away the sins of his people, and to have all the glory of their salvation, and, in his kingly office, to have all power and authority, and to be exalted above every name, so, in his prophetic office, to have perfect knowledge, as man and Mediator, of all the future events that were to befall his church and people, and to make them known, and fulfil them:

and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; this shows, that as the four living creatures, and four and twenty elders, were not angels, so they were not representatives of the Jewish church; or the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament; not even the apostles of the New; for they were all Jews, and could not be said to be redeemed out of every tongue, nation, and people; and also that not the Jews only were redeemed by Christ, but the Gentiles also, and not all mankind, or every individual of human nature, but some out of all the nations of the earth; for God hath chosen some, both of Jews and Gentiles, and these Christ has redeemed and therefore the Gospel is sent unto all nations, that these among them may be called and saved. The redemption of them supposes them to have been in a state of slavery and bondage, as they are by nature, to sin, Satan, and the law; and signifies

a deliverance from such a state, which Christ has obtained, not barely by power, but by price, as the word here used signifies, and may be rendered, “and hast bought us” and the price with which he has bought them in his own “blood”, and which is of full and sufficient value, it being not only the blood of a man, of an innocent man, but of one that is God as well as man: and this price was paid “to God”, and to his justice, against whom men have sinned, whose law they have broken, and whose justice they have injured and affronted, that he might reconcile them to God, bring them near to him, and that they might serve him in righteousness and true holiness.

Ver. 10. *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests*, etc.] (See Gill on “Revelation 1:6”). The Alexandrian copy, and Complutensian edition, and the Syriac, Arabic, and the Ethiopic versions, read “them”, instead of “us”:

and we shall reign on the earth; meaning not merely in a spiritual sense, through grace reigning over sin and corruption, through Satan being bruised under their feet, and through the victory they have in Christ over the world, but in the millennium state, in the thousand years' reign with Christ in the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness; (see Revelation 20:4-6). The Alexandrian copy, and the Complutensian edition, Syriac and Arabic versions, read “they shall reign”.

Ver. 11. *And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels*, etc.] Immaterial spirits, made by Christ, and worshippers of him, and ministering spirits to him and his, the holy and elect angels, who are confirmed in their state by Christ; these John beheld in a visionary way, and heard the voices and articulate sounds formed by them; and there were many of them; how many there are, or were here, cannot be said; we read of a multitude of heavenly host that appeared at the incarnation of Christ, and of more than twelve legions of angels, that Christ could have had of his Father for a word speaking, at the time of his apprehension, who would have rescued him out of the hands of his enemies; yea, that company is innumerable. The Syriac version reads, “as the voice of many waters”; these were

round about the throne; were near to God, stood before him, behind his face, hearkened to his voice, and observed his orders: so with the Jews, the four angels, Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael, are said [f155] to be `raskl bybs`, “round about his throne”, the throne of God: it follows here,

and the beasts and the elders; the sense is not, that John heard the voice of the living creatures, and of the elders, as well as, and together with, the voice of many angels; for he had heard their voice and song before, but that the angels whose voice he heard, as they were round about the throne, so they were round about the living creatures, and round about the elders: the angels are near unto, and encompass the ministers of the Gospel; they are about them, and give them intimations and discoveries of the mind and will of God, as an angel did to John, (<66101>Revelation 1:1), and another to Paul, (<44723>Acts 27:23,24), and sometimes direct them where to go and preach the Gospel, as in (<44169>Acts 16:9,10), and surround them for their safety and protection: so horses and chariots of fire, by whom angels are meant, were round about the prophet Elisha, (<120616>2 Kings 6:16,17), and they were also round about the elders, the churches, and particular believers; angels and saints are near to one another; and angels are very friendly to the saints, and so them many good offices; they all belong to the same family, and are social worshippers of God; the angels are the guards that encamp round about them that fear the Lord, and often protect them from enemies and dangers; and it may be observed, that the saints are nearer the Lamb and the throne than the angels be; according to this account, there was a throne, and one that sat on it, who is the living God; nearest to the throne stood the Lamb; next to the Lamb stood the four living creatures, the ministers of the Gospel; next to them the elders, or churches, and members thereof; and in the outermost ring, and as encompassing all, stood the ministering angels, they being servants; whereas the saints are the heirs of salvation, and the bride, the Lamb's wife, and therefore nearer him:

and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; that is, an innumerable company of them; a like number is mentioned in (<270710>Daniel 7:10) to which this seems to refer; (see <198717>Psalm 68:17). The Jews speak of nine hundred and six thousand millions of ministering angels, that stand constantly before the Lord [f156].

Ver. 12. *Saying with a loud voice*, etc.] To signify their zeal, fervour, and affection for Christ, and to make a free, open, and public acknowledgment of him, and that all might hear of his worthiness, and of the praise and glory that were due unto him:

worthy is the Lamb that was slain; they address him as the Lamb, and not as the Lord of lords, and their Lord; and speak of him as having been slain, and celebrate the virtue and efficacy of his sufferings and death, and ascribe

his worthiness to receive glory and honour thereunto; but do not add, as the living creatures and elders do, “and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood”; because, though they were the subjects and objects of confirming grace by Christ, yet not of redeeming grace: it follows,

to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing; as the book has seven seals to be unloosed, and Christ had seven horns of power and ability to loose them, and fulfil the things contained in it, and seven eyes to look into it, and discover and reveal what is in it, so here are “seven” words made use of, to express the praise that was due unto him; a like number is used by the angels in (Revelation 7:12); and when he is said to be worthy to receive these, it is not to be understood of his receiving the things themselves, but of the praise of them; and that these are to be observed in him, and to be ascribed to him: power belongs to him, as he is the mighty God; and as the Saviour and Redeemer of his people; and as risen from the dead, and as exalted at God's right hand, and made or declared Lord and Christ; having all power in heaven and in earth: “riches” may well be ascribed to him, who has all the perfections of deity in him; whose are the heavens and the earth, and the fulness thereof; and who, as Mediator, is heir of all things, and has both the riches of grace and glory in his hands: “wisdom” also is his; he is wisdom itself, he is the only wise God; and he is the author of all wisdom, natural and spiritual; and, as Mediator, he has the spirit of wisdom and knowledge resting on him, and the treasures of both hid in him: and “strength” may be well attributed to him, which he has shown in making and supporting all things; in saving and redeeming his people with a mighty hand and outstretched arm; and in subduing and vanquishing all his and their enemies; and in giving strength to them to discharge their duty, resist temptations, oppose corruptions, and do their generation work: “honour” is due to him, as the Son of God, he being to be honoured equally as the Father; and who, as man and Mediator, is crowned with glory and honour: “glory” is what ought to be ascribed unto him, even the glory of true and proper deity, and also the glory of salvation; and who, as Mediator, had a glory promised him, and which was due unto him upon his having finished his work, and which he now enjoys: wherefore “blessing” is to be given to him, who is God over all, blessed for evermore, in himself and the perfections of his nature; in whom all spiritual blessings are, and in whom all the nations of the earth are blessed; and to whom praise and thanks are

to be rendered, for the blessings of pardoning, justifying, and redeeming grace, and for all other.

Ver. 13. *And every creature which is in heaven*, etc.] Animate or inanimate, angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, sun, moon, and stars, and the fowls of the air:

and on the earth; men and beasts, and every creeping thing, mountains, hills, fruitful trees, and all cedars: and under the earth: in the bowels of it, metals, minerals, and everything of that kind:

and such as are in the sea; that sail in ships upon the mighty waters, and fishes great and small that are therein:

and all that are in them; in heaven, earth, and sea:

heard I saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever; all creatures in their way praise God, and are subservient to the glory and interest of Christ, and are the occasion of glorifying of both; and even the enemies of Christ, wicked men and devils, will be obliged to own Christ to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father, as well as angels and saints; and the same glory and honour which are given to the one are ascribed to the other, which shows the proper deity of Christ, and his equality with the Father. The Syriac version reads, "and I heard him who sitteth upon the throne, saying, to the Lamb be given blessing and honour", etc. with which compare (<4852>John 5:22,23).

Ver. 14. *And the four beasts said, Amen*, etc.] Giving their assent to what the angels and every creature said, and expressing their desires and wishes that so it might be, and also their faith, that so it was, and would be:

and the four [and] twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever; either God the Father, who sat upon the throne, and is so described, (<6009>Revelation 4:9,10); or else the Lamb who had been slain, and was now alive, and lives for evermore; or both of them, for the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and the Syriac and Arabic versions, omit the words "him that liveth for ever and ever"; and leave it to be understood of either of them, or both; and the Ethiopic version reads, "and the elders worshipped him"; as the four living creatures and four and twenty elders led the chorus, and begun the song, so they close it, as being the persons more immediately concerned in the death and sufferings of the

Lamb, and redemption by him, and in the sealed book, and in the things contained in it; the seals of which are next opened, and an account is given of them in some following chapters.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 6

This chapter contains the vision of the opening six of the seals of the sealed book, by the Lamb, and of the events following thereupon. The preparation to the vision of the first seal is in (Revelation 6:1); the Lamb opens it, John hears a noise like thunder, and one of the living creatures bids him come and see; upon which he saw a horse, of a white colour, and a rider on it, who is described by a bow and crown given him, and by the victory he obtained, (Revelation 6:2); at the opening of the second seal, the second living creature invites him as before; and he sees a horse, of a red colour, with a rider on it, described by his power, to take peace from the earth, and suffer men to kill one another, and by a great sword given him, (Revelation 6:3,4); at the opening of the third seal, the third living creature addresses him in like manner as the other; and he sees a horse, of a black colour, and a rider on it, with a pair of balances in his hands; and hears a voice from among the four living creatures, expressing dearness of provisions, and a charge not to hurt the oil and wine, (Revelation 6:5,6); at the opening of the fourth seal, the fourth living creature speaks to John, as the rest; and he sees a horse, of a pale colour, and a rider on it, described by his name, Death, by his follower, hell, or the grave, and by his power to destroy a fourth part of the earth with the sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts, (Revelation 6:7,8); at the opening of the fifth seal, John saw the souls of the martyrs, under the altar; hears their cry for vengeance; observes that white robes were given them, and that they were bid to be quiet until the slaying and suffering time of their brethren was over, (Revelation 6:9-11); at the opening of the sixth seal follow an earthquake, strange changes in the heavens, the sun becomes black as sackcloth, the moon becomes as blood, the stars fall, and the heaven itself departs, and every island and mountain are moved out of their places, (Revelation 6:12-14), the kings and great men of the earth, and even all sorts, of men, upon this, fly to the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of God the Father, that sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, the opener of the sealed book; giving this as a reason for it, that

the time of his great wrath was come, and none could stand before him, (Revelation 6:15-17).

Ver. 1. *And I saw, when the Lamb opened one of the seals*, etc.] Of the sealed book; one of the seven seals of it, as read the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and the Oriental versions, and the Complutensian edition; that is, the first; so "one" is used for first in (Genesis 1:5 Matthew 28:1); and as appears from the following seals being called second, third, fourth, etc. These seals express events to be fulfilled; and therefore cannot respect the steps towards, and the signs of Jerusalem's destruction, and that itself, which had been accomplished some years before the vision of the seals; and which vision would have been needless: and these are called seals, because they were sealed among God's treasure, or were resolved on, and decreed by him; and because they were hidden and unknown until they came to pass; and when they were come to pass, they were pledges of what God would do in the destruction of Rome Papal, as here in the destruction of Rome Pagan: for these seals, at least the first six of them, concern the Pagan empire, and the state of the church in it; and are so many gradual steps to the ruin of it, and to the advancing and increasing of the kingdom of Christ; and these, with the seven trumpets, which the last seal introduces, reach from the times of the apostles to the end of time, as appears from (Revelation 10:6,7). Now the opening of these seals is the revealing of the events signified by them, and expressed in the hieroglyphics here made use of, and the fulfilment of them;

and I heard as it were the noise of thunder; a voice very loud and sonorous, exciting the attention of John:

one of the four beasts saying, come and see; this was the of the four living creatures, for the word one is used in the same sense as in the foregoing clause; and this creature was like to a lion, (Revelation 4:7); wherefore his voice was loud, as when a lion roars, (Revelation 10:3), and is fitly compared to thunder: there is no need to look out for any particular person, as intended by this living creature; or to conclude him to be Peter, as Grotius, who was dead before this seal was opened; or Quadratus, Aristides, and Justin Martyr, who courageously appeared in the Christian cause, and made very excellent apologies for it, with success, since these lived under the second seal; it is enough in general to understand the ministers of the Gospel, who, as sons of thunder, loudly and publicly preached the Gospel, and, as lions, boldly and bravely defended, and took

notice of the power and providence of God in succeeding their ministry, and in weakening the kingdom of Satan in the Gentile world, and particularly in the Roman empire; and therefore are represented as calling to John to “come and see”; observe and take notice of the following hieroglyphic, representing the success of the Gospel ministry, yzj at, “come and see”, is a phrase often used by the Jews, to stir up attention to what is about to be said; (see Gill on “<4046>John 1:46”).

Ver. 2. *And I saw, and behold a white horse*, etc.] Representing the ministration of the Gospel in the times of the apostles, which were just now finishing, John being the last of them, who saw this vision; and the “horse” being a swift, majestic, and warlike creature, and fearless of opposition and war, may design the swift progress of the Gospel in the world, the majesty, power, and authority with which it came, and opposition it met with, and which was bore down before it; and its “white” colour may denote the purity of Gospel truths, the peace it proclaims, the joy brings, and the triumph that attends it, on account of victories obtained by it, and which is afterwards suggested: white horses were used in triumphs, in token of victory [f157]; a white horse, in a dream, is a good sign with the Jews [f158]; and Astrampsychus says [f159], a vision of white horses is an apparition of angels; and so one of those angels which the Jews suppose to have the care of men, and the preservation of them, is said [f160] to ride by him, and at his right hand, upon a white horse; but the rider here is not an angel, but the head of all principality and power:

and he that sat on him had a bow; with arrows; the bow is the word of the Gospel, and the arrows the doctrines of it; (see <3009>Habakkuk 3:9 <1965>Psalm 45:5); so called for their swift motion, sudden and secret striking, piercing, and penetrating nature, reaching to the very hearts of men; laying open the secret thoughts and iniquity thereof; wounding, and causing them to fall, and submit themselves to the sceptre of Christ's kingdom:

and a crown was given unto him; by God the Father; expressive of Christ's regal power and authority, of his honour and dignity, and of his victories and conquests:

and he went forth, conquering and to conquer; in the ministration of the Gospel, which went forth, as did all the first ministers of it, from Jerusalem, to the several parts of the world; from the east, on which side of the throne was the first living creature, who called upon John to come and see this

sight, as the standard of the tribe of Judah, which had a lion upon it, was on the east side of the camp of Israel; and out of Zion went forth the word of the Lord, which was very victorious, both among Jews and Gentiles, to the conversion of thousands of them, and to the planting of a multitude of churches among them, and to the setting up and advancing the kingdom of Christ; but inasmuch as yet all things are not made subject to him, he is represented as going forth in the Gospel, still conquering, and to conquer, what remain to be conquered: that Christ is designed by him that sat on the white horse, and is thus described, is evident from (<66911>Revelation 19:11-13); with which compare (<19503>Psalm 45:3,4), though as this emblem may respect the Roman empire, the white horse may be an emblem of the strong, warlike, and conquering state of it; and the rider which a bow and crown may design Vespasian, whom Christ made use of as an instrument to conquer his enemies the Jews, and who, in consequence thereof, had the imperial crown put upon him; and it may be further observed, that though his conquest of them was a very great one, yet they afterwards rose up in the empire, in great numbers, rebelled, and did much mischief, when they were entirely conquered by Trajan and Hadrian, who seem to be intended in the next seal.

Ver. 3. *And when he had opened the second seal*, etc.] Of the sealed book; that is, the Lamb, as before:

I heard the second beast say, come and see; this living creature was the ox, whose situation was on the west side of the throne, as the standard of Ephraim, on which was an ox, was on the west of the camp of Israel; no mention is made of the noise of thunder, as before, the voice of the ox being lower than that of the lion; and this perhaps may point out a decrease in the Gospel ministry; to fix on any particular person, as, with Grotius, the Evangelist Matthew, because he says, (<40247>Matthew 24:7), nation shall rise against nation, which carries in it some likeness to what is said at the opening of this seal; or, as with Brightman, Justin Martyr, whose second apology was not regarded by the emperor, is mere conjecture; the ministers of the Gospel are intended who lived under this seal, who, though they might not be strong and courageous like the lion, or their predecessors, yet were like the ox, laborious in preaching, and patient in suffering; and these are represented in this vision as inviting John to behold and observe the following hieroglyphic.

Ver. 4. *And there went out another horse, [that was] red*, etc.] Which may be an emblem either of the suffering state of the church, being answerable to the Smyrnaean one, as the purity and power of the Gospel, represented in the former seal, may answer to the Ephesine church; or else of those contentions and divisions occasioned among men through the Gospel, which, though of a peaceable nature, yet, through the corruption and depravity of men, brings not peace, but a sword; or rather of those bloody wars within the period of time signified by this seal, which came as punishments on the enemies of the Gospel:

and [power] was given to him that sat thereon; not the Lord Jesus Christ, who is said to ride on a red horse, (<3808>Zechariah 1:8); though indeed he presides over his church and people, and takes the care of them when the most desolating judgments are in the earth, and causes all things to work together for good; nor Satan, the red dragon, who was a murderer from the beginning, and delights in effusion of blood, and in stirring up of men to destroy one another, whenever he is permitted; but Trajan the Roman emperor, in whose reign John died; and who came from the west, and was a Spaniard, as was Hadrian his successor, who may be joined with him; which was the side, or quarter, on which the living creature was that spoke to John; and in the times of these emperors were very bloody and civil wars: wherefore power is said to be given him,

to take peace from the earth; that is, from the Roman empire, which is sometimes called the whole world; and which could not have been done, if power had not been given from him who makes peace, and creates evil:

and that they should kill one another: which refers not to the havoc and slaughter which the Jews made one of another at the destruction of Jerusalem, but to the Jews murdering of the Greeks and Romans, and the Romans the Jews, in the times of the above emperors. In Trajan's time, the Jews who dwelt about Cyrene, under the conduct of one Andrew, fell upon the Romans and Greeks, and killed many, fed on their flesh, ate their bowels, besmeared themselves with their blood, and covered themselves with their skins; many of them they sawed asunder, from the crown of the head down to the middle; many of them they threw to the wild beasts, and many of them they forced to fight among themselves, till they had destroyed above two hundred and twenty thousand men; in Egypt and Cyprus they committed the same kind of outrages, their leader being one Artemion, where two hundred and forty thousand men perished [f161]; Lybia

was almost emptied of men by them; so that Hadrian, the successor of Trajan, was obliged to send colonies to repeople the places they had made desolate. But at length they were overcome by Lupus, governor of Egypt, and by Marcius Turbo, and by Lucius, whom Trajan sent against them [f162], and destroyed great numbers of them; and for the space of about fourteen years they were quiet; but in Hadrian's time they rose again, and set one Bar Cochab, a false Messiah, at the head of them, whom they proclaimed king: when Hadrian sent forces against them, and with great difficulty subdued them, took the city Bither, where they were, and destroyed at times five hundred and eighty thousand of them [f163]; the Jews say, that he put men, women, and children to death in such numbers, that their blood ran down into the main sea, yea, that a horse might go up to his nose in blood [f164]; they say that he destroyed in Bither double the number of those that came out of Egypt, even twelve hundred thousand men [f165]; some of their accounts are very extravagant, and exceed all bounds [f166]; however, the slaughter was very great, that it may well be said,

and there was given unto him a great sword; to slay men with; though Hadrian on his death bed, amidst his pains, would fain have had a sword given to him to have dispatched his own life, and could not obtain one [f167]; the Jews say he destroyed all the land of Judea [f168].

Ver. 5. *And when he had opened the third seal*, etc.] Of the sealed book:

I heard the third beast say, come and see; this living creature was that which was like a man, who was on the south side of the throne, as the standard of Reuben, which had the figure of a man, was on the south side of the camp of Israel; this was not the Apostle Paul, as Grotius thinks, to whom was made a prophecy of a famine in the days of Claudius Caesar; nor Tertullian, who made an apology for the Christians in the times of this seal, as Brightman conjectures; but the ministers of the Gospel, whose voice was neither the voice of the lion nor of the ox, but of a man, which was still lower, but yet they retained their humanity, reasoning prudence, and wisdom; and these are represented as calling upon John to come and see, and take notice of the following hieroglyphic:

and I beheld, and lo a black horse; an emblem either of the afflicted state of the church, still answering to the Smyrnaean one, being black with persecutions, schisms, errors, and heresies, which were many; or particularly of the heresies and heretics of those times, who might be compared to a horse for their pride and ambition, speaking great swelling

words of vanity, and to a black one, for their hidden things of dishonesty, and works of darkness, for the darkness in themselves, and which they spread over others; or rather of a famine, not in a spiritual sense, of hearing of the word, but in a literal sense; (see <2Lam 4:7,8 5:10>Lamentations 4:7,8 5:10); not what was at the siege of Jerusalem, or in the times of Claudius Caesar, (<Act 11:28>Acts 11:28); but in the times of the Emperor Severus, and others, as the historians of those times [f169], and the writings of Tertullian show; when the Heathens ascribed the scarcity that was among them to the wickedness of the Christians [f170], whereas it was a judgment upon them for their persecution of them:

and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand; by whom is meant not some noted heretic, or heretics, who had balances of deceit in their hands to prove their tenets by, such as spurious writings, etc. or who made pretensions to the Scriptures, the balance of the sanctuary, to weigh doctrines in; nor Christ, whose name heretics shrouded themselves under, and professed, and who overruled and made use of their heresies for the good of his people, that they might be made manifest. Mr. Mede thinks that Septimius Severus, the Roman emperor, who came from Africa, from the south, on which side was the living creature that spoke to John, is intended, and in which country black horses were in great esteem; and he was the only African that ever was emperor of Rome before [f171]: and the same author thinks, that his having a pair of balances in his hand expresses the strict justice that emperor was famous for; but rather it signifies famine, and such a scarcity as that bread is delivered out by weight to men; (see <Lev 26:26>Leviticus 26:26).

Ver. 6. *And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say*, etc.] Not the voice of Agabus to the Apostle Paul, (<Act 11:28>Acts 11:28); but rather of Christ, who was in the midst of them, (<Rev 5:6>Revelation 5:6); the Ethiopic version adds, “as the voice of an eagle”:

a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; “Choenix”, the measure here used, signifies as much as was sufficient for a man for one day, as a penny was the usual hire of a labourer for a day, (<Mat 20:2>Matthew 20:2); so a choenix of corn was allowed to each man in Xerxes's army for a day, according to Herodotus [f172]; the same quantity for a day was given by the Romans to their shepherds and servants, and is generally said to be about two pounds; according to Agricola it was two pounds and a quarter [f173]. This measure was very different; the Attic

choenix was a measure that held three pounds, the Italic choenix four pounds, and the military choenix five pounds, and answers to the Hebrew Kab [f174]; and in the Septuagint version of (<26450>Ezekiel 45:10,11); it answers to the Bath; and some make it to be the fourth part of a bushel, and others half a bushel [f175]; the first account of its being about two pounds, and the allowance of a man for a day, seems best to agree with this place: so that this phrase expresses such a scarcity, as that a man's daily wages would be but just enough to buy himself bread, without any thing to eat with it; and when he would have nothing left for clothes, and other things, nor anything for his wife and children:

and [see] that thou hurt not the oil and wine; signifying that this scarcity should fall not upon the superfluities, such as oil and wine, which may be spared, and men can live without; but upon the necessities of life, particularly bread: some render the words, “and be not unjust in the oil and wine”; and so think they refer to the laws of the Roman emperors, in relation to wine and oil, and to the just execution of them, that there might be plenty of them; and others understand them in an allegorical sense, of the principal doctrines of the Gospel, comparable to oil and wine, and which Christ takes care of, that they shall not be hurt and destroyed by heretics and false teachers, even when they prevail the most, and bring on a famine of the word, and when the church is blackened and darkened with them; and indeed these may much better be applied to the Gospel, than, as they are by the Jews, to the law; who frequently say [f176] that the law is called “oil”, and speak of hrwt lç hnyy, “the wine of the law” [f177]:

Ver. 7. *And when he had opened the fourth seal*, etc.] Of the seven seals of the sealed book; that is, when the Lamb had opened it, or took it off, as in (<660601>Revelation 6:1);

I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, come and see; this living creature was that which was like an eagle, and was on the north side of the throne, answerable to the standard of Dan, which was on the north of the camp of Israel, and had the figure of an eagle upon it; and the opening of this seal begins with Maximinus the Roman emperor, who came from Thrace, far north. This living creature was not James, the brother of our Lord, who had been dead long ago, as Grotius imagines; nor Cyprian, as Brightman thinks, though he lived under this seal; but the ministers of the Gospel in general in the times referred to are intended: and it may denote some decline in the Gospel ministry, that they had not the courage and strength

of the lion, as the first Gospel preachers; nor the patience and laboriousness of the ox, the next set of ministers; nor the solidity and prudence of the man, the ministers that followed them; and yet they retained some degree of light and knowledge, sagacity and penetration, and contempt of the world, signified by the eagle; these invite John in a visionary way to come and see the following hieroglyphic.

Ver. 8. *And I looked, and behold a pale horse*, etc.] An emblem either of the state of the church, pale not with persecution, as some think, for through that it was red; but with the hypocrisy and superstition of many of its members, who were paving the way for the man of sin, and on account of whom the church was grown sickly and dying; or rather this is an emblem of the sickly and dying state of the Pagan Roman empire, through a complication of judgments upon it, hereafter mentioned, as war, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts:

and his name that sat on him was Death; not Satan, who has the power of death, but death itself; who is represented as a person, as he elsewhere is, sometimes as a king, (<45514>Romans 5:14); and as an enemy, (<461526>1 Corinthians 15:25); (see <232815>Isaiah 28:15); and this was a very ancient way of speaking of death among the Heathens; in the theology of the Phoenicians, according to Sanchoniathon [f178], who wrote before the Trojan wars, a son of Saturn by Rhea was called Muth, whom the Phoenicians sometimes called Death, and sometimes Pluto; which is manifestly the same with the Hebrew word twm, "death"; the name of the rider of this horse may well be called Death, both with respect to the various kinds of death under this seal, and with respect to the short lives of the emperors; for in less than fifty years' time, which is the period of this seal, namely, from Maximinus, A. D. 235, or 237, to Dioclesian, A. D. 284, or 286, there were more than twenty emperors, and who most of them were cut off by violent deaths; besides the thirty tyrants who sprung up under one of them, as so many mushrooms, and were soon destroyed. This is the only rider that has a name given him; and from hence we may learn what to call the rest, as the rider of the white horse "Truth", or Christ, who is truth itself; the rider of the red horse "War"; and the rider of the black horse "Famine": and because both the last, with other judgments, meet together under this seal, the rider of this horse is emphatically called "Death":

and hell followed with him: that is, the grave, which attended on death, or followed after him, and was a sort of an undertaker, to bury the dead killed by death; so these two are put together, (<66018>Revelation 1:18 20:13,14);

and power was given unto them; to death and hell, or the grave, or rather to death only, for the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, “to him”: and the power that was given him reached

over the fourth part of the earth; not of the church, which is never called the earth in this book, but is distinguished from it, (<66216>Revelation 12:16); nor the land of Judea, but the Roman empire; some understand it of Europe, the fourth part of the world:

to kill with the sword; Maximinus, with whom this seal begins, was of a very barbarous disposition, and a more cruel creature, it is said, was not upon earth; and besides his persecution of the Christians, he acted a most inhuman part to the Pagan Romans themselves, so that the senate dreaded him; and the women and children at Rome, having heard of his barbarities, deprecated his ever seeing that city; and he was called by the names of the worst of tyrants; more than four thousand men he killed without any charge or judicial process against them, and yet his blood thirsty mind was not satisfied [f179]: Gallienus, another emperor after him, emptied many cities entirely of men, and killed three or four thousand a day of his own soldiers, whom he understood had thoughts of a new emperor [f180]; under him thirty tyrants sprung up together in the empire, who made great havoc before they were cut off; and in his time the Alemanni (a people in Germany) having wasted France, broke into Italy; Dacia, which beyond the Danube was added by Trajan (to the Roman empire) was lost; Greece, Macedonia, Pontus, and Asia, were destroyed by the Goths; Pannonia was depopulated by (the people called) Sarmatae and Quadi; the Germans penetrated into Spain, and took the famous city of Tarracon; the Parthians having seized Mesopotamia, began to claim Syria to themselves; so that, as the Roman historian observes [f181], things were now desperate, and the Roman empire was almost destroyed: not to take notice of the multitudes that were killed in after wars and persecutions, under other emperors, during this seal:

and with hunger; or famine; there was a grievous famine in the times of Gallus and Volusianus, which Dionysius bishop of Alexandria makes mention of [f182]; and Cyprian, who lived under this seal, also speaks of famine, and indeed of all these three, war, famine, and pestilence, as then

imputed to the Christians, and to their irreligion, which charge he removes [f183]:

and with death; that is, with the pestilence, which, by the Targumist [f184], and other Jewish writers [f185], is commonly called antwm, "death", because it sweeps away and carries off such large numbers with it: now in the reign of the last mentioned emperors was a very noisome pestilence, which raged most cruelly; the Roman historian says [f186], that their reign is only known, or was famous, for the pestilence, diseases, and sicknesses; Hostilianus, who was created emperor by the senate, died of it [f187]; Dionysius of Alexandria has given a most shocking account of it, who lived at the same time [f188]; it began in Ethiopia, and went through the east, and through all parts of the Roman empire, and lasted fifteen years; to which perhaps, for its large extent and long duration, there never was the like:

and with the beasts of the earth; by which many of the Christians were destroyed in the persecutions of those times; and is also one of God's four judgments, and which goes about with the sword, famine, and pestilence, (<26142>Ezekiel 14:21), and may be literally understood of destruction by wild beasts, as Arnobius, who lived at this time, observes [f189]; or allegorically, of men comparable to wild beasts, as Herod is called a fox, and Nero a lion; and such savage creatures were most of the Roman emperors, and particularly the thirty tyrants under Gallienus: so the Targum on (<24312>Jeremiah 3:12); interprets "the beasts of the field", aymm[ykl m, "the kings of the nations". The Alexandrian copy reads, "and upon the fourth part of the beasts", as if the power of death reached to them as well as to men. Under this seal all the judgments of God on Rome Pagan meet together; and it is observable that Maximinus, a Roman emperor, and one of the last of the Pagans, boasted, that for worshipping of the gods, and persecuting Of the Christians, neither pestilence, famine, nor war, were in his times, when on a sudden all these three came together at once [f190]; to which may be added the following observation, that though the several steps and methods which God took to punish, weaken, and destroy the Roman Pagan empire, were remarkably seen in the distinct periods to which these first four seals belong, yet they must not be entirely restrained and limited to these periods, as if they were not made use of in others; so though the Gospel proceeded with remarkable success under the first seal, in the times of the apostles, to the subduing of multitudes in the Roman empire, it was also preached with great success under the following seals;

and though there were most grievous wars under the second seal, in the times of Trajan and Adrian, so there were also in after times; that was not the only period of war, though it was remarkably so; likewise there was a famine in the times of Claudius, under the first seal, (<44 11 28>Acts 11:28); and in the time of Trajan, under the second seal [f191], and of Commodus [f192] as well as under the third; and there were pestilences also in those times, as well as under the fourth seal; and because God did by each of these weaken, break, and at last bring to ruin that empire, they are showed to John one after another.

Ver. 9. *And when he had opened the fifth seal*, etc.] Of the seven seals of the sealed book; here is no beast speaking here, nor horse and rider presented to view; it was now a very dark time both with respect to the church of God and ministry of the word, and the Roman empire. This seal refers to the times of Dioclesian, and the persecution under him; and instead of the voice of one of the living creatures, John hears the voice of martyrs:

I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain; these include not only all the martyrs that were put to death in the persecution of Dioclesian, but all those that suffered in all the persecutions preceding; for this, being the last, involves them all. “Souls”, being immaterial and incorporeal, are invisible to the bodily eye; these therefore were either clothed with corporeal forms, as angels sometimes are, or rather John saw them in a visionary way, as he saw the angels: and these were the souls of such as “were slain”; their bodies were dead, but their souls were alive; which shows the immortality of souls, and that they die not with their bodies, and that they live after them in a separate state: ylwjqd ^ytmçn, “the souls of them that are slain”, is a phrase used by Jewish writers [f193], and who have a notion that the souls of those that are slain are kept in certain palaces, under the care of one appointed by God [f194]: and these were seen “under the altar”; either this is said in allusion to the blood of the sacrifices, which was poured out at the bottom of the altar, (<03 04 07>Leviticus 4:7 5:9), in which the life and soul of the creature is; or because that martyrdom is a sacrifice of men's lives, and an offering of them in the cause of God and truth, (<50 02 17>Philippians 2:17 <55 04 07>2 Timothy 4:7); or with some reference to a common notion of the Jews, that the souls of the righteous are treasured up under the throne of glory [f195] they have also a saying, everyone that is buried in the land of Israel is as if he was buried “under the altar” [f196]; for they think that being buried there expiates their sins [f197]; to which they add,

that whoever is buried “under the altar”, is as if he was buried under the throne of glory [f198]; yea, they talk of an altar above, upon which Michael the high priest causes the souls of the righteous to ascend [f199]. Christ may be meant by the altar here, as he is in (<580810>Hebrews 13:10), who is both altar, sacrifice, and priest, and is the altar that sanctifies the gift, and from off which every sacrifice of prayer and praise comes up with acceptance before God; and the souls of the martyrs being under this altar, denotes their being in the presence of Christ, and enjoying communion with him, and being in his hands, into whose hands they commit their souls at death, as Stephen did, and being under his care and protection until the resurrection morn, when they shall be reunited to their bodies which sleep in Jesus: and they were slain

for the word of God; both for the essential Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose faith they professed; and for the written word, they made the rule of their faith and practice, and which Dioclesian forbid the reading of, and sought utterly to destroy; and for the Gospel principally, which is contained in it:

and for the testimony which they held; the Syriac and Arabic versions read, “for the testimony of the Lamb”; and so the Complutensian edition; either for the Gospel, which is a testimony of the person, office, and grace of Christ, the Lamb, which they embraced, professed, and held fast; or for the witness they bore to him, and the profession which they made thereof, and in which they continued.

Ver. 10. *And they cried with a loud voice*, etc.] With great ardour and fervency, being very pressing and importunate; and which shows that they were awake, and not asleep, and that the soul does not sleep with the body in the grave, or is after the death of that in a state of insensibility and inactivity, as some imagine:

saying, how long, O Lord, holy and true; the person they address is either the Lamb in the midst of the throne, with whom they were, and under the shelter of whom they were safe and happy; or God the Father, who sat upon the throne, whom they call “holy”, because being so in his nature, and as appears in all his works, he could not but hate, and so revenge the evil that was done to them by their cruel persecutors; and whereas he is “true” to all his threatenings, as well as his promises, and faithful to every word of his, they doubted not but he would judge and avenge them of their

enemies; but they seem desirous to know how long it would be first: saying,

dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? the men of the world, idolatrous persons, earthly princes, who had shed their blood; and which they desire not out of any sinful or malicious affection, but that the holiness and justice of God might appear, and also his truth and faithfulness in his promises to them, and threatenings to his enemies; and that God in all things might be glorified, and his church and people on earth might be supported and delivered; (see <18342>Job 24:12).

Ver. 11. *And white robes were given to everyone of them*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read in the singular number, "a white robe", and so does the Syriac version; as a token of their innocence, that they did not suffer, or were slain, for any capital crime or immorality they were guilty of; and of their purity and perfection they now enjoyed; as also of that spiritual delight and pleasure, which was unspeakable and full of glory, they now had in the presence of God and Christ; and in short, of that happiness and glory which souls in a separate state, before the resurrection morn, are partakers of; who besides the righteousness of Christ, comparable to fine linen clean and white, walk with Christ in white, in the shining robes of bliss and glory:

and it was said unto them, that they should rest; or have rest; eternal rest from all their toil and labour, from all their sorrows and sufferings of every kind, which rest remains for the people of God, and into which these were now entered; or that they should cease from expostulating and inquiring after the above manner, and rest satisfied and contented, exercising the graces of faith, hope, and patience, believing, looking, and waiting:

yet for a little season; either until the end of this persecution by Dioclesian, when vengeance would be taken of the Roman empire, and it would be no more as Pagan; or until the day of judgment, when full vengeance will be inflicted on the persecutors of the saints; and which is but a little while with God, with whom a thousand years is as one day, and in comparison of that eternity of blessedness glorified saints are partakers of:

until their fellow servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they [were], should be fulfilled; meaning either the rest of the saints that should suffer martyrdom in the: following part of this persecution; or those who should suffer under the Arian persecution, when the empire would

become Christian; or under Rome Papal, and in all the persecutions of the apostasy, unto the end of that state: these are called “fellow servants” and “brethren” of the saints in heaven; for they all worship and serve the same God, and belong to the same family, in heaven and in earth; and the selfsame reason that is made use of to animate the saints below to courage, faith, and patience in suffering, (<4601 9>1 Peter 5:9), is used to keep up the expectation of the saints in heaven, of that vengeance that will be executed on their enemies, and to point out the time when it will be; and it may be observed, that the number of martyrs, or of those that shall suffer and die in the cause of Christ, and for his Gospel, is fixed and determined by God; and that number shall be perfected and completed, and when that is done, he will pour out all his wrath on them that have persecuted them and put them to death: and so the Arabic version renders it, “that the number of their companions and brethren, and of those who are to be killed as they have been killed, is fulfilled”; In the Apocrypha is written:

> “39 Which are departed from the shadow of the world, and have received glorious garments of the Lord. 40 Take thy number, O Sion, and shut up those of thine that are clothed in white, which have fulfilled the law of the Lord. 41 The number of thy children, whom thou longedst for, is fulfilled: beseech the power of the Lord, that thy people, which have been called from the beginning, may be hallowed.” (2 Esdras 2)

Now though this seal does not introduce any judgment to be executed on the Roman empire, as the others do; yet since it introduces all the martyrs with one united voice requiring vengeance on their blood, it may very well be considered as a step towards, and as making way for, the utter ruin of that empire: and which the next seal being opened brings on, and is a full answer to the cry of these souls.

Ver. 12. *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal*, etc.] Of the sealed book which the Lamb took out of the hand of him that sat upon the throne, in order to open it, and unloose its seals. About this seal interpreters much differ; some refer this to the destruction of Jerusalem, because of the likeness of expressions here used, and in (<4024 7>Matthew 24:7,29 <4221 5>Luke 21:25,26 23:29,30); but this was past many years before this seal was opened; and besides, though that time was a day of wrath to the uttermost upon the Jewish people, and it was the Lamb's day of wrath, taking vengeance on them for their unbelief and rejection of him as the

Messiah; yet they had no sense of the Lamb, nor any apprehension of his wrath at that time, nor have they now, but imputed their calamity to their divisions and quarrels among themselves. Others think this seal belongs to the destruction of the Roman empire by the Goths, Huns, Vandals, etc. but it should be observed, that the empire stood some hundreds of years after the end of the fifth seal and the opening of this; and it was after the seventh seal, and at the sounding of the trumpets, that that destruction came on; moreover, that calamity was by the savageness of some barbarous nations which overrun the empire, but this here spoken of comes from the wrath of the Lamb; add to which, that that calamity distressed the Christians in the empire, and them chiefly, whereas this falls only upon the enemies of the Lamb, and the persecutors of his people. Others are of opinion that this has respect to the strange change of affairs in the church of Christ, through the rise, power, and tyranny of antichrist; by "the earthquake" they suppose is meant the shaking of both church and state by the man of sin; who shook the doctrines, ordinances, and discipline of the church, and threw all into confusion, and introduced a new face of things; and also shook the kingdoms of the earth, and the thrones and crowns of princes: by the "sun" becoming "black", they think is meant the sun of righteousness, Jesus Christ, who was obscured in the doctrines concerning him, as the one and only Mediator, and justification by his righteousness, and pardon through his blood, by introducing the mediation of angels and saints, the doctrine of justification by works, and the doctrine of merit, works of supererogation, indulgences, pardons, penance, and purgatory: by the "moon" they understand the church, which receives all its light, grace, righteousness, and holiness, from Christ, and which, like the moon, is changeable as to its outward form and circumstances; and this became "as blood", through the persecutions, massacres, and cruelties of the Romish antichrist, who has been made drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus: the "stars" they take to be the ministers of the word; either hypocritical ones, who were like unripe figs, destitute of true grace, and so were easily shaken with the wind of Papal power, and fell into the earth, and apostatized from the faith, and conformed to the corruptions of antichrist; or the true ministers of the Gospel, who were put to death, and that to an untimely and violent one, signified by the shaking of untimely figs by a mighty wind: by the "heaven" departing as a scroll rolled up, they suppose is designed either the church, which fled into the wilderness, and remained invisible during the Papal power and cruelty; or else the Scriptures, which the pope made himself sole judge and interpreter of and shut up from the

common people in an unknown language, and forbid the laity the reading of them: by “mountains” they think are intended the kings and princes of the earth, who were obliged to submit to the Romish antichrist, and give their kingdoms to him, and receive their crowns and kingdoms from him, and be his vassals: and by “the islands”, the people their subjects, who were forced to acknowledge him as the supreme head, and receive his mark in their right hand or forehead, or they could not buy and sell: and by all ranks and degrees of men, as “kings”, etc. hiding themselves in rocks and mountains, and calling upon them to fall on them and cover them, they apply either to their invoking the virgin Mary, and other saints, to intercede for them, and screen them from the wrath of God and Christ, on account of their sins; or else to the persecutors of the saints, of every rank and in every age, and to the punishments that shall fall upon them. But however feasible this interpretation may seem to be, it is certain that this was not the face of things at the close of the fifth seal, or the Dioclesian persecution, and at the opening of the sixth, when Constantine came to the imperial throne, for then the church appeared as she is described in (Revelation 12:1); which is just the reverse of this. There are others, who because of the very awful things here spoken of, and the very awful language in which they are expressed, conclude that this seal respects the day of judgment; not considering that the fifth seal ends about the year 313, at the close of the last of the ten persecutions, and that the sixth seal begins where that ends; and though above 1750 years have elapsed since that time, yet the day of judgment is not come, and we know not when it will; besides, here is another seal, a seventh seal, which follows, and introduces punishments on the Roman empire, and seven vials follow, which pour out plagues upon antichrist, all which can never be thought to be after the day of judgment; moreover, the account of the day of judgment stands in its proper place in (Revelation 20:12); after the destruction of Babylon, the first resurrection, and the saints' thousand years' reign with Christ. But to proceed; the business which is the subject of this seal is the removing of Paganism, and Pagan governors out of the Roman empire; this was the thing the rider upon the white horse, under the first seal, set out upon to effect, and never ceased until he had accomplished it; and this is what ensued upon the close of the fifth seal, when Pagan persecution ceased, on Constantine, a Christian emperor, having the reins of power in his hands; and it cannot be thought, that so wonderful a change of things as this should be omitted in this prophetic history; and it is easy to observe that changes in kingdoms and governments, both as to the polity and religion of

them, are sometimes expressed in such like figurative terms as here; (see <230309>Isaiah 13:9,10,13,17,19 34:4,5 <370221>Haggai 2:21,22); and which may be accommodated to this event as follows:

and, lo, there was a great earthquake; or "shaking", both of the heavens and earth, and which, as it denotes in (<370206>Haggai 2:6,7); compared with (<581226>Hebrews 12:26,27); the removing of Jewish worship and ordinances, in order to make way for the Christian ordinances and institutions, which were to remain; so here it intends the removing of Pagan worship and idolatry, and of Pagan magistrates, that the Christian religion and Christian magistrates might take place. This, with what follows, concerning the darkness of the sun and moon, might be literally true; and it seems by historians, that there were such phenomena about those times; for it is asserted [f200], that a very great earthquake in Syria followed the Dioclesian persecution, which shook and caused to fall the tops of houses at Tyre and Sidon, and killed many thousands; and some such like happened at Rome, and at Spoletum, where above three hundred and fifty Pagans perished, as they were serving their idols. It is also observed [f201], that the moon was turned into blood in the times of Galerius, who succeeded. Dioclesian; and that the sun failed, and the stars shined for four hours, when Licinius was conquered by Constantine; but then these may be considered as symbols of the change in the empire.

And the sun came black as sackcloth of hair; which is made of black hairs; (see <235003>Isaiah 50:3); as when eclipsed. The sun was the chief deity worshipped by the Heathens, under various names, and this becoming black, may design the removing of their principal gods from their honour and glory, or the downfall of idolatry, which the Jews [f202] call hrz hdwb[lç hçmç, "the sun of idolatry", which they suppose is meant in (<220106>Song of Solomon 1:6). And Satan, the god of this world, who was worshipped in different forms, now fell, as Lucifer, the son of the morning, and as lightning from heaven, and was cast down from all his dignity, influence, and power, to the earth; for the casting out of the red dragon, the old serpent, and Satan, after his combat with Michael and his angels, in (<661203>Revelation 12:3,7-9), refers to this very time; likewise the chief magistrate, the Heathen Roman emperor, may be included; and it is remarkable, that Dioclesian the emperor, who had now retired from the imperial government, and was under a cloud, under disgrace, and in

distress, had, in the zenith of his glory, caused himself to be worshipped as a god, and as the brother of the sun and moon.

And the moon became as blood; as when obscured; the Alexandrian copy and some others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, “the whole moon”; this may design the next Heathen deity, or class of deities, for the moon was also worshipped by the Heathens under different names; and may likewise include the Pagan priesthood, which was next, and was annexed to the imperial dignity; and which was disused by, Constantine and his successors; and even the very title, and the robe which was a symbol of it, were laid aside as unworthy of Christian princes; see Mede upon the place.

Ver. 13. *And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth*, etc.] All the other inferior deities lost their esteem, worship, and honour; for the idol temples being now opened, the idols and statues were exposed to the common people, and were found to be stuffed with hay and straw, which brought them into great contempt [f203]. Moreover, as stars sometimes signify the ministers of the Gospel in the Christian church, (Revelation 1:20), and sometimes the priests in the Jewish church, (Daniel 8:10); so they may here likewise include the idolatrous priests among the Heathens, who were discharged and removed by Constantine, and had their posts and profits taken away from them; yea, Maximinus, an Heathen emperor, or tyrant, being beaten by Licinius, who was then Constantine's colleague, killed many of the priests and prophets of his gods, which were formerly had in great admiration by him, as deceivers and betrayers of him, by whose oracles he was animated to the war [f204]. And in like manner Licinius put to death the priests and prophets of the new idol at Antioch [f205].

Even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind; which figs being young and green, and not fixed, fall off easily, and in great numbers, when a blustering wind beats upon them; and so the rabble of Pagan deities, and idolatrous priests, were easily, and in great numbers, removed through the power of Constantine, which carried all before it.

Ver. 14. *And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together*, etc.] The manner of writing formerly was on rolls of parchment; hence the word volume is used for a book, which, when rolled up, the writing within could not be seen, not a syllable nor letter of it. In like manner the Roman empire, as Pagan, which was like a large sheet, or rather like the expanse

or firmament of the heaven, stretched out over all the earth, was now, as to the Paganism of it, rolled up together, so that there were no more Heathen gods, nor Heathen priests; no more idolatry, and idolatrous worship of that kind were to be seen, and not so much as the names of Heathen gods to be heard of in the empire.

And every mountain and island were moved out of their places; by "every mountain" may be meant the places of idolatrous worship, which were usually upon mountains; (see <2406>Jeremiah 3:6,23); which were now shut up, or demolished, or used for Christian worship; and "every island" being moved also may show, that Paganism was not only rooted out of the provinces of the empire upon the continent, but out of the islands also; and the ecclesiastical history of these times informs us, that there were Christian churches in the isles, which enjoyed the Gospel free of persecution and distress; as in the isles of Cyprus, Crete, the Cyclades, Sardinia, Siciiy, Corsica, and in ours of England, Scotland, and Ireland [f206]. Mr. Daubuz thinks, that as "mountains" design the temples of idols, "islands" signify the revenues of them, which were now taken away, and applied to other uses.

Ver. 15. *And the king's of the earth, and the great men*, etc.] The Roman emperors, and other principal magistrates, governors of provinces and cities:

and the rich men; among the commonalty; these three may design perhaps more particularly the emperors, nobles, and senate of Rome: and

the chief captains; or captains of thousands, that had the command of the Roman legions

and the mighty men; the soldiers that were under them, men of strength, courage, and valour;

and every bondman, and every freeman; which takes in all the inhabitants of the Roman empire, of every state and condition, and which was an usual distinction among the Romans: these

hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; where, through their cruel persecutions, they had forced multitudes of Christians to flee, and therefore, "lex talionis", the law of retaliation was righteously inflicted on them; and not to take notice of any other, this was remarkably true of their kings or emperors Dioclesian and Herculius Maximianus, who

were emperors together, in the height of their imperial glory and grandeur, the one being at Nicomedia, and the other at Milan, did, on one and the same day, of their own accord, abdicate the empire, and divested themselves of their imperial crown and government, and retired to a private life; pretending in public, that old age, and the weight of business, were the cause, but to their friends they owned, that it was through despair, because they could not extinguish the Christian religion [f207]. Some ascribed this to frenzy and madness [f208]; but the true reason was, that the wrath of the Lamb was let into their consciences, and which they could not bear, and which obliged them to take this step, to the amazement of the whole world. Maximinus, who succeeded them, being overcome by Licinius, laid aside his imperial habit, and hid himself among the common people, and skulked about in fields and villages [f209]. Maxentius, another emperor, fled from Constantine, the instrument of the wrath of the Lamb, and the pouring it out upon his enemies, and fell into the river Tiber, from the Mylvian bridge, where he perished; and which was the very place in which he had laid snares for Constantine [f210].

Ver. 16. *And said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us*, etc.] They chose death rather than life. Dioclesian being invited by Constantine to a marriage feast, excused himself by reason of his old age; but receiving threatening letters, the historian [f211] says, in which he was charged with having favoured Maxentius, and with favouring Maximinus, he poisoned himself; and others of the emperors are said to lay violent hands upon themselves:

and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; thus they owned the proper deity, and almighty power of God, and Christ, which they dreaded; so Maximinus being afflicted with a most horrible disease, of which he died, asked pardon of the God of the Christians, and owned that he suffered justly, for his reproaches of Christ [f212] Licinius, who sometimes pretended to be a Christian, and joined with Constantine, but afterwards revolted and fought against him, being conquered and taken, was put to death; at which time he, and they that suffered death with him, confessed that the God of Constantine was the only true God [f213]. This passage shows, that Christ, God's firstborn, is higher than the kings of the earth; yea, that he is equal with him that sits upon the throne, with God his Father, since his wrath is equally dreaded as his; and that, though he is a Lamb, mild, meek, and gentle, yet there is wrath, fury, and indignation in him, against his enemies, which is very dreadful and intolerable; (see <19202>Psalm 2:12).

Ver. 17. *For the great day of his wrath is come*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, “of their wrath”; both of him that sits upon the throne, and of the Lamb, against the Heathen gods and Heathen persecutors, in answer to the cry of the martyrs in (Revelation 6:9,10).

And who shall be able to stand? against either of them, or in their presence, and so as to bear their wrath and displeasure; all which expresses guilt, shame, fear, and despair.

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 7

This chapter contains a vision seen at the end of the sixth, and at the opening of the seventh seal, which expresses the security of the saints in all ages following, the praises of angels and men on that account, and the happiness of all the people of God in the millennium state. First, a vision of four angels is seen restraining the winds from blowing on the earth, sea, and trees, (Revelation 7:1); then of another angel, described by the place from whence he came, the east; by what he had, the seal of the living God, and by his cry to the four angels not to hurt the earth, sea, and trees, until the servants of God were sealed, (Revelation 7:2,3), and then follows the number of the sealed ones in general, (Revelation 7:4), and the particular number of them out of each tribe of Israel, (Revelation 7:5-8). After which is another vision of all the elect of God together, described by the numberless multitude of them; by their descent from all nations; by their position and situation before the throne, and the Lamb; by their habit and attire, and by their loud cry, ascribing salvation to God, and to the Lamb, (Revelation 7:9,10), who are joined by all the angels around them, worshipping God, and ascribing glory to him, (Revelation 7:11,12). And next is described the happiness of this numerous company, in the thousand years' reign, introduced by some discourse which passed between John, and one of the elders, (Revelation 7:13,14), who are said to be before the throne, to serve God continually, and to have his presence, (Revelation 7:15), to be free from everything troublesome and distressing, (Revelation 7:16), and to be fed by the Lamb, and to be led by him to fountains of living water, and to have all their tears wiped away from them, (Revelation 7:17).

Ver. 1. *And after these things*, etc.] After the opening of six of the seals of the sealed book, and after the demolition of Heathen deities, and of Heathen worship, and of Heathen magistrates, in the Roman empire, and the representation of these to John, he had the following vision; and which therefore does not refer to the preservation of the Christians, before and at the destruction of Jerusalem, which was under the first seal; nor to the

security of the saints from the wrath of the Lamb, when it fell upon the Pagan worshippers, of all ranks and degrees, which was under the sixth seal, and was now over; but rather it respects an intermediate space of time between the sixth and seventh seal, as reaching from Constantine to Theodosius; for upon Constantine's being sole emperor, the church enjoyed great peace and tranquillity after the blustering storms of Pagan persecution ceased; and great numbers of God's elect were converted and sealed, and the winds of Heathen persecution were held, and blew no more, unless for a short time under the Emperor Julian; though the church was not free from the wind of error and heresy; and the storms of contention which arose about them, nor from the tempest of Arian persecutions, which were very grievous; wherefore this refers to what should be between the sixth and seventh seal, which brings on the seven trumpets: and now, before John sees that seal opened, a pause is made, and this vision is shown him, to fortify his mind, and all other saints, that are observers of these things, who by the opening of the following seal would see what judgments and plagues would come upon the empire, now become Christian, and what changes and revolutions would be made in it, and might fear that the church of God would be wholly swallowed up and lost; wherefore this vision is exhibited to show, that notwithstanding the devastations by the Goths and Vandals, and the rise, progress, and power of Mahomet, and the dreadful apostasy of the church of Rome, and all the miseries of it, and the plagues that should come upon the church for it; yet God would have throughout all this, and in, every age of time, a sealed number, a true church, hidden and secured, even until the seventh angel has sounded his trumpet, and time shall be no more, and the mystery of God will be finished.

I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any trees. Four angels are mentioned, in allusion to the four spirits of the heavens, in (<3806>Zechariah 6:5); and though the earth is not a plain square with angles, but round and globular, yet it is said to have four corners, with respect to the four points of the heavens; and though there is but one wind, which blows sometimes one way, and sometimes another, yet four are named with regard to the above points, east, west, north, and south, from whence it blows. These are commonly called “the four winds of heaven”, (<2708>Daniel 8:8 11:4); but here, of the earth, as in the Targum on (<2311>Isaiah 11:12), and he shall bring near the captivity of Judah, a [r a

yjwr [bram, “from the four winds of the earth”. And such things as are chiefly affected with winds are particularly observed, as the earth, upon which buildings are thrown down by them; and the sea, in which ships are wrecked; and trees, which by the violence of them, are blown down, and torn up by the roots. Some by these angels understand evil angels, who are sometimes called angels, without any additional epithet to distinguish them, and that because a desire of hurting seems to have been in them, as well as a power, (<660702>Revelation 7:2,3); and who are, in every part of the world, seeking to do all the mischief they can; and may be said to hold the winds, not in a literal sense, for God only gathers the wind in his fist, and holds it there, and lets it loose at his pleasure; but in a mystical sense, as these may refer to the word, and the ministers of the word, whose progress and success are often hindered by Satan and is emissaries; and some particularly understand by them the four monarchies of the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman; others the four emperors, after that Dioclesian and Maximianus had resigned, as Maximinus, Galerius, Maxentius, and Licinius; others Mahomet, or the Turk, in the east, who hindered the Gospel by his wars and devastations, as well as by false worship; the kings of France and Spain on the west, by fire, and faggot, and sword; and the pope in the south, by bulls and excommunications; and the empire and emperors of Germany on the north, by public edicts; or, in general, all the Popish tribe, popes, cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, and friars, by their decrees, anathemas, sermons, writings, and lying miracles, did all they could that the Gospel might not be preached neither in the earth, on the continent, nor in the sea, or in the islands of it; or that any of the saints, the trees of righteousness, who lived in woods and mountainous places, or were forced to fly into woods, might have any advantage by it. But, after all, rather this is to be understood of good angels, and either of their restraining evil angels from doing mischief, (see <270103>Daniel 10:13,20,21) (<661204>Revelation 12:4,7); or keeping back the winds of false doctrines and heresies from the churches of Christ, in the several parts of the world; or rather, and which is the true sense, of their holding in the storms of calamities and war to the destruction of kingdoms, provinces, islands, and the several inhabitants of them, and intends a general peace throughout the world; (see <240936>Jeremiah 49:36 51:1,2). This mystical way of speaking seems to agree with the notions of the Jews, who speak of angels standing at the gates of the four winds, jwr yj tpmw “and the keys of the wind in their hands”, whose names they give us [f214]; and make

mention of ajwr ykalm, “the angels of the wind” [f215]; and the Magi among the Persians call the angel of the wind “Bad”, or “Badran” [f216].

Ver. 2. *And I saw another angel*, etc.] Not Constantine, who came from the eastern parts to the empire, with the true knowledge of God, and the authority of God to propagate it; and who repressed the four angels, or evil spirits, contention, ambition, heresy, and war, from doing the mischief they otherwise would; and sealed the saints, by giving them a platform of doctrine at the council of Nice, as Brightman and others think. But the uncreated angel, the angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ; for who but he should have the privy seal of heaven, who is the angel of the great council, as the Septuagint render (<2009>Isaiah 9:6) and who could speak in such an authoritative manner to the four angels, “saying, hurt not the earth”, etc. but he who is the head of all principality and power? and who should seal the servants of the Lord, but he who has them in his hands, and keeps them by his power, so that none of them shall perish? And to him agrees all that follows:

ascending from the east; from Judea, from Zion, from whence Christ, as the salvation, or Saviour of Israel, came, (<1947>Psalm 14:7); and whose name is the east, as some render (<3008>Zechariah 3:8); he is the dayspring from on high, the sun of righteousness, who rose from the east, the place of the rising sun, and brought light, life, and joy to his people, when he came to seal them. Compare with this (<2601>Ezekiel 43:1,2,4 44:1-4 46:1,2) (<2701>Ezekiel 47:1).

Having the seal of the living God; having the impress of deity upon him, being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image or character of his person; having a testimony, an authentic proof and demonstration of his being the Son of God, of his being the true and living God; as also a commission from God, as Mediator, being sealed by him; and having all power and authority from him, to seal and secure the people which were given unto him, and for which purpose he now came: to which may be added, that Christ has the Spirit, with his gifts and graces, without measure, by which the saints are sealed unto the day of redemption; and moreover has likewise the seal of the book of life, or of eternal election, in his hands; the elect are chosen in him, and the book of life, in which their names are written to eternal life, is in his keeping, and is therefore called the Lamb's book of life. The Jews speak [f217] of the east gate of one of the palaces they suppose above, which they say is shut all the six days, and on

the sabbath day is opened, and the governor of this palace has two ministers, one on his right hand, and one on his left, and two seals in their hands, µyyj µtwj, "the seal of life", and the seal of death, and all the books of the world, before them; an, some are sealed to life, and some to death, with which this passage may be compared. They speak also of an angel that presides at the eastern part of the heavens, who receives the prayers of the Israelites, whose name they call "Gazardia" [f218], as this same angel is said to offer up the prayers of the saints, (Revelation 8:3).

And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels; to show his power and authority over them, they being his creatures and ministers; and to express his great concern for his people, his care of them, and affection for them; and to signify the danger they were in through the calamities that were coming on, should they not be sealed:

to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea: they had a commission from God to let loose the winds, or to bring on wars, devastations, calamities, and plagues, of various sorts, upon the Roman empire, now Christian; and on the seat of the beast, not only on the continent, but upon the islands also, even upon all the nations, tongues, and people subject to the see of Rome.

Ver. 3. *Saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees*, etc.] That is, as yet, for their commission was not contradicted, nor taken away by Christ; and at the time appointed, at the blowing of the several trumpets, they let loose the winds, and let in the Goths, Hans, and Vandals, the Saracens and Turks into the empire, and after that poured out the vials of God's wrath upon the Romish antichrist: this retarding of them was but in appearance, that there might be an opportunity to show to John what care would be taken all along of the church of Christ, and true servants of the living God:

till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads; the servants of sin, Satan, and the beast of Rome, were took no notice nor care of; they were the persons to be hurt by the winds, signified by the earth, sea, and trees, even idolaters, small and great; but "the servants of our God", who serve him with grace in their hearts, from a principle of love, in the exercise of faith, without servile fear, and with reverence and godly fear, in righteousness and true holiness, and with a view to his glory; and are worshippers of him in spirit and in truth, being followers of the Lamb,

whithersoever he goes; and so are the servants of his God, and their God; the sealing of them does not design the sealing of them with the seal of election, this was done in eternity; nor with the seal of the Spirit, which is common to all the saints in all ages; but it denotes the hiding and concealing, and so securing the saints amidst all the calamities of the empire, and throughout the whole time of the Romish apostasy, from first to last; and respects the time when the church fled into the wilderness, and was hid, and nourished with the hidden manna, for a time, and times, and half a time, (<66124>Revelation 12:14). Christ set a mark upon them, as was upon the houses of the Israelites, when the destroying angel passed through Egypt, and destroyed the firstborn in it; and as was upon the foreheads of those that sighed and cried in Jerusalem, when orders were given to slay young and old, (<021223>Exodus 12:23 <260904>Ezekiel 9:4). Christ will have a people in the worst of times; he knows who are his, and he will take care of them; he has his chambers of protection to hide them in, till the indignation is over past: the sealers, “we”, are either Father, Son, and Spirit, who are all jointly concerned for the welfare of the eject; or Christ and his ministering angels that attend him, whom he employs for the good and safety of the heirs of salvation: the seal with which these are sealed is the seal of the living God, the foreknowledge, love, care, and power of God; and the name of God, even Christ's Father's name, and their Father's name, in their foreheads; the new name of children of God, by and under which they are known and preserved by him: and this is said to be “in their foreheads”, in allusion to servants, who used to be marked in their foreheads; hence they are called by Apuleius [f219] “frontes literati”; and by Martial, a servant is called “fronte notatus” [f220]: but then these were such who had committed faults, and this was done by way of punishment [f221]; wherefore it can hardly be thought that the servants of God should be sealed, in allusion to them: but rather with reference to the mitre on the high priest's forehead, as some think; or it may be to (<260904>Ezekiel 9:4), and shows, that though these persons were hid and concealed from men, they were well known to God and Christ; nor were they ashamed to make a public and open confession of Christ before men, as did the true and faithful witnesses of Christ, the Waldenses and Albigenses, in the midst of the greatest darkness of Popery, and of danger from men; and who seem to be chiefly intended.

Ver. 4. *And I heard the number of them which were sealed*, etc.] And therefore could be sure of the exact number, which did not depend upon

his sight, and telling them, in which some mistake might have been made, but he heard the number expressed:

[and there were] sealed an hundred [and] forty, [and] four thousand: which is a square number arising from twelve, the square root of it, being just twelve times twelve thousand; and may denote their being the true and genuine offspring of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, holding their doctrine, and being built on their foundation; (see <462114>Revelation 21:14); and these were

of all the tribes of the children of Israel; not that these were all Jews in a literal sense, for the time of their conversion in great numbers is not yet come. Dr. Goodwin thinks these sealed ones design the believers of the Greek and Armenian churches, and his reasons are not despicable; but this is to limit and restrain them to a particular part of the church of Christ; whereas they take in all the saints within this long tract of time, even all that are the true Israel of God, who are Jews inwardly, of what nation, kindred, tongue, and people soever; and is a certain and determinate number for an uncertain and indeterminate one; and only intends a large number of persons known to God and Christ; see the Apocrypha: ``Arise up and stand, behold the number of those that be sealed in the feast of the Lord;" (2 Esdras 2:38)

Ver. 5. *Of the tribe of Judah [were] sealed twelve thousand*, etc.] Judah is mentioned first, because Christ sprung from that tribe, and the pure worship of God was preserved in it; and that itself was preserved a distinct tribe until the coming of Shiloh; its name signifies "praise God", (<012935>Genesis 29:35); and shows, that it becomes all the sealed ones, all true believers, and every member of the church of God, to praise him for all favours and blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

Of the tribe of Reuben [were] sealed twelve thousand; Reuben was Jacob's firstborn, but by his sin he lost the honour and privilege of birthright, and therefore is mentioned after Judah, who prevailed above him and the rest of his brethren; his name signifies "see the Son", (<012932>Genesis 29:32); and shows that the Son of God is to be looked unto for righteousness, life, and salvation, by all that expect to be saved, and to him does the true church look for eternal life and happiness.

Of the tribe of Gad [were] sealed twelve thousand; his name signifies a "troop", (<013011>Genesis 30:11), and may denote that there would be a

numerous company of saints and faithful witnesses during the time of sealing, and amidst all the troubles and afflictions that would attend the church and people of God, and who in the issue would be conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Christ; (see <014919>Genesis 49:19).

Ver. 6. *Of the tribe of Aser [were] sealed twelve thousand*, etc.] "Asher", which the Septuagint pronounce "Aser", as here, signifies "blessed", (<013013>Genesis 30:13); as all the sealed ones are, blessed with all spiritual blessings, with grace here, and glory hereafter.

Of the tribe of Nephthalim [were] sealed twelve thousand; the name of this tribe signifies "wrestlings", (<013008>Genesis 30:8); and may design the wrestlings of saints, both with God in prayer, and with their enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, and also their strivings together for the faith of the Gospel.

Of the tribe of Manasses [were] sealed twelve thousand; this word signifies "forgetting", (<014151>Genesis 41:51); and shows that the followers of Christ should forget the things that are behind, their sinful lusts and pleasures, the onions and garlic in Egypt, and their former company and acquaintance, their own people, and their father's house, and all their labours and sufferings for the sake of Christ.

Ver. 7. *Of the tribe of Simeon [were] sealed twelve thousand*, etc.] The name of this tribe signifies "hearing", (<012933>Genesis 29:33); and such an hearing as is attended with obedience; and denotes the spiritual and practical hearing of the Gospel by those who hear, and understand, and believe, and practise what they hear, and yield the obedience of faith unto it.

Of the tribe of Levi [were] sealed twelve thousand; this name signifies "joined", (<012934>Genesis 29:34); and denotes, that these sealed ones were not only joined one to another in love and holy fellowship, but to Christ, and were one spirit with him, and were members of his body, flesh, and bones, and cleaved to him with full purpose of heart.

Of the tribe of Issachar [were] sealed twelve thousand; the interpretation of this name is "hire" or "reward", (<013018>Genesis 30:18); and may design those rewards of grace which God bestows upon his faithful servants, in times of tribulation.

Ver. 8. *Of the tribe of Zabulon [were] sealed twelve thousand*, etc.] Which signifies “dwelling”, (<01310>Genesis 30:20); and was the tribe in which Christ had his dwelling, and where he much conversed; and may denote his gracious inhabitation, as well as that of God the Father, md of the Spirit, among the saints and sealed ones.

Of the tribe of Joseph [were] sealed twelve thousand; whose name signifies “adding”, (<01324>Genesis 30:24); and may intend the additions both of numbers, and of gifts and graces to the churches of those times.

Of the tribe of Benjamin [were] sealed twelve thousand; this word signifies “the Son of the right hand”, (<01518>Genesis 35:18); showing, that these sealed ones are as a signet on God's right hand, and are as near and dear unto him as a man's right hand is to him; (see <19817>Psalm 80:17). Now twelve thousand out of each tribe make just the number of a hundred forty and four thousand, (<66704>Revelation 7:4); the tribe of Dan is not mentioned, it may be because of the apostasy of that tribe, one of Jeroboam's golden calves being set up there; showing that God had no sealed ones of that sort, and instead of him Levi is reckoned; though that tribe had no part in the division of the land of Israel, yet had a part in Christ, and is therefore mentioned in this mystical account. Nor is the name of Ephraim used, it may be for the same reason; there having been a great defection in that tribe from the pure worship of God, and instead of him the name of Joseph appears.

Ver. 9. *After this I beheld*, etc.] What follows is a distinct vision from the preceding one, and is not a continuation of that, as if the sealing of the Jewish believers was designed by the former, and the sealing of the Gentiles in this latter; whereas in this vision there is no mention made of sealing, nor was there, or will there be any need of it in the time it refers unto; and which is not the time of the Reformation; nor when the vials began to be poured out upon the seat of the beast; for though there were great numbers converted in many nations, kindreds, people, and tongues, yet not in all; nor do the characters of this great multitude, and the happiness they shall enjoy, seem to suit with persons in a state of mortality and imperfection, (<66714>Revelation 7:14-17); wherefore many interpreters understand this vision of the saints in heaven: but it rather respects the millennium state, or thousand years' reign of Christ with his saints on earth, with which all that is here said agrees; compare (<66714>Revelation 7:14) with (<66204>Revelation 20:4); and (<66715>Revelation 7:15) with (<66203>Revelation 22:3);

and (Revelation 7:16,17) with (Revelation 21:4,6). And the design of this vision is to show to John, and every diligent observer, that after the seventh seal is opened, the trumpets are blown, and the vials poured out; during which time there will be a number sealed that will profess Christ; and at the close and winding up of all things, in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, Christ will descend, and all the saints with him; their bodies will be raised, and the living saints changed, and make one general assembly, who are shown to John here, as in (Revelation 21:9,10); to relieve his mind, and support his spirits, in a view of the calamities ushered in by the opening of the seventh seal.

And lo, a great multitude, which no man could number; which design all the elect of God in the new Jerusalem church state, the bride, the Lamb's wife, or the new Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven; these will appear to be a great multitude, not in comparison of the inhabitants that shall have dwelt upon earth, nor of the professors of religion in one shape or another; for, with respect to each of these, they are but a few, a seed, a remnant, a little flock; but as considered in themselves, and so they are many who are ordained to eternal life, whose sins Christ has bore, for whom his blood has been shed, and whom he justifies, and who are called by his grace, and are brought to glory; and who make up such a number as no man can number: God indeed can number them, but not man; for they are a set of particular persons chosen by God, and redeemed by Christ, and who are perfectly and distinctly known by them; their number and names are with them; their names are written in the Lamb's book of life; and God and Christ can, and do call them by their name; and when they were given to Christ, they passed under the rod of him that telleth them; and he will give an exact account of them, of every individual person, another day. But then they are not to be numbered by men; and they will be

of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, and therefore must consist both of Jews and Gentiles; these were not all nations, etc. but “of” all nations, some of all nations; and such God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and the Spirit calls; God has not chosen all the Jews, but a remnant, according to the election of grace, nor all the Gentiles, but has taken out of them a people for his name; and so Christ has redeemed, by his blood, some out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, of Jew and Gentile: and hence the Gospel has been sent into all the world, and to all nations, for the gathering of these persons out of them; and when they

are all gathered in, they will all meet together in the new Jerusalem church state, and make up the body here presented to view.

Stood before the throne and before the Lamb; the throne of God, and of the Lamb, will be in the midst of the new Jerusalem church; the tabernacle of God will be with men, and he will dwell, among them; and before the presence of his glory will all the saints be presented; and the Lamb will then present to himself his whole church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; and they will behold his glory, and see him as he is: and as they are described before by their number, and their descent, so here by their position and situation, and, as follows, by their habit and attire,

clothed with white robes; agreeably to their princely and priestly characters: it was usual for princes and noblemen to be arrayed in vestures of linen, as Joseph was in Pharaoh's court; and the Jewish priests wore garments of linen, in their daily ministry and service; and in the thousand years' reign the saints will appear to be kings and priests, (<66510>Revelation 5:10 20:6); and accordingly will be clothed as such: and this may also be expressive of their entire freedom from sin by the blood of Christ, (<66714>Revelation 7:14); and their complete justification by his righteousness, which is sometimes compared to white raiment, and is called fine linen, clean, and white; and likewise their spotless purity and holiness, sanctification in them being now perfect, which was before imperfect: and these robes may also design their shining robes of glory and immortality; for they will now be clothed upon with their house from heaven, and will have put off mortality and corruption, and have put on immortality and incorruption, and appear with Christ in glory; for such will be the then state of things:

and palms in their hands; or branches of palm trees, as in (<43213>John 12:13) as an emblem of their uprightness and faithfulness, which they had shown in the cause of Christ, even unto death, the palm tree being a very upright tree, (<24005>Jeremiah 10:5 <22707>Song of Solomon 7:7); or of their bearing up under a variety of pressures and afflictions, by which they were not cast down and destroyed, but bravely stood up under them, and were now come out of them; the palm tree being of such a nature, as is reported, that the more weight is hung upon it, the higher it rises, and the straighter it grows; (see <19212>Psalm 92:12); and chiefly as an emblem of victory and triumph over their enemies, as sin, Satan, the world and death, which they had been struggling with, in a state of imperfection, but were now more

than conquerors over them; the palm tree is well known to be a token of victory. So Philo the Jew [f222] says, the palm tree is συμβολον νικης, "a symbol of victory". Conquerors used to carry palm tree branches in their hands [f223]: those who conquered in the combats and plays among the Greeks, used not only to have crowns of palm trees given them, but carried branches of it in their hands [f224]; as did also the Romans in their triumphs; yea, they sometimes wore "toga palmata", a garment with the figures of palm trees on it, which were interwoven in it [f225]: and hence here palms are mentioned along with white garments; and some have been tempted to render the words thus, "clothed with white robes", and "palms on their sides"; that is, on the sides of their robes [f226]. The medal which was struck by Titus Vespasian, at the taking of Jerusalem, had on it a palm tree, and a captive woman sitting under it, with this inscription on it, "Judaea capta", Judea is taken. And when our Lord rode in triumph to Jerusalem, the people met him with branches of palm trees in their hands, and cried, Hosanna to him. So the Jews, at the feast of tabernacles, which they kept in commemoration of their having dwelt in tents in the wilderness, carried "Lulabs", or palm tree branches, in their hands, in token of joy, (<03Le23 40>Leviticus 23:40); and in like manner, these being come out of the wilderness of the world, and the tabernacle of God being among them, express their joy in this way; (see Gill on "<04Jo12 13>John 12:13").

Ver. 10. *And cried with a loud voice*, etc.] To show the strength of their affection, and the greatness of their joy, and how sensible they were of the favour they enjoyed, and how hearty they were in the following ascription of glory to God, and the Lamb.

Saying, salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb; by "salvation" is meant, not only temporal salvation, and those many deliverances, which God had wrought for them, and particularly in bringing them out of great tribulation, (<07Re7 14>Revelation 7:14); but spiritual and eternal salvation, which is the salvation of the soul, and is owing to the free grace of God, and the blood of Christ; and the sense is, that God and the Lamb are the sole authors of it, and the glory of it ought to be given to them, and to no other: God the Father, who sits upon the throne, resolved upon it in his eternal purposes and decrees, and contrived and formed the scheme of it in the council of peace, and he made sufficient provision for it in the covenant of grace; and as he from eternity appointed his Son to be his salvation to the ends of the earth, so in the fulness of time he sent him to be the Saviour of the world, and delivered him up for all his people, unto

death itself, and spared him not, but awoke the sword of justice against him, and sheathed it in him; and since he had such a concern in salvation, the glory of it in right belongs to him: and the Lamb, the Son of God, he engaged to do the will and work of God, and from everlasting became the surety of the better testament; and in time he came to seek and to save lost sinners, and he is become the author of eternal salvation to them; his own arm has brought it, and it is in him, and no other, even a salvation from sin, Satan, the law, the world, hell, and death, and wrath to come; and it will be the employment of the saints, both in the new Jerusalem church state, during the thousand years' reign, and in heaven to all eternity, to ascribe the glory of all this, not to themselves, to their merits and works of righteousness, or to any creature whatever, but to God and the Lamb only.

Ver. 11. *And all the angels stood round about the throne*, etc.] The holy and elect angels, even all of them, the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, the innumerable company of them, who are represented in the same position; (see Gill on "Revelation 5:11");

and [about] the elders, and the four beasts; the churches and ministers; yea, round about the great multitude before mentioned, the camp of the saints, and the beloved city; whose guardians they will be, and to whom they will always be ministering spirits.

And fell before the throne on their faces: in token of submission and reverence:

and worshipped God; by celebrating the perfections of his nature, and ascribing to him the glory of all his works.

Ver. 12. *Saying, Amen*, etc.] As approving and confirming what the great multitude of men had said in (Revelation 7:10); in ascribing the glory of salvation to God, and the Lamb: the angels, though they have no part in it themselves, yet highly approve of it as right and just, that men should give the glory of it where it is due.

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, [be] unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. Here a seven fold praise is given to God by the angels, as to the Lamb, in (Revelation 5:12), and in words much the same they rightly ascribe blessing to God, who is blessed in himself, and is the source of all blessedness to his creatures, angels and men. And also "glory"; the glory of his divine perfections, who is the God of glory; and of all his works of

nature and providence, and especially of the salvation of men by Christ. "And wisdom"; he being the only wise God, whose wisdom is to be seen in all the works of creation, and in the government of the world, and in nothing more than in the scheme of redemption by the Son of God: "and thanksgiving": for all mercies and favours, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, enjoyed by angels, or by men: "and honour"; which is due to him from all his creatures, as he is the Creator of them; and from all his children, as he is their Father; and from all his servants, as he their master: "and power": which he has exerted, in making all things out of nothing, in supporting the whole universe in its being, and in saving and preserving his own people: "and might"; or "strength", he being the almighty God, the strength of Israel, and the rock of ages, in whom is everlasting strength; and the praise and ascription of all this, the angels wish to be given him by themselves and others, to all eternity; and as desiring that so it might be, and as believing that so it would be, they add their to it.

Ver. 13. *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me*, etc.] This elder was not the Apostle Peter, as some Popish interpreters have thought; and still less Pope Silvester, who lived in the times of Constantine; be is much more likely, according to others, to be Constantine himself, the first of the elders, or the chief magistrate when the church sprung out of its troubles, and enjoyed rest and peace; though some have thought of the prophet Isaiah, since many things said by this elder are to be found in his prophecy; compare (Revelation 7:14,16,17); with (Isaiah 1:18 49:10 25:8); but it is needless to inquire who the particular person was; it is enough to say, that he was one of the four and twenty elders about the throne, one that belonged to the church, perhaps the same as in (Revelation 5:5); who, in a visionary way, is represented as accosting John upon the above sight. The word "answered" is a common Hebraism of the New Testament, which is often used when nothing goes before, to which a return is made; and only signifies here, that the elder opened his month, began to speak, and called to John, and said as follows:

what are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? This he said, not as being ignorant of them, or of the reason of their being clothed in this manner, nor of the place and state from whence they came, as appears by the account afterwards given of them by him; but to stir up John to take more notice of them, as being a body of men that were worthy of observation and contemplation, and were worth his while to consider well who they were, and from whence they came; and also to try him

whether he knew them or not, and to bring him to a confession of his ignorance; and that he might have an opportunity of giving him some hints about them, which might be useful to him, and to the churches, and for the explanation of this vision, and other parts of this prophecy.

Ver. 14. *And I said unto him, sir, thou knowest*, etc.] John replies in a very humble, modest, and respectful manner, to the elder, calling him "sir", according to the usage of the eastern people; and it is observable, that this word is much used in his Gospel, and more than in any other book; (see <43041>John 4:11,15,19,49 5:7 12:21 20:15). Some copies, and the Complutensian edition, read, "my Lord"; and so do the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions. John confesses his ignorance, and ascribes knowledge to the elder, and desires information of him; for the sense is, that the elder knew who they were, and from whence they came, but he did not, and therefore desires that he would inform him; and so the Arabic version renders it, "and my Lord, thou art more learned"; that is, than I am, and therefore instruct me, as he accordingly did;

and he said to me, these are they which came out of great tribulation: seeing this company designs all the elect of God, that ever were, are, or shall be in the world; "the great tribulation", out of which they came, is not to be restrained to any particular time of trouble, but includes all that has been, is, or shall be; as all the afflictions of the saints under the Old Testament; from righteous Abel to Zechariah; and all the troubles of the people of God in the times of the Maccabees, (<58135>Hebrews 11:35-38); all the persecutions of the Christians by the Jews, at the first publication of the Gospel; and the persecutions under the Roman emperors, both Pagan and Arian; and the cruelties and barbarities of the Romish antichrist, during the whole time of the apostasy; and particularly the last struggle of the beast, which will be the hour of temptation, that will come upon all the world; and in general all the afflictions, reproaches, persecutions, and many tribulations of all the saints, and every member of Christ in this world, who in the new Jerusalem church state will be come out of them; which supposes them to have been in them, and yet were not overwhelmed by them, and lost in them; but, by divine support and assistance, waded through them, and were now quite clear of them, and never more to be annoyed with them; (see <66204>Revelation 21:4).

And have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; not in the blood of bulls and goats, which could not take away sin;

nor in their own blood, their sufferings for Christ, on which they did not depend, knowing there is no comparison between them, and the glory revealed in them; nor in any works of righteousness done by them, which are imperfect and filthy, and need washing; but in the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. The "robes" which they washed in his blood may either design themselves, their consciences, which this blood purges from dead works; or their outward conversation garments, which have their spots, and need continual washing; or else the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, or their justification, which is by the blood of Christ, (Romans 5:9). The act of washing from sin, by the blood of Christ, is sometimes ascribed to Christ himself, as in (Revelation 1:5); but here to the saints, and designs the concern which faith has in the blood of Christ, which deals with it for justification, peace, and pardon, for the removing of sin from the conscience, and for cleansing from all impurity, both of flesh and Spirit: and the effect of this is, that their robes were "made white"; that is, that they were freed from all sin, were without fault before the throne, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. This shows that these persons had no trust in themselves, or dependence on their own merits, and works of righteousness, but wholly trusted to, and depended on the blood and righteousness of Christ; which is the only way to come out of tribulation, and enter the kingdom.

Ver. 15. *Therefore are they before the throne of God*, etc.] (See Gill on "Revelation 7:9"); not because of their great tribulations, but because they were brought through them, and out of them, by the grace and power of God; nor because of their robes, or conversation garments, but because those were washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb; or because of the blood of the Lamb, and their justification, pardon, and cleansing by it:

and serve him day and night in his temple; not in any material temple, but in the new Jerusalem, the general assembly and church of the firstborn, the temple of the living God; for in this state there will be no material temple, or place of worship, but God and the Lamb will be the temple thereof, (Revelation 21:22); nor will there be any night there, (Revelation 22:5); wherefore this phrase, day and night, only denotes the constancy and uninterruption of their service, there being nothing to obstruct them in it, or break them off from it, as now; in allusion to the priests and Levites, who were, one or other of them, night or day in the service of the temple: and the service of these persons in the new Jerusalem state will not lie in attending on the word and ordinances, or in the ministration of them, as in

the present state; but in praising God, singing Hallelujahs to him, adoring the perfections of his nature, and admiring his wonderful works of providence and grace, and ascribing the glory of salvation to him, and to the Lamb; and this their service will be the glorious liberty of the children of God. Hence the Ethiopic version renders it, “and they praise him day and night”; this will be the employment of the saints in the millennium state, and to all eternity:

and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them; or “tabernacle over them”; for the tabernacle of God shall be now among men, and he will dwell among the saints; they shall enjoy his presence, and have the most intimate communion with him; it will appear most manifest that he is their covenant God, and they are his covenant people; and he will be a tabernacle, not only of inhabitation, but of protection for them; and the name of this city, this new Jerusalem, will be “Jehovah Shammah”, the Lord is there.

Ver. 16. *They shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more*, etc.] The words are taken out of (Isaiah 49:10), and will be true in a literal and corporeal sense. Now the saints are often in hunger and thirst, then they shall be so no more; and in a mystical and spiritual sense, there will be no famine of the word; for though there will not be the outward ministration of the word, as now, the substance of it will be enjoyed, to full satisfaction; nor will there be any uneasy desires after spiritual things, and much less any hungerings and thirstings, or lusting after carnal, sensual, and earthly things.

Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; not the sun of persecution, (see Matthew 13:6,22); nor the heat of Satan's temptations, or his fiery darts; nor of any fiery trial, or sore affliction; nor of the divine displeasure, or any fearful sense and apprehension of it; nor of toil and labour, called the burden and heat of the day, from all which they will be now free.

Ver. 17. *For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne*, etc.] (see Revelation 5:6); not before the throne, as the great multitude are said to be, (Revelation 7:9); nor round about it, as the angels in (Revelation 7:11); but in the midst of it, being equal to him that sits upon it; sitting on the same throne with him, and having the same power and authority, he

shall feed them as a shepherd his flock; for this Lamb is a Shepherd, and this great multitude are his flock; whom he will feed in this state, not by his ministers, word, and ordinances, as now; but in person, and with the rich discoveries of himself, and of his love, signified by a feast, by new wine in his Father's kingdom, and his own, and by eating and drinking at his table, in the kingdom appointed by him to his followers; and hence it is they shall never hunger more: or “shall rule them”, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; for the same word signifies “to feed”, and “to rule”, as a king rules his subjects; Christ will now be visibly King of saints, and King over all the earth, and will reign before his ancients gloriously; and, in these days of his, Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely under his power and protection:

and shall lead them unto living fountains of water; by “water” is meant the grace, love, and free favour of God in Christ, that pure river of water of life, which proceeds from the throne of God, and of the Lamb, from divine sovereignty; and with which the saints in this state shall be sweetly and fully solaced and refreshed; and hence they shall never thirst more: and this is said to be “living”, because not only refreshing and reviving, but because it will last for ever; the love of God is from everlasting to everlasting; and it is signified by “fountains”, to denote the abundance of it, even as it will be perceived and enjoyed by the saints now; for these waters will not be only up to the ankles, and knees, but a broad river to swim in, which cannot be passed over; and hither will Christ lead his people, which is, one branch of his office as a Shepherd; and which shows his care of them, and affection for them.

And God shall wipe away all tear, from their eyes; or “out of their eyes”, as the Alexandrian copy reads; (see <23258>Isaiah 25:8). The sense is, that that which is now the occasion of tears will cease, as the sin and corruptions of God's people, which now are the cause of many tears; as also Satan's temptations, the hidings of God's face, and the various afflictions of this life, and the persecutions of the men of the world; there will be no more of either of these; all will be made to cease; (see <662104>Revelation 21:4); and in the room of them full and everlasting joy will take place, (<233510>Isaiah 35:10). Mr. Daubuz thinks, that the whole of this chapter belongs to the sixth seal, and that the promises in it are such as were to be accomplished at the opening of the seventh, and do not belong to the millennium state; but had their fulfilment in the times of Constantine, who he supposes is the angel that came from the east, who restrained the persecutors of the church, and

introduced a general peace in church and state; and as he came with the seal of the living God, which he understands of the cross of Christ, he put upon his standard, and on the shields of his soldiers, so he sealed the servants of God on their foreheads with it, by allowing them to make a public profession of a crucified Christ, and by protecting them in that profession, even men of all nations, Jews and Gentiles; and particularly he thinks the innumerable palm bearing company may design the council of Nice, gathered by him, which consisted of the representatives of the whole Christian church in the several nations of the world, who had great honour, freedom, and immunities conferred upon them; and that the angels are the Christian magistrates, submitting to the Christian religion, and defending the church, which was now come out of the great tribulation of Heathen persecution, and had temples and places of public worship opened for them; in which they had full liberty to serve the Lord continually, without interruption; and were secure from all affliction and persecution, and were filled with joy and gladness; and the Lamb, by the means of Constantine, as Christ's vicar and servant, he declared himself to be, fed and protected the church in peace and quietness; all which are accomplished during the rest, or “silence”, under the next seal; and which I should very readily agree to, since this interpretation carries on the thread of the prophetic history without any interruption, were it not for the description of the palm bearing company, both as to quantity and quality, and the declaration of the happy state of those come out of great tribulation, which I think cannot be made to suit with any imperfect state of the church on earth, without greatly lowering the sense of the expressions used; however, if anyone prefers this exposition to what is given, I am not much averse unto it.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 8

This chapter contains the opening of the seventh seal, and the things that followed on it, and particularly the sounding of the first four trumpets. Upon the opening of the seventh seal there was silence in heaven for half an hour, (Revelation 8:1); then follows a vision of seven angels, who stood before God, and had seven trumpets given to them, (Revelation 8:2); then of another angel, described by his position, standing at the altar; by his having a golden censer, and by much incense being given him, the end of which was to offer up the prayers of all saints, which with it went up to God, and were acceptable to him; and by filling his censer with the fire of the altar, and casting it to the earth; the effects of which were voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake, (Revelation 8:3-5), after which the seven angels prepare to sound their trumpets, (Revelation 8:6); the first blows his, which brings hail and fire, mingled with blood, upon the earth, which burns up the third part of trees and all green grass, (Revelation 8:7); the second blows, upon which a burning mountain is cast into the sea, and a third part of it becomes blood, a third part of the creatures in it die, and a third part of the ships upon it are destroyed, (Revelation 8:8,9); the third angel blows; upon which a star, like a burning lamp, falls upon the third part of rivers and fountains, whose name is Wormwood, and embitters them, so that many men die of them, (Revelation 8:10,11); the fourth angel blows, and the third part of the sun, moon, and stars, is smitten, and becomes dark, so that there is no light for a third part of the day and night, (Revelation 8:12); and the chapter is concluded with the vision of another angel flying through the midst of heaven, proclaiming three times woe to the inhabitants of the earth, on account of what would be uttered by the three following angels, who were yet to blow their trumpets, (Revelation 8:13).

Ver. 1. *And when he had opened the seventh seal*, etc.] That is, when the Lamb had opened the seventh and last seal of the scaled book:

there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour; not in the third heaven, the seat of the divine Being, of angels and glorified saints,

where are hallelujahs without intermission; but in the church, which is oftentimes signified by heaven in this book, and where now the throne of God was placed, in that form as described in (<ref_snippet type="bible_ref">Revelation 4:4-8</ref_snippet>), or rather in the Roman empire: nor is this silence the sum of this seal, or the only thing in it; for it includes the preparation of the seven angels to take their trumpets, though none of them were sounded during this period. This space of time some think refers to the time which elapsed, while the angel, who had incense given him to offer it with the prayers of saints, did so, and took fire off the altar with his censer, and cast it on the earth: and while the seven angels had their trumpets given them, and they were preparing to sound. Others are of opinion that this was only a pause, a breathing time for John between the former visions and seals, and the following; nothing being said or done, or anything exhibited to him during this interval; but he was at leisure to reflect on what he had seen, and to prepare for what was to come. Others understand it of the amazement of the saints at the judgments of God, which were coming upon the Christian empire, and of their quiet and silent preparations for these troubles and combats, both within and without, they were to be exercised with; (see <ref_snippet type="bible_ref">Zechariah 2:13</ref_snippet>). Others have thought that this refers to the state of the saints after the day of judgment, when there will be an entire cessation from persecution and trouble, and when the souls under the altar will have done crying for vengeance; but this will be not for half an hour only, but to all eternity; nor will angels and saints be then silent. Rather this is to be understood of that peace and rest which the church enjoyed upon Constantine's having defeated all his enemies, when he brought the church into a state of profound tranquillity and ease; and this lasted but for a little while, which is here expressed by about, or almost half an hour, as the Syriac version renders it; for in a short time the Arian heresy broke out, which introduced great troubles in the church, and at last violent persecutions. The allusion is, as in the whole of the following vision of the angel at the altar, to the offering of incense; at which time the people were removed from the temple, from between the porch and altar [f227], to some more distant place; and the priest was alone while he offered incense, and then prayed a short prayer, that the people might not be affrighted lest he should be dead [f228]: and who in the mean while were praying in a silent, manner without; (see <ref_snippet type="bible_ref">Luke 1:9,10</ref_snippet>); hence the Jews say [f229], that the offering of incense atones for an ill tongue, for it is a thing that is introduced yaçjb, “silently”, and it atones for what is done silently, such

as whisperings, backbitings, etc. and they call [f230] silence the best of spices, even of those of which the sweet incense was made.

Ver. 2. *And I saw the seven angels*, etc.] Not the seven spirits of God, (<660104>Revelation 1:4 5:5); their names, as well as their office, differ; nor the ministers of the word, though these are often called angels in this book, and blow the trumpet of the Gospel, and lift up their voice like a trumpet; but the angelic spirits, and these either evil ones, since they are the executioners of wrath and vengeance, and bring judgments on the earth; and who, are sometimes said to stand before God, (<112221>1 Kings 22:21,22 <180106>Job 1:6); or rather good angels, who are sometimes ministers of divine wrath; (see <102416>2 Samuel 24:16,17 <121935>2 Kings 19:35); "seven" of them are mentioned, as being a proper number for the blowing of the seven trumpets, which would complete all the woes that were to come upon the world, and in allusion to the seven princes the eastern monarchs used to have continually about them, (<170114>Esther 1:14), as it follows:

which stood before God; and denotes their nearness to him, and familiarity with him, they always behold his face; and their service and ministrations, and their readiness to execute his will: the allusion is to the two priests standing at the table of fat, with two silver trumpets in their hands, with which they blew, and another struck the cymbal, and the Levites sung, which was always done at the time of the daily sacrifice [f231]:

and to them were given seven trumpets: everyone had one; and which were an emblem of those wars, and desolations, and calamities, which would come upon the empire, and upon the world, at the blowing of each of them; the trumpet being an alarm, preparing for, proclaiming, and introducing these things; (<240419>Jeremiah 4:19 <280508>Hosea 5:8); these are said to be given them; either by him that sat upon the throne, about which they were; or by the Lamb that opened the seal; and shows that they did nothing but what they had a commission and order to do. Here is manifestly an allusion to the priests and Levites blowing their trumpets at the close of the daily sacrifice, and at the offering of incense [f232] as before observed.

Ver. 3. *And another angel came*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, "from the east", as in (<660702>Revelation 7:2); pointing to the same angel, and who is intended: for not a created angel, as Gabriel, or any other, is meant; nor any mere man, at least not Pope Damasus, who lived in Constantine's time, as Lyra thought; nor Constantine himself, which is the opinion of Brightman, who thinks that his, and the desires of other good men to make

peace, and compose the differences occasioned by the Arian heresy, are designed by the incense and prayers; and this being brought about at the counsel of Nice, when the Arian blasphemy was condemned, and truth confirmed, is intended by the ascent of the smoke of the incense with the prayers, out of the angels hands; when there followed upon this great contentions, heart burnings, and persecutions, signified by fire, voices, thunderings, etc. and others, have been of opinion that the Emperor Theodosius is designed, and that respect is had to his prayer both in the church, and at the head of his army, before the battle with Eugenius, the saints in the mean while putting up united prayers to God for success, and which was obtained; and this victory was attended with a miraculous tempest, and gave a deadly blow to the Pagan religion. Yet neither of those, but Christ himself, the Angel of the covenant, and of God's presence, is here intended, who appeared in an angelic form; so the high priest in the day of atonement was called jylç [f233], "an angel", or messenger, to which the allusion is;

and stood at the altar; either of burnt offerings, and may be rendered "stood upon it"; and so may represent his sacrifice, which had been lately offered up for the sins of his people, he being both altar, sacrifice, and priest; or rather the altar of incense, since mention is made of a censer and of incense, and the smoke of it; and seeing this altar is a golden one, as that was, and is before the throne, as that was before the vail by the ark of the testimony; (<02301>Exodus 30:1,3,6); and so Christ is here introduced as the high priest, advocate, and intercessor for his people, though both altars may be respected in this verse: "the altar" may design the altar of burnt offering from whence the coals were taken in the censer; and the "golden altar" the altar of incense where the coals being brought the incense was put upon them, and offered; and here he "stood" as everyone concerned in the service of the sanctuary did [f234]:

having a golden censer; the Ethiopic version adds, "of fire": for this was a vessel in which were put burning coals of fire taken from off the altar before the Lord (<03612>Leviticus 16:12), and which may denote the sufferings of Christ, he pains he endured in his body the sorrows of his soul, and the wrath of God which was poured like fire upon him; the altar from which they were taken off was typical of Christ: in his divine nature which is the altar that sanctifies the gift, and gave virtue to his blood and sacrifice; and all this being before the Lord may show that Christ's sufferings were according to the will of God, were grateful to him, and always before him;

for these burning coals in the censer were also carried within the vail, representing heaven, where Christ entered by his own blood and where he is as a Lamb that had been slain, the efficacy of whose death always continues; and this being a golden censer shows the excellency and perpetuity of Christ's sacrifice and intercession. In the daily service the priest used a silver censer, but on the day of atonement a golden one [f235]; though at the daily sacrifice there was a vessel used, called Pkh, like to a large golden bushel, in which was a smaller vessel full of incense [f236], and may be what is here designed:

and there was given unto him much incense; the intercession of Christ is meant by “the incense”, which, like that, is sweet and fragrant, very grateful and acceptable to God and also pure and holy; for though it is made for transgressors, yet in a way of righteousness, and consistent with the holiness and justice of God; nor is there any like it, nor should there be any besides it; the intercession of angels, and saints departed, ought to be rejected: and it is perpetual, or will be for ever; (see <02Ex30:7> Exodus 30:7,8,34-38); and whereas it is said to be “much”, this is an allusion either to the many spices used in the composition of the incense, (see <02Ex30:34> Exodus 30:34); the Jews say [f237], that eleven sorts of spices were ordered to Moses, and the wise men have added three more, in all fourteen; or to the priest's handfuls of incense, which he took and brought within the vail on the day of atonement, (<03Le16:12> Leviticus 16:12); and which were added to, and were over and above the quantity used every day [f238]; and even in the daily service the pot of incense was not only filled, but çwdg, “heaped up” [f239]; now this may denote the fulness of Christ's intercession, which is for all his elect, called and uncalled, greater or lesser believers, and for all things for them, as their cases be; for conversion, discoveries of pardon, preservation, perseverance, and glorification; and to support this, he has a fulness of merit, which makes his intercession efficacious; for incense was put upon the burning coals in the censer, or upon the fire before the Lord, (<03Le16:13> Leviticus 16:13), signifying that Christ's intercession proceeds upon his sufferings and death: his blood and sacrifice, from whence all his pleas and arguments are taken in favour of his people, and which always prevail: and this is said to be given him, as his whole work and office as Mediator, and every branch of it is; he is appointed to this work, is allowed to do it, and is accepted in it, by him that sits upon the throne: in the daily offering of the incense, one took the incense and gave it into the hand of his friend, or the priest that was next him; and if he wanted instruction how to offer it, he

taught him, nor might anyone offer incense until the president bid him [f240]; to which there seems to be an allusion here: now the end of this was,

that he should offer [it] with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions add, “of God”; the prayers of the saints, rightly performed, are themselves compared to incense, being very grateful and acceptable to God, (<19E102>Psalm 141:2); and the Arabic version here renders it in connection with the preceding clause, and explanative of that, “and there was given unto him much incense and much spice, which are the prayers of the saints”, as in (<660508>Revelation 5:8); and at the time of incense the people prayed; (see <420110>Luke 1:10); and these are spiritual sacrifices, which Christ the high priest presents for the saints, perfumes with the incense of his mediation, and makes acceptable to God, being offered upon, and coming up from that altar which is before him, and which gives value to everything that is put upon it: and they are the prayers of saints, who are set apart by God the Father, whose sins are expiated by the blood of Christ, and who are sanctified by the Spirit of God; who draw nigh to God with a true heart, and call upon him out of a pure heart, and in sincerity and truth; the prayers of such righteous ones, through faith in Christ, avail much with God; and the prayers of all saints are regarded by Christ, and presented by him, whether they be rich or poor, high or low, greater or lesser believers. The Jews often speak of an angel, whose name is Sandalphon, who is appointed over the prayers of the righteous, and takes them and presents them to God [f241]: so Raphael in the Apocrypha:

> “I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.” (Tobit 12:15)

says he was one of the seven holy angels that carry up the prayers of the saints; and the heretic Elxai, who was originally a Jew, talked of the holy angels of prayer [f242]: so the Jews say, that God “by”, or “through his Word”, receives the prayers of Israel, and has mercy on them [f243]. In the Greek text it is, “that he should give”, etc. that is, the “incense”, agreeably to the Hebrew phrase in (<041647>Numbers 16:47), and elsewhere.

Ver. 4. *And the smoke of the incense*, etc.] For the incense being put, as it was used to be, upon burning coals of fire, caused a smoke to arise like a cloud, (<031613>Leviticus 16:13 <261811>Ezekiel 8:11); so that the whole house, or temple, was filled with it [f244]:

[which came] with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God out of the angel's hand; alluding to the incense the priest took in his hand, and cast upon the burning coals; and shows how that by the smoke of the incense, or the virtue of Christ's mediation, the imperfections of the prayers of the saints are covered; and how they are it perfumed and made acceptable to God; and so are said to ascend up before him, and to be regarded by him, as the prayers of Cornelius were, (<44104>Acts 10:4); now all this is expressive of the wonderful affection of Christ for his church and people, and care of them; that before the angels sound their trumpets, and bring on wars and desolations into the empire, Christ is represented as interceding for them, and presenting their prayers both for deliverance for themselves, and vengeance on their enemies.

Ver. 5. *And the angel took the censer*, etc.] The golden one before mentioned, the use of which was to take and carry in it burning coals of fire:

and filled it with fire of the altar; of burnt offering, for upon that, and not upon the altar of incense, fire was; the allusion is to the priest

> "that was worthy to use a censer [f245]; who took a silver censer, and went to the top of the altar (of burnt offering), and having removed the coals there, and there took them in his censer, and went down and emptied them into a golden one, and there was scattered from it about a kab of coals;"

for the golden one held a kab less than the silver one [f246];

and cast [it] into the earth: the Roman empire: by "fire" some understand the Spirit of God, and his gifts and graces, which sat upon the apostles as cloven tongues of fire on the day of Pentecost; and which they suppose were now plentifully bestowed on the ministers of the word, to enlighten them, inspire them with zeal, and abundantly fit them for the work of the ministry, in consequence of Christ's mediation and intercession: and others think the Gospel is intended, which is sometimes compared to fire, (<24009>Jeremiah 20:9 23:29), or else those contentions and quarrels which, through the corruptions of men, arise on account of the Gospel, (<42249>Luke 12:49); though rather by fire here are meant the judgments of God, and his wrath and fury poured forth like fire upon the Roman empire, now become Christian; and so was an emblem of those calamities coming upon it at the sounding of the trumpets; and shows that as Christ prays and intercedes for

his, own people, for their comfort and safety, so he will bring down, his judgments upon his and their enemies; (see <26102>Ezekiel 10:2); and the Targum on it:

and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake; which may be understood either of the nature, use, and effects of the Gospel, speaking to the hearts of men by the sons of thunder, enlightening their minds, and shaking their consciences; the like were at the giving of the law, (<21916>Exodus 19:16); or rather of those terrors, distresses, and commotions in the world, because of God's righteous judgments, and which particularly will be at the sound of the seventh trumpet, and the pouring out of the seventh vial, (<66115>Revelation 11:15 16:17,18); the allusion is to the sounds that were heard at the time of the daily sacrifice; for besides the blowing of the trumpets by the priests, and the singing of the Levites, of which (see Gill on "<66002>Revelation 8:2"); there was a musical instrument called hprgm, "magrephah" [f247], which being sounded, a man could not hear another speak in Jerusalem: yea, they say it was heard as far as Jericho.

Ver. 6. *And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets*, etc.] Given them, (<66002>Revelation 8:2);

prepared themselves to sound; they stood up, took their trumpets in their hands, and put them to their mouths; this was giving notice of what was coming upon the earth, and a kind of warning to men, and a call upon them to repentance, and to prepare to meet God in the way of his judgments. The time when these trumpets began to blow was after the opening of the seventh seal, and so after the destruction of the empire as Pagan, which was under the sixth seal; and after that peace and rest from persecution in Constantine's time, signified by the half hour's silence in heaven; and after the prayers of the saints for vengeance, because of their blood shed in the time of Rome Pagan, were offered up, heard, taken notice of, and accepted; and therefore cannot regard, nor have any concern with the state of the church before Constantine's time, as some have thought the three first trumpets had; the first introducing the contradictions and blasphemies of the Jews, and their persecutions of the Christians, and the effusion of their blood by them; the second the ten persecutions under the Heathen emperors; and the third, the errors and heresies which pestered the churches of those times: nor indeed do they concern the state of the church at all; though it seems much more likely that the first four trumpets should

bring in; as others have thought, the several heresies of Arius, Macedonius, Pelagius, and Eutyches, which sprung up before the rise of Mahomet, who appears under the fifth trumpet. But all the six trumpets have to do with the empire as Christian; for as the six seals are so many steps towards the destruction of the empire as Pagan, and the vials bring on the ruin of Rome Papal; so the six trumpets are so many gradual advances to the ruin of the empire, now Christian: and it must be observed, that the Emperor Theodosius, at his death, left the empire divided between his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius, the eastern part of it, which had Constantinople for its seat, to the former, and the western part of it, which had Rome for its seat, to the latter; now the first four trumpets bring in a barbarous people out of the north, the Goths, Huns, and Vandals, into the western part, who, by various incursions and wars, at last utterly destroy it; and the fifth and sixth trumpets bring in the Saracens under Mahomet, and the Turks into the eastern part, who took possession of that, and have kept it unto this day. (This was published in 1747, Ed.) A preparation being made, the angels begin to sound their trumpets.

Ver. 7. *The first angel sounded*, etc.] Or blew his trumpet:

and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood; somewhat like one of the plagues of Egypt, (Exodus 9:23-25); in which was hail mingled with fire, only no blood, but what was caused by its fall on man and beast. Some have thought the Arian heresy is here intended, which may well enough agree with the time; and which may be compared to “hail”, for the mischief it did to the vines, the churches; and because of the violence with which it came, and the chillness of affection to Christ and his people, which it brought on professors of religion; and the barrenness which followed upon it, it making men barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ Jesus; and to “fire”, because of the wrath, contentions, animosities, and divisions it occasioned among those who were called Christians: and “blood” may be brought into the account, since the like persecutions under Constantius and Valens were raised against the orthodox on account of it as were against the Christians under the Heathen emperors: and this storm fell upon “the earth”; the whole Roman empire; for even all the world was once said to be Arian, except one Athanasius; and particularly upon the carnal and earthly part of the church, who were seeking places and preferments under the Arian emperors: “and burnt up the third part of trees”; the trees of righteousness, the saints, particularly the doctors of the church, the tall cedars in Lebanon; who either seemed to be such, and were infected with

this heresy, and destroyed by it, as many were; or were truly such, and were greatly oppressed, afflicted, and persecuted for not embracing it: and also “all green grass”; the common people, private Christians, weak believers, who had the truth of grace in them, and suffered much for not giving into this heresy; or who seemed to have it, but had it not, but withered away, being scorched up and destroyed with this pernicious notion: but rather this trumpet regards not the church, but the empire; and this storm of hail, fire, and blood, designs the irruption of the Goths into it, from the year 395, in which Theodosius died, to the year 408, under Radagaisus their general; with two hundred thousand of them, some say four hundred thousand, be entered and overrun all Italy, but was stopped and defeated by Stilicho; also Alaricus, king of the Goths, penetrated into Italy, came to Ravenna, and pitched his camp not far from Polentia, to whom the Emperor Honorius gave up France and Spain to make him easy, and that he might cease from his ravages and depredations [f248]; and these irruptions and devastations may be fitly expressed by hail, fire, and blood, just as the coming of the Assyrian monarch into the land of Israel is signified by a tempest of hail, and a destroying storm, (<23B802>Isaiah 28:2); and it is remarkable, as Mr. Daubuz observes, that Claudian the poet [f249], who lived at the time of Alarick's war, compares it to hail:

and they were cast upon the earth; the Roman empire, the continent more especially, as Germany, France, Spain, and Italy, which were particularly affected and distressed with these barbarous people:

and the third part of trees were burnt up; by which seem to be meant people of the higher rank, the richer sort of people, who suffered much in these calamities; (see <230213>Isaiah 2:13 <381102>Zechariah 11:2); yea, princes, nobles, and rulers, both civil and ecclesiastical, who suffered much at this time, as Jerom [f250], who was then living, testifies; and so “trees” are interpreted of kings, rulers, and governors, by the Targum on (<230213>Isaiah 2:13 <381101>Zechariah 11:1,2); “the trees of the field”, in (<235512>Isaiah 55:12); are interpreted of kingdoms [f251]: the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read before this clause, “and the third part of the earth was burnt”; that is, of the Roman empire:

and all green grass was burnt up; the common people, who may be compared to spires of “grass” for their multitude, being as it were innumerable; and to “green” grass, for their delightful, comfortable, and

flourishing condition before these calamities came upon them; and for their weakness and impotency to withstand such powerful enemies; (see <18525>Job 5:25 <19716>Psalm 72:16 <23406>Isaiah 40:6,7 37:27 <04204>Numbers 22:4); and these commonly suffer most when a country is overrun and plundered by an enemy.

Ver. 8. *And the second angel sounded*, etc.] His trumpet:

and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; by which is meant not the devil, as some think; called a "mountain" from his height of pride, a great one from his might and power, and a "burning" one from his great wrath and malice against Christ, his Gospel, and his people; and who may be said to be "cast into the sea" of this world, and the men of it, whom he instigates against the saints, and who are like a troubled sea that cannot rest: but rather some heresy, and, as some have thought, the Macedonian heresy, which was levelled against the deity of the Holy Spirit, as was the Arian heresy against the deity of the Son; the abettors of which looked big, and were supported by power, and showed great zeal for religion, and pretended to great light and knowledge; and which heresy much affected the sea of pure doctrine, particularly the third part of doctrine, in which the third Person, the Spirit of God, is more especially concerned; and was of so pernicious a nature, as to kill many that professed the Gospel, and had a name to live, and destroy many particular churches, comparable to ships; but, as before, it is best to understand this of another incursion of the Goths into the Roman empire, and of the effects of it; and it seems to have respect to the taking and sacking of Rome by Alaricus, king of the West Goths, in the year 410, or 412 [f252]. Rome is very fitly represented by a great mountain, as kingdoms and cities sometimes are; (see <38407>Zechariah 4:7 <23302>Isaiah 13:2); seeing it was built on seven mountains; and its being taken and burnt by Alaricus is aptly expressed by a burning mountain, as the destruction of Babylon, which is another name for Rome, is by a burnt mountain in (<24525>Jeremiah 51:25); the "sea" into which this was cast may signify the great number of people and nations within its jurisdiction which suffered, and were thrown into confusion at this time; so distresses and calamities in nations are expressed by a like figure in (<19602>Psalm 46:2);

and the third part of the sea became blood; that is, a third part of the jurisdiction of Rome, signified by the sea, (see <24536>Jeremiah 51:36); was afflicted with wars and bloodshed by this same sort of people; for while

these things were done in Italy, a like calamity fell on France and Spain; the Alans, Vandals, and Sueves, having depopulated France, passed over the Pyraenean mountains, and seized on Spain; the Vandals and Sueves on Gallaecia; the Alans on Portugal; and the Silingi, which was another sort of Vandals, invaded Andalusia [f253]; the Goths under Ataulphus entered France, and the Burgundians seized that part of it next the Rhine [f254]: (see Exodus 7:20,21).

Ver. 9. *And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea*, etc.] The fishes; by whom men are meant, the inhabitants of the Roman empire; (see Ezekiel 29:4,5), where by fish the Targum understands mighty princes and governors:

and had life, died; were put to death by these savage and barbarous people, who killed all they met with, men, women, and children, young and old, rich and poor, high and low:

and the third part of the ships were destroyed; by which may be designed either the cities and towns within such a part of the Roman jurisdiction, which were burnt or plundered by them; or their goods and effects, which they pillaged, and carried off the wealth and riches of the people, even all their substance, as Austin [f255] and Jerom [f256], who lived in those times, affirm.

Ver. 10. *And the third angel sounded*, etc.] His trumpet:

and there fell a great star from heaven; not Mahomet, as some think, for this time is too soon for him, who rose up under the fifth trumpet; nor Arius, for whom it is too late, who lived in the times of Constantine; and still less Origen, who lived before his time; but rather Pelagius, who was a man of great eminence in the church, of much learning, and made great pretensions to religion and holiness, and, like a star and lamp, shone forth awhile, with great lustre and splendour, but fell into very great errors; denying original sin, and asserting the purity of human nature, crying up the power of man's free will, and asserting that human nature, without the grace of God, was able to keep the whole law, even to perfection; and his name, according to his doctrine, was wormwood and gall, which embittered the sweet doctrines of the free grace of God, and affected the fountains and rivers, the sacred Scriptures, from whence these doctrines flow; so that instead of being pleasant and wholesome to men, through his false glosses and perverse interpretations of them, they became bitter and

poisonous; and many souls, that received and imbibed his sense of them, died spiritually, and were lost and perished, as all must inevitably, who depend on the strength and works of nature, and deny and despise the grace of God: but it is best, as the other trumpets, so to understand this of the invasions of the above barbarous people, particularly the Vandals under Genseric, who being turned out of Spain by the Goths, went into Africa, where peace was made, and part of Africa given them to dwell in; after which Genseric, through treachery, seized upon Carthage, and greatly afflicted Sicily: Theodosius made war against them to no purpose, and peace being made between Valentinian and Genseric, Africa was divided between them; and some time after Rome was spoiled by Genseric of all its riches [f257]. Mr. Daubuz thinks Attila, king of the Huns, called the dread of the world, and the scourge of God, is meant by this star; who was a rebel against the Romans, and made sad ravages in the empire; at the beginning of which troubles a great comet appeared; and, according to Cassiodorus [f258], the Huns were auxiliaries to the Romans against the Goths; but Litorius the Roman general was taken; and after this the Huns rebelled, and depopulated Thrace and Illyricum; and Attila, their king, having slain his brother Bleda, and partner, became sole monarch; and though the Romans under Actius, by the help of the Goths, beat him in the fields of Catalaun, and obliged him to depart, yet afterwards, having got a reinforcement, he entered with great force into Aquileia, with whom Pope Leo made peace:

burning as it were a lamp; this star resembled that which is called Lampadias, which Pliny says [f259] imitates, or bears a likeness to burning torches; and he speaks of a spark which fell out of a star, which had such an appearance [f260]: this is expressive of war, and great destruction in the empire:

and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of water; that is, upon the large provinces and chief cities belonging to the Roman empire, and the governors of them, who suffered very bitterly and severely in these times; compare with this (<332>Ezekiel 32:2,6). The last clause, “and upon the fountains of waters”, is left out in the Alexandrian copy.

Ver. 11. *And the name of the star is called Wormwood*, etc.] Because of the bitter afflictions, sorrows, and distresses which it was the instrument of; just as Naomi called herself Mara, because the Almighty had dealt bitterly with her, (<080120>Ruth 1:20);

and the third part of the waters became wormwood; that is, the inhabitants of the provinces and cities belonging to the Roman empire were afflicted with grievous and bitter afflictions and calamities; so great distresses are called wormwood, and waters of gall given to drink, (<24>Jeremiah 9:15 <25>Lamentations 3:19);

and many men died of the waters, because they were bitter; through the barbarities and cruelties of these savage people, who afflicted the empire: there seems to be an allusion to (<02>Exodus 15:23).

Ver. 12. *And the fourth angel sounded*, etc.] His trumpet. Some think this refers to the Eutychian heresy, which confounded the two natures of Christ, and of two made one mixed nature, neither human nor divine; and brought great darkness upon the doctrine of Christ's person, the sun of righteousness and into the church, signified by the moon, and among the ministers of the word, the stars. Others are of opinion that that darkness which preceded the rise of the Papacy, and introduced it, is here intended:

and the third part of the sun was smitten and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars, so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise; when the doctrine concerning the person and offices of Christ, who is the sun and light of the world, was obscured by heresies; and the discipline of the church, which, like the moon, has all its light, beauty, and order from Christ, was sadly defaced by the introduction of Jewish and Paganish rites and ceremonies; and the ministers, the stars, were drawn by the tail of the drag on, and cast to the earth, became corrupt in their principles, and carnal and sensual in their lives; so that it was a time of great darkness and gloominess, night and day: but rather this trumpet has respect to that darkness and ignorance which the above barbarous nations, the Goths, Huns, Vandals, and Heruli, spread, and left throughout the empire; for from this time there was a visible decline, as of evangelical light and knowledge, so of all kind of useful knowledge, and nothing but ignorance, stupidity, and barbarity, took place everywhere; and which were very assisting to the man of sin, antichrist, to fix and settle his dominion over the kingdoms which rose up out of the empire at this time; and it also refers to the entire destruction of the western Roman empire, which is expressed by much the same figures as the ruin of the Roman Pagan empire, in (<66>Revelation 6:12,13); and which the various irruptions of these savage people issued in; compare with this (<26>Ezekiel 32:7,8), where the

destruction of the Egyptian monarchy is signified in like terms: Jerom, who lived about the time of the first inundation of these nations, in very mournful language expresses the inhumanity and impiety of them, and the ruin they threatened the empire with; and, says [f261], "[Romanus] orbis ruit", "the [Roman] empire is falling". About the year 455, when Rome was taken by Genseric the Vandal, the empire was divided into ten kingdoms; and in the year 476, Augustulus, the last of the Roman emperors, was obliged to quit his imperial dignity: the Heruli, a people of the same kind with the Goths, and originally Scythians, as they, under their king and leader Odoacer seized on Italy, took Rome, killed Orestes and his brother Paul, and deposed Augustulus, the last of the Roman emperors, and banished him into Campania; and so the western empire ceased, Odoacer taking upon him the title of king of Italy, and translated the seat of the empire from Rome to Ravenna [f262]; and then might the sun be truly said to be smitten: but still, though Odoacer the Herulian reigned in Italy, the Roman form of government was not altered, the consulship and senate still continued, as they did also under Theodoric the Goth, his successor; but when Italy was recovered by Narses, the Emperor Justinian's general, these, with other magistrates, ceased, and Rome became a dukedom, and was subject to an exarch of Ravenna; and then the moon and stars were smitten also. The phrase of smiting the sun, moon, and stars, is Jewish; for the Jews express the eclipses of the luminaries in this way, and say [f263] that when the luminaries ˆyqwl, "are smitten", it is an ill omen; when hqwl hmjh, "the sun is smitten", it is an ill sign to the nations of the world; and when hqwl hnbl, "the moon is smitten", it is a bad omen to the nations of Israel [f64] and so the phrase, "the day shone not", is also Jewish; it is said [f65] of some Rabbins, that they sat and studied in the law amwy ryhnd d[, "until the day shone"; and when "the day shone", they rose up and went on their way.

Ver. 13. *And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, instead of "an angel", read "an eagle"; and to "fly" agrees with either of them, and the sense is the same let it be read either way; and this angel may design either Christ, or a created angel, or a minister of the Gospel, as in (Revelation 14:6); did the next trumpet introduce Popery, as some have supposed, Gregory bishop of Rome might be thought, as he is by some, to be the angel here intended, since he gave notice and warning of antichrist being at hand:

saying with a loud voice; that all might hear, and as having something of importance to say, and delivering it with great fervour and affection:

woe, woe, woe; three times, answerable to the three trumpets yet to be blown; and which are therefore called the woe trumpets: and these woes are denounced

to the inhabiters of the earth; the Roman empire, particularly the eastern part of it, which the fifth and sixth trumpets relate unto; and even the whole world, with which the seventh trumpet is concerned:

by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound! the design of this loud cry of the angel is to show, that though the distresses and ruin which the barbarous nations had brought upon the western empire were very great; yet those which would come upon the eastern empire by the Saracens and Turks, under the sounding of the fifth and sixth trumpets, would be much more grievous; and especially the judgments which the seventh trumpet would bring upon the whole world, when all the nations of the earth will be judged. From the sounding of the fourth trumpet, to the sounding of the fifth, was a space of a hundred and thirty five years, that is, from the deposition of Augustulus, A. D. 476, to the public preaching of Mahomet, A. D. 612.

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 9

This chapter gives an account of the blowing of the fifth and sixth trumpets, and of the effects following upon them. The fifth angel blows his trumpet, and a star falls; the key of the bottomless pit is given to him, which being opened by it, out of it comes smoke to the darkening of the sun and air, and out of the smoke locusts, who have power like scorpions, (Revelation 9:1-3); whose power is restrained from using it to the hurt of the grass, or any green thing or tree, only of those who had not the seal of God in their foreheads; but are permitted, though not to kill men, yet to torment them five months, which is worse than death unto them, (Revelation 9:4-6). The shapes of these locusts, which are said to be like horses, are described by their heads, faces, hair, teeth, breastplates, wings, and tails, and are said to have a king over them, whose name is mentioned, (Revelation 9:7-11). The blowing of this trumpet brings on one of the woes mentioned in (Revelation 8:13), and the two other follow, (Revelation 9:12). The sixth angel blows his trumpet, and a voice is heard from the horns of the altar, directed to the said angel, ordering him to loose four angels bound in the great river Euphrates, where they were prepared, for a determinate time, to slay the third part of men, and they were loosed accordingly, (Revelation 9:13-15). The number of the army, under these angels, is given, (Revelation 9:16), and the horses and horsemen are described; the riders by their breastplates of fire, jacinth, and brimstone; their horses' heads as heads of lions, fire, smoke, and brimstone, issuing out of their mouths, by which the third part of men are killed, (Revelation 9:17,18). The reason of this slaughter is, because they had power both in their mouth and tails, which latter were like serpents, and had heads, with which they did mischief, (Revelation 9:19); and yet such who were not killed by these plagues, but escaped, did not repent of their idolatry, murders, sorceries, fornication, and theft, (Revelation 9:20,21).

Ver. 1. *And the fifth angel sounded*, etc.] His trumpet:

and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: some take this star to be Jesus Christ, the bright and morning star; and understand by falling, no other than his descending from heaven to earth, in which sense the word is used in (<01140>Genesis 14:10); and that because he is not only said to have the keys of hell and death, (<660118>Revelation 1:18); but particularly the key of the bottomless pit, (<662001>Revelation 20:1); but then there is a wide difference in the use of the key by the star here, and the angel there, or between the opening of the pit, and letting out smoke and locusts, and the shutting it up, and Satan in it; the one well suits with Christ, the other not: nor is Satan here designed, as others think, who once was a bright star, and shone among the morning stars, but by sin fell from heaven, his first estate; and the fall of this Lucifer, son of the morning, was as lightning from heaven, (<421018>Luke 10:18). But then this was a matter over and past, and what was well known to John; nor did he need a vision to represent this unto him: nor is Arius intended, who lived before any of the trumpets were blown; nor the Emperor Valens, who fell from the heavenly doctrine of Christ's divinity into the Arian heresy, which he encouraged and defended; whereby Christ, the sun of righteousness, was obscured, and the air, the church, enlightened by Christ, was darkened; in whose time the locusts, the Goths and Vandals, infected with Arianism, greatly distressed the eastern Christians; but his reign was long before the fifth angel sounded his trumpet, which was after the year 600: wherefore by this star is meant antichrist; but whether the western or eastern antichrist, the pope of Rome, or Mahomet, is a question: some interpreters go one way, and some another: Brightman thinks both are intended, seeing they both are antichrist, and rose to the height of their power much about the same time; and the characters and circumstances in this vision very. Well agree with them both: what is objected to Mahomet is, that he never was a doctor or teacher in the church, or had any dignity in it, which a star in this book most commonly signifies, and therefore could not be said to fall from it; but this may be observed, that the Arabians, among whom he lived, had received the Christian religion before his time; that he himself was conversant with the Scriptures, as appears by his wretched perversion of them in his Alcoran; and certain it is, that his accomplices were such as had professed Christianity, as Sergius, a Nestorian of Constantinople, and John of Antioch, an Arian, and he himself set up for a prophet: others think the pope of Rome is meant by the star, seeing the bishops of that city had shone out in great light and purity of doctrine and practice formerly, but now about this time most sadly apostatized; they had been indeed gradually

declining for some time, but now they may be said openly to fall from heaven, when Phocas, who murdered his master, the Emperor Mauritius, and took the imperial crown to himself, gave to Pope Boniface the Third the title and power of universal bishop, about the year 606, which he and his successors exercised in a most haughty and tyrannical manner:

and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit; which shows that this could not be a star in a literal sense, but must design some man, or body of men, and agrees well with the popes of Rome: by "the bottomless pit" is meant hell, out of which the beast arose, and into which Satan will be cast, (⁶⁶¹⁰⁷Revelation 11:7 17:8 20:3); and by "the key" is designed the power of it, of opening and shutting it, of saving persons from it, or of casting them into it; and which the popes of Rome take to themselves, even all power in heaven, earth, and hell, signified by their triple crown; and which they arrogate to such a degree as to say, that if the pope should send many thousands into hell, no one ought to say, what dost thou? This is a different key from what were given to Peter; he had the keys of the kingdom of heaven, his pretended successors have the key of the bottomless pit; his were keys of knowledge, theirs of ignorance, and of the depths of Satan, let out of this bottomless pit, of which the antichristian religion, both Popish and Mahometan, consist; his were given by Christ, theirs by Phocas a murderer; or they had their power from the dragon, (⁶⁶¹³²Revelation 13:2,4); from Satan himself, according to whose working and influence they come forth, though by divine permission.

Ver. 2. *And he opened the bottomless pit*, etc.] With the key that was given him; he made use of his universal power over all bishops and churches, enacted laws, issued out decrees, made articles of faith, and imposed them on men's consciences, and obliged all to submit to his hellish principles and practices; and this, as it may be applied to Mahomet, the eastern antichrist, may regard the publishing of his Alcoran, and obliging all his followers to receive it as the infallible word of God:

and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; the Complutensian edition reads, "of a burning furnace"; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; which may design false doctrine, and superstitious worship, which sprung from the decrees of popes and councils, and the Alcoran of Mahomet: and smoke being a dark thin vapour, and very troublesome to the eyes and nose, and of a perishing nature, which soon vanishes away, these are fitly expressed by it; for they are the hidden things

of darkness, and the authors and abettors of them are such who darken counsel by words without knowledge; they are empty things, have no solidity and substance in them, are comparable to wood, hay, stubble, smoke, and wind; and are very troublesome and offensive to all enlightened persons, and who have the smell and savour of divine things; and will all perish with the using, being the doctrines and commandments of men, when the true Gospel is an everlasting one. Smoke sometimes designs great afflictions, punishments, and judgments upon men, (<01517>Genesis 15:17 <23143>Isaiah 14:31); and here may represent those judgments, both spiritual and temporal, which the antichristian doctrine and worship, brought upon the world, and which have been manifest in all ages since.

And the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit; Christ, the sun of righteousness, was greatly obscured by the Romish antichrist, by his false doctrine and worship, in his offices, merits, and grace, he taking upon him to be head of the church, the infallible interpreter of Scripture, and to give out pardons and indulgences; and particularly by the doctrines of merit, of works of supererogation, and of justification by works, etc. as he also was by Mahomet, who represented him only as a mere man, and exalted himself above him as a prophet; and by both were "the air", the church which receives its light from Christ, darkened; or the Scriptures, which are the breath of God, are given by inspiration of him, these were most grievously beclouded, and most wretchedly perverted, both by the decrees of popes, and the Alcoran of Mahomet. And it is remarkable what Abulpharagius [f266], an Arabic writer, reports, that in the seventeenth year of Heraclius the emperor, which was the year 627, and the fifth of the Hegira, in which year Mahomet began to plunder and make war; for in this year was his plundering excursion into Dumato'l Jundal, and the battle of Bani Lahyan, that half of the body of the sun was darkened; and the darkness remained from Tisrin the first, to the month Haziran, so that very little of its light appeared; which might portend that darkness he was introducing by his wretched religion. And frequently the sun and air have been darkened at noonday by the locusts, as Pliny [f267] relates; and of which we have had a late account from Transylvania; (see <02015>Exodus 8:15).

Ver. 3. *And there came out of the smoke locusts the earth*, etc.] Not literally, for these locusts might not meddle with the grass, nor any green thing, or tree, as locusts do, only men, (<66904>Revelation 9:4); and had a king over them, (<66911>Revelation 9:11); which locusts have not, (<20617>Proverbs

30:27), though the allusion is to such, which spawn and breed in pits, and may be properly said to come out of them; hence in the Hebrew tongue they are called ybg, from abg, “a pit”, or “ditch”: nor are devils intended, though they may be compared to locusts for their original, hell, or the bottomless pit; and for their numbers, we read of a legion of them in one man; and for their hurtful and mischievous nature: nor are the Goths and Vandals designed; these, though they harassed some parts of the eastern empire, yet chiefly the western; besides, they appeared under the former trumpets: but these are to be understood of the western and eastern locusts, especially the latter. The western locusts are the clergy of the church of Rome, cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, and friars, of every order; these were not instituted by Christ, but rose out of the bottomless pit, from the antichristian smoke of councils, decrees, and traditions; and are fitly compared to locusts for their number, which have been almost as the sand of the sea innumerable, and have spread themselves all over the nations of the earth, that have gone by the name of Christendom; and for their devouring nature, living in plenty and idleness, upon the fat of the land, in the best commons, glutting themselves with the spoils of others, devouring widows' houses, and impoverishing countries and kingdoms wherever they come. The eastern locusts are the Saracens, and who are chiefly designed; and who were to harass and distress the eastern empire, and prepare for its ruin, which is brought on under the next trumpet by the Turks. These are fitly signified by locusts, because the locusts generally come out of the eastern parts: it was an east wind which brought the plague of locusts into Egypt, (<2Exodus 10:13); and the children of the east, the Arabians, are compared to grasshoppers, or locusts, in (<7Judges 7:12); and one of the names of a locust is hbra, “Arbeh”, not much unlike in sound to an Arab. To which may be added, that it is a tradition of the Arabians, that there fell locusts into the hands of Mahomet, on whose backs and wings were written these words;

> “we are the army of the most high God; we are the ninety and nine eggs, and if the hundred should be made perfect, we should consume the whole world, and whatever is in it.”

And it was a law established by Mahomet, ye shall not kill the locusts, for they are the army of the most high God; and the Mahometans fancy that the locusts were made of the same clay as Adam was: and besides the

tradition before mentioned, they say, that as Mahomet sat at table a locust fell, with these words on its back and wings;

> "I am God, neither is there any Lord of the locusts besides me, who feed them; and when I please I send them to be food to the people, and when I please I send them to be a scourge unto them;"

hence his Saracens may well go by this name. Now these Saracens sprung up in the times of antichristian darkness, both Papal and Mahometan, and may be said to come out of the smoke of the bottomless pit; and the religion of Mahomet, which they embraced, was no other; and like locusts they were innumerable, they went in troops and bands, as locusts do, (<20>Proverbs 30:27); pillaging and ravaging all they could and their sudden and frequent incursions, the desolations and ravages which they made in the eastern empire, are very aptly expressed by the running to and fro of locusts; (see <23>Isaiah 33:4 <29>Joel 2:9).

And unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power; that is, to torment then, by striking them with their stings in their tails, (<66>Revelation 9:5,10). These are called "scorpions of the earth", to distinguish them from sea scorpions, which are a kind of fish: so Aristotle [f268] and [f269] Pliny speak of terrestrial scorpions, which are the most hurtful; these are of the serpentine kind have an innocent and harmless look, but are soon angry; have stings in their tails, which they are always striking with, that they may miss no opportunity of doing mischief, and with which they strike in an oblique way [f270]; and which very fitly describes the Saracens, the race of the Ishmaelites, a generation of vipers, a subtle and treacherous sort of people, very furious and wrathful, and who lived by continual robbing and plundering of others at an unawares: and this may be applied to the western locusts, the monks and friars, who are the seed of the serpent; and who by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple, have a form of godliness, and speak lies in hypocrisy, and lie in wait to deceive; and being provoked, are full of wrath and anger, and strike very hard with their anathemas and excommunications, and other sorts of punishment, which they have power to inflict.

Ver. 4. *And it was commanded them*, etc.] The locusts, by Christ, who has a sovereign power over all men, and lays them under the restraints of his providence:

that they should not hurt the grass of the earth: true Christians, private believers, it may be those of the lower class; who for their numbers, and for their flourishing estate under the dews of heavenly grace, and the distillations of the doctrine of grace, and the clear shining of the sun of righteousness upon them, and for their weakness, may be compared to grass; and yet as these being a company reserved by Christ for himself, who will not break nor bruise them, so neither will he suffer others to hurt them, and resents every offence done to these little ones:

neither any green thing; who have the truth of grace in them, are spiritually alive, and in prosperous circumstances, in a fruitful condition, being filled with the fruits of righteousness from Christ, the green fir tree, and whose leaves of profession continue green; and are themselves, as David says of himself; like a green olive tree in the house of God, (<19B03>Psalm 3:8).

Neither any tree; any trees of righteousness, good and righteous who are often compared to trees planted by rivers of water, (<19B03>Psalm 1:3) (<24708>Jeremiah 17:8); it may be the ministers of the Gospel, then of great grace and gifts, the tall cedars in Lebanon, may be intended; and so by these various expressions, Christians of every size, from the lowest to the highest class, may be signified. Green things and leaves of trees are what the locusts generally destroy, as appears from the plague of them in Egypt, (<02B05>Exodus 10:5,12,15); and as they did in Syria in the year 1586, as Thuanus reports [f271]. Now as grass, green things, and trees, are what locusts most desire to feed upon and hurt, so real believers, truly godly persons, are those which both the eastern and western locusts, the Mahometans and Papists, have been very desirous of rooting out and destroying; but Christ takes care of these; these are as the apple of his eye, his jewels, his sheep, his sealed ones; none shall hurt them, they shall never perish; he knows them that are his, and he will preserve them amidst fire and smoke, amidst all the corruptions and calamities in the world:

but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads; (see <66702>Revelation 7:2,3); the antichristian party, those of the Romish apostasy, the Papists; and these were they that suffered most by the Saracens, who abhorred image worship, and fell foul on the idolaters of this kind: and, on the other hand, the western locusts, the clergy of the church of Rome, had only influence over the reprobate part of mankind, and only wrought with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, who were giver,

up to believe a lie, that they might be damned, but not upon any of the chosen ones, (2 Thessalonians 2:11-13).

Ver. 5. *And to them it was given that they should not kill them*, etc.] As the power of the locusts was limited with respect to the persons they should hurt, so with regard also to the mischief they should do; for even those whom they were suffered to annoy they might not kill, that is, utterly root out and destroy, so as that they were no more: and thus, though the Saracens killed great numbers in the eastern empire, by their frequent incursions and ravages, and made large conquests, yet they could never destroy the empire itself, or bring it in subjection to them; nor did they ever take Constantinople, the metropolis and seat of the empire, though they often besieged it. And as for the western locusts, the months, friars, etc. though they kill the souls, yet not the bodies of men that are under their power and influence:

but that they should be tormented five months; that is, not that the locusts should be tormented, but men by the locusts; and so the eastern empire was grievously teased and tormented by the Saracens, and many parts of it were conquered, plundered, and pillaged by them, though it was not killed and put an end to. In the year 628, Mahomet with his Saracens having obtained a place in Arabia Felix to dwell in, died in the year 631; from which time his successors, the Saracens, by little and little, subdued Palestine, Syria, and Egypt; and, in the year 640, took Persis, putting King Hormisda to flight; they laid siege to Constantinople seven years, but without success; in the year 698, Carthage was taken by them; and in following times many countries on the continent, and many of the islands, were grievously infested and distressed by them; though the empire itself did not fall into their hands; it was tormented by them, but not destroyed. And the western locusts have most dreadfully tormented men by their exorbitant dues demanded of them; and by obliging them to confessions, and to attend Mass; by enjoining them whippings, fastings, pilgrimages, and penances, and with the terrors of purgatory, and the like. The time that the locusts should torment men, which is “five months”, seems not to design any determinate time; but only that seeing five months is the time that locusts live, and are in their strength and power, even the five, hottest months in the year, from April to September [f272], this seems to denote, that as long as the locusts live, the Saracens in the east, and the monks and friars in the west, so long men should be tormented by them; for it is certain that these have had power to torment men longer time than barely

five months; yea, even though these should be understood, according to the prophetic style used in this book, of five months of years, or an hundred and fifty years; and though this should be doubled, seeing they are repeated, (Revelation 9:10); and so make up in all three hundred ears; for both the Saracens and the Romish clergy have distressed men, either of them, longer time than this: indeed, the flourishing condition of the Saracens was but about three hundred years, or two five months; but their empire or dominion lasted longer, even from the year 622, which was the year of the "Hegira", or flight of Mahomet, to the year 1057 [f273], when the Turkish empire succeeded it: though it is pretty remarkable, that from the year 612, in which Mahomet began to preach publicly, and so let out the smoke with the locusts, to the year 762, in which the city of Bagdad was built, when and where the Saracens settled, and made no more excursions of any consequence, were just an hundred and fifty years, or five months of years, as Mr. Daubuz observes; and I will not say that this is not intended by this prophecy. Noah's flood prevailed over the earth one hundred and fifty days, or five months, (Genesis 7:24).

And their torment [was] as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man; which gives great pain, is very distressing, and their stings are poisonous and mortal: it signifies how troublesome and afflictive those locusts were; to be among them was to live among scorpions, as in (Ezekiel 2:6). As these locusts are like scorpions, so scorpions have been seen sometimes with wings like locusts; such an one, Pausanias [f274] relates, was brought into Ionia by a Phrygian.

Ver. 6. *And in those days men shall seek death*, etc.] Or desire to die, as Job did:

and shall not find it; or shall not die:

and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them; death will be preferred to a miserable life; it will be chosen rather than life, (Jeremiah 8:3). The ravages of the Saracens, their incursions, and the invasions by them, struck such terror into the inhabitants of divers parts of the empire, that they made death more eligible to them than life.

Ver. 7. *And the shapes of the locusts [were] like unto horses*, etc.] The heads of locusts, especially of some of them, are very much like the heads of horses: and here they are compared to horses

prepared unto battle; as they are in (Joel 2:4). The horse is a warlike creature, swift, strong, and courageous, (Job 39:21-25). Locusts sometimes have appeared in the form of armies, and have marched in great order with their leaders before them, and have pitched their camps very regularly; (see Joel 2:7); of which we have lately had an account from Transylvania in our public papers. (This was published in 1747, Ed.) This part of their description may denote the wars of the Saracens, and the rapidity, force, and power with which they overran great part of the empire; and as it may be applied to the western locusts, the disputes, contentions, and quarrels raised by the Romish clergy.

And on their heads [were], as it were, crowns like gold; and in this shape some locusts have appeared, to which the allusion seems to be in, (Na 3:17), "thy crowned men are as the locusts". In the year 1542, it is said [f275], that locusts came out of Turkish Sarmatia, into Austria, Silesia, and other places, which had on their heads "little crowns"; (see Ezekiel 23:42). And the Arabians, as Pliny observes, go "mitrati" [f276], with mitres, turbans like crowns, on their heads. This may design the several victories and conquests which the Saracens obtained in Arabia, Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, Spain, and many other places; and supposing this to have any reference to the western locusts, it may respect the triple crown of the head of then, the caps of the cardinals, the mitres of the bishops, and the shaven pates of the priests, in form of crowns.

And their faces [were] as the faces of men; which may be expressive of the affable carriage of Mahomet, and his followers, especially to the Christians, and of his great pretensions to holiness and religion, and of the plausible and insinuating ways, and artful methods, used by him, to gain upon men; and being applied to the clergy of the church of Rome, may denote their show of humanity, and their pretended great concern for the welfare of the souls of men, their flatteries, good words, and fair speeches, with which they deceive the simple and unwary.

Ver. 8. *And they had hair, as the hair of women*, etc.] Some locusts have smooth, others hairy heads [f277]: this fitly points at the Arabians or Saracens, who, as Pliny says [f278], used to wear long hair without cutting it, and attired as women, and have their names also from women: they were called Hagarenes, from Hagar, Abraham's handmaid, by whom he had Ishmael, the father of these people; afterwards they took the name of Saracens, from Sarah, the wife of Abraham, whose posterity they would be thought to be;

though they may have the latter name, either from qrs, to “rob” and “steal”, with the Arabians, or from the same word, as it signifies to “comb”, from the combing and plaiting: of their hair. This may also point at the effeminacy of the western locusts, the monks and friars, who dress more like women than men; and many of them claim the virgin Mary for their patroness; and may in general design the votaries of the church of Rome, who are under the vow of a monastic life, as those among the Jews, under a Nazarite's vow, wore long hair.

And their teeth were as [the teeth] of lions; so in (<2005>Joel 1:6); which may denote the ravages and devastations of the Saracens in the empire, robbing, pillaging, and destroying all they met with; and is applicable enough to the devouring jaws of the Romish clergy, their plundering the estates of men, their cruelties and barbarities exercised by their Inquisition, etc. Pliny says [f279], that locusts will gnaw the doors of houses.

Ver. 9. *And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron*, etc.] Alluding to the hard skin of the locusts, with which nature has fenced it [f280]; (see <2008>Joel 2:8); and denotes the armour with which the Saracens were accoutred: and if to be understood of the western locusts, the hardness of their hearts, their seared consciences, or their protection by the princes of the earth, the many privileges they are possessed of, the laws made in their favour, and for their security; their breastplates were not breastplates of righteousness, faith, and love, nor in defence of truth, but against it. And some think the iron colour may denote the colour of their habit, their black garments:

and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle; (see <2005>Joel 2:5). The sound of locusts, when they fly or march in large companies, is very great. Pliny says [f281], they make such a noise with their wings, when they fly, that they have been thought to have been other winged creatures; hence a locust, in Hebrew, is sometimes called lxlx, the same name that is given to the high sounding cymbal. The sound of them is said to have been heard six miles [f282]. Aristotle [f283] ascribes it to the rubbing of their legs or thighs one against another; and so the Ethiopic version here renders it, “the sound of their feet”: this may be expressive of the swift and rapid incursions of the Saracens, and of the dreadful alarms to the nations which their invasions made; and may be applied to the noisy declamations, anathemas, excommunications, and interdicts of the Romish clergy.

Ver. 10. *And they had tails like unto scorpions*, etc.] Locusts are said to have the tail of a serpent, and of the vipers of the earth [f284]; (see Gill on "Revelation 9:3"), (see Gill on "Revelation 9:5"). And there were stings in their tails; either in the baser sort of them, the Saracens and Papists; or in their doctrines, the prophet being the tail, (Isaiah 9:15); with which both Mahomet, who set himself up for a prophet, and the Romish clergy, who set up their decrees and unwritten traditions above the word of God, have poisoned and destroyed multitudes of souls:

and their power [was] to hurt men five months; (see Gill on "Revelation 9:5").

Ver. 11. *And they had a king over them*, etc.] Which natural locusts have not, (Proverbs 30:27); by whom is meant the false prophet Mahomet, who was at the head of the Saracens, and led them on to commit the outrages they did; and is believed in by the Turks to this day, as the great prophet of God, and by them preferred to all prophets, not only to Moses, but to Jesus Christ; he is the king of the eastern locusts, as the pope of Rome is the king of the western ones; for the Romish antichrist reigns, or at least has reigned, over the kings of the earth, (Revelation 17:17,18);

[which is] the angel of the bottomless pit; to whom the key of it was given, (Revelation 9:1);

whose name in the Hebrew tongue [is] Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath [his] name Apollyon; both which signify a "destroyer"; and are very applicable both to Mahomet, who by his imposture has been the cause of the destruction of multitudes of souls, as well as by his wars, and those of the Saracens and Turks, of the lives of millions, and of the ruin of many kingdoms, countries, cities, and towns. Abulpharagius [f285], an Arabic writer, relates, that in the times of the Chalif Al-walid, there was one Hejajus, who had caused to be slain, of the chief and illustrious men, an hundred and twenty thousand, besides others of the common people, and that fell in war; moreover, that there died in his prison fifty thousand men, and thirty thousand women: and the same writer reports [f286], that the famous Abu Moslem put to death six hundred thousand men, who were known, besides those that were unknown, and whom he slew in wars and battles: both these instances are taken notice of by Mr. Daubuz, who justly observes, that surely nothing can come near this "Abaddon", but the beast, the son of perdition, (2 Thessalonians 2:3). And to him, the pope of Rome, may the name be truly applied, who has led thousands into

perdition, and will go into it himself; and both he, and the false prophet, with the devil, will be east into the lake, which burns with fire and brimstone, and will be tormented for ever and ever, (<53104>2 Thessalonians 2:4 <66708>Revelation 17:8,11 20:10). "Abaddon", with the Jews, is one of the habitations or apartments of hell [f287], because it destroys all; "Apollyon" is the same with "Apollo", the god of the Heathens, who has his name from destroying [f288].

Ver. 12. *One woe is past*, etc.] One of the three woe trumpets, the first of them; that is, in the vision which John had of it, not the thing itself designed by it:

[and] behold there come two woes more hereafter; under the blowing of the sixth and seventh trumpets.

Ver. 13. *And the sixth angel sounded*, etc.] His trumpet:

and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God; the allusion is not to the altar of burnt offering, which was covered with brass, but to the altar of incense covered with gold; and hence here, and elsewhere, it is called "the golden altar", and was a figure of the intercession of Christ; for on this altar incense was offered, which was typical of the prayers of the saints offered by Christ, through his mediation: the matter of this altar was shittim wood, a wood that is incorruptible, and of long duration, denoting the perpetuity of Christ's intercession; and its being covered with gold expresses the glory and excellency of it; its form was foursquare, as is the city of the new Jerusalem, and shows that Christ's intercession avails for all his people in the four parts of the world: and on it were "four horns", which some think represent the four evangelists, or the Gospel sent into the four parts of the world, and which is the power of God unto salvation; and for the contempt of which, in the eastern empire, the judgments signified under this trumpet came upon it; though rather these may point at the large extent and fulness of Christ's intercession, for all his people, in the four corners of the earth, as well as his power to protect and defend them, and to scatter and destroy his and their enemies. This altar is said to be "before God", in a visionary way, as the altar of incense was before the vail, and the mercy seat, and by the ark of the testimony, (<23001>Exodus 30:1-3,6); suggesting that Christ continually appears in the presence of God for all the saints. Now from hence was a "voice heard" by John, and which seems to be the voice of Christ, the advocate and intercessor. In the Greek text it is, "one voice";

not the voice of many angels round about the throne, nor of the souls under the altar, but of the one and only Mediator between God and man, the Lord Jesus Christ; and this was a voice, not supplicating, but commanding, being addressed to one of his ministering spirits.

Ver. 14. *Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet*, etc.] The sixth trumpet, which was given him, and he had prepared himself to sound, and had sounded:

loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates; not the four angels in (<66701>Revelation 7:1); they stood upon the four corners of the earth; these were in, or at the river Euphrates; they held the four winds, that they should not blow, or restrained the savage nations, that they should not hurt; these are bound themselves, that they might not do mischief; nor are angels by nature at all intended; not evil angels, though they are bound in chains of darkness, and are reserved to judgment, they are admitted indeed to rove about in the air and earth, but are under the restraints of the power and providence of God; nor good angels, who are at the divine beck, and go in and out, and are detained and sent forth according to the pleasure of God, and are sometimes employed in killing great numbers of men; (see <102415>2 Samuel 24:15,16 <121935>2 Kings 19:35); but men are here meant, as appears from (<66916>Revelation 9:16,17), and particularly the Turks, as most interpreters agree; who dwelt on the other side the river Euphrates, and were let loose, or suffered to pass over that river into the eastern empire, to ruin and destroy it, as they did: these are called “angels”, because of their might and force, their power and strength, with which they bore all before them; and for their great swiftness and rapidity in the victories and conquests which the Ottoman family obtained; who, from very small beginnings, raised themselves, in a very little time, to a large monarchy, and founded the Turkish empire, which, from them, is to this day called the Ottoman empire. Ottoman the First subdued great part of Bithynia, and fixed the seat of his kingdom at Prusa; or rather his son Urchanes, who conquered Mysia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, Caria, and the rest, to the Hellespont, and the Euxine sea. Amurath his son took Callipolis, Hadrianople, and the adjacent provinces. Bajazet added to the empire Thessalia, Macedonia, Phocis, Attica, Mysia, and Bulgaria; and Mahomet the Second took Constantinople itself, and thereby put an end to the eastern empire; and all this was done in a very few years: it is said of this last, that he conquered two empires, and twelve kingdoms, and above two hundred cities [f289]. And these Ottoman Turks may be called angels, or

messengers, because they were the messengers and executioners of God's wrath upon the eastern empire: they are signified by “four angels”, either, as some think, because of the four names of Saracens, Turks, Tartars, and Arabians, though all Mahometans, under which they went, before they were united under one emperor, Ottoman; or rather because of the four principalities, or governments, into which they were divided, while they were upon the banks of, or near to the river Euphrates; the seat of one being at Iconium, another at Bagdad, a third at Aleppo, and a fourth at Damascus; and chiefly because, when they passed the river Euphrates, they had four princes at the head of them, Soliman Shak, and his three sons. Soliman himself, as he passed, not knowing the fords of the river, was drowned in it; at which his sons being so affrighted, two of them, Sankur Zengi, and Gun Tugdi, returned to Persia, but the third, Ortogrules, with his three sons (which made “four” again) Condoz, Sarubani, and Othman, or Ottoman, continued, to whom Aladdin, sultan of Iconium, gave them some land among the mountains of Armenia [f290]; and from hence, by degrees, as before observed, a large empire was raised. Now these are said to be “bound in the great river Euphrates”; which river is to be literally understood, and is the same with that which is so called in (Genesis 2:14 15:18), and ran through Mesopotamia and Chaldea, and was the boundary of the Roman empire; so it was fixed by Hadrian [f291]; and beyond which the Turks, before this time did rarely go, and if they did, retired again: for till this time, as the historian says [f292], the Turks had Asia, εντος του ευφρατου, “within Euphrates”, and the Arabians Coelo-Syria and Phoenicia. Now here these were bound; they were not suffered to pass the river, or to make any inroads of any consequence further into the Roman empire; they were restrained, by the decree of God, from proceeding any further till this time; which, as he fixes a decreed place for the sea, that its waves should come thus far, and no further, so he restrains princes from their enterprises, and settles the bounds of empires, as long as he pleases; and they were kept back by the power of God from pouring in upon the empire, and pouring forth their fury upon it, who causes the wrath of men to praise him, and restrains the remainder of it; and they were also prevented from coming any further, as yet, through the internal divisions among themselves, and by the victories of the Christians in Palestine.

Ver. 15. *And the four angels were loosed*, etc.] The time being come, fixed by the decrees of God, making use of the Turks for the destruction of the eastern empire, the restraints of divine Providence were taken off from

them, and they were suffered to pass the river Euphrates; they were let loose like so many furies, and in a little time overran and destroyed the whole empire, and settled their own, now called the Turkish or Ottoman empire; and which was done about the year 1301.

Which were prepared for an hour and a day, and a month, and a year, *for to slay the third part of men*; which may in general denote their readiness, vigilance, and quick dispatch: they lay for a good while hovering over the banks of the river Euphrates, as if they were waiting for an order, or a commission to go over it: they were ready not only at a year's, a month's, a day's, but at an hour's warning, and all of them together; and as soon as ever they had the divine permission, they lost no time; they improved every opportunity, every year, every month, every day, every hour, to settle and enlarge their dominions to the ruin of others; and in a very short time did they accomplish what they desired: though others think this refers to a certain time fixed by God, in which they should be employed in killing men; and the sense is, that these people were prepared in the purposes and decrees of God, or were appointed for such a length of time here signified, by several dates, in which they should destroy a large multitude of men, by way of punishment for their idolatries, murders, sorceries, fornication, and thefts, (Revelation 9:20,21). An hour, which is the twenty fourth of a day or year, in the prophetic style, is fifteen days, and a day is a year, and a month is thirty years, and a year is three hundred sixty five years and a quarter, or ninety one days; in all, three hundred and ninety six years, and a hundred and six days; which is the precise time between A. D. 1057, when the Turkish empire begun, the empire of the Saracens being entirely demolished by Togrul Beg, or Tangrolipix, and A. D. 1453, in which year Constantinople was taken by the Turks, and an end put to the eastern Roman empire, signified by the third part of men; or else this space of time may be reckoned from the date of Ottoman's reign, May 19, 1301, which, to September 1, 1697, is just this term of time, when Prince Eugene obtained a remarkable victory over the Turks, the effect of which was the peace at Carlowitz the next year, since which time the Turks have done but little in Europe: and by this it should seem that their time of killing men here is over, and that their own destruction is hastening on. Mr. Daubuz rejects these computations, since a prophetic year consists of 360 days or years, and not 365, as those suppose; and thinks there is no mystery in these dates, and only signify the angels' unanimous execution of their commission at once.

Ver. 16. *And the number of the army of the horsemen*, etc.] This shows that the four angels before mentioned were men, and design generals of armies, or armies of men, even of horsemen; and manifestly point at the Turks, who were not only originally Persians, and had their name, as some say [f293], from Turca in Persia, and ç r p, from whence the Persians have their name, signifies an horseman; but the armies of the Turks chiefly consisted of horse, and what for show and for use, they had generally double the number of horses and mules as of men [f294]; and they are very good horsemen, and very dextrous at leaping on and off [f295]; and the horse's tail is still carried before the general, and principal officers, as an ensign expressive of their military exploits, and showing where their main strength lies. And the number of this mighty army, it is said,

[were] two hundred thousand thousand; or "two myriads of myriads"; two hundred millions, or twenty thousand brigades of ten thousand each; that is, a very large and prodigious number, almost infinite and incredible, like the army of Gog and Magog, as the sand of the sea, (Revelation 20:8). The Turks used to bring, and still do bring vast armies into the field: in the year 1396, Bajazet, with three hundred thousand men, fell upon sixty thousand Christians, killed twenty thousand of them, and lost sixty thousand of his own: against him afterward, in the year 1397, came Tamerlane the Tartar, with four hundred thousand horse, and six hundred thousand foot, and having killed two hundred thousand Turks, took Bajazet prisoner, and carried him about in a cage, in golden chains. In the year 1438, Amurath entered into Pannonia, with three hundred thousand horsemen: and in the year 1453, Mahomet took Constantinople with the like number [f296]; yea, it is said, that the army at the siege of that city consisted of forty myriads, or four hundred thousand men [f297]. It is reported, that the great Turk contemptuously sent to the emperor of the Romans a camel, or a dromedary, loaden with wheat, with this vow by a message, that he should bring against him as many fighting men as there were grains of wheat therein [f298]. And it is related [f299], that when Ladislaus, king of Hungary, went out against Amurath with four and twenty thousand horse, Dracula, governor of Walachia, advised him not to attack the emperor of the Turks with so small an army, since he went out every day a hunting with more men than such a number:

and I heard the number of them; expressed by some angel, and therefore John was certain of it, otherwise he could not have told them.

Ver. 17. *And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them*, etc.] In such numbers, and with horsemen on them, and in such order, and in appearance, as follows:

having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth and brimstone; which may be understood either literally of their external breastplates, which being of polished iron, according to the custom of these people, looked at a distance like sparkling fire, and seemed to be of the colour of hyacinth, or of a sky colour, and appeared as flaming sulphur; though some think that their breastplates were of different colours, some looked like fire, others like jacinth, and others like brimstone; or it may denote that they would be accoutred in scarlet, blue, and yellow, which are the colours the Turks have commonly wore; or this may be understood of their internal breastplates, and the disposition of their minds, having in their breasts nothing but wrath, fury, desolation, and destruction; a fire devoured before them, and behind them a flame burned:

and the heads of the horses [were] as the heads of lions: gaping and roaring for their prey, or all bloody with it, and looked fierce, and savage, and terrible: this designs not so much the strength, boldness, and intrepidity of their horses, which are warlike creatures, and very undaunted in battle, as of the men that sat upon them, who were like David's heroes and warriors, (1 Chronicles 12:8).

And out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone; which may be referred either to the horses, or to the horsemen, or both: some interpret this allegorically, and by "fire" understand either the tyranny of the Turks over their own people, or their fury against others, or their blasphemy against God, and Christ, and his people, being like so many railing Rabshakehs against the God of the Christians; and by "smoke" the false doctrine of Mahomet, which came out of the same bottomless pit the doctrine of the Romish antichrist did; and is fitly compared to smoke for its disagreeableness, darkness, levity, and duration; (see Gill on "Revelation 9:2"); and by "brimstone" the immorality and sad corruption of manners among the Turks, and what is allowed of, or winked at, as fornication, polygamy, sodomy, etc. but rather this is to be taken more literally, and represents the firing of guns on horseback in battle. Guns are a late invention, and the use of them was found out in the age this trumpet refers to; and were much made use of by the Turks in their wars, and particularly great guns or cannons; these were used by Amurath at the

sieges of Belgrade, and of Constantinople [f300]; and by Mahomet the Second at the taking of Constantinople, where a gun or cannon was used of that size, as to be drawn by seventy yoke of oxen, and two thousand men [f301]. Gunpowder set on fire is fitly signified by fire, smoke, and brimstone, which is made of nitre, charcoal, and brimstone; and the firing of guns on horseback is most aptly described by these coming out of the mouths of horses and horsemen: nor could it well appear to John to be otherwise, who could never have seen a gun, and one fired off in his life; nor could he well represent to others what he saw in vision, than in this manner.

Ver. 18. *And by these three was the third part of men killed*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, "by these three plagues": as the western Roman empire is in the preceding chapter frequently expressed by the third part of several things, (see <6807>Revelation 8:7-12); so here the eastern Roman empire by the third part of men; vast numbers of the inhabitants of which were destroyed by the Turks, through the use of guns, out of which issued fire, smoke, and brimstone; and Constantinople, the metropolis of it, was taken in this way, as before observed, with the taking of which the empire ceased.

By the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths; that is, by the firing of guns.

Ver. 19. *For their power is in their mouth*, etc.] In what proceeded out of their mouth, or seethed to do so; in their guns, and what came out of them:

and in their tails; which may design their foot soldiers, which were as the tail to their horse, and who sometimes did great service; or their way of fighting when they fled, by casting up arrows into the air, which would fall upon the heads and horses of those that pursued them; or their ambushments, by which they destroyed many; or their perfidious violation of treaties; or it may be their tails may intend the doctrine of Mahomet, the false prophet, who is the tail, (<2915>Isaiah 9:15),

for their tails [were] like unto serpents; crooked, crafty, poisonous, and, pernicious:

and had heads; every tail had a head to it; which may be understood of the officers of the foot soldiers, or of the priests and teachers of the Mahometan religion:

and with them they do hurt; with their guns, the power in their mouth, they did hurt to the bodies of men; and with their false doctrines, their tails, they did hurt to the souls of men; the Ethiopic version here adds, “five months”; which seems to be taken from (<66>Revelation 9:10).

Ver. 20. *And the rest of men which were not killed by these plagues*, etc.] By whom are meant the western antichristian party; and such of them as were not plagued, harassed, and destroyed by the Turks, as in Germany, at least some parts of it, France, Spain, Italy, etc.

yet repented not of the works of their hands: their idols, their images of saints departed, which their hands had made; the goodness of God in saving them from the depredations of the Turks, should have led them to repentance for their idolatrous worship of images, but it did not:

that they should not worship devils; or demons, a sort of deities with the Heathens, that mediated between the superior gods and men; and here design angels and saints departed, which the Papists worship, and use as mediators of intercession for them; and this is no other than worshipping of devils, in God's account, and is downright idolatry, and the doctrine of it is the doctrine of devils:

and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which are the several materials of which the Popish images are made: and what aggravates the stupidity of the worshippers of these images, and of the persons represented by them, is, that these are such

which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk; can neither see their persons, nor hear their prayers, nor stir one foot to their help and assistance; (see <19>Psalm 115:4-7).

Ver. 21. *Neither repented they of their murders*, etc.] Of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, with whose blood the western antichrist is made drunk, and which will be found in her, and for which she is answerable. Now, though the western parts of the empire escaped the scourge of the Turks, yet this did not bring them to repent of their murderous practices, but they went on to take away the lives of godly men; witness the persecutions of the Waldenses and Albigenses, the murders of John Huss and Jerom of Prague, the burning of the martyrs here in Queen Mary's days, and the massacres in Paris and in Ireland, and their butcheries elsewhere; and which they have continued unto this day, where the Inquisition obtains:

nor of their sorceries; Jezebel the whore of Rome has been famous for, by which she has deceived all nations; many of the popes of Rome have been necromancers, given to the magic art, and have entered into covenant, and have had familiarity with the devil; and one part of the Romish service lies in exorcisms, conjurations, and enchantments, and which they still continue:

nor of their fornication; all sorts of uncleanness; not only simple fornication, but adultery, incest, sodomy, and all unnatural lusts; brothel houses have been set up and licensed by authority, which have yielded to the popes a yearly revenue of forty thousand ducats; the Romish clergy, popes, cardinals, priests, monks, and friars, have been dreadfully guilty of all manner of uncleanness, and still are; whence Rome is called Sodom, (⁶⁶¹⁰⁸Revelation 11:8);

nor of their thefts; who under pretence of granting indulgences and pardons, and praying souls out of purgatory, with other tricks, cheat men of their money, pillage and plunder their estates, and devour widows' houses; rob men of their substance, and make merchandise of their souls: now all these iniquities the Papists in the eastern empire were guilty of, for which the Turks as a scourge were let in upon it, and destroyed it; and yet the western papacy, who did not suffer in these calamities, took no warning by them, did not repent of their sins, and reform their practices; but went on, and still go on in the same wicked way, and by their hardness and impenitence treasure up wrath against the day of wrath.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 10

This chapter contains a vision of an angel of a wonderful appearance, the voices of the seven thunders, and an order to John to take the book in the hand of the angel, eat it, and prophesy. The angel is described by his strength, a mighty one; by his descent from heaven; by his attire, being clothed with a cloud; by a rainbow on his head; by his face being like the sun; by his feet, which were as pillars of fire, the one foot set on the sea, and the other on the earth; by having a little book open in his hand, and by the loud cry he made, like the roaring of a lion, (Revelation 10:1-3), upon which seven thunders uttered their voices, which John was going to write, but was forbid, (Revelation 10:4); next follows a solemn oath of the angers; the gesture he used, lifting up his hand to heaven; the person by whom he swore, the living God; what he swore to, that time should be no more, and that the mystery of God would be finished at the beginning of the seventh trumpet, (Revelation 10:5-7); then several orders are given to John, as to take the open book in the hand of the angel, which he did, to eat it, as he accordingly did; when he found it to be as it was told him it would be, namely, sweet in his mouth, but bitter in his belly; and then to prophesy again before people, nations, tongues, and kings, (Revelation 10:8-11).

Ver. 1. *And I saw another mighty angel*, etc.] Not any mere man, as Justin the emperor, as some have thought, who sent letters abroad in favour of the orthodox doctrine, against the Arians, which they suppose is meant by the little book open in his right hand; and still less the pope of Rome, whether in the sense of Papists or Protestants, which latter represent him as a tyrant, treading upon men both in the islands and in the continent, and holding forth the book of canons and decrees; rather, as Mr. Daubuz thinks, Luther, with the rest of the reformers, is intended, and especially since the prophecy of this chapter respects the Reformation, which began before the end of the sixth trumpet; and the epithets given to this angel may denote his strength and courage, his divine authority, the protection of him, and the clear doctrine of peace and reconciliation he brought: however, a

created angel is not intended: not the angel that made proclamation for the opening of the book, and unsealing it, (<66512>Revelation 5:2); between which, and having the book in his right hand open, is a wide difference; nor any other, though the epithet “mighty” belongs to angels in common; and though this angel swears by the living God; and though it was an angel by whom Christ signified the things contained in this book to John; but the uncreated Angel, the Lord Jesus Christ, seems rather designed, as appears both by comparing this with (<27127>Daniel 12:7 10:5,6); and from the power lie gave to the two witnesses, (<66103>Revelation 11:3); which cannot agree with a created angel; and besides, who so proper to hold the book open as he who unloosed the seals, and opened it, and to whom the epithet “mighty” may be applied in the highest sense, as God; and who as man may be said to swear by the living God, and to whom the whole description well agrees? he is sometimes called an Angel simply, (<014816>Genesis 48:16 <022320>Exodus 23:20 <440735>Acts 7:35,38); sometimes the Angel of the Lord, and who appears to be Jehovah himself, the second Person, (<011607>Genesis 16:7, 10 18:1,2), compared with (<011901>Genesis 19:1 22:11,12); and sometimes the Angel of God's presence, (<236309>Isaiah 63:9); and the Angel of the great council in the Septuagint on (<230906>Isaiah 9:6); and the Angel, or messenger, of the covenant, (<390301>Malachi 3:1); and may be so called, because he is a messenger from God as man and Mediator, being sent by him to declare his will and redeem his people: and he is a “mighty” one; not only as God, being the mighty God, the Almighty, which appears by his creation of all things, and upholding them in their beings; but as Mediator, having all power in heaven and in earth, and being far above all principality, power, and might; and, as man, made strong by God for himself, and for his people: he appears now as “another” angel, distinct from the seven angels who had trumpets given them to sound, and six of which had already sounded; and particularly from the angel of the sixth trumpet, who had just sounded; though some copies, and the Complutensian edition, leave out the word αλλον, “another”; and very opportunely does he appear for the comfort of his church, when the trumpets that had been blown had brought such desolations upon the empire, western and eastern, and when both the western and eastern antichrists had appeared, and before the seventh trumpet sounds, and brings in the last and greatest woe: and he is said to

come down from heaven; which does not design his incarnation, that was long before this time; nor his spiritual presence with his people, which is common to them in all ages; nor his second coming to judgment, which

will be by a descent from heaven, and in the clouds of heaven, for that is yet future; but in a visionary way, his appearance to and for his church and people in the dark times of antichrist, when afflicted by the Turk on the one hand, and the pope on the other:

clothed with a cloud[f302]; which is expressive not of the human nature of Christ, with which his divinity was veiled in his state of humiliation, so that few saw the glory of his divine Person and the greater part esteemed him a mere man; but rather of the obscurity of him, his person, offices, and grace, in those times of antichristian darkness, and even of the dim light and knowledge which his true and faithful followers had of him in those times; it was a dark and cloudy day with them, as well as the whole earth was covered with the gross darkness of Popery and Mahometanism; though it seems best of all to interpret this phrase of the majestic presence of Christ in his appearances to his people, who went before the people of Israel in a cloud by day in the wilderness, descended in one on Mount Sinai, dwelt in one both in the tabernacle and temple, was overshadowed by one on the Mount when transfigured, ascended in one to heaven, and will return in one, or more: moreover, the cloud may denote the power and protection of God attending the Reformation; (see <19834>Psalm 68:34 <23405>Isaiah 4:5);

and a rainbow [was] upon his head; which was a token of the covenant; (see <66043>Revelation 4:3); and the note there: this, with its blessings, is upon the head of Christ, the antitypical Joseph, and who is the head of his church and people; and Christ appearing in this form at this time when the world was overflowed with Popery and Mahometanism, shows that God was still mindful of his covenant, even in those worst of times, and would not suffer his church to be overwhelmed, and sunk in the general deluge of antichristianism, or the gates of hell to prevail against it; Christ, at such a tirade as this, very seasonably appeals with the rainbow of the covenant on his head, as a messenger of peace, and bringer of good tidings, to let his people know that ere long it would be halcyon days with them, and there would be times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, who was ever mindful of his covenant with them; and that the Gospel of peace and reconciliation would be preached unto them:

and his face [was] as it were the sun; or looked like the sun, as it did at the time of his transfiguration on the and as he is described in (<66116>Revelation 1:16), and may denote clearness and purity of Christ; both as God, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express of his person; and as

man, who is holy, harmless, up defiled; and is also expressive of that fight of nature, grace, and glory, which he imparts unto the sons of men; as well as of that beauty, loveliness, and amiableness in his person, which renders him as the sun, delightful to behold; and of the majesty of his person, and the manifestations of himself, to the great comfort, pleasure, and refreshment of his saints:

and his feet as pillars of fire; which may refer to the state of the church of Christ at this time, which was in the fire of afflictions, when many of its members were called to the stake, and burnt there for the sake of the Gospel, and yet were like "pillars", firm and unshaken; the church was like the bush that Moses saw, which was on fire, but not consumed; Christ was with his people as they passed through it, that it could not kindle upon them so as to destroy them; and their faith, which was tried by it, was found to be much more precious than of gold that perisheth: or this may show what Christ then was, both to his people and to his enemies; to his people his feet were as "pillars" of brass and marble, to bear them up, and support them under all their trials and afflictions; his goings forth towards them in a way both of providence and grace, were in such a manner, as to strengthen and confirm them in the faith of him against all the powers of hell and earth; and they were like "fire", to consume his and their enemies; with his feet he trod upon them, and subdued them under him, who were as stubble, briers and thorns, easily consumed by him, when at the same time be was a wall of fire to his people, and the glory in the midst of them.

Ver. 2. *And he had in his hand a little book open*, etc.] By which is meant not the Bible, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; or the book of the Gospel, the substance of which lies in a little room, and is no other than the preaching of Christ, and him crucified, as God's way of salvation; and which is now more open and manifest, and more clearly made known unto the sons of men, under the Gospel dispensation, than it was before, and especially since the time of the Reformation, to which this book, and the prophecies of it, may have respect; but the same book is here designed, which in (Revelation 5:1) is represented as in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, as shut and sealed; but the lion of the tribe of Judah, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, having taken it out of his hand, unloosed its seals, and opened it; and whereas we never read of his laying this book down, or of his delivering it to any other, he may be well supposed to be this mighty angel, who held it open in his hand: it may be said to be "a little book", because now not only many of the scenes and visions in it were

exhibited, upon the opening of the seals; but because, at the time this vision refers to, many of its prophecies were accomplished, so that the bulk of it was greatly reduced; and it may be represented as “open”, because the seals of it were unloosed, and the things in it revealed; and it is to be observed, that as the several seals of this book, and the opening of them, refer to the state of the empire, both as Pagan and as Christian, as has been seen; so the little book itself, clear of these seals, sets forth the state and condition of the church in the empire, under its different revolutions and appearances:

and he set his right foot upon the sea, and [his] left [foot] on the earth; which signifies that he was Lord and possessor of both, of the whole terraqueous globe, being the Maker and supporter of it; and that his Gospel should be spread all over the world, both on the continent and in the islands of the sea; and that his kingdom should be from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth; that the abundance of the sea should be converted to him, or the maritime parts of the world should be subject to the sceptre of his grace and government; and that the earth, and the uttermost parts of it, should be his possession, though it was now almost wholly in the hands of the Turk and pope; and it may be observed, that he set his foot upon both earth and sea, out of which the two beasts arise, (Revelation 13:1,11), which shall be destroyed by him.

Ver. 3. *And cried with a loud voice*, etc.] That all might hear, and to show earnestness and affection, and that it was a matter of great importance, as well as to denote the certainty of it; what he said is not expressed, but seems to be the book of prophecy, or what regarded the state of his church and kingdom, in the several periods of time to the blowing of the seventh trumpet, when the kingdoms of this world shall become his: and this voice of his was

as [when] a lion roareth; loud and terrible; and indeed it was the voice of the lion of the tribe of Judah, which was heard far and near, throughout the whole world, by his people, and is terrible to his enemies:

and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices; which some understand of the ministers of the Gospel in the times of the Reformation, who were “Boanergeses”, sons of thunder, and think that they are the same with the angels in (Revelation 14:6), etc. or rather these may signify the denunciations of God's judgments, and of his wrath, both upon the eastern and western antichrist, the Turk and pope, signified by the seven vials,

hereafter to be poured out, mentioned in (Revelation 16:1-4,8,10,12,17).

Ver. 4. *And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices*, etc.] Or declared all they had to denounce upon the enemies of Christ and his church:

I was about to write; John taking particular notice of what they said, and believing it might be for the advantage, comfort, and support of the church of Christ under its suffering circumstances, to be informed of what God had in reserve among the treasures of his wrath for their adversaries, was going to put it down in writing, that he might retain it, and the better communicate it, and in obedience to the order given him, (Revelation 1:19);

and I heard a voice from heaven; from God the Father, for the Son of God in a visionary way was come down from heaven, in the form before described; and this voice answers to the Bath Kol of the Jews, and is the same which ordered John to write, (Revelation 14:13), though it here forbad him:

saying unto me, seal up those things; treasure them up in thy mind, keep them within thy breast, hide them from men, for the present, and say nothing of them:

which the seven thunders have uttered, and write them not; that they may not be seen and read at present, because the same things were to be exhibited in another form, and at another time, under the seven vials; only it was thought proper that John should have some intimations of them for his own advantage, and to prepare him for the following vision, for the eating of the book, and for his prophesying before people, nations, tongues, and kings. Mr. Daubuz is of opinion, that by these “seven thunders” are meant seven kingdoms which have received the Reformation, and established it by law within their several dominions, whereby the doctrine and worship of the reformers are become the established religion there; and the laws by which it is established are “the voices” uttered by those supreme authorities; and they are these,

1. The German princes, making one republic.
2. The Swiss cantons.
3. Sweden.

4. Denmark, with Norway.
5. England and Ireland.
6. Scotland.
7. The United Provinces of the Netherlands.

And whereas John, who represents the first reformers, and other faithful men, was for writing what these thunders uttered, this denotes the zeal and earnest desires of these good men to push the Reformation further, and make a thorough work of it, as well as their expectation that now was the time in which the mystery of God was to be fulfilled, in which they were mistaken; wherefore John is bid to seal up these things, and not write them, which shows that the progress of the Reformation was to be stopped from doing fully what the first reformers were prompted to by the supreme powers which encouraged them, and that by the opposition of other temporal princes; it not being the will of God that the glorious state of the church should arise from these thunders, and be built on their laws and establishments; and suggests, that this is not the time in which, nor these the ways and means by which the mystery of God will be finished, which will not be until the seventh angel has sounded his trumpet, (<66107>Revelation 10:7); whereas this period of time, to which the Reformation belongs, is an event of the sixth trumpet: and this exposition bids very fair to be the right one.

Ver. 5. *And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth*, etc.] His right foot being on the one, and his left foot upon the other, as described in (<66102>Revelation 10:2);

lifted up his hand to heaven; the Oriental versions read, “his right hand”; and so some copies, and the Complutensian edition: the man clothed in linen, (<27206>Daniel 12:6,7), who is the same with the angel here, held up both his hands; the lifting up of the hand was a gesture used in swearing: (see <01422>Genesis 14:22); so the Jews say [f303], “the right hand”, or by the right hand, hwhy wz, “this is an oath”, according to (<27207>Daniel 12:7); or whether the right hand or the left, is an oath, according to (<23608>Isaiah 62:8).

Ver. 6. *And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever*, etc.] That is, by the living God, who is the true God: and is so described to distinguish him from idol gods, who have no life nor breath in them; and to assert the excellency and perfection of his nature, who has life in himself originally, and independently, is the fountain of life to all creatures living, and who are

supported in their life and being by him; and so he always was, is, and ever will be; this is the same as swearing by Ancuialus [f304]:

who created heaven, and the things that therein are; the airy, starry, and third heavens, and the inhabitants of them, the fowls of the air, the sun, moon, and stars, and the angels of heaven, as well as the souls of departed saints, and the bodies of as many as are there:

and the earth, and the things that therein are; men, beasts, and creeping things, trees, herbs, minerals, etc.

and the sea, and the things which are therein: the several sorts of fishes in it: this is also said to distinguish the great God from all false gods, who made not the heavens and the earth, who alone is, and ought to be the object of an oath, or by whom an oath is to be made, and not any creature whatsoever; and since the Angel that here swears is the Lord Jesus Christ, this may be understood of him either as man, swearing by God the Father, in which respect the Father is greater than he; or as a divine person, and so swears by himself, (Hebrews 6:13); for to himself do these characters belong of living for ever and ever, and of having made the heaven, earth, and sea, and all in them: the thing he swears to is,

that there should be time no longer which is not to be understood of the cessation of time, and the swallowing of it up in eternity, at the end of all things, when it will be no more measured out by the revolutions of the sun and moon, which will then be no more; for this did not take place upon the angel's oath, or at the time this vision refers to; for after this, there is to be time for the seventh angel to sound his trumpet in, though perhaps that is excepted in the next verse; and after the sounding of that, there will be the space of a thousand years, in which Christ will reign with his people on earth; and after that there will be some space of time for the Gog and Magog army to attack the beloved city; all which will be before the end of all things, or before eternity, properly speaking, takes place; and besides, such an illustrious appearing of Christ as before described, and so solemn an oath as is here made, do not seem necessary to ascertain a truth which nobody doubts of; and everyone knows that after this world, and all things in it are at an end, time will be no more. The true key to this passage is (Daniel 12:7); where the man clothed in linen swears, that to the end of wonders should be a time, times, and a half, and here the angel swears that time should be no longer; that is, that these time, and times, and half a time, should be no longer; that these dates would be up, and the events

affixed to them be accomplished, when the seventh angel should begin to sound his trumpet: the same divisions of time are made in (<66124>Revelation 12:14); and are the same exactly with the 1260 days, or years, and the forty two months of years, so often mentioned in this book: for a time is a prophetic year, that is, 360 years; and times are two prophetic years, or 70 years; and half a time is half a prophetic year, or 180 years, in all 1260 years: now add the several events to be accomplished in this period of time, and it will give the full sense of this passage thus; the angel swears that the thee of antichrist's reign, his tyranny over the saints, his persecution of them, which was to last forty two months, (<66135>Revelation 13:5), should be no longer; nor of the holy city being trodden under foot by the Gentiles, the Papists, which bears the same date, (<66112>Revelation 11:2), and is called the times of the Gentiles, (<42124>Luke 21:24); nor of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, which has just the same measure of duration, (<66103>Revelation 11:3); nor of the church's retirement, and being hid in the wilderness, (<66124>Revelation 12:14); in short, the time of the four monarchies, and of the last of them, the Roman, and of the last branch of that, the Papal, should be no more than till the sounding of the seventh trumpet, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; (<66115>Revelation 11:15); the words will bear to be rendered, as some have observed, “that there should be delay no longer”; that is, of the coming and kingdom of Christ; though the bridegroom has tarried, he will come, and will not tarry beyond the time the angel swears to; every seal of the sealed book is a delay of, and a stop upon, the open appearance of Christ's kingdom; and the opening of every seal is an advance to it; and when the sixth seal was opened, and Paganism destroyed, and Christianity spread throughout the empire, the kingdom of Christ might have been expected to have appeared; but there was a seventh seal to be opened, which was a stop upon it, and which when opened brought ruin and destruction upon the Christian empire, both western and eastern, under the first six trumpets; and till the seventh sounds there will be a delay of Christ's kingdom, but when that sounds there will be no more a delay.

Ver. 7. *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound*, etc.] This is an exception to what the angel had said and swore to, that time should be no longer; “but”, or “unless”, or “except the time of the voice of the seventh angel”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; when a new period and sort of time should begin, very different from the former, which then should be no more; for now will be the time of Christ's

kingdom on earth, which shall last a thousand years; this time will not be like the former, a time of darkness and ignorance, as was in some periods, partly through the errors and heresies which were propagated in early times, and through that barbarity and ignorance which the Goths, Huns, and Vandals, spread over the empire, when they broke into it, and chiefly through the smoke of the bottomless pit, the false doctrine and worship of the Papists and Mahometans; but in the time of the seventh angel, all this gross darkness will be removed, and it will be a time of unspeakable and everlasting light, so that there will be no need of the sun and moon, of Gospel ministrations and ordinances: nor will it be a time of affliction and persecution; time in that sense will be no more, as it has been under the ten Pagan emperors, and under the Arian emperors, and under the Papal hierarchy; for in this period there will be no more death, sorrow, crying, pain, and tears; though there will be time, it will be another sort of time, quite different from the former, which will be no more when the seventh angel once begins; and as soon as he begins to sound, this will put an end to antichristian time; and at the end of his sounding will begin the time of Christ, or the thousand years' reign: and then

the mystery of God should be finished; that is, the angel not only swears that time shall be no longer, but that also then shall be finished the mystery of God; by which is meant, not the resurrection of the dead, and the change of the living, which is called a mystery, (1 Corinthians 15:51); for though when this angel sounds, and has done sounding, and Christ comes, the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the dead in Christ, will be finished, yet not the whole resurrection; for the rest of the dead will not live again till the end of the thousand years: but rather the Gospel is designed, which is often called the mystery, and the mystery of the Gospel, and contains many mysteries in it, which are styled the mysteries of God; which respect him, his being, persons, operations, and grace; and are revealed and made known by him; and the finishing of this may respect the preaching of the Gospel to all nations, which will be before the end of the world, and whereby the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and multitudes of souls converted; wherefore it may be best of all to understand this of the church of God, the general assembly and church of the firstborn, even all the elect of God, whose number will now be finished and completed in the conversion of the Jews, and in the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, both which are called “mysteries”, (Romans 11:25,26 Ephesians 3:4-6); and now as the antichristian church is called

"mystery", "Babylon", (Revelation 17:5); and "the mystery of iniquity", (2 Thessalonians 2:7); so the true Christian church, the new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, and prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, may bear the name of the mystery of God; and this may also take in the mystery of all God's providences and promises, and prophecies, respecting the state of his church and people on earth:

as he hath declared to his servants and prophets; as to Isaiah in (Isaiah 60:3-5), etc. and (Isaiah 66:8); and to Daniel, in (Daniel 2:44) (Daniel 7:25 12:6,7); and to Zechariah, in (Zechariah 14:9), and others; and which was a Gospel declaration, as the word signifies; it was good news and glad tidings; glorious things were declared to them, and spoken by them, concerning the city and church of God, its happy state on earth, and Christ's reign in it.

Ver. 8. *And the voice which I heard from heaven*, etc.] In (Revelation 10:4);

spake to me again, and said, go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth; as John was to prophesy, (Revelation 10:11); it was necessary that he should have a mission and a commission from heaven; and that he should have the open book of prophecy to prophesy out of; and that he should receive this from the angel's hands, who had unloosed its seals, and opened it: and just so to ordinary prophesying, or preaching, it is necessary that men should have their commission from heaven, should be called of God, and sent by him; and that they should have the book of the Scriptures before them, and open to them, and speak according to these oracles, agreeably to the law and to the testimony, which are profitable for doctrine; and that they should also receive the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, with gifts, and a commission to preach it, from the Angel of the covenant, Jesus Christ, who has all power both in heaven and in earth; (see Revelation 10:2).

Ver. 9. *And I went to the angel*, etc.] According to the order given him; he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; and, indeed, whither should any go knowledge but to him who has the words of eternal life, and is the great prophet of the church? and to whom should John go to qualify him for prophesying, but to him, who, as man and Mediator, had this revelation of future things given him? (Revelation 1:1);

and said unto him, give me the little book; he did not take it without his leave, but in a modest and humble manner asks him to give it him, that he might deliver out the prophecies in it to others: so ordinary prophets and ministers of the word should go to Christ, to have their eyes opened, their understandings enlightened, that they may understand the Scriptures, and explain them to others:

and he said unto me, take it, and eat it up; which must be understood not literally, but mystically; and the sense is this, take the book, and diligently peruse it, and with as much eagerness as an hungry man would eat a meal; so greedy are some persons of reading, and as it were of devouring books; hence Cicero called [f305] Cato “helluo librorum”, a glutton at books: and in such manner John is bid to take and eat this book, and look into it, and read it over diligently, and consider what was in it, and meditate upon it, and digest the things contained in it, and lay them up in his mind and memory; and for the present hide and conceal them, in like manner as he was bid to seal, and not write what the seven thunders uttered; and so, though this book is represented to him as open in the angel's hand, yet he must take it and eat it, and hide it in his belly, because the things in it as yet were not to be accomplished: so for ordinary prophesying, or preaching, the ministers of the word should diligently read the Scriptures, constantly meditate on them, digest the truths of the Gospel in their own minds, and lay them up in the treasury of their hearts, and bring them forth from thence in due season:

and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey; as Ezekiel's roll was to him when he ate it, (Ezekiel 3:1-3); the Alexandrian copy, instead of “thy belly”, reads “thy heart”.

Ver. 10. *And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up*, etc.] As he was bid to do:

and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; so is the Gospel in the mouth of a faithful minister of it, who has a spiritual knowledge, and a savoury experience of it; and so it is in the mouth of an understanding hearer, who finds it, and eats it, to the joy and rejoicing of his heart; and so this little book of prophecy being looked into, read, and considered by John, the first taste and knowledge he had of the things contained in it were exceeding grateful and delightful; the view it gave him of the glorious state of the church, and kingdom of Christ on earth, filled with unspeakable pleasure:

and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter; so the ministration of the Gospel occasions bitterness, grief, and sorrow, to the preachers and professors of it, through the persecutions that attend it, the obstinacy and hardness of men's hearts against it, and its being the savour of death unto death to many that hear it; and so the little book of prophecy, upon a perusal of it, giving to John a view of the witnesses prophesying: in sackcloth, and of their bodies being killed, and lying exposed in the street of the great city, and of the church's flying into the wilderness, and continuing there for a time and times, and half a time, and of the barbarities and cruelties exercised on the saints by the whore of Rome, whom he saw made drunk with their blood, made his belly bitter, or filled him with sorrow, grief, and pain.

Ver. 11. *And he said unto me*, etc.] That is, the angel, from whom John received the little book; the Alexandrian copy reads, “they said unto me”: both the voice of God the Father from heaven, that bid him take the book, and the angel that bid him eat it:

thou must prophesy again before many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings; which is to be understood not of John's preaching again to many people, and nations, after his return from his exile at Patmos, as he had done before his banishment thither; and much less of his prophesying along with Enoch and Elias, towards the end of the world, grounded upon two fabulous notions, the one that Enoch and Elias will appear in person before the coming of Christ, and the other, that John died not, but is still alive somewhere, and will continue till Christ's second coming; but rather of his delivering more prophecies out of the open little book; not “before”, as we render it, but either “concerning” many people, nations, tongues, and kings, as the Syriac version renders it: or “against” them, that is, those people, multitudes, nations, and tongues, over which the whore of Babylon reigns, or has reigned, and the ten kings, and kings of the earth she rules over, (Revelation 17:12,13,15,18). Moreover, this may not so much design John's prophesying in person, as the prophesying: of the witnesses or ministers of the word in the several periods of time, whom John personated and represented; and of whom mention is made in the next chapter, to which this seems to be a transition.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 11

This chapter contains the order to measure the temple of God; an account of the two witnesses, their prophesying: and power, their slaying, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, with what followed upon it; and the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and the effects of that. A measuring rod is given to John, with an order to rise and measure the temple, altar, and worshippers, and to leave out the outer court, which was to be given to the Gentiles, who tread the holy city under foot forty and two months, (<66101>Revelation 11:1,2), the same date with the 1260 days the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, (<66103>Revelation 11:3), who are compared to two olive trees and to two candlesticks, and are said to stand before God, (<66104>Revelation 11:4), and who are further described by their power to destroy those that hurt them with fire that proceeds out of their mouths; to shut the heaven, that it rain not during their prophecy; to turn water into blood, and smite the earth with all manner of plagues at pleasure, (<66105>Revelation 11:5,6); but when the time of their prophecy and testimony is expired, their enemies will have the advantage of them; the antichristian beast of Rome, described by the place of his ascent, the bottomless pit, will fight against them, overcome, and kill them; their dead bodies will be exposed publicly within the Roman jurisdiction, and not suffered to be interred; and their enemies will make a public and general rejoicing over them, (<66107>Revelation 11:7-10); but after a short space of time they will revive, and stand upon their feet, to the surprise of all spectators; and being invited by a voice from heaven, will ascend thither, in the sight of their enemies; upon which will be an earthquake, in which the tenth part of the city of Rome will fall, and seven thousand men be slain; which will cause consternation in the rest, and put them upon giving glory to God, (<66111>Revelation 11:11-13); and this will put an end to the second woe, and the third will quickly follow, (<66114>Revelation 11:14), which is the sounding of the seventh trumpet; the effects of which are, voices heard in heaven, declaring that the kingdoms of the world are become Christ's, and that he shall reign for ever and ever, (<66115>Revelation 11:15); upon which the four and twenty elders, that sat on their seats before God, congratulate him,

worship, and give thanks unto him, at the Lord God Almighty and eternal; partly because of his visible power and kingdom he now takes to himself; and partly because the time of avenging his people that had suffered for him upon the nations, which makes them angry, was now come; as also because now would be given rewards to all his prophets, saints, and those that feared him, as well as antichrist and his followers would be destroyed, (<66116>Revelation 11:16-18); and other effects of this trumpet are, the opening of the temple of God in heaven, a sight of the ark of the testament, lightnings, voices, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail, (<66109>Revelation 11:9).

Ver. 1. *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod*, etc.] A measuring reed, which with the Jews was six cubits long, (<26405>Ezekiel 40:5); with the Greeks and Romans, ten feet long; the Ethiopic version here calls it a "golden reed", as in (<66215>Revelation 21:15). This was given unto John very likely by the same angel that gave him the little book, since he afterwards bids him arise and measure with it; and by it seems to be designed the holy Scripture, or the word of God, which is sometimes called a line, a rule, and rod, (<19904>Psalm 19:4 110:2 <48616>Galatians 6:16), and which is the rule and measure of doctrine and faith; and by it all doctrine is to be tried and measured, and whatsoever is not agreeably to it is not of God, nor to be received, but rejected; and it is the rule and measure of all discipline, worship, and practice; it lays down the plan of a Gospel church, which should be gathered out of the world, and separated from it; it shows who are the proper materials of it, what officers are to be constituted in it, and what ordinances are to be administered, and what laws and rules should be observed in receiving and rejecting of members, and according to which the whole community should walk; in short, it directs to all the forms, laws, and ordinances of God's house; and this is the use John, or those whom he represents, were to make of it:

and the angel stood; the same that stood with his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and gave to John the little book, (<66001>Revelation 10:1,2,9); though it may be not in the same place and situation, but rather at the gate of the temple, as in (<26403>Ezekiel 40:3). This clause is not in the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, but is in the Syriac version and Complutensian edition, and is rightly retained, or otherwise it would seem as if the reed spoke:

saying, rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein; the allusion is to the temple of Jerusalem, with its appurtenances; there were the most holy place, and the holy place, which was the inner court of the priests, into which they only entered, which was strictly speaking the temple, and is referred to here; and there was the altar of burnt offering, which was in the court of the priests, and the altar of incense, which was before the vail that divided between the holy and holy of holies; and then there was the outer court for all the Israelites to worship in, referred to in (<66112>Revelation 11:2): and by "the temple of God" is here meant the church, of which the temple was a type; and so particular congregated churches are called temples, (<46316>1 Corinthians 3:16,17 <47616>2 Corinthians 6:16 <49221>Ephesians 2:21). Solomon, a man of peace, was the builder of the one, and Christ, the Prince of peace, the builder of the other; Solomon's temple was built of hewn stones, made ready before they were brought thither, and a true church of Christ consists of lively stones, hewed and fitted for this spiritual building by the Spirit of God; the temple at Jerusalem was built on a high mountain, and on the north of the city, the church is built upon the rock Christ Jesus, and the Gospel church, or churches, in the times of the sixth trumpet, which this vision refers to, and to the close of it, are in the northern parts of Europe; and as the temple was for religious use and service, for the worship of God and sacrifices, so is the Gospel church, and so are Gospel churches, for the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances, and for the offering up the sacrifices of prayer and praise; and as in the most holy place were the ark of the covenant, and the mercy seat, and as it was the place of the divine Presence, where God granted communion to his people, so in the church are held forth the mysteries of the covenant, Christ as the mercy seat and the propitiatory, in whom the displays of grace are made, and through whom the saints have fellowship with God, and enjoy his presence: "the altar" may design Christ himself, by whom the saints draw nigh to God, offer up their sacrifices, and are accepted with him; or the whole of Gospel worship and ordinances, as prayer, preaching, singing of praise, and the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper: and they "that worship therein", or "thereat", are the royal priesthood, or such who are made kings and priests unto God, for none went into the inner court, or served at the altar, but priests; and who make use of Christ, the altar, of his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, in their approaches to God; and who are praying souls, wait at the altar of incense, and draw nigh to the throne or grace with a true heart, and worship God in Spirit and in truth: now

“measuring” of these respects not the primitive church for the first three or four hundred years, and the formation of that according to the rule of God's word, and as a pattern to other churches; for though the apostolic church, or the church as it was in the apostles' time, and as described in their writings, was such a church; yet the church for such a space of time as above was not; there were great departures both from doctrine and discipline, the mystery of iniquity began to work, and way was made for the man of sin and it was far from being a pattern to be imitated; and besides, this measuring refers to the times of the sixth trumpet, and the close of it: nor does it respect the sealing of the 144,000 between the sixth seal and the opening of the seventh seal, which was for the protection and security of them during the times of the six trumpets, which brought desolation into the empire, and apostasy into the church; though measuring sometimes may seem to denote protection, as in (Zechariah 2:1,2,5); and though the outer court is, and will be, a protection to spiritual worshippers, so long as it is not in the hands of the Gentiles, yet this is not the sense, at least not the whole of it: nor does this refer to the hiding of the church in the wilderness, during the reign of antichrist; which might seem to be signified by the internal worshippers retiring to the altar, and to the holy and the most holy place, and being concealed there; and especially since the opening of the temple in (Revelation 11:19), may seem to be opposed to this; but that takes in too large a compass of time, this being an affair relating only to the close of the sixth trumpet, and which was to be before the seventh trumpet sounded: it seems rather to respect the times of the Reformation by Luther, Calvin, and others, when the measuring reed of the word was taken in hand, and used; but then it was used chiefly for the restoration of pure doctrine, and with good success, but not so much for the regulating and orderly discipline of the churches, for the purity of Gospel worship and ordinances; most, if not all the reformed churches, set out upon too broad a bottom, being national, provincial, or parochial; there was a temple, and an altar erected for God, and there were internal and spiritual worshippers; but then they took in the outward court, which should not have been measured in, and circumscribed with them, but should have been left out; but the time for this was not yet come, but now is: in short, I take it that this measuring refers to what was done in the last age, particularly in our nation; and that it has respect to the separation from the national church, when churches, more or less, were gathered and formed according to the Gospel plan and the primitive institution; a work which never was set about and so effectually done before since the age of

the apostles: the baptized and congregational churches are the temple, altar, and worshippers measured, who have both the true doctrine, worship, and discipline of God's house among them; a set of men in the last age were raised up, who drew a plan of churches, and of church discipline, according to the ancient model; gathered churches out of the world, and constituted them according to the order of the Gospel; circumscribed them, and enclosed them according to the rules of God's word, admitting none but such into communion who were judged by the churches subjects of the grace of God; and rejected and excluded from among them such as were wicked and scandalous; and so reduced the pure members of churches to a small number, a little flock, a few names in Sardis: and I am of opinion that the measuring reed must be used again; we have got of late, through negligence, or a want of a spirit of discerning, too many of the outward court among us; who must be left out, in order to be given up to other hands, as follows.

Ver. 2. *But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not*, etc.] The allusion is to the court of the Israelites, where was the great crowd and company of worshippers, even the national church of the Jews, called by Ezekiel the outer court, (Ezekiel 42:14) (Ezekiel 46:21), and which was measured in (Ezekiel 42:20); but this must not be measured: this designs not the visible church apostatized, as succeeding the pure, primitive, and apostolical church, or the apostate church of Rome, antichrist and his followers, for these are meant by the Gentiles, to whom this outward court is given; this outward court, or the worshippers in it, intend a distinct set of worshippers from the internal worshippers, the priests of God in the temple, altar, and inner court, and from the Gentiles, the Papists; and are no other than carnal Protestants, the bulk of the reformed churches, who have only the name, but not the nature of living Christians, have a form of godliness, but deny its power, are Jews outwardly, but not inwardly, and worship only in an external manner, attend to outward forms and ceremonies, but know nothing of true doctrine, pure worship, or spiritual religion; and which are very numerous, as the worshippers in the outward court were: now these, upon a new measuring and regulating of the churches, are ordered to be left, or cast out, and not taken into the dimensions of the Gospel church; these were to be separated from, and have been, and not to be admitted members of regular and orderly constituted churches, and which is here reckoned a sort of casting of them out; the reason of which follows;

for it is given unto the Gentiles; by whom are meant the Papists, who are no other than Paganized Christians, having introduced a great deal of Gentilism into the divine service; as the worshipping of the virgin Mary, angels, and saints departed, which is in imitation of the demon worship of the Heathens; as also the dedication of their churches to saints, their saints' days, divers festivals, and many other rites and ceremonies, are plainly of Pagan original; and therefore they may very well be called by this name: now it seems by these words that the bulk of the reformed churches, the crowd of outward court worshippers, will be gained, over to the Popish party, and fall off to the church of Rome, to which their doctrines and practices are plainly verging; the pope of Rome, as low a condition as he now is in, will be set "in status quo", before his utter destruction; he will regain all his former dominions, and be in possession of them at the time of his ruin; the whore of Rome, the antichristian Babylon, will sit as a queen, and promise herself a great deal of peace and pleasure, the inward court worshippers and witnesses being slain, and she restored to all her former power and grandeur; when in one day, on a sudden, her destruction will come upon her, when the term of the beast's reign will be expired, mentioned in the next clause:

and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty [and] two months; by "the holy city" is meant all the kingdoms of Europe, or what has, been called Christendom, the western empire as Christian, the main seat of the Christian religion, or all the churches styled Christian, and so called in allusion to Jerusalem, which bears this name, (<4005>Matthew 4:5); and which was still of a far larger extent than the outward court: the "treading" of this "underfoot" does not barely design possessing of it, or worshipping in the same place, as the phrase of treading in the courts does in (<2301>Isaiah 1:12); but a tyrannical power over it, and a wasting, spoiling, and destroying it, in allusion to Jerusalem being trodden under foot, wasted, and destroyed by the Gentiles or the Romans, (<4224>Luke 21:24); and the duration of this tyrannical and oppressive reign will be forty and two months; (see <6605>Revelation 13:5), which being reduced to years, make just three years and a half: but then this date cannot be understood strictly and literally; for such a term can never be sufficient for the whore's reign, who was to rule over the kings of the earth, and all nations were to drink of the wine of her fornication: this is too short a time for her to gain so much power, honour, and riches in, as the 13th, 17th, and 18th chapters of this book show, as well as too short for the afflictions and persecutions of the saints by her;

wherefore this must be understood prophetically of so many months of years; and a month with the Chaldeans consisting of thirty days, and a year of 360 days, which account Daniel used, and John after him, forty two months, reckoning a day for a year, after the prophetic style, make 1260 years; which is the exact time of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, of the church's being hid and nourished in the wilderness, and of the beast's reign, and so of the holy city being trodden under foot. Now this date is not to be reckoned from the outer court being given to the Gentiles, but from the first of antichrist's reign, when the pope of Rome was declared universal bishop; and is only here mentioned to show, that the giving of the outward court to his Gentiles will be towards the expiration of this date.

Ver. 3. *And I will give [power] unto my two witnesses*, etc.] By whom are meant, not Enoch and Elias, as some of the ancient fathers thought, who, they supposed, would come before the appearance of Christ, and oppose antichrist, and be slain by him, which sense the Papists greedily catch at; nor are the Scriptures, the two Testaments, Old and New, designed, though their name and number agree, and also their office, which is to testify of Christ; but then to be clothed in sackcloth, to be killed, and rise again, and ascend to heaven, are things that cannot so well be accommodated to them: but these witnesses intend the ministers of the Gospel and churches of Christ, who have bore testimony for Christ, and against antichrist, ever since he appeared in the world; and particularly the churches and ministers in Piedmont bid fair for this character; who were upon the spot when antichrist arose, always bore their protest against him, and were ever independent of the church of Rome, and subsisted in the midst of the darkness of the apostasy; and suffered much, and very great persecutions, from the Papists; and have stood their ground, and continue to this day; and have been like olive trees and candlesticks, imparting oil and light to others. Though they ought not to be considered exclusive of other ministers and churches, who also have bore, and still do bear a witness for Christ, and against the idolatries of the church of Rome: no two individual persons can be meant, since these witnesses were to prophesy 1260 days, that is, so many years, but a succession of ministers and churches; and these are called two, both on account of the fewness of them, and because the testimony of two is sufficient to confirm any matter; and it may be in allusion to the various instances of two eminent persons being raised up at certain periods of time, as Moses and Aaron, at the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt; Caleb and Joshua, at

their entrance into Canaan; Elijah and Elisha in the idolatrous times of Ahab; and Joshua and Zerubbabel at the rebuilding and finishing of the second temple. Now the Angel, and who is Christ, here promises that he will give something to these witnesses: some supply the words, “I will give it”; that is, the holy city, or the church, to them, to be taken care of and defended; others, “I will give” them a mouth and wisdom, which their adversaries shall not be able to resist, according to the promise in (<42215>Luke 21:15). We supply the words, “I will give power”; that is, authority to preach the Gospel, and strength to profess it, and to continue to bear a testimony to it, signified by prophesying; (see <461401>1 Corinthians 14:1,3).

And they shall prophesy; that is, “that they may prophesy”; which is supported by the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, the former rendering the words, “I will give to my two witnesses to prophesy”, and the latter, “I will give in command to my two witnesses that they may prophesy”; the sense is, that Christ will give to them a mission and commission, sufficient authority, all needful gifts and grace, courage and presence of mind to preach his Gospel, to hold forth his word, and bear a testimony for him during the whole time of the apostasy, even

a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days; that is, so many years, which, as before observed, is the date of the beast's reign, of the holy city being trodden under foot of the Gentiles, and of the church's retirement into the wilderness: it is observable, that the date of the beast's reign and tyranny is expressed by months, and the date of the church's being in the wilderness, and the prophesying of the witnesses, is signified by days; and the reason which some give is not despicable, as that the beast and his followers are the children of darkness and of the night, over which the moon presides, from whence months are, numbered; and the church and the witnesses are children of the day, over which the sun rules. The habit of these witnesses during their time of prophesying follows,

clothed in sackcloth; expressive either of their outward state and condition, being poor, mean, and abject, while the followers of the beast are clad in silks, and live deliciously; or else of the inward frame of their minds, as mourning for the sad estate of the church of Christ, groaning under the tyranny and persecutions of antichrist.

Ver. 4. *These are the two olive trees*, etc.] Or represented by the two olive trees in (<380403>Zechariah 4:3,11-14), which there design Joshua and Zerubbabel; and who in laying out themselves, their gifts and wealth, in

rebuilding and finishing the temple, were types of these witnesses, the ministers of the Gospel, in the successive ages of the apostasy; who may be compared to olive trees, because of the oil of grace, and the truth of it in them; and because of the gifts of the Spirit of God bestowed on them, or their having that anointing which teacheth all things; and because they freely impart their gifts, and the golden oil of the Gospel unto others, and also bring the good tidings of peace and salvation by Christ, of which the olive leaf is a symbol; and because they are like the olive tree, fat, flourishing, and fruitful in spiritual things; they are sons of oil, and God's anointed ones:

and the two candlesticks; which hold forth the light of the word, in the midst of Popish darkness: this shows that churches, as well as ministers, are designed by the witnesses, since the candlesticks are explained of the churches, (<66120>Revelation 1:20), though the simile well agrees with ministers of the word, who are the lights of the world, or hold forth the light of the Gospel, which is put into them by Christ: and these olive trees and candlesticks are represented as

standing before the God of the earth; ministering unto him, enjoying his presence, and having his assistance, and being under his protection. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “the Lord of the earth”; and so the Complutensian edition; (see <380414>Zechariah 4:14 6:5).

Ver. 5. *And if any man will hurt them*, etc.] Do any injury to their persons, or properties, oppose their writings, blaspheme their doctrines, and hinder their ministrations; whoever; they be, whether they be any that live among them, or in other parts; whether they be secret or open enemies; or whether they be of the outward court, or be really Gentiles or Papists; and especially if they do them any injustice, if they wrong, oppress, afflict, and distress them knowingly and willingly:

fire proceedeth out of their mouth; by which may be meant the word of God, which they preach and hold forth, which is comparable to fire, (<242329>Jeremiah 23:29), both for light, it being a means of enlightening sinners, who are darkness itself; and of directing saints in their walk and conversation; and of detecting the errors, immoralities, idolatry, and superstition of men, and particularly of the church of Rome, who cannot bear the light of this word, and therefore forbid the reading of it to the laity, and keep it locked up from them in the Latin tongue: and also for the

heat of it, it being the means of quickening, or of conveying a vital heat to dead sinners; and of warming and comforting the saints, causing their hearts to burn within them, while they bear or read it, or meditate upon it; and of scorching and tormenting reprobate sinners, and filling them with wrath, pain, and anguish, especially the followers of antichrist; and this is greatly designed, for this has a particular reference to the pouring out of the fourth vial, (<6169>Revelation 16:9). Likewise, the word of God may be compared to fire for its purity in itself, for every word of his is pure; and for its purifying nature, when faithfully preached, and powerfully applied, it penetrates deep, it searches, and discovers, and purges from the dross of profaneness, false doctrine, and will worship; and for its consuming nature, as follows, it pronouncing damnation to unbelievers and impenitent sinners, and it being the savour of death unto death to such: or else the prayers of these witnesses are intended by the fire that proceeds out of their mouth, for vengeance on their enemies, who hinder their ministrations, blaspheme the truth, and shed their blood; which do not arise from a passionate and revengeful spirit, but from a pure zeal for the glory of God, and the honour of his name, and truth; and which prayers are heard by God, who will avenge his elect, that cry unto him day and night: the allusion is to the fire, which, at the request of Moses, came forth from the Lord, and destroyed two hundred and fifty persons, that opposed him and Aaron; and to the fire which Elias called for from heaven, upon the captains, and the fifties, that came to take him, who were types of these witnesses; (see <0416>Numbers 16:3,29,35 <1210>2 Kings 1:9-12). And also this fire may denote the denunciations of God's wrath by them upon the antichristian party, these being as wood, and their words as fire, to consume them; (see <2454>Jeremiah 5:14 <6919>Revelation 19:9-11,18).

And devoureth their enemies: whether open or secret; just as the fire devoured Nadab and Abihu, the offerers of strange fire, which the Lord commanded not; so the fire out of the mouth of God's faithful servants devours such who introduce divers and strange doctrines, and the inventions of men, into the church of God; the light of God's word convinces and confounds them, though it may not convert them; it flashes in their consciences, and distresses them, so that they gnaw their tongues for pain; there being nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour and destroy them, though not corporeally, yet spiritually and eternally; for even these shall afterwards

make war against them, conquer them, and slay them, and shall see them ascend to heaven, (<6607>Revelation 11:7,12).

And if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed; this is repeated, partly to show the certainty of this destruction; and partly to point out the manner of it, which will be not by the use of carnal weapons: these enemies of the witnesses will not be killed by the sword, or any other weapon, but by the word of God, and through the prayers of the saints, and by the denunciations of God's judgments on them. The Jews express the doctrines and traditions of their Rabbins, delivered from one to another, by fire, proceeding out of their mouths; who say [f306],

> "Rab sat before Rabbi, and "there went forth" hymwpm rwnd ˆyqwqyz, "sparks of fire from the mouth of Rab", into the mouth of Rabbi, and from the mouth of Rabbi, into the mouth of Rab;"

which the gloss explains of their communicating their doctrines and traditions to one another.

Ver. 6. *These have power to shut heaven*, etc.] For these have the keys of the kingdom of heaven given them, and whatever they bind or loose on earth is bound or loosed in heaven; or in other words, having the true key of knowledge in matters, both of doctrine and discipline, given them, whatever they declare, according to the word of God, to be doctrines fit to be received or rejected, and to be the ordinances of God, and matters of worship to be attended to, and what are not, should be so: and in particular,

that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; that is, on their enemies, the antichristian party; for otherwise it must rain on those to whom they minister, their prophecy itself being rain in a spiritual sense: so rain is explained of prophecy in the Targum on (<2306>Isaiah 5:6), which paraphrases the words thus;

> "I will command the prophets that they do not prophesy upon them prophecy:"

for this is to be understood not literally, since the days of their prophecy, or preaching in sackcloth, are 1260, that is, 1260 years, and which is the term and duration of antichrist's reign: wherefore, if this was the case, there must be a famine and great distress, during this long space of time; but as this is not matter of fact, so it would not comport with that plenty, luxury,

and deliciousness, in which the whore of Babylon is said to live: but the words are to be taken in a spiritual sense, and to be understood of the Gospel, and doctrines of it, or the word of God, which is sometimes compared to rain, (<5302>Deuteronomy 32:2 <2550>Isaiah 55:10,11). God is the author and giver of rain, and he only; none of the vanities, or idols of the Gentiles, can give it; has the rain a father? it has, but not on earth, only God who is in heaven; and so the Gospel is of God, and it is he only that can make men able ministers of it; the rain comes down from above, from heaven, and of the same original and descent is the Gospel, it is the voice speaking from heaven; the rain falls, according to divine direction, in one place, and not another, on one city, and not another; and so the Gospel is sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another; it is forbid here, and ordered there. Showers of rain moisten and soften the earth, and make it susceptive of seed; and the Gospel is the means of softening hard hearts, and of making them capable of receiving suitable impressions: rain refreshes the earth, revives the plants and trees, and makes them fruitful; and so the Gospel, attended with a divine blessing, refreshes drooping saints, revives the work of God in them, and is the means of filling them with all the fruits of righteousness. Now the withholding of this rain denotes a famine, not of bread, or a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord; and as it is a judgment on a nation, or on a city, not to be rained upon, so it is a spiritual judgment upon a people, when God commands his clouds, his ministers, to rain no rain of the Gospel on them; and it is one of the judgments upon the antichristian party, that they have not the Gospel preached unto them, nor any dew of powerful and efficacious grace distilled on them, but are left to their blindness, darkness, and hardness of heart: and these witnesses carrying the Gospel along with them, where they prophesy and preach, is called a shutting up heaven, so that it rain not on the followers of antichrist, from whom they separate themselves, or by whom they are cast out; and this is ascribed to them, and is owing to their removal or ejection; much in the same sense as the night and darkness are to the sun's remove; that is, these follow upon it. The allusion is to the withholding of rain in the times of Elijah, one of the types of these witnesses, because of the idolatries of Ahab and Jezebel, (<1170>1 Kings 17:1 18:1,41,45). In like manner is the rain of the Gospel withheld during the reign of antichrist, because of the idolatry and superstition of the apostasy.

And have power over waters to turn them to blood; by "waters" are meant people, multitudes, nations, and tongues, and particularly those over whom antichrist reigns, (<66175>Revelation 17:15), and turning of them into blood designs the confusions and wars raised among them on account of the prophesying of these witnesses, and the persecutions and bloodshed which followed upon it; which eventually are the end and issue of preaching the Gospel; (see <40034>Matthew 10:34,35). The allusion is to one of the plagues of Egypt, and to Moses and Aaron, who were types of these witnesses turning the waters of Egypt into blood, (<02720>Exodus 7:20); and answers to the second and third vials, (<66103>Revelation 16:3,4).

And to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will; alluding to the plagues of Egypt, one of the names of Rome, or the Roman jurisdiction, in (<66108>Revelation 11:8), and which is meant by the earth here; and referring to the rest of the seven vials poured out by these witnesses, signified by seven angels; and their having power so to do as often as they will, is to be understood of these plagues being inflicted on the inhabitants of the earth, or followers of antichrist, in answer to their prophecies and prayers, which are made according to the will of God, and so always have their effect, being such.

Ver. 7. *And when they shall have finished their testimony*, etc.] For Christ, his truths and ordinances; when they are about to finish it, and almost concluded it, even towards the close of the 1260 days or years, in which they must prophesy in sackcloth: or else their testimony and their prophesying may be considered as two distinct things, and the one be finished before the other; their open public testimony, as witnesses, so as to be heard, attended to, and received, will be finished before the last war of the beast against them, in which they will be killed; but their prophesying will continue to the end of the beast's reign, these two being contemporary, of equal date, beginning and ending together; for they will prophesy when they are dead; being dead they will yet speak, and their very death will be a prophesying or foretelling that the ruin of antichrist is at hand; and upon their resurrection and ascension, that will immediately come on. But when their testimony is finished, by a free and open publication of the Gospel,

the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit; the same with that in (<66311>Revelation 13:11), with which compare (<66708>Revelation 17:8); and which is no other than the Romish antichrist; called a beast for his filthiness and cruelty; and said to ascend out of the bottomless pit, out of hell,

because his coming is after the working of Satan: he is raised up, influenced, and supported by him; he is a creature of his, and has his power, seat, and authority from him, the great dragon, the old serpent, called the devil and Satan; his original and rise are the same with those of his doctrine and worship, the smoke of the bottomless pit; they all come out of it, and they will return thither again. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, “the fourth beast that ascendeth”, etc. as if it was the same with Daniel's fourth beast, (<27007>Daniel 7:7,19), as it doubtless is. Now this filthy and savage beast

shall make war against them; the witnesses; a war he has been making against the saints ever since he was in power, by his decrees, his counsels, his anathemas, and by sword, fire, and faggot, (<66137>Revelation 13:7); but this will be his last war, and it will be a dreadful one; it will be the last struggle of the beast; and though it will be attended with the conquest and slaughter of the witnesses, yet it will lead on to, and issue in his own ruin; this is “the hour of temptation”, in (<66310>Revelation 3:10);

and shall overcome them; not by arguments taken out of the word of God, by which their mouths will be stopped, so as to be confounded, and have nothing to say, or so as to yield to him, and give up the truths and ordinances of the Gospel; but by outward force and tyranny, so as that they shall be obliged to give way, and he will take possession of the kingdoms and nations in which they have prophesied: he will first attack the outward court, the bulk of formal professors, and will prevail over them; and then, the outworks being taken, he will more easily come at the inner court worshippers within the temple.

And kill them; not corporeally, but civilly; for as their dead bodies lying three days and a half, that is, three years and a half, unburied, and their resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven, cannot be understood literally, so neither the killing of them; not but that in this war there may be a great slaughter, and much blood shed, in a literal sense: but the killing spoken of seems to regard them, not as men, but as witnesses; they will not be suffered to bear an open testimony any longer; they will be silenced; they will be banished, or removed into corners; and they will not only be under the censures, excommunications, and anathemas of the Romish antichrist, but they will lose all credit and esteem among those, who once pretended to be their friends; who will be ashamed of them, and will join in

reproaching and rejecting them; so that their ministrations will be quite shut up, and at an end.

Ver. 8. *And their dead bodies [shall lie] in the street of the great city*, etc.] Not Jerusalem, which was destroyed when John had this vision, and which will; not be rebuilt at the time it refers to; nor is it ever called the great city, though the city of the great King; however, not in this book, though the new Jerusalem is so called, (<66210>Revelation 21:10); but that can never be designed here; but the city of Rome, or the Roman jurisdiction, the whole empire of the Romish antichrist, which is often called the great city in this book; (see <66169>Revelation 16:19 17:18 18:10,16,18,21). The city of Rome itself was very large, and the Roman empire still larger, so as to be called the whole world and the antichristian see of Rome has been of great extent. Now as the street of a city denotes a public open place in it, a place of concourse and resort, (<202020>Proverbs 1:20,21), the dead bodies of those witnesses being said to lie here, may design the publicness of their silence, disgrace, and contempt; and that the silencing and degrading them, and depriving them of all privileges, will be known all over the antichristian empire; and that they will be exposed to public ignominy and shame, their persons, their characters, their testimony, their doctrines, their writings, their churches, and families, and all that belong to them: or else this "street" may design some part of the Romish jurisdiction, and it may be Great Britain may be particularly designed; for where should the dead bodies of the witnesses lie, but where they are slain? and where can they be slain, but where they are? and where are they, at least where are there so many as in these islands? It may be objected, that Great Britain is not a part of the see of Rome, does not belong to the jurisdiction of it; to this it may be replied, that in this last war of the beast, the outer court will be given to the Gentiles, the bulk of the reformed churches will fall off to Popery, and their countries again fall into the hands of the pope, and, among the rest, Great Britain. The fears of Dr. Goodwin seem to be too just, and well grounded, that the prophecy in (<271145>Daniel 11:45) respects our island, which speaks of antichrist planting "the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain", or "the mountain of delight, of holiness". Now where has God such a mountain of delight, or a people that are the darling of his soul, as here? where in all the globe is there such a spot where God has so many saints, so many Holy Ones, as in this island? it may have been truly called a glorious holy mountain, or a mountain of delight; and what place between the seas is there to which these characters

can agree, but Great Britain? Here then antichrist will plant the tabernacles of his palace; but it will be but a tabernacle, or tent; it will be but for a short time, as it follows, “yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him”, (<27145>Daniel 11:45). Now this great city, in the street of which the bodies of the witnesses will lie exposed, is that

which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt; that is, it is called so in a mystic and allegoric sense, in distinction from the literal sense; (see <6003>1 Corinthians 10:3,4); it is called Sodom because of the fulness of bread, plenty and abundance of all outward good things in it; as well as for the pride and idleness of the priests, monks, and friars which swarm in it; and also for the open profaneness and contempt of true and serious religion in it; and particularly for the sin of sodomy, so frequently committed here, with impunity, yea with allowance, and even with commendation. This sin was extolled with praises, as Brightman observes, by John a Casa, archbishop of Beneventum; and was defended in a book, published for that purpose, by one Mutius; and which was allowed by the bulls and letters patent of Pope Julius the Third; and it is called Egypt, because of its tyranny and oppression; as the Egyptians kept the Israelites in bondage, and made them to serve with rigour, and embittered their lives, so the pope, and his Gentiles, or Egyptians, have in a most oppressive and rigorous manner tyrannised over the souls, bodies, and estates of men; and also because of its great idolatry, Egypt being very remarkable for the number of its deities, and the meanness of them; by which the idols and idolatries of the church of Rome may be fitly expressed:

where also our Lord was crucified; that is, in the great city, which is fitly compared to Sodom and Egypt; for Christ was crucified actually in Judea, which was then become a Roman province, and under Pontius Pilate, a Roman governor, and by his order, and suffered a Roman kind of death, crucifixion, and for a crime he was charged with, though a false one, against Caesar the Roman emperor; and Christ has been crucified at Rome itself in his members, who have suffered persecution and death, and even the death of the cross there; and he has been crucified afresh, both by the sins and immoralities of those who have bore the Christian name there, and by the frequent sacrifices of him in the Mass. Moreover, by this periphrasis may be meant Jerusalem; and the sense be, that as the great city, or jurisdiction of Rome, may be spiritually or mystically called Sodom and Egypt, so likewise the place where our Lord was crucified, that is, Jerusalem; and that for this reason, because that as Jerusalem stoned and

killed the prophets of the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of it were found all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, so in Rome, in mystical Babylon, will be found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon earth, (<4023535>Matthew 23:35,37 <662424>Revelation 18:24). The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, “where also their Lord was crucified”; and the Arabic version more expressly, “the Lord of these two”, i.e. the two witnesses.

Ver. 9. *And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations*, etc.] These are either the enemies of the witnesses, who consisted of the people, kindred, tongues, and nations, out from among whom they were chosen, redeemed, and called; and before or against whom John, representing these witnesses, prophesied; and over whom the Romish antichrist sits and rules, (<660509>Revelation 5:9 10:11 13:7 17:15); or else their friends, either real or pretended; since it is not said “the people”, nor “all the people, kindred, tongues, and nations”, as it is when the antichristian party are spoken of; and seeing “they that dwell upon the earth”, in (<661110>Revelation 11:10), are mentioned as a distinct company from these; and these are said to be some “of”, or “out” of the people, etc. and accordingly the following words will admit of different senses:

shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. Now, though this is not literally to be understood, yet it may have some reference to the usages of the witnesses enemies, who sometimes have not allowed them a burial: so the bodies of John Huss, and Jerom of Prague, were burnt, and their ashes cast into the Rhine; the body of Peter Ramus was cast about the streets, thrown into ponds and ditches, then dragged out, and beat with rods; and some have had their bones dug up again, after they had been buried many years, and then burnt, and their ashes scattered abroad, as Wickliff and Bucer here in England: but as this is to be understood in a mystical and allusive sense, the meaning is, as it may refer to enemies, that they shall see, and look upon with joy and pleasure, and with scorn and contempt, and insult over the witnesses, being silenced and deprived of power and opportunity of prophesying:, and as quite dispirited, cast down, and trodden under foot; and whereas not to have a burial granted is always reckoned a piece of the greatest barbarity and inhumanity, as well as of ignominy and reproach, and is expressive of a most unhappy and miserable condition; (see <19C912>Psalm 129:2,3 <242219>Jeremiah 22:19 <210603>Ecclesiastes 6:3); so it here signifies, that

the enemies of the witnesses having obtained power over them, will not only insult them, but treat them in a very cruel and inhuman manner, and expose them to scorn and contempt; and it represents their case as being very uncomfortable, and deplorable: or as it may respect friends, real or pretended, such as had been, or were, the sense is, that they shall see them in their unhappy condition, and look upon them with pity and compassion; and shall thoroughly consider, and lay to heart, their case and circumstances; and shall remember then, their doctrine and testimony, and their godly lives, and not suffer them to be buried in oblivion; and shall also call to mind this prediction concerning them, that they should continue in this state but three days and a half, and then revive; and therefore they shall entertain hopes of them, as persons sometimes do of their friends, when they are in doubt whether they are dead or not, and therefore keep them above ground for some time, and will not suffer them to be buried; for when put into the grave, there is no more hope, or when a person has been dead, as in the case of Lazarus, four days; so that this conduct may express the kindness and hope of these friends: or it may be, the meaning is, that they will not look at them but very shyly, and at a distance, as being ashamed of them, and having no heart to succour, relieve, and encourage them; but act as did the priest and the Levite towards the man that fell among thieves, and was left half dead, looked upon him, and turned from him, to the other side of the way; as also, that they will not entertain them, or give them any shelter and refuge among them, when, in this their distress, they shall apply to them: the grave is a resting place; there the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest, (<18317>Job 3:17). Such resting places the witnesses in former times have found, as the English in Queen Mary's days found at Frankfort and Geneva, and other places, and since in Holland; and as now the French refugees here, who being killed in a civil sense in their own country, are put into graves, or are allowed places of rest and security here: but now these witnesses will find none; those who pretended to be their friends will look shy upon them, and not harbour them, yea, will not suffer any to do it; they will by some public act, through fear of the Popish party, forbid the reception and entertainment of them. The time that this will last will be “three days and a half”; after which, as in (<661111>Revelation 11:11), they will live again, which cannot be understood literally of so many precise days; for it will; not be possible, that, in so short a time, the news of the slaying of the witnesses should be spread among the inhabitants of the earth, md they be able to express their general joy and rejoicing, and to send their gifts to one

another upon his occasion, as is signified in (<66110>Revelation 11:10); nor does this design so long a time, as the time and times, and half a time, elsewhere mentioned; or that it is a period of the same date and duration with the forty two months, in which the holy city is trodden under foot, and the 1260 days, or years, in which the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth; for during that time they will prophesy, and hold forth their testimony, though in sackcloth; but now they will be killed, and during this space will lie dead, and in entire silence: besides, it will be when they shall have finished their testimony, or towards the close of the 1260 days or years, that this war and slaughter will be, and when these three days and a half will take place, which are to be understood of three years and a half, according the prophetic style, a day for a year; and seems intended for the comfort of the saints, that this most afflictive and distressed condition of the witnesses should last but for a little while. It is made a question, whether this war with the witnesses, and the slaughter of them, and their lying unburied, are over or not: some have thought that these things had their accomplishment in the council of Constance, held about the year 1414, and which lasted three years and a half exactly, when those two witnesses, John Huss, and Jerom of Prague, were killed, insulted, and triumphed over by this council, which was made up of almost all nations. Brightman refers it to the Smalcaldic war in Germany in 1547, when the Protestant army was beaten, and John Frederick, elector of Saxony, and Ernest, the son of the landgrave, and after that the landgrave himself, were taken prisoners; which was a grievous blow to the Protestant cause, and occasioned great rejoicing in the Popish party; but in the year 1550, just three years and a half after that defeat, the men of Magdeburgh rose up with great spirit and courage, and revived the cause. About this time was the council of Trent; to which also the same writer accommodates these things, which consisted of men of all nations, and continued three years and a half; when the authority of the Scriptures was destroyed, which he supposes are the witnesses; when they were suppressed and silenced, and lay as a mere carcass, a dead letter, without any life in them: and it is easy to observe, that there have been several periods of time, in which there has been a seeming fulfilment of these things; the persecution under Queen Mary, and the burning of the martyrs in her time, continued about three years and a half; the massacre in France, in 1572, threatened an utter extirpation of the Protestant religion there, which yet revived in 1576, much about the same space of time here mentioned; and there are several others that have been observed by writers; but what seems most remarkable of all is the case of

the Protestants in the valleys of Piedmont, commonly called the Vaudois. The duke of Savoy, their sovereign, by an edict, dated January 31, 1685-6, N. S. forbad the exercise of their religion on pain of death, ordered their churches to be demolished, and their ministers to be banished; which was published in the valleys April the 11th, and was put in execution on the 22nd of the same month, by Savoy and French troops, who killed great numbers of them, took others, and put them into prisons, whom they released about the beginning of December, 1686, and suffered them to depart into other countries, where they were kindly received, relieved, and preserved, particularly by the kingdoms and states of England, Holland, Brandenburgh, Geneva, and Switzerland, while the Popish party were rejoicing at their ruin: and toward the latter end of the year 1689, about three years and a half after the publishing of the edict, these people were inspired on a sudden with a spirit of resolution and courage; and, contrary to the advice of their friends, who thought their case desperate, secretly passed the lake of Geneva, and entered Savoy with sword in hand, and recovered their ancient possessions; and by the month of April, A. D. 1690, established themselves in it, notwithstanding the troops of France and Savoy, to whom they were comparatively few, and whom they slew in great numbers, with little loss to themselves; when the duke perceiving they were encouraged and assisted by foreign princes, and he having left the French interest, recalled the rest of them, and reestablished them by an edict, signed June 4, 1690, just three years and a half after their total dissipation, and gave leave to the French refugees to return with them. Now I take it, that these several things which have happened at certain times, in particular places, are so many hints and pledges of what hereafter will be universal to the witnesses in all places where they are. It would be very desirable if it could be ascertained, and concluded upon a good foundation, that this affair of the killing of the witnesses was over; but because of the following things it cannot be; for the outward court is not yet given to the Gentiles, at least not the whole of it, which must be, ere they can come at the witnesses in the inner court to slay them: they have indeed attacked it, and have taken some part of it, as in Germany, Poland, etc. but as yet not in Great Britain, Holland, etc. at least not thoroughly, though it is plain they are getting ground. Moreover, the witnesses have not finished their testimony, they are still prophesying: in sackcloth; whereas it will be when they have finished it, and towards the close of the 1260 days or years, that they will be killed: to which add, that the ruin of antichrist will quickly follow their rising and ascension; so that if any of the

above instances had been the fulfilling of these things relating to the witnesses, antichrist must have been destroyed before now. And it may be further observed, that the second woe, which is the Turkish woe, will, upon the fulfilment of these things, pass away; and the third woe, or the sounding of the seventh trumpet, will immediately take place, which brings on the kingdom of Christ; whereas the Turkish government is still in being, and in great power (this was published in 1747. Ed.); and there is no appearance, as yet, of the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ. There may be an allusion, in this space of time, to the time that Antiochus, called Epiphanes, held Jerusalem in his hands, after he had conquered it, which was just three years and six months [f307], during which time he spoiled the temple, and caused the daily sacrifice to cease: this term of time is much spoken of by the Jews; so long they say Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, and likewise Vespasian, and also three years and a half Adrian besieged Bither [f308].

Ver. 10. *And they that dwell upon the earth*, etc.] Out of which the beast arose, and over which he reigns, even the inhabitants of the Roman empire, often in this book called the earth, the followers of antichrist, men that mind nothing but earth, and earthly things:

shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; as is usual with persons, and was with the Jews, to do in times of public rejoicing; (see <17018>Esther 9:18,19 <16810>Nehemiah 8:10,11).

Because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth; not because they were tormented by them, but because they were now freed from their tormenting ministry; they had tormented them by the preaching of the Gospel, which is foolishness, and the savour of death to natural men, and gives them pain, and fills them with vexation and wrath; by their testimony which they had bore for Christ, and against antichrist; by their sharp reproof of them for their false doctrine and will worship, and their impure lives and conversations; by their own holy lives, which would sometimes flash light into their consciences, and make them uneasy; and by their foretelling the calamities and ruin, temporal and eternal, that would come upon them; but now they are silenced, and they hear and see no more of these things at which they rejoice.

Ver. 11. *And after three days and a half*, etc.] When it was certain they were dead, and all hope of reviving was over; (see <43139>John 11:39); that is, three years and a half:

the spirit of life from God entered into them; this phrase is expressive of a resurrection the Jews frequently call the general resurrection hyyjt, "a quickening", and have the very phrase here used; for, speaking of the resurrection, they say[f309], yyjd ajwr, "the spirit of life" does not dwell but in the holy land. This resurrection of the witnesses is not to be understood of a corporeal resurrection; for there is no reason to believe that there will be a resurrection of any particular saints until the general resurrection, which will be at the personal coming of Christ, and at the beginning of the thousand years, and after the sounding of the seventh trumpet; whereas this will be before that, and towards the close of the sixth trumpet: and besides, the death of these witnesses is not corporeal, as has been observed: nor is a spiritual resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace intended, which is owing to the Spirit of life from Christ; for these witnesses were such who had been quickened, and raised in this sense antecedent to their prophesying and killing; but a civil resurrection of them, or a resurrection of them as witnesses, when their spirits will revive, and they will take heart and courage again to appear for Christ: and this may be understood of the same individual persons that were silenced, or of those that succeeded such that corporeally died in the war of the beast, or during this interval; and so these witnesses may be said to rise in them, they appearing in the same spirit they did; just as John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elias: and this will be owing to the Spirit of life from God entering into them; which is said in allusion to the living soul of man, which returns to God, and at the resurrection, whether particular or general, comes from him, and reenters the body; and which also is owing to the Spirit of God, by whom mortal bodies will be quickened; and in allusion to the breathing on the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision, (<26>3701<26>Ezekiel 37:1-14); and the sense is, that the Spirit of God will inspire these witnesses with fresh life and rigour, zeal and resolution; so that though they have been so long silent, lifeless, and dispirited, they shall now rise in high spirits, and bravely exert themselves in the cause of Christ; and this will not be by any worldly power and authority, or by any secular arm, that shall encourage them, but by the Spirit of God, who shall breathe upon them, and afresh quicken them, and fill them with resolution and courage:

and they stood upon their feet; in great numbers, like the army in Ezekiel's vision; and will reassume their former station, and be in a position and a state of readiness to serve the Lord, and to defend his truths, and discharge their duty with boldness and courage, fearing the face of none:

and great fear fell upon them which saw them; in this posture; either on their enemies, who may fear that they should be tormented with them again; that the things which they had foretold concerning their ruin are now coming upon them; that they shall be turned out of their places of profit, and lose all their worldly advantages, and carnal pleasures now, and be miserable to all eternity: or upon their friends, either their false hearted ones, that would not succour them when in distress, who may fear that God, whose finger they will see in this matter, will by them resent their conduct towards them; or else their real friends, who may be filled with reverence and awe of the divine Majesty, as the church was upon the business of Ananias and Sapphira, (<40511>Acts 5:11).

Ver. 12. *And they heard a great voice from heaven*, etc.] The Complutensian edition reads, “I heard”, i.e. “John”; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; but the copies in general read “they”; not the enemies, but the witnesses: and this seems not to come from any Christian civil magistrate in the church, but from Christ himself; not but that Christ may make use of, such for the bringing of his people into a more glorious and comfortable state in this world:

saying unto them, come up hither; as the angel said to John, (<66401>Revelation 4:1), and Christ will say to his people, though on another account, (<40234>Matthew 25:34).

And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; which is to be understood not literally, for no man hath ascended to heaven, nor will any, until the thousand years are ended, when the saints will, in a body, ascend thither; but mystically, of a more glorious state of the church; so to ascend to heaven signifies a more exalted state in a prince, or a kingdom, (<23143>Isaiah 14:13); and here intends a state of comfortable communion of the saints one with another, of great purity and holiness, of large enjoyments of blessings and privileges, and of great security from enemies, and of great glory, and honour, and power, that shall be bestowed upon them; they now dwelling on high, and their place of defence being the munition of rocks. This will be the beginning of the spiritual reign of Christ; and this ascension of the witnesses will be in a cloud, in allusion to our Lord's ascension to heaven, and as expressive of that glory and majesty which will be put upon these risen witnesses, and in which they shall enter into this happy state of things; or it may be, that this may denote that the first appearance of these happy times, and of Christ's spiritual reign in his church, and their more

comfortable enjoyment, will be at first but dim and obscure, and yet such as, in comparison of their former state, will be visible to, and be taken notice of, even by their very enemies:

and their enemies beheld them; going up to heaven, or entering into a purer, and more glorious, and spiritual state; for the mountain of the Lord's house will be established upon the top of the mountains, and Jerusalem shall be made the praise of the whole earth, an eternal excellency, and the joy of many generations; and this shall be seen and known of all, though to their grief and sorrow.

Ver. 13. *And the same hour was there a great earthquake*, etc.] Or the same day, as the Complutensian edition, and some copies, read; that is, at the time of the resurrection and ascension of the witnesses, as there was at the resurrection of Christ; and is to be understood of a very great commotion in the civil affairs of kingdoms and nations within the Roman jurisdiction, as there was when Rome Pagan was near its ruin, (<66612>Revelation 6:12).

And the tenth part of the city fell. Mr. Daubuz interprets the “earthquake” of the irruption of the Ottomans upon the Grecian empire, and the “tenth” part of the city, of the Greek church, and the falling of it, of its loss of liberty, and falling into slavery; but something yet to come is here intended. By “the city” is meant the city of Rome, the great city, mentioned in (<66108>Revelation 11:8); and by “the tenth part” of it may be designed either Rome itself, which as it now is, according to the observation of some, is but a tenth part of what it was once; so that the same thing is meant as when it is said, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen”, (<66148>Revelation 14:8): or it may design the tithes and profits which arise from the several kingdoms belonging to the jurisdiction and see of Rome, which now will fall off from those who used to share them, upon this new and spiritual state of things; the Gospel daily gaining ground, and enlightening the minds of men, and freeing them from the slavery they were held in; or else the ten fold government of the Roman empire, or the ten kings that gave their kingdoms to the whore of Rome, and are the ten horns of the beast, on which she sits, who will now hate her, and burn her flesh with fire; or rather one of the ten kingdoms, into which the Roman western empire was divided. Dr. Goodwin seems inclined to think that Great Britain is intended, which having been gained over to the Popish party, will now fall off again: but I rather think the kingdom of France is meant, the last of the

ten kingdoms, which rose up out of the ruins of the Roman empire, which will be conquered, and which will be the means of its reformation from Popery.

And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand; the meaning is, that in the commotions, massacres, tumults, and wars which will be throughout the empire, such a number of men will be slain; which is either put for a greater number; a certain for an uncertain, as in (<510104> Romans 11:4); and perhaps in reference to the account there; otherwise seven thousand is but a small number to be slain in battle; or as it is in the original text, “the names of men seven thousand”. Now it is observed by some, that the smallest name of number belonging to men is a centurion, or captain of an hundred men; and supposing that to be meant, then seven thousand names of men will imply, that in an hour, or about a fortnight's time, may be slain throughout all Europe, in battles and massacres, about seven hundred thousand men, which is a very large number: or names of men may signify men of name, of great renown, as in (<041602> Numbers 16:2); and then if seven thousand men of name, officers in armies, should be slain, how great must be the number of the common soldiers? Some have thought, that ecclesiastical dignities, or men distinguished by names and titles, such as cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, etc. and the whole rabble of the antichristian hierarchy, which will now fall, and be utterly demolished, are intended:

and the remnant were affrighted; who were not slain in this earthquake; these will be affected with the judgments of God upon others, and be made sensible of their danger, and of their deliverance, which will so work upon them, as to reform them from Popery:

and gave glory to the God of heaven; will acknowledge the justice of God, and the righteousness of his judgments upon those that were slain, and his goodness to them who are spared; will confess their transgressions and sins they have been guilty of; and give the glory of their deliverance, not to their idols and images, but to the true God, whose religion they now embrace; for this respects the large conversions among the Popish party to the true religion, under the influence of the grace of God, through the preaching of the Gospel, which will now be spread throughout the world.

Ver. 14. *The second woe is past*, etc.] Not in John's time, only in a visionary way; the meaning is, that the second woe trumpet, which is the sixth, will now have done sounding, when the four angels, bound in the

river Euphrates, shall have been loosed, and they, with their horsemen, shall have done what they were designed to do; when the two witnesses shall have been slain, and are raised again, and ascended to heaven; and the things attending, or following thereon, as the earthquake, and slaughter, and the conversions of men, are accomplished.

[And] behold the third woe cometh quickly; immediately, upon the passing of the other; namely, the sounding of the seventh trumpet, as follows.

Ver. 15. *And the seventh angel sounded*, etc.] The last of the seven angels, who had trumpets given them to sound, (Revelation 8:2,6). The days of the voice of this angel, as in (Revelation 10:7), cannot refer to the times of Constantine; for though there was then a strange turn of affairs in favour of the kingdom of Christ, when there was a great spread of the Gospel, and large conversions in many places, and many churches were raised and formed in several countries, and the whole empire became Christian; yet this, as we have seen, came to pass under the sixth seal, before any of the trumpets were sounded, and much less this seventh and last; nor do they belong to the times of the Reformation in Germany. Brightman fixes the sounding of this trumpet to the year 1558, when the kings of Sweden and Denmark set up the Gospel in their kingdoms, and reformed them from Popery; and when Queen Elizabeth came to the throne of England, and rooted out great part of the Romish superstition: but it is certain that this angel has not yet sounded his trumpet, and therefore cannot refer to anything past, but to what is to come; we are yet under the sixth trumpet; the outward court is not yet given to the Gentiles; the witnesses are not slain, and much less risen and ascended; the earthquake, the fall of the tenth part of the city, and the slaughter of seven thousand names of men, with what will follow thereon, are things yet to come; the Turkish woe is not over, and antichrist still reigns, and the kingdoms of this world are far from appearing to be the kingdoms of Christ. Some think, and indeed the generality of interpreters, that this respects the voice of the archangel, and trump of God, the last trump, which will sound at the resurrection of the dead, and the day of judgment; but none of these appear in the account of things under this trumpet; but rather the whole has a view to the spiritual reign of Christ, when both the eastern and western antichrist will be destroyed; the Gospel will be carried all over the world, and there will be large conversions both among Jews and Gentiles, and Christ will reign in a spiritual manner over all the earth. Hence it follows,

and there were great voices in heaven; these are either the voices of the angels in heaven, who rejoice at every appearance, and breaking forth of Christ's kingdom and glory, as in (Revelation 5:11,12 7:11,12); and indeed, if they rejoice at the conversion of one sinner, at a single addition to Christ's interest, then much more will they, when the kingdoms of this world become his; or rather these may be the voices of the multitude of the saints in the churches, the same company with those in (Revelation 19:1-7); who express their joy at the judgment of the great whore, and at the marriage of the Lamb; and who, as here, are attended with the thanksgivings and hallelujahs of the four and twenty elders: and it may be, that these are also the voices of the four living creatures, the ministers of the word, since the four and twenty elders generally follow them, (Revelation 4:9,10 5:14); they may be the witnesses, who were silenced, but are now raised up, and are ascended into heaven, and their mouths are opened, and their voices heard again:

saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; by "the kingdoms of this world" are meant worldly kingdoms, which are set up by worldly power, and are supported by worldly policy, and subsist upon worldly principles and maxims; the government of which proceeds upon worldly ends and views; in distinction from the kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world, and is not supported by any such methods; and they are the kingdoms, into which the world is divided, which, and the glory of them, Satan showed to Christ, and insolently offered to give him them, if he would worship him; but these were to come to Christ in another way, and at another time. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin version, and all the Oriental versions, read in the singular number, "the kingdom of this world"; the whole government of it, which is his by right of nature, and will be overturned, and overturned again and again, till he comes, whose right it is; and then all power, rule, and authority, will be put down, and his kingdom, which will tilt the face of the whole earth, will take place: all the antichristian states and kingdoms are here intended, particularly the kingdoms into which the Roman empire, sometimes called the whole world, (Luke 2:1), is divided, which are ten; one of the ten, a tenth part of the city or jurisdiction of Rome, will fall at the close of the sixth trumpet, and the other nine, or the other nine parts, will fall at the sounding of the seventh; the ten kings, that have given their kingdoms to the beast, will have an aversion to the whore, hate her, and

burn her flesh, will fall off from her, and into the hands of Christ; there will be a general and thorough reformation from Popery in all the kingdoms of the Roman empire: but though these are greatly intended, yet not only they, but the Mahometan nations also, as the Turkish woe will now be over, and the great river Euphrates dried up, to make way for the kings of the east, those large kingdoms and countries of China, Tartary, and Persia; and these now under the power of the Turk will embrace the Christian faith; and also all the Pagan nations are to be taken into the account, and who will now enjoy the light of the Gospel: and all, and everyone those Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan kingdoms, will "become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ"; by "our Lord" may be designed God the Father, who is the Lord of the whole earth, the Lord God Almighty, and is acknowledged as such by angels and men; and by "his Christ", his Son Jesus Christ, who is equal with him; and what belongs to the one belongs to the other; and who, as Mediator, is his anointed One; anointed to be prophet, priest, and King; anointed with the oil of gladness, the Holy Ghost; (see <19202>Psalm 2:2), where the same distinction is. In the Targum on (<23402>Isaiah 4:2) mention is made of yyd ajwçm, "the Messiah"; or "Christ of Jehovah": and in the same Targum on (<23510>Isaiah 53:10), it is said, "they shall look" ^zhjyçm twklmb, "upon the kingdom of their Messiah"; though it may be rather that Christ is designed by both these phrases, and the words be rendered, "our Lord, even his Christ"; since the phrase, "our Lord", as well as Christ, is generally understood of Jesus Christ in the New Testament; and who is Lord of all, of angels, and of men, and the Christ of God. Now these kingdoms will become his, not merely by right, for so they are his already, by right of nature, and creation, and preservation; but these have shaken off his government, and have refused to have him to reign over them, and have fallen into the hands of usurpers, as Satan, the god of this world, the Romish antichrist, that reigns over the kings of the earth, and Mahomet the king of the locusts; but now these will, in fact, come into his hands, and be under his government; they will acknowledge him as their Lord and Sovereign, and fear and worship him, as King of saints: and this will be brought about, not by force of arms, as Mahomet got his dominions; nor by policy and fraud, by imposture and lying wonders, by which the pope of Rome has obtained his authority over the nations; but partly by the pouring out of the vials of God's wrath upon the seat of the beast, and upon the river Euphrates, that is, both upon the pope and Turk, which will weaken and destroy their power and authority, and make way for Christ to set up his kingdom; and partly, and chiefly, by the preaching

of the Gospel: now will an open door be set, which none can shut; many will run to and fro, and knowledge will be increased; the earth will be covered with it, as the sea with waters; multitudes of souls everywhere will be converted; a nation will be born at once; churches will be set up in every place, which are Christ's kingdom, where he reigns, and where his subjects are, and his laws are put in execution; where his word will be now faithfully preached, his ordinances purely administered, and he, in his person, office, and grace, will be alone exalted: the consequence of which will be,

and he shall reign for ever and ever; no usurper will ever start up more, or obtain, neither Satan, nor the beast, nor the false prophet, shall ever regain their power and authority any more; neither Paganism, nor Judaism, nor antichristianism, either Papal or Mahometan, shall ever have place more: Christ will reign in this spiritual way, more or less, until he comes personally, and then he will reign with his people on earth a thousand years; and when they are ended, he will reign with them in heaven to all eternity; for though, at the end of these years, he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father, yet he will not cease to reign; indeed he will not reign in the same manner, but he will reign with equal power and authority, and over, and with the same persons. The Vulgate Latin version adds, “Amen”.

Ver. 16. *And the four and twenty elders*, etc.] The same with those in (Revelation 4:4);

which sat before God on their seats; as they are also there described; and which may be expressive of their enjoyment of the divine Presence; and also of their quiet and undisturbed situation, being restored to their former places, which they now possess without molestation and interruption; for as these are the representatives of Gospel churches in all ages, they were with the church in the wilderness during the 1260 days, or years: hence we hear nothing of them from the time of the sealing of the hundred and forty and four thousand, and during the sounding of the trumpets; but now they are restored to their former seats, and upon this wonderful change of things in the world, they

fell upon their faces and worshipped God; in a very humble and reverential posture, and in a way of praise and thanksgiving.

Ver. 17. *Saying, we give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty*, etc.] The person addressed is the Lord Jesus Christ, whose the kingdoms are

become, and who now reigns in great power and authority; he is Lord of all, and truly and properly God, and the Almighty, as his works of creation, preservation, redemption, raising himself from the dead, etc. declare; and each of these titles exceedingly well suit him, when his visible kingdom on earth will be so greatly enlarged:

which art, and wast, and art to come: the everlasting, "I am", the unchangeable Jehovah: the phrase is expressive of the eternity and immutability, (see Gill on "Revelation 1:8"); and it may be observed, whereas in this description of him it is said, "and art to come", this therefore does not belong to his personal, but to his spiritual reign; he will not be as yet come in person, to raise the dead, and judge the world, when these voices shall be in heaven, and these congratulations of the elders be made: the reason of their praise and thanksgiving follows,

because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned; power always belonged to him, as God; he always was the mighty God, and, as such, help for his people was laid upon him, he being mighty to save, and able to bear the government of them, laid on his shoulders; and, as Mediator, all power in heaven, and in earth, was given to him at his resurrection; and he had a name given him above every name, when exalted at the right hand of God, and was made, or declared, Lord and Christ; and from that time he has, in some measure, exerted his power and reigned: he endued his apostles with power from on high; and he went forth in the ministry of the Gospel conquering, and to conquer; and has ever since reigned in the hearts of his people; but now he will manifest and display his "great" power; he will show it more openly, and use it more extensively; his kingdom shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; he shall be King over all the earth; his power has been seen in ages past, but now the "greatness" of his power will be made manifest; he has always had a kingdom on earth, but now the, "greatness" of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, will be his.

Ver. 18. *And the nations were angry*, etc.] (see Psalm 99:1), which the Septuagint render, the "Lord reigns, let the nations be angry". This refers not to the times of the dragon, or the Pagan Roman emperors, who were wroth with the woman, the church, and made war with her seed; but Rome Papal, and its Gentiles, are intended; these are the nations that antichrist reigns over: and it does not so much design their anger against Christ, and his people, expressed by their anathemas, excommunications, murders; and

massacres, and bloody persecutions, which could not be cause of thanksgiving to the elders; but their anger and resentment at his power and reign, at having the outward court taken from them, said to be given them, (Revelation 11:2); and at their loss of power, profit, pleasure, and plenty, through the fall of Babylon, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom; and though these things will make the Gentiles, the followers of antichrist, gnash their teeth, it will occasion joy and thanksgiving among the saints:

and thy wrath is come: the time is come to make Babylon, or the Romish antichrist, to drink of the wine of the fierceness of divine wrath; as the time of the Lamb's wrath and vengeance upon Rome Pagan was come at the opening of the sixth seal, so the time of his wrath and vengeance on Rome Papal will be come at the sounding of the seventh trumpet:

and the time of the dead, that they should be judged; not the time of the wicked, who are dead in sins, while they live, and who die in their sins, not their time to be raised from the dead, in order to be judged, for they will not rise till after the thousand years are ended; nor the time of the dead in Christ, who will rise upon Christ's personal coming, at the beginning of the thousand years; but this trumpet respects not the personal coming of Christ to raise the dead, and judge the world, but his spiritual coming to reign in his churches, and judge their enemies: the time of those that were dead for Christ, whose blood had been shed in his cause, the time for the vindication of them, and avenging their blood, is now come; the souls of those under the altar had been a long time crying to God to avenge their blood on them that dwell on the earth; and now the time will be come, when God will judge his people, vindicate their cause; and when he, to whom vengeance belongs, will repay it, by pouring out the vials of his wrath on the antichristian party, by giving them blood to drink, because they are worthy; this judgment will issue in the fall and ruin both of the western and eastern antichrist.

And that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants; not a reward of debt, but of grace; not the recompence of reward, or the reward of the inheritance in heaven; but some marks of honour and respect; some measure of happiness, peace, and joy, which Christ of his rich grace will give to his ministers and churches, and all that love him in this glorious period of time; and who are distinguished in the following manner,

the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great: by the “prophets” are meant, not the prophets of the Old Testament,

but the prophets of the New; and not those extraordinary persons, who are distinguished on the one hand from apostles and evangelists, and on the other from pastors and teachers, who had an extraordinary gift of interpreting the Scriptures, and of foretelling things to come; but the ministers of the word, the two prophets or witnesses, who had prophesied in sackcloth, but shall now be clothed with salvation: and by "the saints" are designed such as were set apart by God the Father from eternity, and whose sins are expiated by the blood of Christ, and who are internally sanctified by the, Spirit of God, and externally separated from the rest of mankind, and incorporated into a Gospel church state, and are in holy fellowship one with another: and they that "fear the name" of God are such as truly love and reverence him, and worship him in Spirit and in truth, but are not members of any particular church; who yet will be taken notice of by the Lord, and a book of remembrance be written for them; so the proselytes from among the Gentiles are distinguished from the Israelites by the same character; (see Gill on "<44136>Acts 13:16"); or rather this is a general character of both ministers and churches, since to fear the name of the Lord is a phrase that includes all religious worship, internal and external. And now all these, "small and great", whether greater or lesser believers, whether men of larger or meaner gifts and abilities, will all have the same reward, enjoy the same church privileges, partake of the same ordinances, in the purity of them, have the same communion with God, and fellowship with Christ, and one another, and share in, the same common peace, and liberty, and security from enemies: the last thing taken notice of by these elders, as matter of thanksgiving, is the destruction of antichrist.

And shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth; or "corrupt it"; meaning antichrist and his followers; who destroy the bodies, souls, and estates of men, and not only the inhabitants of the earth, but even the earth itself; for through that laziness and idleness which they spread wherever they come, a fruitful country is turned into barrenness; who corrupt the minds of men with false doctrine, idolatry, and superstition, and the bodies of women and men with all uncleanness and filthiness, with fornication, sodomy, etc. (<66902>Revelation 19:2); and are the cause of their own destruction, and the destruction of others; which, upon the blowing of the seventh trumpet, will come swiftly and irrecoverably. Now will Babylon sink as a millstone into the sea, never to be seen more; both the western and eastern antichrists are intended; the former is called the son of perdition, because of his destroying others, and going into perdition

himself; and the latter is called “Abaddon” and “Apollyon”, which both signify a destroyer, (<53004>2 Thessalonians 1:4 <66911>Revelation 9:11).

Ver. 19. *And the temple of God was opened in heaven*, etc.] The temple at Jerusalem, to which the allusion is, was the place of public worship; this, in times of idolatry, was shut up, and fell to decay; and when there was a reformation its doors were opened, and that repaired; and to this the reference seems to be; and the sense is, that at this time the pure worship of God will be restored, and there will be a free and uninterrupted exercise of it; the temple will be open to all; here everyone may come, and sit, and worship without fear; churches will now be formed according to the original plan, and primitive order and institution of them; and the laws of Christ concerning the admission, regulation, and exclusion of members, will be carefully and punctually observed; the ordinances of Christ will be kept, as they were first delivered, and be purged from all the corruptions introduced by Papists or retained by Protestants; the ordinance of the Lord's supper will be freed from the senseless notions of transubstantiation and consubstantiation, and from all vain and impertinent rites and ceremonies that attend it; and the ordinance of baptism will be administered, both as to mode and subject, according to the word of God, as well as be cleared from the superstitious rites of the sign of the cross, chrism, spittle, etc. in short, all external worship will be pure, plain, and evangelical: hence it appears, that by this temple is not meant the church triumphant, and the happiness of the saints in heaven, as becoming visible, not even the new Jerusalem church state, or the personal reign of Christ on earth for a thousand years; for in that state there will be no temple at all, nor will the saints then need the sun, or moon of Gospel ordinances, (<66122>Revelation 21:22,23);

and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: the ark was a chest, in which the covenant or tables of the law were put; upon it was the mercy seat, and over that the cherubim of glory, shadowing it; between which were the seat of the divine Majesty; this ark stood in the holy of holies, and was seen only by the high priest once a year, and was covered with a covering vail, (<040405>Numbers 4:5); it was wanting in the second temple [f310]; to this the allusion is here; (see Gill on “<580904>Hebrews 9:4”). Now in this spiritual Gospel church state, through the pure ministry of the word, and the faithful administration of ordinances, the mysteries of the Gospel, into which angels desire to look, signified by the cherubim over the mercy seat, will be clearly revealed to all Christians, Jews and Gentiles;

particularly to the former, from whom they have been hid; the vail that is over their hearts will then be done away, when they shall be turned to the Lord; and indeed the vail which is overall people will then be removed; and those truths which have been so much obscured by antichrist will be clearly seen; and especially the Lord Jesus Christ, the antitype of the ark, in whom are hid the treasures of wisdom; by whom the law, and the two tables of it, are fulfilled; and in whom they are pure and perfect; and by whom the covenant of grace is ratified and confirmed; and in whom it is sure; and through whom God is propitious to his people, and grants them communion with him; he will be visibly held forth in the ministry of the word; and be seen in the glory of his person, and offices, and grace; who has been so long and greatly hid, and kept out of sight by Popish and Mahometan darkness;

and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail; which may be understood of the vials of God's wrath, that will be poured out upon the pope and Turk; which though mentioned last, will be first, and make way for this spiritual state; particularly the things here spoken of may be compared with what will be at the pouring out of the seventh vial, (Revelation 16:18,21); or this may design the powerful “voices”, and clear ministrations of the Gospel, and the efficacy of them at this time; which, like “thunders”, will awaken the consciences of men, and, like “earthquakes”, will make them shake and tremble, and cry out, what shall we do to be saved? and as “lightnings” illuminate their understandings, and give them a clear discerning of divine things; and as “hail” beat down all self-righteousness and self-confidence, and all errors, heresies, superstition, and will worship. Though I suspect, that these several things are expressive of the change and revolution that will be made after a time, in this happy and comfortable state; and that the cold, which generally attends an hail storm, represents that coldness and lukewarmness, into which the churches of Christ will again sink, expressed in the Laodicean church state, in which condition Christ will find them when he personally appears; so that the seven seals, with the seven trumpets, bring us exactly to the same period of time as the seven churches do.

> “And they took all the holy vessels of the Lord, both great and small, with the vessels of the ark of God, and the king's treasures, and carried them away into Babylon.” (1 Esdras 1:54) ``4 And open your hearts in his law and commandments, and send you peace, 5

And hear your prayers, and be at one with you, and never forsake you in time of trouble.” (2 Maccabees 1)

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 12

This chapter contains a vision of two wonders or signs seen in heaven, a woman and a dragon, and an account of what followed thereon, war both in heaven and earth. The vision of the woman is in (Revelation 12:1,2), who is described by her being clothed with the sun; by her having the moon under her feet; by a crown of twelve stars on her head; and by her pregnancy, travail, pains, and cry. The vision of the dragon is in (Revelation 12:3,4), who is described by his size, a great one; by his colour, red; by the number of his heads and horns, and the crowns on the former; by the force and strength of his tail, drawing and casting: down to the earth the third part of the stars of heaven; and by his position, standing before the woman, in order to devour her child when born. Next follows an account of the birth of her child, and what became of that and her: the child is said to be a man child, is described as a monarch, and as advanced to great honour and dignity; but she flies into the wilderness, where a place is prepared for her of God, and where she is hid for the space of 1260 days, (Revelation 12:5,6); upon this ensues a war in heaven; the combatants on one side were Michael and his angels, and on the other the dragon and his; the issue of which was, that the latter were conquered, and cast out into the earth, (Revelation 12:7-9), on account of which victory a triumphant song is sung by the inhabitants of heaven, because of salvation and strength that were come to them; and because of the kingdom and power of Christ, which now took place; and because of the ejection of Satan, the accuser of their brethren; in which song also notice is taken of the manner in which Satan was overcome by those he accused, by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of their testimony, and by their death; and it is concluded with an apostrophe to those that dwell in heaven, calling on them to rejoice, and to the inhabitants of the earth denouncing woe to them, because the devil was among them, whose wrath was great, his time being short, (Revelation 12:10-12). Next follow the dragon's persecution of the woman, and her flight into the wilderness, and the care took of her there, as before described, (Revelation 12:13,14); then the method the serpent took to annoy her, the help she received from the earth,

and the wrath of the dragon upon that; which put him upon making war with the remnant of her seed, who kept the commandments of God, and had the testimony of Jesus, (<66125>Revelation 12:15-17).

Ver. 1. *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven*, etc.] This vision begins a new account of things, and represents the church in the apostles' times, and purer ages of Christianity, and under the Heathen and Arian persecutions; after which an account is given of the beast, mentioned in (<66107>Revelation 11:7), of his rise, power, and reign, and then of the victories of the saints over him and of the vials of God's wrath upon him, and of his utter ruin and destruction; when comes on the marriage of the Lamb, and after that the first resurrection, and the thousand years' reign; and the whole is closed with a most beautiful description of the new Jerusalem state, which is the grand point and utmost period this prophetic book leads unto. This vision was seen “in heavens”, whither John was called up to, (<66401>Revelation 4:1); and where the various scenes, in a visionary way, were acted, both before, and after this; and which was an emblem of the state of the church on earth: what was seen is called “a wonder” or “sign”, it being very amazing to behold, and very significative of persons and things; and a “great” one, because it respects great affairs, and wonderful events relating to the state of the church in future times, as well as present: and the first thing seen and observed was

a woman: by whom is meant, not the virgin Mary, as highly favoured of God, and big with her firstborn son Jesus; though there may be an allusion to her, and in some things there is a likeness, as is by some observed; as Mary brought forth Christ corporeally, and God in the fulness of time sent forth his Son, made of a woman, so this woman brings forth Christ spiritually, or the manly birth of his kingdom in the world, or one that should be the instrument of enlarging his kingdom; and as Herod sought to destroy Christ in his infancy, and as soon as born, so the dragon here stands watching to destroy the manly birth as soon as brought forth; and as Joseph, with Mary, and her son, by a divine direction, fled into Egypt, where they continued during the reign of Herod, so to this woman are given two wings of an eagle, to flee into the wilderness, where she abides, and is nourished, during the reign of antichrist; and as Herod, after the flight of Mary, killed all the infants of Bethlehem, of two years of age, and under, that he might destroy her son, so the dragon casts out a flood of water after the woman, to carry her away, and makes war with the remnant of her seed; and as the son of Mary, after he had done his work, was taken

up to heaven, and made Lord and Christ, so the man child, this woman brings forth, is caught up to God, and his throne, to rule all nations with a rod of iron. But Mary, and the birth of Christ, can never be intended in this vision, that affair being past and over, and would never be represented to John in this manner, who was well acquainted with it: nor is the church of God, among the Jews of the former dispensation, designed; who were highly honoured of God, on whom he shone forth at the giving of the law to them; who had his word and ordinances, to be a light unto them, and had the priests and prophets of the Lord among them; and whose crown and glory it was to descend from the twelve patriarchs; and who were in great expectation of, and most earnestly desired, and longed for, and were, as it were, in pain for the coming of the Messiah; but to what purpose could such a representation of them be made to John now? much less is the church of the Jews, or the Jewish synagogue, as it was at the coming and birth of here designed, which was an evil, wicked, and adulterous generation, and so bad as not to be declared by the tongue and pen of man, and therefore far from answering the description here; but the pure apostolic church is meant, or the church of Christ, as it was in the times of the apostles, and the first ages of Christianity: the description answers to the first of the seven churches, the church at Ephesus, and to the opening of the first seal; and the church apostolical is here called “a woman”, because the church was not now in its infancy, in nonage, as under the former dispensation, but grown up, mature, and at full age; and because espoused and married to Christ her husband, to whom she now brought forth many children, in a spiritual sense, as she hereafter will bring forth many more; and, because of her beauty in the eyes of her Lord and husband, which is greatly desired, and highly commended by him; as also because of her weakness in herself her ministers and members, not being able to do anything without her husband, Christ, through whom she can do all things. And who is further described by her habit and attire,

clothed with the sun; which does not point at her future state in glory; (see <4013-47>Matthew 13:47); but to her then present state on earth; and is expressive of that clear light of Gospel doctrine, which shone out upon her, like the sun in its meridian glory, and of the heat of love to God, Christ, and his people, and zeal for his truths, ordinances, worship, and discipline, which appeared in her; and of that inward holiness of heart which made her all glorious within; and of the outward purity of life and conversation, which greatly adorned her; but, above all, of the righteousness of Christ,

who is the sun of righteousness, and the Lord her righteousness; which righteousness, as it was doctrinally held forth by her in the clearest manner, was also as a garment on her, to cover, preserve, and beautify her; and is comparable to the sun for its glory and excellency, outshining that of angels and men; and for its spotless purity, being without any blemish or deficiency; and for its perpetuity, being an everlasting one, and even exceeding the sun in duration.

And the moon under her feet; the church is sometimes compared to the moon herself, because, as the moon receives its light from the sun, so she receives her light from Christ; and as the moon often changes, and has its various "phases" and appearances, so the church sometimes is in the exercise of grace, and sometimes not; sometimes under trials and persecutions, and at other times in rest and peace; one while retaining the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel in their power and purity, and anon almost overrun with errors and superstition; but this cannot be the sense here. The common interpretation is, that it signifies the church's contempt of, and trampling upon all worldly things, which are changeable, perishing, and passing away; and which very well suits with the primitive saints, who did set their affections on things in earth, but on things in heaven, who sold their worldly possessions, and laid them at the apostles' feet. Brightman thinks, that, as the moon is a luminary, it may denote the light derived from the word of God, which was a lamp to her feet, and a lantern to her paths, by which her discipline and public worship were directed, and all the private actions of life were squared; which is no contemptible sense of the words: but I rather think the ceremonial law is intended, which is very fitly represented by the moon; it consisted much in the observation of new moons, and its solemn festivals were governed and regulated by them; (see <14>2 Chronicles 8:12,13 <23>Isaiah 1:13 <30>Amos 8:5). There was some light in it, and it gave light to the saints in the night of Jewish darkness; it pointed out Christ to them, and was their schoolmaster to teach and lead them to him; yet, like the moon, it was the lesser light, the light it gave was interior to that which the Gospel now gives; and as the moon has its shots had that its imperfections; had it been faultless, there had been no need of another, and a new dispensation, but that could make nothing perfect; and, as the moon, it was variable and changeable; it was but for a time, and is now done away; it is not only waxen old like the moon in the wane, but is entirely vanished away: and yet, though it was abolished by the death of Christ, it was kept up and maintained by many of the Jews, even of them

that, believed: persons are naturally fond of ceremonies; and many had rather part with a doctrine of the Gospel than with an old custom, or an useless ceremony; and this was, in a great measure, the case of the Jews; (see Acts 21:20); so that it was one of the greatest difficulties the Christian church had to grapple with, to get the ceremonial law under foot; for though it was under the feet of Christ, it was a long time ere it was under the feet of the church; and a wonder it was when it was accomplished. Mr. Daubuz has given a new interpretation of this clause; and by "the moon" he understands the Holy Ghost, the Governor of the church, next to Christ, his successor and Vicar, and the minister of him, the sun of righteousness; who is said to be "under [the] feet" of the church, to assist her in her labour, and in the bringing forth of her man child; and to support and sustain her followers and members; and to be a luminary to them, to guide them in their ways.

And upon her head a crown of twelve stars; by "stars" are meant the ministers of the Gospel, which Christ holds in his right hand, and the church here bears on her head, (Revelation 1:20). And these "twelve" have respect to the twelve apostles of Christ; and the "crown", which was composed of these stars, designs the doctrine which they preached; and this being on her "head", shows that it was in the beginning of this church state that the pure apostolic doctrine was embraced, professed, and held forth; for in the latter part of it there was a great decline, and falling off from it; in the times of the Apostle Paul, the mystery of iniquity began to work; and in John's time many antichrists were come into the world: and also this signifies, that the church openly owned the doctrine of the apostles, and was not ashamed of it before men, and publicly preached, and held it forth in her ministers, to all the world; and that this was her crown and glory, so long as she held it in its power, purity, and was both what she gloried in, and was a glory, an ornament to her: and this was also an emblem of her victory over her enemies, and of her future happiness, and pointed at the means of both; that it was by a faithful and steadfast adherence to the doctrine of the apostles that she overcame Satan, and all her spiritual enemies, and came to the possession of the crown of life and glory.

Ver. 2. *And she being big with child*, etc.] Which may be expressive of the fruitfulness of the church in bearing and bringing forth many souls to Christ, and which were very numerous in this period of time, when it was said of Zion that this and that man was born in her; and particularly of her

pregnancy with the kingdom of Christ, to be brought forth, and set up in the Roman empire, under the influence of a Roman emperor: and this being her case, she

cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered; which are metaphors taken from a woman in travail; and may either denote the earnest cries and fervent prayers of the members of the church, and the laborious and painful ministrations of the preachers of the Gospel for the conversion of souls, and especially for the setting up of the kingdom of Christ in the empire of Rome; or else the sore and grievous persecutions which attended the apostles of Christ, and succeeding ministers of the word, throughout the times of the ten Roman emperors, and especially under Dioclesian; when the church was big, and laboured in great pain, and the time was drawing on apace that a Christian emperor should be brought forth, who should be a means of spreading the Gospel, and the kingdom of Christ, all over the empire; (see <2406>Jeremiah 30:6,7 <4008>Matthew 24:8); so the Targumist frequently explains the pains of a woman in travail in the prophets by aq[, "tribulation"; see the Targum on (<2308>Isaiah 13:8 26:18 66:7).

Ver. 3. *And there appeared another wonder in heaven*, etc.] Or "sign"; which represents the woman, or the church's adversary, Satan; not that he was in heaven, in the third heaven, the place of glory and happiness, for out of that he had been cast long ago; but in his great power and authority here on, earth, particularly in the Roman empire, where the church was labouring to bring forth her man child:

and behold a great red dragon; the devil, as it is explained in (<6209>Revelation 12:9); though not he in person, but the Heathen Roman empire, or the Heathen Roman emperors, acted, influenced, directed, and presided over by him; so Pharaoh king of Egypt, and other cruel and persecuting monarchs and states, are called dragons in Scripture, (<2701>Isaiah 27:1 51:9 <2903>Ezekiel 29:3); all which places the Targum interprets of aklm, "a king", and particularly of Pharaoh king of Egypt; who is like to a great and mighty dragon: and the Roman Pagan empire, as under the influence of Satan, the god of this world, is fitly compared to a "dragon", for its policy and cunning in circumventing and ensnaring the professors of Christianity; and for its cruelty and inhumanity in persecuting of them; and for its poison of idolatry, will worship, and superstition: and it may be called a "great" one, for its strength and power, which lay in its immense treasure and riches, in numbers of men, in powerful armies, in strong cities,

castles, etc. and for its large extent and jurisdiction; and a “red” one, because of the blood of the saints shed in it, by which it became of this colour; suitable to the character and bloody practices of the old serpent the devil, by whom it was influenced, who was a murderer from the beginning; and agreeably to one of the names by which the Jews [f311] frequently call the Roman empire Edom, the name Esau had from the red pottage he sold his birthright for, and who himself was born red, (Genesis 25:29,30); it seems there were red dragons; Homer [f312] says of the dragon, that it is red upon its back:

having seven heads, and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads; the “seven heads” of the Roman empire either design the seven mountains, or hills, on which Rome, the metropolis of the empire, was built, as the seven heads of the beast on which the woman drunk with the blood of the saints sat, are explained in (Revelation 17:9); or rather the seven forms of government which successively should obtain in the empire, as kings, consuls, decemvirs, dictators, tribunes, emperors, and popes; hence these heads are said to have “seven crowns” upon them, as expressive of the imperial power and dignity which were in them, and exercised by them: Mr. Daubuz thinks seven capital cities in the Roman empire are meant, as Rome, Carthage, Aege, Antiochia, Augustodunum, Alexandria, and Constantinople; and nothing is more common than to call chief cities the heads of the countries they belong unto, as Damascus the head of Syria, and Samaria the head of Ephraim, (Isaiah 7:8,9). Pliny [f313] calls Babylon the head of Chaldea; and Cornelius Nepos says [f314] of Thebes, that it was the head of all Greece; and Syracuse is by Florus [f315] called the head of Sicily, as Rome is in Livy [f316], and other writers, the head of the world: and by the “ten horns” are meant either the ten kingdoms which should hereafter arise out of the Roman empire, and whose kings should give their kingdoms to the beast; or the ten Roman emperors, the persecutors of the Christians; or rather the ten provinces, or jurisdictions, which the empire was divided into while Pagan: Brightman out of Strabo has shown, that in the times of Augustus Caesar the Roman empire was distributed into two parts, the one was more immediately under the care of the emperor, and the other was governed by deputies; and each were divided into ten provinces; that which the emperor held consisted of Africa, France, Britain, Germany, Dacia with Mysia and Thracia, Cappadocia, Armenia, Syria, Palestine with Judea and Egypt, in all ten; and that part which was governed by deputies were the outermost Spain, and the isles by it, the

innermost Spain, etc. Sardinia with Corsica, Sicily, Illyricum with Epirus, Macedonia, Achaia, Crete with Cyreniaca, Cyprus, Bithynia with Propontis; so that the Roman Pagan empire, as under the dominion of Satan, is manifestly designed by the dragon thus described. The Jews [f317] speak of ten horns which the Israelites had, which when they sinned were taken from them, as it is written, (<250203>Lamentations 2:3), and were given to the nations of the world, according to (<270720>Daniel 7:20); "and of the ten horns that were in his head", etc.

Ver. 4. *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth*, etc.] So Solinus [f318] speaks of dragons that have power not only in their teeth, but in their tails, and do more hurt by striking than by biting; and the great serpent, which Attilius Regulus and his army fought with, not only destroyed many of his soldiers with its vast mouth, but dashed many to pieces with its tail [f319]; which serpent, Pliny [f320] says, was a hundred and twenty foot long: this is said in allusion to Antiochus Epiphanes, in (<270810>Daniel 8:10); and designs either the subduing of the third part of the principalities, states, and kingdoms of the known world, to the Roman empire, through its great power and strength; which lay in its tail, in its train of armies which attended it, whereby such a number of nations were drawn into subjection to it, insomuch that the empire was called all the world, (<420201>Luke 2:1); or else the influence the dragon should have upon the ministers of the word, who are compared to stars, (<660120>Revelation 1:20); by causing them to relinquish their ministry, and drop their heavenly employment, and fall from that high and honourable state in which they were, into a carnal, earthly, and worldly religion; and that either through policy, cunning, and flattery, or through sorcery, magic art, lying oracles, and prophecy; (see <230915>Isaiah 9:15); or through the violence of persecution they had not power to withstand; of which falling stars there are many instances, as the ecclesiastical histories of those times show:

and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born; just as the dragon Pharaoh lay in the midst of his rivers, in the river Nile, (<263903>Ezekiel 29:3); to slay the male children of Israel as soon as born; and as the dragon Herod sought to take away the life of Jesus quickly after his birth; and as Satan is like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, so the Pagan empire, or the Pagan emperors, took every opportunity to stifle the kingdom of Christ in embryo, and to prevent the bringing forth of any illustrious person; and sought to destroy him as soon as he appeared, who might be thought, or

suspected to be an instrument of encouraging and establishing the kingdom of Christ in the empire: the instances Brightman produces are appropriate, and to the purpose; as of Maximinus destroying Alexander the son of Mammea, who he saw was inclined to the Christians; and of Decius taking off the two Philips, father and son, who were favourable to their cause; but especially the watchfulness of the dragon to destroy the man child was very manifest in the Roman emperors towards Constantine; Dioclesian and Galerius, observing his virtuous disposition in his youth, left nothing unattempted to cut him off privately; he was sent against the Sarmatians, a cruel and savage people, in hopes he would have been destroyed by them; and was set to fight with a lion in the theatre, under a pretence of exercising and showing his valour; and many other methods were used to take away his life, but none succeeded.

Ver. 5. *And she brought forth a man child*, etc.] Not Christ, literally and personally considered, or Christ in his human nature, as made of a woman, and born of a virgin, which was a fact that had been years ago; but Christ mystically, or Christ in his members, who are called by his name, because he is formed in them, and they are the seed of the woman, the church; and many of these were brought forth to Christ by the church in the primitive times, who were a manly birth, hale, strong, and robust Christians; or rather this manly birth may design a more glorious appearing and breaking forth of the kingdom of Christ in the Roman empire; for though Christ came as a King, yet his kingdom was not with observation in the days of his flesh; and though, upon his ascension to heaven, he was made and declared Lord and Christ, and had a kingdom and interest in the world, and even in the Roman empire, during the first three centuries, yet this was attended with the cross and persecution; but now, towards the close of that period, Constantine, a Christian emperor, was born, under whose influence and encouragement the Gospel was spread, and the kingdom of Christ set up and established in the empire; and this seems to be the thing intended here, he being of a generous, heroic, and manly disposition:

who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; this has a manifest reference to (Psalm 2:9); which psalm, and the passage referred to in it, evidently belong to Christ; and as this is represented as something future, what should be hereafter, and not what would immediately take place, it may regard the kingdom of Christ in the last times, of which the present breaking forth of it in Constantine's time was an emblem and pledge; and may denote the universality of it, it reaching to all the kingdoms of the

world, and the manner which Christ will rule, especially over his enemies, antichrist and his followers, whom he will destroy with the breath of his mouth, and break in pieces with his rod of iron, and order all that would not have him to reign over them slain before him; and as this may be applied to Christ mystical, the seed of the church, and members of Christ, as it is in (<6612 6>Revelation 2:26,27); it may relate to their reign with Christ on earth, when they shall sit on thrones, and judge the world, when the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to there; but since this is expressly said of the man child in the text, it may be expressive even of the temporal government of Constantine, who was an heroic and victorious prince, and extended his dominions to the several parts of the world; as far as Britain to the west, and all Scythia to the north, Ethiopia to the south, and the remote parts of India to the east, even to the ultimate parts of the whole world, as Eusebius [f321] affirms, making his kingdom to be three times larger than that of Alexander the great: and more especially it may describe the kingdom of Christ in his times; which was spread throughout all the nations of the empire; when Paganism was demolished, both in the continent and in the isles of the sea, and the strong holds Satan were pulled down, not by carnal, but spiritual weapons; when multitudes of souls were converted by the word, the rod of Christ's strength, and when the saints were guided, directed, fed, and comforted by it; for the allusion seems to be to the shepherd's rod, with which he leads and feeds his sheep; the same word signifies both to rule and feed:

and her child caught up unto God, and [to] his throne; which is to be understood not of Christ's ascent to heaven in human nature, when he was set down on the same throne with his Father; nor of Christ mystical, or of the saints being caught up into the air, to meet the Lord and be for ever with him, and sit down with him on the same throne; but rather of some glorious advance of the church and kingdom of Christ on earth; for as “to fall from heaven” is expressive of debasement and meanness, and of a low estate that a person is brought into, (<2314 2>Isaiah 14:12); so an ascending up to heaven, as the two witnesses in the preceding chapter are said to do, denotes exaltation, or a rise to some more glorious state and condition, which was the case of the church in Constantine's time: and this may also take in the accession of Constantine himself to the imperial throne, which was the throne of God; for king's have their sceptres, thrones, and kingdoms from him, they his viceregents, and in some measure represent

and are therefore called gods, and the children of the most high; yea, since Constantine, as advanced to the empire, was such an instrument in Christ's hand for the setting up and establishing his kingdom in it, Christ himself may be here represented as reigning over the Roman empire, as a presage and prelude of his reigning over all the earth another day.

Ver. 6. *And the woman fled into the wilderness*, etc.] Not as soon as she was delivered of her child, which is not reasonable to suppose, and would have been improper if not impracticable; nor indeed was this flight until after the war was over, mentioned in (66123Revelation 12:13-17); nor until the dragon and his angels were conquered and cast out; nor until a fresh persecution was raised by the dragon against the woman, as appears from (66124Revelation 12:14); where this account stands in its proper place, and is here only introduced by way of prolepsis, or anticipation, and that with this view, to show what care was taken of the woman, as well as of her son: and this does not design the flight of the Christians from Jerusalem to Pella, a little before the destruction of the former; nor the expulsion of the Jews or Christians from Rome, either by Claudius or by Nero; but the disappearance of the true church, and its obscure state and condition quickly after the above advance of it; for through the riches and honours which Constantine bestowed upon the Christians, they became vain, proud, ambitious, and careless; false doctrine and superstition obtained; the antichristian apostasy came on apace, and prevailed and increased, and so obscured the true church, that in process of time it became invisible, was in the cleft of the rock, and in the secret places of the stairs, or like persons in a wood or wilderness, not to be seen, as well as desolate and uncomfortable:

where she hath a place prepared of God; God has had, and will have a church in the worst of times; as he reserved a number in Elijah's time, so he did in the times of the antichristian apostasy, who bowed not the knee to idolatry; this woman, the church, and her case, are the same with the 144,000 sealed ones in (66701Revelation 7:1-8): whom God distinguished, hid, and preserved; for the wilderness is a place of retirement and safety, (26425Ezekiel 34:25), as well as of obscurity; and if any particular place is pointed at, I should think the valleys of Piedmont, which lie between France and Italy, are intended, where God has preserved, and continued a set of witnesses to the truth, in a succession, from the beginning of the apostasy to the present time, living in obscurity, and in safety, so far as not to be utterly destroyed:

that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days: in allusion to the children of Israel in the wilderness, where they were fed with manna forty years; so the overcomers, or true Christians in the Pergamos church state, have hidden manna given them to eat, the food of the wilderness, with which church state the church in the wilderness must be considered as contemporary, as also with the Thyatirian and Sardian church states; for though, at the Reformation, which the Sardinian church state introduces, the church appeared again, and has been ever since coming up out of the wilderness, yet she is stall in it; where she is fed and nourished with the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, by the faithful ministers of the word, the two witnesses that prophesy in sackcloth; the time of whose prophesying: is exactly of the same date with the woman's bring in the wilderness, and with the reign of antichrist, namely, forty two months, or 1260 days, that is so many years, (<66102>Revelation 11:2,3,13).

Ver. 7. *And there was war in heaven*, etc.] Not in the third heaven, the habitation of God, the seat of the angels and glorified saints, there is no discord, jars, and contentions there, nothing but peace, love, and joy; but in the church below, which is militant, and has in it as it were a company of two armies; or rather in the Roman empire, which was the heaven of Satan, the god of this world, and of his angels; and this war refers not to the dispute between Michael the archangel and the devil about the body of Moses, (<650109>Jude 1:9); nor to the of the angels when they rebelled against God, left their first estate, and were cast down to hell, (<650106>Jude 1:6); nor to that ancient and stated enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, (<010315>Genesis 3:15), which has appeared in all ages of time, more or less, since the fall of Adam; nor to the combats which Christ personally had with Satan and his powers when here on earth, as in the wilderness, immediately after his baptism, and in the garden, a little before his death, and on the cross, when he spoiled principalities and powers, and destroyed him that had the power of death, the devil; but rather to the conflict which Christ and his people had with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with the Roman powers, and with false teachers during the three first centuries; though it seems best to understand it of the war commenced by Constantine against Paganism, and which was finished by Theodosius, by whom Heathenism received its death wound, and was never restored since the phrase of war in heaven is not unknown to the Jews; they say[f322] when Pharaoh pursued after Israel, there was war above and below, and there was a very fierce war µymçb, “in heaven”:

Michael and his angels fought against the dragon: by whom is meant not a created angel, with whom his name does not agree, it signifying “who is as God”; nor does it appear that there is anyone created angel that presides over the rest, and has them at his command; though the Jews seem to imagine as if the angels were ranged under several heads and governors, of whom they make Michael to be one; for they say [f323],

> “when the holy blessed God descended on Mount Sinai, several companies of angels descended with him, wtrwbjw lakym, “Michael and his company”, and Gabriel and his company:”

“so kings armies”, in (<19682>Psalm 68:12); are by them interpreted of “kings of angels”; and it is asked who are these? and the answer is, Michael and Gabriel [f324]. Lord Napier thinks that the Holy Ghost is designed, who is equally truly God as the Father and the Son, and who in the hearts of the saints opposes Satan and his temptations; but it seems best to interpret it of Jesus Christ, who is equal with God, is his fellow, is one with the Father, and in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily: he is the Archangel, the first of the chief princes, the head of all principality and power, who is on the side of the Lord's people, pleads their cause, defends their persons, and saves them; (see <650109>Jude 1:9 <270103>Daniel 10:13 12:1); and by “his angels” may be meant either the good angels, literally understood, who are his creatures, his ministers, and whom he employs under him, in protecting his people, and in destroying his enemies; or else the ministers of the Gospel, who are called angels in this book, and who, under Christ, fight the good fight of faith, contend earnestly for it, being valiant for the truth upon earth; or rather the Christian emperors, particularly Constantine and Theodosius, and the Christians with them, who opposed Paganism in the empire, and at last subdued, and cast it out:

and the dragon fought, and his angels; there is such an order among the evil angels, as to have one of their own at the head of them, they having cast off their allegiance to God and Christ, who is styled the prince of devils, and his name is Beelzebub: hence we read of the devil and his angels; (see <401224>Matthew 12:24 25:41); and these may be intended here, unless false teachers, who transform themselves into angels of light, as their leader sometimes does, should be thought to be meant, who resist the truth and oppose themselves to the ministers of it; though rather, Satan as presiding over, and influencing the Roman Pagan empire, and the Roman emperors, who acted under him, are here designed; with whom

Constantine and Theodosius, under Christ, combated, such as Maximinus, Maxentius, Licinius, Arbogastes, and Eugenius, and those that were with them. The Arabic version renders it, “the serpent with his soldiers”.

Ver. 8. *And prevailed not*, etc.] That is, the dragon, or the devil, and his angels, prevailed not against Michael and his angels; but, on the other hand, were conquered by them, as the above tyrants were by Constantine and Theodosius: some copies read in the singular number, “and he prevailed not”, as the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; and other copies in the plural number, “they prevailed not”: and as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions:

neither was their place found any more in heaven; in the Roman empire; or “his place”, as some copies and versions: this was the time of the judgment of the world, or of the empire as Pagan; Satan the prince of the world, who had long governed in it, was now cast out of all power and authority in it, and all the idol gods in whom he was worshipped, with all the idolatrous priests; nor were there any more any Heathen emperors, for after Constantine's time there was only Julian the apostate, and who reigned but a little while; and after Theodosius, who cleared the empire of Paganism, there never was any, and there is reason to believe there never will be.

Ver. 9. *And the great dragon was cast out*, etc.] From heaven, or from power and authority in the Roman empire, namely, the devil, where he had long presided; it is observable that Constantine himself speaks of “the dragon” being removed from the government of the commonwealth by the providence of God, and by the ministry, or means of him [f325]; and he had his own effigies on a table placed before the porch of his palace, with the cross over his head, and a dragon under his feet thrust through with darts, and falling headlong [f326];

the old serpent; who is so called, because, of old, from the beginning, almost as soon as the world was, he appeared in the form of a serpent, or rather made use of it as an instrument and means, by which he seduced Eve, and so brought on the ruin of mankind, it is very usual with the Jews to call the devil ynwmdqh çjn, “the old serpent” [f327]; wherefore John uses this phrase as a known one, to explain who was meant by the great dragon:

called the devil and Satan; the first of these names signifies an accuser, and a forger of calumnies, and such is the old serpent; he accuses God to men,

as if he was envious of their happiness, as in the case of our first parents, and of men to God, of which there is an instance in the case of Job; and hence he is in (<66120>Revelation 12:10) called the accuser of the brethren; and the latter of them signifies an enemy, one that is filled with hatred and enmity to God and Christ, and to his church and people, whose adversary he is said to be, and at whose right hand he stands to resist, as he did Joshua the high priest:

which deceiveth the whole world; which he did by deceiving our first parents, from whom all mankind spring, and in whose loins they were when they were deceived; so the Jews say [f328] of the old serpent, that µlw[h lkl h[jm, "he deceives the whole world"; and so he deceived and corrupted the old world before the flood; and so he seduces every age and generation of men in the world; but here the Roman empire, sometimes called all the world, as in (<420201>Luke 2:1), is meant, whom Satan deceived by drawing it into idolatry and superstition;

he was cast out into the earth; he was cast out of the Roman empire, from the rule of it, and worship in it, the Heathen gods and Heathen emperors being no more; when he possessed and instigated, and influenced the Huns, Goths, and Vandals, a meaner and baser sort of people, hereafter in this chapter called the earth, which is said to help the woman, contrary to the intention of Satan; the phrase denotes the greatness of the fall of Satan, his loss of power, and the meanness and low estate of the persons he afterwards had the power of, both the savage people before mentioned, and the antichristian party:

and his angels were cast out with him; the Heathen emperors, magistrates, priests, and other votaries of his, which he made use of as instruments to do his will.

Ver. 10. *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven*, etc.] Which was a song of praise on account of the victory obtained by Michael and his angels over the dragon and his, or for the overthrow and downfall of Paganism in the Roman empire; for by "heaven" is meant the empire, now become Christian, or the Christian church state in it; and the "loud voice" heard in it by John shows that there was a great number in it, who rejoiced on this occasion, and that they were full of affection and fervency, and therefore expressed themselves in such manner, and in form following:

now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; "salvation" was come when Christ obtained it by his sufferings and death, and comes to particular persons in the effectual calling, and it will only be fully come when it is perfectly enjoyed in heaven: but here it designs a deliverance from Satan, as the god of this world, who was now dethroned, and cast down from his power, authority, and influence in the empire; and from Pagan idolatry and superstition, and from the ten days of tribulation, the cruel and bloody persecutions under the Heathen emperors; and denotes that safety and security, comfort, peace, and happiness, the churches enjoyed under the government of a Christian emperor: and now was come "strength"; not the strength of Christ personal, displayed in the redemption of his people; but rather of Christ mystical, of his church and interest, which had been very weak and low, and under oppression and persecution, but was now exalted, and in a flourishing condition, and was become strong and mighty; or it may design the strength and power of Christ, shown in destroying his enemies, in casting the dragon out of heaven down to the earth, and in bringing to confusion and destruction the Heathen emperors, princes, and others, who fled to the rocks and mountains for fear of him, and because of his great wrath: also now came "the kingdom of our God", the Gospel of the kingdom was preached everywhere and Gospel churches were set up in all parts of the empire, both which are sometimes signified by the kingdom of God; here was now an illustrious appearance of the kingdom of God in the world, such as had never been before; and which was a pledge and presage of the greatness of the kingdom, or of that everlasting kingdom which will be set up hereafter, when all other kingdoms will be at an end: to which is added "the power of his Christ"; or his authority as Lord and Christ, which took place at his resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God, and which will more fully appear at the last day, when he shall come in glory, and exercise his authority in judging the quick and dead, of which there was some resemblance at this time, in dethroning Satan, destroying Paganism, and putting an end to the power of the Heathen emperors and empire; and which is expressed in such language as the day of judgment is, ([6662]Revelation 6:12-17); for to the opening of the sixth seal does this passage belong: a further account is given of the matter of this song, and the reason of it:

for the accuser of our brethren is cast down; hence it appears that this is not a song of the angels in heaven, since the saints are never called their

brethren, nor the angels theirs, but their fellow servants; rather it may be thought to be the song of the saints in heaven, acknowledging those on earth to be their brethren, as they are, for there is but one family in heaven and in earth, and the saints on earth are called the of the souls under the altar, (Revelation 6:9,11); but as this refers to the state of the church in Constantine's time, it must be the song of the saints in that state, who call the martyrs, that had been slain under the former persecutions, their brethren; for that they are the persons meant is clear from the following verse, whom Satan is an accuser of, for he is designed here; the word rendered “devil” signifies an accuser, and a false one, and is so translated (Titus 2:3); this is a name frequently given to Satan by the Jews, and have adopted into their language the very Greek word [f329] that is here used; and often say of him that he accuses Israel, and particularly that he accuses Israel above, that is, in heaven; and that he stands and dymt grjqm [f330], “continually accuses them”, the very phrase used in the next clause: when Israel came out of Egypt, they say [f331] the angel Samael (the devil) stood and accused them; the first day of the month Tisri, according to them [f332], is appointed a day for blowing of trumpets, to confound Satan, who comes to accuse at that time; so they say [f333] that Satan stood and accused Abraham, and others; and indeed he was an accuser from the beginning, both of God to men, and of men to God; we have instances in Job and Joshua the high priest, (Job 1:8-11) (Zechariah 3:1); but here it refers to the accusations brought against the Christians in the primitive times, during the ten persecutions, which were very horrid ones indeed; as that they had their private suppers, at which they ate their own infants, and their nightly meetings, for the gratifying of their lusts, in which they committed adultery, incest, and all manner of uncleanness; if ever a fire happened in a city, they were charged with it; and whenever there were any famine, or pestilence, or wars, or any public calamity, they were accused as the cause and occasion of it; as appears from the apologies for them written by Justin, Tertullian, Cyprian, Minutius Felix, etc. so that Satan at this time was remarkably the accuser of the brethren; but now this father of lies was cast down, he was cast out of heaven, and deprived of that power and authority he had in the empire, and lost his influence over men, and could not spread his lies, and get his false charges and accusations credited and received as before; he was not indeed wholly destroyed, nor even shut up in the bottomless pit, but he was cast down to the earth; he was in a low condition, his power was greatly diminished, and he was conquered by Christ, and cast down and bruised under the feet of the saints,

which accused them before our God day and night; so the evil spirit in Ahab's time, and Satan in Job's time, are said to stand before the Lord: and this shows the malice, and also the insolence of the devil, that he should stand and accuse the saints before God, who he knew was their God, and was on their side, and therefore his accusations could be of no avail; and though Christ appears in the presence of God for them, and is their advocate with the Father, yet he is constant and indefatigable in going about, and picking up charges against them, and carrying them to God.

Ver. 11. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb*, etc.] The Lord Jesus Christ, by whose blood they were redeemed and ransomed out of the hands of Satan, that was stronger than they; and by which they were justified from all sin, and so all charges and condemnation were of no avail against them, whether of Satan or the world; and by which they were cleansed from all pollution, both internal and external; and by which even their conversation garments were washed and made white; by this they also, drew nigh to God with boldness, as to their own God, notwithstanding the accusations of Satan; and this they could, and did make use of as a shield to defend them against all his charges; and this being sprinkled upon them, as it gave them an inward conscience peace amidst all, so it was their security from the destroying angel; and under this purple covering they went triumphantly to glory, having through it obtained an entire conquest over Satan: as also

and by the word of their testimony; either by Christ, the essential Word, they bore record of, who is sharper than any twoedged sword, and through whom they were made more than conquerors; or rather by the use they made of the Scriptures of truth, the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, to which they bore a faithful testimony, and to which they adhered, and by so doing gained the victory over Satan and his instruments, whether false teachers or persecutors; and particularly by the Gospel, which they embraced, professed, and preached with constancy and courage, and by their last testimony they bore to it at their death, on the account of it, as it follows:

and they loved not their lives unto the death; they did not value them; they made no account of them; they were not anxiously careful to preserve them; they chose to lose them; they ran to the stake, and willingly and cheerfully laid them down; they did not count them dear unto them, as said the Apostle Paul, that they might finish their course with joy, and testify

the Gospel of the grace of God, or bear a testimony to it, (<44>Acts 20:24); yea, as Christ has directed, (<42>Luke 14:26); they hated their lives in comparison of him, and when in competition with him and his Gospel; and by dying thus they conquered Satan; had they loved their lives, and saved them by denying Christ and his truths, Satan would have conquered them; but dying in the cause of Christ, and for it, they got the victory over him.

Ver. 12. *Therefore rejoice, [ye] heavens, and ye that dwell in them*, etc.] So in the prophetic language, at times, and upon occasions of rejoicing, the heavens are called upon to join, and bear a part therein, (<19>Psalm 96:10,11 <23>Isaiah 44:23); and by these may be meant here the angels of heaven, who rejoice at every advance of Christ's kingdom and interest; they rejoiced at his incarnation, and so they do at the conversion of every single sinner; and much more may they be thought to do so at such a time as this, when there were such multitudes of conversions, and the churches and interest of Christ in so flourishing a condition, and Satan's kingdom so much weakened; and to these may be joined the souls of the saints departed, who might be made acquainted with this wonderful change of things in the empire; and it may also be understood of the saints, the members of the several churches, even all heavenly minded persons, who were born from above, and were partakers of the heavenly calling, and whose conversations were in heaven; these are called upon to take their part in this song of praise and thanksgiving:

woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea: such as are of the earth, earthy, sensual, and earthly minded persons; and who are like the troubled waters, and raging waves of the sea, cannot rest, but cast up mire and dirt, and foam out their own shame; the barbarous nations of the Goths and Vandals, carnal professors of religion, and the antichristian party, which quickly upon this sprung up, may be intended, on whom this woe is denounced; the reason of which follows:

for the devil is come down unto you; and a greater woe cannot be upon men on earth, than to have the devil among them, who always brings mischief with him, and breathes nothing but ruin and destruction to men; he having lost his power in the Roman empire, possessed the above persons, and took up his residence among them; he came down, but not willingly, he was forced to it, he was cast down:

having great wrath; because he was conquered, and cast out of heaven, and was deprived of the worship that had been long given him, as the god

of the world, and of that authority and influence which he had over men: and this his great wrath was seen in stirring up the Arians to persecute the Christians; and in the times of Julian, when he endeavoured to regain his lost power; and in bringing in the Goths, Huns, and Vandals, into the empire, to waste and destroy it; and in moving the antichristian party, which soon prevailed, to make war against the saints:

because he knoweth he hath but a short time; ere he should be shut up in the bottomless pit, or be confined in the place of torment, and ere his full punishment should be inflicted on him; which time of his to tempt, deceive, disturb, and distress men, is to be no longer than during the forty two months of antichrist's reign, and the 1260 days, or years, of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, and of the church's being in the wilderness, and no longer than till the thousand years' reign of Christ with his saints begins, which, in comparison of his long reign in the Gentile world, is but a short time; and though, after the thousand years are ended, he will be let loose, yet it will be but for a season, a very small time, when he will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and be tormented night and day, for ever and ever.

Ver. 13. *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth*, etc.] When the devil perceived he had not the power in the Roman empire he formerly had; and that his influence was only over the common and meaner sort of people, or over the earthly part of the church, and the barbarous nations in the world:

he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man [child]: he was enraged at the church, and pursued her with great wrath, who had brought forth a Christian emperor, by whom the kingdom of Christ was encouraged and supported in the empire; and because he could not come at this child to destroy it, that being caught up to God and to his throne, he attacks the woman, the church, in a new way, by stirring up earthly minded professors of Christianity, the Arians, against her, and by bringing in an inundation of the barbarous nations into the empire, now become Christian; for this persecution cannot be understood of the persecution raised by the Jews, under the instigation of Satan, against the Christian church, quickly after the ascension of Christ to heaven, for then the dragon had his place and power in the Roman empire, whereas this persecution was not till after the downfall of Paganism in it; and for the same reason it cannot design the persecution against the Christians begun by Nero, and carried on under

succeeding emperors, which were the ten days of tribulation under the Smyrnaean church state, and were now over; these were the pains and birth throes of the woman, the church, antecedent to, and which brought on, the birth of the man child; and the persons that endured them were those that overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and their death, which were all previous to these times: nor does it respect so much the persecution under Julian, which was carried on not by open force and violence, but by subtlety; be abstained from corporeal punishments and shedding of blood, observing that these methods in former times had given the Christians an opportunity of showing their faith, patience: and fortitude, which had been the means of increasing their number; wherefore he betook himself to more private and artful methods, as to content himself with taking away the revenues of the ministers of the word, not suffering any Christians to be in military employments, denying their children the use of schools, encouraging the Jews, their sworn enemies, and tolerating all sorts of heresies among themselves, that so they might destroy one another; to which may be added, that his reign was but one year and seven or eight months, and therefore can scarcely be thought to be pointed at here; but inasmuch as the Arian persecution was the first after the fall of Paganism, and the principal one before the rise of antichrist, this may most reasonably be concluded to be meant here; and this began even in Constantine's time, for by means of an Arian presbyter that belonged to his sister Constantia, he was prevailed upon, towards the close of his days, to believe that Arius was not the man he was said to be, and that he had had hard measure; insomuch that he was recalled, and received into communion, and Athanasius was driven from his church, and banished to Triers in France: and the historian says [f334], that Constantine exercised “vim persecutionis”, the force of persecution, or a violent one; bishops were exiled, the clergy were severely handled, and laymen taken notice of, who separated themselves from the communion of the Arians. Under Constantius, his son, the persecution raged much, Athanasius being gone from Alexandria, and one Gregory put in his room; and the people being uneasy at it, some were banished, others cast into prison, and others had their goods confiscated; women were dragged by the hair of their heads to the tribunals, and used very ignominiously; three thousand soldiers entered a church on an Easter day, and killed many women and children; virgins were stripped naked, and the bodies of those who died of their wounds were denied a burial, and cast to the dogs; and the persecution did not stop here, but went through Egypt, where the bishops, some of them, were

beaten with rods, others were laid in bonds, and others were banished: in Egypt and Lybia ninety bishops were forced away, sixteen were banished, whose churches were delivered to the Arians. Lucius of Adrianople was bound in chains, cast into prison, and there perished; Paul of Constantinople was first expelled, after that murdered, and Macedonius, an Arian, put in his room; and such who refused to commune with him suffered stripes, bonds, imprisonment, and other tortures, of which they died, and others were banished, where they perished; women that refused had their breasts cut off, or burnt, either with red hot irons, or with eggs roasted at the fire to a very great heat [f335]; with other instances too many to recite. Under Valens the emperor things were still worse, who became an Arian at the persuasion of his wife, and was baptized by Eudoxius, the Arian bishop of Constantinople, who, at his baptism, obliged him to swear that he would defend Arianism, and persecute those of a contrary opinion; and accordingly he moved an irreconcilable war against them; at one time he expelled Melesius from Antioch, Eusebius from Samosata, Pelagius from Laodicea, and Barsis from Edessa; and all the rest that would not communicate with Euzoius, an Arian, he punished, either with pecuniary fines or with stripes; and he is said to drown many in the river Orontes. This persecution went through the churches of Thrace, Dacia, and Pannonia; but what is most shocking of all is, that some chosen ecclesiastical men, to the number of four score and one, were sent to him from Constantinople to Nicomedia, with a supplication to redress some injuries and grievances; at which he being angry, ordered Modestus, the governor, to take them and put them to death; but the governor fearing to do it openly, lest there should be an insurrections, ordered a ship to be got ready, pretending to carry them into exile, but directed the mariners to go in a fisher's boat behind, and set fire to the ship, which they accordingly did when at sea, where all the above worthy men perished at once [f336]. It would be endless to rehearse all the instances of cruelty under this persecution; it need only be observed, that this was at the instigation of the devil, as all persecution is; and that Satan herein acted like himself, as the great dragon, as he was when Rome Pagan was in power: these were Christian emperors in name, but they exercised all the cruelties of the Heathen ones, if they did not exceed them; and a greater regard was shown to Paganism than to the orthodox religion. Valens tolerated all religions but that, especially Heathenism; all his reign the fire burned upon the altars, images were honoured with libations and sacrifices, the public festivals of the Heathens were kept, and the rites of Bacchus were performed in the streets [f337]; and

this persecution was followed by the inundation of the barbarous nations, of which hereafter.

Ver. 14. *And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle*, etc.] By which are meant, not the two testaments, by which she was supported under afflictions, trials, and persecutions, and against Satan and all his efforts; nor the two graces of faith and hope, by which she rose, and dwelt on high, in the view of invisible things, and with contempt of the world, its frowns or flatteries; nor, as others think, prayer and good works, by the former of which she flew to God for supplies of grace and protection, and by the latter was useful and profitable to men, and gave glory to God, and escaped the just censures of the world; nor are two powerful kingdoms, within the dominions of the dragon, intended, as others have thought, who take them to be France and Spain, to which Britain was an appendix; when they were in the possession of Constantius Chlorus, the father of Constantine the great, where the Christians had refuge in the persecution under Dioclesian; but this was before the war in heaven, and the downfall of Paganism in the empire, and before the above persecution; rather these two wings of the eagle design the eastern and western divisions of the Roman empire: it is not unusual in Scripture for a monarchy, or monarch, as the Assyrian king and kingdom, to be signified by an eagle, and the wings of eagles, (<26178>Ezekiel 17:3,12 <27004>Daniel 7:4); and it is well known that the eagle is the ensign of the Roman empire, to which the allusion is in (<42428>Matthew 24:28); and at the death of Theodosius the empire was divided, as has been observed before, into two parts; the eastern empire was given to one of his sons and the western to another; and this was between the Arian persecution, and the irruption of the Goths and Vandals, when the church was fleeing and gradually disappearing; and these two empires both went under the Christian name, and supported the outward visible church, though much corrupted, and still more and more corrupting; by which means the pure members of the church, though few and very obscure were preserved. In a word, these wings may denote the swiftness in which the church proceeded to disappear, having lost her former simplicity and glory for which eagles' wings are famous, (<20235>Proverbs 23:5); and more especially that divine strength and support by which she was bore up, and carried through, and delivered out of sore afflictions and persecutions; (see <23831>Isaiah 40:31). The allusion is to God's deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt when he bore them as on eagles wings,

and carried them though the wilderness, (<2Ex 19:4> <5Dt 32:10-12>), so here it follows,

that she might fly into the wilderness; a place desolate, and full of serpents and scorpions, uncomfortable, and destitute of provisions, and yet a place of safety as well as of solitariness and retirement; and chiefly designs the obscure and invisible state of the pure church in the times of the antichristian apostasy; (see Gill on "<66 12:6>").

Into her place; which was prepared of God for her, as in (<66 12:6>);

where she is nourished by the ministers of the word the two witnesses that prophesy in sackcloth who feed the church with knowledge and understanding; with the words of faith and good doctrine, with the Gospel, and the truths of it, which are sweet, comfortable and nutritive; and with the ordinances of the Gospel, the entertainment of Wisdom's house, the feast of fat things, and the breasts of consolation; and with Christ the hidden manna, the food of the wilderness: and that

for a time, and times, and half a time; that is, all the times of antichrist, the forty two months of his reign; during which time the holy city is trodden under foot, and in a desolate and afflicted condition outwardly, as may be learnt by comparing together (<27 7:25>) (<66 13:5> 11:2); and until the end of wonders, or when time shall be no longer or till the seventh angel has sounded his trumpet as appears from (<27 12:7> <66 10:6,7>). This date is the same with 1260 days in (<66 12:6>), for "time" signifies a prophetic year, or 360 years; and "times" two years, or 720 years; and half a time, half a year, or 180 years, in all 1230 years; and which are to be reckoned, not from the beginning of the church's flight in Constantine's time, or from the Arian persecution, but from her entering into her wilderness state, or entire disappearance upon the prevalence of the antichristian apostasy; which might be when the bishop of Rome took upon him the title of universal bishop: and here and during this time she is hid

from the face of the serpent; that is, from his wrath so as that he cannot utterly destroy her. God having reserved a sealed number for himself; (see <66 6:16>), or from the sight of the serpent as the Arabic version renders it, so as that he could not discern with all his quick sight where the church was.

Ver. 15. *And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood*, etc.] Which cannot design any persecution before the fall of Paganism, either of the Jews, or of the Romans; nor indeed the Arian persecution, since the casting out of this flood is distinguished from the above persecution, and was after the church began to flee upon that persecution; though it is not unusual for wicked persecutors, and violent persecutions, to be expressed by waters, and they are called proud waters, (<19C401>Psalm 124:1-4); and these may be said to be cast out of the mouth of the serpent, the devil, who was a persecutor and a murderer from the beginning, and by whom all persecutors and persecutions are instigated, moved, and carried on; but rather, as the words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, (<200804>Proverbs 18:4); and doctrines, good or bad, may be so called; that flood of errors and heresies, which were poured in between the times of Constantine and the rise of antichrist may be here intended; such as the Arian heresy, which denied the divinity of Christ; the Nestorian heresy, which divided his person; and the Eutychian heresy, which confounded the two natures in him; and the Macedonian heresy, which took away the deity of the Holy Ghost; and the Pelagian heresy, which destroyed the grace of God, and set up the power of man's free will: and this flood of errors and heresies may be truly said to be cast out of the serpent's mouth; since the old serpent, the devil, is the father of all lies, and errors: and the above heresies are the doctrines of devils, and damnable ones; and were designed by Satan to destroy the souls of men, and ruin the church: though since this flood followed upon the Arian persecution, and was after the church began to flee, being supported and secured by the two divisions of the empire, eastern and western, the wings of the Roman eagle, it seems best by this flood to understand the irruption of the barbarous nations, which quickly followed that division; the Goths, Huns, Vandals, Heruli, Alans, and Lombards, who were poured into the western empire, and overran, and at last destroyed it; so that this flood is contemporary with the first four trumpets; after which followed the swarms of locusts, the Saracens, which infested, teased, and tormented the “eastern” empire; and after them the Turks, the four angels bound at the great river Euphrates, were let loose, and like a mighty torrent overflowed, and utterly destroyed it; and all this was done at the instigation of Satan, he being filled with wrath, because the empire was become Christian, and his view was to destroy the church in it: for this flood was cast

after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood; along with the empire, and be no more; but his designs were frustrated, and he disappointed; so people, nations, and tongues, are compared to waters in (<66175>Revelation 17:15); (see <23807>Isaiah 8:7 28:2), which the Targum interprets of the armies of much people.

Ver. 16. *And the earth helped the woman*, etc.] By opening itself, and taking in what the serpent cast out, so that it could not reach the woman, and annoy her, as follows:

and the earth opened her mouth; as it did when it swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, (<04160>Numbers 16:30); to which history this may have some respect:

and swallowed up the flood which the dragon east out of his mouth; if the flood refers to the Arian persecution, then the earth helping the woman, the church, and swallowing up this flood, may respect the Goths, who broke into the Roman provinces, under their king, Athanaricus, and fell upon the Arians, with great rage and cruelty, and infested the Roman provinces, which were nearer; they seized upon Thrace, which was the occasion of tranquillity to the orthodox; for Valens being moved by these things, desisted from persecuting them, and, leaving Antioch, he went to Constantinople to form measures for the carrying on of the war against the Goths [f338]; and thus the earth helped the woman. But if, by the flood, the errors and heresies of those times are meant, then the councils may be intended by the earth; which, though they consisted of men that were earthly, and greatly apostatized in other things, yet opposed, refuted, and condemned these heresies and errors, and so were the means of preserving the church from them, as some think; though others are of opinion that the barbarous nations are in this also designed, who embracing Arianism, and the corrupt religion, where they came, by which they were, in, some measure, mollified and reconciled to the Christians, did not seek to root them out, and destroy them, as Satan hoped they would; but since they themselves, with the Mahometans, are meant by the flood, the earth must be interpreted of the corrupt and antichristian church, the idolaters which sustained the force of this inundation, and for some time repelled it, and so secured the true church; and when the western empire was overrun by it, as by the Goths, etc. idolaters, earthly minded men, and carnal professors, were the sufferers, and bore the shock of it; and when the eastern empire was overrun by the Saracens, the tormenting locusts, the green things,

grass and trees, were not hurt by them; none of the sealed ones, only those who were not sealed, (Revelation 9:4); and the Turkish inundation was a scourge upon the antichristian party: so that it was the earth, or earthly part of professors, the idolaters, that bore the fury and force of this flood, and broke it off from the church. And so sometimes wicked men are helpful to the saints, as the Philistines were serviceable to David, to screen him from the fury of Saul; and Lysias, the chief captain, and Felix and Festus, Roman governors, were instruments of preserving the Apostle Paul from falling into the hands of the Jews, his enemies; and the Christians that were scattered by the persecution at Jerusalem found refuge and safety among the Gentiles.

Ver. 17. *And the dragon was wroth with the woman*, etc.] The devil was very angry with the church, because he could not destroy her by the Arian persecution he had raised; and because he could not carry her away with the flood, either of errors and heresies, or of the barbarous nations; and because he could not, by any means, come at her, and indeed did not well know where she was, a place being prepared for her of God in the wilderness, where she was taken care of: wherefore he took another method as follows,

and went to make war with the remnant of her seed; which refers to the war the beast, to whom he gave his power, seat, and authority, is said to make with the saints; and which was entered into and carried on by his instigation, of which there is an account in the following chapter: the persons with whom he went to make war are described as “her seed”; the seed of the church, her spiritual offspring, the sons and daughters she brought forth to Christ; between which seed, and Satan and his seed, there always was an enmity: and these are “the remnant” of her seed, a few persons scattered up and down, a remnant according to the election of grace; who were not in bodies, or in church states, regularly formed, as heretofore, but in private families, and some here, and some there; and who were called out to bear a testimony for Christ in corrupt times: and these are further described as such

who keep the commandments of God: and not the traditions of men: nor are the commands of the moral law of God so much designed, though it is true that these were kept by the seed of the church; but rather the ordinances of the Gospel, the commands of God our Saviour, such as baptism and the Lord's supper; which were kept by these faithful ones, as

they had been delivered, when they began now to be sadly corrupted by the antichristian party:

and have the testimony of Jesus Christ; the Gospel, which is a testimony concerning him; (see Gill on "Revelation 1:2"). This they had in their hearts, a spiritual knowledge and saving experience of it; and this they had in their hands, they made a profession of it, they held it forth, and held it fast; all which was the reason of Satan's enmity against them, and war with them.

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 13

This chapter contains a description of the Romish antichrist, under the figure of two beasts, the one representing him in his civil power, the other in his ecclesiastical power. The first beast is described by its origin, the sea, and by the monstrous shape its several parts; its heads seven, in which were the name of blasphemy; its horns ten, on which were crowns; its skin like a leopard, its feet as a bear, and its mouth as a lion; and by its state and condition, having power, a throne, and great authority; and having one of its heads wounded, and healed; and by the great regard had unto him, being wondered at, and worshipped by all the world, and declared to be more powerful than any, and none to be like them, (66301Revelation 13:1-4). Next an account is given of what he was suffered to have, a blaspheming mouth, and power to continue forty two months, (66305Revelation 13:5); and of what he said or uttered, his blasphemy against God, his name, tabernacle, and the inhabitants of heaven, (66306Revelation 13:6); and of what he did by permission, made war with the saints, overcame them, and had power over all people, (66307Revelation 13:7); and of the worship given him by the reprobate part of the world, (66308Revelation 13:8); and the whole is concluded with an exhortation exciting attention to what had been said, with a threatening to the beast, and a word of comfort to the saints, (66309Revelation 13:9,10). And then follows the description of the second beast, by its original the earth; by its likeness to a lamb, and a dragon; to the former for its two horns, and to the latter for its speech, (66311Revelation 13:11); and by the actions ascribed to it, which are many; as exercising all the power of the first beast; causing all the inhabitants of the earth to worship that; doing miracles, of which one is mentioned, thereby deceiving the men of the world; ordering them to make an image to the wounded beast; giving life to it, so that it could speak; putting to death all that refused to worship it; obliging men of all ranks and degrees to have a mark in their right hands or foreheads, and forbidding such that had not to buy or sell, (66312Revelation 13:12-17). And the chapter is concluded with an epiphonema, exciting men of understanding to search out, and count the number of the beast's name, since it is possible to be done, being the

number of a man, and easy to be done, consisting of three Greek letters, χ ξ ς, which are numerically 666, (Revelation 13:18).

Ver. 1. *And I stood upon the sand of the sea*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, “and he stood”, etc. and so the Alexandrian copy; meaning the dragon, said to be wroth with the woman, and to go forth to make war with her seed, in the latter part of the preceding chapter, where some versions place this clause; and the Arabic version reads expressly, “and the serpent stood”, etc. And this is thought by some to be the better reading, because of the connection with what goes before, and because there is no mention of the name of John, nor of his being called or removed from heaven, where he was beholding sights, and continuing the account of them, (Revelation 4:1 12:1 15:1), as there is when he is shown sights elsewhere; (see Revelation 17:3 21:10). And besides, as the dragon was contriving a new way of persecuting the saints, and about to raise up a beast out of the sea, by which he might do it, to whom he would give his power, seat, and authority, he is represented as standing in a proper place for this purpose; it was upon the sand, which may signify a multitude of people employed by him, and also may denote the weakness and failure of his efforts in the issue; yet the Greek copies in general agree in the common reading, and refer it to John, who stood on the shore of the isle of Patmos, and in a fit place, in a visionary way, to behold the following sight: for that the next clause belongs to him is without doubt,

and saw a beast rise up out of the sea: by which is meant, not the devil, because it is in (Revelation 13:2), distinguished from the dragon, who is the devil and Satan, as also elsewhere, (Revelation 16:13 20:10), nor the old Roman empire, though there are many things which seem to agree; the Roman monarchy is called a beast it is one of the four beasts in (Daniel 7:2,7); which rose up out of the sea, from a multitude of people and nations, which were gathered to it and composed it. Rome Pagan had, as this beast has, seven heads and ten horns, (Revelation 12:3); and had power over all nations, and is therefore sometimes called the whole world, and exercised great cruelty upon the Christians; but then this is signified by the red dragon itself, in the preceding chapter, and, besides, had risen up before the times of John, whereas this is one of the things shown him, which should be hereafter: this beast then was not, but was to come, (Revelation 4:1 17:11); and was not to arise, nor did it arise till after the downfall of Rome Pagan, and after the Arian persecution, after the

woman's flight into the wilderness, and after, and upon the inundation of the barbarous nations into the empire, as appears from the preceding chapter; nor will the time of this beast's duration agree with the old Roman empire, for this beast is to continue forty two months, (<66135>Revelation 13:5); which is the whole time of the holy city being trodden under foot, and of the church's being in the wilderness, and of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth; whereas the Roman monarchy, governed by emperors, did not last four hundred years. Moreover, as this beast is distinguished from the dragon, so it is said to have its power from him; whereas the Roman empire was of God, and obedience and subjection to it are always recommended to the saints in the Scriptures, (<45301>Romans 13:1 <56301>Titus 3:1 <60113>1 Peter 1:13), much less can the empire, as become truly Christian, be intended; nor are either the eastern or the Turkish empires designed, for neither of these had their seat at Rome, which the dragon save to this beast, but at Constantinople: it remains then, that by it meant the Roman empire, when divided into ten kingdoms, and united in the Papacy; or it designs Christ in his secular power, with the ten kings, that receive power with him as such one hour, and give their kingdom to him: now this beast is said to “rise up out of the sea”; either out of the abyss, the bottomless pit of hell, (see <66107>Revelation 11:7 17:8); or out of the sea of this world, and the wicked in it, who are like a troubled sea that cannot rest; or out of the floods of errors and heresies, by which this man of sin was conceived and cherished, and a way was paved for his open rising and appearance in the world; or rather, since waters design, in this book, nations, people, and tongues, (see <66715>Revelation 17:15); and the four beasts in Daniel are said to rise out of the sea, (<27002>Revelation 7:2); and a multitude of people are compared to the waves of the sea, (<26603>Ezekiel 26:3); see also (<23972>Isaiah 17:12 57:20), where the Jewish writers say [f339], the nations are compared to the sea, as Israel to the sand, the inundation of the barbarous nations, the Goths, Huns, and Vandals, into the empire, seem to be intended, which made great commotions and changes in it: these set up ten kingdoms in it, upon which antichrist arose, and placed himself at the head of them; these gave their kingdoms to the beast; and so may be said to give rise unto him, especially as to his secular power.

Having seven heads: which some understand the seat of knowledge, and seven a number of perfection; and so may refer to those boasted treasures of wisdom and knowledge which antichrist pretends to have, as being the judge of controversies, and the infallible interpreter of the Scriptures; or

else the seven fold form of government among the Romans is intended, as in (66128Revelation 12:3); or rather as it is interpreted in (66179Revelation 17:9); the seven mountains on which Rome was built, and so design the city itself built on them, that being the metropolis of the empire; or the seven capital cities of the empire, as Mr. Daubuz thinks; the whole is meant, for it is the same Roman monarchy as before, only in a different form:

and ten horns; the ten kingdoms, into which the empire was divide it upon its being wasted and vanquished by the Goths, and the ten kings of them, which reigned with the beast, and gave their kingdoms to him; so horns signify kingdoms in (38018Zechariah 1:18).

And upon his horns ten crowns; which distinguishes Rome Papal from Rome Pagan; the crowns in Rome Pagan were upon the heads, or the emperors, that resided at Rome; and though it had ten horns, as here, and was divided into so many provinces, which were governed by deputies, proconsuls, etc. yet they were not kings, they had no crowns; but here the horns have crowns on them because the governors of these ten kingdoms are crowned kings:

and upon his heads the name of blasphemy; which refers not to Rome Pagan being called the eternal city, and Rome the goddess, and the like; but to Rome Papal, or antichrist, who elsewhere is said to have the name "Mystery" written upon the forehead, and to have blasphemy on his heads; and is called blasphemy in the abstract, as being a most blasphemous creature against God, Christ, and his people, and so his name is suitable to his character, mouth, and language, (66135Revelation 13:5,6); assuming that to himself which only belongs to God and Christ, as power over the conscience, to forgive sin, etc. and even deity itself; (see 53004 2 Thessalonians 1:4 66178Revelation 17:3). The Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, "names of blasphemy".

Ver. 2. *And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard*, etc.] To which the Grecian kingdom is compared in (27006Daniel 7:6); because of that rapidity and swiftness with which Alexander overran the world, and set up this monarchy; and to which the Roman Papal monarchy bears some resemblance; for as the Grecian monarchy was divided into several parts, which the leopard's spots may also point out, so the Roman empire was divided into ten parts, and united under the pope, as the head of them; and

may be, in this form, compared to a leopard for its swiftness, (<35108>Habakkuk 1:8); because this beast, as soon as he arose and got power, quickly, and in a very short time, extended it over all emperors, kings, princes, bishops, and over all kingdoms and churches; and for its spots, (<24123>Jeremiah 13:23), which may be expressive both of the spots of sin and immorality of every kind, and of errors and heresies, superstition and idolatry, with which antichrist and his followers abound; and for its insidiousness and cruelty, (<24106>Jeremiah 5:6 <28137>Hosea 13:7). It lies in wait for its prey, and suddenly falls upon it, and devours it; and is a lively picture of the cunning sleight of the antichristian party, who lie in wait to deceive, and of their blood thirstiness and barbarity. It is reported [f340] of the leopard, that it is of a sweet smell, and by its odour it draws the fawns, does, etc. near it, and then makes a prey of them; so antichrist, by outward riches and preferments, by the external pomp and splendour of his religion, by his living wonders and miracles, and by his great pretensions to holiness and the like, allures multitudes unto him, and destroys them.

And his feet were as [the feet] of a bear; to which the Persian monarchy is compared, (<27005>Daniel 7:5). And this, as some think, may denote the strength and stability of the kingdom of antichrist, it having already endured a great while, and will be thought to be very firm and stable when its ruin is near; or rather the wars and fightings of antichrist against the saints, the fore feet of the bear being what that creature lights with, and tears and destroys such as oppose it, or fall a prey to it; and may also, as before, express the voraciousness and cruelty of antichrist, with respect to the bodies and souls of men:

and his mouth, as the mouth of a lion: to which creature the Babylonian monarchy is compared, (<27004>Daniel 7:4), uttering out blasphemies against God, threatening ruin and destruction to men, and injecting fear into them, as the roaring of a lion does, and seizing upon, and devouring their estates and possessions, as well as butchering their persons. This beast has all the properties of the several beasts in Daniel's prophecy, wherefore all the figures there made use of to describe them are put together, to point unto us this monster of iniquity.

And the dragon gave him his power: for the coming of antichrist is after the working of Satan, (<53109>2 Thessalonians 1:9,10); he gave him his cunning and subtlety, as the old serpent, and taught him his arts and tricks to deceive mankind; and gave him a power to do signs and lying wonders,

as well as communicated his malice and cruelty to persecute and oppress the saints; or an “army” of ecclesiastics to fight under him, and for him:

and his seat; at Rome, for there Satan's seat was, (Revelation 2:13), in the time of the Pagan Roman empire, which was quitted by Dioclesian and Maximian, when they resigned the government of it, the one being at Nicomedia, and the other at Milan; and when Constantine came to the throne, he removed to Byzantium, and rebuilt it, and called it after his name Constantinople, and had his residence there, as had all the eastern emperors afterwards; and as for the western emperors, they chiefly resided either at Milan or Ravenna, to which last place Odoacer, Theodoric, and other Gothic kings retired, when the government was in their hands; so that hereby this seat was empty, and way was made for antichrist to take it, as he did.

And great authority; over the Roman empire, and the kings and kingdoms in it; he gave him his authority as the god of this world; what Christ refused at the hands of Satan, that his pretended vicar took, even the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them; yea, assumed to himself all power in heaven, earth, and hell, signified by his triple crown, at the instigation of the devil; so that it appears that he is not the vicar of Christ, but the vicar of the devil; and not the successor of Peter, but the successor of Satan; and that he holds his possessions, not by the donation of Constantine, but by the gift of the dragon.

Ver. 3. *And I saw one of his heads*, etc.] Not the Capitoline mountain, or the Capitol, the temple of Jupiter, built on that hill, which was burnt by lightning in the times of Titus, and magnificently rebuilt by Domitian, which was a thing past, and of no such moment as to be taken notice of here; nor anyone of the Roman emperors particularly, as Julius Caesar, at whose death the empire received a wound, upon its first erection in him, but was healed by the settlement of Augustus in it; nor Nero, at whose death the family of the Caesars ceased, when the empire was threatened with ruin in the following reigns, but was restored and reestablished in Vespasian, for these were before the times of John: but this is to be understood of the sixth head, or form of government, which obtained in the empire; namely, that of emperors, and of the destruction of Rome itself, the head of the empire, and which was built on seven mountains, designed by the seven heads of this beast: and this head was

as it were wounded to death; when the Roman empire was like a burning mountain cast into the sea; when Rome itself was taken, sacked, and burnt, more than once, particularly by Totilas; when Augustulus, the last of the emperors, was obliged to abdicate the throne; when Odoacer called himself, not emperor of Rome, but king of Italy, and retired from Rome to Ravenna; and when Adolphus, another Gothic king, thought to have changed the name of Rome, and given it that of Gothia: this seemed to be a deadly wound to Rome, to the empire and emperors.

And his deadly wound was healed; by the setting up of ten kingdoms in it, the kings of which gave them to the beast, to antichrist, the pope of Rome, and so the empire came to have an head again, a governor, though of another kind: some choose to understand this of the wound which antichrist received at the Reformation, by Luther, Calvin, and others, which has since been healing, Popery recovering itself again in some countries where it was driven out, and which, it is thought, will be entirely healed before his destruction:

and all the world wondered after the beast; which expresses the large extent of antichrist's dominion, which reached to all the Roman empire, (<4201>Luke 2:1); yea, to all kindreds, tongues, and nations, (<6613>Revelation 13:7); so that the universality the Papists boast of, as a note of the true church, is manifestly a mark of the beast, or of antichrist; and also the great esteem he is had in by his followers, who admire his power and authority, his grandeur, pomp, and riches, his signs and lying wonders, his pretended infallibility and holiness, his stock of merits and unwritten traditions, his skill to interpret Scripture, and his power to forgive sins, and the like: they went after him, obeyed him, embraced his doctrines, attended his religion and worship with wonder and amazement.

Ver. 4. *And they worshipped the dragon*, etc.] The devil, in the idols, images, angels, and saints departed, to whom they give adoration, as did the Gentiles, whose successors they are, and whose name they bear; (see <4620>1 Corinthians 10:20);

which gave power unto the beast, as in (<6613>Revelation 13:2);

and they worshipped the beast; not only in a civil way, being subject to him as their temporal lord, to whom they give homage; obedience, and tribute, but in a religious way; for antichrist sits in the temple to be worshipped as God, showing himself that he is God, and receives adorations from his

creatures, the cardinals, and others; but woe to them that worship this beast; (see Revelation 14:9-11).

Saying, who [is] like unto the beast? using such expressions as are used of God himself, implying that there is none like him, (Exodus 15:11) (Psalm 113:5 Isaiah 40:18,25), yea, they ascribe deity to him, calling him our Lord God the pope, God, and a God on earth; (see Gill on "2 Thessalonians 2:4").

Who is able to make war with him? And indeed, such was his power and strength once, that he was more than a match for emperors and kings; and those were badly off that engaged in a war with him, when his power was such, that he could depose one, and set up other, kick the crowns of kings, tread upon the necks of emperors, oblige them to hold his stirrup, while mounted his horse, and keep them barefoot at his gate for days together, waiting for admittance; of all which there are instances.

Ver. 5. *And there was given unto him a mouth*, etc.] The beast is said to have a mouth before, like the mouth of a lion, (Revelation 13:2); but now he was moved and stirred up by the dragon, the devil, to open it, not only in a cruel and voracious way, but in a haughty, lying, and blasphemous manner: and this was given him, it was at the instigation of Satan, and by divine permission; his coming, speaking, and acting, were after the working of Satan, but not without the will of God; who, as he gave up many to a judicial blindness, to believe his lies and blasphemies, gave up him to speak them, as follows:

speaking great things, and blasphemies; great swelling words of vanity; calling himself by high and lofty titles, as Christ's vicar, Peter's successor, head of the church, universal bishop, etc. promising great things to his followers, riches, honours, pleasures, pardons, and heaven itself; and uttering things of a blasphemous kind, or great blasphemies, the particulars of which are mentioned in (Revelation 13:6); so the little horn, who is the same with the Romish antichrist, is said to have a mouth speaking great things, very great things, and his look more stout than his fellows, (Daniel 7:8,20).

And power was given unto him to continue forty [and] two months; to continue in being, or to continue blaspheming and speaking great things; and indeed, as long as he continues, he will continue blaspheming; as soon as he arose he had a name of blasphemy on his heads, and his mouth was

immediately opened in blasphemy, and so it continues, and will to the end of this date. The Ethiopic version reads it, “and power was given to him to do signs, whatsoever he would”; miracles, lying signs and wonders; (see ⁶⁶¹³Revelation 13:13,14). Some copies read, and so the Arabic version, “and power was given him to make war”; but he did not make war as soon as he arose, and so not all the time that is here allotted him; and the word “war” seems to be transcribed from (⁶⁶¹³Revelation 13:7). The phrase rather intends his being, and the continuance and duration of it; which is the same period of time in which the holy city is trodden under foot by this beast, and the same with the 1260 days or years, in which the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, and the woman, the church, is in the wilderness, (⁶⁶¹¹Revelation 11:2,3 12:6,14); for forty two months, reckoning thirty days to a month, as the eastern people did, make just 1260 days, for these things are all contemporary: hence it appears, that 1260 prophetic days, that is, years, contain the whole period of antichrist's reign and continuance; so that could we tell where they began, it might be exactly known when his reign will end; but for want of knowing the former, the best of calculators have failed in the latter: but seeing the time when he was made universal bishop by Phocas bids fair for the time of his open appearance, and the beginning of his reign, and of his blasphemy, which was in the year 606, to which, if we add 1260, the expiration of his reign will fall in the year 1866; so that he may have upwards of an hundred and twenty years yet to continue; but of this we cannot be certain; however, the conjecture is not improbable.

Ver. 6. *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God*, etc.] By sitting as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God; by suffering himself to be called by the name of God, God on earth, Lord God the pope, and to be worshipped as God; and by assuming infallibility, giving out that he cannot err, which only belongs to the God of truth; and by his idolatrous practices commanded by him, as the worshipping of idols of gold, silver, wood, and stone, which is in Scripture called blaspheming God, (²³⁶⁵Isaiah 65:7 ²⁶²⁷Ezekiel 20:27); (see ²⁷¹¹⁶Daniel 11:36).

To blaspheme his name; his authority, by arrogating to himself all power in heaven, earth, and hell; by taking upon him to bind and loose the consciences of men, and to dispense with the laws of God, and make them void by his own traditions; and to dispose of the kingdoms of this world, by removing kings, and setting up kings at pleasure, which is the prerogative of the King of kings; and by pretending; to forgive sin, which

none but God can do; and by granting indulgences, pardons, etc. Moreover, by the name of God may be meant the Scriptures, which are the means by which God reveals and makes known himself; and these the man of sin blasphemes, by making them a nose of wax, by imposing on them what senses he pleases; by assuming a right of being the sole interpreter of them, and the judge of all controversies; and by setting up his own unwritten traditions upon an equal foot with them, and above them, and by denying the common people the use of them, in their own language; and particularly the Gospel, which is sometimes called the name of the Lord, (<4409 15>Acts 9:15), may be intended, which is sadly blasphemed, and evil spoken of by antichrist; as the doctrines of justification by Christ's righteousness, of peace and pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice, through the antichristian notions of merit, works of supererogation, pardons, penance, purgatory, and the like:

and his tabernacle; meaning either the human nature of Christ, which God pitched, and not man, the temple of his body, in which the Godhead dwells bodily, and where the eternal Word dwelt, or tabernacled among men; this is blasphemed by pretending to transubstantiate, the bread and wine in the supper of the Lord into the very body and blood of Christ, and to offer him up again in the sacrifice of the Mass, every time that blasphemous piece of service is performed: or else the church of God, which is the temple of the living God, where he chooses, desires, and delights to dwell; this is blasphemed by antichrist, by sitting in it as if he was God; asserting himself to be the head of the church which solely belongs to Christ; taking upon him to coin new doctrines, and make new laws and orders, and impose them on it, and to change and alter the ordinances and discipline of it as he pleases; and by persecuting and destroying all such who will not submit to his decrees and prescripts: or else heaven itself, the habitation of God, and where his throne is, may be designed, which the pope blasphemously affirms to have the keys of; and that he can open and shut it, let persons into it, or exclude front it, at pleasure; and that he can dispose of it, and sell it for money, and make and canonize new saints in it, as often as he thinks fit.

And them that dwell in heaven; either saints below, members of a Gospel church, who are born from above, are partakers of the heavenly calling, and whose conversation is in heaven, who are by antichrist stigmatized and persecuted as schismatics and heretics; or rather angels and saints departed, who are in heaven, and dwell there, and who are worshipped and prayed to

as Mediators and intercessors, whose names are used in a very ridiculous and blasphemous manner, to their great dishonour and reproach, as well as to the injury of Christ, the only Mediator between God and men.

Ver. 7. *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints*, etc.] The remnant of the woman's seed, (<66217>Revelation 12:17), whom God has set apart for himself, Christ has cleansed from sin by his blood, and the Holy Spirit has sanctified by his grace; and who under the influence of it live holy lives and conversations; against such Satan always bore an enmity; and it is an aggravation of the wickedness of the Romish antichrist, that he makes war with such, which he is stirred up to by Satan, with a malicious intent, and is permitted by God for the trial of the faith and patience of his people: this war of antichrist, with the saints, may be understood not merely spiritually, of his anathemas, excommunications, bulls, and the like, but literally, of his drawing the temporal sword against them; (see <66310>Revelation 13:10); and bringing of armies against them, and fighting pitched battles; and it is thought there may be a special regard had to his war with the Waldenses and Albigenses, in which war it is said that a million were slain; and may take in all his ways and methods of destroying the saints, by the bloody Inquisition, murders, massacres, and punishments of all sorts; and also his last war with the two witnesses, in which they will be slain, which is yet to come, (<66107>Revelation 11:7);

and to overcome them: not so as to submit to him, and to forsake the doctrines and ordinances of Christ, but by killing them; and who, by dying in the faith and cause of Christ, overcome Satan, get the victory over the world, and antichrist, and are more than conquerors through him that has loved them.

And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations; in the Roman empire, which wondered after him, and worshipped him, and over whom he has reigned, and has exercised both a temporal and spiritual jurisdiction; (see <66715>Revelation 17:15,18).

Ver. 8. *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him*, etc.] The inhabitants of the Roman empire, the idolatrous part of it, the men of the world, earthly minded men; who are as they came into the world, and are of the earth, earthly, and seek only after earthly honours, pleasures, and profits; these are the admirers and adorers of the beast:

whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; by which book is meant God's predestination of men to eternal life, or his decree of election; why this is called the "book of life", (see Gill on "Revelation 3:5"); and their "names [being] written [therein] from the foundation of the world", (Revelation 17:8), for such a construction the words will bear, denotes that election is eternal, and is not an act of time, nor dependent upon anything done in time; and that it is of particular persons, and not of bodies of men, of nations and churches, and still less of propositions, or of persons so and so qualified, or under such conditions and circumstances; and that it is perfectly well known to God, and is sure and certain in its effects, and is unchangeable and irrevocable; for what is written in it, is written, and will always stand, not upon the foot of works, but of the sovereign grace of God; and this is called the Lamb's book; that is, Christ, who is compared to a Lamb for its harmlessness, meekness, and patience, and was typified by the lambs in the legal sacrifices; and this book is called his, because he was present at the making of it, and was concerned in putting down the names in it, (John 13:18), and he himself stands first in it as the elect of God, and the head of all the elect, who, as members, were chosen in him: the act of election was made in him, and stands sure in him; and he is the author and giver of that life, which men are chosen unto both here and hereafter: and he may be said to be "slain from the foundation of the world"; in the decree and purpose of God, by which he was set forth, or foreappointed to be the propitiation for sin, and was foreordained, before the foundation of the world, to redeem his people by his blood, and in the promise of God immediately after the fall of man, that the seed of the woman should have his heel bruised, and he himself should bruise the serpent's head, which made it as sure as if it was then done; and in the sacrifices, which were immediately upon this offered up, and were types of the death and sacrifice of Christ; and in the faith of the saints, which brings distant things near, and considers them as if present; and also in his members, in Abel, and others, in whom he suffered, as he still does in his people; to which may be added, that such is the efficacy of the bloodshed and death of Christ, that it reached to all the saints from the beginning of the world, for the justification of their persons, the atonement of their sins, and cleansing from them; for the remission of sins, that are past, and for the redemption of transgressions under the first testament; for Old Testament saints from the beginning are saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus, as New Testament

ones are. Something like this the Jews say [f341] of the Messiah upon (<01491>Genesis 49:11),

> "he washed aml[yrbtad amwym, "from the day that the world was created"; who is he? this is the King Messiah. — It is written (<01002>Genesis 1:2); "and the Spirit of God", etc. This is the Spirit of the King Messiah; and from the day that the world was created; he washed his garments in wine;"

which the Jewish writers [f342] understand of blood, which for its redness is like to wine; though they interpret it of the blood of the slain, with which the garments of the Messiah will be stained. Now such whose names are not written in this book of the Lamb, who have no interest in electing grace, nor in redemption by Christ, the slain Lamb of God, nor any right unto eternal life, who are reprobate persons, vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, who are foreordained to condemnation, and are given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned, these are the followers and worshippers of antichrist.

Ver. 9. *If any man have an ear, let him hear*.] And diligently attend to this mystical description of antichrist, as being matter of some difficulty to understand, as well as of great moment and importance, and seriously consider it, that he may know him, and his followers, and avoid them; (see Gill on "<660107>Revelation 1:7").

Ver. 10. *He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity*, etc.] As the devil, by whom men are led captive at his will, and the Romish antichrist, who leads multitudes of souls to hell; these shall be taken and cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone. The Jews [f343] have a saying, that

> "captivity comes into the world for idolatry, uncleanness, and murder;"

which three things are notorious in the Romish antichrist: and in the same treatise they say [f344], that the sword, the next judgment mentioned, comes into the world for delay of justice, and the perversion of it.

He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword; the design of the phrase is to show, that there will be a just retaliation made to the antichristian beast, for all his cruelty to the saints, and the murders of them; and that because he has shed much blood of the saints, blood shall be given

him to drink, and he shall be used in like manner he has used others; (see Genesis 9:6) (Matthew 26:52).

Here is the patience and the faith of the saints; meaning either that hereby, through the cruelties and barbarities of the Romish antichrist, the patience and faith of the saints are tried; and that they have great need of them, and of the exercise of them, under such usages; and that these being tried, and continue, will receive much commendation, honour, and praise; or else the sense is, that it requires both faith and patience in the saints, to believe that antichrist will be thus destroyed, and to wait quietly till the time comes. The Arabic version reads, "here is the patience and prayers of the saints": who cry, how long will it be ere our blood is avenged? and have need of patience to rest a while, till their prayers are answered.

Ver. 11. *And I beheld another beast*, etc.] The same with the first, only in another form; the same for being and person, but under a different consideration; the same antichrist, but appearing in another light and view: the first beast is the pope of Rome, at the head of the ten kingdoms, of which the Roman empire consisted; this other beast is the same pope of Rome, with his clergy, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, etc. before he is described as a temporal monarch, now as a spiritual lord; there he is represented in his secular character, as having the seat, power, and authority of the dragon, of Rome Pagan, engaging the attention and wonder of the whole world, and striking terror into them, and as making war with the saints, and ruling over all nations and tongues; here in his ecclesiastic character, pretending great humility and holiness, showing signs and lying wonders, obliging to idolatry, and exercising tyranny and cruelty on all that will not profess his religion: that this is the same beast with the first in substance, though not in show, appears from his exercising the same power, causing all to worship the first beast, or himself as a temporal lord, by which he is supported in his spiritual dignity; and by mention being made only of one beast, at the close of this account, and of his mark, name, and number being but one; nor is there any other but one hereafter spoken, of in this book, either as ruling, or as conquered, and as taken, and as going into perdition, and as cast into the lake: this beast is described by his original,

coming up out of the earth; either from under it, out of the bottomless pit, from hell; or out of, a low condition, a poor crawling earthworm; the extracts of many of the popes, cardinals, and religious orders, have been

very mean: or this may represent the secret and private manner, and slow degrees by which this monster of iniquity rose; as things gradually rise up out of the earth unobserved; this man of sin was springing up in the apostles' time, and by degrees rose up to the power and authority he is here said to have: or rather, as this beast, in his other form, rose up out of the sea, out of the commotions raised in the empire by the barbarous nations, by whom he was lifted up to his imperial dignity; so he is described in this form, and is represented as rising up out of the earth, out of the earthly part of the church, or out of the apostasy which the visible church was sunk into, through the outward riches and honours bestowed on it by the Christian emperors, which made way for the rising of this beast; and this shows the nature of his kingdom, which is worldly and earthly, and so truly antichristian, being diametrically opposite to the kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world:

and he had two horns like a lamb; or “like to the Lamb”; the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God; though he has seven horns, denoting fulness of power, this but two; he stands on Mount Zion, with the 144,000, having his Father's name on their foreheads, this upon the earth, with his followers, having his own mark and name upon them. The Ethiopic version renders it, “and he had two horns, and he seemed as a lamb”; he affected a lamb like disposition, pretended to great humility and meekness, calling himself “servus servorum”, the servant of servants, to cover his pride, ambition, and tyranny; and would be thought to be a lamb without spot and blemish, ascribing to himself infallibility, and suffering himself to be called his Holiness, when he is the man of sin, and mystery of iniquity: by his “two horns” some understand his two fold power, secular and ecclesiastic; but as these are separately represented by two beasts, rather these two horns intend the two parts of the empire, eastern and western, into which it was divided, when this beast arose, and by which the Papacy was raised to its power, had supported in it; and the two supreme pontiffs, the bishop of Rome, and the bishop of Constantinople; or else the beast's power of binding and loosing, of dispensing with the laws of God, and of imposing his own laws on the consciences of men.

And he spake as a dragon; like the devil himself, affirming as he did, ([2406]Luke 4:6); that the power of disposing of the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them, was delivered to him, and he could give it to whom he would: he spake arrogantly, as if he was above all that is called God, and as if he was God himself; and he spake like a dragon cruelly, like the

great red dragon, like the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning, breathing out slaughter, and threatenings against the saints, as Rome Pagan; and he spake lies in hypocrisy, blasphemies, idolatries, and doctrines of devils.

Ver. 12. *And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him*, etc.] Sitting in the same seat, having the same power and authority from the dragon, making war with the saints by preaching and writing against them, by anathemas, excommunications, and bulls, and so overcame and silenced them, or delivered them over to the secular arm to be put to death, ruling over the consciences of men in a tyrannical way, in all nations, kindreds, and tongues, in the empire; and all this before, in the presence, and under the influence of the secular power, of the Papacy, signified by the first beast, and with his good liking, and for his credit and support:

and causeth the earth, and them that dwell therein; the Roman empire, and the inhabitants of it, especially the carnal and earthly part of them:

to worship the first beast; to be subject to the temporal power of the Papacy, or to submit to the pope as a temporal lord, to give homage and tribute to him, and the like, in order to support his worldly power and grandeur; and this was caused or brought about by his emissaries, his spiritual vassals, his legates, cardinals, priests, etc. by their exhortations, persuasions, and commands, delivered both in writing and preaching:

whose deadly wound was healed; which deadly wound was given the Roman empire under its sixth head, the emperors, when they ceased, and was healed by the pope, the seventh head, being set as a temporal monarch over the ten kingdoms in it.

Ver. 13. *And he doeth great wonders*, etc.] Or miracles; not real, but pretended ones, lying wonders, which the Popish legends are full of the accounts of, as done by the priests, or by this or the other saint:

so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men; in imitation of Elijah, (2 Kings 1:9-14); and this single instance is put instead of all others, it being usual with the Jews to express all wonderful and miraculous operations by this miracle of Elijah's: and this may be understood mystically, of the pretensions of the Papacy to confer the Holy Ghost, and his gifts upon men, by breathing on them, which on the day of Pentecost were represented by cloven tongues, as of fire, coming down from heaven; or of their anathemas, curses, and

excommunications, at which time burning torches and candles are cast up, and fall down, as emblems of divine wrath, which is called cursing men with bell, book, and candle; or else of the fire of persecution: “from heaven”; the secular powers of the empire: “upon the earth”; the common people: or this may be understood literally; so they tell us, that Pope Zachary, once on a journey to Ravenna, had in the daytime a cloud to protect him from the heat, and in the night time armies of fire appeared in the clouds to go before him; and as Pope Innocent was at Mass, a golden crown was seen, and on it a dove, and under it a smoking censer, and hard by them two burning firebrands: and it is reported of Pope Hildebrand, that, whenever he pleased, he could shake his sleeves, and sparks of fire would come out; and by these miracles deluded the eyes of the simple with a show of holiness, which, with other instances, are taken notice of by Napier, Brightman, and other writers: and so here this is said to be done “in the sight of men”; to their apprehension, seemingly, in their view; they being cheated and deluded with an appearance and show of things which were not real.

Ver. 14. *And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth*, etc.] The Complutensian edition, and two of Stephens's copies, read “mine”, instead of “them”; creatures of God, and professors of Christ, carnal and unregenerate men; not the elect of God, and true believers in Christ, these cannot be deceived by the signs and wonders of false Christs and false prophets; antichrist's deceivableness of unrighteousness only operates in them that perish:

by [the means of] those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; the secular power of the Papacy encouraging, confirming, and giving a sanction to those lying miracles, and obliging all to believe them, and come into the things, doctrines, or practices, they are designed to promote:

saying to them that dwell on the earth: the apostate church, or the carnal inhabitants of the empire: ordering and commanding them

that they should make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword, and did live; meaning the Roman empire, which had received a deadly wound in its sixth head, the emperors, by the sword of the Goths, Huns, etc. but now revived in its seventh head, the pope of Rome, to whom the ten kings gave their kingdoms: the image made to this beast some understand of the translation of the empire to Charles the great, and

his successors the emperors, by the pope of Rome, he ordaining so many electors to chose a king of the Romans, and elect an emperor when one was wanting; and this was an image to the first beast, a shadow, an appearance of the Roman empire, and but a shadow; for the power of inaugurating and crowning these emperors, and of setting up and deposing them when the pope pleased, lie reserved to himself: but rather this designs the image worship, or the worshipping of idols of gold and silver, of wood and stone, which he caused the inhabitants of the earth to make, and give adoration to; or else the whole Papal religion, and the Papacy itself, for the beast, and the image of the beast, are all along in this book afterwards mentioned together as being the same, (Revelation 14:9 15:2 16:2 19:20 20:4), which is an image of the Gentile religion, in their high priest, priests, temples, idols, offerings, garments, worshipping of angels, and saints departed, with a numerous train of rites and ceremonies, borrowed from the old Pagan religion; hence the Papists are called Gentiles, (Revelation 11:2), the Roman empire, represented by these two beasts, and this image, had now one head, the pope, as before an emperor, and a religion in it much resembling its ancient one; but, before that was set up, this image was in being.

Ver. 15. *And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast*, etc.] Or "breath"; he breathed into it, and animated it; he gave this new religion a sanction, he confirmed and established it, and obliged all in his dominions to embrace and acknowledge it; and this he did by his decrees and canons, and those that refused were delivered over to the secular power, which he also exercised under another consideration:

that the image of the beast should both speak: so that it was not like Nebuchadnezzar's golden image that he set up, which required another to speak for it and demand adoration to it; and should seem to be preferable to the dumb idols of the Gentiles, which have mouths, but speak not; and may be understood either of the images of the virgin Mary, and other saints, which it is pretended, and the people are made to believe, that they do at times actually speak, and really weep and laugh, as it may serve their different purposes; or this image may be said to speak by the decrees, canons, anathemas, curses, threatenings, persuasions, doctrines, and blasphemies of the pope and his clergy; so that this image is like both the first and second beast; it has a mouth speaking blasphemies, as the first, and it speaks like a dragon, as the second;

and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed: which, according to the generality of copies, refers to the image itself, that that has a power from the beast as to speak, so to put to death those that refuse to worship it; but the Complutensian edition reads και ποιει, "and causes": that is, the beast causes, or orders all those that will not worship the image, to be killed; that is, that as many as will not embrace and profess the Popish religion shall be put to death; and these are the known orders and decrees of the Papacy, which have been executed by the Inquisition, and other hands, in innumerable instances; the blood of all the saints and prophets is found in Rome Papal, and will be avenged; these are the martyrs of Jesus, with whose blood the whore on the scarlet coloured beast has been made drunk; and this sense is confirmed by the eastern versions.

Ver. 16. *And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond*, etc.] Men of all ranks and degrees, states and conditions, within his jurisdiction; this refers to the beast, and not to the image:

to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; or "that they might give themselves marks", as the Complutensian edition reads; which is an allusion either to the custom among the Romans of imprinting marks upon their servants and soldiers, by which they might be known to whom they belonged; servants had them in their foreheads [f345], and soldiers in their hands [f346]; or to the usages of the Jews in binding their phylacteries upon their arms and foreheads, to put them in mind of the law of God, and their obedience to it; or to the practices of the Heathens, in putting the mark of the god they worshipped upon their bodies; Maimonides [f347] says, it was a custom with the Gentiles to mark themselves with their idols, showing that they were their bought servants, and were marked for their service: the sense is, that some received the mark in one place, and some in another: those who were obliged to receive the mark in the right hand seem to be the clergy, such who entered into holy orders; who lifted up their right hand, and swore and vowed allegiance to the pope, and testified they were ready to defend and support his religion and interest; and who in their ordination are said to have an indelible character impressed on them: and those who received the mark in their foreheads are the common people in general, who one and all have the same impress upon them; which may intend either the sign of the cross in baptism, or rather their open confession of the Popish religion, which they as publicly avow and declare as if it had been written on their foreheads.

Ver. 17. *And that no man might buy or sell*, etc.] Either in an ecclesiastical sense, as to, be in any church office, or perform any such service, to say Mass, hear confession, give absolution, sell pardons and indulgences, etc. or in a civil sense, as to trade, and exercise merchandise, and this was forbidden by several Popish councils and synods; the Lateran council, under Pope Alexander, decreed against the Waldenses and Albigenses, that no one should presume to retain or encourage them in their houses or countries, or "trade" with them; and the synod of Tours in France forbid any reception of heretics, or protection, and that any communion should be had with them "in buying and selling", as Mr. Mede has observed; and it was ordered by a bull of Pope Martin the Fifth, that no contract should be made with such, and that they should not follow any business and merchandise:

save he that had the mark; took the oath to be true to the pope, or made a public profession of the Popish religion:

or the name of the beast; Papists, so called from the pope; thus the antichristians are called from antichrist, as the Christians from Christ:

or the number of his name; which is either the same with the number of the beast in (Revelation 13:18), or is something distinct it; and those who have it may be such persons who neither have the indelible character of the Romish clergy, nor are open professors of the Popish religion, but are in heart inclined to it, and privately and secretly promote it, by their doctrines and practices; and so are numbered, reckoned, esteemed, and accounted of by the Papists, and receive favours from them; or rather such who openly "furnish the drink offering" in the Mass, mixed with wine and water, ynm l , "for that number", (Isaiah 65:11).

Ver. 18. *Here is wisdom*, etc.] Not only in the above description of the two beasts, but in what follows as to the number of the beast, these two now coalescing in one, and have one and the same number; and to wrap it up, and conceal it in such an obscure manner, shows great wisdom in God, as it requires much in men, and serves greatly to exercise all his intellectual powers to find it out:

let him that hath understanding count the number of, the beast; whoever has skill numbers, let him make use of it, that he may know the name and nature of the antichristian beast, and the numerical letters of his name, or the number of him, and of the time when he arose, and when he will expire:

for it is the number of a man: either a number that may be reckoned by man, or which is in common use among men; (see <66217>Revelation 21:17); or that which is contained in the name of a man:

and his number [is] six hundred threescore [and] six: which some think refers to the time of the rise of antichrist, in the year 666; but that seems rather to be in the year 606, when the bishop of Rome obtained the name of universal bishop; others have been of opinion that it refers to the expiration of the beast, which they thought would have been in the year 1666, the number of the thousand being dropped, as it is in our common way of speaking; as when we say the Spanish invasion was in 88, meaning 1588, and the civil wars began in 41, that is, 1641; but time has shown that this was a mistaken sense; the more prevailing opinion is that of Mr. Potter, who has wrote a peculiar and learned treatise upon this passage, who makes the counting of this number to be no other than the extracting of its root, which is the number 25, which when multiplied into itself, and the fraction in working it 41 is added, makes up the square number 666; and now 25 being added to A. D. 33, make 58, which was the time of the beast's conception, to which if 666 is added, it brings us to the year 724, when he arrived to his age of manhood, and when the war about the worshipping of images broke out: but others think that the numeral letters in some man's name which amount to this date, and which agrees with antichrist, are intended; and here various conjectures are made; some have observed, that in genealogical arithmetic the number of Adonikam's posterity is 666, (<15213>Ezra 2:13); whose name signifies “a lord rising up”, or “risen”; and suits very well with antichrist, who is risen up, and assumes a lordly domination over the kings of the earth; and it is further observed, that the Hebrew word tyymwr, which signifies “Roman”, and, having the word beast or kingdom joined to it, designs the Roman beast, or kingdom, consists of numeral letters, which make up this sum; and so the Hebrew word rwts, “Sethut”, which is the name of a man, (<04313>Numbers 13:13), and signifies “mystery”, in its numeral letters comes just to this number, and one of the names of the whore of Babylon is “mystery”, (<66705>Revelation 17:5); but the name “Lateinos” bids as fair as any, which is mentioned by so ancient a writer as Irenaeus, who was a hearer of Polycarp, a disciple of John, the writer of this book; now the numeral value of the letters of this word makes up exactly 666, thus; λ 30. α 1. τ 300. ε 5. ι 10. ν 50. ο 70. ς 200. in all 666; and it is well known that the church of Rome is called the Latin Church and the pope of Rome the head of the Latin church, and his

seat is in the Latin empire, and the service of the beast is in the Latin tongue, and the Bible is kept in that language, from the reading of the common people: it has been observed that the numeral letters in Ludovicus, or Lewis, which is a common name of the French kings, and is the name of the present French king, make up this same number; and may denote the destruction of antichrist, which will quickly follow the downfall of the kingdom of France, under a king of this name; and the rather, since this was the last of the ten kingdoms that was set up, and in which the primitive beast subsists, and the only one that has not yet been conquered, or in which a revolution has not been; and since this is the tenth part of the city which shall fall a little before the third woe comes on: and that it may fall under Ludovicus, or Lewis, the present French king [f348], may be hoped for, and is desirable.

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 14

This chapter contains three visions; one of the Lamb on Mount Zion, another of the three angels preaching against Babylon, and the third of the harvest and vintage. The vision of the Lamb is in (<6401>Revelation 14:1), which is no other than Christ, described by his similitude, as a Lamb; by the place where he was, Mount Zion; by his position there, standing, and by the company that were with him, whose number were 144,000, and their character, his Father's name written on their foreheads; at the same time a voice was heard from heaven, comparable to the sound of many waters, of thunders, and of harps: and a song sung which none learn but the above number with the Lamb, (<6402>Revelation 14:2,3), who are described by their purity, chastity, and strict adherence to Christ; by their redemption through him; by their being the firstfruits of God and of the Lamb, and by their integrity and unblemished character, (<6404>Revelation 14:4,5); next follows the account of the three angels; the first comes with the everlasting Gospel, to preach it to all men, loudly calling upon all to fear and worship God, and give glory to him, since he is the Creator of all, and the hour of his judgment is come, (<6406>Revelation 14:6,7); the second proclaims the fall of Babylon, with the reason of it, (<6408>Revelation 14:8); and the third denounces the wrath of God upon the worshippers of the beast in the most public manner, and that for ever, (<6409>Revelation 14:9-11); and this vision is closed with some expressions, showing that, till this was done, the patience of the saints would be tried, and the true worshippers of the Lamb be discovered, and comforting them with an assurance of that rest that remains after death for the faithful followers of Christ, (<6412>Revelation 14:12,13); after this is the vision of the harvest and vintage of the earth. The reaper is described by his form, like the son of man; by his seat, a white cloud; by a golden crown on his head, and by a sharp sickle in his hand, (<6414>Revelation 14:14); who is called upon by an angel out of the temple to make use of his sickle, and reap, because the time of reaping was come, the harvest being ripe, (<6415>Revelation 14:15), upon which he thrusts in his sickle, and reaps the earth, (<6416>Revelation 14:16); after this, another angel appears out of the temple, with a sharp sickle, to whom another

angel from the altar, that had power over fire, calls to make use of his sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine, since the grapes were fully ripe, (Revelation 14:17,18); upon which he thrusts in his sickle, and gathers them, and casts them into the winepress of divine wrath, which being trodden, blood comes out of it to the horses' bridles for the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs, (Revelation 14:19,20).

Ver. 1. *And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read “the Lamb”; the same that had been seen before in, the midst of the throne, (Revelation 5:6); and all the Oriental versions have the same article also; the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, for mention is made of his Father in a following clause; the King of Zion, where he is seen standing, and the Redeemer of his people, who are at large described; it is the same Lamb who is so often spoken of in this book before: in the two preceding chapters an account is given of the state of the church, as oppressed under Rome Pagan, and Rome Papal, and here of its more glorious and victorious condition, with Christ at the head of it; in the last chapter antichrist is described, with his followers and worshippers, and as exercising tyranny and cruelty upon the saints, and here Christ and his followers are represented in vision, and some hints given of the fall of Babylon, and of the wrath of God upon the worshippers of the beast, and of the happiness of those who belong to the Lamb: and of him it is here said, that he

stood on the Mount Zion; by which is meant not heaven, but the church on earth; why that is called Mount Zion, (see Gill on “Hebrews 12:22”); here Christ the Lamb stood, as presiding over it, being King of Zion, or the church; where he stood and fed, or ruled, in the name of the Lord, and in the majesty of his God; and where he appeared in the defence of his church and people, oppressed by antichrist; for he is Michael that standeth for the children of his people, and who stands with courage, and in the greatness of his strength, and is invincible; nor does he stand here alone:

and with him an hundred forty [and] four thousand; the same with those in (Revelation 7:3,4), though all the world wondered after the beast, and all that dwelt upon the earth worshipped him, yet there was a number preserved that did not bow the knee to him; a remnant according to the election of grace, who were called out of the world, and brought to Zion, and were on the side of the Lamb, and abode by him, and cleaved unto him:

having his Father's name written in their foreheads; not baptism, administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as some think; nor eternal election, as others, though as their names were written in the Lamb's book of life, so this was manifest to themselves and others, as if his name and his Father's had been written in their foreheads; but rather adoption, the new name of a child of God, they having the spirit of adoption, whereby they cried, “Abba”, Father, and being openly and manifestly the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus; unless it should be thought there is an allusion to the inscription in the mitre on the forehead of the high priest, “holiness to the Lord”, and so be expressive of that visible holiness which will be on the saints in the spiritual reign of Christ, which this vision respects; (see <3814>Zechariah 14:20); or to the frontlets between the eyes of the people of Israel, to put them in mind of the law, and their obedience to it, (<0508>Deuteronomy 6:8); and so may here denote the engagements of those saints in the service of God; though perhaps no more is intended than their open and hearty profession of their faith, and that they were not ashamed of appearing in the cause of God and truth; nor of Christ and his words, his Gospel and ordinances: the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “having his name, (the Lamb's,) and his Father's name written in their foreheads”; and the Ethiopic version adds, “and of his Holy Spirit”. Mr. Daubuz thinks this vision refers to the times of Constantine, and to the Christians then, and particularly the council of Nice, and as contemporary with that in (<6709>Revelation 7:9-17).

Ver. 2. *And I heard a voice from heaven*, etc.] The same with the voices heard in heaven upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet, (<6115>Revelation 11:15);

as the voice of many waters; very loud, and uttered by a great multitude of people, signified by waters in this book, (<6715>Revelation 17:15); the same with those that praise the Lord for the destruction of antichrist, and for the marriage of the Lamb, (<6901>Revelation 19:1-7);

and as the voice of a great thunder; to which the Gospel may be compared for its open, loud publication, being heard far and near, as thunder is:

and I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps; that is, singing the praises of God, for the fall of Babylon, the happy state and condition of the church, and the blessings of grace; the harp being a musical instrument, used under the Old Testament in singing praise: Brightman thinks that

these different sounds represent the course of Gospel doctrine, and the church's voice throughout the reign of antichrist; that when the church first went into the wilderness, her voice was like the murmuring of waters, confused and indistinct; when she began to revive under the Waldenses and Albigenses, Wickliff, Huss, etc. her voice was like thunder, loud and terrible; and at the Reformation, it was as the voice of harpers, when confessions of faith were published with sweet harmony and consent. Others have thought that the different properties and efficacy of the Gospel are designed; as its rapidity and irresistible force, by the many waters; its striking and shaking the consciences of men, by the thunder, Christ's ministers being sometimes “Boanergeses”, sons of thunder; and its harmonious music, pleasant sound, peace, joy, and comfort it brings, by the voice of harpers. The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, “the voice which I heard was as harpers”, etc.

Ver. 3. *And they sung as it were a new song*, etc.] The song of redeeming grace; the same with that in (Revelation 5:9); see the note there: this is to be understood of the 144,000, who sung it

before the throne, and before the four beasts and the elders; that is, publicly in the church, the ministers and members being present; of these; (see Gill on “Revelation 4:4”); (see Gill on “Revelation 4:6”);

and no man could learn that song but the hundred [and] forty [and] four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth; out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; from among the men of the earth, and out of the apostate church, called the earth, in opposition to the pure church, which so often goes by the name of heaven in this book; and these, in consequence of being redeemed by the blood of Christ, were called by grace out of the world; and such only can sing the song of redemption with application to themselves; and say he has redeemed us, and loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood; to none but these is it given to know spiritually and experimentally the mysteries of electing and redeeming grace; the natural and carnal man neither knows nor receives the things of the Spirit of God; nor can he learn them by hearing, reading, study, and conversation, unless it be only in a notional and speculative way. The Jews speak of a new song, which the angels have never used [f349];

> "it is said, (<19B801>Psalm 98:1); "sing unto the Lord a new song"; a new song, for there is an old song; but this song is what the angels never praised him with, and therefore it is new;"

and indeed the song of redeeming love is peculiar to men.

Ver. 4. *These are they which were not defiled with women*, etc.] With the whore of Rome, and her harlots, she is the mother of; while the kings and inhabitants of the earth were drunk with the wine of their fornication, or committed idolatry with them, which is spiritual fornication, and is here meant by being defiled with them, these were free from such pollutions, or idolatrous practices:

for they are virgins; for their beauty and comeliness in Christ, chastity, sincerity of their love, uncorruptness in doctrine and worship, and for the uprightness of conversation; (see Gill on "<402501>Matthew 25:1");

these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; as the sheep follow the shepherd of the flock, and which is a character of Christ's sheep, (<431004>John 10:4,5,27). These follow Christ in the exercise of the graces of humility, patience, and love; and in the performance of the several duties of religion, and subjection to ordinances, and in the path of sufferings; and in every way in which Christ the Lamb has gone before them, or in his word and providence leads and directs them to, whether it be grateful to the flesh or not; particularly they follow where he is preached, and his Word and ordinances are faithfully administered; and they follow him to heaven, where he is: it was part of the oath taken by the Roman soldiers, τοις στρατηγοις ακολουψειν οποι ποτ' αι αγωσι, "to follow the generals wherever they should lead" [f350], to which it is thought there is an allusion here; (see <101521>2 Samuel 15:21);

these were redeemed from among men; "by Jesus", as the Syriac and Arabic versions add, and so the Complutensian edition; by the blood of Christ, for all men are not redeemed by it; and in consequence of this they were called, and delivered from this present evil world, and the men of it, and from a vain, wicked, and idolatrous conversation with it:

[being] the firstfruits unto God, and to the Lamb; in allusion to the firstfruits under the law, which represented and sanctified the lump, and showed that harvest was coming; so these persons are called the firstfruits to God, and to the Lamb, being called by grace, and consecrated to their worship and service, with reference to the harvest of souls, or that large

number of them which will be gathered in during the spiritual reign of Christ, which these persons will be at the beginning of; and as those who are first called and converted in a country or nation are said to be the firstfruits of it, (<450605>Romans 16:5 <461615>1 Corinthians 16:15); so these being the first, in the period of time to which respect is had, bear this name; and as the converted Jews received the firstfruits of the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, and at other times, so these will receive the firstfruits of the far greater pouring forth of the Spirit in the latter day, which will begin, and usher in the kingdom of Christ; (see <450823>Romans 8:23).

Ver. 5. *And in their mouth was found no guile*, etc.] Or "a lie", as the Complutensian edition, the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions read; by which may be meant idolatry, for idols and idolatrous practices are often called lies, and lying vanities; (see <241619>Jeremiah 16:19 Amos 1:4 Jon 1:8 <450125>Romans 1:25); and the sense is, that the superstition and idolatry of the church of Rome were not among them: or it may design false doctrine, and the meaning be, that they did not speak lies in hypocrisy, as the followers of antichrist do; nor were they given up to believe a lie, as they are: the generality of copies read, "no guile"; which is expressive of the sincerity of their words; there was no deceit nor hypocrisy in them; they did not speak with flattering lips to men, nor did they draw nigh to God with their mouths, when their hearts were far from him; they were Israelites indeed, like Nathanael, in whom was no guile; though not in so strict a sense, in which this phrase is used of Christ, (<600122>1 Peter 1:22);

for they are without fault before the throne of God; not as considered in themselves, as if they were entirely free from sin, and never committed any; though it might be true of them, that in general they were of unblemished lives and conversations, that is, not guilty of any notorious and scandalous crimes; but rather the sense is, that they were without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, as being washed in the blood of Christ, and so cleansed from all sin, and as being justified by his righteousness from all iniquity; and so were before the throne of God, and in the sight of divine justice, unblamable and unreproveable; (see Jude 24 <510122>Colossians 1:22); the phrase, "before the throne of God", is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and in the Complutensian edition.

Ver. 6. *And I saw another angel*, etc.] This is to be understood not of one of the ministering spirits so called; for though wings are sometimes ascribed to angels, and Gabriel is said to fly swiftly; and though they desire to look into the mysteries of the everlasting Gospel, yet the preaching of that is not committed to any of them; but a minister of the Gospel is intended, who is the angel of the church, for in this book pastors of churches are so called, (<6602>Revelation 1:20); and not a single minister of the Gospel is meant, but a set of Gospel ministers; and some think that those are designed who appeared in the eighth and ninth centuries, both in the eastern and western empire, against the worshipping of images; since this angel calls upon the inhabitants of the earth to fear God, give glory to him, and worship him, and not images; but there was little of the everlasting Gospel preached in those times. Others are of opinion that those who preceded, and led on to the Reformation, are pointed at by this angel, such as Wickliff in England, Franciscus Petrarcha in Italy, John Huss and Jerom of Prague in Bohemia, with others; but these also had not the everlasting Gospel in its clearness and purity, nor did they preach it to all the inhabitants of the earth; rather I think a set of Gospel preachers are intended, who will appear at the beginning of the spiritual reign of Christ, and will be a means of ushering it in; and these are the watchmen of Zion, who will give the Lord no rest till he has made Jerusalem the praise of the whole earth; and who will then see eye to eye in Gospel mysteries, and will publish good tidings of peace and salvation, and proclaim Zion's King reigning, (<2606>Isaiah 62:6,7 52:7,8); this angel is called “another”, being distinct from the voice heard (<6602>Revelation 14:2), though he is the first with respect to the following angels, as appears from (<6609>Revelation 14:9); the place where John saw this angel, and the position he was in, follow:

fly in the midst of heaven: the church, the great congregation, the several congregations of the saints; in the midst of which these ministers will preach righteousness, salvation, loving kindness, and truth, as Christ has done before them; and from hence the word of the Lord will go forth to all parts of the world: they will preach the Gospel openly and publicly, with great freedom, boldness, and intrepidity, in the view of all men, not fearing the faces of any; and the Gospel ministered by them will have a swift, sudden, and universal spread; they themselves will run to and fro, and the Gospel will run and be glorified, and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and multitudes will flock to Christ, who in that day will be alone exalted; for these ministers will come forth publicly:

having the everlasting Gospel; the Gospel in its fulness and purity; the Gospel of the grace of God, of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, of peace and pardon by his blood, and of complete salvation by him; called everlasting, because the substance of it was settled from all eternity, in the council and covenant of peace; it was ordained before the world was, and was hid in God from the beginning; and the revelation of it was of old; it was made to our first parents immediately after the fall, and was spoken of by all God's holy prophets which have been since the world began; it was preached before unto Abraham, and in the times of Isaiah, and by other prophets, and so is no new upstart doctrine: besides, the matter of it is everlasting; it treats of everlasting things; of the eternal election of persons to salvation; of God's everlasting love to them; of an everlasting covenant he made with Christ on their account; of blessings, promises, and grace given to them in him, before the world began; and of his being set up so early as a Mediator, and of his going forth in a way of grace from everlasting; as well as it reveals an everlasting righteousness, and brings life and immortality, or eternal life to light, or shows the way to everlasting life and happiness; to which may be added, that it will abide for ever, it will always remain, and that inexpugnable, maugre all the opposition of hell and earth; it will continue till all the elect of God are gathered in, notwithstanding the violence of persecutors, or the craft of seducers; nor will it be antiquated and made void by another Gospel succeeding it, for there will be no other: now this the ministers of those times will “have”; not in their heads only, by knowledge, but in their hearts, by experience, and will have it in their mouths, and speak it out freely and openly, and will have a commission from Christ to preach it, and gifts qualifying them for it:

to preach to them that dwell on the earth; that are in the apostate church, carnal, unregenerate, and earthly persons. The Complutensian edition reads, “that sit on the earth”; as persons abject, mean, and distressed, to whom the Gospel is acceptable:

and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people; whether Jews, Turks, or Pagans; for the Gospel, as before observed, will now have an universal spread all the world over.

Ver. 7. *Saying with a loud voice*, etc.] These ministers shall lift up their voice like a trumpet, and cry aloud, and deliver out the Gospel fully and faithfully, with great authority and power, and with much vehemence, zeal, and fervency:

fear God; or “the Lord”, as some copies, the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, read: not the antichristian beast and his followers, as men formerly had done; but God the Lord, and him not with a servile fear, or a fear of punishment, of wrath, hell, and damnation; nor with a distrust of his grace, love, power, and providence, much less with an hypocritical fear; but with a godly fear, which has the goodness of God for its object, and springs from a sense of the love of God, and is a reverential affection for him, and is attended with faith and spiritual joy, and includes all worship of him, both internal and external; hence the Syriac version renders it, “serve God”: and this shows that the duties of religion are to be inculcated by Gospel ministers; and that they will be urged by them when the everlasting Gospel is preached in its greatest purity:

and give glory to him; and not to graven images, which he will not allow; and glory is to be given to him, on account of the perfections of his nature, and, the works of his hands; and is given when men ascribe greatness to him, praise his works of creation, and acquiesce in those of Providence, acknowledging the power, goodness, and wisdom of God in all; and when they give thanks for all his mercies, temporal and spiritual, and especially for Jesus Christ; and when they exercise faith on him as their God in Christ, and ascribe their salvation to him and to the Lamb, and not to the works of their hands; and when they attend his worship, and the duties of religion, and so glorify him with their bodies and spirits, which are his:

for the hour of his judgement is come; not of the great and last judgment, but of the government of the Lord Christ, committed to him by God the Father; in which sense the word is used in (<46152>John 5:22) for now will the time be come, when the kingdoms of this world will be his; and he will take to himself his great power, and reign, in a spiritual manner, in the world; and now also will be his time of judging the dead, or of avenging his people, whose blood has been shed for him, and of his judging the great whore, or of inflicting his judgments upon antichrist and his followers; all which will be under the sounding of the seventh trumpet, to which this vision is contemporary; (see <66115>Revelation 11:15,17,18 17:1 19:2)

and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters; God, the Creator of all things; and not the beasts, nor idols, the works of men's hands.

Ver. 8. *And there followed another angel*, etc.] A “second”, as the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and the Syriac version add;

and the Arabic version reads, “and the second angel followed”; another set of Gospel ministers, who will immediately follow upon the former, proclaiming the fall of Babylon, which will be brought about through the preaching of the everlasting Gospel. Some think the Waldenses and Albigenses are here designed, who gave a great blow to Babylon, and laid a foundation for her ruin. Others have thought that Luther, and the reformers of his times, are intended, who gave a deadly blow to Babylon, and she has been falling ever since: but to me it appears, that a set of ministers in the spiritual reign of Christ are meant, who will not only signify the fall of Babylon to be certain, and near at hand, but will live to see and declare her actual fall, as follows:

saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city; which is to be understood not of the world in general, which will not now be come to an end, for all nations of the world are distinguished from this Babylon in the next clause, and is only represented as a city, though a great one; nor of Babylon in Chaldea, which was fallen many hundreds of years before this vision; nor is there any likelihood of its being restored, nor any reason to believe that it will ever more be the seat of empire over all the nations and kings of the earth, as the Babylon mentioned in this book is, (<66175>Revelation 17:5,18) though undoubtedly the allusion is to that Babylon, and the very words are used which express the fall of it, and are taken from it; (see <23209>Isaiah 21:9) but this is to be understood of Rome, which all along in this book is called the great city; (see <66108>Revelation 11:8 16:19 17:18) and not of Rome Pagan, for that is fallen already; and the account of the fall of that is given before, at the opening of the sixth seal, and the casting the dragon out of heaven, upon the war there, between Michael and him, though Mr. Daubuz is of opinion that this is here meant; but of Rome Papal, called Babylon the great, (<66165>Revelation 16:5) (<66182>Revelation 18:2) and so the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac and Arabic versions, read here; and the Romish antichrist is so called, because that city was famous for its pride and haughtiness, for its tyranny and cruelty, and for its idolatry; and indeed its name, which signifies “confusion”, well agrees with the Papacy, which is a confused mixture of Judaism, Paganism, and Christianity: so Rome is called Babel in some ancient writings of the Jews [f351], where some copies read “Babel”, others read “Rome”; and Tertullian, who wrote long before the appearance of the Romish antichrist, says [f352], with our John, Babylon is a figure of the Roman city: and of this it is said, that it “is fallen, is fallen”; which words are repeated for the certain

confirmation of it, as matter of fact; for the fall of antichrist will certainly be in the spiritual reign of Christ, in the Philadelphian church state; (see Gill on "Revelation 3:9") now will Babylon come in remembrance before God, and he will pour out the vials of his wrath upon her, and will give men an aversion to her; and through the preaching of the Gospel she will fall, just as the walls of Jericho fell at the sounding of the rams' horns: the reason of which fall will be,

because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication: by her "fornication" is meant the idolatry of the church of Rome; so the idolatry of Israel and Judah is often expressed in the Old Testament by fornication and whoredoms; (see Jeremiah 3:6 Ezekiel 23:2,3) and the wine of it designs the alluring methods used to draw into it; such as the riches and honours, and pleasures of this world, promised to men, and the great appearances of holiness and religion, the deceivableness of unrighteousness, the miracles, signs, and lying wonders done by them, by which men are made sottish and stupid, and induced to believe a lie; just as wine intoxicates, and inclines and excites to lust: and by "the wrath" of it is meant either the heat of lust unto it, or the wrath of God against them which is stirred up by it; and now the aggravation of her sin is, that she not only drinks of this wine herself, or commits idolatry, being instigated to it by the allurements of it, though she hereby incurs the displeasure and wrath of God, but she draws all nations into the same idolatrous practices.

Ver. 9. *And the third angel followed them*, etc.] The two preceding ones, and that very quickly; by whom is meant not Luther, and his associates in the Reformation, as some think; nor his successors, or the ministers of the Gospel in general from his time till Christ's second coming, as others have thought; but a set of Gospel ministers in the spiritual reign of Christ: the first set of them publish the everlasting Gospel, which leads on to the ruin of antichrist; the second set proclaim the downfall of Rome, and this third set denounce the wrath of God upon all that have professed the Popish religion:

saying with a loud voice; as the first angel did, with like authority and vehemence, in order to strike terror, and express indignation:

if any man worship the beast and his image; give in to the idolatries of the church of Rome, and embrace, maintain, and defend the Popish religion, which bears a resemblance to the worship of the Heathens, and is the very image of Rome Pagan; (see Revelation 13:4,12,15)

and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand; openly profess Popery, and swear allegiance to the man of sin, and do all they can to support his interest; (see <66316>Revelation 13:16,17).

Ver. 10. *The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God*, etc.] Which is a just punishment for their sin; that as such have drank of the wine of the wrath of Rome's fornication, (<66408>Revelation 14:8) so they shall now drink of the wine of God's wrath; it is usual in Scripture to express the punishment God inflicts upon wicked men by his wrath, and by the wine cup of his fury; and their suffering such punishment, by their drinking of it; (see <24515>Jeremiah 25:15 <18220>Job 21:20) so azgwrd ^yy, "the wine of wrath", is a phrase used by the Jews[f353]:

which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation; sometimes called a cup of fury and of trembling, (<25117>Isaiah 51:17,22) and is sometimes said to be full of mixture, (<19758>Psalm 75:8) of various ingredients of wrath and fury; and the words may be rendered here, "which is mixed without mixture": and though it seems to carry in it a contradiction, yet is true in different senses; it may be said to be mixed as wine with various sorts, which is the stronger, and sooner inebriates and intoxicates; or in allusion to the cup the Jews gave to malefactors, to stupefy them, when going to execution, which had various things put in it for that purpose; (see Gill on "<41523>Mark 15:23") and so designs the several ingredients in the cup of divine indignation, or the several ways in which God expresses his wrath; and yet it is without mixture; it is judgment without mercy, pure wrath, without the least allay; not so much as a drop of cold water granted, or the least your shown, or any mitigation of fury for a moment:

and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone: in allusion to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, which are now a burning and a sulphurous lake, called Asphaltites, and is an example, pattern, and similitude of the vengeance of eternal fire, (Jude 7) and hence the beast and false prophet are said to be cast into such a lake, (<66920>Revelation 19:20) and here their followers will be punished; which is expressive of the horrible torments of hell, and the dreadful punishment of the antichristian party there; (see <19106>Psalm 11:6) and what will aggravate their misery is, that it will be

in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; the latter will be their Judge, and will condemn them to everlasting burnings, and pronounce the sentence on them; and the former will be the executioners of it; they will gather them out, and sever them from the righteous, and cast them into the furnace of fire, and will be spectators of their punishment, and rejoice at it; and the sight of their power and glory will increase the torment of the sufferers.

Ver. 11. *And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever*, etc.] That is, the smoke of that fire which torments them will for ever arise; or, in other words, there will be no end of their torment; hence their misery is called everlasting fire, everlasting punishment, and everlasting destruction, (<4025>Matthew 25:41,46 <5309>2 Thessalonians 1:9) and smoke being very troublesome and distressing, is mentioned to set forth the very uncomfortable state of the wicked; and so it is used by Jewish writers: hence we read of µnhg ˆnt, "the smoke of hell" [f354], with which the eyes of the wicked will be filled in the world to come:

and they have no rest, day nor night; the fire of divine wrath which tortures them is never quenched, and the worm of conscience which gnaws them never dies: this is directly contrary to a notion of the Jews, that the wicked in hell have rest sometimes; they talk of angels blowing away the smoke from them, so that they have rest an hour and a half; and which they say they have three times a day, and whenever Israel says Amen, let his great name be blessed [f355]; and particularly that hell fire never burns on the sabbath day, nor does the smoke of it ascend then, and that the wicked have always rest on that days [f356]; though sometimes they contradict themselves, and say they never have any rest [f357], which is the truth:

who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name; that is, whoever are the followers of antichrist, or the professors of the Popish religion; so far is salvation from being in the church of Rome, and only there, that there is none in it; and whoever live and die in the profession of Popery, shall surely be damned as this passage is true.

Ver. 12. *Here is the patience of the saints*, etc.] That which has required their patience, and about which it has been exercised, what they have been patiently waiting for, namely, the destruction of antichrist; and now it will

be come, and patience will have its perfect work; (see Revelation 13:10)

here are they that keep the commandments of God; and not the inventions of men, and the traditions of antichrist, but the ordinances of the Gospel, as they were at first delivered, without any adulteration and corruption; and who kept them because they were enjoined by God, and from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory: these are distinguished from the worshippers of the beast, and were preserved throughout the apostasy; these are the witnesses who will now be risen, and the remnant of the woman's seed, with whom the dragon made war by the beast: and these are the hundred and forty and four thousand who are before described; these will be in a very glorious and comfortable church state; the word will be purely preached, and the ordinances truly administered, and the doctrines of the Gospel will be heartily embraced and professed: it follows,

and the faith of Jesus; meaning either the grace of faith, of which Jesus is the object, author, and finisher; and which these saints will have from him, and exercise upon him in a very strong and comfortable manner; and which, and the profession of it, they will hold fast to the end; or else the doctrine of faith, concerning the person, office, and grace of Jesus Christ, the faith once delivered to the saints, which they will have contended for, stood fast in, and now will hold in a pure conscience: these seem to be the words of John, declaring the faith, patience, and obedience of the saints of these times.

Ver. 13. *And I heard a voice from heaven*, etc.] Like that which was heard at Christ's baptism and transfiguration, certifying the truth of what follows, so that that may be depended upon as an undoubted verity:

saying unto me, write; which is a further confirmation of the following sayings being true and faithful; (see Revelation 1:9 19:9 21:5)

blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; merely to die is not an happiness, for death is common to all, good and bad; it is a disunion of soul and body, and cannot be in itself desirable; it is the fruit of sin, and has something in it awful and terrible; and though it is the privilege of believers, as its sting is removed by Christ, yet not as simply and absolutely considered; but to die in the Lord is a blessedness: some render the words, “which die for the Lord”; so the Arabic version, “which die for the faith of the Lord”; and the Ethiopic version, “which die for God”; and

so restrain them to the martyrs of Jesus: to suffer death for the sake of Christ and his Gospel is a gift and an honour, and what glorifies Christ; and there is a glory consequent upon it, which such shall enjoy; but then in the spiritual reign of Christ, to which this passage refers, and after the destruction of antichrist, there will be no more suffering for Christ, no more martyrdoms; wherefore this cannot be the sense of the words: nor do they mean dying in the lively exercise of faith and hope in the Lord; for though it is a happiness so to die, both to persons themselves, and to their friends and relations, yet these are not the only persons that are blessed; there are some who all their lifetime are subject to bondage, and go off in the dark, and yet are happy; but to die in the Lord is to die interested in him, in union to him; which union is not dissolved by death, and which preserves from all condemnation, at death or at judgment, and secures the soul's immediate entrance into happiness, and the resurrection of the body at the last day, and therefore such must be blessed: the phrase, “from henceforth”, is differently placed; the Ethiopic version connects it with the word “write”, rendering it, “write now”; and the Vulgate Latin version reads it with the next clause, “hereafter, yea, saith the Spirit”; and so the Latin interpreter of the Syriac version, though that itself seems rather to place it as ours does, and which is most correct; and is to be understood not of the time of John's writing, thenceforward to the resurrection; for those that died before his time were as happy as those who died after; nor of the time of death, though it is a truth, that from the time of the saints' death, and from the very moment of their separation, they are blessed, and are in a state of happiness until the resurrection; but of that period of time which the declarations made by the three preceding angels refer to, from thenceforward, and after the destruction of antichrist, and during the spiritual reign of Christ: and the sense is, that happy will those persons be that die in Christ within that time, and before the Laodicean church state takes place; when coldness, lukewarmness, and carnal security will seize upon men, and Christ will come upon them at an unawares; and those sharp and severe times will commence, signified by the harvest and vintage of the earth in the following verses, and which seem to be no other than the end of the world, and the destruction of it; wherefore happy will they be that are going to heaven before that time comes; (see <2104012>Ecclesiastes 4:1,2 <2357012>Isaiah 57:1,2)

yea, saith the Spirit; the third witness in heaven, who sets his seal to the truth of what the voice declares, and shows wherein this blessedness will consist:

that they may rest from their labours; both of body and soul; from all toil of body, and laborious work, from all diseases and distempers of body, and all outward sorrows and calamities men labour under, and are fatigued with in this life; and from all inward troubles, from a body of sin, from the temptations of Satan, and from all doubts and fears, from their present warfare state, and all conflicts with their spiritual enemies:

and their works do follow them; they do not go before them, to prepare heaven and happiness for them; nor do they take them along with them, and use them as pleas for their admission into the heavenly glory; but they will follow them, and will be found to praise, and honour, and glory, and will be taken notice of by Christ, and graciously rewarded by him, at his appearing and kingdom. This is directly opposite to the notions of the Jews, who say, that when a man departs this life, his works "go before him", and say unto him, thou hast done so and so, in such a place, and on such a day [f358]; and that whoever does a good work in this world, it shall "go before him" in the world to come [f359]; and so they [f360] represent good works as saying to a man when he is about to die,

> "go in peace; before thou gettest thither, Ætwa µymydqm wna, we will go before thee, as it is said, (<23808>Isaiah 48:8) "thy righteousness shall go before thee"."

Sometimes they say [f361], they go along with him at the time of a man's departure: neither gold, nor silver, nor precious stones and pearls accompany him, but the law and good works, as it is said, (<20622>Proverbs 6:22) "when thou goest it shall lead thee", etc.

Ver. 14. *And I looked, and behold a white cloud*, etc.] In this verse is a description of the person principally concerned in the harvest of the earth, hereafter mentioned; by whom is designed not some great potentate or prince, an encourager of the Reformation among his subjects; nor an angel in an human shape; nor Martin Luther, as others; but the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who is described by his form, and by his seat, and by what he had on his head, and in his hand:

and upon the cloud one sat like unto the son of man; so Christ is said to be, (<66013>Revelation 1:13) and in (<27713>Daniel 7:13) where there is a like vision of him as here, and which refers to the same time; it is a name by which the Messiah is often called, and is expressive of the truth of his human nature, who was found in fashion as a man, and was really one; for his being like to the son of man designs reality and truth, and not mere appearance; (see <40145>Matthew 14:5 <43014>John 1:14) and besides, as this was in vision, it is very properly expressed, for Christ appeared to John in vision like to that human nature in which he is at the right hand of God: and here he is seen "sitting" upon the "white cloud"; which shows that he was come to judgment in the clouds of heaven, and was set on one of them, as on a throne; and a white cloud represents the purity, uprightness, and justness of his proceedings in judgment; for which reason he is said to be on a white throne, (<66011>Revelation 20:11)

having on his head a golden crown; as an ensign of royal majesty, showing that his kingdom was now come, the time for him to reign personally with his saints on earth a thousand years; and that it was a very glorious one; and that he should now reign before his ancients gloriously; and that it was pure, solid, and durable; (see <19210>Psalm 21:4)

and in his hand a sharp sickle: to reap the earth with, as hereafter, and is expressive of his power as King of saints and Judge of the world, to gather all nations before him; for the sickle is used to gather with, as well as to cut down.

Ver. 15. *And another angel came out of the temple*, etc.] Not the Holy Spirit, who, being God omniscient, knows the day and hour of judgment, which is a secret to men and angels, as Napier thinks; since though he dwells in the church as his temple, yet is never called an angel; nor does this angel represent the souls under the altar, who come out from thence, and importunately desire vengeance on the inhabitants of the earth, the worshippers of the beast, who had shed their blood; but rather the mighty angels who shall descend from heaven with Christ, and who shall be employed by him as reapers, to gather in his elect from the four winds, as well as to bind up the tares in bundles, and burn them; unless a set of Gospel ministers, as before, should be intended, who either by divine revelation, or by the signs of the time being come, and observed by them, will know that the harvest, or end of the world, is come; since this angel is said to come out of the temple, the church, which had been measured, and

was now opened in heaven, and from whence angels are said to come, (<66110>Revelation 11:1,19 15:5,6)

crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud: as the first and third angels did, (<66147>Revelation 14:7,9) denoting great vehemence and importunity: thrust in thy sickle, and reap: which being spoken by an inferior angel, whether this designs the ministering spirits, or preachers of the word, must be understood not as commanding, nor even directing what should be done, but as beseeching and entreating: (see <19218>Psalm 132:8). Dr. Lightfoot thinks, and not without reason, that there is here some allusion to the putting in of the sickle, and reaping the first corn in Judea, at the feast of the passover, by the order of the sanhedrim, which sat in the temple; nor did any reap till they had the word given them, “reap”, by the messengers of the court, called ˆyd tyb yjwlç, “the angels”, or messengers “of the sanhedrim”: to whom the reaper said, shall I reap? and they say to him, rwxq[f362], “reap”: the reasons follow:

for the time is come for thee to reap; the time of the end of the world, and of the judgment of it, which is fixed by God; and of Christ's coming to judge both quick and dead, and of the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the saints:

for the harvest of the earth is ripe: the measure of the sins of wicked men will now be filled up, and the afflictions of the saints will be accomplished in them, and the number of God's elect will be completed in the effectual calling; they will be all called, and so things will be ripe for the second coming of Christ. There seems to be some reference to (<29313>Joel 3:13) “put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe”: the Jewish doctors ask[f363], to whom is this said? R. Phineas, in the name of R. Hilkiah, says, µykalml, “to the angels”; so the mighty ones, in (<66141>Revelation 14:11) are by Kimchi interpreted of the angels.

Ver. 16. *And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth*, etc.] He put forth, and made use of that power which he had in his hand, in answer to the entreaty of the angel, the time being fully come which was fixed for this great event:

and the earth was reaped; and the harvest of it was got in; reaping and harvest sometimes are used in an ill sense, and design the wrath of God, and his judgments inflicted upon men; (see <23705>Isaiah 17:5) (<24513>Jeremiah 51:33 <29313>Joel 3:13). Hence some think, that both this and the vintage

following intend the judgments of God upon antichrist, and that they are contemporary with the pouring out of the fifth and sixth vials upon the beast and his followers; and the rather, since the destruction of Babylon, literally taken, is expressed in such language, (<245133>Jeremiah 51:33) though these seem to have respect to times after the fall of the Romish Babylon, before declared in (<661408>Revelation 14:8) and most interpreters refer the harvest to the last judgment at the end of the world; and which sense is greatly countenanced, and to be illustrated by the parable of the tares and wheat, in (<401330>Matthew 13:30,39) (<401341>Matthew 13:41,42) sometimes these phrases are used in a good sense, and intend the gathering in of souls by the preaching of the Gospel; as there are the appointed weeks of the harvest, so there is a time fixed for the calling and conversion of God's elect; and when this time is come, and especially to any number of them in any particular place, it is an harvest, as in Galilee and Samaria in the times of Christ, (<401937>Matthew 9:37,38 <430435>John 4:35) the reapers are the ministers of the Gospel; such were the apostles of Christ, (<430436>John 4:36-38) and the sickle is the Gospel, by which not only men are cut to the heart, and cut down, and removed from their old bottom, and principles and practices, but are gathered to Christ, and into his churches; and when large numbers are brought in, it is an harvest time, as in the times of Christ and his apostles; (see <230901>Isaiah 9:1-3 <440241>Acts 2:41 <470214>2 Corinthians 2:14) hence some interpreters think that the harvest here has respect to the Reformation, which followed upon the preaching of Luther, Calvin, and others, when a large harvest of souls were gathered in, in Germany, France, England, and elsewhere; but rather it may be thought to refer to the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles in the latter day, in the spiritual reign of Christ, to which the preceding visions belong, as we have seen; the earth will be reaped indeed, and a great harvest it will be, when a nation shall be born at once, and the vast multitudes of the Gentiles shall be brought in, as in (<236608>Isaiah 66:8 49:20 60:3-11) and the rather this may be judged to be the meaning of it, since the passage from whence these phrases are borrowed respects the bringing again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, (<290301>Joel 3:1,13) though it seems best to understand it of the Lord's wheat harvest at the end of the world, when the wheat of the earth shall be reaped, and gathered into Christ's barn, or garner, or into his and his Father's kingdom; this reaping of the earth is the removing of the saints out of it, not by death, but by the resurrection of them from the dead; for when Christ shall come in the clouds of heaven, and sit on the white cloud, or throne, the dead in him will

rise first, and the living saints will be changed, and both will be caught up together, to meet the Lord in the air; so that the earth will be reaped, and be clear of them, and there will be none left in it but the wicked of the world; and what will become of them is declared in the following verses, under the representation of a vintage.

Ver. 17. *And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven*, etc.] It is a strange conceit of Mr. Brightman's, that this angel is Thomas Lord Cromwell, in the days of King Henry the Eighth, a sincere favourer of pure religion; and that the following angel is Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, a martyr, that had power over fire; and that the vintage, here spoken of, refers to the destroying of religious houses, and disposing of abbey lands to other uses; which was done under the king's authority, by the former of these, at the instigation of the latter, when those who were set over that business made such havoc of the goods of the Papists, that their houses seemed to swim in their spoils, as in a river of pressed grapes. Dr. Goodwin much better interprets it of God's vengeance upon the carnal Protestants and professors of religion; since it is an angel out of the temple that will execute it, and another from the altar, zealous of God's worship, that will provoke to it; and since the winepress will be trodden without the city, the church; and which began in the wars in Germany, in the last age, and will have its full accomplishment when the whole outward court is given to the Gentiles; but how these, who are but a few, when compared with the wicked of the world, should be called the vine of the earth, I see not. Mr. Daubuz thinks this vision of the vintage has had, at least in part, its fulfilment in the late wars in the times of Queen Anne, the Popish countries being then made the seat of war, in which they suffered much; rather they come nearest to the truth of the matter, who take this to be the battle of the great God Almighty, under the sixth vial, (<66164>Revelation 16:14,16) fought by the word of God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who will tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, (<66195>Revelation 19:15) when the beast and false prophet will both be destroyed: but inasmuch as Babylon is before declared to be fallen, (<66148>Revelation 14:8) and since the gathering in of the Lord's wheat at the first resurrection is designed by the harvest, it is best to understand this vintage of the perdition of ungodly men by fire, at the conflagration of the world, which will be at the beginning of the thousand years' reign, and of the gathering of them in at the second resurrection, at the end of it, for the destruction of them in hell, soul and body. And by this “angel” is meant,

not the saints of the most High; for though they may be said to come out of the temple, the church, and shall judge the world, yet they will not be employed in gathering together the wicked, and casting them into the lake of fire, or winepress of God's wrath: rather the ministering spirits are intended, who are the reapers at the end of the world, and who will gather the wicked, and bind them like tares in bundles, and cast them into the furnace of fire; though it is best to interpret this of Christ himself, who is often called an Angel in Scripture, as the Angel of God's presence; and the Angel of the covenant; and frequently in this book, as in (<660702>Revelation 7:2 8:3 10:1) because, as Mediator, he is God's messenger; and he may be said to do that, which he does by others, as instruments, as to gather the vine of the earth, and cast it into the winepress; and he may be said to "come out of the temple which is in heaven": whether this be understood of heaven itself, which the temple, and especially the most holy place in it, was a figure of; here Christ is, and from hence he is expected to come, and will come at the last day, as Judge of all the earth; or of the church of God, for here Christ dwells, and grants his gracious and spiritual presence until his second and personal coming, with all his saints: and now he will have them all with him, both quick and dead, and will be personally in his temple, the church, in the great congregation of the righteous, and out from among them will he display his power in the destruction of the wicked; and the rather he may be thought to be intended, since none but a divine person ever trod the winepress of God's wrath; (see <236301>Isaiah 63:1-3 <660913>Revelation 19:13,15,16) to which may be added what follows,

he also having a sharp sickle; the same who is described as like to the son of man, on a white cloud, with a golden crown on his head, and such a sickle in his hand, (<661414>Revelation 14:14) which is expressive of the same judiciary power and authority.

Ver. 18. *And another angel came out from the altar*, etc.] Where are the souls of the martyrs of Jesus, (<660609>Revelation 6:9) and whom this angel is thought by some to represent, in his address to him that had the sharp sickle, crying for vengeance on the wicked of the earth, who had shed their blood: the allusion seems to be to the altar of burnt offerings, where the sacrifices were slain, and on which they were burnt with fire; and which was an emblem of the strict justice of God, showing, that those persons, for whom these sacrifices were offered, deserved to be treated in like manner; and here the angel coming from thence signifies, that he came on the behalf of the justice of God, treating that he, to whom vengeance

belonged, would execute it upon all the ungodly, who were ripe for judgment: and hence it is further said of him,

which had power over fire; whether the angels, as they have presided over particular kingdoms and states, (<27010>Daniel 10:20,21) preside over the elements, since this angel had power over fire, and another angel is called the angel of the waters, (<661605>Revelation 16:5) may be considered. According to the Jews [f364] there are çaykalm, "angels of fire", and µymykalm, "angels of the waters"; particularly it is said [f365], that Gabriel is çalç rç, "the prince of fire", or "that has power over fire", and Jurkemo is drbh rç, "prince of hail", or has power over it: however, fire is to be taken here, not for the Spirit, and his gifts, which not a created angel, but Christ only, has a power over, to baptize with; nor the Gospel, nor martyrdom, but rather the wrath of God, which in Scripture is often compared to fire, of which this angel was an executioner: and indeed here it may be referred, both literally to the burning of the world, and the wicked in it, in which the angels may be concerned, who will descend with Christ in flames of fire, taking vengeance on the wicked; and figuratively to hell fire, and the destruction of the wicked in it, who will be cast into it by the angels of God.

And cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, as in (<661415>Revelation 14:15) expressing like vehemence and importunity,

saying, thrust in thy sharp sickle: not commanding or directing, but entreating as before:

and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; not the vine of God's planting, the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, the church of Christ; but the vine of the earth, of wicked and earthly men, whose vine is the vine of Sodom, etc. (<053232>Deuteronomy 32:32,33) and which is spread over the whole earth; a wild vine, whose grapes are gall, clusters bitter, and their wine the poison of dragons; and to such a vine the wicked are compared, for their emptiness and unfruitfulness, their uselessness and unprofitableness, and for their being fit fuel for everlasting burnings; (see <261501>Ezekiel 15:2-5). And the clusters of it may denote the great multitude of the wicked now to be cut down, gathered in, and destroyed, the reason given,

for her grapes are fully ripe; their wickedness very great, their iniquity full, the measure of their sins filled up, and they fitted for destruction, and ripe for ruin; (see ⁂Joel 3:13). Some understand this of the degenerate church of Rome, and the destruction of it; (see ⁂Revelation 19:15).

Ver. 19. *And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth*, etc.] Before "upon the earth", when the harvest was gathered in, the wheat being on the earth, but not belonging to it; but here "into the earth", the vine being the vine of the earth, rooted in it, and natural to it:

and gathered the vine of the earth; the Arabic version reads, "of the whole earth"; in like manner as the tares in the parable are said to be gathered, and bound in bundles, and cast into the fire, which, as here, intends the destruction of the wicked, at the end of the world: this vine may be said to be cut down at the burning of the world, and to be gathered at the second resurrection, as the wheat harvest of the saints will be at the first resurrection:

and cast it into the great winepress the wrath of God; the same with the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, so often mentioned in this book: the torments of the wicked will lie in the wrath of God being poured forth upon them, and into them, which will be that fire that cannot be quenched, and that worm that never dies; and this is signified by the squeezing of grapes in a winepress, as God's judgments in this world sometimes are, (⁂Isaiah 63:3,6) and which will be very heavy and intolerable, since this winepress will be trod by the Lord God Almighty: and it is said to be a great one, as it must needs be, to hold the vine of the whole earth, or all the wicked of the world, who will be like the sand of the sea, innumerable; and this will be big enough for them all, and they will all be cast into it at once. Tophet is deep and large, (⁂Isaiah 30:33).

Ver. 20. *And the winepress was trodden without the city*, etc.] The beloved city, the new Jerusalem, into which none of the wicked will enter, and without which are dogs, etc. (⁂Revelation 20:9 21:27 22:15). The allusion may be, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, to the olive presses, which were without the city of Jerusalem, from whence Gethsemane had its name, whither our Lord went, and where his sorrows began the night he was betrayed: hell is sometimes expressed by outer darkness, and said to be far off from heaven, and between the one and the other a great gulf is fixed, the distance is considerable; hence men are said to go forth to behold the

miseries of the wicked; (see <402213>Matthew 22:13 <421623>Luke 16:23,26 <236624>Isaiah 66:24).

and blood came out of the winepress; alluding to the juice squeezed out of grapes, called the blood of grapes, (<014911>Genesis 49:11).

Even unto the horses' bridles, for the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs; which is only an hyperbolical expression, setting forth the largeness and universality of the destruction of the wicked, and the impossibility of their escaping it. In like manner the Jews express a great slaughter of men; so of the slaughter at Bither, by Adrian, they say [f366], they went on slaying wmjwjd[µdb swsh [qçç d[, "until a horse plunged in blood up to his nostrils", and the blood ran four miles into the sea; which is not to be understood literally, but as expressing a prodigious effusion of blood: and as to

the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs, perhaps there may be an allusion to the measure of the land of Israel, and the common notion of it among the Jews, who make it to be the square of four hundred parsoe [f367]: hence they often speak of the land of Israel shaking and moving four hundred "parsoe", upon some extraordinary occasions [f368]; and a "parsa" contained four miles [f369], so that four hundred "parsoe" made a thousand and six hundred miles; and if miles and furlongs are the same, in which sense only the land of Israel could be so large, here is the exact space; for Jerom [f370], who was an inhabitant of it, says, it was scarce 160 miles in length, to which agrees R. Menachem [f371]; and it may be observed, that the Arabic version renders the words, "by the space of a thousand and six hundred miles". The Ethiopic version, very wrongly, reads, "sixteen furlongs".

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 15

This chapter is a preparation to the pouring out of the seven vials, and contains a vision of the seven angels in heaven that should do this work, of a chorus of harpers on this occasion, and of the same seven angels coming out of the temple, and receiving the vials, in order to execute their commission. The vision of the seven angels, having the seven last plagues, so called because filled up with the wrath of God, is said to be a sign, great and marvellous, (Revelation 15:1) a sea of glass, mingled with fire, is seen, with persons standing on it, described by the victory they had got over the beast, his image, mark, and number of his name; by having the harps of God in their hands, and by the song they sung, called the song of Moses, and of the Lamb; in which they ascribe to Christ deity, dominion over the saints, omnipotence, justice, truth, and holiness; give him glory, celebrate his works, commend his ways, and suggest that he ought to be the object of the fear and worship of all, (Revelation 15:2-4). Next the temple in heaven is seen opened, out of which come the seven angels, described by the place they came from, the temple; by what they had, the seven plagues; by their habit, clothed in pure white linen; and by their golden girdles about their breasts, (Revelation 15:5,6) to whom one of the four living creatures, made mention of in (Revelation 4:6) delivers to them seven golden vials full of divine wrath, upon which the temple is filled with smoke from the Lord; so that it was not possible for anyone to enter into it, until these seven plagues were ended, (Revelation 15:7,8).

Ver. 1. *And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous*, etc.] This chapter is a preparation to the pouring out of the seven vials, as (Revelation 16:1-21) is to the sending of the seven epistles, and (Revelation 2:1-3:22) to the seven seals and seven trumpets: the vision is called a “sign”, because what was seen was significative of future events; a sign of the coming of Christ, of his kingdom, and of the destruction of antichrist; and it is said to be a sign “in heaven”, where John was called up, and where he had his visions; and it was “another”, a different one from that in (Revelation 12:1) which represented the downfall of Paganism,

but this the downfall of Popery; and it is a very “great” one, it is expressive of great things, as the fall of Babylon the great, or the judgment of the great whore, and the great glory of the church and kingdom of Christ; and it is “marvellous”, for the two grand events it respects are very wonderful; as that antichrist, who was once in such power, should be destroyed, and that by such weak means, in the esteem of men, as the preaching of the Gospel, which is no less marvellous than the fall of Jericho by the sound of rams' horns; and that the church, which was in so low an estate in the wilderness, for the space of 1260 days or years, should become so glorious. The vision follows,

seven angels, having the seven last plagues; these are not the same angels that blew the seven trumpets, for they are not contemporary with them, but are more likely the same with those in the preceding chapter; though they seem rather to be different from them: if these were angels literally understood, their having plagues is no objection to their being good angels, since such are often the executioners of God's wrath; and that these good ones, appears from one of them talking with John, and showing him the judgment of antichrist, and another the bride, the Lamb's wife, and her glory, (Revelation 17:1 21:9) though they seem rather to be the ministers of the Gospel, since they are said to come out of the temple, (Revelation 15:6) and since the destruction of antichrist will be by the breath of Christ's mouth, or by the preaching of the Gospel; unless it should be thought that members of churches are designed, since these angels receive their vials from one of the four living creatures, (Revelation 15:7) or preachers of the word; and may denote some very principal men, as kings, who will now be come to Zion, and be members of Gospel churches, and will be the nursing fathers and protectors of them; and these will hate the whore, and burn her flesh with fire; but of these angels, see more on (Revelation 15:6). They are said to have “the seven last plagues”; that is, in their vials; for these seven plagues are the same with the seven vials of the wrath of God, to be poured out upon antichrist; and are no other than so many steps, ways, and means, by which God will bring on and finish his destruction: these are called the last plagues, because they will be in the last days: there have been plagues before, as at the destruction of the old world, and of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the plagues of Egypt, and the downfall of several monarchies and kingdoms, and of Paganism in the Roman empire; but these will fall upon antichrist, and will be the last upon him, for they will issue in his utter ruin; they will

be the last plagues upon the earth, there will be no other after them, but the conflagration of the world, and the general destruction of the wicked in hell. These plagues are the same with the third woe, and are an explanation of it, and belong to the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which brings in the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of Christ, and the time of God's wrath upon the nations, or Gentiles, the Papists, and of judging the dead, and destroying them that destroyed the earth, (<66115>Revelation 11:15,18) for these plagues do not follow upon the harvest and vintage, nor has this vision any respect to them, nor to be connected with the preceding chapter, but with (<66101>Revelation 11:1-19) and gives an enlarged view, both of the glory of Christ's kingdom, and of the ruin of antichrist, by these plagues, called the last:

for in them is filled up the wrath of God; upon the beast, and his followers.

Ver. 2. *And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mingled with fire*, etc.] Not baptism, but rather the blood of Christ, which may be compared to a sea, for its abundant virtue and efficacy in cleansing from all sin; and to a sea "of glass", since in it are clearly seen free justification, full pardon, peace and reconciliation; and may be said to be "mingled with fire", being attended in the application of it with the Spirit of God, whose gifts and graces are sometimes signified by fire: and so, according to others, this sea may represent the pure church of God, as washed in the blood of the Lamb; compared to a sea for the multitude of which it consists, and to a sea of glass, because of the transparency and clearness of its principles and practices, and may be said to be mingled with the fire of love and zeal: most interpreters understand it of the world, which is like a sea for the multitude of its inhabitants; and sometimes to a troubled one, because of the restlessness and disquietude of the wicked in it; but here it is like a sea of glass, for the quiet, and peace, and rest it shall be in at this time; though it is commonly said to be like such a sea, partly because all things are manifest, and open to an omniscient God; and partly because of its outward splendour, and the brittleness, frailty, and transitoriness of it; and to be mixed with fire, either because of the light of the Gospel, and the operation of the Spirit in the hearts of some that are in it, or because of the afflictions and persecutions the saints in it; though it seems best of all to understand it of the Gospel, as in (see Gill on "<66046>Revelation 4:6"); and which may be said to be mingled with fire, either because of the powerful and clear demonstration of the Spirit that attends it to the minds of many, or that heat of persecution which is raised by it; (see <42249>Luke 12:49) or rather it

denotes the purity of the Gospel in those times, its general spread, and the great zeal and fervour of the professors of it, since persecution will now be at an end.

And them that had gotten the victory over the beast; over antichrist, signified the beast, that rose up out of the sea, and out of the earth, (Revelation 13:1,11) and which are the same, and were but one, though in different forms, as from hence appears: the beast first overcame the saints, by slaying of them; and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, by preaching and professing the Gospel, by their close and constant adherence to it, and by dying for it:

and over his image; caused by him to be made to the first beast; and is no other than the Popish religion, which bears a resemblance to Paganism; and which the saints may be said to get the victory over, by standing out against it, opposing and refuting it, not giving into it, but bearing their testimony against it:

and over his mark; refusing to receive it either in their forehead, or in their right hand; that is, either to swear allegiance to him, or profess his religion. This clause is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, Syriac. Arabic, and Ethiopic versions:

and over the number his name; that is, they would not own his supremacy and authority, nor embrace his doctrines, nor obey his orders, nor be reckoned his followers in any form or shape; (see Revelation 13:15-18). These conquerors John saw

stand on the sea of glass; which, if applied to the blood of Christ, shows that these confessors were purified by it, and were more than conquerors through it; that they were come out of great tribulation, and had washed their garments, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and were just come up from the washing, and stood upon, or rather by, or “near the sea”, as the Arabic version renders it, in allusion to the priests at the molten sea, in the temple: but if the world is meant by the sea, their standing upon it designs their victory and triumph over it by faith, their having it under their feet, and their contempt of it; but rather, since the Gospel is intended, it may denote their solid standing upon the doctrines of it, the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and their steadfast continuance in them, and faithful abiding by them, whereby they got the victory over antichrist:

having the harps of God: their hearts in an excellent frame, tuned and disposed by God, to sing his praise, and set forth his glory; having them filled with spiritual joy and gladness, and with great thankfulness, on account of their victory, the happy state of Christ's church, and the destruction of its enemies: the allusion is to the people of Israel, Moses and the men, and Miriam and the women with timbrels and dances standing on the sea shore, when the Egyptians were destroyed, singing the praises of God; as is still more manifest from the following verse.

Ver. 3. *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God*, etc.] Not that in (<5320>Deuteronomy 32:1) but that in (<0201>Exodus 15:1) and the sense is, either that they observed the law of Moses, which he as a servant in the Lord's house faithfully delivered, and kept it distinct from the Gospel, and did not blend them together, as in the times before; or rather, that they sung a song like that of Moses, and on a like occasion. Pharaoh was the very picture of the pope of Rome; his oppression and cruel usage of the Israelites represent the tyranny and cruelty of the Romish antichrist; and the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, and the destruction of the Egyptians at the Red sea, which occasioned the song of Moses, were an emblem of God's bringing his people out of antichristian bondage, and of the ruin of antichrist, upon which this song is sung; and Rome, in this book, is called Egypt, (<6108>Revelation 11:8). The Jews have a notion, that the very song of Moses itself will be sung in the world to come, in the days of the Messiah; for they say, there are in it the times of the Messiah, and of Gog and Magog, and of the resurrection of the dead, and the world to come [f372]. And this song was sung by the Levites in the daily service [f373].

And the song of the Lamb; the Lamb of God, who was slain for the sins of men; the same song of which mention is made, (<6609>Revelation 5:9 14:3) the song of redeeming love, a song of praise for the blessings of grace which come through him, and of deliverance by him:

saying, great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; Christ is in this song addressed as a divine person, as Lord of all, God over all, blessed for ever, the Almighty God, as his works declare him to be; his works of creation, providence, and redemption, which are all great and marvellous, particularly the accomplishment of the glorious things spoken of his church, and the destruction of his enemies, which are here designed:

just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints: made so by his Father, and acknowledged by all his people, and especially at this time, when his

kingdom will more visibly and gloriously appear: the Alexandrian copy, one of Stephens's, the Complutensian edition, and Arabic version, read, King of nations, as in (Jeremiah 10:7) from whence this, and the beginning of the next verse, seem to be taken; the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, “King of ages”, an everlasting King, as in (Jeremiah 10:10) but the generality of copies read as we have it: and the ways of this King are just and true; his purposes, decrees, and counsels of old, are faithfulness and truth; all his proceedings towards his own people, his subjects, are mercy and truth; his precepts and ordinances, his worship and service, are just and true, in opposition to every false way; and all his judgments upon his enemies, which are intended, are just, being what their sins deserved, and are true, being agreeably to his word and threatenings.

Ver. 4. *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord*, etc.] At this time the people of the Jews shall seek after Christ, and fear him and his goodness; the forces of the Gentiles shall be brought into Zion, whose heart shall then fear, and be enlarged; the fear of the Lord will be in all places, and in all men, both Jews and Gentiles, (Hosea 3:5 Isaiah 60:5)

and glorify thy name? by ascribing all divine perfections to him, giving him divine worship and adoration, and attributing the whole of salvation to him, and the glory of all that is done for his church, and against its enemies:

for thou only art holy; not only perfectly holy, as man, but infinitely and essentially holy, as God, and the fountain of holiness to his people, as Mediator: this character seems to be given in opposition to antichrist, who arrogantly assumes the title of holiness to himself, when it only belongs to Christ.

For all nations shall come and worship before thee; the Gospel shall now be preached to all nations, and the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of it; the kingdoms of this world will become Christ's, and his kingdom shall be to the ends of the earth, and all people shall obey him: the words seem to be taken, with some other phrases before used, out of (Psalm 86:8-10)

for thy judgments are made manifest; or “thy justifications”, or “righteousnesses”; the perfect righteousness of Christ, and the doctrine of justification by it, will now be most clearly revealed, and generally received, in opposition to the Popish doctrine of merits, works of supererogation, etc. or the judgments of the King of saints upon antichrist,

who will now avenge their blood, which he has shed; (see <66170>Revelation 17:1 19:2) and the justice and righteousness of his proceedings against the man of sin will be notorious and manifest to all, and be acknowledged, as in (<66165>Revelation 16:5,6 19:1,2).

Ver. 5. *And after that I looked*, etc.] That is, after John had seen the above vision, he looked again, and saw what follows:

and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened; this does not refer to heaven itself, the antitype of the holy of holies, which is opened by the blood of Christ, by which he himself has entered, and his people have boldness to enter now by faith, and where their souls always enter upon their departure from their bodies; for of this temple cannot be said what is in (<66508>Revelation 15:8) nor to the Jerusalem state, or the most glorious state of the church on earth, during the thousand years' reign; for in that there will be no temple, (<66122>Revelation 21:22) much less to any material temple on earth; the temple at Jerusalem was destroyed before this vision was, and is never to be rebuilt; nor will there be any third temple, as the Jews vainly expect: but to the church of God in the spiritual reign of Christ, under the blowing of the seventh trumpet; and designs the same thing as in (<66119>Revelation 11:19) and this is to be understood as what will be, not before, but after the seven angels have poured out their vials; for till they have fulfilled the seven plagues, there is no entering into the temple for smoke, (<66508>Revelation 15:8) and besides, it was after these things; after John had seen the seven angels, with the seven last plagues, (<66501>Revelation 15:1) that he beheld the temple opened. The church is called “the temple”, in allusion to Solomon's temple, because of its builder, materials, situation, magnificence, strength, holiness, and use; (see Gill on “<47616>2 Corinthians 6:16”) and the tabernacle, in allusion to the tabernacle of Moses, which was before the temple, because God dwells in it, as he did in that; and because like that it is movable, and but for a while; and points at this church state, which will not always be so, but change and sink into the Laodicean state: and it is called “the tabernacle of the testimony”, as that was; the testimony was the law, or the two tables of stone, so called, because they testified what was the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God; and these being put into the ark, were a testimony of the covenant between God and the people of Israel, and were a witness against them, when they transgressed them, (<05326>Deuteronomy 31:26,27) and over these were the mercy seat, and cherubim, as a testimony of the divine Presence; and the law being put into

the ark, hence the ark was called the ark of the testimony, and that being placed in the tabernacle, that was called the tabernacle of the testimony, or of witness, (<0401>Numbers 1:50 <4044>Acts 7:44) and all these were types of, and came to signify Christ, and the covenant of grace, the Gospel, and the mysteries of it: so that by the opening of the temple, etc. is meant a free exercise of the true religion, a setting up of Gospel churches according to the original plan, a keeping of the ordinances, as they were first delivered, and a more clear discovery of Gospel truths: it is the same with the open door in the Philadelphian church state, (<6608>Revelation 3:8) as well as that at this time there will be a full manifestation of the judgments of God upon antichrist: the Alexandrian copy leaves out the word “behold”.

Ver. 6. *And the seven angels came out of the temple*, etc.] By which it appears, that they are such who are of, or belong to the church of Christ; and are either ministers, or members of churches, who will be the executioners of God's wrath upon the beast, and his followers; some copies, and the Complutensian edition, read, “out of heaven”:

having the seven plagues; that is, they were appointed to inflict them, and were preparing and furnishing for it, and quickly had orders to do it:

clothed in pure and white linen; in which habit angels have been used to appear, as at our Lord's resurrection and ascension, and is by some thought to be expressive of the purity and holiness of angels; but rather saints are meant, who appear in the habit of priests, being all made kings and priests; and denotes their being clothed with the pure and spotless robe of Christ's righteousness, which is fine linen, clean and white, and the righteousness of the saints, (<6908>Revelation 19:8) and also their spiritual joy in their present situation, and in the view of the destruction of antichrist, their sackcloth being put off, in which they, the witnesses, before appeared. So the linen garment of the high priest was, as Philo the Jew says [f374], made of “fine linen”, καψαρωτατος, “most pure”. The Alexandrian copy, and some copies of the Vulgate Latin version, and some exemplars mentioned by Andreas Caesariensis, an ancient commentator on this book, read, “clothed with a stone, pure and white”; as if they were arrayed in garments of stone, which is not likely; unless reference is had to the stone asbestos, of an iron colour, found, as Pliny says [f375], in the mountains of Arcadia, of which linen was made, called “asbestinum”, and of that garments; which were so far from being consumed by fire, that they became clean and brighter by it; or

to the Carystian stone, which the inhabitants of Carystus used to comb, spin, and weave, and make carpets of [f376].

And having their breasts girded with golden girdles; such an one as Christ himself was girded with, (<66013>Revelation 1:13) and this some understand of the love, which the breasts of angels are filled with towards the saints, and their readiness to perform all good offices to them, and to execute the judgments of God upon their enemies, whenever they have orders: but since these angels come out of the temple, and members of Gospel churches seem designed, rather this is to be understood either of the grace of faith, which is much more precious than of gold that perisheth, which receives the righteousness of Christ, puts it on, and girds it about the believer; or of love, the love of God and Christ, which encompass the saints about, and constrain them, and engage them in fervent love to them, and one another: or of the girdle of truth, (<49614>Ephesians 6:14) which is near and close to them, and which keeps them close to Christ; nor can they depart totally and finally from him, or that; or in general, this may denote their strength and readiness for what service they shall be called to; (see <42125>Luke 12:35,36 <60113>1 Peter 1:13).

Ver. 7. *And one of the four beasts*, etc.] Or living creatures: now we hear of them, as of the four and twenty elders, under the blowing of the seventh trumpet, (<66116>Revelation 11:16) with which this vision is contemporary; these living creatures are the ministers of the Gospel; (see Gill on "<66406>Revelation 4:6") and this was one, or the first of them, who was like a lion, for fortitude and courage, and whose voice was as the noise of thunder, (<66407>Revelation 4:7 6:1) and so fitly represents those ministers who shall give out the vials of God's wrath: not any particular person is designed, who shall be at this time; and much less Luke the evangelist, as Lord Napier thinks; nor Peter, who prophesied of the last time, (<610310>2 Peter 3:10,11) as Grotius; but a set of Gospel ministers, comparable to one of the living creatures John had before seen; of whom it is said, that they

gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever: these seven vials are for the seven last plagues to be put into, and out of which they are to be taken, or poured, and inflicted; (see <66219>Revelation 21:9) hence it appears, that the seven plagues, and the wrath of God, are the same thing, and both design God's judgments upon antichrist; and these being expressed by "vials", which are measures, and large ones, show the large abundance and plenteous effusion

of God's wrath, and the secret, sudden, and irresistible power of it; and yet that it will be poured out in measure, according to righteous judgment, and therefore it is put into vials; and these golden ones, expressive of the purity, holiness, and justice of the divine proceedings: and it will be very terrible; it will be, not the wrath of men, but of God, and a cup of the fierceness of his wrath; it will be the wrath of the living God, of him that lives for ever, and as he is, such will his wrath be; it will continue for ever, for this wrath will issue in the everlasting destruction of antichrist: so the wrath of God is signified by a wine cup of fury, (<242515>Jeremiah 25:15) and that destruction, and those plagues which God designed to bring upon Pharaoh, are by Jonathan ben Uzziel, in his Targum on (<014012>Genesis 40:12) called azgwrd alyyp, "a vial of wrath", which he should drink of: and in the pouring out of there seven vials, there is in some of them a manifest allusion to the plagues of Egypt. So the cup of trembling, in (<235117>Isaiah 51:17) is by the Targumists called ylyp, "a vial", and also "the cup of fury", (<235122>Isaiah 51:22) and that these vials were not small narrow mouthed vessels, but large broad mouthed ones, and more properly basins or bowls, is manifest from the use of the word with Jewish writers. The dishes on which the loaves of the shewbread were set, each of which loaves was ten hands breadth long, and five broad [f377], are by the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem on (<022529>Exodus 25:29 <040407>Numbers 4:7) called tlyyp, "vials"; and so the chargers offered at the dedication of the tabernacle, (<040713>Numbers 7:13,84,85) are, by the same, rendered vials, which weighed 130 shekels; and so the silver bowl they offered, is, by Josephus [f378], called a vial: the bowls in (<300606>Amos 6:6) are, by the Targum there, said to be "silver vials". The lordly dish brought by Jael to Sisera, (<070525>Judges 5:25) the Targum calls the vial of the mighty ones; and the earthen vessels used at the trial of the suspected wife, and at the cleansing of the leper, are both by Jewish writers said to be "vials" [f379]. Now these vials were given to the seven angels by one of the living creatures, the ministers of the word; from whence it seems that these angels design members of churches, as distinct from ministers; and may intend civil magistrates, and very principal ones, as kings of the earth, who, in this state of things, and times, will belong to the churches, and will be the instruments of destroying antichrist: and these vials may be said to be given to them by the ministers, since they will execute this vengeance in consequence of their prayers, and the churches', called vials full of odours, (<660508>Revelation 5:8) and because these great men will be stirred up by the

ministers of the Gospel, and by their ministrations, to do this work; (see <66184>Revelation 18:4-6).

Ver. 8. *And the temple was filled with smoke*, etc.] Not with the smoke of false doctrine and superstition; that comes out of the bottomless pit, this from God, (<66092>Revelation 9:2) and besides, Gospel churches will grow purer and purer, while the seven angels are pouring out the vials: but rather this may be understood of judicial blindness and hardness of heart, upon the antichristian party, which will come upon them from God in righteous judgment; so that they will not be reformed by the plagues, and vials of wrath, nor repent of their sins; but blaspheme God, who has power over the plagues, and so shall not be able to enter into the temple: or else this may design God's powerful and gracious presence in his church, in allusion to the cloud which filled the tabernacle, so that Moses could not enter; and which filled the temple, so that the priests could not minister, (<024034>Exodus 40:34,35 <111810>1 Kings 8:10,11) since this is said to be

from the glory of God, and from his power; whose presence is the glory in the midst of his church, and a covert, a protection and defence, to the saints, so that none can come into the temple to hurt them: (see <230405>Isaiah 4:5,6) or rather this intends “the smoke of the anger of God”, as the Ethiopic version renders it, and which is intolerable; and it may have respect not only to the wrath of God, which is insupportable, but to that great affliction which will befall the saints in those times, through the last struggle of the beast; called the earthquake, and the hour of temptation, and a time of trouble, as never the like was, and which will be shortened for the elect's sake:

and no man was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled. None of the anti-Christian party will attempt to enter in, because of their blindness and obduracy; nor can they get in to do any mischief, because the glorious and powerful presence of God is a defence against them: and this may also have some respect to the darkness of God's judgments, which will not be clearly manifest until these seven plagues are accomplished; till that time God's judgments on antichrist will remain a great deep, and be unsearchable; there will be no entering into the temple, so as fully to understand them, which is meant by going into the sanctuary of God, (<197317>Psalm 73:17) and this makes the interpretation of the pouring out of these vials, in the next chapter, very difficult.

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 16

This chapter gives an account of the pouring out of the seven vials by the angels; their orders for it are in (<6601>Revelation 16:1). The first angel pours out his vial on the earth, the effect of which is a noisome and grievous sore upon the followers of antichrist, and the worshippers of his image, (<6602>Revelation 16:2). The second pours out his upon the sea; the events of it are, the sea became blood, and every living creature in it died, (<6603>Revelation 16:3). The third pours out his upon the rivers and fountains of water, which thereby became blood; upon which the angel of the waters applauds the justice of God, declaring the righteousness of his judgments, and giving a reason for it; and which is confirmed by another angel from the altar, (<6604>Revelation 16:4-7). The fourth angel pours out his vial on the sun, the effects of which are, scorching men with heat, their blasphemy against God, and impenitence, (<6608>Revelation 16:8,9). The fifth pours out his on the seat of the beast, the consequences of which are darkness in his kingdom, men gnawing their tongues because of their pains, their blasphemy of the name of God because of them, and their impenitence, (<6610>Revelation 16:10,11). The sixth angel pours out his on the river Euphrates, and what followed upon it are, the drying up of that river to make way for the kings of the east; there unclean spirits are seen, described by their original, coming out of the mouths of the dragon, beast, and false prophet; by their form, like frogs; by their internal nature, spirits of devils; by their works, doing miracles; by the errand they are sent, and go upon, to gather the kings of the earth to the battle of God Almighty, which they succeed in; but before this is done, a declaration is made of the suddenness of Christ's coming, exciting the saints to watchfulness, and to keep their garments, that they might not be naked, and exposed to shame, (<6612>Revelation 16:12-16) Then the seventh angel pours out his vial into the air, the consequences of which are, a voice from heaven declaring it is done: other voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake; a rupture of the great city into three parts; the fall of other cities; the remembrance of Babylon before God; the flight of every island and mountain, and a great

hail storm, which causes men to blaspheme God, (⁶⁶⁶⁷Revelation 16:17-21).

Ver. 1. *And I heard a great voice out of the temple*, etc.] The church, which in the preceding chapter is said to be opened; this was either the voice of God, whose temple the church is, and where he dwells, and who, has power over these plagues, (⁶⁶⁶⁹Revelation 16:9) and who, when he is about to bring judgments on the earth, is said to roar out of Zion, (⁶⁶⁶⁶Revelation 16:16) or of Christ, who is always in the midst of his church and people, and whose voice is as the voice of many waters; (see ⁶⁶⁶⁵Revelation 16:15) or it may be of one of the four living creatures, the ministers of the word, in and by whom Christ often speaks; and the rather, since one of these gave the seven angels the golden vials of the wrath of God, they are now bid to pour out.

Saying to the seven angels, go your ways and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth; for though these angels had the seven last plagues to inflict, and the seven vials of God's wrath to pour out, and were in a readiness to do it, yet they did not move without an order, which is here given them; and they are bid to go their ways, from the temple, the church, where they were, and of which they were members, to the several parts of the antichristian empire; and there pour out all the wrath and vengeance of God upon his enemies, and theirs, and leave nothing behind, but give them the dregs of every cup of his fury: the earth here is to be taken in a larger sense than in the following verse, and includes the land and sea, the fountains and rivers, and even the ambient air, and also the sun in the firmament, as the pouring out of these vials upon them show; and designs the whole apostate church, consisting of earthly men, all the inhabitants of the earth, that worship the beast. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, and the Complutensian edition, read, “the seven vials of the wrath of God”; these seven vials are not contemporary, much less the same with the seven trumpets; there is indeed a likeness between them in some things, especially in the first four; for as the first four trumpets affect the earth, the sea, the fountains, and rivers of water, and the sun, so the first four vials are poured out on the same, and that in the same order; first on the earth, and then on the sea, etc. and which will give some light, and be a direction to observe the several parts of the antichristian empire, which will suffer by these vials, and the in which their ruin will proceed; and as the trumpets were so many gradual steps to the ruin of the Roman empire, eastern and western, when become

Christian, so these vials are so many gradual steps to, and which issue in the ruin of, both the eastern and western antichrist; though they do not respect the same things, nor the same times: the trumpets respect the Roman empire as Christian, under the government of emperors, after the downfall of Paganism in it; and the vials respect the antichristian powers in their several branches, under the pope and Turk. Antichrist did not appear until the fifth trumpet sounded, whereas the first vial is poured out upon his followers and worshippers, (Revelation 16:2) from whence it is a clear point, that the first trumpet and the first vial cannot be contemporary; and the same judgment may be made of the rest: and it may be further observed, that these vials are only poured out on the enemies of God and of Christ, and of his church and people; for no wrath can be poured out upon the saints, not the least drop of it can fall upon them; this would not be consistent with God's everlasting love to them, with the satisfaction of Christ made for them, nor with the blessings of justification, pardon, adoption, etc. bestowed on them; not but that they may meet with trouble in the of these vials, through the wars that will be in the world, and through the struggles of the beast of Rome, especially its last, which will be the hour of temptation, and that time of trouble than which never was the like; yet all will work for, and issue in their good, and they will rejoice in God's righteous judgments; the blow will be upon antichrist, the vengeance of God will fall upon those that have the mark of the beast, and the worshippers of his image, upon the seat of the beast, even upon Babylon, and the whole Romish jurisdiction, as appears from (Revelation 16:2,10,19,20) and also upon the Turkish empire, and all the nations engaged in the interest of both pope and Turk, (Revelation 16:12-14,16) and it is easy to observe, that there is in many of these vials an allusion to the plagues of Egypt; in the first, (Revelation 16:2) to the plague of boils, (Exodus 9:8,11) in the second and third, (Revelation 16:3,4) to that of turning the waters of Egypt into blood, (Exodus 7:19-21) in the fourth, (Revelation 16:10) to the darkness that was over all the land of Egypt, (Exodus 10:21,23) and in the fifth there is a manifest reference to the frogs that distressed the Egyptians, (Exodus 8:5,6) and in the seventh, to the plague of hail, (Exodus 9:23-26) and they have much the same effect, even the hardening of those on whom they fall, being far from being brought to repentance by them, (Revelation 16:9,11) and this confirms the application of the vials to the destruction of Rome, which is spiritually called Egypt, (Revelation 11:8) and may assure that they will issue in the ruin of antichrist, and in the salvation of God's people, as

the plagues of Egypt did in the destruction of Pharaoh, and in the deliverance of the children of Israel; and may also lead us to conclude, that there will be a like quick execution of the one as of the other; for as the plagues of Egypt came very quick one after another, so it seems as if the pouring out of these vials would be in like manner; the angels receive them together, and have their orders at the same time; and they go forth immediately, one after another, if not together, to the respective parts where they are to pour them forth, and which they do directly; (see ⁂Revelation 16:8). Moreover, these vials will affect antichrist both with respect to his civil and ecclesiastic capacity, or both in temporals and spirituals, and, both antichrists, eastern and western: whether they are begun to be poured out or not, is a question. I am ready to think they are not, because they seem to me to refer to the seventh trumpet, which as yet has not sounded, and are the same with the wrath of God, and the time of the judging the dead, or avenging the blood of the saints, which will be come when that sounds, (⁂Revelation 11:18). Besides, the outer court is not entirely given to the Gentiles, nor the witnesses slain, which must be before this time of wrath upon antichrist; not but that there has been some manifest marks of the divine displeasure upon the whore of Rome, and she has been sinking ever since the Reformation, at which time some begin these vials, or before; and she is reduced to a low estate; yet I think not to such a degree as these vials express.

Ver. 2. *And the first went*, etc.] The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, "the first angel", and who undoubtedly is meant, who readily and cheerfully obeyed the orders given him, as did the rest; by this angel cannot be meant Pope Adrian, as Lyra, a Popish interpreter, imagines; for a pope would never hurt the worshippers of the beast, as this angel does; rather some Christian Protestant prince or magistrate is designed, and Brightman applies it to Queen Elizabeth; though a set of kings and princes yet to come seem to be intended:

and poured out his vial upon the earth; not upon the whole earth, and the inhabitants of it; not upon the temple or church of God, and the worshippers in it, which are measured, hid, and protected; nor upon the Roman Pagan empire, which was destroyed under the sixth seal, and which never had any worshippers of the beast and his image in it, for then he was not risen; nor upon the whole apostate church, only a part of it: some think the meaner and vulgar sort of Papists are meant, who were reformed by the Waldenses, Wycliff, Huss, and others before Luther; but rather the

antichristian powers on the continent are designed, and particularly Germany; for as the first trumpet affected the earth, (Revelation 8:7) and brought the Goths into Germany, and other inland countries on the continent; so this first vial affects the earth, and brings distress upon the Popish party in the same place: and this respects not the Reformation by Luther, as some have thought, nor the wars of the Turks here in the last age; though were it not for some things unfulfilled, which are to precede these vials, one would be tempted to think that this vial was now pouring out upon the empire; but I rather think this refers to a time of distress yet to come on those parts, and which will issue in a reformation from Popery again; for it should be observed, and it may be observed once for all, that though these vials are so many plagues upon antichrist, they are each of them so many steps to the advancement of Christ's kingdom and glory:

and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image; that is, who were professors of the Popish religion, and adherents of the pope of Rome in those parts; (see Revelation 13:15-17) who will only feel the effects of this vial, and that by a noisome and grievous sore falling on them, in allusion to the plague of boils in Egypt, (Exodus 9:8-11) by which may be meant, either literally something external, but not the plague in Dioclesian's time, for then the beast was not risen; and there were none that could have his mark or worship his image: some have thought the French disease is intended, which first appeared in the world in 1490, among the Papists, as a just judgment upon them for the horrible and unnatural lusts and uncleanness of the Romish clergy; and others understand it of a very great heat, which will be before the burning of the world, and will raise blisters and boils upon men: or rather this may design something internal, either the remorse of their consciences, reflections on their past practices, and black despair and horror of mind; and their madness, wrath, and fury, their malice and envy at the success of the preachers of the Gospel, and of Protestant states and princes against them; (see Deuteronomy 28:27,28,34,35). Moreover, their secret and wicked practices, both in political and ecclesiastical affairs, will be discovered, and they will appear with boils and blotches upon them all over, which will render them odious to the people, and be the means of a general reformation. Mr. Daubuz thinks the curse of wickedness in the ninth and tenth centuries, after the invocation of saints and angels, and the worship of images were settled, is meant.

Ver. 3. *And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea*, etc.] Not literally; and so does not design the stagnation of it, which it is thought will be before the general conflagration; (see Amos 7:4) nor is it to be understood of the sea of this world, and the men of it, who are like a troubled sea; but rather of Popish doctrines and councils, which are a sea of errors, and will now be confuted and put an end to. Brightman applies it to the council of Trent, and makes this angel to be Chemnitius, a German divine, who wrote a confutation of it; but as the sea is a collection of many waters, and many waters in this book signify the people and nations under the Romish yoke, sea here may design the whole jurisdiction of Rome, or mystical Babylon; (see Jeremiah 51:36) and particularly its maritime powers, Spain and Portugal: and as the second trumpet affected the sea, (Revelation 8:8) and brought the Vandals into Spain and Portugal, so this second vial affects the sea, and brings great wars, slaughter, and bloodshed into these parts, when they also will be reformed from Popery:

and it became as the blood of a dead man; thick, clotted together, and putrid, and so never to be returned to their former state:

and every living soul died in the sea: those, that are not reformed will either die by the sword, or fly into other parts; for there will be no comfortable living for the Popish party in those countries where now they live in power, ease, and affluence. This, and the following vial, are referred by Mr. Daubuz, the one to the first crusades, or holy wars, for the regaining of the holy land, and the other to the latter of them.

Ver. 4. *And the third angel poured his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters*, etc.] Which also is not to be literally understood of a stagnation of them, before the burning of the world; nor of the destruction of Popish fleets and navies, such as the Spanish armada in 1588, and others since; but rather of Popish writings, of the most learned and subtle men among them, who like rivers and fountains, which supply and fill the sea, support and keep up the Romish jurisdiction and hierarchy; and of the confutation of them by Protestant writers; and of the utter destruction of their principal orders, and chief men among them, as cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, Jesuits, etc. though it seems chiefly to design the places near to Rome, such as Italy and Savoy; for as the third trumpet affects the rivers and fountains, (Revelation 8:10) and brings in the Huns into Italy, and issued in the destruction of the empire; so the third vial affects the same, and brings terrible wars, and great effusion of blood, where so much of the

blood of the saints have been shed: hence it follows, and they became blood; these countries will be covered with blood, and a reformation will ensue upon it; the allusion is to (<2079>Exodus 7:19-21).

Ver. 5. *And I heard the angel of the waters say*, etc.] So we read in Jewish writings [f380] of an angel that was amyd arç, "the prince of the sea", and of angels that were over the waters, and others over fire [f381]; though here is designed not one of the µym ykalm "angels of the water", that presided ove the waters, as another over fire; (see Gill on "<6148>Revelation 14:18"), but the third angel that poured out his vial upon the waters; when he had so done, he said as follows. Dr. Lightfoot thinks, and that not without reason, that since these angels appeared in the garb of priests, (<6506>Revelation 15:6) and since there was a priest appointed to take care of the wells, and fountains, and ditches about Jerusalem, that the people might have water at the feasts [f382], there is an allusion to him; and certain it is that there was such an officer; there was one Nechoniah, who was over the fountains and ditches [f383]; and in the same office was Nicodemon ben Gorion [f384], thought to be the Nicodemus mentioned in the New Testament.

Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be: which may be understood either of God the Father, who had power over these plagues, (<6609>Revelation 16:9) and sent them; or of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, and is righteous in all his ways and works, in all his judgments on antichrist, and is the eternal "I AM", which is, and was, and shall be; (see <6008>Revelation 1:8). The Alexandrian copy, and most others, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read "holy", instead of "shalt be"; for the purity and holiness of Christ will be seen in the judgments which he will exercise, as follows:

because thou hast judged thus; or "these things"; or "them", as the Ethiopic version reads; that is, has brought these judgments upon the men signified by rivers and fountains, and made great havoc and slaughter of them, expressed by their becoming blood; the justice of which appears from the following reason.

Ver. 6. *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets*, etc.] Which shows that rivers and fountains cannot be literally understood, but men are designed, wicked and bloody men; and it is notorious to all, how much of the blood of the saints, of the preachers of the Gospel, of the prophets and

witnesses, have been shed in Italy, Savoy, and other places near Rome, as well as in Rome itself; (see <66176>Revelation 17:6 18:24).

And thou hast given them blood to drink; sent the sword among them, making great slaughter and devastation; (see <23926>Isaiah 49:26)

for they are worthy; or deserving, to have their blood shed by the law of retaliation.

Ver. 7. *And I heard another out of the altar say*, etc.] That is, another angel that came out of the altar; (see <66148>Revelation 14:18) and who represents the souls under the altar, whose blood had been shed by the above persons; compare with this (<66069>Revelation 6:9) though, there, such whose blood had been shed by Rome Pagan are described; the Ethiopic version calls this angel as before, “the angel of the fountains of water”; and the Alexandrian copy, and Syriac and Arabic versions, read, “I heard the altar saying”: as follows,

even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments; the same as in (<66153>Revelation 15:3 19:2). This angel joins the other, and approves and confirms what he says; applauding the judgements of Christ upon the worshippers of the beast, from the verity of them, being what were threatened, and from the justice of them, being what they deserved.

Ver. 8. *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun*, etc.] Not literally; and so designs not a violent heat, which shall go before, and be a preparation for the burning of the world; nor any sore famine arising from it, which would be common to all, good and bad; but mystically: some understand this of Christ, the sun of righteousness, not of any wrath that shall be poured forth on him again, being now justified in the Spirit; but either of that clear shining of Christ in the ministry of the word, in those times this vial refers to; when Zion's light will be come, and the light of the sun will be seven fold, and Christ alone will be exalted; which clear ministration of Christ, though it will not savingly enlighten, yet will convict and confound the antichristian party; they will be scorched with the beams of heat and light, which will dart from hence; these will torture them, and fill them with envy, rage, and malice, because they will not be able to obscure this light, or stop the progress of it; they themselves will be so enlightened by it, as to see and know the truth of Christ's person, and offices, and grace, and yet will sin against it, and so be guilty of blasphemy against the Spirit of God, a sin which will greatly prevail among them; and

they will, like the clay, be the more hardened by this light and heat, and will not repent of their sins and errors, nor confess them, nor own the light and conviction they have received: or else of the wrath of Christ, which he will be moved by this angel to stir up against the antichristian party, and which they will be sensible of, and be fearfully looking for. Others, and which comes much to the same sense, understand this of the Scriptures, the fountain of spiritual light, and of the clear interpretation of them in those times; when the watchmen shall see eye to eye, and when the day shall declare and make manifest every man's work, and the fire reveal and try it; and the same effects upon the antichristian party shall follow as before: but I rather think this refers to some part of the antichristian state, as in the other vials, or to something belonging to it; some have thought that the house of Austria, the chief family in the empire, or the king of Spain, or the emperor, who were both formerly of that house, or Germany itself, is meant; but the empire, as we have seen, seems to be designed by the earth in the first vial; wherefore, rather as the smiting of the third part of the sun, moon, and stars, under the fourth trumpet, signifies the utter extirpation of the Roman emperor, and all other Roman magistrates, who were the sun, moon, and stars in that empire; so this vial upon the sun refers to the pope, and his creatures, the cardinals, etc. who is the sun in the antichristian kingdom; and this angel may design the kings of the earth, who will be stirred up against him, by whom he and his dependents will suffer sorely, if not destroyed.

And power was given unto him to scorch men with fire; which may either respect the burning of Rome, and the adjacent parts; or rather the filling of the antichristian party with rage and malice, at the destruction of the pope, and his creatures; for these men are the same with those in (Revelation 16:2).

Ver. 9. *And men were scorched with great heat*, etc.] Burned with rage against the followers of Christ; were filled with envy at the success of his Gospel, and with fury and madness at the ruinous condition of the antichristian state, being deprived of its head, and chief officers:

and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues; plagues or judgments are from God, when and wherever they come; they are sent and inflicted by him, and he can lessen or increase them, continue or remove them, as he pleases; and these, unless sanctified, will not reform men, but harden them, and set them a blaspheming the author of them. And

this blasphemy may either respect the nature and perfections of God, charging him with inequality in his ways, and with injustice and unfaithfulness; or the Gospel, and the truths of it, which declare his glory, and his greatness; and which will now have a general spread, to the great mortification and confusion of the followers of antichrist:

and they repented not to give him glory; that is, they did not repent of their wicked deeds, their idolatries, murders, sorceries, fornications, and thefts, as in (<66920>Revelation 9:20,21) so as to own and confess them, which is, the meaning of giving glory to God in repentance; (see <60719>Joshua 7:19). This shows that repentance is not in man's power, but in the gift of God's grace; for though he may give space, yet if he does not give grace to repent, no man will repent; nor will any means of themselves produce it; as not the most powerful and awakening ministry, as the ministry of John the Baptist, and of Christ, and of the Gospel preachers that will be in those times, this vial refers to, nor the greatest mercies and favours, so not the severest judgments; (see <33006>Amos 6:6-11). The event of this vial, or the plague of it, is applied, by Mr. Daubuz, to the wars between the emperors and the popes, and between the Guelphs and Gibelines.

Ver. 10. *And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast*, etc.] The beast is the same with that in (<66301>Revelation 13:1,11) and which again shows that to be one and the same: the seat or throne of the beast is Rome, which, when the empire was Pagan, was the seat of Satan, or the dragon, (<66213>Revelation 2:13) and when the beast or antichrist was risen, the dragon gave this seat, as well as his authority to him, (<66302>Revelation 13:2) and is that city which is so often called, in this book, the great city, and is manifestly pointed out by its seven mountains, on which the city of Rome stood, (<67709>Revelation 17:9) and the pouring out of this vial upon it denotes the destruction of it, when it will be burnt down, and become desolate, an habitation of devils, of every foul spirit, and hateful bird, (<66802>Revelation 18:2,9) and this corresponds with the fifth trumpet; for as that brings in the rise of antichrist, both eastern and western, who rose much about the same time, so this vial affects him particularly; the western antichrist, his seat and kingdom. Mr. Daubuz refers this plague to the expulsion of the western and eastern emperors from their capital cities, Rome and Constantinople, and to the mischiefs caused by the antipopes in the west, and to the quarrels and schism in the Greek churches in the fourteenth century.

And his kingdom was full of darkness; not only of the darkness of false doctrine and superstition, for so it was always, being filled with the smoke of the bottomless pit; nor only of judicial blindness and darkness, which the subjects of the antichristian state are given up unto; but rather of a discovery of all this, with all their hidden works of darkness, which will now be brought to light; though it seems chiefly to design the great affliction and distress the antichristian state will be in at this time, which darkness sometimes signifies; (see <230901>Isaiah 9:1,2 <243616>Jeremiah 13:16 <330518>Amos 5:18) it having lost its sun, the pope, under the preceding vial, and its seat, the city of Rome, under this: the sense is, that it will be greatly obscured in its glory and magnificence, in its traffic and riches, (<661811>Revelation 18:11-19) its power and authority will be greatly diminished, and it will be had in contempt by the princes of the earth; though it will not as yet be utterly destroyed, for its utter destruction is reserved for the seventh and last vial. The allusion is to the plague of darkness in Egypt, (<021021>Exodus 10:21-23). And they gnawed their tongues for pain; these are the men of the antichristian party, the subjects of the antichristian kingdom, now become full of darkness, the worshippers of the beast, and his image; these will gnaw their tongues, which expresses their inward anguish and distress, their anger, wrath, and fury, their being filled with revenge, and yet in an incapacity to execute it, and will even be afraid to express it; and therefore will bite their tongues in madness; and this for pain, for the pain of their mind, at the sad and low estate of the antichristian kingdom.

Ver. 11. *And blasphemed the God of heaven*, etc.] Who made it, and dwells in it, and from whence wrath is revealed, and comes upon the seat of the beast, upon the kingdom of antichrist, and the subjects of that kingdom; they will curse him who is of right their King, and their God, and look upwards to heaven, where he is, (<230821>Isaiah 8:21,22) and this,

because of their pains and their sores: (see <661602>Revelation 16:2) the inward frettings and distresses of their minds, the gallings and gnawings of their consciences, the horror and terror of their souls, and their fearful looking for of judgment, which the present face of things upon antichrist will bring upon them; just as the Egyptians, in the time of their darkness, were distressed with internal guilt, and black horror of mind, and with evil spirits, which were sent among them, and haunted them during that season; (see <197849>Psalm 78:49) and repented not of their deeds; their antichristian works of darkness; (see <660920>Revelation 9:20,21).

Ver. 12. *And the sixth angel poured his vial on the great river Euphrates*, etc.] Which is not to be understood literally of the river Euphrates, which ran through Mesopotamia and Chaldea, and by the walls of Babylon; and of the drying of it up to make way for the Jews in the eastern parts of the world, to pass into their own land, and possess it; when a like miracle will be wrought for them as was when they came out of Egypt, by dividing the Red sea for them; and as when they entered into Canaan's land, by laying the waters of Jordan on heaps, so that they passed over as on dry land; in favour of which sense the passage in (<231115>Isaiah 11:15,16) is thought to be, which the Targum interprets of God's smiting the river Euphrates; though the river Nile in Egypt seems rather to be meant: but it does not appear that there is any number of Jews beyond the river Euphrates; the far greater number of them is in the western and northern parts of the world; so that there will be no need for the drying up of this river for their passage into their own land; nor, if there were any in those parts, can any reason be given why they should be called the kings of the east, who, wherever they are, are a poor contemptible people, and have never had any ensigns of royalty among them for many hundreds of years; nor can that river be thought much to hinder, were all other impediments out of the way, nor the drying of it up much facilitate their passage to Judea, and much less affect their conversion: besides, this vial, as the rest, is a plague on antichrist, in some branch or other, or on some part or other, of the antichristian state; which, if not designed here, is nowhere in the account of this vial, and therefore this must be understood mystically; there is no doubt an allusion to the draining of this river at the taking of Babylon by Cyrus, according as was predicted in prophecy, (<234427>Isaiah 44:27,28 <245038>Jeremiah 50:38 51:31,32,36,37) who, making sluices and drains, turned the river another way, and marched through it with his army, and surprised and took the city at once, while Belshazzar and his nobles were indulging themselves in rioting and drunkenness, as Daniel relates, (<270501>Daniel 5:1-30). Now some, because that Babylon was situated upon the river Euphrates, and Rome, or the Romish antichrist, is mystical Babylon, think that is here designed, and is the object of this vial; and that the drying up of this river designs the withdrawing of nations and kingdoms, signified by waters, (<661715>Revelation 17:15) from its jurisdiction and power, which will bring on its ruin; and also the stoppage of dues and tithes, annates, Peter's pence, and of all its traffic in indulgences, pardons, etc. whereby it will be greatly impoverished, and brought to nothing: but it should be observed, that the fifth vial affects Rome, the seat of the beast; and as for the beast himself, he

will not be destroyed till the battle of Armageddon; and mystical Babylon, or the antichristian state, in the whole compass of it, will not be destroyed until the pouring out of the seventh vial; wherefore rather the eastern antichrist, the Turks are meant, in whose dominions this river is; for as the Assyrian monarch is signified by the waters of this river, when he was in his glory, and had his seat at Babylon, by which this river ran, (<23807>Isaiah 8:7,8) so may the Turks, who inhabit by this river, be intended by it; and the rather, as this sense exactly corresponds with the sixth trumpet; for as the sounding of that trumpet looses the four angels bound in the great river Euphrates, which founded the Turkish empire, as we have seen; so the pouring out of this sixth vial affects the same empire, and brings it to ruin. Mr. Daubuz is of opinion that this plague refers to the depopulation and destruction of the Grecian empire, and the bringing of the Turks into Europe, who have greatly distressed and tormented the corrupted Christians or Papists.

And the water thereof was dried up; the Ottoman empire will be extinct, just as the destruction of the Babylonish monarchy is expressed by the drying up of its sea, (<24636>Jeremiah 51:36) so the destruction of the Turkish empire is signified by the drying up of the water of this river, which is in the heart of it: and this is the passing away of the second woe, (<66114>Revelation 11:14)

that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared; which some understand of Christians in general, who are made kings and priests unto God, and of Christian kings in particular, whose way will be prepared, by the declining state of antichrist, to express their hatred to the whore of Rome, and burn her flesh with fire; but the Romish antichrist is not here intended: others think, as before observed, that the Jews are designed; that the Jews will be converted in the last days seems manifest from (<28105>Hosea 3:5 <45125>Romans 11:25,26) and other places; and that they will return to their own land is suggested in abundance of prophecies, particularly in (<26721>Ezekiel 37:21) (<33094>Amos 9:14,15) and it must be allowed that the eastern, as well as the western antichrist, is a stumbling to them; and especially the advantage which the Turks have gained over the powers that go under the Christian name, and their possession of their land is an hinderance to their return to it; so that the destruction of the Turkish empire will undoubtedly make way for their conversion, and restoration to their own land; but then this will be equally advantageous to the Jews in the west as to those in the east, if there be any numbers of them there,

which does not appear, and therefore there seems no reason why they should be pointed at, and be called the kings of the east: rather therefore to me it seems, that, through the fall of the Ottoman empire, way will be made for the kings and princes of the east, literally understood, to have and embrace the Gospel of Christ; for, the Turks being destroyed, the Mahometan religion will decline, the Gospel will be carried into the eastern parts of the world, into those vast kingdoms and countries which lie in those parts, when they will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and the kings and princes of them will come to the brightness of Zion's rising; so that the ruin of this monarchy will pave the way for the spread of Christ's kingdom from sea to sea, and front the river, the river Euphrates, to the ends of the earth; and this also will prepare the way, and lead on for all the saints, who are kings, and shall reign with Christ a thousand years, who is said to come from the east, (Revelation 7:2) or from the rising of the sun, as these are said to do, as the words may be rendered, to possess the kingdom under the whole heaven: Philo the Jew [f385] has some expressions illustrating the literal sense of this, where he speaks of a Roman army on the banks of Euphrates, which kept the passage of “the eastern kings”.

Ver. 13. *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs*, etc.] Rome, the seat of antichrist, being destroyed, and the kingdom of the beast darkened, and brought into great contempt, Mahometanism greatly declining, the Gospel succeeding everywhere, the Jews being converted, and resettled in their own land, the devil bestirs himself more than ordinary; and dispatches his, and the emissaries of antichrist, to the kings of the whole earth, that can any ways be engaged on their side, and against the saints; and these are no other than the creatures of antichrist, such as cardinals, priests, and particularly Jesuits, as their original from the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, show. Mr. Daubuz thinks these “three” are the “monks”, the “religious knights”, and “secular clergy”: and these are called “spirits”; not because they are what are called familiar spirits, or devils themselves, for they are the spirits of devils, as in the next verse; but either because they pretend to be spiritual men, ecclesiastics, men in spiritual offices, and indeed are spiritual wickednesses in high places; or because of their agility, swiftness, and expeditiousness in going to and fro, Satan like, to do mischief: and they are said to be “unclean”; as the evil spirits and devils are, being so by nature, and delighting in uncleanness, and giving themselves up to work it with greediness: and they are “like frogs”; the allusion is to the plague of frogs in Egypt, (Exodus 8:5,6) and these antichristian

emissaries are fitly compared to them, for their impurity, and pleasure they take in it, as frogs do in dirt and filth; and for their being talkative, impudent, and troublesome, like the noisy croaking frogs; so “rhetoricians” are by Cicero [f386] compared to frogs; and as the frogs of Egypt got into the king's bedchamber, (<020803>Exodus 8:3 <195030>Psalm 105:30) so these get into the private retirements of princes, into their cabinet councils, and stir them up to war and bloodshed: and as for the number, “three”, this is only used to express a sufficient number of them, or to make the account square with the dragon, beast, and false prophet, from whom they proceed; and besides, this is omitted in the king's manuscript. Now John saw these, in a visionary way,

come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet; by the dragon is meant the devil, (<662009>Revelation 12:9) not as acting in Rome Pagan, which has been long ago destroyed, rather as in the Pagan parts of the world, and as in the Turkish empire, now ruined; who, seeing his cause declining everywhere, bestirs himself to support and revive it, though this issues in the binding of him for a thousand years, (<662002>Revelation 20:2). By the beast is meant the first beast, in (<663001>Revelation 13:1) and so the Ethiopic version renders it; the antichristian civil state, now sadly shattered and weakened, by the pouring out of the fifth vial: and by “the false prophet” is meant, not Mahomet, or the supporters of his religion, but the second beast in (<663011>Revelation 13:11,12,14,15) or the antichristian ecclesiastic state, as appears from the description of this prophet in (<661920>Revelation 19:20) compared with that: so then these spirits manifestly appear to be the emissaries of antichrist, under a diabolical influence; his creatures, that are made, and sent forth by him, have their commissions and orders from him, to act for him in every shape, to support his interest, civil and religious, by lies, murders, and false doctrine; a further account is given of them in the next verse.

Ver. 14. *For they are the spirits of devils*, etc.] They are of their father the devil; they are acted and influenced by him, he works effectually in them, and leads them captive at his will; they do his lusts, and are murderers and liars, and false teachers, like him:

working miracles; lying ones, to deceive men; this clearly points out who are meant, namely, the followers of antichrist, who, as they spread the doctrines of devils, endeavour to confirm them by signs and lying wonders:

which go forth unto the kings of the earth: those who have committed fornication with the Romish antichrist, such of them as will remain:

and of the whole world; as many Pagan princes as they can come at, and engage by any ways and means in their interest; they will go forth to them like the lying spirit to Ahab's prophets, (<1 Kings 22:22>1 Kings 22:22)

to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty; that is, they will persuade them to gather together, to fight against the saints, the Gentile Christians in the several parts of the world, and the Jewish Christians, now settled in their own land; and this will be the battle of the Lord, who is God Almighty, and it will be fighting against him; and therefore the attempt must be vain and fruitless, and issue in the ruin of those who are gathered to it, who will be deceived and drawn into it by these diabolical spirits: and this is called “the battle of that great day of God”; not of the day of judgment, for it will be before that time; but of that day of vengeance upon all the remains of his and his church's enemies, both Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan, who will for this purpose be gathered together; “which”, as the Ethiopic version renders it, “God has appointed”.

Ver. 15. *Behold I come as a thief*, etc.] These are the words of Christ, inserted in a parenthesis in this account, before it is concluded, to acquaint his people with his near and sudden approach, and to give them a word of caution and exhortation in these times of difficulty; for he is the Lord God Almighty, who sent forth these angels to pour out their vials, and whose judgments are applauded as righteous, (<Revelation 16:1,5,7,14>Revelation 16:1,5,7,14) and who so often in (<Revelation 22:7,12,20>Revelation 22:7,12,20) says “I come quickly”; and which is to be understood not of his spiritual coming, which will be already at this time, but of his personal coming: and which will be “as a thief”: as it is often expressed, (<1 Thessalonians 5:2>1 Thessalonians 5:2 <2 Peter 3:10>2 Peter 3:10 <Revelation 3:3>Revelation 3:3) not in the bad sense, to steal and kill, and to destroy, though Christ's coming will issue in the everlasting destruction of the wicked; but the phrase is designed to express the suddenness of his coming, and the surprise of it:

blessed is he that watcheth; against sin, the lusts of the flesh, and the cares of this life, lest they bring a sleepiness upon him, and so the day of the Lord come upon him at an unawares; and against Satan and his temptations, who goes about seeking whom he may devour; and against his emissaries and false teachers, who lie in wait to deceive; and blessed is he also who is wishing and waiting for the coming of Christ, and so, being

ready, will enter with him into the marriage chamber, and partake of the supper of the Lamb:

and keepeth his garments: either his conversation garments, unspotted from the world, and whenever defiled washes them, and makes them white in the blood of the Lamb; and keeps them from being stripped of them, by those who would lead them into sinful ways; or that keeps and holds fast the robe of Christ's righteousness, and garments of his salvation, which are the righteousness of the saints, that fine linen clean and white, that white raiment which only can cover their nakedness, that the shame thereof does not appear, (<66908>Revelation 19:8 3:18)

lest he walk naked; twxmh ˆm µwr[[f387], "naked of the commandments", or good works, according to the Jewish phrase; having lost, or dropped his conversation garments:

and they see his shame; or lest, being naked, he be exposed to shame and confusion, yea, to everlasting ruin and destruction; (see <402212>Matthew 22:12,13) the allusion is to the burning of the garments of those priests who were found asleep when upon their watch in the temple: the account that is given is this [f388];

> "the man of the mountain of the house (the governor of the temple) goes round all the wards (every night) with burning torches before him; and in every ward where the person does not stand upon his feet, the man of the mountain of the house says to him, peace be to thee; if he finds he is asleep, he strikes him with his staff, and he has power to burn his clothes; and they say (in Jerusalem) what voice is that in the court? (it is answered) the voice of a Levite beaten, and his clothes burnt, because he slept in the time of his watch; R. Eliezer ben Jacob says, once they found my mother's brother asleep, and they burnt his clothes:"

now imagine with what shame the poor Levite so served must appear the next morning among his brethren, with his clothes burnt, and he naked; and with greater shame and confusions must he appear at the last day that is destitute of the righteousness of Christ.

Ver. 16. *And he gathered them together*, etc.] Or rather "they gathered them together", as the Syriac version renders it; for though the verb is singular, a noun plural goes before it, as in (<66614>Revelation 16:14) and the

same spirits that are there said to go forth, to gather the kings gether, these will gather them together; will persuade the Papal, Pagan, and Mahometan powers, the remains of them in the several parts of the world, to join together, and make one effort for the reviving of their declining, and almost ruined interests: for which purpose they will be brought together,

into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon; which may be the same with Har-megiddo, the mountain of Megiddo; for the Hebrew word rh is read "Ar" by the Greeks; so the city Argarize is interpreted the mountain of the most High[f389]: and this refers either to the slaying of Josiah in the valley of Megiddo, which occasioned such mourning, that it became proverbial for any great sorrow; (see <14352>2 Chronicles 35:22,25 <381211>Zechariah 12:11) where it is called the valley of Megiddon; or rather to the slaughter of Sisera's army at the waters of Megiddo, by Barak, (<070519>Judges 5:19) suggesting that the same would be the fate of these united powers. Some derive the word from ˆwhdg and amrj, which signify "the destruction of their troops", or "armies"; and so designs not any place, that has been or is, but which will be so called from the issue of this battle; and since it is an Hebrew name that will be given it, it may lead us to conclude it will be somewhere in Judea, and very likely no other than the valley of Jehoshaphat, where all nations will be gathered; and which is called the valley of decision, where will be the day of the Lord, and multitudes will be slain, (<290302>Joel 3:2,13,14) though the name will suit any place where there will be a defeat of these enemies; but this vial only brings them together; the utter destruction of them is reserved for the next.

Ver. 17. *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air*, etc.] Or "upon the air", as the Alexandrian copy, Syriac and Arabic versions, read; by which is meant the kingdom of Satan, he being the prince of the power of the air, (<490202>Ephesians 2:2) not that he has power over the air, to raise or lay winds and storms in it at pleasure; but he is so called because he is the prince of that posse of devils, the principalities and powers of darkness, that have their dwelling in the air; hence the air, encompassing the whole earth, stands for the kingdom of Satan all the world over: and this vial differs from all the rest; that whereas the rest only affect some part or branch of the antichristian state, this will affect all the remains of the Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan powers, gathered and united together at Armageddon; and the pouring out of this vial is the execution of divine wrath and vengeance upon them all at once; and the effects of this vial will

not only reach to the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, and their armies, or the united forces of the remains of Pagans, Papists, and Mahometans, who will be slain, and their flesh given to the fowls of the air; and not only to the beast and false prophet, who will be taken in this battle, and cast alive into the lake of fire, which is expressive both of their temporal and eternal punishment, (<66197>Revelation 19:17-21) but to the binding of Satan upon the second coming of Christ, of which notice is before given, (<66165>Revelation 16:15) and even to the destruction of Gog and Magog at the end of the thousand years' reign; yea, to the casting of the devil into everlasting fire, since this vial is the last plague, in which the wrath of God is filled up, and so brings to the end of all things, (<66201>Revelation 20:1-10). The first accomplishment of this vial will be the decisive battle at Armageddon, when the remains of all Christ's and his church's enemies will have a total defeat; and this will be the third and last woe, which will utterly destroy those that have destroyed the earth, Pagans, Papists, and Mahometans, even all the open enemies of Christ, so that nothing will lie in the way of his kingdom; now will the spiritual reign of Christ, which has been gradually advancing by the pouring out of each vial, be in its full glory: but though antichrist will be no more, and Satan will have no more in form an open kingdom upon earth; yet, towards the close of this reign, great lukewarmness and coldness will seize professors of religion, and immorality and profaneness will abound again; which will bring on the times of the coming of the son of man; who, upon his personal descent from the third heaven into the air, will drive Satan and his posse of devils from their territories, and quickly will the general conflagration begin, when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; and which is no inconsiderable part of the pouring out of this vial into the air.

And there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne; this voice is said to come “out of the temple of heaven”, that is, out of the temple which is in heaven, which will now be opened, as under the sounding of the seventh trumpet, with which this vial corresponds, and indeed is contemporary; and which designs the church, enjoying the pure worship of God, the word and ordinances, and the free exercise of religion; and this shows that when this voice will be uttered, as yet the Jerusalem church state will not be begun, since there will be no temple in that; (see <66119>Revelation 11:19 14:17 15:5 21:22) the words, “of heaven”, are left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic

versions, which read, “out of the temple from the throne”; the seat of government in the church, described in (<66042>Revelation 4:2-6) the voice came with power, authority, and majesty; not from any of the four and twenty elders, or four living creatures, or angels about the throne; but either from God the Father that sits upon it; or from Christ the Lamb in the midst of it, and rather from the latter, since a like phrase was used by him on the cross, (<43930>John 19:30) and the same is expressed by him who is the Alpha and Omega, (<66206>Revelation 21:6) and this voice is called a great one, being the voice of a great person, the King of kings, and coming with great power, and was spoken aloud:

saying, it is done; what the angel swore should be in the days of the seventh angel, namely, that time, antichristian time, should be no more, and the mystery of God in his purposes and providences should be finished, and all the glorious things spoken of his church and people be accomplished; (see Gill on “<66106>Revelation 10:6”), (see Gill on “<66107>Revelation 10:7”) the word γεγονε may be rendered “it has been”, or “it was”, and the sense is, but now is not; and the meaning may be, Babylon was, but is not, it is now fallen; the beast and false prophet were, but now are not; the Turk, or Mahomet, was, but is no more; all the antichristian powers are destroyed; Christ's body, the church, will be completed, the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, all the elect called, and the new Jerusalem prepared as a bride for her husband; and when the utmost effects of this vial will take place, the end of all things will be; by the same “fiat” that made the heavens and the earth, they will disappear, and new heavens and earth succeed in their room.

Ver. 18. *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings*, etc.] As at the giving of the law, (<021916>Exodus 19:16) and at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, (see Gill on “<66115>Revelation 11:15”) and may intend either the pure ministry of the Gospel in the spiritual reign, the voices of Christ's ministers, and the effects of them, who will be “Boanergeses”, sons of thunder, and will be the means of enlightening the minds of many, as well as of shaking the consciences of men, signified by the earthquake following; or rather, the tremendous and awful judgments of God upon the remains of the antichristian party, as the very great commotions and changes that will be made in the world are expressed in the next clause:

and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great: for as the changes made

in the Jewish state, civil and ecclesiastical, are signified by the shaking of the heavens and the earth, and as the fall of Paganism is expressed by an earthquake, and the fall of the tenth part of the city is the effect of another; so the destruction of all the antichristian powers, and the mutations made in the earth thereby, are designed by this; (see <58126>Hebrews 12:26,27 <66612>Revelation 6:12 11:13) (<29316>Joel 3:16). Mr. Daubuz applies the whole of this vial to the, Reformation, when such a revolution was made in a short time, as has not been known since the world was, or men became worshippers of the beast; at which time Christendom was divided into three parts, the eastern or Greek church, the western or Latin church, and the reformed churches.

Ver. 19. And the great city was divided into three parts, etc.] By which is meant not Christendom, distinguished into Protestants, Papists, and neutrals, which has been long the case; nor the city of Jerusalem, as inhabited by Christians, Jews, and Turks; nor the city of Rome itself, the seat of the beast, which will have suffered under the fifth vial; but the whole Romish jurisdiction, which is the great city, that reigns over the kings of the earth, as it will now be; though some think the Turkish empire is meant, which they suppose was only afflicted under the preceding vial, but will now be divided into three parts, and afterwards into six, (<26901>Ezekiel 39:1,2) and so come to ruin; and others are of opinion that it is included in this great city at least; and doubtless the remains of it are to be taken into this account, and probably are considered in the following clause; wherefore it is better to understand this of the Romish jurisdiction, so often called the great city in this book, (<66108>Revelation 11:8 14:8 17:18) and its division into three parts is either in reference to the three heads of it, the dragon, beast, and false prophet, or to the three unclean spirits that come out of them, which will lead on to this ruin; though the allusion seems rather to be to the destruction of Jerusalem, (<26502>Ezekiel 5:2,12) and denotes the utter ruin of the Romish antichrist, in all its branches and remains; a tenth part of this city will fall towards the close of the sixth trumpet, (<66113>Revelation 11:13) and now all the other nine parts will fall, a threefold division will be made of the city, each division containing three parts: the Jews [f390] have a prophecy, that upon an appearance of a star at Rome, which they suppose will be when the Messiah comes, the three upper walls of that city will fall, and the great temple, or church (St. Peter's), will fall, and the governor of that city (the pope) will die:

and the cities of the nations fell; of the Pagans and Mahometaus; or as there will be an utter extirpation of the Papacy, so of Paganism and Mahometanism, in the several nations where they have obtained, and where there will be now any remains of them;

and great Babylon came in remembrance before God; not Constantinople, as Brightman thinks, because that Rome, the seat of the beast, is affected under the fifth vial, and the great city under this; but since no other is called Babylon in this book but the Romish antichristian state, it must be meant here; (see <66148>Revelation 14:8) (<66170>Revelation 17:5 18:2,10,21) for many hundreds of years Babylon seemed to be forgotten by God, no notice being taken of her sins and iniquities in a judicial way; but now God will remember her sins, (<66185>Revelation 18:5) and inflict deserved punishment upon her:

to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath; as a just retaliation for the wine of her fornication, with which she has intoxicated the kings and inhabitants of the earth; the wrath of God is sometimes signified in the Old Testament by a cup, a wine cup, a wine cup of fury, (see <19708>Psalm 75:8 <24515>Jeremiah 25:15) and here the exceeding greatness of his wrath is expressed by the phrases used, and intends the pouring out of all his vengeance, to the utter ruin of the Romish antichrist.

Ver. 20. *And every island fled away*, etc.] This may be understood either of the dissolution of the world, the present heavens and earth, when there will be no more sea, (<66210>Revelation 21:1) and so consequently no islands:

and the mountains were not found; for the earth and the heaven will be fled away at the appearance of Christ the Judge, and there will be no place found for them, (<66201>Revelation 20:11) and new heavens, and a new earth, without sea or mountains, will succeed: or rather this may signify the utter extirpation of all the antichristian powers in every shape, whether on islands or on the continent; for this day of the Lord will be upon every high mountain and hill, to bring them low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted, (<23214>Isaiah 2:14,15,17) and may particularly respect the dissolution of monasteries, and the plundering them of their riches and revenues.

Ver. 21. *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven*, etc.] Which must be understood not as after the fall of the cities, and the flight of the islands and mountains, but at the same time; and it looks as if such men that shall escape at the battle of Armageddon, that hail stones from heaven

will fall upon them and destroy them; just as the kings of the Amorites and their men were killed by hail stones, cast down by the Lord from heaven, as they fled before Joshua, when more were killed by the stones than were slain by the sword, (<06011>Joshua 10:11) the allusion seems to be to the plague of hail in (<02923>Exodus 9:23-26)

every stone about the weight of a talent; which is threescore pound weight, a prodigious weight indeed for a single hailstone! such hail stones were never known to fall; the largest I have read of is what Caspar Wesserus assured Mr. Broughton [f391] of, at Zurich, which being brought from a field afar off, to the consul, and so must melt in carriage, yet weighed a pound. It may be said of this hail storm, as of the earthquake in a preceding verse, that it will be such as never was since men were upon earth; and denotes the sore, heavy, and even intolerable judgments of God upon the antichristian party: God's judgments are sometimes signified by hail storms, (<23026>Isaiah 30:26-30) and particularly the judgments upon Gog and Magog, (<26822>Ezekiel 38:22) which may respect the same as here: the Jews [f392] now expect a great hail in the times of Gog and Magog:

and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; the plague of hail brought down the hard heart of Pharaoh, and humbled him, so that he acknowledged his wickedness, and the sin of his people, and owned the justice of God; but this more terrible storm will have no effect upon these men, to convince and reform them, but, on the contrary, they will break out into blasphemy against God, who caused it to fall on them; it will have the same effect as the fourth and fifth vials:

for the plague thereof was exceeding great; it must beat down all before it, and be intolerable: whether this hail storm may not also have some regard to coldness and lukewarmness, as Naplet suggests, and so may point at the close of the spiritual reign of Christ, or the Laodicean state, which will bring on the second coming of Christ, and so this effect of the seventh vial will end where the seven churches and seven trumpets do, may be considered; (see Gill on "<66115>Revelation 11:15").

CHAPTER 17

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 17

This chapter contains a vision of a beast, and a woman on it, and the interpretation of it; one of the seven angels that had the seven vials proposes to John to show him the whore of Babylon, the Jezabel before spoken of, who sits on many waters, with whom the kings and inhabitants of the earth have committed fornication, being intoxicated by her, (<6170>Revelation 17:1,2) in order to which he carries him into the wilderness, and there he sees a woman, who is described by the beast she sat on, of a scarlet colour, full of blasphemous names, with seven heads and ten horns; by her array, in purple and scarlet, decked with gold, pearls, and precious stones; by a cup she had in her hand, full of abominable filth; by a name written on her forehead, given at large, and by the condition she was in, drunk with the blood of the saints; which sight filled John with great wonder and admiration, (<6173>Revelation 17:3-6) wherefore, to remove his astonishment, the angel proposes to explain to him the mystery of the woman, and the beast she sat on, (<6177>Revelation 17:7) and first the mystery of the beast is explained, by its several states, past, present, and to come; by its original and end, ascending out of the bottomless pit, and going into perdition; by the veneration it would be had in by the reprobate part of the world, (<6178>Revelation 17:8) its seven heads are interpreted of the seven mountains on which the city of Rome, designed by the woman, stood, and of seven kings, or forms of government, five of which had ceased, and one was in being in John's time, another was to come, which should not continue long, and the beast would be an eighth, (<6179>Revelation 17:9-11) its ten horns are explained of ten kings, described by their kingdom they had not as yet received, and which they should have one hour with the beast; by their agreement in mind and conduct; and by their war with the Lamb, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and those that are with him, the called, chosen, and faithful, and the issue of it, (<6172>Revelation 17:12-14) the waters on which the whore sat are interpreted of a multitude of people, nations, and tongues, (<6175>Revelation 17:15) the hatred and destruction of her by the ten kings, and the manner of it, are declared, (<6176>Revelation 17:16) which is owing to the will of God, who put it into

their hearts to agree to give their kingdom to the beast till the prophecies and promises were fulfilled respecting this matter, and now to destroy the whore that sat upon it, (Revelation 17:17) which woman is explained of the great city of Rome, that reigns over the kings of the earth, (Revelation 17:18).

Ver. 1. *And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven vials*, etc.] It may be the first of them, since one of the four beasts designs the first of them, in (Revelation 6:1,3) though Brightman thinks the fifth angel is meant, because he poured out his vial on the seat of the beast, who is by this angel described; but rather this is the seventh and last angel, concerned in the utter destruction of antichrist: and therefore proposes to John to show him the judgment of the great whore:

and talked with me, saying unto me, come hither: he conversed with him in a friendly manner, (see Zechariah 1:9) and desires him to come nearer to him, and go along with him, adding,

I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore; that noted and famous one, known before to John by the names of Jezabel and Babylon, who taught and caused many to commit fornication, (Revelation 2:20) (Revelation 14:8) and is no other than Rome Papal; for that a city or state is meant is clear from (Revelation 17:18) and it is usual for idolatrous or apostate cities to be called whores or harlots, (see Isaiah 1:21) (Ezekiel 23:2-4 Na 3:4) and she is called a “great” one, because of the largeness of the Papal see; and because of the multitude of persons, the kings of the earth, and the inhabitants of it, with whom the Romish antichrist has committed spiritual fornication, or idolatry: her “judgment” signifies either her sin and wickedness; in which sense the word is used in (Romans 5:16) and which is exposed, (Revelation 17:5,6) namely, her idolatry and cruelty; or else her condemnation, and the execution of it, suggested in (Revelation 17:8,16) and more largely described in the following chapter:

that sitteth upon many waters; which in (Revelation 17:15) are interpreted of people, multitudes, nations, and tongues, subject to the jurisdiction of Rome; and so several antichristian states are in the preceding chapter signified by the sea, and by rivers and fountains of water: and this is said in reference to Babylon, an emblem of the Romish harlot, which was situated upon the river Euphrates, and is therefore said to dwell upon many waters, (Jeremiah 51:13) her sitting here may be in allusion to the

posture of harlots plying of men; or may denote her ease, rest, and grandeur, sitting as a queen; and is chiefly expressive of her power and dominion over the kings and nations of the earth, (<66178>Revelation 17:18).

Ver. 2. *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication*, etc.] These are the ten kings, who being of the same mind, and of one religion, the Popish religion, gave their power, strength, and kingdom to the beast, (<66172>Revelation 17:12,17) and have been enticed by the whore of Rome to commit spiritual fornication with her; that is, idolatry, to worship, as that church enjoins, idols of gold, silver, brass, and wood, the images of the virgin Mary, and other saints; hence this whore appears to be no mean strumpet, but one of great note, and in much vogue, being sought after and made use of by the great men of the earth;

and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication; that is, the inhabitants of the Roman empire, or earthly minded men, mere carnal persons, have been drawn into idolatrous practices by the allurements of the church of Rome; such as riches, honours, pleasures, lying miracles, and great pretensions to devotion and religion; whereby they have been intoxicated as men with wine, and have been filled with a blind zeal for that church, and the false doctrines and worship of it, and with madness and fury against the true professors of religion.07834-Re17.3 Ver. 3. *So he carried me away in the spirit*, etc.] Not in body, as if he was removed from the isle of Patmos to some other place; but in a visionary way, just as Ezekiel was carried between earth and heaven, in the visions of God, to Jerusalem, (<26803>Ezekiel 8:3). It was represented to the mind of John, to his spirit, or soul, as if he had been taken up by the angel and carried through the air:

into the wilderness; by which may be meant either the wilderness of the people, the world, the church hereafter described, being a worldly one, and consisting of worldly men; or Gentilism, the Gentile world is often in the prophecies of the Old Testament called a wilderness; the Romish church having much of Heathen worship, and Heathen customs and practices in it, hence its votaries are called Gentiles, (<66102>Revelation 11:2) or this circumstance may be mentioned, and the thing so represented to John, because that a wilderness is a solitary place, and fit for retirement and meditation; and where he might, without any interruption, take a full view of the following sight, and make proper observations upon it; and it is worth notice, that this is the place where the true church and became out of

sight, in the room of which this apostate church appears: or, as others have thought, John is had into the wilderness, where the true church was hid and nourished, and the false one is there shown him, that seeing both together, he might compare them, and observe the difference between them; to all which may be added, that a wilderness is a fit place for such a beast as hereafter described to be seen in:

and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast; the beast is the same with that in (<6613>Revelation 13:1) as the description shows, and is no other than the Roman empire as Papal; the "scarlet" colour is expressive of its imperial dignity, its power and authority, it received from the dragon; and also of this beast's cruelty and tyranny, and of its shedding the blood of the saints: the woman sitting upon it is the great city of Rome, as is manifest from (<6718>Revelation 17:18) or the Romish antichrist, the apostate church of Rome, represented by a woman, as the true church is, (<6201>Revelation 12:1) but in a very different form, and is the same with the second beast in (<6311>Revelation 13:11) and the false prophet; and as the two beasts respect the same, under different considerations, namely, the Papacy, in its civil and ecclesiastic capacity, so this strange phenomenon, a woman sitting on such a beast, means one and the same thing as the horse and his rider in the seals, though in different views; the woman designs the Romish church, with the pope at the head of it, and the beast the Roman Papal empire as civil, by which the former is supported and upheld, bore up on high, and exalted in the manner it has been: moreover, as purple and scarlet are the colours of garments wore by the pope, and cardinals, hence the woman in the next verse is said to be "arrayed in purple and scarlet colour", so even the very beasts on which they rode were covered with scarlet. Platina [f393] says that Pope Paul the Second

> "ordered by a public decree, on pain or punishment, that no man should wear a scarlet cap but cardinals; to whom also, in the first year of his popedom, he gave cloth of the same colour, to put upon their horses and mules when they rode; and besides, would have put into the decree, that the cardinals' hats should be of scarlet silk:"

upon which Du Maulin [f394] makes this remark;

> "Pope Paul the Second was the first that gave scarlet to the cardinals, as well for themselves as for their mules, to the end that this prophecy, which agreeth in general with the see of Rome,

might likewise appertain particularly to everyone of the pillars of the said see, which is to be set upon a “scarlet coloured beast”.”

It follows,

full of names of blasphemy: that is, the beast, or Roman Papal empire, was full of them; in (Revelation 13:1,5) a name of blasphemy is said to be upon his head, and he to have a mouth speaking blasphemy; but here his whole body is represented as full of them, and may refer to the blasphemous doctrines of worshipping of images, of pardons and indulgences, of transubstantiation, etc. and to the multitude of images, of the virgin Mary, and other saints, in the antichristian state, in every part of it; and to those blaspheming persons, the cardinals, priests, and Jesuits, which abound in it; as well as to those blasphemous names and titles which are given to the pope, the head of it, or assumed by him; such as God on earth, the vicar of Christ, the head, and husband, and foundation of the church, with many others:

having seven heads, and ten horns: the seven heads are the seven mountains, on which the city of Rome, the metropolis of the empire, is seated; and the seven kings, or seven forms of government, under which it has been, as appears from (Revelation 17:9,10) (see Gill on “Revelation 12:3”), (see Gill on “Revelation 13:1”) and the “ten horns” signify the ten kings over the ten kingdoms, into which the empire was divided, when overrun by the Goths and Vandals; and which ten kings gave their kingdoms to the beast, the Romish antichrist; they gave their strength and power to him, being of his religion, and have been his horns, his defenders and supporters, ever since, as may be gathered from (Revelation 17:12,13,17).

Ver. 4. *And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour*, etc.] Which may be expressive of her grandeur, authority, and power, sitting as a queen, and sovereign in the empire, ruling over kingdoms and nations in it; and also of her bloody disposition to the saints, with whose blood she is afterwards said to be drunk;

and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls; which may denote her hypocrisy, she being gilded with these things, as the word signifies, when she was inwardly rotten, corrupt, and filthy; and may point out the things by which persons have been enticed into the communion of the church of Rome, and to comply with her idolatrous worship and practices;

and may also respect the prodigious riches, which have, by various methods, been brought into the pope's coffers; these, with other things, are reckoned among the merchandise of Babylon, (Revelation 18:12) and particularly this may have reference to the adorning of their temples, or churches, and the decking of their images, with those things; which gaudy pompous shows strike the minds of carnal men, amuse them, and engage their attention. So Philo [f395] the Jew describes an whore as arrayed in purple, and adorned with gold and precious stones; (see Proverbs 7:10).

Having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication; in allusion to Babylon, (Jeremiah 51:7) and also to harlots, who give philters or love potions to men, to excite lust, and draw their affections to them; and this being a golden cup may design the external lustre and splendour of the worship of the church of Rome, by which many have been drawn into a compliance with it, which is attended with many abominable, filthy, and idolatrous practices: and perhaps some regard may be had to the golden chalice, in which, it is pretended, is the very blood of Christ, which the priests take as such, and worship and adore, and is no other than an abominable and filthy piece of idolatry; and such are the persons that partake of it; like the Pharisees of old, they make clean the outside of the cup and platter; glister, and make a great show of devotion, but within are full of extortion and excess.

Ver. 5. *And upon her forehead was a name written*, etc.] As the high priest had on his mitre upon his forehead written, holiness to the Lord, (Exodus 28:36) only a different inscription from that; the allusion is thought to be to harlots, who not only used to put their names over their doors, but some of them upon their foreheads, that all might know who they were; of which Mr. Daubuz has given proofs out of Seneca, Martial, Juvenal, and Petronius; and such might be said to have an whore's forehead indeed: and this is expressive of the openness and impudence of the church of Rome, in her idolatrous worship; she openly declares it, and pleads for it, and invites and ensnares persons to join with her in it: the name follows,

mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth; her name is “mystery”; not the mystery of godliness, that she dislikes and opposes, but the mystery of iniquity; which is the name antichrist went by in the Apostle Paul's time, when he was but in embryo, (2 Thessalonians 2:7). Some reference may be had to the mystery of the Mass, in which the Papists pretend are the very body and blood of Christ;

to their seven sacraments, for wherever almost they find the word mystery, they make a sacrament of that to which it is applied; and to their unwritten traditions, and the sense of the Scriptures, which are locked up in the pope's breast: and it is very remarkable what has been observed by some, that the word “mystery” was formerly upon the frontlet of the pope's mitre, and was removed by Pope Julius the Third, when it was observed that the Protestants made use of this passage of Scripture, and applied it to the Romish antichrist. Joseph Scaliger[f396] affirms, that he saw mitres at Rome with this inscription on them. Though others think that this is not any part of the name, but only signifies that this woman was, in a mysterious or mystical sense, called Babylon, etc. just as the great city is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, (<661108>Revelation 11:8) but to me it seems to be a part of the name, as well as what follows, “Babylon the great”; that is, the great city, (<661408>Revelation 14:8) by which name the church of Rome may well be called, because of the signification of it, confusion, (<011109>Genesis 11:9) its doctrine and worship being a confused mixture of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity; and because of the pride and haughtiness of it, its tyranny and cruelty, and its sorceries and idolatry; (see <232412>Isaiah 14:12-14 47:6,7,12,13 <245038>Jeremiah 50:38).

And the mother of harlots, of all antichristian states and kingdoms; and is different from the heavenly Jerusalem, the Gospel church, which is the mother of true believers, (<480426>Galatians 4:26) or the “mother of fornications”: as some copies read, and the Vulgate Latin and eastern versions render it; that is, the author and encourager of them, as the church of Rome has been; of corporeal fornication, by commanding celibacy, and forbidding marriage to priests, and setting up of brothel houses; and of spiritual fornication or idolatry, everywhere required and encouraged by it: and of “the abominations of the earth”; of abominable doctrines and practices; all manner of wickedness that is to be found in the earth, as murder, adultery, sodomy, perjury, etc. these, with everything that is vile and wicked, are practised and connived at by her.

Ver. 6. *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints*, etc.] To see a woman drunk is a shameful sight; but to see one drunk, not with wine, but with blood, is monstrous, cruel, and shocking; the sword, when it devours, and is satiate, is said to be drunk with blood, (<244610>Jeremiah 46:10) but for a woman to be so is unexampled; and not with her own blood, as she will be, (<234926>Isaiah 49:26 <661606>Revelation 16:6) but with the blood of others; and not with the blood of wicked men, but with the blood of saints;

such as God the Father has set apart from everlasting, and chosen to be holy; whom Christ has sanctified by his blood, or whose sins he has expiated, and to whom he is made sanctification; and who have principles of grace and holiness wrought in them by the Spirit of God, and live holy lives and conversations:

and of the martyrs of Jesus; the saints, whose blood is shed by antichrist, are martyrs also; but they seem to design the common people, and these the ministers of the Gospel, who are the martyrs of Jesus, both in life and death; they are his martyrs or witnesses, by their doctrine and ministry, bearing testimony to him as Jesus, a Saviour; testifying that he is the only Saviour, that there is salvation in no other, in opposition to the antichristian doctrines of merit, penance, purgatory, etc. for which they have been cruelly put to death, and in great numbers, and so have sealed their doctrine by their blood. Now the woman being drunk with their blood, denotes the blood thirstiness of the church of Rome, her greedy aud insatiable desire after the blood of the saints, and her delight in it, being exceeding mad against them; and the multitude of it shed by her, as the slaughters of the Waldenses and Albigenses, the butcheries of the duke d'Alva in the Low Countries, the massacres in France, Ireland, and other places, the burning of the martyrs in Queen Mary's days here, with numerous other instances, show.

And when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration; not at the sight of the beast, which he had seen before, but at the sight of the woman, as, upon the beast; he wondered that one of her sex, generally timorous and fearful, should ride on such a monstrous creature; he was amazed at her dress, and grand appearance, whereas the church in his time consisted of poor persons, meanly arrayed; it was astonishing to him that one bearing the name of a Christian church should rise to such grandeur; and he wondered at the name upon her forehead, what the whole of that inscription should mean; but, above all, at her drunkenness with the blood of the saints; at her inhumanity and cruelty, being as savage as the beast she rode on; and also at God's forbearance of her, that he, who is a pure and holy Being, a lover of his saints, an avenger of his elect, should suffer such a brutish, barbarous, and blood thirsty creature, to live upon earth; (see ⁓Habakkuk 1:13).

Ver. 7. *And the angel said unto me*, etc.] The same as in (⁓Revelation 17:1)

wherefore didst thou marvel? which is not said by way of reproof, as questions of this kind sometimes are, (<44312>Acts 3:12) for John did not wonder at her with a sinful admiration, so as to have her in great veneration, and to do homage and worship to her, as the inhabitants of the world wondered after the beast, (<66303>Revelation 13:3 17:8) but his admiration was an amazement, or stupefaction of mind, joined with indignation at her; and this is said by the angel to lead on to what he had to declare unto him.

I will tell thee the mystery of the woman; that is, what is mysteriously or mystically designed by her; for till it was made known to John by the angel, it was a mystery to him; and when it was revealed, the interpretation is given in such an obscure manner, that it is only understood by the mind that has spiritual wisdom; and still remains a mystery to carnal men, just as the Gospel itself does. The hidden meaning of this woman, or the mystery of her, is told by the angel in (<66718>Revelation 17:18).

And of the beast that carried her, which hath the seven heads, and ten horns; the mystical sense of the beast, its heads and horns, and which is also delivered in a mysterious manner, is given in (<66708>Revelation 17:8-12).

Ver. 8. *The beast which thou sawest was, and is not*, etc.] It is added at the end of the verse where the same description is given, “and yet is”; this beast is to be understood not of the devil, who “was” the god of this world, “is not”, being cast out by Christ, and yet is in being; for he, the dragon, is distinguished from this beast, and indeed from him the beast has his seat, power, and authority, (<66501>Revelation 13:1,2) nor any particular emperor, as Domitian, a cruel and savage one, who was in power in Vespasian's time, when he was abroad, and then was out of it upon his return, and yet afterwards was in again, being as one sent from hell, and went at last into perdition; but the Roman empire itself is intended, as we have seen, which carried and supported the Papacy; and variously may this be interpreted; as that it was in the hands of the Romans originally, and long continued with them, but now “is not”, in John's time, being in the hands of Trajan, a Spaniard, “and yet is” in being, Rome being the metropolis of it: it was a very powerful and flourishing empire, “and is not”, being destroyed by the Goths and Vandals, “and yet is” a large empire under the jurisdiction of antichrist; it was an idolatrous empire, which encouraged the worshipping of Heathen gods, “and is not” guilty of the same idolatrous practices it was, as the worshipping of Jupiter, Mars, etc. “and yet is” much given to

idolatry in another way, worshipping the virgin Mary, and other saints; it "was" under kings, consuls, dictators, tribunes, decemvirs, and emperors, it "is not" in such a form of government, "and yet is" under its seventh head the pope; "Rome was", but "is not" the same it has been, in some respects, and yet is the same, for idolatry, cruelty, etc. it has the image of old Rome, when Pagan, and under the power of the dragon; and though antichrist was not risen up in the empire to an head, to supreme power yet it was in being in the apostles' times, and began to work, and by degrees to show itself. In short, the meaning is, that this beast "was" the Roman empire, as Pagan, described by a dragon with seven heads, and ten horns, with crowns on the heads, but is not as yet in the Apostle John's time, as Papal, described with seven heads, and ten horns, and crowns on the horns.

And shall ascend out of the bottomless pit: out of hell, from whence the antichristian beast has its power; (see Revelation 11:8 13:2) otherwise all civil power is from God, but not antichristian power, that is from the devil:

and go into perdition; everlasting destruction, the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; this will be the end of the beast, (Revelation 19:20).

and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder; the inhabitants of the Roman empire, earthly minded men, shall have the beast in great veneration, and follow and worship him; (see Revelation 13:3,4,12)

whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world; none but reprobates, not any of the elect of God, are the admirers and worshippers of antichrist; (see Gill on "Revelation 13:8")

when they beheld the beast that was, and is not, and yet is; the Roman empire in glory, under the emperors, destroyed by the Goths, and revived in the Papacy. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the last clause,

and yet is.

Ver. 9. *And here is the mind which hath wisdom*, etc.] This refers either to what goes before, concerning the beast, his various states, rise, and ruin, and his admirers; or to what follows after, concerning the meaning of his heads and horns, or to both; and the sense is, that notwithstanding the interpretation of these things by the angel, yet it requires a large share of wisdom to understand them; and here is enough to exercise the mind that is

ever so well stored with knowledge and understanding; and so the Arabic version renders it, “here it is required that one should have judgment and wisdom”; for to a man that has not, the affair will still be obscure and unintelligible. The words may be rendered, “here is the mind, he that hath wisdom”; that is, let him make use of it, as in (<66138>Revelation 13:18) and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “and this is the sense, he that hath wisdom”; this is the sense of the beast, and of his heads and horns; and he that has wisdom, let him consider it, and take it in, and apply it to proper persons, things, and times; and so the Ethiopic version, “he that has wisdom and understanding, let him know this”; or take cognizance of it, it being a matter of importance, and attended with difficulty:

the seven heads are seven mountains of which the woman sitteth that is, they signify seven mountains, or are symbolical representations of them; just as the seven good kine, and seven good ears, in Pharoah's dream, signified seven years of plenty, and seven thin kine, and seven empty ears, seven years of famine, (<01426>Genesis 41:26,27). As the woman is a city, (<66718>Revelation 17:18) these seven mountains, on which she sits, must be so many mountains on which the city is built; and what city can this be but Rome, which is so famous for being built on seven hills? This is taken notice of by Virgil [f397], Horace [f398], Ovid [f399], Claudian [f400], Starius [f401], Martial [f402], and others; and indeed there is scarce a poet that speaks of Rome but observes it: hence it has been sometimes called, by writers, the seven hilled city, and sometimes Septiceps, the seven headed city, which comes near to the language here: the names of the seven mountains were these, Capitolinus, Palatinus, Aventinus, Esquilinus, Coelius, Viminalis, and Quirinalis; the four first of these were taken in by Romulus, the first founder of it, and the three last by Servius Tullius, when he enlarged it; and upon the addition of the seventh mountain there was a feast kept, called Septimontium; and which was kept in seven places in the city [f403]; and was annually observed; and in this situation it was in John's time; for Pliny [f404], who was contemporary with him, expressly says, that in his time it took in seven mountains; and that this refers to a city in John's time, then reigning over the kings of the earth, is certain from (<66718>Revelation 17:18). Now there was no imperial city, so built in his time, but Rome: for though Constantinople is built on seven hills, yet this was not in being in John's time, but was built by Constantine many years after, in imitation of Rome; and though the situation is much altered now, being in Campus Martius, it being greatly reduced, and in a less compass, yet this hinders not but that it

is the same city here designed: and this confirms that the beast before spoken of, on whom the woman sat, is the Roman empire, since she is here said to sit on the seven mountains, on which Rome, the metropolis of that empire, was built; and this shows the pope of Rome to be antichrist, the great whore, Babylon, the mother of harlots, since no other has his seat at Rome but he.

Ver. 10. *And there are seven kings*, etc.] The Arabic version renders it, "who are seven kings"; and it should be rendered, as it is by the Vulgate Latin, Syriac and Ethiopic versions, "and they are seven kings"; that is, the seven heads signify seven kings also, for they have in them a double representation, first of seven mountains, and then of seven kings; by which are meant not seven ages of the world, as from Adam to Noah; from Noah to Abraham; from Abraham to David; from David to the Babylonish captivity; from the Babylonish captivity to Christ; from Christ to antichrist; and from antichrist to the end of the world; the five first of which were gone in John's time, the sixth was then in being, and when the seventh shall come it will continue for a short time: this is a foolish and absurd interpretation of the Papists, who make the beast to be the devil, and these his seven heads; whereas he rather is the head, or god of the world: nor are seven emperors of Rome intended, which are differently reckoned, according to the different times John is supposed to have had this revelation. Grotius, who is followed by Hammond, supposes this was written in the times of Vespasian, and reckons them thus; Clandius, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, and Titus; the first five of these were dead in John's time, one was then, the sixth, Vespasian, the then reigning emperor, and the other, Titus, was yet to come to the empire; and when he came to it, continued but a short time, two years and two mouths: others, who more rightly judge that John wrote in Domitian's time, reckon them after this manner; Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, and Nerva; the first five of these were dead; Domitian was then living, and Nerva, the other that was to come and succeed him, reigned but a little while, not quite two years; but to this sense must be objected, that there were other emperors before either Galba or Claudius; and before John's time there were more than five fallen or dead; according to the first account, there must be nine dead, and according to the latter eleven; for before Claudius there were Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, and Caius: besides, if these were the seven heads of the beast, the beast must have been long ago without any head, and consequently must have expired; whereas it is

still in being, and will be under the fifth, sixth, and seventh vials, which are yet to come; it will be at the battle of Armageddon, and will be taken then, and cast alive into the lake of fire; to which may be added, that the beast, in the form in which John now saw it, was not yet risen in the times of these emperors; but by the seven heads are meant so many forms of government which took place successively in the Roman empire, and were all of them idolatrous heads, as kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, tribunes, emperors, and popes; it being usual for any sort of governors, or governments and monarchies, to be called kings, (Deuteronomy 33:5 Daniel 7:17,23).

Five are fallen; or ceased, are no longer in being as kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and tribunes; at least, the supreme power was not lodged in any bearing either of these names in John's time:

and one is; the Pagan emperors; an Heathen emperor, Domitian, then reigning, when John had this vision; and these continued to the opening of the sixth seal, which put an end to that succession, as Pagan, and till the woman brought forth the man child, or till Constantine's time:

and the other is not yet come; which some understand of the Christian emperors, who immediately succeeded the Pagan ones, and were another, and different from them, as to religion, though the form of government was the same, and were not another head; for they were not an idolatrous head, on which were names of blasphemy, but another king; for from the following verse it appears, that there are eight kings, and but seven heads, and therefore one of them should seem not to be a head; and these, when they came, continued but a short time in comparison of the Heathen emperors that reigned before them, and of the hope, or antichrist, who was to reign after them 1260 years; for they reigned not, put them all together, more than 150 years; and especially at Rome their stay was short, for Constantine removed from thence to Constantinople, in the nineteenth year of his empire. But these emperors, though in religion they differed from the others, yet their form of government and title were the same, and therefore must be included in the sixth head: according to some, Theodoricus the Ostrogoth, and his successors, are meant, who continued about an hundred years; others have thought that the exarchs of Ravenna, who rose up upon the destruction of the western empire, are intended, and who continued but a short time; but then these had not their seat at Rome, which it seems necessary each head of this beast should have; it is better, therefore, to

understand this of the popes of Rome, the seventh and last head of the Roman empire; these were not yet come, in John's time, to their supreme dignity and authority:

and when he cometh he must continue a short space; forty two months, or 1260 days; that is, so many years, which, though a long time in itself, and in the account of man, yet with God, with whom a thousand years is as one day, and in comparison of the everlasting kingdom of Christ, and his people, it is but a short space; and so the reign of the beast, and of the ten kings with him, is said to be one hour, (⁶⁶¹⁷²Revelation 17:12) and this is said for the comfort of the saints, and to keep up their faith and patience under their sufferings in antichristian states. Mr. Daubuz makes these seven heads, or kings, signified by seven mountains, seven capital cities, which by degrees came to belong to the Roman empire; as first Rome itself, the capital of Italy; next Carthage, the capital of Africa; then Aege, the capital of Macedonia; after that Antiochia, the capital of the east; then Augustodunum, the capital of the Gauls; and Alexandria, the capital of Egypt; five of these six, with the monarchies belonging to them, were fallen; one, or the first of them now, was the mistress of all; and the other seventh was to come, namely, Byzantium, or Contantinople, which continued not long. This passage is so interpreted, as also the seven heads, in (⁶⁶¹⁰¹Revelation 13:1) by this writer.

Ver. 11. *And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth*, etc.] That was in embryo in John's time, and yet was not come to its power and grandeur, is the eighth king; and this is the Papacy, which takes the name of the beast, because it is the head of the beast, and the only surviving head of the beast, or Roman empire, now become Papal:

and is of the seven; one of the seven heads, and the last of them, and is an idolatrous one, as the rest were, requiring and encouraging the worship of angels, of the virgin Mary, and saints parted: the pope of Rome is the eighth king, and seventh head, the latter with respect to his temporal power, and the former with respect to his ecclesiastical authority; for his government is quite of a different sort from the rest, being of a mixed kind, partly civil, and partly ecclesiastical, and therefore is signified by two beasts in the thirteenth chapter:

and goes into perdition; being the son of perdition, and is justly deserving of it; (see Gill on "⁶⁶¹⁷⁸Revelation 17:8").

Ver. 12. *And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings*, etc.] Not ten Christian emperors, which are reckoned up by Brightman from Constantine to Theodosius; for these did not reign with the beast, or give their kingdoms to him, and much less did they make war with the Lamb; they are rather the angels of Michael, that fought for him, the Lamb, against the dragon, and his angels, (Revelation 12:7) nor ten kings that will rise up and divide the Roman empire between them, towards the end of the world, which is a sense devised by Papists to obscure and hide from men the true meaning of the passage; but the ten kingdoms which rose up, and into which the Roman empire was divided upon its being ruined, and torn to pieces by the Goths, Huns, and Vandals. They are the same with the "ten toes" of Nebuchadnezzar's image, and the "ten horns" of the fourth beast, or kingdom, in (Daniel 2:42 7:7,23,24). These are differently reckoned up by interpreters: by Napier thus; Spain, France, Lombardy, England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Hungary, Italy, and the exarchate of Ravenna: by Mr. Mede after this manner; the Britains in Britain, under Vortimer their king; the Saxons in the same place, under Hengist; the Franks in Gallia Belgica, or Celtics, under Childeric; the Burgundians in another part of France, under Gunderic; the Wisigoths in Aquitain, and part of Spain, under Theodoric; the Sueves and Alans in Gallaecia and Portugal, under Riciarius; the Vandals in Spain and Africa, under Genseric; the Almains in that part of Germany called Rhetia, under Sumanus; the Ostrogoths in Pannonia, and after in Italy, under Theodomir; and the Greeks in the rest of the empire, under Marcianus: and by another [f405] writer they are accounted for in this way; the Almains in both the Rhetia, and in Pannonia, who rose in the year 356; the Ostrogoths, first in Pannonia, and then in Italy, in 377; the Wisigoths in Pannonia, and then in Italy, afterwards in France, and last of all in Spain, in 378; the Huns in Pannonia, and for some time throughout all Europe, in 378; the Britian Romans in Britain, and afterwards the Saxons, in 406; the Sueves, first in France, and then in Spain, in 407; the Alans, first in France, and then in Spain, in 407; the Vandals, first in France, then in Spain, afterwards in Africa, in 407; the Burgundians in France, in 407; the Franks in France, in 410. And it is generally thought all these ten kingdoms were up by the year 450 at least. Though Dr. Allix makes the epocha of them A. D. 486, when the western empire was taken from the Romans, and fixes them in the following order; the Almains in Rhetia and Pannonia; the Franks in Belgica; the Anglo-Saxons in Britain; the Wisigoths in Gallia Aquitania and Hispania Tarraconensis; the Sueves and Alans in Portugal; the Vandals in

Africa; the Burgundians in Gallia Sequanensis; the Ostrogoths in Pannonia, and afterwards in Italy; the Lombards in Pannonia, and the Heruli and Turcilingi, who conquered Augustulus: and though these kingdoms were thrown into different forms and shapes afterwards, yet it is remarkable they were just of this number; as,

1. Italy and Germany;
2. France;
3. Spain;
4. England with Ireland;
5. Scotland;
6. Hungary;
7. Poland with Lithuania;
8. Denmark, with Sweden and Norway, Sweden being since divided;
9. Portugal;
10. The Grecian empire seized by the Ottomans.

And as these kings cannot be understood of single persons at the head of these kingdoms, or of so many kings succeeding one another; so neither is it necessary to consider these kingdoms as being in the same state, and made up of the same sort of people always; it is enough that they are in the same place, and within the empire; for we, may observe, that different things, at different times, are ascribed to them, or at least to some. They all are at first of one mind, and give their kingdom to the beast; then they, at least some of them, hate the whore, and burn her with fire; and yet others lament the destruction and burning of Rome, (<66176>Revelation 17:16,17 18:9).

Which have received no kingdom as yet: in John's time, when the Pagan empire was in being, and the beast was not risen, with whom they were to reign; hence these horns have no crowns on them, (<66123>Revelation 12:3).

But receive power as kings one hour with the beast; as soon as he was risen; and therefore the horns are represented with crowns upon them, (<66131>Revelation 13:1). Their rise was with the Papal beast, who rose not to his supreme power and dignity until the western emperor, which let and hindered, was removed out of the way; which was done by the barbarous nations, who set up these kingdoms, which made way for the lordly and tyrannical government of the pope of Rome; so that he and they rose up together: and this may he meant by the “one hour”; namely, that at one and the same hour or season he came to his supreme authority and grandeur,

and they received their kingly power with him; or this may denote the time of their continuance in their honour and greatness; it was but for an hour, or a short time, as that phrase sometimes signifies, (<57015>Philemon 1:15) and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “for one hour”; to which agrees the Arabic version,

and their power shall be of one hour: and this shall be “as kings”; for they only have the title of kings, but not sovereign power; they are vassals to the beast, the pope, who reigns over them, (<661718>Revelation 17:18) and sets up kings in these kingdoms, and deposes them at pleasure; exalting himself above all that is called God, or above all civil magistrates; so that these have only the name, not the thing; they are as kings, and look like such, but are not really so; though what power they have, they receive not from the beast, but from God; the beast receives his power and authority, as well as seat, from the dragon; but civil power and magistracy is from God, who suffers these princes, and gives them up to such stupidity as to give their kingdom to the beast, and to exercise their power as he directs.

Ver. 13. *These have one mind*, etc.] The princes of these kingdoms, and their subjects, become, in time, of one religion; first they were Arians, and then Papists; and for a long series of time there was great unity between them, with respect to religious sentiments, being zealously attached to the church of Rome, its principles and practices:

and shall give their power and strength unto the beast; the Papal antichrist, the eighth king, and seventh head; to him they have given power to exercise all ecclesiastical authority in their kingdoms; as to ordain bishops, and deliver the pall to whom they will; to excommunicate offenders, and even lay their kingdoms under an interdict when they pleased; and have assisted and defended the popes of Rome with all their force, with all their might and main, and to the utmost of their power, and have engaged in what have been called the holy wars, at their motion; they have given their riches and wealth, which are called the forces of strength, (<183619>Job 36:19) which they have, by various methods, drained them of; hence the whore of Rome came to be decked with gold, and pearls, and precious stones; yea, they have given them their kingdoms, and have received them from them, and become tributary to them.

Ver. 14. *These shall make war with the Lamb*, etc.] The Lord Jesus Christ, so often spoken of in this book under this character, (<660506>Revelation 5:6,12 6:1 7:10 14:1). And this war is not to be understood of a war with him

personally, or of that last and decisive, battle at Armageddon, in which will be the kings of the earth; but of a war with his members, of their persecuting of the saints, and faithful witnesses of Christ in all ages, within their jurisdictions, being instigated to it by the beast, under whose influence they are:

and the Lamb shall overcome them: partly through the constancy of his people, who will not love their lives to the death, but freely lay them down for him; nor can anything separate them from the love of Christ, or prevail upon them to desert him, his truths and ordinances, cause and interest, but are more than conquerors through him, and so he overcomes in them; and partly through a reformation which he effects, as in some of those kingdoms already, as Sweden, Denmark, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and others, and will do in others hereafter; (see <66716>Revelation 17:16)

for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; he is so by nature, as God and Creator, to whom the kingdom of nature and providence belongs; and by office, as Mediator, being made higher than the kings of the earth; hence he is more than a match for them, they cannot stand before him; this is a reason why he overcomes them, and it cannot be thought it should be otherwise: this Lamb is the lion of the tribe of Judah, and when he rouses himself, and stirs up his wrath, and exerts his power, kings and great men flee from him; (see <66615>Revelation 6:15-17 <19026>Psalm 2:6,9-12). This is a proof of Christ's proper deity, the same titles being given to him, the Word and Son of God, as to God himself, (<66916>Revelation 19:16 <54615>1 Timothy 6:15,16).

And they that are with him: his servants and his soldiers, that fight under him, and abide by him,

are called, and chosen, and faithful; they are chosen in Christ from all eternity, to grace here, and glory hereafter, and so stand opposed to the admirers of the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life, (<66708>Revelation 17:8) for this is to be understood of their eternal election, and not of their separation by the effectual calling in time, for that is expressed by their being “called”; and though their calling is here set before election, as in (<61010>2 Peter 1:10) yet it does not precede it; the Arabic version reads, “chosen, called, faithful”; first “chosen” by God the Father, then “called”, not with the bare external call by the ministry of the word, for, so, many are called, and not chosen; but by special grace to special benefits, and with an holy and heavenly calling, and which is irresistible,

and without repentance; and being called they remain “faithful”: the meaning is, either that they have faith, or are believers in Christ; which faith they have bestowed on them in the effectual calling, as a fruit of electing grace; and by this they overcome the world: or else, that they are persons of integrity and uprightness, that are on the side of Christ; they are the faithful in the Lord, and are made so by him; and they are faithful to him, and abide by his Gospel and ordinances, and in his cause and interest, even unto death; and so this character is expressive of the perseverance of those who are chosen and called, even unto the end.

Ver. 15. *And he saith unto me*, etc.] That is, the angel, who proposed to give John the interpretation of the vision, he went on with it as follows:

the waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, (see Gill on “Revelation 17:1”),

are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues; denoting the vast multitude of people, of which the several kingdoms, of divers languages, consist, which belong to the jurisdiction of Rome Papal: it is an eastern way of speaking, and is particularly used to express the various kingdoms, and infinite number of people belonging to the Babylonish monarchy, which was an emblem of the antichristian state, (Daniel 3:4,7,29 4:1) and these are compared to waters, to many waters; which phrase sometimes is used for the sea, (Psalm 107:23) because of the vast numbers of them; the whole world wondered after the beast, and the kings and inhabitants of the earth have been subject to the see of Rome; and because of their overbearing force, carrying all before them; (see Isaiah 8:7,8 Jeremiah 47:2) (Revelation 13:3,4) and because, like waters, they are continually upon the flux, one generation succeeding another; and because of their instability, fickleness, and inconstancy, as in religion, so in their constitution, they will hate the whore they love; and as they frequently change and alter in their form, at last they will utterly cease: so the Jews [f406] interpret many waters, in (Song of Solomon 8:7) of all people, and of the kings of the earth, and of the nations of the world; and they say, that many waters never signify any other than all the nations, and those that are appointed over them [f407]. So, “he drew me out of many waters”, (Psalm 18:16) is by the Targum on the place explained, he delivered me from many people. And so (Psalm 46:4) is paraphrased by the Targumist;

> “people, “as rivers”, and their streams, shall come, and make glad the city of the Lord;”

see the Targum on (Isaiah 8:7) and in (Ezekiel 32:2) where it is observed kingdoms are compared to waters [f408].

Ver. 16. *And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast*, etc.] (Revelation 17:3) and which are interpreted of ten kings, (Revelation 17:12). The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and the Syriac Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, “and the beast”; and then the sense is, that the ten kings and states in particular, who have defended antichrist, and the whole empire in general, which has bore up and supported the whore of Rome:

these shall hate the whore; her principles and sentiments, her doctrines, which are doctrines of devils, her wicked practices, her idolatries, adulteries, murders, and thefts; they will repent of their fornications with her, and cease from them; their love will be turned to hatred, and the latter will be greater than ever the former was, like Amnon's to Tamar; and as it usually is with men towards harlots, when they see their follies, and how they have been deceived and abused by them:

and shall make her desolate; leave her, quit her communion; no more commit fornication with her, or join with her in her idolatrous worship; but come out from that apostate church, and renounce all fellowship with her, and persuade and engage as many as they can influence to do the same:

and naked; strip her of her purple, scarlet colour, gold, pearls, and precious stones; cease to give their power and strength, withhold their taxes and tribute, deprive her of her power and authority, civil and ecclesiastical, in their realms, and take away even her patrimony from her; and not only so, but expose her shame and filthiness, her abominable principles and practices, to all the world; which has been in part done already:

and shall eat her flesh; not literally, but mystically; not out of love, but hatred; they shall take that to themselves, and make use of, which have fattened her, as bishoprics, and other benefices, lands, endowments belonging to abbeys, and monasteries, and other religious houses; an instance and example of which we have in King Henry the Eighth's time; so some understand this phrase of devouring the substance of others, in (Psalm 27:2 Daniel 7:5). So the Targumists often interpret “flesh and fatness”; by “riches, goods”, or substance; the phrase in (Isaiah 17:4) “the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean”, is paraphrased, hyrqy rtw[, “the riches of his glory shall be carried away”; and the words in

(<33003>Micah 3:3) who shall also eat the flesh of my people", etc. are rendered, "and they who spoil" ym[yskn, "the goods", or "substance of my people, and take away their precious mammon, or money, from them. And again, (<38109>Zechariah 11:9) "let the rest eat, everyone the flesh of another", is in the Targum, "let a man spoil" yskn, "the goods or substance of his neighbour"; and in (<66716>Revelation 17:16) he shall eat the flesh of the fat; the paraphrase is, "he shall" spoil yskn, "the goods or substance of the rich".

And burn her with fire: alluding to the law in (<03209>Leviticus 21:9) which required that the daughter of a priest, that played the whore, should be burnt with fire; and this is to be understood literally of burning the city of Rome, the seat of the whore, with fire; of which (see <66808>Revelation 18:8,9,18). It has been very near being burnt in times past, as by Alaricus the Goth, Attila the Hun, Genseric the Vandal, and by Totilas, and in later times by Charles the Fifth; and would have been, had they not been dissuaded or diverted from it; and which were so many preludes and warnings of its future fate: and we may learn from hence, that Rome, and the Romish antichrist, will not be destroyed by the Turks, but by the Christians; and by the same states, and kingdoms, and princes, by which the whore of Rome has been supported in her grandeur, power, and authority, who will revolt from Popery, and embrace the pure Gospel of Christ: and this shows, that the ten horns, or kingdoms, into which the Roman empire has been divided, will subsist in this form at the destruction of Rome; wherefore, it has been rightly observed by some, that not one of these kingdoms shall ever be able to rise to universal monarchy. France has been for many years attempting it, but in vain; and we may sit down easy and satisfied, assuring ourselves with the greatest confidence, that all attempts this way will be fruitless; there never will be another universal monarchy on earth but that of Christ's; (see <27027>Daniel 2:37,39,40 7:3,23, 27).

Ver. 17. *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will*, etc.] By doing the preceding things to the whore of Rome, whose destruction is according to the will of God; it is his approving will, what he likes of, and will be well pleased with; it is his will of command, what he will order to be done, (<66806>Revelation 18:6,7) and it is his determining will, his will of purpose, his decree, what he has resolved shall be done; he has fixed the time of her reign, and longer than that she shall not continue: and these kings, in

destroying her, will not do so much their own will, as the will of God, and God will put it into their hearts to do it; he will work in them both to will and to do; he will fill them with hatred to her; he will incline their minds to do the above things, as it will be in the power of their hands to do them; he who has the hearts of all men, and even of kings in his hands, and can turn them as rivers of water, will move them hereunto, (<21101>Proverbs 21:1) he that turned the hearts of the Egyptians to hate his people Israel, (<19A525>Psalm 105:25) will turn the hearts of these kings to hate the whore, and do unto her as is here predicted; and the same God will do this, who has, on the other hand, already put into their hearts to do the following things:

and to agree: this clause is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin version, and is the same with that of having one mind, (<66173>Revelation 17:13) that is, being of the same religion; God giving them up to a reprobate mind, to believe a lie, that they might be damned; which must be understood not of the same individuals, but of their predecessors; unless this is to be interpreted of their agreeing together against the whore, to pull her down, and set up the pure worship and service of God; for this is a blessing of grace from God, who gives his people one heart and one way, that they may fear him, (<24239>Jeremiah 32:39) but the former sense seems best, since it follows,

and give their kingdom unto the beast; the eighth king, and seventh head, the pope of Rome; to whom they have given their power and strength in things civil and ecclesiastical, their wealth and riches; and have received their crowns from him, and have held their kingdoms by him, and become tributary to him: and this is done, and will be,

until the words of God shall be fulfilled; concerning the afflictions of his church and people, and the reign of antichrist, for the space of forty and two months, (<66102>Revelation 11:2 13:5) all which while they are fulfilling the secret will of God, unknown to them, and yet act against his revealed will, and break his commands; just as the Jews, ignorant of the prophecies of the Old Testament, fulfilled them in condemning Christ, (<44127>Acts 13:27). That God should put it into the hearts of these kings to fulfil his will, in destroying the whore of Rome, is easily received; but there seems some difficulty that he should put it into their hearts to agree and give their kingdom to the beast, which was sinful: now this he did, not by infusing sin into them, which is contrary to his pure and holy nature; but by leaving them, and giving them up to their own hearts' lusts; stirring up, and moving

upon their minds, and directing the motions of it, to such and such objects, which they readily and voluntarily fell in with; and yet the concern of God herein does not, nor do his decrees about sin infringe the liberty of the will in acting, or excuse the sinfulness of the action, or make God the author of sin; as the instances of selling of Joseph by his brethren, and the crucifixion of Christ by the Jews, show.

Ver. 18. *And the woman which thou sawest*, etc.] (<66173>Revelation 17:3) as there described,

is that great city, often mentioned in this book; great Babylon, the city of Rome, (<66108>Revelation 11:8 14:8 16:19) which reigneth over the kings of the earth; which then reigned in John's time over the kings of the earth; and this clearly points out the city of Rome, for there was no other city then, but that, which reigned over the kings of the earth; that was then the metropolis of the Roman empire, to which the whole world was subject; and therefore it is called all the world, (<42201>Luke 2:1) and since, all the kings of the empire have been under the jurisdiction of Rome Papal. It was formerly called Urbs Regum, a “city of kings” [f409], either for the reason in the text, or because its inhabitants looked like kings.

CHAPTER 18

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 18

This chapter gives an account of the fall of Babylon, and of the lamentation of many, and of the joy of others, by reason of it; which account is published by several angels: the first that declares her fall is described by his original, descending from heaven; by the great power he had; by his resplendent glory, and by his mighty cry in publishing her destruction; which is illustrated by the desolate condition she will be in upon her fall; the reasons of which are given, became the nations and kings of the earth had committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth were enriched by her luxury, (<66180 1>Revelation 18:1-3). Another voice is heard from heaven, calling upon the people of God, first to come out of her, lest partaking of her sins they should share in her plagues, seeing her iniquities had reached to heaven, and were remembered before God; and next to take full vengeance on her, because she had glorified herself, lived deliciously, and in great security, (<66180 4>Revelation 18:4-7). And then follows a continuation of the account of her destruction, what her plagues would be, death, mourning, famine, and fire; and which would be sudden, in one hour, and certain, from the power and justice of God, (<66180 8>Revelation 18:8). Next follow the lamentations of the kings, merchants, and masters of ships, because of her greatness, riches, and merchandise, which are all come to nothing, (<66180 9>Revelation 18:9-19). And then the church; the saints, apostles, and prophets, are called upon to rejoice at the vengeance taken on her, (<66180 20>Revelation 18:20) upon which a mighty angel appears, who by an action signifies the manner of her destruction, and the irrecoverableness of her state and condition, (<66180 21>Revelation 18:21) and declares her utter ruin, by affirming that nothing that was either delightful or profitable, or necessary or comfortable, should any more be found in her; giving the reasons of it, because of her luxury, idolatry, and bloodshed, (<66180 22>Revelation 18:22-24).

Ver. 1. *And after these things*, etc.] The vision of the woman on the scarlet coloured beast, and the interpretation of both by the angel:

I saw another angel; not the Lord Jesus Christ, though the several things said of this angel agree with him; nor one of the ministering spirits, though the characters of him will also suit with one of them, but rather a minister of the Gospel, or a set of Gospel ministers, who will arise a little before the downfall of Babylon, in the spiritual reign of Christ; though not the same with the angel of fire, (Revelation 14:18) as some have thought, because of his illustrious appearance, and the loudness of his voice; but the same with the angel, or third thundering voice in (Revelation 14:6) for not only the times of both agree, but the selfsame words are expressed by one as by the other; and this angel is distinct from him that showed John the preceding vision, and gave him the interpretation of it, and from all the seven angels that had the vials, and is described as follows: and first by the place from whence he came, John saw him

come down from heaven; denoting the suddenness of his appearance and cry; he came down at once, and cried out immediately; the subject of his cry, the destruction of Babylon, being what will be at an unawares; and also the commission and authority of the ministers signified by him, who will have their warrant from heaven to say what they will deliver; so that this likewise expresses the truth of their message, since both that and they come from heaven:

having great power; to do great work, to declare the fall of Babylon the great: or "having great authority"; being sent from the King of kings, in his name, as his ambassador, to proclaim what shortly will come to pass; an event of the greatest importance to the glory of God, the interest of Christ, and the comfort of his people:

and the earth was lightened with his glory; (see Ezekiel 43:2) by which is meant the glorious Gospel of Christ, the light of which will at this then be very great: these ministers will run to and fro the earth, and knowledge will be increased, and the earth will be filled with it: the Arabic version reads, "with the splendour of his countenance"; and the Ethiopic version, "with the splendour of his countenance, and his glory"; (see Isaiah 60:1-3).

Ver. 2. *And he cried mightily with a strong voice*, etc.] Which shows not only the vehemence and affection of the ministers of the word, who will publish what follows, but the greatness and importance of it; and this loud voice may be, as for the sake of the whole church in general, that all may bear, so for the sake of those of the Lord's people in particular, that will be

in Babylon at this time; and it may have regard to that deep sleep and spirit of slumber that Babylon itself will be in, which, notwithstanding this loud cry, will remain insensible of its ruin till it comes upon her, as was the case of old Babylon, (<2659>Jeremiah 51:39-41),

saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen: the whole world is not designed by Babylon, for it is distinguished from all nations in the following verse; nor Babylon in Chaldea, which was fallen long before John saw this vision, but Rome Papal; (see Gill on "<6648>Revelation 14:8") so the woman is called in (<6705>Revelation 17:5) who sits on seven mountains, and is that great city, the city of Rome, that reigns over the kings of the earth, (<6809>Revelation 18:9,18) this is said to be fallen, because, in a very little time after this declaration, it will fall; for as yet it was not destroyed, since after this the Lord's people are called upon to come out of her, and are bid to reward her double; and it is declared, that her plagues, should come in one day, and she should be burnt with fire; and an angel after this throws a millstone into the sea, saying, that so should Babylon be thrown down, (<6804>Revelation 18:4,6,8,21) and it is repeated to denote the certainty and utter destruction of her: and which is more fully expressed by what follows,

and is become the habitation of devils; as old Babylon was of satyrs, (<2321>Isaiah 13:21) demons, which appeared in a hairy form, like goats, and the word is rendered devils in (<3207>Leviticus 17:7) and the inhabitants of Rome now are no other; the pope and his cardinals, the priests, Jesuits, monks, and friars, are the spirits of devils, and their doctrines the doctrines of devils; (see <6614>Revelation 16:14 <5401>1 Timothy 4:1)

and the hold of every foul spirit: devils are frequently called unclean spirits, and these appear in desert and desolate places, (<4043>Matthew 12:43) where they are either of choice, or rather are obliged to it; and so the word translated "hold" signifies a prison, or place of confinement; and such as are comparable to unclean spirits now haunt and abound in Rome, and its territories; (see <6613>Revelation 16:13)

and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird; such, as vultures, kites, owls, etc. which generally reside in desolate and uninhabited places; the Alexandrian copy, the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, add, "and the hold", or "seat of every unclean and hateful beast"; and so the desolation of old Babylon is described by wild beasts and doleful creatures dwelling in it, (<2321>Isaiah 13:21,22 <2409>Jeremiah 50:39 51:37). Some consider all this as a reason of the destruction of Babylon or Rome, because it now is the

residence of persons comparable to devils, foul spirits, hateful birds, and beasts of prey; but this account rather describes its state and case in which it will be after its ruin, being never more to be inhabited by men, in allusion to old Babylon, (<2339>Isaiah 13:19,20 <2506>Jeremiah 51:62).

Ver. 3. *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication*, etc.] That is, all the nations of the Roman empire, the European nations, otherwise the Pagan and Mahometan nations have not; but these have, being made to drink by her, and made drunk therewith, that is, with her idolatries; (see Gill on "<6148>Revelation 14:8").

And the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her; joined with her in her idolatrous worship and practices, and encouraged the same, and obliged their subjects to them in their dominions; (see Gill on "<6172>Revelation 17:2").

And the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies; or "luxury"; which is not to be understood in a literal sense; though it is true that many merchants, in all ages, have enriched themselves by sending their commodities to Rome, where, through the vast consumption and luxuriousness of the place, they have bore a good price; but this is to be interpreted of spiritual merchants; these are such who do not merchandise by sea, but are land merchants, the merchants of the earth, and are said to be the great men of the earth, (<6823>Revelation 18:23) such as are equal to princes, lords, and nobles; such are the cardinals, archbishops, and bishops; though the inferior clergy of the Romish church, who are under these, may be included: to which may be added, that one part of their wares is said to be the souls of men, (<6813>Revelation 18:13) which plainly shows what sort of merchants these are; they are such who make merchandise of men, and pretend to sell them heaven, and the salvation of their souls; these are they that deal in pardons and indulgences, which they sell to ignorant people, and for a sum of money say Mass to fetch souls out of purgatory: all things have been saleable at Rome, crucifixes, priests, altars, temples, prayers, heaven, Christ, yea, God himself, as the poet Mantuan expresses it; and because of these idolatries, and wicked practices, Rome will be at last destroyed.

Ver. 4. *And I heard another voice from heaven*, etc.] Either of another, or of the same angel, or rather of God, or Christ himself, since the persons addressed are called his people:

saying, come out of her, my people; meaning either his elect ones, till now uncalled, being such whom God had chosen for his people, and were so by virtue of the covenant of grace, were given to Christ as his people, and were redeemed by him, though, till this call, in an unconverted state; or else such who had been secretly called by the grace of God, but had not made a public profession of the Gospel, nor bore an open testimony against the Romish idolatry; for as the Lord had a righteous Lot in Sodom, and saints where Satan's seat was, Rome Pagan, so he will have a people in Rome Papal, at the time when its destruction draws near; and these wilt be called out, not only in a spiritual sense, to quit the communion of the church, to forsake its idolatries, and not touch the unclean thing, separate themselves from her, and bear a testimony against her doctrines and worship, but in a literal sense, locally; they shall be bid to come out of her, as Lot was ordered to go out of Sodom before its burning, and the people of the Jews out of Babylon before the taking of it, (2608Jeremiah 50:8 51:45) to which reference is here had: and as the Christians were called out of Jerusalem before the destruction of it: this shows the particular knowledge the Lord has of his people, be they where they will, and the gracious care he takes of them, that they perish not with others; and that it is his will they should be a separate people from the rest of the world; and this call of his sufficiently justifies the Protestants in their separation from the church of Rome, and every separation from any apostate church;

that ye be not partakers of her sins: by conniving at them, or committing the same; and all such are partakers of them, and have fellowship with these unfruitful works of darkness, that are in the communion of that church; and those that dwell at Rome are in great danger of being so, and cannot well avoid it: yea, even those that only go to see it, and stay but for a time in it, and that not only through the strength and influence of example, but through the force of power and authority:

and that ye receive not of her plagues; or punishments; the seven last plagues, which belong to her, the vials of which will be poured out upon one or other of the antichristian states, and the fifth particularly will fall upon Rome, the seat of the beast, and is what is here referred to.

Ver. 5. *For her sins have reached unto heaven*, etc.] Or “have followed unto heaven”; one after another, in one age after another, until they have been as it were heaped up together, and have reached the heavens; the phrase denotes the multitude of them, God's knowledge and notice of

them, and the cry of them to him; (see <01820>Genesis 18:20 Jon 1:2) the Alexandrian copy and Complutensian edition read, “have cleaved”, or “glued”, and so the Syriac and Arabic versions seem to have read; her sins were as it were soldered together, and stuck fast to her, and being joined and linked together, made a long chain, and reached to heaven, and cleaved to that, and cried for vengeance:

and God hath remembered her iniquities; and is about to punish her for them; for as forgiveness of sin is signified by a non-remembrance of it, so punishment of sin by a remembrance of it, and of the persons that commit it; (see <66169>Revelation 16:19).

Ver. 6. *Reward her even as she rewarded you*, etc.] This is spoken to the people of God, who are before called out of Babylon; and the chief of them are the seven angels with the seven last plagues of the wrath of God, and the same with the ten kings that will burn the whore with fire; these are called upon to take vengeance, by way of retaliation, for what she had done to them, in allusion to what is said of old Babylon, (<24015>Jeremiah 1:15 51:24,35) and must be understood not of what she will have done to them personally, but to their predecessors in the faith of Christ in former ages; that as she had hated them, and made war with them, so now they should hate her, and make war with her; and as she had stripped them naked of their clothes, and spoiled them of their worldly goods and substance, so now they should strip her naked of her harlot's attire, of her gold, silver, and precious stones, and make her and her territories desolate; and as she has burnt many of the precious saints in the flames, as here in England, and elsewhere, so now they shall utterly burn her with fire; and as she has shed the blood of the righteous, and drank it, and been drunk with it, they shall give her blood to drink; and as she hath killed multitudes with the sword, so now shall they kill her and her children; (see <66132>Revelation 13:12) nor is this contrary to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and the spirit of Christianity, which will not admit of revenge, (<40538>Matthew 5:38,39) (<45217>Romans 12:17,19-21) since this will not be private, but public revenge, inflicted by Christian princes and magistrates, who are ministers of God, and revengers to execute wrath on them that do evil:

and double unto her double according to her works: the meaning is not to inflict upon her a punishment doubly greater than her sins, for this would be contrary to the justice of God; nor does ever God punish men in this life more, but less, than their iniquities deserve; nor can any temporal

punishment be doubly greater than sin, which deserves eternal death; and with this she will be punished hereafter, and therefore will not have her full punishment now, and much less a greater than her sins required; to which may be added, that this will be according to her works, her wicked works, and therefore will not exceed the demerit of her sins: but the sense is, that if it was possible to be done, they should use her with double severity to that she had used them with; seeing her sins deserved a severer treatment than even they had had from her; the phrase signifies an abundant and utter destruction, a punishment which was suitable and sufficient; (see <2340 2>Isaiah 40:2 <2460 18>Jeremiah 16:18 17:18) and it suggests that they should not spare her, nor pity her, but use her with the greatest severity imaginable, it being not possible to exceed her due deserts, or what her works required:

in the cup which he hath filled, fill to her double: not in the cup of her abominations, her errors, idolatries, and wickedness; but in the cup of afflictions and trouble, which she wrung out to the people of God, in that give her double portion: the sense is the same as before.

Ver. 7. *How much she hath glorified herself*, etc.] And acted the proud and haughty part in exalting herself above all emperors, kings, and princes, above all kingdoms and states, and also above all churches, assuming arrogant titles, and even blasphemous names; (see <6130 1>Revelation 13:1,5)

and lived deliciously: in a very luxuriant manner, as the popes, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, and friars have done; some being clothed in purple and scarlet, and in gold and silver, and all living upon the fat of the land, and in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness:

so much torment and sorrow give her: by pulling down her pride, which goes before a fall, than which nothing could more torment and afflict her; by stripping her of her fine clothes and rich apparel; and by taking away her fat benefices from her, which will cut her to the heart; and by burning her with fire, which will be very excruciating:

for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen; a lady of kingdoms, as in (<2340 5>Isaiah 47:5) to which the reference is; having a temporal power and authority over the kings of the earth, and a spiritual jurisdiction over all churches, apostate ones, being the mother of harlots; and her “sitting” as such, as it well agrees with the whore on many waters, and the woman on the scarlet coloured beast and seven mountains, who are all the same, and

is very suitable to antichrist, who pretends to sit in Peter's chair, and does sit in the temple of God, as if he was God; so it is expressive of her empire and government over nations and churches, and of the continuance of it, as she imagines, (see <2347>Isaiah 46:7) and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “I shall reign always”: to which she adds,

and am no widow; nor never shall be, as she flatters herself, (see <2347>Isaiah 47:8). Were she the true spouse of Christ, as she boasts herself, she indeed would be no widow, for Christ is an everlasting and never dying husband; but she is the whore of the kings of the earth, and though she fancies she shall be no widow, that is, bereft of people and power, (see <2501>Lamentations 1:1) because she now sits on many waters, people, multitudes, and nations and tongues; yet ere long, like old Babylon, she will have no men in her, but will be inhabited by devils, foul spirits, and hateful birds:

and shall see no sorrow; through loss of children, power, and authority; (see <2347>Isaiah 47:8) but in this also she will be mistaken; her children will be killed with death, as is threatened to Jezebel, (<6623>Revelation 2:23) and her plagues shall come upon her at once: now these words may be considered either as spoken by her when in the height of her power and glory, as she was about three or four hundred years ago; or just before her destruction, which seems to be the case, and looks as if she would regain her power, and be in her former state before her utter ruin; (see Gill on “<6602>Revelation 11:2”).

Ver. 8. *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day*, etc.] The seven last plagues, which will be in a very little time executed upon her, very speedily and very quickly, one after another, if not all together; and particularly the fifth vial may be respected, as well as the plagues that follow; (see <2349>Isaiah 47:9)

death; not the second death, which will not be till after the decisive battle at Armageddon, when the beast will be taken, and cast alive into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death; but either the pestilence, which is called so, (<6608>Revelation 6:8) or rather death by the sword, war, which will be brought upon her, and in which she and her children will be slain with the sword:

mourning; for the loss of her children, the destruction of the city of Rome itself, the seat of the beast, and for the darkness of his kingdom, the inhabitants of which shall be in such pain, as to gnaw their tongues for it:

famine; which generally attends war, at least sieges; and it looks as if Rome would be besieged awhile before it is destroyed, which will produce a grievous famine in it; this is opposed to her living deliciously, as well as the two former are to her notion of sitting a queen for ever, and knowing no sorrow:

and she shall be utterly burnt with fire; the burning of Rome has been attempted several times, by different persons, and has been burnt in part, but not wholly, (see Gill on "Revelation 17:16") but now it will be entirely destroyed by fire; either by fire from heaven, as Sodom and Gomorrah were; or by fire breaking out of the earth, it being very manifest that there are volcanos, burning mountains, and subterraneous fires in those parts, which seem to be so many preparations in nature for the burning of that city; or rather by the ten kings, who will set fire to it; and it may be by all these ways. The Jews have a notion, that, at the coming of the Messiah, Rome will be burnt [f410], as Sodom has been; you will find, say they [f411], that of Sodom and of that kingdom (Rome, of which they are speaking, and which they afterwards call the fourth kingdom), it is decreed concerning them both, that they "should be burnt with fire"; of Sodom, (Genesis 19:24) and of the fourth kingdom (Rome), (Isaiah 34:9).

for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her; the Alexandrian copy reads, "that has judged": and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; that is, has purposed and determined her destruction, and therefore it is unavoidable; he that has resolved upon it, and foretold it, and has condemned her to it, is the Lord God Almighty; and he is able to execute the sentence determined and pronounced, and it is impossible she should escape: it may be understood of Christ the mighty God, the Judge of quick and dead; (see Jeremiah 50:34).

Ver. 9. *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication*, etc.] Idolatry, (Revelation 17:2 18:3)

and lived deliciously with her; (Revelation 18:3,7) joining with her in her sensual, as well as in her idolatrous practices:

shall bewail her, and lament for her: shall mourn inwardly, and by various gestures outwardly express their sorrow at her desolation; (see Ezekiel

27:30-32) these will not be the ten kings who will burn the whore with fire, and then repent of what they have done, and weep over her, as Titus did at the destruction of Jerusalem, as some Popish writers have fancied, for they will hate the whore, and eat her flesh; but earthly and idolatrous kings, who will be in the communion of the church of Rome:

when they shall see the smoke of her burning: as Abraham saw the smoke of Sodom and Gomorrah go up like the smoke of a furnace; by which they will perceive that her judgment is come, and her ruin begun.

Ver. 10. *Standing afar off for the fear of her torment*, etc.] Lest they themselves should share in it, who have partook of her sins; either they will not be in a capacity to help her, or they will be dispirited, and will be in awe and dread of God's righteous judgments:

saying, alas! alas! that great city Babylon! that mighty city! it will aggravate their sorrow, when they reflect upon the former grandeur, magnificence, power, and authority, of the city and see of Rome, so often called in this book the great city; and so it is by other writers; the Jews call it so: they say [f412], when the Messiah comes,

> "the kings of the world shall be gathered to atbr atrq, "the great city" of Rome; and the holy blessed God will cast upon them fire and hail, and great hail stones, (with which compare (Revelation 16:21)), and they shall perish from the world, except those kings that do not come there."

It is common with the Jewish writers to call the Roman empire Edom; and Magdiel, one of the dukes of Edom, (Genesis 36:43) who has his name from "greatness", is interpreted by one of their commentators [f413] of Rome; the reason of which, another of them says [f414], is because Rome is become great above all kingdoms: the mount of Esau in (Obidiah 1:21) is interpreted abr akrk ty, "that great city" of Esau, which is Rome [f415], and the same epithet it has in the Talmud [f516]; and Porphyry calls it την μεγαλην πολιν, "that great city", without making mention of its name, as here; so among the Latins [f417], "Magnoe spes altera" Romae:

for in one hour is thy judgment come: the Ethiopic version reads, "the hour of her judgment"; the time of her punishment fixed by God; but the sense is, that her vengeance was suddenly come upon her; this is the judgment of

the great whore, which the angel proposed to show to John, (Revelation 17:1).

Ver. 11. *And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over over her*, etc.] Who these are, (see Gill on "Revelation 18:3") and, what their lamentation, (Revelation 18:16) the reason of their weeping and mourning follows: for no man buyeth their merchandise any more; what their merchandise is, is expressed in the two next verses; and this shows that it is not to be understood merely in a literal sense; for such commodities in general as are there mentioned, if they do not sell at one place, they will at another; and the decline of trade in one city does not put a stop to business all the world over; and often so it is, that the ruin of commerce in one place is the rise of it in another; and all the things hereafter spoken of, excepting the last article, are what will be merchandised in one place or another to the end of the world; unless the sense should be, that no man at Rome, and the parts adjacent, will buy of this merchandise any more; but though they should not, this could not be cause of such lamentation as is afterwards expressed, since their goods might be sold elsewhere; but it looks as if this must be understood of such kind of wares as will be disused and despised all the world over, and they will meet with no customers any where to deal with them in them.

Ver. 12. *The merchandise of gold and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls*, etc.] Things for treasure and ornament, and with which the great whore is said to be decked, (Revelation 17:4) and, literally understood, may denote the vast riches which these spiritual merchants, or factors for Rome, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, and friars, bring into their own coffers and the pope's, by the trade they drive in her wares with the souls of men; and may have also a regard to what their images, chalices, crowns, mitres, etc. are made of, and what some of them are adorned with; and as Tyre, to whom the reference is in the several particulars of this account, had her merchants for these things, (Ezekiel 27:12,16,22) so Mr. Brightman thinks that in these, and in some following ones, Spain is Rome's merchant, which fetches them from the Indies for her: but these things, mystically taken, sometimes design the doctrines of the Gospel, (1 Corinthians 3:12) and which are to be preferred to, and more to be esteemed than thousands of gold and silver; and these Rome's merchants pretended to deliver out; but instead of them, they put off wood, hay, and stubble, yea, doctrines of devils, and lies in hypocrisy; and sometimes the grace of God is meant, (Revelation 3:18) which is more

precious than gold that perisheth; and this they pretend to convey to men “ex opere operato”, in the ordinances, as baptism, etc. and to communicate the Spirit, with his gifts and graces, for money, which is direct simony; yea, they pretend to sell eternal life, nay, Christ, and God himself:

and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet: things which belong to apparel and dress; and, literally taken, the “fine linen” is for their copes, wore by bishops and by chanters, and sub-chanters, and for surplices wore by their priests, in imitation of the Jewish priests, and for Mass clothes, etc. the “purple, silk”, and “scarlet”, were for the popes, cardinals, archbishops, and bishops; so the woman on the scarlet coloured beast is said to be arrayed in purple and scarlet, (<66170401>Revelation 17:4), Tyre had its merchants for these, (<26270701>Ezekiel 27:7,16,24) the fine linen and silk may mystically denote the holy lives, good works, and merits of the saints, those of them called works of supererogation, which become the church's stock, and they sell out for others that want; which is a monstrous kind of ware, and a dreadful imposition upon men, since men cannot be saved and justified by works; and the best of men are so far from having a redundancy of works, that in everything they sin and offend, and are greatly deficient: and they are so far from helping others, that they are unprofitable servants themselves: the purple and scarlet may signify the blood of Christ, which they pretend to sell in the Mass; nay, they have pretended to have had the very liquid blood of Christ, which they have carried in a crystal glass, thick on one side, and transparent on the other; and so could not be seen by persons in a mortal sin, until they had given a good deal of money, and then the clear side was by sleight of hand turned to them; and which was no other than the blood of a duck, renewed weekly by the priest; which trick for a long time brought in vast sums of money, and was detected at Hales in Gloucestershire, in Henry the Eighth's time; or these may intend the sufferings of the saints, which likewise come into the treasure of the church, and are at its dispose for money, the virtue of which being very great for the salvation of men's souls:

and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble: things for utensils and furniture, not so much for their houses, as for their churches; Tyre had its merchants for these, (<26270501>Ezekiel 27:5,6,12,13,15). “Thyine wood”, Pliny says [f418], was very durable, and of it the rafters of ancient temples were made; and may design such like lasting and odoriferous wood as cypress, cedar, etc. used in the Popish churches, for

the embellishing of them, and for images in them; it may be the same with the wood of the Almug, or Algum trees, since these are rendered thyine wood in the Vulgate Latin version in (<11011>1 Kings 10:11,12 <14910>2 Chronicles 9:10,11) vessels of ivory may be boxes made thereof, in which the host is put, and the relics of saints are preserved: and "vessels of most precious wood", or "stone", as the Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions read,

and of brass, iron, and marble, may intend various vessels used in their churches; as vessels for holy water, fonts of marble, and other valuable stones, for baptism, censers of iron and brass to burn incense in. Cocceius thinks that by these vessels of different materials are meant good men; who are like sweet smelling wood for the fragrancy of their doctrines and lives; and like iron, brass, and marble, for their courage, constancy, and patience; and who have been canonized for saints, which has brought in much money into the pope's coffers: this is a practice in imitation of the Heathens, who deified men, and set them over particular days and affairs; and the privileges of such canonization among the Papists are, that such a saint has his name set in the calendar in red letters, may have churches and altars dedicated to him, and his image set up in them, and a holiday be kept for him, and may be prayed to, and worshipped; a practice dreadfully derogatory to the glory of Christ's person and office, but is that in which these merchants have found their account; for through references, commissions, and reports, for proof of the saint's character and miracles, his friends are at very great expense before the affair is issued, especially if rich; our King Henry the Seventh was very desirous of having his kinsman Henry the Sixth canonized, and solicited the pope for it, but he would not do it under fifteen hundred ducats of gold, which the king thought was too much, and so declined it.

Ver. 13. *And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense*, etc.] Things for delight and pleasure, for the gratifying of the senses; cinnamon, and odours were used for perfuming, (<20717>Proverbs 7:17) anointing with oil was used at feasts, (<19235>Psalm 23:5) and "frankincense", or censings, at banquets, and for the regaling of persons after food [f419]: these customs obtained among the eastern people. Tyre had its merchants for these things, (<26719>Ezekiel 27:19,22) and Mr. Brightman thinks Italy is Rome's merchant in these, which it fetches from Greece, Arabia, and Egypt; it may be these rather respect the ecclesiastical use of them; "cinnamon, odours", and "frankincense", may signify the perfumings and

censings used in churches, or the burning incense in imitation of the sweet incense under the law; and “ointments” may denote their chrism, or anointing with oil at baptism, imagining that Christ was anointed with material oil at his baptism, whereas it was with the Holy Ghost: moreover, these things may be mystically understood, “cinnamon” being used by harlots in perfuming their bed, (<20717>Proverbs 7:17) may intend the stews and brothel houses erected at Rome, and licensed by authority, each whore paying so much per week; the revenues of which would sometimes yearly amount to twenty thousand ducats: “ointments” may be understood of chrism in baptism, and extreme unction at death: “odours” and “frankincense” may mean their prayers and pater nosters, their prayers for the dead, which were never made without the pence; hence that proverbial expression, no pence, no pater noster.

And wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep: things for civil use; these are things which belong to food, to eating and drinking, and are the most material and necessary things of life, (<19007>Psalm 4:7 <24312>Jeremiah 31:12 <28121>Hosea 2:21,22 <01043>Genesis 4:3 <23213>Isaiah 22:13). Tyre had her merchants for these, (<26717>Ezekiel 27:17,18,21) and Mr. Brightman will have Italy to be Rome's merchant for wine and oil; Sardinia and Sicily her merchants for fine flour and wheat; Germany for beasts, and England for sheep: and with respect to the ecclesiastical use of these things, wine is for the chalice, used in daily Masses, and drank only by the priests; “oil” for chrism at baptism, and for the extreme unction: “fine flour” for the Mass, or to make their breaden god of; and “wheat, beasts, and sheep” for tithes for the clergy:

and horses, and chariots, and slaves; things for splendour, equipage, and attendance; horses and chariots for the popes, cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, to ride in state and grandeur, and slaves to wait upon them. Tyre had her merchants for these (<26714>Ezekiel 27:14,20) and Mr. Brightman's opinion is, that the French are Rome's merchants for horses and chariots, and the Swiss for slaves, or “bodies”, as the word may be rendered, who live by exercising their bodies, and hiring them out in war; and who are many of them the guards of the person of the pope of Rome: and last of all it is added,

and souls of men; still in allusion to the merchandise of Tyre, some of whose merchants are said to trade in the persons of men, (<26713>Ezekiel 27:13) which the Targum and Septuagint render, in the souls of men; the

popes have some of them sold their own souls to the devil, to get into the chair, and, when in, have been the means of destroying of thousands of others; they assume a power over the souls of men, of binding and loosing the consciences of men, imposing new laws upon them, and freeing them from obligation to the laws of God and men, to the ruin of their souls; and it has been said by their sycophants, that if the pope should send thousands of men to hell, no one should say to him, what dost thou? The Romish priests pretend to redeem souls out of purgatory for such a sum of money, and sell pardons and indulgences, say Mass, and promise heaven itself for money; and this they get at the expense of men's souls, by their false doctrine and superstitious worship, and so make merchandise of them, as is said of the false teachers, (2 Peter 2:3) moreover, as by “slaves”, or bodies, in the preceding clause, are meant such who serve with their bodies, either by way of attendance, or in unnatural lust; so by “souls” of men may be meant men of soul, of great natural wit and understanding, of great parts, abilities, and learning, with which they serve the man of sin, and his interest, such as Bellarmine, and others.

Ver. 14. *And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee*, etc.] Or “the autumn of the desire of thy soul”; the desirable fruits which are then in season; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions render it “apples”, which are ripe in autumn; and may design all such fruit as Italy abounds with, which will now be destroyed; and seems to point at the time of year when Babylon's destruction will be: but, in the mystical sense, these fruits may intend universal dominion over nations and churches, the obedience of kings and princes, riches, honours, and pleasures of all sorts; things greatly affected by the Papacy, and of which a large harvest was expected, but now all will be at an end:

and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee; all that were palatable to the taste, and pleasant to the sight, that were excellent and desirable; as the triple crown, cardinalships, archbishoprics, bishoprics, deanaries, fat benefices, and good livings:

and thou shalt find them no more at all; for this will be an utter destruction; at the Reformation these desirable things were taken from her in several nations, and in some places she has recovered them again, as in Germany and other places; and the outward court, or the reformed church, sinking into an outward show and form, will be wholly given to the Gentiles, the Papists, and they will have these things in their hands again

before Rome's utter destruction, but after that they will no more be regained.

Ver. 15. *The merchants of these things*, etc.] Before mentioned, who have traded in them for themselves and for Rome:

which were made rich by her, (see <6618>Revelation 18:3)

shall stand afar off for fear of her torment; as the kings of the earth before, (<6618>Revelation 18:10) being conscious to themselves of their being partners in her crimes, and so might justly fear they should share in her punishment; and it may be, they will outwardly deny they are now of her religion, and will externally embrace the reformed religion; though they will be inwardly weeping and wailing for the destruction of Rome, and the loss of their merchandise and goodly things.

Ver. 16. *And saying, alas, alas! that great city*, etc.]. Using the same words the kings of the earth do, (<6618>Revelation 18:10) only adding, suitable to their characters as merchants, and the things they traded in with her,

that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls; (see Gill on "<6618>Revelation 18:12") (see Gill on "<6617>Revelation 17:4"), see also (<2732>Ezekiel 27:32).

Ver. 17. *For in one hour so great riches is come to nought*, etc.] That is, in a very short time, expressing the suddenness and speediness of Rome's destruction, the quick dispatch and expedition that will be made in it, by the instruments of it, as in (<6618>Revelation 18:10). Rome was always famous for its great wealth and riches; the Jews have a saying [f420], that if ten kabs of riches descend into the world, the ancient Romans take nine of them, and the other the whole world:

and every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off; the lamentation of the kings and merchants of the earth being ended, masters of ships, sailors, and seafaring men begin theirs: by "ships" are meant dioceses, abbeys, priories, and monasteries; and by the masters, or governors of them, bishops, abbots, priors, the heads of monasteries, and of the several orders of the Franciscans, Dominicans, etc. and by "all the company in ships", or "every shipmate", the fellows that belong to every religious house and order; and by "sailors" and "traders at sea", all such who compass sea and land to

make proselytes to the Romish religion, like the Pharisees of old, and who, as they, make them two fold more the children of hell than themselves; and, in general, these traders abroad may design the pope's legates, sent by him into various parts, to collect his revenues, and the Jesuits, who are everywhere sent abroad to sow sedition and false doctrine, and the priests that travel about to sell pardons and indulgences: these

stood afar off; as the kings and merchants before, for fear of sharing in the condemnation and punishment of Babylon; knowing full well that they deserved it, having been associates with her in her crimes.

Ver. 18. *And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning*, etc.] (See Gill on "Revelation 18:9")

saying, what city is like unto this great city? as before for magnificence and grandeur, so now for sorrow, desolation, and ruin; nor was any city like it for power and authority, for pride and luxury, for idolatry and superstition, blasphemy and impenitence; the like the sailors say of Tyre, (Ezekiel 27:30) from whence this and other expressions are borrowed in this lamentation.

Ver. 19. *And they cast dust on their heads*, etc.] As the seafaring men on account of Tyre, (Ezekiel 27:30) this was a gesture used in mourning when persons were in afflicted and distressed circumstances, denoting disorder, confusion, and debasement; (see Joshua 7:6 Job 2:12)

and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, alas, alas! that great city; as in (Revelation 18:10,16) so it was once, though now in flames:

wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea; not only the merchants of the earth, as in (Revelation 18:3) the cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, but the governors of religious houses; these accumulated great wealth to themselves, and got the best of lands into their possession for the use and support of their abbeys and monasteries:

by reason of her costliness; or costly things; pardons, indulgences, absolution, saying Mass, and praying souls out of purgatory, all which are costly, and hereby these traders have been enriched; and now the remembrance of these things, of which they will be deprived, will affect and grieve them, as well as the suddenness of Rome's ruin:

for in one hour is she made desolate; her judgment come, and her riches come to nought, (Revelation 18:10,17).

Ver. 20. *Rejoice over her, thou heaven*, etc.] This is said by the voice from heaven, (Revelation 18:4) which having called upon the saints to come out of Babylon, and to take vengeance on her, now calls upon all good men to rejoice at her ruin, while others were weeping and wailing; not at that, simply considered, but as the justice of God is displayed therein: heaven may be literally understood, which sometimes is addressed when anything of very considerable note and moment is done or spoken of, whether it be something exceeding bad, as in (Isaiah 1:2 Jeremiah 2:12,13) or something exceeding great and good, as in (Psalm 96:11-13) or else the inhabitants of heaven, either the angels, who as they rejoice at the good and happiness of the saints, so at the confusion and destruction of their enemies; and the Syriac version reads, “heavens and angels”; or else the souls of men departed, particularly the souls under the altar, that have been long crying for vengeance on account of the shedding of their blood, (Revelation 6:9) who may be made acquainted with Rome's destruction; or rather the true church of Christ upon earth, which in this book often goes by the name of heaven, in opposition to the apostate church, called the earth, because its members, doctrines, and ordinances, are from heaven, and its happiness lies there:

and ye holy apostles and prophets; the Alexandrian copy and Complutensian edition read, “and the saints, and the apostles, and prophets”; making three distinct sorts of persons, of which heaven, or the church, consists: by “saints” may be meant private members of churches, who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, and live holy lives and conversations; and by “apostles”, not the twelve apostles, or persons in such an office as they were, but ordinary ministers of the word, who are sent forth to preach the Gospel, and will be upon the spot at the destruction of Babylon, and will be such as shall have preached and defended the pure apostolic doctrine; and by “prophets” are intended not the prophets of the Old Testament, nor such under the New who had the gift of foretelling things to come, but such who have a gift of interpreting the Scriptures and preaching the Gospel; the same with the two witnesses, who till this time will have prophesied in sackcloth, but shall now put it off, and put on the garments of praise and joy:

for God hath avenged you on her; or “judged your judgment on her”; that is, has executed righteous judgment on her, for all the evils done by her to the saints in ages past, the predecessors of the persons here mentioned, as well as to themselves: vengeance belongs to the Lord, and he will avenge his elect sooner or later.

Ver. 21. *And a mighty angel*, etc.] Not Christ, nor one of the ministering spirits, but some man or set of men, perhaps the same with him in (<66180>Revelation 18:1)

took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea; just as Jeremiah took a stone and bound it to his book after he had read it, and cast it into the river Euphrates, as a sign and token of the destruction of old Babylon, (<24506>Jeremiah 51:63,64 <02155>Exodus 15:5 <16911>Nehemiah 9:11)

saying, thus with violence shall that great city be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all; which is expressive of the utter destruction of Rome, and of the violence, force, and power with which it will be destroyed, and of the suddenness and swiftness of its destruction, and of the irrecoverableness of its state and condition.

Ver. 22. *And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters*, etc.] Which were for mirth, delight, and pleasure:

shall be heard no more at all in thee: the words seem to be taken from (<23408>Isaiah 24:8 <26613>Ezekiel 26:13) and may not only regard the loss of every thing that was delightful and pleasant to the ear in private houses, at festivals, and nuptials, and the like, but the ceasing of church music; there will be no more bells, nor organs, or any other instruments of music; no more chanters, and sub-chanters, choristers, singing men and boys:

and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be shall be, found any more in thee; which are very useful and necessary in cities and societies; it is threatened to Judah, that the cunning artificer should be taken from her, (<23003>Isaiah 3:3) and it is reckoned as a considerable part of the distress of the captivity that the carpenters and smiths were away from Jerusalem, (<24001>Jeremiah 24:1) and this judgment may fall on Rome for her worshipping idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, the works of men's hands, artificers and craftsmen, and who are employed in making other trinkets and wares for antichrist:

and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; to grind corn with, (see <242510>Jeremiah 25:10) there will be a famine at the time that Rome is besieged, (<661808>Revelation 18:8) and after it is destroyed, there will be no corn to grind, nor inhabitants to eat it, and so no use of the millstone; this is said in opposition to her luxurious and delicious living, (<661803>Revelation 18:3,7,9) and this may also refer to feasts and rich entertainments, for which spices were ground and prepared by an hand mill [f421] in the house; and so may signify here that there would be no more of such entertainments and rich living; with which sense agrees what follows. This clause is wanting in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 23. *And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee*, etc.] Either for common use, or at feasts, or at marriages, which being kept at night, required candies, lamps, or torches; this shows that Babylon, or Rome, shall be deprived of everything, even of the least thing that is comfortable in life; (see <242510>Jeremiah 25:10) this will be a just punishment upon her for her abuse of this blessing of life; so where wax candles in great numbers have been burning in the daytime, there will not be so much as a single candle to give light in the night; and where candles have been lighted up for the dead, there will not be one for the use of the living:

and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: there will be no marrying, nor giving in marriage; no procreation of children, or propagation of posterity, in this place; which denotes the utter extirpation of the inhabitants of it; the phrases are taken from (<240734>Jeremiah 7:34 16:19) (<242510>Jeremiah 25:10,11) and this will be in righteous retaliation for the prohibition of marriage; which God has instituted, and is honourable, (<540402>1 Timothy 4:2) the reasons of Babylon's destruction follow:

for thy merchants were the great men of the earth: in allusion to the merchants of Tyre, said to be princes, (<232308>Isaiah 23:8) for by trading and dealing in the wares and merchandise of Rome, persons of mean extract, and of very low circumstances of life, have grown exceeding rich, and have equalled the princes of the earth; as for instance, Cardinal Wolsey here in England, a butcher's son at Ipswich; and on the other hand, the princes and great men of the earth have become Rome's merchants, and have thought it an high honour to get a cardinal's hat, as the Cardinals Albertus duke of Austria, Bourbon, Pool, and others, mentioned by Brightman:

for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived; meaning her false doctrines, traditions, idolatry, superstition, and will worship, with which, as another Jezebel, she has bewitched, allured, and deceived the nations of the empire, and the kings thereof, (<66183>Revelation 18:3).

Ver. 24. *And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints*, etc.] Such as before mentioned, in (<66180>Revelation 18:20) this is another reason of her destruction, besides her luxury and idolatry, namely, her shedding the blood of the saints, with which she is said to be drunk, and therefore blood is now given her to drink, (<66176>Revelation 17:6 16:6) for she will now be found guilty of slaying the witnesses, who are meant by the prophets and saints, that have been from the beginning of the apostasy:

and of all that were slain upon the earth: not only of those that have been slain in the city of Rome, but of all those that have been slain throughout the empire; they being slain by her order, or with her consent, and she conniving at it, encouraging it, and therefore will be justly chargeable with it all; (see <40231>Matthew 23:31,32,35) the Ethiopic version adds, “for the name of Christ”.

CHAPTER 19

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 19

This chapter contains the triumph of the saints over Babylon, and their thanksgiving to God because of his judgments on her; the marriage of Christ and his church, and a battle between him and his and her enemies, with the success of it. The congratulations are first of a promiscuous multitude in the church, ascribing salvation, praise, honour, glory, and power to God, because of the righteousness of his judgments, and because of the perpetuity of them, (<6691>Revelation 19:1-3) and then of the four and twenty elders and four living creatures, who worship God, assent to what had been before said, and join in praising the Lord, (<6694>Revelation 19:4) and then another voice out of the throne is heard, calling upon all the servants of the Lord, and those that fear him, whether small or great, to praise our God, (<6695>Revelation 19:5) after which is heard the voice of a great multitude, stirring up one another to praise, because of the reign of the Lord God Almighty, and to rejoice and be glad because the time of the Lamb's marriage with his bride was come; who is described by her dress, the righteousness of the saints, comparable to fine linen, clean and white, (<6696>Revelation 19:6-8) upon which an angel bids John write those persons happy who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and affirms these to be the true sayings of God; wherefore John, in a transport of joy, was just going to worship the angel, had he not been forbidden by him; from which he dissuades him, by observing that he was his fellow servant, that God only is the object of worship, and that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, (<6699>Revelation 19:9,10) next follows a vision of a battle between Christ and his enemies; and first he the General is described, by the horse he sat upon, a white one; by the characters he bears, faithful and true; by what he did, judging and making war in righteousness; by his eyes, which were as a flame of fire; by his having many crowns on his head; by having a name, or names unknown, and particularly one, which is the Word of God; by his habit, a vesture dipped in blood; by the armies he was at the head of, riding on white horses, and clothed in fine linen; by a sharp sword coming out of his mouth, with which he should utterly destroy the nations; and by having a name on his vesture and thigh, King of kings, and

Lord of lords, (Revelation 19:11-16) upon which an angel is seen standing in the sun, and calling to all the fowls of the heaven to come to the supper of the great God, and to eat the flesh of kings, captains, mighty men, horses and horsemen, of all ranks, and degrees, (Revelation 19:17,18) and next an account is given of the armies of the beast, and of the kings of the earth, that came to make war with the above warrior, (Revelation 19:19) the issue and success of which follow; the beast and false prophet are taken, and cast alive into a lake of fire and brimstone; and the rest are killed by the sword of the above General, and the fowls have a feast of their flesh, (Revelation 19:20,21).

Ver. 1. *And after these things*, etc.] After the angel had declared the fall of Babylon, a voice from heaven had called the people of God out of her, and had ordered them to take vengeance on her; after the mournful lamentation of the kings, merchants, and seafaring men; after another voice had called upon the saints to rejoice at her overthrow, and a mighty angel had described the manner of it, and had expressed her ruin in the strongest terms, with the reasons of it, John heard the songs of the righteous, as follow:

I heard a great voice of much people in heaven: not literally taken, for these are not the innumerable company of angels, who are never called people; nor the spirits of just men made perfect, or the souls of departed saints, but men on earth; wherefore heaven designs the church, as in (Revelation 18:20) and frequently in this book; the people are the same with the 144000 seen with the Lamb on Mount Zion, (Revelation 14:1) and with those on the sea of glass, who had got the victory over the beast, (Revelation 15:2) and are no other than God's covenant people, who are given to Christ, and made willing to be his in the day of his power; and though they are but a seed, a remnant, a small company, when compared with the world and carnal professors; yet are a large body of themselves, especially they will be at this time, when the nation of the Jews shall be born at once, and the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in: and their voice on this occasion, the downfall of Rome, is said to be “great” partly on account of their number, who will join together in acclamations of praise, and partly on account of their great affection and vehemency of spirit, which will be raised hereby:

saying Alleluia; an Hebrew word, which signifies “praise ye the Lord”. The Jews say [f422], that the book of Psalms consists of ten sorts of songs, but

Hallelujah is the greatest of them, because it comprehends the name (Jehovah) and praise in one word: and it is observable that this word, which is often used in the Psalms, is first used when the Psalmist desires the utter consumption and destruction of sinners and wicked men on earth, and is here taken up by the saints at the destruction of the man of sin and son of perdition; (see <19A435>Psalm 104:35) and its being an Hebrew word shows that at this time the Jews will be converted, and that Jews and Gentiles will become one church state, and will worship and praise the Lord together; for the word is a call upon the saints to join together in solemn praise and thanksgiving; who is to be praised for the perfections of his nature, for the works of his hands, both of nature and grace; and for his righteous judgments on his and his church's enemies; and this is to be done in concert:

salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: salvation, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, is of God; “salvation” from antichristian power and tyranny, and from all enemies, and the everlasting salvation of the soul; and the “glory” of it belongs to all the three Persons; they are glorious in themselves, and deserve all glory to be ascribed to them by man, and especially by the saints: “honour” is also their due; God the Father is to be honoured because he is the Father, and the Son is to he honoured as the Father is, and the Holy Spirit is not to be grieved, but to be highly esteemed and valued, and equally with the other two Persons: and “power” belongs to them all, and is seen in the works of creation, redemption, and sanctification.

Ver. 2. *For true and righteous are his judgments*, etc.] As in (see Gill on “<661503>Revelation 15:3”), (see Gill on “<661607>Revelation 16:7”): this is to be understood of God's judgments in general, and is a reason of the attribution of praise and glory to him; which may be said to be true, because, being threatened, are now fulfilled; and to be “righteous”, because according to the demerit of sin; and particularly God's judgments on antichrist are intended:

for he hath judged the great whore; Jezebel, Babylon, the Romish antichrist, before spoken of, (<661701>Revelation 17:1) not only by passing a sentence of condemnation on her, but by executing it, putting it into the hearts of the kings to hate and burn her, and utterly destroy her; and which is judging right, since it follows:

which did corrupt the earth with her fornication; drew the kings and inhabitants of the Roman empire into wicked and idolatrous practices, and so corrupted and destroyed them in soul, body, and estate; (see Gill on "Revelation 11:18") for this vision is contemporary with the seventh trumpet:

and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand; shed by her, (Revelation 18:20,24 16:6) and this being done in righteous judgment, is matter of joy and praise to the saints.

Ver. 3. *And again they said, Alleluia*, etc.] Or a "second time" they said it; they began and ended their solemn worship and service with it; so some psalms begin and end with this word, translated in the Old Testament by the words "Praise ye the LORD", as in (Psalm 106:1,48 113:1,9) etc. and the repeating of the word shows how hearty, arnest, and constant they were in the work of praise on this account:

and her smoke rose up for ever and ever; they repeated their hallelujah, or gave one spiritual "huzza" more at the burning of Rome, and this followed: or the words may be rendered, "for her smoke rose", etc. and so are a reason for the second "hallelujah": it looks as if Rome, like another Sodom and Gomorrah, would sink into a sulphurous burning lake, and continue so: respect is had to the everlasting punishment of antichrist and his followers in hell, and to the everlasting burnings that will follow Rome's temporal destruction, which was an example and symbol of the vengeance of eternal fire; (see Revelation 14:11) so the Jews [f423] say of the burning of Rome, that its fire shall not be quenched for ever, and that "its smoke shall rise up for".

Ver. 4. *And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts*, etc.] Mentioned in (Revelation 4:4,6) and who represent the churches of Christ and ministers of the Gospel in the several periods of time, these join in the chorus, and praise the Lord on the account of the destruction of Rome, and ruin of antichrist; so they are often heard of in this book, when any remarkable thing is done, or when there is any breaking forth of the kingdom and glory of Christ; (see Revelation 5:8-10,14 7:11 11:16,17 14:3 15:7) these

fell down; on their faces before God, as in (Revelation 4:10 11:16) in great reverence of him, and of his righteous judgments:

and worshipped God that sat on the throne; described in (Revelation 4:2,3) this refers to the public worship of God in the churches, by the ministers and members of them:

saying, Amen; Alleluia; they said "Amen", and signified their assent to what the much people in heaven had said, (Revelation 19:1-3) and joined in the same "hallelujah", or expressions of praise to God, for this great appearance of his in the downfall of Babylon. Both these words are used together in (Psalm 106:48), (see Revelation 5:14).

Ver. 5. *And a voice came out of the throne*, etc.] Not from God the Father, that sat upon it, for the phrase,

praise our God, could not be said by him with propriety and pertinence; but rather from Christ, the Lamb, in the midst of the throne, who as Mediator could say of him to his people, my God and your God, and my Father and your Father, (John 20:17) though it seems best to understand it of the voice of one of the angels about the throne, since one of these is afterwards spoken of, whom John would have worshipped, but was forbid, (Revelation 19:9,10) and which may design either one of the ministering spirits, or a preacher of the Gospel, and a set of such, calling upon the saints to the discharge of their duty, or to return to it on this occasion:

saying, praise our God, all ye his servants; meaning not the ministers of the Gospel only, who serve in the Gospel of Christ, by preaching and defending it, and in the administration of Gospel ordinances to the comfort of the saints, but all the people of God; for though they are sons, and no more servants to sin and Satan, and the world, yet they are servants of God and of righteousness, and serve him willingly and cheerfully in a way of duty, and without slavish fear, and with a godly one, and from principles of love and gratitude, and without mercenary views and selfish ends; and these are called upon, as a part of their service, to say hallelujah, or to sing the praises of God for his judgments on antichrist; (see Psalm 134:1 135:1,2).

and ye that fear him, both small and great; who fear the Lord, not with a servile, but filial fear, with the new covenant grace of fear, which springs from, and is increased by, the goodness and grace of God; whether greater or lesser believers, fathers, young men, or children; whether Jews or

Gentiles, or of whatsoever nation, kindred, or people; (see <19B513>Psalm 115:13 <661118>Revelation 11:18).

Ver. 6. *And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude*, etc.] Even of all the servants of the Lord, and them that fear him, small and great; a vast multitude of converted Jews and Gentiles, in the several parts of the world, who in answer to the voice out of the throne, which came with great power and energy, lift up their voices in praise to God, both for their own conversion, and for the downfall of Babylon:

and as the voice of many waters: falling down in a descent, or in rough and rocky places, which make a great noise, and is heard afar off; and such must be the united voice of so great a multitude of converts as will be gathered together everywhere at this time: the same metaphor is used of the voice of Christ in (<660115>Revelation 1:15)

and as the voice of mighty thunderings; violent claps of it, which are sometimes so loud that they rend the very heavens, and strike the inhabitants of the earth with the utmost consternation: these are the same voices which will be heard in the church when the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, (<661115>Revelation 11:15)

saying, Alleluia; or praise ye the Lord; they will call upon one another to celebrate the praises of God, on account of the above things, in the same manner, and using the same word the people in heaven, and the four and twenty elders and four living creatures, do; and this is the fourth time the word is used in this context, and confirms the observation that has been made, that this vision refers to the conversion of the Jews, which will quickly follow the destruction of Rome: and the Jews themselves have a notion, that when Rome is destroyed the Messiah will come; and so he will in his spiritual reign. They say [f424],

> “our redemption will be immediately upon the destruction of Rome.”

And again [f425],

> “the root of our redemption depends upon the destruction of Rome.”

The reason for their saying “hallelujah” follows,

for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; by whom is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, and God over all, blessed for ever, and is the Almighty; and though he was set up as King over the holy hill of Zion, and has reigned over the church in every age, and came as King into this world, though his kingdom was not of it, and at his resurrection was declared Lord and Christ, and his kingdom was then more manifest, and he has ever since displayed his kingly power in defending his church, and defeating the enemies of it; yet now will he reign more visibly and gloriously, his kingdom will be enlarged from one end of the earth to the other, and he will be King over all the earth, which will occasion great joy to Jews and Gentiles; (see <19701>Psalm 47:1,2 97:1) and (see Gill on "<66117>Revelation 11:17").

Ver. 7. *Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour to him*, etc.] The saints particularly; the converted Jews will call upon one another to express their gladness at the glorious display of Christ's kingly power and authority, and at the destruction of his enemies, and the happy and comfortable state of his church and people; and to rejoice in him as the Lord their righteousness and strength, and to give him the honour and glory of salvation, and to return him thanks for all the benefits they shall have received from him, particularly on account of what follows:

for the marriage of the Lamb is come; that is, of Christ, the Son of God, with the Jewish church more especially; there was a secret betrothing of all the elect to Christ before the world began; and there is an open espousal of every individual of them at conversion; but the public and general solemnization of the nuptials will not be until the new Jerusalem church state takes place in the personal reign of Christ, hereafter mentioned, (<66210>Revelation 21:1,2,9) but here, and as previous to that, there will be a very general and open marriage of Christ with the people of the Jews, who have long rejected and forsaken him; for if the conversion of a single person may be called a marriage with Christ, much more the conversion of such members; and which is often prophesied of under this metaphor of a marriage, as in (<23504>Isaiah 62:4,5 <28219>Hosea 2:19). And now the time will be come for the accomplishment of it, the evidence of which follows:

and his wife hath made herself ready, or "dressed herself"; by decking herself with jewels, and putting on her wedding garment provided for her, and given to her by her husband, the Lamb, as appears from the next verse: this preparation will lie partly in the number of converts that will be

brought into the Jewish church, which she will receive and clothe herself with, as with the ornament of a bride, (<23A918>Isaiah 49:18) and partly by the exercise of the several graces of the Spirit upon Christ, comparable to the jewels of a bride, with which she will be adorned for her husband; and also by putting on the robe of his righteousness, hereafter mentioned, which the old Jewish synagogue rejected, and therefore was cast off, (<450103>Romans 10:3, <402212>Matthew 22:12,13). The Arabic version reads, "the marriage of the Lamb is now come with his spouse, prepared for him"; and the Ethiopic version, "the marriage of his Lamb is come, and the wife is prepared"; and that her preparation is not by her own merits and works of righteousness, but by the grace of her husband, is clear from the following verse. Mr. Daubuz, by "the marriage of the Lamb", understands the first resurrection, and the state of the church at that time; and by "the fine linen", the dress of the church, next mentioned, the incorruptible body of the saints compared to a garment, (<461553>1 Corinthians 15:53 <470502>2 Corinthians 5:2-4) and by those who are afterwards said to be "called to the marriage", the converted nations in a mortal state: but all the saints will share in the first resurrection; besides, as yet the beast and false prophet are not destroyed, which must be before the first resurrection, as the following vision shows.

Ver. 8. *And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen*, etc.] Or "Byssine": the "Byssus", of which fine linen is made, is said to grow on a tree, in height like to a poplar, and its leaves like a willow, and to be brought out of Judea into Egypt, which the Egyptians used in most of their holy things [f426]. A dress neat and modest, and not like the attire of the whore of Rome, (<661704>Revelation 17:4) and this is said to be

clean and white, and is interpreted in the next clause:

for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints, or "righteousnesses"; not good works, or their own righteousness; for though these are evidences of faith, by which the saints are justified, and are what God has prepared for them, that they should walk in them; yet these are not comparable to fine linen, clean and white, but are like filthy rags, and cannot justify in the sight of God; but the righteousness of Christ is meant, and justification by that; for that is the only justifying righteousness of the saints: and though it is but one, yet it may be called "righteousnesses", or "justifications", in the plural number; partly because of the several seasons in which the act of justification passes, first in God's mind from eternity, next on Christ as the

surety, when he rose from the dead, and on all the elect in him, and then in the consciences of the saints when they believe, and the sentence of it will be notified and declared to men and angels at the last judgment; and partly because of the many persons that are justified by it, as also because of the excellency of it; so the Jews use the word in the plural number: the Targumist on (<380304>Zechariah 3:4) paraphrases the text, “I will clothe thee” Æwkz, “with righteousnesses” [f427]; upon which words Jarchi has this note,

> “change of beautiful garments is all one as if it had been said twykz “righteousnesses”: and because sin is like to filthy garments, righteousness is like to garments beautiful and white.”

Christ's righteousness may be compared to fine linen, clean and white, because of its spotless purity; those that are arrayed with it being unblamable and irreprovable, and without spot and blemish, and without fault before the throne; with this the Jewish church will be clothed; all the Lord's people will be righteous, they will have on the best robe, and wedding garment, which was despised by the Jews in Christ's time, who refused to come to the marriage feast; and their being arrayed with it will be owing to the grace of Christ, who grants it; and so Christ's righteousness is called the gift of righteousness, the free gift, and gift by grace, and abundance of grace; and faith, which receives it, and puts it on, is the gift of God, (<450515>Romans 5:15-17 <490208>Ephesians 2:8). Not only the garment is a gift of grace, but the putting of it on is a grant from Christ, and what he himself does, (<236110>Isaiah 61:10 <380304>Zechariah 3:4).

Ver. 9. *And he saith unto me, write*, etc.] What follows, because of the importance of it, and to show the certainty of it, and that it may be regarded and remembered: the person speaking is either the voice from the throne, (<661905>Revelation 19:5) or the angel that attended John all along, and showed him this revelation, (<660101>Revelation 1:1) or the angel that proposed to show him the judgment of the great whore, (<661701>Revelation 17:1).

Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb; by which is meant the Gospel ministry and ordinances, and communion in them, to which the Jews will be called to partake of in the latter day; these at the first of the Gospel dispensation are called a “dinner”, to which, the Jews were invited, but refused to come, and now a “supper”, because made in the evening of that dispensation; to which being called with an effectual calling, they will come and partake of it; on which account they are

pronounced blessed, being the bride, the Lamb's wife, having on his righteousness, partaking of his benefits, and being called unto, and made meet for eternal glory and happiness; or else these may design converted Gentiles, who will be invited to join with them, and will.

And he saith unto me, these are the true sayings of God; the Syriac version reads, “these my true words are of God”; being true, it is plain they are of God, and being of God, it is certain they are true; for he is the God of truth, and cannot lie, and therefore may be depended upon.

Ver. 10. *And I fell at his feet to worship him*, etc.] Being transported with the news he brought him of the marriage, or conversion of his countrymen the Jews, and struck with reverence and awe of the glory and majesty in which the angel appeared to him; and forgetting himself, that worship was only due to God, he behaved in this manner; which is not to be excused nor justified, as appears from the angel's words:

and he said unto me, see thou do it not; the words are in the original very short and concise, and are spoken in an abrupt manner, and in great haste; as fearing he would be guilty of idolatry, before he could speak all his mind, and use the arguments that were necessary to dissuade from it:

I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; if this was one of the ministering spirits, he was a servant of the same Lord as John; and if he was a minister of the Gospel, he was still more literally a fellow servant of his, and of the apostles, and preachers of the Gospel; which is meant by the testimony of Jesus, that bearing testimony to the person, office, grace, obedience, sufferings, and death of Christ, and the glory following; and therefore being but a servant, and a servant in common with John and his brethren, was by no means to be worshipped; not the servant, but master; not the creature, but the Creator:

worship God and him only, even God the Father, Son, and Spirit; not the Father to the exclusion of the Son, the firstborn, whom all the angels are called upon to worship; nor of the Spirit, who is equally joined with the Father and Son in baptism, a part of religious worship, and in other parts of it also; but this excludes all creatures, angels, and men, things animate or inanimate, and images of them; the worshipping of which will now be no more, or at least will be quickly at an end.

For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy that is, the testimony of Jesus, or the Gospel which John and his brethren had, is the very spirit, life,

and soul of the prophecy of this book; for as all the prophets bore witness to Christ, so does the Spirit of God in this; or the testimony which they had, and bore to Christ, was equal to the spirit of prophecy with which this angel was endowed; so that he and they were upon an equal foot; and he was no more a proper object of divine and religious adoration than they were.

Ver. 11. *And I saw heaven opened*, etc.] This vision refers not to the same time the first seal does, (Revelation 6:2) for though a white horse, with a rider on it, is seen here, as there; that respects the first times of the Gospel, this the latter part of the dispensation of it; nor to the war in heaven between Michael and the dragon, and their angels, (Revelation 12:7) that issued in the downfall of Paganism in the Roman empire, this will issue in the downfall of the Papacy in it; nor to the personal coming of Christ to the last judgment, of which an account is given in the following chapter; but to the battle at Armageddon, to which the sixth vial is a preparation, and which is finished under the seventh, (Revelation 16:13-17) and what is briefly hinted at there is at large related here; in which Christ, the General, and his armies, on the one hand, and the kings of the earth, with the beast and false prophet, and their armies, on the other hand, appear to give battle to each other: and the issue of the battle is particularly represented, in order to have a view of which, “John saw heaven opened”: not literally, as at Christ's baptism, and at the stoning of Stephen, nor in a spiritual sense, by the blood of Christ, but visionally, as in (Revelation 4:1) and since heaven, often in this book, signifies the church on earth, a more glorious and comfortable state of the church may be designed; when her gates shall be opened continually, and not shut day nor night, to receive the forces of the Gentiles, and their kings, (Isaiah 60:15) such a state as is referred to in (Revelation 11:19 15:5) to which visions this is contemporary; and it may denote a very glorious appearing of Christ, not in person, which will be after this, but in his kingdom and power, in defeating his enemies, and reigning spiritually with his saints: and it may also design the clear revelation and discerning John had of the following things:

and behold a white horse which, as in (Revelation 6:2) may be a symbol of the Gospel, and Gospel ministers, as there in the former, here in the latter part of the Gospel dispensation; signified by a horse, to denote the swift progress of the Gospel in the latter day, the majesty, power, and authority with which it will come, bearing down all opposition made

against it; and by a white horse, to express the purity of the Gospel, and of its preachers and professors, and the peace it publishes, and gives, and the joy it brings, and the triumphs that will attend it.

And he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True: that Christ is here meant, is evident from the description of his eyes, (Revelation 19:12) being the same as in (Revelation 1:14) and from his name, (Revelation 19:13) which is the peculiar name of the Son of God, (John 1:1,14) and he sits upon, and is bore by, and rides forth in the Gospel, and the ministry of it, with glory and majesty, and prosperously, (Psalm 45:3,4) and the characters of faithful and true well agree with him; (see Gill on "Revelation 3:7"). (See Gill on "Revelation 3:14"). He is "faithful and true" to God, who appointed him a Leader and Commander of the people, and to them he is the Commander of: and these characters well suit him now, when he will accomplish all the glorious things spoken of the church, relating to her spiritual and happy state in the latter day, and serve greatly to recommend him as a General.

And in righteousness he doth judge and make war; which is to be understood not of the last judgment, though that will be executed in righteousness, and therefore is called the righteous judgment, yet in that day there will be no war, no opposition, the wicked will at once submit; but of Christ's judging of his people, and avenging their blood on their enemies, and the remainder of them among Papists, Pagans, and Mahometans; who will be gathered together at Armageddon in battle array against them, when there will be an utter discomfiture of them in righteous judgment; for as in times past the beast made war with the saints and witnesses, and overcame them, Christ will enable his people to make war with him and his accomplices, and overcome them, as the sequel of this vision shows, Christ being at the head of them, though not in person, yet in power.

Ver. 12. *His eyes were as a flame of fire*, etc.] Which denotes the perspicuity and penetration of them, the omniscience of Christ to look into and discover the secret machinations, schemes, and devices of his enemies against his people, and his exercise of it in favour of them, his eyes, like a flame of fire, running to and fro on their behalf; and also this may signify the fierceness of his anger against the enemies of his people, the eyes of his glory being provoked by their cruelty and wickedness; and likewise the suddenness of their destruction, and the inevitableness of it.

And on his head were many crowns; for he has not only a crown, as the Creator and Governor of the universe, in right of nature, but he has one which his Father has put upon his head, when he set him as King over his holy hill of Zion, (<19210>Psalm 21:3) and there is another which his mother, the church, crowned him with in the day of his espousals, (<22311>Song of Solomon 3:11) and besides these, every believer puts a crown on his head, gives him the glory of their salvation, and all of them cast their crowns at his feet: to which may be added, that the crowns of all the kings of the earth are his; they reign by him, and are accountable to him. This part of the description may be expressive of that all power in heaven and earth, given to Christ at his resurrection, and exercised by him ever since; and particularly of the extensiveness of his kingdom at the time this vision refers to, when the kingdoms of this world shall be his, (<661115>Revelation 11:15) for this vision, and the seventh trumpet, are contemporary; and it may be a symbol of the many victories obtained by him, and of the last and closing one that should now be obtained by him.

And he had a name written that no man knew but he himself; which seems to be his name, the Son of God, as the unknown name of the overcomer, in (<660217>Revelation 2:17) is a child of God; and the sense is, that his divine nature, in which he is the Son of God, is incomprehensible, and that the begetting or generation of him, as such, is ineffable, (<203004>Proverbs 30:4) and that without a divine revelation the name itself could not be known; or it could not be known that God had a Son, and that Christ is he, and bears that name, (<401127>Matthew 11:27 16:16,17) or else his name Immanuel. The incarnate God may be intended, which is a secret and wonderful name, and contains in it, without controversy, a great mystery, which cannot be comprehended by finite minds; or his name, פלא, “wonderful, secret”, (<230906>Isaiah 9:6 <071318>Judges 13:18). This name is said to be “written”; that is, in the Scriptures of truth, in which it is revealed that Christ is the Son of God, and Immanuel. In (<661916>Revelation 19:16) the name of King of kings, etc. is said to be written on his vesture, and on his thigh; and the Ethiopic version makes this to be written on his crown or diadem, reading the words thus; “and upon his head a crown, and there was written in his diadem a name, and no man knew it, but he himself only”; as the high priest had “holiness to the Lord” written on his mitre. The Syriac version inserts a clause between the two last, “having names written”, and then follows, “and a name written”, etc. and so the Complutensian edition.

Ver. 13. *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood*, etc.] Either in his own, by which he became the Saviour of his church and people; or else in the blood of his saints, he now comes to avenge; or rather in the blood of his enemies, with which he appears as stained, before the battle is fought, the victory being sure, and their slaughter unavoidable: the metaphor is taken from persons treading in a winepress, whose garments are stained with blood of grapes; (see <66915>Revelation 19:15 <01491>Genesis 49:11 <23601>Isaiah 63:1-3). Here may be also an allusion to the Roman general's vesture, which was sometimes purple or scarlet, in which he fought, as did Lucullus [f428].

And his name is called the Word of God; the name of Christ, often used by John in his Gospel, epistles, and in this book, (<43001>John 1:1,14) (<62001>1 John 1:1 5:7 <66002>Revelation 1:2,9). Of the signification, reason, and import of this name, (see Gill on "<43001>John 1:1"). The reason why he is called by it here may be partly to express his greatness, glory, and majesty, this being a name which principally belongs to him, is a person, as the Creator of all things, and as previous to his incarnation; and partly because all the promises of God in his word, and which are all yea, and amen in Christ, will be now shortly fulfilled.

Ver. 14. *And the armies which were in heaven*, etc.] Not the angels, though they are God's host, and are the armies of the heavens; they are in heaven, and dwell there, and follow Christ, attend upon him, and minister to him, and have been sometimes represented by horses and horsemen, (<12021>2 Kings 2:11 6:17 <38008>Zechariah 1:8) and they are pure and holy creatures, and will come with Christ to judgment: but this vision refers not to the day of judgment; and besides, the saints are meant, as appears by their habit, for the fine linen, white and clean, is the righteousness of the saints, (<66908>Revelation 19:8) and the righteousness of angels and saints is not the same. Moreover, these are the same company described in (<66714>Revelation 17:14). The saints are in a state of warfare, have many enemies to fight with, sin, Satan, and the world; they are enlisted as volunteers under Christ, the Captain of salvation; they are provided with the whole armour of God, and are very numerous, and always more than conquerors through Christ: these are described by the place where they were, "in heaven"; not being glorified saints in heaven; with these indeed Christ will come to judgment, even with all his saints with him; but members of the church militant, said to be in heaven, because that is often called the kingdom of heaven; and because their names are written in

heaven, and they are of heavenly extract; they are born from above, and are partakers of the heavenly calling; they belong to heaven, they are citizens of it, and are pressing on to it. And these

followed him; Christ, their Leader and Commander in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty; having gone on in his ways through a train of sufferings, and cleaved unto him, and now attend him; not to assist in fighting, but to add to the glorious and triumphant appearance of their General; and therefore are said to be

upon white horses; they had served Christ in his Gospel, which some of them had preached, and all professed, and had maintained the purity of it in doctrine and practice, and now triumphed in Christ, and along with him, riding upon horses of the same colour with his, as being his princes and nobles, and whom he had made kings as well as priests; the former may be signified by their horses; (see <070510>Judges 5:10) and the latter by their following habit,

clothed in fine linen, white and clean; not the horses, but the armies on them; which designs not their inward purity, which was very glorious; nor their outward conversation garments, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb; but the robe of Christ's righteousness, which is pure and spotless: these have no armour on, for they are not to strike a blow, only their General, who has the bloody garment on, is to tread the winepress, and destroy antichrist with the breath of his mouth, or with his sword proceeding out of it, as follows.

Ver. 15. *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword*, etc.] The Complutensian edition, and all the Oriental versions, with the Vulture Latin, read, “a sharp twoedged sword”. The word of God, or the judiciary sentence of Christ according to it, and which he will fully execute, to the utter destruction of all his enemies; (see Gill on “<660116>Revelation 1:16”) that with it he should smite the nations; the Gentiles, the Papists, the antichristian states, those that have adhered to Babylon, and have drunk of the wine of her fornication. This is predicted in (<042417>Numbers 24:17-19) and on account of this the nations will be angry under the sounding of the seventh trumpet, with which this vision is contemporary, (<661118>Revelation 11:18).

And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; use them with the utmost severity; the phrase is taken out of (<190209>Psalm 2:9) a prophecy of Christ,

and mentioned twice before in this book, (see Gill on "Revelation 2:27"), (see Gill on "Revelation 12:5"):

and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God; the fierce wrath of God against sinners is compared to a winepress; and the wicked antichristian party are likened to clusters of grapes; who being ripe for destruction, are cast into it, and pressed, squeezed, and trodden down by the mighty power of Christ, the Word of God, whose vesture is therefore before said to be dipped in blood; the same metaphor is used in (Revelation 14:19,20) the allusion seems to be to (Isaiah 63:3,6).

Ver. 16. *And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written*, etc.] This name, afterwards expressed, is said to be written on his vesture, in allusion to the custom of persons of note and eminence having their names interwoven in their garments, and which was sometimes done in letters of gold, as Zeuxis had [f429]; and it is expressive of the conspicuousness of Christ's kingdom, which now will come with observation; his judgments, the administrations of his kingly office, will be manifest, and he will reign before his ancients gloriously: and its being said to be written on his thigh may mean either that it was upon that part of his garment which covered his thigh; or else that it was also on his sword, which he sometimes girt upon his thigh. Mr. Daubuz has given an instance out of Victor Vitensis, of Clementianus, a monk, who had written on his thigh,

> ""a manichee" disciple of Jesus Christ."

And this being done in Africa, he supposes it to be a Phoenician custom continued. It may here denote the perpetuity of Christ's name, power, and dominion, which will continue to the latest posterity, (Psalm 72:17) which spring from the thigh; and it may denote the subjection of his people to him, signified by the putting the hand under the thigh, (Genesis 24:2). And this name is

King of kings and Lord of lords; which will well suit him now when he shall be openly King over all the earth; (see Gill on "Revelation 17:14").

Ver. 17. *And I saw an angel standing in the sun*, etc.] By whom is meant, not the angel of the fourth vial, who poured it on the sun, taken in another sense than here, and therefore could not stand in it; nor the archangel with the last trumpet, for as yet the dead rise not, nor does the judgment come on; nor one of the ministering spirits; nor Christ himself, for he is the great

God, to whose supper this angel invites, but a minister of the Gospel; or rather a set of Gospel ministers, such as in (Revelation 14:1-6) who may be said to stand in the sun, in like manner as the woman, the church, was seen clothed with it, (Revelation 12:1) and may denote the conspicuousness of Gospel preachers; for, as the church now will be established upon the top of the mountains, so her teachers shall not be removed into corners any more, but her eyes shall behold her teachers; and also the clear sight they shall have of the doctrines and mysteries of the Gospel, who shall now see eye to eye; and particularly the further breakings forth of the glory of the latter day, and the ensuing victory of Christ over all his enemies; and also shows the great strength of their sight, who, far from being like moles and bats, will be able both to look upon the sun, and to stand in it: and it may likewise signify the glory and majesty of Christ's kingdom; the comfortable influence of him, the sun of righteousness, who will now arise upon his people with healing in his wings; and the steadfastness of Christ's ministers to him, and his pure Gospel, and the glorious truths of it.

And he cried with a loud voice; that he might be heard far and near, having something of moment and importance to publish:

saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven; meaning not the barbarous nations, the Goths, and Vandals, and Saracens, which overrun and destroyed the western and eastern empires; these times are too late for them, they rose up under the six first trumpets; nor devils and unclean spirits, which will prey upon and torment antichrist, and his followers, in hell; nor military and avaricious men among Protestants, but Christian princes, and their people, are designed; they are such as are in heaven, the church, and of note there, who will share the spoils of the antichristian people, and possess their kingdoms, substance, and estates: these are invited by the angel, saying,

come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions, read, “to the great supper of God”; and so the Complutensian edition; not the Lord's supper, where not the flesh of men, but the flesh of Christ is eat, by faith; nor the marriage supper of the Lamb, which will be of another kind than this; nor is any spiritual repast intended, such as living by faith on Christ, and supping with him, being entertained with his promises, presence, and the discoveries of his love; but the slaughter of Christ's enemies, and his

victory over them, which is his sacrifice; and these are the guests he bids, (see <360107>Zephaniah 1:7) and whom he calls to share in the conquest and spoils, and to express their joy on this occasion: “the great God” is no other than Christ, the general of the armies in heaven, called before the Word of God, and King of kings, and Lord of lords; who will gain this victory, and will be known to be the great God by the judgment he will execute. This is a proof of our Lord's divinity; (see <560213>Titus 2:13).

Ver. 18. *That ye may eat the flesh of kings*, etc.] Of the earth, and of the whole world, who will fall in the battle at Armageddon; (see <661614>Revelation 16:14 19:19) and design either those antichristian kings and states, which have drunk of the wine of Rome's fornication, and will bewail the downfall of Babylon, (<661803>Revelation 18:3,9) or those Pagan kings which will be drawn in by the pope and Turk, to aid and assist in this war, or both, when, upon the defeat of them, the Christian princes will seize upon, possess, and enjoy their kingdoms and dominions, which is meant by eating their flesh; (see Gill on “<661716>Revelation 17:16”).

And the flesh of captains; of their generals, and officers under them:

and the flesh of mighty men; the common soldiers, who are so called, (<240605>Jeremiah 46:5) who will be rifled and plundered:

and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them; whose rich trappings and clothes will be taken away from them:

and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great; that is, the substance of all the inhabitants of the antichristian empire, both eastern and western, of whatsoever rank, state, and condition they be, (<661316>Revelation 13:16). The metaphors are taken from, and there is a manifest allusion to, (<263917>Ezekiel 39:17-20) and the whole denotes the entire slaughter and utter ruin of the whole antichristian army, and the certainty of Christ's victory over it before hand; and also the destruction of all that are the followers of antichrist, throughout his dominions, which will now wholly fall into the hands of the saints, and be enjoyed by them.

Ver. 19. *And I saw the beast*, etc.] Not the devil, for after this he is taken and bound for a thousand years, and then loosed, and laid hold on again, and cast into the lake of fire; not but that this war will be by his instigation, and under his influence, (<661614>Revelation 16:14) not the Roman Pagan empire, which has been destroyed long ago, under the sixth seal, and was the issue of the battle between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and

his; but the antichristian civil powers, or antichrist in his civil capacity; and which, though it may chiefly regard the western antichrist, and the remains of the Latin idolatry, yet may take in the eastern antichrist, or the Mahometan powers, which may all join together in this battle; the beast will survive for a while the downfall of his seat, Babylon or Rome.

And the kings of the earth; these, as they stand distinguished from the beast, or the antichristian kings, and civil states, may design as many of the Pagan kings and princes, as the pope and Turk by their emissaries can persuade to assist them in this war; (see Gill on "Revelation 16:14").

And their armies gathered together; at Armageddon, or in the valley of Jehoshaphat, (Revelation 16:16 Joel 3:2,12)

to make war against him that sat on the horse; the white horse, (Revelation 19:11) as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, which must be downright folly and madness, since he is the Word of God, the great God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords:

and against his army, (Revelation 19:14) who, though unarmed, and only clothed in fine linen, have nothing to fear, since Christ, the Captain of their salvation, is at the head of them.

Ver. 20. *And the beast was taken*, etc.] At the first onset, as soon as ever the battle begun, and carried away captive, as it was threatened he should, (Revelation 13:10) and this by Christ, who will destroy him with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming, (2 Thessalonians 2:8).

And with him the false prophet; that is, the second beast in (Revelation 13:11-14) as appears by the characters by which he is here described, or antichrist in his ecclesiastic capacity; that is, the pope with his clergy: and indeed, when the antichristian princes and states are taken and destroyed, which are the support of the Papacy, that must in consequence sink, be crushed and ruined; the Alexandrian copy reads, "and they that are with him, the false prophet Jezebel"; the false prophetess and her children, who will now be killed with death, (Revelation 2:20,23)

that wrought miracles before him: the beast, or the civil antichristian powers, even signs and lying wonders, which were approved of, and applauded by him, by which, believing them, he was confirmed in antichristian principles:

with which he deceived them that had the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image; the several subjects of the antichristian states; (see <66314>Revelation 13:14-17) but none of God's elect, who cannot be seduced by such means, (<40424>Matthew 24:24).

These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone; which is the second death, (<66208>Revelation 21:8). The severe punishment of antichrist, considered in both his capacities, civil and ecclesiastic, is expressed by being “cast into a lake of fire”, not material fire, but the wrath of God, which will be poured out like fire, and will be intolerable; and by this lake “burning with brimstone”, which, giving a nauseous stench, aggravates the punishment. Says R. Joden [f430], when a man smells the smell of brimstone, why does his breath draw back at it (or catch)? because he knows he shall be judged with it in the world to come. The allusion seems to be to the place where Sodom and Gomorrah stood, which is become a sulphurous lake, and is an emblem of the vengeance of eternal fire, (<65007>Jude 1:7) and these two are said to be “cast alive” into it, which shows that they will not only suffer a corporeal death at this battle, and in the issue of it, but will be destroyed, body and soul, in hell: the phrase denotes the awfulness, inevitableness, and severity of their punishment; there seems to be some reference to the earth's swallowing up Korah and his company alive, (<041633>Numbers 16:33) (see <270711>Daniel 7:11).

Ver. 21. *And the remnant were slain*, etc.] Not only the kings of the earth, and their armies, that will now be gathered together, but all the remains of Papists, Pagans, and Mahometans, in the several parts of the world, even all the enemies of Christ: these will be slain

with the sword of him that sat upon the horse; upon the white horse, as the Ethiopic version reads; the Arabic version reads, that sat upon the throne,

which sword proceedeth out of his mouth, (<661915>Revelation 19:15) and is the word of God, or the judiciary sentence of Christ according to it; and the meaning is, either that these shall be subdued, conquered, and converted by the word; and so are fitly called a “remnant”, a remnant according to the election of grace among the antichristian party; and which sense agrees with (<661113>Revelation 11:13) or else that they will be convicted and confounded, and not be able to stand against the light and evidence of the word of God, and will be sentenced by Christ to everlasting punishment; and it may be partly one, and partly the other.

And all the fowls were filled with their flesh; all the Christian princes and people will be satisfied with their kingdoms, riches, and wealth, and will rejoice at their destruction, and in the righteousness of God, which will be displayed in it; and now the world being clear of all Christ's enemies, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan, the way will be prepared for Christ's open and glorious kingdom in it.

CHAPTER 20

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 20

This chapter contains the binding of Satan, the saints' thousand years' reign with Christ, the loosing of Satan again, the destruction of him, and the Gog and Magog army, and the last judgment: the angel that is to bind Satan is described by his descent from heaven; by his having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand; and by the use he made of them, laying hold on Satan, binding him, casting him into the bottomless pit, and then shutting it up, and setting a seal on him; by all which he will be prevented from deceiving the nations for the space of a thousand years, (<6201>Revelation 20:1-3). After this thrones are seen, with persons on them, to whom judgment is given; who are said to be such as had been martyrs for Jesus, and had not worshipped the beast, or professed his religion; whose happiness is represented by living and reigning with Christ a thousand years, when others will not; the second death will have no power on them; they will be the priests of God, and Christ, and reign with him during the said term, having a part in the first resurrection, (<6204>Revelation 20:4-6). At the expiration of which term Satan will be loosed, and go out of prison, deceive the nations, and gather Gog and Magog to battle; who, being exceeding numerous, will cover the breadth of the earth, encompass the camp and city of the saints, when fire will come down from heaven and destroy them, and Satan will be cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and false prophet are, and be tormented for ever and ever, (<6207>Revelation 20:7-10). And next an account is given of the general Judgment; and the judge is described by the throne he sat on, a white cloud, and by his majesty, which is such, that the heavens and the earth flee from before him, (<6201>Revelation 20:11). And next the persons judged are described by their common state, the dead; by their age or condition, great and small, and by their position, standing before God; and then an account of the procedure, or rule of judgment; the books are opened, and the execution of judgment according to what is found in the books, (<6202>Revelation 20:12) in order to which the sea, death, and the grave, give up the dead in them, and the two last are cast into the lake, and with them those who are not in the book of life, (<6203>Revelation 20:13,14).

Ver. 1. *And I saw an angel come down from heaven*, etc.] All Christ's enemies, and Satan's instruments being removed, the devil is left alone, and only stands in the way of Christ's kingdom; and what will be done to him, and how he will be in the issue disposed of, this vision gives an account: by the "angel" John saw, is not to be understood Constantine the great; for though he is the man child that was taken up to God, and his throne, being advanced to the empire, yet he cannot, with that propriety, be said to come down from heaven; and though he vanquished the Heathen emperors, in which the dragon presided, and cast Paganism out of the empire, by which the devil ruled in it, yet the binding of Satan is another kind of work, and seems too great for him; and besides, did not take place in his time, as will be seen hereafter: nor is an apostle, or a minister of the Gospel intended; such are indeed called angels in this book, and may be said to come down from heaven, because they have their commission from thence; and particularly the apostles had the keys of the kingdom of heaven, but not the key of the bottomless pit; and a chain and system of Gospel truths, which they made good use of for the establishing of Christ's kingdom, and weakening of Satan's, but not such a chain as is here meant; and they had the power of binding and loosing, or of declaring things lawful or unlawful, but not of binding and loosing of Satan; nor was he bound in the apostolic age: nor is one of the ministering spirits, or a deputation of angels designed; for though Christ will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, and will make use of them, both to gather together his elect, and to cast the wicked into the lake of fire, yet not to bind Satan; but the Lord Jesus Christ himself is this angel, who is the angel of God's presence, and of the covenant; and who is in this book called an angel, (Revelation 7:2 10:1) to whom all the characters here well agree, and to whom the work of binding Satan most properly belongs; for who so fit to do it, or so capable of it, as the seed of the woman, that has bruised serpent's head, or as the Son of God, who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, yea, to destroy him himself; and who dispossessed multitudes of devils from the bodies of men, and is the strong man armed that dislodges Satan from the souls of men, and is the same with Michael, who drove him from heaven, and cast him out from thence before, (Revelation 12:7,8). And his coming down from heaven is not to be understood of his incarnation, or of his coming from thence by the assumption of human nature; for Satan was not bound by him then, as will be seen hereafter; but of his second coming, which will be from heaven, where he now is, and will be local, visible, and personal: of no other coming of his does this book speak, as seen by John,

or as future; nor will the order of this vision, after the ruin of the beast and false prophet, admit of any other.

Having the key of the bottomless pit: the abyss or deep, the same out of which the beast ascended, (Revelation 11:7 17:8). And the key of this becomes no hand so well as his who has the keys of hell and death, (Revelation 1:18) who has all power in heaven and in earth, and has the power of hell, of opening and shutting it at his pleasure, which is signified by this phase; (see Revelation 9:1). The Ethiopic version reads, “the key of the sun”, where some have thought hell to be; and yet the same version renders the word, the deep, in (Revelation 20:3).

And a great chain in his hand; the key in one hand, and the chain in another; by which last is meant, not any material chain, with which spirits cannot be bound, nor indeed sometimes bodies possessed by evil spirits, (Mark 5:3,4) but the almighty power of Christ, which he will now display in binding Satan faster and closer than ever.

Ver. 2 *And he laid hold on the dragon*, etc.] By whom is meant not Paganism, for that was destroyed in the Roman empire under the sixth seal, and was the consequence of the war between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his; and before this time it will be destroyed in other parts under the sixth and seventh vials, when the kings of the earth, being gathered together at Armageddon, will be slain, and the cities of the nations will fall, not only Papal, but Pagan, and Mahometan; and what will not will be converted, for before this time the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of Christ: but the devil himself is intended, so called, partly because of his great power, authority, and cruelty he has exercised in the world; and because of the venom and poison of idolatry, superstition, false doctrine, and worship, with which he has infected the inhabitants of it.

That old serpent; so called with respect to his cunning and subtlety, as well as his antiquity, being from the beginning of the creation, and having as early beguiled our first parents;

which is the devil and Satan; the accuser of God and men, and the adversary of them both. The Complutensian edition and Syriac version add, “which deceiveth the whole world”; and the Arabic version, “the deceiver of the whole world”; which seems to be taken out of (Revelation 12:9), (see Gill on “Revelation 12:9”). Him Christ “laid hold on”, and whom he held fast, as the word signifies: Christ will now take him, apprehend

him, and detain him, as his prisoner; in the wilderness, Satan only felt the dint of his sword, the written word of God, and was obliged to leave him: but now he will feel the weight of his hand, and the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger; in the agony or conflict with him in the garden, he was conquered by prayer; and on the cross Christ destroyed him through death, but now he will be seized by his power, and crushed under his hand.

And bound him a thousand years, with the great chain he had in his hand: the devil is in chains now, is under the power of divine Providence, and can do nothing without divine permission; but this chain is long, and he appears oftentimes to have great liberty, and ranges about the air and earth, and does much mischief; but now he will be so bound by the power of Christ over him, that he will not be able to stir hand or foot, to disturb the saints, or deceive the nations, whether with false worship, and false doctrine, or by stirring them up to persecute the saints. So of the devil, Asmodaeus, it is said in the Apocrypha,

> "And Raphael was sent to heal them both, that is, to scale away the whiteness of Tobit's eyes, and to give Sara the daughter of Raguel for a wife to Tobias the son of Tobit; and to bind Asmodeus the evil spirit; because she belonged to Tobias by right of inheritance. The selfsame time came Tobit home, and entered into his house, and Sara the daughter of Raguel came down from her upper chamber." (Tobit 3:17)

that the angel Raphael, whrsa "bound him". The space of a thousand years is not a certain number for an uncertain, or a large and indeterminate space of time, as in (<19004>Psalm 90:4 105:8) these years are to be taken, not indefinitely, but definitely, for just this number of years exactly, as appears from their having the article prefixed to them; and are called afterwards, no less than four times, τα χιλια ετη, "the thousand years", or these thousand years, (<66203>Revelation 20:3-5,7) and from the things which are attributed to the beginning and ending of these years, which fix the epoch, and period of them; as the binding of Satan, when they begin, and the loosing of him when they end, as well as the reign of the saints with Christ during the whole time; to which may be added, the resurrection of the saints at the commencement of them, and the resurrection of the wicked at the close: but the great question is, whether they are begun or not? if they are begun, when they began; and if not, when they will. Some think that

they began either at the birth of Christ, or at his resurrection, or at the destruction of Jerusalem. I put these together, because they were all in one century, within the compass of seventy years, or thereabout; so that if the thousand years began at either of them, they must end in the same century, in 1100. Now though, upon Christ's coming Satan fell like lightning from heaven, and multitudes of men, possessed with devils, were dispossessed by Christ, and he that had the power of death, the devil, was destroyed by him; and upon the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles in the Gentile world, the prince of the world was cast out, his oracles were struck dumb, multitudes were converted, and churches were set up everywhere, yet still Satan was not bound: he was not bound before the death of Christ; witness the many bodies of men possessed by him; his tempting Christ himself in the wilderness; his attacks upon him in the garden, and on the cross; his putting it into the heart of Judas to betray him; and filling the chief priests and scribes with malice and envy against him, to seek his death, which they brought about: nor was he bound, so as not to deceive the Jews, either before or after the death of Christ, nor is he to this day; they were in Christ's time under the influence of their father the devil, whose lust they would do, and did, in putting Christ to death; and after his death, they were instigated by Satan to persecute his apostles in Judea, and elsewhere; and though after the destruction of Jerusalem they had no more power to act in this way, yet they had no less ill will and malice against the Christians, and are to this day filled with enmity against them, and are led captive by Satan, and given up to believe a lie, that the Messiah is not come, and to reject the true Messiah, and to expect a false one: and as for the Heathen world, notwithstanding the progress of the Gospel in it, yet for the first three hundred years Paganism was the established religion of the Roman empire; and Christianity was everywhere spoken against, despised, and persecuted, and sometimes triumphed over, as if it was extinct; and Satan could never be said to be bound, and in prison himself, when he cast such multitudes into prison, and caused them to have tribulation ten days, (Revelation 2:10) in which so many martyrs suffered; nor did Satan appear to be bound, with respect to the church; the mystery of iniquity began to work in the apostle's times, and there were then many antichrists in the world, deceivers, false teachers and heretics; there was a synagogue of Satan, (Revelation 2:9) and such a set of vile persons under the name of Christians, as scarce ever was in the world; to which may be added, the great decline of love, and other graces, and of the purity of doctrine and worship in the best churches, and the many contentions among themselves,

in which Satan had a great hand, and therefore could not be bound: moreover, some hundreds of years before the thousand years ended, beginning from either of the above dates, the man of sin, the son of perdition, the pope, or western antichrist, was revealed, whose coming is after the working of Satan, (<53209>2 Thessalonians 2:9) and therefore surely he could not be bound then; besides, Mahomet, the eastern antichrist, sprung up, who opened the bottomless pit, and let out the smoke of it, by the Alcoran he delivered, and the false worship he set up: nor was there anything in the eleventh century, which answered to the loosing of Satan, to the Gog and Magog army, their war with the saints, and the issue of it; nor were the nations then more deceived than they had been in some centuries past; at least they were deceived in centuries past, both by the pope and Mahomet, which they would not have been, had Satan been bound then: to which may be subjoined, that if Satan was loosed, then he cannot be said to be loosed a little season, as in (<66203>Revelation 20:3) in comparison of the thousand years, as that must be understood; since it is now between six and seven hundred years since, which is more than half a thousand years. Others begin these years at Constantine's coming to the imperial throne; but though there was at that time a great spread of the Gospel, an enlargement of Christ's kingdom, and a weakening of Satan's, yet Satan was far from being bound; (see <66207>Revelation 12:7,8 13:15) witness the flood of errors and heresies which he quickly brought in, as the Eutychian and Nestorian heresies, the one confounding the natures, the other dividing the person of Christ; the Pelagian heresy, which obscured the grace of God, and advanced the free will of man; the Macedonian heresy, which denied the divinity of the Spirit: and especially the Arian heresy, which was opposed to the deity of Christ, and which introduced great contentions and confusion the churches, and issued in a violent persecution of them, being embraced by the sons of Constantine: not to take notice of Julian, an Heathen emperor, ascending the throne, who by many devilish arts endeavoured to extirpate Christianity; nor what has been observed before, the rise of both Mahomet in the east, and the Romish antichrist in the west, which were both within this period; in process of time the western empire was overrun by the Goths and Vandals, and the eastern empire by the Saracens and Turks; to which may be added, the violent persecutions of the Waldenses and Albigenses, before the year 1300, about which time the thousand years must cease, according to this computation, for opposing the pope of Rome, and who were slain where Satan had his seat, (<66213>Revelation 2:13) and therefore not bound; nor was

there anything happened in that century which might answer to the loosing of him. Others date these thousand years from the Reformation, and so not much more than two hundred of them are yet passed; but that Satan was not bound then, and is not now, is manifest. All the Popish nations have not been reformed, but still remain under the deception; and some, that have been, have revolted again; and the devil has continued to deceive the nations with that false worship, and to stir them up to persecute the reformed. Witness the burning of them here in Queen Mary's days, the massacres in France and Ireland, the present inquisition in Spain and Portugal, and the persecution of the Hugonots in France, and other Protestants elsewhere: and this is further evident from the decline in the reformed churches, both as to doctrine, discipline, and conversation; from the spread of errors and heresies of all kinds ever since, and especially in our age; and from the general profaneness and infidelity of the times, which, when considered, no man in his senses can ever think that Satan is bound; nor indeed will he be bound, or these thousand years begin, till after the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, and the destruction of all the antichristian powers, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan, as appears from the order of this vision, and its connection with the preceding chapter.

Ver. 3. *And cast him into the bottomless pit*, etc.] Or deep, into which the devils desired they might not be sent, and which they dreaded as a torment, it may be, because a place of confinement, (<40831>Luke 8:31 <40829>Matthew 8:29) for this is called a prison, (<66207>Revelation 20:7) and is distinguished from the lake of fire, into which the devil is afterwards cast, (<66210>Revelation 20:10).

And shut him up; that so he might not rove about in the air, nor go to and fro in the earth, nor walk about like a roaring lion, seeking to affright, disturb, or devour:

and set a seal upon him; or upon the door of the pit, for further security, as was upon the stone at the mouth of the lion's den, (<27067>Daniel 6:17) and of Christ's sepulchre, (<40276>Matthew 27:66). The Jews [f431] make mention of a stone they call “Shetijah”, with which the Lord of the world “sealed the mouth of the great deep”, or bottomless pit, at the beginning; but here not that, but Satan in it, is sealed. The Alexandrian copy reads, “and sealed him firmly”, so that it was impossible for him to break out: the end of this apprehension, binding, imprisonment, and security of Satan is,

that he should deceive the nations no more; that is, by drawing them into idolatry, false worship, and false doctrine; and by exciting them to make war against the saints, or to persecute them, as appears from (Revelation 20:8) as he had done before; and it is notorious enough that he has deceived them both these ways; he deceived the Pagan nations not only before, but since the coming of Christ, to worship the Heathen deities; and the Papists, who are called Gentiles, or nations, (Revelation 11:2) to fall down to idols of gold, silver, stone, and wood; and the nation of the Jews to entertain a false and deluded notion of the Messiah; and all of them, in their turns, to persecute the people of God, as the Jews at the death of Stephen, and afterwards; the Pagan emperors for the first three hundred years after Christ; the Papists from the rise of the beast, who had power given him to make war with the saints, and overcome them; but now he will be under such restraint, and in such close confinement, that he will not be able to move the wicked nations to anything of this kind, as he will when he is loosed at the end of the thousand years; nor will he be able so much as to tempt any of the saints, during this term of time, nor give them the least molestation or uneasiness.

Till the thousand years shall be fulfilled; or ended, the whole space of them run out:

and after that he must be loosed a little season; a small space of time, in comparison of the thousand years; how long it will be exactly, cannot be said; and this “must” be, not because he cannot be held any longer, or through any weakness in Christ; but because of the decree of God, who has so appointed it, for the glorifying of himself, in the salvation of his people, and in the final destruction of the devil, and the Gog and Magog army.

Ver. 4. *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them*, etc.] Besides the throne of God the Father, and the throne of glory, on which the Son of God sits, and the twelve thrones for the twelve apostles of the Lamb; there will be thrones set, or pitched, for all the saints, (Daniel 7:9) who will sit on them, in the character of kings, and as conquerors, and shall sit quiet, and undisturbed, and be in perfect ease, and peace, for they that sit on them are the same persons hereafter described in this verse; for after the binding of Satan, an account is given of the happiness and glory of the saints during that time:

and judgment was given unto them; that is, power, dominion, regal authority, possession of a kingdom, answerable to their character as kings,

and to their position, sitting on thrones, (Daniel 7:22,27) unless it should be rather understood of justice being done them, which does not so manifestly take place in the present state of things, and of which they sometimes complain; but now righteous judgment will be given for them, and against their enemies; their persons will be openly declared righteous; their characters will be cleared of all false imputations fastened on them; and their works and sufferings for Christ will be taken notice of in a way of grace, and rewarded in a very glorious manner. And so it may respect their being judged themselves, but not their judging of others, the wicked, which is the sole work of Christ; nor will the wicked now be upon the spot to be judged; nor is that notion to be supported by (see Gill on "Matthew 19:28"), (see Gill on "1 Corinthians 6:2"), (see Gill on "1 Corinthians 6:3"). The Jews fancy that their chief men shall judge the world in the time to come; for so they say[f432],

> "in future time, (or in the world to come,) the holy blessed God will sit, and kings will place thrones for the great men of Israel, and they shall sit and judge the nations of the world with the holy blessed God:"

but the persons here meant are not Jews, but sufferers for the sake of Jesus, as follows:

and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God: these, with the persons described in the next clause, are they who will sit on thrones, during the thousand years of Satan's being bound, and will have judgment given them; even such who have bore witness to the truth of Jesus being the Son of God, the true Messiah, and the only Saviour of sinners, and to him as the essential Word of God, or to the written word of God, the whole Gospel, all the truths and doctrines of it; and who have been beheaded for bearing such a testimony, as John the Baptist was, the first of the witnesses of Jesus: and since this kind of punishment was a Roman one, it seems particularly to point at such persons who suffered under the Roman Pagan emperors, and to design the same souls said to be under the altar, and to cry for vengeance, (Revelation 6:9). This clause, in connection with the former, is differently rendered; the Syriac version renders it thus, "and judgment was given to them, and to the souls that were beheaded", etc. the Arabic version, "and to them was given the judgment the souls killed", etc. the Ethiopic version, "and then I saw a seat, and the son of man sat upon it,

and he rendered to them judgment for the souls of them that were slain for the law of the Lord Jesus".

And which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, (see Revelation 13:1,4,14-16). This describes such who shall have made no profession of the Popish religion, nor have supported it in any way; who shall not have joined in the idolatry of the Romish antichrist, but shall have protested against it, and departed from it, and shall have adhered to Christ, and to the true worship of God; (see Revelation 14:1 15:2). And so this, with the preceding character, includes all the saints that lived under Rome Pagan, and Rome Papal, to the destruction of antichrist, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom; not that these martyrs and confessors, or even all the saints of their times, are the only persons that shall share in the glory and happiness of the thousand years' reign of Christ, and binding of Satan; for all the saints will come with Christ, and all the dead in Christ will rise first, or be partakers of the first resurrection; and all that are redeemed by his blood, of whatsoever nation, or in whatsoever age of the world they have lived, even from the beginning of it, shall be kings and priests, and reign with him on earth, (Zechariah 14:5 1 Thessalonians 3:13 4:14,16 Revelation 5:9,10) though John only takes notice of these, because the design of this book, and of the visions shown to him, was only to give a prophetic history of the church, from his time, to the end of the world; and these particularly are observed to encourage the saints under sufferings for Christ:

and they lived; meaning not spiritually, for so they did before, and while they bore their testimony to Christ, and against antichrist, and previous to their death; nor in their successors, for it would not be just and reasonable that they should be beheaded for their witness of Christ and his word, and others should live and reign with Christ in their room and stead; nor is this to be understood of their living in their souls, for so they live in their separate state; the soul never dies; God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: but the sense is, that they lived again, as in (Revelation 20:5) they lived corporeally; their souls lived in their bodies, their bodies being raised again, and reunited to their souls, their whole persons lived; or the souls of them that were beheaded lived; that is, their bodies lived again, the soul being sometimes put for the body, (Psalm 16:10) and this is called the first resurrection in the next verse:

and reigned with Christ a thousand years; as all that suffer with him will, and as all that will live godly must, and do, (<55212>2 Timothy 2:12) (<55312>2 Timothy 3:12). Christ being descended from heaven, and having bound Satan, and the dead saints being raised, and the living ones changed, he will reign among them personally, visibly, and gloriously, and in the fullest manner; all the antichristian powers will be destroyed; Satan will be in close confinement; death, with respect to Christ and his people, will be no more; the heavens and the earth will be made new, and all things will be subject to him; and all his saints will be with him, and they shall reign with him; they shall be glorified together; they shall sit on the throne with him, have a crown of righteousness given them, and possess the kingdom appointed for them; they will reign over all their enemies; Satan will be bruised under their feet, being bound; the wicked will be shut up in hell, and neither will be able to give them any disturbance; and sin and death will be no more: this reign will not be in a sensual and carnal way, or lie in possessing worldly riches and honours, in eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage; the saints will not be in a mortal, but in an immortal state; the children of this resurrection will be like the angels; and this reign will be on earth, (<66510>Revelation 5:10) the present earth will be burnt up, and a new one formed, in which these righteous persons will dwell, (<61013>2 Peter 3:13) of which (see Gill on "<66201>Revelation 21:1") and it will last a thousand years; not distinct from, but the same with the thousand years in which Satan will be bound; for if they were distinct from them, and should commence when they are ended, the reign of Christ with his saints would be when Satan is loosed, which is utterly inconsistent with it. The Syriac version very rightly renders it, these thousand years, referring to those of Satan's binding. Nor are these thousand years to be understood prophetically, for as many years as there are days in a thousand years; for as this would defer the judgment of the wicked, and the ultimate glory of the saints, to a prodigious length of time, so it should be observed, that prophetic time will now be no longer, according to the angel's oath in (<66106>Revelation 10:6) but these are to be understood literally and definitely, as before, of just such an exact number and term of years; (see <61008>2 Peter 3:8) this is a perfect number, and is expressive of the perfection of this state, and is a term of years that neither Adam, nor any of his sons, arrived unto; but Christ the second Adam shall see his seed, and shall prolong his days longer than any of them, (<23510>Isaiah 53:10). It is an observation of the Jewish Rabbins [f433], that the day in (<01027>Genesis 2:17) is the day of the holy blessed God (i.e. a thousand years), and therefore the first Adam did not

perfect, or fill up his day, for there wanted seventy years of it: and it is a notion that prevails with them, that the days of the Messiah will be a thousand years [f434]; and so they will be at his second coming, but not at his first, which they vainly expect, it being past: and also they say [f435], that in these thousand years God will renew his world, and that then the righteous will be raised, and no more return to dust; which agrees with John's new heaven and new earth during this state, and with the first resurrection: and so Jerom, who was conversant with the Rabbins, says [f436] that the Jews expect a thousand years' reign.

Ver. 5. *But the rest of the dead*, etc.] Meaning not the dead saints, for they will be all raised together, but the wicked dead; and not them as morally or spiritually, but as corporeally dead: these

lived not again until the thousand years were finished; so that there will be such an exact term of years between the resurrection of the saints and the resurrection of the wicked; nor will there be any wicked living upon earth, or in bodies, during that time; for the wicked dead will not be raised with the saints at Christ's coming, and the wicked living will be destroyed in the conflagration of the world, and neither of them shall live again until the end of these years. This clause is left out in the Syriac version.

This is the first resurrection; which is not to be connected with the living again of the rest of the dead at the end of the thousand years, for that will be the second and last resurrection; but with the witnesses of Jesus, and the true worshippers of God living again, in order to reign with Christ a thousand years; for this resurrection is not meant of a resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace; though the work of grace and conversion is sometimes so represented, it cannot be designed here; for such a resurrection the above witnesses and worshippers were partakers of before their sufferings, and which was antecedently necessary to their witness and worship; besides, this resurrection was future in John's time, and was what was to be done at once, and was peculiar to the commencement of the thousand years; whereas the spiritual resurrection was before his time, and has been ever since the beginning, and is successive in all ages, and not affixed to anyone period of time, though there may be more instances of it in one age than in another; nor is this ever called the first resurrection, nor can any reason be given why it should; for though one man may be converted before another, his conversion cannot be called the first resurrection, since there are many instances of this nature before, and many

more after; besides, at this time, there will be none of God's people to be raised in this sense; they will be all quickened and converted before; the nation of the Jews will be born again, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; to which may be added, that if the first resurrection is to be understood in a spiritual sense, then the second resurrection of the wicked dead, at the end of the thousand years, must be understood in like manner: nor is a reviving of the cause of Christ and his interest here intended, particularly through the calling of the Jews, and the numerous conversion of the Gentiles; for though the former of these especially is signified by the quickening of the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision, and is expressed by bringing the Jews out of their graves, and is called life from the dead, (<45115>Romans 11:15) yet that cannot with any propriety be called the first resurrection; for there was a great reviving of true religion in the time of John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles, especially after the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, both among Jews and Gentiles; and there was a revival of the Christian religion in the times of Constantine, and again at the reformation from Popery; and as for the conversion of the Jews and the Gentiles in the latter day, that will be the last reviving of the cause and interest of Christ, which will usher in his spiritual reign, and therefore should rather be called the last, than the first resurrection; besides, this affair will be over before this time; this is signified by the marriage of the Lamb in the preceding chapter; and the kingdoms of the world will become Christ's under the seventh trumpet, and both will be in the spiritual reign: moreover, this does by no means agree with the character of the persons who shall share in this resurrection, they are such who shall have lived and suffered, at least many of them, under Rome Pagan and Papal, (<66204>Revelation 20:4) and therefore can never be understood of Jews and Gentiles in the latter day, when neither one nor other shall be any more. To which may be subjoined, that if this was the sense, then this cause must revive also among the wicked at the end of the thousand years, whereas when they are raised, they will attempt the very reverse. It remains then, that by this first resurrection must be meant a corporeal one; for as some of those that will live again were corporeally beheaded, and all of them corporeally died, they will be corporeally raised again; and in such sense will the rest of the dead be raised at the end of these years; with respect to which this is properly called the first resurrection; it is the first in time, it will be at the beginning of the thousand years, and the second will be at the close; the dead in Christ will rise first in order of time, (see Gill on "<52046>1 Thessalonians 4:16"); they will have the

dominion in this sense over the wicked in the morning of the resurrection: Christ's resurrection is indeed first, but that is the cause and pledge of this; and there were particular resurrections both before and after his, but they were to a mortal state; and there were some saints that rose from the dead immediately after his resurrection; but these were but few, and were designed as an earnest of this; besides, though it was a resurrection, it was not the resurrection; and it may be further observed, that the resurrection of the righteous will be the first at the coming of Christ, (<461522>1 Corinthians 15:22) there will be none then before theirs; theirs will be the first; the resurrection of the wicked, to which this is opposed as the first, will not be till a thousand years after: add to all which, that this resurrection will be, η πρωτη, "the first", that is, the best, as the word is used in (<421522>Luke 15:22) the chief, the principal; the resurrection of the wicked can hardly be called a resurrection in comparison of it, and in many places theirs is not taken notice of where this is, as in (<461522>1 Corinthians 15:12-57 <520413>1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) the righteous will be raised by virtue of union to Christ, in consequence of his having the charge both of their souls and bodies, and in conformity to his glorious body, and to eternal life, which will not be the case of the wicked,

Ver. 6. *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection*, etc.] This may be considered either as descriptive of the persons that shall partake of this privilege; as that they are only such who are blessed with spiritual blessings, with a justifying righteousness, with pardon of sin, and regenerating grace, and who are sanctified by the Spirit of God; these, and these only, will be first raised, and will be called to inherit the kingdom prepared for them, (<402534>Matthew 25:34) or else as expressive of their happiness and holiness when raised; they shall be perfectly blessed in soul and body, and perfectly holy in both: they shall be "blessed", for

on such the second death hath no power; which is the lake of fire, (<662014>Revelation 20:14 21:8) the sense is, they shall escape everlasting burnings, the fire of hell, the torment and misery of the wicked; they shall be delivered from wrath to come; and as their bodies will die no more, their souls will not be subject to any sense of wrath, or to any sort of punishment: and they will be "holy"; they will have no sin in them:

but they will be priests of God and of Christ; of God the Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ, being made so to the former by the latter, (<660106>Revelation

1:6) or of God, even of Christ, that is, of God, who is Christ, since it follows:

and shall reign with him; they will be wholly devoted to and employed in the service of God and of Christ, and will be continually offering up the sacrifices of praise, or singing the song of the Lamb, adoring the grace and goodness of God and Christ unto them, shown them both in providence and in grace:

and shall reign with him a thousand years; this is mentioned again, partly to assert the certainty of it, and partly to point at the blessedness of the risen saints.

Ver. 7. *And when the thousand years are expired*, etc.] Which are not yet expired; not in the year 1000, or 1033 or 4, reckoning from the birth or death of Christ, when Paganism, which had been destroyed in the Gentile world, was introduced into the church, which bore the Christian name, through the man of sin; for this had been bringing in by degrees more or less from the times of Constantine; whence it appears, that Satan in this respect was loose before, and therefore this was not the time of his loosing; nor in 1073, reckoning from the destruction of Jerusalem, and the carrying and spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles, in which year Hildebrand came to the popedom, who may be truly called the brand of hell; Damianus, a brother cardinal, who lived at the same time with him when he was archdeacon of Rome, calls him the holy devil; he was an impostor, sorcerer, and necromancer, and by wicked arts got into the Papal chair; this pope raised the Papal power over princes to a very great height, and made the see of Rome absolutely independent, and all bishops dependent on it; he forbid bishops receiving their investiture from the emperor, or any lay person, under pain of excommunication: this is the pope that made the emperor, with his empress and child, wait three days barefoot at his gates, in the depth of winter, before they could be admitted to him; that doctrine of devils, forbidding priests to marry, was established by him; and in his days that monstrous and absurd notion of transubstantiation began to prevail, though he himself used his breaden god but very roughly; for taking it to be really God, he required an answer from it against the emperor; but it not speaking, he threw it into the fire, and burnt it. Now it will be allowed, that the devil was loose at this time, but then so he was before: there had been popes before this who were conjurers, necromancers, and had familiarity and confederacy with the devil; and near

five hundred years before this time, the pope was declared universal bishop by Phocas; and the forbidding priests marriage was started in the council of Nice, and was approved of by Pope Siricius, long before this time, though it was now more firmly established; add to this, that if the expiration of the 1000 years and the loosing of Satan were at this time, he must have been loosed near 700 years, which can never be called a little season, as in (<6003>Revelation 20:3) especially in comparison of the 1000 years, the time of his binding; when it is two thirds of that time: nor did these years expire in or about 1300, reckoning from Constantine, about which time Pope Boniface the Eighth lived, of whom it is said, that he came in like a fox, railed like a lion, and died like a dog; upon his accession to the popedom, he instituted a jubilee, and on the first day he appeared in his pontifical habit, and gave the benediction to the people, and on the next day he clothed himself with an imperial habit, and put on a rich diadem, and sat on a throne, with a naked sword bore before him, when he uttered these words, “Ecce hic duo gladii”, “Behold here are two swords”, referring to (<4238>Luke 22:38) which the Papists would have understood of the temporal and spiritual power which Peter and his successors are possessed of; at the same time Ottoman was crowned emperor of the Mahometan nations, who founded the Turkish empire, and spread the Mahometan religion in Asia and Greece; and by both these, great disturbances and wars were occasioned, both in the east and west: but still this does not make it appear that now was the time of Satan's loosing; since before this time the Papal power was at its utmost height, and the Mahometan religion had been hundreds of years in the world, and had greatly prevailed; and therefore Satan must be loosed before; and indeed it is in vain to seek after the expiration of these years, and the loosing of Satan, when as yet the years are not begun, nor has Satan been bound, as has been shown on (<6002>Revelation 20:2) but however, when they will be ended,

Satan shall be loosed out of his prison; during the thousand years he will be in a state of confinement, being bound, shut, and sealed up in the bottomless pit, which is therefore here called a prison, as is the place of damned spirits, in (<6019>1 Peter 3:19) but when these will be at an end; his chain will be taken off, at least will be lengthened; the seal upon him will be broken off, the bottomless pit will be opened, and he let loose; which will be done not by himself, but by him that bound him, or by divine permission.

Ver. 8. *And shall go out*, etc.] Of his prison, the bottomless pit, and shall walk to and fro in the earth, and go about like a deceitful serpent, and roaring lion, as before:

to deceive the nations: as he had done before the thousand years began, and from which he was restrained during that time; he had before deceived the Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan nations, and now he will go forth to deceive those at this time

which are in the four quarters of the earth; all the world over: the names of which nations are,

Gog and Magog: not the same which are mentioned in (Ezekiel 38:1-39:16) though there is an allusion to them, and from thence the names are taken, and some of the figures borrowed, and design the enemies of God's people, who will be in the world at this time; so the Jews [f437] speak of a Gog and Magog, that will come up against Jerusalem in the days of the Messiah, whom they still expect, by whom they shall be destroyed:

to gather them together to battle; not one against another, as some think, as the pope against the Turk, and the Turk against the pope, nor are they designed at all; nor "to kill them", as the Ethiopic version renders it; but against the saints and people of God, in the beloved city and camp; herein will lie his deception of them:

the number of whom is as the sand of the sea; that is, innumerable, in allusion to Gog and Magog in (Ezekiel 38:9,15,16) but the great question is, who are meant by these? — Not the Papists, the nations made drunk with the wine of Rome's fornication, the Gentiles, by whom the holy city is trodden under foot, and who will be angry when the time of avenging the saints is come, (Revelation 11:2,18 18:2) for these will be all destroyed, even all the remains of them, at the battle of Armageddon; nor is antichrist himself intended, who will be destroyed in the spiritual reign of Christ, with the breath of his mouth; and at the above decisive battle the beast and the false prophet will be taken alive, and cast into the lake of fire: nor are the Turks designed, the people of Magog being Scythians originally, as Josephus says [f438], from whence the Turks sprung; or Tartarinns, for Paulus Venetus [f439] says the countries of Gog and Magog are in Tartary, called Jug and Munjug; hence some think these are the same with the four angels bound at the river Euphrates, and loosed, whose armies are represented as exceeding numerous, (Revelation 9:14,16,17)

but though the Turkish dominions are very large, yet they do not extend to the four quarters of the world; and when the Turks were let loose, and came even into Europe, it was not against the true Christians, the camp of the saints, the beloved city, as here, but against the antichristian party; the Papists have suffered most by the incursions of the Turks, though it has not brought them to repentance; besides, the loosing of the four angels, or the Turkish nations, and their chiefs, is long before these thousand years begin; that is past already, under the sixth trumpet, whereas the seventh trumpet will be blown, and all the seven vials poured out, and the world cleared of all Christ's enemies, and after that a thousand years must run out, before this Gog and Magog army will appear: nor are the Americans the nations, here spoken of; for they are but in one quarter of the world; nor is there any reason to believe there will be there more enemies of Christ's people than in any other part, since in the spiritual reign of Christ the earth shall be full of his knowledge, and his spiritual kingdom will be to the ends of the earth: and as for that notion that those inhabiting the other hemisphere will be saved from the general conflagration, there is no reason to believe it, since the earth, and whatsoever is therein, shall be burnt up, (2 Peter 3:10). Some think that the wicked living in the distant parts of the world, in the corners of the earth, are meant, who, upon Christ's coming, will flee thither, and remain in continual dread and terror to the end of the thousand years, when Satan will gather them together, and spirit them up against the saints; but this cannot be, because they will all be destroyed at the universal conflagration of the world; nor will there be any in the new earth but righteous persons: but these will be all the wicked dead, the rest of the dead, who lived not again until the thousand years are ended, when will be the second resurrection, the resurrection of all the wicked that have been from the beginning of the world; and these, with the posse of devils under Satan, will make up the Gog and Magog army: all the characters agree with them; these may be called nations, or Gentiles, being aliens from the true Israel of God, the dogs that will be without the holy city; these may be said to be in “the four quarters” of the world, since where they die and are buried, there they will rise and stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army; and as they will die enemies to Christ and his people, they will rise such; as they will go down to hell with their “weapons of war”, as is said of Meshech and Tubal, the people of Gog, (Ezekiel 32:27) they will rise with the same; the grave, the dust of the earth, will make no change in their vile bodies, nor the flames of hell any alteration in the disposition of their minds; yea, as is said in the above place, they will “lay their swords under

their heads", and so be in a readiness, when they rise, to make use of them against the saints, and to avenge themselves; for their envy, malice, and revenge, will be heightened and increased by their confinement and punishment in hell: nor need this be wondered at, since the devils, notwithstanding they have been so long expelled the realms of light, and have been in chains of darkness, and in expectation of everlasting torment, retain the same enmity as ever; and though the deception will be very great, to attack saints in an immortal state, who are like the angels that die not, nor will these die any more, and especially since Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who rules the nations with a rod of iron, will be at the head of them; yet it need not seem strange, when they will rise as weak and feeble, and as little able to resist temptation, and as much exposed to seduction, as they were before; Satan will have as much power over them as ever; and what with their own numbers, and the posse of devils at the head of them, and especially considering the desperateness of their state, and that this is their last struggle and effort for liberty, they will animate themselves and one another to this strange undertaking. These now may be called Gog and Magog, as the one signifies "covered", the other open, or "uncovered": these being all the enemies of Christ and his people, both secret and open: and this sense well accounts for their number, being as the sand of the sea; and which the Arabic version seems to confirm, "and Jagog and Magog shall rise with him". The Jews have a notion that this deception of Satan will be at the day of judgment, which agrees with this account; for immediately upon this will follow the judgment of the wicked: they say [f440],

> "in the day that judgment shall be found in the world, and the holy blessed God shall sit upon the throne of Judgment, Satan atw aly[l yjsa, "shall deceive above and below" (angels and men), and he shall be found to destroy the world, and to take away souls."

Ver. 9. *And they went up on the breadth of the earth*, etc.] Either the whole earth, in the several parts of which they will be raised; or the land of Israel, where Christ and his people will be; and so the wicked being raised, will come up from the several parts of the world, and spread themselves over the holy land; just as Gog and Magog are said to cover the land of Israel, as a cloud, (Ezekiel 38:16) and it may be observed, that the very

phrase of Æxra bjr, “the breadth of thy land”, is used of Immanuel's land, or the land of Israel, in (<230808>Isaiah 8:8)

and compassed the camp of the saints about; these are the blessed and Holy Ones, who have part in the first resurrection, even all the saints; not only the martyrs under the Heathen persecutions, and the confessors of Christ under the Papacy, but all the saints from the beginning of the world; these will be all encamped together, with the tabernacle of God in the midst of them, (<662103>Revelation 21:3) and Christ their King at the head of them, (<330213>Micah 2:13) the allusion is to the encampment of the children of Israel in the wilderness, about the tabernacle, which was in the midst of them, (<040202>Numbers 2:2) etc. afterwards the city of Jerusalem itself was called a camp, and answered in all respects to the camp in the wilderness [f441], to which the reference is in (<581311>Hebrews 13:11-13) and which serves to illustrate the passage here, since it follows:

and the beloved city: not Constantinople, as some have thought, but the holy city, the new Jerusalem, (<662102>Revelation 21:2) the general assembly and church of the firstborn, beloved by God and Christ, and by the holy angels, and by one another; and these very probably will be with Christ upon the same spot of ground where the Old Jerusalem stood, a city so highly favoured, and so much distinguished by God; so that where Christ suffered so much reproach and shame, and such an accursed death, he will now be glorified, and live in triumph with his saints:

and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them; not material fire; with this the earth, and the bodies of the wicked then upon it, will be burnt at the beginning of the thousand years; but now their bodies will be raised immortal, and not capable of being consumed with such fire; but the fiery indignation of God, or his wrath, which will be poured out like fire, is here meant, which will destroy both body and soul; this is no other than the lake of fire, or second death, into which they will be cast; and which will not be until the judgment is over, though it is here related to show what will be the event and issue of their attack upon the saints: the allusion is to the fire sent upon Gog and Magog, and to the burning of their weapons, in (<263822>Ezekiel 38:22 39:6,9,10) and so the Jews [f442] say of their Gog and Magog, that

> “they shall be killed with the burning of the soul, with a flame of fire, which shall come from under the throne of glory.”

Ver. 10. *And the devil that deceived them*, etc.] Both before death, in the present life, by tempting and drawing them into immorality and profaneness, or idolatry, superstition, and will worship, or persecution of the saints; and after their resurrection, by instigating them to make this foolish attempt upon the saints of the most High:

was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone; the same with the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; this will be his full torment, in which he is not as yet; and this will not be until the judgment is finished hereafter described; though it is here mentioned to issue the account of Satan at once, and to show what will be his final state and condition:

where the beast and false prophet are; (Revelation 19:20) who for so many years have been companions in wickedness together; the beast being the first beast that received his power, seat, and authority from the dragon, or devil; the false prophet being the second beast, or antichrist in his ecclesiastical capacity, as the beast is antichrist in his civil power, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with signs and lying wonders:

and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever; that is, not only the devil, but the beast and false prophet, for the word is in the plural number: and this will be the case of all wicked men, of all whose minds are enmity to God and Christ, and to his people; and is a proof of the eternity of hell torments.

Ver. 11. *And I saw a great white throne*, etc.] This vision refers not to the Gospel dispensation, from the exaltation of Christ to his second coming; when he sat down on his throne at the right hand of God, and was declared Lord and Christ; when there was a shaking of the heavens and the earth, a removing of the Mosaic economy, and the ordinances of the ceremonial law in Judea, and of Paganism in the Gentile world; when the Gospel was preached to all nations, and the dead in sins were quickened, and arose and stood before the throne of grace; when the books of the Scriptures were opened and explained, and the book of life was also opened; and by the conversion of some, and not others, it was known who were written in it and who were not, and men were judged to be alive or dead in a spiritual sense, according to the influence the opening of these books had upon them; and the powers of the world, comparable to a sea, and of death and hell, were not able to hold in the dead in sin, when they were called to life, with respect to whom death and hell were destroyed; nor was the Gospel the savour of death to any but to such who were not written in the book of

life. This, in other words, is the sum of Cocceius's sense of this vision; but this affair will be over, and all God's elect gathered in by the preaching of the Gospel, before this vision takes place: nor does it respect the restoration of the Jews, who now are as dead, like Ezekiel's dry bones, but will at this time be quickened, and stand upon their feet an exceeding great army, and will be gathered from the several parts where they are as dead; and when it will be known by their conduct and behaviour who are God's elect among them, and who are not; which is Brightman's interpretation of the vision: but this, as we have seen, will come to pass according to the vision in the preceding chapter, before the thousand years begin; whereas this vision will not begin to be accomplished until they are ended: it is best therefore to understand it of the general judgment at the last day, which is the common sense of ancient and modern interpreters; though it seems only to regard the judgment of the wicked, for no other are made mention of in it: the “throne” here seen is a throne of judgment; it is called a “great” one, because a great Person sat upon it, the Word of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, even he who is the great God, and Judge of the whole earth; and because of the great work that will be transacted upon it, the judgment of all the wicked; this will be the greatest assize that ever was held; it is called the judgment of the great day, and the great and dreadful day of the Lord, (Jude 6 <39405>Malachi 4:5) this throne is also said to be a “white” one; just as the same Person is said to sit upon a white cloud, and ride upon a white horse, (<66144>Revelation 14:14 <66911>Revelation 19:11) it may be in allusion either to a white and serene cloud, or to a throne of ivory, such an one as Solomon made, (<14917>2 Chronicles 9:17) and this is either expressive of the majesty and splendour of it, it being a throne of glory, or a glorious throne, (<40251>Matthew 25:31) or else it may denote the purity and justice of him that sits on it, according to which he will proceed in judgment, and finish it; his character is the righteous judge, and the judgment he will execute will be righteous judgment:

and him that sat on it; the throne was not empty, one sat upon it, who is no other than the Son of God; to whom all judgment is committed, and who is ordained to be Judge of quick and dead; and is every way fit for it, being of great knowledge, wisdom, and sagacity, and of great integrity and faithfulness, as man and Mediator, and being, as God, both omniscient and omnipotent, and so capable both of passing a right sentence, and of executing it; to which may be added, his great majesty and glory, necessary to strike an awe, and command an attention to him:

from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was found no place for them; which is to be understood not figuratively, as in (Revelation 6:14 Revelation 16:20) where in the one place is described the destruction of Paganism, and in the other the destruction of the Papacy, and all antichristian powers; but literally, and not of the present earth and heaven, as they now are, for these will be burnt up with fire at the beginning of the thousand years, but of the new heaven and new earth, at the end of them; and the phrases of fleeing away, and place being found no more for them, show the entire annihilation and utter abolition of them; after this there will be no place in being but the heaven of angels and saints, and the lake of fire, in which are the devils and damned spirits: but though this is mentioned here, it will not be till after the judgment is over; for how otherwise will the dead have a place to stand in before the throne, or hell, that is the grave, and also the sea, give up their dead, (Revelation 20:12,13) but it is observed here, though afterwards done, to set off the majesty of the Judge upon the throne, at whose sight, and by whose power, this will be effected.

Ver. 12. *And I saw the dead*, etc.] An account being given of the Judge, next the persons to be judged are described, and in this clause, by the state and condition in which they had been; for it cannot be thought they were dead when they stood before the throne, but were raised from the dead; for this character is not descriptive of them as dead in trespasses and sins, though they are such as die in their sins, and rise in them, who are meant, but as having been corporeally dead; these are the rest of the dead, the wicked, who lived not again until the thousand years were ended, (Revelation 20:5) as for the righteous, they will be judged upon their resurrection from the dead in the beginning of the day of the Lord; and will be declared righteous and blessed, and be called upon and introduced to inherit the kingdom prepared for them, which they shall have possessed a thousand years when these wicked dead will be raised: who are said to be small and great; which may refer either to their age, being children and adult persons; or to their condition, being kings and peasants, high and low, rich and poor; or to their characters, as greater or lesser sinners; and this description respects them as they are in this world, and is designed to show that no consideration whatever, of age, condition, or character, will exempt them from the general judgment. This is a way of speaking used among the Jews [f443], who say,

> “in the world of souls, µynjqjw µylwdgh, “the great and the small”, stand before God.”

The disputations of the schoolmen, about the age and stature in which mankind will rise and be judged, are vain and foolish: these John saw stand before God; that is, Christ, who is God and Judge of all; before his judgment seat and throne, in order to be judged; for they will stand not as ministering to him, nor as having confidence before him; in this sense they shall not stand in the judgment, (Psalm 1:5) but as guilty persons, to receive their sentence of condemnation. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions read, “before the throne”; the sense is the same; for if they stood before the throne, they must stand before God, that sat upon it: and the books were opened; the book of God's omniscience, which contains all the actions of the wicked, in which all their sins are taken notice of, and will now be brought to light; and the book of his remembrance, in which they are all written as with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; and the book of the creatures, which they have abused, and which will witness against them; and the book of providence, the riches of whose goodness have been despised by them; and the book of the Scriptures, both of law and Gospel, as well as the book of nature, of the light of nature, (see Romans 2:12,16) to which may be added, the book of conscience; the consciences of men will be awakened, and will accuse them, and bear witness against them, and be as good as a thousand witnesses:

and another book was opened, which is the book of life: the same that is mentioned in (Revelation 3:5 13:8 17:8) the book of eternal election, (see Gill on “Revelation 3:5”), (see Gill on “Revelation 13:8”), (see Gill on “Revelation 17:8”). No other use seems to be made of this book in the judgment of the wicked, than only to observe whose names were not written in it, as appears from (Revelation 20:15) reference seems to be had to (Daniel 7:10). It is a notion that has obtained among the Jews [f444], that

> “at the beginning of the year (or every new year's day) ^yjtpn µyrps g, “three books are opened”, one of the wicked perfect, another of the righteous perfect, and a third of those between both; the righteous perfect are written and sealed immediately for life; the wicked perfect are written and sealed immediately for death; the middlemost are in suspense, and continue from the beginning of the

> year to the day of atonement; if they are worthy, they are written for life, if not worthy, they are written for death:"

and in the same treatise [f445], they represent God at the same time of the year as a

> "King, sitting on a throne of judgment, and the books of the living, and the books of the dead, ^yjwtp, "open", before him:"

this with them was a prelude and a figure of the future judgment:

and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works; that is, they were sentenced to everlasting condemnation and death, according to the just demerit of their wicked works; for no other are done by wicked men, nor can any other be in the books, since they are without God and Christ, and destitute of the Spirit, have no principle of grace to act from, nor any good end in view in any action of theirs. So the Jews say [f446],

> "all the works which a man does in this world are "written in a book", and they come into thought before the holy King, and they are manifest before him."

Ver. 13. *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it*, etc.] Which is not to be interpreted metaphorically of the world, and the men of it, who are like the troubled sea; but literally of the sea, and of all such who have been drowned in the waters of it, as were Pharaoh and his host; or have died upon the mighty waters, and have been cast into them, and devoured by the fishes; and particular regard may be had to the men of the old world, drowned by the flood; these shall be raised from thence; the sea shall deliver them up: now this, and what is expressed in the next clause, will not be done after the judgment is set, the books are opened, and the sentence passed, but before all this, and in order to it, as the last clause of this verse shows:

and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; "death", which is here represented as a person, and elsewhere as a king, reigning and having power over men, signifies death in general, and every kind of death of which men have died, whether natural or violent, over whom it will now have no longer dominion, but will be obliged to deliver up all its subjects; and "hell" signifies the grave, which will now be opened, and deliver up all its prisoners, all that have been buried in the earth; (see

(18265Job 26:5,6) the Ethiopic version adds, “and the earth delivered up them that were dead in it”: but this seems unnecessary after the former:

and they were judged every man according to their works; some to greater, some to lesser punishment, as their sinful works deserved.

Ver. 14. *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire*, etc.] Death cannot be taken properly, nor hell be the place of torment, for devils and damned spirits; since that is that lake of fire, for then the sense would be, hell is cast into hell; but either by these the devil is meant, who has the power of death, and is the prince of hell, were it not that the casting of him into this lake is mentioned before in (66010Revelation 20:10) or it denotes the destruction and abolition of death and the grave, that from henceforth they should no more have power over men, nor have any under their dominion, and in their hands; and so what has been promised will now be fully performed, (28134Hosea 13:14 46556 1 Corinthians 15:26) (see 66204Revelation 21:4) or rather the wicked dead, which they shall have delivered up, and will be judged and sentenced to eternal death, (66013Revelation 20:13)

this is the second death; or the destruction of the soul and body in hell, which will consist in an eternal separation of both from God, and in a continual sense of his wrath and displeasure. The Alexandrian copy and the Complutensian edition read, “this second death is the lake of fire”; and so the Arabic version, “and this is the second death, even the lake of fire”; and not much different is the Ethiopic version, “the second death, which is the fire of hell”.

Ver. 15. *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life*, etc.] Upon the opening of it, (66012Revelation 20:12) as all that worship the beast, and wonder after him, (66008Revelation 13:8 17:8) and all wicked men, everyone of them:

was cast into the lake of fire; where are the devil, beast, and false prophet, (66020Revelation 19:20 20:10). It is a saying of R. Isaac [f447],

> “woe to the wicked, who are not written aqtpb, “in the book”, for they shall perish in hell for ever and ever:”

and in the Targum on (26309Ezekiel 13:9) it is said of the false prophets,

> “that amlˆ yyj btkb, “in the writing of eternal life” (or in the book of eternal life), which is written for the righteous of the house of Israel, they shall not be written.”

There seems to be some allusion in the phrase used here, and in the preceding verse, and elsewhere in this book, to the lake Asphaltites, a sulphurous lake, where Sodom and Gomorrah stood, which the Jews call the salt sea, or the bituminous lake; and whatsoever was useless, or rejected, or abominable, or accursed, they used to say, to show their rejection and detestation of it, let it be cast into the sea of salt, or the bituminous lake; thus, for instance,

> “any vessels that had on them the image of the sun, or of the moon, or of a dragon, jlmh µyl µkylwy, “let them cast them into the salt sea”, or bituminous lake [f448].”

CHAPTER 21

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 21

This chapter contains an account of the happy state of the church, consisting of all the elect, both Jews and Gentiles, which will take place upon the first resurrection, and will continue during the thousand years' reign mentioned in the preceding chapter. The seat of the church in these happy times will be the new heaven and the new earth, (⁶⁶²¹⁰Revelation 21:1) the church that will dwell there is described by its names, the holy city, and new Jerusalem; by its descent, from heaven; and by its state and ornament, being prepared and adorned as a bride for her husband, (⁶⁶²¹⁰Revelation 21:2) and her happiness is expressed by the presence of God with her, and communion with him enjoyed by her, and by a freedom from all evils endured in the present state of things, (⁶⁶²¹⁰Revelation 21:3,4) after which John hears the voice of him that sat on the throne, declaring himself to be the author of the new heaven and earth; ordering him to write, that what had been said was true and faithful; affirming that things were now done and finished; calling himself the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: promising grace to the thirsty soul, the inheritance of all things to the overcomer, and also divine sonship; and threatening the second death to sinners, whose characters are given, (⁶⁶²¹⁰Revelation 21:5-8) next John has a vision of the bride before spoken of; the preface to it is in (⁶⁶²¹⁰Revelation 21:9,10) in which is signified that one of the seven angels that had the seven vials talked to him in a very free and familiar manner, and proposed to show him the Lamb's wife; and in order to it carried him to an exceeding high mountain, and showed him the city before mentioned, said to be great, holy, and heavenly; and which is described by the glory of God upon it, and the light that was in it, comparable to a crystal jasper stone, (⁶⁶²¹¹Revelation 21:11) by its wall, which is great and high; and by its, gates and foundations; its gates are in number twelve, twelve angels at them, and on them written the twelve names of the children of Israel, and these situated three at each point, east, west, north, and south; and its foundations are also twelve, having the names of the twelve apostles on them, (⁶⁶²¹²Revelation 21:12-14) by the measure of it, which the angel took with his golden read; of the city, which was twelve thousand furlongs, it

being four square, and its length, breadth, and height equal; and of the wall, which was a hundred forty and four cubits, (Revelation 21:15-17) and next the city is described by the matter of which it was built; the wall of jasper the city of pure gold, like to clear glass; the foundations of precious stone, each foundation being of one stone; the gates of pearls, each gate being of one pearl; the street of the city of pure gold, like transparent glass, (Revelation 21:18-21) and then by the temple in it, which is no other than the Lord God and the Lamb; and by the light, which is the same, it having no need of sun or moon, (Revelation 21:22,23) and next by its inhabitants, the nations of the saved ones, who walk in its light, and the kings of the earth, that bring their honour and glory to it; by its safety and security, and by the purity of it, none but undefiled persons, and such who are written in the Lamb's book of life, being admitted into it, (Revelation 21:24-27).

Ver. 1. *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth*, etc.] This vision relates to a glorious state of the church, not in the times of the apostles, or first dispensation of the Gospel; when the old Jewish church state, with its ordinances, rites, and ceremonies, passed away, and a new church state, a new dispensation, new ordinances, and a new people, took place; and when saints came not to Mount Sinai, but to Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and when God tabernacled and dwelt with men in particular churches and congregations; and the curse of the law and the sting of death were taken away by Christ, and there was no condemnation to them that were in him; which is the sense of some: but death did not then cease, it has reigned over men in common ever since, in a natural way, and immediately upon that dispensation arose persecution unto death, both by Jews and Gentiles; and for the first three hundred years, instead death being no more, and sorrow and sighing fleeing away, there was scarce anything else: nor can it be said that there was no temple, or places of pubic worship, or that the church had no need of the sun and moon of the Gospel and Gospel ordinances then, since these have continued ever since, and will to the end of the world; nor did the kings of the earth bring their honour and glory into that church state in any sense, but set themselves against it, and endeavoured to destroy it; nor were the churches even of that age so pure as here described, (Revelation 21:27) many persons both of bad principles and bad practices crept into them; there were tares among the wheat, goats among the sheep, and foolish virgins with the wise: nor does this vision refer to the times of Constantine,

when the old Pagan idolatry was removed out of the empire, and the Christian religion was revived, and came to be in a flourishing condition, and a new face of things appeared, and Christianity was embraced and honoured by the emperor, and the great men of the earth; there was not that purity as in this state; the Christian doctrine and worship were soon corrupted, being mixed with Judaism and Paganism; a flood of errors was brought in by Arius, Eutychius, Nestorius, Macedonius, and Pelagius, and others; yea, doctrines of devils, and which at length issued in a general apostasy, and in the revelation of the man of sin; nor was there that peace and comfort, and freedom from evils, as from death, pain, and sorrow; witness the Arian persecution, the incursions of the Goths and Vandals into the empire, and the inhuman butcheries and numerous massacres and murders of the Popish party since. Nor has this vision anything to do with the conversion and restoration of the Jews, when they will become a new people, quit their old principles and modes of worship, and there will be no more among them the sea of corrupt doctrine, respecting the Messiah, the works of the law, etc. for this will be over before this vision takes place, as appears from the 19th chapter: nor does it belong to the spiritual reign of Christ, which will be in the present earth, whereas this glorious state of the church will be in the new heavens and new earth; that will be at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and in the Philadelphian church state, this will not be till prophetic time and antichristian times will be no more, when the mystery of God will be finished, and after the Laodicean state is at an end; in that there will be public worship, the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances, but not in this; and though there will be then great spirituality and holiness, yet not in perfection, nor will the churches be clear of hypocrites and nominal professors, and will at last sink into a Laodicean state. Nor is this vision to be interpreted of the church triumphant in heaven, or of the ultimate glory of the saints there; since the new Jerusalem here described descends from heaven, that is, to earth, where the saints will reign with Christ; and since the church is represented as a bride, prepared and adorned for her husband, but not as yet at the entrance of this state, delivered up to him; and since the tabernacle of God is said to be with men, that is, on earth; and this dwelling of God with them is as in a tabernacle, which is movable, and seems to be distinct from the fixed state of the saints in the ultimate glory; to which may be added, that in this state, Christ, as King of saints, will be peculiarly and distinctly glorified, whereas in the ultimate one, when the kingdom is delivered to the Father, God will be all in all: this therefore is to be understood of the

glorious state of the church during the thousand years of Satan's binding, and the saints' living and reigning with Christ; the holy city, and new Jerusalem, is the same with the beloved city in (<66209>Revelation 20:9) what is there briefly hinted, is here largely described and insisted on; this will be the time and state when the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, will first meet together, and be brought to Christ, and be presented by him to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, and Christ will reign gloriously among them: the seat of this church state will be the “new heaven” and “new earth” which John saw, and which are the same that Peter speaks of, in which dwelleth righteousness, or in which righteous persons only dwell, (<610313>2 Peter 3:13) for as the first heaven and earth both here and there are to be understood literally, so in like manner the new heaven and new earth; which will be new, not with respect to the substance, but their qualities; they will be renewed, or purged from everything that is disagreeable, and is the effect of the sin of man; the first heaven and earth were made chiefly for men, but, on account of the sin of man, the earth was cursed, and brought forth thorns and thistles, and both the earth and air, or the heaven, were attended with noxious vapours, etc. and the whole creation was made subject to vanity and corruption; from all which they will be cleared at the general conflagration, and a new earth and heaven will appear, fit for the habitation of the second Adam, and his posterity, for the space of a thousand years. So the Jews speak of new heavens, as µyçdwjm, “renewed” ones, which are the secrets of sublime wisdom [f449]: and they say [f450], that the holy blessed God will renew his world a thousand years, and that in the seventh millennium there will be new heavens and a new earth [f451]:

for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; not those in (<662011>Revelation 20:11) but the heaven and the earth which were first made, which passed away, as Peter also says, adding, with a great noise; meaning not as to their substance, but as to their form, fashion, and qualities:

and there was no more sea; which may be understood either as to the being of it; it was “exhausted”, as the Ethiopic version renders it, being dried up by the conflagration; (see <300704>Amos 7:4) and if Mr. Burnet's hypothesis can be supported, that the paradisiacal earth, or the earth fore the flood, was without a sea, that being made, with the mountains and hills, by the falling of the surface of the earth into the waters under it, there is a surprising agreement between that earth and this new one; but the Alexandrian copy reads, “and I saw the sea no more”; it might be in being, though John saw

it not and since, at the end of the thousand years, the sea will give up the dead which are in it, it must be in being, unless it can be interpreted of the place where the sea was: wherefore it seems best to understand it with respect to its use and qualities; and that as the heaven and earth will pass away, not as to their substance, but quality, so in like manner the sea will be no more used for navigation, nor may it be a tumultuous and raging one, or have its flux and reflux, or its waters be salt, as now; the schoolmen say it will no more be a fluid, but will be consolidated into the globe as the sphere; and, in a mystical sense, there will be no more wicked men; tumultuous and turbulent men are like the troubled sea, that cannot rest, (<2570>Isaiah 57:20) for in the new heavens and earth only righteous persons will dwell, (<6083>2 Peter 3:13).

Ver. 2. *And I John saw the holy city*, etc.] The same with the beloved city in (<6609>Revelation 20:9) the church of God: sometimes the church militant is called a city, of which the saints are now fellow citizens, governed by wholesome laws, and enjoying many privileges; but here the general assembly and church of the firstborn, or all the elect of God, are intended, the whole body and society of them, being as a city, compact together; called holy, not only because set apart to holiness by God the Father, and their sins expiated by the blood of Christ, or because he is made sanctification to them, or because internally sanctified by the Spirit of God, which now is but in part; but because they will be perfectly holy in themselves, without the being of sin in them, or any spot of it on them: and John, for the more strong ascertaining the truth of this vision, expresses his name, who saw it, to whom God sent his angel, and signified to him by these Apocalyptic visions what should be hereafter; though the name is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions:

new Jerusalem; the church of God, both in the Old and New Testament, is often called Jerusalem, to which its name, which signifies the vision of peace, agrees; it was the city of the great King, whither the tribes went up to worship; it was a free city, and a fortified one: the Gospel church state in its imperfection is called the heavenly Jerusalem, and the Jerusalem above, which is free, and the mother of all; and here the church in its perfect state is called the new Jerusalem, where will be complete peace and prosperity; and which is called new, because it has its seat in the new heaven and new earth: the inhabitants of which will appear in their new and shining robes of immortality and glory; and to distinguish it from the old Jerusalem, and

even from the former state of the church; for this will be hatylt "the third time" that Jerusalem will be built, as say the Jews, namely, in the time of the King Messiah [f452]:

coming down from God out of heaven; which designs not the spiritual and heavenly original of the saints, being born from above, on which account the church is called the heavenly Jerusalem; but a local descent of all the saints with Christ from the third heaven into the air, where they will be met by living saints; and their bodies being raised and united to their souls, they will reign with Christ in the new earth: and this is

> "the building which the Jews say God will prepare for the Jerusalem which is above, atjnl, "to descend into" [f453]:"

prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; Christ is the husband, or bridegroom, and the church is his spouse, and bride; and in these characters they will both appear at this time, when the marriage between them will be consummated: and the church may be said to be prepared as such, when all the elect of God are gathered in, the number of the saints is perfected; when the good work of grace is finished in them all, and they are all arrayed in the righteousness of Christ: and to be "adorned", when not only they are clothed with the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, and are beautified with the graces of the Spirit, but also with the bright robes of immortality and glory. The phrase is Jewish, and is to be read exactly as here in the book of Zohar [f454].

Ver. 3. *And I heard a great voice out of heaven*, etc.] Either of an angel, or rather of Christ, or God himself; since the Alexandrian copy and Vulgate Latin version read, "out of the throne",

saying, behold the tabernacle of God is with men; in allusion to the tabernacle being with the Israelites, and the "Shechinah", or divine Majesty, being in the midst of them, and as an accomplishment of the promise in (<26 37 27>Ezekiel 37:27) in the fullest sense of it; and designs something distinct from the spiritual presence of Christ in his church, as his tabernacle and temple, and in the hearts of his people; and from the heavenly glory, or ultimate state of happiness, in which they will be "with him", and that not as in a tabernacle, but as in a city, which has foundations: the phrase seems to denote the personal presence of Christ with his saints in human nature, like, though different from, that in the time of his humiliation; then he dwelt or tabernacled with men on earth, but it

was in the form of a servant; but now he will appear in a glorious body, and indeed in all his personal glory, and reign among them as their King:

and he will dwell with them; in person and not by his Spirit, or by faith, as before, nor as a wayfaring man only for a night; but he will dwell with them for the space of a thousand years, and after that for ever: Christ and his church will now be come together as husband and wife:

and they shall be his people; that is, they shall appear to be his covenant people, that will be out of all doubt; this is made manifest in some measure in the effectual calling; but it does not yet appear neither to the saints themselves, nor to others, what they are, and shall be, but now it will be evident and unquestionable.

And God himself shall be with them; the "Immanuel", God with us; not by his Spirit, as he was after his ascension to heaven, and since is; but in person, he himself will descend from heaven, when his church, the new Jerusalem does; the Lord their God will come in person with all the saints, and will be King over all the earth.

[And be] their God, as Thomas styles him, my Lord, and my God, (John 20:28). The covenant of grace, with all its blessings and promises, are in him, and now will it have its full accomplishment, and the saints be in a state inexpressibly happy; (see Psalm 144:15).

Ver. 4. *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes*, etc.] Occasioned by sin, Satan, the hidings of God's face, and afflictive dispensations of Providence; for these will be no more:

and there shall be no more death; natural or violent; there will be no more putting of the saints to death, or persecution of them unto death, as in former times; nor will they die a natural death any more; these children of the resurrection, and inhabitants of the new heaven and earth, will be like the angels, who die not; there will be no more deadness as to spiritual things among the saints; and as for the second death, that will have no power over them. So the Jews say [f455], ablydyt[lhtymˆya, "there is no death in the world to come"; good is laid up for the righteous in the world to come, and with them is no death [f456]; and after the resurrection the body is perfect, and shall never after taste the taste of death [f457].

Neither sorrow, nor crying; on account of sin, or because of oppression and persecution, or through the loss of near relations and friends; sorrow

and sighing will flee away, all occasions thereof being gone: neither shall there be any more pain; either of body or mind; there will be nothing to afflict the mind, and make that uneasy, but all the reverse; nor will there be any sickness or diseases of body, for the body will be raised glorious, powerful, incorruptible, and spiritual.

For the former things are passed away; not only the first heaven and earth, the world, its fashion, and its lusts; but the former grievous times under Rome Pagan and Papal, and everything which in this present life gives uneasiness and distress.

Ver. 5. *And he that sat upon the throne said*, etc.] By whom is meant, either God the Father, who is often represented in this book as sitting on the throne, and as distinguished from Christ the Lamb; (see ⁶⁶⁰⁴Revelation 4:2) (⁶⁶⁰⁵Revelation 5:13 6:16 7:10) and who may seem the more to be intended, since he is by adopting grace the God and Father of his people, and they are his sons and daughters; or rather Christ, who not only is set down on the same throne with his Father, but has a throne of his own, called the throne of the Lamb, and was seen upon one by John in the preceding vision, (⁶⁶²⁰Revelation 20:11) which though in order of time will be after this, yet in the order of the visions was seen before; and especially since the person on the throne speaking, calls himself the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, as Christ does in (⁶⁶⁰⁸Revelation 1:8) and seeing he it is that gives to thirsty souls of the water of life, (⁴³⁷³John 7:37,38) and makes promises to the overcomer so largely and frequently in (⁶⁶⁰⁷Revelation 2:7,11,17,26 3:5,12,21). He addresses John, and delivers the following things to him,

behold, I make all things new; which is to be understood not of the renovation of persons at conversion, when a new heart and spirit are given, and men are made wholly new creatures; for this is the work of the Spirit, and which is done daily, and is not peculiar to any particular period of time; nor of the renewing of the church state at the beginning of the Gospel, when the Jewish church state and ordinances waxed old, and vanished away, and a new covenant took place, a new and living way was opened, and new ordinances appointed, since all this was before John had this vision; nor was there any need of it to represent it to him; but of the making of the new heaven, and the new earth, which Christ ascribes to himself and of his forming his church anew, making it a new Jerusalem, bestowing new glories upon his people, both in soul and body, and so

presenting them to himself a glorious church; and of the new administration of his kingdom in a very singular and glorious manner; so that it respects a new people, a new habitation, and a new manner of ruling over them; all which is his own doing, and is marvellous; and because it is a matter of great importance, and is wonderful and certain, therefore a “behold” is prefixed to it; (see <23419>Isaiah 43:19). The Jews say [f458], that the holy blessed God will make ten things new in the future state, or world to come; the first is, he will enlighten the world; ((see <66211>Revelation 21:11,23)) the second is, he will bring living water out of Jerusalem; ((see <66206>Revelation 21:6)) the third is, he will make trees to bring forth their fruit every month; ((see <66202>Revelation 22:2)) and the fourth is, all the waste places shall be built, even Sodom and Gomorrha; the fifth is, Jerusalem shall be built with sapphire stone; ((see <66219>Revelation 21:19)) the sixth is, the cow and the bear shall feed; the seventh is, a covenant shall be made between Israel, and the beasts, fowls, and creeping things; the eighth is, there shall be no more weeping and howling in the world; the ninth is, there shall be no more death in the world; the tenth is, there shall no more be sighing, and groaning, and sorrow in the world; (see <66204>Revelation 21:4).

And he said unto me, write; what John had seen, and Christ had said, and was about to say; and particularly what concerned the renewing of all things, the whole being a matter of moment, and worth noting and taking down in writing, that it might be on record for saints to read, and receive comfort and advantage from; and to denote the certainty of it, as well as to show that it was a clear point, and to be known, whereas, when it was otherwise, he was bid not to write; (see <66011>Revelation 1:11,19 14:13 19:9 10:4).

for these words are true and faithful; both what he had said, and was about to say; they were “true”, because they came from God, who cannot lie, and “faithful”, because they would be punctually and exactly fulfilled; (see <66909>Revelation 19:9). The Syriac version adds, they are God's, and so the Arabic version.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto me, it is done*, etc.] The end of all things is come; it is all over with the first heaven and earth; these are no more, and the new heaven and earth are finished: there seems to be an allusion to the old creation, he spake, and it was done, (<19309>Psalm 33:9). The whole election of grace is completed; every individual vessel of mercy is called by grace; all the saints are brought with Christ, and their bodies raised, and living

saints changed, and all together are as a bride prepared for her husband; and the nuptials are now solemnized; all the promises and prophecies relating to the glorious state of the church are now fulfilled; the mystery of God, spoken by his servants, is finished; the kingdom of Christ is complete, and all other kingdoms are destroyed; the day of redemption is come; the salvation of the saints is perfect; what was finished on the cross, by way of impetration, is now done as to application; all are saved with an everlasting salvation.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; which are expressive of the primacy, perfection, and eternity of Christ; of his being the sum and substance, the first cause and last end of all things, relating both to the old and new world, to things temporal and spiritual; (see Gill on "Revelation 1:8").

I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely; he that is athirst is one that is so not in a natural, much less in a sinful, but in a spiritual sense; who as he has thirsted after Christ, and salvation by him; after pardon of sin, and a justifying righteousness; after communion with Christ, and conformity to him, and a greater degree of knowledge of him; so after the glories of his kingdom, and the happiness of a future state: to such an one Christ promises to give such large measures of grace and glory, and in such abundance, as will continue to refresh and delight, and as may be compared to a fountain of living water, namely, for refreshment, abundance, and continuance; and all this he will give "freely", without money, and without price; for as pardon, and righteousness, and the whole of salvation, are all of free grace, so are all the enjoyments of the kingdom state, the riches, honours, and glories of it, and eternal life itself; also plentifully, and in great abundance, and answers to the Hebrew word µnj; (see Numbers 11:5).

Ver. 7. *He that overcometh*, etc.] All spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, the antichristian beast, his image, mark, and number of his name; who is more than a conqueror through Christ; one that perseveres to the end, notwithstanding all temptations, trials, and difficulties; (see Gill on "Revelation 2:7"),

shall inherit all things; the kingdom of Christ in the new Jerusalem state, and all things in it; heaven, eternal glory and happiness, and everlasting salvation; yea, God himself, who is the portion, and exceeding great

reward of his people, and will be all in all. The Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “these things”: the new heaven, and new earth, the presence of God with men, freedom from all evils, and divine refreshments from the fountain of living water before mentioned:

and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son; Christ is not only concerned in predestination to the adoption of children, in making way by redemption for the enjoyment of this blessing, and in the actual donation of it; but he himself, who is the mighty God, is the everlasting Father, and his people are his spiritual seed and offspring, and in his kingdom he will see his seed, and prolong his days; he will long enjoy them, and present them to himself, and afterwards to his Father, saying as in (Hebrews 2:13) and though they are now, in the present state of things, the sons of God, yet it does not appear so manifest that they are, or at least what they shall be; but in this new and glorious state of things, it will be abundantly manifest that they are the sons of God and seed of Christ; and it will be known how glorious they are, and shall be, when they shall see Christ in his glory, and be like him; who will now be πατηρ του μελλοντος αιωνος, “the Father of the world to come”, as the Septuagint render the phrase in (Isaiah 9:6).

Ver. 8. *But the fearful*, etc.] Not the timorous sheep and lambs of Christ, the dear children of God, who are sometimes of a fearful heart, on account of sin, temptation, and unbelief; but such who are of cowardly spirits, and are not valiant for the truth, but who, through fear of men, either make no profession of Christ and his Gospel, or having made it, drop it, lest they should be exposed to tribulation and persecution; these are they that are afraid of the beast, and live in servile bondage to him.

And unbelieving; meaning not merely atheists, who do not believe there is a God, or deists only, that do not believe in Christ; but such who profess his name, and are called by it, and yet do not truly believe in him, nor embrace his Gospel and the truths of it, but believe a lie; these are condemned already, and on them the wrath of God abides, and they will be damned at last; though it may have a regard to such also who are infidels as to the second coming of Christ to judgment, and who are scoffers and mockers at it:

and the abominable: every sinful man is so in the sight of God; but here it denotes such who are the worst of sinners, given up to sinning; who are abominable, and to every good work reprobate; who are addicted to the

worst of crimes, as were the Sodomites and others; the Ethiopic version renders it, “who pollute themselves” with unnatural lusts. The Syriac and Arabic versions express it by two words, “sinners and polluted”, filthy sinners; the character well agrees with Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, and to all that adhere to her, and join with her in her abominable idolatries.

And murderers; of the saints, and prophets, and martyrs of Jesus, with whose blood Babylon, or the whore of Rome, has made herself drunk, and in whom it will be found.

And whoremongers; all unclean persons, that indulge themselves in impure lusts, in fornication, adultery, and all lewdness; as the clergy of the church of Rome, who being forbidden to marry, and being under a vow of celibacy, and making great pretensions to chastity and singular holiness, give up themselves to all lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

And sorcerers; conjurers, dealers with familiar spirits, necromancers, and such as use the magic art, as many of the popes did to get into the chair, and poisoners of kings and princes; whoredoms and witchcrafts go together sometimes, as they did in Jezebel, an emblem of the Romish antichrist.

And idolaters; that worship devils, idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, representing God, and Christ, and the virgin Mary, and saints departed, (Revelation 9:20).

And all liars; in common, and particularly such who speak lies in hypocrisy, as the followers of the man of sin, and who are given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned; all lies being of the devil, and abominable to God. All and each of these

shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. The Jews [f459] speak of several distinct places in hell, for several sorts of sinners, as particularly for sabbath breakers, adulterers, and liars; and say of the wicked, that when he is condemned he shall take wqlj, “his part” in hell [f460]; (See Gill on “Revelation 19:20”)

which is the second death; (See Gill on “Revelation 2:11”).

Ver. 9. *And there came unto me one of the seven angels*, etc.] Either the first of them, as one of the four beasts is the first of them, (Revelation 6:1) or it may be the last, and very likely the same as in (Revelation 17:1)

which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues; that is, the wrath of God poured out by them on the antichristian party; (see Revelation 15:1,7 16:1).

And talked with me, saying, come hither; (see Revelation 17:1).

I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. The “Lamb” is Christ, who is often so called in this book; (see Revelation 5:6,7,9 14:1 13:8 21:23 7:17) (Revelation 19:7) and is the Son of God, the heir of all things, the Maker and Governor of the universe, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; and who, as Mediator, has all accomplishments and qualifications to recommend him as a bridegroom, such as beauty, riches, and wisdom: the bride, his wife, is not any particular believer, nor any particular church; not the Gentile church, nor the Jewish church only, but all the elect of God, consisting of the raised and living saints at the coming of Christ; who will make up one body, one general assembly, and be as a bride, prepared and adorned for her husband: these were first betrothed to Christ in eternity, and were openly espoused by him, one by one, at conversion; and now being all gathered in by the effectual calling, the dead being raised, and the living changed, and all glorified, the marriage is consummated, and they are declared publicly to be the bride, the Lamb's wife; (See Gill on “Matthew 22:2”). And now, though John had had a sight of her before, (Revelation 21:2) yet that was but a glimmering one, at a distance, he being in the wilderness, (Revelation 17:3) wherefore the angel calls him to him, and proposes to give him a clear, distinct, and particular view of her, in all her glory; and a glorious sight this indeed! to see the bride brought to the King in raiment of needlework, and the queen stand at his right hand in gold of Ophir. This is a sight of a quite different nature from that of the filthy strumpet, which the same angel proposed to give to John in (Revelation 17:1).

Ver. 10. *And he carried me away in the Spirit*, etc.] John was in an ecstasy, as in (Revelation 1:10 4:2 17:3) and in the thoughts and apprehensions of his mind and spirit, it seemed to him as if he was carried away from one place to another; for this was not a corporeal sight, nor were any of the visions he had, but what was represented to his mind or

spirit; it being with him as it was with the Apostle Paul when he was caught up to the third heaven, who knew not whether he was in the body or out of the body. The Ethiopic version renders it, “the Spirit brought me”; not the evil spirit Satan, who took up our Lord corporeally, and carried him to an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of this world, and their glory, (<4048>Matthew 4:8) but either a good angel, or the Spirit of God:

to a great and high mountain; to such an one was Ezekiel brought in the visions of God, when the frame of a city and temple was shown him, with their dimensions, (<2602>Ezekiel 40:2) as here a city is shown to John, with its wall, gates, foundations, and their measures: and he was brought to such a place, partly that he might have the more plain and full view of it; and partly to suggest unto him, that now the church of Christ was established upon the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and was a city on a hill, which could not be hid, (<2302>Isaiah 2:2).

And showed me that great city; which is no other than the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife; just as the apostate church, all along in this book before, is called the great city, (<6108>Revelation 11:8 14:8 17:18 18:10,16,18) but now that being demolished, there is no other great city in being but the church of Christ, called a city before; (<6202>Revelation 21:2) here a “great one”, not only because of its prodigious large dimensions, (<6216>Revelation 21:16) but because of the number of its inhabitants, being such as no man can number; and because it is the residence of the great King, the tabernacle of God will be in it; though this epithet is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and all the Oriental versions: “the holy Jerusalem”; called “the new Jerusalem”, (<6202>Revelation 21:2) here “holy”, in allusion to the city of Jerusalem, which was called the holy city, (<4005>Matthew 4:5) on account of the temple in it, the place of divine worship; but here this city is so called, because it is the residence of the holy God, Father, Son, and Spirit, inhabited only by holy men, made perfectly so, and encompassed by holy angels.

Descending out of heaven from God; (See Gill on “<6202>Revelation 21:2”).

Ver. 11. *Having the glory of God*, etc.] Not only upon their souls, which will lie in the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness, the bride's wedding garment being on them, in the perfect holiness which will be in them, and in that complete knowledge of all spiritual and heavenly things they will be possessed of, they will have a glory revealed in them; but upon their bodies

also, for this city, the church, the bride of Christ, will consist only of risen and changed saints, whose bodies will be freed from all dishonour; deformity, diseases, and imperfections, and will be made like unto Christ's glorious body, and will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God. Moreover, the presence of God may be intended by his glory, as the Shechinah, or the divine majesty of God in the tabernacle and temple was called, (<02405>Exodus 40:35) (<11811>1 Kings 8:11) for the glorious presence of God will now be in this church state, which will cast a lustre on all that are in it; for if the face of Moses, and of Stephen, shone so bright and glorious, through the presence of God with them; (see <47307>2 Corinthians 3:7 <44615>Acts 6:15) how much more gloriously will the saints shine in this state, when they shall enjoy the presence of God in a far more illustrious manner? to which may be added, that Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, will now appear in that, and in his own, and in the glory of his angels; and all the saints will appear with him in glory; and to see them in all this glory is a glorious sight indeed!

And her light was like unto a stone most precious; by her "light" is not meant the light she will have in her, though that will be exceeding great, but the fountain of it from whence it comes; that which holds it forth to her, and supplies her with it: the word φωστηρ signifies an illuminator, and is used of the ministers of the Gospel, that hold forth the word of life and light to others, (<50415>Philippians 2:15,16) but here it intends Christ, who is the sun of righteousness, the church's light or enlightener, (<66123>Revelation 21:23) not with the light of nature, as he enlightens every man, nor with the light of grace, with which the saints are enlightened by him in the present state of things, by his Spirit, through the word and ordinances, but with the light of glory: and he is comparable to the most precious stone; he is more precious than rubies; he is so now to them that believe, in his person, offices, grace, and righteousness, and will be more so in his light and glory in the new Jerusalem state:

even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal: God the Father, who sits on the throne, is said to be to look upon like a "jasper"; (See Gill on "<66402>Revelation 4:2"); and here Christ, the illuminator of his church, is said to be like one, because of the exceeding brightness of this stone, and the durableness of it, expressive of the perpetuity of Christ, as the light of his church and people; he is the everlasting light of it, (<23619>Isaiah 60:19,20) and he is compared to the crystallising "jasper". There is one sort which is called "Aerizusa", like to air [f461], and another "Crystallizusa" [f462], clear as

crystal. So Pliny speaks [f463] of a white "jasper" called "Astrios", and which, he says, is crystallo propinquans, "near to crystal", found in India, and on the shores of Pallene. To this Christ is like, because he is light itself, and in him is no darkness at all, and will cause an everlasting day; and such a clear and bright state of things, as that there will be no night, nor any more darkness, nothing but everlasting joy, peace, prosperity, and happiness; there seems to be some reference to (<2600>Isaiah 60:1,19,20).

Ver. 12. *And had a wall great and high*, etc.] Not the Spirit of God, who separates, sanctifies, and preserves the saints, as Cocceius thinks, for this account respects not the church militant; nor the eternal decree of God, the unpassable gulf between heaven and hell, which everlastingly fixes the state of men; for this regards not the ultimate state of happiness: many interpreters understand it of the doctrine of the Gospel, which, as it secures the church now from heretics, and is like a wall very strong and well built, is durable and impregnable; and may be called "great", because of the great Author of it, and the great things contained in it; and "high", since it is not to be reached by carnal minds; so none but such who have embraced it shall enter into the new Jerusalem; for all liars, and forgers of doctrinal lies, and who embrace the antichristian lies, shall be without. Though rather the almighty power of God, which guards his church and people now, and will be their defence in this state, is meant; and which shows the state not to be that of the ultimate glory, which will need no wall, but this will; since an attempt will be made upon the saints in it, though it will be a foolish and fruitless one: and this wall of divine power is very great indeed, and is insuperable by men; God himself is a wall of fire about his people; though it may be best to interpret this of salvation itself, which is by Jesus Christ, if we compare with this text (<2600>Isaiah 26:1 60:18) for those, and those only, who are interested in it, will dwell in the new Jerusalem; and salvation in this state will be enjoyed in its fulness; and this is very great in its author, objects, and matter, being wrought out by the great God, for great sinners, at a great expense, and including grace and glory, and not to be got over or enjoyed by those who have no interest in it.

And had twelve gates; though, strictly speaking, there is but one gate, and that a strait one, which is the Lord Jesus Christ, his person, blood, righteousness, regenerating and sanctifying grace; for as he is the only door into the sheepfold, the church, in its present state, or he only that has faith in him has a right to enter there, and is the only way to heaven and eternal happiness; so he is the only gate into the new Jerusalem, or such only will

be admitted there, who are interested in him: but these gates are said to be twelve, in allusion to the twelve apostles, who pointed out to men the way of salvation by Christ; and to the twelve tribes of Israel, who represent all the elect of God, who enter in thereat; and to the twelve gates of Ezekiel's city, (<26481>Ezekiel 48:31-35).

And at the gates twelve angels; meaning either the ministering spirits, in allusion to the cherubim in (<01324>Genesis 3:24) who are watchers, and encamp about the saints now, and will, as it were, stand sentinels in this camp of the saints, as it is called, (<66208>Revelation 20:8) and besides, will be made use of in gathering the saints from the several parts of the world, and introducing them into this state; or else the apostles and ministers of the word, often called angels in this book, who will shine with peculiar lustre now, and will appear at the head of the several companies they have been useful to, and bring them as their joy and crown of rejoicing into this glorious state: this clause is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Syriac version. The Jews speak of µyrç, "princes", being appointed over the gates of heaven, east, west, north, and south, with the keys in their hands, whose names they give us [f464].

And names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel; not literal, but mystical Israel, whom God has chosen to salvation, Christ has redeemed by his blood, and the Spirit calls by his grace; denoting that all, and each of these, have a right to enter into the new Jerusalem, and will be admitted there, and none but they. In like manner the Jews [f465] make mention of a court of the Lord,

> "which has twelve gates, according to the computation of the tribes of Israel; on one gate is written Reuben, on another is written Simeon; and so all the tribes of Israel are written on those gates; in the time they go up to appear before the Lord of the world, whoever goes up to this gate, (on which the tribe of Reuben is written,) if he is of the tribe of Reuben they open to him, (and receive him,) if not they cast him without; and so of all whom they do not receive; they open to none but to him who is of that tribe, or whose name is written on the gate."

Ver. 13. *On the east three gates*, etc.] On which were written the names of Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan:

on the north three gates; on which were written the names of Reuben, Judah, and Levi:

on the south three gates; on which were written the names of Simeon, Issachar, and Zabulon:

and on the west three gates; on which were written the names of Gad, Asher, and Naphtali; (see <26>Ezekiel 48:31-34). This denotes the collection of the saints from all parts of the world, who shall come from east, west, north, and south, and sit down in the kingdom of God; and therefore here are gates at every point to enter in at; (see <23>Isaiah 43:5,6 <42>Luke 13:29).

Ver. 14. *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations*, etc.] Christ is the one and only foundation of his church and people, of the covenant of grace, and of salvation; and of faith, hope, peace, and joy, and of eternal happiness, and so of this glorious state of the church; he will be the light and temple of it, the glory and safety of it; he will be all in all in it; but because he has been ministerially laid as the foundation, by the twelve apostles, for men to build their present and future happiness upon, therefore the foundations of the wall of salvation are said to be twelve; (see <49>Ephesians 2:20). Moreover, this may denote the firm and immovable state of the church at this time, it being a city which has foundations, or is well founded, (<58>Hebrews 11:10) with which compare (<23>Isaiah 14:32 28:16). Hence it follows,

and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, Syriac and Arabic versions, read, “the twelve names of the twelve apostles”; the allusion seems to be to the inscribing of the names of builders on stones laid in the foundation, in memory of them; and so these wise master builders will be had in everlasting remembrance.

Ver. 15. *And he that talked with me*, etc.] One of the seven angels, (<66>Revelation 21:9) for not a man is the measurer of this city, as in (<26>Ezekiel 40:3) nor John, as of the temple, (<66>Revelation 11:1) but an angel, the same that showed to John this great sight:

had a golden reed; not a common measuring reed, or rod, as in (<26>Ezekiel 40:4 <66>Revelation 11:1) but one covered with gold, denoting the present glorious state of the church, being without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing:

to measure the city; the new Jerusalem, its length and breadth; (see <3801>Zechariah 2:1,2) to show how exactly conformable this church state will be to the rule of God's word, even to perfection: and the gates thereof; to signify who had a right to enter into it, and who not:

and the wall thereof; its height, it being exceeding high.

Ver. 16. *And the city lieth four square*, etc.] To the four corners of the world, from whence its inhabitants come, and denotes the regularity, uniformity, perfection, and immovableness of it.

And the length is as large as the breadth; this church state will be all of a piece, perfect, entire, and wanting nothing.

And he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs; or fifteen hundred miles; a monstrously large city indeed! such an one as never was upon earth; (see <2648>Ezekiel 48:35) and which shows, that this is not to be understood literally, but mystically; and intends the capaciousness of it, here being room enough for all the twelve tribes of Israel; that is, for all the elect of God; for as in Christ's Father's house, so in this kingdom state of his, there will be many mansions, or dwelling places, enough for all his people. This city will hold them all. The Jews [f466] say of Jerusalem, that in time to come it shall be so enlarged, as to reach to the gates of Damascus, yea, to the throne of glory.

The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal. A perfectly uniform state! according to the Ethiopic version, it is in length twelve thousand furlongs, and every measure equal, so that it is so many furlongs in length, breadth, and height.

Ver. 17. *And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits*, etc.] The root of which is twelve, for twelve times twelve is a hundred and forty four; which number is mystical and apostolical, and suited to the perfect state of this church: hence twelve gates, and twelve angels at them, and the names of the twelve tribes on them, and twelve foundations of the wall, and twelve thousand furlongs, the measure of the city.

According to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel; who talked with John, and measured the city, gates, and wall, and who appeared in the form of a man; and his reed might be, as some have supposed, the length of a man, six cubits, or six feet, as in (<2605>Ezekiel 40:5) and may denote that this

business requires the utmost wisdom and understanding of a man, and even of an angel, to look into, and find out; (see <66138>Revelation 13:18) and also may signify the angelic state of the saints at this time, when the children of the resurrection will be like the angels of God, for immortality and glory.

Ver. 18. *And the building of the wall of it was of jasper*, etc.] Which is expressive of the impregnableness, duration, brightness, and glory of salvation by Christ, the jasper being a very hard, durable, and bright stone; and salvation can never be made void, and of none effect; it will last for ever, and in this state will come forth as light, and as a lamp that burneth; it is represented by the same precious stone as God and Christ themselves are; (see <66042>Revelation 4:2 21:11). And the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass; it was made or built of gold; its parts, buildings, houses, and palaces, were all of gold, and that the best; and it was like to transparent glass; that is, either the city, as most copies read, or the gold; for the Alexandrian copy reads, ομοιον, and so the Vulgate Latin version; the gold of which it was is different from common gold; and as this city, the new Jerusalem, designs the saints, the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, the inhabitants of the new earth; this denotes the solidity, excellency, and preciousness of them, the rich and happy state they will be in, as well as their purity and freedom from all sin and corruption, and the clear knowledge of things they themselves will have, and others will have of them; their hearts and actions will be open to all; nor will this gold have any rust upon it any more, or ever be changed, and become dim.

Ver. 19. *And the foundations of the wall of the city*, etc.] Which were twelve; (see <66214>Revelation 21:14) were garnished with all manner of precious stones: (see <23541>Isaiah 54:11,12) not that there were all manner of precious stones in every foundation, but in them all there were, and each foundation had its stone peculiar to it, as follows; and which are not applicable to the persons of the apostles, who were not the foundations, but on them their names only were written: and besides, the order of them, as given in the Evangelists and Acts of the Apostles, is not certain, and always the same, to which these several stories may be adjusted; though they are doubtless comparable to them for their preciousness in the sight of God, and Christ, and all the saints; and for the brightness and purity of their doctrine and lives; and for their zeal in the cause of Christ; and for their solidity, and invincible courage and constancy: much less are these precious stones applicable to a set of ministers in the latter day, who are to be useful in the conversion of the Jews in the several parts of the world,

where these stones are found, as Brightman thinks, but to Jesus Christ, the one and only foundation: and without entering into the particular virtues and excellencies of these stones, in general, they set forth the worth and preciousness of Christ, who is the pearl of great price; the pleasure and delight had in viewing his excellencies and perfections; his brightness, purity, and glory, and his firmness and durableness, as a foundation. There may be some allusion to the twelve stones in the breastplate of the high priest, on which the names of the tribes of Israel were written [f467].

The first foundation was jasper; it was laid with a jasper stone, of which (see Revelation 4:3). On this stone, in the breastplate, Benjamin's name was written.

The second, sapphire; its colour is azure, or sky blue; it is transparent, and exceeding hard. Schroder says there are very good ones found in the borders of Bohemia and Silesia; but those which are brought from Pegu are most valuable: on this stone Issachar's name was engraven.

The third, a chalcedony; it is of a misty grey colour, clouded with blue, yellow, or purple; the best is that which has a pale cast of blue; it is very much like the common agate; and the Hebrew word dkdk, “cadcod”, is rendered agate in (Isaiah 54:12) though it is thought to answer to the carbuncle in the breastplate, on which was written the name of Levi. And Pliny [f468] speaks of carbuncles, called “charcedonies”, which R. Leo Mutinensis says [f469] had their name in memory of the city of Carthagena. There is a precious stone mentioned in the Targum of Jonathan, called ^ydwkdk, “cadcodin”, which answers to the diamond in the breastplate, on which Zabulon's name was written; and in the Jerusalem Targum it is called andkdk, “cadcedana”, and answers to the emerald, which had Judah's name on it, and seems to be put for “chalcodin” and “chalcedana”, which agrees with the name of this stone.

The fourth, an emerald; of which (see Revelation 4:3). The best of this sort are the eastern ones. Schroder says [f470] they are found in Cyprus, Britain, and other places, but not so good as the rest. On this stone Judah's name was written.

Ver. 20. *The fifth, sardonyx*, etc.] Which is partly of the sardian, and partly of the onyx stone, which resembles a man's nail, from whence it has its name; it is reddish, bordering on white; it may be thought to answer to the onyx in the breastplate, on which was written the name of Joseph.

The sixth, sardius; the same with the sardine stone, (Revelation 4:3) of a blood colour, and what is commonly called a cornelian: it is found in Sardinia, from whence it has its name, and in Bohemia and Silesia, though those of Babylon are the best. This was Reuben's stone.

The seventh, chrysolite; a stone of a dusky green colour, with a cast of yellow; by its name it should have the colour of gold. Schroder says it is found in Bohemia, and that it is the same the moderns call the topaz. Some think it answers to “tarshish” in the breastplate, rendered “beryl”, on which was the name of Asher.

The eighth, beryl; a stone of a pale green colour, thought to be the diamond of the ancients: it may answer to the “ligure” in the breastplate, which the Targum on (Song of Solomon 5:14) calls “birla”, and had the name of Dan on it.

The ninth, a topaz; a stone very hard and transparent, of a beautiful yellow, or gold colour: the topaz of Ethiopia was counted the best, (Job 28:19). Some say it is so called from the island “Topazus”; on this stone Simeon's name was engraven.

The tenth, a chrysoprasus; a stone of a green colour, inclining to that of gold, from whence it has its name; for this is the agate in the breastplate, which was Napthali's stone.

The eleventh, a jacinth; or “hyacinth”: a stone of a purple, or violet colour, from whence it has its name; though what the moderns so call is of a deep reddish yellow, pretty near a flame colour. Zabulon's stone was the diamond.

The twelfth, an amethyst; a stone of a violet colour, bordering on purple: it has been thought a preservative from drunkenness, from whence it seems to have its name. On this stone was written the name of Gad. Agreeably to this account of John's, the Jews speak [f471] of the tabernacle above being built on twelve precious stones; and sometimes they say [f472], that the holy blessed God will found Jerusalem with ten kind of precious stones, and which they mention, and several of which are the same with these.

Ver. 21. *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls*, etc.] Denoting the purity and preciousness of Christ, by whom the saints enter, and of the saints who enter in thereat, as well as of the place into which they enter.

Every several gate was of one pearl; the pearl of great price, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only gate, door, and way into this happy state: this shows that this account cannot be taken literally, but mystically, for no such pearl was ever known, large enough to make a gate of.

> "A pearl is a hard, white, shining body, usually roundish, found in a shell fish resembling an oyster, but is three or four times the size of the common oyster; and which ordinarily yields ten or twelve pearls, and sometimes more. Those of the largest size that have been known are that of Cleopatra, valued by Pliny at centies H S, or at 80,000 pound sterling; and that brought in 1574 to Philip the Second, of the size of a pigeon's egg, worth 14,400 ducats; and that of the Emperor Rudolph, mentioned by Boetius, called "la peregrina", or the incomparable, of the size of a muscade pear, and weighing 30 carats; and that mentioned by Tavernier, in the hands of the emperor of Persia in 1633, bought of an Arab for 32,000 tomans, which, at three pounds nine shillings the toman, amounts to 110,400 pounds sterling [f473]."

But what is one of these pearls to make a gate of, for a wall which was an hundred and forty four cubits high? (<62117>Revelation 21:17). The Jews say [f474], that the holy blessed God will bring precious stones and "pearls" of thirty cubits by thirty, etc. and place them "in the gates of Jerusalem", as it is said, (<235412>Isaiah 54:12) which must be understood also not in a literal but mystical sense: and L'Empereur [f475] makes mention of an ancient commentary on (<198701>Psalm 87:1) which says, that the holy blessed God will make a gate at the east (of the temple), and in it two doors, each of one pearl. So R. Joshua ben Levi says [f476], that there are in paradise two gates of agates or diamonds; some render the word rubies.

And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass; denoting the preciousness and delightfulness of the saints' conversation one with another; and the purity and cleanness of it, there being no mire and filth of sin in these streets; and the sincerity and openness of it, each one walking in his uprightness; which will be seen and known of all, as clearly as anything can be beheld in a transparent glass. So the Jews say [f477] of paradise, that the ground is paved with precious stones, the lustre of which may be compared to the light of burning torches.

Ver. 22. *And I saw no temple therein*, etc.] No material temple, as was in the old Jerusalem, or such as is described in Ezekiel's vision; nor any place

of public worship, as under the Gospel dispensation; for in this state there will be no such external form of worship as now, such as preaching the word and administering ordinances. The Jews expect a third temple, but in vain.

For the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it; God will be immediately present with his people, whose face they shall see, and whom they will serve in the most pure and spiritual manner; and Christ in his human nature, in the temple of his body, that tabernacle which God pitched, and not man, which is filled with the train of the divine perfections, and in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, will be the only medium of the divine Presence, and of the communications of glory to men, and of the saints' praise to God, which will be the service they will be employed in; and the Lamb being joined with the Lord God Almighty, shows his deity and his equality with his Father.

Ver. 23. *And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it*, etc.] Which may be understood either literally of these two luminaries, which all earthly cities need; and which, though they may be in being in the new heavens, yet will not have the use with respect to this city they now have. The Jews say [f478], the orb of the sun is in this world; and the gloss adds, but not in the future state, for the lights shall be renewed: and they further say [f479], as here, that

> "in the world to come, "Israel hmjh rwal ˆykyrx ˆya, will have no need of the light of the sun, nor of the light of the moon", neither by day nor by night,"

as they say [f480], the Israelites had not in the wilderness. So they represent the Lord speaking to Moses, and saying [f481],

> "thy days shall cease, but thy light shall not cease; for thou shall have no need for ever of the light of the sun, nor of the light of the moon, and of the stars."

Or else it may be understood mystically, but not of Christ, the sun of righteousness, whom the saints will always need and enjoy; but of the governors and discipline of the church in its present state; and of the written word, which is a light unto them now, and the ministration of it, and the ordinances of the Gospel, by which light and knowledge are conveyed; but in this state all will be immediately taught of God; nor shall

everyone teach his neighbour, but all shall know the Lord perfectly; and also of political governors, who will be no more; (see <461524>1 Corinthians 15:24).

For the glory of God did lighten it; the Shekinah, or glorious presence of God, which filled the temple of Solomon, and shone round about the shepherds at the incarnation of Christ; with the presence of God, who is light itself, which will be enjoyed in a much more glorious manner, will the church now be enlightened; and this will be an everlasting light unto her: and the Lamb is the light thereof; in whose light they will see the face of God, and see God face to face; they will see Christ as he is, and behold his glory; and look upon the angels, those glorious forms of light, and all the glorified saints, and know and converse with each other; and they will look into, and clearly discern all the mysteries and doctrines of grace, and all the various scenes of Providence, which will all be opened and laid before them. And this light will be always without any change and variation; which is no small part of the commendation of this city, which is the inheritance of the saints in light. So the holy blessed God is said by the Jews[f482] to be µylçwry lç wrwa, "the light of Jerusalem"; he is the light of the new Jerusalem; (see <236019>Isaiah 60:19,20) and the light of, the world to come is, by[f483] them, called "the great light".

Ver. 24. *And the nations of them which are saved*, etc.] In distinction from them that will be deceived by Satan, (<662008>Revelation 20:8). These are not all the nations of the world, which will be gathered before Christ, the Judge, for all will not be saved, there is a world that will be condemned; nor the Gentiles only, which shall come into the church state of the Jews when called, for that state is not here designed; and besides, all Israel shall be saved then; nor the living saints at Christ's coming, who shall have escaped, and are saved from the general conflagration; for these, with the raised ones, will be caught up together to Christ, and descend and dwell together on earth, and make one church state; but all the elect of God, both Jews and Gentiles, whom God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and the Spirit has called out of all the nations of the earth: these are only saved ones; such are already saved, not only are determined to be saved, and for whom salvation is wrought out by Christ, and to whom it is applied at conversion, and who are representatively set down in heavenly places in Christ, and are already saved by hope and faith, and with respect to the certainty of salvation; all which may be said of saints in the present state; but these will be such, who will be actually and personally saved, will be in the full

possession of salvation, enjoying all the blessings of it: they will be partakers of the first resurrection, and the glories of it: the tabernacle of God will be with them, they will be free from all sorrows and death, and will inherit all things: the Syriac version reads, “the nations that are saved”; who are redeemed and saved by Christ: this may teach us how to understand those phrases, which seem to favour general redemption, as all men, the world, the whole world; (see <2345>Isaiah 45:20 66:19). These words, “of them which are saved”, are left out in the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, but are in all the copies. These nations are the inhabitants of this city, and they

shall walk in the light of it, which is Christ; they shall enjoy it; they shall have the light of life, and be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light, and that continually: they shall not only come to it, but continue in it, and walk at it, and by the light of it: the walk of these will be different from the walk of saints now, who walk by faith, and not by sight; but these shall walk by sight, enjoying the beatific vision of God, and the Lamb. The Jews say [f484], that Jerusalem, in time to come, will be made a lamp to the nations of the world, hrwal µyklhm µhw, “and they shall walk in its light”, or by the light of it, which is the sense of (<2603>Isaiah 60:3) “the Gentiles shall come to thy light”; (see <2901>Isaiah 9:1,3)

and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it; by whom may be meant either mystically all the saints, who will be kings as well as priests unto God, and will reign as such with Christ in this state, will cast their crowns at his feet, and give him all the honour and glory; or literally, the kings of the earth, who shall have relinquished antichrist, hated the whore, and burnt her with fire, and who will have been nursing fathers in the spiritual reign; or rather all good kings that ever have been in the earth: not that they will be kings of the earth at this time, for now all rule, authority, and power, will be put down; nor will any worldly riches, honour, and glory, be brought by them into this state, nor will they be needed in it; but it is to be understood of who have been kings on earth, though not of their having brought earthly riches and grandeur into the interest and churches of Christ; as David gave much towards the building of the temple, which was begun and finished by King Solomon his son, and as Constantine greatly enriched and aggrandized the church when he became emperor; but the sense seems to be this, that such who have been Christian kings on earth will prefer the happiness of this state to all their riches and greatness here; and that could all the glory of the kings of the

earth be put together, it would not equal, but be greatly inferior to the glory of the new Jerusalem; Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of the inhabitants of this place; (see <46206>Revelation 20:6) besides, these shall do all homage, and submit to Christ the King of kings in the midst of the church, which may be meant by “glory” and “honour”.

Ver. 25. *And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day*, etc.] Which does not design the free communication between the living saints on the new earth, and the raised ones in the new heaven, as some have thought, for these shall be together, and make up one body; but rather the universal collection, and free admission of all the saints from all parts into this city; though it seems best to interpret it of the safety of the inhabitants, (see <24931>Jeremiah 49:31) who will have no enemy to fear, and therefore need never shut their gates; the beast and false prophet will have been taken, and cast into the lake of fire long ago; ungodly men will be destroyed in the general conflagration, and Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit during the thousand years:

for there shall be no night there; this is a reason given why it is before said the gates shall not be shut by day, since it is unusual to shut gates in the day, unless in time of war, because there will be no night in this city, and so no need of ever shutting the gates; the night time being the season for thieves and robbers, and for enemies to make their incursions, and to surprise: but here will be no night; either literally, times and seasons, as measured by the revolutions of the sun and moon, will be no more, they will not have the use they have; at least this city will stand in no need of them. The Jews say [f485], that the world to come will be µwy wlwk, “all day”: or mystically and figuratively, there will be no night of spiritual darkness and desertion, of drowsiness, sleepiness, and inactivity, of error and heresy, or of calamity and distress of any kind; all which are sometimes signified by night in Scripture; (see <22301>Song of Solomon 3:1 <40255>Matthew 25:5,6) (<23609>Isaiah 26:9).

Ver. 26. *And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it*.] The glory of the nations are the people of God, who, though they are reckoned the filth of the world, are the excellent in the earth; these will be brought into this city, and be presented to the King of it, in a glorious manner, and that by the kings of the earth; either such who have been ecclesiastical rulers over them, who will introduce them as their joy and crown of rejoicing; or who have been political governors of them, their

fathers and protectors; or the sense is as before, that whatever is great and glorious in the nations of the world, will be counted as nothing in comparison of the glory and magnificence of this state, and not to be mentioned with it: the Arabic version renders it, “the nations shall bring glory and honour to it”; in the sense before given.

Ver. 27. *And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth*, etc.] As evil thoughts, words, and actions do; and therefore he that enters into this city must be free from all these: or “that is defiled”, as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read; or “that is unclean”, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; alluding to the tabernacle and temple, into which no unclean person might come; (see <235201>Isaiah 52:1). No profane sinner, whose mind and conscience are defiled, and whose conversation is defiling, may enter here; nor any self-righteous person, whose righteousness is as filthy rags, and he himself is as an unclean thing, shall be admitted here; only such who are washed in the blood of Christ, and have on his righteousness, and so are without spot or wrinkle; which shows the pure and perfect state of this church and therefore cannot design any state of the church previous to the coming of Christ and the first resurrection:

neither whatsoever worketh abomination; commits sin, which is abominable in the sight of God, lives and dies in a course of wickedness; or particularly is guilty of idolatry, either makes idols, or serves them, or both, which are an abomination to the Lord; (see <111107>1 Kings 11:7)

or maketh a lie; any lie in general; who is a common liar, loves and invents a lie, and speaks one; delivers that which is false with an intention to deceive; or in particular, who embraces and propagates antichristian lies, doctrinal ones, lies spoken in hypocrisy; such shall be damned; (see <540401>1 Timothy 4:1 <530211>2 Thessalonians 2:11,12) but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life; who are predestinated to eternal life; and though they are naturally, and in themselves defiled and sinful creatures, yet they are justified by the righteousness of Christ, and sanctified by his Spirit, and so are made meet and fit to enter this city; (See Gill on “<660308>Revelation 13:8”). It is by the Jews observed [f486], that

> “the Jerusalem of the world to come is not as the Jerusalem of this world; the Jerusalem of this world, whoever would go up to it (or enter into it) might; but that of the world to come, hl ˆynmwzmh

alaˆylw[ˆya, “none may go up to it (or enter into it) but those who are prepared”, or appointed for it.”

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 22

This chapter contains a further account of the above city, a confirmation of the visions of this book, and the conclusion of it. The city is further described by the river that ran by it, or through it, called a river of water of life, said to be pure and clear as crystal, and to have its rise from the throne of God and the Lamb; and by the tree of life in the midst of it, situated on each side the river, bearing twelve sorts of fruit, yielded every month, the leaves of which heal the nations, (Revelation 22:1,2) and the happiness of the inhabitants of it is set forth, by there being no curse in it; by the throne of God and the Lamb being in it; by the service of the saints in it; by the pleasure they enjoy, and the honour put upon them; by the light of the place, and the duration of the saints' reign, (Revelation 22:3-5) next follow testimonies concerning the authority of the book, and the truth of things in it; and first, the testimony of the angel that talked with John, declaring that the things in it were true and faithful; and that he was sent from the Lord God of the prophets to show to the saints things that would quickly come to pass; and that Christ himself would quickly come; and that they were happy who kept and observed the sayings and prophecies of it, (Revelation 22:6,7) then the testimony of John who saw and heard them, and was about to worship the angel that declared them, but was forbid by him, and dissuaded from it, by observing to him who he was, a fellow servant of his and of his brethren, and that God only was to be worshipped, (Revelation 22:8,9) who is ordered, as it seems by Christ, not to seal up the prophecies delivered to him, since the time of their fulfilment was at hand, when men would remain just as they were, whether ungodly and filthy, or righteous and holy, (Revelation 22:10,11) and who declares that he should quickly come to reward every man according to his works; and that he was the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last; and that they were happy that did his commandments, since it would appear they had a right to the tree of life, and to entrance through the gates into the city before described, when wicked men, whose characters are given, would be without, (Revelation 22:12-15) and still more clearly and fully Christ asserts himself to be the

author of this revelation, and the sender of the angel, to testify it to the church, who is David's root and offspring, and the morning star, whose coming is to be wished for by the Spirit and bride, and every truly gracious soul, (Revelation 22:16,17) and to show the perfection and authority of this book, as well as of the whole Scripture, and to deter persons from adding to it, or taking from it, he threatens to inflict on such persons the plagues herein written, and to take the names of such out of the book of life, out of the holy city, and from the things written in this book, (Revelation 22:18,19) and then he delivers out a fresh asseveration of his speedy coming, to which John adds his hearty “Amen”, and earnest request that he would come quickly; and the book is concluded with a benediction usual in the epistles, especially in those of the Apostle Paul, (Revelation 22:20,21).

Ver. 1. *And he showed me a pure river of water of life*, etc.] Not baptism, which used to be administered in rivers and pools of water; and which engaged to purity of life; and, the power and authority of administering which was from God and Christ; but in this Jerusalem state there will be no use nor need of ordinances; for (Revelation 22:1-6) belongs to the preceding chapter, and is a continuation of the same account, this being not a new vision, but a part of the former, which the same angel, as in (Revelation 21:9) proceeds to show to John: nor is the Holy Ghost intended by this river, whose gifts and graces are sometimes, for their plenty, purity, and quickening virtue, compared to rivers of living water; and who is a pure and holy Spirit, and proceeds from the Father and the Son: nor the doctrine of the Gospel, which comes from the blessed God, and is the Gospel of Christ; and, when purely and faithfully preached, is clear as crystal; and is the means of conveying spiritual life to men, and of supporting it in them: nor the ultimate joys of heaven, which may be called a river of pleasure, for the fulness and variety of delight; pure, and clear as crystal, for the holiness and perfect knowledge of that state; and be said to proceed from the throne of God and the Lamb, being the free gift of God through Christ; but this state is not designed here: rather, therefore, by this river is meant the everlasting love of God, which may be compared to a river for its largeness and abundance, its height and depth, its length and breadth; and for the large displays of it in this state, when its waters will increase, and be a broad river to swim in, and be unpassable; and for the streams of it in election, redemption, calling, justification, pardon, adoption, and eternal life, which make glad the city of God; and for the

pleasure it yields, and the fruitfulness it gives to those who drink of it: it may be called a river “of water of life”, because in the present state of things it quickens such who are dead in trespasses and sins; revives the saints when dead and lifeless, supports their spirits, and is a cordial that preserves from fainting; it keeps and secures from dying the second death and is the spring and source of eternal life; and that itself will last and flow for ever, it is ever running water, it is everlasting love: and it may be said to be pure and

clear as crystal, it being free from all hypocrisy and dissimulation, being real, hearty, and sincere, both in the Father and in Christ, of which the fullest proofs and demonstrations are given; and being clear of all motives and conditions in the creature, by which it might be influenced; and it engaging to purity and holiness of life and conversation; for the doctrine, which brings the account of it, and the inward principle of grace, which is the fruit of it, and every discovery of it, have a tendency hereunto:

proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb; not taking its rise from man's obedience, nor from his love to God, nor from his faith in Christ; for the love of God is prior to all these, and is the spring and cause of them, and therefore cannot be moved and influenced by them; but it has its origin from the sovereignty of God and of Christ, signified by the throne of both, who will be gracious to whom they will be gracious; nor can any reason be given why they love any of the sons of men, but their own sovereign will and pleasure; this is the sole motive, spring, and cause of their love; and God and the Lamb being mentioned together, shows both the equal dignity of their persons, being on the same throne, and the equality of their love to the inhabitants of the new Jerusalem: and thus, as a river adds to the pleasure, use, convenience, and wholesomeness of a city, this glorious city is commended by such a river running by it, or in the midst of it: there may be an allusion to the river which ran out of the garden of Eden, for this will be a paradisiacal state, (Genesis 2:9) or rather to the waters in (Ezekiel 47:1-5) which came from under the threshold of the Sanctuary; though this river proceeds not from the temple, there being no temple in this state, but from the throne of God and the Lamb, which is instead of it.

Ver. 2. *In the midst of the street of it*, etc.] That is, of the city described in the preceding chapter, which shows that this vision belongs to that, and is a

continuation of it, and which street was all of pure gold, (<66212>Revelation 21:21)

and on either side of the river was there the tree of life; not that it stood either in the midst of the street of the city, which being a pavement of gold, a tree could not well stand there; nor on both sides of the river, which is impossible, unless the tree of life is put for many trees of the same kind, as in Ezekiel's vision, to which the allusion is; and so some were on one side of the river, and some on the other, as there; (see <26407>Ezekiel 47:7,12) or unless it can be thought that such a solution of the difficulty is sufficient, that the root of it was on one side, and the branches grew over to the other; though the words may be better rendered, and the difficulty will be removed, and the sense be clear, “between the street of it”, the city, “and the river, on this side, and on that side”; that is, the street on one side, and the river on the other, was the tree of life; compare with this (<43918>John 19:18). So the Jews say [f487], that the tree of life is in the midst of paradise, and its body covers all the garden; and that there is in it five hundred thousand different tastes; and that there is no likeness and smell like it. By the tree of life is meant not the Gospel, nor godliness, nor eternal life, nor any other of the divine Persons, but Christ, who is the author of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal; (See Gill on “<66107>Revelation 2:7”) and its situation between the street of the city, where the saints commune and converse together, and the river of God's everlasting love, which in this state will appear in its fulness and glory, shows that Christ will be seen and enjoyed by all in the most delightful and comfortable manner that can be wished for:

which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; not one sort of fruit one month, and another sort another month, and so on, but twelve sorts every month; which is expressive of the fruits and spiritual blessings of grace from Christ, enjoyed by saints in the present state, and of that variety of happiness and pleasures to be had in this glorious state, and of the continuance of them; they being always ever fresh and new, and will be always sufficient for the twelve tribes of the true Israel of God, and for all that have embraced the doctrine of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; whose drink in this state will be the everlasting love of God, and whose food will be the fruit of the tree of life; both which they shall enjoy in great abundance:

and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations; not for the curing of diseases, or repairing of health; which in the present state of things is done by the application of the blood of Christ for the pardon of sin, which is a healing of diseases, and by the discoveries of the love of God; through the ministration of the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, which might be thought to be signified by leaves; for there will be no disease either of body or mind in this state; besides, the nations that will walk in the light of this city will be saved perfectly and completely, (<62104>Revelation 21:4,24) but these leaves will be for the preserving and continuing the health of the people of God in this state, as the tree of life in Eden's garden was for the preservation of the health and life of Adam, had he continued in a state of innocence; and it denotes that everything in Christ will contribute to the comfort, health, and happiness of the saints. The Jews interpret the passage in (<263472>Ezekiel 47:12) to which this refers, of future time, or the world to come [f488]; and speak of various trees and herbs of great fragrancy and medicinal virtues, which grow quite round on the sides of a laver that stands in paradise [f489].

Ver. 3. *And there shall be no more curse*, etc.] As there was in Eden, from whence a river came, and where was a tree of life; for there the serpent cursed for his concern in man's transgression, and the earth on account of it; but in this new earth, and paradisiacal state, and on the inhabitants of it, will be no curse; here will be no sin, the cause of the curse, nor pain and sorrow, nor death, corporeal, spiritual, and eternal, or the wrath of God, the several effects of sin, and parts of the curse; the curse of the law cannot here take place; for, besides the righteousness of Christ, which all in the new Jerusalem will be clothed with, and so be blessed and secure from the curse, they will be perfectly pure and holy in nature, and constant and complete in their obedience and service; they will always do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven; no accursed person, or anyone devoted to ruin and destruction, will be here; not the old serpent, the devil, he will be shut up in the bottomless pit; nor the blasphemous beast and false prophet, they will be taken and cast alive into the lake of fire before this time comes; no cursing, or accursed men will dwell here; not such who curse themselves, or the saints, or such who will be bid to depart as cursed, these will be destroyed in the general conflagration; nor will there be any anathema denounced against any person, for here wilt be no introducers of another Gospel, nor any that do not love the Lord Jesus Christ; nor will any be an anathema, or accursed from Christ, excommunicated from the

church of Christ, for that will have no members deserving of that; none but what are pure and undefiled; (see <3141>Zechariah 14:11)

but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; God himself will be there, his tabernacle will be among men; the name of this city will be "Jehovah Shammah", the Lord is here; the pure and spotless Lamb of God, the Son of the Blessed, will be here, whose presence will make it an happy state; these will both have their throne, or seat, here; they will sit on one throne, being the one God over all, blessed for ever; this city will be the city of the great King, where his royal glory and majesty will be most illustriously displayed, and which will greatly make for the felicity of this state, and secure it from the curse:

and his servants shall serve him: either the angels, who are ministering spirits, and the servants of God and of the Lamb; or the ministers of the Gospel, the servants of the most high God; or rather all the true followers of Christ, who shall be where he is, and "serve him": both God and the Lamb, who are one in nature, though two distinct persons; wherefore serving them both is not serving two masters: and the service the saints will be employed in, in this state, will not be preaching the word, or attending on the ministry of it, or subjecting to ordinances, which will now be at an end, but celebrating the praises of God, adoring the perfections of his nature, ascribing the glory of every providence, and of all salvation to him, and magnifying the riches of his grace; and this they will perform in the most spiritual, fervent, and perfect manner, and that continually; (see <6675>Revelation 7:15).

Ver. 4. *And they shall see his face*, etc.] The face of God, so as he is not to be seen now; they shall see him as he is; not only the angels, who always behold the face of God, but all the saints, risen and changed, being pure in heart, and perfectly holy; they shall see him face to face, they shall have intimate and familiar communion with him; they shall enjoy his favour, and have the freest and largest discoveries of his love; and they shall see the face of the Lamb; they shall behold Christ and his glory both with the eyes of their understanding, and with the eyes of their bodies; and this is a very desirable sight, and will be very glorious and delightful; it will be fully satisfying, and will make the saints like unto him; it will be free from all darkness and any interruption, and will always continue.

And his name shall be in their foreheads; they shall be known to be his servants, as if his name was written and bore on their foreheads; it will be a

clear case that they are the children and people of God; now they are, but it is not known, at least not so known as it will be in this state; and they will also in the fullest and freest manner own God to be their God, and the Lamb to be their Redeemer; they will be under no fear of man, nor be under any temptation to be ashamed of Christ, or of his service; (see <6401>Revelation 14:1). Some think there is an allusion to the inscription on the mitre of the high priest's forehead, “holiness to the Lord”, the saints being now openly, visibly, and perfectly holy.

Ver. 5. *And there shall be no night there*, etc.] This is repeated from (<6225>Revelation 21:25) to express the certainty of it, and to observe, that the happiness of this state will greatly lie in the light thereof; it will be one everlasting day, ημερα αιωνος, “day of eternity”, or eternal day, as in (<6018>2 Peter 3:18)

and they need no candle, nor the light of the sun; neither artificial nor natural light; neither the dimmer light of the ceremonial law, under the legal dispensation, which was like a candle lighted up in Judea; nor the more clear light of the Gospel and its ordinances, under the present dispensation, which now will be at an end:

for the Lord God giveth them light; immediately from himself, without the use of means and ordinances; and in his light the saints will see all things clearly; who will be always communicating it to them, and will be their everlasting light; (see Gill on “<6223>Revelation 21:23”).

and they shall reign for ever and ever; they are made kings now, and in this state they shall reign with Christ for the space of a thousand years; and when they are ended, they shall not cease to reign; nor will Christ, when he delivers up the kingdom to the Father, for his and their kingdom is an everlasting one, (<6006>Revelation 1:6 5:10 20:4 <2027>Daniel 7:27) and here ends the account of this glorious state of things; what follows is the conclusion of the whole book.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto me*, etc.] That is, the angel that talked with him, and showed him the above things:

these sayings are faithful and true; not only what are delivered in particular concerning the new Jerusalem state, in which are many things new, and unheard of before, and which may seem strange, and even incredible, but all that are written in this book, (<6207>Revelation 22:7,18,19) all which are “faithful”; to be believed by all that read them, and in the

fulfilment of which the faithfulness of God is engaged and displayed: and they are true; for they come from the God of truth, that cannot lie, and are to be credited, and will have a certain accomplishment: this is said to secure the divine authority of this book against the gainsayers of it, whom the Holy Ghost foresaw would arise in the world; and which is here, and in the following part of this chapter, supported by the testimonies of Christ, of his angel, and of John his servant.

And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done; the "Lord" God is the Lord Jesus Christ, as appears by comparing this with (<66 1 1>Revelation 1:1) and this is a very glaring proof of the deity of Christ, since he is not only called the Lord God, but the Lord God of the holy prophets; of the prophets of the Old Testament, who foretold things to come, and spake of the Messiah, his person, office, sufferings, death, and the glory that should follow; and of the prophets of the New Testament, who had a gift of explaining the prophecies of the Old, as well as some of them predicted future events; and both sorts were holy men, set part by God for this office, and had principles of holiness wrought in them, and were moved by the Holy Ghost; these Christ inspired, and qualified with gifts suitable to their work; and he is, as the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin version, and the Oriental versions read, "the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets"; (see <46 14 32>1 Corinthians 14:32) who had power over their spirits, could come at them, and did impress them with a sense and knowledge of divine and future things, which none but God can do: the same sent an angel of his, one of his ministering spirits he has under his command, perhaps the same that here speaks, for so reads the Syriac version, "sent me his angel": to show to John, and by him to all the saints, and to all the servants and followers of the Lamb, things that were in a very little time to begin to come to pass, till all were fulfilled; and even those at the greatest distance were, and are to be fulfilled within a little time, with respect to God, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and in comparison of eternity, and even of the time which had elapsed from the beginning of the world; and these things were shown in the various visions of the seals, trumpets, vials, and others; (see <66 1 1>Revelation 1:1).

Ver. 7. *Behold, I come quickly*, etc.] These are the words not of the angel, but of Christ, as is manifest from (<66 22 12>Revelation 22:12,16,20) and which are to be understood not of Christ's coming in his power to destroy Jerusalem, for this was past when John had these visions, and wrote this

book; but of the second and personal coming of Christ to judgment, as is clear from (⁶⁶²²Revelation 22:12) which though it will not be sooner than the time appointed, yet will be as soon as that time is come, and sooner than is generally expected by men. The Ethiopic version adds, “as a thief”, as in (⁶⁶¹⁶Revelation 16:15) and because the second coming of Christ is an affair of the utmost moment, and will be attended with events of the greatest consequence and importance, in which the visions of this book issue, a “behold” is prefixed to it, as a note of attention and admiration:

blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book; this book is a prophecy of things to come, and therefore cannot refer to the times of Jerusalem's destruction, which some interpreters make it chiefly to concern, for then it would be a narrative of things past; the sayings of it are the things contained in it; to keep these sayings is to read them with observation, to take notice of the accomplishment of them, so far as it has taken place, to keep them in mind and memory, to meditate upon them, and through the grace of God to steer the life and conversation according to the instructions, directions, and cautions here given; and such are blessed in life, and will be in death; they will die in the Lord, share in the first resurrection, and enter through the gates into the city.

Ver. 8. *And I John saw these things, and heard them*, etc.] He was both an eye and an ear witness; some things he saw, and others he heard; and to render his testimony the more authentic, he puts his name to it; and he being an apostle of Christ, and a man of great sincerity and probity, is to be believed.

And when I had heard and seen; the things related in this book, being amazed at them, and filled with joy on account of many of them, and firmly believing the whole as coming from God:

I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. This is the second time John did so, though warned of it, and rebuked for it, which shows the proneness even of good men to fall into sin again and again; and what a propensity there is in mankind to idolatry; and very likely this might be suffered, that a second reproof might be given, and repeated instructions be on record, to prevent the worshipping of angels, introduced in the first ages of Christianity.

Ver. 9. *Then saith he unto me*, etc.] The angel at whose feet John fell down to worship:

see thou do it not; this he said in great haste, and with much vehemence, to hinder him from doing it, as his short way of speaking shows:

for I am thy fellow servant: of God, and of Christ, and am no more the object of worship than thyself; and both of us are, and ought to be, the worshippers of God, whose servants we are:

and of thy brethren the prophets; the apostles and ministers of the word; for prophesying and preaching are the same thing; these were the brethren of John in a spiritual sense, and by reason of their function:

and of them which keep the sayings of this book; (see <6227>Revelation 22:7) and this is said to encourage the observation of them, and is the character of private Christians, and shows the great condescension of the angel to put himself, not only upon a level with John, and the ministers of the word, but with common believers:

worship God; and him only, and that in a spiritual manner, with reverence and godly fear, in faith, and according to his revealed will; (See Gill on "<6910>Revelation 19:10").

Ver. 10. *And he saith unto me*, etc.] Not the angel, but Christ, as is manifest from (<6212>Revelation 22:12,13,16,20). This clause is left out in the Ethiopic version.

Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; as the orders are, when things are intended not to be published, but concealed, at least as yet, because of the distance of the accomplishment of them, which was not the case here; (see <6104>Revelation 10:4 <2786>Daniel 8:26 12:4,9). Christ would have the things John saw and heard, written, and made public, sent in an open book, unsealed, to the churches, that they might be seen and read of all; that so the afflictions and persecutions of the people of God, both under Rome Pagan, and Rome Papal, might be known, and the saints not be offended at them when they came, but be prepared for them, to endure them patiently; and that they might be apprised of the errors and heresies that were to spring up, and of the appearance and wickedness of the man of sin, and his followers, and beware of them; and that they might have some assurance of the destruction of antichrist, and of the glorious state of the church, both in the spiritual and personal reign of Christ, and so be comforted in the midst of their tribulations, and rejoice in the faith and hope of these things. We may learn from hence, that the Scriptures in general are not to be locked up, and concealed from the common people,

but lie open, and are to be read by all; and in particular, that this book is not so dark and obscure as it is thought to be:

for the time is at hand; when the things in this book shall begin to be fulfilled; (see <66010>Revelation 1:1,3).

Ver. 11. *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still*, etc.] These words are not to be considered as ironical expressions, such as in (<21109>Ecclesiastes 11:9) (<23011>Isaiah 50:11) much less as an allowance to do injustice and commit filthy actions; nor even as deterring persons from these things, by tacitly suggesting, that should they continue unjust and filthy, they would be severely punished; nor as an anticipation of an objection that might be made against the publication of this book, and the sayings of it, taken from the ill use that some men might make of it, who might be provoked to injure and persecute the saints more and more, or indulge a filthy conversation; but as a prophecy of what would be at the close of time, at the second coming of Christ. The imperative is put for the future, as is usual in the Hebrew language, in which it is said, let such and such things be, when the sense is, that they shall be; (see <26827>Ezekiel 3:27) (<38109>Zechariah 11:9) and so the meaning of this expression is, he that is now found without a righteousness, and full of all unrighteousness, and acts unrighteously, will continue so; there will be no change made in him, no regeneration, renovation, repentance, or reformation; he will remain the same wicked man he ever was; or he that hurts, or does injury to his fellow creatures, will still do mischief; at least he will have the same inclination, though not the opportunity and power, but will attempt it, of which there will be an instance in the wicked dead, when raised; (see <66208>Revelation 20:8).

And he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: or he shall be filthy still: all mankind are originally, naturally, and universally filthy, or defiled with sin. Some are cleansed from it by the blood of Christ, others are not; and these will continue polluted, nor will the fire of hell fetch out the filthiness of their hearts and nature: or the words may be rendered, “he that defileth, let him defile still”; though he will not be able to defile the temple of God, or corrupt the good communications of the saints, yet he will continue to defile himself; the same evil thoughts, etc. will proceed out of him as ever, which defile the man.

And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; a truly righteous man is one that is righteous, not by his own righteousness, but by the

righteousness of Christ imputed to him; he is one, who by faith looks to Christ for righteousness, and receives it from him, and, in consequence of it, lives soberly, righteously, and godly, and such will continue righteous; not that they will be made more righteous, though they may have a clearer view of their justification, for the sentence of it will be afresh pronounced upon them; but the meaning is, they will ever remain in a justified state, and never enter into condemnation, their righteousness being an everlasting one. The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, Syriac and Arabic versions, read, “and the righteous man, let him do righteousness still”; as he will do, for such will ever be before the throne of God, and serve him in his temple day and night, (<660715>Revelation 7:15 22:3). And he that is holy, let him be holy still. They are holy who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, and none but such will be admitted into the pure state of things upon Christ's second coming; and such will then be perfectly holy, and without sin, and shall continue so: hence we may learn, that justification and sanctification are two distinct things, and that both are durable. With these sayings may be compared some expressions of the Jewish doctors [f490], as the sense of (<031143>Leviticus 11:43,44)

> “if a man defiles himself a little, they defile him much; the gloss on it is, they let, or suffer him to be more defiled; if below, they defile him above; if in this world, they defile him in the world to come; if a man sanctifies himself a little, they sanctify him much; if below, they sanctify him above; if in this world, they sanctify him in the world to come.”

Ver. 12. *And, behold, I come quickly*, etc.]. This is repeated, to confirm the truth of Christ's second coming, and the speediness of it, and to point at the time when the above shall be, and to add what follows.

And my reward is with me: which words are taken out of (<234010>Isaiah 40:10) (<236211>Isaiah 62:11) and which being compared together, furnish out a clear proof of Christ being the true Jehovah, the eternal God. There is a reward of debt, or a due reward, a reward of punishment, which is the just recompense of reward, which, shall be righteously given to wicked men for their sin, (<580202>Hebrews 2:2 <230311>Isaiah 3:11) and there is a reward of grace, which is also called the recompence of reward, the reward of the inheritance, which is no other than the gift of eternal life, which God of his free grace bestows upon his people, (<581126>Hebrews 11:26 <510324>Colossians 3:24) and both these are with Christ; they are in his hands, he has authority

from God, as Mediator, to inflict vengeance on the wicked, and to give eternal life to his people; both which he will do, for this is with him:

to give every man according as his work shall be; if his work is evil, and he is an unjust and filthy man, and the course of his conversation has been vicious, the reward of debt, or just punishment, will be rendered to him; but if his work is the fruit of grace, and he has had his conversation in the world by the grace of God, and he is a righteous person, justified by the righteousness of Christ, and a holy, good man, sanctified by the Spirit of God, the reward of grace, the crown of righteousness, will be given to him.

Ver. 13. *I am Alpha and Omega*, etc.] (See Gill on "Revelation 1:8"). These characters are all put together here, which are before used in (Revelation 1:8,11 21:6) and are very pertinently mentioned in this place, when all promises and prophecies, relating to the glorious kingdom of Christ, were just finishing, and that itself was ready to appear, in which Christ alone should be exalted, the mystery of God would be completed, and time itself be no more. The Ethiopic version adds, "the beginning and end of days", or time. A testimony this, of the deity, eternity, infinity, and perfection of Christ.

Ver. 14. *Blessed are they that do his commandments*, etc.] Either the commandments of God, (Revelation 12:17 14:12) the precepts of the moral law, which are the whole duty of man; which are done either legally in order to obtain life, and then they must be perfectly done, which no man can do; hence none live, and are justified by the deeds of it, and consequently are not blessed, but cursed; or evangelically, when they are done in the strength of Christ, from love to God, in the exercise of faith upon him, with a view to his glory, and without dependence on them, acknowledging the imperfection of them, and looking unto Jesus for righteousness and life, in whom such find both, and so are blessed persons: or else the commandments of Jesus are intended, who is speaking in the context, (Revelation 22:12,13,16) and is speaking of himself, and his, as the angel does in (Revelation 22:6) Christ's commandments are his new commandment of love, and the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper; which are to be observed in the same evangelical manner as the commandments of God, and to be kept exactly as they are delivered, without any alteration, addition, or diminution; and they are to be attended to immediately, and without delay; and such as regard them in a right way and manner are blessed; they have much pleasure and delight in the

observance of them; these commandments are not grievous, especially when they have the presence of Christ, the discoveries of his love, and are under the gracious influences of his Spirit: or it may be rather the commandments in this book are designed, for it may be rendered, “that do its commandments”; keep the sayings of this book, as in (<66217>Revelation 22:7) such as relate to the worship of God, and forbid the worship of the beast, which caution against idolatry, and exhort to come out of Babylon, and direct to follow the Lamb, and charge not to add or take from anything written in this prophecy; and such persons as keep the words of it are pronounced blessed, (<66103>Revelation 1:3). The Alexandrian copy reads, “that wash their garments”; and so the Ethiopic version, and also the Vulgate Latin, which adds, “in the blood of the Lamb”, agreeably to (<66713>Revelation 7:13) and such whose persons and garments are washed in the blood of Christ are blessed indeed; they are justified by it, pardoned through it, and both they and their services are accepted on account of it. The instances of their happiness follow,

that they may have right to the tree of life; or “power over the tree of life”; that is, Christ, not of government over him, but of enjoyment of him; a liberty of eating of the fruit of this tree, having interest in it, and so a right to partake of it; which right, or liberty, is not obtained by obedience to the commands of God, or Christ, or of this book, for this is what is due to God, and obligatory on men; and which, when done, is but their duty, and can merit nothing; though a cheerful and evangelical obedience to the divine will makes such appear to have a right to such a privilege, as the disciples of Christ are not made so, but appear to be such by bringing forth fruit, (<43508>John 15:8) but to have interest in Christ, the tree of life, and a right, power, and liberty to eat thereof, is a free grace gift, (<66207>Revelation 2:7) and happy are those who enjoy such a privilege! (<20318>Proverbs 3:18 <22203>Song of Solomon 2:3).

And may enter in through the gates into the city: the Ethiopic version reads, “into this holy city”: and which intends not entrance into a particular church of Christ, the way into which is faith in Christ, and a profession of it, and submission to the ordinance of baptism; nor entrance into heaven, which, as a Gospel church, is often called a city, and into which none shall enter, but such who are justified by the righteousness of Christ, and are regenerated by his Spirit, the gates of it are Christ and his grace; but the holy city, the new Jerusalem, is meant, and entrance into that, which is so largely described in the preceding chapter, and particularly its gates; and

they must be happy persons, indeed, who enter there; and their right to it is from, and lies in Christ, his blood, righteousness, and grace, under a sense of which they yield a ready obedience to his will, which makes their right to appear. Frequent mention is made of the gates of this city in the book of Zohar; and, says R. Isaac [f491],

> "when the soul yr[çb snkl hkwz, "is fit" (or worthy, or has a right) "to enter through the gates of Jerusalem" that is above, Michael the great prince goes with it, who anticipates for it the peace of the ministering angels, wondering at him, and inquiring concerning it, saying, "who is this that comes out of the wilderness", etc. (<22006>Song of Solomon 3:6)."

Ver. 15. *For without are dogs*, etc.] That is, without the holy city are such persons who are comparable to dogs for their filthiness, impudence, and voraciousness, as are persecutors, heretics, and apostates, (<40706>Matthew 7:6 <50302>Philippians 3:2 <61022>2 Peter 2:22). Some think Sodomites are intended, as in (<052318>Deuteronomy 23:18). So Abarbinel and others interpret the law; and who abound in the Roman jurisdiction, called therefore Sodom, (<661108>Revelation 11:8) and indeed all wicked men, who will be cast out into outer darkness, may be signified hereby. The Jews say [f492],

> "when a man dies, if he be worthy (or righteous) he descends in the likeness of a lion to receive "his" soul, but if not, in the likeness of "a dog", concerning which David says, (<192220>Psalm 22:20)."

And sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters; characters of the antichristian party, who will have no place in this city, or glorious kingdom of Christ; (See Gill on "<662108>Revelation 21:8").

And whosoever loveth and maketh a lie; who loves both to invent and tell lies, and loves to hear them told by others; meaning more especially the doctrinal lies of antichrist, which are spoken in hypocrisy by him, and his followers are given up to believe.

Ver. 16. *I Jesus have sent mine angel*, etc.] As John, the writer of this book, sets down his own name, who was an eye and ear witness of the things contained in it, that they might be more surely believed, (<662208>Revelation 22:8) so Christ, the author of it, puts his name Jesus to it, to engage the greater attention to hear and read, and keep the words of it, as well as to make it plain and manifest, who is the person speaking of his

coming, (Revelation 22:7,12) and who that has any value for Jesus the Saviour, but will give credit, and pay a regard to this revelation of his, which he sent by his angel, one of his ministering spirits, made by him, and under his command, he being the Creator, Lord, and head of angels: this expresses the dignity of his person, and is no inconsiderable proof of his deity: and this was done, in order

to testify, to bear witness to the truth of the things contained in it; to signify and show them, to set them forth in emblems and visions:

unto you these things in the churches; to the servants of the Lord, (Revelation 22:6) to John, and by him to others, to the pastors of the seven churches, who were επι, "over" the churches, as it may be rendered, and to the members of the churches, to all that were in them; for the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read εν, "in"; the Syriac version renders it, μdq, "before the churches". What John saw he wrote in a book, and sent it to these churches, (Revelation 1:11). The words may be rendered, "concerning the churches"; and then the sense is, that the angel was sent to show to John, and by him to others, even to all the saints in all ages, the things relating to the church of Christ, in the several periods of time, represented in succession by the seven churches of Asia. Christ gives a further account of himself, for the greater confirmation of the faith of his people, in the certain accomplishment of the things herein written, by saying,

I am the root and the offspring of David. The former of these is mentioned in the note, (see Gill on "Revelation 5:5"); and the meaning of it is, either that Christ, as God, is David's Lord and head, from whom he had his being, both in a temporal and spiritual sense, and by whom he was supported and sustained; or that, as man, he sprung from the root of David, or descended from him; and so it falls in with the latter, which may be explanative of it, "the offspring of David"; that is, the soft of David, according to the flesh, a frequent name of the Messiah; (see Gill on "Matthew 1:1"). God promised that the Messiah should be of the seed of David, and according to his promise he raised up unto Israel of his seed, a Saviour Jesus, the same person here speaking, (Acts 13:23) who adds,

and the bright and morning star; Christ is compared to a "star", as in (Numbers 24:17) for its light, the light of nature, and of grace, and of the new Jerusalem state being from him; and for its glory, his glory being

the glory of the only begotten of the Father, and he having a glory, as Mediator, which his saints will ever behold, and be delighted with; and for its influence, all the blessings of grace, life, and righteousness, being from him; and to a "bright" star, because he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and so splendid, shining, and illustrious, that he is light itself, and in him is no darkness at all; and to a bright "morning" star, which shows the night is going off and the day is coming on, and is the phosphorus, or bringer of light; as Christ by his first coming, who was then the dayspring from on high, put an end to the night of Jewish darkness, and sprung the great Gospel day, so often spoken of by the prophets, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel, and showed the way to eternal life by himself; so by his second coming, to which this character refers, he will put an end to the night of antichristian darkness, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan; so that there shall be no more night, and shall make an everlasting day, and bring such light into the holy city, that it shall need no candle, nor light of the sun or moon. The dawn of light at the Reformation was a presage of this, (<66228>Revelation 2:28) called there the morning star. With great propriety and pertinence are these titles here assumed by Christ, as "the root and offspring of David", or David's son, when he was about to sit on the throne of his father David, and possess his kingdom in the most visible and glorious manner; and "the bright and morning star", when he was going to usher in such light into the new Jerusalem, as would make all other light unnecessary. Aijeleth Shahar, in the title of (<19220>Psalm 22:1) which is a psalm that belongs to the Messiah, is, by some Jewish writers [f493], interpreted, rqwbh bkwk, "the morning star", the title of Christ here.

Ver. 17. *And the Spirit and the bride say, come*, etc.] Hearing Christ say that he should come quickly, (<66207>Revelation 22:7,12) the Spirit and the bride express an earnest wish, and a most affectionate desire after his coming: by "the Spirit" may be meant the Spirit of God in the hearts of his people, who not only convinces them of, and acquaints with the coming of Christ to judgment, and gives them reason to expect it, but fills their souls with the love of his appearance, so that they look and long for it, and hasten in the breathings of their souls after it: and this in like manner he may be said to wish for, and desire it in them, as he is said to cry "Abba", Father, in them, (<48406>Galatians 4:6) and to make intercession for them, (<48826>Romans 8:26,27). Hence, some interpreters, by the spirit, understand such as have the Spirit, and are spiritual men; either have spiritual gifts, the gift of prophecy, as John, who in (<66220>Revelation 22:20) expresses an

ardent desire that Christ would come quickly; or regenerate men in common, who are born of the Spirit, and bear his name, (<4005>John 3:5,6) and so by an hendyadis, “the Spirit and the bride” signify one and the same; namely, the spiritual bride of Christ, who is sanctified by the Spirit of God; even all the elect of God, whom Christ loved from all eternity, and who are espoused to him as a chaste virgin; the new Jerusalem, who is as a bride adorned for her husband, and is the bride, the Lamb's wife: these wait for the bridegroom's coming, and most earnestly desire it, as there is good reason for them so to do, since his appearing in itself will be a glorious one, being in his own glory, and his Father's, and the holy angels; and seeing then will be the solemnization of the marriage day between Christ and his church; it will be the saints' redemption day; they will then possess full salvation in soul and body; complete grace will be given to them, and glory will be revealed in them, and they shall be for ever with the Lord.

And let him that heareth; what the Spirit and the bride say; or the words of this prophecy; or that has spiritual ears given him, and he hears so as to understand spiritual things, the kingdom of Christ, and the glories of it, let him join the Spirit and bride, and

say, come likewise; or express his wishes and desires in the same earnest and affectionate manner, that Christ would hasten his second coming:

and let him that is athirst come. These seem to be the words of Christ inviting such who thirst after him, his grace and righteousness, after more knowledge of him, and communion with him, to come unto him, by faith, and partake thereof, (<4037>John 7:37) or who thirst after his second coming, and the glories and delights of the new Jerusalem state, to come into it, and eat of the tree of life, and drink of the river of water of life in it; for the character seems to design such, to speak in the language of the Jews, who use like phrases with this, who hunger, µyyj µym twtçl µyamxw, “and thirst to drink living water” [f494], as appears by what follows:

and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. The water of life designs the free favour and love of God, and the communications and displays of it in the new Jerusalem state, even the comfort, refreshment, and glories of that state: to “take” it is to enjoy it, to partake of it, being led unto it, and that being given to them by Christ the Lamb in the midst of the throne, (<6607>Revelation 7:17 21:6) and which is had “freely”, without money, and without price, as in (<2301>Isaiah 55:1) which seems to be referred to; for the happiness of this state, as well as eternal life, is the free

gift of God through Christ; and the persons encouraged to partake of it are "whosoever will"; that is, whoever has a will to divine and spiritual things, wrought in him by God, for no man has such a will of himself, (<scripture_ref type="bible">Philippians 2:13</scripture_ref>) though this does not so much regard the character of the person that may take of the water of life, as the free manner in which he may take it: so the Jews are wont to express themselves, when they would signify the liberty that might be used, or the free way in which anything might be taken, particularly when speaking of the law, and the things of it, lwjyw aby lwjyl hxwrj lk, "whosoever has a mind to take, let him come and take", as it is said, (<scripture_ref type="bible">Isaiah 55:1</scripture_ref>) "ho, everyone that thirsteth", etc. [f495] that is, he is free to take, he is welcome to it; which passage referred to, is thus paraphrased by the Targumist, "ho, ybxd lk, "whosoever "will" learn, let him come and learn, etc.

Ver. 18. *For I testify to every man*, etc.] These are not the words of a scribe, who having wrote out a copy of this book, added the following adjuration to it, to deter persons from adding to it, or diminishing it; for the book is not yet finished, and both Christ and John speak after this; and to insert such a passage into the text would be a bold and daring action; nor are they even the words of John, the inspired writer of it, but of the Lord Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, as appears from (<scripture_ref type="bible">Revelation 22:16,17,20</scripture_ref>) who in a most solemn manner declares to every man, high or low, rich or poor, of whatsoever character, or however dignified, either in a civil or ecclesiastic way,

that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book read or explained,

if any man shall add unto these things. To "add" to the things contained in this book, is not to deliver, or write an exposition of it, in a modest manner, with a sincere view to give light into it, agreeably to the analogy of faith; for to expound Scripture, or to preach from it, consistent with it, is not to add unto it, but to give the sense of it; but then may it be said to be added unto, and so this book, when it is wrested and perverted, and a false gloss is put upon it, as the Pharisees did upon the law; and when unwritten traditions are made to be equal to it, or above it, as the same persons made the traditions of the elders, whereby they transgressed the law, and made the word of God of none effect, and so broke through the precept given, (<scripture_ref type="bible">Deuteronomy 4:2</scripture_ref>) as do the Papists in like manner; and when men pretend to visions and revelations, and make them the rule of faith and practice, and to confirm things that are neither in this book, nor in any

other part of the word of God; and when men interpolate it, and set up human fictitious writings upon equal authority with it; which shows the authenticity of this book, and of all the whole Scripture, and the perfection of it, whose canon is closed with it: the punishment of such a crime follows,

God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; the things threatened to the antichristian party, (<66222>Revelation 2:22,23 <66310>Revelation 13:10 <66149>Revelation 14:9-11) the seven last plagues in which the wrath of God is filled up, which will be inflicted on the same, (<66601>Revelation 16:1-21), the lake of fire and brimstone, into which the beast, the false prophet, the devil, and all wicked men will be cast, (<66920>Revelation 19:20 20:10 <66208>Revelation 21:8) (see <20305>Proverbs 30:5,6).

Ver. 19. *And if any man shall take away from the prophecy of this book*, etc.] As he may be said to do, who denies the authority of this book, which has been done by some, and which the Holy Ghost foresaw; or takes it away from, or denies the reading of it to the people, as the Papists do with respect to the whole Scripture; and who wilfully pervert the sense of it, and will not have the things in it, relating to antichrist, to belong to him.

God shall take away his part out of the book of life; by which is meant eternal election, which is the meaning of the phrase throughout this book, in which whoever are written shall certainly be saved. The worshippers of the beast, or the antichristian party, who are chiefly regarded here, are not written in it, (<66308>Revelation 13:8 17:8) wherefore taking away the part of such, is only taking away that which they seemed to have; (see <42818>Luke 8:18) and the sense is, that such shall be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death, and will be the portion of all that are not written in the book of life, (<66215>Revelation 20:15). The Alexandrian copy, one of Stephens's, and the Complutensian edition, read, “the tree of life”; and so do the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; the sense is the same; (see <43102>John 15:2) and out of the holy city; the new Jerusalem, before described, a part in which is a right to enter into it through the gates, and possess the glories of it: what is mentioned here is only a seeming one, which wicked men may flatter themselves with; and the meaning is, that such shall never enter into it, and enjoy the happiness of it, but shall ever be without, (<66227>Revelation 21:27 <66225>Revelation 22:15)

and from the things which are written in this book; the blessings promised to the overcomers in (<66207>Revelation 2:7,11,17,26 <66305>Revelation 3:5,12,21)

which such as detract from this book shall have no share in. The Alexandrian copy, with some others, and the Syriac version, leave out the copulative “and”, and read “which are written”, etc. connecting them with the book of life, and holy city, which are written, and spoken of, in this book. The Ethiopic version connects the words with the holy city, only reading them, “which is written”, etc. The Jews say of their Talmud, that nothing is to be added to it, or diminished from it [f496].

Ver. 20. *He which testifieth these things*, etc.] Not the angel, (<66216>Revelation 22:16) nor John, who sometimes used this way of speaking, (<43124>John 21:24) but Christ, as appears from what follows; for he

saith, surely I come quickly; who not only asserts the speediness of his coming, as in (<66207>Revelation 22:7,12) but expresses the certainty of it, so that it ought not to be doubted of by any, especially by his own people; though it may seem to be deferred, and, upon that account, be derided by ungodly men; and Christ may have some respect, in this strong repetition of it, to the certainty of the punishment that will then be inflicted upon such who add to, or diminish from this book; for he himself will certainly come in person, and execute the vengeance threatened. John next puts his

Amen to it, signifying his assent unto it, declaring his faith in it, and expressing his earnest desire after it, and wish for it: and in words at length adds,

even so come, Lord Jesus; quickly, speedily as thou hast said, and in all thy glory; set up thy kingdom, let that come, introduce thy people into it, and destroy thine enemies; this he said as one that loved the appearance of Christ, longed for it, hastened to it, and was impatient at the delay of it.

Ver. 21. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*] That is, let a sense of the love of Christ, shown in all his regards to his church and people, which is always the same in itself, though the saints have not always the same perception of it, abide upon you: may you see your interest in the redeeming grace of Christ, in all its branches, and in his justifying, pardoning, sanctifying, and persevering grace; let the fulness of grace in Christ be the object of your trust and confidence; may you have a supply from it to enable you to overcome every temptation, to exercise every grace, and discharge every duty. This shows this book was written in the form of an epistle, and sent to the seven churches of Asia, (<66011>Revelation 1:11) and through them to the churches in all ages. It

begins with a salutation of them, (Revelation 1:4) and ends with one commonly used by the Apostle Paul in all his epistles, (2 Thessalonians 3:17,18). The Arabic version, instead of “you”, reads “us”; and the Complutensian edition and the Syriac version read, “with all the saints”.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 308.

Ft2 -- Adv. Haeres. 50:4. c. 37, 50. & 50:5. c. 30.

Ft3 -- Paedagog. 50:2. c. 12.

Ft4 -- Adv. Marcion. 50:4. c. 5.

Ft5 -- Comment. in Matthew p. 417. Ed. Huet.

Ft6 -- Apud. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 50:3. c. 28. & 50:7. c. 23.

Ft7 -- Suidas in voce ιωαννης.

Ft8 -- Vid. Epiphan Haeres. 51.

Ft9 -- Irenaeus adv. Haeres. 50:5. c. 36. Euseb. Ecclesiastes Hist. 50:3. c. 18.

Ft10 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 3. fol. 73. 2.

Ft11 -- Targum. Jon. in (5229)Deuteronomy 32:39. Zohar in Exodus fol. 59. 3. & in Numbers fol. 97. 4. & 106. 2. Seder Tephillot, fol. 205. 1. Ed. Basil. fol. 2. 2. Ed. Amsterd.

Ft12 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 179. 1.

Ft13 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Ft14 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 14. sect. 9. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 67. 1. & 111. 1. & 128. 1. Raya Mehimna in Zohar in (3120)Leviticus 12:1.

Ft15 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 1. 2. Vid. Jarchium in. Psal. lxviii. 14.

Ft16 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 38. 1.

Ft17 -- Targum in (1324)1 Chronicles 3:24. vid. Beckii Not. in ib. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 85. 2.

Ft18 -- Misn. Menachot, c. 8. sect. 1. 3. & Bartenora in ib. So Alpha penulatorum, “the chief of beggars”, in Martial, 50:50. 2. Ep. 57.

Ft19 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 55. 1. & Avoda Zara, fol. 4. 1. Echa Rabbati,

fol. 52. 1. Baal Hatturim in <5521>Deuteronomy 33:21. & Raziel, fol. 9. & 12. & Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 70. 1, 2.

Ft20 -- Nat. Hist. 50:4. c. 12.

Ft21 -- Epist. ad Tarsenses, p. 76.

Ft22 -- Irenaeus adv. Haeres. 50:5. c. 30.

Ft23 -- De praescript. Haeret. c. 36.

Ft24 -- Apolog. 2. p. 98, 99.

Ft25 -- Epist. c. 11. p. 244. Ed. Voss.

Ft26 -- Epist. ad. Magnes. c. 9.

Ft27 -- Apud Script. Quaest. & Respons. ad Orthodox. inter Justin. Opera, p. 468.

Ft28 -- De Corona, c. 3.

Ft29 -- Homil. in Exodus fol. 41. 7.

Ft30 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 29.

Ft31 -- Herodot. de Vita Homeri. c. 2.

Ft32 -- Vid. Hiller. Onomastic. p. 932.

Ft33 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 7. sect. 4.

Ft34 -- De vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 671.

Ft35 -- Ad Fabiolam. fol. 19. H.

Ft36 -- Cele Hamikash, c. 8. sect. 17.

Ft37 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 18. 2. & 19. 1. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 74. 2. Vid. Jarchi & Kimchi in <6418>Ezekiel 44:18.

Ft38 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 7. sect. 2.

Ft39 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 54. 1. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Sabbat, c. 5. sect. 2.

Ft40 -- Servius in Virgil. Aeneid. 50:8. p. 13. 55.

Ft41 -- Jonathan ben Uzziel in <0204>Exodus 40:4.

Ft42 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 95. 4. & 131. 1.

Ft43 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 5. 1. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 63. fol. 55. 2. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 30. fol. 171. 2. & Tzeror Hammor, fol. 71. 4.

Ft44 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 73. fol. 64. 3. Targum Jerus. in Genesis 30:21. & Jon in Deuteronomy 28:12. Zohar in Genesis fol. 67. 3. Pirke Eliezer, c. 34. T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 2. 1. & Sandedrin, fol. 113. 1.

Ft45 -- Contra Haeres. 50:2. Haeres. 51.

Ft46 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 36.

Ft47 -- L. 7:c. 46.

Ft48 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 39.

Ft49 -- Pesikta Rabbati apud Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 60. 4.

Ft50 -- Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 4. sect. 10.

Ft51 -- Vid. Irenaeum adv. Haeres, 50:1. c. 27. & Tertull. de Praescript. Haeret. c. 46, 47.

Ft52 -- Clement. Alex. Strom. 50:3. p. 436. & Euseb, Hist. Eccl. 50:2. c. 29.

Ft53 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 33. 3.

Ft54 -- Adv. Haeres. 50:3. c. 3.

Ft55 -- Vid. Smith. Notitia septem Ecclesiastes Asiae, p. 164, 165.

Ft56 -- Hist. Ecclesiastes 50:4. c. 15.

Ft57 -- L. 7. c. 46.

Ft58 -- Hist. Ecclesiastes Magdeburg. cent. 3. c. p. 2. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 595, 596. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.

Ft59 -- Smith. Notitia, p. 167.

Ft60 -- Vid. Arrian. Epictet. 50:2. c. 9.

Ft61 -- Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 15.

Ft62 -- De Civitate Dei, 50:18. c. 52.

Ft63 -- Vid. Minut. Felix, p. 42.

Ft64 -- Contr. Haeres. Haeres. 9.

Ft65 -- De praemiis & Poenis, p. 921.

Ft66 -- L. 7. c. 46.

Ft67 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 15.

Ft68 -- Ib. 50:5. c. 1.

Ft69 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburgh. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.

Ft70 -- Notitia, p. 120.

Ft71 -- Servius in Virgil. Aeneid. 50:1. p. 403, & 50:2. p. 633. Ed Basil. 1586.

Ft72 -- Smith. Notitia, p. 112.

Ft73 -- L. 1. sive Attica, p. 8.

Ft74 -- L. 3. sive Laconica, p. 215.

Ft75 -- L. 9. Epig. 14.

Ft76 -- Hist. 50:4. c. 14.

Ft77 -- In Icaro Menippo.

Ft78 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:17. c. 1. sect. 3. De Bello Jud. 50:1. c. 28. sect. 4.

Ft79 -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 28. 4. & Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 20. fol. 229. 1. Yalkut, par. 1. fol. 244. 3, 4. & par. 2. fol. 76. 4.

Ft80 -- De vita Mosis, 50:7. p. 647, 648.

Ft81 -- Antiqu. 50:4. c. 6. sect. 6, 7, 8, 9.

Ft82 -- Apud Hottinger. Exercit. Antimorin. p. 109.

Ft83 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 75. 2. Jarchi in [1216]Exodus 16:13, 14. Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 30.

Ft84 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 38. 4.

Ft85 -- Midrash Shirhashirim, fol. 11. 2. Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2. & Midrash Kohelet, fol. 63. 2. Pesikta in Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 75. 4.

Ft86 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Numbers fol. 96. 2. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 68. 4.

Ft87 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 88. 1.

Ft88 -- Alleg. 50:2. p. 93. Quod det. potior. p. 176. Quis rer. divin. Haeres. p. 491, 492. & Leg. Alleg. 50:3. p. 1103.

Ft89 -- Metamorphos. 50:15. fol. 1.

Ft90 -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 8. 1.

Ft91 -- De Servis, p. 342.

Ft92 -- Contra Haeres. 50:2. Haeres. 51.

Ft93 -- Eccl. Hist. Magdeburgh. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.

Ft94 -- Smith. Notitia, p. 130.

Ft95 -- De Urbibus.

Ft96 -- Notitia, p. 126.

Ft97 -- Antiqu. 50:8. c. 13. sect. 1. 4, 7.

Ft98 -- Juchasin, fol. 7. 1.

Ft99 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 13. 26. & 50:5. c. 24.

Ft100 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. c. 7. p. 418. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 9. c. 3. p. 3.

Ft101 -- Smith. Notitia, p. 138.

Ft102 -- Nat. Hist. 50:37. c. 7. Albert. Magn. de Reb. Metall. 50:2. c. 17.

Ft103 -- Ruaeus de Gemmis, 50:2. c. 6. Albert. Magn. de Rebus Metall. 50:2. c. 17. Schroder. Pharmacopoeia, 50:3. c. 5. p. 18.

Ft104 -- R. David Kimchi in Psal. 1:2.

Ft105 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 35. 1.

Ft106 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 10. 3.

Ft107 -- Maimon. Biath Hamikdash, c. 6. sect. 11, Misn. Middot, c. 5. sect. 3. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 19. 1.

Ft108 -- L. 7. c. 46.

Ft109 -- Ignat. Epist. p. 39. Ed. Voss.

Ft110 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 15.

Ft111 -- Eccl. Hist. Magdeburg. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.

Ft112 -- Smith. Notitia, p. 143.

Ft113 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 2. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 70. 3.

Ft114 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 15.

Ft115 -- L. 7. c. 46.

Ft116 -- Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 50:4. c. 26. & 50:5. c. 24.

Ft117 -- Eccl. Hist. Magdeburg. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 5. c. 7. p. 418. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 7. p. 112. c. 10. p. 254.

Ft118 -- Smith. Notitia, p. 150.

Ft119 -- Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 121. 4. so in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 119. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 111. 1. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 46. 1.

Ft120 -- Cabal. Denud. par. 2. p. 7.

Ft121 -- Lex. Cabal. p. 130. & Baal Hatturim in (585)Deuteronomy 28:15.

Ft122 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 77. 1.

Ft123 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 106. 2.

Ft124 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 34. fol. 173. 4. vid. Targum in Cant. 8:9.

Ft125 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 96. 3. Debarim Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 243. 3. & Vajikra Rabba, sect. 12. fol. 155. 3.

Ft126 -- Misn. Succa, c. 5. sect. 5.

Ft127 -- Misn. Tamid, c. 3. sect. 7.

Ft128 -- Albert. Magn. de Reb. Metall. 50:2. c. 8. Ruaeus de Gemmis, 50:2. c. 1.

Ft129 -- De Legibus, 50:2.

Ft130 -- Ruaeus de Gemmis, 50:2. c. 4.

Ft131 -- Ruaeus, ib. & Albert. Magn. de Reb. Metall. 50:2. c. 17.

Ft132 -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 3. & Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 3.

Ft133 -- Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 1.

Ft134 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 106. 3. & Raya Mehimna in ib. fol. 96. 3. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1. Abot R. Nathan, fol. 1. 3. Caphtor, fol. 82. 2. & 86. 2. & 108. 2. & Nishmat Chayim, fol. 30. 2.

Ft135 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 90. 3. & 92. 1. & in Leviticus fol. 24. 3. & in Deuteronomy fol. 118. 4. Tikkune Zohar apud Rittangel. not. in Jetzira, p. 133, 134.

Ft136 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 46. 2. & 47. 1, 2.

Ft137 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect 2. fol. 179. 1. Vid. Pirke Eliezer, c. 4.

Ft138 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 91. 3.

Ft139 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in ib. fol. 95. 4.

Ft140 -- Aben Ezra in Numbers 2:2.

Ft141 -- Raziel, fol. 45. 2.

Ft142 -- Cicero, Orat. pro Sextio. p. 904.

Ft143 -- Joseph. Autiqu. 50:15. c. 6. sect. 6, 7.

Ft144 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 6. 3. & Tzeror Hammor, fol. 109. 1. & 161. 3.

Ft145 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.

Ft146 -- Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:2. c. 30. & Salmuth in Panciroll. rer. Memorab. par. 1. tit. 42. p. 145.

Ft147 -- Misna Tamid, c. 1. sect. 4. & c. 5. sect. 4. 5.

Ft148 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:18. c. 1. sect 3.

Ft149 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 28. 2.

Ft150 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exodus fol. 49. 3, 4.

Ft151 -- Targum in <2Ki 14>Hosea 5:14. & 11:10. & 13:7.

Ft152 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 6. sect. 6.

Ft153 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exodus fol. 48. 3.

Ft154 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 40. 3.

Ft155 -- Bemidbar Rabba sect. 2. fol. 179. 1.

Ft156 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 69. 1.

Ft157 -- Victor Aurel. de Viris Illustr. in Fur Camill.

Ft158 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 1.

Ft159 -- In Oneiro Criticis, apud Mede.

Ft160 -- Shaare Zion, fol. 102. 2.

Ft161 -- Dion Cassius in Vita Trajani.

Ft162 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 2.

Ft163 -- Dion Cassius in Vita Hadrian.

Ft164 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 57. 1. & Hieros. Taanith, fol. 69. 1. Echa Rabbati, fol. 52. 3.

Ft165 -- Jucaasin, fol. 142. 2. & 143. 1.

Ft166 -- T. Hieros Taanith, fol. 68. 4. & T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 157. 2. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 13. 1.

Ft167 -- Spartianus in Vita Hadriani, & Aurel. Victor. Epitome.

Ft168 -- T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 20. 1.

Ft169 -- Spartianus in Vita Severi, & Lampridius in Vita Alexandri.

Ft170 -- Apolog. c. 40. & ad Scapulam, c. 3.

Ft171 -- Cassiodor. Chronicon. & Eutrop. Hist. Roman. 50:8.

Ft172 -- Polymnia, c. 187.

Ft173 -- De Mensuris Graecis, p. 120.

Ft174 -- Waserus de Mensuris, 50:2. c. 2. sect. 5, 6. & c. 3. sect. 6. & c. 7. sect. 6.

Ft175 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:2. c. 20.

Ft176 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 85. 3. & 96. 1. & 97. 4. & 104. 1. & 105. 2. & 137. 2, 3.

Ft177 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 51. 3. & in Deuteronomy fol. 115. 3. Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Numbers fol. 94. 3. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 5. 3. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 64. 4.

Ft178 -- Apud Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. 50:2. p. 38.

Ft179 -- Capitolinus in Vita ejus.

Ft180 -- Pollio in Vita Gallieni.

Ft181 -- Eutropius, 50:9.

Ft182 -- Apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 50:7. c. 22.

Ft183 -- Ad Demetrianum, p. 278.

Ft184 -- Targum in <13212>1 Chronicles 21:12, 14, 17. & in <14168>2 Chronicles 6:28. & 20:9.

Ft185 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 8. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 1.

Ft186 -- Eutrop. 50:9.

Ft187 -- Victor. Aurel. de Caesaribus, & Epitome.

Ft188 -- Apud Euseb. 50:7. c. 21, 22.

Ft189 -- Adv. Gentes, 50:1. p. 13.

Ft190 -- Euseb. 50:9. c. 8.

Ft191 -- Aurel. Victor. Epitome.

Ft192 -- Herodian, 50:1. c. 37.

Ft193 -- Tosaphta in Zohar in Exodus fol. 79. 4.

Ft194 -- Shaare Ora, fol. 31. 2.

Ft195 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 152. 2. Zohar in Numbers fol. 39. 4. Abot R. Nathan, c. 12. Raziel, fol. 39. 1. Caphtor, fol. 15. 2. & 112. 2. Nismat Chayim, fol. 16. 2.

Ft196 -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 111. 1.

Ft197 -- Maimon. Hilchot. Melacim, c. 5. sect. 11.

Ft198 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 26.

Ft199 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 85. 3.

Ft200 -- Magdeburg. Centuriator. cent. 4. c. 3. p. 86. & c. 13. p. 837.

Ft201 -- Alsted. Chronolog. Thesaur. p. 59.

Ft202 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 6. 2.

Ft203 -- Sozomen, 50:2. c. 5.

Ft204 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:9. c. 10.

Ft205 -- Ib. c. 11.

Ft206 -- Centuriator. Magdeburg. Cent. 4. c. 2. p. 5, 8.

Ft207 -- Contur. Magd. cent. 4. c. 16. p. 909. Vid. Eutrop. 50:9.

Ft208 -- Euseb. Hist. 50:8. c. 13. & de Vita Constantin. 50:5. c. 25.

Ft209 -- lb. 50:9. c. 10.

Ft210 -- Ib. c. 9. & de Vita Constant. 50:1. c. 38. Vid. Aurel. Victor. de Caesaribus.

Ft211 -- Aurel. Victor. Epitome.

Ft212 -- Euseb. Hist. 50:9. c. 10. & de Vita Constantin. 50:1. c. 59.

Ft213 -- Euseb. de Vita Constantin. 50:2. c. 18.

Ft214 -- Raziel, fol. 36. 1. 2.

Ft215 -- Targum in 1 Reg. 19:11.

Ft216 -- Hyde, Hist. Relig. Pers. c. 12.

Ft217 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 100. 1.

Ft218 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 79. 2.

Ft219 -- Metamorph. 50:9. p. 130.

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Ft221 -- Vid. Popma de Operis Servorum, p. 170, etc.

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Ft223 -- A. Gell. Noctes Attic. 50:3. c. 6. Sueton. in Caio, c. 32.

Ft224 -- Pausan. Arcadica, 50:8. p. 532. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:5. c. 8. & 50:6. c. 19.

Ft225 -- Isidor. Hispalens. Origen. 50:19. c. 24. p. 168.

Ft226 -- Vid. Lydium de re Militare, 50:6. c. 3. p. 225.

Ft227 -- T. Tab. Yoma, fol. 44. 1. Maimon. Hilchot Tamidin, c. 3. sect. 3.

Ft228 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 5. sect. 1.

Ft229 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 44. 1. & Zebachim, fol. 88. 2.

Ft230 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 18. 1.

Ft231 -- Misn. Tamid. c. 7. sect. 3.

Ft232 -- Maimon. Hilch. Tamidin, c. 6. sect. 5.

Ft233 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 5.

Ft234 -- Maimon. Biath. Hamikdash, c. 5. sect. 17.

Ft235 -- Yoma, c. 4. sect. 4.

Ft236 -- Misn. Tamid. c. 5. sect. 4.

Ft237 -- Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 2. sect. 1, 2.

Ft238 -- Yoma, c. 5. sect. 1. & T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 47. 1.

Ft239 -- Misn. Tamid. c. 5. sect. 4.

Ft240 -- Misn. Tamid. c. 6. sect. 3. Maimon. Tamidin, c. 3. sect. 8, 9.

Ft241 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 97. 2. & in Exodus fol. 99. 1. Shemot Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 106. 2.

Ft242 -- Epiphan. Contr. Haeres. 50:1. Haeres. 19.

Ft243 -- Targum in <28148>Hosea 14:8.

Ft244 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 5. sect. 1.

Ft245 -- Misn. Tamid. c. 5. sect. 5.

Ft246 -- Vid. Misn. Yoma, c. 4. sect. 4.

Ft247 -- Misn. Tamid. c. 5. sect. 6. & 3. 8.

Ft248 -- Cassiodor. Chronicon in Arcad. & Honor. 42. Petav. Rationar. Tempor. par. 1. 50:6. c. 10. p. 275. Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 5. c. 16. p. 871.

Ft249 -- De Bello Getico, 5:174. p. 209. Ed. Barthii.

Ft250 -- In Epitaph. Nepotian. fol. 9. I.

Ft251 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 50. 1.

Ft252 -- Cassiodor Chronicon in Honor. & Theodos. 43. Petav. ib. p. 276. Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. ib. p. 872. Vid. Hieron. ad Gaudentium, fol. 34. M.

Ft253 -- Cassiodor. ib. Petav. ib.

Ft254 -- Cassiodor. Chronicon. ib.

Ft255 -- De Civitate Dei, 50:1. c. 10. vid. L. Vivem in ib.

Ft256 -- Ad Eustochium.

Ft257 -- Cassiodor. Chronicon in Theodos. 44. & in Marcian. 45.

Ft258 -- Chronicon, ib.

Ft259 -- Nat. Hist. 50:2. c. 25.

Ft260 -- lb. c. 35.

Ft261 -- Epitaph. Nepotian. fol. 9. 50:Tom. 1. vid. etiam Epist. ad Gerontiam, fol. 32. E. & Epitaph. Fabiolae, fol. 68. H.

Ft262 -- Vid. Casssiodor. Chronicon in Zenon. 47. Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 5. c. 16. p. 876. Petav. Rationar. Temp. par. 1. c. 18. p. 304.

Ft263 -- Jarchi in Genesis 1. 14.

Ft264 -- T. Bab. Succa, fol. 29. 1. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 62. 1.

Ft265 -- Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 113. 3.

Ft266 -- Hist. Dynast. p. 99, 102.

Ft267 -- Nat. Hist. 50:11. c. 29.

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Ft270 -- Hist. Nat. 50:51. c. 25.

Ft271 -- Hist. sui Temporis, par. 4. 50:84. p. 162. Ed. Francofurt.

Ft272 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. 50:11. c. 29.

Ft273 -- Petav. Rationar. par. 1. 50:7. c. 13. & 50:8. c. 13.

Ft274 -- Boeotica, sive 50:9. p. 573. Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. 50:11. c. 25. & Aelian. Hist. Animal. 50:6. c. 20. & 50:16. c. 41, 42.

Ft275 -- Vid. Frentz. Hist. Animal. sacr. p. 5. c. 4. p. 799.

Ft276 -- Nat. Hist. 50:6. c. 28.

Ft277 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Cholin. fol. 65. 1.

Ft278 -- Hist. Nat. 50:6. c. 28.

Ft279 -- L. 11. c. 29.

Ft280 -- Claudian. Epigram. 13.

Ft281 -- Plin. 50:11. c. 29, 51.

Ft282 -- Altissiodorensis in <2015>Joel 2:5.

Ft283 -- Hist. Animal. 50:4. c. 9. Vid. Plin. 50:11. c. 51.

Ft284 -- Scriptores Arab.

Ft285 -- Hist. Dynast. p. 129. Dya. 9.

Ft286 -- lb. p. 140.

Ft287 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 19. 1. Zohar in Genesis fol. 47. 2. & in Numbers fol. 74. 2. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 47. 3. & 93. 4. Raziel, fol. 14. 2. & 35. 2.

Ft288 -- Phurnutus de Natura Deorum, p. 92. Macrob. Saturnal. 50:1. c. 17.

Ft289 -- Petav. Rationem. Temp. par. 1. 50:9. c. 7.

Ft290 -- Pocock, Supplem. Hist. Dynast. Abulpharaji, p. 41, 42.

Ft291 -- Rufi Fest. Brev. p. 368. Eutrop. Hist. Roman. 50:8. p. 502.

Ft292 -- Nicephor. Gregor. Hist. Roman, 50:2. p. 29.

Ft293 -- Laonic. Chalcocondylas de reb. Turc. 50:1. p. 6.

Ft294 -- Ib. 50:7. p. 227, 255.

Ft295 -- Laonic. Chalcocond. 50:2. p. 65.

Ft296 -- Alsted. Chronol. p. 321.

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Ft298 -- Napier in loc.

Ft299 -- Bonfinius apud Pareum in loc.

Ft300 -- Chalcocond. 50:5. p. 152, 163.

Ft301 -- Chalcocond. 50:8. p. 252.

Ft302 -- εγκατειλημμενος τη νεφελη, Philo de Vita Mosis, 50:1. p. 608.

Ft303 -- T. Bab. Nazir, fol. 3. 2. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 58. 1.

Ft304 -- Martial Epigr. 50:11. ep. 60.

Ft305 -- Cicero de Fittibus Bon. & Malachi 50:3. c. 1.

Ft306 -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 137. 2. Juchasin, fol. 113. 2.

Ft307 -- Joseph de Bello Jud. 50:1. c. 1. sect. 7.

Ft308 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 43. 4. & 46. 3. & 48. 1. & 52. 2. & 58. 3. T. Hieros. Taanith, fol. 68. 4. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 93. 1.

Ft309 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 79. 3.

Ft310 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 21. 2. See following in Apocrypha:

Ft311 -- Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Rab. in voce µda.

Ft312 -- Iliad. 2. 50:308.

Ft313 -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 26.

Ft314 -- In Vita Epaminond. 50:15. c. 10.

Ft315 -- Hist. Roman. 50:2. c. 6.

Ft316 -- Hist. 50:21. c. 30.

Ft317 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 53. 2, 3.

Ft318 -- Polyhist. c. 43.

Ft319 -- Valer. Maxim. 50:1. c. 8.

Ft320 -- Nat. Hist. 50:8. c. 14.

Ft321 -- De vita Constantini, 50:1. c. 8.

Ft322 -- Shaare Ora, fol. 26. 4.

Ft323 -- Debarim, Rabba, fol. 237. 4.

Ft324 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 14. 3. & 26. 3.

Ft325 -- Euseb. de Vita Constantini, 50:2. c. 46.

Ft326 -- Ib. 50:3. c. 3.

Ft327 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 9. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 1. Imre Binah in Zohar in Genesis fol. 3. 1. & 15. 2. & passim, Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exodus fol. 50. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 7. 3. & 8. 2. & 26. 3. & 46. 1. & Caphtor, fol. 101. 2.

Ft328 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 13. 3.

Ft329 -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 11. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

Ft330 -- Shaare Ora, fol. 21. 4. & 24. 2.

Ft331 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 106. 4.

Ft332 -- Targum Jon. in <04201>Numbers 29:1.

Ft333 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 107. 2.

Ft334 -- Sulpitii Sever. Hist. Sacr. 50:2.

Ft335 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 4. c. 3. p. 50, 56.

Ft336 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 4. c. 3. p. 73, 74.

Ft337 -- Ib. p. 73. & c. 7. p. 304.

Ft338 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 4. c. 3. p. 80.

Ft339 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 41. 4. & 55. 2. & 63. 3.

Ft340 -- Aelian. de Animal. 50:5. c. 40.

Ft341 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 128. 2, 3.

Ft342 -- Targum Jon. & Jerus. & Aben Ezra in <01491>Genesis 49:11.

Ft343 -- Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 9.

Ft344 -- Ib. sect. 8.

Ft345 -- Apulei Metamorph. 50:9. Ausonii Epigram. 50:15. Seneca de Ira, 50:3. c. 3.

Ft346 -- Aetius apud Turnebi Advers. 50:23. c. 12.

Ft347 -- Hilchot Obede Cochab. c. 12. sect. 11.

Ft348 -- The reader will bear in mind that the original edition of this work was published in the year 1747. — Ed.

Ft349 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 70. 4.

Ft350 -- Vid. Lydii Dissert. de Jurament. c. 2. p. 258.

Ft351 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 103. 4. & Raya Mchimna, apud ib. in Exodus fol. 49. 3.

Ft352 -- Adv. Judaeos, c. 9. & Adv. Marcion. 50:3. c. 13.

Ft353 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 51. 4.

Ft354 -- Targum in Psal. 37:20. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 1. Caphtor, fol. 109. 1.

Ft355 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 47. 4.

Ft356 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 36. 4. & in Leviticus fol. 45. 3. & in Deuteronomy fol. 115. 3. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 65. 2. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 149. 1. Nishmat Chayim, fol. 39. 1.

Ft357 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 62. 3. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 152. 2.

Ft358 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 11. 1.

Ft359 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 3. 2. & Avoda Zara, fol. 5. 1. & Nishmat Chayim, fol. 21. 1.

Ft360 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 34. & Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 55. 4.

Ft361 -- Pirke Abot, c. 6. sect. 9.

Ft362 -- Misn. Menachot, c. 10. sect. 3.

Ft363 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 92. 1.

Ft364 -- Sepher Raziel, fol. 39. 2. Targum in 1 Reg. 19:11.

Ft365 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 118. 1.

Ft366 -- T. Hieros. Taanioth, fol. 69. 1.

Ft367 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 28. 1. Gloss. in ib.

Ft368 -- T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 3. 1. & Bava Kama, fol. 82. 2. & Menachot, fol. 64. 2.

Ft369 -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 92. 2. Gloss. in ib.

Ft370 -- Ad Dardanum, fol. 22. 1. Tom. 3.

Ft371 -- In Genesis fol. 60.

Ft372 -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 23. 2. & 24. 3, 4. & 25. 2. & T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2.

Ft373 -- Maimon. Tamidim, c. 6. sect. 9.

Ft374 -- De Somniis, p. 597.

Ft375 -- Nat. Hist. 50:37. c. 10.

Ft376 -- Pancirol, rer. memorab. par. 1. tit. 4. & Salmuth in ib. Plin. 50:19.

c. 1. Turueb. Adversar. 50:23. c. 1. Schotti Thaumaturg, 50:2. sect. 10. p. 118.

Ft377 -- Misn. Menachot, c. 11. sect. 4, 5.

Ft378 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 8. sect. 10.

Ft379 -- Misn. Sota, c. 2. sect. 2. Joseph Antiqu. 50:3. c. 11. sect. 6. Misn. Negaim, c. 10. sect. 1.

Ft380 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 68. 3.

Ft381 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 58. 4. par. 2. fol. 167. 4.

Ft382 -- Maimon, Cele Hamikdash, c. 7. sect. 15.

Ft383 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 1.

Ft384 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 5. fol. 3. 2.

Ft385 -- De Legat. ad Caium, p. 1022.

Ft386 -- Ad Atticum, 50:15. Ep. 16.

Ft387 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 91. 3.

Ft388 -- Misna Middot, c. 1. sect. 2. T. Bab. Tamid, fol. 27. 2. & 28. 1. Maimon. Beth Habbechira, c. 8. sect. 10. & Cele Hamikdash, c. 7. sect. 4.

Ft389 -- Euseb, Prepar. Evangel. 50:9. c. 17. p. 419.

Ft390 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 86. 1.

Ft391 -- See his (Zohar's) Works, p. 491.

Ft392 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 12. fol. 99. 1.

Ft393 -- De vitis Pontiticum, p. 312.

Ft394 -- Defence of the Catholic Faith, etc. c. 3. p. 38.

Ft395 -- De Mercede Meretricis non recip. p. 861.

Ft396 -- In Scaligeran.

Ft397 -- Aeneid. 6.

Ft398 -- In Carmine Seculari.

Ft399 -- De Trist. 50:1. Eleg. 4.

Ft400 -- L. 3. de Laud. Stilicon. 50:3. ver. 135.

Ft401 -- Syl. 50:1. Syl. 2. ver. 191.

Ft402 -- L. 4. Ep. 53.

Ft403 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial Dier. 50:6. c. 11.

Ft404 -- Nat. Hist. 50:3. c. 5.

Ft405 -- De Excidio Antichristi apud Poli Synops. in loc.

Ft406 -- Targum in Cant. 8:7. Shirhashirim Rabba fol. 26. 1.

Ft407 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 51. 3. & Raya Mehimna in ib. & in Numbers fol. 105. 3. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 179. 4.

Ft408 -- Yaikut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 93. 2.

Ft409 -- Justin. 50:18. c. 2.

Ft410 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 74. 3. & in Numbers fol. 86. 1.

Ft411 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 48. 2.

Ft412 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 74. 3.

Ft413 -- Jarchi in Genesis 36:43.

Ft414 -- Abarbinel in Daniel fol. 42. 3.

Ft415 -- Jarchi in Obadiah, ver. 21.

Ft416 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 21. 2.

Ft417 -- Servius in Virgil, Eclog. 6. p. 67.

Ft418 -- Nat. Hist. 50:13. c. 16.

Ft419 -- Misn. Beracot, c. 6. sect. 6.

Ft420 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 49. 2.

Ft421 -- Schindler. Lex. Pentaglott. in Voce jwr, Colossians 1712.

Ft422 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 89. 1. T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 117. 1.

Ft423 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 48. 2.

Ft424 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 148. 1.

Ft425 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 163. 4.

Ft426 -- Philostrat. Vita Apollon. 50:2. c. 9. Vid. Apul. Apolog. p. 225. Pausan. 50:5. sive Eliac. p. 294.

Ft427 -- See <2610>Isaiah 61:10. & Targum in <3802>Hosea 10:12.

Ft428 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:1. c. 20.

Ft429 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. 50:35. c. 9.

Ft430 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 51. fol. 45. 4.

Ft431 -- Targum Jon. in <2830>Exodus 28:30.

Ft432 -- Yalkut Simconi, par. 2. fol. 41. 4.

Ft433 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 5. fol. 185. 4. vid. Jacchiad. in <2725>Daniel 7:25.

Ft434 -- Midrash Tillim, fol. 4. 2.

Ft435 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 1, 2. & Gloss. in ib. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 42. 1. & 49. 3. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 150. 2.

Ft436 -- Comment. in Zach. 14:16, 18.

Ft437 -- Targum in Cant. 8:4. & Targum Hieros. in <0426>Numbers 11:26.

Ft438 -- Antiqu. 50:1. c. 6. sect. 1.

Ft439 -- In Schindler. Lex. Pentaglott. col. 288.

Ft440 -- Zohar. in Genesis fol. 73. 1.

Ft441 -- T. Bab Zebachim, fol. 116. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Beth Habbechirah, c. 7. sect. 11.

Ft442 -- Targum Jon. in <0426>Numbers 11:26.

Ft443 -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 154. 2.

Ft444 -- T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 16. 21.

Ft445 -- T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 32. 2. & Erachin, fol. 10. 2.

Ft446 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 118. 3.

Ft447 -- Tosaphta in Zohar in Genesis fol. 78. 2.

Ft448 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 42. 2. Vid. ib. fol. 49. 1. &. 53. 1. & 71. 2. & Nazir, fol. 24. 2. & 26. 1, 2. Bava Metzia, fol. 52. 2. Temura, fol. 22. 2. & Meila, fol. 9. 2. & 10. 1.

Ft449 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 5. 2. vid. Kimchi in lsa. 56:6.

Ft450 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 92. 2. & Gloss. in ib. Zohar in Genesis fol. 69. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 150. 2.

Ft451 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 35. 3.

Ft452 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 126. 4.

Ft453 -- Ib. fol. 103. 4.

Ft454 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 53. 2.

Ft455 -- Echa Rabbati, fol. 48. 2. & Midrash Kohelet, fol. 61. 2.

Ft456 -- Maimon. Teshuva, c. 8. sect. 1.

Ft457 -- Midrash Hanneelam in Zohar in Genesis fol. 70. 1.

Ft458 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 101. 3.

Ft459 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Leviticus fol. 7. 2.

Ft460 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 15. 1.

Ft461 -- Ruaeus de Gemmis, 50:2. c. 1.

Ft462 -- Dioscorides, 50:5. c. 160.

Ft463 -- Nat. Hist. 50:37. c. 9.

Ft464 -- Raziel, fol. 35. 2.

Ft465 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 70. 4.

Ft466 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 24. 1.

Ft467 -- Vid. Targum Jon. & Jerus. in (12817)Exodus 28:17. Targum in Cant. 5:14. Shemot Rabba, sect. 38. fol. 138. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 178. 3.

Ft468 -- Nat. Hist. 50:37. c. 7.

Ft469 -- Shilte Hagibborim, fol. 45. 4.

Ft470 -- Pharmacopoeia, 50:3. c. 5. p. 18.

Ft471 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 17. 2. & in Exodus fol. 65. 4.

Ft472 -- Abkath Rocel, p. 150. Vid. Zohar in Exodus fol. 96. 3.

Ft473 -- Chambers's Cyclopedia in the word “Pearl”.

Ft474 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 100. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 1. & Yalkut, par. 2. fol. 54. 1.

Ft475 -- Misn. Middot, c. 4. sect. 2. Vid. Yalkut Simconi, par. 2. fol. 54. 1.

Ft476 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 1. fol. 7. 1.

Ft477 -- Sepher. Avodah Hakkodesh, fol. 46. 1.

Ft478 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 101. 1.

Ft479 -- Raziel, fol. 17. 2.

Ft480 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 57. 2.

Ft481 -- Petirat Moseh, fol. 23. 2.

Ft482 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 57. 2. & 98. 1.

Ft483 -- Ben Gorion apud Aben Ezram in Psal. 49:19.

Ft484 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 56. 3.

Ft485 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 91. fol. 79. 4.

Ft486 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 2.

Ft487 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 1. fol. 7. 1.

Ft488 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 19. 1.

Ft489 -- Sepher Avodah Hakkodesh, fol. 46. 1.

Ft490 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 39. 1.

Ft491 -- Medrash Haneelam in Zohar in Genesis fol. 77. 1.

Ft492 -- Raya Mchimna in Zohar in Numbers fol. 95. 2.

Ft493 -- Apud Kimchi in loc.

Ft494 -- Raziel, fol. 31. 2.

Ft495 -- Abot R. Nathan, c. 4l. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 79. 4. & 82. 4. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 54. 3. & 100. 2.

Ft496 -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 34. 1.